Echando Carrilla: Stance and Social Regulation through Joking

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This research identifies the practice of carrilla, a socially recognizable kind of joking used among a group of second generation Mexican-Americans from East Los Angeles. Using DuBois’ (2007) concept of the stance triangle, this research finds that carrilla is sustained as subjects take up by divergent stance positions in relation to objects that are considered to be of high sociocultural and intersubjective value. Radcliffe-Brown’s (1940) idea of the joking relationship is used as a foundation for showing how joking can simultaneously appear hostile and friendly, and for demonstrating the social role of joking in general. In taking up divergent stance positions, actors engaged in echando carrilla (doing carrilla) can regulate behaviors and ideas that are considered to be socioculturally important (such as gender, race, class and assimilation, among others) by invoking specific values within a shared epistemic framework. Carrilla as it is practiced among the participants in this study is hypothesized to be adapted from similar interactional practices present in Northern Mexico.

PREFACE

A search of the word “carrilla” on Google’s Mexico search engine yields few meaningful results. Of the results that do appear, one of the most informative is a metacommentary on the phenomenon between two Spanish speakers on a user-generated wiki called wordreference.com. Domtom, a user who lives in Barcelona, Spain posts the following on May 22, 2007:

¿Alguien sabe si en México existe la palabra carrilla? Si sí, ¿qué significa? Ya digo, en el español que se habla ahí.

{Does anyone know if the word carrilla exists in Mexico? If so, what does it mean? I am referring to the Spanish that is spoken there.}

The question receives immediate uptake on the same day by Horusankh, a blogger who lives in Guadalajara, Mexico:

Sí, si [sic] existe, y significa algo así como burla, pero entre amigos y sin intención de ofender, quiero decir, no son bromas pesadas, por ejemplo, si un muchacho está hablando con una muchacha y sus amigos lo ven y le empiezan a decir en coro “¡eeeeeh, tiene novia!”, o cosas por el estilo. Usado con verbo se dice “echar carrilla”. Disculpa, es tan común en
México que me acabo de dar cuenta de que no puedo explicarlo dando un sinónimo. Es decir, sí puedo, pero creo que son frases tan de acá que no explico mucho: “agarrar de su puerquito”, “traer de bajada”.

{Yes, it exists, and its like a joke but between friends and without the intention of offending, I want to say, its not like a mean joke, for example, if there is a boy that’s talking to a girl and his friends see him and they say together “Oooh, he has a girlfriend!” or for similar things. If used with a verb, it is expressed [as] “to give carrilla”. My apologies, it is so common in Mexico that I just realized that I can’t explain it giving you a synonym. That is to say, I can but I think that they are such [local/regional] phrases that I do not explain much: [for example,] “treating him as his little pig”, [or] “to bring back on [her/his] return”.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the seemingly innocuous role jokes and teasing in social life, in actuality the role of joking may be a way to carry out serious social business (Tholander & Aronsson, 2002). This paper is an attempt to describe the form and function of the practice of carrilla, a specialized type of joking present in Northern Mexico, using Radcliffe-Brown’s (1940) concept of the joking relationship and DuBois’ (2007) concept of the stance triangle. Insofar as it is a kind of joking, carrilla among adults serves a social regulatory function by allowing participants to critique and/or comment on ideas and practices that are of high sociocultural and intersubjective importance. The concept that joking can act as a mechanism for social regulation has been treated by other authors (Abrahams, 1962; Eisenberg, 1986; Miller, 1986; Peters, 1972) whose studies demonstrate that joking may be integral in shaping and reinforcing moral standards and expectations as well as regulating power relations without arousing hostility among interactants. This study adds to this literature by identifying the socially recognizable practice of carrilla as a kind of joking and by providing an analysis of its form. A socially recognizable practice is one that is recognized by users as special and different from similar practices (in this case, joking or teasing in general) and having a specific set of rules that give shape o he interaction.

The extent to which carrilla has become a socially recognizable practice is indicated by the detailed explanation provided by Horusankh in the preface, where a distinction is drawn between echando carrilla (doing carrilla) and structurally similar processes such as joking or teasing. The specialness of carrilla is based on the specific ways in which it is used by interactants to resolve mounting interactional tension as participants negotiate their positions to one another (intersubjective negotiations) and the objects involved in the interaction (socioculturally salient ideas and practices). Examining carrilla through an analytical lens that considers both the form of stance taking and the function of social regulation is important.
in providing a framework for understanding structurally similar phenomena while simultaneously outlining the specificities of the practice.

Radcliffe-Brown (1940) identified a *joking relationship* between men and their mothers-in-law in South Africa, describing the interaction as a specialized conversational ballet “such that in any other social context it would express and arouse hostility […] there is a pretense of hostility and a real friendliness” (196). The seeming paradox of the joking relationship in Radcliffe-Brown’s description is apparent – how is it possible to simultaneously maintain a “pretense of hostility and a real friendliness”? Similar paradoxes present themselves in *carrilla* – interactants may openly disagree with one another, may verbally attack the characters and/or habits of others, and may even engage in physically threatening acts – yet the joking frame persists, constituted by a general sense of joviality as participants laugh, smile and provide additional conversational points. *Carrilla* allows participants to openly grapple with topics that are of high sociocultural and/or intersubjective value and critique others in a sanctioned, socially recognizable frame. Like other kinds of joking, *carrilla* may ultimately be a mechanism by which social regulation is enacted as participants take up stance positions that index their opinion or perspective on a given topic and simultaneously provide a forum in which to comment on breeches or violations of expected behaviors or systems of belief (Fine & de Soucey, 2005; Peters, 1972; Sharman, 1969). Stance positioning is importantly tied to the social regulatory function in that it is linked to participant’s degree of commitment or stance to the object and subject (Goodwin, 2007; Mendoza-Denton, 1999; Tannen, 2001).

*Carrilla* is predicated on mounting *interactional tension* as participants take up divergent stance positions over the course of an interaction. According to DuBois (2007), stance positions can be scalar and may be characterized as convergent or divergent, which acknowledges the fluctuations in stance that may be present in a given interaction (170). *Carrilla* is sustained by the dynamic negotiation of stance positions by participants in the maintenance of the frame – the interactional tension from which *carrilla* arises is predicated on a dialogic interplay between the stance positions of two (or more) actors as they orient to objects of intersubjective and/or sociocultural importance and to one another. Intersubjective factors refer to the ways that actors relate to one another, or to the relation between actors’ subjectivities (DuBois 2007), while sociocultural factors involve shared epistemic frameworks which contextualize and enable evaluation of beliefs and practices within a social field. The stance triangle is useful in understanding the practice of *carrilla* in that it provides a model to analyze the dialogic relationship between subjects and *in relation* to objects to which individual actors orient in taking up stances. In the argument that follows, social factors include ideas and behaviors that are of high sociocultural value, including socioeconomic status, hygiene, class, cultural orientations and other ideas that are of local importance such as expected behaviors or systems of belief. Participants must share similar epistemic frameworks that precipitate congruous interpretations of objects, allowing actors to take up stances
that make sense of their positions in relation to these objects and to other subjects. An analysis of carrilla provides a way to contextualize the role of stance positioning in actors’ evaluations of objects that are of high sociocultural value, demonstrating the dynamic and dialogic role that stance positioning plays in interaction.

**Understanding Carrilla: Interactional and Social Elements**

DuBois’ (2007) stance triangle is a powerful analytical tool by which we can parse the complex interactional features of carrilla. The stance triangle provides a framework to understand “systems of sociocultural value that stances invoke and reproduce, as social actors position themselves and evaluate entities with respect to specific values along any socially salient dimension of the sociocultural field” (DuBois, 2007, p. 177). Because carrilla is a socially recognizable practice and relies on a specific set of epistemic orientations that inform stance positions, the stance triangle provides fertile ground for discovering the dialogical relationship between stance in relation to objects of sociocultural value. Importantly, the stance triangle combines the processes of evaluation, stance positioning and alignment as elements of a unified stance act which involves three levels of stance consequences including the evaluation of an object, the positioning of the subject, and the subject’s alignment with other subjects (DuBois, 2007 p. 163). The stance triangle also provides a way to contextualize the interactional moves found in carrilla as participants actively take up stance positions towards one another and the objects of their engagement. Failure to take up stance positions required of carrilla may result in the frame’s dissolving or never being realized (see Excerpt 2 for an unsuccessful attempt).

In understanding the interactional frame of carrilla, it is important to acknowledge that such a practice must be learned. The interactants represented in the transcripts of this study are the children of persons who immigrated to the United States from Northern Mexico in the 1940-1950’s. Their case is complicated because they were born in the United States, are for the most part monolingual English speakers, and do not report identifying directly with Mexican culture. Despite these factors, they successfully invoke the carrilla frame numerous times in the course of a conversation. The closest interactional phenomenon to carrilla to my knowledge has been described by Eisenberg (1986) who identified teasing relationships between adults and children in Mexicano homes of Northern California, noting that teasing acted as a form of social control and a way to reinforce relationships between interactants. Eisenberg provided evidence that children, through being teased, are socialized into appropriate behavior and learn the rules of interaction and social norms; most importantly, Eisenberg’s study identifies the idea that joking or teasing children is in actuality a reflexive process by which children themselves learn to become teasers. (See Loudon, 1967, and Bergen, 2007, for additional discussion of the socializing effects of teasing.) In the light of Eisenberg’s findings, carrilla identified among the participants in this study can be viewed as the crystallization of sociocultural and interactional forms which they were exposed to as
children. Although teasing and joking more generally may occur in many different sociocultural contexts, the methods and elements that are controlled differ based on the sociocultural values to which participants orient. Theorists have identified that incongruities in behavior (that is, a general discontinuity of an individual’s behavior in conforming to a norm) may motivate the production of humor or jokes (La Fave, Haddad & Maesen, 2007) and that these processes may be ultimately predicated more generally on judgment (Bergson, 1911). In sum, carrilla is used to carry out serious social business as it provides a way for participants to grapple with issues that are of high sociocultural and intersubjective value as they take up stance positions. In the transcript analyzed below, these issues include socioeconomic factors, ideas of assimilation, hygiene, and race.

PARTICIPANTS AND DATA

The group of individuals involved in this study are persons in their 50’s and have spent their childhoods (at least up to age 12) in East Los Angeles, an urban residential center east of downtown Los Angeles. The participants have identified as Chicano/a or Mexican-American and were at the time of data collection residing in a more affluent suburban area of Los Angeles County approximately four cities to the east of downtown (traveling east on Whittier Boulevard). The interaction was videotaped with a single camera in the living room of Letty and Fernando (pseudonyms) who were cohabitating at the time as a couple. The interactions that are transcribed below followed an informal anthropological interview which lasted about an hour and a half about personal experiences of moving from East Los Angeles to the suburbs. Two of the women, Letty, a schoolteacher, and Ana (pseudonym), an office worker for the county, met each other in grade school in East Los Angeles in the 1960’s and considered themselves to be good friends at the time of the data collection. Fernando reported working as a safety trainer at a large corporation in the city and had been with Letty for over five years. Fernando, Letty and Ana reported spending a good amount of time together and often attended barbeques, a local farmers market, and other social outings together. The author and an assisting cameraperson were the only other persons present at the time of recording.

A Successful Enactment of Carrilla

The interaction that followed the interview lasted almost an hour and a half during which there were many invocations of carrilla. This section features one of the most robust examples of carrilla recorded during the conversation. The recording took place in the evening, and the three participants appeared to be in generally good spirits, engaged, and very interested in talking about life in Los Angeles after the interview had ended. The three participants began to discuss the various demographic pockets present in Los Angeles, including Monterey Park, which is a city northeast of downtown Los Angeles that has a high proportion of
East Asian residents. Jokingly, Letty and Ana bring up the common stereotype that persons from East Asia are notoriously bad drivers, and Fernando points out that he has personally observed people from other ethnic backgrounds (Whites and Mexicans) who can’t drive either (lines 1-4). The following transcribes the first 17 lines that set the stage for carilla, as tension mounts in the interaction. Lines 18-44 include paralinguistic information such as body orientations, touching, and salient iconic gestures (Kendon 1995) used by participants that enhance or possibly constitute the interactional frame of carilla. Gestural or bodily elements present in the conversation that do not occur with speech appear on separate lines, are given a turn number, and are enclosed by italicized parenthesis ((gesture)).

**Excerpt 1: Parking the Car on the Grass**

1. F: But I’ve seen
2. I’ve seen white people that can’t drive worth a shit.
3. And I’ve seen Mexicans drive worth a shit.
4. L: But you didn’t live in a t-
5. Every single day
6. F: Oh my god!
7. This was daily in in on Huntington. I swear to god, it was everyday.
8. A: It’s horrible
9. Go, go to the corner of Garfield and Valley.
10. L: I mean I didn’t want to walk down the street.
11. Yes, forget it, you don’t want to
12. A: Just stand on the corner of Garfield and Valley, gee, dude
13. L: You’ve never been…
14. Not all the time, not all the time
15. A: It’ll be a life changing experience
16. L: No, I’m serious.
17. ‘member when in the car
18. F: Are Mexicans the only ones that park their car on the grass?
19. L: [But one day we were in the car-
20. ((puts hand on shoulder))
21. And I [ took a vote ((removes hand and raises hand, as if taking a vote))
22. A: [Like you? ((accusative point))
23. F: Like me! Ha ha ha ha [ha ha ha.((Ana leans forward as Fernando leans back to guffaw))
24. L: [Yeah!
25. F: *Park my car on the grass?! ((smacks forehead and leans further into couch))
26. L: [Oh yeah!
27. A: You park your car on the grass!
28. L: [I hate that! [And I hate that, I hate it. ((pointing at Fernando))
29. D: [Oh:::
30. ((Ana leans in and POINTS, with full body thrust forward))
31. L: When he first did it- ((pointing at shoulder))
32. F: Ha ha ha ha ha
33. ((Ana moves closer, the point turns into an open hand, as if to strike him over the head))
34. (silence 2.0 seconds)
35. F: ((Fernando laughing, arms down, back hunched in a defensive position))
In Excerpt 1, participants negotiate stance positions in relation to intersubjective and sociocultural factors which constitute the foundation for echando carrilla (doing carrilla). Fluctuations in stance positions, primarily those positions that are divergent, build interactional tension over the course of the sequence. This divergence occurs at both the level of the subject and the object; in this case, Ana and Letty together take up a collaborative position against Fernando (subject/intersubjective stance positioning) because of his habit of parking the car on the lawn (an object of sociocultural value). Line 18 precipitates a switch into the carrilla frame based on recognizable cues that allow participants to enter the frame (Ensink & Sauer, 2003). The single most important cue that causes the conversation to shift from a generally joking conversational frame to the carrilla frame is the presentation of a topic that has high sociocultural value. The saliency of this topic is confirmed by the wholesale orientation of all participants to the frame as actors take up stance positions.

The defining moment that invokes the carrilla frame, as indicated above, is the cue of the topic in conjunction with mounting tension in the interaction. We can observe that the conversation builds tension as participants assume divergent epistemic and affective stance positions (Haviland, 1991). Stance taking up to line 18 appears to be both epistemic and affective in the sense that interactants make truth/knowledge claims and posit judgments about these claims; line 8 positions Ana unequivocally on an affective front while the sequence of lines 4-17 positions Ana and Letty as knowledgeable of the state of affairs present in the context discussed and Fernando as lacking this knowledge. The stance positions in this case orient to both the subject of Fernando and the object of the driving conditions in Los Angeles. To make claims and to subsequently take up stance positions regarding these claims requires experience and knowledge of the driving conditions in Monterrey Park as well as the ways that these conditions intersect with locally salient ideologies about the driving habits of people in this area. The preliminary steps of taking up stance positions is key in setting the stage for carrilla as participants assume positions
that are recognizably divergent. Tension mounts in the conversation as participants indicate their disagreement – in this case, Fernando takes up a position in which he openly disagrees with the statements made by Ana and Letty. Utterances that indicate epistemic (lines 1-4) and affective (line 6) stance positions make clear that Fernando not only disagrees with Letty and Ana’s ideas, but that he distrusts the truth of their claims. Fernando begins in line 1 by questioning the truth value of the claims made by Ana and Letty, a move which sets into motion the building tension arising from divergent stances. This move is pivotal in that it forces Ana and Letty to respond and justify their position, as seen in the lines that follow (lines 4-17) where Ana and Letty argue the truth of their position.

Participants signal their understanding that carrilla frame has been invoked by shifting their attention from justifying their position to taking up divergent stance positions in relation to Fernando as a subject (Fernando has parked his car on the lawn) and the object that is of sociocultural value (the social implications of parking one’s car on the lawn in Los Angeles). Not only do the interactants share a similar set of cultural interpretations, but they seamlessly orient to the interactional frame of carrilla based on the implications of Fernando’s statement about the object (stance against the practice of parking the car on the lawn) and the subject (stance against Fernando because he parks his car on the lawn) – positioning their own subjectivities in the process. In practice, these factors combine to create a dynamic stance triangle event.

These divergent stance positions combine to generate an interactional tension which escalates over time until it is resolved by entering the carrilla frame, allowing a redirection of the rising tension. It may be observed that the conversational move uttered in line 18 changes the interactional frame in two ways: firstly, it refocuses the frame from one of general joking and disagreement to one that involves detailed knowledge of culturally readable signs and their local implications; together, these contribute to constituting an object of high sociocultural value. All participants, upon processing the social implications of parking the car on the grass by Mexicans, immediately orient to this new frame, which precipitates subsequent interaction. To park one’s car on the grass in Los Angeles is of particular sociocultural importance to the participants who associate it with behavior found in East Los Angeles, where parking is at a premium because of houses being tightly packed together. To park one’s car on the grass is thus indexical of a kind of habitus (Bourdieu, 1977) linked with ideas of socioeconomic class, access to resources, and in some cases, cultural orientations. As indicated in other parts of this paper, carrilla provides a socially recognizable frame in which participants can grapple with serious issues without arousing hostility. One might observe here that Ana, through a variety of linguistic and paralinguistic strategies, chides Fernando for perpetrating this undesirable behavior by engaging in theatrical displays which demonstrate her divergent stance position, including finger pointing (line 22), interruptions/overlapping with Letty (line 28, line 37, line 41, line 44) and threatening violations of personal space (line 22, line 30, line 33) (see also Photo 1).
How might we explain why carrilla appears in this interaction instead of outright hostility? One of the ways that we might explain the role of carrilla derives from the idea that the role of joking may be as a way to avoid conflict or as a general amelioration strategy (Boggs, 1978; Radcliffe-Brown, 1940). Other research on conflict has demonstrated the many ways in which it arises and may be resolved through joking or humor, taking into account culturally-specific tolerances for overlaps and interruptions (Haviland, 1996; Kakava, 1993), events leading up to arguments (Maynard, 1985), forms of opposition (Goodwin, 1983; Goodwin, Goodwin & Yager, 2002) and conflict negotiation strategies (Kakava, 1993; Kuo, 1992; Song, 1993). Carrilla is special in that it is not simply a way of avoiding conflict, but that it is a socially recognizable practice where talk about topics that are of high sociocultural value (and thus may have the strongest and most divergent stance positions) are sanctioned to be openly debated and disagreed upon without arousing outright hostility.

An Unsuccessful Invocation of Carrilla

In understanding the special character of carrilla, it is important to examine contexts in which it does not work. One of the clearest examples of an attempt to invoke the carrilla frame, and failure for the other participants to orient to the frame, is invoked by Letty a bit later in the conversation following the segment about parking the car on the lawn:
Excerpt 2: Turd versus Turf

68 A: You have no grass.
69 L: We have no grass
70 A: What do you do water your dirt?
71 L: Eh-heh, yeah.
72 A: I’m gonna water my dirt.
73 F: Guess what. No, no. I’m gonna put, I’m gonna put, uh turd
74 L: Were gonna put
75 F: Uh, [not turd
76 L: [Were gonna-
77 _Turd_! Ha ha ha ha ha ha
78 F: [Turd!
79 L: ![Turd]!=
80 F: =Sod.
81 D: ![O:::h!]
82 L: ![Turds]=
83 F: =Gonna [put sod
84 L: ![Ehheheh turd.
85 F: Putting sod [in there we’re getting sod in there
86 L: ![Turds] ha ha ha ha ha.
87 F: We’re putting sod in there this weekend=
88 L: =Turds.
89 A: You serious.
90 L: Yes. Not the whole deck.
91 F: We’re gonna put sod.
92 L: Turd sods.
93 A: Sod.
94 L: Yes grass.
95 F: Some grass.

Although one the most important preconditions of a building of interactional tension required of _carrilla_ is present in Excerpt 2, such as in line 70 where Ana asks Fernando mockingly if he waters his dirt then voices Fernando’s thoughts in line 72 (I’m going to water my dirt), the _carrilla_ frame is not invoked. The moves in lines 68-72 are important because they allow for the development of divergent stance positions and set the stage for participants to move into the _carrilla_ frame. In line 73, Fernando responds to the statements made by Ana and Letty regarding the condition of the lawn – importantly, he aligns epistemically and affectively with their statements that the lawn is indeed in bad shape and does not disagree outright with their assessment. One might note here that if Fernando had elected to disagree with the women on this point, this may have been an opportunity to enter the _carrilla_ frame. Tension builds as Ana chides Fernando for his poor housekeeping and Letty takes a general stance position against Fernando’s poor housekeeping in line 69. Line 77 represents a point in the conversation in which _carrilla_ may be possible as Letty cries out the utterance _turd_ and proceeds to laugh because of Fernando’s mispronunciation of the word _turf_ in line 73. It is evident in the lines that follow that the other participants in the conversation do not orient
to the frame invoked by Letty, who sustains the frame by herself without uptake by other members. The conversation is brought back into the tenor of the previous frame beginning in line 94.

Why do Ana and Fernando not orient to the frame invoked by Letty? There may be a couple of different explanations for this: the first would be that the tension has not been adequately built in subsequent lines. Another possibility for the flop of this carrilla attempt is that Letty orients to an item that is not within the purview of relevance for participants to engage in carrilla – a slip of the tongue may be silly and allow for a joke or teasing but does not carry with it the sociocultural gravity required of carrilla. Simply put, the object is not of high sociocultural value. The requirements of carrilla in relation to the stance triangle may also be of importance here insofar as participants do not immediately identify a specific stance position to take up in relation to either the subject and/or object required of carrilla. How might we explain the emergence of carrilla in some contexts and the failure of it in other contexts? The following section outlines a detailed characterization of carrilla which may provide some answers as to the elements required for a successful interaction to take place.

A Characterization of Carrilla

Based on the data discussed above, it may now be possible to provide a general characterization of carrilla. Firstly, the actualization of carrilla in conversation is predicated on the activation of the carrilla frame, which involves participant’s simultaneous orientation to the recognizable social practice. The carrilla frame involves the dynamic negotiation of sociocultural and intersubjective elements as participants take up the necessary stance positions at the right times as the frame is invoked. There are three interrelated points that can be outlined here which encompass carrilla’s form and function:

1. Carrilla is a socially recognizable practice used to resolve mounting interactional tension – divergent stance positions within the frame are ritualized. Ritualized elements that index divergent stance positions include linguistic and paralinguistic elements characterized by aggressive verbal play (in relation to the stance object and subject) such as interruptions, accusations, elevated voice pitch and volume, as well as possible bodily engagement (e.g., finger pointing, lunges). Within the carrilla frame, there are rules on what is and what is not permissible as a topic. This analysis provides evidence that carrilla is used to grapple with objects of high sociocultural and intersubjective value, as these objects allow participants to take up stance positions divergent enough to precipitate the carrilla frame. This leads to the second characteristic:

2. Carrilla involves shared epistemic frameworks which contextualize ideas and topics that are of sociocultural and intersubjective value and corresponding appropriate stance positions. Objects that are determined to be of value within the sociocultural field may be locally constructed but are also im-
portantly rooted in larger ideological frameworks – either way, determining the value of an object in order to take up a stance position requires shared knowledge. At least three kinds of knowledge are required for carrilla to be successful: 1. knowledge of the implications of taking up one stance over another; 2. knowledge of the rules of interaction (which objects are eligible to take up a stance on and which are not) and; 3. knowledge of what objects have high sociocultural and intersubjective value and what objects do not. This knowledge can be traced not only to the dynamic interactional features of carrilla but also to the sociocultural values attached to certain ideas and the expected orientations. We can track the stance positions of interactants by examining what they say as well as what they do, through attention to paralinguistic features such as intonation, gesture and body position. Shared systems of belief about how the world is ordered lead to the third related characteristic of carrilla:

3. Carrilla may be a mechanism for social regulation enacted through stance positioning. In order for the work of stance positioning to be effective in invoking and sustaining the carrilla frame, participants must share similarly ordered epistemic frameworks. Like other forms of joking, carrilla allows participants to comment on or critique the behaviors or beliefs of others without arousing hostility. Carrilla is a socially recognized practice in which participants can grapple with serious issues by taking up divergent positions in a joking framework.

CONCLUSION

Carrilla is invoked when a participant recognizably shifts the interactional frame to focus on an object of sociocultural value based on mounting interactional tension. This shift must involve epistemic and affective stance divergences among interactants as they orient differentially to ideas or behaviors of sociocultural value, setting the stage for the enactment of social regulation (Arno, 1990; Radcliffe-Brown, 1940; Sharman, 1969). Participants must take up divergent stances in relation to subjects and objects present in the conversation and work to sustain the interactional tension required of carrilla.

It should be noted that intersubjective factors may differentially contribute to the carrilla frame. The example provided in the preface by Horusankh describes a case of carrilla among young men. Gender and the alignment of interactants play a role in shaping the interaction, as does shared presupposed knowledge. For example, one might note that in both cases, the women took up divergent stance positions against the only male in the interaction. Stance strategies may be partially shaped by the number of persons present in an interaction, such as Kangasharju’s (2002) identification of “multiperson” interactions which result in the formation of “teams” in the course of sequences of disagreement. Mendoza-Denton (1999) also identifies interactional alignment strategies where more than two parties are
involved in what is called “collaborative opposition,” where groups may take sides in the course of a conversation. In the sequence outlined above, Ana and Letty form an alliance against Fernando and feed off one another in their enactment of the carrilla.

The joking relationship has been described as a situation that is simultaneously constituted by hostility and friendliness; insofar as carrilla is a kind of socially recognizable practice of joking, it displays similar properties. Thus, carrilla may act as a kind of social cohesion even as it displays evidence of conflict. Goodwin (2006) writes that among interactional participants, conflict may be “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” (67). In carilla, participants must be already in a kind of relationship where the carrilla frame is recognizable and desirable and where divergent stance positions can be viewed as progressing the frame through time. Divergent stance positions are important in the carrilla frame because they constitute grounds for sustained (epistemic and affective) tension among interactants precipitated by dialogic properties and sequential organization (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 1996) immanent in interaction. The paradox of the simultaneous existence of hostility and friendliness present in joking described by Radcliffe-Brown may be resolved though understanding the mechanics of carrilla in that being able to engage in conflict in ways that are socioculturally sanctioned signals an orientation to epistemic frameworks that transcend the interaction and index membership in larger cultural categories.

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NOTES

1 Interview data has suggested that Ana and Fernando were chided by their parents in ways similar to the techniques identified by Eisenberg (1986).
2 East Los Angeles is predominately populated by persons of Mexican descent, including both Mexican nationals and American-born persons of varying generations, although the actual distribution of residents includes persons hailing from many different places.
APPENDIX: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

[utterance] ; overlapping utterances
[utterance] ; clipping
Italics ; emphasis or change in vocal quality
Bold ; loud utterance
Bold Italic ; loud utterance with a change in vocal quality
((x )) ; indicates action/gesture
° ; whispered
(.) ; pause

REFERENCES


Echando Carrilla


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