Chapter Six

'Haud yer tongue and mind yer language': A sociolinguistic study of Galloway Irish, a lasting dialect of a small area of south west Scotland

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1   Introduction

1.1   Rationale and aims of the research

In recent years sociolinguistic research in the British Isles has reported the process of *dialect levelling,* 'whereby differences between regional varieties are reduced, new features emerge and are adopted by speakers over a wide geographical area' (Williams and Kerswill 1999: 149). It is seen as the driver in the loss of locally distinctive features that are gradually replaced by supralocal forms (Trudgill 1986, 2003, Britain 2010), which have a 'wider geographical currency' (Cheshire *et al.* 1999). While many studies focus on urban areas, there is a growing body of research on the loss of traditional forms across a range of lexical, morphosyntactic and phonological features in areas of social and geographical isolation such as Shetland (Smith and Durham 2012) and the north east of Scotland (Smith 2005, Marshall 2004, Smith and Holmes-Elliott 2017, Brato 2014). At the same time there may be a pull towards more localised norms e.g. some studies find stability or even increase in localised forms (e.g. Watson 2006)

In this chapter I examine a dialect in Galloway in south west Scotland which exhibits many relic features which may be in decline in favour of more supralocal norms. The area is noted for a dialect referred to locally as 'Galloway Irish' which is most distinctive within a 10-mile radius from Stranraer and diminishes beyond this range. It clearly demonstrates its origins in its proximity to, and historical contact with Ireland. Millar suggests that '(t)o other Scots the variety sounds more like those of Ulster than those of

Scotland' although this may be changing (2018: 17). I investigate a number of phonetic variables which are said to arise from contact with Ireland and specifically, to determine if they are changing across the generations to more supralocal forms. By doing so, the chapter will not only contribute to our knowledge of Scots in the present day, but more broadly to issues of stability, obsolescence and innovation across time and space.

1.2 The research site

The hammer-head peninsula, the Rhins of Galloway, in the extreme south west of Scotland has long experienced geographical and consequently social remoteness from the main administrative centre of the region and from the major urban centres in Scotland. At a distance of only 20 miles across the Irish Sea, Belfast is the nearest city.
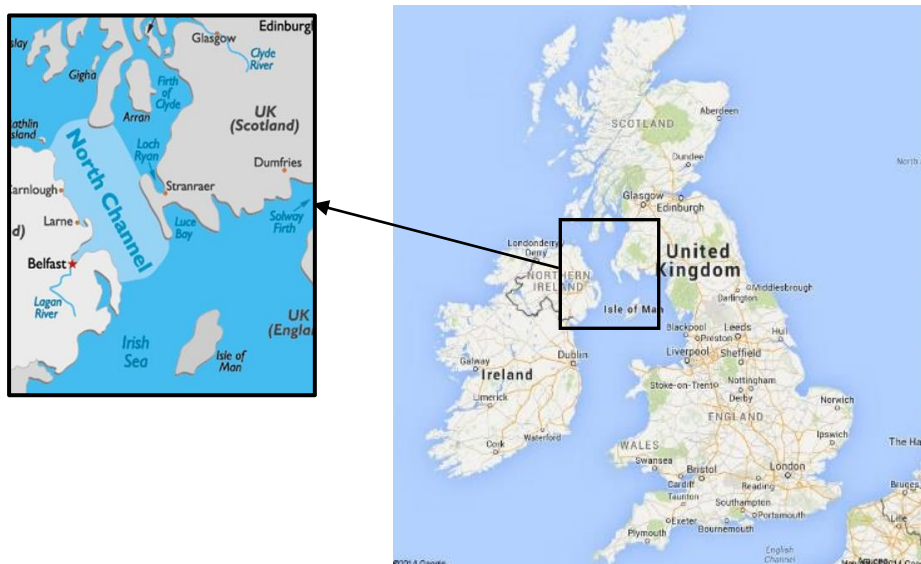

Figure 1: Map of the Rhins of Galloway (Google Maps)

Although it is important to note that the migration between north east Ireland and south west Scotland was a feature throughout the history and prehistory of the two islands, more recently two key points of interest emerge from the historical profile of the area. Firstly, in the early seventeenth century the 'plantation' of Ireland had a direct influence on the dialect of west Galloway with many landowners, their workers and families emigrating to specific areas of northern Ireland. The surnames which endure on both sides of the Irish Sea are testament to this historical event. Over time the language based on Scots became established in the area and Ulster Scots has now become an official language in Northern Ireland. Secondly, in the early 1800s many Irish

emigrants travelled the short route to the west of Galloway increasing local settlement populations year on year (Todd 1854: 46). This annual harvest migration continued until 1845, when the Great Famine led to many more migrating from Ireland to escape starvation. Although others went further afield through Ayrshire to settle in the north west and beyond there was an obvious impact on the west of Galloway in social and language terms. Thereafter the development of shipping, the short sea crossing and seasonal travel by Irish workers to work on the potato harvest in Galloway until the 1950s meant regular contact between the populations was well established.

The physical geography of the area has also determined its social, cultural and economic features for generations. It is a rural, agricultural area with nearby ferry terminals and major road arteries to the north, east and south supporting transport for goods and tourism between Ireland and the main centres of the UK and beyond. Economic productivity was predominantly agricultural but now also includes public services, retail and hospitality sectors. It is likely that the lack of outward economic interaction has an influence on the present-day use of language in that there has been little pressure for change. The two significant factors above, central administration from Dumfries with minimal devolution of decision making to the districts, and secondly the movement of populations to the main centres, have led to lasting isolation from the centres of power.

In this chapter I analyse the speech of local residents. Do the relic 'Irish' features survive in this area and, if so, what are the social and linguistic constrains on their use?

2   Research background

2.1   Descriptive studies

Although dialect studies have provided valuable descriptive information of dialect areas of the British Isles (Aitken 1984, Trudgill 1984, Wells 1982), there is often only passing attention to the west of Galloway. Hughes, Trudgill and Watt's (2013) section on Lowland Scots deals only with 'urban varieties spoken in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Rural varieties … diverge more markedly from English than urban Lowland Scots does' (Hughes, Trudgill and Watts 2013: 158). The earlier work of Murray (1873), focusing specifically on the south of Scotland, gave a detailed description of the vowel system, articulation and pronunciation.

It is in the tradition of research into Ulster Scots dialect variation that we can find recent and relevant studies into the phonological features similar

to the variants investigated in this dissertation. Most notably, Gregg (1972) carried out extensive research in the north east of Ireland into Ulster Scots which he defined as a dialect of Lowland Scots (Robinson 2006: 9). Macafee (2006) outlines the considerable progress that has been made towards mapping Ulster Scots speech within detailed dialect areas, and highlights efforts that have been made to identify the dialect areas in the Lowlands of Scotland which correlate with those of Ulster Scots, e.g. Mather and Speitel's (1986, as cited in Macafee 2006: 61) *Linguistic Atlas of Scotland* vol. 3, with a view to finding the 'source' of the phonological variation. While Milroy (1982: 28–29) considers that movement from Galloway to north eastern areas of Ireland is the source of Ulster Scots, Riach (1978, as cited in Macafee 2006: 62) has the opposite view, that Galloway Irish dialect arose from the seasonal migration from Ulster referred to in 1.2 above. However, it is now considered that 'reverse influence' (Macafee 2006: 61) has operated over the centuries. The descriptive approaches above were in the tradition of identifying the 'successive states of a language' at given points in time (Milroy and Milroy: 1985: 339), to which rules or laws could be applied which might govern the transitions to the next. These studies are important to our understanding of dialect geography by identifying some of the enduring features of dialects.

2.2   Recent sociolinguistic research

Recent sociolinguistic studies across Scotland have investigated patterns of linguistic variation in relation to a number of variables, such as the glottal stop (Stuart-Smith 1999), the weakening of postvocalic /r/ (Lawson, Stuart-Smith and Scobbie 2014), TH-fronting (Stuart-Smith and Timmins 2006), and vocalisation of /l/ (Stuart-Smith, Timmins and Tweedie (2007). Smith (2005) points out that most large-scale sociolinguistic studies report 'erosion of historically Scots forms' (Smith 2005: 113). Whilst research in urban areas shows that many traditional Scots variants are declining thereby weakening the linguistic heritage of some dialects there is possibly some resistance to the influences of change for the rural, more isolated dialect areas (Watt and Smith 2004).

2.3   The linguistic variables /l/ and /a/

In this chapter I target two highly distinctive variables, a clear /l/ and long /ɑː/ which have been documented in the dialect studies mentioned above. Here I focus on the variants which are said to be particular to this area. Both are defined by their perceived 'long' duration, compared to some, though not all dialect or accent areas of Scotland. A systematic analysis of speech data will

show the extent to which the long, clear /l/, which I will characterise by /l:/, and the long backed /ɑ:/ continue to be resistant to change towards the dark and the shorter, fronted variants respectively.

2.3.1   /l/

The /l/ variable is the subject of much sociolinguistic research across Britain and beyond and typically has two variants, the clear [l], found in word or syllable-initial, and dark [ł], formed by the 'retraction of the back of the tongue towards the velum', in word-final positions (Sproat and Fujimura 1993: 292). Millar (2018) discusses the historical deletion of final /l/ after low back /a/ as a 'highly marked feature of all Scots dialects' (Millar 2018: 90). In addition, he notes the presence of the clear front allophone in island communities. Aiken (1984), edited by Macafee (2015), states that, although the dark realisation of /l/ is developing across many areas of Britain, the clear variant remains in a small number of areas including Galloway where it 'appears to be the rule' (2015: 14). Stuart-Smith, Timmins and Tweedie (2006) found that dark /l/ is found to be well-established in urban areas though it appears to be more resistant to change in rural settings. Describing /l/ in Scotland, Wells (1982) states, 'A clear variety [[l], is characteristic of the Gaelic and post-Gaelic areas: not only the Highlands and Islands, but also the south-west (Dumfries and Galloway – where it may be due rather to recent Irish influence)' (Wells 1982: 412). Harris (1984) notes that in the north of Ireland 'the realisation of /l/ is clear in all positions' (1984: 130). One of the striking features of the accent of Galloway is that the /l/ is notable by its clear realisation in all phonetic environments, and the dark /ł/ is rarely evident. At an allophonic level, some occurrences have a quality which can be perceived as being prolonged, however, closer examination also identifies a qualitative difference between the local and more typical Scottish English accents, i.e. a strongly bladed articulation of the sound in which the tip and sides of the tongue make contact with the alveolar area. In the present study therefore the /l/ sound was analysed in a variety of phonetic environments and coded according to three variant categories, two clear ([l:], [l]) and the dark [ł].

2.3.2 /a/

The second variable studied is the /a/ vowel, which is commonly realised in Galloway as a low, backed and prolonged /a:/ variant, in for example /la:m/. There is a 'backed' quality to this sound which is almost realised in /ɔ/, to the extent that local English teachers in the secondary school in Stranraer have described it as youngsters 'swallowing' the /a/ sound. In his analysis of Scots

vowels incorporating material from the Linguistic Survey of Scotland (Mather and Speitel 1986) and his own observations Millar states that in the south west '*land* becomes a member of the CAUGHT set' (Mather and Speitel 1986: 77). Murray's (1873) paper presents detail of Vowel 7, which includes a 'low back wide' variant, the 'Scotch a, long in faa, waar, land, short in mán, wád' (Murray 1873: 110). Interestingly he notes that 'the Scotch a, when most broadly pronounced is only equal to the common Cockney pass, ask, demand (pahs, aahsk, demaahnd' (Murray 1873: 110). There is some similarity with this variant, though in present-day Cockney there may well be a diphthongal element to its realisation. Gregg (1958: 174) also describes a similarity in the realisation of this vowel (in Ulster Scots) with English RP which he describes as:

> (vowel) No. 9 [ɑ:] is open, back, unrounded, nearer to the vowel in RP grass [grɑ:s] than to that in French grâce [gRɑ:s]. It occurs in words such as [mɑ:n] 'man', [lɑ:n] 'land', [skɑ:r] 'scare', [skɑ:rt] 'to scratch'; 'cormorant', [gɑ:nś] 'stutter', [hɑ:d] 'a hold, grasp'.

Wells (1982: 400) discusses the marked differences between vowel systems in Scottish and English accents, e.g. their typical monophthongal quality and the 'lack of oppositions' in the BATH/TRAP distinction. Where it does occur '(t)he quality varies not only allophonically but also socially.' (Wells 1982: 403). Winston (1970) (as cited in Wells 1982: 403) highlights the realisation of low back /ɑ/ in particular environments e.g. '-#, -r#, and -rC (bra, car, farm); sometimes also before a fricative (calf, path)'. Aitken (1984: 2) notes that in certain areas, including the South, 'these dialects commonly have open realisations of all the low vowels, 16 (/ɛ/), 17 (/a/) and 12 (/a:/)'. The variation in the /a/ to /ɑ/ is also highlighted by Scobbie, Gordeeva and Matthews (2006: 6):

> A minority of SSE speakers have the phonemic contrast /a/ versus /ɑ/, but it is far more common to have just one low vowel /a/ with two allophones ... which may have a large phonetic distance between them.'

One other variant can also be heard in more specific environments, in the form of a clipped [ă], almost like /ʌ/, as in [stărt] and [trăctor]. It was felt better that, along with the two low, backed variants [ɑ], [ɑ:] and the fronted [a], a fourth, [ă], was added to the coding list.

2.4 Research questions

As no formal sociolinguistic research has been conducted into this variant in Galloway, this study aims to investigate its use and to examine whether the types of change found in Ulster Scots by Gregg (1972) are reflected in the south west Scotland. The accent is characterised by a range of distinctive phonological features consistently identified in descriptive dialect studies as common to both the current area of study and areas in Northern Ireland. For this reason, it is the phonology of the area which has been selected for study. The particular questions addressed in the research are as follows:

1. What are the phonological features and current distribution of the variants in Galloway?
2. Is there evidence of ongoing change, i.e. is the production of the local variants reducing across the generations?
3. To what extent do the variables gender and speech type influence the patterning of the linguistic features?

3 Methodology and data

3.1 Sampling of participants

An apparent-time model was used to identify speech patterns across gender and three generations. A third predictor variable, speech context, was included to elucidate any tendencies towards style shifting within the interview environment. The sample was largely made up of participants whose occupations were rather 'fluid' and thus was not stratified by class. The 24 speakers were stratified by age and by gender (Table 1):[1]

Table 1: Sampling design: Age and gender stratification

Gender/Age Group	60+	30–45	10–11
Male	4	4	4
Female	4	4	4

The following criteria were applied to the selection of speakers:

1. speakers born in Stranraer or within a 10-mile radius,
2. parents/spouses also born in the area,
3. they should not have lived away from the area for longer than a year.

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[1] From here participant codes will consist of age group (1 = older, 2 = middle and 3 = younger) and gender M or F e.g. older male = 1M.

The children were from a small, local primary school and were selected with the cooperation of staff who had knowledge of the families local to the area for three generations. It was more challenging to find the middle age range participants who fitted the selection criteria. However, a 'social networks' approach was used to attract participants in one village environment, where it was possible to recruit family members of the children, and others through network contacts.

The writer, although not born and brought up in the area, has lived for over three decades in the Rhins of Galloway; it was felt that the length of residence and common community association would minimise the effects of the 'observer's paradox' (Tagliamonte 2006: 40, 47) and indeed the 'interviewer effect' (Llamas, Watt and Johnston 2009: 383). The use of local issues and topics of mutual interest facilitated the natural flow of conversation.

3.2   Materials

The word lists were drawn up to include /l/ and /a/ tokens in the different phonetic environments described in Tables 2 and 3. Deterding's (2006) version of the fable, 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf'[2] was selected for the reading text as a familiar story likely to be known by children or upper-primary stage and with appropriate linguistic features. The word list and passage were considered by the Headteacher and class teacher as appropriate for the pupils selected for the study.

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[2] A reading text with 'a good range of the sounds of English' (Deterding 2006), but more importantly, it included tokens for each of the two variables in a wide range of phonetic environments**,** including, for example those with /l/ in final position after a vowel and part of a final cluster.

Table 2. Careful speech tokens with /l/ by position (58 tokens)

	#l/V-	-V/l#	-C/l/#	#C/l/-	-/l/C#	-V/l/V-	-V/l/C- -C/l/V# -V/l/V#
Word list	*lame* *last* *lead* *leave* *lamb* *light* *little*	*bell* *meal* *school* *skill* *ball*	*apple* *little* *kettle* *cattle* *needle*	*black* *flat* *plaster*	*milk* *kilt* *field*	*cooler* *fillet* *sailing* *mallet*	*Belfast*
Read test	*long* *looking* *louder* *later* *little*	*all x2* *full* *while* *usual* *successful* *fool*	*little*	*plan* *pleasure*	*himself* *wolf x4* *fields* *told* *also*	*village x2* *villagers x2*	*exactly* *actually* *unfortunately*

Table 3. Careful speech tokens with /a/ by position (29 tokens)

	initial	#r	#t	#c	#fricative	#nasal/ liquid
Word list	*apple* *arm* *aunt*	*start* *garden*	*matter* *pat* *that* *cattle* *flat*	*black* *back* *tractor* *exact*	*last* *plaster* *father*	*began* *lamb* *Belfast* *mallet*
Read test	*after* *afternoon*	*dark*		*actually* *exactly*		*plan* *ran* *began*

3.3 Speech recordings

Recordings were taken using a Sony IC Recorder ICD-PX240, which was deemed adequate for auditory analysis of the interviews in which speakers are seated throughout recordings with the small unobtrusive recorder placed in close proximity. Careful speech tasks were recorded, followed by a conversation with the interviewer, conducted to last for a minimum of 10–15 minutes per speaker.

3.4 Transcription and coding

Transcriber was used for orthographical transcription of the recordings, labelling of speech turns and, finally, identification of tokens. At this stage the *Principle of Accountability* (Labov 1972) was respected in that 'every variant that is part of the variable context, whether the variants are realised or unrealised elements in the system, must be taken into account' (Tagliamonte

2006: 27), ensuring that the occurrence of a target variant can be expressed as a proportion of the total number of occurrences of the variable.

The next stage, *circumscribing the variable*, is carried out to ensure that the analysis of the datasets is reliable and accurately reflects the use of the variants in speech samples. Tokens were extracted from the interviews according to the following criteria e.g. exclusion of discourse markers *well, like*; unstressed /a/ syllables as in *again*; the relative pronoun *that* (although the demonstrative adjective was included); repetitions beyond five. The token yield was as follows:

Table 4: Total tokens

Speech type	/l/	/a/
Careful speech (per speaker)	58	29
Casual speech (across all speakers)	2811	1462

The tokens were analysed auditorily in this study. Audio files were opened in Audacity, in which tokens could be easily isolated and inspected.

3.5 The data

Frequency data were generated according to the main sociolinguistic variable and a manual analysis of variant occurrence in specific phonetic environments was also carried out to identify patterns of use. SPSS binomial logistic regression was carried out to determine the mains effects of the dependent variables and their interaction on the data. Details of the results are shown below.

4 Results

4.1 The /l/ variable

The distributional analysis in Table 5 confirms the observations detailed by Wells (1982), Harris (1984) and Gregg (1972), that in the south west of Scotland, /l/ is clear across all age groups, both genders and speech types, although the few /ɫ/s in the younger group suggest that it is beginning to creep into their speech. It does however show that the more pronounced quality of the /l:/ variable is diminishing in favour of the /l/. A closer look at the data indicates trends which support findings of language change in other studies.

Table 5: Summary of mean N and percentages (/l/ variants) across age group, gender and speech type

Group	Careful speech			Casual speech		
	/l:/	/l/	/ɫ/	/l:/	/l/	/ɫ/
1M	209 (90%)	51 (10%)	0 (0%)	563 (97%)	23 (3%)	1 (0%)
1F	179 (78%)	23 (22%)	2 (0%)	511 (93%)	37 (7%)	1 (0%)
2M	137 (60%)	84 (40%)	1 (0%)	363 (69%)	166 (31%)	0 (0%)
2F	109 (47)%	122 (52%)	0 (1%)	380 (69%)	178 (31%)	1 (0%)
3M	84 (36%)	141 (62%)	3 (2%)	74 (27%)	180 (69%)	8 (4%)
3F	69 (33%)	159 (66%)	3 (1%)	113 (34%)	113 (64%)	8 (2%)

4.1.1 Age

Figure 2 shows that in apparent time the occurrence of the relic bladed /l:/ is much higher in older speakers (90%) and reduces but still predominates in the middle age range (61%). The younger cohort's retention of the variant at 33% indicates that, although it is declining, it is far from obsolete. In this broad view of the data, then, it is clear that the progress of change across this 50-year spread of age cohorts is fairly rapid. The difference between the levels of bladed realisation of /l/ and age group is statistically significant (p< 0.001).
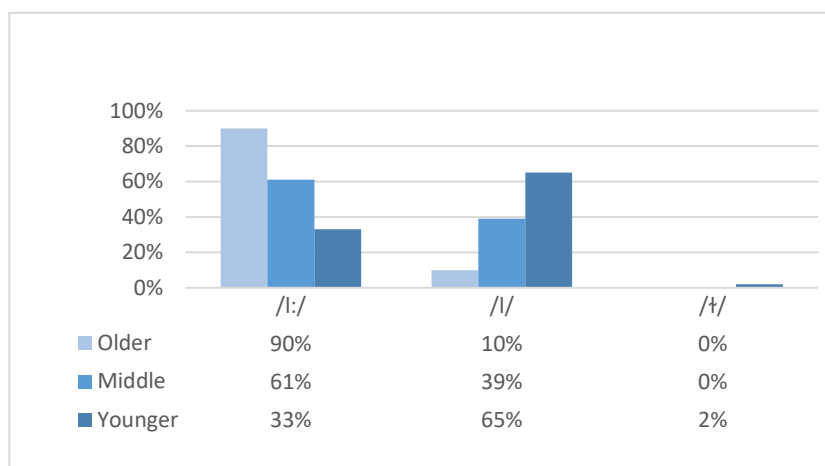

	/l:/	/l/	/ɫ/
Older	90%	10%	0%
Middle	61%	39%	0%
Younger	33%	65%	2%

Figure 2. /l/ variants by age

4.1.2 Gender

The data in Figure 3 show a clear linear reduction in the locally marked variant in favour of a less pronounced form of clear /l/ across gender and age groups from 1M to 3F, but led in each case by the female speakers. That is, female speakers are more likely to use the standard clear /l/ realisation than their male counterparts in each age cohort. In male 60+ speakers /l:/ is almost categorical (93%), while females use the variant in slightly less (85%).

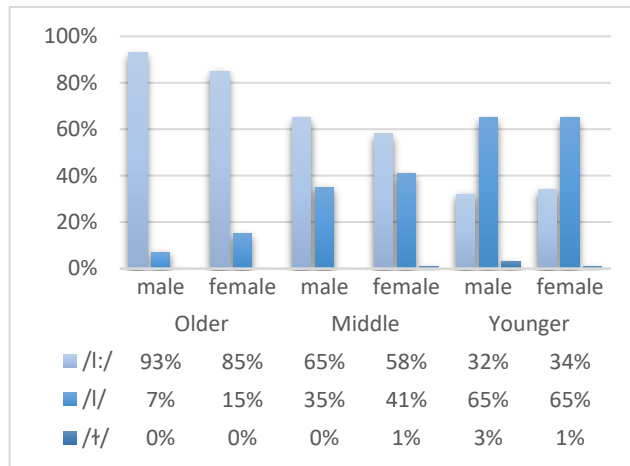|		male	female	male	female	male	female
		Older		Middle		Younger	
▪	/l:/	93%	85%	65%	58%	32%	34%
▪	/l/	7%	15%	35%	41%	65%	65%
▪	/ɫ/	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	1%

Figure 3. /l/ variants by age and gender

In 30–45-year-olds the gender gap is similar at 7% (65% for males compared to 58% for females), indicating that, although they are leading the change, females still show a preference for the localised variant. For the younger speakers, with their much-reduced use of /l:/, the gender difference is very small and in the opposite direction (males 32% and females 34%). Their preference for the less marked variant is therefore firmly in evidence. Of the younger cohort it is the males who show a greater preference for the stigmatised /ɫ/ (3%).

The degree to which gender affects the realisation of /l:/ does contribute to the model, in that males tend to produce significantly more realisations of the local variant ($p<0.05$), and the effect of its interaction with age is also significant ($p<0.01$).

4.1.3 Speech type

Figures 4a and 4b show patterning by age group according to speech type. In natural speech, the older/middle cohorts show a higher frequency of the localised variant compared to the careful setting. In contrast, the younger group show a consistent preference for the less marked /l/ across speech type, suggesting that they are less influenced by speech context than the older cohorts.
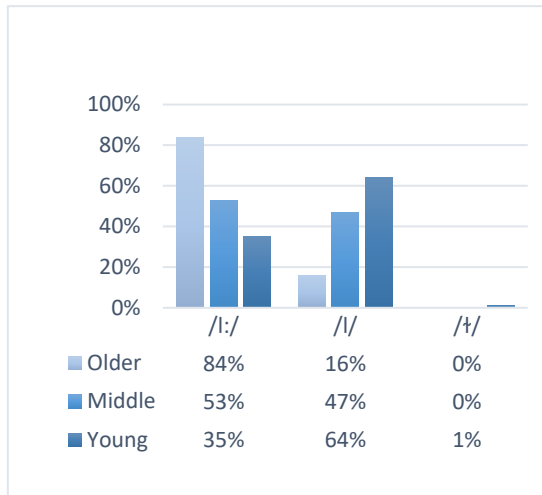

	/lː/	/l/	/ɫ/
Older	84%	16%	0%
Middle	53%	47%	0%
Young	35%	64%	1%

Figure 4a. /l/ variants in carefull speech by age groups

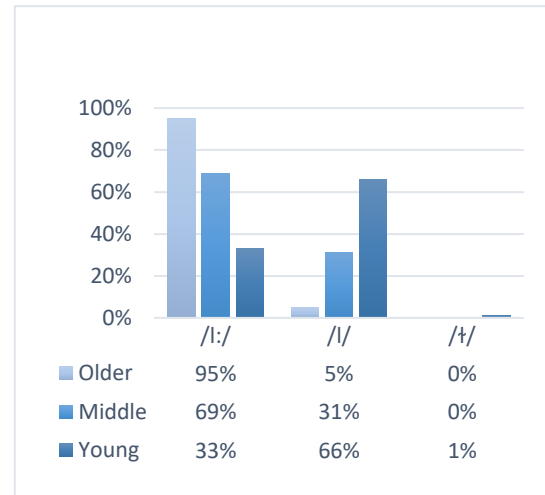|	/lː/	/l/	/ɫ/
Older	95%	5%	0%
Middle	69%	31%	0%
Young	33%	66%	1%

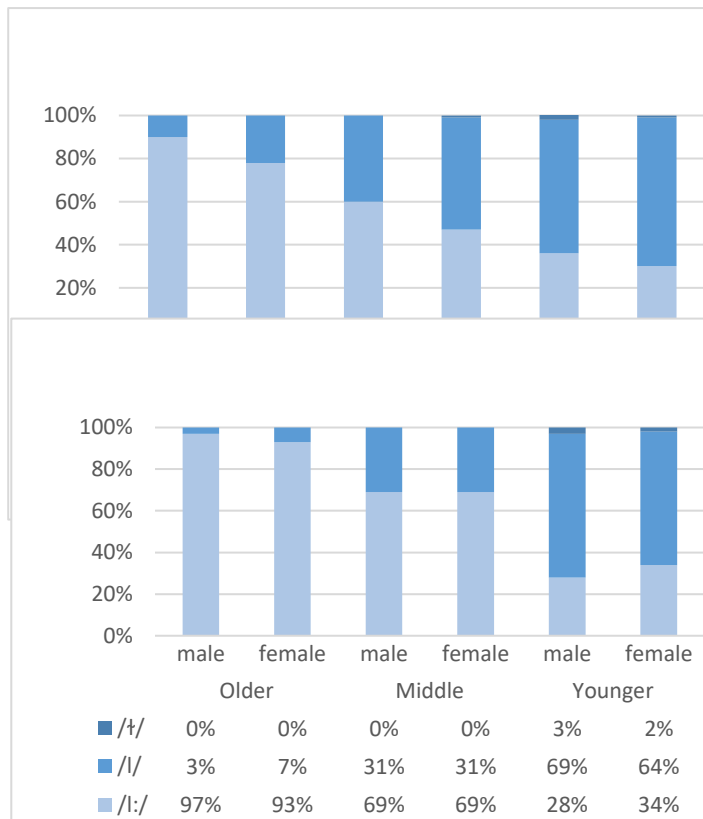Figure 4b. /l/ variants in casual speech by age groups

Figures 5a and 5b show the distribution of variants across age and gender according to speech type. In careful speech, there is a steady reduction in /lː/ across age and gender with females leading the change as in the overall data. In casual speech, the rate of decrease in the frequency of traditional /lː/ across gender is slower. Also, there is very little difference in gender within each age cohort. The traditional variant is almost categorical in 1M, with 1F only slightly less at 93%. 2F and 2M show identical strong preference for /lː/ (69%)**.** In the younger group, however two interesting and unexpected patterns are evident: the 3M group has a slightly lower frequency (28%) of /lː/ in casual than careful speech (37%), and also 3M frequency is lower than the 3F group (34%). These results are contrary to patterns found in

sociolinguistic research into the influences of gender and the adoption of supralocal accents by younger speakers.

Figure 5a. /l/ variants within careful speech by age and gender

Figure 5b. /l/ variants within casual speech by age and gender

In addition to the significant decline across age groups, we can nevertheless conclude that males retain the localised variant longer than females. In comparing careful to casual speech data, SPSS testing confirms that there is a

	male	female	male	female	male	female
	Older		Middle		Younger	
/ɫ/	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%
/l/	3%	7%	31%	31%	69%	64%
/lː/	97%	93%	69%	69%	28%	34%

significant difference between the two speech contexts (p<0.001).

It is more challenging to explain such patterning within a single age and gender group. However, we could speculate that this group are working through the language change process and individually are yet to establish their phonetic expression with consistency.

Despite the above anomalies, the data trends for this variant confirm some general patterns found in dialect research in which:

- the local variant is being replaced by the less marked form,
- in careful speech, almost all groups show increased use of the generalised Scots form, and

- female speakers appear to adopt the less marked variant more readily than males.

4.1.4 Investigating phonetic environment

Although not a predictor variable, an examination of the linguistic constraints across age group, gender and speech type in the realisation of the /l:/ variant is carried out to provide further insights into language change already demonstrated in the data. To this end percentage /l:/ occurrence of all tokens in careful speech is summarised in Figure 6, following the classification of five linguistic environments in Tables 2–3. A full analysis of word position in casual speech tokens was beyond the scope of this research. However, after 'hand-sifting' through the original spreadsheet, the distribution of /l:/ in the three word positions, initial, final and medial (-V/l/V-) yielded the data in Figure 6. The most important positions in this study are initial and final as they have undergone most prior research and have significant effects in other studies. These will therefore merit most attention in this section.

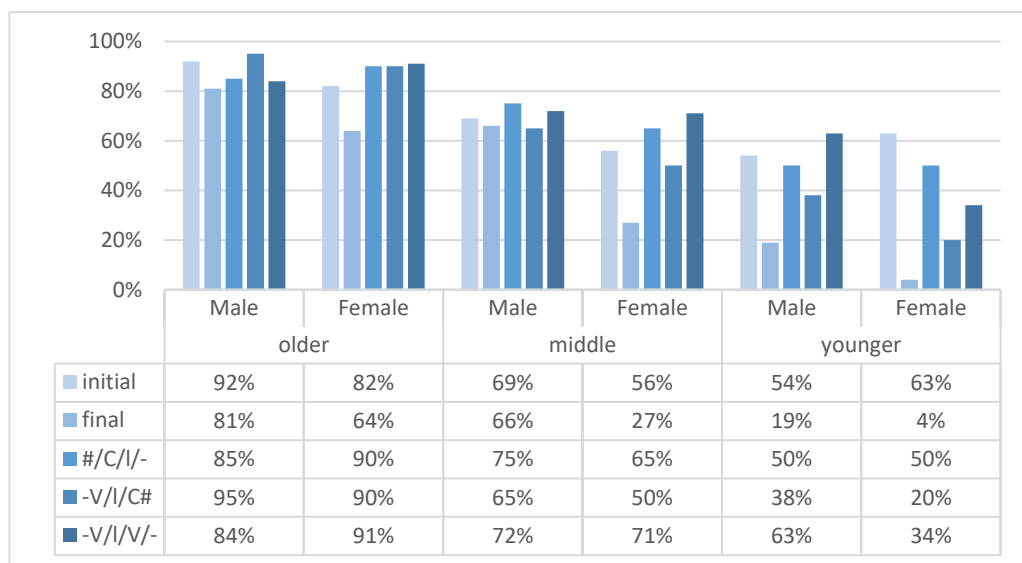| | older | | middle | | younger | |
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
initial	92%	82%	69%	56%	54%	63%
final	81%	64%	66%	27%	19%	4%
#/C/l/-	85%	90%	75%	65%	50%	50%
-V/l/C#	95%	90%	65%	50%	38%	20%
-V/l/V/-	84%	91%	72%	71%	63%	34%

Figure 6. /l:/ variants in all tokens by word position across age and gender in careful speech

In careful speech, Figure 6 shows a reduction in the traditional form across age groups in most phonetic environments. Gender follows the pattern already found in the general data in that females usually show lower frequencies of the /l:/ variant, though here there are a few exceptions. In casual speech (Figure 7), older speakers generally remain loyal to the traditional form in all word positions, with a steady reduction across age. Looking at initial /l:/

in careful speech, it is less frequent in females in older and middle age groups, but 3F show a surprising increase here. It was noted that the following vowel influences the articulation e.g. for *lamb,* /l:/ was realised in 7/8 older speakers, 4/8, and 4/8 in younger speakers, while for *leave* the frequency was higher (8/8 older, 7 middle and 5 younger speakers). This confirms the articulatory constraints described in Kingsmore (1995):

> Although /l/ allophones have been summarily divided into clear and dark, this is a simplification, in that each category may be subdivided, in prevocalic and intervocalic context, into more or less palatalized or velarized according to environment influences. For example, /l/ becomes higher or more palatalized in the environment of high front vowels and lower or more velarized in the environment of low back vowels, as in *leaf – lawn, feeling – fallen.*

> (Kingsmore 1995: 116)

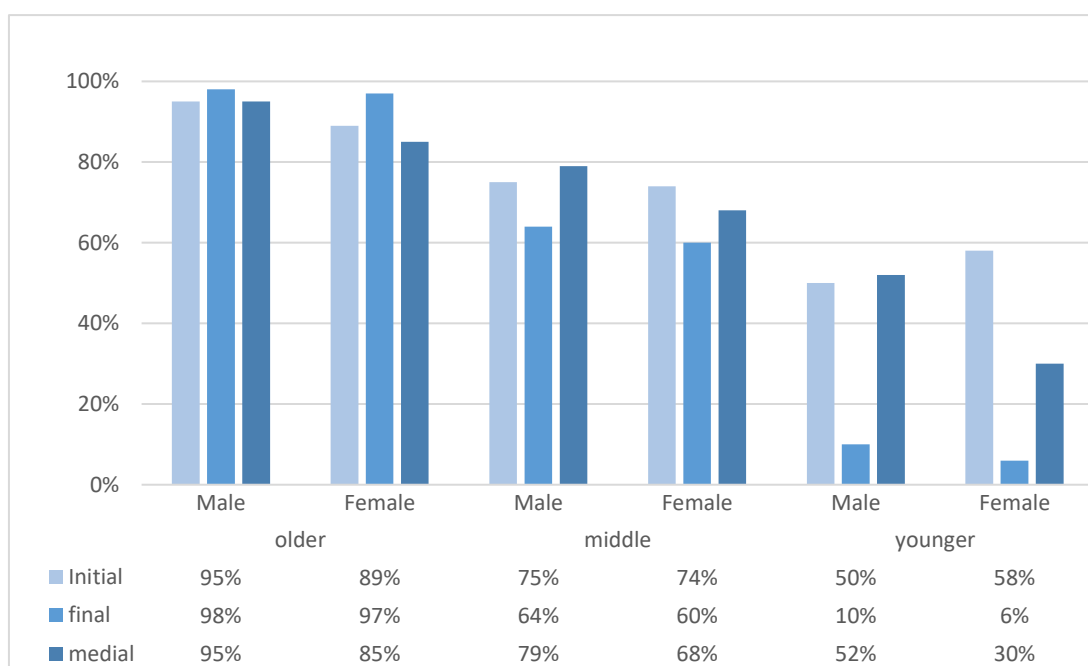|	older		middle		younger	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Initial	95%	89%	75%	74%	50%	58%
final	98%	97%	64%	60%	10%	6%
medial	95%	85%	79%	68%	52%	30%

Figure 7. /l:/ variants in all tokens by word position across age and gender in casual speech

In casual speech, the trend is similar in the rate of reduction of the /l:/ but with all speakers showing slightly higher frequencies, as expected in this more natural speech situation.

For final /l/, the data show an interesting contrast in the speech types. In casual speech, older and middle groups have not yet shifted their articulation towards a more vocalised realisation, ie their frequencies of /l:/ remain higher across the cohorts compared to use in careful speech, in which there is a considerable reduction particularly amongst 2F whose rate of use plummet to 27%. This pattern continues, so that 3F have almost rejected the /l:/ variant in final position. The younger speakers' rejection of the traditional form is similar in both speech types for final /l/. This rapid adoption of the standard clear /l/ across age groups suggests that the phonological rule observed for final /l/ is at an initial stage with older speakers and the replacement is becoming almost complete with younger speakers.

In final clusters (*milk, kilt*) there is a much greater spread, with 1M and 1F showing high frequencies of /l:/, and diminishing to 38% (M) and 20% (F) in the younger cohort. Also observed was categorical use of traditional form across age/gender in *kilt*, *field*, *fields*, *wolf* and *himself* (consistently realised as [hɪmsɪɫf]**,** a distinctive word in this area).

In the initial consonant cluster (*plan*, *pleasure*), the occurrences of /l:/ follow a similar pattern as initial /l/ though 1F favour this traditional form more than 1M and Gp 3 still using the variant around 50%.

It is clear that the younger cohort show signs of influence from outside contact as they begin to reject the traditional variant, though, as we have seen in the general results, its replacement in this group is mainly by the clear /l/, with a small number of dark [ɫ] emerging. Focusing only on the effects of age, both sets of data support the general trends for /l/ in other studies on word position, as well as confirming the overall representation of a dialect which is declining in some of its significant features, though far from obsolete. The younger data are less reliable however as the numbers of tokens with medial /l/ in casual speech were minimal in this group, possibly due to a less widely developed vocabulary.

4.2.   The /a/ variable

Table 6. Summary of mean N and percentages (/a/ variants) across age group, gender and speech type

Group	Careful			
	[ɑ:]	[ɑ]	[a]	[ă]
1M	44 (38%)	34 (30%)	3 (3%)	20 (29%)
1F	53 (44%)	26 (25%)	9 (8%)	11 (23%)
2M	47 (42%)	31 (27%)	4 (3%)	33 (28%)
2F	26 (23%)	60 (52%)	5 (4%)	25 (21%)
3M	20 (18%)	69 (61%)	5 (4%)	34 (18%)
3F	23 (20%)	65 (57%)	15 (13%)	28 (10%)

Group	Casual			
	[ɑ:]	[ɑ]	[a]	[ă]
1M	200 (61%)	30 (8%)	5 (2%)	96 (29%)
1F	173 (56%)	67 (13%)	8 (2%)	85 (29%)
2M	143 (53%)	56 (22%)	10 (4%)	55 (21%)
2F	137 (54%)	35 (12%)	7 (2%)	94 32%)
3M	19 (20)%	30 (47%)	4 (8%)	28 (25%)
3F	34 (24%)	44 (46%)	17 (3%)	40 (27%)

Table 6 shows the distribution of means for across the predictor variables. The most striking feature of the data is the low frequency of the TRAP variant /a/. All age and gender groups show combined /ɑ/ and /ɑ:/ frequencies of 66% or over, establishing the low backed variants firmly within the speech of the area. The high front /a/ variant is little in evidence throughout the data, although the fourth variant, /ă/, accounts for approximately 25% of all occurrences. These general data confirm the description by Gregg (n.d.) of this vowel as a phoneme which consistently has a low back articulation in some areas of Scotland including the Rhins of Galloway.

Before looking in detail at the analyses of the data, a number of issues are described below with examples which are relevant to the discussion of this variable. Firstly, some caution is required in the interpretation of the data. The distribution of the variants makes the description of non-standard/ standard forms in the study unusual, in that tokens which would in SSE contain the BATH articulation of the vowel, are vernacular in their long /ɑ:/

form, but all occurrences of the long, backed variant are also a marked feature. Add to this the frequency of the 'clipped' /ă/ realisations and it seems that a large proportion of the occurrences of the variable are in some way marked variants. This makes comments about language change towards a 'standard' form rather challenging in terminological terms. Only those tokens coded /ɑ/ and which are similarly realised in SSE are what could be termed standard, although this criterion is not clear-cut, as the allophone across Scots dialects can vary between the realisations. It is not possible to create these distinctions within the time frame of the study, and so the three variants could be considered to form a continuum of markedness, which may be a useful way in which to interpret the data in terms of language variation and change. The most appropriate description of the patterns of use in this section will therefore involve the examination of change within the localised variants and trends towards reduced markedness.

4.2.1   Age

Figure 8 shows the effects of age group on the variation in the /a/ variable across gender and speech type. We find that the more vernacular variant, /ɑ:/, has a higher frequency in the older group (49%) with a reduction in favour of the shorter /ɑ/ over the other age cohorts. The reduction is slow at first with the middle cohort's frequency of the variant at 42%, followed by a rapid fall in the younger age group who look to have rejected the longer vowel to a large extent with only 20% frequency. The cross-over point occurs in this group

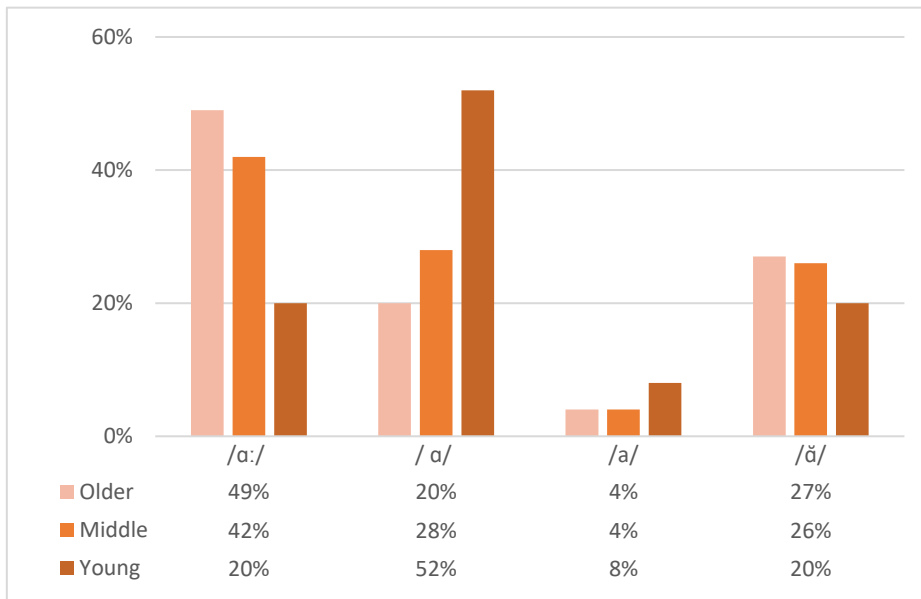|	/ɑː/	/ ɑ/	/a/	/ă/
Older	49%	20%	4%	27%
Middle	42%	28%	4%	26%
Young	20%	52%	8%	20%

Figure 8. /a/ variants by age

who adopt the shorter form significantly more (52%) All age groups show very small levels of /a/ realisation, although the slight increase in the younger group may be the first sign of a trend towards a clearer distinction in the articulation of the /a/ vowel. Frequencies of the short /ă/ are surprisingly similar though slightly reduced in the younger group. As with the /l/ variable, there is change in progress within the target vowel across age, and although the values and the range are much smaller, there is a statistically significant main effect for age (p< 0.001) and most of this effect found in the younger cohort (p< 0.001).

4.2.2   Gender

Across both speech types, the data for gender (Figure 9) shows that there is no difference in the high realisation of /ɑː/in the older cohort (50%). 2M show similar levels (47%), but there is a sharp fall in 2F use (21%) with a corresponding rise in their shorter, backed /ɑ/. This latter rate is shared with both 3M and 3F in their preference for the /ɑ/ variant and seems to present a distinct cross over point from the preference for the localised, prolonged variant to the shorter form.
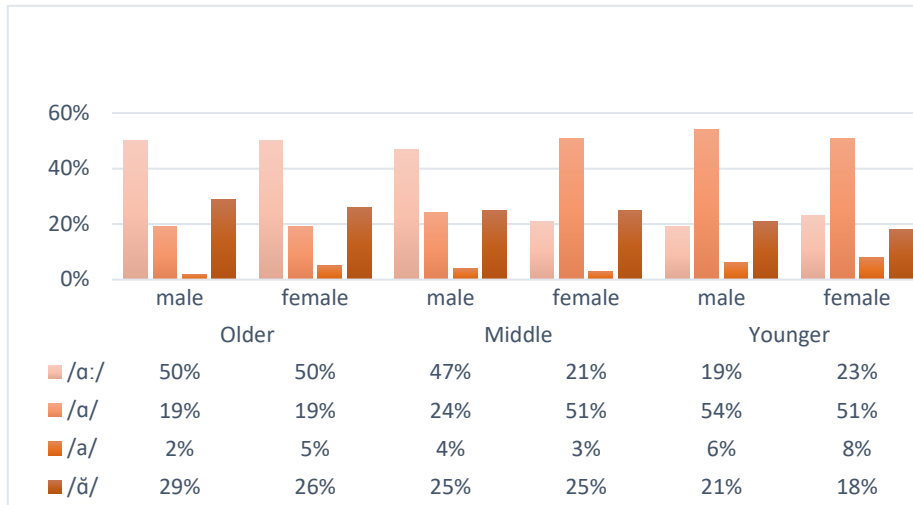
	/ɑː/	/ɑ/	/a/	/ă/
Older male	50%	19%	2%	29%
Older female	50%	19%	5%	26%
Middle male	47%	24%	4%	25%
Middle female	21%	51%	3%	25%
Younger male	19%	54%	6%	21%
Younger female	23%	51%	8%	18%

Figure 9. /a/ variants by age and gender

In the case of /ă/, there is a very slight linear reduction across age and gender from 1M (29%) to 3F (18%). Statistical testing shows no significant difference for gender though there is a significant effect for the interaction of age and gender (p< 0.05).
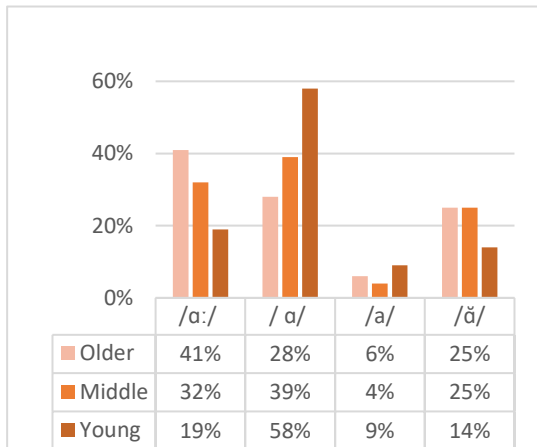
4.2.3 Speech type (style)

	/ɑː/	/ ɑ/	/a/	/ă/
Older	41%	28%	6%	25%
Middle	32%	39%	4%	25%
Young	19%	58%	9%	14%

Figure 10a. /a/ variants in careful speech by age

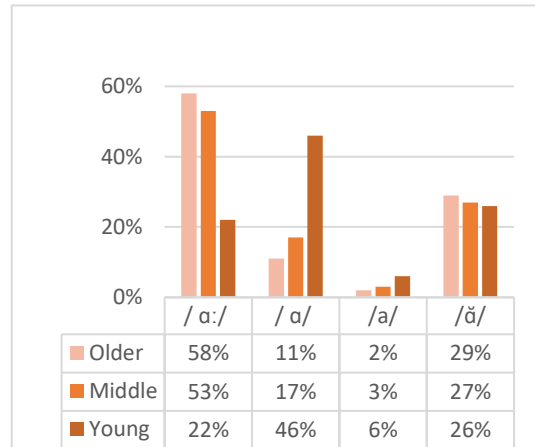|	/ ɑː/	/ ɑ/	/a/	/ă/
Older	58%	11%	2%	29%
Middle	53%	17%	3%	27%
Young	22%	46%	6%	26%

Figure 10b. /a/ variants in casual speech by age

The data in Figures 10a and 10b confirm older and middle speakers' higher frequencies of the localised /ɑː/ (58% and 53%,) in the casual speech compared with 41% and 32% in careful speech. The younger group show low frequencies of the target /ɑː/ in both social contexts but with differential patterning across the other variants. In careful speech, the /ɑː/ form was

replaced by a heightened /ɑ/ frequency (58%), and /ă/ use was minimal (14%). In the natural setting, this clipped variant increased (26%) at the expense of /ɑ/ (46%). As with /l/, the younger cohort have inconsistent patterns in their use of the variants suggesting an accent features yet to be established with the younger community of speakers. An anecdotal observation is relevant here: the younger cohort showed greater inconsistencies within speakers in their realisations of repeated tokens such as *captain,* with /ɑ/ or /ă/.

Turning to the impact of gender and age on speech type, in careful speech, the striking feature is the pattern in the younger cohort, where the frequency of /ɑ:/ is much lower, and that of /ɑ/ much higher than the other age groups (Figures 11a and 11b). The effects for speech type and for the interaction of age and speech type, the differences are both statistical significant p<0.001. The interaction effect for gender and speech type, i.e. of females' careful speech using males as reference is also significant at p<0.05.
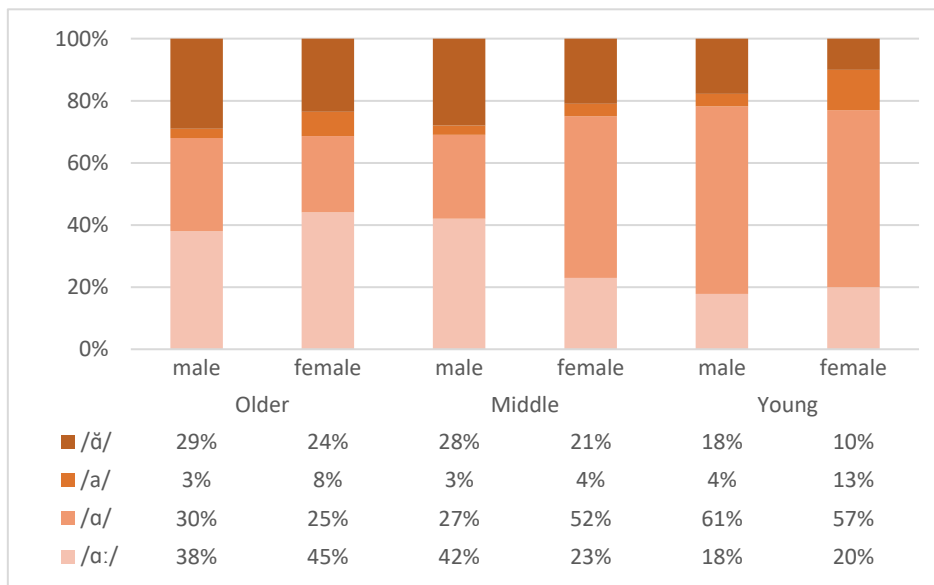

	Older		Middle		Young	
	male	female	male	female	male	female
■ /ă/	29%	24%	28%	21%	18%	10%
■ /a/	3%	8%	3%	4%	4%	13%
■ /ɑ/	30%	25%	27%	52%	61%	57%
■ /ɑ:/	38%	45%	42%	23%	18%	20%

Figure 11a. /a/ variants in careful speech by age and gender

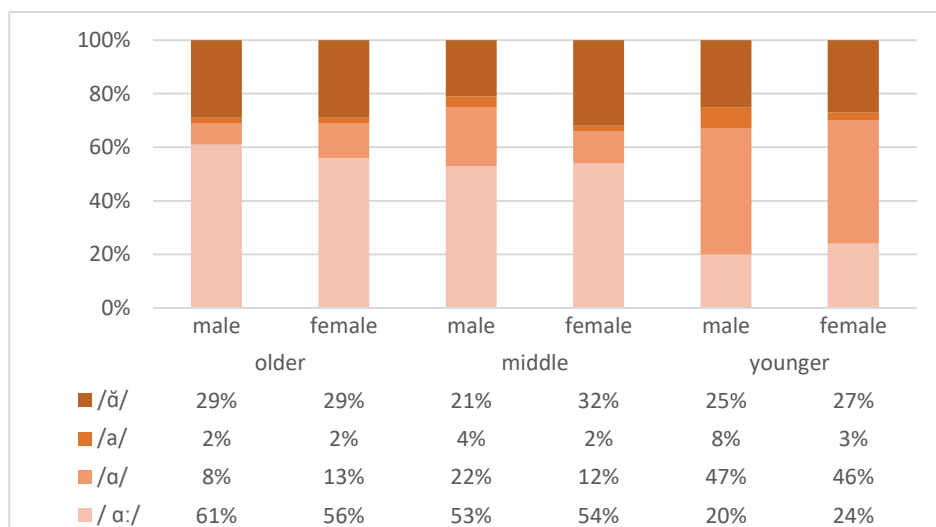|		male	female	male	female	male	female
		older		middle		younger	
■	/ă/	29%	29%	21%	32%	25%	27%
■	/a/	2%	2%	4%	2%	8%	3%
■	/ɑ/	8%	13%	22%	12%	47%	46%
■	/ ɑ:/	61%	56%	53%	54%	20%	24%

Figure 11b. /a/ variants in casual speech by age and gender

4.2.4. Sample data investigating phonetic environment

The occurrence of the short, often 'staccato' /ă/, which can sound almost as /ʌ/, merits some further examination. Its frequency in certain phonetic environments appears to be consistent across age, gender and both speech types. This realisation was first noticed in the pilot study with words such as *st*/ă/*rt* and *tr*/ă/*ctor*. In the present study in the casual word list and text, the token *b*/ă/*ck* is realised by older speakers seven out of eight times, seven out of eight times by middle and four out of eight by younger speakers, and a similar pattern was found in *bl*/ă/*ck, c*/ă/*ttle, tr*/ă/*ctor, ex*/ă/*ct, ex*/ă/*ctly*, *fl*/ă/*t* and /ă/*ctually*. It seems to occur then when it precedes /c/ or /t/ and occasional other phonemes, such as /n/ as is */ă/nt* (aunt), and in *l /ă/ssies* in the casual speech of one 3M speaker.

5   Discussion

5.1   Main findings

The data confirm previous studies into the dialect of the area which describe the pervasive use of a clear /l/. They also showed a high frequency of the distinctive long, bladed /l:/ among older members of the community. The fact that has such high frequency of /l:/ in older speakers and across a wide range of phonetic contexts, places it firmly as a feature of a relic accent. It remains much in evidence in community members, but is declining across generations quite rapidly. Younger speakers' frequencies, although subject to

replacement by a more regional variety and to a very small extent by a velarized form, indicate that it is not yet obsolete. Though the occurrence of the dark /ɫ/ is rare, it is nevertheless important to include it in this and any further investigations to determine its progression in this dialect area. For the moment, however, the more shorter clear form, increasingly used across age groups, retains it palatalised articulation, i.e. that which describes the SSE variant. The linguistic environment influences older speakers in the directions predicated by other studies, but contrasting the /l:/ and /l/ variants rather than /l/ and /ɫ/. In word final position particularly, it is unsurprising that realisations of vernacular /l:/ have given way to shorter clear /l/, as most accent studies in the British Isles demonstrate the change from /l/ to the velarized /ɫ/ in this position.

The frequencies of /ɑ:/ were lower in older speakers, but the effect for age group confirmed that this too is a feature in decline. There is still a question regarding its replacement in the vowel system. The /ɑ/ variant is undoubtedly increasing in line with the attrition in/ɑ:/, but the very slight spikes in /a/ in the young cohort and also in the 2M group, suggest that this variant will continue to increase. A full examination of tokens usually realised by /a/ to establish the effects of the predictor variables on their realisation in Galloway was not possible. The resistance to change of /ǎ/ is another question left by the study. The root of this variant is difficult to determine from the historical literature, but its complexity suggests that much more could be done to 'map' the feature geographically and phonologically.

5.2 The processes of variation and change across gender and speech type
The results show a steady decline in /l:/across age while the use of /l/ increased. In contrast 3M, 3F and 2M showed similar realisations (around 50%) of /ɑ:/, and in 2F and younger speakers its use dropped substantially to 20%, though, as mentioned above, this can only be described as a *more* standard form, due to the tokens which would normally be realised by /a/ in SSE. Results for /a/ suggest a general change towards a less backed articulation of the vowel but any predictions as to obsolescence are confounded by this confusion of expected versus actual realisation of the vowel. In many research studies into gender differences in speech patterns 'women tend to avoid stigmatized forms' Tagliamonte (2012: 32). She further comments, '(t)his correlation is so strong that Fasold (1990: 22) refers to it as 'the sociolinguistic gender pattern'.' A number of explanations have been given for persistent gender difference. Cameron and Coates explored the view that conservatism is a factor, i.e., that women 'stick to older forms because

they are more conservative' (1985: 143). To move away from the marked form in a rural community, suggests an awareness of the vernacular nature of the form and a need to conform to the prestige of a wider geographical area.

A second approach is to examine the social status of speakers against patterns of linguistic variants in a community: women regard prestige and vernacular variants as having varying social value, so that they show style shifting toward prestige variants more readily than males. The issue of females working in language sensitive roles is also relevant to the results in the study. Two of the 2F speakers work in public sector positions (police officer and teacher) which requires a degree of style-shifting. This too is worthy of close examination where males are concerned, as some research has shown that vernacular norms have more prestige within working class speakers, leading to the term 'covert prestige' (Trudgill 1972). This could operate as a feature of the male retention of the traditional form in that their social evaluation of the feature is high. Although social class was difficult to determine and therefore not used as a variable here it is the case that the older male participants are within a tight-knit social network which could be important in the mechanisms which maintain language features (Milroy 1987, cited in Kingsmore 1995: 81). Almost all males across the older and middle ranges work for or within the farming and agriculture-related industry, and their status as employer or employee has little influence on their vernacular accents in comparison to the social cohesion provided by their day to day work. In terms of the different trends in age between /l/ and /a/, the local forms may have differing levels of perceived prestige by middle group females, ie /a/ has more prestigious value than /l/.

Looking now at speech type, the somewhat inconsistent patterning in the younger cohort may be due to the fact that younger speakers have not yet established their style(s) of speech, whether careful or casual. It is interesting to note that during a feedback session the children showed awareness of the issues surrounding style shifting and bidialectalism, illustrated in the following comments:

(1) I came from England and didn't understand the people in my class and they didn't understand me. Now I speak like them in school and when I go home I speak like my mum and dad. (3M)

(2) It [speaking with the local accent] makes you more accepted. (3F)

The lower frequency in females' use of the variant was statistically significant at $p<0.05$. There was a significant difference between speech types ($P<0.001$)

and an interaction effect of females and speech type (p<0.01), indicating that females use /l:/ in careful speech significantly less than male.

Although gender played only a small part in the patterning of the /a/ variable there was a small effect for the influence of speech type. The large effect seen in the 2F careful speech, in which the long backer vowel is much lower than the males or the older group, and also lower than their casual speech rates, is the most striking result in this section.

The patterns demonstrated in this study accord with other research reports into relic dialect phenomena, such as Smith (2005), who found that velar fricatives, a distinctive feature in the north east of Scotland, are declining across the generations in favour of a standard form. The fact that dark /ɫ/ is so rare in this area of Scotland seems to indicate that the linguistic feature has some immunity from the spread seen in urban areas such as Glasgow. To the extent that there is attrition of /l:/ this may be a first step in the 'trajectory of change' (Smith 2005: 122), i.e. the changing status of the variable in this community from the local to the standard Scots form, and one which may continue towards the velarization recorded in so many areas across Britain.

As with /l/ in section 2, the same principle is in evidence in the use of /a/, ie that the females' language is based on social roles in which they communicate with a wide range of different speakers. The males on the other hand have a narrow social network as in the covert prestige principle in operation maintaining the stigmatised variant. Kerswill (2010) describes the social network as a mechanism which contributes to language change such that 'a close-knit network serves as a powerful norm-enforcement mechanism, inhibiting change while a loose-knit one allows, or even promotes, change' (2005: 221). The interaction between age and speech type highlights the low rates of /ɑː/ in both genders, but in careful speech the corresponding increase in the realisation of /ɑ/ is at the expense of /ă/, which is otherwise stable across age and gender. The data suggest the process of levelling is taking place, i.e. the local dialect is losing its distinctive features in favour of more mainstream SSE.

6   Conclusion

This chapter aimed to contribute to the dialect map of Scotland by systematically analysing distinctive phonological features of the west of Galloway. The results for the two key variables confirm the descriptions reviewed in section 2. The local variants /l:/ and /ɑː/ are firm features of older

speakers though the incidence of the latter is reduced. The analysis of the two variables showed a reduction in frequency over the generations and an increase in the more standard Scots forms. Despite similarities in outcomes for the local variants under investigation, the processes of change and the possible next stages of the process are unclear.

Looking first at the /l/ variant, it seems likely that the variants will change from an (almost) binary choice between /l:/ and /l/ at present, to /l/ and /ɫ/ with no reduction in the number of variants. Further, the grammatical rules appear to apply across the generations, although the conditioning factors vary in degree within the gender and speech type variables. In the case of /a/ a more complex picture. While the low backer /ɑ:/ persists, with the patterning focused on the length of the phoneme, the /a/ variant may well increase. However the fate of the /ă/ is uncertain as it is only in the very youngest speakers that a slight reduction is evident. The data show that despite some significant change across age in two distinctive phonetic features of the accent of the Rhins of Galloway, this does not reflect a movement towards the innovative or supralocal forms observed in many studies of speech communities across Scotland, but rather the trends may reflect a move away from the forms used by older members of the community. The 'trajectory of change' may well be towards the increasing use of dark /ɫ/. Further research would undoubtedly shed more light on the trends and patterns in the data and the processes of change in the area e.g. the investigation of an additional life-stage, that of adolescents, considered by Eckert (1997: 163) as innovative in their speech and often leading change. Acoustic methods of measurement to benefit methodological reliability in the distinction between, for example, vocalised and velar /l/, and in assessing vowel durations.

This study is a small contribution to the picture of sociolinguistic change in just one of a growing number of rural areas where vernacular speech patterns are reducing or in some cases obsolescing. A final thought for the future of Galloway Irish is the status it holds amongst Scots dialects generally and speakers' sense of heritage, culture and identity. Smith (2005) suggests that in addition to describing dialects, we 'also take some responsibility for their preservation' (Smith 2005: 123). Millar (2018) discusses the wider context of the language landscape of Scotland with the promotion of Gaelic medium education in 2005, the recognition of Scots as a national language in 2011, the widely spoken SSE and dialects of Scotland, all of which raise questions about the linguistic future of the country. I suggest that the spirit of this sentiment calls for an alternative interpretation of the phrases to 'haud yer tongue' and 'mind yer language' as positive reminders

to linguists and to local and wider communities to preserve and celebrate such distinctive dialects as that studied here.

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