

Style (continued)

LINGUIST 159

American Dialects

11/13/2014

Style in the third wave

“Style are **performative**... style *brings about* meaning, it doesn't just reflect already-existing meaning.”

-the Half Moon Bay Style Collective,
“The elements of style”

Performativity

- **J.L. Austin** – *Speech Act Theory* — performative utterance accomplishes some action
 - “I name the ship ‘Queen Elizabeth’.”
- **Judith Butler** – performative utterance puts forth acts of identity (“doing” a style or social type)
 - “Gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed”
 - Butler, *Gender Trouble* (1993)
- Performance speech (as a register), or “high performance”

Podésva (2001)

- Which variable (or system of variables) is investigated?
- What is the research question?
- Where was the research conducted?
- Who were the speakers?
- How was data elicited?

Podésva (2007)

Linguistic styles derive meaning by

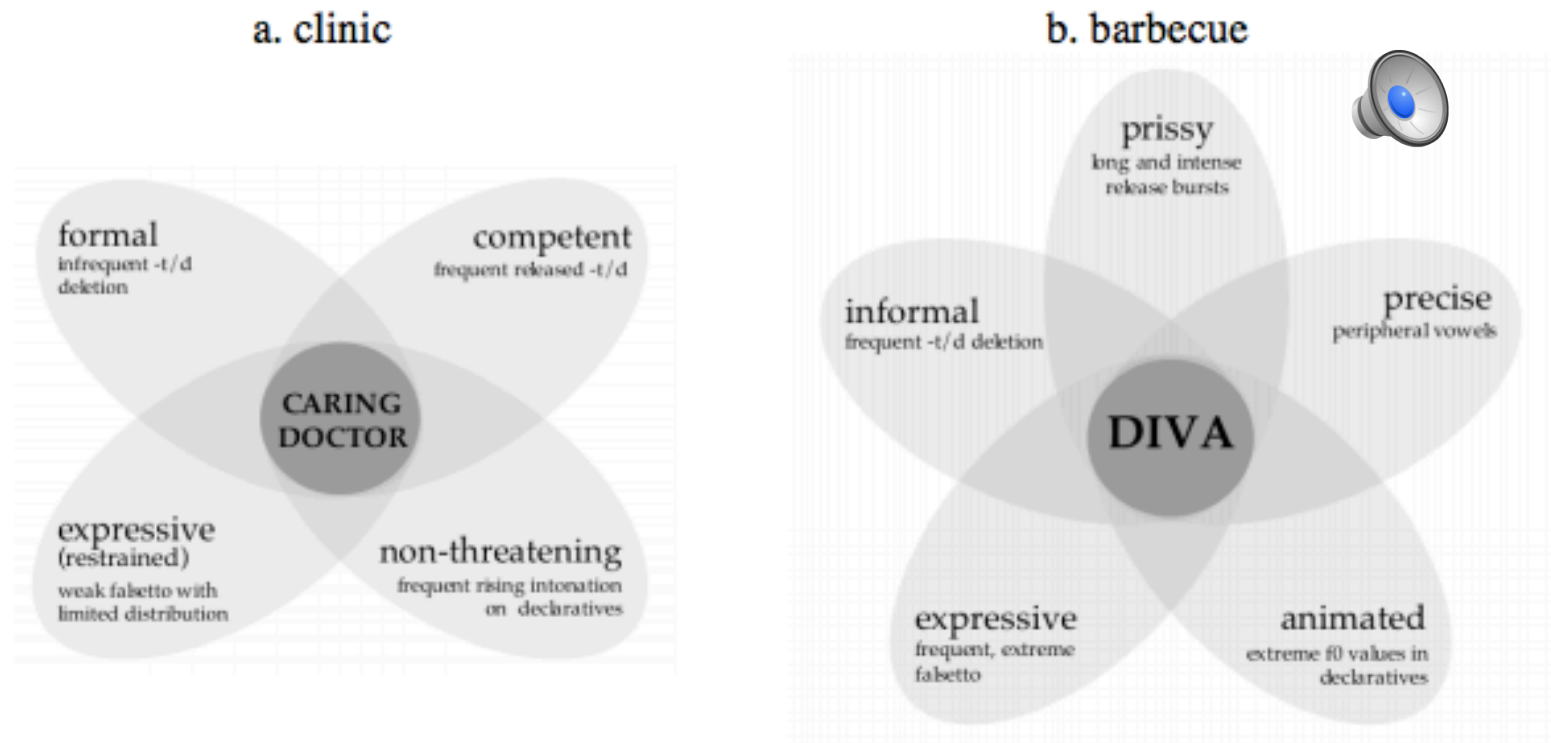
- Assembling the social meanings of their component linguistic features
- Contrasting with other linguistic styles
- Occurring in specific interactional moments

Podésva (2007)


- What are the ways we can infer social meanings of linguistic features?
- How does Podésva use discourse context to infer social meaning? Why is this strategy useful?
- What is the relationship between styles and personas? Why is this useful?

Podesva (2007)

(2) Figure 1. Heath's stylistic packages in two situations



(4) Excerpt of Heath's rollerblading narrative

1 Heath Some kid[d^h] was gonna, shoot, what the hell do you
2 call those little, those little things that,
3 a crossbow. I was, I was **rollerblading**
4 today and some kid's like, '**I'm gonna**
5 **shoot you with my crossbow!**'
6 Eliza <laughter>
7 Heath **This little guy.** And this **other** kid, like, two 
8 minutes **later** has a little **gun completely**
9 separate area. '**I'm gonna shoot you!**' <laughter>
10 Do I just scream, like, 'Shoot me?'
11 Jeff Well, when you're white boys rollerblading through
12 a black neighborhood, yes.
13 Heath **Maybe** so. So um, there's some kinda little, **Oh oh**
14 there's a **cute little**, there's a **cute little**
15 **PARK.** It's on, on kind of, down Washington
16 Boulevard, on the west side of MLK.
17 Eliza Mhmm.
18 Heath 'Cos it's kind of a <unintelligible> so just to
19 rollerblade down in that area. And there, there was
20 a a carnival, which, carnival's are just trash - but
21 I don't go to them. But, but nonetheless there's a
22 carnival. There's a **cute like** park over there and
23 then there's a little, uh, museum-y kinda place.

Podesva (2007)

- How would we situate these findings in the attention to speech model?
- How would we situate these findings in the audience design model? The referee design model?
- Does Heath speak his own dialect? Multiple dialects?

Performance

- Performances used to examine ideological connections between language and particular social types (e.g. Schilling-Estes 1998; Coupland 2001; Chun 2004; Johnstone 2011; Carmichael 2013)
- Linguistic stylization in performances viewed as reflecting most emblematic features connected with these social types — features that are **enregistered**

Performance

- Many studies of performance have examined linguistic performances of social types connected to *place* (e.g. Schilling-Estes 1998; Coupland 2001; Johnstone 2011; Carmichael 2013)
- Dialect stylization – connection between dialect features and *place* as mediated by roles, stances, and social types associated with that place

Schilling-Estes (2001)

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Schilling-Estes (1998)

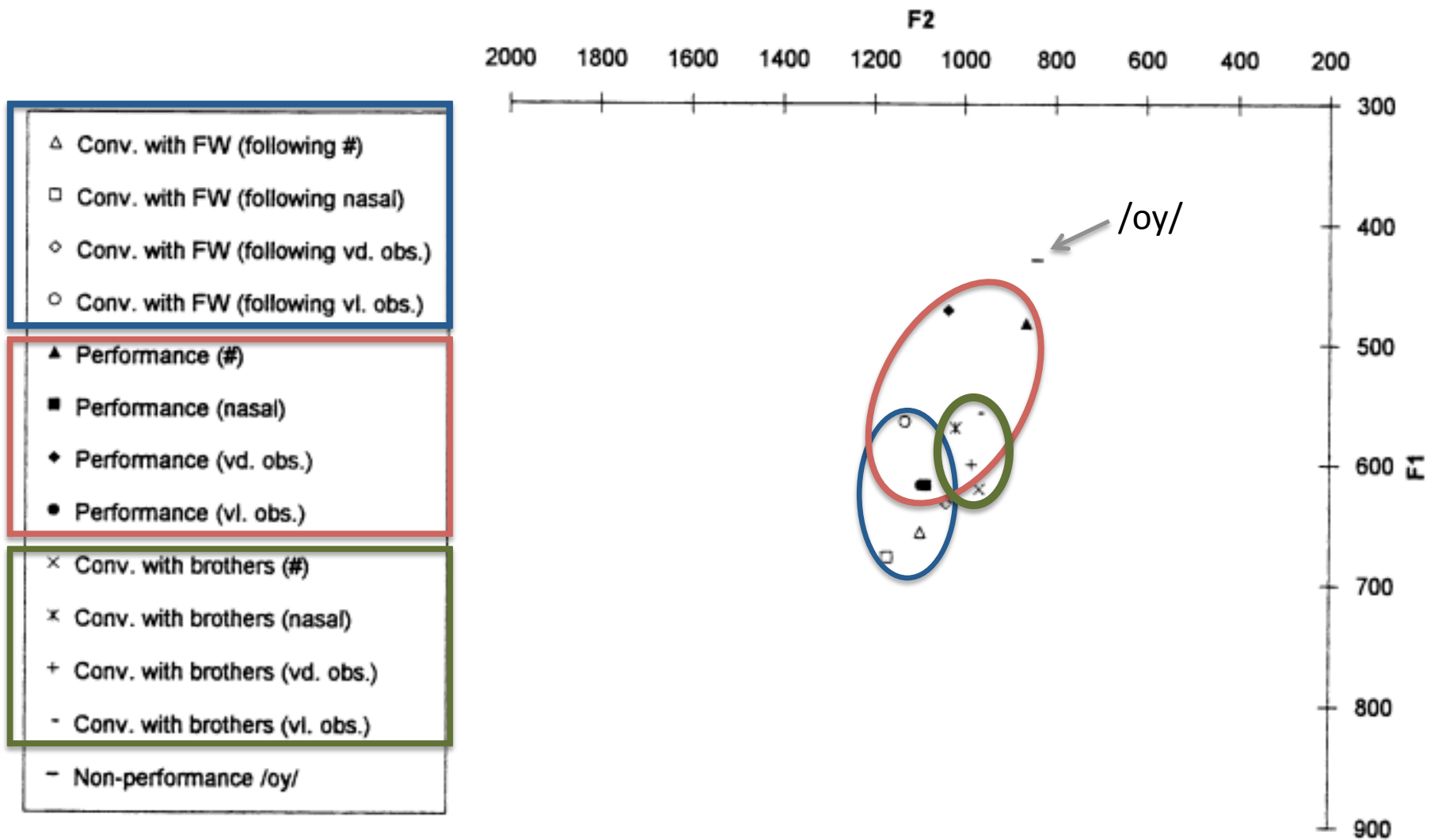


FIGURE 1: Mean values for the /ay/ nucleus in three stylistic contexts.

Schilling-Estes (1998)

- What dimensions of /ay/ does Rex shift upon? Which ones are more influenced by style-shifts? Less influenced?
- What does this tell you about how Rex (and others) perceive about Ocracoke English?
- What is the social meaning of Ocracoke /ay/?
- How does this relate to attention to speech (also a model of perception/evaluation)?

Schilling-Estes (1998)

- *When* in the interview context does Rex shift into his performance register? *Why*? How do we know?
- How can we situate Rex's style-shifting in the audience design model? The referee design model?
- Does Rex speak a dialect? Multiple dialects?
- Connection between dialects and specific roles? Specific personae?
- Does this influence how you think of regional dialects? How?

Performance and Performativity - Questions

- How does thinking about *performances* help us understand the use of dialect features?
- Does performance always run counter to the attention to speech model? The audience design model?
- How are case studies of one speaker useful for us in thinking about dialects?

Style in the third wave - Questions

- Is it reasonable to say that every single utterance of a variable serves a purpose for that speaker or listener?
- How can we separate uses of a variable that can be attributed to speaker agency versus linguistic rules/structure?
- Which types of social meanings are primary?
- How does social meaning, or performativity, interact with consciousness?