Self-recordings, when speakers record their own speech without a researcher present, have featured in several recent studies on style-shifting and phonetic variation (e.g., Podesva 2007; Sharma 2011). Such recordings are attractive for potentially eliciting a wider range of styles than can be recorded in a typical sociolinguistic interviews. Analyses of micro-level interaction show a variety of ways in which participants negotiate the self-recording context (Schøning and Møller 2009), where speakers engage in speech activities that are not typical to interviews. However, obtaining self-recordings also presents ethical and logistical challenges inherent in training a participant to be a temporary fieldworker. Perhaps for this reason they are not a standard part of the variationist toolkit, and there has been no systematic study comparing the phonetic differences between self-recorded speech and speech obtained from sociolinguistic interviews.

The results presented here show that the contrast between self-recordings and interviews can be the single most reliable predictor of phonetic variation. We analyze four speakers each recorded in a sociolinguistic interview with the first author, and three self-recordings each with friends and family. The results show that the contrast between interview speech and self-recorded speech is a stronger predictor of sibilant variation (/s/ and /z/ CoG and Spectral Peak higher in interviews) than the contrast between interview speech and reading passage speech (/s/ and /z/ CoG and Spectral Peak higher in reading passages; see also Tucker *et al.* 2016). These results dovetail with previous findings for seven of twelve vocalic variables for one of these speakers (four of six F1 variables and three of six F2 variables; Boyd *et al.* 2015). As one of few studies to demonstrate robust style-shifting effects for sibilants (see also Maniwa *et al.* 2009, Saigusa 2016), our results have implications for the growing body of work on sibilant variation in North American English (e.g., Linville 1998, Flipsen *et al.* 1999, Smyth *et al.* 2003, Levon 2007, Campbell-Kibler 2011, Mack and Munson 2012, Podesva and Van Hofwegen 2014, Zimman 2013).

We also analysed speech from one of the speakers who was recorded during an informal interview held over lunch with the first author one year prior to the self-recordings and formal interview. We found that her sibilant production during the informal lunch interview was nearly identical to her production in the self-recordings a year later. We take this to suggest that the nature of the speech event may be a stronger predictor of variation than the identity of the interlocutor, at least in this case (cf. Sharma 2011). Regardless, the results suggest that the classic sociolinguistic interview may capture a relatively narrow range of potential phonetic variation: even the most 'casual' interview speech might be more hyperarticulated than is often assumed. Speech in self-recordings may be different enough from speech in interviews to justify overcoming the practical challenges of its collection and integrating it into standard sociolinguistic methodology.

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