L-Vocalisation in Somerset

Submitted for examination for the degree of

PhD in Linguistics

April 2023

By

Victoria Garnett

Supervisor: Dr. Jeffrey Kallen

School of Linguistics, Speech and Communication Science

Trinity College Dublin

Volume 1 of 2

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work.

I agree to deposit this thesis in the University's open access institutional repository or allow the Library to do so on my behalf, subject to Irish Copyright Legislation and Trinity College Library conditions of use and acknowledgement.

I have read and I understand the plagiarism provisions in the General Regulations of the University Calendar for the current year, found at http://www.tcd.ie/calendar.

I have also completed the Online Tutorial on avoiding plagiarism 'Ready Steady Write', located at http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/ready-steady-write.

Signed:  Date: 24 April 2023

Abstract of Thesis

Traditional dialects in British English are undergoing a process of change, due in part to urbanisation, increased social mobility and language contact through population movement. Within British English there are several phonological changes occurring, including L-Vocalisation: the process whereby realisations of /l/ change from a Clear or Dark /l/ into a vowel sound. This process has occurred before during the Middle English period, resulting in the total deletion of /l/ in words such as *talk, calf, yolk*. The modern process of L-vocalisation in British English varieties appears to be the result of dialect levelling via diffusion from the South East of England. This thesis therefore asks three research questions: What is the realisation of /l/ in Somerset, what evidence is there of variation and change, and what factors (e.g., dialect levelling) are influencing these patterns? Taking influence from research into the ongoing changes throughout other British English varieties, this thesis adopts a field-study approach, conducting interviews with participants from two locations in Somerset: Central Somerset and West Somerset. These areas are selected for their contrast of urbanising space in Central Somerset and a more rural landscape found in West Somerset. Data is a combination of a reading exercise, and a more conversational interview in order to capture two registers of speech. The results and subsequent analysis find that L-vocalisation in a Coda position is in wide use throughout different areas in Somerset. In both West and Central Somerset, there is an increase in the use of vocalised forms of Coda /l/ since the time of the SED. Moreover, it finds that dialect levelling via diffusion of L-vocalisation is not universal throughout the county: rather its use reinforces and maintains existing dialect boundaries across the county, promoting the divide between the rural and the urbanising areas.

Acknowledgements

In researching and writing this thesis, I am indebted to the following for their support:

I wish to thank my supervisor Dr. Jeffrey Kallen for his unwavering patience, his expert guidance and his supreme generosity. Thanks also to Dean of Graduate Studies Prof. Martine Smith, and Dr. Kathleen McTiernan, Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning in the School of Linguistics, Speech and Communication Studies.

My thanks also go to my examiners for their helpful recommendations and thorough review of previous iterations of this thesis.

I first wish to thank the Trinity Long Room Hub for financial support for travel to conferences, as well as tuition fees for the 2017-18 academic year.

I also wish to thank and acknowledge the funding and support afforded to me by the Malcolm McEwen Trust (administered by the Exmoor Society), who provided funding not only for recruitment activities in West Somerset but also a travel bursary that enabled me to carry out my research on Exmoor. I wish to thank Honorary Secretary of the Malcolm McEwen Trust Dr Graham Wills, and Exmoor Society Chairman Rachel Thomas and former Exmoor Society Archivist Dr Helen Blackman for their enthusiasm and support in putting together the Exmoor Language Garden, for administering the Malcolm McEwen Trust funding, and for providing links and contacts within the Exmoor area.

While I am from Somerset, my social network does not extend to West Somerset, and therefore much assistance was needed to both gain an insight into 'the way things are done' on Exmoor, as well as establishing links and contacts in the locations around the Moor. To that end, I wish to thank Jan Ross and Sue Cottrell at the Exmoor Heritage Centre in Dulverton; the wonderfully generous Brenda Staples and the team at the Winsford Archive; Dave Gurnett at the Exmoor National Park Authority, local historian Richard Westcott; Harriet Gurney at Minehead First School; Wendy Daughtrey of Dulverton Middle School; the speakers at the Exmoor Language Garden in 2015: local musicians Tom and Barbara Brown of Umber Music, local author Victoria Eveleigh, local historian Steven Pugsley, and Tony Takle. I also wish to thank Denise Stanbury who not only recruited what seemed like half of Exford to take part in my study, but also generously handed over the use of her lounge for an entire Friday evening so I could conduct my interviews there! In other parts of Somerset, I was also very kindly and generously helped in my recruitment by Brian Smedley, Scott Temblett, Katy Gilmartin, Jack Sweet, and Steve Haigh.

I would also like to thank the 51 people who took part in my research across Somerset. They will not be named here for the purposes of confidentiality, but I am so grateful to them for letting me into their homes, sharing their stories with me, and every one of them teaching me something new. They are the heart of this thesis.

Robyn Homeniuk and Kristen Schuster for their guidance and expert knowledge in statistical analysis.

On a more personal level, I would like to thank the following people.

Dr. Jennifer Edmond for mentoring me through academia, being exceptionally accommodating, and providing me with so many opportunities to develop skills and relationships that I might not otherwise have been opened to.

My colleagues in DARIAH-EU and the eCloud and PARTHENOS projects who have encouraged me throughout my studies. It would not be possible to name all of them, but there are those who have almost vicariously lived my PhD experience who I would like to name: Agiati, Arnaud, Erzsébet, Frank, Kristen, Sally, Sheena, Steven and Toma.

My 'office buddies' at the Trinity Long Room Hub: (in chronological order) Jo, Deirdre, Catherine, Joanne, Karolina, Emma, Francesca, Georgina, Michelle, Gill, Sharon, Eliza and Debs. the entire duration, and I am very grateful to them. The hard-working team in the Trinity Long Room Hub who provide such a supportive space for early career researchers. While I haven't officially been one of the Hub Scholars, Jane, Caitriona and the team have always supported my research, and offered advice at the right moment.

My friends have done a fantastic job of keeping me sane over the past decade, and in particular I would like to thank my 'Taskmaster' friends Angelina, Maria, Mento, Mo, Robyn and Sorcha for their encouragement, my PhD siblings Deirdre, Steve and Kathy, as well as Victoria Squire and Sarah Coombs for their review of my 'Somerset' information to make sure I represented the county properly. Thanks also to Elaine Ní Chiarba and Derva O'Driscoll. I particularly thank Meabh Ni Loinghsigh who very kindly loaned me her Zoom recording equipment for the duration of the PhD in order to obtain high quality recordings.

Finally, I'd like to extend my most heartfelt thanks to my family, and my long-suffering and exceptionally patient husband Stu, who has made the same sacrifices as I have in the process of this thesis, kept a roof over our heads, and made sure that I remain fed. No amount of thanks will ever be enough.

For Ray Garnett
1930-2022

Table of Contents

Volume 1

Volume 2

List of Tables

List of Figures

1 Introduction

Where once traditional dialects were abundant throughout England, to the extent that dialects could vary from village to village, the changes that English dialects have undergone have now left a dialectal map that sees less linguistic variety as one moves from location to location. Traditional dialects in British English are undergoing a process of change, due in part to urbanisation, increased social mobility and language contact through population movement. The mechanisms at play that result in dialect change can be categorised into two main types: the endogenous system internal change, and exogenous, sociolinguistic change (Trudgill, 1999). This external change can be the result of contact with other varieties, or can also involve extra-linguistic social psychological factors such as identity (e.g. Beal, 2010; Eckert, 1989), or demography (Coates, 2006; Kerswill, 2003). Among these contact-induced changes, there have been different categorisations applied to the processes. One outcome of such processes is regional dialect levelling, which has become of increased interest to modern dialectologists. The processes leading to (regional) dialect levelling and standardisation occur globally, and the study of them has provided universal models that can tell us much about the manner in which new features are diffused, as well as how they are resisted.

1.1 Research Questions

This thesis will investigate the progress of dialect change through rural and urbanising areas in the South West of England. It will first look at the broader patterns in language variation and change, including the theories and methods employed in modern dialectology, before moving on to discuss these factors in British English varieties. In particular, the history, boundaries and identities within the area of study, specifically Somerset, will be considered, representing as it does a traditional dialectological area. Taking L-vocalisation as a phenomenon for study, this thesis will then propose a hypothesis, and draw up a methodology for data collection and analysis. Results are discussed in the context of British English varieties and reviewed to determine if the rural and urbanising nature of the areas has an impact on dialect levelling, and if so, how.

This thesis therefore poses three broad research questions: What is the realisation of /l/ in Somerset, what evidence is there of variation and change, and what factors (e.g., dialect levelling) are influencing these patterns? The background to these questions is discussed in the following two chapters, at the end of which they are framed in the context of current knowledge and re-presented.

1.2 Key Findings of the Thesis

The primary finding within this thesis is that, in line with the rest of the south of England, L-vocalisation has increased considerably in Coda positions over the past 60 years. In most cases Coda /l/ is realised as a rounded vocalised form of either [u] or [ʊ]. Unrounded vocalised forms are also found, as well as a low rate of complete deletion.

Additionally, this thesis finds that the patterns of these realisations do differ slightly across the two locations studied, and that there may be different motivations for change in realisation of /l/. In the case of the more central urbanising locations, there is evidence to suggest that L-vocalisation is occurring as a result of diffusion from larger nearby urban spaces. The different patterns in use, though, indicate that the cause of the change may not entirely be due to external influences in all communities, but may instead be due to internal motivations for change that reinforce a sense of identity in the more rural parts of the county.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is interested in how language variation and change can occur in a rural dialect or dialects, particularly in the face of a changing population and economy. L-vocalisation is used as the focus of the study to determine any potential change and the progress of possible dialect levelling.

Chapter 2 will discuss the different types of language change, the theoretical approaches that have been taken by traditional and modern dialectologists to study language change, and issues that form much of the current discussion around dialect change in modern linguistics, including motivations behind regional dialect levelling and standardisation that have been observed broadly, with focus on that seen in British English.

Chapter 3 will therefore look at the progress of dialect levelling in British English more broadly, as well as common sound changes taking place within the country. It will then go on to discuss Somerset as the location of interest within this thesis.

Chapter 4 will look much more closely at L-vocalisation, specifically the articulation and linguistic constraints of realisations of (l), the geographical patterns of L-vocalisation globally and then in British English varieties, before then discussing the social factors related to L-vocalisation.

Chapter 5 discusses methodological considerations relating to the research design, including ethical and practical issues in the design of the data gathering process, and the subsequent processing and analysing of the data.

Chapters 6 and 7 present the results, first by age (Chapter 5) and then by gender (Chapter 6), which reveal a real-time change in the use of (l) since the Survey of English Dialects (Orton et al., 1967). Chapter 8 then discusses the results in the context of linguistic constraints, social constraints, and the known patterns of diffusion that can lead to dialect levelling and language change. Ultimately, the historical dialectal boundary between Central and West Somerset dialects is shown to be reinforced in the face of diffusion of L-vocalisation.

Chapter 9 concludes the thesis, providing a summary of the overall findings, critiquing the approach taken and offering possibilities for future research.

2 Language Change and Issues of Modern Dialectology

2.1 What is Language Change?

The diachronic study of language and how it has changed throughout millennia has been a subject of great interest to dialectologists for centuries. It reached particular scrutiny in the 19th Century when the Neogrammarian theories of sound change and the tenet of regular exceptionless change within a language system became a basis for historical linguists. Much of the study, though, has rested on completed changes rather than stages of transition. As a result, Neogrammarians were only able to identify change retrospectively, and could not identify changes in progress. In the broadest terms, changes that occur in language can be placed into two major headings: structural change and realisational change.

Structural sound change occurs in the phonology of a language when phonemes are created or lost within that phonological system, as a result of either a split or a merger. A split occurs where allophones or variants of the same phoneme become phonemes in their own right. This process is also called **phonologisation,** whereby, according to Jakobson a contrast emerges where previously it was accounted for through allophony, and as a result, there is a loss or change to the phonological environment (Jakobson, 1931, cited in Weinreich et al., 1968). Splits can also be seen historically. During the Early Modern English era, around the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, words such as *meat* and *mate* were homonyms in British English varieties. However, words that were previously in the same word-class began to break out into a new class. If we frame these word groups in terms of Wells' Lexical Sets (Wells 1982), words such as *great* and *break* remained in the FACE group, whereas words such as *beat*, *meat,* and *wreak* moved towards the FLEECE group. Guy (2003) suggests that this isn't a split in the strictest sense, though, as there must have been something within the group that made them at least minutely phonetically distinct from one another, enough to cause a split and be reinterpreted phonemically.

The opposite of phonologisation is **dephonologisation,** whereby the phonemes merge, resulting in the loss of a phoneme from the phonological system (Weinreich et al., 1968). Eckert and Labov (2017) argue that mergers are easily identified, and are not typically ascribed social meaning. The pin/pen merger before nasals found for example in southern states of America

(see e.g. Labov et al., 2008) where vowels in words from the DRESS are raised towards the KIT set, but not the other way around.

Structural sound changes can involve a number of interrelated smaller changes. Where this happens, we can get 'chain shifts', of which the best-known example in English is the Great Vowel Shift. Watson, Maclagan and Harrington (2000) demonstrated how the vowels of New Zealand English have changed over a 50 year period between the mid-1940s and the mid-1990s as a result of what they determined to be overcrowding in the front vowel space, resulting in a drag-chain effect that raised HEAD and HAD. This, they continued, may have been the result of HID becoming centralised in stressed positions in order to increase its perceptual salience, and thus dragging HEAD and HAD into the space. Alternatively, the movement of HID created room in the mid-high front vowel space into which these two vowels could move independently. This movement of HID in New Zealand English contrasts with the Australian English movement of HID, which became more tense, but both, Watson et al argue, occurred through a need to provide 'greater opportunities to hyperarticulate it when it occurs in accented position' (C. I. Watson et al., 2000, p. 66). However, Torgersen and Kerswill (2004) reviewed Labov's principles of vowel shift in the light of more data from the south-east of England from their own study, and from additional studies in the area. They found evidence to contradict these principles. In particular they found that, in contrast to Labov's Principle I (tense nuclei will rise along a peripheral track), studies showed younger speakers in South East London were using a more open realisation of TRAP and DRESS vowels, and no other tense vowels were becoming raised (see Tollfree, 1999). North East of London, Trudgill (1986, 1999) reported lowering and fronting of STRUT, and no instances of raising.

Chain shifts within the phonological structure are inherently structural. Summarising this kind of phenomenon, Labov's Principles of Vowel Shift (1994) demonstrated universal patterns of movement within the vowel space of any language variety. He developed these universal principles by looking into historical vowel shifts that had occurred throughout European and Asian languages, such as the Great Vowel Shift in English, the Czech Vowel Shift, and the Middle High German Vowel Shift. In doing so, he ultimately identified the following principles:

> PRINCIPLE I - In chain shifts, tense nuclei rise along a peripheral track
> PRINCIPLE II - In chain shifts, lax nuclei fall along a non-peripheral track
> PRINCIPLE IIa - In chain shifts, the nuclei of upgliding diphthongs fall
> PRINCIPLE III - In chain shifts, back vowels move to the front
> (Labov, 1994, p. 116)

However, in line with Labov's Principle III, Torgersen and Kerswill further reported evidence from previous studies[1] of GOOSE and FOOT fronting in South East England, and Milton Keynes (to the north west of London) respectively.

Realisational change occurs when the sound produced may change, but the structure of the phonology remains intact. That is, a new variant may arise in the realisation of a phoneme, but it doesn't have an impact on the use of the phoneme itself, nor does it make any structural changes elsewhere in the phonology. Realisational changes could also be considered 'conditioned changes' as they may only happen within specific phonetic constraints rather than at a more universal level. In that sense, it occurs at a more allophonic level than phonemic. For example, in English varieties, the phoneme /k/ can be realised as an aspirated [k^h], as in an onset initial position, e.g., *kit* [k^hɪt], or unaspirated [k] as may occur in an onset cluster position such as *skit* [skɪt]. If a speaker uses an unaspirated [k] in *kit*, as may be found in some Scottish dialects (for example, see (Wells, 1982b) the meaning of the word is not changed, nor is it a change in the structural use of the phoneme.

Reallocation is a process that can result in either structural or realisation change that occurs when allophones of a phoneme shift closer to or completely into another word class, which can also be interpreted as **rephonologisation**, where structure is unchanged but phonemes are reinterpreted (Jakobson, 1931 cited in Weinreich et al., 1968). Splits and mergers in the system result in structural change to that system as either new phonemes are 'promoted' from the allophonic level, or phonemes are lost or perhaps 'relegated' to allophony. With rephonologisation, the inventory of the phonological structure remains intact, but the phonemes themselves are reinterpreted. A contrast is still in place, but the phonemes providing that contrast may change. Millar and Trask give the example of all instances of Middle English /i/ becoming the diphthong /ai/ in Modern England (see Millar & Trask, 2015, pp. 138–139). They argue that while this kind of change may not typically have a great impact on the language (no new phonemes are created, nor are any lost as a result of this kind of change) it can still be classed as rephonologisation, resulting in a reorganisation but not restructuring of the phonological system.

Reallocation can occur as a result of language contact and koineization (discussed in Section 2.5.3), through which two varieties may have two different allophones in use for one lexical set[2]. When this happens, it is likely that one allophone will be used in one phonetic or

[1] Torgerson and Kerswill reported data from Torgersen (1997) and Kerswill and Williams (2000a)

[2] This is of course an oversimplification as it is also possible that a dialect or language may have two distinct phonemes for two otherwise identical lexical items, whereas another dialect may only have one phoneme in use. The FOOT/STRUT distinction in the south of England, operating with two distinct phonemes is in contrast to the mono-phonemic use in the north of England, for example.

lexical position, and the other allophone may be used in a different one. This may result in a split in the word-class that causes some words to shift into a different or new lexical set. Horvath and Horvath (2001) give an example of reallocation in Australian English, whereby the two allophonic uses of the BATH vowel in British English (typically /æ/ used in the northern dialect of England, and /a/ found in most southern dialects) that were brought to Australia have now split into two distinct phonemes. The /æ/ form is used in environments preceding nasal consonant clusters, bringing them into the TRAP lexical set, and /a/ is used in most other environments, putting them in the PALM lexical set.

In summary, there are two main types of sound change that can occur: structural change, where the phonological structure of the language is altered, and realisational change where the phonological structure remains intact but the realisation of phonemes within it is altered. A third change, reallocation (or rephonologisation) can incorporate either of these two changes. The changes that occur do not necessarily happen in isolation, particularly in the case of structural changes, where the impact of a structural change can have a knock-on effect on surrounding phonemes, sometimes resulting in chain shifts.

While these processes describe the ultimate linguistic outcome of a change, they do not explain what triggers such a change. Changes do not happen spontaneously, there is often something either linguistic within the system (for example, a chain shift already in progress), or something extra-linguistic occurring within the environment or speech community that can influence the change. This chapter will discuss such influences.

This thesis is particularly concerned with realisations of (l). Changes that are occurring in English language varieties with regard to (l) are not structural in nature, but there are certainly realisational changes that could see it encroaching into another phonemic space, for example where L-vocalisation could bring /l/ close to a vocoid such as /ʊ/ to a point where they could merge.

2.2 Dialects as Repositories

The study of historical sound change among the 19th century German-based linguists enabled contemporaneous English dialectologists to look to the dialects in Britain as a means to both reconstruct historical iterations of English, and to try to capture them in their use at that point before further change occurred. Even within modern dialects, historical linguistic artefacts can still be found linking that dialect to an older form of the language. Some of the clearest examples can be found in place names and topography that demonstrate the history of both the country, and the progress of the changes in a language. Parts of north and east England that were held under Danelaw after repeated Norse invasions still retain dialectal terms in use

today, such as '*fell', 'dale',* and '*-by*' at the end of place names that correspond directly to the modern Nordic languages e.g. Icelandic '*fjall', 'dalur', 'bær*', Norwegian '*fjell', 'dal', 'by*' (respectively '*hill/mountain', 'valley', 'town*'). By contrast, to continue with these examples, place names in the south west of England still point to Celtic or Norman French origins where the Vikings had less of an influence, giving '*tor', 'combe'* and '*-ton*'.

This was one of the underlying principles of the English dialectologists of the 19th Century, who travelled the countryside to collect dialectal features from specific regions as a means of preservation to continue the study of historical language change. The capture of these non-standard forms was seen as a way of keeping the past alive, as Stoddart, Upton and Widdowson explain:

"Fuelled by survivalist notions of dialect as a lively fossil that refuses to die, much of the early research aimed to reconnect the present with the past, using the evidence of the living speech to establish patterns of historical development in the evolution of the language…"
(Stoddart et al., 1999, p. 82)

Thus, dialects in themselves are repositories of 'lively fossils'. The desire to record and preserve language use that may be specific to a geographic region or community, which may be lost as a result of language contact and change, was a key motivating factor for these scholars. In doing so, traditional dialectologists investigated language use among speakers in locations that are considered historically stable (i.e., have not undergone major population increase or industrial change), such as rural locations, and among speakers who are also traditionally less dynamic (i.e. less likely to be socially or geographically mobile) and who have probably stayed in the same occupation for most of their lives. Consequently, the speakers within these locations were considered most likely to have maintained conservative non-standard language use. Studying speakers of traditional dialects in these types of locations, the dialectology studies aimed to create a map of geographic variation while preserving older forms of language use. Dialect societies were formed with the express purposes of capturing the 'archaic language' of their respective counties or regions.

Collectively, dialectological studies of locations within a wider space give details of non-standard linguistic features that are either common or different to the locations, and thus a map of the use of these features can be drawn up. In many cases, this results in multiple maps with isoglosses to indicate a boundary between the use of one variant and another.

One of the most extensive dialectological studies of England and the historical use of English was conducted by Alexander Ellis in the late 19th Century. Ellis observed dialectal forms,

often pronunciations, of English either in historical contexts (Ellis et al., 1875), or more contemporaneous ones (Ellis, 1889b, 1890). Ellis obtained data from over 500 locations, with support from various informants in those locations, many of whom were in positions of some authority, such as clergymen. He divided the UK (which at the time Ellis was writing included Ireland) into 6 key areas: Southern, Western, Eastern, Midland, Northern and Lowland, with an additional distinction between the Celtic countries of Scotland, Ireland and Wales by what Ellis called the 'Celtic Border'. These locations allowed Ellis to create isogloss maps with the final volume. Ellis's method for dialect capture included a comparative test that recorded dialectal forms for predetermined sentences and phrases in the structure of a story, a 'dialect test' of seven numbered sentences with words selected to highlight pronunciation, and a classified word-list ordered according to the historical word origin (e.g. Roman, Norse, etc) that was sent around to clergymen as a survey (Ellis, 1869). Ellis's target participants were from what he called the 'uneducated' 'peasantry', highlighting once again the justification among dialectologists that the most authentic 'traditional' dialect is to be found among the most conservative speakers. However, even in the late 19th Century, Ellis noted that language use among what he called the peasantry involved a form of what modern dialectologists recognise as 'code-switching', having a pronunciation that is used among their fellow dialect speakers, and another form that follows RP more closely that is used for 'the educated' (Ellis, 1889b, p. 1435). This, he laments, made the data he got back 'worthless' (ibid). He got around this by asking local collaborators to either advise on the local pronunciation or obtain the data for him. The data Ellis was able to collect in this extensive and protracted study formed the basis of many investigations into the dialects around Britain and Ireland. The use of rural speakers with a lower socioeconomic status continued the profile of the conservative speaker from a traditional dialect area, and yet even within this Ellis recognises and points to the use of two dialect forms among these speakers: one for those within the shared community, and one from those outside it. Of the data he was able to gather, though, he provided a means for comparison, and a methodology that would be followed throughout the 19th and 20th Century.

Joseph Wright, working with data supplemented by that of Ellis, conducted a similar study of the contemporaneous use of the dialects within the British Isles (J. Wright, 1905). The scope of his work, which was aided by a long list of named helpers included Scotland and Wales, and even parts of Ireland. The final result is a compilation of data offering pronunciations, grammatical constructions and lexical items. Within his own work, Wright commented on the variation among speakers of the same dialect, seemingly eschewing the Neogrammarian notion of the idiolect and the homogeneous form. He states in his preface:

"And even the pronunciation of natives differs considerably in the same district according to their social rank, for the working classes have their social scales, just as the upper

classes, Great divergences can arise too, according to the age of the dialect speaker (...) This accounts for some of the differences in the pronunciation of the same words in the same district"

(J. Wright, 1905, p. vi)

Wright's indication of variation within the same district points to a desire not to form a homogenised dialect from the average of individuals' speech, as per the approach of Paul and the German Neogrammarians, but to point out the differences that can occur within that speech community. Wright also mentioned the impact the observer can have on the use of language, as he observed the different types of speech style that any potential informants used:

> "The working classes speak quite differently among themselves, than when speaking to strangers or educated people, and it is no easy matter for an outsider to induce them to speak pure dialect, unless the outsider happens to be a dialect speaker himself".
> (J. Wright, 1905, p. vii)

Without explicitly saying so, Wright was acknowledging the impact of the interviewer on participants' speech, and also the process of style shift. While gathering his data, Wright commented on the decline in use of traditional dialect, a familiar lament of dialectologists that continued throughout the 20th Century, shared by Wells (1982b) and Wakelin (1986) in their works from the 1980s.

One of the most comprehensive studies of English dialects in the mid-20th Century was conducted by Harold Orton and Eugene Dieth from the University of Leeds. This *Survey of English Dialects* (Orton & Dieth, 1962) followed a similar approach to that of Alexander Ellis in that it was conducted using a written survey that was posted out for responses, and it specifically visited small rural locations around England. The participants in the Survey of English Dialects (SED) were by design typically older members of the community, usually over the age of 50, who rarely travelled beyond the local area and were usually men (although there were women recorded in some locations). The participants took part in an interview that was designed to draw responses that gave lexical information, morpho-syntactic information, and phonological information about the dialects spoken in the areas visited. The data was then compiled into books; the Basic Materials, and has formed the basis for many other publications around English dialects, such as the *Linguistic Atlas of England* (Orton et al., 1978), *Word Geography of England* (Orton & Wright, 1974) and *An Atlas of English Dialects* (Upton & Widdowson, 1996). In addition to providing material for several publications, it has also become a basis for comparison for many studies into dialects and language change around England in the late 20th and early 21st Centuries. Criticisms of the SED, though, are similar to

criticisms that can be applied to older dialectology studies as a whole. The speakers used in such studies tend to all have the same traditional dialect speaker profile, and often are not interviewed or studied in great numbers, yet the data coming from these interviews is used to draw conclusions around the language in use in a wide geographic area. Moreover, the locations under study also do not wholly represent the entire wider geographical area, as often large urban locations are ignored. Despite these criticisms the SED, and indeed all the dialectological studies discussed here, provide an irrefutable significant body of data, which has allowed sociolinguists and dialectologists to either draw conclusions around language use, or use them as a basis for comparison in language change studies.

2.3 Standardisation

Language change as a result of standardisation is somewhat of a special case from the other types of language change described in Section 2.1 above, as standardisation is often planned, and the result of linguistic ideology thereby making it entirely exogenous. Standardisation of language refers to the processes that lead to a variety being adopted and established as the standard form. Haugen (1966) describes four key stages that occur in the standardisation of a language: selection of norms; codification of norms; elaboration of the function of the standard; and finally, acceptance by the community. It is not necessarily the most widely spoken form, nor the most prestigious form that is adopted as the standard, although often prestige is ascribed to the standard. As Mugglestone (2003) points out, any standard language must be able to fulfil a range of different functions, as Haugen's 'elaboration' stage suggests. That is, it must be 'omni-functional' (Mugglestone, 2003, p. 9) it must be suitable in educational settings as well as legal, in public speaking as well as private conversation. Indeed, the use of the standard language within educational settings solidifies and perpetuates its use in official matters. It is considered the language of the educated, the language of court (in both the judicial and royal sense), and the language of government.

While the functions of a standard language are many and varied, so too are the motivations behind the standardisation of language: typically extra-linguistic, falling into ideological, political, demographic, social or educational reasoning (Pedersen, 2005). Where the standardisation of language serves as a function in political ideology, it minimises differences between those *within* the national boundaries, and maximises differences of those beyond the boundaries: "(t)he ideal is: internal cohesion - external distinction" (Haugen, 1966, p. 928). Dialects appeal to local loyalties, they disrupt the unification of a nation, hence "the national ideal demands that there be a single linguistic code by means of which (...) communication can

take place" (ibid) with the intention that this communication, of course, is how a political force can disseminate its message to as many people as possible.

2.3.1 Standardisation from an Ideological standpoint

Milroy (2001), defines standardisation in broad terms as the 'imposition of uniformity upon a class of objects', be they electrical plug sockets, levels of education, metadata models, and indeed, language. The key terms here are 'imposition' and 'uniformity'. Taking the latter first, the notion of uniformity does, as Milroy continues, imply that these items are idiosyncratic in nature, and require some manner of order or structure by which they can be made more interoperable or widely used. The 'imposition' of language standards implies that there is both an ideology behind it, and a resistance to it. Within Denmark, the standardisation of the language was both ideological and demographically motivated (Pedersen, 2005). The spread of a new urban standard from Copenhagen throughout the rest of the country was aided by increased mobility via new railways in the 19th Century and a burgeoning national identity. There was no strong sense of social class, meaning speakers did not necessarily feel any animosity towards people in a neighbouring parish or suburb, and were therefore more predisposed to standardisation (Pedersen, 2005, p. 189). Yet ideology does not only sit alongside political motivations for the standardisation of a language, it can also be hugely influenced by national and cultural identity (e.g. Abercrombie, 2018).

In the case of British English varieties, only the written form is standardised: it can be spoken in any accent and still be the 'standard' English (J. Milroy & Milroy, 1999; Trudgill, 1979). While 'Received Pronunciation' may serve as a non-regional pronunciation, Mugglestone (2003) demonstrates how the establishment of the BBC in 1922 brought with it considerable prescriptivism over the use of RP as the 'correct' way to speak English, selected entirely arbitrarily from the accent of one of the earliest newsreaders, and fuelled by ideology. The BBC saw itself as 'educating' the nation in the correct way to speak. However, while RP may have had somewhat of a hey-day in the first half of the 20th Century, the second half would see its decline in popularity. After the Second World War, and with the advent of the pop culture of the sixties, the notion of 'talking proper' was replaced with that of 'talking posh', and was seen as increasingly old-fashioned (Mugglestone, 2003). The success of bands such as The Beatles and The Kinks made Liverpudlian or Cockney accents more fashionable to the younger audience, and the buttoned-up stereotype of the BBC presenter with his clipped tie and clipped tones was not in step with the rest of contemporary pop culture. At the same time, the launch of ITV, which was not so prescriptive in use of accent, gave people greater access to different varieties, and reinforced their positive opinions towards their own accents. Eventually even the BBC began employing speakers with regional accents for its news broadcasts and reports (for example,

Huw Edwards from Wales, and Chris Mason from North Yorkshire). Despite the increased dialectal variation among BBC broadcasters, though, prestige is still ascribed to RP among the general population. Indeed, standard forms of language are still aligned with prestige (J. Milroy, 2001), and convergence between varieties is often discussed in terms of 'vertical' convergence and 'horizontal' convergence, whereby any convergence along a 'vertical' axis refers to that between standard and non-standard varieties, but horizontal convergence is that between two non-standard varieties (Berruto, 2005). Haugen (1966) himself considered the notion that a dialect is not a 'fully developed language' (p927). In this context, though, it appears Haugen is referring to the requirement for wide use of the dialect in order for it to become the standard language, as per his final stage of standardisation, acceptance by the wider community.

Broadly speaking, where the standardisation of a language has occurred, it implies that there are other varieties of the same language that do not share the same features. Regional dialects represent different forms or varieties of a language that may have undergone different changes at different times or represent a form of the language before a certain change in the language occurred. However, standardisation is not a naturally occurring change within the language or dialect, it is designed and planned consciously with a view to acceptance and adoption within the speech community. Thus, Milroy's use of the word 'imposition' implies potential for resistance to the process of standardisation through regional dialectal forms.

2.4 Variationist approaches and the Sociolinguistic Turn

2.4.1 Weinreich, Herzog and Labov's Theory of Language Change

While the dialectologists were concerned with reviewing and potentially preserving the historical uses of language, the structuralist 19th century Neogrammarian theories of sound change couldn't wholly account for the transition between the 'old' to the 'new' forms of language. The Neogrammarians looked primarily at synchronic change, that is change over time from a retrospective perspective and that was therefore already completed. In doing so, they determined that all sound change was regular and exceptionless, meaning that where change had occurred to a phoneme within certain phonetic constraints, it had occurred in all other instances. Weinreich et al (1968) critiqued the theories of language change that had been proposed, and in doing so lay the groundwork for modern dialectology in recognising the importance variation in language and dialect has in the transitional aspect of sound change. One of the most important elements of Weinreich et al's theory of language change was the use of

the linguistic variable as a means of studying change. By using this, it provides consistency against which comparisons can be drawn. The linguistic variable is most simply described as "…socially different but linguistically equivalent ways of doing or saying the same thing" (Chambers & Trudgill, 1998, p. 50). The notion of the linguistic variable was first formally defined by (Labov, 1966) and has since become one of the primary focuses in sociolinguistic research. The Linguistic Variable can be used to determine differences between language varieties that may indicate social differences in language use as well as geographic ones. However, Weinreich, Labov and Herzog cautioned the application of the linguistic variable, stating: "A linguistic variable must be defined under strict conditions if it is to be a part of the linguistic structure; otherwise, one would simply be opening the door wide to rules in which 'frequently', 'occasionally', or 'sometimes' apply" (Weinreich et al., 1968, p. 196). In this regard, the linguistic variable must be already embedded in the phonological structure phonemically so as to provide a reliable means for identifying any variation or change in progress.

The context of the language, whether social or linguistic, can have a bearing on the use of the variable. It is unlikely, especially during a period of transition, that a new form will be categorical in use that is specific to a linguistic environment regardless of any other constraints or contexts. The context may be influenced by speech style, discourse type or social setting (Guy, 2003, p. 374). By focussing on the linguistic variable, sociolinguists are able to then apply further questions that give an indication of how language is used by a particular subset of society; do they have multiple forms of the same variable that they use for different occasions; is this a recent development in the dialect, or has it been a feature of that particular dialect for some time?

2.4.1.1 Critiquing Neogrammarian and Generative Grammar Theories

The key principle behind Neogrammarian theories work was that of the speech of the individual, and Paul (1880 as citied in; Weinreich et al., 1968) determined the model of a 'Language Custom' that comprised the 'average' of each individual speaker. In this sense he was describing what might now be called a speech community, and the speech of the individual could be analogous to the state of the Language Custom. While the individual's idiolect does not mirror exactly the Language Custom, any change to the idiolect becomes a change to the Language Custom, as the individual's change causes the average to readjust. Similarly, any addition or loss within the Language Custom (for example through birth or death within the group of speakers) can also cause a shift or change to the average. According to Paul, such changes may be small but cumulatively the many changes to an individual's speech can cause the Language Custom to gradually change over time.

Weinreich, Labov and Herzog's important work into a theory of sound change (1968) reviewed Paul's 'Language Custom' model and came away with some criticisms, specifically that the real world uses of language are quite different from the notion of a Language Custom; that the notion of a Language Custom itself has no boundaries, making it difficult to specify what is and isn't part of the dialect. Moreover, the practice of 'averaging' dialect is not possible in all domains of language structure, particularly lexical or morphological; and that ranking is also not possible in terms of types of change across linguistic domains.

Paul's account of the causes of sound change were summarised by Weinreich et al as boiling down to the motivation for greater comfort by the speaker. However, while this may certainly be a factor in assimilation, particularly in consonant clusters, it doesn't account for how some Language Customs may split so that some speakers retain the distinction between the consonants whereas others assimilate them.

Following on from their critique of Hermann Paul's work, Weinreich et al looked at the models for language change found within the generative grammarian school of thought, and the persistence of the notion of homogeneity of language. They determined gaps in theories (specifically Halle, 1962) regarding child language acquisition that did not wholly take into account the input of a child's peers in language development; that did not account for social hierarchies in language variation; and that did not recognise the transitional periods of variation in language use.

These gaps within the generative grammar model, as well as the difficulties of the Neogrammarian structuralist model of homogenous language, motivated Weinreich et al to form a theory of language change based around what they called 'orderly heterogeneity'. Where Neogrammarians took sporadic and irregular change as indications of borrowing between dialects, Weinreich et al, building on the works of linguists from the Prague school and 20th century American linguists, declared that such change was more likely to be instances of style switching, as speakers could hold more than one phonological, lexical or grammatical representation in their repertoire. Moreover, when speakers of two different dialects do meet, they may accommodate and acquire features from their opposite dialect and adapt them for their own use. Over time this new feature may replace the original one in the speaker's grammar, it may be rejected, or it may find an alternative use (i.e. it is reallocated).

The theory of language change they proposed addressed certain problems that dialectology can pose, specifically: the constraints problem; the transition problem; the embedding problem (in both the linguistic and the social structure); the evaluation problem, and the actuation problem.

The constraints problem looks at the linguistic conditions in which a linguistic variable may occur, and how the linguistic system as whole deals with variability. For example, there are

certain rules and patterns that language change follows. One reliable pattern of change is the direction of a chain shift, or lenition, as these processes are rarely reversed.

The transition problem highlights some of the key principles within this theory, that transitions occur slowly, and therefore allow for periods of variability within the speech community. This problem is crucial to Weinreich et al's theory as they find that "[it] can learn more from the so-called transitional dialects than from "core" dialects (citing Herzog, 1965, pp. 1–5). Indeed, it stands to gain by considering every dialect as transitional (...) From observation *in vivo* it can learn things about language change that are simply lost in the monuments of the past" (Weinreich et al., 1968, p. 184).

The embedding problem looked at two sub-areas, that of embedding within the linguistic structure, and embedding within the social structure. Changes within the linguistic structure occur in either continuous or discrete stages, meaning that the variable under study can have a continuous range of values (see Weinreich et al., 1968, p. 185). Equally, social changes can directly impact on the linguistic structure.

The Evaluation Problem is similar to that of embedding in the social structure, in that it deals with perceptions and attitudes towards language. Speakers evaluate the use of language and often there are some forms that are stereotypes of the dialect. These stereotypes are not necessarily always positive and are more often realised in the lexicon. Speakers are also highly aware of these forms, and as a result use them as a means of self-monitoring, as Weinreich et al explain: "...overt social correction is sporadic, since, when a linguistic variable acquires social significance, speakers substitute the prestige norm for the basic vernacular as a control in audio-monitoring" (Weinreich et al., 1968, p. 183).

The Actuation problem looks at how all the social and linguistic constraints and factors can impact on the actual process and patterns of change. If language change is a truly social process, then it makes it difficult to predict where and when change will appear next. However, Labov (1965) argues that by continuously repeating studies it reveals patterns that can allow us to make some informed guesses with regards to change (see Weinreich et al., 1968, p. 186).

2.4.1.2 Weinreich et al's principles of change

Having reviewed previous theories, and drawn their own conclusions about the issues the Neogrammarians and generative grammarians raised or overlooked in their approaches, Weinreich et al presented seven key principles for a theory of language change:

1. Linguistic Change is not to be identified with random drift proceeding from inherent variation in speech

2. The association between structure and homogeneity is an illusion

3. Not all variability and heterogeneity in language structure involves change; but all change involves variability and heterogeneity.

4. The generalization of linguistic change throughout linguistic structure is neither uniform nor instantaneous; it involves the covariation of associated changes over substantial periods of time, and is reflected in the diffusion of isoglosses over areas of geographical space.

5. The grammars in which linguistic change occurs are grammars of the speech community... idiolects do not provide the basis for self-contained or internally consistent grammars

6. Linguistic change is transmitted within the community as a whole; it is not confined to discrete steps within the family...

7. Linguistic and social factors are closely interrelated in the development of language change....

Truncated from Weinreich et al, 1986, p187-8

In setting out these principles, they observed the inherent variation and heterogeneity within language use at dialectal levels. While these differences exist within a speech community, they do not necessarily lead automatically to a change. Furthermore, when change does occur, it is not instantaneous, instead appearing as a period of transition during which variability is observed. The variability and ultimate direction of change is, according to Weinreich et al's principles, influenced by social factors as well as linguistic constraints, and while the course of change cannot be accurately predicted, certain patterns have been observed as occurring more frequently than others within the literature.

2.4.2 The Urban Gaze

The impact of Weinreich et al's Theory of Language Change opened up further studies in the field of sociolinguistics, making use of social variables to identify where in the community change and variation is occurring first, and even shifting the focus of language study from the wholly rural to the urban. For example, Labov's own work on socio-economic factors in large department stores in New York was necessarily based in an urban location by design (see Labov, 1966).

Traditional dialectology has favoured the most conservative and non-mobile speakers as those likely to have maintained use of the most traditional forms of language in a local area. However, the notion of a conservative non-mobile speaker that has formed the basis of many

major dialectological studies is an idealistic one, as very few speakers fall into this exact category. As Auer points out: "people have always been on the move, during the Great Migration, during European colonial expansion, in the enormous population movements in the age of industrialization, particularly from the countryside into the urban industrial centre" (Auer, 2013, p. 6). Britain (2016) goes slightly further and declares that the traditional dialectologists were unapologetic in their suspicions of mobility, as they considered it the enemy of authentic dialect, bringing instability to the linguistic community. However, while these more stable linguistic communities are stereotypically rurally located, in a later work, Britain (2017) argues that the distinction between 'rural' and 'urban' spaces carries with it ideological connotations, that suit either tourism, or a political agenda. These connotations have in turn shaped the way dialectologists approach language study in these two spaces. The 'rural gaze' and 'urban gaze', as Britain terms them, often appear diametrically opposed, with one type of location positively or negatively making up for the perceived shortfalls of the other in popular culture. In dialectology, the rural has thus tended to focus on the older members of a community, usually male, with the notion that these are the more conservative speakers who speak the more 'authentic' local dialect. Urban dialectology by contrast often focuses on younger speakers from diverse backgrounds for the purposes of measuring how language contact can influence language use. Foulkes and Docherty take issue with the label 'urban dialectology', though, as they see most of the work in the field as being restricted to issues of accent, rather than to additional wider lexical or grammatical items, and thus a reference to dialectology is, in their view, "slightly imprecise" (Foulkes & Docherty, 1999, p. 5).

Labels aside, there was an increased recognition among even traditional dialectologists that the focus of studies of non-standard varieties should not be limited to a certain type of location or individual but should at least incorporate the variety of speakers to be found in communities to better reflect the societal as well as geographical context in which the language is used.

2.4.3 Waves in Sociolinguistic Research

As work progressed within the field of Variationist Linguistics, so too did the understanding of the relationship between the social and the linguistic. Eckert (2012) discusses the progression of variationist linguistics as being in three waves. The first wave as represented by Weinreich, Labov and Herzog's collaborative and individual works, and those of other variationists influenced by their work, is interested in the variationist categories within society, such as age, gender, speech style and socio-economic status, and how these can play a part on language use.

As sociolinguistic investigation progressed, questions were raised around some of the nature of the influence such factors have on language use. Rather, scholars began to see speakers as less passive in the face of such factors, and more active in their use of them. For example, the Labovian use of reading passages, wordlists and conversations as a means of capturing different levels of formality in speech was challenged by Bell (1984), who argued that using such methods doesn't necessarily tell us how speakers use language according to different modes of formality, it simply tells us how they use language while they are reading, or while they are reading out words on a list. Instead, he posited that speakers were much more active in their choice of language use, depending on their audience. Douglas-Cowie's earlier (1978) study of speakers in Articlave, Northern Ireland also demonstrated how local speakers adjusted their speech when addressing a non-local observer. Lesley Milroy's work in Belfast (Milroy, 1980) took into consideration the size of an individual's social network both within and beyond their speech community, and whether this correlated with their readiness to acquire innovations within their speech. Moreover, this was also compared with demographic features of speakers. In drawing comparisons between men and women of different age groups within three communities in the Belfast area, she found that men tended to have denser social networks than women, meaning that men were more likely to remain in close contact with a smaller group of people, most of whom were likely to be within the same social network themselves. Women on the other hand tend to have more disparate social networks as they have contacts from beyond the local community who are not necessarily all linked to one another any other way. This might include parents of their children's friends, work colleagues. The density of a social network, Milroy found, would have an impact on the social pressures to maintain the dialect or variety used within that group. The more close-knit a social network is, the less likely any external innovations will find their way in and be used by the speakers. Conversely, where a social network is weak, or is being weakened it leaves opportunity for innovations. Men with their close-knit social networks therefore speak with a conservative non-standard form, whereas the women in her study were more likely to use innovations that they may have acquired from their wider, and therefore weaker, networks. However, Milroy cautions that "... change in network structure alone does not appear to be sufficient condition for change *towards a standard,* although it does appear to trigger off some kind of change in the vernacular." (Milroy, 1980, p. 186).

The second wave of sociolinguistic scholarship therefore took a more ethnographic approach, interested in looking more closely at the individual's use of language and how their sense of community and identity can play a part. Eckert's own work into the use of language amongst adolescents in Detroit in the mid-1980s formed part of this second wave. Known as the 'Jock and Burnouts' study, Eckert looked at how the identities these two groups took

correlated with socioeconomic class, and subsequent use of language. She found that where the middle-class 'jocks' were more concerned with conforming with social norms, and had good relationships with their school and teachers, this was borne out in a more conservative use of language that was in step with the standard variety. The burnouts, though, had little to no desire to conform with social norms, or with the wider community, and had no strong affiliation to their school. These speakers were typically from working-class backgrounds and had no ambitions for third level education top-level careers. Eckert found that these speakers tended to be more innovative in their use of language, and in particular the 'burnout' girls were the most innovative (Eckert, 1989).

This focus on the relationship between language and individual interactions, and how those individuals embed themselves within a community marked a distinction between the broader social demographics within a speech community of first wave sociolinguistics. While neither returns to the idiolectal averages of the Neogrammarians, the interplay between networks provides a new level of understanding of how language is used alongside identity.

The third wave almost flips the approach of the second wave. Rather than looking at how a community and social network influences language use, the focus shifted towards how speakers use language to assert their different identities according to social situations. For this reason, Eckert names this wave of sociolinguistic thought as that which accounts for 'Stylistic Perspective'. The notion of code-switching was a heavy feature in Weinreich et al's Theory of Language Change, whereby an individual who is a 'native' or at least fluent in two or more different dialects is able to switch between them according to whom they are speaking, thus ensuring that they are understood, and welcomed. The third wave theories take this ability to 'code-switch' further, by looking at features within a speech community as salient or perhaps stereotyped markers that can be indexed. In doing so, those features then acquire stereotypes associated with the speech communities that use them, and in turn those features can be used by those who wish to portray the associated stereotypical attributes.

In a more recent study, Vaughan and Moriarty (2020) look to the social media channel 'YouTube', and in particular at the short animated series 'Martin's Life" as a space to investigate how use of specific non-standard forms and their associated stereotypes are used as a way to reinforce identity through stylisation. This, they say, is of importance when looking at the use of language in media, particularly as the use of social media and digital platforms grows. The stereotypical features of Corkonian dialect used both in the animated "Martin's Life" videos on YouTube, and also by those leaving comments on the videos pointed to an intended use of humour rooted in identity, and to performative use of language from the commenters who wanted to demonstrate that they are in on the joke. Vaughan and Moriarty argue that the language use in both the comments and the cartoons represent registers that Agha calls "cultural

models of action" (Agha, 2007, p. 145 cited in; Vaughan & Moriarty, 2020, p. 214), and that their use and appearance on a digital platform creates a new domain for the use of stereotypical local dialect. They conclude that not only is the use of stereotypical dialect features a means of indulging in nostalgia for the Irish diaspora, but that it also offers a means of placing a personal "sense of authenticity and self, expressed here through the performance of identities, vernacular play, and explicit commentary on identities." (Vaughan & Moriarty, 2020, p. 215).

The waves of sociolinguistic practice have driven some interesting areas of research in dialectology in the past 60 years, drawing on social psychology and sociology to explain dialectological phenomena. The understanding of non-linguistic factors in language use has broadened, and the digital and technological methodologies now available to researchers has forged new paths to answer new linguistic questions.

2.4.4 Summarising Variationist Approaches

Since the late 1960s, the field of study of language change and variation has developed considerably from the initial principles of observing completed changes and preserving existing dialects. While the field of dialectology still holds preservation and observation of dialects as its core, the methods and theories that inform such studies are now richer and incorporate more understanding of variety within the dialects themselves and the motivations for that.

This thesis positions itself within the context of modern dialectology, and broadly speaking takes a first-wave approach in terms of its design, with age and gender forming the main points of analysis. However, the research design and subsequent data reveal the need for an analysis beyond simply a first wave approach, as issues around identity and language choices raised by second and third wave sociolinguists are also taken into consideration. These issues will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

2.5 Issues of Modern Dialectology

Having addressed the chronological developments within studies of language change and variation, we now turn to the factors at play within modern dialectology studies. Many of these factors are stalwarts of linguistic investigation that hail back to the early dialectologists, namely where change comes from, and how it can pass from speaker to speaker, community to community. Others have taken into consideration the impact of modern technology on language use, including those that have afforded greater geographical and social mobility. These issues of concern within modern dialectological scholarship will be discussed in turn.

2.5.1 Internal vs External Motivations for change

We have seen how one of the fundamental issues of investigation within language change studies often comes down to where the change originates. Trudgill (1999) takes a different view of the notions of what he calls endogenous and exogenous change. Endogenous change is that which is internal to the dialect, and exogenous change comes from outside the dialect. Exogenous change that can be shown through homogenisation towards a national mainstream variety or a nonstandard variety; and endogenous change which is internally motivated within the dialect in question.

Trudgill's (1999) examples of endogenous change are offered mostly from examples from his previous studies in Norfolk. Changes occurred among younger speakers in the vowel space, which were not found in other nearby or non-regional varieties. This led Trudgill to the conclusion that they could only have been internally motivated (see, Trudgill 1999, p134-135). However, he also points out problematic cases where there was ambiguity as to the origin of the change, as there were similarities between the changing sounds in Norfolk among younger speakers that were also reflected in dialects and non-regional varieties. In his closing remarks he states that it can be difficult to show that exogenous change is the reason behind a sound change within a dialect, as he points that with such sound changes "there is always the possibility that they would, as it were, have 'happened anyway'" (Trudgill 1999:139), pointing to potential internal changes at play. This is echoed to an extent by Kallen (2005), in his investigation of realisations of the voiceless alveolar stop /t/ in Irish English. When trying to determine whether linguistic or external motivations were behind any variations that resulted from convergence or divergence, he was unable to come down entirely on either side of the debate. The application of universal models can identify potential internal changes, for example Labov's Vowel Shift model or the expectation that a voiceless consonant might become voiced, but a voiced consonant becoming voiceless is not expected (e.g., *latter* may become *ladder* but never the opposite). Kallen, however, suggests that "general principles of phonology can, at best, only define points in the system which are open to change, and establish probabilities that change - if it happens - will operate in a particular direction." Kallen 2005, p54-55. In other words, system-internal changes may make certain changes highly likely, but they are not necessarily inevitable as social factors also form constraints. These social constraints prevent changes from being adopted by wider speech communities, even if they are mutually intelligible and share a common roofing standard language.

The process of transmission is arguably an endogenous change. Labov describes this process as 'change from below' in that it is generated in and remains with the speech

community, as language is passed from caregiver to child. The changes themselves are small and incremental, thus preserving the dialect or language despite the imperfect reproduction of the parent or caregiver's language (Labov, 2007).

Labov's meta-analysis of multiple studies of the increased use of '*be like*' as a quotative over time, demonstrates how an initial community-internal change among what he calls the 'avant garde' has undergone transmission within that speech community and then diffusion throughout the English speaking world (Labov, 2018). His investigation reviews studies over two generations, focussing specifically on data gathered in Philadelphia. The group Labov labels as the 'avant garde' are among the first generation of users of '*be like*' in place of '*said*' when demonstrating a speech act, such as (1) below.

(1) I saw Meg's boyfriend at the corner store the other day, and **I was like** 'oh hi Dave', but he totally ignored me

These avant garde speakers were mostly younger speakers in their late teens and early 20s at the time of recording in the late 1970s and early 1980s, who then passed their language use on to their children via transmission, who then developed its use further. Labov further considers whether the use of this type of quotative that describes an internal intention or state, rather than using a verb that describes an externally performative act, such as '*say*', is reflective of a demarcation between an inner and outer voice. This runs in parallel to a more expressive style among younger speakers that encourages and enables people to be more communicative of their emotions and feelings.

This raises some interesting questions, particularly in relation to Lakoff's (1987) concept of the cognitive categorisation model as reflected and affected through language. Cognitive models such as this are beyond the scope of this paper, but Labov's example *is* an expression of changing culture and cognitive expression, and *is* an indication of endogenous language change. If these avant garde speakers are demonstrating a change in terms of culture through language, it represents an internal change through external non-linguistic factors, which in turn is diffused as exogenous change into other demographics and speech communities.

The directionality of change was a matter of concern among sociolinguists and is often represented in the metaphor of axes. Berruto discusses exogenous change in the broadest sense in the form of vertical and horizontal axes. Vertical convergence occurs when a dialect converges with a standard language, whereas horizontal convergence is that which occurs from non-standard dialect to dialect (Berruto, 2005). While not necessarily intended this way, the

ideological implications of such an axis are demonstrated in Milroy's discussion of the elitism present in the process of standardisation.

Trudgill points out that exogenous change processes such as dedialectalisation and standardisation can take a while to affect non-standard or lower status varieties, particularly phonological rather than lexical changes (Trudgill, 1999, p. 136). This is potentially related to the separation of Standard English from any specific pronunciation in British English. In Labov's own vertical model of change from above and change from below, the 'change from above' as an external process is the result of diffusion from *any* variety of language, not just a standard (Labov, 2007). Here, the hierarchy of standard vs non-standard is replaced by simply all change from an external source being a change that is landed on the dialect from above.

2.5.2 Models of Geographical Diffusion

Diffusion describes the process by which linguistic innovations are adopted through social and geographical space via language contact. The process of diffusion can follow different patterns, although all require language contact between two different dialects or varieties. Indeed, Trudgill recognised the need to look at "*why* and *how* linguistic features, under linguistic change, are diffused from one location or social group to another" (Trudgill, 1974a, p. 217).

As with the broader field of dialectology, models to explain or describe linguistic diffusion can be discussed in an approximately chronological order.

2.5.2.1 Wave Theory

Schmidt's 'Wave Model' (1872 cited in ; C.-J. N. Bailey, 1973) describes the process of diffusion as a series of waves, with features migrating in use from a central influential source to permeate into the language of all within close proximity, as ripples from a stone dropped in a pond (see Figure 1). Within this model, the innovations furthest from the point of origin are older, whereas those closer to the point of origin are newer innovations. Therefore, the closer a speech community is geographically to a location that has an innovative dialectal form, the more likely that speech community is to adopt it within its own dialect. The assumption is made that the varieties of language involved are mutually comprehensive, thus allowing for meaningful language contact, and that the innovations are viable within the grammatical and phonological structure of the language system (C.-J. N. Bailey, 1973). Taking a wave as a metaphor for diffusion throughout geographical and social space, it can represent the most simple form of language contact, in that the innovation continues its progress throughout a space without gaps, migrating to new speakers until it hits a boundary or obstacle it cannot cross, or "the wave has lost its energy" (Hinskens et al., 2000, p. 7). Looking at barriers from a

social perspective, though, Bailey describes social spaces as those into which new innovations can be carried, such as gender, ethnicity and social class, as well as the social differences that might come with a geographical move from urban to rural.

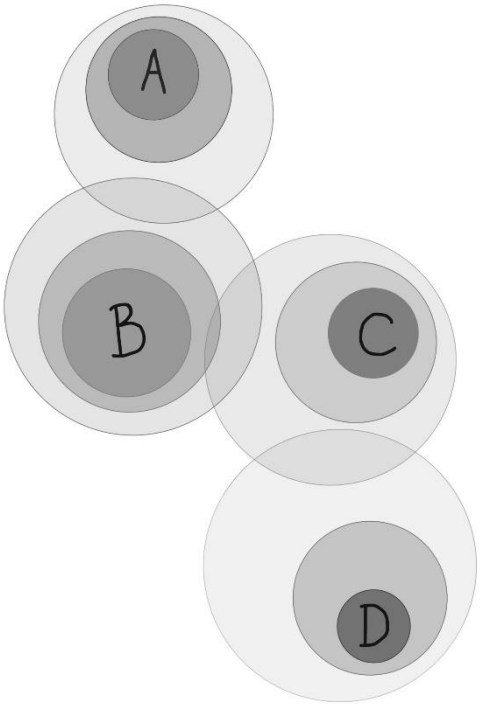


Figure 1- Wave Model of diffusion, after Bailey 1973

The rate of diffusion is not even when viewed over time, rather diffusion of a dialectal feature through the wave model closely resembles an 'S-Curve' (C.-J. N. Bailey, 1973) as shown in Figure 2. If viewing the rate of adoption on a graph, with change over time on the horizontal 'x' axis, and rate of change on the vertical 'y' axis, then the take-up would start slowly among a few speech communities, and then as more adopt the feature, the rate of change would increase until it reached near-saturation point. The rate of change would slow again as the gaps and pockets in the social or geographical space were filled in.

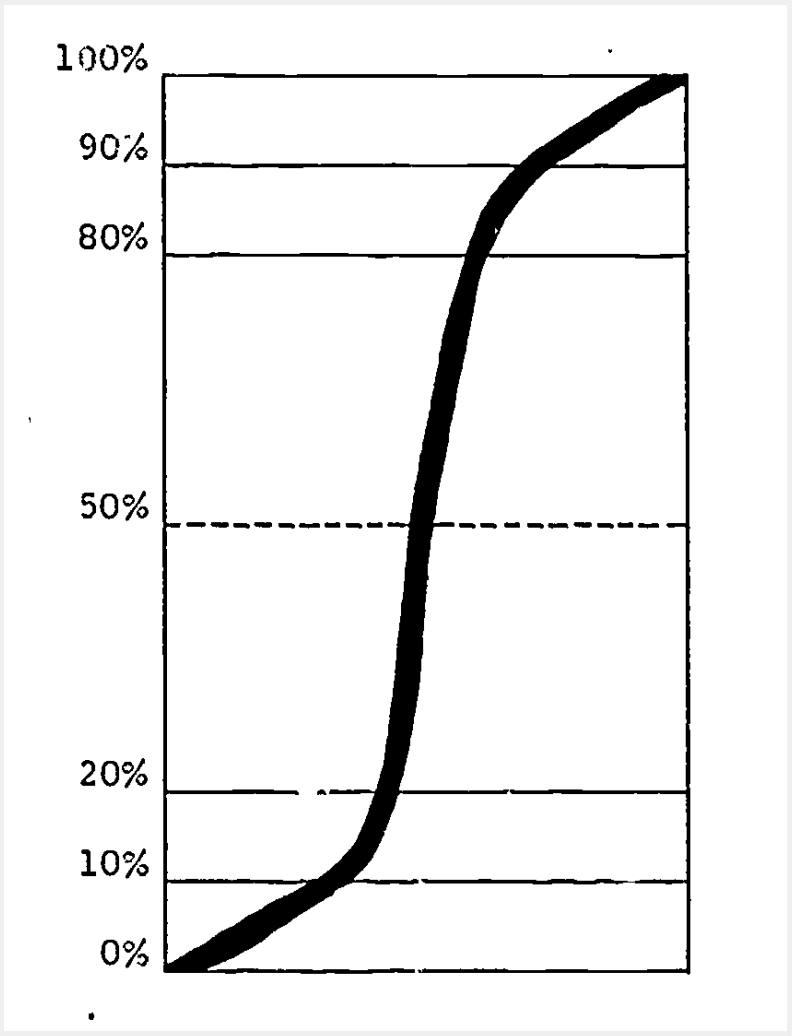


Figure 1 -S-Curve f change in the Wave diffusion model, from Bailey 1973 p77

This wave-diffusion model through geographical space can, according to some, resemble the spread of a disease, and for this reason has been given the alternative label of 'contagious diffusion' by (Bailey et al., 1993). This takes the assumption that linear space is the principal factor in the diffusion of a feature. They consider this "best illustrated by the transmission of a disease: direct contact with someone possessing the trait is the primary requisite for its spread" (p366). They place this in contrast to the urban hierarchy model (see below) and demonstrate this through the location of an interstate highway running between Oklahoma cities. However, even with this contrast defined as something in opposition to the hierarchical model, both still ultimately rely on language contact.

Criticisms of this wave model lie in its inability to explain how some linguistic features can 'skip over' smaller urban and rural spaces in the diffusion from a large city to another large city further away. The Urban Hierarchy Model seeks to show how and why these gaps in the

geographical and social reach of a dialectal feature can occur, and how an alternative pattern of diffusion can be predicted.

2.5.2.2 Urban Hierarchy Model (Gravity Model)

Bloomfield (1933) proposed that diffusion occurs according to the density of communication between locations, rather than proximity as a basis for predicting patterns of language use. Gravitational pull of larger objects on smaller objects is well documented in physics and has also been applied to disciplines such as economics. An extension of this theory, that larger objects influence the direction of smaller objects, was applied by Trudgill as a way to review the influence of larger cities and towns over smaller ones in terms of language use (Trudgill, 1974a). This 'Gravity Model' measured the differences between populations of larger towns against those of smaller towns, and the distances between them. Through his investigations into language change in East Anglia and Norway, Trudgill's proposal was that, in looking at dialectological maps, the isoglosses drawn to denote a linguistic variety in a geographical space were not accurately showing the differences. Specifically, he showed that small rural villages that lie between towns don't necessarily share linguistic features with those urban spaces.

However, if a single large city in a region has influence over satellite towns that surround it through proximity, those towns would be more likely to pick up certain linguistic features from that large city. In turn, smaller towns that are near to the satellite towns also pick up that feature, and so the linguistic feature may disseminate among speakers in a wider region, with towns becoming ranked in a hierarchy (hence the alternative name of 'Urban Hierarchy Model' which is also applied to the Gravity Model) of which are more likely to acquire linguistic features from neighbouring larger urban locations (see Figure 3). Trudgill (1974a) uses the example of TH-fronting in Norwich, a feature known to have come from London. He asked

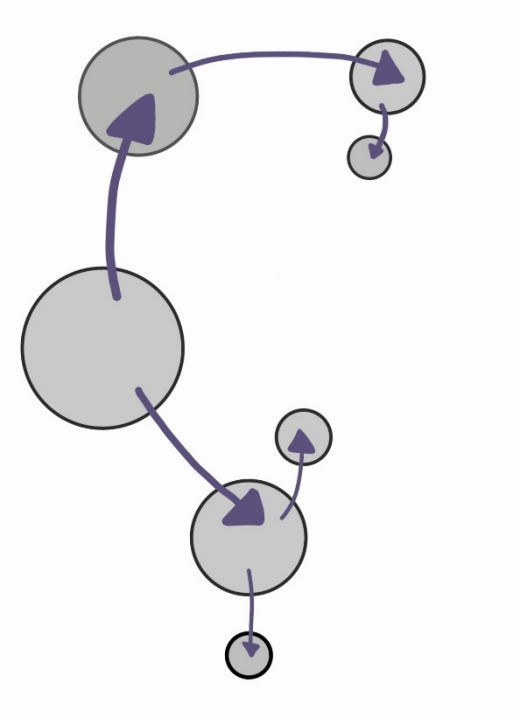


Figure 3 - The Urban Hierarchy Model, after Trudgill 1974

why London is so influential in the adoption of innovative forms compared with other urban areas closer by. His initial attempts at a model borrowed directly from geography:

Equation 1 - Trudgill's initial model for proximity vs influence

$$Mij = \frac{PiPj}{(dij)^2} \qquad \begin{matrix} M = \text{interaction} \\ P = \text{population} \\ d = \text{distance} \end{matrix}$$

Here, *Mij* represents the interaction between town *i* and town *j* which is influenced by *P*, the populations of the two towns multiplied by one another, and divided by the square of the distance between the two towns (p233). The figure for 'population' is given in thousands e.g., a population of 120,000 people is presented in this formula as '120'. Distance is given to the nearest mile. The resulting figure is then presented as a three-digit index score. Taking London and Norwich as examples, Trudgill presented the following:

$$\text{M.London.Norwich} = \frac{8000 \times 120}{(110)^2} = 80 \text{ approx.}$$

Figure 4 - Trudgill's demonstration of the initial Urban Hierarchy Model, taken from Trudgill 1974a, p234

The resulting index score is therefore '080' (p234). An additional calculation then indicated that the interaction Birmingham has with Norwich has an index score of 006, suggesting that London has a much greater interaction with Norwich than Birmingham does.

The motivations behind a change that occurs through diffusion through an urban hierarchy are not solely reliant on geographical proximity. The linguistic closeness, or 'prior-existing linguistic similarity' (p234) between the receiving dialect and the originating dialect of a feature cannot be too distant, so that any adjustments to adopt the new feature won't be too great. Trudgill also accounts for the influence of an urban space on another, using the population size of both urban spaces as a direct indicator of this. His final formula was therefore:

Equation 2 - Trudgill's urban hierarchy model, final equation

$$Iij = s.\frac{PiPj}{(dij)^2} \cdot \frac{Pi}{Pi + Pj}$$

Within this formula, *I* is the influence, and *Iij* is the influence location *i* has over location *j*. The symbol *s* is the level of similarity in dialect between the two locations, and is set according to a predetermined matrix. In the case of Trudgill's example, he looks at the similarity between dialects with Norfolk as a starting point (see Table 1).

Table 1 - Trudgill's table of similarity, taken from Trudgill 1974a

s=	4	for other Norfolk varieties
	3	for other East Anglian varieties
	2	for other south-eastern varieties
	1	for other varieties in England
	0	for all others.

The population is given in thousands and the distance is given in miles. The resulting score is an index rounded to the nearest whole number. Continuing Trudgill's case study of London's influence over Norwich (and the wider East Anglia area), the calculation is therefore as follows:

(1)

***Influence London over Norwich = 2* x ((8000 x 120) / (110 x 110)) x (8000 / (8000 + 120))**

Influence of London over Norwich = 156

Where London's influence over other East Anglian towns is calculated, Trudgill returns index scores of 060 for Lowestoft, and 048 for King's Lynn . To get a clearer picture of the influence one large urban space may have over several smaller urban locations, this calculation can be run for those smaller towns, and compiled in a matrix. The influence the smaller urban spaces may have on one another can also be collected in this way.

Recognising that the influence model still doesn't account for gaps or islands in a geographical or social space, Trudgill took his calculations further. He looked to the combined influence of other local communities in comparison with larger urban spaces, as without this it would be assumed that London, as the largest urban space within Britain, would be directly influential over all urban spaces within the country, which is not the case. The final calculation

requires that the combined influence of all other locations in the study are subtracted from the influence between two specific locations. For example, in a study that comprises London, Norwich, Ipswich, King's Lynn and Lowestoft, the influence that London has over King's Lynn would be reduced by subtracting the combined influence over King's Lynn of Norwich, Ipswich, and Lowestoft. This calculation therefore shows the "*relative* strength of different centres" (Trudgill 1974 p237). With this formula, it is possible to predict which dialects in locations may be more likely to undergo language change towards adopting a variant that originated in a larger town or city nearby.

2.5.2.3 Counter-Urban Model

A Counter-Urban model, alternatively called the 'contrahierachical' diffusion model, is one that goes against the principles of the Urban Hierarchy Model (as the name suggests). Within this model, rather than features diffusing outwards from urban spaces into rural ones, innovations with an origin in rural locations are instead brought into the urban spaces. An example of this comes from Oklahoma, in which Bailey et al (1993) describe an instance of the phrase *fixin to* spreading from rural locations into the larger cities in the state. Their data showed that it was a form that was used more often (55.4% of instances) by longer-term residents, specifically those who had lived in the location for more than 10 years, than shorter-term residents (41.5% of instances) (Bailey et al., 1993, p. 378). This, they suggest, is the result of high migration into the region and a desire among the long-term residents to project a local identity that would differentiate them from the 'newcomers'.

These models explain the diffusion of linguistic innovations through geographical space, but they don't entirely account for movement through social space, or how other social or geographical factors can impact or impede this diffusion. The 'Cultural Hearth' model does touch on the sense of space and place as a cultural phenomenon, thus suggesting that identity also plays a part. However, it primarily looks at the behaviour of the diffusion rather than the social reasons for it.

2.5.2.4 The 'Cultural Hearth' Model

Another mode of diffusion that in many ways shares features of the Urban Hierarchy model is the 'Cultural Hearth' model. This diffusion model comes from the realm of geography and anthropology and models the (pre)historical diffusion of cultural practices within emerging societies. Within this model, urban centres influence the areas immediately surrounding them first, with culture, and more specifically within this context linguistic features, gaining a foothold

in these areas before diffusing more widely to surrounding rural areas. While Horvath and Horvath (1997, 2001, 2002) don't use this term by name, Britain (2010) aligns their findings with this model. Horvath and Horvath's work investigating L-vocalisation demonstrated that, when looking at multiple locations across Australia and New Zealand, neither the spatial 'wave' diffusion model, the urban hierarchy (gravity) model or the counter-urban model gave satisfactory explanations for the patterns they found.

> "If spatial effects do not explain the patterns, there is another possible geographical interpretation—the effect of place—that can be considered. Often place effects provide a potential explanation for why spatial models fail to account adequately for the facts (i.e., why some localities resist the spread of innovation while others welcome it)." (Horvath & Horvath, 2001, p. 52).

Within this, their explanation rests in the importance of place over space, that is a single location, or cluster of locations rather than a wider space focussing on (geographical) relationships between places. The sense of place can itself give positive or negative feelings of identity, and thus can form the basis for evaluation of a new linguistic feature coming from outside. If seen favourably, it may be adopted. If it is not deemed compatible with the place, it may be rejected (Horvath & Horvath, 2001). This sense of place falls into the 'cultural hearth' model of diffusion in that it attends to the cultural and linguistic needs of the immediate locality first before spreading beyond those perceived boundaries.

2.5.3 Dialect Levelling, Koineization and New Dialect Formation

Kerswill and Trudgill (2005) define dialect levelling, as a "decrease in linguistic differentiation associated with location, leading to disappearance or attrition of local dialects" (p202). That is, linguistic features used within a dialect that are salient or potentially stereotypical are replaced with a more widely used variant in order to 'level out' any differences. This could be to reduce variation for the purposes of mutual intelligibility, or in order to reduce any social stigma associated with the dialect that the form brings. Hinskens points to dialect levelling as a two dimensional process that impacts a dialect in structural ways (Hinskens, 1998). The first reduces variation between non-standard varieties: what Berruto would call horizontal change (see Section 2.3.1). The second falls into similar lines as Berruto's vertical change, whereby there is a structural change in a dialect or dialects due to a dialect-standard convergence (Hinskens, 1998, p. 36). Both fall into Labov's category of 'change from above'.

Torgersen and Kerswill describe the process of dialect levelling as involving three key factors: **Geographical diffusion** where linguistic features spread out from urban locations to

surrounding areas; **Levelling** in which speakers from less widely-spoken dialects accommodate their speech during face-to-face interactions by reducing use of local linguistic features, and; **Non-contact, extra-linguistics factors** such as speaker identity, attitudes and ideology that can in some ways predetermine which linguistic features they consider attractive and those they do not (Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004).

Kerswill (2003) describes two processes at work in dialect levelling: geographical diffusion whereby a feature is spread via regular face-to-face contact through geographical space; and levelling that occurs via convergence, in a manner closely related to speech accommodation (see also Hinskens, 1998). Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) (Giles, 1973), later Communication Accommodation Theory, (CAT) (Giles et al., 1987; Giles & Baker, 2008) is the theoretical assumption that individuals will change their linguistic behaviour (e.g. phonologically, syntactically, lexically) by converging or diverging their language use in response to others.

Accommodation can be used consciously or unconsciously by speakers. Examples of conscious accommodation may be from a salesperson or potential employee at an interview, or a teacher trying to speak to a group of young people. The motivation here may be, in the case of the former, to impress the customer or interviewer by mirroring their (linguistic) behaviour; or, in the case of the latter, to demonstrate an affiliation with the different social group through linguistic choices. In both these cases, accommodation may occur through adopting certain phonological features from their interlocutor's dialect, or by using lexical items that are either from a standard dialect or from their interlocutor's dialect, rather than from the speaker's 'native' dialect. This does, of course, have the potential to backfire, as an individual making a conscious effort to accommodate may risk 'over-accommodation', which could come across as patronising and condescending, or in the worst cases, culturally offensive (Coupland et al., 1988). Indeed, Hinskens (1998) states that before any structural convergence resulting from long-term accommodation can take place within a dialect, so too must there be a condition of socio-psychological convergence (p42). In other words, there must be a favourable view of the speakers of the dialect with which another dialect is converging.

Assuming accommodation is received favourably and has the desired effect of enabling an individual to either gain the status or social identity to which they aspire, or to receive a 'reward' of approval from their interlocutor (Giles & Powesland, 1997) then this in some form completes what Auer and Hinskens (2005) label as the first component or step of a three-step hierarchical model of structural language change. The second component in this model highlights the shift from short-term accommodation, as has been described above, to long-term accommodation whereby the feature or features used in the accommodation act then become more of a habitual speech practice. This may remain as a feature of that individual speaker's

own idiolect or, as in the third component of this model, it may then become an innovation that spreads to others within the community. This third step is what results in language or dialect change within a speech community, specifically within the context of this discussion, levelling via convergence. Berruto (1989 c.f. 2005, p. 82) reminds us that the notion of reciprocity should also be considered in accommodation; it is not necessarily a one-sided process. Both speakers (and by extension both speech-communities) may accommodate one another, and thus change may occur within both dialects.

Convergence is not an inevitability with long-term accommodation. There are other factors that can induce convergence of dialects, and not all are necessarily through the will of the speakers. Hinskens (1998) points to extra-linguistic factors as a reason behind the gradual progress of dialect levelling: that the process of levelling, both internally to the dialect and also as an exogenous change, is through incremental change across apparent time, and; that the geographical distribution of a feature can determine the speed at which it is levelled out, if at all (Hinskens, 1998, p. 43). Hinskens' study investigated the speech of men in the Limburg region of the Netherlands. This region was split into three dialectal areas: Ripuarian dialects (labelled 'A'), a transition zone between Ripuarian and East Limburg dialects (labelled 'B') and the East Limburg dialects (labelled 'C'). These areas were also geographically smallest to largest respectively. Using a collection of dialect features, he found that the features specific to dialect area A, the smallest dialect area, were being reduced much more frequently than those that were in use in regions A and B. Similarly, those features in use in all three dialect regions were being reduced in use at a lesser pace (see p42-43). The geographical distribution of dialect features and any subsequent levelling across dialects is also raised by Kerswill (2003) to eradicate ambiguity in the use of 'levelling' as a process for regional dialect levelling, and hence offers the following distinction: that 'regional dialect levelling' requires change throughout a wide geographical space to occur, whereas 'levelling' describes changes that are the outcome of accommodation that 'level out' any marked differences between the two dialects in contact.

An ultimate outcome of dialect levelling is the eradication of distinguishing dialect features altogether, resulting in dialect death. The process of dialect is often observed as a fairly rapid decline in the use of local features that distinguish one local dialect from another. As mentioned above, this can be due to regional dialect levelling or standardisation, but other factors can be down to a dwindling local population due to out-migration or an ageing local population not being replaced by younger generations. In-migration from other parts of the country can also contribute to dialect death, particularly if such population movement reduces the local population so much that they are unable to use their local dialect in everyday life (e.g. Britain, 2009).

2.5.3.1 Koineization and New Dialect Formation

The term 'koine' is a Greek term for 'common', and earliest use is cited as the vernacular used among those living and working in a trade port in the Attica region, specifically Athens (see Siegel, 1985). These people came from all over the Mediterranean, and a 'common' language was formed based on one specific dialect with significant contributions from several others (Siegel, 1985, p. 358). Modern koineization, though, is often considered to be a slightly different process: one whereby a koine is formed through the combination of two or more varieties. Auer and Hinskens define koineization as the process of "development through dialect mixing, simplification and reduction of a regional lingua franca - incorporating features of various varieties" (Auer & Hinskens, 1996, p. 3). It is a process that incorporates regional dialect levelling along with mixing and simplification (Kerswill & Trudgill, 2005). Siegel is careful to ensure that the definition of a Koine is neither too broad or narrow, settling on a koine being "the stabilized result of mixing of linguistic subsystems such as regional or literary dialects" (Siegel, 1985, p. 363). He proposes four main stages in the process of koineization: the 'prekoine' stage where language use is unstable and multiple forms are used simultaneously and inconsistently (p373); a 'stabilized koine' (p373) where features from the dialects have been selected, or focussed "by means of a reduction in the forms available", as Trudgill describes it (Trudgill, 1986, p. 107) and the compromise is formed, but it may still be lacking in morphological complexity (Siegel, 1985, p. 373); the 'expanded koine' where the compromised dialect is used in increasing functions throughout the broader population, e.g. literature, legal issues, and may also increase in morphological complexity (p374); and finally the 'nativised koine' where it becomes the first language for a population (p374). Not all koines go through all four stages, nativisation can be achieved at any point. Once nativised, new dialects or koines may then become susceptible to 'drift' from their mother language, as can be seen in New Zealand English (Trudgill et al., 2000).

Siegel distinguishes between two main types of koine: a *regional koine* resulting from contact between two dialects of the same language that takes place in the same location where one of those dialects is commonly spoken (p363), and an *immigrant koine*, where two or more regional dialects are not native to the location in which they are brought together (p364). Trudgill refers to the immigrant koine as a 'new dialect' (Trudgill, 1986, p. 83).

While the processes that go into the development of a koine can be very similar to dialect levelling (indeed, dialect levelling is part of the process of koineization), the crucial difference between them is that dialect levelling does not necessary result in a compromise between the dialects in the mix, whereas koineization results in a compromise dialect, taking in features from the multiple dialects (Siegel, 1985, p. 365). Indeed, Kerswill (2008) states that "'Regional dialect levelling' refers to the decrease in the number of variants of a particular phonological,

morphological, or lexical unit in a given dialect area, and should be distinguished from *diffusion*, which is the spread of linguistic features across a dialect area" (p671).

At this point it is important to acknowledge that, much like pidgins and creoles, koines are not always formed through voluntary language contact. Kerswill (2008) reminds us that some koines such as South African Bhojpuri and Fiji Hindi were the result of involuntary movement of Indians to European colonies for indentured service (Mesthrie, 1993 c.f. Kerswill, 2008, pp. 672–673), a replacement for slavery after abolition in the 19th century. Thus, koineization became a necessity among the people who were shipped from their homelands. Furthermore, Kerswill points out that koineization is hindered if speakers do not 'waive their previous allegiances and social divisions to show mutual solidarity" (p673). Because Koines, unlike pidgins and creoles, are formed from dialects of the same system, speakers can in theory continue to use their own vernaculars and still be understood (Siegel, 2001 c.f. Kerswill, 2008, p. 673). However, as discussed in Section 1.5.4.1, identity can both inform and be informed by the use of language, and long-term accommodation is impacted accordingly. Therefore, rigid adherence to a dialect form that is not used by an interlocutor or interlocutors is less likely to result in accommodation on either side.

An end result of koineization is ultimately new dialect formation, and is in many ways very similar to the process of exogenous change in that it requires face-to-face language contact, and forges new forms through long-term accommodation and levelling. By looking at new dialect formation it can tell us a good deal about the processes involved in exogenous change between existing dialects.

Within the stages outlined by Siegel, Trudgill also points to 'reallocation' of forms from the dialects that are repurposed elsewhere within the new dialect (Trudgill, 1986). This sits in addition to the structural reallocation discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Britain and Trudgill (2005) discuss **socio-stylistic reallocation** as a direct result of the koineization process where social factors are involved in the realisation of the sounds. They provide an example from Trudgill's work in Norwich, specifically looking at the vowel choices in the 'ROOM' lexical set (which includes *'room', 'groom'* and *'broom*'), and how three different varieties from locations surrounding the city of Norwich have been reallocated. In West Norfolk, the vowel is /u:/; in South Norfolk, the vowel is /ʊ/; and in North and East Norfolk, the vowel is the more central /ʉ/ (p185). Within the city, however, these three regional varieties have been allocated by social status, where the West Norfolk variety is considered high status (and thus used by many middle-class speakers); the South Norfolk /ʊ/ has medium status, and the centralised /ʉ/ of North and East Norfolk has the lowest perceived social status, and used by working class speakers.

It is unlikely that the results from Somerset will reveal a new dialect in formation. However, there is a strong likelihood of dialect levelling occurring in Somerset, and therefore this is taken into consideration.

2.5.4 Non-Linguistic Motivations in Language Change

Second and Third Wave Sociolinguistics looked at the additional factors beyond simply demographics that could impact on the progress or direction of language change. Even 19th Century dialectologists found that the use of language is not uniform according to location and the demographics of the individuals using it. Modern studies now take into consideration the autonomy that speakers have in their language use, whether they choose to demonstrate their connection to a group through language use, or to project a certain quality more often associated with a different group. Yet beyond this, additional factors that speakers do not have control over can also impact language use and language contact, such as topography in the landscape, and the ease of population movement within it. These factors all impact language but are not linguistic motivations.

This section will therefore look at how non-linguistic motivations such as identity, geographical borders and mobility can contribute to or hinder the progress of linguistic innovation.

2.5.4.1 Identity

Social Identity Theory (see Tajfel & Turner, 2004), the theory of how individuals develop and maintain unconscious biases and a sense of self-esteem according to their social identity has two key components. The first is down to personal identity based on idiosyncratic personality traits, and interpersonal relationships with particular people. The second key component is how an individual categorises themselves into a group, and how their self-identity and self-esteem is based on that categorisation. Through this categorisation the differences between members of the 'in-group' (the group to which a person belongs) and the out-group (any other groups that are in direct comparison to the in-group) are accentuated, while any similarities are dismissed or reduced. Equally any similarities among members within the in-group are accentuated and differences are reduced or dismissed. This establishes the 'us and them' between the groups and begins to seed unconscious bias either in favour of fellow in-group members, or against out-group members. A simple example of this is a football fan's relationship with their team. By selecting and self-categorising into a group of supporters for a particular football team, there is an immediate sense of us and them. When the selected football

team wins, an individual who is part of a group of supporters will feel a great sense of pride and their self-esteem is rewarded. If that team loses, members of that group lose self-esteem.

The social structure of groups can lead them to be permeable or impermeable (Abrams, 2001). Some groups are predefined and cannot be changed through movement, for example generational groupings based on age, or groupings by ethnicity. Age and ethnicity of an individual cannot be altered, and therefore any groupings based on them are impermeable. Groupings based on socio-economic status, place of residence or education can be altered, though, and thus it can become a matter of self-esteem if one is included within them. Externally applied prestige and internally applied self-esteem of the group can rely on many factors, usually in comparison to other out-groups.

The unconscious sense of self-esteem associated with a group through Social Identity Theory has been investigated as a factor in language variation and change. One of the most well-known studies that looked into how identity with a certain group can influence language choices and change is Labov's study of Martha's Vineyard (1962). Set off the east coast of New England in America, Martha's Vineyard was for many years a fishing community. In the mid-later 20th Century, however, it became a desirable location for second-home owners and wealthy retirees to spend summer months, creating two distinct groups: the local Martha's Vineyarders and the wealthy outsiders. Labov identified that in response to this, the local Vineyarders' dialect underwent change in order to distinguish themselves from the summer visitors. Labov discovered what has been described elsewhere as 'Canadian Raising', that is the centralisation of the onset vowel in both PRICE and MOUTH. This centralisation (as Labov terms it) correlated strongly with the feelings of identity around the island. Of the 6 locations Labov studied, he found that the middle-aged fishermen in the Chilmark community had the greatest degree of centralisation. He put this alongside the strong feelings of local loyalty based on the historical local prestige of the location. This community is considered one of the oldest on the island, with ties back to the first English settlers in the 17th and 18th Centuries. The Chilmark community was also the most opposed to the influx of summer visitors, despite any economic benefits they brought to the island. Labov therefore surmised that the strong feelings of local identity compared with the disdain the community had for the out-group (the summer visitors) had led them to reinforce their differences linguistically, by centralising the onsets of these PRICE and MOUTH diphthongs (Labov, 1962, 1963). The group itself represented a permeable boundary, based as it is on something that can be altered, namely the place of residence. However, the need among the local middle-aged fishermen to differentiate themselves from these summer visitors and to maintain the prestige they were afforded on the island was strengthening that group boundary.

The use of language within a Community of Practice can also reinforce a sense of identity and denote inclusion and exclusion from a group. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) define communities of practice as "an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavor. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations - in short, practices - emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor. As a social construct, a community of practice is different from the traditional community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages" (p464). Meyerhoff and Strycharz (2013) point out that the "key notion here is *practice*" (p429), as a community of practice requires the shared purpose or action among the members in order to bring them together with a common goal. Wenger (1998) gives three key criteria for defining a community of practice. The first is that the community of practice involves **mutual engagement** among its members. That is, they regularly interact in order to collaborate on the shared endeavour. That interaction is likely to be face-to-face, but it's possible that remote contact through phone calls, video calls and email may also function to ensure interaction (Wenger, 1998, p. 74 cited in Meyerhoff & Strycharz, 2013, p. 429). The second criterion Wenger proposes is that the members of the community are engaged in a **jointly negotiated enterprise.** Meyerhoff and Strycharz urge caution in this a point of analysis, though: "Sociolinguists who wish to use the notion of CofP in their analyses have to exercise caution and ensure that as researchers they are not attempting to constitute 'communities of practice' for which a shared enterprise is explanatorily vacant" (p430). Thirdly, members of the community will have a **shared repertoire**: a set of vocabulary specific to that community that may involve technical speech particular to a common task, or references to people both within or outside the group, for example. Being able to recognise and appropriately use that shared vocabulary can be used to identify those who are part of the group, and those who aren't. It is important to note that CofPs are not necessarily something entered into specifically to become part of a group for prestige or identity. They can vary in their nature, coming down to a group of people in a workplace, or more broadly a particular industry. They can also relate to those engaged in a particular sport, or hobby, such as playing football or going to a weekly social dance night.

We have seen that social prestige of a group and how it is assigned can be down to many different factors. How an individual may choose to align themselves linguistically is also indicative of their affiliation to a social group. Mees and Collins' research into glottalisation in Cardiff discussed identity and social mobility as factors in language change (Mees & Collins, 1999). Their longitudinal study was conducted among working-class and middle-class speakers in Cardiff between the mid-1970s and the mid-1990s. They looked at the speech of women in particular, over the course of the longitudinal study, from their schooling in a working-class part

of the city to adulthood. In their interrogation of the data, they found that glottalisation occurred among two female speakers who had grown up working class but had since moved into the middle-class, either through marriage or education. On the other hand, the two working-class female speakers had not acquired glottalisation. Glottalisation was not a feature previously seen among speakers in Cardiff, but was associated with a metropolitan London lifestyle, and considered fashionable among Cardiff speakers. A South Wales accent, however, was treated with some ridicule among Cardiff speakers who do not share some of the General South Wales English features such as a 'lilting' intonation (p187), and monophthong vowels in GOAT and FACE (p191). Mees & Collins suggested that increased glottalisation, along with an increase in use of diphthongs in GOAT and FACE, among the women who had moved from a working class to a middle class socio-economic status was due to a desire to adopt a more prestigious non-Welsh form of speech. Conversely, they suggested that their results support Labov's assertion that working-class speakers are more 'secure in their speech norms' (Labov, 1966, pp. 495–496) so don't feel a need to change. This conclusion from Labov as well as Mees and Collins is also borne out in the findings of Williams and Kerswill (1999) in Hull, where use of the language standard was considered 'posh' and was therefore avoided among working-class adolescents. The close-knit nature of the community in Hull has formed some resistance to standardisation. At the same time, Kerswill and Williams also found that these younger speakers in Hull had adopted the non-standard T-Glottalling, found largely among southern dialects, but less so within RP. Use of T-Glottalling was also found among older and middle aged speakers despite this not being a feature of the traditional local dialect, but at a lower frequency than younger speakers. This indicates that while these younger speakers did not want to sound posh by adopting standard English or RP features, they were happy to adopt and make greater use of a different southern non-standard feature in order to differentiate themselves from older generations in their community.

Watt (2000) relays the findings of his study among Tyneside speakers, in which he found that the social markedness of a local feature can have an impact on the linguistic decisions a speaker may choose if they want to convey a certain identity. In a study of 32 speakers, divided by age, gender and socio-economic class, three main types of realisation of the FACE and GOAT vowels - specifically either a monophthong ([eː] or [oː]), a centring diphthong ([ɪə] or [ʊə]), or a closing diphthong ([eɪ] or [oʊ]) - along with a fourth monophthong in the case of GOAT (the rounded central [əː]), were studied. Watt found that use of the centring diphthongs (labelled Type II) was in decline among the age groups and across both gender and class groups. A monophthong (labelled Type I) or a closing diphthong (labelled Type III) were more likely to be used among women in particular, and among younger speakers, rather than the Type II (centring diphthongs) found in the more traditional local dialect. Watt determined that regional

dialect levelling rather than any internal motivating factors was behind these changes. However, in addition to this wider dialect levelling, Watt found that the younger middle class males were the highest users of the fourth [ɵː] variant that was also found among the working class males, but in very low use among the older middle class males. He concluded that this was the result of a desire to reflect and project 'local loyalty' (D. J. Watt, 2000, p. 97). This asserts a parallel with the Martha's Vineyarders as discussed above.

In investigating the effects of national identity on accommodation, Babel (2010) sought to replicate the study conducted by Bourhis, Giles and Tajfel (1973) in which (English) speakers from a community in Wales were asked to produce utterances both before and after hearing an RP speaker. Participants were also given a positive or negative story about the RP speaker to see if this was more likely to lead the participants to converge or diverge with an RP variety. Babel replicated this with New Zealand English speakers using an Australian English model speaker. Babel suggests that, in contrast to Trudgill's findings (Trudgill, 1981, 1986), it is not always the most salient dialectal features that are imitated by speakers of a different dialect. Following Hay et al (2006), the differences between Australian and New Zealand realisation of the TRAP and KIT vowels are more salient, but the differences in pronunciation of the DRESS vowel are less so. Yet Babel found that the Australian realisation of the DRESS vowel was imitated by the New Zealand speakers more frequently than the TRAP and KIT vowels. In a further contradiction, in reviewing Trudgill's (2008) suggestion that accommodation is automatic but social ties can be fostered as a result of accommodation even if social identity does not play a part, Babel found that speakers may converge without realising it, but accommodation is not necessarily something that happens all the time. Rather Babel suggests a more nuanced approach, that "speakers cannot help accommodating, but group-identity attitudes modulate this automatic process" (Babel, 2010, p. 453).

Identity can therefore have various effects on the use of language. On an individual level it drives a person or sub-group within a speech community to make choices in their language use in order to project an identity that makes them stand out from other members or sub-groups within their community. It can be used by an individual to align themselves within a group, either on a conscious or unconscious level. The power of group identity can also resist potential accommodation to an external variety, particularly if that variety is a language standard.

2.5.4.2 Geographical Borders

We have discussed the reciprocal relationship between social group identity and dialect/language change, but the impact of geographic borders and barriers on language contact is equally important to language change.

2.5.4.2.1 Political and Administrative Borders

Political and administrative borders such as national or county borders can play an interesting role in language use and language perceptions. Political borders may be used to denote territory of one group of people from the territory of another, and may inform the locations of regional or national boundaries. However, they can also be the result of arbitrary division between one block of land and another with little or no consideration of the cultures or indeed language use that they may traverse. Spaces in the immediate or near vicinity of borders can become hard frontiers, or conversely they can become 'buffer zones' in which "cultural, linguistic and social hybridity can emerge, resulting in the formation of a sub-cultural buffer zone" (Newman, 2006, p. 151). Where hard borders may also represent a heavy isogloss between language varieties, the transition buffer zones can become a place in which language varieties are in regular contact.

Hinskens et al (2000; 2005) discuss three types of state border found within Europe and how they relate to language spoken across or around them. The first is a border that divides an area in which the same standard language is spoken on both sides. This type of border is typically younger than the dialects that are spoken in the area, and are the result of recent administrative changes. An example of this is the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. On either side of this border, English is the standard language, and yet a continuum of Irish English dialects runs through this border (see Kallen, 2005). The second type of state border indicated by Hinskens et al (2005) traverses different but related languages. These could refer to the borders between Norway and Sweden, or Germany and the Netherlands. In these cases, the languages are potentially mutually intelligible (particularly in the case of Norway and Sweden). The third kind of state border creates what Hinskens et al call a 'roofless' dialect. In these instances, a dialect area is divided by a national border, but the corresponding standard language is only used on one side of the border.

These three types of borders show the continuum of dialects that can appear throughout a geographical space regardless of political boundaries. However, while these boundaries may appear somewhat arbitrary, the administrative implications of these boundaries lead to greater opportunity for divergence. Schooling, transport links and governance are to a large degree dictated by these boundaries, promoting closer contact within the boundary than beyond it. In the case of schooling, this happens primarily for younger individuals, but can also impact on social contacts for the parents of the children at the schools. The locations of boundaries can also lead to perceptual differences between speakers of different varieties. In the case of boundaries that have been in place for centuries, such as the Scottish-English border, they also come with a good deal of historical context to further divide the populations on either side, which has had an impact on the dialect features on either side of the border, and the attitudes

towards those varieties on either side (see Glauser, 2000; C. Montgomery, 2012, 2014). Watt et al (2014) investigated the sense of identity felt by speakers on both side of this border, which may at first glance represent that first type of borders described by Hinskens (see above) whereby the same standard language is spoken on both sides of the border, and where, as Watt et al put it, "the dependencies between subtle accent / dialect differences and speakers' identities may become particularly meaningful and finely balanced" (p8). The history of how English came to be the standard language used on both sides of the Scotland/England border is itself one of conflict resolved only by political machinations through the Act of Union in the 18th century that has seen Scotland largely governed from Westminster ever since. The relatively recent devolution of power in 1999 that enabled Scotland to establish an independent parliament in Edinburgh reinforced stronger feelings of identity among Scottish people, as was borne out by the drive to hold a referendum on the cessation of the union with the rest of Britain. The Scottish Independence referendum was held in mid-2014, the same year that Watts et al published their findings, and would likely have had an influence on the responses that the Scottish people gave (and perhaps also some of those on the English side of the border) during the data-gathering period of this research in the few years leading up to that referendum.

2.5.4.2.2 Topography and Natural borders

A group's place within the landscape can influence a sense of identity, as the landscape itself may present natural barriers that can cut one group of people off from another. While comparatively recent improvements in transport and technology allow us to largely overcome these barriers, topographical features in the landscape have for millennia been an obstacle that has separated us and allowed linguistic differences, and potentially prejudicial perceptions to develop. David Britain discusses this in his works in the English Fens (Britain, 1991, 1997, 2002a; Britain & Trudgill, 2005) an area of boggy marshland that straddles parts of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and South Lincolnshire. The inaccessibility across these marshlands led to communities within the Fens becoming cut off from larger towns on either side of them until they were drained by Dutch engineers in the 17th Century. Even with the development of railways, the Fens were still largely cut off as trains tended to pass through them rather than stopping at multiple points throughout the area. This relative isolation from the rest of the East Anglian and East Midlands dialects led to dialect islands forming. Britain discusses these dialects in terms of language contact and the urban hierarchical model - demonstrating how large rural areas can be 'skipped over' as dialect features hop from urban space to urban space. It also demonstrates quite clearly the impact natural borders can have on contact-induced dialect change.

2.5.4.3 Mobility and Language Contact

While geographical borders, both political and topographical, can represent a delineation between dialects, they can nevertheless be overcome, resulting in language contact. This of course is how convergence and divergence can occur in the first place, but the models and methods by which dialects can come into contact require discussion. Distance does not account for topography, though, as geographical features in the landscape can be barriers or indeed pathways to communication (Nerbonne, 2010). Travel-to-work time works better as a measure rather than distance (Britain, 2004), as this more accurately reflects the chances of communication.

Kerswill (2006) proposes three types of geographical mobility that can potentially impact language contact. The first is **commuting** (daily migration), which can take place over a number of years, but the individual commuting never actually moves away from their hometown. They may be exposed to a different dialect or indeed dialects throughout their working day as a result of the commute. This exposure may occur within the workplace from fellow workmates or customers, or possibly through interactions with fellow commuters on public transport if that is the mode of travel they use. The second type of geographic mobility is **seasonal migration**, where an individual may move away from their hometown for a limited period for work, or possibly study. Examples of seasonal migration may include summer work or an internship or apprenticeship in a different town or part of the country or may also include university study away from home. The lengths of such stays could vary but may be up to months at a time. The third type of geographical mobility is **long-term or permanent migration** which could last for years. It may be a change of town or region, or it may even be a change of country, again for economic, employment or education-based reasons, such as those seen in New Zealand and Milton Keynes (Kerswill & Trudgill, 2005; Kerswill & Williams, 2000b; Trudgill et al., 2000; A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999). Beaman (2021) looks at the impact of mobility across an individual's lifespan. She argues that "...as individuals move and come into increased contact with speakers of different varieties, they naturally accommodate their speech to their interlocutors throughout their lifetime." (Beaman, 2021, p. 31). She conducted a longitudinal study into interspeaker linguistic stability in the Swabian German dialect, using corpus data gathered over a period of 35 years. She notes that the location and lifestyles of the speakers in the study had changed in the intervening 35 year period between recording dates, and that where in 1982 the dialect speakers were living in a close-knit community, by 2017 they were much more dispersed and distant both geographically and socially (p40). Over the course of the study Beaman found that the use of dialect had declined in both geographical areas, but that it had declined much more in the urban Stuttgart than in the less urban Schwäbisch Gmünd. However, when also analysing for orientation towards Swabian as a dialect and culture, those

in Stuttgart with a greater affinity towards Swabian dialect had retained dialectal features more. Pertinent to this brief discussion of mobility, though, the impact of mobility on dialect use seemed to be more significant among women than among men when comparing the data from 1982 with that from 2017. Women with high mobility were less likely to use Swabian dialect features whereas among men the rate of mobility (given as a binary 'high/low') made no significant difference. Beaman suggests that cultural changes in German society may also be a factor in this, as traditionally men were more likely to travel due to work, and earn larger salaries, while women were more likely to stay at home to fulfil domestic duties and childcare. As these gender roles have become increasingly blurred and women take up jobs that require more travel, they too have been exposed to greater dialectal diversity. Additionally, as more women strive to reach higher positions within the workforce, the pressure to speak a more standardised form of the language would also have been present. Beaman argues that overall, there is an inversely proportional relationship between mobility and identity in the use of dialect features. Where a speaker has high mobility and low identity to Swabian, then that speaker is more likely to have lost dialect features over the course of their lifetime. However, the reverse is also true, in that low mobility speakers with a high sense of identity orientated towards Swabian will have more dialectal features in their repertoire.

Beaman's study represents how extra-linguistic motivations are not mutually exclusive in their impact on language. There is a relationship between identity and mobility, which in turn are both open to influence from geographical features and political boundaries. As Beal observes, while the "stroke of a bureaucrat's pen" (Beal, 2010, p. 225) that draws a border or boundary in the delineation of one jurisdiction from another may appear somewhat arbitrary, the impact on the movement of people around that space, and their sense of identity to it can be influenced as a result. Thus, the opportunities for language contact and the affiliation residents feel towards their location will impact on dialect.

The development of perceptual dialectology as a focus of study solidifies this relationship between place and identity. The methodologies in perceptual dialectology studies can vary, but typically they employ the application of perceived boundaries between dialectal varieties and their association stereotypes onto geographical space (see Preston, 1982; Preston & Howe, 1987). Often, within this approach, the perceived characteristics of the speakers of stereotypical features, and the attitudes towards them are also requested and evaluated in the context of attractiveness of dialect (see for example Long, 1999). The impact of the boundary or border in question itself can also determine how well non-linguists on one side may view the dialect and by extension the speakers on the other side of it (e.g. C. Montgomery, 2012). These studies demonstrate very clearly the intangible and unbreakable bond that the sense of place and space fosters within language use.

2.6 Summary

The methods and motivations for the study of dialect have developed and grown since the 19th Century enthusiasm for dialect 'capture', that is the recording and preservation for future study of historical and contemporaneous language forms in much the same way a snapshot or screengrab captures an image at a particular moment in time. In turn, theories of language change have been tested and revised, sometimes diverging into different schools of thought, all ultimately chasing the answers to the relationship between historical and modern language use, and what processes caused such changes.

The place of language within the landscape has remained a consistent focus of linguistic investigation and is the basis of dialectology studies, historical and modern. Sociolinguistic methods have been applied to dialectology in order to broaden the understanding of how language sits within the landscape and among the people in it. After all, language is inherently human, therefore one cannot ignore the actions, motivations and relationships that humans to fulfil, realise and maintain through language use.

In the interests of moving beyond the traditional dialectological model of language capture through observation of only the most conservative speakers in rural spaces, sociolinguistic approaches turned to the spaces where language showed the most variation, the urban landscape. Within these studies, the processes of transition that mark language change over time were brought into focus, and with them the roles that different demographic groups play in that language change. The shift in focus from purely demographic approaches in first wave sociolinguistic theory have been joined with the influence of identity and place on language use in the second wave, through to the use of language to reinforce and project an identity in the third wave. These waves broaden the scope of analysis beyond simply internal vs. external.

The impact of increased social and geographical mobility has blurred societal and linguistic boundaries. As these boundaries shift or are reduced, so has the progress of dialect levelling continued. This has been particularly prevalent in the South of England, in particular, and in British English varieties in general.

3 Modern British English dialectology, with a focus on Somerset

The location under investigation in this study is the county of Somerset in the south-west of England. This county has been the subject of dialectological studies over the past two centuries, and is widely regarded as a rural area, thus making it a prime case for traditional dialectology. It has rarely been subject to more modern dialectological studies, particularly those applying more sociolinguistic techniques, unless it is part of a much broader study as a whole.

The discussion so far has taken a broad view of factors within language change, and while it has incorporated examples from British English varieties, it has not focussed exclusively on those varieties. Before looking at Somerset in more detail, though, it is useful to take a look at the ongoing trends and matters that concern modern British English dialect studies. This chapter will look at patterns of linguistic variation and change over the past 50 or years within British and Irish English dialect varieties. It will then move on to look at Somerset specifically, with a special interest in previous studies into the dialects within the county, and how the non-linguistics factors discussed in the previous chapter may also have potential impact on the use of language within the county both historically and in the past 50 years.

3.1 Issues in modern British dialectology

The previous chapter looked at patterns of diffusion and the subsequent outcomes. Modern British dialectology has in recent times been occupied with three key issues within British English varieties that have been affected by diffusion: Regional Dialect Levelling, Koineization, and Dialect Death. While these issues were addressed on a global level in Chapter 1, this section will look more closely at how they manifest in British English, before turning to the location under specific study within this thesis, Somerset. Issues of sociolinguistic interest will be discussed in relation to Somerset, before a hypothesis is proposed with regards to potential change in the county dialect.

3.1.1 (Regional) Dialect Levelling

In the previous chapter, dialect levelling was discussed from a theoretical perspective, as well as a global standpoint. Here, dialect levelling will be discussed in the context of British English varieties (with occasional global English examples). Dialect levelling, and by extension

regional dialect levelling is the result of language contact where features from one dialect can be diffused into neighbouring dialects, who in turn reduce the use of stereotypical features in favour of the new form.

Williams and Kerswill (1999) point out that, particular to British English varieties, the increased mobility among the population in the years since the Second World War have contributed to phenomena such as dialect levelling, as more speakers of different varieties are brought into contact with one another. The contact with other varieties that this increased mobility afforded speakers led to accommodation and thus dialect levelling. Areas around large urbans spaces were particularly affected by this, and the regions around London are a prime example. Williams and Kerswill studied speakers in Milton Keynes, Hull and Reading, the first representing a new town in which the population was almost entirely comprised of in-migrants; the second representing a town far from London with little social and geographical mobility in the population, and an underperformance within schools that reinforced the lack of mobility; and the third representing something between the two as an old established town that has seen a recent rush of in-migration and increased industrial development. The three locations were evaluated in terms of use of vowels and three known ongoing changes in British English shown to originate in London: voiced and voiceless TH-fronting and T-Glottalling. They found that Milton Keynes and Reading, the two cities closest to London, displayed more similarities with one another, and with other varieties in the south-east than the northern city Hull.

Dialect levelling in the south-east of England, and perhaps more broadly across the south of the country, is largely the result of diffusion from London varieties. Trudgill (1999) gives an example of the influence of London English on the Norwich and East Anglia dialects in which dedialectalisation (whereby the features of a dialect are replaced with features from a standard or mainstream dialect) occurred through lexical redistribution. Where previously Norwich English had a division between lexical items containing vowels that used a monophthong /e:/ in *face, name,* and *gate*, and those that used a diphthong /æi/, used in *play, main,* and *day*, these were changing towards an increased use of the diphthong form where previously the monophthong was used. This diphthong form was found in London English and elsewhere in British English dialects in both sets of words, and it was suggested that the London English variety was more prestigious and had therefore been an external influence on this change. Trudgill noted that this merger was almost entirely completed by the late 1990s.

Staying within East Anglia, Britain (2014) points to levelling occurring in Fenland dialects, where towns have adopted more supralocal features that have not been observed in rural locations close by. He gives two examples of such levelling: where words within the FACE set, are realised as diphthongs in central Fenland towns that would otherwise be realised with

a monophthong [ɛ] in the rural western Fens; and a split between 'rose' and 'rows' that occurs in the eastern Fens is also avoided within Central fens towns (Britain, 2014, p. 37).

Contact-motivated change does not necessarily come exclusively from one external source. Trudgill (1999) points out an instance in which change was influenced not only by a standard variety, but also by other non-standard dialects. Trudgill discusses the move from an unrounded open back vowel [ɑ] in the use of LOT to a rounded open back vowel [ɒ] in Norwich English, as is used in many other dialects in British English. This rounded form was found among both middle-class women who were influenced by RP, and working-class men who were influenced by neighbouring local dialects in Suffolk (Trudgill, 1999, p. 138). In this case, the change is not only from a mainstream variety, but simultaneously from a non-standard (dialectal) variety.

Torgersen and Kerswill (2004), following a review of evidence in the light of Labov's Principles of Sound Change (as described in Chapter 1 Section 2.1), conducted an investigation into the realisations of six short vowels (KIT, FOOT, DRESS, TRAP, STRUT and LOT) in two locations: Ashford in Kent, which sits South East of London; and Reading to the west of London. They analysed both SED data gathered close to the respective locations, as well as their own data from interviews and wordlists. While Torgersen and Kerswill demonstrated that the results of their study in the South East of England could be potentially explained by internally motivated change, they ultimately concluded that, due to the patterns shown in the vowels spaces of the two locations, the change was more likely the result of dialect levelling via geographical diffusion from London. This, they argued, supported Farrer and Jones' 2002 assertion that linguists should not assume an 'unspoken hierarchy of explanatory adequacy' that favours internal factors (Farrar & Jones, 2002, p. 8; as cited in Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004, p. 48).

There are some instances of resistance to dialect levelling in British English varieties, however. Watson (2006) shows that while other parts of Britain are converging through geographical diffusion to adopt features such as glottalisation, TH-fronting and a labiodental /r/, Liverpudlian English is actively diverging, replacing [t] with elision ([h]) instead of a glottal stop, particularly in function words with short vowels, and unstressed utterance-final positions (see Kaye & Harris, 1990; as cited in Kallen, 2005). Watson does not discuss the motivations for this resistance, but notes that the 't→h' feature of Liverpudlian English was not only resisting the levelling process that is replacing utterance-final [t] with [ʔ] in many other dialects in the north-west of England.

This brings the discussion back briefly to endogenous change and the supposition that divergence between dialects is internally motivated. Endogenous change does not take features from either mainstream or traditional dialects, but instead develops a new phonological feature among the speakers within the dialect. However Maguire et al (2010) point out that while it

could be expected that this sort of sound change might lead to divergence, this is not necessarily exclusively the case, as new sound changes in one dialect may then be adopted by a neighbouring dialect through diffusion. In the same study Maguire et al go on to point out that, even with exogenous factors at play, the same sound feature acquired by a dialect as part of language contact is not necessarily going to take the same place in the phonological structure of the receiving dialect. Where a sound may be associated with a lexical item, or a specific phonetic environment in one dialect, it may be restructured for use in a slightly different phonetic environment in another dialect. Thus, exogenous change in one dialect may result from the diffusion of endogenous change in another dialect, but not necessarily with the same phonetic result.

3.1.2 Dialect Levelling vs Standardisation in British English Varieties

Elworthy notes the impact of levelling in his 1876 description of the West Somerset dialect:

> "Now although a process of levelling may be going on, as respects quaint words and local idioms, which board schools in every parish will surely accelerate, yet I shall hope to show that this process is slow, and at present very far from complete. As regards pronunciation, intonation, and those finer shades of local peculiarity which mark divergences from the Queen's English almost more than the words used, I maintain that the changes are far slower than those which are constantly going on in what we call received English itself. "
>
> (Elworthy, 1876, p. 198)

Elworthy's view of levelling appears here to be predicated on the basis of a standardisation of the language via the school system. We have seen in the previous chapter how a language variety, typically related to speakers within a certain prestigious social group, can be selected as the 'standard' to which all speakers within a broad national community are expected to adhere. The motivations behind acquisition or prescription of a standard can be shrouded in ideologies of 'correctness' and social class stereotypes (J. Milroy, 2001; Mugglestone, 2003), or they can be down to a desire to display national pride. Milroy's definition of standardisation, whereby a uniformity is 'imposed', shows the prescriptive nature of standardisation, as it is often promoted and driven through education, with the prestige of education itself often standing as a paradigm for the selection of varieties to 'impose'. By contrast, regional dialect levelling appears more organically, without the social prestige that may be assigned according to social class or level of education. Instead, accommodation is one of the key motivations behind regional dialect levelling, offering a linguistic compromise where

standardisation does not. A case in point can be seen in southern English varieties. The standardisation of British English does not incorporate an accent, more this was a process that impacted the lexicon and grammar. Standard English, though, can be spoken in any regional accent and still be considered 'Standard English'. The prestige form of Received Pronunciation (RP) though is often seen by non-linguists as the 'correct' accent in which to speak English, so much so that educational and broadcast institutions required its use (see Mugglestone, 2003). The use of RP has diminished both in the classroom and the broadcasting airwaves as more regional varieties have been represented, yet still mostly speaking the Standard English dialect.

Over the past nearly 40 years the rise of what Rosewarne termed 'Estuary English' (Rosewarne, 1984) has spread out from the South East of England, and brought many features of accent typically associated with London dialects, including TH-Fronting, L-Vocalisation and labiodental /r/. In his later discussion of Estuary English, Rosewarne asked if Estuary English was becoming the 'new RP' (Rosewarne, 1994), looking to its adoption throughout the south of England, with speculation as to its adoption in Wales, and the north of England. What was particularly telling, though, was the increased adoption of Estuary English among Rosewarne's albeit limited study among secondary school pupils. Regardless of whether or not they were based in a school from the state system or the public/private school system, students were adopting features of Estuary English, and all with motivations of identity and image projections: for the students who had come from a predominantly RP speaking background, they were adopting Estuary English to acquire more 'street credibility' (p7), whereas the students in schools where a local accent was most frequently spoken, they were acquiring Estuary English in order to sound more 'sophisticated' (ibid).

The question of whether or not Estuary English is becoming a standard, or is an extreme form of regional dialect levelling is not entirely certain. Rosewarne describes Estuary English in the context of RP, and in particular the functions Estuary English has taken within southern British society. Rosewarne provides examples of its use in the corporate world, and by popular figures in broadcast media, and also, as seen above, as a variety that might not necessarily be taught in schools but is nonetheless the variety that many school leavers come away with. In this regard, it was perhaps the case that by 1994, the time Rosewarne's article was published, that Estuary English was in the process of completing Haugen's four stages of standardisation, with the elaboration of function in social situations (stage three), and may have been on its way to the final stage: acceptance by the community.

Yet, while the elaboration of function, as per Haugen's model of standardisation (Haugen, 1966), is well underway, it cannot be ruled out that Estuary English is part of a process of regional dialect levelling, as not all features of Estuary English are adopted among the southern English dialects. Watt and Milroy (1999) argue that Estuary English is a levelled form

rather than a well-defined variety. If this were some form of 'standardisation' of speech in southern English varieties, then it would not be possible to distinguish a speaker of Estuary English from Cornwall with one from Essex. And yet regional variety still exists, despite the accommodations made through face-to-face language contact.

3.1.3 Koineization and reallocation

One of the most well-known examples of koineization in British English varieties was observed in the new town of Milton Keynes (Kerswill & Williams, 2000b, 2000a; A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999). In the post-War years of the mid-20th Century, populations that were displaced due to evacuation or bombings in urban locations required re-housing, and several 'new towns' were built to accommodate them as part of that. New industries and opportunities also allowed for greater social mobility, and people began to be able to afford to buy their own homes, which served as further encouragement for individuals and their families to move to such new towns. Milton Keynes to the north-west of London was one such new town (now a city), and due to its proximity to London and the Midlands, it was populated by people from various parts of the country for purposes of commuting while also not suffering the high costs of living in a large city. Kerswill and Williams (2000a) posit that Milton Keynes offers an opportunity to observe a new dialect in its stages of formation. In particular, at the time of their study, they were able to study the speech of the original in-migrants, and the subsequent generation that grew up in the town. In doing so they noted that focussing was already taking place, where features of the multiple dialects spoken in the town were being selected for specific functions by younger speakers. They also pointed to the "ease with which the children were able to form social networks in which new norms could be forged" (Kerswill & Williams, 2000a, p. 110). Children, they argue, have a very important role to play in the development of a koine.

Britain and Trudgill (2005) demonstrate phonological and lexical reallocation through koineization in Norfolk. Norwich has undergone phonological reallocation through what Britain (1997) terms 'Fenlands Raising', where the different realisations of /ai/ found around the Fenlands area, prior to their reclamation in the 16th Century have been reallocated in modern usage according to phonological environments. A study of a corpus of 81 speakers (Britain, 1991) from the Central Fens area was combined with two other corpora from around King's Lynn and Chatteris to investigate the realisations of the onset of the PRICE and MOUTH vowels in the area. The study found that in the central Fenlands towns, those that had been populated following the drainage of the Fens, there was a preference among older speakers for a central onset in the PRICE vowel, becoming [əɪ] before a voiceless consonant. In any other linguistic environment, the onset was more open, producing either [ɑɪ] or [ɑ:]. In the surrounding parts of the Fens, the different realisations are present: in the Western part of the Fens, speakers use

a monophthong in all instances of the PRICE vowel; in the Eastern Fens the onsets are more central before a voiceless consonant, but the onsets are also closer than other parts of the Fens. What makes this particular sound change different from other instances of Canadian Raising is that this has only occurred in the PRICE vowel, not in the MOUTH vowel. However, this can be seen as phonological reallocation as Britain and Trudgill argue, "In the case of /ai/, speakers appear to have simplified the mixture of variants by reallocating them according to principles of phonological naturalness -[əɪ] before voiced consonants and [ɑɪ] before other environments" (Britain & Trudgill, 2005, p. 198).

3.1.4 Dialect Death

Within British English varieties, dialect death is a result of the urbanisation and gentrification of the countryside in the post-war era (Britain, 2009). The promotion of the 'green and pleasant land' has encouraged movement out from the cities, especially by those who can afford second homes, or to retire to the more bucolic landscapes that in turn may not have the transport connections and Wi-Fi access that those in regular office jobs require. Even within those spaces in which appear to have a stable local population is there enough of a rapid change to the population that dialect death has occurred. David Britain states that '(i)n most cases, and in most places, dialect variation seems radically less marked, less divergent and less locally oriented than that spoken one hundred years ago' (Britain, 2005b, p. 35). The increase in retirees moving out from urban space into the more rural locations is also demonstrated in UK Census statistics showing an increase in population movement into rural Somerset from the south east of England. This in-migration into the area has the effect of also displacing younger locals who find themselves unable to afford the house prices in this newly desirable rural space. Younger dialect speakers then move to more urban spaces to acquire work, and find more affordable housing, often in house shares that may lead to dialect mixing. At the same time, the older traditional dialect speakers are not replaced after they die by younger local dialect speakers within the local community, as often those younger speakers have moved out either through choice or through financial necessity. Indeed, locations in Somerset, such as Wootton Courtenay, that were used in the SED are no longer suitable for traditional dialectal study, as no local-born dialect speakers are still living in the area, according to those living nearby. It has been largely populated by second-home owners and retired in-migrants (anecdotal evidence from a local 'gatekeeper' to this study in West Somerset).

Smith and Durham (2011) and their investigation of language use in Lerwick on the Shetland Islands demonstrated a dialect that was in the process of undergoing dialect death. Grammatical and lexical features of the local dialect were being replaced by more widespread Scottish English varieties among younger speakers, compared with their older fellow locals.

However, while the older speakers were the most frequent users of local forms, there was a split among the younger speakers. Some of the younger speakers used the more widely used Scottish English forms, and some used the local forms more. They investigated whether non-linguistic factors were motivating this, such as mobility of the speakers, and their social networks, but no such correlation was found. They suggested that their results indicated rapid dialect attrition, but more in line with Chambers' model increments along the age continuum (Chambers, 2002; as cited in Smith & Durham, 2011, p. 25).

The rapid societal changes in Britain in the years since the Second World War have had a considerable impact on British English dialects. Increased opportunities for geographical mobility mean greater population movement. Education levels among the population have increased due to legislation (i.e raising the school leaving age) and an increased economy that means more people have been able to attend university, thus also supporting population movement. Additionally, new industries and new techniques in existing industries have attracted workers from further afield. The result has been increased dialect levelling, the development of new dialects, and sadly, the death of some dialects as they lose speakers. Somerset sits directly in the path of forms that are diffusing out from London and the rest of the south of England. Therefore, the patterns seen in modern British English varieties can offer an insight into the changes that this thesis seeks in Somerset.

3.2 Known Sound Changes in Progress in British English Dialects

This chapter thus far has looked into the processes of change ongoing within British English. Many examples within this discussion have provided a picture of sound changes ongoing within the dialects, yet these do not provide a clear overall picture of the pattern of where certain changes are occurring. The following section will therefore summarise these sound changes and attempt to provide a picture of which changes are occurring where within the British Isles.

Britain (2009) presented a summary of sound changes ongoing within England. Using additional examples, his table is elaborated on and expanded in Table 2 below. This summary suggests that at least 20 years ago these changes to consonants in England were widespread with the exception of L-vocalisation, which only featured in dialects south of Derby. Another exception as well is the resistance to change shown in Liverpool. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, Liverpool is actively diverging from neighbouring varieties, and has not acquired the features typically attributed to diffusion from London.

The following sub-sections will look at these sound changes in England in more detail and broaden the scope to include Scotland and Wales.

Table 2- The distribution of TH-Fronting, L-vocalisation, labio-dental /r/ and T-Glottalisation across England - Adapted from Britain 2009

Location	**Fronting of /θ/ and /ð/**	**Vocalisation of /l/**	**Labiodental /r/**	**T-glottalisation**
London (Schleef & Ramsammy, 2013; Tollfree, 1999)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Colchester (Johnson & Britain, 2007; Meuter, 2002)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reading (A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Milton Keynes (A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Norwich (Trudgill, 1999)	✓		✓	✓
The Fens (Britain, 2005a)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bristol (Grossenbacher, 2016; Kerswill, 2003; Wells, 1982b)	✓	✓		✓
Derby (Docherty & Foulkes, 1999; Foulkes & Docherty, 2000)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Birmingham (Mathisen, 1999)	✓	✓	few	✓
Hull (A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999)	✓		✓	✓
Liverpool (Newbrook, 1999; Watson, 2006)			few	
Sheffield (Stoddart et al., 1999)	✓		?	✓
Middlesborough (Llamas, 1998, 2000, 2015)	✓		✓	✓
Newcastle (Docherty & Foulkes, 1999)	✓		✓	✓
Carlisle (Jansen, 2021)	✓		few	✓
Glasgow (Macafee, 1983; Stuart-Smith & Timmins, 2006)	✓	✓	?	
Edinburgh (Schleef & Ramsammy, 2013)	✓	?		

3.2.1 TH-Fronting

TH-Fronting is defined by Wells as "the replacement of the dental fricatives, [θ] and [ð] by labiodentals [f] and [v] respectively" (Wells, 1982b, p. 328). This feature is closely associated with London varieties, specifically Cockney (ibid). Sivertsen (1960; as cited in Schleef & Ramsammy, 2013 p27) described how this feature was used among speakers born before 1900. Beaken (1971; cited in Wells, 1982b, p. 329) demonstrated how the feature was in use among younger children who could alternate use without hypercorrection. In their 2013 work, Schleef and Ramsammy looked at TH-fronting among adolescents in London, where they described the sound change as 'well established', with gender playing a significant role in the use of the feature. Tollfree (1999, p. 172) tells us that there is "no significant difference" in use of TH-fronting, either voiced or voiceless, between age groups in South East London, but that there is no contrast between /θ/ and /f/, or /ð/ and /v/ in a word-final or word-medial position. In a word or syllable initial position, /ð/ is likely to become [d] or zero. /θ/ may also be realised as either [h] or [ʔ] in initial or word-medial position respectively.

West of London, Williams and Kerswill found strong evidence of TH-Fronting in the new town of Milton Keynes, and the more established town of Reading (A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999). They found that this was most frequent among working class boys in particular. There was a distinction, though, between the use of the voiceless and the voiced allophones. The allophone [f] in place of /θ/ was used in all linguistic positions, yet the frequency of [v] in place of /ð/ was only given for non-initial position (p160). Further west still, Kerswill reports high use of TH-Fronting in Bristol city, which drops off in the peripheral areas of the city (Kerswill, 2003). Kerswill attributes this high use of TH-Fronting that is limited to the city itself as a result of a direct train connection to London, which itself points to the urban hierarchy model of diffusion.

In East Anglia, Meuter's study (2002) among primary school children indicated that TH-Fronting was in use among this age group in Colchester, Essex. In Norwich, Trudgill notes that TH-fronting had increased in use considerably between 1968 and 1983, where /θ/ was totally lost, and replaced by [f] in all linguistic positions among younger speakers, and /ð/ was only used in a word initial position among these same speakers. Older speakers had retained their use, however (Trudgill, 1988, p. 43, 1999, p. 132).

In Sandwell, in the Black Country near Birmingham, Mathisen (1999) reported an increasing amount of TH-fronting among younger speakers where older speakers still used [θ] and [ð]. Labiodentals were typically found in an onset or intervocalic position, and did not occur at all in function words (see p111).

In Derby, Docherty and Foulkes (1999, p. 51) show evidence of widespread use of TH-fronting among young working class speakers in both conversational and reading styles, but considerably less use among their middle-class peers, suggesting strongly that socioeconomic class and identity are factors in its use. Further north, in Newcastle, Watt and Milroy (1999) note very limited use of TH-fronting among younger working class speakers. As with their results from Milton Keynes and Reading, Williams and Kerswill found that younger speakers in Hull used a labiodental form, typically more so among working class speakers, and among boys more than girls (p160).

TH-Fronting has been reported in Scotland (Macafee, 1983), with evidence of an increase in recent years among younger speakers (Stuart-Smith & Timmins, 2006; Stuart-Smith et al., 2007). However, in addition to the English, specifically London, varieties of TH-Fronting where this is typically found in a word-initial or medial position (e.g., *think* > [fɪŋk], *bother* > [bɒvə]), the Glaswegian TH-Fronting was found more frequently in a word-final position. This pattern of syllable-final TH-Fronting was also found in a community in Fife in the central-east of Scotland (Clark & Trousdale, 2009, 2010). Just south of Fife, Schleef and Ramsammy (2013) investigated the relatively recent increase in TH-Fronting in Edinburgh. They compared the use of TH-Fronting in London where the feature is well established with that in Edinburgh where it is a relatively new feature in the dialect. They found that where gender plays a significant role in the use in London, it is not so in Edinburgh (p42).

3.2.2 T-Glottalling

T-Glottalling is another stereotypical feature of Cockney English, that has spread out beyond the Greater London area and Essex. It is now so widespread that Milroy, Milroy and Hartley considered it 'perceived as a stereotype of urban British speech' (J. Milroy et al., 1994, p. 3; as cited in A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999, p. 159). It describes the production of a glottal stop [ʔ] in place of /t/, typically in a word-final or intervocalic position.

Wells (1982b) comments that glottalisation of intervocalic and word-final /t/ is frequently found in Bristol (p344). Williams and Kerswill (1999) note that not only is there frequent use of T-Glottalling among younger speakers in Hull, but this also appears to be happening among middle aged and older speakers. This, they feel, is somewhat unexpected due to the lack of use of TH-Fronting in the dialect at the time of the SED. However, they also look to Milton Keynes and Reading, two large towns much closer to London, that have considerable T-Glottalling in their dialects. This proximity to London, where T-Glottalling is considered a major feature of the dialects, is not so surprising given the number of commuters from Reading to London, and the in-migrants from London that moved to Milton Keynes when it was first built.

Docherty and Foulkes describe T-Glottalling in Derby English as 'almost categorical' when it occurs before a consonant, but also in very high used among younger speakers in a pre-pausal and pre-vowel position (Docherty & Foulkes, 1999, p. 50). Remaining in the Midlands, in Sandwell, Mathisen (1999) notes that T-Glottalling is most frequent among younger speakers, but in contrast to most other varieties, this occurs more frequently among the middle-class and female speakers.

In Sheffield, Stoddart, Upton and Widdowson indicate use of [ʔ] in place of /t/ in an intervocalic or word-final position in all age groups, but at 'two to three times more' among younger speakers than older, and in particular by men (Stoddart et al., 1999, p. 75).

In Cumbria, a mostly rural county topped and tailed by urban areas Barrow-in-Furness in the south and Carlisle in the north, Jansen (2021) finds that T-Glottalling is occurring in a less urban environment of Maryport on the West Cumbrian coast, but notes that this is 'not yet nearing completion' (p39). She also finds that while speakers of all ages are demonstrating use of TH-fronting, the older speakers are using forms more in line with those found in London, Glasgow and Ipswich, whereas younger speakers in Maryport had use that was more in line with Tyneside and Buckie. It's important to note to Jansen's study comes an entire generation after many of the other studies cited here, and therefore an ongoing change among younger speakers might not necessarily have the same influences. Those speakers around England who were categorised as younger or adolescent speakers in studies published in 1999 are likely the parents to the younger or adolescent speakers in more recent studies. An influence among these present-day younger speakers may well be similar to the motivating factors found in Tyneside a generation earlier (see Watt, 2000) where there is a strong desire to differentiate not only from Southern (or Scottish) varieties in order to show a distinct local variety, but also a desire to differentiate themselves from their parents.

Staying in the north of England, Llamas (2015) reports high use of T-Glottalling among younger speakers in Middlesborough that is 'virtually categorical' (p265). She also reports high use of T-Glottalling among older women that is not as prevalent among their male peers.

As was previously discussed in this thesis, Mees and Collins (1999) found another differing pattern in T-Glottalling among women in Cardiff. The study involved speakers in middle class and working class areas of Cardiff. They found that women who had grown up working class but had become middle-class through marriage or education had acquired glottalisation, whereas those who had remained working class were less likely to use it in their speech. This suggests once again that identity plays a part in the adoption of features, and as T-Glottalling is a feature most frequently associated with the south east of England, the more middle-class speakers wanted to differentiate themselves from their Cardiff accent. The working class speakers, though, were clearly not influenced by notions of prestige, and had

therefore resisted any levelling or change to incorporate the South East English T-Glottalling. It is important to note, though that Mees and Collins incorporated both [ʔ] and [ʔt] under the term 'glottalisation', and didn't distinguish between the two in their results.

The non-regional variety RP also features glottalling, and has done so for some time (see Przedlacka, 2008) T-Glottalling in RP, though, is restricted to an environment of before a sonorant, and across a word boundary (Ramsaran, 1990, p. 187; cited in Przedlacka, 2008, p. 5).

3.2.3 Labiodental /r/

Mathisen (1999) reported a few examples of labiodental [ʋ] realisation of /r/ in Sandwell, near Birmingham, but for the most part /r/ is realised as a post-alveolar [ɹ]. North East of Birmingham, Docherty and Foulkes indicated increased use of labiodental /r/ among younger speakers in Derby (Docherty & Foulkes, 1999). Labiodental /r/ has been reported in Middlesbrough in the north east of England (Llamas, 2001; cited in Britain, 2009). Jansen (2017) also points to a low level of use among young speakers, more so among males than females, in Carlisle, Cumbria. Trudgill (1999) describes an increase in use of a labiodental /r/ in Norwich between 1968 and 1983. Williams and Kerswill (1999) reported common use of labiodental [ʋ] among children and young adults in Reading, Milton Keynes, and further north in Hull (see p147).

The labiodental [ʋ] as a realisation of /r/ appears, then to be moving without geographical limitation throughout English dialects.

3.2.4 L-vocalisation

L-vocalisation both globally and in the British Isles will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. However, I here present a summary of the pattern of L-vocalisation use throughout Britain.

As a feature closely associated with Cockney, there is little surprise that South East London also displays use of l-vocalisation. Tollfree (1999, p174) reported "variable, context-dependent L-vocalisation" among younger speakers, typically in a post-vocalic or syllabic environment, and 'blocked' in initial or intervocalic positions.

As indicated in Britain's table (see Table 2 above), there is little to no L-vocalisation present in the literature in dialects north of Derby. However, Reading and Milton Keynes, two towns close to London, have variable vocalisation of /l/ (Williams and Kerswill, 1999, p148). Just north of London in Essex, Meuter also found instances of l-vocalisation among primary school children in Colchester (Meuter 2000).

Using data from the English Dialect App (Leemann et al., 2018), Grossenbacher (2016) describes use of a vocalised /l/ along the M4 corridor, looking specifically at Swindon, Bath and Bristol. The basis of her argument was diffusion of this feature from London along one of the major motorways that runs through the south of England and Wales. This suggests that this feature has diffused from London. However, the history of (l) in Bristol is well known, as intrusive /l/ is applied after word-final vowels, e.g., *idea* > *ideal.* Wells, (1982b) suggests that this feature particular to Bristol and the close surrounding area was at the time of writing, the early 1980s, 'now quite rare (p345). Anecdotal evidence from a member of my own family who was raised in Bristol from an early age, though, suggests this has long held a vowel-like quality. This family member, who was raised and has spent most of his life in the Bristol area, moved to another part of the county nearly 20 years ago, which suggests the [ʊ] sound he mimicked for the intrusive Bristol /l/ was in use well before then, as it was salient enough to be described in this way.

Glaswegian dialects historically have lexically-determined use of l-vocalisation as a feature of Scots (Macafee, 1983) however Stuart-Smith, Timmins and Tweedie (2006) noted the increase in use of vocalised /l/ that followed the same pattern as that found in South East England among working class children in particular.

3.2.5 De-rhoticisation

While not mentioned in Britain's original table, of some relevance to this thesis is the loss of rhoticity in stereotypical rhotic dialects. London accents and RP are typically non-rhotic, as are dialects in Wales. However, there are still accents around England that are considered rhotic, or to have rhoticity. West Country accents are stereotypically seen as rhotic, as are dialects in parts of East Anglia, and East Lancashire accents, particularly around Blackburn and Wigan, which have rhoticity in their traditional dialects (see Orton et al., 1978). However, many of these traditionally rhotic accents are losing their rhoticity. Williams and Kerswill reported in 1999 that older speakers in Reading and Milton Keynes were variably rhotic, but that this was restricted to only the NURSE vowel among younger speakers in Reading, and wasn't used at all by younger speakers in Milton Keynes (A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999, p. 147).

The south-west of England, a stereotypically rhotic region of England, has seen considerable de-rhoticisation over the late 20th and early 21st Century. Piercy (2007) reported a loss of rhoticity among speakers in both rural and urban locations in Dorset. Her findings indicated that this loss of rhoticity was mostly among men, but there was also some loss among women. In the county borderlands of East Devon and West Somerset, Jones (Jones, 1998; cited in Britain, 2009) found ongoing derhoticisation. This is particularly interesting as this part of both counties is very rural, with much of it lying in the Exmoor National Park.

In Scotland, Stuart-Smith, Lawson and Scobbie (2014) discuss what they call a "socially-constrained, long term process of derhoticisation" (p59) of coda-/r/. They cite evidence of weakened rhoticity in Glaswegian from the early 20th Century, which was socially stigmatised. In Edinburgh, de-rhoticisation occurred from a tap or trill to a post-alveolar [ɹ] among working class girls (Romaine, 1978). Macafee (1983, p32) noted that there is a complete loss of postvocalic /r/ among adult speakers, typically working class males, in Glasgow.

3.2.6 Sound changes in modern British English in summary

Where these sound changes are occurring, it is typically doing so among younger speakers from a largely working class background. There are, though, indications from these studies that nearly all of them are occurring across most of England, Wales and Scotland, in line with a pattern of diffusion out from London, as many of these studies have concluded. An exception here, though, is that of L-vocalisation, where the varieties in the north of England seem to be resisting this change. Liverpool is also showing resistance to most of these changes. Further north in Scotland, this change has taken effect, perhaps primed by the existence of L-vocalisation in the native Scots dialect.

One thing that all these studies have in common is that they mostly take place in urban areas. This is perhaps down mostly to self-selection among the researchers conducting these studies, particularly as so many cited here were all published in the context of urban dialects. Yet the pattern of diffusion of these features supports the urban hierarchy model, suggesting a clear pattern beginning with innovation of dialect features within London dialects that then diffuse out from the capital to smaller cities and in turn towns. In some cases, the changes have been reported in much more rural areas, notably the west coast of Cumbria, as well as parts of Devon and Somerset.

Of further note is the trend of change that is occurring primarily among working class speakers. While middle class speakers are not unaffected by these changes, it does suggest that covert prestige attributed to some of these features is playing a role in their acquisition.

3.3 Somerset as a traditional dialect area

Having reviewed the dialectological trends currently impacting on British English varieties, this study will now focus on Somerset as an area for investigation. This area has been selected for two reasons. It shared many of the geographical and social features that can be found in areas of England that have also received extensive study in recent years, notably The Fens (Britain, 1997, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2014; Britain & Trudgill, 1999, 2005) and Cumbria (Jansen, 2015, 2021). These areas have all seen population movement and development

following the reclamation of or industrialisation within the landscape. Yet despite this, large parts of these regions still retain their 'rural' identity, even in the face of increased tourism, industrialisation (particularly in the case of Cumbria and Somerset in the wake of nuclear power) and in-migration.

The second reason for selecting this county is my own very close association with it. I was raised in Somerset, and still have close family ties to the area. As a result, I am familiar with a lot of the dialect, history and traditions of the county, as well as the feelings of identity that they bring, particularly in the Central Somerset area. This therefore makes it easier to determine points of local identity, as well as recognise local factors that may impact on the use of language. On a very practical note, it also made it considerably easier to locate and recruit participants for the study, particularly in the area closest to where I grew up.

Much study has been conducted within Somerset in recent years, specifically around the grammatical and lexical items in use within the county. Of less concern among recent linguists, though, has been the phonological variability within the county, with little scholarship conducted to update the knowledge of the area since the SED. This thesis therefore makes Somerset the location of interest as a traditional dialect area undergoing both industrial and linguistic change.

3.3.1 Brief Introduction to Somerset

Somerset is a historic county in the South West of England. It has borders with Devon to the south west, Dorset to the south, Wiltshire to the east and Bristol to the north. It is a mostly rural county with a history of farming, both livestock and arable, but it also has a strong tourism industry, and many of its larger towns have also become hubs for the manufacturing industry. From the mid-Twentieth century onwards, it has also become a major location for nuclear power. Linguistically it is renowned for a high level of rhoticity, displaying what is often characterised among non-linguists (somewhat derogatorily) as a 'farmer' or 'yokel' accent.

The history of the county has long been a somewhat paradoxical one of anti-establishment conservatism. Historically, Sedgemoor in central Somerset was the location of the Battle of Sedgemoor in 1685, in which the Duke of Monmouth led a failed rebellion against King James II. Many of Monmouth's troops were Somerset locals and as a result many of those who survived the battle were hanged by Judge Jeffries, leaving a distinct gap in the local population. This local identity of rebelliousness is potentially borne out in more recent political developments. In the EU Membership Referendum in 2016, the political constituencies of West Somerset and Sedgemoor in Somerset were among some of the highest that voted to 'Leave'

(60.6% Leave in West Somerset, 61.2% in Sedgemoor)[3]. While the highly controversial and contentious result was certainly not universal among all residents in the area, it does show a high number who do perhaps reject governance from a distant base of power, and would prefer to be governed from a location closer to home.

From a linguistic standpoint, the importance of the relatively remote setting and the identity and independence among the population of Somerset may influence the use of language, particularly in comparison to the seats of power.

3.3.2 The impact of landscape on language use in Somerset

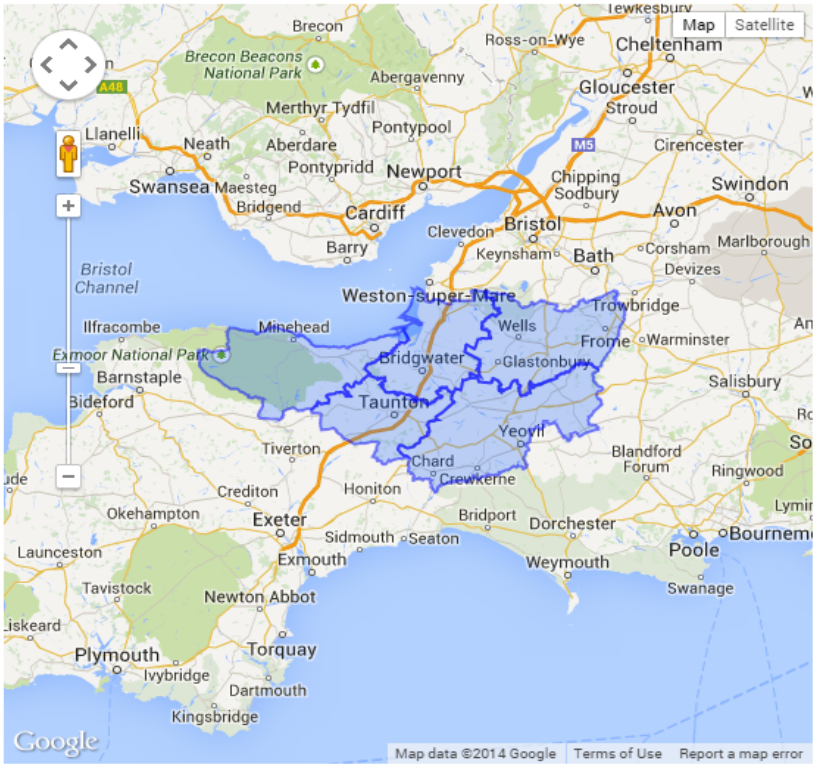
As with nearly all historic counties in England, the boundaries of and within Somerset have changed over the years. As populations increase and governmental regions develop different needs, county, district and parish boundaries shift: new areas of government are introduced, and older or redundant areas of government are assimilated into neighbouring areas. While the people within those shifting boundaries might not change, it can potentially have an impact on the day-to-day life within the area such as schooling and public transport, as location is often tied to the arbitrary boundaries that are assigned to it. For that reason, both historical and modern day boundaries will be discussed here for the purposes of contextualising the regions of study within the county.

3.3.2.1 The Historical and Present Day Political boundaries

Somerset is one of England's oldest counties. This well-established county means those who live within it have a strong sense of identity tied to its history. In 1974, the northern part of the county was divided off and included in the newly formed administrative county of Avon, which also incorporated Bristol and Bath, which had been part of Somerset, within its border. However, this was changed once again in 1996 when Avon was abolished as a county, and the City of Bristol became a local government area. Those areas of Avon that had originally been part of Somerset were formed into North Somerset, and Bath and North East Somerset (known as 'BANES'). This study, though, focuses on locations within the present-day government area of Somerset.

[3] Electoral Commission Results of the EU referendum: https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/elections-and-referendums/past-elections-and-referendums/eu-referendum/results-and-turnout-eu-referendum - retrieved 8th August 2019

District Maps



Powered by Google Maps and OS Open Data. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no 100038382 (2014).

Figure 2 - County of Somerset with districts marked as up to March 2019 (taken from somersetintelligence.com, retrieved October 2015)

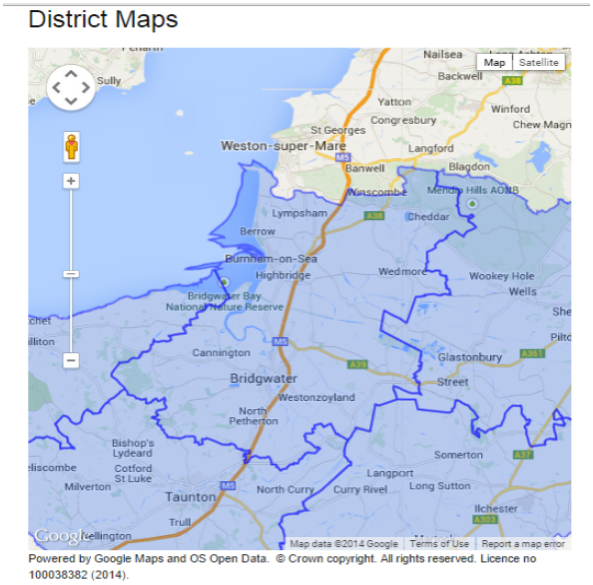


Figure 3 - District of Sedgemoor (from somersetintelligence.com, retrieved Oct 2015)

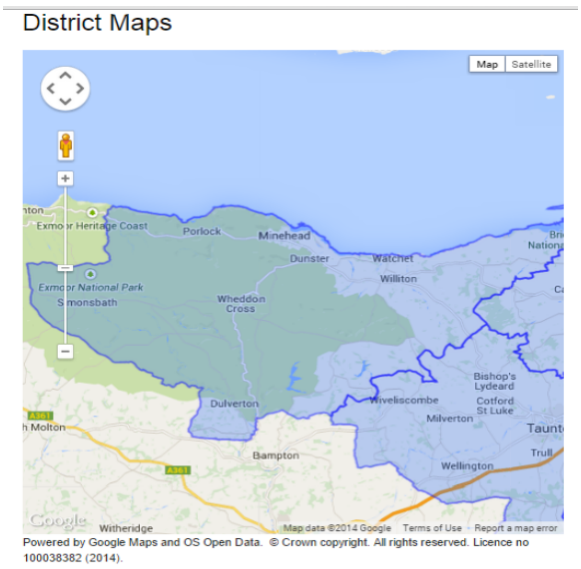


Figure 4 - District of West Somerset up to March 2019 (from somersetintelligence.com, retrieved Oct 2015

During 2015-2017 when data was gathered for this study, the district councils of Somerset were West Somerset, Sedgemoor, Taunton Deane, South Somerset, Mendip (see Figure 5). However, after data-gathering was completed, the internal government boundaries within Somerset were changed. In April 2019, the districts known as 'West Somerset' and 'Taunton Deane' merged to become 'Somerset West and Taunton'[4]. For that reason, the information presented here will reflect the boundaries at the time of data collection, as the administrative boundary in place at the time will have impacted on the schooling and transport that brought people into contact with one another.

Sedgemoor (see Figure 6) is in the centre of Somerset and stretches up to the top of the main county of Somerset, bordering North Somerset. The M5 motorway runs directly through Sedgemoor, connecting the central large market town of Bridgwater with the county town Taunton, and further on with Exeter in Devon, and with Bristol in the north. This part of the county is therefore well connected, and as a result there have been many new housing and industrial developments built here, bringing new people into the area.

West Somerset (see Figure 7) makes up the part of the county that has the largest border with Devon. To the north, the largest town is Minehead, and at the south is the town of Dulverton. This district in particular is the most sparsely populated in the county, with a large amount of it given over to the Exmoor National Park, and the agriculture that goes with that. As a result, the population tends to live mostly in small villages that sit between the two largest

[4] The Somerset West and Taunton (Local Government Changes) Order 2018

towns in the district (Minehead to the north and Dulverton to the south) with limited public transport mostly running along the road that connects those two towns.

3.3.2.2 Geographic information

Somerset has a varied landscape of hills and large flat lands. The Somerset Levels (known locally as 'the Levels') are an area of very flat land that sits in the centre of the county across much of Sedgemoor and South Somerset. The Polden Hills, a fairly low-level ridge of hills, run through the Somerset Levels for around 10 miles, effectively dividing the Levels into the Vale of Avalon (also known as the North Somerset Levels) to the north from the Somerset Levels (also known as Sedgemoor, but distinct from the Local Government district) to the south. The Levels themselves are below sea level and are thus very marshy and prone to flooding. Much like The Fens in East Anglia, the Somerset Levels represent an area that was mostly uninhabitable and unfarmable due to marshland up until they were also drained as part of the Reclamation Acts in the 17th Century. Prior to this, the area was only partially drained by monasteries at Glastonbury, Muchulney and Athelney (M. Williams, 1963). As a result of the reclamation in the 17th Century, drainage is provided through a network of man-made irrigation channels such as ditches (known locally as 'rhynes') that run alongside the roads, and separate fields; the King Sedgemoor Drain which runs between the River Cary and the River Parrett along the southern side of the Polden Hills, and the Huntspill River on the North Somerset Levels.

The location of these hills, rhynes and irrigation systems has gone hand in hand with the routes that roads take and has therefore shaped the way that people move around the landscape, and with whom they can most easily come into contact. Agriculturally, the Somerset Levels are mostly used as grazing land for livestock, although some fields are used for arable crops.

The Quantock Hills run from the Bristol Channel coastline in the north down towards Taunton and form a barrier that divides the Somerset Levels in Sedgemoor from the more hilly areas in West Somerset. Small villages run along the east and west sides of the Quantocks, and some are connected via minor roads that run over the hills. Modern motoring makes passing the Quantocks much easier now, but historically these would have been more of a barrier. Along the north of the hills by the Bristol Channel the A39 connects West Somerset and Sedgemoor. To the south the road connects the county town of Taunton with Williton. The common land on the Quantocks has also been used for livestock over the centuries, affording farmers from either side of the hills the occasion to meet.

Further west of the Quantocks lies Exmoor. In its current status of a National Park[5] Exmoor sits two thirds in West Somerset, and one third in North Devon, thus the county boundary between Somerset and Devon runs through it. The area is mostly used for farming livestock, but it also attracts a large amount of tourism for its coastline with the Bristol Channel, and for its picturesque landscape. In many cases, this tourism has turned into longer term residence as many people from outside the area choose to retire there.

The hills of the Quantocks, Exmoor and the Poldens would have hindered movement and potentially cut off the towns on either side from one another, or at the very least made travel between them more difficult, or lengthy. As on the Somerset Levels, these topographical forms form a natural pattern of barriers and routes within the landscape that either connect or cut off towns and villages from one another, allowing for dialect islands, or greater language contact within the county. In the case of West Somerset, where the population has historically been somewhat separated from the rest of the county by the Quantocks, and shares common grazing land and valleys with people from North Devon on Exmoor, this also provides potential for convergence with North Devon, and divergence from their fellow Somerset dwellers. Indeed, Elworthy (1876) notes in his discussion of the West Somerset dialect that the Quantocks, along with the Blackdown Hills south of Taunton, form the natural boundary of the West Somerset district, and that just outside Taunton the marked difference in dialect could be observed, where the town of Ruishton to the east of Taunton spoke 'the eastern dialect', and Bishop's Hull one mile to the west of Taunton spoke the western dialect.

3.3.2.3 Transport Infrastructure through the county

Just as the topography of the county can help or hinder population movement, the transport infrastructure can do likewise. Somerset has a few major roads that run through it, the largest of which is the M5 motorway that connects Birmingham with Exeter, which in turn connects with the M4 at Bristol that takes travellers to either Wales or London. The M5, which was completed in 1972, runs through the centre of Somerset, and links large towns such as Weston-Super-Mare (in North Somerset) with Bridgwater and Taunton. It also enables people living along the M5 corridor to commute to Bristol to the north, and Exeter to the south. In the summer months, and during other holidays throughout the year, the M5 also brings large numbers of tourists to the South West.

The A38 runs parallel to the M5 and up until the motorway was built, this was the main road that ran north to south through the county, providing a commuter route for those living in Somerset, and a tourist route for those living outside the county. It runs through Bridgwater,

[5] https://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/about-us/who-we-are-and-what-we-do, retrieved 2nd Nov 2019

where it crosses another major road that runs through the county, the A39. The A39 runs from Bath to Truro (in Cornwall), linking towns such as Glastonbury, Bridgwater, and Minehead in West Somerset before continuing along the Bristol Channel coastline to North Devon. These two major A-roads connecting in Bridgwater, along with the more recent M5 running alongside it makes the town a central hub within the county for industry, as well as commuters. Those living in smaller villages in more remote parts of the county move into or closer to Bridgwater for these connections, bringing with them their dialect features.

The railway network in Somerset has been significantly reduced since the Beeching Report in the 1960s[6], and now national transport links run along a line from Bristol to Exeter (stopping at various towns including Weston-Super-Mare, Bridgwater and Taunton along the way), and a line from Taunton to Reading, via Somerset towns such as Castle Cary, and Frome, both towards the east of the county. Branch lines that connected smaller and more remote locations to the major towns were either sold off or torn up, dramatically decreasing public transport provision for more rural areas. In Somerset, much of what was the rail network that connected towns in West Somerset with the main line to Bristol is now privately owned as the 'West Somerset Heritage Railway' and used as a tourist attraction. This means that most people in Somerset are very reliant on cars to get around, and therefore they often travel in isolation or with a very limited number of other people, usually friends from their own or nearby villages.

These transport connections and their development throughout the 20th Century holds an important factor for dialectology; that of mobility. While mobility isn't discussed in detail in this thesis, it does impact on the lives and the opportunities that different speech communities in Somerset have for language contact with those from outside the area, and thus cannot be ignored.

3.3.3 Population information

According to 'Somerset Intelligence'[7], a website managed by the Somerset County Council, the population of Somerset is currently around 555,000. Somerset has experienced a good deal of population movement in the past 60 years, with new industries opening up in the central part of the county. This increase in trade and industry led to an increase in employment opportunities, which brought people into the region. Similarly social mobility has led to more

[6] The Beeching Report "The Reshaping of British Railways – Part 1: Report" (1963) was compiled by Dr. Beeching on behalf of the UK Government to restructure the network of railways around the UK, and ideally cut down the numbers of railways in order to save money. As a result, the Beeching report recommended significant reductions in railways, and many branch lines that connected more remote and rural locations with larger towns were closed down.

[7] Somerset Intelligence, managed by Somerset County Council - http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/, retrieved 9th August 2019

and more young people from the region leaving to go to university. Data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS)[8] shows that the 15-24 year age group is the largest leaving the region each year, which points to the practice of young people leaving to attend University[9]. By moving away for education, this brings the younger speakers leaving Somerset into contact with other language varieties, at least for the duration of their studies. The combination of dialects or even languages brought together under such circumstances is of course unique, and therefore each young person from Somerset who leaves to attend university will in turn develop a unique and small speech community among their new peers, that isn't necessarily a dialect, but is specific to that group of speakers. When returning to Somerset, it is possible they will use features of their new peer group, with potential to introduce a new feature into the local dialect.

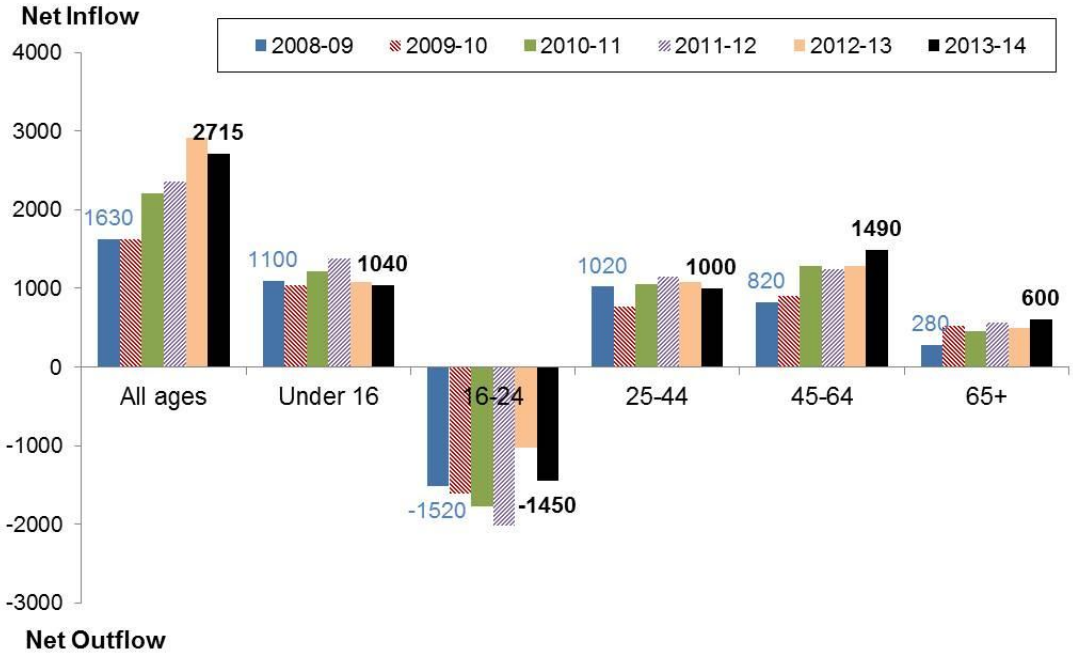


Figure 8 - Net outflow of population from Somerset by age[10]

In contrast to the younger people from Somerset leaving the county for educational or work-based purposes, the ONS also reveals that each year, the largest age group moving into the region is 30-44 years, implying movement for family and economic reasons. This greater movement allows for greater exposure to more varieties of regional dialect. Statistics from the

[8] Presented on the Somerset Intelligence website

[9] Technically, the county of Somerset has no University, therefore the majority of prospective Higher Education students who wish to attend university rather than obtaining a degree through distance learning must leave the county to do so. Bridgwater and Taunton College does offer Level 6 (equivalent BA/BSc Hons) qualifications in some subjects, but does not award the degrees directly. Bath University and Bath Spa University fall within the historic county of Somerset, but are now in 'Bath and North East Somerset', which is a separate administrative county and not included in the statistics held on the Somerset Intelligence site.

[10] Graph taken from http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/migration.html, retrieved 26th October 2015

Office of National Statistics, as reported by the Somerset Intelligence website, also show that West Somerset has the highest percentage of residents aged over 65 in the UK, 33.7% in 2017[11]. These 30-44 year olds may be those who have chosen to move to Somerset from outside the area for quality of life, or work-based reasons. Alternatively, they could be returning to the county after having completed studies or the initial stages of their careers. Both of these groups within their age groups will bring with them a different variety of speech. Those who have never lived within the county will have their own regional dialect features. Those who moved away and are now returning will also have new linguistic features within their repertoire and may offer more influence over the speech of their peers who stayed in the county. These returning speakers will already have a relationship with people in the county, therefore any barriers that might otherwise have been applied are not in play here and therefore the returning speakers do not have to negotiate any forms of gatekeeping to be accepted as a part of the community. They will most likely be able to easily code-switch back into the local dialect, but may choose to use lexical items or pronunciations that they have acquired during their time spent outside the area. These small changes may be picked up by local native dialect speakers, and in turn diffuse through the speech community, particularly if the returning speakers are very popular in their peer group, or are in a position of authority.

Somerset has also experienced a large influx of 'internal migrants'; that is migrants from within the UK. As Figure 9 shows, overall Somerset has experienced an increase year on year of people moving to the county since 2008, most of whom moved to Sedgemoor. Interestingly, among the districts West Somerset has not only the lowest rate of net in-migration, but also had net out-migration in 2010.

As discussed, the impact of the movement of people in and out of the county increases the chances of language contact and the potential for change through dialect levelling or even koineization. The increase of in-migrants also increases the number of new varieties coming into the county, and moving into spaces that previously had a very sparse population, as new developments are built up in suburbs of local towns, or villages, bringing these new varieties into spaces that may have little or no representation of the 'native' dialect.

[11] Population statistics taken from Somerset Intelligence http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/somerset-facts-and-figures/, retrieved 26th October 2015

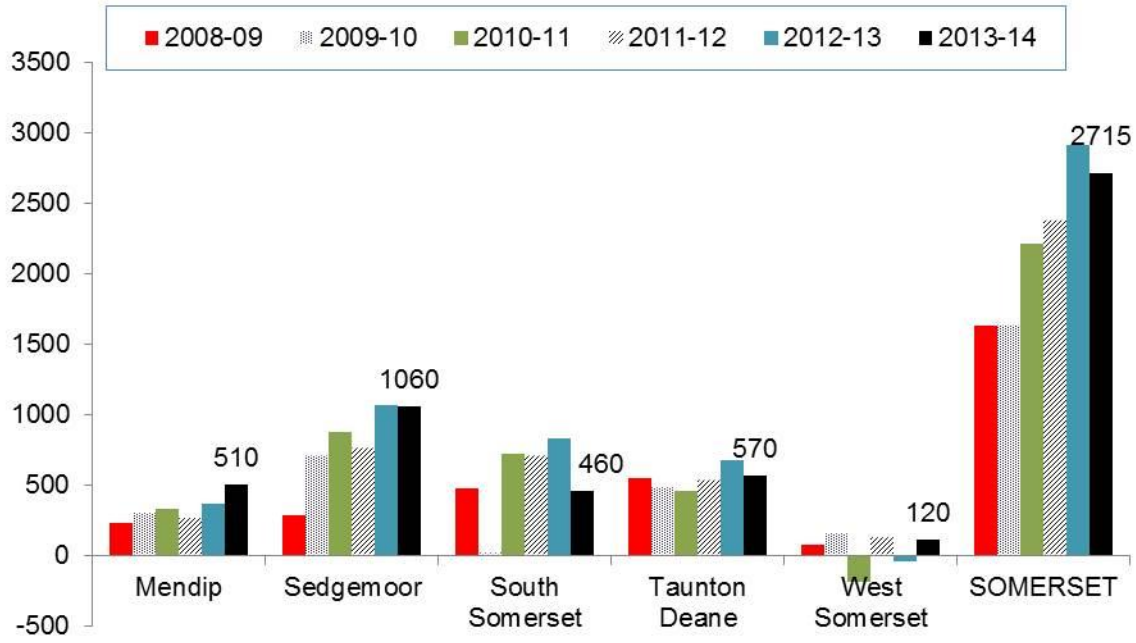


Figure 9 - Rate Flow of Net Internal Migration into Somerset by Year[12]

3.3.4 The Impact of Employment and Industry on Language Use in Somerset

The increased development of transport infrastructure in the area has also had an impact on the local economy. Somerset as a whole has a mixed economy of agriculture, tourism and manufacturing. It is home to major tourism, distribution and manufacturing businesses such as British Cellophane, IBM, Morrison's, Butlins and Yeo Valley, as well as RNAS Yeovilton. Up until the 20th Century, the main industry in Somerset was farming, typically livestock for both dairy and meat, and orchards. Statistics taken from Census records[13] show how cattle farming practices within the county changed little between 1920 and 1970. Specifically for this thesis that covers the period of time during which the SED was conducted in Somerset and is within living memory of many of the older participants in this study.

The South West of England enjoys a strong tourism industry as a whole. Somerset receives its fair share of these holiday makers, and those who are travelling elsewhere in the South West will most likely also travel through Somerset via the M5 or other main roads. The Quantocks and Exmoor offer much in the way of scenery for holiday makers, and many of the

[12] Graph taken from http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/migration.html, retrieved 26th October 2015

[13] http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/atlas/data_map_page.jsp?data_theme=&data_year=1970&u_type=ADM_CNTY&data_rate=R_WHEAT retrieved 30th October 2015

coastal towns in the county such as Weston Super Mare and Burnham-On-Sea have historically been popular seaside resorts. Butlin's in Minehead (West Somerset) opened in 1962, drawing in holiday makers and seasonal employment. Many of those working in the tourism industry have come to the area from outside, sometimes from overseas. The attraction to the area is so strong for some that many have chosen to buy second homes, or to retire to Exmoor, as shown in part by the data from the ONS regarding in-migration (see Population information above).

3.3.4.1 Recent Industrialisation in rural Somerset

While the traditional industries in Somerset have been agriculture and then tourism, from the second half of the 20th Century onwards the increase in transport infrastructure in the county has in turn brought increased industrialisation, particularly in Central Somerset. The M50 motorway with its connections to larger urban areas has meant the area around the Levels in particular has become prime land for building large-scale industrial projects. The flat land around Bridgwater also provides warehouse support for large supermarket chains such as Morrisons, and distributional support through haulage companies.

From 1935 until its closure in 2005[14], the British Cellophane factory was one of the biggest industries in Bridgwater, employing many in the town. The Royal Ordnance Factory just north of the town also provided employment and had close links with other ordnance factories around the country, as well as to government departments in London. All of these industries have brought people into the area for employment. One of the largest projects of industrialisation in Somerset in more recent times, though, has been the nuclear industry.

3.3.4.1.1 The Nuclear Industry in Somerset

Hinkley 'A', the first nuclear power station at Hinkley Point on the Bristol Channel coastline, was built between 1957 and 1965, and it commenced operations in 1965[15]. The construction and subsequent running of the power station provided a huge amount of employment, and as a result brought many in-migrants to the West Somerset and Sedgemoor area. Hinkley A was ultimately decommissioned in 2000, but a second power station, Hinkley 'B' was built from 1967, and began operating from 1976[16]. It currently employs around 750 people on site, and is due to be decommissioned in 2023.

Construction of the 'Hinkley C' power station began in 2018, although additional infrastructure works in the immediate vicinity and wider local area began long before that. It is

[14] Grace's Guide (website) "British Cellophane, Bridgwater" https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/British_Cellophane, retrieved 9th August 2019

[15] Taken from the World Nuclear Association website: https://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/countries-t-z/appendices/nuclear-development-in-the-united-kingdom.aspx, retrieved 9th August 2019

[16] EDF Energy 'About Hinkley Point B': https://www.edfenergy.com/energy/power-stations/hinkley-point-b, retrieved 9th August 2019

estimated that the site currently has around 2,500 workers, many of whom have moved to the local area for the construction[17]. As a result, semi-permanent accommodation has been set up in Bridgwater and some closer villages. The construction has also increased peripheral industries such as hospitality and hotels, construction of housing, building new roads, and an increase in manufacture and warehouses to support the construction.

As with transport developments, the nuclear industry in particular has had a huge impact on the landscape of the county, and on the populations of the towns and villages, particularly in the central Somerset region.

3.3.5 The Somerset Identity

As a Somerset native, I feel I can speak with some authority on the typical identity held within the county. It should be noted, though, that my Somerset experience is mostly within the Sedgemoor district in the centre of the county, but having spoken with several people in West Somerset over the course of this study, I feel I can also present the attitudes towards the county from people in that area as well. In addition to this, I took an anonymous poll among contacts from central Somerset on Facebook, asking them to provide five words they most closely associated with Somerset. By using Mentimeter, the results were anonymous as I did not know who had filled the survey out, only how many people had done so.

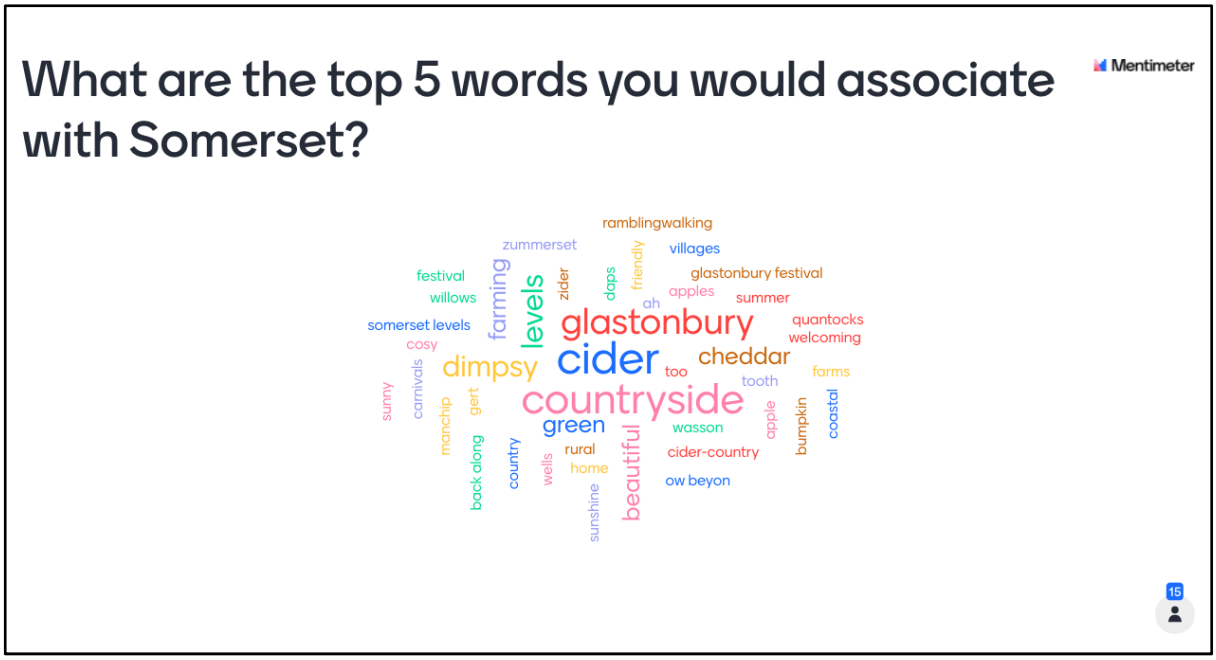


Figure 10 - Results from Mentimeter.com responses to the question 'Top 5 words you associate with Somerset'

[17] BBC News, "Hinkley Point C: Life inside a nuclear power station construction campus". https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-somerset-47718991, retrieved 9th August 2019

The identity within Somerset is that it is a very rural area, even among those who live in the larger towns. As can be seen in Figure 10 above the words most people from Somerset associate with the county relate directly to the landscape and the agricultural practices that take place within it, such as cider or cheese production. There is no mention of the industrialised or urban parts of the county, despite the Hinkley Point Nuclear Power station complex being one of the largest employers in the area. Where any type of municipality is mentioned, it is only done so as 'villages', again invoking the sense of small rural spaces. While the results were anonymous, the network of people with whom the link to the survey was shared is based in Central Somerset, which is currently undergoing significant industrial development due to the construction of Hinkley C power station, as well as increased warehouse distribution development and transport infrastructure into previously rural spaces. It is therefore possible that the responses to the survey invoked purely rural imagery and rejected any sense of urbanisation as a direct response to the increased development the central Somerset area has seen, particularly in the past decade.

The population of the county is largely white British, with a small non-white population. In the past few decades, the area has also seen an increase of migration from east Europe, specifically Romania and Poland, into the county[18], and the average rate of non-UK born people living in Somerset in 2015 was between 5-7%[19], which incorporated migrants from all over the world, not just the EU. This rate is a little higher than neighbouring counties to the south and west, but on a par with, or lower than Bristol to the north, and Wiltshire to the east.

The politics within the county have in recent years been a mix of conservative and liberal, although in the 2015 General Election, the Conservative party gained all the constituencies in Somerset, claiming seats in the South and East of the county that had been previously held by the Liberal Democrats[20]. This result was maintained in the 2017 General Election[21]. The data collection for this study took place between these two election periods (and beyond), and it can be therefore stated with some confidence that the political identity of the county during the period relevant to this study leans towards the conservative (with both lower-case and capital 'c'). How this might affect language use could vary. It might represent a desire

[18] Information from 'Somerset Intelligence',http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/international-migration.html retrieved 2nd Oct 2021

[19] Data regarding non-UK people living in Somerset taken from https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/whataremigrationlevelslikeinyourarea/2015-08-28 - retrieved 2nd Oct 2021

[20] UK 2015 General Election Results, BBC website: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2015/results/england - retrieved 2nd Oct 2021

[21] UK 2017 General Election Results, BBC website: https://www.bbc.com/news/election/2017/results/england - retrieved 2nd Oct 2021

to conform to a less regional accent and adopt a prestige accent, such as RP, used by those in power. Alternatively, it might have the opposite effect, as speakers in the county resist change to language and reinforce their conservative rural identity through the use of the local dialect.

Moving away from politics, the county also draws much of its identity through traditions. One of the most well-known and celebrated traditions in Somerset is the Carnival. The Carnival processions in Somerset take a different approach to other forms of carnival as they occur over a series of nights throughout Somerset in mid-late Autumn. The procession is in the form of both walking entries and tractor-pulled illuminated carts featuring performers, and prizes are awarded in various categories. There are three carnival circuits in Somerset, each taking place at a different time in October and November, but the biggest is the Guy Fawkes Circuit, which takes place in central Somerset, starting with the Bridgwater Carnival in early November. The Carnival forms a huge part of identity in Bridgwater, and can often divide opinion. Many people in the town are members of a carnival club and ascribe their own personal identity to that club. The carts are built by members of the carnival club, and the theme of a cart is kept a closely guarded secret until the carnival season begins. As a result, there is a friendly rivalry between the clubs around the town, which are also often affiliated with a certain pub or leisure club, thus giving them all geographical relevance. Carnival also has its own terminology. The carts are specifically called so in the Somerset carnivals, and not 'floats' as might be found elsewhere. Knowing this difference and using this specific term has in itself become a marker of local identity, particularly within Bridgwater and surrounding villages.

By contrast, there are those who see the carnival as a nuisance, annoyed at the disruption to services and traffic in the towns on the nights of the carnival. They see the carnival as an obsession, particularly in Bridgwater, and find it frustrating that so much money within the town is dedicated to supporting the carnival rather than going towards supporting other social initiatives. Many, though, do acknowledge the fundraising that the carnival encourages, and simply accept it as part of the town, even if they don't align themselves with it.

Further afield, in West Somerset, there are also strong feelings of rural identity, but many are frustrated that the local identity may be being lost as more people from outside Somerset move into the area. There are those who feel themselves closer to Devon than to the rest of Somerset, and one participant in the study who mentioned specifically that she rarely travels further east than Taunton, preferring instead to go to Cornwall. Depending on who you speak to, they will either see the county border that passes through Exmoor as almost non-existent, taking Exmoor as their means of identifying themselves rather than by county, or they will see the border as a much more tangible one that warrants some friendly rivalry.

A strong sense of rural identity is perhaps not a surprise in West Somerset, as it is the least populated part of the county, but one of the largest spaces geographically. The landscape

is dominated by the Exmoor National Park, the Brendon Hills and the Quantock Hills, and much of its industry is, as previously discussed, based in farming and tourism.

The identities of these two parts of the county are perhaps also influenced by the broadcast media they receive. Llamas (2015) discussed the boundaries of regional broadcast media in the north-east of England. Within Somerset, there is also a division. Most of Somerset receives local news from the BBC Points West programme, which has headquarters in Bristol. West Somerset, as was, receives its local news from the BBC Spotlight programme, though, which has its headquarters in Plymouth, Devon. The locations of the respective headquarters of these two regional broadcasters influences the focus of the news and information that is disseminated out to their viewers. The ITV regional broadcasting follows similar boundaries, with ITV Westcountry covering Cornwall, Devon and western Somerset, and ITV West covering the Bristol region similar to BBC Points West. These locations will also have a bearing on the accents of the presenters of their news broadcasters, albeit with levelled accents that perhaps have features closer to RP for broadcast purposes. These factors in place influence the identity of the viewers, as they align themselves to the places and people in the news they receive from their regions. This supports the feeling described by one of my participants from West Somerset that she feels more comfortable as she travels west and rarely travels east of Taunton (which is in the BBC Points West broadcast region).

3.3.6 The Somerset dialects

Few studies have been conducted in the area since the large-scale industrialisation, and it is hoped that this current study will provide some insight into the local dialect during this period of extensive redevelopment and population movement. However, while Somerset has been seen as a traditional dialect area, the increase in urbanisation and industrialisation will have made an impact on the local dialect. The work of dialectologists to preserve the local dialect has provided a snapshot of the speech communities within Somerset. Their work enables us to look at the traditional dialect in more detail.

Wells (1982b) and Wakelin (1986) have both provided detailed accounts of the sounds found within Somerset, both of whom based their descriptions on the findings of the SED, though Wakelin also used historical texts of dialectal poems to account for more historical features. Using their accounts, and additional information from other sources such as the *Survey of English Dialects Basic Materials* (Orton & Dieth, 1962), and the *Linguistic Atlas of English* (LAE) (Orton et al., 1978), there follows a description of the features of the traditional dialect(s) in Somerset.

3.3.6.1 Vowels

A summary of the vowels in Somerset is discussed here, using Wells' lexical sets and data from the LAE and SED as well as historical data from Wakelin (1986).

3.3.6.1.1 Front Vowels

KIT and DRESS are much in line with the rest of the south of England (giving [ɪ] and [ɛ] respectively), although in the case of KIT there are some small pockets and individual instances of a more centralised [ə] or [ʌ] in use to the west of the county (see LAE)

In the TRAP vowel, the isoglosses in the Linguistic Atlas of England show that the [æ] form appears mostly in the central parts of the county, and the [a] form tends to appear on the western and eastern-most parts (see for example '*man'* in Ph5 of the LAE). The BATH vowel across Somerset is similar to that of a TRAP vowel, however this varies from a closer [æː] in much of the northern-western coastal area of the county, and an open [aː] in the central and south west of the county, and also found in the north east, where the city of Bath is located (and pronounced [baːθ]). However, as the maps in the LAE also show, in the south-west of the county, there is use of the more front-open [aː], similar to that found in large parts of Devon.

3.3.6.1.2 Central Vowels

In the case of the NURSE vowel, several maps in the LAE show use in Somerset of the central rhotic [əɾː] that is used throughout the rest of the south of England. Wakelin (1986), though, points out that West Somerset, along with Devon and parts of Cornwall, does have older use of [aː] in '*learn*' and '*fern*'.

As is the case with much of the south of England, the STRUT vowel is an unrounded centralised [ʌ] or [ə].

3.3.6.1.3 Back vowels

Wells (1982b, p. 347) notes that the vowels of FOOT are fronted in West Somerset where it borders with Devon, giving *foot* as [fʏt] and *goose* as [gʏːs] (see LAE map Ph139). The LAE shows that this is indeed the case for the word '*foot*' (map Ph143) and also with '*bull*' (Ph53a) and '*wool*' (Ph54a) in the west, whereas the rest Somerset, in line with most of the country, uses [u] (what would now be transcribed as [ʊ]) according to the LAE maps.

This same pattern is also found in the THOUGHT vowel, where most of the county follows the variety found across the wider south of England region: that of [ɔː]. Wakelin (1986) describes the FORCE vowel as [ɔː] followed by either /r/ or /r/-colouring (p26), but also

indicates that in east Somerset there is use of [a]. The LAE maps show this with an east/west divide running through the county

The LOT vowel in Somerset (and much of the South West), according to Wells, is often unrounded, thus [lɑt]. However, as Wells (1982b) further points out, within the SED data and also the LAE, this is recorded as a rounded back open vowel [lɒt], with examples such as *holly* [hɒli] (LAE Ph38) and *fox* [fɒks] (LAE Ph39) recorded across most of the south of England as such. An exception to this is in the north east of Somerset, which records use of lengthened [ɔ], giving [fɔːks].

According to Wells, the CLOTH vowel is in line with LOT, using [ɒ], or occasionally the unrounded and more fronted [a].

3.3.6.1.4 Diphthongs

In the case of CHOICE, according to Wakelin "(t)he traditional (south west) form seems to be /ʌɪ/, but /aɪ/-forms also occur here" (1986, p. 28). This may have already fallen out of use among speakers when data used in the LAE was gathered, though, as the form given in '*voice*' (Ph187) is [ɔi], in line with much of the rest of the south of England. MOUTH has three distinct variants in use throughout the county: [au] in most of the central and northern parts of the county, [æu] in the south and east, and [æɤ] in the west of the county, as it is in most of Devon and all of Cornwall (see LAE maps Ph147-154).

The FACE set (see LAE maps Ph60-64) all use either a monophthong [eː] or [ɛː] in the west of the county near the Devon border, with a diphthong [ei] in the central part of the county. One exception to the FACE vowel is in the word '*great*', which presents three options: one that is closer to the rest of the south of England, giving either [ei] through the centre of the county, a monophthong [eː], or [əʳː], giving the word '*gurt*', which is a stereotypical and salient feature of Somerset and most of the South-West. Maps for the PRICE diphthong, (e.g., LAE maps Ph113-Ph118) all show a west-to-east variation, with the western side of Somerset taking an open-front [æi], the central part of the county using a lower [ai], and the northern and eastern parts of the county using the back [ɔi]. The LAE maps for NEAR, represented with *'hear'* and *'year'* (Ph101-2), suggest that a more centralised [jəʳː] was used in the majority among older speakers in Somerset, although there are also some instances of [iəʳː] in central and northern parts of the county. SQUARE gives a front-to-centre diphthong with either r-colouring or a retroflex /r/ throughout most of the county, with an occasional east/west split.

Wakelin describes the historical data for the CURE set to be somewhat slight but that "there is a tendency towards a close first (element) in the SW ([uə], [ʏə])" (Wakelin, 1986, p. 29). Data from the SED supports this, with the more fronted [ʏə] form used in the west of the county

only (See SED XI.7.12 '*sure*'). The low to high back diphthong GOAT shows some variety, but typically is either [ou] (occasionally [ou:]) in the north of the county, and a monophthong [o:] in the rest of the county (see maps Ph119a-124a).

3.3.6.1.5 Somerset vowels in summary

Wakelin notes that there is a division through Somerset running roughly along the route of the River Parrett that groups the western part of the county with Devon and Cornwall, and the dialect to the east of the river as more closely aligned with the rest of the south of England (p18). The data in the SED and LAE support this in nearly all cases, showing that there is a tendency for West Somerset to differ from the rest of the county, as the vowels in this part of the county more frequently align with those over the border in north Devon and occasionally also Cornwall, rather than with the vowel use found further east in the rest of Somerset.

3.3.6.2 Consonants

3.3.6.2.1 Fricatives

Historically, a feature that is considered typical of a South West variety of English is the voicing of fricatives that would be voiceless in Received Pronunciation. For example, the voiceless fricatives [f], [s], and [θ] are voiced when in a word or syllable initial position, and thus become [v], [z] and [ð], with the exception of clusters with [r] where /θr/ is instead /dr-/, for example *three*, or *thread* (Wells, 1982b). Wells and Wakelin both noted in the 1980s, however, that this feature was in significant decline, if not entirely lost among non-rural speakers (Wakelin, 1986; Wells, 1982b).

Trudgill notes TH-Fronting as a feature of Bristol (Trudgill, 1999), but there are no recorded instances of that in the SED or LAE in Somerset. Anecdotally, though, I can report that hearing TH-Fronting in Central Somerset in particular would not be out of place in the more modern dialect.

3.3.6.2.2 Glides

There is no 'yod-dropping' in most of Somerset, although there is evidence of it in West Somerset in 'dew', 'few', and 'new' (LAE maps Ph178-181) where /ju/ is presented as [ʏ:]. In the middle of the county, however, the presence of an apparent /j/ after either /d/ or /t/ at a phonemic level has resulted in an affricate at an allophonic level, thereby /dju/ > [d͡ʒ] and /tju:/ > [t͡ʃ] (see LAE maps Ph178, and Ph183-4).

3.3.6.2.3 Obstruents

Lenition of sorts has also been found in south-west varieties, including parts of Somerset, in obstruents, /p t k/. Wells' description specifies Devon, but comments that according to the LAE, where a line can be drawn from Weston-Super-Mare (North Somerset) down to Portsmouth (Hampshire), there have been instances of /k/ as [g]. It is important to note that Wells is 'not convinced' that any such lenition has resulted in a loss of distinction between /k/ and /g/, or /t/ and /d/ (Wells, 1982b, p. 344).

The use of /t/, though, has additional potential allophones available to it in the South-West of England, including Somerset. The allophones are typically the result of lenition, resulting in a voiced [d], a tap [ɾ] or glottal [ʔ]. Glottalling in particular is noted by Wells in relation to Bristol but it is worth mentioning in regard to Somerset as well. Wells discusses the use of the glottal stop in place of /t/ in both Intervocalic and Coda positions, including both word final and cluster positions, e.g. *lot* and *lots* can both be [lɒʔ] and [lɒʔs], *butter* can be [bʌʔə˞] (Wells, 1982b, p. 344).

3.3.6.2.4 Aspirants

The use of /h/ is noted as sociolinguistically variable throughout the south-west, with H-dropping occurring in an onset position (see Wells, 1982b). In the traditional Somerset dialect this is usually in the far west of the county (see the LAE maps Ph220 and Ph221). An example of this is seen *'hear'* (LAE Ph101) where /h/ is replaced with /j/ (as [jəˤ:]) among older speakers in Somerset, with instances of [iəˤ:] in central and northern parts of the county. The rest of the county, along with small parts of Devon and Dorset, appears to indicate a small pocket of resistance to h-dropping in the SED data.

3.3.6.2.5 Nasals

The use of '*-ing*' /ŋ/ in Somerset, according to the SED data presented in the LAE, shows that '*ng*' is not realised as a velar nasal, but an alveolar nasal [n], resulting in '*shillin', mornin', herring'* and *'farthin'* (Ph208-Ph211), although in the case of '*farthing*' the LAE indicates that the [n] is syllabic in some instances (see LAE Ph211).

3.3.6.2.6 Liquids

Wells (1982b) observes that one of the most recognisable features of all South West regional accents is the high level of rhoticity in all linguistics environments (that is, prevocalic and postvocalic); a characteristic which can be found among speakers at any social level. This includes 'r-colouring' in central vowels such as [ɜ˞:] and [ə˞:].

Within the SED and LAE data, most instances of /l/ follow a categorical pattern of a clear [l] in an onset and intervocalic position, and a dark [ɬ] in a coda position. Within these two datasets, there are occasional instances of a vocalised or zero form of /l/ in a coda position in individual locations in the SED, but this is not shown in any one word or datapoint as occurring across the entire county.

3.3.6.3 Scholarship of Somerset Dialect(s)

As part of the 19th Century fervour for capturing historical language use, dialectologists Williams and Jones (1873) published a glossary of Somerset words based on notes taken by previous dialect enthusiasts on behalf of the Somersetshire Archaeological Society. In his preface, Williams notes the loss of "that interesting old language, which those great innovators, the Printing Press, the Railroad and the Schoolmaster, are fast driving out of the country" (pg. iv). The glossary contains occasional examples of the dialect words in context, with an orthographic interpretation of the pronunciations, for example, in the very first entry (2):

(2) A, *pron.* He, ex. **A didn't zai zo did a**?

(W. P. Williams & Jones, 1873, p. 199)

Around the same time, Elworthy wrote his observations on the dialect of his native West Somerset, which at the time he described as "very little known" (Elworthy, 1876, p. 199). He laments how much of the dialectal work conducted in Somerset was mainly focussed on the 'Eastern division', and that "the far richer vocabulary is and more expressive speech of the Western passed over with the remark set against a few stray words in the glossaries 'pronounced so-and-so west of the Parret (sic),' thus leaving it to be inferred that, with the few exceptions alluded to, and a slight difference noticed here and there in the sounds of *oo*, the dialects are identical : but this is a great mistake." (p200). Elworthy does note differences between West Somerset and North Devon dialects, with examples from the grammar. The bulk of his work, though, lies in a description of the phonology of the dialect, presented to the Philological Society.

Alexander Ellis's dialect studies in the late 19th Century (1869, 1889a), as discussed in the previous chapter, naturally also took in Somerset, providing descriptions of phonological and grammatical features. His study was not focussed specifically on Somerset as he took in all the British Isles and parts of Ireland, but he looked at 26 locations within the county. He also referred to Elworthy's findings for those locations in West Somerset in much of his work. His study, though, took in both urban spaces (e.g., Bath, Taunton, Wellington) as well as the more typical rural locations associated with traditional dialectology studies.

The Survey of English Dialects and the publication of its basic materials has provided linguists with a solid dataset on which to conduct scholarly work. However, as years progress, this 60+ year old data becomes less relevant to those wishing to give an example of how language is used in rural areas today, and has become more a means of historical comparison. As discussed above, one of the criticisms levelled at the SED is the lack of diversity in its participants, taking a very traditional dialectological platform in its selection. However, the information gathered about the participants was thorough enough for linguists to be able to recognise those shortcomings in the data, and to take steps to account for them. It remains one of the most important datasets available to linguists wishing to study historical forms of dialects.

Providing an update to such datasets, however, is no mean feat. Funding and resources are a continual challenge for large-scale dialectology projects such as this, but the improvements in technology have enabled linguists to create corpora to continue longitudinal studies into British English varieties. There are some notable additions to the body of datasets and scholarly work around Somerset dialects in particular.

The Helsinki Corpus of British English Dialects (Rissanen et al., 1991) compiled data from Somerset, which included fieldwork that was conducted in the early 1970s by Ossi Ihalainen and his team. This was supplemented further when Ihalainen returned to Somerset in the 1980s to record his participants once again, thus creating a longitudinal dataset. Much of Ihalainen's work is based around grammatical language variation and change (Ihalainen, 1976, 1980, 1985a, 1985b), however fellow linguists from the University of Helsinki have conducted research into phonetic aspects of the Somerset dialect, mostly in the vowels in use in East Somerset accents (Nevalainen & Aulanko, 1995).

The Freiburg Corpus of English Dialects (FRED) has collections of recordings, some of which are available online, from Somerset[22]. These were collected in the 1980s and early 1990s. As with previous dialectology studies, the majority of speakers from Somerset are male, and over the age of 68.

The English Dialects App was launched in 2016, and takes advantage of developments in technology to crowdsource linguistic data from smartphone users. The project is a collaborative project between universities in the UK and Switzerland. The researchers developed an app that could be used on iOS (Apple) and Android (Google) phones that could be downloaded for free, and gathered data from users (with their permission) via a quiz that users took in order to see what features their own dialects shared with those in England. This is in part crowdsourcing through gamification, as the app also offers users results on where their dialect is most likely from. Users can then provide feedback on how accurate this was, and thus

[22] Freiburg Corpus of English Dialects, https://fred.ub.uni-freiburg.de/, retrieved 2nd Nov 2019

update the app's database (Leemann et al., 2016). As part of this exercise, users are also invited to provide a recording of their speech as they read a specified passage. This then provides data that has been compiled in the English Dialects App Corpus (EDAC) (Leemann et al., 2018). By the researchers' own admission, the data that has been collected to date is skewed towards a certain demographic, typically younger speakers who have enough money to own a smartphone, and enough interest in dialects to want to take part. They also found that they have more females than males taking part. This is not to take away from the impact the dataset will have on future linguistic research, but it does highlight some of the difficulties in recruiting participants from different demographics, particularly through crowdsourcing.

3.4 Forming Research Questions

Towards the end of Chapter 1, the three broad research questions informing this thesis were introduced. This section now re-introduces those questions and discusses the motivations for asking them in the context of current knowledge of sociolinguistic theory discussed in Chapter 2, and the ongoing sound changes discussed in the present chapter.

3.4.1 British English sound changes, and the selection of a variable

The sound changes occurring within British English dialects that have been discussed in this chapter have shown a general trend of levelling via diffusion out from London and the South East. We have seen how L-vocalisation in particular has occurred only in the south of England, leaping over the north of England to also appear in Scottish dialects. It would be reasonable to expect, therefore, that the gravity model of diffusion could have brought L-vocalisation into the southwest of England, and Somerset specifically, perhaps via Bristol, finding a foothold in the larger M5 corridor towns of Weston-Super-Mare, Bridgwater and Taunton before diffusing outwards into the smaller towns and villages.

The SED shows very low levels of L-vocalisation occurring within Somerset among its participants, suggesting this feature, if it was following the same process of diffusion from larger towns, was potentially in progress in the early-mid 20th Century. It therefore begs the question: how do modern realisations of /l/ compare with realisations found within the SED data from Somerset?

3.4.2 Somerset as a post-dialectal society

The study of dialects within the British Isles since the 19th Century and the enthusiasm for collecting historical or archaic forms of language has both provided a snapshot of language at those points in time, and provided a means for comparison with more modern dialects in the same geographical space. As methodologies have developed and understanding of the wider use of language within society and among individuals has improved, so too have the techniques and questions used within dialectology. In addition to noting the phonological, grammatical and lexical features of a dialect, such dialectological studies now include non-linguistic variables to take into account the variation of language use among different age, gender or socioeconomic groups, the style of language they are using in accordance with the scenario at hand, and the motivations of the speaker when they use certain features.

This thesis is interested in language use in Somerset, a region in the south west of England that has been the subject of a few dialectological studies over the years. In the intervening period since the SED, though, the county has seen considerable changes in infrastructure and economy, which in turn have had an impact on the landscape and the people living within it. While the west of the county, as was noted over 140 years ago by Elworthy, is separated from the rest of Somerset with the natural boundaries formed through topography, technology and increased mobility have reduced the barriers to movement throughout the county and beyond. The recent industrial developments in the centre of the county with nuclear power and distributional warehouses and manufacture are starting to impact on the traditional rural stereotype of the area, especially as towns grow and have subsumed smaller satellite villages.

Yet most of the county remains predominantly rural, despite these pockets of industrialisation and infrastructural development. Anyone driving through the county on the M5 will see almost all hills and fields with livestock or crops, with only the occasional housing development or industrial park. There are no major cities within the county, certainly not since the reorganisation of administrative boundaries[23]. The central districts of Sedgemoor and what was Taunton Deane (now Taunton and Somerset West) have two of the largest towns in the county, yet still claim a rural identity. These two districts are not the ideal traditional dialect area anymore, but neither are they entirely urban. They have become something else, alluded to in Britain's discussion of the urban vs the rural (2017). Much like the region of West Cumbria studied by Jansen (2015, 2017), the region has a strong tradition of agriculture and tourism as industries, yet have also seen the introduction of nuclear power into the landscape, bringing with it jobs, improved roads, and increased mobility, leading potentially to more language

[23] As explained previously, Bath is now in its own administrative area of 'Bath and North East Somerset'.

contact and subsequent dialect levelling. It has, in essence, become a post-dialectal society: with the population and economy having the characteristics of neither those used in traditional dialect studies, nor those of the subjects of modern sociolinguistic research in more urban spaces. Whether Somerset represents communities in a transitional state from rural to urban remains to be seen, but it is not the same landscape or community it was during the SED.

West Somerset, on the other hand, remains almost entirely rural, even with the comparatively larger tourist town Minehead at the north, and thus would still be recognisable to the traditional dialectologists. Elworthy's study separating West Somerset dialect from the rest of the county has been further supported in subsequent investigations into isoglosses and dialect features within the area, as both Wakelin (1986), and the Linguistic Atlas of England (Orton et al., 1978) demonstrate. It therefore makes this an area of interest within a linguistic study of the wider Somerset dialects, offering a means of comparison with the more urbanised 'post-dialect' area of Central Somerset.

3.4.3 Finalising the Research Questions

In light of the changes to the economy and landscape of Somerset, coupled with the known changes overall within British English varieties, it is reasonable to wonder if there has been any change to Somerset dialects, particularly in the latter half of the 20th Century since the time of the SED. As presented at the beginning of this thesis, three research questions are posed within this thesis. The first broad question asks: what are the patterns of realisation of /l/in modern Somerset dialects? Within this current chapter, realisations historic and current in the realisations of /l/ have been presented in the context of other ongoing changes in British English. L-Vocalisation in British English is not new, having undergone the process in Middle English that saw the deletion of /l/ in words such as *talk* and *calf.* The modern process of Coda L-Vocalisation occurring in the late 20th Century and into the 21st Century is following the same path, moving from clear to a darkened form, and then darkening to the point of vocalisation. We might therefore expect that any instances of L-Vocalisation in Somerset are also following this pattern, with a relationship appearing between Dark /l/ and Vocalised forms of /l/.

Two further questions then present themselves: what evidence is there of variation and change, and what factors (e.g., dialect levelling) are influencing these patterns? Chapter 2 discussed overall patterns of language change. Models of language change were presented and discussed, such as the Wave model and the Urban Hierarchy Model. Given the density of large urban spaces in England, it could be considered likely that there is a relationship of influence between large urban spaces and the small locations that surround them. Increased communications technology and mobility also affords greater opportunity to travel and interact

with speakers of different varieties which in turn offers interlocutors two choices, accommodate to the different varieties, or diverge from them. Dialect Levelling currently underway in various British English varieties suggests that dialect-specific features are being accommodated. It could therefore be expected that speakers in Somerset are reacting to these changes: either through loss or adaptation of dialect-specific features to accommodate towards speakers of other varieties, or they are diverging in order to preserve their identity.

This thesis will endeavour to answer these to give a snapshot of modern realisations of /l/ in Somerset locations.

4 Realisations of /l/, with focus on L-Vocalisation

This chapter will discuss the variable under study within this thesis: that of (l). In the first instance it will look at the articulatory elements of realisations of (l) before focussing specifically on L-Vocalisation. It will then review previous studies into (l) as conducted globally, followed by a review of historical instances of L-Vocalisation in British English varieties before moving on to discuss modern use of (l) in British English. Finally, the social aspects of use of (l) are considered within the British English studies, and what predictions we may be able to make regarding use of (l) in Somerset in the context of known patterns of change in progress elsewhere.

4.1 Describing /l/

From a phonological standpoint, the phoneme /l/ in English is a lateral consonantal sonorant, which stands in contrast to /r/ and /n/ which are sonorant consonants but not lateral. There are different realisations to /l/, as described by Ladefoged and Johnson, "there is a considerable difference in the articulation of /l/ before a vowel or between vowels, as in *leaf* or *feeling*, as compared with /l/ before a consonant or at the end of a word, as in *field* or *feel*" (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011, p. 68).

4.1.1 Articulation of /l/

Most realisations of /l/ involve two potential articulatory gestures: a primarily coronal gesture, which is typically realised with the tongue tip at the alveolar ridge, or; a primarily dorsal gesture, typically more sonorant, in which the tongue retracts, the dorsum raises towards the velum and the tip of the tongue lowers producing 'velarisation' (see Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011; Collins & Mees, 2013, p. 94). These different forms are named as a 'clear' /l/ and a 'dark' /l/ respectively, which Halle and Mohanan view as distinct entities (Halle & Mohanan, 1985; cited in Johnson & Britain, 2007). Many British English varieties, including Received Pronunciation (RP), hold a categorical distinction between a clear /l/, which appears pre-vocally either in an onset or intervocalic position (Collins & Mees, 2013; Wells, 1982a), and dark /l/ that appears in a word/syllable final (coda) position. Examples of this distribution can be found in Table 3 below.

Table 3 - Distribution of /l/ in English

Linguistic Environment	Example	Phonological realisation in RP
Onset (both syllable initial, and following a consonant)	'Live', 'lamp', 'clear'	[lɪv] [læmp] [klɪᵊ]
Intervocalic (between two vowels; one may be stressed, or both unstressed)	'Fully', 'peeling', 'allow'	['fʊli] ['piːlɪŋ] [ə'laʊ]
Coda		
Coda Word-final (preceding consonant onset)	Carnival time	['kaːnɪvəɬ taɪm]
Coda Prepausal (V_#)	Carnival	['kaːnɪvəɬ]
Pre-Consonant (V_C)	'Wells', 'hold'	[wɛɬz] [hɑʊɬd]
Coda Syllabic (Usually but not exclusively appearing in an unstressed **post-consonantal** position)	'Vinyl', 'candle', 'purple'	['vaɪnɬ] ['kandɬ] ['pɜːpɬ]

These distributions are typical of many English varieties. The allophones are in complementary distribution, as the appearance of one form in what might be considered the place of another would not be a violation of the phonological system of English, nor would it change the meaning of the word or render it meaningless (Collins & Mees, 2013). For example, the word *cold* could be uttered as either [kɒld], [kɒɬd], or even [kɒʊd] and would still be recognised and understood as an adjective to describe a low temperature, whereas if [θ] and [ð] were used interchangeably, it could potentially change or lose meaning e.g., *thin* can be [θɪn] but not [ðɪn]. This distribution of allophones of /l/ can be seen elsewhere within varieties of English around the world. While there may be a clearer distinction between the distribution of clear /l/ and dark /l/ in most varieties of British English (with the exception of some, discussed later in this chapter), there is less of a distinction in many varieties of American English, where, according to Ladefoged and Johnson, "all examples of /l/ are comparatively velarized, except perhaps those that are syllable initial and between high front vowels" (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011, p. 69). Equally, in previous studies of Irish English describe the realisation of /l/ in all linguistic environments, including coda, as being a clear /l/, although there is some evidence to suggest that l-darkening is occurring in a syllable final position, particularly around Dublin

(Wells, 1982b; Harris, 1985; cited in Kallen, 1997, p. 23). Wells (1982b) indicates that Dublin English had a "certain amount of clear vs dark alternation (...) the 'dark' allophone is usually only moderately velarised", (p431). He continues to cite personal communication with a Dublin university-based colleague who provides anecdotal evidence of young students using dark /l/. Some researchers still maintain the use of clear /l/ in all position (e.g. Hickey, 1999), but more recent accounts still point towards an increase in use of Dark /l/ in use in other parts of Dublin, and potentially spread into other Irish English dialects (Moylan, 2009; cited in Kallen, 2013, p. 49).

These studies show that all dialects of English have the phoneme /l/, but they all have potential to realise /l/ in a number of ways allophonically. For example, as seen above, many US dialects feature dark /l/ in all positions, whereas by contrast there is historical use of /l/ where it is realised in its Clear form in all positions. Between these two extremes, there are several examples of both Clear and Dark /l/ present within the dialect, appearing categorically or variably. The following section investigates the findings of selected previous studies into /l/ realisation in English.

4.1.2 The realisations of /l/

So far I have discussed /l/ in the context of allophonic variation. However, this allophonic status of /l/ is the subject of some contention. Sproat and Fujimura (1993) is one of most influential works in this regard, for instance, who argue that /l/ is realised on a continuum ranging from a clear /l/ to a dark /l/, and while the choice of /l/ realisation may be determined by linguistic environment, those realisations are not discrete allophones. With a primary focus on American English varieties, they argue that the distinction between a dark (velarised) /l/ and a clear /l/ is on the basis of the timing of the dorsal and coronal gestures of the tongue in its production, specifically that primarily coronal articulation is more accurate and therefore more easily determined, whereas a primarily dorsal articulation followed by or simultaneous with a coronal gesture can disturb the accuracy of the coronal gesture, thus producing a sound further back in the vocal tract. Their study made use of electropalatography (EPG) technology, placing pellets at three points on the tongue, near the tip of the tongue, mid-region of the tongue blade, and the dorsum (Sproat & Fujimura, 1993, p. 294), to measure the position of the tongue at during articulation of /l/ in different linguistic contexts. Five subjects were studied: four American English speakers, and one of the authors himself who was a British English speaker with many years among American English speakers. Each speaker was asked to read 17 individual phrases aloud four times "at a conversational rate" (p297). The phrases were devised to ensure data covered specific linguistic environments within a wider intervocalic context. Their results prompted Sproat and Fujimura to propose that all articulations of /l/ involve both

an apical and dorsal gesture, recognising that "it is commonly observed that syllable-final instances of a consonant are more weakly articulated than syllable-initial instances" (p305). That is, syllable-final instances of /l/ may be more subject to darkening than syllable-initial, as this is typically a weaker position for consonantal gestures. They further observed that while this use of dark /l/ was not universal, where it did occur it does so with the same pattern of dark /l/ more typically found in syllable final position and clear (light) /l/ in syllable initial (p309). However, they do not consider this categorical use, more the result of phonological constraints within the syllable that influence the duration and strength of an apical gesture. For this reason, Sproat and Fujimura suggest that the quality of a vocalised /l/ should be looked at in the context of other allophones of /l/. They argue that there is no allophonic distinction between realisations of /l/ as the articulatory gestures are still the same, but timing determines how complete those gestures are. They place the burden of proof on the linguist who wants to argue that there **are** distinct allophones of /l/ in English. Huffman (1997) suggests that there is nuance to Sproat and Fujimura's argument, though. Huffman posits that it is not the case that duration influences the 'backness' of /l/ alone, but that the vowels adjacent to /l/ may have a co-articulatory effect.

Building on Sproat and Fujimura's conclusions, Lee-Kim et al (2013) identified that while there has been much work into the articulation of onset and coda (l), there has not been a good deal of work on intervocalic (l), with the notable exception of Huffman (see above). Their study focussed on a New York dialect, reviewing the use of /l/ in intervocalic environments determined by morpheme boundary and surrounding vowels. Results showed that intervocalic (l) is sensitive to the placement of a morpheme boundary, thus determining production of a dark /l/ (see p493). Acoustic data supported this, and Lee-Kim et al were able to show that, among their New York participants, pre-boundary /l/ is darker than post-boundary /l/, as pre-boundary /l/ is at the end of a free-standing morpheme, and is therefore more similar to a stem-final (l) (see p502). They also concluded their data supported Sproat and Fujimura insofar as /l/-darkening occurs on a continuum, but that contrary to Sproat and Fujimura, the duration of the production of (l) was not solely influential over its realisation at its position as much as its position in a morpheme boundary. It could be argued that an Intervocalic /l/ in a pre-boundary position is more similar to a Coda /l/, and therefore more likely to behave as such with darker /l/. Such an approach could then draw the discussion back to the viewpoint of /l/ realisation as a categorical distinction.

Of those linguists who do consider variation in realisation of /l/ to be allophonic and categorical by linguistic position (e.g. Boersma & Hayes, 2001; Cruttenden, 2008), Yuan and Liberman (2011) pick up the gauntlet thrown down by Sproat and Fujimura, and claim to show that there **is** categorical distinction between realisations of /l/. Like Lee-Kim et al, their work

focuses on Intervocalic /l/, and draws on a large-scale corpus analysis of American English. They found that there is a categorical distinction between onset and coda /l/, and that intervocalic can be "either dark or light, depending on the stress of the vowels preceding and following it" (p42). They further argue that the "duration effect on /l/ darkness, for example, does not suggest that no categorical distinction exists between dark and light /l/ (...); rather, it shows the characteristic of one category, the dark /l/. This can be seen from our result that duration affects the darkness of dark /l/ but not light /l/." (p43)

Scobbie and Pouplier (2010) point out that Sproat and Fujimura's study focussed on American English varieties, and did not take dialectal variation into consideration. Scobbie and Pouplier further pointed to dialectal variation in terms of this categorical distinction, describing Southern British English as "having the 'classic' distribution" (p243) of clear /l/ in onset, and dark /l/ in coda, compared with varieties such as Scottish Standard English in which dark /l/ is present in both onset and coda (Stuart-Smith et al., 2006). Scobbie and Pouplier used EPG and focused on Word-Final phrase medial /l/, with non-lingual /h/ and /b/ as surrounding phonemes in a pre-consonant context to avoid any lingual co-articulation that may make the gesture ambiguous. They found that L-vocalisation was greater among the Southern English and Scottish English speakers than was found among the American English speakers in Sproat and Fujimura's study. Scobbie and Pouplier also found that there are gestural and timing differences between the two British English dialects, with alveolar contact reduced among Scottish English speakers: something not entirely unexpected in a dialect with greater use of dark /l/ in an onset position. With an eye on ambisyllabicity of sandhi L, they determined that in such a context /l/ "may be light in quality and consonantal, for example in Essex (...), or vocalised and /w/-like, for example in London (...)" (p242). In addition, they challenged Sproat and Fujimura's assertion that all instances of /l/ are realised on a gradient, rather showing that a 'different, more complex, and speaker-specific variation which crosscuts the prosodically-conditioned gradience of darkness" (p253) is apparent.

Bermúdez-Otero and Trousdale (2012) add to the discussion around ambisyllabicity of word-final prevocalic consonants that "display both onset-like and coda-like properties" (p706). In particular, they state that present day dialects treat word-final prevocalic /l/ as a coda as it undergoes darkening (p707). They further counter Sproat and Fujimura's claim of /l/-darkness realised as a continuum by discussing L-vocalisation in the context of the life cycle of phonological processes. They determine that l-darkening and L-vocalisation are two successive (and therefore separate) steps in the process of lenition of liquids (p708), with l-darkening appearing before L-vocalisation, i.e., "l > darkening ɫ > vocalization ɻ̩ (>deletion Ø)" (p709). As, in their words, l-darkening "got on the escalator" (p710) before L-vocalisation, and therefore is

at a point in the process of lenition where is it much more stable, and indeed now narrowed in domain to much that it is categorical, where L-vocalisation is still variable.

Turton (2017) suggests there is a clear north/south divide in British English varieties as to whether or not there is a categorical or gradient pattern of realisations of /l/. Turton took an in-depth instrumental analysis of the realisations of /l/ and was able to support previous literature that showed that all instances of (l) in Manchester are dark in both onset and coda, yet there is suggestion that a small but significant difference in the quality of (l) in initial and final position might mean that there is a categorical difference rather than a gradient. Of the five locations Turton investigated, the RP and London varieties demonstrated a clear/dark categorical patterning according to phonological context, whereas the varieties in the north of England demonstrated no categorical distinction, but an occasional gradient pattern in coda positions (e.g., the *pee**l***-type tokens) typically aligned with duration. On further investigation using ultrasound as well as acoustic and auditory means, Turton showed that there was some gradient in the realisation of /l/ when duration was factored in, particularly in coda position. Turton's further work with Baranowksi showed that, contrary to Turton's previous work, there was evidence to show an allophonic distinction between onset and word-final /l/ when taking social class into consideration (Turton & Baranowski, 2021). Overall, though, they found that /l/ has become darker in Mancunian varieties in both onset and coda positions, thus reflecting a change in progress. Turton suggests that a gradient pattern makes sense on an articulatory level as the word or phrase-final position allows more time for the dorsal gesture to complete, and thus make the /l/ darker. It cannot account for darkness in all varieties of English, though (Turton, 2017, p. 17).

4.1.3 Summarising descriptions of (l)

The discussion around the categorical vs variable nature of /l/, and in turn the designation of /l/ as a phoneme with allophonic variation is something that has sparked discussion among linguists. On one side, there are those who wholly subscribe to Sproat and Fujimura's argument that /l/ is realised on a continuum, due to the asymmetric articulations in conjunction with timing of dorsal contact. This is supported and modified slightly by other linguists. However, it was pointed out that these conclusions are based entirely on American varieties of English, and this don't account for variability in other non-American dialects where the realisation of /l/ is more closely tied to syllabic position. This thesis does not focus on the phonological and phonetic discussions relating to realisations and articulations of (l), but it does proceed on the understanding that there is allophonic distinction between realisations of /l/, and that these realisations do broadly fall into a categorical distinction within many British English varieties. The ambiguity of categorisation of coda pre-vocalic /l/ in particular is borne

out in further studies, as is detailed later in this chapter. The phoneme (l) is thus shown to be variable according to linguistic environment, dialect, and even perception of articulation, particularly in a coda position. The inherently sonorous nature of /l/ leaves it open to potential further sonority and thus vocalisation; that is, acquiring a more vowel-like quality. This potential for vocalisation is discussed further in the next section.

4.2 Linguistic and Phonological constraints of L-Vocalisation

This thesis is particularly interested in the progress of L-vocalisation as an innovative feature of Southern British English varieties, and how that progress manifests within Somerset dialect(s). While this study is primarily focussed on the social factors that can motivate sound change, it is useful to determine the phonetic environments of /l/, and under which linguistic circumstances the variable occurs.

L-vocalisation is the occurrence of a vowel in place of either a clear or dark /l/. According to Wells, L-vocalisation is characterised by its resemblance to a "back-vowel, semi-vowel or voiced glide" (Wells, 1982a, p. 258). It can occur as either a rounded back vowel, such as [ʊ] or [u], or it can be an unrounded back vowel, such as [ɤ]. In British English varieties, L-vocalisation is most typically found in a coda position, either post-vocalically, or post-consonantally, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4 - Forms of L-vocalisation and their phonological realisations in a word-final and syllabic position

Linguistic Environment	**Example**	**Realisation with a rounded vocalised /l/**	**Realisation with an unrounded vocalised /l/**
Postvocalic (word-final or in a preconsonantal position)	'Carnival', 'Wells', 'hold'	['kaːnɪvʊː] [wɛʊz] [hɒʊd]	['kaːnɪvɤː] [wɛɤz] [hɒɤd]
Syllabic (Usually but not exclusively appearing in an unstressed postconsontal position)	'Vinyl', 'candle', 'purple'	['vaɪnʊ] ['kandʊ] ['pɜːpʊ]	['vaɪnɤ] ['kandɤ] ['pɜːpɤ]

The nature of a vocalised form is debated among linguists. For some, a vocalised /l/ is a particularly darkened form of a velarised /l/ that does not have a separate allophonic status (see for example Collins & Mees, 2013, p. 94), thus forming the extreme end of the spectrum as laid out by Sproat and Fujimura (see section 4.1). However, Wright (1988) observes that, while instrumental means of analysis for realisations of /l/ may show a gradual shift toward

vocalisation, the "auditory distinction between non-vocalised dark /l/ and vocalised /l/ is quite discrete" (p358). That is perceptually, the listener hears two distinct variables, regardless of the continuum in articulatory gestures. Borowsky et al (2001) further supports this distinction in relation to Australian and New Zealand varieties, saying that a clear /l/ appears in a more 'consonantal' position whereas a nucleus or coda /l/ such as in 'hold' or 'canal' is more velarised or vocalic. Therefore, a truly vocalised /l/ has no coronal articulation at all.

Horvath and Horvath (2002) and van Reenan (1986) both suggest that a vocalised /l/ develops from a velarised /l/, at least within their varieties of study in Australian English and Dutch respectively. That is to say in order for vocalisation of /l/ to occur, the dialect in question must already have the categorical clear/dark /l/ distinction similar to that outlined above in Table 4. Johnson and Britain (2007) add to this, suggesting that L-vocalisation occurs in dialects where there is either a clear/dark categorisation, or /l/ is dark in all linguistic environments. In other words, dark /l/ must be present in Coda position, regardless of the variant of /l/ used in onset or intervocalic position, before L-vocalisation in Coda position can occur. For this reason, Johnson and Britain argue that "the emergence of the vocalised dark /l/ is to be expected, and should be viewed as an example of the emergence (or re-emergence) of the unmarked" (p3). That is, L-vocalisation is expected as unmarked variation informs the direction of language change. They further conclude that vocalised forms of (l) will "eventually become categorical, at least in some linguistic environments" (p31).

Moving beyond the prerequisites for existing realisations that aid vocalisation, Scobbie and Wrench (2003) found that L-vocalisation was most likely to occur prelabially (which they expanded out to mean Preconsonantal) and least likely to occur Prevocalically. Where L-vocalisation occurred in a prepausal position, it was most likely to do so in a weak (unstressed) syllable. They used data from the MOCHA articulatory speech database (see Wrench, 2000; cited from Wrench & Scobbie, 2003) featuring data from eight speakers from England, Scotland, and the US, and thus were able to review this across different dialects.

Borowsky and Horvath (1997) drew on Optimality Theory to investigate phonological constraints on /l/ vocalisation in Australian English. They looked into the position of the /l/ within the word, determining three classes of words: Class 1 having a final /l/ which is syllabic (*noodle*, *people*); Class 2 where the /l/ is at the end of a word following long vowels (*feel*, *cool*); and Class 3, /l/ is the member of a coda cluster (*milk*, *felt*). They determined that Class 1 /l/ was most likely to be vocalised as it was syllabic and therefore sonorant. Within this class, there is a tension between two constraints. The first constraint being that while English permits sonorant consonants as syllabic nuclei in certain circumstances, the optimum is that this be a vowel. Therefore, when an /l/, which has some sonority, is in this nucleus position, the grammar of the language may 'push it toward vocalizing' (Borowsky & Horvath, 1997, p. 115). However,

the second constraint working against this is the Identity Constraint (McCarthy & Prince, 1995; cited in Borowsky & Horvath, 1997, p. 114) whereby 'segments in the input must be the same as the output' (Borowsky & Horvath, 1997, p. 114). In other words, it is preferred that realisations of a phoneme are as similar to that phoneme as possible. In this case, /l/ = [l], and this is preferred over /l/ = [ʊ]. According to Borowsky and Horvath, "(t)here is going to be a tension between these two requirements whenever /l/ occurs as a syllable peak." (p115). The vocalisation of /l/ in this position is down to the dominance of the dorsal gesture and the loss of the coronal gesture, as observed by Sproat and Fujimura. Class 2 (the word-final /l/) was also likely to be vocalised, but less so than Class 1 (a syllabic /l/) as English "positively dislikes syllables larger than two moras" (p116). Class 3 was deemed least likely to vocalise /l/ as it was part of a coda cluster, where "segments must be as sonorous as possible" (p117).

Borowsky and Horvath's study showed a ranking of syllabic structures that are conducive to L-vocalisation within Australian English. Staying with the broad environment of /l/ but focussing only on the quality of the segments within the environment surrounding /l/, we turn to Hardcastle and Barry (1989), who found a relationship between front/back quality of a vowel preceding /l/ and the consonant following it. They conducted a study with six speakers of different varieties of English (three from South East England, one from the West Midlands, and two from South East Australia). Their study determined L-vocalisation within a reading exercise incorporating 12 key words in which /l/ was preceded by a front or back vowel and followed by consonants from coronal to dorsal articulation. They found vocalisation occurred among all speakers, but there was no real pattern in terms of the regional variety of the speakers[24]. However, a pattern did occur among the speakers with regards to the phonological environment of Coda /l/. Fronted consonants such as alveolar stops or sibilants did not favour vocalisation, but fronted vowels did favour vocalisation where back vowels did not. For example, among their participants, words with low back vowels preceding and apical affricates such as '*Walsh*', and '*bulge'* were less likely to produce vocalisation than '*milk*'. Hardcastle and Barry suggested that the contrast between the front vowel /ɪ/ and the dorsal consonant gesture found in a velar consonant such as /k/ assists both the perception of vocalisation, and the articulation of it. The velar component of a dark /l/ becomes assimilated and the close or half-back vowel that results contrasts more with the preceding front vowel, meaning that the secondary coronal gesture producing alveolar contact is almost redundant (Hardcastle & Barry, 1989, p. 16). While these findings may apply to the specific dialects under analysis in Hardcastle and Barry's study, there are several other studies in different dialects that

[24] The two speakers in Hardcastle and Barry's study with the highest use of L-vocalisation were from South East England and South East Australia, while the other speakers from South East England and Australia, as well as the participant from the West Midlands, had fairly low rates of vocalisation

contradict this 'front vowel + dorsal consonant' model as the prime phonological context for L-vocalisation (e.g. Ash, 1982; Borowsky et al., 2001; Durian, 2008; McElhinny, 1999; Meuter, 2002). Indeed, Hardcastle and Barry stress the limitations of their study due to the low numbers of participants, and the small number of tokens (12 in total) within their study.

Moving to the US, where McElhinny (1999) investigated a Pittsburgh dialect, focussing on three different phonological processes: vocalisation of /l/; laxing of /i/ before /l/; and laxing of /u/ before /l/. Her study was based on the speech of eight people split evenly by gender, all of whom were of European descent. The study found that overall, the syllabic position that was found the most favourable in Australian English by Borowsky and Horvath was the least favourable among Pittsburgh speakers. Of the preceding vowels, [ɛ] and [ɒ] also disfavoured /l/-vocalisation, but not as much as a preceding consonant in syllabic position. With this finding, McElhinny was able to demonstrate that amongst Pittsburgh speakers, the [+FRONT] or [+BACK] quality of vowels is not an influence on L-vocalisation. Taking a cue from Sproat and Fujimura, McElhinny categorised word-final environments according to how they were positioned within the intonation, but simplified the overall categories into three: intonation final Prepausal), word final boundary, and morpheme final boundary. The study found that these three categories of syllabic position had an influence over L-vocalisation, resulting in an apparent hierarchy whereby the most favourable position was at the end of an intonation (Prepausal position), and the least favourable was at a morpheme boundary. A final finding of the study was the influence of the relative tense/lax quality of the preceding vowel. The monophthongisation of diphthongs (ay) and (aw) in Pittsburgh that preceded /l/ are, McElhinny argues, influencing L-vocalisation. The shorter vowel where previously there had been a longer diphthong, allows the vocalised /l/ to step into the spot previously occupied by the upward glide of the diphthong (p182). McElhinny's hypothesis rests on the work of Ash, who says that high and mid front vowels "disfavor vocalization because the position of the tongue close to the palate for these vowels promotes palatal contact in the production of /l/" (Ash, 1982, p. 90; cited from McElhinny, 1999). Ash's own study for her doctoral thesis investigated the different environments of /l/, and the potential influencing factors behind vocalisation of /l/ within the Philadelphia area.

It has been shown, therefore, that the linguistic conditions that favour L-vocalisation across different dialects are for a large part varied and contradictory. Hierarchies and rankings of the coda environments produce different results in different varieties of English, but with one key exception: Coda Pre-Vocalic position is least conducive to L-vocalisation, due to its status as something in between an Onset, Intervocalic or Coda /l/. In terms of preceding vowels, there is evidence that L-vocalisation is possible with any vowel preceding it, but the favourability of frontness/backness, or closeness/openness of the vowels is dependent on the existing phonological constraints within that dialect. Having reviewed the phonological aspects to L-

Vocalisation, the next two sections will turn to reviewing the geographical patterning of L-Vocalisation more broadly.

4.3 L-Vocalisation in Global English varieties

Ash (1982) is one of the most documented studies into L-vocalisation, focussing on Philadelphia. She found that /l/ was subject to vocalisation in intervocalic as well as coda position among speakers in her study. Nearly 40 years after Ash, Purse (2020) conducted an apparent time study into the use of three potential forms of (l) across a 100-year time period using corpus data from the Philadelphia Neighbourhood Corpus. Interestingly the tokens were divided into onset and coda groups according to Maximal Onset Principle, whereby Coda Prevocalic /l/ was categorised as 'Onset' due to its position before a vowel (p100). Contrary to expectations, in the light of previous studies, vocalised /l/, along with dark /l/, was found in the onset position, while clear (light) /l/ was found in the minority. Purse does note that this may be due to the categorisation of 'surface onset' tokens, and points to results where vocalisation in surface onset is found among intervocalic and word final pre-vowel positions. However, closer examination does show that L-vocalisation does not occur in word initial or onset cluster positions. Purse was able to show that L-vocalisation has increased in Philadelphia over the course of the 20th century. Within this data, though, Purse indicates that there is no sign of domain-narrowing occurring, as all speakers display use of L-vocalisation in Intervocalic as well as Coda positions. This use of L-vocalisation in an intervocalic position reinforces the findings of Ash (1982). Purse further argues that there is no context in which a speaker will use a vocalised /l/ where a clear /l/ is already used in that position, but the presence of a dark /l/ does not inhibit subsequent vocalisation. This supports the linguistic constraints argued by Horvath and Horvath, and Johnson and Britain that dark /l/ must be present before L-Vocalisation can occur.

Dodsworth (2005) studied 21 white-collar speakers from Worthington, Ohio, with a particular interest in coda /l/, sub-divided into 'syllable final (e.g. *all, almost*) 'coda consonant cluster' (e.g. *cold*), and 'syllabic /l/' (e.g. *little*) (p239). In addition to these coda sub-categories, the position within the morpheme, the quality of the preceding segment (vowels and consonants), and the quality of the following segment (again, vowel or consonant, and pause) were also analysed. The speakers were themselves divided by gender and age, as well as geographical location: Columbus, Worthington 'proper', and Old Worthington. Most frequent vocalisation among speakers from Columbus and Worthington 'proper' was preceded by a central vowel, whereas those from Old Worthington favoured a back vowel. There was a difference between the geographical locations with regards to the following segment where

labial consonant was favoured among the speakers from Columbus, but Worthington proper and Old Worthington both favoured a dorsal consonant (see p242). However, the rate of vocalisation overall was lowest among those in Old Worthington, signifying a relationship between local identity and vocalisation, which is discussed later in this chapter.

Staying in Ohio, Durian (2008) also investigated speakers of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in Columbus, Ohio, particularly those working in blue collar jobs. The study was a comparison between data taken from two corpora: the Sample of Africa American Vernacular English in Columbus (SAAVEC) corpus gathered in 1992; and white-collar European Americans from the Buckeye Corpus (Pitt et al., 2005; cited in Durian, 2008). Both datasets were analysed for gender, date of birth, race, where the speaker grew up and occupation. Durian's findings showed that L-vocalisation occurred in both groups of speakers, and that there was little indication that gender or age were of significance in this. However, ethnicity of participants did play a part in the patterning of linguistic constraints where L-vocalisation occurred. Durian found that where /l/ was preceded by a back vowel it was more likely to vocalise. This was true for both the African American and European American speakers, although the rate of vocalisation, where /l/ was preceded by a back vowel, was higher among African Americans than among European Americans. European Americans were more likely than African Americans to vocalise where /l/ was preceded by a front vowel. Overall, Durian found that working-class African American speakers were more likely to vocalise /l/ in a coda or syllable final position, but that where /l/ appeared in a consonant cluster, there was a hierarchy as to the type of consonant most likely to induce vocalisation: from most likely to least, dorsal consonants (e.g., *bulk*) > labial consonants (e.g. *bulb*) > coronal consonants (e.g. *bolt*). This hierarchy was the same for both African American and European American speakers, regardless of frequency.

The majority of instances recorded of L-vocalisation in the US have been located in the north east of the country. Yet there are also reports of L-vocalisation further south. Data from Hazen and Dodsworth (2012) that indicates there is L-vocalisation in West Virginia, but that this is weakening among younger speakers. Wolfram and Christian (1976) indicated that "l vocalization is quite restricted" (p48) in Appalachian English, but pointed to L-deletion in many instances, particularly where /l/ is followed by a labial.

Moving to another continent, L-vocalisation has also been reported widely within Australia and New Zealand (Bauer, 1994; Borowsky et al., 2001; Borowsky & Horvath, 1997; B. Horvath & Horvath, 1997; B. Horvath & Horvath, 2001, 2002). Where L-vocalisation occurs in New Zealand English, it typically does so with a rounded vowel, prompting Bauer to suggest that /l/ becomes "an allophone of the vowel phonemes in FOOT or GOOSE" (Bauer, 1994, p. 389). Horvath and Horvath (2001) further this, suggesting that New Zealand English in particular is

ripe for L-vocalisation in the case of the coda position as the changes to the vowel system make this environment more favourable. Where fronted vowels preceding /l/ typically disfavour vocalisation, those vowels are becoming more centralised (see C. I. Watson et al., 2000), and thus becoming more conducive to /l/ becoming vocalised (B. M. Horvath & Horvath, 2001, p. 53). This vocalisation was typically more frequent among younger speakers in their study, which was conducted around 20 years ago, therefore the younger speakers are now in their 30s or 40s. If L-vocalisation in New Zealand is an ongoing change, one might expect the rate of L-vocalisation now to be higher still among present-day younger speakers.

Within Australia, Borowsky and Horvath (1997) found a 43% rate of L-vocalisation in a coda position among younger speakers in the city of Adelaide. Their study of 63 speakers, gathered from both anonymous passers-by in Adelaide city centre, and of predominantly working class informants known to the authors, showed that L-vocalisation was occurring in coda position, and occurring most frequently among younger speakers, typically working class males.

As previously discussed, realisations of /l/ can be considered categorical, whereby there is a distinction between clear and dark /l/ that typically aligns with onset and coda respectively, particularly in RP. Borowsky and Horvath compared this categorical distinction of onset / coda and the variability of l-realisation in the coda position. They found that the categorical distinction still held up for onset positions, particularly those in in which the /l/ was immediately followed by a vowel, that is where /l/ in intervocalic across a word boundary e.g., *fool is*, where /l/ is intervocalic and morpheme internal, e.g. *Phillip*, and where /l/ is intervocalic across a morpheme boundary e.g. *foolish*. They found the impact of a following vowel-initial word was also demonstrated in a coda syllabic position, where /l/ was also realised as a consonant, and not vocalised, e.g. *middle of* (Borowsky & Horvath, 1997, p. 106).

The demography of speakers within these studies varies widely between the countries discussed here. Studies within the US find vocalised forms of (l) among African American and European American speakers, whereas there is no indication from the studies in Australia or New Zealand as to what non-European ethnicities in those countries do with (l). It is important to note, though, within Durian's study of speakers in Columbus, Ohio, that the groups of speakers not only represent two different ethnic groups, but also two different social class groups. Therefore, it is not entirely clear whether the variation in L-vocalisation among these speakers is a product of social class or ethnic community. In addition to race, the patterns of use across age, gender and social class groups are of interest. In nearly all cases, with the exception of that reported by Hazen and Dodsworth (see above), the younger speakers use vocalised forms more than older speakers, indicating change in progress.

4.4 L-Vocalisation in British English

4.4.1 Historical accounts of L-Vocalisation in British English

L-vocalisation as a process has already been completed in English in certain phonological environments. Words such as *talk, calf,* and *palm* are all lacking in a lateral approximant, despite retaining <L> orthographically (Johnson & Britain, 2007). In the Middle English period, /l/ was fully realised in words such as 'calf' and 'folk'. However, in the 16th Century a change took place with the relationship between /l/ and preceding vowels /a~æ/ and /ɔ~ɒ/, including where /l/ was followed by a word boundary or another consonant. In this instance, rounded close mid-back vowel /ʊ/ was added between /l/ and the preceding vowel, producing a diphthong, such as /aʊ/ and /ɒʊ/, giving /caʊlf/ or /fɒʊlk/. Over the next century, in these words /l/ became assimilated with /ʊ/ in cases where /l/ was followed by a consonant, and the new diphthongs were replaced with long vowel monophthongs, whereby /aʊ/ became /aː/ giving /caːf/ *calf*, and in other instance /aʊ/ became /ɔː/ giving /tʃɔːk/ *chalk*. The diphthong /ɒʊ/ became /oː/, eventually /əʊ/, giving /fəʊk/ *folk* (Schlüter, 2012, p. 37). As will be shown later in this section, the realisation of /l/ in some of these words is not entirely uniform, as in some instances /l/ was retained at least the time of the SED in words such as *palm*.

In Scotland, Old Scots underwent l-vocalisation in short vowels /a, o, u/. Similar to the process of l-deletion in Middle English in England, l-vocalisation in Old Scots occurs at a word boundary or before another consonant. Much of this l-vocalisation is still found in modern Scottish dialects, as identified in Glasgow (Macafee, 1983). Scots L-vocalisation was identified as the most frequently used Scots phonological variant in Macafee's study (Stuart-Smith et al., 2006). Indeed, where L-vocalisation occurs in forms of Old Scots still used in Glasgow at the time of Macafee's study, she notes "../l/ is vocalised following [Old Scots] /a, o, u/. /al/ develops to /ɔ/, e.g. *aw, a', aa* = all; *aaready* = already; *baw* = ball; *faut* = fault; *faw* = fall; *haud* = hold; *hauf* = half; *sma'* = small; *wa* = wall. However, following /d/ blocks the loss of /l/, e.g. *aul(d)* = old; *cauld* = cold. /ol/ develops to /ʌu/, e.g. gowd = gold. /ul/ develops to /u/, e.g. *fu, fou', foo* = full; *pu'* = pull; *shoolder* = shoulder. Where this fails, the outcome is /ʌl/, e.g. *bull, full, pull" (*Macafee 1983, p38). Stuart-Smith et al (2006) note the similarity of the restriction /d/ places on l-vocalisation in modern New Zealand English (as outlined in Horvath and Horvath 2002).

Historically, L-vocalisation was also found across Northern England among speakers from the 16th to 20th centuries, particularly where /l/ formed part of a coda cluster. Ihalainen's review (1994) of historical literature from the 17th Century onwards shows how L-vocalisation was present in coda clusters in the 'North-country' and 'East Yorkshire English'. In particular,

Ihalainen gives examples of L-vocalisation that have typically occurred in coda clusters that are preceded by a mid-low back vowel: “Spellings like *o'ad/oad/aud* 'old', *cov'd* 'calved', *book* ' bulk ', *faut* 'fault' and *awmeast* 'almost' are also frequent in seventeenth and eighteenth century dialect texts illustrating Yorkshire English” (p263).

Joseph Wright (1905) made a very detailed account looking at patterns of l-realisation in specific words and phonetic environments. He noted that there are certain environments in which /l/ ‘often disappears’ or disappears entirely. In the case of the latter, he records that /l/ has disappeared from at least one word beginning with the bound morpheme *al-* in *almost, already, always* in dialects found in counties all over England; interestingly the only location in which /l/ is omitted from all three of these words is in West Somerset. The full geographical patterning of the ‘disappeared L’ as outlined by Wright has been compiled by the present author into Figure 11, where each instance relates to a word in which Wright declares that /l/ has disappeared. These instances are recorded by county, and represented in this map on a scale, the darker the colour, the more instances of ‘disappeared /l/’ recorded by Wright. However, the only location that Wright recorded as omitting /l/ in the word *although* is in the Orkney Islands, where /l/ is not recorded as having disappeared in the other three words. In the case of vowels, Wright noted that this disappearance of /l/ often occurred after what he described as a ‘guttural vowel’; that is, a back vowel as found in *salt*, *all, pole,* and *school,* for example. In particular, Wright looked at how ‘medial l has often disappeared’, particularly in clusters, such as /ld, lf, lk, lp, ls, lt/. Of the examples in this category, though, the majority are those where the /l/ is preceded by /ɒ/, as found in *bolt, cold, fold, false* for example. Where /ɒ/ is the preceding vowel, instances of l-disappearance are nearly always found in the northern counties, with Lancashire and Derby

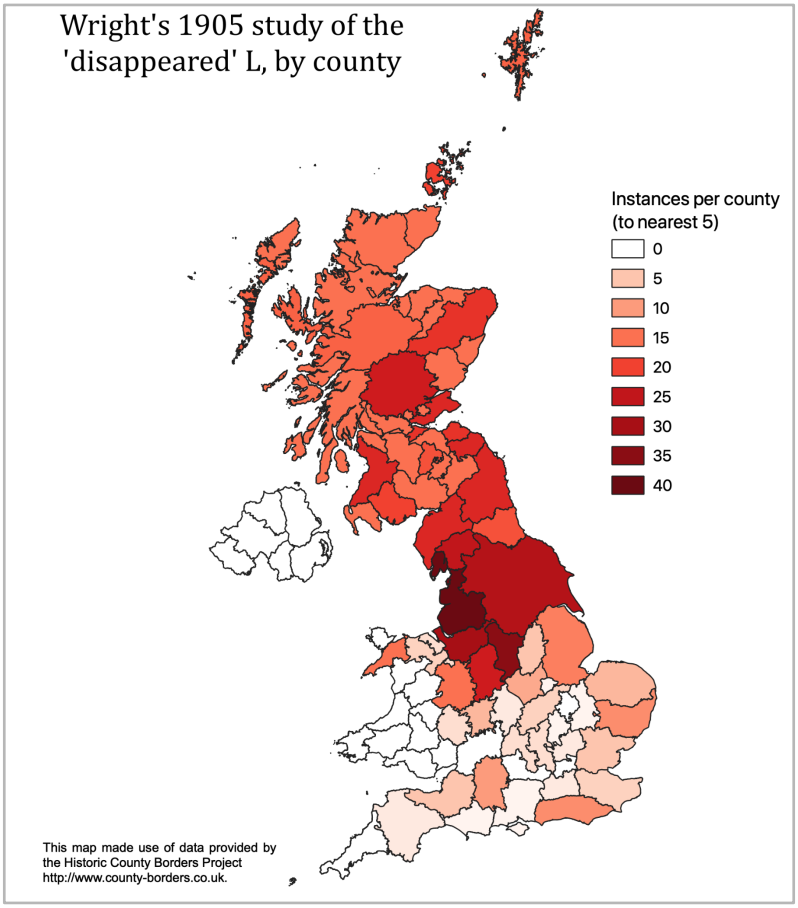


Figure 5 - This author's visualisation of data from Wright (1905) demonstrating L-Vocalisation or Deletion

having the highest (and almost identical) frequencies of use. Interestingly, through a review of the work of dialectologists from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, Ihalainen (1994) found that this same pattern of L-vocalisation or omission in an '*-old*' cluster was described as a feature of Yorkshire dialects in the late 17th Century, specifically the East Riding. Wright's results show that Yorkshire still had a high use of L-vocalisation or omission, but it had clearly spread out and become more prevalent on the western side of the Pennines by the late 19th Century. A further point of interest here is that while in the set of instances in which medial /l/ 'often' disappeared, Lancashire had instances in all words in which /-ɒlC/ is found, but there were no instances where Coda Pre-Consonant /l/ is preceded by any other vowel. This pattern is borne out throughout the rest of the counties in Wright's account, with only a few exceptions. Where those exceptions occur in more than one location, they are typically in words with back vowels e.g., *bulk, pulpit*. Further south, the counties in the east and south of England, around London, also have recorded instances of an 'often disappeared' /l/, particularly in the coda Pre-Consonant data. Suffolk and Sussex, while not neighbouring counties, seem to have the highest instances among these eastern and southern locations. However, in the southwest, Wiltshire has the highest number of instances, but Somerset has fewer than a handful of instances.

In Scotland, while there are instances of L-vocalisation or deletion in the *-old* Coda Pre-Consonant set of words in much of the country, it is the word-final set that sees all of the country displaying L-vocalisation in 11 of the 19 sample words given, specifically those preceded by [ɔ] or [ʊ], e.g. *all, ball, pull, wool*, thus indicating that the Old Scots l-vocalisation demonstrated by Macafee (1983, see above) .

What is unclear, though, is what Wright means by 'disappeared' in these instances. He does give accounts of /l/ becoming a vocalised rounded form where the preceding vowel is a high fronted form. For example, in his account of the pronunciation of *milk* and *silk* in Wiltshire, he transcribes them as 'miók' and 'siók' respectively (J. Wright, 1905, p. 216). This is not given where the preceding vowel is a (low) back vowel. At face value, then, we might conclude that /l/ is a zero form in cases where there is a preceding back vowel.

This data from the early 20th century shows that L-vocalisation, or L-deletion was not a feature most readily associated with London and south-east varieties of English but was more frequently found in the dialects in northern counties of England in environments with preceding back vowels or followed by labial or coronal consonants.

Approximately 50 years after Wright conducted his study of English varieties, the Survey of English Dialects began a country-side study of dialects in the mid-1950s, led by a team from the University of Leeds (Orton & Dieth, 1962). The study selected locations that were specifically rural, and speakers who were typically older and usually (but not always) men. Given the age of these SED informants, it is highly likely they were alive and living in locations

similar to those studied by Wright at the turn of the 20th Century. Their data therefore represents a continuation of dialect use within the regions that were studied by both Wright and the SED.

In the Linguistic Atlas of England (Orton et al., 1978) data from the SED are presented in map form with isoglosses dividing the uses of different variants in phonological, lexical, morphological and syntactical representations (Figure 12 and Figure 13). These maps are useful for viewing broad trends in variation throughout the country. Later, Kolb (Kolb, 1979) used the same SED data to produce maps, but rather than using isoglosses, he and his team used colour coded symbols to indicate the exact realisations of responses within the individual locations. Specific to this thesis, Kolb also offers a section in this compilation of maps dedicated to the realisation of /l/. Reviewing the LAE and Kolb's Atlas of English Sounds together, it is possible to see a picture of l-realisations within the SED data, particularly those in a Coda position.

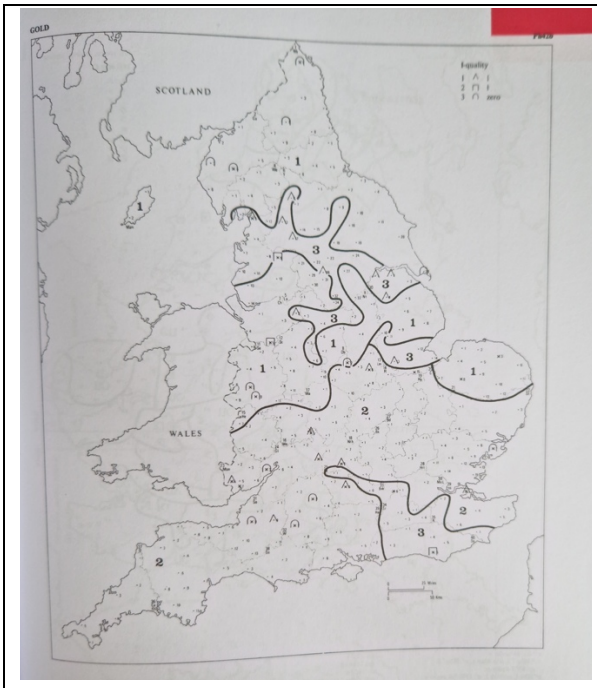


Figure 12 - Image of map from Linguistic Atlas of England (Orton et al 1978)

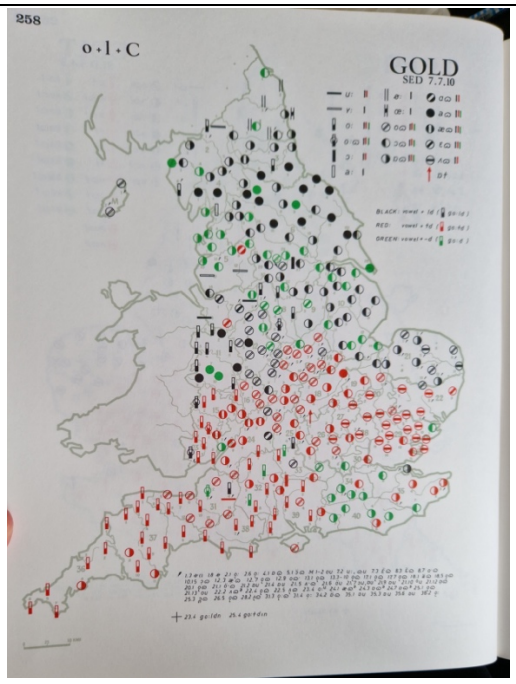


Figure 13 - Image of map from Atlas of English Sounds (Kolb, 1979)

Beginning with instances of coda /l/ followed by another consonant, henceforth 'V(l)C', the LAE and Kolb both indicate a strong north/south divide in the use of realisations of /l/, where Dark /l/ is found mostly in the south of England, and /l/ is recorded as 'absent' in the north of England. In some cases, the Midlands show a different use altogether, further

separating the dialects across the country. Where Clear /l/ is found in a post-vocalic position, it is more often in the Midlands or the north. Therefore are some exceptions to this of course. Often an absent /l/, or a vocalised /l/ form is found in the south-east of England, specifically Sussex and Surrey, and sometimes Kent. The SED mainly targeted rural spaces, therefore it is difficult to tell if these occurrences of /l/ absence (or potential vocalisation) are related to their proximity to London. The absence of /l/ largely in the north indicates a change in realisation over real time as many studies in the North of England now point to a dominant use of dark /l/ in both onset and coda position (see Turton, 2017; Turton & Baranowski, 2021). As indicated by Britain (2009), L-Vocalisation is not present in northern cities identified in more recent studies, rather a dark /l/ is present. By contrast, L-vocalisation is found in coda positions in southern cities more frequently.

Within word-final and prepausal coda positions, 'V(l)#', Clear north/south divide that reflects that of V(l)C where north has mostly clear /l/ and south has mostly dark /l/. There is a consistent pattern of vocalised /l/ in the south east of England, specifically Sussex, Surrey, Kent and Essex: 4 of the counties that surround London. There is also indication that there is a trend towards vocalised /l/ in Berkshire and Oxford in a V(l)# environment. There are some instances of L-vocalisation in the North West, but not as frequently as in the south east. In the case of WOOL, L-vocalisation is also present on the Scottish border, and is potentially related to the Scots L-vocalisation as it takes a different form to that in the south east of England. Similarly, in the case of some u+/l/ instances of l-vocalisation, vocalised forms present in the north-west of England are different to those in the south east, particularly in Lancashire in 'School' where /l/ is vocalised as a front close rounded vowel [ʏ]. In the case of i+/l/, Kolb notes vocalised forms as [ɷ], appearing as a diphthong, or in one case a triphthong in Somerset, as they move from front close unrounded [i] to back mid-close rounded [ɷ].

One word in the Linguistic Atlas of England represents the environment of Coda with a preceding consonant ('C(l)#'), that of 'UNCLE' (Ph246), although there are patterns of use in this target word that are similar to WEASEL (Ph247), which itself has some instances of /l/ becoming syllablised. L-vocalisation is realised as [u] in the Home Counties and parts of Essex, Berkshire and Wiltshire. Clear /l/ is consistent in the north, with one instance of Dark /l/ recorded in Norfolk. However, in the south there is more variation and there are individual instances of vocalised and clear forms in those parts where dark /l/ is in the majority. There are also two instances of dark /l/ in the south east where the vocalised realisation of /l/ is in the majority.

The LAE and Atlas of English Sounds identify two main environments of /l/: the morpheme internal instances e.g., *'filly, fellies, stallion, holly'*, and the instances across morpheme boundary, e.g. *boiling, shelling*. In both morpheme-internal and across-morpheme-boundary intervocalic environments, there exists the same north/south divide seen between use of Clear

/l/ and Dark /l/ as found in the Coda position. Clear /l/ is dominant in the north, whereas Dark /l/ is in use in the south. However, the boundary dividing the regions that use these two variants lies further south in the case of the Intervocalic /l/, and in the case of intervocalic across morpheme boundary, the Dark /l/ dominated south is still interjected with pockets of Clear /l/ use. This once again differs from the know use of /l/ in more modern dialects in British English, particularly in the north where /l/ is darkening.

The SED materials presented in both the Linguistic Atlas of England and Kolb's Atlas of English Sounds demonstrate a continuation of L-realisations from Wright's data collection in the early 20th Century. However, they also show that, while Middle English l-vocalisation was completed to the point of l-omission in words such as 'calf, half, talk', realisations of 'PALM' (as shown in Kolb, p253) in more modern dialects indicate that /l/ has not been completed omitted. Kolb's representation of the data in the SED shows that, while there is a spread of 'absent /l/' found throughout the country from north to south, the south west of the country along with parts of Sussex and Kent up to Hereford and Gloucester makes use of a dark /l/ in PALM, although the preceding vowel varies from a rounded close mid-back vowel (as found in Somerset and Devon) to an unrounded open back vowel (found more widely in the West Country counties and parts of Hereford).

4.4.2 L-Vocalisation in present-day British English

While a summary of the distribution of a vocalised realisation in British English varieties was provided in the previous chapter (see Section 3.2.4), this section will now look in more detail at the realisations of /l/ found throughout British English.

Kirkham et al (2020) find three distinct patterns of categorical use of (l) in British English varieties, specifically: "(1) clear onsets and dark codas; (2) intermediate/dark onsets and dark codas, but with a positional distinction intact; and (3) dark onsets and dark codas, with minimal or no distinctions between positions" (pEL76). For the most part, this follows a north/south divide with the clear/dark distinction occurring in Southern British English varieties, and dark onsets and codas typically occurring in northern dialects, but outliers such as Bristol and Newcastle are also present. In comparison to the other sound changes occurring through British English varieties, modern L-vocalisation is limited to southern England and parts of Scotland, essentially 'skipping' over dialects in northern England. This pattern strongly indicates that this is a feature that is diffusing out from London and the South East.

Before diving into the regional aspects of L-Vocalisation, it is worth making a pit-stop at the non-regional variety RP. Within Received Pronunciation (RP) Wells (1982a) describes the 'allophonic rule for /l/' in its clear state as appearing before a vowel, whereas a 'dark' /l/

appears elsewhere, or as he specifies, before a consonant or in final position (p258). However, Collins and Mees (2013) describe how younger Near RP (NRP) speakers have adopted L-vocalisation in a postvocalic position. In her review of RP as a model for learners of English, Przedlacka (2008) discussed how L-vocalisation is 'making inroads' (p22) into RP, but suggests that its inconsistent presence in pronunciation dictionaries indicates that it is not yet established.

The modern form of L-Vocalisation is typically associated with accents from London, specifically 'Cockney'. Wells (1982b) writes that a "London /l/ is very susceptible to vocalization in syllable-final position" and further notes that /l/ vocalisation is "a sound change very much in progress" (Wells, 1982b, p. 313). He also notes that, in a word-final environment, a syllabic /l/ is "perhaps more readily vocalized than the non-syllabic", such as in *people* > ['pi:pʊ] (ibid.). This is remarkably similar in patterning to the ranking found by Borowsky and Horvath. Tollfree's (1999) work in South East London English demonstrates L-vocalisation that has a back vocoid that is either velarised or pharyngeal, with lip-rounding or spreading playing no particular part in the realisation. This occurs in a word-final, pre-consonantal and intervocalic position. She noted that, among her participants, this vocalisation is more in use among the younger speakers, which she suggested indicates a change in progress. However, there are studies showing a spreading of L-vocalisation beyond the 'Bow-Bells' of central London, and into what is known as 'Estuary English'. Estuary English is supra-local variety (or varieties) in the South East of England that are in the process of undergoing regional dialect levelling, as characterised by Rosewarne: "I feel that the spread of the 'Estuary l' (final /l/ to /w/) is analogous to the earlier dropping of post-vocalic /r/" (Rosewarne, 1994, p. 8).

South of London, Przedlacka reports L-Vocalisation in Kent (Przedlacka, 2002; cited in Britain, 2011, p. 52). West of London, L-vocalisation is also found in Reading, further along the M4 motorway, and Milton Keynes, to the north-west of London (A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999). Alongside this, there is reported to be a high level of labio-velarisation accompanying this, that is, a rounded dark /l/, in a syllable-final position. In the case of Milton Keynes, the development of L-vocalisation has occurred in the area since the city's development in the mid-1960s, as SED data from a village near to where Milton Keynes now sits indicates no L-vocalisation present in the mid-1950s (Kerswill & Williams, 2000a).

In the east of England, particularly around East Anglia, studies into a mix of rural and urban spaces have shown the L-vocalisation has developed, and not just in locations closest to London. Wright (1988) argued that, in Cambridge at least, L-vocalisation was occurring in younger speakers more frequently than in older speakers, suggesting that at the time of her study in the late 1980s, this was a change in progress. Within this wider estuary space, Meuter's study (2002) in Colchester, Essex, investigated the linguistic constraints around L-vocalisation

in two groups of primary school children aged 6 and 10 years. She found that their patterns of use of L-vocalisation were on a similar level to those of older speakers from a previous study (Spero, 1996; cited in Meuter, 2002). Her work was primarily based in linguistic constraints, with only age acting as a social constraint. In this, she found that, within a syllabic position (or the nucleus of a syllable) both age groups favoured preceding dorsals, labials and glottal stops, for example as found in *giggle* /gɪgl̩/, *bubble* /bʌbl̩/, and *bottle* /bɒʔl̩/ respectively. However, both disfavoured preceding vowels in syllabic position, e.g., *cool* /kul̩/. However, only the older children favoured preceding coronals (e.g., *puddle* /pʌdl̩/) whereas the younger children disfavoured them. Regarding preceding vowels in a word/syllable final position, Meuter looked at front, central and back vowels. Central vowels were the most favoured among both age groups, and also among older speakers in Spero's study (a means for comparison), with highest probability coming among the 6 year olds in Meuter's study. When accounting for age, Meuter found that the older children (aged 10) showed a pattern of speech that was similar in use to the older adult speakers in Spero's 1996 study in South-East England. She concluded that, while she only was not able to account for any social factors other than gender, the children in this study are not simply learning the speech of older generations, but are actively participating in sound changes (Meuter, 2002).

The Fens that incorporate northern Cambridgeshire, parts of Norfolk and Lincolnshire have been studied extensively in the past 25 years. Trudgill noted in his discussion of Norwich dialect (Trudgill, 1999) that while the urban Norwich dialect did not yet have L-vocalisation at the time of his study, the RP-like distribution of dark /l/ in a syllable final position alongside the increased L-vocalisation in the southern parts of East Anglia meant that it "may just be a matter of time" before L-vocalisation is found in more urban spaces in Norfolk (ibid, p140). However, Britain's studies in The Fens revealed that younger speakers spanning the Fens **are** acquiring L-vocalisation. His 2005 study looked at three locations: Spalding in Lincolnshire (western Fens); Wisbech and March in Cambridgeshire (central Fens); and 'The Terringtons" (Terrington Saint Clement and Terrington St. John) in Northern Norfolk (eastern Fens). He found that while 'the Terringtons' located in Norfolk did have the lowest use of vocalised (l) of the three locations, but the use of vocalised forms among the younger speakers was only just shy of 60%. Therefore, while Trudgill claimed that L-vocalisation had not yet gained ground in rural parts of Norfolk east of the Fens, the Fens themselves did have some use of this innovation, due in part to the clear/dark /l/ distinction found among younger speakers in the area where older speakers maintained the more traditional East Anglian use of Clear /l/ (see Britain, 2005a, p. 1010). Johnson and Britain (2007) found L-vocalisation in high use (over 60% in a syllable rhyme position) among younger speakers (aged 15-30years), and some lower use among older speakers (50-65yr olds). They further found that among adolescents in the Fenlands, the

preceding consonant in a coda syllabic (post-consonant) position made little difference to the rate of vocalisation, which remained high in the cases of labial, coronal and dorsal preceding consonants. Among Fenlanders aged between 20 and 30 years at the time of their study, rates of L-vocalisation were slightly lower than the adolescent speakers, but it was considerably lower where /l/ was preceded by a dorsal consonant. Among much older Fenlanders aged 50-65 years, all instances of L-vocalisation were considerably lower, as would be expected, but this was lowest particularly where /l/ was preceded by a coronal consonant.

Moving much further north, Schutzler (2015) tells us that the categorical distinction between clear /l/ and dark /l/ is not the same in Standard Scottish English as it is in Southern Standard British English where, as discussed, the distribution in Received Pronunciation typically sees clear /l/ in onset and intervocalic positions, and a dark /l/ in coda positions, including where /l/ is syllabified. In Standard Scottish English, /l/ is typically dark in all phonetic environments (see also Macafee, 1983). Recent change has occurred in Scottish English whereby L-vocalisation in a coda position, similar to that found in the South East of England, has been recorded among younger speakers, particularly in Glasgow. This is in addition to an older form of L-Vocalisation already in existence in Old Scots (Macafee, 1983; Stuart-Smith, 1999; Stuart-Smith et al., 2006). Based on Macafee's 1982 data, which was collected from working class men and women across five age groups in Glasgow's East End, Stuart-Smith, Timmins and Tweedie (Stuart-Smith et al., 2006) made a comparison with data gathered by Timmins in 1997 from informants from the west side of the city, both working class and middle class, men and women, and in two age groups. Where Macafee's study was conducted making use of group interviews, Timmins made use of wordlists, and paired interviews between the informants without the researcher present to encourage more spontaneous conversation. They analysed both datasets according to the phonetic environment, as shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5 - Phonetic environments, as labelled by Stuart-Smith, Timmins and Tweedie 2006

Phonetic position	**Example**
Preconsonantal	milk
Word-final postvocalic	well
- sentence/utterance final	well#
- prevocalic	well and
- preconsonantal	well could

Word-final post-consonantal	people
- sentence/utterance final	people#
- prevocalic	people and
- preconsonantal	people could

Stuart-Smith et al found that there was no clear overall pattern, more a series of smaller patterns within the data. For instance, where L-vocalisation occurred, it was typically among working class younger speakers. Between the two different data gathering styles, the reading exercise had higher instances of L-vocalisation than spontaneous conversational speech. When looking at the phonetic environments, the preconsonantal (coda cluster) position found in '*milk*' was most favoured for L-vocalisation, followed by postconsonantal and then word-final (Stuart-Smith et al., 2006, p. 83).

Investigations looking into identity around Glasgow and the use of l-vocalised forms revealed that it was females who had the highest use of L-vocalisation in a coda position, and that the speakers with the highest local identity were the ones who were moving away from the non-traditional forms of coda /l/ (Braber & Butterfint, 2008). In the same study, it was found that the relationship between a feeling of local identity and the pronunciation of onset /l/ did have a more expected pattern, whereby the low-identity speakers were more likely to use the non-traditional clear /l/ form for word/syllable initial position.

Back into England, and historically, we have seen that the north of England did have L-vocalisation in the 19th Century. However, as has been seen in more recent studies, L-vocalisation of the sort found in the South of England is not present, and indeed there is less of a categorical distinction between clear and dark forms in northern varieties. This pattern of dark /l/ in all linguistic environments is interesting, particularly when viewed in comparison to the Wright data from 1905. In this historical data, older speakers in Lancashire and Derbyshire, two of the counties that formed much of the urban space of the city of Manchester before the metropolitan county Greater Manchester was created in 1974, had the highest use of L-vocalisation in a medial or final position in England. Cheshire and Yorkshire, parts of which are also incorporated into Greater Manchester, also had high instances of L-vocalisation in these same linguistic positions. Despite considerable reports of L-vocalisation or omission in Wright's data for Yorkshire, and in previous centuries, Petyt's 1985 study of West Yorkshire urban varieties showed only occasional use of L-vocalisation in forms of *-old*, and only among those participants that Petyt suggested would "commonly be described as 'broad'..." (Petyt, 1985, p. 219). This suggests that by the later 20th century, L-vocalisation in this environment was not a

common feature among urban West Yorkshire dialects. More recent studies in other areas of the north of England such as Manchester (e.g. Baranowski & Turton, 2015; Turton, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017; Turton & Baranowski, 2021) and Sheffield (Kirkham, 2017) show there is still resistance to this vocalised form; instead making use of darker forms of /l/ in all linguistic positions.

In the West Midlands, Mathisen (1999) found, through analysis of data collected in the mid-1980s by Michael Walton at the University of Oslo, that L-vocalisation was present among speakers of all ages, but was particularly frequent among younger speakers (those around the age of 30 at the time of data collection), even during the word-list exercise the participants were asked to read aloud, indicating that this is present in careful speech as well as conversational speech. Mathisen also found that L-vocalisation was present in most coda positions, including word/syllable-final, coda cluster and syllabic positions. In the East Midlands, the pattern of realisations of /l/ within Derby does fall into the mainly clear/dark pattern as found in southern varieties (Wells, 1982b), but as Docherty and Foulkes (1999) showed, L-vocalisation is a frequent occurrence in a post-vocalic and post-consonant position, but with certain linguistic constraints particular to the local dialect. For example, among older speakers, there were instances of syllabic clusters with velar consonants, such as [kl] and [gl] becoming alveolar clusters, e.g. [tl] and [dl]. The example Docherty and Foulkes give is where *pickle* becomes [pɪtl]. In nearly all other syllabic consonant clusters, the /l/ becomes vocalised, but this did not occur in environments in which an alveolar consonant is used. This means that, among those older speakers where [kl] became [tl], vocalisation did not occur. However, when looking at social factors accounting for age (older/ younger), social class (working class / middle class) and gender (male / female), it was the younger, working class and male speakers who were more likely to vocalise in all Coda environments studied (Docherty & Foulkes, 1999, pp. 52–53).

4.4.3 South West England

The geographical and linguistic patterning of L-vocalisation of English varieties around Britain provides a strong indication of what may be found in the South West area of England. Bristol in particular is famous for intrusive word-final /l/, where words such as *idea* become *ideal*. However, by the early 1980s that feature was already almost non-existent (Wells, 1982b, p. 345) and has fallen more into stereotypical 'Brizzle' dialect rather than something that is typically used on a day-to-day basis, particularly among younger speakers (personal knowledge).

Grossenbacher (2016) discussed the increased use of vocalised /l/ in postvocalic position among younger, working class speakers in Bristol and Swindon, with reference to their place on the M4 corridor and possible spread of this variation coming from the South East of

England. The study was based on data from the English Dialects App (Leemann et al., 2018) and compared to data from the SED. Grossenbacher found that L-vocalisation was in greatest use in Swindon, followed by Bristol and then Bath, which also follows the pattern one might expect in the Urban Hierarchy Model, as Bath is between Bristol and Swindon, but is closer to Bristol. However, Grossenbacher also proposes a counter-urbanisation model, as L-vocalisation was present in the SED data from the more rural areas that surround Bristol, and may have been brought in by speakers moving into the city. She also found that increase in L-vocalisation was mainly among younger speakers, and indeed age and education were bigger factors in this use than gender, mobility or ethnicity, particularly as she points out that the data from the English Dialects App was very skewed towards "highly educated, the White English *digital natives* and the urban dwellers" (Grossenbacher, 2016, p. 92).

Within Somerset, the SED locations closest to Bristol are those that showed most L-vocalisation, although this was in very low amounts (Orton et al., 1967). The three locations closest to Bristol are Weston (So1), Blagdon (So2) and Wedmore (So3). Of these three, Wedmore, the furthest from Bristol, had the highest use of vocalised forms. But, again, it is important to note how low this use was, as Table 6 shows:

Table 6- Use of Coda /l/ in SED data for Somerset locations closest to Bristol

Coda /l/ Realisation	**Clear**		**Dark**		**Vocalised Rounded**		**Vocalised Unrounded**		**Zero**		**Other**		**Totals**	
Location	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**
So1 Weston	8	5	136	91	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	149	100
So2 Blagdon	7	5	121	84	13	19	0	0	2	1	1	1	144	100
So3 Wedmore	16	12	81	59	38	28	0	0	1	1	2	1	138	100

4.4.4 Summarising the Geographical Patterns of L-Vocalisation

Modern L-Vocalisation is not an exclusively British phenomenon, as this thesis shows evidence from the US and Australasia. Most of the examples found of L-vocalisation in the US appear in the eastern side of the country, with many studies occurring in the north-eastern states, but evidence also indicating L-deletion in Appalachian regions. Vocalised forms in these US studies show vocalisation that is both rounded and unrounded occurring in a typically coda position, although there has been some vocalisation reported in Intervocalic position. In Australia, L-vocalisation has been identified in South Australia, and in New Zealand, where L-vocalisation is typically rounded, and occurs only in the Coda position. Another difference between the two continents is the favourability of syllabic positions for L-vocalisation. Coda

Post-Consonant /l/ is highly favourable for Australasian speakers, but considerably less so for American speakers.

Within British varieties, there have been waves of L-vocalisation that have occurred over the past few centuries. In Scotland, historical 'old Scots' L-vocalisation is combined with the more modern 'London' vocalisation and has become phonologically reallocated. Data from the turn of the 20th Century shows a north/south divide where dialects in the north of England typically had vocalised or deleted forms, yet in the south /l/ was largely realised in a consonant form, be it Clear or Dark. Over the course of the 20th Century, this has flipped, and a new form of Coda L-vocalisation is now present across much of the south of England where consonantal Dark /l/ is found in all syllabic positions in northern English dialects. In the south west of England, the realisation of /l/ in Bristol, one of the region's largest urbans spaces, was historically as an intrusive dark /l/, and has become a source of stereotyping and ridicule, despite being lost in modern usage. Vocalisation of Coda /l/ is evident from more recent studies, indicating a change in progress, although there are residents of the city who would argue that the previous and stereotypical intrusive /l/ seen in Bristol was actually vocalised, at least by some. The SED indicates some small use of vocalised forms in locations to the north of Somerset, highest in the central Somerset location of Wedmore (So3), showing that vocalised forms are a small part of the historical dialect in that part of the county at least, and are therefore available to modern speakers as a realisation that doesn't violate other phonological rules within the dialect. Therefore, from a geographical and phonological stand, it is possible that L-vocalisation of the type seen diffusing from London and the south east of England is present in Somerset, where dark /l/ has historically held the Coda position, and L-vocalisation has already some use. Other factors may encourage or inhibit such a change, though, as are discussed in the next section.

4.5 Social factors associated with /l/ Realisation

Having reviewed the patterns of L-vocalisation on a phonological and geographical basis throughout British English varieties, and beyond, we now turn to look at the social patterns behind the realisations of /l/ within the studies discussed above in both British English and a more global context. The field of sociolinguistics is informed by the understanding that language is not influenced and impacted by geography and phonology alone. While language is *prima facie* about communicating information efficiently, it also communicates considerably more than the content of the message, such as the emotion of the speaker, where they come from, how they identify themselves within geographical and social space, and their attitudes towards others. The means of communication can be manipulated by the speaker to alter this sub-text

information as well, of course, but often such social factors act in a subconscious manner beyond even the speaker's awareness. Social factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic class as well as perceptions, attitudes and identity can interact with the geographical and linguistic factors to influence realisation of a phoneme, be that consciously or unconsciously. This section will therefore take a look at the social factors and situations that can influence the realisation of /l/.

4.5.1 Age

Age is a typical indicator of ongoing dialect change when using apparent time evidence. The examples discussed above show a clear tendency for L-vocalisation to be highest among younger speakers across British English dialects: in particular London (Tollfree, 1999; Wells, 1982b), East Anglia (Meuter, 2002; S. Wright, 1988), the Midlands (Mathisen, 1999) and Glasgow (Stuart-Smith, 1999; Stuart-Smith et al., 2006). The dates during which these studies were carried out show a rough chronological pattern that indicates diffusion of /l/-vocalisation out from London and the south east through the rest of the south of England, and up into Scotland. The realisations of (l) in particular are subject to age grading. Johnson and Britain remind us that very young children in the process of language acquisition will often vocalise (l) before their articulation and perceptions mature, regardless of whether or not the child's native dialect has vocalised forms of (l) present (Johnson & Britain, 2007). Meuter's study (2002) in Colchester, however, showed that beyond the stages of language acquisition, L-vocalisation occurs in very young children even after the process of suppression takes place. Meuter points to the greater use of L-vocalisation among her younger speakers, aged around 6 years, as an indication that they are participating in the sound change ongoing in Essex. This pattern of younger speakers using innovative forms is also reflected in the increased use of dark /l/ in varieties around Manchester (Turton & Baranowski, 2021).

Stepping beyond British English varieties, in Australian and New Zealand English varieties it was shown that younger speakers also vocalised more frequently than older speakers, thus following the typical pattern of change in progress (Borowsky et al., 2001; Borowsky & Horvath, 1997; B. Horvath & Horvath, 1997; B. M. Horvath & Horvath, 2001, 2002). However, this typical pattern is not entirely universal when moving outside English language varieties. Leemann et al (2014) found that within some Swiss German dialects, in particular Fribourg to the south west of Bern, it was older speakers who were leading in vocalisation of (l). The higher presence of vocalisation among older speakers than younger speakers suggests that vocalisation was established in these regions earlier, and furthermore indicates that the change has already been completed in these areas, and it is now the younger speakers who are innovating away from this use. Thus, age is a powerful indicator of ongoing change within a

community, and can be used to make predictions about the progress of an innovative feature throughout the population.

4.5.2 Gender of speakers

Turning again to Australian English, Borowsky and Horvath (1997) found that men vocalised /l/ more frequently than women, although among working class speakers both gender groups had high instances of vocalisation, supporting the assertion of change from below and covert prestige. Horvath and Horvath (2002) further added, though, that gender and social class did not have a statistically significant effect on the frequency of L-vocalisation (p325-326).

Among British English varieties, though, Meuter points to a very weak correlation among L-vocalisation and gender in Colchester. In Derby, Docherty and Foulkes found men tended to vocalise /l/ more frequently than women (Docherty & Foulkes, 1999). In Glasgow, men were also found to make most use of L-vocalisation, particularly in a Coda Pre-Consonant position e.g. *milk* (Stuart-Smith et al., 2006). Looking at other realisations of /l/, Mathisen (1999) found in the West Midlands that there was a pattern of dark /l/ use in all positions among men, but that the women in her study used Clear /l/ before vowels. Dark /l/ was in use in all positions in careful speech, though, suggesting a velarised realisation is considered a prestige form within this dialect. Turton and Baranowski (2021) found that gender did have an impact on the realisation of /l/, showing that women were leading a change towards darker /l/ in all positions within a syllable in Mancunian varieties.

Previous studies therefore offer two complementary patterns emerging: men, particularly younger men, seem to be the pioneers in change toward L-vocalisation in a Coda position, whereas women are showing change towards L-darkening in dialects where there was previously no categorical split between onset and coda /l/. We have seen how these realisations fit into a wider pattern of lenition, where vocalisation can only occur in an environment that already has dark /l/.

Based on the results of these studies, one can predict that, where L-vocalisation occurs among the speakers in this study, it will be greater among men than among women.

4.5.3 Style

The studies into L-vocalisation discussed here used a variety of methods to gather tokens of /l/ in different phonological contexts. Some used word lists and interviews, and some used exclusively reading exercises. Mathisen (1999) found that L-vocalisation occurred regardless of style, among speakers in the West Midlands. Stuart-Smith et al (2006) found that younger working class speakers made use of vocalised forms at the same rate across both word-

list and conversational speech. L-vocalisation occurred more frequently in the reading exercise than in conversational speech among speakers in Glasgow.

Kerswill (1995) specifically discussed the impact of style shift within experiments that evaluated L-realisations. Acknowledging Bell (1984) and his sociolinguistic viewpoint that reading aloud is not necessarily a proxy for formal speech, it is merely an indication of how an individual reads aloud, Kerswill argues that regardless of the experimental set-up, "speakers will map what they are asked to produce onto an imagined, real-world context. In this case, the slow speech is likely to be redolent of a formal situation in which careful, but above all standard, speech is the norm" (Kerswill, 1995, p. 198). He further points to the use of alveolar /l/ as a potential switch by speakers to a standard-influenced variety (ibid).

If one assumes that the act of performance associated with reading aloud incites speakers to take greater care with their speech, and that care in turn draws speakers closer to features of a prestige form such as RP, or similar, then it is expected that there will be less L-vocalisation in the reading exercise than in the conversational speech data. Furthermore, if one assumes women are more likely to conform with prestige varieties, it is therefore likely that women will make greater use of dark /l/ in coda position in the reading exercise and therefore less vocalisation when compared with their conversational speech data.

4.5.4 Ethnicity and L-realisation

Durian (2008) demonstrated differences between African American and European American speakers, whereby coronal consonants in Coda Pre-Consonant position (e.g. *old, bolt, gulls*) have a stronger impact on the speech of African Americans than for European Americans. Furthermore, Durian suggests, blue collar African American speakers may be reinforcing their identity through use of L-vocalisation. Within British English varieties, Grossenbacher's (2016) study in Bristol, Bath and Swindon indicated that /l/-vocalisation was a feature most typically found among non-white participants, usually men. By contrast, in Manchester Turton and Baranowski (2021) found that speakers of Pakistani or Black-Caribbean origin born and raised in the city had a much 'lighter' use of /l/ when compared with white speakers from the city. While the form used by non-white speakers is not necessarily a Clear /l/, as might be found among speakers of RP and other southern English varieties, the form used in both onset and coda positions was lighter than the form used by their white counterparts. Indeed, Turton and Baranowski propose that a lighter (but not Clear) /l/ in both onset and coda positions is a feature of Multicultural Manchester English (see also Drummond, 2017; Drummond et al., 2016). The same was found in Sheffield (Kirkham, 2017). Kirkham analysed speech of adolescent speakers in Sheffield from British Asian and British Anglo communities, selected to also ensure there was an equal division by age and gender. Overall, Kirkham found some light

vocalisation in the speech of one British Asian woman (p24), but otherwise, both British-Anglo and British-Asian speakers used dark /l/ in word-final position. Furthermore, while all speakers use dark /l/ in all positions, there was a 'lighter' /l/ among British-Asian speakers than British-Anglo speakers in onset and word-medial positions (p25).

Across British English varieties, therefore, it seems that the north/south divide is not only evident in the presence or absence of L-vocalisation, but in the realisation of innovations among different ethnicities within these regions. This study doesn't account for race and ethnicity within the data, and therefore cannot contribute to that particular discussion, primarily because there is not a great deal of ethnic diversity among the population in Somerset, particularly in the very rural parts of the county where the population is overwhelmingly white-British. This is also the case of the speakers within the present dataset, in which there is only one speaker who is a person of colour. Therefore, it would not be at all representative or statistically viable to conduct a study based on divisions of ethnicity in this study.

4.5.5 Attitudes and Identity

Chapter 1 discussed the importance of language in a sense of identity and group perception. We have seen how, for some communities, realisations of (l) are a marker of belonging. For example, in the same way that speakers from Durian's study among African-American speakers in Columbus, Ohio determined that identity was reinforced through use of L-vocalisation (Durian, 2008), participants in Dodsworth's study in Worthington, Ohio, used a lack of L-vocalisation to reinforce their closer affiliation with Old Worthington, in contrast to speakers from around the wider Ohio area who use L-Vocalisation more readily (Dodsworth, 2005).

Study of variations in phonemes such as /l/ reveal perceptions as well as social functions of language. L-vocalisation is a salient feature of London varieties and is somewhat stigmatised. Gimson and Ramsaran (1970) and Wells (1982a) described /l/-vocalisation is a working class London phenomenon. Hudson and Holloway (1977) as discussed in Wells (1982b) found that, in a study of language attitudes to linguistic varieties among school children, a dark /l/ variety was associated with middle-class girls, and a vocalised rounded form was associated with working class girls. L-Vocalisation has long been marked as a working-class feature of London varieties, in particular Cockney (Wells, 1982b), and with class distinctions come perceptions of the people that use such varieties. However, increased use of varieties such as Estuary English, in which L-vocalisation is frequently found in a coda (word/syllable final) position show that there is perhaps some covert prestige attached to its use. Indeed, use of variants that hold covert prestige can indicate a sense of identity among the speakers, and their affiliation to a certain location, socio-economic status, or speech community. Tollfree's (1999) observations of L-

vocalisation were conducted across London, both inner-city and suburban locations, covering a range of socioeconomic status. All speakers in her study, regardless of socioeconomic status, used L-vocalisation. She continued that L-vocalisation was not stigmatised among her speakers, although it was "unconsciously suppressed when accommodation towards the regional standard occur[ed]" (p175). Williams and Kerswill (1999) observed that changes to consonants, which included variable vocalisation of /l/, among speakers in the south of England are "from standard to non-standard, and are thus likely to be more acceptable to working-class speakers" (p162). In Glasgow, working-class speakers, particularly younger speakers, use a mix of old-Scots L-vocalised forms, and the more recently acquired South East England forms (Stuart-Smith et al., 2006; Stuart-Smith et al., 2007).

For the most part, studies investigating L-vocalisation, particularly among British English varieties, have focussed on speech communities in large urban spaces. Taking regional dialect levelling into consideration, and the diffusion models discussed previously in Chapter 1 of this thesis, the spread of this particular feature of modern dialects is only half of the story, if we are to assume L-vocalisation is occurring in all of these locations through geographical diffusion. Johnson and Britain (2007) demonstrated how L-vocalisation has become a dialect feature among younger speakers in the rural Fenlands area of East Anglia and the East Midlands, and thus moving out of the urban areas of the south-east of England. This thesis offers a further departure by investigating the progress (if any) of diffusion of L-vocalisation within the rural areas of the south-west, specifically the county of Somerset.

4.6 Some tentative predictions about L-realisation in Somerset

Having discussed further the behaviour and realisations of (l) within global and British Englishes, some tentative predictions can be made regarding what may be found in this thesis. We have seen how L-vocalisation is spreading outwards from the south east of England. SED data already shows that L-vocalisation was present in Somerset in the mid-1950s, therefore it is not a feature that is incompatible with the local dialect(s) of Somerset. It is therefore reasonable to expect that there will be an increase in L-vocalisation in a Coda position when comparing the speakers in the present study with the data from the SED, as was hypothesised in Section 3.4.3. Furthermore, given the social factors reviewed in previous studies, it is predicted that younger men are the most likely to use vocalised forms of /l/ in Coda position. Conversely, it is expected that older women will have the lowest use of vocalised forms, and highest use of dark /l/ in a Coda position. It is possible there may even be hyper-correction to a Clear /l/ in coda position among these speakers, particularly in the reading exercise.

There are two locations that are studied within this thesis: the urbanising Central Somerset, and further west the much more rural West Somerset region. Looking in particular at the findings of David Britain, Wyn Johnson and Peter Trudgill in their various studies into the Fens, it is predicted that there will be greater use of vocalised /l/ in the urbanising Central Somerset region, which lies closest to the M5 motorway, and geographically closer to the cities of Bristol and London. By contrast, it is predicted that the speakers from the very rural West Somerset will have lower use of coda L-vocalisation and will have retained a realisation of /l/ that is similar to the findings of the SED within that location.

The following chapter outlines the methodological considerations used to answer the overall question of dialect levelling and diffusion of L-vocalisation in Somerset and use these tentative predictions as a guide for the research design.

5 Methodology

5.1 Research Design

The previous chapters discussed the phenomenon of language change, in particular dialect levelling, and also how the variable under study (l) is manifested within British English varieties (and beyond) both historically, and in more recent studies. Within this, studies showed that vocalisation of /l/ in a coda position has increased over time, and is gaining increased use in particular through dialect levelling and language contact. Much of the focus of L-vocalisation in English varieties has centred around the south and east of the country, and as shown in Chapter 3, there has been little previous indication of L-vocalisation having any substantial use among speakers in Somerset, particularly historically around the time of the SED. This thesis has posed three research questions into the realisation of /l/ in Somerset (see section 3.4) and made some tentative predictions about how those realisations will pattern across the population (see section 4.6).

This study combines dialectology methods that incorporate spatial variation within a defined geographical region with sociolinguistic variationist methods that take into account the spatial nature of the data, change over time according to age groups of participants, and their gender.

Dialectology studies are interested in mapping linguistic variations among traditional speakers. These speakers may typically be non-mobile, older speakers living in rural areas, as they are the most stable and less likely to have encountered different varieties of the same language. The SED, as shown, is one such example, and this made very thorough use of questionnaires in recorded conversations. Only one or two members of a community were enlisted in the research, and all fit the same profile of non-mobile, older, in rural areas and typically male. Lexical, morphosyntactic and/or phonological data is then recorded on a map and isoglosses drawn to show where changes in use of a given feature occur.

Sociolinguistic studies tend to follow the structure laid down by Labov in his 1966 study into New York City English, which is designed to capture as many stylistic variations of speech from each informant as possible (Labov, 1966, 1972a). The typical structure of this involves an interview that fulfils 5 main tasks: casual conversation; careful speech; reading; word lists, and minimal pairs. Regarding the structure of the interview, Labov notes that the interview itself is a process of getting to know the participant, which in turn impacts on the usefulness of the speech obtained: “As the outsider gradually becomes an insider, the quality of the speech obtained and the speaker's involvement in it rises steadily. A field worker who stays outside his

subject, and deals with it as a mere excuse for eliciting language, will get very little for his pains" (Labov, 1972a, p. 114).

The research question leading this particular study, however, requires a reasonably large number of speakers (for a single-researcher project) in order to determine regional variation. This large number of speakers is needed to account for the various sociological variations that can be seen in a general population, accounting for age, gender, and social class for example. It would not have been feasible to include word lists, minimal pairs and a specific section of the conversation that generated knowingly formal or careful speech due to the length to which it would have pushed the interview. I had intended to make sure that I gathered what I needed within the reading and conversational data alone and did not want to take up more of the informants' time than was necessary. The reading exercise and conversational interview already provided me with two speech styles that allowed me to compare how a style shift was realised. For this reason, a reading exercise was used as a means to draw forth a careful or performative speech style in addition to the casual conversational style that was also hoped for. The structure of this study has two sections: a conversational interview that used open questions that would ensure responses that provided information relating to age, childhood hometown, employment status and occupation, level of education, and further information about social activities, themes around childhood memories, favourite holidays, and thoughts about the future of the area and the reading exercise to gain data on a more formal speech style.

5.1.1 Selection of locations

One of the aims of this study is to determine how dialect levelling interacts with dialect boundaries within a county. Following Elworthy (1876) and Wakelin (1986), it has been determined that historically the area of West Somerset has a different dialect to that found in the rest of the county. At the time of this study, the local government districts separated West Somerset from Sedgemoor at the Quantocks AONB. This study will thus divide the county into these two regions: West Somerset and Central Somerset. Central Somerset incorporates locations found along the M5 trunk in both Sedgemoor and the former Taunton Deane district, and West Somerset those held within the district boundaries (at the time of the study).

Having made this decision to divide Somerset into these two regions for the purposes of this analysis, it then led to the selection of locations within the SED basic materials.

5.1.2 The Survey of English Dialects as a basis

The Survey of English Dialects specifically selected locations that were small villages or hamlets, very rural, and quite distant from much larger towns. In order to try to draw as close

a comparison as possible, I targeted the same locations from the SED, or villages and small towns very close to these original SED locations. In the 60 or so years since the SED was conducted, however, these locations have undergone some changes, and have either grown in size, or have become even smaller in population due to economic influences. In the cases of Withypool (So8) and Wootton Courtenay (So5), it was reported to me by people living in the area that the local native population was either extremely old or had moved away. In the case of Wootton Courtenay in particular, much of the native population has been replaced with second home owners from outside the area, or retirees from other parts of the country. Much of the younger population has moved away in order to find a job and raise a family.

Many of the SED locations in this study, particularly in the Central Somerset area, were selected based on the locations closest to the two main urban areas in Central Somerset: Bridgwater and Taunton. The locations selected from the SED Basic Materials were So3 - Wedmore, So6 - Stogursey, So10 - Stoke St. Gregory and So13 - Merriott. In West Somerset, all 4 SED locations were selected: So7 - Stogumber; So 8 - Withypool; So9 Brompton Regis; and So10 Wootton Courtenay.

5.1.3 About the SED materials

The SED devised a questionnaire that informants answered during interviews with the fieldworker. The basic materials for the Somerset locations are in Volume 4 of the SED, "The Southern Counties", published in 3 parts. Phonetic data is listed against the specific words or answers given to the different questions the participants were asked. In Somerset, there are typically two or three participants in each location. The participants in Somerset were all interviewed by the same fieldworker, John T. Wright (denoted by his initials JTW) so we can be confident that the analysis of the results is consistent (Orton et al., 1967, pp. 15–24). In all but one of the locations used within this thesis, the recordings took place in 1956. One informant (So9.3 - HE) was recorded in 1964 by Martyn F. Wakelin, and the SED notes do not mention that he participated in the same questionnaire. The participants in each location of the SED did not answer the entire survey, rather the complete questionnaire was split among the participants in a given location. In his 2012 study of SED locations in Northern England, Maguire specifies that an attempt to analyse the responses on the basis of speaker would 'dramatically reduce the total number of tokens for each data point', and therefore instead treats each location as a 'single informant' (Maguire, 2012, p. 396). Following that approach, the responses from informants in each location are also treated as a single informant, where the combined responses from the informants are grouped together.

A distribution of the locations, the informants and the sections of the survey they responded to is shown in Table 7 below:

Table 7 - Breakdown of participants in selected SED locations

SED ref	SED location	SED Speaker	SED Field Worker(s)	Date Interviewed	Age at recording	QUESTIONN			
						I	II	III	IV
So3	Wedmore	WF	JTW	Jan 1956	72	x	x		
		SR			60				
		SW			63			x	x
So5	Wootton Courtenay	RK	JTW	July 1956	76	x	x	x	x
		DCB			66				
So6	Stogursey	TC	JTW	Jan 1956	82	x	x	x	
		SVW			69				x
So7	Stogumber	FJB	JTW	May 1956	65	x	x	x	x
So8	Withypool	HW	JTW	July 1956	74	x	x		
		HR			53			x	x
		EH			70				
So9	Brompton Regis	GG	JTW	July 1956	77	x	x		x
		EH			77			x	
		HE	MFW	1964	69				
So10	Stoke St Gregory	WW	JTW	April 1956	71	x	x	x	
		JB			73				x
		WH			78				
So13	Merriott	SO	JTW	March 1956	80	x	x	x[25]	x
		ARP			50			x[26]	
		EWP			61				

[25] Participant answered up to < Book III Q7.9

[26] Participant answered Book III Q7.10- 13.18

A total of 241 words containing /l/ from the SED were analysed per location. Not all participants provided a response, or indeed provided a response in which /l/ was present. A full list of the words from the survey, along with their reference numbers, is shown in Appendix II. Where a response differs from that of the expected response in the SED, it is recorded, and if it contains /l/ it is also analysed.

5.2 Determining linguistic environments from the SED materials

Where /l/ appears within a word, either in Onset, Intervocalic or a Coda Cluster position, there is little ambiguity regarding the linguistic environment. However, within the SED materials it is not always clear whether or not /l/ is followed by a consonant or a vowel in a word final position (e.g. I.3.11 *cess-pool*). Some context may be given in the examples, but not always. As pointed out in Maguire 2012, the SED is not always clear if the recorded response is a word given in isolation, or was part of a longer sentence. For this reason, where a response is given in the materials in the context of a sentence, it is attributed to the appropriate linguistic environment (i.e. word-final or Coda intervocalic across word boundary). Without any sentence or phrase to contextualise the utterance, it is assumed that the /l/ appears in a CODA prepausal position.

With very few exceptions, the variants of /l/ recorded in the SED were the same as those used in the analysis of the Somerset Speaks dataset. Seven of the tokens from the SED were recorded as variants that were not found within the Somerset Speaks dataset, and in some cases only one token of a variant was found in the SED dataset. For this reason, where a variant had such low numbers of tokens and was not found in the modern dataset, they were grouped as 'Other'. The tokens falling into the category of 'Other' are not included in the final analysis.

Across the county, a total of 1892 tokens were acquired from the Basic Materials: 952 in Central Somerset, and 940 in West Somerset. The distribution of tokens by their broad linguistic environment across the geographical locations is shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8 - Summary of SED tokens by geographical location and linguistic environment

Ling Env	**Central Som't**	**West Som't**	**Totals**
ONSET	330	338	668
INTERVOCALIC	91	111	202
CODA	531	491	1022

Totals	952	940	1892

5.2.1 Mixed approach of Real time and Apparent time data

As was discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, it was felt that changes in language over time were the domain of the historical linguists, and that dialectology was interested in creating snapshots of language use in order to capture dying dialects. Such captured dialects would then form the basis for comparison in future studies in order to show that a change had occurred over time. The focus was on the end result of change, thus, historically, linguistic studies that aimed to show a change in language over time ideally required data from the same location or community in at least two different time periods to show the completed change. Such studies are also called longitudinal or real-time studies. The logistics of a long-term study to elicit real-time data often prove difficult, though, either from lack of funding, or indeed time.

Weinreich, Herzog and Labov (1968) championed the need to look more closely at variations within the community as an indication of change, particularly across age groups. They questioned the notion of inaccuracies in language transmission between parent and child as the sole cause of language change and instead proposed a model that looked at a community of speakers as a whole, incorporating the inherent variation within that community into a model of change. Labov's studies in Martha's Vineyard (1963) and New York City (Labov, 1966) took the synchronous, apparent-time model as a means of observing changes in progress.

Longitudinal studies are idealistic, but challenging, relying on stable communities of speakers who are either available for re-interview in a long-term panel study, or who can be replaced by other members of the same community who have a similar demographic status in a repeated survey. It can become even more challenging if a community becomes so small it almost disappears, meaning no speakers at all are available to replicate the original study and draw comparisons. The Apparent Time model provides a surrogate to real-time studies by conducting a one-off study with people from different age groups in a community as a means of obtaining temporal representation. The intended outcome is that older speakers and younger speakers will differ to such an extent that a change could be identified from the speech patterns between the groups. While observing the benefits to conducting research into language change in such a manner, Bailey (2002) acknowledges its limitations by presenting three situations that "pose potential problems for the apparent-time construct" (G. Bailey, 2002, p. 314), namely a) the generality of apparent time; b) the stability of individual vernaculars; and c) the occurrence of age-graded features.

There is an assumption of generality in the use of apparent time data, and that there will be no conflict between real time and apparent time data, assuming the methods used are similar. Bailey (2002) tested this using data from previous studies, all of which had apparent time data within them, but when combined also produced real time data due to the 10-15 years between them. His study found that despite some methodological differences between the data sets, the results were reliable. He cautioned, though, that "Smaller, less representative samples can be expected to produce less general and less valid results" (p318)

The second limitation Bailey observed is the assumption of the stability of individual vernaculars, that is that adult speakers will not change their language use as they grow older. He concludes that adult speakers are more stable in their vernacular use, and that apparent-time data from teenagers is less reliable within a broader community dataset as longitudinal studies showed that younger speakers are more likely to change their language up to young adulthood.

The third limitation Bailey discussed is almost in contradiction to the assumption of a stable vernacular in adult life, specifically looking at the issue of age-grading. Beyond the developmental changes that can take place up to early adulthood in an individual's language, there are additional social pressures that can impact language use throughout adulthood. Life stages may impact language use, such as when trying to establish oneself in a profession (Sankoff & Laberge, 1978; cited in G. Bailey, 2002), or attending higher education. By the same token, the eventual lack of professional pressure that comes with retirement (or indeed, achieving seniority in a profession) potentially has the opposite effect of being less influenced by social pressures in a professional capacity. Bailey advised caution, urging researchers to take societal pressures and individual sociolects into consideration while designing a methodology and drawing conclusions from apparent time data.

Despite these cautions, though, apparent time analysis is widely considered to be a suitable approach to determining variation and change in progress within a community. This study is based on a combination of real time and apparent time data, and therefore must also come with certain caveats within the data. This study has only used data from adult speakers; therefore it can be confident that there is a reasonable degree of linguistic stability within the dataset. The presence of 'age grading' within the data is one clear issue, and demographics of the speakers have also been taken into consideration. The combination of SED data with the apparent-time data in my 'Somerset Speaks' dataset is done so with the intention of analysing phonological change, therefore there is less concern about eliciting specific grammatical responses. For this reason, the registers in use in the SED were of more concern when designing the interviews than the replication of the SED surveys.

5.2.2 Demographics of the speakers

5.2.2.1 Age groups

The age range of the targeted participants was from 18 years of age and upwards. This was done for practical as well as the linguistic reasons outlined above: adults are able to give their own consent to participate in interviews and therefore this reduces the amount of time and administration needed to conduct them. The intention was to recruit participants within categorised age groups, however as recruitment continued, prescriptivism over categorisation by age became unrealistic. In order to enable a meaningful analysis that did not divide the speakers into ever smaller groups, the participants were divided into two groups: Over 40 and Under 40. This categorisation was used by Milroy (1980) in her study in Belfast communities, and is useful in this particular study as it also reflects approximate generational boundaries seen in wider Western society. Those in the Under 40 age group at the time of this study fall roughly into the late 'Gen X' and 'Millennial' generations. These participants have grown up with email and either home computers or devices with much of their young adulthood also influenced by development of Web 2.0 technology such as social media. These participants would also have had greater access to education beyond compulsory school age and are less likely to be settled. The older members of this group were likely in the earlier stages of family life, if indeed they have settled down at all, and only recently become established in their careers. The younger members of this group may still be in education or other career training, and may not have settled down into a career, or family life. At the time of interview, the oldest participant in the Under 40s age group was 38 years old, and the youngest was 19 years old.

Those in the Over 40s age group are much more established in their careers and have been settled down for some time. Many in this group had already retired and those with families had likely seen their children move away from home. Many of the participants in this group fell into the Generation X, 'Baby Boomer' and Inter-War generations. The youngest participant in this age group was 49 years old at the time of interview, and the oldest was 92 years old.

5.2.2.2 Gender

According to Labov, "...gender is a powerful differentiating factor in almost every case of stable social stratification and change in progress that has been studied" (Labov, 2001, p. 262). He continues that despite gender roles, particularly those of women who have experienced considerable social change in the latter half of the 20th Century, at the time he was writing the traditional role of women as caregivers to children was still the norm, and that, unfortunately, women were still given social status secondary to men (p262). The influence of gender is

therefore, as Coates points out, a result of social factors that impact on both the perception and production of linguistic behaviour between the genders (Coates, 2006, p. 63).

Previous studies in British English dialects have shown that there is a trend of younger men using non-standard forms most frequently within a community of speakers (e.g. Macaulay, 1978; Trudgill, 1974b). Labov (2001) also found in Philadelphia that for the most part, "women use a lower level of stigmatized variables than men" (p265). Such patterns are not the absolute rule, though. Nichols (1978) found that it was the older women in a lower social class within the community of interest who were using more non-standard forms, and that, according to her findings, it may be greater mobility within a community that results in greater innovative forms in women's speech. However, she also found a difference between these older women and the younger women from the same community, as it was the younger women who tended to use more prestige forms than older women. Montgomery discusses this further, looking at changing patterns of employment as factors in speech variation over gender (M. Montgomery, 2008, p. 180), where the increasing levels of education had led to greater social and geographical mobility among younger speakers. Labov (2001) showed in results from Philadelphia that style can impact both men and women in their speech, and that a shift towards standard or prestige variants in a more formal speech style is not just a feature of women's language. Milroy (1980) also found higher use of non-standard forms among women in Ballymacarrett in Belfast. Gender, therefore, has an impact on language use that is not always universal across language communities.

The impact of gender in my own study must therefore be considered as carefully as that of age in the use of variants of (l) among the more modern speakers. Where possible, the recruitment process tried to ensure an even number of men and women among the categories (see section 5.3 below), however, as the recruitment process outlined below demonstrates, this was not always possible. It should also be noted that all participants in this study fell into a man/woman binary gender pattern, and none identified otherwise.

5.2.2.3 Additional variables

Many factors can help to build a socioeconomic profile of a group of participants. I initially intended to also include education levels and geographical mobility into this study. These were discussed and captured during the interview process, and indeed are discussed in the wider analysis of the results but are not used as variables in the processing of the data for reasons of space. As part of the recruitment, I therefore tried to ensure that there was an even balance between those who had obtained a third level qualification, and those that had not. Despite these efforts, there were some categories by age and gender that did not have an even representation of third-level graduates and non-graduates.

5.3 Recruitment of participants

Once the locations and social variables were selected, the recruitment of participants began. In order to test the hypotheses regarding regional language change in a dialectal area, and to fulfil the needs of both a dialectology and a sociolinguistic style interview, the recruitment had to take into consideration variables such as age, and gender of the participants.

Gatekeepers to communities of practice are frequently used in sociolinguistic research. As I am from the Central Somerset area, I acted as my own 'gatekeeper' in many instances, calling upon local friends either to participate if they were willing, or to recommend me to members of their family, work colleagues or friends. My network in this area proved very useful, however it did mean that there was a strong representation from people within my own age group (many of the Under 40 year olds at the time of interview), which was something I tried to rectify as the data gathering process continued. Overall in the Central Somerset area I recruited 17 of the 24 participants through my own personal networks. Where I was unable to recruit people through my personal network, I contacted local authority councillors and the local museum. Through their networks I was able to recruit additional participants.

In the West Somerset area, however, I had no such contacts. Instead, I had to find gatekeepers to help me to make contact with potential participants. I contacted the Exmoor Society, the Exmoor National Park Authority, who have links with local schools and colleges (as a way to recruit both teachers, and older students over the age of 18), and local Young Farmers groups. The Exmoor Society Archivist in particular helped me to reach out to potential participants across Exmoor through a collaborative event kindly hosted by the Exmoor Society. I also ran a prize draw for a voucher, created a blogsite and made social media announcements. I also contacted the tower captains in various belltowers across the region to forge links with the local bellringers. This became particularly useful as a chain of references developed and in one instance, I managed to acquire 12 participants all resulting from one belltower captain 'gatekeeper'.

Recruitment, though, was certainly a big challenge, particularly in areas where I had no existing contacts. As can be seen, I tried various avenues, but a big difficulty lay in not being able to spend long continuous periods in the areas under study in order to build up contacts and make those more serendipitous connections. Instead, I had to rely on a more remote means of contacting individuals and making planned trips over to the area during weekends and times of annual leave.

However, one of the biggest issues I encountered was trying to find younger people, particularly within the West Somerset area. The reason for this became apparent after speaking to some of my older participants, and indeed the belltower captains, who informed me that very

few people living in the villages are actually from the area. Furthermore, many young people move away for work or study, and don't always return to live in the area until later in life.

The final selection of data from these interviews also determined which interviews were ultimately used in the analysis. The distribution of the participants by age and gender across the two locations is shown in Table 9. While I did not want to remove speakers from my dataset, particularly with the difficulty I had experienced in recruiting people, a review of their demographic details that came up during interview confirmed that some did not fall into my criteria for speakers. In the cases of Ex001 and Ex014 they had been born and raised outside Somerset, and despite having spent most of their lives living in the area, they were not suitable for that reason. Ex005 had been born and raised in the West Somerset area, but had been sent to a private school and received elocution lessons before then moving to London in early adulthood and spending over 50 years in the London area before moving back to Somerset. Consequently, Ex005's accent had no local features, and was much closer to an older style of RP. However, because these speakers' data had been transcribed for the purposes of archiving, they are listed sequentially in the larger dataset. Therefore, their data was omitted from this study, but they are listed in Table 10 and Table 11 below for completeness.

Table 9 - Distributions of participants across locations by category

	Women		**Men**		
Location	**Over 40**	**Under 40**	**Over 40**	**Under 40**	**Totals**
Central Som't Conversation	7	9	2	7	25
Central Som't Reading	7	9	2	7	25
West Som't Conv	8	3	8	3	22
West Som't Reading	6	3	7	3	19
Total participants	15	12	10	10	47
Total by Gender	27		20		

Table 10 - Full table of participants in Central Somerset

Participant	Date recorded	Age group	Gender	Reading exercise	Location
Bridg001	Dec-15	Over 40	m	y	Central Som't
Bridg002	Dec-15	Over 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg003	Jan-16	Under 40	m	y	Central Som't
Bridg004	Feb-16	Under 40	m	y	Central Som't
Bridg005	Feb-16	Under 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg006	Feb-16	Under 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg007	Mar-16	Under 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg008	Mar-16	Over 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg009	Mar-16	Over 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg010	Mar-16	Under 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg011	Mar-16	Under 40	m	y	Central Som't
Bridg012	May-16	Under 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg013	Jun-16	Under 40	m	y	Central Som't
Bridg014	Aug-16	Under 40	m	y	Central Som't
Bridg015	Aug-16	Under 40	m	y	Central Som't
Bridg016	Aug-16	Under 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg017	Sep-16	Under 40	m	y	Central Som't
Bridg018	Sep-16	Over 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg019	Sep-16	Over 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg020	Sep-16	Under 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg021	Sep-16	Over 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg022	Sep-16	Under 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg023	Aug-17	Over 40	m	y	Central Som't
Bridg024	Oct-17	Over 40	f	y	Central Som't
Bridg025	Oct-17	Under 40	f	y	Central Som't

Table 11 - Full table of participants in West Somerset

Participant	Date recorded	Age Group	Gender	Reading exercise	Location
Exmoor001	Nov-15	n/a	n/a	n/a	West Som't
Exmoor002	Nov-15	Over 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor003	Nov-15	Over 40	f	y	West Som't
Exmoor004	Dec-15	Over 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor005	May-16	n/a	n/a	n/a	West Som't
Exmoor006	May-16	Over 40	f	y	West Som't
Exmoor007	Aug-16	Over 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor008	Aug-16	Over 40	f	y	West Som't
Exmoor009	Dec-16	Under 40	f	y	West Som't
Exmoor010	Jan-17	Under 40	f	y	West Som't
Exmoor011	Aug-17	Over 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor012	Aug-17	Over 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor013	Aug-17	Over 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor014	Sep-17	n/a	n/a	n/a	West Som't
Exmoor015	Sep-17	Under 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor016	Sep-17	Under 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor017	Sep-17	Over 40	f	n	West Som't
Exmoor018	Sep-17	Over 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor019	Sep-17	Over 40	f	y	West Som't
Exmoor020	Sep-17	Over 40	f	n	West Som't
Exmoor021	Sep-17	Under 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor022	Sep-17	Under 40	f	y	West Som't
Exmoor023	Sep-17	Over 40	f	y	West Som't
Exmoor024	Sep-17	Over 40	m	y	West Som't
Exmoor025	Oct-17	Over 40	f	y	West Som't

5.4 Conducting the interviews

5.4.1 Interview design

The design of the interview took two parts in order to gain the quality of speech mentioned by Labov (1972b). The first was an initial conversational section asking questions about the participant's personal history, when and where they were born, where they grew up and went to school, where they worked, and their hobbies (see Appendix III). This was not only to ease the participant into the interview process by asking them questions that they would hopefully be able to answer very easily, but it also provided important sociolinguistic information about that individual. The conversation then moved into more emotional matters, asking the participants about any traditions that were particular to either their local area, or just to their family; what were their earliest memories of significant times of the year, such as Christmas, or summer holidays; and their opinions in relation to changes taking place in the local area. In particular, many of the participants were asked what they thought the future held for the local area, particularly in the light of the building of Hinkley C power station, which began at around the time the interviews were taking place.

The second and final part of the interview was a reading exercise, whereby participants were asked to read aloud an abridged story from a children's book, namely 'Milly Molly Mandy Gets Up Early' (Lankester-Brisley, 1929) (see Appendix IV). This was selected for the high frequency of repeated occurrences of words containing /l/ in all relevant linguistic environments throughout the text (e.g. *Milly, Billy, Little, Doodle, Field*), allowing for greater opportunity to collect multiple tokens of the same word. Participants could opt out of this part of the interview if they did not feel comfortable reading aloud, and those who did read aloud were given the option of stopping at any time if they wanted to.

5.4.2 Ethics

As with any study involving people, ethical consideration and approval was required in order to continue to the interview stage of the research. The interviews in this study were all conducted before the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation came into effect, and therefore this was not required as part of the ethics application. However, due diligence has still been given to ensuring the protection of any personal or identifying details of the participants. On initial contact with any potential participants in the research, a 'participant information leaflet' (PIL) was sent to them either in the post, or via email. The Participant Information Leaflet is included in Appendix V. They were also sent a copy of the Informed Consent Form and were told that they would be asked to sign this at the interview if they wished

to proceed. In cases where gatekeepers were setting up interviews with participants on my behalf, they were sent the PIL and the Consent Form and asked to pass them on to any potential participants.

If the participants agreed to interview, then this was arranged, and I brought along printed copies of the PIL and the Informed Consent Form. The participants were invited to read the PIL before we continued, if they wanted to, and offered the opportunity to ask any questions about the interview itself, or how their data would be used afterwards if this wasn't answered in the PIL. Once they were happy to continue, they were asked to sign and date two copies of the Informed Consent form, I also signed them both. I then gave one of the signed forms to the participant for them to keep while I retained the other for my records. In addition to signing this form, oral confirmation that they were happy to take part in the interview was also obtained at the very beginning of the recorded interview.

In the case of participants from West Somerset, an agreement was made with the Exmoor Society that participants could also agree to allow their recorded interview to go into the Exmoor Society archive. This was in exchange for funding for an event to recruit participants. This was an 'opt-in' consent with a tick-box appearing on the consent form. If they later decided they didn't want to be included in the archive they could inform me in writing and I would take them out of this collection.

All participants in both West and Central Somerset were given a 4 week 'cooling off' period in which they could change their mind about their recording being included in the study. While one participant from West Somerset did change their mind about inclusion in the archive, no participants contacted me to request that they be removed from the study. On the basis of the information provided above, ethical approval was granted by the university (see Appendix VI).

5.4.2.1 Data protection

Details of the participants are recorded on a password protected spreadsheet that is in turn kept on a password protected laptop. Backups of all data are stored on a password protected hard-drive, and also in cloud storage which has password protection. All participants have been anonymised for the purposes of data analysis. Codes have been used in place of names, simply indicating the location they were recorded, and the order in which they were interviewed. Their year of birth was required to establish their age group, and while not included in the tables published in this thesis their place of birth was also asked to establish how local they are to the area. The analysis in this thesis is conducted using numerical values derived from the recorded data. Any sections of transcripts used in the analysis have been anonymised either by omission or pseudonym.

5.4.2.2 The Exmoor Society archive

It was explained to the participants in West Somerset that their anonymity would not be held if they agreed to have their recorded interview submitted as an oral history to the Exmoor Society archive. However, the recordings are only to be made available in CD format, and will require a person to travel to the Exmoor Society archive in order to access them. It was explained that recordings were to be embargoed until after the PhD has been completed, so the recordings were not made immediately available. Nevertheless, sensitivities to members of the local community must be taken into consideration so as not to put them in any harm or risk (De Laine, 2000). Therefore, the recordings will be reviewed and appropriately edited for any sensitive information before they are submitted to the archive. It is believed that this will not reduce their quality as linguistic resources or oral histories, but will ensure the participants can be confident that their recordings will not put them in any difficult or potentially unsafe situations. Ensuring safety and wellbeing of participants secures trust in the research community and allows linguists and other social scientists to continue working with members of such communities (see Research Data Alliance International Indigenous Data Sovereignty Interest Group, 2019; Rice, 2006).

5.4.3 Navigating the Observer's Paradox

Another important factor to consider is that of the observer's paradox whereby the nature of observation changes the behaviour of the participant. Labov discusses five working principles involved in obtaining data for linguistic changes and variation (LVC) studies, based on a review of previous research methods. Those working principles are: 1) there are no single style speakers; 2) styles can be ranged along a single dimension, measured by the amount of attention paid to speech; 3) the vernacular, in which the minimum attention is paid to speech, provides the most systematic data for linguistic analysis; 4) any systematic observation of a speaker defines a formal context where more than the minimum attention is paid to speech; and 5) face-to-face interviews are the only means of obtaining the volume and quality of recorded speech that is needed for quantitative analysis (Labov, 1981).

These working principles can, as Labov himself points out, prove to be somewhat self-defeating and contradictory, as the need to obtain the vernacular to enable 'the most systemic data for linguistic analysis' as indicated in principle 3 can become modified or endangered by the actions taken to address working principle 5: that is conducting face-to-face interviews to obtain the volume of data required.

"LCV is then faced with the "observer's paradox": Our aim is to observe how people talk when they are not being observed. The problem is well known in other fields under the name

of the "experimenter effect," and the problem of minimizing the experimenter effect is one that has received a great deal of attention." (Labov, 1981, p. 30)

Labov continues that to a certain extent, this observer's paradox cannot be entirely eradicated, merely mitigated. As discussed above, informed consent is paramount to ensure the ongoing trust necessary between linguistic scholars and their potential participants. This necessarily means that the participants know that they are being studied. For this reason, interviews with participants need to employ other strategies to distract the participants from the knowledge that they are under observation, and thereby make them relaxed enough to slip into more informal language. Within this study, the interviewees were informed that the study was investigating language change in the local accent, and how the local dialect may be tied to local traditions.

Labov further describes 10 key goals of the sociolinguistic interview. Within these goals, a structure can be found that caters to the more formal requirements of the interview that can help to categorise participants according to any variables that are to be used (for example: age, linguistic background, place of birth and childhood, occupation, etc). Additional sections of the interview may then gather responses that are more in line with the desirable 'vernacular' speech, relying on responses to questions designed to elicit emotion, be that nostalgia, anger, or happiness. Finally, more formal exercises are used to provide a contrastive style, such as reading or wordlists (often both).

Within this current study, the questions used in the interview were designed along these principles, with a slightly formal 'fact-finding' portion at the beginning of the interview, a more 'conversational' module that asked about local history, childhood memories, and current local affairs. While not exactly within the bounds of Labov's suggested topics, the items discussed were considered in line with the agreement to create oral histories for the Exmoor Society archive. It was also the intention not to cause any distress or incite an angry response from the participant by discussing personal matters such as death and the danger of death, sex, and matters of moral indignation (see Labov, 1981, p. 33). Milroy and Gordon (2003), though, do not consider this a universally applicable topic or set of topics, depending on the cultural context, and it is advisable to modify the focus of discussion according to the community in which the study is being conducted. Rather, matters of moral indignation were addressed to an extent in conversation around local current affairs and local traditions. This was particular to the location: in Central Somerset, topics such as the local 'Carnival' or the ongoing building of the Hinkley C nuclear power station nearby would bring forward strong emotions of either huge enthusiasm for it, or a reticence towards it. However, such topics were not presented in a contentious manner designed to provoke a strong reaction, they were merely presented as 'what are your thoughts on…' or 'how do you think X has already or could impact on the local area'. In

West Somerset, the issue of hunting also provoked reaction. Many participants are members of the local hunt and considered it a vital part of the local community. Others saw it as having a detrimental impact on the countryside and local economy and were against it, although they were sometimes hesitant to voice such views. In other cases, participants brought up topics that I had not included, and the ensuing discussion brought forth impassioned opinions. Through discussions around these topics, the 'matters of moral indignation' that Labov advises were employed to try to draw attention away from the interview scenario, thus mitigating the observer's paradox to an extent.

Schilling-Estes (2013) reviewed the Labovian sociolinguistic interview style with case studies to determine if Labov's Vernacular Principal was still relevant to more recent sociolinguistic practices. She highlighted Labov's assertion that even with careful research design, the conversational aspect of interviews will often still remain guarded, and that even when a speaker is not feeling particularly self-conscious they may still present a different style of speech or vernacular, depending on the situation (Labov, 1972b). Memories of events that incite emotion, such as childhood family holidays and traditions (Gordon, 2001), and important moments in the participants' lives, asking about local traditions that may invoke a sense of pride, and even asking opinions of topical or perhaps controversial events in the news can draw the participants' attention away from the recording device sitting in front of them, without having to 'deceive' them, fulfilling the 'narrative' requirement in Labov's decision tree for stylistic variation (Labov, 2001). Schilling-Estes (2013) argues further, though, that even this narrative element to an interview can become more performative than casual in speech style, as the retelling of a story could be something that the participant has done several times before, honing their delivery to the greatest effect and thus becoming a performance in itself.

Another aspect of the observer's paradox that needs to be taken into consideration was the effect that the researcher themselves may have on a participant's language choices, either consciously or unconsciously. The researcher is, to some extent, an authority figure in this situation, regardless of the respective ages of the interviewer and interviewee. The dynamic in an interview for research purposes is often that the interviewer is 'in charge' of the situation, and therefore the interviewee may feel compelled to 'please' the interviewer with their responses. How the interviewer dresses, their body language, and of course their own accent may indirectly influence the language choices of the participant (Labov, 1981). Labov's advice in this regard is for the interviewer to position themselves in the role of 'learner':

> "The interviewer must have a keen appreciation of the strengths and expertise of the speaker: a genuine and profound interest in what the speaker knows. If he pays attention, he is bound to learn and absorb knowledge that will be fed back into future interviews and raise his discussions with others to a higher level of interest and expertise."
>
> - (Labov, 1981, p. 40)

Within the interview, much attention was paid to asking the participants about their own experiences, and therefore not something I would know about. In addition to this, questions about the participant's occupation would often bring up interesting points for discussion in which I could ask them more about specific technical terminology, or techniques that they used in their work. This was particularly useful in West Somerset, in which many of the participants were either farmers, farm labourers, or worked in the agricultural industry. Having very little knowledge of this myself, this became a useful area for discussion in which I was genuinely in the role of 'the learner' and thus less likely to be seen in a position of authority.

As outlined in the next section, many of the participants, particularly from the Central Somerset area, were recruited through personal social networks, either through family friends, as friends from school, or even in some cases old schoolteachers. This existing acquaintance or friendship with many of these participants made the relationship between interviewer and interviewee less formal, although still required careful consideration. In all interviews, including those with participants who lay beyond personal networks, the choice of clothes was kept fairly casual and relaxed in order to appear more like a friend popping round for a cup of tea.

5.4.4 Interview tools

All interviews were recorded digitally using a ZOOM recorder with a built-in microphone. While this did have the downside of being present even in the peripheral view of the participant, it did reduce the need for any sound-testing or attaching any lapel microphone to the participant's clothing which, as Labov points out, can often be counterproductive. The recordings were saved as MP3 files, making them easily transportable because of their size, without losing any quality in the recording. For reasons outlined in section 5.5.2 the recordings were not intended for instrumental analysis, so WAV files were not necessary. MP3 files are adequate for auditory analysis and not as large in file size. The recordings were saved to a laptop, to an online secure cloud storage service, and to a password-protected external hard drive, in line with the ethical considerations discussed above.

5.5 Data Analysis

5.5.1 Processing the tokens

In total 38 hours, 8 minutes and 24 seconds of recorded interviews were taken: 18 hours 40 minutes and 40 seconds in Central Somerset, and 19 hours 27 minutes and 44 seconds in West Somerset. The interviews were transcribed orthographically, ready for processing in an online annotation tool: Atlas.ti. By environment, the breakdown of tokens in the two locations and styles are shown in Table 12 below. The low number of tokens in the prepausal and pre-vowel positions, particularly in the reading exercise, points to the extra criteria applied to these positions regarding what does or doesn't follow (l). In the reading exercise there were fewer instances of (l) in any case, and the speed at which the participants read aloud had an impact on the number of prepausal tokens that were available for analysis, as some speakers read quickly and did not allow for a pause. In addition, not all participants read to the end of the text, and not everyone took part in the reading exercise, particularly in West Somerset.

Multiple instances of the same word in the same linguistic environment can skew results (Tagliamonte, 2006). Throughout both the reading and conversational data, multiple words in each participant's data were capped according to their frequency within the different linguistic positions. This was especially necessary in the reading exercise as the names of the three characters, 'Milly-Molly-Mandy', 'Billy Blunt' and 'Little Friend Susan', were repeated in full several times throughout the text.

Table 12 - Tokens by environment, location and style

Syllabic Position	**Linguistic Environment**	**Example**	**Tokens Central Som't**		**Tokens West Som't**		**Total Tokens**
			Reading	**Conv**	**Reading**	**Conv**	
Onset	Initial (#_V)	**l**amp	438	2014	328	1453	4233
	Onset Cluster (C_V)	s**l**eep	716	1867	530	1233	4346
Intervocalic	Morpheme Internal	he**ll**o	569	711	463	610	2353
	Across Morpheme Boundary	ye**ll**ing	217	711	115	518	1561
Coda	Word Final	Te**ll** me	380	1550	273	1101	3304
	Coda Cluster	he**l**p	417	1244	324	1185	3170
	Prepausal	ill.	87	175	87	339	688
	Post-Consonant	cand**l**e	208	648	140	528	1524
	Coda Pre-Vowel	Te**ll** Emily	124	687	95	563	1469

Table 13 - Tokens by Participant

Central Somerset			**West Somerset**		
Participant	**Conv**	**Reading**	**Participant**	**Conv**	**Reading**
Bridg001	527	141	Ex002	258	141
Bridg002	448	143	Ex003	402	141
Bridg003	505	100	Ex004	358	140
Bridg004	515	142	Ex006	403	142
Bridg005	417	92	Ex007	394	141
Bridg006	246	96	Ex008	407	139
Bridg007	294	47	Ex009	478	142
Bridg008	329	141	Ex010	502	142
Bridg009	431	92	Ex011	297	-
Bridg010	401	143	Ex012	360	128
Bridg011	353	143	Ex013	334	141
Bridg012	297	141	Ex015	202	92
Bridg013	437	59	Ex016	209	45
Bridg014	410	142	Ex017	115	-
Bridg015	262	141	Ex018	420	68
Bridg016	352	143	Ex019	320	143
Bridg017	548	143	Ex020	398	-
Bridg018	361	140	Ex021	185	138
Bridg019	409	141	Ex022	439	142
Bridg020	323	117	Ex023	339	141
Bridg021	351	143	Ex024	304	50
Bridg022	336	142	Ex025	406	139
Bridg023	370	141			
Bridg024	283	142			
Bridg025	402	141			

The length of the interviews varied, with some lasting around 90 minutes and some lasting just 20 minutes. To make for a fairer comparison, the full interviews were transcribed, but only 30 minutes from the middle of each interview were annotated. Where interviews were shorter than 30 minutes, the entire interview was annotated.

The annotations to the transcriptions were made using Atlas.ti 9, an annotation software that enables quantitative analysis of qualitative data. Following orthographic transcription of

the recordings, they were then listened to for a second time, and instances of (l) were 'tagged' with their respective linguistic environment and phonetic variant. Words such as *could* or *half* were not annotated, unless (l) was realised by the participant. Once tags had been applied to the instances of (l) within a single transcript, a co-occurrence table was generated, and exported as an Excel spreadsheet. This, however, had to be checked through a second time to ensure that instances of co-occurrence were not being duplicated falsely, as could happen when a word had two occurrences of (l), such as *little* (in this case with both an Onset Initial /l/ and a Coda Post-Consonant /l/).

5.5.2 The Reliability of Impressionistic Analysis

Different factors can impact on the perception of a sound between speakers, including the quality of the recording and the speed of the speech under analysis (see for example Hall-Lew & Fix, 2012; Sproat & Fujimura, 1993), familiarity with the variety under analysis (Kerswill & Wright, 1989, 1990) or indeed the variable itself (see Lawson et al., 2011). To account for this, secondary testing is often performed on samples of the results to check for agreement and accuracy. By ensuring accuracy one can also ensure objectively verifiable results. Instrumental means can take this objectivity further by removing the human from the process. However, these are also not perfect. This section will discuss the instrumental and auditory means of testing for reliability, and then demonstrate what steps were taken in my own data to verify accuracy.

5.5.2.1 Acoustic analysis

Realisations of /l/ are noted to be difficult to observe through acoustic means, particularly through instrumental means (e.g. Lawson et al., 2011) as under spectrographic analysis, Coda /l/, particularly unstressed, can be mistaken for a vowel even when realised as a velarised /l/. For this study, which is specifically looking at whether there has been an increase in the vocalisation of /l/, it would therefore become very difficult to distinguish between a dark /l/ and a vowel, particularly in an unstressed position. (l) is already a sonorant consonant as a liquid, making it considerably closer to a vowel-like sound. Figure 14 shows a snippet of a spectrogram from the reading exercise of one of my participants (Ex005, who was subsequently not used in the final analysis). As can be seen the F_1 and F_2 readings for /ʌ/ in *uh*, /ʌŋ/ in the first syllable of 'uncle' *un*, and the syllabic dark /l/ in the second syllable of 'uncle', /kl̩/ are very similar making it difficult to differentiate from a vocalised unrounded /l/ that may take the form of a mid-back vowel such as /ʌ/ or /ɤ/. Therefore, reading a spectrogram alone cannot definitively show if this is a dark /l/ or an unrounded mid-back vowel.

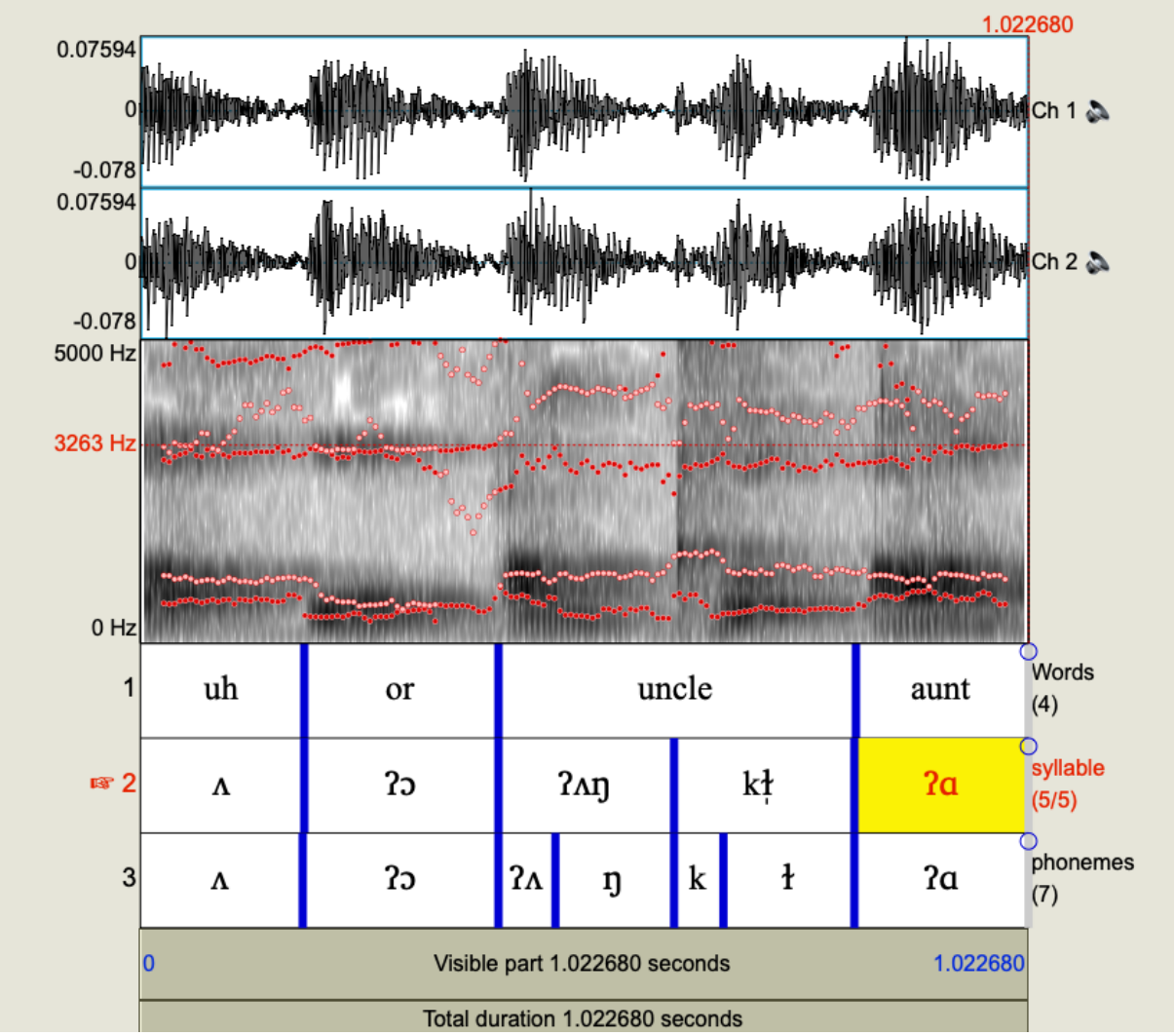


Figure 14 - Praat-generated spectrogram displaying use of /l/

As shown above, acoustic analysis is an accurate means of instrumental analysis in the majority of cases, but analysis of /l/ in certain environments is very open to interpretation and does not give a definitive distinction between a realisation of a dark /l/ and that of a mid-high back vowel that may occur in a vocalised /l/ form.

5.5.2.2 Electropalatography

Electropalatography (EPG) is a very efficient and accurate means of measuring tongue connection and placement on the hard palate of the mouth. However it is not without its negative points. Kerswill and Wright (1989) conducted analysis using both auditory means, and instrumental, specifically through electropalatography (EPG). The use of EPG is an ideal for segmental analysis, however it is one that few can afford, especially when compiling a large set of interview data from multiple individuals. They acknowledged that EPG is limited in the

articulatory information it can capture, as it only analyses the movements of the tongue and doesn't capture the full range of articulatory gestures of speech, such as voicing or voicelessness, the movement of the lips (e.g. lip rounding), or the prosodic elements such as pitch or volume. They did conclude, however, that EPG is a very useful and reliable method that can be used alongside acoustic or auditory analysis to verify transcribed data. Kerswill and Wright (1989, 1990) were also able to conclude that familiarity with the variety of language under analysis can also impact on the reliability of the responses from those analysing it. This is supported by other, more recent studies in which the familiarity of the listeners had an impact on their perceptions of the recordings they were listening to. For example, Plug & Ogden (2003) aimed to investigate the use of postvocalic /r/ among 4 young Dutch speakers, specifically where rhoticity was present, and where there was /r/-deletion. The results were analysed both impressionistically and through instrumental means. In conducting the impressionistic auditory analysis, there were differences in observations among the 4 listeners, only one of whom was highly familiar with Dutch phonetics.

In any study, there has to be a compromise between what is the best practice within the design of the project, and what is the most practical within the typical financial and time-based constraints. For a reasonably large study with multiple participants, EPG analysis is not realistic for two reasons: a) while many may be able to overcome the mildly invasive physical sensation of having a palate mould in their mouths, the setting for such studies, which typically necessitates being in a lab, is not conducive to relaxing speakers; and b) EPG equipment must be tailored and modelled to each speakers' mouth, and as such can very quickly become very expensive, and without major funding almost impossible to achieve.

5.5.2.3 Auditory Analysis

Auditory analysis is the perceptual evaluation of a phoneme through non-instrumental means. In other words, a listener, ideally with some phonetic training, listens to speech and transcribes what they are hearing. This has been the most commonly used analysis method, used by Labov in his 1966 New York City study and repeated many times since. It is attractive as a methodology because it is almost without financial cost and allows the greatest opportunity for large-scale data gathering and for acquiring the holy grail of sociolinguistics study: natural speech. But while cost effective, it can take considerable time to complete, and it is also likely the least reliable of the methodologies of analysis of speech, as it relies on individual perceptions.

Two methods are used for secondary auditory analysis: intra-rater analysis, whereby the researcher conducts a second analysis on a sample from a dataset to check for consistency in their own perceptions, and inter-rater analysis whereby a second person listens to a sample

from the dataset. Both intra and inter-rater results can then be compared with the original results taken from the same dataset.

Clopper (2011) discusses the kappa statistic to assess agreement between listeners. Whereas some methods can be based on the level of agreement in an analysis of binary options presented as a percentage score between two listeners, the kappa statistic also takes into account any additional variables or categories that were present in the data. The kappa statistic returns a decimalised score between 0 and 1, and a score above 0.7 is considered reliable. The score is calculated by taking the expected score (E), which is dependent on the number of categories (100 divided by the number of categories), and the observed score (O), which one hopes would be above 80% overall. The formula used for the calculation is thus:

Equation 3 - Kappa Statistic

$$(O-E) / (1-E)$$

An example given by Clopper (2011) is taken from Pope, Meyerhoff and Ladd (2007) which had four categories (therefore E = 25%) and an observed reliability of 80%. These scores presented as a decimalised figure give 0.25 and 0.80 respectively. This is calculated as below:

Equation 4 - Example of the Kappa Statistic in use

$$(O-E) / (1-E)$$
$$(0.80 - 0.25) / (1 - 0.25) = 0.73$$

This result of 0.73 indicates that the analysis of the data is reliable.

5.5.2.4 Testing the reliability of initial results

In order to ensure that my own results were reliable, I conducted both an inter-rater and an intra-rater secondary auditory analysis on the initial results. The inter-rater analysis was conducted by a fellow researcher who works in the phonetics lab at the School of Linguistics, Speech and Communication Science at Trinity College Dublin. Her knowledge of phonetic procedures was greatly valued and was known to this researcher as a reliable and thorough researcher who could be trusted to conduct this analysis in an ethical manner. While not an expert in southern British English varieties, the inter-rater was given a link to resources[27] with

[27] The inter-rater was given a link to excerpts from the Survey of English Dialects, specifically publicly available clips from the British Library Sounds Archive of the original recordings taken in Somerset, specifically

which to familiarise herself with the accent, and she was encouraged to listen to as often as she wanted. The inter-rater was given a protocol document, which gave a background to the study, instructions to follow, and also outlined a 'code of conduct' with regards to the privacy of the data (the full protocol can be found in Appendix VII). Both inter and intra-rater used 6 variants to label the realisation of (l): Clear /l/, Dark /l/, Vocalised Rounded /l/, Vocalised Unrounded /l/, Zero, and 'Other'.

The data used in the secondary analysis all came from the reading exercise data as it allowed the most direct comparison between speakers as they were all reading the same data and ensured personal information of the participants was kept confidential as none appeared in this section of the interview.

The reading exercise was closely scrutinised for appropriate instances of (l) to be analysed. In total, 20 words were selected from the reading exercise. They were selected from the reading exercise for their linguistic environments. Greater weighting was given to the 'Coda /l/' group, as this is the main environment of interest within this PhD and is shown to be the one with the greater variety in realisation. The recorded reading exercises from 20 participants of the 48 participants used in this study were selected: 10 from West Somerset and 10 from Central Somerset, selected to provide a good sample of both gender and age groups. With 20 words selected, and 20 speakers identified, this would give me approximately 400 instances of /l/. In practice, not all words were read by all participants, and the inter-rater was unsure about 3 of the tokens. Thus, a set of 388 datapoints were acquired in the intra-rater analysis, and 385 in the inter-rater analysis. Both the inter- and intra-rater results were compared with the original analysis, which for the purposes of this exercise is called the 'prime' analysis. Where there was agreement in labels between the secondary analyses and the prime analysis, this was given a score of '1'. Where there was disagreement, this was given a score of '0'. The total score was then divided by the total number of datapoints with responses and multiplied by 100 to give the observed score percentage (O) required in the kappa statistic.

Of the 385 tokens analysed by the inter-rater, there were 293 instances of agreement. This gives an observed score of 76.1%. There were 6 potential variants of (l) used, giving an expected score (E) of 0.167. The kappa statistic showed a score of 0.71 (see Equation 5), making the prime analysis reliable according to the inter-rater analysis:

Equation 5 - The Kappa Statistic applied to inter-rater analysis

$$(O-E) / (1-E)$$

https://sounds.bl.uk/Accents-and-dialects/Survey-of-English-dialects/021M-C0908X0065XX-1000V1 (retrieved 20th Dec 2020). She was also encouraged to listen to more of the clips from the Somerset collection.

(0.761 - 0.167) / (1 - 0.167) = **0.71**

The total number of datapoints assigned a label in the intra-rater analysis was 388, and there were 311 instances of agreement. This means an observed agreement of 80.15%. The kappa statistic returned a score of 0.76 in the overall intra-analysis test (Equation 6), also suggesting that the prime analysis was reliable:

Equation 6 - The Kappa Statistic applied to intra-rater analysis

(O-E) / (1-E)

(0.802- 0.167) / (1 - 0.167) = **0.76**

When breaking down the results by environment, however, the picture becomes a little less certain. In Onset and Intervocalic positions, the agreement between the prime analysis and that of the inter-rater is high. However in the Coda position, agreement in the inter-rater analysis is not at the threshold for reliability following application of the kappa statistic (see Table 14).

A review of the selection of labels in the Coda category (see table below), showed that all three analyses selected dark /l/ most frequently across the sample, but the inter-rater identified more of the other variants available. The inter-rater also perceived more use of rounded vocalised /l/ than the prime and intra-rater analyses, and also selected unrounded vocalised /l/ in 16 instances where it doesn't appear in the original analysis, and only once for the intra-rater analysis (see Table 15).

Table 14 - Kappa Statistic results across linguistic environments

Linguistic environment	**Inter-rater Kappa statistic result**	**Intra-rater Kappa statistic result**
Onset	0.83	0.82
Intervocalic	0.85	0.71
Coda	0.60	0.77

Table 15 - Variants of (l) used across the original, inter- and intra-rater analyses.

Variant	Original	Inter-rater	Intra-rater
l	2	1	2
ɬ	119	97	115
ʊ	72	76	71
ɤ	0	16	6
ø	0	0	1
other	1	4	1

With these results taken into consideration, a second full auditory analysis of all instances of Coda (l) in the conversational and reading exercise data was conducted across the Central and West Somerset datasets. In the light of the results from the inter-rater, greater attention was given to the potential use of vocalised forms of (l), particularly unrounded realisations. The results presented in this thesis are those from this second full analysis.

5.5.3 Statistical Tests

Modern dialectology that uses quantitative methods increasingly includes additional statistical testing to verify significance in the results. The statistical test queries hypotheses about the data (Field, 2009). For example, the null hypothesis (H_0) states that there is no difference in the relationship between datasets, whereas an alternative hypothesis (H_1) states that there is a difference in the relationship between the datasets. Where statistical significance is found, the null hypothesis can be rejected and H_1 is confirmed. However, this is not always a straightforward conclusion. A non-significant result does not necessarily mean that no difference or relationship between variables exists, it simply suggests that more research might be needed to conclude this. Similarly, significance can be misleading if the dataset is especially small, with only a handful of datapoints from which to draw.

Thus, before a test can be conducted, one needs a hypothesis in place to test as this determines the type of test used. Where such studies can be designed to ensure a uniform distribution of variables across a population, parametric tests such as t-tests are used to assess the significance of any differences between variables (Cantos Gómez, 2013). However, linguistic data is 'lumpy' (Tagliamonte, 2006, p. 133) and thus is not always evenly distributed throughout

a population or sample. Therefore, non-parametric tests are used as an alternative to determine the significance of difference between variables.

If one is testing for a relationship between variables, one might use the Pearson correlation coefficient, the Spearman rank correlation coefficient, or Pearson's Chi-Square test in the case of categorical variables (Cantos Gómez, 2013, p. 44). By testing relationships between variables (in the case of this thesis, the difference realisations of /l/ vs the independent variables such as age or gender) for statistical significance, one can confirm if a change has occurred over time, or if there is variation within a population of speakers when comparing them by gender. It also determines if further study is required. Thus, the null hypothesis stated that there was no difference between the groups being compared, and the alternative H_1 hypothesis stated that there is a difference.

The statistical tests were conducted using SPSS (v26). The significance threshold was set at 0.05, and thus any p-values higher than this were a confirmation of the null hypothesis, and any p-value lower than 0.05 indicated that there was a significant difference in use of the variants, and thus the null hypothesis could be rejected. The Chi-Square test was used to determine statistically significant differences in uses of variants between categories of speakers according to the independent variables: speakers by age group, speakers by gender group, and speakers by location. Within Chi-Square, Fisher-Freeman-Halton-Exact Test (henceforth "Fisher's Exact Test", or 'FET') was applied. This additional test accounts for small sample sizes: that is sample sizes or groups with a low number of individual responses within a category or group. This is important because Pearson's Chi-Square usually offers an approximation of significance as it is usually used on much larger datasets, and therefore conducting exact calculations can take considerable time, even with a computer. An approximate value of significance is normally adequate for larger datasets as the size can allow for small inaccuracies and still present a reliable result. However, when working with much smaller datasets there is no room for inaccuracy, and therefore the Fisher's Exact Test is required. Combinations of the independent variables on the use of variants of (l) were also tested, e.g. gender and age, age group and location. Results were tabulated along with descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages of variants in use.

5.6 Methodology in summary

Sociolinguistic analysis requires careful consideration of multiple different issues, as outlined above. This thesis combines real and apparent time data, adding an extra complexity to the analysis by comparing longitudinal data with apparent time data that could be subject to issues of age grading. Nevertheless, the comparison across real time offers a direct window into

a change within the Somerset dialect. Moreover, apparent time data provides information about ongoing variation and change that can inform us about the progress of change, and which members of the population are most susceptible to such a change.

In addition to matters of research design, ethical considerations were discussed, and an outline of the steps taken to ensure the safety of both the participants and the fieldworker, as well as ongoing data protection beyond the project, was provided.

The procedure for processing the data, and a discussion and subsequent testing of the reliability of the analysis was also conducted. This led to a full re-evaluation of a subset of the data, thus ensuring confidence in the results.

The following two chapters provide those results in detail.

6 Results - Comparing by Age Groups

This chapter presents the results by age. As previously discussed, age has been selected as an independent variable for two reasons: it enables us to make a real-time comparison with speakers from the SED to determine the existence and direction of change in the realisation of (l), and it allows conclusions to be drawn about the variation and progress of change using apparent time data within the modern data set.

This chapter is broken into three main sections. The first section will review the data from Central Somerset, taking each linguistic position in turn and reviewing the data first from the reading exercise and then the conversational speech. For the Onset and Intervocalic positions, the individual positions such as Onset Initial and Intervocalic Across Morpheme Boundary are not presented in full here for reasons of necessary brevity and relevance, particularly as there was no indication that morpheme-boundary conditioning was occurring, particularly in Intervocalic positions. The Coda position in particular will include a breakdown of the individual Coda positions. Section 6.2 will review the data in the same manner for West Somerset. Section 6.3 will then compare the data across the two locations to determine any statistically significant results within the three linguistic environments by age groups. In all cases, the numerical data is presented as percentages to normalise the inconsistencies in the number of responses from each participant, thus providing a descriptive statistical overview.

The data indicates a real time increase in use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in Coda position across both locations in Somerset in both reading and conversational speech. The pattern of use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ differs between the two locations, though, as older speakers in West Somerset have greater use of this form than their Central Somerset counterparts, thus indicating West Somerset has earlier use of L-Vocalisation in a coda position.

6.1 Central Somerset

6.1.1 ONSET

Beginning with the reading exercise, Clear /l/ dominates in this onset position for both the Over and Under 40s, as well as the SED. The small difference in use between the speakers in all three age groups in reading speech is shown as statistically significant in the Fisher's Exact Test (p=.001).

Table 16 - Chi-Square tests in use of Clear /l/ between all three age groups in Central Somerset, Onset position reading speech style.

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	48.770[b]	28	.009	<.001		
Likelihood Ratio	45.529	28	.019	.001		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	36.235			.001		
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.977[c]	1	<.001	<.001	<.001	.000
N of Valid Cases	29					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 45 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

c. The standardized statistic is 3.739.

Comparing the SED speakers with their modern day counterparts, the Over 40s speakers, there is also a statistically significant difference in use of Clear /l/ (Fisher's Exact Test (FET) p=.038).

Table 17 - Chi-Square tests in use of Clear /l/ between SED and Over 40s speakers: Onset position, Reading speech style, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	13.000[b]	7	.072	.038		
Likelihood Ratio	16.048	7	.025	.038		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	10.896			.038		
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.123[c]	1	<.001	.001	.001	.001
N of Valid Cases	13					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 16 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .31.

c. The standardized statistic is 3.335.

The difference between the Over 40s speakers and the Under 40s age groups in use of Clear /l/ is also statistically significant in reading speech (FET p=.035, see Table 18).

Table 18 - Chi-Square tests in use of Clear /l/ between Over and Under 40 yr old speakers: Onset position, reading speech style, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	17.043[b]	11	.107	.038		
Likelihood Ratio	22.260	11	.022	.038		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	15.667			.035		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.008[c]	1	.315	.343	.178	.009
N of Valid Cases	25					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 24 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

c. The standardized statistic is 1.004.

Among the Over 40s, there is some use of the Dark /l/ form, more so than the Under 40s. When comparing the data from all three age groups, this use of Dark /l/ is not consistent with that of the older speakers in the SED dataset and suggests that this is particular only to the Over 40 speakers. Indeed, this difference in use of Dark /l/ between all three age groups is shown as statistically significant in reading speech (FET p=.018, see Table 19). Statistical testing between the SED speakers and the Over 40s speakers in reading speech, though, shows the difference is not significant, but there is a statistically significant difference in the use of Dark /l/ between the Over and Under 40s speakers (FET p=.009, see Table 20) .

Table 19 - SPSS output of Chi-Square tests between all age groups, Onset Dark /l/ Reading speech style in Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	15.766[b]	8	.046	.036		
Likelihood Ratio	17.622	8	.024	.030		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	14.567			.018		
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.786[c]	1	.052	.053	.035	.013
N of Valid Cases	29					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 14 cells (93.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

c. The standardized statistic is 1.946.

Table 20 - Chi-Square tests in use of Dark /l/ between Over/Under 40s speakers: Onset position, reading speech style, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	12.413[b]	4	.015	.009		
Likelihood Ratio	14.435	4	.006	.011		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	11.462			.009		
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.101[c]	1	.001	<.001	<.001	.001
N of Valid Cases	25					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 9 cells (90.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

c. The standardized statistic is 3.178.

The low numbers of instances of the Zero /l/ form (/l/ is deleted) across all age groups do not make a great impact on the use of Clear /l/ in this position, however the difference in use across the age groups of this form is shown to be statistically significant according to Fisher's Exact Test (p=.006, see below). This is further confirmed when testing the use of Zero /l/ between the SED speakers and the modern Over 40s (FET p=.007, see Table 22). There are no instances of either Vocalised Rounded or Vocalised Unrounded /l/ realisations in onset position among any of the age groups (see Table 23).

Table 21 - Chi-Square tests between all age groups in use of Zero /l/: Onset position, reading speech style, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	9.850[b]	2	.007	.006		
Likelihood Ratio	11.209	2	.004	.006		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	8.777			.006		
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.799[c]	1	.094	.113	.082	.054
N of Valid Cases	29					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 3 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.38.

c. The standardized statistic is 1.673.

Table 22 - Chi-Square tests in use of Zero /l/ between SED and Over 40s speakers: Onset position, reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	9.244[b]	1	.002	.007	.007	
Continuity Correction[c]	5.870	1	.015			
Likelihood Ratio	11.044	1	<.001	.007	.007	
Fisher's Exact Test				.007	.007	
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.533[d]	1	.003	.007	.007	.007
N of Valid Cases	13					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 3 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.54.

c. Computed only for a 2x2 table

d. The standardized statistic is 2.921.

Table 23 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Onset Reading

Central Somerset Reading			
By Age Group		**Onset**	
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=16)	691	43.188	98
Over 40 (n=9)	425	47.222	95
SED (n=4)	321	80.25	97
Dark			
Under 40 (n=16)	11	0.6875	2
Over 40 (n=9)	23	2.555	5
SED (n=4)	5	1.25	2
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	0	0	0
Over 40 (n=9)	0	0	0
SED (n=4)	0	0	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	0	0	0
Over 40 (n=9)	0	0	0
SED (n=4)	0	0	0
Zero			
Under 40 (n=16)	4	0.25	1
Over 40 (n=9)	1	0.1111	0
SED (n=4)	9	0.31	1

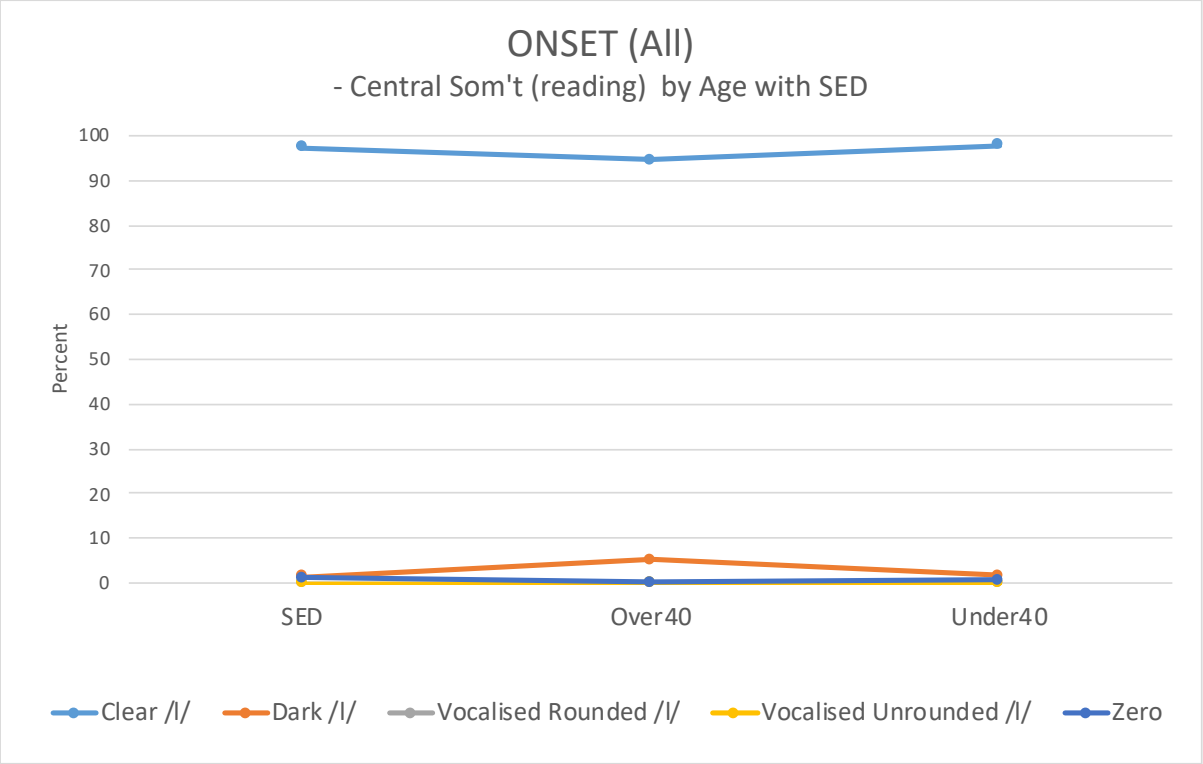


Figure 15 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Onset reading

A shift in speech style to conversational shows some difference in the use of (l), Clear /l/ remains the dominant form among all speakers in both age groups, the statistical tests show no significant difference between the three age groups in its use. There is some use of Dark /l/ among the older speakers (see Table 24 below). However, of interest here is the greater use of Dark /l/ in conversational speech among both the Over and Under 40 age groups, but the older speakers use Dark /l/ twice as much in conversational speech (10% of tokens) as in reading (5% of tokens).

Table 24 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Onset Conversation

Central Somerset Conversation			
By Age Group	**Onset**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=16)	2344	146.50	92
Over 40 (n=9)	1144	127.11	87
SED (n=4)	321	80.25	97
Dark			
Under 40 (n=16)	63	3.94	2
Over 40 (n=9)	129	14.33	10
SED (n=4)	5	1.25	2
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	0	0.00	0
Over 40 (n=9)	0	0.00	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.00	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	9	0.56	0
Over 40 (n=9)	2	0.22	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.00	0
Zero			
Under 40 (n=16)	145	9.06	6
Over 40 (n=9)	40	4.44	3
SED (n=4)	4	1	1

Table 25 - Chi-Square tests in use of Dark /l/ between Over/Under 40s speakers: Onset position, conversation speech style, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	18.490[b]	12	.102	.039		
Likelihood Ratio	24.353	12	.018	.039		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	16.631			.025		
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.561[c]	1	.033	.010	.010	.002
N of Valid Cases	25					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = conversation

b. 26 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

c. The standardized statistic is 2.136.

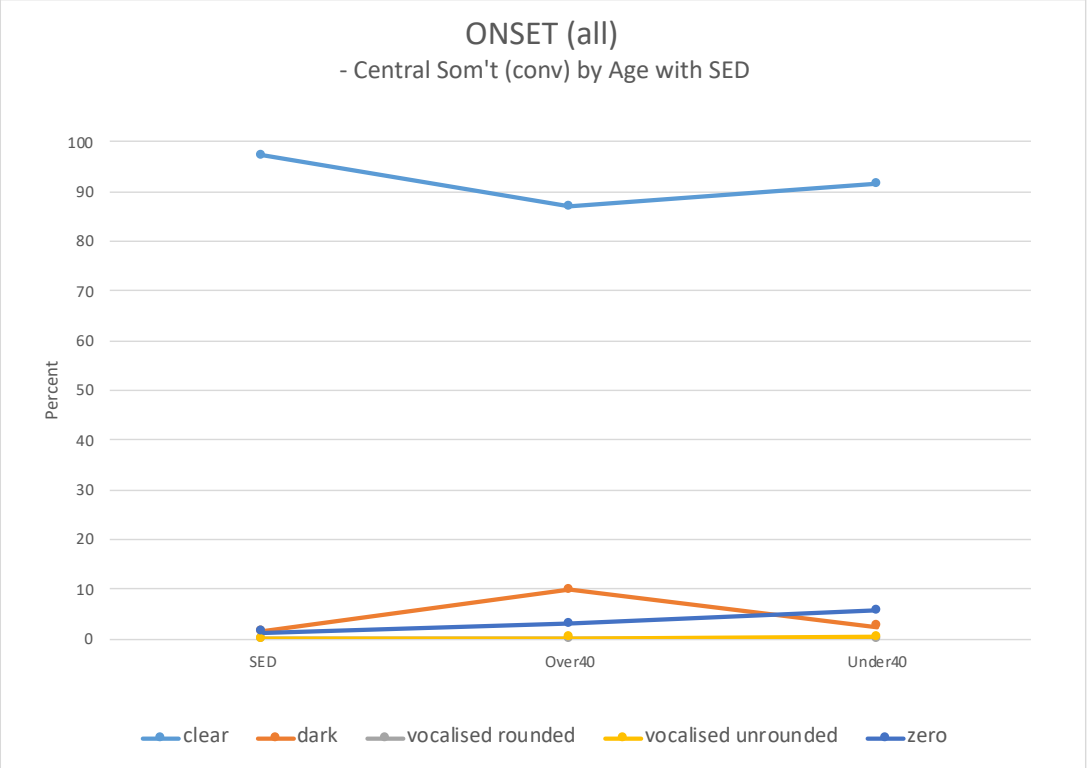


Figure 16 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Onset Conversation

The addition of the SED data to the Onset position dataset indicates that where a variable use of (l) is in place for the Over 40s, this was not the case among this older SED group. Indeed, this SED group has a higher proportional use of the Clear /l/ variant (97% of instances) than the Under 40s group, showing that there has been a statistically significant decrease in the use of Clear /l/ between the SED data and the younger speakers.

The data suggests that where the use of (l) in an Onset position is variable among Over 40s in Central Somerset, it is almost categorical among younger speakers who use a clear variant in 92% of instances. There is a significant difference in use between the Over/Under 40s age groups in use of Dark /l/ (FET p=.025, see Table 25), yet the comparatively small number of instances of Dark /l/ in conversational speech compared with the Clear /l/ variant does indicate that the modern speakers are more likely to use Clear /l/ in a more formal register.

The real time increase in use of the Zero form in an Onset position between the SED speakers and the modern Over 40s speakers suggests that, while this may be happening in very low numbers, the use of the zero form is still a highly significant one (FET p=0.017), and points to a change in progress.

Table 26 - Chi-Square tests in use of Zero /l/ between SED and Over 40s speakers: Onset positions, conversation speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	13.000[b]	6	.043	.017		
Likelihood Ratio	16.048	6	.013	.017		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	10.782			.017		
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.547[c]	1	.019	.013	.007	.001
N of Valid Cases	13					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = conversation

b. 14 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .31.

c. The standardized statistic is -2.355.

An impressionistic analysis of the data across the formal and informal styles for this linguistic environment shows that there has been a change in the use of Clear /l/ and Dark /l/ between the SED speakers and the modern Under 40s speakers. There is little difference in the use of (l) overall as Clear /l/ remains the most frequently used form in both reading and conversational speech by quite some way, but it does suggest a slightly larger amount of variability in the conversational style than in the reading style, as would be expected. The increased use of the zero form across the styles, and particularly among younger speakers, points to a potential change in progress, and this is backed up to an extent by the statistical tests conducted. However, given the already small number of tokens, it would be certainly worth conducting further research into this to see if this pattern continues among a greater number of speakers before concluding that this statistical result is reliable.

6.1.2 INTERVOCALIC

As with the Onset position, we expect to see the Clear /l/ form as the main variant in use among all speakers. And indeed this is the case in the reading exercise, with a statistically significant increase in the use of Clear /l/ across real time (p=0.02 in the Fisher's Exact Test). This is further supported when testing the difference in use of Clear /l/ between SED speakers and modern Over 40s (p=.017, see Table 28), although no significant difference is found between both age groups of modern speakers. The individual Intervocalic positions 'Across Morpheme Boundary' (e.g. stealing) and 'Morpheme Internal' (e.g. Holly) do not differ in the descriptive statistics in reading speech, with Clear /l/ used at similar levels across all age groups, including the SED speakers. In both environments the SED speakers have some low use of Dark /l/ (less than 10%), but this drops considerably between SED and Over 40s speakers and is almost entirely lost among Under 40s speakers.

Of further interest, use of Dark /l/ is higher among the SED speakers than it is among the Over/Under 40s speakers, indicating that the use of Dark /l/ has declined in real time with statistical significance (FET p<0.001, see Table 29). The youngest age group uses exclusively Clear /l/ in this position in the reading style, showing a significant difference between older and younger speakers in the modern dataset (p=.018, see Table 30).

Table 27 - Chi-Square results in use of Clear /l/ across all age groups: Intervocalic position, reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	42.896[b]	22	.005	<.001		
Likelihood Ratio	39.304	22	.013	.001		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	31.347			.002		
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.217[c]	1	.040	.039	.024	.002
N of Valid Cases	29					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 36 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

c. The standardized statistic is -2.054.

Table 28- Chi-Square results in use of Clear /l/ in SED vs Over 40s: Intervocalic position, reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	13.000[b]	6	.043	.017		
Likelihood Ratio	16.048	6	.013	.017		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	10.782			.017		
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.740[c]	1	.002	.001	.001	.001
N of Valid Cases	13					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 14 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .31.

c. The standardized statistic is -3.121.

Table 29 - Chi-Square results in use of Dark /l/ across all age groups: Intervocalic position, reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	18.767[b]	6	.005	.005		
Likelihood Ratio	20.289	6	.002	.002		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	17.364			<.001		
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.418[c]	1	<.001	<.001	<.001	.000
N of Valid Cases	29					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 10 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .28.

c. The standardized statistic is 3.927.

Table 30- Chi-Square results in use of Dark /l/ between Over/Under 40s speakers: Intervocalic position, reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	8.039[b]	3	.045	.018		
Likelihood Ratio	8.615	3	.035	.018		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	7.540			.018		
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.861[c]	1	.009	.008	.008	.008
N of Valid Cases	25					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 6 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

c. The standardized statistic is 2.619.

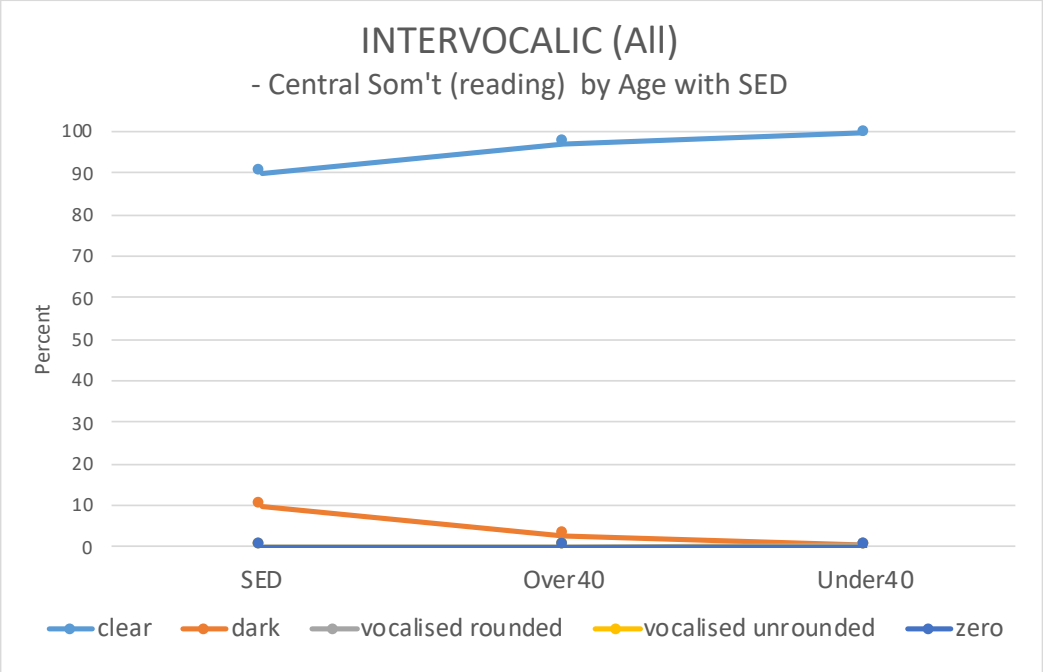


Figure 17 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Intervocalic reading

Table 31 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Intervocalic reading

Central Somerset Reading			
By Age Group	**Intervocalic**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=16)	488	30.5	100
Over 40 (n=9)	287	31.89	97
SED (n=4)	82	20.5	90
Dark			
Under 40 (n=16)	1	0.06	0
Over 40 (n=9)	8	0.89	3
SED (n=4)	9	2.25	10
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	1	0.06	0
Over 40 (n=9)	0	0.00	0
SED (n=4)			0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	0	0.00	0
Over 40 (n=9)	0	0.00	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.00	0
Zero			
Under 40 (n=16)	0	0.00	0
Over 40 (n=9)	0	0.00	0
SED (n=4)	0	0	0

As in the formal reading exercise data, the pattern in the conversation data of use of variants of (l) in the Intervocalic position across age groups is very similar to Onset position (see Table 32). Clear /l/ is the most frequently used form for both age groups, but in Intervocalic position this is with less use among the Over 40s than the Under 40s. Both age groups use Dark /l/, but at a very low rate (both groups are below 20% in their use of Dark /l/). While remaining at very low levels in both Intervocalic positions, there is a very slight increase in instances where /l/ is omitted altogether for the Under 40s age group compared with the Over 40s.

With the inclusion of the SED data, the majority use of Clear /l/ in an Intervocalic position remains consistent across the age groups. In the conversational informal speech style, the Over 40s use of Clear /l/ and Dark /l/ is more in line with that of the SED speakers, indicating that there has been very little change in real time in use of /l/ in an intervocalic position. The apparent time difference in the descriptive data in use of Clear /l/ between the Over 40s and Under 40s becomes more pronounced in this conversational style, although differences in use of Clear /l/ or Dark /l/ in use between these age groups are not shown as statistically significant.

The patterns in use in the individual intervocalic positions in conversational speech do not differ from the overall Intervocalic data presented below. Use of the Dark /l/ form is marginally higher among Under 40s in the Morpheme Internal environment than it is across a morpheme boundary.

Of note here, when comparing the reading and conversational data, is that the use of Dark /l/ is higher among the Over 40s in the conversational data than it is in the reading data. It is also of note that the Under 40s do not have exclusive use of Clear /l/ in this position in the conversational speech where they did in the reading style. However, instead of using the Dark /l/ variant like the older speakers, they use a combination of both Dark /l/ and the Zero form. This reflects the use of the Zero form in the Onset position, particularly in the conversational data, for the Under 40s. Use of Zero /l/ is slightly higher among these same speakers across morpheme boundaries than it is in a morpheme internal environment, although again this is at very low numbers, and does not necessarily indicate an influence in the type of intervocalic environment.

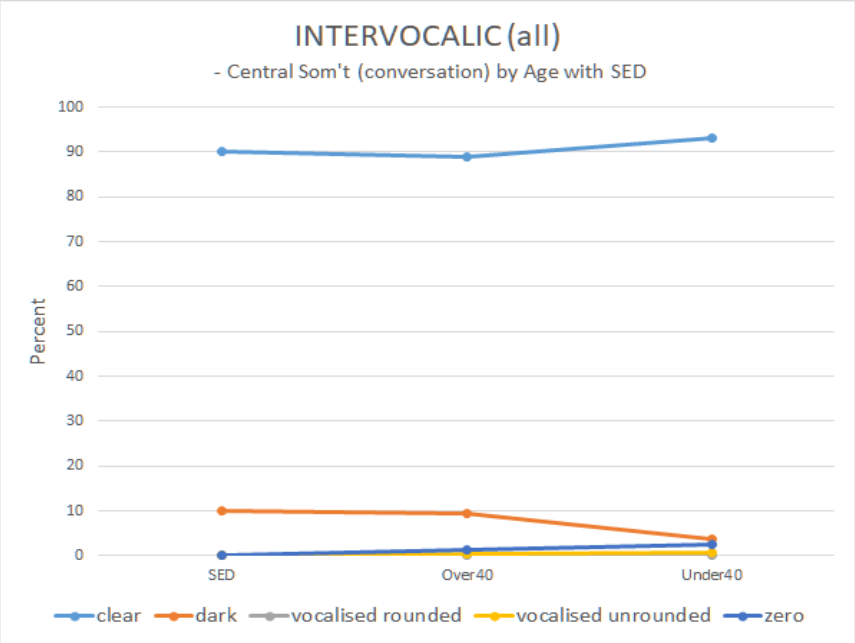


Figure 18 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Intervocalic Conversation

Table 32 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Intervocalic Conversation

Central Somerset Conversation			
By Age Group		**Intervocalic**	
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=16)	819	51.19	93
Over 40 (n=9)	478	53.11	89
SED (n=4)	82	20.5	90
Dark			
Under 40 (n=16)	32	2.00	4
Over 40 (n=9)	50	5.56	9
SED (n=4)	9	2.25	10
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	1	0.06	0
Over 40 (n=9)	0	0.00	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.00	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	7	0.44	1
Over 40 (n=9)	2	0.22	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.00	0
Zero			
Under 40 (n=16)	21	1.31	2
Over 40 (n=9)	7	0.78	1
SED (n=4)	0	0	0

6.1.3 CODA position

As has been discussed earlier in this thesis, the use of (l) in Coda positions is subject to much more variability than that found in the Onset and Intervocalic positions. For this reason, where the results from the Onset and Intervocalic positions were discussed with the positions combined, the Coda positions will all be discussed separately. This will then provide a picture as to which Coda positions are more conducive to L-vocalisation, and which are more resistant.

In the overall Coda position, the data from the reading exercise shows that, in contrast to the use of variants in the Onset and Intervocalic positions, there is a switch in the most frequently used form between the Over/Under 40s age groups. Where it was in the majority use in Onset and Intervocalic positions, use of the Clear /l/ form among the SED speakers is almost entirely lost among the modern speakers (p<.001, see Table 33). The difference in use of Clear /l/ in reading speech between SED speakers and Over 40s is shown as significant (p=.010, see Table 34), as it is among Over and Under 40s speakers (p=.012, see Table 35).

The older speakers, including the SED informants, use Dark /l/ in the large majority of instances, with low use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ (see Figure 19). Use of Dark /l/ across all age groups gives further confirmation to this shift in use of the variants, returning a statistical significance in the change in use of Dark /l/ among all three age groups (p=.025, see Table 36), although when testing across the age groups as pairs (i.e. SED vs Over 40s, Over 40s vs Under 40s), there is no statistical significance found.

The use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ shows real time change in the descriptive statistics as it almost doubles between the SED speakers and the Over 40s group before increasing further still among the Under 40s (see Table 37). Disappointingly, Fisher's Exact Test of this descriptive data does not show any statistical significance in the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ between any of the age groups.

Table 33 - Chi-Square results in use of Clear /l/ across all age groups: Coda position, reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	32.784[b]	12	.001	<.001		
Likelihood Ratio	30.056	12	.003	<.001		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	23.482			<.001		
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.966[c]	1	.005	.004	.004	.001
N of Valid Cases	29					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 20 cells (95.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

c. The standardized statistic is 2.822.

Table 34 - Chi-Square results in use of Clear /l/ between SED and Over 40s speakers: Coda position, reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	13.000[b]	5	.023	.010		
Likelihood Ratio	16.048	5	.007	.010		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	11.613			.010		
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.899[c]	1	.009	.001	.001	.001
N of Valid Cases	13					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 12 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .31.

c. The standardized statistic is 2.627.

Table 35 - Chi-Square results in use of Clear /l/ between Over/Under 40s speakers: Coda position, reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	10.098[b]	3	.018	.012		
Likelihood Ratio	12.815	3	.005	.008		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	9.444			.012		
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.008[c]	1	.083	.110	.064	.043
N of Valid Cases	25					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 7 cells (87.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .72.

c. The standardized statistic is -1.734.

Table 36 - Chi-Square results in use of Dark /l/ across all age groups: Coda position, reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	58.000[b]	48	.153	.025		
Likelihood Ratio	55.940	48	.201	.025		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	52.656			.025		
Linear-by-Linear Association	22.145[c]	1	<.001	<.001	<.001	.000
N of Valid Cases	29					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 75 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

c. The standardized statistic is 4.706.

Nevertheless, the strong use of the Vocalised Rounded form in the formal reading exercise, as demonstrated in the descriptive statistics is telling, particularly among the Under 40s, as it indicates that the Vocalised Rounded form is considered an acceptable variant for formal speech among these younger speakers.

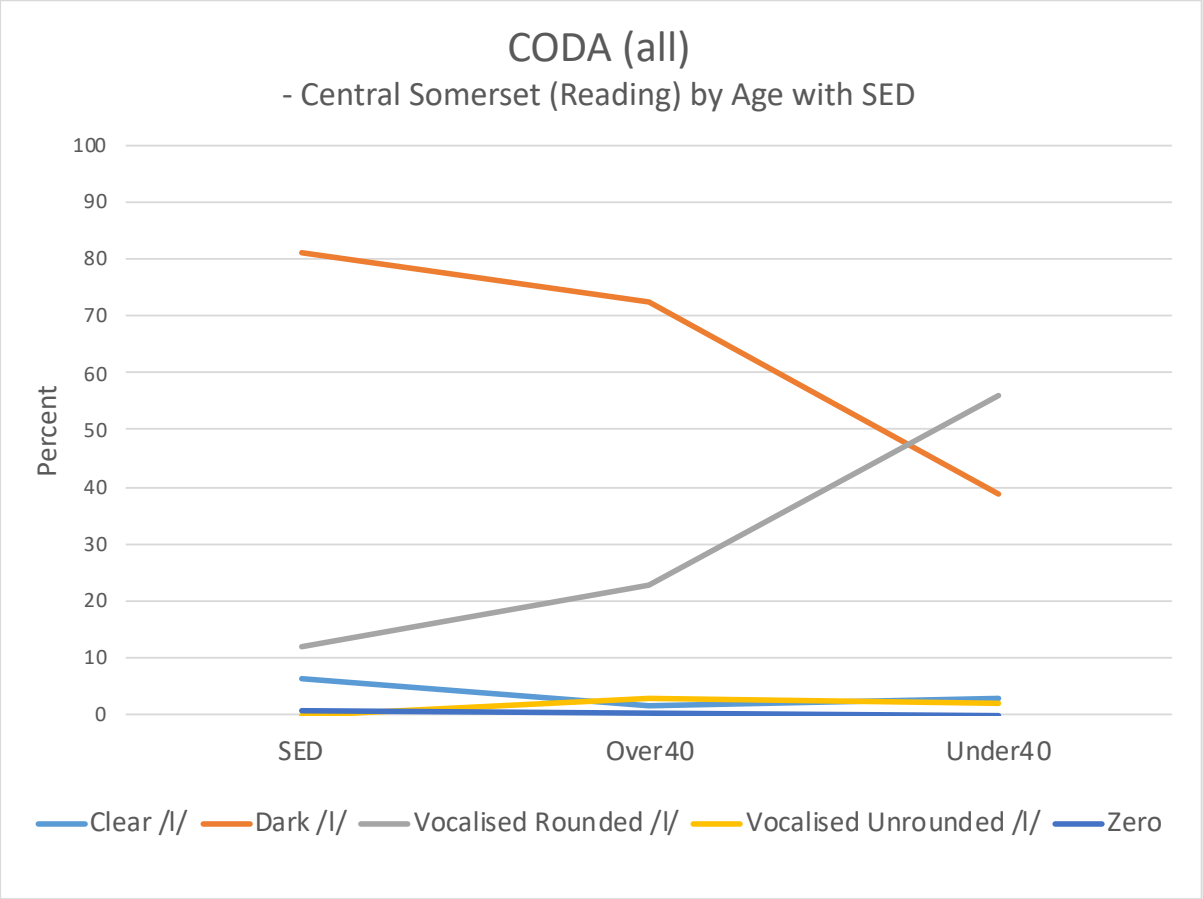


Figure 19 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda reading

Table 37 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda reading

Central Somerset Reading			
By Age Group		**Coda**	
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=16)	23	1.44	3
Over 40 (n=9)	7	0.78	1
SED (n=4)	33	8.25	6
Dark			
Under 40 (n=16)	287	17.94	39
Over 40 (n=9)	348	38.67	73
SED (n=4)	427	106.75	81
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	413	25.81	56
Over 40 (n=9)	109	12.11	23
SED (n=4)	63	15.75	12
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	14	0.87	2
Over 40 (n=9)	13	1.44	3
SED (n=4)	0	0.00	0
Zero			
Under 40 (n=16)	0	0.00	0
Over 40 (n=9)	2	0.22	0
SED (n=4)	3	0.75	1

As in the reading exercise, the overall result in the informal conversational speech style indicates a change from a majority use of Dark /l/ among the SED and Over 40s age groups to that of the Vocalised Rounded /l/ between the Under 40s speakers. The pattern of use in the conversational data (see Figure 20) shows a more linear decline than is seen in the reading style in use of Dark /l/ across all three age groups (see Table 41) and increase in use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ between the three age groups, although again the results here are not statistically significant when using Fisher's Exact Test.

Of note is the small increase in the Vocalised Unrounded form in conversational speech between the SED data and the more recent speakers ($p<.001$, see Table 38), which would indicate that the unrounded form is also increasing in use, although later than the rounded form. In the conversational speech, the Over 40s speakers are more open to vocalisation than SED

speakers (FET p=.003, see Table 39) whereas in the reading exercise they remain more in line with the SED speakers, suggesting a particular resistance to vocalisation in formal speech among these Over 40s speakers. This trend of significance is continued when testing between the older and younger speakers from the modern dataset (p=.002, see Table 40).

Table 38 - Chi-Squared results in use of Vocalised Unrounded /l/ across all age groups: Coda position, conversational speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	51.287[b]	20	<.001	<.001		
Likelihood Ratio	48.302	20	<.001	<.001		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	35.063			<.001		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.134[c]	1	.287	.311	.155	.019
N of Valid Cases	29					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = conversation

b. 33 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

c. The standardized statistic is -1.065.

Table 39 - Chi-Squared results in use of Vocalised Unrounded /l/ Between SED vs Over 40s speakers: Coda position, conversational speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	13.000[b]	5	.023	.003		
Likelihood Ratio	16.048	5	.007	.003		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	11.256			.003		
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.876[c]	1	.090	.077	.001	.001
N of Valid Cases	13					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = conversation

b. 12 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .31.

c. The standardized statistic is -1.696.

Table 40 - Chi-Squared results in use of Vocalised Unrounded /l/ between Over/Under 40s speakers: Coda position, conversational speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	19.213[b]	9	.023	.003		
Likelihood Ratio	25.033	9	.003	.003		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	17.347			.002		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.873[c]	1	.350	.423	.214	.027
N of Valid Cases	25					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = conversation

b. 20 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

c. The standardized statistic is .935.

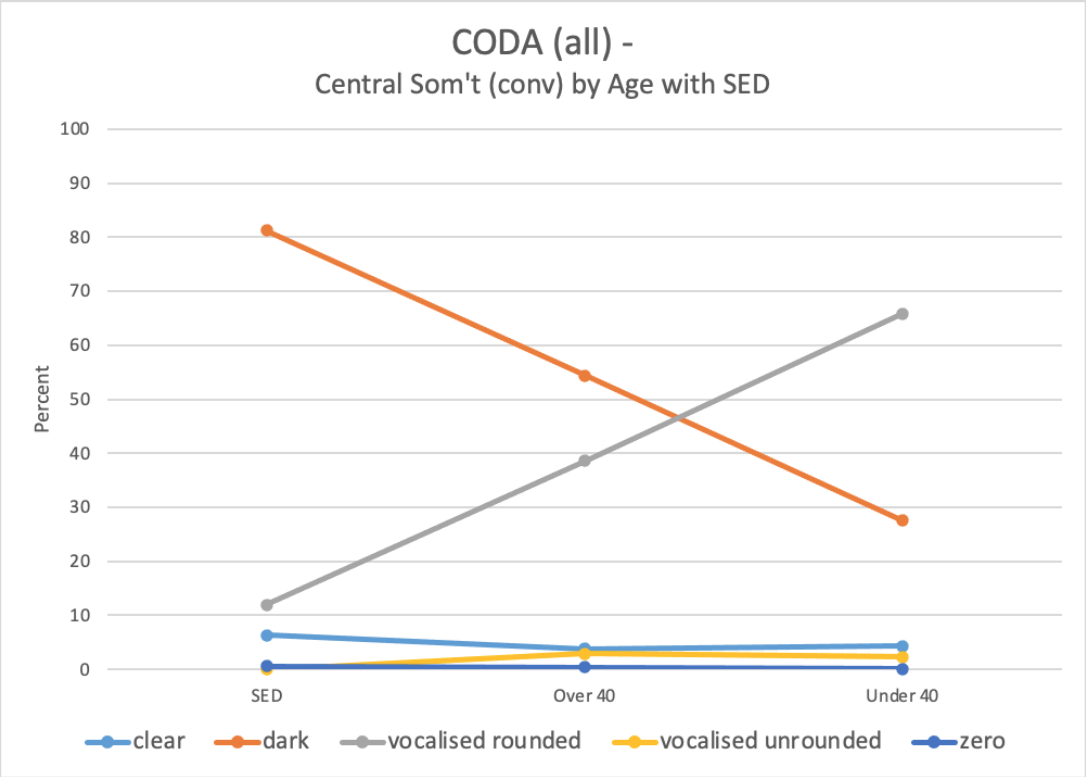


Figure 20 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda conversation

Table 41 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Conversation

Central Somerset Conversation			
By Age Group	**Coda**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=16)	114	7.13	4
Over 40 (n=9)	62	6.89	4
SED (n=4)	33	8.25	6
Dark			
Under 40 (n=16)	730	45.63	27
Over 40 (n=9)	896	99.56	54
SED (n=4)	427	106.75	81
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	1749	109.31	66
Over 40 (n=9)	636	70.67	39
SED (n=4)	63	15.75	12
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=16)	60	3.75	2
Over 40 (n=9)	47	5.22	3
SED (n=4)	0	0.00	0
Zero			
Under 40 (n=16)	3	0.19	0
Over 40 (n=9)	7	0.78	0
SED (n=4)	3	0.75	1

This overall picture for the Coda position shows that the use of Dark /l/, which was in the very high majority among the SED speakers and thus categorical, is now variable alongside the Vocalised Rounded form for the more modern speakers in the Over/Under 40s age groups. It is useful, therefore, to look more closely at the different Coda environments to see which are more favourable to L-vocalisation and which are more resistant to it. However, where statistical analysis could be conducted when combining these Coda positions, the number of tokens per speaker in the Coda position is too low to provide a reliable statistical analysis, particularly

when breaking the data down into further categories as will happen in the following chapter reviewing the impact of gender.

6.1.3.1 CODA Pre-Consonant

The Coda Pre-Consonant forms in the reading data are found in words such as '*field*' and '*called*'.

Table 42 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant reading

Coda Pre-Consonant (Reading) Central Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	13	6	170	82	24	12	0	0	0	0	207	100
Over40	1	1	84	54	68	44	2	1	0	0	155	100
Under40	0	0	110	42	136	52	16	6	0	0	660	100
Totals	15	1	551	54	420	41	36	4	0	0	1022	100

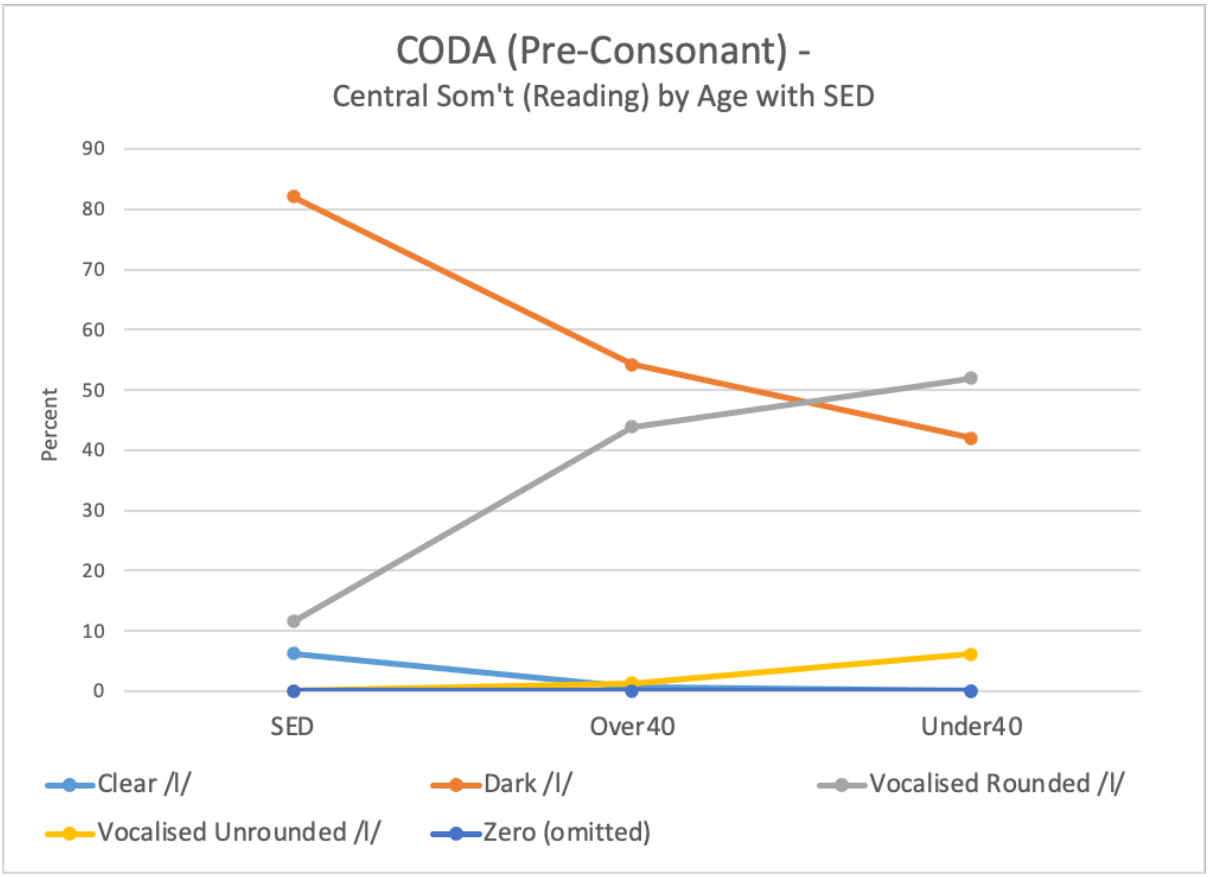


Figure 21 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant Reading

In the reading exercise, the real time data between the SED and Over 40s speakers show a sharp decrease in use of the Dark /l/ form and an equally sharp increase in the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ (see Figure 21). Here, use of Dark /l/ decreases from 82% among the SED speakers to 54% among the Over 40s (see Table 42), and the Vocalised Rounded form increases from 12% use among the SED speakers to 44% among the Over 40s. This sharp change in use then levels out somewhat in the apparent time data between the Over/Under 40s. Between these modern speakers there is a change in the use of the majority forms, from Dark /l/ among the Over 40s to Vocalised Rounded /l/ among the Under 40s. Of the three age groups, the difference between the Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded forms is smallest among the Under 40s speakers, where Dark /l/ is used in 42% of instances, and Vocalised Rounded /l/ is used in 52% of instances. The remaining 6% of instances in the Under 40s reading exercise is found in the use of the Vocalised Unrounded forms, where this is almost entirely unused by the Over 40s (1% of tokens) and the SED speakers (no instances at all).

Turning to the conversational speech style, there is once again a switch in the most frequently used form between the Over 40s and Under 40s, from Dark /l/ to Vocalised Rounded /l/. Vocalised Rounded /l/ is much higher among the Under 40s in a conversational style (67% of instances, see Table 43 below) when compared with their use of this form in the reading exercise (50%, as shown in Table 42 above). At the same time, the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among the Over 40s age group remains around the same level, suggesting that the younger speakers are more susceptible to style shift than older speakers in this linguistic position. In the informal register of the conversational speech, however, the Under 40s are much more comfortable to use Vocalised Rounded /l/ at a higher rate.

Table 43 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant conversation

Coda Pre-Consonant (Conversation) - Central Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	13	6	170	82	24	12	0	0	0	0	207	100
Over40	0	0	249	53	201	42	23	5	0	0	473	100
Under40	4	1	228	30	514	67	25	3	0	0	771	100
	17	1	647	45	739	51	48	3	0	0	1451	100

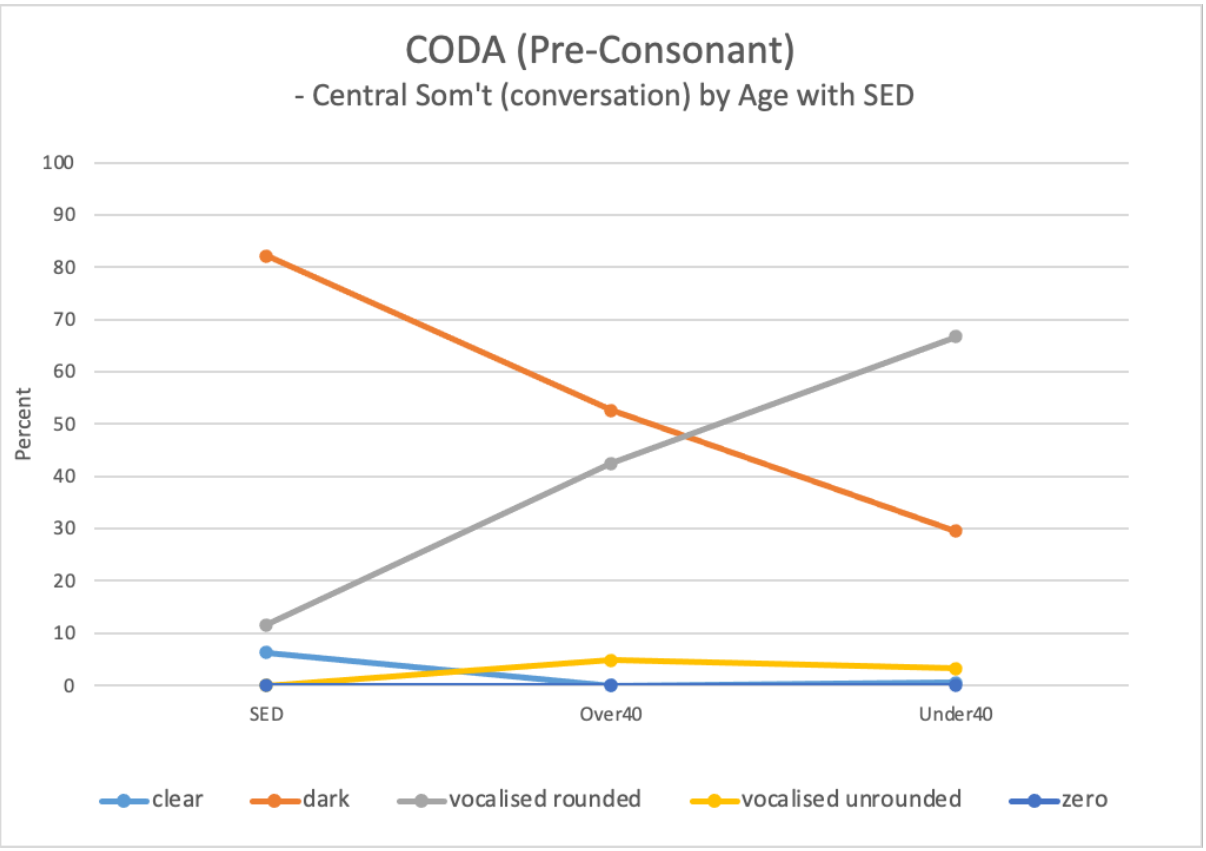


Figure 22 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant conversation

Looking at the lesser-used variants in this group, there is a change in use of Clear /l/ and Vocalised Unrounded between the SED data and the Over 40s group, with a reduction of Clear /l/ and an increase in Vocalised Unrounded that then reduces slightly from the Over 40s to the Under 40s.

6.1.3.2 CODA Word-Final

Examples of (l) appearing in a word final position include *pull*, and *still*. Within the reading exercise, there is once again a difference in use of (l) in a formal style. The Over 40s speakers have high use of Dark /l/ (62%) and low use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ (34%), whereas for the Under 40s, the reverse is true (40% Dark /l/, and 59% Vocalised Rounded /l/).

Table 44 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Word Final reading

CODA Word Final (Reading)												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	8	20	22	54	9	22	0	0	2	5	41	100
Over40	0	0	96	62	53	34	4	3	2	1	155	100
Under40	0	0	89	40	133	59	3	1	0	0	225	100
Totals	8	2	207	49	195	46	7	2	4	1	421	100

The data from the SED shows that Coda Word Final position was much more variable among those speakers. Clear /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ are almost equal in use among SED speakers, and in turn are in greater use among these same speakers in this Word Final position than they were in the Coda Pre-Consonant position. Indeed, when comparing the SED data to the Over 40s group in the reading exercise, the SED speakers use Dark /l/ less than the Over 40s. The younger speakers, on the other hand, favour the Vocalised Rounded form, despite the more formal speech style.

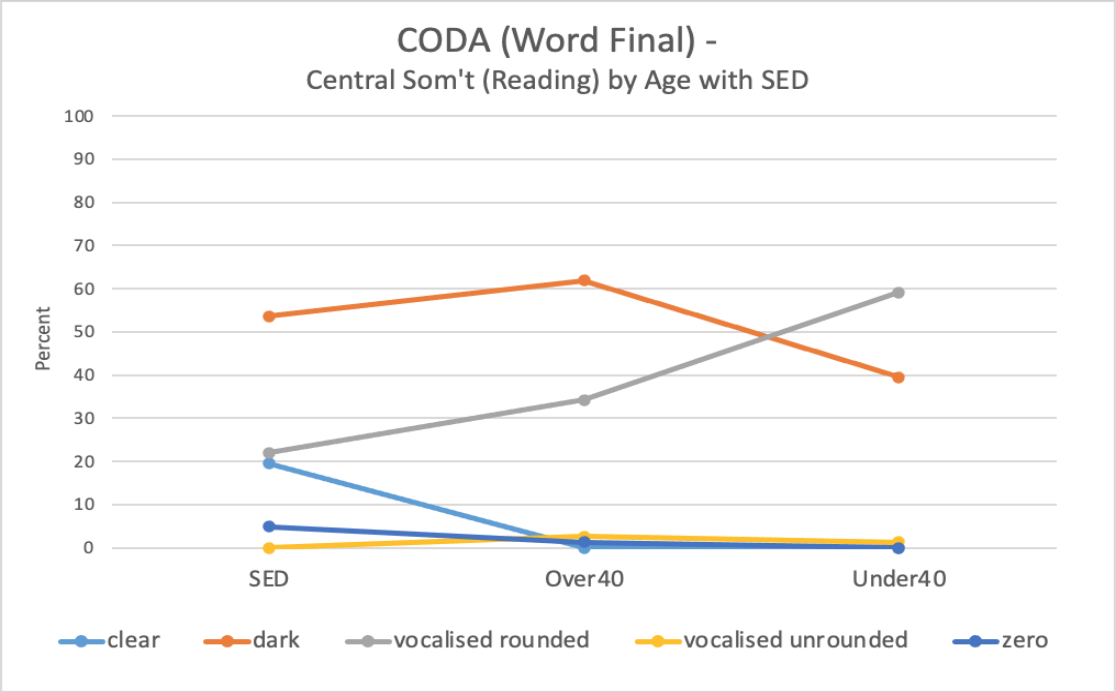


Figure 23 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Word Final reading

Table 45 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Word Final conversation

CODA Word Final (Conversation) - Central Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
SED	8	20	22	54	9	22	0	0	2	5	41	100
Over40	4	1	270	46	287	49	15	3	5	1	581	100
Under40	9	1	219	23	716	74	23	2	2	0	969	100
	21	1	511	32	1012	64	38	2	9	1	1591	100

The change in speech style to conversational speech makes a considerable difference to the use of variants of (l), particularly among the Over 40s group. In the conversational style, both of the age groups from the modern data set use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority, where the SED speakers have very little use of this form. Among the Over 40s age group, use of Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ is at approximately the same rate (46% and 49% respectively, see Table 45) showing an increase in the use of the Vocalised Rounded form when

compared to the data from the Reading exercise for the Over 40s, suggesting that Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ are interchangeable for these speakers.

Among the Under 40s, though, the difference in the use of Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the conversational speech style is considerably greater than it was in the reading exercise. While the Under 40s showed a higher use of the Vocalised Rounded form than Dark /l/ in Coda Word-Final position in the formal speech style, these younger speakers have increased their use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the conversational speech style, suggesting they are aware that Dark l/ might be considered the more appropriate choice in a formal speech style, but are still comfortable using the Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority of instances regardless of the register.

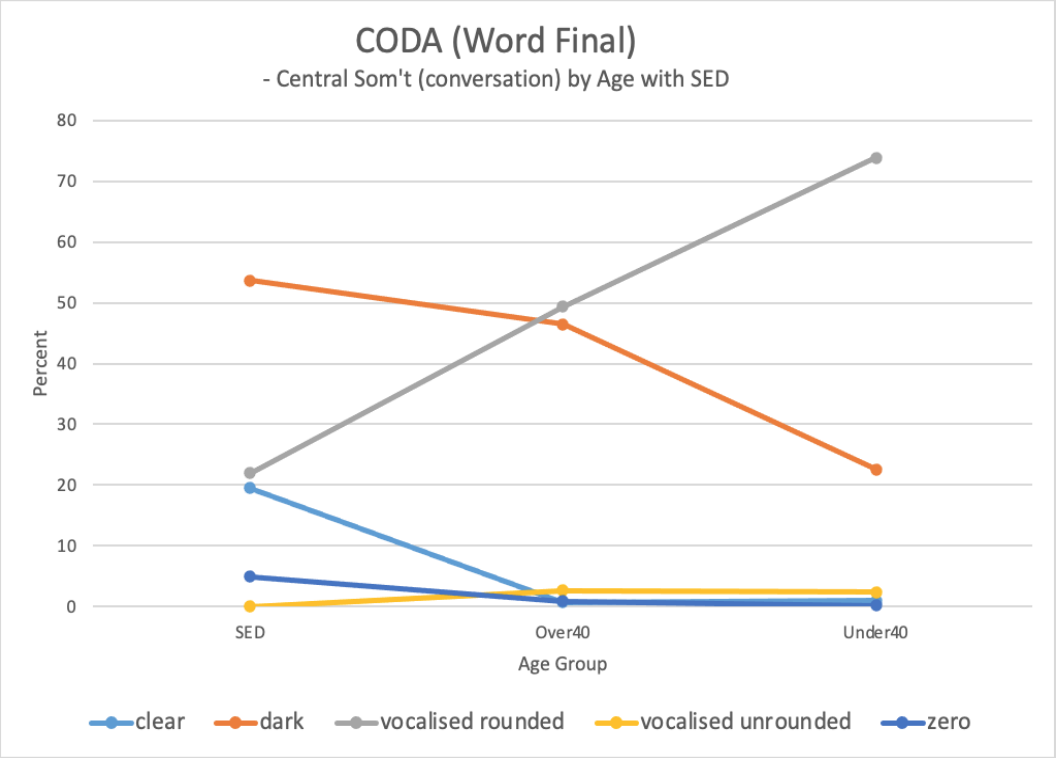


Figure 24 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Word Final conversation

SED data shows that Vocalised Rounded /l/ was in use in this position at a rate higher than has been seen in the other Coda positions so far. Also note, Vocalised Rounded /l/ is slightly higher in use than the Clear /l/ form: a pattern that was also seen in the Coda Pre-Consonant position. Moreover, in both speech styles, the modern speakers use almost no tokens with a Clear /l/, which suggests that modern speakers are moving away from the SED speech patterns when using a formal register, but the Over 40s speakers are not using (l) in the same way as their younger counterparts. Instead, they appear to be using a speech style closer to many other south of England varieties, including that of RP.

The trajectory of change between the three age groups for the Vocalised Rounded /l/ form seems fairly consistent, increasing from the SED speakers to the Under 40s age group across real and apparent time without any real change of pace. The decline in use of Dark /l/ seems to be greater between the Over/Under 40s age groups than it does across real time between the SED and Over 40s speakers, due to the greater variation in use of (l) in this position within the SED data, whereas the Over/Under 40s restrict any variation to just the Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded forms in both the reading and conversational styles.

6.1.3.3 CODA Post-Consonant

Examples of post-consonantal (l) in this dataset include *single* and *candle.* Post-Consonant position in the reading exercise shows almost no change at all in the use of (l) over real time between the SED speakers and the Over 40s age group. Both age groups use Dark /l/ in over 90% of instances (see Table 46), whereas 10% of instances use Vocalised Rounded /l/. This changes dramatically when moving on to the Under 40s group, who use the Vocalised Rounded form in the majority of instances (62% of tokens).

Compared with the other Coda positions, this position so far has demonstrated greater resistance to change in use of (l) variants. The increase in use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ seems to have only occurred between the two more recent age groups, with no change at all between the SED and Over 40s age group.

Table 46 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant reading

CODA Post-Consonant (Reading) Central Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	1	1	98	92	7	7	0	0	0	0	106	100
Over40	0	0	73	94	5	6	0	0	0	0	78	100
Under40	0	0	50	38	80	62	0	0	0	0	130	100
Totals	1	0	221	70	92	29	0	0	0	0	314	100

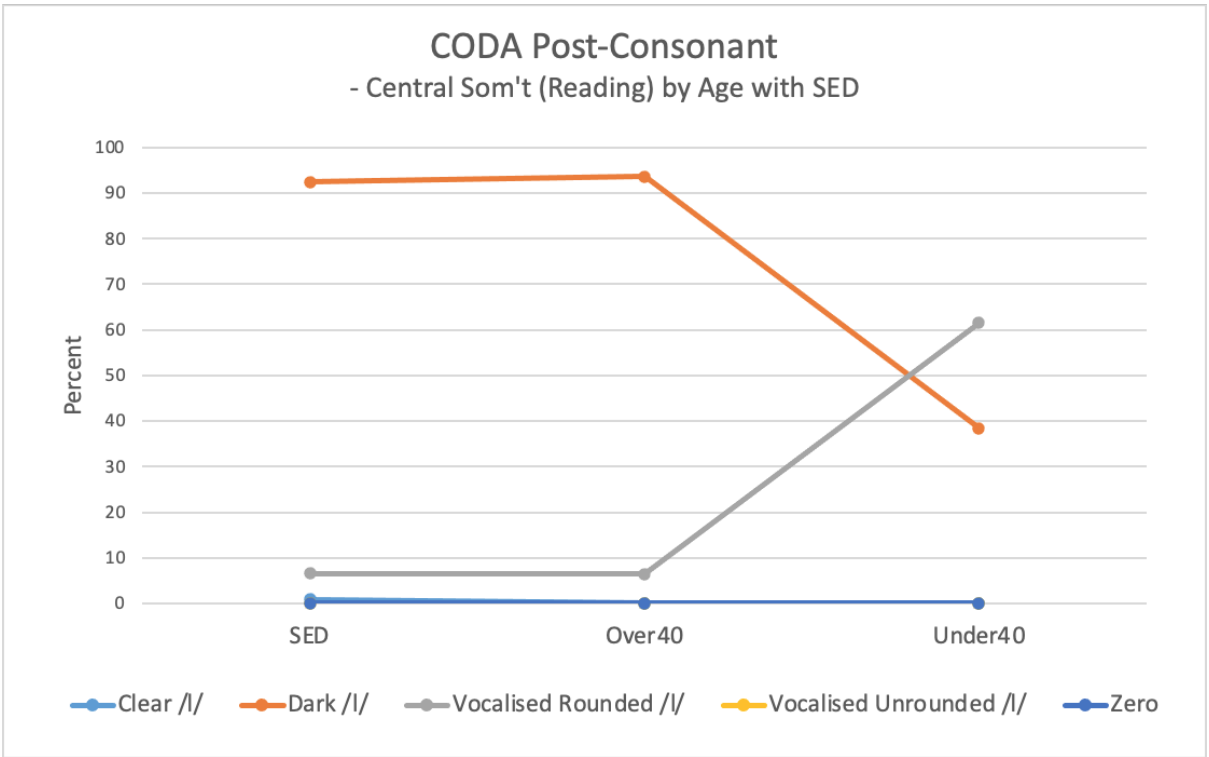


Figure 25 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant reading

The pattern found in the conversational data is quite different to that seen in the reading exercise. Here we see a marked difference between the Over 40s and the SED speakers, with the now-familiar pattern where the Over 40s use a Dark /l/ in the majority, but the Under 40s use the Vocalised Rounded form the most frequently, as in previous Coda positions. Both age groups use the Dark /l/ and the Vocalised Rounded /l/ variably.

Table 47 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant conversation

CODA Post-consonant (Conversation) Central Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	1	1	98	92	7	7	0	0	0	0	106	100
Over40	0	0	127	60	83	39	2	1	0	0	212	100
Under40	1	0	127	29	306	70	2	0	0	0	436	100
Totals	2	0	352	47	396	53	4	1	0	0	754	100

The use of Dark /l/ decreases while Vocalised Rounded /l/ increases between the SED speakers and their present-day counterparts in the Over 40s age group (see Figure 26 below). This real time change is further strengthened by the further decrease in Dark /l/ and increase in Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the apparent time between the Over 40s and the Under 40s, indicating an almost unwavering progression of change between the three age groups. It would seem, therefore, that while L-vocalisation has met some resistance among the older speakers in the more formal register, there is no such resistance in the conversational style.

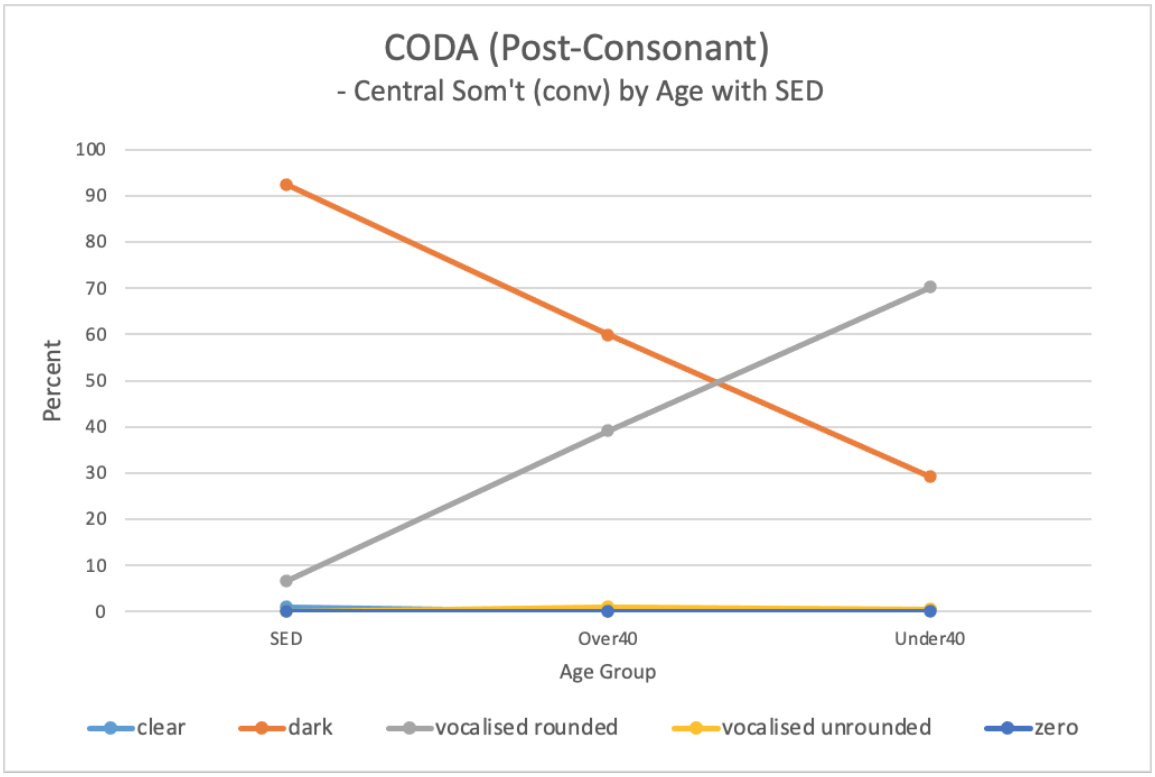


Figure 26 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant conversation

6.1.3.4 CODA Prepausal

Examples of (l) in a Coda Prepausal position are similar to those in a word-final position, but they occur at the end of an utterance and are therefore not followed by any subsequent phoneme. As a result, there are fewer instances of this Coda position in the entire dataset as it requires the criteria of both word-final and utterance-final positions.

The data in the reading exercise for the Coda Prepausal position follows a similar pattern to that in the Post-Consonant position, where any great use of the Vocalised Rounded form only occurs among the Under 40s age group. Where this Prepausal position differs, though, is that the Over 40s age group increases use of Dark /l/ over that found in the SED group, (see Table 48 below). While the Under 40s age group uses the Vocalised Rounded form in the majority of

instances (54% of tokens), they still make considerable use of the Dark /l/ form (42% of tokens), suggesting that in a formal style the Under 40s use these two forms variably. These younger speakers also use Unrounded Vocalised form in 4% of instances where the older speakers do not use it at all.

Table 48 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Prepausal reading

CODA Prepausal (Reading) Central Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	10	6	131	79	23	14	0	0	1	1	165	100
Over40	0	0	26	87	4	13	0	0	0	0	30	100
Under40	0	0	24	42	31	54	2	4	0	0	57	100
Totals	10	4	181	72	58	23	2	1	1	0	252	100

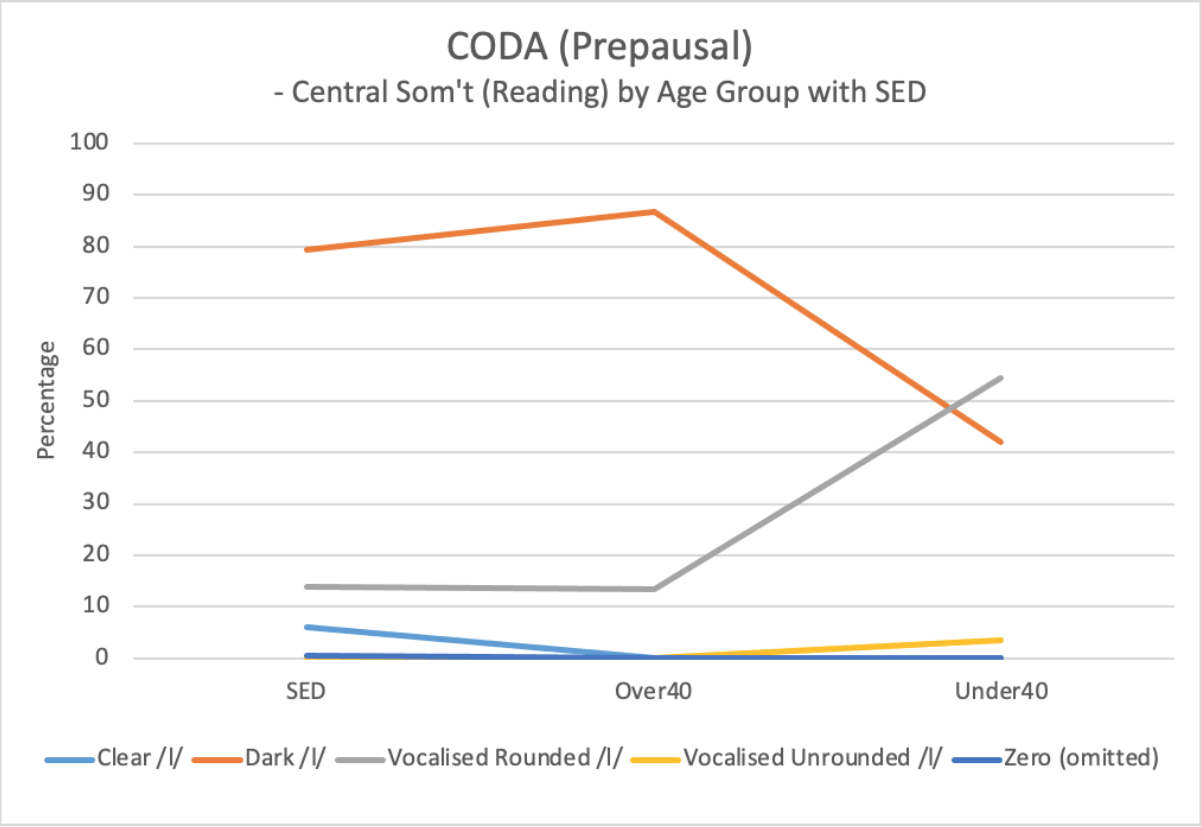


Figure 27 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Prepausal reading

Table 49 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Prepausal conversation

CODA Prepausal (Conversation) - Central Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	10	6	131	79	23	14	0	0	1	1	165	100
Over40	0	0	53	58	36	40	1	1	1	1	91	100
Under40	0	0	26	31	54	64	4	5	0	0	84	100
Totals	10	3	210	62	113	33	5	1	2	1	340	100

The pattern in the conversational style in Coda Prepausal once again shows a more consistent linear progression in the decrease in use of Dark /l/ and the increase in use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ across all three age groups (see Figure 28 below). There is no other variability between the variants, with the exception of some further minor use of the Unrounded Vocalised form in the younger speakers.

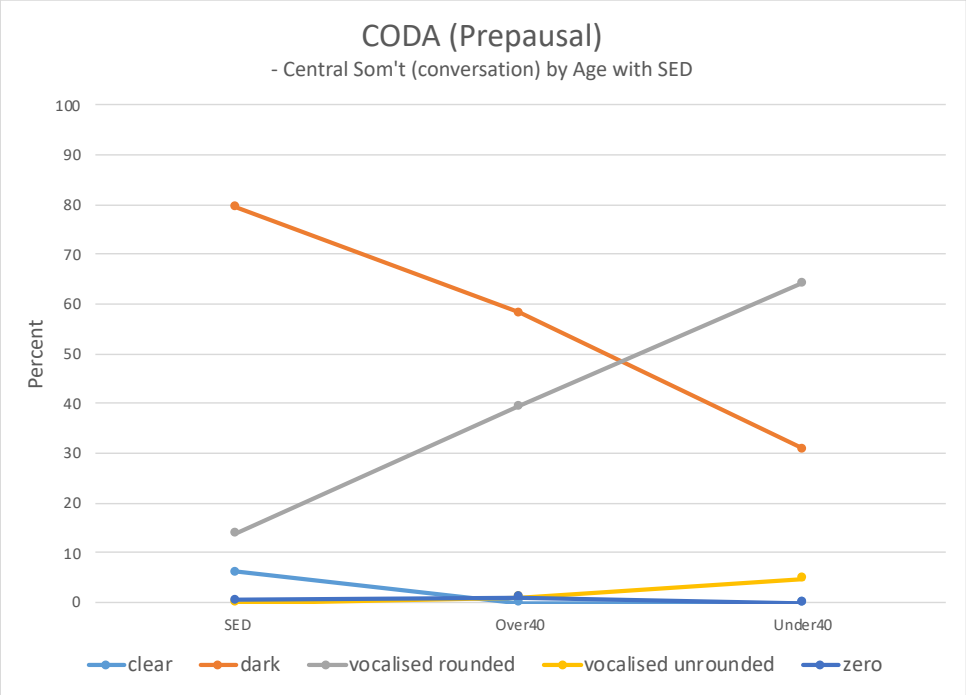


Figure 28 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Prepausal conversation

6.1.3.5 CODA (Pre-Vowel)

The Coda Pre-Vowel form (henceforth 'Pre-Vowel') is one that occurs in a mid-utterance word-final position, and where the following word begins with a vowel, e.g. *we**ll** **e**stablished*. Data from the reading exercise show that the Pre-Vowel position behaves very differently to the other Coda positions discussed so far. The Pre-Vowel position is the only position in the Coda set that has Dark /l/ in the majority across all three age groups. The degree to which this is used does vary, but an initial slow decline between the SED and Over 40s speakers rapidly decreases further between the Over and Under 40s speakers.

Of note here is the use of Clear /l/ in this position for all speakers, which both the SED and Over 40s age groups use in 14% of instances. Vocalised Rounded /l/ does not appear at all in the SED data but has some low use of 4% among the Over 40s.

Among the Under 40s age group, the use of (l) becomes more variable, as their use of Dark /l/ is lower in this position than in the other Coda positions, and the use of the Clear /l/ form increases between these speakers and the Over 40s (see Table 50 below). Indeed, where in other Coda positions these younger speakers have used Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority, here that form is relegated to 3rd position, below the Clear variant.

Table 50 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel reading

CODA Pre-Vowel (Reading) Central Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	1	14	6	86	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	100
Over40	7	14	41	82	2	4	0	0	0	0	50	100
Under40	22	30	40	54	12	16	0	0	0	0	74	100
Totals	30	23	87	66	14	11	0	0	0	0	131	100

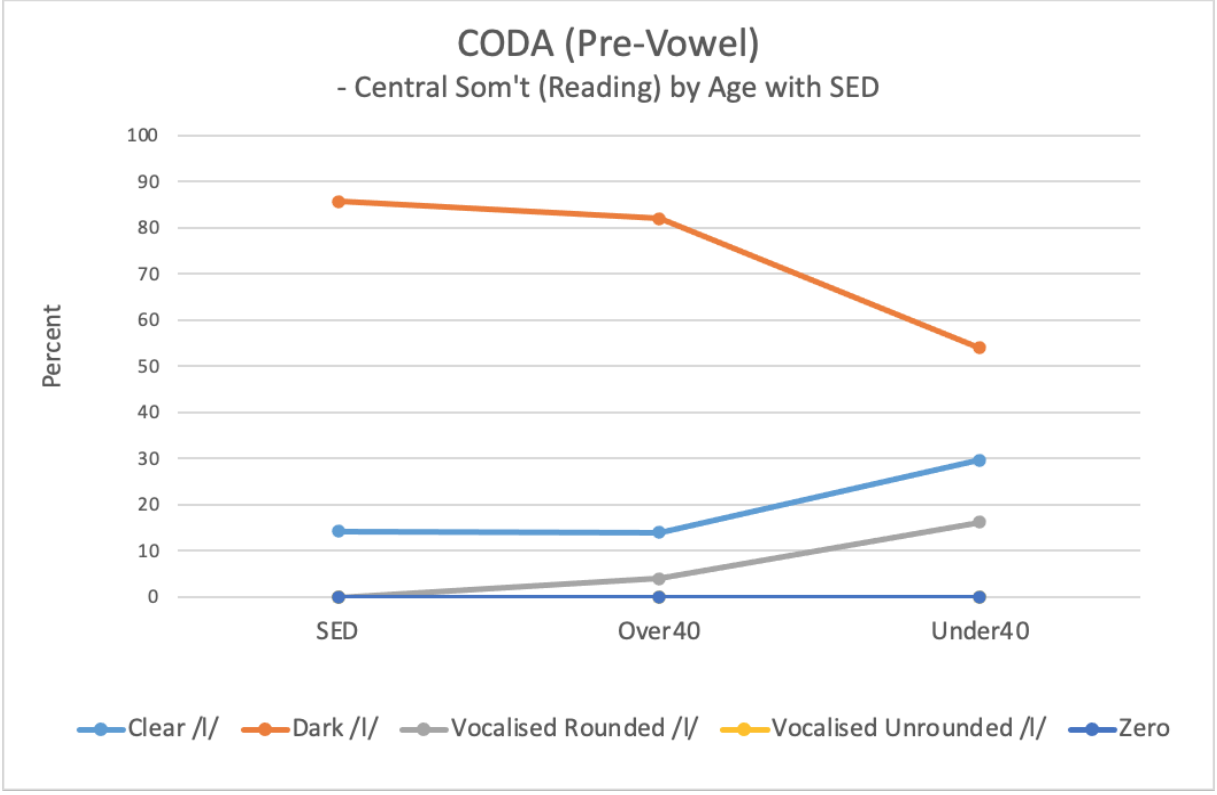


Figure 29 - Visualisation of L-realisation of Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel reading

The conversational data shows a pattern that is more familiar within the Coda positions: Dark /l/ is most frequently used among the SED and Over 40s age groups, and the Under 40s use Vocalised Rounded /l/ most frequently. This greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among these youngest speakers in turn reduces Clear /l/ to third position in this conversational data.

Table 51 - L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel conversation

CODA Pre-Vowel (Conversation) Central Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	1	14	6	86	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	100
Over40	58	20	197	68	29	10	6	2	1	0	291	100
Under40	100	25	130	33	159	40	6	2	1	0	396	100
Totals	159	23	333	48	188	27	12	2	2	0	694	100

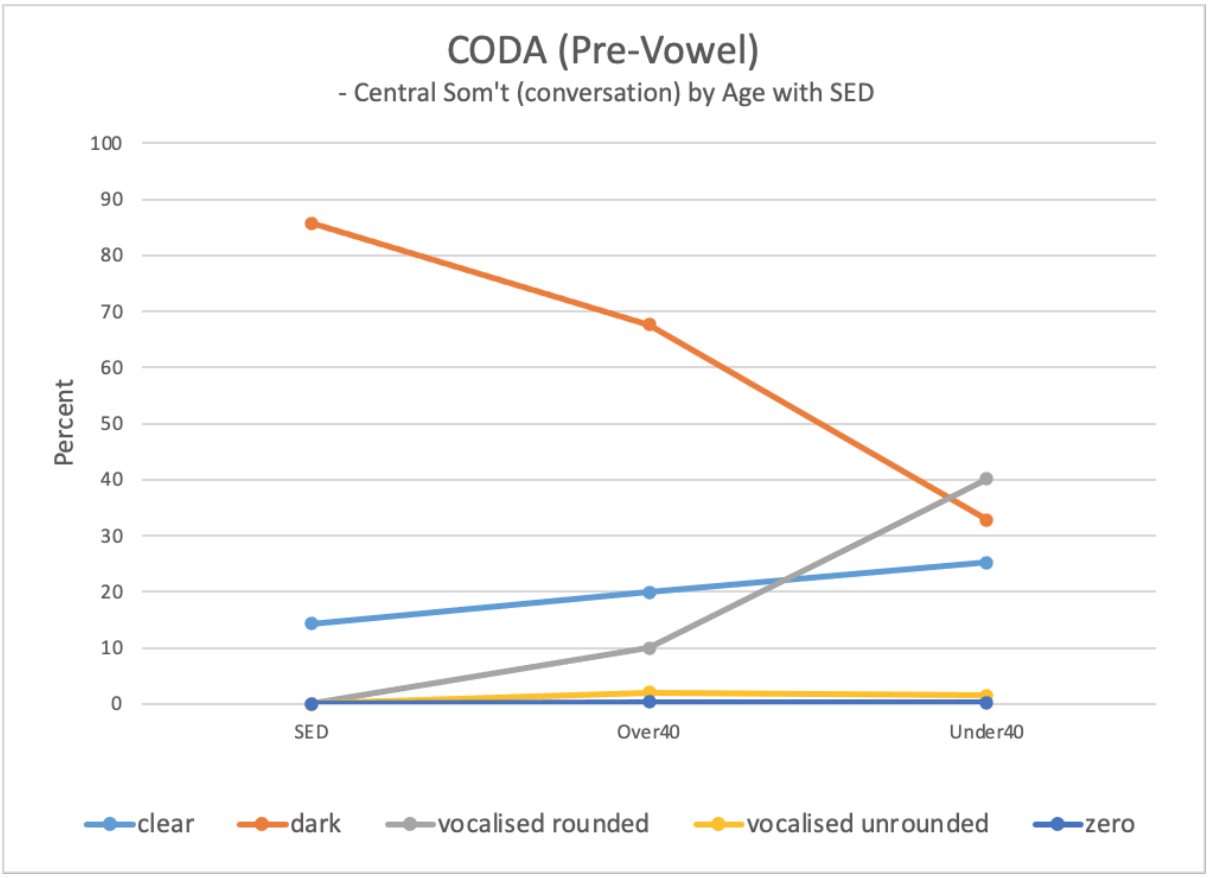


Figure 30 - Visualisation of L-realisation in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel conversation

The less formal register also has an impact on the use of the variants for the Over 40s. In the reading dataset the use of Dark /l/ for these speakers was above 80%. In the Conversational dataset, the use of Dark /l/ falls below 70% (see Table 51), whereas both Clear /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ increase in use.

The use of variants in the Pre-Vowel position compared with the other Coda positions points to its hybrid nature of being between an Intervocalic and a Coda environment. The use of Clear /l/ in this position where it doesn't occur in any great amount in the other Coda positions would suggest that this is an Intervocalic position in its own right. However, the high use of the Dark /l/ form among all speakers in the reading exercise, which is then replaced as the dominant form by the Vocalised Rounded /l/ among the Under 40s age group in the conversational data set reinforces its status as a Coda position.

The Coda Pre-Vowel position is therefore the most resistant to L-vocalisation, as it brings increased variability among not only the Vocalised Rounded and Dark /l/ forms, but also with the Clear /l/ variant. The 'pseudo-intervocalic' nature increases the need to separate the vowels with either a Dark or Clear /l/. This requirement is considered less important among

the younger speakers, though, who are more likely to adopt the more sonorant vocalised rounded form.

6.1.4 Summarising and discussing the results from Central Somerset

In an Onset position, the descriptive results indicated that, when comparing the SED data with the two age groups from the more recent data collection in both speech styles, there has been a slight change over real time. In the formal reading speech style, the use of Clear /l/ is increased among the Over/Under 40s, both of whom use Clear /l/ more frequently than the SED speakers. This change appears to be in line with that typical of many other varieties in the south of England, where clear /l/ is almost exclusively used. It is noted, though, that younger speakers have reduced use of Clear /l/ in favour of a slight increase in use of the zero form. The low number of tokens of the zero form among the SED speakers indicates that it was almost unused in this position. Therefore, any higher level of use among the speakers from the more recent data collection both Over and Under 40, then this is an indication of a change. The statistical tests back this up.

The Intervocalic position follows a very similar pattern to the Onset for both speech styles, where Clear /l/ is once again the dominant form throughout. As is to be expected, the use of Clear /l/ in these positions drops slightly in the conversational data set compared with the reading exercise, but the descriptive statistics show this only by a very small percentage. Statistical significance is shown across all three age groups in the use of Clear /l/ in the conversational data, and for both Clear and Dark /l/ in the reading exercise, whereas when comparing the two more recent datasets, the Over/Under 40s, significance is only found in the use of Dark /l/ in both speech styles.

As previously mentioned, the Coda positions offer considerably more variation. There is a consistent 'switch' in use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ and Dark /l/ between the Over 40s and Under 40s in all positions, and in both styles. Of interest is how Vocalised Rounded /l/ is used to a high degree by the younger speakers in both speech styles, albeit to a lesser extent in favour of the Dark /l/ form in the more formal speech. Also of note is the increasing use of the Vocalised Unrounded /l/ in conversational speech, which is occurring in low numbers but could suggest the early stages of another form of vocalisation in progress. Use of both vocalised forms in reading speech suggests that these younger speakers are still aware that the Dark /l/ form might be considered the more prestigious or 'correct' form to use, but that they are still comfortable using the Vocalised Rounded form in the majority of cases. While the Over 40s speakers may have more of a tendency to use the Vocalised Rounded form than the SED speakers, particularly

when using a less formal style, they still increase the use of Dark /l/ in the reading exercise to suit the scenario accordingly.

6.2 West Somerset

Having reviewed the data from the Central Somerset region by Age, this thesis now turns to the data from the West Somerset participants. The same approach is taken whereby the Onset and Intervocalic linguistic environment groups are discussed at a more general level, and then the data for the Coda environment groups are discussed in more detail to account for the greater variation in their results.

6.2.1 ONSET

Where the descriptive data from Central Somerset sees use of Clear /l/ in Onset position as fairly stable from the SED to the younger speakers in the reading exercise, in West Somerset there is a decrease in use of this variant over real time (see Table 52). The 'dip' seen in Central Somerset among the Over 40s age group is also apparent here in West Somerset, though (see Figure 31 below). Use of Dark /l/ among the Over/Under 40s is higher than that found in Central Somerset in the same speech style and increases slightly among the West Somerset speakers over real time, although this is not supported by Fisher's Exact Test. Such an increase in Dark /l/ in is somewhat unexpected as one would expect lower use among the younger speakers, particularly in a formal speech style, if one assumes the target variety for formal speech is modelled on a non-regional variety such as Received Pronunciation (RP) or even Estuary English where Dark /l/ is not typically present in Onset position.

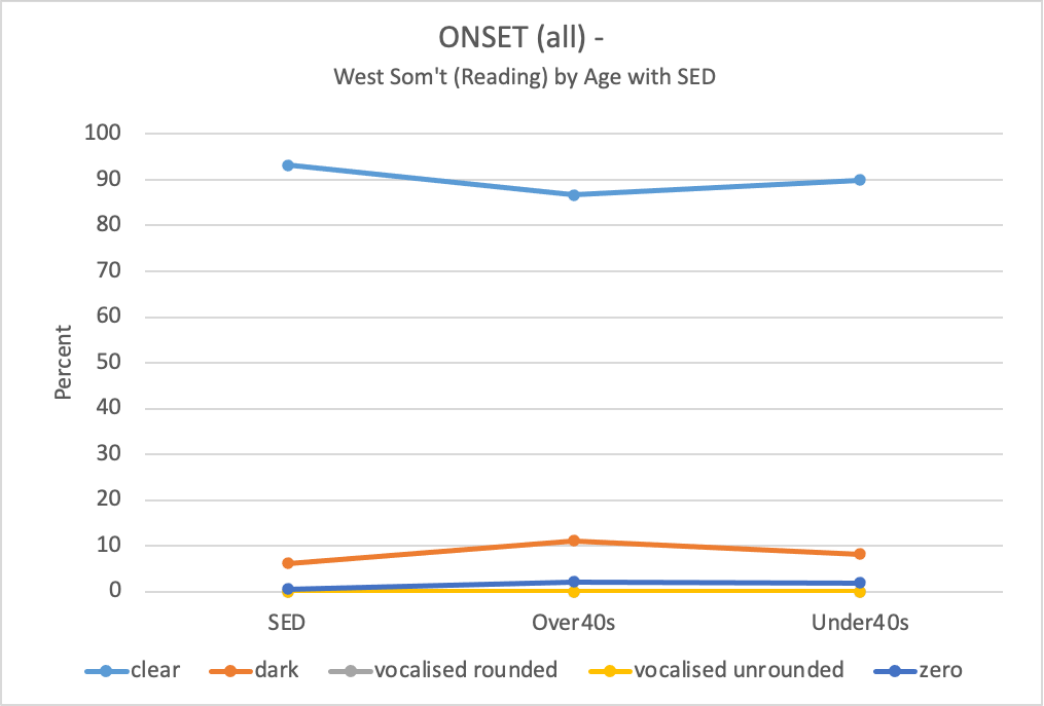


Figure 31 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Onset reading

Table 52 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Onset reading

West Somerset Reading			
By Age Group	**Onset**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=6)	231	38.500	90
Over 40 (n=13)	522	40.150	87
SED (n=4)	315	78.750	93
Dark			
Under 40 (n=6)	21	3.500	8
Over 40 (n=13)	67	5.150	11
SED (n=4)	21	5.250	6
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	0	0.000	0
Over 40 (n=13)	0	0.000	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.000	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	0	0.000	0
Over 40 (n=13)	0	0.000	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.000	0
Zero			
Under 40 (n=6)	5	0.830	2
Over 40 (n=13)	13	1.000	2
SED (n=4)	2	0.500	1

In the conversational data, use of Clear /l/ returns to the more familiar stable high use across all three age groups, confirmed by Fisher's Exact Test where no significance is found, indicating no difference across the age groups. In this conversational style, the Over 40s use Clear /l/ in 10% more instances than in the reading exercise, apparently rejecting Clear /l/ as the more formal 'correct' form and adopting the Dark /l/ form instead. The simultaneous reduction in use of the Dark /l/ form between reading and conversational speech styles is tempered somewhat by the greater use of the Zero form increasing across the age groups. Chi-Square tests were run against all the data in the Onset position in both speech styles, but no

significant result was returned. This is perhaps not surprising, given the similarity is use of the variants across the age groups in both speech styles.

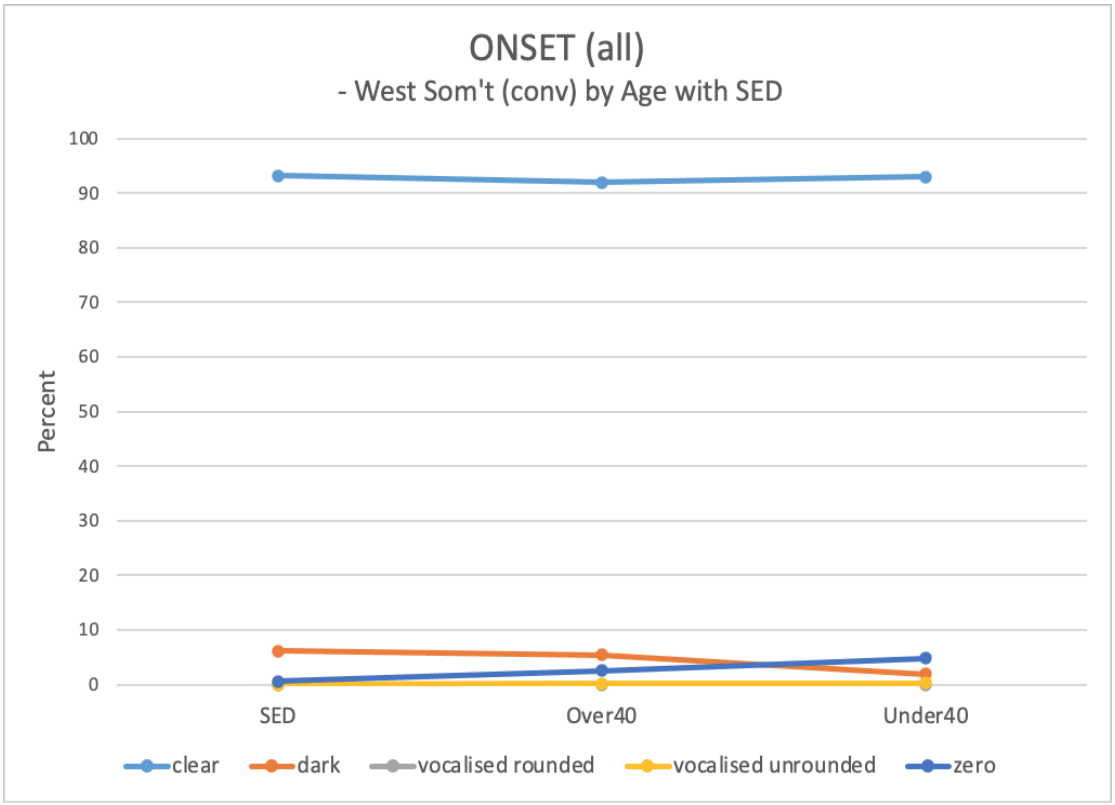


Figure 32 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Onset conversation

Table 53 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Onset conversation

West Somerset Conversation			
By Age Group	**Onset**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=6)	668	111.333	93
Over 40 (n=16)	1827	114.188	92
SED (n=4)	315	78.750	93
Dark			
Under 40 (n=6)	14	2.333	2
Over 40 (n=16)	108	6.750	5
SED (n=4)	21	5.250	6
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	0	0.000	0
Over 40 (n=16)	0	0.000	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.000	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	2	0.330	0
Over 40 (n=16)	3	0.190	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.000	0
Zero			
Under 40 (n=6)	35	5.833	5
Over 40 (n=16)	50	3.125	3
SED (n=4)	2	0.500	1

6.2.2 INTERVOCALIC

Clear /l/ dominates in Intervocalic position in the reading exercise, increasing sharply in real time from the SED speakers to both age groups of the modern speakers (see Figure 33 and Table 59). This increase in use of Clear /l/ is significant between the SED and Over 40s speakers (FET P=.010, see Table 54), but the corresponding real-time decrease in use of Dark /l/ from the SED speakers to the modern speakers does show significance (FET p=.003, Table 55), as do tests between SED and Over 40s speakers (FET p=.003, see Table 56). There is no use of any of the other variants in this speech style, therefore it can be assumed that the decrease in use of Dark /l/ relates to the increase in use of Clear /l/ in reading speech.

The individual intervocalic positions do not differ from their combined data in either speech style, where the SED speakers had a nearly 40% use of Dark /l/ that is not found in anywhere near as great an amount among the modern speakers, suggesting a change over time. It also indicates that for these West Somerset speakers, the morpheme boundary does not make a difference with regard to realisation of /l/.

Conversational data in West Somerset by age shows that the Clear l/ is again in highest use for the majority of instances in the Intervocalic group (see Figure 34), increasing significantly over real time from the SED data. Conversely, Dark /l/ has a real time decrease in use across all three age groups (p=0.029, see Table 57), with a significant difference also found between the SED speakers and the Over 40s (p=.045, see Table 58). Comparing this with the results from the Reading exercise, the Under 40s age group have the same level of use of Clear /l/, only dropping its use by 2% (see Table 60), whereas the Over 40s reduce their use of Clear /l/ in this position slightly more, dropping its use from 97% of instances in the reading exercise to 89% of instances in the conversational speech. Contrary to what was seen in the Onset position, this is more in line with the patterns seen in Central Somerset, and the rest of the south of England. Note also the low-level use of the Zero form among the younger speakers where there is none in the SED. Statistical tests for these lesser-used variants shows no significant difference in use.

Table 54 - Chi-Square results in use of Clear /l/ between SED and Over 40s speakers: Intervocalic position, reading speech, West Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	14.221[b]	6	.027	.010		
Likelihood Ratio	15.778	6	.015	.010		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	11.068			.010		
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.810[c]	1	.009	.005	.005	.001
N of Valid Cases	17					

a. Participant Location = West Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 14 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .24.

c. The standardized statistic is -2.610.

Table 55 - Chi-Square results in use of Dark /l/ across all age groups: Intervocalic position, reading speech, West Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	30.720[b]	14	.006	<.001		
Likelihood Ratio	29.794	14	.008	.001		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	22.743			.003		
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.321[c]	1	<.001	<.001	<.001	.000
N of Valid Cases	23					

a. Participant Location = West Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 23 cells (95.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .17.

c. The standardized statistic is 3.365.

Table 56 - Chi-Square results in use of Dark /l/ between SED and Over 40s speakers: Intervocalic position, reading speech, West Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	17.000[b]	6	.009	.003		
Likelihood Ratio	18.550	6	.005	.003		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	13.370			.003		
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.350[c]	1	<.001	<.001	<.001	.000
N of Valid Cases	17					

a. Participant Location = West Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 14 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .24.

c. The standardized statistic is 3.654.

Table 57 - Chi-Square results in use of Dark /l/ across all age groups: Intervocalic position, conversation speech, West Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	30.411[b]	16	.016	.006		
Likelihood Ratio	29.182	16	.023	.014		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	20.444			.029		
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.890[c]	1	.003	.001	<.001	.000
N of Valid Cases	26					

a. Participant Location = West Somerset, Language Style = conversation

b. 27 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .15.

c. The standardized statistic is 2.982.

Table 58 - Chi-Square results in use of Dark /l/ between SED and Over 40s speakers: Intervocalic position, conversation speech, West Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	15.833[b]	8	.045	.045		
Likelihood Ratio	16.197	8	.040	.045		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	11.254			.045		
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.408[c]	1	.065	.070	.050	.013
N of Valid Cases	20					

a. Participant Location = West Somerset, Language Style = conversation

b. 18 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .20.

c. The standardized statistic is 1.846.

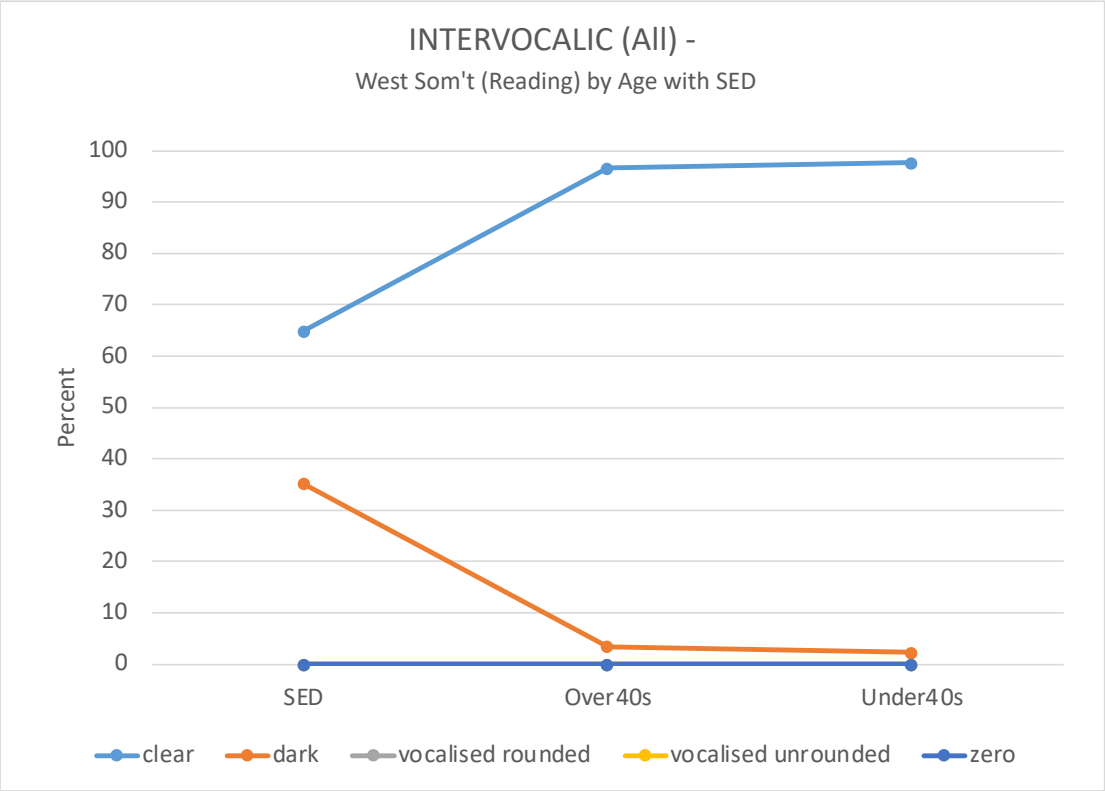


Figure 33 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Intervocalic reading

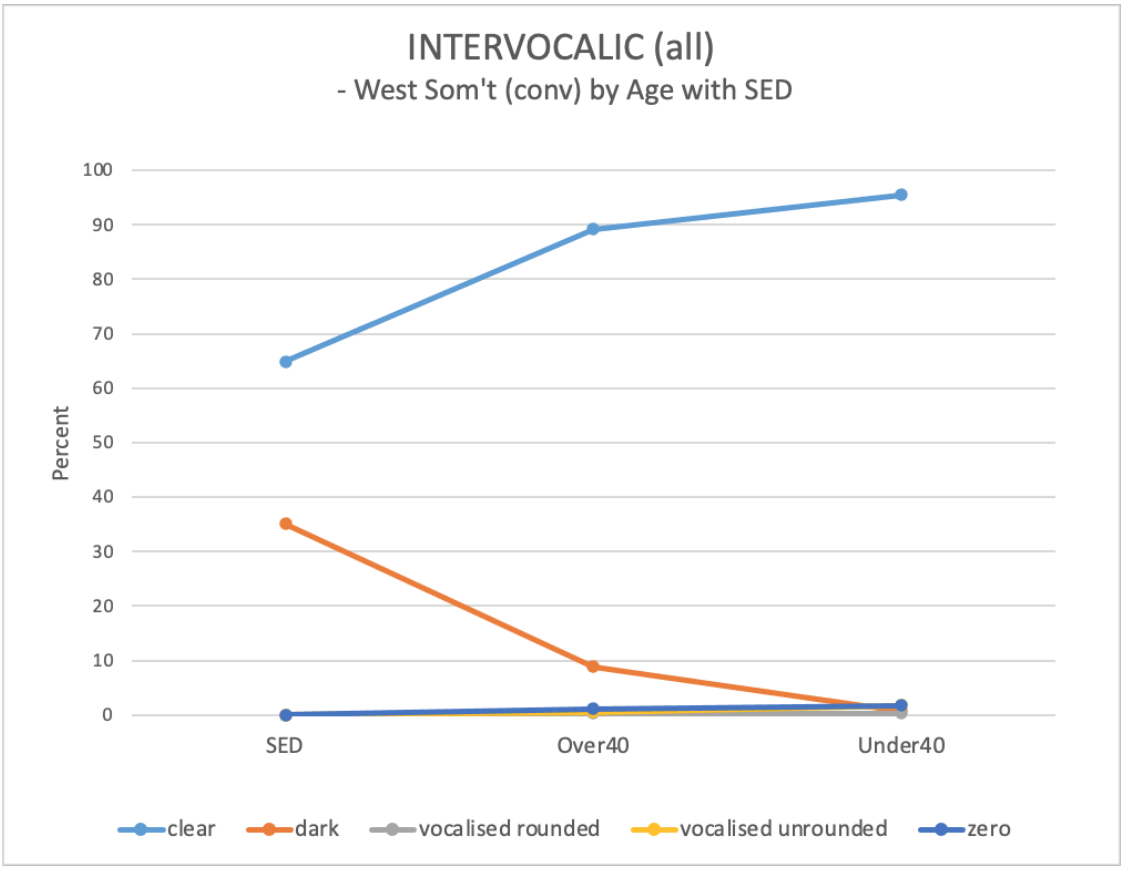


Figure 34 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Intervocalic conversation

Table 59 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Intervocalic reading

West Somerset Reading			
By Age Group	**Intervocalic**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=6)	168	28.00	98
Over 40 (n=13)	392	30.15	97
SED (n=4)	72	18.00	65
Dark			
Under 40 (n=6)	4	0.67	2
Over 40 (n=13)	14	1.08	3
SED (n=4)	39	9.75	35
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	0	0.00	0
Over 40 (n=13)	0	0.00	0
SED (n=4)	0	0	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	0	0.00	0
Over 40 (n=13)	0	0.00	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.000	
Zero			
Under 40 (n=6)	0	0.00	0
Over 40 (n=13)	0	0.00	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.000	0

Table 60 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Intervocalic conversation

West Somerset Conversation			
By Age Group	**Intervocalic**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=6)	278	46.33	96
Over 40 (n=16)	743	46.44	89
SED (n=4)	72	18.00	65
Dark			
Under 40 (n=6)	2	0.33	1
Over 40 (n=16)	74	4.63	9
SED (n=4)	39	9.75	35
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	1	0.17	0
Over 40 (n=16)	3	0.19	0
SED (n=4)	0	0	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	5	0.83	2
Over 40 (n=16)	4	0.25	0
SED (n=4)	0	0.000	0
Zero			
Under 40 (n=6)	5	0.83	2
Over 40 (n=16)	9	0.56	1
SED (n=4)	0	0.000	0

6.2.3 CODA

The speech in a formal reading style in the combined Coda positions among the West Somerset speakers shows a real time decrease in the use of Dark /l/, and an increase in the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ (see Table 61), although Fisher's Exact Test does not indicate any statistical significance to these results. This pattern is familiar now, having reviewed data from Central Somerset, although there are some differences across the two locations. In Central Somerset, Vocalised Rounded /l/ was already in low use among the SED speakers, whereas there was almost none among the SED speakers from West Somerset, as Figure 35 below demonstrates, where SED speakers use Dark /l/ in the majority in the overall Coda position. Use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ increases considerably between the SED and Over 40s age groups by

just over 40%. The increase then continues so that it becomes the dominant form among Under 40 year olds. The use of Dark /l/ is halved in real time between the SED speakers and the Over 40s, and continues to decline by over 25% again over apparent time between the Over/Under 40 year olds.

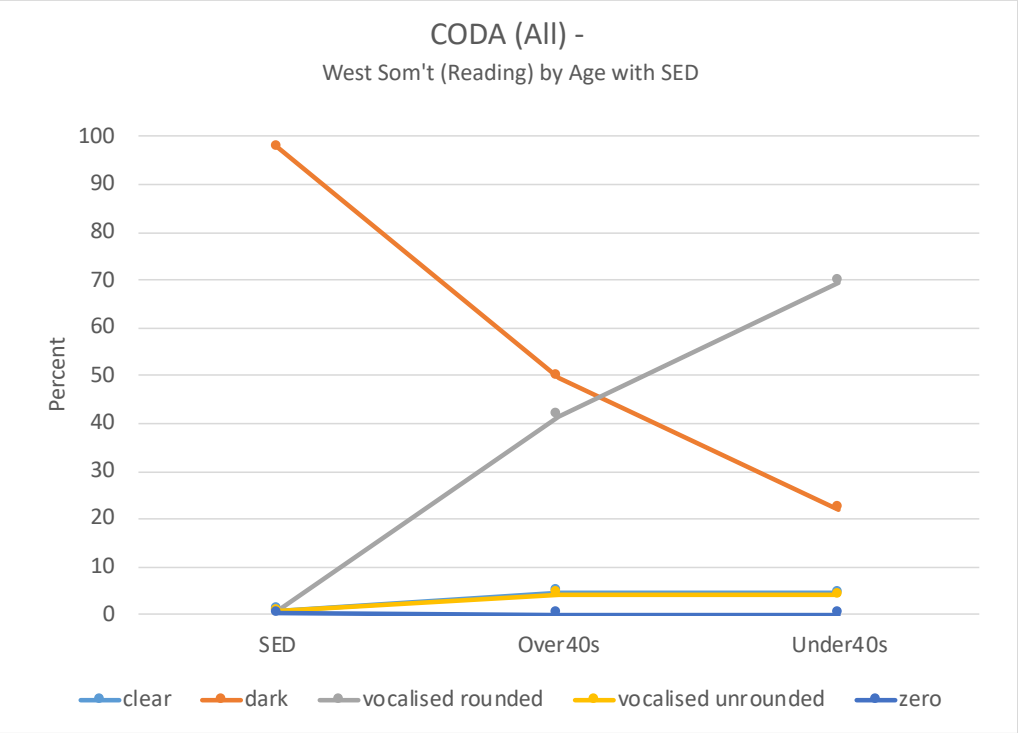


Figure 35 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda reading

The descriptive statistics of the conversational Coda data show that the same overall pattern over real time of Vocalised Rounded /l/ replacing Dark /l/ is still present (see Table 63), and indeed this is confirmed by Fisher's Exact Test (FET p=.013, see Table 62). However, use of the variants among the Over 40s age group differs from the reading exercise data. The conversational data shows that the already small gap in the use of Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ among the Over 40s speakers closes completely in this conversational speech style, and they are now used in equal measure (48% of instances for both variants). There is almost no reduction in the use of Dark /l/, though (a drop of 2% is shown), indicating that the increase in Vocalised Rounded /l/ comes at the expense of the Vocalised Unrounded and Clear /l/ forms that were in very low use among the Over 40s age group in the Reading exercise.

Table 61 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda reading

West Somerset Reading By Age Group Variant of (l)	**Coda Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=6)	12	2.00	4
Over 40 (n=13)	30	2.31	5
SED (n=4)	4	1.00	1
Dark			
Under 40 (n=6)	60	10.00	22
Over 40 (n=13)	320	24.62	50
SED (n=4)	478	119.50	98
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	190	31.67	70
Over 40 (n=13)	269	20.69	42
SED (n=4)	3	0.75	1
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	11	1.83	4
Over 40 (n=13)	27	2.08	4
SED (n=4)	3	0.75	1
Zero			
Under 40 (n=6)	0	0.00	0
Over 40 (n=13)	0	0.00	0
SED (n=4)	1	0.250	0

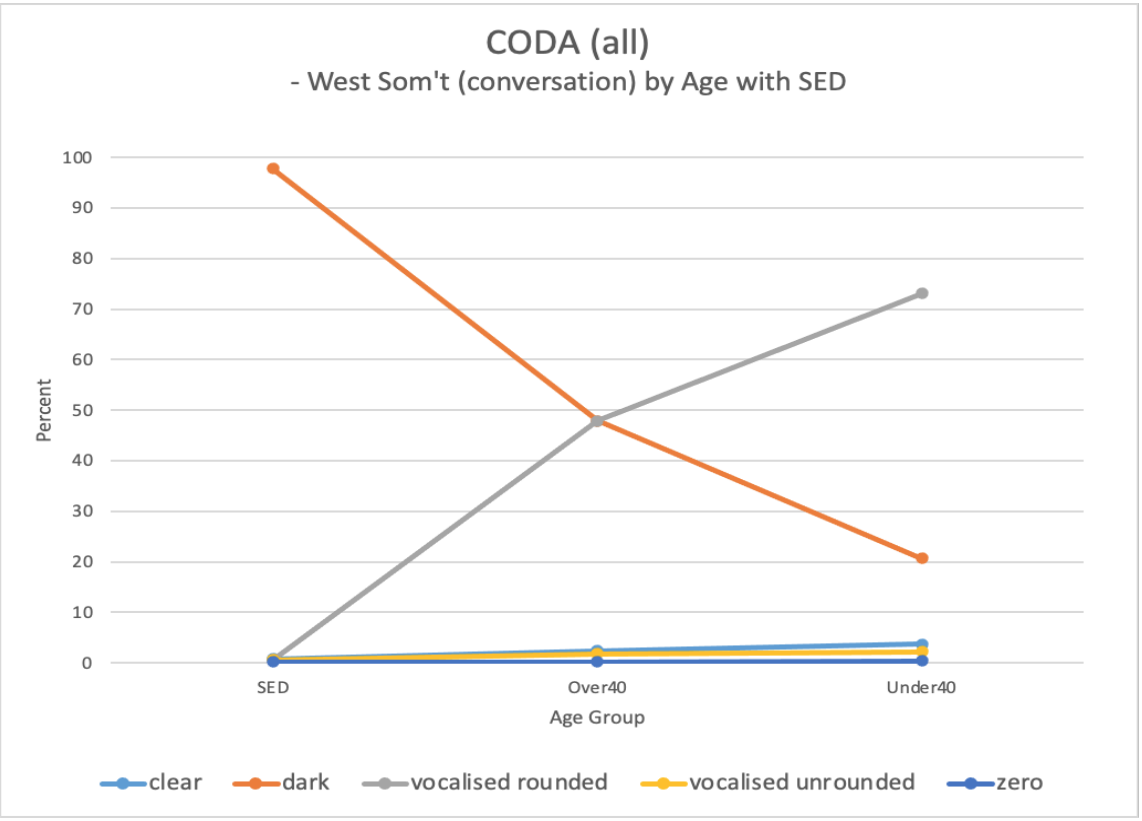


Figure 36 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda conversation

Table 62 - Chi-Square results in use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ across all age groups: Intervocalic position, conversation speech, West Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	52.000[b]	40	.097	.013		
Likelihood Ratio	48.107	40	.178	.013		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	44.783			.013		
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.330[c]	1	<.001	<.001	<.001	.000
N of Valid Cases	26					

a. Participant Location = West Somerset, Language Style = conversation

b. 63 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .15.

c. The standardized statistic is -3.651.

Table 63 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda conversation

West Somerset Conversation			
By Age Group **Variant of (l)**	**Coda** **Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Under 40 (n=6)	38	6.33	4
Over 40 (n=16)	63	3.94	2
SED (n=4)	4	1.00	1
Dark			
Under 40 (n=6)	214	35.67	21
Over 40 (n=16)	1284	80.25	48
SED (n=4)	478	119.50	98
Vocalised Rounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	756	126.00	73
Over 40 (n=16)	1284	80.25	48
SED (n=4)	3	0.75	1
Vocalised Unrounded			
Under 40 (n=6)	23	3.83	2
Over 40 (n=16)	48	3.00	2
SED (n=4)	3	0.75	1
Zero			
Under 40 (n=6)	4	0.67	0
Over 40 (n=16)	4	0.25	0
SED (n=4)	1	0.250	0

Of some note, though, across all Coda positions the use of the Vocalised Rounded form has been adopted by the older speakers in West Somerset to a greater extent than in Central Somerset, despite the SED data from Central Somerset showing around 20% of use of the Vocalised Rounded form where the West Somerset SED participants had no use of this form. It could be expected that historically earlier use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in Central Somerset would then translate to higher use among modern speakers. In the intervening period since the

SED, West Somerset there has been a rapid increase in real time in the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ and a corresponding reduction in use of Dark /l/, although Fisher's Exact Test does not show any statistical significance in these differences.

As was seen in the Central Somerset data, a more in depth analysis of the individual Coda positions revealed which were more conducive to L-vocalisation, and which were more likely to show resistance to it. By breaking the Coda positions down and analysing them again for West Somerset, it might indicate if the type of change towards L-vocalisation is happening in the same way for these speakers, or if a different pattern of use is taking place in this part of the county that might account for the different pace of change.

6.2.3.1 Coda Pre-Consonant

The pattern of use of the variants in the reading exercise data for Coda Pre-Consonant position are very similar to those found in the conversational data for the combined Coda positions, except for some use of Vocalised Unrounded /l/ among older speakers that reduces slightly among the Under 40s. There is also a higher use of the Vocalised Rounded form among the Over 40s speakers that suggest Coda Pre-Consonant is particularly favourable to /l/-vocalisation in this age group.

Table 64 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant reading

Coda Pre-Consonant (Reading) West Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	2	1	176	96	1	1	3	2	1	1	183	100
Over40	0	0	106	46.5	105	46	17	7.5	0	0	228	100
Under40	0	0	21	22	70	73	5	5	0	0	96	100
Totals	0	0	127	39	175	54	22	7	0	0	324	100

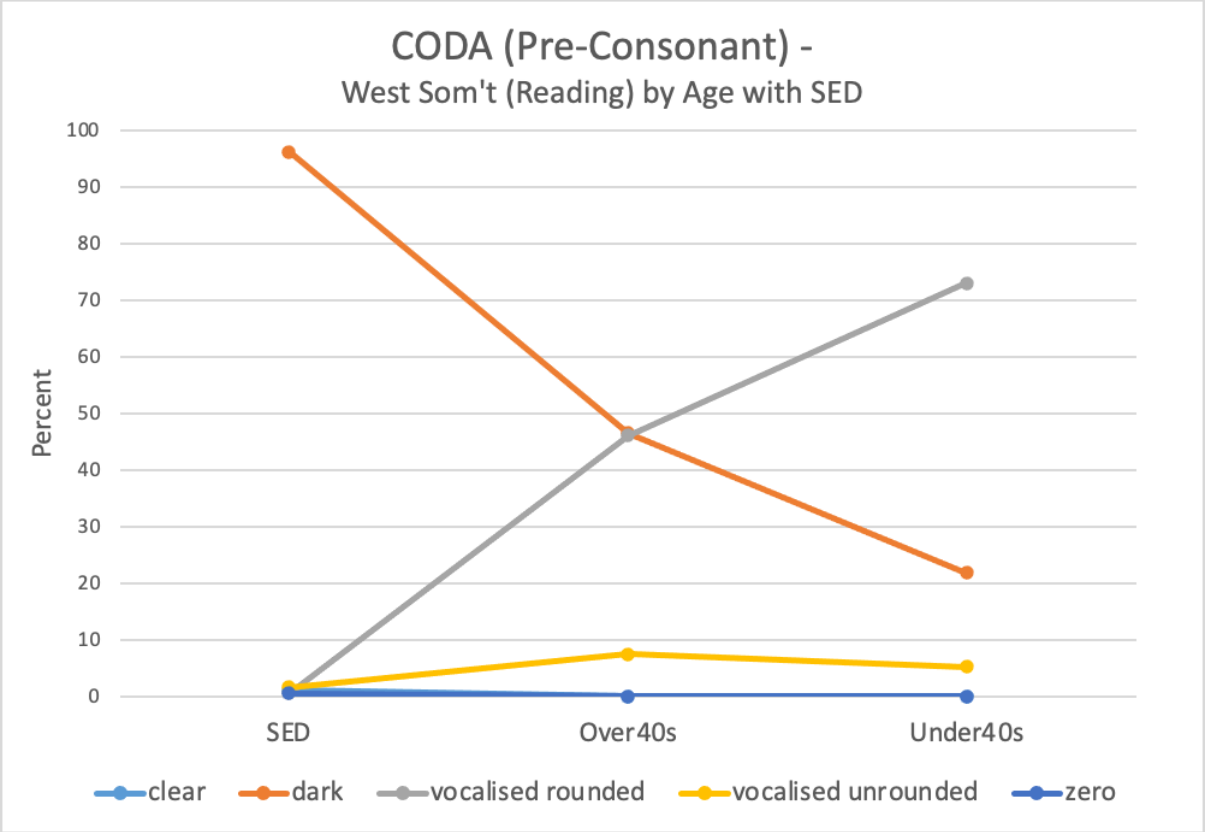


Figure 37 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant reading

Neither the Over 40s nor the Under 40s change their use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ across the speech styles, however both do have greater use of Dark /l/ in the conversational speech than in the reading: the Over 40s to a greater extent (reading 46.5%, conversation 56%) than the Under 40s (reading 22%, conversation 24%). Apparent time data shows an increase in use of Vocalised Unrounded /l/ from the older to the younger speakers. This differs from the reading exercise where the Over 40s use the Unrounded form more than the Under 40s age group.

Table 65 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant conversation

Coda Pre-Consonant (Conversation) - West Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	2	1	176	96	1	1	3	2	1	1	183	100
Over40	2	0	446	56	389	46	11	1	0	0	848	100
Under40	0	0	80	24	246	73	11	3	0	0	337	100
Total	4	0	702	51	636	46	25	2	1	0	1368	100

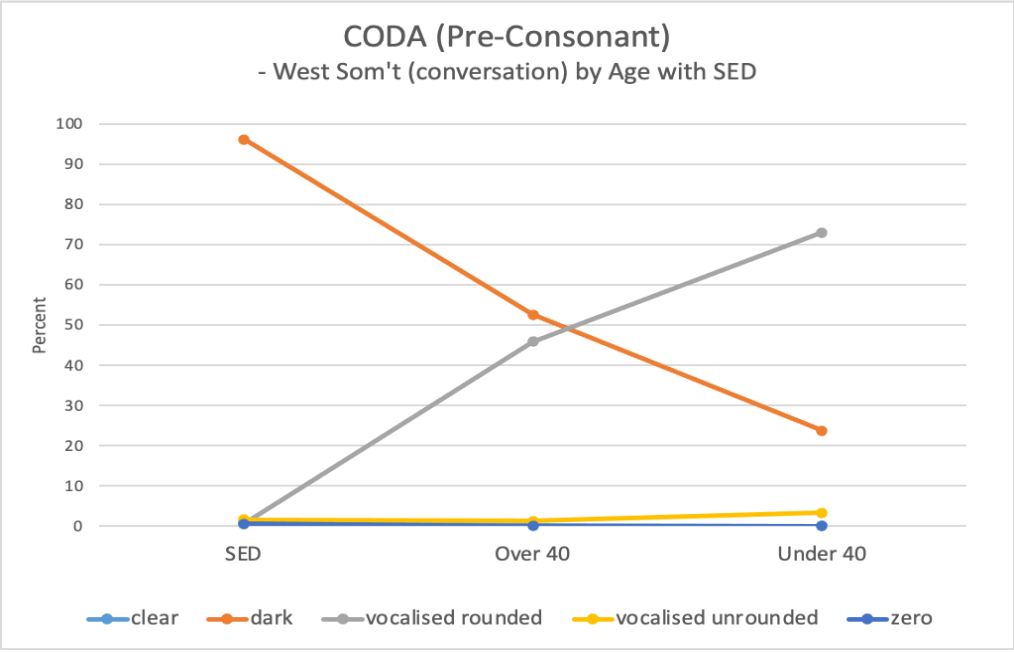


Figure 38 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant conversation

6.2.3.2 CODA Word-Final

The data from the reading exercise shows that both Over and Under 40s favour Vocalised Rounded /l/ as the majority form (see Table 66 and Figure 39 below). This is once again with no use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among the SED speakers. Dark /l/ is used in the majority by the SED speakers and is used variably with the Vocalised Rounded form by the Over 40s. However, it has low use among the Under 40s, who once again use the Vocalised Rounded form at a very high rate.

Table 66 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Word Final reading

CODA Word Final (Reading) West Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
SED	2	5	35	92	1	3	0	0	0	0	38	100
Over40	1	1	79	41	106	55	6	3	0	0	192	100
Under40	0	0	9	11	67	83	5	6	0	0	81	100
Totals	1	0	88	32	173	63	11	4	0	0	273	100

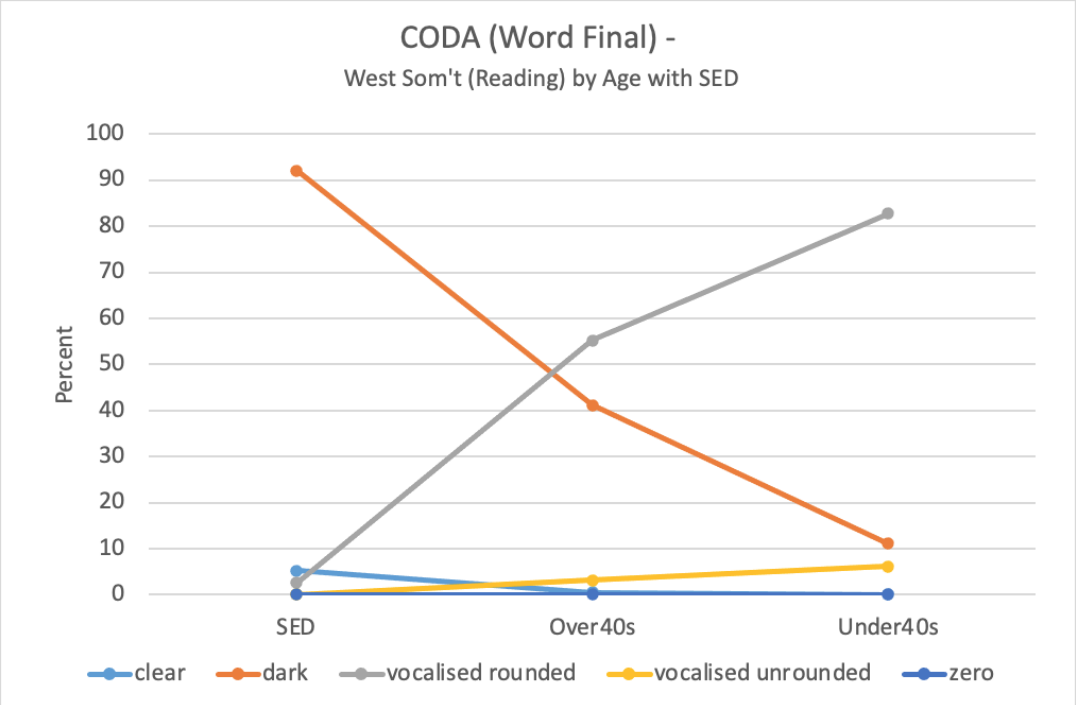


Figure 39 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Word Final reading

Any use of Clear /l/ among the SED speakers is lost among the Over/Under 40 year olds. Instead, these speakers also make some low use of the Vocalised Unrounded form where there was none among the SED speakers.

In the conversational speech data, the overall pattern of use does not change, but both modern age groups do increase their use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ slightly. In this speech style, the Over 40s make use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in 60% of instances compared with 55% in the reading data, and the Under 40s use this form in 87% of instances in a conversational speech style compared with 83% in the reading style. Neither of these increases is very large, suggesting that this Coda position is not as susceptible to change between speech styles.

In both speech styles it is noted that the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ is higher among the Over 40s speakers in West Somerset in Coda Word-Final position than it is among the same age group in Central Somerset.

Table 67 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Word Final conversation

CODA Word Final (Conversation) - West Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	2	5	35	92	1	3	0	0	0	0	38	100
Over40	4	0	306	38	482	60	16	2	2	0	810	100
Under40	2	1	30	10	255	87	5	2	1	0	293	100
Total	8	1	371	33	738	65	21	2	3	0	1141	100

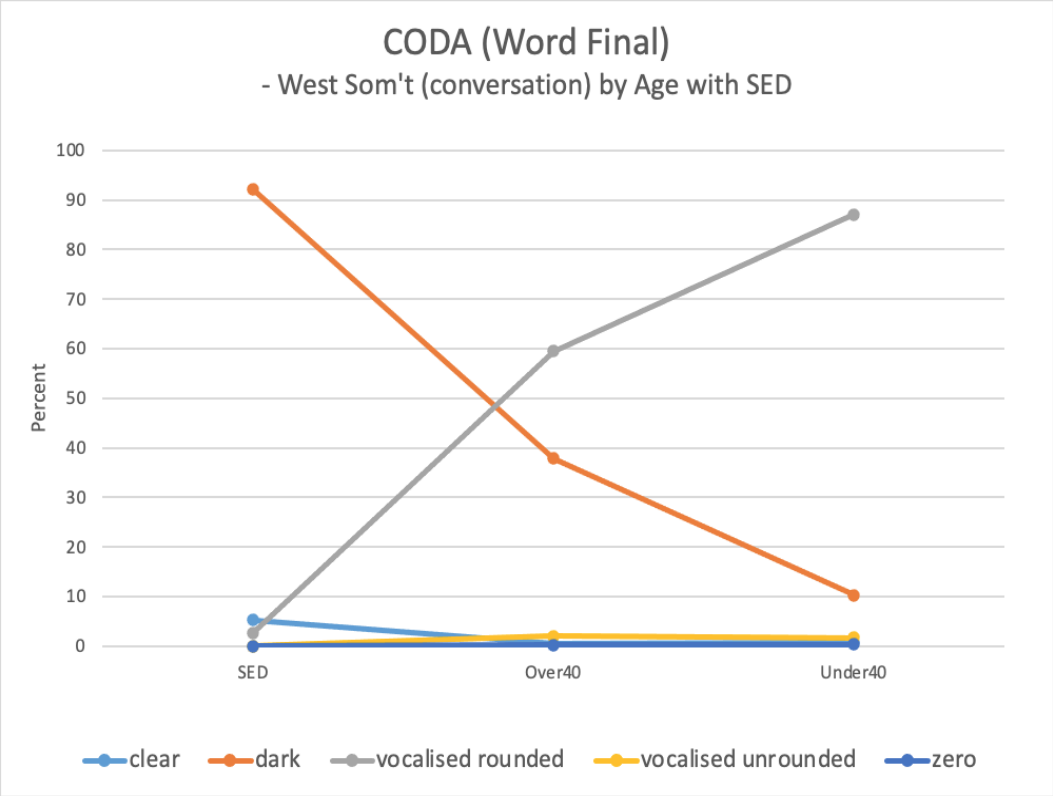


Figure 40 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Word Final conversation

6.2.3.3 CODA Post-Consonant

The Reading exercise data in the Post-Consonant position shows a slightly different pattern to that seen previously among the West Somerset speakers. In other Coda positions the change in the use of Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ has been more rapid between the SED speakers and the Over 40s age group, and then reduces in intensity between the Over and Under 40s groups. Yet in this Post-Consonant position the pace of change increases between the Over/Under 40s age groups.

Table 68 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant reading

CODA Post-Consonant (Reading)												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	0	0	101	99	1	1	0	0	0	0	102	100
Over40	0	0	73	75	21	22	3	3	0	0	97	100
Under40	0	0	18	42	24	56	1	2	0	0	43	100
Totals	0	0	91	65	45	32	4	3	0	0	140	100

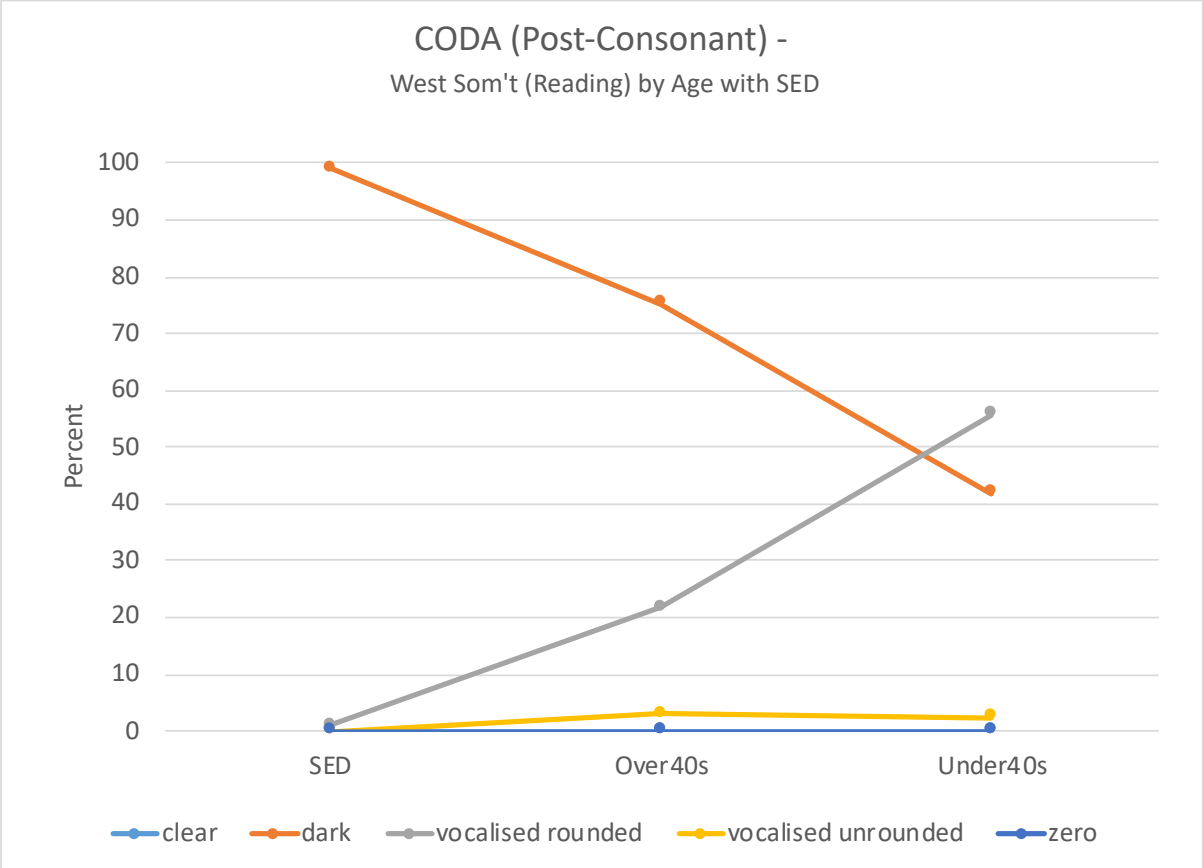


Figure 41 - Visualisation of L-Realisation in West Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant reading

The Under 40s speakers use Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ variably, with Vocalised Rounded /l/ having the majority of use. Vocalised Rounded /l/ is also available to the Over 40s, but they favour Dark /l/ considerably more.

In the conversational data, both the Over and Under 40s increase their use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ and decrease use of Dark /l/ when compared with the reading exercise data. This increase is greater among the Over 40s who more than double their use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ when shifting from reading to conversational speech (See Table 68 above and Table 69 below).

Interestingly there does appear to be a real time increase, albeit small, in the use of Clear /l/ among the Under 40s where there is no use of it in either the SED or Over 40s age groups in either Reading or Conversational speech. This suggests that the low-level use of Clear /l/ among the Under 40s is an entirely new innovation among speakers in this part of the county.

Table 69 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant conversation

CODA Postconsonant (Conversation) - West Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SED	0	0	101	99	1	1	0	0	0	0	102	100
Over40	0	0	196	51	179	47	8	2	0	0	383	100
Under40	1	1	44	30	99	68	0	0	1	1	145	100
Totals	1	0	341	54	279	44	8	1	1	0	630	100

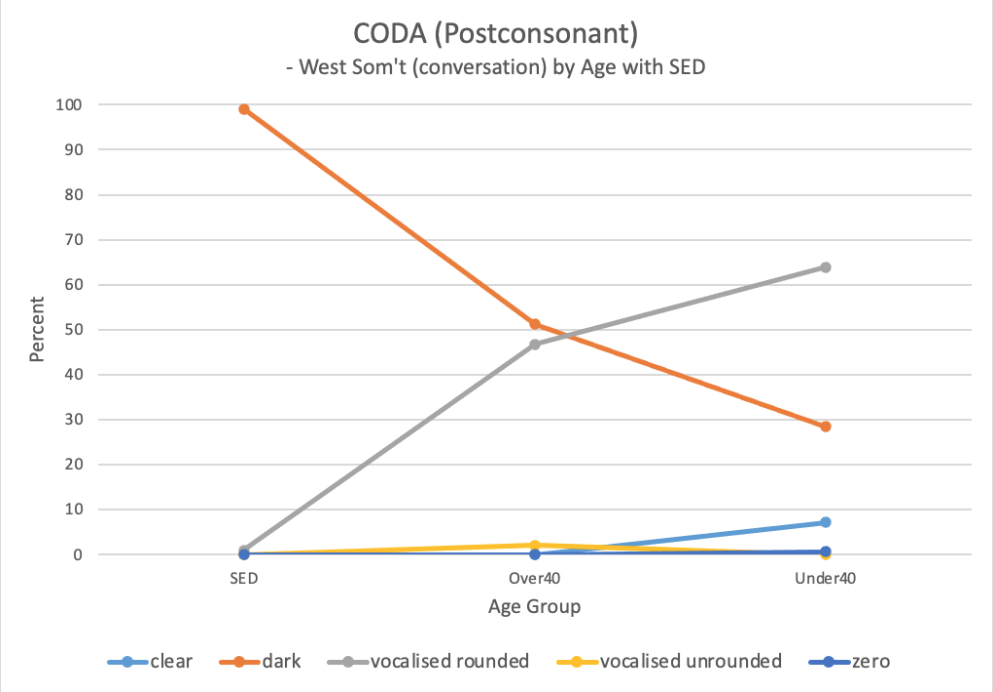


Figure 42 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Postconsonant conversation

6.2.3.4 CODA Prepausal

In the reading data, there is once again very high use of the Vocalised Rounded /l/ form among the Under 40s, and almost equal use of the Vocalised Rounded and Dark /l/ forms among the Over 40s. This shows a marked difference between West Somerset Over 40s speakers, and their counterparts in Central Somerset. Where in Central Somerset there is a real time increase between the SED speakers and the Over 40s speakers in use of Dark /l/, the West Somerset speakers go in a different direction, dramatically reducing use of Dark /l/ in favour of increasing use of Vocalised Rounded /l/. As a result, the pattern of change from SED speakers to the Under 40s in West Somerset follows the overall pattern of a mostly linear increase in use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ from oldest to youngest speakers, which mirrors a steady and continuous decrease in use of Dark /l/ in real time.

Table 70 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Prepausal reading

CODA Prepausal (Reading) West Somerset												
	Clear		**Dark**		**Vocalised Rounded**		**Vocalised Unrounded**		**Zero**		**Totals**	
Age Group	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**
SED	*2*	5	*35*	92	*1*	3	*0*	0	*0*	0	*38*	**100**
Over40	*0*	0	*30*	48	*31*	50	*1*	2	*0*	0	*62*	**100**
Under40	*0*	0	*4*	16	*21*	84	*0*	0	*0*	0	*25*	**100**
Totals	***0***	**0**	***34***	**39**	***52***	**60**	***1***	**1**	***0***	**0**	***87***	**100**

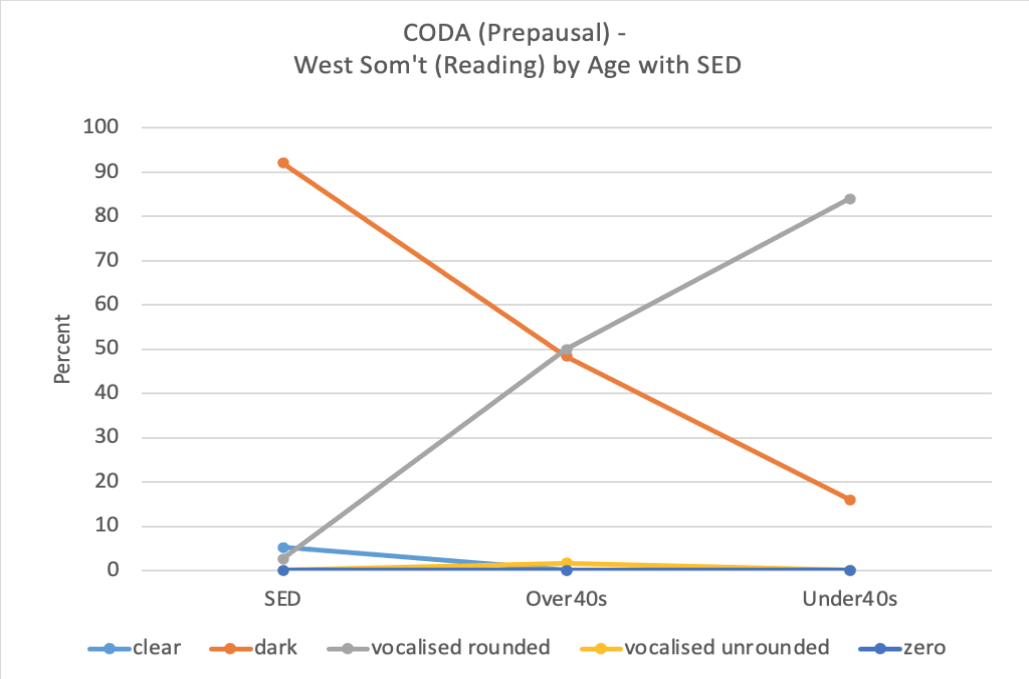


Figure 43 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Prepausal reading

The shift in speech style to conversational data shows greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among the Over 40s, making Vocalised Rounded form the dominant form among both Over and Under 40s. As in other Coda positions, there is almost no use of the Vocalised Rounded form among the SED speakers, which indicates that use of this form among the Over 40s speakers is a fairly recent change. The continued increase, but at an apparently slower pace, between the Over 40s and Under 40s in the use of the Vocalised Rounded variant further points to a change in progress here, as the initial momentum for the change over real time eases off.

The use of /l/ in this position has gone from categorical use of Dark /l/ among the SED speakers to a variable use of two variants among the Over 40s, to almost exclusive use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among the Under 40s.

Table 71 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Prepausal conversation

CODA Prepausal (Conversation) West Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**
SED	*0*	0	*158*	100	*0*	0	*0*	0	*0*	0	*158*	**100**
Over40	*0*	0	*108*	46	*123*	52	*4*	2	*0*	0	*235*	**100**
Under40	*0*	0	*12*	12	*89*	86	*3*	3	*0*	0	*104*	**100**
Totals	***0***	**0**	***278***	**56**	***212***	**43**	***7***	**1**	***0***	**0**	***497***	**100**

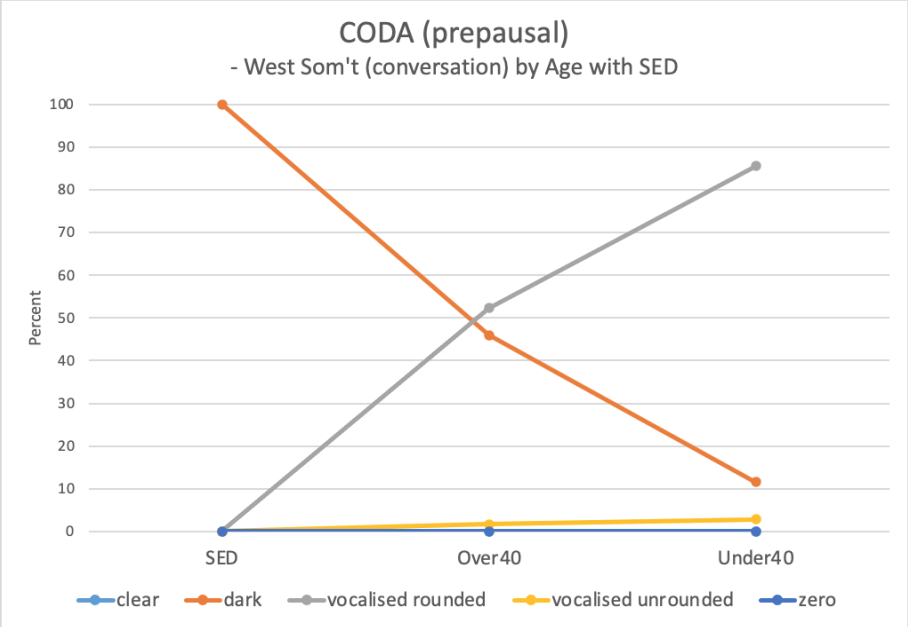


Figure 44 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Prepausal conversation

6.2.3.5 CODA Pre-Vowel

As in Central Somerset, the Pre-Vowel position behaves very differently from the rest of the Coda positions among West Somerset speakers. While there are only 8 tokens in the SED dataset that correspond to Pre-Vowel position, other Coda positions in the West Somerset SED dataset have shown that Dark /l/ was the only variant in large use among these speakers in a Coda position. The reading exercise data from the Over/Under 40s speakers indicates a change in real time, and the use of (l) in this position has become much more variable in progressively younger age groups. The use of Clear /l/ has increased to the point that it is used more

frequently than the Vocalised Rounded form among speakers in the modern dataset. Under 40s in particular use Clear /l/ the most frequently in this position, above both Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/, which are used in equal measure.

Table 72 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel reading

CODA Pre-Vowel (Reading) West Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**
SED	*0*	0	*8*	100	*0*	0	*0*	0	*0*	0	*8*	**100**
Over40	*29*	43	*32*	48	*6*	9	*0*	0	*0*	0	*67*	**100**
Under40	*12*	43	*8*	29	*8*	29	*0*	0	*0*	0	*28*	**100**
Totals	***41***	**43**	***40***	**42**	***14***	**15**	***0***	**0**	***0***	**0**	***95***	100

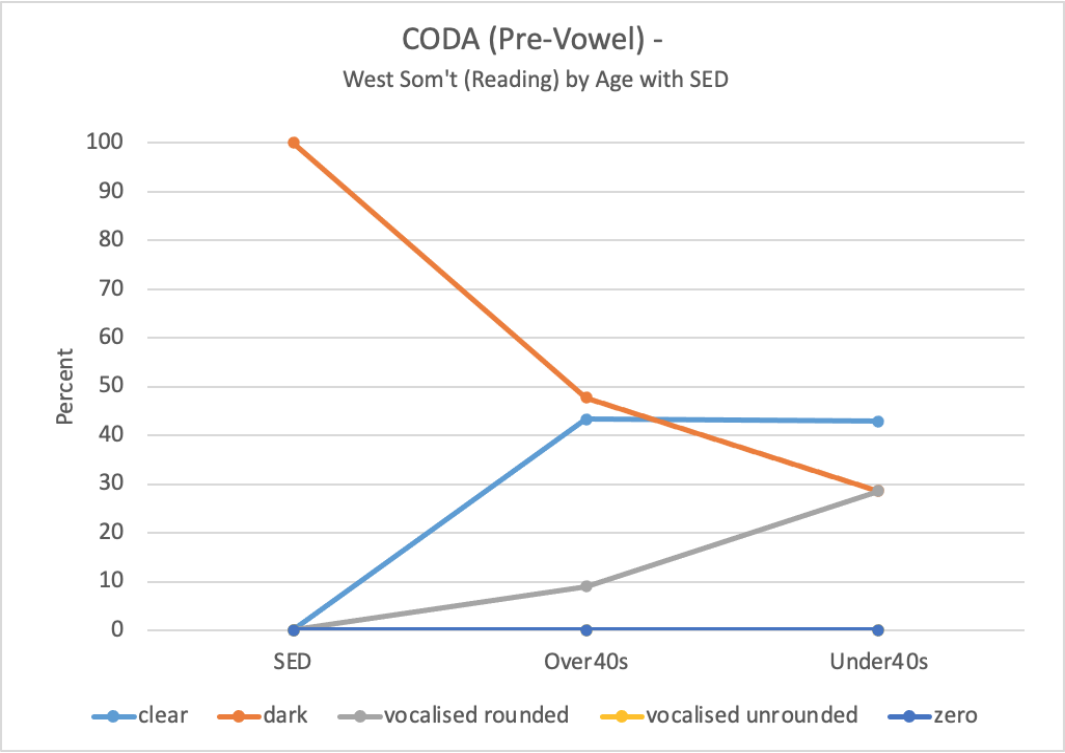


Figure 45 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel reading

The apparently hybrid nature of this position along with the changing perception of it among speakers is therefore shown once again. Exclusive use of the Dark /l/ among the SED suggests they firmly considered this position to be within the Coda environment, and thus used variants typically found in Coda positions. However, the real time decline in use of this Dark /l/

form, and the increase in use of Clear /l/ in particular suggests that the Over/Under 40s are not quite so rigid in their perception of this position and see it as requiring variants more appropriate to an Intervocalic position. Further evidence of this flexibility among the youngest speakers is in their high use of Clear /l/ alongside a use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ that is higher than the Over 40s age group showing the use of (l) in this Coda position is highly variable among younger speakers.

The high variability is also found in the conversational data. However, whereas the Clear /l/ form was used more than Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the reading exercise by both the Over/Under 40s age groups, that is not the case in the conversational data. Indeed, in conversational speech style, there is a return to the typical pattern of use where Dark /l/ is the most frequently used form among the SED and Over 40s age groups, which is then replaced by the Vocalised Rounded form in the speech of the Under 40s. The difference between the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ and Dark /l/ among the Under 40s is also much smaller in this Coda position (see Table 73). Clear is used at a higher rate than in any of the other Coda positions in a conversational style, but it is not used more than Dark or Vocalised Rounded /l/. This again supports the suggestion that the perception of this Pre-vowel position as a wholly Coda environment has altered over real time.

Table 73 - L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel conversation

CODA Pre-Vowel (Conversation) - West Somerset												
	Clear		Dark		Vocalised Rounded		Vocalised Unrounded		Zero		Totals	
Age Group	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**	***N***	**%**
SED	*0*	0	*8*	100	*0*	0	*0*	0	*0*	0	*8*	**100**
Over40	*57*	14	*228*	56	*111*	27	*9*	2	*2*	0	*407*	**100**
Under40	*35*	22	*48*	31	*67*	43	*4*	3	*2*	1	*156*	**100**
Totals	***92***	**16**	***284***	**50**	***178***	**31**	***13***	**2**	***4***	**1**	***571***	**100**

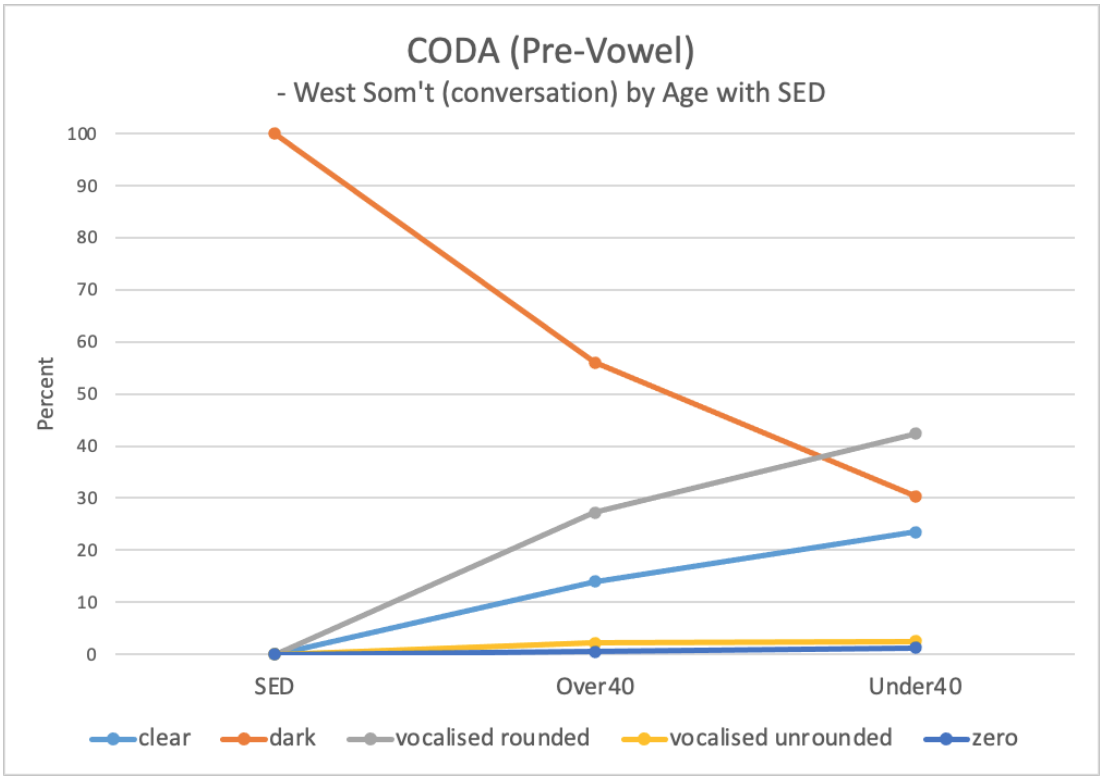


Figure 46 - Visualisation of L-realisation in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel conversation

6.2.3.6 Summarising and Discussing the Results in West Somerset

The results from West Somerset are similar to those from Central Somerset in that both parts of the county have undergone real time change in realisations of (l). However, as has been shown, there are some crucial differences in the use of (l) in West Somerset. In the Onset position, the Clear /l/ form is the most frequently used among all age groups in both speech styles, but there has been an increase in the use of Dark /l/ in more formal reading speech among the Over 40s. This is unexpected, and points to the speakers from West Somerset potentially diverging from the non-regional southern varieties as models for formal speech.

In the Intervocalic position, there is variability between Clear /l/ and Dark /l/ in the use of (l) among the SED speakers, although Clear /l/ is still used the most frequently. The Over/Under 40s use Clear /l/ at a higher rate, and thus lower their use of Dark /l/. In a conversational speech style there are significant real-time differences between all three age groups in the increased use of Clear /l/ and the decreased use of Dark /l/. There is also a significant difference between the Over/Under 40s in their decreased use of Dark /l/ in Apparent Time.

Much of the variation occurs in the Coda position. The pattern is still one that shows a real time change from a majority use of Dark /l/ among the SED speakers to Vocalised Rounded /l/ occurring in the majority among the Under 40s. In nearly all the positions, this is represented

with a steady and continuous linear progression across the three age groups, often with a slightly greater pace of change between the SED and Over 40s age groups, that then appears to slow down between the Over/Under 40s.

6.3 Comparison of Age Groups across both Somerset locations

Having reviewed the use of (l) in the two locations separately, this section will now compare use of (l) across the two locations. As in previous sections, we will look at each linguistic position in turn, starting with reading and then conversational speech. Statistical tests have also been conducted against the results for each location. However, for reasons of space, only tables where statistical significance is found in results will be shown here in this section.

The results presented in this chapter show some age-related differences, which have clear implications between the locations. On first glance, the very high use of Clear /l/ among all speakers in the Onset position in both speech styles would suggest that there is no real difference between the locations in the use of (l) in this position. However, when viewing the two locations together, the lower use of Clear /l/ in West Somerset compared with no change in Central Somerset in the reading speech style is shown to be significantly different among the Over 40s speakers (FET p=.049) and also Under 40s speakers (p=.038, see Table 74 below). Likewise, West Somerset speakers have significantly higher use of Dark /l/ than speakers in Central Somerset among the Under 40s speakers within the modern dataset (p=.024, see Table 75). Statistical significance is particular to the formal reading exercise, though, and no significant differences are found in the conversational data.

Table 74 - Chi-Square tests in use of Clear /l/ across locations: Onset position

Chi-Square Tests

Age Group	Language Style		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Under 40	conversation	Pearson Chi-Square	19.479[a]	19	.427	.836		
		Likelihood Ratio	23.009	19	.237	.836		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	18.576			.836		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	3.190[b]	1	.074	.074	.037	.001
		N of Valid Cases	22					
	reading	Pearson Chi-Square	19.479[c]	13	.109	.038		
		Likelihood Ratio	23.009	13	.042	.038		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	16.719			.038		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	.651[d]	1	.420	.442	.218	.010
		N of Valid Cases	22					
Over 40	conversation	Pearson Chi-Square	17.766[e]	19	.538	.927		
		Likelihood Ratio	23.307	19	.224	.927		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	17.102			.927		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	1.129[f]	1	.288	.303	.152	.003
		N of Valid Cases	25					
	reading	Pearson Chi-Square	17.174[g]	12	.143	.049		
		Likelihood Ratio	23.175	12	.026	.049		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	15.756			.049		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	3.932[h]	1	.047	.040	.011	.003
		N of Valid Cases	22					

a. 40 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .27.

b. The standardized statistic is -1.786.

c. 28 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .27.

d. The standardized statistic is -.807.

e. 40 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

f. The standardized statistic is -1.063.

g. 26 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .41.

h. The standardized statistic is -1.983.

Table 75 - Chi-Square tests in use of Dark /l/ across locations: Onset position

Chi-Square Tests

Age Group	Language Style		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Under 40	conversation	Pearson Chi-Square	5.447[a]	8	.709	.880		
		Likelihood Ratio	6.915	8	.546	.850		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	5.496			.929		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	.502[b]	1	.479	.544	.289	.044
		N of Valid Cases	22					
	reading	Pearson Chi-Square	11.581[c]	5	.041	.021		
		Likelihood Ratio	12.689	5	.026	.032		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	10.068			.024		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	8.686[d]	1	.003	.002	.002	.002
		N of Valid Cases	22					
Over 40	conversation	Pearson Chi-Square	18.490[e]	14	.185	.111		
		Likelihood Ratio	24.353	14	.042	.111		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	16.990			.082		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	2.425[f]	1	.119	.097	.080	.007
		N of Valid Cases	25					
	reading	Pearson Chi-Square	8.900[g]	8	.351	.467		
		Likelihood Ratio	11.441	8	.178	.467		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	8.177			.504		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	5.170[h]	1	.023	.022	.012	.005
		N of Valid Cases	22					

a. 18 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .27.

b. The standardized statistic is -.708.

c. 11 cells (91.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .27.

d. The standardized statistic is 2.947.

e. 30 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

f. The standardized statistic is -1.557.

g. 18 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .41.

h. The standardized statistic is 2.274.

Use of Dark /l/ in an Intervocalic position differs in the descriptive data among the Under 40s in both locations in a conversational style. Otherwise, the pattern of increase in Clear /l/ and decrease in Dark /l/ in both speech styles is similar across the locations in both speech styles. Clear /l/ remains in very high use among the Over/Under 40s in both locations. This suggests that where previously the use of /l/ was variable between the Clear and Dark forms in the Intervocalic positions for the speakers in the SED dataset, there has been a change to almost universal use of Clear /l/ in an Intervocalic position among the Over/Under 40s speakers across the county. The lack of statistical significance in Fisher's Exact Test to any differences across the data would confirm this.

In the Coda positions, the apparent time data from both Central Somerset and West Somerset strongly suggests change in the use of variants of /l/. The same can also be said between the SED and Somerset Speaks datasets, indicating a real time change. In both locations, the Vocalised Rounded form has increased in use between the Over/Under40 age groups, and

the Dark /l/ variant has decreased in use. Beyond these superficial similarities, there are crucial differences between the two locations in the use and realisation of (l). There is a significant difference between the two locations in use of Clear /l/ among Over 40s speakers in the reading speech style (FET p=.002, see Table 76), but not in conversational speech, nor among Under 40s in either speech style.

Table 76 - Chi-Square tests in use of Clear /l/ across locations: Coda position, all speakers

Chi-Square Tests

Age Group	Language Style		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Under 40	conversation	Pearson Chi-Square	10.656[a]	12	.559	.800		
		Likelihood Ratio	12.965	12	.372	.800		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	10.413			.815		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	.132[b]	1	.717	.761	.391	.039
		N of Valid Cases	22					
	reading	Pearson Chi-Square	2.338[c]	3	.505	.608		
		Likelihood Ratio	3.015	3	.389	.620		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	2.096			.656		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	1.243[d]	1	.265	.372	.193	.104
		N of Valid Cases	22					
Over 40	conversation	Pearson Chi-Square	10.026[e]	8	.263	.271		
		Likelihood Ratio	12.445	8	.132	.279		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	8.836			.308		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	2.214[f]	1	.137	.152	.097	.010
		N of Valid Cases	25					
	reading	Pearson Chi-Square	14.244[g]	4	.007	.002		
		Likelihood Ratio	18.194	4	.001	.002		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	12.862			.002		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	7.109[h]	1	.008	.006	.004	.003
		N of Valid Cases	22					

a. 26 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .27.
b. The standardized statistic is -.363.
c. 7 cells (87.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .82.
d. The standardized statistic is 1.115.
e. 18 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.
f. The standardized statistic is -1.488.
g. 10 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.23.
h. The standardized statistic is 2.666.

Of particular note, Vocalised Rounded /l/ is higher among the Over 40s age group in West Somerset than it is in Central Somerset in both speech styles, although Chi-Square Tests do not indicate statistical significance to this difference. Higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among speakers in one location than the other among speakers in the same age group could be an indication of earlier adoption, assuming of course that the L-vocalisation occurring in West Somerset is the same type of L-vocalisation happening in Central Somerset, and that they are motivated by the same thing. For instance, in Central Somerset it was shown that the formal

speech scenario makes a difference to the older speakers when it comes to their choice of (l) variant. In West Somerset, the Over 40s don't alter their use of variants between the speech styles quite so much, suggesting that for these speakers, variance in (l) is less marked in a coda position.

Among younger speakers, there is no significant difference found across the locations, but the descriptive data reveals some variation. For instance, while younger speakers in both locations favour Word Final position in conversational speech for L-Vocalisation, in the reading exercise they favour different positions. In Central Somerset, younger speakers vocalise more in the Coda Post-Consonant position in the reading exercise, whereas in West Somerset younger speakers do so more in the Coda Prepausal position. As with the older speakers, in all cases the younger speakers in West Somerset use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more than younger speakers in Central Somerset, reinforcing the higher L-vocalisation found in the west of the county. The patterns of L-vocalisation across Coda positions in both locations will be analysed in more detail in Chapter 8.

6.4 Results by Age in Summary

This chapter has shown that L-Vocalisation in Coda position, particularly in the Vocalised Rounded form, has increased among speakers across Somerset since the time of the SED. Indeed, among younger speakers in particular it is now the most frequently used variant of (l) in a coda position. In both locations, speech style makes a difference to the use of variants of /l/, where the reading exercise brings speakers more in line with the categorical use of (l) found in RP where Clear is used in Onset and Intervocalic position, and Dark /l/ is used in the Coda position. However, while that use is more in line with RP, it is not identical to it, as there is considerable use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among all speakers in the modern dataset, regardless of age. Rather, any use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ is typically lower in a reading speech style than it is in less formal conversational speech.

L-Vocalisation has not been adopted in the same way across the county, though. Differences can be seen both across the locations between the age groups. Among the Over 40s speakers, those in West Somerset have greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than the Over 40s in Central Somerset, which suggests strongly that rural West Somerset appears to have adopted L-vocalisation earlier, or to a greater extent than urbanising Central Somerset. Among the Under 40s, speakers in both locations use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority in Coda position, but they don't use the individual Coda positions in the same way in the reading exercise, suggesting a slight difference among these speakers in terms of formal language models. However, while frequencies differ, the younger speakers do vocalise /l/ the most on

the Coda Word Final position in conversational speech, and the least in Coda Pre-Vowel position in both speech styles. These similar patterns point to potential levelling among younger speakers overall.

To further investigate if there are any other differences in the use of variants of (l) across the county of Somerset, particularly in the use of Coda /l/, the next chapter in this thesis will review the results according to gender.

7 Results - Comparing by Gender

7.1 Why Gender?

The previous chapter confirmed that a change has taken place in real time in the use of variants of (l) across both locations in Somerset. A breakdown of the linguistic positions and age groups was conducted to find patterns in use to determine whether change had occurred, and how far any change had progressed through the community. Therefore this chapter will look at the data across the two locations, not only by gender broadly, but also by gender and age to further investigate the demographics and social factors under consideration in this thesis. This does reduce the number of participants in each category, and in the case of the Men Over 40 in Central Somerset, this is reduced to just two speakers (see Table 77). This is likely to impact on the statistical significance of the data here, hence the need to use Fisher's Exact Test in statistical analysis. However, data in a descriptive statistical format can indicate where potential change may be occurring that warrants further investigation.

The SED data is not used in this section as the data from the Somerset locations contains data from only men, and the real-time difference would not be relevant to the discussion of the current variability between genders in present-day Somerset. All speakers from the modern dataset in Central Somerset took part in the reading exercise. The breakdown of the speakers by age and gender in each group is now as follows:

Table 77 - Breakdown of participants by gender and age in Central Somerset

Central Somerset	**Over 40**	**Under 40**
Women	7	9
Men	2	7

Within West Somerset not everyone took part in the reading exercise. The breakdown of participants across the categories is therefore as follows:

Table 78 - Breakdown of participants by gender and age in West Somerset

West Somerset	Reading		Conversation	
	Over 40	**Under 40**	**Over 40**	**Under 40**
Women	6	3	8	3
Men	7	3	8	3

As in Chapter 6, the reporting of results will begin with Central Somerset, looking at the results by speech style.

7.2 Central Somerset by Gender

7.2.1 Onset positions

In the previous chapter, it was shown that the dominant form in Onset position in both speech styles was the Clear /l/ among the Over and Under 40s. It is therefore little surprise to find that this is also the case in both reading and conversational speech, regardless of gender (see Figure 47 and Figure 48, and Table 79). Use of variants other than Clear /l/ in the reading exercise is too small to be of consequence as the use of the Clear /l/ form is so high it could be considered that these deviations are anomalies rather than an indication of wider variation. The Chi-Square tests in both speech styles confirm that there is no difference in the use of (l) in an Onset position between the genders.

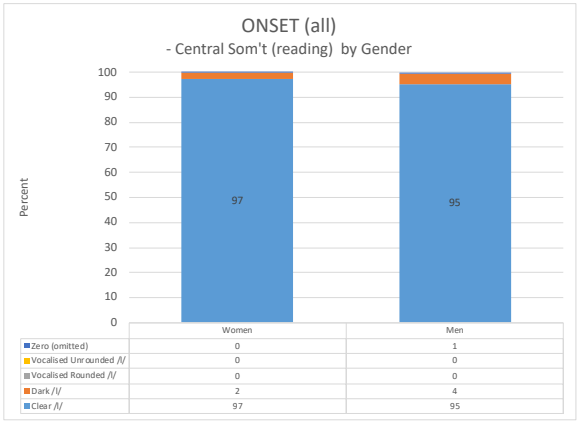


Figure 47 – Visualisation of L-realisation by gender in Central Somerset, Onset reading

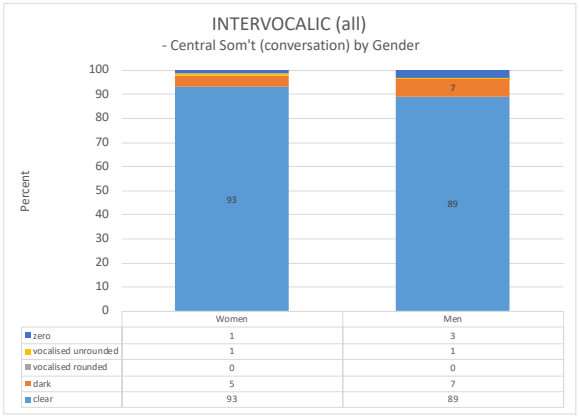


Figure 48 - Visualisation of L-realisation by gender in Central Somerset, Onset conversation

Dividing the results by both gender and age (see Table 82) shows that where there is use of Dark /l/ it is mostly among older men. The highest use of Clear /l/ comes from the younger speakers, particularly younger women. Chi-Square tests in the conversational speech reveal a significant difference between older and younger women in the use of Dark /l/ (p.022, see Table 81) where older women use this variant more frequently. In reading speech, there is also a statistically significant difference between older and younger women in the use of Clear /l/ (p=.016) and Dark /l/ (p=.003). However, the differences seen between the older and younger men in both speech styles is not shown as statistically significant in the Fisher's Exact Test.

In the previous chapter the descriptive data showed that the Over 40s in Central Somerset had lower use of Clear /l/ in Onset position than the SED speakers, representing a real time decrease in use. Having divided the data by age and gender, it shows that in both speech styles the Over 40s Men have lower use of Clear /l/ than the Over 40s women (see Figure 49 and Figure 50 below), which is expected in light of the results seen here that women overall have higher use of this form.

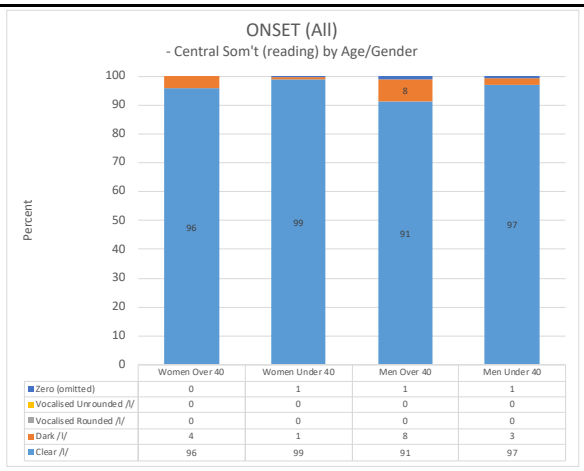


Figure 49 - Visualisation of L-realisation by age and gender in Central Somerset, Onset reading

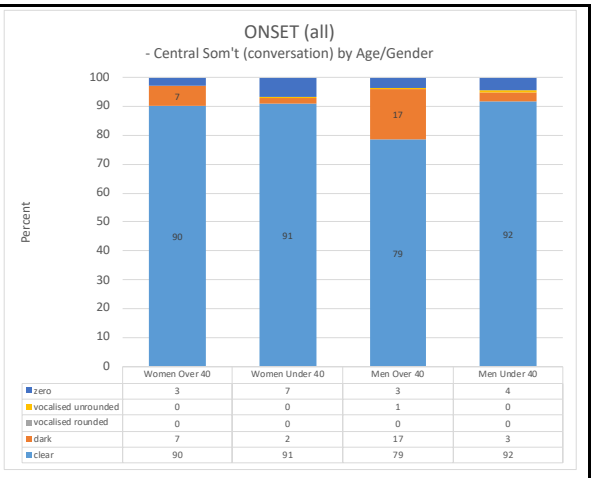


Figure 50 - Visualisation of L-realisation by age and gender in Central Somerset, Onset conversation

Table 79 - L-realisation by gender in Central Somerset, Onset

Central Somerset		
By Gender	**Onset**	
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**% of tokens**
Clear		
Women (Reading)	717	97
Men (Reading)	399	95
Women (Conv)	2028	91
Men (Conv)	1460	89
Dark		
Women (Reading)	18	2
Men (Reading)	16	4
Women (Conv)	91	4
Men (Conv)	101	6
Vocalised Rounded		
Women (Reading)	0	0
Men (Reading)	0	0
Women (Conv)	0	0
Men (Conv)	0	0
Vocalised Unrounded		
Women (Reading)	0	0
Men (Reading)	0	0
Women (Conv)	3	0
Men (Conv)	8	0
Zero		
Women (Reading)	2	0
Men (Reading)	3	1
Women (Conv)	115	5
Men (Conv)	70	4

Table 80 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in age groups by gender: Onset position

ONSET						
Central Somerset		**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero**
Reading	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	.278	.500	nul	nul	.222
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	.464	.236	nul	nul	.596
Conversation	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	1.000	nul	nul	.417
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	**.021**	nul	.449	.648

Table 81 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in gender groups by age: Onset position

ONSET	**Central Somerset**	**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero /l/**
Reading	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	**.016**	**.003**	nul	nul	.475
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.889	.306	nul	nul	1.000
Conversation	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	**.022**	nul	.213	.207
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	.333	nul	.500	1.000

Table 82 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Onset Reading

Central Somerset Reading			
By Gender	**Onset**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	386	42.890	98.5
Women Over 40 (n=7)	331	47.290	96
Men under 40 (n=7)	305	43.570	97
Men over 40 (n=2)	94	47.000	91
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	3	0.330	0.5
Women Over 40 (n=7)	15	2.140	4
Men under 40 (n=7)	8	1.140	2.5
Men over 40 (n=2)	8	4.000	8
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	0	0.000	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	0	0.000	0
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	2	0.220	1
Women Over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	2	0.290	0.5
Men over 40 (n=2)	1	0.500	1

Table 83 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Onset conversation

Central Somerset Conversation			
By Gender	**Onset**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	1158	128.67	91
Women Over 40 (n=7)	870	124.29	90
Men under 40 (n=7)	1186	169.43	92
Men over 40 (n=2)	274	137.00	79
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	23	2.56	2
Women Over 40 (n=7)	68	9.71	7
Men under 40 (n=7)	40	5.71	3
Men over 40 (n=2)	61	30.50	17
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	0	0.00	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	0	0.00	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	0	0.00	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	0	0.00	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	3	0.33	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	0	0	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	6	0.86	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	2	1.00	1
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	87	9.67	7
Women Over 40 (n=7)	28	4.00	3
Men under 40 (n=7)	58	8.29	4
Men over 40 (n=2)	12	6.00	3

7.2.2 Intervocalic Positions

Having already reviewed Intervocalic /l/ by age, one expects to find high use of Clear /l/ in almost all instances. Clear /l /is indeed the most frequently used variant by both genders in both speech styles, however, the shift in speech style does impact on this use (see Figure 51 and Figure 52). In particular, men seem the most affected by this shift, as they use Clear /l/ in 10% fewer instances in conversational speech than in reading, where women use only 6% fewer (see Table 84). There is no difference in the use of Clear /l/ between the genders in a reading speech style (women 98.6% Clear /l/, men 99%), which is supported by the statistical tests as no significance is found in any of the tests (see Table 85). This is also the case in conversational speech.

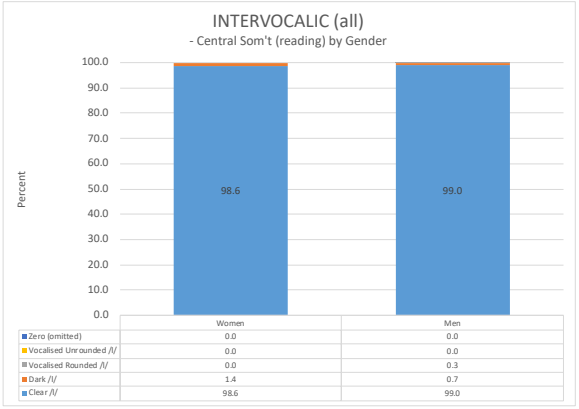


Figure 51 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Intervocalic reading

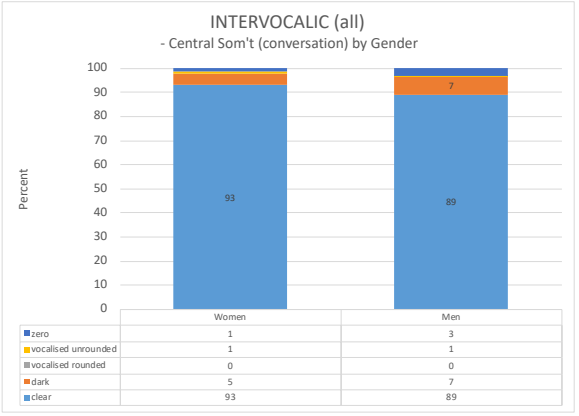


Figure 52 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Intervocalic conversation

Table 84 - L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Intervocalic

Central Somerset			
By Gender	**Intervocalic**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women (Reading)	490	30.63	98.6
Men (Reading	285	31.67	99
Women (Conv)	772	48.25	93.00
Men (Conv)	525	58.33	89.00
Dark			
Women (Reading)	7	0.44	1.4
Men (Reading	2	0.22	1
Women (Conv)	41	2.56	5.00
Men (Conv)	41	4.56	7.00
Vocalised Rounded			
Women (Reading)	0	0.00	0
Men (Reading	1	0.11	0
Women (Conv)	0	0.00	0.00
Men (Conv)	1	0.11	0.00
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women (Reading)	0	0.00	0
Men (Reading	0	0.00	0
Women (Conv)	5	0.31	1.00
Men (Conv)	4	0.44	1.00
Zero			
Women (Reading)	0	0.00	0
Men (Reading	0	0.00	0
Women (Conv)	11	0.69	1.00
Men (Conv)	17	1.89	3.00

The differences from the analysis by age group are reflected somewhat when comparing gender and age. In the reading exercise, the younger speakers have exclusive use of Clear /l/ in Intervocalic position, and it is among the older speakers that there is slightly lower use, replaced entirely by Dark /l/ (see Figure 53 and Figure 54). Furthermore, there is no difference in its use between the genders in the Over 40s age group. The use of variants becomes more varied in the conversational speech style. While it is still the most used variant, all speakers have lower use of Clear /l/ in this speech style compared with the reading exercise, and it is the younger speakers who have more use of Clear /l/. Use of Dark /l/ is greater for all speakers, and a significant difference in use of Dark /l/ between older and younger men in a reading speech style (p=.028, see Table 86). There also is a significant difference (p=.027) found between older and younger women in conversational speech. Nearly all speakers also have some use of Vocalised Unrounded and Zero forms, but not to a statistically significant degree. Use of the Zero form is highest among the men in both age groups, and lowest among the older women.

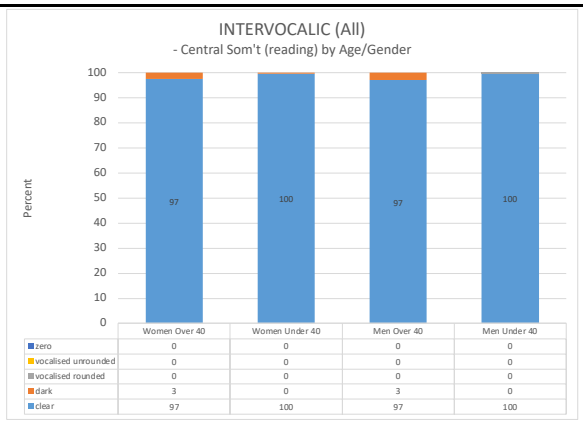


Figure 53 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Intervocalic reading

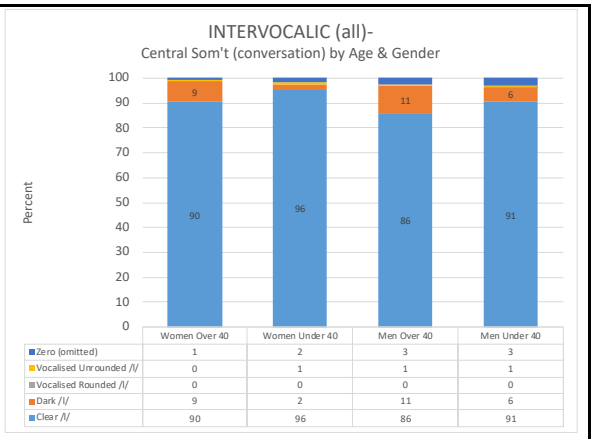


Figure 54 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Intervocalic conversation

Table 85 – Chi-Square tests (Fisher's Exact Test) between gender and age groups in Central Somerset, Intervocalic

INTERVOCALIC						
Central Somerset		**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero**
Reading	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	.278	.500	nul	nul	.222
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	.456	1.000	.438	nul	nul
Conversation	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	1.000	nul	.222	.417
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	.131	.438	.229	.447

Table 86 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in gender groups by age: Intervocalic position

INTERVOCALIC	**Central Somerset**	**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero /l/**
Reading	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.736	.562	nul	nul	nul
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.278	**.028**	1.000	nul	nul
Conversation	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.723	**.027**	nul	.308	1.000
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	.833	1.000	1.000	1.000

Table 87 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Intervocalic Reading

Central Somerset Reading			
By Gender	**Intervocalic**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	268	29.780	100
Women Over 40 (n=7)	222	31.710	97
Men under 40 (n=7)	220	31.430	100
Men over 40 (n=2)	65	32.500	97
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	1	0.110	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	6	0.860	3
Men under 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	2	1.000	3
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	1	0.140	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	0	0.000	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	0	0.000	0
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	0	0.000	0

Table 88 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in central Somerset, Intervocalic conversation

Central Somerset Conversation			
By Gender	**Intervocalic**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	426	47.330	96
Women Over 40 (n=7)	346	49.430	90
Men under 40 (n=7)	393	56.140	90
Men over 40 (n=2)	132	66.000	86
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	8	0.890	2
Women Over 40 (n=7)	33	4.710	9
Men under 40 (n=7)	24	3.430	5
Men over 40 (n=2)	17	8.500	11
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	1	0.140	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	0	0.000	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	4	0.440	1
Women Over 40 (n=7)	1	0.140	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	3	0.430	1
Men over 40 (n=2)	1	0.500	1
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	8	0.890	2
Women Over 40 (n=7)	3	0.430	1
Men under 40 (n=7)	13	1.860	3
Men over 40 (n=2)	4	2.000	3

7.2.3 Coda Positions

Moving on to the Coda positions, and the combined data in the reading exercise shows that men have almost equal use of the Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded forms, where women use Dark /l/ more frequently than they do Vocalised Rounded /l/, although they still use both at a fairly high rate. Use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ is higher among both genders in the conversational speech than in the reading exercise, and dark /l/ is used less. This shift is larger among men than women, where men use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in 15% more tokens in conversational speech than reading speech, and women by 11% (see Figure 56 and Table 90 below).

Both speech styles also have low use of the Clear /l/, Vocalised Unrounded and Zero forms with some variance between the genders, in which they are in slightly higher use in the conversational speech than the reading exercise, and in all cases are evenly used by both genders. Use of Vocalised Unrounded /l/ is shown to be significantly different in conversational speech among men and women, where men have greater use of this variant (p=.020, see Table 89).

Table 89 - Chi-Square tests in use of Vocalised Unrounded /l/ across gender groups: Coda position, Reading speech, Central Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	10.978[b]	5	.052	.022		
Likelihood Ratio	14.726	5	.012	.014		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	10.330			.020		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.336[c]	1	.562	.704	.397	.092
N of Valid Cases	25					

a. Participant Location = Central Somerset, Language Style = reading

b. 11 cells (91.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

c. The standardized statistic is .579.

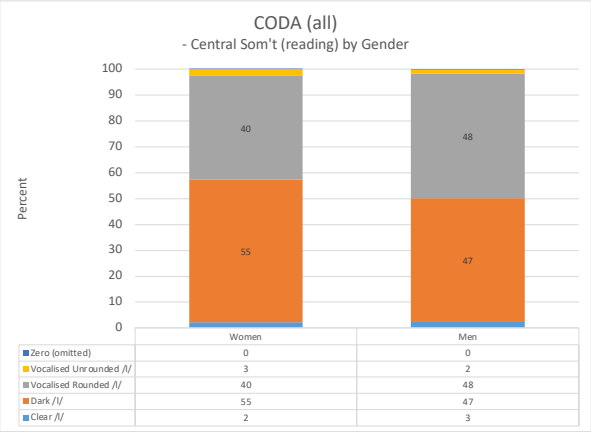


Figure 55 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda reading

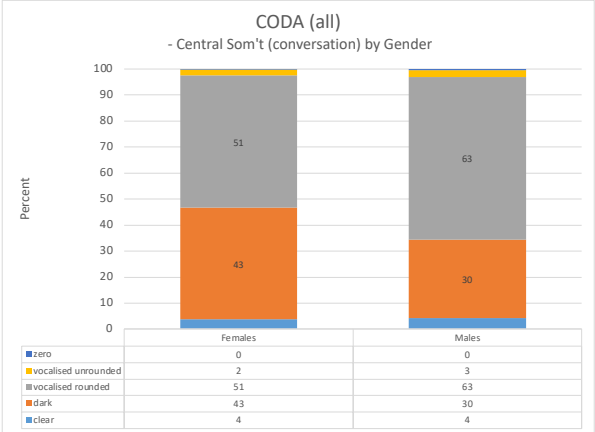


Figure 56 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda conversation

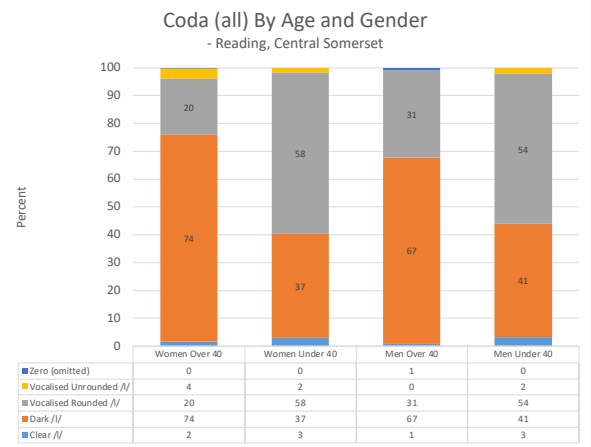


Figure 57 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda reading

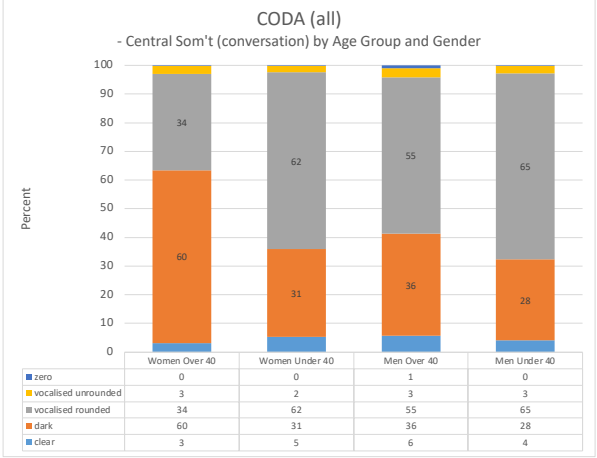


Figure 58 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda conversation

Table 90 - L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda

Central Somerset			
By Gender	**Coda**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women (reading)	18	1.13	2
Men (reading)	12	1.33	3
Women (Conv)	102	6.38	4.00
Men (Conv)	74	8.22	4.00
Dark			
Women (reading)	424	26.50	55
Men (reading)	211	23.44	47
Women (Conv)	1118	69.88	43.00
Men (Conv)	508	56.44	30.00
Vocalised Rounded			
Women (reading)	308	19.25	40
Men (reading)	214	23.78	48
Women (Conv)	1328	83.00	51.00
Men (Conv)	1057	117.44	63.00
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women (reading)	20	1.25	3
Men (reading)	7	0.78	2
Women (Conv)	61	3.81	2.00
Men (Conv)	46	5.11	3.00
Zero			
Women (reading)	1	0.06	0
Men (reading)	1	0.11	0
Women (Conv)	4	0.25	0.00
Men (Conv)	6	0.67	0.00

Table 91 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results between gender and age groups in Central Somerset, Coda

CODA						
Central Somerset		**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero**
Reading	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	.417	1.000	.889	1.000	.417
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	.890	.723	.227	**.038**	nul
Conversation	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	.833	1.000	1.000	.722	.167
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	1.000	1.000	.178	.550

Table 92 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in gender groups by age: Coda position

CODA	**Central Somerset**	**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero /l/**
Reading	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	**.017**	.475	.585	.694	.438
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.750	.611	.611	1.000	.222
Conversation	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.824	1.000	1.000	**.018**	.700
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	1.000	1.000	.333	.167

In the previous chapter, when analysing across age groups, the Under 40s showed the highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in both the Reading and Conversational data. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that both genders in the Under 40s have higher use of this form than their Over 40s counterparts. The Over 40s women and men both use Dark /l/ more than Vocalised Rounded /l/, with use of Dark /l/ highest in particular among the Over 40s women in

both speech styles. What is less expected is the higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among the Under 40s women than the Under 40s men (see Figure 57). The difference between these younger speakers shows no significance, though (see Table 91 above).

Conversational speech shows a different picture. It is immediately clear from the descriptive statistical data that all speakers use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more in this speech style. Yet the older women still use Dark /l/ the most frequently, but the older men now use the Vocalised Rounded form in the majority (see Figure 58). The difference in the descriptive data is not so pronounced among the older and younger men, where both use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority. Unlike in the reading exercise, the conversational data shows the younger men have the highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/, and thus slightly higher than the younger women. Similarly, when testing the gender groups by age, the difference in use between older and younger women of the same Vocalised Unrounded /l/ form is shown as significant in the Fisher's Exact Test (p=.018, see Table 92) in conversational speech.

Two age and gender groups in particular seem most affected by the style shift: the older and younger men. The men in both age groups seem to have a bigger shift in their use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than the women. This suggests that they are most conscious of their speech in a formal reading scenario, yet it is unclear if they are aware of this.

Table 93 - L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda reading

Central Somerset Reading			
By Gender	**CODA**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	12	1.330	3
Women Over 40 (n=7)	6	0.860	2
Men under 40 (n=7)	11	1.570	3
Men over 40 (n=2)	1	0.500	1
Dark			
Women Under 40	151	16.780	37
Women Over 40	273	39.000	74
Men under 40	136	19.430	41
Men over 40	75	37.500	67
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40	234	26.000	58
Women Over 40	74	10.570	20
Men under 40	179	25.570	54
Men over 40	35	17.500	31
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	7	0.780	2
Women Over 40 (n=7)	13	1.860	4
Men under 40 (n=7)	7	1.000	2
Men over 40 (n=2)	0	0.000	0
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	1	0.140	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	1	0.500	1

Table 94 - L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda conversation

Central Somerset Conversation			
By Gender	**Coda**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	62	6.890	5.5
Women Over 40 (n=7)	40	5.710	3
Men under 40 (n=7)	52	7.430	4
Men over 40 (n=2)	22	11.000	5.5
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	362	40.220	30.5
Women Over 40 (n=7)	756	108.000	60
Men under 40 (n=7)	368	52.570	28.5
Men over 40 (n=2)	140	70.000	36
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	906	100.670	62
Women Over 40 (n=7)	422	60.290	34
Men under 40 (n=7)	843	120.430	65
Men over 40 (n=2)	214	107.000	54.5
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	26	2.890	2
Women Over 40 (n=7)	35	5.000	3
Men under 40 (n=7)	34	4.860	2.5
Men over 40 (n=2)	12	6.000	3
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=9)	1	0.110	0
Women Over 40 (n=7)	3	0.430	0
Men under 40 (n=7)	2	0.290	0
Men over 40 (n=2)	4	2.000	1

7.2.4 Individual Coda positions in Central Somerset

As in the previous chapter, the Coda positions will now be reviewed individually. Statistical tests have not been carried out in these Coda positions because the further division of the data both by gender and then by age renders the results meaningless as the tokens become greatly reduced. Therefore, only descriptive statistics are considered. In reviewing these positions, attention will be paid to which are more favourable to L-vocalisation, and which are more resistant, particularly for the gender and age groups. Many of the results are already determined, as we have seen in the previous chapter that the Pre-Vowel position has the lowest L-vocalisation overall. Word Final and Post-Consonantal, however, were found to have the most L-vocalisation among the speakers in Central Somerset, so it could be expected that these Coda positions will be more favourable for L-vocalisation for all speakers when categorising by gender and age.

Broadly speaking, in all but the Coda Pre-Vowel position, men have the highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ regardless of speech style. On the other hand, women have the highest use of the Dark /l/ form of the two genders in both speech styles, but it is not always their highest used form throughout. When shifting from reading to conversational speech, women do make much more use of the Vocalised Rounded forms in all Coda positions, and this becomes their highest used form in the Coda Pre-Consonant conversational speech (Figure 60), Word Final conversational speech (Figure 62), and Coda Post-Consonant conversational speech (Figure 64). Between the genders, men and women both have equal use of both Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the reading speech in the Coda Word Final position.

The higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in conversational speech compared with their use of Dark /l/ in the majority in the reading exercise among women tells us that they are more susceptible to changing their most-frequently used variants depending on the speech style, whereas men consistently use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority regardless of speech style. It also shows us that both men and women have greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in conversational speech than reading. So, despite men using Vocalised Rounded /l/ consistently highest in all positions, they do still feel the need to suppress its use somewhat in a more formal speech style.

As mentioned, the Coda Pre-Vowel position behaves differently to the other Coda positions. Here, Clear /l/ is used consistently across speech styles by both men and women, neither of whom change their use to any large degree. However, both genders use considerably more Dark /l/ in the reading exercise than conversational speech where there is higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among both men and women. Of particular interest, though, is that while both genders do use Dark /l/ in the majority in the reading exercise, it is the men who have

greater use of this variant, and women who have higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/. This represents a brief departure from the pattern we are used to at this stage where men use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more than women in both speech styles.

Also of note, while use of other variants is minimal, there is some use of Vocalised Unrounded in both speech styles, with women using this variant more than men in the reading, and vice versa in the conversational speech.

It is likely, when reviewing this data by gender and age group, that we will find the older women are the highest users of Dark /l/, thus bringing this average up across both age groups of women. Conversely, we might expect that younger men have the greatest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/. As there are only two men in the Over 40s category, any use of variants they have will be levelled out by the use of the larger Men Under 40 group.

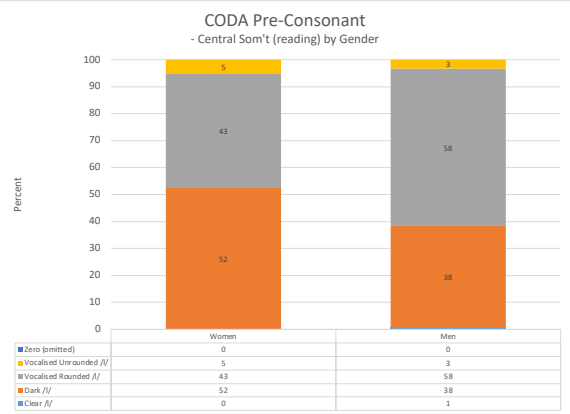


Figure 59 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant reading

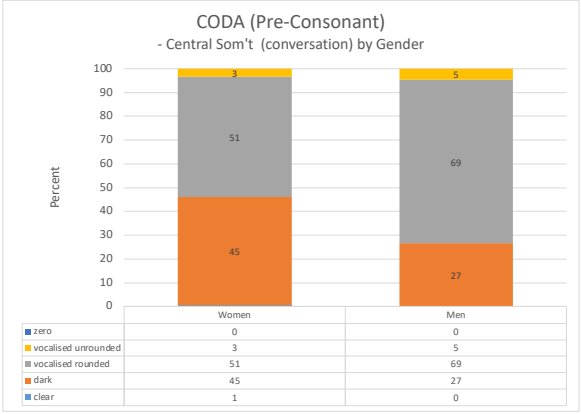


Figure 60 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant conversation

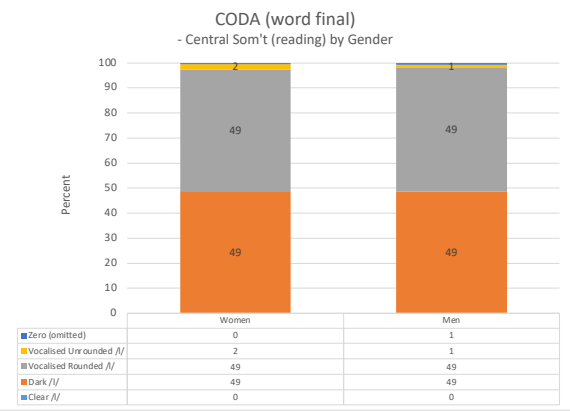


Figure 61 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Word Final reading

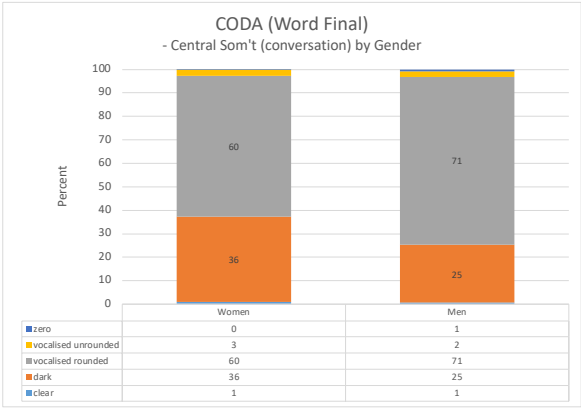


Figure 62 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Word Final conversation

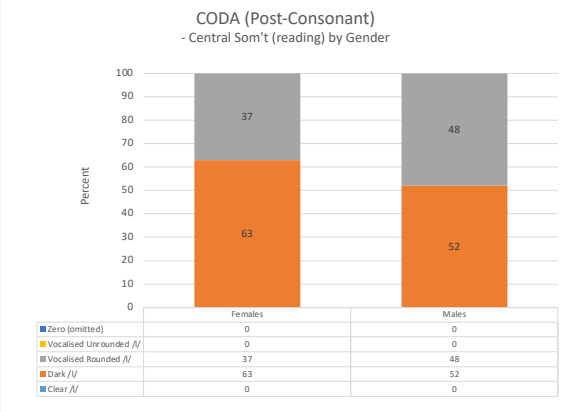


Figure 63 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant reading

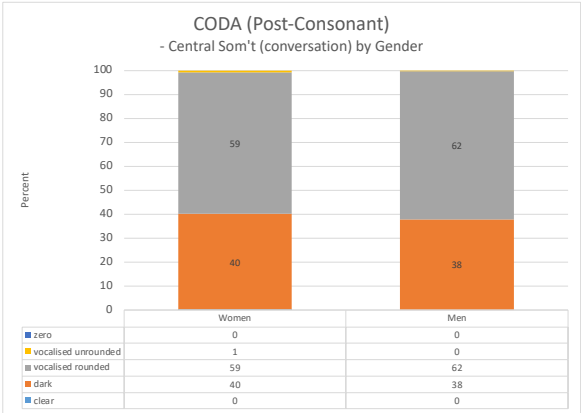


Figure 64 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant conversation

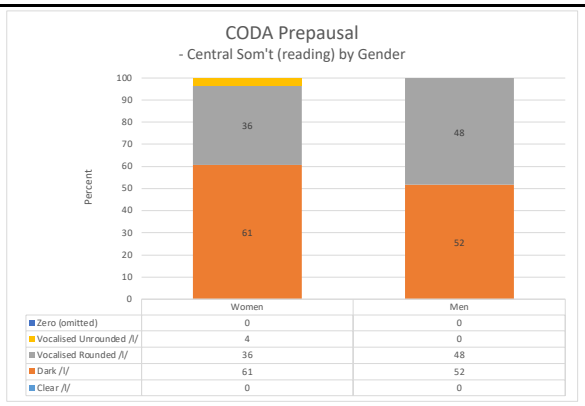


Figure 65 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Prepausal reading

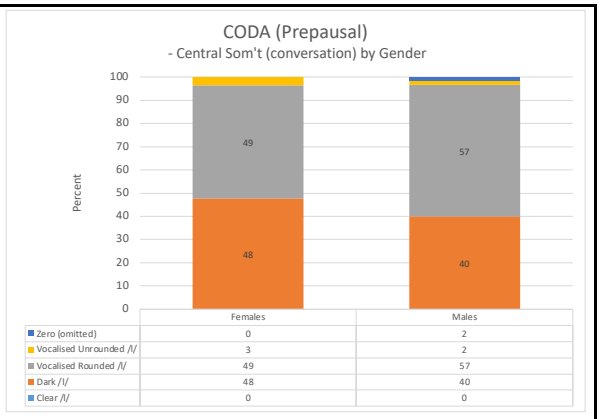


Figure 66 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Prepausal conversation

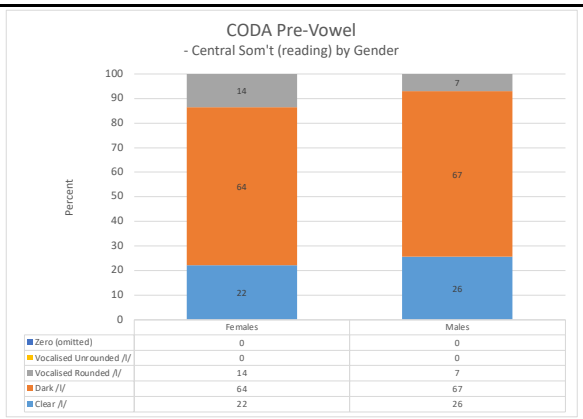


Figure 67 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel reading

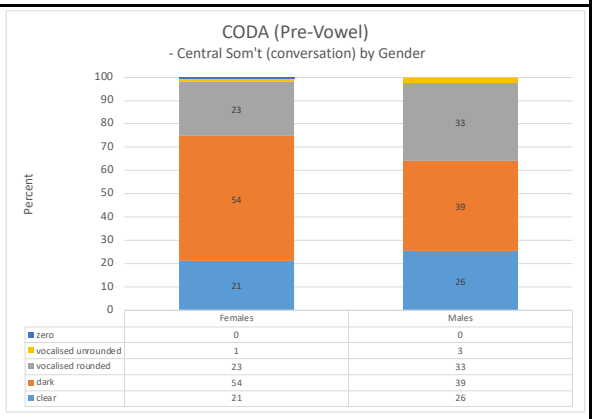


Figure 68 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel conversation

We already know that older speakers use more Dark /l/ where younger speakers use more Vocalised Rounded /l/. Therefore, it is of little surprise to see that overall the Under 40s speakers use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in both speech styles more than the older men and women. We also know from the overall Coda data above (see 7.2.3) that women have higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the Reading exercise than men. Looking at the individual Coda positions we can see that in the reading exercise, Women Under 40 have the highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in four of the five Coda positions (Coda Pre-Consonant, Figure 69; Coda Word Final Figure 71; Coda Post-Consonantal, Figure 73; and Coda Pre-Vowel Figure 77). What is perhaps a surprise here, though, is how that translates over into the conversational speech style. The overall Coda data showed younger men as the higher users of Vocalised Rounded /l/, but that is not the case in all the Coda positions in conversation speech. In the Coda Word Final position, use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ is equal between the two younger gender groups (74% in both genders). This is also the case in the Coda Prepausal position (64% each, see Figure 76). In the Coda Post-Consonant position, younger women have greater use of Vocalised Rounded

/l/ than men. But what seems to pull the average up for the men overall from their very low use in the reading exercise is the very high use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among the Men Over 40 in the Pre-Consonant position (74%, see Figure 70).

Of little surprise, though, is that the Women Over 40 overall have the lowest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/, consistently so in the conversational speech. Low use of this form among older women does sit in with the expectations that have developed throughout this thesis in accordance with examples of /l/ in other British English dialects.

Another more consistent pattern that emerges is that, across both speech styles, the use of variants groups according to age more than it does gender. Younger speakers use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority where older speakers use Dark /l/ (with the exception of the Pre-Consonant position). Moreover the younger speakers are much closer in their use of variants suggesting a more homogenous use of (l) than the older speakers.

It is worth briefly discussing the Coda Pre-Vowel position in a little detail. Use of variants is slightly different in the Coda Pre-Vowel position to the other Coda positions, as we have come to expect. Clear /l/ is used in greater frequency than the other Coda positions, in particular among the older speakers it is used more in the conversational speech than the reading exercise (see Figure 77 and Figure 78). Vocalised Rounded /l/ is used considerably less than in other positions, although again it is used more in the conversational speech than the reading exercise. But the pattern of similarity between gender groups by their ages is still present. In the Pre-Vowel position, the older speakers have almost categorical use of Dark /l/ whereas the younger speakers, both men and women, have a more variable use between the Clear, Dark and Vocalised Rounded forms. The use of multiple variants in this position among younger speakers further points to its hybrid nature, as it becomes more 'intervocalic' as the speakers become younger, gaining more use of the Clear /l/ form. However, this also shows that, while typically the more conservative of all the groups in their speech, particularly in the reading exercise, the Women Over 40 are more in line with the younger speakers with their use of Clear /l/ in this position than they are the Over 40s men.

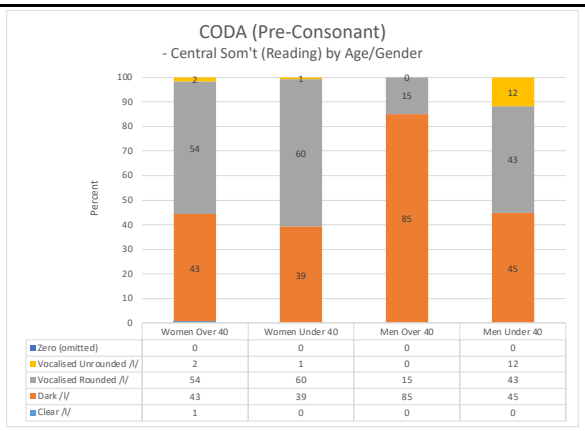


Figure 69 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant reading

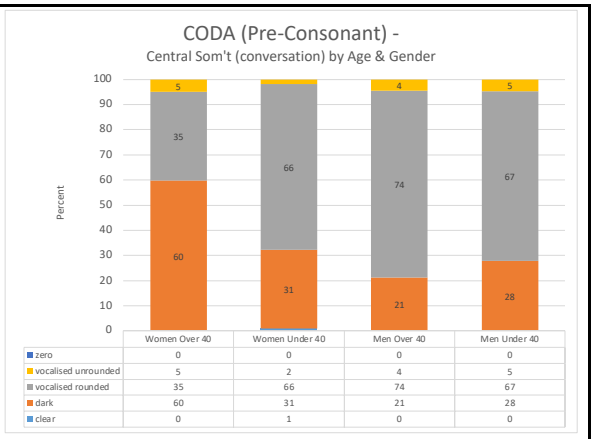


Figure 70 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant conversation

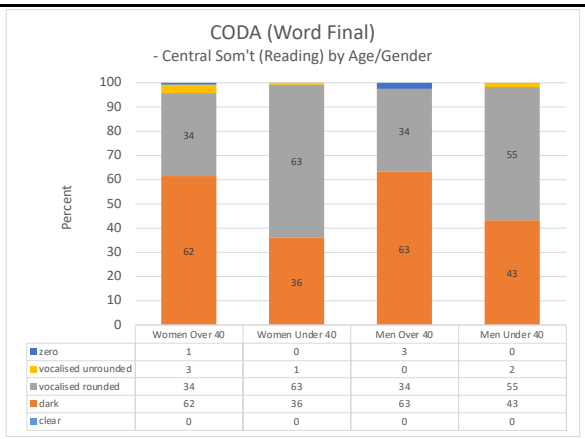


Figure 71 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Word Final reading

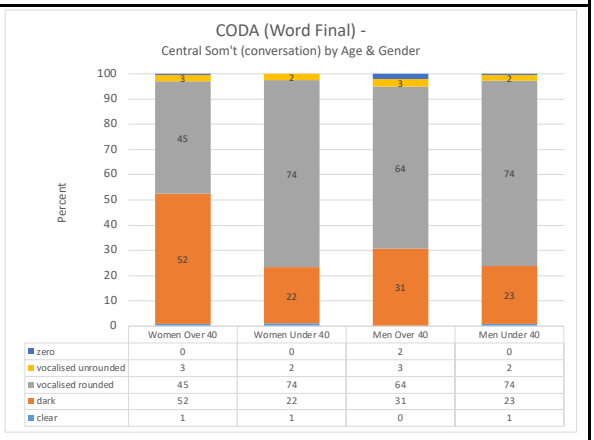


Figure 72 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Word Final conversation

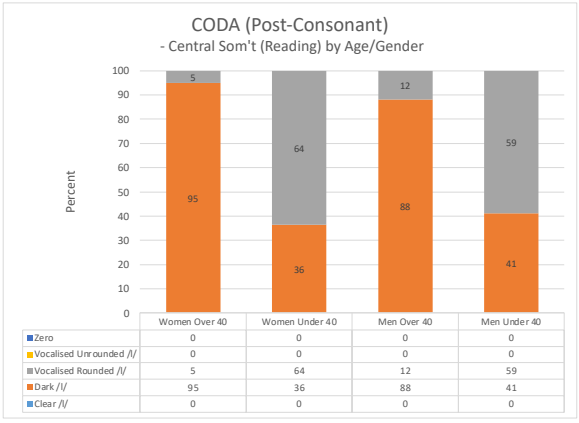


Figure 73 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant reading

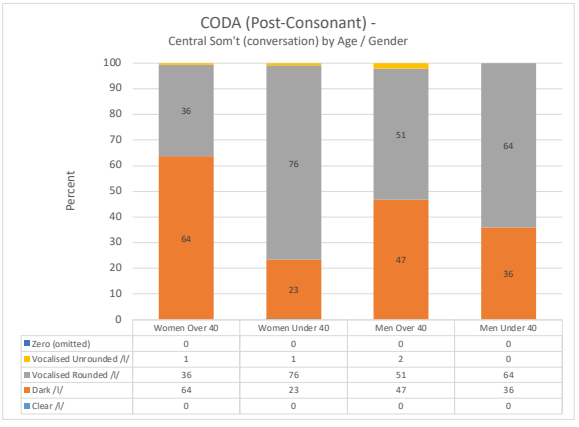


Figure 74 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant conversation

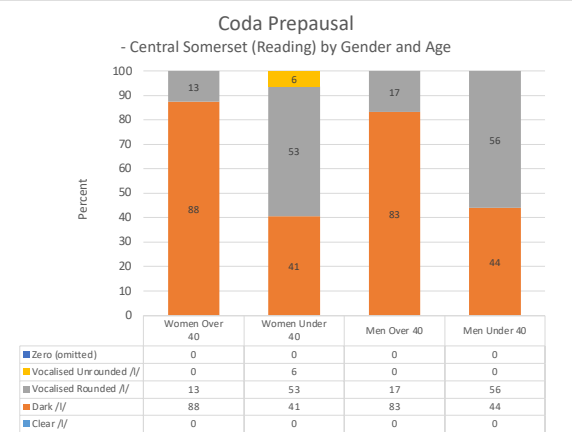


Figure 75 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Prepausal reading

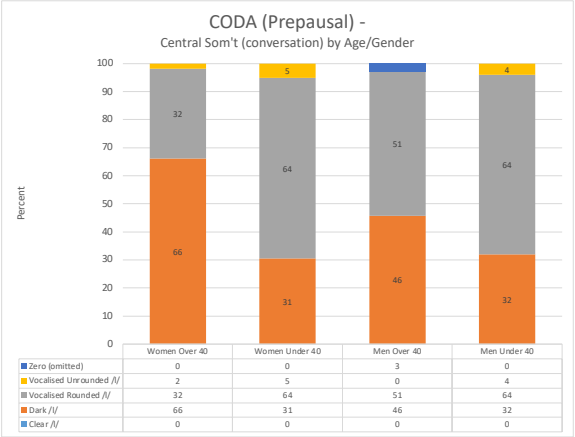


Figure 76 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Prepausal conversation

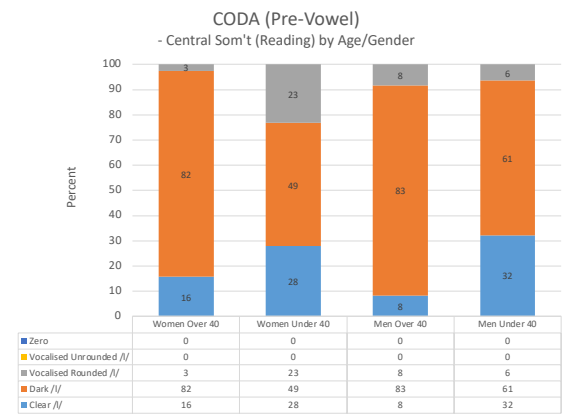


Figure 77 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel reading

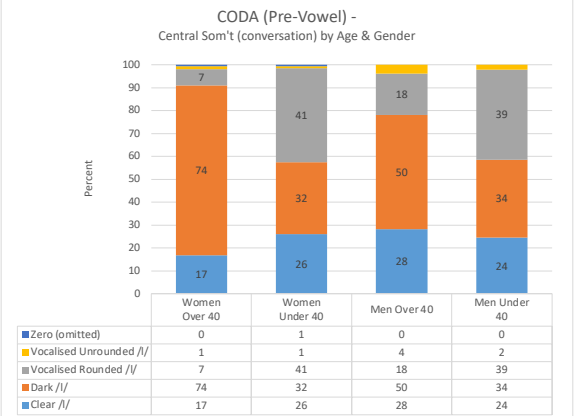


Figure 78 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in Central Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel conversation

7.2.5 Summarising the results in Central Somerset

While gender plays a role in the use of variants throughout the Central Somerset speakers, it does not do so at all ages. Among the younger speakers, there is more homogeneity in the use of (l) in the different linguistic positions overall. However, gender does have more of an impact among the older speakers, as the Women Over 40 tend to use (l) in a different way to the younger women, particularly in the Coda positions.

In the Onset position, descriptive statistics show women use Clear /l/ more than men in both speech styles. Younger women have significantly lower use of Dark /l/ than older women, and also younger men. In the Intervocalic position, younger men use Dark /l/ more than younger women in conversational speech according to descriptive statistics. Older women use Dark /l/ significantly more than younger women in conversational speech, and the same occurs among the men by age in the reading exercise.

The Coda positions show a few clear patterns. While all speakers use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more in the conversational speech than the reading exercise, it is men who use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more than women in both speech styles when looking at the overall Coda data. When digging down into the individual Coda positions, though, it is clear that the younger women have greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the reading exercise than younger men, and that the high use among younger women is levelled out by the low use among older women. Equally, where the younger men do not typically have the highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in all Coda positions in conversational speech, the unexpected high percentage in use of this form among the Older Men raised the average use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ for men overall.

The differences between the groups in Central Somerset are more anchored around age rather than gender. In Coda position the descriptive statistics showed differences in use of Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ between older and younger women. Overall, older women did favour Dark /l/ in both speech styles in all individual Coda positions, which is not seen among even the older men, as well as the younger speakers. The high use of the Dark /l/ form among the older women fits with a sociolinguistic pattern of women often being more likely to conform to a standard where men are more conservative and use the traditional dialect. However, in the case of the SED data from Somerset, the traditional dialect and RP both use Coda Dark /l/, therefore it's difficult to tell which variety either gender is confirming with. If the assumption is held that women are more likely to converge with a wider standard, then it might suggest that for the different age groups, there are different varieties that are considered 'standard'.

It is also noted that when testing for gender within age groups, there were no statistically significant differences found in Coda position in the use of any variant other than Vocalised Unrounded /l/ in the reading speech style. However, there was some variance seen in the

descriptive statistics, particularly between the different coda positions, showing that overall the use of Coda (l) between the younger speakers was much more homogeneous across genders than it was among the older speakers. This might indicate that any change in the use of (l) throughout the Central Somerset dialect has reached, or is close to reaching its final stages, and that these younger speakers represent that final stage of change. Moreover the variability in the use of (l) between the genders in the Over 40s age groups could represent an intermediate stage of change from the time of the SED speakers.

7.3 West Somerset by Gender

7.3.1 Onset Positions

In West Somerset, the descriptive statistics in the reading exercise and conversational data do not give any indication of a difference in use of (l) in the Onset position between the genders (see Table 97 below) which is confirmed by the Chi-Square tests which find no significance. Of the small numbers of Dark /l/ in use, they occur more among the men than the women, but not significantly so.

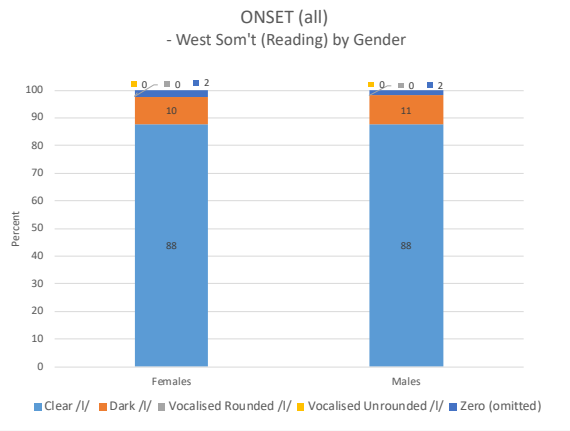


Figure 79 - Visualisation of L-Realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Onset reading

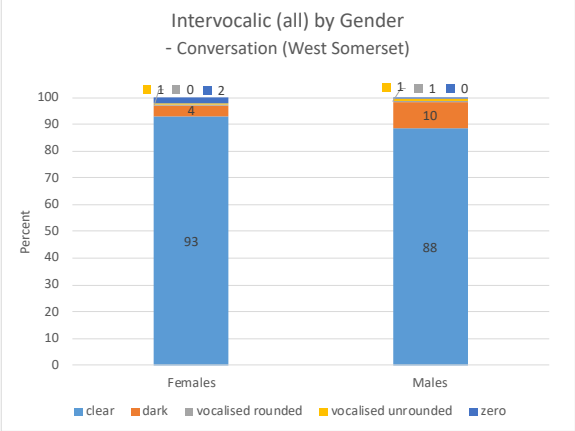


Figure 80 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset , Onset conversation

There is little difference in the use of (l) when breaking the gender groups down by age. The older speakers in both gender groups do have slightly lower use of Clear /l/ and subsequently higher use of Dark /l/ across both speech styles. An age-based difference is shown among older and younger men, where younger men to have higher use of Clear /l/ and older men have greater use of Dark /l/ in conversational speech (See Table 99). It is also noted that use of the Zero form is seen among all speakers in both speech styles. This is higher overall among younger speakers than the older, but there is no significance seen for the levels of use

between age or gender groups (see Table 95 and Table 96). In the reading exercise, though, there is more of Zero /l/ found among older women than the younger speakers. It is possible that the younger speakers have acquired this feature via transmission from the older women through parental caregiving. Two of the younger men do have familial relationships with two of the women in the sample. Nevertheless, this could represent the emergence of a new variant for these speakers in this linguistic position, and may merit further investigation in a longitudinal study.

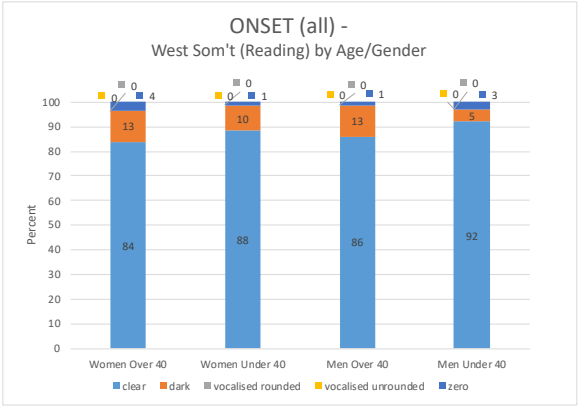


Figure 81 - Visualisation of L-Realisation by Age and Gender in West Somerset, Onset reading

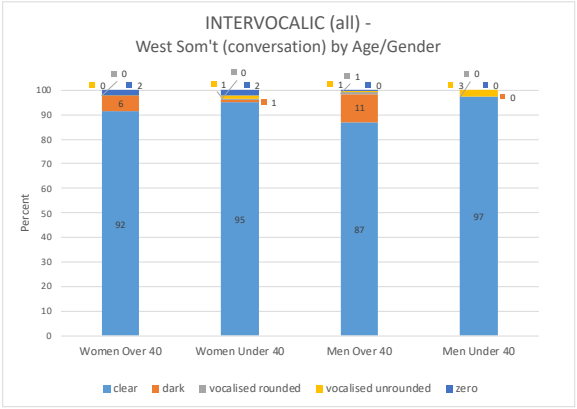


Figure 82 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Onset conversation

Table 95 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in age groups by gender: Onset position, West Somerset

ONSET						
West Somerset		**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero**
Reading	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	1.000	nul	nul	.615
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	.400	nul	nul	1.000
Conversation	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	.467	.217	1.000	1.000	.676
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	.600	nul	.400	1.000

Table 96 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in gender groups by age: Onset position, West Somerset

ONSET	**West Somerset**	**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero /l/**
Reading	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	1.000	nul	nul	.786
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.533	1.000	nul	nul	1.000
Conversation	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.564	.564	1.000	1.000	.830
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	.618	nul	.152	.836

Table 97 - L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Onset

West Somerset			
By Gender	**Onset**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women (reading)	407	45.22	88
Men (reading)	346	34.60	88
Women (conv)	1488	135.273	93
Men (conv)	1007	91.545	91
Dark			
Women (reading)	46	5.11	10
Men (reading)	42	4.20	11
Women (conv)	57	5.182	4
Men (conv)	65	5.909	6
Vocalised Rounded			
Women (reading)	0	0.00	0
Men (reading)	0	0.00	0
Women (conv)	0	0.000	0
Men (conv)	0	0.000	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women (reading)	0	0.00	0
Men (reading)	0	0.00	0
Women (conv)	2	0.182	0
Men (conv)	3	0.273	0
Zero			
Women (reading)	11	1.22	2
Men (reading)	7	0.70	2
Women (conv)	54	4.909	3
Men (conv)	31	2.818	3

Table 98 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Onset reading

West Somerset Reading			
By Gender	**Onset**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	138	46.00	88
Women Over 40 (n=6)	269	44.83	84
Men under 40 (n=3)	93	31.00	92
Men over 40 (n=7)	253	36.14	86
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	16	5.33	10
Women Over 40 (n=6)	30	5.00	13
Men under 40 (n=3)	5	1.67	5
Men over 40 (n=7)	37	5.29	13
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	0	0.00	0
Women Over 40 (n=6)	0	0.00	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.00	0
Men over 40 (n=7)	0	0.00	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	0	0.00	0
Women Over 40 (n=6)	0	0.00	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.00	0
Men over 40 (n=7)	0	0.00	0
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	2	0.67	1
Women Over 40 (n=6)	9	1.50	4
Men under 40 (n=3)	3	1.00	3
Men over 40 (n=7)	4	0.57	1

Table 99 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Onset conversation

West Somerset Conversation			
By Gender	**Onset**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	498	166.000	93
Women Over 40 (n=8)	990	123.750	93
Men under 40 (n=3)	170	56.670	93
Men over 40 (n=8)	837	104.630	91
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	13	4.33	2
Women Over 40 (n=8)	44	5.500	4
Men under 40 (n=3)	1	0.330	1
Men over 40 (n=8)	64	8.000	7
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=8)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=8)	0	0.000	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=8)	2	0.250	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	2	0.670	0
Men over 40 (n=8)	1	0.130	0
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	26	8.67	5
Women Over 40 (n=8)	28	3.5	3
Men under 40 (n=3)	9	3.000	5
Men over 40 (n=8)	22	2.750	2

7.3.2 Intervocalic Positions

As in the Onset position, Clear /l/ is the highest used form in the reading exercise among both genders in the Intervocalic position, with a slight difference showing a higher use of Clear /l/ among women than among men, who themselves have more use of Dark /l/ (see Table 101 below), although these slight differences are not statistically significant according to Fisher's Exact Test. In the conversational speech style, use of Clear /l/ is lower whereas Dark /l/ and the Zero form are both higher among all speakers when compared with the reading exercise. However, men show higher use of Dark /l/ than women in conversational speech, but there is no significance found here. However, there is a significant difference found in use of the Zero form in conversational speech in both Fisher's Exact Test (p=.004, see Table 100).

Table 100 - Chi-Square tests in use of Zero /l/ between genders: Intervocalic Position, Conversational speech, West Somerset

Chi-Square Tests[a]

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	9.569[b]	3	.023	.011		
Likelihood Ratio	11.449	3	.010	.016		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	8.866			.011		
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.043[c]	1	.005	.004	.002	.002
N of Valid Cases	22					

a. Participant Location = West Somerset, Language Style = conversation

b. 6 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .50.

c. The standardized statistic is 2.836.

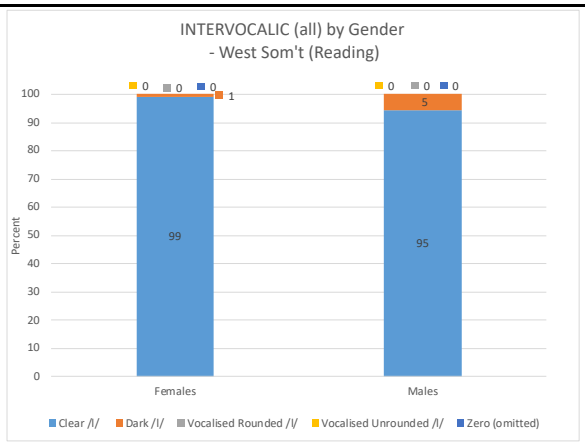


Figure 83 - Visualisation of L-Realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Intervocalic reading

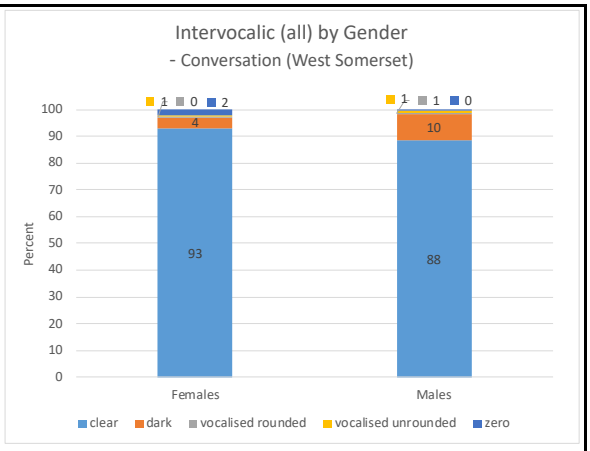


Figure 84 - Visualisation of L-Realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Intervocalic conversation

The use of variants by gender and age shows that in the reading exercise, use of Clear /l/ is impacted by gender more than age, confirming the findings above when evaluating for gender only. Indeed, younger women use Clear /l/ more than the younger men (see Table 102 and Table 103) yet no significance is seen between these younger speakers, nor among the older and younger women or men groups (see Table 104 and Table 105). All groups except the younger women have some use of Dark /l/ in this speech style. Age has more impact on use than gender in conversational speech, though, as the younger speakers have higher use of Clear /l/ than the older speakers among both gender groups. When reviewing the data across gender groups, there is some indication that gender does have an impact, particularly among younger speakers in both speech styles. However, these gender differences point more broadly to age as a factor overall, as it indicates that the older speakers are more homogeneous in terms of their use where the younger speakers have more variety by gender.

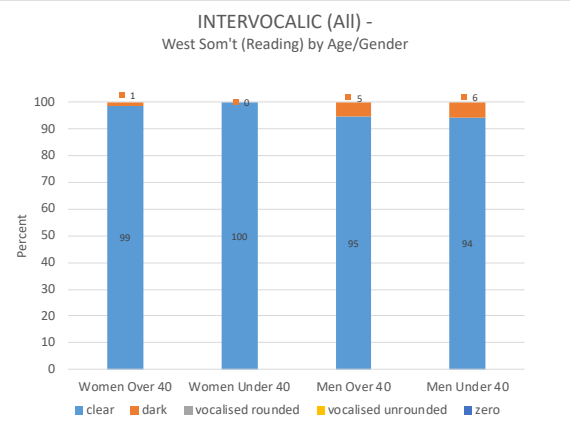


Figure 85 - Visualisation of L-Realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Intervocalic reading

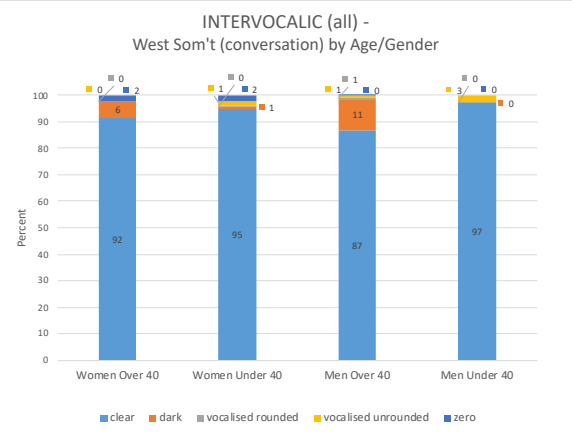


Figure 86 - Visualisation of L-Realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Intervocalic conversation

Table 101 - L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Intervocalic

West Somerset			
By Gender	**Intervocalic**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women (reading)	302	33.56	99
Men (reading)	258	25.80	95
Women (conv)	578	52.55	93
Men (conv)	664	60.36	88
Dark			
Women (reading)	3	0.33	1
Men (reading)	15	1.50	5
Women (conv)	27	2.45	4
Men (conv)	49	4.45	10
Vocalised Rounded			
Women (reading)	0	0.00	0
Men (reading)	0	0.00	0
Women (conv)	1	0.09	0
Men (conv)	3	0.27	1
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women (reading)	0	0.00	0
Men (reading)	0	0.00	0
Women (conv)	4	0.36	1
Men (conv)	11	1.00	1
Zero			
Women (reading)	0	0.00	0
Men (reading)	0	0.00	0
Women (conv)	13	1.18	2
Men (conv)	1	0.09	0

Table 102 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Intervocalic reading

West Somerset Reading			
By Gender	**Intervocalic**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	102	34.000	100
Women Over 40 (n=6)	200	33.330	99
Men under 40 (n=3)	66	22.000	94
Men over 40 (n=7)	192	27.430	95
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=6)	3	0.500	1
Men under 40 (n=3)	4	1.330	6
Men over 40 (n=7)	11	1.570	5
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=6)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=6)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=6)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0

Table 103 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Intervocalic conversation

West Somerset Conversation			
By Gender	**Intervocalic**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	207	69.000	95
Women Over 40 (n=8)	371	46.380	92
Men under 40 (n=3)	71	23.670	97
Men over 40 (n=8)	372	46.500	87
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	2	0.67	1
Women Over 40 (n=8)	25	3.130	6
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=8)	49	6.130	11
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	1	0.330	0
Women Over 40 (n=8)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=8)	3	0.380	1
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	3	1.000	1
Women Over 40 (n=8)	1	0.130	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	2	0.670	3
Men over 40 (n=8)	3	0.380	1
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	5	1.67	2
Women Over 40 (n=8)	8	1.000	2
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=8)	1	0.130	0

Table 104 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in age groups by gender: Intervocalic position, West Somerset

INTERVOCALIC						
West Somerset		**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero**
Reading	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	.476	.394	nul	nul	nul
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	.100	1.000	nul	nul	nul
Conversation	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	.739	.467	.569	.152
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	.400	1.000	1.000	.100

Table 105 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in gender groups by age: Intervocalic position, West Somerset

INTERVOCALIC	**West Somerset**	**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero /l/**
Reading	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	1.000	nul	nul	nul
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.700	.450	nul	nul	nul
Conversation	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	.855	.273	.152	.564
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	.503	1.000	.545	1.000

7.3.3 Coda Positions

Looking at the use by gender in the overall Coda position, women have slightly greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than men in both speech styles (see Figure 87 and Figure 88, and Table 106), which is somewhat of a surprise, and sits in contrast to the results seen in Central Somerset. The higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among women is not shown to be significant, though. Both genders make greater use of Clear /l/ and Vocalised Unrounded /l/ in the reading exercise, and appear to concentrate their use of variants to Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the conversational speech.

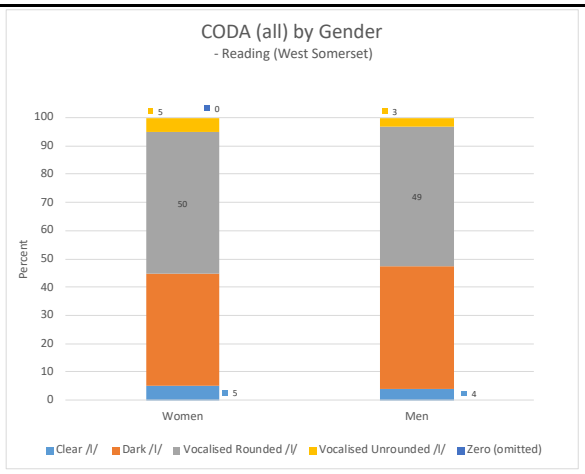


Figure 87 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda reading

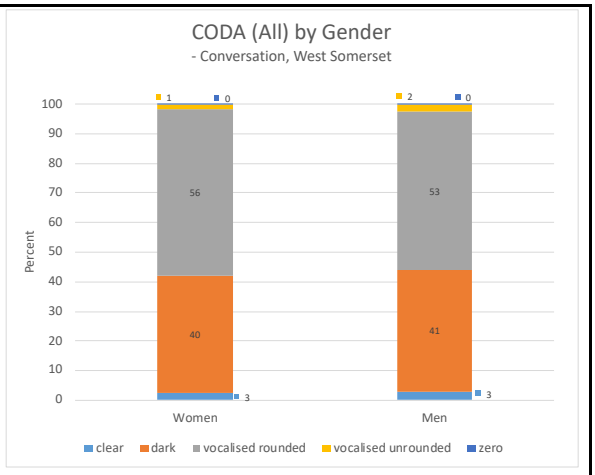


Figure 88 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda conversation

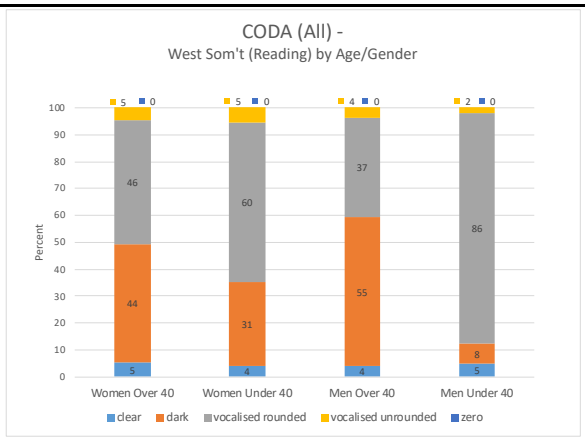


Figure 89 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda reading

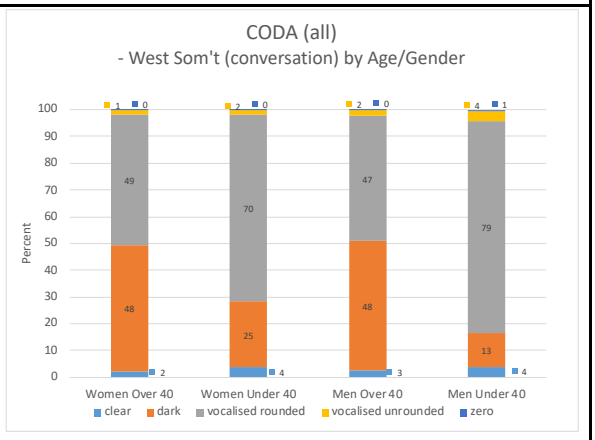


Figure 90 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda conversation

We know that younger speakers use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more than older speakers, and indeed the younger men and women have demonstrably higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than older speakers, using this variant more than Dark /l/ in both speech styles (see Figure 89 and Figure 90). Younger men have the highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in both speech styles, however, in conversational speech all speakers except the younger men have greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ and lower use of Dark /l/ than they do in the reading exercise. Among the older speakers, Dark /l/ is in much higher use overall, but it is only the most frequently used form for the older men in the reading exercise. For the older women, the use of variants does not alter to a huge degree between speech styles. The older women use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority in both speech styles, and more so than the older men, particularly in the reading exercise (see Table 107). Despite this, there is no significance found between the older speakers by gender (see Table 109) suggesting a more homogeneous and stable use of variants for these speakers.

Table 106 - L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda

West Somerset By Gender	**Coda**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women (reading)	25	2.78	5.00
Men (reading)	17	1.70	4.00
Women (conv)	51	4.64	3
Men (conv)	50	4.55	3
Dark			
Women (reading)	199	22.11	40.00
Men (reading)	181	18.10	43.00
Women (conv)	796	72.36	40
Men (conv)	701	63.73	41
Vocalised Rounded			
Women (reading)	253	28.11	50.00
Men (reading)	206	20.60	49.00
Women (conv)	1125	102.27	56
Men (conv)	914	83.09	53
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women (reading)	25	2.78	5.00
Men (reading)	13	1.30	3.00
Women (conv)	30	2.73	1
Men (conv)	41	3.73	2
Zero			
Women (reading)	0	0.00	0.00
Men (reading)	0	0.00	0.00
Women (conv)	5	0.45	0
Men (conv)	3	0.27	0

Table 107 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda reading

West Somerset Reading			
By Gender / Age	**Coda**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	7	2.330	4
Women Over 40 (n=6)	18	3.000	5
Men under 40 (n=3)	5	1.670	5
Men over 40 (n=7)	12	1.710	4
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	52	17.330	31
Women Over 40 (n=6)	147	24.500	44
Men under 40 (n=3)	8	2.670	8
Men over 40 (n=7)	173	24.710	55
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	100	33.330	60
Women Over 40 (n=6)	153	25.500	46
Men under 40 (n=3)	90	30.000	86
Men over 40 (n=7)	116	16.570	37
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	9	3.000	5
Women Over 40 (n=6)	16	2.670	5
Men under 40 (n=3)	2	0.670	2
Men over 40 (n=7)	11	1.570	4
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Women Over 40 (n=6)	0	0.000	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	0	0.000	0
Men over 40 (n=7)	0	0.000	0

Table 108 - L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda conversation

West Somerset Conversation			
By Gender	**Coda**		
Variant of (l)	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**% of tokens**
Clear			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	25	8.330	3.5
Women Over 40 (n=8)	26	3.250	2
Men under 40 (n=3)	13	4.33	4
Men over 40 (n=8)	37	4.630	3
Dark			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	171	57	25
Women Over 40 (n=8)	625	78.130	48
Men under 40 (n=3)	43	14.330	12.5
Men over 40 (n=8)	658	82.250	48
Vocalised Rounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	485	161.670	70
Women Over 40 (n=8)	640	80.000	49
Men under 40 (n=3)	271	90.330	79
Men over 40 (n=8)	643	80.380	47
Vocalised Unrounded			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	11	3.670	1.5
Women Over 40 (n=8)	19	2.380	1
Men under 40 (n=3)	12	4.000	4
Men over 40 (n=8)	29	3.630	2
Zero			
Women Under 40 (n=3)	2	0.67	0
Women Over 40 (n=8)	3	0.38	0
Men under 40 (n=3)	2	0.670	0.5
Men over 40 (n=8)	1	0.130	0

Table 109 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in age groups by gender: Coda position, West Somerset

CODA						
West Somerset		**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero**
Reading	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	.643	1.000	1.000	.685	nul
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	1.000	1.000	.400	nul
Conversation	Over 40s Men/ Women, p=	.559	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
	Under 40s Men/ Women, p=	1.000	.400	.400	1.000	.400

Table 110 - Chi-Square test (Fisher's Exact Test) results when testing use of variants of /l/ in gender groups by age: Coda position, West Somerset

CODA	**West Somerset**	**Clear /l/**	**Dark /l/**	**Voc. Rounded /l/**	**Voc. Unrounded /l/**	**Zero /l/**
Reading	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.714	1.000	1.000	1.000	nul
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	1.000	1.000	.850	nul
Conversation	Women Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	.164	1.000	1.000	.618	.491
	Men Over 40 vs Under 40 p=	1.000	.564	.564	.588	.152

7.3.3.1 Individual Coda Positions

Once again, the division of speakers and tokens by individual Coda positions makes performing statistical tests challenging, particularly when these speakers are further categorised by age as well as gender. Therefore only descriptive results are discussed here.

The first thing to note is that both genders use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority in both speech styles across all but two positions: Coda Post-Consonant and Coda Pre-Vowel. In Coda Post-Consonant (see Figure 95 and Figure 96), Dark /l/ is used in the majority by both groups of speakers, and in the Pre-Vowel position it is Clear /l/. Furthermore, in the review of the data above for all Coda positions, we saw that women had higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than men in both reading and conversation speech. Looking here at the individual Coda positions, it can be seen that most of these positions in both speech styles do show women to have higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than men, in all but three scenarios: the Coda Post-Consonant in the reading exercise; and Coda Pre-Vowel position in both reading and conversational speech (See Figure 99 and Figure 100).

Across speech styles, there is greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in conversational speech than the reading exercise overall, although the Post-Consonantal and Pre-Vowel positions show a greater difference in use between the speech styles. Post-Consonant position shows the greatest difference in frequency of variant use between the genders. In the reading exercise, Dark /l/ is used most frequently by both genders, where women use this in the large majority. Men use Dark /l/ almost 20% less than women and have more use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than women. In conversational speech, there is a complete change as both genders use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more than they do Dark /l/, but the difference in use between these variants is considerably smaller than in the reading exercise.

The Pre-Vowel offers more variation, as has come to be expected. In the reading exercise, both genders use Clear /l/ in the Coda Pre-Vowel position more than they do in the other Coda positions. Among women, Clear /l/ is the most used form in the reading exercise. There is some use of Vocalised Rounded /l/, which is greater among men than women, but this form is not used at the same level as the other two variants by either gender. In the conversational speech there is considerably less use of Clear /l/ among both men and women, and greater use of Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/. Dark /l/ is now the most frequently used form for both genders, highest among women. Men use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more than women in this speech style as they did in the reading exercise.

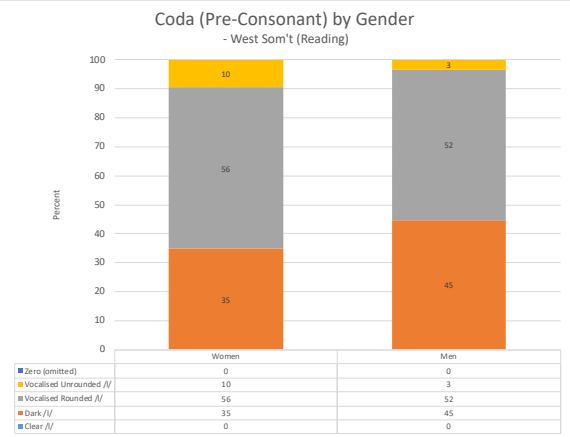


Figure 91 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant reading

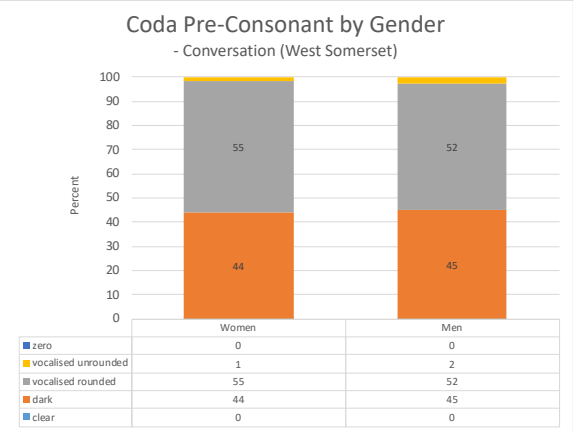


Figure 92 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant conversation

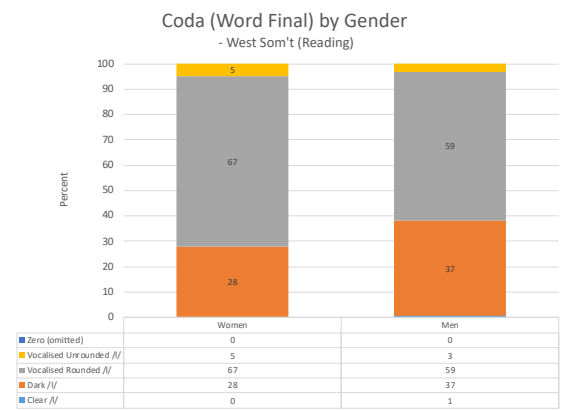


Figure 93 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Word-Final reading

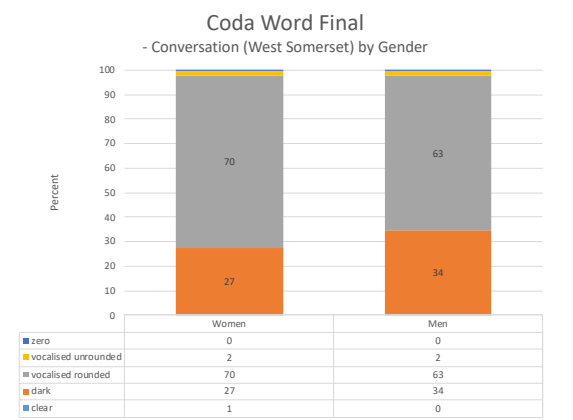


Figure 94 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Word-Final conversation

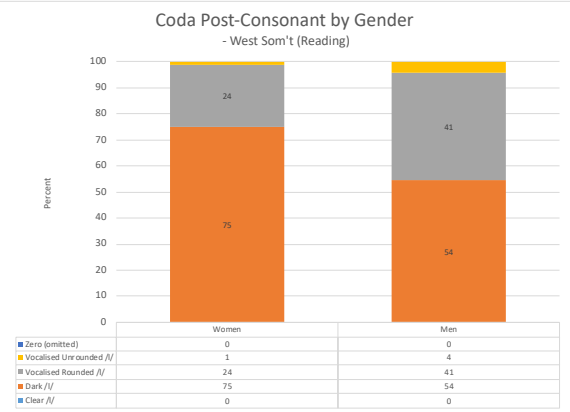


Figure 95 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant reading

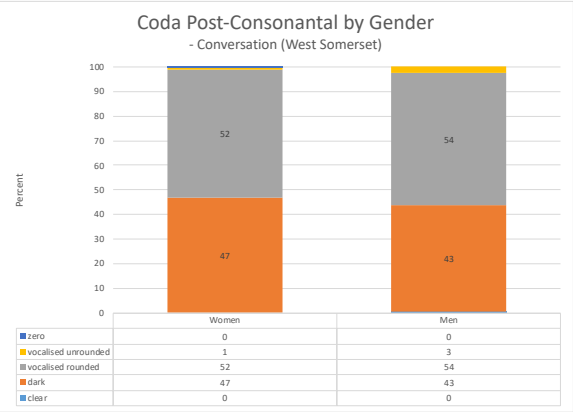


Figure 96 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant conversation

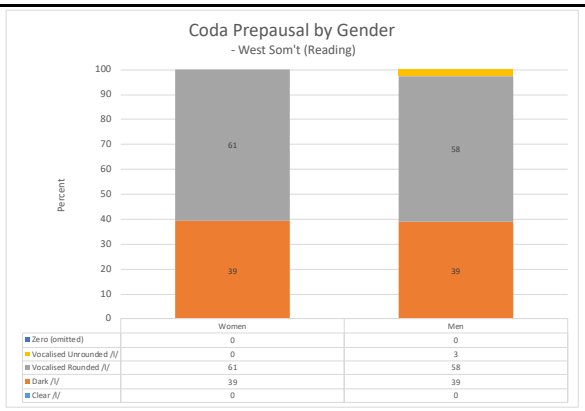


Figure 97 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Prepausal reading

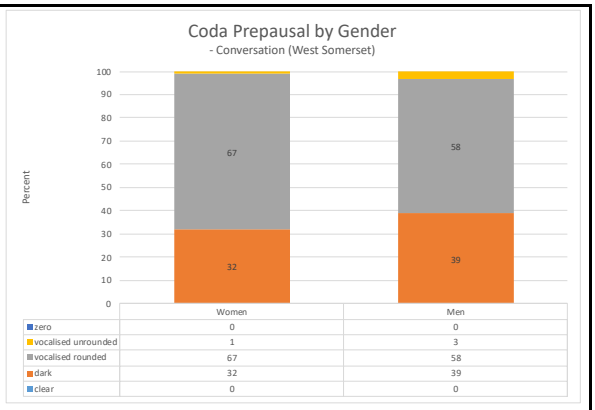


Figure 98 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Prepausal conversation

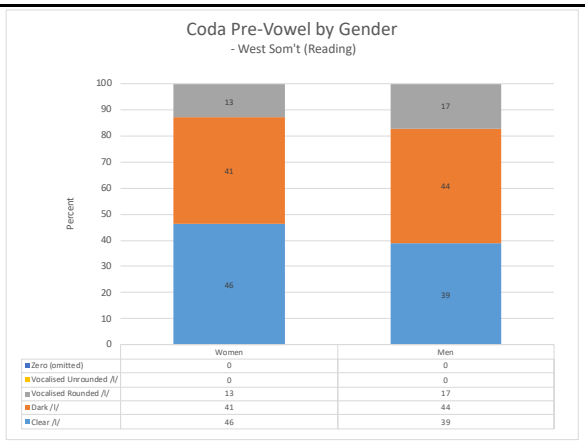


Figure 99 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel reading

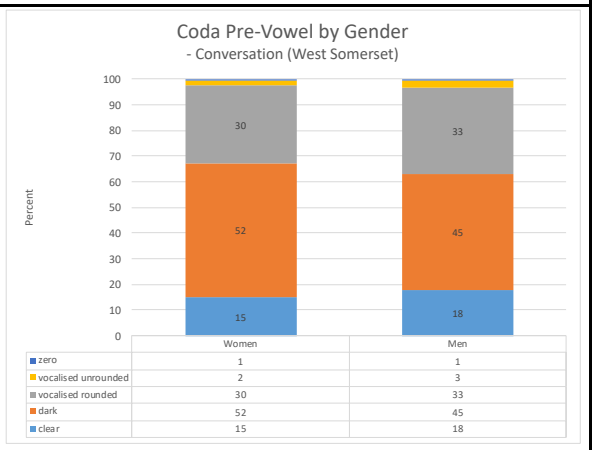


Figure 100 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel conversation

The overall Coda data divided by gender and age showed that while women have the highest use overall of Vocalised Rounded /l/, it was younger men who had highest use of this form overall in both speech styles.

The same division of speakers by age and gender in the individual Coda positions shows a similar picture: younger men have the highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ across all speech styles (see Figure 101 to Figure 110 below). By direct contrast, though, older men have much lower use across both speech styles, sometimes the lowest among all groups of speakers, and thus their low use reduces the average among all men.

The difference in use across genders when further investigating across individual coda positions brings the discussion of the impact of social factors back to the fore, and the indication that age is more of an impact than gender. The younger men and women have a similar pattern of use to one another across the individual Coda positions: both using Vocalised Rounded in the majority, with the exception of the Coda Post-Consonant in reading speech and Coda Pre-Vowel position in both speech styles, echoing those overall results by gender seen above. Conversely

the older speakers do not have as much similarity across the genders as the younger speakers. Older women will often use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority of their tokens in most Coda positions, where men have either near equal use of both Dark and Vocalised Rounded /l/, or will use Dark /l/ in most instances.

As seen above, Coda Pre-Vowel has a very different picture. All speakers across age and gender groups use a lot more Clear /l/ than in other positions, mostly so among older women and younger men, and least among younger women and older men. Use of Dark /l/ in the reading exercise is almost identical between both age groups of women, where the Men differ considerably between older and younger (see Figure 109). The younger speakers have more use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than the older speakers. Therefore there is not an easily identifiable pattern in use of (l) in the reading exercise. In the conversational speech, however, there is a much clearer pattern showing a difference across the groups by age. All speakers have lower use of Clear /l/ in conversational speech, which makes a suggestion about their perceptions of use of (l) in this position overall, as well as their perception of use in formal speech. Older speakers favour Dark /l/ where the younger speakers have the highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/. It should be noted, though, that younger women use Dark /l/ in the majority in Pre-Vowel Coda position in conversational speech, and it is only the younger men who use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority here. The use of variants overall is most similar between the older speakers, whereas the younger speakers differ from one another. Use of (l) in the Coda Pre-Vowel position offers a contrasting picture to the rest of the individual Coda positions where younger speakers are more homogenous and older speakers vary more between themselves. Despite this contrast, it nevertheless shows a stark age divide in use of (l) across these positions that is not matched by the gender groups.

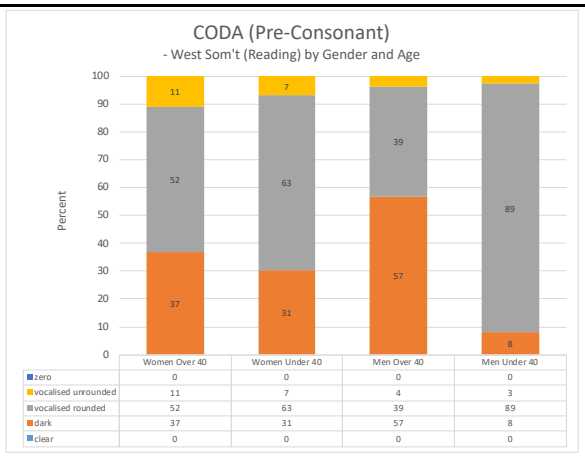


Figure 101 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant reading

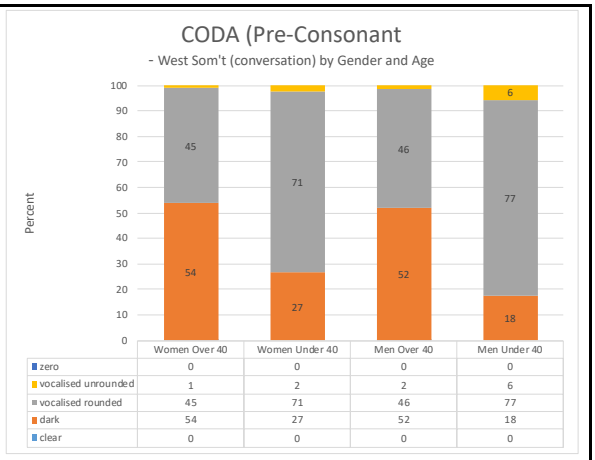


Figure 102 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Consonant conversation

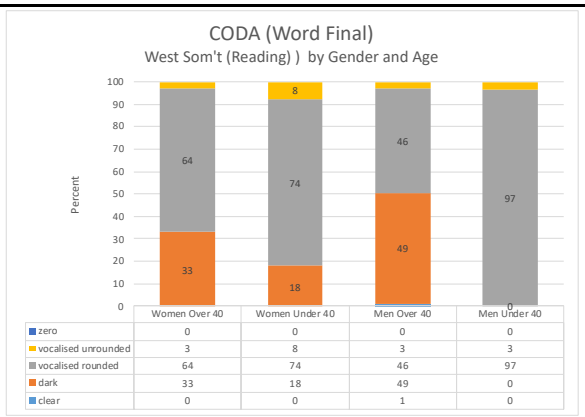


Figure 103 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Word Final reading

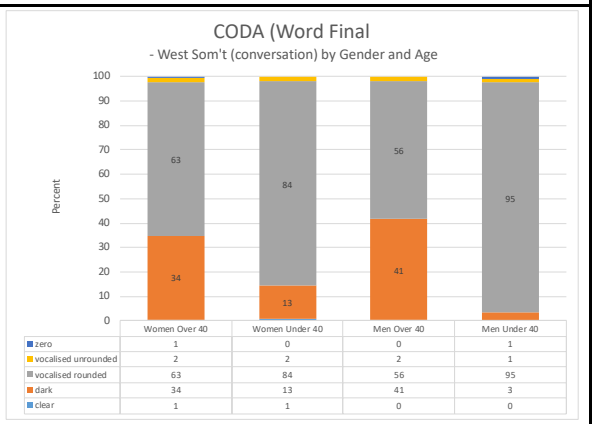


Figure 104 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Word Final conversation

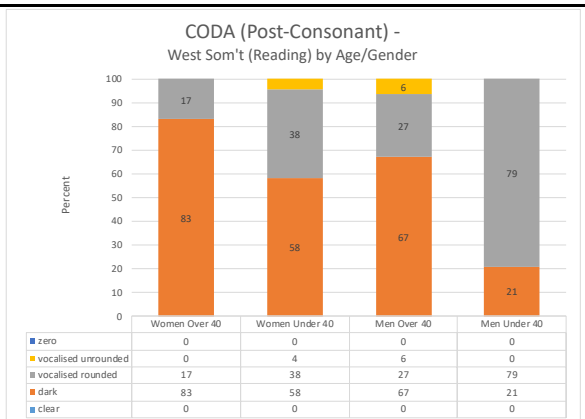


Figure 105 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant reading

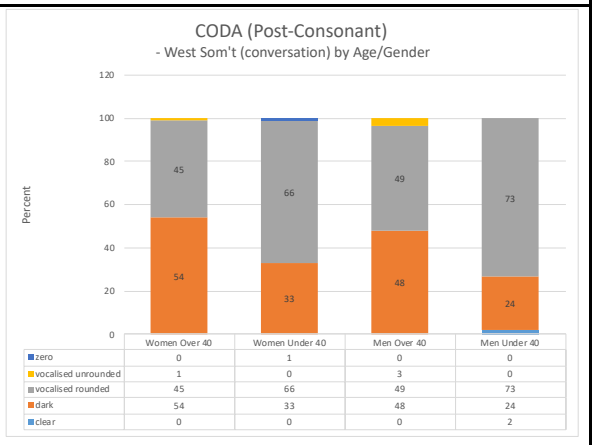


Figure 106 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Post-Consonant conversation

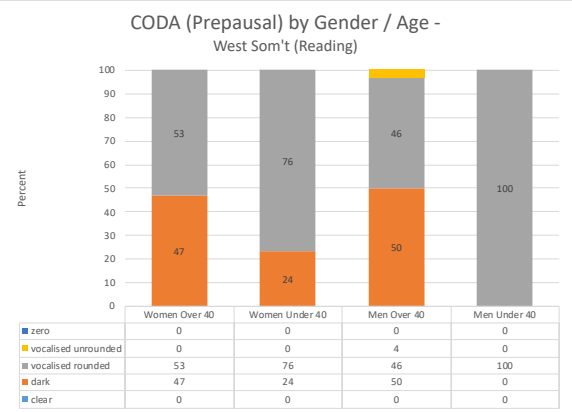


Figure 107 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Prepausal reading

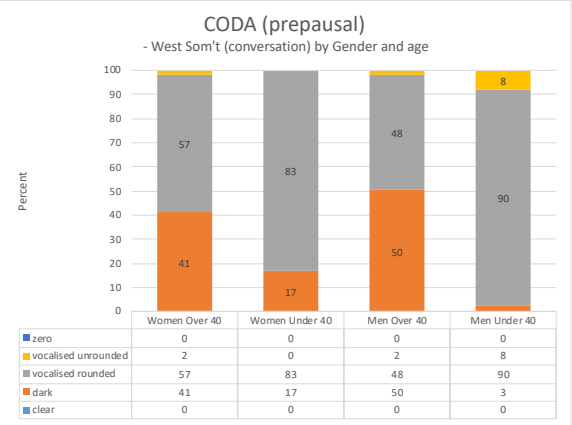


Figure 108 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Prepausal conversation

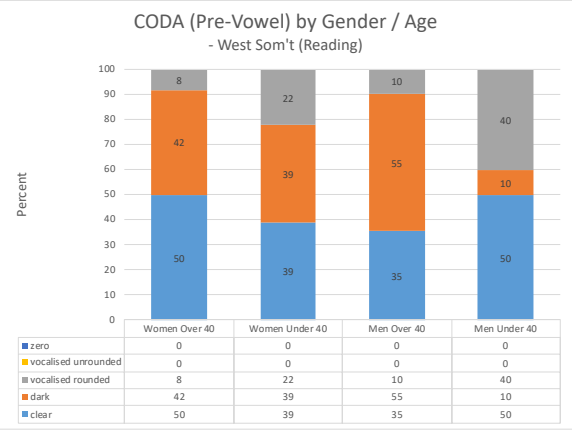


Figure 109 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel reading

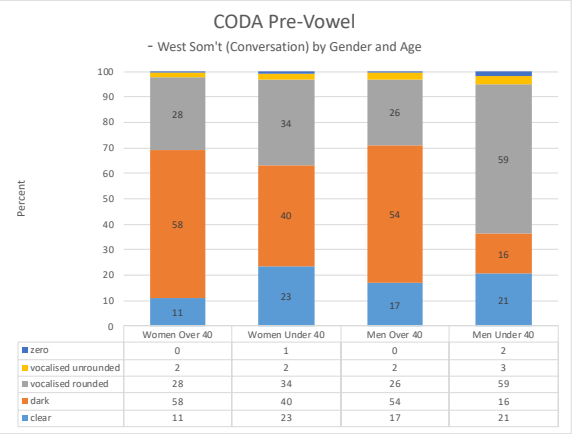


Figure 110 - Visualisation of L-realisation by Gender and Age in West Somerset, Coda Pre-Vowel conversation

7.3.4 Summarising the results in West Somerset

In West Somerset, there are differences found in the use of (l) with regards to gender and age in the different linguistic positions. In Onset position, in both speech styles women have a slightly higher use of Clear /l/, where men use more of the Dark /l/ form. The breakdown of results by age and gender further shows that Men Under 40 differ from the other speakers in use of Clear /l/, particularly in conversational speech. However, in a reading style, these younger men have a higher use of the Zero form in Onset position, and at levels similar to the older women, suggesting that to some extent there is a possible transmission of this form, albeit in low levels, from the traditional caregiver role among women to the younger men where familial relationships were present. While not statistically significant, the descriptive statistics showed gender was also found to be a factor in the different use of Dark /l/ in the reading exercise among the younger men and women. However, it is possible that the lower use of Dark /l/ among the younger men is offset by their higher use of the Zero form.

The Intervocalic position shows more variation between the speakers, with an apparent homogeneity seen among the older speakers in both the reading and conversational speech styles. Here a difference is found between men and women in the use of Clear /l/ in a reading style that is not seen in the conversational speech style. No significance found in the difference of use of Clear /l/ when comparing Over/Under 40s women with one another, or Over/Under 40s men in either speech style. Moreover, when reviewing the Over 40s men and women, and the Under 40s men and women, the older speakers have no differences in their use of Clear or Dark /l/, whereas the younger speakers differ by gender in their use of Clear /l/. The variation seen among the younger speakers in this position suggests that use of (l) is less stable for these speakers in this position than it is among the older speakers.

Among the overall gender groups in the overall Coda data, women have higher use than men of Vocalised Rounded /l/. There is a consistent pattern of high use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among both men and women in the Under 40s speakers in all but the Coda Post-Consonant and Pre-Vowel positions in both the reading and the conversational speech styles. The Post-Consonant and Pre-Vowel positions have less use of Vocalised Rounded /l/, with lowest use occurring in the Pre-Vowel position among all age and gender groups where Clear /l/ has greater use than in any other position.

Coda position once again highlights age as a greater factor in variation than gender. While women are shown to have highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ when accounting for gender alone, it is the younger men who have the highest use by far of the Vocalised Rounded form overall when reviewing by gender and age combined. The statistical tests in the overall Coda data across gender within their age groups showed that, much like the Intervocalic

position, there are no significant differences in use of any of the variants between the older men and women, but there are differences in the descriptive data between the Under 40s men and women in their use of Dark /l/ in both speech styles, Vocalised Rounded /l/ in conversational speech, and Vocalised Unrounded /l/ in the reading exercise. This once again points to some stability between the older speakers in this part of the county where there is variance among the younger speakers. The individual Coda positions also showed that any differences by gender typically occurred in one age group or the other, depending on the speech style. While there was no clear pattern to differences across the gender groups within their age groups, the unifying factor was the impact the division by age made.

7.4 Gender as a factor across locations

Across both locations there are some clear differences in use of (l) by the different gender groups, which in turn point to a broader difference in use across the county.

In Onset position, Clear /l/ is the highest used form by all speakers. Both locations show significantly higher use of Clear /l/ among women overall, although Central Somerset sees equal use among men and women in the reading exercise. Indeed, when comparing the women across the county, there is a significant difference in reading speech when using Fisher's Exact test (p=.028, see Table 111).

Table 111 - Chi-Square tests comparing use of Clear /l/ among gender groups across county: Onset position

Chi-Square Tests

Gender	Language Style		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Man	conversation	Pearson Chi-Square	15.960[a]	17	.527	1.000		
		Likelihood Ratio	21.980	17	.185	1.000		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	15.394			1.000		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	9.330[b]	1	.002	<.001	<.001	.000
		N of Valid Cases	20					
	reading	Pearson Chi-Square	19.000[c]	15	.214	.108		
		Likelihood Ratio	26.287	15	.035	.108		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	17.000			.108		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	3.120[d]	1	.077	.077	.039	.003
		N of Valid Cases	19					
Woman	conversation	Pearson Chi-Square	24.929[e]	23	.354	.498		
		Likelihood Ratio	33.726	23	.069	.498		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	23.013			.498		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	.287[f]	1	.592	.615	.311	.005
		N of Valid Cases	27					
	reading	Pearson Chi-Square	19.936[g]	13	.097	.028		
		Likelihood Ratio	26.079	13	.017	.028		
		Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	17.530			.028		
		Linear-by-Linear Association	.015[h]	1	.902	.928	.487	.018
		N of Valid Cases	25					

a. 36 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .45.

b. The standardized statistic is -3.055.

c. 32 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .47.

d. The standardized statistic is -1.766.

e. 48 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .41.

f. The standardized statistic is .535.

g. 28 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

h. The standardized statistic is .124.

When reviewing by age, descriptive statistics show in Central Somerset older women use Dark /l/ more than younger women in both speech styles, and the same is also shown in the descriptive statistics between older and younger men, although these differences are not significantly so.

Of interest is the higher use of Dark /l/ among all speakers in West Somerset in the reading exercise compared with the Central Somerset speakers. In Central Somerset, the younger speakers have almost no use of Dark /l/ in the reading exercise where the older speakers have a small amount. Use of Dark /l is greater for Central Somerset speakers in the conversational speech. Over in West Somerset, though, all speakers have lower use of Dark /l/ in the conversational speech than reading, where they use Dark /l/ in at least 5% of instances. Moreover, even among younger speakers, it is the Men Under 40 who use Dark /l/ the least in the reading exercise. This defies expectations if we assume that speakers in both parts of the

county have the same model for a prestige model for Onset (l). The results here strongly suggest that this is not the case.

In the Intervocalic positions, descriptive statistics indicate differences between the younger speakers in Central Somerset by gender in their use of Dark /l/, whereas in West Somerset the difference seen among younger speakers is in the use of Clear /l/. In both locations, the descriptive statistics show that the younger women have the higher use of Clear /l/ in both the reading and conversational speech styles, where the younger men have more use of Dark /l/, albeit in small numbers.

It was also noted that the older women in Central Somerset vary more from the rest of the groups in the descriptive statistics, whereas the younger men and women have more similar use of variants. While no significance has been found in these differences, it does suggest that there is some variation between these groups. In West Somerset, though, descriptive statistics indicate that there are differences when comparing the younger men with the younger women and older men. Furthermore, differences between genders, particularly among the younger speakers suggest that age and gender are influential in use of (l) in this part of the county.

Both genders have a variable use of Dark /l/ and Vocalised Rounded /l/ in nearly all Coda positions that are very similar to one another. Broad analysis by gender in Central Somerset indicates that, within the descriptive statistics, men have higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than women in both speech styles, whereas the same analysis in West Somerset shows women to have higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than men. However, in both locations, the division of gender by age shows the opposite: in Central Somerset it is younger women with higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the individual coda positions, whereas in West Somerset, younger men have higher use than younger women, and the older women have such low use it levels out the use among younger women. These gender variations in the two locations do highlight a cross-border difference between the dialects: within Central Somerset younger women appear to be the driving force behind use of Vocalised Rounded /l/, and in West Somerset it is younger men.

7.5 Results by Gender in Summary

Across the two locations, gender does play a role in the use of (l). Overall, younger men do have higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in Coda position, and it is typically the older women who use this form the least. This fits in with the use of vocalised forms of /l/ in other British English varieties. However, there are still some differences that make Somerset stand apart from these other varieties somewhat. In Central Somerset it is younger women who use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the majority of Coda positions in both speech styles. In West Somerset, though, it is the younger men who are leading the use of Vocalised forms in both speech styles.

Comparing the two locations confirms that, while both locations have seen an increase in the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in a Coda position since the time of the SED, the distinction between a West Somerset dialect and the rest of the county as outlined by Elworthy (1876) in the early 20th Century remains in place. The implications of this in the broader use of (l) in the south west and how it might compare with patterns of dialect levelling will be the starting point for the discussion of these results in the next chapter.

8 Discussion

This thesis set out to evaluate the progress of dialect levelling in the southwest of England, paying close attention to the effect of a dialect boundary within a wider administrative boundary. In particular, the spread of L-Vocalisation, a sound change already in progress throughout the south of England, is the focus of the study within the dialect or dialects of Somerset, namely Central Somerset, and West Somerset, the latter of which is historically recorded as a distinct dialect from that found in the rest of the county (Elworthy, 1876).

At the end of Chapter 4 (L-Vocalisation) predictions were made about the nature of realisations of (l) within Somerset, and how any changes will have occurred throughout the county. The first prediction stated that there would be an increase in L-Vocalisation in Somerset since the time of the SED. The data from both sides of the county have a greater use of both rounded and unrounded forms of Vocalised /l/, but the Rounded form is in much higher use than the unrounded form. This thesis hypothesised that, as has happened in other parts of the south of England, there has been a real-time increase in the use of vocalised variants of (l) in a Coda position, to the extent that this is now used in preference to the more traditional Dark /l/ form found among speakers in Somerset in the Survey of English Dialects (SED) over 60 years ago. Moreover, it was hypothesised that younger speakers would display a greater use of vocalised forms than older speakers in the same location, thus representing a sound change in progress. Therefore, it was anticipated that vocalised variants of (l) would be found in most use among younger speakers, and that older speakers would be more likely to conform with the traditional dialect forms by using vocalised forms of (l) less frequently.

The results of this study have confirmed that there has been a real-time change in the realisation of (l) in Somerset since the time of the SED. In both parts of the county there has been loss of the already minimal use of Dark /l/ in Onset and Intervocalic positions, further increasing use of Clear /l/. In Coda positions, speakers in both parts of the county have increased use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ to the point where, among younger speakers in particular, it has now replaced Dark /l/ as the most frequently used form of (l). These changes are demonstrated across speech styles, occurring in both reading and conversational speech. Ostensibly, this pattern of change would indicate that l-vocalisation has increased through a process of dialect levelling as seen throughout the rest of the south of England, and that this change is the result of language contact, spreading from the south east. However, the results show a higher use of vocalised rounded forms among speakers in both age groups in the more rural West Somerset part of the county than among the urbanising Central Somerset region that

appears to contradict both wave diffusion theory and dialect levelling theory. Real time change has occurred in both parts of the county, but it has done so in different ways. In Central Somerset, the increase in L-Vocalisation occurs at a steady pace across the age groups, with the Over 40s age group acting as an intermediate phase of change where L-Vocalisation is highly variable with Dark /l/ in a Coda position. West Somerset, though, sees much greater use of vocalised (l) forms among the older speakers, more so than among their Central Somerset peers, which leads to questions around how this apparent anomaly can occur if we are to assume that a typical pattern of diffusion from the South East has occurred. To investigate these differences, and what they might mean for the overall pattern of diffusion of l-vocalisation within Somerset, this chapter will look at the phonetic and social constraints found within the results, and then move on to discussing these within the context of l-vocalisation as a phenomenon, and broader dialect levelling processes within British English varieties.

8.1 Constraints on the use of (l) in Somerset

8.1.1 Linguistic Constraints

To acquire a more detailed view of the pattern of l-vocalisation within Somerset compared with that found in other varieties, we now turn to look at the linguistic constraints at play in the Somerset varieties, alongside examples from other British English varieties, typically those from the south of England.

Previous studies have investigated the impact of surrounding segments on the realisation of (l) (e.g. Hardcastle & Barry, 1989). This thesis, however, does not take that approach. Rather it has focussed on the environments of (l) and their realisations within the context of social cues. Yet there is merit in reviewing the linguistic constraints within the data, and their impact on the realisation of (l), in order to set a foundation of analysis.

Earlier in this thesis, the environments in which L-vocalisation has been found were discussed. Attempts have been made to find an ideal environment in which L-vocalisation is most likely to occur. Those identified indicate that either a categorical Dark /l/ and Clear /l/ distinction between Onset/Intervocalic and Coda position is required (Johnson & Britain, 2007) or that Dark /l/ simply have already been place in Coda position, regardless of the realisation of (l) in Onset and Intervocalic positions such as in New Zealand and Australian English, (e.g. B. Horvath & Horvath, 1997) and in Dutch (Van Reenen, 1986). Thus the pattern of *clear>dark>vocoid* can be observed. The SED data for Somerset shows a high use of dark /l/ in Coda position, thus making it optimal for vocalisation. Indeed, in Wedmore (So3) in Central

Somerset, vocalised forms were already in use at a low level. The expectation here is that within the data from modern speakers, the pre-existence of l-vocalisation in Central Somerset would therefore mean this part of the county had a head-start in L-vocalisation, and therefore would have a greater use of vocalised (l) among modern speakers than in West Somerset. Yet the data shows that West Somerset has a greater use of vocalised (l) in a Coda position among speakers in all age groups. The data indicates that West Somerset speakers have undergone a rapid change in the use of (l) in real time. This apparent anomaly mirrors that seen in the increased use of T-Glottalling among older speakers in Hull by Williams and Kerswill (1999).

The unexpectedly high use of vocalised (l) in West Somerset therefore warrants a closer look at the use of vocalised (l) within the Coda positions. Borowsky and Horvath (1997) devised a ranking of three classes of environments in which L-vocalisation occurs in Australian English varieties: Class 1 - Coda Post-Consonant (*noodle, people*); Class 2 - Coda Word Final (*feel, cool*); Class 3 - Coda Pre-Consonant (*milk, felt*). Similar rankings of ideal environments for L-Vocalisation have also been devised in other varieties of English e.g. Pittsburgh (McElhinny, 1999), Colchester (Meuter, 2002), and Glasgow (Stuart-Smith et al., 2006). It is appropriate, then, to review the results of the individual Coda positions from Somerset to determine a ranking, or rankings in the locations.

The results from the modern speakers are grouped according to their age, location and speech style, making it possible to build a picture of the pattern of use across the county. Speech style in particular makes a difference when looking at the Coda positions in Central Somerset to determine which are more likely to produce l-vocalisation. Figure 111 and Figure 112 below compare the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ across the three age groups in the different Coda positions, divided as they are by speech style. Figure 111 shows the percentage of use in the reading exercise, and Figure 112 shows this in the Conversational data. From these figures, it shows that the Vocalised Rounded form is used in high frequency by all three age groups in the Coda Pre-Consonant and Coda Word Final positions. In the case of the SED data the highest use of L-vocalisation occurs in the Word Final position, suggesting the innovation occurred here first before appearing in other Coda positions. Among the modern speakers in Central Somerset, the shift in speech style brings about a change in ranking for both age groups. The Over 40s change from highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the Coda Pre-Consonant position in the reading exercise, to Coda Word Final position in the conversational data: the same position as the SED speakers. Similarly, the Under 40s speakers switch from highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the Post-Consonant position in the reading exercise, to the Word Final position in the conversational data, thus reinforcing the argument that Word Final position was the earliest position in which L-Vocalisation occurred for these speakers. The switch towards a more traditional local variety in a more relaxed speech style suggests that the modern speakers are,

at some level, conscious of their use of (l) when speaking in a slightly more formal setting, such as reading aloud, regardless of the nature of the text they are reading (in this case, a children's story). The specific coda environments do not themselves denote prestige, be it overt or covert. Rather they indicate that historically speakers in this part of the county used (l) in one particular way, and that when speaking in a more relaxed conversational manner, that traditional use of (l) is retained among modern speakers of all ages. It should be noted that, reviewing the descriptive statistics, the degree of change between the highest used environments for the younger speakers is very small, as there is high use of L-vocalisation for these speakers throughout the data.

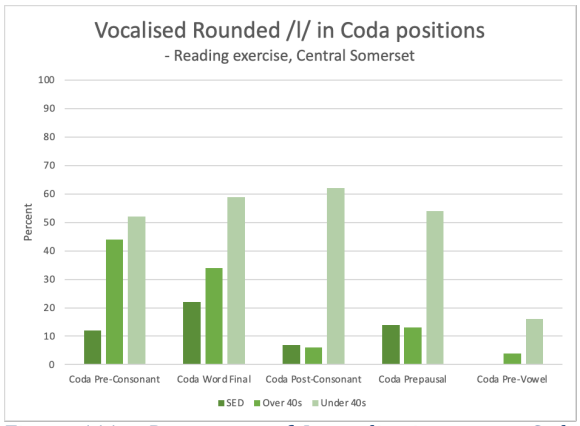


Figure 111 - Percentage of L-vocalisation across Coda positions in Central Somerset Reading exercise

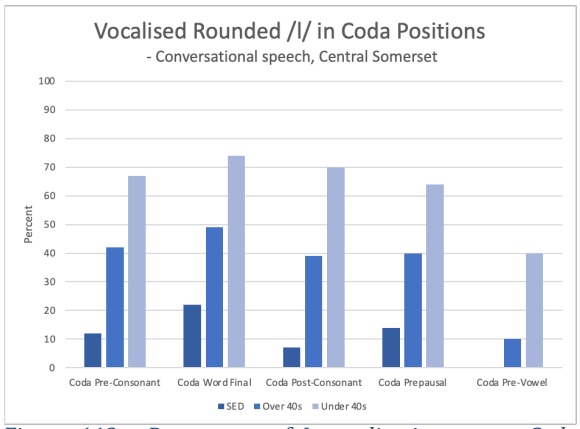


Figure 112 - Percentage of L-vocalisation across Coda positions in Central Somerset Conversational speech

While a shift in speech style brings about a change in ranking of Coda positions in Central Somerset, this is not the case in West Somerset. Within West Somerset, vocalised rounded /l/ increases between the reading and conversational speech styles (see Figure 113 and Figure 114 below) without changing the majority of rankings among the age groups across speech styles. In the reading exercise, the Under 40s have the highest use of vocalised rounded /l/ in the Coda Prepausal position, followed very closely by the Word Final position. This ranking swaps in the conversational speech, but the difference in use of vocalised rounded /l/ between these two coda positions is marginal. For the Over 40s, the Word Final position has most use of vocalised rounded /l/ in the reading speech style, and the Prepausal position follows behind. This ranking for the Over 40s is retained in conversational speech.

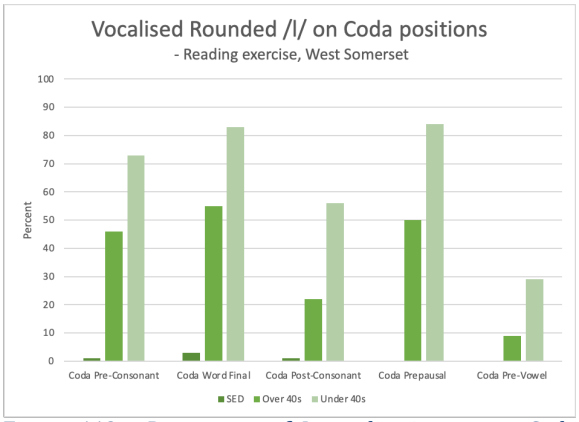


Figure 113 - Percentage of L-vocalisation across Coda Positions in West Somerset Reading exercise

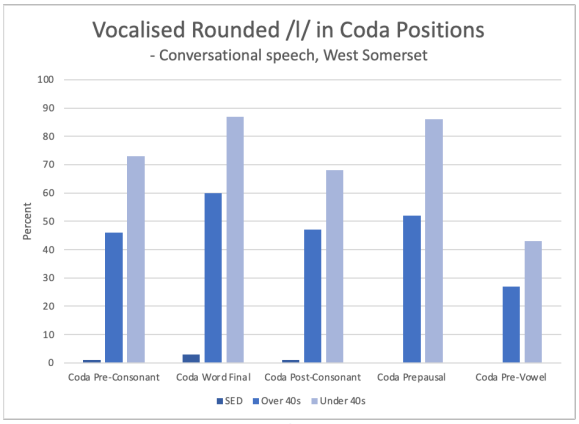


Figure 114 - Percentage of L-vocalisation across Coda Positions in West Somerset conversation

The results from this thesis showed that, overall across Somerset, the Coda Word Final position was most favourable for nearly all age groups, but there was still a Central/West divide in how other linguistic positions fared.

Having looked at the most favourable Coda positions for L-Vocalisation within both Somerset locations, we now turn to the least favourable positions. Here the Coda-Pre-Vowel position is shown to be the most resistant to L-vocalisation among all the modern speakers in both parts of the county, and in both speech styles. However, while this position has the least amount of vocalised (l), the higher use among the younger speakers compared with the older speakers suggests an early stage of change in progress, hinting that (l)-vocalisation may yet develop further in this position. Interestingly, the use of variants among the SED speakers would suggest that Coda Pre-Vowel was previously a typical candidate position for vocalisation, as Dark /l/ was found to be almost exclusively in use here. Real-time change demonstrated in the results in this thesis has pushed this position away from the expected Coda Dark /l/ to become highly variable in a different way. The emergence of Clear /l/ in the Coda Pre-Vowel position among the Over 40s is inhibiting vocalisation for both this group of speakers and the Under 40s speakers in both locations. This resistance to L-vocalisation and somewhat varied realisation among the speakers can be expected when taking into consideration findings of previous studies (e.g. (Scobbie & Wrench, 2003; Bermúdez-Otero & Trousdale, 2012). The data in this thesis does indicate that the perception of Coda Pre-Vowel /l/ has altered among the speakers, and is in a state of variability. In both locations, the results show that Clear /l/ is used more frequently in the formal reading exercise in Pre-Vowel position by Central Somerset younger speakers and all speakers in West Somerset, whereas older speakers in Central Somerset use Dark /l/ in this position. This use of Clear /l/ is reduced in the conversational speech among the younger speakers in Central Somerset, though: replaced in part with vocalised and Dark /l/ forms. In West Somerset there is a similar picture, where the use of Clear /l/ among all speakers seen in

the reading speech style is reduced considerably in the conversational speech. The higher use of Clear /l/ in the formal register would suggest that the speakers in both Central and West Somerset are more careful to treat this Coda Pre-Vowel position as Intervocalic – neither Onset nor Coda to use Bermúdez-Otero and Trousdale's description - yet the high use of vocalised forms in this same position in the conversational data suggests that for these speakers the situation is less clear, and still in a variable state that could go either way.

A ranking of most to least favourable linguistic positions for L-vocalisation found in this study can therefore be devised (see

Table 112), along with the results from previous studies of British English varieties (see Table 113). Colour coding is added to this table to determine a pattern. The most resistant Coda position in nearly all varieties, including those from Somerset, is the Pre-Vowel position. Yet it is clear from this table that the Central and West Somerset varieties have a pattern of use in both reading and conversational style that indicates strongly that it is a distinct variety from others, even neighbouring dialects such as those in Bristol and Swindon. Word Final position as the most favoured for (l)-vocalisation in a conversational speech style makes the Somerset speakers differ from all the other British English varieties where a ranking for favourability has been given. There are some limited instances of similarity with other British English varieties, though. One might expect that the variety that Somerset speakers share the most features with would be the Bristol, Bath and Swindon dialects. This is indeed the case for the Over 40s speakers in Central Somerset in a reading speech style, who favour the Coda Pre-Consonant (V_C) position, as do the Bristol, Bath and Swindon speakers in Grossenbacher's study (2016). Yet it is important to note that the speakers in Grossenbacher's study are demographically very different to those in the Over 40s category in Somerset. Grossenbacher's participants who made greatest use of vocalised forms were largely from a non-white working class background, whereas the Over 40s speakers in Central Somerset that share a ranking with Grossenbacher's speakers are nearly all white-British speakers, and older by definition. The likelihood that younger non-white male speakers from Bristol would influence the speech of older white speakers from Central Somerset is very slim. Furthermore, Coda Pre-Consonant position is also favoured in Colchester in Essex among the 6 year olds in Meuter's study (2002), and among speakers in Glasgow (Stuart-Smith et al., 2006). This Coda Pre-Consonant position is less favoured by the Under 40s in Central Somerset and speakers in both age groups in West Somerset, though, regardless of speech style.

In her work in Colchester, Meuter found that the Post-Consonantal position was more favourable to L-Vocalisation, but the Word-Final position was the least favourable. The results from both locations in Somerset showed very high use of the Vocalised Rounded form among all speakers in the Word Final and Prepausal positions, what Meuter called 'preceding vowel'. It

has been over 20 years since Meuter conducted her research, and this was done among very young speakers. By now, these speakers would be of a similar age to many of the Under 40s speakers in both parts of Somerset. Yet this still shows a distinct variety in use of L-vocalisation in Somerset compared with South East varieties.

Table 112 - Ranking of Likelihood of L-Vocalisation by Coda Position in Somerset

Region	Age group / style	Coda Pre-Consonant	Coda Word Final	Coda Post-Consonant	Coda Prepausal	Coda Pre-Vowel
Central Somerset	Over 40s (reading)	1	2	4	3	5
	Over 40s (Conv)	2	1	4	3	5
	Under 40s (Reading)	4	2	1	3	5
	Under 40s (Conv)	3	1	2	4	5
West Somerset	Over 40s (Reading)	3	1	4	2	5
	Over 40s (Conv)	4	1	3	2	5
	Under 40s (Reading)	3	2	4	1	5
	Under 40s (Conv)	3	1	4	2	5
1 – Most likely, 5 – Least likely						

Table 113 - Ranking of Likelihood of L-Vocalisation by Coda Position in British English varieties

Location and relevant study	age (where recorded)	Coda Pre-Consonant	Coda Word Final	Coda Post-Consonant	Coda Prepausal	Coda Pre-Vowel
Bristol, Swindon & Bath (Grossenbacher 2016)		1	2	3	-	4
London (Wells 1982)		2	2	1	2	-
Colchester (Meuter 2000)	6 yr olds (now mid 20s)	1	3	2	3	-
Colchester (Meuter 2000)	10 yr olds (now early 30s)	2	3	1	3	-
Derby (Docherty and Foulkes 1999)	Younger males more likely	1	1	4	1	-
Glasgow (Stuart-Smith et al 2006)		1	-	-	-	5
' -' = position not mentioned in the study						

1 = Most likely, 5 = least likely

The data reveals that speakers in Somerset, in both locations, have not only adopted L-Vocalisation as a feature of their respective dialects, but they have also done so on their own terms. The comparison of the Somerset use of L-Vocalisation with other varieties from British English, in particular those from the south of England through which it is anticipated that diffusion of L-vocalisation would have occurred. Indeed, I specifically say that this relates to respective dialects in the plural precisely because the process of analysing at this granular level of linguistic environment enables us to see that the speakers in both locations have retained the existing division between a West Somerset and broader Somerset dialect by making use of vocalised rounded /l/ in different environments. Section 8.1.2 will investigate these patterns of distribution according to social factors to determine how this feature has been adopted at a sociodemographic level.

8.1.2 Social Constraints

Having reviewed the data within the context of phonetic constraints, we now turn to look at the independent variables linked to the social context of the data, and how these may impact the use of (l). The social constraints investigated in detail within the data are gender and age. Age has been discussed in a previous section in the context of showing change over both real time and through apparent time data. In this section, there is scope for further discussion around the use of style shift across the age groups. While education levels were taken as part of the interview process, there was a usable divide by education level only in Central Somerset. In West Somerset very few participants had attended university, and those that had were all women. Similarly, a divide of social class might have been possible in Central Somerset, but it becomes much more difficult again in West Somerset as the typical criteria for different socioeconomic classes would have put the majority into one group. Additionally, while other studies in the South West have been able to draw comparisons in the use of (l) based on ethnicity (e.g. Grossenbacher, 2016), this is also not possible in the present thesis. The vast majority of speakers interviewed within this thesis fall into the 'White British' category, and thus the data would not be reliable for such an analysis regarding ethnicity.

8.1.2.1 Age as a social factor

Age has already been discussed in the previous section as a category with which to evaluate linguistic constraints such as environment, and to identify the hypothesised change in use of (l) through real and apparent time data. In this section, I will look at the impact of age as a social factor, more closely incorporating style shift.

8.1.2.1.1 Prestige and style shift across the age groups

Two speech styles were gathered as part of the interview within this thesis: reading and conversational data. The intention is to draw comparisons between these two speech styles, with reading acting as a proxy for formal speech (Labov, 1972b). As discussed, there are criticisms to taking this approach (e.g. Bell, 1984), however, for the purposes of drawing a comparison, the two speech styles do show a contrast in use of (l).

The results in chapter 5 do show a clear difference in use across both the speech styles among speakers in all age groups. In Onset position, both age groups in Central Somerset had higher use of Clear /l/ in the reading exercise than in the conversational speech, although the shift in style had a greater impact on the older speakers than the Under 40s, as the Over 40s doubled their use of Dark /l/ in this less formal speech style. In West Somerset, we saw how the speakers in both age groups increased their use of Dark /l/ in the conversational speech and decreased use of Clear /l/ in comparison to the reading speech style, thus contrary to expectations of style shift (if we are to assume that speakers are more likely to employ RP features in formal language), and in direct contrast with the behaviour of speakers from Central Somerset. It was suggested in Chapter 5 that the West Somerset speakers may have a different model for formal speech than the Central Somerset speakers. Moreover, given these differences they may have been building on the use of (l) among the SED speakers, which also showed higher use of Dark /l/ in West Somerset than in Central Somerset. In Intervocalic position, both locations behave more in line with what might be expected, as all speakers have higher use of Clear /l/ in the reading speech style than in the conversational speech. Among the older speakers in both locations, the shift from reading to conversation is greater than that among the younger speakers, suggesting that the older speakers are more aware of their speech and to a certain extent their use of (l) when using a more formal register. Overall, in Coda position the modern speakers increased use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the conversational speech style compared with the formal reading style, regardless of the degree of vocalisation already shown in the formal reading speech style. In Central Somerset, there is a shift among both age groups where Dark /l/ is replaced by Vocalised Rounded /l/ when moving from reading to conversational speech. The younger speakers have higher use of vocalised /l/ than the older speakers in both

speech styles. In West Somerset the same pattern is seen, although the difference in use across the speech styles is not as great as in Central Somerset. Once again, the younger speakers have greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in both speech styles. In all linguistic environments, speakers on both sides of the county demonstrate a difference in use of (l) that corresponds with style shift.

Romaine (1978) reminds us that "(t)he presence of a prestigious feature does not necessarily imply that the alternate form is stigmatized" (p154), nor that use of other variants in formal speech styles indicates prestige. In this regard, it is possible that the speakers from the modern data set are not necessarily looking to an external prestigious variety such as RP, but may instead be looking to the more traditional speech of the SED speakers. Mathisen (1999) argues that "(c)onservative local pronunciations associated with the past tend to linger in the **most casual types of speech** and within the older age groups" (p120, my emphasis). Yet the locally conservative form of Coda (l) in Somerset, shown to be Dark /l/ in both parts of the county, is not the most frequently used form in casual conversational speech. When comparing the use of Coda /l/ among the SED speakers with the data from the reading exercise from the 'Somerset Speaks' participants, one can see that the perception of prestige forms among Somerset speakers does not conform with the SED use, and has moved towards a model that is more closely aligned with RP where there is a categorical distinction between use of Clear /l/ and Dark /l/ in Onset and Coda positions respectively. This conformity with an overtly prestigious variety such as RP is also reflected in the Intervocalic positions. Where SED speakers had use of Dark /l/ in an Intervocalic position, the use of this form is considerably lower among the modern speakers, particularly in the reading exercise. The use of vocalised forms of /l/ in Somerset suggests that there is awareness at some level of how this variant may be perceived socially to other forms in a Coda position, and there is a performative element with audience in mind (see e.g. Bell, 1984; Douglas-Cowie, 1978).

The style shifts seen within the data across the two locations do indicate that there is a more conscious use of (l) in the reading exercise, and that it is the older speakers who are impacted by this more than the younger speakers in terms of degree of change in use of variants. The direction of change is not always the same, though, as we have seen in the case of the West Somerset speakers in Onset position who have greater use of a non-RP-like form in the reading exercise compared with the conversational data, thus contradicting the supposition that speakers will more likely align with a non-regional prestige form such as RP in more formal speech. This further indicates a difference in use of (l) across the two locations within Somerset and reinforces the argument that the dialect boundary between them remains unchanged, indeed strengthened in the face of ongoing language change.

8.1.2.2 The Impact of Gender

Gender as a factor in the realisation of (l) differs across the county. In both locations, different results regarding gender were displayed depending on the level of granularity within the analysis. Before going into the more detailed layers of analysis regarding style and age, in the first instance we look at the broad findings by gender alone across both locations.

In Central Somerset the results for Onset and Intervocalic positions found that both genders in the modern dataset had a majority use of Onset Clear /l/ in both speech styles where women used Clear /l/ more than men, significantly so in conversational speech. In Intervocalic position there is very little difference between the genders across speech styles and both use Clear /l/ in the majority.

The Coda position offers the greatest variability between the genders in use of (l). In Central Somerset, the overall Coda data showed that men use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more than women. Given the result from studies elsewhere in British English varieties, this is not a big surprise, and indeed the predictions around use of (l) made at the end of Chapter 3 stated as much. However, in West Somerset it is a different story, where the overall data in Coda position shows women have higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than men in both speech styles. This *is* unexpected, given the results seen elsewhere, but further points to a difference between the two locations in terms of how they use (l) in Coda position. Of course, this is not the full picture, as the results showed how speech style and further divisions by age offered greater nuance to the data in both locations.

8.1.2.2.1 Prestige and Style within the gender groups

The result of speech style among the gender groups largely falls in with the expected pattern of using more RP-like features in the reading exercise than in the conversational data, although there are differences between the genders in Central Somerset where there are not in West Somerset.

In Onset position, Central Somerset speakers are almost equal in their shift from reading to conversational speech in their use of (l). For example, both men and women use Clear /l/ less in conversational speech than they do in the reading exercise, and conversely have higher use of Dark /l/ in conversational speech. In Intervocalic position, Central Somerset speakers show that men have a greater shift in use of (l) than women. Here women have a marginally lower use of Clear /l/ than men in the reading exercise and a great use of clear /l/ in the conversational speech. This use of (l) in the Intervocalic position is curious as it does not conform with what is expected in terms of prestige forms in formal speech. If women are using Clear /l/ less in the reading exercise, and Dark /l/ more, it suggests RP is not necessarily their model for formal speech among women, but a variety with darker Onset and Intervocalic /l/ may well be. Of

course, this does not take the results by age into account, and it has already been shown that in Central Somerset the Over 40s had greater use of Dark /l/ than either the SED or Under 40s speakers, therefore we can rule the more traditional dialect out as a prestige form in this instance. However, known varieties discussed in Chapter 3 showed that northern English (see for example Turton, 2017) do have a darker /l/ in all environments.

Reviewing the results from Coda /l/ in Central Somerset shows that women in turn use Dark /l/ in the majority in the reading style and more so than the men, whereas men use both vocalised and Dark /l/ almost equally. In the conversational speech, both genders use Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the highest percentage of instances, but it is once again men using the Vocalised Rounded /l/ form more than women. Such use falls more into the pattern expected. Previous sociolinguistic studies tend to show women as the more likely to innovate with language use, particularly towards a prestige form (e.g. Mees & Collins, 1999 in Cardiff; Docherty et al., 1997 in Tyneside). The higher use of Dark /l/ in the reading exercise among Central Somerset women strongly suggests alignment with RP-like varieties. However, Dark /l/ is most frequently used among the SED speakers, so it might equally constitute an alignment on the part of women with an older conservative style. It therefore becomes difficult to distinguish an exact model for prestige among these speakers. In reviewing the impact of style shift on the genders in Central Somerset, men are impacted more by the shift in register from reading to conversational data, as they display a greater difference in the use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ and Dark /l/ between the speech styles than women.

By contrast, in West Somerset, the pattern of use overall in Onset position is different to that in Central Somerset, as women undergo a slightly greater shift than men between registers. Both men and women have greater use of Clear /l/ and lower use of dark /l/ in conversational speech compared with reading speech. The impact of style shift in Intervocalic position is almost equal between the genders, as both have greater use of Clear /l/ in the reading exercise than in conversational speech. In Coda position women and men have equal and high use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the reading exercise, and both have greater use of this form in the conversational speech. This high in the reading exercise indicates one of two things: either that both genders in West Somerset consider the use of Vocalised Rounded (l) appropriate for their formal speech style, or that the use of (l) is not tied to social prestige for these speakers, and therefore their use of (l) is unconscious. If these speakers use a vocalised rounded /l/ as a choice for formal speech it also suggests that they don't necessarily look to non-regional varieties such as RP when making decisions about the use of (l) in formal speech, and instead may look to local community leaders. Yet the increased use of Vocalised Rounded form among both genders in the informal conversational speech still indicates suppression at some level of the vocalised form in a more formal register. This change is only slight, though, and the women remain the more frequent

users of L-vocalisation than men in both speech styles in West Somerset, albeit by a very small degree.

8.1.2.2.2 Age vs gender

In Somerset, this thesis has already shown that the younger speakers in both parts of the county have higher use of vocalised forms than the older speakers, as is expected in apparent time evidence of change in progress. The impact of gender, though, is not uniform across the county. Breaking these results down by gender and age revealed some unexpected outcomes. Where men are shown overall to have the highest use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in Central Somerset, among the Under 40s speakers it is the women who use Vocalised Rounded /l/ more than the men in the reading exercise. The individual Coda positions also show that younger women have higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than younger men across all but the Coda Prepausal position in the reading exercise, and a similar result shown in the conversational speech style. Among older speakers, the men have greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ than the older women, who generally favour Dark /l/. The picture in West Somerset is almost entirely the opposite. We have already seen that overall women are shown to have greater use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ in both speech styles. A review of the overall Coda data by age and gender shows that while the younger speakers have higher use of this form than the older speakers, the younger men have higher use than any other gender and age group. However, it also shows older women to have higher use of Vocalised Rounded /l than the older men. The relationships between age and gender in use of (l) in Somerset is not uniform across the county, indeed there are very stark differences between the two locations. A unifying factor between the locations appears to be the impact of age compared with gender. Where similarities or differences occurred among the speakers, there was a more consistent pattern of use when comparing by age than gender. Moreover, previous studies into L-vocalisation have found that it is usually higher among the younger men in a community (see for example (for example Mathisen, 1999; Docherty & Foulkes, 1999; Tollfree, 1999; Grossenbacher, 2016). West Somerset poses something of an anomaly in this regard, where it is younger women with greater use among this cohort in nearly all individual Coda, particularly in the reading exercise. This alone suggests that younger women look to varieties with L-Vocalisation as prestige forms. In the case of southern British English varieties, Estuary English is a strong contender in this regard. Indeed, the younger women in West Somerset are generally higher educated than their male contemporaries, and have had greater opportunity to travel beyond the boundaries of the county, potentially putting them in contact with speakers of other varieties. Indeed, two of the three younger women attended university in Bristol, which has already been shown to have L-vocalisation present. The third woman Under 40 regularly travels to London as part of her work.

Therefore among these speakers, gender may play no part at all in West Somerset, and it may be down to lived experiences of the speakers, along with occupation and mobility. These particular factors are discussed further in section 8.3.2.1 later in this chapter)

This difference between the two locations with regards to gender and use of variants of (l) mirrors Milroy's findings where two different communities in Belfast of seemingly similar social make-up had different patterns of use across the genders (L. Milroy, 1980): in Ballymacarrett men used non-standard variants more than women, whereas in Clonard the opposite was found. Milroy's findings showed that social networks within the communities played a large part in those differences, as Clonard was a newer community with a weaker social network, therefore there was less social pressure from peers to conform to a locally ascribed vernacular. Moreover, the incoming variant was not a social marker for women, and in this community, younger women in particular were the higher users of an innovation (L. Milroy, 1980, p. 190). Comparing the use of (l) in this study with its fellow liquid, Romaine (1978) observed that gender of the speaker was "the most important single factor" (p150) in her study that correlated with use of (r). This study has found, though, that gender alone is not a big factor for these speakers, but gender combined with age is a greater influence.

8.1.2.3 Determining favourable environments for L-Vocalisation by age and gender

The results by both age and gender show that there are differences in patterns of realisation across the county between the two locations. This thesis seeks to determine if dialect levelling is occurring within Somerset. If we are to consider the change in use of (l) a result of dialect levelling or standardisation, regardless of the frequencies by age or gender, the first line of enquiry would be to seek out an external variety that may be acting as a target prestige form, be that overt or covert. The two candidates that present themselves as overt prestige varieties in the south of England are near-RP and Estuary English, both of which have varying levels of L-vocalisation (see Rosewarne, 1984, 1994). Estuary English has a higher level of L-Vocalisation than modern RP, so this would seem the more likely candidate. It is also worth considering the Bristol, Bath and Swindon varieties as prestige forms for these speakers, given the closer proximity. Of course, those speakers in Grossenbacher's study (2016) who used the most L-Vocalisation were in the younger male category, and in particular were in a non-white category as well.

To investigate whether there is an external prestige variety with L-Vocalisation present, and to attempt to identify a possible candidate, we return to the ranking table of coda positions with known instances of L-vocalisation in British English varieties. This time the Somerset speakers are grouped by gender as well as age (see Table 114). Of course, these rankings in use of L-Vocalisation do not reflect the use of (l) overall in the context of all linguistic environments,

as the results have already shown that not all speakers used the Vocalised Rounded form in the majority. But, this does show where L-vocalisation does occur in both styles of speech, and that there are patterns in this use that can tell us something about how Somerset varieties sit within broader British English varieties, and moreover if there is a clear pattern that can indicate where prestige is perceived for these speakers, if indeed prestige is perceived at all in external varieties.

Table 114 - Ranking for L-vocalisation of Coda Position by age/gender/style

Location	Gender/ Age group	Coda Pre-Consonant	Coda Word Final	Coda Post-Consonant	Coda Prepausal	Coda Pre-Vowel
Central Somerset	Women Over 40s (reading)	1	2	4	3	5
	Women Over 40 (conv)	3	1	2	4	5
	Men Over 40s (reading)	3	1	4	2	5
	Men Over 40 (conv)	1	2	3	3	5
	Women Under 40s (reading)	3	2	1	4	5
	Women Under 40 (conv)	3	2	1	4	5
	Men Under 40s (reading)	4	3	1	2	5
	Men Under 40 (conv)	2	1	3	3	5
West Somerset	Women Over 40s (reading)	3	1	4	2	5
	Women Over 40 (conv)	3	1	3	2	5
	Men Over 40s (reading)	3	1	4	1	5
	Men Over 40 (conv)	4	1	2	3	5
	Women Under 40s (reading)	3	2	4	1	5
	Women Under 40 (conv)	3	1	3	2	5
	Men Under 40s (reading)	3	2	4	1	5
	Men Under 40 (conv)	3	1	4	2	5

Reviewing Table 114 shows again that Central Somerset has a more variable use of (l) across the Coda positions when comparing the speakers categorised by gender and age according to speech style. In West Somerset, though, there is less variance across gender, age and speech style. We will now look more closely at the two locations individually before drawing more detailed comparisons between the two.

In Central Somerset, the older speakers seem to 'swap' the most likely coda position for vocalisation across gender groups. Where the older men are most likely to vocalise /l/ in the

Word Final position in the reading exercise and Pre-Consonant position in the conversational speech, the older women do the opposite. The Under 40s speakers have slightly more agreement across gender groups in terms of the most likely environment for vocalisation. An exception to this is the younger men in conversational speech, who rather favour the same coda position (Word Final) as the Over 40s women in the same speech style, or the older men in the reading style.

Of note, though, is the degree of change that takes place for each gender/age group in terms of rankings of coda positions across speech styles. In Central Somerset, among the older speakers, both genders make a change in rankings of all coda positions but the Pre-Vowel position by at least one degree (e.g. changing from 3rd place to 4th place, or 2nd to 1st place). However, among the younger speakers, the Under 40s women make no changes at all in their ranking of the coda positions when shifting speech style, while the younger men all change rankings of all coda positions (except Pre-Vowel). This indicates that younger women are consistent in their use of vocalised forms across the coda positions regardless of speech style, but all other speakers undergo change here.

The men in Central Somerset share similarities across the age divide in the conversational speech, but less so in the reading exercise. In conversational speech, while there is a difference in terms of the two most likely positions, there is a remarkably similar ranking for 3rd place as both age groups have equal ranking of two positions (post-consonant and prepausal). In the reading exercise, the men in both age groups share the same position for second highest ranking (Coda Prepausal), but differ in ranking for first, third and fourth place. Therefore, it can be argued that the men in Central Somerset differ by age in terms of overall ranking, and that they have a different model for prestige when looking at the most highly ranked position in the reading exercise.

In West Somerset there is a good deal more uniformity across the gender and age groups, regardless of speech style. For the older speakers, there is unanimous agreement across gender groups in the highest ranked position (Word Final) in both conversational and reading speech. The Word Final position is also used most frequently by both the younger men and women in their conversational speech. However, in the reading speech they differ from their older peers. Here, both men and women in the younger age group are most likely to vocalise in the Prepausal position, with the Word Final position ranked in second place. Once again, the difference comes as a split along age categories rather than gender. This indicates that these speakers are happy to speak like their parents in an informal setting, but when reading aloud, and by extension in potentially more formal settings, they turn to a different model for prestige. This different model could be something external, or it could be an innovation they have developed internally.

Comparing the gender and age groups across the two locations, it becomes apparent once again that there are clear differences between these two dialectal regions. For example, while the older women in both locations agree in terms of use of the word final position, ranking this as their most likely environment for vocalisation in a conversational speech style, the younger women across the locations disagree strongly in both speech styles. Here the younger women in Central Somerset place Prepausal position in fourth place in both reading and conversation, but the West Somerset younger women vocalise most frequently in this position in reading speech, and second most in the conversational speech. Similarly, the older men across the locations in conversational speech disagree with regards to use of (l) in the Coda Pre-Consonant position. In Central Somerset, older men vocalise most frequently in this Pre-Consonant position, whereas West Somerset older men rank this in fourth place in conversational speech. Furthermore, the younger speakers in Central Somerset see the Post-Consonant position as highly favourable for vocalisation, particularly among younger women who use this in both reading and conversational speech. By contrast, in West Somerset, both men and women in this younger age group rank this position very low, in both speech styles.

There are some similarities across the regions as well, it should be noted. For example, younger men in conversational speech in both locations rank Word Final in first place, and both men and women across both locations rank the Post-Consonant position in fourth place in the reading speech style. However, despite these similarities, across the two regions, the more homogenised rankings among the speakers in West Somerset compared with those in Central Somerset point to a dialect boundary in place between the two regions. This uniformity in West Somerset points to the close-knit nature of the rural community. Here, younger speakers are, for the most part, emulating what the older speakers in the community do with L-vocalisation in both conversational and formal speech. While the descriptive statistics of the speakers by age showed an apparent time increase in use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ among younger speakers, this shows that the patterns of use in terms of syllabic positions remain, for the most part, consistent throughout this process of language change

In reviewing Table 114 in comparison with Table 113, it is immediately apparent that there is little agreement in the most favourable Coda position between the Somerset varieties and the other British English (BrEng) varieties where favourable position is noted. For instance, where most other BrEng varieties indicate that the Pre-Consonant position is most favourable, this is only the case for Women Over 40 in Central Somerset.

It is also clear that, while there is a difference between the two locations, there is still an age divide that surpasses gender. Younger speakers in each location are typically aligned in terms of their most favourable position, whereas older speakers differ not only from the younger speakers, but also across gender. This pattern indicates that, with Somerset, there is a

uniformity developing among younger speakers when it comes to use of (l) in a reading speech style, and in itself could indicate levelling.

Younger speakers in Central Somerset don't look at the speech of their older fellow community members in patterns of (l) use, or even to Bristol. Rather, they look to the South East varieties in their use of L-Vocalisation. By contrast, the Over 40s in Central Somerset and the speakers in both age and gender groups in West Somerset all use L-Vocalisation at the same lower rate in the Post-Consonant position, thus strongly indicating that these younger speakers in Central Somerset are looking elsewhere for prestige forms, and that they represent a further stage in change from those older speakers in the same location.

Reviewing this use of (l) in Somerset in the context of the wider British English varieties, the choice of most favourable position among the younger speakers in Central Somerset for both is the Post-Consonant position. This puts them in line with the use of (l) shown among 10 year olds Colchester in Meuter's 2002 study, and also with that noted by Wells in London nearly 20 years prior (Wells, 1982b). It also shows that while the women may have slightly higher use of a vocalised rounded form than the men in the Under 40s group in Central Somerset, they do both have this in common.

The patterns shown in West Somerset show some minor similarities to other British English varieties. For example, among the Under 40s, both genders have Word Final in the second-most favourable position, similar to Bristol, Bath and Swindon, and to the London variety described in the early 1980s by Wells. This latter variety is telling, as it suggests that the L-vocalisation in use among younger speakers in West Somerset has potentially diffused out from London over the past 40 years, taking in the larger urban spaces in the South West, and then found its place among younger speakers in West Somerset. What makes this argument slightly less compelling is that a similar pattern of use is found among older speakers and the Women Under 40 in Central Somerset, but not the Men Under 40 in Central Somerset with whom one might expect the Under 40s Men in West Somerset to have some affinity.

It should be noted, again, that all speakers demonstrated an increase in use of Vocalised Rounded /l/ when shifting from a reading to a conversational speech style, with the exception of the Men Under 40 in West Somerset, who use Vocalised Rounded /l/ less in conversational speech than in reading speech.

8.1.3 Summarising constraints

Having reviewed the constraints, both social and linguistic, on the use of (l) in Somerset, it shows a demonstrative difference between the two locations. Frequency of use of Vocalised Rounded forms of (l) show an overall increase, but it is most curious that use of this innovative form is higher among older speakers in West Somerset than among the same age group in

Central Somerset, apparently eschewing the expected pattern of diffusion from the South East. Moreover, analysis of the data in the context of gender shows that there is yet another difference between the two locations.

The distribution of Vocalised Rounded (l) across the different Coda positions, again analysed by both age and gender, shows another difference in overall use between the two locations. Central Somerset displays a high degree of variability between the age and genders groups, where West Somerset has a more stable pattern between the same categories.

The following section draws more detailed comparisons between this use of (l) in Somerset with other varieties of British English in which (l) has also been the subject of study. In particular, it also draws on the geographical and social contexts of those varieties, and how they compare with that in the two Somerset locations.

8.2 Somerset use of /l/ in the context of other British varieties

From a geographical standpoint, a direct comparison can be drawn between the locations in Somerset and those found in Britain's investigations in the Fens of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire. Comparing the two locations confirms that the distinction between a West Somerset dialect and the rest of the county as outlined by Elworthy in the early 20th Century remains in place. This reinforced dialectal boundary also mirrors David Britain's findings in The Fens, where the eastern, central and western Fens managed to maintain dialectal differences, while remaining distinct as a whole from other East Anglian dialects (Britain, 2002c). The more topologically varied West Somerset has added natural barriers that separate it from the rest of the country that echo central marshy areas of the Fens in East Anglia. Moreover the marsh-like landscape of Central Somerset, specifically the Somerset Levels that have only been fully opened up in the mid-20th Century with the construction of the Huntspill River and the transport infrastructure of the M5 motorway (Hawkins, 1973), are similar to the areas of the Fens where similar infrastructural development and extensive drainage took place around the same time, opening parts of the Fens up to greater influence from external varieties (Britain, 1991, 1997, 2002a, 2002c, 2005a). Linguistically the boundaries are also similar. The towns studied by Britain had a distinct north/south divide, linguistically, with Peterborough noted as having typical northern English features, whereas eastern parts of The Fens are noted as sharing more features typical of East Anglian dialects. This again reflects the dialect boundary identified by Elworthy in Somerset, dividing West Somerset from the rest of the county, and further described by Wakelin (1986). Towns such as King's Lynn and Peterborough on the periphery of the Fens were subject to large-scale rapid development to accommodate 'overspill'

from London in the 1960s and 1970s (Britain, 2002c, p. 79), influencing socio-economic change and "the spread of urban forms into more rural areas" (ibid, p81). In Central Somerset, Bridgwater in particular has seen rapid industrial development as a result of the nuclear industry and manufacture distribution, while also reinforcing its status as something of a commuter town for Taunton and Bristol due to improved road access to both. In addition to Bridgwater, smaller satellite towns such as Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge have undergone increased housing development, with many younger people from Bridgwater and the surrounding villages moving to the two smaller towns due to more affordable property prices. The close connections of these younger people to their families in Bridgwater and the villages, both emotionally as well as geographically, provides a route for linguistic innovations that have made it to Bridgwater via Bristol and Taunton to find their way into the more local dialects in the area; or as Britain puts it "acting as linguistic catalysts for the propulsion of core linguistic features into the area" (Britain, 2002c, p. 81). Central Somerset, then, certainly conforms to the typical diffusion model of moving progressively through larger to smaller urban locations. The use of vocalised forms of /l/ in West Somerset, on the other hand, does not fit in with this model; nor does it seem to be explained by the cultural hearth and counter-urban models. Indeed, the pattern of uses of /l/ in the SED show l-vocalisation as much lower than that in Central Somerset (Vocalised Rounded /l/ in the SED data showed use in West Somerset at 1%, whereas Central Somerset had use of 12% among participants). What has happened in West Somerset shows a rapid increase in use of vocalised forms since the time of the SED, contradicting models of diffusion as this more rural area shows greater use than the urbanising Central Somerset area. Returning to Britain's 2002 study of The Fens as a means for comparison, the use of /l/ shows that the Western Fens town of Spalding (in Lincolnshire) had the highest use of a vocalised form followed by the central and eastern locations, in that order. The Central Fens represent the location that historically has been more isolated, even in the face of increased population as a result of the London 'overspill', therefore one might expect that innovative features such as L-Vocalisation would not have reached this area before the more accessible Spalding to the west. Britain's explanation of the lowest use in the eastern area of the Fens is down to the dialectological boundary that sees a much later clear/dark categorisation of /l/ among speakers in this part of the Fens. This lack of clear/dark categorisation is, as Johnson and Britain (2007) showed, a restricting factor in the adoption of L-vocalisation, and therefore it is to be expected that the eastern Fens dialect would lag behind in adoption of L-vocalisation compared with dialects to the west. This is not the case in West Somerset, though, where there was already a clear/dark split in place at the time of the SED between onset and coda positions, although the intervocalic positions in West Somerset were slightly more variable. There is not a phonological barrier here to overcome, therefore it stands to reason that there would be less linguistic

resistance to L-vocalisation. However, while the phonological conditions are favourable, the geographical and socioeconomic factors at play in West Somerset do not explain the apparent earlier adoption of L-vocalisation compared with the dialects to the east, if one is attempting to explain this seemingly anomalous occurrence via models of geographical diffusion.

To some degree, the vocalisation of /l/ reflects the decline and loss of /r/ throughout British English varieties from the 19th Century to the present. Typically studies looked at the most conservative speakers, as Britain (2009) points out, but the loss of /r/ spreads from the east of the country and makes in-roads among middle-class speakers in particular in the south west (e.g. Sullivan, 1992). Piercy (2006, 2007) investigated use of /r/ in Dorset, and found that, while there was a typical urban hierarchy model at play throughout most of the county in terms of loss of /r/, older women in the large town of Weymouth retained /r/ where those in more rural areas had lower use, thus adopting the innovation (Piercy, 2007). In the case of West Somerset, though, L-vocalisation is not so categorical by gender: in both reading and conversational speech styles, descriptive statistics showed there was a less than 5% difference in use between the genders for both vocalised forms.

Historically, within the south west, Wright (1905) discussed use of vocalised forms of (l) in different linguistic positions in Wiltshire. Taking data from Kjederqvist (1902; cited in J. Wright, 1905) who studied the dialect of Pewsey in Wiltshire, Wright concluded that the distribution of vocalisation was "(a) finally before consonants or a pause; (b) medially before other consonants than the dentals (especially d and t); (c) in syllables which had not the principal accent, except in the position after d and t." (J. Wright, 1905, pp. 217–218). Therefore there is little distinction between the Coda Pre-Consonant, Coda Word Final and Coda Prepausal in Wright's conclusion for early 20th Century Pewsey dialect.

8.3 Patterns of Diffusion, Dialect Levelling and the impact of L-Vocalisation in Somerset

Weinreich, Labov and Herzog (1968) argued that contemporary variation in a language or dialect is an indication of change in progress. This thesis has discussed the historical and present use of (l) in Somerset through the lens of linguistic and social factors, and finds that there is variability according to age, location and gender. The higher use of the innovative Vocalised forms of (l) among younger speakers compared older speakers in both parts of the county is a strong indication of dialects undergoing change. How that change has developed in the county is a matter for discussion in this current section.

8.3.1 Patterns of Diffusion

The patterns of diffusion discussed previously in this thesis focused primarily on the Wave Model, the Urban Hierarchy Model, the Cultural Hearth model, and the Counter-Urban Model. Previous studies in British English have shown that these patterns of diffusion are typical, particularly in the use of (l) (see e.g. Grossenbacher, 2016; Kerswill, 1995; Trudgill, 1988; A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999).

8.3.1.1 The Wave Theory Model

A review of the data allows us to quickly rule out the **Wave Theory model** (C.-J. N. Bailey, 1973; G. Bailey et al., 1993) as the pattern of diffusion across the two locations. If we take the view that the changes occurring in Somerset are wholly the result of dialect levelling and diffusion from the South East of England, the Wave Model would predict that use of Vocalised /l/ would occur earlier and in greater frequency in Central Somerset than it would in West Somerset, as Central Somerset is geographically close to the South East. Yet, as the data shows, the progress of change is not uniform across the county. Rather than lagging behind its more easterly neighbour, West Somerset has higher use than Central Somerset among all age groups, suggesting earlier adoption in this part of the county. In the face of a lack of support for the data from the Wave Theory, it is reasonable to therefore investigate the impact of the Urban Hierarchy model.

8.3.1.2 The Urban Hierarchy Model

Much of the literature around L-vocalisation currently ongoing throughout the south of England is that this is a feature that has spread out from London into regional dialects and social dialects, such as RP and Estuary English (see Beal, 2010). Models of exogenous change seen in the south of England, such as that associated with L-vocalisation, align with the urban hierarchy or gravity model, where a change in progress does not move through geographical space in a linear uniform manner, rather it 'skips' the less densely populated areas in the first instance, moving through highly-populated urban areas such as cities and then on to large towns, before then moving into smaller satellite towns around the large urban spaces. Ultimately, the innovation becomes a feature of the more rural areas as the gaps between urbans spaces are reached (Trudgill, 1974a). This pattern has been found in the spread of L-vocalisation, starting in London and moving westwards to Reading and Milton Keynes (e.g. A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999) and has also been found as the route of progress into the west of England via the M4 corridor, where L-Vocalisation appears greater in the city of Bristol in the west, then moves east to the large town of Swindon, and lastly in the smaller city of Bath that sits between the two

(Grossenbacher, 2016). If the London form of L-vocalisation continues in this urban hierarchy pattern, it would be expected that it would be found among the more urban Central Somerset area earlier, and that there would be less L-Vocalisation found in the much more rural West Somerset area. In particular, as the largest urban area within this study, around which many of the Central Somerset speakers were located, it could be expected that speakers in Bridgwater have the most use of vocalised forms in a Coda /l/ position. It would also be expected that, if apparent time is taken as an indication of change over time, the older speakers in Central Somerset would adopt L-vocalisation in a Coda position earlier than those in West Somerset.

As discussed in Section 2.5.2.2, Trudgill's Urban Hierarchy model is expressed through the following formula:

Equation 7 - Trudgill's Urban Hierarchy model

$$Iij = s.\frac{PiPj}{(dij)^2} \cdot \frac{Pi}{Pi+Pj}$$

To recap, *I* is the influence, and *Iij* is the influence location *i* has over location *j*. The symbol *s* is the level of similarity in dialect between the two locations, and is set according to a predetermined matrix. With this formula, it is possible to predict which dialects in rural locations may be more likely to undergo language change towards adopting a variant that originated in a larger town or city nearby. It is therefore possible to identify index scores that indicate the possible influence urban spaces in England, and more specifically Somerset, have over the locations that were studied in this thesis.

We know that L-vocalisation is a feature of speech among speakers, particularly younger people, in Bristol. Assuming that Bristol, as the largest urban space in the South West region, has the greatest influence over language varieties in the area, one might expect that the city has greater influence over those spaces with which there is greatest connection. The M5 runs directly through Bristol and Central Somerset, thereby providing a quick means of travelling between the two areas. Equally, there is a regular commuter train that runs between Taunton and Bristol, stopping at Bridgwater and Highbridge, two locations where interviews were conducted.

Table 115 - Degrees of Similarity in South West varieties, after Trudgill 1974

s=	4	for other West/Central varieties[28]
	3	for other Somerset varieties
	2	for other south-western varieties
	1	for other varieties in England
	0	for all others.

Conversely, as was discussed in Section 3.3, there is no such direct train route, or major road that connects many of the places in West Somerset with Bristol. Those with cars can get around easily, of course, but the driving time from Winsford in the centre of Exmoor to Bristol is around 2 hours, whereas a drive from Bridgwater to Bristol city centre can take around 1 hour, with a similar time on the train. Following Trudgill's process, degrees of similarity among Somerset and other South West varieties can be seen in Table 115.

Applying Trudgill's equation to demonstrate interaction between the locations, we can see the following:

Table 116 - Distance between locations

Locations	**Miles**
Bridgwater to Bristol	30
Winsford to Bristol	73.9

Table 117 - Populations of cities

City	**Population**
Bristol population in 2016[29]	655,698[30]
Bridgwater Population in 2019	44,390[31]
Population of Winsford in 2019	310

[28] Where West Somerset Varieties align with other West Somerset varieties, and likewise in Central Somerset.

[29] 2016 is selected as this is the mid-point of the data collection for this thesis.

[30] Bristol population taken from https://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/bristol-population, retrieved 29 Nov 2021

[31] Bridgwater and Winsford populations taken from available data, showing 2019 figures on http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/population-estimates/, retrieved 29 Nov 2021

Equation 8 - Influence of Bristol over Bridgwater

Influence Bristol over Bridgwater = 2 **x ((467.1 x 41.3) / (37.8 x 37.8)) x (467.1 / (467.1 + 37.8)) = 24.98**

Influence of Bristol over Bridgwater = 025

Equation 9 - Influence of Bristol over Winsford

Influence Bristol over Winsford = 2 **x ((467.1 x 0.3) / (74 x 74)) x (467.1 / (467.1 + 0.3)) = 0.05**

Influence of Bristol over Winsford = <001

In Trudgill's example from his 1974 paper, he mentions that this model shows the influences one urban space may have over another but doesn't account for the smaller spaces in the same broad location that have not adopted the innovations shared between the larger urban spaces. This, he argues, is crucial because the model as it stands would predict that any small locations between the two urban spaces would also be linguistically influenced by the larger urban centre. He therefore goes on to look at the influence other closer urban spaces may have on the linguistic behaviour of speakers in smaller towns. His model then combined index scores of other nearby urban spaces and deducted them from the score of the largest urbans space. In his example, the combined index scores from Norwich, King's Lynn and Ipswich to show influence over Lowestoft are deducted from that of London's index score over Lowestoft. If the combined index scores from East Anglia are greater than that from London, it can be stated that London does not have a direct influence over Lowestoft, and that any change from London will have to become established in one of the other East Anglian locations first.

In the cases shown from the Somerset locations above, this is not necessary, as it can already be seen that the index score of Bristol's influence over Winsford is less than 001 (when converting the result of the formula into a whole number index score). This gives a very clear indication that the use of (l) and the L-Vocalisation found in Bristol is not a direct factor in the L-Vocalisation found among the speakers in West Somerset. Reasons for this could be due to the very long travel time between the two locations, and the very low population of Winsford (310 people) compared with the population of Bristol (over 450,000), which will yield a much lower result when multiplying one by the other than, say, the population of Bridgwater (just over 41,000 people) multiplied by Bristol. But the index score between Bristol and Bridgwater indicates that Central Somerset use of (l) is potentially directly influenced by Bristol. This shows that the L-Vocalisation found in West Somerset among older speakers is less likely to have been the result of dialect levelling via diffusion from Bristol, as both the wave diffusion patterns and

urban hierarchy would mean that it is seen among the Over 40s Bridgwater speakers in equal or greater numbers than in West Somerset. It begs the question of where this influence may have come from, if not from the SED speakers in the area a generation or two before.

Here, it may be useful to once again look at Trudgill's model to see which other nearby urban spaces may have more impact on the dialects of Central and West Somerset. Larger urban spaces such as the county town Taunton, Minehead, Dulverton and even Barnstaple over the county border in Devon could influence many of the speakers in the very rural parts of West Somerset. Taunton is also very likely to have an influence over Bridgwater as the larger town. Table 118 shows the index scores rounded to the nearest whole number of those towns influencing one another. The urban spaces are listed by population size, largest to smallest. Population figures and travel distances can be found in Appendix IX.

Using Trudgill's equation, it shows the influence of Bristol and Taunton over Bridgwater is as expected: that the county town of Taunton has a greater linguistic influence over Bridgwater (index score 053) than Bristol does (index score 025). By Trudgill's approach, this means that Bridgwater should not adopt a feature of Bristolian dialect before Taunton does. If the L-vocalisation found in Bridgwater is the same as that from Bristol, this strongly suggests that change from Bristol diffused to Taunton first and then on to Bridgwater.

The Influence of Bristol over Minehead is at 003, which is one index point higher than Bridgwater's influence. However, Bridgwater and Taunton combined have an influence of 005, and therefore it is more likely that Minehead is influenced by neighbouring Somerset dialects than by the Bristolian dialects. Furthermore, the larger North Devon town Barnstaple appears to have no influence over Minehead either (actual figure is 0.23). Even the much smaller locations in West Somerset of Dulverton and Winsford are entirely uninfluenced by any of the larger municipalities around them, according to this model.

The Urban Hierarchy Model therefore fits very well with the specific towns within Central Somerset, but falls down considerably when applying that model to the much smaller towns and villages of West Somerset.

Table 118 - Matrix of index score in Somerset according to the Urban Hierarchy Model

Linguistic Influence index scores		Influencing urban space								
		Bristol	Exeter	W-S-M	Taunton	Bridgwater	Barnstaple	Minehead	Dulverton	Winsford
Influenced urban	Bristol	-	004	020	004	002	000	000	000	000
	Exeter	015	-	002	005	001	001	000	000	000
	Weston-S-M	110	003	-	005	004	000	000	000	000

	Taunton	024	007	003	-	016	000	000	000	000
	Bridgwater	025	004	008	053	-	000	000	000	000
	Barnstaple	002	003	001	001	000	-	000	000	000
	Minehead	003	001	001	003	002	000	-	000	000
	Dulverton	000	000	000	000	000	000	000	-	000
	Winsford	000	000	000	000	000	000	000	000	-

8.3.1.3 The Counter-Urban Model

Having investigated the Urban Hierarchy Model as a framework in which language change is taking place in Somerset, and not finding a wholly satisfying result, the next model to look to is the **Counter-Urban model**. The index scores shown in the Urban Hierarchy model for areas in Exmoor show no influence at all of a large city such as Bristol, or indeed any of the large urban spaces nearby. This indicates that L-Vocalisation started in West Somerset independently of the variant occurring in Bristol, particularly as the Bristolian users of vocalised forms are younger speakers, and West Somerset shows high use among older speakers. Horvath and Horvath (2002) point out that the greater use of a feature within a geographical space is an indication of a potential origin for that feature. This therefore points to the potential for West Somerset being the origin of L-Vocalisation in Somerset, and not the more urbanised Central Somerset. Evidence from the Census does show, though, that younger people from West Somerset have been moving away from the South West regions for education or work purposes. These younger emigrants from West Somerset may have become 'language missionaries' (see Trudgill, 1986), although rather than coming back into the region with innovative forms, these speakers are moving away and taking their vocalised forms with them. Where this explanation comes a little unstuck, though, is in the ethnic make-up of the speakers from Grossenbacher's study in Bristol, where the highest use of vocalised forms was found among non-white younger men. West Somerset has a very large white English majority population, with almost no other ethnicities present, with the exception of a small Hungarian population in Minehead[32]. Young white speakers from West Somerset are unlikely to have had an impact on the spoken varieties of younger working-class non-white speakers from large urban spaces, particularly as those who travel outside of West Somerset usually do so for university. Indeed, of the three participants from West Somerset who mentioned that they had spent considerable time in

[32] Ethnicity figures for Somerset can be found at http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/census-ethnicity.html retrieved 2 Dec 2021

Bristol, two of them had done so to attend University. In Bristol it is more likely that L-Vocalisation has some covert prestige associated with it, particularly if spoken by young working-class speakers. Therefore, young middle-class white English speakers from rural West Somerset are unlikely to carry any social prestige for the young urban speakers in Bristol.

An alternative is to consider that Bristol might not be the destination of innovations from West Somerset via counter-urbanisation, rather it might be Central Somerset. Many of the larger further education and vocational training colleges lie in Central Somerset. Before many were merged into the wider Bridgwater and Taunton College, Bridgwater College and Somerset College of Art and Technology in Taunton catered to A-Level and Vocational qualification students from all over the county. Cannington College has provided training in agricultural sciences for decades. In addition, there is also Richard Huish college in Taunton that specialises in A-Levels. These colleges attract students from all over the county, West Somerset included. Cannington College in particular was mentioned by all the Under 40s men and one of the Under 40s women in West Somerset as a place they had gained training and qualifications or were currently attending on a weekly basis as part of an apprenticeship. If Cannington College was where many others in West Somerset have received training over the years, it is possible this may have provided an opportunity for language contact between West Somerset and Central Somerset. Working at an agricultural college, those coming from more rural areas such as Exmoor may themselves have covert prestige among their peers, and therefore features of their dialect such as vocalisation of (l) could have been passed on as a change from below to the Central Somerset attendees. A considerable amount of further study, particularly around mobility patterns within Somerset, would have to be conducted before this hypothesis could be verified.

8.3.1.4 The Cultural Hearth Model

The Urban Hierarchy model fits the results in Central Somerset, but not in West Somerset. Horvath and Horvath (2001) proposed the Cultural Hearth model as an alternative when spatial effects do not explain the results. This model focuses on the sense of place and identity among the speakers in a community. An internally developed feature is used as part of the local identity before being diffused out from that area. External features are measured against the local identity, and if seen favourably are adopted. However, the locations within West Somerset are themselves quite distributed. As has been discussed, they are smaller villages and towns across a large rural area, with two relatively larger towns to the north (Minehead) and south (Dulverton). Thus, the Cultural Hearth model is not an ideal match either, as this required a more geographically close community. But, the sense of place, and the desire

among inhabitants to evaluate an external feature in the context of that identity does raise a compelling case as an alternative explanation.

Therefore, it seems likely that the split in the manner of use of (l) across the county of Somerset is not simply a matter of adaptation of incoming innovations to the different existing dialects, it may be due to how the innovation reached the two dialects in the first place, that is: differing patterns of diffusion. None of the spatially motivated models of diffusion explain how and why West Somerset has a higher use of the 'innovative' Vocalised Rounded form. At this point, we start to look beyond simply dialect levelling through diffusion as a sole reason for the changes that are occurring within Somerset and look to the speakers themselves. Specifically, how the speakers use language alongside their identity, and how they use language within communities of practice.

8.3.2 Economy, Identity and Communities of Practice

The progress of an innovation throughout a community can depend largely on its social structure, influenced by external social pressures such as standardisation, but also by internal factors such as the economy of the area(s), where and how people within the community make their living, and how the formation of the community may assist or resist change from outside.

It has been established here that the historical dialectal boundary between the West Somerset variety and Central Somerset remains intact. It has also been shown that both Central and West Somerset have distinct uses of (l) compared with other varieties in the south of England, including that spoken among speakers in Bristol. With this information, it appears that the dialectal boundaries at play align closely with the administrative boundaries in place for many years leading up to and during the recording on interviews[33]. As has previously been discussed (see section 3.3.2.1) the administrative boundaries at play in Somerset have impacted the organisation of key language contact opportunities, such as schooling and public transport. The topography of Somerset has nurtured a natural divide between the population that impacted movement throughout the two areas. The topography also influences agricultural practices as the hillier West Somerset supports meat farming where the largely flat and rhyne-filled levels of Central Somerset support dairy farming, thus forming a divide in this largely universal economy. Thus while comparisons have been drawn in this thesis between the Somerset dialects and those spoken in the Fens, there is a crucial difference to be noted here: that The Fens straddles three counties and thus three governmental boundaries, whereas the

[33] It should be noted again that the administrative boundaries within Somerset were changed in 2019 to bring West Somerset into a combined district with what was Taunton Deane to become 'Somerset West and Taunton'. This in turn is also due to be disbanded as all district councils are merged to become 'Somerset Council' on 1 April 2023, see https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/government-confirms-new-unitary-somerset-council/ .

divisions between the dialects in Somerset are all incorporated within the one large governmental boundary. The results of this thesis discussed thus far therefore confirm and re-establish boundaries within borders. Watt et al (2014) discussed the use of language across a national border (Scotland and England), noting the 'subtle accent / dialect differences' (p8). If the linguistic data from this thesis indicates that the magnitude of the political boundary may be irrelevant, and that feelings of identity and place may be as strong for a relatively minor administrative border, particularly when combined with natural boundaries found between these two locations in Somerset.

This section will look at the identity that is woven into the economy and populations of the two locations once again with a view to the speakers themselves, and how their place within the economy may relate to the use of (l) within their social demographic, as discussed in section 8.1.2 above. It will then look at the feelings of identity expressed during the interviews, and how this may impact language use, and finally how the various communities of practice may also impact the use of (l) within the county.

8.3.2.1 Economy as a factor on l-vocalisation

As a more urban and industrialised part of the county, the areas of employment among the participants in Central Somerset was more varied than those in largely rural West Somerset. Indeed, in West Somerset the majority of participants were either currently working in the agricultural sector or had retired from jobs in that sector. Others were either small business owners or were currently or previously working in the care sector. Some notable exceptions were a retired property manager, a schoolteacher, a local government worker (specifically working in agricultural management), and two speakers working in Bristol in office-based jobs. All of these exceptions, apart from the retired property manager, were women, and all but the schoolteacher and the property manager were in the Under 40s age group. In addition to this, all the care sector workers are older women, including one unpaid caregiver. Most of the farmers and farm labourers (current and retired) are men, with a few women in this category also.

Those working in the care sector, agricultural sector, specifically livestock, or who own small businesses do not have as much time available to them to travel, nor are they necessarily required to travel for work. Any travel in livestock farming is usually associated with travelling to move their animals around, such as markets, fairs and shows, or ultimately the slaughterhouse. In such activities, there is a wider community that is both sector and regionally based, all tied up with the identity of being a livestock or agricultural worker. Similarly, care workers are not expected to travel for work other than to the care home, or to clients' homes in the local area. The requirements of the job are such that they need to be available for long shifts,

and thus cannot travel away for any great length of time apart from holidays. Small business owners are in a similar situation as farmers, as they cannot leave their businesses for any length of time. In nearly all cases, the businesses were retail based, so there was little travel beyond the region, and it also involved working long hours with little time off. However, despite the lack of travel for these members of the community, their lines of work did make them very integral to the wider community. Farmers and farm labourers in rural locations might work in isolation often, but they forge strong ties out of necessity with their fellow farmers and labourers. Care home workers spend a lot of time with their clients, again forming trusted relationships with them. Small business owners, particularly those who run local shops in small communities are equally known to everyone and may also hold some prestige within their communities as everyone goes to them for small groceries and other incidental items that they wouldn't necessarily pick up in 'the big supermarket shop'. Such communities may be geographically distributed much wider than those in more urban spaces, but they have very tight bonds. These tighter community bonds may also have an impact on language use, creating a local norm for language use, as was seen in Milroy's speakers in Ballymacarrett (L. Milroy, 1980). This might account for the homogenous use of (l) seen in the rankings of the different Coda positions in West Somerset when accounting for both age and gender.

Conversely, Central Somerset has much more variation in the sectors and types of employment among the speakers, although the nuclear industry does represent a very large economy of its own within the area, and directly or indirectly employs many people in this part of the county. However, the multitude of companies feeding into the Hinkley site, both in the ongoing work of the existing Hinkley B, and the construction of the new Hinkley C, make the nuclear sector as an employer in Somerset very partitioned and faceted. Indeed, people working in Hinkley B have no contact with those working in the construction of Hinkley C as part of their daily work. Even the mode of transport to and from the two Hinkley sites is entirely separate. Workers in Hinkley B station are able to make their own way to work, either in their own cars, through lift-shares, or on public transport[34]. Those working in the Hinkley C development are obliged to drive to a designated park and ride and get a shuttle bus (personal correspondence with Hinkley C construction workers). The only people working in Hinkley Point in this thesis are those who work (or retired from) Hinkley B, and therefore would not have undergone a communal commute to work. Indeed, due to the 24-hour working pattern of the station, it is unlikely that those working night shifts would have used anything other than their own transport to get to work.

[34] It should be noted that travel times on public transport to Hinkley B are prohibitively long in duration, so nearly everyone drives (personal knowledge).

Nuclear industry aside, the largely varied nature of the employers of the speakers reflects the wider economic landscape in this part of the county, and also the looser ties between the speakers. The addition of in-migration to the area in the case of Central Somerset does mean more opportunity for integration into the community through work-based contact. This differs from West Somerset where there are fewer job opportunities available, and those that are available tend to be sector-specific (e.g. tourism, farming or nuclear industry) and entry-level positions that would attract fewer people, thus presenting no threat (as it were) to the close ties established in the more rural community. Sandøy (2004) looked into community types and their impact on variation within dialects. In reviewing communities in Iceland and the Faroe Islands, Sandøy determined that the slightly larger but closely-tied communities of around 150 people in the Faroe Islands had led to some social stratification in the dialect. However, the Icelandic model of smaller isolated family units of around 10 people had restricted the potential for variation, as younger people were more likely to use the same language as their parents and older generations without regular contact with their peers. Sandøy continues that "...village structures seem to favour a stronger identity or adherence to the local Community" (p62). Scaling Sandøy's model of Iceland and Faroese communities up, one could draw a direct comparison between the communities in Central Somerset and West Somerset. In this scenario, Central Somerset, with its larger urban spaces allowing for more mingling and contact among the inhabitants would resemble the Faroese model, thus demonstrating great variation. In the case of this thesis, that variation is reflected through the differing patterns of use of L-vocalisation. By contrast, West Somerset might more closely resemble the Icelandic model, with smaller groups of people living in relative isolation on farms occasionally coming together for school, markets, or social events. Here in West Somerset, there is greater cohesion in the patterns of use of L-Vocalisation.

8.3.2.2 The role of Identity in Somerset

This thesis did not test specifically for feelings of identity within the local communities, but some of the responses to questions during the interviews did point to holding an identity that distinguished them from other parts of the country, and solidified the relationship between their identity and the local area. This fits with other studies that looked into diffusion and migration. In explaining their choice of towns to study, Williams and Kerswill drew on studies from Trudgill and Milroy to identify how patterns of migration may impact on feelings of local identity:

> "The choice of town was informed by the claim that highly mobile populations give rise to diffuse social network structures which in turn promote rapid dialect change (cf. Trudgill 1992, 1996) and that the kind of stable communities we find in old-established urban populations promote the enforcement of local conventions and norms, including linguistic norms (L. Milroy 1980)."
>
> - (A. Williams & Kerswill, 1999, p. 149)

It has previously been discussed that Bridgwater and Central Somerset is an area that has seen a large amount of in-migration over the past 50 years, specifically since the commissioning of Hinkley Point. The building of the M50 motorway also made it much easier for people from further afield to move to the area and still be able to commute to Bristol, Exeter, or even London. In this regard Bridgwater is very similar to the town of much of Kerswill and Williams' work: Reading. Both are old and long established towns that have seen a good deal of industrialisation in their recent history, thus attracting more in-migrants. West Somerset has also seen a good deal of in-migration from the south-east, as shown in Census data, but of a different kind to that in Central Somerset. Here the draw is less economic and more aesthetic. Anecdotal evidence among the speakers and gatekeepers from West Somerset is that many houses in the area are being taken up as second homes by people from the south-east, or they are being sold to people from outside the community who want to retire to the area, as shown in (1).

(1)

Ex008: I don't know I mean the the greater London Council bought built a load of houses for their pensioners, so there's yeah, so there's quite a few London pensioners live over Periton side [of Minehead] um, and then of course their children or whatever might come visit 'em, and then as they get older they think, actually we quite like where mum and dad live so we might retire down here so you do get an awful lot of retired people move or people that are due to retire moving down here.

One village in particular, Wootton Courtenay (SED location So5) was mentioned by a gatekeeper (unrecorded) as having no more locally born and raised people living in it. This has

become a cause for concern among the community, particularly as it raises house prices and pushes younger people out. Furthermore, the attitudes about the influx of people moving into the area, either to retire or for temporary tourism-based work are not all positive, as shown in (2) and (3).

(2)

Ex023: our parish council I think there's only two yeah one person now that's actually lived on Exmoor all the time, see and they come in and their ideas are just not, they think they can change it all and that's why Exmoor's like it is because we don't do change much, you know you can change a bit innit, it's not no they think we're slow (...) but we're not, we're not it's... we we know a lot more, we know what works

(3)

Int: Do you think Butlins has had..

Ex006: Oh don't get started me on Butlins! (laughs)

Int: It's such a big part of the town, almost literally

Ex006: unfortunately yes, it is, I don't I'm not a fan, um..... I cannot I I argue all the time people say Oh it brings so much money into the area, well where does the money go how much money no one can tell me where does it go no one can tell me that either (...) but I remember the town before Butlins and um when they started building it as a kid then growing up you knew what nights to go out because of it was pay night and if it was pay night at Butlins you stayed in because it was awful, you know

Some of the older participants in West Somerset also pointed to their lack of travel. The participants in West Somerset are largely employed in livestock farming, or run their own businesses, which does not afford much time for travel away. Moreover some expressed their unwillingness to travel further east from West Somerset, preferring instead to go to Cornwall, or Devon for a holiday, as shown in (4) and (5).

(4)

Ex023: no I I've no illusions of going anywhere else. They all tease me here, **yes if you go past Taunton, it's that's nearly abroad for [me**], and then you think, uh, I been to [Cornwall] last weekend

(5)

Ex008: I feel I'm part of Exmoor. Um, ... because probably cos I like walking and driving over it, I like nothing better. If I, **if I go past Bridgwater or Taunton that way, I start getting panic attacks!** I'm fine driving south, I'm alright going to Devon and I'm alright going to Cornwall, but

Int: yeah

Ex008: Going that way I don't like it at all, and it's getting worse as I'm getting older, which is a bit scary, so yeah I feel like I'm part of Exmoor.

As with Ex008, there is a strong link with identity and place, particularly for Exmoor, with many of the participants, some of whom are from families who have lived in the same village or even the same house for several generations. The less positive feeling towards the number of people moving into the area from outside, either to retire or for work is a motivation for locals to differentiate themselves from these new people moving into the area.

As previously discussed, Exmoor and West Somerset have remained largely rural, but it has seen a large influx of second-homers and retirees moving from elsewhere in England[35] . In West Somerset, this has led to two sections of society: one of the people who are relatively transient, arriving either as second home or holiday-home owners, or as retirees who may stay for a period of time, but end up moving back to their hometowns when they realise how far away from their grandkids they are; and a second local community that has remained somewhat more stable and close-knit, with people from different villages knowing one another through church, bellringing, Young Farmers, hunting meets and livestock auctions. The villages may be smaller, but the greater distance people have to travel in order to meet up or attend school means that people are also in the same community over a wider area. This raises a comparison with Sandøy's work in Iceland and the Faroes (Sandøy, 2004), with West Somerset presenting a situation similar to Iceland: small but widely distributed individual family units making for differentiation from other Nordic varieties while also maintaining a shared dialect. If many of the people moving into the area are from the south east of England, as both census data and local anecdotal evidence suggest, it is likely that these speakers will lean more heavily towards using a form that is particular to the South West in order to distinguish their use of (l) from that of the people moving into the area.

We have seen how identity is represented among speakers from Somerset, particularly those from West Somerset, and how language can reinforce that sense of identity that distinguishes the people in the county from the rest of the south of England, and how native speakers distinguish themselves from those moving into the area from other parts of the country. But a 'Somerset identity' alone does not wholly explain the reinforcement of the dialectal boundary between Central and West Somerset, particularly in an age of increased social and geographic mobility. Geographical and social boundaries are not the only factor involved here. It is therefore useful to briefly discuss the social structures at play within Somerset that may reveal areas of overlap and distinction, specifically in relation to communities of practice.

8.3.2.3 The community of practice as a factor

Within this study there are two broad communities, divided not only by political boundaries, but also by the communities of practice within their borders. The mode of diffusion into these communities was discussed in section 8.3.1 above, however it was found that applying models such as the Urban Hierarchy Model did not provide an adequate explanation for the

[35] See 'Somerset Intelligence: People and Neighbourhoods' http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/somerset-facts-and-figures/#PN retrieved 30 Aug 2022

behaviour of speakers in West Somerset in particular. This suggests two things. The first, and perhaps most obvious, is that the 'hierarchy model' is just not going to work with very small locations. The model relies on a certain level of population in order to indicate an impact in terms of influence. Which leads to the second possibility coming from this model: that below a certain population level, the size of a location and its services become irrelevant, and influence is gained more through communities of practice. Similar to social networks, communities of practice rely on the relationships between people within a community. Communities of practice rely less on close geographical proximity, such as might be found in social networks in larger urban spaces (L. Milroy, 1980), more they rely on a close connection forged through an identity or shared experience. In the case of West Somerset, that shared experience is found through living in a sparsely populated rural area that is tied together through agricultural practices and hunting. The participants in this study were dispersed across the West Somerset region, but many of them still know one another. Farming requires a large amount of space in which to operate, therefore the individual locations may be further apart, but they still maintain a close connection through social events (e.g. Harvest Home, hunting meets), their children's education (assuming they have children), and other organised social clubs, such as Bridge Club, Young Farmers, or bellringing.

These social groupings bear hallmarks of communities of practice (Eckert, 1989; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Meyerhoff & Strycharz, 2013; Wenger, 1998). This thesis did not set out to investigate communities of practice (CofP) but given the anomaly of age variation across the linguistic boundary, it warrants a brief discussion of how these speakers may fit into the criteria of communities of practice, and how their use of L-vocalisation may potentially be explained by such a model. A brief analysis of Wenger's three criteria for a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) can be applied to the speakers and broader Somerset population. The first criterion involves **mutual engagement.** Within West Somerset, the speakers are much more dispersed throughout the rural space. The towns and villages in West Somerset are considerably smaller than those found in Central Somerset. However, despite this dispersed population in West Somerset, there is still regular contact through socialisation in the pubs, or through activities such as the Young Farmers, the bellringers community, or through clubs such as Bridge or Whist. The lower population in West Somerset can mean that the members of these different social groups regularly overlap. In Winsford in the centre of Exmoor there is overlap between those who are involved in the running of the local archive, and those who are involved in regular charity fundraising activities such as the Harvest Home, or other ad hoc fundraising activities. The group involved in the local archive are in turn also involved more widely in the larger Exmoor Society archive (based in the larger town of Dulverton), and thus

regularly come into contact for that purpose. Indeed, many of the shared activities within the local community involve a great deal of regular contact.

Within Central Somerset, the larger towns and villages draw speakers together into the same geographical space, but the greater number of social spaces such as pubs, clubs and sports venues, particularly within the main town under study in this thesis, Bridgwater, mean that members of the speech community in the geographical space are more fragmented. In those spaces where there are fewer options for socialising, e.g. where there is only one pub, there is a greater chance of regular interaction among the same groups of people. However, a relatively large town like Bridgwater has many pubs, clubs and other social spaces, giving the people in the area more options. But, as has been described in earlier chapters of this thesis, the biggest Community of Practice within Central Somerset is that of the Carnival. The general pattern of different carnival clubs having headquarters in specific pubs in the town automatically creates a natural homing instinct of sorts (although that doesn't necessarily stop people from one carnival club going to a rival's pub on a night out!). This annual event brings together people from many different occupations, social classes, and educational backgrounds, from all over the region. Within the Carnival CofP there are those who actively engage in Carnival, and there are also those who don't engage, or dislike Carnival, especially within Bridgwater. The identity of someone who doesn't engage with carnival can almost be as strong as someone who does, but even with that, it is still likely that they would still use vocabulary associated with carnival.

Both West and Central Somerset each have dominating industries in which a large number of speakers work which constitute the second of Wenger's criteria: a **jointly negotiated enterprise**. In Central Somerset, the nuclear industry is the biggest single employer among the speakers interviewed, with many other peripheral industries employing alongside it. In addition, the Carnival is arguably as strong a candidate as the nuclear industry in terms of a jointly negotiated enterprise, particularly around Bridgwater. In West Somerset, the largest industries are tourism, care work and farming. Among the speakers, farming was the main sector represented, with speakers either currently engaged in or retired from running their own farms, working as farm labourers, or working in sectors that sit directly alongside the agricultural sector (e.g. governance, supply). Farming itself can be isolating, however the shared experience of farming provides the community of practice among these speakers. The shared experience of lambing season, or of preparing and sending animals to auction is something that would not be felt as strongly by those not directly involved in it. This shared knowledge and lived experience takes the speakers engaged in farming within West Somerset beyond simply a shared social category, as even if farmers may find themselves in direct competition for business, they still have the broader key goal of maintaining the local agricultural industry for their mutual benefit. As discussed above, many of the speakers within West Somerset are also

engaged in clubs, community projects and social activities. In both cases it can be strongly argued that there are communities of practice with jointly negotiated enterprises.

This also leads to Wenger's third criterion: the **shared repertoire**. There is a shared vocabulary in West Somerset that became apparent during the interviews where I had to clarify certain terms that were regularly used by speakers involved in this industry, e.g. the use of 'AI' for 'artificial insemination', and what is meant by 'mixed farming'. These terms and jargon items become short-hand among the community when they meet in the pub, or at social events, as well as in the practice of conducting their business at auction, when dealing with local government regulations, or when obtaining supplies. Beyond the farming industry, the bellringers (many of whom are also involved in the farming community) have their own groups of terms e.g. 'changes', 'peals', 'tower captain'.

In Central Somerset, the presence of Carnival also brings with it a shared repertoire of terms and rituals that are used among members of the community, that have seeped into the local dialect. Rather than carnival 'floats' as might be familiar in similar events elsewhere throughout the world, the term 'carts' is used. 'Squibbing' and 'Carnivalite' are not necessarily exclusive terms to the Central Somerset carnival circuit, but they are a key part of it.

8.3.2.4 Summarising the Impact of Identity on Somerset dialects

The combination of regional identity felt by the participants, coupled with the different communities of practice found within the two Somerset locations does offer some explanation for the differing use of (l). It doesn't necessarily explain fully how the older speakers in West Somerset have a higher use of vocalised rounded /l/ than older speakers to the east in Central Somerset, but it does provide a motivation. The different communities of practice across the two counties may have some crossover, but among the people interviewed for this thesis, that cross-over is limited. For example, there were no agricultural workers interviewed in Central Somerset, and no nuclear industry workers interviewed in West Somerset, even though there are undoubtedly people from those sectors in both parts of the county. Nonetheless, it still represents a division between the two locations, and within my own dataset.

Beyond Somerset, the results of previous studies investigating the combined impact of boundaries and identity (e.g. C. Montgomery, 2012; Beal, 2010; Preston, 1982; D. Watt et al., 2014) are supported here, particularly in the case of West Somerset. Furthermore, despite the lack of opportunity for geographical diffusion present within West Somerset, the Cultural Hearth model proposed by Horvath and Horvath in the realm of language change does fit the results from this part of the county when combined with the strong impact of regional identity

and social structures in the form of communities of practice that separate the two locations, and in turn reinforce group identity within them.

8.4 Summarising key discussion points

During analysis of the results, the spatially motivated models of diffusion, specifically the Wave model, the Urban Hierarchy Model, and the Counter-Urban Mode were unable to fully explain the patterns of (l) found across the county of Somerset. Central Somerset appears to comply with the urban hierarchy model, with index scores that would support features of (l) passing down from Bristol to Bridgwater via Taunton, and modifying en route, as has been found in previous studies of diffusion (Britain, 2005a; Leemann et al., 2014; Trudgill, 1986). In West Somerset there is a different pattern of use, and the Urban Hierarchy did not suit the locations in West Somerset at all due to the small size of the villages and towns across the region. Rather, the results here indicate a closer affinity with the Cultural Hearth model in this part of the county, although the wide distribution of the speakers across the region in the small locations suggests otherwise, as there are no smaller locations from which the features could then diffuse. The differences in primary economies across the county lead inhabitants in West Somerset to express a sense of identity that sits in contrast to Central Somerset and the rest of the south of England. The various communities of practice across the county mirror the different economies, again offering contrast across governmental boundary lines, reinforcing the historical boundary in place.

The results and analysis presented here point to two distinct uses of (l), and two distinct patterns of change occurring simultaneously. This reminds us as modern dialectologists that the rural space is just as innovative as the urban (and urbanising). Where there is typically a distinction between the use of sociolinguistic techniques in urban spaces, and traditional dialectology techniques among rural spaces, the results in this thesis reaffirm that the rural is not static. Variation in such spaces is not necessarily the result of passive diffusion into the area, it is also the result of motivations found in urban spaces: specifically in this case those of identity, as was seen among speakers in Tyneside (D. Watt, 2002, 2014), and also Martha's Vineyard (Labov, 1962). Indeed, it is the latter of these studies with which a closer affinity may be found. West Somerset and Martha's Vineyard both see a great deal of tourism, and both have a native population that has seen their younger generations priced out of the housing market through in-migration from wealthier areas. The desire to differentiate is therefore strong. However, where speakers in Martha's Vineyard modified a previously used feature of the local dialect, the results from the SED coupled with the work of Wright in the early 20th Century shows that the West Somerset dialect has not previously featured L-Vocalisation, and that this change is an

entirely new innovation within the repertoire of the local speakers. Whether that innovation is something that has developed internally within the area or has arrived due to language contact is inconclusive within this thesis, but if externally motivated change is the cause, it is not clear how and from where this change has arrived, given the disparity between the apparent timeline of adoption between West and Central Somerset, and the incomplete map of use of (l) across the south of England.

9 Conclusion

9.1 Summarising the findings of this thesis

This thesis asked three research questions: What is the realisation of /l/ in Somerset, what evidence is there of variation and change, and what factors (e.g. dialect levelling) are influencing these patterns? The results and subsequent analysis find that L-vocalisation in a Coda position is in wide use throughout different areas in Somerset. In both West and Central Somerset, there is an increase in the use of vocalised forms of Coda /l/ since the time of the SED. Moreover, it finds that dialect levelling via diffusion of L-vocalisation is not universal throughout the county: rather its use reinforces and maintains existing dialect boundaries across the county, promoting the divide between the rural and the urbanising areas. However, while the distinction between dialects might be obvious between the rural and urbanising spaces, the direction and social patterns of change are not what might be expected. In West Somerset, a much more rural space, there is greater use of l-vocalisation among both older and younger speakers in both formal and informal speech than in the urbanising Central Somerset space, contrary to expectations that urbanisation and urban spaces would be associated with earlier adoption of new dialect features. L-Vocalisation in particular has been shown in previous studies to be spreading outwards from London and the south-east, and has diffused into urban South West varieties via the M4 corridor. Therefore, it would be assumed that varieties in Somerset closer to these larger urban spaces of Bristol and Bath would have adopted L-Vocalisation earlier than more rural areas further from the urban spaces. Yet the greater use of L-vocalisation in a Coda position among speakers in West Somerset shows us that something different is occurring among these speakers.

It is important to note here that not only is there a greater use of L-vocalisation among speakers in West Somerset than those in Central Somerset, but there is also a difference in the patterns of distribution of L-vocalisation. When reviewing the individual Coda positions for use of L-Vocalisation among the speakers by age group and gender, it showed that there was a difference in terms of which Coda positions were more likely to have L-vocalisation across the two regions. Moreover, in West Somerset there was more agreement among the age groups and gender groups with regards to the use of L-vocalisation by individual Coda position than there was among these groups in Central Somerset. This more homogeneous pattern of use in West Somerset suggests that L-vocalisation is more stable, and thus has been in use for longer in this

rural location than the more variable use across the age and gender groups in Central Somerset. The distinction between West and Central Somerset in the use of vocalised forms of (l) reinforces the existing linguistic boundary, and mirrors the distinctions found by Britain (2002) in the Fenlands, where the dialects in the area were different from other surrounding dialects but were also distinct from one another. There is one key difference between Britain's findings in the Fens, and the findings within this present study in Somerset: specifically, the apparent earlier adoption of L-vocalisation in rural West Somerset compared with urbanising Central Somerset. L-vocalisation was not present to any extent among speakers in West Somerset in the SED, but it was present among the Central Somerset SED participants in small numbers. Dark /l/ was already present in Coda position in the SED data from both Central and West Somerset. Following the shown pre-existing criteria for L-vocalisation this presence of Dark /l/ is conducive to the adoption of a vocalised form.

9.2 The Limitations of the Diffusion Models

An attempt was made to apply models of diffusion to the results and locations within the study to identify if and how the L-Vocalisation occurring in the Somerset locations was via diffusion, and if so, by which model. The Wave model was ruled out quite quickly based on the pattern of use of (l) among the speakers in the county that directly contradict the expected pattern of gradual diffusion from east to west. The Urban Hierarchy Model was applied to attempt to account for higher use of L-Vocalisation in West Somerset than Central Somerset among older speakers. Indeed, there is an argument that the close connections between the key places studied in Central Somerset, and the larger urban spaces of Taunton (within Central Somerset, but not included in this study) and Bristol would have more of an influence, and the urban hierarchy model did support this. Applying Nerbonne's adapted model, replacing distance between towns with travel time, we would expect that Taunton has an immediate influence over Bridgwater, and Taunton is itself directly influenced by Bristol. Taking Grossenbacher's work into consideration, London has an influence over Bristol. It was therefore hypothesised that via the Urban Hierarchy Model, the London form of L-Vocalisation would have diffused down through to the South West and Somerset in particular via a sequence of urban spaces from Bristol to Taunton to Bridgwater and then into the satellite villages around Bridgwater. While this model did indeed provide a set of index scores that presented a pattern of hierarchy for locations from Bristol to Bridgwater in Central Somerset, it did not give a satisfactory set of index scores that might explain which locations have been an influence on the smaller West Somerset villages. Moreover, the findings of the patterns of distribution of vocalised rounded (l) in both West and Central Somerset showed that there was a different

pattern in West Somerset that did not match South East varieties. The changes in use of (l) within rural communities therefore presented a direct challenge for the Urban Hierarchy Model.

The next model to review in the context of the data was the Counter Urbanisation model. However, here too there was no indication that changes occurring in Central Somerset were the result of counter-urbanisation from West Somerset due to travel for work or study, as many of the participants from West Somerset were farm workers who rarely travelled to Central Somerset locations for any great length of time that would have enabled contact. The travel patterns and occupations of speakers in the area bring us to the second factor that leads us to reject the urban hierarchy model, that of communities of practice. The speakers interviewed in both locations were people who had spent the majority of their lives in those particular locations. Those living in West Somerset are in (or retired from) occupations that typically did not allow for a great deal of travel out of the area, but did allow for close bonds with other people close by. In Central Somerset there was great scope for mobility with their occupations, and indeed there are those who work or worked with speakers from West Somerset, particularly those involved in the nuclear industry with ties to Hinkley Point. Yet within Central Somerset there is similar contact with speakers from other parts of Somerset, Bristol and the broader south west, as well as the rest of the UK.

Finally, the results in West Somerset in particular looked favourable towards the Cultural Hearth model, but this could not be confirmed as the speakers were quite distributed throughout geographical space and were not all part of the same communities. However, it does point towards communities of practice as a possible catalyst for change in this part of the county.

The models of diffusion showed that the Urban Hierarchy Model was likely the mode of diffusion of vocalised forms of (l) into the Central Somerset area, but not the West Somerset area. If, as the evidence suggests, West Somerset has adopted L-vocalisation separately to Central Somerset, then one explanation proposed in this thesis is that of local identity and community. This study looked briefly at the attitudes displayed by the speakers in West Somerset towards other locations, as well as those people who were moving into the area. It found that, while these examples were not originally sought within the interview structure, opinions from some speakers were forthcoming that revealed a strong sense of identity tied to the West Somerset area, and a less favourable view of locations outside the area, and the people coming from them. These speakers sought to position themselves firmly as locals to the extent that they rarely leave the area, even if that meant being slightly self-effacing on occasion. With such a strong sense of identity in place, it makes sense that, much as in Martha's Vineyard, these speakers would adopt, consciously or unconsciously, speech patterns that would also reinforce their differences to neighbouring locales.

Therefore, a second explanation proposed is the role of Communities of Practice (CofPs). A review of the social and working groups found within the two locations did indicate strong CofPs that were distinct to the two different regions. In Central Somerset, the Carnival CofP, and the Nuclear Industry CofP were highlighted as the two major social groupings within the regions, in which there is often an overlap (e.g. Carnivalites who also work at or retired from Hinkley Point B Power Station). In West Somerset, the Bellringers and the Farmers were two major groupings, again with a large overlap. Crucially, though, there was no overlap with the groups in the neighbouring region. This therefore reinforced the dialectal boundary while also providing an impetus to forge a distinct identity, particularly in West Somerset.

9.3 Overall Conclusion

The two locations within Somerset posed an area of interest for a study in modern dialectology, and specifically how dialect levelling may impact an historical cross-county dialectal boundary. This study found that the historical boundary in Somerset remains intact, despite dialect levelling occurring in the eastern part of the county. Moreover, while the feature under study, L-Vocalisation, has been adopted throughout both locations, this has happened in different ways, and more so by the inhabitants of the more rural space in West Somerset, contrary to the expected outcomes when applying diffusion models. The increase of L-Vocalisation via Dialect Levelling is undoubtedly occurring throughout the south of England; however this study shows that L-vocalisation may also occur in rural spaces simultaneously to dialect levelling. In particular, it challenges the notion of rural spaces as stable, traditional and passive spaces in the face of language change, showcasing a change that has developed independently of similar changes occurring elsewhere. As society itself in non-urban spaces changes, the techniques used in dialectology to capture variation also need to change.

9.4 Limitations of this thesis and areas for additional research

While every care was taken to ensure the scientific endeavours within this thesis were as rigorous as possible, there were unfortunately still some limitations in the design, execution, and results. This is down in part to the nature of a solo project such as a PhD thesis, particularly one that is unfunded.

A fairly fundamental limitation of this thesis is that the entire dataset was not analysed auditorily by the same individuals. Specifically, the SED data was taken from published 'Basic Materials' books wherein the auditory analysis was completed some considerable time ago by

other linguists working in that project. Some recorded materials are still available via the British Library, but for reasons of expediency, and familiarity with the recordings available online was possible. But as was discussed in the methodology, no two auditory analyses will be the same. Therefore, the perception of variants of (l) would differ ever so slightly between the SED field workers working in the mid-late 1950s, and my own analysis conducted in the mid-late 2010s. Added to this is the technological development that has taken place in the intervening period between the two studies, and the improved capture of audio data.

In an ideal research project, the design would have ensured even distribution of participants across locations by genders and age groups. The time limits, as well as remote recruitment of participants made this a difficult task, particularly in West Somerset where this researcher did not have any contacts at the beginning of the project. Therefore, it was a case of "beggars can't be choosers" in the recruitment of participants. However, the even distribution of participants across non-linguistic factors would make the descriptive statistics more convincing. That is of course where non-parametric statistical tests allow for uneven distributions and can improve confidence in the results.

Social factors of age and gender were discussed within this thesis. However, it was noted that some social factors were not accounted for that have been in previous studies. Issues of ethnicity, social class and education are often included in studies, particularly those taking place in more urban spaces. This study did not include ethnicity in its research design for reasons already discussed: that Somerset does not have a very high population of non-white people. Indeed, within the entire sample across both locations in Somerset, only one participant was from an ethnicity other than 'White British'. Therefore, it would not have made sense to divide the sample to analyse for ethnicity. Social class was considered, and Education was used as a proxy for this, dividing those who had attended 3rd level education from those who had not. Once again though, this fell afoul of the difficulty in finding recruits. The distribution of those who attended 3rd level university was fairly even in Central Somerset, but in West Somerset, a 3rd level education was only something that could be attributed to women, as none of the men in the West Somerset sample attended University.

Education was also originally intended as a proxy for mobility, as there are no Universities in the county of Somerset therefore anyone wishing to attend would have to travel out of the county. However, this was not an entirely reliable means of predicting mobility, as 3rd level qualifications can be achieved through remote learning. Mobility can be difficult to determine, particularly in the modern world where cars, new economies and more recently telecommunications and social media have made it easier to get around to work and make contact with speakers of other language varieties. Other studies have developed schemas to categorise mobility, but these can be idiosyncratic to the data and speakers, and may not be

universally transferable. Mobility was later disregarded in this study, but a future design may be able to incorporate it to see what impact the mobility of the participants as well as the in-migration of speakers from other regions may have on the local dialect, particularly in the light of the Hinkley Point nuclear power station development and the peripheral industries that have built up around that.

In a project with a larger team and better resources, these challenges could be overcome. The larger team would be able to develop wider networks throughout the communities to promote and recruit participants to fit a greater range of categories, including ethnicity, social class, education and mobility. This larger team would then be able to conduct a more thorough analysis of language use and variation within Somerset using these categories as potential factors.

9.5 Future work

One PhD is never enough to cover the entirety of the issues that are raised in the process of its development. Of particular interest to this researcher while undertaking this thesis are the issues around borderlands and boundaries, the impact of increased industry in a post-dialectal urbanising society, how mobility can shape the progress of a sound change in such spaces, and how social networks can help or hinder the progress of an external innovation in rural spaces such as West Somerset. These potential areas for future work are discussed below.

9.5.1 Studies into the borderlands between Devon and Somerset

This thesis has shown that speakers from West Somerset developed L-vocalisation in a different way to Central Somerset in order to maintain their separate identity. Indeed, it was shown that speakers in West Somerset identify more readily with Devon and Cornwall than they do with the rest of Somerset and the South of England. This is further supported by literature describing an historical dialect boundary separating West Somerset from Central Somerset. What could not be determined, though, was whether or not dialects in North Devon have had an influence on the development of L-Vocalisation in West Somerset. Anecdotally, during this study I saw indications that L-Vocalisation is a known feature of Devon dialects, yet to date there is very little empirical evidence that would support this. Further study is therefore merited to verify this anecdotal evidence, and to look in greater detail into the tension between the existence of a feature, and an incoming variation of the same feature, particularly L-vocalisation. The SED confirms that Devon dialects studied all displayed use of dark /l/ in all linguistic positions (see SED Vol 4 pt1 p51-59), therefore it is possible that in the intervening period since

the SED, speakers have undergone a similar process to that found in Manchester dialects (e.g. Baranowski & Turton, 2015; Turton, 2015) and formed a categorical distinction, thus darkening Coda /l/ to such a degree that is now vocalised, or perceived as such. Stuart-Smith et al (Stuart-Smith et al., 2006) discussed historical l-vocalisation and the new 'London-based' innovative L-vocalisation form among Glasgow speakers. Re-contextualising that to a much more rural space such as the borderlands between North Devon and West Somerset may tell us more about the nature of rephonologisation and lexicalisation as processes of dialect change in different communities.

9.5.2 Studies into new prestige forms

While RP was used as the comparative prestige form in this study, as has been noted it is less and less likely that RP is the model most people use for this. Estuary English has been discussed, but while this does have more use in television and radio, these are not the only broadcast media available in the 21st century. Moreover, while there are those who do not consider broadcast media to be a viable means of direct language contact (you can talk to your telly, but it doesn't really answer back), studies show that it can have somewhat of an influence (Stuart-Smith et al., 2007). Television has been a part of most people's homes for generations now, and it is possible that in that time it has had an impact on speech. However, new broadcast media forms are available and used heavily by many younger people. There is much study that can be done with social media and language change, particularly how social media plays a part in the lives of people who live in post-dialectal spaces; how high the take-up of use is among speakers from different parts of the county (which may also be determined by connectivity speeds), what platforms they use, and how this may or may not impact their language use. Certainly, there is scope for viewing YouTube 'vloggers' as a community of speech practice. Do these YouTubers adopt a formal or conversational register, or have they devised a new type of speech style? Is the speech of YouTubers representative of a regional variety, or is a new non-regional variety developing among this community of practice? With all this potential for new language varieties developing in non-geographical digital spaces, how does it impact on the recipients of such broadcast media when they DO operate in physical space? It is a similar debate to the issue of whether radio or television have influenced language use, but with this new means of media being taken up by much younger speakers, and largely ignored by many older speakers, is this contributing to dialect levelling and dialect death, or is it reinforcing regional varieties through the 'democratisation' of broadcast media?

9.5.3 Studies into mobility in post-dialectal societies

There has already been much work put into developing means of assessing mobility and evaluating its impact on language use. Most of this has been in the levels of mobility a person has at the time of the study, but as was found when trying to devise a taxonomy of mobility that would suite the data I had, there is little account given to the levels of mobility a person has had over the course of their lifetime, or indeed when in their life such mobility occurred.

The changes currently going on in the county of Somerset with regards to further development of the nuclear industry, the development of green spaces between urban spaces and their satellite villages, and the changing nature of what constitutes an 'office' taking place, there are grounds for conducting a longitudinal study of speakers in these post-dialectal spaces. The study would not only take their sociolinguistic profiles into consideration (e.g. age, level of education at the beginning of the study, birth location, etc), but it would also build up a much clearer picture of where these speakers work over the course of the study, who they work with, who they socialise with, how their hobbies, interests and even political views change over the course of the study, and whether the patterns of such change match with any change they undergo in their use of language. This can be done through more qualitative means, reviewing each person's mobility on an individual level over an extended period of time to get a more accurate picture, taking a more 'Third Wave' approach.

The development of Hinkley C will also have an impact on the local dialects to the area. Indeed, this thesis itself stands as a marker in the sand for the current use of language in the area. A longitudinal study that incorporates workers from the nuclear industry, as well as others from the local area may reveal the effects of large-scale industrial developments such as this on small communities in rural and urbanising 'post-dialectal' areas such as Central and West Somerset.

9.5.4 Studies into Social Networks and Communities of Practice

This brings into discussion the use of more ethnographic methods when investigating social networks within the post-dialectal society, noting the importance not only of the individual speaker and their idiosyncratic backgrounds that may impact on their language use, but also how that background influences how the speaker reacts or interacts with an interview scenario.

Therefore, if this study were to be conducted again, there would be greater attention given to the social networks, and also to the communities of practice at play within Somerset, and how this might influence language use and language change. The interview itself would discuss involvement in the community, and much more detail about social activities that might

be tied to those communities. Within Central Somerset, the largest community of practice (CoP) would recognisably be the 'Carnivalites', which in turn have sub-groups depending on which Carnival Club a speaker affiliates with. Further work could be conducted between different clubs within this carnival community to see if differences lie between the clubs in terms of language use, and whether the entire community itself has a use of language that is different to 'non-Carnivalites'.

A second CoP might also be those who work within Hinkley Point. This again affords further sub-division, as there are those who work or have worked in the existing power stations (Hinkley A, which is decommissioned, and Hinkley B, which is still in operation), and those who work on the construction of Hinkley C. Indeed, the division between the people working in the station under operation and the station under construction would make for an interesting study, as one represents an established workplace with employees who will have been in situ for possibly decades, and the other represents a fairly newly developed workplace community that is inherently fixed-term in duration.

9.5.5 Future Work in Summary

The work in this thesis opens the door to several other opportunities for study. The potential studies given here are a few of the areas that can be investigated. It is hoped that this thesis and the results presented can offer a basis for longitudinal studies in the area, particularly as it undergoes change socially, demographically, as to a certain extent geographically. The past ten years have represented a period of great change for Somerset as Hinkley C undergoes development bringing infrastructural and industrial change. The coming decades will also bring change as Hinkley C becomes operational, and society moves further towards new modes of working.

Bibliography

Abercrombie, A. (2018). Language purism and social hierarchies: Making a Romani standard in Prizren. *Language in Society*, *47*(5), 741–761.

Abrams, D. (2001). Social Identity, Psychology of. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 14306–14309). Pergamon. https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-043076-7/01728-9

Agha, A. (2007). *Language and Social Relations*. Cambridge University Press.

Ash, S. (1982). *The vocalization of /l/ in Philadelphia.* [Doctoral Thesis]. University of Pennsylvania.

Auer, P. (2013). The geography of language: Steps toward a new approach. *Freiburger Arbeitspapiere Zur Germanistischen Linguistik. FRAGL*, *16*.

Auer, P., & Hinskens, F. (1996). The convergence and divergence of dialects in Europe. New and not so new developments in an old area. *Sociolinguistica*, *10*(1), 1–30. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110245158.1

Auer, P., & Hinskens, F. (2005). The role of interpersonal accommodation in a theory of language change. In *Dialect change: Convergence and divergence in European languages* (p. 335). Cambridge University Press.

Babel, M. (2010). Dialect divergence and convergence in New Zealand English. *Language in Society*, *39*(4), 437–456. http://dx.doi.org.elib.tcd.ie/10.1017/S0047404510000400

Bailey, C.-J. N. (1973). *Variation and linguistic theory.* Center for Applied Linguistics. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED125238

Bailey, G. (2002). Real and Apparent Time. In J. K. Chambers, P. Trudgill, & N. Schilling-Estes (Eds.), *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change* (Vol. 11, p. 312). Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Bailey, G., Wikle, T., Tillery, J., & Sand, L. (1993). Some patterns of linguistic diffusion. *Language Variation and Change*, *5*(3), 359–390. Cambridge Core. https://doi.org/10.1017/S095439450000154X

Baranowski, M., & Turton, D. (2015). Manchester English. In R. Hickey (Ed.), *Researching Northern Englishes* (pp. 293–316). John Benjamins Amsterdam and Philadelphia.

Bauer, L. (1994). English in New Zealand. In R. Burchfield (Ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English language* (Vol. 5, pp. 382–429). Cambridge University Press.

Beaken, M. A. (1971). *A study of phonological development in a primary school population of East London*. University of London.

Beal, J. (2010). Shifting Borders and Shifting Regional Identities. In C. Llamas & D. Watt (Eds.), *Language and Identities*. Edinburgh University Press.

Beaman, K. V. (2021). Identity and mobility in linguistic change across the lifespan: The case of Swabian German. In A. Ziegler, S. Edler, N. Kleczkowski, & G. Oberdorfer (Eds.), *Urban Matters. Current Approaches of International Sociolinguistic Research (Studies in Language Variation)*. John Benjamins.

Bell, A. (1984). Language style as audience design. *Language in Society*, *13*(2), 145–204. https://doi.org/10.1017/S004740450001037X

Bermúdez-Otero, R., & Trousdale, G. (2012). Cycles and continua: On unidirectionality and gradualness in language change. In T. Nevalainen & E. Closs Traugott (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook on the history of English* (pp. 691–720). Oxford University Press.

Berruto, G. (1989). Tra italiano e dialetto. In G. Holtus, M. Metzeltin, & M. Pfister (Eds.), *La dialetttologia italiana oggi; Studi offerti a Manlio Cortelazzo* (pp. 107–122).

Berruto, G. (2005). Dialect/standard convergence, mixing, and models of language contact: The case of Italy. In P. Auer, F. Hinskens, & P. Kerswill (Eds.), *Dialect change. Convergence and divergence in European languages* (pp. 81–97). Cambridge University Press.

Bloomfield, L. (1933). Language (New York: Henry Holt, 1933). *Linguistic Aspects of Science*, 20–45.

Boersma, P., & Hayes, B. (2001). Empirical tests of the gradual learning algorithm. *Linguistic Inquiry*, *32*(1), 45–86.

Borowsky, T., Collins, P., & Blair, D. (2001). The vocalisation of dark l in Australian English. *English in Australia*, *26*, 69–87.

Borowsky, T., & Horvath, B. (1997). L-vocalization in Australian English. *AMSTERDAM STUDIES IN THE THEORY AND HISTORY OF LINGUISTIC SCIENCE SERIES 4*, 101–124.

Bourhis, R. Y., Giles, H., & Tajfel, H. (1973). Language as a determinant of Welsh identity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *3*(4), 447–460. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420030407

Braber, N., & Butterfint, Z. (2008). Local Identity and Sound Change in Glasgow: A Pilot Study. *Leeds Working Papers in Linguistics and Phonetics*, *13*, 22–43.

Britain, D. (1991). *Dialect and Space: A Geolinguistic Study of Speech Variables in the Fens*. University of Essex. https://books.google.ie/books?id=Mvt8nQEACAAJ

Britain, D. (1997). Dialect contact and phonological reallocation: "Canadian Raising" in the English Fens. *Language in Society*, *26*(01), 15–46.

Britain, D. (2002a). Diffusion, levelling, simplification and reallocation in past tense BE in the English Fens. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *6*(1), 16–43.

Britain, D. (2002b). *Phoenix from the ashes?: The death, contact and birth of dialects in England*.

Britain, D. (2002c). Surviving 'Estuary English': Innovation diffusion, koineisation and local dialect differentiation in the English Fenland. *Essex Research Reports in Linguistics*. http://repository.essex.ac.uk/id/eprint/152

Britain, D. (2004). Space and Spatial Diffusion. In J. K. Chambers, P. Trudgill, & N. Schilling-Estes (Eds.), *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change* (pp. 603–637). Blackwell Publishing Ltd. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9780470756591.ch24/summary

Britain, D. (2005a). Innovation diffusion: '"Estuary English"' and local dialect differentiation: the survival of Fenland Englishes. *Linguistics*, *43*(5), 995–1022. https://doi.org/10.1515/ling.2005.43.5.995

Britain, D. (2005b). The dying dialects of England. *Historical Linguistic Studies of Spoken English*, 35–46.

Britain, D. (2009). *One foot in the grave? Dialect death, dialect contact, and dialect birth in England*.

Britain, D. (2010). Language and space: The variationist approach. *Language and Space: An International Handbook of Linguistic Variation*, *1*, 142–162.

Britain, D. (2011). The heterogeneous homogenisation of dialects in England. *Taal En Tongval*, *63*(1), 43–60.

Britain, D. (2014). Where North meets South?: Contact, divergence, and the routinisation of the Fenland dialect boundary. In D. Watt & C. Llamas (Eds.), *Language, Borders and Identity* (pp. 27–43). Edinburgh University Press.

Britain, D. (2016). Sedentarism and nomadism in the sociolinguistics of dialect. *Sociolinguistics: Theoretical Debates*, 217.

Britain, D. (2017). Which way to look. *Perspectives on "Urban" and "Rural" in Dialectology. In E. Moore et al. (Eds.): A Sense of Place: Studies in Language and Region. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press*.

Britain, D., & Trudgill, P. (1999). Migration, new-dialect formation and sociolinguistic refunctionalisation: Reallocation as an outcome of dialect contact. *Transactions of the Philological Society*, *97*(2), 245–256.

Britain, D., & Trudgill, P. (2005). New dialect formation and contact-induced reallocation: Three case studies from the English Fens. *International Journal of English Studies*, *5*(1), 183–209.

Cantos Gómez, P. (2013). *Statistical Methods in Language and Linguistic Research*. Equinox Publishing.

Chambers, J. K. (2002). Patterns of Variation including change. In J. K. Chambers, P. Trudgill, & N. Schilling-Estes (Eds.), *The handbook of language variation and change* (pp. 349–372). Blackwell.

Chambers, J. K., & Trudgill, P. (1998). *Dialectology*. Cambridge University Press.

Clark, L., & Trousdale, G. (2009). Exploring the role of token frequency in phonological change: Evidence from TH-Fronting in east-central Scotland1. *English Language & Linguistics*, *13*(1), 33–55.

Clark, L., & Trousdale, G. (2010). A cognitive approach to quantitative sociolinguistic variation: Evidence from th-fronting in Central Scotland. In *Advances in Cognitive Sociolinguistics* (pp. 291–322). De Gruyter Mouton.

Clopper, C. G. (2011). Checking for Reliability. In M. Di Paolo & M. Yaeger-Dror (Eds.), *Sociophonetics: A student's guide* (pp. 188–197). Routledge.

Coates, J. (2006). Gender. In C. Llamas, L. Mullany, & P. Stockwell (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to sociolinguistics* (pp. 62–68). Routledge.

Collins, B., & Mees, I. M. (2013). *Practical Phonetics and Phonology: A Resource Book for Students*. Routledge.

Coupland, N., Coupland, J., Giles, H., & Henwood, K. (1988). Accommodating the elderly: Invoking and extending a theory1. *Language in Society*, *17*(1), 1–41.

Cruttenden, A. (2008). *Gimson's Pronunciation of English*. Hodder Education.

De Laine, M. (2000). *Fieldwork, participation and practice: Ethics and dilemmas in qualitative research*. Sage.

Docherty, G. J., & Foulkes, P. (1999). Derby and Newcastle: Instrumental phonetics and variationist studies. In *Urban voices: Accent studies in the British Isles* (pp. 47–71). Arnold.

Docherty, G. J., Foulkes, P., Milroy, J., Milroy, L., & Walshaw, D. (1997). Descriptive adequacy in phonology: A variationist perspective. *Journal of Linguistics*, *33*(2), 275–310.

Dodsworth, R. M. (2005). *Linguistic variation and sociological consciousness*. The Ohio State University.

Douglas-Cowie, E. (1978). Linguistic code-switching in a Northern Irish village: Social interaction and social ambition. In P. Trudgill (Ed.), *Sociolinguistic Patterns in British English* (pp. 37–51). Edward Arnold.

Drummond, R. (2017). (Mis) interpreting urban youth language: White kids sounding black? *Journal of Youth Studies*, *20*(5), 640–660.

Drummond, R., Schleef, E., & Preece, S. (2016). Identity in variationist sociolinguistics. *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity*, 50–65.

Durian, D. (2008). The vocalization of/l/in urban blue collar Columbus, OH African American Vernacular English: A quantitative sociophonetic analysis. *OSUWPL*, *58*, 30–51.

Eckert, P. (1989). *Jocks and burnouts: Social categories and identity in the high school*. Teachers college press.

Eckert, P. (2012). Three Waves of Variation Study: The Emergence of Meaning in the Study of Sociolinguistic Variation. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *41*, 87. edsjsr. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-092611-145828

Eckert, P., & Labov, W. (2017). Phonetics, phonology and social meaning. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *21*(4), 467–496. https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12244

Eckert, P., & McConnell-Ginet, S. (1992). Think Practically and Look Locally: Language and Gender as Community- Based Practice. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *21*, 461–490.

Ellis, A. J. (1869). *On Early English pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer* (Vol. 1). Ardent Media London: Published for the Philological Society by Asher & Co., and for the Early English Text Society and the Chaucer Society by Trübner & Co.

Ellis, A. J. (1889a). *On early English pronunciation: With especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, containing an investigation of the correspondence of writing with speech in England from the Anglosaxon period to the present day ...: Vol. V*. London: Published for the Philological Society by Asher & Co., and for the Early English Text Society and the

Chaucer Society by Trübner & Co. http://archive.org/details/onearlyenglishpr00elliuoft

Ellis, A. J. (1889b). *The existing phonology of English dialects compared with that of West Saxon speech*. Greenwood.

Ellis, A. J. (1890). *English Dialects—Their Sounds and Homes: Being an Abridgment of the Author's 'Existing Phonology of English Dialects', which Forms Part V. of His 'Early English Pronunciation', with a Selection of the Examples Reduced to the Glossic Notation* (Vol. 24). English dialect society.

Ellis, A. J., Salesbury, W., Schmeller, J. A., Barclay, A., & Winkler, J. (1875). *On Early English Pronunciation: Illustrations of the pronunciation of the XIVth and XVth centuries. Chaucer, Gower, Wycliffe, Spenser, Shakspere, Salesbury, Barclay, Hart, Bullokar, Gill, Pronunciation vocabulary* (Vol. 1). Philological Society.

Elworthy, F. T. (1876). The Dialect of West Somerset. *Transactions of the Philological Society*, *16*(1), 197–217.

Farrar, K., & Jones, M. C. (2002). Introduction. In K. Farrar & M. C. Jones (Eds.), *Language Change: The Interplay of Internal, External and Extra-Linguistic Factors.* (pp. 1–16). Mouton de Gruyter.

Field, A. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS* (3rd ed.). Sage publications.

Foulkes, P., & Docherty, G. J. (1999). Urban voices–overview. In *Urban voices: Accent studies in the British Isles* (pp. 1–24). Arnold.

Foulkes, P., & Docherty, G. J. (2000). Another chapter in the story of/r: 'Labiodental' variants in British English. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *4*(1), 30–59.

Giles, H. (1973). Accent mobility: A model and some data. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 87–105.

Giles, H., & Baker, S. C. (2008). Communication accommodation theory. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*.

Giles, H., Mulac, A., Bradac, J. J., & Johnson, P. (1987). Speech Accommodation Theory: The First Decade and Beyond. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, *10*(1), 13–48. https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.1987.11678638

Giles, H., & Powesland, P. (1997). Accommodation Theory. In N. Coupland & A. Jaworski (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics: A Reader* (pp. 232–239). Macmillan Education UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-25582-5_19

Gimson, A. C., & Ramsaran, S. (1970). *An introduction to the pronunciation of English* (Vol. 4). Edward Arnold.

Glauser, B. (2000). The Scottish/English border in hindsight. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *145*, 65–78.

Gordon, M. J. (2001). *Small-town values, big-city vowels: A study of the Northern Cities Shift in Michigan*. Duke University Press.

Grossenbacher, S. (2016). *From East to West? Dialect diffusion between Swindon and Bristol.* [MA Thesis]. Universität Bern.

Guy, G. R. (2003). Variationist approaches to phonological change. In B. D. Joseph & R. D. Janda (Eds.), *The Handbook of Historical Linguistics* (1st ed.). Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Halle, M. (1962). Phonology in Generative Grammar. *Word*, *18*, 54–72.

Halle, M., & Mohanan, K. P. (1985). Segmental phonology of modern English. *Linguistic Inquiry*, *16*(1), 57–116.

Hall-Lew, L., & Fix, S. (2012). Perceptual coding reliability of (L)-vocalization in casual speech data. *Lingua*, *122*(7), 794–809. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2011.12.005

Hardcastle, W., & Barry, W. (1989). Articulatory and perceptual factors in /l/ vocalisations in English. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*, *15*(2), 3–17. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0025100300002930

Harris, J. (1985). *Phonological variation and change: Studies in Hiberno-English*. Cambridge University Press Cambridge.

Haugen, E. (1966). Dialect, Language, Nation. *American Anthropologist*, *68*(4), 922–935.

Hawkins, D. (1973). *Avalon and Sedgemoor*. David and Charles.

Hay, J., Warren, P., & Drager, K. (2006). Factors influencing speech perception in the context of a merger-in-progress. *Journal of Phonetics*, *34*(4), 458–484.

Hazen, K., & Dodsworth, R. (2012). *Going to L in Appalachia: Language change for L-vocalization in the Mountain State* [PDF presentation]. 86th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Portland, Oregon.

Herzog, M. (1965). The Yiddish language in Northern Poland: Its geography and history. Bloomington, Indiana: Research Center in Anthropology. *Folklore, and Linguistics Publication*, *37*.

Hickey, R. (1999). Dublin English: Current changes and their motivations. In *Urban voices: Accent studies in the British Isles* (pp. 265–281). Arnold.

Hinskens, F. (1998). Dialect Levelling: A Two-dimensional Process. *Folia Linguistica*, *32*(1–2), 35–52. https://doi.org/10.1515/flin.1998.32.1-2.35

Hinskens, F., Auer, P., & Kerswill, P. (2005). The study of dialect convergence and divergence: Conceptual and methodological considerations. In P. Auer, F. Hinskens, & P. Kerswill (Eds.), *Dialect Change* (1st ed., pp. 1–48). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511486623.003

Hinskens, F., Kallen, J. L., & Taeldeman, J. (2000). *Merging and drifting apart. Convergence and divergence of dialects across political borders*. *2000*(145), 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl.2000.145.1

Horvath, B., & Horvath, R. (1997). The geolinguistics of a sound change in progress:/l/vocalisation in Australia. *U. Penn Working Papers in Linguistics*, *4*(1), 109–124.

Horvath, B. M., & Horvath, R. J. (2001). A multilocality study of a sound change in progress: The case of/l/vocalization in New Zealand and Australian English. *Language Variation and Change*, *13*(1), 37.

Horvath, B. M., & Horvath, R. J. (2002). The geolinguistics of/l/vocalization in Australia and New Zealand. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *6*(3), 319–346.

Hudson, R., & Holloway, A. (1977). *Variation in London English*. Department of Phonetics & Linguistics, Univ. College London.

Huffman, M. K. (1997). Phonetic variation in intervocalic onset/l/'s in English. *Journal of Phonetics*, *25*(2), 115–141.

Ihalainen, O. (1976). PERIPHRASTIC" DO" IN AFFIRMATIVE SENTENCES IN THE DIALECT OF EAST SOMERSET. *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, *77*(4), 608–622.

Ihalainen, O. (1980). Relative clauses in the dialect of Somerset. *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, *81*(2), 187–196.

Ihalainen, O. (1985a). He took the bottle and put 'n in his pocket: The object pronoun it in present-day Somerset. *Focus on: England and Wales*, 153–161.

Ihalainen, O. (1985b). *Synchronic variation and linguistic change: Evidence from British English dialects*. 61–72.

Ihalainen, O. (1994). The dialects of England since 1776. In R. Burchfield (Ed.), *The Cambridge history of the English language* (Vol. 5, pp. 197–274). Cambridge University Press.

Jakobson, R. (1931). Prinzipicn dee historischen Phonologic. *TCLP*, *4*, 257–267.

Jansen, S. (2015). Carlisle and Cumbria. *Researching Northern English. Amsterdam: John Benjamins*, 205–226.

Jansen, S. (2017). External and internal factors in a levelling process: Prevocalic (r) in Carlisle English. In J. C. Beal & S. Hancil (Eds.), *Perspectives on Northern Englishes* (pp. 111–134). De Gruyter Mouton.

Jansen, S. (2021). A ubiquitous sound change in the periphery: The case of T-glottaling in West Cumbrian English. *Anglistik*, *32*.

Johnson, W., & Britain, D. (2007). L-vocalisation as a natural phenomenon: Explorations in sociophonology. *Language Sciences*, *29*(2), 294–315.

Jones, J. M. (1998). *Phonological and lexical change in the dialects of east Devon and west Somerset, 1948-1995*.

Kallen, J. L. (Ed.). (1997). Irish English: Context and Contacts. In *Focus on Ireland*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Kallen, J. L. (2005). Internal and external factors in phonological convergence: The case of English /t/ lenition. In P. Auer, F. Hinskens, & P. Kerswill (Eds.), *Dialect Change: Convergence and Divergence in European Languages* (pp. 51–80). Cambridge University Press.

Kallen, J. L. (2013). Irish English Volume 2: The Republic of Ireland. In *Irish English Volume 2: The Republic of Ireland*. De Gruyter Mouton.

Kaye, J., & Harris, J. (1990). Segmental complexity and phonological government*. *Phonology*, *7*(1), 255–300. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0952675700001202

Kerswill, P. (1995). Phonological convergence in dialect contact: Evidence from citation forms. *Language Variation and Change*, *7*(2), 195–207. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954394500000983

Kerswill, P. (2003). Dialect levelling and geographical diffusion in British English. *Social Dialectology: In Honour of Peter Trudgill*, 223–243.

Kerswill, P. (2006). Migration and language. *Sociolinguistics/Soziolinguistik. An International Handbook of the Science of Language and Society*, *3*, 1–27.

Kerswill, P. (2008). Koineization and Accommodation. In J. K. Chambers, P. Trudgill, & N. Schilling-Estes (Eds.), *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change* (pp. 669–702). Blackwell Publishing Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470756591.ch26

Kerswill, P., & Trudgill, P. (2005). The birth of new dialects. In P. Auer, F. Hinskens, & P. Kerswill (Eds.), *Dialect change: Convergence and divergence in European languages* (Vol. 196, pp. 196–220). Cambridge University Press.

Kerswill, P., & Williams, A. (2000a). Creating a new town koine: Children and language change in Milton Keynes. *Language in Society*, *29*(1), 65–115.

Kerswill, P., & Williams, A. (2000b). 'Salience' as an explanatory factor in language change: Evidence from dialect levelling in urban England. *Reading Working Papers in Linguistics*, 63.

Kerswill, P., & Wright, S. (1989). *On the Limits of Auditory Transcription: A Sociophonetic Approach* (York Papers in Linguistics) [Research/Technical].

Kerswill, P., & Wright, S. (1990). The validity of phonetic transcription: Limitations of a sociolinguistic research tool. *Language Variation and Change*, *2*(3), 255–275. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954394500000363

Kirkham, S. (2017). Ethnicity and phonetic variation in Sheffield English liquids. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*, *47*(1), 17–35.

Kirkham, S., Turton, D., & Leemann, A. (2020). A typology of laterals in twelve English dialects. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *148*(1), EL72–EL76.

Kjederqvist, J. (1902). *The Dialect of Pewsey*. Trans. Phil. Soc.

Kolb, E. (1979). *Atlas of English sounds*. Francke Verlag.

Labov, W. (1962). *The social history of a sound change on the island of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts*.

Labov, W. (1963). The social motivation of a sound change. *Word*, *19*(3), 273–309.

Labov, W. (1965). On the mechanism of linguistic change. *Georgetown Monographs on Language and Linguistics*, *18*, 91–114.

Labov, W. (1966). *The Social Stratification of English in New York City.* Center for Applied Linguistics.

Labov, W. (1972a). *Language in the inner city: Studies in the Black English vernacular* (Vol. 3). University of Pennsylvania Press.

Labov, W. (1972b). Some principles of linguistic methodology. *Language in Society*, *1*(1), 97–120.

Labov, W. (1981). *Field Methods of the Project on Linguistic Change and Variation.* https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED250938

Labov, W. (1994). *Principles of Linguistic Change, Volume 1 Internal Factors* (Vol. 1). Blackwell Publishers Inc.

Labov, W. (2001). *Principles of Linguistic Change, Volume 2: Social Factors*. Wiley. https://books.google.ie/books?id=UdFfrgEACAAJ

Labov, W. (2007). Transmission and diffusion. *Language*, *83*(2), 344–387.

Labov, W. (2018). The role of the Avant Garde in linguistic diffusion. *Language Variation and Change*, *30*(1), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954394518000042

Labov, W., Ash, S., & Boberg, C. (2008). *The atlas of North American English: Phonetics, phonology and sound change*. Walter de Gruyter.

Ladefoged, P., & Johnson, K. (2011). *A course in phonetics* (6th ed.). Wadsworth, CENGAGE Learning.

Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, fire, and dangerous things: What categories reveal about the mind*. University of Chicago press.

Lankester-Brisley, J. (1929). Milly-Molly-Mandy Gets Up Early. In *More Milly-Molly-Mandy* (pp. 9–16). Penguin Books.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge university press.

Lawson, E., Stuart-Smith, J., Scobbie, J. M., Yaeger-Dror, M., & Maclagan, M. (2011). Liquids. In M. Di Paolo & M. Yaeger-Dror (Eds.), *Sociophonetics: A student's guide*. Routledge.

Lee-Kim, S.-I., Davidson, L., & Hwang, S. (2013). Morphological effects on the darkness of English intervocalic /l/. *Laboratory Phonology*, *4*(2), 475–511. https://doi.org/10.1515/lp-2013-0015

Leemann, A., Kolly, M.-J., & Britain, D. (2018). The English Dialects App: The creation of a crowdsourced dialect corpus. *Ampersand*, *5*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amper.2017.11.001

Leemann, A., Kolly, M.-J., Purves, R., Britain, D., & Glaser, E. (2016). Crowdsourcing language change with smartphone applications. *PloS One*, *11*(1), e0143060.

Leemann, A., Kolly, M.-J., Werlen, I., Britain, D., & Studer-Joho, D. (2014). The diffusion of /l/-vocalization in Swiss German. *Language Variation and Change*, *26*(2), 191–218. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954394514000076

Llamas, C. (1998). Language variation and innovation in Middlesbrough. *Leeds Working Papers in Linguistics and Phonetics*, *6*(97–114).

Llamas, C. (2000). Middlesbrough English: Convergent and divergent trends in a 'part of Britain with no identity'. *Leeds Working Papers in Linguistics and Phonetics*, *8*, 123–148.

Llamas, C. (2001). The sociolinguistic profiling of (r) in Middlesbrough English. *Etudes et Travaux*, *4*, 123–139.

Llamas, C. (2015). Middlesbrough. In R. Hickey (Ed.), *Researching Northern English* (pp. 251–270). John Benjamins Publishing.

Long, D. (1999). Mapping Nonlinguists' Evaluations of Japanese Language Variation. In D. R. Preston (Ed.), *Handbook of perceptual dialectology* (Vol. 1). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Macafee, C. (1983). *Varieties of English around the World: Glasgow*. John Benamins.

Macaulay, R. K. S. (1978). Variation and consistency in Glaswegian English. In P. Trudgill (Ed.), *Sociolinguistic Patterns in British English.* (pp. 132–143). Edward Arnold.

Maguire, W. (2012). Pre-R dentalisation in northern England. *English Language and Linguistics*, *16*(3), 361.

Maguire, W., McMahon, A., Heggarty, P., & Dediu, D. (2010). The past, present, and future of English dialects: Quantifying convergence, divergence, and dynamic equilibrium - ProQuest. *Language Variation and Change*, *22*(1), 69–104. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954394510000013

Mathisen, A. G. (1999). Sandwell, West Midlands: Ambiguous perspectives on gender patterns and models of change. In P. Foulkes & G. Docherty (Eds.), *Urban voices: Accent studies in the British Isles* (pp. 107–123). Arnold.

McCarthy, J., & Prince, A. (1995). Faithfulness and reduplicative identity. In J. Beckman, L. Walsh-Dickey, & S. Urbanczyk (Eds.), *Papers in Optimality Theory (UMOP 18)*. University of Massachusetts.

McElhinny, B. (1999). More on the third dialect of English: Linguistic constraints on the use of three phonological variables in Pittsburgh. *Language Variation and Change*, *11*(2), 171–195.

Mees, I. M., & Collins, B. (1999). Cardiff: A real-time study of glottalisation. *Urban Voices: Accent Studies in the British Isles*, *185*, 202.

Mesthrie, R. (1993). Koineization in the Bhojpuri–Hindi diaspora—with special reference to South Africa. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *1993*(99), 25–44.

Meuter, A. (2002). The acquisition of/l/vocalisation and labiodental/r/by Colchester primary school children. *Colchester: University of Essex MA Thesis*.

Meyerhoff, M., & Strycharz, A. (2013). Communities of Practice. In J. K. Chambers & N. Schilling (Eds.), *The handbook of language variation and change* (2nd ed., pp. 428–447). John Wiley & Sons.

Millar, R. M., & Trask, L. (2015). *Trask's historical linguistics*. Routledge.

Milroy, J. (2001). Language ideologies and the consequences of standardization. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *5*(4), 530–555.

Milroy, J., & Milroy, L. (1999). *Authority in language: Investigating standard English*. Psychology Press.

Milroy, J., Milroy, L., & Hartley, S. (1994). Local and supra-local change in British English-the case of glottalisation. *English World-Wide*, *15*(1), 1–33.

Milroy, L. (1980). *Language and social networks* (1st ed.). Basil Blackwell Publisher.

Milroy, L., & Gordon, M. (2003). *Sociolinguistics: Method and interpretation* (2nd ed., Vol. 13). Wiley-Blackwell.

Montgomery, C. (2012). The effect of proximity in perceptual dialectology. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *16*(5), 638–668. https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12003

Montgomery, C. (2014). Perceptual Ideology across the Scottish/English Border. In D. Watt & C. Llamas (Eds.), *Language, Borders and Identity*. Edinburgh University Press.

Montgomery, M. (2008). *An Introduction to Language and Society* (Third). Routledge.

Moylan, S. (2009). *Southern Irish English: Review and exemplary texts*. Geography Publications.

Mugglestone, L. (2003). *Talking proper: The rise of accent as social symbol*. Oxford University Press on Demand.

Nerbonne, J. (2010). Measuring the diffusion of linguistic change. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B, Biological Sciences*, *365*(1559), 3821–3828. PubMed. https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2010.0048

Nevalainen, T., & Aulanko, R. (1995). Stressed vowels in East Somerset: An acoustic-phonetic case study. *BAMBERGER BEITRAGE ZUR ENGLISCHEN SPRACHWISSENSCHAFT*, *38*, 236–264.

Newbrook, M. (1999). West Wirral: Norms, self-reports and usage. In P. Foulkes & G. J. Docherty (Eds.), *Urban voices: Accent studies in the British Isles* (pp. 90–106). Arnold.

Newman, D. (2006). The lines that continue to separate us: Borders in our `borderless' world. *Progress in Human Geography*, *30*(2), 143–161. https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132506ph599xx

Nichols, P. C. (1978). *Black Women in the Rural South: Conservative and Innovative*. *1978*(17), 45–54. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl.1978.17.45

Orton, H., & Dieth, E. (1962). *Survey of English dialects: The basic material* (Vol. 1). University of Leeds.

Orton, H., Dieth, E., & Wakelin, M. F. (1967). *Survey of English Dialects. B, the Basic Material: Vol. IV: the Southern Counties: Vol. IV*. Arnold.

Orton, H., Sanderson, S., & Widdowson, J. (Eds.). (1978). *The linguistic atlas of England*. University of Leeds.

Orton, H., & Wright, N. (1974). *A Word Geography of England*. Seminar Press.

Paul, H. (1880). *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte* (fifth, 1920). Halle.

Pedersen, I. L. (2005). Processes of standardisation in Scandinavia. In P. Auer, F. Hinskens, & P. Kerswill (Eds.), *Dialect change: Convergence and divergence in European languages* (pp. 171–195). Cambridge University Press.

Petyt, K. M. (1985). *'Dialect' and 'Accent' in Industrial West Yorkshire*. John Benjamins Publishing.

Piercy, C. (2006). Mixed with others it sounds different doesn't it': A quantitative analysis of rhoticity from four locations in Dorset. *Unpublished MA Dissertation. University of Essex*.

Piercy, C. (2007). A quantitative analysis of rhoticity in Dorset: Evidence from four locations of an urban to rural hierarchy of change. In N. Hilton, R. Arscott, K. Barden, A. Krishna, S. Shah, & M. Zellers (Eds.), *CAMLING 2007* (pp. 199–206). Cambridge Institute of Language Research (CILR).

Pitt, M. A., Johnson, K., Hume, E., Kiesling, S., & Raymond, W. (2005). The Buckeye corpus of conversational speech: Labeling conventions and a test of transcriber reliability. *Speech Communication*, *45*(1), 89–95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.specom.2004.09.001

Plug, L., & Ogden, R. (2003). A parametric approach to the phonetics of postvocalic/r/in Dutch. *Phonetica*, *60*(3), 159–186.

Pope, J., Meyerhoff, M., & Ladd, D. R. (2007). Forty years of language change on Martha's Vineyard. *Language*, *83*(3), 615–627.

Preston, D. (1982). Perceptual dialectology: Mental maps of United States dialects from a Hawaiian perspective. *Hawaii Working Papers in Linguistics*, *14*, 5–49.

Preston, D., & Howe, G. (1987). Computerized studies of mental dialect maps. In *Variation in Language: NWAVXV at Stanford (Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Conference on New Ways of Analyzing Variation)* (pp. 361–378). Department of Linguistics, Stanford University.

Przedlacka, J. (2002). *Estuary English? A sociophonetic study of teenage speech in the Home Counties.* Peter Lang.

Przedlacka, J. (2008). Models and myth: Updating the (non) standard accents. In K. Dziubalska-Kołaczyk & J. Przedlacka (Eds.), *English Pronunciation Models: A changing scene* (pp. 17–36). Peter Lang.

Purse, R. (2020). The Envelope of Variation for /l/ Vocalisation in Philadelphia English. *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics*, *25*(2). https://repository.upenn.edu/pwpl/vol25/iss2/12

Ramsaran, S. (1990). *Studies in the pronunciation of English: A commemorative volume in honour of AC Gimson* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Research Data Alliance International Indigenous Data Sovereignty Interest Group. (2019). *CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance*. The Global Indigenous Data Alliance. https://www.gida-global.org/care

Rice, K. (2006). Ethical issues in linguistic fieldwork: An overview. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *4*(1–4), 123–155.

Rissanen, M., Ihalainen, O., & Kytö, M. (1991). The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts. Diachronic and Dialectal. *Helsinki: University of Helsinki*.

Romaine, S. (1978). Postvocalic /r/ in Scottish English: Sound change in progress? In P. Trudgill (Ed.), *Sociolinguistic Patterns in British English.* (pp. 144–157). Edward Arnold.

Rosewarne, D. (1984). Estuary English. *Times Educational Supplement*, *19*(10).

Rosewarne, D. (1994). Estuary English: Tomorrow's RP? *English Today*, *10*(1), 3–8.

Sandøy, H. (2004). Types of society and language change in the Nordic countries. In B.-L. Gunnarsson (Ed.), *Language Variation in Europe: Papers from ICLaVE 2* (Vol. 2, pp. 53–76). Uppsala Universitiet.

Sankoff, D., & Laberge, S. (1978). The linguistic market and the statistical explanation of variability. *Linguistic Variation: Models and Methods*, *239*, 250.

Schilling, N. (2013). Investigating Stylistic Variation. In J. K. Chambers & N. Schilling (Eds.), *The handbook of language variation and change* (2nd ed., pp. 327–349). John Wiley & Sons.

Schleef, E., & Ramsammy, M. (2013). Labiodental fronting of/θ/in London and Edinburgh: A cross-dialectal study1. *English Language & Linguistics*, *17*(1), 25–54.

Schlüter, J. (2012). Early Modern English: Phonology. *English Historical Linguistics: An International Handbook*, 589–604.

Schmidt, J. (1872). *Die Verwantschdftsverhältnisse der indogermanischen Sprachen*. Hermann Böhlau.

Schützler, O. (2015). *A Sociophonetic Approach to Scottish Standard English* (Vol. G53). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Scobbie, J. M., & Pouplier, M. (2010). The role of syllable structure in external sandhi: An EPG study of vocalisation and retraction in word-final English/l. *Journal of Phonetics*, *38*(2), 240–259.

Scobbie, J. M., & Wrench, A. A. (2003). *An articulatory investigation of word final /l/ and /l/-sandhi in three dialects of English.* 1871–1874. https://eresearch.qmu.ac.uk/handle/20.500.12289/2248

Siegel, J. (1985). Koines and koineization. *Language in Society*, *14*(3), 357–378. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500011313

Siegel, J. (2001). Koine formation and creole genesis. In N. Smith & T. Veenstra (Eds.), *Creolization and contact* (Vol. 23, pp. 175–197). John Benjamins Publishing.

Sivertsen, E. (1960). *Cockney Phonology*. Oslo University Press.

Smith, J., & Durham, M. (2011). A tipping point in dialect obsolescence? Change across the generations in Lerwick, Shetland. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *15*(2), 197–225. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2011.00479.x

Spero, M. (1996). *L vocalisation in southeastern Britain* [Unpublished MA Dissertation]. University of Essex.

Sproat, R., & Fujimura, O. (1993). Allophonic variation in English/l/and its implications for phonetic implementation. *Journal of Phonetics*, *21*(3), 291–311.

Stoddart, J., Upton, C., & Widdowson, J. D. (1999). Sheffield dialect in the 1990s: Revisiting the concept of NORMs. *Urban Voices: Accent Studies in the British Isles*, 72–89.

Stuart-Smith, J. (1999). Glasgow: Accent and voice quality. *Urban Voices: Accent Studies in the British Isles*, 203–222.

Stuart-Smith, J., Lawson, E., & Scobbie, J. M. (2014). Derhoticisation in Scottish English: A sociophonetic journey. In C. Celata & S. Calamai (Eds.), *Advances in sociophonetics* (Vol. 15, pp. 59–112). John Benjamins.

Stuart-Smith, J., & Timmins, C. (2006). 'Tell her to shut her moof': The role of the lexicon in TH-fronting in Glaswegian. In C. Kay, G. Caie, C. Hough, & I. Wotherspoon (Eds.), *The Power of Words.* (pp. 171–183). Rodopi.

Stuart-Smith, J., Timmins, C., & Tweedie, F. (2006). Conservation and innovation in a traditional dialect: L-vocalization in Glaswegian. *English World-Wide*, *27*(1), 71–87.

Stuart-Smith, J., Timmins, C., & Tweedie, F. (2007). 'Talkin'Jockney'? Variation and change in Glaswegian accent 1. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *11*(2), 221–260.

Sullivan, A. E. (1992). *Sound change in progress: A study of phonological change and lexical diffusion, with reference to glottalization and r-loss in the speech of some Exeter schoolchildren* (Vol. 17). University of Exeter Press.

Tagliamonte, S. A. (2006). *Analysing sociolinguistic variation*. Cambridge University Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (2004). An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. In M. J. Hatch & M. Schultz (Eds.), *Organizational Identity: A Reader* (pp. 56–65). OUP Oxford. https://books.google.ie/books?id=BgBREAAAQBAJ

Tollfree, L. (1999). South East London English: Discrete versus continuous modelling of consonantal reduction. In *Urban Voices, Accent Studies in the British Isles* (pp. 163–184). Arnold.

Torgersen, E. (1997). *Some phonological innovations in southern-eastern British English* [MA Dissertation]. University of Bergen.

Torgersen, E., & Kerswill, P. (2004). Internal and external motivation in phonetic change: Dialect levelling outcomes for an English vowel shift. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *8*(1), 23–53.

Trudgill, P. (1974a). Linguistic Change and Diffusion: Description and Explanation in Sociolinguistic Dialect Geography. *Language in Society*, *3*(2), 215–246. JSTOR.

Trudgill, P. (1974b). *The social differentiation of English in Norwich* (Vol. 13). Cambridge University Press.

Trudgill, P. (1979). Standard and non-standard dialects of English in the United Kingdom: Problems and policies. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *1979*(21), 9–24.

Trudgill, P. (1981). Linguistic accommodation: Sociolinguistic observations on a sociopsychological theory. *Papers from the Parasession on Language and Behavior*, 218–237.

Trudgill, P. (1986). *Dialects in contact*. Blackwell.

Trudgill, P. (1988). Norwich revisited: Recent linguistic changes in an English urban dialect. *English World-Wide*, *9*(1), 33–49.

Trudgill, P. (1999). Norwich: Endogenous and exogenous linguistic change. In P. Foulkes & G. J. Docherty (Eds.), *Urban voices: Accent studies in the British Isles* (pp. 124–140). Arnold.

Trudgill, P. (2008). Colonial dialect contact in the history of European languages: On the irrelevance of identity to new-dialect formation. *Language in Society*, *37*(2), 241–254. http://dx.doi.org.elib.tcd.ie/10.1017/S0047404508080287

Trudgill, P., Gordon, E., Lewis, G., & Maclagan, M. (2000). The role of drift in the formation of native-speaker southern hemisphere Englishes: Some New Zealand evidence. *Diachronica*, *17*(1), 111–138.

Turton, D. (2014). *Variation in English/l: Synchronic Reflections of the Life Cycle of Phonological Processes* [PhD Thesis]. The University of Manchester (United Kingdom).

Turton, D. (2015). Determining categoricity in English /l/-darkening: A Principal Component Analysis of ultrasound spline data. *Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences (ICPhS 2015)*, 5.

Turton, D. (2016). Synchronic stratum-specific rates of application reflect diachronic change: Morphosyntactic conditioning of variation in English/l/-darkening. *Papers in Historical Phonology*, *1*, 130–165.

Turton, D. (2017). Categorical or gradient? An ultrasound investigation of/l/-darkening and vocalization in varieties of English. *Laboratory Phonology: Journal of the Association for Laboratory Phonology*, *8*(1).

Turton, D., & Baranowski, M. (2021). The sociolinguistics of /l/ in Manchester. *Linguistics Vanguard*, *7*(1). https://doi.org/10.1515/lingvan-2020-0074

Upton, C., & Widdowson, J. D. A. (1996). *An Atlas of English dialects*. Oxford University Press.

Van Reenen, P. (1986). The vocalization of/l/in standard Dutch, a pilot study of ongoing change. *Linguistics in the Netherlands*, *1986*, 189–198.

Vaughan, E., & Moriarty, M. (2020). It's gems like this that make me wish I hadn't left Ireland!: Humorous representations of Irish English and their role in diasporic identities. In R. Hickey & C. P. Amador-Moreno (Eds.), *Irish Identities* (pp. 198–219). De Gruyter Mouton.

Wakelin, M. F. (1986). *The southwest of England* (Vol. 5). John Benjamins Publishing.

Watson, C. I., Maclagan, M., & Harrington, J. (2000). Acoustic evidence for vowel change in New Zealand English. *Language Variation and Change*, *12*(1), 51–68.

Watson, K. (2006). Phonological resistance and innovation in the North-West of England. *English Today*, *22*(2), 55–61. http://dx.doi.org.elib.tcd.ie/10.1017/S0266078406002100

Watt, D. (2002). 'I don't speak with a Geordie accent, I speak, like, the Northern accent': Contact-induced levelling in the Tyneside vowel system. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *6*(1), 44–63.

Watt, D. (2014). *Language, Borders and Identity*. Edinburgh University Press.

Watt, D. J. (2000). Phonetic parallels between the close-mid vowels of Tyneside English: Are they internally or externally motivated? *Language Variation and Change*, *12*(1), 69–101.

Watt, D., Llamas, C., & Johnson, D. E. (2014). Sociolinguistic variation on the Scottish-English border. In *Sociolinguistics in Scotland* (pp. 79–102). Springer.

Watt, D., & Milroy, L. (1999). Patterns of variation in Newcastle vowels. In P. Foulkes & G. Docherty (Eds.), *Urban voices: Accent studies in the British Isles* (pp. 25–46). Arnold.

Weinreich, U., Labov, W., & Herzog, M. (1968). *Empirical foundations for a theory of language change* (Vol. 58). University of Texas Press.

Wells, J. C. (1982a). *Accents of English: An Introduction* (1st ed., Vol. 1). Cambridge University Press.

Wells, J. C. (1982b). *Accents of English: The British Isles* (1st ed., Vol. 2). Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E. (1998). Communities of practice: Learning as a social system. *Systems Thinker*, *9*(5), 2–3.

Williams, A., & Kerswill, P. (1999). Dialect levelling: Change and continuity in Milton Keynes, Reading and Hull. In P. Foulkes & G. Docherty (Eds.), *Urban voices: Accent studies in the British Isles* (pp. 141–162). Arnold.

Williams, M. (1963). The Draining and Reclamation of the Somerset Levels, 1770-1833. *Transactions and Papers (Institute of British Geographers)*, *33*, 163–179. https://doi.org/10.2307/621006

Williams, W. P., & Jones, W. A. (1873). *Lost Words in the Somersetshire Dialect* (2nd ed.). Longmans, Green, Reader and Dyer.

Wolfram, W., & Christian, D. (1976). *Appalachian speech.* Center for Applied Linguistics.

Wrench, A. A. (2000). A Multi-Channel/Multi-Speaker Articulatory Database for Continuous Speech Recognition Research. *Phonus.*

Wrench, A. A., & Scobbie, J. M. (2003). Categorising vocalisation of English /l/ using EPG, EMA and ultrasound. *Proceedings of the 6th International Seminar on Speech Production*, 314–319. https://eresearch.qmu.ac.uk/handle/20.500.12289/2244

Wright, J. (1905). *The English Dialect Grammar*. Henry Frowde.

Wright, S. (1988). *The Effects of Style and Speaking Rate on/l/-Vocalisation in Local Cambridge English.*

Yuan, J., & Liberman, M. (2011). /l/ variation in American English: A corpus approach. *Journal of Speech Sciences*, *1*(2), Article 2. https://doi.org/10.20396/joss.v1i2.15025