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Appalachian Migrant Stances

Bridget L. Anderson
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1. Appalachian Migration and the Diaspora

Large numbers of Appalachians left economically depressed rural Appalachia in order to seek opportunities in the industrial Midwest beginning around the time of World War I, continuing through World War II, and through the peak years of the auto industry, well into the 1980s. There were also streams of migrants into the Pacific Northwest to work in the logging industry, dating from at least 1900, described by Clevinger (1942). “The Great Southern Migration” swept through the whole South, not just Appalachia, and is the largest internal migration in U.S. history. One defining characteristic of this migration is that it was kin-based (Berry 2000). The diaspora has not broken generational ties to the homeland, but it has extended and changed them.

2. Appalachian Migrants in the Detroit Metropolitan Area

The work of Elmer Akers, a University of Michigan graduate student, provides a window into the world of the earliest Appalachian migrants in the Detroit area. He interviewed merchants, employment agency representatives, landlords, Southern migrants, and their neighbors (Akers 1936). He concluded, in his dissertation, that these early Southern migrants in Detroit showed no evidence of assimilating to Northern culture or “lifestyle” and that they faced hostility from Northerners as they tried to secure work and housing. He described “...total unfamiliarity with the ways and demands of a high-speed industrial society” and their “difficulties of accommodation to Detroit” as “...almost insuperably great” (7). Ties to the homeland are revealed in the commentary by and on these early migrants. One official involved in the hiring process for a local auto factory reported:

It got so we wouldn't hire them at all, towards the last—toward 1929. I got tired of seeing Southerners. You can tell a Southerner as soon as he opens his mouth, you know, if not by his appearance. I would tell them, 'I don't want you fellows from the South. You don't stick to your job. The first thing we know you are gone... back South' (41).

Akers described what were essentially ethnic enclaves of Southern migrants and their social networks as being almost exclusively characterized by relations with other migrants (and not with Northerners): "They are not concerned about what Northerners think of them. Status seemed to be almost wholly a matter of in-group relations among those we interviewed" (65). Berry also comments on the tendency of Southern migrants to form community groups and social networks after migration, which he designated as "an important type of minority behavior" (2000).

The anthropologist John Hartigan also conducted ethnographic fieldwork with not just Southern, but specifically Appalachian Southern migrants in Detroit in the early and mid-1990s (quite a long time after Akers' fieldwork). Hartigan, like Akers, discusses a lack of assimilation to Midwestern social norms:

The clarity of the category (hillbilly) primarily stands out in relation to the degree of assimilation into mainstream White middle class culture. The term's primary contrast inscribed the difference between Whites who assimilated successfully in this northern industrial town and those who retained behaviors or lived in conditions somehow improper for Whites (1999: 89-90).

During my fieldwork in the Detroit area during 2001-2002, I also observed a tendency to form community and neighborhood groups with other Southern migrants as well as many specifically Southern cultural practices (Anderson 2008). I also encountered many stances that I believe accomplish important social and identity work for the migrants I interviewed.

3. Why Stance?

Stance is how speakers express their orientations and attitudes through talk. At a basic level, stance encodes speaker positioning

to the form and content of an utterance (what is said) and to interlocutors (whom one is speaking with). Stance can reveal individual and community value systems (Jaffe 2009: 5). If we treat speakers as social agents, most, if not all, talk is interest laden. Stance is a way to advertise identity. Kiesling makes the strong claim that "...stance taking is always a speaker's primary concern in conversation" (2009: 179). He characterizes stance taking as the primary purpose of talk: "...the informational function of language is subordinate to stance taking: speakers ultimately make linguistic choices in order to take stances" (179).

Stance provides a concrete way to examine identity expressed in talk. Stance is anchored in utterances. Johnstone suggests "...social identity can be seen as the culmination of stances taken over time" (2009: 10). Johnstone and Kiesling point out that stance analysis moves variationist sociolinguistics beyond correlation of dimensions of identity with particular linguistic variables and also beyond approaches in which such correlations are conflated with causation.

Stance is not static and unchanging; it is fluid and bound by moments in time and by specific utterances. For those moments in time, however, stance reveals speaker orientation: to topics of conversation (stance objects) and to other conversational participants. They provide a window into worldview and values.

4. Ethnographic Fieldwork and Stance

When I conducted the fieldwork with Appalachian migrants in Detroit, I did not realize I would end up studying stance. But, at any rate, it would have been impossible for me to be stance-free as an ethnographer and a fieldworker. Since I am Appalachian myself, I was probably doing more culturally-specific stance work than an outsider (non-Appalachian fieldworker) would have been doing. I was presenting myself as Appalachian through stances in my own contributions to the discourse though I was not mindful of doing so during fieldwork. I was both an insider and an outsider—an insider in terms of shared knowledge with participants, of cultural practices, cultural knowledge, as well as an allegiance to the homeland and the people but an outsider with respect to the

Detroit area and the migration experience. I was also an outsider in terms of being aligned (as a student) with the University of Michigan. Puckett (2000) notes a similar insider/outsider positioning in her fieldwork in rural Appalachia. Her family roots were there, but she had never lived there.

Eckert describes ethnography as "...a process of mutual sense making among all participants in the ethnography" (2000: 76). This includes the fieldworker and is particularly true in the collection of oral histories and personal narratives in sociolinguistic fieldwork. Identity is dynamic, not static. As Eckert puts it: "identity is fluid, and particularly in telling the story of their lives, individuals may move through a broad range of identities..." (81). Ties to the homeland are kept intact, in part, via talk. What is spoken of lives—in discourse and in culture. Stewart describes places "devastated by history" as "retain(ing) the marks and memories of the past" and as "...sifting through significance of its own otherness and remainder for something of lasting value" (1996: 42). Appalachia is a place devastated in many ways by history (Williams 2002). It is an area that has always been characterized by poverty, and most Appalachian migrants left the region in order to try to make a living. Stewart lived in West Virginia while conducting her fieldwork and characterizes Appalachia as "hold(ing) to the dream of Homeland" (42). She further acknowledges a century of "displacements and diasporic migrations" (98). Stewart describes stories in talk as "...chronicling what is at hand and making something of things" (111). Good ethnography, like stance analysis, captures something of the voice and spirit of the individual: "...story fragments and lyric images are not easily captured by transcendent theories of culture but flood the very effort with voices and forces of their own and an 'other' epistemology" (210). However, Stewart rightly cautions "...culture isn't something that can be gotten right. At best it is a point of entry, like talk itself" (210). Culture cannot be quantified or categorized. At best, it is revealed in glimpses bound to moments that pass with time. Glimpses will always be incomplete and fleeting, but these observations may prove to be meaningful. Ethnography is best practiced with openness and

attentiveness, and meaning-making is a collaborative endeavor between the fieldworker and participants.

5. Fieldwork

I began fieldwork with the Appalachian participants in the winter of 2001 and concluded in the spring of 2002. To find participants, I wrote letters to the editors of newspapers in the Smoky Mountains of Western North Carolina, where I grew up. I asked readers to contact me or my mother (who still resided in the Smokies) if they had relatives in the Detroit area. In this way, it was easy to get interviews with the Appalachian participants, a process that was doubtless facilitated by my own Appalachian origins. All the Appalachian participants self-identified as being from the Smoky Mountains of Western North Carolina (even if it was in fact their parents or grandparents who migrated) except for one participant (8), whose parents migrated from rural West Virginia, interviewed by Susan Frekko, a graduate student in the Anthropology Department at the University of Michigan.

Third parties were present in some of the interviews. Speaker 5 was interviewed along with two of her friends, who were also the descendants of Appalachian migrants. Speaker 9's mother, an Appalachian migrant, participated in her interview. Speaker 12's husband, a Midwesterner, participated in her interview.

Interviews were ethnographic to the extent possible. Though I did obtain demographic information, I did not use a pre-determined set of questions. I started interviews by asking participants to give their years of birth. I then asked when their families moved up from the mountains. All the migrant participants described their families' migration histories as well as the opportunities and difficulties they encountered in the Detroit area. Each participant described culturally important activities such as extended visits back to Appalachia, family reunions, differences and similarities between Appalachia and Detroit, as well as other topics. It is important to note that each of the participants expressed cultural orientations to and a regional affiliation with Appalachia, even when Detroit-born. All participants except for Speaker 13 are female. Though there is a fairly balanced sample for gender in the

larger study, my earlier work (Anderson 2008) contained an acoustic analysis that focused on female speakers so that I would not have to normalize the data (a controversial process is laboratory phonetics and sociophonetics). Those were the first Appalachian interviews to be transcribed, and the ones I am most familiar with. For convenience, these are the interviews I analyze for stance in this paper.

Table 1. Participants

Speaker	Ethnicity	Year of Birth	Generation	Group (G), Individual (I), or Dyad (D)	Field worker
7	AP	1932	1	I	BA
8	AP	1960	2	I	SF
9	AP	1951	2	D	BA
10	AP	1949	2	I	BA, MA
11	AP	1936	2	D	BA
12	AP	1965	3	D	BA
13	AP	1935	1	D (husband of Speaker 11)	BA
Appalachian White participants N=7					

AP=Appalachian

BA= Myself

MA= White Male Fieldworker (my boyfriend at the time of the interviews)

SF= White Female Fieldworker (graduate student in Anthropology at the University of Michigan)

6. Categories of Stance

This paper utilizes three different categories for stance: authoritative, evaluative, and interactive. My label ‘authoritative’ essentially captures the same kind of stances as Jaffe’s label of ‘epistemic’, which she defines as encoding “degree of certainty” (2009: 7). I prefer the label authoritative because that is the social work that this category of stance accomplishes:

...(they) establish the relative authority of interactants and ...situate the sources of that authority in a wider sociocultural field. Speakers may use epistemic stances in the pursuit of the social capital that accrues to be recognized as having authentic or authoritative knowledge. (2009: 7)

Authoritative stances attempt to legitimate the stance taker and her discursive contributions. This category of stance lays claim to knowledge and sets up an authoritative positioning of the stance taker. *I know how to make cornbread in a cast iron skillet because I am Appalachian* is an example of a basic authoritative stance. Authoritative stances position speakers to make claims and project knowledgeable personae.

Another category of stance is evaluative. Evaluative stances evaluate both the content of talk as well as the stances of interlocutors. They can also express emotional states, e.g. *I'm happy*. This category is related to Jaffe's 'affective' category, which she defines as "laying claims to particular identities and statuses as well as evaluating others' claims and statuses" (Jaffe 2009: 7). Evaluative stances can also make comparisons and establish contrast across relevant persons, entities, categories, etc. (9). *Appalachian women take better care of their families than non-Appalachian women* is an example of a comparative evaluative stance.

The third category of stance this paper examines is interactive. Interactive stances show alignment and disalignment with interlocutors, and, as Jaffe notes, can also provide cues for interpretation of utterances. Jaffe refers to the later as "stances as contextualization" (10). *I hear you* is an example of an interactive stance. Johnstone (2009: 49) describes the richness of conversational data for examining interactive stances because "interlocutors' uptake shapes each other's contributions". Kiesling's label for this category is 'interpersonal', which he defines as "a person's expression of their relationship to their interlocutors" (2009: 172). In this paper, interactive stances are analyzed as either affiliative or distancing. Affiliative interactive stances show accommodation or solidarity among interlocutors while distancing stances do the opposite by creating social distance or opposition. Different categories of stance can overlap in a single

piece of discourse. For example, a stance can be both authoritative and evaluative simultaneously.

Interviews were transcribed using MICASE conventions by myself, students in my American English classes at Old Dominion University, and my graduate research assistant Ashley Tiemman. I checked the transcripts for accuracy and then annotated them for the three categories described above: authoritative, evaluative, and interactive stances. The three categories of stance encode a constellation of speaker positions with respect to topics of conversation and to whom they are talking. The analysis does not present every single stance taken in each of the interviews. Rather, illustrative stances for each category are presented to showcase how stance can operate in the course of conducting ethnographic fieldwork and how it can be used as an analytical tool to understand identity as it is revealed in conversation. For readability, I have in some cases added punctuation and capitalization to some excerpts included in this paper.

7. Stances, Cultural Presentation, and Appalachian Migrant Identity “Work”

As noted above, authoritative stances (coded as “AUTH”) lay claims to knowledge and establish authority. In (1), Speaker 13 presents a series of authoritative stances based on knowledge gained in the experience having migrated to the Detroit area in 1954 and living there ever since. During his long-term residency, he has taken note of where Appalachian (“hillbilly southern”) people live in the area (Hazen Park, Warren, north of Eight Mile). Repeatedly during the fieldwork, the local category of “hillbilly” came up in interviews with Appalachian White and African American Southern migrants. Anderson (2008) describes the use of this local category.

- (1) Sp13: they uh r-really they lived everywhere it seemed like uh people_ oh my the ones we know uh but they were scattered all over ones we we got to know more they came uh from they call it north of Eight Mile you had Hazel Park it was_ I think it was eighty percent hillbilly southern people really swarmed in there Hazel Park, City of Warren

they're all north of Eight Mile and but there was a few uh that were scattered out_ throughout Detroit because there's most of the auto plants were down there you know I mean this was back in the twenties and thirties you know and then and then they started building auto parts uh out north of Eight Mile and uh the suburbs and and it really grew like uh where we lived Warr- City of Warren was uh when we came up there it wa-wasn't even incorporated as a city...[AUTH]

Speaker 13 and his wife settled in the inner suburb of Warren. This speaker's bid for authority rests on his having lived in the greater metropolitan Detroit area for more than four decades. He also is a retired policeman. Also relevant to his authoritative stances is that he is an Appalachian migrant himself and lived in Hazen Park and then Warren. Berry (2000) describes Southern "enclaves" in Midwestern rust-belt cities, and this was my impression during four years of ethnographic fieldwork in Detroit (see Anderson 2008).

We see another authoritative stance in (2) that rests on Speaker 13's personal experience with friendships with other Appalachian migrants.

(2) we have a lot of friends...ah, and my_ and a lot of ah, a lot of people we know from the mountains-- Nantahala, Andrews area earlier that came up here... they came up and worked and, ya know for two or three years and most of them went back most of them...what- what's the old saying, you take the hillbillies out the mountains but you cant take the mountains out of the hillbillies or something like that <LAUGHS> and ah but most of them did go back most- a lot I know- I know more that went back than stayed [AUTH]

This time, the speaker makes a bid for authority based on his personal experience with other Appalachian migrants ("most of them went back...I know more that went back than stayed"). Reverse migration back to the South came up frequently as a topic of conversation in the interviews with both White Appalachian and African American Southern migrants (Anderson 2008) and is understood by demographers to be a trend (DiSalvo 2012).

Evaluative stances (coded as “EVAL”) evaluate and can, as in the example below, compare and contrast relevant entities. In (3) below, the participant, a second generation migrant, is both evaluating “breakfast” gravy and establishing her authority on what it should be (made from sausage) and what it is not (made from chicken).

- (3) We went out to breakfast once... and I wanted biscuits and gravy. They brought me chicken gravy. I said, ‘Excuse me this is not breakfast gravy.’ [AUTH, EVAL] They said well yes it is. I said, “Well, I’m from the South and I’ll tell you-- this is not it. [AUTH, EVAL]... I tell you what, you take me back to your kitchen and I’ll show you how to make Southern breakfast gravy.” [AUTH] And I did. I made them a pot of sausage gravy. My granny taught me how to make it. [AUTH](Speaker 9, Appalachian White F, b. 1951)

Southern breakfast gravy, made of sausage, is compared with chicken gravy, which is evaluated as not qualifying as “breakfast” gravy. The authoritative stance rests on a bid to legitimate authority based on Southern cultural knowledge (“...I’m from the South, and I’ll tell you—this is not it”) and a skill passed down from an elder (“My granny taught me how to make it”). The context for this constellation of culturally important stances was a recorded conversation conducted in the speaker’s home, with myself, the speaker’s mother (also an Appalachian migrant), and the speaker’s neighbor and friend (a migrant from Kentucky) present. This speaker goes on to further elaborate in a stancelike manner on the cultural importance of food preparation, and how this is a similarity between African American Southern migrants and White Southern migrants, as seen in (4) below.

- (4) There’s a lot of similarities between Black and White Southern people. [EVAL] For one thing, we like to cook and eat Southern food. [EVAL, AUTH] I don’t have a racist bone in my body. I don’t look at a person for their color. My husband doesn’t like store bought food or restaurant stuff. I cook all the time and the guys at work say, ‘Ali, you married to a Black woman.’ He says, “No I’m not.” They say, “Yes you are. White women don’t cook

like that.” [EVAL] He’d have pork chops smothered in onion gravy, corn. The correlation between African American and Southern White people is... if you’re from the South, you cook. You can’t tell the difference. My husband would have pork chops smothered in onion gravy. And for breakfast he loves....you know, sausage gravy. [EVAL] (Speaker 9, Appalachian White F, 2nd gen, b. 1951)

This piece of discourse performs an evaluative stance through the comparison of African American and Southern White preferences to cook (“...if you’re from the South, you cook”). The authoritative stance is that African American and White Southern migrants are similar in this regard (“there’s a lot of similarities...”) and offers as support for this stance that “...both like to cook and eat Southern food”. She offers the additional evidence that her husband’s friends’ commentary on the lunches his wife pack as suggesting he is “married to a Black woman”. The participant then emphasizes again, “the correlation between African American and Southern White people is... if you’re from the south you cook.” Evaluative and authoritative stances towards food preparation and its links to Southern culture position this speaker as similar to African American Southern migrants and as enacting both a traditional Appalachian gender role (cooking for her husband) and possessing the cultural knowledge of how to prepare Southern food.

From that series of stances about food preparation, the speaker moves into evaluative stances addressing differences in gender roles involving food preparation for families and husbands, comparing Northern and Southern women in a constellation of evaluative stances.

(5) So, I cater to my husband like that, but the women that my sons married, their mothers weren’t raised like that. They eat a lot of fast foods. They went out a lot, and and um they made their husbands do a lot of the cooking and stuff... which my sons wasn’t used to that. They were expecting their wives to cook like I cook. Now my oldest son lost a lot of weight after he first got married [EVAL] (Speaker 9, Appalachian White F, b. 1951, 2nd generation)

This constellation of evaluative stances compares: the participant with her sons' wives, herself with her sons' wives' mothers, home cooked food with "fast foods", gender roles ("they made their husbands do a lot of the cooking..."), and the weight of one son before and after marriage. (5) exemplifies the comparative potential of an evaluative stance.

A local category that emerged during the course of fieldwork with Appalachian migrants is "Yankee", the preferred term for native Midwestern Michiganders. It came up repeatedly in fieldwork and is discussed in Anderson (2008) as a local category. In (6) we see it used in evaluative stances that establish comparisons.

- (6) There is such a difference in the way a typical Yankee thinks and the way they do things. People from up here are Yankees. ...The true typical Yankees know it all look down on you... That type...gives them a bad image...The pushy, impatient people. They treat Southern people like they're totally stupid, and they're used to a fast pace. [EVAL] But it's weird how those prejudices are, we get, I get tickled. [husband's name omitted] sister, she's married to someone up here who in my opinion is typical Yankee, you know. We kind of tolerate him because we have to, but their kids are so Southern it's pathetic. And [name of her sister-in-law omitted] parents are typical, typical, what we consider Yankees, you know, and they're just... And so there's just such a difference in the way they think and the way they do things. [EVAL] (Speaker 12, Appalachian White F, 2nd gen, b. 1965)

Relevant contrasts in this set of evaluative stances are rich. Yankees and Southerners differ in how they "think and the way they do things"(mentioned twice), the husband's sister's (Yankee) husband and his Southern kids, and the husband and his parents versus the rest of the family. Yankees are "know it alls" who "look down on you". It is "that type" that "gives them a bad image—the pushy impatient people." Yet, the offspring of this Yankee brother-in-law are evaluated as "so Southern it's pathetic."

Evaluative stances saturate talk. Much commentary about the suburbs and suburban residents came up in the course of fieldwork, as in (7) below.

- (7) I had a very poor education. Classes were way over-crowded...very poor. ...Poor education. The city started bussing...trying to integrate the schools. Lots of little riots every single day. The students never got along, especially White students who grew up in neighborhoods without Black people. Of course, I grew up with Black people, and I always got along with everyone. [EVAL] (Speaker 8, Appalachian White F, 2nd gen b. 1960)

In this set of evaluative stances, the education system of Detroit is assessed as “over-crowded” and “very poor”. The relevant contrasts for different types of students are White suburban students “who grew up in neighborhoods without Black people”, the speaker (“of course, I grew up with Black people”), and African American residents. School is characterized by “lots of little riots every single day.” This speaker goes on to offer evaluative stances that further elaborate on the differences between herself and her husband (as Appalachian inner city residents) and “suburbanites” in (8).

- (8) We are different than “suburbanites”. [EVAL] Most White people left Detroit when the Blacks moved in. [EVAL] Our apartment on the Northeast side of Detroit was \$235 a month. It wasn’t safe. [EVAL] (Speaker 8, 2nd gen Appalachian White F, b. 1960) Suburbanites would not have been able to live there. They would have been killed. [EVAL] (Detroit White M, husband of Speaker 8)

Relevant contrasts in this evaluative stance are inner city residents and “most White people who left Detroit when the Blacks moved in” and also who can survive and thrive in an inner city environment (the speaker and her husband) and who cannot (the suburbanites “who would have been killed”).

Another category of stance that I examined is interactive (coded as “INT”). As described above, this category of stance shows alignment and disalignment with interlocutors. Speaker 7, a first generation migrant, has a long stretch of discourse in her

interview in which she discusses the difficulties of migration that provides examples of an interactive stance in (9).

(9) BA: it's good you've got family up here

Sp7: Oh, I love being up here with the family. I can take everything else but being away from the family. And that's what was so hard to do back then when we first come up here is leaving your family behind like that I got so homesick I would just sit and cry

BA: for your mama

Sp7: yeah and my daddy, my brother, my sister. See I had a younger sister I left down there...I missed everybody

BA: so your parents understood

Sp7: yeah cause my other brothers had come up here to work and we had heard all kinds of people had heard about you know coming up here getting good jobs

BA: did you have any friends up here from back home

Sp 7: yeah yeah I did...my sister's son come up here to work for a while, my brother's son was up here..and then people I knew from all around there yeah

BA: well that probably helped a lot

Sp7: oh yeah we'd go visit them and they'd come visit us yeah that did help a lot [INT].

In this example, Speaker 7 echoes my comment "that probably helped a lot" in the last line of the excerpt, a classic example of an interactive stance. Mirroring is an aligning stance. This excerpt also highlights the kin-based nature of the Great Southern Migration, discussed by Berry (2000) and others. The speaker mentions her "other brothers" who "had come up here to work." The "Hillbilly Highway" led to good jobs: "we had heard all kinds of people...coming up here and getting good jobs." Another participant also uses evaluative and interactive stances, given in (10) below, to position herself with respect to the kin-based nature of the migration experience.

(10) Sp11: now it wasn't too bad for_ you know for me because a-after I got used to it because I had relatives up here [EVAL]

BA: that's great

Sp11: yeah especially sisters and brothers [EVAL]

Sp11: yeah and they all_ they all stayed too when they retired together uh-I guess i wasn't_ I had my nephew that moved back after he retired from Ford...

BA: well that's a lot better if your family comes with you [Sp11: yeah <LAUGHS>] especially living someplace like this [EVAL, INT]

Sp11: yeah yeah i come from big family so half of uh_ uh of them's in North Carolina and the other half's up here <LAUGHS> so [EVAL, INT]

(Speaker 11, Appalachian female born 1936).

The evaluative stances elaborate on the theme "...it wasn't too bad for...me...after I got used to it because I had relatives up here...especially sisters and brothers." I, in my role of interviewer and as a fellow Appalachian living in Michigan far away from home in the mountains, respond with an evaluative stance ("well that's a lot better if your family comes with you") and interactive affiliative stance ("especially living someplace like this") that shows I can relate to the difficulties of being so far from the home, the homeland, and family and friends who remained in the mountains. The only people I knew from back home when I lived in Michigan were the Appalachian migrants I was meeting through fieldwork, connections facilitated by friends and family back in the mountains who referred me to relatives in the Detroit area. Speaker 11 now had family in both places ("...half...of them's in North Carolina and the other half's up here").

The next excerpt highlights another trend revealed in the Appalachian migrant corpus, the practice of owning property back South, and some more examples of interactive stances.

(11) BA: I want to find us a little place down there and take out a mortgage for it

Sp7: yeah I don't blame you [INT]

BA: so then we can take all our animals down there

Sp7: hey I might keep you in mind when I wanna sell mine if I do [INT]

BA: yeah do [INT]

Sp7: it's just a little trailer on one acre of land

BA: yeah that's exactly the sort of thing we're looking for
 [INT]
 Sp7 mhm
 BA: yep
 Sp7: I don't know if I'd ever want to sell
 BA: I wouldn't blame you for not [INT]
 Sp7: you know it's right there on my mother's property and
 everything
 BA: yeah
 Sp7:...I used to go down there and stay for months at a
 time...

These interactive stances show that Speaker 7 and I understand the purpose of owning property back in the mountains (and we both come from the same general area of the mountains). After I express desire to own mountain property myself, Speaker 7 responds with “yeah I don't blame you” and reveals that she, in fact, does own property back home: “hey I might keep you in mind when I wanna sell mine if I do.” She is not sure she would “ever want to sell”, and—mirroring what she said to me earlier—I respond, “I wouldn't blame you for not.” These interactive stances are aligning and establish a shared understanding between myself and the participant about the value of owning property back home in the mountains.

The transcript in (12) consists of evaluative and interactive stances. The topic of conversation is ramps—a small wild onion that is a Southern Appalachian delicacy (there are “Ramp Festivals” in Western North Carolina, the area that both myself and these two participants originate from). Note that the participant introduces this topic of conversation.

(12) Sp13: you ever eat any ramps
 BA: oh I love ramps
 Sp13: I do too [EVAL, INT]
 BA: they're tasty [EVAL, INT]
 Sp13: do you eat em raw or cooked
 BA: oh cooked, <Sp 13 LAUGHS> cooked
 Sp13: aww man they if you don't [EVAL, INT]
 BA: you smell them you'll smell for three months [EVAL,
 INT]

Sp13: when I was a kid, we go, we go to school down there to Otter Creek had to walk across the mountain I lived on, by the Briartown Church over in Patrick's Creek , that's where my dad's, farm was , and we had to I had to walk across that mountain, to Otter Creek had to go to school and uh, this there's a few kids there they went sometime they'd send them home <BA LAUGHS> uh, but they'd eat these raw ramps and I mean you talking about onions, onions don't have a tenth of smell as those ramps do they

BA: that's exactly what I was thinking they don't [EVAL. INT]

Sp13: I mean it smells like a rotten egg or [EVAL]

BA: but they taste so good, you like them [EVAL, INT]

Sp11: not really [EVAL, INT]

Sp13: I love them [EVAL, INT]

Sp11: I'll just stick to having onions, my brother eatin pickles and [BA: ooo yummy] pick them every year don't he [EVAL]

Sp13: yeah, they they don't omit that odor when you, cook them do they [EVAL, INT]

BA: right, no it's not near as bad [EVAL. INT]

Sp13: I like them with scrambled eggs, chop em up [EVAL]

BA: yeah I like that [EVAL, INT]

Sp13: put them in some fried potatoes

BA: ooo you put them in all kinds of yummy stuff, how bout a big old pot of pintos [EVAL, INT]

Sp11: yeah...[INT]

This interaction is comprised of a constellation of evaluative and interactive stances. The evaluations inherent in the evaluative stances concern the taste and smell of ramps. The interactive stances are mostly affiliative between myself and Speaker 13; we both like ramps. Speaker 11, the wife of Speaker 13, has a distancing interactive stance. After I say, "but they taste so good, you like them", Speaker 11 replies, "not really." Speaker 13, in contrast, offers at that point another affiliative interactive stance ("I love them"). This entire exchange reveals very specific cultural

knowledge shared between myself and the two participants. As far as I know, ramps do not grow wild anywhere else besides the Southern highlands. Not only that, but treating ramps as a delicacy is part of Appalachian heritage and culture. Still, the taste of ramps is very strong, especially raw, and they do not appeal to everyone, including Speaker 11.

Example (13) is another good illustration of collaborative, culturally specific evaluative and interactive stancework between myself and an Appalachian migrant participant. The topics of discussion are the related events of Homecoming and Decoration Day. Homecoming involves the return of members to the home church and often coincides with Decoration of the church cemetery. The folklorists Jabbour and Jabbour describe and analyze these cultural practices (particularly Decoration Day) and conducted years of fieldwork in Western North Carolina documenting Decorations of family and church cemeteries:

At the practical level, it provides a cultural motivation for cleaning and repairing a cemetery...At the social level, it serves as a focal point for gathering a community, *and it has long provided an occasion for community members from afar to return to their homeplace*. At the deepest spiritual level, a decoration is an act of respect for the dead that reaffirms one's bonds with those who have gone before (Jabbour and Jabbour 2010: vii; italics mine, for emphasis).

The topics of Decoration and Homecoming came up with regularity in interviews with Appalachian migrants. This is an old cultural tradition that persists in mountain communities, even among young people. Many migrants reported regularly returning to their home cemeteries in the mountains for Decoration and to their home churches for Homecoming. In (13) below, Speaker 10 and I elaborate on the significance of these cultural practices. MA, my boyfriend at the time who was helping me with fieldwork, indicates in the course of this exchange that he is unfamiliar with the concept of Homecoming. Speaker 10 also exploits the comparative function of evaluative stances in noting the absence of homecomings in the Detroit area. The participant herself introduced this topic of conversation.

- (13) Sp10: you know um and we don't have-I think something else that should be here homecoming [BA: mhm] I think that's very very important you go to your homecomings [EVAL] do you know homecomings
 MA: like my high school homecomings or what
 BA: he's from Virginia so it's not the same [EVAL]
 Sp10: and they do things different [EVAL, INT]
 BA: it's not the same [EVAL]
 Sp10: it's your home church the church where your
 BA: and that's the one Sunday that everybody comes everybody [INT]
 Sp10: it's like a family reunion of the church
 BA: like a dinner too usually [INT]
 Sp10: oh you have to have a dinner on the grounds [INT]
 BA: yeah [INT]
 MA: didn't have that
 Sp10: well I wish they had that here because I think it makes people closer as a congregation instead of let's just go downstairs and have some coffee and doughnuts and go home you know [EVAL, INT]
 BA: oh homecoming's a big deal [EVAL, INT]
 Sp10: it is [EVAL, INT]
 BA: that and decoration [EVAL, INT]
 Sp10: yeah [EVAL, INT]
 BA: it's usually together
 Sp10: so I think I wish they had that here [EVAL]...you you know I mean you're having a picnic over cemetery grounds [INT]

As in the other examples, evaluative and interactive functions overlap in this constellation of stances. By way of explanation for MA's unfamiliarity with the concept of homecoming, I give an evaluative stance "he's from Virginia so it's not the same thing." Speaker 10 responds with an evaluative and interactive stance ("and they do things different"). The rest of the exchange is a collaborative explanation in which Speaker 10 and I lay out the basics of homecoming. We are both positioning ourselves as culturally authentic Appalachians by demonstrating understanding of the nature and function of homecoming and decoration. I offer

that homecomings and decorations are “usually together.” And Speaker 10 picks up on this theme in her interactive stance which specifies decoration and homecoming, when they occur together, involves “having a picnic over cemetery grounds.” Jabbour and Jabbour (2010) discuss the symbiotic relationship between homecoming and decoration, also, in their book published about eight years after the interviews in Detroit took place:

Homecomings may sound like a synonym for reunions, but the term in Western North Carolina...usually describes the church-sponsored homecomings that were a growing phenomenon throughout the twentieth century. Church homecomings emphasize affiliation to a particular church and focus attention of the founding and history of the church. They may include organized visits to church cemeteries for decorations but only as one facet of the event. Furthermore, families returning to an ancestral area for a church homecoming may visit and decorate graves of family members in cemeteries unconnected to homecoming (46-47).

Not just as an ethnographer, but as an Appalachian person myself, I cannot overstate the importance of the rituals and practices associated with homecomings and decorations. It seems a fitting topic with which to end this paper. It ties together many of the themes that emerged during two years of fieldwork with Appalachian migrants in the Detroit area: respect for tradition, family, community, and the homeland. Jabbour and Jabbour discuss at length the profound cultural significance of Decorations and associated activities:

Again and again in our interviews, people expressed the idea that Decoration Day was about “community.” And since the decoration is also a symbolic communication with the dead, it is important to remember that a cemetery decoration brings together a community of the living, assembled above ground, for a ritual of piety connecting them with a community buried beneath ground. ...The ritual symbolically reconnects these two parallel and kindred communities...” (2010: 186).

Appalachian communities are more than geographical. Mountain communities consist of families and individuals connected to a homeland, whether these individuals and families are in the

mountains or in the diaspora. Communities are for the living, but are connected to the dead and worlds that have passed into time yet which continue to live on in memory and tradition. The community above ground is dynamic, not static, and responds to economic and cultural upheaval in ways that facilitate survival and continuity. Migration is a prime example of adaptation and survival to changes in Appalachia. Migrants forged new lives in an urban far-away land, vastly different from the largely rural areas they were leaving. And all the migrants and descendants of migrants that I interviewed had achieved some degree of financial success.

8. Conclusions

Stance can be analyzed in much more depth than is evident here; this preliminary work only considers the content of the utterances that comprise the stances under investigation. The referential function of these utterances is the primary focus here, and this represents a preliminary step of analysis. The approach, however, is the logical first step.

The categories considered are authoritative, evaluative, and interactive. Authoritative stances lay claim to knowledge and establish authority. Authoritative stances presented in this paper center on the presentation of culturally authentic knowledge by the Appalachian migrant participants. Evaluative stances evaluate, give judgments and opinions, and can also compare and contrast relevant entities. Interactive stances establish rapport between conversational participants. Affiliative stances build common ground and can also show understanding or even empathy. Distancing stances show a lack of alignment between participants for a stance object (what the stance is about).

Future work should consider the role of linguistic resources, for example fine-grained acoustic detail, in stance work. The content of language is only one part of a very complex puzzle.

This paper has presented an exploratory analysis of how stance can perform culturally specific identity work. The Detroit corpus of Appalachian migrants is unique in that both the primary fieldworker (myself) and the participants are Appalachian and maintain connection to the homeland, yet the interviews take place

in the diaspora, in the urban Midwest rather than the rural highland South. The excerpts in this paper only show a narrow range of the many topics that came up in the course of fieldwork, but I did try to choose topics that illustrate how Appalachian identity is presented and negotiated in specific moments in time captured in a rich collection of ethnographic interviews.

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