

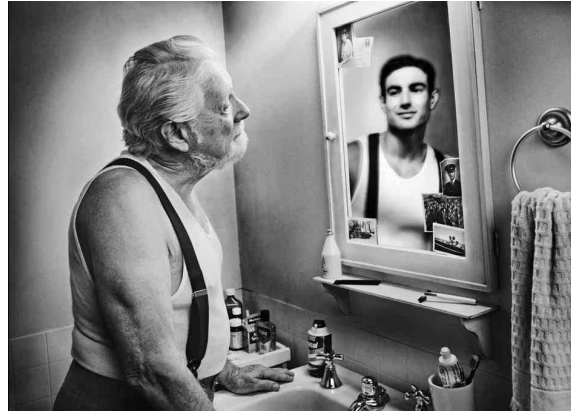
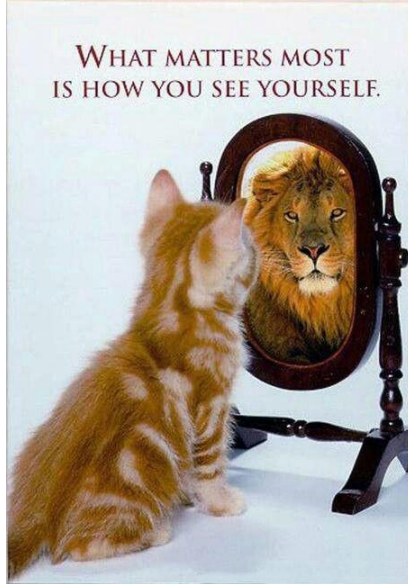
# Identity as a central theme in Linguistics

# Key ideas

- Understanding identity from an interactional perspective
- Identity as construction and co-construction
- Language and gender identities
- Language and racial identities

# Identity

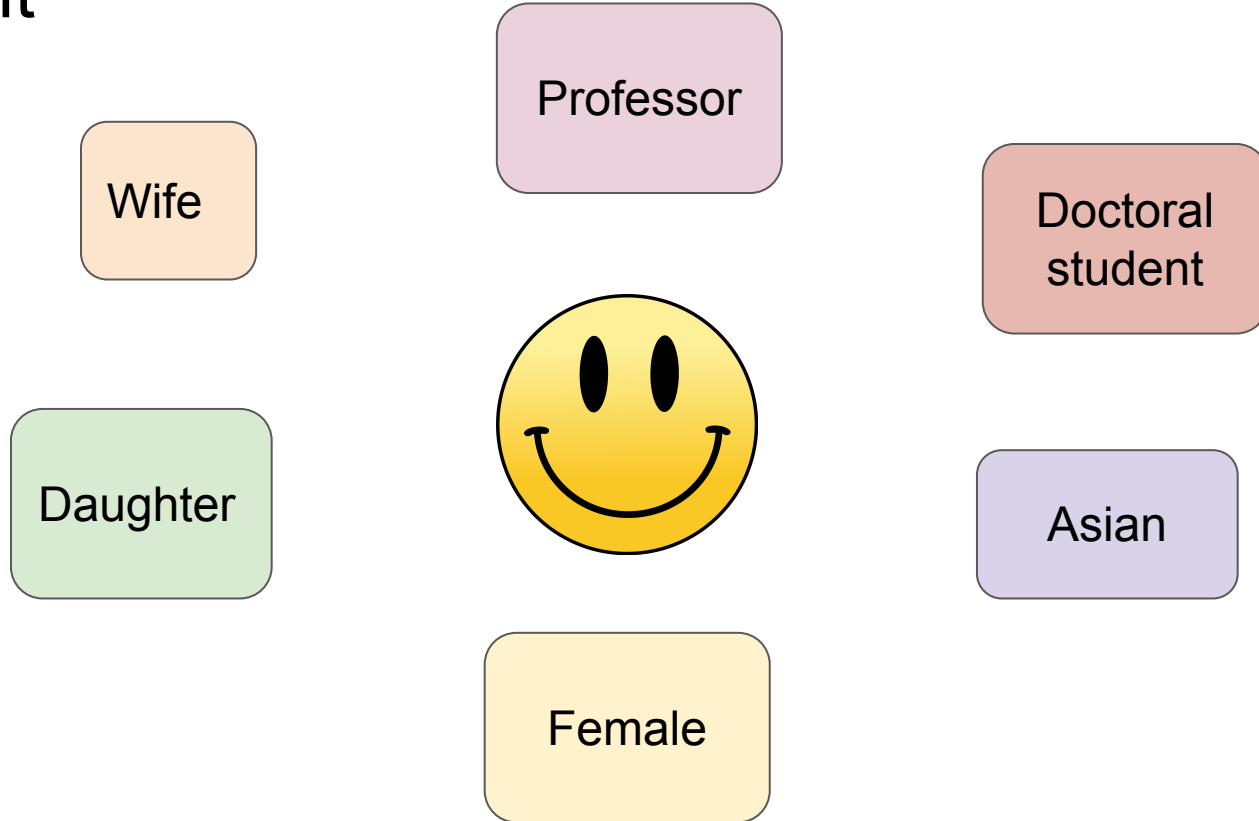
- “Can you show me your ID?”
- How do you see yourself?



# Understanding identity from an interactional perspective

- “Social identity is socially situated; who we are is, at least partially, a product of where we are and who we are with...” (Schiffrin, 1996, p. 198)
- Identity is performed, or constructed if you will, in particular language interactions.
- “[I]n my various activities, I am many different [identities] to many different social groups” (Gallagher & Marcel, 1999, p, 19)
- Identity is not a static quality of an individual; it is a flexible, fluid, and multi-aspected co-construction.
- You can’t define yourself all by yourself.

# Not all identities are relevant, but they can be made relevant



# Identity work in interaction

## Example 1

*I was at a supermarket checking out some plants. One of the people who worked there approached me.*

- ❑ Shop worker: Korean or Japanese?

## Example 2

*I was having lunch with a friend and her friend who graduated from Barnard, a women's college (my first time meeting her). This new friend is a transgendered man. The topic of scholarship came up in the discussion.*

- ❑ Me: wow Barnard really takes good care of their girls.
- ❑ New Friend: AND gender non-binary people too.

# What is the identity work done here?

## Example 3

*This morning I arrived at the faculty resource center but the door was locked. A security guard passed by.*

- ❑ Me: Do you happen to have the keys to the room?
- ❑ Security guard: No. I saw the guy coming this way though.
- ❑ Me: Oh okay thanks.
- ❑ Security guard: Are you faculty?
- ❑ Me: Yes. I know I look like a student.

## Example 4

My roommate who is Korean (adopted by white parents), grew up in Missouri. She was in a shop:

Random stranger: Wow your English is really good!

# Identity as construction and co-construction

Video: When you don't look like your parents

*How are they positioned interactionally?*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it9u\\_VslzTI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it9u_VslzTI)



# Language and Gender

1. Do you agree that men and women speak differently? How? Examples?
  - a. Who curse more?
  - b. Who is funnier?
  - c. Who has more derogatory terms?

How does linguistic behavior shape our perception of gender?

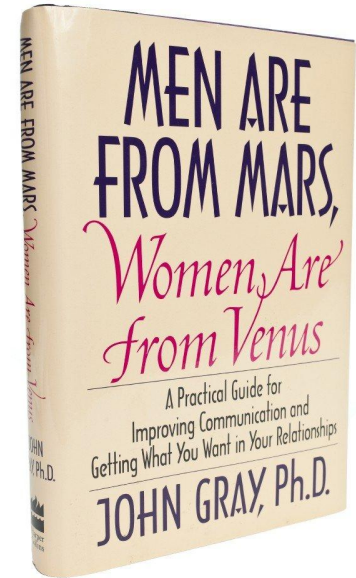
# Gender and Language - **Communicative Style**

He: I'm really tired. I didn't sleep well last night.

She: I didn't sleep well either. I never do.

He: Why are you trying to belittle me?

She: I'm not! I'm just trying to show that I understand!



# Gender differences “myths”

1. Language and communication matter more to women than to men; women talk more than men.
2. Women are more verbally skilled than men.
3. Men's goals in using language tend to be about getting things done, whereas women's tend to be about making connections to other people. Men talk more about things and facts, whereas women talk more about people, relationships and feelings.
4. Men's way of using language is competitive, reflecting their general interest in acquiring and maintaining status; women's use of language is cooperative, reflecting their preference for equality and harmony.
5. These differences routinely lead to "miscommunication" between the sexes, with each sex misinterpreting the other's intentions. This causes problems in contexts where men and women regularly interact, and especially in heterosexual relationships.

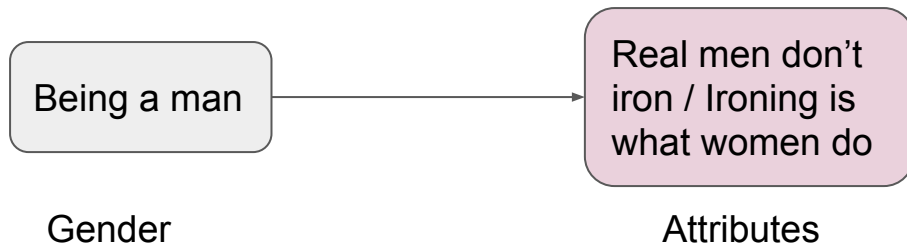
# Why do women say sorry more?

<https://vimeo.com/253499468>

# The construction of gender identity - Categorization process

“In HGTV’s Don’t Sweat It, a man was learning how to veneer the raw edges of a bookshelf he was building. This process of veneering included using a a hot iron to heat press a thin strip of veneer to the edges of the bookshelf. As he was using the iron, the man said to his instructor, an experienced woodworker, “My wife would laugh if she could see me right now.” (p. 16)

“We can see, then, that part of the man’s gender construction was based on the fact that certain actions are correlated to particular categories (Sacks, 1992).”



# The Construction of Gender Identity - Pronoun Use

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssTZtRQmhxY>

# Octagon interviews with two new UFC champions

- Rose Namajunas

0:38

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWI2fVxb-Mc>

- TJ Dillashaw

0:19

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVPiB1PcmO4>

*How do they talk about their victory and new identity as the world champion?*



## Tweet



Dr. Eleonora Sciubba liked



**James**

@JamesConlon\_



It is okay to cry.

It doesn't make you any less of a man.

Men live with mental illness.

We cry.

We breakdown.

There's no need to 'man up'

It's okay to cry.



# Jar Jar Binks in Star Wars

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_FLhO7ZnKHs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_FLhO7ZnKHs)

# Bailey (2017)

Greetings and compliments or street harassment? Competing evaluations of street remarks in a recorded collection

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1XGPvbWn0A>

# Data

1. YouTube video “10 Hours of Walking in NYC as a Woman”
  - a. 1-minute 56-second compilation of 20 encounters with street remarks
  - b. The video was sponsored by an anti-harassment organization called “Hollaback”
2. 1000 consecutive comments made in late 2015 by YouTube viewers

*Are there implicit bias in the selection and editing process?*

# Research questions

1. How are street remarks recorded in the viral YouTube video interpreted by viewers? In other words, what are the popular interpretations of such verbal behavior?
2. What is a sociolinguistic explanation of why such street remarks are problematic?

# Findings - Two competing evaluations

Out of the 1000 comments, 200 of them argue that what the video documented was NOT harassment. 79 of them characterize the verbal behavior as harassment.

This is civil! Not harassment!

The men were just greeting and complimenting her.



Viewers who defend for the street remarks point out **the literal content and surface meanings** of the remarks.

1) how can u say people saying hello and have a good evening as harrassment (9 October 2015, 10:03:46 p.m.)

2) They were not harassment but compliment (30 October 2015, 8:21:23 p.m.)

5) Cut the bullshit ... this is not harassment ... they were complimenting her ... (13 November 2015, 11:25:01 a.m.)

6) Saying hello is not harassment (16 November 2015, 2:36:50 p.m.)

7) This is not harassment they are just compliments (16 November 2015, 9:06:37 p.m.)

8) That was not harassment. Those are nice people trying to engage with you (19 November 2015, 5:19:34 a.m.)

Many treated the comments as civil and even say that calling the remarks harassment was misguided:

9) Do the parts where someone politely greeted her count as harassment too? (21 November 2015, 11:12:39 p.m.)

10) Wow so terrible, saying hi to someone!?!?! WE NEED TO END GREETINGS NOW! (15 November 2015, 7:04:16 p.m.)

11) 'Hello and have a nice day' is not harassment in any way you try to put it. Don't be stupid. (23 November 2015, 5:25:39 p.m.)

12) How are you doing today Have a good day  
How are you doing? God bless you  
How are you this morning? Have a nice evening  
Hello, good morning hi beautiful  
how is it harassment? (15 December 2015, 9:58:03 p.m.)

# Parody the voice of a feminist

13) 'Have a nice day' [PATRIARCHY INTENSIFIES] (9 November 2015, 12:20:42 p.m.)

14) 'have a good day' OMFG HARASSMENT, RAPE, YOU CISGENDER PIGS (28 October 2015, 1:03:47 p.m.)

15) Shit! He said hi? He called her beautiful? He asked how she was? He asked how her weekend was? SHIT CALL 911 RAPE RAPE RAPE SEXUAL HARRASMENT FUCK MEN KILL THEM ALL THEY RAPE CHILDREN HELP. (2 November 2015, 10:18:58 p.m.)

Framing criticisms of street remarks as *overreaction*.



## Viewers who explicitly criticize the street remarks focus on the **pragmatic and contextual dimension** of street remarks

- a. the street remarks don't reflect good intentions or the men were just interested in sex (n = 39);
- b. the person posting had been targeted by such remarks before and therefore knew from personal experience that they are harassment (n = 27);
- c. the men making remarks were bothering the women and demanding their attention (n = 12);
- d. a stranger commenting on a person makes the person feel like an object or prey (n = 9); and
- e. the comments were a form of random shouting at the target, not a form of address or human engagement (n = 8).

20) ... Regarding being told to accept a compliment. You are completely **ignoring context**. You are simply thinking in black and white like oh compliments are good things therefore they must always be good and it's rude to ignore them. Compliments are not always good. They are not good when they are used as bait to get a woman's attention ... (11 November 2015, 8:51:25 p.m.)

21) For those saying 'saying hello and have a nice day isn't bad': I call BS. Why? Because those same people ignore everyone else walking by. They are obviously hitting on her and that is NOT ok. Quit trying to make excuses for harassment. (8 November 2015, 3:32: 15 a.m.)

# Findings

I find that (a) difficulties in articulating the ways in which street remarks are injurious may veil their harm, thus contributing to the perpetuation of male domination of women in public spaces, and (b) the close juxtaposition of explicitly misogynistic comments with interpretations of the street remarks as civil casts doubt on the sincerity of such interpretations.

# A larger social problem reflected in these comments

27) What the actual FUCK!! What a bitch ass whore. Those kind people are calling you beautiful and you just ignore them?? What an asshole. FUCK feminist pieces of shit like you. FUCK you. (17 November 2015, 7:32:53 p.m.)

28) That bitch was greeted by nice people saying 'god bless you' or 'have a nice day' but she wouldn't say 'thank you' Fucking feminist West (11 December 2015, 9:27:41 a.m.)

Condemning Roberts (the woman in the video) for being rude and not displaying gratitude for compliments, calling her disparaging terms (e.g. bitch), and commenting about her appearance (e.g. she's so fucking ugly) ...

- *Accepting such remarks are harmful to women could be very threatening to men, who, like any other group in power, tend to **take their relative privilege for granted and see it as nothing other than the natural order of things.***
- *The misogynistic comments reflect that viewers are defending gender inequality and justifying sexist behavior, thereby reproducing patriarchy.*

# Civil words, uncivil act - An Goffmanian explanation

- Greetings and leave-taking
  - Basic features of social interaction; Unmarked in everyday life with friends and acquaintances
  - In American society, 'civil inattention' is the norm; making street remarks targeting strangers is marked.
  - Justifying street remarks suggest that young women as "open persons" who can be approached and engaged by others at will.
- Use of terms of endearment (e.g. beautiful, sexy, mami, darling, etc.)
  - These are markers of intimacy; using these terms *imposes a fleeting, one-sided fantasy* on the woman.
  - Represents a claim and power over women

*Sexual intentions and insincerity are masqueraded as civil greetings and forms of address.*

<p>Arguments provided by defenders of street remarks</p> <p>- Focus on the surface and literal meanings</p>	<p>Arguments provided by critics of street remarks</p> <p>- Focus on the pragmatic and contextual dimension</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street remarks are greetings and compliments, which are harmless.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a discrepancy between surface content and perceived intentions: Even if the literal meanings of the words may be 'nice', but at a social or pragmatic level they can be 'disrespectful' and feel unpleasant.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roberts should respond to greetings and compliments; she is the one being unkind and uncivil.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street remarks are targeted only at women; these greetings and compliments are not addressed to other passersby. The remarks are sexually motivated.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feminists exaggerate and overreact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These street remarks are an enactment of gender inequality, which further reproduce patriarchy.</li> </ul>

# Good examples from your Term Paper #2

- Much stronger introduction that clearly states the focus of the paper (e.g., What is being analyzed and what you have found)
- Many of you included links to video clips of focal interaction; some even included a short transcript. This is instrumental to making your analysis clear and easy to follow.
- Almost everyone included in-text citation and reference list.

# Media and ideology: The murder of an University of Iowa student

## Undocumented immigrant charged with murder of Iowa ... - NBC News

<https://www.nbcnews.com/.../mollie-tibbetts-missing-iowa-college-student-believed-be...> ▼

Aug 21, 2018 - **Missing Iowa** student Mollie Tibbetts found dead, undocumented ... who have sent their thoughts and prayers for our **girl**," the statement read.

## Man leads police to body, faces murder charge in Mollie Tibbetts case ...

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/08/21/us/mollie-tibbetts-missing-iowa-student/index.html>

Aug 22, 2018 - The body that officials think is that of Mollie Tibbetts, an **Iowa** college student who went

## Mollie Tibbetts: Suspect's father speaks out, says he's baffled by arrest ...

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/.../an-iowa-student-went-missing-now-her-death-is-at-t...>

Aug 23, 2018 - BROOKLYN, **Iowa** — Investigators continued Thursday to delve into the ... Tibbetts was **missing** for a little more than a month, during which the search ... by calling her "this beautiful young **girl** ... killed by a horrible person that ...

## Illegal Alien Left Another Iowa Girl 'Fearing for Her Life' Before Tibbetts ...

<https://www.breitbart.com/.../report-illegal-alien-left-another-iowa-girl-fearing-for-her...> ▼

Aug 24, 2018 - The illegal alien accused of murdering 20-year-old Mollie Tibbetts allegedly heckled another young woman before Tibbetts went **missing**.



# Movies and the choice of accents

<https://mashable.com/article/black-panther-british-accent/#LeIM7YmzyOqZ>

Communicative Behavior and Conflict between  
African American customers and Korean  
Immigrant Retailers in Los Angeles  
Bailey (2000)

# Introduction and relevant literature (p. 86-88)

What are some of the challenges in intercultural communication?

“Because so many of these **communicative conventions and interpretive processes** are socioculturally specific and unconscious, they are not a readily available explanation for breakdowns in communication... participants instead resort to **negative attributions about the character of the other** to explain these disjointed face-to-face interactions (p. 87).

## **Communicative conventions and interpretive processes**

- Love and affection between family members
- Topics of discussion
- Humor

# Social and historical context

Rodney King

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbsk7upx7s0>

Natasha Harlins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBHyrwHqJ10>

LA Riots

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Dvwn4aXE8s>

A Brief History

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86PKB0jXtzA>



# Intercultural communication

- People: immigrant Korean shop owners and African American customers
- Place: LA South Central
- Data:
  - (1) Observations and interviews at over 20 convenient stores; Repeated visits to six stores
  - (2) 4 hours of taping at Korean Convenience Stores
  - (3) Interviews with store owners, cashiers, and African American customers

# Two Explanations:

What are the two explanations of divergent communicative patterns in these interethnic service encounters?

- (1) Contrasting communicative patterns represent a source of frictions
- (2) Communicative patterns represent a local enactment of pre-existing conflicts.

## How do African Americans define respect and disrespect?

	Respect	Disrespect
African Americans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ice Cube Rap Lyrics “pay respect to the black fist or we’ll burn down your store.”</li><li>• Being recognized and valued through interpersonal engagement.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of interpersonal engagement and sociable involvement:</li><li>• Being ignored: “...they don’t look at you, they don’t smile, they don’t speak, they don’t do anything...”</li><li>• Being watched: “They would look over you or around you...”</li></ul>
Koreans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respect as a sense of social propriety and refinement</li><li>• Confucianist ideals of displaying passions only in moderated form; an “educated” person displays less affect.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of restraint</li><li>• Unsolicited small talk</li><li>• Dramatic interactional style</li></ul>

# “Baseline” interaction

Service encounters with Korean customers:

- (1) Greetings or openings
- (2) Negotiation of business exchange
- (3) Closing of encounters.

Service encounters with African American customers:

- (1)-(3) + **interpersonal activities** (e.g. jokes, comments on the weather, discussion of personal experience, etc.)



What is evidence for such differences in interactional style?

Cash: *Annyŏng haseyo.*

Hello/How are you? ((Customer has just entered store))

Cust: *Annyŏng haseyo.*

Hello/How are you?

Cust: *Tambae!*

Cigarettes!

Cash: *Tambae tŭryŏyo?*

You would like cigarettes? ((Cashier reaches for cigarettes under counter))

Cash: *Yŏgi issŭmnida.*

Here you are ((Cashier takes customer's money and hands her cigarettes;  
customer turns to leave))

Cashr: *Annyŏngghi kaseyo.*

Good-bye

Cust: *Nye.*

Okay

- (1) Greetings or openings
- (2) Negotiation of the business exchange
- (3) Closing of the encounter

1 Cash: two fifty ((Cashier rings up purchase and bags beer)) ((4.5))  
2 Cust: I just moved in the area. I talked to you the other day. You  
3 [remember me]?  
4 Cash: [oh yesterday ] last night  
5 Cust: yeah  
6 Cash: [(o:h yeah )] ((Cashier smiles and nods.))  
7 Cust: [goddamn, shit] [then you don't- ]  
8 Own: [new neighbor, huh? ] ((Customer turns half-way to the side toward the  
9 owner))  
10 Cust: then you don't know me  
11 Cash: [(I know you )] ((Cashier gets change at register))  
12 Cust: [I want you to know] me so when I walk in here you'll know me. I smoke  
13 Winstons. Your son knows me  
14 Cust: I had a total knee so my company is retiring my- old black ass at fifty-four  
15 ((Customer smiles and gazes at owner)) ((.6))  
16 Own: (mmh) ((Owner shakes his head laterally and gazes away from the customer))  
17 Cust: and they give me some money  
18 Cash: huh ((Cashier bares his teeth briefly in a smile))  
19 Cust: so I'm spending my money at your store on liquor heh heh heh hah hah hah  
20 hah hah ((Customer laughs animatedly, turning toward the owner who does not  
21 smile, but who continues lateral headshakes as he takes a few steps to the side))  
22 Own: you still can work?

23 Cust: ... so I gotta go get another trade for them to pay me the money. So I'm gonna get  
24 another trade. But then like- after I get another trade they pay me (a sum) a lump  
25 sum of money? And I'm gonna do what I wanna do. ((.8))  
26 Cust: they only gonna give me about sixty or seventy thousand. ((1.4))  
27 Cust: plus- my schooling- ((1.0))  
28 Cust: so- I got to take it easy for a little bit. ((Customer moves toward exit))  
29 Cust: that's why I'm gonna buy enough of your liquor (so I can take it)  
30 Own: alright, take care  
31 ((The customer speaks with high volume and animation, and sounds almost angry  
32 during these penultimate two turns. He is gesticulating so strongly that his sunglasses  
33 come dislodged from atop his head and he has to reposition them as he talks))  
34 Cust: Okay what I'm saying is if you throw five kids (in the middle of the floor) and  
35 don't tell them what they are nothing like that they just grow up to be people.  
36 Cust: They don't even know that they Black. They don't even know they Korean, they  
37 don't know that they White, they don't know this and that. It has to be an old  
38 person like you or me, George Washington and all these motherfuckers. Martin  
39 Luther King and all these motherfuckers.  
40 ((The customer has begun moving toward the exit. His vocal register shifts suddenly to  
41 one of low volume and affect for his final turn. He gazes first at the owner and then the  
42 cashier as he waves goodbye and utters his final words))

# The root of the linguistic problem...

“Both storekeepers and customers publicly interpret each others’ behavior **in terms of their own standards for appropriate behavior** in service encounters. Storekeepers’ relative restraint and lack of sociable, interpersonal engagement with customers would not be perceived as disrespectful in a Korean cultural and linguistic context. It is precisely such restraint, however, that many African- Americans cite as proof of storekeeper disrespect and racism.... Similarly, the levels of affect and interpersonal involvement displayed by many African-American customers, which many immigrant retailers experience as inconsiderate imposition, would be perceived as appropriately personable in many African-American linguistic and cultural contexts (p. 100).”

Owner/Cashier - Customer	Owner/Cashier - Customer
<p><b>K - AA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AA customers tend to initiate a conversation; offer personal details or information</li> <li>• K owner/cashier offer very short answer and try to end the conversation</li> </ul>	<p><b>AA - AA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More small talk; friendly conversations</li> <li>• Being acknowledged and known; eye contact (not monitored); when conversational moves are reciprocated.</li> </ul>
<p><b>K - K</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited to business transaction (a) greeting (b) business negotiation (c) Closing, no small talk, no interpersonal work.</li> <li>• Confucian ideal of self-restraint and respecting social distance</li> </ul>	<p><b>AA - K (N/A)</b></p>

“Different forms of participation persist over time...” (p. 101)  
*Why don't K/AA change/accommodate?*



“Such stores are widely identified as a site of interethnic conflict between African-Americans and Korean immigrants.” (p. 101)

# Two Explanations:

What are the two explanations of divergent communicative patterns in these interethnic service encounters?

- (1) Contrasting communicative patterns represent a source of frictions
- (2) Communicative patterns represent a local enactment of pre-existing conflicts.



“In this highly charged and divisive context, there is often great social incentive for individual Korean immigrant storekeepers and African-American customers to mark and maintain boundaries between each other. One way to mark such boundaries is through contrasting interactional styles” (p. 102).

## Conclusion (p. 105)

1. What is the biggest takeaway in this study?

# Special Talk (12/11): Recognizing and Affirming African American English

*African American English (AAE) or African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is a recognized variety of English. However, this variety is often stigmatized by society-at-large. Many view this language variety as broken English and an indication of low intelligence. This presentation will display evidence for the systematicity of AAVE, as well as hurdles that speakers of AAVE experience.*

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