

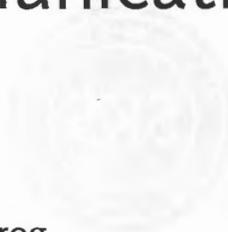
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Registers of Communication

Edited by
Asif Agha & Frog



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Finnish Literature Society • SKS • Helsinki

7. Stranger Sociality in the Home

Israeli Hebrew as Register in Latino Domestic Interaction

From the perspective of linguistic anthropology, the study of register has been revolutionized in the last twenty-five years through a careful re-reading of Mikhail Bakhtin's framework for conceptualizing textuality as a contextualized social achievement that arises in relation to "heteroglossia" (as Bakhtin's term has come to be translated; 1981). That is, the linguistic anthropological concept of register helps us understand better how interactional cohesion is achieved (see Silverstein 1997), even in large-scale social formations where it is usual to find constant and complex processes of socio-linguistic variation and distinction. This volume itself shows a lot of this re-thinking, which is in general a re-thinking of twentieth century notions of language or semiotics more generally, including Ferdinand de Saussure's foundational relation of *langue* and *parole* (Saussure 1955). In particular, Asif Agha's seminal work (1998; 2005; 2007) gives us a guiding framework for thinking about register as part of how sociolinguistic stability forms from heteroglossic conditions. To move beyond concepts of registers as stock forms, Agha speaks of enregisterment, a social process whereby:

diverse behavioral signs (whether linguistic, non-linguistic, or both) are functionally reanalyzed as cultural models of action, as behaviors capable of indexing stereotypic characteristics of incumbents of particular interactional roles and of relations among them. (Agha 2007: 55.)

In this process, forms are enregistered just as (metapragmatic) stereotypes about corresponding speakers crystallize. That is, registers emerge as do concomitant social identities - whether national, ethnic, gendered, professional, or other - and thus shape the trajectories of heteroglossia. Instead of a relatively stable linguistic form (*langue*) being displayed in utterances (*parole*), we can speak of enregisterment and trajectories of change across landscapes of sociolinguistic variation. Registers are not simply special linguistic forms in this framework, but rather they are aspects of social history - a history driven by complex, cross-cutting and diverse social projects.

Agha's approach to enregisterment is useful to the study of bilingualism as a form of heteroglossic trajectory, especially in contexts of immigration.

To focus on bilingual contexts as a question of register means a shift away from speaking about “codeswitching”, “codemixing”, or “borrowing”, as Agha (2009) himself has noted. Instead, it becomes possible to consider the relation of social groups to the emergence of stereotypes, and how this stereotyping occurs as languages are linked through practice to institutional sites, roles or domains of use. Albeit not utilizing the current formulation of register, this social understanding of languages in bilingual context became common to linguistic anthropological studies since John Gumperz’s early work, as part of the ethnography of speaking tradition (e.g. Gumperz & Wilson 1971; Blom & Gumperz 1972). In many studies of bilingualism since then, linguistic anthropologists place as much emphasis on describing the social processes that shape the ideologies and practices that help connect a given “language” to a group of speakers – or, often, a stereotypic speaker – as they do on describing the lexical, phonological, semantic or morphosyntactic phenomena.¹ Indeed, the linguistic anthropology of bilingualism shows how the lexical, phonological, semantic and morphosyntactic phenomena are part of social histories that propel heteroglossia.

Here, I would like to add to this research by considering how, for a highly marginalized migrant group, the dominant national language is also a register of stranger sociality within intimate, domestic contexts. Non-Jewish Latin America migrant workers – who collectively refer to themselves as Latinos – began arriving to live and work in Israel in the early nineties and stayed without legal residence status. They increasingly lived under the fear of deportation in the early 2000s, even as their children were growing up and receiving their schooling in Hebrew and participating in multiple Hebrew-based youth programs. Marginalized in multiple ways, Latino families accept the nationalist ideology that (standard) Hebrew is the language of the Jewish people, while Spanish – in several national and regional varieties – is “our” language, a language of diaspora. These social conditions produce a deep, if shifting, sociolinguistic contradiction from the perspective of Latinos: while Hebrew is considered the language of a nation to which they do not belong, Latino children tend to be Hebrew-dominant.² To complicate these matters, as in many other cases of immigration, the boundary between Hebrew and Spanish is not well-demarked in most daily contexts of Latino interaction, leading to what Latinos themselves think about as “mixing” of the two languages.

Moreover, for Latinos, Hebrew is not only a language of official national public discourse, like that emanating from government, schools, and journalism. Hebrew is also understood to be the language of the street, of the marketplace, of their employers, and more generally of everyday stranger sociality. This everyday stranger sociality is conducted in a more informal register of Hebrew than that used in the official public sphere.

Linguistic anthropologists have written extensively on how linguistic categories and standard national registers help to produce frameworks of mass public participation (for example, Errington 1998; Silverstein 2000; Gal & Woolard 2001; Agha 2003; Inoue 2005; Bate 2009). More generally, literature on public sphere discourse has emphasized how literary and news genres can produce interactional pragmatics of stranger sociality at a mass

scale, where a sense of imagined community is projected on the basis of anonymous participation.³

These literary and official contexts of national stranger sociality are related to but not identical with the more general sense of stranger sociality that I focus on here. The nationalist projects to establish and attempt to unify the official public sphere through the use of a standard register certainly affect unofficial, everyday contexts, but they never fully determine the transient or even long-term indexical meanings associated with the forms used. These everyday contexts occur outside of spatial and temporal zones construed as Latino sites of interaction, what Bonnie Urciuoli (1996) calls the "outer sphere". It is in outer sphere contexts that most Latinos gain their sense of Israeli interactional behavior as strangers, to which they attribute the characterological attributes of roughness and aggression.⁴

In what follows, I will consider Latino perceptions and practices of everyday, outer sphere Israeli stranger sociality. First, I will briefly contextualize the presence of Latinos in Israel, including their perception of Israelis as rough and aggressive. Second, I will go through a story told by a Latino that exemplifies the common idea that, in sites of stranger sociality in Israel, Latinos need to act more aggressively to match Israeli behavior. Here also it is possible to see how Hebrew becomes a term for a register associated with this footing of stranger sociality. Third, I will examine an interaction between a mother and her twelve-year-old son which shows how the son takes up this stranger footing within a domestic context of intimacy. In part, he draws on Hebrew to index his shift in footing. Together, the examples suggest how domestic, inner sphere contexts of migrant groups are buffeted by the enregisterment processes of centralizing national language.

Latinos in Israel

My description and examples are from my study of noncitizen Latino labor migrant families in Israel, with whom I did more than three years of ethnographic and linguistic fieldwork, including a sustained period between 2004 and 2006. The Latino families that I worked with are not Jewish, and comprised Spanish-dominant parents who largely migrated to Israel as adults in search of better economic opportunities, while the Hebrew-dominant children largely grew up in Israel, attending Israeli schools. Latinos work mostly in domestic cleaning, child care, or light industries. Known by state officials and in most public discourses as "foreign workers", both parents and children arrived as part of a large wave of non-citizen migrant workers that began in the early nineties, and continues in different form today. Although by some estimates, Latinos had numbered some 15,000-20,000 prior to the advent of the Immigration Police in 2002, at the time of my fieldwork, they probably comprised 5,000-8000 people.⁵

Latinos see their domestic spaces as a site for socializing their children into Latin American pragmatics of *educación*, the refinement and delicacy of polite behavior. To fully and appropriately inculcate *educación* in their own

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children would mean to reproduce the sites of interaction as remembered from their Latin American upbringing and social settings. This is something most Latino parents concede is impossible to do in Israel, especially because children spend a lot of time in an outer sphere space Latinos call “the street”. Yet, at the same time, Latinos believe that their children show greater *educación* than Israeli children, and that this distinguishes Latinos ethnically. Indeed stories about the rudeness of Israeli children, and how they speak to their Israeli parents, are ubiquitous, and often include the highly salient figure of the Israeli child played out in Hebrew. In the domestic worlds of Latino diaspora, these frequent representations have led to the emergence of a metapragmatic stereotype about the Israeli, and the Hebrew language itself, which some argue is incapable of any softness or other qualities of *educación*.

For Latinos, then, Israelis lack *educación*. In reaching this conclusion, they are ironically participating in a more general “moral panic” about Israeli interactional behavior (Katriel 2004: 211–219). Certainly, in the past, Israelis have been conscious of themselves and have been perceived more broadly as speaking with directness, and avoiding elaborate rhetoric (Katriel 2004: 21–23, 139–164). The highly ideological perception of Israeli directness is then cast by Latinos, in a Herderian mold of equating interactional pragmatics with the named language, as a feature of Hebrew (see Paz 2015). Indeed, in Latino domestic contexts, the forms classified as Hebrew work as a register associated with the stereotyped Israeli stranger.

In these domestic spaces, Spanish and Hebrew can be used like register alternants, capitalizing on these stereotypes. Like in other migrant contexts, families generally use a more syncretic code that neutralizes the apparent distinction of Spanish and Hebrew in much interaction. Yet the contrast is available, and one that is felt to be important, especially to parents who worry about their ability to maintain authority over children given the palpable marginality in which they live.

Stereotyping Israelis as Strangers

In contrast to the domestic spaces and other Latino contexts where *educación* can be found, there were the multiple outer sphere sites where Latinos encounter Israelis. Especially among adults, these encounters were the subject of continuous story-telling about Israelis’ interactional behavior, and Latino responses. In these stories, that is, Israelis are stereotyped as aggressive, rough, short-tempered, and overly inquisitive – in short, liable to interactional acts that threaten their interlocutors’ face.⁶

As an example, here is a story about interacting with an Israeli stranger, told by a Chilean, Rodrigo. The story came up in the context of a group conversation, which I recorded, about the differences in *educación* between Latinos and Israelis. Included in the conversation were two flatmates, Fred from Ecuador and Enrique from Venezuela, as well as Rodrigo’s wife, Ester, who had arrived to Israel from Chile at the age of fourteen and finished high school there, and thus was fluent in Hebrew. All had been in Israel between

three and ten years, and belonged to the same Evangelical church. Rodrigo's story is about how he had used a Hebrew phrase MA IXPAT LI ['WHAT DO I CARE'] as part of defending his seat on the bus from an Israeli stranger. (To the extent it is possible to distinguish, I use *italics* for (etymological) Spanish and SMALL CAPS for (etymological) Hebrew; where the language boundary has been clearly neutralized, I use both.) The story begins before the portion excerpted here, with Rodrigo explaining that a young man approached him on a crowded bus, and first tried to address a sleepy Rodrigo in English. When Rodrigo asked him if he knew Hebrew, the Israeli asked Rodrigo for the seat. In Rodrigo's rendition, the story develops as a series of well-played lines that reject the Israeli stranger's attempt to gain the seat. These toppers win Rodrigo laughs from the rest of us (lines 3, 8, 14, 23). Rodrigo gives this story as an example of how stranger sociality in Israel requires aggressive interactional pragmatics, and, at the same time, he uses Hebrew to directly quote his own speech to the Israeli stranger. Such a poetic juxtaposition serves to reinforce the stereotype of Israeli stranger sociality as aggressive, and thus requiring an aggressive response, which is the conclusion he reaches (line 25). Further, in lines 5-7, Rodrigo singles out the intonation contours and voice quality of his own represented speech for comment, using dummy syllables to produce a caricatured contrast of (roughly) phlegmatic and aggressive intonations. All of this is meant to show how, by speaking like Israeli strangers do, he managed to keep his bus seat:

Excerpt 1. Rodrigo's story about defending his seat on the bus. Some false starts have been removed as well as orthogonal segments to save space. In lines 18 and 28, Rodrigo uses the Chilean dialect colloquial verb forms for second person

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| 1. R: <i>eh yo le dije</i> "ANI LO ROTSE" | R: <i>eh I told him</i> "I DON'T WANT TO" |
| 2. <i>y después- y dije</i> "ZEHU" | <i>and after- and I said</i> "THAT'S IT" |
| 3. [everyone laughs] | [everyone laughs] |
| 4. R: "ANI LO ROTSE, ZEHU" | R: "I DON'T WANT TO, THAT'S IT" |
| 5. <i>no así como</i> <e:h> [phlegmatic tone] | <i>not like</i> <e:h> [phlegmatic tone] |
| 6. <i>eh, fuerte</i> | <i>eh, strong</i> |
| 7. <e:h> [aggressive tone] | <e:h> [aggressive tone] |
| 8. [some laughs] | [some laughs] |
| 9. R: <i>cuando (al rato)</i> | R: <i>when (after a while)</i> |
| 10. <i>y se quedó ahí</i> | <i>and he stayed there</i> |
| [...]* | [...] |
| 11. <i>y me dice eh</i> "ATA SHILAMTI"*** | <i>and he says to me eh</i> "DID YOU PAY" |
| 12. <i>acaso yo había pagado en lugar de el</i> | <i>whether I had paid instead of him</i> |
| 13. <i>y yo le dije</i> "MA IXPAT LEXA" | <i>and I said to him</i> "WHAT'S IT TO YOU" |
| 14. [several laugh] | [several laugh] |
| [...]** | [...] |
| 15. R: (<i>es</i>) "MA IXPAT LEXA" | R: (<i>it's</i>) "WHAT'S IT TO YOU" |
| 16. <i>y me dice</i> "ay" | <i>and he says to me</i> "ay" |
| 17. <i>y se coloca a hablar</i> | <i>and he starts to talk</i> |
| 18. <i>y que</i> "tu teni que pagar" | <i>and that</i> "you need to pay" |
| 19. <i>y le dije</i> "ATA NAHAG SHEL OTOBUS?" | <i>and I said to him</i> "YOU ARE DRIVER OF BUS?" |

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| 20. "MA? MA ATA?" | "WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU?" |
| 21. <i>y no sé, me dijo (...)</i> | <i>and I don't know, he said (...)</i> |
| 22. <i>y también le dije "MA IXPAT LI"</i> | <i>and I also said to him "WHAT DO I CARE"</i> |
| 23. [several laugh] | [several laugh] |
| 24. R: <i>pero fuerte</i> | R: <i>but strong</i> |
| 25. <i>como les gusta a ellos que les diga</i> | <i>like they like being spoken to</i> |
| 26. <i>"entonces ahora que te quedai callado"</i> | <i>"so now you keep quiet"</i> |

* The omitted lines are where Rodrigo attempts to calculate how much time elapsed before the Israeli fellow re-initiated his interrogation.

** Rodrigo uses the first person form of the verb, rather than the second person *shilamta*.

*** In the omitted lines, Rodrigo explains again the nature of the second question, and then notes that he had been sleeping until interrupted by the Israeli fellow.

The story plays out as a series of challenges by the Israeli stranger (the first is not represented, but then lines 11, 18, and 21) which Rodrigo answers. Rodrigo represents his winning lines - which draw laughter - as using Hebrew (lines 1-2, 4, 13, 15, 19-20, 22).⁷ He not only describes his winning lines, but also characterizes his own tone and general interactional orientation as *fuerte* ['strong'] in lines 6 and 24. In lines 25, Rodrigo adds explicit commentary: he was speaking firmly just "like they [Israelis] like to being spoken to." Finally, in line 26, Rodrigo re-iterates the upshot of his answers to the Israeli stranger in transposed speech, using a highly colloquial Chilean dialect form: he was telling the Israeli to just keep quiet. That is, line 26 is a version of how he might have spoken in a similar situation in Chile, complete with the informal register of everyday stranger sociality.

Stories about such encounters with Israelis in everyday contexts were legion among adult Latinos. Just as common was the conclusion that one had to respond in kind. However, crucial here is that in such stories, Hebrew as a set of forms is associated for Latinos with the stereotype of the aggressive Israeli. Further, these outer sphere contexts are where most adult Latinos actually speak Hebrew with Israelis, and, thus where many pick up a jargon variety of Hebrew.⁸ In other words, within Latino inner sphere contexts, Hebrew is *incipiently* enregistered as the speech used among strangers - indeed strangers who lack *educación*. This is not to argue that this small group of marginalized labor migrants has achieved a long-term degree of sociolinguistic stability, or imposed their understandings on a larger society. Rather, this enregisterment process is a localized response to the aforementioned Israeli ideas and practices of interactional directness.

Hebrew forms, as they are perceived by Latinos in inner sphere contexts, do not stay within the boundaries of stories of encounters with strangers, like Rodrigo's in Excerpt 1. More importantly, the interactional directness that is associated with speaking in Hebrew does not stay within the boundaries of such stories. Both Hebrew and the aggressive characteristics associated with Israeli interactional directness continually seep into the bounds of what Latinos consider contexts for Latino *educación*. This seepage is especially evident in interactions between adults who were socialized in Latin America and

their children growing up in Israel. The next example illustrates how, from the perspective of Latino parents, their own children may behave in ways that seem uncannily Israeli.

The Stranger at Home

The example features a Colombian mother, Luna, and her twelve-year-old son, Juan, who had lived some nine years in Israel. Also present was their flatmate, another Colombian mother, Marla. During the course of a casual conversation, which they recorded for me, Juan takes offense when Luna and Marla laugh at his error speaking in Spanish. When this happens, Juan first shifts his interactional footing, leaving the friendly conversational alignment with Luna and Marla for a more adversarial one, and this precedes his eventual change in denotational footing (cf. Agha 2007: 134–142) to Hebrew. After transcribing this recording, I used this excerpt in an interview with 52 Latinos to ask for commentary. Those who know him consider Juan to be a very well-behaved young man, always polite to elders; he also shares his mother's quick sense of humor. However, in this interaction, many found that Juan begins to act in an "Israeli" fashion.

The excerpt begins after a long conversation between Luna and Marla about an event that occurred the day previous to when they made the recording. The context is as follows: I had been contacted by two Spanish-language television reporters who were interested in doing a two-minute segment on Latinos in Israel. During the session, the reporters continually asked the interviewees to repeat their answers in an effort to make them shorter. In the recording from the following day, Luna and Marla had a lengthy and animated discussion about this experience, and Juan's error (line 2) comes just as he attempts to be included in this intimate recollection. Juan's lines 1–2 have a great deal of tone contrast in the contour, which sound *alegre* or jovial to Latinos. He even uses strong sentential stress exactly on the word he mispronounces. Juan wants to comment on the constant repetition the reporters requested, and mispronounces the word *repetirse* ['to repeat']. There are three other points to note in these two lines: he uses IMA for 'mom', an acceptable hebraicism in this context; he simplifies a denotational distinction in adult Spanish by using *grabación* ['recording'] instead of *entrevista* ['interview']; and also he uses *referirse* ['to refer'] at the end of line 2 instead of *decir* ['to say'], probably due to hypercorrection. When Luna and Marla snicker at his error, he is clearly offended (line 7), where he then shifts footing completely from the *alegre* son sharing in a good story to an angry young teenager that ends up speaking over her in Hebrew (lines 36–39).

Excerpt 2. Juan's Error. Luna is Juan's mother and Marla is Lola's mother. A false start has been removed in the interest of saving space. Square brackets signal overlapping turns. [T] is used in the translation to indicate singular (informal) second person address and [V] to indicate plural (formal) second person address.

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| 1. J: IMA, cuando uno habla
en esa grabación | J: MOM, when one talks in that
recording |
| 2. hay que re-(vergarse)
lo que uno se refiere | you have to re-(unclear)
to what you refer |
| 3. L: re-qué? | L: re-what? |
| 4. J: referirse | J: referpeat |
| 5. L: repetirse? | L: reperpeat? |
| 6. M: repe-repe [laugh] | M: repe-repe [laugh] |
| 7. J: qué? [offended] | J: what? [offended] |
| 8. L: referirse? | L: refer? |
| 9. M: repetirse? | M: repeat? |
| 10. J: no, bueno, no hablo en español | J: no, okay, I'm not speaking in Spanish |
| 11. L: no, Juan, no | L: no, Juan, no |
| 12. al contrario | quite the opposite |
| 13. tiene que hablar más Español | you[V] have to speak more Spanish |
| 14. para que suelte esa lengua | so you[V] loosen that tongue |
| 15. J: y tú tienes que hablar más hebreo | J: and you[T] have to speak more
Hebrew |
| 16. L: bueno, enséñame tú | L: okay, you[T] teach me |
| 17. porque es que tú vas a un colegio | because it's that you go to a school |
| 18. mientras que [tú no me educas | while you [don't educate me |
| 19. J: [y tú no me enseñas a mi
hebreo- eh español | J: [and you[T] don't teach me any
Hebrew- eh Spanish |
| 20. L: no, aquí en la casa? | L: no, here in the house? |
| 21. [(... español) | [(...Spanish) |
| 22. M: [(... español) | M: [(...Spanish) |
| 23. L: Marla habla hebreo? | L: Marla speaks Hebrew? |
| 24. yo hablo hebreo? | I speak Hebrew? |
| 25. Lola habla hebreo? | Lola speaks Hebrew? |
| 26. nosotros aquí hablamos todo el día- | we here speak the whole day- |
| 27. J: [BESEDER, BESEDER | J: [OKAY, OKAY |
| 28. L: [(todo el día, no) | L: [(not the whole day) |
| 29. [cuando llegamos a la casa | [when we get home |
| 30. [hablamos en español | [we speak in Spanish |
| 31. J: [BESEDER, BESEDER, BESEDER | J: [OKAY, OKAY, OKAY |
| 32. L: [pero usted . a (refirear) | L: [but you . (referpeat) |
| 33. [cómo es que dijo? | [how was it that you[V] said? |
| 34. J: [BESEDER, BESEDER, BESED- | J: [OKAY, OKAY, OKAY |
| 35. L: a repitearse | L: to referpeat |
| 36. J: MA ANI AMARTI | J: WHAT DID I SAY |
| 37. ANI LO AMARTI KLUM | I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING |
| 38. [ANI LO YODEA SFARADIT | [I DON'T KNOW SPANISH |
| 39. [MI AMAR | [WHO SAID |
| 40. L: [REGA, hablando (de ...) | L: [WAIT, speaking (of ...) |
| 41. [ANI LO MEVINA IVRIT
[pause] | [I DON'T UNDERSTAND HEBREW
[pause] |
| 42. ALO | HEY |

As Juan stated in his interview after hearing himself in the excerpt, he spoke with "chutspah" (Heb. XUTSPA), because he knows that his mother does not speak that much Hebrew and he spoke rudely. Furthermore, he acknowledged

that when his mother starts to ask him questions, he ignores her (repeating BESEDER at lines 27, 31, and 34). As many of my Latino interviewees commented, Juan is treating her "like another person" - that is, *like an outsider or stranger*. From their perspective, starting at least at line 27, Juan no longer treats Luna with the respect one should show one's mother.

This interactional fact is matched by Luna's response. Luna picks up on this stranger sociality, and also shifts denotational footing by the end of the interactional segment shown here. Luna attempts across several turns to encourage Juan to speak more Spanish, as well as to answer his accusation that she does not help him learn. That is, Luna attempts to maintain the role of a mother educating her son. When Juan repeatedly treats her using devices to signal distance, Luna tellingly uses her jargon Hebrew (line 41) to state that she does not understand him when he speaks Hebrew. Then there is a pause, and she follows up his silence with a vocative call, ALO ['hey'] (line 42). This use of ALO is found within non-stranger contexts (often as a kind of pragmatic metaphor), but - especially with the intonation contour Luna used - is more resonant of calling to a stranger in the street, like in the open-air markets (SHUKIM) of Tel Aviv. That is, Luna has interactionally shifted to match Juan's stranger footing.

Given this, it is possible to see from line 7 onward how Juan becomes progressively more distant (and therefore insolent), leading up to Luna's own shift. Juan first loses the *alegre* intonation of lines 1-2 in favor of more angry intonation starting at line 10. Then, when Luna, in educating mother mode, uses a second person V-form honorific (not unusual in this context), Juan returns a T-form in his accusation that Luna does not speak Hebrew any more than he speaks Spanish (line 15). Such a response also suggests a footing of equals, rather than a respectful son speaking to his mother. Then Juan becomes a cold, disinterested outsider, using only a Hebrew-derived form (BESEDER) at line 27 to talk over Luna. Juan takes on the persona of the aggressive stranger, speaking only Hebrew and raising his voice (lines 36-39). Finally, Juan does not even respond to Luna's Hebrew-language complaint that she cannot understand him. That is when Luna shows her awareness that they are speaking to each other as strangers, using the aforementioned ALO-vocative (line 42).

Excerpt 2 shows how Hebrew can function as a register of stranger sociality within Latino inner sphere contexts.⁹ Moreover, it exemplifies the complexity of the enregisterment process among marginalized and marked populations like these non-citizen Latinos. Not only is Hebrew used in stories like Rodrigo's (Excerpt 1) to represent speech during encounters with Israelis in outer sphere contexts. Hebrew also seeps into and becomes cross-indexed with hostile and distant footings in inner sphere contexts. This patterning helps to strengthen the association of Hebrew with the aggressive stranger sociality Latinos perceive in outer sphere contexts.

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Conclusion

Heteroglossia was Mikhail Bakhtin's term for the open-ended, constantly unfolding process of sociolinguistic variation. The question that Bakhtin's insights helps to answer is how relative stability is achieved in the face of constant historical change. This question is especially important to consider in complex, mass social formations. In many modern nation-states, migration generates constant vectors for heteroglossic change, many of which are considered to be structured by bilingualism. In linguistic anthropology, register – and in particular conceiving of a process of enregisterment – has helped to explain relative sociolinguistic stability. Furthermore, as opposed to many studies of bilingualism that assume the genetic distinction between languages continues to hold in all contexts, the framework of enregisterment allows us to examine the practices and institutions through which forms are functionalized as belonging to distinct named languages.

Here, I have considered the bilingual situation of a small, marginalized group of noncitizen Latino labor migrants in Israel. The noncitizen Latinos associate Hebrew with what is perceived as the aggressive behavior of Israelis in contexts of everyday stranger sociality. No doubt their stereotype of an Israeli is an expression of their social marginalization. During my fieldwork, most Latinos in Israel lived in highly precarious circumstances, and had few openings for social mobility. The enregisterment process in which they were part saw Spanish and Hebrew come to mean different registers in inner sphere contexts: Spanish was especially useful for showing *educación*, while Hebrew was especially useful for both portraying and enacting the stereotype of the aggressive Israeli in outer sphere contexts.

Such an enregisterment process is very different than those supported by extensive state or private capital resources, as in language standardization campaigns. Instead, as part of the process of integrating into Israeli social spaces, Latinos perceptions of and reactions to what they consider to be typical Israeli interactional behavior helps to stabilize the indexical meanings of Hebrew and Spanish as registers. This enregisterment is supported by the metapragmatic stereotyping of speakers from a treasure of stories, told again and again by the noncitizen Latinos as they attempt to explain the transformations that migration has brought upon them.

NOTES

- 1 Some classic studies in this tradition are Gal 1979; Hill 1985; Irvine 1989; Heller 1988; Woolard 1989; Mannheim 1991; Kulick 1992; Urciuoli 1996; Errington 1998; Eisenlohr 2006.
- 2 Space does not allow for a full elaboration of these issues here; please see further Paz 2010; 2015.
- 3 Foundational works here are Habermas 1989 and Anderson 1991. For commentary and literature, see further Cody 2011.
- 4 Potentially, Latinos are picking up on some of what Tamar Katriel (2004: 208–211) has described as a style of *kasax*, a term used for a competitive verbal or physical blow to an opponent. Katriel suggests that this style is perhaps converging with direct speaking style of *dugri*.

- 5 On these noncitizen Latinos, see further Schammah Gesser et al. 2000; Raijman et al. 2003; Kalir 2010; on noncitizen labor migration to Israel, see further Willen 2007; Kemp & Raijman 2008.
- 6 On facework and politeness, two classic works are Goffman 1967 and Brown & Levinson 1987.
- 7 Besides this, it could be noted, he represents his adversary's words embedded in narrative nonpast tense in lines 11 and 16, and then his topper responses come framed in the relatively more presupposing past tense forms in lines 13 and 19, which no doubt ratchets up the sense of having outdone the usurper.
- 8 The sociolinguistic skill and grammatical competence among adult migrants varied in ways that cannot be described here due to space limitations.
- 9 This is not true of all Hebrew-derived form. Although space does not allow for an expanded discussion, the use of IMA (line 1) by Juan and of REGA (line 40) by Luna shows something of an incipient syncretic register, that neutralizes the distinction between Spanish and Hebrew.

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