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The Great Migration and the Spread of a Supraregional Variant: Glottal Stop Replacement of Word Final /d/ in DC African American Language

Abstract

The Great Migration was the migration of African Americans out of the rural South between 1915 and 1970. In the 1960s, during the early period of sociolinguistic research on AAL, many communities under investigation had experienced massive in-migration over the preceding thirty years. The core findings of this research were, in part, a function of the new urban populations in the midst of sustained migration and intra-ethnic dialect contact. The current paper focuses on the early period of research on AAL in sociolinguistics, using data from 68 speakers recorded in 1968 in Washington DC available in Corpus of Regional African American Language. In DC, many of the of the in-migrants were working class and Southern born, moving into a city with a well-established African American population. To begin to understand the potential linguistic consequences of the Great Migration, we look at the spread of glottal stop replacement of word-final /d/, a feature in modern AAL that is geographically and socially widespread. The results show that young working-class females led in this sound change and that it was a change initially led by individuals whose parents were born outside of DC, demonstrating the impact the Great Migration had on varieties of AAL in Great Migration destination cities.

The Great Migration and the Spread of a Supraregional Variant: Glottal Stop Replacement of Word Final /d/ in DC African American Language

Charlie Farrington*

1 Introduction

Early sociolinguistic work on African American Language (AAL) focused on demonstrating the overall systematicity of the variety for social and educational purposes, drawing linguistic connections between speakers in different regional settings (Wolfram 2007). Work from this era includes several studies of what Wolfram (2015) called the canonical studies of AAL: Labov et al. (1968) in New York City, Shuy et al. (1967) and Wolfram (1969) in Detroit, and Fasold (1972) in Washington DC. This line of research provided the foundation for the academic study of AAL. Importantly, these studies were completed during the height of the second wave of the Great Migration (Tolnay 2003), a unique sociocultural point in time for each of these communities. While the core findings of this research were a function of the questions the sociolinguists were seeking to answer, they are also a function of the new urban populations. These intra-ethnic contact situations brought about by new migrants from the rural South, as well as the resultant linguistic processes from contact, are critical to consider within this time period. As the discipline continues to move away from the focus on homogeneity in AAL, we must also remember the ways in which the sociohistorical context of these communities have changed and how larger sociological differences play into how we understand and interpret data.

The current paper focuses on this early period of research on AAL by using data from Fasold's (1972) study of Washington DC speech community available through the Corpus of Regional African American Language (CORAAL; Kendall and Farrington 2018). DC was one of the key destination cities in the Great Migration with in-migrants from the rural Southeast, but also had well-established African American communities. The analysis investigates the spread of a sound change internal to AAL: the devoicing and glottal stop replacement of word final /d/, henceforth glottal /d/ (Farrington 2019). In modern AAL, glottal /d/ is geographically widespread, presumably due to the Great Migration. While this variable was investigated in the early studies of AAL, including Fasold (1972), our current understanding of the historical context of DC in the 1960s can help us to better understand both the spread of features shared across communities as well as the development of regional differentiation. Specifically, the current paper focuses on how this variant came into the DC community, with its unique contact situation, by focusing on gender, social class, and parental birthplace in the spread of this sound change.

This paper is organized into 6 parts. In Section 2, I provide a brief background of the sociohistorical context of AAL in the 1960s, including the Great Migration, dialect contact, and the situation in Washington DC specifically. In section 3, I briefly describe the previous work on glottal /d/ in DC AAL, focusing on work during this early time period. In Section 4, I describe the source of the data, coding of the variable, as well as the statistical methods used in the analysis. The findings, presented in Section 5, explore the relationship between glottal /d/ and change over time. Finally, in Section 6, I present some brief concluding thoughts for the continued study of AAL, how the sociohistorical context of communities like DC allows us to view the urban development of AAL as an intra-ethnic contact scenario, while also permitting the development of regional differentiation that we see as a result of the Great Migration.

2 Sociohistorical Context for AAL in the 1960s

With the benefit of time, sociolinguists can address the role of migration and dialect contact in the mid-twentieth century development of AAL. Of course, there has been plenty of work discussing the early development of AAL, e.g. the origins debate (see Rickford 2015; Van Herk 2015) as well

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as whether AAL was converging to or diverging from white varieties of American English in the mid-twentieth century (see Fasold et al. 1987). In all of these earlier discussions of change over time, the development of urban AAL, which later on diffused to rural areas as well (Cukor-Avila 1995; Wolfram and Thomas 2002), has been undertheorized. In this section, I briefly discuss the Great Migration, focusing on the time period up to 1970. Then, I focus on the spread of AAL in this urban context through dialect contact, with a focus on DC, the speech community under investigation in this paper. Finally, we turn to the unique sociohistorical situation in Washington DC in the late 1960s, which would later be known as the Chocolate City, an important community for African American culture.

2.1 Great Migration

The Great Migration was the movement of over six million African Americans out of the South between 1915 and 1970 (Tolnay 2003). While it may have been one of the most underreported stories of the twentieth century (Wilkerson 2010), a wealth of historical and sociological studies over the past thirty years have given great insight into both the demographic changes that occurred in the U.S. during the Great Migration through considerations of sources like census data (e.g. Long 1988; Gregory 2005), as well as migration narratives that recount the stories of individuals and families (e.g., Griffin 1995; Wilkerson 2010). Tolnay (2003) describes the Great Migration as one of the most important demographic movements in the history of the United States, and perhaps the most important movement in the twentieth century. Scholars generally split the Great Migration into two waves, 1916 to 1940 and 1940 to 1970. The complex economic and social forces leading individuals and families away from the rural South ultimately led to a significant African American presence throughout the country (Hunter and Robinson 2018).

2.2 Spread of AAL and Dialect Contact

Previous work that has suggested dialect contact and new dialect formation in the development of AAL is often about contact with local white varieties in the earlier AAL varieties. For example, Wolfram and Thomas (2002) show how the earlier variety of African Americans in Hyde County, North Carolina is more like that of the European American Hyde County residents because of increased contact. Relatedly, Mufwene (2001) showed that the ecology of the different areas where enslaved individuals lived (e.g. cotton, tobacco, and rice plantations) led to different interactions with white people in the area. On top of that, the community demographics resulted in different kinds of intra-ethnic contact.

In large urban areas, like DC, the development of AAL can be viewed in the context of new dialect formation and dialect contact (e.g. Kerswill and Williams 2000). Wolfram (2004) notes that “most researchers agree that the locus of independent innovation within AAVE is largely an urban phenomenon, and that change within AAVE is diffusing from urban to rural contexts.” Several studies have looked at such urban to rural diffusion scenarios (e.g. Cukor-Avila 1995; Wolfram and Thomas 2002), but not the diffusion that was happening as a result of populations movements from rural areas to large metropolitan areas in the mid-twentieth century.

New dialect formation, as discussed by Britain (2018:148-9), highlights three primary steps that may occur, including a large-scale migration from several dialect areas, adult speakers accommodating linguistically to one another, and a subsequent generation of children deriving a system out of the variability. Despite the early focus on the systematicity in the speech of African Americans, sociolinguists were clearly aware that migration was having a major impact on the speech communities. For example, in discussing the social setting for Detroit in 1966, Wolfram (1969: 20) notes that “Detroit, like many other large Northern metropolitan areas, has undergone drastic changes in its racial distribution.” Census data in Detroit showed that the majority of the adult population consisted of non-native Detroiters, while many children and teens were Detroit natives. This pattern is similar to the population trends in Washington DC. Figure 1 presents the census data from Washington DC using decennial U.S. Census data. While in-migration was similar, DC stands out in other respects.

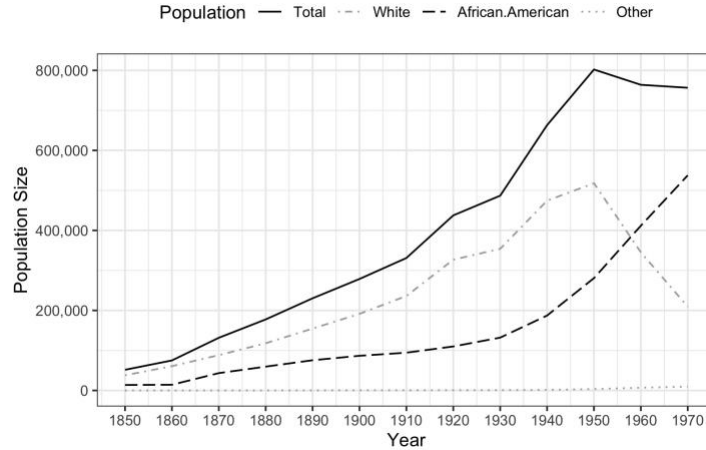


Figure 1: Population of Washington DC by race, 1850-1970 (US Census).

2.3 Washington DC in 1968

Unlike Detroit and other cities that would come to have large African American populations (e.g. in Rochester, NY, King 2018), DC had a significant African American population dating to the late 19th century. From 1880 until 1915, the African American population in DC grew slowly, accounting for about 30% of the city's population, while the city as a whole grew in population. This relatively large African American population led to early discriminatory housing laws and decreased voting rights to maintain a white ruling class as long as possible, despite the rapidly growing population (Asch and Musgrove 2017). Between 1940 and 1970, though, the African American population grew rapidly, increasing 287% in those thirty years, from 187,200 to 537,700. The other marked change was the white flight out of DC beginning in about 1950. As noted above, this was a common trend in many Great Migration destination cities, where portions of the white population moved out to surrounding suburbs as the African American population increased. In DC, the combination of these two movements resulted in an African American majority in 1957 (McQuirter 2000), and by 1970, the nation's capital had more than 2.5 times as many African American residents as white residents.

Many of the new in-migrants in the second wave of the Great Migration to DC were working class and Southern born (Borchert 1980), which raises a question about the language varieties in DC and how the speakers of Southern varieties of AAL are interacting with the more well-established communities. Are there effects, such as increased dialectal variability in the area followed by dialect focusing that are typical of contact situations and new dialect formation (Britain 2018)? Wolfram (1984) described the DC speech community as a complex interaction of ethnicity, region, and social class. He suggested that the "strains of in-migration make the linguistic situation elusive." For example, there was a middle class African American community in the Upper NW district, while working class African Americans in the Southeast (SE) had a Southern United States cultural alignment. Wolfram noted that the linguistic diversity is interwoven into both the geographic location, and in the relationship of the social fabric of the community: "The DC area sometimes has trouble figuring out which side it's on. Inner-city Black residents feel like they're in the South, and suburban residents often feel like they're living in the North" (Wolfram 1984:22).

The combination of a long-standing African American population with the massive twentieth century demographic changes in the city, led to an intra-ethnic dialect contact situation, and ultimately to the development of the modern DC regionally based ethnolect.

3 Glottal /d/ in DC AAL

To begin to understand the linguistic processes underlying the spread of AAL in the urban, mid-twentieth century context, I look at the glottal stop variant of word final /d/. Glottal /d/ is a feature

shared across many varieties of modern AAL in Southern and non-Southern contexts, and in both urban and rural contexts (Farrington 2019). But how did this feature come to be shared across these contexts? Here, I am not making claims about the similarities in use across regions. For example, Farrington (2019) does find some urban/rural and Southern/non-Southern differences, such that non-Southern communities exhibit lower rates of glottal /d/, while rural Southern communities exhibit higher rates of use in unstressed environments.

In DC, several studies over the past half century have highlighted the glottal /d/ variant. For example, one of the earliest studies of the speech of African Americans by Putnam and O’Hern (1955) described an alleyway community in DC, which was physically and culturally isolated from other DC neighborhoods. Based on demographic information, it is likely that many residents were migrants themselves, or first-generation DC residents. For glottal /d/, they found that /d/ was weakened in the dialect, primarily through omission, but also glottal stop replacement. Specifically, the glottal stop was an allophone of /d/ that was heard in words like *grandson* [græ̃ʔsən] and *glad* [glæ:ʔ]. Additionally, Carroll (1971) and Luelsdorff (1975) provide evidence for the glottal stop replacement of word final /d/ in their case studies of child AAL. Finally, Fasold (1972) discussed the glottalization and deletion of /d/ in the context of past tense marking. Younger speakers, particularly younger females, were more likely to use the nonstandard variants in his data.

The focus on sound change in AAL is a relatively recent one, and only recently has word final /d/ been investigated from that perspective (Farrington 2019). In this period at the end of the Great Migration in DC, is this a sound change that is a change from below and are there clear social factors that point to where this feature emerged from?

4 Methods

4.1 Data

The data for this analysis come from the DCA component of CORAAL; Kendall et al. 2018). The sociolinguistic interviews were conducted by Ralph Fasold and colleagues in Washington DC between March 1968 and October 1969, with speaker birth years ranging from 1891 to 1958. Table 1 shows the demographic breakdown of speakers. Speakers were selected from Fasold’s interviews to represent four age groups and three social class groups, roughly corresponding to lower working class, upper working class, and middle class, though because Fasold’s interest was on teenagers and young adults, the oldest generations are not balanced for gender and class.

Year of Birth	Generation	Class 1 (lower working class)		Class 2 (upper working class)		Class 3 (middle class)	
		M	F	M	F	M	F
1891-1931	G.I.	2	1	3	1	6	0
1935-1947	Silent	2	2	4	0	3	6
1948-1958	Baby Boomer	8	5	6	7	6	6

Table 1: Distribution of speakers in analysis.

Generation, which refers to social generational cohorts that share a similar cultural experience, is used rather than age groups in CORAAL speaker selection. The statistical analysis uses year of birth, but the grouping in Table 1 allows us to consider the relative differences between the social conditions of the speakers born in the early 1900s compared to the speakers born between 1948 and 1958 (the Baby Boomer generation represented in DCA). The oldest generation in the dataset, the G.I. generation, are individuals who grew up in the pre- or early days of the Great Migration. The Silent generation (born after 1931) grew up in the midst of the massive population shift in the second wave of the Great Migration, and the Baby Boomers, born between 1948 and 1958, were coming of age in the African American majority in DC after 1957. The linguistic consequences of such differences should also affect how we view apparent time changes within the speech community in

1968. Changes at the level of the linguistic variable could reflect processes internal to the speech community or external processes as a result of the population changes.

Importantly, the CORAAL:DCA component includes detailed demographic information. Each participant listed parental birthplaces on an interview report form. Of the 122 known parental birthplaces for the sixty-eight speakers in CORAAL:DCA, 55.7% are from the Southeast (including Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia), while 32.8% were born in DC. Table 2 summarizes parental birthplace by generation.

Generation	Parental Birthplace			Total
	DC	Southeast	Other	
GI	5 (20.8%),	15 (62.5%)	4 (16.7)	24
Silent	11 (34.4%)	18 (56.3%)	3 (9.4%)	32
Baby Boomer	24 (36.4%)	35 (53.0%)	7 (10.6%)	66

Table 2: Parental Birthplace by Generation.

The major difference between the generations is the number of DC-born parents between the GI generation and the later ones. This trend reflects the overall population trends in DC in the early to mid-twentieth century. As the population increased, intra-ethnic dialect contact also increased. Previous linguistic research has shown an effect for parental origin in work on AAL (Deser 1990).

4.2 Coding Word Final /d/

All recordings were orthographically transcribed in Praat using CORAAL transcription conventions (Kendall & Farrington 2018). The TextGrids were aligned at the phone level using the Montreal Forced Aligner (McAuliffe et al. 2018). A Praat script written by Fruehwald (2012) was used to run through to search for all tokens of post-vocalic, word final /d/. Each token was coded as either a full stop [d], glottal replaced stop [ʔ], glottal reinforced stop [ʔd], or a deleted (zero coda) consonant.

4.3 Statistical Approaches and Independent Variables

All tokens of post-vocalic /d/ in CORAAL:DCA were coded for analysis, resulting in 6404 tokens (overall percentage glottal: 8.9%). For the current paper, a logistic regression model was constructed to analyze the glottal /d/ variant compared to other realized tokens (coronal and reinforced). A series of social and linguistic factors were considered in constructing models. External factors include fixed effects for year of birth, social class, gender, and parental place of birth (DC vs non-DC), while internal factors include syllable stress, word frequency, speech rate, number of syllables in a lexical item, following segment type, and word type. For more information on factor levels, see Farrington (2019).

For model fitting, continuous predictors (word frequency, speech rate, number of syllables in word, year of birth) were centered and scaled by dividing by two standard deviations. Two-level factors (gender, stress) were scaled and centered at 0, while predictors with three or more levels were coded with a simple contrast. The rescale function in the arm package (Gelman 2008) was used for centering and scaling predictors.

A random effects structure was implemented in the analysis. Models were fit with a random-effects structure that converged, without random-effect correlations. The random effects structure included speaker and word as random intercepts with random slopes for syllable stress, speech rate, and syllable number by speaker. Any additional random slopes resulted in singular fit models. Post-hoc comparisons were carried out using the emmeans package in R (Lenth 2018).

5 Results

The best fit model included significant main effects for years of birth and following segment, as well as significant interactions between year of birth and gender as well as year of birth and social class. The summary of the regression model is included in Table 3.

Predictors		Estimates (SE)
(Intercept)		-3.07*** (0.16)
Year of Birth		1.95*** (0.31)
Social Class	(vs. Social Class 1)	
	Social Class 2	-0.04 (0.27)
	Social Class 3	-0.53 (.) (0.28)
Stress	(vs. Stressed)	
	Unstressed	0.39 (0.33)
Gender	(vs. Female)	
	Male	-0.25 (0.24)
Parent Birthplace	DC	
	Non-DC	-0.34 (0.24)
Syllables		0.25 (0.18)
Following Segment	(vs. Consonant)	
	Pause	1.86*** (0.14)
	Vowel	-0.84*** (0.25)
Speech Rate		-0.07 (0.13)
Interactions		
Year of Birth : Social Class 2		-1.46* (0.58)
Year of Birth : Social Class 3		-1.41* (0.67)
Year of Birth : Stress		0.25 (0.58)
Year of Birth : Gender		-1.48** (0.55)
Year of Birth : Parent Birthplace		1.38* (0.63)
Year of Birth : Following Segment (Pause)		-0.17 (0.34)
Year of Birth : Following Segment (Vowel)		0.24 (0.60)
Random effects		
Word (intercept) (SD=0.47)		
Speaker (intercept) (SD=0.57)		
Stress (Slope) (SD=0.95)		
Speech Rate (Slope) (SD=0.41)		
#Syllables (Slope) (SD=0.29)		

Table 3: Summary of DCA best mixed-effects regression model: Glottal vs Non-Glottal Stops.

To illustrate these results, the following figures show predicted probabilities of glottal /d/ based on the model summarized in Table 3 using the sjPlot package (Lüdtke 2018). Based on the significant interactions between year of birth with social class and year of birth with gender, there is an indication that this change follows from what we might expect from a change from below. Figure 2 plots the model probabilities for glottal /d/ by year of birth and gender, faceted by social class.

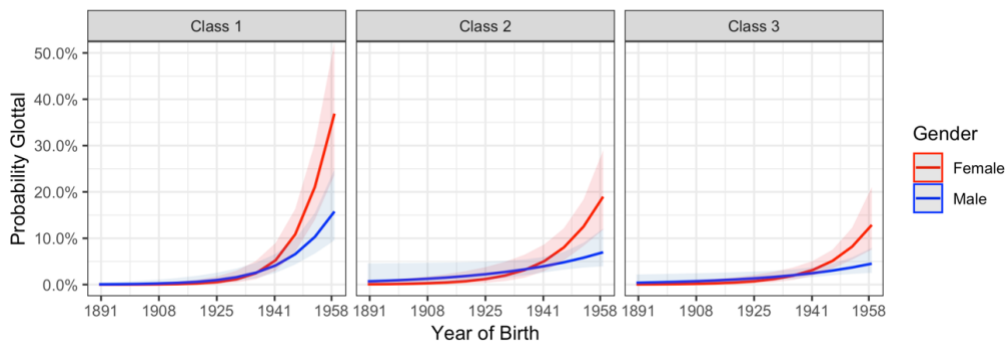


Figure 2: Probability for glottal /d/ by year of birth, gender, and social class.

This figure shows the increase in the glottal variant over time, which is a main effect in this model, while the increase over time steepest for Class 1 (lower working class), showing that these speakers are leading in the use of this feature. At the same time, the females lead in the use of the glottal variant for the youngest speakers in 1968 across social classes. Farrington et al. (2019) found a similar pattern for vowel change among young working class female speakers. It is also worth noting that both social class and gender were not significant main effects in this model.

This leads to the question of how the glottal variant came into DC to begin with. Figure 3 shows the relationship between year of birth and parental birthplace. This significant interaction shows an increase in the glottal /d/ over time for children of DC parents compared to non-DC parents.

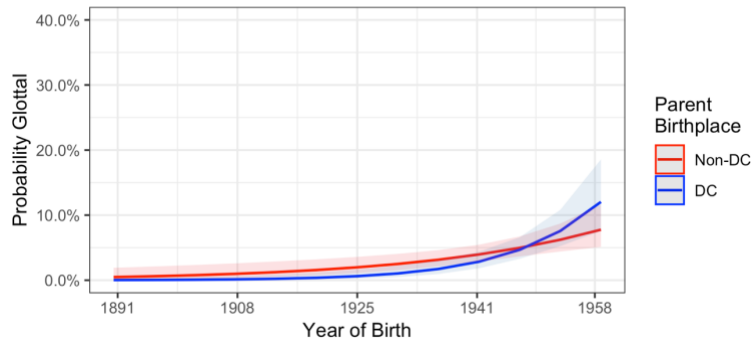


Figure 3: Probability for glottal /d/ by year of birth and parental birthplace.

The overall trend is that for people whose parents were not born in DC exhibited higher rates of use until the Baby Boomer generation. This provides further evidence for the role that the processes at play in the development of urban AAL are happening in that young generation in DC in 1968.

This analysis of DCA allowed us a view into DC AAL at a crucial time in its history. The Great Migration was winding down and the Baby Boomer generation was growing up in a majority African American city, which is different than any previous generation in DC. The cultural importance of DC's African American majority developed out of a push for rights in the early twentieth century that resulted in it being an attractive destination for Southern migrants.

In this analysis of the glottal variant, we observe year of birth interacting with social class and gender. The population had changed and AAL began developing into the urban variety that would be prominent in sociolinguistic studies. Word final /d/ glottalization was coming into the community, led by working class speakers and by young females.

The Baby Boomer cohort was particularly important in the context of the extensive sociolinguistic research done in the 1970s (e.g. Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969; Fasold 1972). Following the constant flow of in-migration and out-migration, migration was slowing down, and this young generation would be focusing the dialect (Britain 2018). Here in DCA, the Baby Boomers give us an opportunity to see how the change in this sound pattern is progressing through the community during adolescence. The adolescent time period has been shown to be the point at which individuals are expected to use hyper-rates of nonstandard forms (e.g., Van Hofwegen & Wolfram 2010; Kohn et al. 2020). Here in 1968 DC, we see a pattern of working class females leading in the use of this incoming variant. The variability in the young working class females is something that Fasold (1972) noted in his analysis, and showed that an effect for distributive 'be' was largely due to several of these young female speakers. Though they were born and raised in DC, all of their parents were from the Southeast (North Carolina and Virginia). These speakers were leading in the use of certain urban AAL features, which suggests that within this generation, the working class group in the city is focusing the dialect, and exhibiting patterns that will intensify and spread as AAL in the late twentieth century.

Who leads this change (young working class females) gives us a clue about the nature of the incoming variant (a change from below), but it doesn't give a clue about whether the variant comes from within the DC speech community, or external to it. To explore that, I looked at the role of internal linguistic effects, as well as parental birthplace. The internal effects investigated included following segment and syllable stress. Stress was an intriguing feature because of the status of

unstressed syllable /d/ glottalization among non-AAL communities, especially in the rural South (Wolfram & Fasold 1974). The results confirm the patterns elsewhere that the glottal variant increased over time primarily in the pre-pausal environment. Stress, on the other hand, did not interact with year of birth, but the direction of the effect suggests that the unstressed glottal led stressed glottal /d/ early in the twentieth century in DC. Lastly, parental birthplace was used as a way to capture what could have been a change from outside the community. The significant interaction showed that the speakers with DC born parents increased the used of the glottal variant over time compared to the speakers with non-DC parents. The pattern once again suggests that the youngest generation is using glottal /d/ differently than other generations, but that around the turn out the century, the glottal variant was used primarily by speakers with non-DC parents. This pattern is similar to certain vocalic features investigated by Deser (1990) in Detroit, suggesting that glottal /d/ might have developed primarily in such communities with similar kinds of in-migration. These results are tentative, and we need more contemporary speakers to better interpret the pattern. This is also not to say that the speakers here are using their parents' dialect, but more likely that there is a relationship between in-migrants, social class, and housing, which is something that can be further explored in the future.

6 Conclusion

Washington DC provides a unique opportunity to explore change over time within AAL. It maintained a majority African American population for much of the twentieth century due to the Great Migration, but it also had a long-standing African American population dating back to the Civil War, which distinguishes DC from other Great Migration cities in the North. The massive in-migration between 1940 and 1970, the second wave of the Great Migration, brought thousands of new residents, primarily from the American Southeast. The demographic makeup of the city changed, and different generations grew up in quite different speech communities. For CORAAL:DCA in particular, these recordings were made in the context of new dialect formation, after decades of increased contact between speakers from both DC and different parts of the Southeast US. By refocusing on the data from that time, with what we know about the development of the DC African American speech community, we can better understand the potential mechanisms that led to features that would become geographically widespread in AAL. At the same time, such features have also developed into markers of regional identity. Understanding this interaction allows for a more nuanced picture of the speech community.

The DCA dataset was collected in 1968 and analyzed by Fasold (1972) as a sort of follow up to work in New York City (Labov et al. 1968) and Detroit (Wolfram 1969). At the time, the focus for sociolinguists working on AAL was on features shared across geographic regions. Additionally, the focus on adolescents in new dialect formation scenarios might have been the perfect group to look at to avoid catching other kinds of geographic variation. Future studies that reanalyze data from this era will give us a more complete picture of the urban development, spread, and intensification of AAL in the twentieth century.

While this paper is specifically a study of AAL in Washington DC in 1968, which is unique in many aspects (e.g. a long-standing African American population, a major destination city for the Great Migration, a lot of sociological and historical research to back up what we know about the social situation in DC), this kind of analysis could easily be about other cities that had population changes as a result from the Great Migration. As an example, Detroit would be an interesting comparison because it had a different source population of in-migrants, being primarily from the Deep South (Wolfram 1969), and the African American population grew from just a few thousand in 1900 to a majority of the city in 2010. Anderson (2002) suggested that the interaction of AAL speakers and Appalachian English speakers led to AAL speakers beginning to exhibit monophthongization of pre-voiceless /ai/. Such ideas can be tested with demographic information about neighborhoods and network information about who speakers work with.

Recent work by Moody (2011) has shown how intra-ethnic contact can lead to useful hypotheses about language change in AAL. In her work, Moody (2011) looked at Coastal Georgia Gullah speakers and how that variety of English might have influenced rural AAL speakers from further inland Southeast Georgia. The case of Washington DC is about intra-ethnic contact between AAL speakers coming from different regional locations.

This kind of work exemplifies the need to both situate the analysis of linguistic variation at the community level, but also to be aware of the sociohistorical processes at play. In Southeast Georgia, for example, the older rural communities were historically distinct by region within Georgia, but also demographic differences resulting from isolation (Moody 2011). In Detroit, the Southern diaspora, Gregory's (2005) term for the combined effects of African American and white migration patterns during the twentieth century, resulted in a unique contact situation that led to the increase of pre-voiceless /ai/ monophthongization among Detroit African Americans (Anderson 2002). Finally, in DC, we see that the youngest generation growing up in majority African American DC were leading the use of features that would become norms of AAL. While it is crucial that we continue to investigate the local context of communities, we must recognize there are histories that are both unique and shared, which can allow for both a monolithic finding (such as the use of shared features) while also showing regional differences across those linguistic features.

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