

Mosaic identity and style: Phonological variation among Reform American Jews¹

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Scholars of American Judaism have argued that American Jews are losing their sense of a distinctive Jewish identity, and the cultural practices concomitant with that identity. This general attrition has resulted in what many label the *mosaic* identity of American Jews, whereby multiple group affiliations exist in tandem and in conflict. Utilizing a reworked framework of language style (based on Bell 1984, 2001), I demonstrate how the claim that Jewish-affiliated practice is compartmentalized and relegated only to specifically Jewish contexts is supported through an examination of the variable pronunciation of word-final /t/. This paper illustrates the ways in which quantitative and qualitative analyses can work together to create a more developed picture of Reform American Judaism.

KEYWORDS: Language style, Reform Judaism, phonological variation, identity

INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the variable pronunciation of word-final /t/ among members of a Reform Jewish community in New York City. I examine the ways in which two members of this community systematically alternate between allophonic realizations of word-final /t/ across different speech contexts. Couched in a redeveloped theory of language style (based on Bell 1984, 2001), I argue that the observed alternations are linked to the ways in which these two speakers portray different aspects of their multifaceted social identities at different times and in different contexts.

Anecdotal evidence, in the form of folk commentary and media representations of certain Jewish characters, seems to suggest that word-final /t/-release is ideologically associated with an American Jewish style of speech. In fact, Thomas (1932) claims that the pronunciation of /t/ among the American Jews he studied is 'overplosive and slightly higher in pitch' (1932: 323). More recently, Benor (2001, 2004) has identified word-final /t/-release as a salient sociolinguistic variable in two different Orthodox American Jewish communities. Yet, other sociolinguistic research has also shown final /t/-release to

act as a meaningful variable for a variety of people and communities, including a community of female nerds in high school (Bucholtz 1996), a community of science-fiction fans (Ashburn 2000) and a gay-male activist lawyer (Campbell-Kibler, Podesva and Roberts 2002). In all of these communities, however, final /t/-release has been shown to carry symbolic connotations of authority or learnedness. In this paper, I examine whether the Reform Jews being studied use final /t/-release in a similar fashion. Since, as Eckert (2000) and others have pointed out, a particular variant cannot be considered to index a social position in isolation, but must be considered within the broader social context of a particular linguistic style, I consider whether these speakers use final /t/-release as one among several symbolic resources to display an authority or learnedness, and hence affiliation, with respect to an identification as a Reform Jew.

In other words, I am not examining whether final /t/-release can be said to be a feature of some Reform Jewish speech, as in Thomas (1932). Rather, I am investigating two individuals' variable pronunciations of word-final /t/ as a function of topic and context, and suggesting that any systematic variation of this feature may in fact be related to the speakers' and the contexts' differing levels of affiliation with Reform Judaism. In doing so, this paper hopes to contribute to a larger discussion concerning the practices of Reform Jews in America. Contrary to losing distinctively Jewish social practices, as some scholars have argued (e.g. Della Pergola 1991; Heilman 1995), I claim that the Reform Jews described here are actively maintaining Jewish-linked behavior as part of their sociolinguistic identity performance, in the form of phonological variation, and simply relegating that behavior to particular social situations.

BACKGROUND

Reform Judaism in the United States

Reform Judaism is the largest denomination of Judaism in the United States, with an estimated population of 1.77 million, or 34 percent of the total American Jewish population (National Jewish Population Survey 2000–2001).² In Manhattan, 85,155 people, or 35 percent of the total Manhattan Jewish population, identify as Reform Jews (New York Jewish Population Survey 2002).³ Claiming its central tenet to be one of change and adaptation, Reform Judaism defines itself not by adherence to biblical law or ritual practice, like the Orthodox and, to a lesser extent, Conservative movements do, but rather by a commitment to leading a moral and ethical life that is grounded in Jewish culture and history. For this reason, the Reform movement is normally seen as the one most acculturated to an American norm, in which all sense of 'Jewish uniqueness, tribalism and ethnic separation' (Heilman 1995: 19) has been lost.

Though stirrings of reform movements in American Judaism can be seen as far back as the 1820s, the American Reform movement did not really take off

until the end of the 19th century (Blau 1973), when certain synagogues in the eastern United States began to adopt certain liturgical and theological changes. These various changes would eventually coalesce and form the foundation of Reform Judaism. Central to this new movement was the redefinition of sacred practice in terms of the (perishable) body and the (eternal) spirit. For the Reform movement, the Decalogue (i.e. the Ten Commandments) is the true spirit of Judaism, and all other biblical commandments are only signs of a covenant with God, and thus not required to lead a Jewish life (Blau 1966).

The newly founded Reform movement was quick to institutionalize itself. In 1873, Isaac Mayer Wise, a prominent Reform rabbi from Albany, New York, founded the Union of American Hebrew congregations (UAHC), which became, and remains today, the administrative body of Reform Judaism.⁴ Over the course of the 20th century, the Reform movement created, expanded and modified a coherent religious platform, which included, among other things, the notion that only the moral laws of the Bible are binding. Of the other parts of biblical legislation, only those that 'elevate and sanctify our lives' are retained, while those that 'are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization' are rejected (Central Conference of American Rabbis 1885).

While many American Jews embraced the Reform movement, others felt it had strayed too far from traditional Judaism, and sought a middle ground between the Reform and Orthodox positions. In 1902, Solomon Schechter founded the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) in New York City, and made it the flagship of a new branch of American Judaism – the Conservative movement. Conservative Judaism stressed the historical importance of traditional Jewish practice, and attempted to combine a progressive mentality with the maintenance of the imperative of Biblical law.

At the turn of the century, then, American Judaism was, as now, divided into three major denominations: Reform, Conservative and Orthodox. While at first American Jews lived mainly together in major urban centers, as time went on, Reform and Conservative Jews, thanks largely to their increased incorporation into American society, began to ascend the socio-economic hierarchy and leave the cities for the 'American life' that awaited them in the suburbs (Halpern 1971). This social mobility on the part of Conservative and especially Reform Jews was counterposed to the relative immobility and isolation of Orthodox- and immigrant-Jewish communities, who remained mostly in urban ethnic ghettos.

For Reform Jews, however, life in the suburbs led to ever-increasing acculturation and a de-ethnicized American way of life (Kramer and Leventman 1961). This general pattern of acculturation was mitigated somewhat by a shift in the popular American ethos in the 1960s and 1970s, when an assimilationist ideal began to give way to one which privileged cultural pluralism. D. Bell (1986) argues that 'the break-up of the cultural hegemony of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs) and the growth of ethnicity as a legitimate dimension of American life forced Jews to maintain an identity and define

themselves in ethnic terms.' Yet, what Jewish identity maintenance necessarily entailed had shifted, and Reform Jews began to define themselves through shared moral and philanthropic obligation (Cohen 1989), rather than through distinctive cultural practices (Della Pergola 1991). It is this 'nebulous sense of shared commitment' (Heilman 1995) upon which contemporary Reform Judaism is based that has led to what many call the 'tenuous' position of Reform Jews in contemporary American society.

The study of Jewish language in the United States

Sociolinguistic investigations of Judaism in America have focused mainly on various Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox communities in the United States, identifying the ways in which these communities use linguistic resources to preserve and perpetuate their distinctive Jewish identities (e.g. Fishman 1985; Gold 1986; Steinmetz 1987). Recent work in Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox communities in the U.S. has begun to highlight the ways in which language is used in these communities to socialize children and reinforce local ideologies of gender (Fader 2000), authority (Benor 2001) and authenticity (Benor 2004). These works have all identified specific linguistic practices that community members take to be indexical of in-group status. Similar to Milroy (1980), Benor (2004) shows that the dense, multiplex social networks of these insular religious communities provide strong norm-enforcement mechanisms both for language and the ideological referents that language symbolizes.

In contrast, research into the linguistic practices of Reform Jewish communities must take as its starting point the arguments put forth in Bortoni-Ricardo (1983). In her examination of the urban migration of rural Brazilians, Bortoni-Ricardo illustrates how the dissolution of tightly integrated social networks can lead to the disuse of linguistic features ideologically associated with a distinctive social identity. Similarly, Blake and Josey's (2003) recent investigation of longtime local residents of Martha's Vineyard illustrates this same process, where distinctive linguistic practice is lost as a result of the breakup of insular community structures. Scholars of Reform Judaism in America have argued that the notion of a coherent, bounded group of Reform Jews is more difficult to support now than at any other time in U.S. history (NJPS 2000). American Reform Jews, therefore, would not be expected to show evidence of distinctive social practice, except perhaps in certain specific, Jewish-identified contexts (Auerbach 2001), and it is this topic which I take up in the remainder of this paper.

METHODOLOGY

Community description

The subjects of this study are two members of a mid-sized Reform congregation in downtown Manhattan, which I will call Beit Shalom. Officially affiliated

with the Reform movement, Beit Shalom offers a variety of religious and communal activities in addition to regular religious services, including child- and adult-education, two youth groups and charitable committees. Moreover, Beit Shalom prides itself on being a progressive synagogue, offering 'alternative' services every other week, in which the traditional Reform Jewish liturgy is infused with more contemporary Jewish music, theatre and poetry. I first came to Beit Shalom in the Fall of 2002, where I spent five months at the synagogue observing and recording various classes, religious services and activities, as well as interviewing the congregation's rabbi, education director, members of its lay leadership and certain congregants.

This paper focuses on two synagogue members who were observed and recorded together in three different settings: a religious school classroom, a youth group meeting and a group interview at one of the subject's homes. Since I had already spent a few months observing and volunteering at Beit Shalom before I began recording the two speakers considered here, both of them were already somewhat familiar with me and my religious/Jewish background. Both were aware that I was a doctoral student in Linguistics, and that I was at the synagogue conducting research on Reform Jewish life in New York. Moreover, they were aware that I was born in Israel and spoke Hebrew, though I had moved to the United States as a child and had grown up there. Finally, while they did not have specific information on my own personal religious beliefs or practices, they were aware that I did not personally affiliate with Reform Judaism nor attend services at their, or any other Reform, synagogue.

One of the subjects, whom I will call Noah, was, at the time of recording, 17 years old and a senior at a public high school in Manhattan. He was born and had lived his entire life in downtown Manhattan, and had for some time been an active member of both Beit Shalom and the Reform movement more generally. Though his family only nominally participated in synagogue life, Noah frequently attended Friday night services, attended supplemental religious school classes, was an active member of the synagogue youth group and was an officer in a national federation of Reform Jewish youth groups. Though he had never been to Israel, Noah expressed a strong cultural connection with Israel and its people, and stated that he wished to go there very soon.

The other subject, whom I will call Hannah, was, at the time of recording, 16 years old and a junior at the same public high school that Noah attended. Hannah was also native to downtown Manhattan and had been attending Beit Shalom her entire life. While her parents had always been very active in the synagogue, Hannah only began attending various youth group and synagogue activities at the urging of Noah, with whom she is a close friend, about two years prior to my observing them. Since then, however, Hannah had become the leader of Beit Shalom's youth group and planned to pursue leadership positions in regional and/or national Reform Jewish youth groups. Hannah had also never been to Israel and, though somewhat more tentatively than Noah, identified with the people and the culture and expressed a desire to travel there.

Following preliminary observations of Hannah and Noah in their various synagogue activities, I recorded the two of them together in a religious school class and during youth group meetings. The class was an Israeli Hebrew class that met at the synagogue every other week for two hours. Part of the synagogue's continuing education program for younger members, this class was available to those who had completed their required religious studies (i.e. through their Bar/Bat Mitzvahs) and wished to continue in the school. All of the students in the class (two, in addition to Hannah and Noah), therefore, had chosen to attend this class, which was taught by an Israeli instructor, and focused primarily on basic vocabulary and grammar of contemporary Israeli Hebrew. The other two students in the class, who are not discussed here, were both younger than Hannah and Noah, having just completed their required Religious School training the year before. Despite the difference in age though, Hannah and Noah were acquainted with them, since all four were members of the Temple Youth Group. There was, however, a fairly obvious divide between the 'older' students, Hannah and Noah, and the 'younger,' both of whom were 13 at the time. The instructor of the class was a staff member of the Temple who had, at the time of recording, taught there for five years. Though Hannah, Noah and he knew each other in passing, he had never taught them nor interacted with them on a regular basis before.

The youth group, on the other hand, was one of two such groups at Beit Shalom, and was intended to be an informal setting in which older students (i.e. post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah) could come together and discuss various Jewish topics. The youth group was entirely student organized and led (by Hannah, in fact), and also met every other week for two hours. At each meeting, a different member of the group would organize activities around a specific Jewish topic, for example, ritual practices around the world, Jewish art or literature, Jewish conceptions of morality. These topics would then be discussed by the group as a whole (normally ranging from ten to 15 participants) for the duration of the two-hour meeting. In addition to Hannah and Noah, youth group meetings attracted a core group of participants, either nine or ten people, who attended each meeting. Members of this core group were Hannah and Noah's peers, 16- and 17-year-old High School students, and were people that both Hannah and Noah considered friends, though they also both admitted to hardly seeing them outside of youth group meetings. The others who attended less frequently I call peripheral members, and were mostly younger congregants, those who had just completed their Bar/Bat Mitzvah (the two other students in the Hebrew class fall into this latter group). In contrast to the classroom, where I was present during recordings, for the youth group, I gave Hannah and Noah tape recorders with which to record the interactions themselves.

Finally, following the recordings in the classroom and the youth group, I sat down with Hannah and Noah together at Hannah's apartment and conducted a sociolinguistic interview with both of them. During this interview, which

lasted approximately 90 minutes, we discussed a wide variety of topics, including family lives, schooling, social lives, Judaism and religious beliefs.

Linguistic analysis

These recordings together generated a corpus of approximately 225 minutes of talk, from which I extracted 1388 tokens of word-final /t/. These tokens were coded as released, non-released, glottalized or deleted on an impressionistic basis, though 140 tokens, or 10 percent of the total, were examined acoustically to verify the impressionistic coding.

Mention should be made of the specific acoustic properties of what I am calling final-/t/ release. In Benor (2001), the author normally refers to the phenomenon as final-/t/ release, and once labels it release/aspiration. Acoustically, aspiration in English is characterized by the cessation of voicing, the severe reduction of energy in the lower frequencies and random noise in the upper frequencies in which formant transitions take place. Alternatively, consonant release is characterized by a short burst of air following stop closure, which appears as sharp spikes in the spectrogram that lack the upper frequency noise characteristic of aspiration. Though stop release and stop aspiration are acoustically distinct in this way, they are conflated and set in opposition to unreleased stop closure.⁵ In addition to release and non-release (characterized by a fall in F1 and rise in F2 frequencies associated with alveolar closure), the dependent variable was also analyzed as either glottalized (identifiable by widely spaced pulses in the waveform and lack of F1 and F2 transitions) or deleted.

Tokens were also coded for both internal and social independent factors which could affect the attestation of the dependent variable. In terms of linguistic factors, Guy (1980, 1991a, b), Labov (1989), and Roberts (1991) all discuss the importance of preceding and following phonological environment on final coronal stop deletion. Additionally, Guy (1991a, b) discusses the importance of morphological category on final coronal stop deletion, and Guy (1991b) argues for the significance of phrasal stress on this variable process. Accordingly, tokens were coded and analyzed for these four internal factor groups.

In terms of social factors, speaker (Noah and Hannah), audience (classroom, youth group and interview) and topic (secular and non-secular) are considered. While the coding mechanism for speaker and audience is straightforward, coding for topic requires a bit more explanation. Within and across all three contexts, a variety of topics was discussed. While certainly the youth group, for example, favors what I call non-secular, that is religious or Jewish, topics, a great deal of talk in the youth group also focused on what I am calling secular things: what type of pizza is best, what brand of athletic shoes to buy, for instance. Similarly, the classroom setting, while mostly secular and focused on the grammar and vocabulary of Israeli Hebrew, did also include some

discussions that were classified as non-secular by virtue of their making specific reference to Judaism, Jewish beliefs and Jewish practices.⁶ The interview setting was the most topically diverse, with substantial time spent discussing both secular and non-secular content. Coding for topic was therefore determined according to the specific content (i.e. secular or non-secular) of the speaker-turn containing a particular token. A restrictive approach was taken to coding for non-secular topics, insofar as only those utterances in which religious beliefs or practices are explicitly referenced were coded as non-secular.

I state above that I am couching my analysis of the variable pronunciation of word-final /t/ within a reworking of Bell's (1984, 2001) theory of language style. In his treatment of style, Bell identifies what he describes as two 'complementary and coexistent dimensions of style, which operate simultaneously and in all speech events' (2001: 165), namely *audience design* and *referee design*. Audience design refers to the ways in which speakers linguistically accommodate to the norms of the particular people they are addressing. As such, audience design describes a responsive phenomenon, whereby speakers attune to what they perceive to be the appropriate linguistic style for speaking with particular people (cf. Giles and Powesland 1975). The presence of this type of effect is evidenced in a data set by systematic alternations between variables, which can then be taken to indicate that speakers are manipulating salient linkages between linguistic forms and the ideological make-up of a particular audience.

Referee design, on the other hand, pertains to an initiative phenomenon, through which speakers dynamically represent their own salient social identities through language. In discussing the relationship between linguistic variation and context, Coupland (2001) describes what he calls *dialect stylization*, a process through which speakers 'construct a social image or persona that interconnects with other facets of a speaker's communicative design in a particular event or act' (2001: 348). Central to Coupland's definition of dialect stylization is the locality or 'situated-ness' of linguistic variation. The social performance enacted by this variation is the construction of an interconnection between a speaker's total social persona, the particular event of speech and the way in which a speaker wishes to locate him/herself within that particular event.

I use Coupland's insights regarding dialect stylization to rework Bell's theory of language style, and in so doing broaden the scope of audience and referee design, making them more sensitive to the specific contexts in which style variation occurs. What Bell (2001) calls referee design, then, I analyze as that aspect of Coupland's dialect stylization that highlights a speaker's total social persona, while I take audience design to refer to that aspect that highlights the particular event of speech (i.e. audience, topic and setting). The ways in which speakers locate themselves within particular speech events, (i.e. Coupland's third interconnected aspect) becomes that space where audience design and

referee design overlap and a speaker's desires for self-presentation critically interact with the exigencies of a particular speech context. This theoretical adaptation allows me to unite the quantitative, empirical strength of Bell's style model with the intersubjective nuance and situatedness of Coupland's stylization model.

Viewed in this way, the goal of the current research is to investigate the ways in which Hannah and Noah may be varying their pronunciations of word-final /t/ to style a dialect. Observed variation across audience and topic is linked to the different social and ideological associations (e.g. more Jewish versus less Jewish; more-authoritative versus less-authoritative) of these audiences and topics (i.e. my re-working of audience design), whereas systematic differentiation between Hannah and Noah's speech is linked to differences in their respective performances of self (i.e. my re-working of referee design). The dependent variable, word-final /t/, is therefore analyzed multinomially across audiences, speakers and topics in an effort to understand how Hannah and Noah are using two distinct, yet interrelated, processes of audience design and referee design to sociolinguistically contextualize themselves in particular speech events.

RESULTS

Multiple quantitative analyses were conducted on the data drawn from the recorded conversations. These analyses included traditional binomial analyses of final /t/-release, as well as trinomial analysis of the dependent variable (Pintzuk 1988, based on original algorithms by David Sankoff and Pascale Rousseau), followed by subsequent binomial analysis of different realizations of word-final /t/. By conducting a trinomial analysis of the dependent variable, which considers multiple allophonic realizations of word-final /t/ as application values, I am able to examine not only how final /t/-release is being used, but also what the speakers are doing when they are not using final /t/-release. In other words, since there are multiple potential allophonic realizations of word-final /t/, any of which could potentially carry social significance, an analysis that ignores other potential realizations and simply groups them into a category of non-application risks overlooking intricate processes of socially salient phonological variation.

To begin, however, consider a binomial analysis of final /t/-release, as shown in Table 1. In this analysis, final /t/-release is set as the application value, and compared to the conflation of the other three potential realizations (i.e. glottalization, non-release and deletion). Though I will focus on the social factors that affect final /t/-release, certain linguistic factors merit mentioning. First, consider morphological category, which according to Guy (1991a) should have a significant effect on the realization of word-final coronals. This factor group is selected as significant, with monomorphemic tokens releasing word-final /t/ 14 percent of the time, irregular past tense tokens releasing their word-final /t/ 33

Table 1: Binomial analysis of final /t/-release*

Factor group	Factor	[t]/N	%	Weights
Morphological category**	monomorph	156/1101	14	0.513
	clitic negation	23/160	14	0.454
	<i>just</i>	18/51	35	0.298
	reg. past verb	15/31	48	0.373
	irr. past verb	15/45	33	0.675
Preceding phonological**	alveolar nasal	41/225	18	0.651
	fricative	83/150	55	0.936
	liquid	12/38	31	0.689
	stop	22/42	52	0.911
	glide	24/214	11	0.348
	vowel	45/719	6	0.322
Following phonological***	pause	55/253	21	0.505
	obstruent	81/526	15	0.485
	lateral	5/41	12	0.490
	rhotic	2/25	8	0.376
	glide	24/187	12	0.512
	vowel	60/356	16	0.522
Stress**	stressed	88/294	29	0.742
	unstressed	139/1094	12	0.429
Speaker**	Noah	146/707	20	0.583
	Hannah	81/681	11	0.414
Audience***	youth group	48/269	17	0.586
	classroom	98/599	16	0.503
	interview	81/520	15	0.452
Topic***	secular	124/784	15	0.470
	non-secular	103/604	17	0.538

* $\chi^2/\text{cell} = 0.94$; Log likelihood = -465.940, Input probability = 0.107

** groups selected as significant at $p < 0.05$ (step-up/step-down)

*** groups not selected as significant

percent of the time and regular past tense tokens releasing their word-final /t/ 48 percent of the time. This relative ordering of frequencies mirrors the predictions made in Guy's (1991a) exponential model of final coronal stop deletion, with regular past tense tokens retaining an audibly released word-final /t/ at a rate of over three times as much as their monomorphemic counterparts.

In terms of preceding and following phonological environments, only preceding environment is selected as significant. Within this group, there is a rough division between vocoid elements (i.e. vowels and glides) which strongly disfavor final /t/-release, and non-vocoid elements (here comprised of stops, nasals, liquids and fricatives) which all favor, to differing degrees, final /t/-release.

Finally, stress is selected as significant, with stressed words showing a preference for final /t/-release. These results are all consonant with those of Benor (2001).

In terms of social factor groups, only speaker is selected as having a significant effect on the attestation of final, released /t/. We see that Noah shows a preference for final /t/-release ($p = 0.583$), while Hannah shows a dispreference for it ($p = 0.414$). While neither audience nor topic is selected, it is useful to consider Hannah and Noah's behaviors across these categories separately. In Table 2, a pattern emerges for both Noah and Hannah. Final /t/-release appears most frequently in the youth group setting (22% and 16% for Noah and Hannah, respectively), while for Hannah it is much less frequent in both the classroom setting (8%) and the interview setting (11%). Noah is somewhat consistent across the board, reducing the frequency of final /t/-release to 21 percent in the classroom setting and 19 percent in the interview setting. In terms of topic, there is a tendency towards increased frequency of final /t/-release with non-secular topics, with Hannah showing a difference of 10 percent versus 13 percent for secular versus non-secular topics, respectively, and Noah a difference of 20 percent and 21 percent, respectively. While at this point, these can only be regarded as very slight tendencies, a pattern does seem to exist for both Hannah and Noah in which final /t/-release is more frequent in the youth group setting and when speaking on non-secular topics.^{7,8}

While the binomial analysis in Tables 1 and 2 above allows us to examine the behavior of final /t/-release across speaker, audience and topic, it tells us virtually nothing about the behavior of the other allophonic realizations of word-final /t/. In order to investigate what these speakers are doing when they are not using final /t/-release, I consider the results of a trinomial analysis in Table 3.⁹ In a trinomial analysis, three potential realizations of the dependent variable are all treated as the application value (consequently, 0.333 is the probability against which rule favoring/disfavoring is judged). Similar to a binomial analysis, the statistical model assesses the effect of the independent variables on the attestation of any of the three dependent variables. Yet, unlike a binomial analysis, since the model is examining the dependent variable

Table 2: Binomial analysis of final /t/-release by speaker (social factors)

Factor group	Factor	Noah*			Hannah**		
		[t]/N	%	Weight	[t]/N	%	Weight
Audience	youth group	16/70	22	0.527	32/199	16	0.578
	classroom	79/371	21	0.500	19/228	8	0.535
	interview	51/266	19	0.493	30/254	11	0.408
Topic	secular	88/438	20	0.562	36/346	10	0.427
	non-secular	58/269	21	0.400	45/335	13	0.576

* $\chi^2/\text{cell} = 1.05$; Log likelihood = -270.644; Input probability = 0.149

** $\chi^2/\text{cell} = 0.74$; Log likelihood = -175.113; Input probability = 0.060

Table 3: Trinomial analysis of social factors*

Group	Factor	Released			Non-released			Glottalized/deleted			Total	
		N	%	Weight	N	%	Weight	N	%	Weight	N	N
Speaker	Noah	146	21	0.410	327	46	0.306	234	33	0.283	707	
	Hannah	81	12	0.264	345	51	0.353	255	37	0.383	681	
Audience	youth group	48	18	0.369	145	54	0.383	76	28	0.248	269	
	classroom	98	16	0.340	294	49	0.312	207	35	0.348	599	
	interview	81	15	0.285	233	45	0.300	206	40	0.415	520	
Topic	secular	124	16	0.319	365	47	0.311	295	37	0.370	784	
	non-secular	103	17	0.346	307	51	0.355	194	32	0.299	604	
Total		227 (input = 0.296)			672 (input = 0.253)			489 (input = 0.451)			1388	

* Log likelihood = -1151.871; $p \leq 0.001$ for Speaker and Audience; Topic not selected as significant.

multinomially, it also assumes interactions between the dependent variables. For this reason, frequencies (in terms of N) do not necessarily straightforwardly coincide with factor weights (Sankoff 1988). Note also that by analyzing word-final /t/ trinomially in this way, I am assuming a direct three-way choice between the different realizations, as opposed to a partitioned analysis in which a certain realization is treated as an underlying value which can then optionally be realized as a transformed variant (Paolillo 2002). Here, I abstract away from considering these rule-ordered processes and treat /t/-release, /t/-non-release and /t/-glottalization/deletion as being direct phonetic realizations of the underlying phoneme (though cf. Rousseau 1989 and Sankoff and Rousseau 1989).

In Table 3, speaker and audience are selected as significant, while topic is not.¹⁰ This finding is in accord with Bell's (1984) assertion that the amount of audience-conditioned style shift will typically be greater than the amount of style shifting conditioned by topic. With respect to speaker, we see that Noah still shows a strong preference for final /t/-release ($p = 0.410$), while he also disfavors final /t/-glottalization/deletion ($p = 0.283$). Hannah, on the other hand, favors final /t/-glottalization/deletion ($p = 0.383$), while showing a strong dispreference for final /t/-release ($p = 0.264$).

The audience group obtains a distinct effect between the relative favoring of final /t/-release versus glottalization/deletion in the youth group and interview settings.¹¹ While the youth group favors final /t/-release ($p = 0.369$), it strongly disfavors final /t/-glottalization/deletion ($p = 0.248$). Conversely, the interview setting disfavors final /t/-release ($p = 0.285$), while manifesting a strong preference for final /t/-glottalization ($p = 0.415$). Yet what seems to be most important here is not the relative favoring or disfavoring of final /t/-release or glottalization/deletion, but the patterning of the variables in the two contexts. In both the interview setting and the youth group setting, release and non-release pattern together, while glottalization/deletion stands apart (strongly preferred in the interview setting and strongly dispreferred in the youth group setting). This finding indicates that there may be, in addition to a systematic pattern of final /t/-release in the data, another pattern with respect to final /t/-glottalization/deletion. In order to tease out more specifically what that pattern may be, subsequent binomial analyses were conducted in which: (1) the conflated category glottalization/deletion was set as the application value; (2) glottalization alone was set as the application value; and (3) deletion alone was set as the application value.

In the interest of space, only the analysis which treated glottalization alone as the application value is presented below. The analysis which combined glottalization/deletion as application value yielded results very similar to those given in Table 4, and is therefore not treated here. In the analysis that treated deletion alone, no social factor groups were selected as significant (though all internal factor groups were). This result seems to indicate that though final, coronal stop deletion is an active variable process for the speakers discussed, it

Table 4: Binomial analysis of final /t/-glottalization*

Group	Factor	[ʔ]/N	%	Weight
Morphological category	monomorphemic	270/1101	24	0.554
	lexical exceptions**	1/211	0	0.170
	reg. past verb	6/31	16	0.967
	irr. past verb	5/45	13	0.452
Preceding phonological	alveolar nasal	3/225	1	0.176
	fricative	2/150	1	0.054
	stop	4/42	9	0.071
	liquid	2/38	5	0.191
	glide	98/214	45	0.856
	vowel	173/719	24	0.685
Following phonological	pause	99/253	39	0.710
	obstruent***	77/526	14	0.463
	rhotic	5/25	20	0.650
	lateral	9/41	21	0.577
	glide	43/187	22	0.536
	vowel	49/356	13	0.360
Speaker	Noah	126/707	17	0.437
	Hannah	156/681	22	0.565
Audience	youth group	46/269	17	0.375
	classroom	122/599	20	0.464
	interview	114/520	21	0.606
Topic	secular	174/784	22	0.528
	non-secular	108/604	17	0.464

* $\chi^2/\text{cell} = 1.29$; Log likelihood = -542.502 ; Input probability = 0.096 ; $p < 0.01$ for all factor groups shown (step-up/step-down)

** *just* and clitic negation are combined to eliminate knock-outs

*** All following obstruents are combined following Guy (1990, 1991a, b) who has shown that the important distinction for final coronal stops in the following phonological environment is sonorant versus non-sonorant

is not necessarily indexical, at least not in the parameters described here. Comparing these three analyses to one another allows us to deduce that it is final /t/-glottalization which is the key component in the variation under investigation.

Focusing only on the social factors, we see that treating glottalization as the application value of the dependent variable causes the analysis to select all of the external factor groups – speaker, audience and topic – as significant. Noah continues to disfavor final /t/-glottalization ($p = 0.437$), while Hannah continues to favor it ($p = 0.565$). The results for audience are also consonant with the trinomial analysis above, with the youth group setting strongly disfavoring glottalization ($p = 0.375$), the interview setting strongly favoring

it ($p = 0.606$) and the classroom setting remaining relatively neutral ($p = 0.464$). Finally, the category of topic, secular versus non-secular, is selected as significant. This result is not necessarily surprising given the distribution of the data in the trinomial analysis. Even though it was not selected as significant there, the released and non-released tokens pattern together in Table 3 above, and can be set in opposition to the glottalized/deleted tokens in the topic group. In Table 4, this pattern achieves a level of significance, with non-secular tokens disfavoring glottalization, though admittedly this result is not very robust ($p = 0.464$).

The relative preference for glottalization in the interview setting and dispreference for it in the youth group setting is maintained when we consider Noah and Hannah's data separately in Table 5. For Noah, audience and topic are not selected as having a significant effect on his use of final /t/-glottalization, though we see from the frequency distributions that Noah uses less glottalization in the youth group setting than he does in the interview setting, though this difference is quite small (15% versus 16% respectively). Audience and topic are, however, selected as having a significant effect on Hannah's use of final /t/-glottalization, whereby she, like Noah, uses less glottalization in the youth group setting than in the interview setting (17% versus 27%, respectively). In terms of topic, the frequency distribution for both Hannah and Noah reflects the results in Table 4, where secular topics have a higher rate of glottalization than non-secular topics (to a level of significance in Hannah's case).

When considered together, the results of the quantitative analyses of final /t/-release and final /t/-glottalization illuminate an interesting pattern in the speech of Hannah and Noah. Though used by both, final /t/-release is preferred overall by Noah, while Hannah prefers to use final /t/-glottalization. In terms of audience, the youth group setting tends to favor release and disfavor glottalization, while in the interview setting the converse is true. This pattern across settings is also replicated in the speech of Hannah and Noah separately, who

Table 5: Binomial analysis of final /t/-glottalization by speaker (social factors)

Factor group	Factor	Noah*			Hannah**		
		[?]/N	%	Weight	[?]/N	%	Weight
Audience	youth group	11/70	15	0.443	35/199	17	0.389
	classroom	72/371	19	0.491	50/228	21	0.393
	interview	43/266	16	0.528	71/254	27	0.678
Topic	secular	83/438	18	0.484	91/346	26	0.531
	non-secular	43/269	15	0.526	65/335	19	0.468

* $\chi^2/\text{cell} = 0.62$; Log likelihood = -251.932 ; Input probability = 0.039 ; groups not selected as significant (step-up/step-down)

** $\chi^2/\text{cell} = 1.70$; Log likelihood = -275.415 ; Input probability = 0.124 ; $p < 0.05$ for groups shown (step-up/step-down)

both use more final /t/-release in the youth group and more glottalization in the interview. Finally, glottalization also interacts with topic, where, for both Hannah and Noah, secular topics elicited more final /t/-glottalization, while non-secular topics elicited more final /t/-release. In short, then, two distinct patterns emerge – one in which the two speakers have a preference for either release or glottalization, and one in which the settings have a preference for either release or glottalization. The complexity of the situation arises from the fact that these two patterns are not only present throughout, but also interact and influence each other in the production of the observed variation.

DISCUSSION

In an effort to understand this complex distribution of final /t/-release and final /t/-glottalization, let us first turn to the audience design effects, that is variation across topic and audience, and then return to differences between the speakers. As shown in Tables 3–5, different realizations of word-final /t/ can be grouped according to setting, with the youth group favoring release (and disfavoring glottalization), and the interview favoring glottalization (and disfavoring release).

Recall that the youth group setting was the one speech environment in which Hannah and Noah were surrounded only by their own peers; no instructors, sociolinguists nor adults, for that matter, were present. Furthermore, there was a level of affective investment in the youth group absent in the other settings. Hannah was the youth group's current president at the time of recording, while Noah had been its president the year prior. They devoted a great deal of time and effort to organizing and attending youth group meetings and events, and both also expressed to me that for them the youth group was a chance to explore and express their Judaism, while also interacting with (Jewish) friends, whom they rarely saw elsewhere. For Hannah and Noah, then, the youth group represents an opportunity to discuss their beliefs with others who share those beliefs. We can imagine that this would be a situation in which Hannah and Noah would be predisposed to display their knowledge of (i.e. authority) and identification with Reform Judaism.

Moreover, the youth group was the one situation, of the three observed, in which Reform Judaism was most actively considered. During the two youth group sessions recorded, the participants (including Hannah and Noah) spent one session talking about various Passover rituals in Jewish communities around the world, comparing them to American Reform Passovers, and spent the other session discussing the arguments for and against the use of traditional Jewish prayer shawls (which the Reform movement does not require). In both of these sessions, Hannah and Noah were active participants, describing their own views on the topics, including discussions of their own ritual practices, the beliefs that underlie those practices and their feelings about the Reform movement in the United States. While these were not the only topics

discussed in these sessions (see below), they occupied approximately 75 per cent of the talk recorded.

This stands in contrast to the classroom setting. While the class did take place in the synagogue's school, it was a contemporary Hebrew language class and practically no time (perhaps 5–10%) was spent explicitly engaging Reform Judaism. This class was taught by an Israeli instructor who displayed a discerned lack of knowledge of Reform Judaism, specifically, and the vast majority of talk between Hannah or Noah and the instructor was concerned with the Hebrew course material. Nor did Hannah and Noah interact a great deal with the other two members of the class, who, though both (somewhat peripheral) members of the youth group, were young enough that Hannah and Noah did not consider them friends or even peers. In fact, most of the speech recorded in the classroom was talk between Hannah and Noah while doing their work.¹²

Finally, recall that the interview took place in Hannah's apartment, where Hannah, Noah and I were the only people present. Since the interview took place after all other observations and recordings, Hannah and Noah were familiar with me personally, though we had still never discussed my own personal religious beliefs (though they knew I was both Israeli and, at least nominally, Jewish). This interview lasted approximately 90 minutes, during which time we discussed their families, growing up, school, recreation, personal religious beliefs, the synagogue and Israel. While we spent 20–25 minutes specifically discussing Reform Judaism, the majority of the interview covered other, not necessarily Jewish-related aspects of Hannah and Noah's lives.

Of these three settings, it seems safe to conclude that the youth group is the one which is most explicitly identified with Reform Judaism, both in terms of audience members and time spent discussing Jewish topics, while the interview setting would seem to be the least. Of the three, only the interview setting took place outside of the synagogue and involved an interlocutor who did not identify with Reform Judaism. The classroom setting falls somewhere in between, where, while the instructor did not identify with Reform Judaism and Judaism was not a major topic of discussion, the class did take place in the synagogue and Hannah and Noah together were the primarily interlocutors.

To return to the data then, the youth group setting, the one most identified with Reform Judaism, significantly favors final /t/-release and disfavors glottalization. Both Hannah and Noah use more final /t/-release when in the youth group setting than elsewhere. In contrast, the interview setting, the one least associated with Reform Judaism, disfavors final /t/-release and strongly favors final /t/-glottalization. Again, both Hannah and Noah use more final /t/-glottalization in the interview setting than elsewhere. This quantitative finding seems to indicate an association, at least for Hannah and Noah, between final /t/-release and an expression of Reform Judaism. When they are in the youth group setting, Hannah and Noah may be using a 'linguistic feature associated with [a certain] group . . . to express identification with that group' (Bell 2001: 147).

Due to the small sample size considered here, I am unable to make any sweeping claims regarding the status of final /t/-release as indexical of Reform Jewish identity. Yet, the systematic patterning in the speech of both Noah and Hannah seems to indicate that they are responding to some audience design effect, whereby final /t/-release is strongly preferred in the youth group. Conversely, when Hannah and Noah are in the interview setting, they avoid the use of final /t/-release, and instead make significant use of final /t/-glottalization. What am I claiming here is that these results may be evidence of a correlation between this observed linguistic practice and the composition of the audiences in these two settings.

This analysis across audiences is further supported by the results across topic. Though the youth group meetings were primarily focused upon Reform Judaism, meetings were also a chance for Hannah and Noah to socialize with friends. Discussions of specifically Jewish topics were interspersed with casual conversations on a variety of topics. When examined across topic within the youth group setting, final /t/-release was preferred when discussing non-secular topics (19% versus 16%), while final /t/-glottalization was preferred when discussing secular topics (24% versus 8%; $p = 0.04$). Within the interview setting, this preference with respect to glottalization was preserved, with non-secular topics favoring glottalization (22% versus 17%; $p = 0.03$), while topic did not have a significant effect on final /t/-release. This pattern is also evident across all settings, where the combined data for topic in Table 4 show non-secular topics to significantly favor final /t/-glottalization.

Across settings, therefore, Hannah and Noah are shown to vary their use of release versus glottalization as a function of audience, while within settings, they are shown to do so as a function of topic. The data presented offer quantitative support for the notion that observed variation occurs as a function of the extent to which these topics and audiences are associated with Reform Judaism. This patterning with respect to word-final /t/ could then be taken as one part of Hannah and Noah's dialect stylizations, whereby they respond to the situated contexts of different speech events. Let us now turn to another part of this stylization process, namely the presentation by Hannah and Noah of their own respective social personae.

While Hannah and Noah pattern similarly with respect to variation across topic and audience, they also do manifest distinct preferences across-the-board. Hannah, though implementing both /t/-release and /t/-glottalization, significantly preferred glottalization. For Noah, the opposite was true. I contend that these facts can be taken as evidence of differential desires with respect to a presentation of self on the part of Noah and Hannah.

Noah, of the two, seems to be more invested in the spiritual and analytical aspects of his Reform Jewish identification. While both are active members of the local synagogue, Noah also sits on the board of the national Reform Jewish youth association. In talking with both of them about their spiritual beliefs and religious practices, Noah admits to devoting a great deal of thought to the

beliefs he has and the practice he engages in. He is, moreover, very aware of the beliefs and practices of Jews in other denominations and cultures, and firmly grounds himself within the Reform movement, from what appears to be a rather informed point of view. During the interview, Noah commented on how he tries to 'organize [his] life around certain Jewish principles,' and he expressed an interest in at least trying various ritual practices, for example, keeping the Sabbath, ritual fasting.

Hannah, on the other hand, while firmly placing her identity within the Reform movement, does so admittedly by default. Having been raised in an active and observant Reform household, Hannah states that she follows the beliefs and practices of the Reform community mostly because she always has:

Hannah: [when asked about going to services on the Sabbath] I mean I've never had a choice about going to temple, and I think maybe if it hadn't been that way I wouldn't have gotten into the youth group . . . yeah maybe if I wasn't forced to when I was younger, I wouldn't have gotten into all this stuff.

Though she certainly expresses individual thoughts regarding her belief system and the practices she will maintain when she leaves her parents' house, Hannah's Reform identification seems more grounded in the maintenance of tradition and cultural norms than that of Noah. Rather, Hannah seems to view her situation as an active Reform Jew in New York to be somewhat of a default. In a way, Judaism is for Hannah her way of being a New Yorker, and the two are intrinsically linked.

In light of this, we can infer that Hannah and Noah's different linguistic preferences are correlated to their distinct personal identifications with a Reform Jewish identity, and thus the second component of dialect stylization. Via these processes of referee design, Noah favors using final /t/-release to express his strong affiliation with Reform Judaism, while Hannah favors using final /t/-glottalization, purportedly to express an affiliation with some other social group. Let us briefly examine what that other identification may be.

Final /t/-glottalization is a widespread feature of casual speech in the United States. Though certainly identified in many dialects of North American English, there is also preliminary evidence that stop-glottalization may be a subjectively salient aspect of English in New York City (Byrd 1994; G. Guy p.c.; Wentworth 1944; Wilson 1993). Perhaps, then, Hannah is using final /t/-glottalization to express an affiliation with a local, or New York, identity. Consider Hannah and Noah's responses when asked about the importance to them of having Jewish friends in their lives:

Hannah: it's more important[^t] than[?] you know, than[?] the people who I have, I have tons of friends and mostly it's like half and half but[^t] the people who I see on a daily basis aren't[?] pretty much [Jewish], with the exception of [Noah] . . . one of my best[^Ø] friends is Irish Catholic and it's never been a problem or anything so it[?] doesn't[?] really matter.

Noah: may be the only reason that's it's important to have a Jewish friend so you could talk to them and and ge[tʰ] their feedback . . . bu[t] their personal opinion because they're Jewish will probably be influence[t] by their Judaism and will probably have some Jewish bearing, so in getting, like if I were to go to [Hannah] and ask her for advice I'd be getting no[t] only her opinion bu[tʰ] I'd be getting a little bi[tʰ] of a Jewish opinion too.

Though she views Reform Judaism as a constitutive aspect of her identity, Hannah does not perceive herself as distinct from her friends and peers in New York, regardless of their religious affiliation. The general impression of Hannah's attitude towards Reform Judaism is that she sees it as highly imbricated with her life as a New Yorker. Elsewhere, Hannah displayed a disdain for what she perceives as the difficulty of living a Jewish life outside of New York, and expressed ambivalence about ever wanting to leave the city. Noah, in contrast, explicitly describes the need for him to have Jewish friends and engage in activities that are Jewish in content. Noah also expressed a desire to leave New York, at least for some time, and experience Jewish customs and cultures in places and communities outside of the city.

These distinct attitudes towards Reform Judaism and New York are manifest linguistically even in the short extracts above. Hannah glottalizes five out of eight word-final /t/s, and does not release any of them. Noah, on the other hand, releases three out of six word-final /t/s, and does not glottalize any of them. For Noah, constructing a distinctive Reform Jewish identity, above and beyond an identity as a New Yorker seems central, and his frequent use of final /t/-release is one way in which he can accomplish this. Alternatively, Hannah does not view her identification with Reform Judaism as distinguishing her from others in New York. Rather, she views being a Reform Jew as one way of being a New Yorker, and she can use final /t/-glottalization to express that. Both speakers, therefore, are actively engaged in processes of referee design, with the crucial distinction being the social groups with which they are (linguistically) identifying.

We have therefore arrived at a place where we may begin to understand the totality of Hannah's and Noah's use of word-final /t/ to style a dialect. The affiliation of certain groups and topics with Reform Judaism seems to account for the preference for final /t/-release when that affiliation is greater and for final /t/-glottalization when it is lesser. Concomitantly, Hannah's and Noah's differing views about Reform Judaism and its importance to their total social personae can be taken to undergird the across-the-board preference which Hannah displays for glottalization and Noah for release. Finally, it is in the interaction between these two processes (e.g. the ways in which Hannah's preference for glottalization overrides the Reform Jewish nature of the youth group or Noah's preference for release overrides the secular nature of the interview) that we can begin to see how Hannah and Noah are using word-final /t/ to position themselves across situations, and perhaps 'style a dialect' for themselves as Reform Jewish New Yorkers.

CONCLUSION

The complex interplay between religious identity and sociolinguistic practice examined above not only illuminates the complexity of identity-linked speech (cf. Bucholtz 2003), but also bears directly on the sociological investigation of Reform Judaism in America. Rather than acceding to what some have identified as the loss of Jewish practice among Reform Jews in America (Della Pergola 1991; Heilman 1995), Hannah and Noah make systematic use of language to index an affiliation with Reform Judaism. Yet, this use interacts with their identifications as New Yorkers. Even though both linguistically present themselves as Reform Jews, they do so variably as a function of context and personal identification. In some ways, Hannah and Noah are enacting what Auerbach (2001) has described as the compartmentalization of Judaism in America, whereby Jewish identity becomes enmeshed in a larger national (i.e. American) identity, and distinctive Jewish practices only emerge in those contexts which are them-selves explicitly Jewish. This compartmentalization of practice, however, was shown to be tempered by individual desire, and only an approach which examines the interactions between both of these dimensions can adequately model the sociolinguistic performance of identity, Reform Jewish or otherwise.

NOTES

1. I thank the following people for their support and comments: Renée Blake, John Singler, Gregory Guy, Sarah Benor, Ana M. S. Zilles, David Sankoff, Allan Bell, Nikolas Coupland and two anonymous reviewers. All errors are, of course, my own.
2. The National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS 2000–2001) cites the total Jewish population of the United States at 5.2 million people. Of those, 13 percent (or 676,000) identify as Orthodox, 26 percent (or 1,352,000) identify as Conservative, 34 percent (or 1,768,000) identify as Reform, 2 percent (or 104,000) identify as Reconstructionist and 25 percent (or 1,300,000) identify as unaffiliated with a denomination.
3. The New York Jewish Population Survey (NYJPS 2002) cites the total Manhattan Jewish population at 243,300 and lists the following denominational breakdowns: 11 percent (or 26,763) Orthodox; 26 percent (or 63,258) Conservative; 35 percent (or 85,155) Reform; 16 percent (or 38,928) Unaffiliated; 10 percent (or 24,330) Secular; and 2 percent (or 4,866) Other.
4. In 2004, the UAHC changed its name to the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ).
5. In fact, A. Gafos (p.c.) points out that aspiration is a sub-class of consonant release, phonetically defined in terms of Voice Onset Time. Here, then, I am considering the entire class of *released* final-/t/, making no sub-distinctions therein.
6. Some may consider the fact that two Manhattan teenagers are enrolled in a Hebrew class to be non-secular in and of itself. For our present purposes, I restrict the definition of what I label 'secular' versus 'non-secular' topics to the precise content being discussed (where I consider instruction in a modern language to be secular, whatever the affective ties to that language may be).

7. Cross-tabulations of speaker by audience and speaker by topic showed little evidence of non-orthogonality. There is a slight skewing in the youth group setting, where Hannah's tokens are overly represented, yet this uneven distribution does not reach a level of statistical significance.
 8. Recall also that Hannah is the leader of the youth group at Beit Shalom. This role, may then, have affected Hannah's use of final /t/-release in the youth group setting, if we maintain the conclusion of previous research that this variable is somehow related to performances of authority.
 9. Though the dependent variable was coded for four realizations, /t/-glottalization and /t/-deletion were conflated in order to reduce the number of cells and allow for a more revealing distribution of the data.
 10. T-Varb, the trinomial analysis software, only runs a 1-way (step-up) analysis, and thus cannot compute significance. The significance of factor groups was determined by performing a manual step-down analysis, whereby each factor group is removed one at a time and the change in log likelihood is tested for significance.
 11. All three of the variants pattern similarly in the classroom setting, with both final /t/-release and final /t/-glottalization/deletion slightly preferred (0.340 and 0.348, respectively), and non-release slightly dispreferred (0.312).
 12. I was also present in the classroom during recording. While at no time did Hannah or Noah, or anyone else for that matter, talk to me, my presence may also have had an effect on speech recorded in this context.
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