

# Linguistic Diversity II:

## Linguistic codes and social capital

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# Today's Road Map

1. Why are we here ...again
2. Opening Discussion
3. The Content
4. Extended Discussion

# The rationale for this talk:

- Previous talk from the Fall 2017 CHP Retreat generated an interest (i.e., indicated from a post-talk survey) for a follow-up on *code-switching*.
- Present talk will:
  - focus on various ways linguistic codes pattern,
  - provide opportunities for discussion, and
  - direct you to a GVSU internal resource.

PURPOSE 0	STARTING POINT 0000000000	CORE MESSAGE 0000	BRIDGING GAPS 0000	WRAP-UP 00
INCLUSION				
Several strategies for supporting linguistic diversity:				
				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Never disparage a student's use or client's use of English (even when they are not around); instead, help to legitimize their speech variety!           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Code-switching, or switching from one variety to another (and back again), may be a useful skill.</li> <li>Each speech variety has a certain amount of social capital (i.e., perceived positively by others), but that social capital is dependent on the situation and the people involved.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Avoid using terms with negative connotations (e.g., "dialect" or "accent"); instead, use neutral terms "speech variety" or "way of speaking" that tend not to elicit a strong reaction.</li> </ol>				
WIL RANKINEN, PH.D. LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY <span style="float: right;">CSD, CHP, GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY</span>				

(Slides available at: <https://www.gvsu.edu/csd/archivednews>)

# A common response to linguistic diversity ...

- During the 1970s through the 1990s in the US, various legal battles were fought to support African Americans in schools and to legitimize their use of African American English (AAE).
- However, disagreement still persists over when and who should use of AAE (or other linguistic codes).



Figure 1: "Do you speak American?", Episode 01 (2005)

<http://www.pbs.org/speak/>

## Guiding Question:

Do you agree or disagree with the opinion stated by Kenneth Lewis (lawyer)?  
Why or why not? (be prepared for larger discussion)

# How do we switch, mix and mesh codes?

- Code-switching
- Code-mixing
- Code-meshing

# How do we switch, mix and mesh codes?

- ① *Code-switching* refers to an individual's ability to shift from one linguistic code to another within a conversation due to social and stylistic constraints.

- Acquired unconsciously
- Requires:
  - linguistically rich and diverse input
  - strong incentive/pressures
- Limited to sentence level

**Ex:** Speaker A, Turn 1:  
*"I forgot to buy the milk..."* [pause]

Speaker A, Turn 2:  
*"Whatever... I be going to the store."*

(Speaker A code-switches from Standard American English to African American English)

# How do we switch, mix and mesh codes?

- ② *Code-mixing* refers to an individuals ability to shift from one linguistic code to another within a sentence due to social and stylistic constraints.

- Similar to code-switching.
  - However, subtle differences exist.
- Seen as a stage toward the creation of new linguistic code.

**Ex:** French/English code-mixing in Quebec

**Ex:** Speaker B, Turn 1:  
“I forgot to buy the milk...” [pause]

Speaker B, Turn 2:  
“Whatever... I be going to the store.”

(Speaker B code-mixes African American English and Michigan's Upper Peninsula English features)

# How do we switch, mix and mesh codes?

③ *Code-meshing* refers to an individual's ability to shift from one linguistic code to another within a written document for social and stylistic effects.

- Follows prescriptive writing norms of the dominant discourse.
- Regularly infuses author's native linguistic code:
  - create stylistic effects
  - capture author's voice

*"Before about 1959 (when the first study was done to change black speech patterns), Black English had been primarily the interest of university academics, particularly the historical linguists and cultural anthropologists. In recent years, though, the issue has become a very hot controversy, and there have been articles on Black Dialect in the national press as well as in the educational research literature. We have had pronouncements on black speech from the NAACP and the Black Panthers, from highly publicized scholars of the Arthur Jensen–William Shockley bent, from executives of national corporations such as Greyhound, and from housewives and community folk. I mean, really, it seem like everybody and they mamma done had something to say on the subject!"*

(?, 1)

[Note: highlighting not in original text]

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## Potential points of discussion:

- How do we prepare our students for their professional careers, while also celebrating and legitimizing their linguistic and cultural diversity?
  - Can you have both?
- Where are the resources?



# GVSU's Internal Resource:

## Linguistic Diversity Initiative

### WELCOME!

The Fred Meijer Center for Writing and Michigan Authors, along with the Director of [Writing Across the Curriculum](#), the [Knowledge Market](#) Partners ([Speech Lab & Research Consultants](#)), members from the [English Department](#), [Anthropology Department](#), and the [Division of Inclusion and Equity](#) are joining forces to seek social justice for all students at Grand Valley with our new [Linguistic Diversity Initiative](#).



### LINGUISTIC INCLUSIVITY

We recognize that one's home-language is a foundational component to one's sense of self. The ways we speak, write, listen, or sign are expressions of who we are, have been, or hope to be. Our mission is to validate all identities and provide every person with respect for their dignity and understanding through empathy; therefore, we are passionate about creating and maintaining a space for all students to feel comfortable and encouraged to exercise their natural identities free from judgement, criticism, or rejection.

Whether you're coming to the Writing Center or the Knowledge Market for help with writing, researching, or speaking, we believe you have the right to your own voice.