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Repeat after Me: The Value of Replication

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ABSTRACT

The past forty years have seen a variety of sociolinguistic investigations, producing interesting results. However, thcrc is always a risk that some of these results may have given a misleading picturc of the situation because of a design flaw in the project or some effect of ignored factors. One way of testing any claims is through a replication of the original study. This paper examines three claims made about discourse variation, showing how separate studies can either support or challenge those claims.

KEYWORDS: Sociolinguistic methodology, discourse variation. Scottish dialects

One of the goals of linguistic theory is to identify universal characteristics of language (Chomsky 1965). These universals can be phonetic (Laver 1994), phonological (Jakobson 1941), morphological (Croft 1990) or syntactic (Greenberg 1963). Few scholars may be concerned with lexical universals, though the use of lexicostatistics in glottochronology assumes that some lexical items arc basic to all languages. In semantics and pragmatics (e.g., Grice 1975; Brown and Levinson 1987) there has bccn a scarch for general principles. In sociolinguistics, however, the main intcrest has been in universal principles of linguistic change (Labov 1994). There has been less interest in other general principles of sociolinguistic variation, except for claims about gcnder differences.

Becausc investigation of discourse variation must examine samples of talk in action, the use of a specific featurc is locally determined, and thus any conclusion from a specific data set may not gcneralizc to other situations. For this reason, any conclusions drawn from a single

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study may give an unreliable indication of a more widespread difference. A salutary example is the claim that men interrupt women more than women interrupt mcn. This view gained an early impetus from an article by Zimmerman and West (1975), and was often taken to be an established fact (Aries 1987; Holmes 1991; Rosenblum 1986). A critica1 review of the relevant studies (James and Clarke 1993) up to that date, however, found that "such a conclusion is incorrect; the majority of studies have found no significant difference between the sexes in this respect"(1993: 309). A similar review of research (James and Drakich 1993) found no basis for the widely held view that women talk more than men. Such assessnients are vitally important to a field such as sociolinguistics because it is only through convergence of results from replications of earlier studies or evidence from studies using different samples or different methodology that we can have any confidence in the results (Campbell and Fiske 1959).

Munroe and Munroe (1991: 164) have emphasized the need for replication in anthropology:

> Replicative undertakings, which are not prized in anthropology. nevertheless must occupy a central place in comparative investigations, just as they do in other scientific activities.

They cite the following passage from Campbell (1969: 427.428):

> Because we social scientists have less ability [than physical scientists] to achieve experimental isolation, because we have good reason to expect our treatment effects to interact significantly with a wide variety of social factors many of which we have not yet mapped, we have much greater needs for replication experiments than do the physical sciences.

Because so many uncontrollable factors affect the quality of speech recorded in sociolinguistic investigations (see, for example, the papers in Eckcrt and Rickford 2001), it is crucial to compare results froin different studies to determine which findings are candidatcs for generalization to a wider population, cven though it will seldom be possiblc to replicate any investigation exactly (Dow 1987).

There is a good example that illustrates this problem. When Fowler (1986) attempted an exact replication of Labov's New York department store survey (Labov 1966: 63-89), she had to replace the lowest-rated store, S. Klein because it had gone out of business (Labov 1994 87-94). This was particularly unfortunate because May's, the replacement store, showed "a dramatic increase" (Labov 1994: 90) over the figures from S.Klein in the original survey. It is inipossible to tell whether this would have been the same if S.Klein were still in business. Thus, even an attempt to replicate an earlier study may not be easy. Most sociolinguistic investigations, however, are not designed as exact replications of previous studies, so there will be much greater differences in the methodology employed. Nevertheless. convergence of results from very different kinds of studies will hclp to give greater force to individual findings.

The present paper examines certain claims made about sociolinguistic diffcrences in diseourse style. The first is one made by Barbara Johnstonc (1990; 1993) with regard to thc

difference between men and women in their ways of telling stories. Johnstone based her claims on 68 stories collected in Fort Wayne, Indiana by students in her classes over the period 1981-1985. The age of the story-tellers ranged from fourteen to sixty-four. Thirty-five of the story-tellers were female and twenty-four male. The examples I will be using for comparison come from more diversc examples of language recorded under a variety of circumstances in different parts of Scotland. Johnstone's narrators were "white, middle-class, urban mid-westemers" (1993: 67). The Sconish exarnples come from both working-class and niiddle-class speakers. The two sets of data are consequently very different and thus any convergence of results should strengthen any conclusions drawn from them.

One of Johnstone's findings refers to a difference in extratheniatic details. She describes extratheniatic as follows:

> Many Fort Wayne personal experience stories include far more detail than should, from the point ofvicw ofstrict rclevance, be necessary, detail which turns out to have no bearing on the narrative core at all.
>
> *Johnstone (1990: 91)*

One difference in extrathematic detail that Johnstone (1993: 73) notices refers to places and names:

> While the men specify place and time more often than do the women, the wornen use personal names more than twice as often as do the rnen.

This was something I had noted in comparing interviews with a Dundee wonian, Bella K. and her brother Len M. (Macaulay 1996). I examined the frequency with which they used different kinds of noun types. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency of noun types

Len		Bella	
People	**Physical objects**	**People**	**Physical objects**
Freq. (n)	**Freq. (n)**	**Freq. (n)**	**Freq. (n)**
26.5 (335)	24.6 **(310)**	**34.2 (432)**	**35.1 (443)**

[Freq. = per **1,000** words]

I had cxpected that in Bella's interview there would be more references to people than to physical objects and in Len's more refcrences to physical objects than to people but the results are slightly in the opposite direction. It can be seen that Bella uses both kinds of nouns more frequently than Len. There is, howcver, one category which Len uses six times as freqiiently as Bella and that is proper nouns referring to places, as can be seen in Table 2. Since much of Len's narrative refers to his wartime cxperiences as a soldier in North Africa and as a prisoner-of-war in Italy and Germany, it is hardly surprising that geographical names should feature largely in his interview but it is not only that which makes the difference. Len refers to the city of Dundee by name 35 times, conipared with only 13 mentions by Bella in a transcript of equal length.

Tuble 2: Frequency of proper nouns referring to places

Len		Bella	
Freq.	(n)	Freq.	(n)
20.4	257	3.2	41

[Freq. = per 1,000 words]

In an examination of same-sex dyadic conversations recorded in Glasgow in 1997 (Stuart-Smith 1999,2003) as part of a study of linguistic change in Britain (Foulkes and Docherty 1999), I looked at the use of proper names. In this sample, there were two age groups: adolescents aged 13-14 and adults aged 40 and over, and approximately equal numbers of males and females, and middle-class and working-class speakers. In the conversations, thc adolescents talk a lot about their friends, but there are differences between the girls and thc boys. Tablc 3 gives the frequency with which people are named in the adolescent conversations:

Table 3: Named references to people in Glasgow adolescent conversations[1]

	Refs. to boys		**Refs. to girls**		**All**	
	(n)	**freq.**	(n)	**freq.**	(n)	**freq.**
Middle-class adolescents	154	7.0	240	10.9	394	9.15
Working-class adolescents	216	10.2	303	14.4	519	24.6
All girls	203	8.4	496	20.6	699	29.0
All boys	167	8.8.	47	2.5	214	11.3

(Freq.= per 1.000 words]

Table 3 shows both social class and gender differences. Refcrences to named people in the working-class conversations (24.6 per 1,000 words) are more than twice as frequent as those in the middle-class conversations (10.9 per 1,000 words) ($p. < .05$)[2]. More strikingly, the girls name people (29.0 per 1,000 words) almost three times as frequently as the boys (11.3 per 1.000 words) ($p.< ,001$). It is also clear that while both boys and girls name boys with about the same frequency, girls name other girls much more frequently (20.6 per thousand words) than boys name girls (2.5 per thousand words) ($p.< .001$). This can be seen also in the use of pronouns, as shown in Table 4:

Table 4: Use of personal pronouns by Glasgow adolescents*

	I		***he***		***she***		***we***		***you***		***they***	
	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.	**(n)**	freq.	(n)	freq.
Girls	(1754)	72.8	(454)	18.8	(737)	30.6	(218)	9.0	(614)	25.5	(208)	8.6
Boys	(933)	40.2	(370)	19.5	(125)	6.6	(174)	9.2	(716)	37.8	(281)	14.8

[* Includes all forms of the pronoun, e.g., *I, me, mine*, etc.]

It can be seen from Table 4 that while both girls and boys use forms of the pronoun he equally frequently, the girls use forms of the pronoun she (30.6 per 1,000 words) almost five times more frequently than the boys (6.6 per 1,000 words) ($p. <.001$). Added to this is the more frequent use

of the first person pronoun I by girls, so that it is clear that girls talk a lot more about girls than either boys or girls talk about boys.

A similar pattem emerges with the adults as can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5: **Named references to people in Glasgow adult conversations**

	Refs. to men		Refs. to women		All	
	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.
Middle-class adults	78	2.3	143	4.2	221	6.5
Working-class adults	134	2.7	232	4.6	366	7.3
Women	161	3.1	343	6.6	504	9.7
Men	51	1.6	32	1.0	83	2.6

It can be seen from Table 5 that there are essentially no differences between the two social classes but the gender differences are even greater than among the adolescents, with the men making very few references to named people (2.6 per 1,000 words) compared with the women (9.7 per 1,000 words) ($p.< .05$), and the women naming other women twice as frequently (6.6 per 1,000 words) as they name men (3.1 per 1,000 words) ($p.< 001$). The differences in adult pronoun use are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: **Use of personal pronouns by Glasgow adults**

	I		*he*		*she*		*we*		*you*		*they*	
	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.	(n)	freq.
Women	(2538)	48.9	(526)	10.1	(1048)	20.2	(452)	8.7	(1631)	31.5	(1001)	19.7
Men	(1476)	45.0	(228)	6.9	(171)	5.2	(272)	8.3	(968)	29.5	(564)	17.2

It can be seen from Table 6 that the women use the personal pronoun ***he*** (10.1 per 1,000 words) almost twice as often as the men (6.9 per 1,000 words) and the pronoun ***she*** four times as frequently (20.2 vs. 5.2). The combined totals of the two pronouns for women are 30.3 and 12.1 for the men) ($p.< ,001$). These differences are all the more striking in that there are only minor differences in the use of the other pronouns, including the first person pronoun I. Since the conversations were unstructured and open-ended, the similarity in the use of pronouns other than ***he*** and ***she*** between the two groups is almost more remarkable than their differences in the use of the gender-specific pronouns[3].

Table 7: **Named references to places in Glasgow adolescent conversations**

	(n)	freq.
Middle-class adolescents	68	3.1
Working-class adolescents	94	4.6
All girls	59	2.45
All boys	103	5.44

[Freq. = per 1,000 words]

The implication of Tables 3-6 is that in the Glasgow sessions, both with adolescents and adults, the females talk about people more than the males do. What about named references to places? Table 7 gives the figures for named references to physical locations in the adolescent conversations.

It can be seen in Table 7 that the working-class adolescents name places slightly more frequently than the middle-class adolescents, but the gender difference is greater, with the boys naming places (5.44 per 1,000 words) more than twice as frequently as the girls (2.45 per 1,000 words) ($p.<.05$). The gender differences are even greater among the adults, as can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8: **Named references to places in adult conversations**

	(n)	freq.
Middle-class adults	385	11.22
Working-class adults	557	11.07
Women	345	6.66
Men	597	18.20

As with the adolescents, the social class differences are not important, but the men name places (18.2 per 1,000 words) almost three times as often as the women (6.66 per 1,000 words) ($p.<.05$).

Looking at the conversations as a whole it is possible to identify those parts where the participants are talking about other people. There is an interpretative aspect here since it is not always easy to tell when one topic ends and another begins. The figures in Tables 9 and 10 are based upon word counts of the proportion of each session devoted to the discussion of people known to the speakers. As with the numbers in Tables 4 and 6 this excludes discussion of public figures such as footballers or musicians.

Table 9: **Proportion of talk about people in Glasgow adolescent conversations**

	Proportion
Middle-class adolescents	37%
Working-class adolescents	56%
All girls	64%
All boys	24%

The gender differences are even more marked by a comparison of the individual sessions. In one conversation between two middle-class girls 88% is devoted to discussing their peers and teachers, and in the two conversations by working-class girls the proportion is 76%. In contrast, among the boys the highest proportion is 38% in one of the conversations between middle-class boys and in one of the working-class boys' conversations the proportion is only 7%.

A similar range is seen in the adult conversations, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Proportion of talk about people in Glasgow adult conversations

	Proportion
Middle-class adults	35%
Working-class adults	25%
Women	38%
Men	15%

The range among the women is from 63% to 13% and among the men from 25% to 5%.

The quantitative differences can be illustrated with clear examples. The first is from an interview I recorded with Ella Laidlaw, a working-class woman, in Ayr. In a story she told about how she had missed an important examination by playing truant the attention to names is clear.

(1)
so when the teacher asked where we were before the exam started

"Please miss"
it was Miss Sadler
she died last week tae
saw her death in the paper
"Please miss Ella Dunlop Alice Croat Janie Stardie" and some other body
I cannae mind who the other lassie was -- oh Ellen Connell
"are away to the Carnegie Library"
she says "Are they?"
so she phoned Mr Reid the janitor
and she sent him to Carnegie Library for us

Truly this is a complete list of characters, all named, including even the janitor. Note that Ella is concemed when she cannot remember the other girl's name after more than fifty years even though it would obviously mean nothing to me. Her use of names contrasts with that of Andrew Sinclair, a coal miner, I also interviewed in Ayr. Ella Laidlaw uses the names of people she knows with a frequency of 8.1 per thousand words, Andrew Sinclair with a frequency of only 1.98 per thousand words. His son, his son-in-law, and his wife are not named when they are mentioned. On the other hand, he is very particular about naming places. In the interview, he names places with a frequency of 8.27 per thousand words, in contrast to EL's 5.5 per thousand words. The example in (2) shows his concem about where people live but not what they are called. He is talking about a man he met in Canada when he was there during the war while he was a merchant seaman.

(2)
he was manager of a munitions factory in Canada
and he belonged here to Kilmarnock here
in fact he told me he'd worked in Ayr town hall here in the-- in the for the Council here in the old town of Ayr

and I always remembered the last time I spoke to him before I left
he used to say "I'll write home and tell my sister" he says
"a fine looking lassie herself
I'll put in a word for you"
she stayed in Williams Street in Kilmamock
but I never ever went to see her or anything like that

Neither the man nor the lassie is named, but the street is.

Thus the claim that Johnstone (1993:73) made that women make more frequent reference to people and mento places is supported by evidence from quite independent studies. This does not make it a sociolinguistic universal but shows that the finding was not totally idiosyncratic.

The second area that I wish to deal with is the discourse marker you know. There are two claims that have been made about the use ofyou know. One is that it is used more frequently by working-class speakers (Stubbe and Holmes 1995), and the other that it is used more frequently by women than by men (Fishman 1978,1980; Ostman (1981). In examining the use ofyou know in the set of Ayr interviews (Macaulay 1991) and the Glasgow conversations, I found no difference between the middle-class and the working-class speakers in the frequency with which they used you know (Macaulay 2002). However, I did find considerable gender differences in Glasgow, as shown in Table 11[4].

Table 11: Social class and gender differences in the use ofyou know in Glasgow

	Freq.	(n)
Middle-class women	8.07	(151)
Middle-class men	4.36	(68)
Working-class women	7.40	(245)
Working-class men	4.59	(79)
Middle-class girls	1.73	(18)
Middle-class boys	0.35	(4)
Working-class girls	0.66	(9)
Working-class boys	0.81	(6)

The Glasgow women use you know with a frequency of 8.33 in contrast to the Glasgow men's frequency of 4.48. This difference is consistent with results reported by Fishman (1978, 1980) and Ostman (1981), but not with Holmes (1986), who found no gender differences in her sample. The Glasgow adults have a total of 548 instances with a frequency of 6.48 per thousand words; the adolescents have 37 instances, with a frequency of 0.86[5]. Whatever it is that leads to the use ofyou know in peer conversations of this kind it does not seem to be well established in Glasgow at the age of fourteen.

Erman (1993) in an examination of the use ofyou know in the London-Lund Corpus found that men used you know more frequently than women. Erman gives figures to show that more

examples of you know were produced by males (198) than by females (148), but she does not give figures on the actual amount of speech produced by males and females, and it is likely that the rnen produced more speech in the samples Erman examined. In order to investigate this further I calculated the frequencies on the basis of the published transcripts.

The transcribed portions of the London-Lund Corpus (Svartvik and Quirk 1980) are not easy to analyze in terms of individual speakers because the contribution of each speaker is not tabulated separately. Instead, Svartvik and Quirk present 5,000 word samples of 34 sessions which may contain from one to six speakers. It is, however, possible to separate out the contributions of rnen and women, with an approximate estimate of the number of words contributed by each gender, though it has to be stressed that these are not exact figures. There is a gender imbalance with rnen providing approximately 107,500 words (63%) of the total 170,000 and women approximately 62,500 (37%). There are 10 sessions in which only rnen speak and 4 in which the speakers all are women. The remainder are mixed-sex. I made a handcount of the use of you know in the LLC transcripts. According to my count the overall frequency of you know is 4.28 but the rnen use you know with a frequency of 3.35 compared with a frequency of 5.87 for the women. Thus, I did not find confirmation of Erman's claim.

Holmes (1986: 14) and Erman (1993: 228) found a greater use of you know in same-sex interactions than in mixed-sex ones, so I looked at this in the LLC corpus. My analysis of the 34 conversations of the London-Lund corpus confirms the view that you know is more likely to occur in same-sex sessions. In the twenty mixed-sex sessions the frequency of you know is only 3.79 compared with 5.06 in same-sex sessions. So the claim that you know is more frequent in same-sex conversations is supported. However, the gender difference persists. In mixed-sex sessions the rnen use you know with a frequency of 3.14 compared with the women's frequency of 4.75. In the same-sex sessions the differences are even greater with the rnen using you know with a frequency of 3.64 compared with the women's frequency of 8.25. The London-Lund sessions thus support the claim that you know is more frequently used by women than by men.

In the case of you know, replication has not produced a clear picture of its use. The results of several studies show that the use of you know varies greatly in that some speakers use it very frequently while others from a similar background or of the same gender use it rarely. This makes generalizations about its use hazardous until we have much more evidence available, and it would be wise not to be tempted into drawing conclusions about the significance of its use until we have a clearer idea of the situation. Thus, you know is a good example of a feature that needs further attention before any generalizations can be solidly established.

My third example comes from two examples of my own work. In analyzing the Ayr interviews (Macaulay 1991) I found what was to me a surprising difference in the use of derived adverbs in *-ly* by the two social classes. The figures are given in Table 12.

Tuble 12: Relative frequency of derivative adverbs in *-ly* in Ayr

	Lower-class		Middle-class	
	(n)	Freq.	(n)	Freq.
Manner	28	0.40	82	1.61
Time/Freq.	41	0.58	70	1.38
Degree	47	0.67	121	2.38
Sentence	76	1.08	174	3.42
really	55	0.79	106	2.08
Totals	247	3.52	553	10.87

[freq. = per 1,000 words]

[From Macaulay 1995: 441 1997: 124]

The middle-class speakers used these adverbs more than three times as often as the lower-class speakers ($p.< .001$), which was an unexpected result. I atternpted an explanation of this difference (Macaulay 1995) but I was troubled by the anxiety that the results might have been a consequence of addressee effect (Bell 1984). Consequently, when I examined the Glasgow transcripts of conversations between friends, I was interested to see whether that same kind of picture might emerge. The results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Relative frequency of derivative adverbs in *-ly* in Glasgow (adults)

	Working-class		Middle-class	
	(n)	Freq.	(n)	Freq.
Manner	11	0.22	32	0.93
Time/Freq.	19	0.38	33	0.96
Degree	35	0.69	42	1.22
Sentence	92	1.82	197	5.74
really	93	1.85	104	3.03
Totals	250	4.97	408	11.89

[freq. = per 1,000 words]

It can be seen frorn Table 13 that the same pattern occurs with the middle-class speakers using these adverbs more than twice as often as the working-class speakers ($p.< .001$). Given the difference in the ways in which the rnaterials were recorded, it is unlikely that the results were seriously affected by the methodology. The use of adverbs is thus an example of a question that might repay further exploration with other samples to find out whether this social class difference in the use of adverbs is found elsewhere.

There is, as far as I know, no comparable study of adverbs but Kroch (1995), in his study of upper class Philadelphia speech found that upper class men were more likely than upper class women or upper middle-class men to use 'intensifying adverbs' (e.g., very, extremely) though the results were not statistically significant. This is consistent with my findings from the Ayr study (Macaulay 1991: 131) and Glasgow (Macaulay 2002). Table 14 shows the figures for the frequency of very in Ayr and Glasgow.

Table 14: Relative frequency of ***very*** in Ayr and Glasgow

	Lower-class		Middle-clas	
	(n)	Freq.	(n)	Freq.
Ayr	70	1.00	178	3.49
Glasgow	16	0.32	147	4.28

[freq. = per 1,000 words]

The social class difference in the use of ***very*** in the Glasgow sample is even more stnking than that in Ayr and is highly significant ($p.<.001$)[6]. Half of the working-class Glasgow adults do not use ***very*** even once. Kroch did not investigate the speech of other social class groups, so his study does not replicate the Ayr or Glasgow studies, but the results seem to be consistent with mine.

Three examples of replication have been examined in this paper. The first and third of them may be sufficiently convincing to provide tentative sociolinguistic generalizations, while the second example (*you* ***know)*** shows the danger of jumping to premature conclusions. But it is not just examples of discourse variation like these that can benefit from replication. We know how speech samples are affected by genre (Macaulay 2001) and style (Eckert and Rickford 2001). Any conclusions about a linguistic variable based on a single sample collected by a single technique are vulnerable to refutation. That is how science progresses. We need replications of all important earlier investigations to help strengthen or undermine confidence in their results and that will be to the benefit of the discipline of sociolinguistics.

These are two powerful reasons for asking the same question more than once. Striking results tend to get cited more often and come to seem well-established even when the actual evidence is not overwhelming. Zimmerman and West's (1975) article on interruptions cited earlier is one example. As Brenneis and Macaulay pointed out:

> In the reporting of sex differences, no news is not good news; it is not news of any kind, and neither tenure nor promotion will follow from the reporting of negative results.
>
> Brenneis ***and*** Macaulay *(1996: 75)*

Consequently, probably more people still believe that there is strong evidence that men interrupt women more than women interrupt men, despite the review by (James and Clarke 1993). A more distressing example is the influence of Basil Bernstein. It is seldom mentioned that many of Bemstein's claims were based on a tiny sample of adolescent boys recorded under far from optimal circumstances (Bernstein 1962), yet his results were often generalized as evidence of social class differences for the total population. An investigation of the kinds of features Bernstein examined in a different sample of speakers (Macaulay, in prep.) shows that there is support for only two of his claims (adverbs, passives) and that these do not justify the conclusions Bemstein drew from them. This does not necessarily mean that Bemstein was wrong but it does challenge the evidence for his claims.

Similarly, while there is an understandable interest in linguistic change, it is also remarkable that some features which might be candidates for change have not changed (Macaulay 1988). It is only rarely that researchers carry out a real time investigation of linguistic change as was the case in Montréal with the 1971 Sankoff and Cedergren corpus (Sankoff and Sankoff, 1973). The Sankoff-Cedergren corpus consists of 60 interviews with French speakers in Montréal in 1971; in 1984 these speakers were interviewed again, with the addition of 12 younger speakers (Thibault and Vincent, 1990). Dubois (1993) and Vincent (1993) were able to trace certain features to see which had changed and which remained stable over this period. More examples of this kind of replication would be very welcome.

NOTES:

[1] In Table 3 and in Table 5 references to public figures such as footballers or actors are not included.

[2] All references to statistical significance are based on the Mann-Whitney nonparametric test.

[3] The pronoun it was not included in Tables 4 and 6 because *it* has other functions in addition to being an anaphoric pronoun. It is consequently difficult to draw conclusions about reference from the raw figures. For what they are worth, the frequencies of *it* are: Boys 26.55, Girls 23.74, Men 28.47, Women 33.95.

[4] The Ayr sample is badly unbalanced for gender so it is not possible to draw conclusions about gender differences.

[5] The frequency for the Glasgow adults is almost identical to that found by Holmes (1986:13) for informal contexts, namely 6.9 per thousand words. Although Holmes' corpus is much smaller (30,000), the similarity of fiequency is interesting.

[6] The frequency of *very* in the 34 conversations of the London-Lund corpus is 4.92, (based on Svartvik, Eeg-Olofsson, Forsheden, Oreström, and Thavenius 1982: 44). This is consistent with the middle-class status of the London-Lund speakers.

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