A COMPARISON OF THE SPEECH PATTERNS AND DIALECT ATTITUDES OF OKLAHOMA

By

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Thank you to the many wonderful friends I've made in Stillwater – we've all done our part to keep each other mostly sane during our time here. Though we'll be dispersing soon, you've made my life immeasurably better and I'm grateful for it.

And finally, thank you to my parents for your encouragement, wisdom, and love. You both instilled in me a tradition of learning and I am eager to carry it on.

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Abstract:

The lexical dialect usage of Oklahoma has been well-studied in the past by the Survey of Oklahoma Dialects, but the acoustic speech production of the state has received little attention. Apart from two people from Tulsa and two people from Oklahoma City that were interviewed for the Atlas of North American English, no other acoustic work has been performed within the state.

This dissertation begins to fill in these gaps by presenting twelve respondents interviewed by the Research on Dialects of English in Oklahoma (RODEO) project. For each speaker, a brief biography is given, including some of their regional and speech attitudes of Oklahoma. Then acoustic data from a wordlist and reading task are presented and compared. Analysis will consider plots of each speaker's vowel system as a whole, and will also examine many environments in isolation. These environments were chosen for their likely presence in Oklahoma, and include such dialect features as the Southern Shift, the pin/pen merger, the caught/cot merger, monophthongization of the PRICE vowel, and neutralization of tense vowels before /l./

After considering each respondent separately, some of their results will be pooled together to give a preliminary sense of the state of dialect within Oklahoma. Demographic variables such as age, gender, and urban/rural upbringing will be related to speakers' attitudes and acoustic production. This will serve two goals – first, to compare modern-day production to the findings of previous scholars, and second, to suggest a dialect trajectory for the state that could be studied further in additional research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

Chapter I

Chapter II

Chapter III

Chapter IV

Chapter V

Chapter V Continued

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

Chapter I

Chapter II

Chapter IV

Chapter V

Chapter V, Continued

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Opening Remarks

This dissertation will present an in-depth examination of the speech and dialect attitudes of twelve respondents from the state of Oklahoma, who were interviewed as part of the Research On the Dialects of English in Oklahoma (RODEO) study. Oklahoma has received sociolinguistic attention in the past such as in Southard (1993) and the prolific work by the Survey of Oklahoma Dialects (henceforth, SOD) project in the mid-1990's (Bailey, Tillery, Wikle, & Sand 1993, Bailey, Tillery, & Wikle 1995 & 1997, Wikle & Bailey 1997). Respondents to these studies were asked about their use of regional lexical items like *y'all* (Tillery & Bailey 1998), and were also asked about their pronunciation of words relating to nearby mergers such as the largely Southern pin/pen merger or largely Midwestern caught/cot merger. Bailey, Tillery, Wikle and Sand (1995), for example, considered speakers' pronunciation of *hawk/hock* and found its presence in the state to be a product of hierarchical diffusion – beginning in the urban centers of Tulsa and Oklahoma City, and later spreading to the more rural parts of the state.

Acoustic work in the state is primarily limited to the phone interviews conducted for the Atlas of North American English ((Labov, Ash, & Boberg 2006), henceforth ANAE), which contacted two respondents each from Tulsa and Oklahoma City. Thomas (2001) also showed acoustic plots from four residents of Yale, OK in his examination of dialects of the United States. I will present some plots from both of these sources in Chapter 2 as a basis of comparison to the RODEO respondents. This

dissertation will expand on these works by adding a greatly expanded level of detail. The ANAE considered steady-state vowels from a wordlist task only, and while Thomas included glide measurements, his analysis included solely a reading passage. For each RODEO respondent presented here, I will include measurements from both a reading passage and wordlist, and also their responses to questions about accent and dialect within Oklahoma. I will show overall mean scores for vowels, but many charts will be broken down to the individual lexical items that comprise each sample. We will be able to observe dialect features at a fine level of detail. I will not categorize respondent demographics ahead of time so that we may allow the data to reveal salient groupings of speakers.

This dissertation represents some of the first printed findings of the RODEO project that began at Oklahoma State University in 2008. The project is ongoing, and as such, this dissertation will not be attempting to make a grand summary of the entire state. Instead, I will be looking more closely at twelve individual respondents (from a total set of 31), interviewed from around Oklahoma – primarily near the center of the state and in the Panhandle. All of them have lived in Oklahoma for most of their lives, and many trace their ancestry back to the initial land runs of the 1890's. As these speakers are from a wider area than just the urban centers, their acoustic results will give a wider snapshot of what might be found in the state at large. Their impressions of Oklahoma's cultural and dialectal boundaries may also prove useful in directing further research within the state.

The scope of this dissertation presents obvious limitations – all of the RODEO respondents considered here are Caucasian, and all of the state is certainly not. In addition to historically Black settlements such as Langston, much of the land within the state of Oklahoma is the domain of several major Native American tribes, including the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Creek. Many Oklahomans that do not live on tribal lands still have Native American blood. Native heritage and kinship are undoubtedly important factors to the speech and culture of Oklahoma, but will not be

considered here. Future RODEO research conducted by Justin McBride and others will be examining the Native American population of Oklahoma.

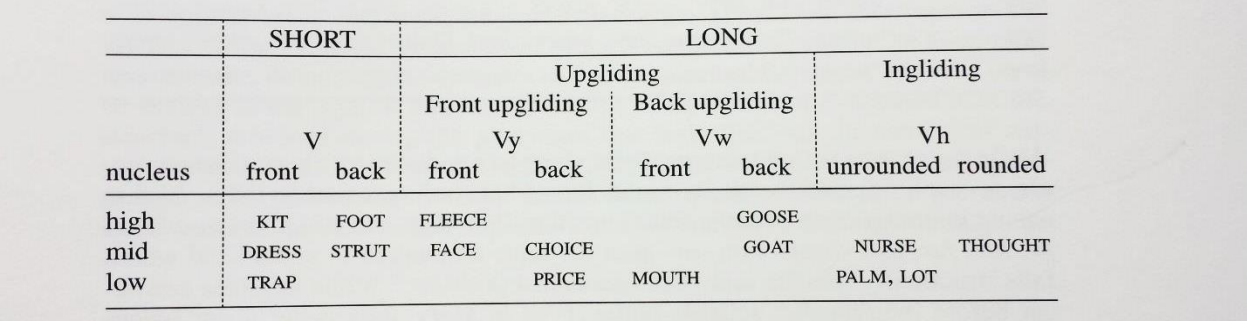
Further, the 31 respondents were interviewed from many areas of the state – from Slapout in the western panhandle to Watts on the Arkansas border. Because each area commonly has only a single representative in the study, this dissertation will not attempt to make sweeping claims about the state as a whole, or entire swaths of a demographic group. Some regions of the state are better represented than others, with the majority of respondents from eastern portions of Oklahoma. Reported findings will focus primarily on individuals, and will be a comparison of their acoustic production and their reported attitudes of the state and its speech. Whereas acoustic research in the past has provided vowel plots with little other detail, the work presented here will compare respondents' acoustic production with their responses to questions about language within the state. This includes their intuitions about who Oklahomans speak like, if they believe they have an accent, and what the accent sounds like. Are they happy with how they speak? Are they nervous of how they hear Oklahomans speak and trying to hide their dialect? Do they not really think about dialect at all? By including respondents' opinions of dialect along with their speech production, this study will be better able to predict not just the present-day speech of RODEO respondents, but where they may be headed in the future.

The twelve respondents presented here have been selected with the intent to balance three possible variables – Sex, Age, and Urban/Rural upbringing. Any trends common to speakers in each of these groups be noted, but again with the caveat that they may not represent the entirety of a group within the state. Again, further work is being done by RODEO to fill in these gaps – Weirich (2013), for example, studies a small area near Oklahoma City, giving a higher group of concentrated respondents.

Despite these limitations, however, this work will accomplish some crucial tasks in understanding the speech attitudes and dialects of Oklahoma. We will see detailed acoustic results and personal commentary from respondents who have lived their lives in Oklahoma. We will expand upon the initial acoustic work from the *Atlas of North American English* to present a more comprehensive first look at the state. Crucially, this work will include more respondents from more cities, and for every speaker, we will be able to compare some of their attitudes toward the state with plots of both a reading passage and wordlist task. Finally, we will have the opportunity to compare the mid-90's predictions of Bailey, Tillery, Wikle and Sand to the speech patterns of modern-day Oklahoma.

1.2 Phonological Notation

For this work I will primarily discuss phonemes using the scheme devised by Wells (1982), shown below in Figure 1.



	SHORT		LONG					
			Upgliding				Ingliding	
			Front upgliding		Back upgliding			
	V		Vy		Vw		Vh	
nucleus	front	back	front	back	front	back	unrounded	rounded
high	KIT	FOOT	FLEECE			GOOSE		
mid	DRESS	STRUT	FACE	CHOICE		GOAT	NURSE	THOUGHT
low	TRAP			PRICE	MOUTH		PALM, LOT	

Figure 1 – Wells' View of 'General American Vowel Classes' from Labov, Ash, & Boberg 2006, p 13

Wells' system was chosen for ease in manipulating and plotting data, and it also provides a more consistent display among the software used to make this document. When describing diphthongs and glides I will use IPA symbols, but vowel plots and general discussion will use Wells. Below in Table 1 is a guide comparing Wells, IPA, and common English words:

Wells	IPA	English Words	Wells	IPA	English Words
FLEECE	i	beat, leaf	GOOSE	u	boot, room
KIT	ɪ	bit, live	FOOT	ʊ	put, good
FACE	e	bait, cave	GOAT	o	boat, toe
DRESS	ɛ	bet, set	THOUGHT	ɔ	bought, caught
TRAP	æ	bat, last	LOT	ɑ	hot, Tom
STRUT	ʌ	but, run	MOUTH	ɑu	bout, house
PRICE	ɑi	bite, light			

Table 1 – Wells, IPA, and Common English Words

These notations represent their vowels in all phonetic environments, so the words *boo* and *boot* would still be described as using the GOOSE vowel despite different positions and surrounding consonsants. One exception to this will be for the PRICE vowel, for which I will use PRICE to denote the vowel prior to voiceless consonants, and PRIZE to mark it before voiced consonants and in word-final position.

1.3 - Looking Ahead

In Chapter 2, I will speak more in detail about the settlement and history of Oklahoma, and consider likely dialect influences, both from founders and in the present. Oklahoma's central location in the country puts it within the borders of several cultural, speech, and climate regions, and this interplay will be addressed.

Chapter 3 will discuss the results of a pilot survey conducted prior to the RODEO interviews, and also the methodology of the interviews themselves, both in recording and analysis.

Chapter 4 will be the main body of the dissertation, with each of the twelve respondents presented and discussed. Each speaker will be given a brief biography that includes their personal impressions of living and speaking within the state, and then their acoustic production of vowels on a wordlist and reading passage task will be considered. Each respondent's overall plot will be presented, along with several isolated environment contexts that are relevant to Oklahoman speech.

Chapter 5 will present findings from a lexical inventory task that was given as part of the interviews. Respondents were asked about 25 regional idioms and phrases – this chapter will look at which terms were well known, and which respondents were well-versed in their use. Unlike Chapter 4, this chapter will consider results from the full pool of RODEO respondents.

Chapter 6 will provide concluding discussion and remarks, as well as a map for future research to come.

CHAPTER II

OKLAHOMA'S HISTORY AND NEARBY REGIONAL INFLUENCES

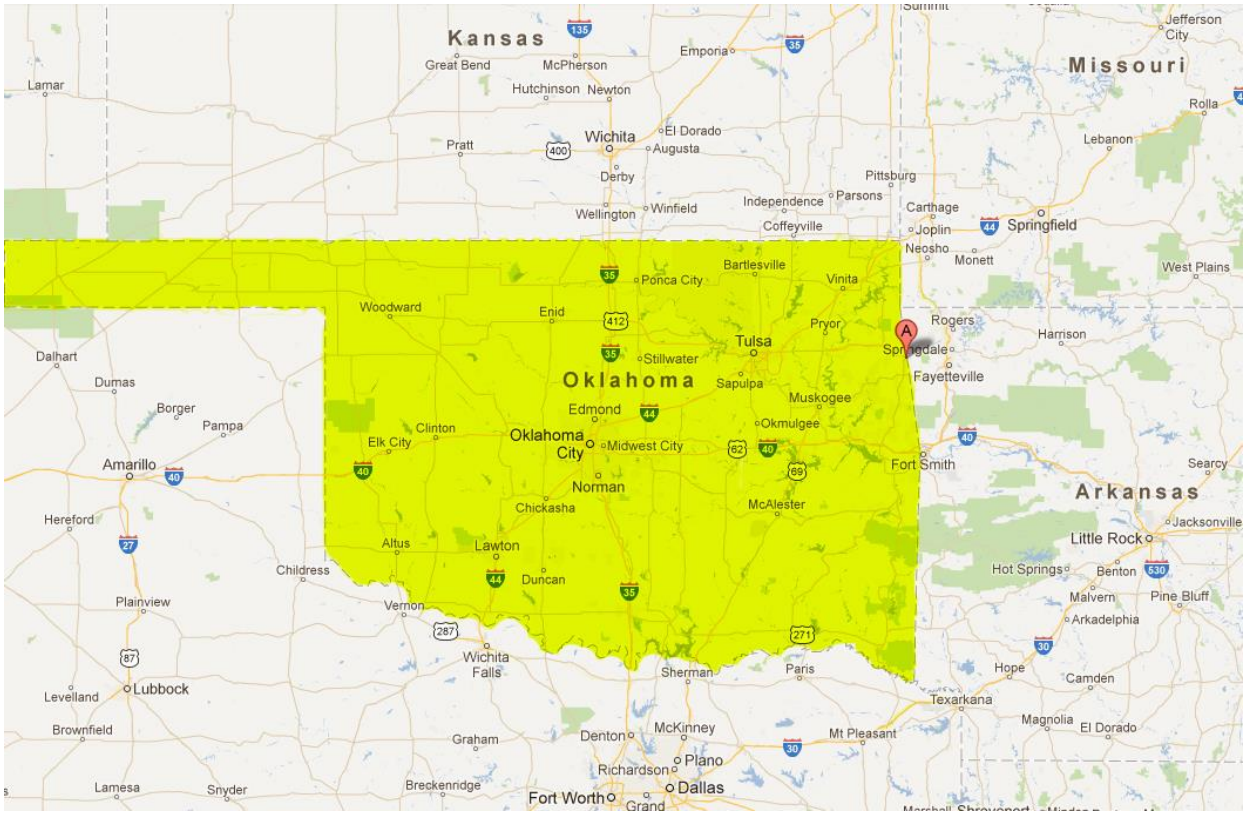


Figure 1 – Map of Oklahoma and Nearby States (from Google Maps)

2.0 Introduction to Oklahoma

Oklahoma is located in the center of the United States, and as can be seen in Figure 1 above, has many neighbors at its borders. As of 2012, it is home to an estimated 3.8 million people, with Tulsa and Oklahoma City as its main urban hubs (US Census Bureau 2012). Unlike many other states in the country, Oklahoma's regional identity is difficult to ascertain, both on a geographic and dialectal level. Oklahoma shares many stereotypical characteristics of the Midwest, such as agriculture, flat plains, and small towns. It also carries Western connotations with its cowboys and oil derricks, and further can identify with the South due to the Southern heritage of many of the early Sooners. Bordered by Kansas to the north, Missouri and Arkansas to the east, Texas to the south, and Colorado and New Mexico to the west, the state is clipped by many cultural boundaries, but is not uniquely a member of any one.

Linguistic attempts to quantify the state have met with a similar lack of uniformity. Unlike states such as Alabama and Mississippi which the ANAE situates entirely within The South (Labov, Ash, & Boberg 2006), the Atlas shows portions of Oklahoma divided up by many possible dialect regions.

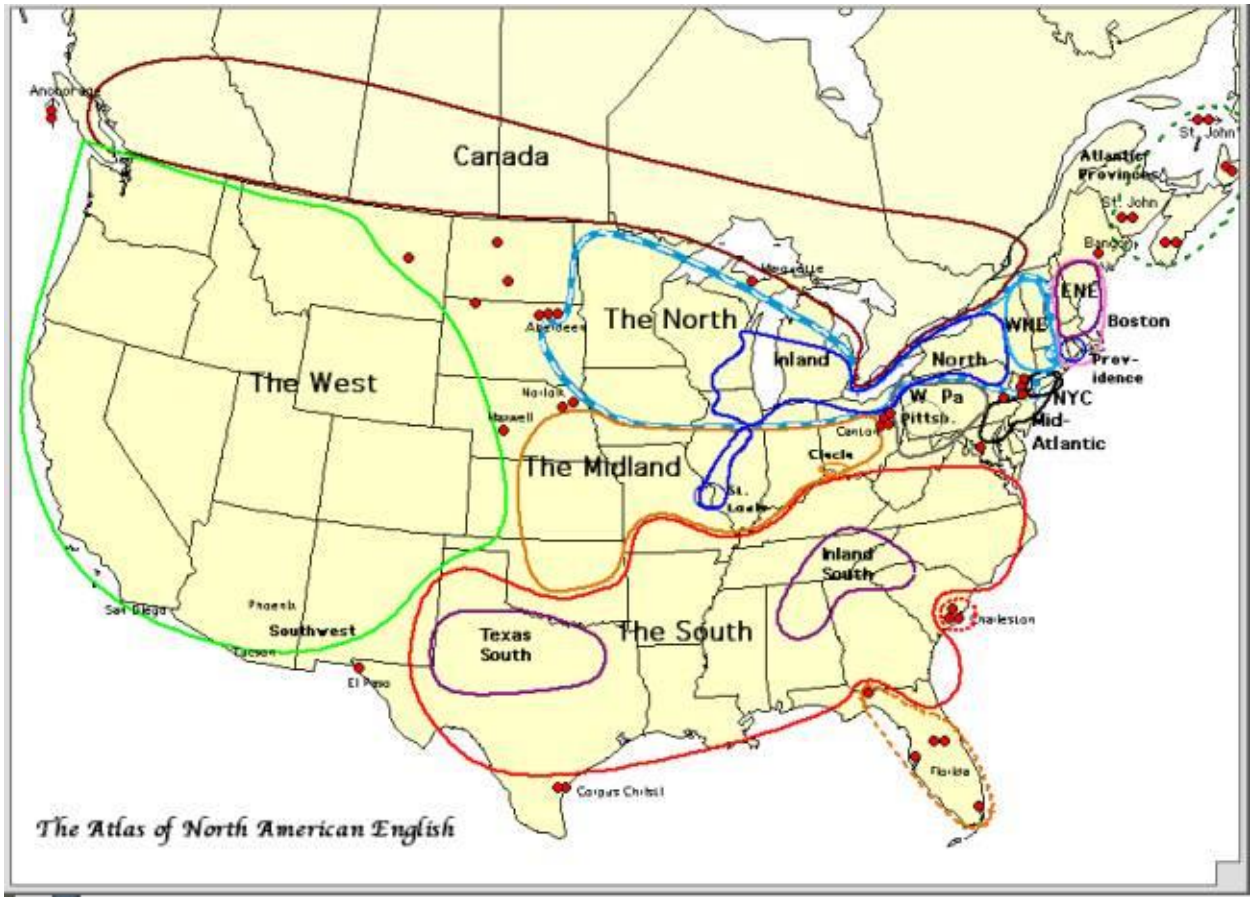


Figure 2 – ANAE Map of Oklahoma and Surrounding Areas (Labov et al. 2006:148)

As can be seen above in Figure 2, the southeastern corner of Oklahoma is considered part of The South, the southern border is part of the Texas South, the panhandle is claimed by the West, and the north-central area (including the two major cities of Tulsa and Oklahoma City) are included in the Midlands. Further, unlike dialectally divided states such as Michigan, the salient dialect features that form boundaries are not immediately apparent. Michigan's major southeastern cities show a well-researched Northern Cities dialect that's been documented by many linguists (Ito 1999, Gordon 2001a, Labov Ash & Boberg 2006), whereas the northern reaches of the state instead exhibit the 'Yooper' accent, particularly in the upper peninsula. Although Metro Detroit Michiganders often do not think of themselves as having an accent (Preston 2005), the 'Yooper' distinction is well known throughout the state as evinced by comedy groups such Da Yoopers and plays such as Escanaba in Da Moonlight. Non-

linguist Michiganders are well aware of the state's dialect boundaries, but we do not know if this is true in Oklahoma.

2.1 - Settlement of Oklahoma

Oklahoma became a state on November 16th 1909, and was the 46th admitted to the union. Much of its territory was reserved for the "Five Civilized Tribes," who were forcibly relocated to Oklahoma during the Trail of Tears. Much of modern-day Oklahoma continues to be home to more than 30 Native American nations and tribes, including the Cherokee, Choctaw, and Osage. Many of the central portions of the state such as Oklahoma County (home to Oklahoma City) were claimed by white settlers during several major land runs, including the Land Run of 1889. Fledgling towns such as Stillwater and Oklahoma City were founded within the central Unassigned lands and within days were home to thousands. Figure 3 below shows the years of settlement for various sections of the state.

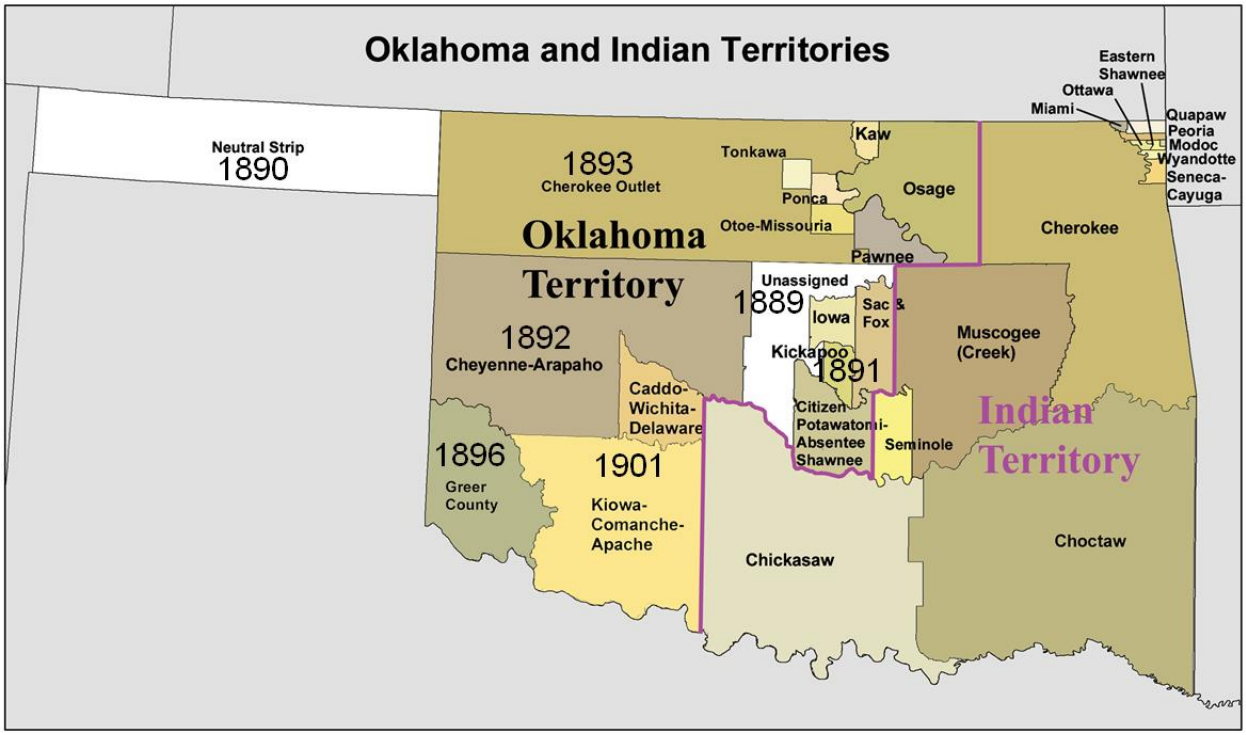


Figure 3 – Oklahoma Territory and Years of Settlement

Southard (1993) examined the origins of settlers from several of the major land runs (shown below in Figure 4), and found that in all cases, the majority of settlers haled from regions he defined as the Lower Midwest, Upper South, and Texas and Lower South. He divided these regions as such:

> *LMW = Lower Midwest = Central and Southern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, and Northern Missouri*
> *UMW = Upper Midwest = Northern Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota*
> *Upper South = Kentucky, Tennessee, Southern Missouri, Arkansas, Western Virginia, and North Carolina.*
>
> (Southard 1993, p 238)

Worth noticing in these regions is that many of Southard's LMW areas such as Central and Southern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois share empathy with Southern culture and dialect that has persisted into the present, as we will see later in this chapter. As can be seen below, easily over half of the settlers in Oklahoma's major land runs were from the South or had strong Southern ties. While it must be noted that these early arrivals would not have possessed the more recent dialect innovations of the Southern Shift (Tillery & Bailey 2008), they nonetheless set the stage for Oklahoma's close ties to (and arguable membership within) the South.

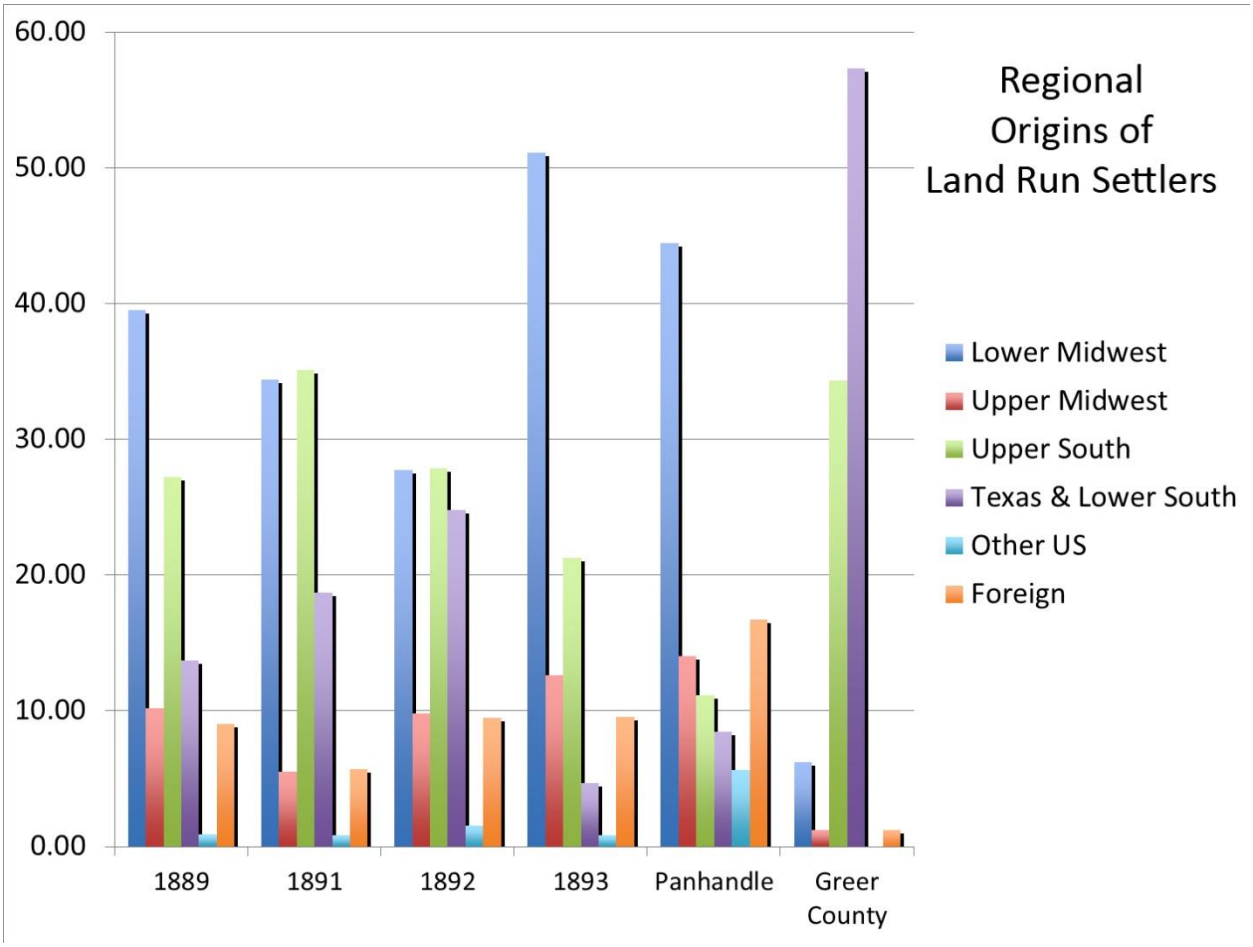


Figure 4 – Regional Origins of Land Run Settlers – from Southard (1993)

In the present day, Oklahoma has several sources of economic development. It is the nation's fifth-largest producer of cattle and wheat, and is the nation's 27th-most agriculturally productive state. In addition, the state has a long history of oil and natural gas production. The state is the birthplace of both Halliburton and the Phillips Petroleum Company that would later become part of ConocoPhillips. Oklahoma also has a strong aeronautical focus, both civilian and military. Tinker Air Force Base houses the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center, one of the largest managers of aircraft components for the US Air Force. The FAA Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center in Oklahoma City employs roughly 5,600 people and is one of the largest employers of the city.

Oklahoma has experienced several periods of major population change. After the early land runs of the 19th century, Tulsa became a boomtown in 1901 with the discovery of oil in nearby Red Fork. The 1905 discovery of the Glenn Pool gusher further spurred development in nearby Tulsa. Further oil discoveries over the next 20 years led many to call the city the "Oil Capitol of the World." Around the same time, the ease of growing wheat in Oklahoma prompted many to invest heavily in farmland in the western side of the state near the Panhandle. This proved to be a disastrous move however, with the coming of drought and the Dust Bowl period. Many 'Okies' were driven to leave the state at this time, greatly reducing the population of the western portion of the state.

Oklahoma has had other periods of boom and bust. While the soaring oil prices of the 1970's brought profit to the energy companies, the sudden plunge in prices during 1982-84 hit Oklahoma hard and forced the state to diversify its economy. An example of this is the strong presence of the HVAC industry within the state, both in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. AAON Inc was incorporated in 1988 to acquire and expand the HVAC division of the John Zink Company in Tulsa, and companies such as Governair and Temptrol operate in Oklahoma City. Telecommunications industries also branched into Oklahoma during this time, and the existing aeronautics industries were further strengthened.

Recent times have brought another oil boom to Oklahoma, this time in the form of 'fracking,' a process of using pressurized water and sand to release oil from rock and shale. Cities like Seminole are producing oil when only a few years ago it would have been infeasible. This may be another short-lived boom, however, as fracking technology is profitable only while oil prices remain high.

This look back into Oklahoma's history shows us that the state's population is not an isolated one. While many of the RODEO respondents can trace their history back to the state's earliest land runs, the state has nonetheless had frequent contact with outsiders, and has seen regular influxes of people through both military and civilian industry. Its central location within the country makes it a

desirable location for logistics and ensures frequent contact with its neighbors. As such, we should not expect a calcified dialect but one that is dynamic and has many influences. In Section 2.2, I will look at some recent studies that might help us understand who Oklahomans spend their time talking to, and in 2.3, I will look more specifically at the acoustic dialect features that they may be coming into contact with.

2.2 - Oklahoman Contact

Two recent studies can offer some insight into whom Oklahomans come in contact with, or at the very least, with whom they share their money and cell phone minutes.

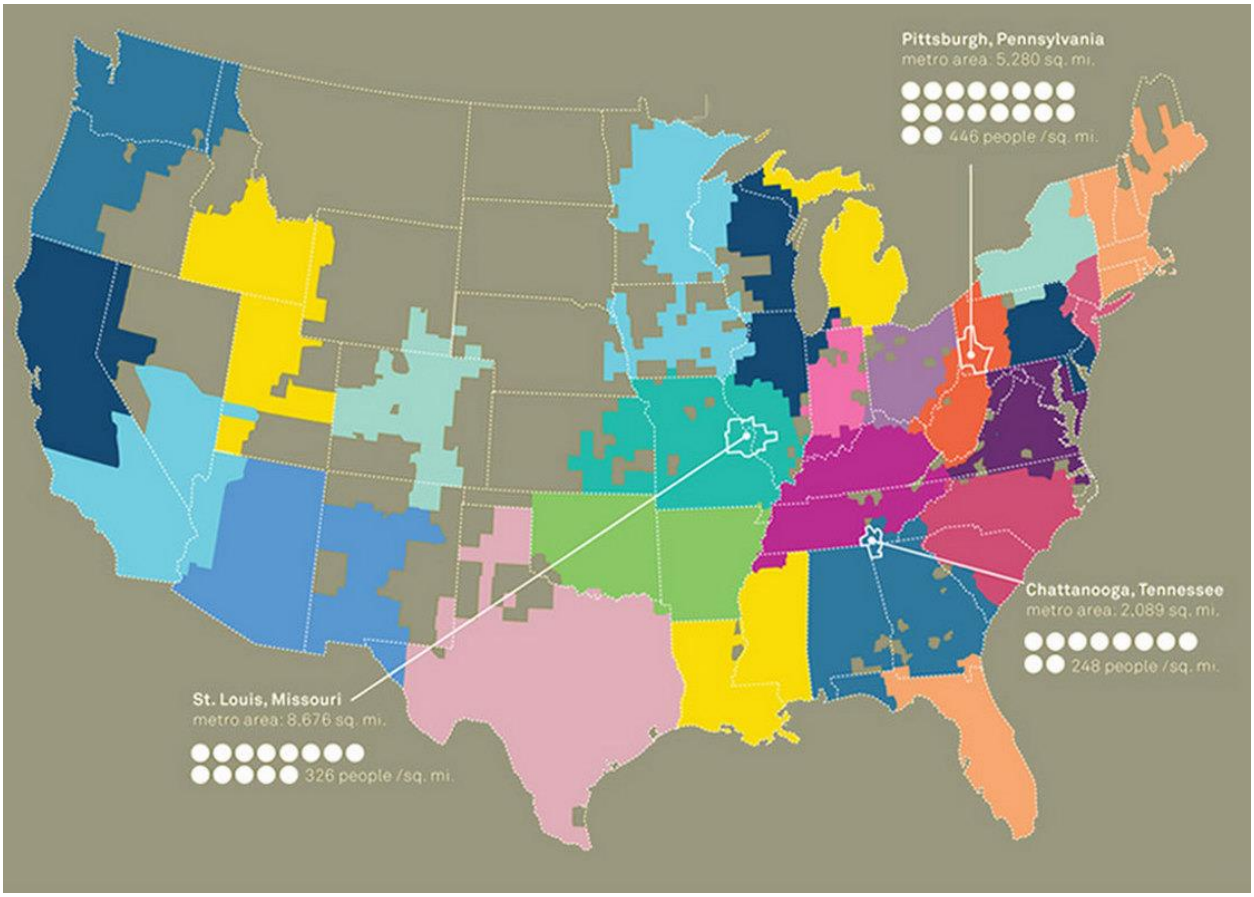


Figure 5 – Connected Areas of Cell Phone Contact (Calabrese et al 2011)

MIT's Sensable Labs Project analyzed anonymous cell phone data from AT&T to see who was calling whom within the United States (Calabrese, Dahlem, Gerber, Chen, Rowland, & Ratti 2011). The map shows Oklahoma and Arkansas as a unified cell – a cell which interestingly includes neither Texas nor Missouri. As these data are anonymous, we do not know who is being called or for what reason, but it suggests that much of Oklahoma's business and family ties may be most closely connected with Arkansas.

Another similar study is an analysis of check-ins from the "Where's George?" online project (Brockman, Hufnagel, & Geisel 2006). An NPR article describes the Where's George site thusly:

It's a website that tracks the movement of dollar bills. Thousands of people participate. All you do is take a bill out of your wallet, type the denomination, serial number, the date and your zip code onto the Where's George? site, and then, with a pen or a stamp, deface the bill with the words "WheresGeorge.com." After which (and this is key), you spend it. So now your bill is moving from business to business, person to person, and if and when another Where's George volunteer discovers it, she or he will note where, note when and spend it again.

(Krulwich 2013)

Brockman et al pooled a database of results from the website and created a map of the United States of regions where the marked bills had circulated. Heavy line boundaries on the map indicate borders between areas where few bills passed – some more permeable boundaries are marked with lighter lines. Figure 6 below shows the area around Oklahoma.

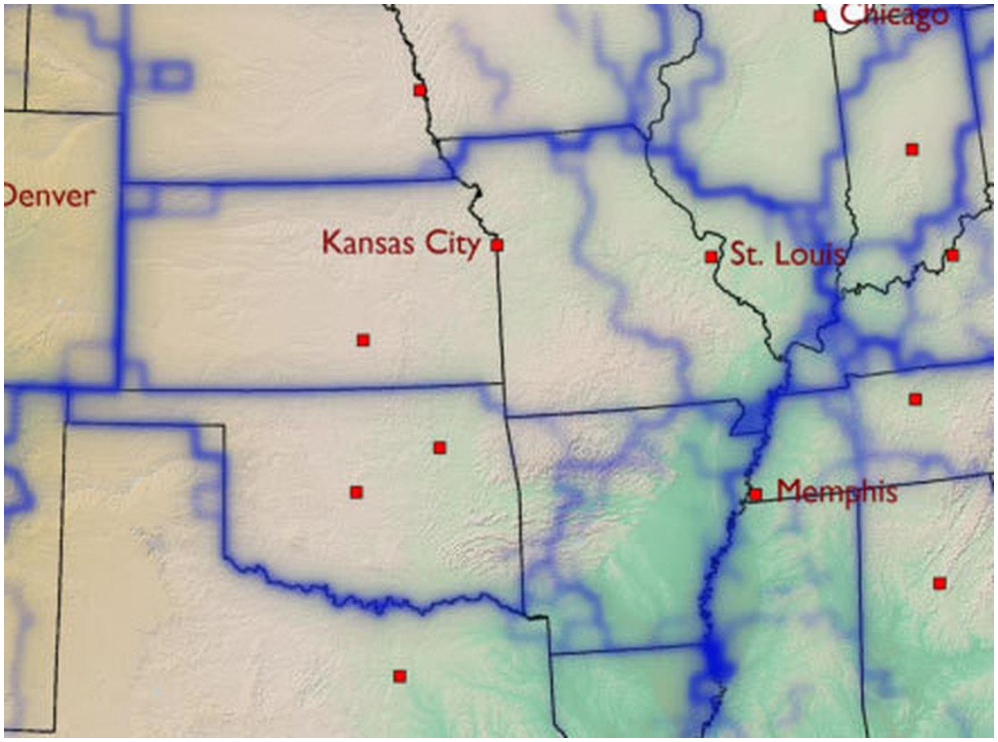


Figure 6 – "Where's George" Contact Map of the Oklahoma Area (Brockman et al. 2006)

The thickest borders of this map denote Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, and Southern Illinois as a single unit (Notice the similarity to the land run demographics we saw from Southard). The heaviest lines thus suggest that Oklahoma is in commercial connection with Kansas City and St Louis, and that the state as a whole is connected with itself. The heavy barrier between Oklahoma and Dallas (the dot in Texas) is striking – despite being almost equidistant to Tulsa as Kansas City, Dallas does not appear to share the same financial contact.

Examining the thinner boundaries, we see that Oklahoma's closest connection is with the western border of Arkansas only, which includes Fayetteville and Fort Smith, but does not extend as far east as Little Rock. As we will see later on, this will match with descriptions of the RODEO respondents, such as Beth who lives on the border in Watts. Others report having extended family in Arkansas, but the cities they mention are far to the western border. Between Brockman et al and Sensable Labs, we may thus infer that Oklahomans' closest regional contacts are with themselves and the western

Arkansas border. Missouri and Kansas are also likely influences, but less so. The border with Texas appears to be a firm cultural one that is crossed less frequently.

2.3 - Dialect and Dialect Influences

Having seen that Oklahoma has several possible neighboring dialects that could all be competing for its attention, we should consider their characteristics. In particular, we should also consider which dialect features are localized to certain areas, and which are more broadly distributed. For example, while the 'Southern Shift' itself is primarily located within the South, other features commonly associated with a Southern dialect such as the pin/pen merger have been observed in Illinois and Indiana (Labov, Ash, & Boberg 2006). Similarly in the Midwest, Gordon (2008) suggests that some of its features may be more mobile than others, arguing that the caught/cot merger is a recent arrival and may still be spreading. We should thus keep in mind an inventory of likely dialect influences.

2.3.1 Peterson and Barney (1952)

Before presenting dialect features of Oklahoma and neighboring areas, I will first briefly discuss the results of Peterson and Barney (1952) (Henceforth, P&B). This work provided acoustic measurements of vowels from male, female, and child speakers of 'General American' English. The formant frequencies obtained from their study have been used as a baseline in describing sociolinguistic change. While scholars no longer speak of 'General American' English, this study remains a standard point of reference. 'Fronted' or 'backed' vowels are often described in relation to P&B-like posititions, which are displayed below in Figure 7**.**

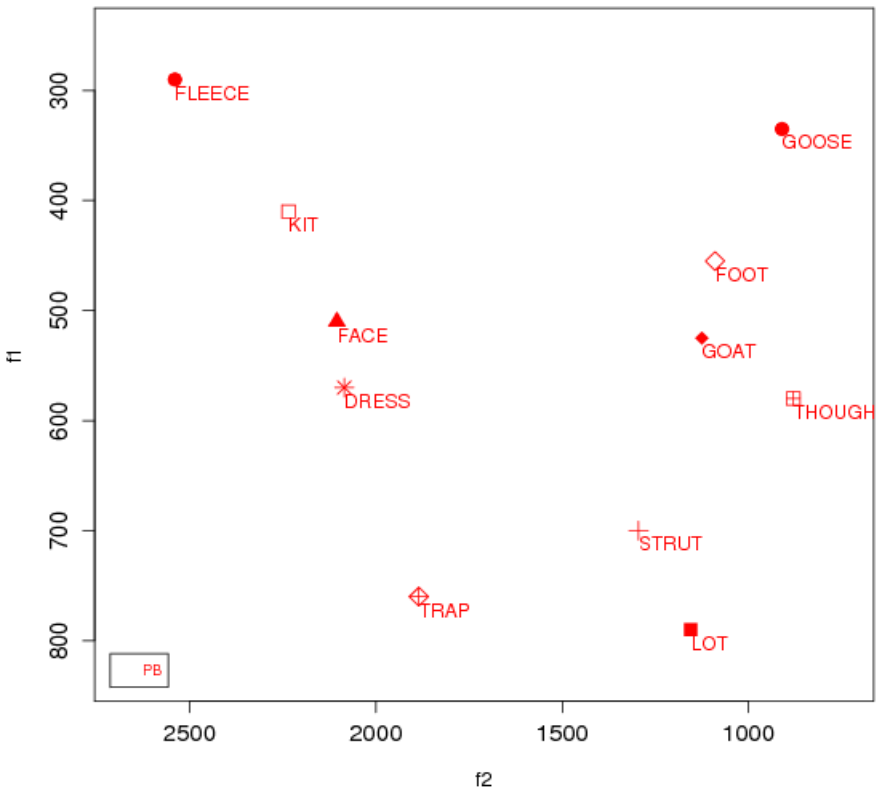


Figure 7 – Averaged Men and Women's Vowel Means from Peterson & Barney (1952)

These positions are for steady state vowel nuclei and do not include glides. This 'General American' plot shows us a vowel system which most vowels are strongly distinct from one another, and in which most vowels comprise a tense/lax pair. In the front, tense FLEECE is above lax KIT, tense FACE is above lax DRESS, and TRAP is at the bottom boundary. FACE and DRESS are near to each other but distinct. In the back, tense GOOSE is above lax FOOT, while tense GOAT and THOUGHT are in the mid range. Notice that this placement of THOUGHT will be much higher than we will see for many RODEO respondents. STRUT is central but low, and LOT occupies the bottom corner of the system.

Although it is doubtful that many modern American speakers of English follow this configuration of vowels, it is nonetheless important to be aware of. The next few sections below will describe 'mergers,' 'shifts,' and so forth, and these terms are used in relation to the P&B vowel chart seen above.

2.3.2 Nearby Dialect Influences

There are more possible regional features to consider than can fit under the scope of this dissertation, and so I will examine a few of the most notable – the Southern Shift, the pin/pen merger, the caught/cot merger, the monopthongization of the PRICE vowel, and reduction of tense vowels before /l/ (merger of pool/pull, for example). In Chapter V, I will present each respondent's overall mean scores for their WL and RP tokens, but then will consider these additional elements in further detail. Each respondent's section will include a chart that breaks down their use of regional dialect features. Some features such as the Southern Shift are considered to be related systems, and I will delineate each component of the system separately. As we will see later on, some respondents do not have all features that make up these systems.

Table 1 below is an example of the feature chart that will accompany acoustic plots within this work. For all speakers, each dialect feature will be annotated on the chart for easy viewing and then given further discussion. I have aimed to have the feature chart be as operational as possible – that is, rather than noting a feature as being regional, the chart simply notes its characteristics without comment. Although the 'Southern Shift' portion considers Southernness, there is justification for this. First, for some Southern Shift features like the inversion of FLEECE and KIT, there are not other areas of the country that show similar variation. Thomas (2001) comments that sound changes involving FLEECE are basically non-existent in American English outside of the South. Second, as we will see below, the components of the Southern Shift have been argued to be related to each other. I will keep these features grouped on the chart (but listed separately) so that we may examine this relationship more closely in the speech of the RODEO respondents.

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**	**Shifted**	**Backed**
a. GOOSE	fronted	partial fronting	back
b. FOOT	fronted	partial fronting	back
c. GOAT	fronted	partial fronting	back
d. MOUTH	fronted	partial fronting	back
Southern Shift	**Southern**	**Shifted**	**P&B Like**
a. PRICE	[ai]	weak glide	[a:]
b. FLEECE/KIT	FLEECE above KIT	Parallel on F1	KIT above FLEECE
d. FACE/DRESS	FACE above DRESS	Parallel on F1	DRESS above FACE
Mergers	**Merged**	**Partial**	**Distinct**
Tense-lax conflation _/l/			
a. /u/-/ʊ/	merged	partial	distinct
b. /i/-/I/	merged	partial	distinct
c. /ɛ/ - /e/	merged	partial	distinct
Pin/Pen Merger	merged	partial	distinct
Caught/Cot Merger	merged	partial	distinct

Table 1 – Sample Chart of Relevant Dialect Features

Each task the speaker performs will be marked separately on the chart. For example, if the respondent used the caught/cot merger on the wordlist but not the reading passage, 'Merged' would be marked 'WL' while 'Distinct' would be marked 'RP.' In each section below I will explain these features in further detail, and discuss the meaning of each of the ratings.

2.3.3 - Southern Shift

As we've seen from looking at past and present-day Oklahoma,, it is likely that there is a Southern influence on Oklahoman speakers. Some of the salient aspects of Southern dialect are the combined elements of the Southern Shift, described here by Tillery and Bailey (2008):

1) *The fronting of the vowels in the GOOSE class and in the FOOT class*
2) *The fronting of the nucleus in the MOUTH class*
3) *The fronting or fronting and lowering of the vowels in the GOAT class*

4) *The lowering and retraction of the vowels in the FACE class*

5) *In parts of the South, the lowering and retraction of the vowels in the FLEECE class*

Tillery and Bailey 2008 p 124

The arrangement of the front vowels in the Southern Shift is often a swapping of the tense/lax pairs, as visualized below in Figure 8:

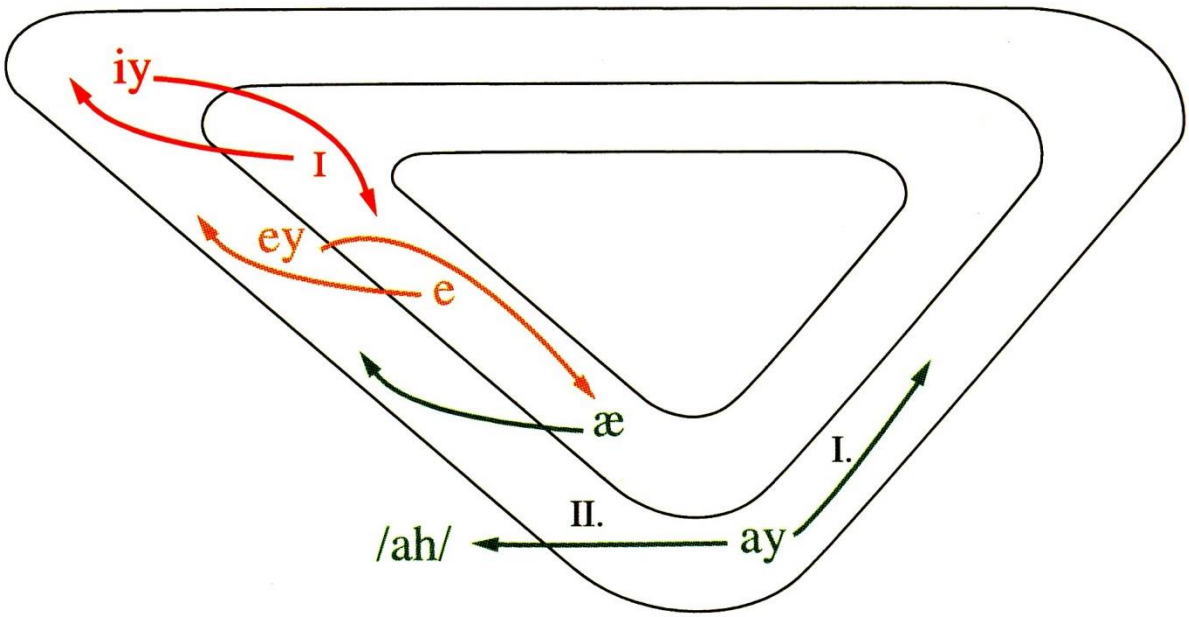


Figure 8 - The Southern Shift (Labov, Ash, & Boberg 2006:244)

2.3.4 – Fronting of Back Vowels

The Southern Shift holds many components that will be examined individually, the first of which is the fronting of back vowels such as GOOSE and FOOT. This feature is not exclusive to the South, but the South is discernible from other areas in that its speakers commonly front GOOSE without also fronting GOAT. As Thomas (2001) describes**,** a common pattern among young people in much of the

country is to front GOOSE (in some cases almost into FLEECE territory), and then front FOOT and GOAT into central positions. Other Southern features appear to be in transition – Thomas (2008) notes that the centralizing of vowels before liquids appears more commonly in older speakers, and Koops et al (2008) suggest that young pin/pen speakers in Houston, Texas may be undoing their merger. This suggests that the presence of such features in Oklahoma may have age as a factor. For the purposes of the chart, I will differentiate fronting at three levels – 'Backed' will signify a P&B-like baseline position toward the back boundary of the speaker's vowel chart. 'Shifted' will denote fronting up to a central position, and 'Fronted' will mark vowels that are fronted beyond the center of the vowel space.

2.3.5 – Fronting of MOUTH

Fronting the nucleus of MOUTH is a practice that is widespread in the South (Tillery & Bailey 2008), but not exclusive to it. MOUTH fronting has been observed as far north as New York City (Labov 1966), and also into Kansas City (Lusk 1976). Because of this wide geographic range, it would be difficult to assert a particular dialect region as a source if fronted MOUTH were observed in Oklahoma. Thomas (2001) offers some guidance, however, suggesting that some Southerners may raise the nucleus to the point that the diphthong is pronounced as /ɛɑ/. Fronted MOUTH would thus be a possible indicator of Southern influence, whereas realization as /ɛɑ/ would be far more definite.

On the chart, there will be three possible measures similar to the front vowels – a MOUTH vowel with an onset near to the speaker's LOT onset would match the baseline shown in P&B, and will be coded as 'Backed.' If MOUTH is fronted up to the center of the vowel space, it will be coded as 'Shifted.'. If MOUTH is fronted beyond the center of the vowel space (likely near the speaker's TRAP vowel), it will be coded as 'Fronted.' The chart will not consider the possibility of raising the nucleus of the vowel near TRAP as mentioned above, but this may be discussed afterward if it appears.

2.3.6 – The Front Vowels

A less common component of the Southern Shift is inversion of the FLEECE and KIT vowels. As mentioned earlier, Thomas (2001) comments that FLEECE is rarely a component of chain shifts and shows little variation throughout the country. The South is one of the few areas where FLEECE shows change – some speakers will use an up-glide for it, and Southern Shift speakers will invert it with KIT. This raising of KIT is often paired with gliding, making the final realization into /iI/. Thomas (2008) notes, however, that the inversion of FLEECE/KIT is not universal throughout the South, and is most visible in areas that strongly lower the nucleus of FACE, such as Alabama and Eastern Tennessee. Because these variations of FLEECE appear exclusively in the South, their use in Oklahoma would be an unquestionable sign of Southern influence. FLEECE remaining in its normal high position would tell us comparatively little, however, as this would match nearly every other region of the United States.

More widespread in the South is the inverting of the FACE and DRESS vowels. Thomas (2001) observes that in Texas, Oklahoma, and Southern Appalachia, FACE can lower to the point that it is an /aei/ diphthong. He also suggests that this lowering pairs with unconditioned monopthongization of PRICE. As for DRESS, a Southern Shift influence would cause it to raise, whereas a strongly northern influence would have it lower and centralized. This provides several possible configurations of mid-front vowels to watch for in Oklahoma: a Southern Shift inversion of FACE/DRESS in keeping with much of the South, an extreme lowering of FACE into TRAP territory that would be more like Texas/Appalachia, or a more Northerly arrangement in which FACE, DRESS, and TRAP appeared in descending order.

For each speaker, the chart will note the relative positions of the tense/lax front vowel pairs. If a speaker's tense vowel is higher than their lax vowel, this will be considered P&B-like. If the pair is inverted, this will be coded as 'Southern.' If the pair is near-parallel, this will be marked as 'Shifted.' Bear in mind that all tokens of these vowels before nasals have been separated from these groups and

will be presented separately. If the speaker has other tendencies such as gliding of these vowels, this will be discussed afterward.

2.3.7 - PRICE Monophthongization

A common feature in much of the South is the monophthongization of PRICE, primarily in word-final position or when before voiceless consonants. Thomas (2008) believes a better term for this is "glide weakening," as he comments that Southern speakers will often reduce the glide in PRICE without eliminating it completely. Thomas (2003) describes this weakening in more detail: "Lowering of the glide appears to constitute the main feature of glide weakening and is a necessary precursor to outright monophthongization." Thomas (2008) comments that this feature is commonly associated in speakers' minds with lower-class speech, and that urban and/or higher status speakers may seek to avoid it. Nonetheless, he describes it as being present in much of Appalachia and also in Texas, and Arkansas. Again, this feature is shared by Oklahoma's neighbors, which suggests it may be in Oklahoma itself. Thomas (2001) observes that PRICE is monopthongized in all environments in Texas, and work such as Oxley (2009) suggests that in Texas, monophthongization of PRICE before voiced consonants is perhaps even more likely than in other environments. In observing Oklahomans' use of PRICE, we might thus be able to differentiate influences – a 'P&B-like' lack of monopthongization suggesting resistance to the South and Texas, 'Southern' monophthongization prior to voiceless consonants and word-finally suggesting influence from neighboring Arkansas, and 'Shifted' monophthongization in all environments suggesting an effect from Texas.

2.3.8 - The Pin/Pen Merger

This is the merging of the KIT and DRESS vowels before nasals. Unlike the Southern Shift, the merger has likely been in existence to some degree since the 19th Century (Thomas 2008, Bailey & Tillery 2008). Although emblematically Southern, it is not confined solely to the South, as can be seen in Figure

9, a map of the merger's presence in the United States based on data from *The Atlas of North American English* (Labov et al 2006). The purple area in California represents the area Bakersfield, where many Southern immigrants relocated. As can be seen, the pin/pen merger extends into Missouri, Southern Kansas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma (although we must remember that most of Oklahoma's coverage is extrapolated from other sources).

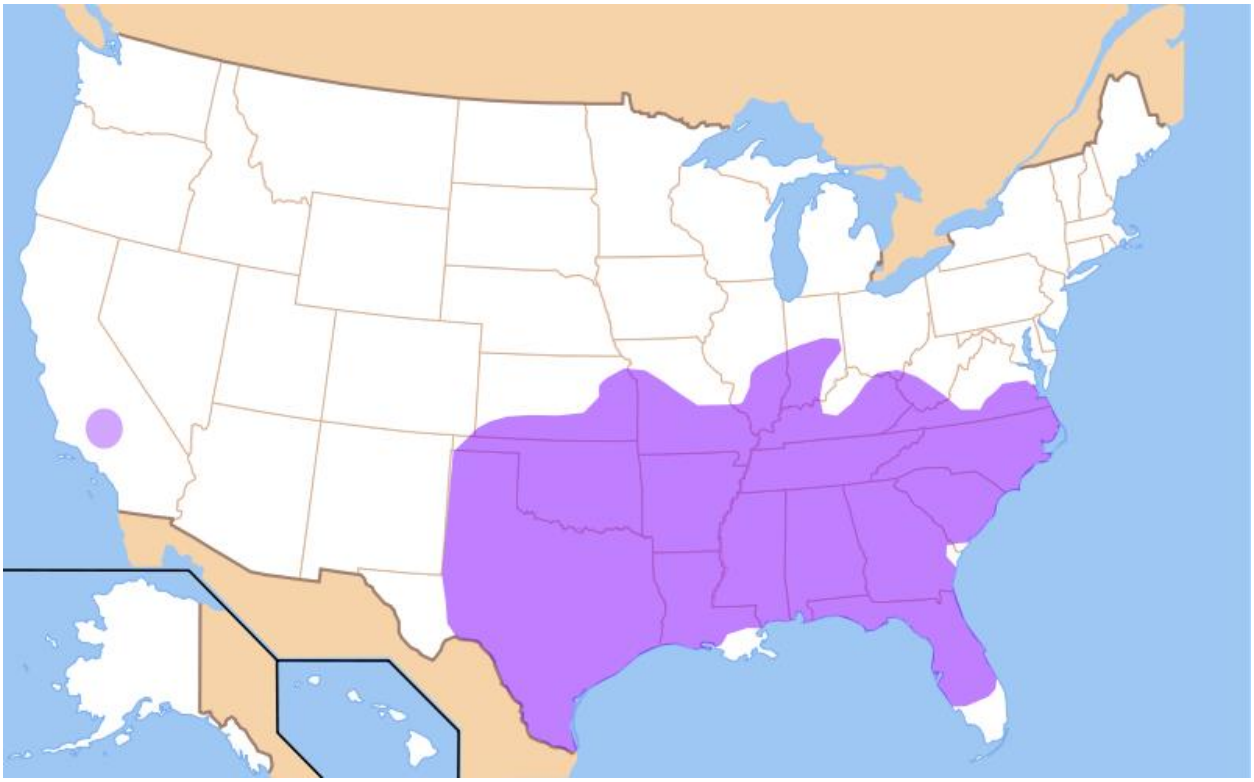


Figure 9 – Usage Map of the Pin/Pen Merger (Based on Labov, Ash, & Boberg 2006)

As mentioned, Thomas (2008) and Koops et al (2008) have suggested that the merger's presence may not be universal in this area, and that younger speakers may be working to undo it due to social stigma. It is possible that there may be an age distinction among Oklahomans, where older residents may be merged, but younger people may not be. It is possible that there may be an urban/rural distinction as well. Both the RODEO WL and RP tasks were created to elicit tokens of pin/pen words, and at the end of the interviews, respondents were asked directly if they used the

merger themselves or heard it from others. For the feature chart, a subject will be considered 'Distinct' if in all cases their F1 and F2 mean onsets and glides are significantly different from each other. They will be considered 'Merged' if no F1 or F2 means are significantly different. If some but not all F1 or F2's are significantly different, they will be labeled 'Shifted.'

2.3.9 - The Caught/Cot Merger

The caught/cot merger has been observed in much of the United States, and is marked by the overlapping of the LOT and THOUGHT vowels. It has been observed in Pennsylvania (Herold 1990), Missouri (Gordon 2001, Gordon 2006), in Utah (DiPaolo 1992), and appears to be moving westward. Thomas (2001) also observes the merger in Texas. Figure 10 below shows the results of an online dialect survey in which respondents answered 'Do you pronounce "cot" and "caught the same?' Regions marked in red self-report as pronouncing the two sounds distinctly, those in blue report being merged.

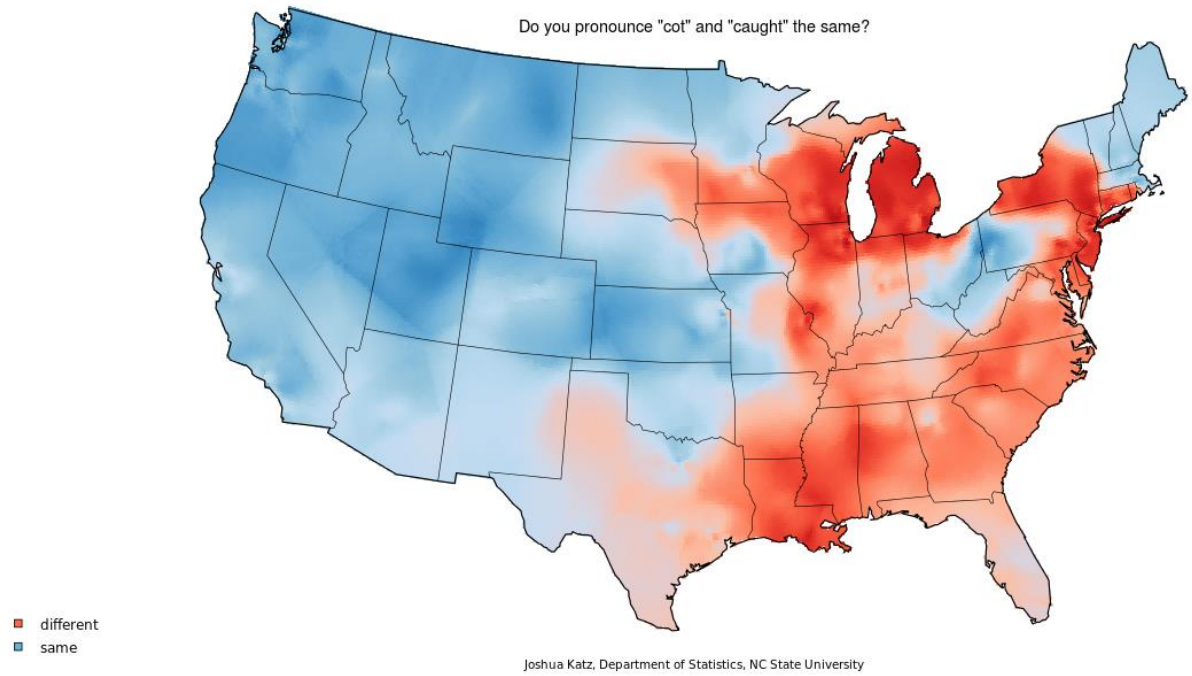


Figure 10– Caught/Cot Results from Online Dialect Survey from Katz (2013)

Two primary areas of the country appear so far have repelled the merger – the South, and regions that have the Northern Cities Shift. NCS's tendency to front LOT but leave THOUGHT backed makes it a poor environment for the caught/cot merger. In the South, the merger is less common due to a tendency to produce THOUGHT as diphthongal /ɔo/. The merger is in place in the Midwest, however, and is a recent arrival as of the 1960's according to Gordon (2008). Majors (2005) reports that although St. Louis avoids the merger due to NCS presence, the rest of Missouri is primarily merged. This places the caught/cot merger at Oklahoma's doorstep, and work from the SOD suggests it has already entered the state via the major cities, shown below in Figure 9**:**

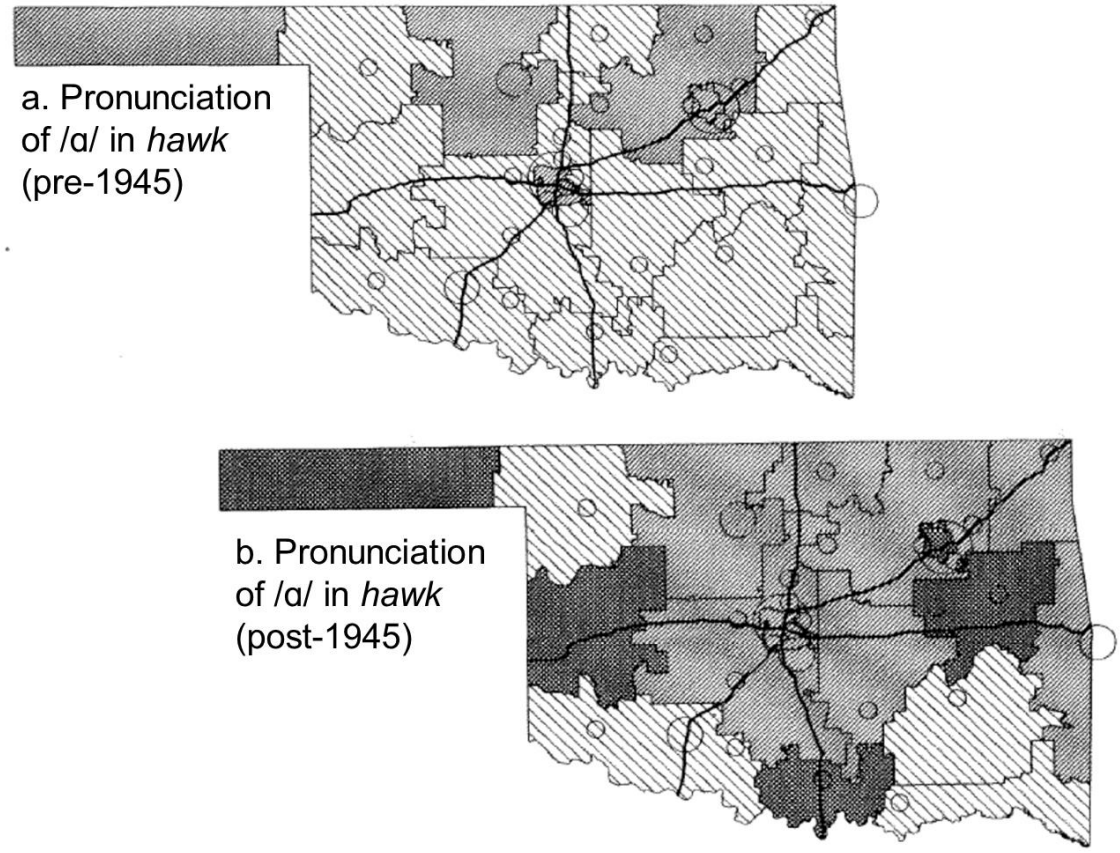


Figure 11 - Caught/Cot Diffusion - Bailey, Wikle, Tillery & Sand 1993:369

In Figure 11 above, the presence of the caught/cot merger is indicated by heavier shades of grey – the darker the area, the more respondents are merging THOUGHT and LOT. As can be seen, before

1945, the merger is mainly present in the main metropolitan areas of Tulsa and Oklahoma City (but the merger also is present in the panhandle). Over time, the merger has diffused from the cities into the surrounding areas of the state. Though gaining prominence, as of 1993 it was not universally used.

Since it is safe to assume that Oklahoma is receiving minimal Northern Cities contact, if its speakers were avoiding the caught/cot merger, this could be construed as a Southern influence. Thomas (2001) also suggests that the merger may be involved with the Southern Shift – he points to white Texans that raise DRESS and also do *not* merge LOT and THOUGHT, saying "For them it appears that /ɑ/ causes /æ/ to be raised, and /æ/ in turn causes /ɛ/ to be raised." We thus might discern Southernness in two ways – keeping LOT and THOUGHT distinct paired with raising of DRESS and TRAP. We will see in Chapter 5 if these two components are necessarily paired.

Because of the caught/cot merger's prevalence among Oklahoma's neighbors, it would be difficult to ascribe a single regional influence to it if it were observed within the state – both the Midlands and Texas would be possible candidates. However, we have several reasons to consider the Midlands as a primary influence both in terms of founders and in the present day. Figure 4 from Southard (1993) showed people from the Lower Midwest as the primary settlement group in all but one of the 19th century land runs, and the 2006 map from Brockman et al. in Figure 6 suggested the most contact with Kansas and Missouri. As we will see in Chapter 5, many RODEO respondents comment similarly – frequently describing visits to Kansas City or St Louis. Bailey et al. (1993) suggest a pattern for how the caught/cot merger might diffuse throughout the state – beginning in urban centers and spreading to more rural areas. Their work would predict that younger, more urban speakers would demonstrate the merger, and that older, more rural speakers would not.

For the feature chart, we thus have three ways to describe caught/cot behavior, similar to pin/pen: 'Distinct' for if the vowels' F1 and F2 are significantly different in all cases, 'Merged' if there are no significant differences, and 'Partial' if only some measures are significantly different. The chart will not consider features such as a possible upglide in THOUGHT, although if observed, this will be discussed afterward.

2.3.10 - Reduction of Tense Vowels Before /l/

A more recent change in Southern speech is the merger of tense vowels before /l/ to a lax form. Thus, *peel* would be pronounced as *pill*, *pool* as *pull,* and so forth. Tillery and Bailey (2008) describe this as a change that has appeared in the urban South as recently as the 1960's, unlike pin/pen and monopthongal PRICE's more historical pedigree. The RODEO WL and RP tasks include the words *peel, meal, sale, fail,* and *cool* to test for this feature. Following their inferences, we would expect to see it in younger, more urban speakers. Thomas (2008) suggests there may be an age difference with *cool* as well – younger Southerners will not front it, but older Southerners may. This may be due to a tendency of older Southerners to pronounce words like *cool* with vocalic /l/ - this different environment would not prompt the vowel to back.

For the chart, P&B-like production of this feature would show no reduction of vowels before /l/, thereby leaving them distinct. Southern production would show a merger, with the tense vowels in lax position. Shifted would display a partial merge – for example if the vowel in *peel* were lower than the respondent's FLEECE but higher than KIT.

2.4 Prior Acoustic Work in Oklahoma

Two scholarly works have presented acoustic plots of Oklahoman speakers – the *ANAE* and Erik Thomas' 2001 examination of New World English.

2.4.1 – The Atlas of North American English

The ANAE was published in 2006 and was an effort to present an acoustic view of the entire country's speech based on telephone survey data collected between 1992-1999. In that time, 762 respondents from around the country's major urban centers were contacted and asked questions about how they spoke. 439 of these respondents had their vowels acoustically analyzed and plotted. The acoustic data were taken from wordlist tasks only (the lists varied by region) and plotted based on F1 and F2 values for each vowel. Four respondents were contacted in Oklahoma – two each from Tulsa and Oklahoma City. Of those, one speaker from each city was included in the acoustic plots. All four respondents answered the survey questions, which included impressionistic ratings of dialect features by both the respondent and interviewer. I will present the two acoustic plots below and also discuss relevant survey answers.

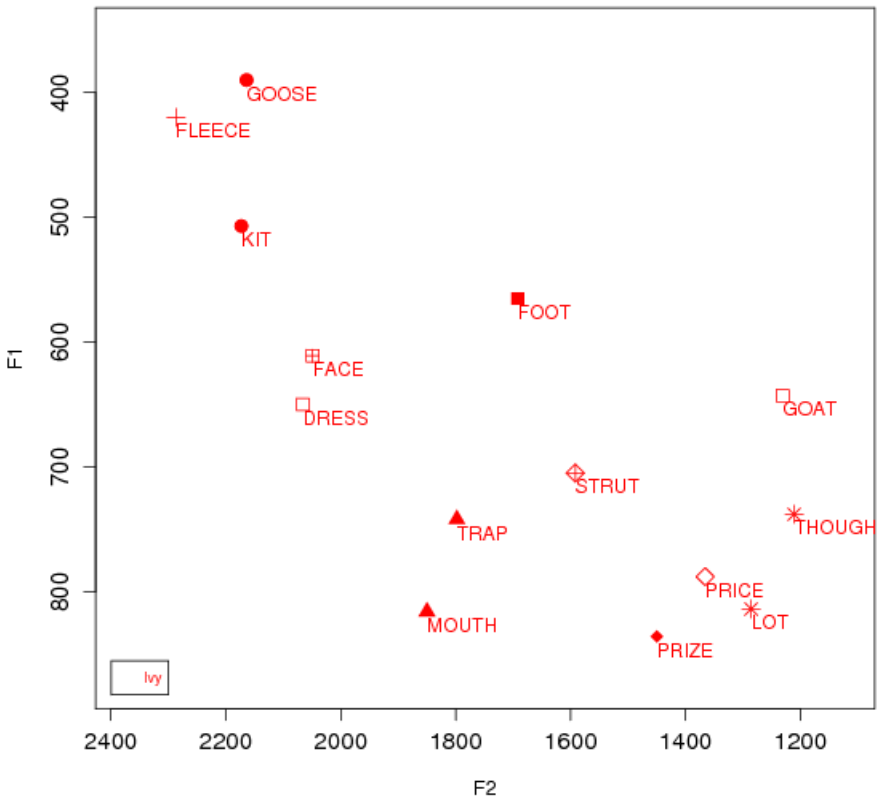


Figure 12 – Ivy, 37, F, Oklahoma City (from Labov, Ash & Boberg 2006 Data Disc)

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**	**Shifted**	**Backed**
a. GOOSE	WL		
b. FOOT		WL	
c. GOAT			WL
d. MOUTH		WL	
Southern Shift	**Southern**	**Shifted**	**P&B Like**
a. FLEECE/KIT			WL
b. FACE/DRESS			WL
/ɑ/ - /ɔ/ merger			WL

Table 2 – Ivy Feature Chart

Ivy exhibits the pattern of back vowel fronting described by Thomas – her GOOSE vowel is extremely fronted, almost equal to FLEECE. FOOT is fronted, but much less so than GOOSE. GOAT remains backed. She does not invert either FLEECE/KIT or FACE/DRESS, and MOUTH is fronted but not

raised. She does not appear to have the caught/cot merger. Without glide measurements, we can say little about her monophthongization of PRICE or other vowels that might possibly have glides. From the data here, she does not appear to display many Southern tendencies.

Figure 13 – Trina, 32, F, Tulsa (from Labov, Ash & Boberg 2006 Data Disc)

Back vowel fronting	**Fronted**	**Shifted**	**Backed**
a. GOOSE	WL		
b. FOOT		WL	
c. GOAT		WL	
e. MOUTH		WL	
Southern Shift	**Southern**	**Shifted**	**P&B Like**
b. FLEECE/KIT			WL
d. FACE/DRESS			WL
/ɑ/ - /ɔ/ merger			WL

Table 3 – Trina Feature Chart

Trina's back vowels are similar but not identical to Ivy's. Like Ivy, the higher the vowel, the more it is fronted. However, GOOSE is not fronted close to FLEECE, FOOT is more front than STRUT, and GOAT moves forward slightly, unlike with Ivy. Her FACE and GOAT vowels are both quite low, a feature which Thomas (2001) observes as well. She also does not appear to have the caught/cot merger or to invert her front vowels in a Southern Shift fashion. Her STRUT vowel is quite low. MOUTH is fronted but not raised. And again, without glides it is difficult to go any further.

Neither of the ANAE speakers exhibit strong Southern tendencies, although as they are both urban women, this is not surprising. Without glide measurements it is impossible to know how they are handling PRICE. It is somewhat unexpected that neither speaker has the caught/cot merger

2.4.2 – Thomas (2001)

The Oklahomans presented in Thomas (2001) are all from Yale, OK, which is also the home of RODEO respondent Hank. All four respondents were recorded in 1993 and include two men and two women performing an RP task. Thomas did not study the pin/pen merger, and so it is not included.

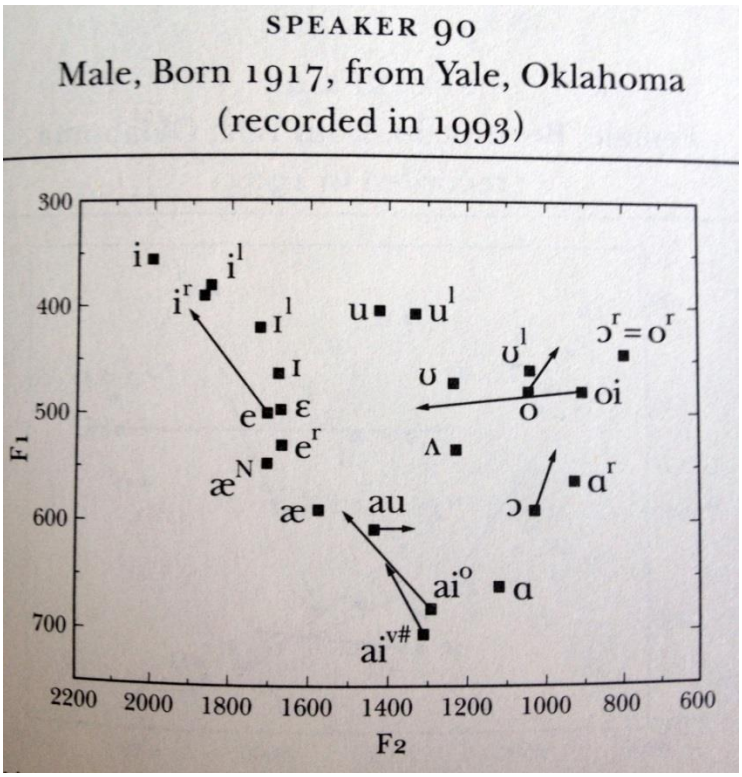


Figure 14 – Speaker 90 RP from Thomas (2001)

Feature	**Fronted**	**Shifted**	**Backed**
Back vowel fronting			
a. GOOSE	RP		
b. FOOT	RP		
c. GOAT			RP
d. MOUTH		RP	
Southern Shift	**Southern**	**Shifted**	**P&B Like**
a. PRICE		RP	
b. FLEECE/KIT			RP
c. FACE/DRESS		RP	
Mergers	**Merged**	**Partial**	**Distinct**
Tense-lax conflation _/l/			
a. /u/-/ʊ/			RP
b. /i/-/I/		RP	
/ɑ/ - /ɔ/ merger	RP		

Table 4 – Feature Chart for Speaker 90

Speaker 90 keeps FLEECE raised above KIT, but has FACE and DRESS parallel to each other. GOOSE is fronted, as is FOOT, but less so. GOAT remains back, parallel with THOUGHT and LOT on F2. He does not demonstrate the caught/cot merger, and his THOUGHT vowel shows an upglide. This would match the expectation of Bailey et al. that an older, rural Oklahoman would not merge caught/cot. MOUTH is fronted, and he does not appear to retract vowels before /l/ (notice that /ul/ is only slightly back of /u/). TRAP is slightly raised, and Thomas comments that his PRICE vowel 'varies between showing weak glides or being monophthongal.'

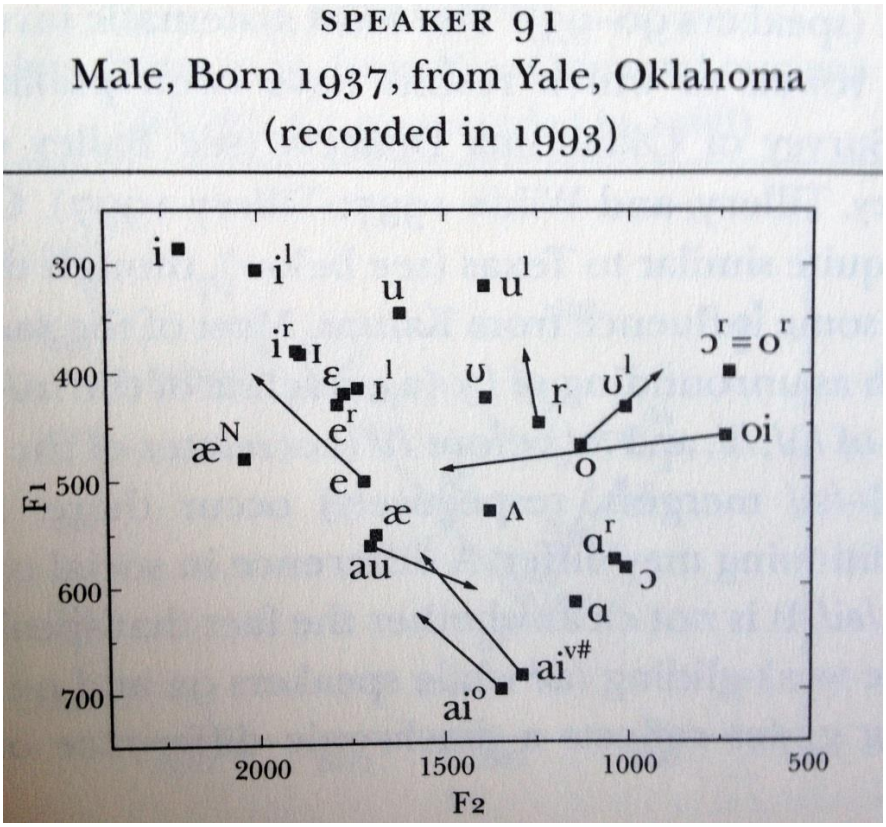


Figure 15 – Speaker 91 RP from Thomas (2001)

Feature	**Fronted**	**Shifted**	**Backed**
Back vowel fronting			
a. GOOSE	RP		
b. FOOT	RP		
c. GOAT		RP	
d. MOUTH		RP	
Southern Shift	**Southern**	**Shifted**	**P&B Like**
a. PRICE		RP	
b. FLEECE/KIT			RP
c. FACE/DRESS		RP	
Mergers	**Merged**	**Partial**	**Distinct**
Tense-lax conflation _/l/			
a. /u/-/ʊ/		RP	
b. /i/-/ɪ/		RP	
/ɑ/ - /ɔ/ merger			RP

Table 5 – Feature Chart for Speaker 91

Speaker 91 follows a somewhat similar pattern as Speaker 90. FLEECE and KIT again are not inverted, but this time DRESS is raised roughly 100 Hz over FACE. GOOSE fronts but centralizes before /l/, FOOT fronts less than GOOSE, and GOAT is again parallel with other back vowels. MOUTH is fronted and raised such that its nucleus is the same as his raised TRAP vowel. PRICE again has weak glides. Thomas remarks that Speaker 91 merged THOUGHT and LOT when reading minimal pairs, but not during the RP task.

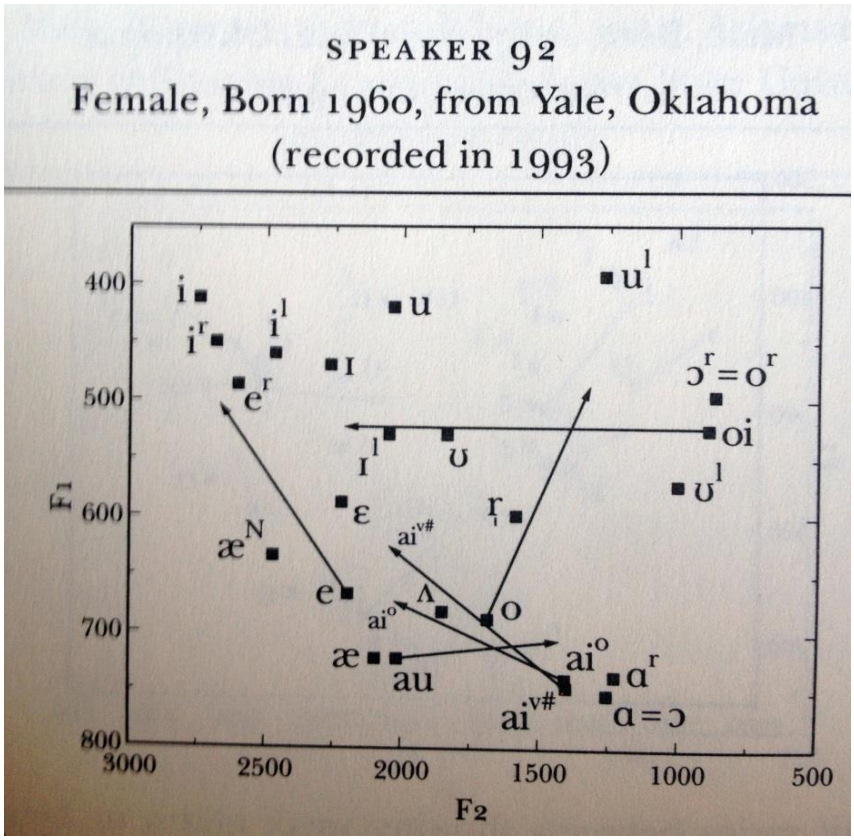


Figure 16 – Speaker 92 RP from Thomas (2001)

Feature	**Fronted**	**Shifted**	**Backed**
Back vowel fronting			
a. GOOSE	RP		
b. FOOT	RP		
c. GOAT	RP		
d. MOUTH		RP	
Southern Shift	**Southern**	**Shifted**	**P&B Like**
a. PRICE		RP	
b. FLEECE			RP
c. KIT			RP
d. FACE		RP	
e. DRESS		RP	
Mergers	**Merged**	**Partial**	**Distinct**
Tense-lax conflation _/l/			
a. /u/-/ʊ/		RP	
b. /i/-/I/		RP	
/ɑ/ - /ɔ/ merger		RP	

Table 6 – Feature Chart for Speaker 92

Speaker 92 is younger than the two men, and shows some different behaviors. FLEECE and KIT are not inverted, and like Speaker 91, she does invert FACE and DRESS. Unlike the men, however, her FACE and DRESS vowels are both much lower. GOAT is much lower as well, and fronts to a much greater degree than with the men. GOOSE and FOOT front strongly, with a much more noticeable backing of their tokens before /l/. MOUTH is fronted into TRAP territory and glides to LOT. She has the caught/cot merger.

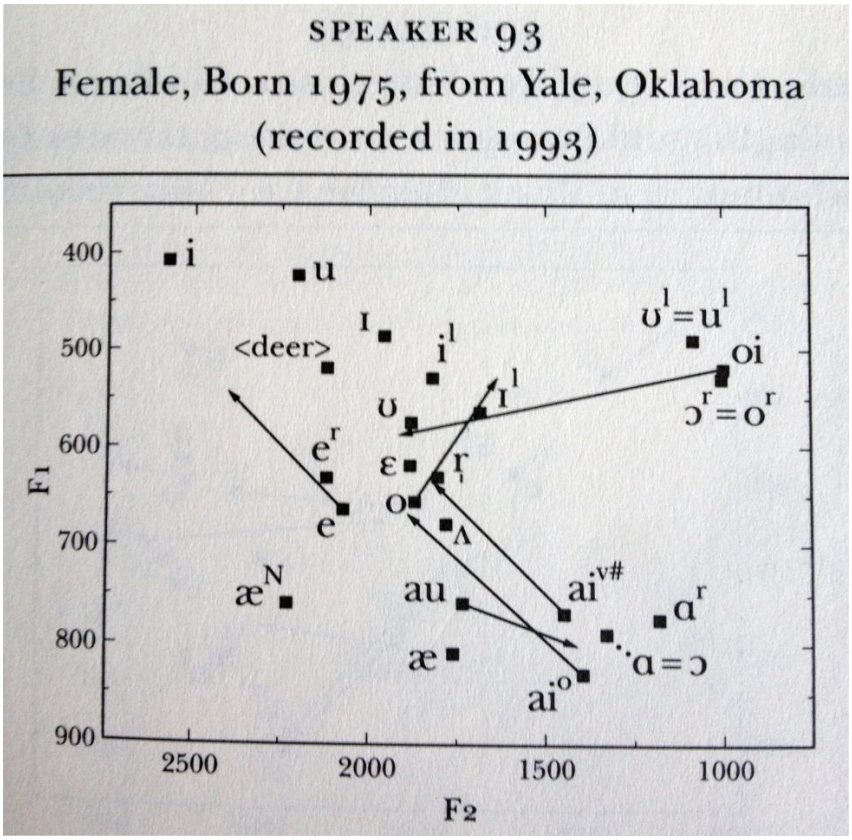


Figure 17 – Speaker 93 RP from Thomas (2001)

Feature	**Fronted**	**Shifted**	**Backed**
Back vowel fronting			
a. GOOSE	RP		
b. FOOT	RP		
c. GOAT	RP		
d. MOUTH		RP	
Southern Shift	**Southern**	**Shifted**	**P&B Like**
a. PRICE			RP
b. FLEECE			RP
c. KIT			RP
d. FACE		RP	
e. DRESS		RP	
Mergers	**Merged**	**Partial**	**Distinct**
Tense-lax conflation _/l/			
a. /u/-/ʊ/	RP		
b. /i/-/l/	RP		
/ɑ/ - /ɔ/ merger		RP	

Table 7 – Feature Chart for Speaker 93

Speaker 93 is the youngest of Thomas' respondents – 18 at the time of her interview. In her front vowels, she does not invert FLEECE/KIT and does do so with FACE/DRESS. GOOSE, FOOT, and GOAT are all fronted. GOOSE and FOOT before /l/ are merged and are drastically backed, especially when we look back to Speaker 90. MOUTH is fronted and raised above TRAP, which is low. She has stronger glides for PRICE than the men did, and she has the caught/cot merger.

With the caveat that this is an extremely small sample, these four speakers suggest some possible predictions for Oklahomans. As the respondents grow younger, the caught/cot merger becomes more visible, as does neutralization of vowels before /l/. We might thus watch for continued advancement of these two features in the RODEO respondents. The Southern Shift does not vary much, with all respondents not shifting FLEECE/KIT, and everyone either placing FACE/DRESS parallel to each other or inverting them. Fronting of MOUTH appears in all four subjects, although its degree of raising appears to vary. The men keep TRAP higher, whereas the women, especially Speaker 93, keep it lower. Because these plots only show RP results, we do not know if the speakers' production varies with context, although we get some hints with Speaker 91's caught/cot vowels that this may be the case.

2.4.3 - Discussion

Having examined these two sources of acoustic data, we can see that they have some substantial limitations for describing the dialects of Oklahoma. Between the two of them, only six speakers from three cities are presented. These three cities are all in the center of the state, meaning that regions such as the the Texas border, 'little Dixie' in the Southeast, and the Panhandle have all been left unstudied. Neither the ANAE nor Thomas suggest that their work does more than scratch the surface of Oklahoma. And indeed, this dissertation is much the same. The ANAE suggests that a comprehensive study of an area might require 100 respondents or more, and my work here will not include that.

However, this work will expand on prior Oklahoma study in several meaningful ways. First, it will study a dozen respondents from eleven Oklahoman cities and towns – twice the number of people than the previous studies combined. Second, each respondent will be presented with data from two separate tasks - a reading passage and a word list. Thomas' plots included only RP data, and the ANAE's featured only WL. From the earlier studies it is impossible to guess at the effects of context on vowel production – my work will show both tasks for every respondent and allow for an opportunity to compare the two.

Finally, while the ANAE did include survey questions, most of these were directly related to speech – questions like "Do you say caught and cot the same?" Questions regarding the speakers' background and attitudes were largely not a part of ANAE data. Thomas' plots include acoustic data and nothing else beyond a few demographic facts. Each respondent in my work will be presented with personal background and quotes describing their attitudes of living in the state. I will also include their responses on a lexical inventory task. Although this dissertation will not present hundreds of people, it will consider each speaker with a great level of detail beyond a single acoustic plot. Future years of the RODEO project may provide the numbers needed to offer an exhaustive acoustic inventory of the entire state of Oklahoma. In the meantime, this work aims to expand on what has been done in Oklahoma so far, both in numbers and in the breadth of detail.

2.5 – Summary

Having better acquainted ourselves with the state of Oklahoma and the research conducted within it, we now have some ideas of what to expect as possible cultural and dialectal influences on the state. Both from Oklahoma's origins and its present-day contacts, we can infer a connection with the South, particularly with Arkansas. To a lesser degree, there is also interaction with Missouri and Kansas. Though we must assume there is some intermingling with bordering Texas, it does not appear to be as

tightly connected as some of Oklahoma's other neighbors. In Chapter IV I will consider the opinions of Oklahoma natives as to the state's place in the country, and who its people are most like. Then, in Chapter V, we will bear these attitudes in mind as we look at Oklahomans speech production via acoustic data.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.0 - Methodology

The Research On the Dialects of English in Oklahoma (RODEO) project began in 2008 at Oklahoma State University with the goal of studying the dialects of Oklahoma. As of February 2012, 31 respondents have participated in recorded interviews, and additional data collection is ongoing. All subjects have been interviewed by OSU graduate students after signing appropriate IRB consent forms. Each interview consisted of a question and answer conversational component (see Appendices A and B), a wordlist reading task (Appendix C), a short passage to be read aloud (Appendix D), a map-drawing task (Appendix E), and a lexical inventory of regional terms (Appendix F). This composition of the interview was modeled from previous work in Michigan such as in Bakos (2008 & 2012), Roeder (2006) Firestone and Giese (2008), and Ocumpaugh (2010), with the goal of providing a balance of formal and conversational samples of speech. This dissertation will be primarily concerned with the reading passage and wordlist tasks.

The wordlist and reading passage were both created to elicit words and phonemes that would be involved in the regional dialect shifts described in Chapter 2, such as The Southern Shift's inversion of tense/lax front vowels, the monophthongization of /ai/, the caught/cot merger, the pin/pen merger,

fronting of /au/, and neutralization of vowels before /l/. These were features that had been observed in the state by earlier works like Bailey, Tillery, Wikle, & Sand (1993), Thomas (2001), and the ANAE. BTWS showed a pattern of hierarchical diffusion for the caught/cot merger with in the state, and as mentioned in Chapter 2, researchers from many parts of the country are describing the merger as expanding within the United States. Other features such as the pin/pen merger have been shown to be advancing or retreating, as with young Houstonians in Koops et al (2008) who appear to be unmerging. These changes must make us presume a dialect system(s) in flux – variation in Oklahoma has certainly occurred since the SOD work in the 90's, and variation is ongoing. The features described in Chapter 2 suggest likely places to observe change in progress, and so the tasks of the RODEO interview includeing the wordlist and reading passage were designed to track that change.

A reason for using both a wordlist and reading passage stems from the work of Labov (1966), which examined New Yorkers' deletion of post-vocalic /r/ in words like 'fourth' and 'floor.' Labov found that depending on the context on an interview task, speakers were more or less likely to drop their /r/'s. In tasks such as telling an exciting story (for example, 'a time you almost died,') speakers dropped /r/ more frequently, but in more careful tasks such as reading a list of words, their speech was more rhotic. He classed such tasks on a continuum from most formal to most casual: Reading a list of minimal pairs > reading a list of words > reading a story > responding to interview questions > telling a personal story. Labov acknowledged that this division of formality was arbitrary, saying 'it is not contended that … (these) … are natural units of stylistic variation: rather they are formal divisions of the continuum set up for the purposes of this study' (Labov 1966, p 112)

As such, although there is evidence that respondents may speak *differently* on various tasks, I am not going to categorize the tasks ahead of time. However, if we observe differences in speech between tasks I will discuss why this might be. The RODEO interviews did not include all of the tasks

described above – there was no minimal pairs list, for example. And although the interviews did include conversation and storytelling, I have chosen to focus this dissertation on the reading passage and word list tasks due to their consistency of token types. Particularly with vowels before /l/, I cannot expect that a respondent will helpfully provide a full set of representative tokens while telling a childhood story. Including the two tasks together then attempts to strike a balance – we have scholarly basis from Labov (and other work such as Trudgill 1974) that speakers may alter their style by task, but we also want a consistent set of tokens, even if those tokens don't occur frequently in conversation. The word list and reading passage together will offer the chance to look for variation across contexts while maintaining a consistent pool of tokens for each speaker.

Respondents were primarily recorded in the field, using a Tascam Dr680 Portable Digital Audio Recorder. In either case, the respondent wore a AT831b Audio-technica uni-directional clip-on microphone. All files were thus recorded digitally at 44,000 Hz and later down-sampled to 10,000 Hz. The recorded files were then analyzed using Praat (Boersma 2001). For both the wordlist and the reading passage, vowel formants were extracted via automated methods. With the wordlist, word and vowel boundaries were aligned manually on a textgrid in Praat, and then formants were extracted using a script written by Nancy Caplow and output to an Excel spreadsheet. Due to the time intensity of manual textgridding, the reading passage data were aligned using the FAVE-align online suite (Rosenfelder, Fruewald, Evanini, & Jiahong 2011), and then the formant values were extracted using the FAVE-extract component of the suite. In all cases, formant values with a bandwidth of over 300 Hz were excluded. Any time in this dissertation when an individual speaker's formant data are presented, these values will not be normalized. When considering speakers of both genders together, the data have been normalized using the NORM online suite (Thomas & Kendall 2007), employing the Labov ANAE method using Telsur G value.

As the FAVE suites are fairly recent developments, I will comment briefly on their implementation. They offered three primary benefits to this study – time savings, a broader scope of measurement, and a standardized method for establishing word boundaries.

The speed of analysis was drastically increased, even in comparison to using the Praat script. Aligning text grids manually in Praat for the WL tasks alone took hours of work a day for several weeks. Transcribing a respondent's WL or RP for FAVE took roughly ten minutes in comparison. As a single researcher, the volume of data that could be feasibly analyzed increased a great deal. Although the text grid alignment performed by FAVE was not flawless (vowel boundaries were sometimes marked too short), it was still much less time-consuming to make adjustments to a FAVE-aligned text grid than to build the grid entirely by hand. Nonetheless, FAVE's inconsistency with marking vowel durations made me reluctant to speak about them in this dissertation.

The FAVE-extract portion of the suite also saved significant amounts of time, and did not appear to be as prone to inconsistencies as the aligner. Because FAVE-extract tests each for varying numbers of formants and chooses the best values, I found that its F1, F2, and bandwidth measurements were comparable to those taken by hand in Praat. Tokens with unsalvageable bandwidths in FAVE looked equally terrible in Praat, and F1 and F2 measures were comparable. Further, FAVE provided measurements across the span of the vowel at 20%, 35%, 50%, 65%, and 80% points. I chose to use the 35% and 80% points to avoid as much interaction with onset and coda consonants as possible. Using two points also worked best with NORM, which plots using an onset and glide measurement.

All respondents discussed in this work are Caucasian Oklahomans who are native speakers of English. They were interviewed in the Fall of 2009 by members of Dennis Preston's *Learn to Speak Oklahoman* seminar, with the exception of Palmer and Skylar who were interviewed in 2012. All except for Skylar were born in the state and everyone has spent the majority of their lives there. RODEO aimed

to have as many people as possible whose parents were also Oklahoman, and this was done in consideration of studies such as Payne (1980) and Tillery (1997). Payne found that parents' being from Philadelphia was important to their children's acquisition of dialect features, and Tillery came to similar conclusions when studying the pin/pen merger in Oklahoma. For most respondents, both of their parents were from Oklahoma. Often, those parents not from the state were from bordering regions of Missouri, Kansas, or Arkansas. Of the respondents presented here, only Skylar had two parents who were not native to the state. Respondents such as Mr. White who left the state as adults for college before returning were not excluded, although those with large spans of childhood outside the state were not interviewed. Respondents were not asked about religion or Native American kinship, and were recruited with the aim of a balance based on sex, age, and location of their hometown. Although I have attempted to distribute respondents across these variables as evenly as possible in this dissertation, I am not going to presuppose grouping categories. I will note respondents' age, for example, but not sort them into age categories unless the data points to them as being relevant.

The question of hometowns being 'Urban' or 'Rural' will be handled similarly. Although cities like Tulsa and Oklahoma City clearly match most definitions of being 'Urban,' it is not necessarily clear that they should be grouped together. The two cities have different historical beginnings – Oklahoma City was founded by white settlers during the 1889 land run, while Tulsa was founded 50 years earlier by members of the Creek tribe. Oklahoma City's early economy was built on stockyards, and although it is now also a hub of petroleum and natural gas, its own oil fields were not discovered until 20 years after Tulsa's. Other Oklahoman cities like Stillwater are difficult to class as 'Urban' or 'Rural.' Stillwater is classified by the government as a Micropolitan Statistical Area, and although the population of this area (77,350) would meet the ANAE's 'Urban' requirement of 50,000 people, its population density would be insufficent. As such, while I have made an effort to include respondents from both large and small towns within Oklahoma, I am not going to offer a firm labeling system for them. If respondents from

particular areas appear to group together in their results (for example, everyone from X region or X population count), I will discuss this, but I will not otherwise presuppose any relationship between locations within the state..

The full list of the initial 2009 RODEO respondents is presented below in Table 1. Those at the top of the chart with a white background are discussed in detail in Chapter V. The other respondents with a grey background are not examined acoustically, but are included in the lexical item inventory in Chapter IV. Spaces left blank are due to not having that piece of information, either from the interviewer not asking the question, or the response being unclear. Two other respondents, Skylar and Palmer, were interviewed at a different time with a slightly adjusted instrument, and are presented separately at the end of Chapter V.

Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Hometown	Yrs in	Mother Res	Father Res	DOB	Occupation	Education
Beth	F	46	Watts	25	Watts		3/3/1963	Shelter Supervisor	BA
Jessica	F	22	Slapout	22	Alva	Slapout	3/25/1987	Student	College Sr.
Judy	F	56	Tulsa	50	Fayetteville, AR	Ft. Smith, AR	12/12/1952	Attorney	JD
Suzy	F	37	Stillwater	20	Medford	Alva	5/6/1972	Teacher	BA
Brian	M	25	Orlando	18	OK	Ponca City	4/23/1984	Pilot	MA
Hank	M	53	Yale		Yale		9/22/1955	Horse Trnr	HS
Jason	M	54	Tulsa	50	Tulsa	Douglass, KS	7/23/1955	Teacher	BA
Kramar	M	24	Broken Arrow	18	Kansas	Missouri	12/15/1985	Assistant Pre-K	Working on Bachelors
Mr White	M	35	Stillwater	35				Fin. Planner	MBA
Ray	M	39	Ada	17	Okemah	OK	9/18/1970	Dean	MA
Allison	F	42	Willow	19	Willow	Willow	8/6/1967	Phys Asst.	BS
Amanda	F	22	Alva	21	Alva	Alva	1/10/1987	Student	B.S.
Amelia	F	47	Henrietta	28	Henrietta	Henrietta	6/7/1969	School Cdnr	2 yr College
Ann	F	50	Sand Springs	50	Hodgins	Heavner	12/1/1958	Legal Sec.	HS
Dee	F	42	Stillwater	36	Jennings	Yale	2/4/1967	Store owner	HS Junior
Elena	F	34	Perry	20	Lamisa, TX	Welch, TX	12/7/1974	College Instructor	M.S.
Gidget	F	36	Bartlesville	35	McCalister	Bartlesville	11/17/1972	Counselor	Masters
Jurnee	F	27	Cushing		Cushing	Arkansas	9/18/1982	Receptionist	2 yr College
Laura	F	39	Henrietta	30	Mcfall	Henrietta	4/27/1970	Student	Grad Student
Rita	F	26	Fairfax	26	Fairfax	Fairfax	12/7/1982	Teacher	BA
Sara	F	56	Stillwater	51	Nebraska	Oklahoma	4/10/1953	Fam. Spprt.	BA
Sharon	F	56	Fairfax	50	Fairfax	Blanchard	8/27/1953	Direct Sales	Some college
Shirley	F	37	Henrietta	37	Midwest City	Midwest City	12/13/1972	School Dir	BA
Tater	F	45	Yale	25	Bristol	Italy	9/28/1963	Teacher	MA
Ben	M	45	Edmond	28	Bristo	Eng		Principal	MA
Eddy	M	29					8/8/1980	Student	Grad Student
John	M	60	Stillwater	38	Stillwater	Stillwater	6/29/1949	Self Empld	HS
Pedro	M	41	Stillwater	41	Stillwater	Chandler	5/25/1968	Landscaper	2 yrs college
Steven	M	19	Stillwater	19	Stillwater	Stillwater	9/23/1988	(future)	College Jr.
Tex	M	31	Edmond	29	Stillwater	Okl. City	4/18/1978	Student	HS in college
Tom	M	46	Yale	46	Cushing		8/5/1963	Welder	HS
Tomas	M	59	Orlando, OK	59	OK	Stillwater		Retired	2 yrs college

Table 1 – Full List of RODEO Respondents

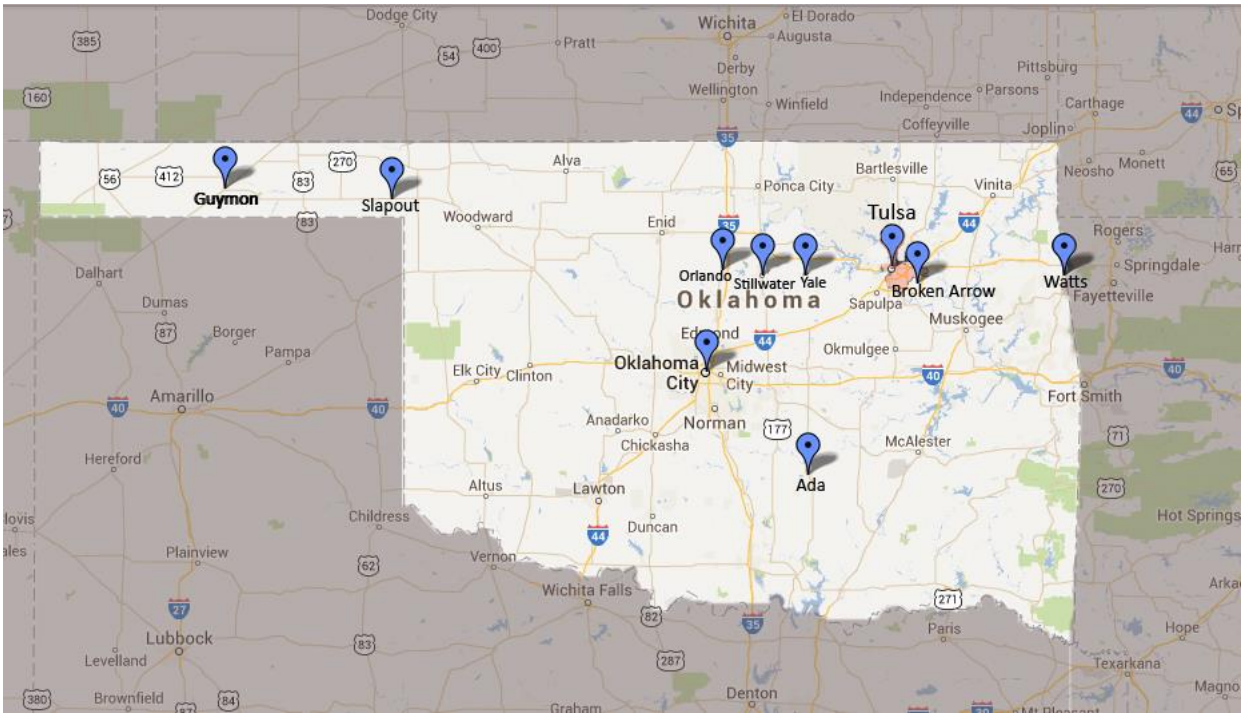


Figure 1 – Locations of Speakers' Hometowns (Adapted from Google Maps)

Figure 1 above shows the hometowns of the twelve speakers included in this study, marked with arrows. Most respondents are from central Oklahoma. Further RODEO work will expand the reach of the study over time.

CHAPTER IV

ATTITUDES SURVEY AND LEXICAL INVENTORY

4.0 - Introduction

Before considering the primary acoustic research of this dissertation, I will discuss two other tasks that were given to Oklahoman respondents. The first is a pilot survey that was given to undergraduate students at Oklahoma State University. The survey asked questions such as where Oklahoma was in relation to the rest of the United States, and whether the respondent considered themselves to be a typical Oklahoman. Although the survey was not a part of the recorded RODEO interviews, it does provide some insight as to how some of Oklahoma's young people are thinking of the state. The other task I will talk about in this chapter is a lexical inventory that was part of the standard RODEO interviews. Each respondent was asked about a series of regional words and phrases such as *fixin' to* and *y'all* and asked how well they knew them. The pilot survey and lexical inventory will give some insight as to local attitudes toward the state of Oklahoma, its people, and its speech. These will be related to the respondents' acoustic production in Chapter V, so as to offer some insight into the possible trajectory of a respondent's speech. For example, does the speaker comment that they are fond of how they speak? Do they feel ashamed and want to hide their 'accent?' Or do they simply think their speech is 'normal' and pay it no mind?

4.1 - Pilot Survey

As we saw in Chapter II, it is difficult to situate Oklahoma into a single cultural or dialect region. That said, it is clear that residents of the United States strongly stereotype based on speech and region, for example thinking of the North as brusque and the South as friendly (Niedzielski & Preston 2003). Depending on where Oklahomans position themselves within the country, this may affect their perceptions of cultural and speech norms. This in turn may affect how they speak, as they may seek to draw attention to features that they are proud of and hide features that they see as undesirable. To offer some earlier insight on this, The Survey of Oklahoma Dialects (SOD) asked Oklahomans which US region they thought the state belonged to, and their replies are shown below in Figure 1.

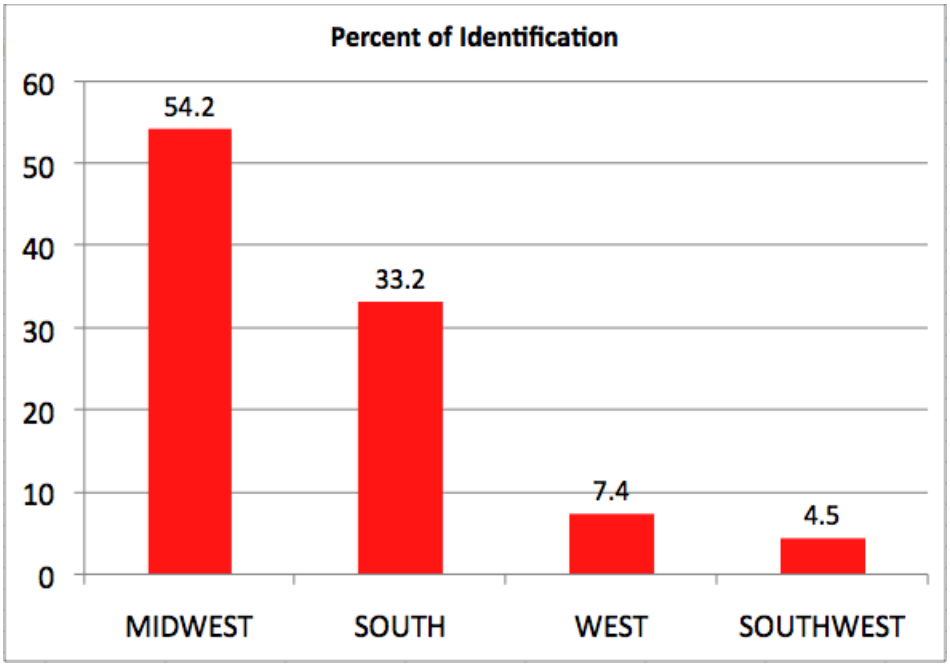


Figure 1 - % of SOD respondents (1991) Who Identified OK as Belonging to One of Four US regions (Tillery 1992: Figure 12)

The Midwest was chosen by the majority of respondents, with the South second, and the West and Southwest distantly behind. Rooney, Zelinsky, Louder & Vitek (1982) found similar results during their study in which they checked phone book business entries for regional names (ex: Midwestern Plumbing vs Southwestern Plumbing); the Midwest was again the most frequent region used.

Before the RODEO interviews began, a pilot study was given to composition students at Oklahoma State University to gauge their own assessments of regional identity (See Appendix G for the complete survey). Although these respondents comprise a limited age group, they nonetheless provide a more recent look at local attitudes toward Oklahoma. The data presented here will consider responses from 61 students, who all indicated being born and raised in the state.

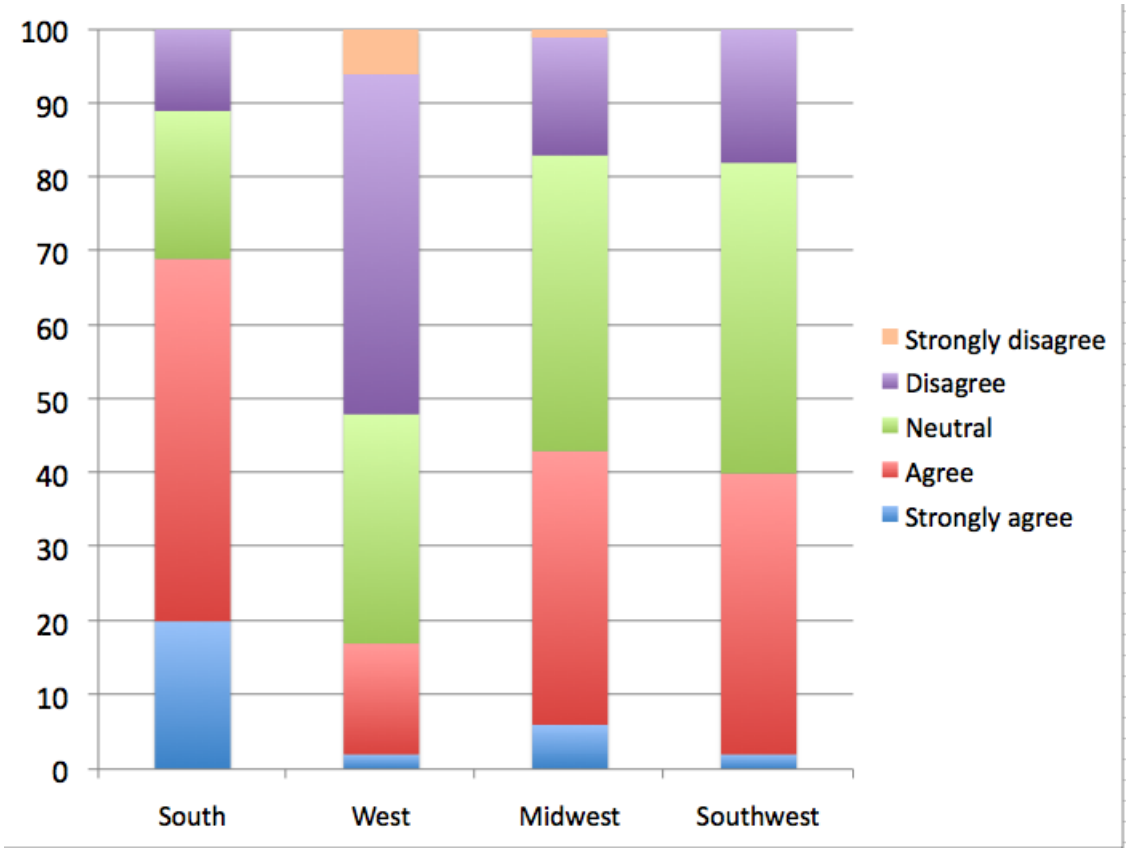


Figure 2 – "Oklahomans are a lot like people from the Midwest (West, South, Southwest)."

As can be seen above in Figure 2**,** students most strongly agreed with the idea of Oklahomans being like people from the South, with just under 70% of them agreeing or strongly agreeing with the idea (Though it is worth mentioning that these categories are not mutually exclusive – a respondent could agree to more than one). The Midwest received the next highest agreement, but only slightly more so than the South, and the majority of subjects disagreed that Oklahomans were like people from the

West. This is an inversion of the Midwest/South relationship shown by Tillery, and a more emphatic assertion of Southernness.

Respondents were asked a similar question – "Oklahomans speak like people from the…" and as can be seen below in Figure 3**,** gave similar replies:

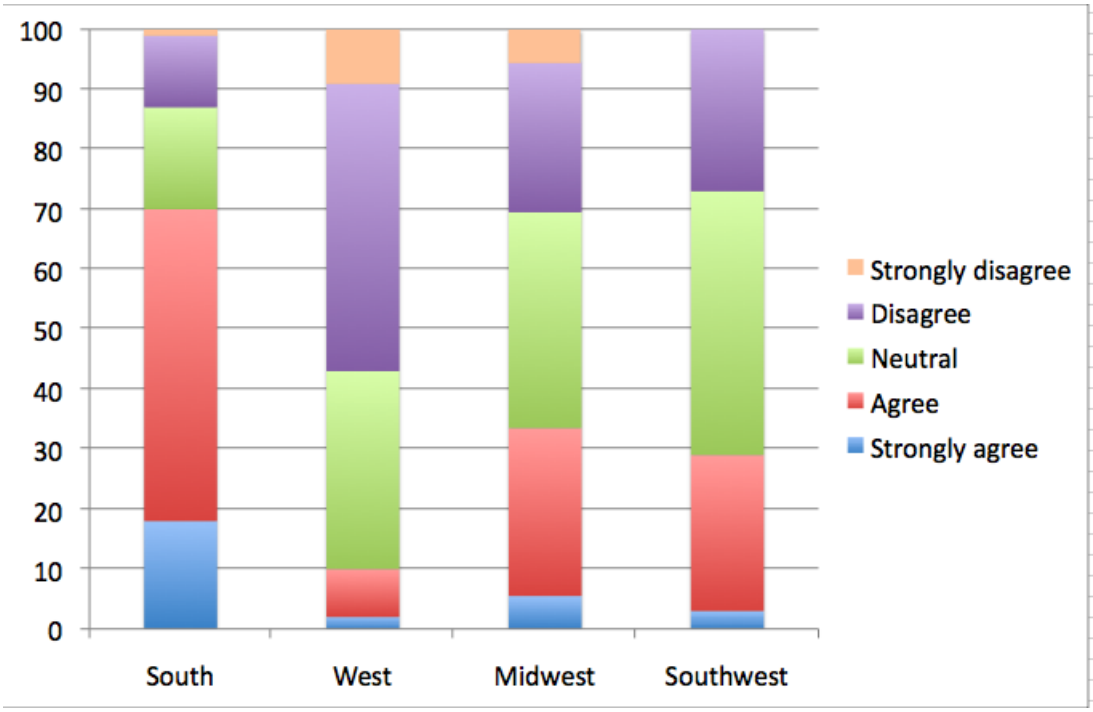


Figure 3 – ""Oklahomans speak like people from the Midwest (West, South, Southwest)."

Again, the respondents most strongly agreed with Oklahoman speech being like that of the South. The Midwest and Southwest again were agreed to less enthusiastically (and with a broad band of neutrality), and the West was rated 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' by a majority of respondents.

It is worth noting that the respondents were not given any sort of definition for these regions, nor were they given a map. Their impressions of what a speaker from the South sounds like or acts like is unknown, as is their estimation of the South's boundaries. They were given the opportunity, however, to describe their impressions of Oklahomans. The survey asked two questions: "I am a typical

Oklahoman," with a 5-point Likert scale of agreement, and "Write 5-10 words that you think describe a typical Oklahoman."

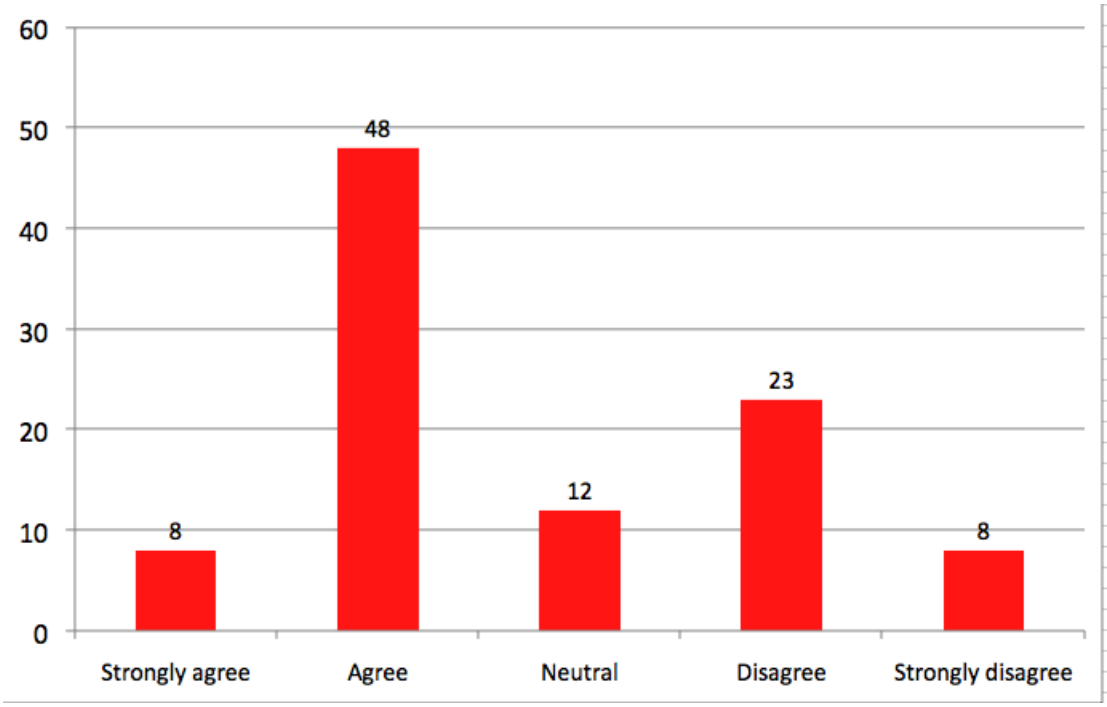


Figure 4 – Undergraduate Responses to "I am a typical Oklahoman." (Percentages)

Most notable in Figure 4 is that these responses include only the 60 subjects who are native Oklahomans. Despite being born and raised in the state, only 56% of them agree or strongly agree with the idea that they represent a typical Oklahoman. Further, nearly a third (31%) disagree or strongly disagree. Koops, Gentry, & Pantos (2008) found that young Houstonians appeared to be eschewing traditional regional identity by losing their pin/pen merger - these survey results could foreshadow a younger population that is not eager to self-identify with the region (which they have labeled most strongly as Southern).

More can be seen in how they identify the region by considering the adjectives they used to describe a typical Oklahoman. Dozens of unique adjectives were given, including 'Animal Lovers,' 'Hats,'

and 'BIG MAMA TRUCK,' and the most frequently-mentioned words are given below. Near-identical terms (Truck/Trucks) were grouped as one lemma.

Country - 35	Hick - 11
Friendly - 22	Conservative - 10
Cowboy - 19	Hard-Working - 10
Farm/Farmer - 16	Laid-Back - 10
Redneck - 15	Nice – 9

Table 1 – "Typical Oklahoman" Adjectives and Number of Occurrences

As can be seen in Table 1, 'country' was the most common response, followed by 'friendly.' Niedzielski & Preston (2003) have noted that attitudes toward the South can be mixed, and this table shows a similar case for Oklahoma. Being 'friendly' and 'nice' are almost certainly thought of in a positive light, but 'redneck' and 'hick' are almost certainly not. Some respondents even seemed to contradict themselves, with one including 'lazy' and 'hard-working' in the same list. Although we cannot know each respondent's positive/negative association with each word, we nonetheless are given some insight as to their impressions of the typical Oklahoman.

These student respondents appear to share the impression that Oklahoma has much in common with the South, both in its culture and speech. At the same time, they appear reluctant to self-identify as Oklahoman, even if they have lived in the state for their entire lives. This may be due to some of the pejorative terms they associate with the state – they may not wish to think of themselves as 'rednecks' or 'hicks.' This in turn may make them more reluctant to employ Southern features in their speech. In the next section, I will discuss what some of these features might be, and in later chapters, I will compare reading passage and word list results. Labov (1994) considers a word list task to be among the most formal, and we will see evidence that some Oklahomans suppress some of the Southern features of their speech during this more careful task.

4.2 - Lexical Inventory

This task is similar to some of the SOD and ANAE work in which respondents were asked about their vocabulary of regional words. The acoustic data from the ANAE that we saw in Chapter 2 was from a wordlist task, but respondents were also asked about lexical items with questions such as "What is the general term you use for a carbonated beverage in your local area?" (Labov, Ash, & Boberg 2006, p 33). Such questions have been used by dialect geographers as a way to describe dialect boundaries. As we can see with carbonated beverages in Figure 5 below, lexical variation can pool in particular areas.

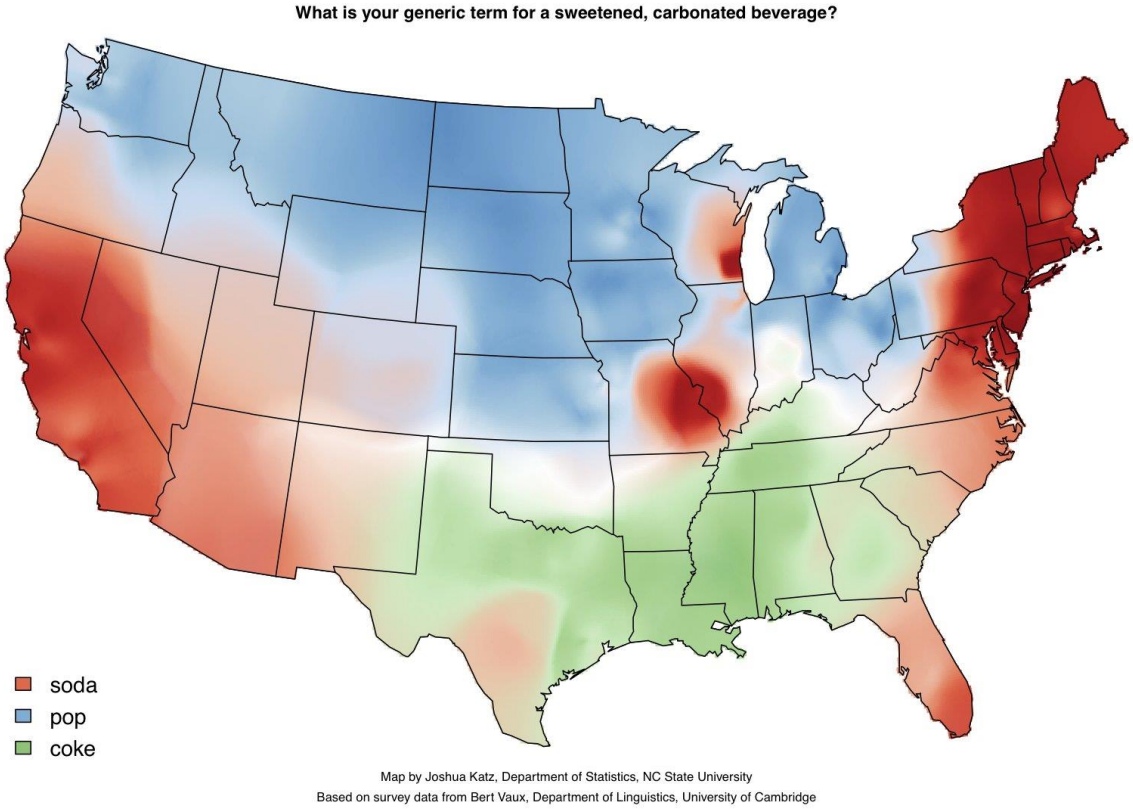
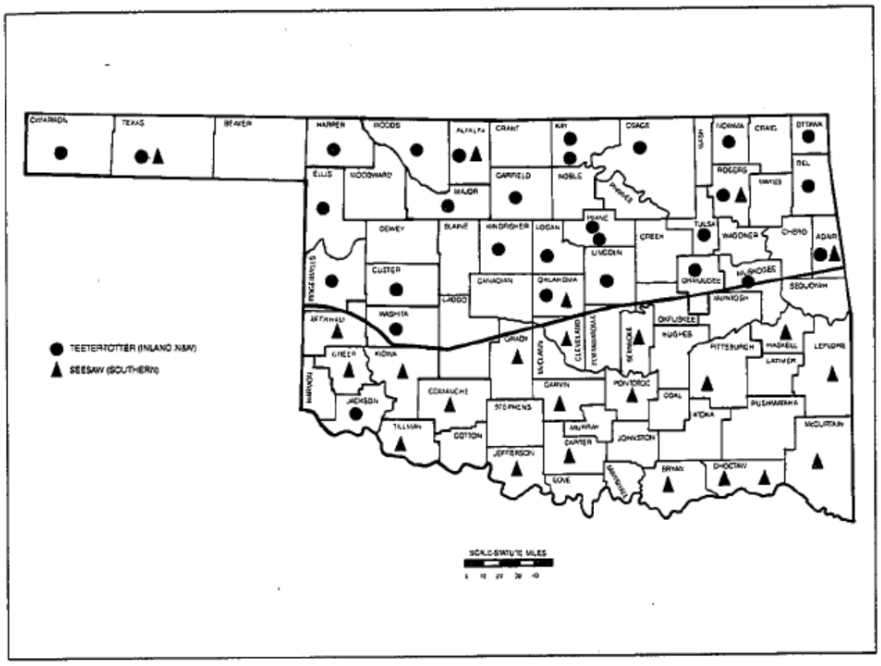


Figure5 – Regional Variation for the Generic Term for Carbonated Beverages from Katz (2013)

As can be seen in Figure 5, the terms for such beverages can be described in general terms and more specifically. *Pop* is dominant in the northern and Midwestern portions of the country, *soda* is the primary term on the coasts, and *coke* is used mainly in the South. We can also see isolated pockets –

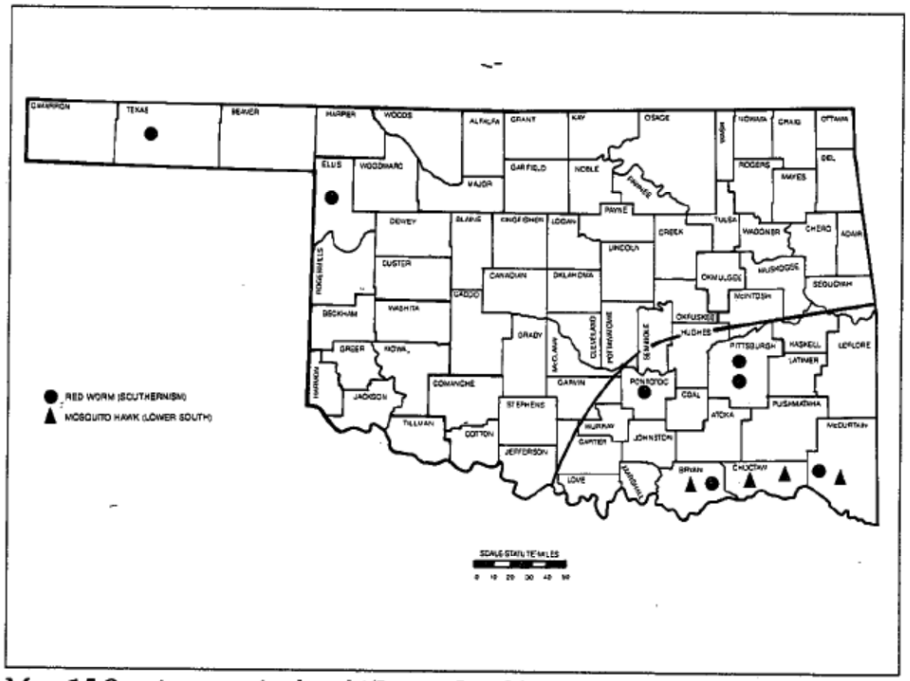
soda flares up in Milwaukee and St. Louis, which are otherwise in *pop* territories. While one map such as this cannot describe the dialect behaviors of an entire region, many of them in aggregate can begin to establish possible dialect boundaries based on commonly-shared terms.

This sort of work has been pursued in and around Oklahoma for some time, including Atwood (1962)'s study of Texas and neighboring areas, the SOD work done by Bailey, Wikle, Tillery and Sand, and the phone surveys of the ANAE. As we can see in Figures 6 and 7 below, regional lexical items in Oklahoma do not have a uniform geography:



Map 15.1. ○ teeter-totter (Inland N & W) △ seesaw

Figure 6 – Distribution of *Teeter-totter* and *Seesaw* in Oklahoma (Southard 1993: 230)



Map 15.3. △ mosquito hawk (Lower South) ○ red worm (Southern/South Midland)

Figure 7 – Distribution of *Mosquito Hawk* and *Redworm* in Oklahoma (Southard 1993: 233)

In Figure 6 we see the use of Northern *teeter-totter* localized primarily to the north side of the state, while Southern *teeter-totter* is used primarily in the south half of Oklahoma. Figure 7 shows the Southern terms *redworm* and *mosquito hawk* (for a dragonfly) being used mostly in the southeastern portion of Oklahoma.

Lexical maps can supplement acoustic data by offering another dimension of comparison. For example, if Oklahomans in an area were not using Southern acoustic features but were using Southern regional terms, we might conclude that there was still a Southern influence even if it was not presenting itself acoustically. Lexical items can also aid in predicting future trends – if Midlands dialect features and lexical items were both prominent in a particular region or age group, we might infer that speakers were trending in that direction.

With this in mind, the RODEO project interview included questions about regional words. The full lexical inventory task is presented in Appendix F. During this part of the interview, respondents were asked about 25 different lexical items and asked to report if:

a) I say it b) I don't, but I've heard it c) never heard it.

The words for the task were selected based on words used by Atwood (1962), and the SOD. Based on these works, 15 terms were classed as being 'Southern,' meaning that they are primarily used in Southern dialect regions. These 15 are presented below in Table 2:

y'all	might could	branch
fixin' to	liketa died	pully bone
see-saw	a-working	redworm
get to talking	snap beans	mosquito hawk
dirt-dauber	dived	snake doctor

Table 2 – Southern Lexical Inventory Terms

These primarily included nouns such as *branch* (for a small stream/creek), *pully bone* (a wishbone), *redworm* (earthworm), but also included double modals like *might could* and grammatical constructions like *get to talking*.

In all interviews, the task was presented orally, with the interviewer reading aloud each question and then asking the respondent for their answer. Each respondent was then given a Southernness score based on their knowledge of the terms. Each term they reported using was scored as 3 points, each that they'd heard was 2, and each they'd never heard was given 1. With 15 terms, this would make the highest Southernness score 45, and the lowest 15.

A similar three-point scoring mechanism was assigned to the lexical items themselves as a way to gauge how well the word was known by RODEO respondents. . With 31 total respondents answering the questions, this makes the highest score for a word 93, and the lowest 31.

4.2.1 - Respondents

Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Urb/Rur	Total	Use	Heard	None
Rita	F	26	Rur	**39**	11	2	2
John	M	60	Urb	**38**	9	5	1
Dee	F	42	Urb	**37**	8	6	1
Tater	F	45	Rur	**36**	10	1	4
Hank	M	53	Rur	**34**	8	3	4
Amanda	F	22	Rur	**34**	8	3	4
Steven	M	19	Urb	**34**	6	7	2
Jurnee	F	27	Rur	**33**	8	2	5
Tom	M	46	Rur	**33**	7	4	4
Brian	M	25	Rur	**33**	7	4	4
Tomas	M	59	Rur	**32**	7	3	5
Tex	M	31	Urb	**32**	6	5	4
Allison	F	42	Rur	**32**	6	5	4
Sharon	F	56	Rur	**32**	6	5	4
Amelia	F	47	Rur	**32**	6	5	4
Elena	F	34	Rur	**32**	5	7	3
Beth	F	46	Rur	**32**	5	7	3
Ray	M	39	Rur	**31**	5	6	4
Laura	F	39	Rur	**30**	2	11	2
Ben	M	45	Urb	**29**	5	4	6
Mr White	M	35	Urb	**29**	3	8	4
Sara	F	56	Urb	**29**	3	8	4
Ann	F	50	Urb	**29**	2	10	3
Jason	M	54	Urb	**28**	5	3	7
Judy	F	56	Urb	**28**	3	7	5
Jessica	F	22	Rur	**27**	5	2	8
Gidget	F	36	Urb	**27**	4	4	7
Suzy	F	37	Urb	**27**	4	4	7
Pedro	M	41	Urb	**27**	4	4	7
Kramar	M	24	Urb	**26**	1	9	5
Shirley	F	37	Rur	**23**	3	2	10
Average				**31**	**6**	**5**	**4**

Table 3 – Lexical Inventory Southernness Scores

On the lexical inventory, the overall mean Southernness score for RODEO respondents is 31/45, and the median score is 32/45. The highest score was Rita with 39, and the lowest was Shirley with 23. Every respondent was at least aware of a majority of the terms – even Judy, who has lived her life in Tulsa. High scores were generated primarily through active use of the lexical items – while it would be

possible to score 30 without using any of the terms oneself, few people followed such a pattern. Laura and Ann had the highest scores for 'heard' of 11 and 10 respectively, but everyone in the top 5 used more than 50% of the terms themselves. The RODEO respondents who scored high thus did so due to their own active use of these terms, not simply hearing them. Even the lowest scorers usually still had 3-4 terms on the list that they used personally. The generally robust scores for all respondents suggest that Southern lexical terms are healthy among the Oklahomans surveyed.

On an individual level, we can see that some respondents matched their intuitions of their speech (Or at least, self-reported dialect usage in a way that matched). Hank, who described his speech as Southern, was one of the highest scorers on the lexical inventory, and was second only to Rita in the number of terms he used personally. He was also the only person that had 'snake doctor' in his active vocabulary. On the other end of the spectrum, when Kramer was asked if he spoke like an Oklahoman, recall that he replied 'I hope not.' In his interview he expressed a great deal of linguistic insecurity, and commented a lot on how 'other people' talk. Accordingly, he himself only uses five of the terms, although he expresses awareness of an additional fourteen. His score on the lexical inventory demonstrates the care that he takes with his accent – he is aware of what would make him sound 'like a hick,' in his words, and diligently avoids it.

We might have posited that there would be a correlation between higher age and use of Southern terms (for example, from the young Houstonians in Koops et al (2008) who appeared to related Southernness with age), and there is evidence for that here. The top five highest scorers have an average age of 45.2,, and no one in the bottom lowest scorers is over 41 (Their average age is 35). However, while two of the oldest men in the study are in the top five scorers (John, Age 60 and Hank, Age 53), the highest scorer is 26-year-old Rita. Gender among the top 10 is an even split, but the lowest scorers are largely women, 8 of the bottom 10.

4.2.2 -Awareness of Lexical Items

Word	Total	Used	Known	None
quarter til	**92**	30	1	0
y'all	**88**	27	3	1
quarter to	**84**	24	5	2
fixin' to	**83**	21	10	0
see-saw	**82**	21	9	1
get to talking	**81**	21	8	2
quarter of	**76**	16	13	2
cherry seed	**72**	18	5	8
dirt-dauber	**70**	14	11	6
might could	**68**	8	21	2
liketa died	**67**	9	18	4
a-working	**64**	10	13	8
snap beans	**64**	9	15	7
dived	**63**	9	14	8
I have ran	**60**	9	11	11
he come over	**59**	4	20	7
my brother (who)	**58**	6	15	10
branch	**58**	7	13	11
positive anymore	**57**	5	16	10
I've done	**56**	2	21	8
pully bone	**52**	6	9	16
redworm	**49**	6	6	19
mosquito hawk	**39**	3	2	26
snake doctor	**37**	1	4	26
snake feeder	**33**	0	2	29

Table 4 - Lexical Inventory Words, Sorted by Score

We can see here that the scores for words distribute differently than the scores by speaker, with the highest possible score a 93, and the lowest a 31. While words such as *y'all* and *fixin' to* appear to be very widely used, some of the words here are overwhelmingly reported to be unknown. *Snake feeder* (a term for a dragonfly) doesn't have a single person who reports using it themselves, and only two respondents report having ever heard it. It avoids the lowest possible score by only two points, and this suggests that the term is virtually extinct in Oklahoma. The other dragonfly terms *mosquito hawk* and *snake doctor*, fare little better. Hank is the only speaker who reports using *snake doctor*, and *mosquito*

hawk fares little better with only three reported users. The other two members of the bottom five, *pully bone* and *redworm*, are in much better shape, comparatively. *Redworm* is reported to be known or used by 12 respondents, *pully bone* by 15. While these two terms are probably also not thriving in Oklahoma, they are not completely gone.

Above the bottom five, the level of awareness jumps considerably. Every term above is reported to be known by at least 20 people, even if it is not in wide use. I believe there is reason to be suspicious of the scores for some of the terms like "I've done went" and "he come over" which had a high level of awareness but a low number of attested users. Such terms appeared to many respondents to be 'bad grammar,' and the alternate conjugations of verbs or alternations of syntax appeared to be salient – people like Kramer were quick to point these terms out as how 'other people' or 'hicks' spoke. Definitional terms like *branch* or *snap beans* did not appear to carry the same stigma when respondents spoke about them – they made more neutral comments like 'my mom says that' and respondents less often with disbelief if presented with an unfamiliar term.

As a group, the best known terms were *quarter to/til/of*, with two of them in the top 5 most used. *Quarter to* was used by 30 of 31 respondents, and was the best known of the entire inventory. The top 5 items were extremely well-known and used, with only four total instances of someone not having heard a term. *Y'all* and *fixin' to* were thought by many respondents to be ubiquitous throughout the state, and so far their impressions appear correct – both are widely used. Everything including *dirt-dauber* and above appears to be in quite active use – there is a noticeable decline below, with only *a-workin* showing double digits for people who use it themselves. The words appear to thus be divided into three subdivisions – an upper echelon of nine terms that the respondents use freely, a middle territory of terms that some of them use but many have heard of, and a bottom five of terms that appears to have largely died off.

4.4 Summary

Having considered the survey and lexical item task, we can see that Oklahomans report themselves as having much in common with the South, without necessarily sharing everything. The majority intuition reported is that Oklahomans speak and act like people from the South, but this was by no means unanimous. The impressions in this chapter match those of the "Where's George" experiment, which showed the tightest connection with western Arkansas, a weaker connection to Missouri and Kansas, and a barrier between Oklahoma and Texas. This appears similar to the survey results in which the respondents ranked the South best and the West lowest in similarity to Oklahoma. This appears to be a change from the SOD's finding that respondents believed Oklahoma was most like the Midwest, but is not otherwise a major re-ordering of things.

The lexical inventory similarly suggests that Southern terms are healthy in Oklahoma, but not used by all. More old-timey terms such as *snake doctor* and *pully bone* are not surviving, and respondents exhibit some unease with using Southern terms, especially those indicative of 'bad grammar.'

As we continue into our study of acoustic production, we will keep these attitudes in mind – many Oklahomans in this sample appear to express and influence from the South but do not necessarily embrace it with open arms. We will see if this carries through in their speech patterns as well.

CHAPTER V

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES AND DISCUSSION

5.0 – Opening Remarks

Having now considered some of the history of Oklahoma and possible social and dialect influences on speech within the state, we will now examine acoustic results from twelve respondents within the state. Our goal will be to look for elements of dialect that prior researchers have noticed, and also to see if we find anything new or unexpected. Are the mergers and shifts described in Chapter II indeed salient to describing the modern-day speech of Oklahoma? Are respondents aware of or reacting to any of them? Are the trajectories predicted (such as advancement of the caught/cot merger from cities into rural areas) indeed coming to pass?

For each speaker, I will discuss some of their life and background within the state of Oklahoma and consider their local attitudes and social network. I will show acoustic data from their wordlist and reading passage tasks, and also present relevant responses from the map-drawing and lexical comprehension tasks. Based on several of these individual dialect portraits, we shall then hypothesize possible common ground in the speech and attitudes of Oklahoman speakers.

Each respondent will be presented in the same fashion – a brief biography followed by their acoustic results. All data will be presented non-normalized, with all results segregated by Wordlist (WL) or Reading Passage (RP) tasks. The acoustic results will consist of an overall chart of mean scores that

will consider the elements we identified in Chapter II as the Southern Shift and fronting of back vowels. All such charts will exclude vowels from several environments, as per Labov 1994:

> - *vowels preceded by glides /y/ and /w/ as in you, cute, we, twice. These glides profoundly affect the position of the nucleus. It is also very difficult to distinguish the end of the glide from the beginning of the nucleus.*
> - *vowels before /l/ as in goal, sell, gold, sullen. In general, the effect of a following /l/, particularly in a syllable coda, is to lower F2 drastically, but it may also affect F1.*
> - *vowels following obstruent-liquid clusters as in grab, block, tree. These have the most profound effect in lowering both F2 and F1, since the liquid actually forms part of the nucleus (as opposed to a simple initial /l/ or /r/, which has a much smaller effect).*
> - *vowels before /r/. Tautosyllabic but the effect of intervocalic /r/ in merry, marry etc. is also considerable, and should not be used in the calculation of means.*
>
> *- From Labov (1994)*

The charts of overall means will also exclude KIT and DRESS vowels before nasals, which are discussed separately below as Pin/Pen environments.

Several of these excluded environments will be considered later in isolation, such as vowels before /l/. Pin/Pen environments will be examined in their own charts and their mean scores will be presented with each respondent's DRESS/KIT means. The caught/cot merger will also be examined, but not separately plotted. The presence of the mergers will be tested with an independent two-sample t-test, as used in Herold (1990) and Majors (2005). PRICE tokens will appear on the complete mean charts, but will also be plotted separately to allow for comparison of final consonant environments. Vowels before /l/ and PRICE tokens will be not be presented as mean scores, due to the small number of elicited tokens. Each word will appear on the plot separately.

5.1 – Presentation of Individual Respondents

5.1.1 - Hank – Male, 53, Yale

At the time of being interviewed, Hank was 53 years old. He is a horse trainer in Yale, OK, where he has lived almost his entire life. Yale is located in Payne County between Stillwater and Tulsa and had a population of 1,227 as of the 2010 census (United States Government). Yale's demographic composition per the census is 87.63% white, 6.93% Native American, with the most of the remainder reporting as being of mixed race. Hank lived in Yale until age 17, when he dropped out of high school

and joined the military. He mentions having 'worked on the road,' but otherwise has resided in Yale. The majority of his family lives nearby – he has five brothers and sisters, all of whom live in town. He puts the number of family members in town as 'at least ten,' and also works with his nephew. Everyone in his family lives somewhere in Oklahoma, except for one niece who lives in California. Like many Oklahomans, he is of mixed Caucasian and Native American ancestry – he reports that some of his ancestors arrived on the Mayflower, but that some of his great grandparents came to Oklahoma through the Trail of Tears. He does not mention their tribal background.

When asked about his speech and the speech of Oklahomans in comparison to the rest of the US, he says the 'Accent is totally different.' When asked to elaborate, he added "We have a drawl. People from the North talk too fast. … Most of us talk slow – People from the South." Hank more than once relates Oklahomans and their speech to the South, and does the same for himself. "When I hear myself on a recording, it sounds to me like I'm from Georgia or Alabama." Asked what a Georgia accent sounds like, he says "More Southern." He reports being self-conscious of how he speaks, but mostly because of stuttering when he was younger. Hank's intuition of sounding like a Southerner appears well-grounded – he displays a wide variety of Southern features in his speech, many of which do not appear in the speech of other RODEO respondents. For example, he says *wash* as /wɑɹʃ/ and *business* as /bɪdnəs/. On the lexical survey, Hank scored high in his knowledge and use of Southern terms with a score of 34/45. He reported using 8 of the 15 words, including terms that many respondents had never heard, such as *branch* and *pully bone*. He was also the only person who reported using *snake doctor*.

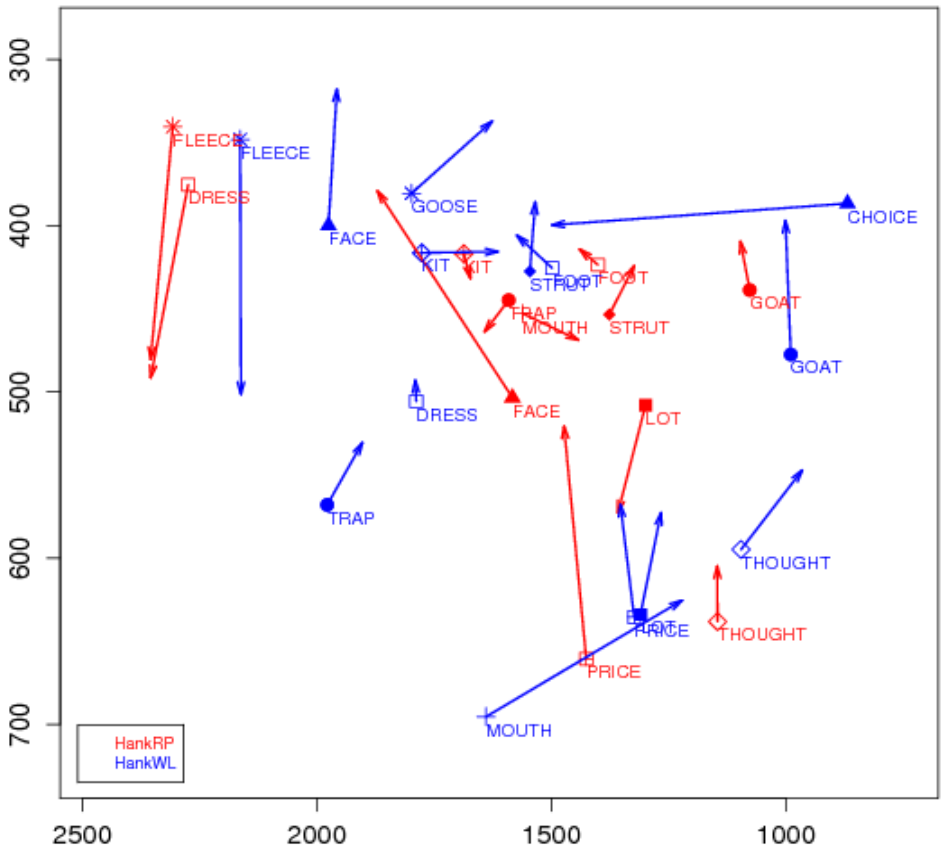


Figure 1 – Hank WL & RP Mean Scores, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE		WL				
b. FOOT	RP	WL				
c. GOAT					RP	WL
d. MOUTH			RP	WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE				WL	RP	
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS		RP				WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/						WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/		WL				
b. Pin/Pen Merger	RP	WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger					RP	WL

Table 1 – Hank Feature Chart

I will begin the discussion of Hank's vowels more generally and then move into more specific contexts. First, in considering Southern Shift features, Hank displays a pattern in his front vowels that we will see again with other subjects. His high front vowels are not inverted in a Southern Shift style in either the WL or RP contexts. On the WL, he keeps a more standard configuration of FACE and DRESS and does not invert them. DRESS is not used with a glide, and FACE is produced as a diphthong with a high onset. On the RP, however, DRESS and FACE are inverted in a Southern Shift fashion. DRESS begins near FLEECE and is pronounced as a glide. Although only the WL had usable tokens of GOOSE, we see that these are fronted along with FOOT. GOAT is not, matching the predictions of (Thomas 2008). THOUGHT and LOT do not appear merged on the WL, but there are not enough tokens to test. They are not merged on the RP (F2@35% $p < .003$). Hank's THOUGHT vowel features a Southern upglide in both contexts, which has been suggested as preventing the merger. All of Hank's MOUTH tokens are fronted in comparison to his LOTs, and his RP tokens are noticeably higher than on the WL, as can be seen below in Table 2.

Speaker	vowel	word	F1@35%	F2@35%	F1@80%	F2@80%
HankRP	MOUTH	AROUND	536.6	1602.6	525.4	1436.6
HankRP	MOUTH	OUT	453.2	1448.3	485.8	1452.6
HankRP	MOUTH	DOWN	368.8	1632.1	395.2	1438.1
HankWL	MOUTH	HOW	742.9	1652.5	437	1178
HankWL	MOUTH	CLOUD	637.5	1548	573.6	1305.6
HankWL	MOUTH	LOUD	674.4	1611.2	666.5	1027.9
HankWL	MOUTH	OUT	726.4	1747.4	824.1	1374

Table 2 – Hank Individual MOUTH Tokens

As we saw in Chapter 2, Thomas (2001) suggests that this raising of MOUTH close to TRAP is a strongly Southern feature, more so than simply fronting.

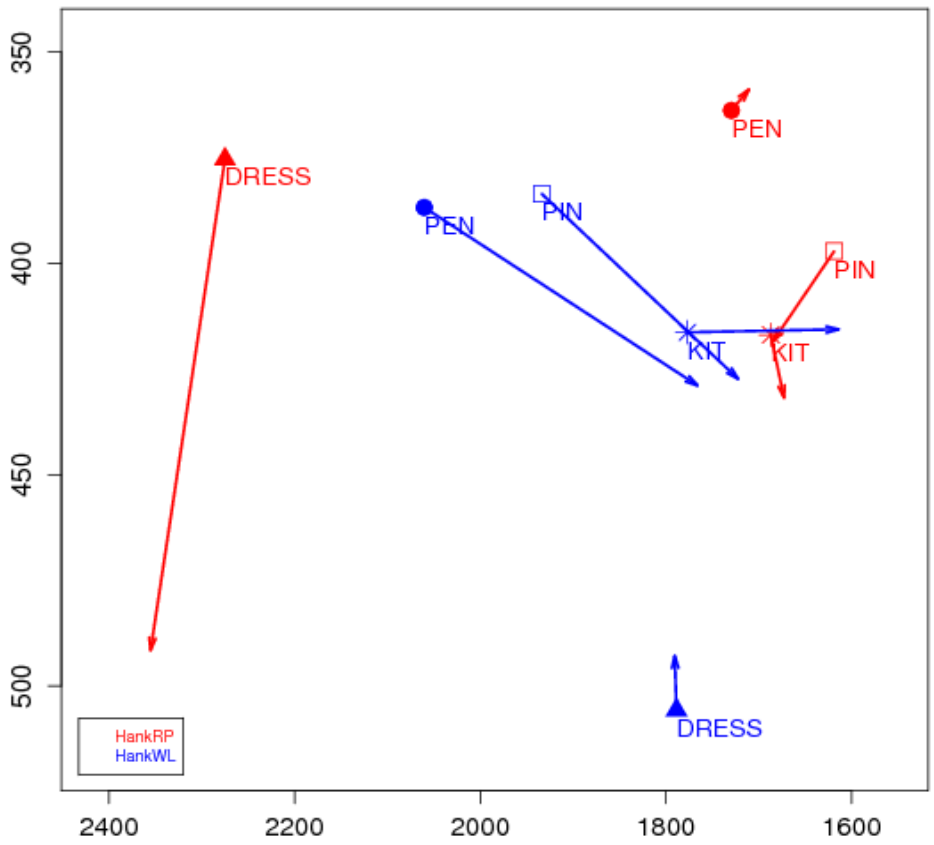


Figure 2 – Hank Pin/Pen Mean Scores, Non-Normalized

As can be seen above in Figure 2, Hank has the pin/pen merger. For reference, on this and future such charts, the 'DRESS' and 'KIT' points on the chart represent Hank's mean scores for non-pin/pen tokens. In both the RP and WL, there was no statistically significant difference between his PIN and PEN mean scores.

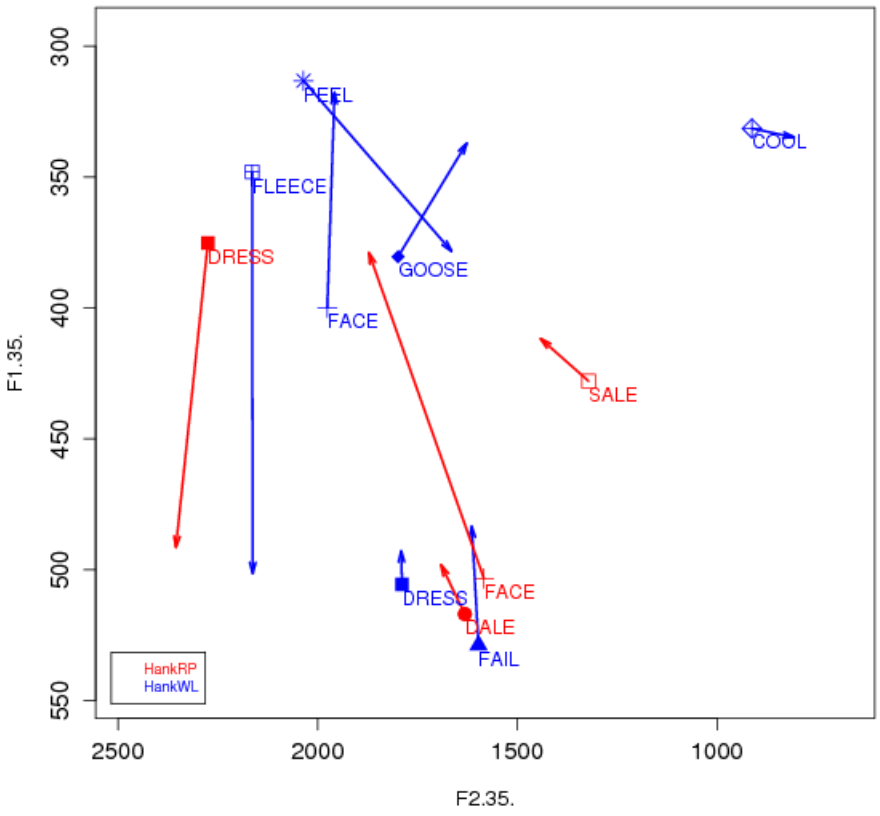


Figure 3 – Hank Vowels Before /l/

For vowels before /l/, Hank appears to have mixed results. In comparison to his normal GOOSE and FACE vowels, his pronunciation of *cool* is drastically backed, and *sale* is centralized. *Peel* does not become *pill*, however, and *Dale* (a misreading of *Dave*) and is not noticeably different from his regular FACE tokens. His WL token of *fail* is lowered and backed in comparison to his WL FACE mean, putting it in the territory of his (Southern Shifted) FACE RP tokens.

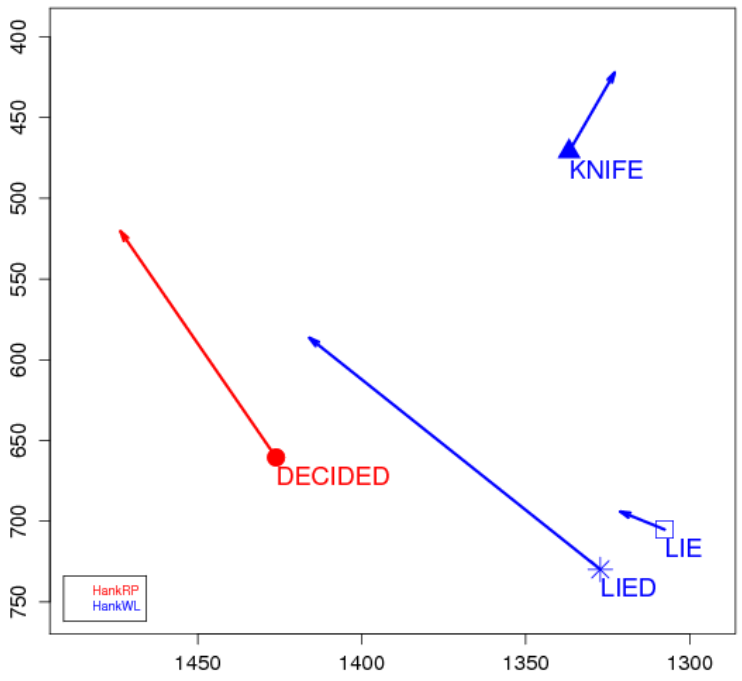


Figure 4 – Hank PRICE Tokens

Hank's production of PRICE also varies – *decided and lied* appear weakly diphthongal; whereas, *lie* and *knife* are monophthongs. Although the low number of usable PRICE tokens from Hank's data limits our look at his system as a whole, we can nonetheless see in Figure 4 that he produces more than one example of monophthongal PRICE while reading the WL Task.

Overall, Hank exhibits many dialect features associated with the South, several of which most other RODEO respondents do not use. In the RP task, he inverts his FACE/DRESS vowels in a Southern Shift fashion (but not FLEECE/KIT). He uses inclusive /r/ in *wash*, fronts GOOSE and FOOT while not fronting GOAT, he has the pin/pen merger, and exhibits use of monophthongal PRICE in Southern contexts with words like *lie* and *knife*. He does not have the caught/cot merger, and he also has a Southern upglide in his THOUGHT vowel. On the RP with MOUTH, he again uses a more strongly Southern form – not simply fronting the vowel but raising it near TRAP as well. His previous intuition that he talks like a Southerner does not appear out of place.

5.1.2 - Beth – Female, 46, Watts

At the time of her interview, Beth was 46 and working as a supervisor at a homeless shelter in Tulsa. She lives in Tulsa, although she was born in the small town of Watts, close to the Arkansas border. Her grandparents and parents lived in Oklahoma, and she mentions the family residing in Talequah before moving to Watts. She lived in Watts through high school, and then went to college for a bachelor's degree in art. After finishing school, she moved to Sunnyvale, California to work in a frame shop. She recalls this as being the first time she'd realized that she spoke differently than people in the rest of the country. In the interview she describes being stared at by customers, not knowing why until her manager told her 'Wow, you really have a Southern accent!' 'He basically told me I sounded like a hick,' she remarks, and this comment appears to have strongly colored her attitudes toward Oklahomans' speech.

When asked what Oklahomans sound like, she says 'Very hick-like. … We butcher the language.' She also expresses reluctance at using the words mentioned in the lexical survey – she admits to using only 5 of the 15 Southern terms herself. She attests to having heard others use 7 of them, and the remaining 3 she is unfamiliar with. Despite her similar small town upbringing to Hank (Watts is even smaller than Yale with only 324 people), she attests to using fewer of the terms presented in the survey. Beth's network composition is also much more isolated than Hank's – whereas he had numerous family members and neighborhood acquaintances living nearby in Yale, Beth reports having no family in Tulsa and not seeing members of her neighborhood in her workplace. She nonetheless seems quite pleased with Tulsa, describing how a trip to the grocery store is now a two-block drive instead of a 15-mile trip to Arkansas. When asked if young people speak like typical Oklahomans, she echoes Tillery (1997)'s thought that being a 'native' Oklahoman is crucial to that, and suggests that the speech of young people

depends on their family and upbringing. Her Southernness score on the lexical inventory was 32, slightly above average.

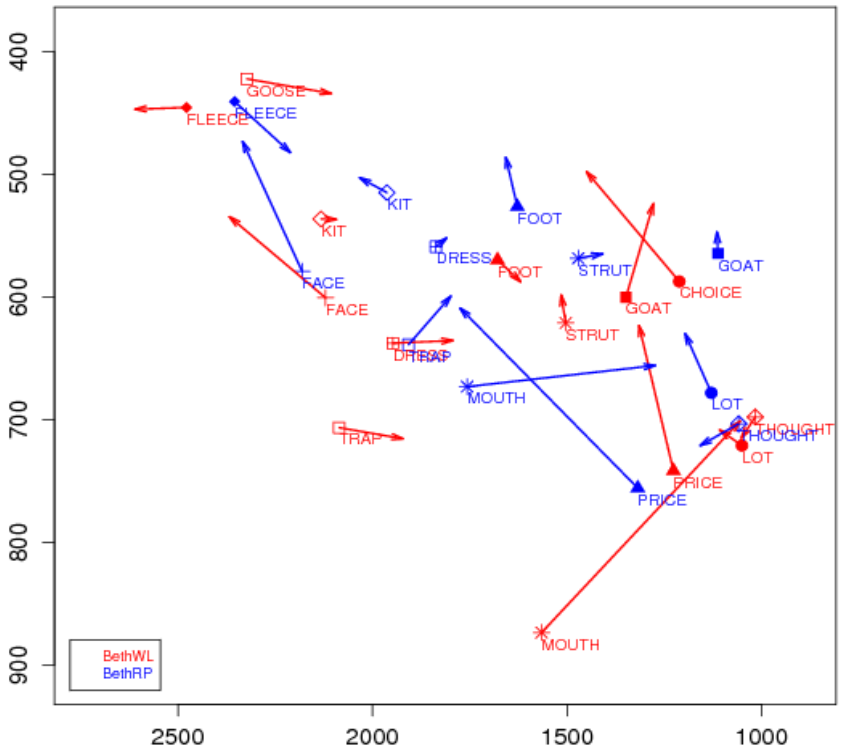


Figure 5 – Beth WP & RL Mean Scores, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE		WL				
b. FOOT	RP	WL				
c. GOAT				WL	RP	
d. MOUTH			RP	WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE					RP	WL
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS			RP			WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/	RP					WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/	RP	WL				
b. Pin/Pen Merger	RP	WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger		WL	RP			

Table 3 – Beth Feature Chart

Looking at Figure 5, we can see some similarities to Hank in Beth's vowels. Like Hank, she does not invert her FLEECE/KIT vowels, and she follows a similar pattern of inverting the FACE/DRESS pair on the RP only. Unlike Hank, she does not use a glide for DRESS in any context. She fronts GOOSE and FOOT while leaving GOAT backed, and also fronts MOUTH. Like Hank, MOUTH is raised nearer to TRAP on the RP task, but is kept very low on the WL. she has the caught/cot merger on the WL, but on the RP she does not (F1@80% $p < .02$). Unlike Hank, her THOUGHT vowel does not have an upglide in either context

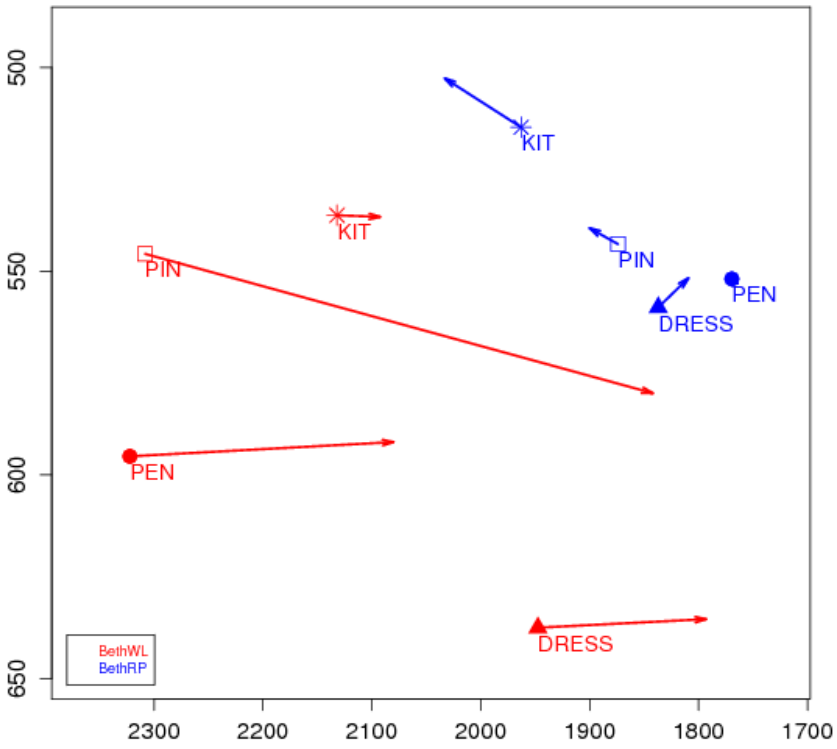


Figure 6 – Beth Pin/Pen Mean Scores, Non-Normalized

Above in Figure 6, Beth exhibits the pin/pen merger in both contexts (no statistically significant difference between F1 or F2), although more visibly in the RP. Beth's vowel space is more generally expansive on the WL task, and so this may explain the greater distances between both WL Pin/Pen and KIT/DRESS.

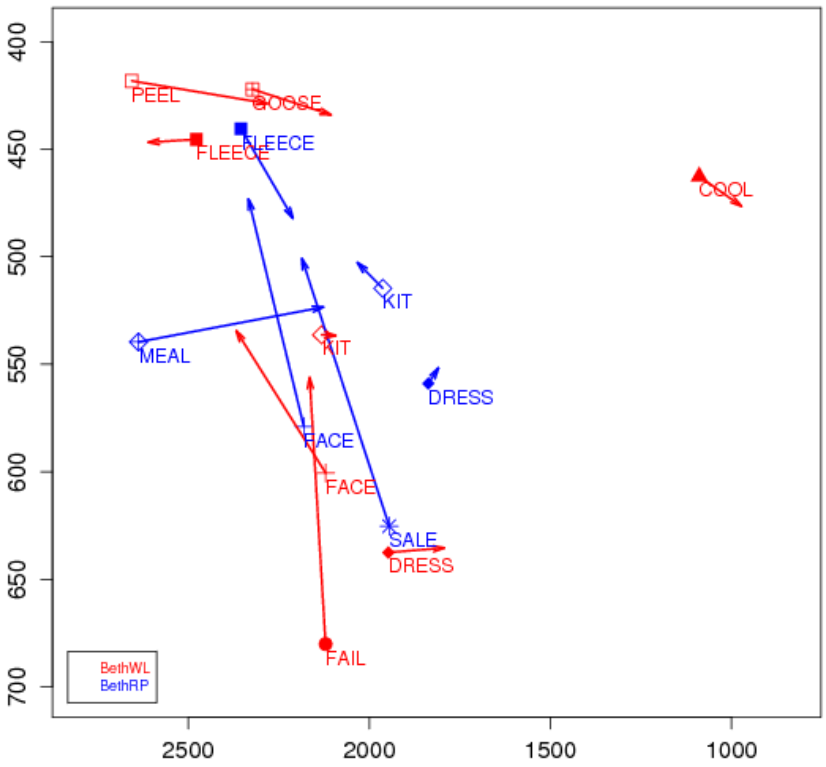


Figure 7 - Beth Tokens Before L, Non-Normalized

For vowels before /l/, Beth does not lower *peel*, but lowers *meal* into KIT territory. Both WL *fail* and *sale* on the RP are lowered into DRESS territory, and like Hank, she does not front *cool* in a similar fashion to her normal fronting of GOOSE vowels.

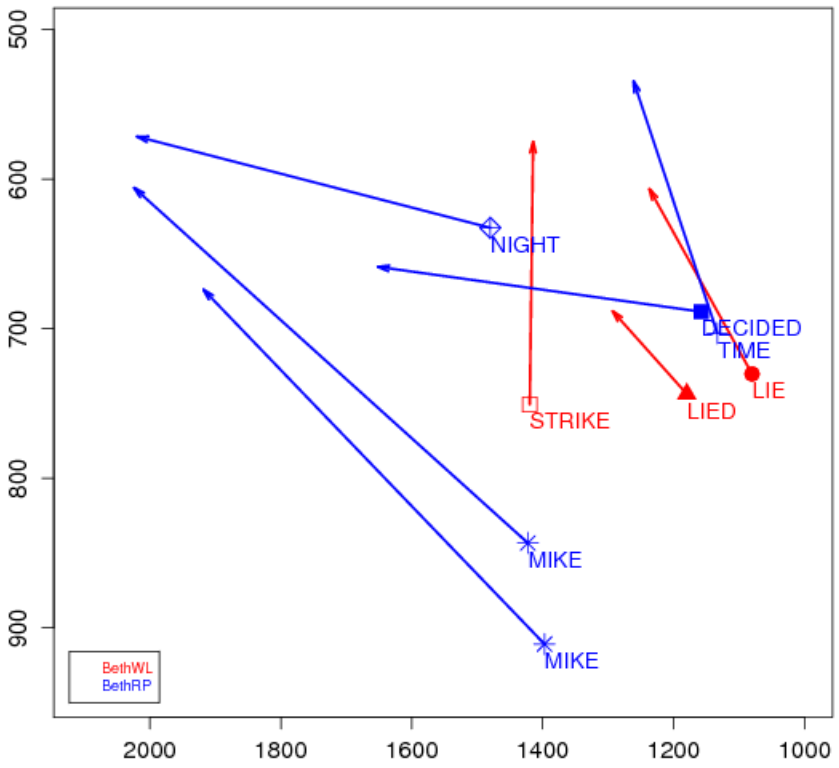


Figure 8 – Beth PRICE Tokens

For her tokens of PRICE, Beth generally uses a diphthong, although weakly so on her WL tokens of *lie* and *lied.* *Mike* and *night* both include voiceless codas, and so a Southern pronunciation would expect these to be diphthongal, which they are.

Overall, Beth exhibits many of the Southern features that Hank displayed, but does not so completely line up with the South. She shows the Southern Shift for FACE and DRESS, fronts GOOSE and FOOT, retracts some vowels before /l/, has the pin/pen merger, and occasionally monophthongizes PRICE. Unlike Hank, she uses the caught/cot merger, and her THOUGHT vowel has no upglide – both of these indicating a more mid-western influence.

5.1.2.2 Beth Imitation

During her interview, Beth offered an unusual sample. After reading the RP task, she commented to the interviewer "I was hoping you'd ask me to read this the way that I thought real, down-home Southern Oklahoma ... like my brother-in-law." The interviewer took her up on this, and she read the RP a second time with an exaggerated accent. The vowel chart of these paired readings can be seen below in Figure 9.

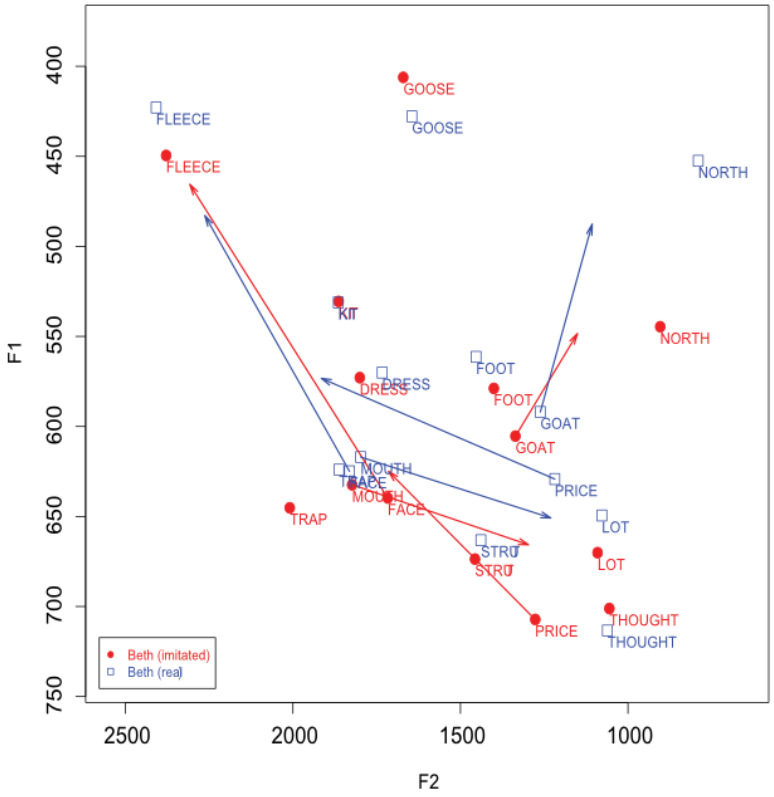


Figure 9 – Beth Real and Imitated Mean Scores (From Bakos & McBride 2012)

From a visual inspection of the plot, there are very few noticeable differences. The Southern traits that linguists would point to do not appear to be amplified in any way – FLEECE and KIT remain in a P&B-like configuration, PRICE remains diphthongal, and she still evinces the cot/caught merger. The Southern features shown in Figure 9 do not appear any more strongly or weakly – GOOSE and FOOT are

still fronted and FACE/DRESS are still inverted. MOUTH remains fronted and raised near TRAP. As can be seen below in Tables 4 and 5, paired T-tests of vowels from real and imitated samples did not show statistical differences in any cases except for the THOUGHT and FACE vowels.

Monophthongal Vowel Quality Means (F1 and F2 in Hz)

		Real		Imitated		Differences[a]	
Vowel	N	F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2
TRAP	6	624	1863	645	2009	R < I	R < I
LOT	10	649	1078	670	1090	R < I	R < I
DRESS	13	570	1734	573	1801	R < I	R < I
FLEECE	9	423	2408	449	2378	R < I	I < R
KIT	14	531	1864	531	1863	I < R	I < R
THOUGHT	4	713	1061	701	1056	I < R[b]	I < R
FOOT	3	561	1453	579	1400	R < I	I < R
STRUT	8	663	1439	674	1457	R < I	R < I
GOOSE	2	428	1645	406	1670	I < R	R < I
NORTH	2	452	790	545	904	R < I	R < I

Notes: *a* Values in the differences columns are expressed in terms of proportions of Real (R) versus Imitated (I)

b Statistically significant ($p < 0.001$)

Table 4 – Real and Imitated Mean Scores Comparison - McBride (2013)

Diphthongal Vowel Quality Means (F1 and F2 in Hz)

		Real		Imitated		Differences[a]	
Vowel	N	F1	F2	F1	F1	F1	F2
Onsets							
PRICE	5	629	1218	707	1277	R < I	R < I
MOUTH	3	617	1798	632	1825	R < I	R < I
FACE	6	625	1831	640	1717	R < I	I < R[b]
GOAT	4	592	1262	605	1336	R < I	R < I
Offglides							
PRICE	5	573	1915	625	1715	R < I	I < R
MOUTH	3	651	1230	666	1297	R < I	R < I
FACE	6	483	2263	466	2308	I < R	R < I
GOAT	4	488	1107	548	1151	R < I	R < I

Notes: *a* Values in the differences columns are expressed in terms of proportions of Real (R) versus Imitated (I)

b Differences are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$)

Table 5 – Diphthongal Real and Imitated Mean Scores Comparison - McBride (2013)

These results suggest that for Beth, the most salient differences between her normal speech and an exaggerated 'down-home' accent may not be acoustic. Despite her strong and repeated negative attitudes of an Oklahoman accent, her imitation of it is not noticeably different from her regular speech. McBride (Forthcoming) looked to see if the two samples were different in any meaningful way, and found the following:

10.4% increase in mean utterance length
5.5% increase in mean intensity
6.2% centralization of FACE vowel onset
1.7% raising of THOUGHT vowel
0% realization of [ING] as –ing

Beth also made several lexical shifts. She reduced words like *remembered* and *going to* to *'membered* and *gonna,* and also substituted terms such as *Wal-Mart* to *Wally World.* But as for acoustic markers like the Southern Shift or monophthongal PRICE, they were unchanged in her 'down-home' imitation.

5.1.3 - Judy – Female, 56, Tulsa

At the time of her interview, Judy was 56 years old and working as an attorney. . She has her Juris Doctorate and lives in Tulsa. She has lived in Tulsa all of her life and has enjoyed it a great deal. She reports that all of her friends live in Tulsa, and her parents as well. Her father was born in Alton, Oklahoma, and her mother is from Fort Smith, Arkansas, a border town with Oklahoma. Before she was born her family lived in Fayetteville, Arkansas and moved to Tulsa for better job opportunities.

When asked about how Oklahomans speak, she says that they talk slower and 'have a bit more of a vanilla accent,' particularly in comparison to people from Boston and New Jersey. She comments that people she's met from there ask her if she's from Louisiana. Her own opinion is that she 'talks pretty similar to other Oklahomans, but might have more of a Southern sound because of my parents coming from Arkansas.' She notes that because of extended family from Arkansas, she learned at a young age that not everyone speaks the same. When asked about local differences, she thinks that young people may talk differently from adults, but it would depend on where in the state they're from. She comments that men swear and use double negatives more often, and points out the southeast area of the state as somewhere that has 'more of a drawl.' Judy had a somewhat low Southernness score on the lexical inventory, scoring a 28/45. She attested to using only three of the 15 lexical items.

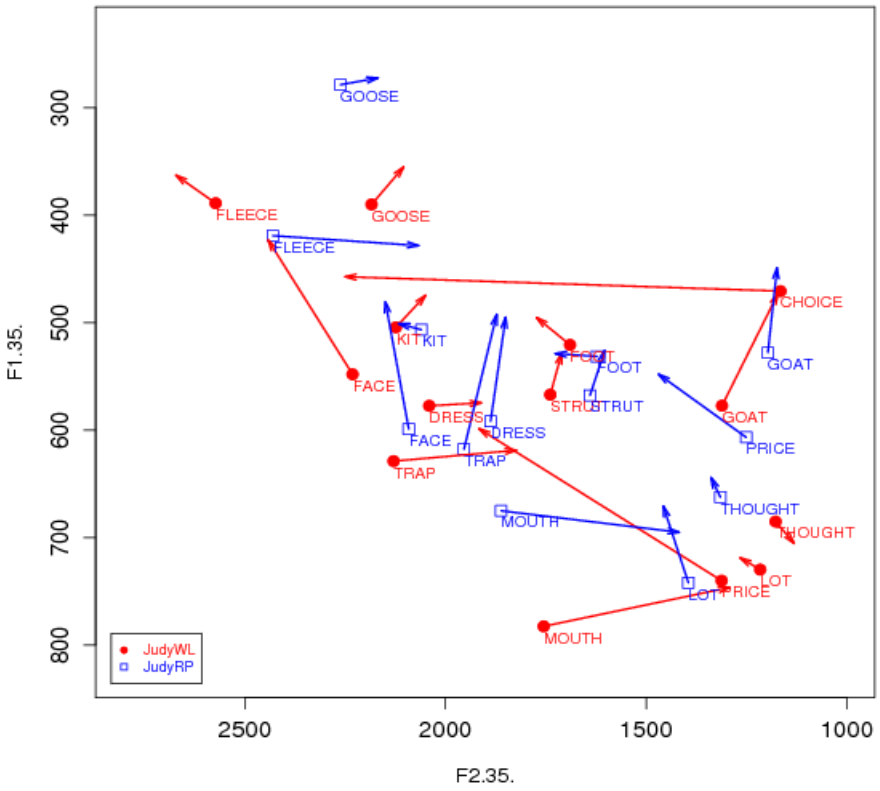


Figure 10 – Judy WL & RP Means, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT			RP	WL		
c. GOAT					RP	WL
d. MOUTH	RP			WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE			RP			WL
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS			RP			WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/	RP					WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/	RP			WL		
b. Pin/Pen Merger		WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger						WL

Table 6 – Judy WL & RP Mean Scores

Judy displays a vowel pattern similar to Beth's. Her WL plot is larger than her RP, and like Beth she shows no signs of Southern Shift, except for FACE and DRESS' slight inversion on the RP. She fronts GOOSE and FOOT in both tasks, but does not front GOAT in either. She fronts MOUTH in both contexts and raises it in the RP. She does not have the caught/cot merger on the WL (F1@35% $p < .04$). Her RP did not have enough usable tokens to test. Her THOUGHT vowel does not have an upglide on the WL and does so only slightly on the RP.

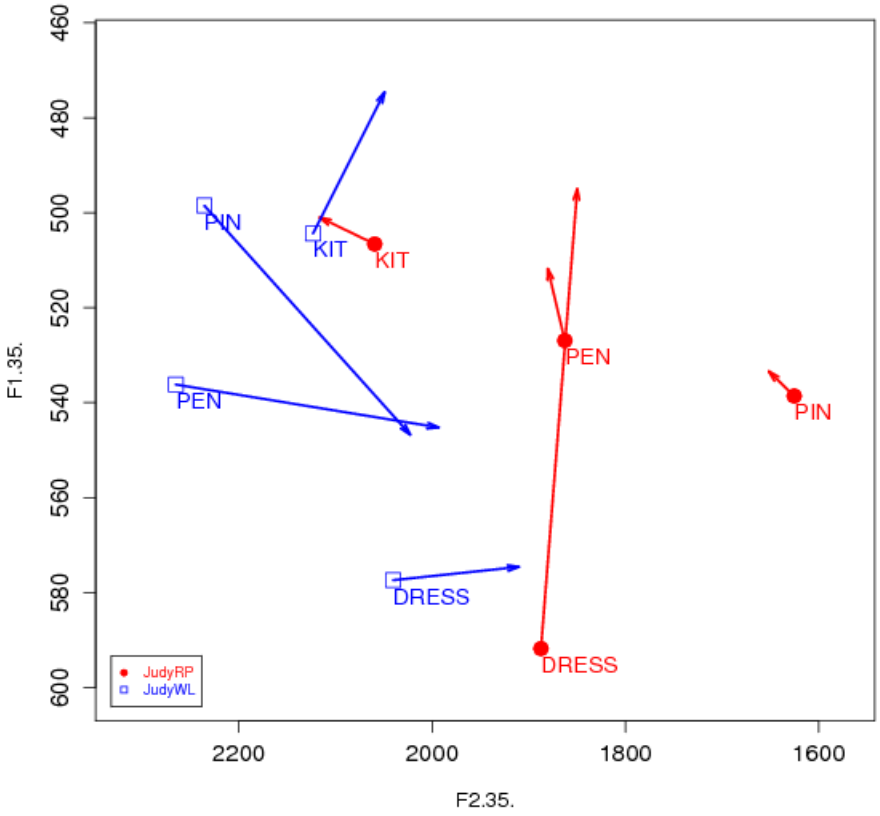


Figure 11 – Judy Pin/Pen Means, Non-Normalized

Judy only had one usable token of PIN on the RP, and so it was not possible to run a T-Test. Her WL scores are not statistically significantly different from each other, suggesting she has the merger.

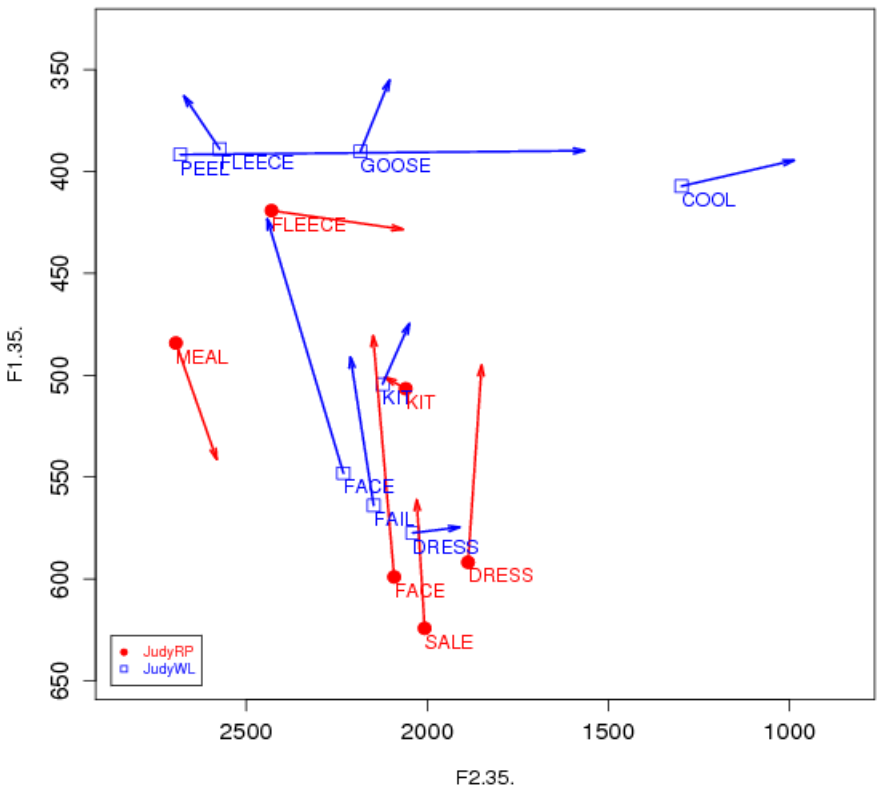


Figure 12 – Judy Tokens Before /l/, Non-Normalized

Like other respondents, Judy backs *cool*, keeps *peel* in her normal FLEECE territory, and lowers *meal.* *Fail* is lowered compared to FACE, but in both tasks her FACE and DRESS vowels are very near to each other. *Sale* is lowered below FACE.

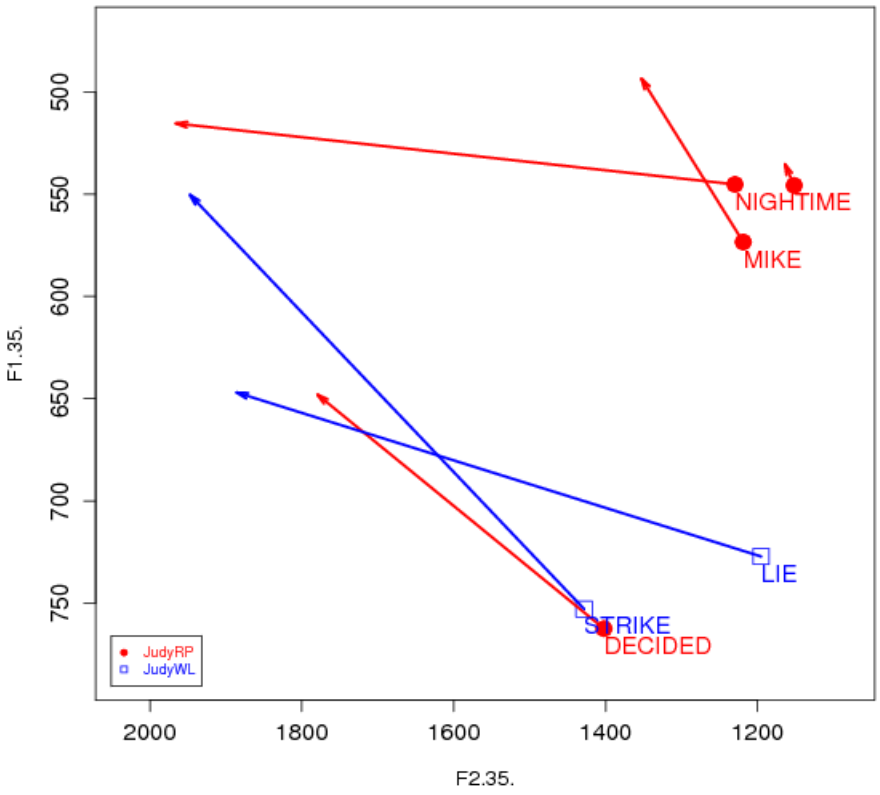


Figure 13 – Judy PRICE Tokens, Non-Normalized

Judy uses diphthongal PRICE in all cases except for *time*, in which she uses virtually no glide at all. The glide in WL *Mike* is weak in comparison to WL *night* and *decided*.

As we will see later in the chapter, Judy patterns with Jason (also from Tulsa) on virtually every feature. She does not appear to use strong Southern features in her speech, although it is possible that context has an effect - several such features appear on her RP task only. For example, on the RP she inverts FACE/DRESS and raises MOUTH. Further, her WL tokens before /l/ do not lower, but RP *meal* and *sale* do. She shows weakened glides for PRICE in the RP words *time* and *Mike*, while both WL tokens have strong glides. It is surprising that she does not have the caught/cot merger on the WL task, as this runs counter to the SOD's prediction of the merger diffusing from the two major cities. This is also one of the few features that she does not share with Jason.

5.1.4 - Suzy – Female, 47, Stillwater

When interviewed, Suzy was 47 years old and working as a teacher in Stillwater. As of the 2010 census, Stillwater is a city of 45,688. As the home of Oklahoma State University (OSU), Northern Oklahoma College, and the Meridian Technological Center, the city is strongly invested in education. With 20,000 students at OSU and a strong manufacturing presence, Stillwater has a regular influx of population that is less common in other areas of the state. Suzy has her Bachelor's degree and has lived in Oklahoma for her entire life, with the longest period being 20 years in Stillwater. Both of her parents are from small towns in Oklahoma – her mother from Medford and her father from Alva. She remarks that she is 'pretty sure we've always been here in Oklahoma.' She does not have family in Stillwater, but does spend time with local neighbors and co-workers. When asked the best part of living in Oklahoma, she answers that it is 'a close-knit community … a good place to raise kids.' When asked what it was like growing up, she says 'we were outside all the time.'

When asked to describe how Oklahomans speak, she simply says 'Normal.' When the interviewer presses her, she elaborates with 'Normal, plain-spoken.' She mentions Oklahomans using 'y'all' and having a 'hick dialect,' but linguistic insecurity does not seem to be on her mind. Unlike many subjects who discovered their accent by being told they spoke differently, she talks about hearing someone from Louisiana and making fun of *them* for their accent. She treats that state's speech as largely uniform – she says no when asked if children speak differently, and does the same when asked about men vs. women. She does suggest that areas near Texas are 'more Southern,' and closer to Arkansas are 'more hick.' She sees herself as speaking like a typical Oklahoman.

Suzy's Southernness score on the lexical inventory was one of the lowest, a 27/45. She reported using only four of the terms, and seven she had never heard. This is high in comparison to most respondents, who on average had only not heard four.

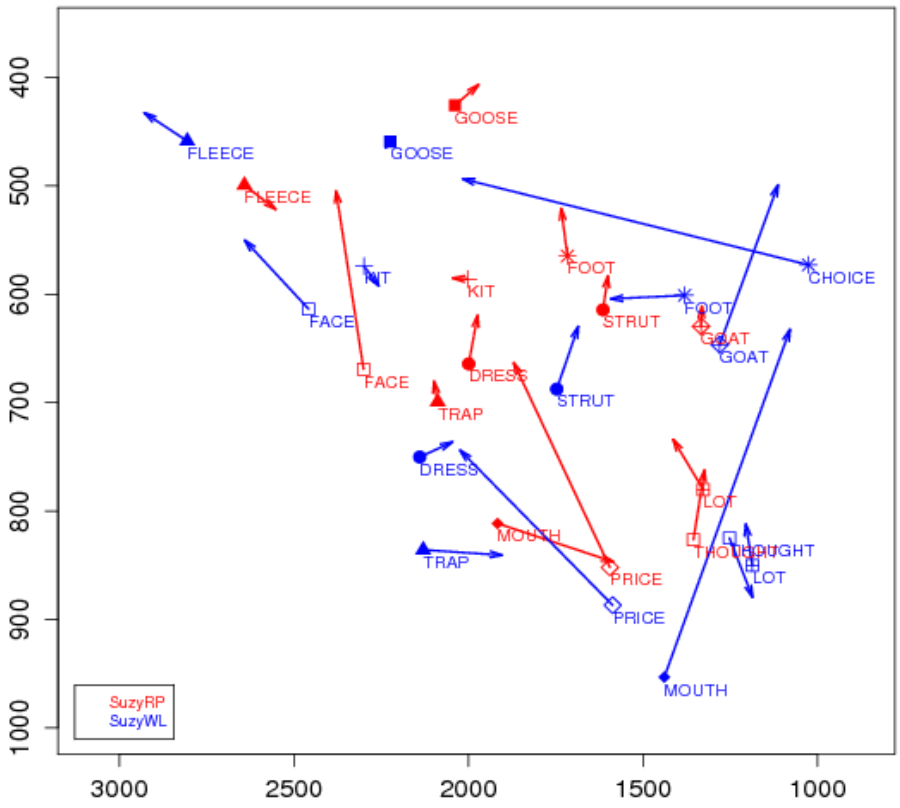


Figure 14 – Suzy WL & RP Mean Scores, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT	RP			WL		
c. GOAT					RP	WL
d. MOUTH			RP	WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE					RP	WL
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS			RP			WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/			RP			WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/			RP			WL
b. Pin/Pen Merger	RP	WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger	RP	WL				

Table 7 – Suzy Feature Chart

Suzy again follows the pattern we've seen of using a more expansive vowel space for the WL than the RP. For her Southern Shift vowels, she follows Beth's pattern of not inverting FLEECE/KIT in any context, and inverting FACE/DRESS on the RP only. She does this only slightly by a difference of 5 Hz, but it this is a noticeable departure from her WL, where the F1 of FACE is a full 150 Hz higher. She fronts MOUTH, but more noticeably on the RP. She does not raise it toward TRAP in either context. GOOSE is fronted in both tasks, FOOT is again fronted more strongly on the RP and barely so on the WL. GOAT does not front in either case. Finally, Suzy has the caught/cot merger, with her RP THOUGHT vowel showing only a minor upglide.

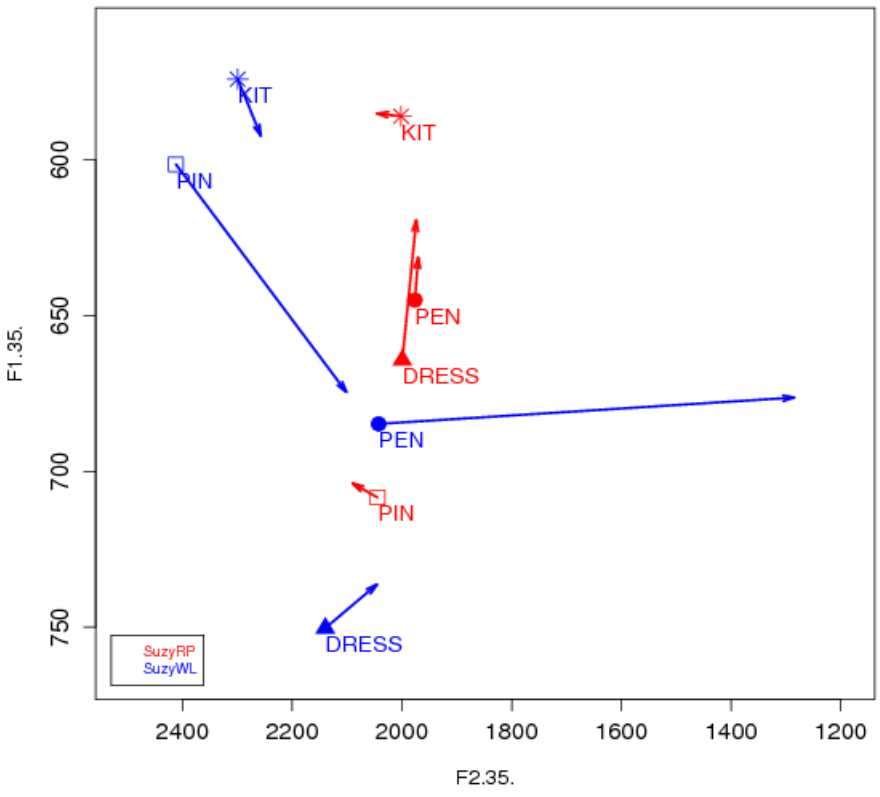


Figure 15 – Suzy Pin/Pen Means, Non-Normalized

Suzy comes close to not having the pin/pen merger, but her mean scores are not significantly different from each other (F1@35 p = .06, F1@80 p= .1, F1@80 p= .055). Her WL PIN and PEN tokens include strong glides, but her RP tokens do not.

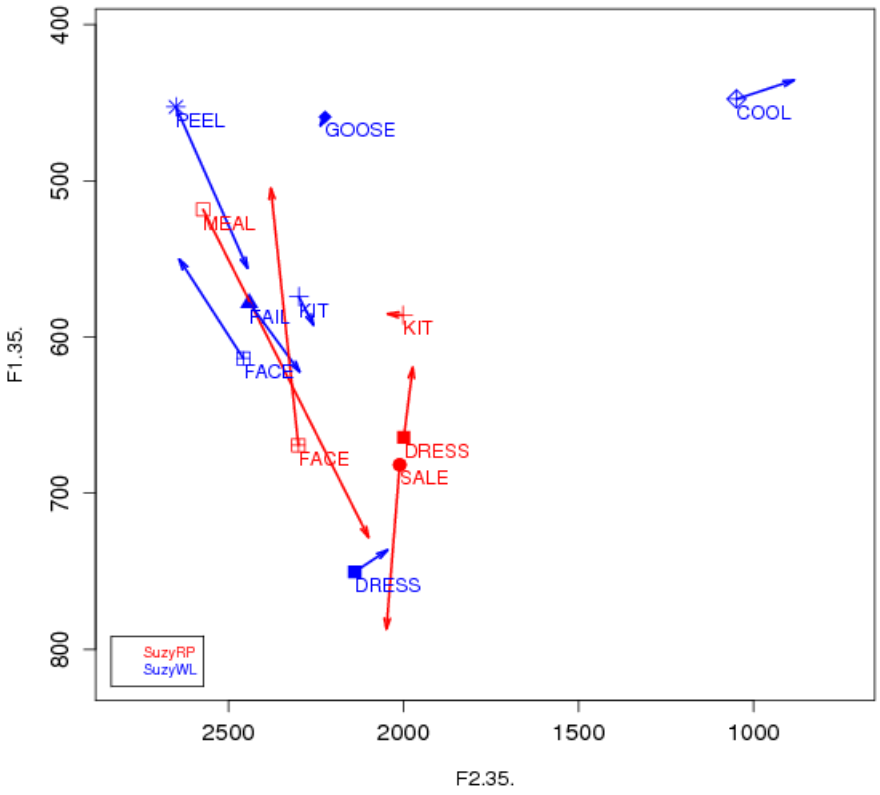


Figure 16 - Suzy Tokens Before /l/

Like all the subjects we've seen, Suzy backs *cool*. She lowers *meal* but not *peel*, does not lower *fail*, and the state of *sale* is difficult to ascertain due to her use of Southern Shift.

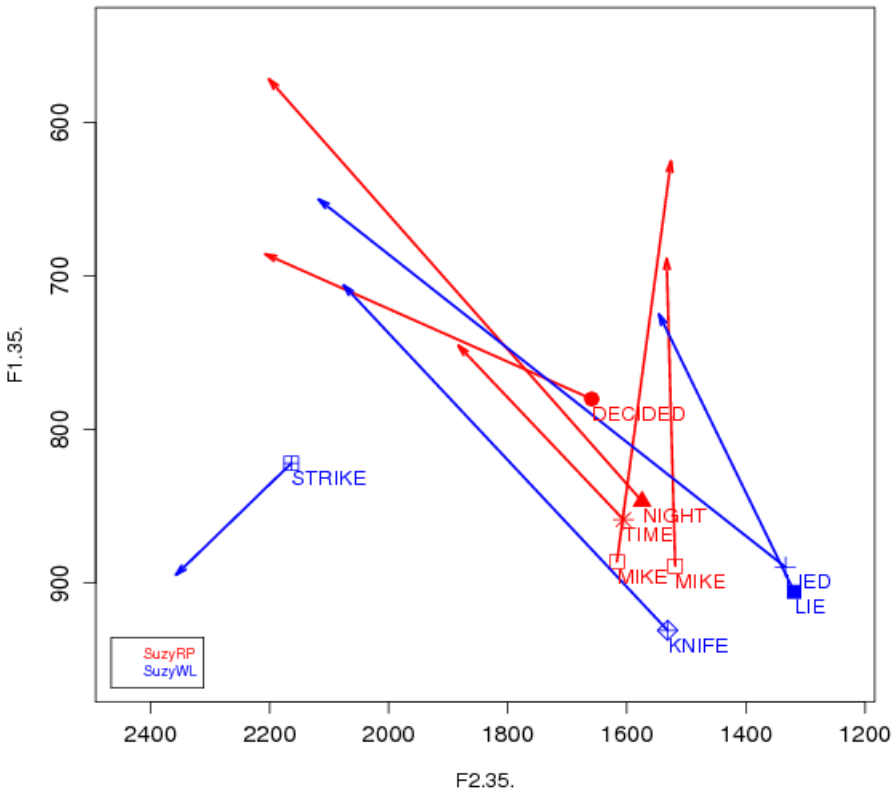


Figure 17 – Suzy Price Tokens

Suzy uses diphthongal forms for all of her tokens of PRICE – independent of phonological and pragmatic context. RP *time* is diphthongal, has a weaker glidein comparison to *night*.

Apart from having the pin/pen merger and retracting some vowels before /l/ (but only on the RP), Suzy does not exhibit many Southern features. Like many respondents she has FACE and DRESS parallel on F1 during the RP, but otherwise has no Southern Shift. Southern trademarks like an upglide in THOUGHT or raising of MOUTH are absent, and her PRICE vowels are diphthongal. She is one of few people who fronts FOOT beyond STRUT as well as GOOSE, and she has the caught/cot merger in both contexts. On her WL task especially, she appears more Midwestern than Southern.

5.1.5 - Jessica – Female, 22, Slapout

Jessica was 22 years old at the time of her interview, and a student at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, studying Public Relations. She planned to go to grad school afterward. In addition to her studies, she is quite athletic, participating in basketball and track. She is from Slapout, an unincorporated community in the north and west of Oklahoma at the base of the panhandle. Apart from Palmer, she is the only other respondent from this section of the state. As of the 2000 census, Slapout had 8 residents, making its designation as 'rural' rather unquestionable! She reports three members of her family living in her home neighborhood, which suggests her family is roughly half the town. Her father was born in Slapout, her mother is from Alva – east of Slapout and near the border with Kansas. 'We've been in Oklahoma for generations,' she says.

Although her responses to interview questions are brief, she responds similarly to Suzy, who described Oklahoman speech as 'normal.' When asked if Oklahoman young people speak differently, she says no, and also doesn't see differences between men and women. Regarding her own speech, she says she speaks like other Oklahomans 'for the most part,' saying 'I don't think I have much of an accent.' Asked about the state as a whole, she says that people in the south 'sound like hicks.'

Jessica's Southernness score on the lexical inventory is low, 27/45. This should not surprise, as Slapout is both isolated and far removed from the Arkansas border. She reports using five of the terms, near to the respondents' overall average of six. However, she has never heard eight of the terms, more than any respondent except Shirley who had never heard 10.

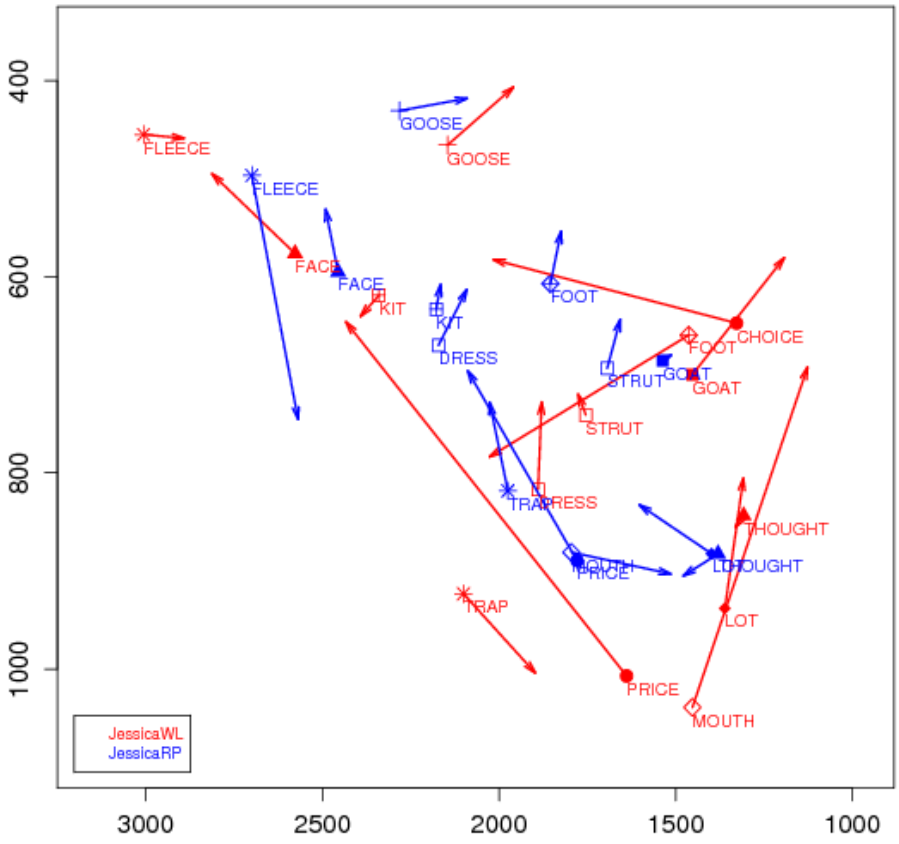


Figure 18 – Jessica WL & RP Means, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT	RP			WL		
c. GOAT			RP	WL		
d. MOUTH			RP			WL
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE					RP	WL
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS					RP	WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/	RP					WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/	RP			WL		
b. Pin/Pen Merger			?	?		
c. Caught/Cot Merger		WL	RP			

Table 8 – Jessica Feature Chart

As with many other respondents, Jessica's WL plot uses more of the vowel space than her RP. She does not show the Southern Shift in either her high or mid front vowels. However, her DRESS vowel is closer to FACE on the RP than on the WL, which matches the pattern we've seen in others, even if it they are not inverted. Unlike many of the RODEO respondents, she does not front MOUTH on the WL, and only does so on the RP. She does not raise it in either context. She fronts on the RP only, FOOT, but fronts GOOSE in both contexts. GOAT is not fronted at all. She shows the caught/cot merger, particularly on the RP. However, her RP THOUGHT vowel includes a glide that makes F1@80% significantly different from LOT ($p < .04$).

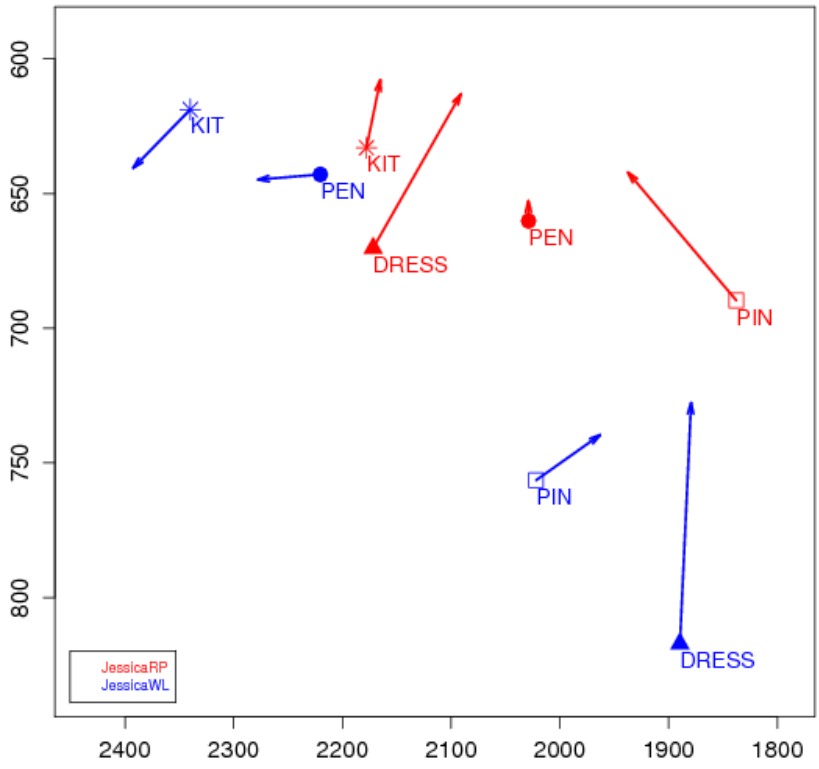


Figure 19 – Jessica Pin/Pen Mean Scores, Non-Normalized

Although Jessica's WL PIN and PEN are nearer to each other than her KIT and DRESS, it is difficult to call them merged. She did not have enough usable tokens to perform a T-Test for either context. Her closely overlapping KIT and DRESS vowels in the RP make it hard to establish a pattern – the space

between them is small, which is exacerbated both by her smaller vowel space on the RP and also by the possibility that her RP may be affected somewhat by Southern Shift.

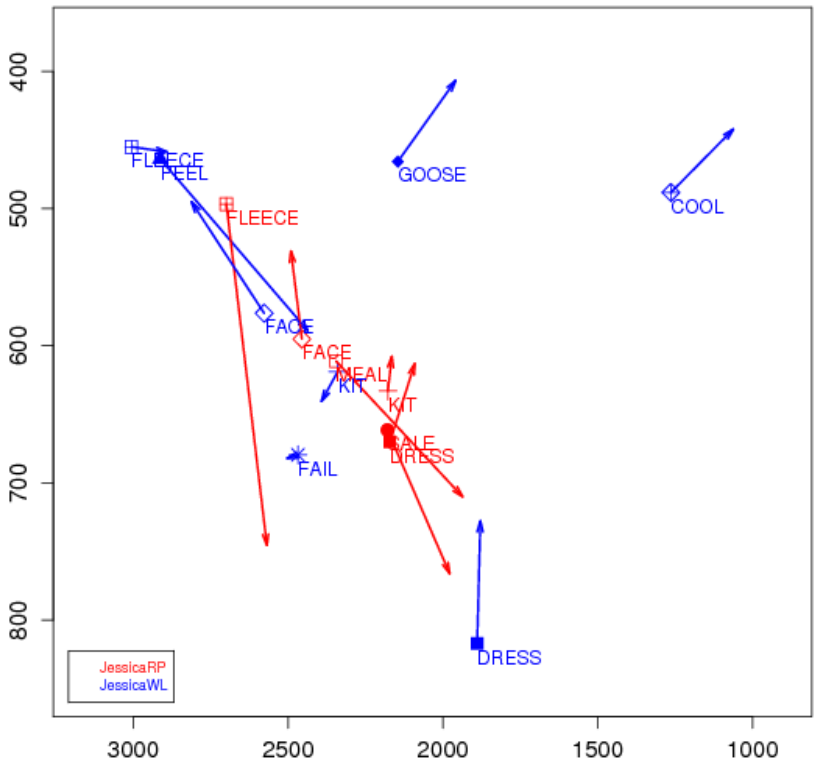


Figure 20 – Jessica Tokens Before /l/, Non-Normalized

As with everyone so far, Jessica's token of *cool* is greatly backed compared to her GOOSE vowel. *Peel* is not lowered, but *meal* is. RP *sale* is in DRESS territory, and WL *fail* is lowered between her means of FACE and DRESS.

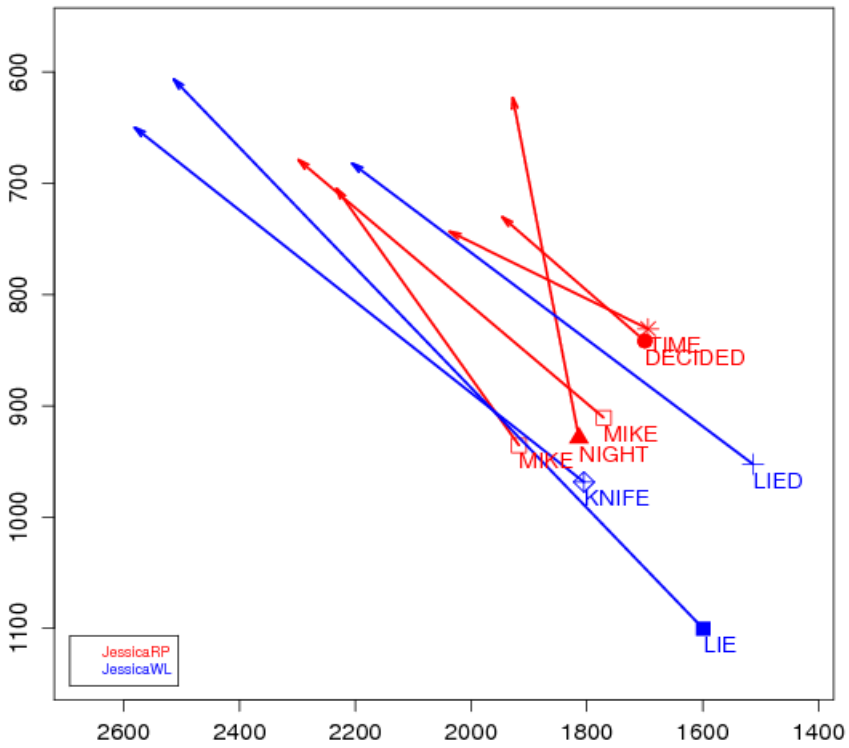


Figure 21 – Jessica Price Tokens, Non-Normalized

Jessica uses diphthongal PRICE in all contexts. Her WL tokens all have a longer glide, which matches her WL plot occupying a greater amount of the vowel space. As with other respondents, her glides for *time* and *decided* are shorter in comparison to other tokens. Notice that tokens before voiceless sounds and in word-final position appear to be the most strongly diphthongal in both contexts. Monophthongs in those environments would be more indicative of a Southern influence, but we do not find them in her speech. The panhandle's close proximity to Texas (and the Texan tendency to monopthongize before voiced environments) may be a more likely influence for her weak glides in *time* and *decided*.

Jessica does not appear to have many Southern features in her speech – and again, given that her hometown is quite close to Kansas and quite far from Arkansas, this is to be expected. She remarked that she did not 'have an accent,' and if she equates an accent with Southernness, her

intuition appears correct. She does not use the Southern Shift, does not use monophthongal PRICE, does not raise MOUTH and only fronts it in the RP context, does not appear to have the pin/pen merger, and only reduces some words before /l/. And although not completely, she does show use of the Midlands caught/cot merger.

5.1.6 - Jason – Male, 54, Tulsa

When interviewed in 2009, Jason was 54 years old and living in Tulsa. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Tulsa is a focal point for much of the state's industry and population influxes. As such, many respondents commented that people spoke differently there in relation to the rest of the state. Jason has lived in Tulsa for his entire life, apart from a few short times away – 2 years working in Germany as an adult, and 2 years living in New Jersey as a child. He joined the army as a young adult and was a demolitions expert, and afterward returned to Tulsa to be a farmer. His father was from Douglass, Kansas, and his mother was from Tulsa, able to trace her roots there back to the 1890's land runs. His father came to Tulsa after World War II because he felt there were better opportunities for raising children than in small-town Kansas. He has two relatives that still live in Tulsa, and comments that 90% of his friends are from 'big cities.'

He learned that people in Oklahoma speak differently when his family briefly moved to New Jersey when he was a child. He says that he 'had a hard time understanding people from New Jersey, and they had a hard time understanding me.' Asked to describe how Oklahomans speak, he says 'Oklahomans tend to speak slowly, what we might call a drawl.' He adds that they 'eliminate syllables where posssible' and use 'lazy speech' (which may be some of what Beth was imitating in her 'down-home' impression).' He sees distinct differences with neighboring states, however, saying that people in East Texas instead have a more Southern 'boll weevil' quality, and that people in Arkansas sound like 'hillbillies' compared to Oklahoma. He thinks young people in Oklahoma speak differently, and describes young Tulsans as having a 'neutral' accent. Asked if he speaks like other Oklahomans, he simply answers 'yes.' He comments that friends in the army made fun of him for it, but adds that it was 'good-natured.' His score on the lexical inventory low – a 28/45, which placed him in the bottom 10 of respondents.

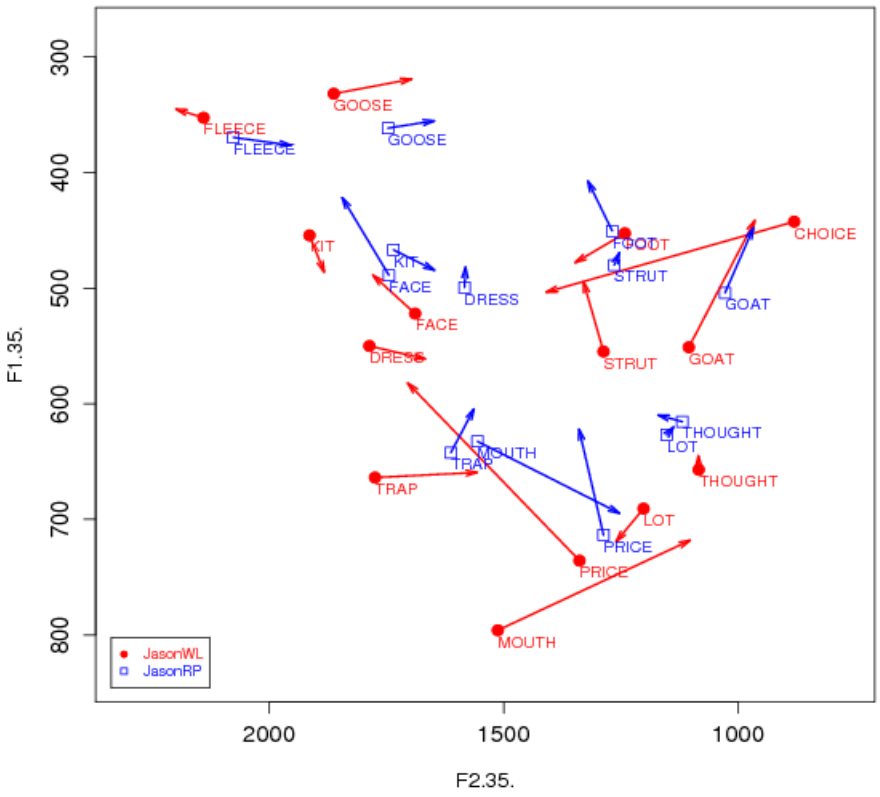


Figure 22 – Jason WL & RP Means, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT			RP	WL		
c. GOAT					RP	WL
d. MOUTH	RP			WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE			RP			WL
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS			RP			WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/	RP					WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/	RP					WL
b. Pin/Pen Merger	RP	WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger	RP	WL				

Table 9 – Jason Feature Chart

Jason's vowel pattern is familiar – he fronts GOOSE, fronts FOOT to a lesser degree, and does not front GOAT. He shows the caught/cot merger on the RP, but puts more distance between the two sounds in the WL. This matches his overall greater distance between sounds on the WL. He does not invert FLEECE and KIT, and as with other respondents, his FACE/DRESS are not inverted on the WL, but are virtually even with each other on the F1 axis on the RP. He fronts MOUTH, and like several respondents, lowers it strongly on the WL while raising it to TRAP on the RP. He has the caught/cot merger in both contexts and does not use an upglide with THOUGHT.

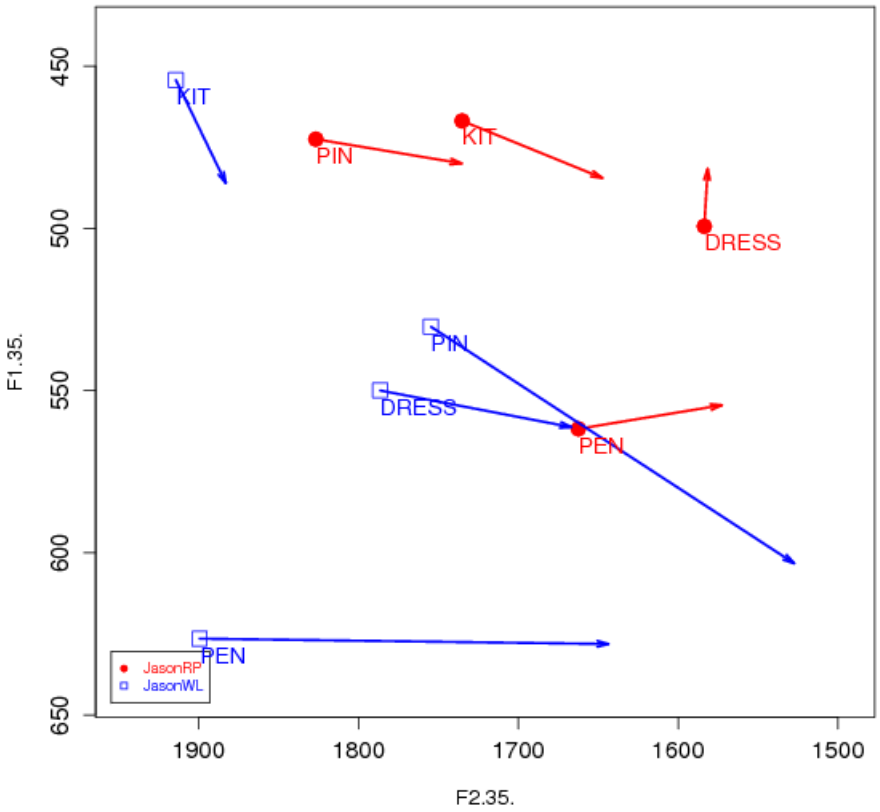


Figure 23 - Jason Pin/Pen Means, Non-Normalized

None of Jason's PIN or PEN means were statistically different from each other. His WL tokens demonstrate the strong back-gliding that is cited in merged speakers by Weirich (2013).

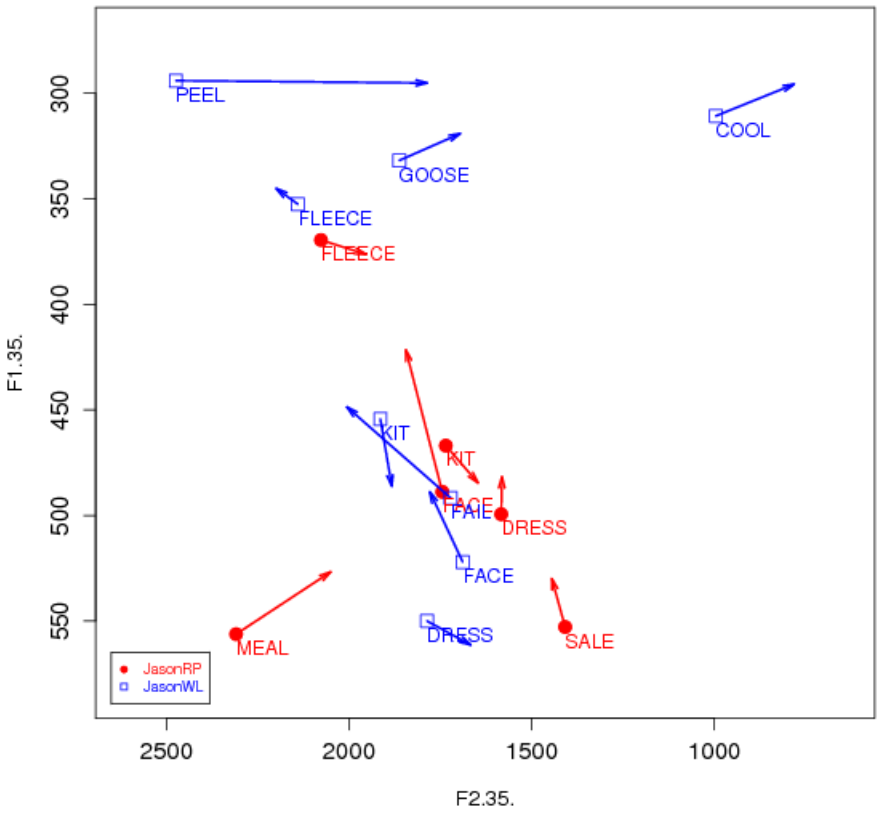


Figure 24 - Jason Tokens Before /l/, Non-Normalized

Jason keeps *cool* backed, does not lower *peel,* and lowers *meal* to below his normal *DRESS* vowel. He does not lower *fail*, but lowers RP *sale* below RP DRESS.

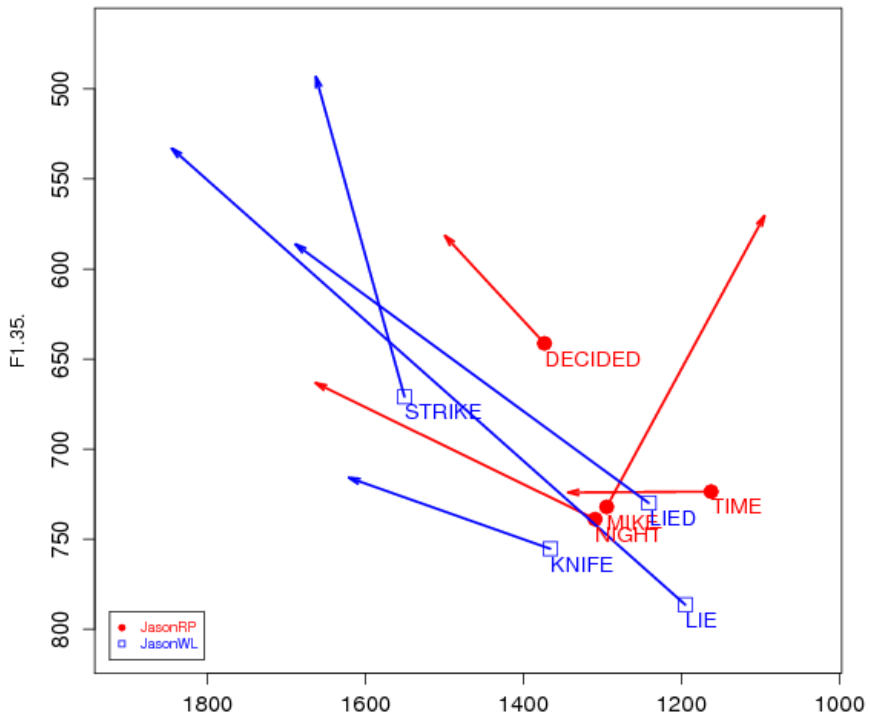


Figure 25 – Jason PRICE Tokens, Non-Normalized

Jason does not use monophthongal PRICE in any cases, although his diphthong of *knife* is weak in comparison to *lie* and *lied* from the same WL context. *Time* fronts slightly but does not raise, matching other respondents who do not have a strong diphthong for it. As with other speakers, the more commonly Southern environments before voiceless sounds and in word-final position do not appear to condition a monophthong – WL *lie* and *strike* maintain glides.

Jason shows a blend of Southern and Midwestern features – he uses the caught/cot merger but also merges pin/pen. Recall that he breaks with Judy and in this case matches the SOD expectation of having caught/cot.His PRICE tokens are a mix of diphthongs and weak glides. Some Southern features, as we've seen before, are more prominent on the RP. This pattern of Southern features appearing more frequently on the RP is beginning to become consistent, and gives us reason to suspect that Labov is correct that respondents are style-shifting between the tasks. FACE/DRESS are parallel on F1 on the RP, and RP MOUTH raises to TRAP in a Southern fashion as well. He also uses weaker glides for PRICE words on the RP than the WL.

5.1.7 Mr. White – Male, 35, Stillwater

At the time of the interview, Mr. White was a 35-year-old financial planner living in Stillwater, which as we saw is also Suzy's home town. Although his parents were both from Iowa, he has lived in Oklahoma for most of his life. He was born in Stillwater and lived there through high school – he commented that this felt unusual to him. Because Stillwater is home to Oklahoma State University, he saw many of his childhood friends as transient, moving in and out of the city while he grew up. He estimated that only one other friend from kindergarten was still living in Stillwater, and that the rest had moved on. Although he spent several years at college in Arizona and St Louis, he returned home afterward and has since remained.

Although he has local family including his parents and an aunt, they are both from Iowa, and he met his wife in St. Louis. Neither his workplace or his neighborhood have many native Oklahomans, and throughout his interview he does not express a strong connection to the state. He comments that locals in Arizona and St Louis recognized that he wasn't from the area, but he was most often thought to be 'Texan.' He remarks similarly on his speech, saying that he does not 'sound Southern' and thinks he sounds more like a Texan. He doesn't talk about hiding his accent, but does express concern with lexical items, saying that he actively worked to hide words like 'ya'll. ' During the lexical inventory he reported using only three of the terms himself, although he reported hearing others use another eight.

In general he expressed an awareness of Oklahoman speech practices but distanced himself from them – he commonly talked about 'other people' using words in the lexical inventory. He did not do the map-drawing task, but when asked about distinctive dialect areas of Oklahoma, he described the southeastern portion of the state as being rural and speaking 'slower … more of a hard drawl and twangy." He designated Oklahoma City and Tulsa as unique speech areas, as well as the panhandle and 'Western Oklahoma.' He interestingly did not mention Stillwater. He suggested that the state had an affinity with Dallas and Kansas City, as well as Saint Louis due to Cardinals fans.

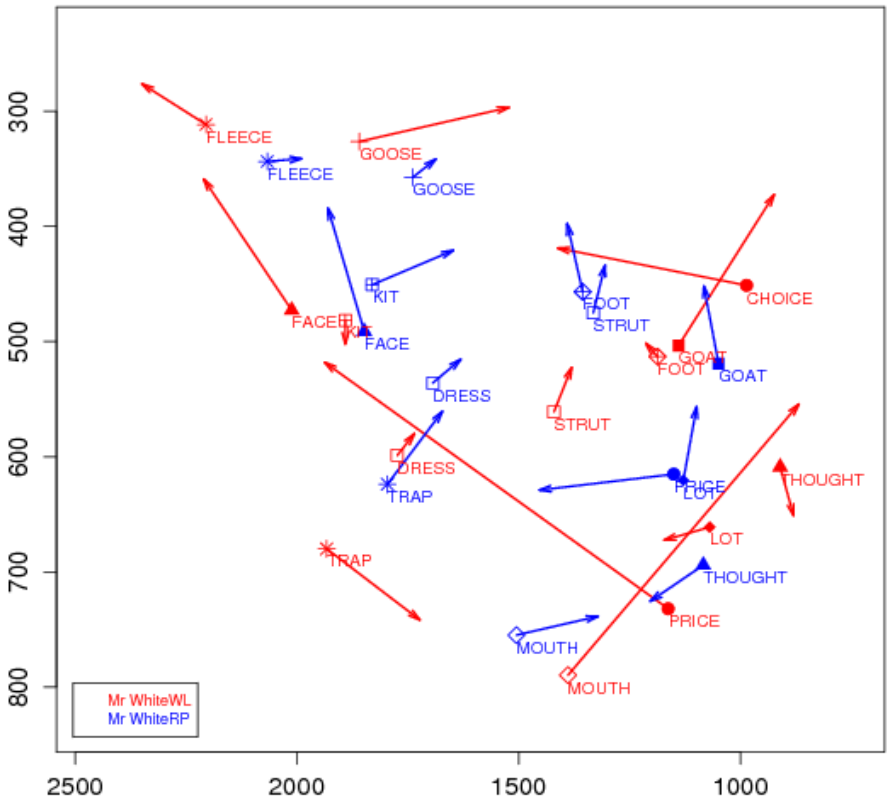


Figure 26 – Mr White WL & RP Mean Scores

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT			RP	WL		
c. GOAT				WL	RP	
d. MOUTH			RP	WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE			RP			WL
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS					RP	WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						
2. /i/-/I/					RP	WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/			RP	WL		
b. Pin/Pen Merger		WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger	RP	WL				

Table 10 – Mr White Feature Chart

Mr White does not use the Southern Shift forms for either his high or mid vowels. He does follow their pattern with his back vowels, however, fronting GOOSE and FOOT while not fronting GOAT. He fronts MOUTH but does not raise it in either task. He pronounces PRICE as a strong diphthong on the WL, but several of his RP tokens have a weaker or non-raising glide. Like Beth, his WL uses more of the vowel space, and his WL reading shows evidence of hypercorrection – he aspirates final stops and pronounces glides in words like *duty* in ways that he does not do during the rest of the interview. He shows the caught/cot merger in both contexts and does not use an upglide in THOUGHT.

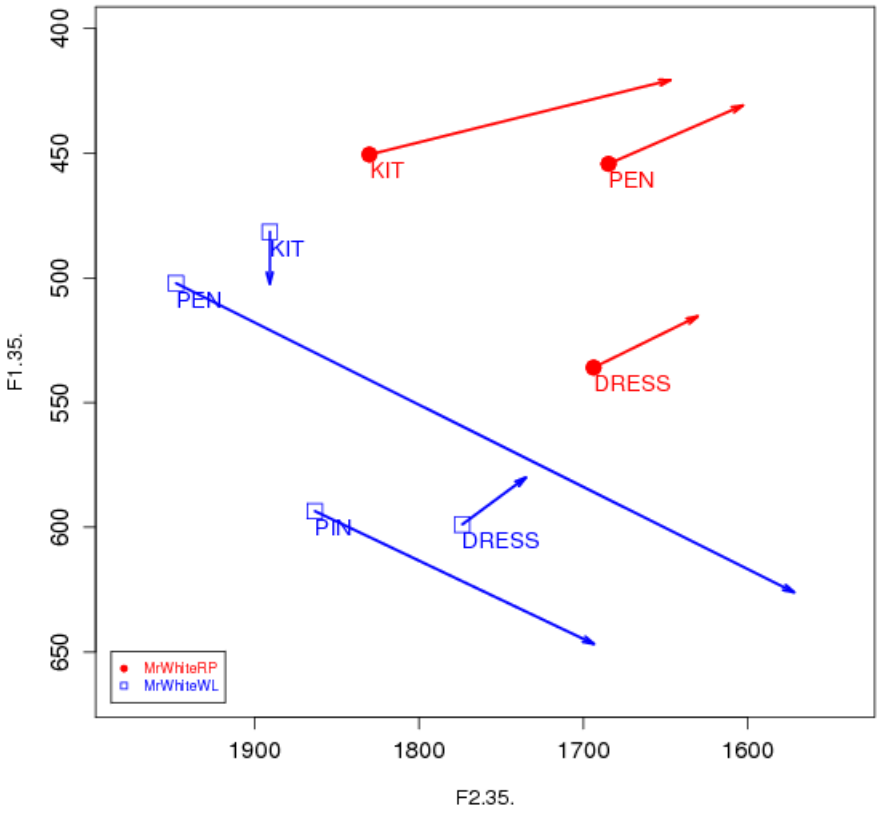


Figure 27 – Mr White Pin/Pen Means, Non-Normalized

Mr White did not have enough usable tokens to test for significance on the RP, but there was no statistically significant difference between his PIN and PEN tokens on the WL. We again see the back gliding indicative of the merger.

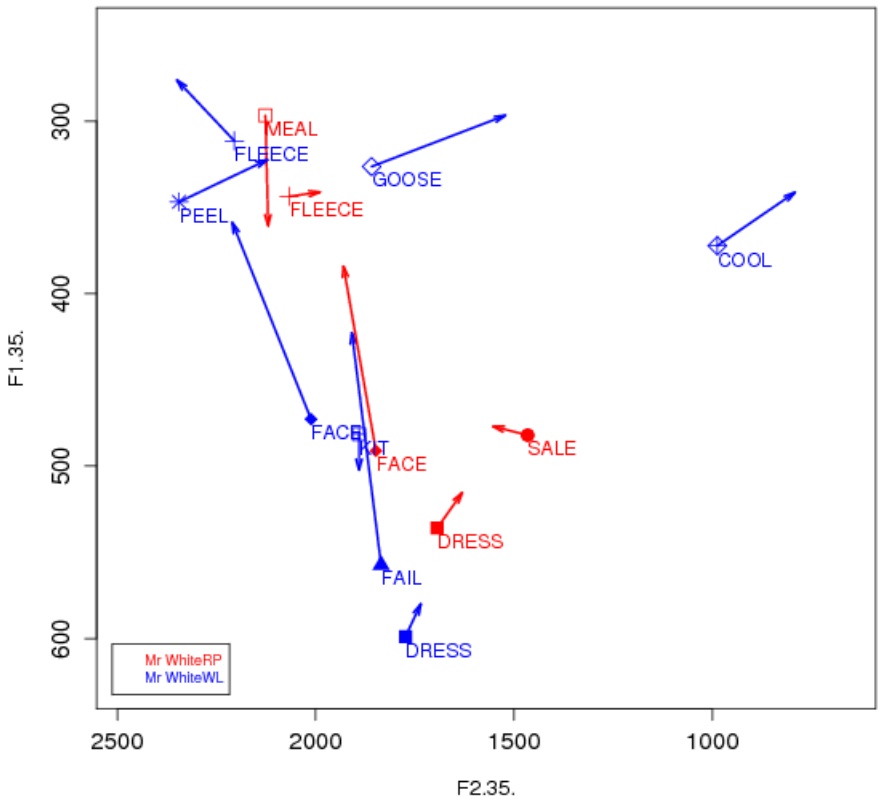


Figure 28 - Mr White Tokens Before /l/

With vowels before /l/, Mr. White does not reduce *meal* and *peel*, but backs *cool* and lowers *fail* into DRESS territory. *Sale* is centralized.

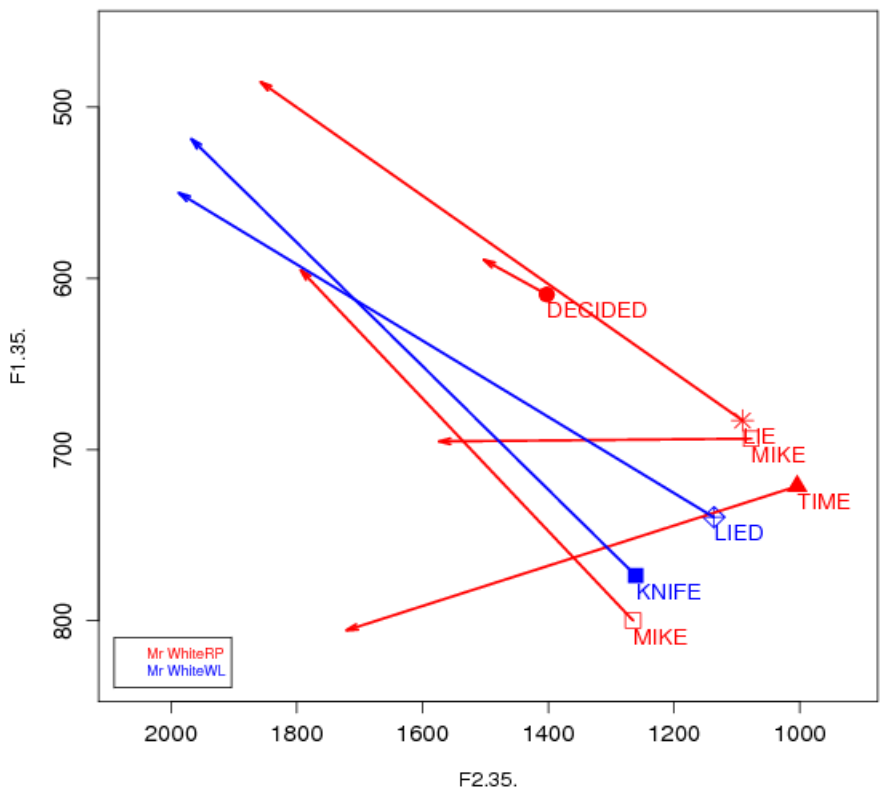


Figure 29 - Mr. White PRICE Tokens

Mr. White uses a diphthong for all of his tokens of PRICE. Voicing of the coda or being in word-final position does not appear to impact this. He does pronounce *decided* with a monophthong, and this does not appear to be due to vowel length – the vowel of *decided* lasts .9 seconds, the same duration as his raising diphthongal pronunciation of *Mike.* He has another token of *Mike* with the weak glide that Thomas (2001) describes, in which it moves forward but does not raise. *Time* behaves similarly although actually lowers as it fronts. It is possible that his treatment of *time* and *decided* may indicate more of a Texan influence, as PRICE in these words occurs before a voiced consonant. However, the following consonant alone is insufficient to describe his PRICE vowel, as WL *lied* shows a strong glide.

Mr White's self-reporting that he does not speak like a Southerner appears accurate – he lacks the more uniquely Southern features of inverted front vowels and monophthongal PRICE. He reduces

FACE before /l/, but does not do so with FLEECE. He fronts MOUTH but does not raise it, and does not have an upglide for THOUGHT. His speech more closely matches Midwestern patterns, particularly because he has the caught/cot merger, he does not neutralize FLEECE before /l/, and he does not raise DRESS in either context.

5.1.8 - Ray – Male, 39, Ada

At the time of his interview, Ray was 39 and a Dean at an Oklahoma college. He has a master's degree and lives in Stillwater. He was born in Ada, a town of roughly 15,000 that is 80 miles southeast of Oklahoma City, and his family has lived in the state since his grandparents' generation and before. He comments that when he was young he wanted to 'get out of Oklahoma,' which he presented as a common desire for young people. Although he has lived in large cities, he describes them as 'claustrophobic,' and returned to Oklahoma. He speaks fondly of Stillwater, enjoying the open space, opportunity to raise animals, and short commute to work. He tells his students that he 'could live anywhere in the world, but chose to live in Stillwater.' He has family in town, mentioning five relatives in three separate households. He does not live near or spend time outside of work with co-workers

When asked about Oklahoma and its speech, he says that 'studies' often do not refer to that state as Southern, and thinks this is a mistake. In particular, he claims that the state can be divided by the I-40 highway, with regions south of it being 'Southern.' He also echoes the frequent assertion of a difference between urban and rural areas of the state, saying that his rural students have 'a distinct Southern accent.' He doesn't think typical Oklahomans are aware of how they speak, and notes that he didn't notice his own speech being distinctive until he was 10-11 years old. On the lexical inventory task, he had a Southernness score of 31, which matched the overall average.

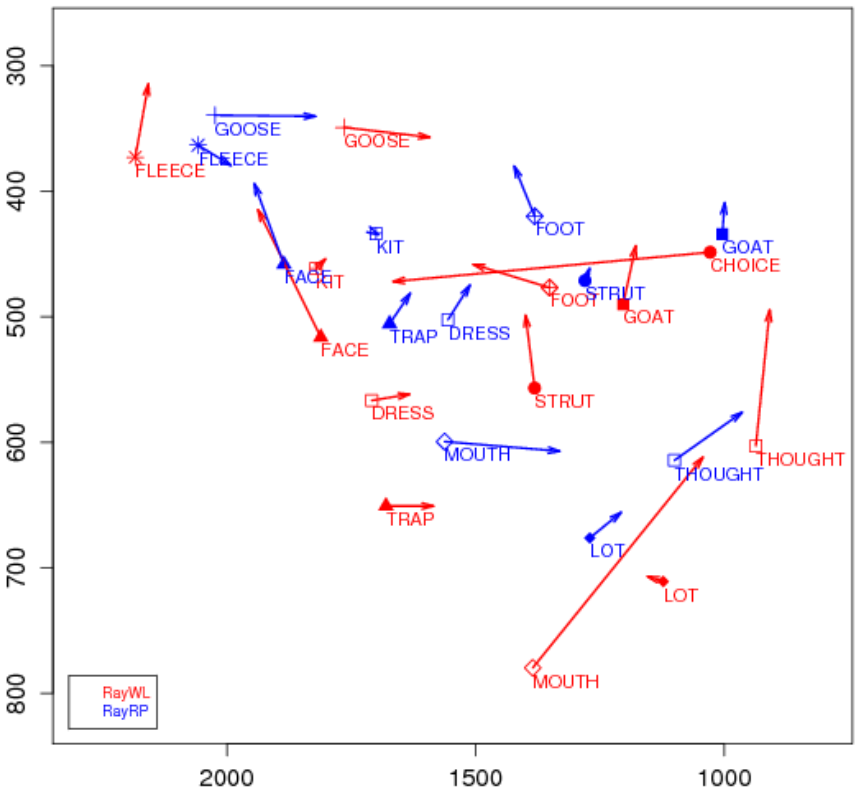


Figure 30 – Ray WL & RP Means, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT	RP			WL		
c. GOAT				WL	RP	
d. MOUTH	RP			WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE			RP	WL		
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS			RP			WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/			RP			WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/			RP			WL
b. Pin/Pen Merger	RP	WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger	RP					WL

Table 11 – Ray Feature Chart

As can be seen above in Figure 30, Ray's combined plot shows the familiar pattern of having the WL occupy more of the vowel space than the RP. The mean scores of WP front vowels are more front, back vowels are more back, and the lower bounds of the space are greatly extended. Visually the vowel space appears almost pulled down like a window shade in comparison. The GOAT vowel is a noticeable exception to this – Ray fronts it in the WL but not the RP, one of the few cases where the WL draws inward rather than out. He uses the caught/cot merger on the RP, but does not do so on the WL (F1@35% $p < .02$, F2@35% $p < .05$). His THOUGHT vowel has an upglide that may make the merger less likely.

Otherwise, Ray displays features that we have seen before – GOOSE and FOOT are fronted, GOAT is only fronted in the WL. MOUTH is fronted in both contexts, and although lowered on the WL, it does not raise on the RP and is much lower than TRAP. Southern Shift is not visible in either the high or mid front pairs, and FLEECE, KIT, and DRESS are pronounced without a glide.

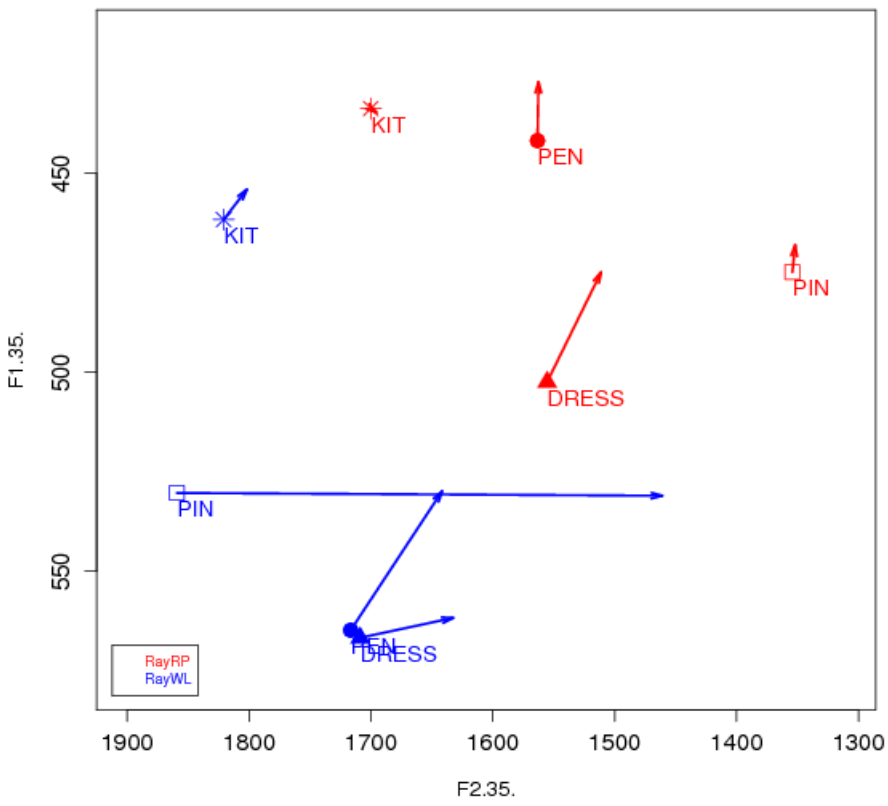


Figure 31 – Ray Pin/Pen Means, Non-Normalized

Ray had too few usable RP tokens for a t-test, but on the WL, his PIN and PEN vowels were not significantly different from each other.

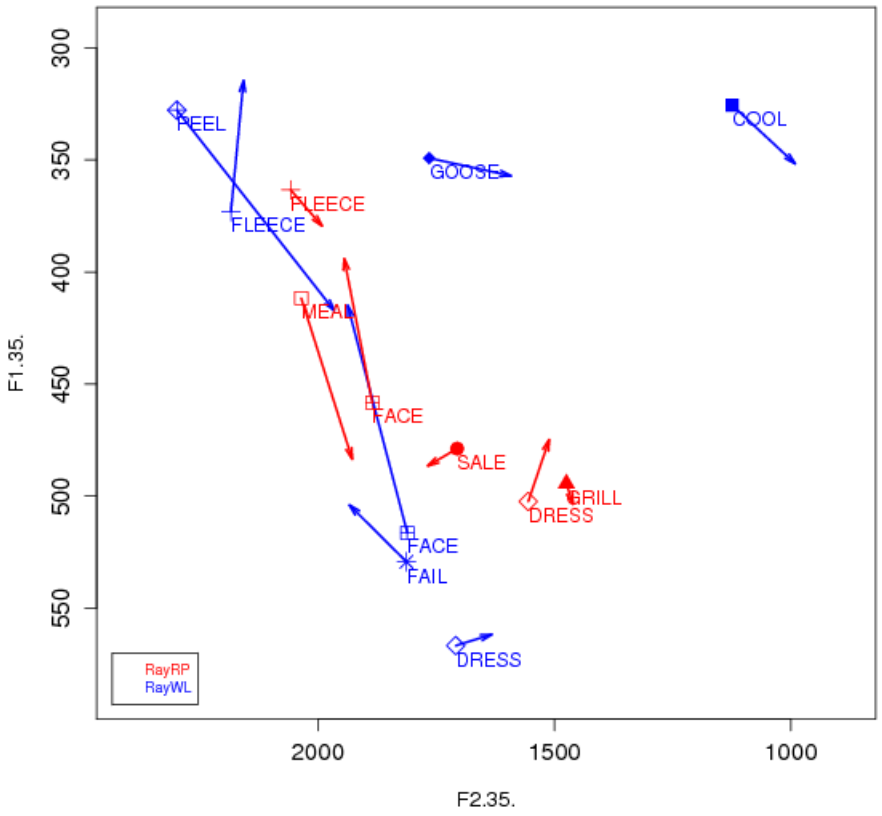


Figure 32 – Ray Tokens Before /l/

For tokens before /l/, Ray backs *cool*, keeps *peel* high, and lowers *meal* in a fashion that we've seen with others. *Sale* and *fail* do not appear to be different from FACE.

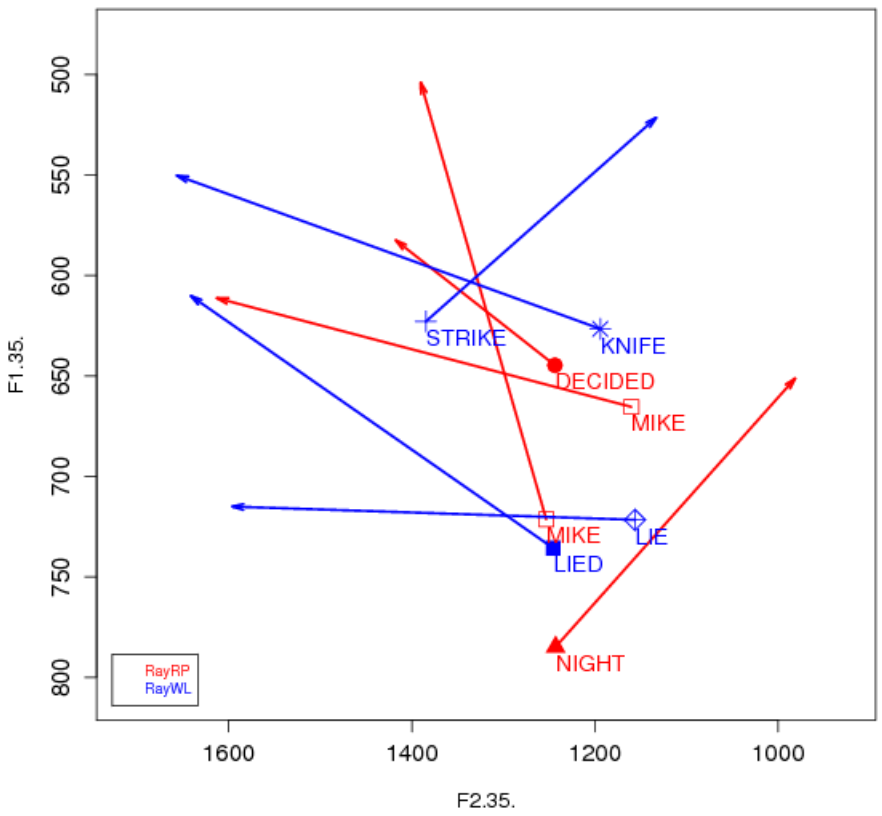


Figure 33 – Ray PRICE Tokens

Ray's PRICE vowels generally have glides, although many of them exhibit the 'weak glides' that Thomas (2001) described – compare, for example, his two tokens of *Mike* on the RP. In one case, the glide strongly raises, whereas in the other, it fronts while raising only about 50 Hz. WL *lie* does not raise at all, and *knife* raises weakly as well. This is a little unusual with the respondents we've seen, as these words would more closely match Southern patterns of monophthongization. He has two tokens that glide back rather than fronting.

Ray uses some Southern features such as the pin/pen merger and lowering of *meal*, and he also uses an upglide with THOUGHT in a fashion that may be inhibiting the caught/cot merger. Although he does have the merger in some contexts, he does not use it exclusively. He lacks some of the Southern

features that we saw in Hank – he does not raise MOUTH in either context, nor does he have the Southern Shift. His PRICE vowel contains many examples of weak glides, but is not monophthongal.

5.1.9 - Kramer – Male, 24, Broken Arrow

Kramer was 24 at the time of his interview and a student at Oklahoma State University, working on his Bachelor's degree. He is from Broken Arrow, a suburb of Tulsa, and lived there until 18, when he came to Stillwater for school. His mother is from Anthony, Kansas, near to the Oklahoma border, and his father is from Missouri. His father was an airline mechanic and came to Tulsa to work at its airport. In Stillwater he has a rather isolated social network – he does not have family in town, nor does he have neighbors in his workplace. He says he mostly 'keeps to himself' and does not spend a lot of time with his co-workers outside of work. He does socialize at bars in town, but mostly 'just for conversation.'

Asked about Oklahoma, he comments that his experience from traveling is that 'people think of Oklahoma as really backwards.' Asked if he speaks like an Oklahoman, he says 'I hope not.' He expresses a great deal of linguistic insecurity, talking about how he tries not to sound like a local - 'If people talk like hicks and talk like Oklahomans, it's kind of around the same thing.' He laments that if he 'talks too long' or raises his voice, his accent will come out, and appears to blame this partially on the time he's lived in Stillwater. He suggests that Oklahoman dialect is a factor of living in a rural area, and Stillwater may still be too rural in comparison for the Tulsa suburbs. He comments, however, that Stillwater is not as homogenous as other areas of Oklahoma – because one commonly sees people from other states and countries, it's easier to recognize an Oklahoman since there's actually variation among speakers. He posits that education also has an effect on dialect, saying 'Some people don't care to speak well.'

Kramar had the lowest Southernness score on the lexical inventory of any of the twelve respondents presented here, a 26/45. Only Shirley scored lower with a 23/45. The only Southern term

he attested to using himself was *dirt-dauber*. He did report knowing an additional nine terms, however, and often commented that he heard 'other people' say such things, but would not use them himself.

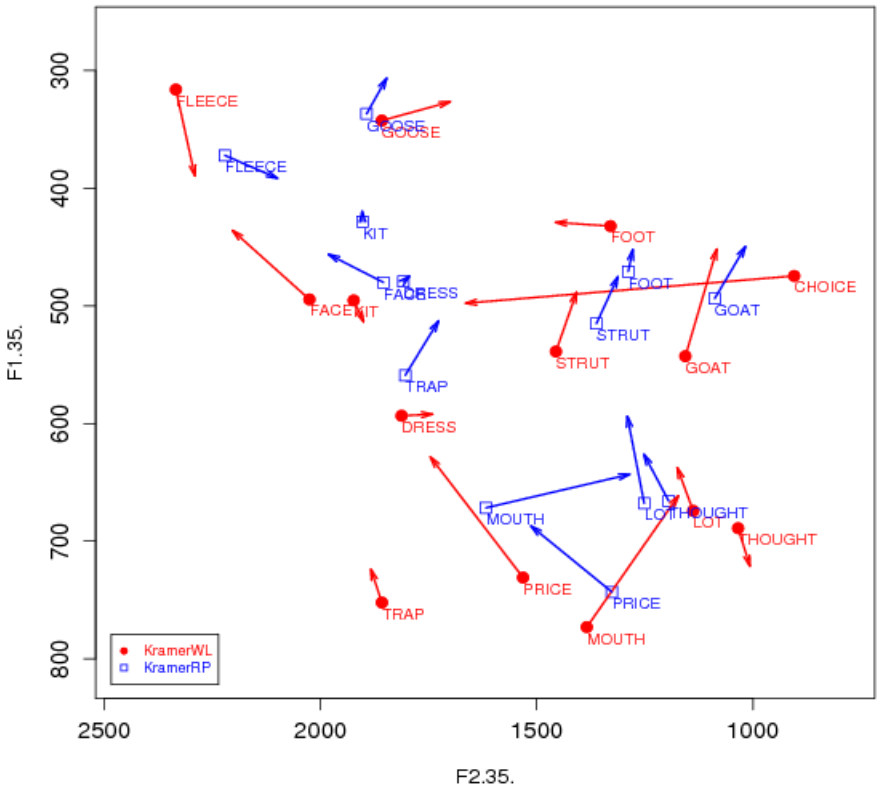


Figure 34 – Kramer WL & RP Mean Scores, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT			RP	WL		
c. GOAT					RP	WL
d. MOUTH			RP	WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE			RP	WL		
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS			RP			WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/ɪ/	RP			WL		
3. /ɛ/ - /e/		WL				
b. Pin/Pen Merger	RP	WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger	RP	WL				

Table 12 – Kramer Feature Chart

Kramer's WL vowel space is more diffuse than his RP. He fronts GOOSE, fronts FOOT (although not past STRUT), and does not front GOAT. He fronts MOUTH but does not raise it. His RP MOUTH is higher in comparison to his WL, but it does not raise near TRAP in either case. Hehas the caught/cot merger in both contexts, and follows the pattern of many RODEO respondents with the Southern Shift – FLEECE and KIT are not inverted, FACE and DRESS are in a standard configuration in his WL, and in the RP, they are adjacent on F1 and nearly identical overall. His WL TRAP vowel is quite low, and his THOUGHT vowel does not have a Southern upglide in either context.

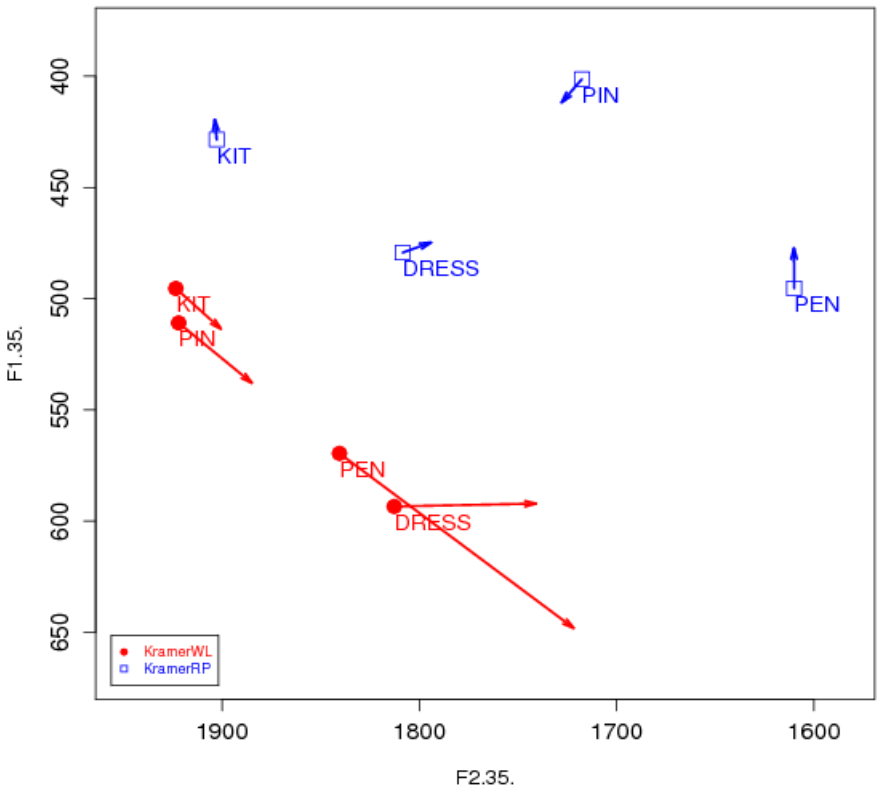


Figure 35 - Kramer Pin/Pen Means, Non-Normalized

When asked about the pin/pen merger, he makes the comment 'I do it, so Oklahomans must do it.' Both tasks show no statistical difference between his PIN and PEN means, and the WL shows glides for both. The RP shows the merger less clearly, but is nonetheless still merged.

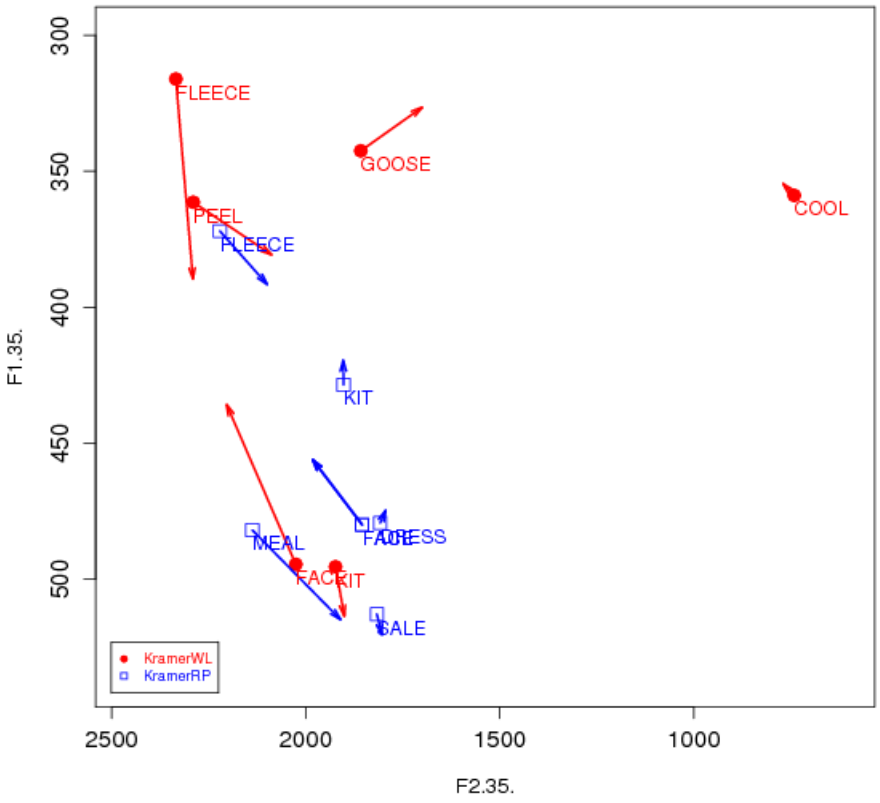


Figure 36 – Kramer Tokens Before /l/, Non-Normalized

Kramer keeps *cool* backed, and lowers WL *peel* somewhat in comparison to WL FLEECE, but still keeps it higher than RP FLEECE. WL m*eal* however, is drastically lowered, well below WL KIT. *Sale* is lowered in comparison to both RP FACE and DRESS, although the likely Southern Shift interaction makes this difficult to assign a cause for.

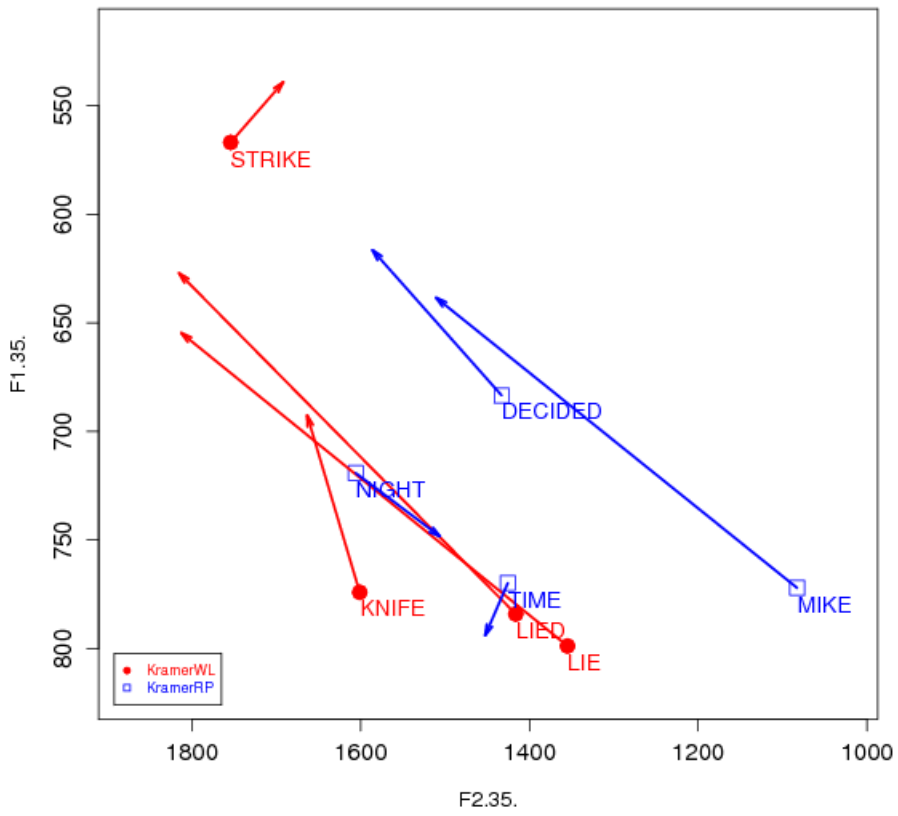


Figure 37 – Kramer PRICE Tokens, Non-Normalized

Kramer uses diphthongal PRICE in all cases except for *time*, similar to other respondents. As we have seen with others, RP *decided* has a weak glide, and WL *knife* does as well. He appears to use a mix of stroner and weaker glides with PRICE.

He avoids the Southern features that Hank carried such as a THOUGHT upglide or raised MOUTH, but has most other traits observed by Thomas (2001), the ANAE, and in RODEO: the pin/pen merger, lowering of *meal* and *sale*, fronting of high back vowels, and placing FACE/DRESS on an even F1 axis on the RP. As we will see later with Skylar, this treatment of FACE/DRESS occurs even with the most citified of the respondents, suggesting it may not be salient in their minds as regional dialect.

5.1.10 - Brian – Male, 25, Orlando

At the time he was interviewed, Brian was 25 years old and living in Tulsa. He was born in Orlando, Oklahoma, 55 miles north of Oklahoma City. Both of his parents are natives of the state. His father's side arrived with the land runs in the 1890's. Orlando is a small town of roughly 200 (United States Government), and he enjoyed living there a great deal. Although he does not have family in Tulsa, he reports having roughly 30 family members in Orlando – thus he is greatly connected with his home town. He mentions that he enjoyed the opportunities of living near open land, such as hunting, fishing, and swimming. He has lived in Oklahoma most of his life, apart from time spent in the Air Force. After military service he got a bachelor's degree and worked as a commercial pilot until being furloughed. When interviewed, he was working on a master's degree in aviation management.

When asked about speech and dialect, he downplays the idea of himself having an accent. He comments that when he traveled as a teenager, he noticed that people spoke differently, but describes this as something he'd 'always known.' He describes times where Oklahomans could not place his accent, asking if he was from 'Pennsylvania.' He suggests that this happens most often in 'professional' environments. For the state as a whole, he at first says that Oklahomans all talk the same, saying that 'we sound more like people from the South and Texas … slower, more country.' Lexically, he comments 'I think everyone from Oklahoma says y'all and fixin,' an intuition we will examine further in the next chapter. But he then sets aside Tulsa and Oklahoma City, saying that they 'don't have much of an accent at all,' and that they 'don't sound like they're from Oklahoma.' During the map-drawing task, he sees the primary dialect borders as being the eastern and western halves of the state, saying that 'hicks' live in the west.

He scores highly on the Southern featues of the lexical inventory with 33/45, reporting that he uses 7of the 15 terms.

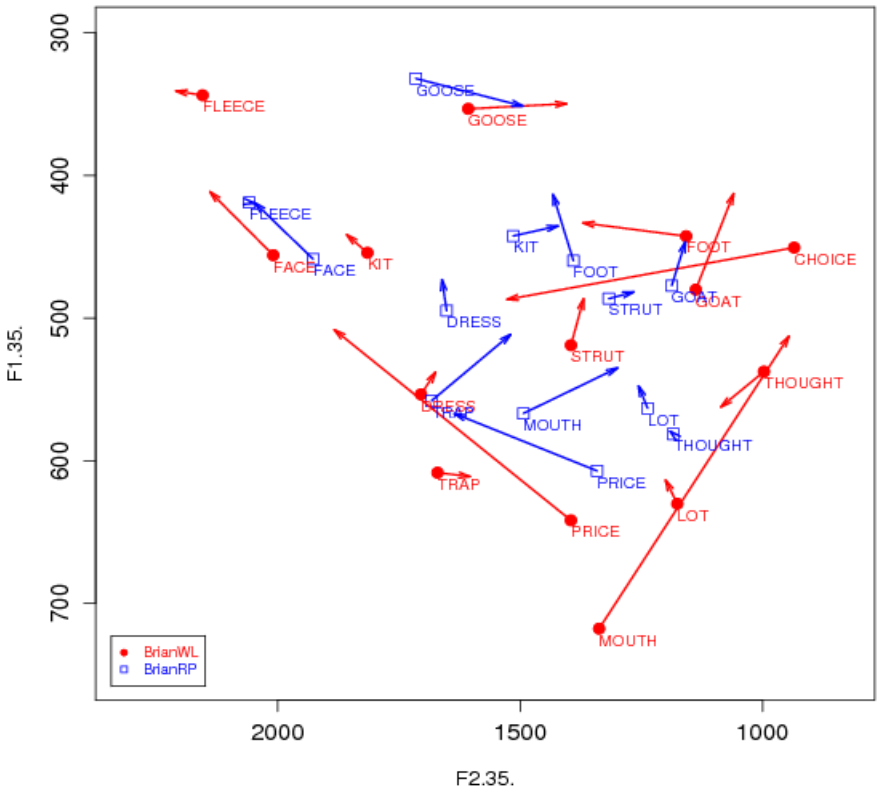


Figure 38 – Brian WL & RP Means, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT	RP			WL		
c. GOAT			RP			WL
d. MOUTH			RP	WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE			RP			WL
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS					RP	WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/	RP			WL		
3. /ɛ/ - /e/	RP			WL		
b. Pin/Pen Merger	RP	WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger	RP	WL				

Table 13 – Brian Feature Chart

As with many of the previous subjects, Brian's WL plot occupies more space than his RP. Once again, front vowels are fronter, back vowels are backer, and fronted MOUTH lowers to make the WL's shape into a pointed triangle. He does not demonstrate the Southern Shift in any of his front vowels. He fronts GOOSE and FOOT in both contexts. GOAT is fronted in relation to his WL vowel space, but not on the RP. He uses the caught/cot merger in both tasks and does not have an upglide for THOUGHT in either context. MOUTH is fronted in both cases. WL MOUTH is very low, but RP MOUTH is raised even with TRAP (though not fronted that far forward). KIT is notably backed on the RP.

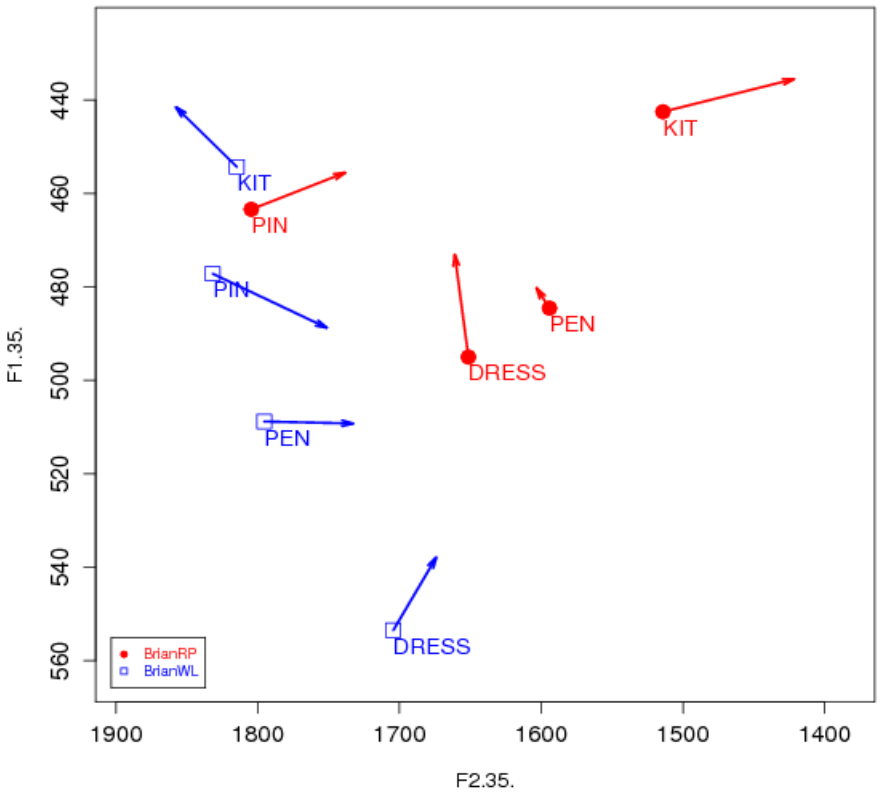


Figure 39 – Brian Pin/Pen Means, Non-Normalized

Brian's PIN and PEN vowels are not significantly different from each other on either the F1 or F2 axis. As with other subjects, the merger is more visible on the WL than the RP. On the RP, there is more distance between PIN and PEN on F2.

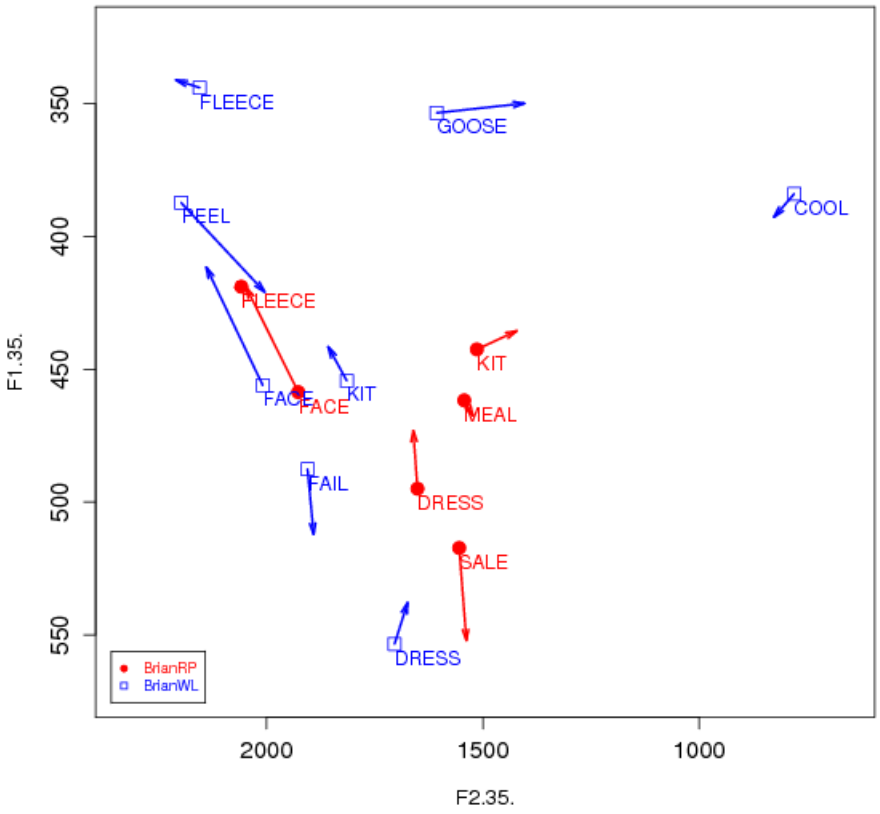


Figure 40 - Brian Tokens Before /l/, Non-Normalized

Brian's lowering of vowels before /l/ is more consistent than many of the other subjects we've seen. *Meal* is lowered dramatically into KIT territory, and *peel* lowers as well, although less so. *Sale* Is lowered below DRESS, and *fail* is also lowered. As with everyone else, *cool* is greatly backed in comparison to his mean GOOSE vowel.

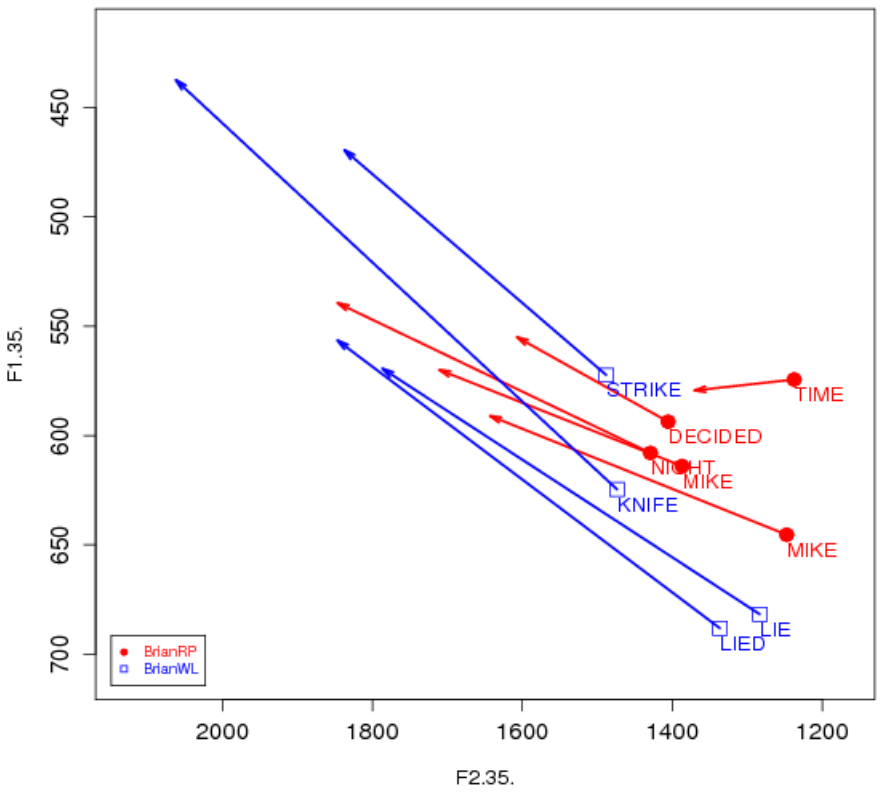


Figure 41 – Brian PRICE Tokens, Non-Normalized

Brian pronounces all his tokens of PRICE with a glide, although does so only weakly with *time* and *decided*. WL glides are longer, matching the larger overall use of vowel space.

Brian does not appear to demonstrate any strong Southern features in his speech apart from reducing vowels before /l/. He does not use Southern Shift or monophthongal PRICE, and his score on the lexical inventory is only slightly above average. His raising of MOUTH on the RP is somewhat Southern, but not fully fronted into TRAP territory as we saw with Hank. His use of the pin/pen merger is uneven, as also is his use of caught/cot. Nonetheless, his overall vowel behavior is in keeping with the other subjects we've seen in terms of its shape and consistency of features such as fronting of GOOSE and MOUTH, general Peterson & Barney-like front vowels, and so forth.

5.1.11 - Skylar - Female, 26, Oklahoma City

The original RODEO interviews in 2009 did not include any young, urban female respondents, and so I cannot show anyone of that demographic from that time. However, other researchers have continued the project and interviewed additional speakers. The respondent below, Skylar, was interviewed in 2012 using a slightly adjusted interview instrument – the WL and RP were altered slightly (mainly to elicit more pin/pen and caught/cot tokens), and she was not given the lexical inventory task. The altered WL and RP tasks can be found in Appendix H and Appendix I. Skylar also varies from the 2009 respondents in that neither of her parents are from Oklahoma. RODEO has interviewed two other young, urban women, but neither of them had parents from Oklahoma either. She nonetheless has lived in Oklahoma since she was an infant, leaving the state only to attend college in Dallas.

Skylar was born in 1986 and was 26 at the time of her interview. She was born in Wisconsin and brought to Oklahoma City when she was only a few months old. Both of her parents are from Waukesha, Wisconsin. She lived in or near Oklahoma City until college, and is currently a medical resident at a children's hospital in the city. She is married, and reports having four additional family members that live near her in Oklahoma City. She enjoys living there, and has a well-connected social network – she guesses about 25% of her co-workers live in her neighborhood, and she spends time with them outside of work.

When asked about Oklahoma, she thinks it is in a 'middle to Southern' region, although she says the accent is 'definitely Southern,' more so in rural areas. As for herself, she feels she is more of a midwesterner because of her parents. She relates this to her accent too, saying that she thinks she sounds like someone 'from the middle of the country.' She remarks that she does not say 'y'all' and instead says 'you guys.'

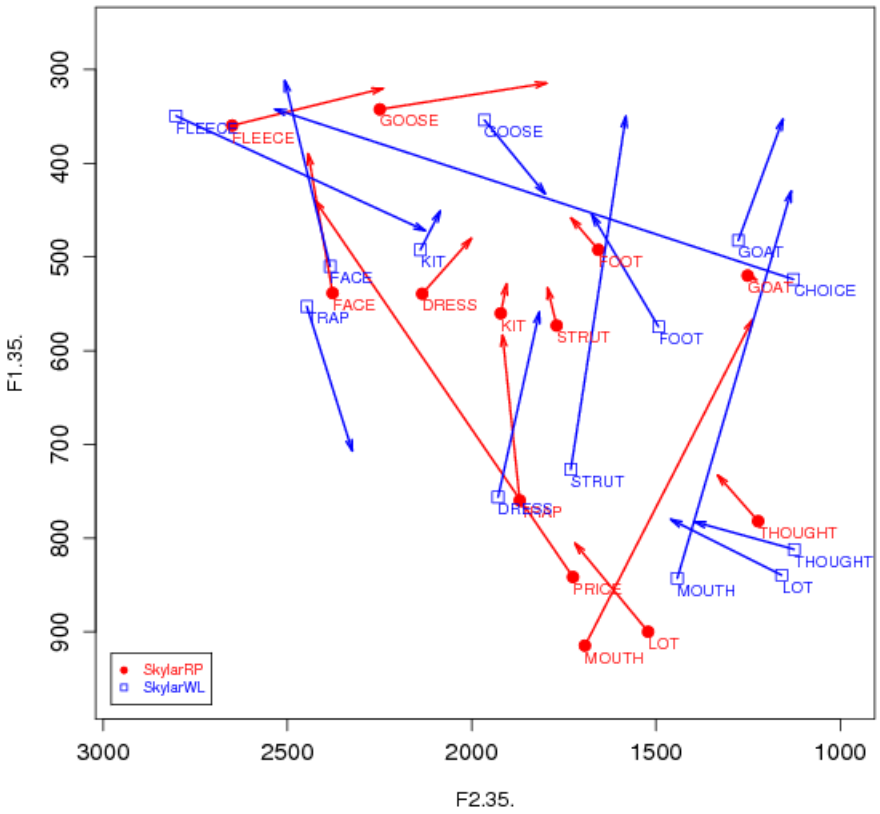


Figure 42 – Skylar WL & RP Means, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT			RP	WL		
c. GOAT					RP	WL
d. MOUTH			RP	WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE					RP	
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS			RP			WL
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/					RP	WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/					RP	WL
b. Pin/Pen Merger					RP	WL
c. Caught/Cot Merger			?	?		

Table 14 – Skylar Feature Chart

Skylar displays almost no Southern features in her speech, and what she does show appears only in the RP. Like many other subjects, her FACE and DRESS are near to each other on the F1 axis on the RP only, but quite far removed on the WL. Her WL TRAP vowel is noticeably high compared to the other subjects we've seen, although this is likely due to both of her tokens appearing before nasals.

Most of other vowel behavior is similar to the other subjects we've seen – she fronts GOOSE, fronts FOOT to a lesser degree, and does not front GOAT. She did not have enough usable tokens to test for the caught/cot merger in either context. She fronts MOUTH on the RP but not the WL and does not raise it in either context. As with many other subjects, the front and back boundaries of the vowel space are broader on her WL, but notice that the lowest bounds belong to the RP. Several of her vowels such as FACE are not noticeably fronter in the WL context. This lack of difference may be a factor of linguistic security – Labov (1994) has suggested that context matters less to the vowels of Northern Cities speakers because they do not think of themselves as having an accent and see no need to adjust, even unconsciously. Skylar may mirror such behavior – when asked what she sounded like, she described her accent as 'normal.' When asked if she was made fun of for how she talked, she simply said 'No.'

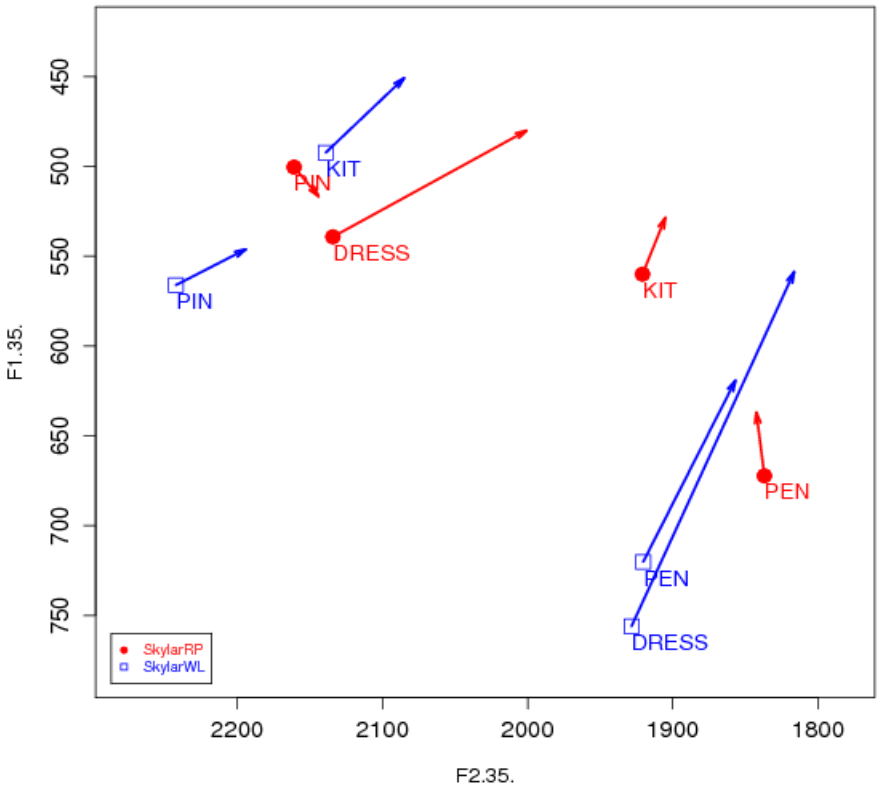


Figure 43 – Skylar Pin/Pen Means, Non-Normalized

Skylar is the only RODEO respondent who does not use the pin/pen merger. In both contexts, her PIN and PEN means are statistically different from one another (RP F1@35% $p < .03$, RP F1@80% $p < .03$, WL F2@35% $p < .03$). This may be due to her urban upbringing, or her non-Oklahoman family.

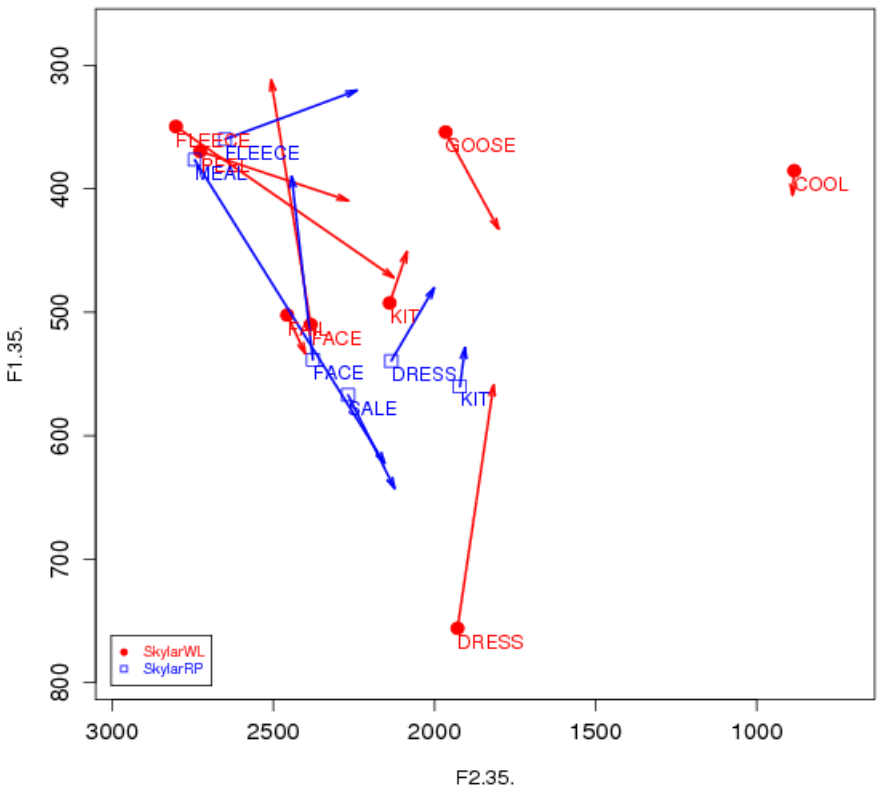


Figure 44 – Skylar Tokens Before /l/, Non-Normalized

Skylar is one of the only subjects we've seen who does not reduce any vowels before /l/. *Meal* and *peel* are indistinguishable from FLEECE, WL *fail* is nowhere close to DRESS. Only *sale* could be argued to be near DRESS territory, and this is only due to the close proximity of her RP FACE and DRESS to each other.

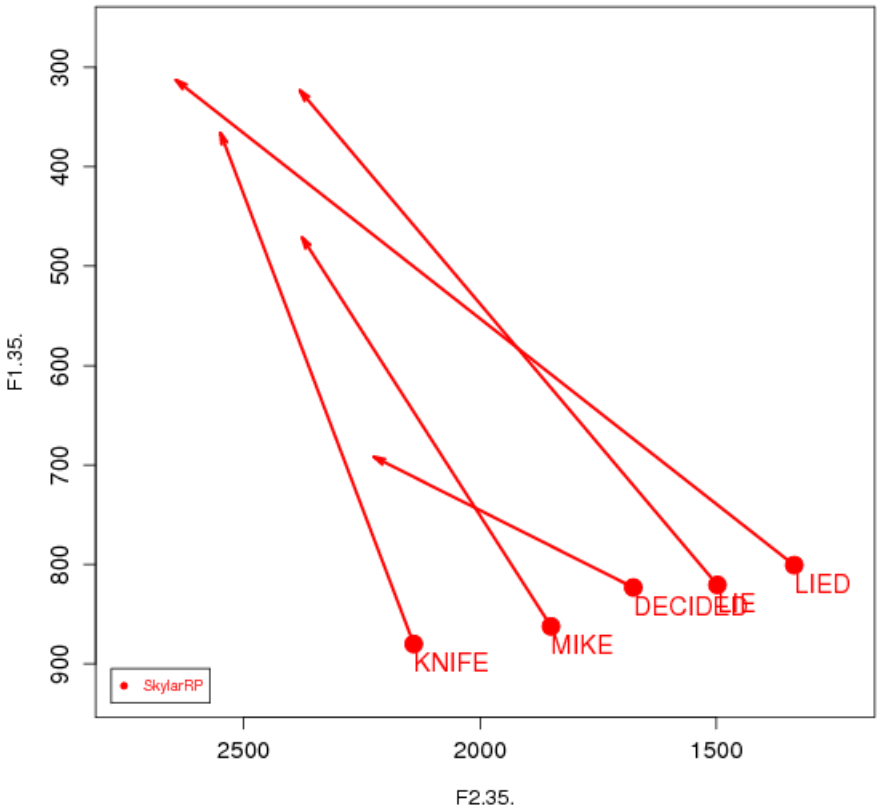


Figure 45 - Skylar Price Tokens, Non-Normalized

Skylar doesn't use monophthongal PRICE in any of the five usable tokens that were analyzed, and all of her glides are very strong except for *decided.*

As mentioned before, Skylar demonstrates almost no Southern features in her speech, except for the close proximity of FACE and DRESS in her RP that we've seen in many other subjects. She seems aware and vigilant of not talking like a Southerner, although it is possible that the front vowel near-inversion may not be salient to her. Her patterns are more Midwestern, particularly with her strongly diphthongal PRICE and total lack of vowel reduction before /l/.

It is worth noticing that while Tulsan Judy and Jason share almost all of the features discussed in this research, Skylar does not always match them, even though she is from an urban center. For example, both Judy and Jason centralize FACE before /l/ on the RP, but Skylar is the single Distinct speaker of the sample. Judy and Jason also front MOUTH on the RP, but Skylar does not. Respondent

comments that Oklahoma City and Tulsa speak differently from one another may have some foundation to them, and it appears to have been prudent not to group the two cities together. In many other cases, however, the three are in tandem – all three back GOAT on both the WL and RP, all three shift FOOT in both contexts, all three shift FACE/DRESS on the RP but not the WL. Although this is a small number of respondents, it does hint at some similarities of speech between the two cities. Judy and Jason may more closely align with each other as members of the same city, but it should also be remembered that they are of similar age (56 and 50, respectively), while Skylar is 26.

5.1.12 - Palmer – Female, 51, Guymon

Palmer is the other respondent included here that was interviewed with the slightly altered instrument used with Skylar. She was born in Guymon Oklahoma, which is in the panhandle, not far from Jessica's hometown of Slapout. She lived there until she was 8, at which point her family moved to Tennessee for two years before returning to Oklahoma. She currently lives in Cache, OK, a small town near Lawton, on the southwest side of the state. Her family has been in Oklahoma for several generations – her paternal grandfather owned a ranch in the panhandle during the dustbowl years, and the ranch remains in the family. Her mother is from Bethany, OK. Palmer has had some college and currently works in an orthodontist's office. She has very strong social and familial ties within her community – she cites a dozen family members in town, and describes her involvement with one of the town's churches as a major positive aspect of living where she does. She likes living in Oklahoma because of its people and 'how they pull together in a time of need.'

Asked about the state, she thinks it is more part of the Midwest than the South, although she suggests that this may depend on where one is in the state. She also says the state is different from Tennessee, noting that her time there showed her different accents from her own. She also has a daughter living in Louisiana, which she describes as 'definitely the opposite of Oklahoma.' Asked about how Oklahomans talk, she answers 'Some people think that you sound like a hick or a hillbilly, but I don't think so. … But if you're somewhere where they're not that well educated, then yes, they do.' She observes variation within the state, noting that a friend of hers says 'can't' as 'cain't,' and that her husband says 'warsh' for 'wash.' She seems to primarily relate dialect to education – when asked about young people she says that 'Kids now are more educated in the way they should speak than when we were growing up.'

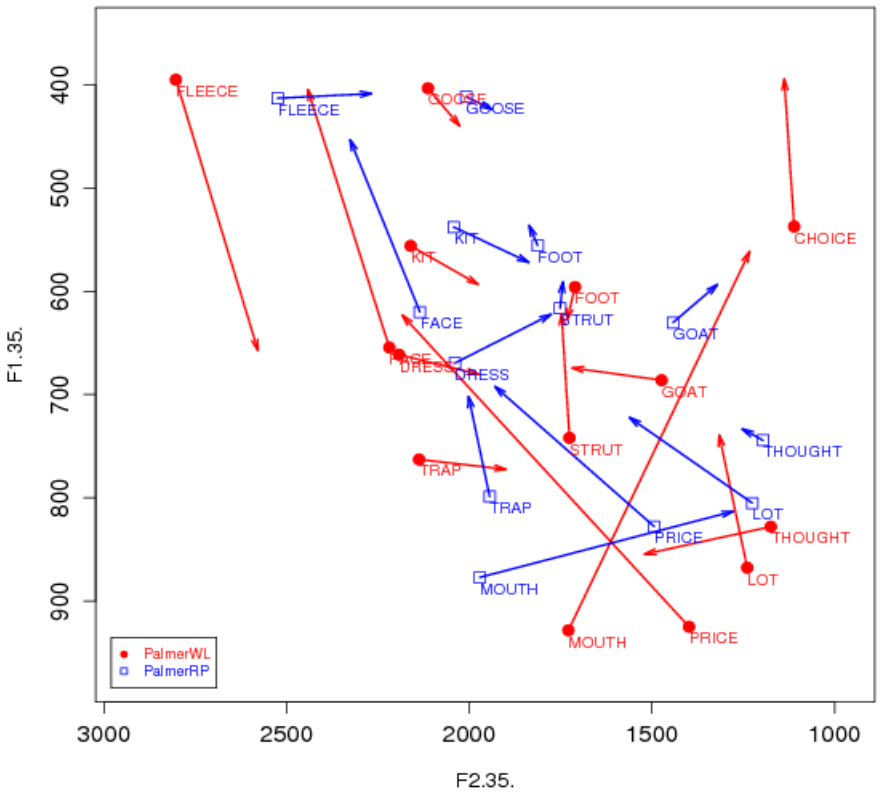


Figure 46 – Palmer WL & RP Means, Non-Normalized

Back Vowel Fronting	**Fronted**		**Shifted**		**Backed**	
a. GOOSE	RP	WL				
b. FOOT			RP	WL		
c. GOAT			RP	WL		
d. MOUTH	RP			WL		
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE					RP	WL
b. FLEECE/KIT					RP	WL
d. FACE/DRESS				WL	RP	
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/						WL
2. /i/-/I/					RP	WL
3. /ɛ/ - /e/			RP			WL
b. Pin/Pen Merger	RP	WL				
c. Caught/Cot Merger	RP			WL		

Table 16 – Palmer Feature Chart

Palmer's chart is similar to the others we've seen, with the WL plot framing the outer boundaries. She shows the caught/cot merger on the WL, but less so on the RP. In both cases she fronts GOOSE and FOOT, and even fronts GOAT somewhat. MOUTH is fronted in both cases, with the familiar trait of being lower on the WL. As with all speakers, her FLEECE and KIT vowels are far apart. Unlike many speakers, she unusually has a Southern Shift-like pattern of FACE and DRESS on the WL rather than the RP. On the WL she follows Hank's pattern of a sharp down-glide in FLEECE, the only other speaker to do so. She uses the caught/cot merger on the RP, and does so on the WL, except for F2@80%, where her use of a glide for both THOUGHT and LOT makes the two significantly different from one another ($p < .03$). She doesn't have a Southern upglide for THOUGHT, and does not raise MOUTH near TRAP in either context.

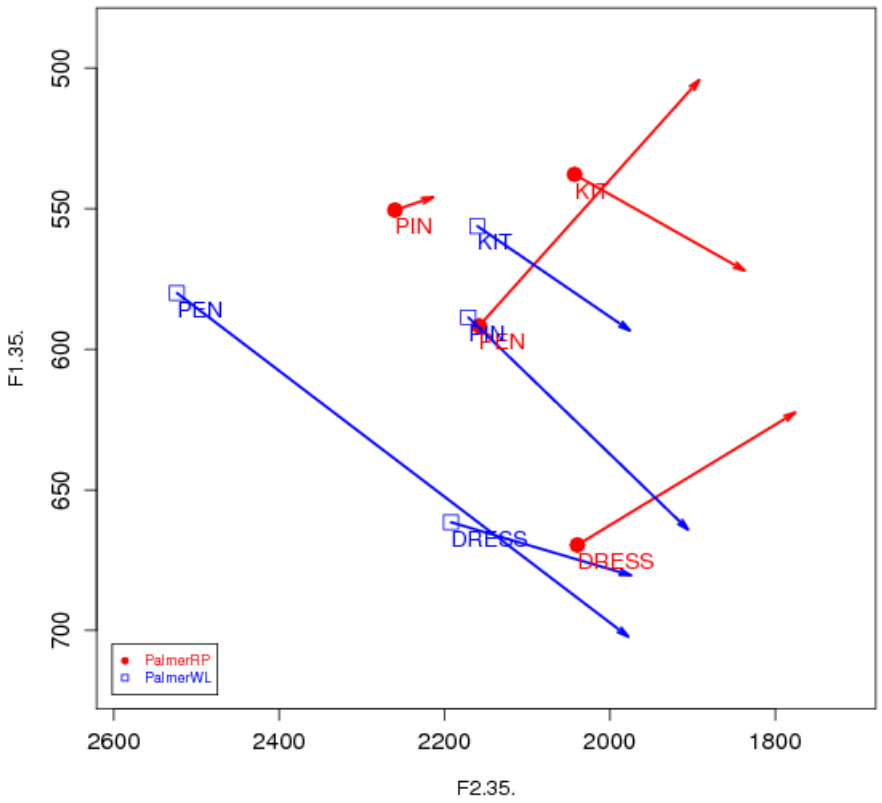


Figure 47 – Palmer Pin/Pen Means, Non-Normalized

Palmer has the pin/pen merger in both contexts, with no statistical differences on the F1 or F2 axes. Like other respondents, she differentiates WL PIN and PEN on the F1 axis but not on F2.

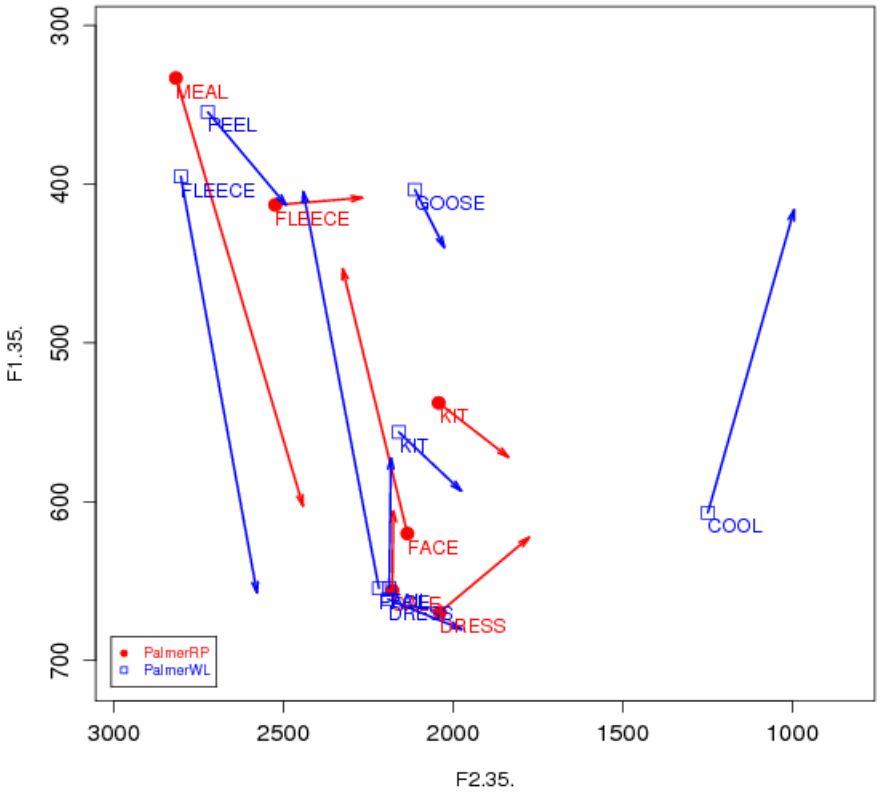


Figure 48 – Palmer Tokens Before /l/, Non-Normalized

Palmer doesn't lower either *meal* or *peel* and actually has a higher F1 for them than her normal FLEECE vowel. Unlike most of the other respondents, she centralizes the vowel in *cool*, but it remains back in comparison to her GOOSE vowel. The cluster of sounds around her DRESS vowels reveals the following: her RP *sale* is low compared to her RP FACE and is closer to RP DRESS, but WL *fail* is in the same territory as WL FACE. However, because Palmer has the unusual trait of a more Southern Shifted FACE/DRESS pair on the WL, *fail* is in indistinguishable territory.

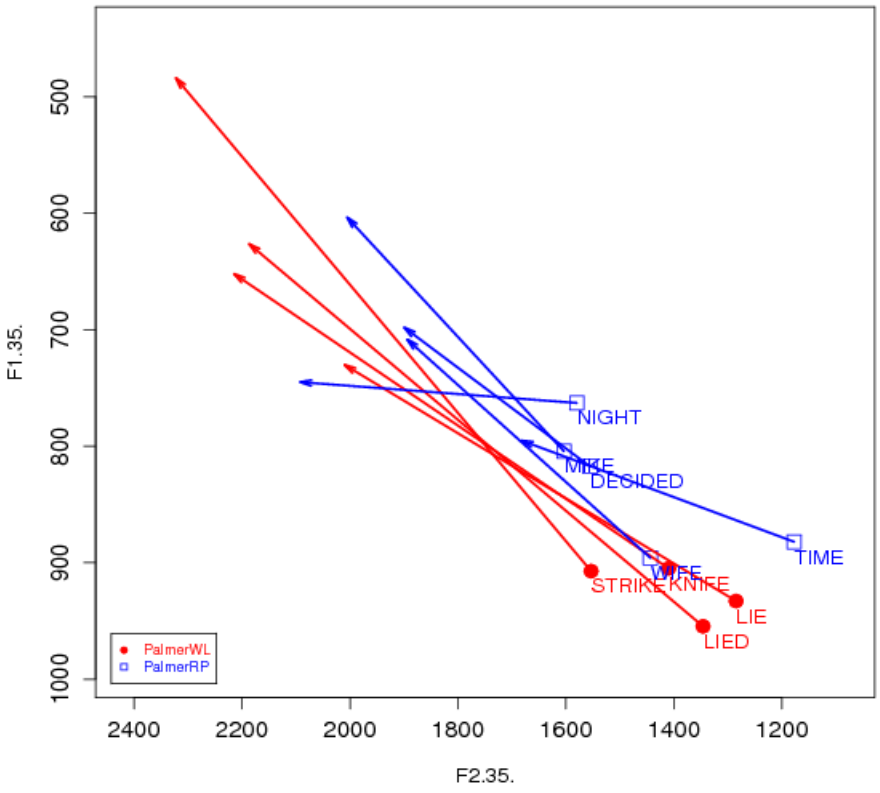


Figure 49 - Palmer PRICE Tokens, Non-Normalized

Palmer uses diphthongal PRICE in all cases, even for words such as *time* and *decided* that many respondents pronounced closer to a monophthong. Her pronunciation of *night* raises only mildly, with the main direction of the glide being forward.

Palmer has a few Southern features such as her inverting of FACE and DRESS in the WL, and the fact that she demonstrates the pin/pen merger. However, she does not have other Southern aspects such as diphthongal PRICE and tense/lax reduction before /l/. As with Jessica, it appears that Palmer's distance from Southern influences has given her a primarily Midwestern character to her speech, although it is interesting that she does not completely have the caught/cot merger.

5.2 – Discussion

Having now presented each of these twelve RODEO respondents indidvidually, we will now examine some of their results together. It is clear that these respondents do not have a single, unified vowel system between them, and so I will make an effort to tease out some of the meaningful components of variation. As I've said, while a dozen speakers are not enough to describe state-wide trends, commonalities within their speech may hint at patterns that warrant further scholarly inqury. I will first present some of their combined results, and then move into a closer examination of each dialect feature. For those that whose participation is not completely one-sided, I will present charts to show their distribution among the RODEO respondents.

Table 17 below shows the combined feature chart results for the twelve respondents. Although many features vary among speakers (and often for the same speaker), this unified chart does display a few speech patterns that are universal to the RODEO respondents – for example, the unanimous fronting of GOOSE in all contexts and the total lack of Southern Shift with FLEECE/KIT vowels. As before, the RP results are presented in the left column of each feature, and the WL in the right. Although each feature should have twelve respondents distributed across it, some results were unable to be included. As we saw earlier, this is due to causes such as having no analyzable tokens, or having an insufficient number for statistical tests.

Back Vowel Fronting	Fronted		Shifted		Backed	
a. GOOSE	10	12	0	0	0	0
b. FOOT	6	2	6	10	0	0
c. GOAT	0	0	3	5	8	7
d. MOUTH	4	0	8	11	0	1
Southern Shift	**Southern**		**Shifted**		**P&B Like**	
a. PRICE	0	0	6	3	6	8
b. FLEECE/KIT	0	0	0	0	11	11
d. FACE/DRESS	1	0	7	1	4	10
Mergers	**Merged**		**Partial**		**Distinct**	
a. Tense-lax conflation _/l/						
1. /u/-/ʊ/	0	0	0	0	0	11
2. /i/-/I/	6	0	1	2	3	10
3. /ɛ/ - /e/	5	3	3	4	1	5
b. Pin/Pen Merger	8	10	0	0	1	1
c. Caught/Cot Merger	7	7	2	1	1	3

Table 17 – Combined Feature Chart Results from RODEO Respondents

5.2.1 - Southern Shift

Having looked at these twelve respondents, we did not see anyone, even Hank, who displayed the complete Southern Shift in their front vowels. All speakers kept FLEECE and KIT strongly distinct from each other, and never came close to a Southern Shift-like arrangement of these two vowels. Further, we did not observe anyone who universally inverted FACE and DRESS in all contexts. No one presented here matched the strong Southern Shift pattern of Tennessee and Alabama presented by Thomas (2008). The evidence of speakers using the Southern Shift appears with FACE and DRESS only, most commonly in the RP.

Name	Sex	Age	Hometown	Name	Sex	Age	Hometown
FACE/DRESS Southern RP				FACE/DRESS Southern RP			
Hank	Male	53	Yale				
FACE/DRESS Shifted RP				FACE/DRESS Shifted WL			
Beth	Female	46	Watts	Palmer	Female	51	Guymon
Judy	Female	56	Tulsa				
Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City	FACE/DRESS P&B Like WL			
Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater	Beth	Female	46	Watts
Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow	Jessica	Female	22	Slapout
Ray	Male	39	Ada	Judy	Female	56	Tulsa
Jason	Male	50	Tulsa	Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City
				Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater
FACE/DRESS P&B Like RP				Brian	Male	25	Orlando
Jessica	Female	22	Slapout	Hank	Male	53	Yale
Palmer	Female	51	Guymon	Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow
Brian	Male	25	Orlando	Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater
Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater	Ray	Male	39	Ada
				Jason	Male	50	Tulsa

Table 18– Respondent Distribution of FACE/DRESS

Some speakers, like Hank, show this shift very dramatically – Hank's F1 for RP DRESS is 125 Hz higher than his RP FACE, and his RP DRESS includes a down-glide not visible in his WL DRESS, which is steady. As we can see above in Table 18, he is the only speaker to have this Southern configuration of his mid-front vowels. His arrangement of FACE and DRESS also matches the older speakers from Thomas (2001). Most other respondents, however, were more subtle with this pattern, often keeping FACE and DRESS parallel at F1 rather than switching them. Seven respondents in addition to Hank kept RP DRESS parallel or higher to FACE on the F1 axis, with an even split of gender and wide distribution of age. Palmer was the only person to shift FACE/DRESS on the WL, but did not do so on the RP. Some of the closer distance on the RP may be due to the overall more compressed vowel space speakers employed for the task. However, it is curious that respondents like Skylar would maintain sizeable distance between FLEECE and KIT on the RP, but not do so with FACE and DRESS.

Shifting FACE/DRESS on the RP appears to primarily be the domain of people in larger cities, but not exclusively. All three Tulsa area respondents shift, as does Skylar in Oklahoma City. The Stillwater residents are split, however, with Suzy shifting and Mr. White not. The Kramer and Skylar share this feature is very interesting – Kramer expressed strong linguistic insecurity, and Skylar emphasized speaking like her parents. Skylar is unquestionably the least Southern of any of the RODEO speakers, and Kramer rated low on all such measures, while appearing to very actively avoid sounding like an Oklahoman. This suggests that this variation in FACE and DRESS does not appear to be salient in the minds of the RODEO speakers as something they should avoid.

When asked about how Oklahomans speak, respondents often mentioned emblematic features such as 'drawl,' the pin/pen merger, or use of monophthongal PRICE (although obviously not in those words). The Southern Shift was never mentioned, and no examples of 'talking funny' included Southern Shift confusions. Notable also is that Beth's exaggerated 'down home' accent did not include any significant alterations to FLEECE/KIT or FACE/DRESS. It may be worth considering that the respondents in this study are not actually using the Southern Shift at all. If we follow the ANAE's model of the shift in which it includes the inversion of both FLEECE/KIT and FACE/DRESS and also counts monophthongal PRICE as a prerequisite, the RODEO respondents appear to have 1/3 of the shift only, and lack the feature that is supposed to begin the chain to begin with. While we did see cases of monophthongal PRICE in this chapter's results, their distribution often more closely fits with Texan norms than Southern. Words like *lie* and *knife* that would be ripe for Southern monophthongs did not typically receive them, and instead the voiced environments like *time* and *decided* were more likely to have weakened glides. FLEECE and KIT were never inverted by anyone, not even enough to be considered 'Shifted.'

It is not unlikely that the observed behavior with FACE and DRESS is not in some way related to the Southern Shift. The speakers from Yale that we saw in Chapter 2 from Thomas (2001) inverted

FACE/DRESS – although we do not know their demographic background, the historical discussion in Chapter 2 shows that the older speakers could easily have Southern background and contact. Plus, the most Southern-sounding RODEO speaker Hank was also the only respondent who fully inverted the two sounds. Plus, we observed similar behavior in Beth, who spent her youth living on the Arkansas border. However, it may be incorrect to describe the RODEO speakers' handling of FACE/DRESS as part of a chain shift when we see no other components of the chain.

If we look at the twelve respondents in aggregate, we see the combined results of Figure 49 below:

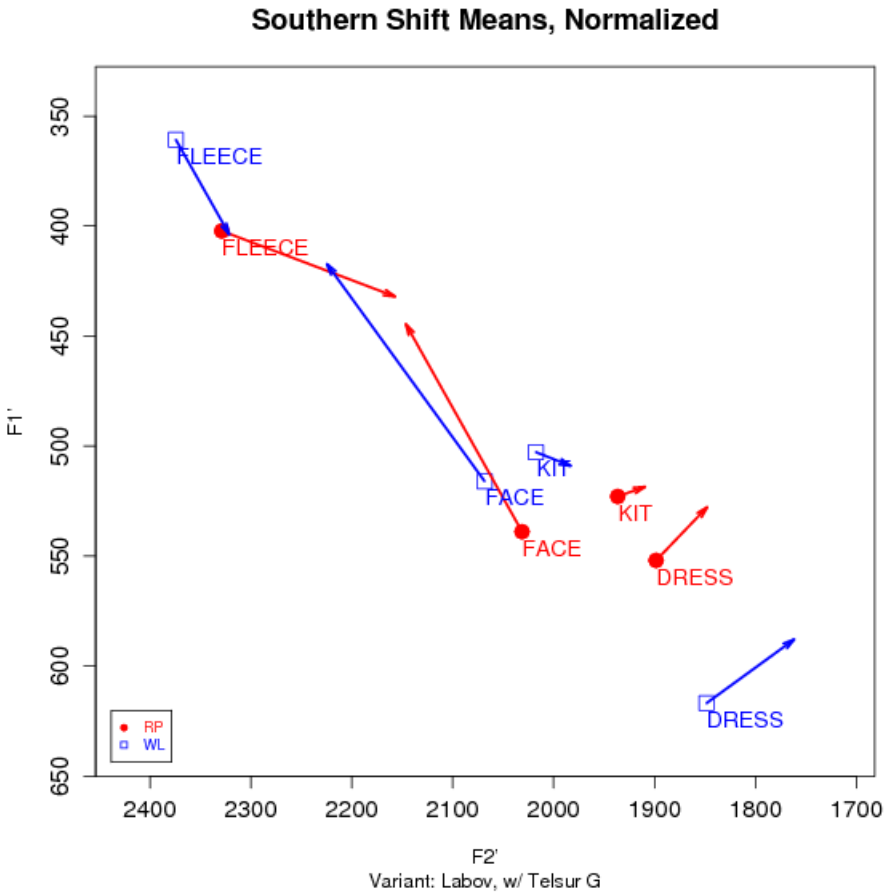


Figure 50 – Southern Shift Means, Normalized

Comparing these results, FLEECE and KIT are significantly different from each other in both contexts. WL FACE and DRESS are also significantly different, but on the RP they are not (F1@35%, p = .68, F2@35% p = .20). Because the RODEO respondents pronounce FACE with an up-glide, FACE and DRESS are statistically distinguishable at the 80% point (F1@80% p < .001, F2@80% < .004)

Looking back to the plots from Thomas (2001) and the ANAE, these results are similar to theirs – none of those six respondents inverted FLEECE/KIT. RODEO respondents' behavior on each task matches the other studies – on the WL they accord with the ANAE's WL plots and keep FACE and DRESS strongly distinct. On the RP, many RODEO respondents follow the pattern of Thomas (2001)'s Speaker 90 by keeping FACE and DRESS parallel to each other on F1. Thomas' other speakers completely invert FACE/DRESS, which is done in RODEO only by Hank. It is worth nothing that for all RODEO speakers, this raising of DRESS occurred only on the RP task – a detail that neither of the previous acoustic works could describe on their own. Also noteworthy is that the shifted forms on the RP for FACE and DRESS do not appear to depend on monophthongal PRICE. Although we saw the ANAE and Thomas (2001) both suggest that monophthongal PRICE was a possible prerequisite for later stages of the Southern Shift, we see speakers such as Kramar and Skylar raising DRESS while still keeping PRICE diphthongal.

Finally, Thomas (2001) reported lowering of FACE and DRESS among his Oklahoman speakers (Speaker 92 especially), but we do not see that with the RODEO respondents. Speakers appear to raise DRESS rather than lower FACE, and GOAT is not lowered in a fashion like Speaker 92.

5.2.2 - Back Vowel Fronting

As we saw above in Table 17**,** every RODEO respondent strongly fronted GOOSE in all contexts. FOOT was always at least partially fronted – no one kept it back in a P&Blike position. More advanced fronting, however, may be conditioned by the speaker's task. Five speakers fronted FOOT while performing the RP, but only one did so on the WL. GOAT was never strongly fronted, and those who

shifted it forward did so evenly on the RP and WL tasks. This matches the Southern pattern described by Thomas (2008), although the fronting of GOOSE is not uniquely Southern. This feature also does not appear to be on the minds of Oklahomans – no respondents mentioned it. Speakers like Skylar and Kramer who cringe at sounding hickish may not be bothered by fronting of GOOSE, as it matches the behavior of much of the rest of the country and may thus not be salient.

Name	Sex	Age	Hometown	Name	Sex	Age	Hometown
FOOT Fronted RP				FOOT Fronted WL			
Beth	Female	46	Watts	Beth	Female	46	Watts
Jessica	Female	22	Slapout	Hank	Male	53	Yale
Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater				
Brian	Male	25	Orlando	FOOT Shifted WL			
Hank	Male	53	Yale	Jessica	Female	22	Slapout
Ray	Male	39	Ada	Judy	Female	56	Tulsa
				Palmer	Female	51	Guymon
FOOT Shifted RP				Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City
Judy	Female	56	Tulsa	Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater
Palmer	Female	51	Guymon	Brian	Male	25	Orlando
Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City	Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow
Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow	Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater
Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater	Ray	Male	39	Ada
Jason	Male	50	Tulsa	Jason	Male	50	Tulsa
FOOT Backed RP				FOOT Backed WL			

Table 19 – Respondent Distribution of FOOT

Looking at Table 19 above, we get some suggestion that fronting of FOOT may be more common in smaller towns. While in both contexts fronting is balanced between men and women, we see that almost everyone who fronts FOOT is from a small town, with Suzy in Stillwater as the only exception. Everyone from the two major cities shifts FOOT but does not front it, with Palmer being the only shifter not in a larger city. Looking to the WL, we see only Beth and Hank who still front FOOT, with both of them from small towns. The RP task appears to much more strongly condition fronting, with 6/12 respondents Fronted on the RP, while only 2/12 are on the WL.

With regard to prior work, RODEO respondents generally matched the pattern seen by the ANAE for back vowels. Speakers tended to either match Ivy's back vowels with GOOSE strongly fronted and GOAT backed, or else to match Trina's weak fronting of GOAT. The extreme fronting of GOAT as with Thomas' Speaker 93 was not done by any RODEO speaker. Plus, as mentioned above, no one lowered GOAT's F1 to the 700 Hz range of Speaker 93 - the vowel remained firmly in the mid range for height on all speakers' plots, and in both contexts.

5.2.3 - Pin/Pen Merger

All subjects except Skylar demonstrated the pin/pen merger, and even with her, the distinction was not consistent (5 of 8 F1/F2 data points were merged, 3 were not). Her non-Oklahoman parents make it more unclear if any of her demographic traits are influencing her pin/pen tokens, but it is very likely she has frequent contact with the merger. Further, because of its uniform presence among the other RODEO respondents, it is likely she encounters the merger among social peers, friends, and colleagues.

RODEO respondents seem more aware of this dialect feature than those discussed so far. Twenty-one of 31 respondents reported using the merger themselves, and everyone reported hearing it in others around them. They also did not appear to think badly of the merger – Kramer described most of the lexical inventory as terms 'other people' used, but was quick to agree that he said pin and pen the same. Below, in Figures 51 and 52, I have separated individual pin/pen words and plotted their average means among the core twelve respondents. For visibility's sake, the WL and RP are on separate plots. Mean scores of non-prenasal KIT and DRESS are included for reference. In both *anything* and *remembered* below, the point shown on the plot is for the stressed syllable only.

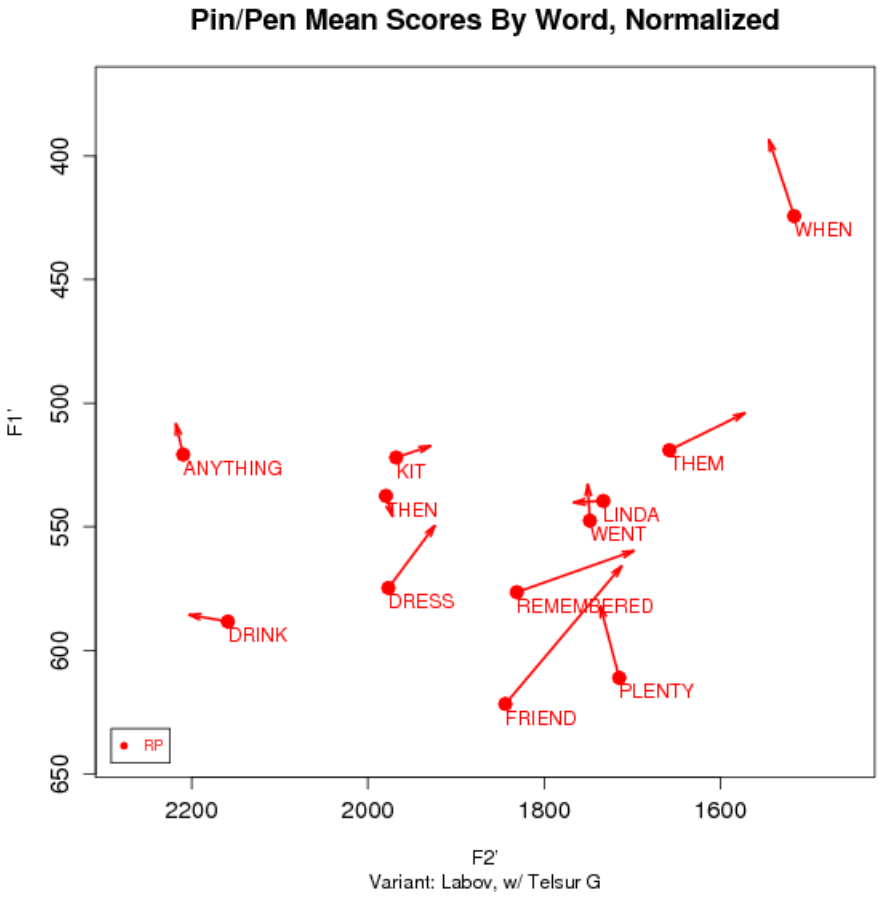


Figure 51 – RP Pin/Pen Mean Scores by Word, Normalized

Speaker	Word	N	F1'	F2'	F1' gl	F2' gl
RP	ANYTHING	12	520.3	2207.6	507.9	2215.9
RP	DRESS	12	574.2	1975	549.1	1922.4
RP	DRINK	3	587.8	2156.9	585.1	2200.8
RP	FRIEND	10	621.1	1842.4	565.4	1710.6
RP	KIT	12	521.5	1966.2	516.9	1927.4
RP	LINDA	10	539.1	1731.4	539.7	1764.9
RP	PLENTY	11	610.6	1713.3	581.6	1734.6
RP	REMEMBERED	12	576	1829.5	559.3	1696.8
RP	THEM	6	518.6	1656.5	503.6	1571.1
RP	THEN	19	537	1977.8	545.3	1970.2
RP	WENT	26	547	1746.5	532.4	1749.1
RP	WHEN	5	424	1515	393.2	1543.6

Table 20 – RP Pin/Pen Mean Scores

The RP contained few tokens of PIN words, but we can see *Linda* with almost the same F1 and F2 values of *went*. *Then* is nearer to KIT than DRESS, and both *them* and *anything* are parallel with KIT on F1, but not F2. *When* is significantly raised and fronted on both its onset and glide (F1@35% p < .003, F2@25% p < .004, F1@85% p < .0007, F2@85% p < .03).

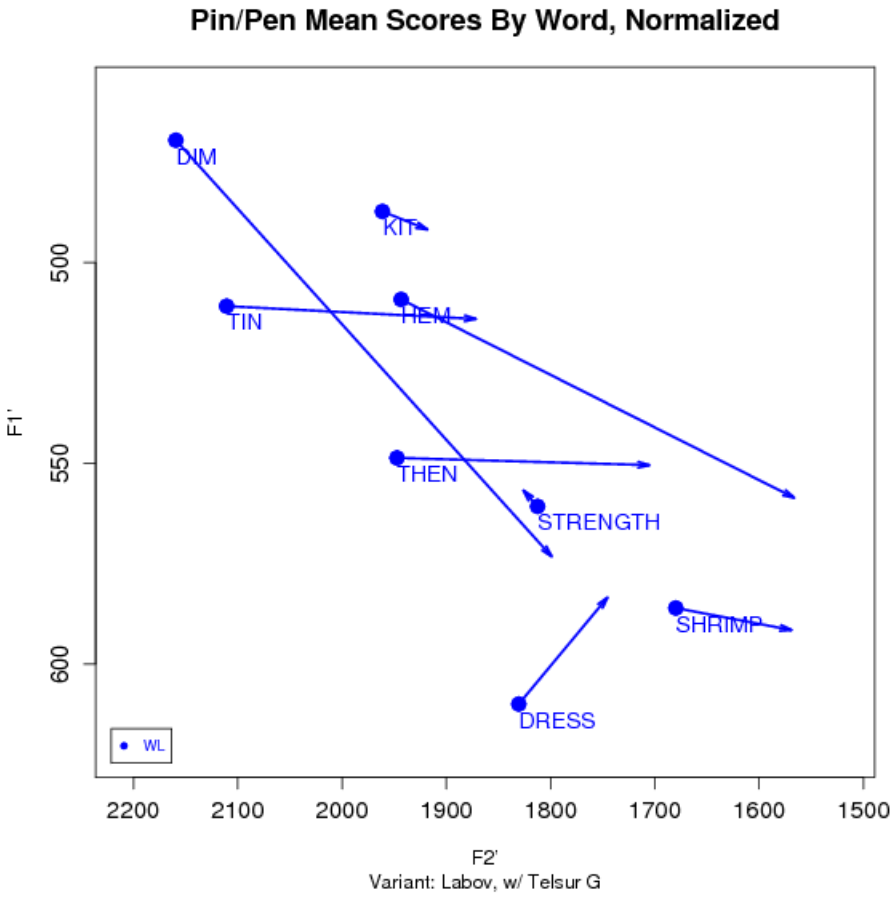


Figure 52 – WL Pin/Pen Mean Scores by Word, Normalized

Speaker	Word	N	F1'	F2'	F1' gl	F2' gl
WL	DIM	11	469.5	2159.3	573.2	1799.1
WL	DRESS	12	609.9	1830.5	583.4	1745.6
WL	HEM	8	509.2	1943.3	558.6	1566.4
WL	KIT	12	487.3	1961.3	491.7	1918.2
WL	SHRIMP	11	586	1679.9	591.5	1569.1
WL	STRENGTH	6	560.7	1812.5	556.7	1826
WL	THEN	10	548.6	1947.4	550.4	1705.4
WL	TIN	11	510.8	2110.7	514	1871.7

Table 21 – WL Pin/Pen Mean Scores

The direction of movement in the WL pin/pen tokens appears to be upward – all PEN tokens are raised above DRESS, and *dim* moves even higher than KIT in a Southern Shift fashion – raising high and then having a sharp down-glide. *Hem* behaves similarly, with its onset only 20 Hz below KIT. *Shrimp* is the only word that lowers, to far below KIT. *Strength* is raised above DRESS, but unlike the other pin/pen tokens, does not have a glide.

5.2.4. - Caught/Cot Merger

The caught/cot merger is not as entrenched with these 12 respondents as is the pin/pen merger. Whereas Skylar was the only speaker to have any F1 or F2 points be significantly different from one another for pin/pen, half of the respondents here had at least one point that was not merged. It is not surprising that Hank was not merged, seeing as the rest of his speech largely matches Southern norms. Also not surprising was that his LOT/THOUGHT vowels were not merged in the onset position, whereas others like Palmer had tokens that began merged and only went apart due to a glide.

Name	Sex	Age	Hometown	Name	Sex	Age	Hometown
Caught/Cot Merged RP				Caught/Cot Merged WL			
Palmer	Female	51	Guymon	Beth	Female	46	Watts
Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater	Jessica	Female	22	Slapout
Brian	Male	25	Orlando	Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater
Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow	Brian	Male	25	Orlando
Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater	Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow
Ray	Male	39	Ada	Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater
Jason	Male	50	Tulsa	Jason	Male	50	Tulsa
Caught/Cot Partial RP				Caught/Cot Partial WL			
Beth	Female	46	Watts	Palmer	Female	51	Guymon
Jessica	Female	22	Slapout				
				Caught/Cot Distinct WL			
Caught/Cot Distinct RP				Judy	Female	56	Tulsa
Hank	Male	53	Yale	Hank	Male	53	Yale
				Ray	Male	39	Ada

Table 22 – Respondent Distribution for Caught/Cot

Looking at Table 22, Bailey, Tillery, Wikle, and Sand (1993) receive some confirmation in the caught/cot distribution of the RODEO subjects. Their findings, shown again below in Figure 53, suggested that the caught/cot merger began in the cities and then later diffused to the more rural areas of the state. On the RP, everyone is Merged except for three people from small towns – Beth from Watts, Jessica from Slapout, and Hank from Yale. Notice that for this feature the location of the town does not appear as salient – only its size. On the RP, everyone from larger city groups together, as well as Brian and Palmer. On the WL, our trend of larger cities merging and smaller cities not still holds, although notice Judy from Tulsa who is distinct. Several people varied their caught/cot production between the two tasks, such as Beth, Jessica, Judy, Ray, and Palmer. These 12 respondents appear to match earlier observations with the caught/cot merger. The only young speaker who doesn't merge is Jessica, and only on one task. Similarly, apart from Judy on the WL, everyone in larger cities merges in both contexts. This also matches (Thomas 2001)'s speakers, where older Speaker 90 showed distinct caught/cot with an upgliding THOUGHT, while younger Speakers 92 and 93 were merged.

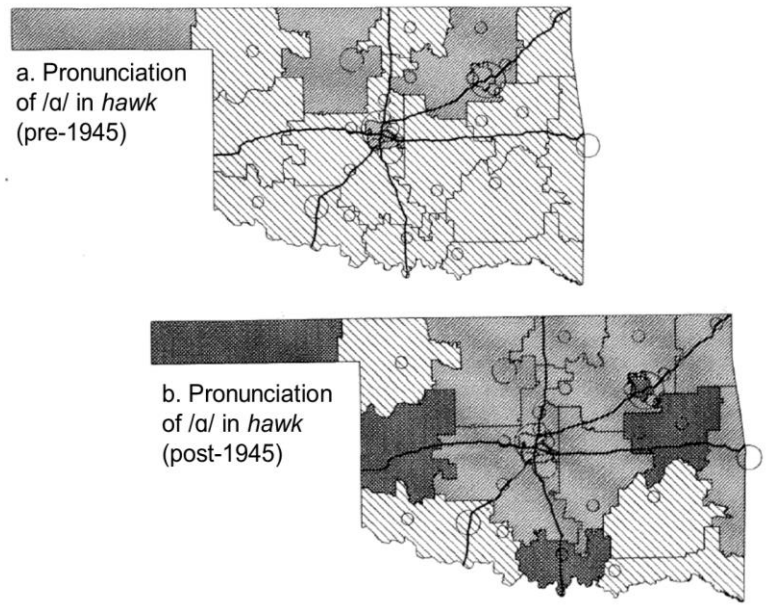


Figure 53 – Diffusion of the Caught/Cot Merger (from Bailey, Wikle, Tillery, & Sand 1993)

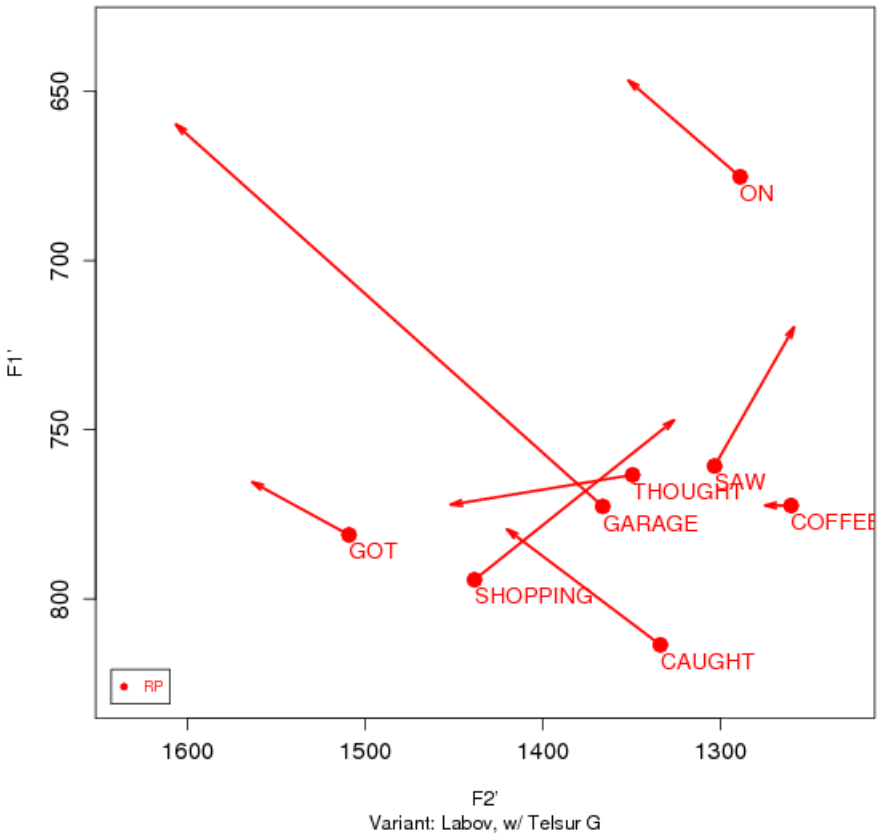


Figure 54 – RP Caught/Cot Mean Scores by Word, Normalized

Speaker	Vowel	N	F1'	F2'	F1' gl	F2' gl
RP	CAUGHT	11	813.5	1334	779.4	1420.3
RP	COFFEE	10	772.4	1260.4	772.3	1275
RP	GARAGE	9	772.6	1366.4	659.8	1606.7
RP	GOT	11	781.1	1509.2	765.5	1563.6
RP	ON	25	675.3	1289.1	646.9	1351.9
RP	SAW	12	760.7	1303.5	719.7	1258.7
RP	SHOPPING	9	794.3	1438.6	747.1	1326.2
RP	THOUGHT	10	763.4	1349.6	772.2	1452

Table 23 – RP Caught/Cot Mean Scores

On the RP caught/cot tokens, LOT and THOUGHT intermingle, most notably with *garage* and *thought*. *Got* and *coffee* are the most distant from each other, and so there may still be lingering distinctions within the vowel class. *Coffee* is notable also in its lack of a glide, whereas most of the other words have a glide of some variety, particularly *garage*. *Saw* is the only word that shows any sign of a

more older Southern /ɔo/ diphthong. *On* is a notable outlier from the group, and it is significantly raised in comparison to its neighbors (F1@35% $p < .001$, F2@80% $p < .001$). It will receive further discussion in the next chapter.

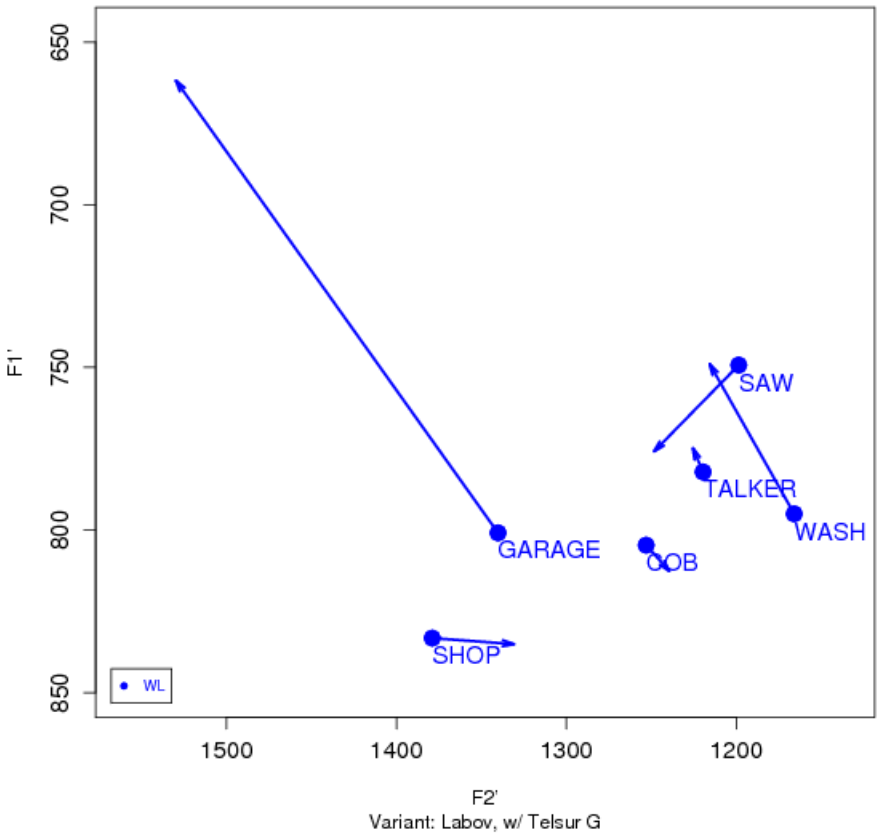


Figure 55 – WL Caught/Cot Mean Scores by Word, Normalized

Speaker	Vowel	N	F1'	F2'	F1' gl	F2' gl
WL	COB	10	804.6	1253	812.6	1239.4
WL	GARAGE	11	800.9	1340.2	661.8	1529.8
WL	SAW	10	749.3	1198.5	775.8	1248.3
WL	SHOP	11	833.2	1378.9	835.1	1330.8
WL	TALKER	11	782.1	1219.5	774.8	1225.5
WL	WASH	10	795	1165.9	748.9	1215.6

Table 24 – WL Caught/Cot Mean Scores

The WL words are again interspersed. *Saw* this time does not feature an up-glide, although if respondents were being more careful to avoid Southernness on the WL, it may explain the difference. *Garage* again has a strong upglide, whereas the other words do not.

On

As mentioned above, tokens of *on* were significantly different than the other LOT/THOUGHT tokens, and were problematic to code. As can be seen below in Figure 56, most subjects produced *on* with a LOT or THOUGHT vowel, but some like Hank and Beth did not.

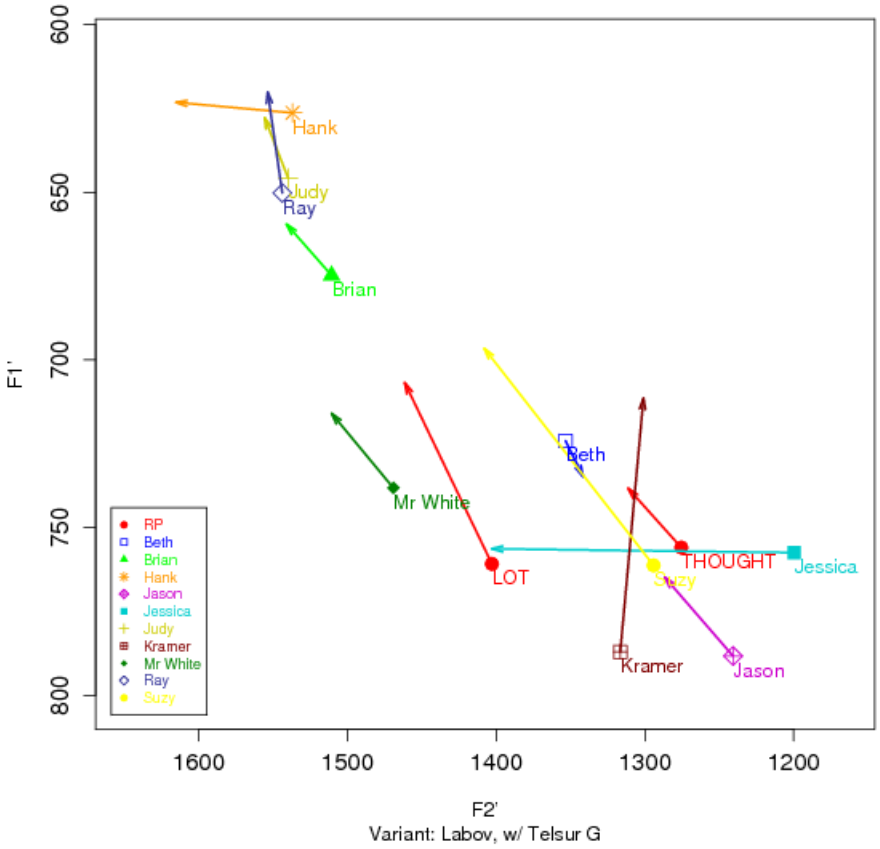


Figure 56 - On Tokens By Speaker, Normalized

Hank, Judy, Ray, and Brian had mean scores for *on* that were visibly different from the rest of the group. Although I classified *on* as a THOUGHT vowel for most speakers, for the upper cluster it

appeared to be more similar to their GOAT vowels, and so for them I classified it as such. As can be seen in Figure 56, although individual THOUGHT/LOT tokens (shown in yellow) exhibit a great deal of flexibility as to their height, they are in general backed. The *on* tokens produced by Hank, Judy, Ray, and Beth are fronted in comparison and stand out from the pack.

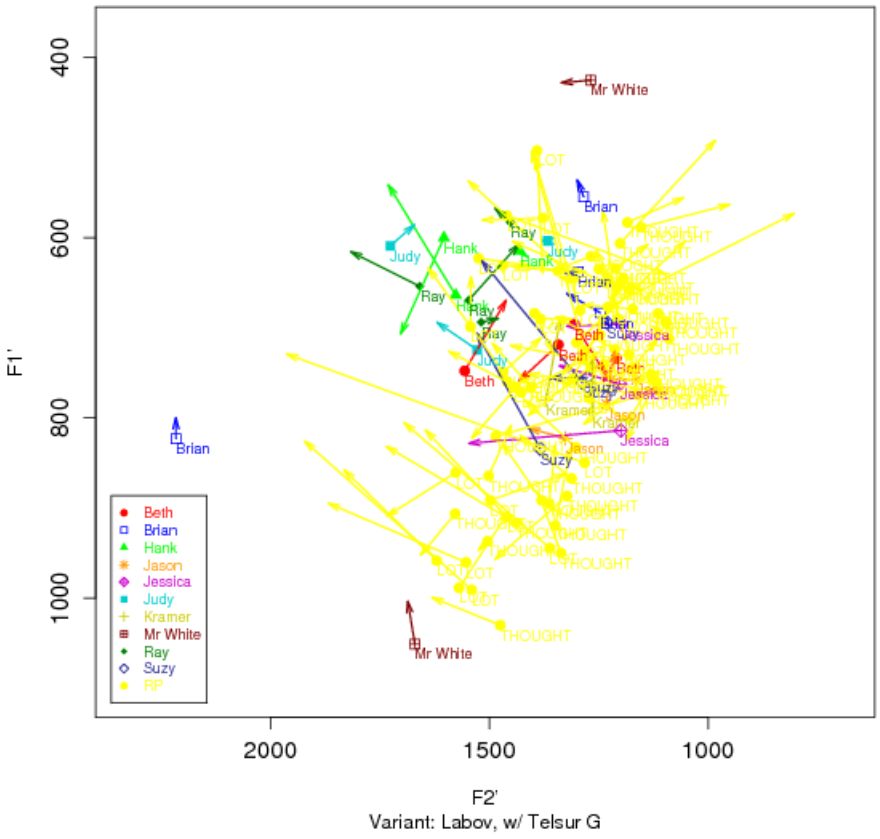


Figure 57 – Individual Tokens of On by Speaker, Normalized

5.2.5 – Vowels Before /l/

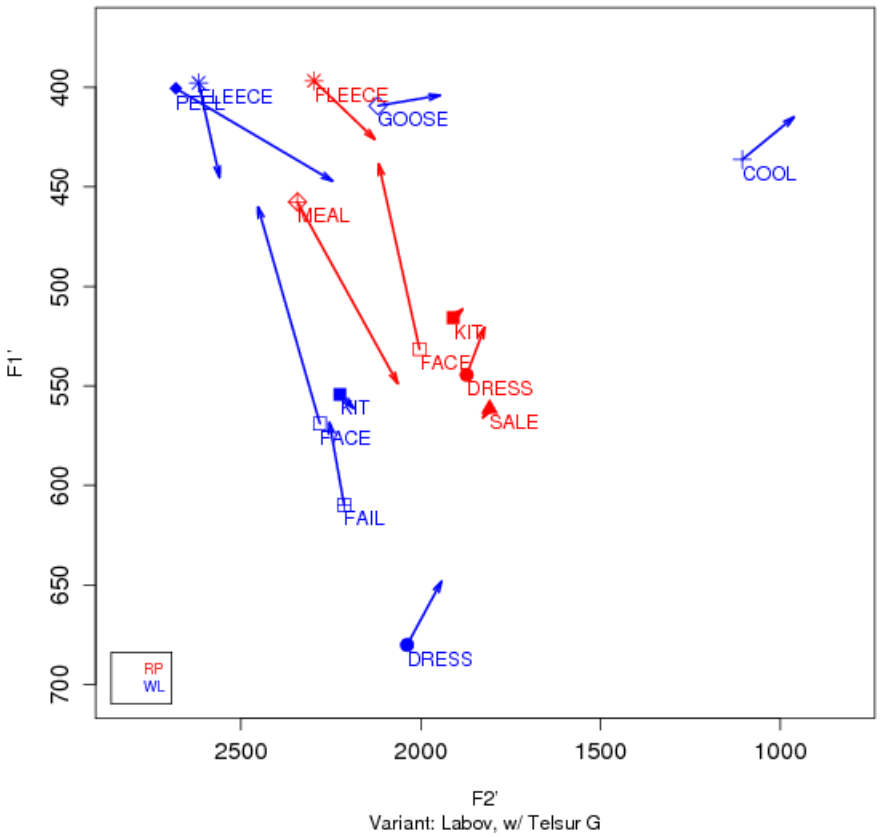


Figure 58 – All Before /l/ Means, Normalized

All of the RODEO respondents strongly back *cool* in relation to GOOSE, making a merger impossible. While only Kramer and Brian lowered *peel,* 8 of 11 tokens of *meal* were lowered. While the averaged means of *meal* and FLEECE are not significantly different, it is still notable that many more tokens of *meal* were lowered overall. This may be a lexical distinction, or be due to a frequency effect. Checking the *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA) shows *meal* to occur 3.37 times for each .3 appearances of *peel*, suggesting it is much more commonly used in American English. On the WL, *fail* does not vary significantly from FACE or DRESS in the 35% position, but because of its much weaker glide, it is significantly different from FACE at 80% (F1@80% $p < .004$, F2@80% $p < .01$). However, f*ail* has enough of a glide to move it away from DRESS at 80%, so they are significantly different as well (F1@80% $p < .03$, F2@80% $p < .003$). RP *sale* is not statistically different from RP DRESS in any position,

or from RP FACE at 35% - this should not surprise, seeing as FACE and DRESS were shown not to be distinguishable from each other in aggregate. *Sale* is significantly different from FACE at 85%, however (F1@80% $p < .001$, F2@80% $p < .01$). This is due to *sale*'s near-total lack of a glide, whereas FACE is diphthongal. For the RODEO respondents,vowels being before /l/ extends the down-glide of FLEECE and neutralizes the up-glide of FACE.

Name	Sex	Age	Hometown	Name	Sex	Age	Hometown
/ɛ/ - /e/ Merged RP				/ɛ/ - /e/ Merged WL			
Beth	Female	46	Watts	Beth	Female	46	Watts
Jessica	Female	22	Slapout	Hank	Male	53	Yale
Judy	Female	56	Tulsa	Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow
Brian	Male	25	Orlando				
Jason	Male	50	Tulsa	/ɛ/ - /e/ Partial WL			
				Jessica	Female	22	Slapout
/ɛ/ - /e/ Partial RP				Judy	Female	56	Tulsa
Palmer	Female	51	Guymon	Brian	Male	25	Orlando
Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater	Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater
Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater				
Ray	Male	39	Ada	/ɛ/ - /e/ Distinct WL			
				Palmer	Female	51	Guymon
/ɛ/ - /e/ Distinct RP				Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City
Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City	Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater
				Ray	Male	39	Ada
				Jason	Male	50	Tulsa

Table 25 – Respondent Distribution for Neutralizing FACE Before /l/

In Table 25 above, the only speaker who merged FACE before /l/ in both cases was Beth. Mr. White was the only speaker who was Shifted in both cases. Neither sex nor age appear to be a deciding factor for neutralization. Hometown also appears inconclusive – although Tulsa and Stillwater speakers group together on the RP, they do not on the WL. The RP task appears to encourage more shifting, with 9/10 usable tokens shifted or more, compared to 7/12 on the WL.

Name	Sex	Age	Hometown	Name	Sex	Age	Hometown
i-I Merged RP				i-I Merged WL			
Beth	Female	46	Watts				
Jessica	Female	22	Slapout				
Judy	Female	56	Tulsa	i-I Partial WL			
Brian	Male	25	Orlando	Brian	Male	25	Orlando
Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow	Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow
Jason	Male	50	Tulsa				
				i-I Distinct WL			
i-I Partial RP				Beth	Female	46	Watts
Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater	Jessica	Female	22	Slapout
				Judy	Female	56	Tulsa
i-I Distinct RP				Palmer	Female	51	Guymon
Palmer	Female	51	Guymon	Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City
Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City	Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater
Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater	Hank	Male	53	Yale
				Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater
				Ray	Male	39	Ada
				Jason	Male	50	Tulsa

Table 26 – Respondent Distribution for Neutralizing FLEECE before /l/

We see a more striking effect of context on this task – 6/10 usable responses are Merged on the RP, whereas none are Merged on the WL. Only 3/10 are Distinct on RP, while 10/12 are Distinct on the WL. Notice that the three Tulsa area respondents (Judy, Jason, and Kramar) group together on the RP, and that both Tulsans are together on WL. As before, there does not seem to be a striking contrast between male/female or among different ages, apart from Brian and Kramar, both young men, grouping together on the WL.

The RODEO respondents' vowels before /l/ somewhat matched Thomas (2001)'s speakers. Although no one in RODEO merged GOOSE before /l/, there were speakers who neutralized *meal* and *peel*, or whose FLEECE vowels were shifted lower than in other environments. Like Thomas' respondents, this feature was not uniform among Oklahomans. Although the pin/pen merger was nearly ubiquitous, vowels before /l/ showed considerable variation. Once again, we also see the need to include multiple speech contexts – fully merged FLEECE tokens appeared only in the RP context,

whereas the WL showed almost no variation from a fully distinct pronunciation. The words themselves may also have made a difference.

5.2.6 - PRICE Tokens

Diphthongal PRICE appears to be the norm for the RODEO respondents, even for speakers like Hank. Although he used a monophthong for *lie*, his tokens for *lie* and *decided* were diphthongs. In many cases, RODEO respondents match the behavior of Thomas (2001)'s speakers, showing a weak glide rather than a full monophthong or dipththong. This may be conditioned by both the task – RP words like *time* and *decided* were more likely to have weaker glides.

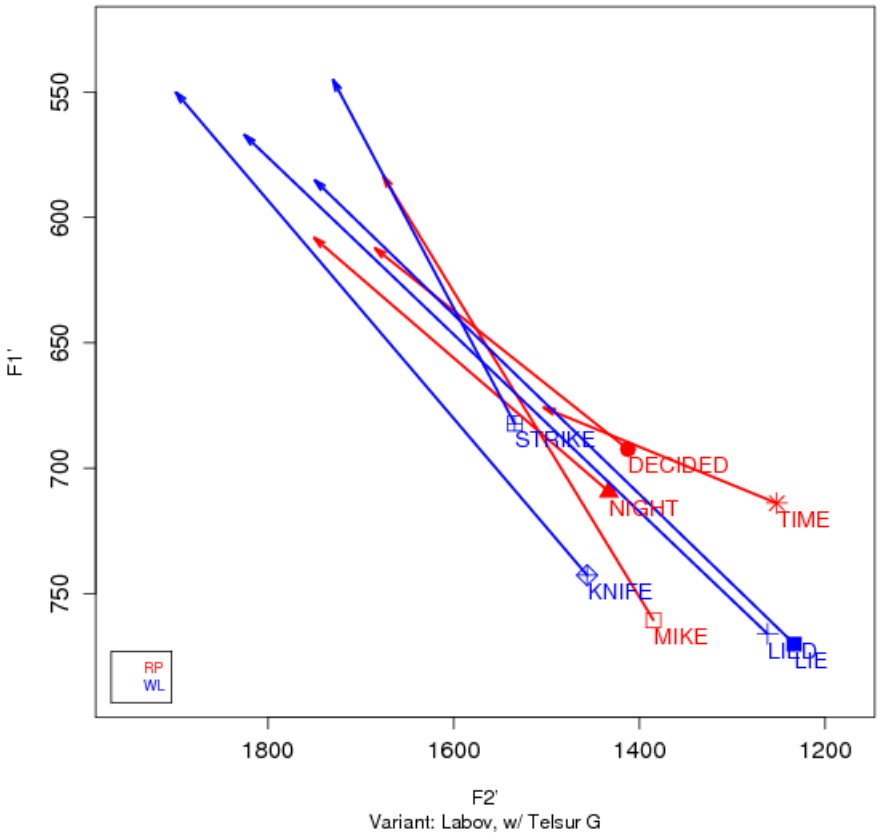


Figure 59 – All PRICE Means, Normalized

Time is notable in that while its F1 onset position is not statistically different from the other RP PRICE tokens, it is significantly backed in comparison (F2@35% $p < .03$). Its glide is also significantly

weaker on the F1 axis (F1@80% $p < .02$). *Time* does not raise its glide as much as the other PRICE tokens, and this behavior was common among many subjects. It appears to match the glide weakening behavior described in Thomas (2003), where its primary weakening is in raising as opposed to fronting. It is possible that this is unique to *time* due to influence from neighboring Texas, where pronouncing it with a monophthong would be common.

Name	Sex	Age	Hometown	Name	Sex	Age	Hometown
PRICE Southern RP				PRICE Southern WL			
PRICE Shifted RP				PRICE Shifted WL			
Judy	Female	56	Tulsa	Hank	Male	53	Yale
Brian	Male	25	Orlando	Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow
Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow	Ray	Male	39	Ada
Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater				
Ray	Male	39	Ada	PRICE P&B Like WL			
Jason	Male	50	Tulsa	Beth	Female	46	Watts
				Jessica	Female	22	Slapout
PRICE P&B Like RP				Judy	Female	56	Tulsa
Beth	Female	46	Watts	Palmer	Female	51	Guymon
Jessica	Female	22	Slapout	Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater
Palmer	Female	51	Guymon	Brian	Male	25	Orlando
Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City	Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater
Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater	Jason	Male	50	Tulsa
Hank	Male	53	Yale				

Table 27 – Respondent Distribution for PRICE

This is another case in which shifting appears conditioned by task, with twice as many speakers shifting on RP than on WL. This is also the only feature we've seen so far where Sex appears to be a factor. On the RP, all shifters but Judy are male, and on the WL, 3/3 shifters are male. Region appears to be less important, and age does not appear to be a factor either.

5.2.7 Fronting of Mouth

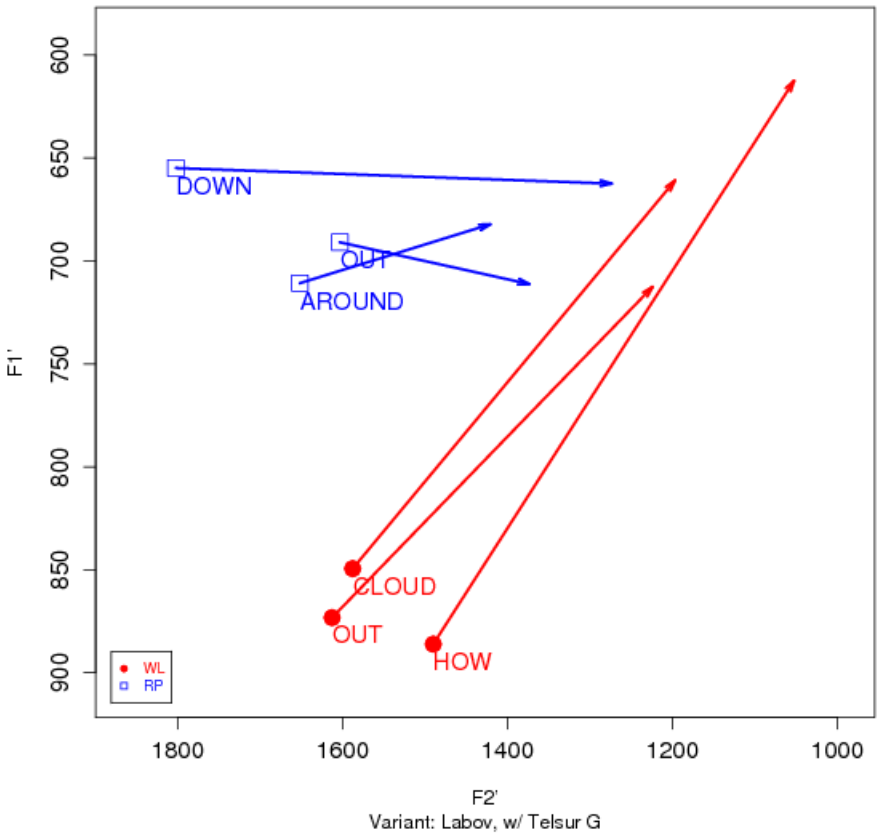


Figure 60 – Mouth Mean Scores by Word, Normalized

Returning to a question that was asked with Hank, we see the MOUTH words plotted separately in Figure 60 above. Although for Hank it appeared that *down* might be raised in comparison to his other MOUTH tokens, overall this is not the case. *Down* is significantly fronted in comparison to its RP compatriots, however, both on onset and glide (F2@35% $p < .02$, F2@35% $p < .04$). More noticeable is the clean division between WL and RP MOUTH tokens, even when the same word (*out*) appears in both contexts. RP words are higher than WL words. Comparing *out,* RP *out's* F1 is significantly higher in the onset, but not the glide position (F1@35% $p < .01$, F1@80% $p < .57$). The WL tokens have longer glides than the RPs, but are generally aiming for the same destination with the end of their diphthongs. With both versions of *out* matching the other words in their contexts, this does not appear to be a lexically

motivated difference. Instead, the WL context itself appears to motivate a lowering of MOUTH in all cases.

Name	Sex	Age	Hometown	Name	Sex	Age	Hometown
MOUTH Fronted RP				MOUTH Shifted WL			
Judy	Female	56	Tulsa	Beth	Female	46	Watts
Palmer	Female	51	Guymon	Judy	Female	56	Tulsa
Ray	Male	39	Ada	Palmer	Female	51	Guymon
Jason	Male	50	Tulsa	Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City
				Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater
MOUTH Shifted RP				Brian	Male	25	Orlando
Beth	Female	46	Watts	Hank	Male	53	Yale
Jessica	Female	22	Slapout	Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow
Skylar	Female	26	Oklahoma City	Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater
Suzy	Female	37	Stillwater	Ray	Male	39	Ada
Brian	Male	25	Orlando	Jason	Male	50	Tulsa
Hank	Male	53	Yale				
Kramar	Male	18	Broken Arrow	MOUTH Backed WL			
Mr White	Male	35	Stillwater	Jessica	Female	22	Slapout
MOUTH Backed RP							

Table 28 – Respondent Distribution for MOUTH

Virtually everyone shifts MOUTH to some degree in both contexts, except for Jessica on the WL. The variation of fronting on the RP does not appear conditioned by sex, although there may be an age factor with Ray as the youngest speaker at 39 whose MOUTH is Fronted. Both Tulsa residents group together again, although Kramar from Broken Arrow does not. Again, fronting of MOUTH may be conditioned by the task – Fronted scores appear only on the RP, Backed scores appear only on the WL.

In comparison with the earlier dialect studies, the RODEO subjects generally front their MOUTH vowel but do not raise it. Although some speakers like Hank and Beth follow the more strongly Southern norm and raise it near TRAP, most respondents kept it on the lower boundary of their vowel system. Several speakers strongly lowered MOUTH on the WL but did not do so on the RP. Speakers

like Hank and Beth raised the vowel exclusively on the RP task, which again demonstrates the value of examining the RP and WL tasks together.

5.2.8 - Shared Tokens

Between the WL and RP, there were five words that were used in both – *garage, Tuesday, fish, then,* and *brother*. Although the two tasks were not designed specifically to compare production of the same word in different contexts, I nonetheless will take advantage of the opportunity, presented below in Figure 57**.** This plot uses the results of all 31 respondents, and shows the syllables of *Tuesday* plotted separately. *Garage* and *brother* show only stressed syllables on the plot.

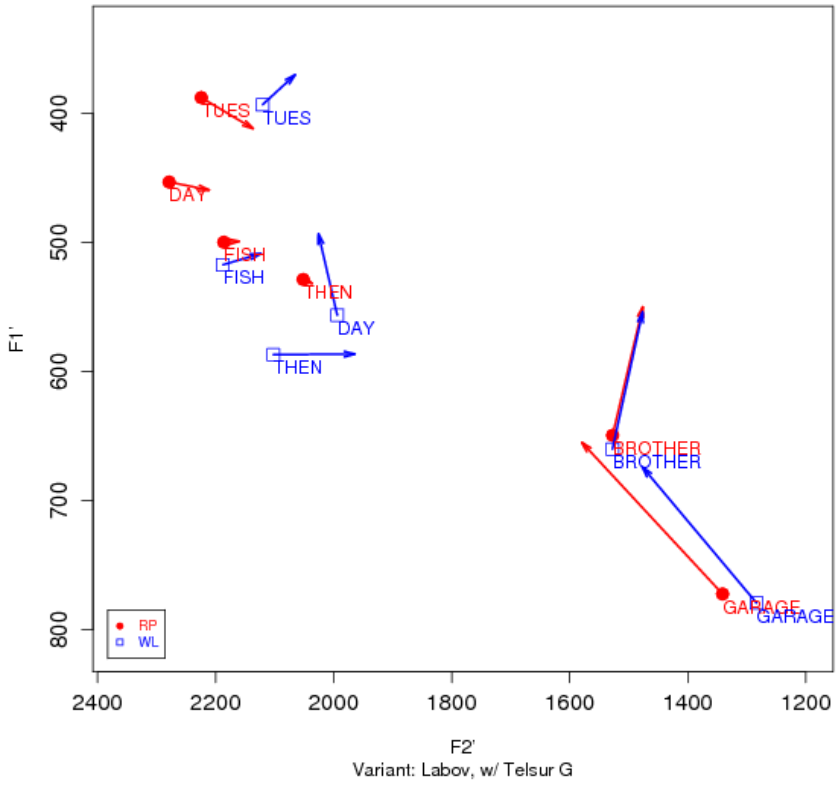


Figure 61 – WL & RP Shared Word Means, Normalized

The distribution of words matches the results that we saw from the earlier twelve RODEO respondents. *Garage* is low and backed, and the first syllable of *Tuesday* is strongly fronted. *Fish* and

brother fit the typical positions of KIT and STRUT respectively. Between the two contexts, *garage, brother,* and *fish* did not show any significant differences. Two sounds did vary significantly, however – *day* in *Tuesday* and *then*. The onset of *day* is significantly raised and fronted in the RP (F1@35% $p < .004$, F2@35% $p < .02$), which suggests a difference in the level of formality – the more careful WL task produces a more standard English "Tuesday," whereas the RP task allows for a more casual "Tues-dee." The other significant difference is the raising of RP *then*'s onset (F1@35% $p < .008$). Being a candidate for the pin/pen merger, this might suggest that speakers may be more likely to apply the merger in the RP. But of course, RODEO subjects show less of a distinction overall between FACE and DRESS on the RP task.

5.3 Closing

In this chapter, I have shown a detailed inventory of the acoustic production made by twelve Oklahoman respondents. There is much to be learned from each person individually, and we have seen variation between subjects that might have been lost by averaging them together – for example, the lack of uniformity in the caught/cot merger. We have also observed that for these twelve speakers, the context of the task has bearing on how they speak. The wordlist appears to elicit more care in differentiating vowels, with speakers of every demographic cell expanding their WL vowel space outward and downward. Further, it appears that several variations in dialect such as shifting FACE/DRESS, fronting MOUTH, and monophthongizing PRICE are conditioned by the RP task. Advanced fronting of MOUTH appeared on the RP only, and twice as many respondents shifted PRICE on the RP than the WL.

Traditional sociolinguistic variables do not seem especially salient in most cases – most variation in features did not skew strongly toward a particular age group or sex. A notable exception to this is the monophthongization of PRICE – all Shifted speakers on the WL were male, as were 5/6 shifters on the

RP. Such clear demographic splits were otherwise rare, as was unanimity in general. Fronting of GOOSE, P&B Like FLEECE/KIT, and P&B Like GOOSE before /l/ were the only universal features shared by all respondents on all tasks. The presence of the pin/pen merger came close to this, with everyone but Skylar being merged. Most other features displayed substantial variation, and these differences did not break down neatly across standard demographic boundaries.

We do see cases where location within the state appears to be an indicator of which speakers may pattern similarly. The strongest pairing was with the two speakers from Tulsa, and to a lesser extent they also paired with Kramar from Broken Arrow, a Tulsa suburb. The three speakers followed identical patterns for FOOT on RP and WL, MOUTH on WL, FLEECE before /l/, and even PRICE on RP. Although Judy is female, she patterned with the other male Tulsa area speakers on PRICE rather than the women. The only case in which the Tulsa area respondents were completely separate from one another was with neutralizing FACE before /l/ on the WL.

City size also appeared to be a factor, particularly with the caught/cot merger, in which non-mergers were from smaller towns. Speakers from larger cities like Stillwater, Tulsa, and Oklahoma City often grouped together, but not universally. The two Stillwater respondents also frequently used the same features, such as with the caught/cot merger and the shifting of MOUTH. Notice also that despite living in Tulsa as an adult, Beth (hometown Watts) did not always pattern with them (for example, on the caught/cot merger and shifting of PRICE). Jessica and Palmer also often spoke similarly, and neither of them had strong Southern features – very likely due to their isolation in the panhandle from Southern influences on the eastern side of the state. While still holding the caveat that this study has a small sample size, it would appear prudent for future work in Oklahoma to strongly consider location within the state as a variable.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this final discussion, I will summarize important findings from the RODEO study in Oklahoma, and I will also consider the implications of this research for sociolinguistic work in general.

One striking aspect of the RODEO respondents is that their intuitions of how they speak are in many cases correct. Unlike Michiganders who think they talk like newscasters but do not, there did not appear to be many Oklahomans whose self-reporting was mistaken. Hank thought he spoke like a Southerner and he does. Kramer thought he had the pin/pen merger and he does. Many respondents suggested that *y'all* and *fixin' to* were omnipresent in the state, and they look to be correct. No one attested to speaking differently than they actually did. The respondents considered here appear to be aware of many of the intricacies of how they speak, both lexically and dialectally. Their descriptions of regional variation within the state also appear to be in line with findings of this study, for example Mr. White's intuition that the Panhandle and Western Oklahoma were different from other areas of the state.

That said, some intuitions of dialect appear more accurate than others. Beth's imitation that was near-identical to her normal speech suggests that at least in terms of *acoustic* characteristics, she is not conscious of all the details. This behavior was mirrored in others, particularly in Southern Shift vowels. Even thoroughly citified Skylar followed a (possibly) more Southern-like pattern with her FACE

and DRESS vowels in the RP, and no one seemed to realize they were doing this. The various mergers discussed in this dissertation did also not appear to be noticed by the RODEO respondents, apart from pin/pen. Mr. White, for example, commented that the WL and RP were designed to elicit pin/pen tokens, but did not mention their equally heavy caught/cot emphasis.

As far as individual dialect features are concerned, we learned much. We saw evidence for the hierarchical diffusion of caught/cot that was described in Bailey et al. (1993). Those who merged caught/cot in the RODEO data were primarily in urban centers, while those who were Distinct were mainly in the smallest towns. We saw that (weakly) monophthongal PRICE was largely the domain of men, and that their patterns by word more closely matched Texan norms than Southern. And for both of these features (and many others), we saw variation. Although caught/cot matched the predicted expectation of hierarchical diffusion from 20 years previous, we do not have evidence that it has spread dramatically or conclusively taken over the state. While fronting of GOOSE is absolutely ubiquitous among the RODEO subjects, caught/cot varied among speakers, and even within the same speakers by task.

This study has observed Southern aspects of speech to be used by RODEO speakers, but their dialect can clearly not simply be declared Southern. Only one piece of the Southern Shift (inverting of FACE/DRESS) was definitively observed, and even then, the behavior was more often a raising of DRESS to be parallel with FACE on F1 rather than a full inversion like was seen with Thomas' speakers. As we saw in Chapter V, this leaves us to question whether the behavior can properly be categorized as the Southern Shift at all. Neutralization of vowels before /l/ was present in RODEO speakers, but spotty. Few people neutralized FACE and FLEECE in all cases before /l/, and no one neutralized *cool*. Monophthongal PRICE was observed, but again, not consistently. Plus, it was seen most often before voiced sounds, which suggests more of a Texan influence than Southern. The Southern features that

were largely extant among RODEO speakers such as the pin/pen merger and fronting of GOOSE have been demonstrated to be used outside of the South, and exclusively Southern features such as pronouncing THOUGHT as /ɔo/ were again evident but by no means universal. RODEO speakers appear to use a blend of Southern and Midwestern features, with considerable variation.

One of the things that is clear from this research is that including more than one speaking context is essential to better understanding the dialect features of a community. There was wide and regular variation between the reading passage and wordlist tasks, and it followed a consistent pattern. The reading passage appeared to condition many of the more typically Southern features like monophthongal shifting of PRICE and the raising of MOUTH into TRAP territory. Considering either of the two tasks in isolation would have been insufficient and would have missed crucial areas of variation – the wordlist alone would have not detected the RODEO respondents' raising of DRESS to be parallel with FACE, and the reading passage on its own might suggest that fronting of FOOT is more widespread than it may be. Multiple contexts are vital, and they must be kept distinct from one another – an averaged pool would have blurred out many of this study's most interesting findings.

Even if Labov (1966) is correct and formality is the cause of style shifting between the wordlist and reading passage, it must be noted that *neither* of the two tasks would match his definition of 'casual' speech, which he classed with examples such as a speaker eagerly telling a story. A wordlist and reading passage are in fact considered by Labov to be two examples of the most careful speech that can be elicited, with only a list of minimal pairs being more controlled. This would suggest that including additional contexts of speaking could be even more informative – although the RODEO interviews do include more relaxed occasions of speaking, it was outside of the scope of this dissertation to study them. Although it is possible that the differences between wordlist and reading passage tasks can be

explained because the reading passage features fluid, connected speech instead of isolated words, I suspect that further research would find this partly correct but not fully explanatory.

Breaking down some of the dialect features by word also illuminated cases where the lexical items themselves were or were not meaningful indicators of change. For example, in looking at the fronting of MOUTH, the particular words appeared not to matter – context drove the distribution of the tokens, even when the identical word *out* was used in both tasks. It is possible that *out's* usage in the RP phrase *out of coffee* might be a different lexical item from other meanings of *out*, and that these incarnations may have predictable patterns that were *not* a factor of the RP or WL tasks. This would merit additional study in the future. We saw other cases where dialect features did appear to vary by lexical item, for example the neutralizing of *meal* but not *peel*, and the monophthongizing of *time* but not the other PRICE tokens. It appears that while lexical or frequency effects may not always be present, they must nonetheless be watched for.

Another methodological consideration that bore fruit in this research was in not defining categories ahead of time, but instead letting distinctions be data-driven. Traditional sociolinguistic demographic markers were not of great use in looking at these twelve respondents – Age appeared to largely not be a factor, and the greater monophthongization of PRICE by men was the only case in which Sex was clearly having an effect. Using a grouping of 'Urban/Rural' ahead of time would have been a mistake for several reasons – first, while Tulsa and Oklahoma City both easily fit an 'Urban' designation, it is not automatically clear that they should be grouped together, due to both their histories and their present day composition. And indeed, while speakers from the two cities often spoke similarly, they did not always group together. Also striking were the smaller towns – although Slapout, Guymon, and Orlando all have populations under 12,000, the speakers from Slapout and Guymon often patterned together, while Brian from Orlando was commonly paired with speakers from the Tulsa metro area.

Future research in Oklahoma and elsewhere will need to be mindful to let the data classify speakers rather than have classifications sort the data ahead of time.

Along this vein, this study made strong efforts not to pool respondents together, and presented almost no findings in averaged aggregate. This was beneficial in demonstrating the strong amount of variation within the state and within a single speaker's dialect. Although some features like GOOSE fronting were shared by everyone, unanimity was generally an exception. Individual speakers were not consistent between tasks (for example, shifting FACE/DRESS on the reading passage but not word list), or even within the same task *with the same word* (consider Ray's flat glide of *Mike* with his strongly raised one, both on the RP). Although there is certainly value to future studies of the state including a vastly larger respondent pool, it must be remember that this comes at a cost. This study's smaller subject pool allowed a far sharper lens to be applied than that used in the work by Thomas or the ANAE.

There is a great deal still to be done in Oklahoma, both in terms of interacting with other cultural populations within the state, and also in simply raw numbers – interviewing more people in more places. Nonetheless, this work has aimed to expand sociolinguists' understanding of the speech practices and dialect attitudes of Oklahoma. By considering the settlement history and prior sociolinguistic research within the state, we were able to have a basis for expectations and to make predictions for the present. By hearing the opinions and attitudes of native Oklahomans, we learn more about how they relate themselves with the surrounding area, and what they are trying to accomplish in their speech. By comparing these attitudes to acoustic production, we gain insight into which aspects of speech Oklahomans knowingly cultivate as part of their identity, and what they may be doing without direct knowledge. Taken together, this work can hopefully serve to guide additional inquiries into the dialects of Oklahoma and elsewhere, both now and in the future.

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Appendix A – Respondent Information Form

RODEO RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Pseudonym _____

Data ID _____ (from the recording if the pseudonym is not used)

Date of Interview _____

Contact Information:

Name _____

Address: _____

Phone (or other contact means) _____

Demographic Information:

Age ____ Date of birth _____ Sex ____ Group membership ____ (A-F from ETHNET)

Profession _____

Education _____

SS: Classification _____ (to be determined from Profession and Education)

Network Relations Part 1 (ETHNET):

What percentage of people from the following groups are your close friends and associates?

A. Rural and/or small town or city European-Americans _____

B. African-Americans _____

C. Native Americans _____

D. Mexican-Americans _____

E. Big City (e.g., Tulsa) European-Americans _____

F. Other _____

Score Part One: _____

Assign score of 1-5 as follows:

100% respondent's own group = 5

75% - 99% respondent's own group = 4

50% - 74% respondent's own group = 3

25% - 49% respondent's own group = 2

1% - 24% respondent's own group = 1

0% respondent's own group = 0

Network Relations Part 2 (SOCNET):

Check each item that applies:

A: Membership in high-density territorially-based network: _____

B: Substantial kinship ties in neighborhood

(more than one household in addition to the respondent's own): _____

C: Work at the same place with at least two people from the

neighborhood _____

D: Work at same place with at least two people from the

neighborhood of the same sex as respondent _____

E: Associates extensively with people from place of work

in leisure time activities _____

Score Part 2: _____

(score = one point for every item checked)

Overall Network Score: _____

(add scores from Part 1 to scores from Part 2)

Appendix B – RODEO Interview Questions

RODEO Interview Questions:

1. Residence: What's your hometown? How long have you lived there? Where is your mother from? Where is your father from? Are they both native speakers of English?

2. Age: Date of birth.

3. Sex, Group Membership (see list in #7 below; in this project we are doing only A's and E's)

4. Occupation: What do you do (or are you planning to do) for a living?

5. Education: What level of school did you finish?

6. Network 1 (SOCNET):

How many people who live in this neighborhood are related to you?

How many people that you work with live around here?

How many people of the same sex do you work with?

Do you hang out with people from work outside of work, then?

How many people do you live with?

7. Network 2 (ETHNET): This may be hard, but can you give me an estimate of your good friends' backgrounds? Around here, there are at least the following groups: African Americans, Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, and European-Americans from both big cities like Tulsa and Oklahoma City and from smaller towns and rural areas. What percentages from those groups are your close friends and associates? For example, if half of your close friends and associates are African American, you would tell me half or 50%. If a fourth of your close friends and associates are Native Americans you would tell me a quarter or 25%. Please do the best you can (and let's try to make it not add up to more than 100%!).

A. Rural and/or small town European-Americans _____

B. African-Americans _____

C. Native Americans _____

D. Mexican-Americans _____

E. Big City (e.g., Tulsa) European-Americans _____

F. Other _____

8. Conversation starters:

What is the best thing about working/living around here?

What does the rest of your family think about the area/its schools/the weather/etc?

How did your family come to Oklahoma?

Have you ever done anything that was really dangerous? Can you tell me about it?

What's the funniest or most embarrassing thing that ever happened to you?

What kinds of games did you play around here as kids.

…….

9. Folk linguistic Questions

How old were you when you found out that people from all over the US didn't sound like people from Oklahoma.

What do native Oklahomans sound like? What makes them different from people in surrounding states?

Has anybody ever made fun of you for the way you say things?

Do young people around here sound like Oklahomans when they speak English?

Do boys and girls/men and women talk differently around here?

Do you think you talk like (other) Oklahomans?

Do all the people in Oklahoma talk pretty much the same way, or are there regions in the state where people sound different? I'd like for you to draw those regions for me on this little map, and you can write in any kinds of identifiers you like on the map as well to illustrate the way people talk there or the kinds of people who live there who speak distinctively.

(Please remember to discuss this map with the respondent after he or she has drawn boundaries and written labels.)

10. Reading Passage: I'm going to give you a short story to read. It's less than a page long. I'll give you a minute or two to look it over, then I'll have you read it out loud.

11. Word List: I'm going to show you some words on the computer. Just read the word on the screen, and I'll hit a button to have it move on to the next screen.

12. I'm going to give you a little Oklahoma grammar and vocabulary list. I'd very much like to know what you say and what others say about these things we're interested in?

13. You may hear people around here pronounce words like 'pin' and 'pen' with the same vowel. Do you? Have you ever heard other people pronounce it this way? Do you know of any groups or subgroups around here who do pronounce it that way (more than others)?

14. You may hear people around here use the phrase "fixin' to" to mean that they are getting ready or about to do something. Do you say this? Have you ever heard other people say this? Do you know of any groups or subgroups around here who say this more than others?

Appendix C – Wordlist

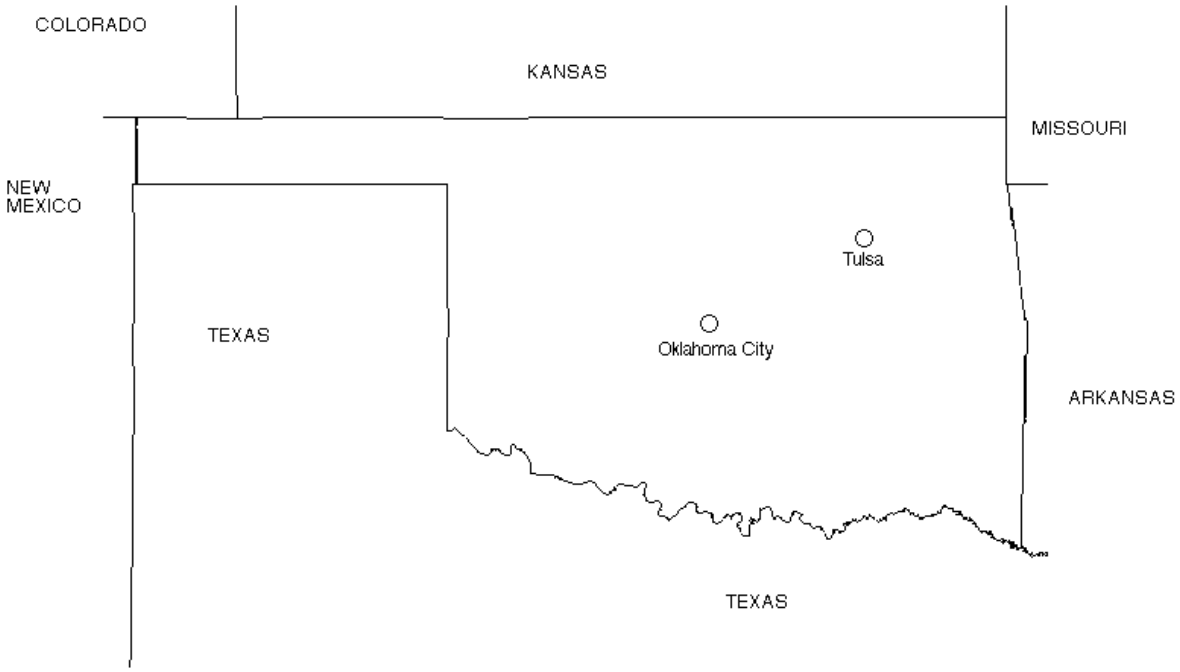
Tree	Houston	Cut	Mat
Pig	Floyd	Shoot	Hem
Day	Seven	Knife	Fish
Every	With	Hook	Wasn’t
Jab	Cloud	Forty	
Cob	Steve	Push	
Saw	Trade	Out	
Hoe	Sand	Brother	
Good	Thing	Lied	
Chew	Measure	Chewed	
Duty	Shop	Then	
How	Tin	Happy	
Boy	Hug	Sang	
Lie	Heat	Bet	
Those	Mesh	Pawed	
Ruth	Thick	Fail	
Wash	Strike	Dim	
Business	Peel	Ate	
Garage	Talker	Cool	
Soda	Strength	Where	
Shrimp	Loan	Boat	

Appendix D – Reading Passage

Please read the following and then read it out loud so I can record it:

Mike was planning to throw a party on Tuesday night, and decided to check his list one more time before he went shopping. He already had plenty of stuff to drink, and he had enough plates and cups. His brother Dave was going to bring some fish he'd caught and maybe put them on the grill. Mike thought he should get some chips, pretzels, and a few other snacks to start the meal. He looked around to see if he had anything sweet, but then remembered that his friend Linda was baking a cake. When he looked in the cupboard, he saw that he was out of coffee. He wrote it down on his list and hoped it was on sale. Then he went to the garage, got in his truck, and went to the Wal-Mart.

Appendix E – Blank Oklahoma Map for Map-Drawing Task



Appendix F – Lexical Inventory

A LITTLE OKLAHOMA GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY LIST

It's no secret that people don't sound the same all over the US. People in Pittsburgh say "gum band" for "rubber band" and go "dahntahn" (not "downtown'). People in Milwaukee want to know if you'd like to "come with" (and don't need to add "us" or "me") and drink water from "bubblers." People in New York City stand "on" (not "in") line, and so it goes. We'd like for you to look at this list and tell us what you use (a), what you don't use but have heard other Oklahomans use (b), and what you've never heard (c).

1. You are able to do something and there is a chance that you might do it. Is a way you would say this "I might could do it"?

a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.
If you don't say it, what would you say?

_____

2. You're getting ready or about to go to work. Is a way you would say this: "I'm fixin' to go to work"?

a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.
If you don't say it, what would you say?

_____

3. Do you say sentences like "My brother lives out in Ponca City is older than me"? (Or do you have to say "My brother 'who' or 'that'…"?)
a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

4. Do you say sentences like "I've done finished" to mean you have "already" finished?
a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

5. Do you ever put a little "a" (sounds like "uh") in front of some words, like in "I was a-working over there yesterday"?
a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

6. When you start doing something, do you ever say sentences like “I got to talking and forgot what time it was” or “When I get to talking, I forget what time it is”?

a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you say?

_____

7. Do ever you say “liketa” for “almost,” as in “I liketa died in that accident”?

a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

8. Do you ever say “come” to refer to past time, as in “He come over to my house yesterday”?

a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you say?

_____

9. If you dive into water at some time in the past, do you ever say “I dived into the pool”?

a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you say?

_____

10. If you are talking to more than one person, do you ever address them as “y’all” or “you all”?

a_____ b_____ c_____
I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you say?

_____

11. Most everybody says “I run to school every day,” “I ran to school yesterday,” but do you ever say “I have ran to school before”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you say? (Be sure the respondent understands that it is in the framework “I have ___ to school before.”)

---

12. Do you ever call the playground equipment that two children use that lets one go up when the other one goes down a “see-saw”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, but you have heard it, what would you call this piece of playground equipment?

_____

13. Do you ever call a certain kind of wasp a “dirt-dauber”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, but you have heard it, what would you call this kind of wasp?

_____

14. Do you ever call a certain kind of insect a mosquito hawk”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, but you have heard it, what would you call the insect?

_____

15. Do you ever call a certain kind of insect a “snake doctor”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, but you have heard it, what would you call the insect?

_____

16. Do you ever call a certain kind of insect a “snake feeder”

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, but you have heard it, what would you call the insect?

_____

17. Do you ever call a certain kind of worm a “redworm”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, but you have heard it, what would you call this kind of worm?

_____

18. Do you ever call a small stream a “branch”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you call a small stream?

_____

19. Do you ever call certain kinds of vegetables “snap beans”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, but you have heard it, what would you call this vegetable?

_____

20. Do you ever call the breast bone of a chicken the “pully bone”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I've heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you call it?

_____

21. Do you ever refer to a certain time by calling it “quarter to”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I’ve heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you say?

_____

22. Do you ever refer to a certain time by calling it “quarter of”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I’ve heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you say?

_____

23. Do you ever refer to a certain time by calling it “quarter til”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I’ve heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you say?

_____

24. Do you ever call the hard stuff in the middle of a cherry the “seed”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I’ve heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you call the hard stuff in the middle of a cherry?

_____

25. Do you ever say “Anymore I’m really tired” to mean “most of the time” or “these days I am really tired”?

a_____ b_____ c_____

I say it. I don't, but I’ve heard it. Never heard it.

If you don’t say it, what would you say?

_____

Appendix G – Attitudes Survey

About You

Write in the answers to the questions below:

Age: _____ Sex _____

Ethnicity (Circle one)

African American European American Hispanic American American Indian

Asian American Other _____

How many years have you lived in Oklahoma? _____

Where did you attend elementary school? (If more than one, where were you the longest?)

City: _____ State: _____

Where did you attend high school? (If more than one, where were you the longest?)

City: _____ State: _____

Oklahomans

Circle your answer below.

1) I am a typical Oklahoman.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2) Use the spaces below to write 5-10 words that you think describe a typical Oklahoman:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

3) Oklahomans are a lot like people from the Midwest.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4) Oklahomans are a lot like people from the West.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5) Oklahomans are a lot like people from the South.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6) Oklahomans are a lot like people from the Southwest.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Speaking

7) Oklahomans speak like people from the Midwest.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

8) Oklahomans speak like people from the West.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9) Oklahomans speak like people from the South.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

10) Oklahomans speak like people from the Southwest.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Circle your answer.

11) If you listen to someone talk, can you tell if they are from Oklahoma?

Yes No

12a) If you can tell from the way they talk that someone is from Oklahoma, can you also tell where in the state they're from?

Yes No

12b) List any such places:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Appendix H – Updated Word List

Tree	soda	cut	dawn
Pig	head	heed	hood
Wendy	shrimp	send	boat
Hayed	strike	shoot	mat
Day	Houston	knife	hem
Every	Floyd	hook	fish
Jab	seven	forty	wasn't
Tin	with	push	had
Hud	hock	hawed	
Cob	hod	out	
Saw	cloud	brother	
Hoe	sinned	lied	
Good	Steve	chewed	
Who'd	trade	then	
Hawk	sang	heard	
Chew	thing	windy	
Duty	measure	happy	
How	shop	sang	
Don	hug	hid	
Hoed	heat	ten	
Boy	mesh	bet	
Lie	thick	pawed	
Those	strength	fail	
Ruth	peel	dim	
Wash	talker	ate	
Business	Tuesday	cool	
Garage	loan	where	

Appendix I– Updated Reading Passage

Mike was planning to throw a party on Tuesday night. His wife had pinned a list to the bulletin board and he decided to check it one more time before he went shopping. He had already bought plenty of stuff to drink and he had enough plates and cups. He remembered that his brother Don was going to bring some fish he'd caught and maybe put them on the grill. Mike thought he should get some chips, pretzels, and a few other snacks to start the meal. He looked around to see if he had anything sweet, but then it dawned on him that his friend Cindy was baking a cake. When he looked in the cupboard he saw that he was out of coffee. He grabbed a pen, wrote it down on his list, and hoped it was on sale. Then he went to the garage, got his truck, and went to the Wal-Mart.

VITA

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2008 – Current	Editorial assistant to William Labov and Dennis R. Preston, *Journal of Dialect Geography*
2008 – Current	Graduate Teaching Assistant – Oklahoma State University
2009	Grader for the SPEAK Test (measures ESL skills) – Oklahoma State University
2008	Elementary School Tutor – Metro Care Services, Phoenix, AZ
2007	Enrollment Counselor – University of Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ
2005 – 2006	Graduate Research Assistant – Michigan State University
2002 -2003	Textbook Materials Designer, Lansing Community College, Lansing, MI

Publication:

2012 *QQ More* – An examination of the origins and modern usage of QQ in an online game forum. In Z. Waggoner (ed). *Game of words, words of play: Essays on the terminology of videogame theory*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company Inc. (In press).

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2003 With Glenn Mathes. ESL/GED Preparation bridge series. Lansing: Business & Community Institute of Lansing Community College.