How Skookum is This? A Survey of Variation and Change in Vancouver English

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Abstract

This study examines linguistic variation and change in Vancouver English (VE), focusing on shifts in the currency and vitality of local terms, general vocabulary usage, and pronunciation patterns across different age and gender groups. Using data from the Survey of Vancouver English (SVEN) (1974-1984) and the Survey of Canadian English (SCE) (1972) for comparison, this research investigates whether local vocabulary–particularly words deriving from Chinook Jargon—has declined among younger speakers. Additionally, it analyzes general vocabulary preferences to assess whether VE has converged with Standard Canadian and American English. Results indicate a significant decline in local lexical items, with younger speakers showing minimal usage and knowledge of these terms. Words such as saltchuck and oolichan have largely disappeared from younger Vancouverites' lexicons, while skookum has undergone a semantic shift from 'strong' to 'cool' or 'great.' Pronunciation changes, such as the shift in the local place name, Kitsilano, further support a trend toward linguistic standardization. Additionally, general vocabulary preferences reveal a continued movement away from traditional Canadianisms such as chesterfield and eavestroughs, toward more widespread North American terms. The findings suggest that VE is undergoing a shift towards a more standard, homogeneous form of speech, evidenced by the disappearance of distinct local terms and pronunciations.

1 Introduction

In the vibrant linguistic landscape of Vancouver, a city as diverse and dynamic as its inhabitants, the aspects of language are ever-changing. This study aims to explore the variation and change in Vancouver English (VE) over time, as well as between age and gender groups. Through my exploration, I expect to find the development of VE to be punctuated by a convergence towards Standard Canadian and American English across all demographics, evidenced by the disappearance of certain distinctive features. This survey is not exhaustive; it will focus primarily on vocabulary, with some investigations into pronunciation and semantic interpretation. Change and variation will be observed through a comparison of data from the *Survey of Vancouver English* (SVEN) (Gregg 2004), conducted between 1976 and 1984, and the *Survey of Canadian English* (SCE) (Scargill and Warkentyne 1972), as well as selected participants from different age and gender groupings. The study is broken into two parts. The first part will examine the vitality, currency, pronunciation, and semantic interpretations of certain local lexical items, while the second will examine the variation of general vocabulary preferences. In the study of local vocabulary, eight items, most deriving from Chinook Jargon, a pidgin language of the Pacific Northwest, were examined:

- *saltchuck,* from English *salt* and Nootka *ch'a'ak* 'water' (Gregg 2004: 68)
- *skookum,* from Chehalis *skukm* 'big,' 'strong' (Gregg 2004: 69)
- *squamish,* the name of a town at the north end of Howe Sound, but in this study is defined as 'a wind that blows from neighbouring valleys down this inlet' (Gregg 2004: 70)
- *oolichan,* from Chinook Jargon *ûlakân* 'a small fish' (Gregg 2004: 71)
- *saskie,* from Squamish Salish *tsa'tsqi* (Gregg 2004*:* 72)
- *saskabush,* derived from *Saskatchewan* or *Saskatoon* and *bush* (Gregg 2004*:* 72)
- *Kitsilano,* a local place name deriving from the name of a former Squamish Salishan chief (Gregg 2004: 75)
- *slough,* from Old English *slōh* 'inlet on a river,' 'backwater' (Gregg 2004: 73)

These terms were taken from the SVEN, but where Gregg expected to find them known and used by many Vancouverites (and was affirmed in this assumption), I expect to find the opposite. I hypothesize these lexical items have been extinguished in the lexicon of young, especially female, speakers of VE. It was observed in the SVEN that these terms had begun to lose their currency among this group, and I believe the process has been completed. I also hypothesize that individuals with at least one parent from

Vancouver will know more of these local terms as opposed to those without, due to the opportunity for transmission from parents. In the study of general vocabulary preferences, 21 items and their variants were explored and compared with data from the SVEN and the SCE. I expect to find that terms regarded as Canadianisms have disappeared in VE and to see a higher frequency of terms more commonly used in the United States. I believe that due to Vancouver's proximity to the American border, and the increased interaction with, and pervasiveness of, American media, some of their vocabulary preferences may have trickled into VE. Furthermore, the similarities between western Canada and the northwestern US have already been documented in their phonological systems, so it is not a great leap to assume they may share a homogeneity of vocabulary too (Boberg 2000: 15).

2 Methods

Speakers of VE have been defined in this study as individuals with English as their native language who have lived in the Greater Vancouver area since at least the age of seven, and have spent no more than two years of their adolescence thereafter outside of the area. After discerning speakers of VE, the sample was then divided into four groups separated by age and gender: young females (YF), young males (YM), older females (OF), and older males (OM). The survey consisted of 34 participants, 32.4% (11) YFs, 26.5% (9) YMs, 17.6% (6) OFs, and 23.5% (8) OMs. Young individuals were born from 2001–2005, and older individuals were born from 1967–1972. Please note here the disproportionality of the groups when examining the presented data. Convenience played a large role in the collection of data; this is an unfortunate consequence that will have to be taken into account. Responses were collected via an online survey, and speakers of VE were then parsed by a set of background information questions.

In the examination of local vocabulary, participants were first asked if they knew the local item; if they responded yes, they were then asked 1) what the word meant, 2) if they had ever heard the word before (this was later taken out of the discussion due to overlap with reports of knowledge), 3) if they used the word themselves, and 4) if they had any additional information they wished to provide. The term 'know' can be relatively ambiguous; therefore, I specified to participants that they should only say they do not know the word if it was wholly unrecognizable. This allowed for responses from participants who may not be able to define the word, but had seen or heard it somewhere. For some of the lexical items, participants were asked about pronunciation as well. In the section regarding general vocabulary preferences, participants were provided with an image and a corresponding written prompt, and asked to select what word they would use. This was a reconciliation of the methods used in the SVEN and the SCE. In Gregg's SVEN, he possessed the advantage of interviewing his participants in person and used

visual-aural prompting to evoke the most relaxed form of speech, avoiding the use of printed or written word (Gregg 2004: 77). Alternatively, the SCE used written word alone. These differences in methodology, though minute, have the potential to impact the validity of comparison between the surveys, so this should be taken into account when examining the data.

After the collection of data, responses were then compared against those from the SVEN and the SCE. The data from the SVEN was collected from three age groups: young (16–34), middle (35–59), and old (over 60), with the oldest participant born in 1888 and the youngest born in 1963. The SCE, undertaken in 1972, examined responses of Grade 9 students and their parents. Both surveys also separated responses by gender. It should be noted that for ease of comparison, the data collected from the middle and old groups from the SVEN were pooled together into a single age grouping to represent the older population, therefore spanning the ages 35-60+. This should be taken into account, as the older group thus covers a much wider age range than that in the current study (51-56); this was a result of collection restraints. Furthermore, the SVEN younger group also covers a much wider range of ages (16-35) than the current study (18-22). In both cases, the current study's range falls within the windows set by Gregg. However, they cover a much narrower scope, lacking responses from a middle sample (23-51), and an old sample (57+). This should be taken into account when viewing the data. In addition, I should note that the data taken from the SCE concerned speakers from British Columbia (BC) as a whole. Nevertheless, one can assume the majority of respondents were from in and around Vancouver as it is the most populated city in BC. Also, keep in mind that this method of self-report may not necessarily yield responses indicative of one's true speech tendencies in everyday life. Finally, it is worth noting that the following report will exclusively feature data showing the most interesting patterns. However, if you are curious, the full data set is available in the appendix.

3 Results

3.1 Local Vocabulary

	Epp (2023)					Gregg (2004)				
Local Item	YF	YM	OF	OM	Total	YF	YM	OF	OM	Total
saltchuck	0%(0)	0%(0)	17%(1)	38%(3)	12%(4)	66%	82%	86%	100%	89%
skookum	36%(4)	33%(3)	100%(6)	88%(7)	59%(20)	42%	60%	87%	96%	78%

oolichan	0%(0)	11%(1)	33%(2)	75%(6)	27%(9)	56%	74%	89%	91%	82%
slough	55%(6)	33%(3)	67%(4)	88%(7)	59%(20)	72%	94%	99%	99%	94%
*saskie**	0%(0)	22%(2)	50%(3)	50%(4)	27%(9)	(0)	(1)	(5)	(3)	4%(9)
*saskabush**	0%(0)	0%(0)	17%(1)	88%(7)	24%(8)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	39%(67)

Table 1: Reported Knowledge of Local Lexical Items

*In Gregg's survey, the terms *saskie* and *saskabush* were latecomers to his list, and thus he and his team were able to elicit 203 and 176 responses, respectively, instead of the 300 from the rest of his terms. The data for *saskie* is presented without percentages, as such a small number of participants knew the term. I also did not have access to comprehensive gendered and aged data for *saskabush*, so that is not represented in this table.

	Epp (2023)					Gregg (2004)		
Local Item	YF	YM	OF	OM	Total	F	M	Total
saltchuck	0%(0)	0%(0)	0%(0)	25%(2)	6%(2)	38%	72%	55%
skookum	0%(0)	0%(0)	50%(3)	75%(6)	26%(9)	32%	58%	45%
oolichan	0%(0)	0%(0)	0%(0)	38%(3)	9%(3)	58%	72%	65%
slough	18%(2)	11%(1)	50%(3)	75%(6)	35%(12)	N/A	N/A	N/A
*saskie**	0%(0)	11%(1)	17%(1)	13%(1)	9%(3)	N/A	N/A	N/A
*saskabush**	0%(0)	0%(0)	17%(1)	75%(6)	21%(7)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 2: Reports of Having Used Local Lexical Items

*In Gregg's presentation of his data of usage of these local lexical terms, he only provided aggregate data of women and men, therefore, his data has been represented in terms of gendered differences alone.

As evidenced by the data in Tables 1 and 2, the prevalence of local vocabulary among speakers of VE has been greatly diminished, especially among younger individuals. The data shows a net decrease in knowledge and usage for all the presented items except *saskie*. The terms that have undergone the largest drop in currency appear to be *saltchuck* and *oolichan*, both dropping from percentages of knowledge in

the eighties (89% and 82%) to 12% and 27%, respectively. *Skookum* and *slough* are the only words that appear to have some remaining vitality among speakers of VE, with reports of knowledge at 59%. However, this is largely confined to the older population: 100% of OFs and 88% of OMs for *skookum*, and 67% of OFs and 88% of OMs for *slough.* Usage of *skookum* was confined exclusively to the older individuals, and *slough* was only reported to be used by two younger individuals, but with a different meaning than OFs and OMs, defined as 'to remove'. Only one other word was reported as used among younger participants: *saskie,* used by just one YM.

Among semantic definitions given by participants, some variation was observed. For *skookum*, the most popular definitions covered the semantic range of good, great, cool, amazing, well done, etc., given by 65% of participants, with no particular distinction between gender groups. Similar meanings of 'very good,' 'fine,' 'OK' were only given by 33% of women and 18% of men in the SVEN. The most popular meanings in the SVEN were related to 'big,' 'strong,' 'athletic,' etc. given by 64% of men, and 35% of women. This was the definition given by only 10% (2) of my respondents. The term *saskie* was only known by 4% (9) of the participants in the SVEN, and was defined generally by all as 'the shoots of a plant or bush.' Not only was this term known by a greater percentage in my study (27% (9)), but it was also given different meanings; 78% (7) defining it as 'someone from Saskatchewan.' For the term *slough*, the majority of respondents (55% (11)) cited it with the nounal meaning of 'a body of water' such as a swamp, river, or river runoff. However, three young respondents defined it as a verb, meaning 'to remove' or 'to fall off'. Definitions of the other terms stayed consistent with those given by Gregg's respondents: *saltchuck* meaning 'ocean,' *oolichan* being a '(small, oily) fish,' and *saskabush* meaning 'Saskatchewan or Saskatoon,' or someone from those places.

	Epp (2023)					Gregg (2004)		
Variant Pronunciations	YF	YM	OF	OM	Total	F	M	Total
[aɪ]	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	13%(1)	3% (1)	49%	48%	48%
[ɑ]	0% (0)	0% (0)	17%(1)	38%(3)	12%(4)	39%	33%	35%
[æ]	91%(10)	89%(8)	83%(5)	50%(4)	79% (27)	5%	8%	6%

Alternates	9% (1)	11%(1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	6% (2)	N/A	N/A	11%

Table 3: Variant Pronunciations of the Vowel in the Third Syllable of *Kitsilano*

For the term *Kitsilano,* I was concerned with pronunciation rather than survival and currency. In the SVEN, the pronunciation preferred by 48% of participants was [aɪ] for the vowel in the third syllable, followed by 35% for [ɑ], and 6% for [æ]. This ordering of preference is swapped in my data, with 79% preferring [æ], 12% [ɑ], and only one participant preferring [aɪ]. Two respondents (6%) alternated between [ɑ] and [æ] in my study, while 11% fluctuated in Gregg's, with one form usually being [aɪ].

3.2 General Vocabulary Preferences

	Epp (2023)					Scargill and Warkentyne (1972)				Gregg (2004)
Variant	YF	YM	OF	OM	Total	FS	MS	FP	MP	Total
Couch Sofa Chesterfield Other	91% (10) 9% (1) 0% (0) 0% (0)	100% (9) 0% (0) 0% (0) 0% (0)	67%(4) 33%(2) 0% (0) 0% (0)	100% (8) 0% (0) 0% (0) 0% (0)	91% (31) 9% (3) 0% (0) 0% (0)	N/A 6% 67% 25%	N/A 8% 72% 16%	N/A 4% 90% 5%	N/A 6% 88% 3%	16% 11% 72% N/A
(indoor) Tap Faucet Either tap or faucet	 27% (3) 18% (2) 55% (6)	 67% (6) 22% (2) 11% (1)	 33% (2) 50% (3) 17% (1)	 63% (5) 25% (2) 13% (1)	 47%(16) 27%(9) 27%(9)	 95% 4% N/A	 92% 6% N/A	 92% 6% N/A	 92% 6% N/A	 67% 25% 8%
Curtains Drapes Either one	91% (10) 0% (0) 9% (1)	89% (8) 11% (1) 0% (0)	67% (4) 17% (1) 17% (1)	88% (7) 0% (0) 13% (1)	85% (29) 6% (2) 9% (3)	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A	44% 51% 5%
(cloth) Serviette Napkin Either one	 0% (0) 100%(11) 0% (0)	 11% (1) 89% (8) 0% (0)	 0%(0) 100%(6) 0%(0)	 0% (0) 88% (7) 13%(1)	 3% (1) 94% (32) 3% (1)	 33% 43% 23%	 31% 47% 21%	 42% 39% 19%	 32% 48% 20%	 N/A N/A N/A
(paper) Serviette Napkin Either one	 9% (1) 82% (9) 9% (1)	 0% (0) 100% (9) 0% (0)	 17%(1) 83%(5) 0%(0)	 12% (1) 75% (6) 13% (1)	 9% (3) 85% (29) 6% (2)	 26% 54% 19%	 33% 48% 18%	 52% 30% 17%	 44% 38% 17%	 N/A N/A N/A

Eavestroughs Gutters Other	0%(0) 100%(11) 0%(0)	0% (0) 100% (9) 0% (0)	33% (2) 67% (4) 0% (0)	0% (0) 100% (8) 0% (0)	6% (2) 94% (32) 0% (0)	40% 31% 22%	40% 41% 11%	82% 14% 3%	76% 22% 0%	N/A N/A N/A
Bus station Bus depot Bus terminal Bus stop	55% (6) 0% (0) 0% (0) 45% (5)	56% (5) 0% (0) 0% (0) 44% (4)	67%(4) 0%(0) 17%(1) 17%(1)	75% (6) 0% (0) 13% (1) 13% (1)	62% (21) 0% (0) 6% (2) 32% (11)	36% 58% 4% N/A	40% 50% 9% N/A	17% 76% 6% N/A	15% 75% 9% N/A	N/A N/A N/A N/A
(a) quarter to three two forty-five either one	18%(2) 64%(7) 18% (2)	0% (0) 89% (8) 11% (1)	17% (5) 67% (4) 17% (1)	63% (5) 25% (2) 13% (1)	24% (8) 62% (21) 15% (5)	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A	96% 3% N/A
(a) quarter after eleven (a) quarter past eleven Eleven fifteen	0% (0) 0% (0) 100% (11)	0% (0) 11% (1) 100% (11)	17% (1) 0% (0) 83% (5)	50% (4) 13% (1) 34% (3)	15% (5) 6% (2) 79% (27)	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A	N/A N/A N/A	47% 28% 23%

Table 4: Comparison of Preferred Variants of General Vocabulary Items

Data regarding general vocabulary preferences showed a trend away from Canadianisms such as *chesterfield* and *eavestroughs*, as well as older-fashioned terms like *serviette.* The items that elicited the largest change in variant preference were *tap/faucet, couch/sofa/chesterfield, gutters/eavestroughs, serviette/napkin, curtains/drapes, (bus) station/depot/terminal/stop* and mechanisms of telling time.

4 Discussion

4.1 Local Vocabulary

I hypothesized that the local words introduced in Gregg's study had undergone a reduction or extinction in the lexicon of younger speakers of VE, specifically women. In this, I was partially supported. My hypothesis was affirmed in its speculation regarding the disappearance of these terms among the younger group, with the large majority reporting no knowledge, usage, or occurrences of hearing these words. The only terms that exhibited any vitality among the younger individuals (here I will take this to be represented by reports of usage) were *slough* and *saskie*, reported by three and one individual, respectively. However, the reported definitions of these words were different from what was provided by the OFs and OMs (this will be explored more later in the section). The second part of my

hypothesis was not supported by the data. Gender appears to have no bearing among the younger individuals on knowledge of the terms, with both YFs and YMs having equally little familiarity with the terms.

That being said, gender did appear to have some effect on the older groups. The local words were commonly cited in the SVEN as 'a man's word rather than a woman's,' and this was supported by the responses in my survey (Gregg 2004; 69). For all of the items, except for *skookum*—which was an exception, with generally equal reports of usage and knowledge for OFs and OMs—OMs had higher percentages of knowledge and usage. So, in two respects, Gregg's observations were continued: the local items may still be considered more of (older) men's words, and they have lost ground among the young, though this has now progressed to a full-scale deletion of these terms from the lexicon of young Vancouverites (Gregg 2004: 69). My other hypothesis regarding higher levels of knowledge of these terms among individuals with at least one parent from Vancouver was not conclusively supported. The only term which appeared to suggest some impact of this variable was *saltchuck*, where all four of the respondents who knew the term had at least one parent from the city. For the rest, though, there was no correlation; many participants with neither parent from Vancouver still reported knowledge. Therefore, I can conclude word knowledge and usage were affected more by transmission from one's environment than their parent's lexicon. Before I move on, I did want to note a potential reason explaining why the terms *skookum* and *slough* had so many more reports of knowledge. I believe the reason may lie in the fact that *skookum* and *slough* were the only terms to be cited in conjunction with places in BC. Three individuals cited *skookum* in relation to Skookumchuck River, or Skookumchuck Narrows, a hike on the Sunshine Coast. *Slough,* similarly, was mentioned in association with Deas Slough near the George Massey Tunnel by two individuals. I believe these items' presence in place names has somewhat ensured their survival, as locations are rarely renamed, and are more likely to make their way into the awareness of individuals who live in the area. Even still, these terms do appear to be undergoing a retreat from VE. Ultimately, this disappearance of local vocabulary in speakers of VE may be interpreted as a sign of a departure from a distinctive lexicon.

In the examination of the pronunciation of *Kitsilano*, a shift towards more standard orthography, or conventions is also visible. The distinct pronunciation of [aɪ], has essentially disappeared, with only one respondent, an OM, reporting use of it. 53% of participants responded that they were not even aware of this pronunciation. The new, dominant pronunciation is [æ], preferred by 79% of individuals, a more common phonetic interpretation based on spelling. There are no conclusive gendered differences in this variable, but a higher percentage of younger individuals do use [æ].

In addition to the local words' obvious descent into obscurity, some other interesting developments concerning the lexical connotations of the terms warrant some examination. These will be explored below.

4.1.1 *Skookum*

The word *skookum* derives from the Chehalis word *skukm,* which means 'big' or 'strong' (Gregg 2004: 69). In comparison with the SVEN, the vitality of the word seems to have remained consistent among my older participants—values of knowledge and usage being similar, if not higher among the OMs and OFs in my survey. However, it appears the meaning of the word has trended away from its original, or intended meaning of 'big/strong' to meaning something more like 'great/good/cool.' The definitions given by my participants were as follows:

- (really) cool: 4
- (really) good/great/amazing: 7
- Very solid/ top notch: 1
- Something very well done/ very complete: 1
- Big/strong: 2
- Not sure: 3

As you can see, the definitions favoured by most respondents (65%) were descriptions of something of high merit or value (good, amazing, cool, well done, etc.). In the SVEN, this definition was offered by 33% of women and only 18% of men. The definition that came out on top in his survey 'covered the semantic range of big, strong, husky, hefty, healthy, and energetic,' offered by 64% of men and 35% of women (Gregg 2004: 69). This was the meaning offered by only 10% (2) of the respondents in my survey. Gender did not appear to have any significant effect on my survey responses, as much as age. The two respondents who gave the definition 'big/strong' were older individuals, an OF and an OM. There were only two young individuals who provided a definition, two YFs, who both said it meant 'cool.' This further highlights the trend from 'big/strong' to 'great/good/cool' over time. It is hard to say why this shift occurred, but I hypothesize it may be due to semantic broadening of the connotations over time as the term is progressively applied to more things, and thus encompasses broader concepts . Regardless, this term is on its way out, with zero reports of usage among younger individuals.

4.1.2 *Saskie*

A very interesting trend arose in my examination of *saskie.* In his survey, Gregg thought he had caught *saskie* on the brink of extinction, with only 9/203 participants knowing the word. However, my data shows a rebound of the word following this observance, with 50% of OMs and OFs reporting knowledge. Interestingly, this rebound was accompanied by a change in the meaning of the word. In the SVEN, the general meaning given by participants was 'the shoots of a plant/bush'. In my study, however, the meaning given by 78% (7) of respondents was 'someone from Saskatchewan.' Of the remaining two, one OM said 'a Riders fan,' referencing the CFL team, the Saskatchewan Roughriders, and the other, the only young individual, a YM, said it meant 'either Saskatchewan or a sasquatch.' One has to assume this term and its lexical connotations are owed to the resemblance of the words *saskie* and *Saskatchewan.* I believe *saskie* naturally became some sort of nickname, using the same mechanisms by which we may refer to individuals from Newfoundlands as Newfies. It is interesting, however, to note that it seems *saskie* took on a similar meaning to another word in our data: *saskabush.* Whatever its origins, *saskie* is also on its way out, being used by only one young individual, in a different context.

4.1.3 *Slough*

The term *slough* exhibited some lexical differences as well, though I believe these may be owing largely to the method of data collection. Unlike Gregg, I did not have the opportunity to pose this question orally, using the pronunciation /slu/. Therefore, I asked participants to also tell me how they would pronounce the word before giving a definition. The local semantic interpretation Gregg sought to examine was *slough* as a sort of body of water, ranging from a swamp to a river channel. Of the 11 individuals who pronounced the word /slu/ (32%), all but one YM, who didn't know the word, provided definitions along this semantic line. Nine of these respondents were older individuals. The most popular pronunciation given was /slaʊ/, by 38% (13) of my respondents, nine of whom did not know or could not define the word. However, there was one OM and one OF who pronounced it /slaʊ/ and still gave meanings of waterway' or 'body of water.' Three young individuals defined the word as a verb meaning 'to remove' or 'to fall off.' None of them pronounced the word /slu/. Therefore, we can conclude *slough* has lost its previous, local semantic interpretation and pronunciation among younger individuals, and is more often cited with its verbal meaning. However, I believe if I had asked the question with *slough* pronounced /slu/, I would have received fewer reports of knowledge and definitions from young individuals. As such, a change in semantic meaning may not be an accurate description of this phenomenon. Rather, one may attribute it to a decrease in knowledge of what a slough (/slu/) is among young individuals.

4.2 General Vocabulary

Regarding general vocabulary preferences, my hypothesis was again partially supported. I was correct in my assumption about the disappearance of Canadianisms such as *chesterfield* and *eavestroughs*, though this has already been noted by Chambers (1995: 156–66), and displayed in data from the *North American Regional Vocabulary Survey* (Boberg 2014). However, there was no conclusive evidence to suggest vocabulary preference is being taken over by American terms. For example, I observed my respondents trending *away* from the American term *drapes* in favour of *curtains.* The only variable that suggests some American encroachment is the decline in the term *tap,* and an increased use of, or alternation with, the American term *faucet.* This was particularly observed among women. 55% of YFs and 17% of OFs vacillated between the two, and 18% of YFs and 50% of OFs used *faucet* exclusively. Vancouver's proximity to the border, then, and the reach of media, may have *some* influence on vocabulary preference. However, it is not enough to draw any general conclusions. Another interesting development was the large number of people who selected *bus stop* as the place to catch the bus. *Station* remains on top, but *stop* is on the rise with 32% reporting it, especially younger individuals. However, this could be due to differences in interpretation, with those choosing *stop* imagining the place on the street where the bus picks you up, and those choosing *station* imagining the building one may go to to get a bus. The final items of interest were those having to do with telling the time. There appears to be a very large shift away from casual phrases such as 'a quarter to' or 'a quarter after' among younger individuals, with them favouring the more formal 'two forty-five' or 'eleven fifteen.' The individuals that use these phrases most appear to be OMs. This again highlights a trend towards the use of more standard phrases, as they are easier to understand for people with a limited knowledge of English. I propose that the use of e.g. 'two forty-five' over 'a quarter to' may be a result of the drastic increase in the use of digital clocks over analog, where visualizing 'a quarter to' is significantly less intrinsic. However, this dip in reported use may also be due to the formal nature of the questionnaire. If I were able to employ the same method as Gregg, asking in person, I may be able to observe results more similar to his.

5 Conclusion

This study examined variation and change in VE as a product of time, age, and gender, employing previous studies as bases for comparison. Ultimately, the survey showed a general movement of VE towards a more homogenous, standard style of speech. This is evidenced by the departure from and disappearance of distinctive local vocabulary, pronunciation, and semantic interpretation, and casual,

typically “Canadian” vocabulary preferences. My assumptions regarding gender were not supported, with YFs undergoing similar variations and changes in speech as YMs. I was supported in my assumption that it was especially among younger individuals that these changes had occurred, with the last vestiges of a distinct speech visible among the older individuals. My data also did not support the assumption that general vocabulary preferences would exhibit an obvious influence of American conventions. Perhaps if I examined newer vocabulary variants not already explored in the SVEN and SCE, I may find evidence of this trend however, from the terms I observed, no clear conclusions could be made. Future research concerning changes in VE vocabulary may aim to explore new local terms, as I have observed with *saskie* that new local items can appear and fade fast.

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Appendix A – General Vocabulary Preferences

	2023 Data					Scargill and Warkentyne (1972)				Gregg (1976-1984)
Variant	YF	YM	OF	OM	Total	FS	MS	FP	MP	Total
Rug (for a large floor covering)	0%(0)	0%(0)	0%(0)	0%(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	18%
Carpet (for a large floor covering)	92%(10)	67%(6)	100%(5)	100%(8)	91%(31)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	66%
Either	8%(1)	33%(3)	0%(0)	0%(0)	9%(3)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9%
Carpeting	0%(0)	0%(0)	0%(0)	0%(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4%
Can	(7)	(4)	(4)	(3)	53%(18)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tin	(1)	(2)	(1)	(0)	12%(4)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tin can	(2)	(2)	(1)	(5)	29%(10)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Any one	(1)	(1)	(0)	(0)	6%(2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Couch	(10)	(9)	(4)	(8)	91%(31)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	16%
Sofa	(1)	(0)	(2)	(0)	9%(3)	6%	8%	4%	6%	11%
Chesterfield	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	67%	72%	90%	88%	72%
Davenport	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	1%	1%	0%	1%	<1%
By another name	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	25%	16%	5%	3%	N/A
(indoor)										
Tap	(3)	(6)	(2)	(5)	(5)	47%(16)	95	92	92	67%
Faucet	(2)	(2)	(3)	(2)	(2)	26.5%(9)	4	6	6	25%
Spigot	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	0	2	0	N/A
Valve	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	0	0	0	N/A
Either tap or faucet	(6)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	26.5%(9)	N/A	N/A	N/A	8
(outdoor)										
Tap	(4)	(4)	(4)	(6)	53%(18)	96	88	91	88	N/A
Faucet	(4)	(4)	(1)	(0)	26.5%(9)	9	6	3	1	N/A
Spigot	(0)	(1)	(0)	(0)	3%(1)	1	1	0	0	N/A
Valve	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	3	4	4	9	N/A
Either tap or faucet	(3)	(0)	(1)	(2)	18%(6)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Silverware	(0)	(0)	(0)	(2)	6%(2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15%
Cutlery	(9)	(8)	(6)	(5)	82%(28)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	46%
Knives, Spoons, Forks	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8%
Utensils	(2)	(1)	(0)	(1)	12%(4)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3%
Tableware/ Dinnerware	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3%
Silver	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3%
Blinds	(10)	(9)	(6)	(7)	94%(32)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	81%
Shades	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	11%
Either one	(1)	(0)	(0)	(1)	6%(2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8%

Curtains	(10)	(8)	(4)	(7)	85%(29)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	44%
Drapes	(0)	(1)	(1)	(0)	6%(2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	51%
Either one	(1)	(0)	(1)	(1)	9%(3)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%
(cloth)										
Serviette	(0)	(1)	(0)	(0)	3%(1)	33	31	42	32	N/A
Napkin	(11)	(8)	(6)	(7)	94%(32)	43	47	39	48	N/A
Either one	(0)	(0)	(0)	(1)	3%(1)	23	21	19	20	N/A
(paper)										
Serviette	(1)	(0)	(1)	(1)	9%(3)	26	33	52	44	N/A
Napkin	(9)	(9)	(5)	(6)	85%(29)	54	48	30	38	N/A
Either one	(1)	(1)	(0)	(1)	6%(2)	19	18	17	17	N/A
Chips	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	48	45	49	56	N/A
French fries	(2)	(3)	(1)	(5)	29%(10)	42	44	49	40	N/A
Fries	(9)	(6)	(5)	(3)	71%(24)	8	19	2	3	N/A
Eavestroughs	(0)	(0)	(2)	(0)	6%(2)	40	40	82	76	N/A
Gutters	(11)	(9)	(4)	(8)	94%(32)	31	41	14	22	N/A
Other	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	22	11	3	0	N/A
Copse	(1)	(0)	(0)	(0)	3%(1)	2	3	0	2	N/A
Bluff	(0)	(2)	(0)	(0)	6%(2)	3	3	10	15	N/A
Clump	(5)	(1)	(1)	(2)	26.5%(9)	49	46	47	43	N/A
Grove	(4)	(5)	(4)	(5)	53%(18)	42	41	42	38	N/A
Spinney	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	1	0	0	0	N/A
Other	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	12%(4)	0	0	0	0	N/A
Bus station	(6)	(5)	(4)	(6)	62%(21)	36	40	17	15	N/A
Bus depot	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	58	50	76	75	N/A
Bus terminal	(0)	(0)	(1)	(1)	6%(2)	4	9	6	9	N/A
Bus stop	(5)	(4)	(1)	(1)	32%(11)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Loaned	(1)	(1)	(1)	(5)	23.5%(8)	14	23	46	46	N/A
Lent	(10)	(7)	(5)	(3)	73.5%(25)	79	69	50	50	N/A
Borrowed	(0)	(1)	(0)	(0)	3%(1)	2	2	2	2	N/A
Any one	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	0	6	1	2	N/A
Dinner	(11)	(9)	(6)	(5)	91%(31)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14%
Supper	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%
Either one	(0)	(0)	(0)	(2)	6%(2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	24%
Usually dinner, sometimes supper	(0)	(0)	(0)	(1)	3%(1)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	36%
Usually supper, sometimes dinner	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	21%
(hard)										
Icing	(10)	(6)	(6)	(7)	85%(29)	88	84	90	94	N/A
Frosting	(1)	(3)	(0)	(1)	15%(5)	11	12	8	4	N/A
(soft)										
Icing	(6)	(6)	(4)	(6)	65%(22)	70	77	61	72	N/A
Frosting	(5)	(3)	(2)	(2)	35%(12)	29	21	36	26	N/A

(a) quarter to three	(2)	(0)	(1)	(5)	23.5%(8)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	96%
Two forty-five	(7)	(8)	(4)	(2)	62%(21)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3%
Either one	(2)	(1)	(1)	(1)	15%(5)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
(a) quarter after eleven	(0)	(0)	(1)	(4)	15%(5)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	47%
(a) quarter past eleven	(0)	(1)	(0)	(1)	6%(2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	28%
Eleven fifteen	(11)	(8)	(5)	(3)	79%(27)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	23%
Any one	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Half past ten	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	0%(0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	18%
Ten thirty	(10)	(8)	(6)	(7)	91%(31)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	82%
Either one	(1)	(0)	(0)	(1)	6%(2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	(0)	(1)	(0)	(0)	3%(1)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A