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PERFORMING IDENTITY ON SCREEN

Language, identity, and humour in Scottish television comedy

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Introduction

Coupland (2001, p. 346) has suggested that sociolinguistics over-invested in 'authentic speech' and until relatively recently ignored the extent to which other styles of language can be used at varying levels to construct identity. For example, utterances can be stylized, where speakers are putting on an artificial voice, and analysing such language usage is increasingly common in dialect variation to examine linguistic features (Coupland has argued that performance is an aspect of stylization in Coupland, 2001, p. 350). Such styling considers accent and dialect to be a resource for constructing identity (Coupland, 2009b, p. 312). Schilling-Estes (1998) has also commented that performance speech, where speakers display for others a particular linguistic variety, has received little attention in mainstream variationist literature but can be used for display purposes (either of one's own or another language variety) and that such language use shows patterning in variation which is similar to 'normal' language usage. This chapter follows this lead, by exploring language usage in two comedy sketches which perform Glaswegian identities. It does so by examining language variation in relation to identity as well as the role of identity in the production of comedy. These fields connect through the concept of performance and show how certain identities are performed and portrayed on the small screen.

By examining performance register, we can gain an insight into speaker production and perception of dialectal varieties. We may also gain an understanding of the features speakers are most aware of as we see which features are performed. We know that speakers are more aware of specific forms, which are overtly stigmatised (Trudgill, 1986, p. 11), as well as forms that are radically different from standard varieties. This has effects on processes such as linguistic accommodation, but also on aspects of performance or imitation. It means that linguists can look at the performance of culturally familiar styles to examine language usage. The fact that different

varieties of English are associated with different types of speakers and provide clues about these speakers is why writers use them in their work, to provide information about characters (Hodson, 2014, p. 3). Fictional media may not have been seen as being reflective of 'real' language, as unscripted media was (Queen, 2013, p. 218), however, as Schilling-Estes argues (above), performed language offers an important source for examining variation.

Bednarek has written that characterisation in television remains neglected (Bednarek, 2011, p. 3) and this chapter aims to correct this neglect. It will examine two particular characters in the Scottish TV comedy show *Chewin' the Fat* to investigate how different Glaswegian identities are portrayed through the use of performed and stylized speech. In order to do so, it will first consider the concept of identity in Glasgow (and Scotland), language in Glasgow, and previous research on performance, before analysing how these particular characters portray Glaswegian identities through the use of language. Television comedy is a fruitful area for the examination of the ways in which speech is often an important generic element in the production of humour. The use of language to mark out differences in class, geography, and social variability is an important aspect of comic genres and this has particular resonances for Scottish comedy where the cultural specificity of Scottishness is often located in language. Hodson has stated why she thinks that language in film is so rarely analysed, as 'it is simply too easy and too obvious' (Hodson, 2014, p. 15). I would argue that the same goes for television. Therefore, this chapter will consider how language can be used in certain TV comedy programmes to perform particular identities.

Identity and language

Chambers has stated that 'language is not primarily a means of communication; it is, above all, a means of cultural construction in which our very selves are constituted' (Chambers, 1994, p. 22). A wealth of literature exists examining the relationship between identity and linguistic change, from Labov's pioneering investigation in Martha's Vineyard (1963) onwards. It is impossible within the scope of this chapter to discuss this literature in detail, but I will give a summary of identity and how this relates to the case study of Glasgow.

Concepts such as national and local identity may initially appear straightforward, but closer investigation reveals that they are actually difficult to define (Anderson, 1991, p. 3). Despite fluctuations in the political status of Scotland over the past four hundred years, its sense of a distinct identity has always remained strong. Identity studies carried out in Scotland have tended to focus on national, 'Scottish', identity, rather than individual local identities, and unsurprisingly Scots are shown to have a clear sense of their own identity as Scottish, as opposed to British. This sense of 'Scottishness' has been the subject of extensive linguistic research (see Braber and Butterfint, 2008 and Braber, 2009 for a full discussion) and has been shown to be increasing rather than diminishing. Even though national identity is strong in Scotland, it is still a problematic concept. Hagan has commented that historically it

would be misleading to talk of a single Scottish identity (Hagan, 2002, p. 72) and this still holds true today. The existence of more local identities within Scotland and issues such as how they are manifested, their underlying psychology, and the role those identities play in language use and change have largely been ignored.

So, there is a Scottish identity, and there may be more Scottish local identities, but how do they relate to language use? Despite the highly complex and ever-changing nature of identity, the hypothesised link between regional or local identity and changes in language has been examined in several varieties of British English (see also Johnstone, 2007 for a study of American English in Pittsburgh). Studies in Middlesborough (Llamas, 1999, 2007) and Berwick (Watt, Llamas, Docherty, Hall, & Nycz, 2014) have as subjects the link between the retention of localised language variants and the speaker's strength of local identity or affiliation. Their results suggest that speakers with a low identification score, and therefore a weaker sense of local identity, tend to use fewer localised language variants (Llamas, 1999).

Tabouret-Keller has stated that individual and social identity are mediated by language – linguistic features bind such identities together and 'language acts are acts of identity' (Tabouret-Keller, 1997, p. 315). This can range from phonetic features, to lexical items and syntactic structures, and language can both create this link as well as express it (Tabouret-Keller, 1997, p. 317; see also Bucholtz and Hall, 2005, p. 586). Language and identity are linked to values, which people share or believe that other groups share (see Omoniyi and White, 2006, p. 1), and Thornborrow has concurred that our use of language is 'one of the most fundamental ways we have of establishing our identity' (Thornborrow, 1999, p. 158). This is a process which has to be built on and re-negotiated throughout our lives, and Johnstone and Bean have added that this is a 'linguistic choice', where speakers choose how to sound (Johnstone and Bean, 1997, p. 222). They have also claimed that this can be influenced strongly by the ways people feel about where they live and that their audiences affect how they speak (see also Jaffe, 2000, p. 40). Ito and Preston (1998, p. 466) have commented that when examining language and identity it may be useful to review the features of language which speakers are not aware of. However, this chapter will examine the features which speakers have chosen to foreground to examine identity, also following Johnstone (1999, p. 514) who has noted that we may have to consider more than just language, including issues such as physical appearance and grooming.

Originally, sociolinguists ascribed identity by social category membership (Dyer, 2007, p. 104), where identity viewed through language was seen as fixed and speakers as agentless, purely products of language. However, speakers can manipulate linguistic resources available to them to create their own identities. This is seen as a form of identity practice where use of language reflects speakers' self-conceptualisation. This allows speakers to express their identification with – or rejection of – particular social groups, as well as their own individuality (Johnstone and Bean, 1997, p. 221). Furthermore, speakers have visions of language and identity which they can draw on, but they also have knowledge about how others use language and can incorporate this information into their own variety (Jaffe, 2000, p. 42), which

accounts for features such as phonetic variability (see for example Ito and Preston, 1998, p. 480). In addition to language and identity, Bauman has said we need to add 'performance' (Bauman, 2000, p. 1), which we will discuss later.

Anderson (1991) has coined the phrase 'imagined community' to explain the binding nature of specific identity in a community which exists despite the fact that those within the group do not know their fellow members; this sense of 'collective identity' is important to many (see also Maier, 2007). As the concept of a 'Scottish' identity has been shown to be very important to Scottish people, the existence of a strong sense of community in Glasgow is not altogether surprising. Although heavily stigmatised as a city by outsiders, its inhabitants have retained a strong sense of belonging. The stigmatization has led to Glaswegian being branded as 'slovenly' and 'degenerate' (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990), and previous research (Braber and Butterfint, 2008; Braber, 2009) has shown that Glaswegian is seen as unattractive, even by many of its speakers. This will also be discussed in a later section.

Language in Glasgow

As noted above, Glasgow has long been stigmatised. As an industrial city, Glasgow suffered from the decline of the shipyards and ship-building industry after relying on this source of income and employment for many years. Historically, the city has been plagued with high levels of deprivation. Arguably more than most cities in the UK, Glasgow has acquired a highly stereotyped reputation. The very nature of a stereotype means that such views are unbalanced, often over-emphasising the negative aspects of Glasgow. However, it is through these stereotypes that many see the city and, by extension, its inhabitants.

The linguistic characteristics of Glaswegian have hardly fared better and the stigmatisation of Glasgow as a city has also resulted in negative associations with the linguistic variety (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990; Hagan, 2002, p. 25). As with all speech communities, there is no single linguistic variety in Glasgow, but a continuum which stretches from 'broad' Scots to Standard Scottish English (see for example Wells, 1982; Macafee, 1997), and certain varieties on this continuum are more stigmatised than others (and these can be correlated with social class, e.g., the greatest stigma appears to be attached to the varieties more usually found in the lower socio-economic groups). Speakers can move along the continuum depending on formality and situational context.

A full discussion of the features of varieties used in Glasgow cannot be covered in this chapter, but the references provided in this section can be followed for more information (particularly Hagan, 2002, section 4.1). Many of the linguistic features associated with Glaswegian are not unique to the city, e.g., use of /x/ in words such as *loch*, the distinction between /w/ and /ʍ/, extensive use of the glottal stop in words such as *matter*, and features of the vowel system such as the fronting of /u/ and the length distinctions described by the Scottish Vowel Length Rule (for more information see Aitken, 1981). However, taken together they constitute what, to many people, is clearly a distinctive Glaswegian accent. Many believe that

Glaswegian varieties are hybrid forms, due to the large number of incomers (see Hagan, 2002, p. 87), which may explain some of the changes discussed below.

Anecdotal evidence found during earlier studies (see Braber and Butterfint, 2008 and Braber, 2009) suggests that in spite of this negativity, or perhaps even because of it, many Glaswegians are fiercely proud of Glasgow and use Glaswegian, with its covert prestige to signal solidarity among working-class speakers and the desire to maintain distinctiveness from other social groups (see for example Stuart-Smith, Timmins, & Tweedie, 2007). There are changes in the variety of Glasgow speech features and certain features are undergoing processes of change (for detailed discussion see Macafee, 1997; Stuart-Smith, 1999a; 1999b; Görlach, 2002; Scobbie, Gordeeva, & Matthews, 2006; Stuart-Smith et al., 2007), but it should be noted that the changes appear to be of three different types: those which appear to be 'Scottish-wide'; those which appear to be a move away from traditional Glaswegian and Scottish standards (such as the increasing occurrence of l-vocalisation different to the l-vocalisation which has long appeared in Scots words, such as fitba', where the realisation of coda /l/ as a vowel, seen particularly in working-class adolescents, is not currently noted elsewhere in Scotland); and those that appear to represent the spread of use of more traditional, often negatively viewed, Glaswegian characteristics. Stuart-Smith et al. (2007) have reported that working-class adolescents examined were employing l-vocalisation as a means of signalling their group identity as Glaswegians; l-vocalisation was highly salient to them as a Glaswegian feature and was not viewed as a feature of English-English.

While some of the sound change processes noted in Glasgow appear to represent a move away from the traditional Glaswegian (and Scottish) model (the so-called 'TH' and 'DH' fronting process is a further example), other changes seem to represent the reinforcement of traditional, often highly stigmatised, Glaswegian features. One such process is the apparent increase in the use of the glottal stop in words such as *matter* and *patter*, even among more middle-class population groups (Stuart-Smith, 1999a). Glasgow has been referred to as the 'home of the glottal stop' (Macafee, 1997, p. 528) and t-glottalling is often considered one of the most salient features of the Glaswegian vernacular and is historically a highly stigmatised feature (Stuart-Smith, 1999a). The increase in usage of this feature noted in Glasgow among both working-class and middle-class adolescents (Stuart-Smith, 1999a) appears to suggest a retention and reinforcement of this traditional feature despite the stigma.

There have been studies which examine how language used in Glasgow has been used in literature, for example by Müller (2011), who has also included an analysis of swearing and how this forms a natural part of the language repertoire of Glasgow. Hagan (2002) has examined Urban Scots dialect writing, which includes the varieties used in Glasgow that are frequently seen as corrupt and vulgar forms, both historically and in contemporary usage, even though many novels set in the city use these varieties to different extents.

In short, Glaswegian is a distinct, often stigmatised variety and one which holds many stereotypes both for those in the city and outside its boundaries.

Performed language

In this section, we will look at the concepts of performed and stylized language. With this we mean that speakers can opt to use certain features of language instead of others as they expect that this performance will impact their audience (Coupland, 2009b, p. 315). This type of language usage highlights particular linguistic choices which express self-image and Johnstone and Bean (1997, p. 226) have argued that this type of language is even more revealing in understanding how speakers organize their sociolinguistic resources than vernacular speech. In particular, speakers choose how to sound and how this may affect their relationships with particular groups (Rampton, 1995 has discussed how stylization can be a form of 'subterfuge' when used to undermine other speakers). These linguistic choices express the self-image of such speakers and this is particularly the case with public speech. By examining case studies, we can understand what individuals are doing with language, as we can see the range of a speaker's linguistic resources. Coupland has also added that stylization involves playing personas, including 'in play or parody' (Coupland, 2001, p. 345) and the examination of such language in settings such as TV programmes can be referred to as 'high performance', where the symbolism and antagonism of different varieties can be seen most clearly (Coupland, 2009b, p. 317). It is exactly this type of situation that will be examined in this chapter.

What we are therefore looking at is what Coupland has referred to as 'stylization', which brings into play stereotyped values associated with particular groups; it is tightly linked to specific discourse communities (Coupland, 2001, p. 350). It requires an audience that can understand the values being portrayed and comment on the identities of the speakers. We will be looking at some groups who are relatively easily stylized, because they can be associated with particular socio-cultural and personal associations (to do with social class, trustworthiness, and character). People draw on stereotypical visions of language (Jaffe, 2000, p. 42) and the images associated with these. This can include elements of code-switching and shared identities, both of which will be relevant in our case study. Johnstone and Bean (1997, p. 224) have called this 'multiple models'; communities have different types of speakers with different types of association attached to them.

Although stylized speech may include exaggerated features and stereotypical images, it is also important to look at features that speakers may not be aware of. We need to bear in mind both salient and non-salient features to investigate how people perceive and produce language and we must consider attitudes towards varieties (Ito & Preston, 1998, p. 466). Speakers may be unaware of what their speech reveals about them or about linguistic stereotypes (Johnstone and Bean, 1997, p. 239), but this may not be the case for overt performances such as those examined in this chapter. Without being able to interview the actors involved, it is hard to know which features they are consciously aware of, but by including two different types of performance, it will be possible to see which linguistic features are used differently by them. We can assume, though, that the use of dialect in such sketches allows the actors to give the audience information about the characters without

having to 'spell it out' (Hodson, 2014, p. 5). The audience can contribute what it knows about this variety, as well as other extra-linguistic information, to understand the characterisation taking place. We also have to assume that the audience is competent and able to make such decisions (Jaffe, 2000, p. 48). Although research has suggested (for example Ito and Preston, 1998, p. 480) that the unconscious use of language can tell us much about identity, it can be argued that examining which features are consciously used during performance of a variety is equally valid and worth investigation. Baumann has also argued that performances are good sites for the investigation of identity and language, as both performer and audience must construct and negotiate elements of identity and consider how language is used to do so (Bauman, 2000, p. 4). Queen has stated 'fictional media can directly address ideologies of language, mainly as they relate to the indexical associations broadly assumed to hold in a community between types of people and how they speak' (Queen, 2013, pp. 220–221).

Studies discussed by Coupland (2009a, p. 287) have examined different performances of vernaculars, including rap performances and adverts, and how audiences can relate to these. They consider the different local phonological, morphological, and lexical features, as well as local knowledge, required by the audience to relate to the sense of 'local' identity. In this research, Coupland has referred to *indexicality* (Coupland, 2009a, p. 285) where he discusses how a way of speaking is determined by how it is contextualised locally and whether this is *enregistered* as local. For more details on enregisterment, see also Johnstone (2011) who has examined highly self-conscious broadcast performances of language and local identity, where she explores how social identities are being created and how language is used to do so. Coupland has added (2010, p. 100) that 'indexical resources are orderly or structural, in the sense that speakers can draw from a template of known, generalised associations between linguistic styles and social meanings'. Speakers can examine the relationships between language and the relationship with the speaker to make sense of people's performances. Hodson has also emphasised the different orders of indexicality, with the third order being most relevant to the kind of performance discussed within this chapter, where it is possible for people to reference a dialect by using a subset of its features (Hodson, 2014, p. 75). Beal has examined this within song lyrics, where the linguistic features within these lyrics do 'social work' as they are associated with particular social categories (Beal, 2009, p. 224). One of the factors considered alongside indexicality and enregisterment is that of commodification. This has been discussed in some detail by Johnstone (2009), where she describes how local forms become linked with the city due to material artefacts, such as t-shirts with 'local' words and phrases. As well as displaying local speech, a specific value is associated with this type of language and allows people to link local speech with particular social meanings and identities. This type of commodification is certainly rife in Glasgow and a small selection of products available is shown here in Figures 15.1 and 15.2. Although these products signal a sense of pride in the local language variety, they can also provide us with information about cultural stereotypes.

FIGURE 15.1 Glasgow mug design, used with permission, *Sprint Design, Glasgow*.

FIGURE 15.2 Drinks coaster with local phrase (this is a catch phrase from *Chewin' the Fat*), used with permission, *Sprint Design*, Glasgow.

Methodology

Before considering the case study of *Chewin' the Fat*, we must first consider some initial research which has influenced the analysis of language used in these two sketches. As part of the research project examining language change and identity in Glasgow (discussed fully in Braber & Butterfint, 2008; Braber, 2009), we have carried out nineteen interviews with Glaswegian speakers (twelve of these speakers were still living in Glasgow and five speakers were now living in England – this was the case as part of the project examined the effect of migration on language change). Each interview consisted of a series of open-ended questions, the aim of which was to encourage participants to talk about their feelings towards Glasgow, Scotland, Britain, and England, their feelings about the Glaswegian accent and speech features, as well as their own speech and language use. We have found the repetition of certain attitudes by the majority of the speakers concerning Glaswegian. Almost all participants commented that certain aspects of Glaswegian were 'ugly' and that they had at times changed the way they spoke for particular purposes. All also commented that Glaswegian was a very distinctive variety and one that could be easily labelled. However, when we asked these participants what made an accent Glaswegian, they found this question very difficult to answer. Some of them commented on the t-glottalling, which is present in Glaswegian, but mostly they gave lexical items (often Scots) as examples of 'Glaswegian' speech. What many did comment on was the concept of a dialect continuum in Glasgow and the particular varieties present in this continuum, and these will be interesting for the data analysis in *Chewin' the Fat*. There were three varieties, which many of our speakers commented on, and these were the names they supplied themselves:

- 'Common' Glaswegian: the variety used by working-class speakers and seen as 'guttural' and 'ugly' (even by those who say they use it themselves).
- 'Normal' Glaswegian: not seen as 'common' as the previous variety, but not prestigious either.
- 'Kelvinside' – this is a highly stigmatised and affected variety used by a particular kind of person. This was sometimes referred to as 'pan loaf'. Traditionally in Scotland there were only two types of bread: 'pan loaf' and 'plain loaf'. Pan loaf was seen as a traditional type of bread, but which was more expensive and fashionable than a plain loaf. Participants in this study commented that to speak with a 'pan loafy voice' is to speak in a posh or affected manner. This is a variety which is more common in older middle-class women, and is treated as a stereotype and caricature by others. 'Kelvinside' is mirrored in Edinburgh, where it is referred to as 'Morningside', which is an affluent area of the city.

The sketches used in this chapter contain the two extreme varieties of Glaswegian: the 'common' Glaswegian and 'Kelvinside'. What we see in these sketches is the performance of two groups of Glaswegians and the stereotypes are very clear (certainly to Glaswegians and other Scots) as belonging to a particular aspect of

Glaswegian identity. Although these are identities with which most probably would not actively associate, they are understood to represent certain groups in the city, and many of the catch-phrases used in the programme have come to be used by large groups of people in Scotland. Jaffe (2000, p. 49) has argued that a large part of humour lies in exaggeration, and this is certainly the case for these sketches. Johnstone (2011, p. 662) has added to this that the quality of the actual performance is important, not just the accuracy of the representations. People do not need to think that this programme represents 'actual' people, but that it plays on cultural stereotypes they stand for (see also Torresi, 2007). Jaffe has commented that these 'voices' must be recognizable to the audience, meaning they that are in some way stereotypical and 'linguistically indexed in conventional ways' (Jaffe, 2000, p. 42).

Chewin' the Fat

The data I consider here are extracts from a Scottish comedy sketches programme broadcast on BBC Scotland. The Scottish division of the BBC was established in 1952. The three BBC Scotland channels (BBC1, BBC2, and BBC Alba) can opt out of national BBC One and Two to broadcast their own programmes in addition to showing networked productions. These channels do continue to produce a high number of local programmes for Scottish audiences, and it was estimated that approximately 75% of those able to receive BBC1 Scotland view the channel. These figures do not take into account that with the increase of freeview digital television, viewers outside the region can also view these stations, but this was not the case when this programme was originally aired.

The show covered in this chapter is called *Chewin' the Fat*, a phrase which means to chat about topics of mutual interest to speakers. It started as a radio show on BBC Radio Scotland and ran as a television programme for four series from 1999 to 2002, and repeats ran until 2009. There have also been six Hogmanay (New Year) specials, which were broadcast and offered as free DVDs to buyers of *The Scottish Sun* newspaper between 2000–2005. The first two series were only shown on BBC Scotland, but series three and four were later broadcast to the rest of the United Kingdom. It is a comedy sketch show, starring Ford Kiernan, Greg Hemphill, and Karen Dunbar, but there are other actors who also appear on the show. The characters examined in this chapter are acted out by Ford Kiernan and Greg Hemphill. The series was mostly filmed in and around Glasgow. There is also an accompanying webpage hosted by the BBC about the programme and containing short downloads as well as personality tests, images, and games.

The sketches involve many different characters from around Scotland, including Gaelic-speaking sock puppets, northern Lighthouse workers, and a spoof Star Trek cast from Tayside. However, many of the sketches involve Glaswegians, for example 'The Big Man', a tough Glasgow gangster; 'Ronald Villiers', the world's worst actor; and 'Tom Gallacher', a Glasgow merchant who sells dodgy merchandise. *Chewin' the Fat* plays on the association of social characteristics mentioned earlier in the chapter and plays on the stigmatised association of Glasgow with crime and violence. The two sets of characters which will be analysed here are acted by the same

individuals (Ford Kiernan and Greg Hemphill), both born in Glasgow. Not all characters appear in every episode and never appear more than once in an individual episode. The two character types which are the focus of this analysis are:

- The Neds (this includes Rab McGlinchy, who appears as an interpreter on the news programme). These are generally working-class adolescent hooligans, also referred to as 'chavs' in England. The word Ned is an acronym for 'non-educated delinquent'. They are typically attired in baseball hats, shell-suits, gold jewellery, and gelled-down hair, while smoking, drinking, and looking angry, and are involved with petty crime and often seen as unemployed.
- The Banter Boys (real names James and Gary). They are two very camp men – pretentious but amused and entertained by the 'Common Glaswegians'. They are keen to belong to the speech community but never quite manage to fit in. They have styled hair and old-fashioned clothing (turtleneck jumpers, waistcoats). They speak in affected pan loaf voices, but frequently talk about 'the banter', the language style used by other Glaswegians. See Figures 15.3 and 15.4 for images of these two characters, dressed as they are for the scene discussed below.

FIGURE 15.3 Ned (this is not from *Chewin' the Fat* as no images were available, but of a Glaswegian comedian, Neil Bratchpiece, dressed as a *ned*). Used with permission, Creative Commons Attribution Licence.

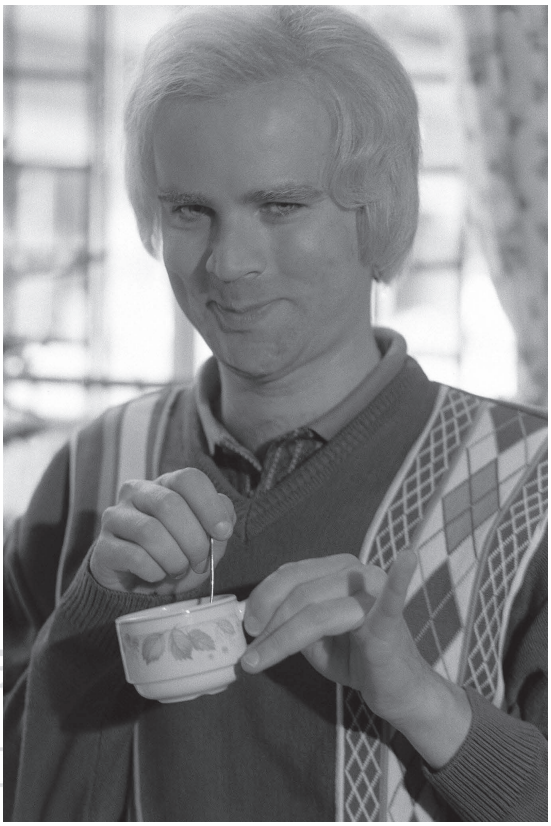

FIGURE 15.4 Banter Boy: Gary, used with copyright permission BBC.

Coupland (2001, pp. 370–371) has commented that the political situation in Wales, with political devolution and a changed economy, has led to the establishment of new identities. He comments that Wales has a strong sense of national identity and the humour used by comedians is 'laughter WITH rather than AT speakers of Welsh English' (Coupland, 2001, p. 371, emphasis in original). I would argue that this is also the case with the comedy programme reviewed in this chapter. Fictional TV characters frequently stand for attitudes and values (Bednarek, 2011, p. 10) and are used by audience members to identity with (or not) and show affiliation with (or not) and tell us something about the way people think about a city or a group of people. However, as this is a comedy television programme, entertainment remains the most important aspect of the programme (Coupland, 2001, p. 351). There are other studies which consider the use of Scots and other linguistic features, such as Brown and Lenz (1997) who have examined the use of language in the Scottish situation comedy *The High Life*. They have found that characters use local pronunciations and Scots lexis as part of the comedy of the programme.

Analysis

In this section, I will analyse accent and vocabulary and how these are linked with visual aspects, including props, costume, and appearance (as discussed by Hodson, 2014, p. 16) to investigate how these characters perform their linguistic identity. We can see that these characters use particular words with particular pronunciations, they have a way of speaking, and a particular voice. Also, the visual elements are supposed to be representative of the characters, and this includes hair style, clothing, and what they are doing during the sketches. Much of the success of these sketches is based on in-group humour. It is assumed that viewers understand the stereotypes and the references made in the sketches. However, the humour does work on a further level for those who are not aware of these cultural stereotypes and they can appreciate the comic value of the situations without fully understanding the references being made.

The features I will be discussing in connection with these sketches are:

- Word-final and word-medial glottallization of /t/
- Monophthongization of diphthongs
- Fronting of /u/
- Standard vs non-standard pronunciations of specific lexical items
- Scots lexical items, including tags
- Cultural references

The first extract discussed below takes place at a fairground and considers the Neds. As the scene opens, there are rides, flashing lights, and the two characters are walking from one stall to the next. The two 'young men' are unnamed and are dressed in a way that is typical of adolescent youths known as 'Neds' in Scotland (and will therefore be named Ned 1 and Ned 2 below). They are wearing colourful shell-suits, have dark hair that has been gelled right down over their foreheads, and their hands are deep in their pockets. When they start talking, they do so in a heavily nasalized voice, which is a feature of certain urban Glaswegians, specifically young male working-class speakers. Their voices are relatively monotonous and contain little pitch variation. The linguistic features they use show they are from Glasgow. These characters are seen as typical of certain parts of the Glaswegian population and associated with lower working-class individuals.

Extract 1: The Neds

(There is a fairground with flashing lights and rides and the two characters enter screen from the left)

1 Ned 1 I wisnae into that mad ping pong patter by the way

Ned 2 Nah, your ping pong was pingin' all o'er the shop there. Nae chance o' a goldie, know what I mean

Ned 1 Fancy a go o' the shootin' but (camera shows the stallholder calling for custom)

5 Ned 2 Aye, man, aye

Ned 1 Oh eh man, eh, crossbow (both laugh and pick up a crossbow each)
Ned 2 That's absolutely tops man
Ned 1 Beautiful (both aim crossbow at the stallholder, stop laughing and look serious)
Ned 2 Gie us a gonk, ya dobber

This sketch underlines what is known about Neds: they are dishonest and untrustworthy. Although they chat in a very friendly way to each other, when they turn on the stallholder, their attitudes change completely and they stop being friendly and become rather menacing instead. From a linguistic point of view, as mentioned above, both Neds have very nasal voices. They produce many of the features which are typical of this urban variety: glottalling of medial and final /t/, fronting of /u/, and many consonants are elided. See Table 15.1 for more details.

There are other non-standard features which are used by the two speakers. In line 1, the first Ned says he 'wisnae' (for 'wasn't'). This is a typical negative construction used throughout Scotland. There is also the use of the tag 'but', which is not used with its usual means of a conjunction, but used at the end of the sentence to emphasize what the speaker is saying. There are other lexical items, such as 'aye' (for 'yes') and terms such as 'man' when addressing one another, which index this sense of a strong, local identity. There are also taboo words, which are an important part of language in Glasgow. Use of taboo words and swearing are absolutely necessary for the expression of a Glaswegian identity: 'it is crucial for the authentic expression of the everyday experiences of the underprivileged' (see Hagan, 2002, p. 209). The second Ned calls the stallholder 'ya dobber' (a derogatory term which literally means 'penis') when threatening him and asking for the 'gonk' (toy troll). As this is a relatively short extract, there are many other features which appear in other sketches including these characters which are not shown here. These include, for example, fronting of back vowels ('off' produced as /af/ not /ɒf/ and 'want' produced as /want/ where Standard English would use /wɒnt/). There is also frequently retraction of /s/, where /s/ is produced more like /ʃ/.

The second extract consists of the Banter Boys talking about getting a bargain from the Barrows (known locally as the Barras, a very well-known market in Glasgow where there is always a bit of dodgy-dealing going on, but is generally harmless). The word 'banter' itself is interesting. Banter refers to informal, joking chat between friends who may be teasing each other. One of the main threads

TABLE 15.1 Variables for the Neds.

t → ʔ	pa*tt*er, bu*t*, wha*t*, beau*t*iful
u → ʉ	sh*oo*t
əʊ → o	g*o*, crossb*ow*
Consonant elision	o*v*er, o*f*, gi*v*e
ing→ in'	shoot*ing*, ping*ing*

running through this TV show is the repetition of stereotypes and catch phrases by particular characters. The audience watching the programme know at the outset of the sketch (if they are regular watchers) what the main point of the sketch will be. For these particular characters, they are always trying to fit in with 'typical' aspects of life in Glasgow, whether that is football, shopping, or chatting to locals. However, their appearance and very camp behaviour immediately show them not belonging to their desired speech community. The normative heterosexuality associated with Glaswegian 'real men' (and indexed by characters such as The Big Man, mentioned previously) ensures that these two characters are clearly outsiders.

Before we look at the linguistic features of these characters, there are other features which are important in setting the scene. They are sitting in a quaint tea room (no alcohol and cigarettes) having 'their tea'; they both have very styled hair, are wearing waistcoats, jumpers and slacks, and one of them is wearing a little gold ring on his pinkie (as opposed to big signet rings that many Neds would wear); there is no other gold jewellery, such as gold chains which are worn by Neds in other sketches; and in this sketch they have bought a silver Rennie Mackintosh tea strainer. Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928) was a Glaswegian architect, water colourist, and artist. The Mackintosh style, which is typified by strong angles with rose motifs, has had a resurgence in Scotland with furniture, jewellery, crockery, and many other products based on his designs. This particular tea strainer is being held above an anthology of Robert Burns love poetry. Robert (also known as Rabbie) Burns (1759–1796) was a Scottish poet and lyricist of the Romantic period who is known for writing in Scots, and is Scotland's most famous poet. These are both items which would be considered more middle-class by many inhabitants of Glasgow, particularly many of the other characters in *Chewin' the Fat*.

Extract 2: The Banter Boys

(James and Gary are sitting in a very ornate, flowery tea room with an elaborately laid table)

1	Gary	Do you love it, or do you love it, a genuine Rennie Mackintosh tea strainer, if you will
	James	Oh Gary, it's an utter darling, totally tosh
	Gary	Mais oui James and I trust that you will be coming roond for your tea in the Glesgae style?
5	James	Does the pope wear a mitre? Now tell me Gary, where did you pick it up, at some little antique fair?
	Gary	Indeed I did not James, I picked it up doon the Barrows
	James	Ooh, the Barrows
	Gary	Well, it was tagged at £90 but I managed to haggle the stallholder down to £85

James Well, that's the beauty of the Barrows

Gary And he threw in an anthology of Rabbie Burns love poetry
James Ooh, I love Rabbie Burns
Gary I fought murder, policeman, what a bargain, ooh the stallholder, a real Glasgae man
James A Glasgae ticket

Gary Absolutely full o' the banter. In fact as he wrapped them, he looked me straight in the eye and said, I saw you comin'

James Aah, the Glasgow banter doon the Barrows

The two characters talk about the bargain, one of them states that he managed to haggle the seller from £90 to £85, but does not realise that he has been ripped off (he comments that the salesman even says that he saw him coming, without being aware of the irony that this was not meant in a positive way, and this is one of the important jokes about this sketch, as 'real' Glaswegians would not stand for this). This clearly shows that they do not belong to this community as they do not understand the way of the Barras. Additionally, it also suggests another distinguishing factor: it seems that the money does not matter so much to them, as it suggests they have money for such frivolous items.

The language used by James and Gary is very different to the previous sketch (bearing in mind that the same two actors also performed the Ned scene, so these linguistic features have been specifically chosen to represent these speakers). There is no nasal voice used by either character, instead these two men use voices with considerable pitch movements and excessive intonation (in words such as 'genuine' in Line 1). This manner of speaking is distinctly camp and it can be assumed that these speakers are supposed to be gay. Accompanying the pitch and intonation are also very visible facial expressions, such as eye rolling and eyebrow raising, which are not present in the first sketch.

The linguistic features are also very different to those of the first sketch (see Table 15.2). Some of the features initially look similar, but are used very differently. One of the most obvious differences is the complete lack of t-glottalling, even word finally in words such as 'it' where we would expect glottalling in most speakers. Throughout the second sketch, all instances of /t/ are retained by both speakers. There is very little consonant elision, in fact it only occurs once when Gary says the stallholder is 'full o' the banter'. Some of the other features which look more local are used inconsistently, for example the word 'down' is produced in two different ways by Gary, suggesting that this is not a style he is completely used to, and he gets it wrong. This element of uncertainty is also present in the word 'Glasgow' which is sometimes pronounced in the local form 'Glesgae' but not consistently so. The market they are referring to is locally known as 'The Barras', but is referred to by these two characters as 'The Barrows', which is a standard English variety which does not index local identity. Also, the word 'banter' which is so important to these men is not produced in an accurately local style. It is produced with /æ/,

TABLE 15.2 Variables for the Banter Boys.

t → t	ban*t*er, i*t*, u*tt*er, to*t*ally
a → əʊ	Barr*ou*s
aʊ → u	r*ou*nd, d*ou*n
Consonant elision	o*f*

which is a less fronted and shorter version of what would be expected from Glaswegian speakers. Much of this pronunciation points to an element of hypercorrection where James and Gary are aware of what is required, but cannot produce these consistently enough.

Many features are more similar to Kelvinside than Common Glaswegian, for example the way they say 'and' (sounds more like /ɛnd/): the sound is raised, which is a very salient feature of Kelvinside. They also tend to show a very backed /u/, as opposed to the fronted vowel seen in the Neds.

There are some lexical items which cement the image of the pretentious Kelvinsider, such as 'darling', 'totally tosh', and the French phrase 'mais oui' used by Gary in Line 3, as well as referring to 'some little antique fair' in Line 6, noticeably not 'wee' which would be used by many speakers and is frequently used by other characters in the programme. Not only do James and Gary get the pronunciation 'wrong', this is also the case for some of the other culturally significant items. James in Line 5 responds 'does the Pope wear a mitre' to signal that a question has a very obvious answer, whereas usually it would be 'is the Pope Catholic?' Phrases such as 'I fought murder, policeman, what a bargain' in Line 14 are typical of the pretentious, elaborate speech style of these characters as opposed to the direct vulgarity of the Neds ('ya dobber'). Neither of these two speakers uses local tags such as 'but', or expressions such as 'man', which typify the Neds in other sketches.

From these two different, very short, sketches we can see some of the different linguistic identities which are indexical of Glasgow. This analysis could be elaborated by including more sketches or more characters, to further this evidence. However, we can see two of the most stereotyped identities of Glasgow: on one side, the young, rough adolescents who use obscene language, greater use of localised features and their competence in an 'accurate' Glasgow linguistic identity. On the other hand are the incompetent, middle-class Kelvinsiders who do not really belong, who are trying to fit in, but are not able to accurately and consistently display their linguistic identity.

Conclusion

This chapter has established how different Glaswegian identities are portrayed by two specific characters in a television comedy sketch show. It examined the use of stylized language in performance speech, and as a result it has been able to show that TV comedy is a fruitful area to analyse ways in which speech is an important element in the production of identity. This means that stylized, performed language

can be used by sociolinguists to examine issues such as identity and language variation alongside more traditional vernacular forms of language.

In the programme *Chewin' the Fat*, the contrasting characters of the Neds and the Banter Boys were compared. Visually, these characters look and act differently – the Neds dress in shell-suits with gelled-down hair and are linked with petty crime, alcohol, and smoking. The Banter Boys are dressed in a more old-fashioned way with styled hair, and are associated with culture and pretension. Linguistically, these characters also behave differently. The Neds have nasalized voices and produce t-glottalling, consonantal elision, and vowels which are associated with Glasgow speech. Their language contains swearing and references to taboo language. The Banter Boys do not produce t-glottalling or consonantal elision. At times, they appear to try to produce vowels which are associated with the 'common' Glaswegian variety, but their attempts misfire and their variety fits with the 'Kelvinside' variety. Their language does not include swearing or taboo language, but makes reference to art and culture instead.

According to Johnstone, performance speech can be heard in different ways: a linguistic feature can be used to construct a particular persona, whether that be Glaswegian or working-class (or both), or can be seen as a funny sketch because of its content (Johnstone, 2011, p. 675). This mainly depends on the audience. Nardini has added that you have to 'be there' and understand what the comedy is referring to (Nardini, 2000, p. 89), so maybe this is why the programme did not do so well outside Scotland as it did with a local audience who understood the underlying comments. However, what we can see is that language, as well as other features such as clothing, hair, and accessories, are used by speakers to index and enregister their sense of identity. The linguistic features used by the characters reflect what the audience understands about linguistic and cultural associations within Glasgow and what is meant by these.

Coupland has argued that the search for authenticity and the authentic speaker can be seen as 'the elephant in the room' (Coupland, 2010, p. 99), as it is something that sociolinguists may search for but not adequately discuss what this should actually be. This chapter has argued that performed language is an interesting vehicle to examine language variation, as it allows us to further investigate the role of identity in language variation. We can see that such comic roles still follow speech patterns which would be seen in vernacular speech and, as such, reflect reality, even though they can be exaggerated.

As Coupland has argued in his study (2001), the social meanings that are constructed through the radio talk show he examined do not undermine Welshness, and this is similar to the sketches I have examined. The language used in *Chewin' the Fat* is designed to capture a Glaswegianness that people understand and can relate to, if only to identify that they do not belong to either of these two groups, but still to Glasgow. These sketches encapsulate stereotypical Glaswegian ways of speaking and ways of being – these are two cultural groups which Glaswegians are aware of. Speakers share such cultural images and this allows for a feeling of solidarity with one another in their imagined community. Johnstone has commented that 'social stereotypes and collective knowledge are embraced and embroidered: what

is being constructed is a representation of a community's sociolinguistic identity' (Johnstone, 2007, p. 181)

The use of language requires speakers to make linguistic choices, and through these choices speakers make claims to social identities. This applies to the audience as well as the characters in these cases. We have seen here that using a 'local' accent becomes linked with a sense of 'localness' (Johnstone, 2007, p. 168), and that can be the case for 'natural' and 'performed' language.

Finally, it is clear that much more work remains to be done, but examination of these sketches enables the provisional conclusion that linguistic features (linked to very important visual features) can be used to portray different social identities, and that in this case, many of the linguistic features reflect those used by speakers (even if many of them have been exaggerated for comic effect). Even if the Glaswegians we questioned found it very hard to pin down the features of Glaswegian English, they would have no problem identifying the different groups that are portrayed in *Chewin' the Fat*. In short, examining stylized or performed speech has been a successful way of examining 'real' language and the features within it, and can tell us much about the way a particular variety is viewed.

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