Sociolinguistics

- William Labov, father of sociolinguistics
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- NYC department store study
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- /r/ is often deleted in codas in NYC
- Hypothesis: There is a certain social significance in the way of producing this sound, that there is a distinct difference in the social environment of the people with or without deletion of /r/.
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Department store study

Three stores:

• Saks 5th Avenue (upper middle class)
• Macy’s (lower middle class)
• S. Klein (working class)
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To get comparable results Labov asked for a department on the fourth floor.

“Fourth floor.”

“Excuse me?”

a more careful pronunciation of “Fourth floor”

transcription of the pronunciation of /ɹ/ in “fourth” and “floor”

both in the first response and in the careful pronunciation
Department store study

- Bill: Where can I find _____?
- Clerk: It's on the fourth floor
- Bill: Excuse me
- Clerk: The fourth floor
Department store study

- Variable means they changed pronunciation after “excuse me?”

**Overall Distribution of /r/ in Labov's Department Store Study, NYC**

![Bar chart showing the distribution of /r/ in Saks', Macy's, and Klein Department Store. Saks' has a higher percentage of variable /r/ compared to 100% /r/ at Macy's and Klein.]
Department store study

% /r/ per repetition
Logistic Regression

- What tools were used?
- Analysis done with percentages alone.
- PCs not available to do logistic regression in 1969 (It is computationally intensive)
- Your reading explains how to analyze his data with logistic regression
Logistic Regression

• The dependent variable (that you measure) is categorical
  • Yes or no
  • Pronounced or deleted
  • Car of Dan, Dan's car
  • Have got, got, have
Logistic Regression

- The dependent variable (that you measure) is categorical
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  - Car of Dan, Dan's car
  - Have got, got, have
  - ***Score on a test, frequency, reaction time***
Accents in Music Genres

• What is the appropriate accent for country music?
Accents in Music Genres

• What is the appropriate accent for country music?

• What is the appropriate grammar for rock?
  – He don't dance good
  – He doesn't dance well
Accents in Music Genres

• What is the appropriate accent for country music?

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• What is the appropriate accent for pop?
Accents in Music Genres

• 1960s
• Pop was dominated by US artists
• Until the British Invasion in the mid-60s
  – Beatles, Rolling Stones, The Who, Moody Blues
Accents in Music Genres

• 1960s
• Pop was dominated by US artists
• Until the British Invasion in the mid-60s
  – Beatles, Rolling Stones, The Who, Moody Blues
• What accent did they sing in?
Accents in Music Genres

- **US English characteristics**
  - Flapped /t/
  - /æ/ not /a:/ in *half, last, can't*
  - /a:/ instead of [aɪ] in *my, life* (Blues is AAVE)
  - /^/ instead of /ʊ/ in *mother, love, but*
  - /a/ instead of /ɔ/ in *top, body, all*
  - Pronouncing /r/ in coda
Accents in Music Genres

- US English characteristics used by Beatles and Rolling stones
  - Flapped /t/ (let it be)
  - Pronouncing /r/ in coda
Accents in Music Genres

Figure 8.2 (r) and (t): the Beatles and the Rolling Stones
Accents in Music Genres

• US English characteristics used by Beatles and Rolling stones
  – Flapped /t/
  – Pronouncing /r/ in coda
• Why imitate for acceptance if you are at the top of the charts?
Accents in Music Genres

• How were these data acquired?
-ing to -in'

- Open ended interviews
- Effect of class and gender

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>UMC</th>
<th>LMC</th>
<th>UWC</th>
<th>LWC</th>
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<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>90.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
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Is there really a Utah English?
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- Experimentally acquired data
  - 12 speakers, 6 from Utah, 6 from other Western states
  - differed in age (20, 40, or 60 years old) and gender
  - read paragraph full of possible Utahisms
    - *Man, tests really stress me out. I think they’re giving me ulcers. My mom says the calcium in warm milk really helps, but I think she’s full of it. Sometimes I just feel rotten like there’s no pleasure in life.*
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• Experimentally acquired data

  63 people judged parsed out sentences
  • How strong of a Utah accent does the person have?
    • 1=none, 6=strong
Is there really a Utah English?

- Is there a difference between Utahns and other westerners?
Is there really a Utah English?

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- Yes (Utah=3.39, Westerner=2.72)
Is there really a Utah English?

- Who can hear the difference? Utahns? Westererns? Non-Westerners?
Is there really a Utah English?

- Who can hear the difference? Utahns? Westerners? Non-Westerners?
- Utahns and Westerners can, Non-Westerners can't
Is there really a Utah English?

- Which of these characteristics did people use to distinguish Utahns?
  - fail/fell merger
  - deal/dill merger
  - pool/pole merger
  - cord/card merger
  - bowl/bull merger
  - intrusive ‘t’ (else as eltse)
  - glottal stop (mountain as moun’ an)
  - intrusive glottal stop (conference as con?ference)
  - singing as singkingk
  - pronounced ‘l’ (in words like folk)
  - Sunday as Sundee
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Is there really a Utah English?

- Did gender play a role?
Is there really a Utah English?

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- Yes, males (regardless of origin) were judged to have a stronger Utah accent
Is there really a Utah English?

- Did age play a role?
Is there really a Utah English?

- Did age play a role?
- Yes, older people (regardless of origin) were judged to have a stronger Utah accent.
Is there really a Utah English?

- Are certain lexical items considered Utahn?
- Sentences with these expressions read by 4 non-Utah females
- People judged degree of Utah accent on 1-6 scale
Is there really a Utah English?

**Possible Utahisms**
- ‘boughten’
- ‘sluff’
- ‘my heck’
- ‘reservoir’
- ‘for cute’
- propredicate do
  - (‘I used to do’)
- time that
- compass directions
- ‘moisture’
- ‘tend’ for babysitting
- ‘frontage road’

**Non Standard Features**
- focuser/quotative ‘like’
- ‘you bet’
- ‘might could’
- ‘pop’
- positive ‘anymore’
- ‘there’s’
- comparative ‘way’
- ‘come with’
- ‘what’s that?’
- ‘ain’t’
- double negatives
- ‘we was’
Is there really a Utah English?

- Which ones are Utah shibboleths?

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When do people acquire dialect attitudes?

- Kids 3-5 listened to recorded voices from identical boxes
- One had standard US and one AAVE voice
- Same message played from each
When do people acquire dialect attitudes?

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- One had standard US and one AAVE voice
- Same message played from each
When do people acquire dialect attitudes?

Hi. My name is Kenneth. I go school in Washington. I got nice present. You’ll like this a lot. It nice and fun to play with. Bet you can’t guess what it is. I give you a clue. It got about five color. You ain’t never got a present like this before. You play with it a long time. My friend, he got one. He play with it all the time. He like it a whole lot. You gonna take this present, ain’t ya?

Hi. My name is Steve. I go to school here in Washington. I have a very nice present for you. It’s really fun to play with. In fact, I’d bet that no one has ever given you a present this nice. Can you guess what it is? Here, I’ll give you some clues. It has about five colors and it will last you for a long time. My friend has one. He plays with it all the time. He likes it a lot. You’re going to take this present, aren’t you?
When do people acquire dialect attitudes?

**Taking**
- Which box has nicer presents?
- Which box sounds nicer?
- Which box talks better?
- Which box do you like better?
- Which box do you want to take your present from?

**Giving**
- Which box wants it more?
- Which box needs it more?
- Which box sounds nicer?
- Which box do you want to give it to?
When do people acquire dialect attitudes?

- One group of kids was White and the other Black
  - Both said White speaker talked better
  - Both said White speaker has nicer presents
  - Both said Black speaker needs it more
When do people acquire dialect attitudes?

- Children listed person telling story with a villian, superhero, and sidekick
- They then heard a sentence that any of the three could have said but in different accents
  - Standard British
  - Standard American
  - Ethnic American (Hispanic?)
- They had to choose which of the three characters said it
When do people acquire dialect attitudes?
When do people acquire dialect attitudes?

- What accent does the sidekick have? The villain? The superhero?
When do people acquire dialect attitudes?

- What accent does the sidekick have? The villain? The superhero?
- Where does this come from?