#KYIVNOTKIEV: AN INVESTIGATION INTO BRITISH POLITICIANS PRONUNCIATION OF UKRAINE'S CAPITAL CITY AND THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL IDEOLOGY ON VARIATION

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Abstract: This research paper investigates the variable and changing pronunciation of Ukraine's capital city "Kyiv" used by British politicians prior to and after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It aims to investigate a conscious language change, an area lacking in scholarly literature. Two variants were identified: a disyllabic variant resembling [khiˈjɛv] and a monosyllabic variant resembling [khiːv]. The former is linked to a pro-Russian stance, whilst the latter is now connected to a pro-Ukraine position. The study had two objectives in capturing when British politicians changed their pronunciation, and whether their political affiliation impacted which pronunciation they used. To do this, A quantitative investigation was conducted on the pronunciation used by a sample of 91 British politicians between March 2017 to March 2023. The quantitative and statistical analysis showed that, before the invasion, the politicians in the sample only used the disyllabic variant; however, following the invasion, the monosyllabic variant emerged, and six months later, it became the form that British politicians significantly preferred. Additionally, a speaker's political identity did not affect which pronunciation they used, with speakers on the left and right of the political spectrum favouring the same forms.

Keywords: sociolinguistics, political ideology, British politics, conscious language variation and change.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, a growing site of research in sociolinguistics has begun to examine how speakers' political identification and ideology affect language variation. Despite this, it remains a small area of research, mainly focusing on aspects of linguistic variation that speakers do not consciously control. Considering this, the current study aims to record and observe language variation available for conscious choice while simultaneously investigating whether a speaker's political ideology plays a part in intentional linguistic shifts. To do this, I look into how British politicians have been pronouncing Ukraine's capital prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and over the course of the ongoing conflict between 2017-2023. This pronunciation has recently experienced considerable change and variation in English speakers. For example, taken from the current analysis is the pronunciation used by British politician Boris Johnson taken just days apart[1]:

1) "…I travelled to ***Kyiv*** to meet President Zelensky on 1st February" [kʰiˈjɛv]
2) "…What we are seeing now, tragically, as I am sure the House knows, is people moving west out of ***Kyiv***" [kʰiːv]

Ultimately, the current study aims to capture when British politicians changed their pronunciation and whether their political ideology affected which pronunciation they used. To achieve this, a quantitative analysis of how British politicians in the House of Commons and House of Lords pronounced Ukraine's capital between March 2017 and March 2023 was conducted.

The second section of this dissertation reviews literature and research on political ideology and language variation and change. Further, in section 2, I discuss conscious language shifts and introduce the variable pronunciation of Ukraine's capital using evidence from social media and English popular press. Two research questions and two hypotheses are presented from the multi-modal evidence provided. Following this, I present

[1] All examples are reproduced verbatim from Hansard Parliament transcripts (2022). The phonetic transcriptions were provided by my own auditory analysis of the transcripts on the Parliament TV website. See the reference list for the website links for the transcripts and audio of examples 1 and 2.

the methodology of the current analysis, referring to the data collection, organisation, and statistical testing process. The results of said methodology are presented in section 4 and further discussed in relation to the research questions and hypotheses in section 5. A discussion of the study's broader ramifications and amendments to address its acknowledged flaws are included. Section 6 brings the current analysis to a close, where it is concluded that prior to the invasion, British politicians were using a disyllabic pronunciation resembling example 1; however, after the invasion, they adopted a monosyllabic variant resembling example 2. Moreover, a speakers' political identity did not influence the pronunciations they used, and it is suggested that this was likely because the British politicians in the sample generally all supported Ukraine.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Political ideology and language

Understanding the connection between language and politics dates to the classical Greek and Roman rhetorical treatises (Dunmire 2012:735). Since then, a large area of research into the link between Politics and Language has focused on political discourse analysis, which aims to comprehend the nature and purpose of political speech, as well as the ways in which language produces, maintains, and or abuses power in society (Dunmire 2012:736). Therefore, it appears that in this field, language is often acknowledged for its influence in politics. However, acknowledging the flip side of the interaction in how politics affects language use has received less attention which recent studies in sociolinguistics have begun to address. In the following section, I explore several insightful studies on political identification and the adoption and use of linguistic forms in various languages.

The relationship between political ideology and language is explored in a study by Hall-Lew, Friskney, and Scobbie (2017), who systematically compared the vowels used by 5 Scottish National Party (SNP) politicians and 5 Scottish Labour politicians from speeches they had made in the House of Commons between 2011-2012. Hall-Lew et al. (2017) acoustically examined Scottish politicians' pronunciation of the CAT vowel and found political party conditioned the vowel height with that Scottish Labour politicians produced a higher CAT vowel than SNP politicians . Despite their small sample size and emphasis on a linguistic trait that in this context is thought to be unconscious to the speaker, their results still emphasise the significance of considering political identification as a social predictor in linguistic

variance. However, there is limited generalizability to the current analysis, which focuses on conscious language choices.

Seminal findings related to the current study come from the work of Hall-Lew, Coppock and Starr's (2010) study on the pronunciation of the country "Iraq" by American politicians. Hall-Lew et al. (2010:92) state that in American English, the second vowel of "Iraq" has variable pronunciation where it is either pronounced with /ɑː/ or /æ/. Regarding this variation, they claim that using /ɑː/ over /æ/ shows a speaker's general regard for speakers of other languages and foreign language learners. Furthermore, through reviewing the American popular press and online discussion boards, they found that the different pronunciations of "Iraq" were tied to particular social meanings. Pronunciation with /ɑː/ was commonly associated with the 'correct' and more 'respectful' pronunciation, whereas pronunciation with /æ/ was associated with violent and anti-Iraqi sentiment (Hall-Lew et al. 2010:93). Considering this, they investigated whether political identity predicted pronunciation use. To do this, they studied a corpus of political speech from American politicians in The House of Representatives. They predicted that Democrats (American Left-wing political party members) would favour the more respectful and closer to the native phonology variant with /ɑː/, whilst Republicans (American right-wing political party members) would favour the negatively evaluated and nativised variant with /æ/ (Hall-Lew et al. 2010:94). Their predictions were realised, demonstrating the influence of political identification on speech patterns, and highlighting how the pronunciation of geographical placenames can be a site for variation conditioned by political stance.

Studies in languages other than English have also examined political identity and ideology and how it affects linguistic variance. For example, Blas-Arroyo (2020) studied the phonological variation among 16 Catalonian politicians during the Catalonian procés from 2007- 2017. The procés was a political movement in favour of the independence of Catalonia from Spain. The study examined 3 Spanish phonemes, which each had variants that either closely matched Catalan phonology or more closely resembled Spanish peninsular phonology. They predicted that left-wing politicians, who historically have had a better relationship with more popular segments of society where demands of covert prestige are more common (Trudgill 1972 cited in Blas-Arroyo 2020:423), would promote variants that are closer to Catalan phonology. However, their results revealed that the left/right divide in politicians was not a significant predictor in which phonological variants they used. Instead,

whether the politicians identified as nationalists was a predictor, with nationalist politicians promoting vernacular features that are borrowed from Catalan phonetics including the velarisation of /l/ and the voiceless [t] in word final position (Blas-Arroyo 2020:433- 436).

In turning to more conscious language choices, research conducted by Gustafsson Sendén, Renström and Lindquist (2021) also illustrates an interesting relationship between political identity and the adoption of gender-inclusive language in Swedish. Their research analysed the attitudes towards and use of the Swedish gender-inclusive third-person pronoun singular "hen" in a sample of 1,203 Swedish speakers from 2015-2018. Since "hen" was only formally added to the Swedish language in 2015, it is a very recent grammatical form. Their results showed that left-wing political orientation and interest in gender issues predicted, more frequent use of "hen". Furthermore, non-users of "hen" were typically older and right-wing oriented in their political beliefs (Gustafsson et al. (2021:603). Their findings implicate an interesting link between the adoption and use of language forms and a speaker's political ideology, which is pertinent to the current study.

The literature thus far reveals an intriguing link between political ideology and language; among the ideas in the literature is the distinction between right—and left-wing speakers and the language they use and adopt. While no discernible pattern is seen across the research, this distinction alone implies that there are fundamental differences between politically left-oriented and right-oriented speakers that may have an impact on linguistic variation. Therefore, it is essential to assess what separates these political ideologies to understand the possible effects on language. To do this, political research on the subject is briefly reviewed.

Research by Czarnek, Swzed and Kossowska (2019:809) address the left and right political distinction via their cultural beliefs and posit that right-wing cultural beliefs refer to embracing tradition and norms. In contrast, left-wing cultural beliefs show a preference for social change and freedom (Czarnek et al. 2019:809). There is evidence that indicates that individuals who have high openness , in that they embrace, and value novelty and variety tend to lean on the left of the political spectrum Roets, Cornelis and Van Hiel 2011:53). On the other hand, individuals with low openness, who embrace tradition and value familiarity tend to support right-wing political ideas (Roets, Cornelis and Van Hiel 2011:53). In their meta-analysis, Sibley and Duckitt (2008: 268) noted this pattern and discovered that people with low levels of openness are more likely to support right-wing agendas across North

America and Europe, demonstrating a level of universality among politically right-winged individuals globally. Considering this, the results of Gustafsson et al. (2021) are explained under the premise that left-wing-oriented speakers who have higher openness levels, are more likely to embrace novelty; thus, in their language, they appear to be more open to adopting the gender-fair language form “hen”. Similarly, this political research speaks to the results of Hall-Lew et al. (2010), whereby the left-wing democrats, who typically have high openness levels, adopt the "correct" and "respectful" phonological variant closer to the foreign source, whilst right-wing republicans who are typically attributed to have low-openness and favour tradition, used the more nativised variant associated with violence and anti-Iraqi sentiment.

Overall, the literature paints an interesting yet obscure link between political ideology and language variation. It is evident that more work needs to be done on this topic. To the best of my knowledge, the left-right political divide in British English has not been studied extensively in sociolinguistics. It is the subject of this research, which aims to contribute to the expanding body of work on linguistic variation and political identity. Interestingly, most of the research on political identity and language variation has covered unconscious language mechanisms. Therefore, there needs to be more understanding into how political ideology might affect conscious language choices. Thus, a primary aim of the current study is to understand the role political identity might play in conscious language choices. In order to do this, I first examine deliberate language changes and the mechanisms underlying them.

2.2 Conscious language change

Linguists have recognised that certain linguistic shifts stem from intentional, conscious efforts by speakers (Thomason 2007:41). Labov (1994:598) recognised this, commenting: "There is a part of language behaviour that is subject to conscious control, to deliberate choice, to purposeful and reflective choice". Nevertheless, there is minimal research on the kinds of "language behaviours" Labov (1994:598) mentions. There are many possible mechanisms responsible for these language shifts, and Fairclough (2003) offers some insight into what they might be. Fairclough (2003) addresses the intricate relationship between society, culture, and language and suggests that changing culture, which he defines as the expression of values and identity, involves changing language practices. Based on this, he contends that changes in language practices, signify a shift in values (Fairclough 2003:23). Fairclough's comments taken in relation to the conscious language behaviours mentioned by

Labov (1994), indicate that a speaker's language choice is reflective of their values and identity. Geographical place names are one language domain where study has focused on how linguistic choice relates to identity and values.

Kearns and Berg (2002) argue that the pronunciation of geographical place names entails a declaration of cultural politics. Pertinent to the current study, Krivoruchko (2008), cited in Hall-Lew et al. (2010) studies the variation in Russian usage between the prepositions 'na' and 'v' with 'Ukraine' which respectively translate in English to "on" and "in" and argued that they had become markers of socio-cultural identities in the context of Ukraine's independence from Russia. Krivoruchko (2008), cited in Hall-Lew et al. (2010), found that the phrase 'na Ukraine' is associated with nationalist discourse whilst 'v Ukraine' was associated with anti-nationalist discourse and political correctness. Therefore, using 'na' indicates a speaker's position towards nationalist beliefs (Krivoruchko 2008 cited in Hall-Lew et al. 2010). These findings implicate how geographical placenames are sites for specific language choices, where these choices can signify a speaker's stance, and disclose facets of their political identity. Additionally, these findings validate the current research into the pronunciation of the place name Kyiv, which will now be introduced and discussed in relation to the research cited so far.

2.3 Conflict as a catalyst for linguistic change and the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital city.

As a site of linguistic variation in English speakers, the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital has received little attention in scholarly work. Thus, to provide sufficient information and evidence of its intricacies, I will adopt an approach similar to Hall-Lew et al (2010) who explored the variable pronunciation of "Iraq" and its social meanings within popular American Press and online discussion boards. Accordingly, I explore the changing and variable pronunciations of Ukraine's capital used in English-speaking Media and Press and examine commentary on it on social media platforms. From this evidence and by drawing similarities to the literature reviewed in sections 2.1 and 2.2 above, I explain why Ukraine's capital might be the site for variation by political ideology.

2.3.1. Background: Ukraine and Russia

Throughout the 20th and 21st century, the relationship between Ukraine and Russia can be summarised as turbulent. In 1991 Ukraine became an independent state, following the

collapse of the USSR (Conant, 2023). In 2014 Russia invaded and annexed the Ukrainian Crimean peninsula increasing tensions between the two states (Conant 2023) . This relationship reached its boiling point on the 24th of February when Russia's President Vladimir Putin launched a full-scale invasion into Ukraine (Walker 2023:4). This started an on-going war characterised by bloodshed and displacement with the United Nations estimating over 10,000 civilian casualties (Janowski 2023), and 6.5 million Ukrainians were made refugees (‘Ukraine refugee situation’ 2024). With Putin's threats and warnings of nuclear action against the global West if they were to provide military intervention (Soldatkin and Osborn 2024), individuals showed their support through other means. One means of support observed during this time occurred in the pronunciation and spelling of Ukraine's capital city by English speakers.

2.3.2 [kʰiˈjɛv] or [kʰiːv]: The change to monosyllabic pronunciation

Throughout most of the 21st century, English speakers' pronunciation of Ukraine's capital was disyllabic. The Longman Dictionary of English Pronunciation (2000) describes the pronunciation as ['ki:ef] or ['ki:ev] (Wells 2000:419); similarly, Wikipedia also provides the phonetic transcription of [ˈkiːɛv] (‘Kyiv’ 2024). From hearing how British English speakers were pronouncing Ukraine's capital city, I ascribe the pronunciation as [kʰiˈjɛv].

Notwithstanding the variance across these phonetic transcriptions, English speakers' widely accepted norm pronunciation was disyllabic. However, in recent years, a change occurred, with some English speakers having adopted a new monosyllabic pronunciation, which from observation phonetically resembles [kʰiːv]. This observation prompted the current study, hoping to investigate when this transition occurred and whether political identity was a predictor for the pronunciation speakers used.

As previously alluded, the invasion of Ukraine saw a sharp increase in interest into the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital city. This interest was captured across British media and the press. For example, on the 24th of February 2022, Wales Online published an article titled "How to pronounce Kyiv and why has the pronunciation changed?" (Purves 2022). Similarly, on the 25th of February, the Guardian published an online article titled "How to pronounce and spell Kyiv? And why it matters" (Rice-Oxley 2022). Across both articles, three points can be synthesised about English speakers' pronunciation of Ukraine's capital. Firstly, at the time both articles were published, the pronunciation used by speakers had already begun to

change. Secondly, the authors recognise two pronunciations. The first is evaluated negatively and associated with the spelling 'Kiev' from the English transliteration of the Russian spelling Киев and assigned the phonetic spellings 'kee-yev' or 'key-ev'. The second is evaluated positively and associated with the spelling Kyiv from the transliteration of Ukrainian Київ and assigned the phonetic spellings 'kee-eve' or 'kee-yiv'. Thirdly, before the invasion, English speakers used the transliterated Russian pronunciation; however, now there is a strong conscious effort to move away from this pronunciation and use the Ukrainian pronunciation (Purves 2022, Rice-Oxley 2022).

Despite this recent surge in popularity in promoting Ukrainian linguistic conventions and resisting Russian linguistic conventions, Ukraine has been pushing for this since 1991 (Yao, Crowden, and Vaisman 2023:1). The Ukrainian Ministry of Affairs launched the #KyivnotKiev campaign in 2018, as part of the country's long-standing attempts to distance its capital from its Soviet history (Bremner 2022). More recently, these spelling conventions have become intrinsically linked with the pronunciations of Ukraine's capital.

Examining the media pieces as a true reflection of society at large, they reveal a conscious effort to encourage English speakers to use the Ukrainian pronunciation around the time of the invasion. Despite this, the Ukrainian pronunciations the authors promote do not accurately reflect the monosyllabic pronunciation observed in English speakers and raises the question of where this pronunciation originated and why it is being used. To answer these questions, I investigate commentary on social media. With spelling variance serving as a sign of phonetic variety, social media sites like Twitter have been viewed as locations for the creation and exchange of ideologies (Hall-Lew and Trousdale 2020:90). The various pronunciations of the capital of Ukraine are depicted in Figure 1. The tweet captures the monosyllabic pronunciation, the disyllabic pronunciation and the ideologies surrounding each of them.

Figure 1: a tweet by @Animeriity posted on X [Twitter] on 27/02/2022.

Figure 1 exemplifies that at the time of the tweet (27/02/2022), a shared belief existed that the monosyllabic pronunciation resembles the "correct" Ukrainian pronunciation. Wikipedia (2024) provides the Ukrainian pronunciation as [ˈkɪjɪu̯] (‘Kyiv’ 2024). Phonetically, the monosyllabic pronunciation exhibited in Figure 1 bears little resemblance to the Ukrainian pronunciation. This desynchrony between the Ukrainian pronunciation and the monosyllabic variant was captured by Victor and Zraick (2022) in their online article for the New York Times, where they posit that this desynchrony lies in the inability of English speakers to reproduce the Ukrainian phonology. Thus, the monosyllabic pronunciation [kʰiːv] appears to be a failed attempt replicating native phonology. However, this argument falls flat, given that the English language accepts both the Ukrainian and Russian variants' vowel sequences (Bikelienė, 2023:192). Regardless of the accuracy of the pronunciation, English speakers still believed it was closer to the Ukrainian pronunciation. Shapiro (1997:437) notes that in the case of loan words such as the names of foreign places, modern American speech appears to favour pronunciations that speakers interpret as closely resembling the source languages phonology. Although Shapiro (1997) observes this trend in American speech, his findings have important implications, supporting the premise that the promotion and adoption of the monosyllabic variant by English speakers was due to speakers interpreting it as replicating the Ukrainian pronunciation.

Figure 1 reflects the ideologies surrounding each pronunciation. For this speaker, the choice between the monosyllabic pronunciation and the disyllabic pronunciation reflects an individual's stance concerning the Ukraine War. Using what they perceive as the "correct" pronunciation [kʰiːv], shows a speaker supports Ukraine, whilst using the disyllabic Russian

pronunciation [kʰiˈjɛv] does the opposite. This notion is clearly shared, hence the likes it has received.

The tweet further demonstrates how speakers recognise the variance in pronunciation and accept that it is a matter of choice, providing an illustration of the conscious "language behaviours" that Labov (1994:598) mentions. Lindblom et al. (1995:28) address literature on the “socio-genesis” of sound changes and comments that the adoption of new pronunciations can signal a speaker's solidarity with a group. Additionally, they explain that speech communities judge phonetic forms according to their to their social value and that these evaluations can result in phonetic changes (Lindblom et al. 1995:28). Although they refer to unconscious language variation, Lindblom et al. 's (1995) comments in relation to the case of the pronunciation of Ukraine’s capital city, highlight the potential reasons why some speakers shifted their pronunciation. The monosyllabic variant has become a signal of solidarity with Ukraine and has gained an element of social prestige. The disyllabic pronunciation is judged for its negative social value as supportive of Russia. As a result, going from a disyllabic to a monosyllabic pronunciation indicates a change in values, supporting Fairclough's (2003) notion theory that discourse changes reflect changes in values. Additionally, speakers may be more likely to use the monosyllabic variant after hearing the discourse supporting it. Koeser and Scenzy (2014) noted this trend in their study of gender-fair language in German, finding that speakers may be motivated to use gender-fair language after hearing arguments supporting it.

Despite the linguistic movement away from the Russian disyllabic pronunciation, some speakers maintained this pronunciation. This is evidenced in a personal opinion article published by British conservative journalist Ed West on the 22nd of March 2022, titled 'I will never accept Kyiv" (West, 2022). In the said article he proclaims he will not call Ukraine's capital "keev" despite his pro-Ukraine stance where he claims it is an "empty gesture of solidarity" (West 2022). West (2022) expresses a patriotic desire to maintain the English exonym, which is the disyllabic form that he claims is the widely accepted pronunciation used by English speakers for last 200 years. Furthermore, he expresses his disdain for using the monosyllabic variant and echoes throughout the piece how the modern push for native spellings and pronunciation to be utilised in English is unnecessary (West, 2022). Overall, this discourse indicates that although there was a linguistic movement in favour of English speakers switching to the monosyllabic variant, it was not received by

everyone. Furthermore, the fact that the pronunciation of the capital of Ukraine was up for public debate, evidences again how it is a site for conscious decision, where speakers deliberately chose to participate actively with monosyllabic variants or to maintain the disyllabic pronunciation at the time.

Overall, the discourse surrounding the pronunciations on social media and English popular press indicates that [kʰiːv] is generally perceived as "correct" and most like the Ukrainian pronunciation. Using the monosyllabic pronunciation appears to symbolise solidarity and support for Ukraine and its identity separate from Russia. This performative and symbolic function of language in associating forms with ideologies has been observed in other linguistic contexts, most notably in language and gender studies. Such studies have demonstrated that both the structure of language and the selection of words, represent subtle mechanisms that play a role in reinforcing gender roles within society (Beukeboom and Burgers 2019; Ridgeway and Corell 2004 cited in Gustafsson Sendén 2012:590). One clear example of how language forms and choices are tied to ideology is gender-marked language. McConnel and Fazio (1996) examined how university students perceived man-suffixed (chairman) and person-suffixed (chairperson) occupation titles and found individuals were more likely to associate man-suffixed titles with "masculine" traits like rationality, assertiveness, and independence, whilst person-suffixed titles were associated with "female" traits like caring and emotional. This shows how specific language choices can represent ideologies. This adds credibility to the premise that choosing the monosyllabic variant [kʰiːv] reinforces a speaker's position regarding the Ukraine and Russian war.

To summarise, the evidence reviewed reveals that around the invasion on the 24th of February 2022, there existed a strong effort for English speakers to shift their pronunciation from the Russian pronunciation to the Ukrainian pronunciation. However, as discussed, the monosyllabic pronunciation adopted and observed in English speakers did not accurately phonologically resemble the Ukrainian pronunciation. Despite this, English speakers believed that the monosyllabic variant was close to the Ukrainian form and thus promoted its use. Using the examined data as a guide to what English speakers were doing and my observations, I predict that English speakers had adopted a new pronunciation following the invasion.

A recent study by Bikelienė (2023)[2] explored how the spelling and pronunciation had shifted across prominent English news agencies before and after the Russian-Ukrainian war. Her findings revealed that the invasion on the 24th of February 2022 accelerated the process of speakers in the sample changing their pronunciations from the dominant soviet variant to the Ukrainian variant. Bikelienė (2023:205-206) finds, in line with the current research, that switching from the previously utilised Russian form to the Ukrainian variant shows a conscious decision and shows a speakers solidarity. Although Bikeline (2023:207) concedes that her research is introductory to comprehending the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital, she suggests that future research should consider the political leanings of the media outlets examined. Following this, the present study will examine politicians speech to see if speakers' political inclinations influence the pronunciation they employ.

As Bikelienė (2023) alluded to, the variable pronunciation of Ukraine's capital has not been widely researched. Thus, this current study hopes to contribute to its findings by recording its change in a different sample of speakers. Thus, the following research question and hypothesis were devised:

Research Question 1: When did the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital Change for British politicians?

Hypothesis 1: According to recent research and the media excerpts discussed, British politicians will use the disyllabic 'Russian' pronunciation prior to the invasion. After the invasion, British politicians will use the new monosyllabic pronunciation.

2.3.3 Political identity and the pronunciation of Kyiv

The analysis in section 2.1 has shown that political ideology can predict language variation; however, understanding its role in the variation in a conscious language shift has yet to be researched. Thus, the following research question was devised:

[2] This paper was found in April 2024, after I conducted my own research and analysis into the pronunciation of Kyiv in English-speaking media and by British politicians.

Research question 2: Does a speaker's political identity affect their pronunciation of Ukraine's capital?

In turning to how political identity might affect the pronunciation of Kyiv in English speakers, I refer back to Hall-Lew et al. (2010) study on political identity and the variation in the vowels in “Iraq”. Although it is a different variable to the current study, Hall-Lew et al. (2010) showed that the two variants of pronouncing Iraq had become tied to particular social meanings. One being the correct, native, and empathetic variant, whilst the other was tied to meanings of violence, and anti-Iraqi sentiment (Hall- Lew et al. 2010:93). This has also been observed in the pronunciations of Kyiv, where the monosyllabic variant [kʰiːv] is perceived as the correct, native variant, and its use symbolises solidarity to Ukraine, whilst the disyllabic variant [kʰiˈjɛv] is perceived as supportive of Russia. Hall-Lew et al. (2010: 94) predicted that due to their differing attitudes, democrats (left-wing) would favour the 'correct' and closer to the foreign source variant, whilst Republicans (right-wing) would favour the nativised variant. This pertains to the current investigation since the preceding section showed that speakers thought the monosyllabic variation was similar to the foreign source. Through years of use, the disyllabic variant became nativised for English speakers.

The political research discussed in section 2.1, which addressed the attitudinal and cultural differences between the political left and right, revealed that left-wing individuals show a preference for change and value novelty, whilst right-wing individuals embrace tradition and familiarity (Czarnek et al., 2019; Roets et al. 2011). These political tendencies are found to be transcontinental (Sibley and Duckitt (2008:268). In conclusion, this suggests that left-wing English speakers who are more open to innovation may switch to the monosyllabic pronunciation, which is seen to emulate the sound of Ukrainians. On the other hand, right-wing speakers who value tradition may hang onto the nativised disyllabic pronunciation. The following hypothesis was developed as a result of the parallels drawn between the current analysis and the analysis conducted by Hall-Lew et al. (2010):

Hypothesis 2: In accordance with prior literature discussed, political ideology may affect which pronunciation speakers use. Politically right-oriented speakers may retain the two-syllabic "Russian" pronunciation, whilst politically left-oriented speakers may shift to the new monosyllabic pronunciation.

3. Methodology and Data

In order to operationalise the hypotheses stated in section 3, I conducted a quantitative analysis of the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital city used by British politicians over time. The current study was inspired by Hall-Lew et al. (2010) to determine the significance of political identity as a predictor in the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital. However, due to constraints resulting from the variable's nature and the fact that this study aimed to capture the timescale in which the pronunciation shifted for politicians, Hall-Lew et al. (2010) methodology was not replicated precisely. In this section, I describe the data collection process, the nature of the data, and how the predictors of time and political identity were coded and analysed.

3.1 Data Collection

Inspired by Hall-Lew et al. (2010) who collected data from American speakers in the House of Representatives, I obtained data from the closest British equivalent, speakers in The House of Commons. The House of Commons members debate significant issues of the day and discuss and propose new laws (‘The two-house system’ n.d). Due to the nature of the variable in question, there were periods where the capital was discussed more frequently because of significant events involving Ukraine. However, there were also periods during which it was not discussed because it was not making significant news in politics. Therefore, the search was extended to include speakers from the House of Lords. This increased the overall frequency of tokens. Tokens, therefore, came from the house of Lords chamber, the House of Commons chamber, the Grand Committee and Westminster Hall. The decision to have speakers from both chambers was justified on the grounds that they share similar parliamentary roles and often collaborate (‘The two-house system’ n.d). Furthermore, they both house speakers of both left and right political stance, thus hypothesis 2 could be tested.

All data was gathered using the Parliamentlive.tv website, which houses an inventory of audio-visual recordings of parliamentary debates, in conjunction with the online Hansard database which provided the corresponding transcripts of parliament debates. Tillery and Bailey (2003:352) explain several benefits to using pre-existing evidence in sociolinguistic studies, most significantly being that it saves time and cost, but it also provides unique evidence, that isn’t available through other means of data collection. Data collection involved

searching the term 'Ukraine' in the parliament live.tv website which retrieved audio recordings of parliamentary debates from the House of Commons and the House of Lords in which Ukraine was discussed. To extract tokens, the transcripts of these debates were searched for Kyiv tokens and then compiled into an Excel file. To ensure the search was exhaustive, I used the find function software application in each transcript.

3.1.1 Capturing change

To operationalise research question 1, tokens were collected using a real-time sociolinguistic technique before and after the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24. This allows for comparing data from several periods to monitor and document change. As was previously mentioned, the frequency of the tokens varied according to whether or not the capital of Ukraine was trending in politics. For this reason, I extended the timescale beyond the year 2022 to earlier years to ensure that there was a large enough sample of tokens to accurately reflect the pronunciation British politicians were using prior to the conflict. This meant the first tokens collected were from a parliamentary debate in March 2017. From this date, every instance of a speaker in the House of Commons and Lords saying Kyiv was recorded up until a year after the invasion in March 2023. This timescale and method of recording every instance of Kyiv was rationalised, as in doing so, it increased the token count and thus could capture the language shift. In the next section, the overall frequency and distribution, as well as the inclusion criteria of tokens, is discussed.

3.2 Data structure and coding the variable

3.2.1 The monosyllabic and disyllabic pronunciation

In total, 256 tokens of Kyiv were extracted between 28/02/2017 to 7/3/2023 from a total of 60 separate debates where Ukraine was a topic of discussion. The tokens came from a sample of 101 individual speakers. The current analysis focuses on Kyiv's monosyllabic and disyllabic pronunciations; thus, each token was coded accordingly. To code for these variants, I followed a similar procedure to Bikelienė (2023) who categorised tokens of Kyiv based on auditory analysis. Similarly, to Bikelienė (2023:195), an advanced acoustic examination of the tokens was not carried out. It was justified because the two pronunciation variations are clearly distinguished from one another, based on their distinct syllable structures. Any token which did not resemble either pronunciation was excluded. Based on the analysis conducted in Section 2.3.1.2, it can be inferred that Kiev and Kyiv's spelling conventions are associated with the distinct pronunciations of Ukraine's capital.

Consequently, in the analysis going forward, I will utilise the spelling Kyiv to denote the monosyllabic variant [kʰiːv] and the spelling Kiev to denote the disyllabic variant [kʰiˈjɛv].

3.2.2 Political Identity

In order to test whether political identity affected speakers' pronunciation, I followed Hall-Lew et al. (2010) methodology, and categorised speakers' political stances by the political party they represented. This information was readily available on the Hansard website. To operationalise hypothesis 2, the political party they represented was further sorted into whether they held left-wing or right-wing views. To do this I consulted Data from the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) on British Political parties. The CMP is tool for assigning political parties a score based on how left or right they are positioned. 0 represents the centre, while positive scores indicate more right-wing ideas, and negative scores indicate left-wing ideas. The CMP is a widely utilised resource, and it has been used in hundreds of academic publications (Gemenis 2013:3-4).

In terms of the two major political parties in the UK, according to the CMP statistics in 2019 which is within the timescale of the current analysis, the conservative party scored 6.2, whilst Labour party scored -31.8 (Lehmann et al. 2023). Thus, conservative speakers were accordingly labelled as right-winged, and labour speakers as left-winged. In addition to speakers from these parties, tokens from minority parties were included to increase the total token count. Therefore, using the CMP data, these parties were divided into whether they were left- or right-wing-oriented in their political views. The tokens came from members of the Green Party, the Scottish National Party (SNP) and Liberal Democrats. On the CMP (2019) data, The Green Party scored -20.36, the SNP Party scored -24.46, and the liberal democrats scored -19.56 (Lehmann et al. 2023). Thus, speakers from these parties were labelled as left. Although the UK Independence Party was not included in the CMP's data, a small number of tokens were obtained from speakers of this party, so were added to the right-wing speakers. Tokens from speakers who were not affiliated with a particular party, such as crossbenchers, were excluded from the study.

Unlike Hall-Lew et al (2010), the typical sociolinguistics factors such as sex, or age were not coded for. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, there was no indication in the literature reviewed that these factors would impact pronunciation. Secondly older male MPs are typically found to be the demographic who speak the most in parliament (Uberoi, 2020).

Thus, I expected most tokens to come from this demographic. Therefore, I could not achieve a stratified sample of men and women across age groups.

3.2.3 Time Scale

After coding all tokens and exclusions, 234 tokens remained from 91 separate speakers. 44 of the speakers were classified as right-wing politicians, and the remaining 47 were classified as left-wing politicians; thus, the sample was relatively balanced. Across the whole time span the number of tokens obtained per speaker ranged from 12 to 1; thus, the average number of tokens per speaker was 2.6. Table 1 shows the observed total of tokens across the timeframe in months and by variant. Table 2 shows the calculated distribution of variants across each month and year.

Table 1: the observed total of Kiev/Kyiv tokens from March 2017 to March 2023.

TIME (YEARS/MONTHS)	**KIEV**	**KYIV**	**TOTAL**
2017	8	0	8
2018	4	0	4
2019	0	0	0
2020	1	0	1
2021	4	0	4
2022 JANUARY	27	0	27
1/02/2022-23/02/2022	5	0	5
24/02/2022-28/02/2022	6	7	13
MARCH	14	28	42
APRIL	5	4	9
MAY	4	5	9
JUNE	7	7	14
JULY	-	-	-
AUGUST	-	-	-
SEPTEMBER	4	15	19
OCTOBER	4	15	19
NOVEMBER	2	15	17
DECEMBER	0	7	7
2023 JANUARY	1	2	3
FEBRUARY	2	20	22
MARCH	2	9	11
TOTAL	**100**	**134**	**234**

Table 2: the relative frequency of Kiev/Kyiv tokens from March 2017 to March 2023 as a percentage.

TIME (YEARS/MONTHS)	KIEV	KYIV
2017	100	0
2018	100	0
2019	100	0
2020	100	0
2021	100	0
2022 JANUARY	100	0
1/02/2022-23/02/2022	100	0
24/02/2022-28/02/2022	46.2	53.8
MARCH	33.3	66.7
APRIL	55.6	44.4
MAY	44.4	55.6
JUNE	50	50
JULY	-	-
AUGUST	-	-
SEPTEMBER	21.1	78.9
OCTOBER	21.1	78.9
NOVEMBER	11.8	88.2
DECEMBER	0.0	100.0
2023 JANUARY	33.3	66.7
FEBRUARY	9.1	90.9
MARCH	18.2	81.8

As shown in Table 1, the frequency of tokens varied dramatically across the timescale. Aligning with the approach Bikeliene (2023) used in analysing the pronunciation and spelling of Kyiv across English media, I looked at how the pronunciation within established time periods. This was justified because the variation in pronunciations used by the speakers in the sample followed a similar pattern during certain times. Furthermore, it also allowed the data to be more evenly distributed across the timescale. Additionally, organising the data according to time periods was further justified to enhance the effectiveness of conducting a statistical analysis on the data.

To do this, I consulted the overall frequency of the tokens as well as how they were distributed across the timescale measured (see Tables 1 and 2). Tokens from prior to the invasion were all grouped together because they all followed the same variation pattern. Tokens from immediately after the invasion to the end of March were

grouped together. This was because a small number of tokens (5) were extracted from the 24th of February to the end of February, so they were compiled with the tokens from March, which followed a similar variation pattern. Tokens from April and May were grouped together as they both exhibited a low token frequency count. After this, they were compiled with the tokens from June because they followed the same variation pattern. No data was obtained from July or August likely because the parliament was in summer recession thus no parliamentary debates were taking place. Tokens from September and October were compiled together as they exhibited the same variation pattern. Tokens from November were grouped with December, with a very low token count. Finally, all tokens from 2023 were grouped together. This was because January exhibited a very low token count, so it was compiled together with February. This group then showed a similar distribution of variation to March, so was grouped together. As a result, 6 time periods were established with token counts over 20. See Table 3 for the established time groups and the dates covered.

Table 3: the established time periods, together with the associated dates from which the debates were drawn and the total number of tokens extracted.

Time Period	**Dates Covered**	**Overall token count**
Pre-invasion	28/03/2017 - 23/02/2022	49
Invasion till end of March	24/02/2022 - 31/03/2022	55
Post-invasion	01/04/2022 - 30/06/2022	32
6-8 months after invasion	01/09/2022 - 31/10/2022	38
8-10 months after invasion	01/11/2022 - 31/12/2022	24
10-13 months after invasion	01/01/2023 - 31/03/2023	36

In section 4, the distribution of Kyiv and Kiev tokens are analysed in relation to the time periods established in table 3. Additionally, these time periods are also utilised to analyse the distribution Kyiv and Kiev tokens by speakers political ideology in section 4.2.

3.3. Statistical Testing

After coding and organising the data, quantification methods were applied, and the overall frequency and distribution of tokens were calculated and are presented in section 4. To test hypotheses 1 and 2, a regression analysis was carried out. To do this I utilised the Language Variation Suite website. A regression analysis was carried out to establish whether the timescale and political stance affected the pronunciation used by British politicians . To

account for the variance in how many tokens were produced by each speaker, each token for speaker, and thus used as the random intercept in the regression analysis. The results of the statistical analysis are presented in section 4.3.

4. Results

This section presents the results of the quantitative analysis carried out as described in section 3. To begin, research question 1 is addressed regarding the predictor of time. To do this, the relative frequency of tokens across the time periods established is reviewed. In section 4.2, research question 2 is addressed concerning the predictor of political identity. This section investigates the overall proportional distribution of tokens (Kyiv/Kiev) by political standing (left and right), and the proportional distribution of tokens by political standing over the time periods established. Due to the fluctuation of token count across the time periods, it is vital to look at the relative frequency of tokens, as well as the raw count of tokens. A regression analysis was carried out to test whether the findings revealed in both sections are significant. The results of the statistical analysis is presented in section 4.3.

4.1 The pronunciation of Ukraine's capital in British politicians between 2017-2023

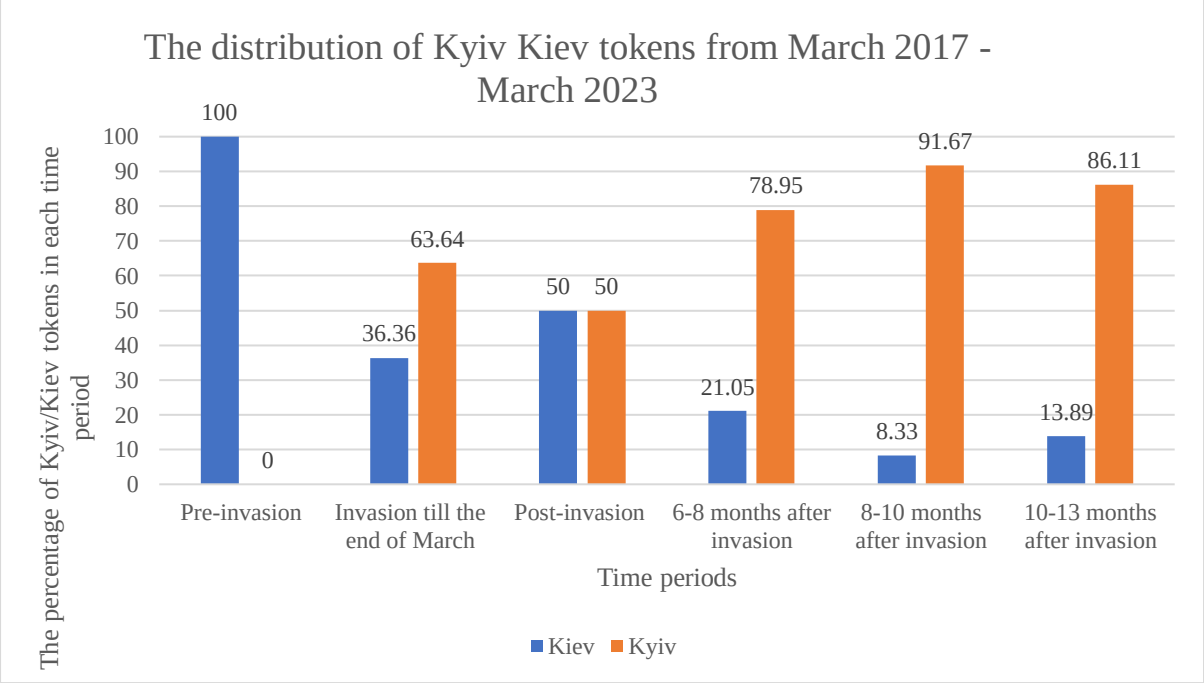

Figure 2: the relative frequency of Kyiv/Kiev tokens as a percentage of the total tokens obtained in each time period.

Figure 2 shows that prior to the invasion of Ukraine, the British politicians in the sample, exclusively used the "Russian" disyllabic variant Kiev. However, from the invasion on the 24th of February to the end of March (Invasion period), the monosyllabic variant is being adopted by speakers. During this time period, figure 2 shows that the monosyllabic variant is used more frequently, accounting for 63.6% of tokens, thus showing a stark increase that suggests a shift. Interestingly, during the post-invasion period, there was a decrease in the monosyllabic variant to 50% of the tokens; thus, during this period, neither variant was favoured by British politicians. However, shown in Figure 2 is that after the post-invasion period, the monosyllabic variant becomes the pronunciation used most by British politicians. The highest proportion of the monosyllabic variant occurs between 8-10 months after the invasion, where it accounts for 91.6% of the tokens. Figure 2 shows that across all the time periods, the disyllabic variant was still being used by British politicians. However, from 6 months to the 1 year after the invasion, its use remained relatively infrequent, remaining below 21.6% of the tokens. In summary, Figure 2 shows a distinct trend suggestive of an effect on time- scale. Whether this effect was significant is tested in section 4.3.

4.2 Political Ideology

Table 4: the overall frequency (N) and relative frequency of Kyiv and Kiev tokens as a percentage of total tokens produced by right-wing and left-wing speakers separately.

Political Stance	Variant	Distribution	N
Right	KIEV	42%	53
	KYIV	58%	73
Total			**126**
Left	KIEV	43%	47
	KYIV	57%	61
Total			**108**

According to Table 4, both the political left and right employed the monosyllabic variety more frequently than the disyllabic variant between March 2017 and March 2023 where it accounts for 58% of the total tokens obtained from right-wing speakers and 57% of the total tokens obtained from left-wing speakers. Interestingly, there is only a 1% difference in the distribution of Kyiv and Kiev tokens between politically left and right oriented speakers. As

previously shown in section 4.1, British politicians seem to be adopting a monosyllabic pronunciation. As a result, the distribution of Kyiv/Kiev tokens according to political ideology within the defined time periods will be investigated, to ascertain if and when speakers on the left and right adopted distinct pronunciations between 2017 and 2023.

Table 5: The overall frequency of Kyiv and Kiev tokens produced by right wing speakers across the time periods established.

Time period	**Kiev**	**Kyiv**	**total**
Pre-invasion	27	0	**27**
Invasion till the end of March	10	21	**31**
Post-invasion	10	13	**23**
6-8 months after invasion	6	11	**17**
8-10 months after invasion	0	10	**10**
10-13 months after invasion	0	18	**18**
total	**53**	**73**	**126**

Table 6: The overall frequency of Kyiv and Kiev tokens produced by left-wing speakers across the time periods established.

Time period	**Kiev**	**Kyiv**	**total**
Pre-invasion	22	0	**22**
Invasion till the end of March	10	14	**24**
Post-invasion	6	3	**9**
6-8 months after invasion	2	19	**21**
8-10 months after invasion	2	12	**14**
10-13 months after invasion	5	13	**18**
total	**47**	**61**	**108**

Table 5 and 6 reveal that for both right- and left-wing speakers, the highest count of tokens were obtained from the Invasion till the end of March. Furthermore, more tokens were obtained from right-wing speakers during the earlier time scales, pre-invasion, invasion till march, post-invasion. Towards the end of the time frame from 6-8 months and 8-10 months more tokens were obtained from left-wing speakers. In the last time period from 10-13 months after the invasion an equal number of tokens were gathered from right-wig speakers and left-wing speakers. To understand the pattern of variation between Kyiv and Kiev tokens

over the time scale, the relative frequency tokens by left-wing and right-wing speakers as a percentage of the total tokens produced by right-wing and left-wing speakers separately in each time period is presented.

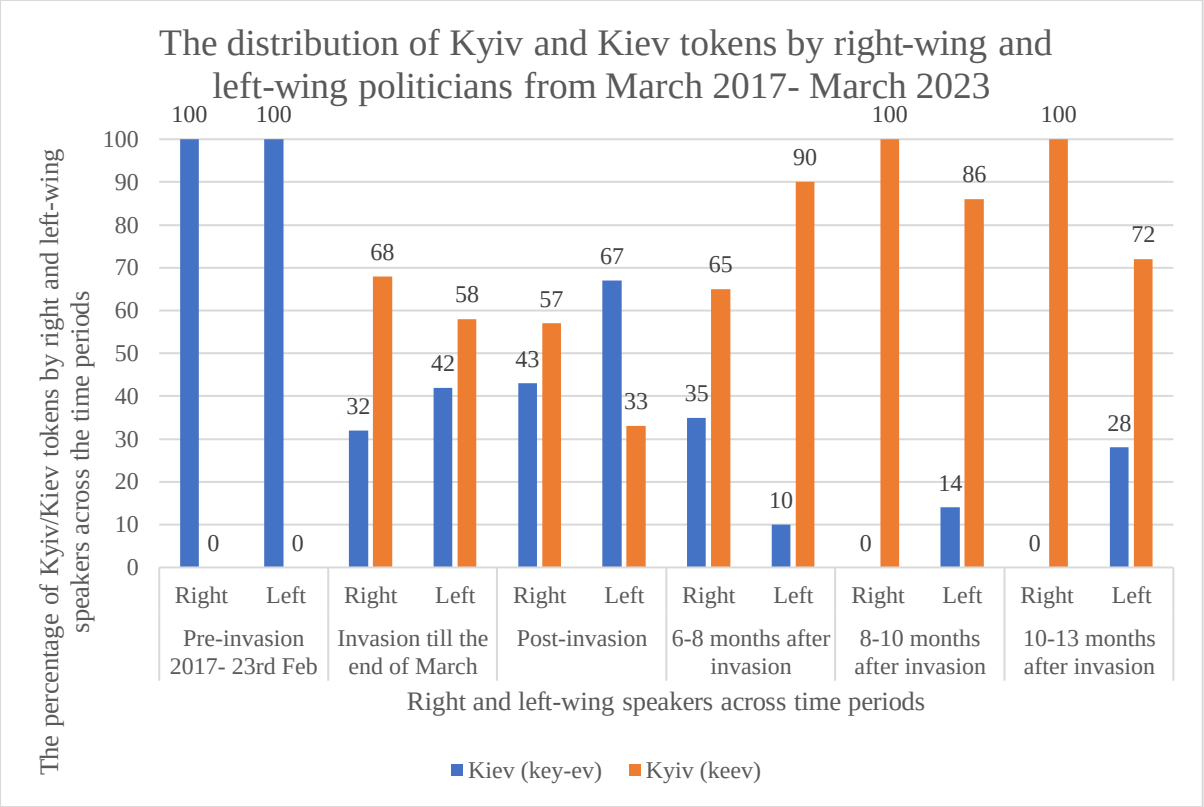

Figure 3: The relative frequency of Kyiv and Kiev tokens by left-wing and right-wing speakers as a percentage of the total tokens produced by right-wing and left-wing speakers separately in each time period.

Figure 3 demonstrates that, contrary to expectations, overall, the right and left are not acting markedly differently from one another in terms of the pronunciation they were using across the established time periods. Reiterated in Figure 3, both right-wing and left-wing speakers exclusively used the disyllabic variant before the invasion. During the invasion period, both left- and right-wing speakers used the monosyllabic variety more frequently, where it accounted for 68% of the total Kyiv/Kiev tokens obtained from right-wing speakers, and 58% of the total tokens obtained from left-wing speakers. Figure 3 shows that right-wing speakers followed a similar trend during the post-invasion time frame, using the monosyllabic variety more frequently (57%) than the disyllabic variety (43%) albeit at a lower frequency. Notably, the opposite is observed for left-wing speakers during this period, where the disyllabic variant accounts for 67% of their tokens. From 6-8 months after the invasion, speakers of both left-

wing and right-wing stances show increased rates of the monosyllabic variant; however, this time, speakers on the left exhibit a higher frequency of monosyllabic variants (90%) compared to right-wing speakers (65%). In the remaining two periods, left-wing speakers favoured the monosyllabic variant but still utilised the disyllabic pronunciation, while right-wing speakers exclusively used the monosyllabic pronunciation. Overall, there appears to be no distinguishable trend based on political ideology, with both right and left-wing speakers favouring the same variants in all periods, bar the post-invasion time period.

4.3 Regression Analysis

Table 7: The results of a mixed-effect regression analysis for Kyiv/Kiev variation in British politicians.

Fixed effects	Estimate	Std. Error	Z value	Pr (<|z|)
(Intercept)	6.716e-01	7.064e-01	0.951	0.3417
Pre-invasion	-3.684e+01	8.786e+06	0.000	1.0000
Post-invasion	-3.031e-01	8.833e-01	-0.343	0.7315
6-8 months after invasion	**1.875e+00**	**9.077e-01**	**2.065**	**0.0389***
8-10 months after invasion	**3.380e+00**	**1.347e+00**	**2.510**	**0.0121***
10-13 months after invasion	**2.143e+00**	**9.453e-01**	**2.267**	**0.0234 ***
Political right	-5.432e-02	8.626e-01	-0.063	0.9498

Table 7 shows the results of a mixed-effect regression analysis for the variation of Kyiv/Kiev tokens in the sample of 91 British politicians between March of 2017 to March 2023. The model used the disyllabic variant 'Kiev' as the reference level and the monosyllabic 'Kyiv' variant as the application value, thus the table shows how likely the monosyllabic variant occurred across the time periods and by political left-wing and right-wing speakers. The model tested the effect of 8 predictor levels: 6 time periods and the 2 political stances. The model used the invasion time period and the left-wing political stance as the base level against which to test.

Table 7 shows that the independent variable of political stance has no significant effect on the variable of Ukraine's capital, as the P value from the regression test is 0.9498, which is above the level of statistical significance (0.05). From the analysis carried out in section 4.2, this result is unsurprising given that both right and left-wing speakers followed a similar pattern

in terms of the pronunciation they favoured overall and across the time periods established. As a result, an interaction test was not conducted since it would have been redundant. Despite the lack of significance, table 7 reveals that overall right-wing speakers tested against left-wing speakers during the invasion period, disfavoured the monosyllabic variant evidenced by the negative estimate value.

In turning to the variable pronunciation over the time periods, table 7 reveals that with Kyiv as the application value ,and left-wing speakers and the invasion period as the testing base line, 3 out of the 6 the time periods significantly favoured the monosyllabic variant. Table 7 reveals that 6-8 months after the invasion, British politicians significantly favoured the monosyllabic variant as the p-value 0.0389 is lower than the level of significance (0.05). Similarly for 8-10 months after the invasion, and 10-13 months after the invasion British politicians significantly favoured the monosyllabic variant with p-levels 0.0121 and 0.0234 respectively. Additionally, table 7 reveals that during the pre-invasion time frame British politicians disfavoured the monosyllabic variant evidenced by the negative estimate figure. The very high p-value is accounted for by the fact that there was no variation in Kyiv/Kiev tokens during this time period. On a similar note, British politicians during the post-invasion time frame, disfavoured the monosyllabic variant as shown by the negative estimate figure. Overall, the table reveals that from 6-months after the invasion, British politicians significantly favoured the monosyllabic variant. The implications of these findings will be discussed in section 5.

5. Discussion

In the following section, I discuss the results of section 4 in relation to the research questions and hypotheses of the current paper. The analysis findings are then reviewed in relation to the evidence and literature cited in section 2. Through this process, I provide possible explanations for the trends observed in section 4 and discuss the current study's limitations. In light of these limitations, recommendations for improvements and future research directions are suggested to further the understanding of what conditions of the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital and its further implication for conscious language shifts.

5.1 Research Question 1: When did the Pronunciation of Ukraine's capital change for British politicians?

The review of discourse surrounding the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital on social media and English popular press, warranted the hypothesis that British politicians, as a reflection of the wider population, would be using a disyllabic pronunciation prior to the invasion, and use a monosyllabic pronunciation after the invasion. This hypothesis has been partially proven from the data obtained. Before the invasion, the disyllabic pronunciation was exclusively used by the British politicians in the sample (see Figure 2), thus supporting the first premise of the hypothesis. During the invasion timeframe, which covered tokens from the 24th of February 2022 (invasion) to the end of March 2022, the monosyllabic variant was adopted by British politicians, supporting the prediction that after the invasion, British politicians would adopt the monosyllabic variant. The regression analysis of the same timeframe revealed that the monosyllabic variant was favoured, however, not significantly. Neither variant was favoured during the post-invasion timeframe, which covered from 1/04/2022-30/06/2022. Thus, data from these two timeframes does not support the hypothesis that after the invasion, British politicians would be using the monosyllabic pronunciation. However, in the remaining time periods spanning from 6-13 months after the invasion, British politicians significantly favoured the monosyllabic variant. Accordingly, this reveals that the monosyllabic variety was adopted from the start of the invasion; nevertheless, British politicians did not start to favour this pronunciation until six months later. In light of this, the hypothesis is only supported partially.

The data obtained in the current study is suggestive that the invasion signified a shift in pronunciation. These findings are similar to the trends seen in Bikelienė (2023) analysis of the spelling and pronunciation of Ukraine's capital, where she suggested the 24th of February accelerated the process of the shift in pronunciation. However, Bikelienė (2023:195) analysis also revealed that the shift in spelling and pronunciation preceded the invasion, which was not evident for the sample of British politicians in the current data. This disparity may lay in the sample of speakers examined. In Bikilienė's (2023) study, she examined both the written and spoken forms of Ukraine's capital within media where speakers may be policed into using specific forms/pronunciations. For example, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has a pronunciation unit which decides and prescribes which pronunciations are used (BBC Information and Archives 2013). This is a demonstration of the media's proclivity

towards prescriptivism. Prescriptivism involves the monitoring of speech and writing patterns to maintain certain values form or variety as an expression of social prestige patterns (Hernández- Campoy and Cutillas-Espinosa 2017:50). These prescriptivist pressures on Bikilienė's (2023) sample of speakers to change their pronunciation may have been greater, thus accounting for their earlier shift in how they pronounced Ukraine's capital. These pressures would not have been as great on the sample of politicians in the current analysis, who potentially changed pronunciation on their own accord. Furthermore, the invasion of Ukraine saw an explosion of interest into the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital and the politics behind it. In receiving much attention during this time, it is likely the speakers in the sample were only made aware of the pronunciations and their meanings at this time, thus accounting for the shift after the invasion.

While the data is suggestive that the invasion signifies a shift in pronunciation, it is difficult to pinpoint in the current study whether this date genuinely prompted the shift. To provide a more comprehensive study of this, either more tokens would need to be obtained from immediately before the 24th and after, or an investigation should be carried out into the pronunciation used by a select sample of politicians from prior the invasion to after the invasion. This would document whether individual speakers changed their pronunciation, and whether the invasion conditioned this change. For the present study on British politicians of the house of Commons and House of Lords, neither option was viable since all possible tokens found were analysed, and due to the requirements of British politicians in parliament, I was unable to rely on the same speakers over an extended period.

5.2 Research Question 2: Does a speakers political identity affect their pronunciation of Ukraine's capital?

From reviewing the growing body of literature on political ideology on language variation and considering the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital pronunciation, I hypothesised that Political ideology would affect how British politicians pronounced Ukraine's capital. I hypothesised that right-wing politicians may retain the disyllabic pronunciation and that left-wing politicians may utilise the monosyllabic pronunciation. This hypothesis was not proven. Both left-wing and right-wing politicians in the sample exhibited very similar rates of the monosyllabic and disyllabic pronunciations (figure 3). The mixed-effects regression analysis revealed that political-identity did not condition the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital for

British politicians. When accounting for how the pronunciation was changing in British politicians, the analysis of right-wing and left-wing speakers' pronunciation over the time periods reveals that in 5 out of the 6 time periods, they favoured the same variant. The only time period where they acted differently was during April 2022 to the end of June 2022 where contrary to expectation, the left-wing speakers showed a preference for the disyllabic variant and the right-wing speakers favoured the monosyllabic variant. However, caution needs to be taken when interpreting these results, as the frequency of tokens obtained for left-wing speakers during this period was very low (9) compared to the tokens obtained from right-wing speakers (23) thus, comparisons are difficult to draw.

It should also be acknowledged that hypothesis 2 was warranted from scholarly literature which looked at different variables, much of which were unconscious language mechanisms. However, as the role of political identity in conscious language shifts is not greatly researched, these studies were used as a benchmark in understanding how political ideology might condition variation in the pronunciation of Ukraine's capital.

In line with Hall-Lew et al (2010) study, I derived the hypothesis that British left-wing speakers would favour the phonological variant associated as 'correct' and 'respectful', while British right-wing speakers would favour the nativised variant, which was associated as the opposite. As section 4.3 revealed, this was not the case. The regression analysis revealed that political stance did not condition the pronunciation used by British politicians. The degree to which the American left- and right-wing parties compare to British ones may explain why the right/left difference is not evident in the current study. Using the same method employed in the current analysis for grouping political parties into the political right and left, the CMP reveals that the democratic party scored -24.66, whilst the right-wing Republicans scored 32.969 in 2020 (Lehmann 2023). In comparison to the scorings of British parties in 2019 (see section 3.2.2), the left democrats scored quite similarly to the left-wing British parties (mean score was -24.03); however, the republican party scored much higher than the right-wing conservative party which scored 6.2 (Lehmann 2023). Therefore, this may explain why the trends observed for American and British right-wing politicians are not replicated in this study. Therefore, future studies should exercise caution when drawing broad conclusions about the political left right divide across other nations.

This issue of generalizability between the American political divide and the British political divide is unlikely to be the significant cause of the lack of trend recorded for political stance and the variation in pronunciation. Across the studies reviewed in section 2.2, the ideological stance and opinion on a subject is considered in conditioning variation. For example, in Hall-Lew et al. 's (2010) study, the right and left divide corresponded with their stance on the resolution under debate. For Hall-Lew et al. (2010:95), this meant nearly all the Republicans were pro-surge meaning they supported the increasing of American combat troops in Iraq, compared to nearly all the democrat speakers being anti-surge. This reveals how the speakers in Hall-Lew et al. (2010) sample were divided not only by whether they were right-winged or left-winged political stance but also by their stance on the surge of Iraq.

On a similar note, the results of Blas-Arroyo's (2020) study revealed that a speaker's identity and ideology effect linguistic variation. This study revealed that it was not whether a speaker was politically right-oriented or left-oriented which predicted their use of Catalan or peninsular Spanish phonological variants, but rather whether they advocated for the independence of Catalan. The study concluded that Nationalist politicians favour phonology associated with Catalan speech communities .In terms of the left and right political divide, the current study's findings align with Blas-Arroyo (2020) in finding that it did not condition variation in the pronunciation of Ukraine. However, a critical distinction between the current study and Luis Blas-Arroyo (2020) is that his sample of speakers, the politicians, were directly involved with the stance under resolution. Thus, their stance towards the resolution was a facet of their identity as a nationalist or not. The British politicians in the present research, however, are not directly involved with the Ukrainian and Russian conflict, so while their pronunciation indicates that they support the situation, it is less likely to be an integral part of their identity. This may explain why the disyllabic variant remained in use throughout the time frame researched, as this pronunciation differentiation does not directly impact the speakers of the sample.

Regarding the present study, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict did not cause division among British politicians in the same way that the Iraq surge caused division among Democrats and Republicans in Hall-Lew et al (2010) study nor and the Catalan Procés caused division among nationalist and anti-nationalist politicians in Blas-Arroyo (2020) study. Furthermore, in this study a speaker's stance on the Russian Ukrainian conflict war was not obtained. Despite this, it is unlikely that the left-wing and right-wing British politicians in the

sample had opposing views on the Ukrainian war. The fact that most politicians, both left- and right-wing, adopted the monosyllabic variety suggests they share the same or similar values with regard to the pronunciation, according to Fairclough's (2003) notion that a change in language can denote a change in values. However, in order to offer a more thorough understanding of this, future study should examine the speaker's unique position and viewpoint towards the conflict between Russia and Ukraine to see whether, as in earlier studies, it is influenced by the ideological and personal attitude of an individual.

In summary, the analysis of political ideology did not yield significant findings, however they still provide valuable insights into political ideology and conscious language shifts. The lack of significance is likely a result of the same position taken on the Russian conflict in Ukraine by both left- and right-wing politicians. Furthermore, future research into the effect of political ideology and conscious language shifts may yield different results by analysing the adoption of specific language forms by speakers who are polarised on a stance. Despite this, it is still important to consider the non-significant findings in the context of conscious language shifts.

5.3 Conscious Language Shifts

In addition to the research questions, a primary goal of the current study was to record an example of the “language behaviours” mentioned by Labov (1994:598) that are amenable to conscious and purposeful choice—a field of linguistics that has received much attention in the field of sociolinguistics. The analysis of discourse surrounding the pronunciation of Ukraine capital city in English popular press and social media, revealed that during the time of the Russian invasion into Ukraine, there was a conscious effort for speakers for change the pronunciation they were using. The data obtained in the current study captured this shift in pronunciation, thus a primary aim of the study was achieved. Furthermore, in trying to understand what conditioned these intentional language shifts, the political identity of speakers was investigated but was revealed to have no effect on the pronunciation. Overall, my findings in isolation are not enough to know what conditions conscious language shifts, however they indicate that for the case of Ukraine's capital, participation with the monosyllabic variant is performative as a marker of solidarity.

6. Conclusion

This research aimed to record and observe a language behaviour that is available for choice, and to investigate whether a speakers' political stance plays a part in this intentional variation. To do this, I carried out an original investigation into how British politicians were pronouncing the capital city of Ukraine from March 2017 till March 2023. In line with previous literature and the media evidence reviewed, two hypotheses were formulated. Firstly, prior to the invasion of Ukraine British politicians would be using the native disyllabic pronunciation resembling [kʰiˈjɛv] which has become associated with a pro-Russian stance. After the invasion British politicians will be using the monosyllabic pronunciation resembling [kʰiːv] which signals solidarity and support for Ukraine. Secondly, politically right-oriented speakers may retain the two-syllabic "Russian" pronunciation, whilst politically left-oriented speakers may shift to the new monosyllabic pronunciation. Through a quantitative analysis, the first hypothesis was partially proven, where it was found that prior to the invasion, British politicians favoured the disyllabic variant, however from the invasion to 6 months after, the monosyllabic form was adopted but remained relatively variable with disyllabic variant. 6 months after the invasion this variability levelled out with British politicians significantly favouring the monosyllabic form. The analysis also revealed that whether a speaker was right-wing or left-wing did not condition which pronunciation they used. These results are potentially explained by the universal condemnation among both left- and right-wing British politicians over the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. My study provides preliminary contribution into the understanding of conscious language changes, and the role of political ideology in these conscious language changes.

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Figures and examples

Figure 1:

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Example 2:

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