Abstract
This paper investigates the distribution of Appalachian and Southern speech markers in an Eastern Ohio College Community and the sociolinguistic implications of the distribution. I combine a qualitative approach that uses the content of participants' speech to understand the sociolinguistic pressures and expectations within four different Communities of Practice (CofPs) with a quantitative approach to measuring variable feature frequency across the CofPs. Frequencies of /aj/ monophthongization, /ej/ shifting, and /o/ fronting are contrasted across CofPs. Occurrences of the two stages of the Southern Vowel shift (SVS) are also contrasted. The findings here suggest that the distribution of these three feature types is controlled by the linguistic capital values associated with them in each CofP. Participants demonstrated acute awareness of social bias from non-members of the community against features that the participants themselves thought of as rural. CofPs that give high linguistic capital to 'mainstream' English, such as a traditional writing class, create low-capital situations for Appalachian and Southern speech markers. I found that frequencies of Appalachian and Southern features distributed separately, but that both increased in contexts which were contextually linked to ruralness, or whose social structure was relaxed.

1. Introduction
1.1 The Linguistic Communities of Practice Model, applied to Appalachian English

Here I discuss a case study that has begun on the linguistic performances of identity seen in the context of the Northern Appalachian University. I portray the speech of a community of
faculty and students at a school in Northern Ohio whose interests and academic pursuits place them within many intersecting communities of practice, from the academic to the social. I attempt to answer three main research questions. First, what phonological features associated with Appalachia and neighboring regions such as the South and the Midwest are present in the speech of members of this community? Second, how do the identities of individuals within this community coincide with the identities of the spheres of influence present in the community and outside of it? Finally, how does the use of phonological features associated with particular spheres of influence in particular Communities of Practice reflect the intersectional identities of the individual speakers?

To summarize my findings, I first found evidence of two stages of the Southern Vowel Shift and occurrences of /o/ fronting. They used features associated with both the South and with the Appalachian regions studied so far. These features do not demarcate the influence of any kind of blanket language spoken within the whole South or all of Appalachia. Rather, they mark the impact of social spheres of influence which also impact the regions in which these features are found.

During my inquiry into students’ self-identity I encountered students who felt affinity to the Appalachian identity, though they were hesitant to claim it by that name. I found that they often described themselves with substitute terms, such as country, and charged terms such as hillbilly and redneck. In this short study, they did not use identifiers associated with the South or with the Midwest. In their language, students reported switching to a language of the academic sphere: “the language of college,” as one student called it during an interview.
In section 1.1 I will explain the theoretical framework on which I have built my ethnographic approach. In section 1.2 I will describe the community involved in my study and contextualize it within the regional story of Appalachia. In section 1.3 I will discuss the ethnographic spheres of influence which I expect to shape the speech within the communities of practice I observe. I will discuss the social history which is relevant to each sphere of influence in the Northern Ohio university setting. I will also discuss the linguistic work that has identified features commonly found within these spheres. In section 1.4 I will describe the communities of practice which I will focus on in this study. In section 2 I will describe the methods I have used in my data collection and my analysis. In section 3 I will present the data I have collected and observations I made while in the field. Section 4 will summarize and contextualize this data with the work done so far on Southern Appalachian Englishes. In section 5 I will describe my conclusions and speculate on what my data may mean for the field.

1.1 The Community of Practice Framework

For my analysis I rely on Lave and Wenger’s Community of Practice framework, adapted for sociolinguists by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992). For my fieldwork I have used the model put forward by Mallinson and Child 2007, applying their methodology to a very different Appalachian region and speaker population. I use their approach as a framework on which I base the design of my own study and analysis. I expected to find that Appalachian speech styles are used less by speakers of Appalachian Englishes within academic settings, and that this disappearance is observable through contrastive examination of the frequencies of Appalachian language styles across social contexts. In other terms, I expected to find that the frequency in use of the features belonging to other Appalachian Englishes are more prominent in
a socially relaxed context than an academic context. I base my hypothesis on self-reports by Appalachian authors regarding the intellectual stigmatization of the Appalachian sphere in the academic sphere community as the two collide in the classroom.

In 1992, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet introduced a then-recent concept from Sociology to the field of Linguistics, providing a powerful new lens for the study of language variation and pragmatics. Their paper adapted the novel framework of the "Community of Practice" (CofP) from its original context in an anthropological ethnographic study by Lave and Wenger (1991) into a discussion of language's role as both a product of gender-based communities of practice and an active influence on the construction of gender identities. Eckert (2005) classifies this kind of ethnographic approach to sociolinguistics, which places more attention on personal style than did the previous two waves, as part of a third wave of sociolinguistic research, which, she posits, provides a way to connect communities of practice with the cultures and identities reflected in them. Since then, the concept of Communities of Practice has been adopted by other sociolinguists studying variation in English, as a way to talk about the many intersecting communities which influence an individual's language, and the ways in which the language of the individual's community of practice influence the formation of their identity. The 2007 study by Mallinson and Child, which adopted Eckert and McConnell-Ginet's (1992) approach, forms a foundation for the present study of code-switching among North Appalachian students.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), a CofP is a group of people with a common goal who, through collaboration towards the goal, develop a shared set of practices for achieving it. These groups come together for a common purpose (worship, soccer, socializing) and develop a common repertoire of practices (religious traditions, team mottos, eating at the same table at
lunchtime). As Eckert 1999 points out, a CofP is distinguished from a traditional community or sphere of influence by the presence of some common collaborative goal between members. A church, a soccer team, and a group of friends at lunch all qualify as communities of practice, having immediate common goals at the center of their interactions. Meanwhile, a township, while a traditional community, does not by definition qualify as a CofP because it does not share any immediate common practice or goal. A community of practice may theoretically contain the members of a town, but only if there is a very specific, active goal shared by absolutely all members that the CofP strives to achieve. This is highly atypical of a community referred to only by the conventional term “town”.

Communities of Practice are also influenced by the intersectional association of their members with larger social, economic, or ethnographic communities, referred to in this paper as spheres of influence\(^1\). For example, a women’s soccer team is a community of practice whose explicit purpose for coming together is the goal of playing soccer. It contains members of the female community, but a soccer team that contains both queer and straight women is likely to develop a different set of language and practice than will a soccer team which contains only straight women. As an intersectional being, an individual may be a member of many Communities of Practice at one time. The greater the number of spheres of influence affecting the speaker\(^2\), the greater the number of ways in which the practices which she employs may vary across CofPs. The practices she chooses in a given CofP perform the part of her intersectional identity that best supports her footing in that CofP. Speech, then, as a practice governed by identity, is given to change across CofPs.

\(^1\) Here I refer to the definition of “intersectionality” as given by Crenshaw (1991)

\(^2\) In other words, the greater the number of traditional communities in which the speaker has membership
Within the CofP discussion, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet’s (1999) discussion adds that language style is a practice that is commonly shared by CofPs in order to unite them and promote progress towards the common goal. Language styles also influence and shape the other practices developed by a group. A community of practice, through linguistic interactions motivated by standing dynamics of power, will develop a particular style of language amongst themselves that includes a common lexicon and grammar. The CofP employs language to define itself, and (consciously or subconsciously) chooses a dialectical "code" by which it will communicate. In this way, in the words of Hayward (2014), which will be discussed next, identity is performed, whether regional, ethnic, or social.

In *Talking Appalachian*, Hayward (2014) writes on the applications of the concept of Communities of Practice to Appalachian Englishes, citing late 20th-century sociolinguists' grouping of Appalachian Englishes into one dialect as a factor that has contributed to the stereotyping of the Appalachian Englishes and the people who speak them. Hayward particularly criticizes the following passage in the *Dictionary of North American English* (Labov et al, 2006:316, as cited in Hayward et al 2014).

While linguists disagree on the extent to which Appalachian English can be considered a single dialect, it is clear that the varieties spoken in these areas share certain features that set them apart from other varieties of English. As a result, Appalachian English is considered to be a regional dialect of American English.

Calling all non-standard variants of English spoken in the Appalachian region by one name, Hayward argues, usually leads to association of the stereotypically negative variety of AE- and with it, the stereotype of the "poor, white hick mountaineer" (Clark and Hayward 2014:74) with all of the people who live there. Hayward points out that the people of many Appalachian
regions do not call their own language Appalachian, but rather refer to their language according to the local regional names. She emphasizes the importance of recognizing the independent identity possessed by each of the many valleys, hollows, and towns of Appalachia, which is painted by the many intersecting identities belonging to each community of practice whose members live there, lest linguists perpetuate the caricatures of Appalachian peoples. She praises studies which discuss Appalachian Englishes through the lens of communities of practice, rather than through the traditional 'single-dialect' lens.

One of the studies that Hayward 2014 points to as a model for future sociolinguistic work on Appalachian Englishes is that conducted by Mallinson and Child between 2002 and 2005 on Linguistic Communities of Practice constituted by a small group of women in a black Appalachian community of Texana, North Carolina. Over the course of their fieldwork, the researchers in this study were invited to accompany the group of women as they engaged in two contrasting social events: evening bible study meetings at the local church, and nighttime informal social gatherings on the porches of community members’ houses, where the women would gossip and chat about life in Texana. The researchers then analyzed the frequency at which a set of five variables, which had been previously documented as being socially or regionally stratified, were present in the speech of both groups. They tested features associated with both African American English (AAE) and Appalachian English (AE) to identify dialect alignment for both groups of women. They found that the frequency of the features associated with AE was greater among the ‘church ladies’ than among the ‘porch sitters’, and the frequency of features associated with AAE was greater among the ‘porch sitters’ than among the ‘church ladies’ (Mallinson and Child 2007). Because of their effective use of the CofP model, I have
chosen Mallison and Child’s work as a foundation for my own study of code-switching among North Appalachian students.

1.2 The community

I have chosen to focus on the speech of college students at a Northeastern Ohio College as the site of my study for two specific reasons. First, young people have been shown to be frequent drivers of linguistic change (see for example Eckert 1988), and thus participants in college are likely to exhibit a range of linguistic styles that is more distinct than those of other age groups. College students are a population that is usually friendly to questions about personal identity, and thus I hoped to find individuals here who wish to discuss their own identities and communities of practice in my interviews. Among college communities in Appalachia, I have intentionally chosen one in Northern Ohio because this region, whose socio-economic status and history is shared in many ways with more Southern parts of Appalachia, has yet received much less attention from sociolinguists than have styles of Appalachian English found in Southern Appalachia, particularly in West Virginia and parts of North Carolina. In these latter regions, thanks to the work of such researchers as Kirk Hazen, Walt Wolfram and Donna Christian, features that distinguish speakers of Appalachian English styles are well-documented (Hazen, 2017; Wolfram and Christian, 1974).

Eastern Ohio was recognized as part of Appalachia by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in 1965 (Williams 2002) (Figure 1). Ohio is not part of the geographically-defined regional core of Appalachia, which is carved by the span of the Great Appalachian Valley. The Appalachian counties of Ohio may be topographically described as the Appalachian Plateau, which borders the mountains on the west (Carver, 1999: 119). Though not in the
mountains directly, this region shares social, economic, and historical features with the regional core, which qualify it to be included in the Appalachian Regional Commission (Office of the Inspector General, US). Linguistically, it was classified as part of the Lower North region (Carver 1987:248) during the broad-sweeping “first wave” of sociolinguistic research delineated in Eckert (2005). Like other modern Appalachians, many Appalachian families who live in Ohio, especially those close to the urban centers such as Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati, migrated from the mountains in the early 20th century, particularly after the two world wars, as will be discussed in section 1.2.1.

I observed and conducted my interviews at a university in a town in the Northeastern part of Ohio. The students who I observed are mostly white, and most were in their early twenties. The university campus hosts a number of high school students who are enrolled in college classes at the university, and are blended into the classes with the traditional college students, causing the average age of students to be younger than it is on traditional university campuses. The students all commute from home to the campus for classes. During my study I observed three different classes: one on agrobusiness, one on English composition, and one on literature.

In this Northern Appalachian college, I expected that I would observe the stylistic effects of at least three spheres of influence. These are the Appalachian sphere, the academic sphere, and the southern sphere. I thought that I might also observe the effects of an urban or midwestern community on the language spoken by these students. I also hypothesized that the subject of the

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3 In his 1987 word geography, Carver eliminated the historic “midland” classification which had been used to describe Appalachia by previous surveyors, including Hanz Kurath of the 1930s and 1940s. He favored instead the “Lower North” and “Upper South” classifications, arguing that the features of these two were more similar within themselves than the features of the “midland” as a whole (Kurath 1987:161-203).
class might influence the speech markers that were present— for example, whether more Appalachian-associated speech markers would be present in agrobusiness than in literature or composition. I discuss the outcome of this comparison in section 3.2.4.

![Map of Appalachia](image)

**Figure 1.** Appalachia, as designated by the Appalachian regional commission in 1965. Found in Williams 2002:13.

For this paper, I have decided to focus on the frequencies of phonological tokens, because variation in phonological feature variations in this community are more immediately noticeable than are syntactic and lexical variations. Features for which I found tokens carrying syntactic variation among themselves within the community are not present in high enough
number for me to be confident making any conclusions about the linguistic effect of spheres of influence in regional communities of practice based on them.

Figure 2. The Major Dialect Regions Summarized. From Carver 1987:248.

1.3 Relevant Spheres of Influence

1.3.1. Sphere of Influence A: The Greater Appalachian Community

Appalachia as a region spans what Craig Carver described as the Upper South and the Lower North (Figure 2) (Carver, 1987). The language spoken by the people of Appalachia is distinct from those spoken by both the New England North and the Southern plain, but according to Carver, the distinction between the speech of Northern and Southern Appalachia must also not be ignored. In fact, even a single way of pronouncing “Appalachia” is not agreed upon by Appalachian speakers. Generally speaking, people from South and central Appalachia pronounce the word with a low back third vowel followed by an affricate, [əpələʃə]. Northern
Appalachians and many outsiders instead use a mid-front vowel followed by a fricative, [\textipa{æpalefə}]\textsuperscript{4} (Williams 2002: 14) Nevertheless Appalachians of North and South have in common the social stereotypes and cultural stigmatizations that outsiders ascribe to their speech. Many of the region’s people also share a common Scots-Irish heritage, tracing back to their ancestor’s flight from Northern Scotland and England in the early 18\textsuperscript{th} century. The refugees fled crop failure and persecution from the Catholic monarchy of England (Williams 2002: 31). They arrived in Pennsylvania near Philadelphia via the Delaware River, and subsequent migration and settlement in regions along the famous Wilderness Road after the nation’s revolution brought the new Appalachian people westward (Williams 2002). In the centuries that followed, these pioneers’ descendants spread through the mountain range and the surrounding valleys. A language system developed across the regions they inhabited whose distinct features are shared in some aspects throughout the region.

This system, like all American Englishes, retains some features traceable to the inhabitants’ ancestral languages, which lie heavily in Ulster Irish and Northern English\textsuperscript{5}. According to Montgomery (2014: 45) ‘When it comes to connections with the Old World, the Scotch-Irish element is the strongest for grammar and, to some extent, for vocabulary’. Examples include the lexical items hull, piece, poke, (quarter) till, want (to get) off, and you’re, and syntactic items such as the personal pronoun hit ‘it’ and use of existential they: ‘They’s a

\textsuperscript{4} Williams 2002: 14 describes the following social distinction over the pronunciation of the region: “people who said [\textipa{æpalefə}] were perceived as outsiders who didn’t know what they were talking about but were more than willing to tell people from the mountains what they should do and how they should do it”.

\textsuperscript{5} I acknowledge that other linguistic influences may have influenced Appalachian Englishes, including native American languages and African American English. These influences are not the focus of this paper, though I hope this study may inspire further inquiry into the influences of these language variants in modern Appalachia.
problem with Bessie. The system of course also includes conspicuous regional features that have no evidence-supported basis in Ulster or Northern England, including the phonological features that will be examined in my analysis. The distance spanned by the mountain range (as much as 900 miles from Northeast to Southwestern corners) has also led to great variability of the speech spoken across the range.

Obermiller (2004) describes how Appalachian individuals in the early 20th century traveled to and from cities as industrial activity "boomed and busted". The appeal of factory jobs in the city was an impetus to leave the mountains for those living in the poor mountain regions. When industry slowed, many individuals were forced to return to their hometowns. Obermiller emphasizes the effect of World Wars I and II on the migration patterns. During World War II, young men and some women left the mountains for military service. Meanwhile those left behind were attracted to the urban centers by the job openings in the production of steel and other materials for which the war created high demand. As the Great Depression caused more boom and bust cycles in the coal industry, more Appalachians were forced to leave the mountains in search of economic security. In the decade after the war, electricity, diesel, natural gas, and oil began to replace coal as a source of heat and energy. This caused an economic collapse for Appalachian economies that relied on coal mining as a source of income, forcing more families to leave in droves for jobs in the cities. By 1960, the Southern Appalachian Region alone had lost roughly 1 million persons to out-migration (Ford 1962). Their descendants can

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6 These examples are cited in Montgomery (2014:45) from their entries in the Dictionary of American Regional English (DARE). For a summary of studies on the etymology of Appalachian language features and other examples of Ulster Irish-derived features in Appalachian Englishes, see Montgomery (2014) in Clark and Hayward (2014).
now be found on the outskirts of urban centers nationwide, but particularly on the Eastern side of the country (Obermiller 2004:95).

As Puckett (2014) articulates, Appalachian culture is highly stigmatized, partially due to the stereotypes that have been laid on it by outsiders. Puckett cites linguistic anthropologists’ conclusions that “SBAE (Standard Broadcast American English) is a preeminent symbol of Americanness at the expense of any vernacular”. The symbolic implication for Appalachian English speakers is that they are considered to be less American if they do not speak SBAE. The applied implication for Appalachian American English speakers is that authority figures, including government officials, teachers, or employers find an excuse to dismiss or reject the needs of the AE speaker. (Puckett 143). In the media, the Appalachian person is painted as a strange and sometimes even scary character, from the uneducated, unsophisticated Beverly Hillbilly to the terrifying stalker of Deliverance. This “redneck” is uneducated, violent, and even un-American. With such a strong stigma in the media, and such an imbalance of symbolic power between speakers of AE and SBAE as Puckett 2014 describes, it would not be a surprise if speakers were to code-switch out of their home dialect in a power-loaded environment such as the college classroom.

Researchers in North Carolina and West Virginia have conducted extensive research on speakers of Southern Appalachia. Among the largest bodies of data on the subject is the West Virginia Corpus of English in Appalachia (WVCEA), which comprises of 61 interviews with West Virginia speakers of Appalachian Englishes led by Kirk Hazen. Data from this corpus can be found on the webpage of the West Virginia Dialect Project7. Another notable source of

7 https://dialects.wvu.edu/
information on Appalachian English can be found in Wolfram and Christian's *Appalachian Speech*, a book which developed from part of a final report on research conducted between 1974 and 1975 in Mercer and Monroe Counties in West Virginia. This research helped me identify which features are shared by the Appalachian Englishes in West Virginia. The features described in these sources should not be considered as defining features for all of Appalachia. Nevertheless, this information is useful for linking the same features in the Northern Appalachian Englishes to other Appalachian Englishes in order to track the influence of the Greater Appalachian Sphere between Communities of Practice for ethnographic purposes.

1.3.3 Sphere of Influence B: The Southern Community

Self-definition terms for Appalachian speakers across states frequently include the description 'Southern' in lieu of 'Appalachian' (Hayward 2014:74). I submit that is because of the social capital linked to both terms, by which the term 'Appalachian' is costlier than the term 'Southern' as a self-identifier. While Appalachia was a contested region during the American Civil War, with West Virginia splitting from Virginia because of Northern sympathies, the last 100 years have seen migrations of Appalachian peoples to the South and into Northern cities. By virtue of the migration, Northern Appalachian speakers are culturally and historically related to the Southern Appalachian populations of West Virginia, Eastern Kentucky, Eastern Tennessee, Western North Carolina, Northwestern South Carolina, and Northeastern Georgia. These states have been historically viewed as being Appalachian by surveyors before the 1965 Appalachian Regional Commission (shown in Figure 1).

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By using the term 'Southern', speakers associate themselves with their Southern Appalachian neighbors while retaining social capital that the term ‘Appalachian’ might have cost. In so doing, they acknowledge that their speech is different from that of the rest of the Northern United States, and similar in some way to the speech of these neighbors. This association supports cultural cohesion between the Appalachian states. It does not locate Appalachia within the South exclusively. Speakers’ substitution of ‘Southern’ for ‘Appalachian’ as a self-identifier is no argument against membership of Northern Appalachian within the greater Appalachian community. Nevertheless, linguistic studies of Appalachian English have thus far have focused on Southern Appalachia exclusively.

A commonality among the features shared by the Southern Appalachian regions studied and the greater Southern region is the Southern Vowel Shift (SVS), which will be described in more detail in Section 3. I was curious when I began my study whether I would detect any Southern markers in my participants’ speech. The presence or absence of these markers provides information as to whether the South influences Northern Appalachia linguistically, in addition to influencing Southern Appalachia. The context in which they appear indicates where, if at all, the ‘Southern’ code carries linguistic capital within this community.

1.3.4 Sphere of Influence C: The Midwestern Community

The college community where the fieldwork was done is within two hours’ driving distance each of Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Columbus. All three cities are included in the author’s own definition of the Midwest as a native of Cincinnati Ohio, another Midwestern city not extremely far away. I am unaware of any contest to this definition. Projects such as the Buckeye Project (Pitt et al 2007) in Columbus, and the Pittsburgh Speech and Society Project (online,
Johnstone et al) describe the features which these midwestern cities have in common and those which are unique to each. These cities’ populations carry features in common with the near-by Appalachian Mountains, from whence some of the urban populations have migrated. For example, on the overview page of the Pittsburgh Speech and Society project, the project personnel explain that Yinz, a colloquial form of you, is a feature shared with the Appalachian Mountains. However, speakers in cities may develop unique linguistic features of their own. For Pittsburgh, the monophthongization of the /au/ dipthong is unique. So Midwestern speech can influence Appalachian speech, but Appalachian speech can also influence Midwestern speech.

1.3.5 Sphere of Influence D: The Academic Sphere of Influence

The academic world in the United States has a history of linguistic prescriptivism, particularly in writing (Curzan 2016). This trend has tended towards the stigmatization of the language features used by members of lower socio-economic groups by attaching to them labels such as unprofessional, unscholarly, or even just incorrect. Within the sphere of influence of the academic community in the United States, social capital values on language features deemed “standard” are artificially inflated. To compensate for the inflation in the sociolinguistic economy, features deemed nonstandard are given lesser social capital value (Puckett 2014).

1.4 The Communities of Practice

I now move to discuss the CofPs in which I did my recordings. To reiterate the distinction between CofPs and Spheres of Influence, CofPs are defined by the common goal which brings them together, and the subsequent shared set of practices which they adopt; as a result, a geographic community is not by definition a community of practice, nor is a community based on shared ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or any other attribute which is internal to a person,
regardless of the shared practices that these groups may have. It is the specific goal that brings the group together, then, which defines a community of practice.

1.4.1 CoP A: The English Club

At the commuter college where the fieldwork occurred, there is an English club that meets weekly to discuss literature in a casual setting. They have a small number of members who know each other well. I received permission to attend the club one week and record their conversation. As was true of every setting I recorded in, the students were aware that I was observing their speech. This opportunity provided a setting in which I was able to collect data on Northern Appalachian students’ speech in a relaxed context.

1.4.2 CoP B: Classes

Classes I attended ranged from about 4 students to 20 students. Many students at the college are white and traditional college age. This college also teaches a number of highschool students who attend college by means of Ohio’s College Credit Plus program. Most of the college’s student body by doesn’t live in the town where the college is located, but many of them live within the closest counties. I attended three classes.

1.4.2.1 Literature Class

I attended an honors colloquium in literature. The class was geared towards students who have an advanced handle on writing within the college. The discussion within the class focused on Richard Rodriguez’s *The Achievement of Desire*, a chapter of Rodriguez’s book about his personal educational journey and his exploration of personal identity throughout it. The discussion progressed to focus on issues of class and identity in the students’ own lives,
particularly with respect to how they relate to community members with less access to higher education. This class provides a valuable ethnographic window into the students’ self-awareness of the tension between the identities they associate with their home sphere of influence and the academic sphere.

1.4.2.2 Composition Class

I also attended a developmental composition class, focused on supporting students with the basics of how to write conventional college papers. The class incorporated both lecture-style teaching and collaborative group work, asking students to break down the sections a post by Ivy Bashear on the oral histories of her family in Eastern Kentucky\(^9\) paragraph by paragraph to determine the core purpose for each paragraph, then explain their conclusions to the class. Students reported what personal connections they made to the narrative while reading it, and what aspects of their identities they connected to it. Then, the discussion shifted to comparing Bashear’s writing style to the style of conventional academic writing. From this progressed a discussion on the dynamic of the writer’s style according to the expectations of the target audience and the influence of culture on contextual expectations for writing.

Aside from providing ethnographic information on the practices related to tradition that are held in common within the communities that the students at the college belong to, the class also presented a unique opportunity to listen to the same students speak within the micro-context of the peer group and also within the micro-context of the larger class setting. These micro-contexts, both within the larger CoP of the composition class setting, present the opportunity for

variations in a single individual’s lexical choice and phonological presentation between contexts to be observed within the setting of the classroom. It is plausible that, within the safety of the peer group, students use words that carry low social capital in the typical setting of a general class discussion.

1.4.2.3 Agrobusiness Class

A course in agrobusiness provided variety. Of all the classes, this was the smallest, with only 4 students. The focus of this class was unique compared to the other two, as it focused on a practice that is specifically shared within rural CofPs such as farming families. The relationship between rurality and Appalachian-ness is beyond the scope of this paper. I do not conflate the two. Indeed, the Urban Appalachian Community Coalition of Cincinnati exists to provide voice to Appalachian migrants living and raising the younger generation in urban settings. However, many residents of Appalachian America are likely to identify themselves as being “country” before they use the word “Appalachian” (Hayward 2014:74). Whatever the reason for this, the facets of “Appalachian” identity and those of “rural” identity are indisputably linked.

2. Methods

I received permission to record three different classes on campus over two days during the fall term. A club meeting and an interview with a professor who self-identifies as Northern Appalachian were also recorded. Recordings were transcribed in standard English orthography. I noted any place where speakers appeared to comment on their own usage of Appalachian language features, and what they said about it. I then chose salient phonological variables that have been associated specifically with Southern Appalachian, Greater Southern, and Pittsburgh
Englishes to use as speech markers. This was done in order to track the dynamic of usage of these speech markers across Communities of Practice for ethnographic purposes. The Speech markers I use should not be taken as features of some blanket variant of English that encompasses these large spheres of influence. Rather they should be seen as features shared between variants of each sphere, with which a distinct cultural identity is associated. For example, the Appalachian English features I use are shared between two communities in West Virginia studied by Wolfram and Christian (1976). I do not use them as ‘pan-Appalachian’ features, but rather as a way of measuring the influence of a social sphere in Northern Appalachia which also has influence in these counties.10

2.1 Criteria for Marker Candidates

My choice of candidate speech markers was heavily inspired by the findings recorded in Labov (2005), Wolfram and Christian (1976), and Hazen (2015). When choosing candidate markers to quantify within participants’ speech, the main criteria included that the candidate must be attested to be present in at least one previously-studied Appalachian English dialect, that it must have been heard at least once in the region by me, and that it must be associated with an overlapping sphere of influence (Appalachian, Midwestern, Southern, Black, etc). It was difficult to locate identity-salient syntactic and syntactic vacatons within the recordings from listening. The author attributes this to the type of discourse that was occurring, as will be discussed in section 4. Because of the low number of relevant syntactic and semantic variable tokens, this paper focuses on phonological markers, particularly those associated with unstressed final [ə] and the Southern vowel shift.

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10 Featural differences within spheres of influence is not the focus of this study.
2.2 Phonological Features of Interest

Table 1

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<td>d.</td>
<td>[i] -&gt; [I] shift</td>
<td>[krik] -&gt; [krIk]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows an overview of the candidate variations for which at least one representative token was identified within the recordings. I will focus my analysis in this paper on unstressed final [ə] and on the first two stages of the Southern vowel shift, leaving the Pittsburgh [aʊ] monophthongization and the third stage of the SVS for future papers.

2.2.1 The Southern Vowel Shift


11 ANAE= Atlas of North American English
refers to an ordered chain of vowel placement shifts whose trigger can be attributed to the monophthongization of a single vowel. The ANAE, whose methods for dialect cartography are based on the results of the Telsur phone survey conducted in the 1990s, does not represent small towns and rural areas such as the counties of Eastern Ohio, being limited in its target population to urbanized areas of America with a population over 500,000 (Labov et al 2006:4). In addition, the survey sample size was limited to only about 2 speakers per isogloss, intended only to provide a picture of the most common geographic trends within American English feature distribution rather than to reveal social differences linguistically within urbanized areas. With this fact in mind, the ANAE identifies the SVS as a defining characteristic of Southern American English phonology, and maps its general occurrence to the part of the country demarcated by red dots in Figure 3.

The authors of the ANAE attribute the Southern vowel shift's setting-off to be caused by the glide deletion from words containing the phoneme /ɔj/, in effect producing the allophone [a] rather than [aj] where that phoneme is present. This is referred to in the Atlas and in this paper as the monophthongization of /ɔj/. Alongside the deletion, the resulting vowel gets slightly fronted. As shown in table 1, for 'wide' [wɔjd] becomes [wad]. Stage 2 of the shift can then occur, in which /ɛj/ centralizes and lowers to fill the space, causing /ɛ/ to raise and front. For 'bait', [bɛt] becomes [bet], while for 'bet' [bɛt] becomes [bet] or [beat]. In the final stage, /iː/ moves in parallel with /ɛj/, simultaneously shifting down and centralizing. In essence, the frequencies of

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12 In the words of the authors on page 4, "the Atlas is designed to produce an overall view of regional patterns that will guide and stimulate local studies to provide a more detailed view of the sociolinguistic and geographic variation in a given area."
formants 1 and 2 for the pair /e/ versus /ej/ and for the pair /i/ versus /iy/ switch places (Labov et al: 128).

Figure 3 (above): The 3 stages of the SVS. Left: stage one. Right: stages 2 and 3. Maps and diagram from Labov et al 2006: 128.

Figure 4 (below): the shape of the vocal apparatus and the trends involved in the SVS.

The SVS cluster was chosen as a set of speech markers specifically to identify the contexts, if any, in which the speech of Ohio Appalachian speakers takes on features of Southern United States English. This approach can inform me on the relationship between the expression of Appalachian identity and the expression of Southern identity.

2.2.2 Fronted /o/
Wolfram and Christian (1976:66) end their description of the phonological features they observed in their study of two counties of West Virginia with a phenomenon which they call ‘unstressed ow’. This phenomenon is referred to in other studies as /o/ fronting (as it is, for example, in Butters (1981) and I will also refer to it thus\textsuperscript{13}. This term refers to the movement of the phoneme which produces the allophone [o] at the end of a word to the center of the vowel space due to relaxation of the vocal apparatus, producing an ending containing schwa-like [ə] instead. In some parts of Southern Appalachia, such as the West Virginia counties studied by Wolfram and Christian (1976), this unstressed, fronted syllable takes on a rhotic shape, becoming [ɚ]. This is the phonetic mechanism which transforms ‘hollow’ to ‘holler’, and ‘yellow’ to ‘yeller’. Other alternate endings to [o] than [ə] exist, as described in Butters 1981. In this paper I focus on a variation that sounds like [ə].

2.3 Analysis Method

Self-reporting results were isolated and organized according to speech sample. For the phonological analysis, roughly five minutes of speech from each of the items was analyzed. For quantifying the occurrence of the /əj/ monophthongization (stage 1 of the SVS), the quality of each occurrence of /əj/ was judged by ear, and for each occurrence it was recorded whether the vowel sounded like [ə] or like [əj]. The number of instances of each vowel type were tallied. For at least ten tokens of each vowel type, the vowel was isolated in the spectrogram for the recording in Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2017). The basic shape of the spectrogram intervals

\textsuperscript{13}I do so not without some hesitation. It is clear to the author that there is, or was, some dispute between the Wolfram and Christian team and Butters because of the language used in the latter scholar’s (1981) paper. Nevertheless, Butters’ findings, which build on Wolfram and Christian’s (1976) paper, are useful to the framing of my own findings, and provide a term which more accurately describes the phenomenon I am trying to frame in a phonological model.
containing the vowel were compared. These variations were totaled for each recording and then divided by the number of words in each of the recordings to identify the frequency of the variables. Frequencies were compared in order to determine whether differences in marked feature usage could be identified. For analysis of the occurrence of stage 2 of the SVS and fronted /o/, it was marked whether the features were observed or not by ear.

3. Results

This section is divided into two subsections. Section 3.1 is a summary of the participants' own observations about changes in their speech across contexts and about their identity as Appalachian Americans. Section 3.2 is a summary of the results which I have gotten from a phonological analysis of recorded speech samples for each context. Together, these results begin to describe the use of language features which I observed in this community.

3.1 Self-reports

Many of the conversations that I recorded contained both direct and indirect discussions of identity within the rural and Appalachian region, plus its intersection with identity in the academic sphere. Self-reports are extremely valuable to this analysis as sources of information on the social spheres of influence that a speaker is consciously aware of as influencing their language practices. They also reveal a great deal about a speaker's attitudes towards their identity, the amount of social capital that they perceive a given aspect of their identity to carry, and who they perceive to be inside or outside of a given sphere. Only pieces of each recording contain relevant self-reporting regarding speakers' self-identity and language use. Here I discuss the relevant pieces of each.

3.1.1 Faculty Interview
In an interview with a self-identifying Northern Appalachian professor, I was able to ask questions about the professor’s relationship to her identity and its expression in her language practices. Prompt topics focused on her cultural identity, how she perceives herself in relation to it, and her own observations on how her language changes across contexts. From the full transcript, I have extracted questions and answers that reveal new information about language practice across CofPs, and paraphrased them here.

When asked about her ethnic/cultural identity growing up, the professor responded that she didn’t really know of the term “Appalachian” as a young person until one of her teachers at school explicitly presented the term as part of who she was. This, she says, is the position that some of her students are in now. As a composition professor, she sees Appalachian identity as an important thing to talk about where she lives, both because there is a great deal of ungrounded stigma directed towards Appalachian language features, and because learning about her Appalachian heritage gives her a sense of having roots and history that she wants to share with her students. The professor also lamented that she didn’t feel as if she had much control over the register that she used when at school. She explained that she felt as if, when she was at school, it ‘wouldn’t occur’ to her to phrase her words as she would at home. Geography, she said, plays a large role in her register; the farther into the country she is, the more Appalachian she finds herself to sound.

3.1.2. English Club

The English club’s conversation includes valuable content regarding their own understanding of social and linguistic variation between contexts, especially with relation to me, an outside observer on whom they projected certain stigmas about their identities as rural
Americans, or in fact, as Appalachian Americans. The English club’s casual atmosphere was, as one student told me, the product of all of the students having known each other since elementary and middle school. The students made it clear that, not only were they acutely aware of the informality of their discourse, but they were also aware that their informal speech may carry linguistic markers that are stigmatized as “redneck” or “hillbilly” speech. An interesting moment linguistically is illustrated here, about five minutes into the conversation:

Student 1: Just so you know, we all went to high school together, so.
Student 3: So we’re familiar with each other over more than five years
Student 2: Yeah there’s no formality at all between us.
Student 3: (register change) Over five years because we went to middle school together too. (To student 2) I went to elementary school with you!
Student 2: Oh right! Yeah, no formality whatsoever.

Interviewer: {town name} high school?
Students: No, {county school name}.
Student 1: It’s like 45 minutes away from here.
Student 2: So we all probably sound like a bunch of rednecks, but, it’s ok.
Student 3: (still in dramatically different phonological register) I resent that, I’m a hillbilly (laugh).

In this short dialogue, two very interesting things happened. First, a register change occurred in the speech of Student 3. It occurred during a discussion about familiarity among the group and former schooling in a rural area. Something about the context of the conversation seems to have triggered a “code switch” in phonology. In the phonetic analysis section, I will describe more specifically what features this new phonology had. The effect to the researcher as an outsider was for the speaker to sound more likely to be from a rural area, an association which I have already noted is closely linked to an outsider’s perception of an Appalachian area (section 1.4.2.3). Second, the students demonstrated an acute self-consciousness regarding their identity as graduates of a county high school in front of me, an outsider recording their speech.
The code-switching occurrence, or change in registers, which occurred when the students in the club were talking about the high school they attended, raises the question of why young members of a stigmatized community may momentarily code switch into a stigmatized dialect, even in front of an outsider. This question may be explained by the self-consciousness the students exhibited, shown in the rest of the speech segment above. A few possibilities for the cause of the switch come to mind. It is possible that the speaker may have switched regardless of the presence of the researcher, and that something about the discussion of the high school in the county caused the switch. It is also possible that, with their self-deprecating comments, the speakers were distancing themselves from a dialect which they recognize as having low social capital. Yet given the context, in which one member of the CofP vocalized a concern that her group sounded like “a bunch of rednecks” to the outside researcher, and the code-switcher herself jokingly called herself a “hillbilly”, I think it possible and likely that I was witnessing a moment of alliance between the speakers. Conscious of the prejudices I may be carrying towards their way of speaking, the students acknowledged the difference, then dismissed it with humor. This exchange is telling of Northern Appalachian speakers’ awareness of how the outside views their language, and how that awareness plays out for college students in academic communities that are associated with, but not part of, their home communities.

3.1.3 Composition Class

One of the primary questions of this thesis, namely ‘how does the speech of an individual in the community change according to the context in which it is spoken’, was also raised in the course of the class discussion. Though the discussion particularly focused on written language and planned rhetoric rather than on spontaneous speech, it nevertheless relates to the role of
context in identity expression through language. Rhetorical style, the discussion pointed out, often has a great deal to do with context, even when the rhetoric is planned. The instructor emphasized the non-congruence of the post’s writing style to the most common pedagogical essay model, the five-paragraph essay, particularly because of the post’s lack of obvious topic sentences and transitions. Together the students and the instructor concluded that the audience for the post was likely to be future family member and community members. The instructor then posed the question to the class: “How does [the identity of Bashear’s audience] have to do with the way she is writing?” With no answer, the instructor briefly explained that culture has an influence on expectations on writers in each and every context, and that as Bashear was writing her post, she used an Appalachian discourse form because she was writing to members of her community. She also offered the answer that “when someone is speaking or writing, they’re actually trying to identify with the audience”.

From this part of the conversation I interpreted a few points being made by the instructor in response to the research questions. The first point was that even in planned writing, context and audience identity influence language choices by the speaker. The second was that in the Appalachian community, community members and family members are likely to discourse in a narrative style that is in many ways unique to Appalachian culture.

This distinction between Appalachian and mainstream American discourse structure (in other words, narrative style) exists on a higher level of structure than do phonological distinctions between the two dialects. Yet the distinction articulated here demonstrates a high level of awareness of the distinction between mainstream and Appalachian narrative speech. The instructor also demonstrated a high level of awareness of the stigma on Appalachian speech. If
this professor’s well-articulated awareness of the distinctions between mainstream and Appalachian discourse features can be used as a measurement of the awareness her students have of the distinctions and stigma associated with Appalachian speech, even at a subconscious level, it speaks largely of the linguistic capital difference between mainstream and Appalachian speech in this region. Such a powerful dynamic is the ideal environment for code switching to occur in CofPs where Appalachian speech is of low linguistic capital.

3.1.4 Literature Class

During this discussion, I gained additional information from the students about their perception of themselves in their interactions with contrasting realms of home and academia. I also heard new thoughts on the language contrast within the two realms. It was from these thoughts that the title of this paper comes. As stated, the discussion in this class was on Richard Rodriguez’s “The Attainment of Knowledge”. A major theme of the class discussion on Rodriguez’s essay in the literature class revolved around the feeling of resentment that Rodriguez describes having during his education towards his less-educated immigrant parents. The students recalled Rodriguez describing the heavy accent with which his parents spoke and his embarrassment when they spoke to his teachers. The instructor then posed the following question to the class: ‘have you ever been embarrassed of your parents?’ The question opened up the line of thinking which regarded the student’s own process of reconciling their home identity with the identity of student-hood. Language was a part of this discussion, as it was part of the initial discussion about Rodriguez’s parents’ accent. One student posited that, in order to succeed, he felt that there was a new language which he needed, the ‘language of college’. And in doing so, like Rodriguez in his essay, some of the students expressed a feeling of
disenfranchisement from their personal identities that existed before taking on the new language of college.

In order to fully appreciate this comparison, we must again call to mind the concept of the intersectional person. Unlike Rodriguez, my participants are not immigrants. Yet some of them belong to a community at home whose language and other practices are not assigned the highest social capital, compared to those of mainstream America. In this way, the immigrant experience and the experience of some of the participants in this study are similar. Both learn new practices, including new ways of speaking, when they enter academia. The student who articulated his thoughts on learning the ‘language of college’ gave a name to the register that is associated with the academic sphere of influence which, as I will argue in section 3.2, so strongly dominates the speech across CofPs in the greater college community where I studied.

3.1.5 Agrobusiness Class

This class was a traditional lecture-style class. The lecture focused on the timing of grain harvesting. No discussions or self-observations regarding identity or language occurred.

3.2 Phonological Analysis

3.2.1 What /æj/ monophthongization “looks like”

The spectrogram of the monophthongized /æj/ is similar but subtly different from its diphthong counterpart in my speech samples. Figure 4 shows the two side by side in similar phonological environments. In the diphthong case, the vowel’s formant 2 frequency makes a constant ascent from the beginning of the vowel to the end of it, as shown in Figure A. In the monophthongized case, however, the ascent is still present, but is delayed from the beginning of
the vowel, with a duration in which the formants are relatively stationary preceding it at the
beginning of the vowel. During this stationary phase, the vowel sounds very much like [a].

![Figure 4a. From recording of faculty interview. Duration of /aj/ vowel is highlighted in pink. A: ‘I’m’ with diphthong vowel. B: monophthongized ‘Time’. Spectrograms generated in Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2017).](image)

In every case in which the vowel quality was determined to sound like [a] rather than like [aj], the stationary part of the vowel formant structure was measured to last for at least 49% of the duration of the entire vowel. It is a notable observation that this stationary period needn’t last for the entire vowel in order to be heard as [a] instead of [aj], but only about half of it in order to sound to the ear like a monophthong. Consistent with the observations in ANAE (page 26) which predict that in Eastern Ohio and Western Pennsylvania, /aj/ monophthongization only occurs before sonorants and word boundaries, no cases of /aj/ monophthongization were found before obstruents.

3.2.3 Code-switching moments within ColPs

3.2.3.1 English Club code switch
Within the speech sample from the English club, there was a moment, described in section 4.1.3, in which the register that one student was speaking in changed dramatically according to the content of the conversation. The content of the moment is described in section 3.1. Phonologically speaking, two things occurred. First, instances of /æj/ were voiced as clear monophthongs. Second, for the only time in the recording, the second stage of the SVS was observed in the word resent: the second /ɛ/ was voiced as [ɪ]. The emergence of the second stage under the circumstances examined in section 3.1 lends support to the possibility that this is an exaggerated form of a phonological mode which exists in the speaker’s everyday repertoire. With this possibility comes the question of whether the SVS may emerge more frequently under circumstances unaffected by the academic sphere of influence—for example, in the speaker’s home.

3.2.3.2 Faculty Interview Code Switch

During a segment of the faculty interview not analyzed in the 5-minute speech sample that was quantitatively measured, the faculty member switched to a different register in order to accommodate a quotation from her mother, “I just realized them peaches is rottin’ on the tree”. It is clear what the trigger for the register switch is (the faculty member was switching registers to clarify the transition to quotation of someone who is deep into the Greater Appalachian sphere of influence). The phonological final vowel fronting feature attributed to Appalachia (Wolfram and Christian 1976) but not observed before in any of the CofPs studied, shows up here. In addition, a heavily marked Appalachian syntactic feature, demonstrative them, also shows up here. The emergence of these Appalachian features, formerly absent from any of the CofPs observed, during the code switch lends more support to the possibility that they are present in the speakers’ repertoire, but repressed by the influence of the academic sphere.
3.2.4 Quantitative data sampling, summarized

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community of Practice or context for recording*</th>
<th>Percent /ɑj/ monophthongization in 5 minutes</th>
<th>Stage 2 formant reversal?</th>
<th>Unstressed /o/?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Interview</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
<td>observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Club</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Observed during code-switch only</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition Class (groups)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition Class (whole class)</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Class</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrobusiness Class</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Observed</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Theoretically, the Faculty Interview is not a Community of Practice, not comprising of more than one person gathering to work towards the same immediate goal.

Overall, the faculty interview shows the most frequent and broadest occurrence of features associated with previously-studied Appalachian Englishes. This is unsurprising, given that the speaker embraces her Appalachian identity fully. The English club also used a notable number of the phonological variables being measured. Agrobusiness shows the broadest use of the variables after this, and a great deal more instances of the second stage of the SVS than any other recording (not quantified here). The frequency of usage of Appalachian phonological variables was relatively low during the literature class. In the composition class, a notable contrast occurred in /ɑj/ monophthongization between groups and whole-class settings; the monophthongization was found to occur more frequently in the group settings. This supports the
change in Appalachian feature usage across contexts of differing comfort described in Section 1.4.2.2.

With the observations in the previous paragraph made, it is important to note that overall, the occurrence of phonological variations, especially in the second and third columns, is relatively low. It is difficult to discern the possible meaning of this information for the study. I offer the potential explanation that these features were in low demand, having low social capital. If this is the case, phonological features as well as syntactic features in low or no supply in the classroom may be much more present in the speakers’ home environments.

4. Summary and Discussion of Results

In this study, I have observed three socially stratified phonological phenomena across communities of Practice in a Northern Appalachian college setting. I have seen that the first stage of the Southern Vowel Shift, monophthongization of the /oj/ phoneme, is present in both classrooms and social settings. It was shown to be the most common in the recorded setting in which the speaker most comfortably embraced Appalachia as part of her personal identity. I have seen that the second stage of the Southern Vowel Shift can be found in two CofPs: several times in agribusiness class, and only once in the English Club, under very particular conditions. It is possible but not confirmed here that agribusiness’s association with rural life caused the SVS’s progression to stage two to occur in this CofP. Finally, I have observed fronted /o/ in one context, the faculty interview. The frequencies of all markers measured were a great deal lower than I had expected. Nevertheless, the distributions of these features with relation to the spheres of influence which have the most sway over them are roughly what I expected to see. The markers meant to distribute with the expression of ‘Southern’ identity (the stages of the SVS)
and those meant to distribute with the expression of Appalachian identity (the fronted /o/) all distributed most frequently in the interview, the social group and agribusiness, compared to the traditional writing classes. The frequent use of features associated with Appalachia within this community support Northern Ohio's inclusion in area linguists' definition of 'Appalachia'. Further, the scattered distribution of these features in a pattern that makes some sense supports their effectiveness as identity markers.

Through this phonetic analysis I have confirmed that, across CofPs, the register or "code" which speakers use varies according to the code that carried the most capital at a moment. In this study, I have seen that the register spoken in the social club is very different from that used in class, and that the register for the social club may contain more Appalachian or rural features. I have also seen that codeswitches can happen within a CofP if the conversation shifts dramatically in the CofP.

During the study I have also heard a variety of attitudes by participants about their own language. I have observed wariness of the 'Language of College' but also deference to it as the language which carries linguistic capital. I have observed self-consciousness from some participants and pride from others over a very similar cultural heritage. The self-conscious were those who had had less opportunity to learn about their own heritage.

This is only a first start into the ethnographic linguistic analysis for this area. In future studies, I hope for a more effective and accurate way to analyze recorded sound data, such as an accurate automatic formant extractor, in order to enable the analysis of a greater number of speech tokens in one recording, thus improving result accuracy. Having more participants could
also begin to make possible recordings of speech in a more intimate setting such as a home, potentially allowing for the features which did not come out in high frequency to come out more.

5. Conclusion

I have shown that both the Southern and Appalachian spheres of influence play a role in shaping Eastern Ohio language. Because Communities of Practice within this region show notable usage of the features observed in studies of other Appalachian Englishes, this research gives support for Eastern Ohio to be considered as an Appalachian region linguistically (and not just economically or culturally) by both area linguists and sociolinguists. This does not designate Appalachia as a linguistically Southern variant; rather it is indication of Linguistic cohesion between Northern and Southern Appalachia. In order to tease out the identity difference between the Southern and Appalachian communities as well as the difference between rural-ness and Appalachian-ness, more features will need to be identified which correspond with either one or the other, and their uses will need to be quantified across CofPs.

I have also shown that there is a stigma associated with Appalachian identity that college students in this community are both acutely aware of and self-conscious of in their language. They associate their language with a highly stereotyped and stigmatized identity: the hillbilly and the redneck. Northern Appalachian students are vastly unaware of or unacquainted with the concept of their identity as Appalachian. Students hoping to better themselves through education bear the burden of having to learn an entire new language, "the language of college," at the price of distancing themselves from their home identities. Appalachian identity and its influence in the linguistic economy is gradually disappearing due to its holding low linguistic capital.
Northern Appalachian advocates such as the professor I interviewed find great value in their identity as Appalachian, when they have been informed of it and taught about it. Education on the history and essence of Appalachian culture can help to curb the stigma associated with Appalachian identity and thus restore esteem to Appalachia’s marginalized people. This includes teaching students about their language as a valid way to speak English with its own cultural and historical development. For Northern speakers, this will be most effective when coupled with an explanation that Appalachia extends to the North, lest the myth that Appalachia is only in the South prevent students from being empowered with knowledge of the meaning and value of their heritage. It is my belief that empowering Appalachian students thus also empowers them to understand and respect the value and dignity of those with intersecting but different heritage, especially the black Appalachian community.

If educators are to teach their students about their identity and their language as Appalachian and Northern Appalachian people, they must have tools with which to do so. The Northern Appalachian region is understudied. This gives language educators few resources with which to help students contextualize their language differences from the writing and speaking standards that they encounter in their classes with a lens that reflects value on the student’s own way of speaking. This region therefore needs more representation in sociolinguistic literature and inclusion in the general study of Appalachian culture and language.

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