4 Discourse Analysis of Spoken Interaction

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4.1 Introduction

Although many well-established approaches to language attitudes have produced valuable and insightful perspectives, criticism has been levelled (Hyrkstedt and Kalaja 1998: 346) at making general assumptions based on the results of conventional techniques which both seek to measure language attitudes without adequately taking account of broader context and also oblige the participants to respond only within the parameters of categories predetermined by the researchers (see also Chapter 2). In response to these potential shortcomings of the predominantly cognitive and positivist approaches to language attitudes, methodologies have been developed based on principles from social constructivist perspectives inspired principally by discursive psychology (Potter and Wetherell 1987; Potter 2003), discourse analysis (Gee 2011: 2), and interactional sociolinguistics (Couper-Kuhlen and Selting 2017: 4–7). This chapter presents a practical implementation of these approaches for the purposes of language attitudes research.

Gumperz (2015) refers to the schemata of *frames* (inspired by Goffman 1974) to contextualise the knowledge and presuppositions to be expected and understood in each section of talk. This configuration facilitates the analysis of processes and strategies such as *positioning*, which describes how speakers shift alignments with other speakers, audiences, and topics throughout the interaction (see also Jaffe 2007: 4). Exploring the positioning of speakers in interaction serves as the main example in this chapter for demonstrating the value of this method which aims to account for contextually relevant 'meaningmaking processes and the taken-for-granted, background assumptions that underlie the negotiation of interpretation' (Gumperz 2015: 313). The research outlined here embraces the shift away from a conception of a language attitude as more or less an isolated construct of the mind, largely devoid of context, and instead moves towards the construction of evaluations through discursive practices in interaction, where context is regarded as a significant factor.

Some key studies in this area have been undertaken by Liebscher and DaileyO'Cain (2009: 196–200; see also Dailey-O'Cain and Liebscher 2011: 93–95), who build on these concepts in their recognition of three levels of discoursebased approaches for analysing language attitudes in interaction: content-based approaches, turn-internal semantic and pragmatic approaches, as well as interactional discourse-based approaches (see also Chapter 2). This research by Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2009: 201) is particularly insightful because of the additional depth of analysis the levels offer, for example, expanding the scope of observation beyond turn-taking and content analysis so that it includes phenomena such as interruptions, conversational overlap and the broader sociocultural macro-context.

As will become clear throughout this discussion, there are several possible approaches for collecting suitable data for discourse analysis of spoken interaction. It does not rely on one

specific data elicitation technique but, as this chapter demonstrates, encompasses various ways of collecting interactional spoken data. Indeed, another innovative method based on spoken interaction has been developed by Soukup (2009: 90), who draws on interactional sociolinguistics to investigate language attitudes in Austria but with an alternative study design involving a phase where informants listen to interactions from a televised political discussion. They are asked to identify perceived shifts from standard language into dialect. By combining these findings with a verbal-guise test, Soukup draws on both sets of data to describe the interactive strategies adopted by the TV show guests as they shift their style of language between standard and dialect for rhetorical and argumentative purposes. Finally, an additional angle for analysing language attitudes in spoken interaction consists of emergent narratives and the valuable insights they offer (König 2014, 2019). By examining the positioning of the interviewee in language-biographical narrative sequences during interviews on the micro level, König (2019: 146–150) establishes that language attitudes are usually recipient-designed and link up with pervasive language ideologies in the broader macro-social sphere.

4.2 Strengths and Limitations

4.2.1 Strengths

A central tenet of the matched-guise technique (see Chapter 12) and its variants (see Chapters 13 and 14) is that the participants are not fully informed about the research purpose and certain aspects of the process. For instance, they are usually unaware that they are listening to, and rating recordings produced by, the same speaker or set of speakers. Aside from the fact that it is debatable how effective (Soukup 2019: 88) the 'trick' of using the same speakers for multiple recordings is in practice (in an attempt to keep variables as consistent as possible), there is an inherent ethical issue arising from the researcher's efforts to keep the full intentions of the study and its real procedure hidden from participants who are volunteering to give their responses. However, there is no element of 'deception' in arranging a discussion with participants to express openly their views on language and usage. It is immediately clear from the outset what is expected from them and no parts of the study need to be deliberately kept concealed. Indeed, one of the possible 'ice-breaker' openings at the start of an interview (Chapter 7) or focus group (Chapter 8) could be to ask the participants to describe the language variety under investigation and what it means to them, for example, *What is Multicultural London English? How would you describe this?* Or *What is Ruhr German?* The initial response to this question has much potential to divulge at an early stage their views, collective knowledge, and emotional response (reflective of the affective, cognitive, and conative components of language attitudes), as well as clearly setting the focus of the session.

Such openness can be a considerable practical strength of the approach because it reduces the need to set up a delicate experimental setting which relies on a degree of obscurity with regard to the ultimate aims of the study. In fact, introducing a longitudinal dimension whereby the data collection phase is carried out again at another time with the same participants, possibly sharing all or some of the researcher's previous findings as part of a reflexive activity, can produce valuable data on the nature of language attitudes and how

they change (e.g. Ianos et al. 2017 using a questionnaire-based approach). Despite the potential benefits for language attitudes research, there is an absence of qualitative interactionbased language attitude projects which focus on a longitudinal dimension.

As opposed to direct methods of attitude elicitation that employ similar data collection strategies (e.g. interviews or focus groups), discourse analysis of spoken interaction in language attitudes research places much emphasis on context – which is why the method falls clearly within the societal treatment approaches to language attitudes. Taking into account the nuances, influences, and implications of the various degrees of context (e.g. micro–meso–macro levels as in Horner and Bellamy 2016: 321–326) allows for greater recognition of the broader sociocultural, situative, and interactional settings which have become to be regarded as crucial to examining the expressed attitude or attitudes (Tophinke and Ziegler 2006). This emphasis on the larger frame of reference is partly in response to perceived weaknesses in some of the traditional cognitiveoriented language attitudinal methods which have been seen to neglect the pertinent factors that have given rise to these responses towards language in the first place:

> the study of language attitudes seeks to do more than to discover simply what people's attitudes are, and what effects they might be having in terms of behavioural outcomes. A further concern is to understand what it is that determines and defines these attitudes. (Garrett et al. 2003: 13)

So another potential practical benefit of this technique is the opportunities it affords to supplement the elicitation of the language attitudes with crucial contextual information, to observe how the speakers negotiate their views in relation to the other participants and also to have the opportunity as a researcher to follow up anything expressed by the participants which requires further clarification or explanation. A key factor in using spoken interaction for analysis is to allow the participants sufficient time to provide thorough explanations in response to questions and stimuli, as well as to foster a suitable environment for encouraging spoken exchanges between the participants. Accumulating experience in conducting such fieldwork can help, especially when testing the methodology with an initial pilot study. This usually produces plenty of *rich* data (centring on 'depth' rather than 'breadth'), which is increased further by gathering detailed information on each participant's background and asking probing questions in the interactions.

Whilst analysing varying perceptions of standard German according slight dialectal influences on the spoken standard, Hundt (1992: 4), who mainly used the matched-guise technique, points out the challenges of making the experimental setting as realistic as possible whilst ensuring that as many variables as possible are constant. Striking a suitable balance along this continuum which consists of a sterile, laboratory-style experiment at one extremity and an almost natural, real-world set-up at the other is a common issue in deciding the approach and design of a language attitudes study. The more conversational, open-ended, and flexible interaction-based procedure allows for a more 'natural' environment to some extent and does not treat attitudes as disconnected mental constructs. Instead this approach gives importance to their expression in interaction with others, which reflects the process in which attitudes are usually constructed and communicated. Suggestions for making the environment comfortable and more 'natural' for participants include maintaining a relatively

relaxed conversational tone and helping participants to adjust to the presence of the researcher and any recording devices. Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2009: 218) conclude their study of language attitudes in interaction by suggesting that this method allows 'attitudes to be expressed in much more true-to-life situations and allow[s] for the interpretation of those attitudes with respect to that situation'.

Similarly, the aforementioned flexibility in this approach permits much greater scope for the participants to introduce perspectives, considerations, and interpretations which the researcher might not have initially accounted for. In most quantitative-based studies using closed questions, whether it is a semantic differential or a fixed set of multiple choices on a questionnaire, the responses by the participants are constrained by the assumptions, presuppositions, and creativity of the researcher. A freer, conversational-style interaction opens up opportunities for the participants to head in directions during the discussions, narratives, and performances which might not have been originally envisaged by the researcher. This approach embraces the *emergent* nature of qualitative research and enables a project to develop fresh lines of enquiry even as the interactions take place, which might in turn present new ideas that warrant further investigation as part of the broader project. The example case study described in Section 4.6 emerged from similar flexibility with the project development and objectives. The interaction discussed in that section belongs to part of a wider project on *Language attitudes in the Ruhr region* (of Germany) and this component of the larger project, focusing on young people, evolved dynamically because of their distinct language practices (especially the use of 'street' styles of speaking and their multilingual repertoire) which largely set these discussions apart from others in the project.

Being based on spoken interaction for exploring language attitudes, the general set-up for data collection is relatively straightforward on a practical level since it does not require much special equipment (other than perhaps audio recording devices) and can take place at a mutually convenient location. If the researcher is carrying out fieldwork alone, then usually the most time-consuming aspects (besides transcribing) are recruiting participants and arranging a suitable time and place for each of the recorded sessions. The interactive nature of the discussions also allows for a reflexive dimension and encourages the researcher to engage in reciprocity (Trainor and Ahlgren Bouchard 2013), provided that the researcher is also a participant in the discussion. It is possible that the participants consult the researcher on their views and knowledge of the topics under discussion and, if appropriate, the researcher has the opportunity to 'give something back' as it were by commenting on relevant aspects of the research that have come to light so far. This latter aspect could become part of a post-recording participant–researcher feedback session. A longitudinal study provides even greater scope for reflexivity by building on previous interactions and, whilst observing potential changes in attitudes during the intervening period by returning to the previous discussions and reconsidering those views in the subsequent interaction.

As mentioned briefly already with reference to Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2009: 199), a discourse analysis of spoken interaction provides the opportunity to add another layer of depth to the analysis of language attitudes by taking into account features 'that are either simplified or not observed when the analyst looks only at individual speaker turns (e.g. laughter, interruptions, pauses, pitch changes, intensity changes, conversational overlap)' (Liebscher and DaileyO'Cain 2009: 199). The fine-grained level of scrutiny that this

approach offers means that details such as the positioning of the interactants, their shifting stances, and their argument structure can all be considered whilst investigating the expression and construction of the language attitudes emerging in the interaction. Some of these latter points will be discussed more thoroughly in Section 4.4.

4.2.2 Limitations

However, the greater depth and attention to detail afforded by this approach comes at the expense of the representativeness and possibilities for statistical analysis offered by quantitative techniques. Unlike studies which make use of printed or digital questionnaires which can be completed by a large number of participants simultaneously, discourse analysis of spoken interaction requires a great deal of attention afforded to an interaction and its relevant context. Of course, using multiple fieldworkers can expedite the data collection process. Similarly, the approach does not lend itself to the automated data processing of questionnaires and the generally easily categorisable responses of most quantitative-based language attitudes studies. Another key consideration is the time required for transcribing the spoken interaction. Transcription of spoken data can take a tremendous amount of time and resources, especially if carried out by a single researcher. This is especially the case when a close examination of the interaction is necessary and therefore undertaken in accordance with formal transcription conventions (e.g. along the lines of conversation analysis; more on this in Section 4.4). Nuance, detail, and depth are key aspects of this method, although a mixed-methods project could take advantage of combining the strengths of a quantitative language attitudinal technique with the context and comprehensive insights provided by a discourse analysis of spoken interaction. This mixed-method approach has been accomplished effectively by Soukup 2009, whose aforementioned study incorporated a televised interaction as a stimulus, together with a verbal-guise test, and interviews.

4.3 Research Planning and Design

Since context is an integral part of this approach, importance is often placed on gaining knowledge about the background and linguistic biographies of the individual participants. This might be unlike quantitative approaches which aim rather for amassing a larger number of participants with the objective of obtaining a more representative sample and therefore usually gather comparatively fewer details about each participant. In laying out the groundwork for this ‘discursive’ turn in language attitudes studies, Tophinke and Ziegler (2006: 11) provide an example interview and emphasise the importance of supplying fundamental information about the participants in order to situate the interaction within the macro–meso–micro context framework. So, besides the conventional basic information requested from the participants, such as age and gender, the researchers explain that the participants are both university students; that they study German and medicine, respectively; that they are from West Berlin and they got to know each other on a train journey. The details form part of the macro-context, which can be considered as important for the contextualisation and interpretation of the language attitudes within the broader social and cultural setting (Tophinke and Ziegler 2006: 6). Therefore, it is worth building an informed

profile of the participants and their linguistic life trajectories, either during the data collection or during a preparatory stage of the fieldwork. All this information can then be drawn upon in order to examine the attitudes in interaction as they are expressed and negotiated.

Appropriate recruitment strategies include snowball sampling and, in some cases, purposive sampling if a specific demographic category is sought (e.g. young people as in the case study example in Section 4.6). Dailey-O'Cain and Liebscher's (2011: 95) data set consists of '64 audiotaped semi-structured, conversational interviews [...] each with between one and three participants' as part of a project on German-speaking urban areas in Canada. The participants were recruited by promoting the project in a local newspaper and also using the snowball 'friend-of-a-friend' technique. A very important preliminary step for any research involving human participants is obtaining appropriate ethical approval from the respective institution (see Trechter 2017 for further discussion about ethical considerations).

Another key practical consideration is the setting of the observed interaction. It is paramount that the location is suitable in terms of low background noise, is comfortable for the participants, and satisfies the safety criteria of ethics approval. Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain's (2009) 'Saxony project' comprises conversational interviews, some audio-recorded and some video-recorded, involving both the two researchers and the participants, carried out either in people's homes or in public places. Participants tend to be more at ease if meeting up at a familiar location and possibly by avoiding university buildings which can have associations with more formal academic settings.

Once an opportunity to record a spoken interaction has been organised, there are various techniques to facilitate suitable responses and data for a discourse analysis of spoken interaction. In an investigation into language attitudes towards multilingualism, König (2014: 104–105) conducted thirteen narrative interviews with men and women of Vietnamese origin who were living in Germany (amounting to approximately twenty-two hours of recordings that were then transcribed according to the GAT 2 conventions, see Selting et al. 2009). Similar to Dailey-O'Cain and Liebscher's work (2009, 2011), König implemented concepts from conversation analysis (2014: 65) to examine language attitudes emerging from the interaction in the language biographical interviews. König (2014: 66) focused predominantly on the narrative dimension of the interviews because the micro-analysis of the spoken interactions proved productive for observing experiences of multilingualism and related language attitudes. König (2014: 158) encouraged the interviewees to continue to reveal more and more of their perspectives on language and multilingualism by deliberately avoiding, in her role as interviewer, direct spoken evaluations of what had been expressed. This lack of response by the interviewer had the effect of provoking the interviewees to elaborate on their experiences in more detail by reporting on dialogues and continuing to refine their own evaluations. König (2019: 147–148) adopted a similar approach in a subsequent project based on a 'corpus of qualitative interviews with migration-induced multilinguals from different backgrounds living in Germany'. The study looked at the interviewees' perspectives on the importance of speaking German and their heritage languages with or without a non-native accent. The researcher achieved this by focusing on the concept of *accent* and how the interviewees introduce it as a discourse topic, in addition to analysing how they frame their experiences of having an

accent or not, depending on each individual case. Therefore, it is worth developing a repertoire of such strategies to steer the interaction in the direction which optimally suits the research objectives and to create a situation which encourages the participants to express their views on language and related matters.

When recording the audio of interactions involving more than one participant, it is worth considering the use of multiple audio recorders with lapel microphones. Only having one recorder could lead to confusion at a later date with regard to which voice belongs to which speaker. Not knowing this would be detrimental to carrying out a reasonable analysis of the interaction. Having lapel microphones usually improves the audio clarity of each individual's spoken dialogue and having a separate audio stream for each participant also helps to discern what is being said when they are speaking at the same time. The separate audio streams can later be analysed individually or merged using suitable audio editing software such as Audacity (Audacity Team 2020). Another practical consideration is to begin with a pilot study in an early phase to test ideas and approaches, as well as to iron out potential issues. A pilot study would also be a useful means for becoming familiar with this method if it is new to the researcher. Video recording could be considered, rather than simply audio capture, in order to include gestures, facial expressions and other relevant visual cues used for communication in the observed interaction. It is worth devising an appropriate 'lead-in' to the session which helps to set the topic and frame the general discussion. In addition to the earlier suggestion in Section 4.2.1 of asking participants to describe the language variety (or varieties) under discussion, making reference to a current debate prominent in the media which links up well with the study can help direct the participants towards the main research focus. Since interactions also incorporate power dynamics, another factor worth bearing in mind is to ensure that the researcher–participant relationship is one which places the participants in the role of 'experts'. So the researcher might need to counter initial expectations from the participants that the researcher will already 'know everything' about the topics under discussion.

In summary, key practical design considerations for investigating language attitudes by means of discourse analysis of spoken interaction include devising appropriate participant recruitment strategies, collecting sufficient background information from the participants, structuring the sessions so that they are optimal for encouraging suitable interactions for analysis, fostering a suitable rapport with the participants, clearly framing and guiding the discussion, and taking into consideration the value of a pilot study, appropriate audio equipment, and video recordings.

4.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The recordings can be transcribed using one of the many transcription guidelines available, with some popular conventions described by Heritage (2004) and by Selting et al. (2009, for German). There is software available to assist transcription, one example being the audio-visual annotation tool ELAN (The Language Archive n.d.), in addition to software to facilitate a qualitative analysis, such as the commercial package Nvivo. Depending on the aims and focus of the analysis, one of the decisions regarding the transcription would be how much detail to include, ranging from a minimal transcription to a finer, more elaborate

transcription containing many features of spoken expression (e.g. including changes in pitch and volume). Some of the features to look for in the transcribed recordings are described in this section.

A particularly fertile analytical technique for observing the expression and construction of language attitudes in spoken interaction is to examine the discursive practice of positioning amongst the participants (Davies and Harré 1990; Bamberg 1997: 336–337). It is not unusual to observe continual shifts in position depending on how the interaction unfolds. An example of this is when a participant might begin by expressing a negative attitude towards a largely stigmatised spoken feature, although the same participant later realises that they have in fact used the very same stigmatised feature themselves whilst actively disapproving of it. The participant might then begin to justify their use of the feature and modify their initial criticism. Alternatively, another participant in this example interaction might strongly identify with the same stigmatised form because of its importance for local identity, which can then have the effect of bringing about changes in stance amongst the other interactants towards the linguistic feature under discussion who play down their initial negative views of it (Johnstone 2007: 63–64). Stigmatisation and positioning form the basis of an example from Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2009: 207) when they discuss an exchange about the placement of primary stress on the German word *Salat* 'salad' or 'lettuce'. The different intonations of *Salat* have implications for aligning the speaker with a particularly stigmatised dialect and the described interaction demonstrates how speakers position themselves discursively as 'not a speaker of a stigmatised form'.

Another useful area of analysis is positioning with regard to notions of legitimacy, authenticity, and group alignment in the interaction. König (2019: 146) observes that speakers who are considered to 'have an accent' position themselves in interviews either as 'legitimate', 'authentic' speakers or as 'illegitimate', 'inauthentic' speakers. One example noted by König (2019: 145–146) is the interviewee, EKe, who is himself positioned by others as a 'non-native' or 'inauthentic' speaker of German by concentrating on the prosodic emphasis on *fast* 'almost' in the description that he speaks *fast akzentfrei* 'almost without an accent' which is how EKe reports he is described by others. This corresponds to the first level of positioning (Bamberg 1997: 336–337) in relation to other characters in the reported event. EKe, however, evaluates this 'praise' positively in the interview and presupposes that the interviewer shares this view, i.e. that 'having nearly no discernible accent in German' is favourable, which alludes to the second level of positioning: in relation to the audience. Finally, in the next part of König's (2019: 146) transcribed example, EKe portrays himself as being able to imitate well the pronunciation of others and positions himself as 'a supermobile speaker who is capable of changing easily between sociolinguistic spaces', which links up with the third level of positioning: in relation to the speaker themselves. Ultimately, these positioning acts reveal attitudes that the speakers harbour with regard to different spoken varieties. These examples apply elements of conversation analysis to the detailed examination of the unfolding interactions. Modal particles, intonation patterns and the ways dialect words are pronounced (Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain 2009: 207) can all be useful features to focus on for observing the interactants' positioning. Likewise, König (2019: 146–158) makes use of framing (Goffman 1974; Gumperz 2015), prosody and

meanings implied by evaluative words (such as *natürlich* 'of course') in her analysis of the interviews.

Although this chapter is largely using positioning as the example of exploring language attitudes in spoken interaction, another fruitful area of analysis worth mentioning is narratives. König (2014, 2019) incorporates research on narratives (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012) to enable further observations of subjective conceptions of identity and how this relates to language practices. Language biographical narratives, comprising mainly small stories emerging in the interaction, shed light on the speaker's construction of self, experience, and attitudes towards the linguistic varieties under discussion. König (2019: 158) discusses the example of a German of Turkish descent who tells the story of a visit to his uncle's when he proudly spoke some of the Turkish words he had just learnt but became the object of ridicule from 'legitimate' Turkish speakers because of the sound of his German accent. On account of his acceptance of being made fun of, König interprets the small story as demonstrating his acceptance of a standard language ideology and a positive stance towards the concept of 'legitimate' speakers.

Dailey-O'Cain and Liebscher (2011: 96) also draw attention to the usefulness of short illustrative narratives, or small stories, for demonstrating the construction of language attitudes. Rather than forming isolated self-contained segments, the short narratives are interpreted within the broader context of the on-going interaction as they emerge according to the given moment and situation. After data collection finished, the researchers parsed the conversations searching for sections 'in which attitudes toward German dialects are discursively constructed by speakers' (2009: 201). They make particular use of interactional analysis and are especially interested in 'the conversational context (e.g. where the conversation takes place, where the speakers are from, speakers' level of familiarity with each other), as this can have an impact on the ways in which attitudes are constructed' (2009: 201). The researchers also turn partly to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in order to examine the influence of widespread ideologies and social discourses on the construction of language attitudes. CDA indeed offers further analytical possibilities for exploring language attitudes in spoken interaction (see also Section 2.1.2 on CDA).

4.5 New or Emerging Trends

In recent times, there has been a well-documented shift (e.g. Androutsopoulos 2011; Shortis 2016) in written practices which, as a consequence of technological developments, has resulted in increasing written representation of informal, spoken communication, for example, in text messaging and social media (see Chapter 3). Androutsopoulos (2011: 153) labels this innovation and change in digital written usage 'the elaboration of vernacular writing'. This has implications for analysing spoken interaction because it opens up the exploration of language attitudes in the conceptually spoken domains (Koch and Oesterreicher 1985: 450) of digital and online communication. Tophinke and Ziegler (2014) have already begun this trend by turning to online blog comments and analysing the social-interactive comments of blogs to examine the language attitudes that are expressed using this digital form of communication. As Tophinke and Ziegler (2014) demonstrate, much of

the same analytical devices and strategies (discursive psychology and conversation analysis) can be successfully applied to computer-mediated communication.

4.6 Case Study: Attitudes towards Youth Language in Dortmund

Inspired by recent research taking place in cities predominantly throughout Europe which look closely at emerging varieties in multilingual urban environments (e.g. similar to the studies of young people's language use in Nortier and Svendsen 2015), the case study outlined below was carried out in a neighbourhood of Dortmund, Germany, to observe the linguistic practices of young people at a youth club, as well as to analyse their metalinguistic comments on their own language usage. The young participants lived in a highly diverse multilingual setting and often discussed their language use with reference to youth subcultures, feelings of marginalisation, and acts of non-conformity.

Before the recordings took place, there was a lengthy preparatory phase to ensure the data collection process would run smoothly and optimally. The initial step consisted of arranging access to the youth club, which involved meetings beforehand with the social workers who oversaw the club. After undergoing a background check from the authorities to approve contact with young people under eighteen years old, there was a three-month period of getting to know the young people and their environment by visiting the youth club once a week with the permission and presence of the social workers. Whilst this enabled the researcher and young people to become familiar with one another, it also helped to gain a sense of the youth club setting, to learn about linguistic practices in that environment and to observe the constellations of relationships between the young people who were there. This helped significantly with engaging some of the young people later when the time came to arrange the recorded spoken interactions (four in total, each consisting of three young people and the researcher).

The interaction below is from one of the groups and consists of 'Leo' aged sixteen, 'Robert' aged seventeen, and 'Michael' aged eighteen (see Example 1). Leo and Robert considered themselves monolingual speakers of German, whereas Michael spoke Greek at home in addition to being a self-identified speaker of German. The example will be analysed with a view to exploring the expression and construction of language attitudes in the spoken interaction, with particular focus on the concept of positioning and the insights it provides. Since the demonstration here is not making use of a fine-grained conversation analysis approach (precisely marking intonation, length of pauses, and so on), the interactions are presented using a minimal transcription format to keep them readable and easily understandable. The English translation below the original German has been produced by the author and is meant to reflect the language of the original as closely as possible rather than render everything into idiomatic English. [Group #2, 13:31–14:11]

001	MICHAEL:	Sie ähm sie müssen das ma so verstehen, wenn wir zu Hause ähm reden, reden wir ähm mit
002		unseren Eltern eigentlich in einem vernünftigen Deutsch.
003	ROBERT:	Mit Punkt.
004	LEO:	Mit Komma.

005 ROBERT: [Lacht]
006 MICHAEL: Mit Punkt, mit Komma ...
007 LEO: Mit allen drum und dran.
008 MICHAEL: Satzaufbau. Und sobald wir die Tür verlassen, und ein Kollegen sehen: Was kommst du?
009 ROBERT: Das fängt schon an.
010 MICHAEL: Kommt ... kommt schon: oh was machen, Bruder? Was geht heute?
011 LEO: Zum Beispiel so machen ... kürzen wir auch ab. Wir sagen nicht was machst du? Wir sagen ...
012 MICHAEL: Was määhn.
013 LEO: Was määhn.
014 [General laughter.]
015 LEO: Was mahen.
016 FIELDW.: Was määhn.
017 ROBERT: [Laughs.]
018 LEO: Zum Beispiel, zum Beispiel: Wir ... was machst du, wir nehmen das du weg, und sagen einfach
019 nur ‘was mahen’.

001 MICHAEL: You erm have to understand it in this way, when we talk erm at home, we erm actually talk to
002 our parents in sensible German.
003 ROBERT: With full stops.
004 LEO: With commas.
005 ROBERT: [Laughs.]
006 MICHAEL: With full stops, with commas ...
007 LEO: With all these things.
008 MICHAEL: With the formatting. And as soon as we go out the door and see a colleague: How’s it going?
009 ROBERT: It starts straight away.
010 MICHAEL: Starts immediately: oh what’s up, bro? What’s going on today?
011 LEO: For example, like that ... we shorten phrases as well. We don’t say: what are you up to? We say ...
012 MICHAEL: What DOOO [or alternatively, translated less literally: What UUUP].
013 LEO: What DOOO.
014 [General laughter.]
015 LEO: What dooo.
016 FIELDW.: What DOOO.
017 ROBERT: [Laughs.]
018 LEO: For example, for example: We ... What are you up to, we get rid of the ‘you’ and just say
019 ‘what do’.

It becomes apparent from this excerpt that the speakers make a clear distinction between the different spoken varieties they are familiar with and the domains that they are appropriate

for. The way in which language attitudes are expressed through the interaction can be analysed using Bamberg's (1997) levels of positioning, which were outlined earlier and exemplified with reference to König's (2019) interview with EKe in Section 4.4. On the first level of positioning, that is, in relation to other characters in the reported event, the young participants distinguish between ways of speaking with their parents and with their friends. Michael's mention in line 2 of *in einem vernünftigen Deutsch* 'in sensible German' prompts responses from both Robert and Leo in line 6 who then describe this as a variety *Mit Punkt, mit Komma* 'with full stops, with commas'. Besides showing agreement amongst the young people about their self-reported language use in this example, the interaction already conveys the association of a more standard-oriented variety with punctuation and writing, which are hallmarks of written, standard language, and its ideological associations of correctness. In the second level of positioning, in relation to the audience, the extract begins with them addressing the audience, explaining the way 'you' have to understand it. This signals a performative dimension to the interaction, indicating that the language attitudes they express are negotiated depending on who is listening and how they want to present themselves. The symbolic meaning of full stops and commas, associated with more formal 'proper' language, serves also as a guide for the audience to frame clearly the distinction they describe between the casual, informal, playful talk with friends outside of the household and 'correct', 'non-street' language at home with parents. Finally, the third level of positioning, namely in relation to the speakers themselves, describes how they also position themselves in this interaction as skilful speakers who can navigate between the styles belonging to different domains, in this case: home with parents and outside with friends. Their self-described knowledge and awareness of which linguistic resources are appropriate for the various settings underline their understanding that one way of speaking is more polite and norm-oriented, whereas the other style is informal, intentionally non-conformist, and used in a competitive, banter-spirited way.

Drawing again on analytical frameworks explained earlier in the chapter, the rest of the extract from line 8 evokes Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain's (2009: 207) discussion in Section 4.4 of the placement of primary stress on the German word *Salat* amongst their participants and the implications it has for speaking a stigmatised variety of German. In contrast to the speakers in the aforementioned discussion who distanced themselves from the non-standard pronunciation, the participants in this extract from Dortmund identify strongly with this 'other' way of speaking because of its role as a marker of ingroup identity and belonging. Michael positions himself as an expert in the group's informal way of speaking by instigating the explanation and coming up with the initial examples of street talk, such as *was machen, Bruder* 'What's up, bro'? (line 10). Leo and Robert then follow with *Was mäahn* 'What DOOO' (lines 12 and 13), indicating that they can also use these styles and to support Leo's view that their shared way of speaking consists of shortening expressions: *kürzen wir auch ab* 'we shorten phrases as well' (line 11). A crucial insight offered by observing the language attitudes as expressed in their interactions is the constant banter and repartee that gives rise to their slang expressions, providing important context to how the phrases are used and therefore how the interactants view the 'street talk' style that they are describing. Performance and play pervade the entire recorded session. Even in this short example of the back-and-forth between the three young people, the greeting *was machen*

has evolved and been reproduced to form *was määhn* and *was mahen*. It illustrates the fluidity of their ingroup style and the heteroglossic nature of their slang which is continually transient and changing. The eagerness to follow up on each other's examples of how they talk outside of the home shows how this informal style establishes their alignment with the youth club group and keeping up with the playful exchange is part of this practice. Knowing the latest slang signals familiarity with the group. Whilst their interaction indicates positive emotional attachment to this way of talking, it also shows an awareness that it is not suitable for some other settings. Throughout other parts of the discussion beyond this example extract, the three participants continue to emphasise their awareness of domain-specific styles and later describe more clearly their perception that their ingroup informal forms of spoken communication are subject to wider social stigmatisation and prejudice. There are moments later on when Leo positions himself as the 'other' to voice the views of people who criticize the young people because they hear them speaking in a way that is often evaluated negatively.

Another benefit from the weekly visits to the youth club over three months in preparation for the recorded interactions was that, by the time the recordings began, it was fairly straightforward to think up relevant questions and topics for discussion based on the behaviour, relationships and linguistic practices observed during the visits. This greatly assisted the subsequent recorded interactions because references made by the young people to on-going events and trends outside of the focus group could be recognised and followed up by the researcher. The value of contextual information cannot be underestimated for understanding and framing the spoken interaction. Since the recordings took place in a separate, quieter room on the youth club premises, the young people involved were generally at ease and comfortable with the situation. A post-recording feedback chat afforded an opportunity to check on how the participants had found the discussion and to ensure that they were content with the procedure.

Suggested further readings

Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (2017); Davies and Harré (1990); Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2009); Potter and Wetherell (1987); Soukup (2009)