A Convergence of Dialects in the St. Louis Corridor

Lauren A. Friedman

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Abstract

In the study of dialect geography, boundaries of many types appear at the edges of dialects (ANAE, Dinkin 2013). However, the disruption of a dialect boundary at a single point by a non-linguistic change does not necessarily change the dialect boundary but creates a new type. The present study examines the influence of the Inland North dialect on the St. Louis Corridor, a geographically Midland area located between Chicago and St. Louis across the state of Illinois. The Corridor is also the home of Route 66, which in 1926 was the first paved highway in Illinois. In analyzing data from original interviews, the Atlas of North American English (Labov, Ash, and Boberg 2006), and archival resources (Wood 1996), I situate the Inland North influence in time, namely for those born in the 1920's through 1940's. Based on corroborating evidence from population statistics, traffic patterns, and the history of Route 66, I demonstrate a timeline for Inland North influence and how it interacts with the Midland features. I also show that the Inland North influence rises and retreats alongside a major change in transportation patterns from water to land (cf. Trudgill 1974 for a similar dialectal change). Based upon the distinctions between the findings in this study and other situations of dialect boundaries, I propose a new boundary type: a dialect "breach."

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1 Introduction

The current study of the St. Louis Corridor follows a long tradition of case studies analyzing the geography of sociolinguistic variation. Labov, Ash and Boberg's (2006) Atlas of North American English [ANAE] is the largest scale analysis of the dialects across North America and gives a cohesive view of the dialect boundaries across the US and Canada. Although dialectal variation is maintained and evolves without direct contact with another dialect, change as a result of dialect contact can occur very rapidly (Johnson 2007). In addition, evidence of dialect retreat at boundaries has been found (i.e., Dinkin 2009, Evanini 2009). In the current study, I show that a long-established dialect boundary, the North-Midland boundary, was perforated by a wave of dialectal influence, creating a new type of dialect boundary.

The St. Louis Corridor is the area located between Chicago and St. Louis on a diagonal across the state of Illinois. The Corridor roughly follows the path of Route 66, the first paved highway in Illinois and the precursor to modern I-55. The Corridor is also situated geographically in the Midland dialect region, which contains a diverse set of dialect features. Route 66 connects this primarily rural strip of land to two major metropolitan centers: Chicago and St. Louis. Chicago, at the northeast end, is located in the Inland North dialect region. Speakers in that area demonstrate features of the Northern Cities Shift (NCS), a series of vowel movements found in the cities of the upper Midwest (Labov, Yaeger and Steiner 1972, Labov et al. 2006). In the Midland dialect region, speakers demonstrate a number of common features but there is no single cohesive dialect.

Although geographically distinct from the Inland North, speakers from the area stretching between Chicago and St. Louis also have demonstrated use of the NCS features. Speakers from St. Louis and the remainder of the Corridor, on the other hand, have previously shown some indications of NCS features (Labov et al. 2006, Labov 2007, Murray 1993, Murray 2002, Bigham 2010) in addition to Midland features (Habick 1980, 1993). The current study provides evidence for the NCS influence in the Corridor and its relationship with overlapping Midland influence spanning a hundred year period. Analysis of the vowel systems of Corridor speakers shows a more detailed geographic distribution of NCS and Midland dialect features. The following analysis is based upon a corpus of 95 speakers from a combination of sources: original interviews, ANAE recordings, and oral history archival recordings. In examining 9 dialect features (Midland and NCS) from these 95 speakers, a consistent pattern emerges that allows a glimpse into the transportation and communication patterns of the past that is absent from population studies.

This study of the Corridor dialect also differs from past studies in critical ways. First, although other studies have attributed dialectal features found in the Corridor to influence from Chicago or the Inland North generally, dialectal influence in this study can be most directly linked to a change in transportation patterns. Analysis of these speakers demonstrates that the NCS appeared in the early 20th century, coinciding with the paving of Route 66, then retreated with subsequent bypassing of cities on that route. Most importantly, instead of showing a more typical dialect boundary between two geographically distinct areas, the Inland North influence may be better described as a dialectal "breach" of the Midland area. Though the Midland dialect gradually increased in the Corridor over time, the Inland North dialect (a series of vowel movements called the Northern Cities Shift) made a generation-long appearance along a heavily traveled route before reversing almost entirely. In that way, the NCS influence does not move along a dialect boundary in expected ways, instead showing far-reaching influence limited to a short period of time.

2 Background

2.1 Dialect Boundary vs. "Breach"

When there are multiple dialects found within a broad geographical area, a dialect boundary of some type exists between those dialects. In considering the eastern boundary of the Inland North in upstate New York, Dinkin (2013) references four different types of dialect boundaries:

1. A *sharp* boundary, where speakers of each dialect do not have any features in common.
2. A *gradual* boundary, where dialectal features are reduced for speakers living near the boundary.
3. An area of *overlapping* dialectal boundaries, where speakers near the boundary either show features of both dialects or within the same community some speakers will show features of one dialect or another.
4. A *null* boundary, where the two dialects do not meet and speakers in the dialect valley do not show features specific to either of the surrounding regions.

In many geographical areas, the dialect boundaries have shifted over time. For example, Evanini's (2009) study of Erie, Pennsylvania showed movement of Midland characteristics into a formerly Northern area. In some areas, dialect boundaries are fairly stable over time. For instance, The North-Midland boundary specifically is a well-studied and established dialect boundary. Since the mid-20th century, study after study has reiterated the strength of the North-Midland dialect boundary using lexical, phonological, and syntactic dialect characteristics (Kurath 1949, Kurath and McDavid 1961, Carver 1987, Frazer 1993, Labov et al. 2006, Thomas 2010). Thomas in particular found the North-Midland to be particularly stable over time in northern Ohio. Using 8 phonological isoglosses and lexical data from the DARE, ANAE demonstrates nearly identical isoglosses across northern Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio (Labov et al. 2006:207).

Because the NCS and the Midland dialect coexist in the same geographic area, the type of dialect boundary of the four above that seems most appropriate is an overlapping boundary. As I will show in the analysis of the Corridor data, there are speakers with features of both dialects and speakers without features of either dialect, which matches the definition of overlapping boundaries. However, in most cases of overlapping dialect boundaries, one boundary is moving toward another or both boundaries are moving toward one another. Because they are overlapping at the edges, this boundary appears to move more or less in parallel. As I will demonstrate in Section 4.3, the dialects in the Corridor show a dialectal puncture in the boundary, showing less of an overlap of dialects than between dialects in a single area.

2.2 Midland Dialect

The Midland dialect region covers the area south of the Inland North and north of the Ohio River. The eastern and western boundaries are less clear, as it has been described as stretching either from eastern Ohio through central Kansas (Labov et al. 2006:148), or from Pittsburgh to St. Louis (Boberg and Strassel 2000:108). Historically, the people living in this area come from a number of locations: the Upland South (Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee), the eastern North Midland (Pennsylvania and New Jersey), and New England (Frazer 1986:143).

The ANAE describes the Midland dialect as lacking the homogeneity that dialects in the North and South show (Labov et al. 2006:263). According to ANAE analysis, many Midland dialect features are the default features and local sound changes are more common than larger dialect features. Likewise, past studies of the Midland dialect in different parts of the region have demonstrated a number of features, but no across-the-board commonalities. Friedman 2014 takes a detailed look at seven separate studies and the ANAE, ultimately finding that six features were the most common: post-coronal /uw/ fronting, /ʌ/ fronting, /ow/ fronting, a conditioned low-back merger, /aw/ fronting, and the nasal system.[1] Table 1 below details the studies of the Midland and

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[1]/u/ fronting is also spreading in Farmer City, IL (Habick 1980, 1993), but this change did not appear in other Midland studies.

the most common dialect features found in the Midland, including studies that show the dialect features as incoming changes. Although these features are the most common in the Midland, none

	/Kuw/ fronting	/ʌ/ fronting	/ow/ fronting	Conditioned low-back	/aw/ fronting	Nasal system
Midland (Labov et al. 2006)	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Midland (Kurath and McDavid 1961)					✓	
Northern Ohio (Thomas 2010)	(born after 1910)	✓		✓		
Columbus, OH (Durian 2012)	(born after 1945)	✓	✓	(born before 1937)		(born after 1970)
Indianapolis, IN (Fogle 2008)	✓		(born after 1982)	✓		✓
Farmer City, IL (Habick 1980, 1993)	✓	✓	(born after 1950)			
McDonough C, IL (Frazer 1983)					(born after 1923)	
Cincinnati, OH (Boberg and Strassel 2000)						(born after 1965)

Table 1: A summary of known Midland dialect features or changes in progress by location (Friedman 2014:18). For changes in progress, age ranges have been noted.

are consistently present across the region. This is in contrast to the Inland North, where Labov (2007) found the NCS to be consistently demonstrated by speakers from all areas of the region.

Although the variation present across the Midland makes it difficult to pin down which features would be the most applicable to this study, two studies have analyzed the Midland dialect in Illinois in the last few decades. Habick's (1980, 1993) study analyzes speech in Farmer City, a small town in central Illinois northeast of Springfield and near the Route 66 area. Habick focuses on the presence of /uw/, /ow/, /ʌ/, and /u/ fronting, particularly in relation to the Southern or South Midland dialects. Frazer's (1983) study of McDonough County in Western Illinois near the Missouri border finds /aw/ fronting and raising to be increasing mainly in the speech of men in the more urban areas. Frazer attributes this increase to covert prestige of the variable, in addition to migration away from the rural and into the urban areas following World War II.

However frequently these dialect features are associated with the Midland, these vowel movements do not exist in a dialectal vacuum. Therefore, not all of these features can be used to approximate the Midland influence on speakers, in part because of the interactions of specific vowels with NCS features. The methodology in Section 3 discusses which features will be used in this analysis as measures of the Midland dialect.

2.3 Northern Cities Shift

The St. Louis Corridor may be located geographically in the Midland, but it also shows a presence of dialect features known as the "Northern Cities Shift" (NCS). The NCS is a chain shift of vowels that have been found in the dialect of the large Midwestern cities situated around the Great Lakes, called the "Inland North" (Labov, Yaeger and Steiner 1972, Labov et al. 2006). The presence of the NCS in the Inland North was first recognized in academia under different names in the 1950's and 1960's (Kurath and McDavid 1961, Marckwardt 1957, and Allen 1964). As Labov (1994) points out, Fasold (1969) was the first to recognize this combination of vowel movements in an unpublished paper. Using data from Shuy, Wolfram and Riley's (1966) Detroit study, Fasold demonstrates the raising of /æ/ and the fronting of /o/ and /oh/. However, the NCS is a more complex and broader system than those three vowels alone. The NCS, as described in the ANAE, is a clockwise chain shift of 6 vowels: /æ/, /o/, /oh/, /ʌ/, /e/, and /i/,[2] as demonstrated in Figure 1.

Despite the strength of the NCS in the Inland North shown in the ANAE, not all studies show a significant increase of NCS vowels in the Inland North over time. For instance, Dinkin

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[2]The characters /o/, /oh/, /e/ and /i/ refer approximately to the International Phonetic Alphabet symbols /ɑ/, /ɔ:/, /ɛ/, and /ɪ/. For a visual representation of the NCS features used in this study, see Figure 2.
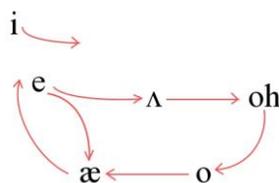
Figure 1: The Northern Cities Shift.

(2009) finds two New York communities to be receding from the NCS. After considering a number of other towns with differing amounts of NCS criteria in apparent time, Dinkin concludes that both Cooperstown and Sidney, "fringe" Inland North communities in upstate New York, are retreating from the NCS, giving the increased contact with non-NCS speakers as an explanation for the retreat (110). In addition, in their study of speakers from three different dialect groups (the Inland North, Midlands, and Inland South), Jacewicz et al. (2011) find a pattern of retreat similar to Upstate New York. In particular, for those from Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Inland North), their results show a significant /æ/ lowering over successive generations as well as some /i/ fronting for the youngest group. Although the speakers in each study are in different edges of the Inland North, in both of these studies, speakers are retreating from the NCS.

Multiple studies that have touched upon the Corridor have found traces of the NCS present. Labov 2007 finds that each of the nine Corridor speakers analyzed in the ANAE show at least one NCS feature and Bigham 2010 finds Corridor speakers more similar to Chicago speakers than those from Southern Illinois. In addition, Labov 2007 finds NCS features correlate with age in the Inland North but no such correlation for the Corridor, the same distribution Stanford and Kenny 2013 predict using an agent-based simulation. Both Murray (1993, 2002) and the ANAE also found evidence of the NCS in St. Louis. Each of these studies cited above attribute the NCS presence to influence from or contact with Chicago or elsewhere in the Inland North.

2.4 Route 66

When considering the St. Louis Corridor in a historical or social context, the most salient piece of the area's history is Route 66. The first major mode of transit across the state was the Illinois and Michigan Canal (I&M), located to the north and west of the Corridor. At the time, roads were either gravel or dirt and driving took much longer than today. When the Illinois portion of Route 66 was completed in 1926, it was Illinois' first paved highway, connecting Chicago to the West through St. Louis. Instead of diverting traffic around populated centers the way a modern highway might, Route 66 originally connected the small towns between Chicago, Springfield, and St. Louis (Cassity 2004:61). The Great Depression also saw a large migration out of cities and into less populated areas. Sublett (p.c.) argues that during the Great Depression, people were likely not moving towards populated areas, like Chicago, but instead towards farmland and direct food sources. [3]

However, in the 1950's and 1960s, Route 66 was widened from a two-lane to a four-lane highway (Cassity 2004:238–9), allowing for more traffic and bypassing small towns (Heritage Research 2013:7-8). It is possible that this resulted in less interaction between the people who lived and worked on Route 66 and outsiders. By 1977, Route 66 was completely converted into modern Interstate 55 (I-55) while the original Route 66 remained as a local and historic scenic roadway. Eventually Route 66 became a tourist destination and today many visitors drive Route 66 to drive on it, either in sections or as a whole.

3 Methodology

The analysis in the current study is based upon a corpus of 95 speakers: 56 interviews conducted in 2011 and 2012 (48 from in-person interviews and 8 from phone interviews), 15 ANAE inter-

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[3]Dr. Michael Sublett is a professor in the Department of Geography-Geology at Illinois State University.

views (2 not transcribed in the original study, one re-transcribed for this study), and 24 interviews from oral history archives. The scripts for the phone interview and the in-person interview were based upon the TELSUR phone interviews from the ANAE and Q-Gen-II (Labov 1984). The in-person interviews conducted for this study were recorded on an M-Audio Microtrack Pocket Recorder and phone interviews were conducted through Skype and recorded through the Audio Hijack Pro computer program. 83 of these interviews were transcribed using the ELAN program (Brugman and Russel 2004), then vowels were forced-aligned and extracted using the FAVE program suite (Rosenfelder, Fruehwald, Evanini and Yuan 2011).[4]

In order to increase the time depth of this study, a number of oral histories that are publicly available online from the University of Illinois Springfield Archives Oral History Collections (Wood 1996) and the Historical Society of Missouri Oral History Collection were also analyzed. These 39 additional interview subjects, ranging in interview dates from 1972 to 1998, allowed me to look 26 years farther backwards in time to 1896 and strengthened findings.

The analysis in this study uses the normalized measurements produced by the FAVE program using the Lobanov (1971) method (.pll files). After alignment and extraction, I hand-checked outlying vowels for accuracy before vowel means were calculated. The number of vowels extracted for each speaker varied based upon a number of factors, including length of interview and type of interview (phone interviews generally had less speech than in-person interviews), but 500–1,500 vowels were measured for each speaker, averaging 933.[5] In the end, the 95 Corridor speakers analyzed each had an average of 408 tokens.

Additionally, the analysis looks at dialect features, dividing measurements by whether they satisfy specific criteria. The following criteria, taken from ANAE and the studies mentioned in Table 1, are used in this study to determine whether a speaker has a specific dialect feature and are visual representation in the vowel space (Figure 2):

NCS

1. $F_1(æ) < 700$ Hz (AE1)
2. $F_1(æ) > F_1(e)$ & $F_2(æ) > F_2(e)$ (EQ)
3. $F_2(o) – F_2(e) < 375$ Hz (ED)
4. $F_2(o) > 1450$ Hz (O2)
5. $F_2(\Lambda) > F_2(o)$ (UD)

Midland

1. $F_2(Kuw) > 1600$
2. $F_2(ow) > 1200$
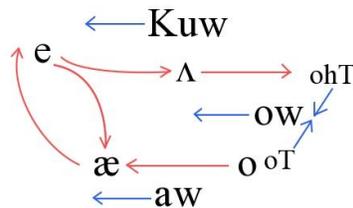3. $F_2(aw) > 1600$
4. t-test of /o/ & /oh/

Figure 2: The NCS (red) and Midland (blue) vowel movements analyzed in the current study.

Although /ʌ/ fronting and the /æ/ nasal system were analyzed in past studies of the Midland, the current study does not consider them to be Midland criteria. The /æ/ nasal system, though common throughout the Midland, is not a Midland-specific feature. Also, because a key feature of the Inland North is /ʌ/ backing, it would be difficult if not impossible to separate out the forces of Midland /ʌ/ fronting and Inland North /ʌ/ backing. Therefore, throughout this study, I will focus on the remaining four Midland features: the fronting of vowels /ow/, /Kuw/ (/uw/ following non-

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[4] The remaining 12 interviews used data from the ANAE and were not re-analyzed because of poor sound quality on the digitized recordings.

[5] A number of interviews could not be included in the analysis because of lack of speech, including an in-person interview and a number of additional ANAE interviews. Not all of the tokens collected were used in the analysis either; specifically, vowels before /r/ and laterals, vowels without primary stress, and non-content words (based upon those specified in Plotnik (Labov 2011)) were excluded and only 8 vowels were analyzed (/æ ʌ oh o e ow Kuw aw/).

coronal consonants), and /aw/, as well as the conditioned low-back merger, which are present throughout the Midland region.

4 Results

4.1 The Role of Route 66 in Corridor Speech

For each speaker, both the NCS and Midland features were analyzed. Analysis of Corridor speakers in this study shows a number of NCS features present in their speech. Most of the speakers with the most NCS features are those who grew up in the largest cities, Springfield and St. Louis. Figure 3 shows that while a handful of speakers who grew up in the other medium-sized cities
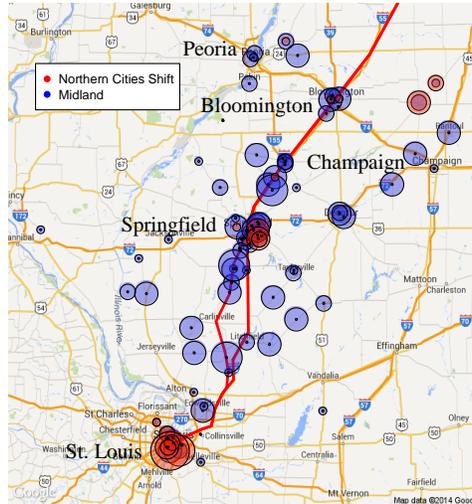

Figure 3: Map of the dialect of 95 speakers in the St. Louis Corridor according to the number of NCS (red) and Midland (blue) features each showed.

(Bloomington, Champaign and Peoria), Springfield and St. Louis have the largest concentration of speakers with NCS features (red). On the other hand, speakers with Midland variables (blue) are fairly evenly distributed across the area, both on and off Route 66. In fact, when speakers are divided into location in relation to Route 66, as in Figure 4, a few trends appear. First, for speakers who grew up along Route 66, the NCS variables are present for only a generation. Figure 4 shows a large increase in the number of NCS features for Route 66 speakers born in the 1920's to the 1940's (solid red line). All 5 NCS features, but the earliest is /æ/ raising and the most common is the reversal of /o/ and /ʌ/. In addition, speakers demonstrating NCS variables from off Route 66 (solid blue line) were born later: 1949, 1952 and 1968.

In addition, the observation that the Midland dialect is evenly spread throughout the region is borne out over time. The hatched lines in Figure 4, representing the speakers on (red) and off (blue) of Route 66 respectively, are fairly equal over time, especially for speakers born after 1930. Before 1930, speakers off of Route 66 do demonstrate use of the Midland variables at a slightly higher rate than Route 66 speakers, but their use rises in parallel over time. In fact, when the Midland feature use dips at the same time NCS variables rise, all speakers have the same Midland usage. In fact, it is striking how the rise of NCS variables and dip in Midland variables coincides. The Midland variables used in this study do not include those that directly interact with NCS variables.[6] Additionally, the NCS measure of /ʌ/ backing is in relation to /o/ fronting. Therefore, it appears as though the speakers themselves are either internally decreasing their use of Midland

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[6]For a previous attempt to tease out the overlap that does exist between NCS and Midland variables in the vowel space, see Friedman 2014:114−154.
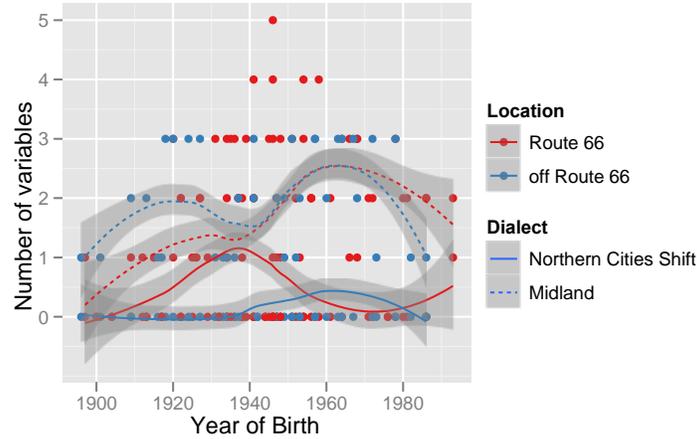
Figure 4: Average number of Midland and NCS variables satisfied by year of birth, divided into those living on Route 66 and those not living on Route 66 [N=95] (Friedman 2014:46).

variables to accommodate the NCS features, or this is happening as a result of fewer Midland speakers migrating to the Corridor.

4.2 Population Movement and its Effect on Dialect Spread

The resulting dialectal trends described above contribute to a larger narrative of Corridor migration patterns. As discussed in Section 2.3, previous studies of the Corridor have separately concluded that there was some NCS influence or that the Corridor dialect was more similar to the Inland North than other areas of Illinois. The main findings from Section 4.3 include:

1. Despite the large increase in NCS features for Route 66 speakers, those off Route 66 show no evidence of NCS features during the same time period.
2. The Midland dialect decreases slightly for all speakers at about the same time as the NCS increase, but more notably for off Route 66 speakers.
3. Midland dialect features do not show the same distinction on and off Route 66: similarly aged speakers had approximately the same amount of Midland features regardless of location (Figure 4) and were geographically spread out (Figure 3).

Combined with the social history of the Corridor (Section 2.4), the dialectal findings from this study point to a story of influence and retreat. NCS influence from the Inland North likely initially spread to the Corridor from the Inland North as a result of the paving of Route 66 in 1926. The spread of the Midland dialect stalled at the same time, either because the dialect features from the two dialects interacted, Midland speakers were no longer migrating to the area. In both situations, it likely meant that a large group of NCS speakers moved to the area.

The only empirical evidence for a large population movement from the Inland North to the Corridor comes from Friedman's (2014) analysis of 1940 census records and traffic patterns.[7] Although some neighborhoods showed a slightly higher concentration of migrants who had moved from the Inland North between 1935 and 1940, most people had not moved in the past 5 years. Friedman also analyzed historic daily average traffic flows in the Corridor and found most traffic was non-commercial before the mid-1950's and by 1934, the segment north of Springfield through Bloomington saw a jump in popularity to non-commercial traffic.[8]

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[7]Census records indicate whether a person had lived in the same house as in 1935 or what town, city or county they had moved from. Because the census did not record where residents were born beyond the state level and 75% of 1940 Springfield residents were born in Illinois, it is possible but not provable that a large number of Chicagoans had moved to Springfield before 1935.

[8]Although the Springfield-Bloomington segment saw a marked increase, the Joliet-Bloomington segment (the most direct path to Route 66 from Chicago) decreased between 1931 and 1934.

4.3 Dialect Overlap vs. Dialect "Breach"

Exactly how the NCS entered and influenced speech in the Corridor is not entirely certain, but there is evidence for wide reaching influence that did not move the North-Midland boundary in an expected way. As discussed in Section 2.1, this dialect situation is similar to other *overlapping* dialect boundaries, where either speakers will show features of both dialects simultaneously or individuals will speak one dialect or another. What distinguishes the Corridor is that this area of overlap is not actually bounding two dialect regions. Instead, the overlap constitutes the entire area of the NCS influence. Therefore, it may be more accurate to describe this as a "dialect breach," where a boundary is disturbed at one point but does not affect the boundary as a whole. The distinction between the two is demonstrated in Figure 5, where on the left the hatched oval
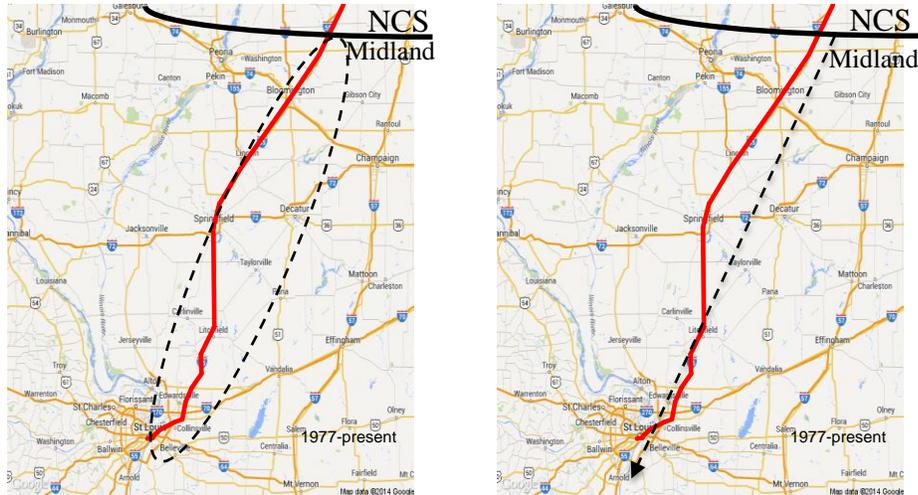

Figure 5: Map of the St. Louis Corridor with the current alignment of Route 66 outlined in red. The left represents an "overlapping" boundary type, the right a dialect "breach".

around Route 66 would represent an overlap and on the right the hatched arrow would represent a breach. Additionally, the individual Route 66 speakers have fewer Midland variables on average the more NCS features they show.[9] In this case, dialectal influence is interjected from a geographically distant dialect region, the Inland North, but does not change the North-Midland boundary itself (in solid black). Therefore, it appears to be less of an overlap of two boundaries and more of a direct influence of one area upon another, cutting through the dialect boundary.

Another feature that sets this boundary type apart is the way in which the NCS retreats and spreads. The period of NCS spread described above was followed by the retreat of NCS features from Route 66 and a slight increase of NCS off of Route 66. Although dialect retreat can occur at other dialect boundary types (e.g., Dinkin 2009), the retreat is more geographically distinct from the original source in this case. Additionally, the number of NCS features shown decreases until it completely disappears, which would not necessarily be the case if the boundary were at the edge of two dialect regions.[10]

5 Conclusions

This study demonstrates that NCS influence is found in the Corridor dialect. However, the influence was bounded in time to a single period: those speakers born between the 1920's and the 1940's. It also differed in character from other types of dialect boundaries, where instead of

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[9]This is based upon Route 66 speakers who had 1, 2 or 3 NCS variables, who averaged 2.3, 1.5 and 0.8 Midland features respectively. Speakers with no NCS variables showed a wide range of number of Midland features, but averaged to 1.7 Midland variables. Speakers with 4 or 5 NCS variables could not be averaged.

[10]One Route 66 speaker born after 1970 shows /o/ fronting.

change happening at the boundary, the influence breached the North-Midland dialect boundary. Of course, this did not happen in a historical vacuum: the NCS influence on the Midland area coincided with the completion of the first paved highway in the state. The change in transportation patterns appears to have fundamentally changed the way speakers spoke, either by migration from one dialect region to another or an increase in face-to-face contact. In addition, the influence of the NCS on the area affected the Midland dialect as well, interacting in such a way that the rise in NCS interacted with the Midland dialect in a nearby area.

This analysis of the Corridor is not the first study to attribute dialectal change to changes in transportation patterns. Trudgill (1974) finds that in Norway's Brunlanes Peninsula, the spread of dialectal features followed changes in transportation patterns. The older speakers showed more advanced features in the larger coastal towns while younger speakers showed more advanced forms in the areas between the bigger cities and on new highways. When water transportation was a more important means of transportation, the dialectal features from the largest city were diffused to the other coastal cities through water transportation, leaving the inland area free of advanced features. Later on, when transportation patterns changed from water to land, speakers in the areas along the highway showed more advanced forms. As discussed in Section 2.4, the main type of transportation in Illinois before there were paved roads was by water using the I&M Canal. Changes in transportation patterns can change the established patterns of dialect diffusion within a generation. Therefore, with new transportation patterns and increased population mobility, the general stability of the North-Midland boundary found in the area could be simultaneously maintained and infiltrated down a specific path.

Whether the Corridor is an example of a dialect breach, overlapping dialect boundary, or something else altogether, the two dialects did interact in a novel way. Subsequent retreat, whether reflecting a more widespread retreat (it occurred in the same time frame as other dialect retreats) or was a result of the historical context specific to this area, deserves further consideration.

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Department of Linguistics
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6305
lfri@ling.upenn.edu