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Abstracts • Résumés

Going back to the source: A comparative analysis of the expression of necessity in Hexagonal and Quebec French

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French spoken in Quebec (QF) is largely considered to be vastly different from Hexagonal France (HF) but this assumption has not been tested empirically. Systematic and accountable analyses of morphosyntactic features in HF are generally absent from the current body of linguistic research on French, which precludes the possibility of reliable comparison. This represents the main motivation for this study: to conduct a comparative variationist analysis of morphosyntactic variation in both varieties.

The variable under analysis here is the expression of necessity. Variants include *falloir*, *devoir*, *être obligé*, avoir *besoin*, and *avoir à*, though only the first two (shown in 1-3) have been the focus of prior (usually theoretical) studies.

> 1. Je **dois** aller.
> 2. Il **faut** que j'aille.
> 3. Il **faut** aller.

Extensive quantitative analysis of variant use (n= 2591) in large corpora of spontaneous speech (LLL-Orleans, 1968-2010; Branco-Rosoff et al., 2012; Poplack & Bourdages, 2005) revealed many striking similarities: both varieties make use of all of the variants and generally share the same underlying grammar for each. However, one clear difference emerged: while *falloir* dominates both systems, its form differs in the two varieties. The main variant in HF is *falloir* INF (3) while in QF, it is *falloir que* (2). Further analysis revealed that this difference is due to the independent phenomenon of *falloir que* emerging as the dominant lexical form in both the expression of the subjunctive (Poplack et al., 2013) and necessity in QF, which has led to a reorganization of the necessity system. QF speakers express the distinction between generic and non-generic necessity differently than HF speakers by using *falloir que* + tu_{indef} rather than *falloir* INF. This study contributes to clarifying our understanding of the (dis)similarities between HF and QF, and offers insight into the relationship between transplanted dialects and their source variety more generally.

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L'expression de la référence temporelle au futur dans les textos québécois et belges

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L'intérêt pour les aspects lexicaux et orthographiques de la langue des textos est marqué bien que la morphosyntaxe ait été négligée (Fairon et al. 2006). Par ailleurs, la difficulté à placer ce medium sur le continuum oral – écrit a fait couler beaucoup d'encre, sans qu'on envisage cette question sous l'angle de la variation. Notre recherche, qui porte sur la référence temporelle au futur (RTF), propose une analyse variationniste comparative de SMS belges et québécois.

Plusieurs études antérieures ont porté sur l'utilisation des trois principales variantes: le futur synthétique (FS), le futur analytique (FA) et le présent futural (PF). Ces études sur l'oral spontané ont porté sur les facteurs sociaux et linguistiques contraignant la variation dans plusieurs variétés de français. Alors qu'en français québécois, les contextes négatifs favorisent le FS (entre autres, Emirkanian & Sankoff 1986, Poplack & Turpin 1999, Blondeau, 2006, Wagner & Sankoff 2011), l'étude du français acadien montre que le choix de cette variante dépend de la distance temporelle (King & Nadasdi 2003, Comeau, 2015).

Notre analyse examine 1500 occurrences tirés des corpus belge et québécois du projet SMS pour la science (Fairon et al. 2006 et Langlais et al. 2012). La tendance générale indique que le FS est plus fréquent dans les textos qu'à l'oral spontané préalablement étudié. Par ailleurs, l'analyse variationniste des facteurs linguistiques (distance temporelle, présence d'adverbe, polarité, type de verbe, personne, et contingence) et sociaux (sexe et âge) montre des configurations communautaires différentes: 1- la présence du FS est plus importante en Belgique qu'au Québec, où c'est le FA qui est préféré; 2- la distance temporelle et le type de verbe sont des facteurs significatifs seulement dans le corpus belge; 3- la polarité est un facteur beaucoup plus significatif au Québec. En revanche, le PF exige la présence d'un adverbe dans les deux corpus.

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This seems to be on the way out: Covariants of *seem* subordination in Canadian and British English

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Five different complementizers, shown in (1), can link a perception verb to a finite subordinate clause in Canadian English.

(1) It seems (*like/as if/as though/that*/Ø) she's getting better quickly.

The dominant variant is *like* (López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2012) – an incoming form that now represents 68.2% of the comparative complementizers across several corpora of sociolinguistic interviews from Ontario (Tagliamonte 2003-06, 2006, 2007-10, 2010-13, 2013; Tagliamonte and Denis 2014). The alternatives are infrequent, particularly *as if* and *as though* (author 2011, 2014).

A broader, related change is also occurring in Ontario (author, 2015). The entire subordinate structure in (1) – mostly with *like* – is taking over from Subject-to-Subject raising in apparent time. In other words, (2b) is now catching on at the expense of (2a).

(2a) She seems to be getting better quickly.
(2b) (It/she) seems like she's getting better quickly.

Is this secondary change a consequence of *like* having overtaken the competing complementizers? Since the shift towards *like* in the UK is far behind Canada (López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2012), I use a methodologically comparable corpus from York, England (Tagliamonte 1996-98, 1998) to probe this issue. I find that *like* is low-frequency in York (13.2%) and that there is absolutely no evidence of a broader change. This suggests that the shift from (2a) to (2b) depends on a certain threshold of the *like* complementizer in the community grammar.

I propose that this is attributable to the syntactic/pragmatic versatility of the *like* complementizer. Because it supports optional copy-raising (Rogers 1973, Horn 1981, Asudeh and Toivonen 2007, *inter alia*), the matrix subject position can accommodate either an expletive or a noun phrase (as in 2b). These options correspond to different levels of evidentiality (Rogers 1974, Asudeh and Toivonen 2007, Rett and Hyams 2014), making the *like* construction more informative than its extant competitors.

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(Why) is code-switching sometimes a predictor of contact effects?

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We explore correlations between code-switching rates in heritage language speech and evidence of language contact effects. Previous studies find that the degree to which speakers code-switch had no correlation with their use of English-like preposition stranding in French (Poplack et al. 2012) or null subjects in Spanish (Torres Cacoullos & Travis 2010, 2011). In contrast, our study of word-final obstruent devoicing among second generation Heritage Polish speakers in Toronto reveals that the code-switching rate is positively and significantly correlated with speakers' rates of devoicing (n=1,010). In an attempt to reconcile these findings, we suggest that the phonology of a language (e.g., devoicing) is more susceptible to code-switching effects than the syntax (e.g., preposition stranding, null subjects).

We test this hypothesis by analyzing a syntactic feature of Heritage Polish – case-marking – using data from the same nine sociolinguistic interviews that provided the data in the devoicing study. For each speaker, the number of code-switches between Polish and English is counted and divided by the length of the interview, for a normalized measure of switches per minute. We find no correlation between speakers' rate of use of non-prescribed case markers (n=712) and their code-switching rate (Spearman's Rho = 0.57, p=0.11). We argue that this can be taken as evidence in favour of a distinction between phonological and syntactic variables in terms of their susceptibility to language contact effects through code-switching. However, we also raise the question of whether the distinction could be addressed in terms of: a) variables in which the Heritage Language and English systems are necessarily in competition with each other, as in preposition-stranding and case marking *vs.* b) variables in which the two systems can converge, as in devoicing.

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Codeswitches or borrowings: who cares? Evidence from English lone-origin nouns in Lebanese Arabic

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In studies on codeswitching, Arabic is often commissioned for counterexamples to even the most influential of theories (Bentahila et al. 2013). This disagreement about counterexamples is rooted in the contentious nature of donor material in any recipient language. The essential question is whether they are bona fide borrowed items or single-word code switches. The answer lies in the paramount importance that researchers elaborate empirically accountable procedures for differentiating lexical borrowing and code-switching (Poplack et al. 2015).

I address whether lone English-origin nouns (LEONS), in (1) in otherwise Lebanese Arabic (LA) behave like code-switches, deeming liable to be commissioned to contest a theory on code-switching; or like borrowings, deeming their use as counterexamples irrelevant. Applying the comparative variationist methodology, I make systematic comparison in the speech of Ottavian Lebanese/English highly proficient bilinguals, extracted from the spontaneous speech of a 16 speaker subsample of *Le Corpus Levantin d'Ottawa* (2012). I compare the behavior of the LEONS in otherwise LA discourse (N=230) with the behavior of their counterparts in the two benchmarks, unmixed LA (N=500) and unmixed English (N=500) extracted from the same subsample. Making use of *conflict sites*, I determine the grammar operating on these LEONS by assessing the coronal assimilation of the definite determiner (D), possession and plurality as diagnostics.

(1) Shou ha d-**decision** (019/856)
    What this DEF.decision
    "What kind of decision is this?"

Results show that LEONS mostly behave like their counterparts in LA by assimilating D to the following coronal, and adopting Arabic possession and plurality. Notably for *all* these diagnostics, they behave *very* differently from their English counterparts highlighting their *borrowing* status into LA rather than code-switches. This paper provides further evidence that LEONS cannot be brought to bear on any analysis of code-switching, let alone be used as counterexamples to such theories, without an empirical accountable methodology.

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Emerging Structure in Vowel-to-Vowel Coarticulation:
Indications of changes to the Canadian French vowel system in apparent time

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A characteristic feature of Canadian French is the presence of both tense and lax high vowels, but whether this difference is underlying or not is still debated (eg. Gauthier 2013). Looking at optional high-vowel laxing harmony, Poliquin (2006) found that a high vowel with more features in common with the following high vowel (backness, rounding) is more likely to match it in laxness. This study examines coarticulation in the mid vowel series, building on descriptions of their harmony-like tendency (eg. Landick 1995). Through the variationist framework, we seek to determine whether there's a relationship between the mid and high vowels, suggesting they may share features, and whether this relationship has changed.

The present study examines of 25 000 tokens of mid-vowels in non-final syllables extracted from the Laurentian surveys of the *Phonologie du français contemporain* corpus (Durand et al. 2002, 2009; www.projet-pfc.net). We analysed the first formant at the midpoint using mixed-effect linear regression, including the following vowel's height and its phonological similarity to the target vowel (matching rounding, laxing and backness), the target vowel's underlying height and features, and the speakers' age and gender.

We find not only that the target vowels' F1 is significantly affected by the following vowels' ($p<0.0001$), but that having more features in common with the following vowel significantly increases the amount of coarticulation ($p<0.0001$ for backness and $p=0.0014$ for rounding). The main finding, however, is that for younger speakers matching in laxness is significantly associated with more coarticulation as well ($p=0.00012$), which supports treating both mid and high vowels as having vowel pairs specified for laxing for younger speakers, rather than only treating the mid vowels as having two vowel series. More broadly, this suggests that empirically analysing gradient phonetic processes can allow us to better understand a phonological system as a whole.

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Cross-roads at the linguistic market: Canadian Raising and post-vocalic-R on Mount Desert Island

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Local identity practices are not as straight-forward as originally predicted (Labov 1972, 1963). In this project I build on previous work on local identity practices in coastal rural communities (e.g. Blake and Josey 2003, Josey 2004, Labov 1972, Wolfram 1997) in an investigation of local identity practice on Mount Desert Island, a tourist-dependent community in Eastern New England based on a corpus taken from sociolinguistic interviews (Tagliamonte 2006) with N = 12 native speakers of the Mount Desert Island community. I extracted N=576 tokens of post-vocalic-R (e.g. "car", "barn", produced variably with the /r/-segment following the vowel (Nagy and Roberts 2004, Irwin and Nagy 2007) and N=570 tokens of /aj/ and N=469 of /aw/ to investigate speakers' use of Canadian Raising (Chambers 1973, Dailey-O'Cain 1997).

Multivariate analyses show that the dropping of post-vocalic-R on Mount Desert Island is favoured by older women and persons whose socioeconomic livelihood depends on non-locals, suggesting that older women are responsible for maintaining local identity through language as found in other communities (Josey 2004) and that speakers are aware of their social position on the linguistic market (Bourdieu 1972).

Acoustic analyses of /aj/ and /aw/ shows that Canadian Raising is being introduced to the community. /Aj/ and /aw/ raising are being introduced to the community at different rates of change. I found a wide range of phonological and social variation in the use of Raising as is found in other communities where this feature is introduced in the northern United States (Vance 1987, Dailey-O'Cain 1997).

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Like in the Adjective Phrase: Queering ongoing change in Toronto, Canada

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The discourse-pragmatic uses of *like* have received substantial attention in the sociolinguistic literature (e.g. Andersen 1997; D'Arcy 2005, 2007, forthcoming). Of the many attested structural positions, the adjective phrase (AP), as in (1–2), is one of the more recent and innovative adjunction sites (D'Arcy 2005).

> (1) people are [*like* apprehensive] about talking to me (f/18)
> (2) maybe like if I was [*like* sick] or something like that (m/18)

This study focuses on AP *like,* contrasting two populations: (1) Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer (GLBQ) youth (Tagliamonte & Uscher 2009) and (2) the ambient youth population in the Toronto English Archive (TEA) (Tagliamonte 2003-2006). Results from over 3000 predicate APs in a sub-sample of 12 speakers (6 GLBQ and 6 TEA) show an overall distribution of 6% *like*, in line with earlier findings (D'Arcy 2005). However, with the added perspective of the GLBQ groups, the data reveal that AP *like* does not correlate with male speakers as in previous research (D'Arcy 2005). Instead, female GLBQ speakers lead in the use of AP *like* (9%), while GLBQ male, non-GLBQ male, and non-GLBQ female speakers all use AP *like* at the same rate (5%). Further, logistic regression analysis confirms that sexual orientation, not sex, is statistically significant; modelling this as an interaction factor group is also significant. These results provide evidence that a binary sex effect is not illuminating for this feature. Taken together, I argue that the earlier sex correlation is weakening, consistent with continuing grammaticalization. In ongoing research, the linguistic correlates and social meaning of *like* will be added to this perspective. At present, these results suggest that GLBQ women may be the leading edge of innovation in the ongoing grammaticalization of discourse-pragmatic AP *like.*

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L'usage des marqueurs discursifs en français laurentien : le cas des variantes *mais* vs. *ben*

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Introduction : Des études variationnistes (Roy 1979, Chevalier 2007, Leblanc & Philips 2015) sur le français acadien ont montré que la particule *ben* alterne avec d'autres marqueurs discursifs (*well*, *but*, *so*, *mais*). Par ailleurs, Arrighi (2013) a démontré que dans cette variété, la particule ben alterne avec la variante mais et serait en voie de la remplacer dans le discours. L'alternance *ben*/*mais* est aussi présente dans certains contextes en français laurentien (1), mais n'a pas encore fait l'objet d'une étude quantitative.

(1)   a. ***Mais*** c'est déplaisant se promener avec un char rouillé. (CFPQ 15, 1,8)
        b. ***Ben*** à l'école d'été il y en a beaucoup quand même des musulmanes. (CFPQ 10,1,12)).

La présente recherche vise à combler ce vide en proposant une analyse quantitative (avec Goldvarb X par Sankoff et al. 2005) de 6 sous-corpus du CFPQ (Dostie 2012).

Méthodologie : Notre analyse s'appuie sur l'étude de 892 occurrences, à savoir 450 *mais* et 442 *ben*. Chaque occurrence a été codifiée pour des facteurs linguistiques (type de phrase, position dans la proposition et degré de certitude) et sociaux (âge, sexe et groupe socioéconomique).

Résultats : L'analyse nous montre que *ben* est autant utilisé que mais. Le choix de *ben* est favorisé par ceux qui travaillent dans un cadre informel et celui de mais par ceux qui côtoient les cadres formels. Pour les facteurs linguistiques, la phrase interrogative favorise l'utilisation de *mais* tandis que *ben* est utilisé dans les déclaratives.

Conclusion : Au terme de notre étude, nous montrerons que *mais* est associé au standard. *Ben* par contre est une forme vernaculaire associée au français québécois. A cet effet, il n'y aurait pas d'évidence de remplacement de *mais* en français laurentien comme l'a été démontré en français acadien.

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Just a stereotype, eh?

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The Utterance Final Tag (UFT) *eh* is perhaps the most well known stereotype of Canadian English (Avis 1972, Gold and Tremblay 2006, Denis 2013). However, recent work has shown that *eh* is becoming more infrequent, making up less than 4% of all UFTs in Toronto, Canada's largest urban centre (Denis and Tagliamonte 2016). The present study examines the UFT system in two rural Ontario communities – Almonte and Wilno/Barry's Bay. A total of 4855 UFTs were extracted from sociolinguistic interviews from 78 speakers. Overall usage rates for *eh* are 22% and 39%, respectively, with individual rates ranging from 0% to 85% when compared with other variants. While overall rates in the populations are stable, there appears to be a decrease in *eh* use in apparent time for female speakers only. It is also evident that *eh* correlates with social class: in Almonte, speakers with postsecondary education have an average *eh* rate of 5%, compared to 25% for speakers without postsecondary education. Wilno/Barry's Bay shows trends in the same direction, with an average *eh* rate of 24% for speakers with postsecondary education and 47% for speakers without postsecondary education. These findings are consistent with Denis's claim that *eh* has indexed a "hoser" identity, that of the "non-urban, blue collar Canadian male" since at least 1980 (2013: 5).

I argue that there was a shift in the social meaning of *eh* in these communities in the mid 1940s from rural working class to masculine rural working class. Though *eh* may be on the decline in urban centres such as Toronto, these data show that *eh* is alive and well in certain sectors of the population. What speakers consider to be an urban/rural distinction is more nuanced in the rural context, a finding that cautions against lumping all rural Ontario areas together.

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Agreeing to disagree: the lexical effect on past participle gender agreement in French

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While standard French requires past participles (PastPs) to agree with their antecedents in syntactic configurations where the direct object precedes the verb, this rule is only applied variably in spoken Canadian French:

(1)   non-agreement: [FdO.150.120] <u>cette piste cyclable_{Fem}</u> là, on <u>l'</u> a pris_{Masc}

        agreement: [FdO.113.764] <u>le cours_{Masc}</u> … tu sais je <u>l'</u>ai pris_{Masc}

Using the *Corpus du français de l'Outaouais* (Poplack & Bourdages 2005), I exhaustively extracted all PastP forms with an audible difference between masculine and feminine realizations. I tested several claims from the literature, most of which ascribe the variation either to semantic factors such as specificity (Déprez 1998), or to social factors such as years of schooling (Brissaud 1999). I also included an innovative factor group to test lexical effects, based on the classification scheme in Tanase (1976) for PastP morphological endings, and then performed detailed sub-analyses to reveal the possible morphological, phonological, or frequency-related effects operating alongside this lexical group. The multivariate results failed to turn up any of the previously attested semantic or social effects. Instead, the factor that most strongly contributes to agreement is PastP ending. Past participles that end in –*s*, such as *assis.e*, strongly disprefer agreement, while those ending in -*rt*, such as *ouvert.e*, almost categorically select agreement. The sub-analysis results showed that this effect was not due to morphology, phonology, *or* frequency, but rather due to the lexeme of the PastP itself. Further evidence of this comes from the fact that some lexemes (e.g. *fait.e)* are still pronounced as though they bear agreement in syntactic configurations where no object precedes the verb, and therefore agreement is *pro*scribed (2):

(2)   "agreement" where *pro*scribed: [FdO.171.88] l'hygiéniste a pas faite_{Fem} beaucoup de cours

This is a novel and surprising finding contra previous results: the factor that determines the realization of PastP agreement is lexical.

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Subject-verb order in Jordanian Arabic: A variationist approach

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Word order has been a longstanding controversy in Arabic linguistics (Baker 1979; Dahlgren 1998; Brustad 2000; Edwards 2010; Holes 2010). Much previous research has been hampered by the use of decontextualized or intuited material. Conspicuously rare in contemporary studies of word order variation in Arabic are systematic analyses of spontaneous speech data (Edwards 2010:94; but see e.g., Owens, Dodsworth & Rockwood 2009).

Drawing on the framework of variationist sociolinguistics (Labov 1972), I conduct a quantitative analysis of word order variation in the speech of 30 speakers of Jordanian Arabic (JA) stratified by age, sex, education and urbanity. I utilized these spontaneous speech data to: (i) assess the frequency of different word order variants in JA; (ii) ascertain which social and linguistic factors constrain variant choice; and (iii) determine whether the apparent time component reveals any evidence of change in progress.

Distributional and multivariate analyses of 2049 tokens coded for several social and linguistic factors (e.g., morpholexical class of subject, animacy, grammatical person), confirm that word order variation is subject to multiple constraints (Holes 1995). A first important finding concerns the quantitative preponderance of SV(O) word order in vernacular JA, which competes with less frequent VS(O). Statistical analysis reveals that the presence of an object and definite subject pronouns are key predictors of SV(O) word order choice. Comparison of younger (18-40) speakers with older (40+) speakers offer provisional indications that alternation between SV(O) and VS(O) word orders is implicated in ongoing change. This inference is additionally bolstered by sex-differentiation (Labov 1990) and urban- rural split, with women and urban-origin speakers leading in the use of SV(O).

The results foreground that empirically accountable analyses of patterns of variation in apparent time offer an important evidence-based perspective on the possible evolution from VS(O) to SV(O) in the history of JA (El-Yasin 1985).

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Patterns of futurity: A variationist study of future temporal reference in spoken Italian

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The expression of future temporal reference (FTR) is a site of much variability in Italian. Unlike its Romance sisters, where the bulk of FTR is assumed by a periphrastic *go*-variant, Italian divides the labor between the synthetic future [SF], in (1), and the futurate present [P], in (2).

(1) Mi **darà** domani le bozze (R.1.421)
'Tomorrow he *will give* me the drafts.'
(2) Domani mattina stessa, magari la **chiamo** (N.4.338)
'Tomorrow morning maybe I *call* her'

What motivates a speaker to choose one rather than the other? The existing literature on the topic suggests that SF is the "default", but that specific conditions license P: adverbial specification (Berruto, 1990; D'Achille, 2006), proximity of the future predication and certainty with respect to its realization (Lepschy & Lepschy, 1981; Berretta, 1994). But a major factor is speech style: SF is reportedly associated with more formal situations (Coveri, Benucci, Diadori, 1998).

Based on analysis of 424 tokens of FTR in the *Lessico di frequenza dell'Italiano Parlato* (LIP; De Mauro *et al.* 1993), this study constitutes an empirical test of these hypotheses in a variationist approach. Results confirm, as expected, that variability in FTR expression in Italian is heavily constrained, albeit not by the factors cited in the literature as operative. Speech style turns out to play no role, nor is SF affected by uncertain predications; it is favored in adverbially and temporally unspecified contexts. SF is favoured as well as with third person subject and formal *lei*.

Although negative polarity has never been invoked previously for Italian, the marginals of negation (63%) demontrate a favourable effect for SF despite the fact it does not reach the threshold of statistical significance. I explore the similarities of the underlying grammars, as expressed by conditioning, between Italian and its well-documented French sister (Poplack & Dion, 2009).

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Continuing our Study of Stable Variation: The Role of Continuous Factor Groups

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Language change necessitates variation – no language change can happen without it – but the reverse is not always true: sometimes a variable remains stable over time. To better diagnose change vs. stable variation, we must clarify the differences between them. Wallenberg and Fruehwald (2013) propose that a key difference between them is the type of factor constraining each: factors that exist along a continuum will block language change, keeping the variable stable. Language change is the default, but if a variable is governed by a continuous factor, this will lead to the variable's stability over time (*ibid*.). Any continuous constraining factor should induce stability in the variable, regardless of whether or not it is governed by other discrete factors. That is, all stable variables should be constrained by at least one continuous factor, while no language change variables should be constrained by any continuous factors.

The Wallenberg-Fruehwald hypothesis is supported by their analysis of only 3 dependent variables. This study tests provides a more stringent test by analyzing 31 dependent variables found in articles published in *Language Variation and Change*. Relevant articles in Vols. 22-27, the period during which Rbrul and its capacity for testing continuous factors has emerged as a common tool, were examined. Each dependent variable reported for each article was coded as 'stable' or 'changing.' Factors constraining each variable were coded as 'continuous' or 'discrete.' Of the 23 language change variables analyzed, none were reported to be constrained by continuous factors; of the 8 stable variables analyzed, only one was found *not* to be associated with any continuous factors (in the one exception, no continuous factors were tested). This significant distinction (Fisher's Exact Test p<0.01) supports the Wallenberg-Fruehwald hypothesis, indicating that following this lead would expand our knowledge of a key distinction between stable variation and language change.

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Stative Possessives in Newfoundland English: A Tale of Two Cities

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Variability in the use of stative possessives (*have, have got, and got*) is a distinguishing feature of varieties of English (Tagliamonte, 2003). *Have* has been reported to be on the rise as the preferred variable in Canadian English and correlates with youth and education in Toronto English (Tagliamonte et al. 2010). *Got* is clearly identified as non-standard and is frequently stigmatized.

This paper investigates participation in mainstream Canadian English developments in an urbanizing variety of Newfoundland English. Petty Harbour is a former fishing community that is now a commuter town close to St. John's, the provincial capital. 27 speakers from the Petty Harbour Corpus (PH) were subsampled and stratified according to age and gender. A total of 1,565 tokens were coded for three linguistic factors: Subject Type, Subject Reference, and Object Type.

Analysis reveals that Petty Harbour youth are about a generation behind Toronto English speaking youth. Petty Harbour youth patterns with the middle group described in Tagliamonte et al. (2010). The choice of stative possessive in Newfoundland English appears to boil down to two variants, *have* and *got.* They each carry their own social meanings. Multivariate analysis reveals that the choice of stative possessive is conditioned by subject type. *Got* forms are favoured with pronouns.

Furthermore, preliminary investigations of a different corpus reveal that the innovative mainland pattern of stative possessives is slowly gaining elsewhere in Newfoundland. In Corner Brook, a smaller city on the island's west coast, younger speakers appear to be patterning with the oldest generation in Tagliamonte et al. (2010). In other words, the move toward *have* is yet another generation slower. This suggests that this innovation is diffusing from the mainland to the St. John's area, and then on to regions farther from the capital. It also argues that distance from the capital, not city size, is the main factor determining participation in language change.

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Three Early Modern English Ladies

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Throughout Middle and Early Modern English (EME), individuals shifted their use of the third person singular suffix from –th to –s (Raumolin-Brunberg, 2005), as in (1-2), from the Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence (PCEEC):

(1) "[My uncle] *knoweth* the valew of an oth." (Arabella Stuart, 1603)
(2) "Mr. Doctor Mondford *hopes* I may recover." (Arabella Stuart, 1610)

This change began in Northern England during the 10th century, gradually moved south and gained popularity among the upper ranks by the end of the 17th century (Raumolin-Brunberg, 2005, p. 41). The PCEEC shows that the later an individual was born the higher the frequency of –s and -s increased across the lifespan (Raumolin-Brunberg, 2005, p. 46). Sir Walter Ralegh, an Elizabethan courtier, is a case in point: his –s use rose from ~10% to ~50% between 1580 and 1609 (Raumolin-Brunberg, 2005). The current study examines letters of three early modern English ladies to investigate whether they align with previously investigated gentlemen (Raumolin-Brunberg, 2009) and (a small sample of) ladies (Raumolin-Brunberg, 2005) in the –th to –s shift.

Arabella Stuart, Anne Howard and Elizabeth Neville all shift from –th to –s across their lifetime; however–s is highly constrained by the letter's recipient, recipient's gender, subject of the sentence and letter's register. Further, for Arabella Stuart an increase in –s appears in less formal letters to female recipients in sentences with non-royal subjects. In Arabella Stuart's formal (often apologetic) letters, she almost always uses the older –th form. These results align with the historical facts on this variable: formal, "literary genres [employed] the conservative –th [and] the more oral [informal] genres [used] –s." (Raumolin-Brunberg, 2005, p. 41); however, they demonstrate that although speakers shift in the direction of a change in progress across their lifetime (e.g. Sankoff & Blondeau 2007) style-shifting is deeply implicated.

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Revitalizing Old Relatives: Evidence from Early and Late Modern English (1571-1796)

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Efforts to transcend the problem of the 'bad data' of language history (Labov 1994) have inspired the quest for diachronic sources which approximate *spoken* interactions of the past. This talk describes the use of one such novel data source taken from the *Corpus of English Dialogues* (Culpeper & Kytö 2010) and the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (Hitchcock et al. 2012). The data comprise dialogic exchanges between court officials, prisoners and witnesses. While these texts are not verbatim reports of actual speech, their value resides in their *speech-based* content (Culpeper & Kytö 2010:17).

Our primary focus is on restrictive relativization in the 17th and 18th centuries. Drawing on more than 1800 restrictive relative clauses coded for relative marker and its syntactic function; definiteness and animacy of the antecedent NP; as well as the syntax of the matrix clause and length of the relative clause, we track the evolution of restrictive relative constructions over 225 years (1571-1796). The ascendancy of normative ideologies in the 18th century (Beal 2004) additionally enables us to assess the impact of prescriptive grammar on restrictive relativization strategies.

The results turn up a number of key findings. Contrary to claims in the literature (Dekeyser 1984), subject relative omission does not decline during the period under investigation. In the 18th century, non-subject relative omission increases in the speech-based data at a time when writers were enjoined to be 'relative pronoun-minded' (Visser 1970:54). And at the end of the 18th century, *who* marks only 19% of subject relatives, contrasting markedly with Ball's (1996:249) figure of 89% for literary texts from the same period.

The results show that changes in the variable grammar are minimally impacted by prescriptive ideologies. Above all, they demonstrate the capacity of novel data sources to shed new light on the evolution of restrictive relativization strategies and challenge existing findings.

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Great, cool, and *amazing*: Adjectives of positive evaluation in Canadian English

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Adjectives that encode positive evaluation, as in (1-3), provide character, emotion and affective meaning to vernacular usage.

(1)   **a.** It was *fantastic.* **b.** The singers were *amazing* and **c.** gave a *great* history of music.
(2)   **a.** Aww, that's *awesome,* **b.** really *amazing.*
(3)   [1] How are you doing? [2] I'm *great*.

Building on earlier quantitative analysis of adjective usage in Canadian English (Tagliamonte & Brooke 2014), this paper examines variation and change in 4000 adjectives of positive evaluation using semantic fields to circumscribe the variable context (Thibault 1991) and quantitative comparative methods (Poplack & Tagliamonte 2001; Tagliamonte 2002). Considered diachronically, more and more of these adjectives have been added to English since Old English (OED), and in contemporary usage there are many different types. The most frequent variants in Canada are *great* (22.1%)*, cool* (21.5%), *amazing* (8.5%), *wonderful* (5.6%), and *awesome* (5.3%). However, their distribution in apparent time mirrors the historical trajectory in terms of frequency: older forms, such as *wonderful, amazing,* and *terrific* are favoured by elderly speakers, while newer variants, such as *awesome*, are favoured by those born in the 1980's. Logistic regression analysis confirms that age is most significant predictor. Older variants are also favoured in attributive position, as in (1c), while newer variants favour predicative and solitary functions, as in (2) and (3). The co-occurrence with intensifiers, as in (2b) is also positively correlated with speaker age. Many adjectives of positive evaluation have well defined heights of usage, e.g. *wonderful* (1920's), and then decline, suggesting that while the variation in this system is structured, the forms themselves are highly sensitive to culture, opening up new possibilities for pinpointing the actuation of linguistic change.

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A 'little' story from Northern Ontario: Semantic variation in the linguistic system

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In this paper we present a comparative sociolinguistic analysis of the adjectives of smallness, as in (1-4), in contemporary Ontario English using eight socially stratified corpora; one urban and the others of varying size, social structure, and distance from the urban epicentre.

(1) Oh I hate North Bay, you know, it's so *small*
(2) There's a *little* gully near our house
(3) So you went to these very *tiny* schools
(4) Burnt River which is ... a *wee little* town

Our goal is to examine the effects of transmission and diffusion (Labov 2007), the Founder Principle (Mufwene 1996) and the historical origins of dialects (Poplack & Tagliamonte 2001).

With 6117 tokens across 11 types, we first examine overall frequencies by date of birth of speakers and geographic location and then test for social and linguistic predictors using mixed effects models and the comparative sociolinguistic method.

Little and *small* are the most common variants at 75% and 21% respectively. The form *wee* is circumscribed to places with Scots founders (Almonte) demonstrating longitudinal retention, while *tiny* is a minor variant in small northern towns (Kirkland Lake and Temiskaming Shores) and among the elderly in Toronto, suggesting obsolescence. The contrastive frequencies of *little* and *small* are stable over time and across communities, revealing remarkable grammatical stability in this area of grammar. Moreover, the variants are conditioned by a strong and parallel internal constraint: *small* is favoured in predicative position (1) and *little* in attributive position (2).

We explore the nuances of this constraint, which appears to involve the nature of prototypical meanings and their grammaticalization, potentially offering the comparative enterprise a new line of explanatory evidence. Our findings highlight how synchronic dialect data expose not only the history and development of contemporary dialects but also the deep underlying nature of grammar.

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