Dude, What Was I Talking About?:
A New Sociolinguistic Framework for Marijuana-Intoxicated Speech

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If sociolinguistics is the study of the interplay between social constructs and language, it seems that a major oversight has been made. Intoxication, particularly drinking alcohol and smoking marijuana, plays a vital role in many cultures— the United States being no exception. However, the effects of intoxication on speech, and the variation between sober speech and intoxicated speech, is still an under-researched field. Of the research that has been done, most works are concerned with mechanical errors in speech production, and then, usually only intoxication by beer/liquor is considered. Perhaps this lack of investigation results from a faulty reasoning that intoxicated speech can be accounted for merely by its alleged manner of rule-*breaking*, rather than any type of rule-*adherence*. However, what I present in this work will show quite the opposite.

Using the sub-study of Topic Management, I show that, while sober speech can be analyzed using the pre-existing models for Topic Management (as it should; these models were based on sober speech), marijuana intoxicated (stoned) speech needs a new framework to be devised before one can generate any conclusive discussion. The work here, then, is a project to create a preliminary sociolinguistic framework combining traditional models of conversation, topic, and turn-taking together with models of other genres of speech to arrive at a working model for the rules of stoned speech.

This new model allows for both recoverable (mitigated) and non-recoverable (unmitigated) topics in topic-shift, successful topic introduction and failed topic introduction, and the special category of topic regainment, all of which are necessary for a discussion of the rule system of stoned speech. Otherwise, this variation would merely appear to work without any recognizable adherents, only describable as "breaking the rules" of conversation.

Briefly, this new model works to show that the variation between stoned speech and sober speech is such that marijuana-intoxicated speech more readily reflects the communication rules for meetings than the rules for regular conversation which sober speech reflects. This paper, then, is an attempt to re-assess the variation between the inter-personal aspects of communication in both marijuana-intoxicated (stoned) speech and sober speech. (348 words)

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