🔓 **Research Article**

SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING STYLE VARIATION

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into how gender, age, ethnicity, social network, socioeconomic status, and other social factors impact language choices regarding style. This is called style variation, when people's speech patterns, dialects, and registers change based on social circumstances. Vocabulary is a powerful tool for self-expression and group identification, and this analysis shows how people change their vocabulary to fit in or stand out from their social circles. How prevailing social standards impact linguistic prestige and stigmatization is one area that the article delves into, as does the impact of power dynamics and social stratification on language patterns more generally. The study shows how language is a social identity marker that reflects larger social structures and interactions through case studies and sociolinguistic research. The results indicate that differences in style are not static but depend on the surrounding environment. They are an integral part of society and lighten the relationship between language, culture, and personal identity.

KEYWORDS

Gender, age, ethnicity, social network, socioeconomic status.

INTRODUCTION

In ordinary life, we use language to convey meaning but also to evoke and maintain particular social relationships and identities. As linguistic variation, language style figures at the meeting point between utility and preference, between language and social life. This essay takes a close look at the social meaning

of stylistic variation, an area of linguistic study that has captured a significant amount of attention in the last twenty-five years. Our particular emphasis here is the development and consequences of the conjunction of linguistic style with the central categories of social identity: gender, age, and social class. How are these categories indexed in style? What does that tell us about the organization of social life and the relation of language to social structure and social change?

In the next section, we will survey some of the social factors that influence linguistic style in English, in the service of providing a rough sample of the state of the art in variationist sociolinguistics as of the year 2000. After that, we will move into a few case studies to explore some ways in which language variation actually works. Throughout the piece, we will lean towards a more definitional approach, assuming that style constitutes one of several levels of variation in which language might be documented—in ascending order along a drilldown from language to dialect, register, style, and idiolect. There comes a jacket (register) on the globe (language) (Coverdale's version and Tyndale's 1526).

Definition of Style Variation

One of the issues in sociolinguistics is style variation. The main concern of scholars working in this area is the factors that affect style variation. It may be thought, however, that determining the style in question is a more significant issue than analyzing the determinants of it. Although this idea seems plausible, one should recognize how style is being used in social life as a first step to make the concept more accurate. In language and society, style generally refers to how language changes according to the participants, the purpose of communication, and the intent. Style also plays an important role in providing respect, solidarity, or status. Mullany and White therefore point out that the concept of style is naturally relative to the situation.

The situation is not the only factor that sets off style differences. There are a lot of social factors that need to be considered. Accordingly, Labov introduces the first consistent explanation of style behind the linguistic difference. Labov (1972; cited in Holmes, 2001) defines style as the selection between two known genres: formal style which we use to speak judgmentally, and casual style used to speak things that are suggested in casual usage. Holmes (2001) states that people usually code-switch between informal and formal styles. The informal style covers casual vs. careful and scripted vs. spoken styles. The formal style includes matters of etiquette and register. Costume plays a great role in style coding. Other style indicators are location, subjects as well as a combination of these main variables.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Stylistic choices have often been argued to be socially constructed and evaluated with reference to social categories, such as those related to gender, socio-economic class, age, or ethnic group. In this regard, Tagliamonte noted, "as human social beings, we construct our identities through socially constructed differences in speech, dress, religion, food, etc", and sociolinguists have predicted and observed consequently that social factors should correlate with stylistic variation. In this vein, this paper will argue that speakers may also be motivated to make stylistic choices which appear to others as stranger by affiliation with style-innovators who use these features as regular variants – thus also affiliating with the same version of social identity as the style-innovators.

The paper analyses stylized lexical and lexical variation in the talk show host interviewees in the early years of the two Oliver films, as a case of show-stylization where guests select lexical variants 'like the style innovators in the show-world, and... ooze such variants in their talk, mixing more or less genuinely spontaneous showspeak, conv-show anagrams and highlights of their specialist professional lexis less likely to be developed beyond exclusive one-off status'. The results generally support the SREL approach more than the account based on style-innovator-stranger-affiliations. SREL-affiliates' verbasization and poly-twosomes usually occur on the row on the end of the film comparable spots more frequently than unaffiliates, and other stylized popular forms, such as non-verbal token of turns and lexis, especially nick-names, other show-world English and transcripts.

Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory (SIT) is premised upon the idea that individuals develop and preserve their self-concepts with reference to their memberships in social groups and, crucially, that the value of "in-group" membership is systematically preferred to "out-group" membership. Members of an in-group are perceived to share important characteristics with them - such as nationality, religion, age, language, occupation, or gender - whilst members of out-groups are perceived to be different from them in some important aspect (e.g. racism - based upon skin colour). Crucially, group membership and how this is defined is salient; demonstrating inter-subjective agreement within and across groups.

Social Identity Theory posits that such group membership represents a distinct form of self-identity and has important consequences. Critically, SIT allows us to talk about identity without resorting to categorization; rather, it can be understood as a psychological transformation, whereby the social identity takes on cognitive primacy, having an impact on the way we internalize our sense of self. We adopt aspects of the identity of our in-group members as our own and consequently use the indices of that social

identity to locate, recognize, distinguish, and relate to ourselves and others. As a central feature of SIT, style is therefore considered not just as a reflection of individual autonomy but rather as firmly rooted in social identity. Homophily within groups means that individuals are more similar to their groups than they are to those who are not members of their groups, with writing "we shape our self to fit the contours of a particular face," whilst language style has emerged as a key index in determining such social identity.

SOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING STYLE VARIATION

The usage of factors distinguished in the preceding sociolinguistic analysis as social is distributed across factors and effectors, which makes it difficult to identify a common underlying feature or triggers. Instead, we need to look for more concrete triggers. Social factors include: (1) people's socioeconomic status, their family's socioeconomic status, or their place within wider economic systems such as their perceived social class; (2) ethnic group or cultural background; (3) the referred individuals' gender; (4) fever age groups in mainstream population (potentially such that the young people correspond to in-group young people are more likely to be influenced by contemporary social predictions).

In this section and the following ones, we will outline a range of effectors associated with particular social influences on linguistic variation. Given the challenge of providing a comprehensive list of such influence, we pull the literature on sociolinguistic variation to compile a broad but non-exhaustive list of social dimensions that have been reported in previous studies. While those dimensions cluster around gender, age, social class, geographical location, and professional and institutional affiliations, we need to be open in principle to additional varieties motivated by social experiences associated with other social categories, memberships, or roles. Even at the dimensions of we quest to outline, the membership in the relevant social groups might not determine individual behaviors but rather serve as an additional factor helping to determine the order or range of other parameters such as the hearer's expectations, the external circumstances, or internal goals and that domain-specific or individual style differences can trump the role of social groups.

Socioeconomic Status

Individuals differ in their speech behavior. A host of factors serve to shape and constrain stylistic variation. One is speakers' economic standing. Financial resources are far from the whole story. Wealth alone doesn't provide the same kind of constraints on talk as does working money and social class. Both are basic to understanding style. Speaking behavior varies reliably with SES. Generally, wealthier speakers prefer more formal, perhaps overtly polite, signals, while lower-middle-class speakers prefer friendly casualness. It will

be argued that subjects' place in the economy, or purchasing power, influences their talk because it is a component of their place in society.

It is generally practically and morally unacceptable to be perceived as overpowering or blatantly cruel or disdainful. As a result, if I seek to hear what you really think of me or my writing, it is nonsensical for me to press this request by offering money. Money will distort the vocal expression of either valuations or attitudes. What good are your insults to me, replete with a sneer and scorn, if you show disdain in fluent lawyerly terms? Notice that valuation and evaluation may offer different responses, so research on the matter must allow the speaker this distinction in formulating answers. Wealth indexes the subject by preference for interpretative practices that hold good in the aggregate for people so positioned. The aggregate is the resultant of many different intersecting social histories. Religion, race, gender figure into this transitional likelihood, but most available indicators refer to current economic worth and class.

CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON STYLE VARIATION

Finally, the cultural origin of an individual seems to play an important role in the choice of vocabulary. In small-scale societies, where all members have the same level of acculturation, dialect leveling has flattened social structures more than the size of the language units.

Among major languages, sociolects serve as in-group markers and the sub-cultures of speakers shape adjusted linguistic behavior. Far from being a regrettable source of sociolinguistic noise to be 'factored out', ethnicity has been increasingly recognized as constitutive of the social fabric of the communities within which language and other symbolic forms are produced. The link between ethnicity and style, however, unlike the obvious correlation between social status and style, is probably the most neglected domain of the sociolinguistic calculus.

Ethnic styles, like those of social classes, are historically emergent, socially meaningful, and therefore variable across and within speech communities. Moreover, all available evidence across many linguistic communities suggests that they bear the mark of the contact zones in which they have evolved. But laid down in this fashion, this conclusion must surely raise an important research question. That question is: When ethnicity and style are shown to be sensitive to the social demography of a community, does this discovery mean that ethnic variation is 'really' socially determined and hence has, at base, the same kind of mechanistic and determining status of social class as we have described it? Or, to put the question another way, ought we to regard the acceptability of a given usage to people across racial or ethnic categories as simply a more perfect reflection of social class positions? Or is it

possible that in studying the structure and distribution of varieties we should treat ethnic and racial identities as a set of constraints in their own right, and potentially as constraints that sometimes significantly modify and displace the study-of-social-class distribution? The detailed examination of ethnic style and stylistic organization which follows in subsequent chapters will speak directly to this question. In terms of the general account that we have offered, we are committed to the following propositions.

Ethnicity and Race

Many sociologists and other scholars have done extensive research on the way that physical appearance plays into the ascription of race and subsequent stereotyping and biases based on assumed racial memberships. Their findings point to the strong link between social hierarchy systems and racial categorizations insofar as they argue that the former built and taught the latter. Physical appearance is superficially performed but it is also a substantial aspect of racial membership and identity.

Ethnicity and race represent a different aspect of social categories than do other categories such as religion, sexuality, sex, etc. or personal identity/emotion categories such as attitude or ambition. Using lifestyle as a form of cultural expression, we can highlight how these social categories might be linked to appearance variation in different ways. In some cases, ethnicity

and/or racial identity may influence the lifestyle that groups of people become socialized into. For some people, the cultural heritage shaped by their ethnicity and racial identity might significantly shape the choices they make with regard to appearance. In other cases, particularly for multiracial and immigrant communities, members may place a lower (though still existent) premium on sartorial cues, using dress and exposure more as an assertion of difference and privilege than resonance with a real and authentic heritage.

Gender and Style Variation

Gender and style variation. The literature on style variation has, to date, almost exclusively employed cross-sectional data from convenience samples, making it difficult to examine the influence of key social factors, including gender. However, the fashion media, much of the literature on fashion and social identity, for instance, is replete with evidence demonstrating that sex is a key determinant of one's sartorial and stylistic preferences. There are plenty of examples in the fashion media from which we can infer the existence of a fairly essentialist discourse circulating around what constitutes appropriate 'masculine' or 'feminine' dressing.

For example, Sarah Wilson, commentator for the UK newspaper The Guardian and former editor at i-D, states that it is difficult to 'visualize a group of young women willing to embrace capris without coming over

all fifties'. Judith Eurich of the Bertelsmann Foundation in Germany claims that 'Today's young men are fashion conscious, but they don't wear low-hipped and flared pants'. It seems that women are much more compelled to adopt contemporary styles, rather than men who seem to be drawn to a sense of continuity.

Identities are also at work in the readers' posted opinions; frequently they referred to 'local' attitudes and values which justify and validate the individuals' taste. Sexist and adolescent attitudes pervade discussions, often implicitly, of dress and style, especially in the family context. Men or boys who wear or desire overtly fashionable clothes are generally referred to in sexist terms because it is assumed that only women and girls (the 'fair sex') can recognize or should have any interest in the latest fashions.

Besides a few references to current fashion in relation to particular items of military surplus, such as parkas and camouflage gear, men hardly reference fashion or style in their online texts at all. Women, on the other hand, support the dominant belief that fashion and styles are made for and by women and girls. In these texts, therefore, it is unsurprising that overtly feminist messages underpin most of the readers' opinions. These messages concern the dangers of media socialization and the value of alternative, innocent childhood pursuits.

Thus, in accordance with 1. and 5. from the typifying attributes above, femininity appears to be about caring only in the 'true-to-oneself' way, while the fashion system and, especially, media socialization pressurize individuals to wear uniforms and imitate others.

Analysis of style comments also reveals some interesting interrelationships within the family itself. Those parents living with children do not negatively adjust their views in line with Opinions 1-5 to such a great extent as those adults who are not. It is also interesting to note contradictions in the arguments of some wholesale restylers who say that while they personally embrace the trend en chraine children of flashy fashion, like the ones featured in the 'pregnancy section of Sunday papers.

In these contexts of family life, those who hold opinions 1-5 largely actually assume that most people are making such and similar arguments, whether wholesale women's magazines or within at work in education or other institutions (especially those sports and health-related ones) are condemning mainstream fashion, mass conformity, and/or the conspicuous consumption of brands and labels or commodities to some degree. But the great variation of subjects - especially 'fashion victims' - in published articles suggests that it is exceedingly unlikely they all agree on these virtually universal traits, even though some of them may indeed subscribe to these lifestyles.

Thus, this dialogue potentially creates new hierarchical boundaries around the possession of appropriate 'knowledge', and new signifiers such as the design of the uniforms sourced from diverse high-street, secondhand, and on-street garments which are brought to local arts classes on a particular school day, and which reflect subcultural and anti-mainstream identities of these pupils. Requires Hard Hatters.

STYLE IN SOCIETY

Femininity and Masculinity

Our identities are social, and a range of social factors shape who we are. One of these factors is gender. Gender identity is an 'everyday social category'. Fashion and personal style feed off this lived sense of gender. Although masculine and feminine styles do not always correlate neatly with biological sex, they are markers of the kind of men and women the wearers want to be. At a societal level, distinctive masculinities and femininities are associated with different normative ideologies, however overlapping they may be. The values associated with hegemonic femininity are domestic, private, and expressive; those of hegemonic masculinity are public, the world of work, and instrumental. Fashion choices can be an instantiation of these values.

Thus, drawn from social norms, femininity and masculinity in fashion are a response by women and men to a web of collective expectations, institutions, and structural power relations. As Smithers and Hiscox put it, 'a belief in biological differences is far less insidious in shaping fashion than are the socially constructed myths surrounding heterosexuality'. A classicist interpretation of femininity revolves around the polarity of men's clothes being deliberately anti-feminine. Gaultier says this contrast between the girlie and the butch plays out in the French fashion scene. Femininity advocates 'flexibility, sweetness, originality, and high spirits', according to Chandor, and thus femininity varies in its intensity. Normative femininity is a broad consensus on the 'well-bred', 'emotional' woman, at ease with her sexual desires and relationships with others. A feminine fashion-a-full-circle perspective struggles to deal with the fashion that is unnaïve or tongue-in-cheek. It depoliticizes femininity too much, making it merely a label of style. It allows us less of a stance critiquing the ideology of femininity.

AGE AND GENERATIONAL STYLE VARIATION

Our life is divided into stages; each stage is characterized by different social responsibilities and relationships, as well as different bodies and faces. In general, the more time has passed since a person or other social entity went through a particular life stage, the more they will have changed. These observations directly imply major style differences between age groups as age is typically associated with a wide range of social and biological changes. There are, of course,

plenty of alternative moves an ageless society could make, but in the world we live in, rough judgments about characters and behaviors are often made on the basis of age.

Compared to other sources of variation, many expect relatively weak style contrasts between adjacent age groups. But because of the social investment in age, and because of the stylistic vested interests vested parties have in their own pasts, generational style differences can sometimes be unusually large. In Michael Apted's Up series, for example, we watch children grow up from primary school age and make their way into their forties. The people featured in the series are predominantly Londoners, and there's a fair bit of variation between them in terms of education, class origin, and ethnicity. But, generally speaking, young Londoners are more different from old Londoners than the old Londoners are from the old country-siders.

In such rapid-career-change, slow-diet successive periods, the visible differences between hard-working young adults and their retiree parents, or between defiant middle-aged punks and their upwardly-mobile, married-settler peers, tend to be also matters of styles. And in slow-fashion-change faster-life-change societies it is at work that attitudes to clothing have been most crisply observed. From the 1960s to the 1980s the post-war lead party divided over the physical details of who got the war's consolations, and who got the

consolations for having missed the war; whether or not beer or suits, or other pinned-on accoutrements need be thin, shoveled-out, many common pennies-thin, not hardly any big wedge pinched, as beer or bootleg Scottish whiskey or dandy threads or doss itself are all equally free and typical. In response to almost every Irish-generation power cut, the shored-old radiators throw off the heady scent of 1950s paraffin of pensioners' flaky hereditary pleura oil fuel. In fashion, because consumption before production of old globaloney music is so conflicted, youth-time rather than yarn or civil service counts as the age-trend signalman.

Youth Subcultures

Perhaps the most visible subcultures studied by sociologists are the youth-driven movements associated with style, such as punk, hip-hop, and psychedelia. Organizations like punk started as social networks full of creativity, emotional solidarity, and music - not neatly organized social movements capable of promulgating a plan or even a blanket ideology. But historically, from the Beats in the 1950s, radical activists in the 1960s, hip-hop breakdancers in the 1970s, eco-activists, grungers, anarcho-pacifist punks, and riot girls in the 1990s, these same social interactions go on to create such movements. In all, one discovers a basic logic behind the study of these musical and style movements: youth invests an emotional intensity in its music and style that is

transformative and serves narrative and community-building purposes.

We are interested in turning attention directly to fashion and its centering of the body, and to develop what we see as the logical extension of our central arguments here: fashion is as much a sticky object as a sticky self and its influence works both ways. The broader scene of stylistic fusion represents a more complete incorporation of both the local and the marginalized into contemporary fashion: the youth collectively shape the standard, nonfashion. In its stylization, the contemporary self oscillates between illustrating and defying a multiplicitous, multivalent, stylishly aware culture.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFLUENCES ON STYLE VARIATION

In this paper, we will try to answer the second listed question specifically about what kind of social factors influence style. Specifically, is there some kind of geographical difference in the use of forms like you and your? And, if there is, can we say something about what produces this difference - that is, about the kinds of influences that geographical section or kinds of residence exert on the form of address used? Are these geographical influences essentially urban/rural? According to what we might call the large-scale "hoodie" model of variation, the main domain of influence would be the region or part of the country, the "hoodie," while urban or rural residence would

affect the strength of the regional influence by determining the extent of individuals' connections to the region. Research in geography and related areas (sometimes called "cultural" geography) has found little to no class difference in the styles used.

To begin, it seems likely that there would be some differences between the styles found in an average urban and an average rural area, so that we would want to at least attempt a zone of interaction between them. In general, if we assume (following Labov) that "style" in verbal behavior is influenced by regional patterns and has a connection with the expression of identity, and if we assume (following the labeling of different sets of socially determined variables as independent "sectors") that there are "sectoral" group identities based on local residence as well as apparently less ambiguous markers such as class indicators, then we should predict that residence will affect the stylistic choices of individuals. It may be that the local identities less related to class are somehow based on a preference for small town or rural residence that might become apparent to linguists observing the prestige and/or social psychological importance of sectoral markers within and between areas lab systematically.

Urban vs. Rural Styles

Urban fashion looks are different from rural as in cities it is common to express oneself with different and

unique fashion. In urban areas, several different people from all over the state or even from other regions of the country live together. This results in a mix and blending of various traditions, cultures, and values inculcated with various fashion. It creates a more appealing and unique quality and a wider variety of dress styles.

However, as society gets more and more homogenously urban, I believe that this will influence the styles of both rural and urban fashion. As more people accumulate in the cities, rural lives are left behind, making them less fashionable. It is important to understand that people in rural areas also have their unique styles which are not so common in city life. Some people remember their rural life with their clothes and may also customize their clothes to match up with this style. In India, we can observe that the tradition or culture of people from rural areas who are away from cities for work tends to follow the same fashion. A person might keep the tradition alive simply with his or her clothes. A tourist going to a hill station during this time may differentiate and observe a great impact from a tourist going there 20 years back. The people going there now will try to dress themselves according to the tradition which is still prevailing in such areas. For example, in Goa, 20 years back everyone was attracted towards western culture and lifestyle but now one can observe the change; people have updated themselves with the new fashion and

lifestyle and are slowly moving away from the traditional dresses.

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY IN STYLE VARIATION

Media is another powerful social agent that affects the actual speech of individuals. Like other social agents studied in this chapter, new media can affect individual social behaviour even beyond usage of the actual platform (i.e. people who do not use social media might be affected by the norms promoted by the platforms). One of the new possibilities offered by the internet is connection between individuals at a very local level, and this can be seen particularly clearly in types of styles that have little monetary cost and that evolve by being copied or because people are learning from looking at others. Here, we talk about internet style evolution, and how social media and the increasing use of the digital realm can exploit these aspects of human social behaviour.

Sites, shows, newspapers and glossy magazines now provide a constant stream of images of people and places. These images may of course have been photoshopped, airbrushed or even entirely faked, but largely they purport to show a really existing person at a really existing time and place. The humans in the photos might be professionals, and the picture may have been taken by professionals, and yet, for reasons still not entirely understood, people look at these pictures and try to copy the things that people in the

pictures are doing. All this means that, to some extent, a platform like Instagram has to feature what people have been doing, but not too much. We talked before about a short feedback loop in style evolution.

Influence of Social Media

Influence of Social Media - A Digital Revolution. Digital culture has changed the way we use and consume fashion. Women and men have equal access to the internet, and the new digital machinery - computer, tablet, and mobile phone - makes simulation easier. Newspapers, fashion magazines, and fashion reports have been partly replaced by social networks like Instagram, Weibo, and Twitter. The picture of an opening look can have millions of hits. More than that, it is possible to buy that very piece immediately because there are systems in place to connect buyers and sellers. That way, distribution is increasing. Producers, who navigate consumer markets, have access to a broad digital network of information. This newfound transparency provides fashion marketing with a new army of fashion critics, making the consumption of fashion increasingly difficult.

The new trend economy favors consumers who are always on the lookout for something new. The tendency to conform to others in the purchase of goods and fashion trends is an important social force to create and produce availability and exchange of style. The characteristics of the surrounding group, the

daily working environment, and social grouping mark the landscape of city and village with stylistic varieties that are not shown in fashion magazines. Participants in this hypostyle can identify a global trend, generated by Creative Cities, Die Weltstadt Computers, Social Media Fashion, Bloggergende Vorbilderweg, BürgerIn∗nenarbeit Gothams, and cityscapes of film imagination in different territories.

PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL STYLE VARIATION

Occupation and professionalism have contrasting style expectations and norms. Lawyers, judges, and other expert roles require an authoritative and formal register of communication, while customer service staff and waiters are expected to adopt informal styles. The expectation in both of these papers was that, in such contexts, there are virtually no perceptible stylistic differences within each role, because such roles already require a tightly controlled communicative style. Indeed, in this sample, there are only sporadic morphosyntactic and lexicogrammatical style shifts to be noted. This is not, though, a universal pattern, as noted, for example, in customer service rep openings.

However, jobs also interact in varying ways to generate differing style degrees, and also professional or occupational targets. One typical distinction is between people professions requiring highly

developed interpersonal skills and training in contrasting and corporate strategic cultures, such as managers in care and law, social service work and health professionals, as in Hara's paper. Client groups are also a defining feature of stylistic normatives. Other distinctions can be made between professionals working in more highly regulated state, legal or political contexts and those in corporate-based youth, sporting and creative industry fields. These papers explore style detail and variation in other professional and workplace contexts, ranging from mainstream corporate businesses through to post-bureaucracy (creative) industries. Boss and Wilson map out the performance management source genres of different industry spaces, for example, 'creativity' industries, banks, hospitals and local government, and then business divisions down to the internal policy formats of the Human Resource division.

Corporate vs. Creative Industries

In corporate industries, the demands and constraints of the professional setting impact stylists' choices and productions. Stylists are required to fit into stylistic codes, creating uniform and classic looks via a combination of "neutral elegance" to constitute a disguise that transmits consistency and impartiality. They are also expected to avoid characteristics that denote personal preferences and too radical tastes, so as to fit within the distance and neutrality that corporate visual projection is accustomed to. This general drift is visible in distinctive styles based on simple, neutral, loose, and classic shapes and materials. The idea is also spread that females in these settings should avoid going too far with sensuality and give a better image by being modest and not using any violent colors, helping to construct these general stylizations.

In creative industries, such as fashion, professionalism is associated with creativity and self-expression. Occupational contexts generate characteristic stylistic presentations via professional codes and an emphasis on symbolic independence from norms. Fashion is an industry where appearances matter most and where people mostly work on the construction of clothes and bodily presentations. Stylists in this field are into showing their autonomy and creativity by having a distinctive look that is both up to date and shows their expertise and singled-out abilities, an important matter in the world of fashion and creativity-focused work. In those areas, the requirement is to present a non-conforming look, probably a bit extravagant, and with the perpetually-up-to-date trend showing not only the skills and abilities of the stylists but also their growing interest in the period's fashion. Overall, people working in creative industries have a worried look on their bodily and professional side and search for distinctions that creative-looking clothes could offer.

CONCLUSION

The four generative social factors discussed in this book are at a variety of levels, refer to different potentially social factors, and interpret them in a variety of ways. Any analysis could only hope to do justice to a few aspects of any one of these factors, and so I cannot complain when the experts do not say everything there is to say in such an analysis but instead contribute only one thread to the fabric. The goal of the research contained in this book is to cut into the social conventions to show that style is also possible.

We know that persons typically produce and understand others' behavior as stylistic. Someone who establishes a potential style to be hers is positioned - and positions her friends as positioned relative to her - in a social universe and the continua of identities available there for the person to entertain. In part, this identification yields moral stances on personal attributes: style gives normative purchase on a person's actions because style is a critical norm of social life, whereas grammar is not. We are better positioned to understand marks of the social dimensions in stylistic production because we are better and better at analyzing marks of the social position of participants in the data we collect. We can inquire with far more confidence and accuracy into the relationships that are the upshots of the use of linguistic variables in context.

Summary of Key Points

In conclusion, style variation may be linked to a combination of different social attributes, including audience design, link to ethnic group identity, stance, and local community membership. Differences in stylistic choices within a community with the same other-accessible characteristics can be related to the speakers' distancing from or embracement of local community traits, their different attitude to the local ways or to the stereotype regarding the local community, different age group identity, or where they have developed an attention to the role of style in listener orientation. Speakers' backgrounds or their location, area of interests (including the level of institutionalisation of the activity), and their general attitude to language variation and change may determine not only how concerned they are with style, especially how concerned they are with signalling group membership or indicating stance and in what respects this is done, but also what aspects of variation the informant pays knowledge about in their H and/or L.

This essay has presented an overview of a number of social factors that may be associated with differences in stylistic choices. The informants, as, for example, participants in a regional survey, may not be able to represent their community in relation to the variable tested; they will not necessarily know whether the F2 of their vowels or the realisation of their glottal stop or any other morphosyntactic or phonological item is an

index of being from Cwmafan. It is incumbent on the researcher to sample the groups to be included in the study to ensure that the survey or interview is able to register the old speaker, the young pre-adolescent, the adolescent, the teenager, and the individual; the form of address, topic of conversation or both that bring out differences; and all speakers who address more than one or two people and/or whom the others listen to. It is incumbent on the researcher to ensure that the topic, mode of conversation and the style type of interest is included and that the researcher or the committee can deal holistically with the situation in Wrexham that includes the fundamentalist who will not address her in his dialect or style and the former The Guardian reporter, now the Plaid MP, who is beginning to feel her linguistic pigmentation.

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