

# Men's Identities and Patterns of Variation

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## 1 Introduction

The sex pattern in language variation, in which men use non-standard variants more than women, has proven to be one of the most widespread phenomena in variation research. While many explanations for men's linguistic behavior have been proposed, few have been based on in-depth social science research, and even fewer on research on men's identities. Because people communicate identity through language use, it is important to consider research on social identity when constructing explanations for language use. When studying the sex pattern and men, then, we should ask what it is about men's identities that leads them to value aspects of non-standard language varieties. In this paper, I attempt to connect men's everyday identities, the surrounding cultural forces helping to shape those identities, and their use of the non-standard variant of one linguistic variable.

Research on language and gender – and gender studies in general – suggests that power is central to men's identity, and it is in the notion of men's identities as powerful that I find the explanation for men's non-standard usage.<sup>1</sup> Socioeconomic status, or prestige, is the normal conception of power in variation studies. These studies make the basic assumption that socioeconomic power is indexed through standard language use (as shown by a correlation between socioeconomic status and variant use, following Labov 1966). But power may come in forms other than structural socioeconomic status; in fact, research on men's identities suggests that men who lack socioeconomic power often construct identities that are powerful in other ways, sometimes destructively so (see Connell 1995). One common alternate source of power employed by men is physical power. I propose that when men use more non-standard variants, they do so to help create a powerful identity based on physical power rather than structural power.<sup>2</sup>

I demonstrate in detail how this process works through an analysis of the (ING) variable in the speech of members of a small, homogeneous community of practice: a college fraternity. Even within this homogeneous community, men's identities vary with respect to their constructions of powerful identities. I focus on two men who use more of the non-standard variant, [ɪŋ] (which I will refer to as N), than other men in a more formal and public meeting activity type. In meetings, most fraternity men shift toward the standard variant ([ɪŋ], or G); in contrast, these two men actually shift toward N in the meeting

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<sup>1</sup> Power is defined here on two levels. On its most basic level, power is action that affects other actions. More generally, it is the potential to affect the actions of others as perceived by the actor and the others based on the perceived roles of the actor and the others.

<sup>2</sup> This proposal builds on Eckert's (1990) explanation for the sex pattern. She suggests that the boys she studied have other ways of expressing power besides language, but girls that girls have fewer ways to symbolically express power. I would not limit language to only symbolizing one kind of power, but connect language to other forms of power, and suggest that men *do* use language for power, even those who seem to use prestige forms less frequently. However, because men have different access to various kinds of power, they use language differently. As often is unfortunately true, the rules are different for men and women.

activity type. By investigating these men's identities in depth, I explore how they are creating a powerful identity, and how the N variant is consistent with this powerful identity.

Then, by connecting these local identity constructions with more global concerns, I suggest that the explanation for the fraternity men's language use could form the basis of a general explanation to men's side of the sex pattern. Motivation for these local identity constructions comes from cultural models and ideologies that represent men in stereotypically powerful roles, but allow for more than one powerful role. Thus, both structurally powerful identities (connected with standard language use) and physically powerful identities (connected with non-standard language use) are culturally ratified men's identities. These different sources of power can be thought of as sources for overt and covert prestige, respectively (see Trudgill 1972 and below for a discussion of covert prestige).

Finally, in this paper I address the way in which variants and social meanings interact. In my analysis, I suggest that cultural roles are general sources from which speakers piece together identities and linguistic variants (see California Style Collective 1993 for a discussion on this process). But speakers put these roles and variants to use at the local level of discourse within a community of practice. Thus, it is only at the local discourse level that we can understand variants through their interaction with all levels of context (including other variables), and the social work they do. Within the fraternity, culturally-recognized power roles are aligned with different parts of the fraternity ideologies (hierarchy, competition, and camaraderie). In addition, the cultural and community power roles are indexed in discourse through the stances and footings taken up by speakers within activity types, these activity types are interpreted within the historical context of previous roles evoked in the community by the speaker. The local use of a variant is therefore connected the global patterns of use reflected in variation analyses.

The paper proceeds as follows. I first frame the problem: After a review of the (ING) variable, I present the quantitative data from the fraternity. Next, I lay a sociological foundation for the explanation: I outline a framework for power and the relationship between power and men's identities; I connect this framework to the fraternity structures, activity types, and ideologies. Once I have laid this explanatory foundation, I show how two members construct power in their identities, how their use of the variable connects with these powerful identities, and how these constructions reflect and interact with the community ideology as well as cultural models and roles.

## 2 The (ING) Variable

Fischer (1958) performed the first known study of the (ING) variable. He analyzed data from interviews and test protocols with children in a "semi-rural New England Village". Fischer's work is a relatively sophisticated study the nature of linguistic variables and their connection with identity. He found first that boys used N more than girls. However, he went on to note that the difference between two types of boys was also significant. The 'model' boy, who "did his school work well, was popular among his peers, reputed to be thoughtful and considerate" (1958:49), had a much higher rate of G and lower rate of N than did a 'typical boy,' who was seen as "physically strong, dominating, full of mischief, but disarmingly frank about his transgressions" (1958:49). This finding suggests already that the primary social meaning of the variable has more to do with characteristics such as dominance and rebellion than with the sex of the speaker. Sex shows an effect because of the difference between the number of boys and girls who construct such an identity.

Fischer notes that the variants "serve to symbolize things about the relative status of the conversants and their attitudes toward each other" (1958:51). Fischer thus anticipates here the connection between stance and identity that have only recently been pointed out in variation studies (Bucholtz 1992, McElhinney 1991). Finally, Fischer notes in his conclusion, again anticipating later findings, that "[a] variant which one man uses because he wants to seem dignified another man would reject because he did not want to seem stiff" (1958:56).

Since Fischer's study, many studies throughout the world have found similar sex-marked results for this variable, although most did not analyze differences within groups, such as Fischer did with boys in his study (Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley 1968, Anshen 1969, Woods 1978, Reid 1978, Douglas-Cowie 1978, Wald and Shopen 1981, Houston 1985). Labov's (1966) study of New York City, which served as a model for most variation studies, investigated (ING) and found a strong correlation between both class and style and (ING), but no significant differences for sex. Labov (1972) notes the remarkable regularity of the variable, which he names a stable sociolinguistic marker. The variable is stable because its rate of variation does not seem to be changing (although it does vary somewhat by dialect), and it is a marker because speakers are aware of the variation, but have not stereotyped it so much that the low prestige variant is never used. Because the variable is sensitive to both class and style, Labov (1972:240) noted that "it may therefore be difficult to interpret any signal by itself – to distinguish, for example a casual salesman from a careful pipefitter", echoing Fischer's comments quoted above.

It is possible that Labov's findings with respect to gender may result from the class structure of New York, which proceeds in a more gradual manner than Norwich, the subject of Trudgill's (1972) study. In that city, Trudgill found a sharp differentiation in the (ING) rates between the middle class and the working class.

Trudgill hypothesizes that "[working class] speech, like other aspects of [working class] culture, appears, at least in some Western societies, to have connotations of masculinity, probably because it is associated with the roughness and toughness supposedly characteristic of [working class] life which are, to a certain extent, considered to be desirable masculine attributes". (1972:182) Thus, the sharper difference between classes, and a more class conscious society may cause men to be more likely to use the (ING) variable as a sex-marked variable.

Trudgill's study is important in other respects. In contrast with previous studies' focus on women's higher rate of standard usage, he focused on the behavior of men, and their higher use of non-standard speech. He notes "that there are hidden values associated with non-standard speech, and that . . . they are particularly important in explaining the sex differentiation of linguistic variables" (1972:183). Trudgill goes on to investigate whether this "covert prestige" has a role in the sex differences in Norwich.

To discover covert prestige, Trudgill investigated how men and women reported their use of several other variables that show socioeconomic stratification in Norwich. He asked informants what variants they used, and how often. Some respondents reported more standard speech than they actually used (over-reporting), some reported less (under-reporting), and some were accurate. Simplifying somewhat, Trudgill found that men tended to under-report more than women. Thus men seemed to value the non-standard in a covert way. There was no difference between the reporting across classes, suggesting that sex, not class, is the important independent social variable. Age, however, was also a factor in under-reporting; both young men and women under-reported more than their older counterparts. He notes that "group-identification of a kind desirable by these speakers is signaled by the usage of non-standard form, and this leads to its increases and exaggeration" (1972:192).

These findings, then, provide some suggestions as to the reasons behind the higher male non-standard usage: male toughness, and male and youthful rebelliousness. Trudgill (1972:188) also suggests "signaling group solidarity" as a concern for men. Trudgill, however, assumes that these values are salient for his speakers, and neither performs nor cites sociological nor anthropological evidence;<sup>3</sup> we have no independent reason to believe that the men whose speech he analyzes have the values and goals he ascribes to them. Trudgill's study thus moved the understanding of sex and variation forward greatly, but, as often happens, left more questions in its wake.

Another relevant study is Huspek's (1986) study of lumber workers in the northwest United States. Huspek attempts to arrive at a more fine-grained explanation of the use of the variable. He proposes seven descriptive, categorical rules for the use of (ING) in the worker's speech, based on the grammatical category of the word containing the variable, whether the word is a "swear word", respect for or resentment toward the agent of verb constructions with (ING), and whether or not the agent is the speaker.

While this study is welcome in that it suggests more specific constraints on (ING), it falls short in several respects. The first shortcoming is that it assumes the variable is sensitive only to prestige, as defined by social class, without providing a definition or justification for this explanation. Thus, Huspek's explanations are not as specific as they might seem, since they all appeal to the same explanatory concept. Moreover, other explanations are not considered, such as the role solidarity or friendship might play in the use of the variable. Even though speakers score high on a linguistic insecurity test, and are from a lower socioeconomic group, these facts do not necessitate that prestige is the reason for the correlation; we need more specific evidence about the values and ideology of the community, and the salience of those values during the speech event during which the analyzed forms were uttered to be certain of explanations. This is the second criticism: the study does not take into account the actual values and ideology of the community, and how the variable fits into those values. Finally, Huspek does not take into account phonological effects (e.g., following phonological environment), although he does use other language internal (syntactic) factors to analyze the variable. He argues for the functionalist view that syntactic categories have social significance, and that this social significance is at the heart of the syntactic pattern of (ING). In this sense, he blurs the distinction between language internal and external factors.

Huspek thus argues that syntax, lexical meaning, and social meaning are inseparable. This claim is refuted strongly by Houston's (1985) work on the history of (ING), and the historical basis for the grammatical patterning of the variable. Houston also found that (ING) is sensitive to grammatical category, but on a gradual, rather than categorical, scale: more 'noun-like' words had a higher rate of G than 'verb-like' words. Thus, in her multiple regression analysis of speech from interviews in England, she found that more 'noun-like' a word, the more likely that it will have the G variant. However, the statistical groupings do not fit into the four categories identified by describing words as +/-Noun and +/-Verb, but into less discrete categories on a continuum, which Houston cites as supports for Ross's (1973) grammatical continuum.

Houston also found that the grammatical effect reflects "an historical process, a partially completed merger between two originally distinct morphemes in English" (1985:360). She establishes this fact through differences in (ING) use in south England dialect areas and correlated differences in the history of the morphology in these areas. Houston shows that the difference in variable rates between noun and verbal categories can

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<sup>3</sup>Although to Trudgill's credit, little research specifically focusing on gender was available, and feminist theory was still in its infancy.

be better explained through the history of English, rather than appealing to morphology or the functional characteristics of nouns and verbs.

In sum, the (ING) variable is perhaps the most studied variable in the English language (if not in all linguistics), because it is variable in all varieties of English and is sensitive to most of the factors sociolinguistics have considered for any variable: phonology, syntax, dialect, style, class, and sex. Moreover, the general picture is the same across dialects for the other factors, so that even in places as far apart as Los Angeles, Norwich, and Australia, men tend to have a higher rate of N than women. This regularity and stability is attractive for analyzing language use in the fraternity, where members are not all from the same dialect area. Moreover, as Labov (1972:243) notes, "[w]ithout a base line of stable sociolinguistic markers, there is no basis for investigating more abstract questions", such as how aggregate patterns of language and gender relate to the everyday work of identity construction.

### 3 (ING) Patterns in the Fraternity

In this section, I describe the results of the analysis of (ING) in the fraternity. I first describe the coding procedures, then present the main results. I then analyze cross tabulations and other manipulated data to better understand the patterns at work.

#### 3.1 Coding

Each token of (ING) was coded as alveolar (preceded by an untensed vowel), velar, or alveolar (preceded by a tensed vowel). The latter were rare, and were eventually dropped from the analysis. Each token was also coded for the independent variables of speaker, activity type, following phonological environment, and grammatical category. Speakers were coded by person, rather than sex, class, etc., since I am comparing individuals in a homogeneous community (with respect to sex, age, and class).

Activity type is similar to the style factor in Labov (1966) and other studies. I use activity type rather than style for several reasons. First, most variation studies are based on interviews, and therefore do not have the possibility of coding for activity type. Second, activity type is defined both emically and etically; members themselves recognize a difference between "hanging out" and meetings, the two main types on which I have focused.

Meetings are simply tokens of (ING) spoken during the full weekly meetings. A sample of meetings were coded, chosen at random. Gavel, the story round at the end of these meetings, was considered a separate activity type, because the tone, purpose, and organization of talk changes considerably. Unfortunately, I was able to tape very little of this activity type, and it is therefore not central to my analysis. "Hanging out", or "socializing" as I usually refer to it, is less specific than meetings. Socializing takes place at a number of locations and with differing numbers of participants; however, dividing this activity type would not yield comparable results, because each speaker was not recorded in all types of socializing types. Tokens for the socializing activity type were exhaustive for each speaker. This activity type was the most difficult to tape, and therefore fewer tokens were available.

I also coded interview tokens, although these interviews were not necessarily classic sociolinguistic interviews, in that the goal was not to obtain the most vernacular speech. These interviews were used to understand the fraternity and its ideology, gather

information about members, and find out how they see their role in the fraternity. All interviews were not identical, however, because not all were private, and I did not have a close relationship with all interviewees. One turned into a group interview; I therefore added the group interview as a category, but only a few of the speakers participated, and I did not set up another interview. Interviews were coded for the first 45 minutes, or the complete interview, if shorter. Because of the volume of talk in interviews, they comprise over half of the total tokens. Some word lists and reading passages were recorded, but again, only with some speakers.

Internal factors coded for were following phonological environment and grammatical category. In addition to grammatical categories outlined by Houston (1985), the marker *fuckin'* was included as a separate category. This word functions as several different grammatical categories, but is almost categorically alveolar.

### 3.2 Results

Tokens were analyzed using the IVARB variable rule multiple regression analysis program for DOS. All factor groups were selected as significant in the step-up-step-down procedure. Table 1 lists the results for all factors, with probabilities and percentage of N.

The variable rule program asks for an 'application value,' which I chose to be N. Other studies have traditionally chosen G as an application value (e.g., Houston 1985). Because the two variants are true variants (as shown by Houston's work), as opposed to one being a derivation of another, the choice is probably not crucial. My choice was motivated by the fact that I am specifically interested in the men's use of the non-standard, given the patterns other studies have found, especially Trudgill (1972).

<b>Following Environment</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>
Liquid	.65	74	31/42
Labial	.57	67	89/132
Alveolar	.56	60	166/278
Vowel	.51	57	197/345
Palatal	.50	38	5/13
Semivowel	.49	60	29/48
Pause	.36	41	75/184
Velar	.34	53	31/58
Input/total	.62	57	623/1100

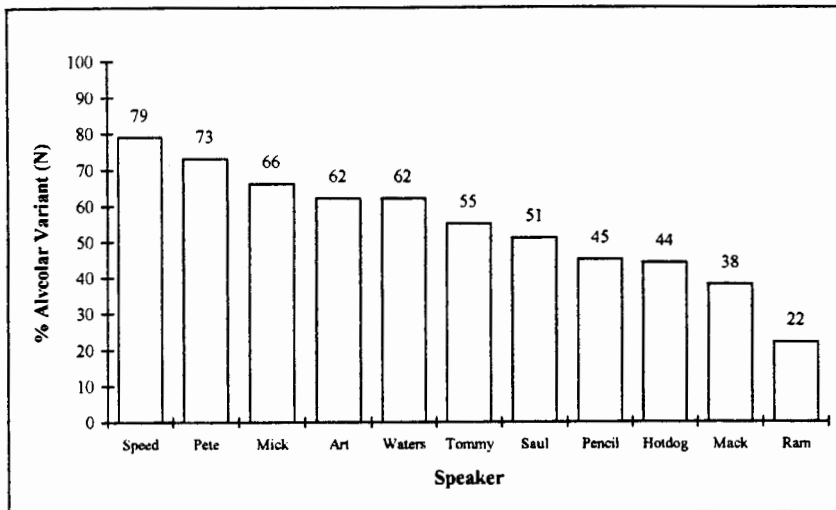
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>
Speed	.91	79	130/164
Mick	.63	66	84/128
Pete	.54	73	100/137
Tommy	.51	55	16/29
Art	.47	62	40/65
Waterson	.45	62	23/37
Pencil	.36	45	50/111
Hotdog	.33	44	77/175
Mack	.31	38	32/84
Saul	.28	51	59/116
Ram	.15	22	12/54
Input/total	.62	57	623/1100

Grammatical Status	p	%	N
Fucking	.97	97	86/89
Progressive	.61	69	313/453
Verb complement	.59	72	43/60
Preposition	.54	60	9/15
Participle	.48	54	47/87
<i>something, nothing</i>	.41	45	29/64
Mono-morphemic Noun	.38	47	9/19
Proper name	.38	67	2/3
Appositive	.38	60	9/15
Adjunct modifier (part)	.27	38	8/21
ACC ING	.27	36	4/11
Sentential complement	.26	25	1/4
WHIZ deletion	.23	33	2/6
Derived nominal	.16	14	2/14
Gerund	.16	24	49/201
Adjunct Modifier (ger)	.16	30	8/27
Adjective	.11	18	2/11
Input/total	.62	57	623/1100

Activity Type	p	%	N
Socializing	.72	75	180/240
Interview	.54	53	280/529
Meeting	.30	46	118/256
Group IV	.59	67	14/21
Reading	.10	54	25/46
Gavel	.29	75	6/8
Input/total	.62	57	623/1100

**Table 1: Probabilities and percentages of alveolar (N) application of (ING) for all factor groups.**

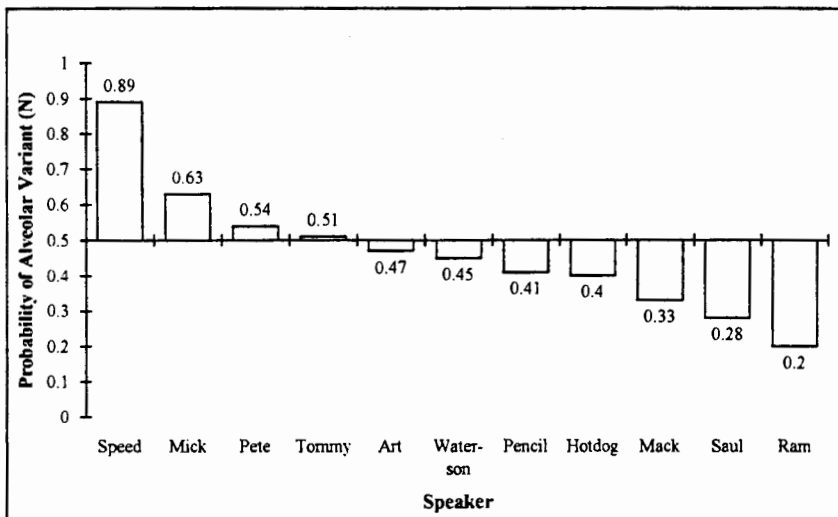
The non-discrete differences of probabilities in the grammatical status factor group roughly match Houston's (1985) findings for grammatical category, although I have not analyzed the results in detail, since this issue has no bearing on my research question (except to account for any interaction). For the same reason I will not speculate on the striking differences between my results and Houston's for the following phonological environment; the only similarities between the results are the effect of a following velar consonant (favors G), and [-back] consonants, which slightly favor N.



**Figure 1: Percentage of alveolar variant for speakers.**

The results for speaker are reproduced graphically in Figures 1 and 2. In Figure 1, the percentages of N use are shown, yielding a range from 79% for Speed to 22% for Ram. Note the gradual slope; there are no clear groupings among speakers. This situation changes for the variable rule results in Figure . Although the distribution still looks quite smooth, notice that Pete is not highly likely to use N (compared with his percentage of 73%), while Saul is very unlikely to use N (compared with his percentage of 51%). These disparities suggests that there is an interacting factor that gives these men higher percentages than would be expected from their probability scores. The probabilities also suggest a way of grouping the speakers: one group favors N (Speed and Mick), another group disfavors N (Saul, Mack, and Ram), while the other speakers form a middle group, with Pencil and Hotdog disfavoring the use of N slightly more than Pete, Art, Waterson, and Tommy.





**Figure 2. Variable rule probabilities of alveolar variant for speakers.**

However, speaker was not the only language external variable that affected the use of (ING); activity type was also significant. I focus on three activity types: Socializing ("hangin' out"), meetings, and interviews, with the former two being the most important, given that they are 'natural' or 'native' speech activities. Socializing highly favored N at 75% (.72 probability), while meetings disfavored N strongly at 46% (.30 probability). Interviews fell in between at 53% (.54 probability).

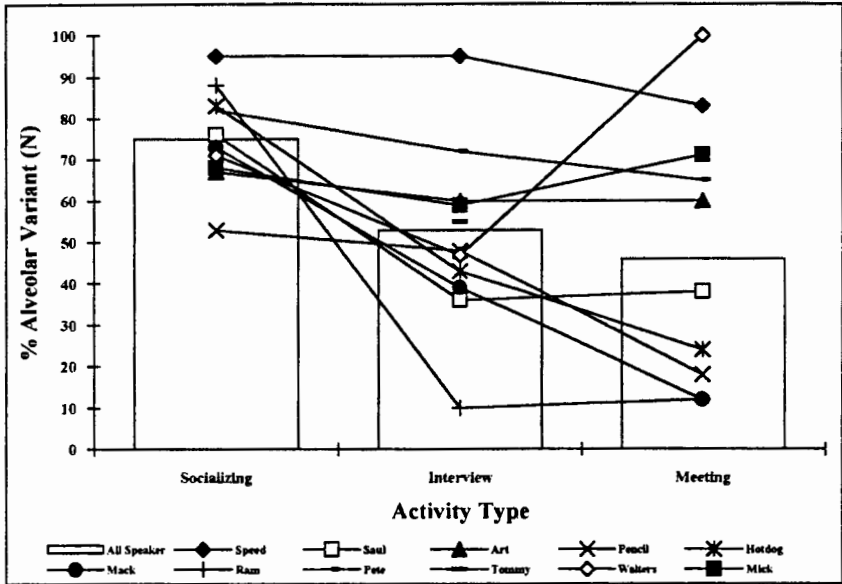


Figure 3. Cross tabulation of speaker and activity type factor groups.

The variable rule analysis does not tell the whole story, however. As Labov noted, the interaction between style (activity type) and class (speaker) is one of the interesting aspects of this variable. Thus it is important to investigate the interaction patterns through a cross tabulation, the first of which is given in Figure 3.

Across activity types, the pattern of speaker stratification changes dramatically; most speakers move in the same general direction, but they do not move in lock-step. Moreover, the differences between speakers increase from socializing to meeting. In the socializing activity type in figure, most of the speakers congregate in a 67-88% range. This clustering is found again in the interview results, with a group congregating in a 36-60% range. In the meeting activity type, however, there is no such 'core' middle group; the speakers are spread out almost evenly, with the largest split occurring between a group below the mean (indicated by the bar) and a group above the mean. Speed continues his outlier status in all three activity types.<sup>4</sup>

The speaker factor group also interacts with the language internal factor group of grammatical category, as shown in Figure 4. In order to see a pattern, this chart represents only the four most numerous categories; other categories present so few tokens that no

<sup>4</sup> Ram's low score in the interview section is probably due to several factors. First, it was a short interview, conducted while several other members were present. This prevented Ram from relaxing and from losing his awareness of the tape recorder. It was also the first interview I conducted, and I did not yet know Ram very well. Thus, he was self-conscious of his presentation of self within the language ideology of the dominant culture (rather than the fraternity).

pattern was apparent. The progressive factor represents verbal categories, while gerund represents nominal categories. Thing words (*nothing, something*) were not as numerous, which accounts for most of the deviations from the pattern (Pete and Mick).

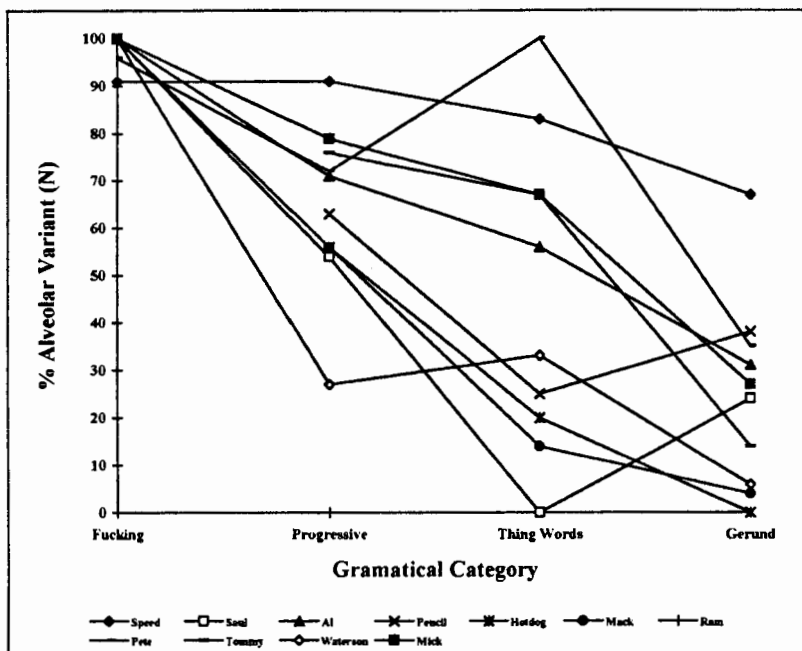


Figure 4: Cross tabulation of speaker and grammatical category factor groups

Here we see the strong effect of the discourse marker *fuckin'*: Almost all speakers use N categorically with *fuckin'*. All speakers except Speed use less N in progressive, even less in gerund, with thing words falling in between. The results in this figure indicate that *fuckin'* tokens may interfere with the regularity of the results (although it is an important part of using language to create identity). Therefore, removing it from the analysis may yield more accurate results. Figure shows the cross tabulation of speaker and activity type without *fuckin'* tokens.

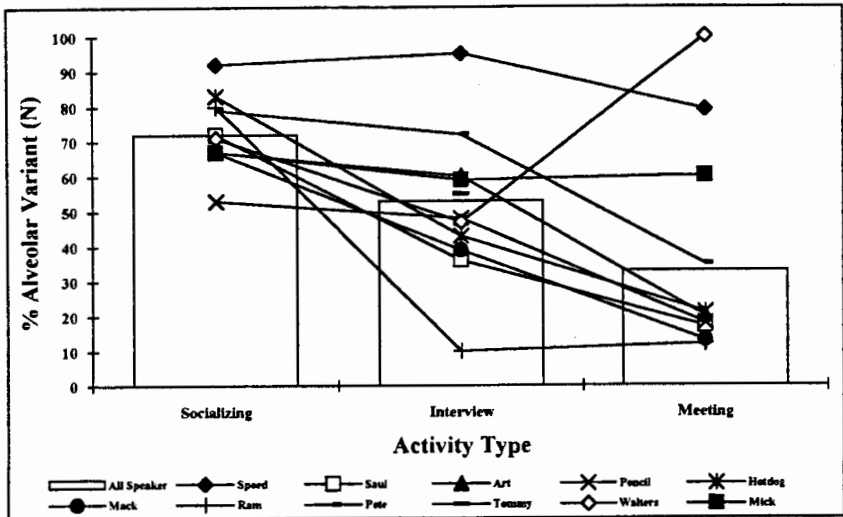


Figure 5: Cross tabulation of speaker and activity type factor groups, tokens of *fuckin'* not included.

The picture now becomes much more regular, because of changes in the meeting activity type. The speaker stratification without *fuckin'* tokens is almost identical in the socializing and interview situations as with these tokens, with a small drop in the average N rate in the socializing situation (from 75% to 72%), and no change in the interview situation. However, the meeting situation average drops considerably, from 46% to 33%, and the cluster we find in the socializing and interview activities is now present in the meeting activity as well. The meeting activity also corresponds more closely with variable rule probabilities (except for Watson, whose categorical N is discussed below).<sup>5, 6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Thus, the reason the meeting activity was so spread out seems to be the influence of *fuckin'*. This finding raises a more interesting question, however: *why* were the *fuckin'* tokens so influential in the meeting situation? Why did they make up such a great proportion in this situation and not in the socializing situation, where we might think that the relaxed atmosphere would allow the men to swear more? The role of *fuckin'* will be taken up in the discussion.

<sup>6</sup> Watson's anomalous behavior is probably due to a low number of tokens. Overall, he only had four tokens in the meeting activity, two of which were *fuckin'*. The remainder were progressive and thing words, respectively; more tokens may have yielded a pattern more in line with the other speakers, although see the analysis below of his speech from which the tokens are taken. Finally, this graph suggests that Speed's high use of N still must be explained, and Pete consistently uses a higher rate of N as well.

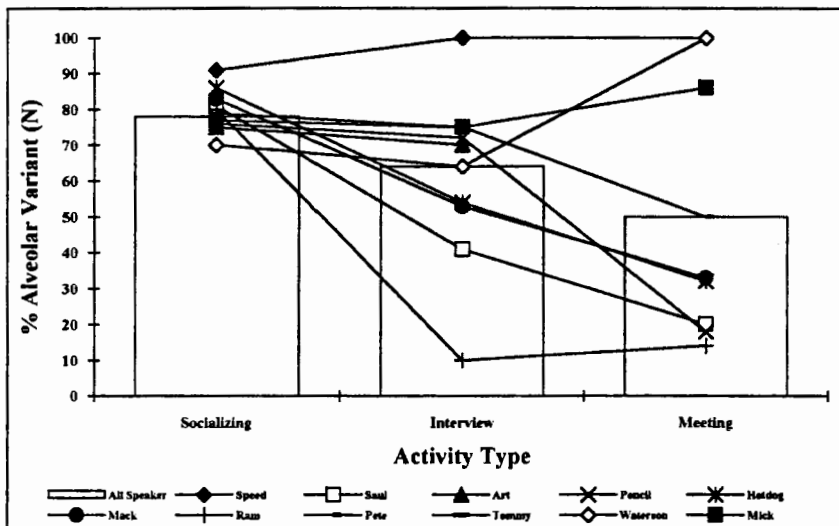


Figure 6: Cross tabulation of speaker and activity type for progressive verb forms only.

One way to factor out the effect of the grammatical category is to consider only one category. Thus, I now turn to an analysis of the progressive tokens only in Figure 6, which again shows the fan pattern noticed in Figure \*. More important, the order of stratification is almost identical to the variable rule probabilities in Figure \*, Waterson's two tokens notwithstanding: Mick and Speed actually *increase* their use of N in the meeting situation, while the others decrease it, with Pete decreasing much less than the others. In addition, Pencil now clusters with the other speakers in the socializing activity type, suggesting that his low N rate previously was due to language-internal factors.

The difference between socializing and meeting are even more obvious in Figure 7, which only shows those two situations. Notice that the slopes that Speed and Mick follow are similar, as are all the other speakers except Pete (who already seems to be a special case) and Waterson. Given that progressive tokens make up 41% of all tokens, it is not surprising that the pattern for those tokens is similar to the aggregate pattern. The progressive is the only grammatical category that contains enough tokens to be analyzed separately ( $n=453$ ). Even a combining factors of following Houston (1985:109) does not yield a meaningful cross-tabulation picture for gerunds, the next most common grammatical category, since many speakers used no gerunds in the analyzed speech ( $n=201$  for gerunds alone;  $n=287$  for combined factors).

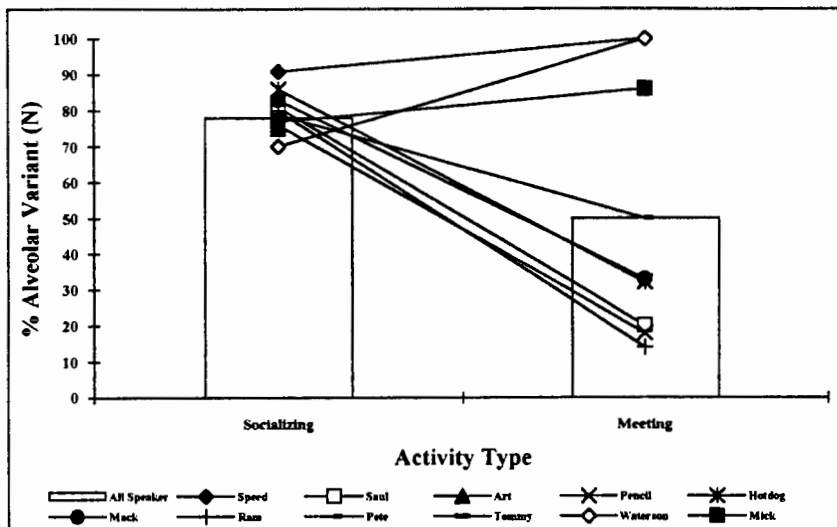


Figure 7: Cross tabulation of speaker and activity type (without interview) for progressive verb forms only.

I discuss Speed's consistently high N scores elsewhere (Kiesling 1996a, b). His behavior is consistent with his rebellious identity and his alignment with a working-class, merit-driven ideology of hierarchy – he questions the ascribed hierarchical system in favor of an achieved hierarchical system. In this paper I will focus on the Mick's and Waterson's high meeting N scores. Thus, I will attempt to find the motivation for their 'anti-hypercorrection': why do Mick and Walters shift to such a high N value in meetings, when other fraternity members shift in the other direction?

This question can be answered most successfully by considering the men's unique identities within the context of the ideology of the fraternity and the speech activities. In the next section, I explain the ideologies of the fraternity and the cultural ideologies in which they are embedded.

#### 4. Gamma Chi Phi, Power and Hegemonic Masculinity

The answer to the question posed in the previous section ultimately lies in the (linguistic) mechanisms men use to create powerful identities. We thus need to explore the relationship between language, power, and men's identities in general before we attempt to explain the two men's behaviour. This relationship, the focus of this section, is based on sociolinguistic and social science research, and is motivated more fully elsewhere (see Kiesling 1996a).

#### 4.1 Power

Power, at a practical level affecting language use, comes from relatively enduring power roles into which people step, either literally or figuratively. These roles come from four different but interrelated contexts, each slightly more removed from the interaction in which a power role is invoked. First, roles are available from a person's previous identities within a community; members of the community will remember that person's role and their relationship to it, and assume that the present role will be consistent in some way with a previous role. Although identities do change, they tend to be stable, not static. In the fraternity, a member may become older or be elected into a new position, thereby changing his available roles. However, he will fit that role into his historically constructed identity. Second, roles are available from the current activity type (Levinson 1992) or frame (Bateson 1972, Goffman 1974, Frake 1977, Tannen 1990). For example, the role of teacher is salient while *giving* a lecture (and may be evoked by certain kinds of language), but may not be as salient (or salient at all) when *listening* to a lecture (when 'colleague' or even 'student' may be the role). Third, the community's structure may provide different roles for a speaker (including both formal roles such as "class president", and informal roles such as "class clown"). Finally, the culture provides (and restricts) roles available to speakers based on cultural models for that speaker, especially when it comes to ascribed characteristics such as sex, age, and ethnicity (see Holland and Quinn 1987). Because of the multiplicity of sources (virtually every new person encountered provides a new role from which "identity material" – linguistic or otherwise – may be drawn), identity constructions will be a mixture of different parts of these roles (see California Style Collective 1993). *Power* roles are those which the community defines as powerful; those roles which lend the person who fills that role the ability to intentionally affect action in the community because of the structure and ideology of the community.

I have identified seven types of power processes from which these roles may be built: physical (coercive and ability), economic, knowledge, structural, nurturant, demeanor, and ideological. I distinguish between two types of physical power: Coercive physical power is the power of the mugger, while ability physical power is an action made possible by physical ability or skill. Economic power is the process that rewards one action (e.g., labor) with the possibility of another action (e.g., purchasing goods). Knowledge power is the process of gaining knowledge to perform an action. Structural power is the power of a place in a structure, classically but not necessarily a hierarchy. The potential action of one person high up in a hierarchy – and the recognition of the possibility of these actions – directly affects a person lower down (and also the person higher up). Nurturant power is the process of helping another, as in teaching or feeding. Demeanor power is the power of solidarity: moral authority, being liked, being 'a good guy.' The process of demeanor is not normally addressed by views of power, because the actions in this type of power act on emotions. Thus a person exhibits demeanor power when others feel happy, entertained, involved, respectful, etc.

But it is the ideological process which is the most important. It is a 'defining process,' because individuals evaluate the other types of power processes through the ideological process. This defining process – which I will refer to as 'ideological power' – ratifies certain traits as powerful and determines which of the other power processes are available (i.e., identifies the roles in the community). Within each of the other processes, ideological power identifies what is and what is not powerful. Thus ideological power is the process of power whereby the ways of thinking about the world are naturalized into a community's behavior, and power roles are identified.

## 4.2 Indexing power roles

Ochs (1992) showed that language is used to index (feminine) gender partly through the maternal role. She showed that differences in the way a woman goes about the activity of mothering in middle-class, white American society and Samoan society lead to differences in the way women use language. Ochs suggests that this kind of indexing can be extended to stances and acts. Thus, certain linguistic features and strategies are directly indexed to stances, acts, and activities, and these are in turn indexed to gender. Mothering as an activity is thus characterized by different linguistic strategies in the two cultures, which leads these linguistic strategies to be associated with femininity. Roles such as "mother" are central to the connection between stances, acts, and activities and gender. Thus, we would expect that men are also connected to certain societal roles (which are culturally presumed to be powerful), and it is through these roles that they connect their identities and language.

## 4.3 Power and hegemonic masculinity

Why are the roles that men hold are powerful, and why do men strive for powerful roles? The concept of hegemonic masculinity is central to both questions. Hegemonic masculinity, as outlined by Connell (1987, 1995), is the dominant ideology and social reality of American culture. This ideology is based on a hierarchy of identities, especially men's identities, with the white, corporate, wealthy heterosexual identity at the top of this hierarchy, in a position to dominate the actions of much of the rest of society, largely because with his wealth. Although most men do not attain this ideal, hegemonic masculinity – through its ordering of identities – nevertheless pressures men to try to get as high on this ladder as possible.<sup>7</sup> Roles that place a man at the top of a hierarchy are therefore highly valued, and powerful, so men wish to create identities that are based on power roles. Moreover, other men's claims to power roles are resisted.

Specific power roles and their value are determined by the ideologies of the culture and the community. The cultural power roles available to the fraternity men (and American men in general) are not limited to the power-suited CEO; there are two other culturally-based power roles available: the father and the physically powerful man. Whether or not it is a true picture of reality, the father role in American culture is still that of the man who represents the family in the public economic arena, primarily through work. In parenting, he is seen as the disciplinarian, but also as protector and provider. The physically powerful man has two manifestations, both based on his ability to earn a living by using his body: the blue-collar laborer and the sports star. These roles are often identified with each other, as in the Rocky film character. They are powerful because of the physical power of their bodies, not because of their place in the formal hierarchy of society (as is true for the white-collar worker). In practice, of course, all the roles are abstractions, models from which pieces may be taken and used; there are very few Rockys in the real world.

Because language is used to index these roles, it is natural that language associated with prestige, or structural power, will be used more by those whose social practice (in nonlinguistic areas) comes closer to filling those roles. Every variation study to date has

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<sup>7</sup> Remember here that this is an underlying cultural ideology, and may not be explicitly shared by all members; in fact, one way we know that this ideology underlies the culture is that some men, such as many gay men, do resist and reject it, and the difficulty they have resisting it.



shown this prediction to be true (e.g., higher-class speakers use more standard variants). But we would might also expect language to index the other power roles, especially the physical power role. This connection, I suggest, is the motivation for covert prestige.

It is important to remember here that I do not claim that these culturally-based power roles are the only ones; in fact, they are only the most abstract roles available to the fraternity men. The fraternity community, and activity types in that community, provide other role possibilities. In the next section, I discuss the fraternity and its ideologies, so that we then can explore what Mick and Waterson might have been doing in the meetings. In this section, I have laid the general foundation for my analysis: I outlined a view of power based on culturally- and community-relevant roles; drew on masculinity literature to discover a motivation for men to create powerful identities (hegemonic masculinity); and claimed that language is related to power and men's identities because it indexes these roles.

## 5 The Ideology of Gamma Chi Phi

McLemore (1991), in her study of Texas sorority speech, showed that single-sex college social clubs are well-suited to studying the interaction between language and culture. Such studies are especially ideal for investigating the effects of community ideology on language use. The main ideology of the Gamma Chi Phi reproduces the hierarchy of hegemonic masculinity. Fraternities are male student social clubs at American colleges and universities. Members usually join in their first year of school, after negotiating the process known as "rush". This process is not unlike courtship, in that members and "rushees" meet at social events and decide whether or not they like each other. Once a student joins, he becomes a probationary member, or a "pledge". Pledges are treated much like soldiers in a boot camp: as they learn the customs of the fraternity, they are treated as if they have little individuality or autonomous rights. After this period, which lasts approximately three months, men become full members in the fraternity, although they are still considered to be unknowledgeable and in need of more instruction in the ways of the fraternity. The fraternity does charitable work for the community, and raises money for its social events. By helping with these activities, fraternity men are recognized as capable, and compete with one another to be elected into ever-higher fraternity offices as they become older.

The progression through the fraternity illustrates the values and ideologies of the fraternity. The hierarchical world view of fraternity members is most apparent. This view separates the fraternity from the rest of the world (especially women). Within the fraternity, members move through different levels of membership; the difference between the privilege of a senior and the restriction of a freshman pledge is striking. Through competition, men move up through the fraternity hierarchy. Thus, the value of competition is also a central fraternity ideology; members compete against each other and against other fraternities, both on the sports field and socially, and much of their talk is centered around sports. The competition in the formal hierarchy is based on another minor ideology: the value of hard work. Thus, men are evaluated for formal positions in the fraternity based on the amount of time and effort they have given to the fraternity. Finally, the men have an ideology of camaraderie among the members. I use camaraderie in a special sense: the fraternity members are all supposed to be the closest of friends, to the exclusion of non-members, just as brothers in a family or soldiers on the battlefield. Camaraderie is thus a privilege-based friendship, one that implies a hierarchy between members and the rest of the world.

Different ideologies are also salient in different speech activities within the fraternity. I have made a rough, simplistic taxonomy of speech activities, which opposes

the meeting speech activity against all socializing speech activities, as explained in section 3. In the meetings, the hierarchy is the most salient ideology, while when socializing, camaraderie is usually the most important.

In sum, three ideologies – hierarchy, competition, and camaraderie – structure the way men conceive of power and approach interactions, and the value of hard work is an important component of the formal hierarchy and competition within it. These ideologies reflect similar ideologies at work in the larger society; after all, the fraternity members are not completely cut off from society, but a part of it. Thus, the ordering which is central to fraternity ideologies can be seen as a local manifestation of hegemonic masculinity.

## 6. Vernacular Power: Waterson and Mick

We now have the tools to explain Mick and Waterson's behavior in the meeting: They are indexing a different kind of power role than the other men in meeting. They are indexing a hard-working role by also indexing the culturally-based physically powerful working-class role. In addition, they index the casual camaraderie of the socializing activity types to create a connection to the other fraternity members in the meeting. These roles and activity types are indexed not only through this single variable (ING), but also as stances and acts that are created through other linguistic devices. Each of these roles are based on a history of previous types of roles and stances that make up the men's more stable "personality". In this section I analyze some of Mick and Waterson's discourse to demonstrate that these are indeed the roles, stances and activity types they index and have previously constructed in the community. First I consider Waterson's speech from which all four of this (ING) meeting tokens were taken. Rather than just explaining these tokens as 'noise,' or too few to see a pattern, they show a pattern when considered within the context of his speech, in which Waterson presents himself as a hard worker well-known to the fraternity community. Mick's tokens are more numerous, but (ING) seems to be working in the same general way for him as it did for Waterson, even though they have quite different personalities.

### 6.1 Waterson

Because all of Waterson's tokens are taken from a short speech, I will focus only on that speech for an explanation for his categorical N use. It is clear in this speech that he is trying to construct a the hard working identity, because he explicitly focuses on this side of his identity in his speech. It is likely that he is using the N variant to help create that impression. In addition, he seems to be appealing camaraderie in his speech. Therefore, N may also serve as a symbol of camaraderie, perhaps by indexing an activity type in which camaraderie is understood (i.e., socializing).

Waterson is thin, with a very high voice (sometimes mistaken for a woman's), and young – he is in his first election as a full member, but is running for a very high office. His speech in the election for vice president is transcribed in Excerpt . Vice president is the leadership office that performs much of the organizational "grunt work", such as calling all the members to get them to attend meetings, fundraising events, and philanthropy events, filling in when other officers aren't there, and taking on jobs that aren't explicitly connected to an office. Because he does not speak often in meetings, this speech comprises the entire sample used for the variation analysis of Waterson's meeting tokens (ING tokens are in bold; *gonna*, *anything*, and *everything* were not coded because they are categorical).

Hotdog is the president in control of the meeting, which takes place in a campus classroom. Waterson and the other candidates are outside, so Hotdog indicates that Waterson should come in to give his speech.

**EXCERPT**  
(2a:255-72)

- Hotdog: Could we have Brian Waterson  
(7.3) ((Waterson walks in, goes to the front of the room))
- Waterson: Um (1.1) I'm not gonna f- um put a load of shit in you guys whatever.  
Um (0.7) You guys know I'm a **fuckin'** hard worker.  
I work my ass off for everything.  
I don't miss anything I'm always- I'm always there,  
I'll do anything for you guys,  
and if you nominate me for this position  
I'll put a hundred percent ef- effort towards it,  
I mean I have **nothin'** else to do 'cept **fuckin'** school work.  
and the fraternity.  
and uh and uh like uh like you guys said um this- we need a change  
because we're **goin'** down?  
A:nd I know I don't have a lot of experience? In like position-wise?  
But when this fraternity first started (0.5)  
back in uh April of of nineteen eighty-nine,  
um the guys that were elected for positions then didn't have too much  
(0.9) uh: experience in positions either.  
So just keep that in mind when you vote.  
Thank you boys.  
Remember I'm the- I'm the ice ma:n. ((final two words said in an  
emphasized whisper as he walks out of the room))

It is clear from his first statement that Waterson is going to try to act 'tough.' In line three, he states that he is "not gonna put a load of shit in you guys", meaning that he is not going to smooth over the rough edges – he is going to "tell it like it is". Right from the start then, he indexes a stance that focuses on practicality, and his use of *shit* indexes a working-class role and a casual activity type. Waterson then presents the main argument for electing him: *You guys know I'm a fuckin' hard worker*. The next five lines support this point, becoming more and more earnest and sincere. In line 10 (*I have nothin' else to do...*), he presents a motivation for his hard work and dedication to the fraternity. Thus, Waterson shows with his own words that the "hard-worker" role is central to this speech and his identity during this speech. Because N is identified with the hard physical labor of the working-class, it is natural that Waterson use this variant throughout his speech.

Two of the N tokens come from *fuckin'*, however, which is almost categorically N for all speakers. It might seem, then, that we have to throw these out as lexically conditioned. But we should not be so quick to dismiss, but ask further questions: Why is *fuckin'* so categorically N? Why is Waterson using *fuckin'* here? What is this word's function? First, *fuckin'*, as profanity, is associated with similar things that N is associated with: non-standard, working class, and physical power. Thus, these tokens should not be dismissed but taken as pure indexes of the hard-working identity that Waterson is trying to create. In fact *fuckin'* seems to function simply as an affective marker, to intensify whatever feeling is already being conveyed; *fuckin' hard worker* might be paraphrased as

"very hard worker", while the *fuckin' in fuckin' school work* heightens the trivial, incidental nature of school work in Waterson's life. Note also that his use of *fuckin'* is not isolated profanity: he also uses *shit* (line 3) and *ass* (line 5). With this language, he not only says he is a hard worker, but creates the impression of someone who doesn't 'mess around' and gets the job done by indexing the working-class role.

In line 10 Waterson seems to shift gears from earnestness to joking, although the point he makes – that he has no other extracurricular activities – is serious. In this line, he again uses *fuckin'*, although in this case he may also be indexing camaraderie as well as intensifying the triviality of school work, given that he is joking. The N in *nothin'* may also be used this way, especially because it would not be predicted on the basis of following environment or grammatical category (which have variable rule weightings of .51 for following vowel and .41 for *something, nothing* category). Camaraderie would also account for his use of *'cept* for *except*, because the former is more casual. Because (ING) is used in more casual situations, it may also be symbolic of a casual style and in turn camaraderie and friendliness. Waterson also draws on camaraderie by saying *you guys know* in line 4, rather than just saying he is a hard worker. With this phrase, he suggests that they are all so close and everyone knows him so well that they will vote for him.

In the second part of his speech, from line 12 on, Waterson goes on the address the problem of his age by appealing to change (something that had come up repeatedly in the elections), and older members. He finishes, in line 23, by again calling on camaraderie by referring to one of his fraternity nicknames.

Waterson is thus creating a hard-working image in his speech, and drawing on camaraderie. His use of (ING) fits with this identity, especially his use of *fuckin'*, which should not be seen as a token to be thrown out, but an even more striking instance of this indexing. Waterson draws on multiple, interrelated sources to create an identity that is consistent with his message in his speech. His stance is one that includes the members (as in *you guys know I'm...*), he indexes a community-valued hard working identity, and a working-class role that suggests solidarity and physical power. This identity is relatively new for him; he does not normally play the "tough guy". But for the point he makes in this speech, the roles and stances he indexes are consistent with his message. The N variants fit into this identity construction. Note that they do not determine, nor are they determined by, this identity, but are part of the package of linguistic and non-linguistic indexes he presents in the speech. None have a specific meaning alone, but together they take on indexes and meanings that create Waterson's identity.

## 6.2 Mick

Mick is an older member, and speaks much more frequently in meetings. He thus has an established role in the fraternity and in meetings. In addition, he has a psychological view of himself that also influence how he creates his identity, and how he uses (ING). The reasons for Mick's shift to more N in the meeting activity type are superficially similar to Waterson's; however, in Mick's case we must consider more talk than for Waterson, and thus must understand the kinds of roles he plays in the fraternity and other communities. Mick thus constructs an overall identity that is based on the hard-working, camaraderie-building roles we saw in Waterson's speech.

Mick is from rural northeastern Pennsylvania, and his father owns a trucking dealership.<sup>8</sup> Mick was also a wrestler in high school, which was an important part of his identity because wrestling in that region is a very popular sport (Mick tells of signing autographs and getting free meals in his hometown because he was a wrestler). Mick also sees himself as hard working, as shown in this excerpt from his interview. The excerpt begins just after I have asked him to discuss his future plans:

EXCERPT

(8b:401-8)

- Mick: I'm just a very: (3.0)  
 Tha- the type of person that's goin' somewhere and and uh, whatever I mean (1.0).  
 This is merely just uh  
 I mean they- I- um (1.3)  
 Anything I do I do it (.) the best I can do.  
 I mean I have I have *not* watched television in I couldn't tell you how long.  
 I mean just don't do things that aren't very productive at all. ((staccatto))  
 I me-
- SK: (?)
- Mick: No I don't No I don't you're right I don't ha:ng out.
- SK: (sit on the couch)
- Mick: No even if I go to the townhouse I'll sit there for a whi-  
 I don't know if you've ever been there when I come in I sit there and I'm like (0.5)  
 All right. What are we doin'.
- Scott: He he he he
- Mick: 's like. I just can't- I can't just do *nothing*.

Here Mick talks about his ambition (line 2), and how he values work over play (lines 7-15). Hard work is thus an important value for him. Because he explicitly presents himself as someone who will work so much, we expect him to index this role through his language as well. He also exemplifies connection to hard work in his discussion of his high school days:

EXCERPT

(8a:405)

- Mick: I could never, never satisfy my dad.  
 I tore down, wa- we had a chicken coop?  
 That- the end of it burned down.  
 It was, like, on my grandfather's farm  
 it wasn't really our farm it was the closest- our closest neighbor.

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<sup>8</sup> While his mother does work, psychological research shows that men tend to identify with the role of the father. Indeed, I asked him what both his parents do, and he highlighted his father, as is clear below in Excerpt 3.

But ah, it was huge.  
 It was about three times the size of this house  
 It took me a whole summer to tear it down.  
 Hand- by my hand all- hand by- brick by brick I tore the damn thing  
 down.  
 And he was still like- he was bitchin' at me the whole time y'know.  
 Like, if- I'd come in, yeah, What's takin' so long?  
 Yeah I mean he's- and he's- not that I hate him for that I'm very glad that  
 he was like that, yknow.  
 He built our whole house himself.  
 The entire thing.

Mick discusses this episode with pride, using it to show how hard he works. Mick thus presents an image of being down-to-earth, hard-working, and physically powerful. But Mick also displays ambition to rise to the top, and to be in the middle of the "hustle and bustle" of the Washington area. Not surprisingly, then, Mick was elected president of the fraternity early in my research.

Speed, who also has a high N rate in the meeting (and throughout his speech), also values ability and hard work. But Speed also takes a stance against the fraternity hierarchy, suggesting that he uses (ING) to help create an identity that is somewhat rebellious toward "authority", metaphorically rebelling against "authorized" or "standard" language (see Kiesling 1996a,b for a detailed analysis of Speed's linguistic behavior). Although this suggests that N may be used to help construct a confrontational stance, its use is not necessarily restricted to a rebellious identity. On the contrary, it can be used to signal power by someone who has structural power through a similar confrontational stance. Mick this stance in the following excerpt, which took place in a meeting in which the members were discussing what to do for their annual holiday party, since they were low on funds to put on the usual extravagant bash. In the middle of the debate, Mick (now president and thus able to draw on a formal power role) gets frustrated and explodes (bold indicates (ING) tokens), shouting the following so vehemently that his face becomes very red:

EXCERPT  
 (8b:254-6)

Mick: I swear to God **fuckin'** every semester all we have do is sit around and argue about money money money money.  
 And I'm not gonna pay this **fuckin'** money. All right?  
 Yeah: you guys **sittin'** back I know you guys are **thinkin'** I'm gonna pay this **fuckin'** money just 'cause I *have* money.  
 I'll tell you what, I ain't gonna pay a fuckin' thing. All right?

While Mick is in a powerful position, he is nevertheless taking a stance in opposition to the membership. Notice his use of *fuckin'* in lines 1, 3, and 4, and his categorical use of N, and his use of *ain't*, another nonstandard feature, in line 6. These uses of nonstandard English combine with his message (and his volume) to show he is taking a stand against the members, but in an authoritative way that is the prerogative of a leader (or a father). Even though he is using the working-class variant, he is still clearly the leader, the

authority. Thus, N seems to index a confrontational stance, perhaps through an identification with the competitive, physically powerful role.

This excerpt illustrates that we cannot say that a person in a certain structural position will use a variable in a certain way, based on his or her "social address". It does suggest, however, that the variant is identified with social structure because of the more specific indexing of variants to more specific, practice-based social constructs such as roles, activity types, and stances.

## 6.4 Summary

In this section, I have used Mick and Waterson's discourse to bring out the roles, stances, activity types, and values they wish to evoke in their identities. In Waterson's case, we were concerned only with the single speech in the election meeting. He was clearly evoking a hard-working identity, as well as the camaraderie of the fraternity. We can thus deduce that N is associated with these two central fraternity ideologies. We also see that the connection between N and *fuckin'* is related to the similar indexing and stance-taking work they do in conversation. Mick also aligns himself with the hard-working fraternity ideology, although here we have evidence that being a hard worker is a deep psychological role he sees himself playing. In addition, there is evidence that Mick uses N to help create a confrontational stance. Finally, the specific indexing and stance-taking work that N helps do can all be identified with the physically powerful cultural role, as opposed to the socio-economically powerful cultural role. This role therefore seems to be central to the ways N may be used as a social index.

## 7 Conclusion

Because (ING) is an old, stable, sociolinguistic marker, its possible meanings are varied and complexly interrelated. Mick and Waterson's use of N in meetings indexes a number of interrelated roles, stances, and activity types, and depend crucially on cultural and community ideologies and values. The dominant cultural power role indexed by the N variant is the working-class, physically powerful role, which in turn is indexed to other roles that Mick and Waterson wished to evoke (as shown in their discourse), most notably that of the hard-worker. This hard-working role is valued one in the fraternity ideology of competitive hierarchy. The N variant also helped Mick create a confrontational stance, which may also be associated with the physically-powerful role, and in fact may draw its confrontational effect from that role. Finally, N is used to evoke the camaraderie shared by the fraternity members by identification with an activity type in which camaraderie is the focus. Thus, because N is used more in a friendly activity type, N can be used to evoke that activity type even within an activity type focused on the formal fraternity hierarchy. In addition, camaraderie is likely associated again with the physical power role, either through the working class or the athlete role. Thus, because N is indexed to that cultural role, camaraderie can be indirectly indexed through that role.

What emerges, then, from the explanation of Mick and Waterson's N usage, is a general indexing to the cultural working class role. Attributes of that role, such as "hard-working", "rebellious", "casual", or "confrontational", are specifically indexed in conversation according to the context, e.g., other indexes such as discourse markers, propositional content, relevant community and cultural ideologies and values, the activity type, and attributes of the speaker and his or her previous identity constructions. The

variant in the abstract is only indexed a very general role, and it is only when combined with context, in the full sense of the term, that *specific* parts of that role are instantiated. The variable alone has no "meaning" as such; "meaning" comes about only when an identity takes shape through the interaction of text and context.

We have thus seen that Mick and Waterson gain something through their use of N and its identification with the working-class role, and all the pieces of that role. But this analysis relies crucially on the identification of the variant with the role, something which already exists in the larger English speaking speech community. But why in the first place would working class men use more non-standard variants, and *value* those variants? The answer lies in hegemonic masculinity and the sources of power available to working-class men. Hegemonic masculinity pushes men to have a powerful identity, to construct identities that appear to dominate in some way, either actually or symbolically. In fact, Gal 1992 proposes that the basic process of "men's language" is symbolic domination. Because working-class men do not have access to economic or structural power, physical power may take its place, especially since their jobs often rely on their physical power. This process, taken to extremes, is known as "protest masculinity" (introduced by Adler 1956, expanded on by Connell 1995) and is characterized by physical violence; I am proposing that working-class men are drawing on a similar process when they use the non-standard variant more than other groups.<sup>9</sup> Solidarity among these men may be another path of 'resistance' to hierarchical power, but is still subject to the strictures of hegemonic masculinity. This interaction between hegemonic masculinity and solidarity leads to what I have termed camaraderie.<sup>10</sup> Physical power and non-standard language therefore become connected through the stereotype of working-class men's identity roles, deeply embedded in the American culture.

In this paper, I have shown how one variant, and the roles, activity types, and stances connected to it, are used in a small community of practice that is nevertheless part of the larger American culture. Moreover, I have shown how two men in this community use this variant in practice to help create identities that draw on parts of that cultural role. I have thus connected the everyday linguistic practice of these men with the larger societal patterns of linguistic variation, providing both the local and the cultural motivations for their use of the variant, and more importantly, the connections between these different levels of motivation.

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<sup>9</sup> Of course, they also do not have as much access to standard language through schooling, nor does their economic livelihood necessarily depend on their using standard language (although one could argue that creating a physically powerful identity might be economically advantageous).

<sup>10</sup> I use *resistance* with caution, because this resistance is only against one form of power, not the structure of hegemonic masculinity which leads the men to construct some sort of powerful identity.



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