

Dialect distinctiveness

LINGUIST 159 - American Dialects

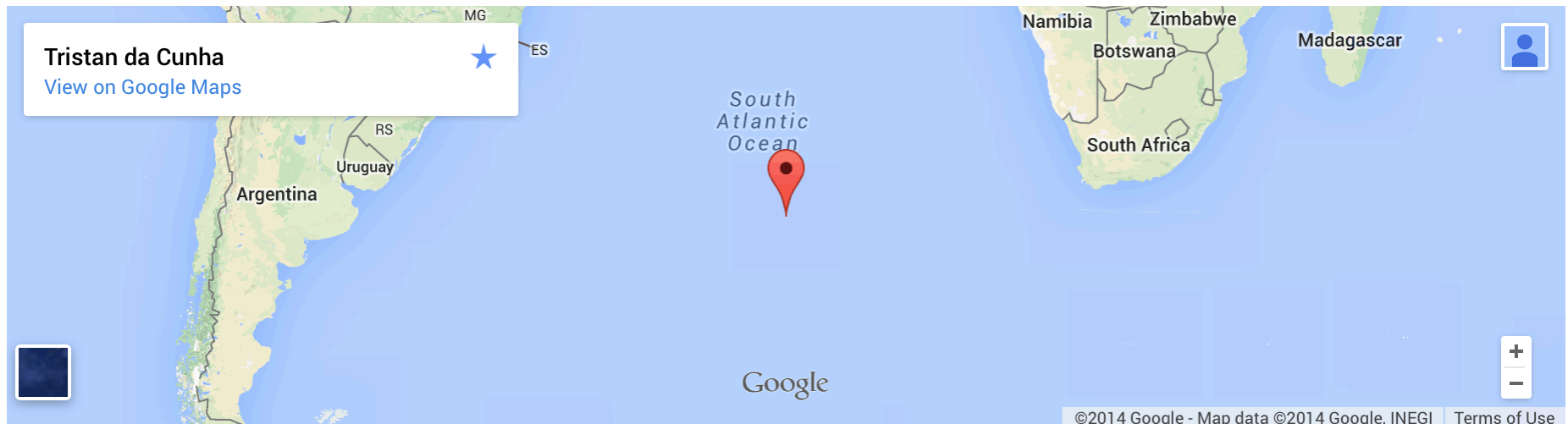
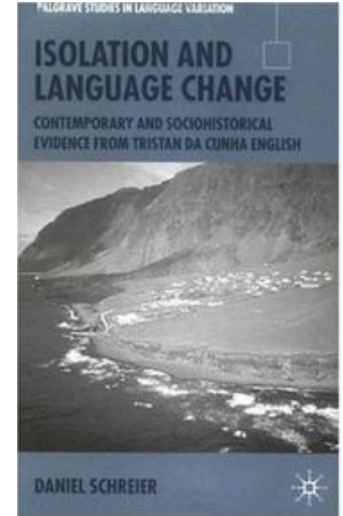
October 9, 2014

The world's remotest island



Daniel Schreier

Tristan da Cunha



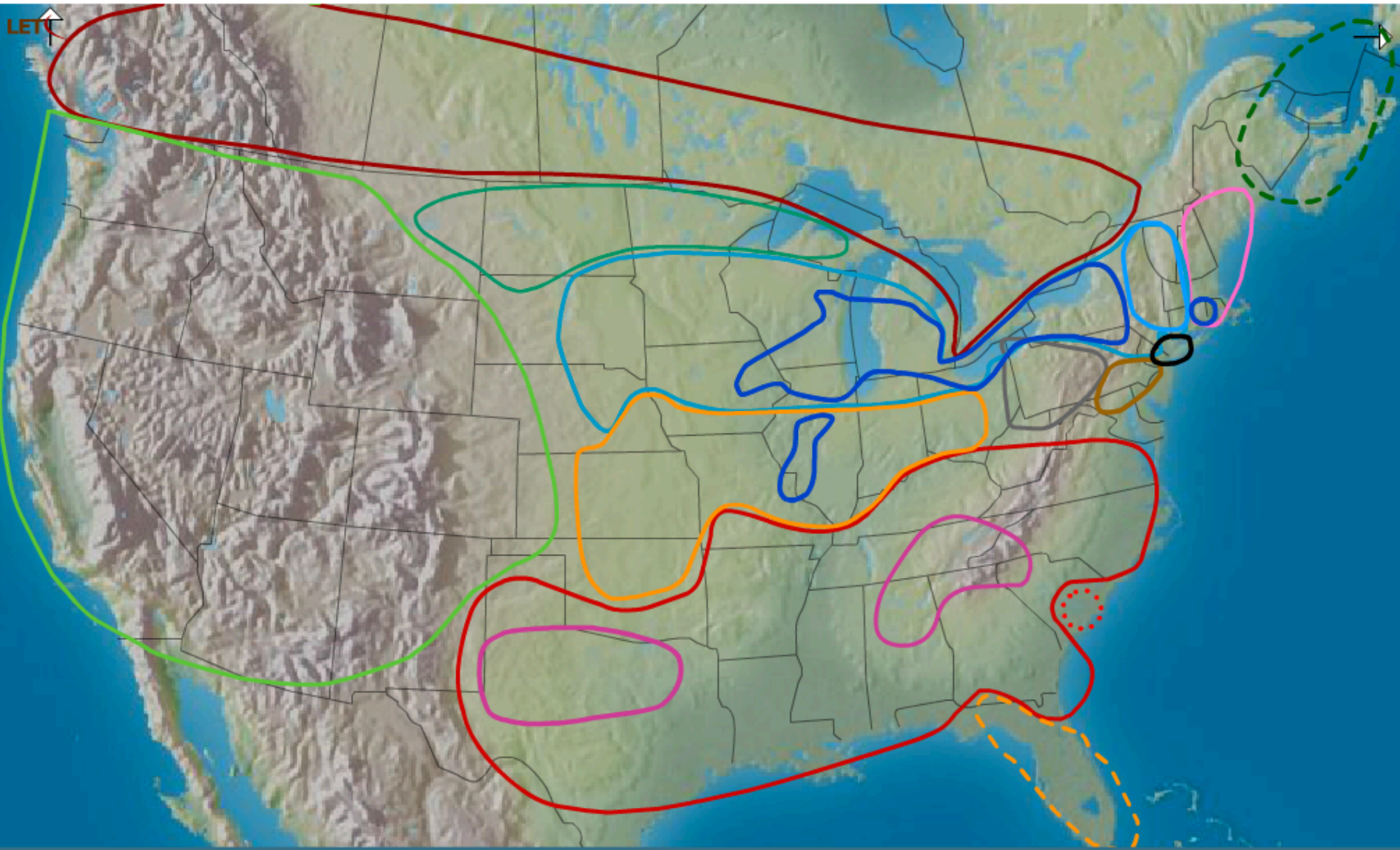
Dialect leveling

The reduction of dialectal distinctiveness through mixing with other dialects.

(W&S glossary)

****Does this really happen?***

- (1) shifting patterns of immigration
- (2) shifting patterns of migration
- (3) changing cultural centers
- (4) increasing interregional accessibility. (W & S, chapter 4)



Source: The Atlas of North American English (Labov, Ash, & Boberg 2005)

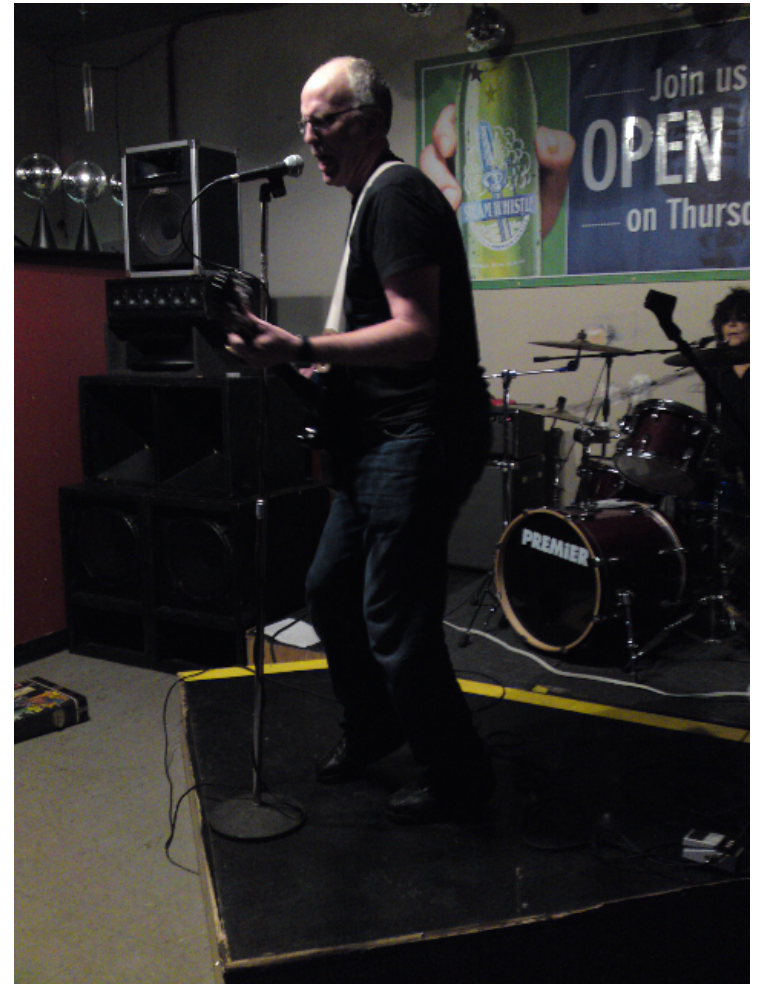
Types of change

Convergence: The adjustment of a language variety over time to become more like another dialect or other dialects.

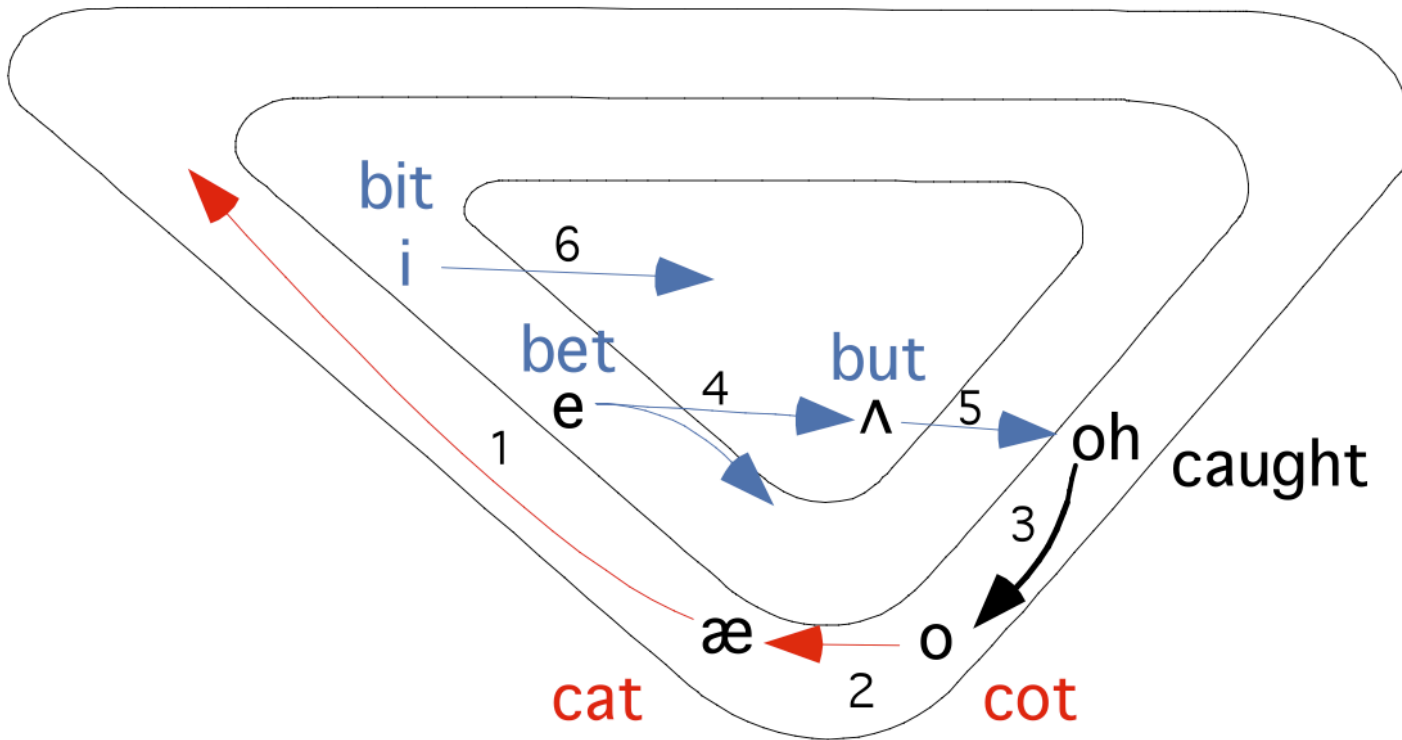
Divergence: The development of a language variety or language structure so that it becomes more dissimilar from other varieties or structures.

NCS as Linguistic White Flight

Gerard Van Herk (2008)

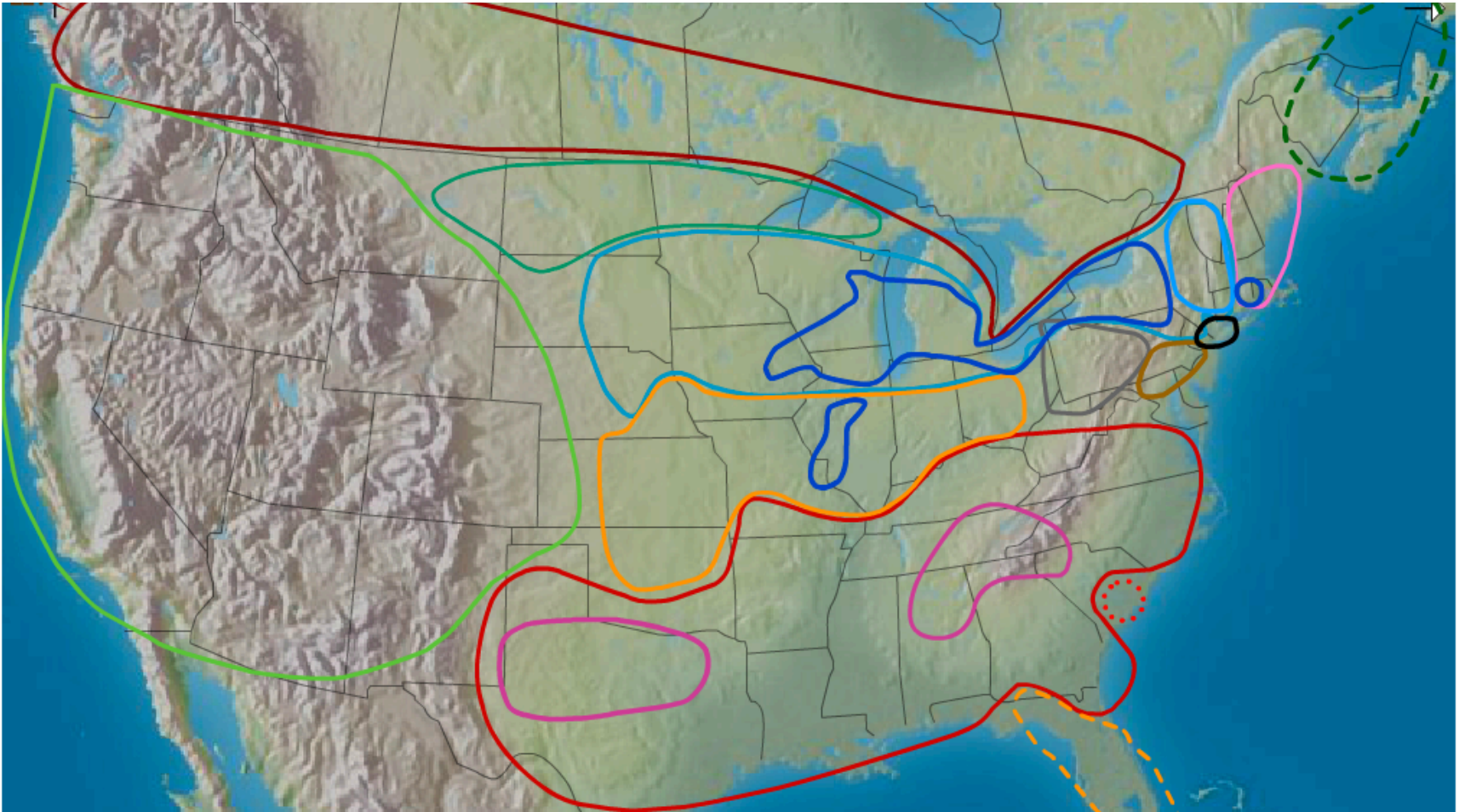


Northern Cities Shift



The *actuation* question

The actuation question



Northern Cities Shift



The Great Migration



The Great Migration

		<i>1910-40</i>	<i>1940-60</i>	<i>1910-60</i>
<i>Northern Cities</i>	Detroit	57.55	48.69	345.98
<i>Shift Participant Cities</i>	Cleveland	37.42	33.51	175.14
	Chicago	27.02	38.94	145.31
	St. Louis	27.76	61.27	127.63
	Buffalo	16.03	19.76	126.72
	<i>New York</i>	106.55	34.61	233.60
<i>Non-Participant Cities</i>	Cincinnati	20.24	19.74	38.69
	Pittsburgh	12.11	10.64	20.21
	Erie	1.88	9.73	22.89

Table 1. Size by speed of African American population growth

Flight vs. Aspiration

What does this mean for individual speakers participating in the NCS?

What's the connection with Eckert's work in Belten high?

In what other linguistic arenas do we also see flight-oriented terminology?

What is the “divergence hypothesis”?

Types of change

Convergence: The adjustment of a language variety over time to become more like another dialect or other dialects.

Divergence: The development of a language variety or language structure so that it becomes more dissimilar from other varieties or structures.

Dialect leveling

The desegregation of ethnic communities is an ongoing process in American society which continually brings speakers of different ethnicities into closer contact with one another. The expected result of this interethnic contact is the erosion of ethnic dialect boundaries, even though ethnolinguistic boundaries can be remarkably persistent. W&S, p. 184.

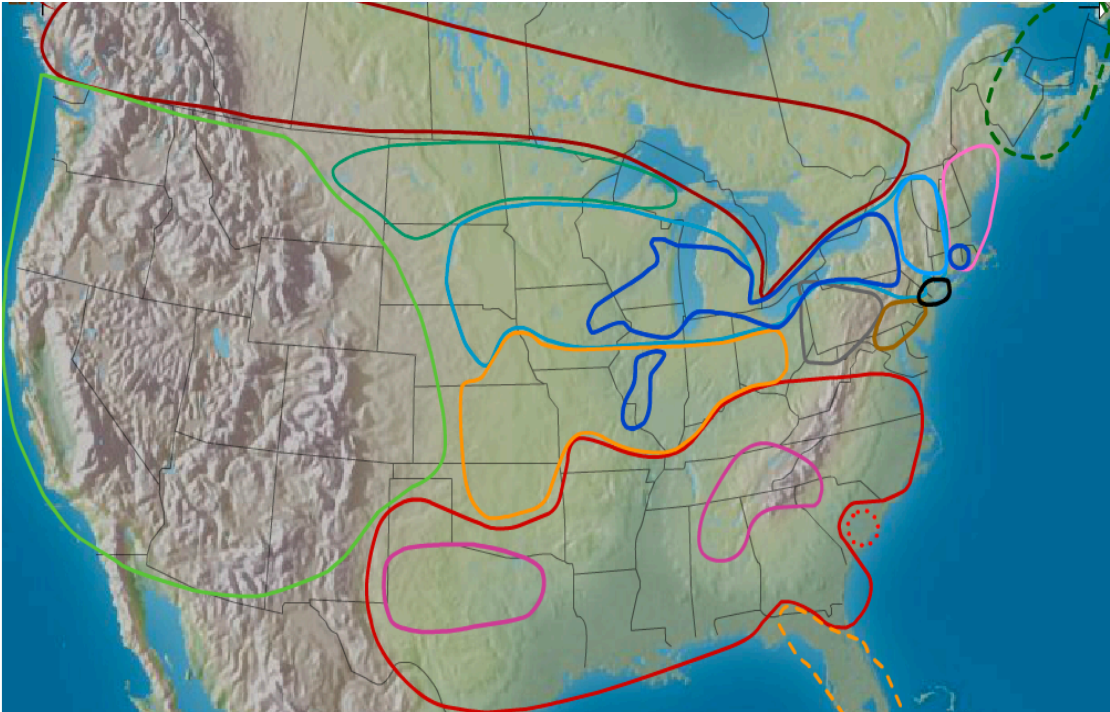
Anderson (2002)

Table 5: Comparison of Detroit AAE with other varieties for pre-voiceless /ai/

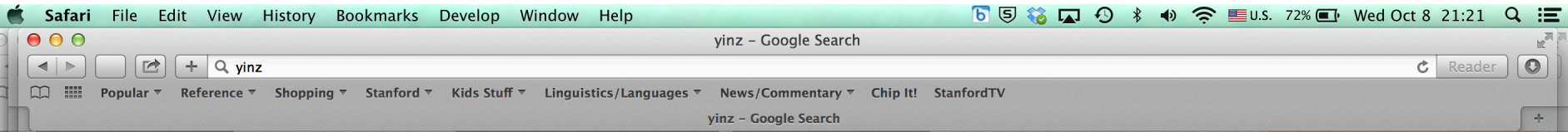
	Pre-voiced monophthongized /ai/ (TIDE)	Pre-voiceless monophthongized /ai/ (TIGHT)
Detroit AAE	Yes	Yes
Southern Appalachian White	Yes	Yes
General Southern White	Yes	(Yes)
Southern AAE	Yes	No
Northern White	No	No

The case of “Yinz”

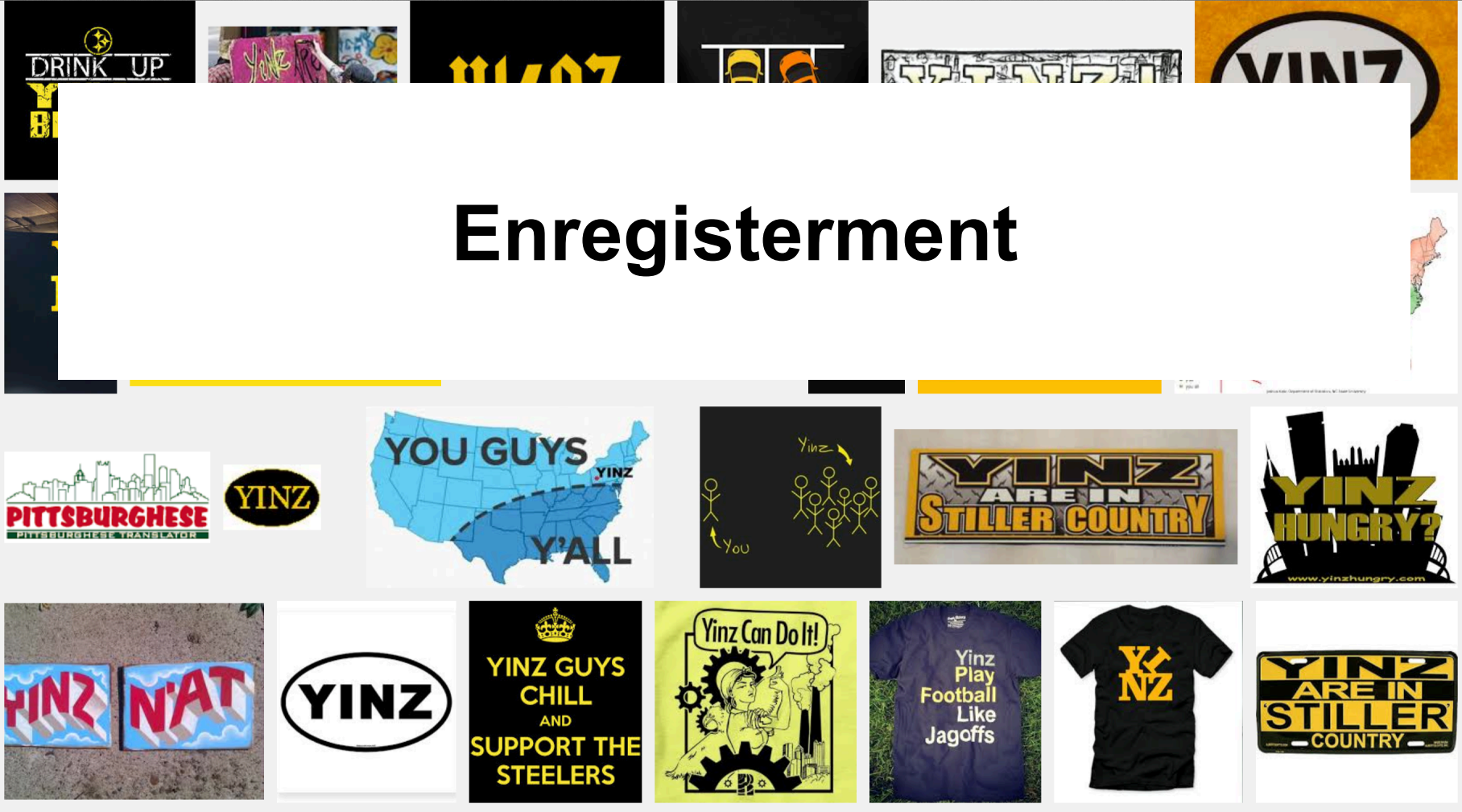
Barbara Johnstone (2013)



The case of "Yinz"



Enregisterment



'Pittsburgh English' → 'Pittsburghese'

Settled by the Scots-Irish

Some distinctive features of 'Pittsburgh English'

Phonology

CAUGHT-COT merger

/o/ fronting

monophthongization of /

aw/

pre-/l/ mergers

/l/-vocalization

Morphosyntax

yinz (2nd-person plural)

reversed transitivity btw

leave and *let*

needs/wants + past

participle

'Pittsburgh English' → 'Pittsburghese'

Some distinctive features of 'Pittsburgh English'

Lexicon

jag (tease)

nebbby (nosy)

slippy (slippery)

gumband (rubber band)

Discourse/prosody

falling intonation on *yes/no*
questions

n'at sentence-final
discourse marker

Saliency (Labovian terms)

Indicators

a variable feature that shows no pattern of stylistic variation in users' speech, speakers are not aware of this variable.

Markers

a variable feature that shows stylistic variation, speakers use different variants in different contexts, the use of one variant over another is socially meaningful.

Stereotypes

a variable feature that is the overt topic of social comment; may become increasingly divorced from forms that are actually used.

‘Pittsburgh English’ → ‘Pittsburghese’

It is at the *stereotype* level that a **dialect** gets to be *enregistered*.

Pittsburgh English *indicators*:

regional variables that are associated with being from southwestern Pennsylvania, also with being working class and male (everyone speaks that way)

'Pittsburgh English' → 'Pittsburghese'

Pittsburgh English *markers*:

regional variables become available for social work; speakers start to notice and attribute meaning to regional variants, shifting styles in their own speech.

Pittsburgh English *stereotypes*:

regional variables that become essentially linked with a *place* in the popular consciousness, highly codified lists to perform (and parody) local identity

Ideal Change Model

Stage	Stage of Change	E_1	E_2
1	Categorical status, before undergoing change	X	X
2	Early stage begins variably in restricted environment	$X > Y$	X
3	Change in full progress, greater use of new form in E_1 where change first initiated	$Y > X$	$X > Y$
4	Change progresses toward completion with movement toward categorically first in E_1 where change initiated	Y	$Y > X$
5	Completed change, new variant	Y	Y

Future of dialects

What's Johnstone's take?

It has been argued that economic and cultural developments have diminished the relevance of place in human lives...But it is also claimed that local, place-based community still has a role to play, albeit a changing one... people attempt to “re-embed the lifespan within a local milieu” ([Giddens]1991, 147), such as through attempts to cultivate community pride.

Ideal Change Model

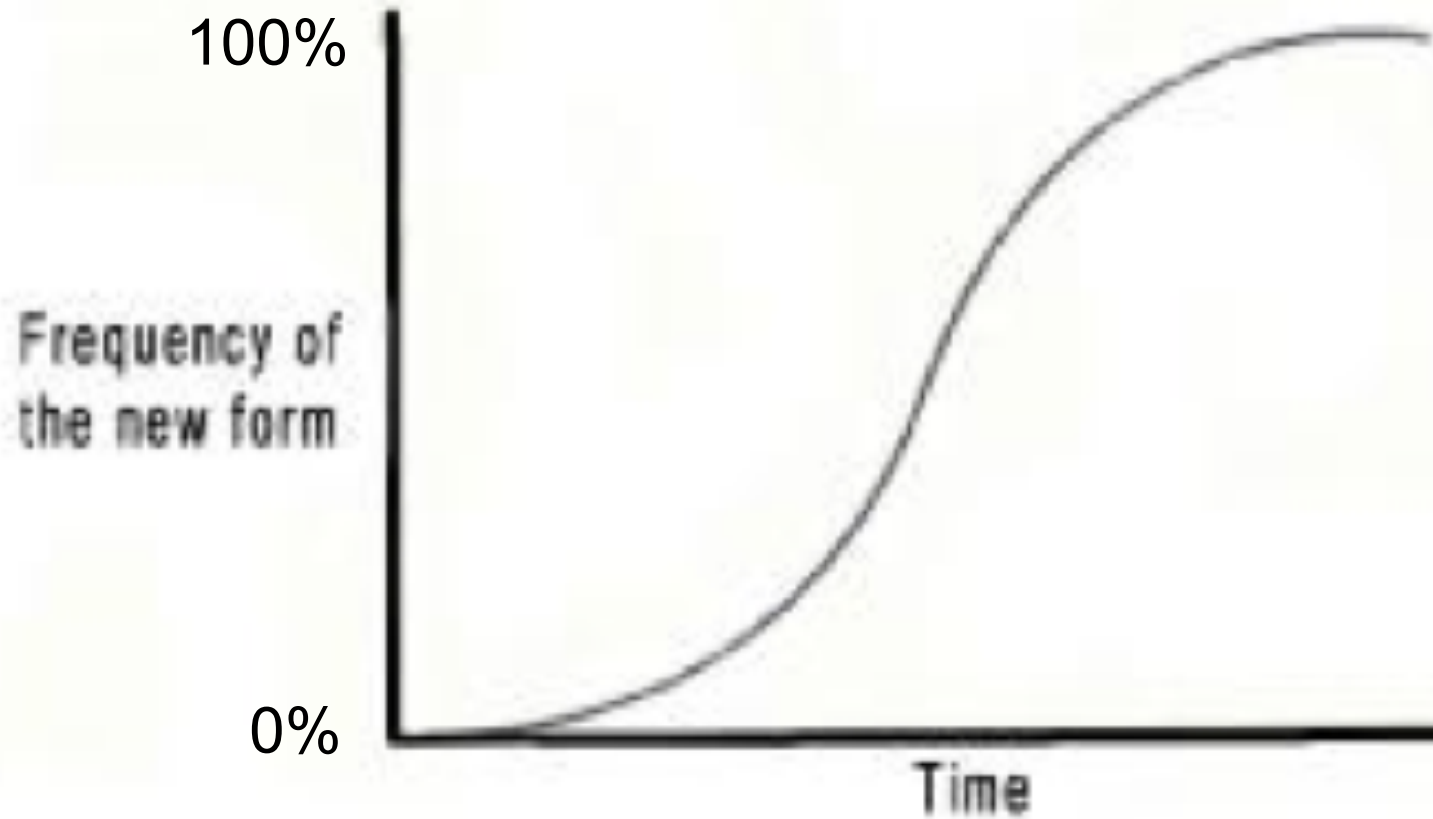
Stage	Onset <i>h</i> deletion in English	Unstressed	Stressed
1	Earliest stage, before undergoing change	1	1
2	Earlier stage at start of <i>h</i> loss	0>1	1
3	Change in full progress, <i>h</i> still exhibited by some older speakers in isolated dialect areas	1>0	0>1
4	Change progresses toward completion <i>h</i> exhibited in restricted environment by some speakers in isolated dialect	0	0>1
5	Completed change, includes most English dialects outside of isolated regions	0	0

Change slope hypothesis

Like diffusion through a social spectrum, spatial diffusion takes place in a three-part temporal process that simulates an *S* curve, with a period of infancy, of slow expansion, during which the trait is relatively uncommon; a middle period of rapid expansion after a critical threshold has been reached; and a later period of saturation and filling in as potential adopters become scarce.

(Bailey, Wikle, Tillery, and Sand 1993: 366)

Change slope hypothesis



Change in a lifetime: *be like*

Buchstaller and
D'Arcy (2009)

Data from
1990s

Table 2: Overall distribution of quotative verbs in younger and older speakers in AmE, EngE, and NZE

	Older		Younger	
	%	N	%	N
a: In AmE				
<i>be like</i>	3.6	16	13.6	89
<i>think</i>	10.5	46	7.6	50
<i>say</i>	53.0	233	35.2	231
<i>go</i>	2.0	9	7.2	47
∅	15.2	67	20.0	131
<i>be</i>	3.0	13	3.2	21
Other	12.7	56	13.3	87
Total		440		656
b: In EngE				
<i>be like</i>	0.5	4	7.0	92
<i>think</i>	7.6	55	9.1	120
<i>say</i>	68.0	495	37.1	487
<i>go</i>	2.1	15	20.0	263
∅	16.5	120	19.9	262
<i>be</i>	1.8	13	4.3	56
Other	3.6	26	2.6	34
Total		728		1314
c: In NZE				
<i>be like</i>	0.0	0	6.1	38
<i>think</i>	14.6	94	22.7	142
<i>say</i>	77.5	499	39.0	244
<i>go</i>	0.8	5	18.6	116
∅	5.3	34	9.8	61
<i>be</i>	0.0	0	1.0	6
Other	1.9	12	2.9	18
Total		644		625

Change in a lifetime: *be like*

Tagliamonte and
Denis (2014)

Data from
2005-2010

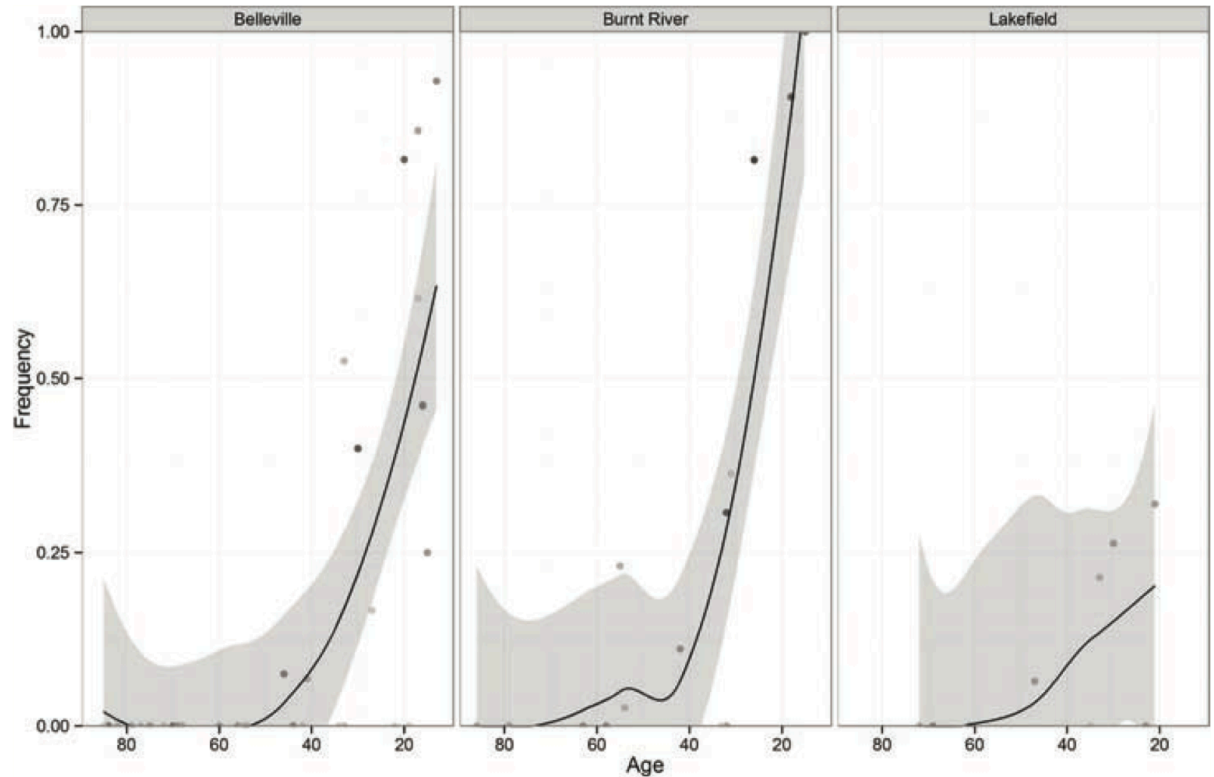


FIGURE 14. Scatterplot of individuals' frequency of *be like* across apparent time in SE Ontario.

Change in a lifetime: *be like*

	<i>be like</i>		<i>say</i>		<i>go</i>		<i>think</i>		∅		other	
	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>
TOR	63.7	2,093	13.3	436	3.4	112	3.0	99	12.0	396	4.6	152
BLV	19.6	177	44.1	397	3.4	31	8.8	79	20.6	186	3.4	31
BTR	40.4	175	41.8	181	2.1	9	6.5	28	6.9	30	2.3	10
LKF	14.6	29	53.3	106	1.5	3	9.5	19	16.6	33	4.5	9

TABLE 5. Overall distribution of quotative forms in Toronto, Belleville, Burnt River, and Lakefield.

Data from
2005-2010

Tagliamonte and
Denis (2014)

Change in a lifetime: *be like*

Table 8: Calculation of transfer for *be like* from AmE into NZE and EngE

	Form	Constraints	Ranking of constraints	Hierarchy of constraints	Overall
Person					
UK	x	x	x	x	4
NZ	x	x	x	x	4
Mimesis					
UK	x	x	-	x	3
NZ	x	x	-	x	3
Content					
UK	x	x	-	x	3
NZ	x	x	-	x	3
Tense					
UK	x	x	-	-	2
NZ	x	x	-	-	2

Buchstaller and
D'Arcy (2009)

Data from
1990s