CROSSROADS AT THE LINGUISTIC MARKET*

M.J. Antiqua-Parlee
Memorial University of Newfoundland

ABSTRACT

Local identity practices are not as straightforward as originally predicted (Labov 1972a, 1963). I build on previous work on local identity practices in coastal rural communities (e.g. Josey 2004, Labov 1972a, Wolfram 1997) in an investigation of feature maintenance and identity practices on Mount Desert Island, a tourist-dependent community in New England. Based on sociolinguistic interviews with 12 native speakers of the MDI community, I find that the use of a local feature, the dropping of post-vocalic R (e.g. "car", pronounced variably as [kaɪ] or [ka:], is moribund in the community. The r-less variant is still in use by older speakers, and among these speakers a gender pattern and a pattern with respect to a speaker's source of capital emerge (Bourdieu 1991, 1972, 1986).

Key words: Identity practice, rhotics, sociolinguistics, variation

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a sociolinguistic study of phonological variation in a coastal Eastern New England community which is economically dependent on tourism. Mount Desert Island's (henceforth MDI) residents rely heavily socio-economically on outsiders through summer visitation to the area. Prior research (Reid 2007, Josey 2004, Bourdieu 1972) indicates that a speaker's relationship with outsiders (their symbolic power and capital) influences linguistic choices. Previous work investigates the use of language as a resource to express a local identity (e.g. Labov 1963, Shilling-Estes and Wolfram 1995, Van Herk et al. 2009).

The impact of outsiders on these communities is identified in previous work; the role of outsiders on the practice of local identity has not yet been fully explored. I attempt to rectify this problem, offering apparent time data (e.g. Labov 1972a, Bailey et al. 1993, Chambers 2002) concerning the use of a regionally identified (Roberts and Nagy 2004, Reid 2007) language feature by native speakers of MDI, analyzing its patterns with respect to linguistic marketplace (Bourdieu 1997) in order to investigate how speakers in the community accommodate the expectations of outsiders through local language features, such as those in other coastal communities Maine (Reid 2007) who are using enregistered (i.e. speech used for in a particular social setting for a particular purpose) local speech as an attraction for local tourists (i.e. tourists expect to hear the local speech).

Through these data, I contribute a study on a previously undocumented community to the sociolinguistic literature, and describe its use of post-vocalic-R drop (Irwin and Nagy 2009) a local language feature, as part of local identity practice in addition to an exploitation of incoming non-locals who are expecting to hear the local variety of English (e.g. Reid 2007).

* I thank the University of Newfoundland for providing me support to complete this paper. I also would like to thank Dr. Gerard VanHerk for his insightful comments on the earlier draft of this paper.

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

1.1 Research questions and hypotheses

In this section, I expand the premise of this project by developing research questions and related hypotheses. How do speakers living in the MDI community practice a local identity? Language is found to be a rich resource for speakers in other communities (Labov 1972a, Shilling-Estes and Wolfram 1995, 1999, Wolfram 1997) in the practice of identifying with the local community. Patterns in the form of social variation are observed in the use of these local language features including gender, age and place (Josey 2004).

In other communities local identity practice is practiced through the variable use of locally-identified regional features, with some degree of social variation as a result of differences in attitudes and social groups (Labov 1963, Josey 2004). Practice of a local identity through local language features, such as PVR, should exhibit social patterns revealing a social meaning behind local identity practice and its maintenance on MDI.

Also, in other communities, the use of local features is found to be in decline (e.g. Shilling-Estes and Wolfram 1999, Irwin and Nagy 2007), with maintenance of these features found only among specific social groups such as older men (e.g. Wolfram 1997) and women (Josey 2004). Therefore, use of the local r-less variant on MDI should be observed in remission and only be found among certain social groups.

Which speech features do residents of the MDI community use to practice a local identity? Previous work on other communities in the Eastern New England region (e.g. Reid 2007, Nagy and Roberts 2004, Becker 2014, Stanford et. al 2012) observes that certain phonological features, such as post-vocalic-R drop are markers of regional identity. (Reid 2007, Becker 2014, Irwin and Nagy 2007, Stanford et al. 2012) argue that there are changes in progress in the region in the use of locally-identified PVR. The use of PVR is expected on MDI as a marker of local regional identity; however, it may be undergoing change (Irwin and Nagy 2007).

What is the impact of linguistic marketplace and capital on the speaker's choices? Living in a community dependent on an external source of capital (such as MDI) should have an affect on how a speaker practices a local identity and therefore which source of capital a speaker depends on will impact a speaker's choices, as speakers have different motivations due to their different relationships with outsiders (Bourdieu 1972, 1986, 1991, Josey 2004).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Labov's (1963, 1972a) ground-breaking studies of local identity practices impact the field with his investigation of the production of the phonetic variants of /aj/ and /aw/ in the coastal Eastern New England community of Martha's Vineyard. He observes that the use of centralization correlates positively with social and grammar internal factors including a speaker's sense of island identity, aversion to tourists (outsiders), occupation, age, ethnicity and a number of phonological considerations.

Josey (2004) follows up on Labov's (1972a) study on Martha's Vineyard. The variants are still in use today to maintain a local identity; however, across forty years the negative evaluation of outsiders associated with the variants has not been maintained. She argues that this is due to tacit acceptance of the socio-economic shift.

The use of local language features is in decline in other coastal communities as well, as with the backing/raising of /aj/ on Oracoke (e.g. Shilling Estes and Wolfram 1995, 1999). They find that /oj/ is used as a marker of local identity for older men in the community, while marginalized

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

groups do not participate. It is clear from these previous studies on local identity practice that phonological features are used by local speakers to practice a local identity. This has been one of the main concerns of sociolinguistics since its outset (Labov 1972a).

Bourdieu (1972, 1986, 1991) introduce a new perspective concerning how speakers make selections between linguistic features in terms of relationships of power and capital. He finds that speakers are sensitive to their positions in these matters and make linguistic decisions accordingly in order to accommodate the other speaker with whom they have a relationship. For example, Gal (1978) finds that bilingual speakers living a Hungarian community are sensitive to the choice between German and Hungarian in terms of what situations to use which language (i.e. the two languages carry varying prestige); German is favored in matters of courtship and in the business world while Hungarian is favored between friends and at home. Josey (2004) finds that the second meaning of diphthong centralization on Martha's Vineyard, the rejection of outsiders, has been lost over time as island residents now accept their community's socio-economic dependence on non-locals. Reid (2007) asserts that speakers of the local variety of New England English in Maine are self-described as having a "rustic old English way of speaking." They are aware of the speech features associated with their dialect, and of its salience to non-locals. Mainers, Reid contends, exploit the beliefs of outsiders concerning local language using the enregistered image (Johnstone 2011)[1] of the Mainer for outsiders of an unspoiled Maine coast and speakers living there who use traditional "unspoiled" (i.e. traditional) language features, for the benefit of the outsider, thereby attracting them to visit the region.

3. STUDY DESIGN

Traditional sociolinguistic methods, including the sociolinguistic interview (e.g. Tagliamonte, 2006, Labov 1972a) were used to construct a corpus. These data are the basis for multivariate analyses which I use to examine the social patterns concerning language use on MDI.

3.1. The speech community

MDI is an island community located off the coast of southern Maine. The region draws 2.5 million visitors annually. Tourism is central to the local economy, and so this is an excellent community to investigate the impact of market given its economy being dependent on outsiders (Bourdieu 1991, Josey 2004).

The local variety of English is Eastern New England English, shared with speakers of the eastern New England region. The Maine coast was settled by colonists from elsewhere in the eastern New England region, and the linguistic features used in coastal Maine are similar to those of speakers in Eastern New England. These settlers were primarily from southeast England (Nagy and Roberts 2004, Forbes 1944).

3.2. The MDI Corpus

I recorded sociolinguistic interviews (neither in-group or out-group) with 12 locally born and raised community members. This exclusion criterion ensured that the informants who were included in the corpus provided a sample of the local speech variety. I collected a sample

[1] An enregistered image (or item) is one utilized by a community in a specific social setting for a specific purpose (e.g. Reid 2007), typically for the benefit of the speakers.

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

balanced for age and gender in order to examine the trajectory of language change in the community using the apparent time hypothesis (Labov 1972a, Bailey et al. 1993, Boberg 2008, Chambers 2002). Table 1 below shows the sample distributed by age.

TABLE 1

The Mount Desert Island Corpus

Gender	**1999-1985**	**1984-1950**	**Born Before 1950**	**Totals**
Male	2	2	2	**6**
Female	2	2	2	**6**
Totals	**4**	**4**	**4**	**12**

Informants were stratified into three age groups. It should be noted that the age stratification here reflects three distinct life stages that are important in a working class community. The youngest age group, born between 1999-1985 and aged[2] 15-29 at the time of the study, has limited work experience and consists mostly of students. Those who are employed in this age group mostly have temporary (e.g. summer) employment and if they are employed in the winter, are likely not in a career oriented job. The middle age group, born between 1984-1950 and aged 30-64 at the time of the study, has significantly more work experience than those in the younger group. Most are currently employed year-round (if they have a summer position, it is likely in addition to regular employment). They are also more likely to be in a career-oriented position and to be in a more advanced position with their company, and the majority of this age group is still working. The oldest speakers, born before 1950 and older than 65 at the time of the study, have more work experience than any other group but are likely retired (if they are working, it is likely in summer employment or in otherwise part-time or temporary employment).

All four speakers sampled of the middle generation were examples of "professional, career-track" workers. The youngest generation showed more variability. Two speakers work only during the summer months in highly tourist-oriented jobs, and are also students at the local area high school. A third speaker generates their entire income from such seasonal sources of employment, while the final speaker has a professional-track career-oriented position. Finally, for the oldest generation, three speakers were retired (three of them) with one still working in a career-oriented professional position.

[2] Ages are reflected on the time when interviews were conducted in 2014.

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

3.3. Data collection

The gathering of linguistic data consisted of four tasks, conducted with informants in one-on-one interviews. First, two questionnaires were used to collect demographic data and information about the speaker's social networks (Milroy 2000) and capital (Bourdieu 1997) which were designed to frame the social analyses of this project (i.e. the answers given during these questionnaires frame the coding for social factors), and to calculate a speaker's social network (loose or dense) and capital (local or non-local dependent). Second, speakers read a word list. Third, speakers read a reading passage. Fourth, the speaker and I engaged in a conversation aimed to elicit the vernacular (Labov 1984). This conversation lasted, typically, for an hour and followed the tree method suggested by Josey (2004). These linguistic tasks, it should be noted, are in a step-down order of formality (Labov 1972b) ending in the least formal task.

With the tree method, a main topic of the speaker's interest is discovered through conversation, and outlying topics are encroached through further discussion, resulting in discovery of further topics of interest and further conversation and interest on behalf of the informant, through which further topics of interest were discovered and so on. When one tree was exhausted, another would be attempted at root.

3.4. Data extraction

One linguistic (dependent) variable was chosen to investigate the research questions concerning local identity practice on MDI. This is the use of Post-vocalic-R drop (e.g. Irwin and Nagy 2007, Nagy and Roberts 2004, Reid 2007). Post-vocalic-R is a rule-based feature (see example 1 below for its operationalization). Previous work has shown that vowel height (e.g. [+high] [fiɹ] "fear", [-high] [kaɹ] "car"), back-ness (e.g. [+back] [koɹ] "core", [-back] [kaɹ] "car") and syllable weight (e.g. heavy [baɹz] "bars", light) impact the selection of variants (e.g. Ellis et al. 2006, Feagin 1990, Irwin and Nagy 2007, Labov 1966). Tokens were coded based on their contexts for these linguistic factors.

(1) Variable Context: rhotic following vowel, /VR/; e.g. “barn” or “car” /baɹn/, /kaɹ/

a. Variant I (R-less): [ba:n], [ka:] ɹ → 0 / V_

b. Variant II (R-ful):” [baɹn], [kaɹ].

As shown in these examples, the variable context of this feature targets /ɹ/ in a coda (i.e. where a lexeme’s underlying representation has an /ɹ/ directly following a vowel. Two variants can be realized in this context. First, the **r-ful variant (b)** can be described where the underlying vocalic /ɹ/ is pronounced in the surface representation. Second, the **r-less variant (a)** can be described as when the underlying post-vocalic /ɹ/ is not pronounced in the surface representation. Tokens were coded as to whether underlying post-vocalic /ɹ/ was pronounced (r-ful variant, e.g. [baɹn] "barn") or not (r-less variant e.g. [ba:n] "barn") by the speaker.

Twelve tokens from the word list, twelve tokens from the reading passage and twenty-four from the conversation style were extracted from each speaker for multivariate analysis for a total of 48 tokens from each speaker and 144 per speaker, 1,728 in the corpus. The same 12 tokens (same words) were extracted from the word list for all the speakers, as well a different 12, but

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

still the same for all the speakers were used for the reading passage. For the conversation style, the first 24 instances of the variable context (see Figure 3.2 below) were extracted.[3]

I follow Feagin (1990), Ellis et al. (2006), Irwin and Nagy (2007) and Stanford et al. (2012) in their use of an impressionistic method of analysis of tokens of the underlying /vR/ variable context tokens in the MDI corpus. (See Weaver 2000, for an alternative method involving the acoustic analysis of the third formant to identify dropping). It should be noted that such an impressionistic method is only as valid as my own native speaker judgements.

Tokens were coded, in addition to the linguistic factors discussed previously, based on responses to questionnaires for a number of demographic and other information, as described here.

First, a speaker's gender (as self-identified) was coded. (Labov 1972b, Cameron 2003, Bucholtz 1999) as male or female (although I was open to code a speaker's gender to any non-binary group).

Second, a speaker's age (Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2009, Labov 1972a) was coded to one of three generations, reasons noted previously for this stratification. The youngest speakers were born in 1985 or earlier. The middle generation was born in 1984-1950, with the oldest speakers then born before 1950.

Third, the speech style context was coded as operationalized by attention to speech (Labov 1972b): formal, informal.

Fourth, a speaker's social networks (Milroy 2000) were analyzed as loose (i.e. as having many ties with few of them being described as strong) or as dense (i.e. as having fewer ties, but with those ties had being able to be described as strong). It is vital not to ignore such a factor in an investigation of local identity maintenance, given its role in other communities (e.g. Milroy and Milroy 1978) in local feature maintenance.

Fifth, a speaker's source of capital (Bourdieu 1997, Josey 2004) was analyzed as being dependent on the local or non-local economy to determine the influence on the speaker by the tourist-dependent economy. By dividing speakers into these groups, I am able investigate these two group's selections on the market (Bourdieu 1997) with respect to their life in a tourist-dependent community, which prior work on the Maine coast (Reid 2007) has shown influences said choices on local speech.

4. RESULTS

576 tokens of PVR were impressionistically analyzed in this study. Only 250 of these tokens (those taken from interviews with speakers born before 1985) were included in multivariate analyses. This is a consequence of the younger generation's categorical use of the r-ful variant as discussed below. Analyses were performed using Goldvarb X Sankoff et al. (2015.

When I examine the distribution of variants across generational groups (Figure 4.1), it is clear that the younger generation is categorical in their use of the r-ful variant, although the older generations are variable.

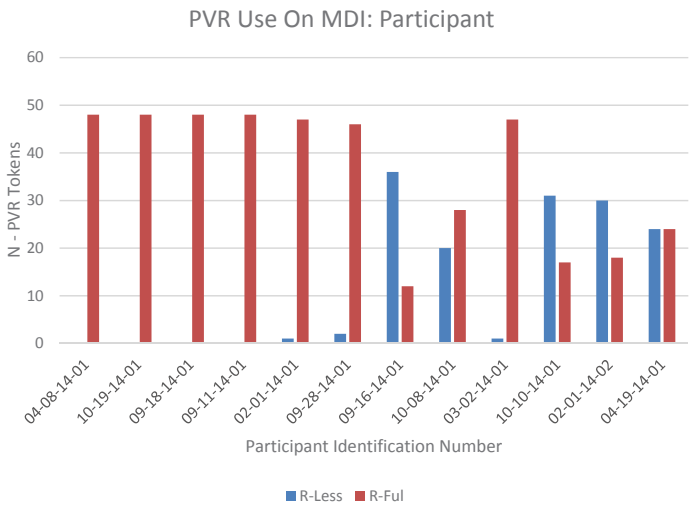
Figure 1 clearly shows the differences between informants: several informants, rarely use the local variant.

[3] The data were not transcribed but were analyzed audibly for variable contexts of VR.

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

FIGURE 1

Distribution of R-less PVR variants by Informant on MDI



The interaction of factor groups due to sample size (i.e. there were not enough speakers in the corpus to represent all the factor groups investigated in the study) presented a problem to be corrected. Table 2 shows the first attempt at trying to correct this problem, through combining capital score and social network type into a single factor group while maintaining a consideration of all the original factor groups. Other runs were executed after this in a similar fashion: they could not resolve the issue of data interactions. As is clear from this table, the data (marginals) do not fit as expected into the statistical model presented by the factor weights (i.e. factor weights favor the r-less variant when marginals disfavor, and vice versa).

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

Table 2 shows the initial results of multivariate analyses, showing a number of interactions that emerged between factor groups.

TABLE 2
Initial Logistic Analyses to the Choice of R-less Variants on MDI

Log Likelihood			-189.545
Significance			0.046
Degrees Of Freedom			16
Corrected Mean			.300
N			384
Factor Groups	Factor Weight	N	% R-Less
Social Networks & Market			
Loose/Non-Local	.20	96	21.9%
Dense/Non-Local	**.93**	145	58.6%
Dense/Local	.15	143	27.3%
RANGE	78		
Current Residence			
Bar Harbor	.31	240	27.1%
Mount Desert	**.80**	144	55.6%
RANGE	*49*		
Speaker Gender			
Male	.30	192	39.6%
Female	**.70**	192	35.9%
RANGE	*40*		
Speaker Age			
1985-1950	**.72**	192	30.7%
1950 And After	.28	192	44.8%
RANGE	*44*		
Stress: /Vr/			
Primary	.44	236	22.2%
Unstressed	**.57**	103	45.6%
Secondary	.64	45	48.9%
RANGE	*20*		
Vowel Quality: /vR/			
[+back]	.33	93	41.8%
[-back]	**.56**	131	24.7%
RANGE	*23*		
Speech Style			
Word List	[.52]	96	38.5%
Reading Passage	[.58]	96	41.7%
Conversation	[.45]	192	35.4%
RANGE	*13*		
Highest Level Of Education			

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

Degree	[.57]	144	27.1%
Required-Only	[.46]	240	44.2%
RANGE	*.11*		
Syllable Weight			
Heavy	[.51]	194	35.1%
Light	[.49]	190	40.5%
RANGE	*.02*		
Vowel Quality: /vR/			
[-high]	[.56]	153	35.3%
[+high]	[.46]	58	32.8%
[mid]	[.46]	170	41.8%
RANGE	*.10*		

==========

To resolve the interactions, especially for capital score (a key factor group for this study's research questions), age and gender were consolidated into a single factor group. I then took into consideration interactions between both age and gender and capital. In order to rectify this problem, two separate runs were conducted, as will be shown below in tables 3 and 4. Table 3 shows the logistic regression analysis of age and gender with other factors considered (except capital) while Table 4.4 shows that of capital score with age and gender excluded. In following this procedure, as is clearly shown, the previous interactions were abated. In Tables 2, 3 and 4 factors favoring r-lessness (i.e. those generating a factor weight greater than .50) are presented in boldface type. Factor groups disfavoring r-lessness are presented in plain type. Non-significant factor weights are given in square brackets.

TABLE 3

Age and Gender included (Capital Excluded): Factors Selected as Significant to the Choice of PVR variants on MDI

==========

Log Likelihood			-233.614
Significance			0.019
Degrees Of Freedom			14
Corrected Mean			0.378
N			384
Factor Groups	Factor Weight	N	% R-Less
Age and Gender			
Middle Generation Male	.33	96	21.9%
Older Generation Male	**.67**	96	57.3%
Middle Generation Female	**.53**	96	39.6%
Older Generation Female	.49	96	32.3%
RANGE	34		

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

Vowel Quality: Back-ness			
[-back]	**.55**	291	24.7%
[+back]	.36	93	41.9%
RANGE	*19*		
Word Stress			
Primary	.45	236	32.3%
Elsewhere	**.58**	148	46.6%
RANGE	*13*		
Speech Style			
Formal	[.55]	192	40.1%
Casual	[.45]	192	35.4%
RANGE	*10*		
Syllable Weight			
Heavy	[.49]	194	35.1%
Light	[.51]	190	40.5%
RANGE	*02*		
Vowel Quality: Height			
[-high]	[.51]	125	38.7%
[+high]	[.44]	58	32.8%
RANGE	*07*		

==========

Table 3 shows a number of patterns emerge concerning the use of PVR on MDI. First, age and gender are selected as significant, with male speakers born before 1950 and female speakers born between 1985-1950 favoring PVR. Word stress also emerges (as expected from previous studies on PVR) with unstressed and secondary stress syllables (i.e. not primary stress) showing a favoring effect and primary stress showing a disfavoring one. As previously noted, due to interactions and in order to adequately address the research questions of this project, a subsequent run, considering capital score separately, is necessary, the results of which are presented below.

TABLE 4

Capital Score Included (Age and Gender Excluded): Factors Selected as Significant to the Choice of PVR Variants on MDI

==========

Log Likelihood			-224.847
Significance			0.010
Degrees Of Freedom			12
Corrected Mean			
N			384
Factor Groups	Factor Weight	N	% R-Less
Social Networks & Market			

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

Loose/Non-Local	.33	96	21.9%
Dense/Non-Local	**.72**	145	58.6%
Dense/Local	.39	143	27.3%
RANGE	39		
Vowel Quality: Back-ness			
[+back]	.36	93	24.7%
[-back]	**.55**	291	41.9%
RANGE	*19*		
Word Stress			
Primary	.44	192	39.6%
Elsewhere	**.59**	192	35.9%
RANGE	*15*		
Speech Style			
Formal	[.55]	192	40.1%
Casual	[.45]	192	35.4%
RANGE	*10*		
Syllable Weight			
Heavy	[.51]	194	35.1%
Light	[.49]	190	40.5%
RANGE	*02*		
Vowel Quality: Height			
[-high]	[.51]	123	38.7%
[+high]	[.44]	58	32.8%
RANGE	*10*		

==========

As is shown in Table 4, although capital score (as a collapsed group with social network) emerges as significant, with speakers with a dense network depending on the non-local tourist economy favoring the r-less variant, no other social factors emerge as significant in this run. A number of phonological considerations emerge, as expected in accordance with other studies on PVR in the literature: back vowels and the absence of primary word stress disfavor the r-less variant.

5. DISCUSSION

Asymmetry with respect to speaker gender is a wide-spread observation on language variation (Peng 1982, Bucholtz 1999, Labov 1972b, Cameron 2003). It is not surprising that a number of gender patterns emerge with respect to the choices between the variants on MDI.

In their use of PVR, middle aged women heavily favour the r-less variant. In changes from above, following Principle Ia of Labov's (1972b) principles of linguistic change, we expect women to favor the incoming prestige forms. Here, we find the opposite. The answer does not lie far away from MDI. Elsewhere in the Eastern New England region, on Martha's Vineyard, Josey (2004) finds that women are the ones responsible for maintaining a local identity through the use of diphthong centralization. I posit, given the evidence seen in the regression analyses and patterns seen in other communities, that middle-aged women (along with older men) on MDI

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

are the ones primarily responsible for local identity maintenance. First, a generational gap in local identity practice is apparent: younger speakers in the community show zero interest in maintaining the use of PVR. As a result, the need to maintain this local feature is apparent even for the middle-aged speakers. Women in the community, it appears, are more flexible in terms of their ability to resist incoming standardization than men.

A speaker's source of capital (i.e. their position on the linguistic market, Bourdieu (1972, 1996, 1986) is found to impact a speaker's choices on MDI. This is in addition to social network type, which was collapsed with capital to account for interactions. This pattern of use is a direct consequence of life in a tourist dependent community. Residents are aware of how their livelihood (market and capital) relates to outsiders and are making linguistic choices in response. Speaker 09-14-14 comments that "we need the tourists, but we could do without the traffic."

Capital effects on PVR are easily explained in the context of previous work which studies locally-identified features in other coastal Maine communities Reid (2007). On MDI, we find that speakers whose position in the market forces them to be dependent on outsiders favour the use of the r-less (local) variant. This is, however, true only of those with a dense social network and not of those with a loose network. Although these results appear surprising at first, given that one may assume that a feature associated with the local variety of English would be more commonly associated with those working in jobs that do not depend on outsiders, previous work on the regional variety (e.g. Reid 2007, Josey 2004) who have investigated the use of local enregistered speech to attract locals to the area to promote summer visitation (Reid 2007) in other coatal Maine communities and the use of diphthong centrilization (Josey 2004) which has lost its second meaning with its island residents who still express a local identity but no longer wish to reject an outside economy on which they now rely and have come to accept this fact about their island life in part explains this finding, as speakers on MDI are sensitive to their relationship with the summer visitors and what impact tourism has on their life and make linguistic choices in accordance to what benefits it will have on them. As in other coastal communities it has been shown that using local speech promotes this industry, it can be argued that using it on MDI similarly does so and residents of MDI are following this pattern found elsewhere on the coast of Maine and, like those of Martha's Vineyard, accept their community's socioeconomic status as a community that relies on summer visitors and this all reflects in their linguistic choices and the patterns observed in this project. The pattern supporting this, of course, is largely that of the r-less favorance found by those who are depending on the non-locals. Therefore, the use of local features in coastal Maine is tied to the market (Bourdieu 1997) and clearly speakers who are dependent on the non-local economy see the capital benefit of using these features in order to support their economic well-being.

The middle generation that favors the use of the r-less variant instead of the oldest generation, although at the least the oldest generation participates in the use of this variant as opposed to the youngest generation who is categorically r-ful, suggesting the shape of an upside down-J for this nearly finished change. A possible explanation as to young people's avoidance of the r-less variant of PVR is a drive towards standardization (Van Herk et al. 2009), motivated by the desire to out-migrate from the community. Residents of MDI are largely of retirement or approaching said age, and there is little appeal to the area for the younger generation in terms of career, social activity or otherwise especially in competition with urbanization. This is a similar effect as in other rural island communities such as Smith Island (Shilling-Estes and Wolfram 1995) and Newfoundland (Van Herk et al. 2009), though it is interesting to witness the younger generation categorically avoiding the r-less variant.

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

6. CONCLUSION

This project discusses language variation and change on MDI through an investigation of locally-identified PVR drop and diffused Canadian Raising.

Previous work on local identity practices elsewhere did not play out as expected on MDI. The local feature of R-lessness was not used to express a local identity by the majority of residents, nor was it used to reject outsiders. In fact, in regards to the second meaning of centralization on Martha's Vineyard, the use of PVR on MDI is quite the opposite, with speakers who are dependent on the non-local economy favouring the r-less variant in order to facilitate the creation of an enregistered image of a local resident who uses local linguistic features for the sake of outsiders. Reid (2007). These findings are similar to those on Smith Island, Maryland (Shilling-Estes and Wolfram 1999) where the local variant is also found to be in moribund status and a single social group is found to practice the local variant, although on Smith Island it was local men maintaining local identity practice and on MDI it is older women. The finding that women are maintaining the local identity is not surprising, as such a result is found elsewhere in Eastern New England (Josey 2004).

The creation of an enregistered image for outsiders was not the end of the impact of market on a speaker's linguistic choices (Bourdieu 1972, 1986, 1991). The use of Raising was found to be heavily influenced by market as well, with speakers who were dependent on the local economy found to favour the more raised variants of the /a/ nucleus. Those dependent on the non-local economy have less flexibility than their compatriots, given that their language reflects on them (and they may be evaluated negatively on its use). As a result, those who do not depend on the non-locals for their livelihood have the flexibility to introduce the contact feature to their speech.

Capital plays a vital role with respect to variation in a community dependent on tourism, and speakers are capable of making the choices they need to benefit from their relationship with tourists whether the feature is locally identified or a result of contact. While a locally identified feature is at risk of death, two groups struggle to maintain its use against a younger generation driven to leave the community.

REFERENCES

Bailey, Guy, Wikle, Tom, Tillery, Jan; Sand, Lori. (1993). Some patterns of linguistic diffusion. *Language Variation and Change (5, 3)*: 359-390.

Boberg, Charles. (2008). Phonetic differentiation in Standard Canadian English. *Journal of English Linguistics 36(2)*: 129-154.

Bourdieu, Pierre. (1972). The economics of linguistic exchanges. *Social Sciences Information 16(6)*: 645-668.

Bourdieu, Pierre. (1986). The forms of capital. In *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*. Richardson, J. (ed). New York: Greenwood: 241-258.

Bourdieu, Pierre. (1991). Language and symbolic power . Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Cameron, Deborah. (2003). Gender issues in language change. *Annual Review Of Applied Linguistics 23*: 187-201.

Chambers, Jack. (2002). Patterns of variation including change. In *The handbook of language variation and change*, Chambers, Jack; Shilling-Estes, Natalie; Wolfram, Walt, eds. 358-381.

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

Ellis, Micheal; Groff, Cynthia; Mead, Rebecca. (2006). A rapid and anonymous study of /r/ vocalization in an /r/ pronouncing city. *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics 12(1)*: 57-67.

Irwin, Patricia, Nagy Naomi. (2007). Bostonians /r/ speaking: A quantitative look at (R) in Boston. *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics 35(13,2)*: 135-147.

Johnstone, Barbara. (2011). Dialect enregisterment in performance. *Journal of Sociolinguistics 15(5)*: 657-679.

Josey, Meredith. (2004). *A sociolinguistic study of phonetic variation on Martha's Vineyard*. PhD Dissertation. New York: New York University:

Leddy-Cecere, Thomas, Baclawski, Kenneth, Walker, Nacole, Stanford, James. (2012). New England borderlands: A new investigation of the East-West boundary. *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics, 17(2)*: 119-153.

Labov, William. (1963). The social motivation of a sound change. *Word 19*: 273-309.

Labov, William. (1972a). The social motivation of a sound change. In *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Labov, William. (ed.), Philadelphia, PA: University Of Pennsylvania Press: 1-41.

Labov, William. (1972b). Some principles of linguistic methodology. *Language In Society 1(1)*: 97-120.

Labov, William. (1972c). *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Philadelphia Press.

Labov, William. (1984). Field methods of the project on linguistic change. In *Language in use*, Baugh, John, Scherzer, Joel. (eds.). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall. 1-51.

Milroy, Lesley. (2000). Social network analysis and language change: Introduction. *European Journal of English Studies 4(3)*: 217-223.

Reid, Lindsay. (2007). English in Maine: The mythologization and commodification of a dialect. Online Source. http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~cpercy/courses/eng6365-reid.htm. Last Accessed: 05/01/2012.

Roberts, Julie, Nagy, Naomi. (2004). New England phonology. In *A handbook of varieties of English Volume 1: Phonology*. Berlin: Mouton de Grutyer: 270-281.

Sankoff, David., Tagliamonte, Sali., Smith, Eric. (2015). Goldvarb Yosemite: A multivariate analysis application for Macintosh. http://individual.utoronto.ca. Last Accessed: 12/09/13.

Shilling-Estes, Natalie, Wolfram, Walt. (1995). Moribund dialects and the endangerment canon: The case of the Ocracoke Brogue. *Language 71*: 696-721.

Shilling-Estes, Natalie, Wolfram, Walt. (1999). Alternative models for dialect death: Dissipation vs. concentration. *Language* (75,3): 486-521.

Shilling-Estes, Natalie. (1999). Reshaping economies, reshaping identities. Gender-based patterns of language variation in Ocracoke English. Paper presented at the fifth annual meeting, *Berkley Women And Language Conference*: April 24-25.

Tagliamonte, Sali. (2006). Analyzing sociolinguistic variation. Edinburg, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tagliamonte, Sali.; D'Arcy, Alexandra. (2009). Beyond phonology: Adolescence, incrementation and change. *Language 85(1)*: 58-108.

Van Herk, Gerard, Childs, Becky, Thorburn, Jennifer. (2009). Identity marking and affiliation in an urbanizing Newfoundland community. In *Proceeding of the 31st Annual Meeting of the Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association*. Cichocki, Wiadyslaw.(ed.): 85-94.

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)

Weaver, Rebecca. (2000). *Acoustic features of /r/: Variation in African American Vernacular English speaking children and adults of the mid-south*. PhD Dissertation: University of Memphis.

Wolfram, Walt. (1997). Hoi toide on the Outer Banks: The story of the Ocracoke Brogue. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

BDD-A26022 © 2016 Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.143 (2026-11-19 07:51:54 UTC)