This paper contributes to the sociolinguistic discussions about styles and their linguistic resources in interaction. My analysis will focus on the use of address term veli 'bro, brother'. I will show how its social indexicality is construed and how issues of gender or ethnicity are negotiated both by addressing someone with the term and by providing implicit and explicit metapragmatic accounts on its use.

My study falls in the fields of interactional sociolinguistics and linguistic ethnography. I gathered the data using ethnographic methods in two junior high schools in Eastern Helsinki, and they consist of a field diary, interviews with 38 adolescents, several audio- and video recordings of spontaneous interaction both during the lessons and the breaks, as well as retrospective interviews.

The schools in question form communities of practice that are superdiverse in nature. The participants speak 16 different first languages altogether. Because of their different linguistic biographies, the participants have asymmetric accesses to the linguistic resources associated with the main language of interaction, Finnish. The adolescents are also taking part in the global flows of popular culture, and the globally recycled resources are appropriated in the local stylistic practices.

In my data, the address term veli is used similarly to bro in American English, and it is implicitly and explicitly associated with local manifestations of hip hop. My analysis show, that veli carries social indexicality of (black) ethnicity, and it can be used in positioning oneself and the addressee with relation to 'glocal' styles that intertwine with gender and ethnicity. Together with other stylistic resources, veli may be used for displaying solidarity (e.g. ethnic or masculine) and for taking a stance toward ongoing social dynamics and interactional context.

Keywords: style, social indexicality, youth language.