

**The Linguistics 113 Survey of Massachusetts Speech  
Part Two: Pronunciation**

**The purpose of this survey is to investigate what speakers from all areas of Massachusetts report about (i) the presence of certain dialect features in their own speech, (ii) the variation they may show in the use of these dialect features, and (iii) opinions they may or may not have regarding these dialect features.**

**\*\*The speakers answering the survey must have been brought up in Massachusetts and English must be their mother tongue.\*\***

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**1. Your name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Initials of speaker consulted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1: Questions about R-dropping and R-full pronunciations**

The following words are ones in which the *r* may “drop” in the accent of some (but not all) people from Eastern or Central Massachusetts: *car, care, four, fear, start, mother, water, mark, tour*. The term ‘R-dropping’ will be used for pronunciation in which the *r* is dropped in these words, and ‘R-full’ for pronunciation where *r* isn’t dropped.

3. Which pronunciation did you use when talking with family when you were growing up (before high school)?

- R-dropping
- R-full
- Both

4. Which pronunciation do/did your parents use? Check as many as are applicable.

- Mother R-dropping
- Mother R-full
- Mother Both
- Father R-dropping
- Father R-full
- Father Both

5. Which pronunciation do you use when talking to friends from high school?

- R-dropping
- R-full
- Both
- Depends on whether they are r-droppers or not

6. Which pronunciation do you use when talking with friends from college (answer if currently in college)?

R-dropping

R-full

Both

Depends on whether they are r-droppers or not

7. Imagine you were to make a presentation in class. Which pronunciation would you use?

R-dropping

R-full

Either one

8. Imagine you were to announce a program of music by local bands at a benefit concert for hurricane victims in your hometown. Which pronunciation would you use?

R-dropping

R-full

Either one

9. If you change in your use of *r*-dropping from one context to another, is this a deliberate choice, or an unconscious change?

Deliberate

Unconscious

Some of both

10. If it's a deliberate choice, what's the basis for it?

11. Which pronunciation would you think appropriate for use by a grade school teacher in Eastern Massachusetts?

R-dropping

R-full

Either one

12. Which pronunciation would you think appropriate for use by a grade school teacher in Western Massachusetts?

R-dropping

R-full

Either one

13. Which pronunciation do you think appropriate for use by a UMass Amherst professor?

R-dropping

R-full

Either one

14. Which pronunciation do you think appropriate for use by a local TV anchor person in Boston?

- R-dropping
- R-full
- Either one

15. Which pronunciation do you think appropriate for use by a local TV anchor person in Springfield, MA?

- R-dropping
- R-full
- Either one

16. Which pronunciation do you think appropriate for use by a national network TV anchor person?

- R-dropping
- R-full
- Either one

17. Do you prefer one of these pronunciations to the other?

- R-dropping
- R-full
- No preference

18. Can you explain your preference, if you have one?

19. Can you recall any comments that any of your teachers, classmates, friends or family ever made concerning *r*-dropping? If so, what was the nature of the comments?

## **Part II: Questions about other aspects of pronunciation**

20. Do you pronounce the vowel in the first syllable of the words *father* and *bother* the same, or different?

- Same
- Different

21. Do you pronounce the vowels in the words *caught* and *cot* the same, or different?

- Same
- Different

22. If the vowel in *caught* and *cot* is the same in your speech, is it the same as the vowel in the word *bother*, or the same as the vowel in the word *father*, or neither?

Same as in *bother*

Same as in *father*

Different from both of them

23. If you have the same vowel in *caught* and *cot*, but a different vowel in *father*, have you been aware that this pronunciation is a feature of Eastern Massachusetts speech?

Yes

No

24. Has anyone ever commented on your pronunciation of words like *cot*, *lock*, *hot*, *John*, *collar*, *bother*?

Yes

No

25. Do you pronounce the vowel in the two words *mat* and *mad* the same, or different?

Same

Different

26. Do you pronounce the vowel in the two words *man* and *mad* the same, or different?

Same

Different

27. Do you pronounce the vowel in the two words *lab* and *lap* the same, or different?

Same

Different

28. Do you pronounce the vowel in the two words *lamb* and *lab* the same, or different?

Same

Different

### III. Personal Information

29. Age

30. Sex

Female

Male

31. Place of birth (town, county, state)

32. What is the town (and county) where you went to high school?

33. In the town where you went to high school, how many of the people dropped their *r*'s?

Most of them

A majority

A minority

Very few or none

34. Indicate your current hometown (and county), if different from the town where you attended high school.

35. If your current hometown is different from your high school town, please indicate how many of the people there drop their *r*'s.

Most of them

A majority

A minority

Very few or none

36. Where was your mother born? (town, county, state)

37. Are you familiar with the neighborhood where you mother grew up?

Yes

No

38. Where was your father born? (town, county, state)

39. Are you familiar with the neighborhood where your father grew up?

Yes

No

40. Did your parents go to college?

Mother

Father

Both of them

Neither of them.

41. What is the ethnicity of your grandparents (Italian, Cherokee, Jewish, African-American, Puerto-Rican, French-Canadian, Irish, etc.)