"Introductions" in California American English Stuttering Speech Communities

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INTRODUCTION

This poster explores "introductions" as one of several discourse genres that the American English Stuttering Speech Community (AESSC) uses to develop collective identity. These discourse genres are media for reproducing communal norms that locate stuttering as variation *(Figure 1,2)*. In addition to the features noted by Pillet-Shore (2008), introductions are significant because the AESSC positions the act as an ideologically-laden event for one to construct a complex persona that includes but is not limited to sociolinguistic and regional identities.
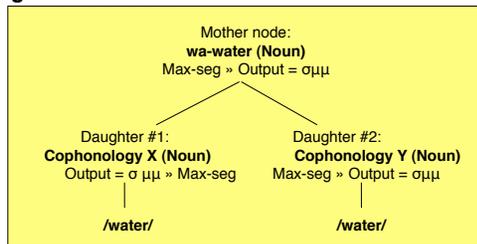
Mother node:
wa-water (Noun)
Max-seg » Output = σμμ

Daughter #1:
Cophonology X (Noun)
Output = σ μμ » Max-seg

Daughter #2:
Cophonology Y (Noun)
Max-seg » Output = σμμ

/water/   /water/

Figure 1. The grammatical model of a stuttering construction, using Morphological Doubling Theory (Inkelas and Zoll 2005, Landar 1961).

METHODS

Data comes from ethnographic fieldwork and recordings in two chapters of the Stuttering Organization of America (SOA) in Southern California. I transcribed interactions using the Jefferson system from conversation analysis.
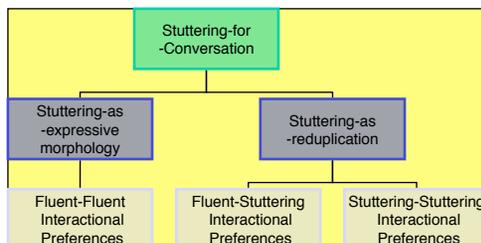
Stuttering-for-Conversation

Stuttering-as-expressive morphology

Stuttering-as-reduplication

Fluent-Fluent Interactional Preferences

Fluent-Stuttering Interactional Preferences

Stuttering-Stuttering Interactional Preferences

Figure 2. The conversational model of stuttering in interaction.

FINDINGS I: RE-MAKING CALIFORNIA

- Within introductions, social actors do talk of immigration and movement to California from different places, highlighting California's rich diversity.

- Interactants also engage in a social project of erasing *(Figure 3)* other California sociolinguistic variations to constitute the relevance of another sociolinguistic field: American Fluent/Stuttering English.

- Through erasure, social actors strategically reconstruct the AESSC as a unique space with interactive norms that promote stuttering as variation.
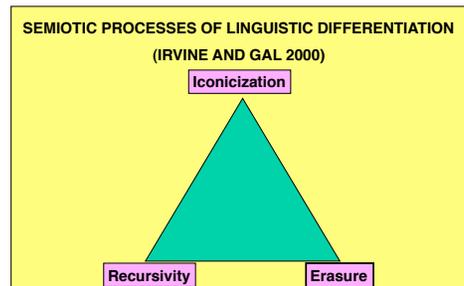
SEMIOTIC PROCESSES OF LINGUISTIC DIFFERENTIATION
(IRVINE AND GAL 2000)

Iconicization

Recursivity   Erasure

Figure 3. Process of linguistic differentiation in the AESSC.
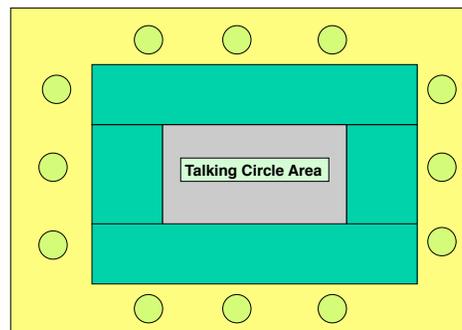
Talking Circle Area

Figure 4. The circular setup of introductions in a SOA meeting. The grey area marks the talking circle, the zone for remaking verbal art.

FINDINGS II: SEQUENCE/SHAPE

(a) Summons-Answer/Request
A: Summons
B: Answer
A: Clap (Ratification)

(b) Introduction as Macro-Turn
B: Greeting
B: Introduction
C: Continuer or Assessment
B: Introduction

(c) Closing
B: Closing
C: Repair initiator or topic proffering
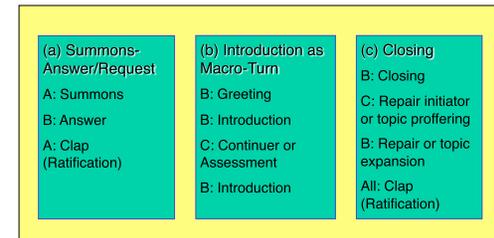B: Repair or topic expansion
All: Clap (Ratification)

Figure 5. The sequential organization of introductions in SOA.

- Introductions usually occur in a macro-turn format (Duranti 1981) with multiple turn-construction units, within a circle *(Figure 4)*, and include no turn-completion strategies (Lerner 1991, 1996) from recipients in turns where persons employ the stuttering construction.

- Interactants must say their name in the turn-initial component, regardless of whether someone else or the same speaker has said it earlier.

- Within sequentially-relevant locations *(Figure 5)*, interactants must select when, how and to whom to explicitly invoke and formulate identities, including person-who-stutters, fluent person, and California native/non-native.

CONCLUSION

Introductions operate in the AESSC as an important interactive resource in building this speech community. This genre also requires social actors to erase other sociolinguistic fields in California and highlight the sociolinguistic field of American Fluent English and American Stuttering English.