

## **The dynamics of communicative practices in transmigrational contexts<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on identity constructions in interactions among migrant youth in Germany. It addresses the following questions: How do participants construct particular cultural and social identities through communicative practices? How do they use linguistic heterogeneities to position themselves in everyday encounters? What is the relation between the construction of "otherness" and the construction of speakers' own identity? I.e. in what ways is the "discourse of alterity" connected to the "discourse of identity"?

This study of social and linguistic consequences of transmigrational contexts is based on informal interactions as well as on narrative interviews collected between 2003 and 2008 among young men (15 to 23 years old) of migrant background in German youth centres in Münster, Rheine, Solingen and Hamm.

The analysis focuses on communicative practices – such as 'insulting remarks' and stylized forms of reported speech – used in doing identity work. It will be argued that these practices are related to linguistic ideologies; furthermore, they reflect on diversified belongings in a multi-cultural environment.

### **1. Introduction**

Over the last thirty years, social theories have begun to explain the human world not as some 'given' entity, but as constructed, maintained and modified by human action (Berger & Luckmann 1966; Luckmann 1992). Everyday interaction plays the key role in the construction of social reality: It is within interactions that social categories are constructed, cultural relevances transmitted, and social identities created and perpetuated.<sup>2</sup> Thus, language and commu-

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<sup>1</sup> Special thanks to Peter Auer, Celia Roberts and Margret Selting for helpful comments on a previous version. Thanks to Lisa Roebuck for checking the English.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gumperz/Cook-Gumperz (1982: 1): "The study of language as interactional discourse demonstrates that these parameters [i.e. social categories such as gender, ethnicity, etc.] are not constants that can be taken for granted but are communicatively produced. Therefore to understand issues of identity and how they affect and are affected by social, political, and ethnic divisions we need to gain insights into the communicative processes by which they arise."

nicative practices constitute a central part in "forging and sustaining cultural practices and social structures" (Foley 1997: 3).

Various studies, which focused on the analysis of how participants use language to (re)construct, change, and evaluate social reality in their daily interaction, have demonstrated that language cannot be treated as an independent system, instead it has to be studied in its fundamental nature as a means of social practice:<sup>3</sup> "As a result of these studies, language no longer counts as an autonomous system, but rather as a system simultaneously defined by, and defining of, sociopolitical processes" (Gumperz/Jacquemet 2008). In order to bridge the gulf between language on the one hand and 'social facts' such as cultural or ethnic groups, gender, institutional roles, or class on the other, concepts such as 'contextualization', 'indexicality', 'ideology', 'genres', and 'communicative practice' have become of major importance.

This paper analyzes interactive constructions of cultural identities in transmigrational contexts. Working with concepts such as contextualization, indexicality, ideology, genres, and communicative practice, the article provides insight into the inherent linguistic and cultural diversity characteristic of today's communicative environments and sheds light on various practices<sup>4</sup> used in doing identity work.

## 2. Cultural dynamics of diversified communicative practices

Globalization and migrant movements are transforming the communicative environments of modern societies: Germany, as well as other Western European countries, are not only developing from monoethnic to multiethnic but also from monolingual to multilingual societies (Dirim/Auer 2004). Diversities – diversity of languages, diversity of communicative practices, diversity through language – represent a major challenge for linguistics (Blommaert/Verschueren 1998). Whereas in the 1970s linguists as well as sociologists still assumed that children and grandchildren of migrants would adopt the particular majority language as the mother tongue, recent studies in various European countries show that this is not the case.<sup>5</sup> These (grand)children of migrants (in Germany as well as other European countries) increasingly refuse to accept the notion that they must integrate and adopt the prestigious majority language or reject it and preserve the stigmatized minority language. As a consequence, new communicative practices, as well as various forms of language mixing, hybridisation, and creolization are developing, and the relationships between majority and minority languages are much more complicated and dynamic than has thus far been assumed. Along with the development of new forms of linguistic diversity and communicative practices, we observe the construction of new forms of social and cultural identities (Hinnenkamp 2000; Kallmeyer/Keim 2003; Kotthoff 2004; 2008): Youth of migrant background often reject simple self-categorizations such as 'migrants', 'Turks', 'Arabs', 'Russians' or 'Germans'; i.e. belongings and identities can no longer be seen as exclusively related to regional or local roots. Instead we are confronted with multi-cultural places, multiple belongings, multi-cultural identities, and new forms of linguistic diversities; i.e. the supposedly 'natural' link between nation, cultural practices, identities, and language is dissolving (Jacquemet 2005).

The category of 'transmigration' (Stein 2008; Günthner i.pr.) provides a concept with which to describe the ongoing configurations of this cultural as well as linguistic 'in-

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Gumperz (1982a;b); Hanks (1987; 1996); Auer/di Luzio (1992); Günthner (1993; 2000; 2010); Knoblauch (1995); Kotthoff (1998).

<sup>4</sup> The notion of 'practice' ties back to Bourdieu (1982) who considers language and speaking as 'social practice'. Cf. Hanks (1987; 1996); Günthner (1999; 2000; 2003; 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Hewitt (1994); Rampton (1995); Kotsinas (1998); Füglein (2000); Auer (2002); Hinnenkamp (2000; 2005); Dirim/Auer (2004); Keim (2004); Hinnenkamp/Meng (2005); Bückler (2006); Kern/Selting (2006); Günthner (2008; 2010; i.pr.); Selting (2008); Selting/Kern (2009).

betweenness', which transcends the traditional paradigm of migration. It no longer looks at migrant or minority speech communities as isolated entities inside a nation-state, which can be analyzed in opposition to a clearly identifiable, well-structured entity: the dominant, standardized national language. Instead, it focuses on the increasing mobility of people, languages, and cultural conventions, which leads to a complex dynamics of communicative practices.

In order to account for these cultural dynamics, new concepts, new methods, new tools, as well as interdisciplinary approaches are necessary. As Heller (2008: 2) points out: "In the current globalizing context, sociolinguistics has begun to recognize the need to reorient studies of language, community, and identity in the nation-state away from autonomous structure and towards process and practice, in order to capture the ways in which linguistic variation is central to new forms of social organization".

### 3. The construction of social and cultural identities in interaction

In multi-cultural and transmigrational contexts, new social and cultural identities take shape, new communicative practices and new forms of language mixing develop; i.e. people's movements lead to movement in languages and communicative practices.

Based on empirical studies of communicative practices among young men with a migrant background living in Germany, I shall claim that focussing on the development and dynamics of communicative practices can provide new insight into the workings of social and cultural identities as well as into various kinds of diversity in modern societies. I shall look at the intricate ways in which these young men index social group affiliations: How do they use language to construct cultural and social identities? How do they use communicative practices to index social relations in everyday encounters? How do they display diversity through language?

The study is based on informal interactions as well as on narrative interviews<sup>6</sup> collected between 2003 and 2008 among young men (15 to 23 years old) of migrant background in German youth centres in Münster, Rheine, Solingen and Hamm.<sup>7</sup>

#### 3.1. The use of 'insulting remarks'

The data reveal that these young men frequently make use of the minor genre (Bakhtin 1979/86) of 'insulting remarks' when addressing one another.

Genres, which represent a central communicative means in the construction of social reality (Luckmann 1986), work as "frames, embodying presuppositions associated with ideological values and principles of communicative conduct that in a way bracket the talk and thereby affect the way in which we assess or interpret what transpires in the course of the encounter" (Gumperz 1999: 456). Thus, genres can be treated as historically and culturally specific conventions and ideals according to which speakers compose talk and recipients interpret it (Luckmann 1986; Hanks 1987; Günthner 2000; Günthner/Luckmann 2001; Günthner 2007a; 2010). As various studies on uses of genres in everyday interaction reveal, genres – as culturally sedimented patterns of speaking – are closely connected to the dynamics of interaction (Günthner 2007a). They not only guide the activities in verbal interaction but are also part of

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<sup>6</sup> The data were collected (in various schools, youth centers as well as in private locations around Münster and the Ruhr area) by students of my seminars on "Türkenslang" (i.e. an ethnolectal variety of German) and "Sprache und Migration" ('Language and Migration') (2003-2008) at the Westfalian Wilhelms-University Münster. I am grateful to all students who participated in this project. Cf. Bücker (2006); Günthner (2008; 2010; i.pr.).

<sup>7</sup> Most of the participants stem from families with parents born in Turkey, former Yugoslavia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon and Morocco. Some of the youth, however, were born in these countries and came to Germany between the ages of two to seven.

the ideologies of social groups (Bakhtin 1979/86; Günthner/Knoblauch 1995; Günthner 2000; 2010).

The minor genre of 'insulting remarks' is used within this particular "community of practice" (Wenger 1998; Eckert/McConnell-Ginet 1998) as a multifunctional communicative resource with which to do identity work, to form in-group connections and to construct hierarchies and power relations within the group.

The following transcript segment is taken from an interaction between On and Pa. They are 19 and 17 years old, male youth of Turkish and Iranian origin who meet almost daily in a youth centre; they play games, listen to music, or play at the computer. In general, they communicate in German; sometimes bits and pieces of Turkish are used. On is sitting at a computer trying out different names for his e-mail-address, when Pa joins him:

WUDDIE 3 (BÜCKER: MÜNSTER)<sup>8</sup>

01 ON: <<ff> ey ↑Playboy,>  
 02 <<f> komma=HER;>  
 03 (0.5)  
 04 <<all> stell=dich=ma eben=hin und hilf mir ma=mit=n  
 05 ↑NAmen suchen.>  
 06 PA: (0.5) <<p> hey GAMMler;>  
 07 ON: sag mal was GEHT=n heut bei(dir),08 (1.0)  
 08 ON: HA?  
 09 PA: was?=  
 10 ON: =wo kommst du=n HER?  
 11 PA: <<p> zu hause;>  
 12 ON: <<ungläubig> WAS?>  
 13 PA: zu HAUse;  
 14 ON: <<scherzhaft> warste am SÜCHten oder was,>  
 15 PA: ( )  
 16 ON: <<flüsternd> EY, mach ma=n bisschen niKIta  
 17 un=so fertig Alter,>  
 18

01 ON: <<ff> hey ↑PLAYboy,>  
 02 <<f> come=HERE;>  
 03 (0.5)  
 04 <<all> stand=here for=a=sec and help  
 05 find a ↑NAme.>  
 06 PA: (0.5) <<p> hey BUM;>  
 07 ON: tell me what's up with (you),  
 08 (1.0)  
 09 ON: HU?  
 10 PA: what?=  
 11 ON: =where were you?  
 12 PA: <<p> at home;>  
 13 ON: <<sceptical> WHAT?>  
 14 PA: at HOMe;  
 15 ON: <<jokingly> were you high or what,>  
 16 PA: ( )  
 17 ON: <<whispering> EY, do get down on niKIta  
 18 and=others Alter,<sup>9</sup>>

When Pa enters the room, On addresses him with the first pair part of a greeting sequence "<<ff> ey ↑PLAYboy,>" and asks to help him find a name. Pa reacts with the production of

<sup>8</sup> I am grateful to Tania Bucker for providing this example. Cf. also Bucker (2006) and Günthner (2008; 2010; i. pr.).

<sup>9</sup> *Alter* (derived from *alt*, 'old') is an address form typical of "Türkenslang", a (poly-)ethnolectal German variety used among youth with migrant (Turkish, Arab, or former Yugoslavian) background.

the conditionally relevant second part: "<<p> hey GAMMler;>" ('hey BUM; line 06) and thus orients to On's ritual insult.

As in this example, 'insulting remarks' are frequently used in greeting routines. They consist of a greeting element (such as "hi", "hey", etc.) and the insulting address form (Günthner 2010; i.pr.). In cases of adjacently positioned 'insulting address forms' (as in this segment), second speakers don't repeat first speakers' abusing term but their reply shows a variation on the insulting 'theme' (e.g. "PLAYboy" – "GAMMler").<sup>10</sup>

After this initial greeting routine and Pa's statement that he has come from home (lines 12 and 14), On enforces the jocular modality by asking him whether he was taking drugs at home: "<<scherzhaft> warste am SÜCHten oder was,>" ('<<jokingly> were you high or what,>') (Z. 15).

The 'insulting' address forms in our data reveal various parallels with Bakhtin's (1968: 187f.) concept of "unofficial elements of speech" (e.g. abuses), which – by breaking established norms of verbal address – construct common identity among the users:

"Abuses, curses, profanities, and improprieties are unofficial elements of speech. They were and are still conceived as a breach of the established norms of verbal address; they refuse to conform to conventions, to etiquette, civility, and respectability. These elements of freedom (...) exercise a strong influence on the entire contents of speech, transferring it to another sphere beyond the limits of conventional language. Such speech forms, liberated from the norms, hierarchies, and prohibitions of established idiom, become themselves a peculiar argot and create a special collectivity, a group of people initiated in familiar intercourse, who are frank and free in expressing themselves verbally."

Sometimes speakers in our data supply their 'insulting remarks' with laughing tokens, indicating a playful tone of voice. In the following sequence, the first 'insulting remark' is attached to a request:

WUDDIE 3 (BÜCKER: MÜNSTER)  
 77 PA: <<p> trotzdem (.) das klingt doch gut.>  
 78 ((ON tippt etwas am Computer))  
 79 ON: YES:  
 80 (1.5)  
 81 ON: verPISS dich geh ma woanders hin <<lachend> du  
 GAMMler;>  
 82 PA: <<lachend>( ) ALTER>  
 83 (4.5)  
 84 ON: verPISS dich du SCHWUCHtel;  
 85 (4.0)  
 86 ON: BOA mein LIEBlingsfilm;  
  
 77 PA: <<p> still (.) that sounds good.>  
 78 ((ON is typing something on the computer))  
 79 ON: YES:  
 80 (1.5)  
 81 ON: PISS off go away <<laughing> you BUM;>  
 82 PA: <<smiling>( ) GUV>  
 83 (4.5)  
 84 ON: PISS off you FAG;  
 85 (4.0)  
 86 ON: BOA my FAvourite film;

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. also Androutsopoulos (1998: 475). However, contrary to Androutsopoulos' (1998: 474) observation that 'insulting greeting routines' are always accompanied by a second person pronoun ("du" in German), the youth in our data do not necessarily use pronouns in their insulting address forms.

On's 'insulting request' "verPISS dich geh ma woanders hin <<lachend> du GAMMler;>" 'PISS off go away <<laughing> you BUM;>' (line 81) is partly accompanied by laughter, contextualizing a joking modality. Pa joins this playful keying and replies with a further remark (which is not quite intelligible). On returns the apparent 'insult' by intensifying his attack and questioning his sexual preference "verPISS dich du SCHWUCHtel;" ('PISS off you FAG;'); line 84.

Most 'insulting remarks' in the data consist of brief exchanges, usually including two turns. Rarely, as in this example, we find a more extended form (with three and more turns). Extended 'insulting' sequences come close to what Dundes, Leach, and Özkok (1972) describe in their study on Turkish boys' verbal duelling activities: Male adolescents demonstrate their communicative skills in selecting appropriate retorts to provocative 'insults'. Also in the case at hand, On is demonstrating his 'insulting skills' by topping the preceding offences.

In besting Pa's reply, On, however, not only demonstrates his performing skills, but he constructs his status in the group. When Pa does not react (and thus gives in), On changes topic and starts talking about his favourite film. Within this 'community of practice', 'insulting remarks' are used as interactive devices with which to negotiate hierarchy and social status within the group.<sup>11</sup> The skillful performance of 'insulting remarks' forms a sort of subcultural capital (Bourdieu 1979), whereby virtuoso performers gain higher status within the group.

In his work on the Turkish Power Boys, Tertilt (1996: 198-202) discusses playful insults and verbal duelling as important means to construct masculinity among male youth. 'Ritual insults' are – according to Tertilt (1997: 164) – a 'cultural technique', which instructs these young males how to display a macho disposition by showing aggression, dominance, and coolness (Tertilt 1996: 206-209). Dundes, Leach, and Özkok (1972: 158) argue that 'ritual insults' and verbal duellings – as conventionalized genres among Turkish (and Arabic) male youth – are to be considered in connection with Turkish (and Near Eastern) concepts of masculinity. Therefore these genres focus on topics such as manliness and sexuality, sexual subordination and homosexuality.<sup>12</sup> The 'insulting remarks' in our data also mainly revolve around a specific range of topics; i.e. stupidity, laziness, manliness, sexuality, and homosexuality.

However, as the following sequence – also taken from the interaction between On and Pa – shows, not all kinds of insulting terms are accepted within the group; i.e. inadequate 'insults' get rejected. In line 32, Pa addresses another young man (belonging to the same peer group) who is entering the room, calling him a "N:IGGER" in an aggressive tone of voice:

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WUDDIE 3 (BÜCKER: MÜNSTER)
30  ON:  =die meinten der ist voll der Ödo13 un=so;>
31      (2.0)
32  PA:  <<zu einem anderen> (ey du) NI:Gger,>
33  ON:  .hh
34      (2.0)
35  ON:  ach NICH mit NIGger MANN;
36      hör auf mit so=m SCHEI:SS;

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<sup>11</sup> 'Insulting remarks', however, are not restricted to migrant youth in Germany. As various studies reveal, other communities of practice (in Germany as well as in other areas) also frequently make use of 'insulting remarks'; cf. Labov (1974) for 'ritual insults' ("signifying" and "playing the dozens") among Black adolescents, and Mitchell-Kernan (1972) on "mocking" and "marking" activities in African American speech. Cf. also Androutsopoulos (1998) on 'insulting remarks' among German youth without migrant background. Cf. Günthner (2010).

<sup>12</sup> Within migrant contexts in Germany, 'ritual insults', however, do not seem to be restricted to men: As Kallmeyer/Keim's (2003) studies demonstrate, Turkish girls in Mannheim are not only familiar with 'ritual insults', but also practice them.

<sup>13</sup> "Ödo" is slang (derived from "öde"; boring).

30 ON: =they said he was totally NERVE wracking and=so=on;>  
 31 (2.0)  
 32 PA: <<to another guy> (hey you) NI:Gger,>  
 33 ON: .hh  
 34 (2.0)  
 35 ON: oh no NOT with NIGger MAN;  
 36 quit that kinda SHIT;

On explicitly opposes Pa's use of the address form "NI:Gger" and asks him to "hör auf mit so=m SCHEI:SS;" ('quit that kinda SHIT') (lines 35-36). This sequence reveals that what counts as proper terms for 'insulting' is not fixed and determinate, but is being negotiated in interactions.

Here again, the construction of social status is at stake: On is the one who tells Pa what insulting terms to use and what not to use. In criticizing Pa for his use of "NI:Gger" as an address form, On constructs his status as someone whose 'voice' is 'being heard' (Bourdieu 1982) and thus as someone, who has the 'symbolic power' to determine what are proper ways of handling this genre. Through his rejection of Pa's insulting term " NI:Gger", On takes over control of the situation and creates a social situation where he is the actor who claims authority in the field of the debate (Blommaert 2006).

These short sequences demonstrate that 'insulting remarks' have a variety of functions in this "local language community" (Silverstein 1998): They are used as a conventionalized in-group way of addressing co-participants. They also function as a means to construct hierarchies and social status within the group (by means of striking back, giving in, determining what terms are inappropriate, etc.). Finally, these sequences reveal the intertwinedness between genres (such as 'insulting remarks') and the social contexts in which they are produced: Even though address forms such as "Gammer" ('bum') and "Schwuchtel" ('fag'), etc. are abusive terms, their communicative function has to be interpreted within the particular context of use. As part of their communicative household, ritual insults are also closely connected to the construction of a common identity among these youth; as "unofficial elements of speech" (Bakhtin 1968: 187f.) they are used to create a "special collectivity".

In an interview sequence On and Pa state that German youths have problems understanding their way of talking. As an example for such misunderstandings they refer to "Beleidigungen" ('insulting remarks'):

WUDDIE (HEURLÉ: MÜNSTER)  
 232 ON: wenn einer (.) der nich zu uns gehört,  
 233 und einmal mit uns is;  
 234 der würds uns vielleicht nich so gut verstehen;  
 235 PA: (-- ) was wir (.) meinen;  
 236 ON: oder er würd irgendwas ernst nehmen  
 237 was gar nich ernst gemeint is;  
 ((...))  
 281 ON: alles was was es an beleidigung gibt;  
 282 ON: [(.) is bei uns dabei so,]  
 283 ? [((lachen)) ]  
 284 ON: aber das is dann halt keine beleidigung (.)  
 [für UNS so ](.)  
 285 PA: [ ((...))]  
 286 ON: weil das is nich ernst gemeint-  
 287 das is immer mit=nem lächeln;

232 ON: if someone (.) who isn't one of us,  
 233 and he's with us once;  
 234 he's not really gonna understand;  
 235 PA: (-- ) what we (.) mean;  
 236 ON: or he might take something serious  
 237 that wasn't meant like that;

((...))  
 281 ON: all those insults we have;  
 282 ON: [(.) for us it's like],  
 283 ? [((laughter)) ]  
 284 ON: but it's not really an insult (.) [for US ](.)  
 285 PA: [((...))]  
 286 ON: because it's not serious-  
 287 it's always with a smile;

On and Pa are talking about communicative problems they have with people who are not part of their group (i.e. 'someone, (.) who isn't one of us,' line 232): They don't understand their ways of talking and take things seriously which aren't intended to be serious (lines 236-237). A few seconds later, On refers to "beleidigungen" ('insults') to exemplify what they mean by 'communicative problems'; he states that such an 'insulting remark' is not meant seriously: 'it's always with a smile' (lines 286-287). Thus, he refers to the modality these insults have for 'them' as a group; outsiders, however, might misunderstand the intended playfulness and take them seriously.

This sequence displays the participants' ethnotheory concerning their use of "Beleidigungen" ('insults'): They treat them as 'their language', which differentiates them from outsiders who do not understand its modality. Here, we can detect the speakers' linguistic ideology (Silverstein 1987), i.e. the more or less explicit knowledge of their own communicative practices.<sup>14</sup>

Linguistic ideologies form the basis for framing the meanings and functions of particular linguistic practices (Gal/Irvine 1995; Gumperz/Jacquemet 2008). However, as Bucholtz (2007: 245) argues: "On the one hand, the social meanings that ideology assigns to particular linguistic forms affect who may legitimately use them and in what way. On the other hand, the ways that people speak may either reinforce or challenge language ideologies – and often the latter, for social meaning of language, while ideologically rigid, is often more flexible in practice".

Within this particular community of practice, 'insulting remarks' are treated as a sort of 'we'-code which distances these youth from those who apparently don't know how to 'play the game'. However, even though these youth state that their German peers don't understand these practices, research as well as own ethnographic observation point to the fact that also German youth (without migrant background) make use of insulting remarks (Androutsopoulos 1998). Thus – even though actual communicative practices may challenge their linguistic ideologies –, this group's ideology concerning proper uses and interpretations of 'insulting remarks' serves as a communicative symbol contextualizing membership (or "association"; Simmel 1908/1958) and differentiating insiders from outsiders. Linguistic ideology and practices serve as "acts of identity" (Le Page 1978);

### 3.2. Stylizations of (the) 'typical German'

As Susan Gal (1988: 247) writes:

"We need a comparative analysis that interprets codeswitching practices not only as conversational tools that maintain or change ethnic group boundaries and personal relationships but also as symbolic creations concerned with the construction of 'self' and 'other' within a broader political economic and historical context."

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<sup>14</sup> According to Irvine (1989: 255) linguistic ideology can be treated as "the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests".



In this section I shall discuss stylizations and codeswitching between various linguistic varieties as resources speakers use to construct association and otherness within their local language community.<sup>15</sup>

The speakers in our data frequently make use of stylized reported speech to portray social groups, to symbolize social types and to distance themselves from members of these groups. These stylizations heavily rely on indexical means, such as choices of one linguistic variety over another, particular prosodic design, features of voice quality, specific lexico-semantic devices, and the use of particular communicative activities. Participants mobilize linguistic heterogeneities to index social identities and belongings.<sup>16</sup>

In the following, we shall look at two sequences to investigate how these young men exploit linguistic heterogeneities in reported speech to index social identities and to construct 'otherness'.

The first segment is taken from an interaction between two female university students of German family background (Jule and Jana) and two male high school students (Si and Sey) of Turkish background.<sup>17</sup> After Jule and Jana have asked the young men about their uses of Turkish and German in various contexts, Si and Sey report that they sometimes have fun ("wir machen uns auch unter uns LÄCHerlich", 'among ourselves we have fun') by imitating German and the way some Germans speak.

SPOTTSPRACHE I (MOCK LANGUAGE I) (Jule-Jana-Sey-Si; Rheine)  
 454 Si: ( ) wir machen uns auch unter uns LÄCHerlich,  
 455 =zum beispiel ( )  
 456 wir reden dann IMmer wir-  
 457 =so typisch DEUTSCH;  
 458 damit wir dann eben halt noch=noch ( ) sind.( )  
 459 Si: wir reden [(noch) ] typisch DEUTSCH.  
 460 Sey: [nein so]  
 461 Si: DOCH klar mann,  
 462 =( ) doğrusunu söyle Oğlum.<sup>18</sup>  
 463 wir reden UNterhalb u-  
 464 =unter uns reden wir richtig dieses verFALLene,  
 465 (.) dieses richtige,  
 466 Jule: ALte deutsch?  
 467 Si: dieses ALte deutsch;  
 468 =wenn wir uns lächerlich machen zum beispiel=verstehen sie,  
 469 ich hab zum beispiel nen (deutschen) beKANNten,  
 470 Sey: aber doch nicht [uns selber du ( ) ]  
 471 Si: [meine SCHWester wohnt da;]  
 472 und da rede ich doch auch,  
 473 WAS?  
 474 **Moruk;**<sup>19</sup>  
 475 =wir reden doch unter uns über die DEUTschen,  
 476 =und erzählen uns gegenseitig WITze.  
 477 Sey: JA.  
 478 =aber wir machen uns nicht in DEM sinne  
 gegenseitig schlecht;  
 479 Si: [nein ich sag ja eben ((...)) ]  
 480 Sey: [sondern wir machen uns LÄCHerlich]  
 481 =wie die DEUTschen eigentlich reden;

<sup>15</sup> As argued in Günthner (1999; 2007b; 2010), 'association' or 'otherness' are not objective relationships of given entities between individuals or groups but are the result of interactive accomplishments and interactive processes of attributions.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Auer (2007) and Günthner (2007b; 2010) on linguistic heterogeneities and constructions of identities.

<sup>17</sup> Thanks to Judith Enge and Janine Sternhagen for collecting these data.

<sup>18</sup> This is Turkish for "tell the truth, boy!"

<sup>19</sup> "Moruk" is Turkish for 'old fogey'. It is used as an address form in "Türkenslang".

482           =und nicht wir SELber,

454   Si: (           ) among ourselves we have fun,<sup>20</sup>  
 455           =for example (           )  
 456           then we speak we-  
 457           =like typical German;  
 458           so that we then well are sort of (           ). (           )  
 459   Si: we speak [(...)           ] typical German.  
 460   Sey:           [no like]  
 461   Si: of course we do man,  
 462           =(           ) *doğrusunu söyle Oğlum.*  
 463           we speak below a-  
 464           =among ourselves we really speak in this outdated,<sup>21</sup>  
 465           (.) this real,  
 466   Jule: old German?  
 467   Si: this old German;  
 468           =when we make fun for example= you understand,  
 469           for example I've got a (German) acquaintance,  
 470   Sey: but not of [ourselves (           )           ]  
 471   Si:           [my sisters stays there;]  
 472           and then I also speak,  
 473           what?  
 474           **Moruk;**  
 475           =among ourselves we talk about the Germans,  
 476           =and tell each other jokes.  
 477   Sey: yeah  
 478           =but we don't want to run each other down;  
 479   Si: [no I just said ((...))]  
 480   Sey: [but we make fun]  
 481           =about the way the Germans speak;  
 482           =and not ourselves,

Si and Sey are pointing out that when they are alone together, they sometimes imitate "typisch DEUTSCH" ('typical German') (line 459). Si tries out various terms to refer to the German variety they use to make fun of: "typisch DEUTSCH" ('typical German'), "dieses verFALLene (.) dieses richtige" ('this ['declined'] outdated (.) this real [German]') (lines 464f.). When Jule provides the term "dieses ALte deutsch" ('this old German') as a reaction to Si's search for an expression (line 466), he takes up her suggestion "dieses ALte deutsch" ('this old German') (line 467) and enforces that they use this variety to make fun of (and at the same time to have fun). After a short clarification sequence between Si and Sey (line 470-479), Sey emphasizes that they make themselves "lächerlich" ('ridiculous') about the Germans' way of speaking (line 481), which contrasts from their own way (line 482). Thus, the activation of different varieties is used as a resource for opposition-building and for positioning oneself and others in social space.<sup>22</sup>

Right after this sequence, Si lists various examples to illustrate how they make themselves "lächerlich" ('ridiculous') about the German's way of speaking. First he mentions his use of Austrian German (lines 485-6):

SPOTTSPRACHE II (MOCK LANGUAGE II)  
 483   Si:       ich sag das halt nur eben halt so

<sup>20</sup> This unusual (and ungrammatical) German construction is ambiguous, as "lächerlich" actually means 'ridiculous'. In this context, Si implies that they 'are making fun of' as well as that they 'are having fun'.

<sup>21</sup> In the German original Si uses the term "verfallene [Deutsch]" (i.e. 'gone to ruin' or 'declined' German).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Auer (2007: 14).

484 =normale Sachen  
 485 ( )in österreich sagen DIE so  
 486 <<falsettostimme> LECK mia am orsch> oder  
 487 Sey: <<lacht>>  
 488 Si: (das eben so VOLL)  
 489 =RICHTig so deutscher irgendwie so  
 490 Jule: hm  
 491 Si: (oder )<<mit nasaler, gepresster Stimme> GERD  
 492 =kommst du bitte ESSen>  
 493 oder ( )  
 494 Ju&Ja: <<lachen>>  
 495 Si: <<mit leicht jaulender Stimme> der rennt ja wie  
 496 schmidts KATze durch die gegend>

483 Si: *I just say it just like that*  
 484 *=normal things*  
 485 ( )in Austria they say like  
 486 <<falsetto voice; imitating Austrian dialect> kiss  
 my ass> or  
 487 Sey: <<laughs>>  
 488 Si: (this is so totally)  
 489 =typical German somehow like that  
 490 Jule: hm  
 491 Si: (or )<<in a choked, nasalized voice> GERD  
 492 =would you please come to eat>  
 493 or ( )  
 494 Ju&Ja: <<laugh>>  
 495 Si: <<howling voice> this guy is running around  
 496 like Schmidt's cat >

After imitating Austrian German, which is acknowledged by Sey with laughter (line 487), Si (line 489) introduces a 'typical German speaker' ("=RICHTig so deutscher irgendwie so", 'typical German somehow like that'). The ethnic category 'German' is used here to refer to a social group, he doesn't consider himself to be a member of. In lines 491-492 Si animates the voice of a 'typical German' who is calling a person named "Gerd" to table: "GERD=kommst du bitte ESSen" ('GERD=would you please come to eat'). In order to display this category bound way of speaking, Si applies various linguistic and prosodic resources:

- (i) a highly distinct pronunciation and slow tempo indexing a monitored way of speaking (Mitchell-Kernan 1972: 177);
- (ii) a choked, nasalized tone of voice;
- (iii) a typical German name ('Gerd') used in the address form;
- (iv) the politeness marker "bitte" ('please') indicating a very polite and somewhat distinguished way of calling a family member to come to the table.

This type of reported speech functions as "category animation" (Deppermann 2007: 336), and thus as one of these "cases, in which an utterance is not framed as a veridical quotation, but as an animation (...) of a way of speaking that is indexical of some category of persons". In our extract, this stylized type of reported speech is used to index the category of a "RICHTig so deutscher" ('typical German'); i.e. the reporter (Si) does not pretend to reconstruct sequences from actual past dialogues, but instead he aims at portraying typical characteristics of a specific social group by indexically relating specific ways of speaking to a particular social type. What he evokes is the voice of a highly stylized speaker of Standard German. As Rampton (2006: 225) points out, when speakers switch into a stylized voice, "the recipients are invited

to use their broader understandings of society to figure out exactly what 'image of another's language' this is actually supposed to be." At the same time, they are also asked "to figure out exactly what dimension of the practical-activity-on-hand the voice or accent might be relevant to – so as well as 'What is this voice representing?' there is the question: 'How is this voice relevant to the business-on hand?' And on top of that, they are invited to provide an evaluation – 'Is this representation any good? How does the performed image compare with their own sense of the language, people and events being modelled? And how well does it fit into what we're doing right now?'"

Here, the animation of the character's hyper-distinguished, mannerized voice shows indications of mockery; i.e. the quoted voice is prosodically stylized in such a way that we can detect a 'layering of voices' (Bakhtin 1979/86; Günthner 1993; 1999; Schwitalla 1997/2003): On the one hand, we 'hear' the voice of the 'typical German'; on the other hand we 'hear' Si's evaluation of this utterance as exaggerated, fuzzy, and squeamish. Thus, the typical German's voice comes close to what Bakhtin (1981) calls "parodistic stylization":<sup>23</sup> The reporter uses the voice of the other and exploits it for her/his own purposes. This *mise en scène* of a typical German's way of speaking invites the recipients to laugh (line 494). Si then comments on Gerd's reaction (after he was called to eat) by referring to an idiomatic expression: "<<mit leicht jaulender Stimme> der rennt ja wie schmidts KATze durch die gegend>; '<<howling voice> this guy is running around like Schmidt's cat >'). In referring to this saying, he portrays Gerd (and thus, the 'typical German') as a sissy; i.e. as someone who is scared of his bossy wife and rans around panic-stricken.

Si's way of "playing with the voice of others" (Deppermann 2007) resembles communicative practices described in Anthropological Linguistics as "styling the other" (Hill 1999). In stylizing others' voices, the reporter (Si) sets up a dense "symbolic dialogue between the speaker's self and the images of the other" evoked through the special code of selection. (Rampton 2001: 49). As Rampton (1999: 421) points out, in 'styling the other', speakers exploit linguistic varieties "to appropriate, explore, reproduce and challenge influential images and stereotypes of groups that they do not themselves (straightforwardly) belong to. By performing a variety that is stereotypically associated with a group, they can evoke, represent or even identity with the group". In this extract, we can observe how the reporter (Si) exploits particular linguistic means (especially prosodic cues) to construct a variety which becomes indexically related to a group he doesn't consider himself to be a member of. (i.e. "=*RICHTig so deutscher irgendwie so*", 'typical German somehow like that'). Thus, the general high prestige of Standard German is converted in Si's performance; i.e. social norms and attitudes towards the standard variety of German are subverted to provide Si with a linguistic means to distance himself from a 'typical German'.

Thus, we can detect how participants use linguistic heterogeneities in their performances of identity display.

The following segment is taken from an interaction between two female students Ina and Eva and Enis and Robbie, two male youth, whose families come from the former Yugoslavia. Enis and Robbie are talking about reasons why they don't like to mix with the German. They hardly have any German friends, because "die sind nich so wie wir (.)" ('they aren't like us'); "die sind nich DRAUF wie wir" ('they aren't up for it like we are.');

WIR UND DIE DEUTSCHEN ('WE AND THE GERMANS') (BÜCKER)<sup>24</sup>  
 345 Ina: ja und ähm=ihr habt aber nicht SO: viele deutsche  
 346 (.) freunde;  
 347 nich so viel wie ausländische?  
 348 Ro: nein=nein[=nein]

<sup>23</sup> Cf. also Günthner (1997, 1999, 2002, 2007b) on prosodic stylization in reported speech.

<sup>24</sup> Thanks to Tanja Bücken for sharing this data with me.

349 Ina: [ wie]=wieso ist das so?  
 350 Ro: wir kommen mit den deutschen [nich] in DISco rein=  
 351 En: [ähm ]  
 352 En: =nEIn (-) man kommt mit den leuten (.)  
 353 wie soll ich sagen?  
 354 die sind (0.5)  
 355 am meistens=die sind nich so wie wir.  
 356 Ro: verstehs du?  
 357 die sind nich DRAUF wie wir  
 358 (-)die ham's nich DRAUF.  
 359 En: nein=nich deswegen aber=  
 360 Ro: =die machen zu viele hausaufgaben.  
 361 En: nein die sind nich so wie wir (.)  
 362 zum beispiel wenn (-)  
 363 wenn ich die witze mach,  
 364 (-) jeder versteht's  
 365 aber er er kapiert's nich.  
 366 Ina: wieSO:?  
 367 wieso meinst du ist das so?  
 368 En: weiß nich=die sind nich so AUFgewachsen wie wir=  
 369 die sind anders AUFgewachsen=  
 370 Ro: =verstehs du  
 371 wir sind halt AUFgewachsen (-)  
 372 wir ham (.)reSPEKT(-)[in der famILie]  
 373 Ina: [ was sind] denn das für witze,  
 zum beispiel,  
 374 was, die die=die die nich verstehen?  
 375 meinst du vom (-) INhalt oder von der  
 [MESSage oder ]  
 376 En: [ja: überhaupt] auch so (-)  
 377 das (.) benehmen is anders=  
 378 Ro: =also die reden SO  
 379 <<len> ↑JA: ich möchte gerne DIE:S machen>  
 380 <<len> und falls ich das KRIE:GE> (-)  
 381 <<len> dann wird ich gerne mein  
 abiTÜ:R gerne machen müsste=>  
 382 <<all, f> =aber wir reden so>  
 383 <<all, f> ↑YO check the MOve=>  
 384 <<all, f> wollen das arbeit kriegen>  
 385 <<all, f> wenn nich=>  
 386 <<all, f> verPISS dich ALTer>  
 387 En: ( ) so kriegste nIE: ne arbeit, alter  
  
 345 Ina: well and ehm=but you don't have that many german  
 346 (.) friends;  
 347 not as many as foreign ones?  
 348 Ro: no=no[=no]  
 349 Ina: [ wh]=why not?  
 350 Ro: we don't get into discos [with] the germans=  
 351 En: [ehm ]  
 352 En: =no (-) one gets with these people (.)  
 353 how should I say this?  
 354 they are (0.5)  
 355 most of the time=they aren't like us.  
 356 Ro: you understand?  
 357 they aren't up for it like we are.  
 358 (-) they got no flava.  
 359 En: no=not because of that but=  
 360 Ro: =they do too much homework.  
 361 En: no they aren't like us(.)  
 362 for instance when (-)  
 363 when I tell the jokes,

364 (-) everybody understands it,  
 365 but he he doesn't get it.  
 366 Ina: why?  
 367 why do you think this is the case?  
 368 En: don't know=they aren't brought up the way we are=  
 369 they are brought up differently=  
 370 Ro: =you understand  
 371 we were brought up (-)  
 372 we show (.) respect (-) [within the family]  
 373 Ina: [what kind of ] jokes are those,  
 for example,  
 374 what, those those=which they don't understand?  
 375 do you mean (-) concerning the content or the  
 [message or what]  
 376 En: [well: in general] besides (-)  
 377 their (.) behaviour is different=  
 378 Ro: =well they talk like  
 379 <<len> ↑yeah: I would love to do this>  
 380 <<len> and if I get that> (-)  
 381 <<len> then I would like to  
 get my high school diploma=>  
 382 <<all, f> =but we speak like>  
 383 <<all, f> ↑YO check the MOve=>  
 384 <<all, f> want to get work>  
 385 <<all, f> if not=>  
 386 <<all, f> piss off ALTer>  
 387 En: ( )you'll never get a job like that, alter

Enis and Robbie are providing various examples to illustrate differences between German peers and themselves that make it difficult for them to be friends: Germans work too much for school, Germans don't understand their jokes, they are brought up differently, they don't show respect within the family, etc. After Ina asks for more details concerning the argument that the Germans don't understand their jokes (lines 373ff.), Enis refers to their different way of behaving (line 377). Robbie supports Enis' statement by illustrating their ways of speaking.

As in SPOTTSPRACHE II (*MOCK LANGUAGE II*), Robbie displays 'category-animation' (Deppermann 2007: 336ff.) and assumes the footing of an anonymous (German) speaker. The combination of mannered Standard German with a highly distinct pronunciation and a slow tempo indicates "monitored speech" (Mitchell-Kernan 1972: 177) and contributes to stylizing the animated characters in an affected way. By pronouncing "abiTÜ:R" (line 382) with a pointed mouth and a lengthened "Ü:", the articulations sound rather uncool and somewhat arrogant.<sup>25</sup> Thus, phonological variables in combination with specific lexical elements are used to constitute particular social categories.

Again, we not only 'hear' the voice of a typical German, but we also 'hear' the narrator's evaluation of the reported utterance as exaggerated, pedantic, and ridiculous. In this 'parodistic stylization', "the speaker's expressivity penetrates through the boundaries" (Bakhtin 1979/86: 92) of the speaking subject and spreads to the other's speech, by transmitting it in a caricatured way.<sup>26</sup> Thus, what is treated as the typical way for the majority group (Germans) to speak, is being ironized and ridiculed.

As Gumperz (1982a) points out, linguistic resources are conceived as conventionally connected to particular values and frames of interpretation. In line 382 Robbie contrasts this mannerized way of speaking with his own group's variety, starting out with the contrastive

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Kallmeyer/Keim (1994: 232f.) on "gezierten Standard" ('foppish standard') with a slow tempo and an accentuated way of speaking. Cf. also Bückler (2006: 97).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Schwitalla (1997/2003); Günthner (1999). Cf. also Selting (2008) on alternation between German and 'Turkish German' as speech styles.

connector "aber" ('but') ("<<all, f> =aber wir reden so> "; '<<all, f> =but we speak like>'). Again, reported speech is used as category animation – indexically related to the in-group ("wir"; 'we'). Robbie's staging of their own voice sharply contrasts with the portrayed German way: It shows typical features of 'Türkenslang', a (poly)ethnolectal German variety used among youth with migrant (i.e. Turkish, former Yugoslavian or Arabian) background, who are oriented towards a Ghetto identity (Hinnenkamp 2000; Androutsopoulos 2001; Dirim/Auer 2004; Kallmeyer/Keim 2003; Kern/Selting 2006; Selting 2008; Selting/Kern 2009; Kern 2009; Günthner 2010; i.press):

- prosodically it is realized with an increase in volume and tempo;
- we find lexical markers such as "ALTer", "YO", slang terms such as "verPISS dich", hiphop phrases ("check the MOve");
- it reveals grammatical markedness indicative of 'Türkenslang': incorrect uses of grammatical gender marking ("das arbeit").

This codeswitching into an ethnolectal variant ('Türkenslang') clearly contrasts with the mannered variant of Standard German attributed to their German peers. Enis' comment on their way of speaking clearly indicates possible consequences (on the use of non-standard variety): "so kriegste nIE: ne arbeit, alter"; 'you'll never get a job like that, alter' (line 387).

The display of different ways of speaking symbolically indicates different social worlds (Bücker 2006: 97): On the one hand, the Standard German variant of speaking represents an orientation to the German majority society and an orientation to higher education. On the other hand, the ethnolectal variant is typical of the youth subculture, which Enis and Robbie orient to. The use of particular ways of speaking indexically ties a social group to practices and ideologies associated with toughness, coolness, and with problems in finding work.

The 'they'-code is contrasted with 'we'-code. Thus, the construction of identity and alterity, of sameness and otherness, of in- and out-groups is closely connected to communicative practices and ideologies. Instead of employing explicit evaluations (such as 'conformists', 'cowards', 'grinds', 'sissys', etc.), Robbie mainly relies on indexical means (such as codeswitching into Standard German, prosodic features, means of voice quality, particular lexical items, etc.) to index social meanings and at the same time to contextualize his evaluation of the 'other's' communicative behaviour.

Codeswitching into stylized Standard German is a cultural capital used in this group as a resource for doing identity work. The standard variety of German is being recontextualized and hereby exposed to parody. By ridiculing speakers of Standard German, the young men symbolically take revenge and cope with issues of low status; i.e. they subvert majority values. At the same time, they are aware of possible consequences resulting from their belonging to the sub-culture (cf. line 387, where Enis comments on Robbie's self portrayal: 'you'll never get a job like that, alter').

Furthermore, the category-animation is presented as a performance, in which there is "a heightened awareness of both the act of expression and the performer" (Bauman 1986: 3). This 'mise en scène' brings a way of speaking into the 'spotlight' for evaluation and critique and presents it as something for the audience to enjoy and laugh at.

The episodes reveal how diversities of language and diversities of speaking are performed and, at the same time, are inseparably connected with the social worlds of the self and others, both present and absent in a specific context.

These sequences also hint at the cultural dynamics of these youth, who no longer inhabit one locale, but find themselves in borderlands (Hall 1992): Their linguistic practices reflect their experience with multiple cultural sites and their ability to translate between heterogeneous communicative practices, styles, and varieties (Gumperz/Jacquemet 2008). The use of

different varieties to stage different social characters indicates that in plurilingual communities, languages and linguistic varieties can serve as indexically pregnant modes of performing and 'voicing' identities (Silverstein 1998: 407).

#### 4. Conclusion

With migrant movements, not only are people moving, but languages and communicative practices are also 'on the move'. This study – focussing on communicative practices in trans-migrational contexts – reveals how youth in multi-cultural environments develop their own forms of communicative practices (and ideologies), oscillating between different languages, varieties and (sub)cultures. The analysis sheds light on two ways of constructing inclusion vs. otherness in a group of young men: 'insulting remarks' and category animations in reported speech.

The speakers employ 'insulting remarks' as a multifunctional resource. They form a sub-cultural capital which they use to position themselves as insiders and others as outsiders. Furthermore, they are communicative means with which to establish hierarchy and status within the group. As an "unofficial element of speech" (Bakhtin 1968: 187f.) this little speech genre represents "a breach of the established norms". By "transferring [their speech] to another sphere beyond the limits of conventional language", it creates "a special collectivity, a group of people initiated in familiar intercourse, who are frank and free in expressing themselves verbally."

Another practice employed by these young men to do identity work and position themselves in opposition to other social groups is the use of stylized forms of reported speech (i.e. 'playing with the words of others'). In animating social characters with specific linguistic varieties and contrasting stylized and even parodized ways of speaking with their own, the reporters provide little performances and create 'acts of identity'. Furthermore, these uses of linguistic diversity point to the way in which linguistic resources are indexically related to linguistic ideologies.

The analysis reveals important social and linguistic consequences of transmigrational contexts. Studying communicative practices in these contexts helps us to gain insight into complex everyday life communication processes which construct diversified belongings in a multi-cultural environment.

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