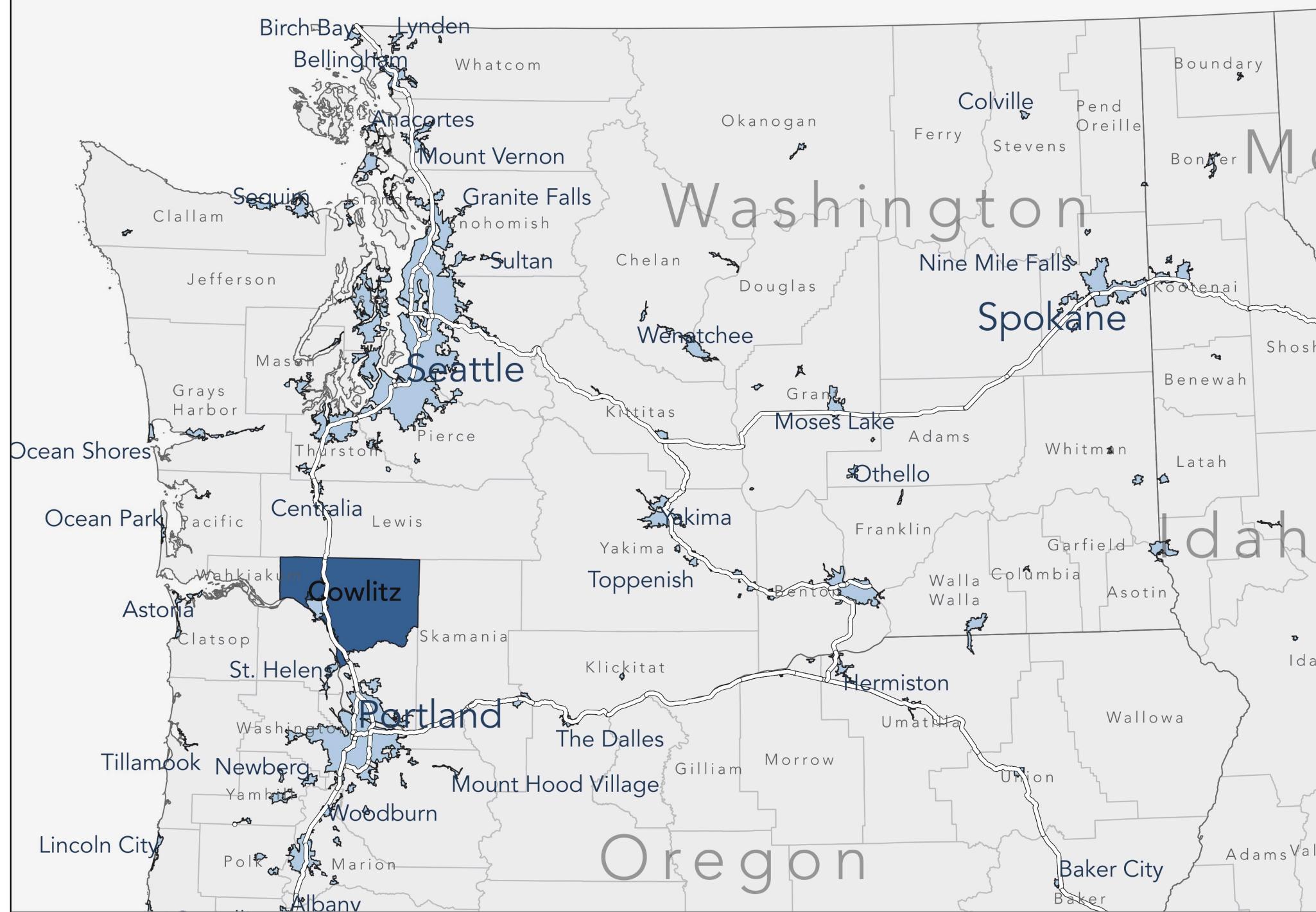


Vowel Dynamics of the Elsewhere Shift: A Sociophonetic Analysis of the English in Cowlitz County, Washington

Joey Stanley

Dissertation Defense
December 4, 2019

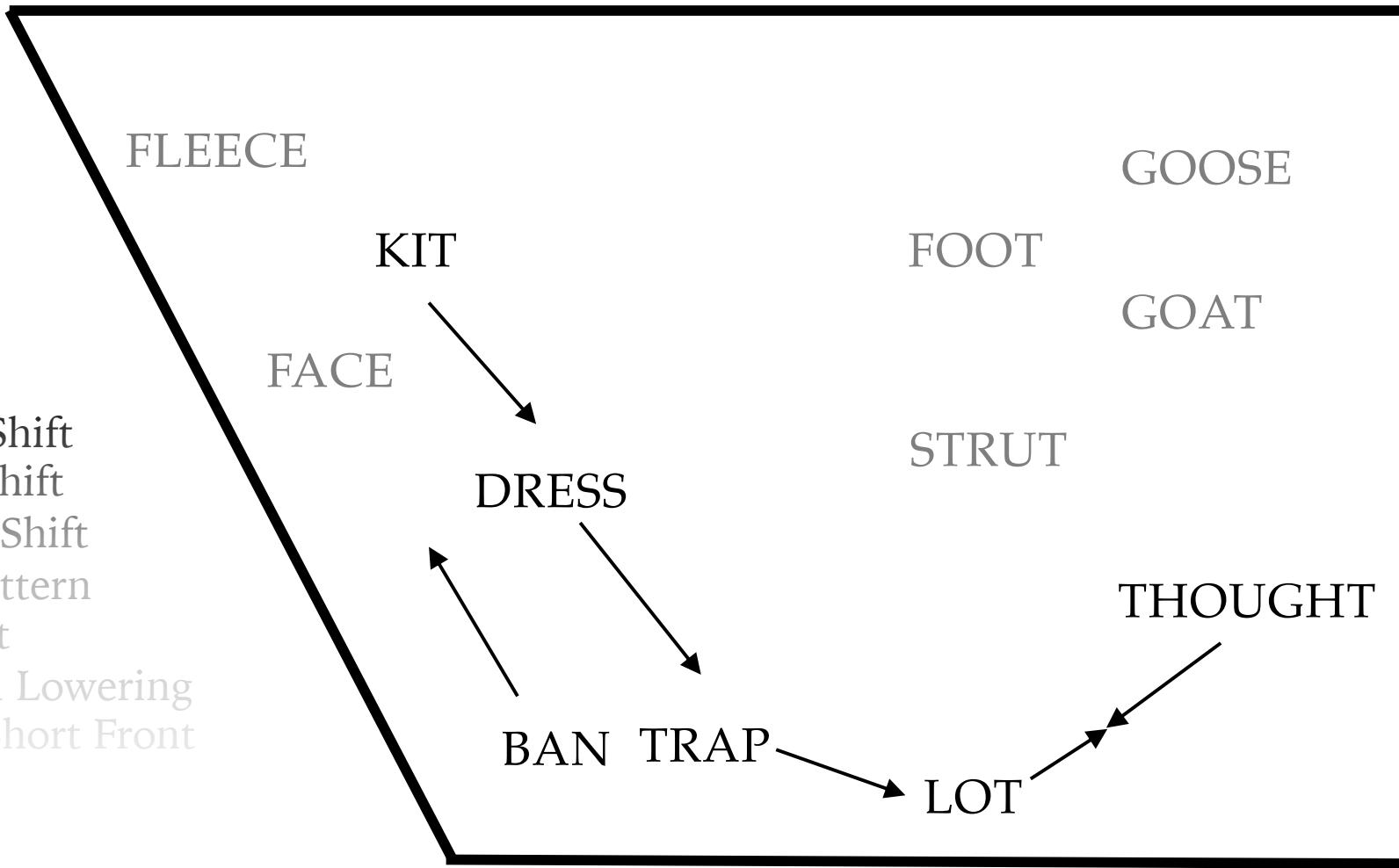


So, I mean we *must*. I mean, *we must* have a different dialect.
But how it would compare to others...?

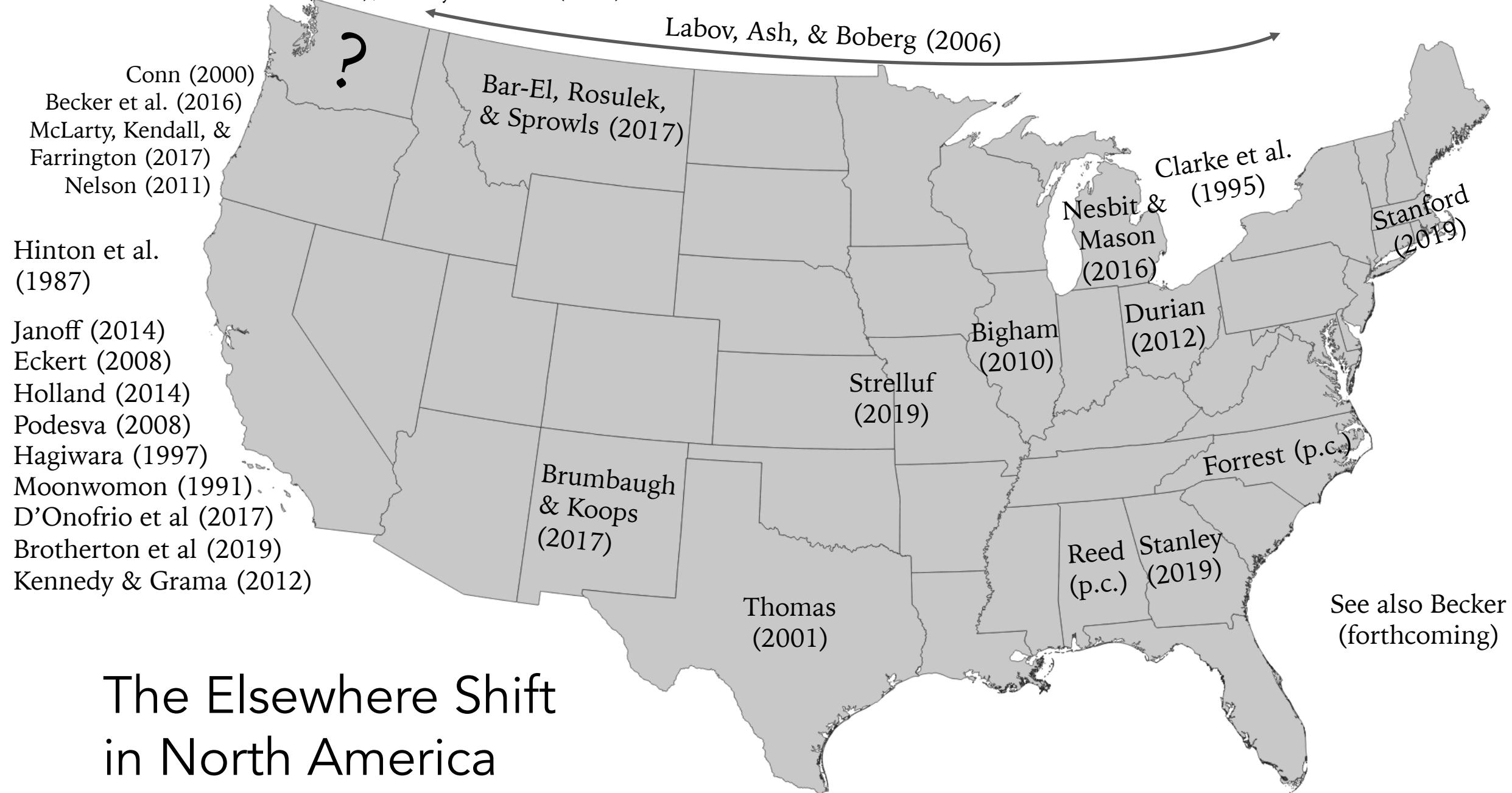
– “Shane”

The “Elsewhere Shift”

a.k.a.
California Vowel Shift
Canadian Vowel Shift
Low Back Merger Shift
Western Vowel Pattern
Third Dialect Shift
Short Front Vowel Lowering
North American Short Front
Vowel Shift



Hall (2000), Tamminga & Sadlier-Brown (2008),
Roeder et al (2018), Presnykova et al (2018)



The Elsewhere Shift in North America

Seattle Caucasians do not participate in the retraction of /æ/ BAT and /ɛ/ BET... Additionally, we do not see the lowering of the /i/ BIT and /ɛ/ BET vowels.

– Wassink (2016:84)

It is curious that Canadian and California English should display such a similar trend while not being geographically contiguous neighbors of each other, since there is currently no evidence documenting the same type of shift in the geographic space between them.

– Swan (2016:30–31)

Methods

Data Collection

When Summer 2016

Recruitment face-to-face, business cards, snowball, family

Method Traditional sociolinguistic interviews (Labov 1984)

Speakers 54

Audio 45h 16m

Corpus size 350,000 words

Vowels analyzed 128,370

Data Processing

Transcription Manually

Forced-Alignment Montreal Forced Aligner (McAuliffe et al. 2017)

Formant Extraction Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2018)

Filtering Mahalanobis distance (Mahalanobis 1936)

Normalization ANAE method (Labov, Ash, Boberg 2006; cf. Nearey 1978)

Transformation Barks (Zwicker 1961, Traunmüller 1990)

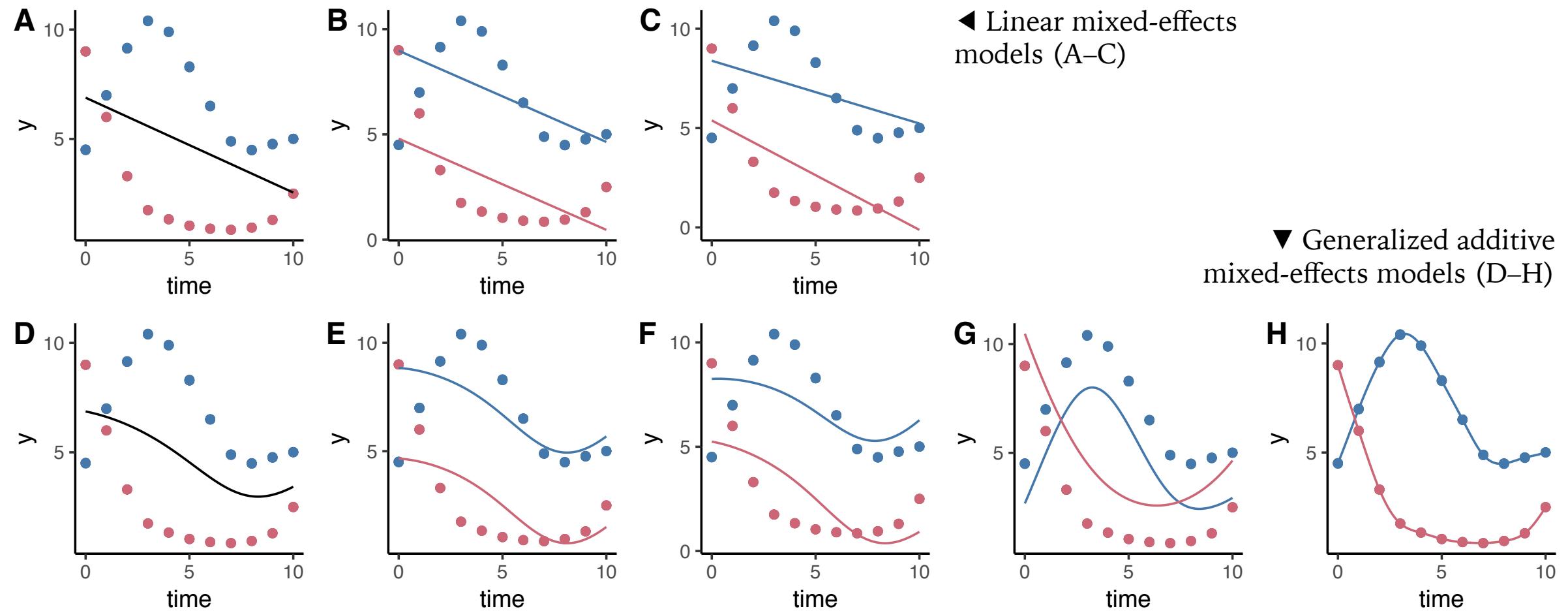
Software R (R Core Team 2018), tidyverse (Wickham 2018)

Visuals ggplot2 (Wickham 2015)

Data Analysis

There is a growing consensus in the field that dynamic measurements of vowels provide a more complete view of vowel characteristics, and they avoid a necessarily arbitrary choice of selecting a specific time point where the measurements are taken.

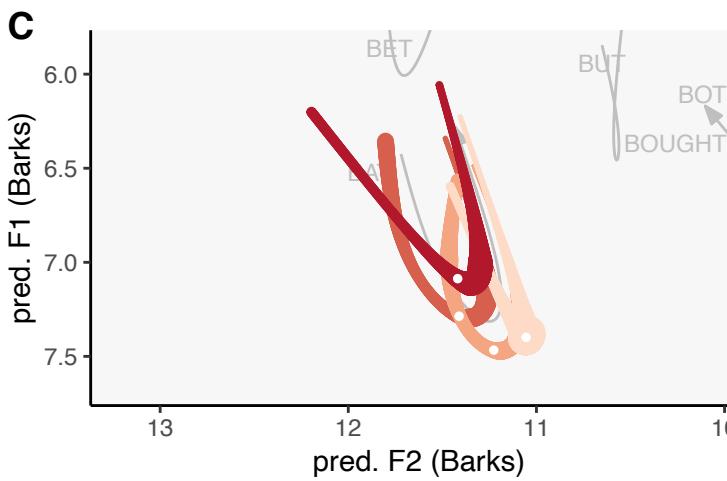
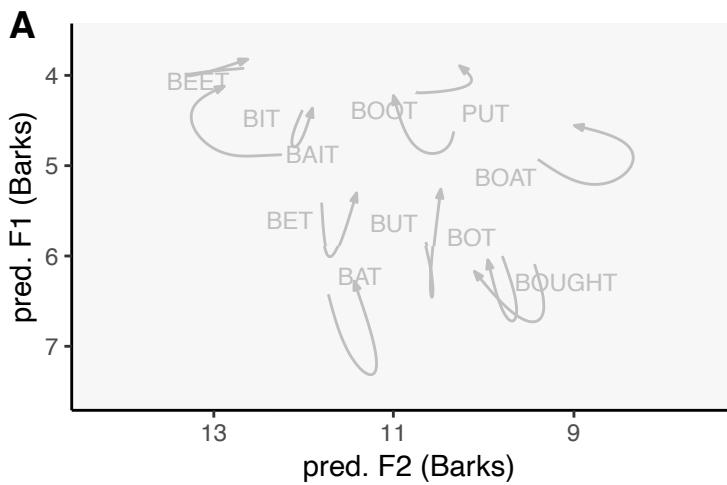
– Strycharczuk & Scobbie (2017:330)



See Wood (2017), Sóskuthy (2017), Gahl & Baayen (2019), Renwick & Stanley (to appear)

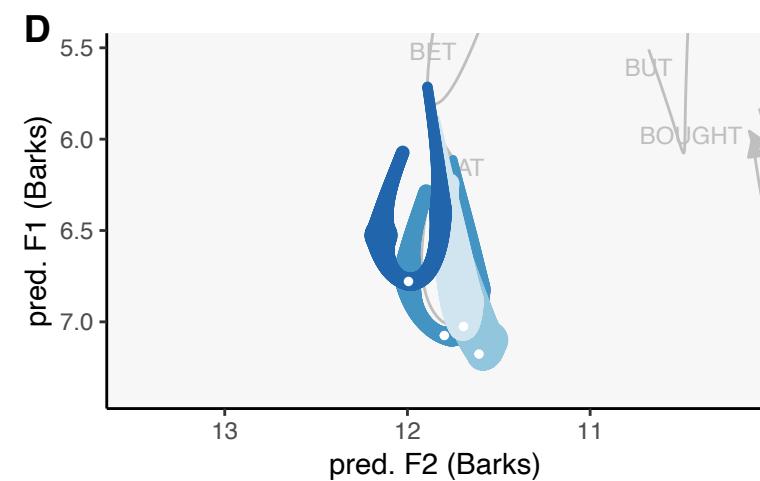
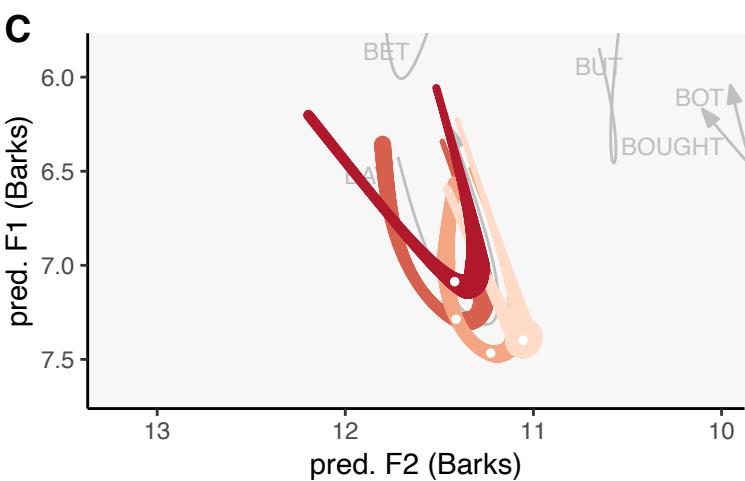
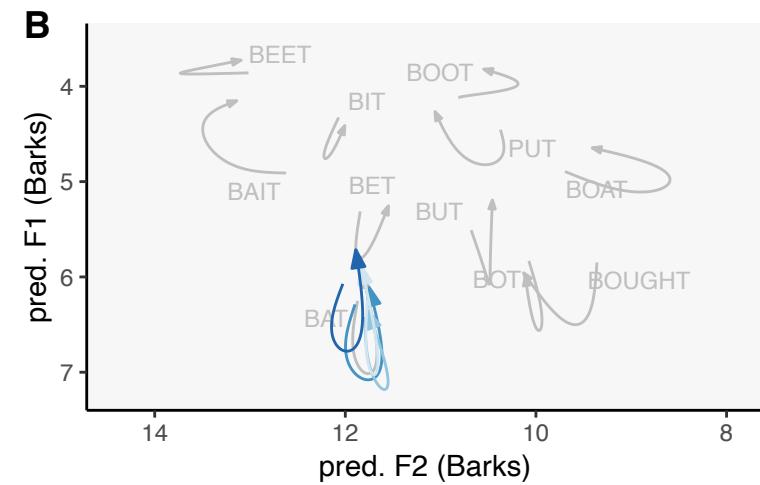
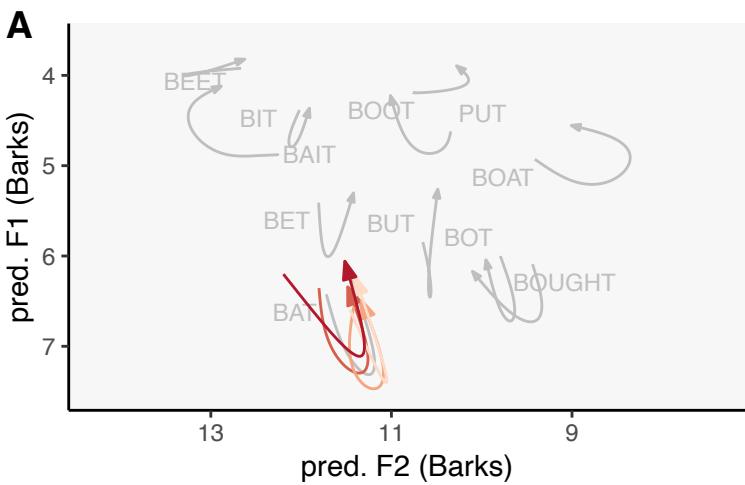
```
mdl_seed <- mgcv::bam(anae_bark ~  
    formant_sex_gen +  
    s(percent, by=formant_sex_gen, k=4) +  
    log(dur) * formant_sex_gen +  
    s(word, formant, bs="re") +  
    s(speaker, formant, bs="re"),  
    data=df, discrete=TRUE)  
  
rho <- start_value_rho(mdl_seed)  
  
mdl <- update(mdl_seed, rho=rho, AR.start=df$start_event)
```

Results



generation and sex

- silent F
- boomer F
- genX F
- millennial F

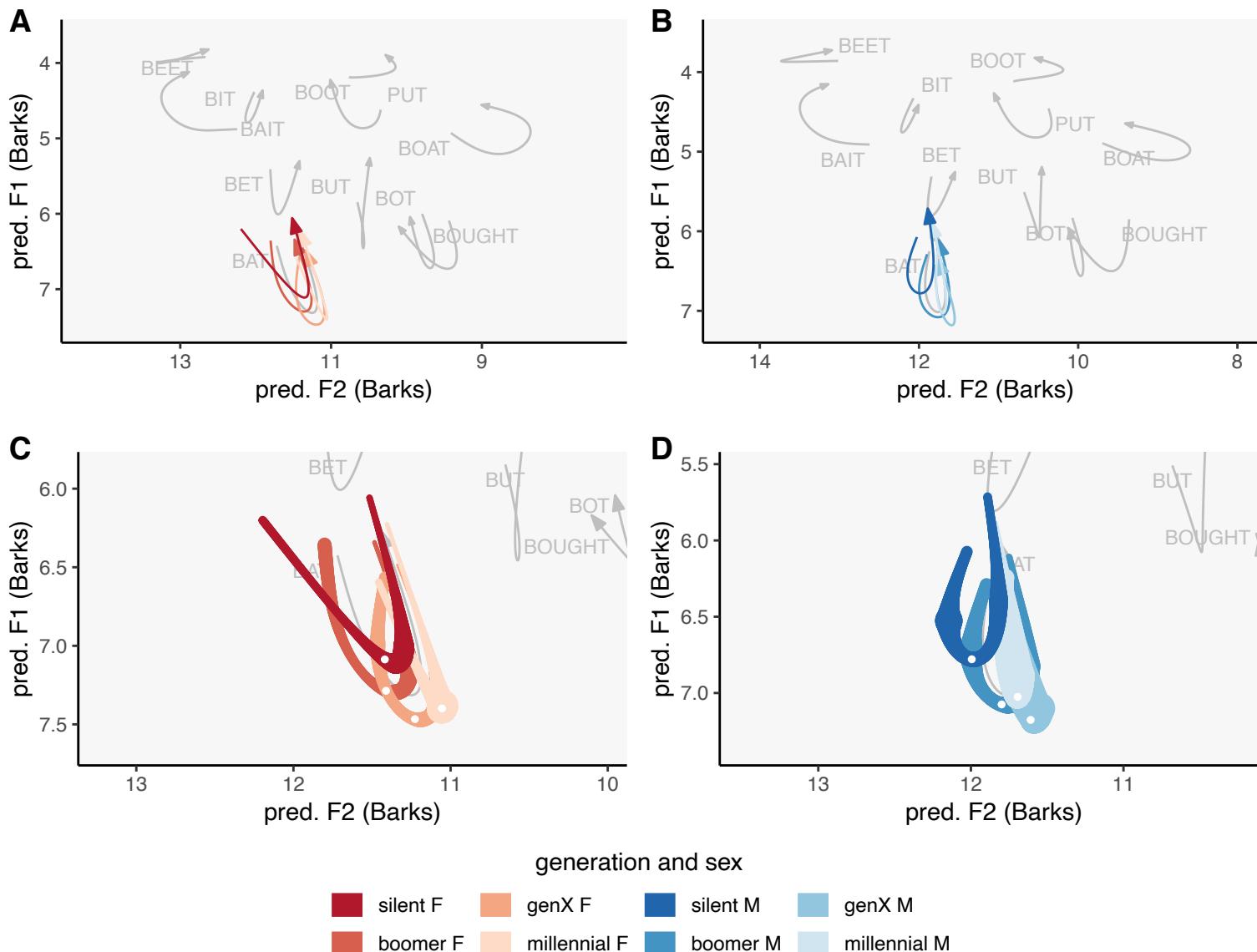


generation and sex

- | | | | |
|----------|--------------|----------|--------------|
| silent F | genX F | silent M | genX M |
| boomer F | millennial F | boomer M | millennial M |

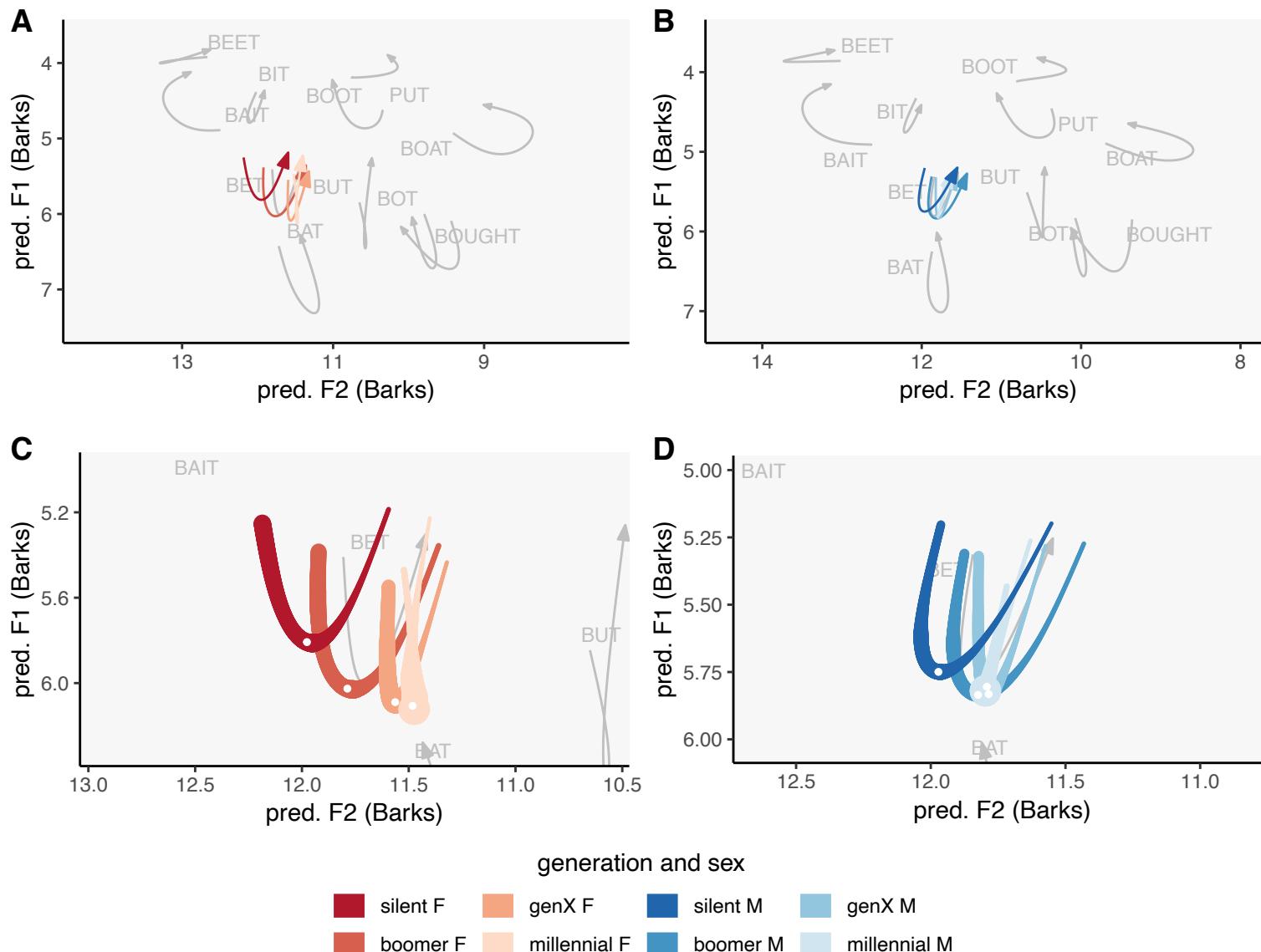
BAT

- Continuous and relatively constant change over 4(+) generations.
- First half (onset–midpoint) lowered and then retracted.
- Women consistently ahead of the men.



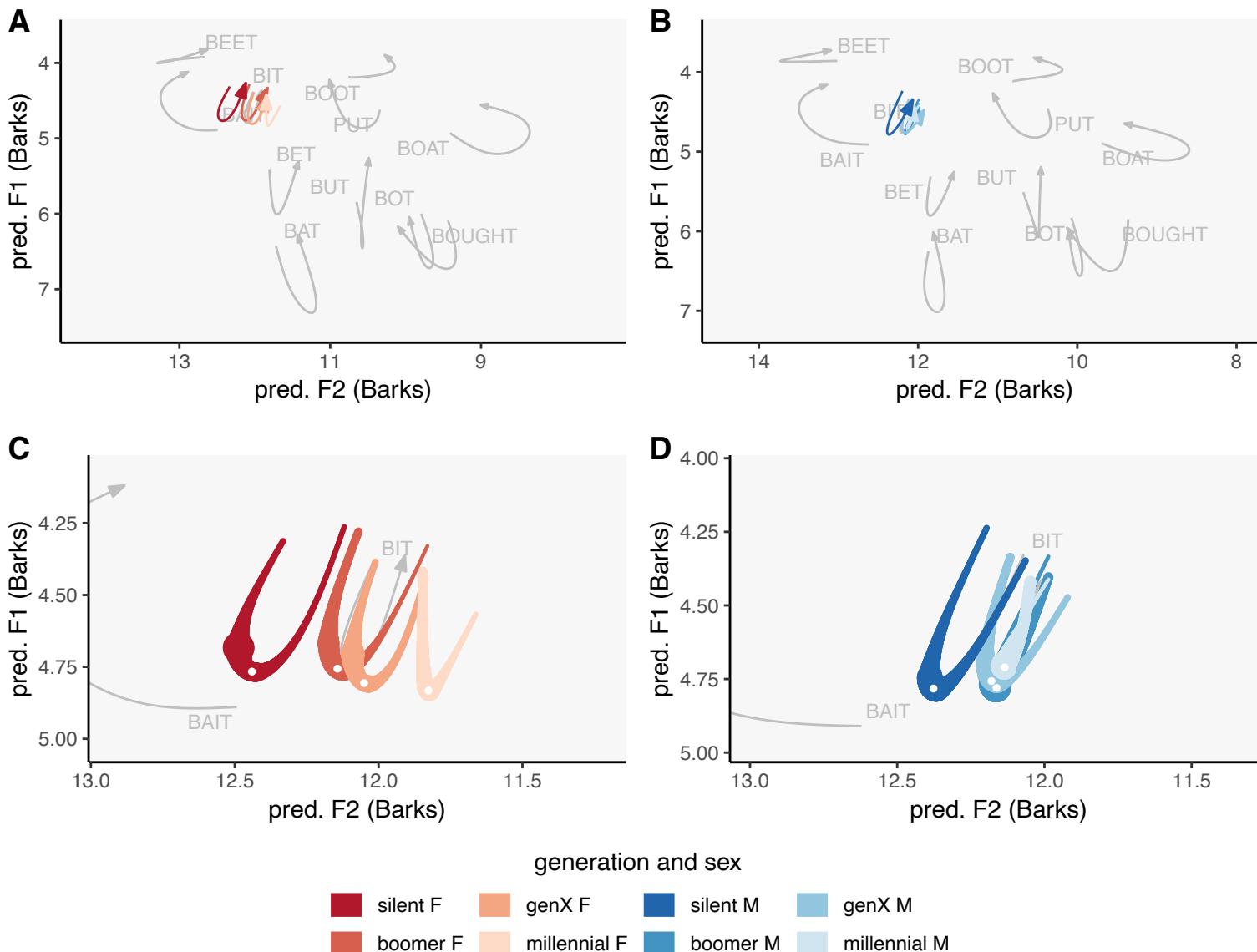
BET

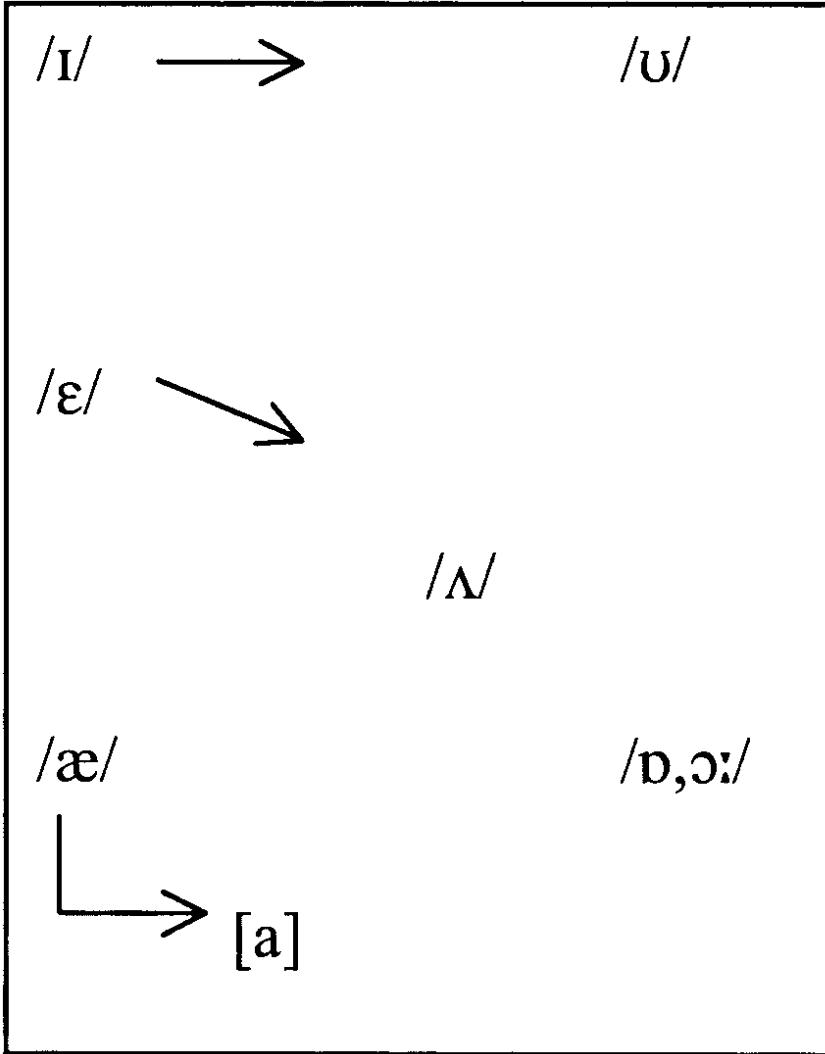
- Women are lowering and retracting.
- Everyone is changing trajectory shape.
- Change started with Boomers.



BIT

- Women retract somewhat.
- Men show little change.



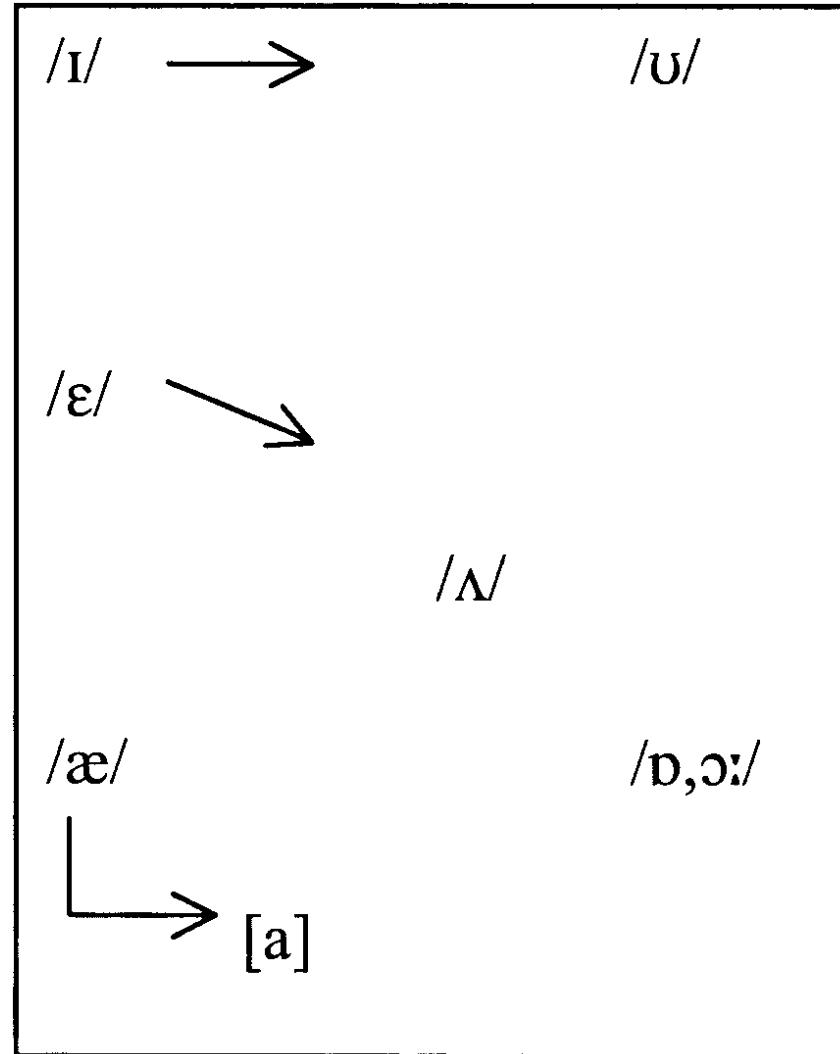


The Elsewhere Shift in Montreal—and Cowlitz County.
From Boberg (2005:149)

after 1980
same time as the economic collapse

~1950

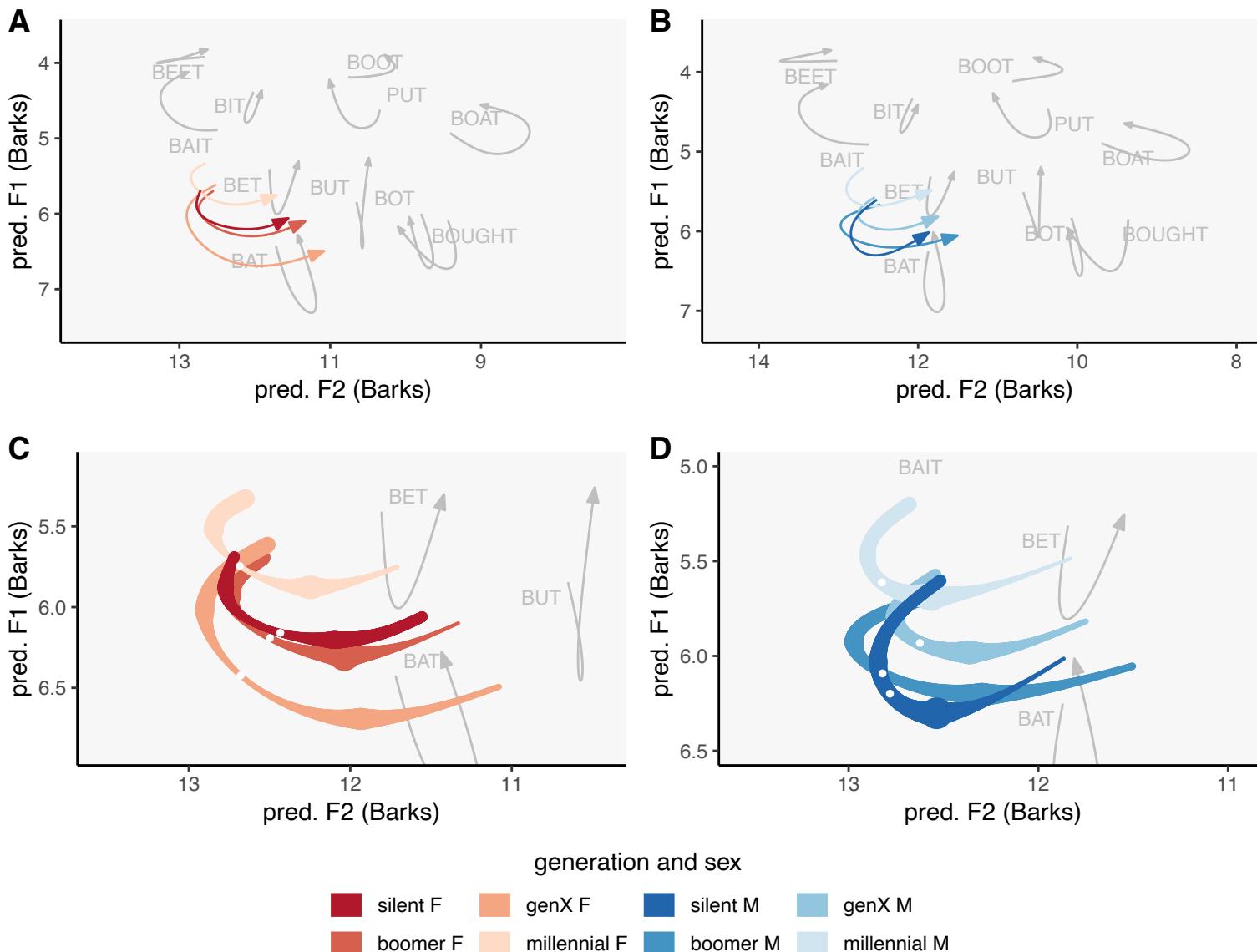
(before) 1930
same time Longview was founded

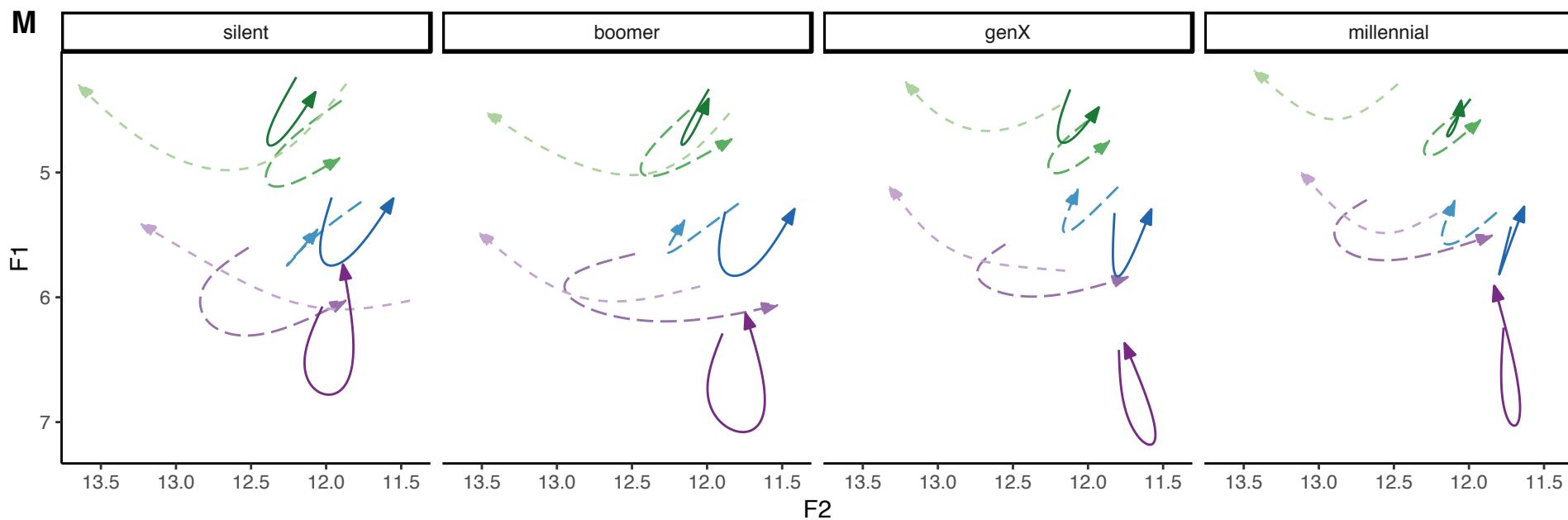
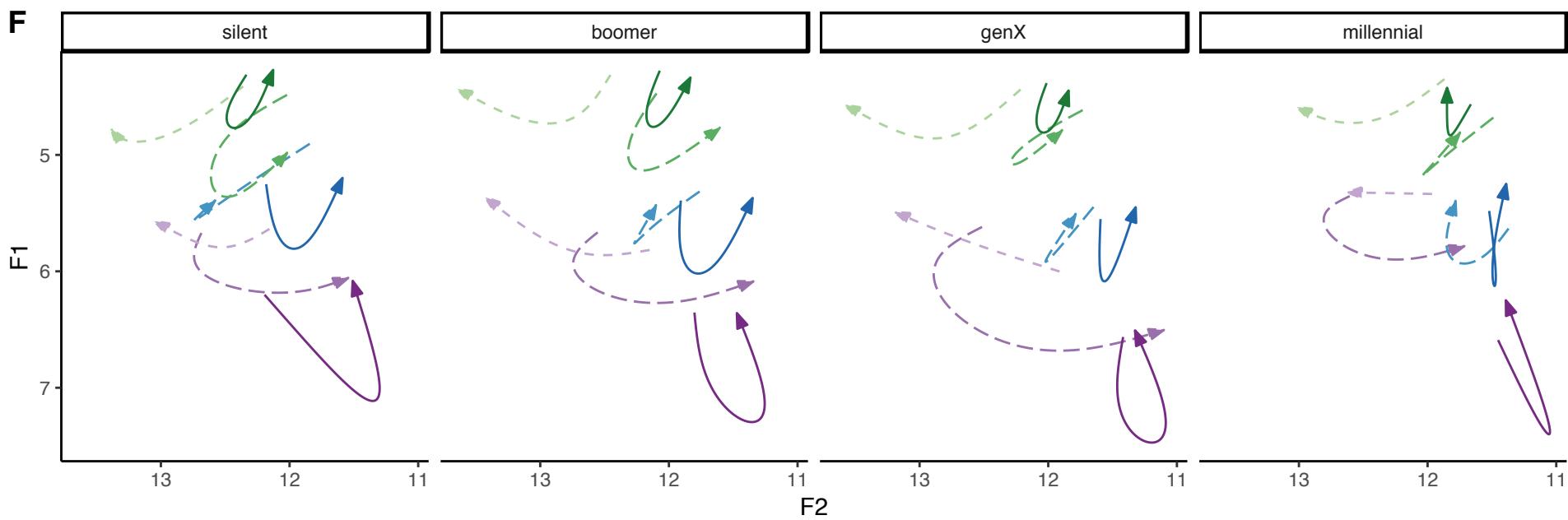


The Elsewhere Shift in Montreal—and Cowlitz County.
From Boberg (2005:149)

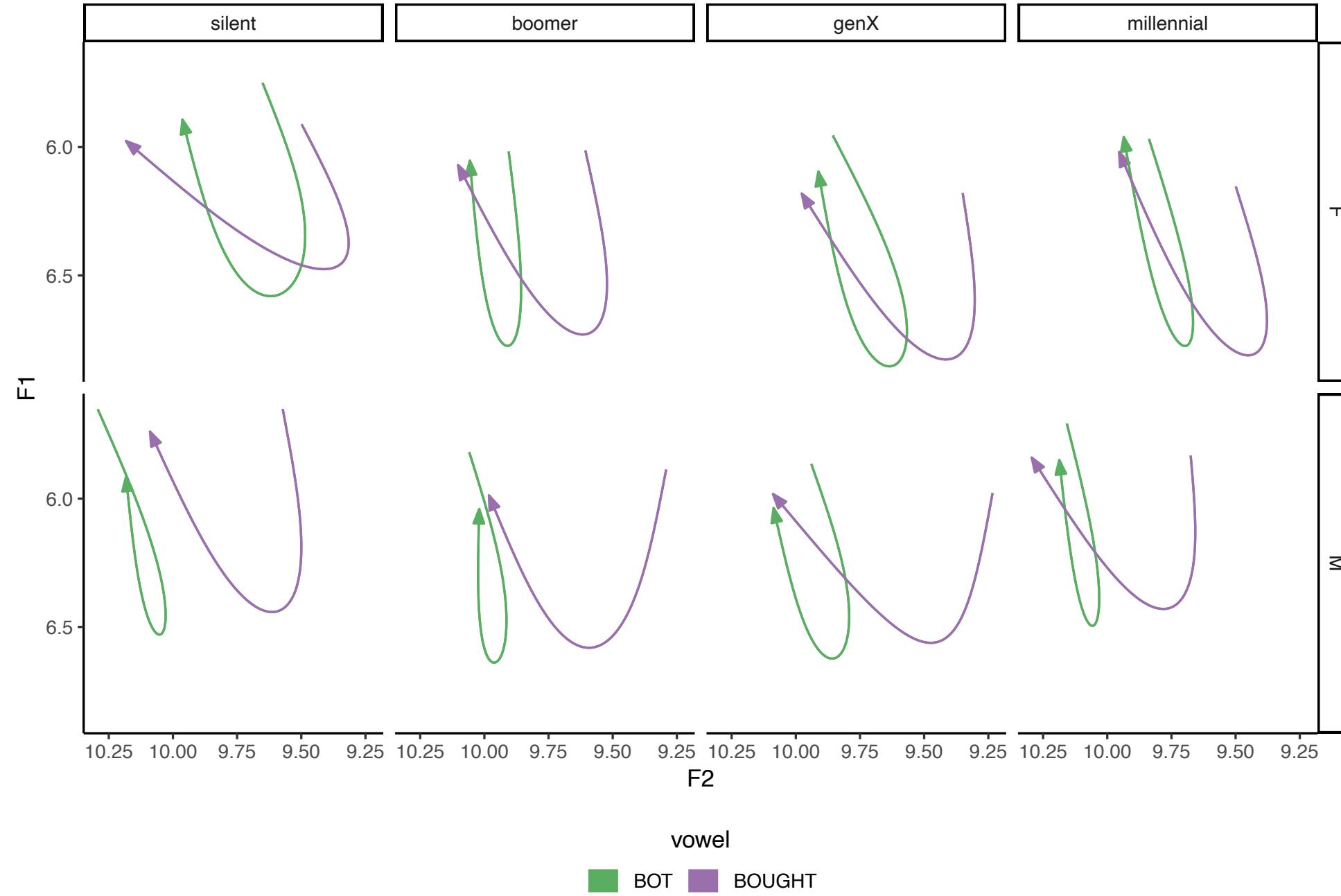
BAN

- Phonetically, raised and quite dynamic.
- Women were stable, then lowered, then drastically raised.
- Men gradually raised it.





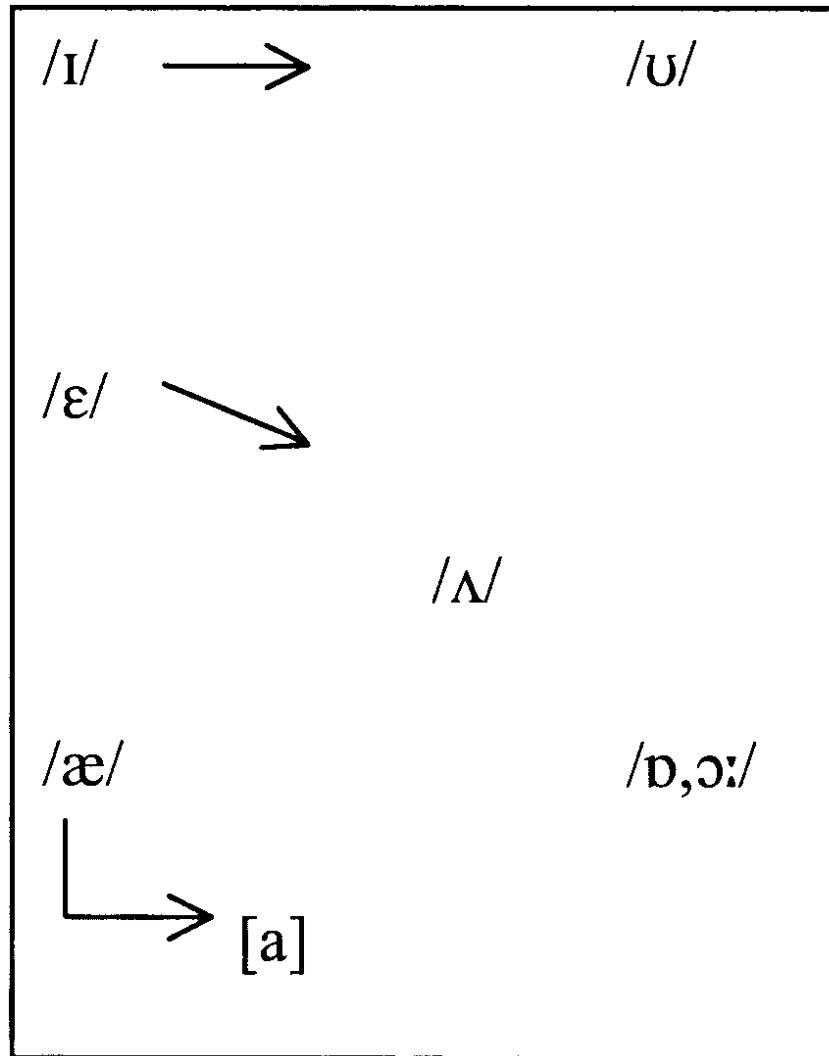
→	BIT	→	BET	→	BAT
vowel	—	—	—	—	—
—>	BIN	—>	BEN	—>	BAN
—>	BING	—>	BANG	—>	



after 1980
same time as the economic collapse

~1950

(before) 1930
same time Longview was founded



before 1930
same time Cowlitz
County was settled?

The Elsewhere Shift in Montreal—and Cowlitz County.
From Boberg (2005:149)

Discussion

Generational Divide

I mean, downtown Longview back in the day was fun. There was really a lot to do.

– “Kevin” b. 1967

We’re boring. Kelso’s boring. Like, honestly, I think Kelso sucks. Just, Kelso is so boring like I want to change Kelso so badly.

– “Jessica” b. 1998

Portland

“Is Portland as weird as it seems on Portlandia?”

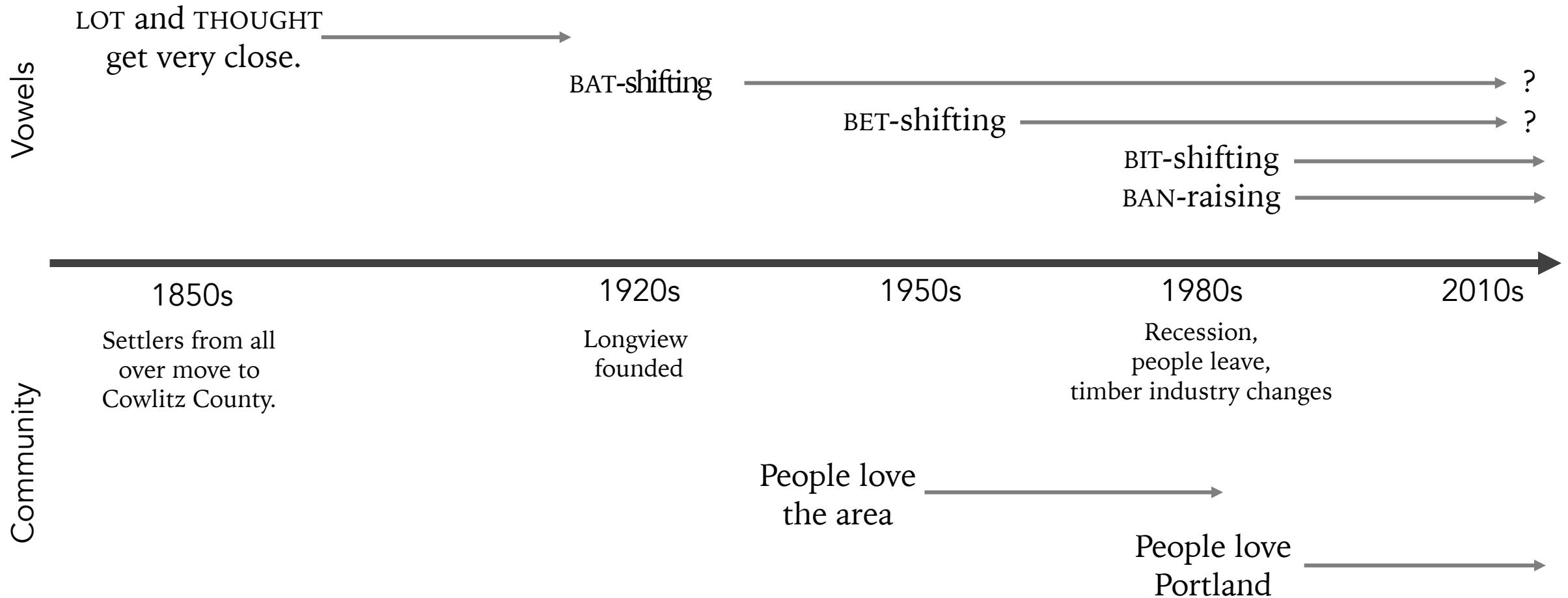
Portland's weird...yeah, Portland is, um, very eclectic. Very eclectic... Growing up as a kid I don't remember thinking that Portland was all that weird... [or] being quite as odd as it has become as now, yeah.

– “Shane” b. 1971

[laughs] Yeah, definitely, oh yeah. Yep. Yeah, I love that. I love that about Portland, that it's as weird as it is. Uh, I don't know, it just seems like- it almost seems like it's another hub of the world, right?

– “Sean” b. 1985

Changing Community → Changing Vowels



Conclusions

Contributions

- The Elsewhere Shift is in Washington (and has been for a while).
- In Cowlitz County, the Elsewhere Shift is a pull chain, beginning with the (near) merger of LOT and THOUGHT, ultimately triggered and aided by:
 - major events and their subsequent demographic shifts
 - place reorientation from inward to outward
- It didn't (straightforwardly) spread from California or Canada
 - possibly independently developed
 - possibly from the same source as California and Canada
 - its spread northward helped though
- Methodologically, GAMMs illuminated variation and change in trajectories in the Elsewhere Shift.

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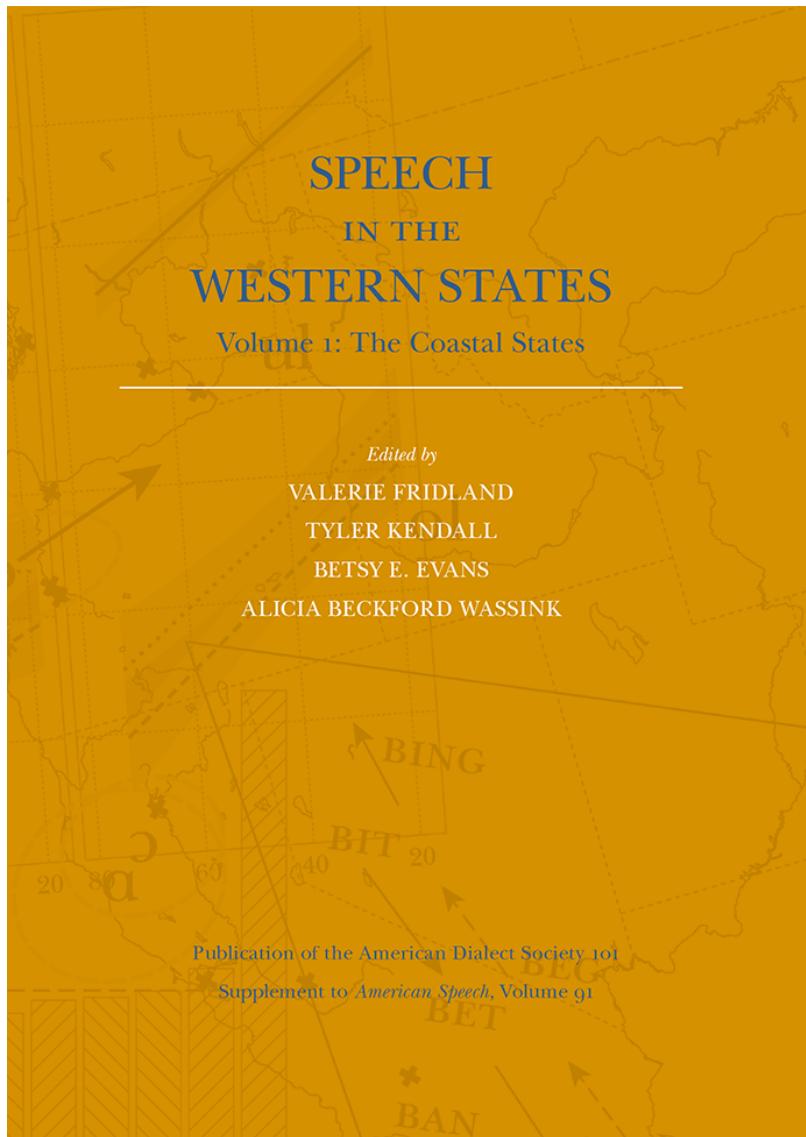
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Thanks for attending!

A current version of this study can be found at
joeystanley.com/dissertation

Thanks to the UGA Graduate School Dean's Award for funding fieldwork.

Bonus Slides

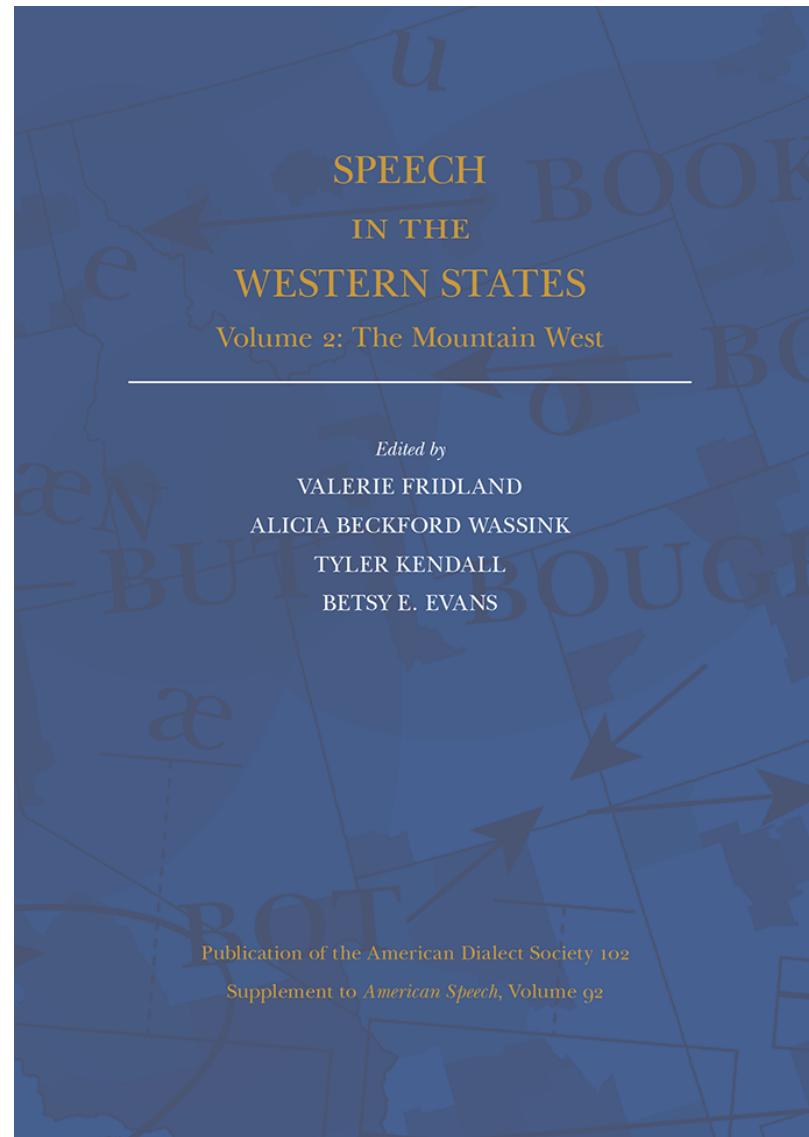


Regardless of what we uncover as we move forward, it is clear that speech in the West is dynamic and changing, and there will be plenty to keep dialectologists busy in the coming years.

◀ Fridland et al. (2016:164)

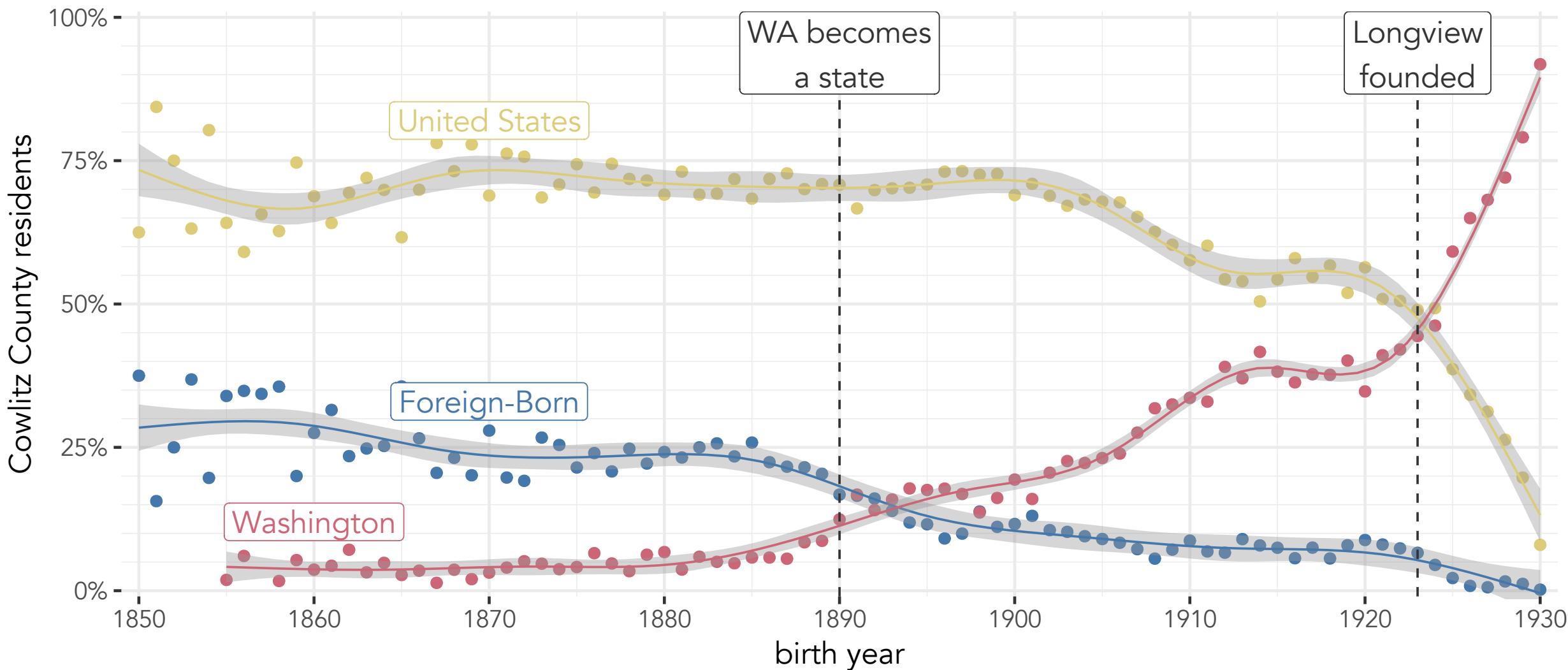
So, now the vowels of the West are perhaps not so wild as we once thought, but there is much left along the Western frontier for future generations of dialectologists to explore.

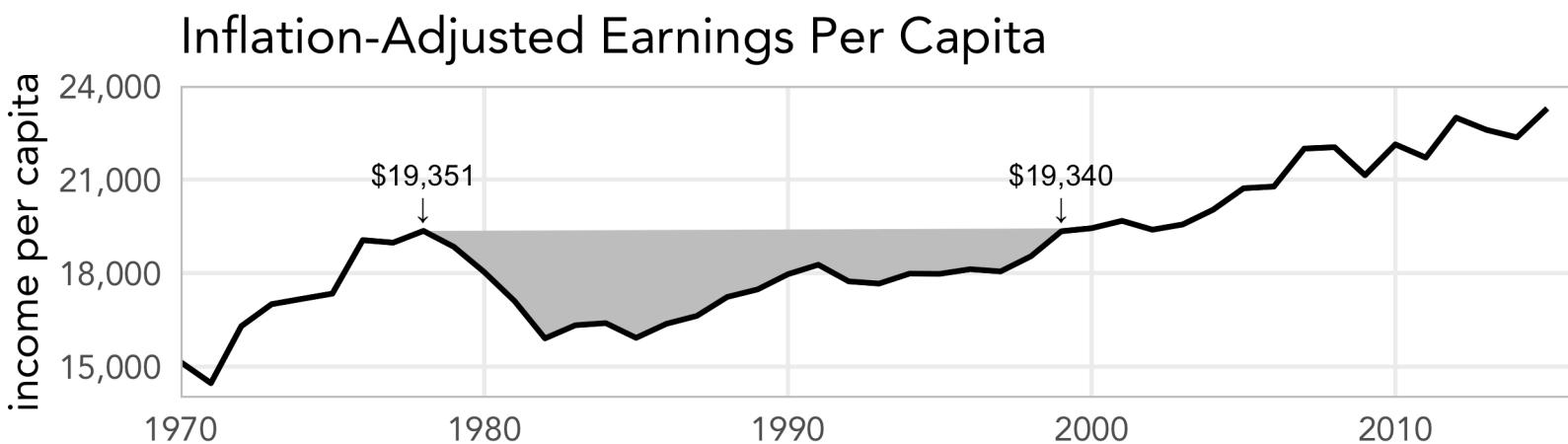
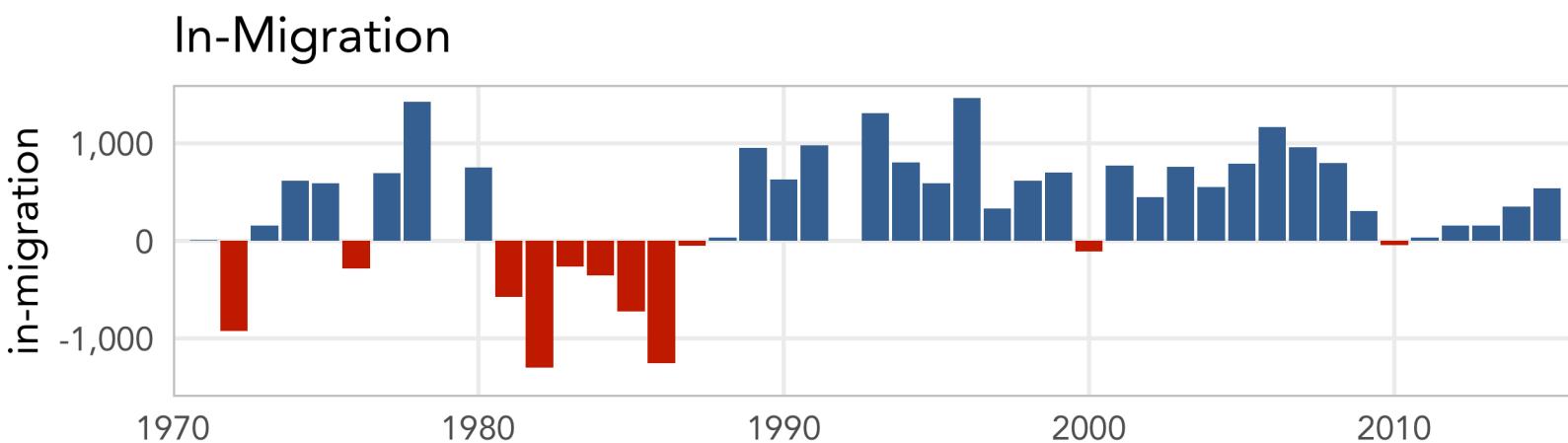
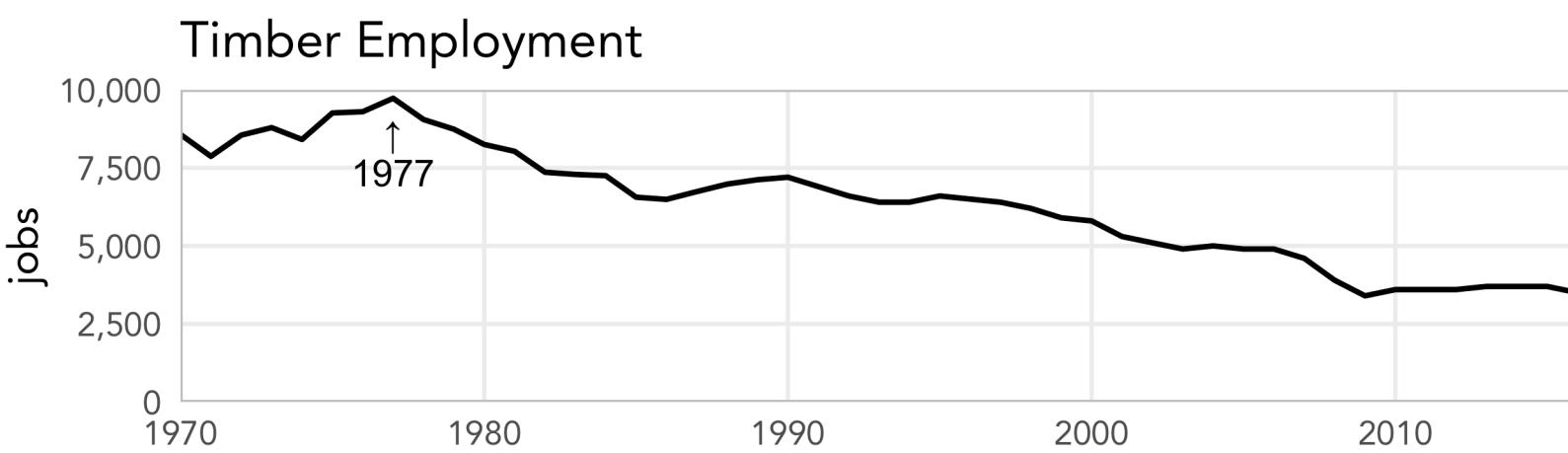
Fridland et al. (2017:173) ►



Cowlitz County residents' places of origin over time

Based on the 1930 census





Data Analysis

[T]he quality of most English vowels can be adequately represented by the frequency of their first and second formants, reflecting their height and advancement, respectively.

– Labov, Ash, & Boberg (2006:37)

Generational Divide

It appears that the town is divided into two groups...
The older generation grew up in a beloved, picturesque
small town while the younger generation grew up in a
town of unemployment, drug abuse, and an aging
population.

– Stanley (2018: 144)

I grew up in good times. The sixties was a good era, the
seventies was good, eighties. And then it started going
down the tube.

– “Ed” b. 1949

