

TALKING WITH ABUELO: STYLING INSIDER-OUTSIDER IDENTITIES IN A MULTI-CULTURAL FAMILY

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ABSTRACT

Taking an interactional sociolinguistic (IS) approach to discourse analysis, this study explores how multi-cultural and multi-lingual siblings interact with their monolingual grandfather (Abuelo), and how, through these interactions, they negotiate and construct multi-cultural family identities. Using Tannen's (2007) power and solidarity framework, I analyze four excerpts from a seven hour corpus of naturally occurring face-to-face recorded conversations between my sisters, my grandfather, and myself, from 1984 in Spain to answer the following question: How do speakers style (Coupland, 2007) themselves as legitimate speakers in a multilingual and multi-cultural family? The analysis shows that resistance to Abuelo's authority was accomplished secretly through ridicule using code-switching, simultaneously managing deference and resistance. Authority was also established among the sisters through hierarchies of translation and interpretation, which provided opportunities for resisting Abuelo's authority through codeswitching between English and Spanish. The study demonstrates how codeswitching underscores the affiliative and disaffiliative interactional stances for achieving both solidarity and power.

This study demonstrates how members of a multi-sited, transnational family use their multilingual resources to manage difference and to negotiate relationships. The study is one example of how families experience dislocation, relocation, and a frequent shuttling back and forth between communities, all hallmarks of the context of *late modernity* (Blackledge & Creese, 2008; Canagarajah, 2012; Chen, 2008; Giddens, 1999). The intensity of this mobility has complicated and contradicted what has traditionally been a close proximity to family, both geographically and socially. Late modernity is a concept about the way society plays out in time and space. It allows us new ways of approaching social life, including identities, relationships

and social institutions such as family or school (see Blackledge & Creese, 2008). These changes provide us with an opportunity to see life from different perspectives while simultaneously obfuscating these relationships and disrupting what we have previously deemed traditional social lifestyles (Coupland, 2007).

The newer generations of the social institution of family are no longer tied to or constrained by the culture, nor to the language(s) that previous generations were brought up with. This also means that without these precise boundaries, the lines for what constitutes ‘insider’ and who is an ‘outsider’ are not precisely drawn. Nevertheless, such identities are often treated as meaningful in face-to-face interactions among family members. Family members continue to build relationships regardless of difference, and sometimes even find commonality through capitalizing on their cross-linguistic and cross-cultural identities. This study examines how a portion of my own family uses or rejects each other’s linguistic resources to either sustain harmony within the family or to maintain individuality. I analyze extracts from a corpus of naturally occurring speech between three young multi-lingual and multi-cultural granddaughters with immigrant parents and American passports and their monolingual Spanish grandfather in his environment. Unaccustomed to this variety of family, situated in a new environment, each of us reshapes, modifies, and/or transforms our use of language based on the expectations we have for the different and sometimes challenging interactions we participate in. We style our language (Coupland, 2007) to manage the outcomes of these exchanges and in so doing, blur the lines of power, hierarchy, or authority and solidarity, connection, or alignment. Relationships amongst family members are characteristically hierarchical, yet deeply intimate, and delving into how the late modern family communicates and what resources it uses to do so is the aim of this study.

RESEARCH ON FAMILIES: FROM MODERN TO LATE MODERN CONTEXTS

Research on family language use within a sociolinguistic framework has explored how people manage social relations amongst family members in monolingual families (Tannen, 2007; 2009; Tannen, Kendall & Gordon, 2007). Tannen, Kendall and Gordon (2007) found that in engaging with family members, people are constantly aligning with each other to maintain good relations while at the same time asserting their individuality and power: the two are constantly

intertwined. Tannen (2007) provides an example of a mother welcoming home her husband with their two year old toddler in tow. The child wishes to sit in the father's lap but because he is cranky from not having eaten, he reacts with annoyance and the child, who does not speak much yet, begins to cry. The father changes how he speaks to her but is unsuccessful at getting her to calm down so his wife, the baby's mother, acts as a mediator. The father's initial reaction was rough and unwelcoming, exerting his power to deny her the chance to sit on his lap, but as the short interaction proceeds, he changes his tone to one that is friendly and inviting, cuing alignment and finally asks her to sit on his lap. To calm her husband down, the wife speaks for the child in the child's voice, saying that she missed her daddy and that she was not feeling very well. She does so in an effort to mollify his reaction and successfully expresses her concern about his reaction through the voice of the child. She successfully speaks "as, to, and through" (p. 40) the baby in hopes of making a connection between the father and daughter. She exerts her own motherly power to protect her child and to bring harmony to the small family's interaction. This exchange occurred in a monolingual English-speaking American household. The pushes and pulls for power and solidarity are interwoven to create a warm comforting blanket called family.

Research that focuses on multilingual practices among families has begun to demonstrate how speakers use their resources, which are sometimes quite limited, to construct identities that indicate belonging within a family while simultaneously acknowledging differences among generations and cultural affiliation. (Canagarajah, 2012; De Fina, 2012; Zhu, 2005; 2010; Williams, 2003) A Chinese-British diasporic family in the UK was the topic of Zhu's 2010 study. She looked at the address terms and how a multi-sited family created new social and cultural identities. The youngest generation straddled the family's cultural traditions with life in the new country, which in turn provided new identities and ways of meaning as well as tensions associated with language ideologies. Her study focuses on intergenerational interactions where the older generation teaches the younger generation how to address their elders. These traditional forms of address seem antiquated and from the old country to the younger generation, which is one of the reasons Fishman (1991) lists for the shift to majority languages. But the parents who hold the hierarchical power in these relationships are insistent on teaching their children nonetheless.

Intergenerational relationships are inherently asymmetrical. Typically, the older generation wields the power and has the ability to tell the younger one what to do. In multicultural and multilingual intergenerational relationships, that is not always the case. In William's (2005) study where the participants are Chinese-Americans living in Michigan, she examines code-switching between a mother, May, and her daughter, Liz, whose asymmetrical relationship tends in the other direction—with the child wielding more power than is usual for a daughter. The mother seeks advice from the child, quite nontraditional in this kind of relationship. The mother, though she asks her daughter for the advice, ceding power to her daughter, reminds her daughter who the adult is and stands up for herself when Liz makes negative remarks about her mother's decision-making process. Through code-switching they contest each other's authority and negotiate their relationship to construct their roles as parent and child. Having access to both languages was vital to their understanding of each other.

Studies have shown time and again that language shifts by the third generation. (Barron-Hauwaert, 2011; Canagarajah, 2008; De Fina, 2012; Fishman, 1989; 1991; 1999; Lambert & Taylor, 1996; Park & Sarker, 2007; Schüpbach, 2006; Vidal, 2011) The first generation of immigrants are monolingual in the minority language, the second generation is bilingual yet dominant in the majority language and the third generation is monolingual in the majority language—they are unable to speak to their grandparents. De Fina (2012) studied a tri-generation Italian-American family from New York whose third *and* second generation had all but lost their ability to speak Italian or Sicilian, but retained their Italian identity. She demonstrates how these three generations of family use language engagement to navigate generational differences and shows that even minor engagements with the heritage languages in family encounters aid in the retention of their Italian identity and an acceptance by the Italian-speaking member of the family. She concludes the study by stating that studies on language shift and loss have historically seen the blending of languages as an indicator of language loss, but that in reality language and identity shift is much more complex than simply being lost. Families living with more than one language have members whose linguistics repertoires are disproportionate in comparison to others within their own families. Knowing that there is more to loss and shift by the third generation is tantamount to the study of post-modern families.

The mixing of languages, the blending of dialects and the styling of family members' languages all point to language use in the post-modern intercultural family. In this study, I aim

to add to the literature on the discursive negotiation of relationships in families where linguistic resources are not equally dispersed amongst its family members. Framing the study with the notion that power and solidarity are inextricable in nature, this study aims to answer the question: How do speakers style (Coupland, 2007) themselves as legitimate speakers in a multilingual and multi-cultural family?

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

I take an interactional sociolinguistic (IS) approach to discourse analysis (DA) to understand how, through our interactions, my sisters, my grandfather and I—members of a multi-sited family—negotiate and discursively construct power and solidarity and where the boundaries for *insider* and *outsider* are drawn. One of the ways in which the lines are drawn and yet also transgressed, is by styling (Coupland, 2007) each other's language. Coupland states that style is an integral part of all forms of communication and that late modernity is evident in worldwide connections and associations and the manner in which we manage these relationships. Studying how styling attests to these dynamics allows us to understand some of the characteristics of life in late modernity (p. 30) Because a hallmark of IS is context, I provide rich descriptions of ethnographic information based on my own brought-along knowledge of our routines, histories, experiences and memories from our childhood and my experiences and aim to answer the research question by using Tannen's framework through Coupland's styling.

Styling can help us to understand power and solidarity in relationships through accommodation to someone else's speech, creating insider access. This can be done by imitating their lexicon, their phonology, even their intonation, thereby linguistically expressing solidarity. It can also provide us with the discursive or interactional tools necessary to mock or reject authority, resulting in power struggles and delineations of outsider identities. In families, where maintaining harmony yet individuality is ever-present, power and solidarity are inextricably intertwined and one way of understanding how this plays out is through analysing how families style themselves. The data reveals how contextualization cues such as prosody and intonation (Gumperz, 1982) underscore some of the ways in which we style ourselves in attempts at power and solidarity.

Power and solidarity has been an investigative framework in sociolinguistic analysis since the 1960s (c.f. Brown & Gilman, 1960) and continues to be developed with Tannen's large body of work on interactional sociolinguistics (Tannen, 1990; 1994; 2005; 2007; 2009; Tannen, Kendall & Gordon, 2009). Her particular approach to the indivisible nature to power and solidarity is a useful tool in my study because she analyzes it from an IS perspective and looks at how family discursively manages relationships. She insists that discourse analysts must take into consideration that what speakers say within family discourse are have the potential to concurrently be power *and* solidarity moves.

The data to be discussed here come from a corpus of seven hours of naturally occurring interactions during mealtimes at Abuelo's house in Oviedo, Asturias, Spain during the summer of 1984. The conversations were between Abuelo, our monolingual Spanish-speaking grandfather, and my two younger sisters and me, who were raised speaking Spanish at home with their Spanish mother and Cuban father, but who were educated in public schools in English in Newark, Jersey. All four of us are present in each of the four extracts, though not all of us speak in all of them. Abuelo is always an interlocutor, and each one of us plays a significant role in at least one of the interactions. Sibling interaction is also part of the chosen extracts, where power and solidarity play key roles. Across the corpus, brokering harmonious mealtimes is a job that Abuelo became an expert at. In one extract, he used his ability to sculpt his language usage with his granddaughters to maintain cohesion amongst the four of us. There is an obvious contestation of authority in at least two of the examples, more subtle contestations are also evident amongst the other extracts. Family is contested and co-constructed and code-switching, be it from language to language or through styling one another linguistic resources is apparent throughout the data.

The data are transcribed based on Jeffersonian transcription conventions and I use a three-line gloss guided by the Leipzig glossing rules (see Appendix). The first line is the original utterance, the second line is a morpheme-by-morpheme translation and the third line is a translation from Spanish to English. Where interactions are solely in English, only one line is used.

CONTEXT

During the summer of 1984, my sisters, Caterina (aged 6), Begoña (aged 9), and I (aged 10) were sent to Spain to spend the summer with my mother's family. It occurred to our mother that it might be interesting to record our conversations while in Spain that could serve as mementos of our time with our family to be listened to in the future—recordings for posterity's sake. She put a 10-pack of TDK cassettes in our suitcase and sent us to Asturias, her home province, for six weeks. The data used in this study comes from approximately seven hours of naturally occurring talk between the three sisters and our grandfather who we called Abuelo, then aged 68, (now deceased) who was a Spaniard, but lived in Mexico from age 34 until approximately age 64. Though a monolingual speaker of Spanish, Abuelo had multiple linguistic resources due to his being from Asturias, where there is a regional language, Asturian, whose lexicon permeates society, as well as a the Mexican Spanish influence from having lived in Mexico for 30 years.

After we were born, when it was clear that we would be raised in the US, Abuelo bought a series of about 20 BBC binders full of English lessons with the intention of learning conversational English. His English at the time, was limited to polite speech such as greetings, please, and thank you and his pronunciation was strongly influenced by Spanish. He never did, in fact, acquire a fluid conversational English. We, on the other hand, were born in New Jersey (NJ) in the 1970s to a Spanish mother and a Cuban father and were brought up speaking Spanish at home with our parents and with the Cuban side of our family, who also lived in NJ. Though we were raised speaking Spanish at home, because our schooling in NJ was in English, our dominant language by 1984 was English. Our control of the Spanish language was good, but as is the case with most bilingual siblings, (Barron-Hauwaert, 2011; Shin, 2002; Vidal, 2011) as the oldest, my Spanish was the strongest and the youngest's, Caterina's, was the weakest.

Our exposure to Spanish happened mostly in NJ and came from our parents, their Spanish and Cuban friends, our Cuban aunts and grandparents, our Puerto Rican friends' parents, and other Spanish-speaking adults. Though many of our childhood summers were spent in Spain with our parents, in 1984 they sent us on our own for six weeks to be immersed in our Spanish culture, heritage, and language. In an email, my mother reports three reasons for wanting to send us to Spain without them:

(1) Mi principal razón fue darles la alegría a mis padres de disfrutar de vuestra compañía. Cuándo iban a tener otra oportunidad así? (2) Daros la oportunidad a vosotras de que conocierais a vuestros abuelos y compartierais con ellos en su ambiente. Desde que nacisteis me propuse que aunque estábamos muy lejos de mi familia y amistades, de mi tierra, de mi cultura, yo haría todo lo posible para que vosotras de una forma u otra conocierais mis raíces, (3) esta era una buena oportunidad de que pasarais un poquitito de vuestra niñez en mi tierra, con mi familia y con mis amigas.

She states that her principle reason was to give her parents the joy of our company. When were they going to have another opportunity like this? (2) She wanted to give us the opportunity to get to know our grandpaters and to share with them in their own environment. Since we were born, she promised herself that even though we were far from her family and friends, from her land and her culture, that she would do all she possibly could, in one way or another, for us to know her roots. (3) This was a good opportunity for us to spend a little bit of our childhood on her land, with her family and her friends.

It is during this summer that these seven hours of interaction were recorded and that serve as the corpus for this study. The recordings took place during meal times, as the tape recorder was always on the kitchen counter. The kitchen was the most likely place for three little girls and their grandfather to sit (mostly) still to talk for 30-minute stretches of time. The data is rich in themes and topics: meals, cooking, sister talk, humor, popular culture, silly laughter, spontaneous singing, Abuelo teaching us right from wrong, language, and family. All of these themes have the potential to be studied independently. For this study, however, the styling of our language for creating insider and outsider identities in our multi-sited family is the focus.

DATA

I have chosen four excerpts totaling approximately five minutes of talk. Across the examples, the data indicates how language is used to connect with or reject the authority or control of those who we are interacting with. They also reveal that power can be used discursively to align with each other just as solidarity has the ability to create power or authority. They all demonstrate an effort to establish both authority and legitimacy, alignment and individuality, power and solidarity. The first extract highlights how Abuelo helps to maintain (relative) harmony during

lunchtime in breaking up an ensuing fight by styling Caterina's 'illegitimate' Spanish. In so doing, he aligns with her, distracts the sisters and manages mealtime. This interaction is representative of many such interactions in the data set where Abuelo made an effort to intervene in cases of friction between the sisters. Across the corpus it was also clear that we all regularly resisted Abuelo's authority as well as each other's—mostly the younger refusing the older siblings'. We were used to the way our mother parented us and the manner in which Abuelo did was strange as is reflected in excerpt 2. us was 'weird' and reflects how Begoña, the middle sister resists Abuelo's authority.

Excerpt 2 highlights Begoña's independence and use of linguistic hybridity to reject both my big sister role and Abuelo's epistemic stance. He attempts to teach her what to say when answering the phone and she overtly rejects it. This excerpt is, in part, an example of how Begoña uses the tape recorder as a 'safe' tool for rejecting the way Abuelo does things, both cooking and teaching Spanish. The third excerpt is an example where we are constructed as outsiders through the questions and answers given during a telephone conversation. Yet the excerpt also demonstrates how families in late modernity try to create some transnational equilibrium as we are trying to work out who our family is and how we fit into it. I play the role of the children's representative by speaking for the group. The prosody used in the answering of Abuelo's questioning highlights a recited or scripted quality that cues that these questions have been asked many times before. The content of the questions directed at us by Abuelo and the form of our answers themselves emphasize our foreignness. The final excerpt is an example of the contesting nature of a family in late modernity. Linguistic resources are used in an attempt to conform to a traditional family, where typically one language is used, but the frictions evident in a transcultural family are reflected in the contestation of the styling of language: which language is chosen for communicating commands as well as which is used for contestations.

Here, Abuelo attempts to convince Caterina to use Spanish only in the house, but uses English and Asturian to do so. His lack of the use of Spanish jumps out at Caterina and she asks him an obvious question about his own linguistic practices. It is important to note that the excerpts I have chosen all took place after us having been in Spain for at least three weeks, therefore we had already established a rhythm of sorts and our expectations of each other were probably already in place.

Below I analyze each extract individually and then provide a bigger picture of the patterns and themes across the excerpts with a larger more holistic vision of what is already known about family. Finally, I provide a discussion on how IS methods might shed light on family and the discursive ways in which we build the late modern social institution of family as well as future directions for studying families discursively.

1. Brokering a Harmonious Mealtime

In this first extract, Abuelo is cooking a meal and he asks Caterina what she wants. Her response is taken as a linguistic mishap in the form of grammatical gender, which causes my grandfather amusement and provides him with the tools necessary to construct a persona who aligns with his granddaughter and prevent a major argument from taking place between the sisters.

Excerpt 1: *La huevo*

- 01 Abuelo Qué quieres ahora, el chocolate eh?
What-Q want-2Sg now, the-M chocolate huh?
What do you want now, chocolate Huh?
- 02 Caterina [Si::::↑
[ye::::↑s
- 03 Abuelo Chocolate? Eh, Caterina
Chocolate? Huh, Caterina
- 04 Caterina No, la huevo.
No, the-F egg-M
No, the egg.
- 05 Abuelo La hueva↓ La hue↑va?
The-F egg-F The-F egg-F
The egg↓ The e↑gg?
- 06 Caterina La huevo frito
The-F egg-M fried-M
The fried egg
- 07 Abuelo {Giggle}
- 08 Mónica EL!
THE-M
The!
- 09 Abuelo {Giggle}
- 10 Abuelo {laughing voice}
Pero si no querias no querias hueva frita, hombre, como,
But if neg want-2S NEG want-2Sg egg-F fried-F man, how,
But you didn't want, didn't want a fried egg, man, how

sister voice. She rejects Abuelo's stylization of Caterina's Spanish as acceptable and claims the egg that Abuelo is currently making is hers because "I:: asked first." This emphatic prolongation of "I" cues (Gumperz, 1982) her power: one that stakes her claim for access to the meal. It is not a coincidence that the prolonged word that hints at power is the first person pronoun—she is exerting her individuality discursively and prosodically. The stretched sound also cues to Abuelo that there is a fight arising. It is important to note that the sisters are speaking English in lines 12-16, and that Abuelo only speaks Spanish. The elongated vowel sounds act as a contextualization cue to Abuelo that they are about to start an argument. He immediately interjects in line 13 that Caterina asked for the "hueva" and not the "huevo". In lines 14 and 15, Begoña again rejects Abuelo's stylization of Caterina's linguistic mishap and with a big sister authoritarian voice tells her that she will never get what she is asking for because (linguistically) there is no such thing, demonstrating she, too, has more linguistic resources and therefore more power than the little sister. Caterina is quick to defend herself in line 16 and take back the power that Begoña attempted to thwart through the use of elongated sound of "I'm", using the first person pronoun and present progression to show that there is no doubt she is getting her egg, regardless of her 'inaccurate' use of Spanish and regains her own power. Finally, in lines 17 and 18, Abuelo recycles Caterina's linguistic mishap and realigns with her by using the feminine ending egg—*hueva*—thereby establishing an understanding that she will get her own egg, marked explicitly through dative case. In so doing, Abuelo aligns with her discursively and displays solidarity, rather than asserting his own linguistic authority as a much more expert user of Spanish.

It is interesting to note that after this extract, as eggs are frying in the background, an argument did start, but this time about who was getting the next egg. He breaks up the fight by stating that one of them is getting the 'huevo' and the other is getting the 'hueva'. He takes on the repertoire of his granddaughters, including 'illegitimate' Spanish, to manage the circumstances. Coupland (2007) states that "Speakers perform identities when they have some awareness of how the relevant *personas* constructed are likely to be perceived through their designs." (p. 146) Abuelo, is seemingly aware that performing Caterina's Spanish will be perceived as a means to divide up the food, break up the fight, give Caterina back some agency and power along with it and successfully manages sisterly tensions.

He has the power to do this even if we can see power as governing asymmetrical relationships where one is subordinate to another. An example of this asymmetrical relationship governed by power is age as we saw in Williams's (2005) study. Another example of power is the ability to broker relationships. Our grandfather, who was clearly older than us, wielded more power than we did and was able to 'manipulate' the siblings and mealtime by reappropriating Caterina's language and making it his own.

2. Contesting Authority

Abuelo was retired at the time, so he was usually at home during lunchtime. In Spain of the 1980s, when cellphones were nonexistent, people were given at least two hours off of work that were used to prepare the meal, eat, take a *siesta* and make phone calls. Lunchtime was a good time to expect to catch people at home and therefore a good time to make calls. This proves true throughout the corpus and is relevant in the next two extracts.

In excerpt two, we are about to have lunch, and because Abuelo is preparing the meal, he asks the middle sister, Begoña to answer the phone, which she promptly passes to him. He then talks on the phone for a short time while Begoña directs her talk to the tape recorder. After a brief exchange on the phone, he calls Begoña to the phone to speak to a cousin who lives in the country, and who we will soon visit for a few days. In the conversations throughout the seven hours of recordings, Abuelo constantly informed us of who we were going to be visiting and spending time with and how they were related to us.

Begoña uses her linguistic resources in choosing from three different stylized 'hello's' for answering the phone. Through her choice, she exerts her power and subversively disaligns with Abuelo's linguistic authority. Importantly, though not related to linguistic authority, she also undermines his cooking skills covertly rejecting his parenting skills as he is talking on the phone. Begoña turns to the tape recorder and 'talks to our mom' in English. Her strictures call his linguistic authority (line 11) and cooking (lines 19-21) into question.

Excerpt 2: [alo]↵

{phone rings & A asks B to answer the phone}

01 Abuelo ◦Me cago en la orden◦ {exasperated voice} Contesta
 ◦I shit on the order◦ Answer-IMP-INF
 ◦oh crap◦ Answer

- 25 Begoña =*very weird*
- 26 Abuelo Bego↑ña=
- 27 Begoña Ah ha?
- 28 Abuelo Que es un primo tuyo, este, que
That be-PRES a-M-Sg cousin-M your-M-Sg, this-M that
It's a cousin of yours uh
- 29 te pongas un poco ahí
You-REFL get on-IMP-INF a-M bit-M there
Get on {the phone} for a bit
- 30 Begoña Quién es↓
Who-Q be-3Sg
Who is it?
- 31 {passes the phone to B}
- 32 Abuelo Es un pri↑mo tu↑yo, hijo de Pili:↑na
be-3Sg a-M cousin-M your-M-Sg son of Pilina
He's a cousin of yours, son of Pilina's
- 33 Begoña *Hello↗?* [[hɛlow]]

This family exchange reveals how asserting and contesting authority plays out in transnational family. First, we see how the sisters' interactions show a hierarchy based on age and language expertise or linguistic authority. After Abuelo directs Begoña to answer the phone in lines 1 and 2, I, the oldest sister, assert my linguistic authority over Begoña's Spanish even before she has a chance to use her own resources. My directive with no request from Begoña shows that I expect her to require my help in regard to hear Spanish use. It is clear throughout the data, that over the course of the summer, I must have regularly noted Begoña's less expert command of the language than mine. In line 4, however, Begoña uses her own version of how to answer the phone, by saying [ɔlo]↗, and not using either of the options presented by me, clearly contesting my self-proclaimed linguistic authority. She employs her own linguistic resources and creates her version of how to answer the phone. She thereby rejects the big-sister commands and produces a linguistic hybridity all her own by stylizing the English version of *hello* with Spanish phonology. As soon as she uses her version of how to answer the phone, Abuelo, in line 5, imposes his own correction of how answering the phone is supposed to happen. Like in Zhu's 2010 study, where the Chinese father corrects his second generation British son not to use certain language styles because he deems them to be rude, Abuelo is teaching Begoña what should and shouldn't be said. As a parental figure, he is attempting to socialize her into how to answer the

phone. Abuelo’s version coincides with none of the options suggested or rejected by me, nor the one that Begoña actually used. Abuelo takes Begoña’s *mistake* as an opportunity to assert his grandfather/teacher role. Though he has the most linguistic expertise in Spanish and the most life experience in terms of how to properly answer phones, Begoña contests his version, and rejects his expertise twice—in lines 4 and 33. She actually uses English to answer in line 33, demonstrating that she is aware that whichever version she uses she will be understood by the cousin on the other line. It is interesting to note that one of the options that I offer is grammatically inaccurate. The *correct* option would be “oigo¹”, *I hear*, not “oiga”, *listen up*. Though I am *incorrect* in the advice I offer, I position myself as knowledgeable in Spanish, because even though Abuelo offers another option for how to answer the phone, we have several (Spanish) family members who do answer the phone by saying *oigo*.

An exertion of individuality is a power move, which is what Begoña accomplishes in the first few lines of the excerpt. In families there is a fundamental desire to maintain one’s individuality while at the same time remaining close to those who love us most. The balance of these two are not always simple, but when one has access to several languages, the repertoire of how and when to use the languages creates for an easier balancing act.

Linguistic authority has been the focus of the analysis of the extract thus far; however, the heart of this extract happens on lines 11 and 12 and between lines 15 and 23 where there is a shift in participation framework (Goffman, 1981). Begoña subversively rejects Abuelo’s lesson on how to answer the phone by speaking to *Mami* (our mom) on the recording tape recorder starting on line 11, thereby diminishing his linguistic authority and expertise and making him a bystander in his own space. Her resistance to Abuelo’s teaching comes through in three ways: through the language she chooses to use, with ‘whom’ she uses it, as well as in the prosodic features of her pronunciation of the word *okay* in line 12. She uses English, so even though he is likely to hear her, he does not understand her. Hence, he does not have the opportunity to defend himself, and she creates her own participation framework with Mami in the tape recorder which makes Mami the listener and alienates Abuelo through using a language that he does not have access to, making him a bystander.

¹ *Oiga* is the way our Spanish grandmother answered the phone, however it is interesting to note that in the Spanish-speaking world, there are numerous ways of answering the phone: ¿Sí?, ¿halo? ¿Elo? Dígame., etc. that vary between countries, even regions and households.

His outsider positioning by Begoña continues in line 19, but in this case it is about his style of cooking, which is especially symbolic since this is a parenting activity that he has been doing daily for several weeks at this point. In line 20, she criticizes the way he makes paella, which she describes in a heavy NJ accent as using too much *sauce* and containing “CHICKen”. Since our mother always made paella with seafood, she interprets Abuelo’s version of the dish as problematic. She is rejecting his parenting by rejecting his cooking—something that Mami clearly does much better than him. Her overt rebuff of his cuisine belittles his authority. Her loud voice and strong accentuation in the first syllable of the word *chicken* serve as contextualization cues that underscore her contempt of his cooking. She is styling her family as one way when in fact with all its multiple sites, she does not yet know that there are options for different styles of family (or for paella.) She also explicitly evaluates Abuelo as *weird* in line 22, which clearly reveals some resistance to Abuelo’s everyday household activities. Her appraisal of his weirdness shapes the power that allows her to disalign with him, yet through the use of English, she manages deference concurrently.

Perhaps this weirdness is an example of out transnational family members react to each other. They are not used to them or the ‘new’ way they do things and therefore assess them as strange. Throughout the corpus, Abuelo being *weird* comes up a few times, though mostly to talk about his “weird Spanish”. He uses Mexican terminology such as “orale” and “andale”. To us, these terms are neither Spanish nor Cuban, nor NJ, nor anything we have had previous access to, making it “weird”. In this extract, it is obvious that to Begoña, the way Mami does it is the right way and anything that does not follow her suit is wrong: Abuelo therefore loses credit and parental authority in his granddaughter’s eyes. When she asks him who is on the phone in line 30, he interprets the question as ‘which family member is that’? His answer in line 32 indicates who in the family is on the phone, not the name of the person. This is a move towards solidarity: by Abuelo responding who the person is in our family, he is shaping her knowledge of family and by putting her on the phone, he is steering her involvement in our local family.

It is interesting to note that even though our grandparents were divorced, he maintained ties to both sides of the family, as the cousin on the line was actually from our grandmother’s side, not from his. Pilina is my mother’s cousin, making her son—the one who was on the line—our third cousin: even extended family was made relevant in our life—knowing who was on the

branches of the family tree helped to ensure we knew about our Spanish roots—helping my mother achieve one of her three goals in sending us to Spain that summer.

Abuelo’s ability to teach us about family is embedded in learning how to use ‘his’ language, but because our late modern family is still working out who we are and how we connect, the teachings sometimes go unnoticed. In line 32, Abuelo not only explains how he is our cousin (the son of Pilina) but confers possession onto her by using the possessive adjective *tuyo*. Finally, in line 33, when Begoña answers the phone, she does not say *oiga*, what I had suggested, nor does she say *a ver*, Abuelo’s suggestion. She also does not use *alo*, which is what she had said the first time she answered the phone. She answers by saying *hello* in English disregarding Abuelo’s teachings.

The phonological styling is crucial to analyze the data in this extract where the four different hello’s all represent something different. They do all mean hello and we all use our linguistic authority here, but no one takes up anyone else’s version. Coupland proposes that this kind of phonological styling connects “the social meanings of the utterance” to the bigger picture of the event in which it takes place (Coupland, 2007, p. 8). There is a destabilization in this supposedly easy formulaic and recited speech act: answering the phone. This speech event is embedded in a multilingual and multicultural family where the monolingual grandfather was talking on the phone in Spanish in the background and the transnational granddaughter is having a monologue in English with her ‘mother’ (the tape recorder) just before this. One of its significant connections is that there is a break in communication, a break in authority and that leads Begoña to act out, tell on, and reject Abuelo’s cooking as well as his suggestion for how to answer the phone. Her utterance’s social meaning was one of individuality, of exertion of her own linguistic power and a dismissal of Abuelo’s ways of doing things.

3. Intercultural Family Identities

The efforts that Abuelo made to help us belong to our Spanish family paradoxically involved portraying us as foreign. We were always identified as the “American cousins,” and these identities surfaced in our conversations with our grandfather about our extended family. The following conversation illustrates this experience. As the daughters of a Cuban father who were born in the US, it seems that the identities associated to us by our family in Spain were less Spanish and more American and/or Cuban. Our foreignness is marked by our version of

Spanish: it includes a pronunciation influenced by our Cuban side (not germane to this study, but relevant nonetheless) as well as by living in NJ, where varieties of Spanish abound. Another indicator that we are ‘foreign’ is that we are still learning who our family is—something that would be taken for granted had we been raised in Spain. Abuelo had just gotten off the phone with the cousin from the call above and wanted us to report our own conversations when the phone was passed around.

Excerpt 3: *los dos igual*

- 01 Abuelo: =a ver Qué qué os dijo qué os dijo (.) eh↑=
so what-Q what-Q DAT-3P say-PST what-Q DAT-3P say-PST huh
=so, what what did he say to you what did he say to you huh↑=
- 02 Mónica: =que como esta::mos? {gums smacking/teeth sucking}
that how-Q be-1P {gums smacking/teeth sucking}
=how are we doing?
- 03 si te gusta=em [oviedo]>
if REFL-2Sg like-2Sg um [oviedo]> (city in northern Spain)
if you like=um [oviedo]>
- 04 M&B: ⇒ [oviedo] y cuál te gusta más [[oviedo]]
oviedo and which-Q REFL-2Sg like-2Sg more oviedo
Oviedo and which one do you like more, Oviedo
- 05 Mónica: o::
or::
- 06 M&B&C: ≡ <<esta::dos uni:::dos>>↓
States united
<<The Uni:::ted Sta:::tes>>↓
- 07 Mónica: E::m:
Uh::m:
- 08 Abuelo: Y qué le qué le dijiste↓
And what-Q him-DAT what-Q him-DAT say-PST
And what what did you say to him↓
- 09 Mónica Que: que sí nos gusta estados unidos pero em
That that yes we-REFL-1P like-3P states united but um
Tha:t that yes, we like the United States but um
- 10 nos gusta que a mi me que a mi
we-REFL-1P like-3P that me-DAT-1S REFL-1Sg that me-DAT-1S
We like, that I like, that I
- 11 me gusta los do:s igua:l
REFL-1Sg like-3PSg the-P two same
I like bo:th e:qually
- 12 Abuelo ◦ Pues cla↑ro ◦
Well clear
◦Well, of cou↑rse ◦

As the oldest sibling, I, too, wielded more power than my younger sisters due to my own linguistic resources, but also because as the oldest sibling I was called up to be the representative of the group. In representing the sisters, power and solidarity are inextricably intertwined. Solidarity governs symmetrical relationships characterized by social equality and similarity. A simple example of solidarity, in linguistic terms, is the use of inclusionary pronouns, which becomes relevant in the above extract: we see how this plays out linguistically, prosodically, and contextually. It takes place approximately two minutes after the second one with Abuelo ending the call and asking us in line 1 to report what the cousin said to us by using the second person plural dative *os* and as the representative of the group, I begin to answer in lines 2 and 3. Abuelo wields his power to bring us together through the second person plural dative and I take him up on it and speak for the group. My linguistic command grants me this power, which I use to align with my sisters. It is in the next lines of interaction, where the prosodic features of elongated vowels and synchronous speech in our response to Abuelo's question underscore the positive, diplomatic and formulaic answers we provide. These prosodic features in lines 2 and 6 indicate a script or formula we are already used to because these questions (that constantly mark our foreignness and position us as outsiders) have been asked of us time and again. We align with each other and show our solidarity and our sister insider identity in lines 4 and 6 when my sisters chime in with what I say and by not disagreeing with my responses. The corpus of data points to very little hesitation in disagreeing with each other in other circumstances.

These elongations might also be cueing boredom or apathy—we are being positioned as outsiders and although we were not aware of it then, we were frankly bored with that type of questioning. It shows a lack of depth to the identities imposed upon us: we are the foreign cousins who speak funny Spanish and who are expected to love both the US and Spain equally.

In line 8, after we respond to his question about what the cousin asked, Abuelo elicits our response. This is potentially a face-saving question as he is taking care of us for the summer and wants to be sure that our answers were acceptable to our family members. I position myself as the representative by being the one who takes up Abuelo's question as well as the dutiful granddaughter or family member and demonstrate solidarity with both countries (and perhaps families) by positively responding to the request for clarification on line 9 where I say that we like the US but that I like Oviedo equally in line 11—*los dos igual*. This is reminiscent of De

Fina's (2012) Italian-American participants who "felt both American and Italian, with varying degrees of allegiance to one or the other nationality" (p. 372).

Enacting the big sister role by representing and/or defending our position with our Spanish relatives, at first, I respond as the representative of the sisters in line 10 saying that we like both, but then change my footing by correcting my use of pronouns from *we* to *I*, speaking only for myself. In answering in the first person, I assert my own opinion and position myself as having my own (personal) preferences. I also position my sisters as having their own preferences, which might be different from mine. It is interesting to note that there are many instances in the corpus of data where my sisters state that they no longer want to be there and cannot wait to go home.

This recitation is a good example of how we have been styled and multi-cultured by our own family. We were not ordinary cousins, we were of the foreign variety, made clear by comments throughout the corpus about our language ability and exemplified in the above extract where we are asked to orient our preferences between our two family settings. This is a clear instance where our late modern transnational lifestyle is marked and topicalized by both the cousin on the line and our grandfather who wants to know where we stand. This is reminiscent of Chen's (2008) returnee, Tim, who was always positioned as 'ghost boy' (foreigner) (p. 67) by the locals. He, too, was constantly styled and multi-cultured by his colleagues as his reaction to these imposed-upon stylizations was to accommodate his code-switching styles depending on who his interlocutors were. Our elongated vowels can be seen as an alignment or an accommodation to the answers we are supposed to give as dutiful family members. These answers both grant us the right to be a member of our family and create harmony in an otherwise potentially difficult situation.

Abuelo expected the answer in lines 10 and 11, as is evident not only in the content of his response, but also in the manner in which he expresses it. He says *pues claro* (well, of course) in line 12 in a soft voice. This shows his perspective of grandfather who aligns with his granddaughters and affirms his expectations that we wouldn't answer negatively to our cousin. He is also potentially saving face with the family as he is in charge of us and our answer reflects his charge. Perhaps if we had said we prefer the US, we would have positioned him as a grandfather who wasn't doing his duty of showing us the "Spanish family ropes".

Based on what we say, it is clear that there is an expectation that we are supposed to say that

we equally like both the cultures we are straddling. Even though we may project it, we may not always feel ownership over all of our (imposed upon) identities. The act of discursively conveying ownership of this social identity is not synonymous with feeling that ownership (Coupland, 2007, p. 111). The question is: do we own our Spanish identity and do we have personal investment in it? Discursively, I do not make a decision, I state that for us, or rather for me, both Oviedo and the US are ‘equal’. I thereby project the identity, but my prosody indicates that I do not feel ownership over it, not in this instance where I am being asked to make a decision about which venue is more appealing to me.

4. Questioning Languages & Codeswitching

In this final extract, as in the other extracts, we were sitting in the kitchen preparing to eat our next meal. Caterina responds to Abuelo’s claim that horchata, a milky drink, is much better than the soft drink, Kas, that he describes as junk. Her response is in English and although he asks for clarification because he did not understand her, she responds in English. This prompts him to state that he is going to put a sign back up that he had previously put on display in the kitchen—one that made it obvious that the use of English was prohibited in his house. The linguistic resources he insists upon are discursively contradictory and my six-year-old sister makes him well aware of that fact, bring up the question of who has the power in this extract.

Excerpt 4: *Then why are you speaking English?*

- 01 Abuelo eso está mucho mejor que el kas
 that-M be-3S more better than the-M kas ((soft drink))
 that is much better than Kas
- 02 y que todas esas porquerías. (1.0)
 and than all-F-PL those-F-PL junk-PL
 and than all that other junk food. (1.0)
- 03 >eso es horchata< es
 that-M be-PRES-3S horchata ((milky drink)) be-PRES-3S
 >that is horchata<
- 04 [muy cara
 very expensive-F
 very expensive
- 05 Caterina [then why do you BUY it
- 06 Abuelo eh? Que qué
 huh? That what-Q
 huh? The what?
- 07 Caterina then why do you buy it?

- 08 Abuelo que qué, no te en[tiendo nada?
that what-Q neg you-REFL understand-1S nothing
the what? I don't understand anything
- 09 Caterina [why do you buy the kas?
- 10 Abuelo no me pegexes no me pegexes hablame
neg me-REFL (ast??) Neg me-REFL (ast??) speak-IMP-DAT
don't ?? Don't?? Speak to me in
- 11 en cristiano si no pongo el papel aquí el que
in christian if not put-1S the-M paper here the-M that
in christian, if not, I'll put the paper the one that
- 12 tenía yo aquí
have-PAST-1S I here
I had here
- 13 Caterina ¿Cuál↑?
Which-Q
Which one↑?
- 14 Abuelo ese papel que decía 'no speak English in this
that paper that say-PST-3S 'no speak English in this
The paper that said 'no speak English in this
- 15 home'. no Es is prohibited espeak Englis in this home.
neg be-3S
Home. It's prohibited to speak English in this home.
- 16 MBC {laughter}
- 17 Abuelo *Only speak Spanish.*
- 18 Caterina *Then why are **you** speaking English?*

In lines 1 through 4, Abuelo is using Spanish, in line 5 Caterina is using English. He then responds in Spanish in line 6, she in English in line 7, he then in Spanish in line 8, then she in English in line 9. In lines 10 through 12, he uses a term in Asturian (for which I do not have a definition) to tell her not to speak English, but to speak in 'cristiano' or else he will put up the sign that he originally had hanging in the kitchen. Her only utterance in Spanish is the word 'cual', in line 13, the question which asks 'which one', as in "which paper are you talking about?" Finally in lines 14 and 15, he tries to align with her through his stylized use of English to clarify what it is that he wants to convey to her. It is obvious to her that the command in line 17, *Only speak Spanish* is contradictory in that he is asking her not to speak English, but making this request *in* English which cues laughter for us. She asks the obvious: "Then why are **you** speaking English?"

The sisters laugh at Abuelo's English, marking it as not authentic. His attempt at stylizing English to try to get Caterina to speak in Spanish was unsuccessful. The only utterance Caterina

makes in Spanish is *cuál* in line 13. Coupland (2007) argues that “Authenticity could be a powerful concept to use *within* the analysis of style. Styling, for example, creates social meanings around personal authenticity and inauthenticity, when speakers parody themselves or present themselves as ‘not being themselves’” (p. 25). Abuelo’s demands for Caterina to not speak English, but he never actually tells her that she must speak Spanish *in* Spanish, though this is clearly what he means by not speaking English. He uses Asturian and refers to Spanish as *cristiano*² which marks another layer of inauthenticity since he is not using Spanish—his preferred language choice. The inconsistencies are not lost on Caterina. By using English to request she not speak Spanish, both his linguistic authority and power was diminished due to his inauthenticity, which made her raise the obvious question in line 18: “Then why are *you* speaking English?”

DISCUSSION

In revisiting the research question about how speakers style (Coupland, 2007) themselves as legitimate speakers in a multilingual and multi-cultural family, I have shown that as the oldest sister, I have some degree of power over my sister manifested in my linguistic ability, in speaking for the group, thereby performing identities. I have demonstrated that even though this minimum power is one of the resources I draw upon, Begoña, the middle sister does not always accept it. She shows her contempt for my attempts at correcting her use of Spanish by establishing her own linguistic hybridity. Resistance to Abuelo’s authority comes forth not only in prosodic features by emphasizing syllables, elongating vowels, sharp rises and decreases in pitch, cuing disjunction, but also in our rather lengthy responses to him and his way of doing things, as was demonstrated in the first excerpt in Begoña’s monologue with the tape recorder. Even though Caterina is the youngest and presumably the one with the least amount of power, due to gaps in her knowledge of Spanish as well as to her age, she exerts her agency, her individuality and her power by questioning the obvious and standing up for herself when her big sisters try to push her outside of the insider boundaries.

² The exact meaning of *Cristiano* is unknown, though is reminiscent of religious conquistador language signifying “proper language”, i.e., Spanish.

Power and solidarity have an underlying hand in helping to style the ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ identities in a multi-cultural family as do the linguistic resources available to each person in the family. Each of these resources is different, releasing the institution of family from ‘old structures’. In the research on family and particularly on multi-sited families, there is very little attention paid to how some members within the same family are more ‘insider’ or more ‘outsider’ than others within the same family. Through prosody as well as through code-switching, I have shown that we style ourselves as legitimate speakers in our multi-sited family. Even taking up ‘illegitimate’ Spanish is another way we fit into our family. Seeing how this “release from old structures and strictures” complicates social relationships including intergenerational relationships as well as multi-cultural and multilingual intergenerational relationships and the social institution of family will be important to the future research of late modernity and multi-sited families.

In late modern families, there is a shifting of identities due to multiple languages as well as to multiple locations—there is a shuffling across time and space, moves across lands and bodies of water to be with family in order connect to ancestral cultures. The linguistic resources that we have at our disposal are plentiful and get intertwined and blended. As in the last extract, we see the use of some languages to convey ideas about other languages. This intersection of languages is a metaphor for the direction that our concept of family has taken. We have come to a crossroads of sorts, where making a decision about going one way with language and or with family is no longer necessary—we have the option to take multiple at once which leads to confusion and sometimes misunderstandings. The intersection of language and family in late modernity calls for a much deeper exploration of how we express ourselves with the members of our families and the impact that these interactions have on our being.

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APPENDIX

Transcription Conventions & Glosses

(.) Micro pause less than 0.2 seconds

(1.0) Timed pause

◦ quiet or soft voice ◦

, (comma) slightly rising intonation contour

? rising intonation contour

↗ inflection intonation contour

↑ Sharp rise in pitch

↓ Sharp fall in pitch

: elongated sound

≡ synchronous speech of three people

⇒ synchronous speech of two people

[[IPA]] International Phonetic Alphabet

{Description}

.hh inhalation

hh. exhalation

<slower than surrounding talk>

<<slower than surrounding talk, within slower talk>>

>faster than surrounding talk<

>>faster than surrounding talk, within faster talk<<

=overlap

word Stressed or emphasized voice

WOrd Especially loud voice

WOrd strongly loud voice, louder than ‘WOrd’

MORE accented than other words/syllables

Italics (intersentential) code-switch

?? incomprehensible

1S-1st person singular

2Pl-2nd person plural

3Sg-3rd person singular

DAT-Dative((explanation))

IMP-Imperfective tense

INF-Informal

Neg-Negation

F-Feminine

M-Masculine

N-Neutral

PST-Past

PROG-Progressive

PRES-Present

Q-Question

REFL-Reflexive