



Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen –

Wir laden sehr herzlich ein zu zwei Online-Vorträgen von Dr. Jennifer Hay (NZILBB, Univ. Canterbury, NZ) am Dienstag, 17. Juni. Der erste Vortrag ***Exploring the social meaning of the 'leader-lagger' vowels in New Zealand English*** (Abstrakt 1 siehe unten, 13:30 – 14:30 Uhr) ist insbesondere für eine studentische Zuhörerschaft bestimmt; der zweite Vortrag ***Exploring patterns of vowel covariation in New Zealand English, and their stability over time*** (Abstrakt 2 siehe unten, 15:00 – 16:00 Uhr) wird eher ein Fachvortrag sein. Die Vorträge werden auf Englisch stattfinden.

Einwahlinformationen für zoom sind am Ende dieser Ankündigung inkludiert.

Wir freuen uns über rege Teilnahme und Weiterleitung dieser Ankündigung.

Mit herzlichem Gruß und Dank!!

Eure Laboratory Phonology KollegInnen vom
Leibniz-Zentrum Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft (ZAS Berlin)

***** ENGLISH BELOW *****

Dear Colleagues,

We cordially invite you to two online lectures by Dr. Jennifer Hay (NZILBB, Univ. Canterbury, NZ) on Tuesday, June 17th. The first lecture ***Exploring the social meaning of the 'leader-lagger' vowels in New Zealand English*** (abstract 1 below, 1:30-2:30 PM) is particularly intended for a student audience; the second lecture ***Exploring patterns of vowel covariation in New Zealand English, and their stability over time*** (abstract 2 below, 3:00-4:00 PM) will be more of a specialized academic presentation. The talks will be in English.

Zoom login information is included at the end of this announcement.

We look forward to your participation and would be grateful for your forwarding of this announcement.

With warm regards and thanks!!

Your colleagues from the Laboratory Phonology group at
Leibniz-Zentrum Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft (ZAS Berlin)



***** STUDENT LECTURE *****

Tuesday, June 17th at 1:30 – 2:30 pm sharp

Abstract 1:

Exploring the social meaning of the ‘leader-lagger’ vowels in New Zealand English

This talk explores how listeners perceive patterns of vowel production in New Zealand English, and use them to make social evaluations about speakers.

In our work on the pronunciation of New Zealand English vowels, we have shown that there are several clusters of monophthongs that systematically pattern together across speakers, over time and across corpora (Brand et al., 2021; Hurring et al., 2025). One of these clusters is referred to as the ‘leader-lagger’ cluster. If a speaker is leading in the sound change occurring in one of the vowels in this cluster, they are likely to be leading in all of them. But is a speaker’s position on the continuum from ‘lagger’ to ‘leader’ interpreted as socially meaningful by listeners?

In this talk, I describe a series of experiments investigating the degree to which listeners socially evaluate ‘leaders’ and ‘laggers’ of sound change. The experiments are (1) a pairwise similarity rating task, (2) a free classification task, and (3) a social rating task in which we systematically obscure different vowels.

The overall pattern of results reveals that listeners do socially evaluate leaders and laggers differently, with leaders associated with rurality and lower socioeconomic status and laggers with higher socioeconomic status. However, there are questions around exactly what cues listeners are using to make these evaluations, and how these cues work together with other parts of the signal. It is apparent that listeners use a wide range of strategies to group speakers, and the broader speech context mediates the social salience of the leader-lagger vowels.

***** ACADEMIC LECTURE *****

Tuesday, June 17th at 3 pm – 4 pm sharp

Abstract 2:

Exploring patterns of vowel covariation in New Zealand English, and their stability over time

In Brand et al. (2021) we developed a methodology that facilitates the study of vowel co-variation, and introduced a large-scale analysis of how monophthongs co-vary across hundreds of speakers.

This showed that New Zealand English monophthongs operated as three subsystems of vowels that work together.

For example, one of the subsystems identified in that analysis suggested that speakers can be identified as leaders or laggers in a set of multiple ongoing sound changes. What remains unclear is how stable a speaker’s position within these subsystems are over time. Do leaders and laggers of sound changes remain leaders and laggers over a long period of time?



In this new analysis, we employ corpus data from 51 New Zealand English speakers from a different corpus, who were recorded at two different time-points (eight years apart). We explore covariation between ten monophthongs using Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The results indicate significant stability across the time-points in two of the three vowel clusters identified by Brand et al.

This suggests that speakers' covariation position within their community remains stable over time, even in the context of ongoing sound changes. In other words, speakers might change how they pronounce particular vowels over the 8 years, but they don't change where they sit in the pattern of ongoing sound change – leaders remain leaders, and laggards remain laggards. The overall covariation patterns also replicate patterns observed by Brand et al. (2021) indicating that patterns of vowel covariation observed with PCA can be stable and replicable across multiple corpora.

I also briefly summarise our work on investigating the social meaning of this covariation, and on the initial stages of a new analysis using this methodology to explore German monophthongs.

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