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Variation within a Greek-Cypriot community of practice in London: Code-switching, gender, and identity

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ABSTRACT

The past two decades have seen an explosion of interest in interactionally orientated perspectives on identity. The Community of Practice framework was employed by sociolinguists working within this paradigm because it firmly grounds identity in social practice seeing it as a PROCESS that speakers engage in during actual interactions. Interest in variation WITHIN communities of practice is growing, as the well-boundedness of linguistic and social concepts (including identity and language) is increasingly questioned. The current article develops this perspective by exploring code-switching practices of British-born Greek-Cypriots in two distinct contexts: community meetings and a dinner. Findings indicate that this community of practice does not constitute a uniform entity: complex interactions transpire between local and global variables including gender, community-specific setups, contexts, and discourse types. The study also problematizes the concepts CORE and PERIPHERY, used to describe variation within communities of practice, offering a revised understanding of PRACTICE, which focuses on SILENT PARTICIPATION. (Code-switching, community of practice, Greek-Cypriot, gender, identity, individual variation)

AIMS OF THE STUDY

The Communities of Practice framework, originally developed by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (Lave &Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998), was adopted by sociolinguists working within the discourse constructionism paradigm (Eckert &McConnell-Ginet 1992, 1999) because it firmly grounds identity in social practice and can cater to a range of identity claims and constructions that have not been assigned a priori to interactants (Bucholtz 1999). The concept refers to a group of individuals who come together to perform certain activities and who, through the development and establishment of linguistic and social practices, come to constitute a community (of practice).

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Lave & Wenger's initial conceptualisation of the framework is based on notions of commonality and homogeneity and includes references to COMMON goals and SHARED repertoires. Holmes & Meyerhoff (1999) explored variation within communities of practice and discussed the value of correlating FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF LINGUISTIC FEATURES and INDIVIDUAL DEGREE OF INTEGRATION INTO A COMMUNITY. Based on this assessment, members can be core, peripheral, or marginal (Wenger 1998). Despite identifying heterogeneity within communities of practice, this type of categorisation, based on quantitative analysis of individual language use, offers a static representation of a community.

Other sociolinguistic studies have challenged, or revised, the centrality of UNITY. Eckert (1998) explored how positions within communities can be co-constructed by individuals and their interactions with, and reactions to, their respective groups. Rock (2005) focused on a specific activity in an institutional setting—the delivery of the RIGHT TO SILENCE by officers in the police force—suggesting that a "complex of shared and different cautioning practices and representations of those practices makes for intriguing challenges for the community of practice position" (Rock 2005:100).

Increasingly, researchers are paying more explicit attention to individual participation in communities of practice, as the well-boundedness of linguistic and social concepts (including identity and language) is progressively questioned, especially in the light of increased mobility and technological advances. This article develops this perspective, and further challenges "assumptions about homogeneity which remain implicit in much communities of practice work" (Barton &Tusting 2005:8), by examining individual practices amongst multilingual British-born Greek-Cypriot speakers, members of a youth community group in London. The study offers a unique point of entry into research on individual language use within communities of practice, by providing an in-depth comparison of language use of the same individuals in two distinct contexts: official youth-group meetings that take place every month at a community centre, and an extended social event—a dinner, which took place in an Italian restaurant. The study also identifies the extent and nature of gender variation in each context.

This article considers how individuals use the same resources to engage in identity practices, though in different ways and to different extents. It stresses the importance of acknowledging, identifying, and accepting different ways of participating in a community, without making decisions regarding core or peripheral membership. It problematizes and further develops existing concepts used to describe variation within communities of practice, including CORE and PERIPHERY and their associations with FULL and PARTIAL participation. It also offers a more enhanced, or different, perspective on the key concept PRACTICE, stressing the importance of focusing on both production of speech, but also SILENT PARTICIPATION in constructions of ethnic identity (for example an acknowledgement of cultural personas and behaviours, rather than active participation in teasing sequences or joke-narration).

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This study contributes to the new sociolinguistics of multilingualism (Gardner & Martin-Jones 2012)—an area of study that questions identity ontologies, deconstructs boundaries between languages, embraces process-orientated views of identity, and describes identity as situated practice—by exploring the relations and tensions between individuals, code-switching (CS) practices, larger community values, and discursive identity (re)constructions in a multilingual, multicultural, and heterogenous community of practice. Frequency tests identify whether speakers use the Greek-Cypriot dialect and code-switch, to different extents and for different (socio)pragmatic purposes. As we see below, a consideration of language use in different contexts allows access to a wider range of situated practices, enabling a more comprehensive account of differences observed. Complex interactions transpire between a range of local and global variables including genders, community-specific setups and contexts, individual preferences, discourse roles, and discourse types, further demonstrating the importance of an ethnographic approach in the study of identity and language use. While this community of practice does not constitute a uniform entity, each individual contributes in different ways, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to the construction of their community of practice, and ultimately their common cultural identity. At times these contributions, however, seem to be shaped within parameters set by wider community values and (gendered) expectations.

BRITISH-BORN GREEK-CYPRIOTS: A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Eckert & McConnell-Ginet (1992) introduced the Community of Practice framework into sociolinguistics and provide the following definition:

> A Community of Practice is an aggregate of people who, united by a common enterprise, develop and share ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs and values—in short, practices. (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1999:186)

Examples of such communities include choirs, friendship groups, and academic departments. Lave & Wenger (1991) regarded the framework as a natural and productive environment that could enhance the learning process. They considered learning a social process achieved through participation in community-centred activities. The framework was seen as an essential import into the study of language and gender as it addresses the fact that gender is not an independent phenomenon but something that needs to be studied within social practices (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992).

Wenger identified three main dimensions considered to be the basis for the creation of a community of practice (Wenger 1998; Holmes & Meyerhoff 1999). First, MUTUAL ENGAGEMENT is required: regular interaction between speakers (e.g. meetings, encounters in corridors). Second, speakers need to be part of a JOINTLY NEGOTIATED ENTERPRISE characterised by features such as shared goals, contributions from participants during on-going processes of negotiation, an understanding of roles of

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individuals, and mutually defining identities. Third, speakers develop a SHARED REPERTOIRE: linguistic resources and routines that accumulate over time and are subject to negotiation. Wenger (1998:125–26) cites as examples of constitutive features of a community of practice: shared stories, insider jokes, knowing laughter, styles recognised as displaying membership, and a shared discourse that reflects a common outlook. As speakers spend more time together, they share an increased amount of information and knowledge and through established ways of interacting develop a common sense of identity.

The group of speakers in this study clearly exhibits these three dimensions of Communities of Practice as identified by Wenger (1998). First of all, the speakers regularly interact with one another in a variety of situations including youth group meetings and Greek parties. Second, the speakers are part of a joint-negotiated enterprise: they have shared goals relating to the general objectives of the organisation (e.g. to keep the younger generation in contact with their cultural and ethnic roots). During their meetings, the members of the youth group contribute to different extents, and in different ways, to this enterprise (to be discussed in detail below). Each member has a role: official (e.g. president, secretary, etc.) and/or unofficial (e.g. main provider of jovial atmosphere). Finally, as this study demonstrates, a range of teasing sequences and disagreements are consistently employed by speakers to discursively (re)construct their position vis-à-vis the older Greek-Cypriot generation and British society at large. Their linguistic practices, which form a shared repertoire, enable the participants to exhibit familiarity with, and knowledge of, Greek cultural associations and images, and establish themselves as members of the Greek-Cypriot community (see also Georgakopoulou & Finnis 2009).

The Community of Practice framework is most useful for the specific group of speakers as it enables the identification, description, and exploration of NEW communities and identities that reside outside existing formal social structures (Bucholtz 1999). These communities occur within particular domains such as the classroom and the workplace, but "can be seen as distinct from the formal structures of these domains" (Barton & Tusting 2005:2). These speakers, through encountering each other on a frequent basis, create their own ways of speaking and interacting, their own community of practice. The participants in this study are living a different sociocultural experience compared to the older members of the Greek-Cypriot community. They are also leading a life that incorporates a culture and language other than English. They do not construct meaning and identity simply through the reproduction of existing inherited (Greek-Cypriot and British) sociocultural structures. In fact, at times they overtly express disagreement and discontent with many aspects of both Greek-Cypriot and British cultural and behavioural patterns (Georgakopoulou & Finnis 2009). Instead, they reappropriate given cultural knowledge and structures locally during their interactions, and by coming together every month, they are relearning and reproducing what it means to come from a Greek-Cypriot background and live in London.

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THE GREEK-CYPRIOT COMMUNITY IN LONDON: POLITICS, LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

Identity is an especially flagrant and complex issue in the Greek-Cypriot community in the UK due to its highly politicised make-up. The composition of the community includes an interplay of elements associated with Britishness on the one hand, and the at times turbulent relationship between Standard Modern Greek and the Greek-Cypriot dialect (GCD) on the other.

Migration to the UK from Cyprus started early in the twentieth century, flourishing in the 1950s to 1970s due to social and political turbulence in Cyprus—the result of the struggle for independence from British rule in the 1950s and the Turkish invasion in 1974. Britain was chosen as a host country because of work opportunities and the "colonial connection" (Josephides 1987:43). Greek-Cypriots in Britain are highly involved with the political situation in Cyprus relating to the relationship between Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey. Many individuals within the community are members of political parties that hold different views towards the relationship between Cyprus and Greece.[1] Organisation of, and participation in, political marches and demonstrations relating to the invasion of 1974 are very common.[2]

Newton (1972) suggested that the intelligibility of GCD to speakers of Standard Greek is comparable to that of Dutch to speakers of German. GCD comprises various subdialects that may deviate from standard GCD to such an extent as to become unintelligible to someone living in a main town. When the more standard form of the dialect is spoken, it is easy for the average speaker of Standard Greek to identify familiar lexical items and grammatical constructions. The Greek-Cypriot community of Nicosia, the capital, can be described as diglossic: the standard, used in the media and in parliament, constitutes the official government language spoken in formal domains. In order to have access to education, it is imperative to have a good command of both written and spoken Standard Greek. GCD is restricted to interaction in informal domains such as the family, and has no overt prestige. It has no official written form, although poetical works have been written in the dialect (Kitromilides 1981).

The first immigrants to arrive in London spoke only GCD, their competence in the standard being limited due to a lack of education. Subsequent generations were brought up learning GCD as their mother tongue, some having the opportunity to learn standard Greek at Greek schools run by the Greek-Cypriot Education Mission and the church. As in other migrant contexts (see Sebba & Wootton 1998 for a discussion of British-born Carribeans), the British born Greek-Cypriot speakers' fluency in the ethnic variety varies. Greek-Cypriot families living in London are exposed to the dialect in domains exclusive to the community: satellite television, radio, banks, community centres, restaurants, and nightclubs. Many members of the older generation are linguistically reliant on the community, having never acquired English as their lives revolve(d) around community activities and services.

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Like all other immigrant communities, the Greek-Cypriot community is changing as time progresses. As with the Chinese community in Newcastle (Milroy & Li Wei 1995), the London community constitutes a close-knit network providing support for families to integrate to a greater extent into urban life. Anthias (1992) suggests that individuals who complete higher levels of education may detach themselves from Cypriot identity and social life. As Greek-Cypriot families in London become more financially able, they make education for their children a priority (Christodoulou-Pipis 1991). Members of the younger generation are no longer expected to take over the families' businesses, but can secure higher-status jobs and have developed contacts outside the community.

Many researchers have touched on the issue of ATTITUDES towards the use and preservation of the dialect, especially amongst members of the younger generation who are dominant in English. Papapavlou, Pavlou, & Pavlides (1999) challenge any suggestions that the younger speakers are experiencing an IDENTITY CRISIS (the result of living within two cultures). Kelly (1989:80–84) observes of second generation Greek-Cypriots and Muslim Pakistanis in London that they "use the fusing of such ideologies as a source of both strength and potential for an ongoing process of ethnic redefinition". Gardner-Chloros, McEntee-Atalianis, & Finnis (2005) suggest that members of the community in London regard both Standard Greek and the Greek-Cypriot dialect as part of their cultural heritage and want to preserve these varieties; however, they do not regard them necessary for involvement in the Greek-Cypriot community. Their findings also showed that members of the community see each variety they speak as fulfilling different functions and thus as having the capacity to co-exist within the community.

THE GREEK-CYPRIOT YOUTH ORGANISATION

Data consists of recordings of natural speech of members of a Greek-Cypriot youth organisation during their monthly meetings in North London and during one post-meeting dinner that took place in an Italian restaurant. Recordings of eight meetings were carried out throughout 2001, each roughly two hours long. The dinner lasted for just under three hours and took place in honour of a visiting fellow Greek-Cypriot from the equivalent committee in the United States. Apart from constituting different contexts, the two types of events also contain different discourse types: for example, ARGUMENTS (and the code-switching strategies associated with them) only take place during the meetings, whereas the activity of JOKE-TELLING only takes place during the dinner. I attended the meetings as a SILENT observer, and the dinner as a PARTICIPANT observer.

The group consists of a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and the thirteen members of the executive committee. These positions are the result of elections, and can only be occupied by Greek-Cypriots between the ages of eighteen and thirty. While Menelaos, the president, is the main speaker, the meetings are relatively informal, consisting of interplay between formal meeting discourse and more informal

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teasing and chatting. The ages of the participants are between twenty-one and twenty-nine. Fourteen individuals attended the meetings more or less regularly. Out of these, the president, Menelaos, and the secretary, Lila, were the only two that were present for every recording (eight meetings and one dinner). The twelve remaining members are six males and six females, whose attendance at the meetings varied.

The respondents are nearly all university graduates and most of them work in banks/accounting, a common profession in the community for the younger members. Some of the parents themselves work in banks while others own restaurants. Overall, however, parent occupations are diverse, while the youths are more homogenous in this respect. The members of the youth group sometimes socialise in contexts other than the meetings, although this is not regular, because they are busy with their own professions. Despite the fact that overall they do not socialise frequently, their closeness to each other is clear: a substantial amount of ritual teasing and humorous exchanges take place. Newcomers are treated as if they have been members for years and are made to feel part of the group from their very first meeting. Some have been involved with the Federation for many years and thus regard themselves as being very well acquainted. In addition, some of the male participants are friends through sporting activities sometimes organised by the youth society itself.

Ethnicity is by default a collective point of reference in this cohort as the purpose of the meetings is to discuss issues and organise activities that centre around the community. The core aims of the organisation are to bring together the younger generation of the community, to educate them with regard to the political situation in Cyprus, and to preserve and maintain cultural and ethnic roots and identity. One of the tasks of the youth committee is to notify its members of any political demonstrations taking place in London, encouraging them to participate in order to sustain awareness of the past and present political developments in Cyprus. The organisation, being part of a global Greek-Cypriot youth organisation (NEPOMAK—World Federation of Overseas Cypriot Youth), constitutes the UK representative at conferences on global Greek-Cypriot youth. The point of these conferences is to discuss issues related to Greek-Cypriot youth around the world, to seek solutions to any problems, and to nourish relations between the communities at the global level. Another important objective for the youth group is to put together social events in London, including an annual party at a night club and community football tournaments.

CODING THE DATA

In this article CODE-SWITCHING refers to "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or sub-systems" (Gumperz 1982:59). Similarly to De Fina (2007), code-switching is used as "an umbrella expression for different phenomena including word insertion and intrasentential and intersentential switching" (2007:380).

Frequency tests were carried out in order to identify whether speakers (a) use more or less Greek-Cypriot than each other, (b) code-switch more or less than

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each other, and (c) switch to Greek-Cypriot for different (socio)pragmatic purposes. Therefore the data was coded in order to identify the extent of use of GCD and code-switching, and the (socio)pragmatic force of each switch, that is, to ascertain whether the switch occurred when the speaker was being humorous or amidst an argument. (Socio)pragmatic force here refers in a general sense to the interactional function of the switch (e.g. whether humorous, argumentative, reproachful), which may influence or redefine the relationship between the interactants. Sociopragmatic force, then, can have an interpersonal function that at times may be at odds with the propositional goal (Thomas 1995): for example, a speaker may be reproachful, but the reproach, embedded within humorous discourse, can function to enhance interpersonal relations. Such an analysis helps us understand how speakers engage with the same resources, but in different ways and to different extents.

The following were used as a means of identifying the (socio)pragmatic force of an utterance (a) identification of appropriate verbal and nonverbal cues both on behalf of the speaker and the hearer (see also Pichler 2006), (b) consideration of whether propositional content of contributions are supported or challenged, and (c) sociocultural background knowledge of the researcher (see also Habib 2008). An utterance can have more than one pragmatic function (Boxer & Cortes-Conde 1997; Holmes 2000; Norrick 2003; Pichler 2006; Rogerson-Revell 2007). Therefore, sometimes the same utterance was coded, for example, as both humorous and also direct. The following functions of code-switching were identified and coded: humour, directness, reproach, arguments, and mild disagreements.

HUMOUR relates to all nonserious utterances (including teasing and joke-telling). The cues used to identify such discourse include laughter, exaggerated intonation and accent, formulaic expressions, and nonverbal cues such as exaggerated arm movements. Cultural knowledge was also employed when deciding whether an utterance was playful or not (e.g. knowledge of certain lifestyles and behavioural patterns that are at odds with the general tone of the meeting and that contribute to the creation of a playful frame). Example (1) is coded as humorous. During one of the meetings, Claudia is mocking the Greek-Cypriot tradition of arranged marriages by suggesting that the youth group should include the theme GLOBAL ARRANGED MARRIAGES at a global conference they are organising.[3]

(1) 1 Claudia: I know what, why don't we do a global *proxenia* ['arranged marriages'] xx people
from England xx people from Australia?!
((All laugh))

DIRECTNESS, which describes candour and also aggression (see also Boxer & Cortes-Conde 1997; Norrick 2003), is identified as such by raised volume, disruptive interruption, use (or not) of redressive strategies, and content of the utterance. The reaction of the hearer was also taken into consideration when deciding whether an utterance,

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even if potentially humorous, had a BITE (Boxer & Cortes-Conde 1997). In example (2), Poly inserts a direct GCD utterance amidst English discourse during one of the meetings, ordering the participants to hurry up and terminate the meeting.

(2)	1 Menelaos:	Hello!
		((To Poly who was not paying attention))
	2 Poly:	*Ne, signomi! Ade telione. In na vgoume exo!*
		'Yes, sorry! Hurry up and finish. We are to go out!'

REPROACH was also identified, sometimes coded alongside directness, to describe an utterance that contained an explicit criticism or reproof of someone whether present or absent. In the following utterance, Themis uses GCD to critique and undermine the attitudes of the older generation by making reference to their origins, which he assumes reflects their outmoded opinions.

(3) 1 Themis: At the end of the day they come from *horka* ['villages']

Finally ARGUMENTS and MILD DISAGREEMENTS were identified, with the latter reflecting some form of dissent/discordance on behalf of the speaker when expressing difference of opinion or when correcting the previous speaker. The decision to code an utterance as mild disagreement rather than argumentative was based on a consideration of tone and style of speaker (i.e. no raised volume or disruptive interruption), propositional content, and the reaction of the hearer (in cases where the disagreement was considered "mild" the hearer accepts the speaker's utterance without arguing back). Example (4) is an on-off disagreement where Menelaos switches to GCD to defend himself against Lila's direct utterance. This is considered "mild" as it is not a prolonged exchange; it also contains specific "over-the-top" expressions, including a taboo item ("hell") and the exaggerated Greek expression "There's no need for you to eat me", which seem to mark the exchange as informal and mitigate any potential threat.

(4)	1 Lila:	I've got the old banner
	2 Demetris:	Guys, I wouldn't do a new banner if we're having mega changes and things coming up
	3 Menelaos:	Is it in one piece? ((To Lila))
	4 Lila:	Of course it's in one piece! What the hell do you think I did with it!
	5 Menelaos:	*Endaxi, eroto mana mou! Then in anangi na me fais, kiolas!*
		'Ok, I'm just asking ("my mother")! There's no need for you to eat me!'
		((Change of topic follows))

In example (5), which demonstrates an argument, Menelaos and Claudia are discussing the reason why an email was sent out too late to inform people of a meeting (*EFEKA* and the Protoporia Committee are organisations within the overall Greek Cypriot Federation).

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(5) 1 Claudia: That's because that speech wasn't by EFEKA that speech was organised by LSE Cypriot society, we had nothing to do with it, we were notified later, that's why the email went out late...
2 Menelaos: So? *Then eshi, then eshi kanenan mes to simvoulio tis Protoporias pou pai sto* LSE?
'Isn't there anyone, isn't there anyone from the Protoporia committee that goes to LSE?'
3 Claudia: That's got nothing to do with it because everything still has to get passed through...
4 Menelaos: [Anyway.

In this slightly more heated exchange, the style used (compared to example (4)) is more formal and the exchange is slightly more prolonged. Menelaos switches to GCD in line 2 to challenge Claudia's reason for the lateness of the email. He subsequently dismisses her clarification in line 4 with the utterance "anyway".

INDIVIDUALS, CODE-SWITCHING, AND (SOCIO)PRAGMATIC MEANING

The results indicate that while all speakers incorporate GCD in their speech at some point in their interactions, individuals do it to different extents in each context and for different reasons. Menelaos, the president, stands out as dominating the interactions to a large extent (he dominates just over a third of utterances transcribed: 35.14%), which is expected, especially in the meetings, due to his position as chair. He also uses more GCD than anyone else, as he utters over 40% from the total of GCD uttered by all speakers (in fact, Menelaos' use of GCD is such that his speech can actually provide information on his fluency in GCD, something not always possible to deduce from the speech of others). These findings initially seem to suggest that Menelaos is a core, if not THE core member of this community of practice, due to his extensive use of the minority variety, a variety that one could argue, directly indexes a WE identity (Gumperz 1982).

However, as my findings indicate, while he dominates the meetings due to his role as president, he does not dominate other domains associated with this community of practice: other participants dominate particular practices, such as joke-narration and teasing sequences, during the dinner. These findings suggest that it is not fruitful to define boundaries between core and peripheral members before carrying out more in-depth analyses of individual language use in more than one single context. Communities of practice extend into more than one domain, and it is important to study language use in more than one setting in order to access a fuller range of practices used.

Findings indicate that, apart from producing different amounts of GCD, speakers also code-switch to different extents and for different purposes, with Menelaos

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code-switching to GCD substantially more than the other individuals (see Figure 1; Table 1 contains information on names and gender). It could be the case that the more one talks, the more one code-switches. No correlations were found, however, between quantity of code-switching and overall linguistic output. Instead, as we see below, other variables including discourse type are more directly responsible for differences observed.

An examination of functions and sociopragmatic significance of code-switching indicated that individuals differ as to when and why they bring GCD into their interactions (see Table 2). Menelaos seemed to use code-switching for all sociopragmatic functions identified, and to use each one to a greater extent than the other speakers. Most individuals used GCD more for humorous purposes than for attacking aspects of the interlocutor's face. This was not the case for all speakers, however; for example, practically the only use of GCD for Luka involved directness, reproach, a rude word, argument, and disagreement. By contrast, both Aphrodite and Apostolis use GCD almost exclusively for humour: neither use GCD to engage in argument or disagreement. Vaggelis uses GCD both for humour and for directness, argument, and reproach. In sum, all participants use GCD/CS to engage in a set of social practices—practices that include humorous and argumentative discourses and that characterise this cohort of speakers as a community of practice. However, the use of GCD, or CS, has different sociopragmatic significance for each speaker as participants engage with these practices to different extents and in different ways.

INDIVIDUALS AND CONTEXTS

A comparison of language use in two different contexts can provide a unique insight into the practice and the function of code-switching. A greater use of

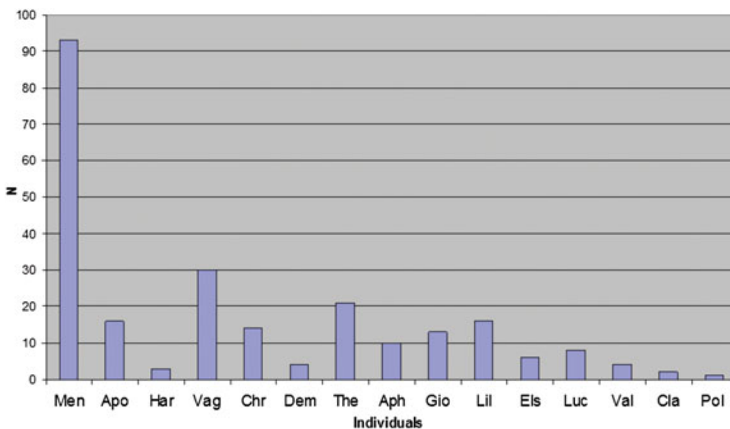

FIGURE 1. Individuals and amount of switches to GCD.

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TABLE 1. *Participants' names and gender.*

Men	M	Menelaos
Apo	M	Apostolis
Har	M	Harry
Vag	M	Vaggelis
Chr	F	Chryssa
Dem	M	Demetris
The	M	Themis
Aph	F	Aphrodite
Gio	F	Giorgia
Lil	F	Lila
Els	F	Elsa
Luc	M	Luka
Val	F	Vally
Cla	F	Claudia
Pol	F	Poly

GCD occurred during the dinner: 37% of the total Greek-Cypriot words uttered in all nine data sets were used for the dinner only. So just over one-third of the community variety was produced in one single recording. This result at first glance seems to confirm findings from studies that interpret language choice in the context of fixed sets of social and situational factors, such as use of the community language to index ingroupness when the situation is more informal (such as a dinner). A more in-depth examination of data, however, suggests that a combination of other variables, including gender and discourse type, are more directly responsible for the increased use of the minority variety in the context of the dinner.

Despite the fact that proportionally more GCD words were used for the dinner, results indicate that fewer switches (to GCD) took place: during the dinner nine switches to GCD occurred every 100 GCD words, while in the meetings sixteen switches to GCD occurred every 100 words. In conclusion, when the participants were dining, they used a larger amount of GCD proportionally to the meetings, but code-switched almost half as much, that is, the switches were fewer, but longer: each utterance contained a longer stretch of GCD.

These findings can be directly related to the types of discourse present in each context: the meetings contain arguments and disagreements and the dinner contains more jovial discourse, including a series of joke narrations. However, more significantly, detailed analysis shows that this finding is not consistent across individuals. Menelaos, Lila, and Vally display a substantial decrease in their use of the Greek-Cypriot dialect in the context of the dinner: Menelaos used 79% of his total GCD usage in the meetings, and both Vally and Lila only used GCD during the meetings (they both attended the dinner). These findings suggest that not all speakers automatically increase their use of the ethnic variety in informal contexts (see Figure 2). Menelaos engages in argumentative discourse during the meetings,

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TABLE 2. *Individuals and sociopragmatic functions.*

Function		Individual													
	Men	The	Apo	Har	Vag	Chr	Dem	Aph	Gio	Lil	Els	Luc	Val	Cla	Pol
Humour	36	6	8	0	16	2	1	11	6	10	3	0	1	1	1
Directness	10	1	0	0	5	2	0	0	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
Reproach	12	3	0	0	3	3	0	1	3	1	0	3	1	0	0
Argument	16	0	0	0	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Disagreement	7	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0
Unknown	21	2	11	2	9	4	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	0	0

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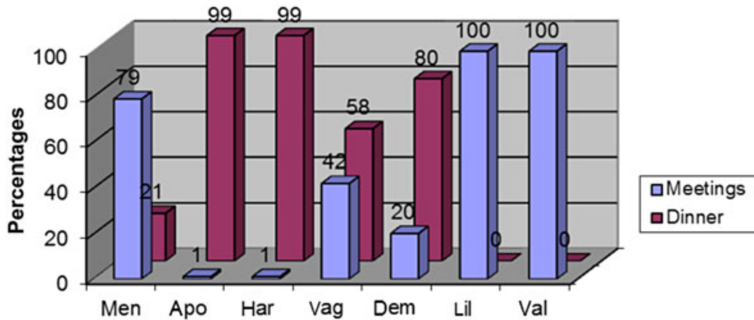

FIGURE 2. Individual use (percentage) of GCD in each context.

which increases his own use of GCD and CS for this data set as he skilfully employs GCD and CS in various ways to construct, and respond to, opposition.

In contrast to these findings, results from a consideration of language use of other participants (who, interestingly, are all males; see the discussion in the section below) show a substantial increase in GCD usage. For example, Apostolis and Harry's usage of GCD for the dinner comprises 99% of their total use of GCD in all recordings respectively. The reason for this is that they were both engaged in the activity of joke-telling, which was prominent during the dinner. This activity seems to constitute an important practice in this cohort of speakers. The jokes are based on cultural knowledge, such as knowledge of stereotyped behaviours, and establish rapport between the speakers who are familiar with these cultural behaviours and stereotypes; while serving to bond the speakers, the process of narrating jokes provides a means of mocking Greek/Greek-Cypriot personas, and repositioning the younger participants with respect to traditional aspects of the Greek-Cypriot culture (see also Georgakopoulou & Finnis 2009).

Joke narration in this group is a practice that requires increased use of GCD overall. Switches are used to structure jokes (also found in Woolard 1988), with the punchlines sometimes being delivered in a different variety, or used to import cultural images that can create incongruous, and hence humorous, frames (Georgakopoulou 2001), and confirm solidarity and ingroupness (Stolen 1992). An example of a typical joke produced during the dinner is given in (6) below.

(6) Shut the door

1 Menelaos:	I've got some funny xxx I've got this one. I think this is courtesy of Luka. A sensitive Cypriot says to his wife "*re gineka evarethika na se thoro mes ti kouzina na vasanizese. Klis tin porta.*" ['(hey, you) wife I am tired of seeing you in the kitchen torturing yourself. Shut the door'] ((All laugh))
2 Aphrodite:	*A panagia mou*! ['Oh my Virgin Mary/oh my'] Horrible!

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Menelaos, after introducing and initiating the joke in English, switches to GCD to represent the voice of the Greek-Cypriot husband. One of the females present, Aphrodite, responds to the joke uttering a typically Greek expression, 'My Virgin Mary,' used commonly by Greek speakers to express shock or disapproval. She further enhances her disapproval by switching to English to assume a more objective voice, again of disapproval, describing the joke as "horrible".

GENDER

Findings from initial analyses suggest that in this community of practice, the male speakers use more GCD in their speech than the female speakers. Even with Menelaos' results omitted (having uttered 42.37% of the total Greek-Cypriot words uttered in all data sets, he could be considered an outlier skewing the overall results), the female speakers still only produce just over half the speech uttered by the males: the male speakers uttered 53% of the total of Greek-Cypriot words uttered by both sexes, and the females 28%.[4]

A consideration of language use during the dinner revealed that only one female, Aphrodite, used GCD, though she used it only slightly more than one of the male speakers. The other two females present, Lila and Vally, spoke only in English. In this particular context of the dinner, the male participants engaged extensively in joke-narration, and CS and GCD were used in various ways and for various reasons in this type of activity, including structuring discourse and adopting cultural personas. The females in this study seem to refrain from this practice and, as we see below, tend to use GCD for different sociopragmatic reasons.

The findings support research that suggests that in some communities, women do not use monological humour—joke-telling—as much as men (Bryant, Comisky, & Zillmann 1979; Boxer & Cortes-Conde 1997). It is important to note that the jokes produced in the current study are obscene, revolving mainly around sexual intercourse, and can be considered derogatory to women. Kaplan (1998) suggests that it is taboo in many cultures for women to narrate jokes, especially obscene ones. One would expect that the narration of jokes that celebrate the male as a prolific sexual entity would be more common amongst males. It could be argued, moreover, that women, especially Greek-Cypriot women who come from relatively traditional backgrounds, may choose not to contribute to such sexist and audacious discourse. This suggestion receives some support from Boxer & Cortes-Conde who suggest that it is more common for males to "tease about bodies", including those of others, because "For women … to tease about bodies is to touch something that we have been trained to take seriously" (1997:291). Indeed humour, as a monological act of individuals, seems to be an almost exclusively male domain in this community of practice, with the females not expected to actively participate in the construction and maintenance of ingroupness through this practice.

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Despite the fact that the women in this particular group do not narrate jokes, they play a key role in the process by constituting a (mock) disapproving audience for the males, thus providing them with a stage, and participating in the acknowledgement of familiar cultural frames. During the process of joke-narration, female and male roles are in complementary distribution with the women and men being passive and active respectively (Coser 1960). Therefore, humour is used to construct, and also maintain, gendered roles (Crawford 2006).

While indeed females do not narrate jokes (in this particular community of practice) they engage, equally or slightly more than the men do, in other types of discourse that are mediated to a large extent by the minority variety: directness and expressions of reproach, and hence actively participate, albeit differently, in identity practices in this community (see Table 3 which contains Menelaos' results in a separate column to those of the other males, as his results are significantly higher than any other speaker). Indeed, Tannen & Kakava (2001) focused on disagreement in the Greek culture and suggested that in this society, disagreement is frequently accompanied by markers of solidarity, for example, use of affectionate forms of names at disagreement points. They conclude that expressing disagreement can actually have a solidarity function in itself in the Greek culture. Therefore, a switch to a language that is more tolerant of directness (Sifianou 1992; Tannen & Kakava 2001) can potentially soften the impact of the speech act enabling the female speaker to "get away with it" without coming across as being inappropriately rude or direct (Gardner-Chloros & Finnis 2003). In this study, the female participants seem to be "allowed" to produce this discourse type, which, on par with humorous discourse include joke-narrating, constitutes an important practice in this community. Therefore, female participation in this community of practice is restricted by wider community setups and cultural norms.

Excerpt (7) is an example of a switch to GCD when being direct. The speakers are deciding upon a location for a day trip to take place during the global Greek-Cypriot youth conference in Nicosia. Lemesso (Limassol in English) and Protara are both locations in Cyprus. In this example, Claudia questions and dismisses her interlocutor's suggestion of going to Limassol for the beach trip, and uses the Greek expression *mana mou*, which is commonly used in disagreements in the Greek culture and, while literally translated as 'my mother,' is roughly equivalent to the English 'mate.'

(7) Beach trip

1 Claudia: You know they do, you know they gonna do the trip, they do a whole day trip xxx last day, can they do can they do a beach trip.
2 XXX: Yeah, Lemesso!
3 Claudia: No, not Lemesso, *mana mou xxx pame sti Lemesso xxx. Protara*! ['my mother xxx let's (not) go to Limassol xxx Protara!']

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TABLE 3. *Gender and sociopragmatic function.*

Function	Menelaos	Males	Females
Humour	36	31	24
Directness	10	7	10
Reproach	12	9	9
Argument	16	3	8
Disagreement	7	2	3

In this example, English and Greek-Cypriot combine to achieve directness. English is used to initially index the utterance as oppositional through the use of "No". Claudia then switches to GCD to utter *mana mou*, which is commonly used in arguments in Greece. Indeed, Tannen & Kakava (2001) mention that in Greek interactions, the use of the particle *re* sometimes accompanies a lexical item such as *ohi* 'no,' which is most closely association with disagreement, resulting in the construction *ohi, re* 'no, you.' While Claudia does not utter *re* here, she does switch to GCD after uttering "no, not Lemesso" in English, and produces a similar item (to *re*): *mana mou*. She then proceeds to specify her own preferred destination in GCD. Claudia is thus being impolite (Culpeper, Bousfield, & Wichmann 2003; Culpeper 2005) attacking different aspects of her interlocutor's face, including his quality face: his desire to be valued in terms of his competence and his desire to preserve his self-esteem (Spencer-Oatey 2002; Cashman 2006). She is, however, using Greek linguistic markers when expressing disagreement and is thus skilfully employing both varieties to ensure that rapport is maintained.

Similarly to joke-narration, being direct and expressing reproach is used by the speakers to establish and maintain rapport, and gives the female speakers the opportunity to actively participate in the process of constructing and maintaining ethnic identity. Therefore, men and women in this study seem to contribute to the construction and maintenance of their ethnic identity in different ways, with men engaging in teasing sequences and joke-narrations, and women in expressing reproach and directness. Both are exhibiting their familiarity with common cultural elements whilst at the same time adhering to cultural norms and gendered expectations in the community.

While this study does identify associations between particular discourse types and genders, these associations are not definitive. For example male speakers also switched to GCD to engage in argumentative discourse. Therefore, this study is not dismissing the suggestion that discourse type, rather than gender, can be directly responsible for differences observed in language use (Freed & Greenwood 1996). Instead, it is highlighting the need to take into consideration (a) community-specific setups and gender roles (see Sebba & Wootton (1998) for a similar discussion of code-switching in the Caribbean community in London), and (b) the fact that different genders may contribute differently to the establishment and maintenance of their respective communities of practice.

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It is important to also acknowledge that communities, including gender roles, do change, and while this change may not be captured by more general analyses of group language use, a more fine-tuned analysis of individual speech may reveal certain marked linguistic choices. In this study, one particular female, Claudia, used an English taboo item, *fuck*, excessively during one of the meetings, something that arguably both reflects, and potentially constructs and propagates, changes in gender roles in this community. While some studies have found that men use more taboo words than women (e.g. Bailey 1985; McEnery & Xiao 2004), other studies have confirmed that this pattern is not consistent (Risch 1987; De Klerk 1992). In the current study, while none of the males ever used any swear or taboo words in English (and incidentally used relatively few in GCD), Claudia used the word *fuck* twenty-three times in different grammatical contexts, including "for fuck's sake", "fuck it", and "fucking". Claudia did not utter any taboo items in GCD, however. This could indicate that each individual has a preference for which social and pragmatic information to convey in GCD (and which in English). In addition, while it seems acceptable for the men to swear in GCD, and the women not to, Claudia's increased use of swearing, albeit in English, could constitute an initial step towards change, with potentially taboo items creeping more readily into the GCD repertoire of female speakers. It is of course important to acknowledge the possibility of individual factors that could affect Claudia's increased use of taboo items, including personality and upbringing. Claudia was the only member of the group who did not reside in London. She was an undergraduate Law student at Oxford University. Therefore, both her geographical location and her language choices position her as a peripheral member of the community of practice. Peripheral members can either gradually become core members, adopting the language uses of the other core members, or continue on an outwards trajectory. By contrast, peripheral members, identified by their nonconformist language uses, can also be responsible for perpetuating change within the community of practice. Claudia does indeed seem to be challenging constructions of femininity in this community. I am not suggesting that one person's use of taboo items will ultimately be responsible for changes in gender expectations in the larger community. It is important, however, to have access to information on individual usages and identify nonconformist behaviours to obtain a greater understanding of the nature of the community of practice, its relation to wider communities (including British and Greek-Cypriot communities) and possible future developments within it.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of individual language use in two separate settings, revealing the complex interplay between individuals, genders, community-specific setups, and contexts in the construction and expression of identity amongst British-born Greek-Cypriots. Findings show that this community of

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practice does not constitute a homogenous entity. An investigation of inter—and intra—individual variation demonstrates how individuals participate in different ways, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in the construction and maintenance of their community of practice, with each individual having a different set of variables, including gender, that can influence their linguistic choices. Therefore, while there seems to be an expectation that all speakers will use the community variety at some point in their interactions (see De Fina 2007 for a similar discussion of language use of Italian-American members of an all male card-playing club in the US), each speaker uses GCD to different extents, for different purposes, and in different ways.

All members engage in producing, or supporting, nonserious discourse and participate, as audience or speakers, in mocking other members of the community and aspects of the Greek-Cypriot culture. These processes enable individuals to affirm their membership to their ingroup and define, and redefine, their identity as British born Greek-Cypriots. These practices constitute their linguistic repertoire, which they use to a greater or lesser extent, enabling them to participate in their community of practice. Identity is indeed firmly located in the context of DOING identity, with each individual doing identity differently. While some preferred to use GCD to convey humour and to express reproach, others limited their use of GCD to directness and argumentative contexts.

The female members are not expected to actively participate in the construction and maintenance of ingroupness via the narration of jokes in this mixed-sex group. Therefore, contrary to Kotthoff's suggestion that in Western societies "[t]he simplistic model of the actively joking man and the receptively smiling woman has lost ground" (2006:4), evidence from this study suggests that this model is still firmly established in the interactions of the participants. The females are challenging the gendered stereotypes, however, which many of the jokes are based on, as they are expected to constitute the disapproving audience.

While the women do not actively participate in the production of jokes, they do participate, to an albeit slightly greater extent than the males, in direct discourse, participation that also constitutes an important practice in this community. Therefore, it is important not to abstract gender from the specific community under investigation, but to take an ethnographic approach and identify whether, and how, each gender participates differently in their respective communities of practice. In the current one, female participation is restricted by wider cultural setups and norms: they engage in acts of rudeness and SOCIAL ARGUMENTS (Schiffrin 1984), as they are indicative of rapport, but do not seem to actively engage in the production of jokes.

This study also suggests that a consideration of individual variation can tentatively point in the direction of cultural changes in the larger Greek-Cypriot community. In particular, while females refrained from telling jokes, thus adhering to gender expectations, one female produced a substantial amount of taboo items in English during the meetings. This arguably suggests that change could be gradually spreading across the community, becoming manifest in certain language uses

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(taboo language) before spreading to others (joke narrating). Thus, while the simplistic model of the actively joking man and the receptively smiling woman (Kotthoff 2006) does hold in this community, the simplistic model of the swearing male and the modest female is possibly starting to give way.

Bloomaert suggests that it is important to rethink Sociolinguistics as a "sociolinguistics of mobile resources" (2010:1). While Bloomaert is more specifically making reference to the phenomenon of globalisation and literal and virtual flows and movements, it is an important concept to consider in smaller, more localised contexts where speakers are constantly negotiating space for constructions and expressions of identities. The identity of the current speakers is not indexed by any particular variety, or by the sum of two separate varieties. Instead, each variety offers the speakers RESOURCES, which, depending on which physical or social space they happen to be in, they can use to engage in identity practices. Each gender employs resources, albeit within the parameters of their gender; however, this identity in turn is constantly challenged and negotiated as cultural norms and values are continuously challenged and revised.

There is a tendency in Community of Practice theory towards COMMONALITY. Even when individual participation is considered, for example, through the concepts of peripheral and core membership, these are contained categories, which entail binary membership: individuals are either peripheral or core (and can move in between). In an attempt to deconstruct the boundaries between these two concepts, Lave & Wenger (1991) introduced the idea of LEARNING TRAJECTORIES, which can contribute to the overall community of practice even if they do not lead to full participation. This concept, however, still does not account for certain SILENT forms of participation identified in the current study, which are equally important in the community: individuals who are less verbose are also participating in the construction of their community of practice and ultimately their ethnic identity. This is achieved by acknowledging contributions of others, and responding to them, for example, through laughter (e.g. mock disapproval). Wenger suggests that PARTICIPATION involves the process of "being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities" (Wenger 1998:4; emphasis in original). This article further clarifies that action can also involve a less verbose but equally engaged role.

Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder (2002:9) state the following:

> The knowledge of experts is an accumulation of experience—a kind of "residue" of their actions, thinking, and conversations—that remains a dynamic part of their ongoing experience. This type of knowledge is much more a living process than a static body of information. Communities of Practice do not reduce knowledge to an object. They make it an integral part of their activities and interactions, and they serve as a living repository for that knowledge.

Sociolinguists place a greater emphasis on the concept of IDENTITY rather than that of KNOWLEDGE, with the latter being more prominent in management literature. Identity, however, can indeed be perceived as an accumulation of knowledge becoming a RESIDUE of actions: a living and dynamic process and not a static entity defined by

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existing sociocultural structures. And individuals contribute to different extents, and in different ways, to this "residue" by engaging in, and responding to, uses of GCD and/or CS. Hence, we find them participating in the process of acknowledging familiar cultural frames and constituting the audience for identity-based rituals, including joke-narration. All participants are working together, in different ways, to express their common identity.

Communities of practice extend into more than one domain and it is important to study language use in more than one setting in order to access a fuller range of language uses. Therefore, further studies using this framework would benefit from exploring language use of the same speakers in distinct community-centred contexts. In addition, studies would benefit from considering language use of the same speakers in both single—and mixed—sex groups in order to access a wider array of identity practices.

APPENDIX: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

[	overlapping speech
((All laugh))	nonverbal behaviour; author commentary
xxx	inaudible data
XXX	unknown speaker

NOTES

[1]Right-wing supporters hold more positive attitudes towards Standard Greek, which, to an extent, can be said to reflect their positive attitudes towards Greece, whilst individuals who are more left wing orientated are more likely to support the use of Greek-Cypriot, as opposed to Standard Greek, in schools in Cyprus (Panayiotou 1996). These attitudes mirror attitudes towards the concept of *Enosis*: unification of Cyprus with Greece, especially before and straight after independence from Britain in 1960, with those more in favour of unification with Greece (usually right-wing supporters) manifesting more positive attitudes towards Standard Greek.

[2]For example, the annual marches in protest of the declaration of the Turkish-occupied northern part of the island as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

[3]The text in italics in the examples is Greek-Cypriot. For a list of transcription conventions, see the appendix.

[4]Results without the omission of Menelaos are as follows: males 73% and females 23%.

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