

CONSONANTAL VARIATION IN UTAH ENGLISH

WHAT EL[t]SE IS HAPPENING[k]

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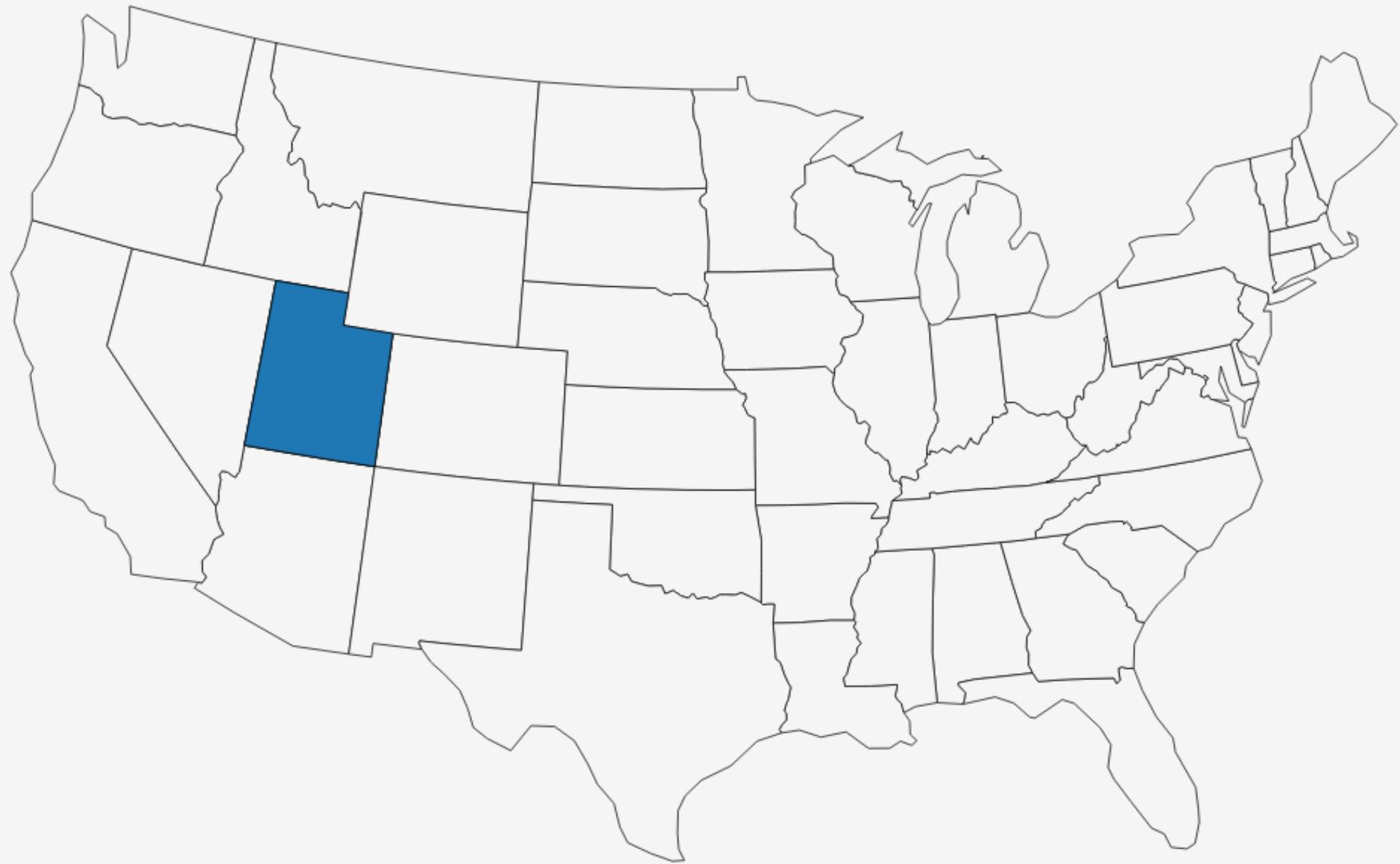
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UTAH ENGLISH

Most research on Utah English phonology has concentrated on vowels

COT-CAUGHT merger, CORD-CARD merger, pre-lateral mergers (Baker & Bowie 2010, Baker, Eddington, & Nay 2009; Bowie 2003, 2008, 2012; Di Paolo 1992, Faber & Di Paolo 1990, Helquist 1970; Labov, Yeager, & Steiner 1972, Lillie 1998, Petersen 1988, Reeves 2009; Sarver 2004, Stanley & Renwick 2016, Bowie 2018)

/aɪ/ monophthongization (Morkel 2003, Skyes 2010)

PIN-PEN merger (Lillie 1998)

THIS STUDY

We focus on three consonantal variables.

1. Realization of unstressed /tən/ as [ʔɪn] in words like *mountain, cotton, Latin, etc.*
(Baker, Eddington & Nay 2009, Savage 2014, and especially Eddington & Savage 2012)
2. [t]-epenthesis in /ls/ sequences as in *false, Olsen, salsa, else, also, etc.*
(Baker, Eddington & Nay 2009, Javkin 1978, Savage 2014)
3. [k]-epenthesis after /ŋ/: *talking, thing, morning*
(Alzoubi, Borders, & Di Paolo 2013; Di Paolo & Johnson, this conference)

DATA COLLECTION

Audio collected via Amazon Mechanical Turk (Kim *et al.* 2016; Kim *et al.* ms, Stanley ms)

Target words embedded in 186 sentences from COCA.

Also 87 items in a wordlist

Dataset		[k]-insertion	MOUNTAIN	FALSE	total
14 Utahns	sentences	1,534	198	163	1,895
Ages 20–44	wordlist	129	499	272	900
6 women, 8 men	total	1,663	697	435	2,795

5.5 hours of audio

2,795 observations

We're in the middle of fieldwork right now, so expect some more in the future.

MOUNTAIN

MOUNTAIN

mountain, cotton, button, Latin, mutant, kitten, Clinton, Manhattan, gluten, certain...

Henceforth the MOUNTAIN lexical set

Baker, Eddington & Nay 2009, Savage 2014, and especially Eddington & Savage 2012

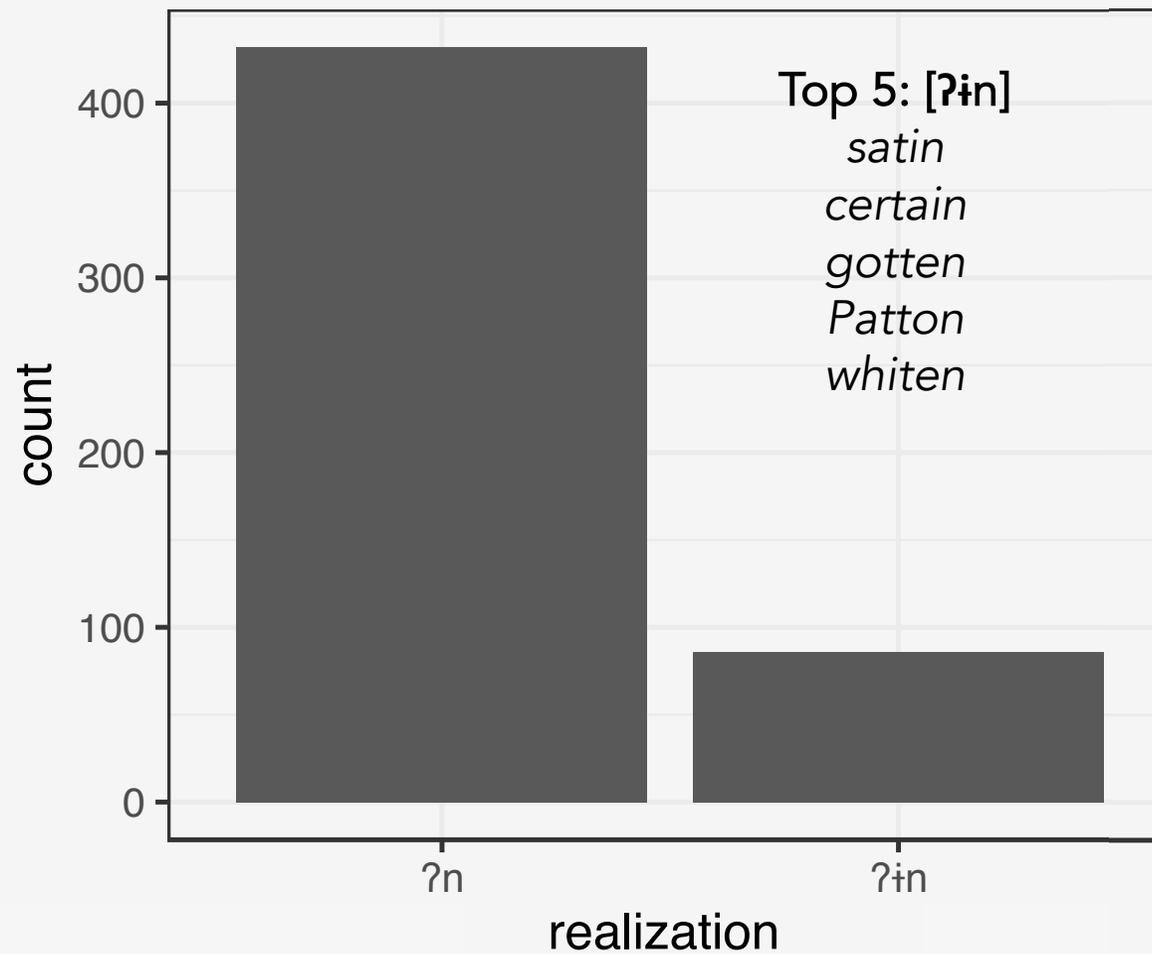
Mainstream pronunciation: [ʔŋ]

Stereotypical Utah pronunciation: [ʔɪn]

Hyperarticulated pronunciation: [t^hɪn]

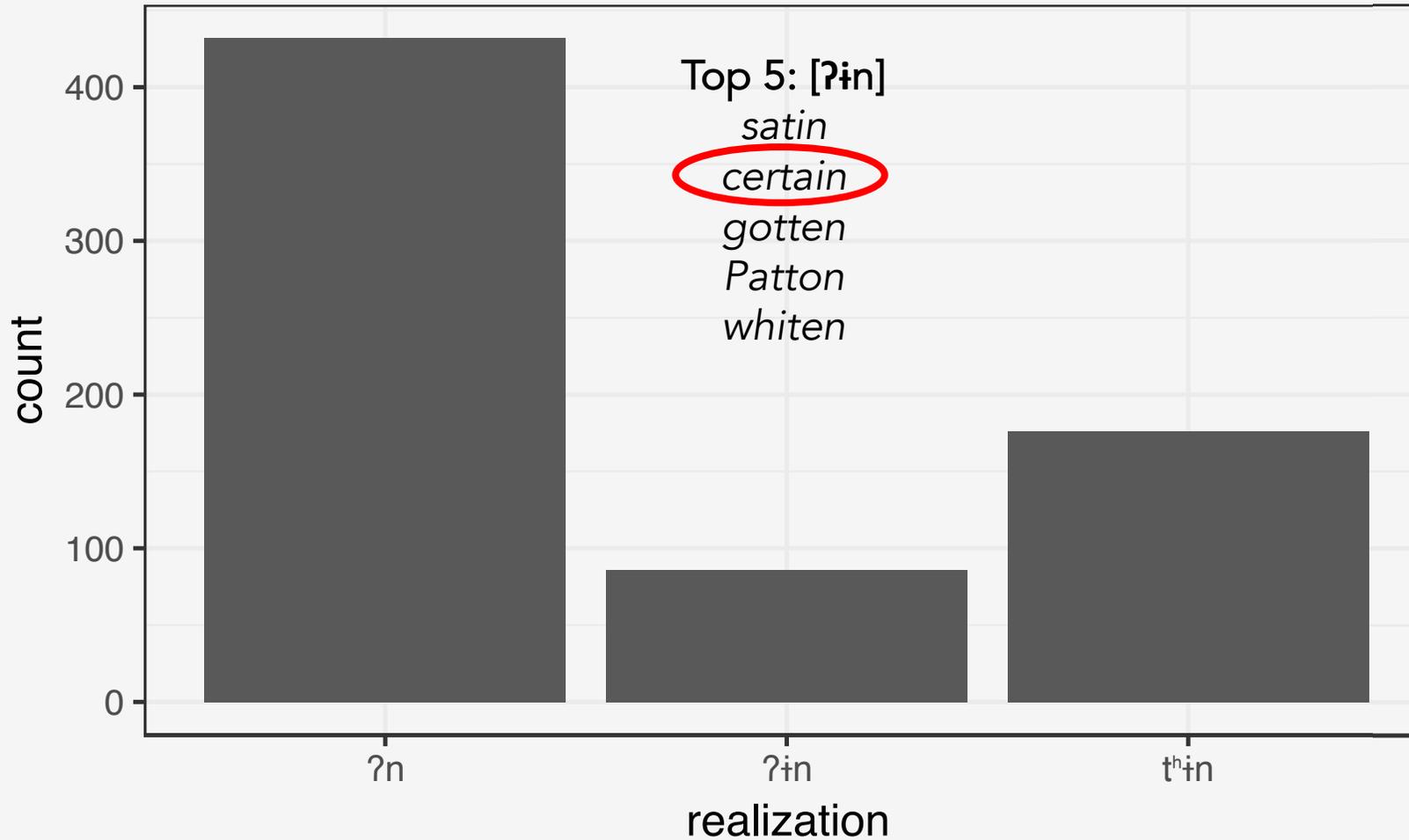
MOUNTAIN DISTRIBUTION

Top 5: [ʔn]
certainly
eaten
retina
threatened
tighten



MOUNTAIN DISTRIBUTION

Top 5: [ʔn]
certainly
eaten
retina
threatened
tighten



Top 5: [ʔin]
satin
certain
gotten
Patton
whiten

Top 7: [tʰin]
~~bulletin~~
sentence
fountain
mountain
Scranton
Clinton
titan

MOUNTAIN COMMENTARY

[ʔɪn] has shibboleth-level saliency (Savage 2014)

“Mou'uns” is a dead giveaway you're talking to a Utahn.

–u/BizarroBednar on r/exmormon. Mar. 2012

Mountain= Mown'un: How could this NOT be the number one Utah-ism? The dropped T is infamous. But it doesn't just drop, it almost makes a staccato sound where the T should be when pronounced.

–Daily Herald. Dec. 2012

The glottal stop carries stigma, not the vowel insertion:

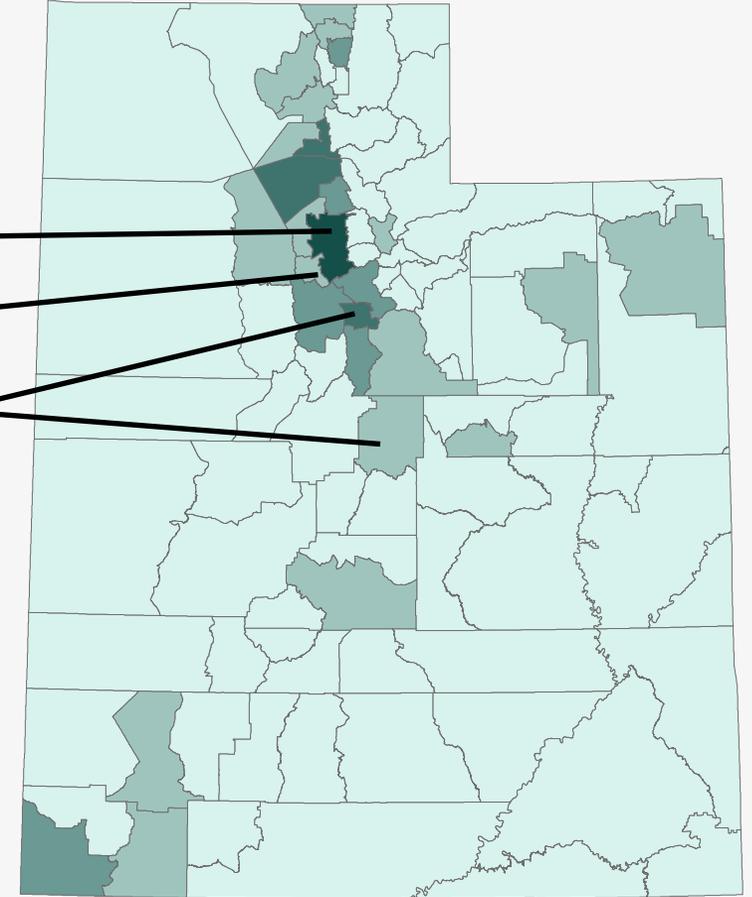
The Impor-an Mow-un in Lay-un accent. Pure laziness. People slopping through words [...] Notice that these all substitute a glottal stop (that horrible nasal pause that comes from the back of your mouth [...]) for the actual T sound.

–Russanne's Utah Accent Post. Oct. 2012

STEREOTYPICAL UTAH MOUN[ʔɪn]

moun[ʔɪn] exclusive to women in our sample.

pseudonym	[ʔɪn]	age	city
Heather	3/68 = 4.4%	34	Salt Lake City
Maddy	8/27 = 29.6%	24	South Jordan
Mandy	18/38 = 47.4%	40	Ephraim
Chelsea	57/68 = 83.8%	25	Provo



Demographically relatively diverse, other than gender.

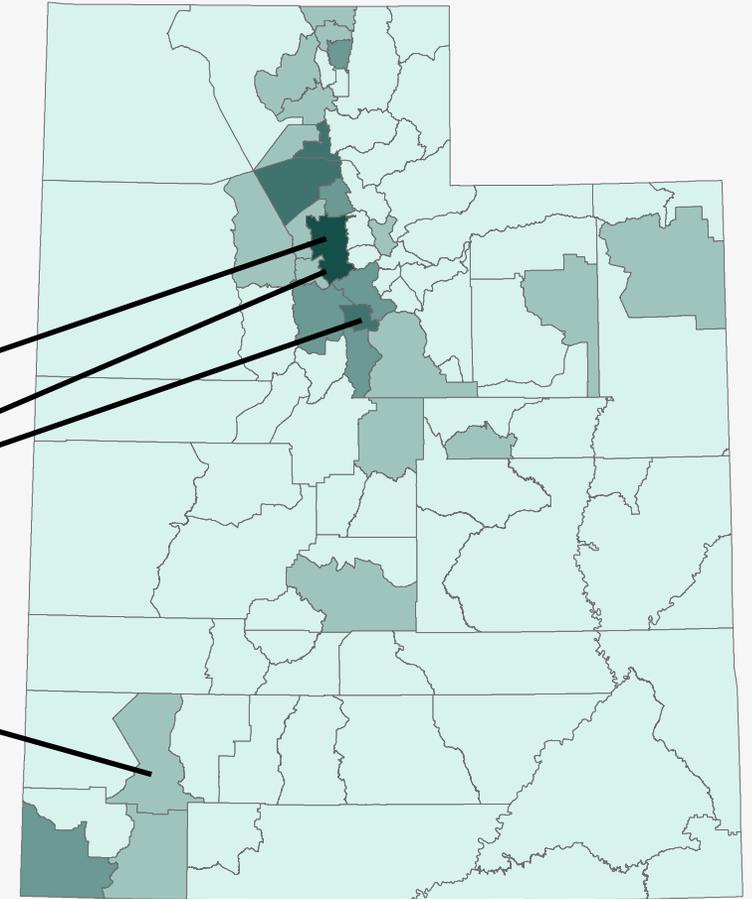
This generally supports Eddington & Savage (2012).

HYPERARTICULATED MOUN[t^hin]

moun[t^hin] twice as common as *moun*[ʔin].

All participants used this variant at least once.

pseudonym	[t ^h in]	age	city
Heather	25/68 = 36.8%	34	Salt Lake City
Maddy	17/27 = 63.0%	24	South Jordan
Zach	26/77 = 96.3%	24	Provo
Jared	66/68 = 97.1%	26	Cedar City



MOUNTAIN MODELING

We ran a mixed-effects multinomial logistic regression model using Rbrul (Johnson 2009) age, education, religion, and style as fixed effects speaker and word as random effects.
(Sex was excluded because only women used moun[ʔin], but we can interpret that as significant.)

Only age was significant in the model.

Younger people use hyperarticulated moun[t^hin] more.

MOUNTAIN DISCUSSION

Mainstream *moun*[ʔŋ] is the most common form overall.

It was the preferred variant for 10 of our 14 Utahns.

Chelsea was majority user of *moun*[ʔɪn]

Zach, Jared, and Maddy were majority users of *moun*[t^hɪn]

This explains why *moun*[t^hɪn] was so common

This is a reaction against the stigmatized glottal stop in *moun*[ʔɪn].

FALSE

FALSE

false, Olsen, salsa, else, also, balsamic, Chelsea, Wilson, Nelson, pulse, allspice...

Henceforth, the FALSE lexical set

Nonmainstream pronunciation: [ɫts]

Only /ls/ clusters and not /lz/ (**fall[d]s*) (Javkin 1978)

Previous work

"less friendly" sounding (Savage 2014)

Considered stereotypically Utahn by non-Utahns (Baker, Eddington & Nay 2009)

COMMENTARY ON "FALSE"

Relatively little overt commentary, but negative.

Live Coug My least favorite Utah accent is the adding of a T to certain words/names. We all know about the dropping of the T, but they add too.

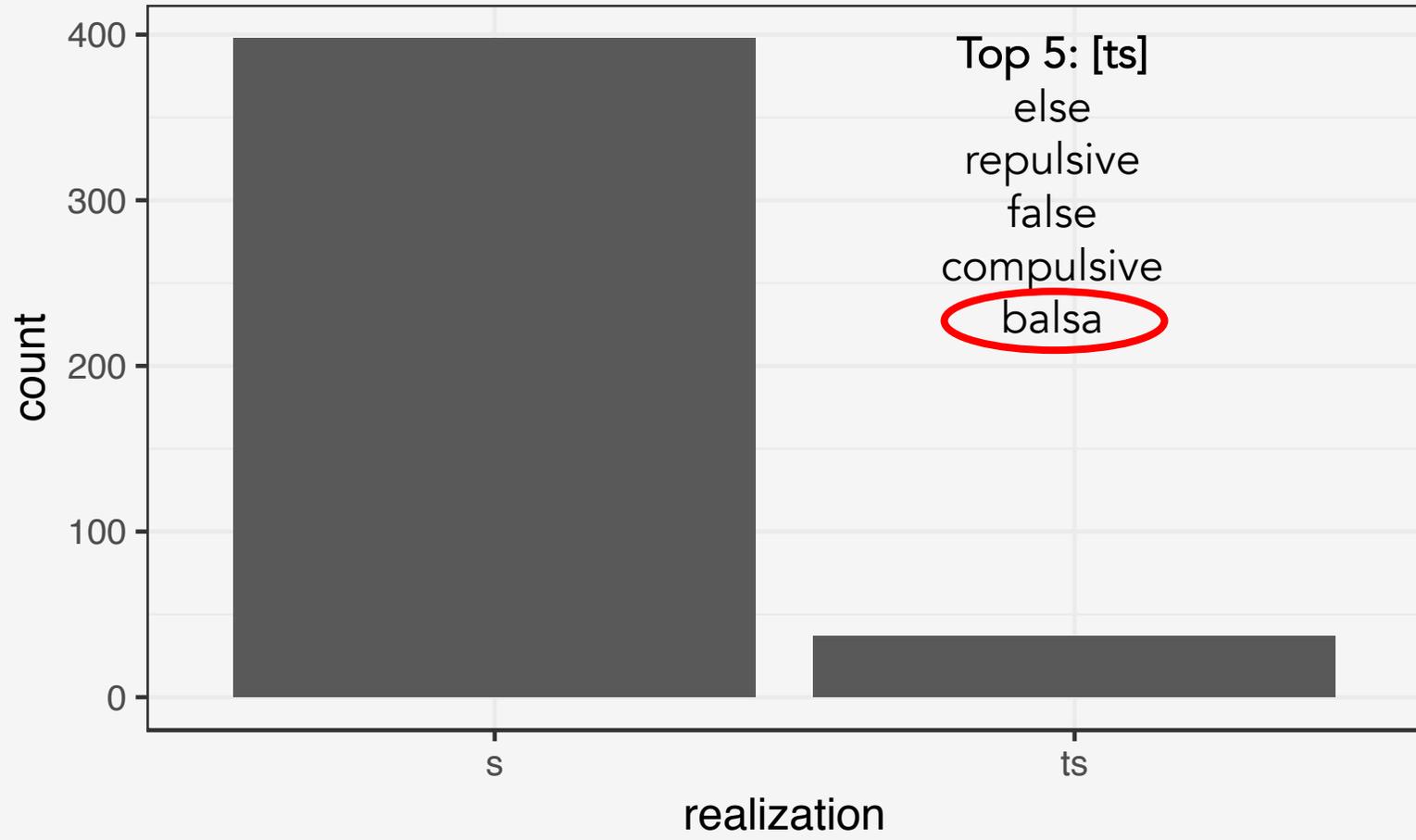
FN Phat My wife hates when her family in Utah pronounces her name Chelt-see.

LiveCoug Yup. Our daughter's name is the same way. I just want to scream "there is no T in her name!!!!!"

Comments in a thread on cougarstadium.com. January 13, 2013.

DISTRIBUTION OF "FALSE" VARIANTS

Top 5: [s]
upholster
holster
dulcimer
bolster
balsamic



FAL[t]SE

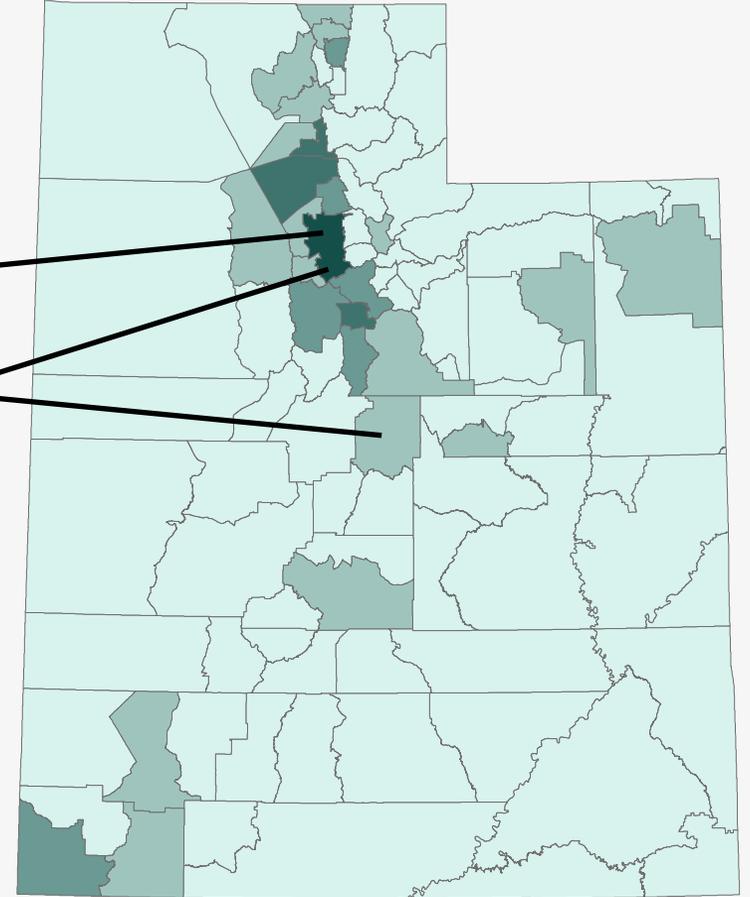
Only 6 of 14 Utahns had the non-standard form.

3 of these were just once

pseudonym	[t̥s]	age	city
Heather	16/44 = 36.4%	34	Salt Lake City
Mandy	4/30 = 13.3%	40	Ephraim
Maddy	2/13 = 15.4%	24	South Jordan

Only Heather had it to any significant degree.

She also used *moun*[ʔin] the most and *moun*[t^hin]



[k]-EPENTHESIS

[k]-EPENTHESIS

Epenthesis of [k] after /ŋ/ (Alzoubi, Borders, & Di Paolo 2013 & Di Paolo & Johnson this conference)

Mainstream pronunciation: [ɪŋ] or [ɪn]

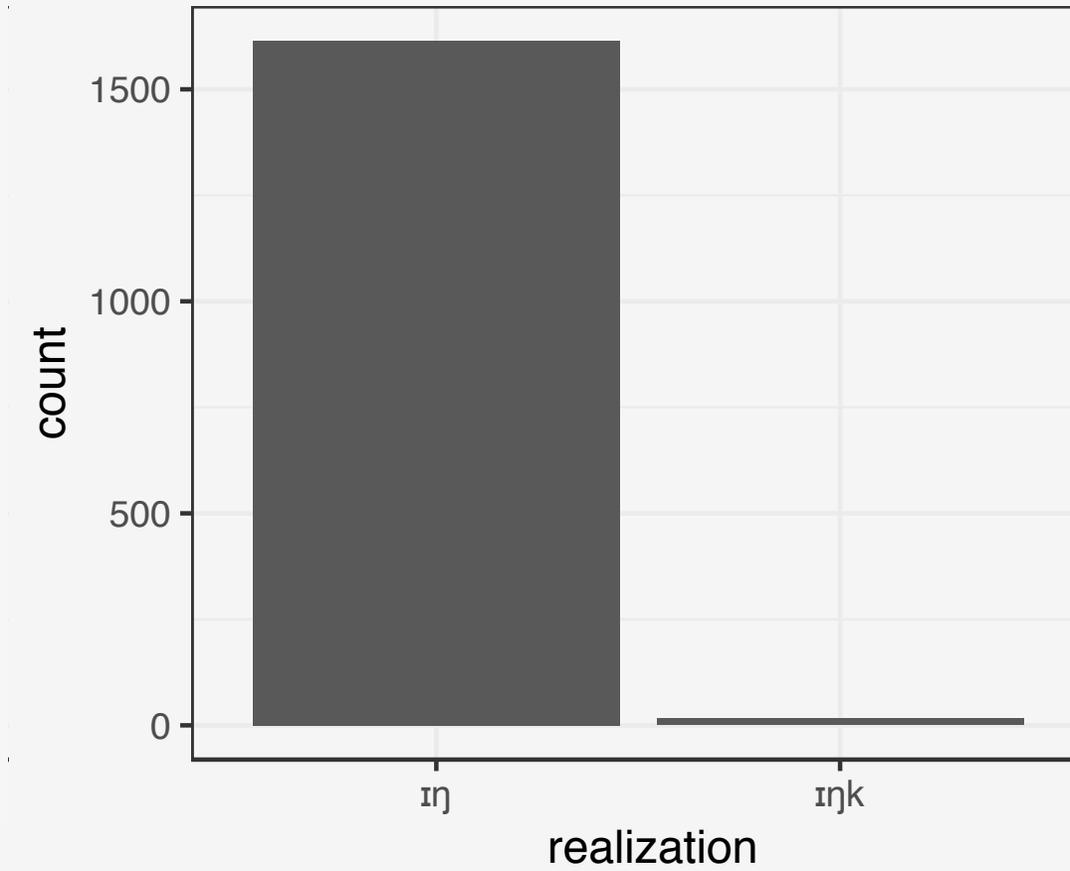
Utah pronunciation: [ɪŋk] or [ɪŋg]

Little overt commentary. Mostly neutral in tone.

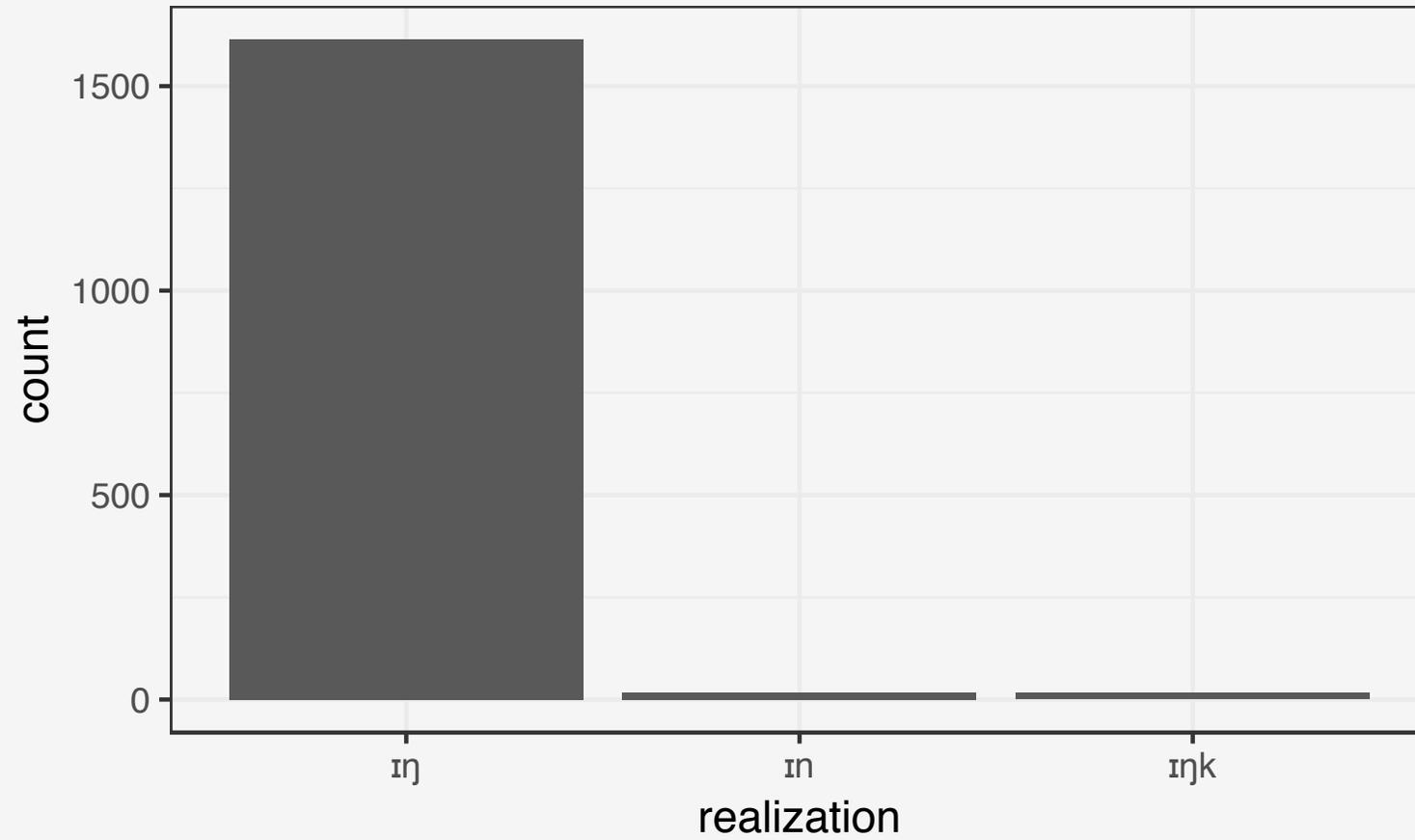
The thing I noticed when I moved to Utah was the "k" sound at the end of "ing" (like "sing-ink").

–Christiane Rampato, comment on HJnews.com. Aug. 2016

[K]-EPENTHESIS DISTRIBUTION



[K]-EPENTHESIS DISTRIBUTION



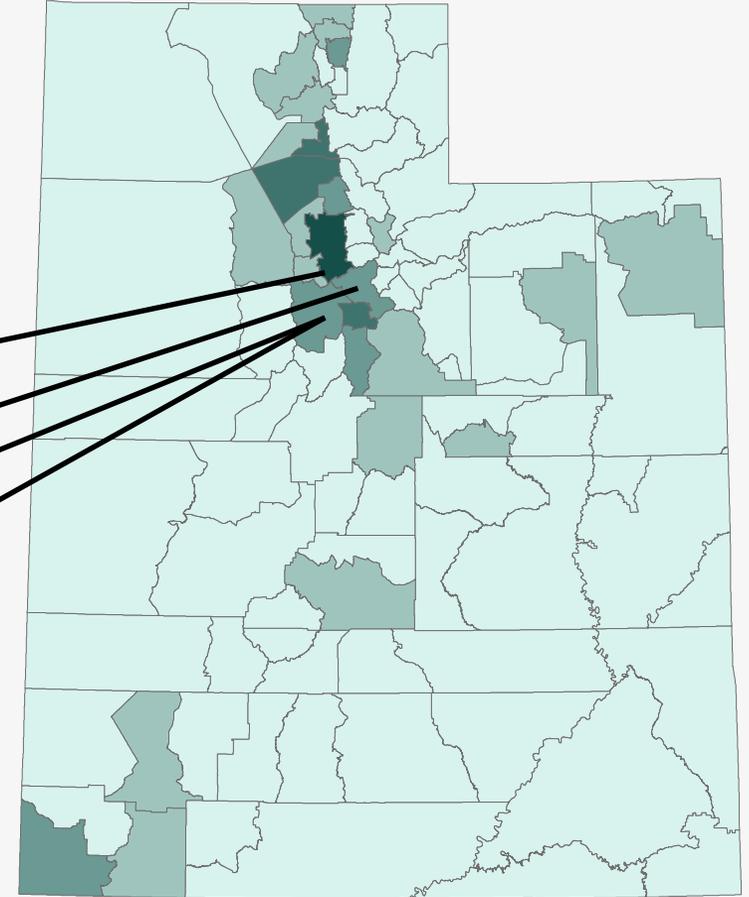
[K]-EPENTHESIS

Who used this form?

6 of 14 people used [ɪŋk] at least once.

None with any degree of significance.

pseudonym	[ɪŋk]	age	city
Maddy	3/81 = 3.7%	24	South Jordan
Jamie	2/74 = 2.7%	33	American Fork
Tim	5/82 = 6.1%	39	Cedar Valley
Sam	4/160 = 2.5%	22	Cedar Valley



CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY

MOUNTAIN

standard *moun*[ʔŋ] was the most common
hyperarticulated *moun*[t^hɪn] twice as common as *moun*[ʔɪn]
more common in younger speakers
possibly as reaction to stigmatized variant

FALSE

no clear pattern, but possibly women use it more

[k]-epenthesis

not enough data

CONCLUSION

Nonmainstream forms can be found in Utah English.

These are not captured by the demographic variables we gathered.

We encourage more research on consonantal variation and Utah English generally.

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