

*“Interdental-stopping among Older-aged Bilingual and Monolingual
Finnish- and Italian-heritage Upper Peninsula Michiganders”*

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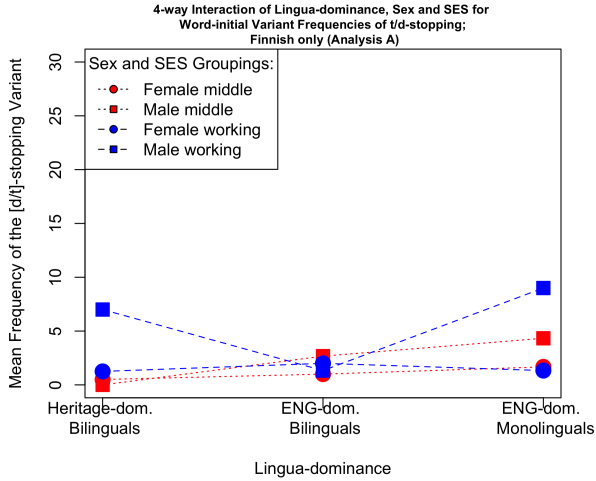
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The realization of interdental fricatives as coronal oral stops, referred to as interdental-stopping, is often attributed to substrate effects of ethnicity and immigrant-heritage. Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (UP) is an excellent case to examine this feature’s complex variation within bilingual and monolingual older-aged cross-sections of a rural immigrant speech community. To what degree, if any, is interdental-stopping occurring among Michigan’s UP Finnish- and Italian-heritage speech communities? Interdental-stopping has been documented in UP English [3, 2], but only a more recent report has provided any quantitative account that tracks this salient feature and its sociophonetic trends within the community [1].

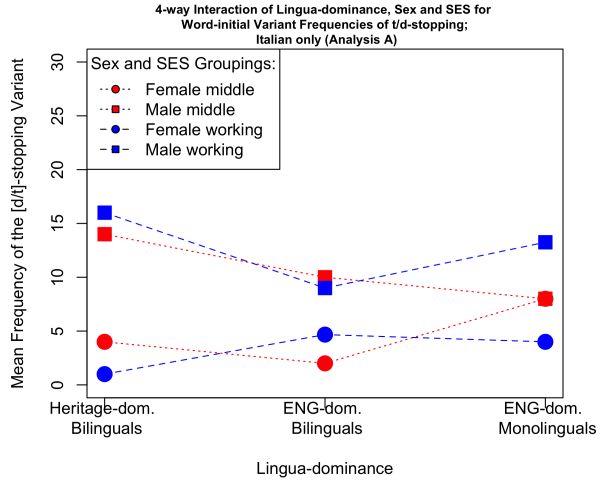
The present study examines this feature among 41 Finnish-Americans and 30 Italian-Americans, whom are all older-aged residents from Michigan’s Marquette County. Both samples are stratified by gender, socioeconomic status and lingua-dominance. All data is obtained from a reading passage task.

This study reveals interdental-stopping occurring most often among Italian working-class males and least among English-dominant bilinguals (see Figure 1). Such findings goes beyond the claim that this feature of UP English indexes working-class [2]. Interdental-stopping indexes working-class masculinity – held with prestige and used by older-aged, working-class males, primarily among Italians, as a linguistic marker of local identity in the UP English speech community.

Word count: 200/200



(a) Finnish



(b) Italian

Figure 1: Mean frequency of interdental-stopping of each heritage group stratified by sex, socioeconomic status and lingua-dominance

REFERENCES

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