"100% Authentic Pittsburgh": Sociolinguistic authenticity and the linguistics of particularity

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1. Introduction

Variationist sociolinguists have traditionally chosen as their object of study the most unselfconscious, "vernacular" speech in relatively closed, homogeneous communities like traditional working-class neighborhoods, with their dense, multiplex social networks, and in the relatively self-contained symbolic economies of schools. This has allowed us to explore social correlates of variation and processes of change in communities where these things appear least muddied by outside influences, and doing so has given us a solid foundation for understanding patterns of variation and change. Any claim about the best site for research is liable to be read as a claim about the best speakers or ways of speaking, however. Among the most influential models for subsequent research in variationist sociolinguists is of course the work of William Labov (1972, 2001). Labov's claim that unselfconscious, everyday speech relatively untainted by the presence of outsiders provides the clearest evidence of the systematicity of variation and change has often been implicitly taken as a claim about what the best data is and who the most "authentic" speakers are. Other influential variationists, such as James and Leslie Milroy (Milroy, 1987; Milroy & Milroy, 1992) and Penelope Eckert (2000), have also been read (or mis-read) as suggesting that the kind of communities they have studied provide the best, most unsullied evidence of the mechanisms of variation and change.

However, as Bucholtz (2003), Coupland (2007, pp. 25–26), and others have pointed out, what counts as an authentic linguistic variety or an authentic speaker depends on who is counting and why. As Coupland puts it: "authenticity is not so much a condition of a research design; it is a

social meaning" (Coupland, 2007, p. 26). Many sociolinguists are now shifting our focus to situations in which authenticity seems a great deal more problematic: than it did in classic variationist work: situations in which different groups of speakers may have access to very different sets of sociolinguistic resources and ways of evaluating such resources, situations in which talk is mediated or performed, situations in which social networks are looser and more changeable, situations in which the issue of what it means to say something one way or another is more complex.

The fact that we no longer take the existence of sociolinguistic authenticity for granted does not mean, however, that the idea is no longer relevant. The people we study may think of some variants and some speakers as more authentic than others, and these judgments can be consequential, as people choose or avoid particular variants, emulate or fail to emulate particular speakers, and argue about what varieties are really like. In this paper I explore the meaning of sociolinguistic authenticity in a community where the concept of authenticity is often in play and often linked with how people talk. My analytical method is a kind of discourse analysis (by which I mean close, systematic interpretation of texts and records of talk) which is linked, at every step, with ethnography (by which I mean rigorous, long-term exploration of human systems of meaning, acting, and being). Rather than looking at a representative subset of a large set of data (a set of tokens extracted from a set of sociolinguistic interviews, a set of newspaper articles, a set of contributions to online chats, a set of narratives), here I look at a single instance of a single thing. I work outward from this particular text to the sources of creativity and constraint that make it possible and shape its form and meaning. The question with which I begin is both very broad and very particular: "Why is this text the way it is and no other way?" My text is the following:

100%   Authentic Pittsburgh   100%

The people of this great city are considered to be the nicest, warmest, and friendliest in the world. Native or visitor, when you leave this place the generosity and hospitality of its inhabitants leaves you longing to return. Here, they love their sports teams so much that the fans are said to bleed "black n' gold". Never ones to pass up a party, it's not uncommon to find almost anyone out on the "tahn" enjoying a few "irons" to "worsh" down their pierogies, chipped ham sandwiches, or kolbassi.

To paraphrase it, the text is a description of "authentic" Pittsburghers that alludes to personal characteristics (friendliness, generosity, warmth), pastimes (sports and celebrations), and food and drink (beer, pierogies, kielbassi, and chipped ham sandwiches). By means of respelling, it also makes some claims about how authentic Pittsburghers talk (*town* is spelled <tahn>, *and* <'n>, and *wash* <worsh>). Like any written text, the words are not only a linguistic artifact but also a visual one. The text appears on the front of a t-shirt (Figure 1).

Figure 1: "Authentic Pittsburgh" T-shirt (Photo by B. Johnstone)

The t-shirt is white; the lettering is black and a saturated yellow color; the lettering is in two different fonts, one serif ("100%", "authentic Pittsburgh") and one sans serif (the rest of the text), all in capital letters. There is a silhouette of a city skyline above the words and in between the two iterations of "100%") and an inverted pyramid shape in a lighter orange under the text.

Like any cultural artifact, this one is "interactional" in the sense that it exists only because someone or some people produced it and it has meaning only in the eye of its creators and consumers. The creators of the shirt had a purpose as they designed it and circulated it, and its physical and linguistic characteristics probably have something to do with that. The t-shirt's meaning is partly shaped by the interaction between its creators and consumers. Like any text, the text on this shirt is intertextual, bearing traces of prior texts and practices surrounding texts. And, like any other artifact, the t-shirt it is an artifact of some world, some set of material, historical, and ideological circumstances. The text appears on a cotton t-shirt; the shirt cost less than ten U.S. dollars; it was for sale in Pittsburgh, a post-industrial city in the northeastern United States where people think that they speak a distinctive way and where people like to talk about language, I bought it around 2009, and so on.

This chapter contributes to our understanding of sociolinguistic authenticity in several ways. From a theoretical perspective, this case study reminds us that sociolinguistic authenticity in Pittsburgh is linked with authenticity in other practices. Speaking in a particular way can only seem authentic (or not) in the context of living, being, and acting in ways that seem authentic. Ideas about sociolinguistic authenticity sometimes circulate via material artifacts, produced under particular historical and material circumstances and embedded in particular sets of social practices. In the set of ideas that surrounds ways of speaking "Pittsburghese", sociolinguistic authenticity is linked to

place and social practices associated with place and locality. Thinking systematically about what this text is silent about, and to whom it is silent, highlights how what counts as authentic can differ even within a fairly homogeneous community, because ideas about authenticity are circulated via practices to which not everyone has access or in which not everyone chooses to participate.

Methodologically, discourse analysis of the sort I use here highlights how what Silverstein and others have called "text-metricality", or the juxtaposition of different items in parallel structures, operates in the creation of meaning. It is hard to talk about what the text on the shirt "means" or how it links authenticity with its attributes, without looking at what is juxtaposed with what. Words are juxtaposed with other words in the time span of unfolding conversation or reading, but texts are also juxtaposed with other texts over longer spans of time. Intertextual relations such as generic relations also shape the meaning of a text.

2. The linguistics of particularity: moving from etic to emic

Arriving at an account of why this text is the way it is and no other way requires systematically interrogating the text in context, looking at it from multiple perspectives. This is a way of working associated with Alton L. Becker (Becker, 1995; Johnstone, 2008). In much of his work, Becker started with one text – a Burmese proverb (Becker, 1984a), for example, or a sentence in classical Malay (Becker, 1979) or Old Javanese (Becker, 1982). Becker called this approach "the new philology" or "the linguistics of particularity" (Becker, 1984b). He attributed the idea to his Ph.D advisor, the linguist Kenneth Pike, but he also found resonances in the work of cyberneticist Gregory Bateson, critical theorist Paul Ricoeur, language philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, and American transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson, among others. The approach is rooted in the idea that "particularity involves both the observer and the text: both are in history" (Becker, 1988). Becker suggests that particular texts take the particular shapes they do for at least these reasons:

- Texts are adapted to the structural conventions of the language or languages they draw on, and they reshape these conventions.

- Texts evoke prior language and reshape the possibilities for future language.

- Texts evoke and reshape interpersonal relations.

- Texts adapt to their media and reshape the possibilities of their media.

- Texts reflect and reshape the worlds they are in and the worlds they are about, worlds that are made of things and ideas about things.

- Texts are loud about some things and silent about others; they evoke and reshape conventions about the sayable and the unsayable.

One way to move from outside of a text to inside it, then, is to interrogate what is happening along each of these axes of possibility and constraint. What we uncover along one axis will overlap and interlace with what we find along all the others. At each step, the analyt is forced to do what is necessary to move from an etic, outsider's perspective to an emic, insider's perspective. The analyst's interpretive framework thus changes as the analysis proceeds, or, as Becker puts it, "The change is not just an increasing awareness of regular patterns *in* the language, but a change in what Pike calls the observer" (Becker, 1995, p. 72).

These six observations about discourse constitute a heuristic for exploring, in a systematic way, what is potentially interesting and important about a text or a set of texts. A *heuristic* is a set of discovery procedures for systematic application or a set of topics for systematic consideration. Unlike the procedures in a set of instructions, the procedures of a heuristic do not need to be followed in any particular order, and there is no fixed way of following them. A heuristic is not a mechanical set of steps, and there is no guarantee that using it will result in a single definitive explanation. A good heuristic draws on multiple theories rather than just one. Becker's heuristic forces us to think, for example, about how discourse is shaped by ideologies that circulate power in

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society, but it also forces us to think about how discourse is shaped by people's memories of previous discourse, along with other sources of creativity and constraint. It is a way to ground discourse analysis in discourse, rather than starting with a pre-chosen theory and using texts to test or illustrate the theory.

2.1 Texts are adapted to the structural conventions of the language or languages they draw on, and they reshape these conventions

I begin by exploring how the text on the shirt evokes, reinforces, and creates linguistic categories. One way to approach this is to look at what is juxtaposed with what in the text, since, as Roman Jakobson showed, juxtaposition on the real-time syntagmatic axis of actual utterances both evokes and creates semantic links on the remembered paradigmatic axis of possibilities (Jakobson, 1960, 1968). Juxtapositions are often created by parallelism, either in the strict sense of repeated syntactic patterns with some different lexical matter, or in the looser sense of syntagmatic co-occurrence.

The principal structural parts of the text are the picture, the headline, and the several-sentence passage underneath the headline. The juxtaposition of these things suggests that they be taken as related: the skyline is to be read as the skyline of Pittsburgh and the headline is to be read as a the headline for the following sentences. Picture, headline, and text are also juxtaposed with the colors black and or yellow. The juxtaposition on the shirt of the two colors and the expression "BLACK 'N GOLD" suggests that the yellow color should be called "gold".

Further, there are a number of lists in the text. The attributes nice, warm, and friendly are listed in the first sentence: "The people of this great city are considered to be the nicest, warmest, and friendliest in the world". Semantically, the list suggests that people who are nice are warm and friendly, people who are friendly are warm and nice, and people who are warm are nice and friendly. Many of these juxtapositions are so familiar to some of us that the words *nice*, *warm*, and *friendly* have

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come to seem almost synonymous. "Native" and "visitor" are also justposed in the text: "Native or visitor, when you leave this place … ". In general, syntagmatic juxtaposition is an invitation to pragmatic implicature. It announces that the juxtaposed items are related and invites us to work out the relationship. The juxtaposition of "native" and "visitor" works via a different kind of figuration than does the juxtaposition of "nicest", "warmest", and "friendliest": antonymy rather than synonymy. Natives are not visitors and visitors are not natives. Readers are also invited to imagine the relationship between "generosity" and "hospitality": "the generosity and hospitality of its inhabitants". We might respond to this invitation by imagining generosity and hospitality as synonyms, or we might see the relationship as synechdochic, with hospitality as a subset of generosity.

Another set of parallel items consists of characteristics and actions that are syntactically predicated of Pittsburghers: Pittsburghers "are considered to be the nicest, warmest, and friendliest people in the world, "are generous and hospitable, "love their sports teams", are "not ones to pass up a party", "go out on the tahn, " and enjoy "irons", pierogies, chipped ham sandwiches, and kolbassi. The fact that all of these things are in parallel syntactic slots invites us to think of them as related. Loving your sports teams means not passing up parties, going out on the town means drinking beer and eating pierogies and kolbassi, and so on.

The fact that the words represented as "n', " "tahn", " irons", and "worsh" in the list of attribute of Pittsburghers are all in quotation marks suggests that a these are all things that Pittsburghers say. Among these are three words that have been respelled in nonstandard ways: *and* is spelled <'N>, *town* is spelled <TAHN>, and *wash* is spelled <WORSH> This invites us to imagine that it is not, or not only, the meanings of these words that are distinctive, but also the way the words sound.

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2.2 Texts evoke prior language and reshape the possibilities for future language

This t-shirt borrows and re-uses the conventional Title-Body format common to many written texts. The title is larger and centered. It is followed by the body of the text in a smaller type size and sometimes (as on the "Authentic Pittsburgh" shirt) a different font. This arrangement invites people familiar with what titles are and how they related to text-bodies to imagine that the text on the shirt is "about" the title in some way – an elaboration, an explanation, a narrative suggested by the title. We might also note that the title is in a Roman, serif font that we are used to seeing in "serious" contexts such as newspapers, while the text is in a more "playful" sans-serif font.

People who interact with and via this shirt must know by whom and why such shirts can be worn. As Miller (2002) points out in a study of t-shirts produced by fans of the rock band Phish, there is a tradition in the U.S. and elsewhere of playful t-shirts, often featuring borrowed and recontextualized images. Such shirts are purchased and worn because of their "badging" function (Glass, 2008; Kelly, 2003; Symes, 1987). People who see Pittsburghese shirts for sale tend, in other words, to know how to consume them, both in the sense of how to interpret them and in the sense of who might wear them and in what contexts.

Representations of Pittsburgh speech on t-shirts are also highly intertextual with one another and with representations of Pittsburgh speech in other media, such as online lists and a well-known folk dictionary (McCool, 1982). A comparison of one t-shirt from the late 1990s with the McCool folk dictionary makes this clear. Of the 32 words on the shirt, 26 were also in the folk dictionary, and 20 of these were spelled the same way on the shirt as in the book. When asked where they get their ideas, t-shirt vendors sometimes refer to "lists on the internet". This degree of intertextuality is made possible in large part by the fact that Pittsburghese shirts are bought and sold in a grass-roots, often literally person-on-the-street market which is not quite legitimate, if not quite illegitimate. Trade marking is rare and designers and vendors are unlikely to sue one another for copying their

ideas, word lists, or designs. Ideas for the shirts' visual design are also borrowed and re-used. Black and gold are the colors of the city's sports teams and the city shield and flag; they are almost compulsory for any item alluding to local identity. Further, images of the downtown cityscape have been featured on Pittsburghese shirts since they were first produced.

2.3 Texts adapt to their media and reshape the possibilities of their media

The medium for this message is a cotton t-shirt. In order for this message to circulate, producing and selling shirts like this must be economically feasible. The availability of wholesale t-shirts and sweatshirts at low cost, together with inexpensive reproduction technology that is available locally, makes the shirts relatively disposable, so people are willing to purchase them without much forethought. According to the website of Berda CompuGraphix, a t shirt wholesaler and printer located near Pittsburgh (Berda CompuGraphix, n.d.), a white, 100% cotton, heavyweight or 50/50% cotton/poly blend t shirt, including one-color printing in one location, wholesaled at the time this shirt was for sale for $3.29 per shirt if 500 shirts were purchased. Selling such a shirt for as little as $5.00 represents a 30% markup. Gold shirts with black printing are $5.29 per shirt for 500 shirts; these often sell for $8.00, which represents a 50% markup. Dealers' overhead costs are low, since the shirts can be produced nearby and are often sold on the street. In sum, it makes economic sense both to sell shirts with Pittsburghese on them and to buy them. In particular, it makes sense to start which white t-shirts, which are cheaper, and to limit the number of colors used in the printing process, as has been done with our shirt.

Since we are not (yet) able to embed sound or video in a cheap cotton shirt, the linguistic medium here is writing. This means that if speech is to be represented, it has to be represented in writing, not in the form of oral performance. The representation of speech in writing is necessarily partial, and, as Dennis Preston and others have pointed out, always ideological (Jaffe, 2000; Preston,

1985). This is true whether we are talking about the International Phonetic Alphabet or the sort of respellings were are looking at on this shirt. All of the respellings on this shirt reflect the idea that it is possible to use English orthography to write phonetically. This presupposes, of course, that English orthography is not normally phonetic. Further, if the respellings are phonetic, then, the idea is, anyone who can read English should be able to sound them out.   The spelling of and as *n'* (or one of its variants) is highly conventionalized and likely to be interpretable by almost anyone who is likely to see the shirt in its actual world. It should be noted, however, that there are people who do not know the rules of this language game. Many Americans are taught in elementary school reading lessons based on "phonics" that standard English orthography is already essentially phonetic and that each English word has a single correct spelling, which is also the most logical spelling. For them, the idea that there could be two valid spellings for the same word, one "correct" and one more phonetic, might be foreign. (I interviewed a group of 12 and 13 year old working-class children who did not know how to interpret the re-spelled words on a Pittsburghese postcard.)

The other two respelled words on the shirt, *tahn* and *worsh*, are difficult to make sense of unless one already knows how Pittsburghers are said to pronounce the words they represent. We are led to wonder, then, who is actually being positioned as the audience for this message.

2.4 Texts evoke and reshape interpersonal relations

Interpersonal relations are created, affirmed, and reshaped through interactions involving a shirt like this. For one thing, the shirt reflects and creates interpersonal relations between the text-producer and the text-consumer. The shirt looks at first glance as if it should not require local knowledge to interpret. In fact, it shares some generic features with informational, instructional discourse. Like discourse meant to inform, the text on the shirt is high in epistemic certainty (the verbs are all in the simple present tense) and low in hedging modality ("almost" in "almost anyone" is the only hedge).

The perspective is that of an outside observer ("they" love "their" sports teams) who makes the kinds of appeals to unspecified sources of epistemic authority that we are used to seeing in expert discourse (Pittsburghers "are considered" to be nice; sports fans "are said" to bleed black and gold).

But in fact readers cannot really understand the text unless they already know what "black and gold" refers to, what "chipped ham" is, how "tahn" is supposed to be pronounced, what an "iron" is, and so on. The text positions people who do not know these things as outsiders, people who do as insiders. So it serves the "badging" function attributed to t-shirts like this in two ways: by being about Pittsburghers and by being fully interpretable only by Pittsburghers.

Interpersonal relations can also be evoked and reshaped with the shirt as instrument. Pittsburghers tend not to actually wear shirts like this but rather to buy them for friends and relatives elsewhere, people who will understand them and find them funny and who can use them to distinguish themselves from other people where they live and bond with fellow ex-Pittsburghers. Interpersonal relations are evoked in the text itself, too, though the qualities and activities attributed to Pittsburghers: they are nice, warm, friendly, generous, hospitable, sports-loving, party-loving, like to drink inexpensive beer (an "iron" is an "Iron City", a local brand of beer). They eat pierogies and kielbasa, which are traditional foods with Eastern European origins, and chipped ham, a kind of locally-produced sandwich meat. And they speak with non-standard accents. All of these are things that, to people in the know, can index an unpretentious style of interaction with roots in the immigrant-heritage working class.

2.5 Texts reflect and reshape the worlds they are in and the worlds they are about, worlds that are made of things and ideas about things

What has happened, locally and in popular culture at large, to enable Pittsburgh speech to add value to a shirt? Arjun Appadurai's (1986) description of the "commodity situation" is a useful heuristic

for exploring the conditions and processes that have led to the viability of Pittsburghese shirts. According to Appadurai, the "commodity situation in the social life of any 'thing' [can] be defined as the situation in which its exchangeability (past, present, or future) for some other thing is its socially relevant feature" (Appadurai 1986, 13). In order to enter into a commodity situation, a "thing" (in our case, the imagined dialect people call "Pittsburghese") must, historically, be in a "commodity phase", it must be a potential "commodity candidate", and it must be in a viable "commodity context" (13-15).

One of the many intersecting sets of ideas that make local speech a potential commodity in Pittsburgh is the ideology about language, place, and tradition that underlies what Regina Bendix (1988) calls "folklorism". This is the idea, which originates in 19th-century Romanticism and continues to circulate today, that old, vernacular practices and artifacts are the most authentic. According to the ideology of folklorism, "authentic" folk ways are untainted, desirable in a way that newer practices are not, even if newer ways of doing things are more practical. Ideas like these lead people to want to preserve old objects and old practices things even if -- or even to show that – they do not use such objects or do things that way themselves. In Pittsburgh, being able to cite the older form of a local word can be a useful way of claiming expertise about local speech (Johnstone, 2007).

According to the ideology of folklorism, cultural authenticity is also linked with connectedness to place. This is because older social practices last longer in isolated places, where it is less likely that new practices will be imported. People and practices that have never moved, or that have generations of rootedness in a particular geographic area, are, according to this set of ideas, better and more authentic than others. When this ideological scheme is in play, Appalachian folk-songs collected in remote valleys trump contemporary or even Classical forms, and non-standard regional accents trump national varieties. In Pittsburgh, the display of local speech is sometimes part and parcel of the display of other elements of local cultural heritage, like steelworkers' hard hats,

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plaques and signs commemorating local people and historical moments, buildings where memorable events occurred, and the like. The Pittsburgh historical museum has at times had a small informational poster about Pittsburgh speech on display, and a documentary film (Sebak, 2001) and accompanying museum exhibit on the theme of "Pittsburgh A to Z" both featured the pronoun *yinz* ('you, pl.'; a form of *you ones*) to fill the slot for Y. Knowing the meanings of local linguistic forms is sometimes explicitly linked with Pittsburgh authenticity, as in the shirt we are examining here.

When and how did local speech in Pittsburgh acquire the potential for commodification? What set of ideas about local speech had to be in place before people could begin to think of it as having economic value in this way? Answering this question requires taking a historical perspective on the indexical meanings of Pittsburgh linguistic forms (Johnstone, Andrus, & Danielson, 2006). Until the middle of the 20th century, local forms were correlated with demographic facts about their users, but although dialectologists had begun to notice some of these correlations, Pittsburghers had not. Because there was no metapragmatic activity calling attention to the correlations, the forms had no indexical meaning (Silverstein, 1993). Only when alternative forms began to be heard did some Pittsburgh forms become hearable, by contrast with the alternatives.

It should be noted that the set of forms that have become hearable in Pittsburgh includes many forms that are not heard only in Pittsburgh and does not include some forms that are heard in Pittsburgh. With the exception of the monophthongization of /aw/, usually represented on t shirts as <AH> in words like "dahntahn", all occur elsewhere in western and central Pennsylvania, along the Ohio River valley, or in Appalachia. In other words, the set of forms associated with "Pittsburghese" in the local imagination is not the same as the set of forms a linguist, operating with a different set of assumptions about language, class, and place, would identify with Pittsburgh speech. Once they became hearable, features of local-sounding speech were first linked ideologically

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with working-class identity, incorrectness, and/or lack of education. Gradually, however, the set of features enregistered as "Pittsburghese" and the indexical meaning of using them have started to shift, so that now many people hear a slightly different subset of features of local speech as expressing local identity and some can use it to project localness.

Pittsburgh speech entered a commodity phase only when local forms were socially meaningful in this way, that is, when they were no longer linked exclusively with class or correctness but also (or, for some people, instead) with local identity. It is at this stage that a Pittsburgh word or phrase can come to evoke local pride or nostalgia, even among people who do not identify themselves as working-class or as speakers of a non-standard variety. While the earlier (and, for some people, still exclusively) more stigmatized meanings of local forms still resonate, so that a t-shirt with Pittsburghese on it may still call to mind working-class pride and disregard for correctness, this link is now indirect, mediated by the association of local forms with authentic localness.

As we have shown in more detail elsewhere (Johnstone et al., 2006) these changes have been enabled by social and geographical mobility. When Pittsburgh women began to get jobs as secretaries and receptionists, they came into contact with other social classes and their ways of talking and had to learn to vary their speech in order to sound more correct and careful, or, alternatively, more like their peers. When Pittsburghers began to travel, in the military and on holiday, they came into contact with people from other places who sounded different and noticed that the Pittsburghers sounded different to them, they began to connect local speech with place and identity. Mobility has thus been perhaps the crucial factor in putting Pittsburgh speech into a commodity phase.

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2.6 Texts are loud about some things and silent about others; they evoke and reshape conventions about the sayable and the unsayable

But this shirt does not evoke the whole story of Pittsburghese. For one thing, it includes only three of the many phonological features, words, and phrases that have become associated with Pittsburghese. The features represented on the shirt – ""n" for *and*, "tahn" for *town*, "worsh" for *wash* – are among the most common, but the feature that is used the most often to evoke Pittsburghese, namely the use of *yinz* as a second-person plural pronoun, is absent. The text on the shirt also fails to reflect the ways in which Pittsburghese can be heard as *in*authentic. It did not require a sociolinguist to alert some Pittsburghers that the Pittsburghese they see on t-shirts is a partial, commodified, media-driven version of "the actual speech of the Pittsburgher", as one of my consultants put it. And "the actual speech of the Pittsburgher" is not always celebrated. For many Pittsburghers, sounding like a Pittsburgher is a liability, particularly if one does not have any choice in the matter. There are speech therapists who help people lose their Pittsburgh accents.

More generally, the text on the shirt does not reflect the fact that there are many circulating ideas about what Pittsburgh is and means. For example, the shirt links Pittsburghese with maleness and with ethnicity (for at least some consumers), but is silent about what Pittsburgh means to women; it links Pittsburghese with nativeness (you can be a "native" or a "visitor") but is silent about people who are not either native or visiting, such as long-term residents who are from elsewhere.

3. Discussion

This analysis has illustrated how ociolinguistic authenticity is always linked with authenticity in other practices. Speaking Pittsburghese is semiotically linked, on artifacts like this, with a lifestyle, a way of being and acting vis à vis others. What we are studying when we study Pittsburghese is not just a set

of words, pronunciations, and bits of grammar, but what Asif Agha would call a "register". Registers are "cultural models of action that link diverse behavioral signs to enactable effects, including images of persona, interpersonal relationship, and type of conduct" (Agha, 2006, p. 145). Among the "diverse behavioral signs" that are linked with Pittsburghese are words like "pierogies", "chipped ham", and "irons", pronunciations like "tahn" and "worsh", activities like partying, eating kielbasa and drinking beer, watching sports and wearing "black and gold" t-shirts. Pittsburghese both evokes and creates the "characterological figure" of the Yinzer, the local term for a stereotypically local person. A characterological figure is an "image of personhood that is performable through a semiotic display or enactment" (Agha, 2006, p. 177).   The Yinzer can be performed through the semiotic display of Pittsburghese or the enactment of a stereotypical Pittsburgh lifestyle – instructions for which are provided on the "Authentic Pittsburgh" shirt.

Thinking about the media of this message, and how the message may reshape its media, highlights how ideas about sociolinguistic authenticity sometimes circulate via material artifacts, produced under particular historical and material circumstances, and thinking about how texts and interpersonal relations shape one another reminds us that artifacts like t-shirts are embedded in particular sets of social practices – like the practice of wearing t-shirts, buying funny gifts for relatives, shopping in the Strip District, where such shirts are for sale, and so on. The social practices that co-occur with and are evoked by an artifact contribute to its meaning.

Looking at the material and ideological world that is evoked by and created in this text, we are reminded that sociolinguistic authenticity is, in Pittsburgh and elsewhere, linked to place. The ideology that underlies this linkage is a heritage of the Romantic movement of the 19th century and the return to regionalism in the aftermath of the First World War (Johnstone, 2010). Thinking systematically about what this text is silent about, and to whom it is silent, highlights the fact that what counts as authentic can differ even within a fairly homogeneous community, because ideas

about authenticity are circulated via practices to which not everyone has access or in which not everyone chooses to participate. For example, some Pittsburghers have no reason to pay much attention to artifacts like this shirt, because they are not participants in the set of ideas and behaviors that the shirts are embedded in. African-American Pittsburghers, for example, are for the most part uninterested in Pittsburghese, thinking of it as the way white people talk. Some Pittsburghers do not go to places where t-shirts like this are sold. Some Pittsburghers do, but have no reason to buy the shirts or even pay much attention to them.

Taking an analytical approach informed by the linguistics of particularity, as I have done in this chapter, also requires us to look closely at the language of the text and ask how the text is shaped by the resources of language and in turn helps shape these resources. Doing this helps us see that what Silverstein and others have called "text-metricality", or the juxtaposition of different items in parallel structures, is a key way in which meaning is signaled. It is hard to talk about what the text on the shirt "means" or how it links authenticity with its attributes, without looking at what is juxtaposed with what. But juxtapositions can happen over different time spans. Intertextual relations such as generic relations also shape the meaning of a text. Words are juxtaposed with other words in the time span of unfolding conversation or reading, but texts are also juxtaposed with other texts over longer spans of time.

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