



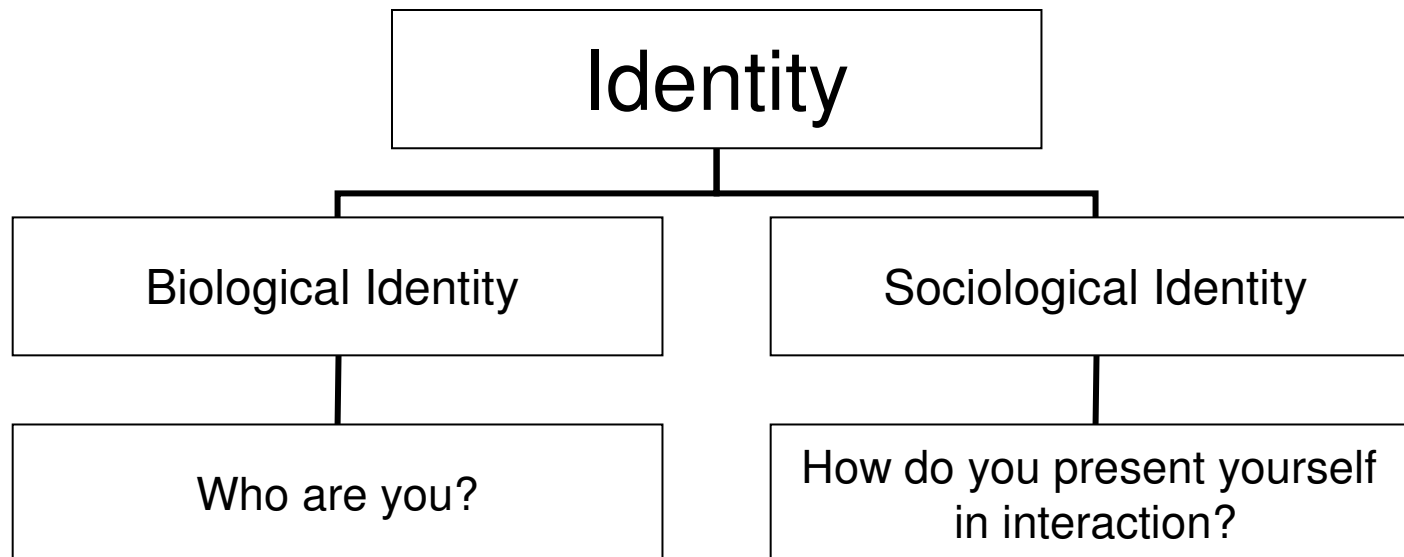
# Interview Design and Interactional Dynamics

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Orderly Heterogeneity Hypothesis:

“Variation in language communities or for individual speakers in the choice between structural alternatives is not random but correlates with the social (would-be) group membership of the speaker(s).”  
(Kortmann 2005: 271)



Classical Labovian Speech Styles (Labov 1966: 90ff.):

A spontaneous/casual speech

A1 speech outside formal interview

A2 speech with third person

A3 speech not in direct response to questions

A4 childhood rhymes and customs

A5 danger of death

B interview style

C reading style

D word list

D' minimal pairs

## *Overcoming the Observer's Paradox*

“The primary goal of all sociolinguistic interviewing is to alter this governing situation [the observer's paradox] informally so that it approaches as closely as possible the format of a conversation between people who are well acquainted, if not friends. With varying degrees of success, the interviewer constructs a symmetrical exchange of ideas and reactions, defining himself or herself as the perfect and attentive listener, with no other goals and ambitions but to learn as much as possible from the subject's life experience. While the interviewer leads the conversation towards topics of maximal interest and emotional involvement, he or she is willing at the first opportunity to remit control over the direction of the conversation, and follow the subject's lead.” (Labov 2001: 88)

## Episode: Baljeet

- 01.JS: Do you feel an affinity to other migrant groups in Britain? Like maybe- do you feel you sit in the same boat, and you have some like (.) some- some problems you have- you share?
- 02.Baljeet: Em (.) not really no
- 03.JS: Not really? OK
- 04.Baljeet: No, no
- 05.JS: Do you feel British, somehow?
- 06.Baljeet: Yeah I do feel British, but em, em then Sikh and then, ya
- 07.JS: OK. Did you visit India?
- 08.Baljeet: Yeah, yeah I went about six years ago, I'm going again in November.
- 09.JS: OK, and when you came there, did you suddenly somehow feel more European, than you would do normally back home?
- 10.Baljeet: Em (.) (*hesitates and then continues decisively*) no I think I blend in there
- 11.JS: You will blend in there?
- 12.Baljeet: Yeah
- 13.JS: Alright
- 14.JS: What about music artists or movies? What do you like at the moment?
- 15.Baljeet: Movies I think (.)
- 16.JS: Do you watch Hindi movies, like Bollywood movies or-?
- 17.Baljeet: I watch a few, yeah
- 18.JS: Yeah?
- 19.Baljeet: Not too- just a few, yeah (*laughs, feels a bit uneasy*)
- 20.JS: OK
- 21.Baljeet: Yeah I think there's one Panjabi film [title of the film (*inc.*)]
- 22.JS: OK
- 23.Baljeet: I wanna watch that, haven't seen it yet (*laughs*)
- 24.JS: I see

## Episode: Pujita

- 01.JS: OK, coming back to this topic now: did religion play- play some kind of role in your identity search or in your (.) becoming what you are today?
- 02.Pujita: What a question that is! That is like a huge question for me. Em, and, em (.) OK, when we were a bi?- when we- when we- when we were growing up there was absolutely no (.) cultural religion forced down to us, at all. Like the maximum we would have is that a? **diwali** [dəvʌli] we'll have this! (*Points at a colorful Hindu idol on the wall*)
- 03.JS: (*laughs*)
- 04.Pujita: And like my mom you-know all year (*inc.*) so that's it, once in a while. That's! It! And ehm, and then I think my mom starred like fasting once- once- once in a while. But, ehm, I think as I- as I- eh as I grew older, I think when I left college, eh left Edinburgh, I eh, on a personal level, I starred, I was bored with so much stuff you-know, I starred gering this (.) I was jus' like I didn't know which way to kinda take my life. I- some sort of dissatisfaction, some imbalance, and I starred looking to texts, you-know like spiritual texts, and everything. So I starred go in the top room and I starred reading this stuff like **Buddhist's** [bʊddhɪsts] and **Hindu's** [hɪndu:z] and stuff, I jus' starred like reading and (.) em, then I kind-of I jus' found myself like jus' drawn to- to India. And I remember thinking OK I'm jus' gonna go to India for jus' a couple'f weeks and then I come back. And I went, I packed my stuff, I ended up staying for like ↗ five years
- 05.JS: OK
- 06.Pujita: Yeah and (.) a part of my journey was a bunch of like spiritual experiences. Nor a part, a very small part. And eh (.) mh, yeah so like every- every year something like different would happen to make me know that, and it was just a gradual su-progression, jus' to make me know that there is (.) (*lento*) like something a lot more eh (.), than what I have (.) been brought up to believe in the west and culturally. (*allegro*) And jus' gradually it jus' came. I can't really it's- I can't really say it is em ↗ religious as such, but what happens is that em, I think, that most Indians have a sort of a genetic symbolic cultural progressing
- 07.JS: (*laughs*)
- 08.Pujita: (*laughs*) You-know?
- 09.JS: Ya, ya eh I can relate ya
- 10.Pujita: Yeah, so it's like there're cerrain- there're cerrain symbols, or there're cerrain like gods or wharever and there is some kinda pool of consciousness and we were all part of it? , you-know and it's kind- of like you don't need to know much about it? or wharever and it's jus' kind-of like- it jus' strikes a chord somewhere, and (*laughs*) you jus' get into this own kind-of like thing, or I don't know how it works.

## *Scopes of the Sociolinguistic Interview*

“Keep in mind that you are not asking questions to get information; you are asking questions that reach the ‘real’ sentiments of your speakers and which elicit natural, spontaneous speech.” (Tagliamonte 2006: 43)

“While critics of this method have claimed that the interview is not a natural speech event, it is not clear what constitutes a “natural” speech event, and what is natural about it. [...] In the sociolinguistic interview, the explicit goal is to elicit information about the interviewee, and the interviewee can enter the event with something like a model from talk shows.” (Eckert 2000: 78f.)

## *Scopes of the Sociolinguistic Interview*

“[Judy’s speech] is anything but conservative, and this not because she is not paying attention to her speech, but precisely because she is. [...] Judy proudly presents herself to me in all her wild, burnout splendor. Indeed, one can see every interview in this study as a performance of identity, for what the interview explicitly tries to accomplish is to discover who the interviewee is in the adolescent social order.” (Eckert 2000: 79)

## Episode: Roop

- 01.JS: Tell me something about your friends, are they all Asians?
- 02.Roop: Most of 'em yeah. But it doesn' matter [bʌ? ɪt dʌzŋ mɚ?ə], some Blacks, some Pakistanis
- 03.JS: Do any problems occur, in terms of ethnic conflicts?
- 04.Roop: See, this is a rough place man innit. This park, a lot of racism
- 05.JS: What kinda racism?
- 06.Roop: You see them guys there? (*points at a group of 12-15-year-old blacks*). You-know blacks havin' a hard time. Could go up there and take their phones jus like that. Nobody would do shit. I used to do that kinda stuff. But now I chill you-know. Jus' sellin' my skunk, harmin' nobody. [...]
- 07.JS: Do you listen to a lot of Hip Hop?
- 08.Roop: (*enthusiastically*) Yeah! [dʒe:ə]
- 09.JS: What do you listen to? Dizzie Rascal and stuff?
- 10.Roop: Tupac (*singing*) fuckin bitches all day, all night [tu:p<sup>h</sup>a:k<sup>h</sup> fʌkɪn bi:tʃɪz ɒl dēɪ ɒl nɔ:t] (*everybody laughs*)
- 11.JS: Have you ever considered becoming a true Sikh? You know that Khalsa thing?
- 12.Roop: Nah fuck that [nɑ: fʌk ðɚ?]. I don' wanna get caught up in that shit! All prayin and stuff. I am a man of myself innit.
- 13.JS: What about arranged marriages?
- 14.Roop: Nah man fuck that [nɑ: mɚn fʌk<sup>h</sup> ðɚ?] (*laughs*)
- 15.JS: You got a girlfriend?
- 16.Roop: Yeah gotta couple of girls. Here and there you-know (*laughs*)
- 17.JS: What do you do on weekends? Are you going out?
- 18.Roop: Yah, goin to central London. Ge?in wasted. You-know, party hard. All night man. Comin back early in a mornin, you-know

Thanks for your attention....

...now interact!

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## Overcoming the Observer's Paradox 2

*Friend-of-a-friend* technique (Milroy 1980: 52ff.)

The local interviewer (Marshall 2004: 116)

Audience Design (Bell 2001: 151ff.)

(eh) index in speech by  
interviewers to informants

By informants	<i>To interviewers</i>			
	MM	MF	PM	PF
MM	46	26	19	—
MF	2	4	—	0
PM	0	—	0	1
PF	—	0	0	0

(eh) index in speech by  
informants to interviewers

To informant	<i>By interviewers</i>			
	MM	MF	PM	PF
MM	6	28	29	—
MF	10	25	—	5
PM	0	—	0	3
PF	—	35	14	9

Notes: Maori (M); Pakeha (P)  
Female (F); Male (M)