

## **Indexical order, identity targets, and the typology of multilingualism**

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The development of a typology of multilingualism must start with a model of the variation observed in multilingual behavior. Patterns of multilingual language choice in interaction—e.g., the distinction between code-switching and language mixing—are clearly one significant area of variation, as already recognized (see, e.g., Auer 1999 and Green & Abutalebi 2013).

Research on small-scale forms of multilingualism—especially in rural areas of Africa (Cobbinah et al. 2017, Di Carlo 2018), the Greater Pacific (Singer 2018, François 2012), and South America (e.g. Epps 2018)—has revealed two domains of variation whose significance does not yet appear to be widely recognized: the structure of local language ideologies and the kinds of metapragmatic knowledge that a multilingual individual must master (see, e.g., Silverstein 1976 for discussion of these domains). These discoveries are due, in part, to an increased appreciation of ethnographic data in sociolinguistic investigation (Eckert 2012).

In this presentation, we develop a preliminary proposal for typologizing variation in the ideological and metapragmatic domains in contexts of small-scale multilingualism. The general framework of the proposal is based on the notion of indexical order (Silverstein 2003). This notion is helpful for characterizing the “layers” of meaning that can be encoded through the deployment of a specific linguistic form in a given context, and it provides a powerful and culturally-neutral way to describe differences in the ways that pragmatic meanings are encoded. In a multilingual setting, indexical order can be used, in particular, to characterize the sociolinguistic meanings that are indexed by language choice. For instance, choosing to address one’s maternal grandfather with the language of one’s father may be seen as communicating disrespect, irrespective of the denotation of the message being conveyed.

The core of our proposed typology rests on what we refer to as *identity targets*, a term we use for the different types of identity that can be indexed via language choice in interaction. Linking the choice of a given language to a specific identity target simultaneously allows one to model how language choice is interpreted within a local language ideology and also characterizes a key component of the metapragmatic knowledge of multilingual individuals.

The study of language and identity, of course, figures prominently in sociolinguistic research. However, it has emphasized the relationship between language choice and variations of a specific kind of identity target, which we term *categorical*, where “one may identify oneself (or another person) by membership in a class of persons sharing some categorical attribute (such as race, ethnicity, language, nationality, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, etc.)” (Brubaker & Cooper 2000:15). By contrast, studies on small-scale multilingualism reveal that at least one other type of identity is central to understanding individual language choice, namely *relational* identity (Brubaker & Cooper 2000:15). This kind of identity depends on the position that an individual occupies within the relational “web” indexed by a language, without implicating any categorical level of identity (Di Carlo et al. to appear).

In this talk, we analyze existing case studies in the literature on small-scale multilingualism to illustrate and justify the distinction between categorical and relational identity. We further argue that this high-level distinction can serve as the foundation of a more articulated typology of identity targets that takes into account the full range of language choice in interaction observed in multilingual individuals over the course of their lifespan.

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