



Heritage Language Variation and Change in Toronto
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(R) AMONG TORONTO'S HERITAGE ITALIANS:
MAINTAINING
LANGUAGE INTERNAL HOMELAND PATTERNS

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Angela Cristiano a.cristiano@rug.nl

Naomi Nagy naomi.nagy@utoronto.ca

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Minority varieties in contact situations: **attrition**, grammar **simplification**, or **transfer** from the majority language (Benmamoun et al. 2013; Polinsky 2018)

Can we find evidence of contact effects or of language-internal lenition?

ITALIAN RHOTICS	CANADIAN ENGLISH RHOTICS
Taps, trills, approximants, fricatives	Approximants

Rhotics
in these
varieties

HOMELAND CALABRIAN

TORONTO'S HERITAGE CALABRIAN



Regional Southern Italian variety

Canadian English: majority language in the city



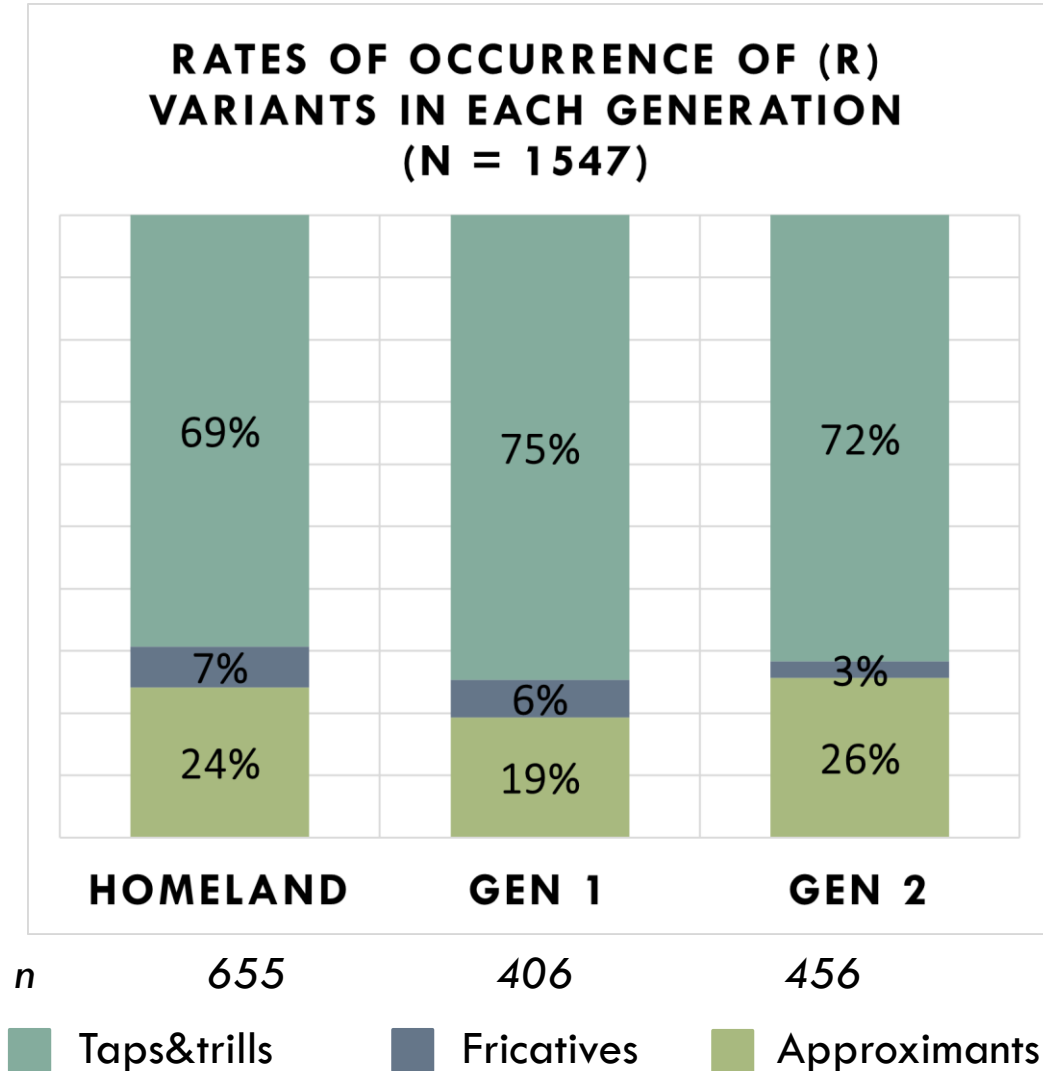
(r) among Toronto's Heritage Italians

METHODS AND MATERIALS FOR VARIATIONIST ANALYSIS

HLVC (Nagy 2011) Calabrian Italian spontaneous conversational data

Sample	Tokens	Dependent variable (r)	Analysis
29 speakers	n = 1555	Word-internal, singleton /r/ e.g., <i>ristorante</i> 'restaurant'	Mixed effects modeling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeland • Heritage Generation 1 • Heritage Generation 2 	20 frequent word types	Variants: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taps&trills ([r] e [r]) 2. Fricative ([r̥]) (<i>lenited</i>) 3. Approximant ([ɹ]) (<i>lenited and like English [ɹ]</i>) 	Reduced (approximants & fricatives) vs. non-reduced (taps & trills) variants Linguistic and social factors as fixed effects, speaker and word type as random intercepts

RESULTS: STABLE VARIATION



Factor	Homeland	Gen 1	Gen 2
Syllable position	✓	✓	
Stress of syllable x Syllable position			✓
Sex x Age	✓	✓	✓

✓ = Significant

Results of Mixed Effects models comparing reduced vs. non-reduced (r) variants, for each speaker group

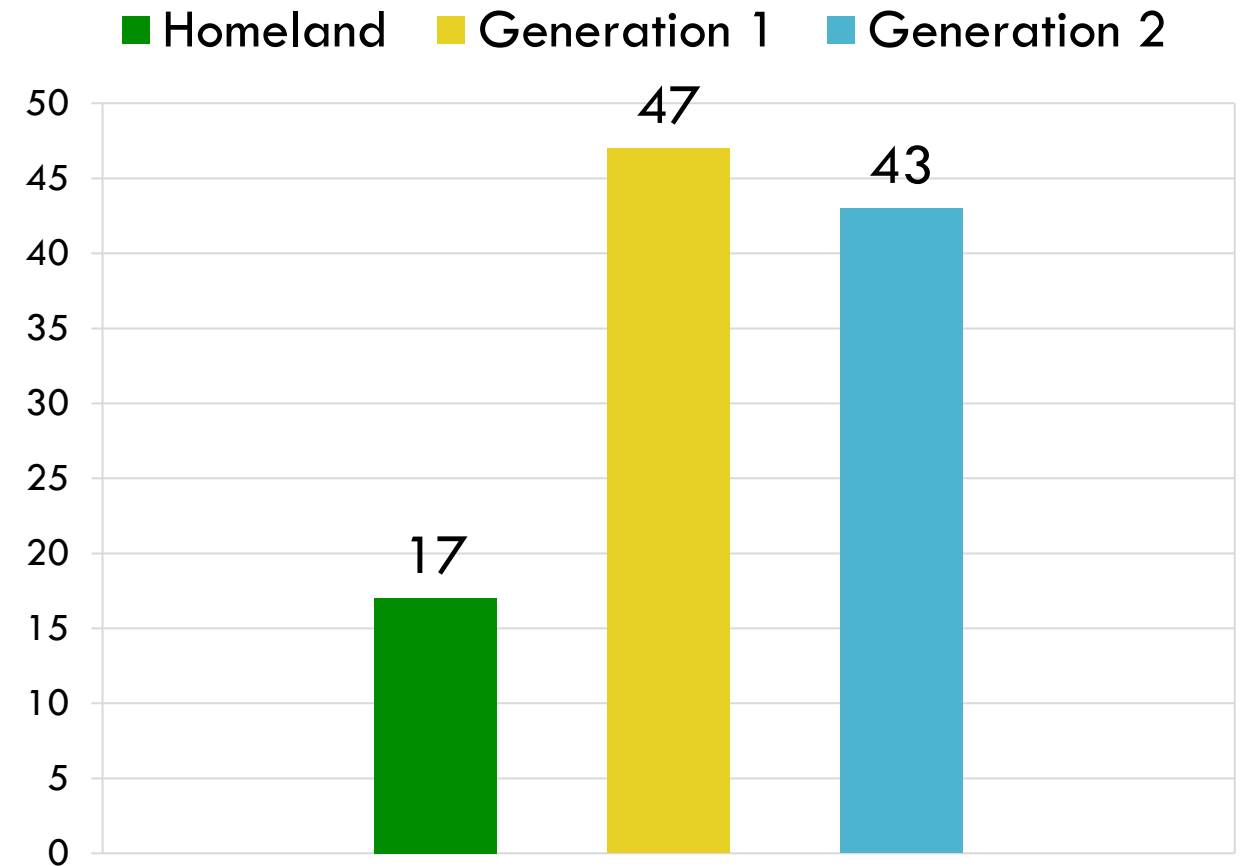
TRANSMISSION OF A LANGUAGE-INTERNAL PROCESS

- No generational differences, the grammar constraining (r) is maintained
 - **no signs of transfer** from English among Heritage speakers
- Heritage speakers acquire and replicate **not only linguistic constraints, but also social constraints**

DUAL CAUSES

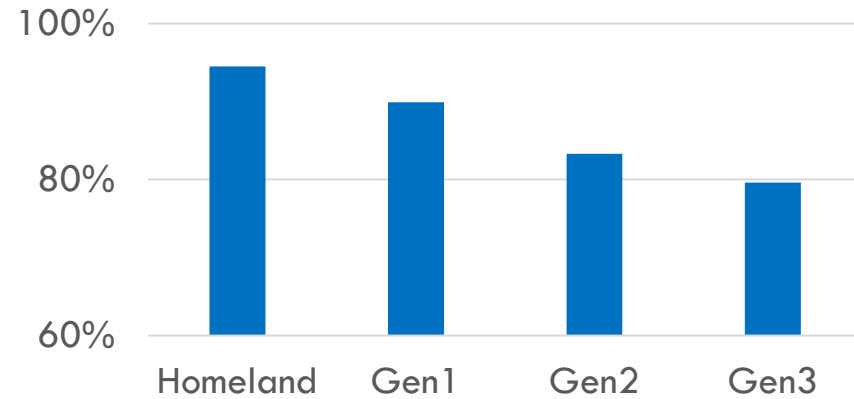
- Coda effect → **synchronic lenition caused by target undershoot** (Bauer 2008; Kirchner 1998; Gillian & Jaworski 2014)
- Heritage speakers increase the relative strength of this constraint → **grammar boosting** (Flores & Rinke 2020; Umbal & Nagy 2021)

RANGES (= EFFECT SIZE) OF THE CODA EFFECT ACROSS GENERATIONS

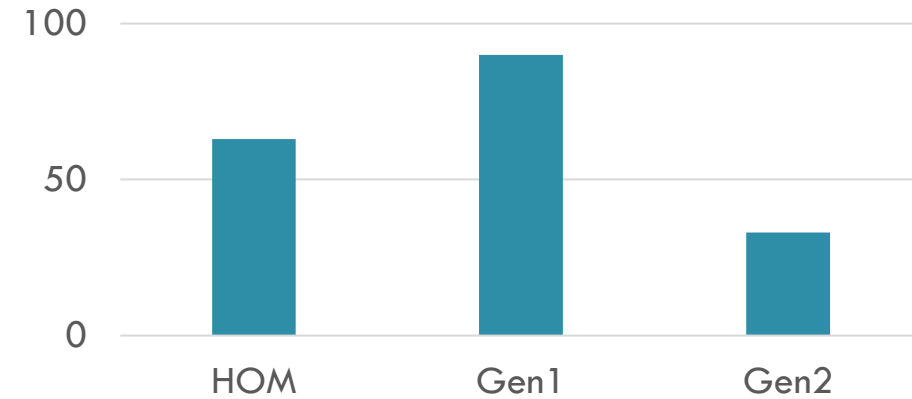


OTHER (R)'S IN HLVC

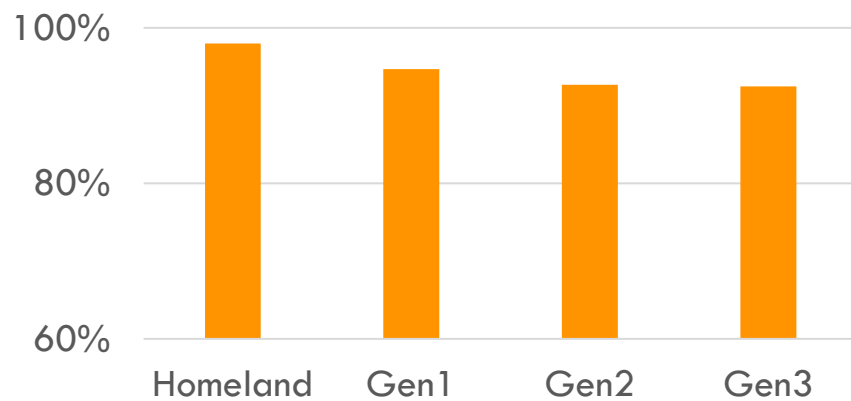
% tap & trill for Russian (r)
n = 1,709



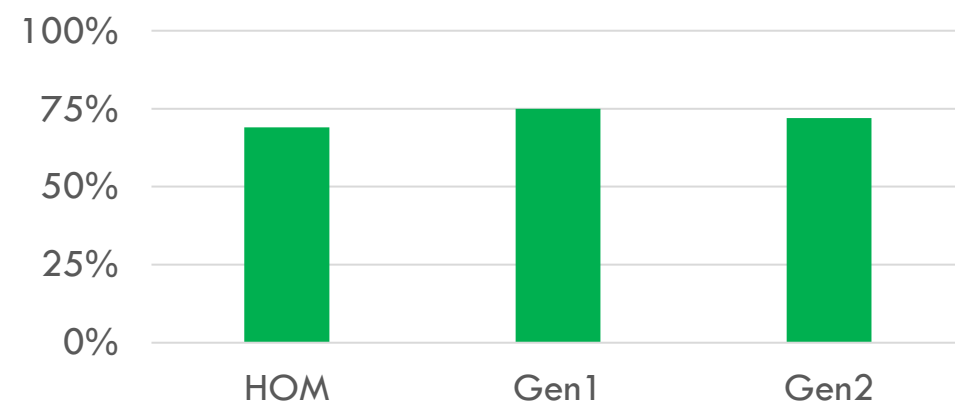
% trill for Tagalog (r)
n = 2,911



% trill for Ukrainain (r)
n = 382



% tap & trill for Italian (r)
n = 1,547



Umbal & Nagy (2021), Cristiano (2022), and thanks to Julia Petrosov & Olha Mamitko for brand new analyses.

감사합니다 Molte grazie Спасибо Köszönöm Obrigada
 дякую Salammat 多謝 gratsiä namuor:ä Dziękuję Ci



ngn.artsci.utoronto.ca/HLVC

a.cristiano@rug.nl

naomi.nagy@utoronto.ca

HLVC RAs for Italian

Anissa Baird
 Vanessa Bertone
 Rosanna Calla
 Vivien Chow
 Courtney Clinton

Marco Covi
 Paolo Frascà
 Tim Gadanidis
 Julia Grasso
 Alex La Gamba
 Carmela La Rosa

Arash Lotfi
 Walter Mancini
 Lisa Marando
 Francesco Muoio
 Maria Parascandolo
 Josephine Petrolo

Alessia Plastina
 Matteo Talotta
 Awet Tekeste
 Letizia Tesi



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ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

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