



Development Iconicity  
Enregistrement  
Pragmatics  
Obsolescence

# Sense-making

Style is not just different ways of saying the same thing; it's about the fact that people don't all say the same thing.

- Development and Obsolescence
- Register
- Pragmatics
- Iconicity

# Styles and Registers

- Style makes locations in the social landscape manifest.
- Stylistic practice is an ongoing process that shifts the landscape as people make imperceptible and perceptible social moves.
- If a style comes to be widely recognized, taking up a broadly consensual location in the social landscape, it might be called a *register*.

# Register

- “a coherent complex of linguistic features linked to a situation of use .... which draws on cultural images of persons”

Irvine, Judith. 1990. Registering affect: Heteroglossia in the linguistic expression of emotion, . *Language and the politics of emotion*, ed. by Catherine A. Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod, 121–61. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- “a linguistic repertoire that is associated, culture-internally, with particular social practices and with persons who engage in such practices”

Agha, Asif. 2004. Registers of language. *A companion to linguistic anthropology*, ed. by Alessandro Duranti, 23-45. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

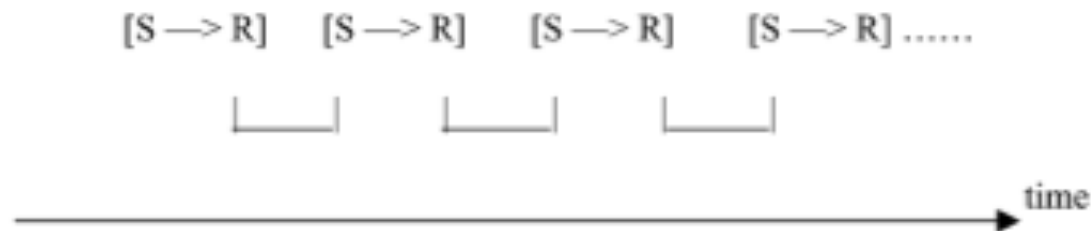
# Enregisterment

The process by which a linguistic repertoire COMES TO BE associated, culture-internally, with particular social practices and with persons who engage in such practices.

Agha, Asif. 2003. The social life of a cultural value. *Language and communication*, 23.231-73.

# agency and the speech chain

Although different socially positioned individuals differ in the degrees of freedom they recognize themselves as having, their responses to messages received in the indexical here and now of each encounter are unavoidably agentive acts that require a semiotic reading of the current message and result in a 'next' message. As the characterological voices of the past speak to the one engaged in this reading, the next turn (or larger chain segment) is always up for grabs, always potentially a branch point in the social life of the register.



## (The enregisterment of RP: a nationalist project)

The prescriptivist argument that English had its own rules of ‘proper’ pronunciation and grammar sought to displace the view that English was—in comparison to Latin and Greek—an inherently vulgar and inconstant tongue.

Style is the embodiment of ideology (Hodder)



Inoue, M. (2006). *Vicarious language: Gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Inoue, M. (2002). Gender, language and modernity: Toward an effective history of "Japanese women's language." *American Ethnologist*, 29(2), 392–422.



PLATE 5. Advertisement for Bigan Taoru (Beautiful Face Towel) by Itō Shōten (Ito Company), *Fujin sekai*, 1909, 4 (10), unpaginated.

# Implicit Association Test

Congruent sets:

-ing

Diphthongal (ay)

Northern State

Newscaster

White Collar

-in

Monophthongal (ay)]

Southern State

Country Singer

Blue Collar

Campbell-Kibler, Kathryn. Campbell-Kibler, Kathryn. 2012. The implicit association test and sociolinguistic meaning. *Lingua* 122: 753–763.

(t) Release is not enregistered with (ay) or (ING)

(ING) and	
States	<.001
Professions	<.001
Singers/Anchors	<.002

(ING) and	
States	<.002
(ay)	<.004
(t)	NS

Campbell-Kibler, Kathryn. Campbell-Kibler, Kathryn. 2012. The implicit association test and sociolinguistic meaning. *Lingua* 122: 753–763.

# Valley Girl Register

California shift

Fronting (uw), (ow)

Trap backing

etc.



Creaky voice

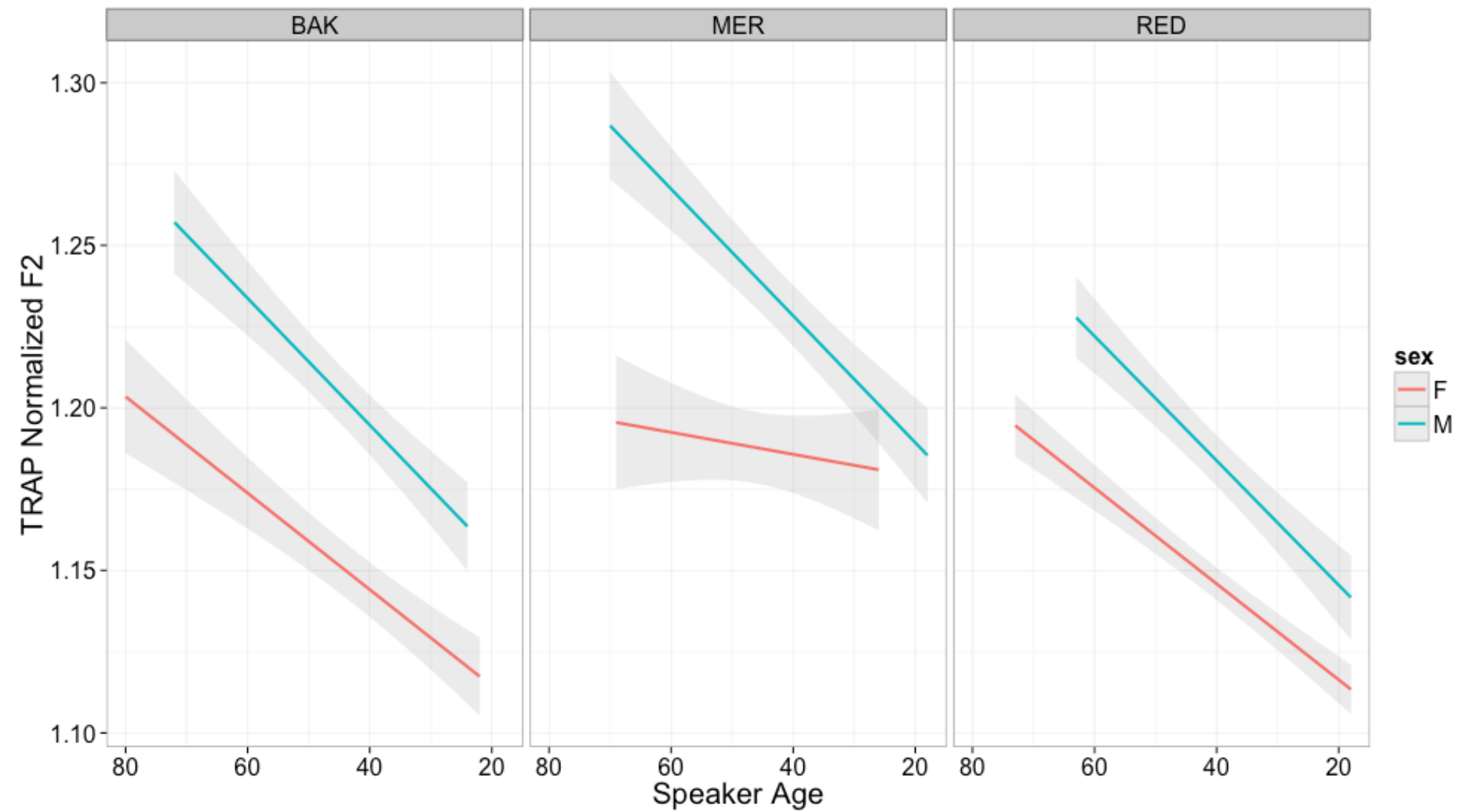
Exclamatives

Intensifiers

Like quotatives

HRT

# TRAP-backing





D'Onofrio, A. 2015. Persona-based information shapes linguistic perception: Valley girls and California vowels. *Journal of sociolinguistics* 19.2. 241-56.

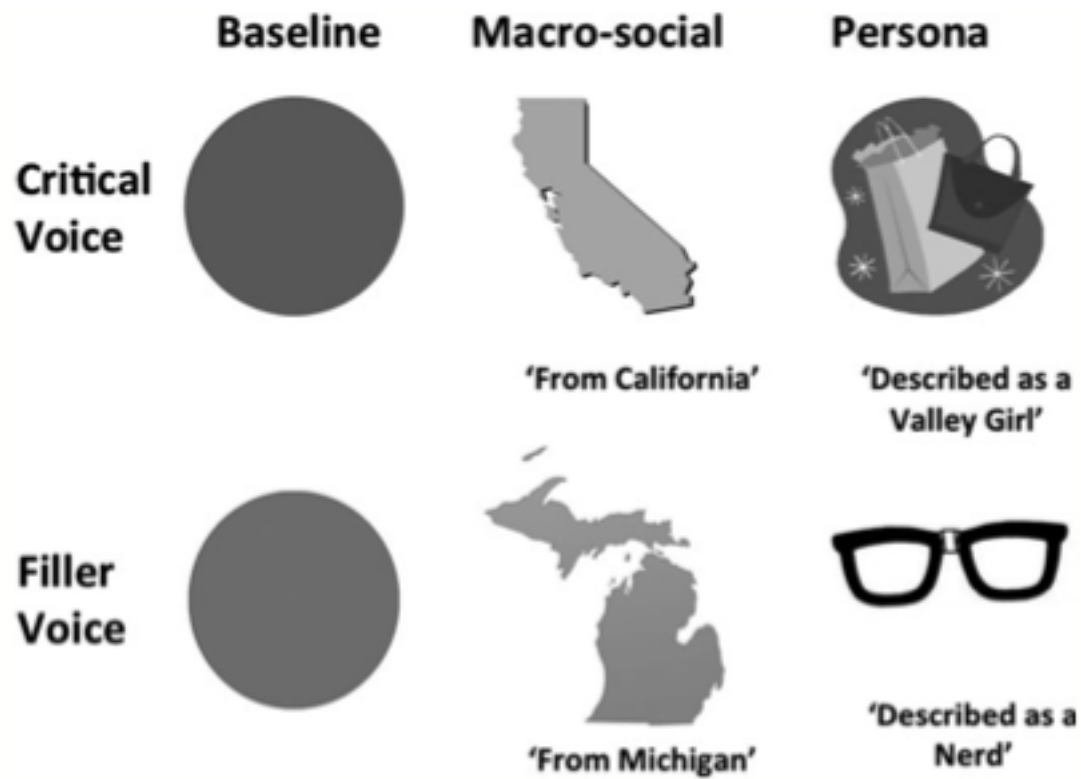
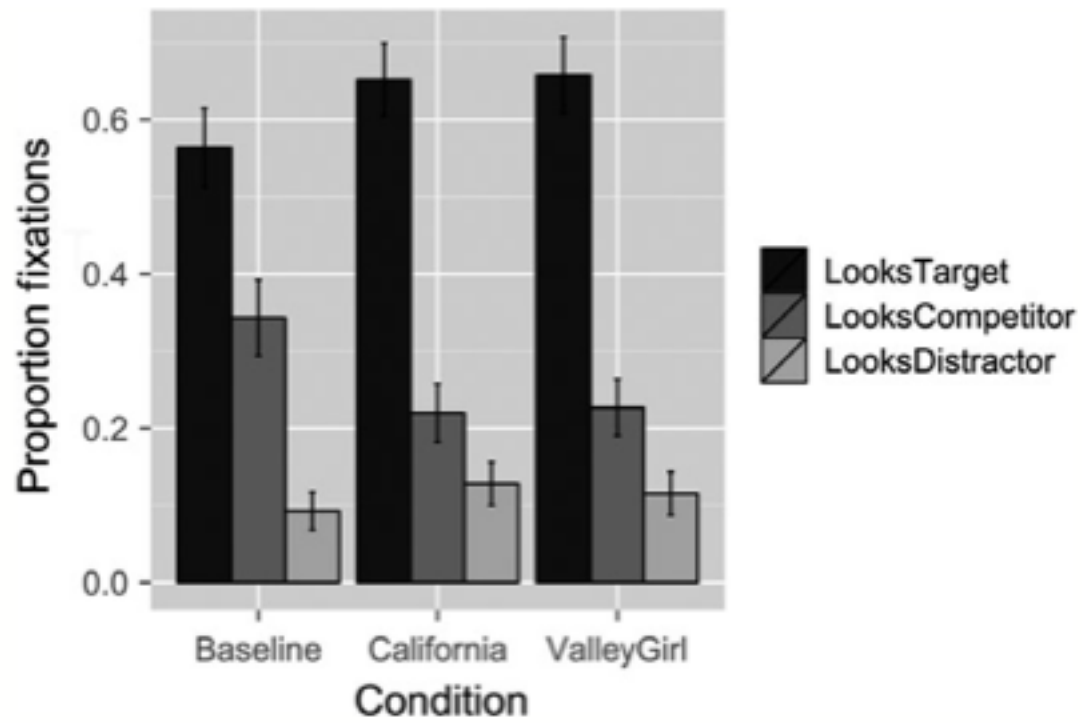


Figure 2: Icons used to correspond to social information conditions

**Table 1:** Mixed effects regression summary of fixed effects for choice of TRAP versus LOT word (N = 116)

Predictor	Estimate	Std. error	T value	P value
(Intercept)	0.84609	0.08376	10.101	1.81e-10***
Condition = <i>California</i>	0.10456	0.08613	1.214	0.2348
Condition = <i>Valley Girl</i>	0.17855	0.8414	2.122	0.0426*
Western Dialect Region = <i>West</i>	-0.16015	0.07104	-2.254	0.0230*

\* = significant at  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* = significant at  $p < 0.0001$ .



# The “acquisition” of variable competence

## The first wave perspective

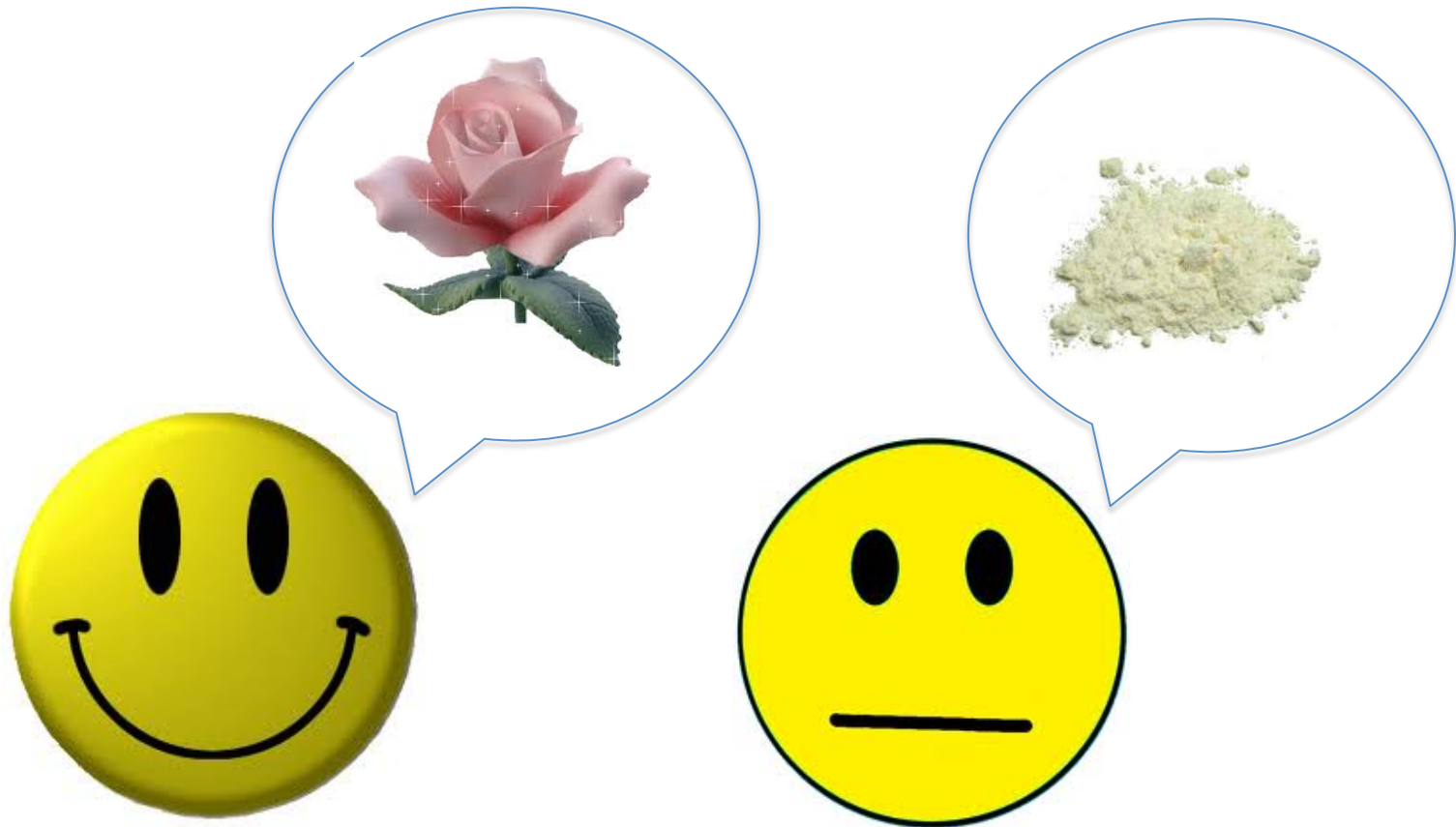
- A focus on macro-social patterns.
- A focus on adult society and adult patterns of variation as the sole target of children’s development.
- A view of the social meaning of variation as fixed.

...children acquire patterns of stylistic variation as soon as they participate in daily family interactions. Thus, from their first words, they associate sociolinguistic variants with different types of interaction and it is only later in development that they use these variants as markers of social identity. Nardy et al p. 267-8

Nardy, A., Chevrot, J-P, Barbu, S. 2013. The acquisition of sociolinguistic variation: Looking back and thinking ahead. *Linguistics*. 51(2). 255-84.

- Learning language is a matter of perceiving patterns connecting linguistic form and context (writ large).
- Babies learn that variation has social meaning in the context of affective displays.

# Affect as basic



NYGAARD, L.C. and LUNDERS, E.R. 2002. Resolution of lexical ambiguity by emotional tone of voice. *Memory and cognition*, 30.583-93.

# Variation and social development

- As kids develop, they incorporate emerging social distinctions into their semiotic system.
- These distinctions will early on be distinctions within and around the family, and then expand beyond as experience expands.

## 3 1/2 year olds doing ‘father’

- lowered pitch, decreased pitch variability, increased amplitude
- often backed and lowered vowels in a manner that produced an almost sinister ‘accent’ :
  - yes [jʌs]
  - bad [bɑ:d]

Andersen, Elaine S. (1990). *Speaking with style: The sociolinguistic skills of children*. London, Routledge. pp. 147 ff.

Age, and place in the family is a fundamental social distinction – both in childhood and in society.

- Early sociolinguistic variables are no doubt associated with age/development
- Features of “baby talk” are primary sociolinguistic variables for kids.
- “baby talk” is also an intimate adult register.

# The developmental imperative: collaborative socialization

- *Growing up* is central to kids' lives.
- Adults stress it (primarily in the insistence on behavior "improvement")
- Nobody wants to be a "baby".
- Older kids have more status. They know stuff, they have more liberties.
- The unknown is exciting.

# Two very different schools

- Steps
  - Predominantly Chicano, Asian American (Vietnamese), African American. (8% white Anglo American). Low income.
- Fields
  - Predominantly white Anglo-American (18% Asian American, Chicano, African American). Middle income.

# Creating a Peer Based Social Order

- Collaboratively appropriating power from adults
- A social order requires differentiation – on the cohort's own terms.
  - From parents and other adults
  - From younger kids
  - Among themselves
- Individuals are concerned with establishing personal value in that order.
- Differentiation drives linguistic innovation.

# Sixth Grade (11-12 yrs old)

We seem s – I- I feel myself as a different person I don't know why

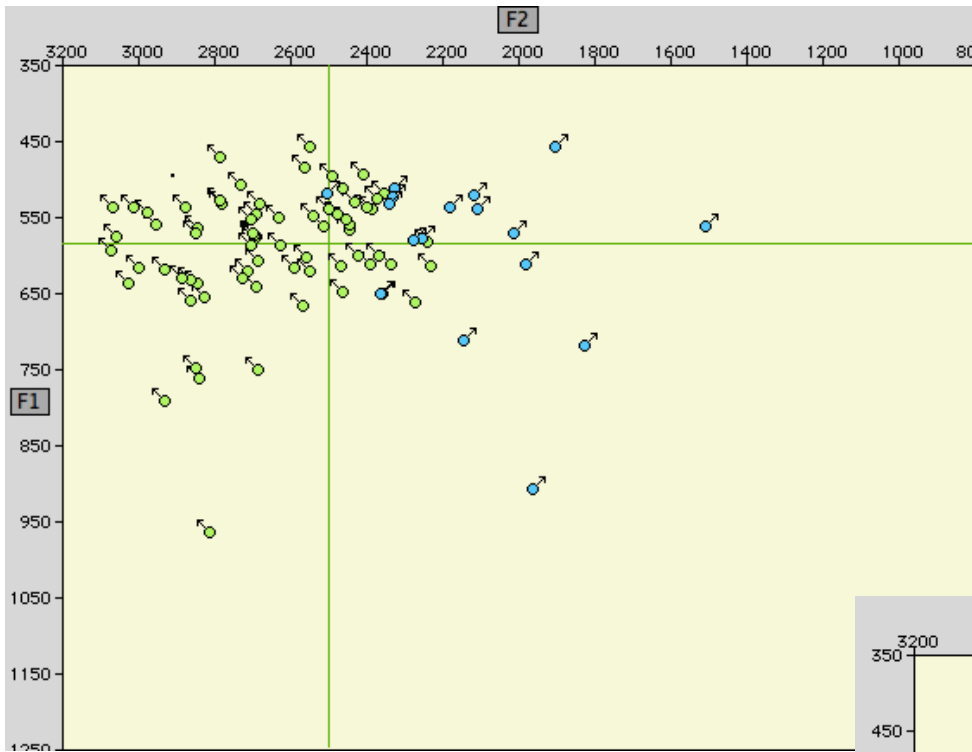


Lots of different changes in my life.

Wow. Now I'm beginning to call myself a life.

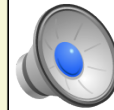
# The Crowd

- Establishment of a heterosexual market
- Bringing together girls' and boys' networks
- Merging smaller groups to create a significant mass.
- Visible activity producing public drama
  - Engineering heterosexual pairs
  - Realigning girls' groups
- The development of a peer-based social order creates an integrated social and linguistic market.

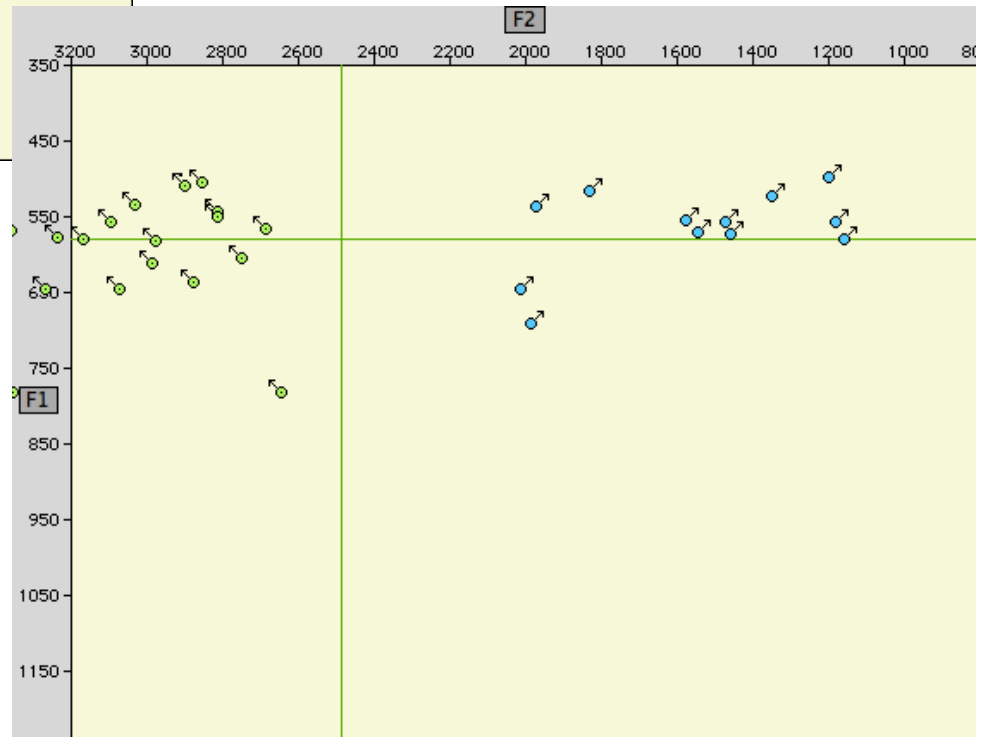


(uw) fronting

Who's going with who

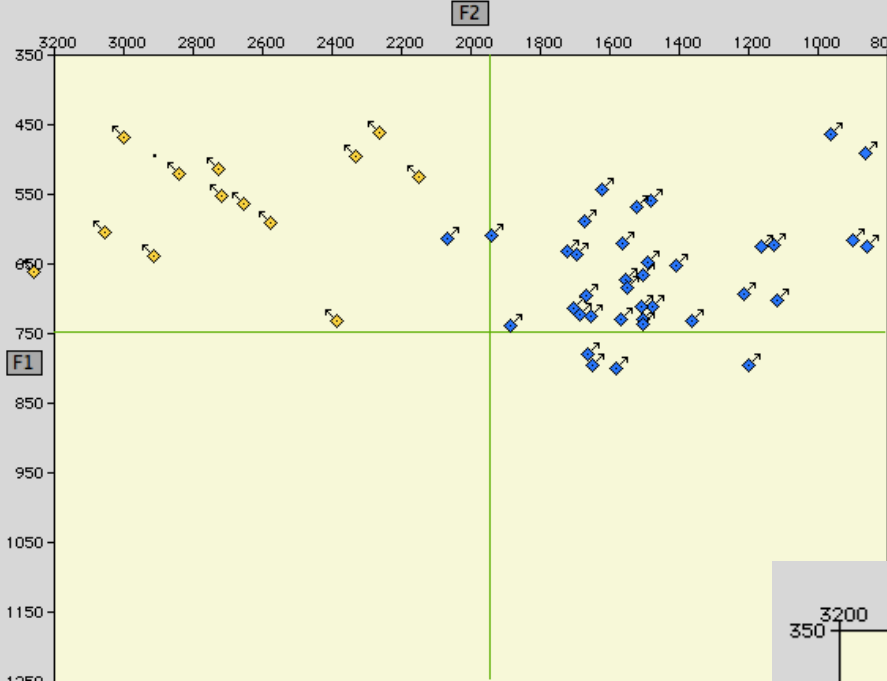


I better move...



Fields > Steps F2  $p < .001$

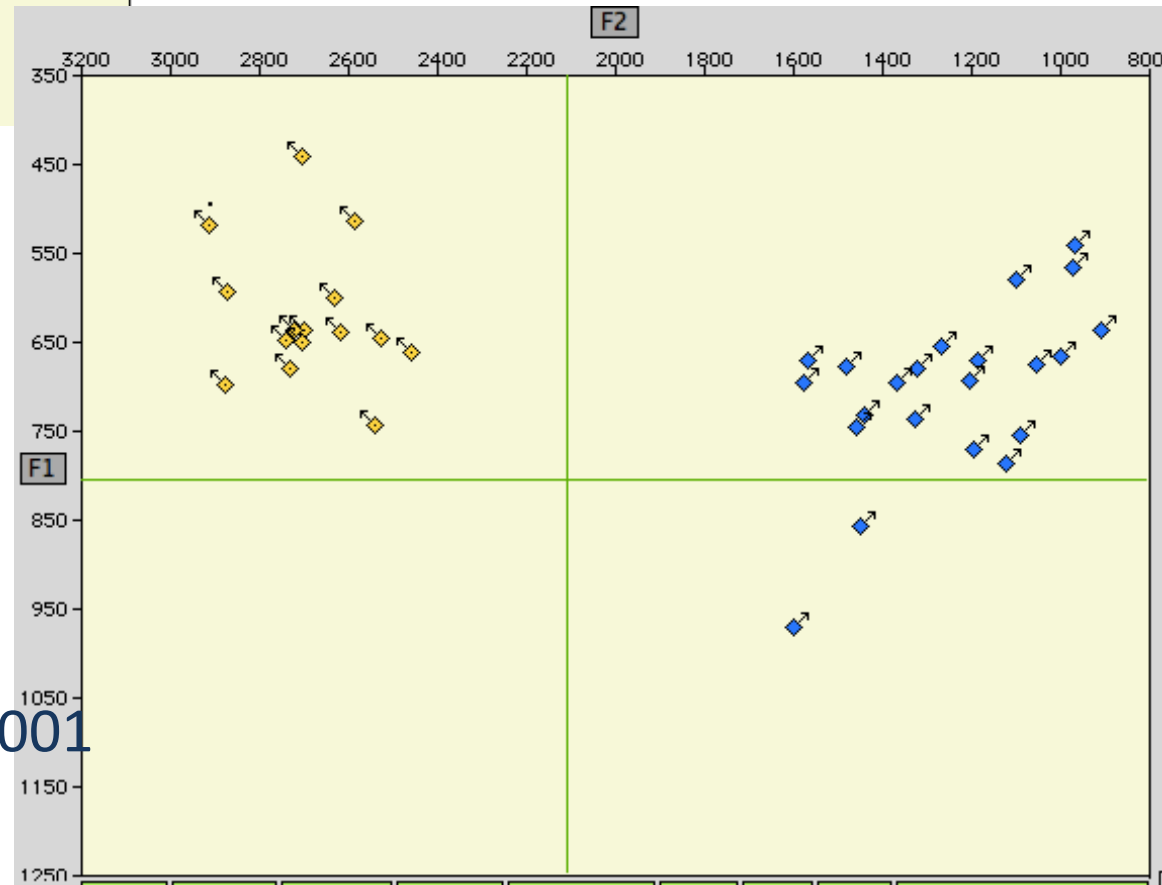
Fields Crowd > Others F2  $p < .05$



(ow) fronting



She goes



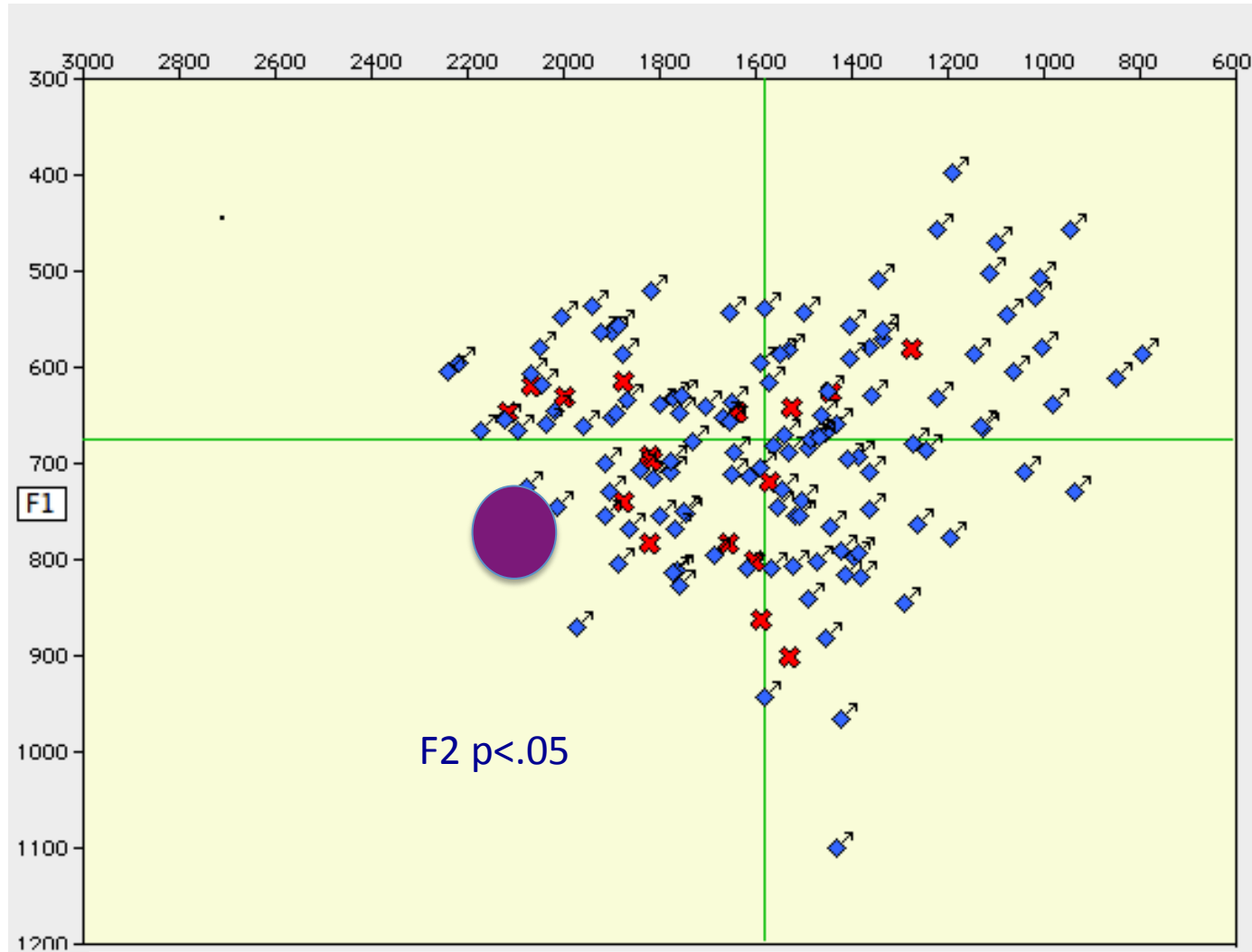
Fields > Steps F2  $p < .001$

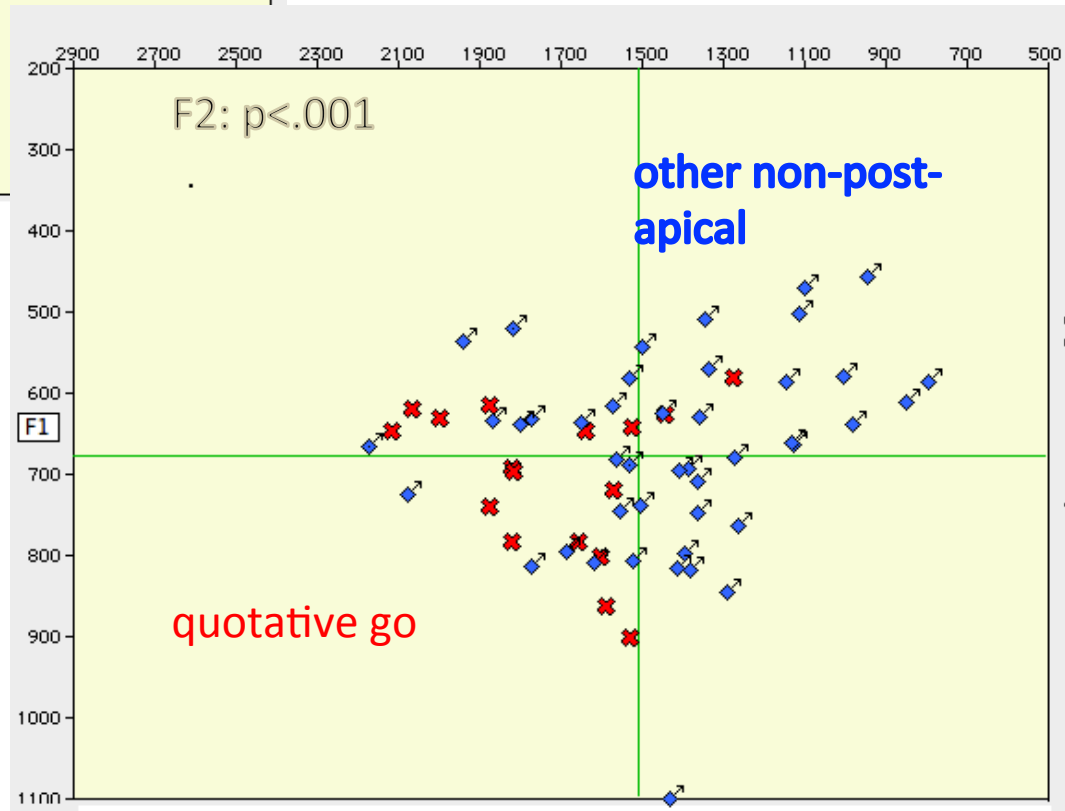
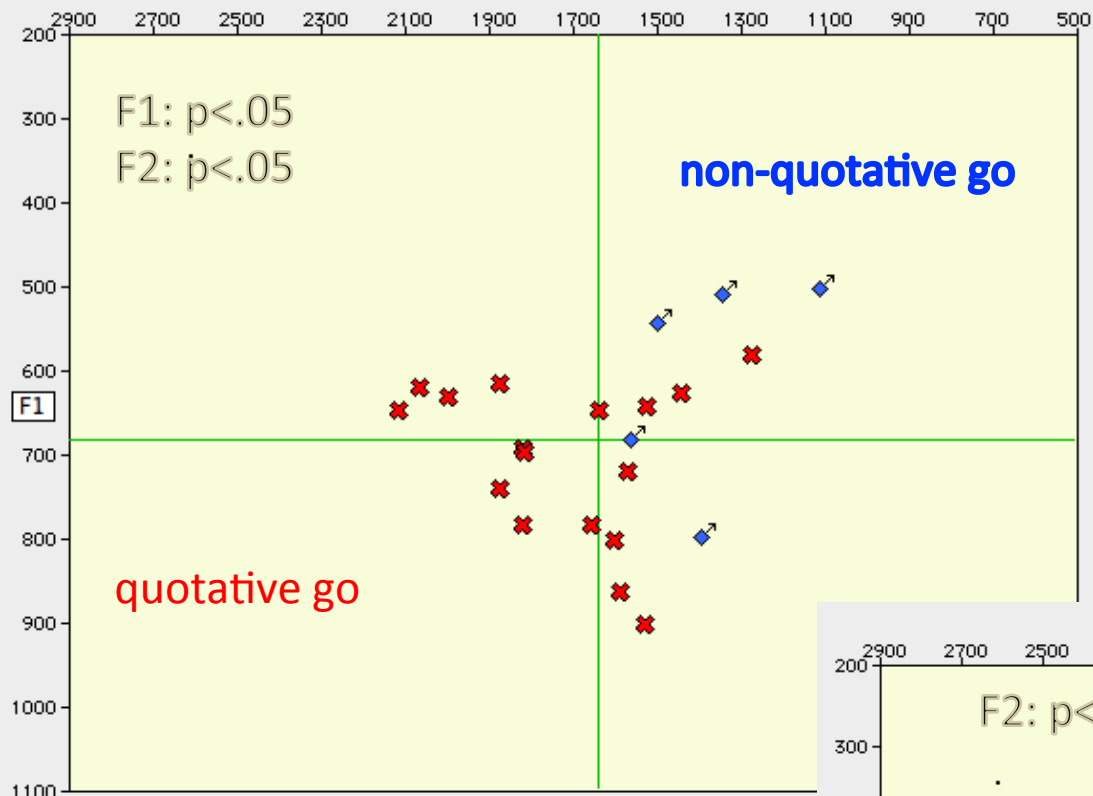
Fields Crowd > Others

F2  $p < .0015$

Steps Others > Crowd F2  $p < .001$

# Rachel's Quotative GO vs Other /ow/





# Beyond phonology

## Morpho-syntactic and lexical variables

- occur less frequently.
- are more subject to awareness
- hence are more subject to register demand
- have referential meaning
- have discourse/pragmatic constraints

The quantitative studies of variation which deal with morphological, syntactic, and lexical alternation suffer from the lack of an articulated theory of meanings. P. 171

... different social groups exchange different types of messages for which they make use of forms with different meaningful structures. P. 179

Lavandera, B. R. (1978). Where does the sociolinguistic variable stop?  
*Language in Society*, 7, 171–182.

Quotatives, discourse markers, exclamatives,  
intensifiers ...



And I'm all "Bitch if you ever put your hand in my face again, I'm gonna fuck you up." right - I said that to her, right?



And she's all \* sh- she went up to my friend Effie she's Asian, she's all she's all "I don't like Asian people, I don't know why." right - and I'm all like "sss"

# Quotative *like* and Inner dialog

(4)

- a. I *was like*, “Man, what else am I going to do?”
- b. I’*m like*, “Oh my God, what do I say? This is bad.
- c. You’*re just like*,“ (weirdsound).”
- d. He didn’ tknow how to place his hands, and he *was like*,“ (noises)

Tagliamonte, S. and A. D’Arcy. 2007. Frequency and variation in the community grammar: Tracking a new change through the generations. *Language Variation and Change*, 19 . 199–217 (p. 203).

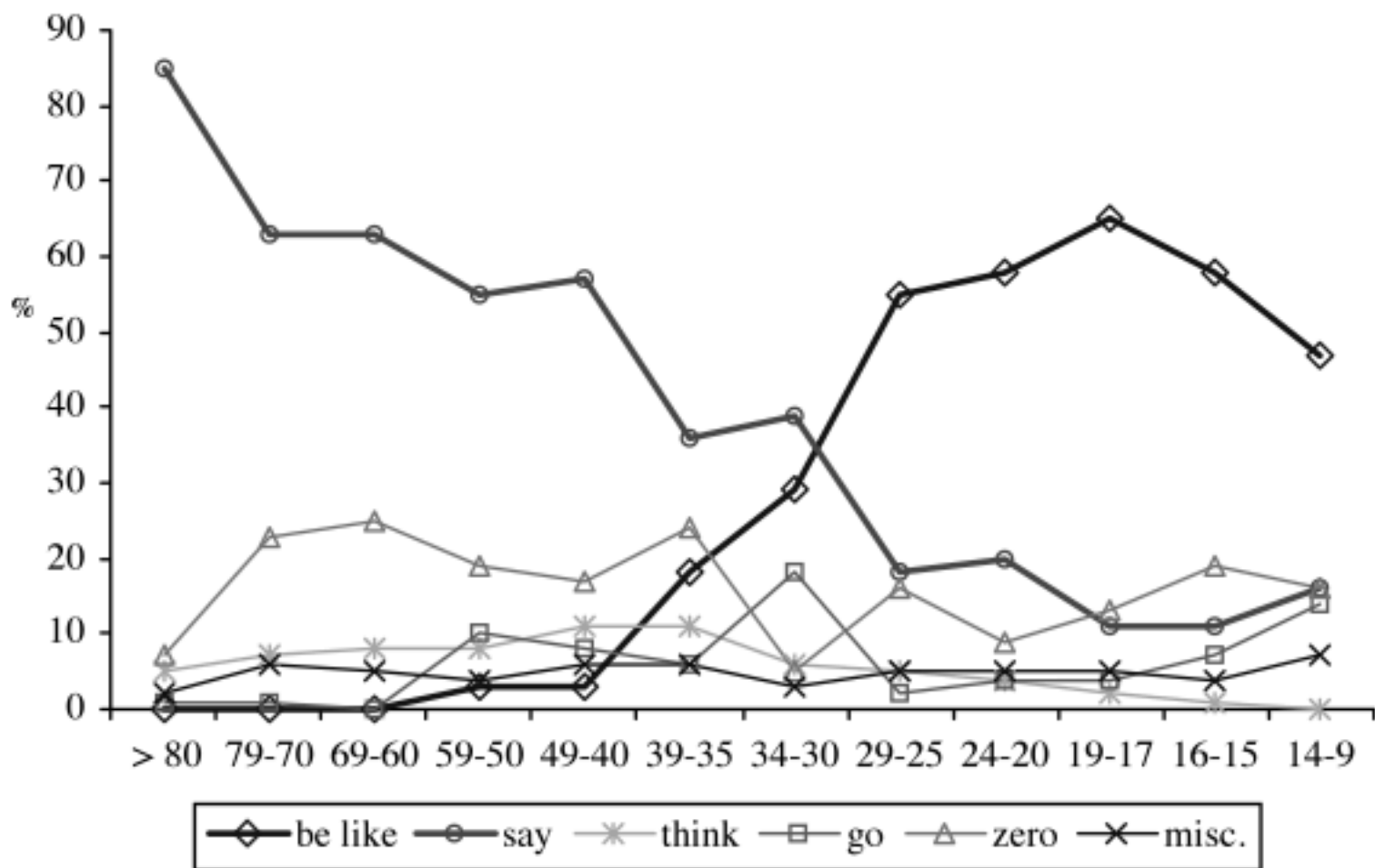


FIGURE 2. Overall distribution of quotatives across the generations in Toronto English.

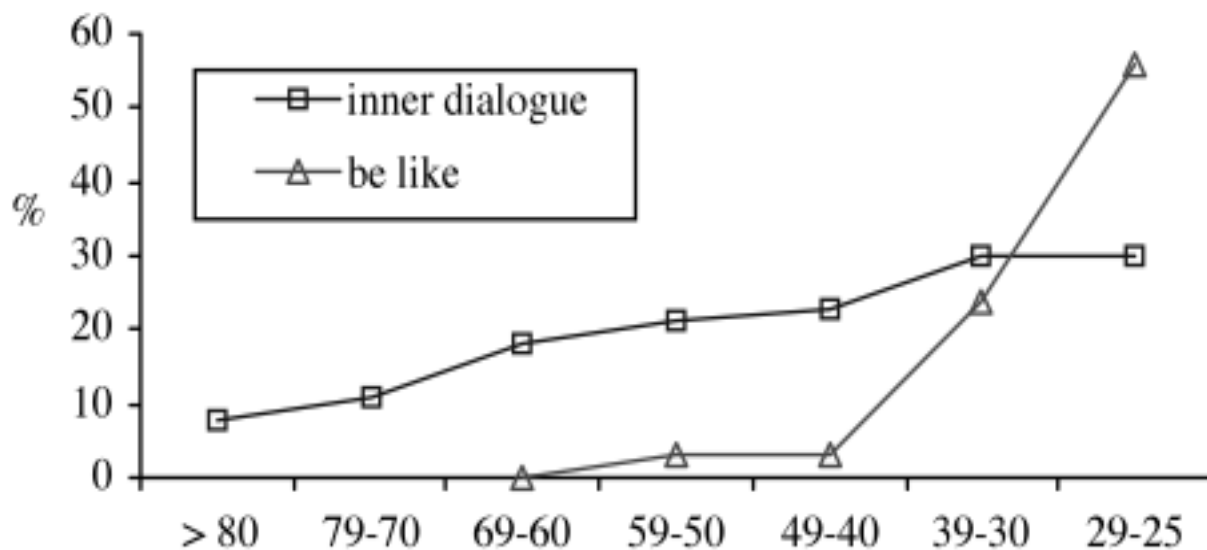


FIGURE 4. Proportion of inner dialogue and *be like* across the generations in Toronto English.

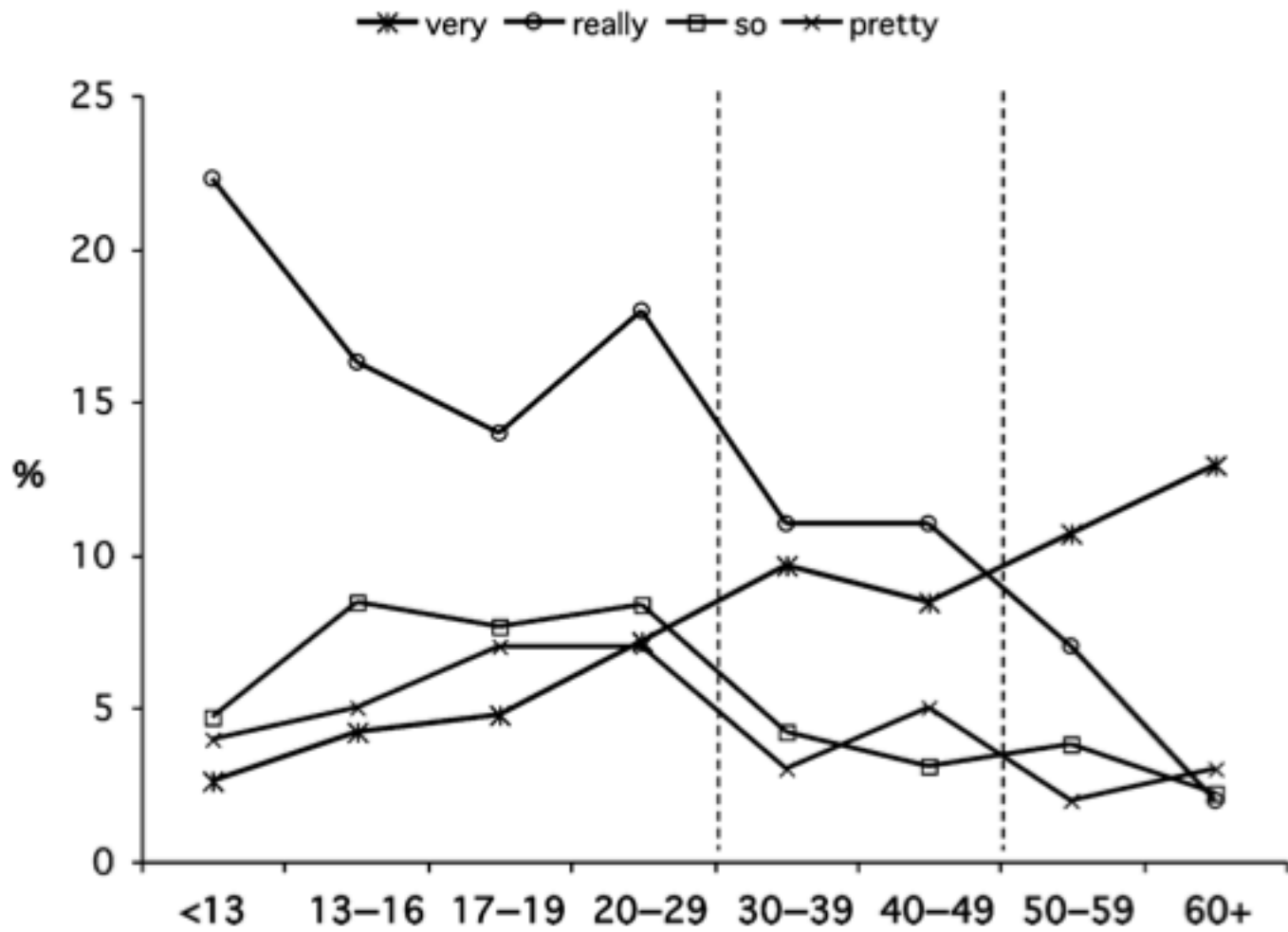


Figure 3. Overall distribution of main intensifiers by age

Figure 7b. Distribution of *really* by speaker sex and age

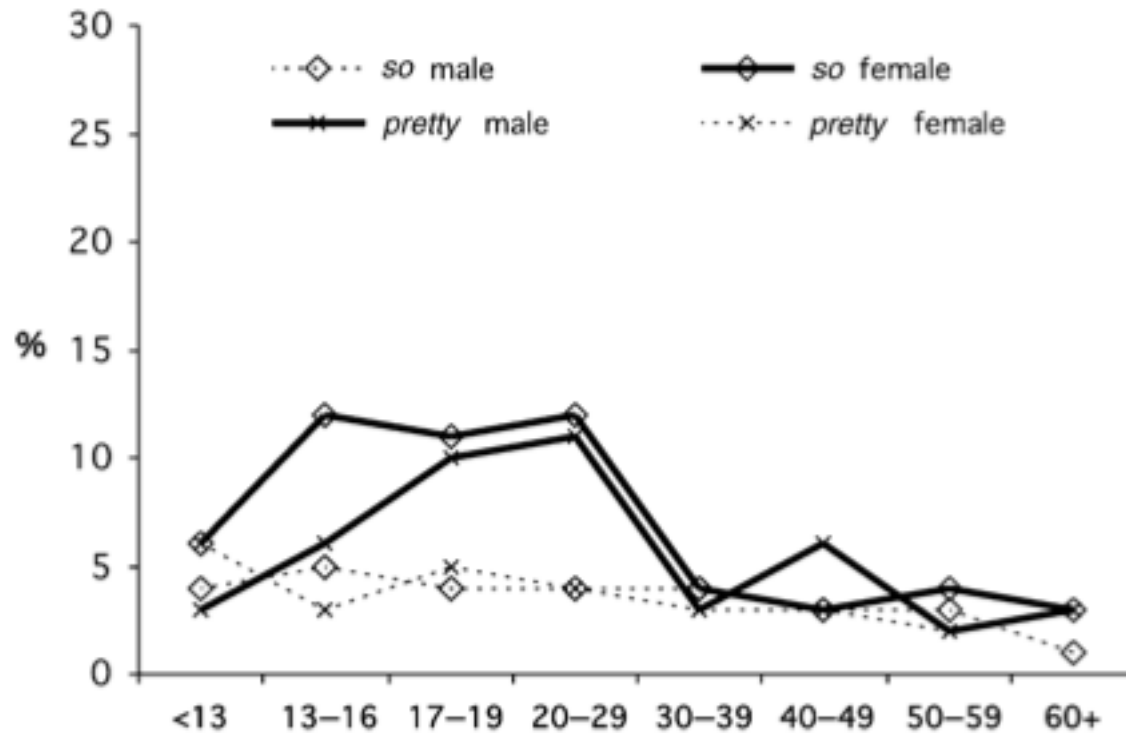


Figure 7c. Distribution of *so* and *pretty* by speaker sex and age

Tagliamonte, S. 2008. So different and pretty cool! Recycling intensifiers in Toronto, Canada. *English Language and Linguistics*. 12.2. 361-94.

(1) Lexical *totally*:

- a. The bus is *totally* full.
- b. She *totally* agrees with me.

(2) Non-lexical *totally*:

- a. You should *totally* click on that link! It's awesome.
- b. For what it's worth, I would *totally* move Tony Allen back into the starting lineup tonight.
- c. Dionne: Hello? There was a stop sign.  
Cher: I **TOTALLY** paused.

“intensifiers that semantically target non-lexical scales create a suitable attachment site for social meaning, and emerge as considerably more articulated social indexicals than intensifiers that combine with lexically supplied scales.”

Beltrama, A. 2014. This Is Totally Interesting. Intensifiers Between Formal Semantics And Social Indexicality. Paper presented at Michigan. University of Michigan.

- non-lexical usages of intensification, in which the targeted scale is not supplied by the denotational meaning of the following predicate, appear to index a salient and articulated constellation of social meaning. By contrast, intensifiers which routinely combine with gradable predicates are associated with a less salient indexical value
- Gradability, and the ways in which it is compositionally implemented, emerges as a linguistic resource that speakers can deploy not just for constructing interpretable sentences, but also for evoking styles, personas, or more specific social attributes.

# Conducting a scale

- That is so/totally 20<sup>th</sup> Century.
- This dress is so/totally New York.
- I'm so/totally coming to the party.

Smoking is just so over. It's so not modern. It's so embarrassingly twentieth century. Like gas chambers, asbestos and driving a car. Like graffiti, factory farming and going to the moon. Things that had never happened before the last century, didn't need to happen at all and soon won't, ever again.

<http://now-here-this.timeout.com/2015/02/10/giles-coren-smoking/>

# “Americans are cravin’ that straight talk.”



(42) [. . . ] it was John McCain who pushed so hard with the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac reform measures. He sounded *that warning bell*.

Acton, Eric K. and Christopher Potts. 2014. That straight talk: Sarah Palin and the sociolinguistics of demonstratives. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 18(1):3-31.

Lieberman, Mark. 2010. Sarah Palin’s distal demonstratives. <http://languagelog ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=2240>

# Palin and others on Fox News

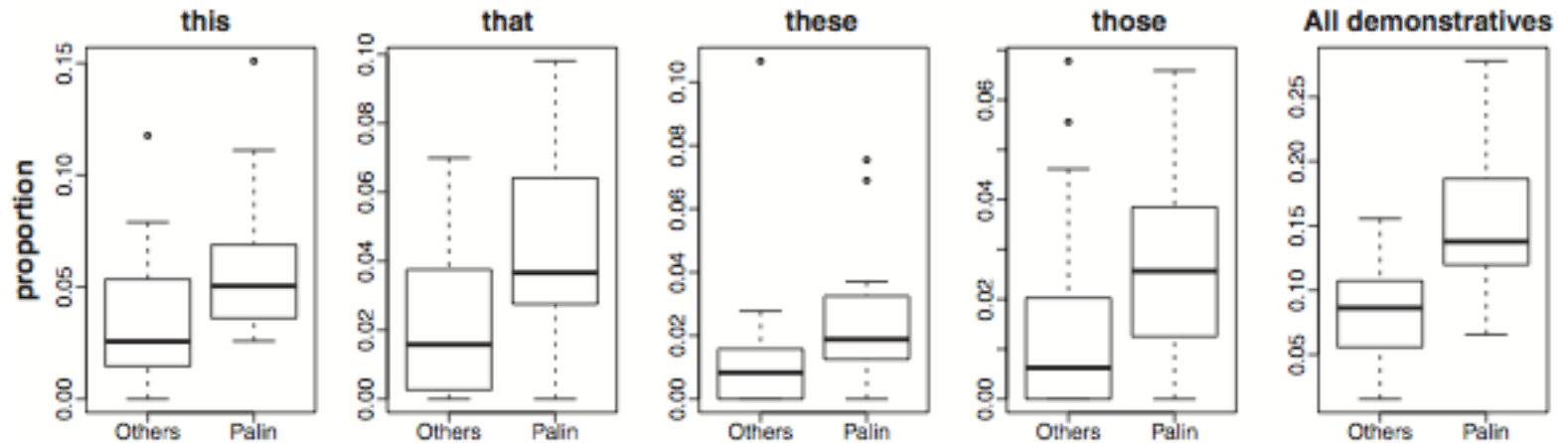


Figure 3: Guests' demonstrative determiners as a proportion of all determiners

<http://www.experienceproject.com>

- Do you ever have one of those days where you just sit around and think about how much your life sucks? I'm having one of those days.
- 'sorry, hugs': 2; 'you rock': 0; 'teehee': 0; 'I understand': 10; 'wow, just wow': 0
- Know the feeling.  
I feel the same today. Good luck getting through it. Totally.

demonstratives, in virtue of their locating and accessibility parameters, are crucially bound up with the speaker's perspective. And, in order for their locating parameter to be resolved, both *this* and *that* require a special degree of coordination between speaker and addressee

Acton, Eric.2014. Pragmatics and the social meaning of determiners. PhD Thesis. Stanford University. P. 51

- That Penny Eckert says variables are signs.
- That Penny Eckert sure likes Paris.

# Slurs

- Slurs derive their significance and force from the attitudes we associate with the people who own them.
- Slurs are generally speaker-oriented
- Invokes “parties to the convention.”

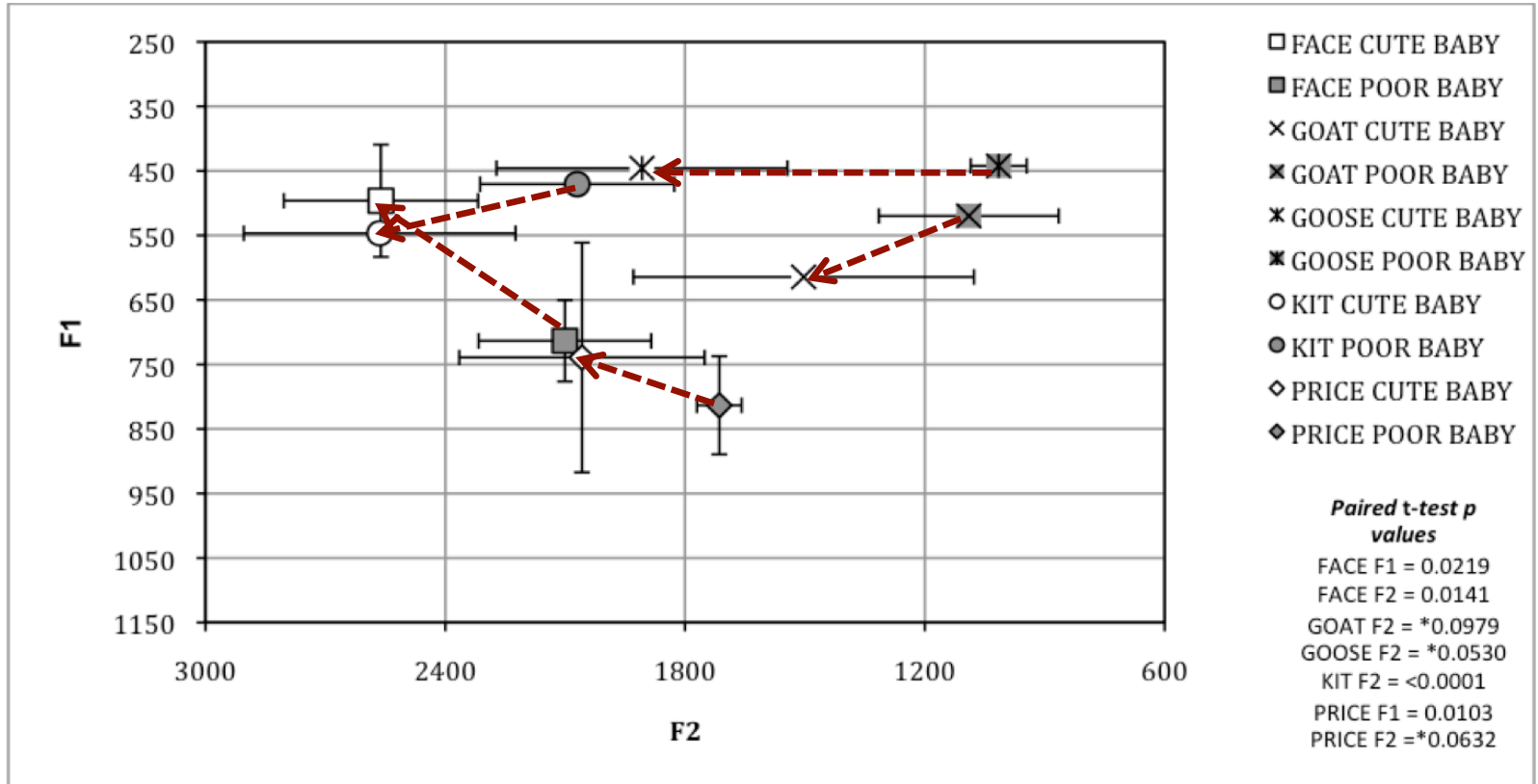
Nunberg, Geoff. 2015. The social life of slurs. Talk given at Institut Jean Nicod. Sept. 30.

# Penelope Pig

Geenberg, Kate. 2010.  
“Poor Baby, You Got a  
Boo-Boo!”: Sound  
Symbolism in Adult Baby  
Talk" Paper presented at  
NWA 39.



# From *poor baby* to *cute baby*



# Frequency Code

Association of high frequencies in  $f_0$ ,  $f_2$ , and in consonant turbulence with smallness; low frequencies with largeness.

- Sapir, Edward. 1929. A study in phonetic symbolism. *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 12, 225-239.
- Newman, S. 1933. Further experiments in phonetic symbolism. *American Journal of Psychology* 45, 53-75.
- Ohala, John. 1994. The biological bases of sound symbolism, 325-347. *Sound Symbolism*. L. Hinton, J. Nichols and J. J. Ohala, 222-236. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

# Conventionalization of the frequency code

- Vowel fronting – Positive affect and youth
  - young
  - innocent
  - happy
- Vowel backing – Negative affect and maturity
  - older
  - wise
  - Sad, angry

Eckert. 2011. Where does the social stop? Parrott, J., P. Quist, and F. Gregersen eds. Language Variation - European Perspectives III. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 13-29

# Affect and Iconicity



One that I really know is **Josh** and he - we give him **rides** after school

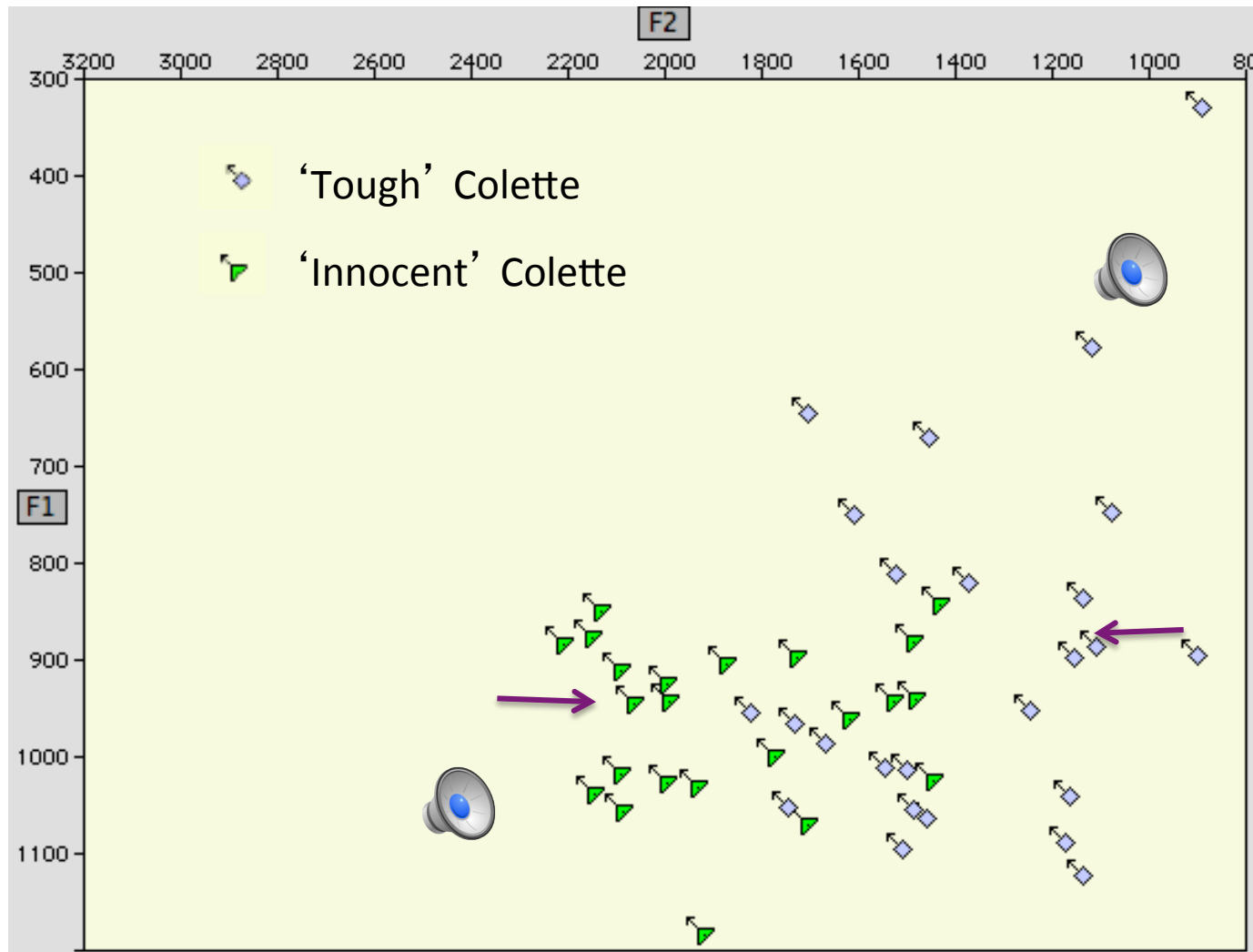


We got in this mad because of **Josh** or something and um the next day cuz she was spending the **night** I’ m all “wait a minute why should we get mad over a stupid boy”

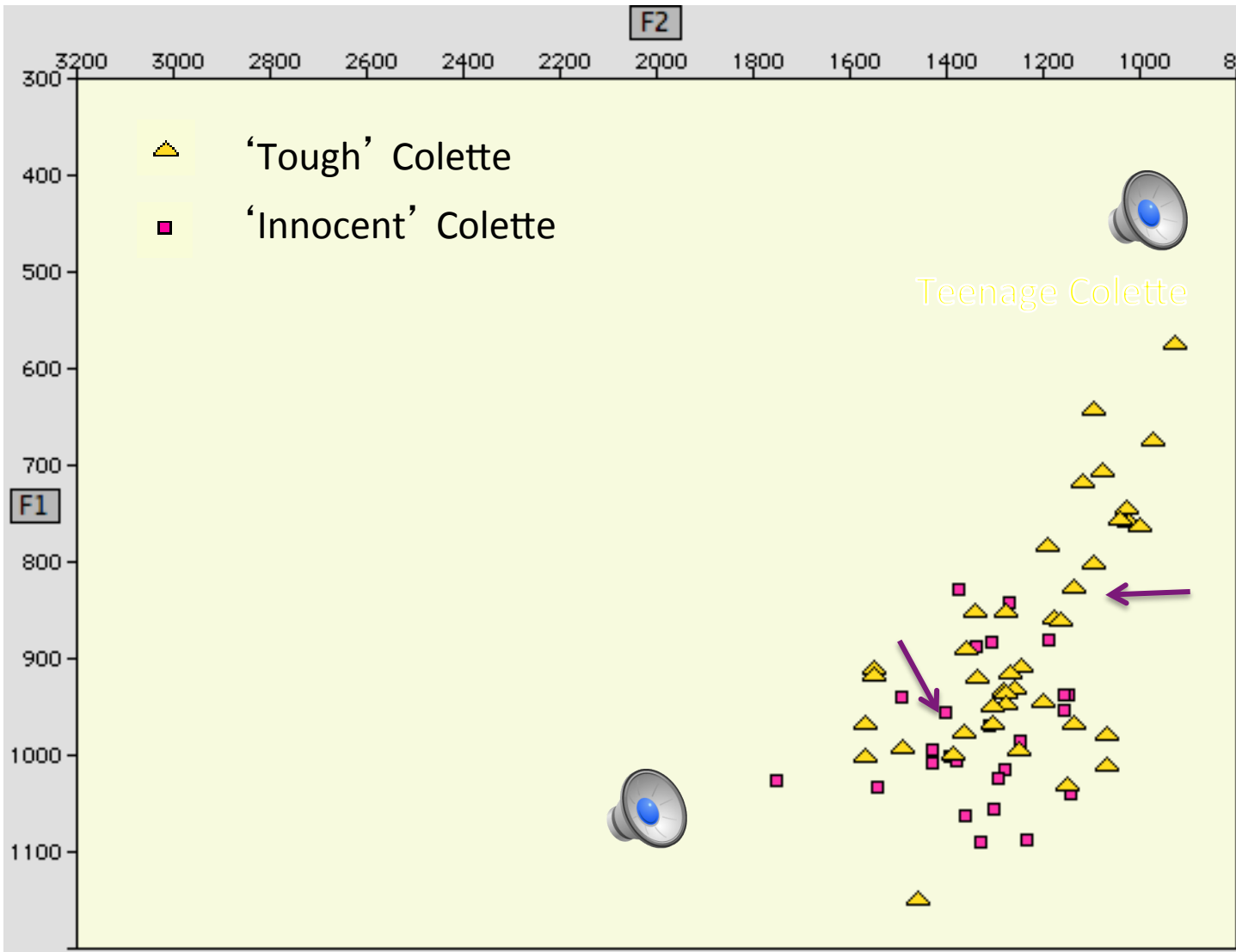


Eckert, P. (2011). Where does the social stop? In F. Gregersen, J. K. Parrott, & P. Quist (Eds.), *Language Variation - European Perspectives III. Selected papers from the 5th International Conference on Language Variation in Europe (ICLaVE 5), Copenhagen, June 2009* (pp. 13–29). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

# Colette's (ay) F1 p<.025 F2 p<.001



# Colette's (a) F1 $p < .001$ F2 $p < .025$



# Backing of (ow) nucleus



Like everybody usually goes on Joanna's and um Vanessa's side so I usually have like **nobody** but Chrissy



“oh well I mean that was really rude and our friendship is **over**.” I said - and I got so mad when she says that so I said “fine our friendship’s **over**.”



I’ m like “Brett can I sit down here?” he’ s like “**No go** find your **own** seat.” ... I don’ t know - and then I’ m like “gosh”

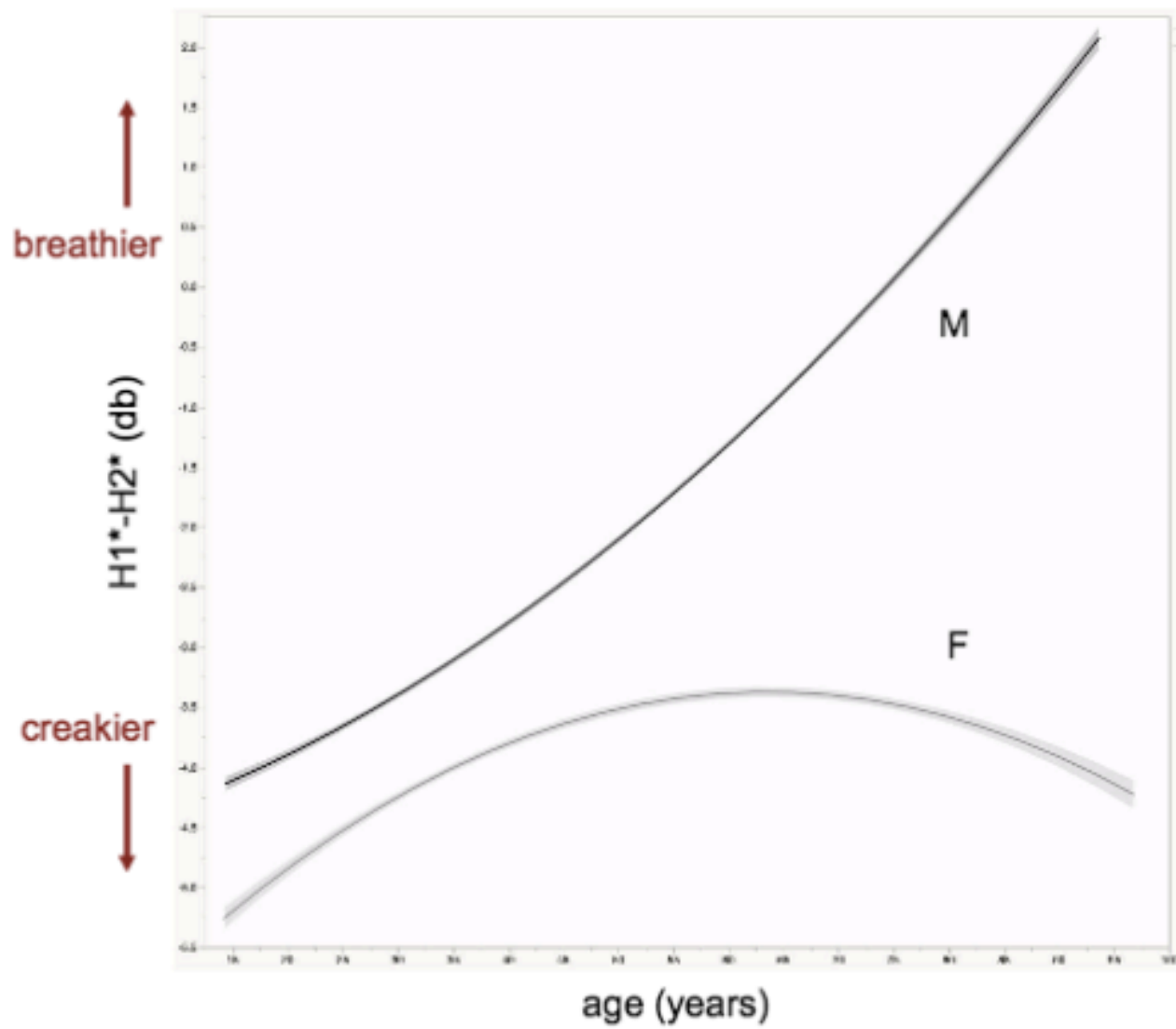


Cuz he **knows** my brother. He used to hang  
like around my brother cuz my brother and  
his friends are like the cool kind of people.  
And you know, like little kids like to hang  
around the big kids and **act** cool.

# CREAK

- Henton, C., & Bladon, A. (1988). Creak as a sociophonetic marker. In L. Hyman & C. N. Li (Eds.), *Language, speech and mind: Studies in honor of Victoria A. Fromkin* (pp. 3–29). London: Routledge.
- Callier, P. and Podesva, R. (2015) Gender differences in the acoustic realization of creaky voice: evidence from conversational data collected in inland California. Paper presented at Linguistic Society of America annual meeting, Portland, OR.
- Yuasa, I. P. (2010). Creaky voice: A new feminine voice quality for young urban-oriented upwardly mobile American women? *American Speech*, 85(3), 315–337.
- Podesva, R. (2010). Gender and the social meaning of non-modal phonation types. Paper presented at the Berkeley Linguistic Society.





# A new generation of reporters: Zoe Chace

- “this new generation of NPR reporters is big on the uptalking and the vocal frying and every other vocal vice you can think of, but I was actually thinking about her accent proper, uptalking notwithstanding.”
- “It's not an accent, it's her actual voice. It grates like cheese. Her accent is generic, inoffensive Eastern Seaboard.”



# Two very different personae



Mara Liasson



Sally Herships





# The experiment

He says (Blackberry)



He says (Policing)



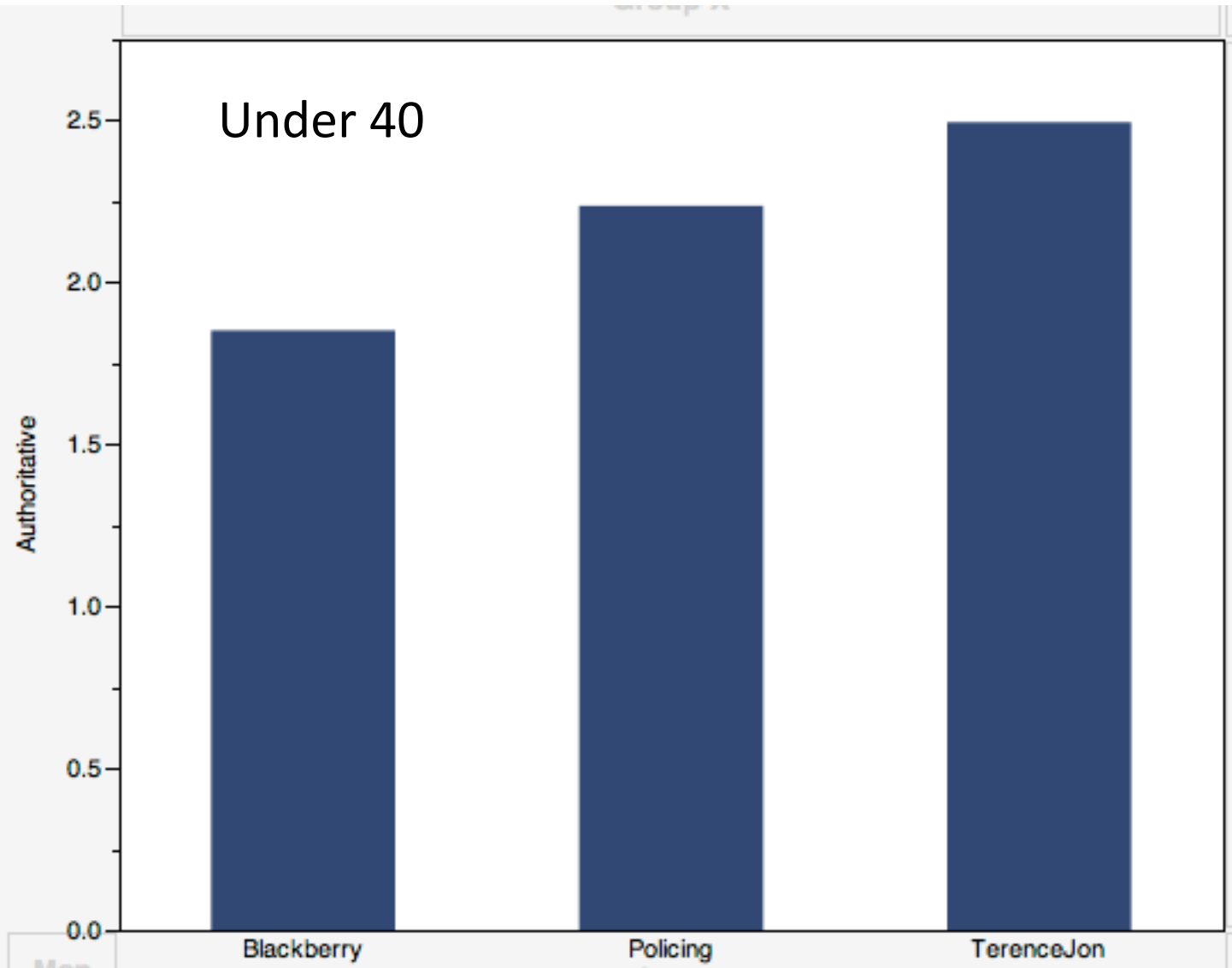
Terence Jones

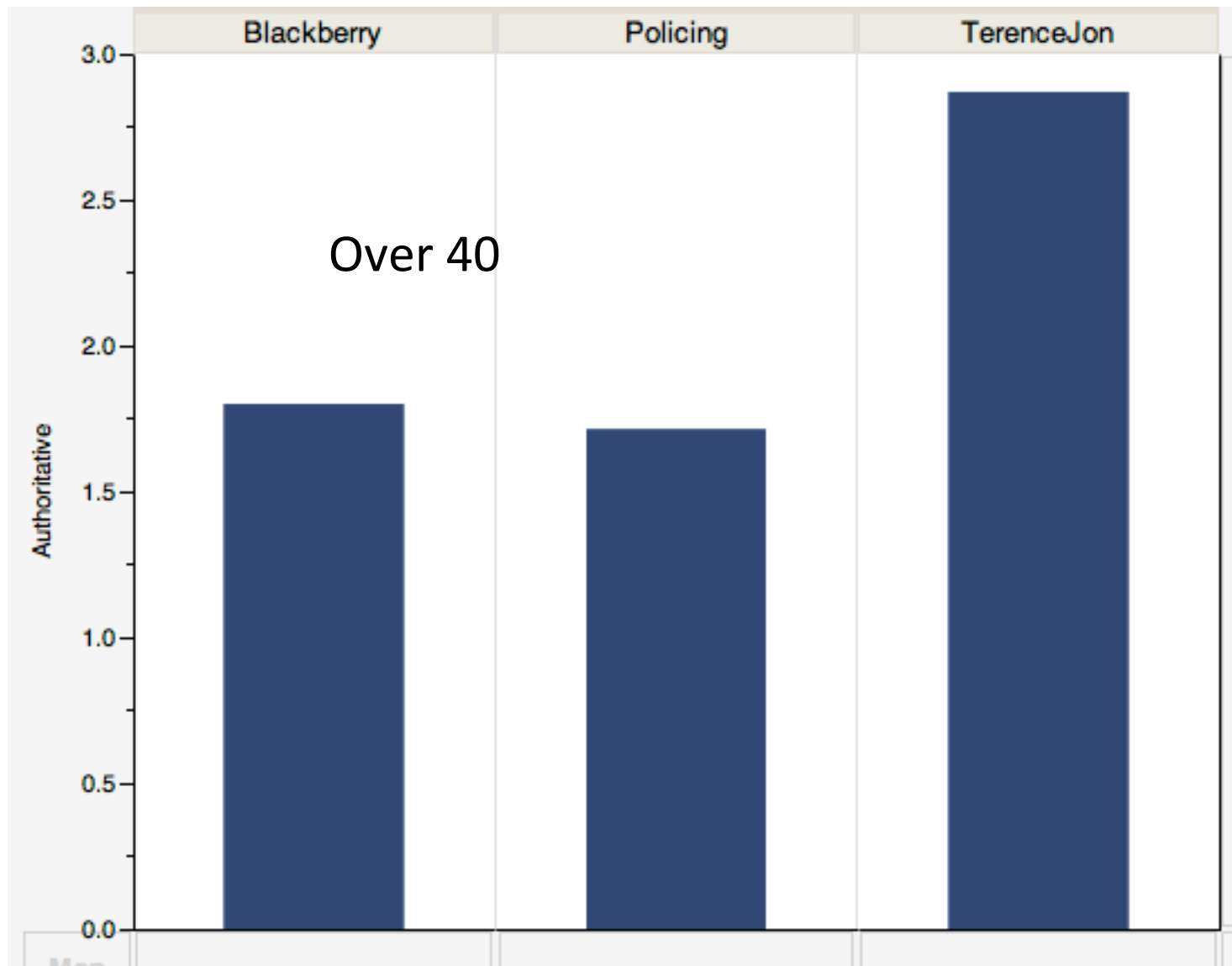
Please listen to this recording of a radio commentator, then go to the next page to give your evaluation of her style of delivery.



How authoritative does this person sound?

	Not at all authoritative	Slightly authoritative	Reasonably authoritative	Very authoritative
This person sounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





# Personae

- Change is what makes language viable for human life.
- Social change, like linguistic change, must take place in small enough increments to maintain interpretability.
- Changes in personae constitute small and immediately accessible social changes.



# Indexical Obsolescence



- The young are leaders in both social and linguistic change.
- The new personae they construct constitute new distinctions in the social order.
- These distinctions are less interpretable to people who do not participate in the new social order.
- Older people are likely to interpret stylistic changes in terms of an older social order.

# Merci!

