

A Descriptive Analysis of the Grammar and Variable Pronunciation of
'there' and the Non-Standard There-Tag in Bathurst English

by

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Abstract

This study is a descriptive analysis of the occurrence of the sociolinguistic variables of pronunciation associated with all forms of 'there' and Non-Standard There-tag (NST-tag) in Bathurst English. Participants were interviewed and the occurrences of 'there' were obtained through the use of sociolinguistic interviews with 15 speakers. The incidences of 'there' were sorted based on grammatical category and pronunciation and were subsequently analyzed based on age and gender. The results indicate that older speakers use non-standard pronunciations of 'there' more than younger speakers and they also use NST-tag more than younger speakers. Younger speakers mostly use standard pronunciations of 'there' and use NST-tag very little. This may indicate age and gender grading or a change in progress in that vernacular is giving way to more standard speech in this community.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis represents a contribution to the study of varieties of English in Canada. In particular, this research is the first study known to the author to look at the English of Bathurst, New Brunswick, a city with a long bilingual (English/French) tradition. New Brunswick is the only Canadian province in which both English and French are constitutionally protected as official languages. Scholarship about northern New Brunswick is largely concerned with the history and language of the Acadians, forcibly displaced by the English during the Deportation starting in the mid-eighteenth century (c.1755), and whose presence in the region is of seminal importance to New Brunswick culture and history.

Overlooked by the literature is the social history of English speakers in the region, and the contact between the English and French language. This research begins to fill this gap by looking specifically at the characteristics of English in current Bathurst English. In later work, it is hoped that the study of other aspects of English in New Brunswick can lead ultimately to a useful exploration of language contact in the area. This thesis will begin to look at the social history of English speakers in this region and speak to the possibility that language contact has occurred in the area.

Using data derived from sociolinguistic interviews with 15 male and female speakers representing two age cohorts of English speakers from Bathurst, this thesis will argue that the use of a Non-Standard *There*-tag (to be defined at the end of section 1) is age and gender graded in the area—older speakers using it more than younger speakers and men using it more than women. Furthermore, variation in pronunciation of this and other forms of *there* are similarly graded. This pattern of age and gender grading is

typical of vernacular (local) forms uncovered in the sociolinguistic literature, and thus this thesis will argue that the particular uses of the Non-Standard There-tag is a feature of local vernacular Bathurst English, which is rapidly in decline in favor of more standard uses and pronunciations.

1.1 English in Bathurst

Over the past few decades there has been an increasing interest in both phonological and grammatical variation in English spoken in different regions worldwide, including Canada. Labov (1963; 1966; 1972; 1982; 2006) has extensively researched English in the United States and is well known for his work in New York and Philadelphia. Eckert (1989; 1997; 1998) looked at how English is spoken in the United States and has looked closely at language and gender variation. Other scholars have examined sociolinguistic variation in English not only in the U.S. but also in England. Trudgill (1974) looked at English in England as well as Milroy (1980) in Ireland. In Canada, Chambers (1973; 1975; 1993; 2001) looked at the variation of English in Canada, as has Scargill and Warkentyne (1972), Sankoff *et. al.* (1989); Dodds de Wolf (2004); Poplack and Tagliamonte (1993); Hagiwara (2006); and Clark (1993). Kirwin (1993), Woods (1993), Nylvek (1993), Avis 1972; Johnson 1976; Gold 2005; Gold and Tremblay 2006; Esling and Warkentyne (1993) have also examined Canadian English in various regions of Canada. Most recently the topic of varieties of English in Canada was revisited in an issue of the *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* (Vol. 51:2/3 2006) with papers from Canadian English in the Global Context conference at the University of Toronto in 2005. This list is by no means exhaustive.

This present study will also look at a variety of English spoken in Canada in the city of Bathurst located in northeastern New Brunswick on Canada's east coast. It will look specifically at the use of standard and vernacular spoken by English speaking residents of Bathurst, a linguistic community that has been largely ignored in sociolinguist research.

1.1.1 Local identity bound up in language

In Bathurst, language affiliation is an important part of how people identify themselves and each other. In virtually all circumstances the language a person speaks and whether one has an accent (either French or English) is noted and that person's native language affiliation (and presumably other social characteristics) is assessed. Like all communities, an individual can be a member of any number of sub-groups (including age and gender cohorts as investigated here, but also family, neighbourhood, church or community group membership, profession, etc.); however, cutting across all of these is language affiliation.

Locally, both English and French are spoken and the community can be generally considered functionally bilingual. New Brunswick is the only province in Canada to adopt French and English as official languages and as such anyone in New Brunswick has the right to service in their native language. If one cannot speak both French and English it is more difficult to find employment, particularly in service-oriented positions. Such individuals must be able to function in both French and English in the context of their occupation, but outside of work they may not be able to carry on a conversation in their non-native language. Most individuals can 'get by' in a public setting if required to do so, although for some it is a struggle.

Prior to the 1970's, public school instruction was in English and private Catholic school instruction was in both French and English. Generally, Protestants were English speaking, but Catholics could be either. Many children who lived in a neighbourhood close to a Catholic school, regardless of religion, went to that Catholic school (although non-Catholic children were excused from catechism and other specifically Catholic functions). Because of this, French and English-speaking children played together on the school ground and managed to communicate effectively. After the 1970's, it was more common for children to go to language-segregated schools. For these children, the division between English and French communities is more part of their personal identity - by comparison, they have had less experience with children from the other community and thus the social distance between them has grown.

While surrounded by French speakers, within the limits of Bathurst proper, most people grew up English speaking or were bilingual. When the local mines opened in the 1950's, a large number of monolingual Francophones moved to the city to be closer to work. At this point in Bathurst's history, both Catholic schools and public school offered academic classes, but only the English (public) high school, Bathurst High School, offered both an academic curriculum and a commercial/industrial stream. French students had to go to the English school to be trained for a trade, or leave Bathurst to be trained elsewhere in French. Currently, there are two school divisions in Bathurst, one French and one English.

The point of this brief overview of recent linguistic history is to illustrate that generations had different experiences with English-French contact, and grew up in

different social times (in terms of institutional divisions between English and French), but that local identity as either English or French has long been a local social issue.

It is also important to understand that the division between French and English is social. There is no real geographical separation between French and English in Bathurst proper. The neighbourhoods are mixed and there is no one neighbourhood that is known locally as primarily or restricted to French or English. Nonetheless, students go to different schools based on what language they speak at home. Thus, it is speculated here that part of the identity of a person from Bathurst is tied up in the language.

1.1.2 Documenting English history in New Brunswick

In New Brunswick, Acadian history is well documented. Conversely, the history of the local English population is not so well documented. In school, students are taught how the Acadians were sent out of the maritime region when they would not swear fealty to the English king. However, other than learning general Canadian history and the history of the Loyalists in southern New Brunswick, students do not learn about local English history. This imbalance may be due to the fact that the French have a longer history in the area.

New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island were originally part of Acadia. The French ceded mainland Nova Scotia (all of Nova Scotia minus Cape Breton Island) to England with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The French have been in the Bathurst region since they settled the area in the 1600's. Nicolas Denys was the French king's representative in Bathurst region (Savoie and Beaudin 1988). During the Deportation (c.1755), the Acadian population in the Bathurst area was not deported, unlike their southern counterparts elsewhere in New France. The Acadian peninsula and

Bathurst region was not as desirable to the English for settlement as the southern regions. It had a harsher climate and was less fertile than southern areas. Thus, at the time of Deportation, many Acadians fled to northeastern New Brunswick to escape the English. This region was a relatively safe haven for Acadians during this time in history and they settled here until the English became more tolerant of the Acadians after France lost Canada to England (Treaty of Paris 1763). In 1767 they were `given` land in the region to settle. Eventually the English moved into the region with the ship building and the forestry industry (including a sizeable number of immigrant Irish and Scottish settlers in the early to mid 1800s) (Savoie and Beaudin, 1988). Their presence came after that of the French.

Nonetheless, the French and English have been living in the region side-by-side for many generations. With this history of contact between the communities, it is likely that there the languages have mutually influenced one another. Although this thesis is not concerned with language contact directly, NST-tag may surface in Bathurst English as a result of language contact. For example, when the Canadian French *là* is translated into English it means ‘*there*’. There may be a connection between NST-tag and the Canadian French *là* as the Canadian French emphatic particle *là* shares some similarities with NST-tag. Investigating this possibility and language contact in the region is left for future research by experts in the field.

1.2 Some definitions

The notion of a sociolinguistic *variable* is based on the idea that there are multiple ways of saying the same thing (Tagliamonte 2006). This means, for example, that a single word can be pronounced differently depending on the speaker. Variables can exist

at any level of language from phonetics to discourse, from phonology to syntax (Tagliamonte 2006). For example; [ð]/[d] in Bathurst English:

1. 'Ya know what I mean *there*.' (Jim: O/M).
2. 'Ya know what I mean *dair*.¹' (Jim: O/M).

In this example, the pronunciation of 'there' is variable, in some cases it is [ðɛr] (*there*) and in other cases it is [dɛr] (*dair*). *Vernacular* (also known as non-standard speech) was initially defined as the style in which minimum attention is given to the monitoring of speech by Labov (1972). It can be considered everyday speech (Sankoff 1974; 1980: 54) or 'real language in use' (Milroy 1992) or simply informal speech (Tagliamonte 2006). It is the most systematic form of speech because it is assumed to be the most free from hypercorrection or style shifting. It is also the style from which every other style must be calibrated (Labov 1984; 29) and is most distant from the idealized norm (Milroy and Milroy 1992; Poplack 1993: 252). It is the foundation from which all other speech behavior can be understood. Although difficult to define, *standard speech* is part of standard language - the variety of language that is associated with education, government, and institutions of global and national power (Eckert 1998). It is sometimes considered the idealized norm of language use. Trudgill (2000) states that standard speech is the language taught in schools and heard on the news. It is, generally speaking, the language used by the most people in the most circumstances. It is not regionally specific and may be associated with higher social classes. Vernacular stands in contrast to standard.

Eckert (1998) discusses standard and vernacular speech in terms of a continuum. It is the language of locally based communities – most people's everyday language. It

¹ In this sentence, '*dair*' is the orthographic representation of the non-standard pronunciation of 'there'.

has regional and local features which are different from the standard. The heart of the local community is the working class and the lower middle class, and thus vernacular language is the language of the local, working class. The closer a person's speech is to the vernacular the easier it is to determine where they are from.

The difference between the vernacular and standard is a matter of degree. Vernacular and standard speech are not mutually exclusive. Most speakers use both depending on the situation. Vernacular and standard speech are not distinct dialects but styles of speech, and depending on the situation, one may choose to use one or the other or both. A dialect is distinguished by its vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (accent) (Edwards 1985), as well as the various styles it encompasses.

Depending on what one's community linguistic norms are, an individual can find prestige using standard or vernacular speech. In the context of this research, *prestige* refers to a value judgment placed on a style of speech. Generally there is positive prestige associated with the language used by the upper class and negative associated with the language used by the lower classes. The prestige of a group of speakers is associated with the prestige of the language they use. Trudgill (2000) states that language is tied up with social structure and societal value systems. Different dialects and accents are evaluated in different ways. Publicly, standard speech has more prestige than vernacular. Privately, and within one's social group, standard speech is not necessarily considered prestigious.

Covert prestige refers to the idea that individuals gain prestige with the use of vernacular language associated with their social group (Trudgill 1998). For example, working class men in Norwich England establish group identity through the use of

vernacular speech and the use of this language is valued by this social group, even if it is devalued by society-at-large—thus the prestige associated with the use of vernacular is ‘covert’. The use of the vernacular helps identify men as part of the working class, whereas women tend to want to be associated with the standard. The norm the males are aiming for is the vernacular. This favourable attitude is not overtly expressed. They are not interested in obtaining social status outside their group. What is statusful or prestigious for their group is non-standard vernacular language (Trudgill 1998: 27).

Age grading and *gender grading* are also terms used in this study. Age grading refers to the use of a form associated with a particular age group (Milroy and Gordon 2003). For example, in Bathurst, younger speakers use Non-Standard There-tag less frequently than older speakers. (The tag itself will be defined in section 1.3.) Similarly, gender grading refers to the use of a linguistic form associated with a particular gender. For example, men use NST-tag with more frequency than women.

Language *change in progress* is another term used in this study. It refers to a gradual change in the linguistic habits of a population over time (Labov 2006). If we look at today’s speakers, they are representative of the speech patterns during the stage in their lives in which these patterns were established. For example, an elderly person represents the norms they learned in their youth and when today’s youth are elderly later in life, they will be an example of the linguistic norms today.

A *tag* is defined in the context of this study as a discourse marker. It is a grammatical (rather than referential) ‘little word’ that indicates organization and meaning at a level higher than the sentence, e.g. in the organization of a conversation or narrative. It might indicate a change in topic, a continuation of a topic, a degree of certainty, or any

manner of other functions. By ‘tag’, here it is meant only that the discourse marker is ‘suffixed’ onto a phrasal element. An example of a tag is the Canadian shibboleth *eh*. It is a well-known marker of Canadian English and has been the subject of research as a discourse particle (Scargill and Warkentyne 1972; Gibson 1977; Woods 1980; and Gold 2005). French *hein* is also a well know discourse particle with a similar function as *eh*, but *hein* does not carry the same identity marker as Canadian *eh* (Gold and Tremblay 2006). *Eh* and *hein* are is used to mean pardon, used in a narrative, following an opinion, following an exclamation, following a statement of fact, following a command, as a question, following fixed expressions, following and insult, and following an accusation.

1.3 “There” “their” and ‘they’re” in standard English

This research looks at forms of ‘there’ as a sociolinguistic variable, especially a non-standard use of ‘*there*’ as a tag in the speech of Bathurst Anglophones. In English, the form [ðɛr] has a variety of grammatical variants with different meanings and different orthography. For the purposes of this study, each relevant version of *there* will be defined and distinguished from other variants.

‘There’ can refer to the *existential there* or *dummy subject there* where ‘there’ stands in as a subject in a sentence like “***There*** are one million people living in Montreal”. *Locative or spatial there* is deictic and usually designates someone or something in space or in a location. For example, “John is sleeping ***there***”. As a form, locative/spatial *there* may refer to a location established in the discourse, or it may be used deictically to ‘point out’ a location in the present environment. Deixis will be discussed further in section 3.2. The third person plural possessive pronoun is also represented by the phonological string [ðɛr]. An example is “The students finished ***their***

tests on time”. Another version, *they’re*, is the contraction of *they* + *are*. For example, “*They’re* eating pizza”. These standard variants will be examined in a later section.

However, in Bathurst, there is another ‘there’ which is grammatically distinct from the ones above. This ‘*there*’ is non-standard and will be referred to as the Non-Standard There-tag (NST-tag²). In the English of Bathurst, NST-tag can be distinguished from the above ‘*theres*’ in that it frequently follows a focused item, rather than as the subject of sentence, before a possessed noun phrase, or indicating a location in space, as in “I don’t get duh question *dair*.” (Jim: O/M). This form is the main focus of this thesis.

Depending on dialect, all the above forms of THERE (standard grammatical forms including those not spelled ‘there’) may have phonological variants. In Bathurst, the most common non-standard phonological form of ‘there’ is with an initial [d]. It is also possible for a syllabic /r/ to appear as the vowel. Thus four phonological variants are commonly heard in Bathurst: [ðɛr], [ðr], [dɛr], and [dr]. In the context of this study, there are two standard pronunciations and two non-standard pronunciations. The standard forms are [ðɛr] and [ðr]. The non-standard pronunciation involves a change in the standard initial voiced fricative [ð] to a voiced stop [d] and include [dɛr], and [dr]. The forms without the separate [ɛ] vowel quality (and consequently occurring with a syllabic [r]) are regarded here as ‘reduced’ forms of standard [ðɛr] and non-standard [dɛr].

² NST-tag is a discourse particle marking what precedes it in the discourse. It is not precisely a clitic like the French *là* (to be discussed in the final section). Its proposed function is emphasis.

1.4 Overview of thesis

This study is primarily a descriptive analysis of the occurrence of the sociolinguistic variables of pronunciation associated with all forms of THERE and the Non-Standard There-tag. The incidence of this tag is examined with respect to who is using it and to what extent. The question asked here is which group or groups use NST-tag and in what frequency? Demographic information such as socioeconomic status and education may be factors in the distribution of NST-tag, but for this study only age and gender cohorts are considered. Non-Standard There-tag is not part of standard Canadian English. In this study it is regarded as vernacular speech used mostly by individuals who identify with local norms and the local community. This study will argue that based on the distribution of NST-tag among age and gender cohorts, that NST-tag is a vernacular form, but it may be involved with a vernacular-to-standard change-in-progress (in that NST-tag, as well as non-standard pronunciations, are being 'lost' among Bathurst speakers).

In Section 2, data collection, speakers, and analysis procedures will be presented. Section 3 will mostly take up the issue of phonological variation in grammatically standard THERE forms, and demonstrate age and gender-grading in their phonological patterning. Section 4 will address NST-tag in the speech Bathurst English speakers from a similar perspective. Section 5 summarizes the results and makes suggestions for future research.

2. METHOD

2.1 The sociolinguistic interview

Sociolinguists use a variety of methods for data collection. For the purposes of this research, principle data are derived from recordings made using the *sociolinguistic interview*. The format of interview used here was born out of a tradition of field methods developed during the project on Linguistic Change and Variation (LCV). This project used participant observation techniques in order to obtain samples of group interaction (Labov 1984). In concept and design, the methods are based on interviews developed in sociolinguistic surveys (Labov 1966); Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley 1968; Labov, Cohen, and Robins 1965). Developments since these studies have developed the technique beyond this starting point (Labov 1984).

The methods used by LCV are governed by two seemingly opposing goals. First is the need for high quality recorded speech and second is the need for recordings of vernacular speech that show minimal shift or accommodation when in the presence of an interviewer. Labov (1984) outlined several working principles for the sociolinguistic interview.

There are no single style speakers. Participants will shift styles of speech for a variety of reasons. There may be speakers who shift more than others; nevertheless, all speakers style shift to suit the situation. Speech styles can be ranged along a single dimension depending on the amount of attention paid to speech. The vernacular provides the most systematic data for analysis of sociolinguistic variables. One does not expect to find the vernacular used in the main body of a first face to face interview no matter how casual or friendly the speaker may appear because any systematic observation of speech

is usually in a formal context and speakers will pay more attention to their speech (Labov 1984).

Interviews are normally formal events in western society. They are usually dyadic and between two strangers with well defined roles. Turn-taking is not equally distributed like they are in conversations among peers. The interviewer usually controls the discourse in that he or she selects the topics and the form of questions. The individual being interviewed has implicitly agreed to comply and answer the questions asked (Milroy and Gordon 2003). In order to overcome this issue in a sociolinguistic interview, the interviewer must take on the position of the learner and take a position of lower authority than the participant (Labov 1984). Nonetheless, face to face interviews are the only means of obtaining the volume and quality of recorded speech that is needed for quantitative analysis (Labov 1984). The sociolinguistic interview is governed by a number of goals:

1. Record one to two hours of unscripted speech from each speaker.
2. Obtain the full range of demographic data necessary for the analysis of sociolinguistic patterns (age, residence, education, occupation, language history, family location and relations, income, rent or house values, group membership and associations).
3. Obtain comparable responses to questions that define contrasting attitudes and experiences among various subcultures (experience of danger of death, fate, premonitions, fighting and rules for a fair fight, attitudes towards other racial and ethnic groups, educational aspirations).

4. Elicit narratives of personal experience, where community norms and styles of personal interaction are revealed and where style is regularly shifted towards the vernacular.
5. Stimulate group interaction among the people present, and record conversation not addressed to the interviewer.
6. Isolate topics of interest to the speaker, and allow him or her to lead in defining the topic of conversation.
7. Trace the patterns of communication among members of the neighbourhood, and establish the position of the speaker in the communication network.
8. Obtain a record of overt attitudes toward language, linguistic features, and linguistic stereotypes.
9. Obtain specific information on linguistic structures through formal elicitation: reading texts and word lists
10. Carry out field experiments on subjective reactions towards perceptions of linguistic forms.

(Labov 1984: 32-33)

The sociolinguistic interview is accomplished with the aid of modules. According to Labov (1984), a module is a group of questions which focus on a particular topic. The general set of modules represents a conversational resource that the interviewer can use in constructing an interview schedule. The questions within a module have been shaped over a number of years following various successful strategies meant to elicit the most relaxed and most vernacular speech possible. These include: (a) responses to general foci of interest like children's games, premonitions, the danger of death, sex, and moral

indignation, (b) colloquial formatting, (c) shortening in that the questions should ideally take no more than five seconds but preferably around 2 seconds, (d) feedback (Labov 1984:33-34).

Modules are hierarchical. A section begins with a general question and then moves onto more detailed issues (Labov 1984:34). Ideally the sociolinguistic interview should begin with questions relating to demography, community, neighbourhood ...etc, and then progress into more personal modules like dating, dreams, and fears. If there is a module on language, it should be at the end of the interview when the speaker has exhausted all the more personal topics (Tagliamonte 2006: 39-40).

Modules are connected at transitional points through close associations and are combined into a conversational network by the interviewer (Labov 1984: 34). The network of modules forms a set of conversational resources to assist in accomplishing the goals of the interview and is a guide for the interviewer. S/he can construct a simulated conversation which follows principles similar to unfocused everyday conversation. The key is to be as natural as possible so that both the interviewer and interviewee are as comfortable as possible so that vernacular speech is elicited. When a participant shifts topics, it is the responsibility of the interviewer to do more than just ask questions (Labov 1984). S/he must be actively involved in the interview process. It is important to talk about topics of interest to the speaker (Tagliamonte 2006; Milroy and Gordon 2003).

Tagliamonte (2006) also states that building rapport with the speaker so that the interview does not feel like an interview will make the speaker more comfortable thereby increasing the likelihood that vernacular speech will be elicited. There is no set moment in the interview when natural language will occur. The participant's language will

simply change as the interview moves along. If the interview takes more than two hours to complete then so be it (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 58).

Thus the module represents a tool available to the interviewer designed to keep the conversation flowing as smoothly as possible, while still directing the speaker's attention away from the style of their speech. It allows the speaker to go on at length regarding topics of interest to them and provides the interviewer with a steady set of topics to turn to as the speaker's conversation changes. The modules used in this Bathurst study were adapted specifically for use in Bathurst by the author from the modules used by previous researchers. Topic areas included standard 'life memory' areas as well as questions tailored to issues of local language attitudes.

2.2 Equipment

The interviews were recorded with a Marantz (PMD 221) solid-state recorder and a Shure microphone. All interviewees were asked for permission to be recorded and signed releases following the University of Manitoba's Joint Faculty Research Ethics Board guidelines. Each interview lasted from 50 to 80 minutes.

All interviews were conducted in Bathurst. The interview was conducted at a location selected by the participant for their comfort. Most were done in the speaker's homes. External interference (electrical appliances, wind, pets, children, etc.) was minimized as much as possible under the circumstances.

2.3 Participants

The participants in this study were three males and four females between the ages of 25-40 and four males and four females over the age of 40 (see Table 1 below.)

All speakers were natives of Bathurst or have lived in Bathurst for most of their lives. Education levels were as varied as occupation, all participants had at least an eighth grade education, most had graduated from high school, but some had post secondary education. Individuals were selected from the interviewer's social network (the interviewer is also a native of Bathurst). Efforts were made to ensure that there was an even balance between the cohorts based on age and gender. Seven participants were male and eight were female. There were four older men and four older women totaling eight speakers in the older (40+) cohort. There were three younger men and four younger women totaling seven speakers in the younger cohort (25-40). The purpose of choosing these groups was to uncover age and gender grading of the variables studied.

2.5 Transcription procedures

The interviews were transcribed using Express Scribe (4.01) with a focus on the frequency of NST-tag in particular. Locative/spatial *there, their, they're*, and existential/dummy subject *there* were also noted as were any phonological variants. . Any ambiguous instances of 'there' were not included. These totaled 5/1065 or 0.5%.

Table 1. Participants in Bathurst English study

Participant ID	Occupation	Language Affiliation
Males 40+		
1. Peter	retired millwright	E
2. Pat	retired (local mill)	F/E
3. Allen	supervisor (mines)	E
4. Jim	retired (mines)	E
Females 40+		
5. Cathleen	business owner	E
6. Ingrid	retired (teacher)	E
7. Sherry	service industry	E
8. Sarah	day care/business owner	E

Males 25-40		
9. Jack	teacher	
10. David	pharmacist	F/E
11. Rick	city employee	F/E
Females 25-40		
12. Nina	service industry	F/E
13. Lise	day care	E
14. Nancy	government service	E
15. Lori	teacher	E

3. GRAMMATICALLY STANDARD USES OF ‘THERE’

In General Canadian English, the phonological form [ðɛr] represents four distinct grammatical forms: dummy subject/existential *there*, locative or spatial *there*, contraction *they’re*, and possessive *their*. For convenience this thesis will refer collectively to these four forms as THERE. The first two, *existential there* and *locative there*, will be examined more in detail here than *they’re* and *their*. Pronunciation variants of all the types of THERE will be compiled and used in this analysis.

3.1 Existential/dummy subject *there*

Existential/dummy subject *there* represents an indefinite subject, and is usually accompanied by some form of the verb ‘to be’ (Quirk *et. al.*, 1985). This form is seen in the sentence “*There will be a storm tonight*”, where ‘there’ can occupy the subject position and the verb ‘to be’ is used. In this case, ‘there’ is referred to as a dummy. The notional subject noun phrase appears in complement position. Consider these sentences:

3. Six bottles of white wine are in the wine rack.

4. **There** are six bottles of white wine in the wine rack.

The NP *six bottles of white wine* is the subject in (1), but is a complement in (2), accompanied by the ‘dummy’ there in subject position.

According to Ballard (2007), existential *there* may be used to change the focus of a sentence as well as to achieve grammatical completeness:

5. A raven is flying towards us.

6. **There** is a raven flying towards us.

The existential construction has the property of giving more emphasis to the subject of the original sentence, *a raven* (Ballard 2007, p.158-9).

Below are representative tables for use of existential/dummy subject *there* from the sample of Bathurst English obtained in this study. Each quadrant is sub-divided into four categories based on pronunciation. Standard pronunciation [ðɛr] is located in the top left quadrant, [ðr̩] bottom left, non standard [dɹ] bottom right, and non-standard [dɛr] top right. For example, Table 2 indicates older males used [ðɛr] 14 times, [ðr̩] 106, [dɹ] 60, and [dɛr] 7. The non-standard pronunciation involves a change in the standard initial voiced fricative [ð] to a voiced stop [d]. The forms without the separate [ɛ] vowel quality (and consequently occurring with a syllabic [r̩]) are regarded here as ‘reduced’ forms of standard [ðɛr] and non-standard [dɹ].

Table 2. Results for existential/dummy subject *there*.

	<i>Older</i>		<i>younger</i>		<i>total</i>
<i>Males</i>	14 [ðɛr]	7 [dɛr]	31 [ðɛr]	0 [dɛr]	302(60%)
	106 [ðr̩]	60 [dɹ]	82 [ðr̩]	2 [dɹ]	
<i>Females</i>	13 [ðɛr]	2 [dɛr]	16 [ðɛr]	0 [dɛr]	204(40%)
	59 [ðr̩]	25 [dɹ]	89 [ðr̩]	0 [dɹ]	
<i>total</i>	286 (57%)		220 (43%)		506

As seen in Table 2, out of 506 tokens, men used the existential construction more than women and the older group used it more than the younger group. Out of the uses by males, older men lead use over younger males and they lead use in the older cohort as well. Younger speakers used it relatively equally as did older speakers. In sum, older males use existential/dummy subject *there* more than any of the other cohorts. They used it a total of 187 (regardless of pronunciation) times out of 506 total in the interviews, or 37%, whereas younger men used it 115 times (23%), younger women used it 105 times (21%), and older females used it only 99 times (19%).

An important comparison to take note of is use of the various pronunciations *within* each cohort. The table below depicts this relative use of each pronunciation.

Table 3. Uses of existential/dummy subject *there* within cohorts.

Total existential <i>there</i> uses	[ðɛr]	[ðr̩]	[dɛr]	[dɹ̩]
Older males (187)	7%	57%	4%	32%
Older females (99)	13%	60%	2%	25%
Younger males (115)	27%	71%	0	2%
Younger females (105)	14%	85%	0	0

The preferred pronunciation for existential *there* is [ðr̩] (66%), followed by [dɹ̩] (17%) and [ðɛr] (15%), then [dɛr] (2%) last. The standard pronunciations were used the most overall and [ðr̩] was the most popular. [dɹ̩] was the most commonly used non-standard pronunciation out of all the cohorts, but it was actually the second choice for older male speakers whereas it was the third choice for the rest of the cohorts. Thus, all speakers seem to prefer the syllabic /r/ rather than the [ɛr] pronunciation. [dɹ̩] was the only non-standard pronunciation used by younger speakers and was used much less when compared to use by older speakers. [dɛr] was used the least by all participants and was not used at all by younger speakers. Although [dɛr] was used very little, older males were almost exclusive users of it. Older males used [dɹ̩] more than older females, younger males, and younger females. Younger females did not use it at all. To summarize, all cohorts used standard pronunciations [ðɛr] and [ðr̩] and all used the non-standard [dɹ̩]; however, not all speakers used [dɛr]. Younger speakers primarily used standard pronunciations and used little of the non-standard ones whereas older speakers used all four.

The data were examined with a generalized linear model with a Poisson distribution and a level of significance of 0.05 because the number of participants in this study is small. As a result, the usual chi-square model could not be used; instead, a generalized linear model was used. Generalized linear models are generalizations of ordinary least squares regression. This type of model provides a unified way to fit responses that do not fit the usual requirements of least-squares fits. In particular, frequency counts, which are characterized as having a Poisson distribution, are easily fit by a Generalized Linear Model (JMP Statistical Discovery: SAS). The technique was pioneered by Nelder and Wedderburn (1972). A Poisson distribution fits frequency counts with a single parameter or more than one parameter. It can be transformed and fit with iteratively reweighted least squares (Nelder and Wedderburn (1972)).

This model produces chi-square test values (p values) as an indicator of probability. That is, there is an effect between variables that is or is not due to chance. If a value falls above 0.05 (>0.05) then the variables in question are due to chance and therefore not statistically significant. If they fall below, i.e. <0.05 , then the interaction is not due to chance and there is an effect between the variables in question and they are statistically significant. In the case of this research, the model produces two p-values, one for an overall effect between all variables (e.g., pronunciation, age, and gender) and a second specifically for age and gender. For age, the model selected out older speakers (as opposed to younger) ascribed a positive or negative parameter estimate to it. If the value was negative then older speakers were less likely to use the variable than younger speakers. If the value was positive, then older speakers were more likely to use it. For example, if the variables are pronunciation [dɛr], age, and gender, and if gender (females)

had a p-value of <0.05 and a parameter estimate of -0.4536 , then females are less likely (because of the negative parameter estimate and a p-value that is <0.05) than males to use this pronunciation than males. If parameter estimate is a positive number, then the females would have been *more* likely than males to use this pronunciation.

In the case of the existential construction, the model indicated that the variables of age and gender did not have an effect on [ðɛr]. The model produced a p-value of 0.2528 (which is above the 0.05 significance level). Similarly, [ðr̩] shows no effect with the variables of age and gender with a p-value of 0.6955. However, there is an overall effect by age and gender on [dɛr] with a p-value of 0.0016. More specifically, older speakers use [dɛr] more than younger speakers with a significant p-value of 0.0020. Similarly, in the case of [dɹ̩], we see that the variables overall have an effect with a p-value of 0.0016. Age has an effect with a p-value of 0.0014. The results from the model indicate that older speakers use [dɹ̩] more than younger speakers. To the extent that it was possible, the statistics support the claims made here that older speakers use more non-standard pronunciations than younger speakers.

3.2. Locative adjunct *there*

Locative adjunct *there* realizes a spatial relation and can be used as a modifying adverb denoting place (Quirk *et al.*, 1985). It can also be used as a complement of a preposition. The verb in the simple present or past is commonly used to draw attention to the presence of somebody or something. For example:

7. **There** they were, cold and miserable.

Note that this can be distinguished from existential/dummy-subject *there* in that the subject ('they') is still present, and *there* can only be interpreted as an adjunct (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, 521-522).

There can be found in other positions as an adjunct indicating space:

8. Put the parcel **there**. (Ballard, 2007, p.30-1)

'*There*' can be used deictically to indicate location. *Deixis* is derived from the Greek 'to point' or 'to show' (Stawarska 2008). According to Hanks (2009), deictics are usually systematic in any language and they are closed classes (p. 13). Deictics like '*there*' show how a person construes objects in his/her space (Hanks 2009). It suggests a relation between what is shown and what is used to show. In the context of speech, a deictic expression shows what is readily apparent to the participants in discourse. Deictic expressions like '*there*' relate utterances to the spatial (and temporal) coordinates of the act of discourse (Stawarska 2008). Burenhult (2008) states that languages have demonstrative adverbs which encode the location of referents on a distance scale, distinguishing referents which are proximal to the deictic center from those which are distant, e.g., English *here* and *there* and *this* and *that*. They are deictic expressions that denote spatial proximity and distance with regard to the speaker's point of view (Stawarska 2008; Brinton 2000); Anderson & Keenan 1985: 281; Hyslop 1993; Diessel 1999: 36, 2005, 2006a; Dixon 2003: 86). For example,

9. "The dog is *there*", and

10. "The dog is *here*"

‘*There*’ used deictically usually indicates something that is not close to the speaker.

‘*Here*’ indicates something closer to the speaker. Below are examples of locative *there*.

11 We hung the picture on the wall.

12. We hung the picture **there**._{location}

13. The dog is under the table.

14. The dog is **there**._{location} (Brinton 2000, p.271).

On the wall and *under the table* can be replaced with ‘*there*’.

Below are representative tables for the appearances of locative *there* in the Bathurst interviews, again with the four phonological variants under consideration in this study.

Table 4. Locative *there*.

	<i>Older</i>		<i>younger</i>		<i>total</i>
<i>Males</i>	50 [ðɛr]	43 [dɛr]	17 [ðɛr]	0 [dɛr]	117
	2 [ðr]	5 [dr]	0 [ðr]	0 [dr]	
<i>Females</i>	21 [ðɛr]	10 [dɛr]	34 [ðɛr]	0 [dɛr]	66
	1 [ðr]	0 [dr]	0 [ðr]	0 [dr]	
	132 (72%)		51 (28%)		183 (18%)

Locative *there* occurred 183 out of 1003 times or 18% of uses of grammatically standard *there* forms. Males used it more than females and older participants used it more than younger. Older men used locative *there* the most (55%) followed by younger women (19%), then older women (17%). Younger males used it the least with (9%) use. Out of the uses of locative *there* by males only, older men used it more than younger. Of the uses of locative *there* by females, the older and younger females used it in approximately the same amount. Of the uses of locative *there* produced by the older speakers, older

men used locative *there* more than older women. And out of the uses of locative *there* made by younger speakers, younger women generated more than younger men.

Table 5 is a further breakdown of the distribution of the use of spatial/locative *there*. Similar to the grammatical category of existential/subject *there*, locative *there* also has four pronunciation variations. Each one will be examined starting with [ðɛr], then moving onto [ðr̩], [dɛr], and finally [dr̩].

Table 5. Locative *there* pronunciations.

Total uses of Locative <i>there</i>	[ðɛr]	[ðr̩]	[dɛr]	[dr̩]
Older males (100)	50%	2%	43%	5%
Older females (32)	66%	3%	31%	0
Younger males (17)	100%	0	0	0
Younger females (34)	100%	0	0	0

[ðɛr] was used the most by all speakers with 67% use, followed by [dɛr] (29%), then [dr̩] (3%), followed by [ðr̩] (2%). [ðr̩] and [dr̩] were used so little that it is difficult to establish a pattern of use. Table 5 shows that older males preferred using [ðɛr] the most, followed by [dɛr]. [dr̩] and [ðr̩] were used very little by the older men. Similarly, older females used [ðɛr] more than the other pronunciations followed by [dɛr]. They used [ðr̩] only once and did not use [dr̩] at all. This is slightly different than the use by older males. Among the younger speakers, [ðɛr] is used the most, having no other variants whereas older speakers used both standard and non-standard variants. There are definite differences in use between the age cohorts and to a smaller degree the gender cohorts. Although it seems as though older males actually used [ðɛr] more than any of the other cohorts in terms of raw numbers, in fact they used this pronunciation the least among the four with only 50% use.

Overall, older males lead use of non-standard pronunciations over all other cohorts. Younger speakers lead use of standard pronunciations. Most speakers preferred using the [ɛr] over the syllabic /r/ pronunciation, which stands in contrast to their preference for it with existential/dummy subject *there*. A possible explanation for this is that, according to Seppanen (1997), existential *there* must be unstressed (in this case use of syllabic /r/) whereas the locative adjunct can either be stressed (in this case the use of [ɛr]) or unstressed. There are other similar stressed and unstressed words in English that show similar patterns. '*That*' used as a complementizer versus a pronoun also shows this stressed and unstressed pattern.

Generally [ðr̩], [dɛr], and [dɹ̩] have a statistical effect on age and gender. There is no effect with [ðɛr] with a p-value of 0.619. There is an overall interaction between [ðr̩] and age and gender (p value of 0.0072). In particular, older speakers use this pronunciation more than younger speakers. The p-value associated with age and [ðr̩] is 0.0032. The model also shows that age and gender generally have an effect with respect to [dɛr] with a p-value of 0.0102. Older participants use this pronunciation more than younger participants with a p-value of 0.0114. There is an overall effect by age and gender on [dɹ̩] with a p-value of < 0.0001. Females use [dɹ̩] less than males and younger speakers use it less than older speakers (p value = 0.0019 and 0.0052, respectively).

The statistics lend support to the claim regarding the differential use of standard and non-standard pronunciations made earlier in this section. The common thread in sections 3.1 and 3.2 is the increased use of the vernacular (nonstandard forms) by older (and male in some circumstances) speakers and little or no use of the vernacular forms by younger speakers.

3.3 *They're* and *Their*

They're and *their* have the same pronunciation variants as NST-tag but will not be examined as in depth as locative and existential *there* for this study; however, the pronunciation choices made by the participants of *they're* and *their are* important because their pronunciations are similar to the pronunciations of dummy subject *there*, locative *there*, and NST-tag, and it must be determined if these pronunciation variables are just phonological/phonetic changes. While the different pronunciations are available to all forms of *THERE*, at least for some speakers, differences in their patterns of use are indicative of a sociolinguistic choice being made as to which are most suitable to a given group for a given function.. Uses of [ðɛr], [ðr̩], [dɛr], and [dr̩] for *they're* and *their* will be included when all pronunciations of standard uses of *there* are compiled and analyzed in Section 3.4.

3.4 All phonological variants and standard uses of *THERE*

As we have seen in sections 3.1 and 3.2 there are trends with respect to pronunciation within each of ‘existential/dummy subject *there*’ and ‘locative/spatial *there*’ categories. Older speakers, and particularly the older men, tend to favour the non-standard pronunciations. The table below summarizes these trends for all standard (i.e. non NST-tag) instances of *there*, *they're* and *their* in the interviews. (For convenience, we will use “*THERE*” to refer to all standard grammatical forms together.)

Table 6. Pronunciation variants for all standard uses of *THERE*.

	<i>Older</i>		<i>younger</i>		<i>total</i>
<i>Males</i>	75 [ðɛr]	53 [dɛr]	76 [ðɛr]	0 [dɛr]	540(54%)
	136 [ðr̩]	90 [dr̩]	105 [ðr̩]	5 [dr̩]	

<i>Females</i>	73 [ðɛr]	13 [dɛr]	62 [ðɛr]	0 [dɛr]	463(46%)
	113 [ðɹ]	510 [dɹ]	149 [ðɹ]	2 [dɹ]	
	604 (60%)		399 (40%)		1003

The total number of standard THERE produced in this sample of Bathurst English is 1003.

If we refer to Table 6 we see the distribution of the four different pronunciations of standard grammatical forms of THERE in this study. Older men used standard grammatical forms of THERE more than the other groups: 354 times or 35% followed by older women with 250 uses or 25%. Younger speakers used these forms less than the older speakers. Younger women used them 213 times or 21%, and younger men 186 or 19%.

More interestingly, if we look closely at the various ways the different pronunciations were used, we see that the cohorts show preferences for one pronunciation over another. Below is a table identifying the distribution of the standard uses THERE.

Table 7. All pronunciations of THERE.

Total productions of <i>THERE</i>	[ðɛr]	[ðɹ]	[dɛr]	[dɹ]
Older males (354)	25%	38%	15%	26%
Older females (250)	30%	45%	5%	20%
Younger males (186)	41%	56%	0	3%
Younger females (213)	29%	70%	0	< 1%

Each cohort used [ðɹ] the most, and all but older males used [ðɛr] (the standard pronunciation) second most, followed by [dɹ]. Older males reversed this preference, using [dɹ] more than [ðɛr]. Older speakers used [dɛr] the least; the younger speakers did not use it at all, suggesting a global and growing non-preference for this form.

The trend to note here is that all speakers preferred using standard (fricative initial) pronunciations over non-standard (stop initial). However, proportional use of non-standard pronunciations was highest among the older men. They used [dɛr] and [dɾ] the most (15% and 26%, respectively) whereas all other cohorts used these pronunciations less. Older females only used these pronunciations 5% and 20% respectively, and younger speakers rarely used them at all.

Comparing the four cohorts we see that [ðɛr] was used by all four groups; younger males use it proportionally more than the rest of the cohorts. Younger females use [ðɾ] more than the rest of the cohorts. Younger males and females seem to prefer [ðɾ] and [ðɛr], and seem to avoid [dɾ]. [dɛr] was used only by older speakers. Older males seemed to prefer the reduced forms more than the other cohorts and they also used the most non-standard forms. Overall, the younger speakers lead use with respect to standard pronunciation of the initial fricative, but older speakers, particularly older males, proportionally use more non-standard pronunciations.

There was no statistically significant interaction for age and gender on the pronunciation [ðɛr] ($p=0.8475$) and [ðɾ] ($p=0.9303$). However, there is an interaction between age and gender in regards to [dɛr]. The model derived a p-value of 0.0040. More specifically, age and [dɛr] interact (p value= 0.0051), indicating that older speakers use [dɛr] significantly more than younger speakers. Finally, age and gender have an effect on [dɾ] with a p-value of 0.0111. More specifically, age has an effect on [dɾ] (p value= 0.0051). In this case, older speakers use this pronunciation more than younger speakers.

The statistical analysis confirms that there are differences between the cohorts in terms of the use of the non-standard pronunciations [dɛr] and [dɾ]. Older speakers used these pronunciations more than the younger speakers. Although they are not the preferred pronunciation choice; however, they are certainly an option for the older speakers whereas they are less available for the younger speakers. This points to an overall trend: older and male speakers use non-standard pronunciations more than younger and female speakers. The standard forms ([ðɛr] and [ðɾ]) are used by all speakers, but the non-standard pronunciations ([dɛr] and [dɾ]) are not.

This pattern of age and gender differences is commonly attested in sociolinguistic research, and will be discussed in this light in Section 4 following the discussion of the grammatical properties and pronunciations of the Non-Standard There-Tag.

4. NON-STANDARD *THERE*-TAG

This section examines the occurrence of Non-Standard *There* (NST)-tag in Bathurst English. As will be demonstrated, it is predominantly used by older speakers, particularly older males. NST-tag has the same four pronunciation variants as standard *THERE* forms (though with a slightly different pattern of distribution of pronunciations among the cohorts): a standard pronunciation ([ðɛr]), a reduced form of this standard pronunciation ([ðɹ]) and two non-standard pronunciations ([dɛr] and [dɹ]). It is grammatically distinct from *THERE* forms discussed in Section 3 as it is neither a locative nor a dummy subject. The claim in this study is that NST-tag is potentially a discourse marker found sentence and/or phrase finally that emphasizes particularizes (or makes specific) what precedes it in the utterance. Below, some examples show where NST-tag occurs and what part of the utterance is specified or emphasized. For example,

15. “By the way I’m just jokin’ **there**.” (Nancy: Y/F)
16. “Ya know what I mean **dair**.” (Jim: O/M)
17. “I see mornings **there** it’s too bad it didn’t work out.” (Peter: O/M)
18. “The French singer **there**.” (Rick: Y/M)
19. “You weren’t living close enough tuhgedder to associate after school **dair**.”
(Sherry: O/F)

Unlike locative *there*, NST-tag does not have a place or spatial interpretation. Although NST-tag can occur in similar places in a sentence, it can also occur elsewhere generally where locatives are not found. For example,

20. “I would go to speak French, but my goodness it wasn’t a good French, poor Jason **dair**, him.” (Jim O/M).

In this case the speaker is not indicating or pointing out ‘Jason’ either as a person in the room or an object in the preceding discourse. He is simply indicating the comment is about “Jason”. The context of the discussion helps the participants in the exchange understand that the *there* being used is not a locative but NST-tag. Another example of potential confusion between NST-tag and locative *there* is when two NST-tags are used in an utterance. For example:

21. “...Newcastle’s gonna be closed **there**. Der goin’ on strike **dair**. (Jim: O/M)

In this example, the topic of discussion is about the imminent closure of the local mill in Bathurst. In this region, there is another large paper mill just to the south in the now amalgamated municipality of Miramichi (formerly known as Newcastle and Chatham). The speaker is focusing on the strike at the Newcastle mill and the closure at the Bathurst mill and placing emphasis on it. One must depend on the context and what has been established elsewhere in the conversation to determine which version of *there* the speaker is using.

Next we will examine the distribution of NST-tag and determine what, if any, statistical significance is associated with NST-tag and age and gender.

4.1 Distribution of NST-tag

Of the total 1065 ‘*there*’ forms recorded from this study, NST-tag appeared 62 times or 6% of total *there* forms. The table below illustrates the distribution of NST-tag pronunciations.

Table 8. Results for NST-tag.

	<i>Older</i>	<i>younger</i>	<i>total</i>
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<i>Males</i>	16 [ðɛr] 2 [ðr̩]	16 [dɛr] 13 [dɹ]	4 [ðɛr] 0 [ðr̩]	0 [dɛr] 0 [dɹ]	51(82%)
<i>Females</i>	1 [ðɛr] 1 [ðr̩]	2 [dɛr] 1 [dɹ]	6 [ðɛr] 0 [ðr̩]	0 [dɛr] 0 [dɹ]	11(18%)
<i>total</i>	52(84%)		10(16%)		62

As one can see, out of 62 uses of NST-tag, older speakers and males used NST-tag the most and women and younger speakers the least. Older males in particular used NST-tag appreciably more than any of the other cohorts with 47 (76%) uses, whereas older females, younger males, and younger females combined used NST-tag far less with only 15 (24%) uses. Individually, they used it even less. Older females, younger males, and younger females produced NST-tag in about the same amount, but pronunciations were not evenly distributed: the older speakers used all four pronunciations whereas younger speakers only used [ðɛr].

Statistically, there is an overall effect between the use of NST-tag, age, and gender with a p-value of 0.0170. More specifically, a p-value of 0.0365 associated with gender indicates that there is an effect between gender and NST-tag. In this case, males use NST-tag more than females.

As mentioned earlier, older males used NST-tag 47 times or 76%. This is three quarters of all uses of NST-tag. In comparison, older females used NST-tag only 8%, younger males 6%, and younger females 10%. [ðɛr] was used 27 times or (44%) by all cohorts, [ðr̩] 3 (5%), [dɛr] 18 (29%), and [dɹ] 14 (23%). If we pool the uses by all cohorts together, we see that [ðɛr] was used the most, followed by [dɹ] then [dɛr]. [ðr̩] was used the least. Although the sample size is small, it seems as though the speakers preferred using [ɛr] over the syllabic /r/. This however does not show the different proportions of use between the cohorts. Consider Table 9 below.

Table 9. NST-tag pronunciations.

Total uses of <i>NST-tag</i>	[ðɛr]	[ðr̩]	[dɛr]	[dr̩]
Older males (47)	34%	4%	34%	28%
Older females (5)	20%	20%	40%	20%
Younger males (4)	100%	0	0	0
Younger females (6)	100%	0	0	0

Generally, [ðɛr] was the only pronunciation used by all participants, in fact, [ðɛr] is the only pronunciation younger speakers used with NST-tag. [ðɛr] and [dr̩] were used the most by older males followed by [dr̩] then [ðr̩]. In comparison, older females used [dɛr] the most in their cohort and the rest of the pronunciations much less. Older women use all pronunciations in relative equal numbers. They used [dɛr] twice as much as each of the other three pronunciations, but there are so few that it is difficult to draw any conclusions at this point. Younger speakers used NST-tag very little and when they did they only used [ðɛr]. The differences between the cohorts are quite substantial. Comparatively, older speakers seem to be more varied with their pronunciations of NST-tag than younger speakers. Use of NST-tag by older males in general is disproportionate when compared to all other.

When subjected to statistical testing, the model found no interaction between the variables of age and gender on [ðɛr] (p value = 0.1279). There is an effect by age and gender on [ðr̩] with a p-value of 0.0072. More specifically, older speakers use [ðr̩] more than younger speakers (p value = 0.0032). There is an overall effect by age and gender on [dɛr]. This interaction produced a p-value of 0.0052. In particular, though, age had an effect with [dɛr] (p value = 0.0127). In this case, older participants are more likely than younger participants to use [dɛr]. There is also an effect by age and gender on the use of

[dɹ]. The p-value produced by these variables is 0.0057 indicating an overall effect between these variables. There are specific interactions between age and gender and this pronunciation. The p-value found in regards to age is 0.0188 and that for gender is 0.0397. This indicates that older speakers used [dɹ] more than younger speakers and females use it less than males.

To summarize, one can see a pattern emerging from the NST-tag data presented here. Older men use NST-tag the most and are the most variable with respect to pronunciation. The older men use more non-standard pronunciations than standard pronunciations. Older women use NST-tag far less than older men are more generalized users of NST-tag in terms of pronunciation: they use all pronunciations almost equally. Younger speakers only use standard pronunciation, when they use NST-tag at all. Statistical tests confirm that the use of NST-tag is not random. Older and male speakers tend to use NST-tag more than younger and female speakers, and older men tend to use non-standard pronunciations more than females and younger speakers.

4.2. Discussion

There is a clear trend with respect to use of NST-tag and its pronunciations: older speakers use NST-tag more and non-standard pronunciations more than younger speakers. Not only do younger speakers use NST-tag very little, but they only pronounce it as [ðɛɹ]. The data also shows that males use it more than females.

The reasons behind the differences in use between older and younger speakers and males and females are complex. The sample size in this study is small and therefore it is probably unwise to make sweeping claims about the trends in language use in Bathurst. However, the patterns seen in these data are reminiscent of other sociolinguistic

variables, particularly in the realms of changes-in-progress and vernacular loyalty. It is therefore worth speculating that there is a change occurring in Bathurst English such that NST-tag and especially its nonstandard pronunciations are (or were) characteristic of the local dialect, but through the process of language change it is being lost.

It is generally accepted that when there is a difference in language use males tend to use more non-standard forms than females. Milroy (1980) found that in Western urbanized society, one of the most general findings is that gendered differences in language usually are in the form of women approximating prestige (or standard) norms and style-shifting between the standard and the local vernacular forms more than men. His study conducted in Belfast found that men seem to be more conservative in that they use local vernacular forms more than women, whereas women tend to lead language change (toward the standard).

More research supporting the idea that men use more non-standard forms than women is found in Labov's (1990) Philadelphia study. In this study, Labov states that men show a higher frequency of non standard use than women. Overall percentages show that women use non-standard forms less frequently than men, and use newer forms more than men during language change (Labov 1990).

Labov (2003) states that there are potential differences in attitudes toward language between males and females. The behaviour of women is quite different than men because they react differently to norms and values. In general, women are more sensitive to overt social correction and thus may prefer prestige forms more than men but this difference is not independent of social class. When we look at the whole range of stylistic behaviour of men and women, it appears that in all but the lowest status group,

women may actually use more non-standard forms in their casual speech than men, but they may shift to a more formal (standard or prestigious) style more rapidly and more readily. Trudgill (1998; 2000) found that men identify with their local community and find (covert) prestige within it with the use of non-standard speech. Conversely, women strive towards the standard and may gain prestige through the use of standard speech.

Eckert (1989; 1998) discussed variation in language use between males and females. She states that current hypotheses about the effects of gender on variation recognize that linguistic differences are as a result of men's and women's places in society. Gender differences in linguistic variation can be attributable to social forces that attach to women by virtue of their place in the (social) economy. For many women, personal influence is achieved through moral authority and depends on the creation of an image of the self as worthy of authority. As a result, women must deal with the accumulation of symbolic capital. Language use can be part of this symbolic capital; the ability to shift from vernacular to more standard and prestigious forms gives women more flexibility and may assist in the establishment of personal authority, i.e. symbolic capital. In essence, women must 'do more' with language to achieve the same things as men. Additionally, women's place in society makes them vulnerable to criticism; as a result, it is in their best interest to have language that is beyond reproach. This is applicable in both standard and vernacular speakers depending on the situation.

Women in this study, particularly the younger women used standard phonological variants more often than non-standard, and used NST-tag very little. This observation, along with the observation that older men use more non-standard variants indicates that there is a difference in language use based on age and gender. While more research is

required, the results here suggest that NST-tag is a local (vernacular) form, as are its nonstandard pronunciations, and that these forms are being lost in younger generations.

It is worth speculating on a slightly different explanation for these patterns, that the variation could be a result of age-grading (here construed more specifically than in Section 1) rather than a change in progress: that language use changes as a result of life-stage.

Milroy and Gordon (2003) state adolescents are the most innovative linguistically as they are in the throes of constructing their identity (usually against the norms of their elders). Middle-aged speakers are the least innovative, i.e., the most conservative because of pressures in their linguistic markets where only working-aged adults normally participate (Eckert 1997). It is difficult to determine whether the middle-aged speakers in this study are the most conservative, as there are only three participants who are middle-aged. The younger speakers may be more innovative and more willing to step away from the linguistic norms of the local community and that as they live in the community they will turn to more vernacular forms.

Age-grading seems to challenge the assumptions of apparent time reasoning (that a person's speech does not change over a lifetime), but most cases of age-graded changes in the literature are associated with childhood and adolescence rather than young adulthood. Also, age-grading seems to be associated with features that have a high degree of social awareness and thereby be subject to conscious manipulation. So the assumption that individuals speech changes over a lifetime is plausible if we understand it to be those features that do not attract social awareness and occurs over one's adult life only (Milroy and Gordon 2003).

At this point, it is simply too soon to state whether it is age-grading we are seeing or change in progress, but we are relatively certain based on the analysis here that there is a difference in language use between older and younger generations. In order to determine whether age-grading or a change in progress is occurring, the applicability of the apparent time hypothesis should be confirmed by real-time evidence with a longitudinal study.

Although not discussed in this study, it is important to note that class may also play a role in language use. Labov (2006) states that individuals who have contact with a wider range of class types are better acquainted with the language styles of the upper middle class. Also, exposure to broadcast media can change the everyday speech of the average person from local varieties towards prestige norms (standard norms). Prestige patterns are acquired during an individual's late teens and college years and the acquisition of prestige traits, approval from associates, and linguistic security would decrease any future shift in everyday speech. Older speakers from the lower class and upper middle class will tend to show the least amount of style variation but for different reasons. Members of the lower class will use fewer prestige forms (i.e., standard forms) and the higher classes will use more prestige forms and not really vary use.

If social status is playing a role in language change, then what can we say with respect to the language choices made by the participants in this study? Based on information obtained by Census Canada (2006), Bathurst is mostly a middle class community; however, as with any community, it has different levels of socioeconomic statuses. Income ranges from just under \$20 000 a year for female single parent families to just over \$63 000 a year for married couple families. The types of employment the

speakers have are illustrated in Section 2.3 (participants). If we infer that employment is an indicator of social status, we can see that in our sample there is a range of employment and therefore a corresponding range of classes. An example of lower class employment is a service industry job such as a grocery store clerk or retail salesperson. An example of working class employment is a job at the local mill or mines, lower middle class is a teacher, and upper middle class is a pharmacist or business owner. Higher status speakers use more standard forms and lower status speakers use more non-standard (less prestigious) forms; therefore, a pharmacist or a local business owner would presumably have fewer non-standard and more standard speech than a lower class speaker, and *vice versa*. This seems to be the case in our sample of Bathurst English. For example, David (Y/M) and Cathleen (O/F) are the highest status speakers in this study, and they did not use NST-tag and non-standard pronunciations. Sherry (O/F) and Nina (Y/F) are the only lower class speakers. Sherry was the most prolific user of non-standard pronunciations and NST-tag among females but Nina did not use non-standard speech. This could indicate support for Labov's claims.

Older women are the most generalized users in terms of use of standard and non-standard forms and use of NST-tag, which may indicate style shifting. Older men use non-standard forms the most and younger speakers the least. This could mean that the older men (all of whom are in the working class in this study) adhere to the less prestigious vernacular, as a function of social class as predicted by the sociolinguistic literature. Younger speakers' preference for standard (prestige) features may be indicative of their social status as well, although evidence for this is limited. Perhaps they have been more exposed to broadcast media than older speakers and identify more

with life outside the local community and are perhaps more ‘worldly’ than their elders. Certainly the majority of the younger speakers have more formal education when compared to the older speakers and may have established speech patterns based on the prestigious standard features. Older females style shifting, younger speakers high use of standard forms, and older males higher use of non-standard forms may be indicative of social class based on the research of Labov (2006). Of course, without more analysis into socioeconomic status in Bathurst one cannot say definitively if linguistic choices made by the participants in this study are a result of socioeconomic status.

If the older speakers are representative of the speech patterns established by their generation and the speech patterns of the younger speakers are representative of their generation’s speech norms, then there seems to be evidence for language change based on the apparent time hypothesis. If the older speakers are simply more conservative with their speech and resistant to change and perhaps identify more with the vernacular and the younger speakers are more innovative and attuned more to standard or prestige norms then age grading may be occurring in this sample of Bathurst English. It is simply too difficult to say with certainty at this stage. A longitudinal study of Bathurst English is required to determine whether what is occurring is a change in progress or age-grading.

5. SUMMARY

We have tried to establish here that older men use non-standard or vernacular forms and younger speakers use more standard forms. In terms of gender, the comparative prolific use of NST-tag and non-standard pronunciations by older men supports the idea that men use non-standard or vernacular speech more than women. This could mean that males rely on means other than standard language to maintain and/or gain status in their community and therefore may not be motivated in the same way as women to strive towards use of standard speech. This may be the case in Bathurst where the incidences of vernacular speech by (older) males are higher than any other group. This could also mean that the younger males do not identify with the same community of practice as older males since they did not use non-standard speech as much as their older counterparts. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) define a community of practice as a group a people who come together for a common endeavour. In this case, the common endeavour is language. The differing use of NST-tag by the different groups indicates that in some ways they represent different communities of practice. Older males perhaps identify with the local community whereas the younger men less so.

Additionally, it could also mean that the females in this study may be using language in different ways in order to establish membership in their community of practice. Perhaps they are using standard speech so that they are “beyond reproach” and are “talking for success”. It is also possible that women with higher incomes (and therefore higher socioeconomic status) may be using standard speech because that is the established expectation in this community of practice and those women who use more non-standard speech may be identifying with a different community of practice than

females who have lower incomes (and therefore lower socioeconomic status). There may also be generational differences at play: older speakers use NST-tag more than younger speakers.

It is difficult at this stage to determine whether age-grading and/or linguistic change is occurring in Bathurst. This research has revealed age and gender differences in the use of pronunciations of *there*, as well as the use of Non-Standard There-tag. The reasons behind the choices these speakers are making are likely multi-dimensional. It will take more research to uncover the motivation behind the choices the speakers are making, as well as to reveal other differences that are further indicators of the social factors at work.

The English language community of Bathurst, NB, has been in existence for at least three hundred years and has been built up initially around the forestry and ship building industries. Its history is deeply rooted in forestry and its economy is dependent on the (once) vast primary resources available in the region. The city grew and flourished for many decades because of the growth of the forestry and mining industries and the social and linguistic landscape of Bathurst changed along with the evolution of this community. The primary industries of this region are dwindling and as they do, the landscape of this community is changing. This will inevitably have an effect on language and the dynamics between the two dominant linguistic communities in Bathurst.

The inevitable interaction between the English speaking community and French speaking community over the long history of this region has undoubtedly left its mark in the language of both French and English speakers and has therefore likely affected the language heard in the community today. The Canadian French emphatic particle *là* may

play a role in the presence of NST-tag in Bathurst English. As mentioned in the introduction, if one translates *là* into English, it means ‘*there*’. Both NST-tag and the clitic *là* are similar in that they add emphasis to something preceding it. Walker (1979) states that *là* adds emphasis to a preceding word, or on occasion, serves as an empty ‘hesitation’ marker without definable semantic content. *Là* is a clitic and is set apart from the adverb form *là* with which it is often confused (Walker 1979: 153). This is not the only similarity between the languages with respect to discourse particles. For example, Gold and Tremblay (2006) discuss the functional similarities between the Canadian French *hein* and the Canadian *eh*.

It is possible that some French has had an influence on Bathurst English, just as English has had an effect on the French in the region. These two linguistic communities have been interacting for many generations. It is reasonable to believe that evidence for language contact and mutual influences are available for documentation and study. The full story of these linguistic features and of this language community must await further research.

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