


January 2007

# Linking Identity and Dialect through Stancetaking

Barbara Johnstone

*Carnegie Mellon University*, [bj4@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:bj4@andrew.cmu.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://repository.cmu.edu/english>

 Part of the [Anthropological Linguistics and Sociolinguistics Commons](#), [Critical and Cultural Studies Commons](#), [Discourse and Text Linguistics Commons](#), [Human Geography Commons](#), [Linguistic Anthropology Commons](#), and the [Rhetoric Commons](#)

---

## Published In

Stancetaking in Discourse: Subjectivity, Evaluation, Interaction, 49-68.

This is brought to you for free and open access by the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Research Showcase @ CMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Department of English by an authorized administrator of Research Showcase @ CMU. For more information, please contact [research-showcase@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:research-showcase@andrew.cmu.edu).

air, J. and Coulthard, M. 1975. *Teachers and Pupils*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
ert, W. 2004. "Language and culture in the classroom."  
M.A.K. Halliday, W. Teubert, C. Frow, and J. Hulstijn (eds.), *Language and Culture in the Classroom*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.  
tim-Bonelli, E. 2001. *Corpus Linguistics*. London: Routledge.

## Linking identity and dialect through stancetaking

Barbara Johnstone  
Carnegie Mellon University

### 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Geographic mobility and new patterns of social interaction associated with the globalizing new economy have resulted at the same time in dialect leveling (Milroy 2002; Trudgill 1986) and, in some places, increased popular attention to regional variation (Beal 1999; Dubois and Horvath 2002). One such place is the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (U.S.) area, where talk about local identity very often includes talk about the local dialect (Johnstone 2000a; Johnstone and Andrus 2005; Johnstone and Baumgardt 2004; Johnstone et al. 2002). When "authentic" Pittsburghers or Pittsburgh activities are described or parodied, local speech is almost invariably mentioned or performed. Souvenir vendors offer t-shirts and sweat shirts, refrigerator magnets, shot glasses, and coffee mugs decorated with lexical items thought to be local and other words spelled in such a way as to suggest local pronunciations. A dictionary of *Pittsburghese*, as the variety is locally known, has been continuously in print since 1982, and there is a copy in most middle-class homes; and Pittsburghers and others go online to contribute to lists of local expressions and discuss what the dialect means for the community. One way to attribute a quintessentially local identity to a person is to label him or her a *Yinzer*, a word derived from the local variant of the second-person-plural pronoun, *Yinz*. While much of this discourse about local speech arises in the context of nostalgia for the city's working-class industrial past, discourse about Pittsburghese also enters into youthful identity work. Pittsburghers in their 20s and 30s, whether or not they make routine use of stereotypically local phonological or lexical variants, sometimes refer to themselves as *Yinzers*, and they perform local identity by means of playful performances of local-sounding forms, both in face-to-face interaction and in more public fora. In a playful nod to the *New Yorker*,

a new Pittsburgh literary magazine was named the *New Yinzers*, and in 2003 a student conceptual artist produced (removable) stickers with brief definitions of local terms and affixed them to bus-stop shelters and mailboxes in a project she referred to as “guerrilla linguistics.”

Heightened dialect awareness, like that seen in Pittsburgh, arises through discursive practices that call attention to and normalize regional forms, at the same time refiguring their role in presentations and representations of local identity (Johnstone and Andrus 2005). This paper explores the role of stancetaking in one instantiation of one such practice: a conversation about local speech between a sociolinguistic fieldworker and two lifelong residents of the Pittsburgh area. In the conversation, the Pittsburghers deploy several strategies for epistemic stancetaking: for making the implicit or explicit claim, that is, that they know enough, from the appropriate sources, to describe and evaluate the local dialect. Some such epistemic stancetaking moves invoke external sources of authority such as published lists of local words and examples provided by other people represented as authentic dialect speakers, while others invoke the speaker’s own competence in the dialect. These include performances of local dialect forms and other allusions to local identity. This strategy proves particularly effective in the interaction in question: the speaker who represents herself as a competent speaker of the dialect and who can perform local dialect forms gets the floor more often and is oriented to as an expert on Pittsburgh speech. As a result, the other speaker, who at first distances herself from speakers of the local dialect, eventually revises her identity claim, recasting herself as a local dialect speaker who knows local forms directly rather than by hearsay. In other words, she links her identity as a Pittsburgher with competence in the local dialect because it is rhetorically useful in this interaction to do so. The micro-rhetorical interactional exigency that requires epistemic stancetaking drives the identity claim. Stancetaking is thus one of the mechanisms through which dialect and local identity become linked in discourse. Repeated engagement in metalinguistic talk in which claiming the social identity of a competent dialect speaker is useful for epistemic stancetaking serves to strengthen and stabilize the idea that being a Pittsburgher means being able to speak the local dialect.

Variationist sociolinguists in the Labovian tradition are coming to see “identity” as a useful explanatory dimension in accounting for some patterns of linguistic variability and their role in language change. Analysis of discourse in interaction in the tradition of Gumperz (1982) and Ochs (1992) find “stance” a useful explanatory category in accounting for how particular linguistic choices in interaction accomplish particular social and rhetorical actions. Sociolinguists drawing on both traditions are beginning to explore how stancetaking can be accomplished through phonological, morphological, and lexical choices, and

how sets of such choices can accrete into stances that index culturally meaningful styles or identities (Eckert 2000; Kiesling 2005). This paper continues the work of exploring how connections between linguistic forms and social identities are shaped by interactional needs for stancetaking. With Eckert and Kiesling, I show that stancetaking and identity are intertwined, in this case because adducing and performing the social identity of a competent dialect speaker is a powerful resource for epistemic stancetaking, so much so that the need for epistemic stancetaking can actually drive dialect-identity claims.

I begin by reviewing how the terms *stance* and *identity* have been used in recent work by interactional sociolinguists and conversation analysts that aims to account for what goes on in particular interactions, and how variationists have adduced these concepts in accounting for patterns of variation across populations. I then show how dialect forms and regional identity can become linked through stancetaking, by virtue of the fact that performances or evocations of dialect competence can function as stancetaking moves. The text I use to illustrate this is an extended transcribed extract from a sociolinguistic interview. The interview was conducted in the course of a project that brings together analyses of regional patterns of phonological, morpho-lexical, and syntactic variation with analyses of the real-time, interactive design of talk in particular rhetorical situations, by particular individuals. I describe how *dialect identity* – one’s positioning as a user or nonuser of the local dialect – emerges as a rhetorical resource for and through stancetaking in a conversation meant to probe Pittsburghers’ ideas about the local dialect and explore how these ideas arise.

## 2. *Identity and stance*

Almost all work about social interaction that adduces the idea of stance as an explanatory tool includes under stancetaking the moment-by-moment choices speakers make that index their relationship to what they say (e.g., whether they are sure or unsure about it, happy or sad about it, surprised or not). Building on early work on epistemic and attitudinal stance (Biber and Finegan 1989, 1994; Conrad and Biber 2000), Hunston and Thompson (2000) operationalize stance as evaluation. Others use “stance” to talk about the marking and claiming of interpersonal relations in talk as well. For Ochs (1992), particular linguistic forms directly index evidential stances such as certainty, interpersonal stances such as friendliness or intensity, or social actions such as apologizing. Particular stances or social actions can then get linked indirectly to social identities such as gender categories (so that, for example, in a particular sociocultural milieu, a stance such as deference might become indexically linked with femaleness). For Du Bois

(this volume: 163), "Stance is a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field": the "sociocultural field" consists of two social actors and an object to which both are oriented. Alignment or disalignment with another social actor can be accomplished through membership categorization moves; thus, claims to social identity for oneself and ascriptions of identity to others fall under the rubric of stancetaking.

Like Goffman's (1959) "presentations of self," "identities," in the interactional-sociolinguistic tradition, are social categories to which speakers orient as they become relevant in the interaction at hand. Some identities are "macrolevel demographic categories," while others are more situation-specific roles or "ethnographically emergent cultural positions" (Bucholtz and Hall 2005: 585). Research on social interaction that adduces identity as an explanatory tool almost always includes under "identities" culturally circulating, frequently adduced ways of categorizing groups of people that are often oriented to as being relevant outside of and prior to the interaction as well as inside it: "Identities" thus include ethnic, class, and gender categories, and categorizations in terms of attributes such as deviance vs. normalcy, tastes, and activities, as well as "discourse identities" such as speaker or audience member. (Perhaps because of a misplaced fear of being seen as locating social agency in the individual human, this body of literature pays little attention to the way in which identities can be associated with individually-embodied speakers (Johnstone 1996, 2000b).) But "identity work" as it is described in some of this literature, includes interactional moves that could also be described as stancetaking. As Bucholtz and Hall point out, "identities may be linguistically indexed through...stances" (2005:585), and a repeated stancetaking move or pattern of moves may emerge as an identity.

Interactionists in the conversation analysis tradition take a similar approach. For them, identity arises in interaction: "for a person to 'have an identity'...is to be cast into a category with associated characteristics or features" (Anfaki and Widdicombe 1998: 3). "Casting into a category" can be accomplished through stancetaking. Conversation analysis stress the need to treat identity as interactional achievement with consequences for the structure of the talk, even if social actors think identities pre-exist interactions and sometimes predict how they will play out.

### 3. Identity and stance in variationist sociolinguistics

Labovian-variationist sociolinguistics (Labov 1994, 2001) is primarily focused on uncovering the mechanisms of language change. Variability is an inevitable con-

comitant of change, so in order to understand how language change is likely to proceed, we need to understand how variability arises and what predicts its outcome. The classic Labovian account uses the correlational methods of quantitative sociology to model how "social facts" about speakers, such as socio-economic status and sex, account for patterns of variation in groups. In the research settings in which most early work was done, upper-class and female speakers consistently tended to use more of certain variants than lower-class and male speakers did, presumably because the variants in question were more "prestigious." Variation within an individual's speech was linked with self-consciousness, which gives rise in many cases to more careful speech, aimed at what speakers think of as more prestigious variants.

From the beginning, however, in Labov's own work as well as in others', more particular questions were being asked about why these kinds of patterns might exist. Why, for example, might males use less "prestigious" forms than females? What might make a working-class speaker adopt more local-sounding forms? Although not framed in terms of stancetaking or identification, the answers that were proposed suggested that phonological variability could be a resource for indexing attitude and affiliation. In his groundbreaking study of Martha's Vineyard, Labov (1963) showed that the speakers who identified most closely with traditional local ways of living were most likely to use the more conservative, older, less standard-sounding variants of certain phonological variables. This suggested that the more local-sounding forms might in fact be part of the process through which local identity was claimed. James and Lesley Milroy's work in Belfast (J. Milroy 1992; L. Milroy 1987) explored the utility of social network theory for uncovering and explaining patterns of variation. People with relatively many and overlapping ties to their neighbors (such that they knew the same people in multiple roles, and the people they knew also knew each other) were relatively likely to talk in a more local-sounding, less standard-sounding way, because dense, multi-plex social networks are effective enforcers of local norms. "Social class" was thus reconceptualized in terms of social activity and from the perspective of speakers' everyday experience of language. Peter Trudgill's (1972) equally influential study of sex-correlated differences in Norwich, England suggested that men may use more non-standard, local-sounding forms because such forms carry "covert prestige" as signals of working-class solidarity. At the same time, R. B. LePage and Andr e Tabouret-Keller (1985), concerned with describing the complicated linguistic situation in the Caribbean, were suggesting that choices among variants in a speaker's repertoire could be thought of as "acts of identity," and that speech communities and linguistic varieties could be seen as ways of labeling the fact that ways of identifying and, accordingly, of talking, sometimes become relatively consistent.

Variationists doing quantitative, correlational work about speech communities have started to add "identity" to the lists of socio-demographic variables they use to account for patterns of phonetic variability, finding that identity (variously operationalized) sometimes correlates more closely with variation than do variables such as age, occupation, or place of residence. For example, Guy Bailey and his colleagues (Bailey et al. 1993) show that, in Texas, linguistic changes that diffuse from rural to urban settings typically involve the reassertion of traditional speech norms, arguably as badges of local identity. One such feature is the monophthongization of /ay/ before voiceless obstruents, as in [ra:t] for *right*. *Speakers who do this are more likely than others to think highly of Texas as a place to live*. Hazen (2000) finds that North Carolina speakers with ties to institutions and cultural characteristics from outside their county are more likely to shift toward standard-sounding pronunciation in formal speech (perhaps because they are more aware of the stigmatization of local speech), while people with more local identities are linguistically more consistent. Rose (2003) has found that among older people from the upper Midwest, the pronunciation of /θ/ and /ð/ as [t] and [d] is not only correlated with rural residence but overtly commented on as a symbol of a "country" identity. Schilling-Estes (1998) shows that in Ocracoke (an Atlantic-coast U.S. island), a speaker self-consciously demonstrating the local pronunciation of an expression he thinks of as particularly local performs the role (Schilling-Estes does not use the term *identity*) of a stereotypical local person with a more vernacular accent than his own. Schilling-Estes suggests that such performances may be more patterned than variationists have assumed and may reveal facts about dialect awareness than can affect the course of change.

Turning to stancetaking, interactional sociolinguists have explored how choices among forms associated with different languages and dialects can signal attitude and affiliation. For example, Ben Rampton (1995, 1999) has studied "language crossing" or "styling the other," exploring how shifts from a speaker's "native" language or variety to and from one clearly associated with another group can accomplish shifts in stance. Rampton (1995) describes how brief excursions into Punjabi by London adolescents of Anglo and Afro-Caribbean as well as Indian and Pakistani descent can signal oppositional footing in interactions with adults or key a joking stance in playground interaction. Stancetaking work can also be accomplished through shifts into and from ways of speaking that are not so clearly "other" but rather part of a speaker's native repertoire (Coupland 2001; Rampton 2003). In Texas, for example, where sounding Southern is a resource more or less "natively" available to many people, moves toward more Southern-accented speech range, depending on the speaker and the situation, from fairly automatic style shifts correlated with register to quite self-conscious rhetorical

moves, as when "Southern Belle"-sounding speech is used in footing-shifts meant to manipulate men (Johnstone 1999a).

Penelope Eckert's (1989, 2000) work in a Detroit high school suggests how the variationist and interactionist approaches to stance, identity, and phonology might be linked, suggesting how correlations like the ones described by Bailey, Hazen, Rose, and others come to be. For Eckert, the choice between one variant and another is part of the semiotic activity in which social identities are created, not simply a reflection of already-existing differentiation. For example, adopting certain variants of vowels is one way of adopting a stance toward and participating in local activity, just as is cruising in cars, dressing in a particular style, or doing some things rather than others in school. Scott F. Kiesling (2005) shows that a particular set of morpho-phonological features that co-occur in the English of recent immigrants in Australia work together to project a face-saving epistemic/interactional stance of "authoritative connection," which, Kiesling claims, is particularly likely to be relevant for members of subordinate groups. Because they work together as a stancetaking strategy, the features get used repeatedly together, and a repeatable style (locally called *wogspeak*) emerges, linked with a repeatable social identity, that of the recent immigrant. Eckert's and Kiesling's work shows how linguistic variants can become indexically linked to social identities through stancetaking. Particular linguistic features available in a speaker's sociolinguistic environment can be used for stancetaking, and sets of co-occurring stancetaking features can come together as styles that index identities. The identities linked with linguistic styles may be ethnic (as in Kiesling's *wogspeak*, derived from a derogatory term for non-whites); they may have to do with local social categories (as with Eckert's *jocks* and *burnouts*), or they may be linked with other sources of identity. When the identity in question is regional, the style that indexes it is often referred to as a dialect, by linguists and laypeople alike. In what follows, I exemplify how stancetaking, identity, and linguistic variation are linked with reference to how ideas about what counts as a dialect are negotiated and circulated in interaction.

#### 4. Pittsburghese in conversation: Identity as a stance resource

Both linguists and non-linguist Pittsburghers associate a distinctive set of linguistic features with southwestern Pennsylvania (Brown 1982; Hankey 1965, 1972; Johnstone et al. 2002; Johnstone et al. 2004; McCarthy 2004; McElhinny 1999), and Pittsburghers talk about this dialect often, in many contexts and media, frequently in connection with talk about local identity (Johnstone 1999b; Johnstone, Andrus, and Danielson 2006; Johnstone and Baumgardt 2004; Kiesling and Wis-

nosky 2003). The dialect appears to be receding: research on one feature, /aw/-monophthongization, shows that it is now more common in the speech of older, working-class speakers, the population that might be expected to use a receding feature longest (Kiesling and Wisnosky 2003; McCarthy 2004). Local-sounding talk, acquired early in life in face-to-face encounters, once identified people as Pittsburghers only to occasional outsiders who noticed the dialect. Insiders, in daily contact with people who sounded the same as they did, seldom noticed or commented on local speech.

Beginning in the 1960s, however, out-migration caused by the collapse of the steel industry and in-migration caused by the growth of the educational and health-care sectors provided increased opportunities, in discursive contexts such as nostalgic talk by ex-Pittsburghers and identity work by newcomers, for the calling to attention of linguistic difference that creates heightened awareness of regional varieties, and Pittsburghers started to use certain local speech features to point to local identity in a more reflexive, stylized way (Johnstone, Andrus, and Danielson 2006; Johnstone and Baumgardt 2004). The area thus lends itself to a study of how dialect awareness arises in a variety of metalinguistic genres of talk. As one phase in a larger study of Pittsburgh speech, co-workers and I have conducted over 100 sociolinguistic interviews in four Pittsburgh-area neighborhoods. The interview protocol elicits explicit talk about *Pittsburghese*, as it is locally known, and throughout the interviews and other research tasks, people often break into spontaneous performances of the dialect. My analytical method in this paper is discourse analysis, by which I mean close, systematic reading of a small amount of text (Johnstone 2002).

In the interview extract that we will examine in detail, a woman in her 40s and her 13-year-old daughter talk about Pittsburgh speech in an explicitly normative way. They offer examples of what Pittsburgh speech sounds like and argue about which forms are authentically local and how local forms should sound. As they do this, they use claims about and performances of their own speech as ways of establishing the authority to describe the dialect, linking epistemic stance with dialect identity.

To keep the transcript readable and avoid caricaturing Jen and Donna by means of eye dialect, I have made notes about their accents in the right-hand column of the transcript rather than using the IPA transcription or respelling in the text. B| is the fieldworker. Simultaneous talk is linked with square brackets; equal signs indicate “latched” talk. Italics mark loud or otherwise stressed words. Jen R., the mother, makes routine use of a number of phonological variables that make her sound local. Her pronunciation of /aw/ is sometimes monophthongized, with *out* realized as [a:ɪ]. She merges and rounds the low back vowels (LBV), pronoun-

calizes /l/. She reduces the diphthong /ay/ to a more monophthongal form when it is followed by /l/ (which is vocalized), as when *while* is realized as [wa:ɪ]. This is another fairly common local-sounding variant. Her daughter Donna has a less local accent; she does not monophthongize /aw/ but fronts /u/ and /o/, vocalizes /l/, and merges and rounds the low back vowel. As do most sociolinguistic interviews in the Labovian tradition (Labov 1984), this one included modules on topics meant to elicit a range of levels of self-consciousness. My summary of Jen and Donna's accents is based on the whole interview, as well as unrecorded talk in other contexts. The topic of accent may well have made them self-conscious about their speech, but in fact they sound very much the same in this segment as elsewhere.

(1) FH01 (“Jen R”) and FH02 (“Donna R”) Pittsburghese

- |    |    |   |  |
|----|----|---|--|
| 1  | bj | Um. So, have you ever heard of Pittsburghese?   |  |
| 2  | jr | Oh yes. I mean, [here's]  |  |
| 3  | bj | [What-]   |  |
| 4  | jr | that store over on the Southside in um, [Station Square that has the] Pittsburghese shirts  | diphthongal /aw/ in <i>Southside</i>   |
| 5  | dr |   | [[Breath intake]] Yeah]  |
| 6  | bj | Uh huh=   |  |
| 7  | jr | =In fact, I remember when my friend Karen moved out of state, with- her husband's job took them out of state and to many other states, I remember sending her a couple Pittsburghese shirts for them. | fronted /u/ in <i>moved</i> , monophthongal /aw/ in <i>out</i> (twice); rounded low back vowel (LBV) in <i>job</i> ; “dropped g” in <i>sending</i> |
| 8  | dr | Um  |  |
| 9  | jr | Um. Yeah, I've heard of [Pittsburghese,] definitely. Yeah=  |  |
| 10 | bj | [Mm hmmm.] =What do you think it is?  |  |
| 11 | jr | I think it's the way we say words.  |  |
| 12 | dr | [[((laughs))]]  |  |
| 13 | bj | [Yeah?]   |  |
| 14 | jr | I think it's how we say “downtown” and um=  | diphthongal /aw/s in <i>downtown</i>   |
| 15 | dr | =“down[town”]   | diphthongal /aw/s in <i>downtown</i>   |
| 16 | jr | [“South]side” and,  | diphthongal /aw/ in <i>Southside</i>   |
| 17 | dr | “Y'all”   |  |

- 18 jr "wash" and "iron" and different words and the way Pittsburgh is. There're "standard," not local pronunciations of wash, iron
- 19 dr "Yinz" [yinz]
- 20 jr [Just the uh- like]
- 21 bj ["Yinz" is another one.] What, what other ones can you think of? [yuz]
- 22 dr Just "y'all" and "yinz." That's, that's the most my friends always are saying "y'all" to me.
- 23 bj ["Y'all?"]
- 24 dr [Drives] me crazy.
- 25 jr "Y'all?"
- 26 dr Yeah, they say "y'all" to me. They say [it's a Pittsburghese] [And that's a Pittsburgh thing?]
- 28 dr If- that's what they tell me.
- 29 bj Huh!
- 30 jr "Younz" is more a Pittsburgh thing than ["y'all"] [yuz]
- 31 dr [yeah]
- 32 jr "Y'all" more like a Georgia. [Southern.] [I was thinking] Southern, [but]
- 33 dr [Yeah]
- 34 jr they still say "y'all" to me. And then, Yeah "yinz." You hear LBV not rounded in lot
- 35 dr "yinz" a lot.
- 36 bj You do? In-  
Yeah well like our neighbors like two doors down, I'm really good friends with their son. He's a year older than me. And like, he says "yinz" constantly, 'cause like both his parents say "yinz" like "Yinz wanna do somethin'?" or [like] ((laughing)) you know so rounded LBV in constantly; fronted /o/ in both, know [I hear that.]
- 37 dr [Mm hnm]
- 38 bj [We don't use that.]
- 39 jr Yeah I never said you [used it] but
- 40 dr [Yeah,]
- 41 jr You don't use that. [Uh huh.]
- 42 bj [But] I'm just thinking, I know, um, like, your dad and I don't use that [too often.] LBV not rounded in lot; /o/ less fronted than previously in over
- 43 dr [No.] But I hear it a lot from [them when] I'm over there
- 44 jr [Mm hnm]
- 45 bj [Mm hnm]
- 46 jr Yeah. It's funny.
- 47 jr

- 48 dr And you pick up on it. You start to say then, [once] [Sure.]
- 49 jr
- 50 dr you're around people so often, you start- I started to say "yinz" to people. ((laughing)) And they're looking at me like, "Okay" ((skeptical, amused voice))
- 51 dr Mm hnm
- 52 bj So, would- you don't- you wouldn't say you use any of the, Pittsburghese things?
- 53 dr Not really. No, I don't think so.
- 54 bj Uh huh [(probably you-)]
- 55 jr [You s-] you do, but you don't reali-. Oh, I know I do. I [say "iron"]
- 56 dr [I do?]
- 57 jr for "iron."
- 58 bj Uh huh.
- 59 dr ["iron"]
- 60 jr [I] say "wash w- wash" for "wash." I [mean] [iron = [ayern]]
- 61 dr ["wash"]
- 62 jr I don't, I don't pronounce my words as clearly as-, [wɔʃ]
- 63 dr "wash"
- 64 jr or the accent's [on] [wɔʃ]
- 65 bj [uh huh]
- 66 jr a different [part] [wɔʃ]
- 67 dr ["wash"]
- 68 bj Uh-huh
- 69 jr Yeah
- 70 dr "wash"
- 71 jr "Southside" instead of "Southside." [wɔʃ] monophthongal /aw/ and assimilated /θ/ in first, "performance," *Southside*; exaggerated diphthongal /aw/ and /θ/ in second, "citation" *Southside* Monophthongal /aw/
- 72 dr "Southside"

73	jr	I say "Southside" "Downtown" instead of "downtown."	monophthongal /aw/ monophthongal /aw/s in first, "performance," downtown; exaggerated diphthongal /aw/s in second, "citation" downtown diphthongal /aw/s
74	dr	"downtown"	diphthongal /aw/s
75	jr	I know I, I know I kn- use a lot of Pittsburghese.	fronted /u/ in <i>do</i>
76	bj	Mm hmmm.	
77	dr	I [probably do] and I don't realize it	
78	jr	[I know I do.] Well when I've been in [different] states, in different cities,	
79	bj	[Mm hmmm]	
80	dr	They'll- they'll say "You're from Pittsburgh."	diphthongal /aw/ in <i>South</i>
81	jr	Yeah, they'll immediately [say,] [When we were in] South Carolina,	/l/ not vocalized in <i>Pennsylvania</i>
82	dr	right? "You're from Pennsylvania="	
83	jr	"You're from Pennsylvania="	
84	dr	"=Yeah, you're- you're [definite-]"	
85	jr	["Are you-], are you from the Pittsburgh area?"	
86	dr	Yeah. ((laughing))	
87	bj	Does that happen to you, too, or=?	diphthongal /aw/ in <i>South</i> ;
88	dr	=Yeah, I mean, I remember one time, we were in South Carolina visiting my, my uncle and my two cousins and my aunt. And we went to (s- some) store, and we were talking about how like the South kind of moves slow, [you know?]	vocalized /l/ in <i>uncle</i> ; fronted /u/ in <i>two</i> , <i>moves</i> ; diphthongal /aw/ in <i>about</i> , <i>how</i> ; monophthongal /aw/ in <i>South</i> .
89	jr	[Yeah, ] [God, it drives you	
90	dr	crazy.] [And then she's like] "Pennsylvania she's like, "You guys from Pennsylvania?" We're like "Yeah." And she's like "You guys wouldn't happen to be from Pittsburgh, right?" And we're like, "We're from Pittsburgh." And she's like, "Oh, okay, I can [tell by your accent?]" [How did she know?] How do you think she knew? She, she was from the Pittsburgh area. She didn't grow up in Pitt- [yeah. She said, she said she originally]	question intonation; vocalized /l/ in <i>Pennsylvania</i> <i>didn't</i> = [dɪ'æn]

93	dr	[Yea-, I thought she was] from Ohio.	
94	jr	Yeah, [but she she was,] [(Eastern)] Ohio?	
95	bj	Right [but she]	
96	jr	[This area?]	
97	bj	she was in Pittsburgh and then they moved to Ohio,	fronted /u/ in <i>moved</i>
98	jr	and then from Ohio they moved to South Carolina.	fronted /u/ in <i>moved</i> ; monophthongal /aw/ in <i>South</i>
99	dr	Yeah	
100	jr	and then from Ohio they moved to South Carolina.	
101	dr	[She didn't have the] accent either. She still had like a Pittsburgh accent.	<i>didn't</i> = [dɪ'æn]
102	jr	[She said that-] Mm hmm. Yeah. She didn't [have]	
103	bj	[Mm hmmm]	
104	jr	a Southern accent at all. She was, like a mom. [You know,] [Mm hmmm]	rounded LBV in <i>mom</i>
105	bj	I would say she was in her early 30s at least.	
106	jr	Yeah.	
107	dr	[Uh maybe 40s.]	
108	jr	[I don't really remember]	
109	dr	I don't know. I- I'm a bad judge of age. But, she was from, eh or grew up in Pittsburgh for a while, moved to Ohio, and then was in South- then they relocated to South Carolina.	glide-reduced /ay/ in <i>I</i> ; vocalized /l/ in <i>while</i> ; fronted /u/ in <i>moved</i> ; monophthongal /aw/ in <i>South</i>
110	jr	[That's] how she knew. 'Cause she even said that Pittsburgh accent, when you're not a-round it, when you do hear it, you really pick up on it fast.	diphthongal /aw/ in <i>around</i>
111	dr	[yeah]	
112	jr	[That's] how she knew. 'Cause she even said that Pittsburgh accent, when you're not a-round it, when you do hear it, you really pick up on it fast.	

Epistemic stancetaking and dialect identity come into play here in a number of ways. At the beginning of the extract, Jen claims the authority to speak on the topic of Pittsburghese with reference to knowing about Pittsburghese shirts and sending one to a friend who has moved away. The shirts Jen is referring to, produced largely for the tourist and local-nostalgia markets, feature words spelled in ways that suggest their "Pittsburgh" pronunciation; on the back, there may be a dictionary-like list of words and phrases thought to be local. Epistemic stancetaking is independent of dialect identity here. Referring to Pittsburghese shirts is a way of arguing from external authority, a resource that is potentially available whether or not one is a speaker of the dialect. Jen supports her epistemic claim (*Oh yes [I've heard of Pittsburghese]*, line 2) with reference to indirect, mediat-



knowledge about the dialect – she has seen it on t-shirts. She maintains this latently detached epistemic stance for another turn (line 9). *Yeah, I've heard of Pittsburghese, definitely. I've heard of* locates the epistemic source elsewhere, in that other people say. Then, however, in response to my question *What do you think it is?* Jen switches to a different mode of evidence, taking up my invitation to adopt an epistemic stance rooted in personal authority (*I think*) and aligning herself with other competent speakers of the dialect (*we*). *I think it's the way we* y words.

Jen then begins to list some of these (lines 14–18), *downtown, Southside, wash, m*. While continuing to locate the source of knowledge in her own competence (*think*), she disaligns somewhat from dialect speakers and returns to a more disjunct mode of epistemic stancetaking that does not rely on competent-speaker dialect identity. The citation forms she produces are not the local pronunciations; anyone who has read or heard about Pittsburghese could produce them, whether or not they knew how they sounded when pronounced by someone with a local accent. Jen pronounces /aw/ as a diphthong in *downtown* and *Southside*, using the ss local-sounding variant. She also pronounces *wash* and *iron* in the standard ways, rather than in the local-sounding variants [wʊʃ] or [wɔʃ] and [aɪrən]. Nor do these citation forms fully reflect what Pittsburghers usually imagine is local: “the way we say [these] words.” *Downtown* is typically spelled “dahntahn,” a artifacts like t-shirts, the spelling suggesting that the monophthongization of /w/ is to be attended to, whereas *Southside* is often spelled “soused,” with a diphthongal /aw/ but a deleted or assimilated /θ/.

In lines 71 and 73, Jen returns to two of these words, contrasting what she presents as their standard pronunciation with the way she claims to say them. In citing the “standard” forms, she exaggerates the diphthongs in both words and the /r/ in *Southside*. In her performance of her own pronunciation, she overdoes what popular local spellings suggest are the local pronunciations, monophthongizing /e/aw/ in both words rather than just in *downtown*. Here, Jen claims an authoritative stance in two ways. In citing examples of Pittsburghese in their standard pronunciations, she is doing something that either a speaker or a non-speaker of the dialect could presumably do, assuming he or she had access to lists of local forms like those on t-shirts or folk dictionaries. In this activity, authoritative stance is independent of dialect identity. But Jen also performs the local pronunciation, an activity that indexes the dialect identity of a competent speaker. She so points to this competent-speaker identity repeatedly in more explicit claims to be an actual user of the dialect, *We don't use that... I'm just thinking... your dad and I don't use that too often* (lines 39–43), *I know I use the Pittsburghese things* (line 55), *I don't pronounce my words as clearly...* (line 62), *I know I, I know I know a lot of Pittsburghese* (line 75). Note how in this final extract Jen starts to say

she *knows* Pittsburghese, which could signal second-hand access to the dialect, but revises the claim to *I use a lot of Pittsburghese*, explicitly claiming to speak it. To summarize, Jen makes epistemic stancetaking moves throughout the conversation. Some of these involve displaying familiarity with external sources of authority such as Pittsburghese shirts. Some of these moves involve performances of this knowledge, in the form of citations of local forms in a standard-sounding way. Other stancetaking moves involve direct claims to competent-speaker dialect identity. Sometimes, as we saw above, performances of competent-speaker dialect identity are embedded in these claims, *I say [aɪrən] for [ayrən]* (lines 55–57) and *I say [wɔʃ] for [wɔʃ]* (line 60).

Donna, the 13-year-old, tries to participate in all these activities. At first, her epistemic stancetaking is marked by moves that distance her from dialect speakers and locate the source of her knowledge about the dialect in others. Invited, like her mother, to talk about what she thinks Pittsburghese is, she talks about what other people say it is. In line 17, she suggests an addition to the list Jen is building, *y'all*, then, after there is no uptake from her mother or me, another in line 19, *yinz*. I acknowledge this contribution in line 21 and encourage her to offer more. She repeats *y'all* and *yinz* in line 22, then explicitly adduces the source of her epistemic authority on the topic of local speech, *my friends always are saying "y'all" to me and They say it's a Pittsburghese [thing]* (line 26). When she continues to be met with skepticism, she makes the same stancetaking move again: *If that's what they tell me* (line 28). These stancetaking moves are not linked to competent-speaker identity – Donna would have access to this source of knowledge whether or not she claimed to be a speaker of the dialect herself – but rather to external authority. Her mother then rebuts Donna's externally-based claim with a dialect-performance move: arguing that *y'all* is not really “a Pittsburgh thing,” she pronounces *yinz* not in the stereotypical version represented on t-shirt lists, which would be [yɪnz], but in an older, more traditional-sounding way, [yɔnz]. She then supplements this with a more distanced move referring to presumably widespread knowledge that does not require dialect identity, *Y'all's more like a Georgia, Southern [thing]* (line 32). Donna continues to argue that *y'all* is local, but continues to disalign herself from the local way of talking, contrasting *I with they* and positioning herself as the recipient of local speech rather than its initiator, *I was thinking Southern, but they still say "y'all" to me* (lines 33–35). But her mother's competent-speaker knowledge apparently trumps Donna's external knowledge: Donna retreats to a discussion of *yinz*, which everyone in the interaction agrees is local, *Yeah "yinz." You hear "yinz" a lot* (line 35). Using *you hear* rather than *I hear*, she aligns herself, if not with dialect speakers, at least with a group larger than herself. She then provides an extended illustration of her claim to hear *yinz* a lot, which includes a dialect performance (“*Yinz wanna do somethin'?*” line 37). Note

that this is not the same sort of dialect performance as Jen's have been: Donna is imitating other people, not making a claim about her own dialect identity. A performance like this displays local knowledge (she knows how local speech sounds) but falls short of a claim to being a speaker of the dialect herself.

As the conversation proceeds, Donna begins to supplement epistemic moves that appeal to external sources with her mother's interactionally more successful mode of stancetaking by evoking a competent-speaker dialect identity. In her first claim to actually being a dialect speaker, Donna frames her competence as an unintentional and uncharacteristic consequence of being around dialect speakers: *... you pick up on it. You start to say then once you're around people so often, you start- I started to say "yinz" to people. ((laughing)) And they're looking at me like, "okay" ((skeptical, amused voice))* (lines 48–50). In answer to my direct question, however, she then explicitly disaligns herself from other dialect speakers, *Not really. No, I don't think I use any of the Pittsburghese things* (line 53). Her mother steers her toward alignment with dialect speakers, *You do, but you don't realize it!* (line 55).

Donna appears to take the hint. She begins to reframe her dialect identity in such a way that it becomes useful in epistemic stancetaking, the way Jen's dialect identity is. One revealing segment begins in line 60, where Jen, listing and performing local forms, makes and tries to illustrate a claim about how she says *wash*. In an apparent performance error, she almost confuses the "correct" form with the "Pittsburghese" form, so that the second time she says the word it sounds like the standard [wɔʃ] but is apparently meant to be an improved performance of what Jen represents as the local pronunciation, [wʊʃ]. Donna, who has just claimed that she does not use *Pittsburghese things* (line 53), then starts to repeat the word over and over in lines 61, 63, 67, and 70, in a low voice, apparently trying to imitate the local pronunciation so as to contrast it with her own. But since Donna picks as her target Jen's second performance, which was actually the more standard-sounding variant, Donna seems to conclude that her own pronunciation is in fact the local one. So after "trying out" *Southside* and *downtown* in a similar manner, she explicitly claims the identity of a dialect speaker in line 77, echoing her mother's earlier wording, *I probably do [use Pittsburghese] and I don't realize it*.

Shifting identity in this way means that Donna can now adopt the epistemic stance of an actual dialect speaker, which her mother has been drawing on, and she does this in co-narrating the story about the family's having been identified as Pittsburghers by their accents. This begins as an explicit claim, co-constructed by Jen and Donna, to the identity of a recognizable dialect speaker:

78 jr [I know I do.] Well when I've been in [different] states, in different cities,  
79 bj [Mhmhm]  
80 dr They'll- they'll say "You're from Pittsburgh."

Jen then claims she is also recognized by her accent, *Yeah, they'll immediately say "You're from Pennsylvania"* (lines 81–83). The ensuing narrative, which involves densely overlapped joint production by Jen and Donna, supports their now mutual claim to competent-speaker dialect identity. It culminates with Donna's voicing of her family (*we*) and a woman they met in the South (*she*): *And we're like, "We're from Pittsburgh." And she's like, "Oh, okay. I can tell by your accent"* (line 90).

## 5. Discussion

I began this paper by noting that, in Pittsburgh, local identity and local dialect are often linked, and by asking how such links are forged. How does being a Pittsburgher get associated in so much popular discourse with speaking "Pittsburghese"? I have explored one way this can happen: if people are talking about local speech, then it can be interactionally useful to claim the identity of a local dialect speaker, because doing so provides one with resources for epistemic stancetaking.

This conversation illustrates how both dialect identity and epistemic stancetaking arise in interaction, in response to particular prompts (such as my *Have you ever heard of Pittsburghese? What do you think it is?*) and more general interactional exigencies such as wanting to get the floor. The two are intertwined in a particularly visible way here. Since both the interactional genre (the interview) and the particular topic called for knowledge claims and displays of the authority to make such claims, epistemic stancetaking was an interactional requirement. Since the topic was local speech, claims about and performances of competent-speaker dialect identity were a particularly useful way to make epistemic stancetaking moves. To get a sense of how stancetaking works in the conversation, I explored both explicit claims to epistemic authority and indirect claims to such authority via citations of local words and sounds. To see how and when dialect identity becomes relevant in the conversation, I described explicit moves that characterize the participants as speakers of the dialect (*I talk that way*) or not (*I don't really use Pittsburghese things*), and indirect claims to local-speaker identity through performances of the local accent. As we have seen, epistemic stancetaking moves in this conversation are often scaffolded on allusions to and performances of dialect identity. The micro-rhetorical exigencies that require stancetaking can be seen to drive identification moves, as when Donna recasts her identity in order to assume a more authoritative epistemic stance.

That the topic of local speech came up in this case is not surprising. I brought it up, as a module in a sociolinguistic interview. But the topic comes up nowadays in many ways. As I have shown in this paper, once the topic arises, dialect can become linked with local identity via the interactional usefulness of representing oneself as a speaker of the dialect. It should be stressed, however, that not everyone has the same kind of access to this resource. There is an important sense in which Jen has a stronger local accent than Donna does, in part for linguistic and cognitive reasons that are not related to identification or stancetaking. Claiming to be a speaker of the local dialect is not the same as being one in the sense linguists usually have in mind; it does not require anything more than knowing a few local-sounding words. A person like Jen, who can perform local pronunciations, may have interactional resources in certain contexts that Donna, who can only say she speaks the dialect, lacks. Discursive activities like the one examined here give the upper hand to more competent speakers of the local dialect. This means that competent dialect speakers like Jen have the stancetaking advantage in this conversation and ones like it. It would be an oversimplification, however, to suppose that its usefulness in discursive activities like this will automatically contribute to the maintenance of the dialect in the face of powerful homogenizing pressures. That is a hypothesis that remains to be tested.

## Notes

1. Work on this project was partially supported by the National Science Foundation, Award BCS-0417657. Jennifer Andrus helped with the transcription, and other co-workers on the Pittsburgh Speech and Society project, in particular Scott F. Kriesling, have helped by discussing earlier iterations of this paper with me. Comments on a different version of this chapter by fellow participants in the 10th Biennial Rice University Linguistics Symposium, "Stancetaking in Discourse," as well as comments on this version by Robert Englebretson, have been most helpful. I am especially grateful to "Jen," "Donna," and other members of their family for their generosity in talking to me and providing other kinds of invaluable assistance with the project.

## References

- Antaki, C. and Widdicombe, S. (eds.). 1998. *Identities in Talk*. London: Sage.
- Bailey, G., Winkle, T., Tillery, J. and Sand, L. 1993. "Some patterns of linguistic diffusion." *Language Variation and Change* 3: 359–390.
- Beal, J.C. 1999. "Geordie nation": Language and regional identity in the north-east of England." Paper presented at Methods X. St. John, Newfoundland, Canada, August 1–6.
- Biber, D. and Finegan, E. 1989. "Styles of stance in English: Lexical and grammatical marking of evidentiality and affect." *Text* 9: 93–124.
- Biber, D. and Finegan, E. (eds.). 1994. *Dimensions of Register Variation*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, C. 1982. *A Search for Sound Change: A Look at The Lowering of Tense Vowels before Liquids in the Pittsburgh Area*. MA thesis, University of Pittsburgh.
- Bucholtz, M. and Hall, K. 2005. "Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach." *Discourse Studies* 7: 585–614.
- Conrad, S. and Biber, D. 2000. "Adverbial marking of stance in speech and writing." In *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and The Construction of Discourse*, S. Hunston and G. Thompson (eds.), 57–73. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Coupland, N. 2001. "Dialect stylization in radio talk." *Language in Society* 30: 345–375.
- Dubois, S. and Horvath, B.M. 2002. "Sounding Cajun: The rhetorical use of dialect in speech and writing." *American Speech* 77: 264–287.
- Eckert, P. 1989. *Jocks and Burnouts: Social Categories and Identity in High School*. New York and London: Teachers College Press.
- Eckert, P. 2000. *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Goffman, E. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books.
- Gumperz, J.J. 1982. *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hankey, C.T. 1965. "Miscellany: 'Tiger', 'tagger', and [aj] in western Pennsylvania: Diphthongal variants of [e] and [æ] in western Pennsylvania." *American Speech* 40: 226–229.
- Hankey, C.T. 1972. "Notes on west Penn.-Ohio phonology." In *Studies in Linguistics in Honor of Raven I. McDavid, Jr.*, L.M. Davis (ed.), 49–61. University, AL: University of Alabama Press.
- Hazen, K. 2000. *Identity and Ethnicity in the Rural South: A Sociolinguistic View Through Past and Present Be*. [Publications of the American Dialect Society 83] Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Hunston, S. and Thompson, G. (eds.). 2000. *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Johnstone, B. 1996. *The Linguistic Individual: Self-expression in Language and Linguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Johnstone, B. 1999a. "Uses of Southern speech by contemporary Texas women." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3: 505–522. [Theme issue on Styling the 'other', Ben Rampton (ed.)]
- Johnstone, B. 1999b. "How to speak like a Pittsburgher: Representations of speech and the study of linguistic variation." Plenary address presented at the Sociedad Argentina de Lingüística, Mar Del Plata, Argentina.
- Johnstone, B. 2000a. "Representing American speech." *American Speech* 75 (Diamond Anniversary Essays): 390–392.
- Johnstone, B. 2000b. "The individual voice in language." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 29: 405–424.
- Johnstone, B. 2002. *Discourse Analysis*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Johnstone, B., Andrus, J., Baumgardt, D., Schardt, A.M. and Kriesling, S.F. 2004. "Whose social meaning? Pittsburgh monophthongal /aw/ in perception and production." Paper presented at New Ways of Analyzing Variation 33. Ann Arbor, MI, September 30–October 3.
- Johnstone, B., Andrus, J., and Danielson, A.E. 2006. "Mobility, indexicality, and the emergence of 'Pittsburghese'." *Journal of English Linguistics* 34: 77–104.
- Johnstone, B. and Baumgardt, D. 2004. "Pittsburghese" online: Vernacular norming in conversation." *American Speech* 79: 115–145.

- Johnstone, B., Bhasin, N. and Witkowski, D. 2002. "Dahntahn Pittsburgh: Monophthongal /aw/ and representations of localness in southwestern Pennsylvania." *American Speech* 77: 148-166.
- Jesling, S.F. 2005. "Variation, stance, and style: Word-final -er, high rising tone, and ethnicity in Australian English." *English World Wide* 26: 1-44.
- Jesling, S.F. and Wisnosky, M. 2003. "Competing norms, heritage prestige, and the decline of /aw/-monophthongization in Pittsburgh." Poster presented at New Ways of Analyzing Variation 32, Philadelphia, PA, October 9-12.
- Johnson, W. 1963. "The social motivation of a sound change." *World* 19: 237-309.
- Johnson, W. 1984. "Field methods of the project on linguistic change and variation." In *Language in Use: Readings in Sociolinguistics*. J. Baugh and J. Sherzer (eds.), 28-66. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Johnson, W. 1994. *Principles of Linguistic Change: Internal Factors*. New York: Blackwell.
- Johnson, W. 2001. *Principles of Linguistic Change: Social Factors*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Keller, R.B. and Tabouret-Keller, A. 1985. *Acts of Identity: Creole-Based Approaches to Language and Ethnicity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McCarty, C. 2004. "Language change in Pittsburgh: The decline of /aw/-monophthongization and the Canadian shift." Poster presented at New Ways of Analyzing Variation 33, Ann Arbor, MI, September 30-October 3.
- McCarthy, B. 1999. "More on the third dialect of English: Linguistic constraints on the use of three phonological variables in Pittsburgh." *Language Variation and Change* 11: 171-195.
- Milroy, J. 1992. *Linguistic Variation and Change*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Milroy, L. 1987. *Language and Social Networks*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Milroy, L. (ed.). 2002. "Investigating change and variation through dialect contact." [Theme issue]. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 6: 3-130.
- Ortiz, E. 1992. "Indexing gender." In *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*, A. Duranti and C. Goodwin (eds.), 335-358. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rampton, B. 1995. *Crossing: Language and Ethnicity among Adolescents*. London: Longman.
- Rampton, B. (ed.). 1999. "Styling the 'other.'" [Theme issue]. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3: 421-566.
- Rampton, B. 2003. "Hegemony, social class and stylisation." *Pragmatics* 13: 49-83.
- Rose, M. 2003. "On de farmi: Sociolinguistic meaning in town and country." Paper presented at New Ways of Analyzing Variation 32, Philadelphia, PA, October 9-12.
- Schilling-Estes, N. 1998. "Investigating 'self-conscious' speech: The performance register in Oracoke English." *Language in Society* 27: 53-83.
- Tudgill, P. 1972. "Sex and covert prestige: Linguistic change in the urban dialect of Norwich." *Language in Society* 1: 179-195.
- Tudgill, P. 1986. *Dialects in Contact*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

## Grammatical resources for social purposes

Some aspects of stancetaking in colloquial

Indonesian conversation

Robert Englebretson

Rice University

### 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

This paper is predicated on two points of departure: First, that stancetaking is a pervasive activity which speakers engage in through the use of language; second, that grammar is motivated and shaped by language use. Assuming these two propositions, then, we should expect grammar itself to be directly implicated in stancetaking. In other words, if stancetaking is a frequent activity of language use, and if frequent activities of language use themselves play a part in shaping language form, then it follows that stancetaking must therefore also be understood as having a role in shaping language form, and the grammatical resources of a language should likewise reflect principles of stancetaking. This paper examines three such resources in colloquial Indonesian, based on a corpus of spontaneous conversational data. I demonstrate how Indonesian speakers use first-person-singular referring expressions, the *-nya* clitic, and verbal diathesis (voice) respectively to manage and index three facets of stancetaking in everyday conversational interaction: identity, epistemicity, and positioning. I further argue that traditional descriptions and accounts have overlooked crucial aspects of the meaning and function of these three grammatical resources. Adopting a view of grammar as rooted in social interaction (in this case, specifically, the social and interactional processes of stancetaking) provides a rich set of previously undocumented observations about their meaning and use.

Regarding the first point of departure mentioned above, the ubiquity of stancetaking in its various forms has been noted for several decades. As Stubbs points out: