
Games of Stance

Conflict and Footing in Hopscotch

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Recent work in the social sciences has reified stereotypes of gender differences in children; girls are reputedly more interested in cooperative interaction and a morality based on principles of relatedness, relationships, care, equity, flexibility, and responsibility, whereas boys are concerned with dominance and an ethic based on principles of objectivity, individual rights, and rule-governed justice. For example, psychologists Miller, Danaher, and Forbes (1986:543) write that while boys are "more concerned with and more forceful in pursuing their own agendas . . . girls are more concerned with maintaining interpersonal harmony."¹ Sociologists Adler, Kless, and Adler (1992) find that in contrast to boys' "orientation of autonomy" (1992:183), girls seek a "culture of compliance and conformity" (1992:184) that lacks assertiveness. Linguist Jennifer Coates (1994:72)² argues that "[t]here is a great deal of evidence to suggest that male speakers are socialized into a competitive style of discourse, while women are socialized into a more cooperative style of speech." Recently within communication studies, Barnes and Vangelisti (1995), building on Sheldon's (1992, 1993) notion of double-voice discourse, have argued that girls often employ a strategy that simultaneously asserts one's position while maintaining relational solidarity. Through mitigation (modification of expression to avoid creating offense [Labov & Fanshel 1977:84]) of opposition, girls demonstrate their concerns for "affiliation, reciprocity, and efforts to protect others' face" (Barnes & Vangelisti 1995:354; emphasis added). Such positions, built on studies of middle-class White girls' talk, implicitly accept the collaborative model of women's speech (Coates 1991, 1994; Falk 1980; Troemel-Ploetz 1992) and resemble the "two cultures" view of language differences postulated by anthropologists Maltz and Borker (1982).³

While celebrating support, cooperation, and nurturance, the dichotomies that

shape current research often imply that females lack the specific language and social abilities required to pursue conflict.⁴ As researchers such as psychologists Hare-Mustin and Maracek (1988) and linguists Bing and Bergvall (1996) have argued, dichotomous categorizations such as these contribute to perceptions of women and men as essentially and invariably different. Girls' games, reputedly devoid of strategic forms of interaction and the negotiation of rules, are viewed as lacking the intellectual complexity and intricate division of labor characteristic of boys'.

Researchers stake their claims on hypothetical studies of conflict—work by Piaget (1965:77), who argues that “the legal sense” is “far less developed in little girls than in boys,” and Gilligan (1982), who states that because girls are primarily concerned with maintaining relationships within intimate social groups, they avoid negotiation. Gilligan's studies, cited in almost all social science studies of women's experience, make use of sociologist Janet Lever's studies of girls' games. Relying primarily upon verbal reports, Lever (1978:479, 472) argues:

Because girls play cooperatively more than competitively, they have less experience with rules per se, so we should expect them to have a lesser consciousness of rules than boys.

The play activities of boys are more complex than those of girls, resulting in sex differences in the development of social skills potentially useful in childhood and later life.

Despite the tremendous scope of such statements, they are not based on close, ethnographic study of what girls actually do as they play games. Research has relied on *interviews about* children's activities rather than *records of* naturally occurring events. In addition, it has concentrated on the *forms* of games (for example, a comparison of the rules and team structure of jump rope versus football) rather than the interaction through which a game is accomplished in situ (Evaldsson 1993, Goldstein 1971, Goodwin 1985, Hughes 1993). When, instead, sequences of interaction are investigated, a very rich social world of the female child is observable—one in which conflict is as prevalent as cooperation.

In this chapter I challenge popularly held beliefs about the lack of complexity in girls' games, based on close analysis of videotaped sessions of girls playing hopscotch, and I argue for the importance of conflict. The data are drawn from fieldwork I conducted among elementary school girls in several different communities: (1) bilingual Spanish/English-speaking working-class girls in grades 2–5 (primarily second-generation Central Americans) in an elementary school located in the Pico Union/Koreatown district near downtown Los Angeles in spring 1993 and (2) fifth-grade African American female children of migrant workers in a federally sponsored summer school program in rural Ridge Spring, South Carolina, during summer 1994.⁵ For purposes of comparison, the group on whom the generalizations in the psychological literature are based, White middle-class girls, is briefly examined as well. I looked at their play in an integrated public school and private summer day care program in Columbia, South Carolina, during May and June 1994.

Social Organization

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The Moves in Hopscotch

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One person jumps... square to square, in... quently the numbers... game of hopscotch is... or a beanbag, from th... the start line (below... jumps from one end o... and without jumping... pied squares next to... blocks. If a person fall... she must forfeit her t...

Girls patrol the bo... their territory throug... called “borderwork.”... would sanction boys... African American gi...

The Role of Judges

The game of hopscoc... man 1961); it entail... playing field and o... Wittgenstein's noti... the actions into wh...

Social Organization within the Game Setting

Hopscotch provides a prototypical example of a girls' game. Generally its rules are described in terms of a simple pattern of rotation, as one girl after another tries to move her token and her body through a grid without hitting a line. According to Lever (1978:479), games such as hopscotch and jump rope are examples of eventless turn-taking games: "Girls' turn-taking games progress in identical order from one situation to the next. Given the structure of these games, disputes are not likely to occur."

This view of hopscotch is seriously flawed. First, in this model rules are viewed as mechanical instructions, but the girls whom I observed treated rules as resources to be probed and played with and actively competed for first place in a round of hopscotch.⁶ Second, by focusing only on the actions of the jumper, the model ignores the work of other parties who act as judges, checking to see if any fouls have been committed.

The Moves in Hopscotch

In hopscotch a player systematically moves through a grid of squares drawn in chalk or painted on the sidewalk, street, playground, or other flat surface. The marks on the grid construct a visible field for action, which orients those who know how to read it to the sequence of moves through space that must be traversed while playing the game. Though there are many different types of grids, the one painted on a cement school yard used in Pico Union looked like Figure 1.1.

One person jumps at a time through the grid. She is expected to move from square to square, in the pattern displayed by the numbers in the diagram. (Frequently the numbers are not actually written in the squares.) The object of the game of hopscotch is to be the first player to advance her token, commonly a stone or a beanbag, from the lowest to the highest square and back again. From behind the start line (below square one), a player tosses her beanbag into a square and jumps from one end of the grid and back again on one foot, without changing feet and without jumping on squares where beanbags lie. Where there are two unoccupied squares next to each other, the jumper's feet should land in the two adjacent blocks. If a person falls down, steps on a line, or steps outside the appropriate square, she must forfeit her turn.

Girls patrol the boundaries of their play space from boys' intrusions, delimiting their territory through what Thorne (1993:64–88), following Barth (1969), has called "borderwork." When boys intruded into girls' space, girls from Pico Union would sanction boys by yelling, "Get out of the way!," while in similar situations African American girls prevented intrusions by yelling, "Go back! Go back!"

The Role of Judges within the Situated Activity System

The game of hopscotch can be viewed as a form of situated activity system (Goffman 1961); it entails the coordinated activity of movement of a player through the playing field and commentary on that player's performance during her turn. Wittgenstein's notion of a language game as a "whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven" (1958:97) is appropriate in considering talk

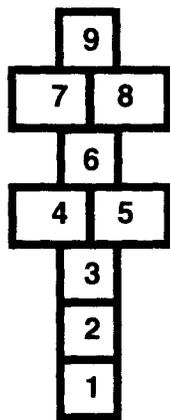


Figure 1.1 A hopscotch grid

that occurs within this frame. Girls playing the role of judge frequently provide critiques of the player's actions, stating their opposition and providing accounts for their position.

A particular social organization of attention is required to construct a point of common focus. Girls evaluating performances attend not only to a particular place (a geographic space), the game grid, but also monitor for particular types of events that are supposed to occur in that place (a form of conceptual space). The grid makes possible the forms of action and local identities⁷ that constitute the game: for example, throwing one's token or stepping on or outside a line counts as a consequential event, an "out" in which the hapless player loses her turn. The situated activity provides both a place *to look* and a particular category of event *to look for*.

Onlookers do not passively watch as someone takes her turn. Rather, hoping to detect mistakes, to call "outs," girls intensely scrutinize a jumper's body as she moves through socially inscribed space. Both African American (AA) and Latina (L) girls playing judge use the term "Out!" to call a foul. In each of the following examples, the player acknowledges her error following the out call. (In transcription, English translations appear in italics in parentheses under Spanish text.)

- (1) AA
 Alisha: ((steps on a line while jumping))
 Joy: Out!
 Vanessa: You out.
 Alisha: ((moves out of grid))
- (2) L
 Paula: ((steps on a line while jumping))
 Rosa: Out! Out! Out!
 Paula: ((smiles widely, then moves out of grid))

Rita: Out! Out! Out!
 Tú estás out!
 (You're out!)

Rather than consisting of scotch is constituted through follows, I analyze the ways game through their comments and shows that they are tonation, gesture, or position or highlight it. In a clear orientation toward conflict in the play of some

The second part shows the framework that the game structures that make the act to win, it is richly overlaid with including laughter, tricking, judging one's performance,

The Structure of Out C

Because play takes the for space, propelling one's token copied with a token can be dependently seen by separate challenge. Often, as in the a simultaneous assessment player:

- (3) AA
 Lucianda: ((puts foot in))
 Joy: You [out. ((/))
 Crystal: [Out! ((/))
 Lucianda: I'm out.
- (4) L
 Carla: ((throws the))
 Gloria: Ou [t! ((clap))
 Sandra: [Out! ((/))
 Carla: AY! ((smile))
 Gloria: I'm next!

Frequently the judge demands analysis by adding a reason

Rita: Out! Out! Out!
 Tú estás out!
 (You're out!)

Rather than consisting of a series of isolated jumping episodes, the game of hopscotch is constituted through the play-by-play analysis of a jumper's moves. In what follows, I analyze the ways in which players negotiate the status of moves in the game through their commentary. The first part discusses the shape of judges' foul calls and shows that they are crucial to the achievement of the activity. Through intonation, gesture, or positioning of turn elements, turns may either downplay opposition or highlight it. In that fouls can be ignored or pardoned, turns that display a clear orientation toward a position of opposition demonstrate the importance of conflict in the play of some girls.

The second part shows that, rather than slavishly following rules, girls transcend the framework that the game provides, to play with, pull apart, and resist the very structures that make the activity possible. While the game is played with the intent to win, it is richly overlaid with multiple types of framings and textured nuances, including laughter, tricking, joking, and bicultural puns. I discuss some examples of reframing by showing how having the last laugh, by outwitting those in the audience judging one's performance, seems as important as finishing first for some girls.

The Structure of Out Calls

Because play takes the form of embodied movement through a publicly visible space, propelling one's token onto a line or stepping on a line or into a space occupied with a token can be identified as a "social fact," something that can be independently seen by separate observers while remaining open to negotiation and challenge. Often, as in the next set of examples, two referees converge to produce a simultaneous assessment of the player's move, enthusiastically challenging the player:

- (3) AA
 Lucianda: ((puts foot in square with token))
 Joy: You [out. ((pointing toward jumper))
 Crystal: [Out!
 Lucianda: I'm out.
- (4) L
 Carla: ((throws the token and it hits a line))
 Gloria: Ou[t! ((claps hands))
 Sandra: [Out! ((claps hands))
 Carla: AY! ((smiles, tosses head, picks up token))
 Gloria: I'm next!

Frequently the judge demonstrates that her call is the product of rule-governed analysis by adding a reason for it.

- (5) AA
 Lucianda: ((steps on a line while jumping))
 Vanessa: Ah: [Lucianda.
 Crystal: [Out!
 Vanessa: → Out- You step **between** the line.
 Not in it.
- (6) AA
 Alisha: ((jumps putting two feet in square 4))
 Joy: → All right honey. You put both foot in fou(hh)r.
- (7) AA
 Crystal: ((steps on a line while jumping))
 Joy: → You hit that line.
 Sorry to tell you that.
 But you hit that line right there. ((tapping on line))
- (8) L
 Sandra: ((steps on a line while jumping))
 Carla: → Out! Repítalo porque pistaste la de acá. ((tapping line))
 (Out! Try it again because you hit this line.)
- (9) L
 Rosa: ((hops with one foot outside grid, one foot on line))
 Carla: Out.
 Maria: Out.
 Rosa: Ay::!
 Carla: → ¡Pisistes la raya! ((hops on the line where Rosa stepped))
 (You stepped on the line.)
- (10) L
 Rosa: ((throws beanbag and it lands on a line))
 Maria: → Ah: tocastes. ((points to square))
 (Ah: you hit.)

In these instances the girl acting as referee or judge provides either an "out," a "response cry" (Goffman 1978) such as "Ah:" (in both Spanish and English), or an "All right" or "Sorry," accompanied by an account of what the foul was.

Highlighting in Embodied Accounts in Out Calls

As examples 5–10 demonstrate, a range of diverse practices is used to call somebody out. In most argumentative moves, the very first thing said, the turn preface, occupies a particularly important position. Retrospectively it classifies the action being opposed, and prospectively it provides a guide for interpreting the position being stated in the accounts and embodied demonstrations to follow. The following provides an example of an "out call." After Sandra steps on two lines while jumping, Carla cries "OUT! OUT!" (line 2). This is followed by an account for her foul call, "PISTASTE LA DE AQUÍ, Y LA DE ACÁ" (lines 3–4).



Figure 1.2 Carla:

- (11) 1 Sandra: ((step
 2 Carla: OUT
 3 PIST.
 (You
 4 Y LA
 (and t

In producing an out types of *footing*, defined as "projected self." Intonation and the construction of altitude is accompanied by a quiver as the finger of the judge laughs at her own attitude. Figure 1.2 illustrates the of the player.

Pitch Leaps

The foul call itself states occurred. Moreover, the Figure 1.3.

Although the normal voice leaps dramatically, an accusing finger, such as salient the speaker's sta



Figure 1.2 Carla: OUT! OUT!

- (11) 1 Sandra: (*steps on two lines while jumping*)
 2 Carla: OUT! OUT!
 3 PISTASTE LA DE AQUÍ,
 (*You stepped on this one.*)
 4 Y LA DE ACÁ.
 (*and this one.*)

In producing an out call, a participant playing judge may take up different types of *footing*, defined by Goffman (1981:128) as one's "stance, or posture, or projected self." Intonation, body positioning, and turn shape are all critical in the construction of alternative types of stance. In example 11 the word "OUT!" is accompanied by a quite vivid embodied affective alignment (Ochs 1993:288) as the finger of the judge points accusingly at the offender (while the player laughs at her own attempt to pull something over on the girl acting as judge). Figure 1.2 illustrates the accusatory point of the judge and the humorous stance of the player.

Pitch Leaps

The foul call itself states unambiguously without doubt or delay that a violation has occurred. Moreover, the foul call is spoken in a very distinctive fashion, as seen in Figure 1.3.

Although the normal pitch of the girls is between 250 and 350 Hz, here Carla's voice leaps dramatically to 663 and 673 Hz over the two tokens of "out." Like the accusing finger, such pitch leaps provide a way to highlight and make especially salient the speaker's stance, here gleeful opposition.

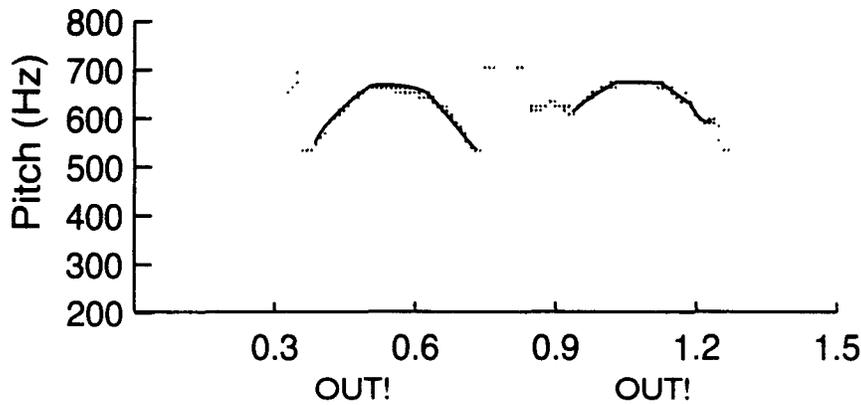


Figure 1.3 The pitch of "OUT! OUT!"

Change in pitch can be shown more clearly if the action being opposed is itself talk. In Figure 1.4 an argument develops between Carla and Gloria over whose turn it is. When Carla states, "Ya voy" (*I'm going now*), Gloria counters "N'ai: Ya voy YO!" (*No. I'm going now*). First speaker Carla's pitch is between 300 and 400 Hz. The opposition turn "N'ai:!" leaps quickly and dramatically to 600 Hz, displaying in her preface her strong oppositional stance.

Pitch leaps thus provide one way of vocally highlighting opposition in the turn preface.

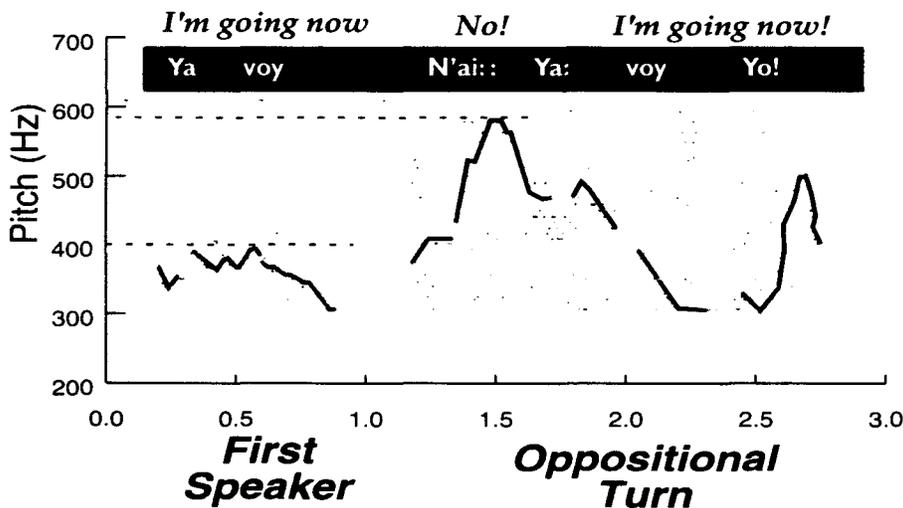


Figure 1.4 Change of pitch in opposition

Demonstration:

Rather than simply occurring by dramatic means. In much the feet of the judge, C feet (see Figures 1.

- (11) Sandra: ((st
- Carla: OU
- PIS
- (Yo
- YI
- (ar

Judges not only addition, in conj consist of replayi challenging playe past mistake. As "this one" (*la de a ing the player's pi tural performance grid, as it provide*



Figure 1.5 Carla: PISASTE LA DE AQUÍ,

Demonstrations in Embodied Accounts

Rather than simply providing a verbal account, a judge may *show how* an “out” occurred by dramatically using her own body and the grid to “replay” the activity just seen. In much the way that a speaker can report another’s speech, in example 11 the feet of the judge, Carla, both replay and comment upon the errors made by Sandra’s feet (see Figures 1.5 and 1.6).

- | | | |
|--------------|--|---|
| (11) Sandra: | <i>((steps on two lines while jumping))</i> | Problematic Move |
| Carla: | OUT! OUT!
PISTASTE LA DE AQUÍ,
<i>(You stepped on this one.)</i>
Y LA DE ACÁ.
<i>(and this one.)</i> | Out! <i>((finger point))</i>
Explanation
<i>((demonstration))</i> |

Judges not only state verbally their objections to a player’s moves in the game. In addition, in conjunction with their talk, they may provide nonvocal accounts that consist of replaying of past moves, to add further grounding for their positions. In challenging player Sandra’s move, Carla animatedly provides a rendition of Sandra’s past mistake. As she states that Sandra had stepped on “this one” (*la de aquí*) and “this one” (*la de acá*), Carla re-enacts Sandra’s movement through space, challenging the player’s prior move. The demonstration—involving a fully embodied gestural performance in an inscribed space—could not have been done without the grid, as it provides the relevant background for locating violations.



Figure 1.6 Carla: Y LA DE ACÁ

Playful Transformations of Out Calls

Players watching the game provide a running commentary on a jumper's actions, congratulating her, mimicking a particularly difficult move, or critiquing her. Girls playfully tease players, lightly pushing them, and in other ways trying to unnerve them. For example, Latina girls point to a player's feet and shout "¡Un ratón! ¡Un ratón!" (*A mouse! A mouse!*). To distract a player, African American girls may make barking dog noises ("Rerruff") or scream someone's name in a falsetto tone that imitates a rooster crowing: "Barbara! Barbara! Barbara!" For these African American girls, the last square is the "Quiet Box," and they try to make jumpers laugh or speak when they land in that square, thereby disqualifying them. A player frequently seems to get as much delight out of her role as a commentator on activity as she does from actually jumping through the grid.

Humorous ways of responding to a referee's out call are possible as well. Not only may players demonstrate an alignment that either ratifies a categorization or challenges it; instead, players may invoke an alternative participation framework, for example, a playful interlude, which closes down the dispute.

One such form of playful transformation occurs in example 12 in which a bicultural pun occurs. The player's high-pitched response cry (Goffman 1978) "Ooo:" and laughter key the interaction as humorous; this results in a transformation from a foul call into a word play exchange. In lines 2 and 3 "Out" and "Sorry" (an alternative way of calling a foul) are spoken by two different evaluators at the same time (lines 4, 5). The action begins as Carla throws her bag outside the grid:

- (12) L:
 1 Carla:
 2 Sandra:
 3 Gloria:
 4 Carla:
 5 Sandra:
 6 Carla:
 7 Sandra:
 8 Gloria:

In this sequence of wordplay. The "rillo" (pronounced "rillo") First, the word "ze" of the affix *-illo* (a 'a little bit sorry:') [so ri ya] and uses gets one of the ju Subsequently a th modality indicate a particular target transformations pr

Displaying Star

In alternation to l play other types of forms of "aggrava children clearly si in the literature a Dror (1986) note Sacks (1987) [197 disagreement is a of turn design, inc aces that mitigate

- (13) A: She doe
 B: Well, ve

Here disagree ment qualifier "someti

By way of cont occurs immediate

- (14) Gloria: ((j
 Carla: ¡N

- (12) L
- 1 Carla: ((throws bag and hits outside grid))
 - 2 Sandra: [Out.
 - 3 Gloria: [So[r]ry. ((clapping hands))
 - 4 Carla: [Oooo:: (hh) ((laughing, moving off grid))
 - 5 Sandra: Sorry.
 - 6 Carla: Sorillo. Sorilla tú.
 - 7 Sandra: *h heh!=
 - 8 Gloria: =;¡¡SORILLA!!! ((singing))

In this sequence the girls collaborate in turning the calling of a foul into a form of wordplay. The jumper, Carla, who is "out," transforms the judge's "sorry" into "sorillo" (pronounced [so ri yo]) (line 6). This word, a bicultural pun, has two meanings. First, the word "zorillo" (pronounced [so ri yo]) means 'skunk.' Second, the addition of the affix *-illo* (a diminutive) transforms the English word "sorry" into "sorillo"—'a little bit sorry.' Carla then further transforms "sorillo" into the feminine "sorilla" [so ri ya] and uses it as a form of name-calling. By adding a subject pronoun, she targets one of the judges as the explicit addressee of her epithet: "¡Sorilla tú!" (line 6). Subsequently a third girl changes "sorilla" through singing it (line 8). The sung modality indicates that the word is no longer being treated as an insult addressed to a particular target, and the sequence is closed down. Wordplay and other playful transformations provide players less oppositional ways of keying the interaction.

Displaying Stance in Opposition Turns

In alternation to keying an exchange as playful (as in example 12), turns may display other types of alignment or footing—for example, a serious orientation toward forms of "aggravated correction" (Goodwin 1983). The shape of turns in which children clearly signal opposition contrasts strongly with what has been described in the literature about the preference for agreement in adult conversation. Yaeger-Dror (1986) notes that intonation over disagreement is frequently nonsalient. Sacks (1987 [1973]) and Pomerantz (1984) find that in adult polite conversation disagreement is a dispreferred activity, which is minimized through various features of turn design, including delays before the production of a disagreement and prefaces that mitigate the disagreement.

- (13) A: She doesn't uh usually come in on Friday, does she.
B: Well, yes she does, sometimes,

Here disagreement is mitigated by both the hesitant "Well" that precedes it and the qualifier "sometimes" that follows it.

By way of contrast in the game of hopscotch, in an out or a foul call, opposition occurs immediately.

- (14) Gloria: ((jumps from square two to one changing feet)) **Problematic Move**
Carla: ¡NO CHIRIONA! **Polarity Expression +**

- (No cheater!)
YA NO SE VALE ASÍ.
(That way is no longer valid.)
- (15) Gloria: ((takes a turn out of turn))
Carla: ¡AY: TÚ CHIRIONA!
(Hey you cheater!)
EH NO PISES AQUÍ
(Hey don't step here.)
¡PORQUE AQUÍ YO VOY!
(Because I'm going here.)
- (16) Gloria: ((Jumps from square 3 to 2 changing feet))
Carla: ¡EY::! ¡CHIRIONA!
¡MIRA!
(Hey! Cheater! Look!)
¡TE VENISTES DE AQUÍ ASÍ!
(You came from here like this.)
(demonstrating how Gloria jumped
changing feet)

Negative Person Descriptor
Explanation

Problematic Move
Response Cry +
Negative Person Descriptor
Explanation

Problematic Move
Response Cry +
Negative Person Descriptor

Explanation

In constructing an opposition move, the preface is critical, because it states quite literally a stance or *footing* (Goffman 1981) with regard to the current action. Affective intensity (Bradac, Mulac, & Thompson 1995) or highlighting (Goodwin 1994) is indicated through pitch leaps, vowel lengthening, and raised volume. Unlike the delayed disagreement in adult conversation, the girls, through their intonation and gestures (such as extended hand points) display in no uncertain or mitigated terms that opposition is occurring. Thus, in example 14 Carla begins her turn with a strong polarity marker “¡NO!”⁸ followed immediately by a negative person descriptor, “¡CHIRIONA!” and then an explanation for why the move is illegal. Variants of this same pattern are found as well in examples 15 and 16. Here the turns begin with response cries or exclamatory interjections, not full-fledged words, which take up a position with regard to a prior action (Goffman 1978): “AY:” and “¡EY::!”

With negative person descriptors referees argue not simply that an infraction has occurred but that what the player is doing is something morally wrong. Girls use the term “chiriona” meaning ‘cheater,’ derived from the English word “cheat” and “ona,” a Spanish agentive nominalizer (or intensifier).

cheat + ona

English verb + Spanish agentive nominalizer (intensifier)⁹

“Chiriona” provides an explicit characterization of the person who produced the move being opposed. By using such a term, a judge argues not simply that an infraction has occurred but that the person who committed the foul is accountable in a very strong way for its occurrence. Following the opposition preface, a referee further explicates why the move is invalid by providing a reason, often through a demonstration. Unlike the delayed disagreement in adult conversation, intonation and gestures (such as extended hand points) display in no uncertain or mitigated terms that opposition is occurring.

Thus, to summarize
clude the following:

1. Opposition is significant (Hasan 1976:178)
2. Alternatively, of creative interjection
3. Dramatic pitch leaps. The work that they do
4. Negative person descriptor as third component by Spanish speakers
5. Following the opposition
6. Embodied demonstrations

In contrast to what happens on girls' games, these count as infractions or violations of positions. These same plays of alignment are drawn from sources through which girls, such as hopscotch games, learn to build and display tactics, a habitus of power.

A Second Instance

Working-class African American girls in the South, use many of the same tactics. The following examples illustrate this.

- (17) 1 Lucianda: (sings)
- 2 Joy:
- 3 Lucianda:
- 4 Joy:
- 5 Crystal:
- 6
- 7 Joy:
- 8 Lucianda:
- 9 Alisha:
- 10 Crystal:
- 11 Lucianda:
- 12 Alisha:
- 13 Crystal:
- 14 Lucianda:
- 15 Alisha:
- 16 Crystal:
- 17 Lucianda:
- 18 Crystal:

Thus, to summarize, characteristic features of opposition turns in hopscotch include the following:

1. Opposition is signaled immediately through an *expression of polarity* (Halliday & Hasan 1976:178) such as "No!"
2. Alternatively, opposition is signaled through a *response cry*: nonlexicalized, discrete interjections such as "AY!," "EY!" (in Spanish).
3. *Dramatic pitch leaps* that provide emphasis and contrast with surrounding talk. The work that they do here displays salience and highlights opposition.
4. *Negative person descriptors* follow the polarity marker or response cry and provide a third component of opposition turns. Terms such as "chiriona" (*cheater*) are used by Spanish speakers.
5. Following the opposition turn, participants provide *explanations* for their positions.
6. *Embodied demonstrations* may accompany explanations.

In contrast to what has been written about them in the social science literature on girls' games, these players not only pay close attention to what can and cannot count as infractions of rules but also have the resources to strongly state and contest positions. These same sequential resources can be deployed to build powerful displays of alignment and affective stance. Indeed, they are part of the grammatical resources through which power is constructed through language. In playing games such as hopscotch girls develop a repertoire of language practices that can be used to build and display themselves as social actors with specific embodied characteristics, a habitus of power.

A Second Instance of Authoritative Stance

Working-class African American girls, children of migrant workers in the rural South, use many of the same practices for highlighting opposition and building explanations. The following provides an example:

- (17) 1 Lucianda: ((takes turn jumping twice in square two and possibly putting her foot on the line of square one))
- 2 Joy: You out.
- 3 Lucianda: [No I'm not. ((shaking head no))
- 4 Joy: [You hit the line.
- 5 Crystal: Yes you did.
- 6 [You hit the line. ((with hand pointing at line))
- 7 Joy: [You hit the line.
- 8 Lucianda: I AIN'T HIT NO LINE! ((leaning toward Crystal))
- 9 Alisha: Yes you did.
- 10 Crystal: ((smiling, shaking head, goes to the spot)) You did. You s-
- 11 Lucianda: No I didn't.
- 12 Alisha: Yes you did.
- 13 Crystal: Didn't she go like this.
- 14 Lucianda: ((does a challenge hit toward Alisha))
- 15 Alisha: You hit me.
- 16 Crystal: You did like this. ((stepping on the line as she replays the jump))
- 17 Lucianda: Shut up with your old-fashioned clothes. ((to Alisha))
- 18 Crystal: You did like that.

- 19 Joy: Yeah you hit that line right there honey. ((as she goes up and uses her foot to index it, tapping it twice))
 20 Lucianda: ((throws the rock and it lands outside))
 21 My feet.
 22 Vanessa: Y- you out now!

In this game of hopscotch, referees state unequivocally, "You out" (line 2), followed by an explanation ("You hit the line") (lines 4, 6, 7). As in oppositional sequences in the talk of African American working-class girls in Philadelphia (Goodwin 1990a), here polarity markers such as "No" (lines 3, 11) and "Yes" (lines 5, 9, 12) preface opposition moves. The foul call—"You hit the line"—is emphatically opposed by the player with "I AIN'T HIT NO LINE!" This utterance is produced at an extremely high pitch range, 780 Hz, as shown in Figure 1.7, and accompanied by a strong body stance—a challenge position in which the player extends her chest toward one of the judges.

Here the larger number of persons present can ratify the observer's point of view, and multiple judges counter the player's position about her move. Explanations or demonstrations of positions are presented by girls re-enacting the moves of players committing fouls. For example, replaying a player's stepping on a line, Crystal states, "You did like this" (line 16) as she re-enacts Lucianda's prior move. Judges' positions are also highlighted by stomping feet on the place where the line was touched (line 19). Here, as in the previous example, the grid is used as an area that can be tapped (line 19), pointed to (line 6), and jumped upon (line 16) to further explicate the

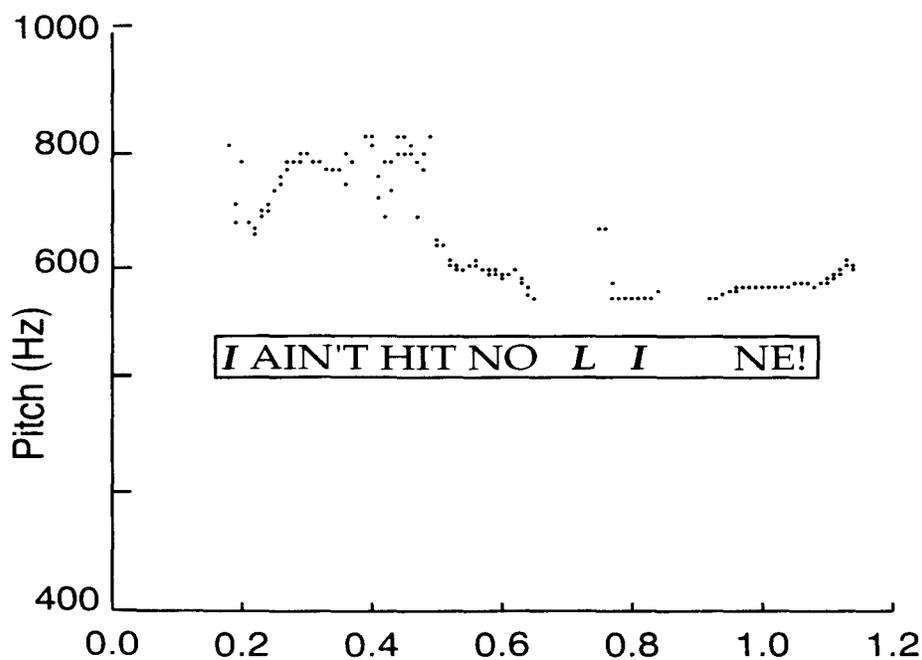


Figure 1.7 An oppositional turn

proofs judges are a number of components of their own bodies, and a personal insult with a despise rather dire

Mitigated Stance

In the data presented while holding each other language change in a very different possibilities of hopscotch, Columbia, South Carolina

- (18) 1 Linsey:
 2 Liz:
 3
 4 Kendrick
 5
 6 Liz:
 7
 8 Kendrick
 9
- (19) 1 Linsey:
 2 Cathleen:
 3 Linsey:
 4 Linsey:
 5 Cathleen:
 6 Kendrick:
 7

The working-class moves as fouls.¹¹ Structures to mitigate (5) display uncertainty word such as "wrote. Whereas expressions who committed the use of terms such from the actor consequences. Girl "You- accidentally their version of the tulating strong pass as acceptable nally, even a failed

proofs judges are offering. Girls formulate their logical proofs by making use of a number of components in an integrated manner—the material game grid, their own bodies, and accounts. In the midst of this sequence, the player produces a personal insult with a challenge gesture toward one of the referees (line 17). However, despite rather direct oppositional moves, girls do not break up the game.

Mitigated Stances toward Fouls

In the data presented so far, girls work to forcefully construct salient opposition while holding each other accountable for deviations from rules. However, with other language choices it is possible to construct actors, events, and social organization in a very different way. I found one group that did not use the participation possibilities of hopscotch to enact forceful positions: middle-class White girls from Columbia, South Carolina.¹⁰

- (18) 1 Linsey: ((throws stone and hits line))
 2 Liz: Oh! Good job Linsey!
 3 You got it [all the way on the seven.
 4 Kendrick: [((shaking head)) That's-
 5 I think that's sort of on the line though.
 6 Liz: Uh- your foot's in the wr(hhh)ong-
 7 [sp(hh)ot.
 8 Kendrick: [Sorry.
 9 That was a good try.

- (19) 1 Linsey: ((throws token))
 2 Cathleen: You **did** it!=
 3 Linsey: Yes! ((falsetto))
 4 Linsey: ((jumps on line))
 5 Cathleen: [Wh-
 6 Kendrick: [You- accidentally jumped on that.
 7 But that's okay(hh).

The working-class girls above highlight opposition and definitively categorize moves as fouls.¹¹ Here, however, the girls acting as judges use a variety of language structures to *mitigate* their foul calls. Hedges such as “I think” and “sort of” (18, line 5) display uncertainty about the accuracy of the call. The force of a fault-finding word such as “wrong” is undercut by embedding laugh tokens within it (18, line 6). Whereas expressions such as “chiriona” attributed strong responsibility to the party who committed the foul, here agency is removed from the offender's action through use of terms such as “accidentally” and divorcing the foot that lands on the line from the actor controlling that foot. Moreover, committing a foul may have no real consequences. Girls assert that a violation of the rules has occurred when they state, “You- accidentally jumped on that” (19, line 6). However, they note that within their version of the game this is permitted: “But that's okay(hh).” Rather than articulating strong stances in calling fouls, these girls let actions they deem violations pass as acceptable moves. It's “okay” if someone “accidentally” jumps on the line. Finally, even a failed attempt is praised as “a good try” (18, line 9). The game of hop-

NE!

1.0 1.2

scotch can thus be played drawing upon diverse notions of acceptable forms of accountability for one's actions.

A range of language choices (as well as embodied stances and affect displays) is available to speakers. Through the way in which players *select from* a repertoire of linguistic possibilities—alternatively making opposition salient or masking it—they construct themselves as quite different types of social actors.

Probing Rules

The model of girls' play in the current literature argues that turn-taking games such as hopscotch progress in identical order from one situation to the next, thus proposing that they operate within what Hart (1951:125) has called a world of "mechanical jurisprudence." To the contrary, when actual play is examined we find that girls regularly test the rules, disputing what can count as a proper application of one and seeing how far they can extend certain rules to work to their advantage. Rather than following rules, they learn how to work and play with them.

In the next example Paula is learning how to do "ABC"—taking three baby steps before throwing her beanbag into a number above six on the grid. Looking toward the other players and laughing, Paula persistently takes a slightly larger third step, playfully probing what she can get away with. The referees counter her tests with polarity markers "NO::" (lines 2, 4), response cries "AY::" (lines 3, 11), opposition turns containing negative person descriptors: "NO CHIRI-ONA!" (line 4) and "cheater" (line 7), as well as explanations: "AY:: QUE TIENES QUE METERTE EN LA RAYA DE AQUÍ LOS DOS JUNTITOS AL OTRO PIE NIÑA" (*Hey you have to place yourself on this line with both feet very close together to the other foot Girl!*). The verbal statement is accompanied by enactments of how precisely to place one's feet one behind the other in small steps on the grid.

- (20) ((Paula, a newcomer, has just been instructed in how to take baby steps in ABC, putting her heel to the toe of her shoe. She is now trying to take larger steps than permitted.))
- | | | |
|----|--------|--|
| 1 | Paula: | A(hh), B, C(h) ((smiling)) |
| 2 | Rosa: | NO[: |
| 3 | Risa: | [AY:: ((spanking Paula)) |
| 4 | Rosa: | ¡NO CHIRIO[NA! |
| 5 | Paula: | [Okay. |
| 6 | | [A |
| 7 | Rosa: | [Cheater! |
| 8 | Paula: | B, C.= ((taking big steps)) |
| 9 | Risa: | NO:: ((body lowers dramatically)) |
| 10 | Paula: | ((smiles widely)) |
| 11 | Risa: | AY:: ((pushing Paula out of the way so she can demonstrate the correct foot patterns)) |
| 12 | | [QUE TIENES QUE METERTE
(You have to put yourself) |
| 13 | Paula: | [Hih hih! |

14 Risa:

15 Paula:

16 Risa:

17

18 Paula:

In the midst of rule. While they co subsequently acco (lines 12–16), the her own thwarted ing with the possibil ability to resist the that they are enga

What happens Lever 1978, Sutto that they are incap ples 17 and 20 sho alternatives. Confl framework visibly ing relationships, t of playing it. Rath the girls build com possibilities for co visibly taking pow

Playing with the

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Of course, the t cover that they ha

- 14 Risa: EN LA RAYA | DE AQUÍ
 (on this line) |
 15 Paula: | Okay!
 16 Risa: LOS DOS JUNTITOS
 (with both feet very close together)
 17 AL OTRO | PIE NIÑA
 (to the other | foot Girl!)
 18 Paula: | A,

In the midst of play the referees take up a very complicated stance toward the rule. While they counter the player's large steps with response cries (lines 3, 11) and subsequently accounts and a demonstration about how one's feet should be placed (lines 12–16), their action is keyed with laughter by the jumper, who laughs about her own thwarted probes of the rules in the midst of her turn (lines 1, 10). By playing with the possibilities provided by the game in this way, girls are developing the ability to resist the rules that are simultaneously providing structure for the events that they are engaged in.

What happens here raises another issue as well. Social scientists (Gilligan 1982, Lever 1978, Sutton-Smith 1979) have argued that conflict is so disruptive to girls that they are incapable of continuing to play when it emerges. However, as examples 17 and 20 show, these girls do not treat conflict and play as mutually exclusive alternatives. Conflict about rules and fouls is embedded within a larger participation framework visibly constituted through playfulness and laughter. Instead of breaching relationships, the disputes engendered by the game are a central part of the fun of playing it. Rather than treating conflict and cooperation as a bipolar dichotomy, the girls build complex participation frameworks in which disputes, with their rich possibilities for cognitive organization and the development of a habitus skilled at visibly taking powerful stances, are embedded within a larger ethos of playfulness.

Playing with the Structure of Attentiveness

Such probing of the structures organizing the game can be applied not only to its rules but also to the frameworks of attentiveness that sustain it. Not only do referees monitor players, but players for their part can monitor the watchfulness of their referees; when they can discern that referees are less than fully engaged in scrutinizing the game, they can try to advance their tokens without referees knowing it—thus playing with the participation frameworks within which the game is conducted.

In the following example Sandra tricks the other players who are involved in their own side conversation about boyfriends. While invisible to the referees, Sandra's movements (as well as a collusive eyeball roll) display to the ethnographers the trick she is attempting. She sneaks across the grid, advances her beanbag to the next square, and then dances back to her place with a Charlie Chaplinesque walk. The following frame grabs (Figure 1.8) show the sequence of moves she makes to advance her token before returning home to her place.

Of course, the trick would not be any fun were the referees not to eventually discover that they had been tricked. After Sandra has moved her beanbag while Glo-

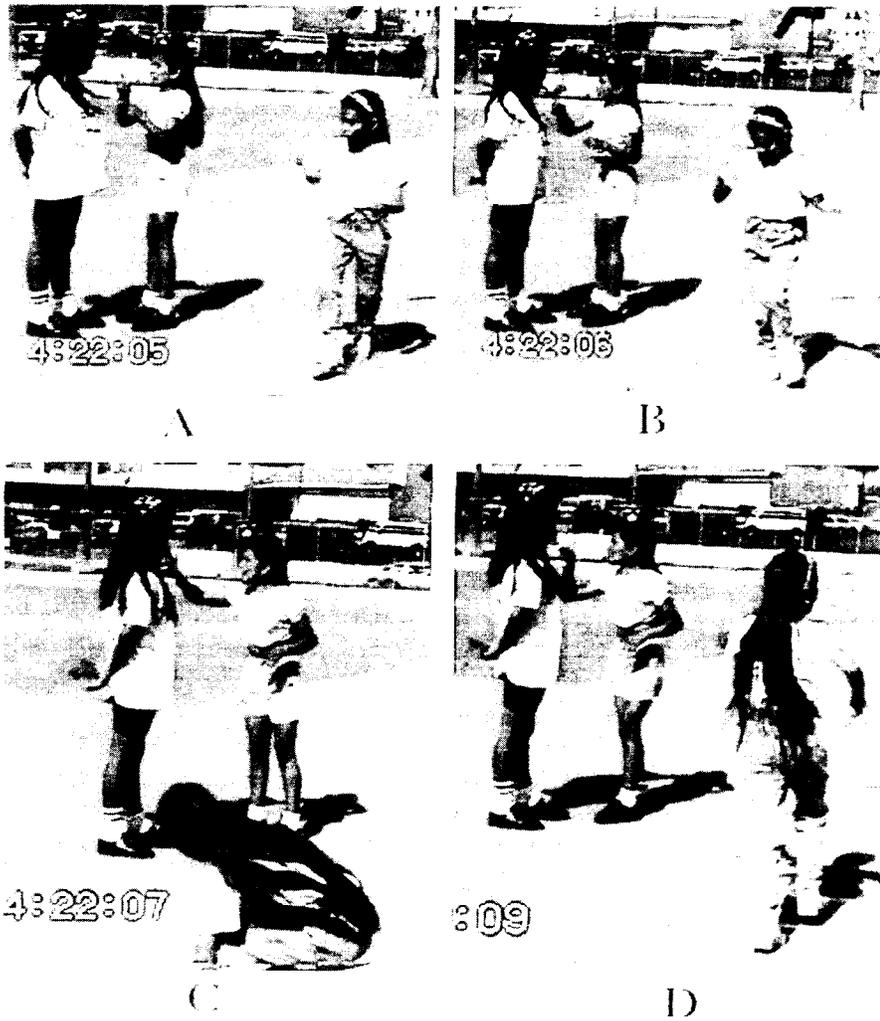


Figure 1.8 Sandra's trickery

ria and Carla have been talking, she states, "Perdí. Sigues tú" (*I lost. Your turn*), pointing to the square where her token has been moved. She then chants "Eh YEI!" (line 4) as she claps her hands. Sandra's posture with hands on hips, and slight bouncing up and down, visibly keys the possibility that something special is going on. In the midst of jumping, as Carla comes to realize that all is not okay, she moves through a sequence of embodied stances. She first puts her hands on hips, in a challenge position (Figure 1.9).

Then Carla uses her extended arm to make an accusatory point as she states "Tú no has pasado este número" (*You haven't even advanced to this number*), with the movements shown in Figures 1.10 and 1.11.



Figure 1.9 Carla's

During "este r
Sandra (in anothe
to. The following

(21)

- 1 Sandra:
- 2 Gloria:
- 3
- 4 Sandra:
- 5 Carla:
- 6
- 7
- 8 Sandra:



Figure 1.9 Carla's challenge pose

During "este número" she advances to the square in question and leans toward Sandra (in another challenge posture) as she stomps on the square she is referring to. The following provides a complete transcript of the interaction in question.

- (21) ((While Gloria and Carla have been talking about boyfriends, Sandra sneaks to advance her token.))
- 1 Sandra: Perdí. [Sigues tú.
(I lost. Your turn.)
 - 2 Gloria: [Whew:::!!! ((twirling around))
 - 3 [Esto es . . . otro problema.
(This is another problem.)
 - 4 Sandra: [Ey YEI! ((clapping hands))
 - 5 Carla: ((jumps and discovers Sandra has cheated, assumes challenge pose with arms akimbo))
 - 6 Tú no has pasado ((finger point))
 - 7 este número. ((stomps on square))
(You haven't gotten past this number.)
 - 8 Sandra: *h h h h hih-hih-hih! ((wringing hands))
hih-hih-hih-hih! ((kicks bag to lower square))
eh hih-hih-hih-hih-hih-hih



Figure 1.10 Carla: Tú no has pasado (line 6 of example 21)

In this sequence stance is displayed through both language and the vocal and nonvocal organization of the body. The party who has been tricked uses her pointing finger and leaning body to display her outrage at the wrong done her. In contrast, Sandra, who has successfully exploited a lapse in monitoring to play with the participation structures that frame the game, punctuates the entire exchange with gleeful, playful laughter (line 8). Keyings of many different forms occur, as co-participants transform their affective alignment toward the game in different ways throughout its course. Within hopscotch, stances are displayed through language choices, intensified intonation contours, gestures, and embodied performances, within the built social world of the game grid as a framework for the interpretation of action.

The Relevance of Conflict for Models of Girls' Interaction

While concern for face-saving has been a major theme in research about female speech, one line of thinking in contemporary social theory stresses the importance of the pursuit of conflict¹² for the organization of social life. Anthropologists argue that "interpersonal conflict, disagreements, and moral dilemmas are at the heart of social life" (White & Watson-Gegeo 1990:3). According to developmental psychologists Shantz and Hartup (1992:11, 2), "the virtual 'dance' of discord and ac-



Figure 1.11 Carla

cord, of disaffirmation, of development, ... of human development, social cohesion, and/or transformation has not only been noted but also promoted a view of

Not only do ... & Higgins 198 ... ethnographies ... women's aggression ... interest.¹⁵ Accord ... of competition ... ing the value of ... mately undermined

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Figure 1.11 Carla: este número (line 7 of example 21)

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cord, of disaffirmation and affirmation . . . is critical to the comprehension of development. . . . No other single phenomenon plays as broad and significant a role in human development as conflict is thought to. Many different functions—cognition, social cognition, emotions, and social relations—are thought to be formed and/or transformed by conflict."¹³ However, most contemporary feminist scholarship has not only avoided analyzing conflicts between women but also actively promoted a view of women as essentially cooperative.¹⁴

Not only do we view conflict and cooperation in dualistic terms (Mukhopadhyay & Higgins 1988) but we also omit competitive interactions among women from ethnographies. As anthropologist Victoria Burbank (1994:100–01) has noted, women's aggressive interactions with other women are rarely a topic of academic interest.¹⁵ According to feminist philosopher Helen Longino, "Our conceptual linking of competition with domination, hierarchy, and scarcity prevents us from appreciating the value of competitive challenge in developing skills and talents, and ultimately undermines our potential to change ourselves and our worlds" (1987:256).

In a similar vein Flax (1990:181–82) has warned: "We need to avoid seeing women as totally innocent, acted upon beings. Such a view prevents us from seeing the areas of life in which women have had an effect, are not totally determined by the will of the other, and the ways in which some women have and do exert power over others."

Feminist sociolinguists argue that we need to move the diverse experience of women of different backgrounds from the periphery to the center of social theory (Freed 1995, Henley 1995, Houston & Kramarae 1991, Kramarae 1990, Morgan 1995). For example, hooks (1989) has contended that while for WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) women confrontation is viewed negatively, African American women are powerful actors in many different kinds of interaction. Houston (1990:31) notes that gender is frequently perceived as separate from ethnicity and class; as a consequence gender is treated "as if it is experienced in the same way by all women, that is, according to white middle class women's experience."

Contrary to the notion that females attempt to avoid conflict, here I have shown through the ways in which elementary school girls construct opposition that they are actively seeking it out. Positions are highlighted not merely through words, but also through intensified intonation contours and embodied performances—marking the spaces stepped on with physical tapping and jumping—within the built social world of the game grid. Girls intently scrutinize players' actions to produce judgments about the jumpers' moves. As these girls play, they do not simply rotate through various positions, but animatedly and playfully dispute, resist, and probe the boundaries of rules as referees and players together build the game event—without the development of physical fighting. Though research (Lever 1978, Sutton-Smith 1979) has used hopscotch to build a deficit picture of girls who lack the ability to use and contest rules, ethnographic study of how the game is actually played reveals just the opposite.

This analysis of preadolescent girls' language practices has obvious relevance to theories of women's language and social organization. Strong claims about female cooperative language styles fall apart under close scrutiny. However, it is possible to systematically describe the reciprocal shaping of alternative language choices and the structures for the organization of participation in social activities. Study of these practices would not be possible if my only data were reports to an anthropologist about such events. Instead, analysis requires accurate records of precisely how talk was produced in the midst of the activity itself as an embodied performance addressed to another consequential actor. Talk, social organization, and context are deeply intertwined with each other. To incorporate agency into studies of female interaction and to avoid dichotomies that essentialize gender differences, we need to look ethnographically at the diverse ways that language is used in a range of natural settings—that is, if we want our notions of gendered aspects of linguistic stance and footing to be on solid ground.

NOTES

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Alicia de Myhrer, provided many of the examples used in this paper. This research was supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation. I have benefited from the comments of several colleagues. I have benefited from the comments of several colleagues. I have benefited from the comments of several colleagues.

1. Similarly, action, and domination, and interper-

2. Coates (1990) builds on the work of...

3. Harding (1990) women a rationality with particular of the particular of ity to separate him

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6. Boasting is a 1993; Goodwin 1990 hopscotch girls in "Qué bueno. Yo voy ganando! Voy ganando someone skillfully acknowledges her success head (as if proclaims "Number nine! I'm

7. On membership

8. On the multilingualism of Spanish-speaking

9. Norma Mendoza-Denton shows how the bi-cultural "cheater" and code-switching the /t/ of "cheat" to English phonology

10. In her study Heath (1983) four cheers in their play (1961) found that frequently deny such can subgroups differ

11. Much more on norms of speaking by Miller (1986) and (1990:82) similar

"'toughness' is more highly valued and there is less concern about 'politeness'." By way of contrast, the principal of the Columbia school where children's mitigated responses were observed actively promoted an ideology of conflict avoidance; such an ideology was consistent with the norms of the Unitarian Universalist Church, which two of the White middle-class girls whose actions are reported here attended.

12. Shantz & Hartup (1992:4) distinguish *aggression*—"behavior aimed at hurting another person or thing"—from *conflict*, defined as "a state of resistance or opposition between (at least) two individuals."

13. For an analysis of the role of conflict in children's friendship development see Corsaro (1994), Corsaro and Rizzo (1990), Eder (1990), Maynard (1985b), and Rizzo (1992).

14. However, see Eder's (1990) analysis of conflict exchanges among working- and lower-class White adolescents in the Midwest and Shuman's (1986, 1993) analysis of disputes among African American, White (Polish American and Irish American), and Puerto Rican inner-city junior high school students. When conflict in young girls has been examined, it has been in terms of face-saving strategies that young (White) girls utilize to mitigate conflict (Sheldon 1992, 1993).

15. However, see Schuster and Hartz-Karp's (1986) analysis of women's aggression on an Israeli kibbutz.

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