

A slightly slummier area?

Negotiations of place-bound identities through social spatialisations and unofficial toponyms¹

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ABSTRACT:

In the article, spatialisations (discourses of ideal or stereotyped spaces) are conceptualised as powerful discourses of the surrounding society, providing resources for place-bound identity construction in interaction. We combine a sociolinguistic analysis with Bakhtinian dialogism to understand how such ‘third’ voices in dialogue empower and pluralise self- and other-positionings embedded in the evocations of unofficial place names. Empirically, the focus is on toponyms that divide the socially mixed Vuosaari suburb in Helsinki into ‘older’ and ‘newer’ territories. The results show that when the stereotypes of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ neighbourhoods or other spatialisations interpenetrate the uses of ‘Old’ and ‘New Vuosaari’, they open room for the (re-)voicing of the meanings of these toponyms for highly differentiated social ends. With the Bakhtinian framework bridging between socio-spatial theory and sociolinguistics, the article develops a spatially sensitised approach to analyse the entanglements of the micro-level contexts of interaction with the macro-level discourses of meaning-giving.

KEY WORDS: unofficial place names, social spatialisations, self- and other-positioning, place-bound identities

ABSTRACT IN FINNISH:

Sosiaaliset spatialisaatiot ovat yhteiskunnassa vaikuttavia tilaa koskevia ideologisia diskursseja. Tässä artikkelissa tarkastelemme niitä paikkasidonnaisen identiteetin konstruoinnin resursseina vuorovaikutustilanteissa. Yhdistämme sosiolingvistiseen analyysiin bahtinilaisen dialogismin näkökulmia tutkiessamme, miten spatialisaatioihin eli ”kolmansiin” ääniin viittaaminen ilmenee, kun puhujat rakentavat alueellista identiteettiään käyttäessään kotikaupunginosastaan epävirallisia paikannimiä yksilöhaastatteluissa ja fokusryhmissä. Tarkastelun kohteena on sosiaalisesti heterogeeninen ja erilaisiin osiin jakautunut Vuosaari Helsingissä. Empiirinen analyysi kohdistuu nimiin, jotka viittaavat kaupunginosan jakaantumiseen uuteen ja vanhaan osaan. Tulokset osoittavat, että nimien *Vanha Vuosaari* ja *Uusi Vuosaari* käyttö liitetään stereotyyppisiin käsityksiin ”hyvistä” ja ”huonoista” kaupunginosista ja niitä käytetään erityyppisten sosiaalisten erottelujen ilmaisemiseen. Bahtinilainen viitekehys toimii metodologisena siltana yhteiskunta- ja tilateorian ja sosiolingvistiikan välillä tarkasteltaessa sosiaalis-tilallisia erontekoja – mikrotason vuorovaikutuskontekstin ja makrotason merkityksenannon yhteenkietoutumista. [Finnish]

INTRODUCTION

As Quist (2018: 240) remarks, the calling of places by ‘alternative’ or ‘unofficial’ names belongs to linguistic resources that contribute to speakers’ constructions of localness, identity, and claims of symbolic ownership over territories (see also Ainiala 2016: 377–378). Such institutionally non-established toponyms not only designate places (as all toponyms do) but also reinforce the reciprocal, language-mediated processes of belonging and othering by placing invisible boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (e.g., Myers 1996; Ainiala and Halonen 2017). Bringing these notions in dialogue with Bakhtian trans- or metalinguistic theory (Vološinov 1990 [1929]; Bakhtin 1981, 1984, 1986) and conceptualisations of social spatialisation (Shields 1991, 2013), this article seeks to open insights into the discursive and interactional processes behind non-established language elements in urban contexts. As distinct from irreverent forms of urban naming in slang (see e.g., Pred 1990; Paunonen et al. 2009), our focus is on the uses and meanings of fairly ordinary or predictable unofficial toponyms in interaction.

Alongside other linguistic elements such as spatially referring common nouns (categorizing instead of ‘individualizing’ spatial entities), personal pronouns, spatial demonstratives as well as the uses of dialects, accents, in-group shibboleths, narratives and spatial metaphors, place names frequently partake in the language-mediated processes of spatialising social difference (on the variety of basic linguistic elements expressing space and spatial relations, see Cassirer 1955: 198–215). Analysing unofficial place names as an instance of the interplay between the micro-level contexts of talk and the macro-level ideological registers of meaning-giving, the central argument of this article is that the interactional acts of voicing place-bound identities, through names or otherwise, do not take place outside the influence of powerful ideological discourses.

Underpinning the study's sociolinguistic analyses in this regard, our methodology draws from the Bakhtinian thought – in particular its stress on the effects of ideological-cultural discourses on the dialogic acts of meaning-giving (Vološinov 1990 [1929]; Bakhtin 1981, 1984).² According to Bakhtin (1986: 88–89), in each society, domain of activity or social circle, there are 'leading ideas' which individual language users reflexively 'cite', 'follow' or 'reaccentuate.' While exact terms for authoritative or culturally powerful discourses vary between Bakhtin's and Vološinov's different works, in this article we refer to them as 'third voices'. By this concept, we accentuate that people do not communicate about places with each other in an ideological vacuum. Analogous to Gal's (2016: 119) view that speakers not only align with or against their interlocutors, but also vis-à-vis stereotypes and other cultural models (Bakhtinian 'third' voices), we posit that the societal context with its competing ideologies offers people a rich repertoire of potential discursive uptakes to dialogically reinforce social and value judgements made in everyday conversations about places (Holloway & Kneale 2000). A second methodological heuristic adopted from Bakhtin (1984) is his discourse typological distinction between various unidirectional and vari-directional types of citing the speech of others in one's utterances. Hence, the study applies the Bakhtinian framework to come to grips with ideological clashes and dialogic re-voicings of projections of space in the analysed contexts of using unofficial toponyms.

Through a case study of a socially mixed Finnish suburb (Vuosaari), the objective of the article is to scrutinise the ways in which the local residents' uses of unofficial toponyms echo meaning-bearing ideological discourses about urban space and its socio-territorial divisions, and, above all, how the speakers appropriate and re-voice these 'third' voices to empower their own place-bound identity positions (cf. Madsen 2014; Tagg 2016: 62). In the case of our study area, a preponderance of unofficial place names used by locals revolves around calling different parts of Vuosaari as 'old' or 'new', a territorial division without any jurisdictional

status. Triggered by the suburb's growth and associated social tensions in recent decades, the unofficial name pair 'Old' and 'New' Vuosaari is a locally pivotal axis of differentiation (Gal 2016) that articulates socio-economic and ethno-cultural differences across its variably aged neighbourhoods. Accordingly, we will detail divergent ways in which Vuosaarians rework the meanings of the old/new divide to make sense of themselves and local 'others' amidst of socially heterogenous circumstances, and concomitant mobilisations of ideological discourses of ideal and stereotyped spaces to pursue their interactional goals.

Hitherto, only scant theoretical attention has been paid to effects of macro-scale ideological discourses on local place naming practices (for partial exceptions, see Pred 1990; Pablé 2000; Quist 2018). To start to fill this research gap, we next turn to the theory of social spatialisation to shed light on the intertwining of unofficial place names (linguistic elements that tend to convey categorisations between social groups while designating local places and territories) with ideological spatialisations (discourses of space rich in wider cultural meanings).

SOCIAL SPATIALISATIONS MOULDING CITIES AND URBAN IDENTITIES

The power-laden discourses of space, and how language and cultural-semiotic systems operate as 'markers of the spatiality of power relationships embedded in the landscape' (Myers 1996: 237), have become enduring research foci in many fields across the humanities and social sciences, including sociolinguistics (e.g., Collins 2000; Britain 2009; Johnstone 2011a; see on the so-called spatial turn: e.g. Massey 2005; Vuolteenaho et al. 2012).

Influenced, among other sources, by Bakhtin, semiology (instead of linguistics), Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) theory of social space and Foucault's (e.g., 1972) conception that epistemic discourses shape subjectivities and material arrangements, Shields (1991) encapsulated this

research orientation as the study of social spatialisation.³ His theory focusses upon ideological-discursive projections (also referred to as place-myths; cf. Barthes 2009 [1957]) that ‘overcode’ complex socio-cultural realities by imbuing them with a spatialised logic. Shields (1991) defines spatialisations as cognition-steering ‘cultural scripts’ that mould material landscapes as well as place-bound identity work and othering processes. As powerful voices of the surrounding society, spatialisations can be conceived from a Bakhtinian perspective as third voices that prompt speakers to make ‘value judgements about the things which are happening in their world’ (Collins 2000: 2031; cf. also Tagg 2016: 62).

One spatialisation type of relevance for the present study are planning discourses. In the immediate post-war years, for instance, in some key milieu concepts of architectural modernism, rural attributes combined with urban amenities were idealised (Healey 2013: 1522). These milieu ideals were also applied in planning new Finnish ‘forest suburbs’ around the 1960s (Hankonen 1994: 56; Clark 2006). With their built environment characterised by a sparse layout and ubiquitous greenness, the forest suburbs were praised in national planning circles as the antitheses of cramped urban living. In our data, unmistakable echoes of this period-specific spatialisation can be still heard, particularly when long-term Vuosaari residents talk about the ‘old’ parts of their home suburb. Evidently, spatialisations inherent in newer urban discourses also represent powerful ideological voices in contemporary cities. In depictions of New Vuosaari in our data, for instance, reverberations of recent place-branding discourses and the stress of the New Urbanism movement on a compact built form and street-level vibrancy are recognizable as the ingredients of high-quality urban living. These examples illustrate that the discursive reproduction of city planning- and promotion-related spatialisations—including their canonised vocabularies—occur not only in professional circles and the media, but also in everyday conversations about places, and in this way influence people’s place-bound identity negotiations.

According to Shields (1991), the discourses of space convey (metaphorically) abstract and ideological statements and bundle (metonymically) together spatial and social attributes on the basis of their partial similarity. This is aptly illustrated by residential territories of bad repute. Along with ethnically segregated ghettos and other problem-focussed projections, the complicity of language-based spatialisations in fuelling the mythic portraits of poverty-stricken neighbourhoods is evident in the enduring currency of the slum trope. The attributes of the slum have long included the presence of lower classes, congestion and ‘blocks of old buildings’ (e.g., Le Corbusier (1987 [1929]; Gilbert 2007; Lombard 2015). As will be seen below, the stereotyped urban ills conveyed by the slum trope feature both in the characterisations of Old and New Vuosaari, reflecting a speaker’s identity position in relation to the name-mediated intra-territorial division in focus. In the terminology of Irvine and Gal (2000), these local reinterpretations of the slum trope exemplify how the qualities of what is being differentiated through a particular axis of differentiation are prone to shift around in our data as well.

The crucial point to draw from the above examples is that idealised or stereotyped social spatialisations contribute to diverse, co-existing discourses and conflicting interpretations about the city. Even though social spatialisations are often highly generalising and de-contextualised constructs, Shields (1991) accentuates that their contributions to collective and individual identities are neither pre-determined nor unidirectional. To be sure, the hype built around contemporary cities’ (say) revitalised waterfronts or tourist-friendly multi-cultural quarters (the discursive echoes of both of which are present in our data) is persuasive enough for many urbanites to endorse such generic landscapes as resources for their own identities—authoritative and hegemonic discourses tend to have ‘great power over us’ (Bakhtin 1981: 424). Inversely, the problem-oriented spatial projections of otherness

(such as the ghetto or slum tropes) often strengthen stigmatisation and affirm established hierarchies and boundaries between ‘us’ here and ‘others’ out there.

Yet, importantly, Shields (1991, 2013) is simultaneously perceptive of how social spatialisations and the ways in which they are performatively actualised can also de-centre or polemicise siloed identity positions. The eminently exportable place tropes of ‘the ghetto’, ‘the hood’ and ‘the street’ in contemporary hip-hop subcultures offer a well-researched case in point (Jaffe 2012). Quist’s (2018) study in Copenhagen documents how the young hip-hop devotees’ uses of ‘Nørrebrox’ (a portmanteau of a multi-ethnic Nørrebro district and Bronx in New York City) and other alternative place names not only serve as the disputations of established discourses on their low-income neighbourhoods but also as the stylistic expressions of their own hip-hop personae and territory-based identities. Even though the unofficial names of ‘Old Vuosaari’ and ‘New Vuosaari’ are not globalised emanations and their local usage is not restricted to any subculture or age group, Quist’s (2018) finding bears analogies with spatialisation- and toponymy-related identity work occurring in our data.

The above remarks open an entry point into the spatialisation- and naming-associated negotiations of people’s place-bound identities. Modan (2007) argues that local residents’ negotiations of self-identity, place-identity and definitions of intra-territorial otherness are fundamentally intertwined, particularly in urban areas undergoing intensive changes (see also Johnstone 2011a: 212–213). In line with this definition and other studies of cities as the socially polymorphous spaces of identity work (e.g., Lefebvre 1991 [1974]; Finnegan 1998; Pennycook and Otsuji 2015), in this study we will not take into account all analysable social, biographical or spatio-temporal dimensions of people’s multi-layered selfhoods. Instead, we will narrow down the theoretical problematics of identity to the interactional ways in which the inhabitants of a socially heterogenous Finnish suburb negotiate their place-bound identities vis-à-vis the area’s unofficial old/new-divide. The type of identity work we analyse

concerns residential area-based socio-economic and ethno-cultural differences and associated identities.⁴ Meanwhile, our approach is to conceive the acts of favourable and unfavourable stance-taking toward different areas and associated social categories within Vuosaari as integral part of the speakers' constructions of self- and other identity. We are particularly interested in how the speakers' place-bound and naming-related identity negotiations at once occur in a dialogic relation to their interlocutors' views and (re-)voice wider spatialisations, typical for situations in which Vuosaarians in strikingly varying ways use the dichotomous old/new axis to draw implicit boundaries between 'us' and 'them' within the suburb.

VUOSAARI AND ITS MULTI-PHASED URBAN GROWTH

Our study area, Vuosaari, has gone through a series of ideologically varied and socio-spatially stratified urban processes since the area was annexed by Helsinki, the capital of Finland, in 1966. Its initiating construction boom around the latter half of the 1960s concurred with the state-led modernisation policies of providing a comfortable living environment for Finns coming to live in Helsinki (Hankonen 1994: 371–375). Accordingly, the new eastern satellite of Helsinki became demographically characterised by a class-blurred, ethnically homogeneous and mainly Finnish-speaking population. With vast swathes of woodland still left untouched by urbanisation, the growth was channelled into two sub-districts: Keski-Vuosaari and Rastila. Particularly in the former sub-district, the sparsely built environment echoed the aforementioned 'forest suburb' design ideal.

Since the late 1980s, the stepped-up urbanisation of the suburb has fanned out onto its southern edge with large-scale building projects in Meri-Rastila and Kallahti first in order. Initially met with vociferous opposition by the 'Let's save Vuosaari' (*Pelastetaan Vuosaari*)

civic movement and its projected threats of a ‘slum-diseased mega-suburb’ (*slummitautinen jättilähiö*), these projects were also retrospectively considered ill-starred by many commentators (Bäcklund and Schulman 2005: 13–14, 67–68). In fact, the two new sub-districts were likened in media to a patchwork of ‘problem suburbs’ held increasingly peculiar to Helsinki’s eastern outskirts. There existed several factors explaining these stigmatising discourses: the sub-districts’ (in many accounts excessively) compact architecture, abundant social housing and new groups with immigrant backgrounds present in larger numbers than hitherto seen in the Finnish context. Consequently, a plan to build the prestigious Aurinkolahti (‘Sun Bay’, originally *Mustalahti* ‘Black Bay’) neighbourhood was publicised to de-emphasise the worsened public image of eastern Helsinki. High-priced luxury flats were built in Aurinkolahti starting in the mid-1990s. In line with international exemplars of revitalised waterfronts and place-branding discourses, Aurinkolahti was specifically marketed to socio-economically well-to-do home-seekers.

In short, successive phases of growth in Vuosaari have resulted in a diverse and territorially polarised housing and social landscape as people of various generations and social backgrounds have settled in it. At present, the population of Vuosaari is approaching 40,000. The proportion of the ethnically non-Finnish population is larger than average for Helsinki, and 20.5% of Vuosaarians have registered other languages than Finnish or Swedish (the national languages of Finland) as their mother tongue in the Finnish population registry (Helsinki alueittain 2015: 26, 186).

With a focus on different meanings that locals associate with the area’s older (Keski-Vuosaari, Rastila) and newer (Meri-Rastila, Kallahti, Aurinkolahti) parts, our following analyses will shed light on how the inhabitants themselves have re-negotiated these discourses of transformation of their home suburb by calling different territories in Vuosaari ‘old’ or ‘new’.

DATA AND METHODS

The following analyses draw from two larger sets of focus groups and semi-structured interviews initially produced for two separate projects carried out between 2004 and 2008.⁵ In both original data sets, a substantial portion of the acquired audio- or video-recorded material consists of interview-type discussions between a non-local researcher or researchers and participant(s) about the latter's relationship to Vuosaari and its different sub-districts. Voices of altogether 63 Vuosaari residents are heard in the corpora, comprising a heterogenous mix of Vuosaarians by age (from adolescents to retirees), gender (with 42 female participants), residential areas (residents from all five urbanised neighbourhoods of Vuosaari) and biographical backgrounds as local residents (some having lived in Vuosaari since the 1960s, others only a few months). Besides a sample of first- or second-generation Somali immigrants, members of a prominent local ethnic minority, the recruited ethnic Finns represented both native Helsinki residents and migrants from other parts of the country. Due to limited resources, the sample was restricted to the ethnic majority in Vuosaari and one prominent minority. All interviews and focus groups were conducted in Finnish.

Out of an opulence of linguistic features and interactional aspects conveyed in the data, our analytic focus was on the linguistically mediated aspects of residential area-based self- and other-positioning. First, we inspected the uses of unofficial toponyms by Vuosaarians to designate their home suburb and its subdivisions. As a step towards understanding how the uses of toponyms related to the participants' identity negotiations, this was followed by an analysis of how the names and associated stances taken on Vuosaari subdivisions signified different social categories and cultural meanings. At a higher level of abstraction, the next step was to analyse how the locals utilised particular ideological discourses and discursive spatialisations as resources for their identity work. To be able to trace markers of such

ideological voices (e.g. Bakhtin 1986; Vološinov 1990) from within the bounds of our data, background research included the excavation of the history of urbanization in Vuosaari and its connections to wider trends in the planning, promoting and differentiation of urban residential areas in Helsinki and Finland since the mid-1960s. Aided by this literature research, we have scanned the evocations of spatialisations in the participants' speech for analysis. By drawing from Bakhtin's discourse typologies, we also scrutinised sub-discourses through which Vuosaarians re-voiced the generic meanings of spatialisations through parody or other types of double-voicing, humorous or ironic distance-taking, hidden polemic, direct confrontation and other dialogic ways (see above all Bakhtin 1984: 181–203). As the final phase, we asked how the ideological discourses and spatialisations entangled with the uses of unofficial place names came linguistically visible in interaction in our data. Attention was paid to the participants' linguistic choices – how they positioned themselves and others when describing their home neighbourhood in Vuosaari and contrasting it with other sub-districts, and how contradictory themes and meanings that emerged in talk re-modified the speakers' identity- and other-positioning (e.g., Bakhtin 1984, 1986; Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain 2009).

The extracts analysed in this article were sampled from one interview and two focus groups with native Finnish speakers. In particular, the focus group extracts were selected due to their illustrative clashes between discursive spatialisations applied to the differently aged urban territories in Vuosaari, conveying varying ways in which our participants spatialised local social differences and identified themselves as Vuosaarians along the name-mediated old/new axis.

DIALOGIC ENTANGLEMENTS OF VUOSAARI'S 'OLD' AND 'NEW SIDES' WITH DISCURSIVE SPATIALISATIONS

Unofficial place names in Vuosaari: A short overview

Our interviews and focus groups with Vuosaarians conveyed dozens of unofficial names designating local places and territories. For instance, the local namescape bore monikers to which xenophobic or putatively jocular local discourses on non-Finnish ethnic groups had given impetus. Reminiscent of Stockholm's Rinkeby and some other European cities with stigmatised 'Little Mogadishu', Meri-Rastila, as the biggest local concentration of people with Somali background, provoked a small repertoire of references to this ethnic minority. The dubbing of its main street as *Mogadishu Avenue* (Ainiola and Halonen 2017), for instance, was indicative of how the Somalis have faced more prejudice and discrimination than most other immigrant groups who have arrived in Finland in recent decades.

Overall, however, the above types of derogatory toponyms were in fleeting use only in our data. As indicated above, the fairly predictable names *Vanha Vuosaari* ('Old Vuosaari') and *Uusi Vuosaari* ('New Vuosaari') and their variants such as *Vanha puoli* and *Uusi puoli* ('Old side', 'New side') had much wider local currency. It was particularly these unofficial names that were the popular markers of place-bound identities for a great many locals (cf. Pablé 2000). 'Old Vuosaari' in particular had been adopted into trans-generational usage, but also 'New Vuosaari' was recognised by our participants.

As if discursively empowered by spatialisations with wider socio-cultural and urban resonance (Shields 1991), the meanings of 'Old Vuosaari' and 'New Vuosaari' simultaneously turned out to convey highly differentiated social ends and varyingly intensive place-bound (dis)affections contingent upon the speakers' life-historical, place of residence-based and interactional positions. The self- and other-positionings through the context-specific uses of these names reflected not only the heterogeneity of people's Vuosaarian identities but also tensions emanating from this multiplicity. In Collins' (2000: 2031) Vološinov-inspired phrase, the deceptively ordinary place names associated with the old/new

divide of the suburb tended ‘to act as an index of some crucial, and often otherwise difficult to perceive, processes in the constitution of, and relationships between, social groups.’ In socially and interactionally differentiated ways, the Old vs. New Vuosaari name pair contributed to the ways in which the participants made sense of the heterogeneous local urban realities.

Cautiousness and clashes over intra-territorial boundaries and stigmatised ‘others’:

Socio-economic and ethno-cultural otherness in identity work

Overall, attributes given to Old Vuosaari as a place ranged in our data from favourable ‘tranquil’, ‘parkish’ and ‘spacious’ to ‘dull’, ‘too remote’ and other unfavourable characterisations. In the case of New Vuosaari, the evaluative scale spanned from ‘chock-full’, ‘restless’, ‘artificial’ and to ‘up-to-date’, ‘lively’ and ‘dynamic’. What Vuosaarians (often quite cautiously) depicted as less favourable social phenomena within their home district and to which specific parts of Vuosaari they located these problematic aspects to a great degree hinged on whether they resided on the suburb’s old or new side. Among those who lived on the old side, the unfavourable characterisations typically concentrated on New Vuosaari, and vice versa (cf. Merry 1981). Many long-term Old Vuosaarians presented the density of the social and housing landscape as a flipside of New Vuosaari. By contrast, in the eyes of our young Somali participants who all lived on the new side, the old side was actually too peaceful and silent, a kind of no-go territory for them where nothing happens and nobody hangs out. For them, Old Vuosaari was a physically adjacent but socially remote place. In the words of 18-year old Daha, ‘there is actually nothing much to do’ (*ei oikeestaan oo mitään tekemistä*) in the older parts of Vuosaari (Ainiala et. al 2015: 386–389).

The latter type of identity positioning in relation to the suburb's old/new divide was also the case with Pinja, an 18-year-old student residing in Kallahti, who was in her own words 'a Vuosaarian in heart and soul' (*sielultaan ja sydämeltään vuosaarelainen*). Evidently embracing the milieu ideals and spatialisations peculiar to New Urbanism and Aurinkolahti's marketing discourses (see above), in her interview, Pinja explicitly praised the 'semi-new' (*keskiuusi*) Kallahti and above all the 'really fabulous' (*tosi hieno*) Aurinkolahti for their ongoing building projects and vibrancy. As a further echo of an ideological discourse readable from her interview, in her depictions of Old Vuosaari Pinja resorted to a set of social spatialisations that have been, in innumerable problem-oriented media representations over the last few decades, associated with mainly lower-class, apartment block-dominated post-war suburbs in the outskirts of Helsinki and other Finnish cities (e.g. Ilmonen 2016). Before the following excerpt, the interviewer has asked Pinja whether she can distinguish between different neighbourhoods within Vuosaari (*pystyksä erottaa erityyppisiä asuinalueita sieltä*). After her positive reply '*Vuosaari is absolutely like blatantly separable like from the newer one*' (*Vuosaari on ehdottomasti niinku selkeesti erotettavissa niinku uudemmassa*), the interviewer asks her to give reasons for her view (line 1).

Extract 1

01 Int: minkä takii?,

why

02 Pinja: (.) no van↑ha↑ (.) ja ↓uus. et se ov vähän t(h)ota (0.4)

well old and new PRT it is a bit PRT

well old and new it is a bit well

03 Pinja: öö siell_ov vanhe-mp-i-i rakennuks-i-i ja: (.) siell_ov vähän (.)

- there is old-COMP-PL-PAR building-PL-PAR and there is a.bit
there are older buildings and there are a bit
- 04 enemmän tällas-i-a (0.8) tällas-i-a (.) Valkea-t yö-t (0.4)
 more this.kind-PL-PAR this.kind-PL-PAR white-PL night-PL
more of these kinds of these kinds of Valkeat yöt
- 05 öö (.) tyypis-i-ä .hh ravintolo-i-ta ja (.) elikkä siis tälläs-i-a
 type-PL-PAR restaurant-PL-PAR and PRT PRT this.kind-PL-PAR
– type of restaurants and so these kinds of
- 06 (0.3) karaoke (.) baari (0.7) vähän (.) k(h)eski-ikäis-t(h)en
 karaoke bar a.bit middle-aged.people-GEN
karaoke bars which are like places where
- 07 (0.6) illanviettois- (0.3) ist- istunn- no illanistujais
 social evenin- soc- soc- well social evening
middle-aged people have social evenin- well places for
- 08 (0.4) paikko-j-a, ja (0.3) tällas-i-a (.) kepap ja
 place-PL-PAR and this.kind-PL-PAR kebab and
social evenings and these kinds of kebab and
- 09 pizzeriaipaikko-j-a ja (0.3) jotain (0.3) .h et se ov vähän
 pizzeria place-PL-PAR and something PRT it is a bit

pizzeria places and something so it's a bit

10 sellas-ta niinku (.) et siell_on se (0.8) öö vanha-v Vuosaare-n ostari (0.4)
such-PAR like PRT there is DEM old-GEN Vuosaari-GEN shopping centre
like that like so, that there is the shopping centre of the old Vuosaari there

11 ja sit siel_o, liikkuu vähä sellas-ta (0.7)
and PRT there is move a.little such.kind.of-PAR
and then there's hanging around such kind of-

12 no mitä nyt? (.)h tulee (0.3) Itä-Helsingi-stä
well what PRT come East.Helsinki-ELA
well what does come to mind about Eastern Helsinki

13 ((naurahtaa)) miele-en ni se on nimenomaa sellas-ta; (.)
mind-ILL PRT it is in particular such-PAR
((laughs)) so it is just a kind of

14 vähän sellas-ta (0.5) slummialue-mpa-a?, .h (0.6) se
a.little such-PAR slum.area-COMP-PAR DEM
a bit such a kind of more like a slum area this

15 Vanha Vuosaari?,
Old Vuosaari

Pinja's depiction includes generalising discourses associated in the Finnish cultural context with life and amenities in post-war high-rise suburbs (e.g., older buildings and karaoke bars, lines 3–10) as well as the images of Helsinki's eastern fringe as a socially backward territory (lines 11–13). Moreover, Pinja reservedly conjured up the globally circulated spatialisation of urban ills (placing emphasis on the social meanings of the slum trope) by using an unusual comparative form and referring to Old Vuosaari as a somewhat slum-type area (line 14). Yet Pinja's depictions of Old Vuosaari are at the same time noticeably cautious in tone, as comes out in her hesitation (see longer pauses in lines 4, 6–7, 10–11, 14) and laughter (lines 6, 13). She invites the non-Vuosaarian interviewer (who does not give any feedback by using dialogue particles during Pinja's long turn) to identify local phenomena – without elucidating their social features – by using pronominal expressions *tällaisia* ('these kinds', lines 4–5, 8) and *sellasta* ('such', lines 10–11, 13–14) (see VISK 2004 § 569; Laury 1997: 40–51) and by a rhetorical question (lines 12–13). She presents these hints as shared knowledge which should be identifiable for the interviewer (so that the recipient would readily understand, for instance, kebab restaurants and pizzerias as the stereotyped markers of a more or less low-prestige Finnish suburb). This kind of implicit way of speaking makes it apparent that her deliberations on the topic of Old Vuosaari were internally mediated (e.g., Bakhtin 1984) by an awareness of other voices that might not necessarily agree with her generalisations.

The interactional construction of self- and other-positions drew in some other focus groups and interviews from ethno-cultural rather than socio-economic differences between Vuosaari's sub-districts. Nonetheless, extremely negative anti-immigrant discourses and alternative, devotedly pro-multicultural discourses in connection with Vuosaari's increased ethnic diversity surfaced only infrequently and cautiously in our data. Many Vuosaarians obviously hesitated to express their views in the recorded research settings—perhaps precisely

due to hot-tempered rows between anti- and pro-immigrant discourses in Finland in recent decades. In some focus groups, however, contradiction-ridden dialogues on the visibility of the ethnic minorities in the local streetscape, and the consequences of this visibility emerged, with a tendency of these exchanges to revolve around the lower-prestige neighbourhoods of Kallahti and Meri-Rastila in New Vuosaari.

One such setting was recorded at the very site that Pinja mentioned as a social space peculiar to Eastern Helsinki (see Ex. 1 above), namely the Old Vuosaari's 'old-style' shopping centre. All residing in Old Vuosaari, the seven interlocutors in this focus group were frequent clients of the area's municipal neighbourhood centre. The participants were themselves relatively marginalised citizens by socio-economic criteria. A key feature in their discussions was emphasising the outstanding and tranquil qualities of Old Vuosaari, frequently setting it against restless neighbouring areas in New Vuosaari. Another peculiarity in the peer group's interactional dynamics was forthrightness in the sense that the participants were not overly wary of asserting mutually deviant opinions (see on candour in familiar speech genres: Bakhtin 1986: 97; cf. on working-class anti-pretentiousness: Skeggs 2004). Whether some co-participants' excessive alcohol consumption, or stances toward ethnically non-Finnish groups in Vuosaari, was under discussion, these topics were treated without notable cautiousness that was otherwise often met in our data.

These interactional aspects are manifested in the following discursive clash of the stances of Juhani (male, 46 years) and Petri (male, 41 years) with those of Taina (female, 56 years). Following the researcher's question on the participants' views regarding Vuosaari (*mitäs te tykkäätte*), a couple of participants first referred to Old Vuosaari's tranquillity without causing discord in the group. In the excerpt, however, Petri and Juhani precipitously engage in recounting their threatening encounters with ethnically non-Finnish adolescents

outside the confines of the old side (Ex. 2a, lines 1–5, 17–20), whereas Taina ends up underscoring her alternative experiences of the politeness of Somali people residing in her apartment block (Ex. 2b).

Extract 2a

01 Petri: mut siis (0.7) mä tarkot-i-m Meri-Rastila-a [*nyt*].
but PRT I mean-PST-SG1 Meri-Rastila-PAR PRT
but I meant Meri-Rastila here

02 Taina: [↑nii;
yeah

03 Juhani: Meri-Rastila.

04 Taina: se on hurja(a).
it is wild

05 Juhani: -> sinne ku [menee ne rupee heittelee-k kiv-i-llä ja muu(ta).
there.to PRT Ø go they begin throw-inf+ILL stone-PL-ADE and else(-PAR)
when one goes there they will begin to throw stones and so.

06 Petri: [se_o- se_or rakenne-ttu jälkeempäi.
it h- it has build-PPTCP afterwards
it ha- it has been built afterwards

07 Taina: niin_o-n.

PRT be-SG3

yes it has

08 Petri: ja (.) sinne_o sitte (0.6) okei (.) kuinka mon-ta kansalaisuut-ta

and there.to is PRT okay how many-PAR nationality-PAR

and to there they have okay how many nationalities

09 mei-llä_o-n (0.3) Vuosaare-s[sa.

we-ADE have-SG3 Vuosaari-INE

have we in Vuosaari

10 Taina: [meidän-ki talo-s on.

our-CLI house-INE is

there are also in our house

11 Petri: aivan älyttömästi.

really many

12 Taina: mm.

13 Juhani: yli viiskymmen[tä.

over fifty

14 Petri: [tääll_o eniten (.) mitä löytyy (.) Suome-sta. (.) yhde-llä
here is most which is found Finland-ELA one-ADE
there is the highest number of different nationalities here that

15 aluee-lla (.) eri kansalaisuuks-i-a.
area-ADE different nationality-PL-PAR
one can find in one area in Finland

16 Taina: on on.
is is
yes yes

17 Petri: ja se-n takii-han tääl tulee konflikte-j-a ja kaikke-e näi.
and it-GEN because.of-CLI here come conflict-PL-PAR and all-PAR PRT
that's why we have conflicts and such here

18 Taina: mm.

19 Petri: ja (.) sit ne hengailee tos jossain Columbukse-s ja muu-ta ja
and they hang.around there somewhere Columbus-INE and else-PAR and
and they hang around somewhere in Columbus ((shopping mall) and (do something) else, and

20 niie-n kans tulee ongelmi-i.
 they-GEN with come problem-PL-PAR
we will have problems with them

Following a territorialising logic, Petri and Juhani specifically mention Meri-Rastila (lines 1–8) and the suburb’s socially mingled transportation hub (with its Columbus shopping mall) in-between Old and New Vuosaari (lines 19–20) as the spaces of contradiction-ridden encounters with ethnically other local adolescents. Juhani depicts an encounter with stone-hurling juveniles as if it were an inevitable occurrence whenever one enters ‘their territory’ in Meri-Rastila. Remarkably, he utilises a so-called zero-person construction (line 5, marked by Ø; see Laitinen 2006) by which he constructs the statement as a generalisation applying to whomever,⁶ rendering his turn a stronger argument against ethnic others. Petri’s position appears somewhat more equivocal and ironic on occasions. At face value, his impromptu question (lines 8–9) and subsequent comment on the high number of nationalities that ‘we’ have in Vuosaari (lines 14–15) are not used disparagingly of the suburb’s recent multiculturalisation. In line with contemporary discourses in Finland and beyond that accentuate the perils of ethno-cultural diversity (Malik 2013), however, it appears that the voicing of ‘really many’ (line 11) nationalities in Vuosaari is aimed at justifying his anti-multiculturalist standpoint. In lines 17 and 19–20 Petri presents no reservations as for the inevitability of ethnic tensions (e.g., by using modal elements) within the culturally diversified suburb and its specific territories. While at first seemingly complying with Petri and Juhani (‘it is wild’ line 4, ‘yeah’ line 21), a discursive clash surfaces when Taina brings her personal experiences of polite and friendly Somalis living next to her into the discussion (lines 1–3).

Extract 2b

01 Taina: meidän talo-ss_ om paljon asuu (.) esimerkiks no-it ↑somaleita; (0.4) ne_o
our house-INE is a lot live for instance DEM-PAR Somali-PL-PAR they are
there are many Somalis for instance who live in our block they are

02 hirveen kohtelia-i-ta ja ystävällis-i-ä ku itse on nii-lle kohtelias
terribly polite-PL-PAR and friendly-PL-PAR when oneself is them-ALL polite
extremely polite and friendly when you are yourself polite to them

03 ja [(juttelee),
and (talk).

04 Petri: tot-ta helkkari-ssa.
true-PAR hell-INE
sure as hell.

Contravening the whole territorialised logic that structures Petri's and Juhani's argumentation, Taina's dialogic response is voiced—in Bakhtin's (1984) vocabulary—as a direct confrontation through a contradictory example on the same topic. While Taina provides no wider contextualisation for her positive experiences, her line resonates with the popular discourses in which ethno-cultural diversity and convivial sentiments are conceived as the positive assets of urban life (e.g., Pennycook and Otsuji 2015). As if to confirm to be inspired by such a stance, immediately after Petri's (obviously ironic) retort *totta helkkarissa*

(‘sure as hell’, line 4), Taina actually also cherished her extremely polite Estonian and Russian neighbours as people with whom she gets along very well.

Taken together, what we can already infer from the extracts above is that being a Vuosaarian is not a determining stamp for its residents’ identities but a negotiable identity type (cf. Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004). In the speaker- and context-specific manifestations of this malleable place-bound identity, the entanglements of social spatialisations with the names *Vanha Vuosaari* and *Uusi Vuosaari* in talk regularly played a major role. In our participants’ self- and other-positioning, socio-economic and ethno-cultural relations within the suburb frequently featured as key motivations for the drawing of boundaries between the old and new sides of Vuosaari. Yet as importantly exemplified in Taina’s case, one’s Vuosaarian identity was not always founded on a strictly territorial socio-spatial logic of ‘us here’ versus ‘others there’. The name-mediated territorialisations of Vuosaari were open to variable types of dialogic (re-)interpretations, depending on interactional situations as well as the speaker’s socio-spatial and biographical backgrounds. Indeed, there were multiple instances in which the meanings of Old and New Vuosaari were re-voiced in a less bipolar manner, one of which we will detail next.

Re-voicing the forest suburb:

A topophilic discourse of Old Vuosaari and its hidden polemic

A strong sense of emotional attachment to ‘Old Vuosaari’ was an outstanding identity marker in notably many focus groups with elderly and middle-aged locals. The speakers in focus insisted on the old side’s enduring qualities as a socially tranquil living space with a sparsely built layout and nature-associated environment (cf. also above in Petri’s, Juhani’s and Taina’s focus group). In the sympathising phrase of Sirkka (female, 67 old years), who herself became a (New) Vuosaari resident in 2000, the true-born residents of Old Vuosaari were

‘friends of nature’ (*luonnonystävät*) who composed ‘a caste of their very own’ (*oma kastinsa*) among the newer and attitudinally more urbanised population segments in the suburb. The retrospectively given unofficial name *Vanha Vuosaari* (‘Old Vuosaari’) was etched as the organising centre of this particularly powerful topophilic and frequently nostalgia-laden local discourse (see on topophilia: Tuan 1974).

To be sure, the above-mentioned discourse and associated self- and other-positionings were usually steeped in individuals’ biographically positioned memories of Vuosaari’s growth and communal history. At the same time, the ways in which many elderly and second-generation Vuosaarians revered Old Vuosaari as a landscape with splendid forest nature bore traces of the language of the forest suburb construction in Vuosaari and elsewhere in Finland around the 1960s (see above). As an associated othering practice, many contrasted their nature-rich and peaceful home quarters with the excessively compact, fully crammed and restless New Vuosaari. In other words, there was a strong tendency to follow the metonymic logic of place myths (Shields 1991) and bundle together the newer neighbourhoods of Meri-Rastila, Kallahti and Aurinkolahti under a single stereotyped spatialisation.

This type of straightforward or unidirectional (Bakhtin 1984: 185–203) residential area-based self- and other-positioning, however, was complicated in focus groups with participants of more mixed migrational and social backgrounds. A case in point is the dialogue below, in which Aija (female, 55 years) questions overriding importance of Old Vuosaari for her place-bound identity even though she and her interlocutor share a decades-long residing history in the suburb. In the case quoted, a discursive clash emerges following the interviewer’s question on the participants’ places of residence. Antti (male, 57 years) first imparted that he resided in ‘Old Vuosaari’, in an ‘excellent place, a peaceful place if complementary building won’t then spoil it’ (*erinomanen paikka, rauhallinen paikka ja ellei nys sitte täydennysrakentaminen sitä p(h)ilaa*). By contrast, in her line below, Aija says that

she relocated from the old side to the new side a decade ago. Both speakers have been actively involved in local residents' associations; hence Aija, too, is very well aware of the nostalgic meanings of Old Vuosaari for many locals and the associated othering discourses of the new side. Amply exemplifying the Bakhtinian view that 'identity is never complete but always in process', shaped and reshaped 'in continuous and constant interaction' with others' utterances (Bakhtin 1986: 55, 89), the following excerpt illustrates how Aija develops her response by 'glancing' both at Antti's preceding reply and the more widely shared stereotyped spatialisations of Old and New Vuosaari:

Extract 3

01 Aija: ja nyt mä oo-n asu-nu (0.5) kymmenkunta vuot-ta tuo-lla **uud-ella** (.) niin
 and now I have-SG1 live-PTCP some ten year-PAR that-ADE new-ADE PRT
*and now I have lived around ten years there in the **new** so-*

02 sano-tu-lla **Uu↑de-lla puole-lla↑** .mt (.) jo-ta niinkun (.) kauhistel-tiin
 say-PPTCP-ADE new-ADE side-ADE which-PAR like be.horrified-PASS+PST.
*called **New side** that people were like horrified at*

03 kum minä tuo-lta **Vanha-lta puole-lta** muut-i-n että; (0.6) miten sinne voi
 when I there-ABL old-ABL side-ABL move-PST-SG1 PRT how there.to Ø can
*when I moved from the **Old side** ((they were like)) how can you*

04 (0.3) tuonne (0.4) hirvee-seen ↑slummi-in muutta-a ja; (.) se on niin
 there.to terrible-ILL slum-ILL move-INF and it is so
move to that terrible slum and it has been so

- 05 täyte-en rakenne-ttu ja ahde-ttu ja (0.6) on-han se erilainen miljöö
 full-ILL build-PPPC and cram-PPPC and is-CLI it different milieu
tightly built and fully packed, and it's, y'know a different kind of milieu
- 06 (0.6) si-llä tava-lla niinku rakennustekni-sesti ja (.) ympäristö-ltä-än
 it-ADE way-ADE like construction engineering-DER and environment-ABL-SUFF
due to its construction engineering and by its environment,
- 07 mutta (0.8) kyl m(e) o-n siellä kymmenen vuot-ta viihty-ny ja (0.2) täytyy
 but PRT I/we be-SG3 there ten year-PAR feel-PTCP.home and Ø must
but I have felt at home there for ten years and I must
- 08 sanoo että e-m mä enää **Vanha-av Vuosaare-en** muutta-s takas. (1.1) koska
 say that NEG-SG1 I anymore Old-ILL Vuosaari-ILL move-COND back because
*say I wouldn't move back to **Old Vuosaari** anymore because*
- 09 tuota ni on tietty-j-ä (.) semmos-i-a juttu-j-a mi-tä sitte tuolla
 PRT PRT is certain-PL-PAR such-PL-PAR thing-PL-PAR which-PAR PRT there
well there are certain things like that there
- 10 **Uude-lla puole-lla** on että; (0.6) on meri vieressä ja o-n oma sauna ja,
 New-ADE side-ADE is PRT is sea beside and have-SG3 own sauna and
*in the **New side** you have the sea next to you and your own sauna and*

11 (0.4)

12 Antti: mm.

13 Aija: merinäköalat saunallaute-i-lta ja näin jo-ta (0.3) ei taas **Vanha**
views of the sea sauna bench-PL-ABL and PRT which-PAR NEG PRT Old
*a view of the sea from the sauna benches and what not that **Old***

14 **Vuosaari** pysty tarjoo-ma-an.

Vuosaari can offer-INF-ILL

***Vuosaari** can't offer*

Aija's turn highlights how the spatial self-identifications by contemporary urbanites tend to be mutable and multi-voiced constructs contingent upon their changing life situations and interactional contexts. As a part of a 'vari-directional' argumentation strategy (see Bakhtin 1984), Aija rephrases the voices of other Vuosaarians (leaving them unspecified by using passive forms) by echoing critical arguments about the tightly built architecture on the new side, especially at the time when she moved to Aurinkolahti (lines 1–5). Particularly in lines 4–5, her talk includes nearly verbatim echoes of previous local planning disputes peaking after the mid-1980s when the then-projected building projects for the Vuosaari coastal zone were issued (see above on 'Let's save Vuosaari' civic movement; Bäcklund and Schulman 2005). Besides citing (intentionally or otherwise) these 'third voices', she performs a subtle interactional gesture towards Antti's preceding turn. This comes out when Aija concedes that the negative views on New Vuosaari may be partially justified by using the clitic *-han* (lines 5–6), which gives an affirmative meaning to the utterance when occurring in

the beginning of a verb-initial assertion (VISK 2004 § 830; Niemi 2013). Furthermore, she labels features of the new side as differences (*erilainen*, line 5), not as problems per se. Rather than neutrally noting that she has lived on the new side for ten years, she also declares being delighted in having lived there that long (line 7). Aija further disambiguates her positive identification with New Vuosaari by confessing that she ‘wouldn’t move back’ (line 8) and by listing amenities which the new side—but not the old—caters to her: the sea in the immediate vicinity and a scenic vista from the sauna in her home including the surrounding archipelago (lines 10, 13). Notably, however, Aija does not explicate living in her new upscale home neighbourhood as luxurious, which would make the socio-economically upward mobile nature of her relocation to Aurinkolahti more explicit.

Although Aija does not excessively dramatise differences in living standards between Old and New Vuosaari, we can hear echoes of different discourses (including both locally specific and global social spatialisations) in her multi-voiced self- and other-positioning (cf. Tagg 2016). As the tools of identity work that operate here through re-voicing various discourses, Aija’s lexical and stylistic choices, for instance, articulate her altered and now more or less interstitial identity position vis-à-vis the discursive-territorial contrasts commonly applied to different residential areas within Vuosaari. More inclined to her New Vuosaarian identity in the analysed speech situation, she draws from academic and architectural discourses (e.g., *miljö* ‘milieu’ and *rakennusteknisesti* ‘due to its construction engineering’, lines 5–6) when characterising the new side. By contrast, when depicting the negative stances of others to the new side, she uses affective expressions like *kauhistehtiin* (‘were horrified’ line 2) and *hirveeseen slummiin* (‘to that terrible slum’ line 4), arguably hinting at these critics as opinionated enthusiasts basing their arguments on sentiments rather than facts. On the grounds of our data as well as the public discourse in the local media, the critical voices belong to the Old Vuosaarians.

To what extent can Aija's re-voicing of those who defame the new side be seen as parodic? In the words of Bakhtin (1984: 193–194), does it involve 'an arena of battle between two voices' in which the other's parodied voice is repeated to make palpable the speaker's directly opposed aspirations? In any straightforward sense, this is obviously not the case. The affective phrases that Aija takes up from the unnamed critics of New Vuosaari are not exactly 'hostilely clashing' (ibid, p. 193) with her own intentions. Rather, her argumentation strategy comes closer to hidden polemic, defined in Bakhtin's (ibid, pp. 194–196) discourse typology as a multi-voiced and actively reworked way of speaking about the referential object of a discourse (in Aija's case about her position in relation to Old and New Vuosaari), while simultaneously exerting 'a polemical blow... struck at the other's discourse on the same theme' (i.e., on the stigmatising local stereotypes of *Uusi Vuosaari*). In this connection, also the re-voicing of the slum trope by Aija ('terrible slum', line 7) is too salient to pass unnoted. In the preceding section, we noted how Pinja appropriated this same trope—one might say unidirectionally—to give credence to her own depiction of Old Vuosaari. By contrast, Aija clearly echoes the slum spatialisation in a double-voiced and vari-directional fashion in Bakhtinian terms (Bakhtin 1984: 185–203). It is precisely the (unnamed) local others complicit in localising the pejorative trope who become the targets of her hidden polemic and, in turn, become the voices through which Aija re-voices her current interstitial speaking position in between stark local territorialisations and associated identifications. Likely based on her accumulated experiences of living in both Old and New Vuosaari, Aija is also more generally able to articulate a coherent interstitial or 'third' identity position of her own by re-voicing different locally influential discourses and spatialisations.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Writing about the long-fixed name of the city of Newcastle in northeastern England, Radding and Western (2010: 396) note that few people today associate its name ‘with any castle, new or otherwise’. In a stark contrast, for the uses of names in reference to the older and more recently-built parts of the Vuosaari suburb analysed in this article, a similar opaqueness was present only by its absence. Unmistakeably, the adjectives *vanha* (‘old’) and *uusi* (‘new’) as parts of these latter place names were ‘living signifiers’ in that they enabled local people to construct their place-bound identities by positioning themselves in relation to relatively recent urban growth in Vuosaari and its differentiated repercussions in the local housing and social landscape. Even though the names *Vanha Vuosaari* (‘Old Vuosaari’) and *Uusi Vuosaari* (‘New Vuosaari’) and their variants were predictable, they signified social topicalities related to the well-recalled aspects of local urban transformation (cf. Paunonen et al. 2009).

However, the wide-spread local currency of Old and New Vuosaari did not translate into like-mindedness or a disappearance of internal frontiers between those who used these unofficial names. In a seemingly paradoxical vein, the speakers were at once united and separated by a non-established, willingly used toponymy. As a locally significant axis of differentiation (Irvine and Gal 2000, Gal 2016), the name pair in focus was open to re-negotiations as a resource of place-bound identity work, reflecting the position and the stance of the speaker (see also Jaffe 2009). It is exactly here where the discursive projections of ideal and stereotyped spaces entered the picture. By drawing from Shields’s theory of social spatialisation we have illustrated how the echoes of variable ideological discourses interpenetrated the use of unofficial place names by Vuosaarians. The acts of appropriation or re-voicing these spatialisations—third voices in Bakhtinian sense—opened room for the uses and meanings of toponyms for highly differentiated social ends. As the types of social spatialisations used in connection with the analysed toponyms, both globally circulating (the slum trope, promotional discourses peculiar to New Urbanism, discourses counteracting or

endorsing multiculturalism) and localised (the stigmatising images of eastern Helsinki, the Finnish forest suburb discourse, planning disputes over the construction of new Vuosaari) discourses were prevalent. Symptomatically, for instance, the slum trope re-appeared in two guises in our data to empower (Ex. 1, line 14) or hiddenly polemicise (Ex. 3, line 4) views of a low-prestige status or excessively dense built environment in Vuosaari's specific parts, respectively. As the key finding of this study, the entanglements of two distinct categories of space- and place-referring constructs—social spatialisations rich in 'extrinsic' ideological meanings on the one hand, and affective unofficial names with local resonance on the other—were co-constitutive in both empowering and pluralising the acts of place-bound self- and other-positioning among Vuosaarians. Through this discursive process, unofficial names associated with the suburb's old/new divide contributed to the interactionally reflexive ways in which Vuosaarians made sense of themselves amidst heterogeneous local urban realities.

Our focus group extracts focused on two illustrative discursive clashes that emerged when contradicting ideological discourses were evoked by the speakers. These analyses, in particular, threw into sharp relief the methodological advantages of Bakhtinian dialogism and discourse typologies (e.g., Bakhtin 1984) in bridging between the social scientific theorisations of the discursive construction of space (Shields 1999, 2013) and socio-onomastics (Ainiala 2016). In the first analysed focus group (Ex. 2), a direct confrontation (through a contradictory example on the same topic) by Taina questioned Juhani's and Petri's strictly territorialised, anti-immigrant discourse on the locality's multi-ethnic realities, whereas in the second analysed focus group (Ex. 3), Aija's hidden polemic vari-directionally utilised the voices of other Vuosaarians to re-voice a coherent interstitial identity position of her own. These analyses revealed that in interactional situations, there exist distinct dialogic ways to articulate new, more hybrid identity positions that go beyond stereotypical generalisations and identifications. Otherwise, our data also featured many parodic re-

voicings, manifestations of ironic and humorous stances, and the cautious tendency of many speakers to avoid taking sides in locally controversial issues. All these stances indicated that Vuosaarians were acutely aware of the multiplicity of local social worlds, voices and identities within their home district, with multiple dialogic implications for the acts voicing their own residential area-bound identities.

Also, beyond the confines of our case study, we contend that to come to grips with the ways in which linguistic elements (such as unofficial place names) and wider ideological discourses (such as social spatialisations) are dialogically entangled with each other in variably heterogeneous localities and interactional contexts, empirically fine-grained sociolinguistic analyses are indispensable. As sociolinguists (e.g., Eckert 2008; Johnstone 2011b) have noted, a key methodological challenge in many research designs concerns the concomitant need to address (in one way or another) both the immediate context of talk (the micro-level of interactional settings) and the wider registers of meaning-giving (the macro-level of ideologies' sphere of influence). With the Bakhtinian approach in the mediating role, we hope to have shown with this study that obstacles to methodological pursuits of studying the effects of macro-scale discourses in micro-scale contexts of identity work are not unsurmountable.

Notes

1. We are grateful to the editors of *Journal of Sociolinguistics* and anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper; shortcomings are our own.

2. See on overlaps between the sociolinguistic interest in the social relationships and situational aspects of speech, and the Bakhtinian theory's insistence in the emergence of all forms of communication and self-realisation in relation to the speech of others, e.g. Tsitsipis 2004; Menard-Warwick 2005; Tagg 2016.
3. Shields (1991, 2013) himself sparingly discusses the significance of language and naming for social spatialisations in explicit terms.
4. Sociolinguists and sociologists tend to stress that certain dimensions of social identity are assumed or imposed, and others are negotiable or disposable (Marcuse 2000; Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004; Auer 2007). Analogously, people's place-bound urban identities, too, can show both fixed and fluid qualities in terms of their local (dis)embeddedness (e.g., Tuan 1974; Anderson and Erskine 2014; Cresswell 2015).
5. The first project examined linguistic variation, social identities and language attitudes in Eastern Helsinki by utilising sociolinguistic, ethnographic and conversation-analytic perspectives (Sorjonen et. al. 2015). The second project investigated the socially differentiated uses of place names (both official and unofficial) in Vuosaari and the inner-city neighbourhood of Kallio (Ainiala and Halonen 2017).
6. In zero-person constructions, typical for Finnish, the verb is always in the 3rd-person singular, but a subject or another major constituent (e.g., object) appears to be missing, translated into English by using the generic *one* or *you*. Its referent is always human (Laitinen 2006).

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Appendix. Transcription symbols

. falling intonation

; slightly falling intonation

, level intonation

? rising intonation

?, slightly rising intonation

↑ rise in pitch

↓ fall in pitch

_ emphasis indicated by underlining (e.g. cat)

: lengthening of the sound

su- dash indicates a cut-off word

[utterances starting simultaneously

(.) micropause: 0.2 seconds or less

(0.5) silences timed in tenths of a second, relative to the tempo of the previous talk

* * talk inside is quieter than the surrounding talk

(h) h in brackets within a word indicates aspiration, often laughter

hh outbreath

.hh inbreath

() item in doubt

(-) word in doubt

(()) comment by the transcriptionist