Processes of Change

Studies in Late Modern and Present-Day English

Edited by
Sandra Jansen
Lucia Siebers

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Studies in Language Variation

21

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Processes of Change

Studies in Late Modern and Present-Day English

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Acknowledgements

This book celebrates the academic work by Raymond Hickey on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday in June 2019. In Ray's long and productive career he has developed far-reaching research interests as shown in his large number of publications, including twenty-one authored or edited books (as of August 2018) such as the monographs *A Sound Atlas of Irish English* (Mouton de Gruyter 2004), *Dublin English. Evolution and Change* (John Benjamins 2005) and *Irish English. History and Present-Day Forms* (CUP 2007), as well as several edited volumes including the *Handbook of Language Contact* (Blackwell 2010), *Eighteenth-Century English. Ideology and Change* (CUP 2010), *Standards of English* (CUP 2012), *Researching Northern English* (John Benjamins 2015), *Listening to the Past* (CUP 2016) and *Sociolinguistics in Ireland* (Palgrave 2016) and many more articles and book chapters. Almost all of these publications are thematically linked by the overarching topic of language variation leading to language change and in particular language change in English.

The response to the invitation to contribute to this book was overwhelmingly positive by academic companions who had worked with Ray on projects over the course of time. It became clear that this book on processes of language change in English would be best organized into two parts: Part One investigates language change in Late Modern English while Part Two deals with language change in Present-Day English. The project took longer than anticipated but we are thankful for the support of the editors of the series *Studies in Language Variation*, Paul Kerswill, Peter Auer and Frans Hinskens, as well as the patience of the contributors. A word of thanks goes to the reviewers who provided valuable feedback and to Birgit Hickey, who was always approachable and was pulling strings in the background.

Sandra Jansen and Lucia Siebers
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Sandra Jansen

Language changes constantly, which makes change a pervasive fact of language. When we speak, sign and write, we make choices. These choices lead to variation, and variation can lead to change. This is, admittedly, a very simplified representation of the process of language change when in actual fact languages are complex systems, with variation and change occurring in systematic ways or via *ordered heterogeneity* (cf. Weinreich et al. 1968). The endeavour of linguists is to investigate these changes.

While variation is "often viewed as a problem in linguistics" (Walker 2010: 1), investigating language change and – in particular – sound change has a long tradition in Historical Linguistics (e.g. Lass 1997). Up to the middle of the twentieth century, Saussure's (1916/1968: 125) idea of synchrony and diachrony as opposing viewpoints remained unchallenged; hence, it was only possible to investigate changes which were complete and variation as part of the change process was neglected.

This understanding of investigating language change by means of investigating variation was altered dramatically by Labov's seminal work (1966 [2006]) on socially stratified language use. In the almost sixty years since Labov defined a new field of studying language change, research on social aspects of language change has grown significantly, new approaches have been developed, the scope of the field has broadened and new aspects of language change have been analysed. Hickey (2002: 2) emphasises that "the significance of sociolinguistics for the study of language change can hardly be overestimated". Mainly due to the large influence of Labov and his work, many sociolinguistic studies based on Present-Day English varieties lead the way in explaining language change processes (cf. Chambers 1992; Hickey 2005; Cheshire et al. 2011; Labov et al. 2013; Rickford & Price 2013; Buchstaller 2015 to name but a very few).

In the early 1980s, Historical Sociolinguistics was introduced as an additional field (Romaine 1982), which uses sociolinguistic methods to investigate language change processes in the past. Studying "the present and past have become interchangeable sources of data for sociolinguistic research" (Conde-Silvestre & Hernández-Campoy 2014: 2). Nevalainen (2015: 244) states in a similar vein:

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> we basically took an integrationist view of sociolinguistic studies of language, forging a strong link between present-day and historical sociolinguistics in terms of their approaches to language and society.

Hence, the investigation of Present-Day English and other periods in the development of English share many links. So far, volumes on language change have often concentrated on particular periods in the history of English (e.g. Kytö et al. 2006; Mair 2006; Hickey 2010) and even though methodological similarities exist between historical and present-day analyses of language change, there are not many publications that combine the two approaches. The purpose of the present volume is to bring together leading scholars studying language change from different sociolinguistic and related perspectives, with a focus on Late Modern and Present-Day English, complementing and enriching the existing literature on language change by providing readers with a kaleidoscopic perspective of aspects of language change in English from around 1700 until the present day.

Research into changes in the Late Modern English period include chapters by Beal, Burridge, Claridge & Kytö, Dossena, McCafferty & Amador-Moreno, Litty et al. and Siebers. These chapters draw on historical corpora, dictionaries, metalinguistic comments and ego-documents. The chapters concerned with Present-Day English by Lukač & Tieken-Boon van Ostade, Kirk, Jansen, Mesthrie & Wills, and Chambers are based on survey data, corpora and spoken language.

The first part of the volume presents processes of change observed in Late Modern English. Beal shows that third-wave sociolinguistic concepts (see Eckert 2012) such as enregisterment and indexicality based on metalinguistic comments can be adopted into Historical Sociolinguistics to investigate language use and language change. These metalinguistic comments can be prescriptive in nature and Burridge picks up this topic by investigating the prescriptive-descriptive divide on the basis of three Late Modern English dictionaries. Claridge & Kytö investigate the use of the phrase *a x deal of* in Australian English and British English while McCafferty & Amador-Moreno explore the origin of the discourse marker *sure*. Dossena discusses the contribution of Scottish sources to the changes witnessed in English vocabulary throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Litty et al. investigate language change due to language contact situations between German and English in North America during the Late Modern period and Siebers examines African American English in Liberia.

The second part of the volume includes chapters studying language change processes in Present-Day English. Based on questionnaire data, Lukač & Tieken-Boon van Ostade examine the use of flat adverbs and set the results in the context of style guides. Kirk employs the ICE-Ireland corpus to investigate the use and change of

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the auxiliary verb *may* and Chambers revisits the concept of the dialect continuum along the Canadian–US border.

Two chapters concern themselves specifically with spoken language and language change. Jansen investigates how dialect levelling and social changes are intertwined in a geographically and economically peripheral community while Mesthrie & Wills examine the development of the GOOSE vowel in five cities in South Africa, highlighting ethnicity as one factor in the variation.

This volume provides a rich source for studies on language change processes in Late Modern and Present-Day English which have shaped and/or are still shaping the way we speak. One example in this volume of the interconnection of analysis in both periods is the concept of prescriptivism in addition to enregisterment and indexicality discussed by Beal, Burridge, and Lukač & Tieken-Boon van Ostade. Prescriptivism has been found in English since at least the eighteenth century (cf. Hickey 2010: 1) and Beal's and Burridge's chapters deal in part with this concept in Late Modern English while Lukač & Tieken-Boon van Ostade's chapter investigates aspects of prescriptivism and style guide use in Present-Day English. Litty et al. and Jansen use metalinguistic comments and ideologies in their analyses of language change, which are usually linked to the enregisterment of certain linguistic features in a speech community.

English is not a single entity but when investigating processes of change in English, the extraordinary diversity of English due to the colonial expansion of the British Empire (cf. Hickey 2004) needs to be taken into account. A number of chapters focus on English English (Beal, Burridge and Jansen); other studies are concerned with change in Irish English (Kirk), American English (Litty et al.), African American English in Liberia (Siebers) and South African English (Mesthrie & Wills). In some of the chapters, a more comparative view between (national) varieties is taken, i.e. in Claridge & Kytö, who compare the development and use of the phrase *a great deal of* in British and Australian English, McCafferty & Amador-Moreno, who investigate the different functions of the discourse marker *sure* in Irish English and compare them to its use in American English, and Chambers, who compares the use of certain linguistic features along the Canadian–US border. Lukač & Tieken-Boon van Ostade investigate and compare the use of flat adverbs in British and American English.

It is hoped that the present volume will contribute to the vibrant field of research into processes of language change in English and be a useful source for those wishing to inform themselves about topics and insights into the development of English in the past 350 years.

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PART I

Processes of change in Late Modern English

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CHAPTER 2

Enregisterment and historical sociolinguistics

Joan C. Beal

This chapter introduces the concepts of indexicality and enregisterment and examines how they can be applied to the study of historical sociolinguistics, as part of a recent turn towards "third wave" (Eckert 2012) sociolinguistic approaches in this discipline. The chapter explores the potential usefulness of indexicality and enregisterment as tools for historical sociolinguistics, drawing on historical evidence of metalinguistic commentary. It also discusses the role of normative texts, dialect literature and popular culture in establishing what Agha terms "a linguistic repertoire differentiable within a language as a socially recognised register" indexing "speaker status linked to a specific scheme of cultural values" (Agha 2003: 231).

Keywords: indexicality, enregisterment, standardisation, codification, prescriptivism, social networks, communities of practice

1. Introduction

Watts & Trudgill (2002: 2), in the introduction to a collection highlighting alternative approaches to the history of English, bemoan the fact that "many of the lessons that have been learned from sociolinguistics [...] do not seem to have been taken up by writers of orthodox histories of English." The qualifier "orthodox" is important here: Millar (2012: xiii) points out that Leith (1997) and Fennell (2001) both "read the history of the English Language [...] through a sociolinguistic lens", and I have noted elsewhere (Beal 1999: 17) that "we can even see precursors of Labovian terminology" in Wyld's (1927) *Short History of English.* By the time Watts & Trudgill published their *Alternative History of English* in 2002, the discipline known variously as "socio(–)historical linguistics" or "historical sociolinguistics" was already at least 20 years old, if we date its origin according to the publication of Romaine's (1982) groundbreaking work. Historical Sociolinguistics is now the more usual term for what has become an established field, as witnessed by the appearance of works such as Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg (2003), a dedicated

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handbook (Hernández-Campoy et al. eds. 2012), a network of scholars organising conferences, workshops and summer schools (HiSoN www.hison.sbg.ac.at), and its own journal, the *Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics*, launched in 2015.

Romaine (1982) demonstrated how the methodology of variationist (Labovian) sociolinguistics could be applied to historical data, but since then other sociolinguistic models have informed sociohistorical scholarship. These models include social networks (e.g. Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2000; Bergs 2005; Fitzmaurice 2010), and communities of practice (see, for instance the studies in Kopaczyk & Jucker (eds. 2013), and Conde-Silvestre (2016: 46) for examples of the latter). These three models correspond to what Eckert (2012) identifies as three waves of sociolinguistics: the first wave is characterised by studies that discovered correlations between linguistic variables and static social categories such as class, gender, ethnic group, etc.; the second involving a more ethnographic approach and concentrating on local rather than global categories and demonstrating the importance of networks in diffusing or resisting innovation; and the third wave moving on from this to consider the active agency of communities of practice in constructing social meaning via linguistic variation. Eckert describes the third wave as "in its infancy" (2012: 88), and Conde-Silvestre admits that "historically-oriented approaches within the third wave are, at the moment, scarce" but, as Conde-Silvestre's paper and those in Kopaczyk & Jucker's collection demonstrate, historical sociolinguistics is beginning to catch the third wave.

Although the study of communities of practice has been the defining feature of third wave studies, two concepts that are essential to understanding the construction of social meaning from linguistic signs are those of indexicality and enregisterment. These terms have been used by Silverstein (2003) to account for different levels of awareness of the association between linguistic features and social characteristics on the part of speakers and hearers. Agha (2007: 15–16) has developed and applied these concepts to explain "how the use of speech is interpreted in the light of […] value-systems" and "how particular systems of speech valorization come into existence in the first place and, once formed, exist as cultural phenomena over the course of some period for some locatable group of social persons". Johnstone (2016: 632) succinctly expresses the key research question for studies of indexicality and enregisterment: "How do particular words, ways of pronouncing words, grammatical patterns, and patterns of intonation come to point to particular identities and activities?"

I have argued elsewhere (Beal 2009) that applying the concepts of indexicality and enregisterment to the study of linguistic variation and change provides an explanation of the apparent paradox of reports of dialect levelling and overt folk-linguistic awareness of dialectal distinctiveness occurring at the same time. In this chapter, I explore the potential usefulness of indexicality and enregisterment as

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tools for historical sociolinguistics, drawing on historical evidence of metalinguistic and metapragmatic commentary.

In the next section, I introduce the concepts of indexicality and enregisterment as set out by Silverstein (1976, 2003) and Agha (2003, 2007), and discuss the implications of this language-ideological approach for historical research. Section 3 considers how this approach can inform the interpretation of historical discourse about language and what insights can be gained from such interpretations.

2. Indexicality and enregisterment

The concepts of indexicality and enregisterment relate to the ways in which features of language (or, indeed other aspects of social behaviour such as dress) come to be associated with aspects of social identity such as class, gender, region, etc., and how clusters of such features (registers) are used by speakers to perform identity. This represents a move away from the essentialist view that a speaker's accent, dialect or variety is fixed according to that speaker's social and geographical circumstances, instead attributing agency to language users. Agha (2003: 22) calls into question the very notion of accents as fixed entities.

> The folk-term 'accent' does not name a sound pattern alone, but a sound pattern linked to a framework of social identities. The social identity is recognized, indexically, as the identity of the speaker who produces the utterance in the instance, and described, metalinguistically, through the use of identifying labels.

Rather than "accent" or "dialect", Agha (2003: 231) uses the term "register" to refer to any set of linguistic features that has come to be recognised as a "linguistic repertoire" marking "speaker status linked to a specific scheme of cultural values". The case study presented in Agha's (2003) paper is, in fact, sociohistorical: he gives an account of the establishment of RP as a "linguistic repertoire" which becomes "a socially recognized register of forms" in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Agha (2003: 236) points out that the identifying labels associated with RP: RP itself, the Queen's English, Public School English, "are not simply neutral descriptors" but "imbue the phenomena they describe with specific characterological values". He argues that RP did not come about as an accident of social circumstances but involved the active agency of groups of individuals engaged in what he calls metadiscursive practices, whereby an identified set of pronunciations is associated with social personae.

Before anyone can engage in such metadiscursive practices, or what Johnstone et al. (2006: 84) have termed "talk about talk", there must be an association of linguistic features with social characteristics. This association is termed indexicality,

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and, within the model posited by Silverstein (1976), different levels of indexicality evoke such associations to a greater or lesser degree. At the first, or, as Silverstein puts it, the *n*th level, the correlation between a linguistic variant and some social factor may be observable to a perceptive outsider (such as a linguistic researcher), but those who use this variant are unaware of this. At the second or *n + 1* level, speakers come to rationalise and justify the link between the linguistic form and some social category. At this point their use of the feature becomes variable according to self-consciousness, identity, style, etc. At the third or *n + 1 + 1* order of indexicality, forms which have been linked with a certain social category become the subject of overt comment. These three orders correspond to the stages in the life-cycle of a linguistic change posited by Labov (1972: 178–180): indicators, markers and stereotypes. However, although these orders naturally appear to involve progression from one stage to another and thus suggest a historical process, Silverstein states that such progression is not inevitable. Linguistic variation observed by researchers (especially with the help of acoustic analysis) may never become overtly associated with social factors by the speakers concerned, and, as Cooper (2013) has demonstrated, forms can cease to be associated with specific varieties or social characteristics and thus become 'deregistered'. Nevertheless, these stages or orders of indexicality offer a useful way of interpreting historical variation and discourse about variation.

Agha's concept of enregisterment further develops the connection between linguistic signs and social meaning, stressing the active agency of language users in the process. According to Agha (2007: 168)

> a register exists as a bounded object only to a degree set by sociohistorical processes of enregisterment, processes whereby its forms and values become differentiable from the rest of language (i.e., recognizable as distinct, linked to typifiable social personae or practices) for a given population of speakers.

Agha's use of the word sociohistorical is significant here: enregisterment is a process which happens at specific points in history when, for reasons such as migration or a rise to prominence of a particular set of speakers, people come to associate a set of linguistic forms with a set of social features characterised in a persona. The register thus recognised may be a social or regional dialect, or a way of speaking associated with a specific practice. Metalinguistic and metapragmatic[1] discourse pointing to the identification of a register with a specific type of person or practice provides evidence that enregisterment has taken or is taking place, but also contributes to

1. These two terms are sometimes confused in discussions of enregisterment. Metalinguistic comments are comments about language, whereas metapragmatic comments refer to the link between linguistic forms and social context.

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the process of enregisterment. This presents sociohistorical linguists with a dual challenge: we need to find and interpret examples of such discourse, but given that, especially for earlier periods, evidence for enregisterment may not exist, we also need to tread carefully when attributing social meaning to variation that we have noticed with the benefit of oversight and hindsight. To take an extreme stance, for the sake of playing devil's advocate, is it valid to describe the variant forms of early English that have been found in extant manuscripts as 'dialects' of Old English in the absence of any evidence that speakers and writers of English at that time attributed linguistic variants to geographical locations? Is it perhaps the case that successive histories and historians of English have enregistered these dialects in the light of their own (neogrammarian?) linguistic ideology, associating linguistic variants such as *stān* vs. *stōn* with points on a map showing the kingdoms of the heptarchy? Or, as Montgomery (2012: 458) suggests, have historians of English tended to read prescriptivism into the metapragmatic comments of Early Modern writers as a result of "looking at the data through a modern lens"? In the next section, I will discuss ways of meeting these challenges.

3. Historical discourse about language

As indicated above (p. 8), third-wave studies in historical sociolinguistics have begun to appear, but these have tended to concentrate on establishing the common linguistic repertoires of communities of practice rather than the indexicality and enregisterment of these features and repertoires. This is because, difficult as it is to reconstruct historical communities of practice (though the increasing availability of letters and other ego documents certainly helps), reflections and comments on the linguistic practices of these communities are often non-existent. Researchers studying contemporary communities of practice are able to discuss with or record conversations amongst members of these communities and thus obtain first-hand metalinguistic and metapragmatic comments. Such comments confirm the researcher's interpretation and provide evidence for the enregisterment of the repertoires concerned. An example of this can be found in Zhang's (2005) study of variation between communities of practice in Beijing. A feature enregistered as belonging to the linguistic repertoire of a lower-class male persona, the "alley saunterer", is the "interdental realisation of the dental sibilants" (2005: 443). Zhang's analysis demonstrated that the interdental variants were "almost categorically associated with male speakers" (2005: 445–6), but comments made by her participants confirmed that this variant was indexed as typical of the "alley-saunterer" style. One participant referred to such people "wandering around in *hútong* [alleys] if they have nothing else to do", characterised them as "big-tongued […] bite their tongues

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when talking" and produced tokens of speech with and without the interdental pronunciation as typical of how "we" and "they" speak (2005: 443). This constitutes clear evidence for the enregisterment of the "alley-saunterer" style of speech, and the third-level indexicality of the interdental variant, but also strengthens Zhang's argument that the female "yuppies" in her study avoid this pronunciation due to its association with such a stereotypically feckless and unprofessional persona.

The historical sociolinguist cannot access such comments directly. Studies of early communities of practice such as Anglo-Saxon monastic houses (Timofeeva 2013) or early modern printing houses (Rogos 2013; Tyrkkö 2013) can discover common linguistic features used by members of the community. However, just as we have no evidence that West Saxons and Northumbrians were aware that one group said *stān* whilst the other said. *stōn*, let alone attributing such variants to "northernness" or "southernness", so, in the absence of recorded metalinguistic comments, we cannot tell whether members of these communities were conscious of that fact that their linguistic practices differed from those of other groups.

Likewise, when it comes to larger communities such as citizens of a town, city, region or nation, we cannot tell whether the lack of extant metalinguistic/ metapragmatic commentary on the differences between "dialects" of such places reflects a lack of awareness on the part of those concerned, or simply a gap in the written record. On the other hand, studies of enregisterment in more recent times (Beal 2009; Johnstone 2009) have found that the metalinguistic and metapragmatic discourse which signals enregisterment tends to appear at specific points in history, when events such as migration bring users of different registers into contact. In both Pittsburgh (Johnstone 2009) and Sheffield (Beal 2009; Beal 2017), de-industrialisation led to the break-up of long-established communities as workers left to seek work elsewhere, and to dialect contact as incomers arrived to take up posts in education, medicine and government departments in these post-industrial cities. In both cities, this coincided with the appearance of texts such as folk dictionaries (Whomersley 1981; McCool 1982), setting out and thus enregistering the cities' dialects as different from others and as associated with local personae. If there was little disruption to communities at certain points in history, and little communication between speakers from different parts of the country, then there may well have been little or no awareness of linguistic differences. However, we have no contemporary records of metalinguistic or metapragmatic discourse from early contact situations such as the Scandinavian settlements in the Danelaw, which we might expect to have led to awareness of, and comments on, linguistic differences.

When such records do begin to appear, they explicitly refer to contact between speakers of different languages or dialects. Some of the earliest examples of such discourse involve comments about the relative status of French and English in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century England. As I have pointed out elsewhere (Beal

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2017), at a time when no standard variety of English had yet been identified, French and Latin carried out the higher functions of language and all dialects of English were indexed as inferior. Robert of Gloucester, writing in the late thirteenth century, provides a historical explanation for the social indexing of French and English and a metapragmatic statement about the relative status of these two languages and how their speakers are perceived.

> Thus came, lo, England into Normandy's hand: and the Normans then knew how to speak only their own language, and spoke French as they did at home, and also had their children taught (it), so that noblemen of this land, that come of their stock, all keep to the same speech that they received from them; for unless a man knows French, people make little account of him. But low men keep to English, and to their own language still.
> (Modern English translation from Barber et al. 2010: 146)

Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon*, written in the early fourteenth century, likewise provides metapragmatic comments on the status of French, and more explicitly tells us how this language was used for social work:

> [G]entlemen's children are taught to speak French from the time that they are rocked in their cradle and are able to speak and play with a child's trinket; and rustic men want to make themselves like gentlemen, and strive with great industry to speak French, in order to be more highly thought of.
> (Modern English translation from Barber et al. 2010: 152–3)

Higden does refer to differences between northern and southern dialects of English, but simply states that southerners find northern speakers hard to understand. I have suggested elsewhere (Beal 2017: 25) that such a statement could be interpreted as "a 'scientific' observation with first-order indexicality" since Higden has noticed differences but attributes no social meaning to these. However, Trevisa, who translated the *Polychronicon* into English at a later date, augmented Higden's comment on northern dialects with ideologically-loaded descriptors:

> All the language of the Northumbrians, and especially at York, is so sharp, slitting and unshaped, that we Southern men may that language unnethe (='hardly') understand. (Trevisa 1385, trans. Caxton 1480)

Trevisa also adds a rider to Higden's remarks about French, noting that "now, in all the grammar schools of England children are abandoning French, and are construing and learning in English" (Modern English translation from Barber et al. 2010: 153). These two interventions on Trevisa's part are connected: once it is no longer the norm for "gentlemen's children" to learn French, the social indexicality of French and English shifts to varieties of English, with northern varieties, as Wales notes "'constructed' from the medieval period onwards as alien and

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barbaric" (2006: 65). Wales (2006: 62) also points out that the reference to York in Higden's (and Trevisa,'s) statement could be explained by "the cultural memory of the inheritance of a strong Scandinavianised element" in what had been the Viking stronghold of Yorvik. This highly plausible explanation also holds out the tantalising possibility that the *Polychronicon* might provide an echo of the kind of metalinguistic and metapragmatic discourse missing from records of the Danelaw: the language of a Scandinavianised city and region might well have been associated with the Viking persona and perceived as harsh.

These early examples are more metapragmatic than metalinguistic: no specific linguistic features are mentioned, but the comments associate ways of speaking – registers – with characteristic personae. Gentlemen and those aspiring to be gentlemanly speak French, whilst rustics speak English, and northerners sound harsh and incomprehensible. The much-quoted comments of sixteenth-century authors such as Puttenham (1589) likewise refer to registers and the type of people who use these rather than variants indexed as belonging to those registers. It is worth quoting extensively from Puttenham, since his statements about what constituted the best English have been so widely cited in histories of English.

> This part in our maker or Poet must be heedily looked unto, that it be naturall, pure, and the most usuall of all his countrey: and for the same purpose rather that which is spoken in the kings Court, or in the good townes and Cities within the land, then in the marches and frontiers, or in port townes, where straungers haunt for traffike sake, or yet in Universities where Schollers use much peevish affectation of words out of the primative languages, or finally, in any uplandish village or corner of a Realme, where is no resort but of poore rusticall or uncivill people: neither shall he follow the speech of a craftes man or carter, or any other of the inferiour sort, though he be inhabitant or bred in the best towne and Citie in this Realme, for such persons doe abuse good speaches by strange accents or ill shapen soundes, and false ortographie. But he shall follow generally the better brought up sort, such as the Greekes call [*charientes*] men civill and graciously behavoured and bred. Our maker at these dayes shall not follow *Piers plowman* nor *Gower* nor *Lydgate* nor yet *Chaucer*, for their language is now out of use with us: neither shall he take the termes of Northern-men, such as they use in dayly talke, whether they be noble men or gentlemen, or of their best clarkes all is a matter: nor in effect any speech used beyond the river of Trent, though no man can deny but that theirs is the purer English Saxon at this day, yet it is not so Courtly nor so currant as our Southerne English is, no more is the far Western man's speech; **ye shall therefore take the usuall speech of the Court, and that of London and the shires lying about London within lx myles, and not much above** (Puttenham 1589: 120–121, italics in original, my bold).

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Extracts from this passage have often been cited as evidence for a London-based standard in the late sixteenth century. In particular, the last sentence in bold above has been used to argue for a geographical delimitation of that standard. Görlach (1999: 488), for example, notes that "Puttenham's localisation of the best English (found in London and sixty miles around it) is almost identical with the area of present-day Southern English". However, as Montgomery (2012: 462) points out, this tendency to fixate on a geographical "fact" is anachronistic when applied to a sixteenth-century text.

> An EmodE [Early Modern English] speaker presented with a map, and asked to draw lines around a dialect area, would most probably not be able to grasp what was being asked. Our culture's obsession with fixing cultural forms in representations of geographical space is an inheritance from the Enlightenment and is highly ideological.

Moreover, as Montgomery also points out, Puttenham is not discussing regional dialects in this passage, but providing advice about the kind of language that constitutes a poetic register. He advocates the use of language that is "naturall, pure, and the most usuall of all his countrey" because this is comprehensible to all. He advises against over-scholarly language and archaism as well as that of rustics, artisans and those living furthest from the capital. We need to read Puttenham's metalinguistic and metapragmatic comments as they were intended at the time: they are enregistering a poetic register and the poet should use language that is indexed as "civil" in the contemporary sense of "civilised" as defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary*:

> That is in a condition of advanced social development such as is considered typical of an organized community of citizens; characteristic of or characterized by such a state of development; civilized. Now *rare*. Freq. contrasted with *barbarous*, *savage*.
> (*OED* online)

Puttenham (1589: 121) tells his readers that this register can be acquired: "gentlemen and others" in every county "speake but specially write as good Southerne as we of Middlesex and Surrey do" and "herein we are already ruled by th' English Dictionaries and other bookes written by learned men". Although Puttenham warns against the "strange accents or ill shapen soundes" used by the "inferior sort", he has nothing specific to say about pronunciation. Rather than proscribing particular variants, Puttenham provides a list of characterological types who either do or do not use the kind of language suitable for poetry. Table 1 below sets out the nouns and adjectives used by Puttenham to describe the kinds of speaker the poet should or should not emulate.

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Table 1. Puttenham's descriptors

Poetic	Not poetic
courtiers	strangers
better-brought up	scholars
civil	rustic
graciously-behaved and bred	uncivil
Londoners	craftsman
gentlemen	carter
	inferior sort
	Northerners
	far Westerners

I have avoided terms such as good/bad, correct/incorrect here because, as Montgomery (2012: 462) argues, to do so would mean imposing our twenty-first century ideology of standardisation on a text written at a time when there was "no privileged 'correct' position from which to pathologize all others". This is not to suggest that the process of standardisation was not under way by the late sixteenth century. Görlach cites as one of the factors defining the beginning of the Early Modern English period around 1500 "[T]he expansion of a written standard form and its increasing homogeneity" and notes that "after 1450, English texts can no longer be localized" (1991: 10). In terms of Haugen's (1966) account of the processes involved in standardisation, a norm had been selected for printed texts in English and Puttenham's remarks relate to the process of elaboration of function, whereby the standard is adapted to perform a wider variety of functions – in this case, poetry. However, despite Puttenham's reference to "th' English dictionaries", and the appearance in the late sixteenth century of the first grammars of English (Le Prieult 2016), the standard had not yet been codified by 1589. Milroy & Milroy argue that "*prescription* becomes more intense after the language undergoes *codification*" (1999 [1985]: 22, italics in original). To read Puttenham's remarks as evidence of early prescriptivism would thus be anachronistic. Re-evaluating this very familiar text in the light of "third-wave" concepts such as language ideology, indexicality and enregisterment helps us to avoid such anachronistic interpretations.

By the eighteenth century, codification and prescription were well under way, stages in the process of standardisation that Milroy and Milroy state to "have been observed to follow from the ideology of standardisation" (1999 [1985]: 23). As Hickey (2010: 1) notes "[T]he most prevalent standard wisdom about the eighteenth century is that it is the period in which prescriptivism in English established itself". Grammars, dictionaries and guides to pronunciation proliferated, all playing their part in the codification of English but also enregistering particular variants and varieties of English by associating them with a range of social characteristics.

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Agha accounts for the enregisterment of RP in terms of a "speech chain" (2007: 206) transmitting metalinguistic and metapragmatic discourse across genres and time. To illustrate this, he cites extracts from pronouncing dictionaries of the eighteenth century and popular handbooks, literary texts and "penny weeklies" from the nineteenth century, all of which exemplify "a series of characterological constructs linking differences of accent to matters of social identity" (2007: 208). Unlike the comments cited above from Puttenham and earlier authors, the discourse found in these eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts links specific variants as well as named varieties with characteristics and characterological figures. Trapateau (2016), using a digitised text of John Walker's *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* (1791), extracted all the evaluative terms used by the most influential elocutionist of the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, many of which are linked to specific phonetic and phonological variants. Trapateau's search reveals that the most frequent critical terms used by Walker in his dictionary are: *vulgar* (94 occurrences); *corrupt* (90); *correct* (77); *improper* (54); *polite* (43); *learned* (41); *gross* (33); *obsolete* (18); *true* (17) and *affectation* (17). Trapateau (2016, 31) argues that "the most frequent terms conveying sociolinguistic values in Walker's observations are *vulgar* (94), *polite* (43) and *learned* (41)". These refer to "three authorities" between whose usage Walker arbitrates in order to ascertain "good usage": common speakers (the vulgar), the upper classes (the polite) and the learned, "three potential sociolects that need to be singularized in terms of phonological traits" (2016: 31). Although Trapateau does not use the terminology of indexicality and enregisterment, Walker's prolific use of critical terms which evoke on the one hand the ideology of standardisation (e.g. *correct, improper, obsolete, true*) and on the other hand social class (*vulgar, polite, gross, affectation)* enregister these sociolects as linked to characterological personae such as the gentleman (*polite*); the lower-class "Cockney" (*vulgar, gross);* the fop (*affectation*); and the scholar (*learned*). Walker's very detailed descriptions of phonetic and phonological variants associated with these characters and descriptors both reflects the *n* + 1-, or even *n* + 1 + 1- order indexicality of these features and plays a very important part in their enregisterment. Walker's *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* was highly influential long after the author's death. Mugglestone (2003: 35) tells us:

> By the end of the nineteenth century John Walker had […] become a household name so that manuals of etiquette could refer to those obsessed with linguistic propriety as trying to "out-Walker Walker". […] Like Johnson, Walker had in effect become one of the icons of the age, commonly referred to as 'Elocution Walker just as Johnson had come to be labelled 'Dictionary Johnson' in the public mind.

As such, Walker, along with other eighteenth-century authors of pronouncing dictionaries such as Sheridan (1780), was a very important link in the speech chain

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whereby the pronunciations recommended in his dictionary made up the repertoire of what was later to become known as RP, and those branded with negative descriptors became stigmatised. Trapateau (2016: 31) provides an account of some of "the most prominent phonological phenomena that dictated the limit between the margin and the norm", whilst Beal (2004) discusses a range of variants stigmatised by Walker and his contemporaries as having, in Sheridan's words "some degree of disgrace annexed to them" (1761: 29–30). In this earlier paper, written before I had had the chance to read Agha's (2003) paper, my aim had been to demonstrate the value of eighteenth-century pronouncing dictionaries as evidence for stigmatised pronunciations in the eighteenth century. However, when such evidence is considered within the framework of enregisterment, its significance becomes even more apparent.

To take one example, the variant identified by Wells as "the single most powerful pronunciation shibboleth in England" (1982: 254), commonly known as "h-dropping", is evidenced in documents from Middle English onwards, but the first example of metalinguistic/ metapragmatic discourse on the subject comes from Sheridan (1762: 34:

> There is one defect which more generally prevails in the counties than any other, and indeed is gaining ground in the politer part of the world, I mean the omission of the aspirate in many words by some, and in most by others.

Walker more explicitly associates this "defect" with lower-class Londoners, including in a list of "faults of the Cockneys" that of "not sounding *h* where it ought to be sounded, and inversely" (1791: xii-xiii). In the course of the nineteenth century, as Mugglestone (2003) and Agha (2003, 2007) demonstrate, such discourse about "h-dropping" is passed along the speech chain from pronouncing dictionaries to etiquette guides, penny manuals and cartoons, all increasing its stigmatisation until it becomes a stereotype of vulgarity. Mugglestone's account in particular is richly illustrated with cautionary tales of how the misuse of /h/ reveals the vulgar origins of social climbers. One of these is taken from a sixpenny manual entirely devoted to the *Poor Letter H*:

> I have heard a person, who was very well dressed, and looked like a lady, ask a gentleman who was sitting beside her, if he knew whether Lord Murray had left any *H*eir behind him – the gentleman almost blushed, and I thought stopped a little, to see whether the lady meant a *Son* or *Hare.*
>
> (H: 1866: 16–17, cited in Mugglestone 2003: 109)

This tale involves two characterological figures: the gentleman, who knows that certain words of French origin, such as *heir*, are pronounced without initial /h/, and the arriviste, who looks "like a lady", but betrays the fact that she is not by pronouncing

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this word, hypercorrectly, with initial /h/. The same two characterological figures appear in the cartoon on the cover of *Poor Letter H*: an elaborately-dressed woman with her nose in the air is approached by an elderly gentleman lifting his top hat and holding a capital H. The caption reads "Please, Ma'am, you've dropped something". Like the Bateman cartoon discussed by Agha (2007: 197–9) this illustration "depicts the social perils of improper demeanor in many sign modalities (dress, posture, gait, gesture)" and "reflexively formulates *cross-modal icons* or *images* of personhood, a contrastive paradigm of two such figures". Whereas the Bateman cartoon makes no explicit reference to accent, *Poor Letter H* indexes the misuse of initial /h/ as a social faux pas which exposes the arriviste and causes embarrasment to the gentleman. This particular linguistic variant must have been enregistered before the publication of *Poor Letter H*, otherwise the cartoon would not have been understood and the publication of an entire pamphlet dedicated to /h/ would not have been a commercial proposition. This extract and the many others listed by Mugglestone (2003) reflect this enregisterment, but also form part of the speech chain that further transmits the message that misuse of /h/ is a sign of vulgarity. These messages both reflect and bolster the prevailing language ideology.

What, then, does the framework of enregisterment bring to our understanding of the history of initial /h/ in English? Jones (1989) finds evidence for both the dropping and insertion of /h/ in the early thirteenth-century *Laȝamon's Brut,* as well as in the sixteenth-century diary of Henry Machyn. Jones suggests a purely phonological explanation for this, that the dropping or insertion of /h/ is used to attain the ideal syllable shape. This is a plausible explanation and, in the absence of any metalinguistic commentary on this variation, we might infer that, at least up to the sixteenth century, this feature is at the *n*th stage of indexicality. Dobson concludes from his examination of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century orthoepistic evidence that "the dropping of [h] is essentially a mark of vulgar or dialectal speech" (1957: 991). However, his reason for this conclusion is that the evidence appears in works by northern and Welsh writers – again, there is no contemporary commentary on this being a feature associated with vulgar or provincial speech. Dobson, with the benefit of hindsight, is in the position of a linguist who might note the distribution of a variant at the *n*th stage. When Sheridan comments on the "defect" of h-dropping and insertion, he suggests that it is indeed indexed as provincial and that it is spreading to "the politer part of the world", in other words, that it is a sound change in the process of diffusion. Sheridan's is, as I have noted, the earliest such comment, and he gives the impression of having recently noticed this phenomenon and, if we had not had the benefit of the earlier evidence examined by Jones, Dobson and others, we might have been tempted to take Sheridan's comments at face value and see h-dropping and insertion as eighteenth-century innovations. Reading the metalinguistic and metapragmatic comments of Sheridan

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and other eighteenth-century authors within the framework of enregisterment reveals that variation in the distribution of /h/ was not new, but newly enregistered. Sheridan's remarks confirm that it had shifted to the $n + 1$ level of indexicality, whilst the stereotyping we find in the nineteenth-century literature demonstrates that it had by then moved to the $n + 1 + 1$ level.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued for a (re-) examination of historical discourse about variation in English in the light of the "third-wave" sociolinguistic concepts of indexicality and enregisterment. In the course of my own research, I found this model particularly useful in explaining why, from the nineteenth century to the present day, discourse about the imminent death of dialects coincided with a burgeoning awareness of, and pride in, dialectal differences. I was able to see that both discourses, those of levelling and those of distinctiveness, were the result of dialect contact, which in turn arose from large-scale social changes. The concepts of indexicality and enregisterment also enable us to distinguish between different types of evidence. Linguistic evidence *per se*, that which is seen or heard in texts or recordings, tells us that a feature exists and that we, as linguists, can discern it and interpret it. The testimony of linguistic experts, such as the observations of nineteenth-century philologists, when unaccompanied by metalinguistic or metapragmatic discourse, tell us that the features concerned were, at the time, indexed at the n level, but provide no evidence of enregisterment. Metalinguistic and metapragmatic discourse, whether that be recommendations concerning appropriate linguistic choices, the association of specific variants or varieties with characters in literature, or the multimodal discourse of cartoons, provides evidence of $n + 1$ (+ 1) level indexicality and of enregisterment. It is important, however, to interpret such material in the light of the prevailing language ideologies of the relevant period, in order to avoid anachronism.

Of course, as is always the case, as sociohistorical linguists, we are dealing with patchy evidence, and the further back in time we go, the less likely we are to have access to metalinguistic or metapragmatic discourse. In these cases, it is important to acknowledge the fact that we simply do not know the significance of the variation we observe and avoid the temptation to interpret such variation in the light of our own language ideologies.

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CHAPTER 3

The obelisk and the asterisk

Early to Late Modern views on language and change

Kate Burridge

This chapter explores the complexities of the prescriptive-descriptive divide as revealed in three dictionaries from the early to late Modern English period. Lexicographers had not yet arrived at the idea that dictionaries should include all words; hence, those they chose to record in permanent form are telling. Also informative is their application of symbols to certain entries. No doubt this notation was informing readers these words were to be treated differently in some way. Yet, these lexicographers did not seem interested in expunging the entries – and they were certainly not advocating an invariable language. Their aims were more to guide readers in their choice of words and to outline different stylistic choices. Echoing David Crystal (2006a: 106) and linguistic wisdom today, "be linguistically prepared" could well have been their motto.

Keywords: prescriptivism, style, dictionaries, doctrine of correctness, hard words, inkhorn terms, hothourse words, mountweazels

1. Introduction

The period of early to late Modern English is typically depicted as negatively prescriptive – a time when scholars sought to constrain the conduct of individuals by identifying certain elements in the language as *bad*. Crystal (2006a: 105) describes 18th century values this way:

> They assumed that one variety of language – the standard variety, as seen in formal written English – was the only variety worth using, the norm for everyone. They asserted the rules of that variety were the only ones that could be called correct. Everything else was rubbish – informal writing, informal speaking, regional speaking or writing.

In this paper, however, I join the growing queue of linguists (stretching from Pullum in the 1970s to Tieken Boon van Ostade more recently) who want it recognised

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that many scholars from this period were not the embodiment of unadulterated prescription, but had their feet firmly planted in usage – and in many ways stood for the approach to language and language change that linguists today hold dear. The dictionary makers I put the spot light on here are among those who adopted the practice of marking certain words with symbols such as the dagger (or obelisk) (†), the double dagger (‡), the asterisk (*), even the fleur-de-lis (⚜). To illustrate, here are the first four marked entries in Edward Phillips (1658) *The New World of English Words Or, a General Dictionary*:

† Abaction, (Latin) a driving, or forcing away.
† Abannition, (Lat.) a punishment inflicted.
* Abequitation, (Lat.) a riding away.
* To Abgregate, (Lat.) to lead out of the flock.

The custom did not continue beyond these dictionaries; the symbols were replaced by more precise and nuanced usage labels, such as those used soon after by Samuel Johnson (e.g. "low", "(im)proper", "ludicrous", "barbarous", "vulgar", "cant" etc.).

However, these early branding dictionaries are valuable for what they can tell us about a period in the history of English when laws were being set down on "proper" or "correct" usage. Lexicographers had not yet arrived at the idea that dictionaries should include all the words of the language (including common words like *dog* and *horse*). Hence, those they chose to record in permanent form are telling, and especially those they earmarked with symbols. What I present here is not an empirical study of the marked words in these dictionaries, however. They have already been brilliantly surveyed by Osselton (1958) and, as will be apparent in my account here, I draw heavily on his classifications of these words. My efforts here are more in an attempt to understand the complexities of the prescription-description divide – what guided these dictionary makers when they compiled their wordlists, why were certain entries tagged for special attention? In lexicography the line between prescription and description is not easily drawn (Mugglestone 2015), and in all dictionaries there will be some regulation going on. Certainly these symbols were informing readers that the entries were to be treated differently in some way but, as I will be arguing here, the message was not to expunge them. These lexicographers were perceptive about usage levels and sensitive to language change – quoting David Crystal's work once again (2006a: 106), this time on the accepted wisdom of modern linguistics, "be linguistically prepared" could well have been their motto.

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2. A brief introduction to the dictionaries

Popular belief has it that Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) was the first dictionary of English. True, it was a remarkable and substantial work (with more than 40,000 entries buttressed for the most part by citations), but there were many other dictionaries published before it, around 663 in fact. The works were not, however, "very dictionaryish", as Lynch (2006: 36) puts it, at least by today's standards. Many were specialist texts (e.g. foreign language, bilingual word books), and others focused on specific fields (e.g. law, gardening, astronomy, sea faring). Among the earliest of the collections were also compilations of cant, and gradually these canting dictionaries expanded from criminal jargon to include colloquialisms more broadly – a transformation marked by the publication in 1785 of the *Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue,* a work containing around 4,000 expressions compiled by the Falstaffian Francis Grose (see Starnes & Noyes 1991: Appendix 11).

The dictionaries under scrutiny here are the following; they roughly span the hundred years before Johnson's *Dictionary* (so from the mid 17th to the mid 18th century):

1. Edward Phillips (editions 1658, 1662, 1671, 1678, 1696) *The New World of English Words Or, a General Dictionary*
2. Nathan Bailey (edition 1727) *Universal Etymological English Dictionary Vol. II*
3. Benjamin Martin (editions 1749, 1754) *Lingua Britannica Reformata*

These three are among the five "branding dictionaries" examined by Osselton (1958). I have excluded the two volumes by John Kersey for the reason that neither Kersey's revision of Phillips' *New World of English Words*, nor his later *Dictionarium Anglo-Britannicum* (an abridged version of the earlier work) reveal anything of the principles behind his approach and what guided his use of symbols.

2.1 The flourishing of "hard words"

The key to understanding these lexicographers' ambitions lies in what had become a kind of a term-of-art in lexicography at this time, namely, "hard words".[1] The English language during this period was being crammed full of classically-inspired expressions, which the newly emerging and expanding literate groups from the

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1. The expression makes an early appearance in the title of John Baret's (1573) dictionary: *An Alvearie, or triple dictionarie in Englishe, Latin and French: very profitable for all such as be desirous of any of those three languages. Also by the two tables in the ende of this booke, they may contrariwise, finde the most necessary Latin or French wordes, placed after the order of an alphabet, whatsoeuer are to be founde in any other dictionarie: and so to turne them backwardes againe into Englishe when they reade any Latin or French aucthors, & doubt of any* ***harde worde*** *therein* (emphasis new).

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middle classes (generally unschooled in the classics) were eager to become acquainted with – and these lexicographers were niche market providers. Among the first monolingual dictionary in English was Robert Cawdrey's *Table Alphabeticall* (1604), and the title page of his first edition says it all[2]:

> A Table Alphabeticall, conteyning and teaching the true writing, and vnderstanding of hard vsuall English wordes, borrowed from the Hebrew, Greeke, Latine, or French. &c. With the interpretation thereof by *plaine English words, gathered for the benefit & helpe of Ladies, Gentlewomen, or any other vnskilfull persons.* Whereby they may the more easilie and better vnderstand many hard English wordes, which they shall heare or read in Scriptures, Sermons, or elswhere, and also be made able to vse the same aptly themselues. *Legere, et non intelligere, neglegere est.* As good not read, as not to vnderstand.

A number of forces were behind the blossoming of these "hard vsuall English words." As has been well documented, these dictionaries came in on the back of a new scientific method that led to contributions in the form of discoveries and inventions across many different fields. Terms were needed for new plants, elements, stars and objects, for example, and those that were created were overwhelmingly Latin and Greek in their derivation – English was playing second fiddle to the classical languages at the time (made clear by Francis Bacon in a letter to Mr. Tobie Matthew, where he tellingly describes it as being among those modern languages that "would play the bankrupt with books"; 1613 [1857]: 5). Hundreds of specialist terms flooded in, changing the nature of English for all time. Giving objects and concepts a classical name also gave them an exclusivity, and this bred a kind of intellectual snobbery as the next group of words illustrate.

These classical coinages were not confined to technical terms. Large numbers of scholarly words based largely on Latin were also created to replace ordinary native English vocabulary. Words such as *deruncinate* (to prune), *pistate* (to bake), *carbunculate* (to burn), *diffibulate* (to unbutton), *dentiloquist* (one who speaks through his or her teeth), *doctiloquent* (speaking learnedly) were "inkhorn terms", the 16th century label for over-the-top literary coinages (cp. the contemporaneous expression *to smell of the inkhorn* meaning 'to be pedantic').[3] Conservative reactions against the influx of these terms triggered on-going controversy – the traditional camp,

2. While Cawdrey is usually credited with producing the first dictionary-like English dictionary, Read is quick to point out that he plagiarized several people's work, in particular Edmund Coote's *Table* of 1596; it was, however, Cawdrey who "first put such a work between covers of its own, and no doubt brought it into wider use" (Read 2003: 194).

3. The label *inkhorn* originally referred to the horn inkwell of scholars, and the phrase *inkhorn term* is first attested in the 1543 work by religious reformer John Bale ("bilious Bale", as he was nicknamed): "Soche are your Ynkehorne termes" (1543: v; *OED*).

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those who wanted to eradicate the linguistic aliens and preserve the Anglo-Saxon pedigree, were up against those who sought improve the "bankrupt" state of English (bereft of quality) by co-opting words, stems and affixes from the more illustrious classical languages.

Some of these "hard words" were undoubtedly at the same time "hothouse words", a label created by Kennedy (1927) for words coined by early dictionary makers and then planted in their word books. While reading through the entries in Thomas Blount's *Glossographia; or, a dictionary interpreting the hard words of whatsoever language, now used in our refined English tongue* (1656), Kennedy describes how he came to realize that many of these "ponderously erudite" words are only ever attested in Blount's dictionary.[4] In fact, after comparing the entries under the letter *D* in Blount with the entries in dictionaries published subsequently, Kennedy estimates there to be as many as several thousand "hothouse" products that have never been extensively used in speech (p. 423). There is a possibility that some of them are at the same time "mountweazels" – the name created by Alford (2005) for a deliberately false entry in a work of reference; in other words, these lexicographers perhaps planted these words in their works precisely to catch out plagiarists. Even today, mountweazels are occasionally encountered, either as a bit of fun or indeed as a copyright trap.[5] We will never know what inspired this flourishing of early hothouse creations, but it is clear that the authority of a dictionary made the erudite-sounding terms real – and those interested in climbing the social ladder wanted to know about them.

Osselton (1958: 137) describes the dictionary in this period as "in essence a hard-word book", and, from his classification of all the "branded words" in the five dictionaries he examined, it is clear that learned words make up the vast majority of marked words (so terms-of art and inkhorn terms, many of which are also hothouse words). He gives the following percentage figures "of learned words branded" for each work: Phillips (89 percent); both Kersey works (88 percent); Bailey (48 percent); Martin (71 percent). Those that make up the rest of the marked words are, depending on the dictionary, some dialect words and borrowings, archaic and

4. He writes, "they more nearly resemble those exotic or newly hybridized plants of the hothouse which most of us at one time or another have admired, have unwisely attempted to transplant into our outdoor gardens, and have hopefully but unsuccessfully cherished to an untimely but inevitable end" (p. 418).

5. In the world of lexicography, the most recently identified hothouse creation was planted in the second edition of *the New Oxford American Dictionary (NOAD)* – the entry was *esquivalience* – *n.* with the highly appropriate meaning "the willful avoidance of one's official responsibilities" (and etymology possibly late 19th cent.: perhaps from French *esquiver*, "dodge, slink away"). A subsequent appearance of *esquivalience* in *Dictionary.com* prompted *NOAD*'s editor-in-chief Erin McKean to explain: "It's like tagging and releasing giant turtles".

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obsolete expressions, a handful of cant and other colloquialisms, and very occasionally a fashion item from the slang of the day. Of course, these descriptions clearly overlap and we cannot know precisely how these words were judged at the time – was *flimsy* 'limber, slight' earmarked because it was new and fashionable, because it was a word "without etymology" (considered onomatopoeic) or because it was jargon (Johnson suspected "it to have crept into our language from the cant of manufacturers")?

Clearly, this was a time of extraordinary lexical innovation, but one involving a rather different type of word creation than we are used to today. These "hard words" were incomprehensible to those outside scholarly circles, but large numbers of the nouveau riche and linguistically insecure were eager to acquire them. Green put it this way – it was the era of "pragmatic lexicography" (1996: 149), and in a way it matches Bolinger's description of today's language professionals whose activities advertise violations of codes – "a bit after the fashion of a fireman who makes himself necessary by setting a fire" (1980: 7). By placing these words in a dictionary, sometimes even crafting them themselves, and then marking a number for special attention with asterisks and obelisks, these lexicographers were creating a market for themselves – and whatever intentions lay behind these symbols, by the authority of their dictionaries they were fashioning their own rituals of prescription and prohibition (because dictionary users interpret even descriptive usage symbols or labels as normative).

In an article on usage advice in early dictionaries, Osselton makes it clear he believes that the convention of both symbols and labels in these early works "shows that the prescriptive tradition in English dictionaries was well established before Johnson's day" (2006: 99). Curzan also views these works as representing an authoritarian stage in lexicography, a time when compilers were concerned with, not just recording English, but regulating it too, "differentiating legitimate from illegitimate", as she puts it (2014: 101). But were these lexicographers driven by the same dogged notions of legitimacy and purity that we associate with the prescriptive spirit of that time, or was something else going on here?

3. The dictionary makers and their linguistic outlook

The lengthy titles and title pages of the publications provide some clues. While it is true they have nothing of the catchy phrases, the mottos or slogans of today's advertisement copy, these were really the prototypes of modern day advertising blurbs and film trailers (in fact, title pages doubled up as classified ads in newspapers). Framed with the puff of marketing language, many even used a promotional technique these days called *comparison advertising*, claiming superiority of the

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dictionary over rival products by mentioning the competition by name (Bailey, for example, advertises "considerable ADDITIONS and IMPROVEMENTS; containing the Explanation of many thousand Words more than Philips, Kersey, Cole, or any English Dictionary extant").

To illustrate, here is the opening page of the earliest dictionary, Edward Phillips (1658), an extremely popular dictionary, going by the number of subsequent editions, and the work that started the trend of non-verbal usage labels:

> THE NEW WORLD OF ENGLISH WORDS: Or, a General DICTIONARY: Containing the Interpretations of such hard words as are derived from other Languages; […] whether *Hebrew, Arabick, Syriack, Greeke, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, British, Dutch, Saxon,* &c. their Etymologies and perfect Definitions: Together with All those Terms that relate to the Arts and Sciences; whether *Theologie, Philosophy, Logick, Rhetorick, Grammer, Ethicks, Law, Natural History, Magick, Physick, Chirurgery, Anatomy, Chimistry, Botanicks, Mathematicks, Arithmetick, Geometry, Astronomy, Astrology, Chiromancy, Physiognomy, Navigation, Fortification, Dialling, Surveying, Musick, Perspective, Architecture, Heraldry, Curiosities, Mechanicks, Staticks, Merchandize, Jewelling, Painting, Graving, Husbandry, Horsemanship, Hawking, Hunting, Fishing,* &c.
>
> To which are added The significations of Proper Names, Mythology, and Poetical Fictions, Historical Relations, Geographical Descriptions of most Countries and Cities of the World; especially of these three Nations wherein their chiefest Antiquities, Battles, and other most Memorable Passages are mentioned; as also all other Subjects that are useful, and appertain to our English Language.
>
> A Work very necessary for Strangers, as well as our own Countrymen, for all Persons that would rightly understand what they discourse, write, or read.

Clearly this resembles the "hard-word book-cum-encyclopaedia" typical of the time (comprising roughly 11,000 entries), with no everyday expressions, colloquial expressions or "country words" (i.e. no dialect). Here, as in his preface (*By way of Introduction to the Right Knowledge of our Language*), Phillips is at pains to explain (as do the other "hard word" lexicographers) that he wants to make English available to a wider audience, and to explain learned terms to the more or less unlettered readers – those who, as he puts it in the Preface, "if they spy but a hard Word, are as much amazed as if they had met with a Hobgoblin".

Phillips begins his dictionary with a brief account of "the mighty stream of forraigne words" that had long been washing in over the foundation of English. Significantly, he does not question the legitimacy of these incomers, which "instead of detracting ought from our tongue, add copiousnesse and varity to it". However, he does go on to suggest in the preface that the matter is controversial: "Whether this innovation of words deprave, or enrich our English tongue is a consideration that admits of various censures, according to the different fancies of men". Most

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importantly, Phillips does not appear to condemn the words he marks – what he warns against, though, is affectation and obscurity, cautioning authors "to fly all Pedantismes [send all pedantic expressions flying], and not rashly to use all words alike". He writes:

> I do not deny indeed, but that there are many words in this book (though fewer then in other books of this kinde) which I would not recommend to any for the purity, or reputation of them, but this I had not done, but to please all humours, knowing that such kinde of words are written, & that the undistinguishing sort of Readers would take it very ill if they were not explained, but withall I have set my mark upon them, that he that studies a natural and unaffected stile, may take notice of them to beware of them, either in discourse or in writing; and if any of them may have chanc't to have escap't the Obelisck (as such a thing may happen in spight of deligence) there can arise no other inconvenience from it, but an occasion to exercise the choice and judgement of the Reader …"

The wording of the preface suggests he is not recommending these words be discarded, but he is sponsoring a certain style ("natural and unaffected"), and by setting his mark upon these words, we assume he is making the point that they are unstylish and pompous. Clearly, he is not a neutral observer of usage – he does reveal he is no fan of some words, and a little later becomes quite condemning when he advises his readers against linguistic "bitsers" (those with hybrid etymologies): "certain kinde of Mule-words propagated of a Latin Sire, and a Greek Dam, such as *Acrilogie*, *Aurigraphy*, and others *ejusdem farinae*". Here he is fingering certain lexicographers ("I have also met with some forged, as I shrewdly suspect, by such as undertook to explain them; so monstrously barbarous, and insufferable, that they are not worthy to be mentioned […]", and in the *Advertisement to the Reader* that follows the preface, he describes it as "needlesse, then abusive and ridiculous" to provide the names of authors "as single testimonies for the fantasticalnesse of their own words" (clearly alluding here to hothouse creations).[6] The language also becomes extravagantly critical in the 4th edition (1678) of the dictionary, when he introduces his bonus appendix – "a collection of such affected words from the Latin and the Greek as are either to be used warily, and upon occasion only, or totally to be rejected as Barbarous, and illegally compounded or derived; the most notorious of which last are noted with an Obelisk".

It is important to emphasize here that his outpouring against hothouse (or dictionary) words is a very different type of norm-enforcement than is usually associated with traditional prescriptivism. Almost a century later, Johnson also notes

6. And in the 5th edition, the revision of his Preface, he states that "*Blunt* and *Cole* are justly to be condemned, as having crouded the Language with a World of foreign Words, that will not admit of any free Denization".

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in the Preface to his *Dictionary* that many entries are simply labeled with the names of dictionary makers (or simply *Dict*. for *Dictionaries*) because, as he explains, he is "not always certain that they are read in any book but the works of lexicographers". Of course dictionaries these days include learned words that are rarely, if ever, employed in speech, but these dictionary creations have *never* existed in actual usage ("ponderously erudite words to which lexicographers have contrived to give the semblance of life by propping them up in position in the midst of the living"; Kennedy's original description of hothouse specimens; 1927: 418). Phillips' rant against invented words such as *circumbilivagination* 'a going round, or in a circular motion' displays a prescriptive spirit that comes close to the normative activities of many modern-day linguists (those who support Plain English campaigns, work in language planning, involve themselves in language documentation and language revival, advise government agencies to solve language problems, write usage guides, recommend non-discriminatory languages, and so on).

The next two dictionary makers appear even closer in their endeavours to modern linguistic thinking. The most significant is undoubtedly Nathan Bailey, the lexicographer who dominated the field until Johnson. Not only is Bailey's *Universal Etymological English Dictionary* the most comprehensive of the three works (with some 25,000 entries), it is the first work to embrace more everyday words, including obscenities. Bailey, like Phillips, makes it quite clear in his preface that he wants to guide people in their choice of words – "those persons who have not had the good Fortune of a liberal Education". And though he is also concerned primarily with hard words, around 52% of his marked words (going by Osselton's figures) include some dialect expressions (e.g. Scottish *kirk* 'church'), colloquialisms (*dabster* 'an expert person'), vulgarisms (e.g. *crack* 'prostitute') and some items of trendy slang (e.g. *cit* 'citizen'), including cant (e.g. *bamboozle* 'to deceive'). Obviously, the inclusion of "humorous or canting Words" (to quote Bailey) was a selling point. The language of scoundrels had become popular in literature; furthermore there was a practical side, as Elisha Cole's *English Dictionary* (1676) (the first general dictionary to include cant words; Starnes & Noyes 1991: 212–3) explains in the Preface: "Tis no Disparagement to understand the Canting Terms: It may chance to save your Throat from being cut or, (at least) your Pocket from being pick'd". Bailey also includes a couple of popular proverbs (e.g. *birds of a feather flock together*) – as today, popularity can turn even traditional pithy sayings into weedy clichés.[7]

7. In the introduction to his *A Complete Collection of Genteel and Ingenious Conversation*, Jonathan Swift notoriously condemns the use of proverbs, though he justifies the presence of sayings "with a proverbial Air" among his own "smart Turns of Wit and Humour", claiming them to be "not originally Proverbs but the genuine Productions of superior Wits, to embellish and support Conversation" (1738: xii).

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From the account he offers in his preface, it is clear Bailey is concerned with matters of style and with levels of usage. Like Phillips, he is not condemning these words outright, but his is a broader view and a more meticulous labelling than we find in Phillips.

> I have distinguish'd those common Words and of approv'd authority, imitable by the Illiterate, from those more proper to be used by the more learned Pens, and on jocular Occasions, in Burlesque, Comedy, or free Conversation. […] To those words of approv'd authority and imitable by the Illiterate, I have prefix'd an Asterism (*), and to the other an Obelisk (†), and some which I would not determine for or against, I have omitted to prefix any Mark at all, leaving them to be used or not, according to the Judgment of the User. […]
>
> I would not be understood to mean, that those Words to which I have prefix'd an *Obelisk,* are Words not fit to be used at all in writing about common Concerns, for many of them may be most proper, drawn by the Pen of an accomplish'd Writer, intermix'd with an agreeable Stile; but that Persons of a slender acquaintance with Literature should rather content themselves with the use of such Words, the force and significancy of which they know proper and apt to convey their Mind, than to intersperse here and there Words above the reach of their Knowledge, either improperly, or in a Stile which in the whole is low and groveling"

Bailey is clearly interested in appropriate language – this is no absolute ban on words. Colloquialisms are fine for conversation, comedy, jocular occasions; technical terms for the "more learned Pens" – but neither colloquial nor technical expressions are suited for a serious style. It is also apparent from his preface that he is no advocate of an invariable language; the Introduction to his previous dictionary (*An Universal Etymological English Dictionary*) even includes a description of various reasons why languages like English will change over time.

Benjamin Martin's *Lingua Britannica Reformata* is another substantial work (around 24,500 words), "a dictionary with a plan", as Starnes & Noyes (1991: 146 describe it. Being overshadowed by Bailey's and later Johnson's dictionary, however, it never received the recognition it deserved. His title page is the outline of his plan in remarkable detail (under eight headings: UNIVERSAL, ETYMOLOGICAL, ORTHOGRAPHICAL, ORTHOEPICAL, DIACRITICAL, PHILOLOGICAL, MATHMATICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL). Martin proclaims his intention to include "all of the Words now used" (and for "useless and obsolete Words" refers people instead to glossaries). Of course he never attains this goal, but he does continue the trend of paying attention to real (everyday) words (and his entries reveal the difficulty of defining these words; e.g. *Cat* 'a well known animal'; *Cow* 'a well known beast'). In the main, though his definitions are methodological, and his separation and numbering of different senses (e.g. literal vs figurative) for each expression is an achievement.

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The vast majority of his marked words are learned (terms-of-art, inkhorn, hothouse), but he also includes some dialect words (e.g. *crowling* 'the fretting and rumbling of the guts, in cattle') and a handful of colloquialisms (e.g. *thumping* 'adj. great, big, large'; *skit* 'skittish'; *clumps* 'a numskull'), including the occasional cussword (*woundy* 'extreme, great, exhorbitant' < the expletive *(Christ's) wounds*). Of his use of the dagger he writes:

> I have, moreover, prefix'd the Mark (†) to many Words which are not to be used in common Discourse, or the genteel Diction; but on particular occasions only; as *to decapitate, to decease*, &c. all these, I say, for distinction Sake, I have put into *Italic* Characters

His contribution to the set of symbols is the addition of a fleur-de-lys to mark poetic words, presumably too lyrical to be appropriate for "common Discourse". Once again we find no evidence of strongly prescriptive pronouncements here – no discourse of legitimacy and purity. Supporting this is Martin's remarkably modern sounding views on language evolution and the futility of trying to control and restrain diversity and change. The preface to his dictionary contains an essay *Physico-Grammatical Essay* (on the nature of language), where he outlines a dynamic view that could easily frame the discussion of any introductory textbook on historical linguistics.

> The pretence of fixing a standard to the purity and perfection of any language is utterly vain and impertinent, because no language as depending on arbitrary use and custom, can ever be permanently the same, but will always be in a mutable and fluctuating state; and what is deem'd polite and elegant in one age, may be counted uncouth and barbarous in another.

3.1 Notations of correctness or something else

Johnson of course comes to the same conclusion as Martin; nine years of working on his own dictionary underscored for him the conceit and the senselessness of his original design to fix the language (as outlined in his Plan; 1747). As he famously writes in his Preface, "sounds are too volatile and subtle for legal restraints; to enchain syllables, and to lash the wind, are equally the undertakings of pride". In fact, it is very likely the case that Johnson's views on language change were ever thus; certainly there are strong hints of this in the Plan when he also writes of the volatility of words ("their changes will be almost always informing us, that language is the work of man, of a being from whom permanence and stability cannot be derived"). Indeed, there is good reason to think the Plan is not so much a statement of his beliefs but something of a sop to his patron Lord Chesterfield (directly addressed

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in the Plan) whose prescriptive views on language were well-known (see Hedrick 1988). In his now famous essay in *The World*, Chesterfield presented Johnson's Dictionary to the public as a work that would establish a "lawful standard for our language".

> It must be owned, that our language is, at present, in a state of anarchy […] The time for discrimination seems to be now come. Toleration, adoption, and naturalization have run their lengths. Good order and authority are now necessary. […] We must have recourse to the old Roman expedient in times of confusion, and chuse a dictator. Upon this principle I give my vote for Mr. Johnson to fill that great and arduous post. And I hereby declare that I make a total surrender of all my rights and privileges in the English language, as a free-born British subject, to the said Mr. Johnson, during the term of his dictatorship […]
>
> (Chesterfield 1754: 601–602)

Chesterfield was one of many calling out for some kind of regulating body to determine correct usage and settle the language for good (and one of the greatest pieces of complaint literature of all times remains Jonathan Swift's 1712 *A Proposal for Correcting, Improving, and Ascertaining the English Tongue*). Such publicly expounded urges to clean up the language go back at least as early as the 1500s, when William Bullokar's (1586) *Bref Grammar for English* stated: "A dictionary and a grammar may stay our speech in a perfect use for euer" (cited by Read (2003) as "a landmark statement, as it so boldly proclaims (in 1586, mind you) the dictionary as law-giver" (2003: 191).

Numerous schemes and proposals appeared with the view to restraining diversity and retarding change – as early as 1648, Dr George Snell (1649: 35–37) outlined in detail his "possibilities" to make "the English tongue a settled, certain, and correct language", a "wel-tuned and smooth running language", and "as pure, proper, and eloquent language as was that of the Greeks or Romanes". However, and probably not surprisingly, those who actually occupied themselves with the business of writing dictionaries and grammars were usually very aware of the vanity (in both senses of futility and self-conceit) of such an enterprise. And modern linguistics, in failing to acknowledge this, has tended to misjudge the work of this time. Writing on the misconceptions surrounding Robert Lowth's grammar, Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2011: 3) describes how

> [c]lose analysis of Lowth's strictures shows that they were often not formulated prescriptively but that they represent a descriptive approach to language, in the process of which he would carefully distinguish between different levels of usage, such as 'common conversation' and 'the familiar style in writing' as against 'the solemn and elevated Style' (1762: 127–8). Thus, while normative grammarians such as Lowth are usually blamed for taking a prescriptive rather than a descriptive outlook on language, in reality the situation is much more complicated.

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What Tieken-Boon van Ostade says of Lowth's strictures could equally apply to the obelisks and asterisks – symbols too often misinterpreted as a notation of correctness. As their prefaces suggest, these dictionaries were also more guides to the social meaning of words, in particular red alerts to readers about the dangers of inappropriate choices. Like today's personal-development "self-help" style books, they both fulfilled and instilled aspirations. As Hickey (2010: 9) describes, the growing middle class "was striving upwards. In this search for social acceptance, the right pronunciation and grammar of English was essential" – and the right use of these learned words was essential too.

Misusing them, overusing them, or even using them at all, could land people in trouble, at the very least make them the butt of someone's humour. Obscure Latinate words such as *galericulate* 'covered as with a hat' or *decacuminated* 'having the top cut off' bring to mind the character of Sheridan's Mrs Malaprop, whose fondness for high-falutin' sounding words led her to comic blunders like the now famous "he can tell you the perpendiculars [= particulars]". Writers of the time placed erudite-sounding words in the mouths of their characters to make them appear pretentious, fake, uneducated, rustic, comical and so on. And there were spectacular examples of satire that tilted at the fustian and bombast of doctors and lawyers. As early as 1617, we find Thomas Middleton lampooning the language of pompous, prating, incomprehensible physicians. In the following brief extract, the sister of a Colonel wounded in a duel asks a surgeon about her brother's condition, and he replies:[8]

Surgeon: *Cava Vena*: I care but little for his wound i' th *orsophag*, not thus much trust mee, but when they come to *diaphragma* once, the small *intestines*, or the *Spynall medull*, or th rootes of the *emunctories* of the noble parts, then straight I feare a *syncope*; the flankes retyring towards the backe, the urine bloody, the excrements *purulent*, and the colour pricking or pungent.

Sister: Alasse, I'me neer the better for this answer.

Surgeon: Now I must tell you his principal *Dolour* lies i' th region of the liver, and theres both inflammation and *turmefaction* fear'd marry, I made him a *quadrangular plumation*, where I used *sanguis draconis*, by my faith, with powders *incarnative*, which I temperd with oyle of *Hypericon*, and other liquors mundificative.

Sister: Pox a your mundies figatives, I would they were all fired.

8. One can see how the word *jargon* with the meaning 'inarticulate chattering of birds' / 'unintelligible nonsense, gibberish' (14th century) came to refer to 'language abounding in unfamiliar terms, as the terminology of a science, art, trade or profession' (17th century) – the word is rarely used with the neutral sense (and insider perspective) of simply 'technical specialist language'.

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Surgeon: But I propose lady to make an other experiment at next dressing with a *sarcotrike*, *medicament*, made of *Iris* of Florence. Thus, (*masticke*,) *calaphena*, *apoponax*, *sacrocalla*.
Sister: Sacro-halter, what comfort is i' this to a poore gentlewoman: pray tell me in plaine tearmes what you think of him.

[Thomas Middleton (1617) *A Faire Quarrell* IV. Quoted in Porter 1995: 43]

The advice George Campbell offers in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric* sheds additional light onto the social life of words at this time, and what might be deemed (in) appropriate usage.[9] First, it is clear from what he writes, that provincialisms were lampooning fodder for commentators at this time ("provincial idioms" beyond "the province, country, or district, which gives name to the dialect" are "sometimes unintelligible and always ridiculous"; pp. 353–4). He also warns (p. 399) against obsolete words, not only because they can be obscure, but they can sometimes give "style an air of vulgarity and cant" (*cant* here being professional slang); however, he also points out that "[i]n certain kinds of style, when used sparingly and with judgment, they serve to add the venerable air of antiquity to the narrative. In burlesque also, they often produce a good effect" (p. 411). On borrowings, he makes the point that English cannot do without them, but when writing of "words and phrases which have, in this century, been imported from France", he does warn against "the affectation of novelty"; for example, using *volupty* for *pleasure*, *denier resort* for *last resort*, *beaux arts* for *liberal arts* (p. 412–13).

This is not the place to go into Campbell's perceptive account, except to emphasize his advice – words (be they learned, specialist, foreign, even new-fangled) should be judged not on their own, but evaluated on their quality of being suitable, or proper, in context of use. As just described, writers poked fun at people who used learned words in an inappropriate style of writing or speech. As Jonathan Swift (1720) put it in his *Letter to a Young Clergyman,* "proper words in proper places, make the true definition of a style" – a quotation that continues to frame many a chapter on style and effective communication today.[10]

9. Though published in 1776, Campbell began writing this towards the end of the era of asterisks and obelisks and, as Osselton (1958: 155) observes, it offers an astute and remarkably modern account of language (e.g. when Campbell pillories Swift's famous pronouncement: "our language, in many instances, offends against every part of grammar", and asks "[w]hat could the Doctor's notion of grammar be, when he expressed himself in this manner?"; p. 342).

10. In the same letter, Swift condemns the "affection of the Pulpit", and in the spirit of the Plain English Movement today, he writes of "hard words" and "obscure terms": "I defy the greatest divine to produce any law either of God or man, which obliges me to comprehend the meaning of omniscience, omnipresence, ubiquity, attribute, beatific vision, with a thousand others so frequent in pulpits".

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3.2 The real linguistic bêtes noires of these dictionary makers

I have always maintained that people's concerns for the well-being of their language and the activities accompanying these concerns are part of our tabooing behaviour generally (Burridge 2010). As Douglas' (1966) anthropological classic on taboos ("matter out of place") makes clear, people structure experience by drawing a distinction between cleanliness and filth. These feelings are universal, and urges to cleanse and control remain constant. But the definition of *dirt* will change with time – and as the social life of language changes, so too will the notion of what is desirable and undesirable (cf. Beal this volume).

To illustrate, consider the issue of punctuation. During the early to late Modern period, such matters largely fell underneath the purist radar; certainly no one railed against a misplaced hyphen, a missing apostrophe or even an aberrant apostrophe. These days, however, all around the English-speaking world, punctuation has become one of the hottest topics of linguistic debate (the 2003 'Runaway No. 1 British Bestseller', *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: the Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, is evidence of this – a book on apostrophes, commas, colons and exclamation marks that sold over three million hardcopies even before its debut in paperback). Beal (2010) tries to explain the public interest in punctuation, especially what has been dubbed the *greengrocer's apostrophe*. As she notes, apostrophlation (the overuse of apostrophes) is a matter of proof-reading and not a matter of life and death, and yet "it is clear that many intelligent people do see the 'greengrocer's apostrophe' as just that". She concludes: "Perhaps the apostrophe and its alleged misuse have come to stand for a whole set of values which the 'grumpy' generation fear losing" (Beal 2010: 63).[11]

So what were the objects of prescriptive comment at the time of these dictionaries – what did people complain about in the equivalent of today's letters to the editors or complaints on talkback radio ("Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells", or from my experience, "Frank of Floreat Park"). It was not the learned Latinate words that got under people's skin, but slanguage – new, flashy, fashionable and often shortened expressions. Swift's writing contains many linguistic health warnings about the adoption of such fashionable colloquialisms. In a letter (No. 230) to *The Tatler*

11. Let me offer a personal example here to illustrate the strong feelings people attach to punctuation. In response to my suggestion that we revise the rules around hyphens and apostrophes, a piece called "Potatoes and Apostrophes" (*The Friday Thing*) responded: "Burridge is so desperate to duplicate the success of Lynne Truss that she would claim that the letter Q should be replaced with a swastika if she thought it'd pull in a few more readers", the writer further suggesting a new verb *to burridge* be added to the *OED* meaning "to disseminate potentially provocative but wholly insincere opinions throughout the media in an effort to attract attention and, ideally, personal wealth".

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(Sept. 28, 1710), he openly condemns slang, especially shortened forms (such as *phizz, mobb, pozz, rep*):

> … we are already over-loaded with Monosyllables, which are the Disgrace of our Language. Thus we cram one Syllable, and cut off the rest; as the Owl fattened her Mice after she had bit off their Legs, to prevent them from running away; and if ours be the same Reason for maiming of Words, it will certainly answer the End, for I am sure no other Nation will desire to borrow them.

A little later in the same letter, he gives the example of sermons filled with "modern terms of art" (such as *sham, banter, bully, bubble, shuffling*), the young men seeking "to show us, that they *know the Town, understand Men and Manners*, and have not been poring upon old unfashionable Books in the University" (italics original). A little later he describes "Men of the Court […] affecting the Phrases then in Fashion; they are often either not to be understood, or appear perfectly ridiculous".

These dictionary makers were not targeting what people were really fussing about at this time. Those who fretted about the state of English did not worry about big difficult terms corrupting the language but ephemeral vulgarisms and vogue words – "the Phrases then in Fashion". And those charged with the responsibility for the real deterioration of the language were the "illiterate Court Fops, half-witted Poets, and University Boys", as Swift pronounces them in his Proposal.

4. The murky ground between prescription and description

> [D]ictionaries do not emerge from some lexicographical Sinai; they are the products of human beings. And human beings, try as they may, bring their prejudices and biases into the dictionaries they make. (Green 1996: 11)

Histories of lexicography like Green (1996) point out that early dictionaries of English come close to being "one-man bands". There were no editorial teams, and it was the lexicographer himself who hitched his name to the product, not the publisher as with modern dictionaries. They were the brand – and into their work inevitably sneaked something of their personalities, and their partialities.[12] Phillips of course springs first and foremost to mind here (the irony being that Phillips claims to have compiled *The New World of English Words* with the assistance of a team of some 34 named consultants, whom he describes as "learned gentlemen

12. Advertising at this time was not oriented towards the dissemination of brand names as today, but there were plenty of signs it had started, with astute commercial promoters such as George Packwood "The Razor Strop King" and Josiah Wedgewood "Vase Maker General to the Universe" having great success in turning themselves into household names; see Burridge (2017).

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and artists that have been assistant in the most practical sciences"). However as earlier explained, much of Phillip's bluster is directed against "the fantasticalnesse" of hothouse words such as *nugipolyloquous* 'speaking much about trifles', *flexiloquent* 'speaking doubtfully' and *mendaciloquent* 'untruthful in speech', dictionary creations that never existed in actual use – "affected or Babarous words", which on the title page of his 4th edition, he advises are "to be cautiously or not at all us'd". Phillip's aim here is surely to educate his readers.

Clearly, these early dictionaries are not purely descriptive in approach, but it is doubtful any dictionary could be described this way – there is always some form of linguistic censorship present. Zgusta (1971: 211) claims what he labels "standard descriptive dictionaries" and "regular prescriptive dictionaries" are logically connected; after all the former will always be describing "what is generally regular, normal, what is the norm". And even if the approach is descriptive, users typically interpret descriptive usage symbols or labels as normative; as Cameron (1994: 22) writes, "most people regard modern dictionaries, which present themselves as works of descriptive lexicography, as the absolute authority on the provenance and meaning of words" (see also Cameron 2012: Chapter 1). Furthermore, as McArthur (1995: 82) describes, "[a]lthough, in recent years at least, dictionary compilers have tried to be neutral and objective when preparing entries, their publishers often exploit social insecurity to promote sales, using subtexts like 'Cultured people own dictionaries – the rest don't'". Dictionaries, no matter how descriptive, objective and scientific the primary aims might be, inevitably reflect some form of prejudice in the items that are included or excluded, and in the definitions and usage labels that are provided. Even those based on corpora cannot escape the cultural values of the society that lurk in the background (see Kaye's 1989 account of the *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary*; Green 1996 on the history of dictionary making; Mugglestone 2015 on the complexities of the prescription-description binary).

Dictionaries aside, can there ever be language descriptions that are totally objective and value-neutral? By their nature they are normative, as Milroy (1992) points out, because they must match the consensus norms of contemporary speakers. Joseph (2017), examining prescriptivism through the lens of the "is-ought distinction" of Scottish philosopher David Hume, illustrates how "is" statements about language (i.e. "what is" – the observation of norms carried out by linguists) always shade into "ought" statements (i.e. "what ought to be" – the enforcement of norms carried out by prescriptivists). As Joseph points out here, "the prescription-description dichotomy is patently blurred". Cameron (2012) goes one step further when she argues that both prescriptive and descriptive behaviour are two sides of the same normative coin ("*both* prescriptivism *and* anti-prescriptivism invoke certain norms and circulate particular notions about how language ought to

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work" (p. 8; emphasis original). This is nicely born out by Severin's (2017) study of normative language debates on the discussion forum website Reddit (specifically the subreddit r/badlinguistics); she shows how descriptivists exhibit many of the same behaviours prescriptivists are chastised for (e.g. reliance on aesthetics, value judgements, faith in authorities and so on).

Descriptivism has of course been a cornerstone of modern linguistics since the 19th century; in an effort to embrace the scientific approach and to eschew anything that smacks of prescriptivism, linguists have overlooked the fact that many of their activities do indeed have a normative purpose (and not simply those involving the usual suspects like language policy and language planning). The fall-out of this polarized descriptive-prescriptive dyad has been that they have also overlooked the common ground between their own work and that of traditional grammarians and lexicographers.

As earlier described, even after an extensive study of these dictionaries, Osselton (1958: 150) does not shift from his view of Phillips, Bailey and Martin as "proscriptive dictionaries", and very much products of their time. He writes that it is

> broadly true to say that the use of the marks of stigma between 1658 and 1754 represents a unique authoritarian stage in the development of the dictionary, a time when the dictionary was concerned with correcting the language as well as recording it. […] There is in principle an obvious connection between the doctrine of correctness in style and language and the attempts to purge the vocabulary by means of daggers in dictionaries. (Osselton 1958: 121)

Curzan (2014: 101) also unequivocally characterizes this early period in lexicography as authoritarian, "concerned with establishing the boundaries of 'legitimate' usage".

Even in Phillips' dictionary, however, it is hard to see any uncompromising "doctrine of correctness" at work – a normative approach, yes, but something more in line with the modern linguistic idea of "appropriateness in language", where norms adapt to context of use rather than fix to some ideal of "correctness". As suggested earlier, this is precisely the sort of endeavour linguists are comfortable with (though they might be reluctant to acknowledge it is normative; see discussion Cameron 2012: chapter 6). It is hard to imagine where a word such as *gymnologize* 'to dispute naked, like an Indian philosopher' (only ever attested in Blount's *Glossographia*) fits into the descriptive idea of usage – here the obelisk does not seem too far away from the asterisk modern linguists use to mark certain constructions "unacceptable" (i.e. not part of the language because they are not "normal").

As Hickey (2010: 3) describes, the eighteenth century was the period "in which speakers of English looked to see what variants among items of change in process

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were preferred by their social superiors", and no doubt these early dictionaries heralded this growing self-consciousness about language. However, these lexicographers were no King Canutes of language change. They had opinions about the stylistic nature of certain entries (poetic, natural, affected, hard, fustian, jocular, burlesque, cant and so on), and they marked these for special attention, but they were not advocating their expulsion, and they were not championing an invariable language. To quote Martin's preface once more, language "will always be in a mutable and fluctuating state". Their intent was to educate their readers by outlining different stylistic layers ("not rashly to use all words alike", as Phillips expressed it), by guiding in word choice, especially those big unfamiliar words ("beware of them, either in discourse, or writing", Phillips' preface again). In this regard, it is not surprising that symbols were abandoned in favour of usage labels, for they are a blunt tool when it comes to identifying different nuances of style – too easily interpreted as ticks and crosses, as history shows.

At the start of this paper, I quoted from Crystal's (2006a) *The Fight for English: How the language pundits, ate, shot and left*, his celebrated attack on Lynne Truss' (2004) blockbuster book *Eats, Shoots and Leaves* for its "misconceived" zero tolerance approach to punctuation. To make this point, Crystal (2006a: 103) has a chapter on "appropriateness" where he emphasizes that, as in other walks of life, "[i]f we behave inappropriately, we risk social sanctions". The main aim of language education, he argues is "the instilling into children of a sense of linguistic appropriateness – when to use one variety or style rather than another, and when to appreciate the way in which other people have used one variety or style rather than another".[13] However he is demonstrably wrong when he concludes here that "[t]his is what the eighteenth-century prescriptive approach patently did not do" (Crystal 2006a: 103–4).

13. This is surely the message we all try to get across to our students, and to cite a recent example of my own from an introductory high school textbook: "Language is no different from anything else in life – you choose the right tool for the job. You wouldn't drink your soup with a fork, mop up spills with your best shirt, bang in a nail with the heel of a shoe (at least not if you had a hammer available) and you probably wouldn't choose to eat your peas with the blade of a knife. In the same way we select the appropriate language to suit the purpose and the context we find ourselves in; in other words, we have to be conscious of the fit, or absence of it, between the language we use and the occasion, the audience, the subject matter and the mode" (Burridge and De Lapps 2015: 12).

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5. Concluding remarks – "a marriage of contraries"

> And a true garden should have an equal regard for Nature and Art; it should represent a marriage of contraries, should combine […] the regular and the unexpected, the ideal and the real. (Sedding 1891: 68)

Currently there are many different processes underway that are releasing English from the conservative forces of the literary standard and its prescriptive ethos. Svartvik and Leech (2006: 207–210) illustrate the dual forces of colloquialization and liberalization at work. Crystal (2006b: 410) describes the new pragmatic approach to language education that includes an awareness of variation and change as facts of linguistic life; he also points to the respect for nonstandard language that comes with globalization and the electronic revolution. Despite these changes, ordinary people continue to write letters to newspapers and phone into radio stations, criticizing those words and constructions they feel do not measure up. Prescription, purism, verbal hygiene (whatever label it goes by) are not simply by-products of codification and generations of dictionaries and handbooks. Normative practices are born of the human desire to control unruly nature – in this case, to define language and to force into neat classificatory systems the reality of "the boundless chaos of a living speech" (to quote Johnson's Preface).

Whenever I think of the prescription-description divide and its history, I am reminded of the gardening debates of the 18th and 19th centuries. Gardeners during this time fell into two camps over the question of what constituted a "proper garden" (Taylor 1951). For some it was a work of art, while for others a work of nature. William Morris was one who fell into the first camp: A garden, he said, "should be well fenced from the outside world. It should by no means imitate either the wilfulness or the wildness of Nature" (1882: 128). There were also those who espoused the wild garden, one that assumed the characteristics of the uncultivated natural world. There were also those who took on a kind of middle ground, those who recognized that to create a work of art such as a garden was also to enter into partnership with natural processes – as Sedding (1891: 68) put it, "an equal regard for Nature and Art […]; a marriage of contraries".

The truth of the matter is that these early gardens usually ended up being places of unity between art and nature, in much the same way that most early grammars and dictionaries lay somewhere in the middle ground of prescription and description. Interestingly, Curzan (2014: 176) in her history of prescriptivism also concludes that "[t]here is more common ground for both 'sides' than is usually portrayed", and she makes the point (as does Cameron's 2012 *Verbal Hygiene*) that this oversimplified binary has for some time been hindering fruitful dialogue between linguists and the lay community. It is perhaps fitting to give Samuel Johnson

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the last word here (though he makes this comment not in reference to gardening philosophies, but to the two major political parties of this time): "A wise Tory and a wise Whig, I believe, will agree. Their principles are the same, though their modes of thinking are different" (Boswell 1816: 124). With wisdom comes common ground, and with this a marriage of contraries that will build more robust forms of knowledge.

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CHAPTER 4

A (great) deal of: Developments in 19th-century British and Australian English

Claudia Claridge and Merja Kytö

All variants of the form *a x deal of* are investigated across nineteenth-century English in south-eastern England and in Australia. Determiner uses dominate followed by adverbial uses with verbs and pronominal uses coming last. The great majority of items found include an adjective, almost invariably *good* or *great*, thus confirming the routinized nature of the larger phrase. Regarding the two semantic functions of *deal*, quantification is more common overall, but while this also predominates in England, Australia prefers degree readings and thus a more strongly grammaticalized form. Stylistically, *deal*-phrases show a preference for involved contexts and to a lesser extent also towards oral contexts. Australian English uses the form to a greater extent, perhaps indicating greater colloquiality, and additionally often shows rising use.

Keywords: quantifier, intensifier, degree, determiner, adverbial, grammaticalization, Late Modern English, variation, routinization, stylistics

1. Introduction

Modern English has a number of specialised [NP *of* NP] constructions, such as *a bit of* / *a lot of* / *a kind of* NP2, where the syntactic relationship has changed from [NP [*of* NP]] to [[NP *of*] NP] and the semantics of the first NP from partitive, taxonomic etc. to quantity- and degree-like meanings (Traugott 2008b). Only some such items have been studied in a diachronic perspective, e.g. *a bit of* (Traugott 2008a; Claridge & Kytö 2014a, 2014b), *a sort of, a lot of*, and *a shred of* (Traugott 2008b), and a larger group involving size-related nouns such as *heap, bunch, lot, bit, jot, flicker* etc. (Brems 2007, 2011). They are usually treated in the context of grammaticalization / delexicalization, constructionalization, and analogy.

A (x) deal of is another one of these constructions, but has so far not received much attention, except for in Kytö & Smitterberg (2006), Smitterberg (2009), and briefly in Traugott (2007). It shares some characteristics with *a lot of*, e.g. its use

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as both determiner and adverbial (*a* x *deal*), its quantifying and degree meanings, and its potentially informal nature. Unlike *a lot of* or also *a kind of*, it does not have a phonologically reduced, coalesced form (*kinda*, but **deala*), but instead exhibits an almost standardly expanded form by including an adjective like *good* or *great*. It is in particular this latter characteristic that makes *deal* stand out from the larger group. This can be seen as a result of aborted grammaticalization and unsuccessful entrenchment of *a deal of* and instead the survival of the longer item as routinized, prefabricated phrase (cf. Traugott 2007: 537, 545, 548).

Grammaticalization or other processes producing this form will not be the focus of this chapter, however, but rather the question of how this supposedly fixed and established phrase fared in the late Modern English period following the upsurge of competing complex quantity and degree modifiers (Traugott 2007: 546). As multal quantifiers have mostly been looked at only in English English (Smitterberg 2009: 140), a comparative perspective across the two varieties of British and Australian English will be adopted here. The distribution of formal-syntactic, and semantic-functional uses will be charted across the two varieties as well as the stylistic preferences of the form in order to identify patterns of change.

Before we continue a note on "Australian English" is in order. Following Fritz (2007: 247–248), it is more appropriate to call this variety English in Australia throughout most of the 19th century and to only apply the term Australian English at the end of that century. However, Fritz also makes the point that English in Australia is already distinguished and distinguishable from other varieties in this period, even if it was a variety in flux, evolving and experimenting with as yet uncertain outcome. While investigating one little drop in this fluidity we will stick to the label Australian English (AusE) for sheer convenience.

2. *A deal (of)*: Forms and functions

Deal in modern English represents a case of homonymy: it is a noun in the original, now obsolescent sense of 'part' (going back to OE *dǣl*), another noun indicating a type of timber or wooden plank, a polysemous verb 'distribute', 'do business', 'concern' as well as the corresponding zero-derived deverbal nouns. In the form in focus here, i.e. *a* [x] *deal* [*of*], with x standing in for any adjective, it still retains some nominal characteristics deriving as it does from the nominal 'part' meaning, and can roughly be paraphrased as 'amount'. Here, it is similar to and a quasi-synonym of *a lot* (*of*), but six times less frequently used than the latter in the BNC, where one finds *a lot of* 148.3 per one million words but *a x deal of* only with a frequency of 31.3.

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In line with the 'amount' meaning, the modern multi-word item is classified as an open-class quantifier, cf. (1a). It also works as an intensifier, in the forms *a great/good deal* belonging to the subcategory booster (Quirk et al. 1985: 264, 591), cf. (1b).

(1) a. The chest contained a great deal of money. (= 'large amount' / 'much')
(example from Quirk et al. 1985: 264)
b. They annoy me a great deal. (= 'very much' / 'greatly')

Smitterberg (2009: 121) calls these two types multal determiner (1a) and multal adverb (1b). As determiner the expression always includes the final preposition *of*. As in (1a), the determiner only occurs with a non-count, or a formally singular noun that is construed as non-count (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 349–350; Smitterberg 2009: 264). The adverb can also indicate duration or frequency (Quirk et al. 1985: 582; Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 716, 720), answering questions like *how much?* or *how long?* as in (2a), (2b); according to Bolinger (1972: 161–162) verb actions are extensible as durative ('so long'), iterative ('so often') or rate ('so many in time x'). Duration and frequency will be subsumed under quantity here.

(2) a. Ed talks a great deal. (= 'often' & 'long')
b. You've talked a great deal already. (= 'a long time')
c. I like it a great deal. (= 'very much')
(examples from Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 720)

Distinguishing such extensible cases from true degree uses with verbs (as in 2c) is not always easy as the meanings may have blended.

The item can accompany nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs; in the case of adjectives, it is said to be commonly (Quirk et al. 1985: 473) or exclusively used with comparatives and also with *too* + adjectives (Bolinger 1972: 111). The co-occurrence with an explicitly degree-marked form may speak for degree uses to be not well entrenched in the *deal* form itself. Kytö & Smitterberg (2006: 215–216)[1] and Smitterberg (2009: 132) find determiner and adverbial uses with verbs to increase over time in the nineteenth century, while adjectives and adverbs are rarely in focus.

Whereas Quirk et al. (1985: 785) claim that *a deal* tends to be restricted to assertive contexts, both Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 725) and Bolinger (1972: 241) allow it in negative contexts, with the exception of *a good deal* (Bolinger 1972: 241). In nineteenth-century data it is indeed found mostly in assertive environments (Kytö & Smitterberg 2006: 213; Smitterberg 2009: 130).

1. Their results are conflated for *deal* and a number of other 'open-class'multal quantifiers (*X many*, *plenty*, *lot* and *lots*).

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As stated above *deal* in this construction still retains nominal qualities. This can be seen, for example, in uses where the prepositionless variant fills the object or subject complement position as an NP and is thus also passivisable (e.g. *they lost a great deal – a great deal was lost*) (Quirk et al. 1985: 602–603). Of course, object instances could also be interpreted as quantifying uses (cf. Bolinger 1972: 110), with unexpressed/understood object, but this is not possible for the subject examples. A clearly nominal characteristic of *deal* itself is also its modification by attributive adjectives, notably by *great* and *good* (also noted as prominent by Kytö & Smitterberg 2006: 211; Smitterberg 2009: 124, 126–127). This, however, could be an instance of fossilization, as the presence of a quantifying adjective is called obligatory in modern Standard English (Quirk et al. 1985: 264; Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 350). *Deal* in this construction has lost the possibility of pluralisation (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 339), although it is in origin a count noun. The weakened nouniness of *deal* and the fossilized nature of the whole phrase is best captured by Smitterberg's (2009: 121) term multal pronoun for this use.

On the basis of the above, the questions to be asked and answered with the help of our data are:

1. What is the distribution between determiner, pronominal and adverbial uses in our data?
2. What are the targets of modification in the case of adverbial use?
3. How often and by what items is the adjective slot filled?
4. What is the distribution with regard to the quantity and degree meanings?

3. Variation across time, space, and contexts

Based on the OED entry for *deal* n.[2] – and disregarding the homonyms – the meaning 'part' > 'portion' is the original one, which becomes obsolete in the standard. The sense 'quantity, amount', while arising later metonymically from 'part' and a partitive meaning, goes back as far as about the year 1000. Quantifying uses of *deal* are thus of long standing in the language. Interestingly, the quantity meaning seemed to need support by suitable accompanying adjectives (vs. *a lot*, which did not); a part was not per se perceived as small or large but made mostly so by the choice of adjective. The restriction to adjectives indicating/implying a large amount is probably of a later date, sometime in Early Modern English. Inferences from the partitive and quantity uses led to a degree interpretation; simple *a deal of* alongside the modified versions is attested with such degree uses from the 15th to 17th

2. This is still according to the second edition entry, dated 1894, accessed 8 March 2018.

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centuries, but only longer versions with modifying adjective survived in this use (Traugott 2007: 537). The short form is more economical but also less explicit, so that one may assume that the longer one will be preferred (especially in sensitive contexts, as in the courtroom, cf. 5.2 below).

Some frequency differences for degree adverbs have been noted for present-day varieties. In general, such adverbs as *quite, very* are more frequent in British (BrE) than in American English (AmE), but individual types may nevertheless be more common in AmE, e.g. *mighty, plenty* (Algeo 2006: 153). Regarding quantifiers or quantifying uses, Smitterberg (2009: 140) has noted the lack of quantitative research on their occurrences in varieties other than English English. The literature is silent on *deal*, but searching some available corpora yields the following picture. Comparing the BNC and COCA yields higher frequencies in BrE for the search strings [*a* (adj) *deal*] (38.8 vs. AmE 30.3 per million) and [*a deal of*] (0.5 vs. AmE 0.1 per million). The smaller and same-sized corpora FLOB, FROWN, and ACE yield similar raw frequencies for BrE and AmE, however (44 and 47 respectively), but the lower figure of 36 hits for Australian English. It is noteworthy that this difference reflects written English only. *Deal* in quantifying and degree uses was already established in BrE at the time of the settlement of Australia. It is attested by 52 hits in the *Lampeter Corpus* (LC) and 128 in the *Corpus of English Dialogues* (CED). In the CED it is also rising from 6.1 per 100,000 words (1640–79) to 25.6 (1720–60). Given its preference for speech-related contexts noted above, it can be assumed that *deal* must have been part of the language of speakers settling in Australia.

Stylistically, *a deal* (*of*) is described as a chiefly informal option in present-day English by Quirk et al. (1985: 264), although contemporary learners' dictionaries do not mark the form in this way. Johnson (1755: s.v. *deal* n.) lists the partitive and quantifying meaning in a neutral, uncommented way, and the OED calls only bare, unmodified *a deal* colloquial (s.v. *deal* n^1, sense 4a). If we look at historical data, *a deal* is found more frequently in speech-related registers, with only 4.3 occurrences per 100,000 words in the LC, but 11 per 100,000 in the CED. The most favourable contexts are CED fiction (21.9 per 100,000) and dialogic handbooks (12.7) in contrast to LC written and formal science (1.8), which does not foster its use. In late Modern English as represented by the Corpus of Nineteenth-Century English (CONCE), *deal* typically characterises involved and interactive contexts (drama, fiction, letters, trials), but is rare in expository contexts such as debates, science and history writing (Kytö & Smitterberg 2006: 214–215;[3] Smitterberg 2009: 127). The legal context, of special relevance regarding our data, also shows this split internally in the CED, with 3.3 in written legal texts, 4.0 in witness

3. With conflated results for 'open-class' multal quantifiers (see note 1, above).

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depositions, but 7.0 in trials (the latter reflecting again a speech-based bias conveyed in dialogue form).

Two further questions arise from these aspects, namely

5. How do the overall frequencies and the distributions compare between British and Australian English, as far as represented by our corpora?
6. Which styles and registers does *deal* prefer or disprefer?

4. Data and methodology

Our data consists of parts from the *Old Bailey Corpus*, version 1.0 (OBC) and the complete *Corpus of Oz Earlier English* (COOEE), representing British English and Australian English respectively. The OBC has been compiled at the University of Giessen based on the *Proceedings of the Old Bailey* (1674–1913) and contains courtroom transcripts (Huber 2007). As the language of courtroom interactants has been taken down for publication in (usually) direct speech form, the OBC presents a window on everyday spoken language of the late Modern English period, albeit not an unproblematic one – the data should be described as speech-based or speech-related, not as speech as such (cf. Kytö & Walker 2003). The COOEE (Fritz 2007; Fritz 2010; Fritz n.d.) also contains speech-related material, namely minutes, speeches, and plays, but the larger part of this corpus is made up by written material from three subtypes of writing, i.e. the private written register (letters, diaries), the public written register (memoirs, newspapers, broadsides, narratives, official letters, reports, verse), and the register of Government English (government letters, legal English, petitions, proclamations). As can be seen both corpora contain legal language. Private writing on the one hand *vs*. public writing and government English on the other hand potentially pattern along the oral-literate cline. The casual-formal cline is represented in COOEE by speech-related and private written data vs. public writing and government English; in the OBC it may potentially be found in the speech of some defendants and witnesses vs. the language of court officials (judges, lawyers). The type of data here is thus suitable for a feature that is described as informal in modern English. COOEE covers a shorter period than the OBC; as its coverage of 1788–1900 fully overlaps with the OBC (1720–1913) this is taken as the time frame for this study. Table 1 summarizes the corpus characteristics and adds the word counts.

Beyond the aspects above, there is a further point linking these two data sources. First, there is a link between the locations, as the language of London and surrounding areas provided important input and influence for southern-hemisphere varieties such as Australian English (Hickey 2004: 36). Secondly, some of the defendants in the OBC trials will in fact have been transported to Australia as part of their

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Table 1. Corpus characteristics and word counts

	OBC	COOEE
variety	British	Early Australian
period	1780–1900	1788–1900
total words	**10,528,520**	**2,003,010**
of which in registers		
speech-based	10,528,520	303,850
private written	–	700,891
public written	–	803,115
government English	–	200,201

punishment. While perhaps only 17% of male convicts in Australia came directly from London courts (Robson 1955 quoted in Fritz n.d.) and the rest from all over the British Isles, the lay courtroom speakers to a large extent represent the pool from which both free and unfree emigrants to Australia were drawn. As for language use, one can glean from sources that "[t]here was certainly no gulf between the language of the convicts and that of the free settlers" (Fritz 2007: 22). According to recent literature, the convicts were a highly heterogenous group comprising a minority of hardened criminals and a majority of ordinary people. Also, many of the colonists were educated while others were illiterate (Fritz 2007: 22).

In the light of the relative scarcity of the feature in the corpora mentioned above, the amount of over 12 million words for 120 years should yield a significant number of results and thus the possibility to chart behaviour along several parameters. The amount of data also allows the subdivision into temporal subcorpora (cf. Table 2).

Table 2. Corpus sub-periods and word counts

	1780s–1800s	1810s–1830s	1840s–1860s	1870s–1890s
OBC	2,645,542	2,794,937	2,590,798	2,497,243
COOEE	214,235	579,581	611,074	598,120

We have opted for 30-year subperiods, in line with generational approaches to language change, and also yielding similar-sized subcorpora (with the exception of the first period in COOEE). Other corpora will be used for comparison, where possible and appropriate, as already done above in Section 3.

WordSmith Tools (version 5.0) was used to retrieve the data, based on the word *deal* in its various possible spellings. Non-standard spellings, such as *dale* (e.g. COOEE 3–144), hardly occur, however. All irrelevant hits, such as verb and semantically unsuitable noun uses (cf. Section 2), were discarded manually. After all exclusions, a total of 1,423 instances remained for analysis.

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5. Deal in OBC and COOEE

5.1 Regional and diachronic variation

The 1,423 instances are distributed across the two corpora and the four periods as shown in Table 3:

Table 3. Instances of relevant *deal* constructions (raw and normalized per 100,000 words)

	1780s–1800s	1810s–1830s	1840s–1860s	1870s–1890s	total
OBC	313	238	261	271	**1,083**
	11.8	8.5	10.1	10.9	**10.3**
COOEE	24	74	125	117	**340**
	11.2	12.8	20.6	19.7	**17.0**

(The difference between the two corpora as well as the development in each corpus is statistically significant (chi square) at the $p<0.01$ level.)

If we consider first the total frequencies, we find that *deal* is less frequent in these two historical corpora than in the modern data quoted in Section 3, about a quarter as common in BrE and a fifth in AusE. Given the higher frequencies for *a lot* noted in Section 2, one might expect the same or even greater difference here, but in fact *a lot* is less frequent than *deal* in these two corpora: there are 959 hits overall (of which 817 *a lot of*) in the OBC and only 102 occurrences of *a lot* (*of*) in COOEE. Interestingly, *deal* in total is more frequent in the Australian than in the British corpus, in contrast to the modern data in Section 3.

An overall comparison of both varieties, as presented in Figure 1, shows BrE and AusE to have almost identical frequencies in the first period. The following three periods show divergent developments, however.

While *deal* in BrE declines towards the second period and then very slowly rises again, in AusE it immediately rises, especially drastically towards the third period, followed by a very slight decrease. From the second period onwards *deal* is clearly more frequent in AusE usage. However, this conclusion is based on a somewhat unequal comparison, as BrE is represented only by one, AusE by four different registers. Comparing only the speech-based type with the OBC trials, we find more similar overall figures and only a slight Australian lead, with 10.3 (BrE) versus 13.5 (AusE), cf. also Table 4 below. One might therefore assume that it is the use of *deal* in written registers that increases the AusE frequencies to the extent shown in Figure 1. However, while this is indeed the case here, this may not mean that AusE has an overall much greater usage. If we compare a register for which a good corpus correlate can be found, namely private letters in COOEE and in the *Corpus of Nineteenth-Century English* (CONCE), we find very similar figures, namely COOEE's 30.5 and CONCE's 32.3 occurrences per 100,000 words.

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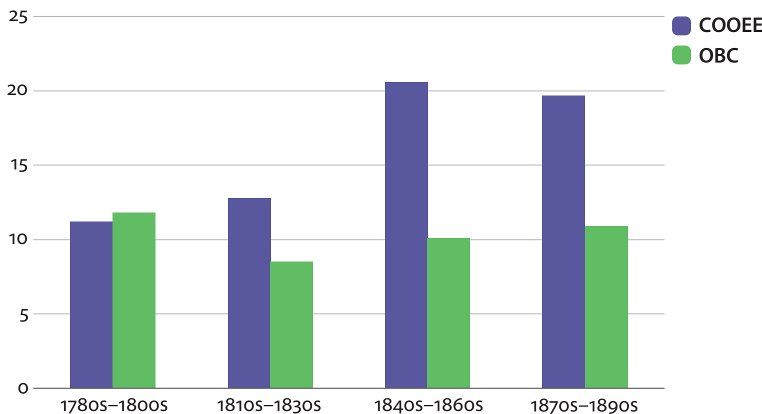

Figure 1. COOEE / AusE versus OBC/ British English (per 100,000 words)

Thus, if one compares like with like, it seems as if the figures of the two varieties are indeed similar.

5.2 Forms, variants and frequencies

This section charts the frequency distribution of *deal* across various formal and syntactic contexts as well as across two corpora and varieties. *Deal* was found in the data in six different uses, namely as determiner in the form *a x deal of* (3a) and in the form *a x deal* as an adverbial modifying verbs,[4] adjectives, adverbs and PPs (3b)–(3e) as well as a pronoun (subject (3f), object, or other complement).

(3) a. No, she took it with a deal of *fortitude*, and refused that clemency I had offered her. (OBC 18110403)[5]

b. I have *pestered* you a good deal with our family affairs but your very kind attention to our Mother and Sisters, the very high terms in which they at all times speak of you, as well as your evident interest in our family matters we regard you as a member of it more nearly allied to us than our real tie of consanguinity warrants. (COOEE, 1–215, 1823)[3]

c. it was just like gold, and was a great deal *brighter* than it is now. (OBC 18920208)

4. Participles in predicative function have been included under verbs here.

5. OBC file references indicate the data of the trial in the form year-month-day, in this case 3 April 1811. COOEE file references indicate the corpus chronology, with the first figure providing the corpus period and the second the specific file. The corpus periods 1–4 correspond to 1788–1825, 1826–1850, 1851–1875 and 1876–1900 respectively, but note that our periodisation is a different one, as explained above.

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d. I venture to say to this Convention we are beginning to make threats a great deal *too early*,… (COOEE, 4–414, 1891)
e. I thought it looked a great deal *like the child* (OBC 18601126)
f. The formation and extension of kindred associations to the A.N.A. in the other colonies must form one of the most powerful factors in securing Federation. A good deal has been done in this direction during the year. (COOEE 4–308, 1894)

Figure 2 shows their distribution in the two corpora:

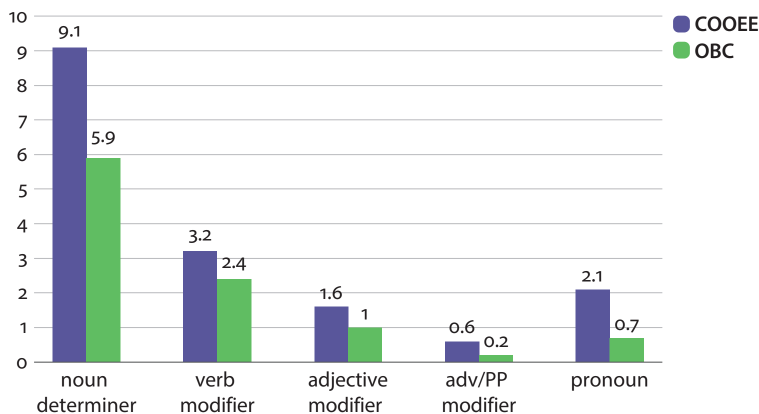

Figure 2. Overall distribution of form-function variants (per 100,000 words)[6]

(The distributions are significant at the p<0.01 level.)

The distribution is similar but not quite identical across the two corpora. The most frequent types in both are the use as noun and verb modifier, but the lead of the nominal use is more pronounced in COOEE. While the adjective modifier takes third position in OBC, it comes fourth in COOEE, where instead the constituent type is used to a greater extent. In both cases the modification of adverbs and PPs is least frequent. The infrequency of adverbial, prepositional, and, to a lesser extent, adjectival targets is in line with Kytö & Smitterberg's findings on their nineteenth-century data. It is noteworthy that COOEE leads in all categories, making greater use of this form. Either this correlates with more quantification and intensification overall in this corpus, or with the preference of *deal* as opposed to other forms. In the latter case this might speak for more informal tendencies of early Australian English. Early Australian society was clearly more egalitarian

6. Due to their rarity, adverbs and PPs have been combined here; their raw figures are as follows: COOEE adverbs 11, PPs 1; OBC adverbs 11, PPs 6.

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than Britain in the 19th century, according to Fritz (2007: 27), which also meant that social distinctions did not automatically show linguistically. This would also decrease pronounced formal – informal differences, so that a form like *deal* might simply be stylistically unmarked in AusE.

We will now focus in on the individual types shown in Figure 2. The pronominal use emphasizes the independent nominal status of *deal* and thus its incompletely grammaticalized nature. In (3f) above, it may be regarded as a noun phrase with free segments, whose head is synonymous with *amount* as well as a unified chunk synonymous to pronominally used *much*. In both cases it represents a quantification meaning. As Figure 3 shows, this use is stable in the OBC and clearly rising in COOEE.

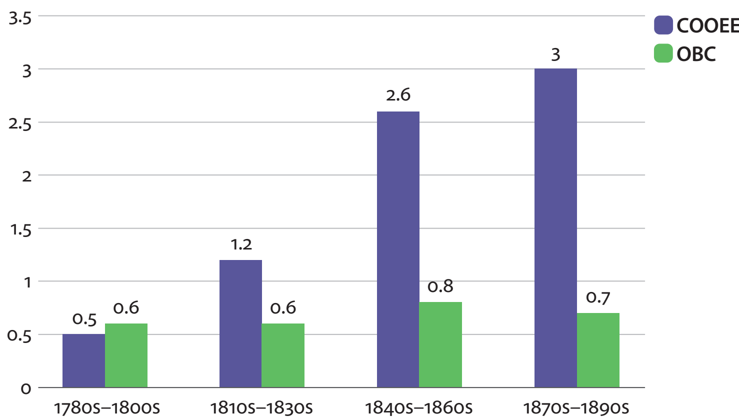

Figure 3. The development of the pronominal use (per 100,000 words)

It can be argued that using a *deal*-variant gives the pronoun more weight than it would have with, e.g., *much*, cf. (4a). Furthermore, *deal* might be deemed necessary for stylistic variation, as in (4b), where both *much* and *deal* are used. Also, modified *deal* might be perceived as a somewhat stronger than *much* but not as strong as *very much*, thus representing a good 'compromise' variant.

(4) a. Again Harriett Phillips could not come out quite so strong in her contempt for colonial ways and colonial people, arriving when she did, as if she had landed ten or a dozen years before, but still there was <u>a great deal</u> that was open to criticism. (COOEE, 3–243, 1865)

b. It isn't <u>much</u> but still it may be <u>a good deal</u> some day. (COOEE, 4–165, 1888)

Such consideration may have played a greater role in COOEE than in OBC, in particular the stylistic aspect, as there is more writing in COOEE.

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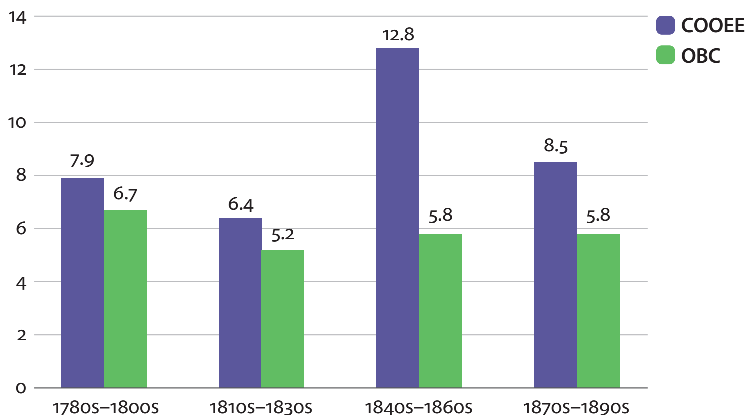

Figure 4. *a x deal of* as determiner with nouns (per 100,000 words)

The determiner use, the most frequent type in Figure 2, is distributed across time and the two corpora as shown in Figure 4. Again there is more variation in COOEE, while there is some decline but overall rather stability in the OBC.

The great difference between COOEE and OBC seen in Figure 4 is here shown to be caused mostly by the third period. The OBC shows an established and stable form, albeit at a low level. Even today, *deal* belongs to the low-frequency group (less than 100 times per million words) within quantifying determiners (Biber et al. 1999: 277). There is no ready explanation for the wavering development in COOEE.

With regard to the adverbial modifier we will only show verbal and adjectival targets in more detail (Figures 5 and 6), as all others are too infrequent.

Verb modification shows an uneven development in both corpora, whereas adjectival modification is more or less stable in the OBC and rising in COOEE. The fact that there are no adjectival targets in COOEE in the first period may be simply due to chance and the small data basis (cf. Table 2) in this period. The almost complete restriction to adjectives in comparative form or accompanied by *too*, noted for modern English, also holds for the present data. In COOEE it is only comparative adjectives that are found with *deal*. In the OBC, comparatives make up the majority followed by *too* + adjective; there are also superlatives and even some forms in the positive, such as *deaf* and *alike,* cf. (5).[7]

7. The following types have been found. In COOEE: *better, easier, faster, less, more, more comfortable, warmer, worse.* In OBC: *better, brighter, cooler, darker, faster, larger, less, lighter, longer, lower, lustier, more, nearer, older, smaller, the sooner, stiffer, stouter, taller, thinner, wiser, (the) worse, younger - heaviest, the best - too dear, too much, too near, too slight - alike, deaf.*

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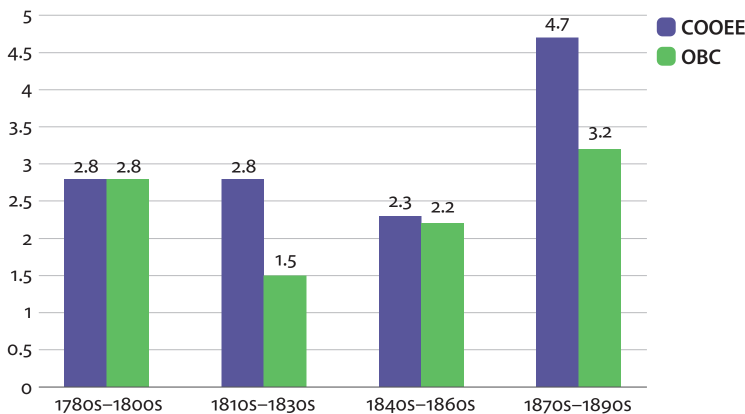

Figure 5. *a x deal* as adverbial modifier of verbs (per 100,000 words)

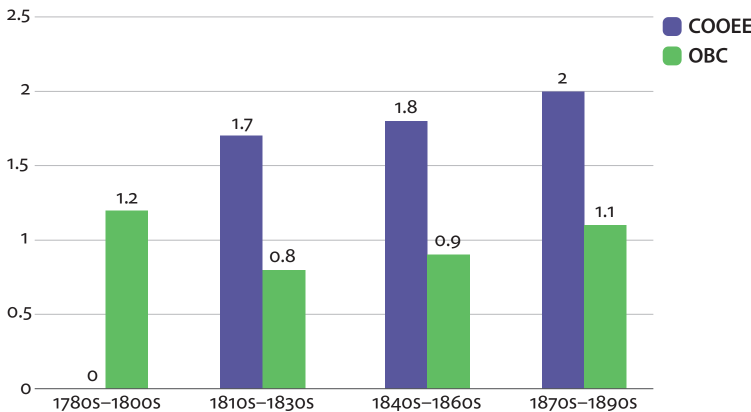

Figure 6. *a x deal* as adverbial modifier of adjectives (per 100,000 words)

(5) a. I met Clark coming along, and he said he had been to carry a bundle for a boy, but he thought no harm; I then took hold of him, carried him to the public-house, and told him he had better tell me where the things were, it would be a deal *the best* for him; (OBC, 18030914)

b. I am a good deal *deaf*. (OBC, 18811212)

c. I do not know that the prisoner and I have been reckoned a good deal *alike*.

The last formal aspect to be treated here is the internal modification of the *deal*-phrase and the questions of obligatoriness and fossilization. As the examples above have indicated, *good* or *great* are present in the majority of cases, as Figures 7 and 8 below show. *Great* is overall the most common form, but it loses ground to *good*. It does so somewhat more clearly in OBC, but in both corpora

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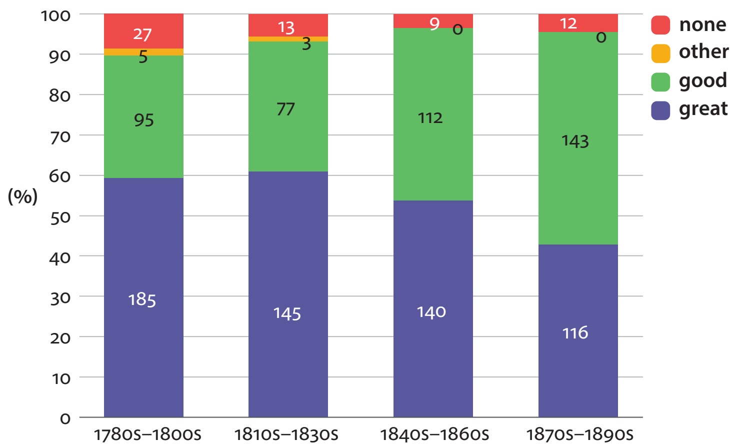

Figure 7. Modification of *deal* in the OBC (%, raw figures in columns)

(The choice of *great* vs *good* is not statistically significant, but the choice adjective vs no adjective is at the $p<0.05$ level.)

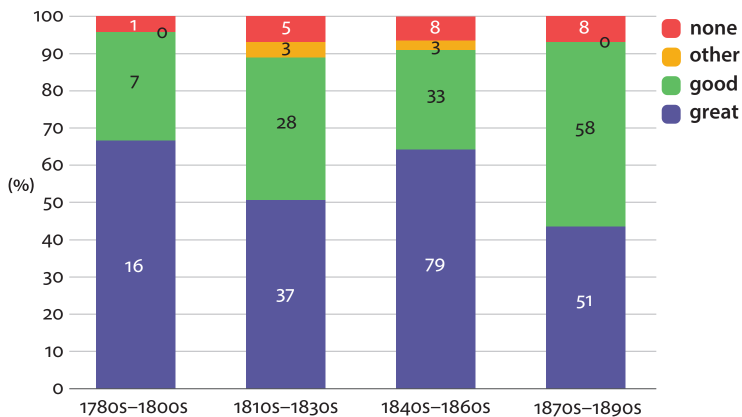

Figure 8. Modification of *deal* in COOEE (%, raw figures in columns)

(The choice of *great* vs *good* is statistically significant at the $p<0.01$ level.)

good is more frequent than *great* in the last period. Thus, one might expect that development to proceed in the direction of *good*, but instead in both modern BrE and AusE *great* is in the clear lead, either three times (BNC) or four times (ACE) more common than *good*.

The two figures also show that bare *a deal* (*of*) and other modifying adjectives are also possible. While the infrequent bare form, as in (6), is declining in the OBC, it is increasing in COOEE.

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(6) a. after they had been with me a short time the male prisoner said that his daughter was coming into a deal of money, and that if I would let them stay they would pay me 1 l. a week (OBC, 18670408)
b. Lightowler was taken over the way to the Green Man; then I talked a deal to him. (OBC, 17920704)
c. he would have said a deal more, but the cap was forced over his face by the executioner. (COOEE, 2–147, 1836)
d. I know she cannot do much but a kind word does a deal for some people. (COOEE, 3–160, 1858)
e. It is a wide subject and requires a deal of study and contracting as we are only allowed twenty minutes… (COOEE, 4–186, 1889)

The decline of the unmodified form in OBC is in line with our assumption (in Section 3) of it being less useful in the courtroom. Comparing the bare examples in (6) with the modified ones in (7) and throughout this chapter, the former appear rather unspecific as to amount of money (6a) or the length of conversation (6b), whereas all examples in (7) give the hearer a much clearer impression of what is referred to and its extent. Modifying adjectives other than *great, good* (7), are even rarer and do not show any clear development; in some periods they do not appear at all. While bare *deal* occurs in adverbial, determiner and pronominal uses, alternative modification definitely prefers the determiner context.

(7) a. Do you think the beer is heavier than the water?- Water is the heaviest a *considerable* deal. (OBC 17830430)
b. Did you or not see another woman like the prisoner, that you for a moment thought it was the prisoner- A. No, there was a *vast* deal of difference; I could not mistake one from the other. (OBC, 18110403)
c. Our horses bounded and neighed with fear - old brutes, which in other respects required an *immense* deal of persuasion in the way of spurs to make them go along. (COOEE, 3–075, 1853)
d. There is *such a* dale of comp[et]ition that some times you think the People would not let one another live if possable. (COOEE, 3–161, 1858)

The alternative modifiers are a small group, comprising *considerable*, *vast* (both COOEE and OBC) as well as *immense, such, terrible* (only COOEE). It is interesting that the much larger database of the OBC does not yield a greater variety here. The large COHA does so,[8] which may indicate that either the courtroom context or British English as such restricts variation in this form.

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8. Forms found there as internal modifiers include *awful, blowed, confounded, consarnt, considerable, deuced, devilish, enormous, immense, infinite, mighty, monstrous, plaguy, powerful, practical, smart, strong, vast, wonderful.*

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Looking at the variously (non-)modified forms of *deal*, it seems as if different levels of quantity or degree can be expressed by this form alone. Bare *deal* may be the weakest/lowest, best paraphrasable by 'some' (e.g. 6c), followed by *good deal* (e.g. 5c), then by *great deal* (e.g. 8), which is possibly synonymous with *considerable deal* (e.g. 7a), whereas the other options have an even greater boosting force (e.g. 7b, c). In (8) a witness tries to vary the force of their statements by modulating the *deal* phrase, with different adjective, negation and additional intensifiers and emphasizers.

(8) he seemed much exhausted – the *blood* on his head was very trifling, *not* a great deal – it was running down his neck – there was a good deal of *it* – I cannot say exactly how much – it was *not such* a *very* great deal – I had heard a scuffle in the cabin (OBC, 18380129)

As the questions are apparently missing in this extract, it is, however, hard to understand the full significance of these variations.

5.3 Functions: Quantification vs degree

Quantification and degree are the only two meanings attested in the data, as the older partitive meaning is not present any more. Example (9) illustrates quantity readings, where in (9a), (9b) a certain substantial amount of the object(s) denoted by the following noun is indicated. The matter in hand is either measurable or countable (cf. also *money* in 6a above). Examples (9c), (9d) fall under quantity by expressing duration (be in town 'for a long/longer period(s)')[9] or frequency (go out 'often') or both blended together.

(9) a. A great deal of *oil* is of course made from those whales and Basses Strait seals; where, as well as in the bays and rivers, these fish are very abundant. (COOEE, 1–206, 1822)

b. Q A great deal of *shot and powder*? – A Not so much powder as shot. (OBC 17860719)

c. Q He *was* a good deal *in town*? – A Yes. (OBC, 18030914)

d. The girls seem to *go out* a good deal, & altogether look very happy. (COOEE, 3–278, 1872)

9. The preceding question was "Is Thomas Hummerston frequently in town?", which was answered in the affirmative; thus the follow-up question may be seen to focus rather on length of stay.

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The pronominal *deal* types have only the quantity reading. With regard to degree readings, *deal* belongs to the amplifying group, more precisely among boosters, which indicate a high (but not a maximal) degree on the scale (Quirk et al. 1985: 591).

(10) a. I have a deal of *comfort* in my dear John, he is almost a young man and very much like myself, he promises to be a good scholar he is at the best school here (COOEE, 1–173, 1819)
b. The only domestic animal they have is the dog, which in their language is called Dingo, and a good deal *resembles* the fox dog of England. (COOEE, 1–015, 1789)
c. John *has improved* a good deal since he came to Melbourne. (COOEE, 4–073, 1884)
d. I told the schoolmaster, and we both looked in at the window, and saw them in the pulpit – the prisoners are a great deal *like the men* (OBC 18570615)
e. I have a place at a farm-house, and I have got a good master, which I am a great deal *more comfortable* than I expected. (COOEE 2–111, 1835)

Deal always has a degree reading with adjectives ((10e), and see the list in footnote 5), whereas with other targets it depends on whether their meaning allows grading or not. More abstract nouns like *confidence, patience, excitement* or *force* and similar verbal cases such as *hurt, annoy, be in favour, distress*, and *amuse*, in addition to the instances in (10a)–(10c) are graded by *deal* in the corpora. Abstractness also plays a role with PPs (10d) and adverbs. As (10a) shows, even bare *a deal of* may have a degree reading, even past the 17th century, contra Traugott (2007) quoted above.

In some few instances (22, = 1.5%) ambiguity between quantity and degree has been found, as in (11a).

(11) a. the house-maid came to me the night before, and told me not to go, for it would cause a great deal of *confusion*, (OBC 18000528)
b. Your's is a shop of a great deal of *bustle and confusion* (OBC 18081130)

Confusion can either refer to an abstract mental state, which would induce a degree reading, or a physical action (e.g. OED sense 5a), which would make possible a quantity reading; the latter is in clearer evidence in the combination *bustle and confusion* in (11b). These few ambiguous cases are disregarded in the statistics in Figure 9 below.

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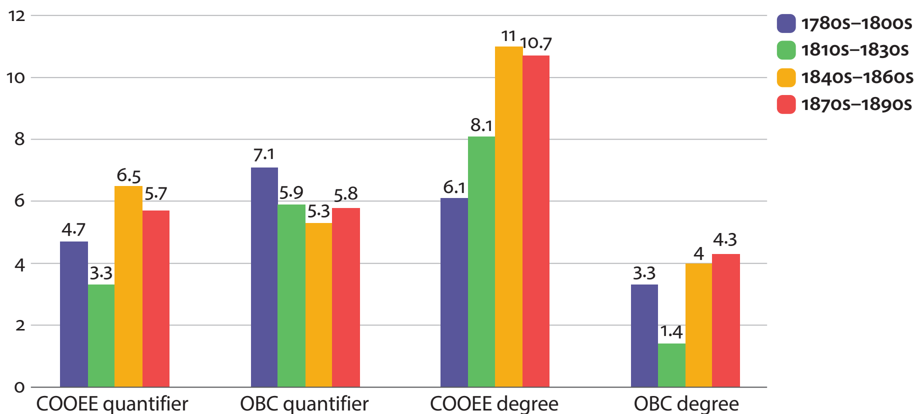

Figure 9. Quantifier and degree functions (per 100,000 words)

(The distributions are significant in the OBC at $p<0.01$, but not significant in COOEE.)

The two corpora show different preferences regarding the use of the quantity and degree meanings, with COOEE favouring degree and the OBC quantity readings. Looking at it by percentage distribution, COOEE always has more than 50% degree, in the period with the lowest lead 56% and in the highest 71%; the OBC's quantity lead ranges from 57% to 78%. Figure 9 shows the development of the two meanings across time in normalized frequencies.

In spite of the overall distribution just outlined, the COOEE also shows a slight rising trend and the OBC a very slight falling trend for the quantifier. The clearest development is the rise of degree in COOEE, however. The relative uncommonness of degree meanings in the OBC is also especially striking. This may partly be explained by the relative dispreference for adjectival targets (cf. Figure 6), which might have favoured more degree readings. Also, there is slightly more use of *a lot of* in OBC (9.1 / 100,000 words) than in COOEE (5.1), which may take over the degree readings to some extent (cf. also Section 4 above). Also, there is of course a great variety of other boosters that may cover the degree area; in the OBC twenty-eight single-word items have been found, including three fairly to

Table 4. Register distribution (per 100,000 words)

OBC	COOEE			
trial transcripts (speech-based)	**speech-based**	**private written**	**public written**	**government**
10.3	13.5	30.5	9.7	3.0

(The register distribution in COOEE is statistically significant at $p<0.01$.)

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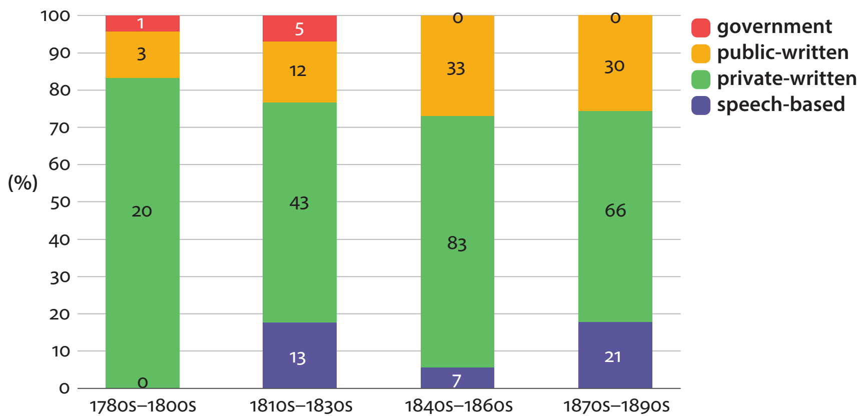

Figure 10. Register distribution in AusE / COOEE (%, raw figures in columns)

highly frequent ones, namely *very* (157.0 / 100,000 words), *so* (34.1), and *greatly* (9.7) (Claridge et al. 2016). This latter point should equally apply to AusE, but this cannot be verified due to lacking research in this field. In order to make complete sense of the picture presented by Figure 9, a full usage profile of boosters and quantifiers would be necessary. Of equal interest would be comparative data of modern BrE and AusE.

5.4 Register variation

We now turn to the distribution across contexts and registers. While the OBC presents only one register, that of courtroom dialogue, COOEE offers four as outlined above. Table 4 and Figure 10 present the results.

Clearly, the bulk of the data is found in a written register, namely private writing, shown by both the normalized figures and the percentages. As this register contains letters and diaries, this shows *deal* as occurring more frequently in involved contexts. However, the much lower frequency of *deal* in speech-based data as compared to private writing complicates the characterisation of *deal* as clearly involved. While the 'oral' frequencies are higher than those in public and government writing, the difference between public written texts and trials in particular is very small indeed. This state of affairs will most probably have been caused by the formal nature of the speech-based data. Courtroom interaction, minutes and speeches are all highly constrained genres, lacking complete naturalness and spontaneity; this also goes to some extent for plays. The somewhat higher speech-based figure in the COOEE may speak for a somewhat more relaxed nature of Australian English towards *deal* in formal contexts.

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6. Conclusion

Let us now come back to the six questions raised in Sections 2 and 3:

As to the syntactic functions of *deal* (questions 1 and 2) we have found a clear preponderance of determiner uses followed by adverbial uses with verbs and pronominal uses coming last. This is in line with earlier research on the nineteenth century, but how this compares with the state of affairs in PDE is so far unknown and awaiting further research. The higher adverbial occurrence with verbs may have to do with the fact that this context is dispreferred by many other, more classical boosters (Claridge et al. 2016). Adjectival targets are infrequent and even more so adverbs and prepositional phrases. The restriction to comparative adjectives noted for PDE is already fully in place in our data.

The majority of our data is made up of larger *deal* phrases, i.e. those including an adjective (question 3), coming to more than 90% in all periods of both corpora. While the unmodified phrase is rare, it nevertheless comes to 5.6% (OBC) and 6.5% (COOEE) of the total and thus shows instances of the grammaticalized bare form. As this form was also found with degree readings, grammaticalization seems not to have been completely unsuccessful. Of those phrases with an adjective almost all show *good* and *great*, and thus confirm the routinized nature of both larger phrases. Both are well-known from modern usage, but are not found in our data with a development that would lead straightforwardly to the modern predominance of *great*. Further research could deal with how and why the incipient trend towards *good* visible in our data was reversed. While the choice of other premodifying adjectives is negligible with one (OBC) to two (COOEE) per cent of all, they nevertheless highlight the still somewhat incomplete fixedness of the phrase and also the users' possibilities for varying nuances of quantity or degree.

With regard to the two functions of *deal*, as quantifier and as degree modifier (question 4), the quantifier is found more commonly (with 58% of all) if one generalizes across the whole data. This overall lead is due to quantity readings being consistently more common in the larger OBC, while COOEE clearly prefers degree readings across its whole period. It would be interesting to see whether these clear usage preferences can be corroborated by further British and Australian data, both historical and modern.

As to stylistic preferences (question 6), *deal* shows clear leanings towards involved contexts and to a lesser extents towards oral contexts. In contrast, it seems to be avoided in highly formal contexts. Again, this is an area where more comparative research is needed.

Finally, the comparison between British and Australian English, as represented by OBC and COOEE respectively, has been the overarching question (5) accompanying all the previous aspects. In many cases, we have found more frequent

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(determiner) and often also rising usage (overall development, pronominal use, adverbial use with v./adj.) in Australian English versus stability or wavering development in British English. Australian English also shows the form as more grammatically entrenched with its preference for the degree usage.

In sum, by looking at the use and developmental trajectory of *deal* in late Modern British and Australian Englishes, we hope to have drawn attention to the interest and value that there is in comparisons made between developments in the mother country and the transplanted varieties. Australian English, in particular, presents a case of variety in "a fascinating language laboratory" where "[g]reat numbers of English speakers came from all over the British Isles with widely differing dialects and sociolects" (Fritz 2007: 25). Even though a number of factors may hamper one-to-one comparisons between the varieties, we can nevertheless expect to gain deeper insights into mechanisms of language change by means of this parallel approach than by focusing on only one of the data sources. Our study has also pointed to the need for paying attention to the role that both extralinguistic and linguistic factors play in forming the usage patterns across the history of the varieties. Finally, despite the increasing interest felt for World Englishes and their history, our study has highlighted the undeniable fact that *a good deal* still remains to be done.

References

Electronic resources

Primary data sources

COOEE = *Corpus of Oz Early English*, compiled by Clemens Fritz. 2004. Cf. http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/CoRD/corpora/COOEE/index.html.

OBC = *Old Bailey Corpus*. The speech-tagged and sociobiographically annotated version (version 1.0, 2013-06-04) compiled in the project: Huber, Magnus; Nissel, Magnus; Maiwald, Patrick; Widlitzki, Bianca. 2012. *The Old Bailey Corpus. Spoken English in the 18th and 19th centuries*. www.uni-giessen.de/oldbaileycorpus.

Other

ACE = *The Australian Corpus of English*. Compiled by Pam Peters. 1986. Cf. https://www.ausnc.org.au/corpora/ace

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CED = *Corpus of English Dialogues 1560–1760*. 2006. Compiled under the supervision of Merja Kytö & Jonathan Culpeper.

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CHAPTER 5

'*but a[h] Hellen d[ea]r sure you have it more in your power in every respect than I have*' – Discourse marker *sure* in Irish English

Kevin McCafferty and Carolina P. Amador-Moreno

Discourse marker *sure* has been a distinctive feature of Irish English for several centuries. Evidence from the *Corpus of Irish English Correspondence* highlights differences between discourse marker *sure* in IrE and other varieties. The IrE discourse marker does not typically occur between subject and verb, but at the beginning or end (and occasionally in the middle) of a clause. Also, IrE *sure* is not usually prominent intonationally and tends not to signal emphasis, but rather expected consensus. The historical letter data suggests a degree of hybridity between "American" and "Irish" usage patterns, offering qualified empirical support for the suggestion that AmE discourse marker *sure* might have originated in IrE uses carried to North America by emigrants.

Keywords: discourse marker, *sure*, Irish English, Corpus of Irish English Correspondence (CORIECOR), Corpus of Irish English (CIE)

1. Not just an emphatic opener: *sure* in Irish English

Research on discourse markers (DMs) has blossomed in recent years, with DMs attracting the attention of scholars interested in regional and pragmatic variation. Differences in the use of DMs between BrE and AmE, for example, are reported in Aijmer (2002), while Aijmer (2013: 127–147) also includes other regional varieties. Within variational pragmatics (Schneider & Barron 2008), the study of DMs provides new insights into factors that influence variation. Until recently, there were few studies of DMs in Irish English (IrE) and fewer again took a diachronic perspective.[1] The present study is concerned with the history and functions of DM *sure*, a

1. For studies of DMs in IrE, see the volumes edited by Barron & Schneider (2005), Migge & Ní Chiosáin (2012), and Amador-Moreno, McCafferty & Vaughan (2015). For diachronic studies, see Amador-Moreno & McCafferty (2015a, 2015b).

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well-known feature of IrE. DM *sure* has been little researched by scholars working on IrE, and what has been done so far deals with either present-day usage (Kallen 2006, 2013: 197–198; Barron 2015; Millar 2015; Murphy 2015) or case studies of literary authors (Amador-Moreno 2005, 2006) and advertising (O'Sullivan 2015).

Like other attested features of IrE, *sure* has attracted speculation as to whether its use as a DM in American English (AmE) might be due to IrE influence (Aijmer 2009: 339) as a consequence of mass emigration from Ireland to North America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, there is little evidence to support this. Suggesting that IrE might have influenced the development of AmE *sure*, Aijmer cites a quotation from the *Oxford English Dictionary*:

> [A] possible explanation for American *sure* is dialectal influence strengthening the use of *sure* in competition with *surely*. In the OED (s.v. *sure 3.a), sure* is for example marked as *Irish* in the meaning 'assuredly', 'undoubtedly' and 'for a certainty'. The following OED example is revealing in this respect since it imitates IrE:
>
> […] 'That's a drop of good Whiskey – eh, Pat? *Pat.* 'Faith, ye may well say that, Sorr, *Shure*, it wint down my T'roat loike a Torchlight Procession.'
>
> (1897 *Punch* 3 April 166/I) (Aijmer 2009: 339)

This meaning of *sure* does not accurately describe IrE usage, though even the *Dictionary of Hiberno-English* defines *sure* as "A common emphatic opening to sentences (cf. S[tandard] E[nglish] 'but')" (Dolan 2004: s.v. *sure*). While emphatic *sure* certainly occurs in IrE (O'Sullivan 2015: 326), the emphatically assertive meaning of the OED definition is not the primary sense of the IrE DM. As we will see, a range of other functions and meanings besides emphasis are conveyed by DM *sure* in IrE, chief among them being its use in signalling assumed consensus, appealing for agreement, indicating that something is obvious, and related functions.

DM *sure* has been a distinctive trait of IrE for centuries, surviving in spite of stereotyping and normative stigmatisation. The present study surveys the historical evidence in the literature on IrE and presents a diachronic survey of this DM, based on data from CORIECOR, the *Corpus of Irish English Correspondence* (McCafferty & Amador-Moreno in preparation). IrE *sure* is used in ways very different to those found in BrE, where it is seldom a DM; it also differs strikingly from AmE *sure*, both as regards the structural positions where it occurs and associated prosodic patterns. However, the results show some degree of hybridity and layering in that both "Irish" and "American" readings are possible for much of the IrE data, and in many cases either reading is possible. The present study thus offers qualified empirical support for Aijmer's (2009: 339) speculation that AmE uses of *sure* might have originated in IrE (and possibly also earlier BrE) uses of *sure* that were carried by emigrants to North America.

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2. A peculiarly Irish English phenomenon?

IrE uses of *sure* differ from those found in other varieties. Kallen (2006: 2013) quantifies the difference between IrE and BrE and identifies the ways in which *sure* is used in these varieties. However, there is no empirical account that permits the same kind of comparison between IrE and AmE, so for this latter combination, like Aijmer (2009), we have to rely on dictionaries.

Figure 1, based on Kallen's (2013) account, shows the notable differences between uses of *sure* in the standard IrE and BrE of the one-million word *ICE-Ireland* (ICE-IRL) and *ICE-Great Britain* (ICE-GB) corpora. Here results are given separately for the Republic of Ireland (RoI) and Northern Ireland (NI) subcorpora of ICE-IRL (approximately 500,000 words each). IrE north and south uses *sure* considerably more frequently overall than BrE. In NI, *sure* is equally divided between DM and lexical uses, while in the RoI, DM uses are in the majority. In contrast, BrE *sure* is almost exclusively lexical, with some use as a simple response (="yes"), but hardly ever as a DM.[2] Other recent accounts based on ICE-IRL (Kallen & Kirk 2008a) and SPICE-IRL (Kallen & Kirk 2008b) also show DM *sure* to be robust in present-day written and spoken standard IrE (see also Kallen 2006: 10).

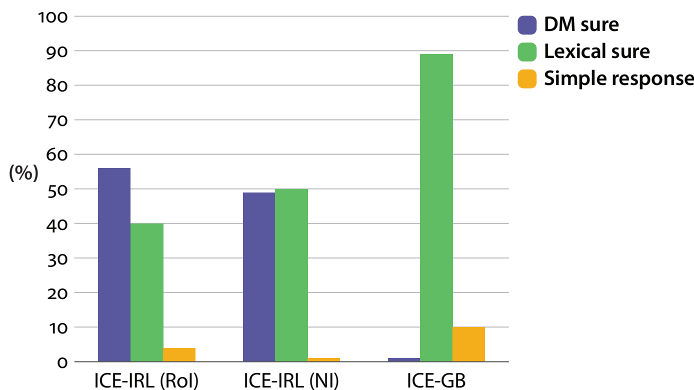

Figure 1. Uses of *sure* in ICE-Ireland and ICE-GB compared, spoken texts only, percentage use (after Kallen 2013: 198, Table 17; n = 219 (RoI), 220 (NI), 304 (GB))

In Figure 2, we compare Kallen's results for BrE and IrE according to the distribution of DM *sure* by utterance position.

2. An earlier comparison of IrE and BrE (Kallen 2006: 18) found no examples in BrE of DM *sure*: "all relevant [BrE] tokens use sentence-initial *sure* as a simple declaration of assent".

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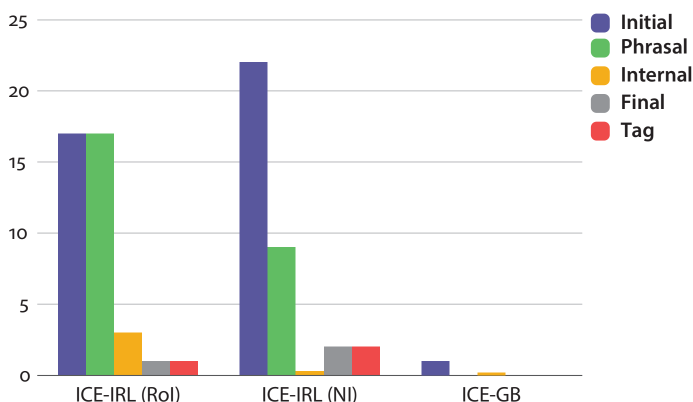

Figure 2. DM *sure* in various contexts in ICE-Ireland and ICE-GB, spoken texts only f/100k words (after Kallen 2013: 198, Table 17; n = 122 (RoI), 107 (NI), 4 (GB))[3]

Again, the stark contrast between IrE and BrE is indicated by the very low rate of DM uses in BrE. In both parts of Ireland, in contrast, DM *sure* is particularly frequent in initial and phrasal uses. We also see differences between the NI and RoI subcomponents of ICE-IRL: while initial and phrasal uses account for the overwhelming majority of instances in both parts of Ireland, bare initial *sure* is more frequent in NI than in the Republic, where these uses are equally frequent. DM *sure* in the other positions never exceeds 7% in either part of Ireland. Kallen's presentation shows IrE is clearly distinguished from BrE: *sure* is overwhelmingly lexical in BrE, with a minor secondary use as a simple response; in IrE, *sure* occurs more often than in BrE, but its use as a response is even more restricted than in Great Britain. Usage is more evenly divided in IrE, north and south, between lexical and DM uses.

IrE use of *sure* also differs in marked ways from AmE, with which it is sometimes equated. For example, the OED makes explicit reference to both varieties in its definition, which states that *sure* is used:

> Qualifying a statement: Assuredly, undoubtedly, for a certainty. Now *poet.* and, in asseverative expressions, *Irish* and *N. Amer. colloq.* (freq. introduced between subj. and vb., as a mere intensive). (OED: s.v. *sure* adv. 3a)

3. Kallen's frequencies per 1000 words have been recalculated per 100k words, to accord with the scale used in other CORIECOR-based studies. For the cells for which Kallen's Table 17 inserts "na" ("not available"), i.e., all but "Initial" for ICE-GB and "Internal" for the NI subcorpus of ICE-IRL, we calculate rates on the basis that the spoken part of the former corpus contains 600,000 words and the NI subcorpus 300,000 words.

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While the focus on positive assertion, intensifying function, and occurrence between subject and verb may accurately describe American usage, this does not capture the uses and functions of IrE *sure*.[4] Nor is the appearance of *sure* between subject and verb common in IrE today, as we will see when looking at data from this variety; the same applies to the older IrE of CORIECOR. However, the OED also defines a further use of adverbial *sure* as follows, citing examples from the mid-sixteenth to mid-nineteenth century:

> With weakened emphasis, it *(a)* becomes concessive = One must admit, admittedly, of course, *(b)* is used to guard against over-statement = At any rate, to say the least, or *(c)* = surely *adv.* 4b. Now *dial.*

The OED gives no indication of which dialects this kind of usage survives in, but it remains widespread in IrE, even in the relatively standard usage of ICE-IRL, and it is most frequent in the initial and phrasal uses that appear in all but two of the OED citations (see below, and Kallen 2013: 197–198). Also, the concessive and mitigating functions attributed to this use of *sure*, as well as lack of emphasis (i.e., stress or intonational prominence) are a better fit for the IrE DM than the first part of the OED definition cited earlier.

The most typical use of DM *sure* in IrE is to signal shared knowledge and the speaker's expectation of consensus; as Kallen puts it, DM *sure* in IrE is used "in linking together some prior knowledge, experience, or statement with the material that is to follow" (2013: 197). IrE DM *sure* also signals intimacy and may be a hedge or mitigator rather than a straightforward expression of certainty (Murphy 2015: 82–83).[5] As we see in Kallen's examples, cited as (1)–(14), the structural context specifically mentioned by the OED – occurrence between subject and verb – is not the most likely one in IrE. Only (8) might be interpreted in this way: if produced without stress on *sure*, it is an instance of the typical "Irish" usage; adding stress makes it "American". In IrE, DM *sure* is most frequent in clause-initial position, either on its own or in a phrasal collocation with *and, but, well*, etc., i.e., as an opener. It can, however, occur medially and clause-finally as well, and in tags, as Kallen's examples indicate (see also Barron 2015).

4. Like the *Punch* quotation cited by Aijmer (2009: 339), the other IrE example in the OED is a better illustration of this use with "weakened emphasis" (OED, s.v. *sure* adv. 3b; emphasis added, KMcC & CAM): "1842 S. Lover *Handy Andy* v, Och **sure**, my heart's broke with you". In contrast to many of the other OED citations, these phrasal and initial types (Kallen 2013: 197) are unlikely to be produced with stress or intonational prominence and cannot be emphatic.

5. In face-to-face conversation, IrE *sure* may also express contradiction, but the sense of expected consensus is usually present as well. The "postal conversations" that provide data for this study are not immediate enough to produce such tokens.

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Initial

(1) 'Don't forget to lock up the fowls.' '**Sure** I did that an hour ago.' (Joyce 1988[1910], 338)

(2) I'd a great ould time now <#> **Sure** I didn't know anyone else except Ronnie and me like <#> And I obviously knew myself like (S1A-090)

(3) It's not too bad <#> **Sure** 'tisn't (S1A-099)

Phrasal

(4) But **sure** one Irishman was more than a match for two Frenchmen (Griffin 1919: 39)

(5) Well **sure** you could try it on (S1A-099)

(6) Aye **sure** that that's the point I'm making (S1A-055) //

Internal

(7) I ran to the bed, an' **sure** there I found her dying (Griffin 1919: 309)

(8) A place like Saint Ita's **sure** would be ideal for the likes of him (S1A-055)

(9) And the next week **sure** wasn't I on <,> wasn't I on the two nights (S1A-059)

Final

(10) They wouldn't kill me in my own country, **sure** (Walshe 2009: 123)

(11) Try them anyway <#> They're they're worth trying **sure** (S1A-090)

(12) That's fine **sure** (S1A-098)

Tags

(13) Now <,> you you didn't have that long with the Dubs really **sure you didn't** <#> You'd probably only two or three years (S1B-047)

(14) Sure it's not in Thurles **sure is it** (S1A-081) (after Kallen 2013: 197–198)

IrE *sure* differs in meaning from AmE *sure* in other important respects, too: the IrE DM points to old information – prior knowledge or experience, or a previous statement in an ongoing discourse – that the speaker/writer assumes is shared with hearers/readers. Beyond that, the speaker/writer often expects agreement. In contrast, American *sure* makes an assertion, stating the user's certainty. In IrE, *sure* furthers discourse by maintaining interpersonal accord, building rapport, reinforcing social bonds, and appealing to shared knowledge (Amador-Moreno 2005; Amador-Moreno & McCafferty 2015a, 2015b). There is in the IrE usage an assumption of consensus arising from the user's belief that the content of the proposition highlighted by *sure* is somehow self-evident,

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beyond discussion, expressing knowledge or attitudes which there is no doubt that both parties share.[6]

Moreover, IrE *sure* also differs from American *sure* in its prosodic and phonological treatment. In examples like (15)–(16), AmE *sure* occurs between subject and verb, and both examples are likely to be uttered (or read) with intonational stress on *sure*.[7]

(15) Many thanks for those nice pictures of your lovely boys. They **sure** are sweet looking. Mrs. Michael Bernard Hanlon, 04.07.1932 (Wells 1991: 112)

(16) Bernard is feeling fine now, and looks better than before he was sick, but his hair is more gray. We **sure** feel thankful we were left together for a while longer. Mrs. Michael Bernard Hanlon, 04.07.1932 (Wells 1991: 113)

This American use of *sure* is encountered to some extent in IrE, too, both historically (see below) and today: O'Sullivan (2015: 326) reports that 4 of 18 tokens in her corpus of Irish radio advertisements were "US usages". American *sure* is typically realised with a full vowel, with or without an off-glide /ʊ/~/ʊᵊ/, or /ɜ˞ː/; it carries stress and is often intonationally prominent; it may even form an intonation unit by itself. In all structural positions, IrE *sure* is typically produced with a centralised vowel /ʌ/ that may be phonetically reduced to (rhotacised) schwa. It is an unstressed element within a larger intonation unit that either opens or closes with *sure* (or has unstressed *sure* in medial position). This lack of prominence sets IrE *sure* apart prosodically from usage in AmE and other Englishes; it may explain why *sure* is less frequently used as a simple response (="yes") in IrE.

The present study takes a historical perspective on DM *sure*, using CORIECOR, which contains personal letters written between Irish people from the late seventeenth century to the early twentieth. In the next section, we review the literature on the distinctively IrE uses of *sure*, sketching its development and examining evidence for the origins of IrE *sure*. The analysis builds on Kallen's (2013) treatment, allowing for a range of alternative readings for this DM. We suggest that the emphatic "American" use of *sure* might be either a continuation of or further development from IrE usage, and possibly also from earlier, but now obsolete, BrE uses transported to North America.

6. In Newfoundland English, a variety heavily influenced by IrE, the IrE uses of DM *sure* are noted by Clarke (2010: 80), who remarks that this DM "indicates that a statement should be obvious or self-evident" (Clarke 2010: 126).

7. These examples are from letters written by an American-born grandchild of Irish emigrants.

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3. Previous accounts of IrE *sure*

The DM functions and prosodic qualities associated with IrE *sure* make it diagnostic of this variety and it has long been familiar to observers. It is so firmly established in IrE that it shows little gender or age differentiation, unlike newer DMs, such as *like* (Murphy 2015: 82–83). DM *sure* is a well-known feature of IrE that may almost be regarded as a stereotype (Amador-Moreno 2005); Millar (2015) speculates that its use in online beauty blogs might be formulaic. Certainly, DM *sure* is used today in films and advertising to signal Irishness (Kelly-Holmes 2005; Walshe 2009: 122–123; O'Sullivan 2015). This indexical function is old. A classic survey of nonstandard English in literature notes that: "[…] some words and phrases have become associated with certain people: *look you* is a sign of Welshness and *sure* of an Irish speaker" (Blake 1981: 15). Discussing Maria Edgeworth's drama *Love and Law* (1817), Blake observes: "The most noteworthy lexical item is the occurrence of *sure* […]" (1981: 135). Of the language of the same author's *Castle Rackrent* (1800), Blake remarks: "[…] *sure* […] is used to introduce a question as in '**Sure** can't you sell though at a loss?'" (1981: 135; emphasis added, KMcC & CAM). These are useful comments on a feature that strikes the ear of a non-Irish speaker of English, but the claim that *sure* introduces questions is not accurate even for *Castle Rackrent*, probably because it is based on a reader's vague impressions rather than empirical investigation of *sure* in the novel.

Our examination of DM *sure* in *Castle Rackrent*, using CIE, the *Corpus of Irish English* (Hickey 2003),[8] found only 4 of 13 tokens introducing questions, as in (17)–(20); the remaining 9 tokens in (21)–(29) all occur in statements, 8 clause-initially and only one (29) clause-finally. Note that (22) and (25) are instances of Kallen's phrasal type.

(17) "**Sure** you wouldn't refuse to be my lady Rackrent, Judy, if you had the offer?"

(18) "[…] why what signifies it to be my lady Rackrent and no Castle? – **sure** what good is the car and no horse to draw it?"

(19) "Oh, murder, Jason! **sure** you won't put this in?"

(20) "**Sure** can't you sell, though at a loss? […]"

(21) "Thady, (says he) as far as the wake goes, **sure** I might without any great trouble have the satisfaction of seeing a bit of […]"

8. The CIE (Hickey 2003) consists mainly of dramatic texts, and has DM *sure* in works by George Farquhar (1677–1707), Oliver Goldsmith (1730–74), Thomas Sheridan (1719–88) and Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816), among others. *Sure* has apparently functioned as a DM in IrE since the early eighteenth century at least. Østebøvik (2010) is a study based on the entire CIE.

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(22) "Oh, Judy, is it you? (says his honor) yes, **sure** I remember you very well – but you're greatly altered, Judy."

(23) "**Sure** it's time for me, (says she) […]"

(24) "You can't see him yet, (says I) **sure** he is not awake."

(25) "A penny for your thoughts, Judy, (says my shister) hark, **sure** Sir Condy is drinking her health."

(26) "[…] **sure** I was as careful as possible all the time you were away, […]"

(27) "**Sure** I could not get the glazier, Ma'am," says I.

(28) "[…] - **sure** you can sell, and I've a purchaser ready for you," says Jason.

(29) "[…] it would have gone hard with me but I would have been at it **sure** […]"
(data extracted from CIE, Hickey 2003)

As mentioned above, in contrast to BrE and AmE, *sure* in IrE seldom occurs as a simple response (equivalent to emphatic *yes*), which is one of its main uses on the other side of the Atlantic. Nor is it frequent between subject and (modal) verb. In the Edgeworth data, there is not a single token of these types. It is, however, also worth noting that (28) follows on directly from the interrogative in (20), and would thus be possible with intonational prominence. It is therefore potentially a hybrid example, capable of Irish/unstressed or American/stressed readings; below, we suggest that the presence of tokens of this type in CORIECOR may have been the route by which IrE DM *sure* contributed to the stressed AmE *sure* that typically occurs between subjects and (modal) verbs. All in all, however, usage in *Castle Rackrent* accords rather closely to what we have observed in Kallen's ICE-IRL data. As we will see, the use of *sure* predominantly in clause-initial position, either alone or in a phrase, and lacking stress, as pointed out by Taniguchi (1972[1956]: 39–40), Todd (1989: 37), Amador-Moreno (2005: 83–91, 2006: 141–152, 2010: 120) and Kallen (2006: 10, 2013: 197–198), is also quite an accurate representation of how *sure* is used in the older IrE of CORIECOR.

As a typical, even stereotypical, IrE feature, DM *sure* has attracted commentary.[9] It has been pointed out that, although it hardly features in the earlier material surveyed by Bliss (1979), it had attracted attention by 1909 (Kallen 2013: 197). However, this is likely to be due to a lack of research interest in DMs until recently rather than lack of earlier use in IrE. Certainly, Edgeworth and other literary authors noticed DM *sure* and used it in portrayals of IrE. Bliss' (1979) anthology contains examples like (30)–(36), where *sure* is used in ways still recognisable as IrE.

9. For discussion, see Amador-Moreno and McCafferty (2015b).

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(30) "**Sure, sure**!" sayes Nees, "dis me old vench is!"
(Anon., *Purgatorium Hibernicum*, 1670–75; Bliss 1979: 117)

(31) "**Sure, sure**!" sayes Nees, "she does but jeast! …"
(Anon., *Purgatorium Hibernicum*, 1670–75; Bliss 1979: 119)

(32) my very Servant! **sure** I dream.
(George Farquhar, *The twin rivals*, 1702/1703; Bliss 1979: 141)

(33) **Sure** the business must be very urgent, when the Postage is so dear.
(Susanna Centlivre, *A wife well managed*, 1715; Bliss 1979: 153)

(34) 'Tis but phipping and shooting all the time; 'tis the same thing in the end **sure**, after all your cunning;
(Thomas Sheridan, *The brave Irishman*, 1740/1754; Bliss 1979: 1)

(35) Phat magnifies that, you fool? 'tis all the same thing, **sure**.
(Thomas Sheridan, *The brave Irishman*, 1740/1754; Bliss 1979: 167)

(36) And if I have not better cloaths on now, phat magnifies that? **sure** I can have them on to-morrow
(Thomas Sheridan, *The brave Irishman*, 1740/1754; Bliss 1979: 167)

Though there are just these few tokens in Bliss (1979), they exemplify variation between clause-initial and clause-final uses, even in the same work, as illustrated in the examples from Sheridan in (34)–(36).

4. *Sure* in the Corpus of Irish English Correspondence

At the time of writing (January 2018) CORIECOR provides 1,347 tokens of *sure* in all, of which just 64 (5%) are DMs. These fulfill a range of functions. *Sure* is used in the letters to justify the actions and opinions of the letter writers and others. In (37), for example, the writer introduces a firm opinion with the hedge *sure*, either inviting or signalling acceptance of his view. And he is surely uniquely well placed to know how much pork his family eats.

(37) we keep one span of horses four milchs cows five heads of young catle ten sheep two hogs fifty hens thirty gees and a nomber of ducks and turkys **Sur** I say of a truth that it takes about eight hundred pounds of poark for our house for the year (David Brown, 09.06.1882)

This use of *sure* is similar in function to (38), where it acts as a mitigator, downtoning the potential reprimand in the statement "I often told you", but also highlighting that this is knowledge shared by both parties.

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(38) Janes glad you have got to make mens suits **sure** I often told you. (Anon., 24.02.1886)

Regardless of clause position, *sure* often makes an appeal to shared knowledge, additionally maintaining interpersonal accord and reinforcing social bonds, as in (39)–(41).

(39) Noble says he is coming out here next spring **sure** he has been talking about coming for the last year or two but his father is not willing that he should come (William Beatty, 09.08.1875)

(40) Marianne Seed is not to be married for some months yet. But **sure** Robert Greer is to be married in the course of a month, to a Miss Cooper an English lady, (Jane Ellen Orr, 28.06.1848)

(41) this is the day of the republican convention they are having great excitement firing cannons & every thing to make a noise we are expecting a fire **sure** this is a great country for drink & rowing at elections (W.J. Weir, 26.08.1890)

These uses are distinctive of IrE, where *sure* tends to be uttered as part of a larger intonation group, attracting neither stress nor intonational prominence, and being realised with a reduced vowel. An added implicature of the appeal to shared knowledge is that the IrE DM is often an appeal for consensus, as suggested above (Amador-Moreno 2005: 87; Hickey 2007: 375). For instance, the letter writer who produced (42) might have thought disagreement unimaginable in this case, since postage was cheap by external objective standards, as measured by the price of a stamp, and the speaker who uttered (43)–(44) is likewise referring to something inevitable.

(42) Mary says its not worth much all I have wrote but **sure** its only a penny after all (Eliza C. Smyth, 30.03.1899)

(43) **Sure**, that the way it is. (WER, F85+) (after Hickey 2007: 375)

(44) **Sure**, we all have to go some time (WER, F85+) (after Hickey 2007: 375)

There is a real sense in which DM *sure* in such contexts signals that the user is stating the obvious.

In contrast, non-lexical *sure* in BrE is reported as overwhelmingly a simple response signalling assent (Kallen 2006: 18). In AmE, *sure* is likewise normally an affirmative response to "offers, invitations and requests [or] to thanks and apologies [as well as] a backchannel item" (Aijmer 2009: 328). Aijmer also observes that AmE *sure* is "emphatic and evaluative" (2009: 326), but in interaction can additionally convey meanings like counter-assertion or challenge (Aijmer 2009: 327); as we will see, there are some tokens in CORIECOR that also convey counter-assertion.

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In the past, IrE *sure* attracted prescriptivist condemnation. Hayden & Hartog noted its "abuse" as an "interjection [or] expletive", attributing this to "a Gaelic use transferred" (1909: 784), though they go no further into this.[10] Stoney (1885: 35–37) regarded it as an Irishism to be avoided, observing that it was an uneducated "misuse". And Joyce too refers to the pervasiveness and social range of *sure*, describing it in more neutral terms as "[…] one of our commonest opening words for a sentence" (1988[1910]: 338–339).

In summary, DM *sure* is a feature that distinguishes IrE from other varieties. It may have been an IrE DM for up to 400 years, surviving in spite of normative stigmatisation. Its presence in CORIECOR letters may shed some light on its diachronic development and its relationship to AmE DM *sure*.

5. *Sure* in CORIECOR

Of the five structural positions where DM *sure* is used in present-day IrE, four are represented in the CORIECOR data; there are no tokens in tags from the letters. Nor do we have any simple response uses, which also belong to face-to-face interaction. CORIECOR provides 64 DM uses of *sure* for analysis. Their distribution through time is shown in Table 1. The earliest attestation in the corpus occurs in the 1760s, though most tokens are from the late nineteenth century.

Table 1. Chronological distribution of DM *sure* in CORIECOR (n = 64)

	Sure	%		*Sure*	%
1760s	1	*2*	1850s	4	*6*
1770s	1	*2*	1860s	3	*5*
1780s	0	*0*	1870s	3	*5*
1790s	0	*0*	1880s	7	*11*
1800s	2	*3*	1890s	15	*23*
1810s	5	*8*	1900s	2	*3*
1820s	7	*11*	1910s	7	*11*
1830s	5	*8*	1920s	0	*0*
1840s	1	*2*	1930s	1	*2*
			TOTAL	*64*	

10. Hayden and Hartog cite only incidental uses in examples illustrating other features: "**Sure**, 'tis often enough I did be telling him" (1909: 936), "**Sure**, sir, I laid it on its right side, and it turned over on me" (1909: 939).

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Figure 3 summarises the distribution of DM *sure* across a modified version of Kallen's (2013) categories. Initial and phrasal uses predominate, as in Kallen's data, accounting for 20 (31%) and 23 (36%) of all tokens, respectively. Initial uses of *sure* on its own as an opener are cited in (45)–(50). Note that the lack of punctuation in many CORIECOR letters sometimes makes it difficult to determine whether a token is initial or final. In (46), for example, *sure* might belong with either the preceding or following clause. Our reading is that it is initial (*sure he has been talking…*), but it is impossible to entirely rule out a final reading (*Noble says he is coming out here next spring sure*).

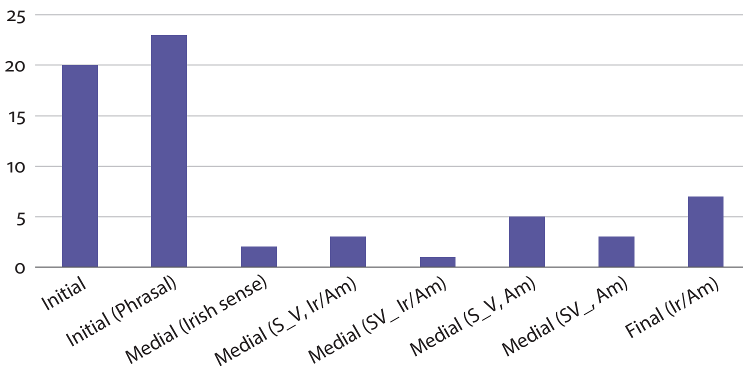

Figure 3. *Sure* as DM in CORIECOR (n = 64)

Initial sure (n = 20)

(45) **sur** you give us a long list of your famely with names which we will give you a return of ours (David Brown, 09.06.1882)

(46) Noble says he is coming out here next spring **sure** he has been talking about coming for the last year or two but his father is not willing that he should come (William Beatty, 09.08.1875)

(47) **Sure** you may wonder the cause of the delay after writing many letters to him on the subject (James Heather, 01.07.1835)

(48) **sure** he was thankfull when he heard the news likely he was the length of Belfast. (Eliza Smyth, 13.12.1918)

(49) Oh, Mary dear, isn't my master a fine man? – **Sure** you saw him the day we sailed. (Bridget Lacy, August, 1832)

(50) Dear Mother, I hope you won't be ruining yourself fretting for them when they go away. **Sure** they won't forget you there no more than at home. (M. Coogan, 27.04.1863)

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These tokens of initial *sure* in the letters signal consensus, expressing knowledge, opinions or attitudes shared by letter writers and addressees.

Twenty-three tokens (36%) are what Kallen (2013: 197–198) calls phrasal uses. Together, these phrasal uses, exemplified in (51)–(56), and the other initial tokens account for 43/65 occurrences in the CORIECOR data (67%). We regard these as a subtype of initial use, since they are most frequently found clause-initially. In this phrasal type, *sure* is preceded mostly by a single word, usually *but* or *and*, as in (51)–(52). There are also a couple of longer phrasal elements in the data: *but a[h] Hellen d[ea]r sure*(53), *and Miss Harrison sure*(54), and *Oh yes sure*(55). Another usage best regarded as phrasal is (56), where *Sure an[d]* illustrates a use listed in glossaries and dictionaries (e.g., Traynor 1953: s.v. *sure*; Macafee 1996: s.v. *sure*). This particular usage is also found in the works of the Donegal (Ulster) novelist Patrick MacGill (Amador-Moreno 2005: 85, 87, 2006: 146–147). Given that Traynor's is a glossary of Donegal dialect and Macafee's dictionary is focused on Ulster dialect more generally, this is possibly a regional, Northern IrE usage.[11]

Phrasal (initial) sure (n = 23)

(51) But **sure** Hanah Christy is going to be married shortly, for certain I hear to Rheubon Harvey her own full cousin. (Thomas Greeves, Tyrone, 03.08.1818)

(52) and **shure** I could not But thank you then for getting it (Mrs Nolan, 08.10.1850)

(53) but a Hellen dr **sure** you have it more in your power in every respect than I have (Sarah Gaylard, 17.02.1769)

(54) and Miss Harrison **sure** two gentlemen is going to give you and her a great drive through Detroit (Mary Lavage, 16.06.1891)

11. Tagliamonte (2012) does not study DM *sure*, but there are tokens in her Northern Ireland data: "[…] They could come in like and startle you and *sure* what can you do? What could I do with anybody that come in? *Sure* I could do nothing." (2012: 167; italics ours, KMcC/CAM). Tagliamonte asks rhetorically what *sure* is doing here (2012: 222, n8). Another example from Cumnock in Scotland is cited as a sentential adverb: "*Sure* it's terrible isn't it?" (Tagliamonte 2012: 78; italics ours, KMcC & CAM). This suggests that *sure* in Scots/Scottish English might be worth investigating. Similar uses there would strengthen the case for retention from earlier Scots. In the *Corpus of Late Eighteenth-Century Prose*, there is just one token of *sure* that probably expresses emphasis (Denison and van Bergen "our Pointon neighbour is *sure* very Uncertain, however see him as soon as he arrives" (Legh Peter the Younger 09.08.1778; emphasis added, KMcC & CAM). That *sure* might also be worth investigating in Early Modern English is suggested by examples cited in Algeo's discussion of the absence of adverbial *-ly* endings: "And sure deare friends my thankes are too deare a halfepeny" (*Hamlet*); "Sure the Gods doe this yeere connive at us" (*Winter's Tale*) (Algeo 2010: 164).

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(55) I would think some such Tonic just the thing for you Father (Oh yes **sure** you could use a little [?] as well to make sure of success)
(R. and M. Thompson, 19.02.1920)

(56) **Sure** an I am afraid he is going to leave (Charles Wilson, 28.06.1820)

Medial position is less frequent than initial and phrasal (initial) uses; there are 14 tokens of medial DM *sure* in the letters (22%). The medial examples are interesting, however, in that they show different functions. The tokens in (57)–(62) are unlikely to carry stress and are statements of assumed consensus. In (57), the behaviour described is regarded as simply not appropriate in church, and the writer is certain his reader will agree, while (58) refers to knowledge assumed to be shared between letter writer and reader(s).

Medial sure (Irish sense) (n = 2)

(57) Others Praying Others Singing and Others Shouting Glory Glory as Loud as they can Bawl and wringing and Clapping their hands and Such Other Conduct **Sure** Man Never Seen in Religious Worship (James Nevin, 10.04.1804)

(58) he has saved a good bit of money and 21ays he is coming home to Ireland **sure** agan the month of April (William Murphy, 16.09.1873)

However, most medial uses are interpretable as either stressed/American or unstressed/Irish uses. The three tokens in (59)–(61) are capable of being read with or without intonational prominence and therefore carrying either meaning. Note that *sure* in (59)–(61) occurs in the typical AmE position, between subject and (modal) verb; however, as (62) indicates, this word order is not obligatory.

Medial sure (American/Irish sense, between subject and verb) (n = 3)

(59) The remainder of the plot of ground owned by him **sure** would sell for as much as the Tenant right of the best farm in our parish (Frank Robb, 03.11.1805)

(60) Claras is still living but no better Mary **sure** will wright to you likewise Emma.
(George Askey, 09.12.1855)

(61) the last time that i was home when i arrived in down the first morning mass i **sure** was the taylor and we had a great time and as uesal
(Thomas McCullough, 18.06.1884)

Medial sure (American/Irish sense, not between subject and verb) (n = 1)

(62) But I am **shure** not as well as some of the others.
(Thomas McCullough, 18.06.1884)

These medial tokens that can be read as either Irish or American uses of *sure* may well be the kind of hybrids that paved the way for AmE *sure* to develop out of the

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IrE DM. If that is the case, then it is significant that CORIECOR also contains a small number of tokens that *must* be read as the stressed/American use.

There are 8 medial tokens, cited in (63)–(70), of the stressed/American kind that the OED calls a "mere intensive". These are all likely to express emphasis, with some degree of stress on *sure*. They occur with *sure* between subject and verb in (63)–(67), though not in (68)–(70).

Medial sure (American sense, between subject and verb) (n = 5)

(63) The mention of your "vacation" spent with Liz & Willie & Percy & Jinty in November (You **sure** must have enjoyed a great deal, from what you say) reminds me of their bigheartedness when I was there.
(R. & M. Thompson, 19.02.1920)

(64) Percy sent us such a lovely Irish calander & then the Song "Donegal" & Percy & London Illustrated paper it **sure** is a dandy (R. & M. Thompson, 19.02.1920)

(65) and Id like to see the 20 year old I couldn't catch, maybe not in 100 yds, but Id **sure** get home before a mile passed, how about it Percy?
(Stuart Thompson, 22.02.1920)

(66) I know home ties have a good deal to do with it but I thought you would **sure** come back here (Lina ?, 29.11.1892)

(67) but as soon as I can get a chance to get off to have them taken I will **shure** send you one (George Burton, 04.03.1889)

Medial sure (American sense, not between subject and verb) (n = 3)

(68) I was **sure** happy to hear that Mother and all our Brothers was well and was likely to do well (John Carse, 15.06.1857)

(69) if he is spared he will be **shure** home next fawl, with his yankee wife
(Samuel Shaw, 02.02.1876)

(70) Will and I could not come up this month but we are coming up the [*torn, KMcC and CAM*] of July, **sure** if they [h]ive any doings or not (Edward ?, 22.06.1889)

The stressed/American use is a minority one in this IrE data, amounting to 13% of the data (n = 8/64), but its coexistence alongside the undoubtedly Irish and the ambiguously Irish or American uses is suggestive of variation in earlier IrE that made a range of uses available for selection in overseas Englishes to which this variety contributed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[12]

12. In his discussion of the absence of *-ly* endings on Early Modern English adverbs, Algeo cites an example from Shakespeare's *Othello* that looks like one of these medial uses: "If she come in, shee'l sure speake to my wife" (2010: 164).

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Finally, *sure* occurs least often in final position. There are 7 tokens of clause-final *sure* in the CORIECOR data (11%), and all of these, cited in (71)–(77), are capable of either American or Irish readings.

Final sure (American/Irish sense) (n = 7)

(71) What Jim was talking about. I want you to have that **sure**. Everything else would be bad enough but that would be worse. (Mary Smyth, 20.04.1903)

(72) I am going home now **sure** as Dr & Mrs Brien are also going and of course they are going to visit us. (James A. Smyth, 10.03.1910)

(73) the girls wants some of the boys to come out **shure** (William Smyth, 01.02.1891)

(74) P.S. I forgot to say On no account enter no wine or spirit business as an apprentice If you do the Devil will get you **sure** – no redemption, (James A. Smyth, 15.05.1898)

(75) so you rest content you will get paid by us **Sure**. and as soon as ever we can, (George McClean, 19.09.1930)

(76) yet I cant say what is the matter with him for he said he would write **sure** Some are obliged to say that he has deserted and gone to America (Bella M. Smyth, 16.08.1900)

(77) Dear Sister, James has kept all your letters in reserve reply **sure** (Annie Hagan, 21.11.1892)

These potentially hybrid variants are likely to express either emphasis or consensus, depending on whether they are read with or without stress. Like the medial tokens that may be treated in this way, these hybrids, too, may have prepared the way for AmE *sure*.

The CORIECOR data consists of 64 tokens of DM *sure*, which is not enough for detailed quantitative study through time and geographical or social space. Nonetheless, this data documents the use of DM *sure* in IrE over the last few centuries, indicating how long it has been found in different structural positions. It also raises the question of whether the variant interpretations might indicate potential paths for the development of this DM towards today's typically IrE and AmE usages, as well as showing that the variation from which AmE might well have selected its DM uses of *sure* was present in the IrE input into the feature pool from which AmE emerged.

Unstressed *sure* expressing consensus was present in EModE and is therefore old enough to have been brought to Ireland during the period of British settlement, which started in the 1550s and lasted until around 1700 (Fitzgerald & Lambkin 2008). The earliest OED citation from 1552–53 is almost exactly contemporaneous with the first large-scale British colonies in early modern Ireland. The oldest token

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in our IrE data is dated 1760, and DM *sure* is present throughout the rest of the period covered by CORIECOR occurring in four of the five structural positions identified by Kallen (2013). We have highlighted the fact that alternative readings of certain tokens are possible in some cases. In all, 19/64 tokens (30%) are actually capable of supporting what we have termed an "American" reading. Overlaps of this kind are suggestive of how the emphatic AmE uses of *sure* might have developed from the IrE (and possibly also earlier BrE) uses taken to North America by emigrants, as Aijmer (2009: 339) speculates. However, before drawing firm conclusions on this point, we should ideally compare our findings with corpus data from other regional varieties of BrE (Scots and Scottish English included), AmE, and others. As more historical corpora of regional varieties are developed, such studies will become increasingly feasible.

6. Conclusions and further directions

Here, we have focussed on a single DM in CORIECOR: *sure* in IrE. We have argued that the evidence of this corpus of personal correspondence suggests *sure* has been used in various structural positions over the last few centuries, and that DM *sure* might have followed an interesting developmental path. One possibility is that it was first imported into IrE from EModE during the period of British settlement, then re-exported across the Atlantic through emigration. The OED citations would support the first part of this proposal; the second part would be supported by the coexistence of alternative uses and functions discussed above, which suggests that the emphatic AmE use of *sure* could have developed out of IrE (and possibly also older BrE) uses transported to North America, with different options becoming the norm in AmE and IrE.

CORIECOR is too small to permit definitive claims regarding the historical development of this DM, and we would ideally like to be able to compare IrE with other varieties in greater detail, but the present study nonetheless suggests DMs may be a valuable site for investigating variation between IrE and other Englishes, and that letters are useful for reconstructing the diachronic development of DMs in IrE and other varieties.

This investigation into the uses of DM *sure* in CORIECOR draws attention to the need for further diachronic analysis of IrE itself, as well as comparisons with other varieties. Analyses of this kind might address issues related to the diffusion of DMs between varieties. Future analysis of DM *sure* in CORIECOR, accounting for social aspects such as the nature of relationships between letter writers and readers, social status, level of education, gender, and regional distribution will help shed further light on the use and development of these features in IrE.

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CHAPTER 6

Scotland's contribution to English vocabulary in Late Modern times

Marina Dossena

This chapter discusses some nineteenth-century Scottish authors, lexicographers, and periodicals that are frequently cited as sources in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, in order to assess their role in the expansion of English vocabulary that occurred throughout Late Modern times. As these citations concern the first instances of both new lexical items and of new meanings, their proportion is analyzed paying special attention to the former. Literary sources are considered on account of their relative popularity at different points in time, but the article also discusses periodicals and dictionaries, which could have a greater or lesser encyclopaedic approach to the vocabulary they collected. The study shows that the complexity of lexical accretion in Late Modern times requires the study of a broad range of materials in the cultural framework in which they were produced and received.

Keywords: Late Modern English, Scotland, Scots, Scottish English, lexicography, lexical borrowing, cultural history

1. Introduction

After the Union of Parliaments in 1707, Scotland's role within Great Britain changed in many ways. On the one hand, it became more marginal, as all political decisions were now taken in London, and almost anyone wishing to climb the social ladder had to move south – a move which, in the long run, would have a considerable cultural impact on people and indeed on Scotland itself. On the other hand, Scotland maintained its distinctiveness in various important fields: religion, the law, the education system, and of course literature. At the same time, the scientific developments that would make Late Modern times a significant epoch owe much to Scottish intellectuals, and the Scottish Enlightenment undoubtedly influenced much European and North American thought. Nonetheless, Scottish speakers were consistently, and sometimes insistently, encouraged to 'improve' their language by conforming to 'standard' models of usage, and countless grammar books,

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pronunciation dictionaries, spelling guides and lists of proscribed Scotticisms were published.[1]

The cultural landscape of Late Modern Scotland thus appears to be quite complex and often ambivalent, and within this framework it may be worth investigating the contribution of Scottish sources to the changes witnessed in English vocabulary throughout the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries.[2] Interestingly, the figures in the timelines presented in the website of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*) indicate the nineteenth century as the time in which the highest number of new lexical items and new meanings were recorded (Dossena 2012). In this study I aim to outline in what ways this type of change in lexical expansion and semantic values is due to Scottish sources. Special attention will be given to the items first cited in literary works (especially those by Sir Walter Scott, who follows *The Times* and William Shakespeare as the third most frequently quoted source in the *OED*), in dictionaries, and in materials published in periodicals such as *Blackwood's Magazine*, in order to rely on a sufficiently broad range of sources addressing diverse readerships.

1.1 Late Modern Scotland between antiquity and innovation

Especially after 1746, when the Jacobite cause was defeated, and indeed throughout Late Modern times, Scots was praised as the language of pastoral expression, poetry and emotion, while a huge number of publications provided guidance on how to avoid "Scotticisms", i.e. "provincial" and "vulgar" forms (see Dossena forthcoming). It may therefore seem surprising to see that the statistical data on the website of the *OED* appear to attribute relative significance to Scottish sources of vocabulary. These figures are of course a function of editorial policies, which have obviously changed over time, and which may have had to depend on the data provided by voluntary readers according to the sources that were (arbitrarily) selected to collect such data. However, the picture we may derive from these findings can be of interest when discussing the importance of individual authors or publications in a more general perspective.

Starting from an overarching framework, we find that, in its 'timeline' section, the *OED* provides an overview of what languages appear to have had an impact on

1. An overview of these often contrasting attitudes at different points in time is Dossena (2005).

2. Among Raymond Hickey's numerous and all very valuable contributions to English historical linguistics, it is certainly appropriate to cite here his book on eighteenth-century English (Hickey 2010), in which he provides an extensive list of the grammars, dictionaries, elocution manuals, and other educational materials that were published (mostly in London) between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

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the history of English vocabulary.[3] In this respect, we find that Britain is indicated as a source of vocabulary in 28,948 cases; of these, a considerable number appear to derive from Scotland – indeed, as many as 18,617 items are said to originate in Scotland, as opposed to 10,631 which are said to originate in England.[4] If the Scottish data are analyzed in greater detail, we see that 30 items are attributed to "Northern Scotland", 321 to Shetland, 221 to Orkney, and only 27 to "Southern Scotland". The distinction between the two mainland areas, however, is hardly fine-grained, and does not take into consideration the typical Highland / Lowland separation that had been in existence for centuries, and in which the greater or lesser influence of Gaelic had undoubtedly played a part in language variation and change; indeed, the *OED* only identifies 74 items as originating in Scottish Gaelic.

As for diachronic developments, it is also striking, though perhaps less so, that – again according to the *OED* timelines – the greatest contribution should come from the sixteenth century, with as many as 4,539 items, while there is a sharp decline in the following century, with 2,092 items, a slight increase in the eighteenth century, with 2,650 items, and another very small increase again in the nineteenth century, with 3,520 items. However, the *OED* is ambiguous in its treatment of Scottish sources; in spite of the significance of the continuum existing in usage between Scots and Scottish English, it is never clearly indicated whether headwords are closer to the former or the latter, and in entries the abbreviation "Sc." may refer to either. Consequently, it is perhaps more useful to look at the actual sources from which quotations are included, so as to discuss their relative importance as far as Scots is concerned, and also in relation to their contribution to language variation and change more in general.

In order to select such sources, external criteria have to be applied, which concern the author's place of origin and/or the place of publication of specific sources; in an attempt to consider different text types and ideally as wide a range of readers as possible, nine sources have been selected for this investigation: four literary figures (Robert Burns [1759–1796], Walter Scott [1771–1832], James Hogg [1770–1835], and Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]), two lexicographers (John Jamieson [1759–1838] and Andrew Ure [1778–1857]), and three periodicals (*Blackwood's Magazine*, henceforth *Maga*, as it was nicknamed at the time [1817–1980]; the *Edinburgh Review* [1802–1929], and the *Glasgow Herald* [1805–]). Details concerning their appearance in the *OED* are provided in Table 1; the numbers in the first

3. As the *OED* is now updated both regularly and frequently, in future quantitative data may be found to have varied as entries are antedated or revised; what is presented here was valid at the time of writing (March 2019).

4. Given the uncertainty of some etymological attributions, figures do not necessarily add up.

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column indicate what place the entries occupy among the 1,000 most frequently quoted source.[5]

Table 1. Selected sources of quotations in the *OED*: Quantitative data

Place among the 1,000 most frequently quoted sources in the OED	Name	Total number of quotations
3	Scott	17,126
20	*Maga*	8,260
117	Burns	2,926
122	*Edinburgh Review*	2,786
126	Stevenson	2,639
135	*Glasgow Herald*	2,593
209	Ure	1,926
228	Jamieson	1,807
559	Hogg	856

Sir Walter Scott and *Maga* feature in the top twenty most frequently quoted sources in the *OED* and all of the sources selected for this study, except for Hogg, fall into the first 250 most frequently quoted sources (i.e., they are in the top 25%). However, they do not seem to have contributed to English vocabulary in the same way; Tables 2a and 2b show what sources have provided instances of first evidence for word and/or first evidence for meaning, and from this we see that it is only Scott and *Maga* that are at the top of both lists. In fact, all sources appear to have provided a much greater number of new meanings, rather than new lexical items, which may bear testimony to the semantic specificity of the variety taken into consideration.

Table 2a. Selected sources of quotations in the *OED*: first evidence for word

Name	Quotations with 1st evidence for word
Maga	927
Scott	433
Edinburgh Review	226
Burns	195
Jamieson	208
Glasgow Herald	150
Ure	148
Stevenson	55
Hogg	47

5. All the tables in this contribution present findings extracted from the information available at www.oed.com under 'Sources'; see fn. 4 above for comments on the validity of such figures.

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Table 2b. Selected sources of quotations in the *OED*: First evidence for meaning

Name	Quotations with 1st evidence of meaning
Maga	2,429
Scott	2,053
Ure	823
Edinburgh Review	752
Jamieson	610
Burns	537
Glasgow Herald	469
Stevenson	260
Hogg	183

While discussing both types of quotation would certainly be of interest, owing to space constraints the latter category is left beyond the scope of the current investigation, which aims only to highlight new contributions to English vocabulary. In what follows, these sources of language change will be discussed in greater detail, starting from a short overview of the importance of James Murray (1837–1915), the *OED*'s first editor, in the scholarship concerning Scottish vocabulary.

2. The Scottish roots of the *OED*

At the turn of the nineteenth century a number of factors, ranging from literary taste to fashion to historical and political circumstances, made it possible for Scots to acquire new status as a means for the expression of feeling, sentimentality, antiquity, and authenticity. The persistence of the antiquarian fashion into the nineteenth century was also reflected in the continuing search for 'pure Saxon' in linguistic matters. Thomas Guthrie praised the way in which children used to be taught in Scotland by means of the Shorter Catechism and the Book of Proverbs, because especially the latter was found to contain "quite a repertory of monosyllables and pure Saxon – 'English undefiled' (quoted by Fyfe 1942: 517).

A similar line of thought was followed by James Paterson, whose *Origin of the Scots and the Scottish Language* (1855) argued in favour of Pictish as the original "Scottish dialect" (1855: 109) and linked "Dano-Saxon", i.e. "the northern Saxon of England", to Icelandic, "which is the elder branch of the Teutonic, and, of course, the senior of the Anglo-Saxon" (1855: 119). At the same time, Paterson emphasised the number of Gaelic words borrowed into Scots; Paterson's theory challenged a previous one, according to which the Scandinavian influence had been paramount

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in the development of Scots;[6] this view had been based on Bede's account of early settlements in Britain and had been put forward by John Pinkerton and James Sibbald, both eighteenth-century antiquaries. It was then taken up by one of the leading figures in Scottish lexicography, John Jamieson, who claimed that the Picts had Scandinavian origins and presented his views on the origin of Scots in an extensive study of the etymologies of names and place-names in the 'Introduction' to his *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, which appeared in two volumes in 1808[7] (1808/1840: xii-xiii; see also Kidd 1993: 251 and Rennie 2012). At the outset, Jamieson identified the specificity of Scottish vocabulary in the legal register, but then he also stated that his work would "serve to mark the difference between words which may be called classical, and others merely colloquial; and between both of these, as far as they are proper, and such as belong to a still lower class, being mere corruptions, cant terms, or puerilities" (1808/1840: ii). Jamieson outlined the presence of social varieties in Scots, thus highlighting the existence of a 'proper' standard and of vulgar speech. Consequently, for the 'colloquial' items he included quotations of humble origin and his use of 'mean' sources marked a turning point in the history of lexicography.[8]

Nonetheless, Jamieson's enterprise was criticised by J. B. Montgomerie-Fleming, who stated that he had found "a remarkably good *Scotch* dictionary" (1899: iv) in Murray and Bradley's *New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (which by then had reached letter 'H'). The *New English Dictionary* would subsequently become world famous as the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*), and it is intriguing to follow Murray's career both as a lexicographer and as "the founder of the modern study of Scots, both historical and descriptive" (Aitken 1995/96: 14).[9] As a matter of fact, Murray had also been praised by D.T. Holmes (1909: 104) as the author of "an illuminating grammar of the language, indicating the various dialects of the Lowlands and their geographical areas". Holmes meant Murray's seminal work *The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland* (1873), a text that was to influence all subsequent studies on the history and the description of Scots.

6. On this controversy see also Collin (1862).

7. A *Supplement* of two further volumes was published in 1825, then an edition in two volumes appeared in 1840; a four-volume edition was issued with additions in 1879–1882 and another *Supplement* was released in 1887.

8. In this sense Jamieson's *Dictionary* also has an important encyclopaedic value, since many entries provide ethnological information that might otherwise have been lost.

9. A very compact bio-bibliographical account is provided by Aitken (1995/96), but see also Murray (1977).

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Aitken (1995/96: 29) points out that Murray was not a linguistic nationalist and actually identified Scots with the northern part of the northern English dialect – thus challenging Jamieson's (and many others') view of Scots as a language – but was against the alleged literary corruption of dialect.[10] His new approach to the historical perspective went beyond the previous debates on the Pictish or Saxon origins of Scots and directed its research to the mutual roots of Scots and Northern English; it provided moreover valuable insights into the features of Scots phonology, morphology and syntax. In addition, Murray was the first to outline a dialect map that was adopted and adapted by later commentators, including the editors of the *Scottish National Dictionary* (1931-) and of the *Concise Scots Dictionary* (1985, 2017), in which the so-called 'Highland Line' marked the geographical distribution of Scots dialects and Highland English.

In more general terms, Aitken (1995/96: 34) ascribes the prominence of the Scots element in the *OED* to the longer tradition of recording Scots rather than other non-standard varieties, opposing this theory to the supposition that this was due to the provenance of two of the four editors, namely James Murray himself and William Craigie, who would then go on to become one of the first editors of *DOST*, *A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, and with whom Aitken himself would work (see Dareau & Macleod 2009). In the *OED* 'Scotland' is seen to occur in 13,373 entries; as for the labels describing usage of the items with which this noun is associated, these indicate that Scottish forms are identified on account of their geographical specificity and of their rarity, but also of their literary and historical quality (Dossena forthcoming). The next section will present some prominent Scottish sources in the *OED*, in order to see what aspects may be highlighted in each of them.

3. Scottish sources in the *OED*

The examination of the sources mentioned in Section 1 above aims to shed light on what discourse areas may have been particularly enriched as a result of their usage. Although it may be argued that these sources do not actually include other significant channels of knowledge dissemination, such as the teaching materials used in self-education or in mechanics' institutes, it should be remembered that the *OED*'s editorial policies reflected Late Modern ideas of what constituted 'good sources' for the presentation of 'examples', among which literature, periodicals and of course other dictionaries were paramount.

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10. According to Aitken (1995/96: 30), Murray's favourite example of this was Burns' celebrated "Scots wha hae", which he called "fancy Scotch", i.e. "the English 'Scots who have' spelled as Scotch […]. The vernacular is […] 'Scots at hes', which Burns evidently considered ungrammatical".

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3.1 Literary voices

As we saw above, Sir Walter Scott is one of the most frequently quoted sources in the *OED*. The distribution of quotations among his works is given in Table 3a below.

Table 3a. Walter Scott: Most quoted texts in the *OED*

	Name	Quotations	
		Total	Percentage
1.	*Heart of Mid-Lothian*	1,004	5.0%
2.	*Fair Maid of Perth*	939	5.0%
3.	*Antiquary*	890	5.0%
4.	*Guy Mannering*	763	4.0%
5.	*Waverley*	699	4.0%
6.	*Kenilworth*	685	3.0%
7.	*Lady of the Lake*	655	3.0%
8.	*Ivanhoe*	650	3.0%
9.	*Rob Roy*	640	3.0%
10.	Letters	620	3.0%

Among such quotations we find items pertaining to Scottish culture (e.g. *clansman*, *sporran* and *the Forty-five*) and items that would gain much broader circulation, not least in literary usage – it is the case for instance of *password*, *skyline*, *Euphuist*, *sirvente* and *mystery play*; the relevant quotations are given here in chronological order:

1799 Scott tr. Goethe *Goetz of Berlichingen* ii. iii. 69 George shall..force the fellow to give him the pass-word.
1808 Scott *Strutt's Queenhoo Hall* I. iv. i. 144 She is as ugly as a succubus, and only wants a hood of snakes to lead the dance of hobgoblins in a mystery play.
1810 Scott *Lady of Lake* ii. 68 A hundred clans-men raise Their voices.
1817 Scott *Rob Roy* III. vii. 209, I advise no man to attempt opening this sporran till he has my secret.
1819 Scott *Ivanhoe* II. iii. 42 The knight..asked his host whether he would choose a *sirvente* in the language of *oc*, or a *lai* in the language of *oui*.
1820 Scott *Monastery* II. ii*. 64 There he found the Euphuist in the same elegant posture of abstruse calculation which he had exhibited on the preceding evening.

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1823 Scott *St. Ronan's Well* I. iv. 84 Some boy's daubing, I suppose… Eh! What.. is this?.. Who can this be..Do but see the sky-line – why, this is..an exquisite little bit.
1832 Scott *Redgauntlet* II. xi. 247 Ye have heard of a year they call the *forty-five*.

Other successful items first used by Scott were *Gael*, *Glaswegian*,[11] *slainte*, *petticoat tail* (a triangular piece of shortbread), *All Souls' Eve*, and even *Maga*, which, as I mentioned above, was the informal abbreviation of the title of *Blackwood's Magazine* (formerly the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 1817–1980). The contexts in which these lexemes first occurred are given in the quotations below, again in chronological order:

1805 Scott *Lay of Last Minstrel* vi. xvi. 176 'Twas All-soul's eve, and Surrey's heart beat high.
1810 Scott *Lady of Lake* v. 192 The Gael around him threw His graceful plaid of varied hue.
1817 Scott *Rob Roy* II. ix. 195 The Glaswegian took him by the hand.
1819 Scott *Bride of Lammermoor* xii, in *Tales of my Landlord* 3rd Ser. II. 285 Never had there been..such making of car-cakes and sweet scones, Selkirk bannocks, cookies, and petticoat-tails, delicacies little known to the present generation.
1820 Scott *Let.* 25 July (1934) VI. 242, I really hope you will pause before you undertake to be the Boaz of the *Maga*.
1824 Scott *Redgauntlet* II. vii. 159 He then took up the tankard, and saying aloud in Gaelic, '*Slaint an Rey*', just tasted the liquor.

Special attention to Scottish folklore, culture and specific usage is also found in the quotations derived from Robert Burns' works and summarized in Table 3b below.

11. Interestingly, uses of this noun would not occur again till the twentieth century, and at first only with a negative connotation:

1923 *Glasgow Herald* 15 Nov. 8 'Glaswegian' is both ugly and absurd… Let us in the name of etymology and common sense be Glasgovians.
1945 *Archit. Rev.* 97 122/1 The fertility of these people will not be maintained when they become Glaswegians or Londoners.
1971 T. J. Honeyman *Art & Audacity* 247 In Pollok House there will be an abundance of riches for the art lover and scholar, and a magnetic attraction for Glaswegians and their visitors.
The adjective, instead, would first be used in the nineteenth century:
1884 *Illustr. London News* 12 Jan. 27/1 Any of the ten words..in addition to the Glaswegian four.

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Table 3b. Robert Burns: Most quoted texts in the *OED*

	Name	Quotations	
		Total	Percentage
1.	*Poems & Songs*	952	32.0%
2.	*Poems*	802	27.0%
3.	Letters	260	8.0%
4.	*Tam o' Shanter*	130	4.0%
5.	*Twa Dogs*	123	4.0%
6.	*Holy Fair*	72	2.0%
7.	*Death & Dr. Hornbook*	71	2.0%
8.	*Cotter's Sat. Night*	46	1.0%

Among the quotations providing first evidence of a word, not unpredictably, we find Scots items like *blether*, *Clootie* (a name for the devil derived from his cloven foot), *Lallan* and *dirl*, but also items pertaining to a less familiar style, like *Ossianic*, *inescapable* and the French borrowing *nouveau riche*. See the following quotations in chronological order:

1786 R. Burns *Poems & Songs* (1968) I. 103 Stringing blethers up in rhyme For fools to sing.

1786 R. Burns *Poems* 55 O Thou, whatever title suit thee! Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie.

1786 R. Burns *Poems* 61 But a' your doings to rehearse..Wad ding a' Lallan tongue, or Erse, In Prose or Rhyme.

1787 R. Burns *Death & Dr. Hornbook* xvi, in *Poems* (new ed.) 60 It just play'd dirl on the bane, But did nae mair.

1788 R. Burns *Let.* 1 Oct. (2001) I. 327, I dare not go into the particular beauties of the two last paragraphs, but they are admirably fine, & truly Ossianic.

1792 R. Burns *Let.* 10 Sept. (2003) II. 146 An inescapable & inexorable Hell, expanding its leviathan jaws for the vast residue of Mortals!

*a*1796 R. Burns *Compl. Wks.* (1859) 315 A story is current of a celebrated *nouveau-riche*.

Robert Louis Stevenson is another author whose contribution to new lexis is quite interesting, and the distribution of quotations among his main works is given in Table 3c below.

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Table 3c. Robert Louis Stevenson: Most quoted texts in the *OED*

	Name	Quotations	
		Total	Percentage
1.	*Treasure Island*	290	10.0%
2.	*Catriona*	266	10.0%
3.	*Kidnapped*	236	8.0%
4.	*Wrecker*	227	8.0%
5.	*Silverado Squatters*	143	5.0%
6.	*New Arabian Nights*	125	4.0%
7.	Letters	90	3.0%
8.	*Travels with a Donkey*	89	3.0%
9.	*In the South Seas*	87	3.0%
10.	*Across the Plains*	84	3.0%

Beyond quantitative data, what is perhaps of greater interest here is that Stevenson's contribution to English vocabulary appears to have an ethnographic value: among the items featuring in his works for the first time we find three Samoan items: *mahalo* (an expression of gratitude), *lava-lava* (a kind of kilt), and *holoku* (a long gown):

1891 R. L. Stevenson in *Sun (N.Y.)* 14 June. 23/3 The money was handed over and received; and the two women each returned a dry 'Mahalo'.

1891 R. L. Stevenson *Vailima Lett.* (1895) xiii. 115 The weird figure of Faauma.. in a black lavalava (kilt).

1893 R. L. Stevenson *Island Nights' Entertainm.* 207 Kokua concealed the bottle under her holoku.

These lexical items were of course bound to become loanwords, as translating them would have lessened their cultural relevance, and therefore they needed to be preserved in their original form. Though they may seem to lend merely a touch of authenticity to discourse, they do in fact contribute to the new attention paid to aboriginal vocabulary in Late Modern times, when Native American, African, Indian and Austronesian lexis was borrowed into English as a result of the globalizing trends rooted mostly in the networks of the British empire and the advance of the so-called 'frontier' in the American West (Dossena 2012: 888–889).

As for James Hogg, his contribution appears to have been less prominent, possibly because the informants who provided examples for the *OED* were less familiar with his work (see Brewer 2018: 133); among his quotations providing first evidence of a word, only *specs* (spelt *specks*) appears to have been successful in the contemporary world:

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1807 J. Hogg *Mountain Bard* in *Poet. Wks.* (1838) II. 202 The miller.., wi' specks on his nose, To hae an' to view it was wondrous fain.

An overview of how quotations are distributed in Hogg's works is given in Table 3d below.

Table 3d. James Hogg: Most quoted texts in the *OED*

	Name	Quotations	
		Total	Percentage
1.	*Queen's Wake*	144	16.0%
2.	*Brownie of Bodsbeck*	114	13.0%
3.	*Tales & Sketches*	111	12.0%
4.	*Three Perils of Man*	68	7.0%
5.	*Shepherd's Cal.*	58	6.0%
6.	*Private Mem. Justified Sinner*	51	5.0%
7.	*Winter Evening Tales*	43	5.0%
8.	*Mountain Bard*	29	3.0%
9.	*Tales Wars Montrose*	25	2.0%
10.	*Queen Hynde*	23	2.0%

3.2 Scottish lexicographers in the *OED*

The *OED* we access today includes as many as 1,807 quotations from Jamieson's *Dictionary*, as opposed to 1,218 from Johnson's *Dictionary* (though Johnson's other works account for another 3,946 quotations). This makes Johnson the 46th most frequently quoted source in the *OED* (with about 0.14% of all *OED* quotations), while John Jamieson is the 228th most frequently quoted source, with about 0.05% of all *OED* quotations; of these, 208 provide first evidence of a word and 610 provide first evidence of a particular meaning. However, as I said above, the antiquarian interest of Jamieson's work, together with its encyclopaedic and ethnographic approach, makes these quotations particularly worthwhile for a study of language change in Late Modern times. In addition, we find items that may have been borrowed into usage on account of their phonaesthetic quality, such as *pernicketie*, *pitter-patter*, *youp*, *fluffy*, *slithery*, *jab*, and *wag-at-the-wa'*:

1808 J. Jamieson *Etymol. Dict. Sc. Lang. Pernickitie*..precise in trifles; applied also to dress, denoting trimness, S. *perjink* synon.
1808 J. Jamieson *Etymol. Dict. Sc. Lang. Pitter-patter*,..to move up and down inconstantly, making a clattering noise with the feet.
1808 J. Jamieson *Etymol. Dict. Sc. Lang. Youp*, a scream.

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1825 J. Jamieson *Etymol. Dict. Sc. Lang.* Suppl. *Fluffy*, applied to any powdery substance that can be easily put in motion, or blown away; as to ashes, hair-powder, meal &c.
1825 J. Jamieson *Etymol. Dict. Sc. Lang.* Suppl. *Sclidder*, *Sclitherie*, Slippery.
1825 J. Jamieson *Etymol. Dict. Sc. Lang.* Suppl. *To Jab*, to prick sharply.
1825 J. Jamieson *Etymol. Dict. Sc. Lang.* Suppl. *Wag-at-the-Wa'*, a name given to a clock, which has no case, frequently used in the country.

Moving from everyday usage to specialized vocabulary, we see that Andrew Ure ranks higher than Jamieson in his contributions as a lexicographer, as he is the 209th most frequently quoted source in the *OED*, with a total of 1,926 quotations (about 0.052% of all *OED* quotations); of these, 148 provide first evidence of a word, while 823 provide first evidence of a particular meaning. As for the distribution of such quotations among his works, this is summarized in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Andrew Ure: Most quoted texts in the *OED*

	Name	Quotations	
		Total	Percentage
1.	*Dict. Arts*	1,482	76.0%
2.	*Philos. Manuf.*	326	16.0%
3.	*Dict. Chemistry*	54	2.0%

A Scottish chemist, scientific writer and professor at the University of Glasgow, in the same city in 1804 Ure "inaugurated his series of "Mechanics' Classes" in popular science and its industrial applications for working men, which were, according to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, [...] probably the first of their kind" (Copeman 1951: 657). While some quotations come from his 1835 book *The Philosophy of Manufactures*, in which he defended the entrepreneurial approach of his time and expressed very controversial views on child labour – views which Karl Marx would criticize in *Das Kapital* (Farrar 1973; Nebbia 2005) – most quotations derive from his *Dictionary of Arts*, *Manufactures and Mines* (2 vols), first published in 1837 and enlarged editions of which appeared in 1840, 1843, and 1853; then four posthumous editions were published, the last in 1878.

Although no source appears to provide an indication of the number of entries in Ure's *Dictionary of Arts*, *Manufactures and Mines*, the project appears impressive: Copeman (1951: 661) cites a review in *The Times* in which Ure's encyclopaedic work is compared to Samuel Johnson's "literary feat" as both produced their masterpieces single-handedly. Ure's entries discuss meanings in relation to their scientific value and manufacturing or commercial purposes, as in the following examples, giving special attention to chemistry, i.e. Ure's own field of specialization:

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Acids. A class of chemical substances characterised by the property of combining with and neutralising the alkaline and other bases, and of thereby forming a peculiar class of bodies called salts. The acids which constitute objects of special manufacture for commercial purposes are the following: i.e. --acetic, arsenious, carbonic, chromic, citric, malic, muriatic, nitric, oxalic, phosphoric, sulphuric, tartaric, which see.

Additions. Such articles as are added to the fermenting wash of the distiller are distinguished by this trivial name.

However, in the *OED* we also find items pertaining to measurements, such as *cryometer* and *thermostat*:

1821 A. Ure *Dict. Chem.* (U.S. ed.) I. p. vii, The article Caloric, as well as..its correlative subjects, Temperature, Thermometer, Evaporation, Congelation, Cryometer, Dew, and Climate.

1835 A. Ure *Philos. Manuf.* 26 The instrument, for which I have obtained a patent, under the name of the heat-governor, or thermostat.

Finally, items are included which nowadays are no longer perceived to be specialized, such as *margarin* (an orthographic form which has since become obsolete and has been replaced by the contemporary spelling *margarine*), *subtropical* and *lager beer*:

1821 A. Ure *Dict. Chem.* at *Acid*, A substance of a peculiar kind, that M. Chevreul, the discoverer, calls margarine, or margaric acid.

1829 A. Ure *New Syst. Geol.* i. iii. 65 The aqueous vapours rising from the subtropical seas.

1853 A. Ure *Dict. Arts* (ed. 4) I. 153 Beers at present brewed in Germany… 11. Wheat *Lager*-beer (slowly fermented).

3.3 Scottish periodicals in the *OED*

The *OED* figures show that periodicals were important sources of new vocabulary in Late Modern times: while magazines and reviews appear to have addressed more general audiences, journals were often more specialized, as their titles suggest.[12] An earlier study (Dossena 2014: 63–67) has already drawn attention to the importance

12. See for instance the following, which also feature as *OED* sources: *American Journal of Botany*, *American Journal of Psychology*, *American Journal of Science*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *British Medical Journal*, *Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal*, *Geographical Journal*, *Journal of Ecology*, *Journal of Philosophy*, *Journal of the Chemical Society*, *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society*, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, *Medical and Physical Journal*, *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society*, etc.

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of data concerning the contributions of various periodical sources, whether British or American, to quotations providing first evidence for word or for sense. Among such sources there are publications which continue to this day, such as the *Scots Magazine* (1739–), *Scientific American* (1845–), and *Harper's Magazine* (1850–); other sources, instead, had a more limited shelf life, although they were very popular and influential: it is the case, for instance, of *Cornhill Magazine* (1860–1975), *Scribner's Magazine* (1887–1939), and the *Mechanics' Magazine* (1823–1871).

As far as the contribution of Scottish sources to English vocabulary is concerned, *Blackwood's Magazine*, or *Maga*, published in Edinburgh between 1817 and 1980, appears to be most relevant – see Tables 2a and 2b above. Among the entries first employed in this important magazine, there are terms pertaining to literature and culture, such as *marginalia*, *penny-a-liner*, *feuilletonist*, *symbology* and *dreamland*, but also items pertaining to the daily life experiences of nineteenth-century users, such as *ginger-pop*, *cosmorama*, *small-town*, *rumfustian* and *trans-oceanic*, the last a word increasingly associated with liners crossing the Atlantic. The relevant citations for these headwords are given below, in chronological order:

1819 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* Nov. 198 The following is transcribed from the blank leaf of a copy of Sir T. Brown's Works in folio, and is a fair specimen of these *Marginalia*; and much more nearly than any of his printed works, gives the style of Coleridge's conversation.

1823 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* 14 473 The whole beats panorama, and cosmorama, and Covent-Garden scenery to boot.

1824 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* June 659/2 Nothing can be better than Miss Austin's [*sic*] sketches of that sober, orderly, small-town, parsonage, sort of society in which she herself had spent her life.

1824 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* Mar. 363 Shee..gave this lad all the roaring, rumfustian, upper-gallery, clap-trap, hullaballoows about liberty, emancipation, [etc.].

1826 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* Nov. 668/1 Twilight looked lovelier than dreamland, in the reflected glimmer of the snow.

1827 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* 21 829 Sauterne, swizzle, imperial, ginger-pop, soda-water, or lemonade.

1832 J. Wilson *Noctes Ambrosianae* lxiv, in *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* Nov. 874 The penny-a-liners..[howled at] the farthing-a-speechifiers.

1840 *Blackwood's Mag.* 48 524 The number of young *feuilletonists*..is now very considerable in France.

Moreover, we also find specialized terms concerning scientific instruments, such as *gyrograph*, *lactometer* and *sympiesometer*; finally, there are items that have since become obsolete, such as *chrematist*, and others that have become part of

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contemporary usage, like *in-law* – see the quotations below, again in chronological order:

1817 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* **1** 418 Mr. Adie has given it the name of sympiesometer (or measure of compression).
1817 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* **1** 525 A Celestial Gyrograph..which gives the true bearings, rising, setting, and culminating, of forty of the principal fixed stars, for any hour and minute of the twenty-four hours.
1845 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* **57** 536 According to the Chrematists the wealth of a nation..is to be measured by the excess of the value of production over its cost.
1894 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* Jan. 24 The position of the 'in-laws' (a happy phrase which is attributed..to her Majesty, than whom no one can be better acquainted with the article) is often not very apt to promote happiness.

Other Scottish periodicals are less prominent, but still relevant, in terms of their contribution to new vocabulary. *The Edinburgh Review* (1802–1929), for instance, provided interesting examples of literary and scientific terms: indeed, the cultural value of such items is seen in *expressionism*, first used in this periodical in 1908 to designate a style of painting:

1908 *Edinb. Rev.* Oct. 466 The appearance of these later and more extreme forms of expressionism..has aided the understanding of beauty partly through a deeper probing of the sensuous elements in æsthetic experience.

Pertaining to literary and artistic domains there are also *subjectivity*, *mannerism*, and *classicist* – see the quotations below:

1803 *Edinb. Rev.* Jan. 265 In the mere belief of the subjectivity of perception, it [*sc.* transcendentalism] certainly is not original.
1803 *Edinb. Rev.* Apr. 246 Mr. Stewart's style..has character without mannerism, or eccentricity.
1827 T. Carlyle in *Edinb. Rev.* **46** 325 Their grand controversy, so hotly urged, between the Classicists and Romanticists..shows us sufficiently what spirit is at work in that long stagnant literature.

In addition, we find Italian, Latin and French loanwords: e.g., *pentimento*, *vexata quaestio*, *de luxe*, and *fête* (v.):

1813 *Edinb. Rev.* Oct. 143 We do not mean to enter upon the *vexata quæstio* of the tones and delivery.

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1819 *Edinb. Rev.* **32** 221 He was in general too fond of flattering and 'feteing' his master.
1819 *Edinb. Rev.* **32** 377 The paper used for printing, except in what are emphatically called *les éditions de luxe*, is very inferior to ours.
1823 *Edinb. Rev.* **38** 430 This seems to be a pentimento of the author.

Among scientific terms, there are *electromotion*, *planetoid*, *homoeopath(ic)*, *Huttonian*, *outcrop*, and *phenakistoscope*:

1802 *Edinb. Rev.* **1** 206 Deducible from the..Huttonian hypothesis.
1803 *Edinb. Rev.* **3** 195 The ingenious hypothesis of Volta concerning electromotion.
1803 H. Brougham in *Edinb. Rev.* Jan. 430 Why may we not coin such a phrase as *Planetoid*?
1805 *Edinb. Rev.* **6** 244 Most of our coal has been discovered..by exploring their outcrops.
1830 *Edinb. Rev.* **50** 513 First stands the homöopathic..then the allopathic or heteropathic [method].
1834 *Edinb. Rev.* **59** 160 The ingenious improver of that beautiful instrument called the Phenakistoscope.

An apparently 'provincial' periodical, *The Glasgow Herald* (1805–), is found to rank among the first 150 most frequently quoted sources in the *OED*, and this is hardly surprising when we consider that Glasgow was one of the largest cities in the British empire. The importance of this source is also seen in the items first occurring in it, several of which concern both industry and social phenomena; among these we find *automobilism*, *re-route*, *remunerativeness*, *social democratic*, and *boycott* (v.):

1845 *Glasgow Herald* 21 Feb. The remunerativeness of the undertakings depends..on the *Quantity* and *Price* of the Ground purchased.
1848 *Glasgow Herald* 4 Aug. 1/6 A new 'cercle' is about to be formed by M. Olivier (Démosthènes) and others of the social-democratic party.
1869 *Glasgow Herald* 22 May 6/1 In consequence of the arrangements for re-routing a portion of the traffic under the joint-purse agreement, a very large amount..has been diverted..to the Caledonian line.
1880 *Glasgow Herald* 1 Nov. 5/5 He [*sc.* Mr Savelle] advised the people to 'Boycott' any man who betrayed them by taking such land.
1896 *Glasgow Herald* 19 June Auto-mobilism has now thoroughly enlisted the interest of the French press.

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4. Concluding remarks

Although Late Modern times have typically been perceived to be characterized by normative trends attempting to iron out variation at both the social and the geographical levels, the data provided in the online edition of the *OED* suggest that phenomena ought not to be oversimplified in their representation. It is true that in Scotland the aim to standardize usage (i.e. to anglicize it, or 'improve' it in LModE parlance) was pervasive mostly, but not exclusively, in relation to phonology and vocabulary. However, the attention paid to literary sources, not least on account of the great success of Walter Scott's novels, enabled items first used in Scotland to become part of 'standard' British usage. This is of course related to the way in which sources were considered by the compilers of the *OED* and the voluntary readers who supplied instances for the various entries, at least in the earliest stages of the project, but again a more complex picture emerges when other cases are taken into consideration.

Among the top 1,000 most frequently-quoted sources in the *OED* other dictionaries feature prominently in terms of their cultural and scientific value: references to Jamieson's and Ure's works point to the recognition of the importance of Scottish lexicography in their respective fields. Finally, periodicals confirm their viability as channels of knowledge dissemination among a broad range of readers. Their varying levels of specialization and the numerous interests they meant to cater for has made them valuable sources of new vocabulary in many different fields. Especially at a time of such rapid change as the nineteenth century, this was an asset, the profitability of which is still very clear today.

The broad range of sources from which both new lexical items and new meanings were acquired bears witness to the complexity of language change, which may progress at varying speed across time and which may depend on rapidly changing cultural trends. The greater or lesser popularity of literary sources, greater or lesser interest in scientific discoveries, and the way in which knowledge was disseminated about them through different print media appear to be all intrinsically relevant in a study of how vocabulary expanded, items became obsolete, changed their spelling, or were replaced altogether. The role played by both literary and non-literary sources in lexicography thus proves an important element to consider in an overall assessment of linguistic phenomena.

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CHAPTER 7

Early immigrant English

Midwestern English before the dust settled

Samantha Litty, Jennifer Mercer and Joseph Salmons

We explore the development of final obstruent neutralization (German *Bad* 'bath': /ba:d/ = [ba:t]) and other features of an emerging Wisconsin English variety that has been shaped by contact, while considering multiple factors such as input, contact, and influence from other varieties. We draw our data from immigrant letters and supplement these with what is known about education and language guides available to early immigrants, as well as contact with other language varieties and dialects. Through time and over remarkably heterogeneous varieties of English and German, we trace the presence of this feature in German and English, where it has been transformed.

Keywords: sound change, language variation, immigrant languages, final obstruent neutralization, new dialect formation, koineization, imposition

0. Introduction

Like no other scholar, Raymond Hickey has laid out the need for complex, multifaceted approaches to the development of new varieties of English, with attention to dialect input, contact phenomena, "indirect influence" from education, and other factors (Hickey 2004: 1–2) and he has called attention to the need for "balanced consideration" of how languages "continue to develop after the dust […] has settled", as some features establish themselves and others recede (2010: 21). This paper explores these issues in how a still-emerging variety of English in Wisconsin was shaped by contact. First, we look briefly at one of the most studied features of this region, Final Obstruent Neutralization (FON), the loss of distinction between pairs like *bad* ~ *bat* or *buzz* ~ *bus* (detailed below). We explore whether its curious historical trajectory – as a feature that was present in the community's English during and directly following initial periods of German immigration in the 19th century, receded and is reappearing today – may be connected to not only conscious awareness of the feature itself but has also come to index other social factors.

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Second, drawing data from several sets of bilingual letters, we provide evidence for widespread early dialectal forms in both German and especially English.

The next section (§ 1) provides the context for this study. In § 2 we discuss the data on FON in the context of teaching materials available to German immigrants learning American English; in § 3 we provide data on a broader set of features drawn from immigrant letters and § 4 gives an overview of such features and their origins and trajectories after immigration slowed and ended. These processes of change continue, that is, even as the dust in some sense has not yet settled, since Upper Midwestern English is still emerging. § 5 concludes.

1. Context

We are now learning much about the impact that immigration has had on the development of American regional English and many other Englishes around the world, but we know almost nothing about the kinds of English immigrants and their immediate descendants learned, knew and used. In Wisconsin, for German-speaking communities, it is quite clear that Standard-like varieties were widely taught, learned and used in Wisconsin (Petty 2013; Salmons 2017) and we have good descriptions of many dialectal and colloquial varieties, but little knowledge of the English spoken in these communities. What we do know is that the variety of English spoken in Wisconsin today is influenced by its immigration past. Between the early-mid 19th century, until about 1910, large numbers of German speakers immigrated to the United States with the greatest concentration settling in the southeastern part of Wisconsin (Seifert 1993: 334). Eichhoff (1971: 44–47) estimates that by 1910 the population in 11 counties in Wisconsin was 35 percent or more of German descent. (In addition to the map in Eichhoff, see Petty (2013: 40); Wilkerson and Salmons (2012: Map 1)). Several communities in this area remained as much as 24 percent monolingual German-speaking through 1910 (Wilkerson & Salmons 2008, 2012), while other regions were as much as 28 percent monolingual German-speaking and of those monolingual German speakers, 49 percent were U.S. born (Frey 2013: 172). Beyond those large monolingual populations, Wilkerson & Salmons (2012) estimate that in 1910 ca. 42 percent of the population in Hustisford, a small southern Wisconsin town, was presumed bilingual in English and German and another 31 percent possibly bilingual. While the number of bilinguals has declined today, according to the 2000 census, 1.5 percent of residents in Dodge County Wisconsin spoke German at home (Purnell et al. 2005a, 2005b).

This region also had large immigrant populations from Norway and Poland, among other places. As communities grew and speakers had more contact with one another, second-generation speakers and beyond, who adopted English as their L1, imposed certain shared features of the immigrant languages and these substrate

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features endured through generations (Howell 1993; Labov 2008: 316). Wilkerson et al. (2014) argue that substrate influence was driven by a rapid transition from German to English in such communities, where children were acquiring only English in an environment dominated by L2 speakers of English so that non-native structures established themselves among monolinguals.

Many such features have been described in recent work. In their introduction to *Wisconsin Talk*, Purnell et al. (2013: 12) lay out features of Wisconsin English including descriptions of phrases, words, and sounds found across the state, e.g. the use of *with* and *once* at the end of a phrase such as *Are you coming with?* instead of *Are you coming along?* or *Are you coming with us?* and *come here once* instead of *come here*. These features appear to be direct translations of immigrant languages that have endured, with the first following patterns of verbal particles in all other Germanic languages and the latter following German and Dutch 'modal' particles.

Another example commonly used by Wisconsinites that distinguishes the regional dialect is the use of *a scissor(s)* or *a clipper(s)* rather than *a pair of scissors* or *clippers*. This is another example of usage linked to immigrant languages. In this case, *a scissors* is used as a singular count noun as it would be in German rather than as a pluralia tantum, as in most varieties of English. We also see similar variation in singular vs. mass count nouns where in German whether something is regarded as a quantity or a set of discrete entities. (See Zwicky (2001) for detailed discussion.) For example, in German our heads have *Haare* 'hairs' on them, while in most varieties of English, we have *hair*, but Wisconsin *hairs*.

Table 1. Pluralia tantum forms in Wisconsin

American English	Wisconsin	German
scissors, pl.	a scissor(s), sg.	*eine Schere,* sg.
(nail) clippers, pl.	a clipper(s)	*eine Nagelschere,* sg.

Many studies focus on the sounds of Wisconsin English, especially vowels, including prevelar /æ/ raising where *bag* is produced as *beg* or rhyming with *vague* (Purnell 2008: 373). In consonants, 'stopping', the substitution of [d] for /ð/, has been investigated (Rose 2006; Delahanty 2011).[1] Another acoustic feature we will discuss in § 2 is Final Obstruent Neutralization (FON), where the distinction between final 'voiced' (or lenis) and 'voiceless' (or fortis) obstruents is neutralized, so that, again, the difference between pairs like *bad* ~ *bat* or *buzz* ~ *bus* are partially or completely lost.

We introduce the key to this analysis briefly before continuing: The distinction between English or German consonants spelled *b, d, g, z* vs. *p, t, k, s* (and so on) was

1. [t] also substitutes for [θ], but the contemporary stereotypes revolve around [d] and our examples use that.

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in much of the modern tradition treated as one of 'voiced' vs. 'voiceless'. We follow the contemporary view, known as 'laryngeal realism', in seeing two-way laryngeal distinctions in languages like Slavic, Romance or Dutch as involving [voice] or glottal tension (in the model of Avery & Idsardi 2001), and languages like English, German and Somali as involving [spread glottis] or glottal width. For English and German, *p, t, k, f* are realized with a spread glottis gesture, often meaning aspiration on stops, while *b, d, g, z* are laryngeally unspecified and realized with highly variable, if any, glottal pulsing (Iverson and Salmons 1995).

These phonetic implementation patterns (aspiration and glottal pulsing) provide one handy diagnostic, but the key criterion for establishing which system a language has is phonological activity. Most importantly, [voice] languages overwhelmingly show spread of voicing, especially regressive voice assimilation, and [spread glottis] languages show spread of voicelessness, typically assimilation to voicelessness (Salmons forthcoming, with references). To illustrate, in a Dutch compound like *bloedbank* 'blood bank', the voicing of the second /b/ spreads into the preceding /d/ to undo final devoicing, yielding a surface cluster of [db]. In contrast, in English, only voicelessness or fortis character spreads, in patterns like noun plurals and past tense marking, e.g. *dogs ~ cats* or *walked ~ jogged*, on the usual analysis that the inflectional forms are underlyingly lenis or unspecified. In rapid speech, this extends over word boundaries, e.g. *have to* or *has to* with [ft] and [st]. Throughout, as a reminder of this underlying phonological analysis, we transcribe fortis or [spread glottis] obstruents *p, t, k, f* as /p^h, t^h, k^h, f^h/ and lenis or unspecified *b, d, g, v* as /p, t, k, f/.

2. The twisted path of one innovation and the possible role of education

Purnell et al. (2005a, 2005b) and Delahanty (2011) showed differences in Upper Midwest consonant production from what is reported for General American English, specifically in FON. FON is a key example of a feature that appeared in 1st generation immigrant speakers, declined, and has reemerged. Benor (2015) defines this as the 'boomerang' effect. This phenomenon occurs when a group of speakers closest to immigration exhibits a feature, over the next generation the feature recedes or becomes less common and then a following generation reintroduces this feature, possibly due to increased interest in their heritage language. We had a fragment here and I've suggested one possible repair. Litty (2017) shows boomerang effects for syllable-initial vernacular forms and the stopping of interdental fricatives is attested in Delahanty (2011).

Delahanty (2011) analyzed historical and new recordings of speakers native to Wisconsin with birth years that spanned a century. Using acoustic analysis,

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Delahanty provides examples of speakers of various ages living in Wisconsin today who exhibit non-standard features and also that these features, such as FON and stopping are recognized and in some cases accepted in communities. These features are typically tied to community and social status. While both features are found in Wisconsin speech, anecdotal evidence and comments captured from speaker recordings would suggest that FON tends to be a feature that ties speakers to their heritage or Wisconsin roots. For example, one of the speakers recorded in Delahanty (2011) was a 55-year old native of western Wisconsin whose name ends in <d>, traditionally realized as [t]. He reported that when he visits home, his family always pronounces his name as with a final [t^h] realization. Two further anecdotes show the role of FON in Wisconsin speech today. First, a 6-year old from Wisconsin learning to spell was asked to spell 'red', and confidently responded, r-e-t. When corrected, he asked "Why is red spelled r-e-d when we say it [ɹɛt]?" In the same community, a teacher asked a student to say a name, Edmond, so that she could write it on a certificate to send home. The certificate showed the name as *Emmit*. These examples point to the presence of FON as perceived by community members.

Delahanty (2011) used recordings of *Arthur the Rat* from the Dictionary of American Regional English (DARE) historical recordings and her own new recordings. In the new recordings, speakers read a series of sentences designed to elicit FON, some from *Arthur* and some new:

(1) FON targets
  a. It's so nice and *snug* here
  b. I think I'll just go back to my hole under the *log*
  c. Would you like a *bag for* that?
  d. After a long hard week, I like to have a couple of *beers*.

Even in this controlled environment, Delahanty found a significant number of speakers of all age groups that exhibited FON. Both Purnell et al. (2005b) and Delahanty (2011) found that the youngest speakers recorded patterned closer with the oldest generation than with middle generation speakers supporting the idea of the 'boomerang' effect of FON. For example, one of the key phonetic markers of a coda laryngeal distinction in English is duration of the preceding vowel. Over time, longer vowel duration tended to be a marker for the lenis. The oldest two generations recorded generally had lower vowel duration (along with longer consonant duration). This ratio changed over time with the youngest generation (birthdates of 1977–1988) producing the least difference as they apparently approach merger.

Another example of a feature exhibiting the boomerang effect is stopping of interdental fricatives. Delahanty (2011) found instances where *them, there, those* are realized as [dɛm], [dɛɹ], [do:z] in data from DARE and speaker recordings.

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(2) Possible stopping environments
  a. *this* won't do
  b. when his friends asked him if he would like to go out with *them*
  c. he wouldn't say yes or no *either*
  d. and when they asked him, would he *rather* stay inside

Examples of stopping were uncommon in the controlled data but are reported often impressionistically. This could be the case because unlike FON, there is clear awareness of the feature and in some communities stopping is socially stigmatized, often associated with people in rural areas or the 'uneducated' and specifically considered a stereotype of Wisconsin speech. Alternately, Rose (2006) found that stopping in one Wisconsin community was a sign of belonging. Rose reported that stopping was mostly found in social gatherings and especially around the card table.

Purnell et al. (2005a, 2005b), Salmons and Purnell (forthcoming), Delahanty (2011), Litty (2014, 2015, 2017) and other studies show that Wisconsin English developed in some unexpected ways than what is reported in most varieties of American English. That many immigrant groups, such as Germans, Norwegians and Poles, spoke languages with some similar grammatical features helped shape English in Wisconsin. Koinéization of the varieties of contact-English occurred when these groups settled in a relatively small geographical area and came into contact with one another. Because many of the immigrant languages exhibit stopping and FON, they were likely readily present in the contact English of these communities and may have aided the survival of these features.

There is a widespread expectation that immigrant communities use more standard features and avoid nonstandard or vernacular English. This view goes back at least to Sawyer (1959) and Johansen (1962) through Wilson (1980), and can be found in the work of Frazer (2006) for Midwestern American English. One common explanation for this in the Midwest is that public education was widely available and highly valued, specifically areas "settled by Europeans who valued formal education but did not speak English as a mother tongue" (Frazer 2006: 293), with the result that they learned a bookish English in school. Evidence from teaching materials and so on suggests that at least many students were exposed to such English in school, though we hasten to add that there was clearly tremendous variation in just what was taught and how. Implicit in this view is the assumption that the Europeans in question, typically northern and central Europeans, were heavily invested in and committed to 'Standard Language Ideology', following Lippi-Green (1997: 64):

> … a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class.

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Lippi-Green (1997: 255) working on English and Davies & Langer (2006) on German have begun to trace the development of Standard Language Ideology, and it remains to be understood how these two traditions interacted in the evolution of English and immigrant languages like German in the Upper Midwest. We do not yet know when and how Standard Language Ideology gained real traction in this region, though it is present today. But many features in immigrant letters run counter to any expectation that letters will exhibit standard features and avoid vernacular forms. Features like vernacular subject-verb agreement patterns and past tense forms and past participles are also attested in Bagwell & Olson's work (2006a, 2006b) and in Bagwell et al. (forthcoming), covering later generations in German immigrant families, born here and educated in American schools. One hypothesis is that as adult immigrants initially learned English, if they did at all, from neighbors, while later generations acquired a set of more standard forms in schools. Even so, standard language ideology has not won out in the region even to the present day.

Our first data source addresses the question of what kind of English immigrants learned and used. The examples below come from published guides for teaching immigrants English (van Dalen 1879[2]; Ahn 1923[3]). They illustrate patterns of interference that German speakers were aware of and sought to avoid, that is, salient and likely stigmatized features of a 'German accent'.

The first example demonstrates that teachers were aware that English distinguishes between 'voiced' and 'voiceless' consonant pairs like *t* vs. *d* or *s* vs. *z* where German does not, from van Dalen (1879: 15, our translation, and throughout we retain original orthography):

> Ganz besonders haben sich Deutsche bei der Aussprache stimmhafter [weicher] Endkonsonanten in Englischen zu überwachen. Im hochdeutschen klingt *Gelb* wie *gelp* … Im Englischen jedoch werden b,d,g,v,z,j, immer stimmhaft [weich] ausgesprochen also auch in Auslaute. Es sind also sorgfältig zu unterscheiden. [Germans especially have to watch for the pronunciation of voiced [weaker] final consonants in English. In High German, *Gelb* 'yellow' sounds like *gelp* … in English however, b, d, g, v, z, j, are always voiced [weak] in final position. This must be carefully distinguished.]

2. This particular language guide, while one of many, was written by a European-German speaker, and intended for all audiences learning English, not specifically German-American immigrants.

3. This language guide was written by a European-German speaker and intended specifically for Germans learning English in America.

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This bit of advice indicates awareness of the feature, an awareness apparently shared by letter writers, as we show in § 3. Furthermore, this example provides evidence for FON as described above by showing that immigrants learning English may have also lacked a consistent distinction between fortis and lenis as we show in the Asbach examples in § 3.1.

Ahn (1923: 279) reports similarly:

> Bei den stimmhaften Konsonanten b, d, g fühle ich das Erzittern des Kehlkopfes, ich höre die sie begleitende Stimme – bei den Stimmlosen p, t, k dagegen nicht. [In the voiced consonants b, d, g, I feel the vibrating of the larynx, I hear its accompanying voicing, but in contrast not in the voiceless p, t, k.]

Ahn's example describes the voiced sounds of Wisconsinites from German-speaking communities. Instrumental phonetic data from Delahanty (2011) also gives examples of English speakers who produce speech indicative of FON (common in German, but unexpected in English). American English speakers variably use various cues such as glottal pulsing or longer vowel duration to differentiate between traditionally voiced vs. voiceless consonants. In Purnell et al. (2005a, 2005b), the youngest generation of speakers did not use much of either cue, narrowing the difference. Recordings from 62 speakers with birth years ranging from 1866–1986 showed that production of voiced consonants changed over time. The oldest speakers relied on vibrating vocal folds as a cue to produce FON while the youngest speakers lengthened vowel duration as a cue to make a distinction. While the production cues changed over time, the distinction has become increasingly fuzzy. FON has become more widespread and socially acceptable with the youngest generation speakers. This is in sharp contrast to the fate of 'stopping', which is stigmatized for many speakers in the region.

3. The broader picture: English dialect features in immigrant letters

Our main data sources are letters written by German-speaking immigrants to Wisconsin (and their descendants) in the mid-19th century. The letters are from three sources, the Asbach, Goth and Volkmann families, all living (or having recently lived) in southern Wisconsin at the time of production.

3.1 The Asbach letters

One set of letters illustrates some striking patterns found in English and German as written by German immigrants. These examples come from letters written by John (Johann) Asbach when he served in the Union Army, and later by his relatives.

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The entire collection consists of not much over 20 pages. We looked at these first in spring 2005 when they had just been digitized for the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies at the University of Wisconsin – Madison's family history archives.[4] This collection is small but linguistically remarkably rich in the number of contact-induced features that it presents, raising a set of questions for testing against a larger and more diverse empirical base. Given the limited data, we cannot undertake any serious quantitative analysis here, but the discussion below outlines areas which can be tested later against a bigger dataset.

Asbach came to the United States from the Rhineland in 1853 and eventually served in Company M, 3rd Iowa Calvary in the American Civil War, and was killed August 25, 1864. The Max Kade Institute long held his small collection of letters, some in German and some in English, but they have now been moved to the Iowa Historical Society in Des Moines.

Before we turn to Asbach's use of English, let us first consider a letter, written by Veronika Asbach (his wife) (Davis City, Iowa) to their daughter Kathrina McNally, Feb. 10, 1887.[5] This letter, of which a partial image is given in Figure 1, is remarkable for both its dialect features (in bold) and mixing of German and English (English underlined):

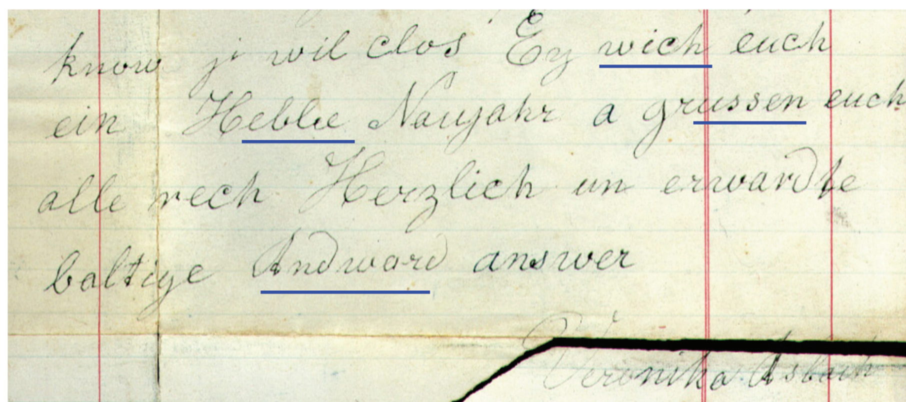
know ji wil clos Ez wich euch
ein Heblie Nayahr a grussen euch
alle mech Herzlich un erwardte
baltige Andward answer
Veronika Asbach

Figure 1. Excerpt from Veronika Asbach letter, with German dialect features underlined in the image

4. Available here: http://mki.wisc.edu/content/john-and-katharina-asbach-letters-and-documents.

5. Because of the small nature of this collection, each letter is listed only by date and author. All can be found at the website listed in footnote 4.

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(3) Veronika Asbach excerpts
…Ey wi**ch** euch / ein He**bb**e N**au**jahr a grusse**n** euch / alle re**ch** Herzlich un erwardte bal**t**ige An**d**war**d** answer
English: … I wish you all a happy New Year and send best greetings to you all and expect an answer soon.
German: … ich wünsche Euch ein frohes Neujahr und grüße euch alle recht herzlich und erwarte eine baldige Antwort.

The letter switches regularly between English and German, but just note what this letter shows about the writer's German. Readers familiar with German dialects will recognize a string of features:

(4) German regional features in Veronika Asbach
- ***wich***: Various parts of the German-speaking world changed the so-called *ich*-Laut in colloquial speech to [ɕ] or merging it with [ʃ]. This pattern was well established in the Rhineland in the 19th century, (cf. Robinson 2001). Here, we presumably have hypercorrection of [ʃ] to [ç], or perhaps simple confusion of the two sounds in spelling.
- ***hebbe***: The lenition or 'weakening' of consonants is found across large stretches of German-speaking Europe, reflected in German spellings here like *Andward* for expected *Antwort*. For *happy*, the process was carried over from her German dialect into English, along with spelling English /æ/ with <e>. Note that for speakers of German varieties with lenition, we see spellings in both directions, i.e. fortis written as lenis, as in this example, but also hypercorrect forms like baltige in this letter for expected *baldige* 'quick, soon' (inflected).

Elsewhere in the letter, we find spellings with <g> where English has a palatal glide, [j]. This suggests that she came from a region where German /g/ is a glide, e.g. ***guer*** 'your', etc. Two further features are distinctly dialectal:

(5) Additional German regional features
- ***grussen***: This should reflect a first person singular verb form, which could point to the Rhineland, and an area such as Ripuarian, where verbs inflect in *-en* rather than Modern German *-e* (Schirmunski 1962: 520).
- ***nau***: Old High German /iu/ develops into Modern German /ɔy/ (*heute, neu, Feuer*) but it became *au* in a variety of dialects, especially west central, including parts of the Rhineland, although the details vary considerably (Schirmunski 1962: 226).

Above all, these and other features show that decades after the Civil War (and the family's immigration to the U.S.), at least part of the family was not comfortable in English and used heavily dialectal German. With that background established,

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let us turn now to a few salient passages transcribed from Asbach's. Figure 2 gives one example of a page from the letters: "Camp near Memphis Tenn, August the 1st A.D. 1864".

Figure 2. Page from John Asbach letter

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Van Coetsem 2000 uses the term 'imposition' to describe how features from a source language show up in similar or modified forms in a recipient language, avoiding the traditional terms 'transfer' and 'interference' because they are imprecise, in particular in obscuring the agency of the speaker (2000: 2–3). Imposition reflects "source language agentivity", as when, to use his example, a French speaker employs French "articulatory habits" in speaking English. A key strand of research in the history of Upper Midwestern English has been tracing effects of imposition from German on English over generations, as some of them have become part of an emerging regional variety (Purnell et al. 2005a, 2005b; Salmons & Purnell forthcoming).

In the transcriptions, our interpretation of each example is given in brackets. Examples of likely imposition from German are underlined, while likely vernacular, regional features of English are boldfaced. As we will see, the line between these categories is not always obvious.

(6) Features of John Asbach letters

a. Aug. 1, 1864; page 1, lines 11–16: butt won think **is whot** I do know that I **hend** bin writing to you that you shurly must be **a** thinking that I wasent **a** going to writ anny more. Still I **hent** vergod to write yed to you. [But one thing [what] I do know is that I haven't been writing to you, [so] that you must surely be thinking that I wasn't going to write anymore. Still, I haven't (*hadn't*?) forgotten yet about writing you.]

b. Aug. 1, 1864; page 2, lines 7–12: Butt still there will come an other time Again When we shal come home again Which I think **whot** won't be so very long anny more Then the Officers here **sais** that the South will be whipt out in the corse of four **Month**. [But still, there will come another time when we will come home again, which I think won't be so very long anymore, since the officers here say that the South will be whipped in the course of four months.]

c. Aug. 1, 1864; page 2, lines 14–16: … he rode that he had seen som wounded Soldiers that **was** wounded in Sight of Atlanta. [He wrote that he had seen some wounded soldiers who were wounded in sight (possibly *inside*?) of Atlanta.]

d. Aug. 1, 1864; page 2, lines 18–20: As you have bin writing in your last letter that you hat blantid a lot of Melons if you have raced a lot … [As you wrote in your last letter that you had planted a lot of melons, if you raised a lot …]

e. Undated letter; page 1, lines 11–14: I **hend** **ead** any thing else yed but wheat bread & **Craker** since I have left home when I was out on the raid I had some Corn bread **what** we jayhawkt. [I hadn't eaten anything except wheat bread and crackers since I left home; when I was out on the raid, I had some cornbread that we had jayhawked.]

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These brief passages exemplify an array of different structural patterns. Some appear to be transitory phenomena, reflecting incomplete acquisition of English, which disappear from regional English as immigrant communities switch to and more fully master English, such as the non-native-like tense-aspect of (6d). Others, typically less core grammatical structures, leave distinct traces in the languages of those communities. Yet other features are ambiguous with regard to their origins, and a last group of features seems to clearly have roots in dialectal English. We provide a more detailed discussion of these features in § 4 with examples drawn from these excerpts.

3.2 Sophia Goth's English letter: Excerpts

The Goth family was originally from Mecklenburg, Germany and came to Dane County, Wisconsin in the 1850s. The letter collection held by the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies at the University of Wisconsin – Madison consists of more than 70 letters from 1855–1926. Most of the letters are in German, but a few, including the letter written by Sophia Goth in 1889 to her family in Middleton while she was traveling to Campbell Hill, Ilinois, are in English.

(7) Features of Sophia Goth's 1889 letter[6]

a. Wen we got to Camp bell hill ever**r**thing was dark but the mill was **a** going and then we went there & the miller send us to Mr. Dutenbusle, and they couldent keep me so they send us to a nother place and they dident wake up [When we got to Campbell Hill everything was dark, but the mill was going and then we went there and the miller sent us to Mr. Dutenbusle, and they couldn't keep me so they sent us to another place and they didn't wake up.]

b. so the first on that was Mr Swear, Max was there to and Mr Swere told him that I was there but he woudend bleve it he told Mr Swear that he was a lier then Max went to the post office and than he just got the dispatch **what** Fritz send a way wen I started [So the first was Mr. Swere. Max was there, too, and Mr. Swere told him that I was there, but he wouldn't believe it. He told Mr. Swere that he was a liar. Then Max went to the post office and then he just got the dispatch that Fritz sent away when I started (on the trip).]

c. Feona cant eat as good as before but Max can eat like a ~~shr~~trasher … [Feona can't eat as well as before, but Max can eat like a thresher…]

d. Sunday is ~~c~~ surch and after church we are going to Bearman [Sunday is church and after church we are going to the Bearman's house.]

6. A transcription of this letter can also be found in Litty (2017: 277–278).

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3.3 Fred Volkmann English letter: Excerpts[7]

Fred Volkmann is a member of the Krueger family living in Dodge County, Wisconsin. The Kruegers originated from near Stargard, Prussia (in what is today Poland). The Krueger Family Papers are housed in the Wisconsin Historical Society Library in Madison, Wisconsin. The collection consists of hundreds of documents and pictures spanning four generations of Krueger's and dating from 1852–1991. The Krueger family immigrated to Dodge County, Wisconsin in 1850. The excerpts below are from Fred Volkmann to his cousin Alexander Krueger, written shortly after moving to Evanston, IL. in 1892.

(8) Features of Fred Volkmann's letter, March 28, 1892
- a. I **hovent no** work to do now I just need to saw a little wood [I don't have any work to do now. I just need to cut a little wood.]
- b. my fathe got hurt by the horse he has been laying around a bought a week old Millie jumped righ on his heel its swelled up very thick we are glad we got red of them [My father got hurt by the horse. He has been lying around about a week. Old Millie jumped right on his heel. It's swelled up very thick. We are glad we got rid of them.]
- c. we had a nice konsort in the ba**b**tist curch a trip to {China} we all got in free they have us a ticked for nothing the other peop{le} ha**d**o pay fifty cents for a tickett and for children twenty-five cents [We had a nice concert in the Baptist Church, "A Trip to China". We all got in free. They gave us a ticket for nothing. The other people had to pay fifty cents for a ticket and tickets for children were twenty-five cents.]

4. Feature analysis

Let us now consider these variants in terms of possible German influence and American regional English. § 4.1 and § 4.2 deal with features in English due to German imposition. § 4.1 addresses features that were likely due to German influence in writing by L2 English speakers; § 4.2 shows non-native features that remain in regional English; § 4.3 addresses ambiguous features; and finally § 4.4 explains features associated with non-standard, regional English varieties.

7. Scans were accessed via the Wisconsin Historical Society Library. The Fred Volkmann letters are part of the Krueger family papers, 1852–1965 (microfilm edition, 1979), State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Microform Micro 748 Reel 1: slides 199–200. Originals in the possession of Edgar Krueger, Watertown, WI. A transcription of the letter is available in Litty (2017: 319–320).

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4.1 Transitional nonnative features

Asbach immigrated to Iowa from the Rhineland as an adult, and we expect to find German features imposed on his English. Over time, many patterns of salient structural imposition have been lost in once German-speaking communities, as immigrants and their descendants became more proficient in English. As noted already, this is true of the nonnative aspectual construction underlined in (6a) and (6d), in which Asbach uses present perfect progressive forms like *you have been writing* for single completed actions, where English requires the simple past.

Similarly, Asbach sometimes produces word orders that are not found in present-day American English. The second sentence in (6a), for example, is impossible for Upper Midwesterners today, *to write yet to you*. These tense/aspect and word order patterns have, to our knowledge, been lost without a contemporary trace.

4.2 Enduring but less directly structural features

Other features of apparent German origin have become part of regional English in the Upper Midwest, as shown in detail by Bagwell & Olson (2006a, 2006b), Salmons et al. (2006) and Tepeli et al. (2007). The surviving features tend to be lexical/semantic or pragmatic rather than core syntactic structures. Remaining features include, for example, use of *by* to mean 'chez, at the home of' – 'we had dinner BY Monica last night' of the former type and the modal-particle-like use of *once* in 'come here ONCE' of the latter.[8] While often referred to as 'syntactic influence', these patterns are in fact quite local and not about core grammar. That is, changing the meaning of a preposition and adopting a particle do not have far-reaching impact on the fundamental structure of a language.

Are there more structural features that survive? As discussed in the previous section Asbach's 'German' was heavily regionally colored, and the same clearly holds for other family members and for Goth and Volkmann. Those features bleed over into English, providing the most striking nonnative pattern in the 'voiceless' consonant pairs like /t/ vs. /t^h/, /s/ vs. /s^h/, and for example when Asbach writes 'forgot' as *vergod* in (6a). (See also other examples underlined, especially in (7a, b) and (8c).) Most FON features have faded over the generations in immigrant communities, although distinct traces of a related pattern appear to have found their way into regional English, (cf. Purnell et al. (2005a, 2005b), Tepeli et al. (2007)). In instrumental phonetic analysis, we have found that the earliest recorded generations

8. This is similar to what we see in (7d) as Goth writes, "we are going to Bearman". It is common in German to express going to a person's home by 'to' plus a personal name, e.g., *wir gehen zu Oma* (lit. 'we are going to Grandma') 'we are going to Grandma's house'.

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actually overproduced the English distinction between words like *bit* versus *bid*. More specifically, English does not simply use phonetic 'voicing' to make this distinction, but rather a bundle of other phonetic cues, like the length of the preceding vowel (longer before /t/, shorter before /t^h/). Some Wisconsinites from originally German-speaking communities born before the turn of the 20th century actually voice both of those sounds in final position, producing them with vibrating vocal folds. Over the following generations, young speakers are only now coming around to a process that phonetically resembles FON. In fact, this is an emerging stereotype in the region, with expressions like "let's go have some beers" and "da Bears" (on the television show Saturday Night Live for Chicago English) pronounced emphatically with /s^h/ not /s/ sounds.

For someone like Asbach, who shows broad lenition – that is, he generally lacks a lenis-fortis distinction like that between /t/ vs. /t^h/ or /s/ vs. /s^h/, including in final position –, evidence is hard to find for FON, but we have a closely related example from the letters in (6a): English *thing* is written as *think*, where many North German speakers realize underlying /ng/ as [ŋk] rather than Standard German [ŋ] in words like *Ding* 'thing'. Most English and German speakers produce only a nasal, [ŋ], and no actual [g]. (Some speakers in the US do have a [g] here – see the stereotypical pronunciation of *Long Island* – and many northern German speakers produce a [k] here in words like *lang* 'long'.)

In earlier work, Geiger & Salmons (2006) found evidence suggesting that formerly Rhenish-speaking communities, those who spoke roughly like Asbach, show similar traces in partial loss of word-initial aspiration, so that *town* is pronounced more like *down*. Where enough of his country people settled, then, the kind of pronunciation Asbach had appears to leave traces in the Upper Midwest, if by a historically complicated route. In particular, much evidence suggests that new communities need several generations for new dialects to crystallize from the mix of community formation, a process called 'focusing', see Kerswill (2002) and related work.

Another similar issue with German speakers learning English is the production of interdental fricatives (/θ, ð/), 'stopping' as described at the beginning of this paper. These sounds do not exist in German and pose challenges for German speakers learning English. In (7c) Goth starts writing *thresher* with <shr>, crosses it out and corrects to *trasher*. This is interesting because many German speakers replace interdental fricatives with stops or sibilants, both of which appear here, first the sibilant, which is corrected, then a stop.

Finally, two more issues arise in the texts which may show imposition from German. In (8b) Volkmann writes about his *fathe*, leaving off the final <r > that would be expected in the English of the Upper Midwest. He does this rather consistently in his letters with words ending in <er>, which is likely an imposition from German because final <er> is reduced to schwa in some varieties of German. The other example is from the Goth letters, in (7b) Goth writes "than" instead of

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"then", which may reflect difficulties with the English low front vowel /æ/ or even the influence of German *dann* 'then'.

4.3 Ambiguous features

The above features are all familiar patterns of imposition on the English of native speakers of German, whether they survive beyond the immigration generation or not. Numerous other features in these texts are ambiguous with regard to their origin: They could come from German imposition or reflect vernacular English. For instance, many vernacular varieties of English use *what* as a relative pronoun, as in 'the people *what* I talked to'. At the same time, though, forms like *was/wat* are also very widespread as relative pronouns in many dialects of German. The origin of the use of *what/whot* as relative pronouns in (6b, e) and (7b), then, is unclear.

Similar to the ambiguity of the origin of *what/whot* is the absence of /h/ in "Wen" in (7a, b), which could be a marker of /wh/ (that is, [ʍ]) simplification or a misperception of the English <wh>. This might well also reflect the loss of /ʍ/, which merges with /w/ in many varieties of American English.

Another feature attested in the Asbach letters is characteristic of Upper Midwestern English and has some parallels in German, but it has not been widely addressed in the literature. In example (6d), Asbach writes *Craker* where in English we expect the plural form, *crackers*, but which may have been analyzed as a plural form by this English L2 speaker following the German pattern, and in (6e), he writes *four Month* where a plural is required in virtually all varieties of English. (*DARE* reports *month* after numbers mostly among African-Americans.)

Here we find two tightly intertwined issues: First, languages differ in what nouns are singular versus plural, as seen in § 1.

Curme (1922: 112–120) and other grammars give extensive lists of these differences between German and English. While it has not been systematically explored beyond mention in particular entries in *DARE* and such, current Upper Midwestern English shows a broad range of such uses, in forms like "let's go have some beers" (also found in Canada and elsewhere) and "I'm going to wash my hairs". Wisconsinites, for example, use, to varying degrees, constructions like the pluralia tantum nouns mentioned in § 1. In their study of Wisconsin German letters written in English, Bagwell & Olson (2006a, 2006b) have a string of similar examples:

(9) Singular/plural patterns (Bagwell & Olson 2006a, 2006b)
  a. Unexpected plural marker added:
     10 *miles* walk
     for the *pains* the [sic] gave him something for to sleep
  b. Expected plural marker missing:the three little *girl* were home
     Fred and us three *girl* went on the buggy

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It is possible, then, that Asbach provides our earliest example of this distinctly Upper Midwestern pattern. In the examples at hand, we do not have direct and obvious German interference, but in cases like those just given, speakers show more general confusion about how to treat particular items, which could easily yield his examples.

A final feature is 'negative concord', more traditionally known as 'double' or 'multiple' negation; it is richly attested across the long history of Germanic, including virtually every variety of English, save for the modern standard language (see Elspaß 2005 for additional discussion). Allen reports it as frequent in the Upper Midwest among his oldest consultants (1975: 81). Highly stigmatized in English, the pattern remains common in German dialects, and invokes less disdain than in English in colloquial speech for most people. Indeed, it survived long in the German literary language (examples from Lockwood 1968: 210–211, given there without further identification of sources; see also the extended treatment in Davies & Langer 2006):

(10) Literary examples of German negative concord
… nirgends war keine Seele zu sehen (Goethe)
… das disputiert ihm niemand nicht (Schiller)

We might expect such forms to appear here, since it was perhaps present in the authors' native dialects and surely present in the English they heard. Yet among the many negatives in the letters, there is only one occurrence in (8a). This surprising pattern warrants attention as the project develops.

4.4 Possible dialectal American English-origin patterns

Less expected are some features of the authors' English which are clearly not grounded in imposition from an L1 and which reflect distinctly vernacular American patterns. Consider some verb forms: Asbach shows a broad lack of person agreement between subject and verb, *soldiers that was* for 'who were' in (6c), and elsewhere in his letters, illustrated here:

(11) Subject-verb agreement
when thies few lines **comes** to hand
peaches **is**
we **was** attacked
the officers **sais** [says]

Asbach and Goth also show so-called *a*-prefixing, *a thinking* and *a going* in (6c) and (7a), and the past participle *ead* (cf. *eaten*). In fact, Frazer (2006: 293) discusses all three features in his treatment of Midwestern grammar: "*a*-prefixing is

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rare here. The same is true of invariant *was, throwed,* past tense *eat* ...." He finds these and other vernacular verb forms particularly rare in the Upper Midwest and trans-Mississippi states.

Allen's *Linguistic Atlas of the Upper Midwest* (1975: 85) provides a table showing changes in use of these and many other morphological features. All the vernacular features just given from Asbach's letters are attested historically, though in decline or gone today. What could be an even more strikingly non-Midwestern form appears in the letters, but is not reported at all by Allen. Asbach's use of *hend* (in (6e) and elsewhere) could reflect, as Walter Kamphoefner suggests (personal communication), dialectal English *hain't* 'is not, are not, am not'. This form is widespread in Southern dialects, found in the Ozarks and Southwest, and even the Northeast, according to the *Dictionary of American Regional English* (Cassidy & Hall 1985–), but they show no attestations in the whole Upper Midwest. Allen reports simply that "no instances of *hain't* occur" (1975: 37). That said, this might well be interpretable as a reduced form of *hadn't.*

Finally, spellings may reflect regional pronunciations. Use of *ever-* for *every-* as in *everthing* for *everything* reflects a widespread Southern and Midlands pattern, attested to an extent in the Upper Midwest (*DARE* 'ever', with map).

5. Conclusion

This paper begins to examine the English of German-speaking immigrants, covering their full linguistic repertoires – across German and English and drawing on material reflecting a range from language as prescribed in standard grammars to relatively standard language and informal personal letters. Just as the German such immigrants spoke and wrote reveals a rich range from standard features to dialect, the above examples show that their English displays more regional features than previous studies and speculations would lead us to expect, and features that one would not expect in this region. Thus, our results bear on the goals laid out at the outset.

First, when we look at the letters of German immigrants in the late 19th-century, we see the frequent imposition of FON in their written English as in (6a), (7a, b), and (8c). Then in the early 20th century, we see evidence of awareness and stigmatization of this feature in teaching materials (in § 2) which point out this feature and explain how to correct it. Purnell et al. (2005b) and Delahanty (2011) found evidence in recordings of different groups of speakers that the oldest and youngest group patterned similar to one another and exhibited traces of FON. Together with the data from our letters, this supports FON as a boomerang feature with a strong presence initially, receding, and finally re-emerging today.

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Over time, the cues that speakers used to produce FON changed but the feature itself persisted. As cultural norms changed, so too did the use and awareness of the feature. The speakers and writers cited throughout this article settled in a relatively small geographical area, setting the stage for the acoustic and sociolinguistic changes in the language over time. These speakers came into contact with other immigrant groups who settled in the area who spoke languages with similar acoustic features. This process of koineization helped maintain FON over time.

Second, on the development of modern Upper Midwestern English, immigrant letters provide examples of distinct traces of immigrant influences, some of which survive to the present day as highly distinct forms. Possible Germanisms that survive to the present include the pattern of count/mass noun usage and the expansion of unexpected pluralia tantum nouns in English resembling their German forms. Most striking, perhaps, these letters contain a range of highly distinct forms, most notably widespread use of vernacular subject-verb agreement. Such patterns extend to vernacular English-origin patterns like negative concord and possibly even to features not previously reported for the region. A key example is again (*hain't*, a form reported especially in Appalachia but also in other American dialects far from Wisconsin, again Cassidy & Hall 1985: 2017:s.v.)

Published sources and immigrant letters can be put to use as tools to begin to write immigrant communities into the history of American English in new ways. This is another example of how a historical sociolinguistic approach can help us understand complex past trajectories of change. While the effects of immigrant languages on varieties of English were traditionally assessed on a before-and-after basis – showing the results of generations of language change and language shift – these sources give us new opportunities to observe the actual processes of change. Most work to date has focused on the trajectories of changes that eventually win out and become part of the new varieties of these communities, but we have shown here that we can also see the effects of imposition in early generations that are eventually lost.

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CHAPTER 8

African American English in nineteenth-century Liberia

Processes of change in a transported dialect

Lucia Siebers

This chapter investigates African American English as it was transported to Liberia in the nineteenth century based on vernacular Liberian letters compiled in the Corpus of Older African American Letters. The analysis focuses in particular on the individual variation in the verbal paradigm of an emigrant family. The findings show that family members evince similar changes in progress transported from the American South but that social changes induced by the migratory movement have resulted in changes with regard to verbal -s marking that take very different paths of developments in two generations of the same family.

Keywords: Earlier African American English, Liberia, emigration, individual variation, social change, verbal concord

1. Introduction

Among the many studies on varieties of English in the last two decades, *Legacies of Colonial English* (Hickey 2004) is a noteworthy and extremely comprehensive contribution that pays due attention to the historical perspective on many former colonial contexts. This chapter is concerned with a type of legacy of colonial English that has received relatively little attention, African American English transported to Liberia in the first half of the nineteenth century. As I will argue here, it presents a particularly interesting case. African American English, itself a high-contact variety that was the outcome of language contact between British settlers in America and transported and enslaved Africans, was transported to another colonial context. While we typically find British or Irish settlers as the typical colonial settlers in many British colonial contexts, we here have the unusual case that the colonized themselves became the colonizers. Parallel to developments in Sierra Leone, this was unique and constituted a very unusual type of the settlement colony (Schneider

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2011: 136). Compared with the situation in Sierra Leone, however, the numbers of freed and emancipated African Americans were much lower and the settler groups much more mixed. These included blacks from Nova Scotia, Jamaicans and other Africans. This mixture of different languages and dialect inputs formed the basis of what later developed into Krio (Schneider 2011: 136). Generally, the motivation of settlers to emigrate was diverse; some of them were religious or political dissenters, some were criminals to be transported (as in the case of Australia) and many came in the hope of a new and better life and new opportunities in another country. In contrast to this, the sole motivation of African Americans to emigrate to Liberia was to be liberated. The only exception to this are the free African Americans whose political, economic and cultural opportunities in a Southern society based on slavery and racial discrimination were limited and who, despite critical attitudes towards colonization in Africa, sought full emancipation and new opportunities in another country.

Two linguistic processes that typically occur in settlement colonies are of interest here. Contact with linguistically and socially distinct settler groups leads to dialect mixing as different dialect features are in contact with each other. Depending on the sociodemographics of the settler groups and the salience and frequency of the features, the dialect features may level off and koinézation takes place. The other type of contact is with speakers of indigenous groups, which may result in language transfer and varying degrees of nativization. In the case of Liberia, the latter process is unlikely for the formative years, since there was little close contact with the indigenous groups. As for the former, the question of which dialect features were subject to change when the different settler groups mixed is of central concern in this chapter. As Condre-Silvestre (2012: 337) rightly highlights, "immigration and contact with foreign communities favor the diffusion of innovations and changes".

2. Previous studies on African American English in Liberia

Among the first studies on English in Liberia is Singler's synchronic investigation of what he calls Liberian Settler English (Singler 1989, 1998). He points out that there is no direct link between Liberian Settler English and nineteenth-century African American English, but he argues that his data nevertheless allow insights into earlier varieties. He focuses on Sinoe County and argues that, due to its geographical remoteness, the limited contact with other groups, and the low influence from indigenous languages in comparison to general Liberian English, the present-day variety retains some of the characteristics of its historical variety.

Earlier studies on nineteenth-century letters were carried out by Kautzsch (2000, 2002) and van Herk (2002). Kautzsch investigates negation patterns in

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Liberian letters published in (Miller 1990 and Wiley 1980). The authors of the letters all hail from Viriginia and Kautzsch compares them to Virginian speakers of his twentieth-century data base. Vernacular negation features such as negative postposing and negative concord occur in both sources but are considerably less frequent in the letters. Kautzsch attributes this to a literacy effect, as even vernacular writers might be influenced by standard norms and thus consciously or unconsciously filter out some vernacular features.

Van Herk's studies are based on his Ottawa Repository of Early African American Correspondence (OREACC), which draws on letters written by Liberian settlers to the ACS published on microfilm in the American Colonization Society Papers (van Herk 2002; van Herk and Poplack 2003). He investigates past time reference in Liberian letters and the high percentage of past tense marking (90%) confirms the English nature of Earlier African American English. Bare preterite forms are more frequent with weak than with strong verbs and the same phonological factors are operative when compared to speech corpora, a fact which according to van Herk underlines the speech-based nature of the letters.

These previous dialectological studies reveal important insights into the morphosyntactic variation and development of Earlier African American English and I will argue in this chapter that these can be usefully complemented with a historical sociolinguistic perspective. As yet, the specific characteristics of the emigration and colonization and the sociohistorical context have not been studied in more detail. I would even claim that some of the data are suitable for so-called 'second- and third wave' historical sociolinguistic studies, i.e. the analysis of historical networks and issues of identity (Siebers in prep.). The importance of identity construction in colonial contexts and new-dialect formation are highlighted in the Dynamic Model (Schneider 2007). Unfortunately, due to the 'bad data' problem' in historical linguistics, all too often we lack the linguistic sources to study this in more detail. The data that form the basis for the analysis in this chapter are outlined in the next section.

3. Data: The Corpus of Older African American English

The data on which this article is based are drawn from the Corpus of Older African American English. It is the largest and most diverse collection of pre-1900 African American English and comprises more than 1,500 letters from almost 1,000 different writers stemming from 18 states in the time span from 1760 to 1910. The corpus is not only diverse in its size and the extent of regional variation, it is also heterogeneous with regard to its writers and their individual literacies. The heterogeneity is an advantage with regard to the amount of regional variation and the time depth, as it allows us to trace language change across decades or even a century,

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at least with high-frequency features (Siebers 2015). With rarer features, only the earliest attestations can be given and hardly anything on possible constraints on the variation can be said, let alone the processes that lead to change. This is particularly problematic in regions or periods for which only a small number of letters are available anyway, since the evidence might not be conclusive and in case of negative evidence we cannot say whether a feature simply did not exist or whether it just does not occur in the extant sources. There are writers from whom only a couple of lines have survived. However, we fortunately also have those authors who wrote an entire series of letters, stretching across a considerable time span, sometimes a lifespan. Such series of letters allow us to study the language of semi-literate individuals in more detail and thus to assess how consistently vernacular features are used. We cannot escape the data problem in historical linguistics and therefore we have to make the best use of bad data in the Labovian sense. For the present purposes, this means to focus on microlinguistic processes of change whenever the detailed investigation of selected individuals is possible. As Nevalainen (2015: 143) rightly points out: "Historical data only rarely provide the sociolinguist with access to the changes that the writers underwent in their lifetimes but we do often know how upper-ranking writers were educated". This is not the case with the vernacular writers here generally, but fortunately the corpus contains letters by five individuals who wrote more than 20 letters, in two cases these span across 20 years. This cannot be considered a lifespan but allows for a longitudinal study, which is the best we have at hand. Three of these individuals stem from the Skipwith, family, African Americans who emigrated to Liberia after the Virginian plantation owner John Hartwell Cocke, emancipated them. The Skipwith correspondence will be introduced in more detail in the next section.

3.1 The Skipwith letters

The Skipwith correspondence comprises 138 letters, 58 from Liberia and 80 from Alabama. The letters were selected for a number of reasons. It is virtually unique that so many letters of one and the same family survived, making them most likely "the largest and fullest epistolary record left by an American slave family" (Miller 1990: 11). This offers unique opportunities for analysis. Unlike many other semi-literate authors, the Skipwiths became regular correspondents, i.e. they consistently kept in touch with the Cocke family. In contrast to those who just left a few lines, the Skipwith letters can be studied for the consistency of certain features. An important question that arises from this fact is whether this regular correspondence had an effect on the language they used in the letters, i.e. whether they became less vernacular. Two members of the family were selected for closer analysis: Peyton

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Skipwith himself wrote 15 letters starting just after arrival in Liberia in 1834 up until 1846. His oldest daughter Diana, aged 12 at the time of emigration, corresponded with Cocke and his daughter Sally between 1837 and 1843. Thus we have documents for the first decade after emigration from two generations of one family. These family letters are closest to being familiar letters, as authors in most other cases did not know the addressee personally and only rarely wrote more than one or two letters. So the Skipwith letters are an exception in this regard. The following table summarises the main details of the Skipwith letters:

Table 1. The Skipwith letters

Author	Life span	No. of letters	Time period	No. of words
Peyton Skipwith	1800–1849	15	1834–1846	9,838
Diana Skipwith	1822–1844?	9	1834–1843	5,661
Matilda Skipwith	1824–?	19	1844–1861	7,987
Nash Skipwith	1831–1851	3	1849–1851	1,019
James Skipwith	?–1860	12	1851–1860	5,705
		59		30,210

4. The sociohistorical context: Emigration to Liberia

4.1 The American Colonization Society

The American Colonization Society was founded in 1816 with the goal to promote the emancipation of African Americans on the condition that they emigrate to Liberia. While not as many as originally intended were willing to emigrate, for those who did, it was a very conscious decision for freedom and against American bondage and a society that was strongly dominated by racist prejudices (Schiller 2011: 203). There was a strongly religious motivation for the foundation of the society and many plantation owners supported the society, both politically and socially. Some plantation owners – among them John Hartwell Cocke the former master of the freed African Americans analyzed in this chapter – were acutely aware of the evils of slavery but at the same time feared the social consequences of full-scale emancipation (Shick 1980: 4). In the post-revolutionary era, criticism of slavery increased and members of the Church were among the first to voice this criticism publicly. As early as the 1770s, colonization in Africa as a solution to the problem of slavery was advocated by a minister of the Congregational Church in Rhode Island, who also saw this as an opportunity to evangelize in Africa. He, in turn, had been motivated by interests expressed from within the African American community to

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'return home to Africa' (Shick 1980: 5). This desire was not shared by everybody in the African American community so it was only some 30 years later that this idea of a larger 'repatriation' scheme was taken up again by whites, most of whom were strong believers in the Christian faith and opposed to slavery. They were committed to this cause since such a scheme meant a way out of their dilemma of not wanting to emancipate all slaves and thus threatening their prestigious and privileged role in society. The attempts of the American Colonization Society (henceforth ACS) were harshly criticized by Northern abolitionists as well as free African Americans. For them, the transportation to and settlement of a fraction of the African American community would not solve the problem of slavery but would rather "transport them from their homes and remove them as advocates for enslaved blacks" (Tyler-McGraw 2007:5). Free African Americans were equally critical of the colonization scheme except for one theme: They were not convinced that they would ever be able to attain full citizenship and saw emigration to Liberia as an opportunity to break away from the inequalities of Southern slave society. Despite their status as free, liberation in all regards was the prime motive for free African Americans to emigrate. All in all, 15,987 African Americans settled in Liberia between 1822 and 1911 (American Colonization Records, cited in Singler 1989). But the majority of African Americans came before the Civil War, with an early peak in the 1830s and a later one in the 1850s. While the repatriation program was originally aimed at free African Americans, only 30.1% of the settlers were freeborn.

4.2 The first settlements in Liberia

Upon arrival at Cape Mesurado in 1822, the first group of settlers founded what was to become Monrovia, named thus in 1824 in honour of President James Monroe (Tyler-McGraw 2007: 131). The majority of emigrants settled in Monrovia, including settlements along St. Paul's River a few miles inland such as Caldwell and Clay-Ashwell. The Liberian letters analysed in this chapter also include writers from these inland settlements. In the analysis, they are grouped as part of the larger Monrovian community due to their proximity to the capital. It can be assumed that for economic reasons, the settlers regularly travelled to Monrovia. It was also the main port of entry but two other major settlement areas further south on the coast ("enclaves", as Shick calls them) were founded along St. John's River (including Edina and Bassa Cove) and Sinoe River (Greenville, Louisiana and Setta Kru). The Liberian subcomponent of the Corpus of Older African American English contains letters from all these settlements but this chapter only focuses on the largest community in Monrovia.

Based on the census in the colony, the U.S. Congress reported the number of 2,388 settlers in Liberia in 1843, of whom more than a third (38%) lived in the capital

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(Shick 1980: 34). The number increased to 11,000 until the beginning of the Civil War, with between 300 and 573 settlers per year (American Colonization Society *Annual Reports* nos. 69–76, cited in Singler 1989: 42). The numbers decreased dramatically after the beginning of the war and peaked for the last time in the three years following the war.

With regard to the new dialect contact situation in Monrovia (and elsewhere), it is essential to consider which part in the United States the settlers came from. With about 30%, the majority came from Virginia (like the Skipwiths) and Maryland, North Carolina and Georgia followed suit (14.4, 11.6 and 10.4% respectively). As Singler (1998: 234) points out, Sinoe County was different in that the mixture of settler groups was quite different and in contrast to the other two settlements had many more settlers from the Deep South (more than 70%) and only 5% from Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina. If the English spoken by the African Americans differed considerably, we would assume the dialect mixing (and the feature pool) in this area to be very different too. The linguistic impact of the different settler communities needs to be addressed in future research.

As to the social stratification of the settler community, five distinct groups can be identified. At the upper end of the continuum are the free African Americans, who can be considered rather well-educated and some of them even wealthy, like the Roberts and Waring families from Petersburg, Virginia. They represented the settler elite and are referred to as the Monrovia 'aristocracy' (Shick 1980: 49) or Monrovia 'mercantile elite' (Tyler-McGraw 2007: 154). The group of emancipated African Americans can be subdivided into poorer and more privileged former slaves like the Skipwiths, who had an intermediate position and were socially aspiring. A fourth group were recaptured Africans. Many of them came from the Congo river and were referred to as 'Congos'. Singler (2008: 105) cites that 5,700 recaptured Africans came to Monrovia until 1860 and found their place in society at the lower end of the social spectrum. The final group were the indigenous ethnic groups the settlers came in contact with. Theirs was a distant and hostile relationship, and it can be reasonably assumed that there was little indigenous influence on the settlers' English in the early years. The settlers' letters contain many references to the indigenous people and it becomes clear that they viewed themselves as Americans who had culturally and religiously little in common with the indigenous population and regarded them as inferior to their own ethnic group.

(1) I wrote you a long catalogue about the Natives custums which I am in hopes that you have found very amusing
(Diana Skipwith, 6 March 1843, Miller 1990: 277)

(2) it is something strange to think that those people of africa are calld our ancestors
(Peyton Skipwith, 22 April 1840, Miller 1990: 75)

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5. Methodology and data analysis

This section will analyze the individual variation of selected members of the Skipwith family with regard to their subject-verb concord and relate it to variation in the community. The relation of the community and the individual is a widely discussed issue in sociolinguistics (for recent examples of this line of research see Stuart-Smith and Timmins 2010 and Waters and Tagliamonte 2017). Much of the research on sociolinguistics, particularly in the Labovian tradition, has focused on the variation of socially stratified groups. The resulting assessment of intra-individual speaker variation as unimportant implies that speakers of a group are assumed to speak in very similar if not identical ways. This is what Wolfram and Beckett (2000) have criticised as the homogeneity assumption. They argue instead that the study of individuals should receive more attention and that it offers new insights into patterns of language change in the community, particularly in the reconstruction of African American English. They argue that there is considerable intragroup variation even in stable communities and therefore sought to investigate how the speech of African Americans in a remote county in North Carolina varied among members of the same community (Wolfram and Beckett 2000: 3). Selected features were subjected to closer analysis for a comparative analysis of the speech individual speakers. This approach is applied to an earlier variety of African American English in this section.

The Corpus of Older African American English contains a large subcomponent of letters written from Liberian letters, totaling 312 (out of 1,500) letters and amounting to 160, 389 words). As outlined in the previous sections, the letters of the Skipwiths will be focused on. In order to embed their individual variation in the wider community, all 186 letters from Monrovia were selected for comparison. They add up to 96,000 words written by 35 males and 13 females.

The analysis of the Liberian letters in the next subsection addresses the following research questions:

- How stable are the features?
- Do members of the same family use the same features?
- Can any changes be observed within the first ten years after the emigration? If so, how can they be explained?
- How do the results correlate with variation in the community?

Based on Kautzsch's (2012) overview, I have listed as a first step all the non-standard morphosyntactic features in Peyton's and Diana's letters. I identified altogether 21 features in their writings and considerable overlap between these two individuals (Siebers fc). Not all of the features are frequent enough, therefore the following were selected for further analysis here: past and present *be* and verbal *-s*.

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5.1 Past *be*

Was/were is variable and non-standard *was* can be partly explained by the Northern subject rule (NSR), which is a combination of the subject type constraint (STC) and the non-proximity to subject constraint. It was operational in Scots from the 14th century onwards (Montgomery 1994) and was extended to present and past *be*. "According to the northern subject rule, plural present-tense verbs take *-s*, unless they are immediately preceded by a personal pronoun subject, as in *They peel them and boils them* and *Birds sings*." (Ihalainen 1994: 221). The NSR was first shown to be in operation in earlier AAE by (Montgomery et al. 1993). In the present study, all occurrences of past tense *be* in the two selected collections were extracted from the letters and coded according to number, grammatical person and subject type. The results are quantified in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Percentage of *was*

	Peyton			**Diana**			**Monrovia**		
	was	**N**	**%**	***was***	**N**	**%**	***was***	**N**	**%**
1st p SG	13	14	92.9	8	8	100	97	114	85.1
2nd p SG	2	3	66.7	1	2	50.0	11	20	55.0
3rd p SG	48	48	100	25	26	96.2	280	305	91.8
1st p PL	1	2	50.0	5	7	71.4	12	20	60.0
3rd p PL	5	11	45.0	3	7	42.9	25	83	30.1
NP	5	10	50.0	3	4	75.0	22	73	30.1
Pro	0	1	0	0	3	0	3	10	30.0

As Figure 1 below shows, the rates for levelling to *was* are very similar between Peyton and Diana. The levelling rates in the second person singular, first person plural and the third person plural range between 42.9 and 71.14%. The relative frequencies of second person singular and first person plural in particular have to be taken with a pinch of salt, as these are only based on a few tokens each. However, the findings are in line with results of earlier studies (Siebers 2015) on subsets from the same corpus. Letters written by Freedmen in the 1860s were compared to letters from Missouri and Indian Territory in the 1890s. All three data sets showed substantial levelling to *was* in the third person plural. The subject type in the third person plural still has an effect: nominal subjects are more likely to be levelled to *was* than pronominal *they* although the effect is no longer categorical (Montgomery et al. 1993; Montgomery 2015). Levelling to *was* was not only limited to third person plural but also occurred in second person singular and first person plural (ranging between 57.1 to 75%). In the letters from the 1860s, percentages for second person plural are even as high as 83% (Siebers 2015: 28). It was hypothesized

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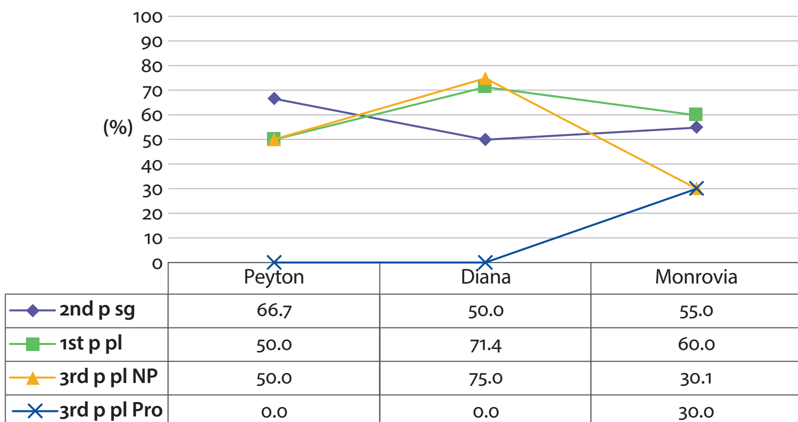
that these results showed traces of a language change in progress and that the two developments were related. The once categorical effect became weaker and as this distinction of marking of subject types was no longer discernible for speakers, it spread on to other grammatical persons in an analogous way. As the Skipwiths represent the first generations of settlers writing from the 1830s onwards, these must have been frequent concord patterns that were already present in the speech of Virginians in the early decade of the nineteenth century. When comparing Peyton's and Diana's results with the overall results of the whole community in Monrovia and its surroundings, we see that there are no major differences between them and their community with regard to second person singular and first person plural and that they seem to represent communal patterns fairly well. We do find different patterns in the third person singular: The overall frequency in Monrovia as a whole at 30% is lower and pronominal *they* does not occur at all with Peyton and Diana but seems to have crept into the community in the ensuing years. These results confirm the trends outlined above for the American South. It is clear that we can see two contrary developments: a decrease of third person plural (and a weakening of the subject types) and an increase in *was* levelling with second person singular and first person plural. The temporal connection between the two changes remains to be studied. Whether the former effected the latter or whether these developed in parallel is a question that needs to be addressed. Judging from earlier studies, it seems as if the overall tendencies are remarkably similar and only minor differences obtain from one region to the next (Siebers 2015). The fact that these similarities of *was* / *were* variation patterns also extend to Southern American Vernacular English seem to corroborate their robustness, as the two varieties were in close contact with each other and Southern American English was likely one of the inputs for African Americans (Schneider and Montgomery 2001; Trüb 2006 and Ellis 2016).



	Peyton	Diana	Monrovia
2nd p sg	66.7	50.0	55.0
1st p pl	50.0	71.4	60.0
3rd p pl NP	50.0	75.0	30.1
3rd p pl Pro	0.0	0.0	30.0

Figure 1. Levelling to *was* in %

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5.2 Present *be*

As Wolfram (2000) has pointed out, the reconstruction of a variety should ideally be based on several features, as no conclusive picture can be drawn on one feature only. Good candidates for comparison are present *be* and verbal -*s*, since the constraints on their variation are very similar. In analogy to past *be*, third person plural nominal subjects are more likely to have an -*s* attached or be levelled to *is* than pronominal *they*.

While verbal -s with other grammatical persons than third person singular and plural is also attested, it is not as frequent as with past *be*. It is known that rates for third person plural with present *be* are lower than for past *be* (Trüb 2006; Siebers 2015).

Table 3. Percentage of present *be*

	Peyton			**Diana**		
	is	**N**	**%**	***is***	**N**	**%**
2nd p SG	0	14	0	1	3	33.3
3rd p SG	94	94	100	60	65	92.3
1st p PL	0	10	0	2	9	22.2
3rd p PL	9	36	26.0	7	20	35.0
NP	9	30	30.0	7	17	41.2
Pro	0	6	0	0	3	0

Again, Peyton's and Diana's levelling rates are fairly similar in the third person plural at 25 and 35%. In contrast to the past *be*, the rates are lower but the subject type constraint is clearly borne out, as both show no instances of *is* with *they*. While Peyton does not exhibit *is* outside the third person, Diana has a few instances of *you* and *we is*. This seems to be a marginal pattern but it might be a parallel to past *be*.

When we consider -*s* with lexical verbs, we see for the first time fundamental differences between Peyton and Diana. The results are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Percentage of -*s* in third person singular and plural

	Peyton			**Diana**		
	-*s*	**N**	**%**	**-*s***	**N**	**%**
3rd p SG	43	59	72.9	7	37	18.9
3rd p PL	7	20	35.0	1	13	7.7
NP	6	16	37.5			
Pro	1	4	25.0			

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Interestingly, Peyton evinces -*s* with both the singular and the plural; in the singular, three quarters of the verbs are marked with -*s* and only one fourth remains unmarked. In the plural, it is a minority pattern comparable with the rates for present *be*. It is an unusual pattern, as it neither shows a categorical African American English feature of lack of third person singular marking nor a strong pattern of plural marking that is associated with British settler origin and shared with other Southern varieties as mentioned above. Not all but some of the AAE speakers in a remote community in North Carolina Wolfram and Beckett (2000) reveal an inverse relationship between the -*s* marking in the singular and the plural of the third person. Those speakers with a high percentage of -s absence in the singular have a low frequency of -s marking in the plural and vice versa. According to Wolfram and Beckett, the AAE speakers with high rates of -*s* marking in the singular and the plural are oriented more towards their Euro American community members.

Diana on the other hand has very low overall frequencies of -*s* marking and verbal -*s* does not seem to be an internalized concord pattern. She neither shows standard third person singular -*s* nor dialectal -*s* in the plural. The obvious question is how can these differences between Diana and her father be explained given the many similarities outlined above. As members of the same family, we can assume close contact and shared practices. Diana was aged 12 at the time of emigration and we can assume that her variety of AAE was fully acquired and fairly stable. While adolescent language use is more susceptible to change than adult use, it is worth considering whether the migratory movement and the resulting contact with other speakers of AAE or indigenous people may have caused changes. The letters of both Skipwiths are unfortunately limited but allow for a division into two time periods to draw a comparison and to investigate whether any changes occurred in the first ten years of emigration. The first period is 1834–1839 and the second period 1840–1846. Since only 24 letters are available for analysis, they were searched manually. When analyzing the letters, it became clear that the later are quite different from the earlier ones in a number of respects. A comparative analysis of past and present *be* was not possible, as the occurrences for each of the periods were too low but the results for verbal -s are presented below in Figure 2.

Peyton's use of third person singular evinces a drastic increase from 60 to 100%. After the first five years he develops more standard usage of third person singular -s. This did not seem to develop gradually but more drastically. After 1840, there is no lack of past tense marking in his letters. At the same time, his plural marking increases substantially too. The question is how vernacular writers develop when they become regular correspondents over a longer period of time. As they become more experienced along the way, it is reasonable that their language use becomes more standard. We clearly see this pattern with Diana, who initially has hardly any tense marking but also shows a drastic increase up to 80% third person singular

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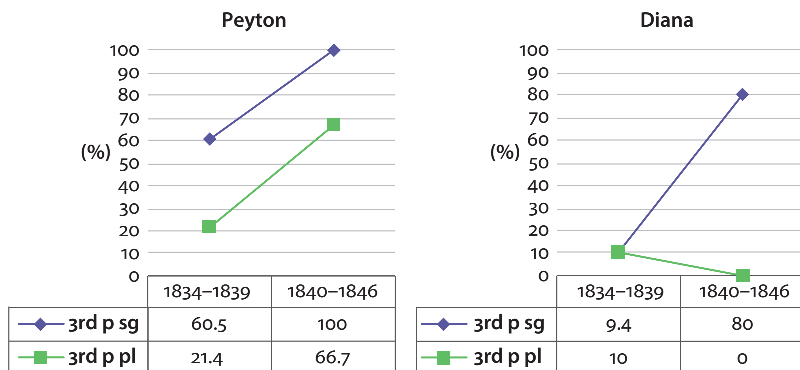

Peyton	1834–1839	1840–1846
3rd p sg	60.5	100
3rd p pl	21.4	66.7

Diana	1834–1839	1840–1846
3rd p sg	9.4	80
3rd p pl	10	0

Figure 2. Percentage of -*s* in third person singular and plural

-s in the 1840s. In contrast to her father, her low use of the plural -s drops to zero occurrences. This is the expected pattern, as standardness increases and vernacularity decreases. This change was most likely caused by influence from more formal education. Diana, as did all other Cocke émigrés, received basic instruction in reading and writing before she went to Liberia and reported in her early letters that she and her siblings were going to school:

(3) there are 5 publick school I hav mention in the furst part of leter that me and my Brother Nash goes to Mrs Luwis Johoston and my sister matilda and Napolun go to mis ivens (Diana Skipwith, 24 August 1837, Miller 1990: 87f)

The dramatic changes of Peyton's use are more difficult to explain. At first sight, it is not clear which type of exposure to more standard forms may have caused such changes as school education did not apply in his case. When having a closer look at his main contacts and networks in Monrovia, it becomes apparent that he had many contacts with politically and economically influential families in Monrovia, such as the Roberts and Teage families. Joseph Jenkins Roberts, who later became Governor and then in 1847 the first president of Liberia, became a friend of Peyton's when they first arrived together on the *Jupiter* in 1833 (Miller 1990: 50). The Roberts and Teage families were free-born Virginians who were affluent and formed part of the elite in Liberian emigré society. While little is known about fine-grained social distinctions in the antebellum African American community, it is a fact that free-borns were privileged and at the upper end of the social spectrum and therefore naturally claimed leading positions in Liberian society that were denied to them in America. In their privileged positions in the American South they presumably had little contacts with enslaved African Americans and Miller even reports on a caste system in some port cities that kept the two groups at a distance (Miller 1990: 49). Having said that, interaction or possible mutual influence between the two varieties of African

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American English was rather unlikely prior to their emigration. Thus emigration resulted in a new social and linguistic mixture. Among the formerly enslaved in Liberia in turn, the Skipwiths represented privileged former bondsmen in comparison to other poorer former slaves. Emigration to Liberia therefore meant social betterment to the Skipwiths. As the member of the family with the highest number of contacts, Peyton benefitted from these new connections most. Unfortunately, too little is known about the free-borns' use of English in order to evaluate the possible influence this may have had on families like the Skipwiths. However, we can observe likely changes in Peyton's usage as outlined above, which could be interpreted as the result of such new contacts. A further indication for the possible influence on Peyton's language comes from Peyton himself in a metalinguistic comment in one of his letters:

(4) I hope you will excuse me, as you know that my incapability forbids that grand style of writing and immersing into an overflow of dictionary words, which you are daily in the habit of seeing and hearing
(Peyton Skipwith, 30 January 1838, Miller 1990: 62f)

This quotation nicely illustrates that and how Peyton noted the differences between the settler elite's language use and his own. He refers to the lexical level, but he must have noted other differences, too. His use of third person singular *-s* undoubtedly indicates this. Since the increase in vernacularity in the plural runs counter to this trend we observe in his use, the only explanation for this is that verbal *-s* must have been particularly salient to him and that he associated it with more standard concord patterns more generally, (possibly) unaware of the distinction between third person singular and all other contexts. As a result, he overgeneralized -s to other contexts as well in order to accommodate to what he thought must have been more standard-like patterns of his new and prestigious connections. Further evidence for this overgeneralization comes from many examples in his later letters where he attaches -s to non-third person contexts as well, a pattern that he did not use in his early letters. The examples in (5) illustrate this:

(5) a. **You wishes** that I should say something about Miss Sally's people
(Peyton Skipwith 25 June 1846, Miller 1990: 82)
b. **I feels** an inclination to lay a side my trade
(Peyton Skipwith, 25 June 1846, Miller 1990: 83)
c. **they has** in a measure dispursed the slave trade
(Peyton Skipwith 29 September 1844, Miller 1990: 81)
d. or **you has** sent me to this country where I can speak for myself like a ma& show myself to be a man, so fair as my ability, allows me.
(Peyton Skipwith 29 September 1844, Miller 1990: 81)

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Peyton's family was an example that social distinctions of a slave society were transported to Liberia but became more fluid in the colony. Free African Americans were not numerous enough to keep up their caste system so they interacted and intermixed with 'privileged bondsmen' like the Skipwiths who became moderators between the settler elite and the poorer emancipated slaves (Miller 1990: 50). Aware of the more fluid social distinctions and the emerging opportunities that the colony offered to him, Peyton can be interpreted as a socially upwardly settler who must have been eager to improve his social standing, not least by showing through his use of language that he was worthy of his new connections.

6. Conclusion

As I hope to have shown in this chapter, the Skipwith family correspondence as well as letters by other settlers in Liberia can be fruitfully studied in a number of ways. Due to the fact that colonization in Liberia was fairly well documented, e.g. by the ACS and its supporters, it offers opportunities to investigate the sociohistorical context and its resulting consequences for the development of a transported variety of African American English in more detail than is possible in many other contexts or time periods. Corpora such as the Corpus of Older African American English allow us to trace language change over an extended period of time or across several regions but we cannot always fully explain which factors or rather combination of factors induce such changes. This study is intended to complement large-scale studies by focusing on micro-level changes, thus raising the question of what we can conclude and generalize from the results. Most importantly, I believe, social changes and their consequences for language variation deserve further attention in earlier African American English and more generally in historical sociolinguistics (cf. Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2003) whenever sufficient sociohistorical information is available. This is particularly relevant in migratory movements, as these often considerably alter social settings. While colonization in Liberia was voluntary (though strongly encouraged through its conditional emancipation), coerced migratory movements characterized all periods in the history of African American English. Therefore findings from such movements, i.e. how dialectally and socially distinct groups mix, interact and influence each other is relevant to other earlier African American communities as well.

What is more, the influence formal education may have on the writings of vernacular writers is germane to the study of African American Englishes in the decades following the Civil War when more and more schools were established to provide education for Freedmen.

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This study is only the first step towards providing a fuller picture into the intra- and intergroup variation of African American English in the Liberian settler community. The focus was on the settlers in Monrovia and its immediate surroundings but a comparative diachronic study of the two other settlements areas in Bassa and Sinoe County is intended to analyze the first thirty years of immigration in more detail.

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PART II

Processes of change in Present Day English

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CHAPTER 9

Attitudes to flat adverbs and English usage advice

Morana Lukač and Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade

Widespread as they are in non-standard and informal varieties of English, flat or suffixless adverbs are subject to prescriptive criticism when appearing in standard English. In the present study we repeated the survey by Mittins et al. (1970) in *Attitudes to English Usage* to investigate whether the acceptability of flat adverbs has changed since the late 1960s. Our findings suggest that acceptability has grown over the past fifty years, with flat adverbs losing their status of a usage problem. The analysis of the Hyper Usage Guide of English database suggests the same. Interestingly, we identified a new usage problem related to the usage of adverbs, one primarily associated with American English, the dual-pair adverb, *thus/thusly*.

Keywords: flat adverbs, *thusly*, usage problems, British English, American English, attitudes to usage, usage guides, acceptability survey, HUGE database

1. Introduction

"Mass media seems to have had a huge impact on the non-use of adverbs." This was an unsolicited comment made by a 63-year-old retired British teacher to an online survey conducted in 2012 in the context of the Leiden University research project Bridging the Unbridgeable: Linguists, Prescriptivists and the General Public. The purpose of the survey was to elicit attitudes to three sentences that contained usage problems (see further Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2013), issues of divided usage that, for one reason or another, evoke criticism. Usage problems are treated in usage guides, usage advice manuals that have been published for English since the late eighteenth century and that are enormously popular today. What the above informant appears to be commenting on is not the fact that adverbs are no longer used today, but that in her opinion they increasingly appear unmarked for the grammatical category they belong to, i.e. by the suffix *-ly*, and that she blames the mass media for this development. An iconic example would be the use of *slow* rather than

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slowly in traffic signs reading "Danger: go slow", where an adjective is allegedly used in the guise of an adverb. Traditionally, such unmarked adverbs are labelled "flat adverbs", a term first coined (according to the *Oxford English Dictionary – OED*) by John Earle (1824–1903) (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*); alternatively, according to Peters (2015: 179), they are referred to as "suffixless" or "zero adverbs", while the terms "dual-form adverb" or "dual adverb" can be used to refer to pairs of adverbs like *slow*/*slowly* that may occur with or without the suffix *-ly*.

Flat adverbs, according to Hughes & Trudgill (1979: 19), are common "[i]n most non-standard dialects … [but] [i]n the case of some adverbs, forms without *-ly* are also found in colloquial standard English". A survey carried out by Raymond Hickey for his study of Dublin English indeed showed that flat adverbs are common in Anglo-Irish, too (2005: 125–133): his example number 9, reproduced in (1), contains a flat adverb (though Hickey's focus in the survey was on the verb form *gets* collocating with the first person singular):

(1) I gets *awful* anxious about the kids at night.[1]

Since usage is so widespread, with flat adverbs occurring both in standard and in non-standard English, they may be expected to come in for criticism. After all, their form does not agree with *-ly* being the typical adverbial suffix in standard English (cf. Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 58).[2] A survey carried out by Mittins et al. in the late 1960s indicated that the sentence in (2) below, with *quicker* for *more quickly*, showed an overall acceptability (i.e. across different styles, ranging from informal speech to formal writing) of only 42 per cent. Their item 53, reproduced in (3), though restricted as to the contexts for which it was rated by the informants (written usage only), was considered acceptable by 54 per cent of the respondents (Mittins et al. 1970: 13, 108).

(2) He did it *quicker* than he had ever done it before (item 32)

(3) That's a dangerous curve; you'd better *go slow* (item 53)

Opdahl (2000), mentions differences in the acceptance of flat adverbs between British and American English speakers, with British informants being more in

1. Throughout this paper, italics are used for emphasis.

2. Historically, *-ly* is a reduced form of the Old English adverbial marker *-lice*, which itself comprises the adjectival suffix *-lic* + adverbial *-e*. Modern English consequently has adjectives as well as adverbs ending in *-ly* (cf. e.g. the adjectives *friendly*, *lovely*, *lowly* and *silly* with adverbially marked forms like *loudly*, *closely* and *highly*). From the eighteenth century onwards this has led to discussions as to whether the correct adverbial forms of *-ly* adjectives should not be *-lily* (e.g. *heavenlily*, *godlily*) (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2006), a discussion which continues in usage guides today.

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favour of the *-ly* forms of dual adverb pairs than American ones. This preference Peters attributes to the appearance in the UK after the Second World War of "censorious usage guides such as that of Partridge (1947/1965/1994), and public anxiety about grammar in the 1990s" (Peters 2015: 201). Both Opdahl's findings and Peters' suggested explanations for the differences in acceptance by speakers of different varieties of English are of interest to our research in the Bridging the Unbridgeable project, since we are not only studying usage advice – in relation to usage problems like the flat adverb – but also attitudes of speakers of British and American English to usage problems. Peters also cites Biber et al. (1999) who found that the occurrence of *-ly* adverbs tends to be "lowest in conversation and highest in academic prose" (2015: 182), and in this light the Mittins survey conducted is relevant. For this paper, we repeated the survey for the flat adverb to see whether acceptability of the sentences in (2) and (3) has changed since the late 1960s. If flat adverbs are, as Biber et al. suggest, more typical of informal speech (conversation) than of formal (academic) prose, we can argue that acceptance should have grown during the past fifty years due to a process called "colloquialization" (Leech 2002: 75; Mair 2006: 183), a growing trend towards greater informality affecting the English language since the early twentieth century (cf. Biber & Finegan 1989).[3]

In contrast to the discussion by Mittins et al. and in the light of Biber et al.'s (1999) findings, we wished to be able to distinguish between attitudes to formal and informal usage in speech and writing (the data for which are not specified separately in the Mittins study), and to place our findings into a more elaborate sociolinguistic context than was done at the time. To this end, we not only asked informants to express their attitudes towards the two sentences above in the contexts specified by Mittins et al. (to which we added two more options: see below), but also to specify their sociolinguistic background (gender, age and education) as well as whether they were native speakers of British or American English (or, alternatively, which language variety formed their preferred linguistic model). To be able to answer questions like these as well as to study usage advice over the years a database was developed, called the Hype Usage Guide of English (HUGE) (Straaijer 2014), which contains usage problems from selected British and American usage guides published from the earliest days of the tradition onwards (1770–2010). This tool enables users to test claims like the one made by Peters (2015: 201) about whether differences in acceptance of flat adverbs between British and American speakers may indeed be attributed to usage guides published in the UK.

3. Some linguists suggest, however, that in spite of linguistic and social changes leading to colloquialisation, pre or proscriptive attitudes continue to exist among speakers of English (Beal 2009; Burridge 2010). This can be interpreted as a "prescriptive backlash".

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2. The survey

To elicit data on the acceptability of the two sentences from Mittins et al. in (2) and (3) above, we set up a survey through the online survey software tool Qualtrics. The survey comprised 16 questions, two on the sentences in question and six more about the informants' sociolinguistic background. In addition, we included two sentences containing the word *thusly*, whose status came up in a discussion on the Bridging the Unbridgeable project blog (Lange 2012). We believe that *thusly* is a hypercorrected instance of what is regarded as a flat adverb (i.e. unmarked *thus*) (cf. § 5), so we invited informants to express their attitudes to this form as well. Because *thusly* developed different meanings over time, we included two sentences with this form as well, taken from the 450-million-word Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Davies 2008–), reflecting two different meanings of *thusly*, "therefore" in (4) and "in this way" in (5) (cf. *Pocket Fowler* 1999):

(4) I don't want to commit myself to a long-term relationship, and *thusly*, I don't want to be financially responsible.

(5) He describes his daily routine *thusly*: "I open my mail and I turn it over to the secretary to answer. I can go into my office now for an hour and that's a day's work."

To these sentences we added an open question asking informants to specify why they disapproved of *thusly*.

Since within the Bridging the Unbridgeable project we also look for new usage problems (cf. Burchfield 1991: 109), we asked our informants about their other linguistic "pet peeves". And because we are also interested in what Milroy & Milroy ([1985] 2012) call the complaint tradition (see Lukač forthcoming a), a type of complaint made by members of the public "about so-called mis-use of language and linguistic decline" (Milroy & Milroy 2012: 7), we added two more questions about whether informants had ever engaged in public discussions about language and grammar. For lack of space, however, these questions will be discussed elsewhere (Tieken-Boon van Ostade in progress and Lukač 2018, respectively). We finally asked informants if there was anything else they "would like to share with us". This question was partly inspired by the use of the verb *share* as a neologism that is typically found in social media communication. By using this verb we aimed to elicit more critical attitudes to language use, comparable to those that gave rise to the many usage problems in existence. One informant, an American native speaker (over 75 years old), indeed responded to this challenge by commenting: "the question reminds me that I don't use 'share' this way".

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3. Usage of *slow/slowly* and *quicker/more quickly*, and of *thusly*

Before discussing the results of our survey, we will present data on the occurrence of the two adverbial pairs *slow/slowly* and *quicker/more quickly* as well as on *thusly* in British and American English. To this end, we consulted the 100-million-word British National Corpus (BNC) alongside the 450-million-word Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Whereas BNC and COCA represent the largest and most up-to-date publicly available corpora of these two varieties of English, a direct comparison between frequencies of occurrence should be undertaken with some care due to the corpora's different structures and compilation methods.[4] In addition, we consulted other corpora to explore aspects of diachronic variation (the Corpus of Historical American English – COHA) and register-specific usage (the TIME Magazine Corpus), to test claims made in earlier studies and usage guides that *thusly* was coined in the nineteenth century for humorous purposes as a hypercorrect substitute for *thus* (Butterfield 2007: 157) and that *-ly* adverbs are more common than zero adverbs in British than American English in dual-adverb pairs (cf. Opdahl 2000; Peters 2015).[5]

3.1 *Slow/slowly* and *quicker/more quickly*

Searching the BNC and COCA for usage data on *go slow/go slowly* produced the following results, which we classified according to the subsections making up the corpora. The raw frequencies were normalised per one million words.

For the BNC, the numbers of occurrences for both variants are small for all subsections; what is more, in four of the SPOKEN instances, *go slow* is not used as the verb + adverb construction we are interested in but as a noun phrase or modifier (e.g. *gonna go on the go-slow*, *going on the go-slow system*), so in fact the figure is smaller still for this subsection. Across the board, then, the figures in Table 1 suggest at first sight that *go slow* and *go slowly* are about equally common in British English. Possibly the higher incidence of *go slowly* in the subsections FICTION and MAGAZINE may be the result of copy editing (see also below). The category MISC is too varied for us to be able to interpret the differences in frequency found. The only instance of *go slow* in the ACADEMIC subsection, presented in

4. The BNC, for instance, is a static and COCA a monitor corpus. See further http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/.

5. All corpora drawn upon are available at http://corpus.byu.edu/ (last accessed: 26 November 2015).

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Table 1. *Go slow/go slowly* in the BNC per subsection

BNC	Total N/ million	SPOKEN	FICTION	MAGAZINE	NEWSPAPER	NON-ACADEMIC	ACADEMIC	Misc.
Go slow	19/0.20	8/0.80	4/0.25	1/0.14	3/0.29	1/0.06	1/0.07	1/0.05
Go slowly	20/0.21	5/0.50	8/0.50	3/0.41	0	1/0.06	0	3/0.14

(6), is followed by the zero adverb *fast*, which may have triggered the use of *slow* rather than *slowly* here.

(6) We have no way of telling whether a simple Menuetto marking by Haydn or anyone else indicates that a movement is to *go slow, fast* or somewhere in between.

Co-occurrence with other zero adverbs is a factor that needs to be reckoned with when examining the choice between *-ly* and zero adverbs.

The data for American English, presented in Table 2, show that, throughout, *go slow* is by far the more common of the two forms, and that it is most frequent in the FICTION and MAGAZINE subsections. In the light of the above qualifications, it seems fair to say that *go slow* is about as frequent in spoken American usage as in British English (because of the larger size of the corpus, the figures from COCA are more reliable in this respect than those from the BNC). The difference in preference for *go slow* rather than *go slowly* is greatest in the SPOKEN subsection of COCA.

Table 2. *Go slow/go slowly* in COCA per subsection

	Total N/million	SPOKEN	FICTION	MAGAZINE	NEWSPAPER	ACADEMIC
Go slow	220/0.47	54/0.57	65/0.72	65/0.68	24/0.26	12/0.13
Go slowly	117/0.25	23/0.24	35/0.39	35/0.37	15/0.16	9/0.10

As in the BNC data, the use of *slow* may occasionally have been influenced by collocation with *fast*; the example in (7), from the MAGAZINE subsection in COCA, illustrates this.

(7) Because the whole point of adiabatic quantum computation is to *go slow* rather than *fast*, adiabatic quantum computers are in principle significantly easier to build than general-purpose codebreaking quantum computers.

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Go slow in COCA, moreover, also occurs in idiomatic phrases like *start low, go slow*, here in the context of a medical prescription. As for *go slowly* in COCA, there are no zero forms that collocate with *slowly*, which confirms that the occurrence of *slow* may indeed occasionally be influenced by collocations with other zero adverbs. In spite of the differently sized corpora, we may conclude that *go slow* seems more common in American than British English, that we see different genre preferences in these varieties (with edited genres in British English appearing to prefer the variant with *slowly*), but that preference for *go slow* over *go slowly* is clearest in spoken American English.

If we look at the distribution of *quicker*/*more quickly* in the two corpora consulted, the following picture emerges.

To start with our BNC data, Table 3 shows that there is no great overall difference in frequency between *quicker* and *more quickly*; looking at the various subgenres, however, we see that *quicker* is more frequent in the SPOKEN and NEWSPAPER subsections of the corpus, though for newspapers the difference is much smaller. *More quickly*, by contrast, is more typical of both non-academic and academic prose and of the MISCELLANEOUS category. The COCA data in Table 4, however, indicate that *quicker* is less frequent in American English and also that the overall difference between *quicker* and *more quickly* is greater in British than in American English. *Quicker*, moreover, does not appear to be typical of spoken American usage, and whereas usage between the two forms in the FICTION subsection is similar, *more quickly* is the preferred variant in the MAGAZINE, NEWSPAPER and ACADEMIC subsections, with the preference in the latter one being most outspoken.

Table 3. *Quicker*/*more quickly* in the BNC per subsection

	Total N/ million	**SPOKEN**	**FICTION**	**MAGAZINE**	**NEWSPAPER**	**NON-ACADEMIC**	**ACADEMIC**	**Misc.**
Quicker (adv.)	445/4.62	111/11.14	76/4.78	48/6.61	58/5.54	39/2.36	33/2.15	80/3.84
More quickly	485/5.04	30/3.01	55/3.46	48/6.61	37/3.54	104/6.30	61/3.98	150/7.20

Table 4. *Quicker*/*more quickly* in COCA per subsection

	Total N/ million	**SPOKEN**	**FICTION**	**MAGAZINE**	**NEWSPAPER**	**ACADEMIC**
Quicker (adv.)	1471/3.17	322/3.37	306/3.38	423/4.43	308/3.36	112/1.23
More quickly	2313/4.98	358/3.75	285/3.15	734/7.68	477/5.22	459/5.04

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Comparing Tables 3 and 4, we may conclude that for British English the differences in frequency between *quicker* and *more quickly* are more pronounced in spoken usage, while this is the case (though less strongly) for written American English instead. Comparing our data with Biber et al. (1999) (see § 1), we may conclude that our findings for the *-ly* forms (low in spoken, higher in academic usage) agree with theirs for both British and American English except for *more quickly*, which is virtually as common in American spoken usage as *quicker*.

3.2 *Thusly*

Checking *thusly* in the *OED* online suggests a nineteenth-century American origin of the form, and a search in COCA as well as the BNC confirmed that *thusly* is indeed more frequent in American than in British English. Performing a Google Books search for *thus* and *thusly*, using Google's online Ngram Viewer, indicated that in both varieties *thusly* is far less common than *thus*. Both languages show a peak for *thusly* during the late 1970s, followed by clear drop. We will discuss in § 5 if the pronouncements of the usage guides against *thusly* may be held accountable for this. If usage is indeed variable, as these data suggest, though with an undeniable preference for *thus*, we have another dual adverb here (cf. Peters 2015: 184–185). A more detailed breakdown of the BNC and COCA data for *thus* and *thusly* is presented in the following tables.

In the British data (Table 5), *thusly* is so rare as to be virtually negligible. What is more, the only two instances encountered derive from the novel *The Suburban Book of the Dead* by Robert Rankin (1993), in which the author appears to have adopted the form for archaic effect. In American English, as shown in Table 6, usage, still fairly rare, is more common, occurring primarily in written registers. To look further into American variation in usage between *thus* and *thusly*, we consulted the TIME Magazine Corpus, a 110-million-word corpus of edited twentieth-century American written English. There, *thusly* appears only nine times (0.09/million words), much less frequently, in other words, than in the relevant COCA subsections (MAGAZINE, NEWSPAPER); in eight instances, moreover, it has the meaning "in this way", introducing direct speech as in (5) above. Possibly, this low incidence of *thusly*, compared to the 23,005 instances of *thus* in the TIME Magazine Corpus, is due to its stigmatisation in American English, as a result of which the form was edited out of the more formal written registers represented in this corpus. Common disapproval of *thusly* was attested in a survey from 1966, when a large majority (97%) of the *American Heritage Dictionary* (*AHD*) Usage Panel found the form unacceptable (Finegan 1971: 22); the number had dropped only slightly (86%) when the survey was repeated thirty-five years later in 2002 (see

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the discussion in *The American Heritage Guide* 2005 in the HUGE database). In § 5 we will take up the question of the role of the usage guides in the stigmatisation of *thusly* in American English.

Table 5. *Thus/thusly* in the BNC per subsection

	Total N/ million	SPOKEN	FICTION	MAGAZINE	NEWSPAPER	NON-ACADEMIC	ACADEMIC	Misc.
Thus	20054/ 200.54	84/0.84	580/5.80	633/6.33	396/3.96	4815/48.15	8937/89.37	4609/46.09
Thusly	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0

Table 6. *Thus/thusly* in COCA per subsection

	Total N/million	SPOKEN	FICTION	MAGAZINE	NEWSPAPER	ACADEMIC
Thus	62764/190.48	1308/2.91	3281/7.29	9678/21.51	3986/8.86	44511/98.91
Thusly	101/0.22	5/0.01	21/0.5	29/0.6	25/0.6	21/0.5

4. Survey results

4.1 The respondents

Our survey was first announced in September 2015 in *English Today* (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2015), and it was further distributed through the regular Bridging the Unbridgeable channels: the project's blog, Facebook and Twitter. In addition, notifications about the survey were sent out through newsletters for graduate students at the Universities of Leiden, Basel and Freiburg, and for editors and translators (SENSE: the Society for English Native Speaking Editors). By mid-September, when we started to analyse the results, 213 respondents had completed the survey. Table 7 provides an overview of our informants in terms of the socio-demographic information provided. The number of the respondents in the Total column in Table 7 does not always add up to 213, as not all respondents answered the questions concerned.

As Table 7 shows, the largest number of respondents come into the age groups 25–39 and 50–64. The youngest and oldest categories contain the fewest respondents. Nearly 55 per cent of our informants are native speakers of British English

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Table 7. The socio-demographics of the participants

Gender	M	F	Unspecified				Total
	59	103	11				213
Age	< 25	25–39	40–49	50–64	65–75	75 <	
	14	61	21	59	11	7	213
Variety (native)	British	American	Other				
	52	24	19				95
Variety (model)	British	American	Other				
	36	22	15				76
Education	Primary	Secondary	University				
	1	10	157				203

and 25 per cent of American English. British English also presents the linguistic model for the majority of those who reported on this question. Nearly 80 per cent of the informants have a university education. This biased figure is largely due to our distribution method: many of our project's social media followers along with the recipients of the newsletters are highly educated individuals interested in questions relating to language use and prescription, with many of them being language professionals such as editors, translators and teachers, as well as students. While we will keep this bias in mind when interpreting the results, our data are in fact no less skewed than those of the Mittins survey, our major source of reference for this study: their informants primarily consisted of teachers, examiners and students (87% of their 457 informants; Mittins et al. 1970: 5–6).

4.2 Acceptability ratings for *quicker*, *go slow* and *thusly*

To analyse the sentences reproduced in (2) and (3), Mittins et al. used a fourfold acceptability scale: informal speech, formal speech, informal writing and formal writing. In our survey, we kept these, but because of the rise of new online registers we added a category "netspeak" (though the term includes different subregisters), which we described as "internet usage or chat language, texting" (cf. Crystal 2006: 402; Hedges 2011). In addition, we added the category "unacceptable under any circumstances", in response to specific requests from participants in an early phase of the online repetition of the Mittins survey on the Bridging the Unbridgeable blog. By computing Cronbach's alpha in SPSS, we found that, with an acceptability rating of .754 for the internal consistency of the survey's 24 items (4 test sentences x 5 registers plus "unacceptable"), the acceptability scale we adopted is reliable.

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As expected, the acceptability of the two sentences has risen considerably since the Mittins survey (see also Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2015: 9). In our sample, the general acceptability for sentence (2) increased from 42 to 82.9 per cent (Figure 1), and for sentence (3) from 54 to 92.1 per cent (Figure 2). Few respondents considered zero adverbs to be acceptable in all five genres: for *quicker* 9.9 per cent (N = 21) and for *go slow* only 4.7 per cent (N = 10) of the responses.

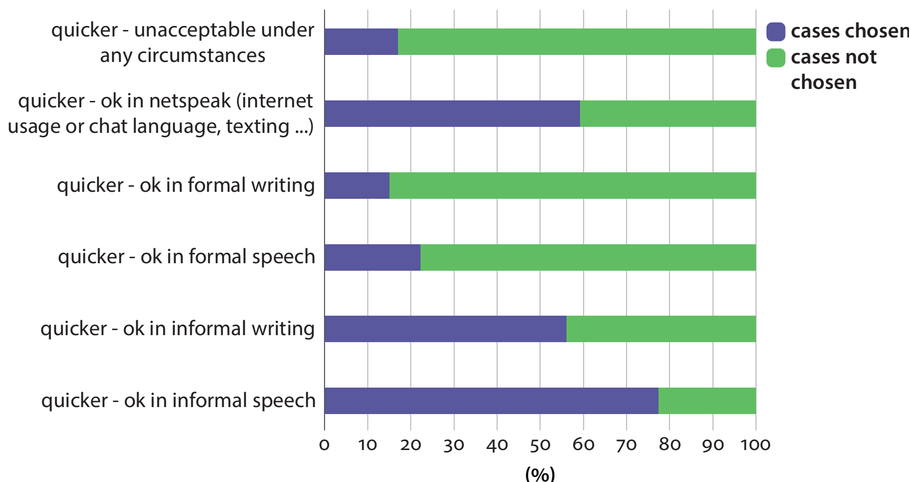

Figure 1. Acceptability rating for *He did it* quicker *than he had ever done it before*

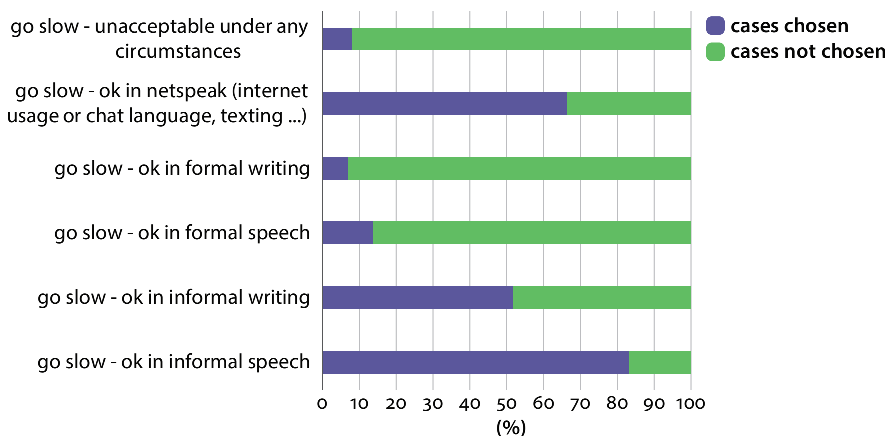

Figure 2. Acceptability rating for *That's a dangerous curve; you'd better* go slow

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This suggests that zero adverbs as used in the sentences concerned are no longer considered problematical today. The survey respondents do, however, make register distinctions, most commonly accepting both usages in the two informal registers (speech and writing) and netspeak. Our survey allowed for multiple responses, and the most commonly chosen combination for both *quicker* and *go slow* was informal speech/informal writing/netspeak, by 25.4 and 29.6 per cent of the respondents, respectively. This most frequent response combination reveals that the two informal registers are commonly grouped together with netspeak, thus suggesting an expected formality scale ranging from informal speech, netspeak and informal writing to formal speech and formal writing.[6]

Though *thusly* was not part of the Mittins survey, we are able to draw on the acceptability rating for this form by the *AHD* Usage Panel in 1966 and 2002 (see § 3.2). The item's meaning in the 2002 survey corresponds to one of our own examples, i.e. (5) above (*The American Heritage Guide* 2005: 464). With 86 per cent of the Usage Panel disapproving of this usage, acceptability of *thusly* in this sense is fairly low.[7] How does this figure compare with the acceptability rating of the form by our informants? The results of our own survey for this usage item which we will label *thusly*^{2} – *thusly*^{1} being represented by our sentence in (4) – are shown in Figure 3.

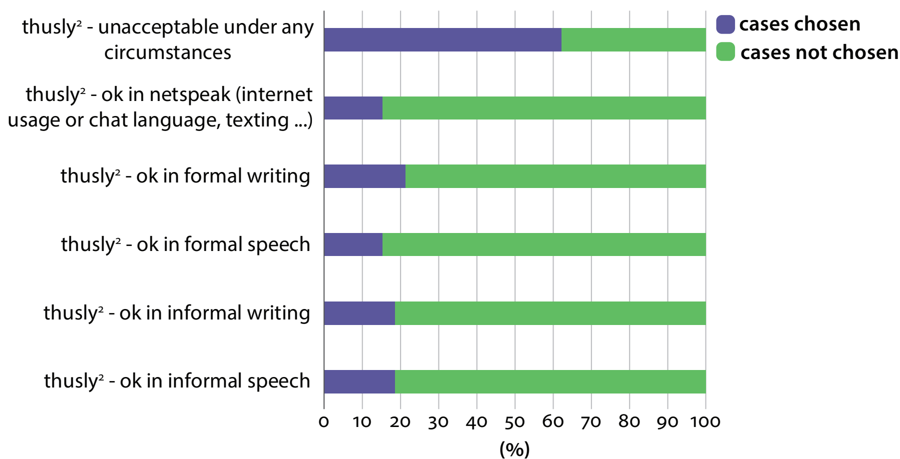

Figure 3. Acceptability rating for *He described his daily routine* thusly ["as follows"] (*thusly*^{2})

6. With netspeak representing neither speech nor writing nor, indeed, both (Crystal 2006: 402), it may be taken to constitute an intermediate category.

7. See the entry for *thusly* in *AHD* (https://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=thusly; accessed on 5 November 2015).

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Figure 3 shows that 62.3 per cent of our informants considered *thusly*[2] unacceptable. Possibly because this sentence came last in our survey, it had the highest no-response rate (14.1%). Nevertheless, thirteen years after the *AHD* Usage Panel survey, the acceptability of what we call *thusly*[2] appears to have increased. Because the *AHD* Usage Panel tested only one sense of *thusly*, we are unable to assess whether the use of *thusly*[1], meaning "therefore", has similarly increased in acceptability over the years. Our own informants, whose acceptability ratings are presented in Figure 4, indicated that, at 79.6 per cent, *thusly*[1] is considerably less acceptable than *thusly*[2].

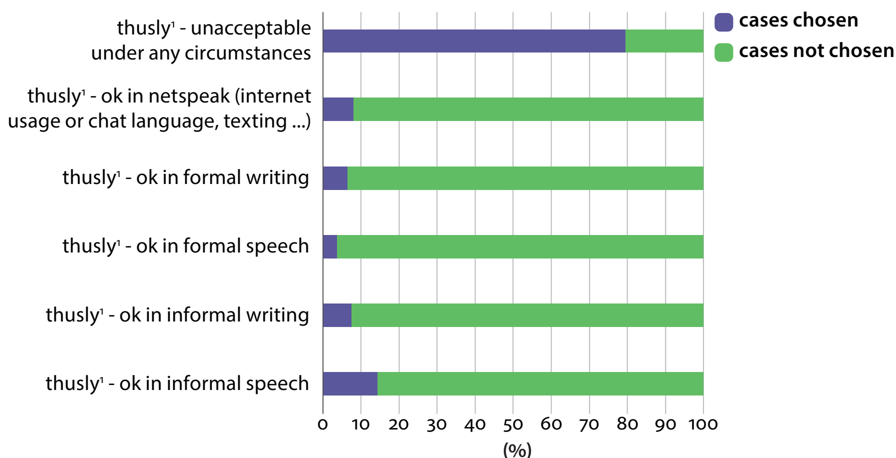

Figure 4. Acceptability rating for *I don't want to commit myself to … and* thusly ["therefore"], … (*thusly*[1])

4.3 Acceptability ranking for *go slow*, *quicker* and *thusly* across sociolinguistic groups

Because it was possible to provide multiple responses, we ended up with 23 different sets of responses to the four example sentences, depending on which combinations of the 6 possible categories (5 registers plus "unacceptable") the respondents chose in their acceptability judgements. For the purpose of testing the acceptability judgements of the survey sentences by the different sociolinguistic groups, we categorized the 23 sets of multiple responses according to a three-point scale, ranging from unacceptable (1), informal (2) to formal (3):

1. Unacceptable – "Unacceptable under any circumstances"
2. Informal – at least one informal register or netspeak, or a combination of these
3. Formal – at least one formal register.

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To compare the differences in ranking between the sociolinguistic groups we performed the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test, which indicates whether the mean ranks for the four sentences, Examples (2)–(5), are the same across all groups. The results that were found to be significant are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Acceptability rankings across sociolinguistic groups (Kruskal-Wallis test)

Sentence	Gender	Age	Nativeness	Variety (native)	Variety (model)	Education
Go slow						
Chi-Square	12.033	3.230	.148	1.422	1.775	8.489
df	2	5	1	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.002	.665	.700	.491	.412	.014
Quicker						
Chi-Square	9.995	5.843	.072	1.232	.173	2.776
df	2	5	1	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.007	.322	.789	.540	.914	.250
***Thusly*^{1}**						
Chi-Square	5.092	7.712	.229	1.913	1.041	.261
df	2	5	1	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.078	.173	.632	.384	.594	.878
***Thusly*^{2}**						
Chi-Square	.506	18.792	3.777	5.549	.264	1.497
df	2	5	1	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.776	.003	.052	.062	.876	.473

The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a significant difference in the acceptability rankings of the sentences only for the sociolinguistic variables gender in sentences containing flat adverbs and age regarding *thusly*^{2}. Whether the speakers were native or non-native speakers of English, speakers of British or American English or another variety, or which variety they modelled their speech on did not correlate with the acceptability ratings of the usage items presented in our survey. Contrary to the pattern reported by Opdahl (2000) (§ 1), then, we found no significant differences between our British and American informants with respect to a preference for either the *-ly* or the zero form of *slow/slowly* or *quicker/more quickly*. Our survey, moreover, showed that men tend to consider *go slow* more acceptable than women and the unspecified group, and this was also the case for adverbial *quicker*. Including the rather small unspecified group in the analysis or not did not affect the significance of the results. According to the test, the variable education plays a role in the acceptability of *go slow* only. Because of the small numbers of primary (N = 1) and secondary-school educated (N = 10) respondents, these results were excluded from the analysis. Interestingly, the only primary school educated participant gave the lowest ratings, ranking all sentences as unacceptable.

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All this suggests that the flat adverb in as far as it occurs in the sentences originally tested by Mittins et al. is a fairly stable language feature, at least in the eyes of the type of informants whose attitudes to the usage problem we analysed, and that this is the case for both British and American English. Our differences from Opdahl's findings may be due to an increasing acceptability of the flat adverb since she carried out her survey more than fifteen years ago. There will probably always be people who continue to disapprove of flat adverbs, and in this light it is important to study the treatment of flat adverbs, as in *go slow* and *quicker* for *more quickly*, in the usage guides. In the light of our survey findings we would expect the flat adverb no longer to be a usage problem. We will return to this in § 5.

The question whether attitudes to the use of *thusly* correlated with the variables gender, age, level of education and language variety, however, proved a different matter. Whereas there are general differences between the two varieties we analysed with respect to *thusly*, with a tendency for speakers of British English to be more likely to classify *thusly*[2] as unacceptable, we did not find a significant difference in our sample. Furthermore, although our sample comprised only fourteen respondents below the age of 25, we found a significant difference in the acceptability rankings for *thusly*[2] between different age groups (see Table 8). This below-25 age group is most permissive towards the usage of *thusly*[2], with only half the respondents, which is less than in the other age groups, rejecting this usage of *thusly*. The effect of age on the acceptability of this usage item may indicate that there is currently a change in progress going on among younger speakers accepting this formerly stigmatised usage. In this light, too, it will be interesting to see how the usage guides treat *thusly*.

5. Go *slow/slowly*, *quicker/more quickly* and *thusly* in the usage guides

The HUGE database includes 77 British and American usage guides, selected from a much larger number of works published between 1770 and 2010. (For the selection principles adopted, see Straaijer 2018 and Tieken-Boon van Ostade in progress.) A full-text search for the term "flat adverb" in the database produced only three hits: Randall (1988); *Webster's Dictionary of English Usage* (1989) and Wilson (1993). All three are American publications, which confirms the point made by Peters (2015: 179) that the term is "used mostly in the US", despite its British origin (§ 1). Flat adverbs are treated in usage guides in general sections like "Telegraphic English" (Vallins 1960) and "The sports commentator's adverb" (Taggart 2010), as alphabetically arranged adverb pairs (e.g. Evans and Evans 1957; Morris and Morris 1975; Garner 1998), or as a combination of both, as in the different editions of Fowler's *Modern English Usage* (1926; Gowers 1965; Burchfield 1996) and Peters

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(2004). Here, we will consider *go slow/slowly*, *quicker/more quickly* and *thusly* only as they are treated in separate entries in the usage guides in the database.

Go slow/slowly is discussed most frequently of the three items: it was found in 27 usage guides. *Thusly* was encountered in sixteen of them, and *quicker/more quickly* only in three, all of them British publications: Wood (1962); Greenbaum & Whitcut (1988) and Peters (2004). Comments on the flat adverb first occur in *Live and Learn*, an American usage guide from around 1856, the only one which straightforwardly proscribes the usage: "He speaks *slow*," *should be*, "He speaks slowly". After that, it occurs in fourteen British and twelve American publications. *Thusly*, by contrast, is largely found in American usage guides (11/16), making its appearance in British publications only in the late 1980s (Greenbaum & Whitcut 1988). Burchfield (1996) assigns *thusly* an American origin, claiming that "it has not been washed ashore in the UK yet"; Peters (2004), too, basing herself on the BNC, notes that "[t]here's little sign of it in British English". It is therefore surprising that *thusly* found its way into British usage guides at all, though the entry for *thusly* in the *OED* – not yet updated in the dictionary's current revision process – shows that it had already "washed ashore in the UK" by the 1890s (the three earlier quotations are all from American sources), as indeed the data we found through our Google Ngram search confirm as well (§ 3.2). The American status of the item is reflected in the addition of an entry on *thusly* by Nicholson (1957/Am), which is otherwise largely a clone of Fowler (1926/Br).

Thusly is treated most critically of all three items: *Webster's Dictionary of English Usage* (1989/Am) even claims that there are "[f]ew words [with] a worse reputation among the arbiters of correct usage than *thusly*". Garner (1998/Am) labels it as a "nonword", calling its usage a "serious lapse". *The American Heritage Guide* (2005), possibly basing itself on Garner, uses the same label (*it has long been deplored by usage commentators as a "nonword"*). Trask (2001/Br/Am)[8] claims that "[t]here is no such word in Standard English", while Morris & Morris (1975/Am) had stated earlier that "[t]*husly* is not even entered in most dictionaries and, when it is, it is marked 'obsolete'" (see also Krapp 1927/Am). Fifteen years later, *Webster's Dictionary of English Usage* (1989/Am) notes that the word has "gain[ed] a secure foothold in the language". That it was marked as obsolete before may have to with its nineteenth-century origin (see *OED*, Wilson 1993/Am, Peters 2004/Br, *American Heritage Guide* 2005/Am and Butterfield 2007/Br). For all that, Mager & Mager (1993/Am) advise their readers to "avoid" the word. Krapp (1927/Am), the first usage guide to discuss *thusly*, calls its use "facetious", as do Nicholson (1957/Am) and

8. Trask (2001) proved impossible to classify as either a British or an American publication. Published by Penguin, the book's preface describes the author as "an American who works in Britain".

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Greenbaum & Whitcut (1988/Br); others label it humorous or jocular (*Webster's* 1989/Am; Wilson 1993/Am; *Pocket Fowler* 1999/Br; *American Heritage Guide* 2005/Am; Butterfield 2007/Br) or ironic (Peters 2004/Br). Several usage guides consider *thusly* unnecessary, since, they argue, we already have *thus* in the language: Nicholson (1957/Am), *The Written Word* (1977/Am), Carter & Skates (1990/Am); *Webster's* (1989/Am), *Pocket Fowler* (1999/Br) and Butterfield (2007/Br). Some writers (Nicholson 1957/Am; Wilson 1993/Am) comment on its colloquial nature while others regard *thusly* as non-standard (*The Written Word* 1977/Am/, Trask 2001/Br/Am). Wilson (1993/Am) calls it an "ignorant substitute for *thus*", and the *American Heritage Guide* (2005/Am), too, attributes usage to the "poorly educated", adding that it has spread even into the language of the educated.

In our survey, we distinguished two different meanings of the word, *thusly*^{1} "therefore" and *thusly*^{2} "in this way" (§ 4.2). This distinction in meaning, however, is only found in the *Pocket Fowler* (1999/Br). Though offering the most elaborate description of *thusly*, *Webster's Dictionary of English Usage* (1989/Am) only mentions *thusly*^{2}, and so do Peters (2004/Br) and Butterfield (2007/Br). As noted in § 4.2, fewer respondents in our survey commented on *thusly*^{2}; for all that, we believe that the *OED* should adopt a distinction into different senses of the word.

If *thusly* is treated critically in the usage guides in our database, *go slow* is not. Most writers accept it, calling it idiomatic (Wood 1962/Br; Fowler 1965/Br) or sanctioned by usage (Mager & Mager 1993/Am) and noting that it has been around for many years (Evans & Evans 1957/Am; Carter & Skates 1990/Am; Burchfield 1996/Br). Others make a stylistic distinction in usage, and hence in acceptability: Ebbitt & Ebbitt (1978/Am), for instance, write that *slow* is acceptable in speech and informal writing (see also *The Written Word* 1977/Am, Swan 1980/Br; Greenbaum & Whitcut 1988/Br; Ayto 2002/Br; Peters 2004/Br; *American Heritage Guide* 2005/Am; Butterfield 2007/Br). The only usage guide after *Live and Learn* (1856?/Am) that still proscribes adverbial *slow* is Burchfield (1996/Br), though in providing *go slow* with the label American English, the discussions in Swan (1980/Br) and Greenbaum & Whitcut (1988/Br) are in effect proscriptive for British readers, too. Morris & Morris (1975/Am) consulted a usage panel for this and other items, reporting that 82 per cent of the panel members accepted *go slow* on road signs, though acceptance was lower (63%) for different uses of *slow* (*When you reach the dirt road you will have to go slow/slowly if* …). The association of *go slow* with road signs is made by several writers, with Nicholson (1957/Am) adding this to the entry she adopted from Fowler (1926). *Webster's Dictionary of English Usage* (1989/Am) even notes that the controversy, which Krapp (1927/Am) attributes to "theoretical grammarians" believing "that adverbs must end in *-ly*", "came in with the automobile". *Webster's* concludes by saying that "[*s*]*low* and *slowly* should really present no usage problem. They each have their proper place, and good writers

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keep them there". It is precisely this, however, that does make the item into a usage problem after all.

The discussion of *quicker/more quickly*, in three British usage guides only, is in effect not very different from that of *go slow/slowly*: while *quicker* is accepted in conversation (Greenbaum & Whitcut 1988; Peters 2004), in writing *more quickly* is to be preferred. The discussion in Wood (1962), however, is particularly confusing: using euphony as a guiding principle is not a very objective criterion, so the entry will not be very helpful to readers seeking usage advice here. Such subjective assessments on what comprises correct usage are nevertheless common in the usage guide tradition (Weiner 1988: 179).

6. The usage guides and the informants

Our analysis of the informants' attitudes towards the two types of flat adverbs we are studying here, *go slow* and adverbial *quicker*, shows a fair amount of consensus with the items' treatment by the usage guides in the HUGE database: compared to their much lower acceptability reported on by Mittins et al. in 1970, the flat adverb seems no longer a usage problem. This is indeed confirmed by *Webster's Dictionary of Modern English Usage* (1989). For all that, usage is still variable across different genres and between speech and writing, both in British and American English, and this may well explain why usage guides continue to provide advice on these and similar items that show divided usage. From a sociolinguistic perspective, it is of particular interest that, in our survey at any rate, men show a greater acceptance of *go slow* and adverbial *quicker* than women. At first sight, this goes against the general trend in sociolinguistics that women are in the vanguard of linguistic change However, this is the case only with variants that carry prestige (Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg 2003: 110), so that because of the non-standard origin of the flat adverb, our findings are probably not exceptional; further studies along the same lines may identify similar trends in usage.

The case of *thusly* is a different matter: usage was not only disapproved of by our informants, the form was also strongly condemned by the usage guides we analysed. Anticipating this, we asked the survey participants why they disapproved of the form. About two-thirds of the respondents did so (139/213), providing the following arguments for their disapproval: *thusly* is a non-word, usage is incorrect, redundant, archaic, it sounds pretentious, ugly, it is a hypercorrection, it is used only humorously and is acceptable only in restricted (informal) contexts, it makes the speaker sound unintelligent, and it is an Americanism. Most of the arguments are familiar terms of disapproval in the context of linguistic complaints (Tieken-Boon

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van Ostade 2013; Lukač 2015) and in descriptions of extra-linguistic arguments that are used in justifying preference for standard linguistic variants (Weiner 1988: 177–180; Pullum 2004: 7), as is indeed illustrated by our analysis of the treatment of *thusly* by the usage guides in § 5. Looking at different sociolinguistic groupings among our informants proved informative as well. On the one hand, we found attitudinal differences between speakers of different varieties of English that correlate with the usage patterns attested by our corpus analysis: *thusly* is much more common in American than British English, as is confirmed by the treatment of the usage guides. Our non-native-speaker informants, on the other hand, regularly draw upon the correctness argument to justify their acceptability judgements, as did this female respondent (aged 40–50): "It is an *incorrect* use of suffixes". Non-native speakers clearly rely on explicitly learnt grammar rules when asked for acceptability judgements. A number of British English native speakers expressed unfamiliarity with the word *thusly*, classifying it as a non-word or describing it as archaic. "To my knowledge," one male speaker aged 50–60 wrote, "it has never figured in the English spoken or written in my surroundings". Our corpus findings, however, indicated that classifying *thusly* as an archaism is incorrect, since the Google Ngram search showed a peak around the mid-1970s, for American and for British English. The drop set in around the same time for both varieties of English. For American English, there may possibly be a link with the disapproval of the form in the usage guides (the HUGE database includes Morris & Morris 1975/Am and *The Written Word* 1977/Am from around this time), but there does not seem to be a similar reason for the decline in British English, since the first usage guide to discuss and disapprove of *thusly* is Greenbaum & Whitcut (1988/Br). Further research into this question is clearly called for.

Our American informants seem more familiar with *thusly*, though they often reject the form because they consider it "pretentious". Whereas *thusly* seems characteristic of formal contexts to some American speakers, most of them relate it to unsuccessful attempts at sounding educated and to hypercorrection, as does this male speaker older than 75: "Hard to say. It has associations for me with *pretentious and ignorant* speakers, and could be most widely characterised as bad style, if not close to ungrammatical." Age, however, proved the most interesting sociolinguistic variable of the ones we considered, since our youngest informants proved to be most accepting of *thusly*. We therefore expect usage to increase in future years despite advice to the contrary in the usage guides.

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7. Conclusion

If anything, our study of the attitudes to one particular usage problem, the flat adverb, as expressed both by the general public and by writers of usage guides demonstrates how profitable it is to approach prescriptivism from a linguistic perspective, and a sociolinguistic one at that (cf. Curzan 2014). Not only did we find that the age-old feature *go slow/slowly* no longer constitutes a usage problem to language users and writers of usage guides alike (with adverbial *quicker* perhaps never really having been one, at least not for American English), we also identified a new dual-adverb pair, *thus/thusly*, that has all the characteristics of a usage problem. With the incoming form representing a case of hypercorrection that is highly stigmatised and associated with unintelligent, uneducated users, we see prescriptivism at work in its most typical form, not only among writers of usage guides, who unanimously condemn the form, but also with our informants, who do similarly, drawing on the same proscriptive metalanguage in the process. *Thusly* is more typical of American English, according to both corpus findings and comments of speakers of British English who are often not familiar with the word at all. But we also found that young speakers are most tolerant of its use. Indeed, searching for images of the word online produces pictures of t-shirts stating "I have informed you thusly". The phrase became popular among younger speakers due to its appearance on the television sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*, in which the character of Dr. Sheldon Cooper, a theoretical physicist, repeatedly stated "I have informed you thusly" rather than using the more common "I told you so".

We furthermore found that men and women responded differently to the question of the acceptability of *go slow/slowly*. While this may have to do with the non-standard origins of flat adverbs, with women generally showing a greater inclination towards standard usage, this provisional finding potentially has important repercussions for the study of the influence of prescriptivism on language use. Not only does our study suggest a contrary development in linguistic changes that involve stigmatised language use from what is found in more regular forms of linguistic change, we also found the opposite effect of what is normally expected of the influence of usage guides. For this item at least, usage guides, despite their increasing numbers, prove to have no influence on language use in the sense of reducing the undesired and undesirable variant when variation is an issue – in fact, what we found for the items investigated is the opposite. *Go slow* seems largely accepted now by both users and usage guides – with men taking the lead in the process – and *thusly* is on the increase, particularly among young speakers, despite strong condemnation and stigmatisation. It will be interesting to see whether *go slow* and *thusly* are unique in these respects, but we expect that they probably are not.

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CHAPTER 10

The modal auxiliary verb *may* and change in Irish English

John M. Kirk

This paper presents an analysis of the modal auxiliary verb *may* using data from the International Corpus of English: Ireland Component (the ICE-Ireland Corpus and from other corpora for comparison. The analysis is focused on the semantic functions of *may*, especially root and epistemic uses. The analysis shows that root uses of *may* predominate overall but epistemic uses predominate in spoken data, in both parts of Ireland. It uncovers a further instance of mild obligation *may*, which may be considered an Irishism.

Keywords: *may*, modal auxiliary verb, root, epistemic, corpora, ICE-Ireland, ICE-GB, standardised English, spoken and written varieties

1. Introduction

When language change – the central topic of this volume – is applied to Irish English, three paradigms come to mind: the long sweep of history over centuries of time; more recent decades indicative of contemporary change; and differences between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland as well as between each of them and England (or Great Britain), the last two of which have come to be demonstrated through comparisons of frequency distributions on the basis of corpus data. Although English came to Ireland in 1167 and existed in a multi-lingual or polyglossic (Crowley 2012) context with Irish, Anglo-Norman and Latin for several centuries, to all intents and purposes, the English of Ireland today descends from the English brought to Ireland in sixteenth and seventeenth plantations, North and South. Thus the historical basis of Irish English may be regarded as primarily Elizabethan and Jacobean English in the South, whereas in the North the basis may be considered a merger between those Englishes and Stuart Scots. Both northern and southern varieties developed through contact with Irish, although that influence of contact was stronger in the South through a greater geographical extent of contact and a larger population size.

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Few people have written more about the historical development of Irish English than the present honorand, Raymond Hickey. In his most comprehensive description of Irish English, *Irish English: History and Present-day Forms*, published in 2007, however, modal auxiliary verbs receive scant treatment – surprising, perhaps, in view of the considerable body of research which has been devoted to them in British and American English and increasingly in World Englishes. However, in a subsequent publication devoted to modal auxiliary verbs (Hickey 2009), Hickey explains that the modal system of Irish was so different in construction and form that there was little scope for substratal transfer, as there had been in other areas of the tense-modal-aspect systems, especially habitual aspect.

2. Research questions

This paper is concerned with the modal auxiliary verb *may*. Three research questions are posed:

- What influence has contact with Irish had on the development of modal auxiliary verb *may* in Irish English?
- What will a comparison of *may* in the ICE-Ireland Corpus with other contemporary corpora especially of British English, spoken and written, reveal about the Irishness of *may*?
- Is there anything Irish about modal auxiliary verb *may* in Irish English?

2.1 Corpus data

The primary evidence underlying this paper is provided by language corpora. Corpora are principled collections of linguistic data in the form of written or spoken texts which have changed the ways in which the different levels and components of a language can be systematically investigated, and now support much empirical research on language description and language change, such as the present.

In this paper, with regard to Ireland, the primary data source is on the *International Corpus of English: Ireland Component* (*ICE-Ireland*) (§2.1) (Kirk et al. 2011a) and its pragmatically- and prosodically-annotated daughter corpus: the SPICE-Ireland Corpus (Kirk et al. 2011b). Synchronic comparisons will be made with the British equivalent (*ICE-GB*) (§2.2) and diachronically with the *Corpus of Irish English Correspondence* (C*ORIECOR*) (§2.4). Occasional historical comparisons for spoken data will be made between *ICE-GB* and the *London-Lund Corpus of Spoken British English* (*LLC*) (§2.3) using the *Diachronic Corpus of Present-day*

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Spoken English (DCPSE) Corpus, which comprises 130,000-word subsets of each corpus. For comparisons of written data, use is made of the *Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus of British English* (LOB) (§2.5) and the *Freiburg LOB Corpus* (§2.6), each a one-million word corpus of written English.

2.2 ICE-Ireland

In the public domain, the only large-scale corpus designed and built to be representative of the national variety of English used by educated speakers in both public and private domains in Ireland, North and South, is the *International Corpus of English: Ireland Component* (*ICE-Ireland*) (Kirk *et al.* 2011a; Kallen & Kirk 2008). The corpus contains a total of 1,053,406 words, comprising 15 discourse situations and 17 written registers, the majority of which registers have not been used for investigations of Irish English hitherto. Crucially, the material is divided equally between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The 300 spoken texts (each of 2,000 words) include private and public dialogues to scripted and unscripted monologues. Because of their situational contexts (e.g. broadcasting, law courts, education, etc.) and from the language used in them, an approximation towards spoken standardized English may be inferred. All speakers are expected to be adults (i.e. over 18 years of age) and have completed their high school education – in fact, a majority of speakers are graduates. A great many of these discourse situations involve public or broadcast interactions in which, conventionally, an approximation to the form and code of the standard language would be expected. More informal exchanges occur in the private dialogues of face-to-face conversations and telephone conversations. Many public as well as private interactions are spontaneous, although some might well have been prepared; however ICE-Ireland is not a corpus of vernacular speech, where a predominance of non-standard or dialectal forms may be expected, although a few Scottishisms, Irishisms and dialect forms from England have crept in to the not quite fully standardised language that is to be found in ICE-Ireland (cf. Kirk & Kallen 2007, 2009, 2010). Most of the present analyses are based on the spoken component, which totals 626,597 words.

The 200 written texts (each again of 2,000 words) are divided along formal grounds too: printed vs. nonprinted; and among printed texts the range stretches from informational and instructional writing to persuasive and creative writing inevitably, the written texts approximate to local varieties of standardized English. Informational texts are subdivided among academic writing, popular writing and press reportage. Within academic and popular there are four subject areas: humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and technology. As there is no quintessential

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writing type, all categories are represented with the same number number of texts (10 each) except reportage and fiction (with 20 texts each), perhaps indicative of their greater popularity or readership.

2.3 ICE-GB

The ICE-GB Corpus has an identical composition to ICE-Ireland comprising c. 1,061,264 words in the same 15 discourse situations and 17 written registers, which again approximate to standard language usage, often spontaneous. Despite its name, almost all its material comes from London. (Cf. Greenbaum 1996. Nelson et al. 2002)

2.4 London-Lund Corpus of Spoken British English (LLC)

The *London-Lund Corpus of Spoken British English* comprising 100 5,000-word spoken transcriptions (totaling 500,000 words) recorded between the late 1950s and early 1970s for the Survey of English Usage. It is the computerized version of the spoken component of the Survey of English Usage Corpus. There are five types of text: face to face conversations, telephone conversations, discussions of various kinds, unprepared speeches and prepared speeches. (Cf. Svartvik and Quirk 1980, Svartvik 1990)

2.5 Corpus of Irish English Correspondence (CORIECOR)

The *Corpus of Irish English Correspondence* (CORIECOR) (McCafferty and Amador-Moreno 2012a, 2012b) is a collection of emigrant letters from throughout Ireland, comprising personal letters dating from about 1700 to 1940, covering the period of the emergence of Irish English. It incorporates the letter collection of the *Irish Emigration Database* and a couple of smaller collections, comprising just under 5000 texts, of which approximately 4300 are letters. Its compilers, McCafferty and Amador-Moreno (2012a, 2012b), comment that the database which, by their calculation, as a whole contains approximately 3.1 million words, has been developed as a diachronic corpus for tracing the emergence and development of features of Irish English including stylistic, regional, and social variation. The CORIECOR evidence shows that the substantial development of many syntactic features took place during the period 1770–1840, a period which emerges from their research as the formative period of Irish English as we know it today.

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2.6 Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus (LOB)

The *Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus* comprises one-million words of running text covering 15 written registers dating from the year 1961. The registers comprise several types of newspaper and fiction texts, learned and scientific writings, and various type of informational texts (e.g. on religion, skills & hobbies, and popular lore), each in different numbers of words. The compilation of the corpus is a British replica of the *Brown Corpus of American English*, the first corpus of its kind for written English.

2.7 Freiburg Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus (FLOB)

The *Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English* is a replica of the LOB Corpus but for the year 1991, with the same text categories and numbers of words in each category.

2.8 The British National Corpus (BNC)

The *British National Corpus* comprises 90 million of written texts, each of 40,000 words, and 10 million words of spoken transcriptions, of which there are two main types: naturally-occurring conversations in a wide range of settings (the 'demographic' sample, which recorded everyday conversations among a very large number of people all over the country as they naturally were occurring); and recordings of meetings and other types of interactional gatherings in institutional settings (the 'context-governed' sample). All recordings were made in the early 1990s.

3. Background

3.1 Modal verb system of Irish

A defining feature of the development of Irish English has been through contact with Irish and the transfer of features from Irish into Irish English. Substratal transfer of morpho-syntactic features such as the *after*-perfect and habitual aspect has been well studied (especially by Filppula 1999; Hickey 2007; Corrigan 2010 and Kallen 2013, among others). The question of similar transfer with regard to modal auxiliary verbs becomes an obvious question. What, then, was the modal system of Irish like? In the following discussion of the modal verb system in Irish, there will be an emphasis on forms which may equate with or be equivalent to *may* in English. According to McQuillan (2009), also summarized in Hickey (2009), the "central features" of the

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model verb system in Irish are its "semantic polyfunctionality" and its syntactic occurrence in a "verb complex in which those forms assume the argument of the main complement verb". Its "peripheral features" are its "lack of fully lexical meanings beyond the modal ones" and its morpho-syntactic defectiveness. Its defectiveness is characterized by the lack of imperatives, the absence of verbal nouns, the presence of a general non-past tense covering the future as well as the present, and the existence of various past tense forms which are dialectally determined. Negation is determined by placement whether the modal or proposition verb is negated.

(1) Féadfaidh sé sneachta a dhéanamh
can-FUT it snow PTL make/do-VN

Thus the notion of possibility is realized by the verbs *féad* or *tig/thig* each glossable as 'may', 'can', 'be able'. *Féad*, which exists only as a modal, has developed from the lexical concepts of 'getting' or 'obtaining' (*féidir*) through bleaching or desemanticisation to a more generalized notion of 'possibility'. No-one has ever shown any evidence of this form having transferred into Irish English.

McQuillan further shows that, in Irish, modal possibility may occur in impersonal constructions based on the copula preceded by often a proleptic (or anticipatory) pronoun *sé* 'it' as subject (as in (1)) and followed by a noun or adjective with modal meaning (*féidir* or *foláir* for 'possibility'), with the semantic subject being expressed or personalised through pronouns within prepositional phrases – either *le* 'to' (to indicate the possession of an opinion, state of mind, feeling, desire or impulse on the part of the semantic subject') (a participant-internal reading or source) or *do* 'for' or *de* 'of' 'from' (which introduce a semantic subject for whom/which a state or condition applies) (a participant-external reading or source). Again, the transfer of such a construction has never been demonstrated.

A further point made by McQuillan is that *féad* or *tig/thig* may be epistemic or non-epistemic and as such are distinguished by different forms and different complements, thus *féadfaidh* is used as a general non-past tense for deontic/ dynamic readings, whereas the conditional form *d'fhéadfadh* for epistemic readings. Again, there is no evidence of transfer.

For van Hattum (2012: 130), on whose work on CORIECOR this article will depend later, "modal expressions in Irish differ from the English modal verbs in most of these respects: Irish expressions have non-finite forms, they are … fully inflectable, they are not necessarily followed by a non-finite verb form, and the past tense expresses past time reference." However, van Hattum acknowledges "some similarities": the polyfunctionality of verbs such as *féad* or *tig/thig*, their ability to express epistemic as well as non-epistemic meanings, their high level of defectiveness, and the ability of the conditional mood to express both past and present time references. Hickey (2009) goes further to show how Irish uses a variety of lexicalised

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phrases or non-modal verbs to express modality. Hickey gives as an example the verb phrase *dóigh liom go*, which can be used to express epistemic modality:

(2) *Is dóigh liom gur siadsan a gcuid gasúir.*
[is likelihood with-me that they-EMPH his share children-GEN_PL]
'I suppose they are his children', i.e. 'They must be his children.'
(Hickey 2009: 6)

A further example concerns epistemic *mustn't*, which may be explained by the extension of the epistemic positive use of *must* to the negative (cf. Kallen 2013: 254).

Nevertheless, little wonder that Hickey (2009) concludes that, because of the high lack of equivalence between the Irish and English systems, there was little chance of structural transfer. "In sum," concludes van Hattum, "Mod[ern[I[rish] does not have a class of modal verbs/constructions comparable to the English modal verbs" (2012: 130). And Nicolas (2014: 29) comments, "the Irish Gaelic system seems globally too different from the English modal system that contact induced features seem unlikely."

The first research question can thus be answered straight away. In the context of language change, from the above summaries of separate developments in Irish and in English, the only really plausible conclusion to be drawn is that Irish speakers adopted the English modal system relatively unchanged. The lack of equivalence in form meant that, during the language shift period when English came to replace Irish as the community language for the majority of the population (Hickey 2007: 121–6; McCafferty & Amador-Moreno 2012a, 2012b), there was little likelihood of structural transfer occurring and indeed both the diachronic attestations and the synchronic situation give no indication of transfer of modal structures from Irish to Irish English. (Hickey 2009: 10)

3.2 Development of *may* in the History of English

In the history of English, following the account in Kisbye (1972), *may* has its origins in Old English. Present-day *may* is derived from a full lexical verb in Old English *magan* usually glossed as 'to have power', 'to be able to', as in:

(3a) ealle **þ**a Þing Þe Þanon cumaÞ wuÞ aelcum attre **magon** (Alfred: Bede)
('have power over all kinds of poison')

May also existed then as an auxiliary verb expressing ability and power, apparently interchangeable with *cunnan*, as in:

(3b) Þa aer Þam se cyning Harold Þyder cuman mihte, Þa gegaderode Eadwine eorl, ond Morkere eorl .. swa mycel werod swa hi begotan **mihton** (OE Chronicle)

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and as a verb expressing permission, as in:

(3c) Ne **miht** Þu lencg tun-scire bewitan (St. Luke)
'for thou mayest be no longer steward' (Authorised Version)

In Middle English, the lexical verb *may* dies out in the fifteenth century.

However, in its auxiliary uses, *may* continues to express notions of ability and power, as in (4a):

(4a) A best Þat men Lynx calles, Þat **may** se thurg thik stane walles
(Richard Rolle: Pricke of Conscience)

(4b) For Þei **mowe** not gon out, but be a litill issue Þat was made be strengthe of men
(Mandeville's Travels)

and the expression of permission becomes more common, as in:

(5) Of Þe ÞInges Þe ȝe **mahen** underuon ond hwet Þinges ȝe **mahen** witen oÞer habben (Ancrene Riwle)

In Middle English, the epistemic sense of *may* gradually becomes developed (cf. e.g. Goossens 1982: 78, quoted by Denison 1993: 299) – what Kisbye calls "the use of *may* to express a possible contingency with relation to the future", as in:

(6) Summe of Þine cunesmen Þer Þou **meist** imete (Judas)

Since about 1400, *may* has expressed a possible contingency with relation to the present, as in:

(7) Ther is manye of yow / Faitours, and so **may** it be that thow / Art riht such on
(Gower, *Confessio Amantis*)

The type he *may have been right* with relation to the past (with a perfect infinitive) has only been evidenced since about 1700.

In accounts of present-day English, *might* is often shown to be a past tense form of *may* – especially when back shifting of tense is called for, as in indirect speech. This tense relationship seems established by Early Modern English, by when *might* also is able to express its own non-past meanings (cf. Kytö 1991).

This brief historical summary may suffice to show that the system of *may* as a modal auxiliary as it is today was established by the time of the Tudor and Stuart settlements in Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and thus available for Irish speakers of English from then on.

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3.3 Descriptive model of *may*

So how has that modal system of English been described? Much interest in modals centres around their semantics, as each typically functions with more than one distinct class of meaning. For some it is a question whether modals are epistemic or non-epistemic. **Epistemic** verbs such as *may* express a usually subjective judgment by the speaker about events which have not yet happened or may only be hypothetical or speculative. Occasionally the judgments may be objective if they arise from public opinion or shared beliefs and not from the speaker. **Non-epistemic** uses of modals such as *may* also relate to speakers (and sometimes hearers) but they are bound up with sentence (or propositional) subjects as well. Typically, *may* expresses **permission** within the terms of the power which a speaker or hearer has in the ongoing discourse; but *may* also relates to the **dynamism** and agency of the proposition being expressed. Thus non-epistemic (non-judgmental, more objective) uses of *may* are categorisable as **deontic** (expressing permission or obligation, external or extrinsic to the individual or situation) or as **dynamic** (expressing ability or possibility, internal to the individual or intrinsic to the situation). Because of the centrality of the relationship between subject and auxiliary, non-epistemic functions are regarded by some as '**root**' functions, a notion influentially promulgated in the research by Geoffrey Leech and Jennifer Coates (1980). Others, notably Palmer (1990, 2001) and Huddleston (2002), following von Wright's (1951) original proposal, however, dispense with the notion of 'root' in favour of two separate seemingly equal functional categories of 'deontic' and 'dynamic'. A useful schema of recent approaches to modal semantics is provided by Depraetere & Reed (2006: 280). All the same, it is the root-epistemic distinction which is at the heart of the present paper. For Collins (2007: 476), "epistemic possibility is the primary meaning of *may* […] in Modern English."

4. *May* in nineteenth-century Ireland

Let us now consider Irish English in the nineteenth century. Language development in Ireland in the nineteenth century, meanwhile, has come to attract attention since the development of the CORIECOR Corpus and the provision of data which can be interpreted as indicative of vernacular speech. CORIECOR is a large collection of emigrant letters dating from 1780–1914. The general impression about language change which is emerging from these data is (a) that the earliest letters were fairly standardised in their format and spelling no doubt because those writing them were either educated in the standardised language or were amanuenses who were skilled

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at writing. And that (b) by the 1840s, more and more Irish people not only were becoming literate but also were switching from Irish to English as their everyday or community language. The result was that more and more letters were being written as if they were being spoken, so that more and more vernacular forms came to appear in those letters. For present-day linguists, those letters provide the earliest evidence for forms which have transferred from Irish. Using these data, a study of the development of modal verbs in the nineteenth century has been carried out by Marije van Hattum (2012).

What van Hattum shows is not only the successful operation of the English modal system but rather the occurrence of certain developments simply at different times from when they happened England. With specific reference to model auxiliary pair *may* and *might* (and a great many studies treat the two verbs together, not least because of the tense relationship), van Hattum categories their uses with the usual distinction between root (what she calls 'metaphysical') and epistemic meanings.

On the basis of the CORICOR evidence, what van Hattum comes to tease out is the development of the perfect infinitive after *may/might* to refer to past ttime contexts; the interchangeability of *may/might* without regard to tense; the operation of back-shifted tenses; and the merger of *may* and *might* in epistemic uses.

Thus CORIECOR shows that it was during the nineteenth century that, for the expression of the root/metaphysical past, the construction *may/might have* + *-ed*-participle came to predominate over *may* + infinitive, as in:

(8) had she chosen any other vessel I **might have tried** to go with her, but as it is I gave up the idea

For the expression of root/metaphysical present or nonpast, CORIECOR shows that *might Vinf* dominates during the nineteenth century but also shows that *may Vinf* and *might Vinf* have become interchangeable, suggesting *may* and *might* were "already semantically tenseless in metaphysical contexts in the nineteenth century" (van Hattum 2012: 183).

(9) should you ever come **you might get** the situation of Matron to an emigrant vessel

Thirdly, van Hattum considers situations (as in indirect speech) where tenses are back shifted, finding that only *might Vinf* or *might have –ed*-participle predominate, as in:

(10) he did not know who **might be listening** to him

(11) thought he **might have taken** it to shew his father

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All the same, van Hattum wonders whether a genuine back-shift is occurring in some instances, making her speculate that *might* yet again is "semantically tenseless".

As for epistemic uses, for the expression of the **epistemic past** (epistemic possibility with past situations) CORIECOR shows that *may Vinf* first occurs in nineteenth century and *might Vinf* declines after 1874. Nowdays, *may have Vinf* predominates in Irish English over *might have Vinf* but the two constructions are equal in English English, further indicative of a tenseless (and thus interchangeable) *may* and *might*, with *may have –ed*-participle showing a past or back-shifted orientation.

(12) I **may have done** so once, but I don't remember

Finally, for the epistemic present/nonpast, CORIECOR shows that *may Vinf* predominates in the nineteenth century in both Irish English (and other evidence shows this for English English) – but the two forms *may Vinf* and *might Vinf* are now equal in both varieties. Van Hattum concludes that the frequencies of each gradually converged in the nineteenth century, considering that as further evidence of development of their tenselessness, as in:

(13) Sir, you **may think** it strange …

(14) They **might be** Catholics

From these details of *may*/*might* in Irish English in the nineteenth century, it is not possible to construct a case for divergence; even if the details of development between Irish English and English English differ at certain stages of time, the outcome appears to be convergence (or reconvergence) with the English system.

4.1 *May* in late twentieth-century Irish and British English

Where description involves variation, a representative, well-balanced corpus such as ICE-Ireland is invaluable: the provision of copious amounts of data not only make it possible to show up differences but to quantify those differences too. The 772 examples of *may* in ICE-Ireland stand as a valid and legitimate sample of that item's behaviour. From analysis and categorisation it proves possible to identify those factors and preferences underpinning that behaviour and to calibrate them for further investigation. No speaker in Ireland uses *may* without making a semantic choice, so that those calibrations provide the evidence for comparison with the choices made by other speakers of English as evidenced by other corpora. The general point is that it is only with the wealth of systematically chosen data as found in a well-balanced corpus that enables analysts to get a grip on, in this case, the complexity of the semantics of a modal auxiliary verb.

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As for the late twentieth century, several corpus resources have been used as the basis for accounting for developments. Foremost amongst them is the Brown family of corpora, which features parallel corpora at thirty year intervals (1901, 1931, 1961, 1991 and 2006) and which has been at the forefront of discussions of contemporary change. In general, the argument about modals would contend that throughout the twentieth century central models have declined whereas semi-modals have increased (cf. Leech et al. 2009). In declining, *may* is thus no exception.

The details of the broad sweep across the decades of the twentieth century need not concern us here; rather, what does concern us is the position of ICE-IRL in relation to its contemporaries, especially FLOB, which is directly contemporaneous.

Table 1 shows that, among written texts, the frequency of *may* in ICE-IRL at 1188 pmw is higher than that of FLOB but only about half that of ICE-GB. If *may* is taken to be a marker of formality in written texts (compared with a more tentative *might* or more informal *can*), then the result may be interpreted as indicating a greater informality in written texts in ICE-IRL than in ICE-GB but not nearly as informal as FLOB.

Table 1. Written *may*

Written	N	Pmw
LOB*	1333	1324
ICE-GB**	819	**2048**
ICE-IRL	**507**	**1188**
FLOB***	1101	1094

* The figures for LOB are from Leech et al. (2009: Table A4.2).
** The figures for ICE-GB are from Collins (2007: Table 4).
*** The figures for FLOB are from Mair & Leech (2006: Table 14.3). Leech et al. (2009: Table A4.2) record the number of occurrences as 1100.

Table 2 shows that frequency of *may* in spoken ICE-IRL is again lower than in ICE-GB. By the same argument, the result *may* be interpreted as indicating a greater informality in spoken texts in ICE-IRL than in ICE-GB, which is itself more informal than the LLC. The suggestion is that in spoken ICE-IRL *may* is replaced by the more diffident *might* or the more informal *can*. The figures for the whole of the spoken component are similar; the DCPSE sample, with fewer texts, yields a different (higher) result.

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Table 2. Spoken *may*

SPOKEN	N	Pmw
ICE-IRL	**265**	**423**
ICE-GB/DCPSE*	213	527
ICE-GB**	399	637
LLC/DCPSE***	390	876
BNC demographic****	637	151

* The figures for ICE-GB, based on the subcorpus (DICE) which forms part of the Diachronic Corpus of Present-day Spoken English (DCPSE), are from Bowie et al. (2013: Appendix 2).
** The figures for ICE-GB are from Collins (2007: Table 4).
*** The figures for LLC, based on the subcorpus (DICE) which forms part of the Diachronic Corpus of Present-day Spoken English (DCPSE), are from Bowie et al. (2013: Appendix 2).
**** The figures for the BNC demographic component are from Leech (2013: Table 4)

There now follows three tables contrasting root and epistemic *may* in ICE-IRL and ICE-GB. Table 3 present raw occurrences as well as the distribution as percentages.

Table 3. Root and epistemic *may* – Occurrences and distributions

MAY	Root		Epistemic		Others		Total
	n	%	N	%	n	%	
SPOKEN							
ICE-IRL	66	25.0	182	**68.7**	17	6.3	265
ICE-GB	13	3.4	365	**96.6**	21	0	399
Written							
ICE-IRL	**320**	**63.1**	178	35.1	9	1.2	507
ICE-GB	117	14.3	658	**80.3**	44	5.4	819

Table 3 shows that in the spoken components of both ICE-IRL and ICE-GB epistemic uses of *may* predominate, with a staggering 96.6% in ICE-GB. It also shows that the written texts are divided, with root uses of *may* predominating in ICE-IRL and epistemic uses in ICE-GB.

Table 4 shows that in ICE-IRL the root use of *may* predominates overall, except for spoken texts in the North, where epistemic predominates. This is actually the opposite of Collins's (2007) claim that epistemic possibility predominates and against his findings in ICE-GB, ICE-Australia and his American Corpus that epistemic *may* predominates.

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Table 4. Root and epistemic *may* in speech and writing

	SPOKEN		Written		Total
	NI	ROI	NI	ROI	IRL
	N.	N.	N.	N.	N.
Root	28	38	125	195	386
Epistemic	105	77	85	93	360
Quasi-Subjunctive	8	5	1	5	19
Benedictive	0	0	3	0	3
Unanalysable	0	4	0	0	4
Total	141	124	214	293	772
Grand Total	265		507		
%	34.3		65.7		100.0

Comparisons of frequencies and percentages distributions have been taken as indicative of linguistic change, as if snapshots of developments on the move. The reasons for the relative infrequency of *may* in ICE-IRL with its seeming conservatism can only be speculated: that Irish English has already abandoned the formality of *may* in favour of more informal *can* or more tentative *might*, but that the instances that are still found tend to retain the older, more formal usages, such as root uses in written texts. The discrepancy in written may between ICE-GB and FLOB re-opens the line of development and poses the question in what way are differences with ICE-Ireland to be interpreted, particularly with regard to change.

Thus the second research question, while answered in a preliminary way by these tables of frequencies, raises as many questions as answers because almost certainly the frequency of *may* is bound up with the frequencies of *might* and *can* (and possibly even *could*). The many patterns of greater or lesser frequency may be indicative of several patterns of change pulling against each other such as growing colloquialisation and informality (and so avoidance of a more formalised *may*) or else a retention of a more formal *may* by some speakers or certain writers.

4.2 Irish uses of *may*

Let us now turn to the third research question and investigate *may* in ICE-IRL for evidence of any peculiarly Irish uses. A motivation for doing so was my awareness from years of teaching in Belfast that students taking their leave from my office after a consultation would often remark:

(15) I may go on now here, John.

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This expresses compulsion and is a local equivalent of *I must go on now here.* This use of *may* as a deontic modal of obligation is noted by Kallen (2013: 169), who gives the example from Galway:

(16) You may ring her up now and tell you're not going because I'm not doing it for you.

An example of this use is also given in Hickey (2009: 13) who adds that it is "commonly found with future reference":

(17) She may be allowed to finish.

In ICE-IRL, one example is found: (18) comes from a witness who, under cross-examination in court, is asked by a barrister to make a mark on a photograph. However, once undertaken, the barrister doesn't think the witness has done so properly. He remarks 'I may show it to the Counsel', meaning that he must do so, and right away.

(18) <LEC-S1B-061$A>[1] <#> Well can you just mark on the photograph where you were when the impact occurred <#> No <,> if you just mark it <#> You 'd need a pen <#> Somebody 'll give you a pen uh <,> <#> Right I thought you uh when you came out you 'd moved into the lane furthest <.> a </.> <.> a </.> away from yours <#> Is that right
<$B> <#> Yes that 's right
<$A> <#> I I I don't <,> I **may** show it to Counsel <#> I don't think she 's marked it correctly <#> She 's put it in the wrong lane from what she 's said so far <#> She puts it in the near-side lane instead of the outer lane

Indeed all four examples relate to immediate, almost contiguous future reference.

If this use of obligatory *may* is recognized as an Irish use, could there be others, with examples in ICE-IRL? That (18) appears appears to be the sole example does not entail, however, that none others exist. From the corpus evidence, the reluctant conclusion has to be drawn that there is nothing Irish about the behaviour of modal auxiliary *may* as its patterns of behaviour in ICE-Ireland, North and South, spoken as well as written, fall qualitatively very much in line with those in ICE-GB, as examined by Facchinetti (2003) and Collins (2007, 2009), despite occasionally striking differences in frequency distribution.

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1. The examples are edited so that *may* appears in bold along with any significant collocations or structural features in italics. Examples from the ICE-Ireland Corpus show, at the start of each, in an identifying bracket, **the geopolitical zone** (NI or ROI), **the text category** (see list above – here LEC), **the text-id** (here S1B-061) and, after the $ symbol, **the speaker id** of that particular text (here A). The symbol <#> denotes the start of a sentence or sentence-fragment, and <,> denotes a brief pause.

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4.3 Merger/blend/borderline cases

That instances of *may* are ambiguous between a dynamic root or an epistemic meaning has been the subject of some debate. Coates (1983) creates a 'fuzzy' category; Facchinetti (2003) talks about a 'borderline' category. Leech & Coates (1980) talk about 'mergers'. However, Collins (2009) argues that, when an epistemic interpretation is possible, showing the speaker's uncertainty about the situation or proposition, that categorisation has to prevail. In the present analysis, apart from the few which, being incomplete, are unanalyzable, categorization as root or epistemic proved possible. However, against ambiguity, Depraetere & Reed (2011) consider the two categories quite distinct and, quoting Van der Auwera & Ammann (2008), state that with epistemic modality: "The speaker asserts that a proposition is possibly or necessarily true, relevant to some information of knowledge", with the corollaries that "If the proposition is only possibly true, the propositional attitude is that of uncertainty. If it is necessarily true, the propositional attitude is that of a high degree of certainty." With epistemic modality it becomes *a matter of degree*: how likely is the proposition true? By contrast, for Depraetere & Reed, "Root modality does not express the speaker's judgment on the likelihood of a situation being the case, it merely indicates whether there is possibility or necessity of actualization or not." Thus with root modality it becomes *an either/or question*: is actualization possible/necessary or not? Even with Depraetere & Reed's new systematic classification, by far the hardest task in analyzing *may* remains the distinguishing reliably between root and epistemic uses.

4.4 *May* and prosody

The claim is made (e.g. by Coates 1983) that epistemic *may* is usually stressed (77%). In the *SPICE-Ireland Corpus*, a pragmatically- and prosodically-annotated daughter corpus of the spoken component of the ICE-Ireland corpus (Kirk et al. 2011b; Kallen & Kirk 2012), 100 of the 300 spoken texts are annotated for tone movement. Annotated instances of *may* amount to 54 occurrences: 46 for a falling tone (*1mAy*); 5 for a rising tone (*2mAy*), 3 for a rise-fall (*3mAy*). Each is epistemic, as in the following examples:

(19) <P1A-001$B> <rep> But again they **1mAy** organise that 2tomOrrow% you-2knOw%* </rep>

(20) <P1A-035$B> <rep> And he **2mAy** be 2overdOing it a bit <{9> <[9> you-know* as 2wEll% …

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(21) <P1B-062$C> <#> <rep> Uhm I can 1Only 1presUme that he **3mAy** have had% 1psorIasis on the 2scAlp% </rep>

There are no instances modal *may* with fall-rise tones.

5. Discussion

Now that the three research questions have been answered, let us reflect on the investigation. *May* has been described as the most neutral of the modal auxiliaries but it could be also be described as the most difficult in view of the need to unravel root from epistemic senses. To resolve such instances, some researchers have identified "fuzzy" (Coates) or "merged" (Leech & Coates 1980; Coates 1995; Collins 2009) or "borderline" (Facchinetti 2003) categories. For Leech & Coates (1980: 86): "we find instances which could be interpreted either as epistemic or as root with little difference of effect. The common semantic element of possibility is indicative of the close connection between the two." Collins concedes that the meaning can be "somewhat ambivalent between epistemic modality and dynamic modality", but that he has analysed such examples decidedly as 'epistemic' in view of the "speaker's uncertainty as whether or not, at any moment, a situation whose potential for occurrence is not in doubt will be actualized" (2007: 480). Depraetere & Reed (2011) explain how, because a great many expressions of possibility between root and epistemic senses are hard to unravel, they felt the need to devise a more objective set of criteria which they establish for identifying root possibility uses. For Depraetere (2010), the solution is a 'modal meaning grid', to take account of the semantics and pragmatics of each instance. This difficulty of analysis and functional categorization almost certainly lies behind the discrepancies between root and epistemic uses in occurrences in ICE-GB as analysed separately by Facchinetti and Collins, with epistemic uses at 61% and 84% respectively. It may also lie behind the difference between ICE-GB and ICE-Ireland where epistemic uses overall amount to only 46.6%.[2]

The main conclusion from this small investigation is that the results from ICE-IRL do not support the apparent increase in epistemic frequency between contemporaneous diachronic corpora of British English such as SEU and ICE-GB, or LOB and FLOB, as noted by Leech et al. (2009), and thus challenge the claim

2. Although the root-epistemic model in Coates (1983) has been highly influential, it is based only on 200 examples each from a spoken corpus (the then SEU corpus which later became part of the London-Lund Corpus) and a written corpus (the Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus), with the result that it is not possible to comment on the frequency of *may* on the basis of her results.

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that "*may* is becoming predominantly an epistemic modal" (Leech et al. 2009: 84), with "the deontic and residual meanings of *may* … decreasing apace" (ibid.: 85). As already mentioned, further investigations into synonymic modals will be needed to get the fullest picture.

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CHAPTER 11

Levelling processes and social changes in a peripheral community

Prevocalic /r/ in West Cumbria

Sandra Jansen

This chapter presents a sociolinguistic study of changes due to levelling in the use of prevocalic /r/ in Maryport, a peripheral community in the county of Cumbria in the far north-west of England. Mixed-effect models are used to investigate linguistic and social constraints in the levelling process. The results show that levelling of prevocalic /r/ is under way and has progressed further in Carlisle than in Maryport. Social changes such as the loss of local employment and the breaking up of neighbourhoods as social networks are provided as reasons for the decline of the local variant.

Keywords: sound change, social change, levelling, geographical diffusion, peripheral varieties

1. Introduction

Geolinguistic processes have been responsible for a number of linguistic changes in the UK, in particular consonantal changes (cf. Kerswill 2003). On the one hand, non-standard features such as TH-fronting and T-glottaling are diffusing across the country, and on the other hand, levelling, i.e. the reduction of socially and/or linguistically marked variants (cf. Trudgill 1986: 98; Moore & Carter 2015: 7) has been observed (cf. Watt 2000; Watt 2002; Jansen 2015b, 2018a). While levelling often leads to the use of supralocal forms associated with a "proper" way of speaking, diffusing changes recently reported in the UK have introduced non-standard features such as T-glottaling and the use of labiodental /r/. The discussion regarding the extent to which supralocal changes are shaping the future of English in urban centres of England is still ongoing, i.e. while features such as T-glottaling and TH-fronting are diffusing across the country (cf. e.g. Britain 2009: 138) various features of Multicultural London English such as the backing of /k/ to [q] and *man*

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as a pronoun are not found in other parts of the country (cf. Cheshire et al. 2011; Cheshire 2013). Existing research on language variation and change processes in peripheral areas of the UK, however, is sparse but does exist; for examples, studies such as Tagliamonte & Smith (2002); Smith & Durham (2011); Tagliamonte (2013); Maguire (2014); Smith & Holmes-Elliott (2017), and Jansen (2018b) focus on peripheral areas. In order to fully understand supralocal changes, studies on language use in peripheral communities need to be included in the discussion of geolinguistic processes.

While /r/ has been studied extensively due to its variable nature across and within languages (cf. e.g. van Hout & van de Velde 2001; Wiese 2001; Sankoff & Blondeau 2007; Piercy 2012; Barras 2018; Jansen & Langstroff forthcoming), in England in the first decade of the 21st century attention was predominantly paid to the diffusion of labiodental /r/ (cf. Foulkes & Docherty 2000; Llamas 2001; Marsden 2006). Similar to other consonantal changes that have been observed around the country (cf. e.g. Kerswill 2003; Britain 2005), the change towards labiodental /r/ is seen as an example of covert prestige, with working-class male speakers often leading the change in communities (Foulkes & Docherty 2000: 39). In Carlisle, a city in Cumbria, the use of labiodental /r/ is still restricted (cf. Jansen 2012) and hence the findings are only tentative, but it seems that a similar pattern is emerging there.

A levelling process observed across the north of England occurs in /r/ in prevocalic position. Trills and in particular taps are replaced by approximants, a supralocal form which is associated with the standard. The change from taps to approximants in prevocalic /r/ has not triggered much discussion. In general, it seems that while in Scottish English taps are commented on (cf. Stuart-Smith 2007; Stuart-Smith 2008; Lawson et al. 2011; Jauriberry et al. 2015), the use of taps is quite under-researched in English English. The use of this feature is mentioned only infrequently. At the beginning of the 1980s, Wells (1982: 368) claimed that taps are still fairly common after voiceless interdental fricatives and labials and in intervocalic position in the north of England, and indeed, Shorrocks (1998: 390–92) found evidence of taps in intervocalic position in Bolton.[1] Similarly, Coupland (1980: 5) commented that “the tapped variant is most common intervocalically” in Cardiff. Formerly, the tap was also a feature of traditional RP (cf. Fabricius 2017) but must be assumed to have different indexicalities in the non-regional RP accent than in northern varieties.

The discussion of the levelling of prevocalic /r/ in the north of England is rather limited: Watt et al. (2014) and Jansen (2015a, 2017) highlight that taps as a local

1. The data in the BBC voices collection for Barrow, Sedbergh and Workington confirm the variable status of prevocalic /r/ in Cumbria (https://sounds.bl.uk/Accents-and-dialects/BBC-Voices).

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feature are decreasing in Carlisle English and are being replaced by approximants. Watt et al. (2014) discuss the distribution of /r/ in pre- and postvocalic position in four communities along the Scottish-English border. They reach the conclusion that “overall, […], the alveolar approximant […] is clearly the default form of overt (r) among speakers from this region of Britain” (Watt et al. 2014: 95). Even though the literature on the use of taps in English varieties is sparse, the consonant cluster of interdental voiceless fricatives and taps is frequently commented on and Maguire (2012: 373), who draws on SED data, claims that there might be a wider effect of taps after /θ/ in English.

The loss of taps in prevocalic /r/ position is an example of the complex nature of a change and the interplay of external and internal motivations. I have suggested elsewhere (Jansen 2015a) that an externally motivated change caused the internally motivated loss of taps in consonant cluster position with an alveolar stop preceding /r/. I propose that the decrease of Pre-R dentalisation in Carlisle English is a coarticulation effect which had a knock-on effect on the loss of taps in this position due to articulatory complexity.

While the systematicity and commonality of linguistic factors in diffusing features has been studied extensively recently, in particular for T-glottaling (e.g. Schleef 2013; Smith & Holmes-Elliott 2017), commonalities in linguistic constraints in levelling processes (e.g. Watt 2000, 2002) have attracted less attention. However, as Piercy (2012) and Jansen (submitted) have shown, the linguistic factors in the decline or increase in use of a feature can show commonalities which tell us more about the nature of this particular feature in spoken language.

This chapter aims to provide further insights into the levelling process in prevocalic /r/ position in a peripheral community. My points of departure in this analysis are (1) to investigate the distribution of /r/ in prevocalic position in Maryport English with a focus on the use of taps; (2) to consider the developmental trajectory of /r/ in apparent time and the underlying mechanisms that may be guiding the pathway to the loss of taps; (3) to discuss commonalities in the trajectory of change in this peripheral community and Carlisle English, an urban variety; and (4) to set the change in the context of social changes which have occurred in the peripheral community in the second half of the 20th century.

2. Sociolinguistic background of Maryport

Maryport is a peripheral town in the borough of Allerdale on the West Cumbrian coast. Figure 1 shows the geographical position of the town, which is a fairly remote community with a population of 11,000. The nearest big city is Carlisle, which is located 45km north-west of Maryport. There is no direct access to a motorway;

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people either need to pass through the Lake District or go to Carlisle to get on the M6. London is about 530km away, which makes the town one of the furthest places from London in England. Maryport is classed as a tourist town but "unlike some areas in Cumbria, Maryport did not benefit from the tourist boom of the last century" (Tagliamonte 2013: 30). Up until the 1980s the local mine and steelworks were major employers in Maryport, in addition to numerous factories in which many people started to work straight after they left school at the age of 16. Most people I interviewed in the community stated that these kinds of jobs no longer exist and that it was hard to find employment in the community now. Some of my interviewees were commuting to Sellafield, a nuclear power plant about 40km south of Maryport, while a few of the interviewees had joined the army for a while due to the lack of jobs in the area.

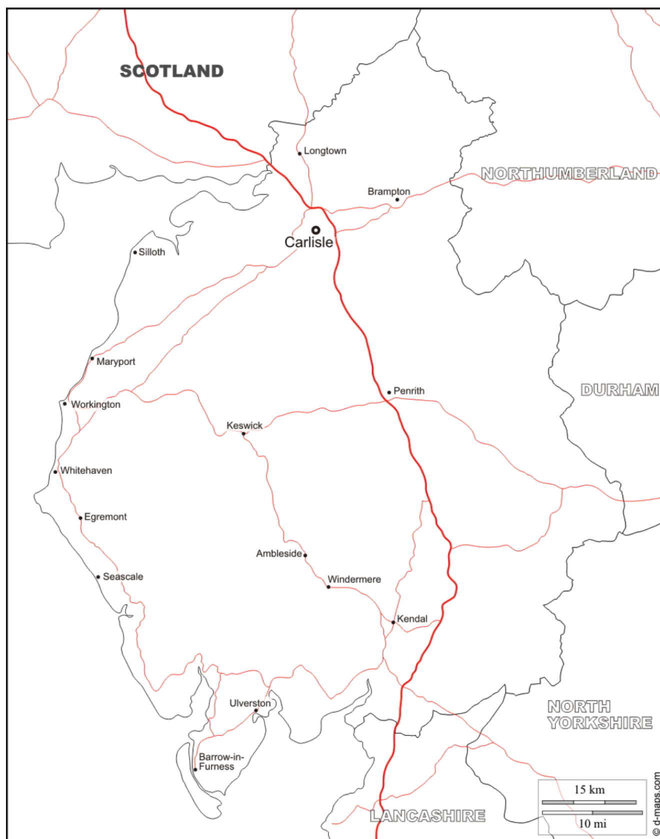

Figure 1. Geographical position of Maryport and Carlisle (d-maps.com. Cumbria)

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Due to the geographically but also economically peripheral position, dialect contact situations are less frequent than in more urban places such as Carlisle or even Workington and Whitehaven, two towns situated just to the south of Maryport. A profile description produced by Allerdale Borough Council provides information on the strengths and weaknesses of the community. Major concerns are the high level of deprivation, high unemployment and the isolation from the M6 and hence the rest of the country, while the strengths include good local public transport and the fact that houses are affordable (Allerdale Borough Council 2014).

The dialect spoken by older speakers in this community sometimes still contains a number of traditional (Cumbrian) features that have been levelled in less peripheral communities, such as [aʊ] in words like *thought*, *daughter* and *bought* and the centralising diphthong [ɪə] in words like *face*. Anecdotal linguistic impressions are that the dialects of Workington and Whitehaven are distinct and less broad than that of Maryport.[2] In the town and along the west coast there is evidence of *micro-localism* (MacRaild p.c.), i.e. people's orientation towards and concentration on their own town or a specific area within the town or village. However, while rivalries between communities still exist, the micro-localism seems to have faded within Maryport over the last 40 years.

At present, Maryport must be categorised as an exocentric open community (Kerswill 2015 based on Andersen 1988). Even though the community is situated in a peripheral area and people from Maryport are still identified as members of this community by people from surrounding areas, the (younger) speakers no longer seem to be protective of local norms. The social changes mentioned here, i.e. the breaking away of strong social networks in the neighbourhoods, the loss of jobs in the 1980s and the lack of employment nowadays, and their linguistic consequences will be reviewed in the discussion section.

3. Methodology

The data for this study stem from sociolinguistic interviews conducted in Maryport in July/August 2014 as part of the project *Mergers, Splits and Traditional Forms: Variation and Change in Vowels in Peripheral Cumbria*. Participants were recorded in one-to-one situations, either in their homes, in the hotel I was staying in or in a quiet room at the local library.

The sociolinguistic interviews (cf. Labov 1984) were structured around local issues (e.g. growing up and living in Maryport, local customs, geographical

2. Several participants noted that people in Workington speak posher than the people in Maryport.

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orientation, family stories) but the conversations were not restricted to these topics. At the end of the interview the participants were also asked to perform a reading task of 58 sentences, designed to elicit a wide range of different phonological variables, which provided about 20 tokens of prevocalic /r/ (depending on reading errors). Interview and sentence-list data were elicited to investigate style defined as attention to speech (cf. Labov 1972).

The Maryport interviews were recorded on a Zoom H-4N recorder. In addition, an external Beyerdynamik Opus 55.18MKII SC condenser microphone was used. The interviews usually lasted for 30–45 minutes and were transcribed orthographically afterward using ELAN (Sloetjes &Wittenburg 2008), resulting in a time-aligned, searchable corpus. All prevocalic /r/ tokens from the sentence-list data were analysed. For the interviews, the first 70 instances of prevocalic /r/ produced after the 10-minute point were analysed auditorily.

Table 1 provides information about the sample in the study. Overall, the data of 16 participants, eight men and eight women, divided into three age groups, were analysed: old speakers (born 1918–1948), middle-aged speakers (born 1952–1972) and young speakers (born 1983–1994). Classifying speakers according to socioeconomic status is notoriously problematic. Kerswill (2009: 361) postulates that "there is no 'natural' way of defining social class". For several reasons, social class is not considered as a social factor in this study: (1) self-classification of the participants did not serve to differentiate the speakers as everybody stated they were members

Table 1. Speakers in the present study

Name	Sex	YoB	Age group
Hillary	F	1918	
Rudi	M	1933	
Sharon	F	1935	old
Eileen	F	1940	
Moragh	F	1948	
Evan	M	1952	
Andrea	F	1954	
Caleb	M	1960	middle-aged
Bob	M	1967	
Amber	F	1972	
Paul	M	1983	
Adrian	M	1984	
Laura	F	1984	
Dominic	M	1987	young
Jesse	M	1990	
Marie	F	1994	

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of the working class; (2) most of the participants left school at the age of 16 and started work straight away; (3) the majority of participants worked in blue-collar jobs. The sample contains a number of skilled workers, in particular men, but this was not seen as class-defining in this community (however, see the discussion about Evan below).

The data extraction provided a sample of 1,481 tokens. Five main variants were identified in the sample:

– a voiced postalveolar approximant [ɹ]: This is the unmarked variant which is now found in almost all varieties of English in England.
– an alveolar tap [ɾ] or trill [r]: The former variant is a conservative form which used to be the norm in many communities in the north of England. The latter variant is used by the speakers born in 1918 and 1935, but in low numbers.
– a zero (non /r/) realisation: in r#V position; a hiatus between the two vowels is observed. Foulkes (1997: 78) mentions that in some cases glottal stops are inserted instead of linking /r/ in Newcastle English, which is also the case in Carlisle English. This possible realisation is also categorised as the zero form. This variant is also found in low numbers in CrV position.
– a fricative that occurs after [t, d].[3] The IPA symbol [ɹ̝] is used as an umbrella symbol for the different degrees of frication in Cr position.
– labiodental [ʋ]: this variant is diffusing across the country and is a fairly recent innovation in Carlisle English (cf. Jansen 2012, 2015a, 2017).

Jansen & Langstrof (in preparation) also find instances of uvular /r/ in a reading passage performance, which was not found in this sample.

3.1 Statistical analysis

A mixed-effect multiple logistic regression using Rbrul (Johnson 2009) was conducted in which the tap variant was treated as the application value. The advantage of this statistical tool is that it enables random factors to be included, such as *individuals*. The fixed social predictors tested were *speaker sex, style* and *age group.* The former two were factors with two levels: male and female and sentence list and interview. For age group three levels were investigated: old, middle-aged and young. The fixed linguistic predictor tested was the *environment*. Examples of the coded phonetic environments are listed in Table 2.

3. This fricative is not distinguished any further as the quality varies quite dramatically. Further acoustic investigation is needed to understand the gradual differences.

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Table 2. Details of coded environments

Environment	Abbreviation	Example
intervocalic	VrV	*carry, very*
word-initial consonant cluster	CrV	*crow, tree*
foot-initial position with preceding consonant	C#r	*that road, bedroom*
word-initial position with preceding vowel	V#r	*the road*
phrase-initial /r/	#r	*#red, #real*
linking /r/	r#V	*after it*

4. Results

Table 3 provides the overall distribution of /r/ in prevocalic position. The tap and approximant variant are used almost to equal shares while the other variants play a minor role.

Table 3. Overall distribution of /r/ in prevocalic position

[ɾ]		[ɹ]		[ʑ]		zero		[r]		other	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
681	46	679	45.8	54	3.7	43	2.9	17	1.1	7	0.4

The use of taps is presented by individual speaker in a number of figures. Figure 2 provides an overview of the use of taps; the interspeaker variation reveals a general decreasing trend visualised by the trend line. Therefore, we can assume that a change in progress is underway where taps as the more conservative feature are replaced by approximants; a similar process is observed in Carlisle (cf. Watt et al. 2014; Jansen 2015a; Jansen 2017). The variation in the use of taps ranges from a frequency of 74.4% by the male speaker born in 1933 to 2.2% by the female speaker born in 1984. However, none of the participants categorically uses taps but one speaker (Laura, born 1984) categorically avoids taps.

There are a number of speakers who are prominent in the data regarding their use of taps; for example, the oldest speaker, Hillary (born 1918), uses taps comparatively less frequently than Rudi, who was born in 1933, which seems to be a surprising finding. However, Hillary uses quite a number of trills instead of taps, an even more conservative form which is hardly used by any of the other speakers. Not only by age but also by language use, she is the most conservative user of this feature. Evan, born in 1952, is also noticeable as he uses taps less frequently than the other speakers in his age group. As mentioned above, Laura has a very low use

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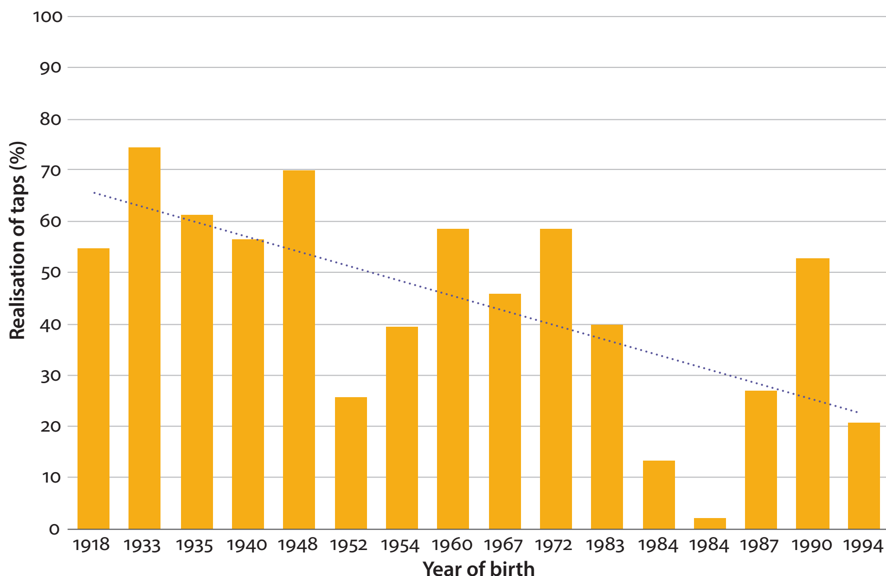

Figure 2. Overall use of taps per speaker

of taps while Jesse (born 1990) displays a comparatively high use of this feature for his age group. Their use of taps is discussed further in the discussion section.

I show elsewhere (Jansen 2017) that environment as a linguistic factor in the use of taps is highly significant in Carlisle English. In the following, I investigate the distribution of taps in the different environments (see Table 2) for Maryport English.

The first environment to be investigated is the consonant cluster (see Figure 3), which in most cases is found word initially. The use of taps is lower than in the overall dataset (Figure 2) with two speakers not using taps at all and three speakers using the feature at a frequency of less than 15%. The group of young speakers (born between 1983 and 1994) display a very low use of taps. The two speakers born in 1984 do not use taps in this environment at all and the speakers born in 1987 and 1994 only use it at a frequency of 10.3% and 21.1%, respectively.

The preceding segment is a strong predictor for the use of taps in Carlisle English (cf. Jansen 2017). Table 3 provides the distribution of taps according to preceding sound in CrV position for Maryport English. While dental and labiodental voiceless fricatives favour taps, voiced and voiceless alveolar stops are not followed by taps at all.

Some similarities with the data from Carlisle are apparent. While /θ/ favours taps, /v/, /p/, /t/ and /d/ disfavour the use of taps in both communities. In Jansen (2017) I commented on the articulatory complexity of taps following alveolar stops

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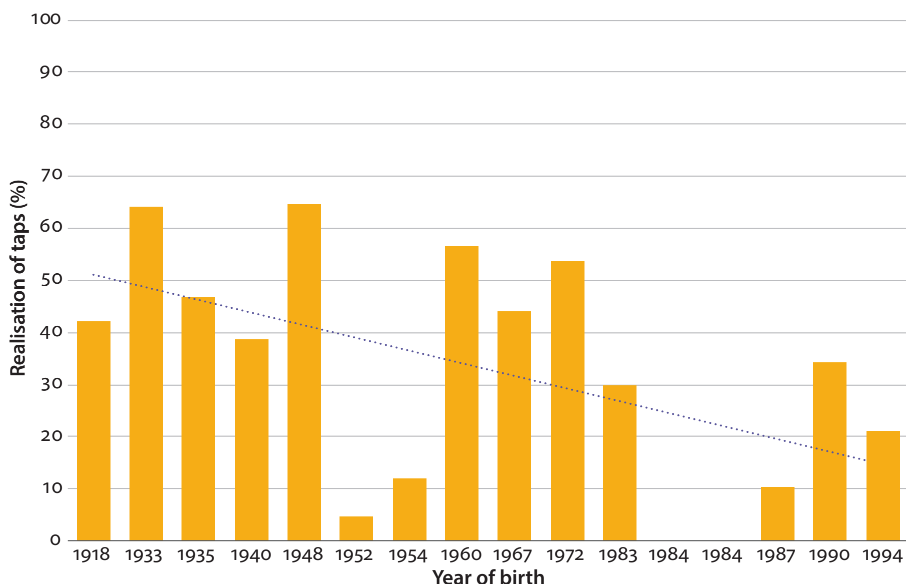

Figure 3. Percentage of taps in CrV position

as a potential reason for this distribution. The results for Maryport confirm that the lack of taps in this environment has linguistic rather than external reasons.[4]

The frequency of taps in word-initial position following a consonant (Figure 4) is comparatively low. In fact, seven speakers do not use taps in this environment at all and even the older speakers have a comparatively low use of taps. This distribution lets us assume that this is an environment which was affected by the loss of taps at an early stage. One reason could be that a lot of lexical items end in alveolar stops, e.g. *played*, *fade*, *cat*, *write*v, which is an environment where taps are disfavoured, as seen in Table 4 for CrV position.

4. In the Survey of English Dialects taps are attested in Cumbria in this environment (cf. Maguire 2012). However, the preceding sound is described as dentalised /t/ rather than alveolar /t/. Maguire describes this as Pre-R dentalisation (2012, 2016) which is also found in Ireland and Scotland. This strengthens the argument that the change from tap to alveolar /r/ has language internal rather than external reasons.

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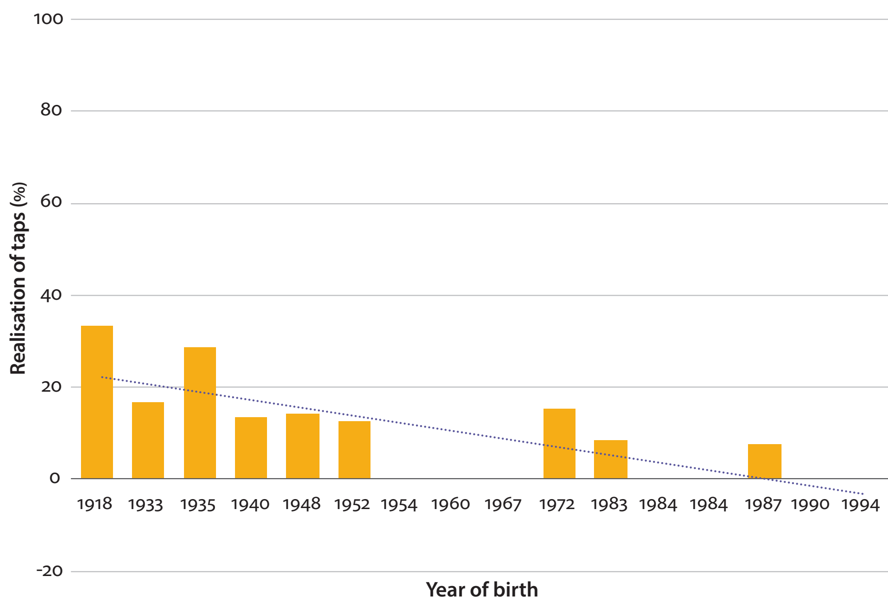

Figure 4. Percentage of taps per speaker in C#r position

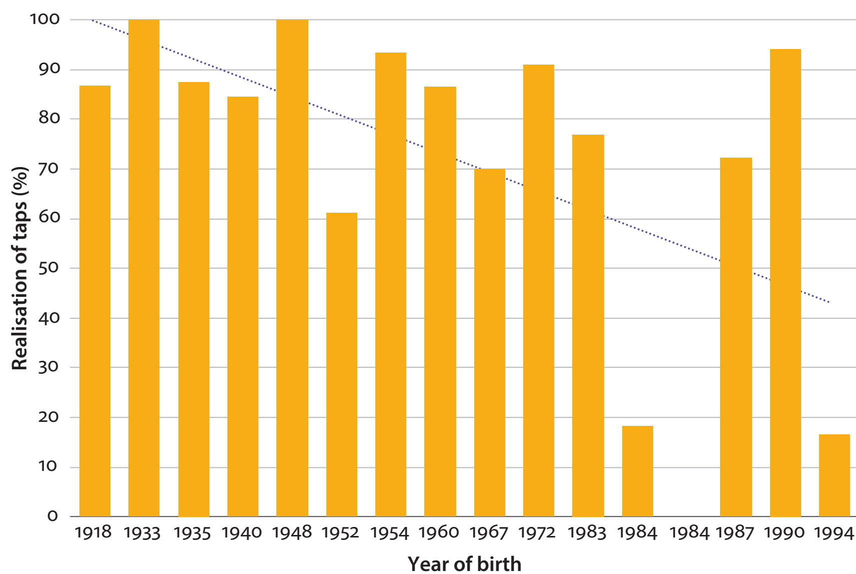

Figure 5. Percentage of taps per speaker in VrV position

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Table 4. Realisation of taps by preceding sound in CrV position

Preceding sound	Realisation of taps (%)
/θ/	72.3
/f/	52.5
/k/	47.8
/b/	46.1
/g/	42.1
/v/	28.9
/p/	19.7
/t/	0
/d/	0

The decrease of taps in intervocalic position is less advanced, with the majority of speakers using this variant at a frequency of around 80%. However, three speakers use taps in less than 20% of all cases or not at all. The three speakers were born in 1984 and 1994. This is a dramatic decrease in the use of this variant even though the two men born in 1987 and 1990 have similarly high frequencies to the older speakers. Two of the speakers who have a low numbers of taps in intervocalic position are women and the man served in the army in the south of England for a while. The difference in the use of taps between VrV and C#r position is quite striking which emphasizes the strength of the constraint.

The distribution of taps in r#V (linking /r/) position in many cases resembles the use of taps in VrV position, which is explainable because both are intervocalic environments but the former position includes a word boundary (Figure 6). However, some speakers use significantly more taps in the linking /r/ position than in VrV position, in particular Laura (born 1984). She does not use taps in intervocalic position but in the linking /r/ position she uses taps in 37.5% of all cases. Similarly, Marie (born 1994) displays a frequency of 16.7% of taps in intervocalic position but in the linking /r/ position her use rises to 55.6%.

Figure 7 shows the interspeaker variation for the V#r position. A similar pattern for the three broad groups as mentioned above emerges here as well. The oldest speaker seems to have a fairly low frequency of taps; however, she uses the more traditional trills as well, hence her low use of taps cannot be assigned to the levelling process. The speakers born between 1983 and 1994 either do not use taps at all in this environment or in less than 20% of all cases. The only exception is Jesse (born 1990), who uses taps quite frequently in this environment. His use of taps is higher than that of all the other younger speakers. This result shows that not all of the speakers are affected by the levelling process to the same extent.

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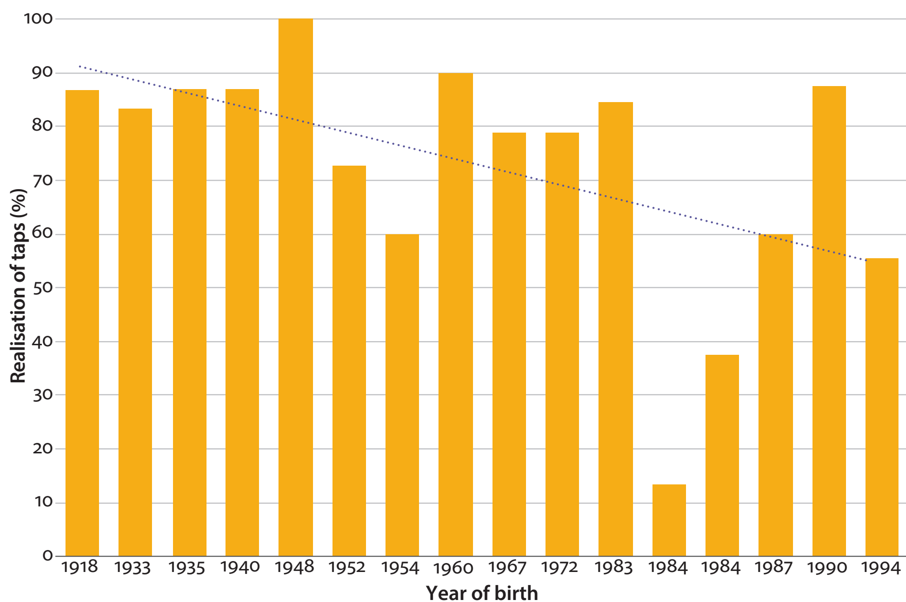

Figure 6. Percentage of taps per speaker in r#V position

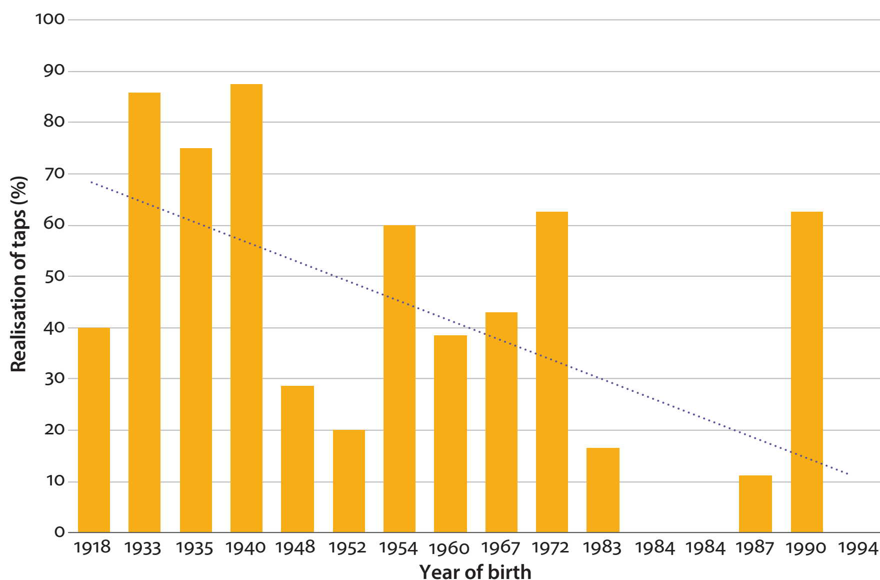

Figure 7. Percentage of taps in V#r position

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The statistical analysis (Table 5) confirms that the loss of taps is a change in progress in apparent time. Sex as a social factor is significant while style is not significant. Environment as a linguistic factor is also significant and the results confirm the trends observed in Figure 3–7: taps are favoured in intervocalic positions while they are disfavoured in phrase-initial position, word-initial position following a consonant and consonant clusters.

Table 5. Significant constraints for prevocalic /r/ (application value: ɾ)

Predictor	logodds	N	%	Factor weight
Environment				
VrV	1.891	245	75.5	.869
r#V	1.882	255	74.1	.868
V#r	0.265	144	41.7	.566
CrV	−.137	641	35.3	.466
C#r	−1.687	165	11.5	.156
#r	−2.214	31	6.5	.099
Age group				
Old	1.248	461	67.7	.777
Middle	.16	469	47.8	.54
Young	−1.407	551	26.3	.197
Sex				
M	.267	739	43.0	.566
F	−.267	742	48.9	.434
Interaction	Sex: Age group			
Log likelihood	−740.211	*df*	11	
AIC	1502.422	R^2	.442	

Figure 8 provides details on the interaction of the decrease in the use of taps across age groups according to sex ($p < 0.01$). The decrease in the use of the feature is slower between old and middle-aged women than between the middle-age group and the young women, i.e. the change “speeds up” while the change seems to slow down for men.

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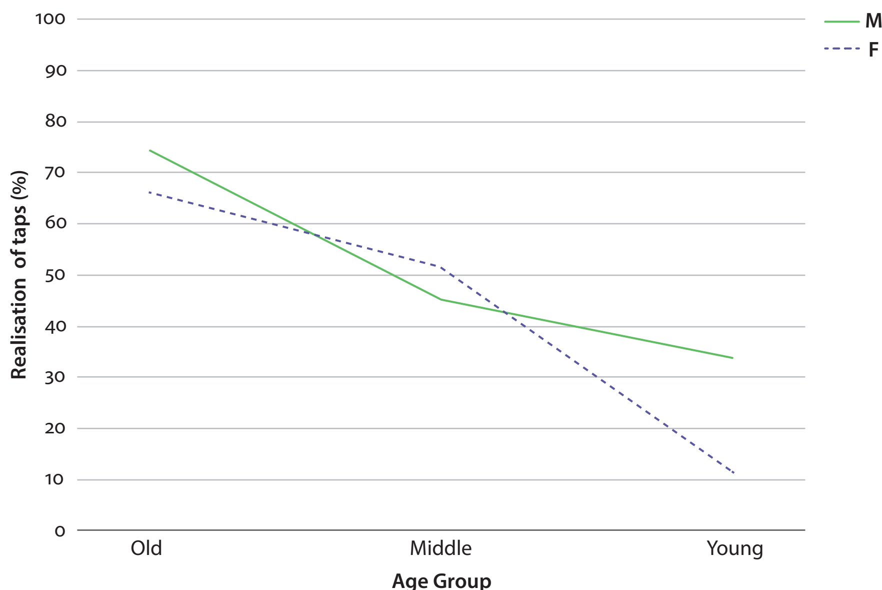

Figure 8. Interaction between age group and sex

5. Discussion

The limited research available on the variation of /r/ in prevocalic position leaves us with the assumption that the levelling of this feature is underway in the north of England. The data presented here confirm this. At the same time, the data reveal that the realisation of prevocalic /r/ varies to a great extent depending on its position in the word, indicating that strong constraints are at work. We would expect this variation in a levelling process as change does not happen overnight and local and supraregional forms co-occur for some time (cf. Røyneland 2009). However, in the community, variation is not limited to the more conservative (or northern) tap variant and the supraregional alveolar approximant, but other (even more traditional and now local) variants such as trills and uvular fricatives are part of the envelope of variation, though in low numbers.

The results presented here also show commonalities with Carlisle English, a community which is also going through this levelling process (cf. Jansen 2015a, 2017, 2018a). While the levelling is more advanced in Carlisle, a lot of similarities in the process of change are observable, e.g. the environment constraint has the same order in both communities as seen below.

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Carlisle:	VrV > r#V > V#r > CrV > C#r > #r
Maryport:	VrV > r#V > V#r > CrV > C#r > #r

These commonalities in the levelling process hint at strong linguistic constraints, similar to the findings for rhoticity (cf. Piercy 2012; Jansen & Langstrof forthcoming; Jansen submitted).

Another commonality is that in intervocalic (i.e. VrV) and linking /r/ position (i.e. r#V), taps "survive" the longest and we see a case of reallocation here, i.e. "two or more variants in the dialect mix survive the levelling process but are refunctionalised, evolving new social or linguistic functions in the new dialect" (Britain & Trudgill 2005: 183). Taps are linguistically refunctionalised by being more or less restricted to the two intervocalic positions. However, taps are also still very common after interdental segments in CrV position (cf. Maguire 2012). In these positions, the articulatory complexity is minimised by only moving the tip of the tongue quickly to the alveolar ridge between vowels. The movement is supported by the airflow.

Social changes within communities have been shown to be responsible for linguistic changes (e.g. Hall-Lew 2017). While similar geolinguistic processes happen in other communities, it is worth looking at social changes which might have influenced linguistic choices in Maryport. Some of these changes are found nationwide but some are particular to the north and Maryport.

(1) As mentioned earlier, mobility increased from the 1970s onwards. People bought cars which made it easier to travel to other places, be it for work, running errands or school. While this is true for other communities as well, the social and linguistic changes due to mobility were probably more resounding in more geographically peripheral areas, i.e. even though the places were still geographically peripheral, travelling to other places became easier. In the case of Maryport, not only the wider use of cars but also the improved connection through the Lake District by extending the A66 to a (in parts) dual carriageway in the 1970s made it easier for people from West Cumbria to travel to other parts of the country.

(2) Job opportunities within the community decreased in particular from the 1980s onwards and people had to become geographically more flexible and start commuting to other places. In many interviews people report that when they left school on Friday, they could start a job in a local factory on the following Monday and that this had changed dramatically since the 1980s. The increase of mobility due to the loss of local jobs is only one consequence. The second outcome of the economically declining community is the psychological effect it has on speakers. People in Maryport generally feel left behind because of the lack of job opportunities which also leads to a kind of numbness and negative feelings towards the

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community but also towards the own identity. The austerity measurements introduced by the Conservative government in 2010 seem to have increased the feeling of being left behind in Maryport.

(3) The interviewees report strong social ties in their neighbourhoods up until the 1980s. Children were playing in the street but stayed in their own neighbourhood. There was a very strong sense of belonging to the different parts of Maryport (which the historian Donald MacRaild described to me as 'micro-localism') which even continued to secondary school. The young speakers do not report these very strong neighbourhood ties any more. This point is directly linked to the increase of supraregional features. Milroy (1987) describes how weak social network ties can let innovative forms enter the community more easily than in close-knit networks. The changes in the neighbourhood structure might indirectly be linked to social changes due to the economic changes in the 1980s. Because people often had to commute to work in other places and women had to find work to support the family, the neighbourhood ties loosened then.

Point (1) and (2) are social changes which were not restricted to Maryport or West Cumbria but are characteristic especially of the North of England while the breaking up of very strong local ties as seen in (3) is quite community specific. Summarizing the social changes described above, dialect contact scenarios have increased, in particular in the second half of the 20th century. We know that increased dialect contact scenarios lead to levelling and diffusion processes (cf. e.g. Trudgill 1986; Kerswill & Williams 2005; Britain 2005) which were accompanied by the breaking up of close-knit communities.

On the other hand, the decreasing workforce in Maryport, just like in other communities, was a drastic change which must have had an effect on the population. Buchstaller (2015: 461f) gives an example from Tyneside:

> Ehm that was around the eighties especially
> With the shipyards closing, the mines closing, steel works
> You know Consett became a ghost town …
> Ehm when they've lost their job through no fault of their own
> And then they can't get a job because there's none to be had …

She reports that eventually the service industry settled in Newcastle and the city has developed into the most important urban area in the north-east. Even though the impact of the industrial decline is still observable in the north-east, improvements can also be seen, while the economic consequences in West Cumbria were even more far-reaching for individuals and families because new employment opportunities such as the service industry were not put into place in Maryport and the surrounding communities. Deprivation and unemployment remain quite high in

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Maryport to this day (Allerdale Borough Council 2017). Jesse (born 1990) reports on the employment situation in 2014:

(1) Jesse:
like you know if there was more shops um more work. There isn't a lot of work anywhere else. (…) There's not there's no competition. Do you know what I mean? For jobs. If you know what I mean. 'Cause there isn't any.

Jesse goes on to state that most of his friends do not have employment and that the ones who work pay for their friends when they go out on the weekends so that they can join their circle of friends. There are not enough jobs but Jesse likes living in Maryport and does not want to leave even if his girlfriend wants to settle somewhere else.

(2) Jesse:
I prefer be at Maryport as much as my girlfriend wants out, I wouldn't move out of Maryport but like I say when my mum and dad moved to Manchester um they had a pub. And I moved down there for like six months. I mean I was only a kid but I said, I said, I don't want us didn't want to be there. So I moved back here with my nana. It's where all my mates are. I guess that I wouldn't move away. Never.

In this small sample, Jesse is the only young speaker who displays the strong connection between wanting to continue to live in Maryport and using taps. Other studies discuss a re-orientation towards local norms by young men (e.g. Labov 1963; Dubois & Horvath 2000; Durham 2011). This might be the case here for the individual; however, for the group of young speakers this development is not observable.

Social changes like the ones described in this chapter can have psychological effects on people's self-concept, in other words, their identity, which then influences their linguistic choices (cf. Torgersen & Kerswill 2004). Foulkes et al. (2010: 717) state that:

> the array of structured variation available to an individual, coupled with other factors such as ideology … can be seen as a rich resource from which the individual can choose elements in order to protect their identity and achieve particular communicative goals.

Jesse's strong connection to the town and the people suggests that his attitudes influence his linguistic choices, i.e. the close connection to the town and the high use of the local feature. However, the data also reveal that the other young speakers are not protective of the local linguistic norms.

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Focusing on the individual level, some speakers do not feel very attached to the community due to the lack of opportunities. The data for Andrea (born 1954) stick out as the frequency of taps is much lower for her than for the other speakers in her age group. Exploring Andrea's personal background provides some information about her attitudes towards the community. Andrea did A-levels and wanted to study art but life got in the way and she stayed in Maryport, had three children and lived in Manchester for a while. Even though every older speaker (born before 1975) talked about the extreme social changes in the past 40 years, she came across as particularly frustrated about the lack of job opportunities and the legacies of the Conservative government's policies in the 1980s (and again from 2010). Her attitudes and frustration (or stance; see below) might play a role in her using more of the incoming approximant than the local tap, which Hickey calls dissociation (Hickey 2000: 2013).

On the other hand, Evan (born 1952) represents himself as a successful businessman in Maryport. He used to run a shop and a pub in the community. His limited use of taps might be related to what Moore & Podesva (2009) have defined as social type in social meaning. They distinguish three types of social meaning:

a. *social type*: social categories as we know them from traditional language and variation studies, e.g. social class and sex
b. *personae*: social categories relevant to the particular speech community
c. *stance*: "fleeting forms of positioning or affect, which are activated within the context of a particular interaction" (Moore & Carter 2015: 17 based on Moore & Podesva 2009).

Local personae who are associated with using taps and other traditional features are invariably described as older and/or from small villages outside of Maryport in the interviews. With his linguistic choices, Evan is distancing himself from these groups by using fewer taps.

Laura's (born 1984) use of local forms is restricted as well. She also seems to be an early adopter (cf. Stuart-Smith & Timmins 2010) of labiodental /r/ (cf. Foulkes & Docherty 2000). While she hardly uses any taps (except in linking /r/ position), she also uses the incoming variant in low numbers. The diffusing feature has been attested in Carlisle (cf. Jansen 2012, 2017) but is quite new in Maryport. Laura used to work in a nursery and a corner shop. In the corner shop in particular she will have been in contact with a lot of people and might have picked up the new feature. In the interview she repeatedly performs a more traditional Cumbrian dialect (including the use of taps) and states that she does not speak this way.

The problematic employment situation has also led people to join the forces for a while. I interviewed four people who had been in the military and were stationed

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in other parts of Britain and abroad. They all reported that they had to readjust their speech so that their comrades would understand them – an important detail when it comes to dangerous situations. They state that their dialect had changed and that people in Maryport had commented on it when they first returned. Adrian (born 1984) is one of the soldiers and his limited tap use is most likely influenced by him having been stationed in the south of England for a while. This aspect of returning soldiers is potentially important to understand linguistic dynamics within a community, in particular in peripheral communities. However, more research is needed to investigate these dialect contact scenarios.

6. Conclusion

The chapter has shown that the levelling of /r/ is now attested in peripheral areas and in particular in West Cumbria. Although intra- and interspeaker variation exists, the data show clearly that the tap as a local feature is declining; however, in intervocalic environments (linking /r/ and intermediate position) linguistic reallocation occurs, which has been reported in other communities as well.

Moreover, we see commonalities in the levelling process in Maryport and Carlisle. Similarities in the linguistic constraints in the decrease in use of this feature, e.g. the disfavouring of voiced and voiceless alveolar stops, provides us with information about the nature of the levelling process and the strength of the linguistic constraints.

The social changes discussed in the chapter seem to have influenced the linguistic choices which can be seen at the group and individual level. While the change from a local to a supraregional feature is described in geolinguistic terms as levelling, the changes in the social meaning of the feature provide us with a more detailed view of how the levelling process progresses through the community.

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CHAPTER 12

The GOOSE vowel in South African English with special reference to Coloured communities in 5 cities

Rajend Mesthrie and Simone Wills

This paper adds to the South African and international literature on the fronting of /u:/ in present day English. It investigates the extent to which varieties of South African English spoken by "Coloured" people participate in GOOSE fronting, which has been noted as a notable characteristic of the variety spoken by "Whites" (Lass 1995). At the same time it investigates whether there are any regional and social differences within South Africa's Coloured communities in the cities of Cape Town, Kimberley, Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg and Durban. An acoustic analysis of the norms of 10 speakers per city showed that structural environment was the best predictor of GOOSE fronting, in line with international findings. There were no consistent patterns for the regional variable of "city" or the social variables of gender and class. Overall Coloured communities show relatively lower degrees of fronting compared to the White norms.

Keywords: GOOSE-fronting, ethnic variation, regional variation, South Africa, acoustic analysis

1. Introduction

GOOSE-fronting – the use of a central to front variant of high back /u:/ – is one of several major changes that have occurred in the vowel systems of Englishes over the last century. Wells (1982: 148) summarised it as follows 40 years ago:

> Many accents have a definitely central rather than back quality for GOOSE – e.g. most English popular urban speech, that of Scotland and Northern Ireland, that of the southern Hemisphere and the southern United States. In general, a back quality may be seen as indicative of a conservative type of accent, e.g. Southern Irish, West Indian.

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Since then GOOSE -fronting has been noted in many varieties (see e.g. Gordon et al. 2004 for New Zealand; Hickey 2004 for Ulster; Fridland 2008 for Nevada, USA; Boberg 2011 for Canada; Jansen 2017 for northern England). This article focuses on South African Englishes, where GOOSE-fronting has been noted in several studies. It was first observed for South African English (henceforth SAE) by the phonetician Hopwood (1928: 22) who described it as '[ù˙w] > [ÿ̆ü(w)]', providing the example of the word *two* which he describes as '[tù˙w] becomes [tÿ̆ü(w)]'. Hopwood's [y] symbol reflects a (centralised) front rounded vowel, which he attributed historically to "a Cockney English pronunciation" (1928: 22). Fifty years later Lanham (1978: 153–154) described the vowel as widespread in (White) SAE (henceforth WSAE) both regionally and socially, with the most advanced variant being "a fully central [ʉ] favoured by preceding [j]".[1] He suggests further that high use of fronted tokens is below the level of social consciousness since it is maintained in formal style without appreciable stylistic variation. Lass (2004: 377) characterises the fronted value as the "normal local (rather than British-focused) value for White standard speakers." Lass (1995: 98–99) wrote of the "peculiarly White" jurisdiction of the vowel in the 1980s, noting that South Africa's other Englishes retained a back quality for GOOSE, sometimes backer than the RP value. Scholars describing these "other" varieties of the time like Black English (Hundleby 1963), Indian South African English (Bughwan 1979) and Coloured English (Wood 1987) have not given reason to doubt Lass's account, since they did not comment on GOOSE as having anything but a back quality in the pre-1994 era.

Sociopolitical events since Lass's observation have been massive, the well-known transition to majority rule of the early 1990s led to the formal end of apartheid as a political system in 1994. The most important consequence of this for sociolinguistics was the opening up of schools on non-racial lines. Children of school going age had the chance (subject to family finances or scholarships) of entering schools formerly reserved for White students. At the same time broader levels of desegregation in workplaces, transport, public places and to a lesser extent, residential neighbourhoods have occurred in the last 25 years. Freedom of association and the scrapping of laws pertaining to "mixed marriages" have likewise lessened the barriers of ethnicity identified and, to some extent, created and rigidified by apartheid (1948–1994). Mesthrie (2010, 2017) has shown how the sociophonetics of English have been altered in the post-apartheid landscape, via dialectological studies that track social change, networks and attitudes in the new South Africa. In the next section we summarise some of these sociophonetic studies before turning to GOOSE

1. We have changed Lanham's (1978) original symbol [y] to IPA [j], since it is clear that he is referring to a glide rather than the front rounded vowel [y] alluded to by Hopwood in the quote above.

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specifically and the complex issue of Coloured identities. This lays the groundwork for the comparative study of GOOSE in five urban Coloured communities. Such a comparison has not been undertaken for any ethnic variety of SAE; so this study serves as a testing point for the assumption that GOOSE shows no variation regionally within any ethnicity.

2. GOOSE-fronting in post 1994 sociolinguistics

Three main sources deal with new variation in GOOSE realisations for Coloured South African English (henceforth CSAE). Mesthrie (2010, earlier working version 2009) set out to chart the use of GOOSE -fronting among younger people who had been to the model-C or private schools, which were known to have had a more multi-racial intake since the 1990s compared to the apartheid era.[2] The aim of the study had been to see whether there was a degree of loosening of the old racial boundaries in light of Lass's trenchant observation regarding the ethnic restriction of GOOSE-fronting (to what we might term "Whites only"). The sample consisted of 48 young people meeting the schooling criteria, 12 from each of the four major groupings White, Coloured, Black and Indian South African Englishes.[3] It is important to note that these labels follow the identification of robust sub-varieties (amidst some overlaps), by South African linguists, rather than using ethnic classifications as *a priori* givens.[4] The 48 speakers were divided for gender in the ratio of 7:5 for females vs males. Speakers were not analysed for regional differences: it was assumed that there was minimal regional differentiation of GOOSE within the White and Black communities, the former having fronted variants and the latter back variants (see Lanham 1978 and Van Rooy 2004 respectively). Given the schooling background, all speakers in the 2010 study were part of the middle classes or middle classes to be. For the Indian and Coloured groups, where variation by city was a possibility (discussed further below), the sample was drawn from Durban for Indians and Cape Town for Coloureds, the main dialect centres for these two groups respectively. Using acoustic methods and basic statistics Mesthrie (2010) found the following:

2. Model-C refers to former "Whites-only" government rather than elite private schools that became multi-racial in the early 1990s. For further details see Mesthrie (2010: 6).

3. A fifth variety, 'Afrikaner English' was not studied, and remains an opportunity for future researchers.

4. This is especially true of some new middle-class students of Black and Indian backgrounds whose peer networks are racially integrated and who are converging to what used to be the middle-class WSAE norm.

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a. Structural conditioning that favoured increasing use of GOOSE-fronting followed the hierarchy: before /l/ > after liquids > after non-coronal > after coronal > after /j/. Mesthrie focussed on the last three environments, seeking to avoid the difficulties of vowel measurements in the environment of liquids.
b. White speakers showed the most fronting in each of these environments.[5] They produced only front vowels after /j/ (in e.g. *you*) and after coronals (in e.g. *do)*. They produced front or central (but not back) realisations after non-coronals (in e.g. *move*). Thus, White speakers did not produce vowels that were on average "back" in these three environments.[6]
c. Black speakers in the prestige schools sample showed a relatively close match to the norms of their White counterparts. This is particularly true of the preceding /j/ environment, where there is no statistical difference between the two groups. For the finer-grained overlaps and differences in the remaining environments see Mesthrie (2010: 16–18).
d. Indian speakers show differentiation into three sets; one of which accords with White norms for GOOSE, a second which resists GOOSE-fronting, and a third intermediate group. While all three groups show some fronting in the /j/ environment, one group shows fronting in both coronal and non-coronal environments, the second in neither, while the intermediate group shows fronting in coronal but not non-coronal, environments.
e. Coloured speakers show norms that are consistently backer than the reference group of White speakers. While some fronted and centralised means do occur, a noticeable difference is that Coloured speakers do not distinguish the (preceding) /j/ environment as any different from coronals, which fall mainly within the "central" range. Mesthrie (2010: 28) concludes that in his student sample "[w]hilst participating in a moderate degree of fronting, Coloured speakers show the greatest resistance [to GOOSE-fronting] females more than males."

The second source on new GOOSE variation, Toefy (2014) found that among middle-class Coloured young adults from Cape Town the vowel has fronted slightly in relation to the typically back transcriptions given by Wood (1987). She also found that middle class speakers' norms are statistically fronter than the working-class speakers' norms. However, relative to a reference group of similarly aged White speakers, the acoustic readings are still quite back. Toefy concludes that the continued use of back GOOSE correlates with the strong sense of Coloured identity and community belonging expressed by the participants in the study. Finally, the third

5. The comparison was based on the average F2 formant readings for each speaker in each of the environments.

6. This remark does not apply to a following /l/ which does induce back values for GOOSE.

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source for new GOOSE variation in the post-apartheid period, Finn (2004: 972) noted that some (mainly L1) speakers did approximate to a more centralised variant, with [ʉː]. The main variant for GOOSE was however [uː], within the hierarchy [uː] > [u] > [ʉː] > [ʉ]. Finn unfortunately does not elaborate on the incidence of shortening of the GOOSE vowel; and – impressionistically speaking – this does not seem to be a prominent characteristic of our data.

The present study aims to find out whether these trends for Coloured speakers are matched in other cities. As mentioned above, Mesthrie (2010) limited his Coloured speakers to Cape Town to offset the possible influence of regional differentiation (in the absence of any information on this factor). In subsequent work he was able to show statistically significant regional variation for Coloured speakers in South Africa in terms of three variables. For BATH, speakers in Johannesburg produce a fronted [aː] in contradistinction to back or backed and raised values in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Kimberley (see Mesthrie et al. 2015). Abbreviations used in the figures and rest of the text for the cities are: CPT – Cape Town; DBN – Durban; JHB – Johannesburg; KBY – Kimberley; PE – Port Elizabeth. For the consonantal variables /t/ and /d/ (henceforth T, D), speakers in DBN produced standard-like alveolar realisations, whereas the other four cities showed high realisations (up to 30%) of dental (i.e. laminal dental) realisations.[7] The third set of variables is /θ/ and /đ/ (henceforth TH, DH), which show a reverse effect: DBN speakers show considerable use of dental stops [t̪] and [d̪] while the other four cities are united in showing high realisations of the standard interdental fricatives [θ] and [ð].[8] We may formulate two hypotheses: (a) that GOOSE norms are similar across the cities, thereby matching what is believed to be the case for most other varieties of SAE, or (b) that GOOSE norms may show regional variation similar to the differentiation by city shown by either BATH (an isogloss around JHB) or T/TH/D/DH for Coloured communities (isoglosses around DBN). Before we discuss the data base and methods of gathering data, it is necessary to discuss the term 'Coloured' and its complex overtones.

7. Tokens were taken from all environments except in triconsonantal clusters (e.g. *wants*), before /θ/ or /đ/ (e.g. *that thing*), or occasionally in intervocalic tap realisations. There was no statistical difference by initial, medial or final position, though some cities showed higher realisations of fronting in /tr/ and /dr/ clusters.

8. The percentages in WL style are 57% for Durban versus 100% in all the other cities. Note that the findings for TH and DH pertain to final position in word list style (e.g. *bath, mouth*).

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3. Coloured identities

While South Africa now has a race free constitution that aspires to equal opportunities for all, the realities of making up for past inequalities as well as the vote catching practices of many politicians means that race is very much alive in public discourse. It is almost a paradox that to overcome disparities and move beyond race, government and other organisations often have to elicit the race affiliations themselves, even though identity documents since 1994 no longer carry such categorisations. Affirmative practices in government departments and business now give preference to the Black majority. Despite this, academics rightly caution that post-apartheid scholarship not be too tightly constrained by the apartheid categories of White, Black, Coloured and Asiatic/Indian.[9] Where possible other categories might come into play; perhaps relating to employment and class as well as gender or language. For the Coloured communities we need to also take note of the contested nature of the categorisation. Individuals are rightly suspicious of any labels if they coincide with, or are used to initiate and sustain, inequality. Furthermore, politically aware individuals and leaders have often criticised the top-down nature of the imposition of the label "Coloured". Adhikari (2009: x) has noted, contrarily, that it is unlikely that governments can impose an identity without some kind of pre-existing consciousness on the ground: "while they may reinforce, constrain or manipulate such identities with varying degrees of success, bearers in the first instance create and negotiate their own social identities". What we also need to acknowledge is the fuzziness of boundaries between Coloured and "other", and the arbitrariness of official classification around these edges. We also need to acknowledge the practice of assigning to the Coloured category individuals that the apartheid state had problems classifying, thus (ab)using this classification to enable and bolster the apartheid system (see Erasmus 2001; Reddy 2001).

On the other hand, ethnicity remains a salient variable for classifications of language in South Africa. Large differences between Coloured, Black, Indian and White "Anglo" multilingual speech repertoires are obvious to most South Africans. While we acknowledge the criticisms of those who are uneasy over the term "Coloured English" (and "Coloured Afrikaans") there is a flip side that has to be acknowledged. There is the danger of ignoring and hence marginalising a community and downplaying the sociolinguistic richness to be found outside the main

9. South Africa's "Asiatic population" has been largely of Indian origin, with smaller numbers of Chinese and other groupings featuring. The Malay section of the Cape population, though also largely of Asian origins, was classified as a subgroup of "Coloured' (yet another instance of the arbitrariness of older categorizations). It also needs to be stressed that the meaning of 'Coloured' in South Africa is different from that of the USA and UK.

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urban centres. Recent work on public signage (Stroud and Mpendukana 2009), rap contests (Williams 2012), and new multiracial living spaces (Dyers 2008) has been illuminating. These studies have documented general multilingual repertoires, and performative practices within changing power dynamics, but they shy away from the intricacies of dialect use, which form one of the main bases for understanding these practices. The five cities work allows us to explore cross-provincial relations among people classified Coloured, and their sociolinguistic overlaps and differences. In our interviews people were very willing to talk about community background, social issues and problems, and relations with people across the city. Not a single interviewee objected to the term "Coloured" entering the conversation, initiated either by themselves or the interviewer. It is quite clear that the term has a positive association in the community and neighbourhood context, even as people express concerns over neighbourhood, social and economic problems. Mesthrie (2012: 375) noted "a localised consensus on the meanings of the terms [Indian and Coloured], based on their daily lived experiences." Moreover, people had very clear images of Coloured communities in the other provinces. One important factor was the constraint on travel, association and accommodation in the apartheid era. A Coloured person seeking employment in another province would have to reside in a 'Coloured area'. Even holiday makers tended to reside among other Coloured (and sometime Indian) communities, given (a) the segregation of hotels in that era and (b) the paucity of hotels and guesthouses in all but the "White areas". Coloured people thus grew intimately connected across cities and developed vivid and sometimes stereotypical impressions of each other and their cities: JHB comes across (by others) as lively and fast living, CPT as friendly but too laid back for serious work purposes, and DBN as very influenced by Indian communities. Cape Town is generally looked up to as a centre of Coloured life, though perhaps less so by JHB citizens. The CPT accent with its intonation contours (sometimes thought of as "sing song") is frequently cited by outsiders, and the high level of English-Afrikaans bilingualism looked on favourably, especially by Durbanites, who are mostly not speakers of Afrikaans themselves. Many people claim to be able to tell some of the cities apart in terms of characteristic accents, though this is mostly impressionistic. However, JHB BATH realisations are above the level of social consciousness, and visitors from this city are subject to teasing over this variable. In KBY one speaker observed light-heartedly (without any knowledge of US stereotypes about New England citizens): *'Yah, well they say "Pahk your cahr in your yahd"* [pä:k jo: kä: in jo: jä:d] (cited in Mesthrie et al. 2015: 21). The strongest indication of the salience of Coloured English on a local level was a discussion with a Coloured female from Durban, over the overlaps between Indians and Coloureds in the city, despite apartheid categorisation. When asked how one could identify a Coloured person on the street, when clues pertaining to religion, culture, name or traditional dress might

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not be available, she said with a chuckle "Once … a Coloured person speaks, in Durban anyway, … they speak in a certain way…"

All these considerations suggest that we lose a depth of sociolinguistic life if we ignore Coloured English as a possible category out of raciopolitical correctness. Expectedly, the ethnic differences are strongest at the working class levels, with a pyramid effect (see Trudgill 1983: 41) holding at upper social class levels, with greater convergence among different ethnicities at this level. Tracey Toefy (2014) has done the closest monitoring of young peoples' usage and the differences between working class and middle-class English among young Coloured people in Cape Town. While middle class youngsters from the model C schools are aware of differences from the working class, they nevertheless do identify with the positive associations of Coloured identity. In the words of one of Toefy's interviewees: "It's cool to be Coloured." The implication here is that while race is no longer prescribed and imposed in the new South Africa, community awareness among young middle-class people is not jettisoned, even if this is not always obvious to outsiders.

4. Sample and methodology

The fieldwork on which this chapter is based was undertaken by Mesthrie between 2006 and 2010. His aim was to set up a base for contemporary English dialectology in South Africa by interviewing at least 40 people each from 5 cities, equally divided for ethnicity and gender. Other criteria proved trickier to hold constant within this sample. Effort was made to include two older people as a reference point for possible changes per group per city; but age was generally not analysable as a variable because of the uneven distribution of speakers by age in different cities. Social class was not rigidly controlled for within the sample in the sense of ensuring an equal number per class per city. However, attempts were made to include both MC and WC speakers as much as possible, and in fact there were enough tokens in this category to ensure statistical results for class.[10] Interviews followed the procedures associated with the sociolinguistic interview (Labov 1972): interviews were done mostly in peoples' homes after initial contacts had been made via an influential resident like a social worker or schoolteacher. The focus of discussion was on speakers' lives, local pastimes, experiences of other cities, and stories of crime – the latter especially producing numerous narratives of personal experience.

10. For reasons of keeping the study to a manageable scope, it was not possible to include "Afrikaner English" as a fifth ethnicity; nor to include post-apartheid migrants from other parts of Africa, Europe or Asia.

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Mesthrie's GOOSE study of 2010 had used manual acoustic measurements within PRAAT (Boersma & Weenink 2008) and basic *t*-tests. The present study uses a broader sample and the latest affordances of the computer era, viz. forced alignment and automatic vowel extraction (FAVE).[11] FAVE, which was developed at the University of Pennsylvania (Rosenfelder et al. 2011) is an adaptation of P2FA (developed by Yuan & Liberman 2008). It comprises two toolkits: (a) FAVE-Align, which was written by Rosenfelder, and geared towards aligning sociolinguistic transcripts with the acoustic input, and (b) FAVE-Extract, which is an adaptation of *extractFormants* (Evanini 2009) written by Rosenfelder & Fruehwald, and provides automatic formant readings of vowels. FAVE was first used to analyse data from the Philadelphia Neighbourhood Corpus (PNC) at University of Pennsylvania, and so was trained on American English data. FAVE's dictionary reflects U.S. English forms, and has been replaced for British English by the British English Example Pronouncing (BEEP) dictionary (Robinson 1994). Within FAVE-Extract we used the Mahalanobis Distance option for formant prediction, based on an algorithm developed by Evanini (2009) and discussed further by Labov et al. (2013: 36). Essentially, this method simulates the continual adjustments that a researcher would carry out in a manual analysis in PRAAT (Boersma & Weenink 2008) to provide more accurate formant readings. We follow Evanini's recommendation of using the 'faav' setting option that measures formants one third of the way into a vowel's duration. We also used the vowel normalisation procedure offered by FAVE, taking the 'Lobanov' (1971) option, which then rescales the normalised values to Hz. As a first step in exploring the data statistically, linear mixed-effects regression {lmerTest} was used in *R* (Johnson 2009; Kuznetsova et al. 2014; *R* Core team (2014)). The fixed effect factors (predictors) for this study were 'city', 'gender', 'phonetic environment' and 'social class'. The random effect predictors were 'word' and 'individual' The results are presented as random forests and conditional inference trees (or "c-trees") processed in R using the {partykit} package via the 'ctree' function (Hothorn et al. 2006).

We modified the BEEP dictionary to reflect adjustments for South African English differences from British English variants – e.g. schwa rather than [I] in unstressed syllables like *roses, wanted*, and *exactly,* and [ɒ] as a covariant of schwa in initial prefixes like *com-*, *con-*, *col-* (e.g. *computers, concern, collect*). FAVE works well for middle-class L1 SAE accents (Chevalier 2016), and works reasonably well for CSAE (Wills 2016; Fraser 2017).

FAVE allowed the extraction of 5730 GOOSE tokens, of which 2803 were analysed. Only tokens carrying primary stress were included in the analysis, as

11. The discussion on these new techniques is based on Chevalier (2016) and Mesthrie (2017: 323–325). We thank Alida Chevalier for her original input.

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unstressed vowels and vowels carrying secondary stress are prone to being reduced in rapid speech (Toefy 2014: 108). From an acoustic perspective, tokens preceded by /r/ and /l/ were excluded, as these environments are known to affect acoustic readings (Mesthrie 2010: 10). Finally, tokens from SAE words originating in Afrikaans and other South Africa languages like Zulu or Xhosa were also not counted.

We did a careful check on the alignments and automatic readings as follows: (a) 9 of the shorter textgrids were checked throughout and realigned manually if they showed major signs of misalignment; (b) the remaining 41 textgrids were checked in 5 to 10 minute sections (depending on interview length) at the beginning, middle and end; (c) assignment of the GOOSE vowel to the appropriate lexical sets was checked, and in fact was error free; and (d) vowel measurements were inspected in the EXCEL file output and cleared of any obvious misreadings by deletion (for unclear acoustic signal) or manual readings (otherwise).

In terms of conditioning environments, (a) preceding coronals, (b) preceding non-coronals and (c) preceding consonant /j/ environments were coded for. This follows Mesthrie (2010), in which these environments proved phonetically and sociolinguistically robust. Two additions were made to these three environments: (d) preceding consonant /h/ as a separate non-coronal subset, since Mesthrie noted a possible fronting effect for some speakers, and (e) /l/ after a GOOSE vowel. While /l/ has been shown to have a general retracting effect on /u:/ in international varieties of English (Labov et al. 2006: 152), the evidence for CSAE has been less decisive. Lanham (1978: 152) verified that velar /l/ has a general effect on SAE vowels, however, more recently Toefy (2014: 192) found the acoustic data to be inconclusive for this effect within CSAE. As such GOOSE tokens followed by /l/ were not excluded from the present analysis.

5. Findings

5.1 GOOSE means in relation to other monophthongs

Figure 1 gives a bird's eye view of the monophthongs of CSAE, expressed as means per city, undertaken by Fraser (2017) as part of her study of BATH in CSAE. Some of these means are fairly typical for WSAE, especially of older speakers: (a) raised DRESS means; (b) raised TRAP means; (c) raised and back means for BATH. One notable difference is that THOUGHT is noticeably back in CSAE, possibly on what Labov (1994) terms a peripheral track (extreme fronting or backing along a pathway not yet discernible independently). Another difference is that FOOT appears to be back, in contrast to descriptions of FOOT lowering and fronting in WSAE (Bekker 2009; Chevalier 2016). The noticeably high-front position of FLEECE (in comparison

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to KIT) is also shared with WSAE, and may be a reaction to GOOSE-fronting. In Figure 1 the full distance between FLEECE and GOOSE is preserved, even though the means for GOOSE are in the central vowel space. The distance between FLEECE and GOOSE on one hand and KIT and FOOT on the other can be seen as roughly the same.

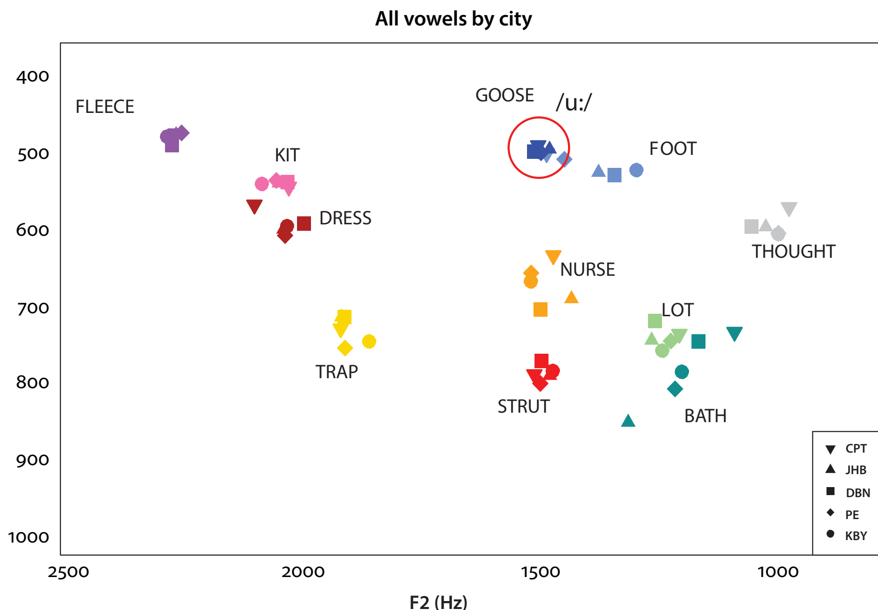

Figure 1. GOOSE means per speaker and city in relation to the monophthongs of CSAE (based on Fraser 2017)

5.2 GOOSE distribution by environment

There was a neat differentiation of the 2,803 tokens by what we may term backing vs fronting environments ($p < 0.001$). As Figure 2 shows, GOOSE is fronter after coronals and /j/, compared to all other environments. The "backing environments" are after /h/ and non-coronals as well as before /l/. The constraint hierarchy for fronting by structural environments is:

> AFTER /j/ < AFTER CORONALS < AFTER /h/ < AFTER NON-CORONALS and/or BEFORE /l/.

The respective F2 medians (rounded off to the nearest 10 Hz) are clearly different in these four environments:

> 1830 Hz < 1620 Hz < 1240 Hz < 1160 Hz.

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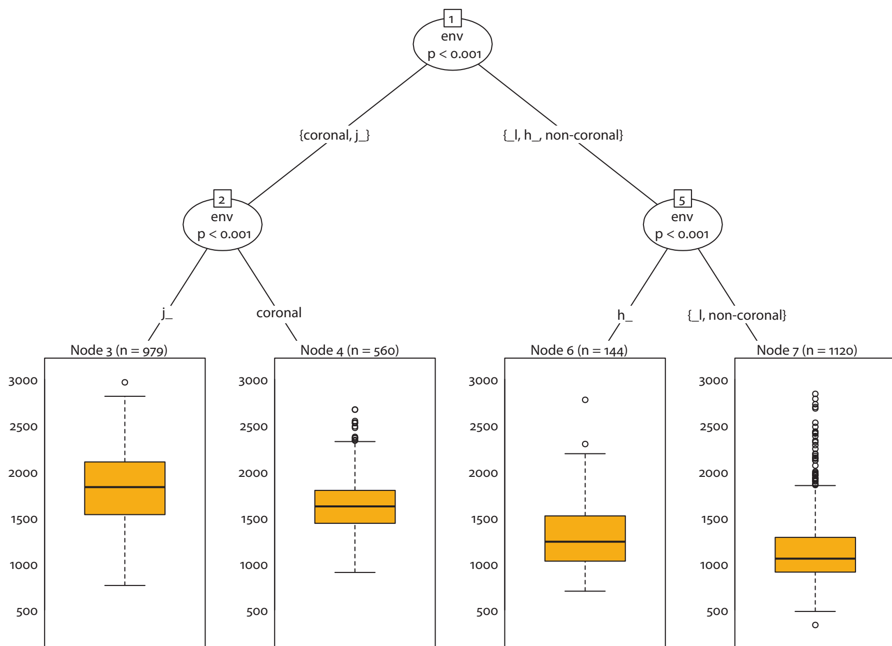

Figure 2. Conditional inference tree for GOOSE in 5 cities in relation to 5 structural environments

These medians thus range from back (for /l/, /h/ and non-coronal environments) to central (for /j/ and coronal environments). We follow up on Mesthrie's (2010: 30) suggestion that /h/ be isolated in future studies as it seemed to have a fronting effect for some speakers, despite being a non-coronal (example tokens in *who, whose, who'd, who'll, hoop, hoot* etc). In our study /h/ is indeed differentiated from other (preceding) non-coronals in that it induces fronter GOOSE tokens than the other non-coronals (see the third versus fourth box in Figure 2, reading boxes from the left). However, the figure also shows that overall /h/ does side statistically with 'non-coronals' and 'following /l/' rather than being a fronting environment *per se*. With this background we now explore the possible differences by city and social factors of class and gender.

5.3 Overall differences by city and sub-factors

Given that the number of social factors (or fixed factors) was large (city, sex and social class) we expect the overall c-tree to be complex and this is indeed the case. To make the c-tree reproducible and readable we split it into three parts. The first part (Figure 3) shows the primary branching (node 1), which the statistics show

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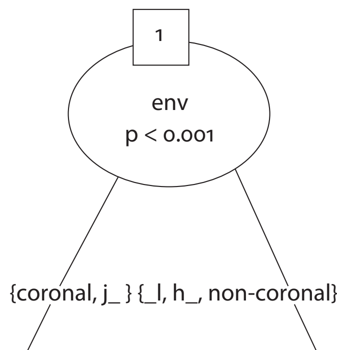

Figure 3. Node 1 and primary branches of the conditional inference tree for GOOSE-fronting in 5 cities by structural environment, gender and social class

to be the structural environments. We then show each of these primary nodes in detail separately. Node 17 in Figure 4 shows the social factors that are significant in the backing environments, while node 2 in Figure 5 comprises the social factors associated with the fronting environments.

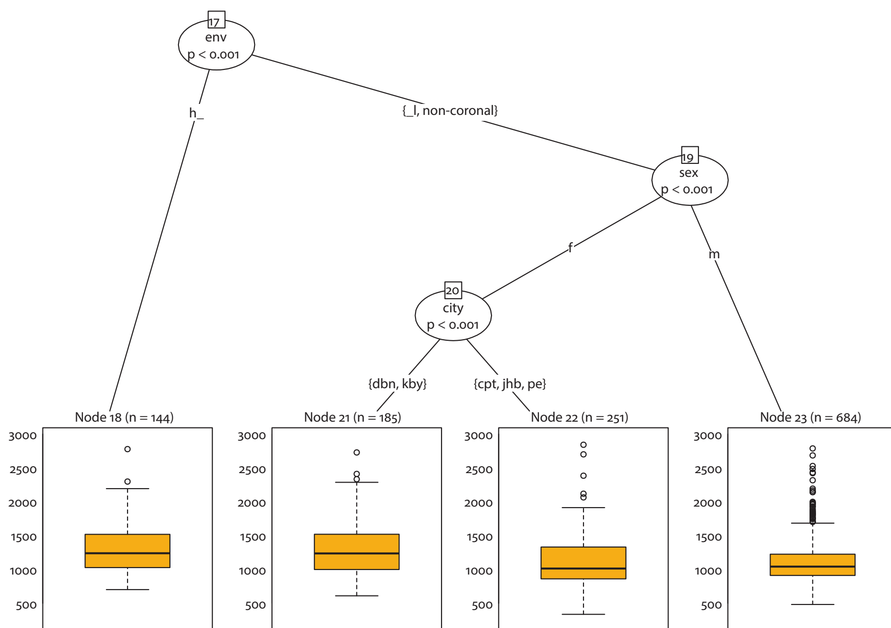

Figure 4. Branching structure for backing environments in the conditional inference tree for GOOSE-fronting in 5 cities by structural environment, gender and social class

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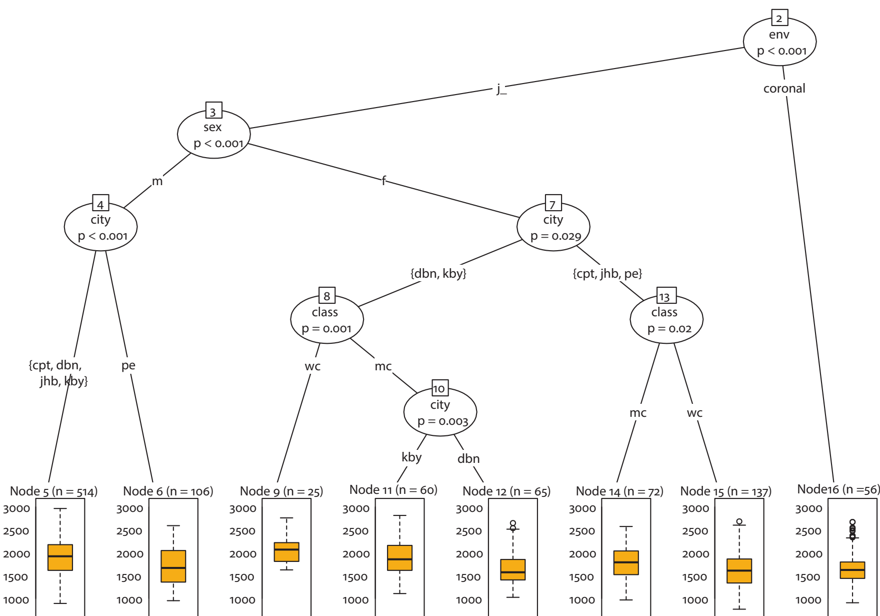

Figure 5. Branching structure for fronting environments in the conditional inference tree for GOOSE-fronting in 5 cities by structural environment, gender and social class

To make sense of Figures 3–5 we should note the following:

i. The most salient factor accounting for variation in the data is structural environment (see node 1, Figure 3). The backing and fronting environments bifurcate as discussed in Section 5.2 above.
ii. We first consider how the social factors relate to the backing environments in Figure 4 (i.e. after /h/ and non-coronals, and before /l/). For /h/ there is no relevant social or regional differentiation. For the remaining backing environments, the primary division is by sex (see node 19), with men having backer realisations than women. There is no discernible difference for males by city. Females are overall fronter in the backing environments (i.e. before /l/ and after non-coronals – node 19), this time with some differentiation by city. Node 20 shows that there is a significant difference between the female norms in the backing environments between DBN, KBY and CPT, JHB, PE, the latter group being backer.
iii. Turning to the fronting environments (Figure 5), we see that the coronal environment shows no social or regional differentiation. In contrast, /j/ shows intricate social differentiation. Most significantly males (1888 Hz) show greater fronting than females (1717 Hz) in this environment (node 3). They do so more

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> in CPT, DBN, JHB, KBY than PE (node 4). Males show no differentiation by social class. For females there is differentiation by city (node 7) and within them by social class. DBN and KBY females have fronter GOOSE medians (1796 Hz) than women in the other three cities (1665 Hz – node 7). Within DBN and KBY working class female speakers have fronter medians (2067 Hz) than middle class female speakers (1730 Hz – node 8). For the latter a finer gradation occurs with KBY (1855 Hz) speakers showing fronter medians than DBN (1572 Hz) (node 10). For the other three cities (CPT, JHB, PE) middle class medians (1790 Hz) are fronter than working class medians (1608 Hz – node 13).

Thus there are no neat patterns overall of a purely regional nature. Males are backer in the backing environments and fronter in the fronting environments. The cities are differentiated in the non-coronal environment and in the /j/ environment for females; for males there is differentiation by city for /j/ only. But there is no strong pattern by city alone.

6. Discussion and conclusion

We offered two likely possibilities in Section 2, viz. (a) that GOOSE norms would prove similar across the cities, or (b) that GOOSE norms would be dissimilar and follow the regional differentiation found for BATH or T/TH/D/DH. In fact, neither possibility holds in this strong form. For possibility (b) there is no evidence of JHB or DBN being isolated in Figures 3 to 5, the way they were for BATH and T/TH/D/DH as reported in Section 2 above. Although possibility (a) is closer to being true, there are some fine-grained differences. When a city shows up as statistically significant in Figures 3 to 5, it is always within a specific environment and/or sex grouping. The overall hierarchy is as follows:

STRUCTURAL ENVIRONMENT > SEX > CITY/ SOCIAL CLASS

There is no consistency with which a city coheres with a particular sex or structural environment. While there is variation, it is not socially salient – apart from one observation: that males have more "peripheral" norms than females in the sense they are backer in the backing environments and fronter in the fronting environments. We are unable to offer a plausible explanation for this interesting difference, which does not occur in Mesthrie's (2010) findings for any of the middle-class speakers from the four ethnic groups. We conclude by comparing the CSAE norms for GOOSE with that of other studies.

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In common with the international varieties cited in the introduction to this paper fronting (towards central means) occurs in /j/ and coronal environments, the former being statistically different from the latter. This differs from the young Cape Town Coloured speakers analysed in Mesthrie (2010) where no differentiation could be found between these two environments (although the means also fell within the “central” range). In that study Mesthrie (2010: 28) also found that Coloured speakers show the greatest resistance to GOOSE-fronting, females more so than males. (see the full quote in Section 2 above under (e), as well as Toefy (2014) for a similar finding). This finding is partially replicated in this broader sample by city and speakers (from a more varied schooling background); however – as we have noted – males are more back than females in the backing environments.

How do Coloured norms of this study relate to White norms? The only comparable study for GOOSE is that of Mesthrie (2010), but since the sample and analytic techniques were different, what follows must be taken as only a rough guide. Mesthrie set up a grid for GOOSE-fronting made up of the following categories (or “notches”):

front – frontish – central – backish – back

Speakers were assigned to each of these based on the Watt-Fabricius normalised mean ratios (the above corresponding to cut off points of 1.4 – 1.2 – 1.0 – 0.8 – 0.6). For comparative purposes we can assign the normalised Hz of the present study to the above grid as follows: 2000Hz – 1750Hz – 1500Hz – 1250Hz – 1100Hz.

We can then offer a rough comparison of the norms of the two samples, evident in Figure 6.

	Front	**Frontish**	**Central**	**Backish**	**Back**
Before /l/		W	**W**	W/ C	**C**
After non-coronals	W	**W**	W	C	**C**
After coronals	W	**W**	**C**		
After /j/	**W**	W/ C	**C**		

Figure 6. A comparison of the GOOSE F2 norms of Coloured speakers versus young White speakers in Mesthrie (2010: 13). KEY: W – Whites; C – Coloureds; boldface – main concentration of speakers; grey background – primary range for Coloured speakers.[12]

12. Technically there are some Coloured speakers whose medians fall above 2000Hz in the /j/ environment and hence into the “front” category. These are two older WC females from DBN and KBY. Likewise, the rough comparison in Figure 6 leaves out one White speaker from the Mesthrie (2010) study who exceptionally fell into the back category in the /l/ environment.

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- Before /l/ the WSAE sample ranges from frontish to backish, with a main concentration of speakers in the central region. In contrast the CSAE speakers in the present study range from backish to back, with the majority in the latter category.
- After non-coronals the WSAE sample ranges from front to central, with a main concentration of speakers in the frontish region. The CSAE sample of this study shows no overlap, with a range from backish to back (as for the /l/ environment).
- After coronals the WSAE sample is front to frontish, with a main concentration in the latter region. In contrast all CSAE speakers of this study are in the central region.
- After /j/ WSAE speakers are again in the front to frontish region, with a main concentration this time in the former region. n contrast the CSAE sample range from frontish to central.

These observations are summarised in Figure 6.

The grey shading in Figure 6 provides a graphic illustration of these differences, amidst two minor overlaps. There is always a difference of at least one notch between the main concentrations of speakers (in bold); these differences are stark (two to three notches) in all but the coronal environment.

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Ray Hickey's immense contribution to the broad fields of language variation, contact, multilingualism and World Englishes inform much of this paper (see e.g Hickey 2004). He has used his immense knowledge and experience to encourage South African and international scholarship, looking for parallels which others are slow to recognise (e.g. Hickey forthcoming). He does this with a warmth and modesty that is a pleasure to acknowledge.

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CHAPTER 13

Borders and language

J. K. (Jack) Chambers

We expect to find dialect differences dispersed along a geographic continuum, under normal circumstances. That is, unless some contingency disrupts the geography, we expect to find only minor differences in the speech of one community and the communities on either side. The differences proliferate as distance increases, so that dialect differences are greater in communities further away. This pattern of dispersion is known as a dialect continuum (Chambers and Trudgill 1998: 5–7). It is a model that has not aroused much critical scrutiny presumably because it follows from the common-sense observation that people tend to speak more like their neighbors than people further away. The most rigorous examination of the concept, the dialectometric analysis of a chain of Dutch villages by Heeringa and Nerbonne (2001), corroborated the main tenets of the model.

Keywords: dialectology, dialect continuum, linguistic borders, lexical variables, pronunciation variables

1. Continua and dis-continua

For all that, breaks in the geographic continuum are plentiful and come in two essential types. Most obvious are *physical* breaks that divide the landscape with natural obstacles such as mountain ranges, marshlands and large bodies of water. Such obstacles either prevent or impede communication across the divide, and thus foster independent developments linguistically and in other matters. Breaks in the continuum can also be *cultural* in the many senses of that word, including ethnic, religious and political. Cultural breaks are psychological or attitudinal rather than physical, and they can disrupt the flow of communication as decisively as mountains or lakes. Often the physical and cultural barriers coincide because cultural boundaries tend to be drawn at physical breaks. In fact, the most abiding cultural boundaries are the ones that are reinforced by physical barriers because they naturally minimize border disputes, the prime cause of skirmishes, insurrections and wars.

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Linguistic borders, whether physical or cultural, admit several grades of difference on the two sides. Essentially, they are either language borders or dialect borders. Language borders have different languages on the two sides, and this category admits further gradations, of course, if the languages are typologically and genetically unrelated, as for instance at the Sino-Russian border, or genetically related but unintelligible, as between, say, France and Germany, or between the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec, which are overwhelmingly English-speaking and French-speaking, respectively. The applicability of the dialect continuum at borders with unintelligible languages on either side is hard to conceive. However, language borders foster bilingualism, so that bilingual buffer zones naturally and perhaps inevitably grow on either side. Bilingual zones are relevant to the concept of dialect continua though they are seldom analyzed that way. Alsatian German and Baden-Württemberg French deserve the attention of dialectologists, and their study would surely yield many nuances about sociolinguistic accommodation under complex conditions.

Bilingual buffer zones effectively neutralize language borders by creating a dialect border in the substratum. Dialect borders are characterized as having genetically related varieties on either side that are mutually intelligible to some degree. They need not be the by-product of bilingual accommodation but occur indigenously between, for instance, Germany and Austria, or Rwanda and Burundi, or India and Pakistan. Indeed, the prototype for dialect continua is often the West Germanic continuum (as in Chambers & Trudgill 1998: 6), which spans the border between German and Dutch but purportedly maintains the continuum in village varieties at the border. Intelligibility at dialect borders is a slippery concept, and subject to change as political relations and other conditions change. In fact, the distinction between language borders and dialect borders is itself a graded category, well-defined at the poles but fuzzy in the middle where it might be hard to find a consensus as to whether, say, the Serbian-Croatian divide is a language border or a dialect border.

The border I will discuss in the rest of this article is a dialect border that is about as well defined as can be. It is the Canada-United States border, with varieties of English on both sides that are fully intelligible and so similar phonologically that outsiders have difficulty telling them apart. Both varieties belong to the same branch of the English language family, the American branch, which is r-ful (with a few well-known exceptions), has intervocalic t-voicing post-tonically and a front vowel in *half* and *can't*, as opposed to the British branch, with varieties spoken in the United Kingdom and the southern hemisphere that are mostly r-less, have voiceless /t/ intervocalically and a back vowel in *half* and *can't*.

The variables I will talk about are lexical and pronunciation differences from the Dialect Topography of Canada (Chambers 2007). I will look at three specific points

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along the vast Canada-United States border and I will make two fairly straightforward but (as far as I know) hitherto unrecognized or perhaps just inexplicit points about linguistic borders: first, cultural differences, in this case different nationalities, outweigh physical differences in disrupting the continuum, and, second, communities right on the border sometimes maximize their differentness, a concept I will refer to as the bastion mentality.

2. Borders interrupted and continuous

Borders sometimes fall along geographic fault lines of one kind or another, as mentioned above, and they can also be continuous, without physical demarcation. The extraordinarily long border between Canada and the United States – 2400 km along the Yukon/Alaska border in the sub-Arctic northwest, and 6500 km along the southern continental area – admits of many different adjunctions. I am going to look at three borders that differ physically. Culturally, all three mark the divide between the two nations and are in that sense exactly the same.

The first border is the Niagara frontier separating the Canadian province of Ontario from the American state of New York. The conspicuous physical markers at the border are the world-famous Niagara Falls, over which 100,000 cubic feet of water fall every second down the 520 m precipice linking Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. The Falls lie about midway along the seven mile length of the Niagara River. Above the Falls are turbulent cataracts and below them is a sheer limestone gorge. The river is impassable along its entire length except by bridges or other man-made contrivances. The border at Niagara is, in the terms we are interested in, a national boundary that is geographically interrupted.

Although the English varieties spoken on both sides of the Niagara border have the same origins, descending from eighteenth century England, and have interlocking histories, including a formative infusion of Midland American refugees into inland Canada after 1776 (Chambers 2013), they have diverged in several ways. Phonologically, the cities along the American side of the Niagara border, Buffalo and Niagara Falls, have undergone the vowel change called the Northern Cities Shift (Gordon 2013), and Canadians across the gorge have Canadian Raising of /aw/ and low-back vowel merger ("cot-caught merger"), but none of these phonological features crosses to the other side. These phonological differences are more general and more blatant than the differences I will discuss. The lexical and pronunciation variables I discuss below also result from independent developments. They are, as expected, quantitative rather than qualitative, that is, statistically significant tendencies rather than absolute differences.

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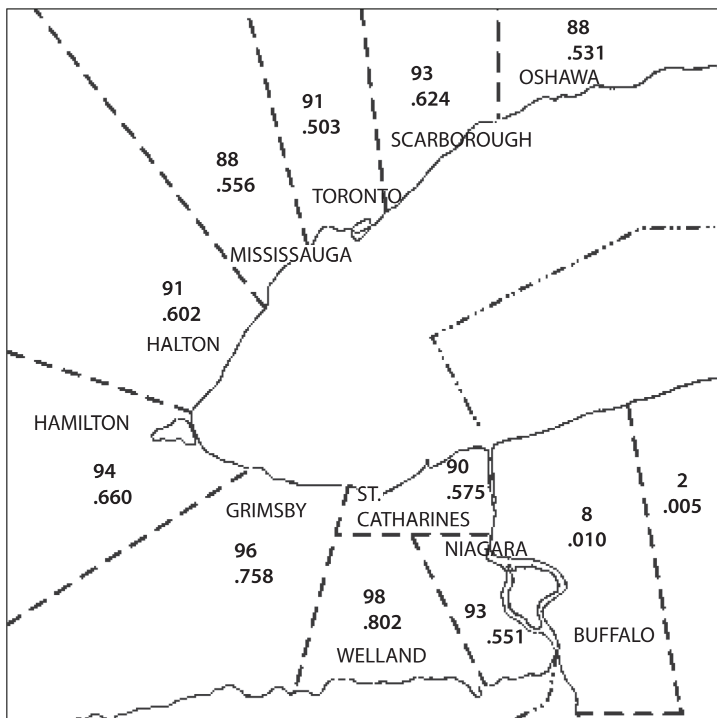
The pronunciation variable that comes closest to an absolute marker is the past tense of the verb *shine*, as in *The sun <u>shone</u> brightly yesterday*. In Canada, *shone* typically has an unrounded vowel /ɑ/ so that it rhymes with *gone*, but in the United States it has rounded /o/ and rhymes with *bone*. Map 1 shows the distribution of the Canadian pronunciation in the region surrounding the Niagara border, called the Golden Horseshoe because of its horseshoe-shaped curve around the western tip of Lake Ontario. The Golden Horseshoe is the most densely populated part of Canada, with almost six million people, one-fifth of Canada's population, in a 250 km arc; it also holds a commanding position commercially (hence the "golden" epithet). Niagara Falls is visible on the map in the lower right (the southeast) as a river that widens in the middle where the waterfall is situated. The U.S. border regions are to the east of it, separated into two dialect survey regions at the immediate border (where Buffalo is marked) and the region beyond it. The Canadian side is divided



Map 1. Pronunciation of *shone* with /ɑ/ in the Golden horseshoe including the Niagara border between Canada and the United States shown as percentages (in bold)

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into five survey regions on the south shore called the Niagara Peninsula, and five on the north shore, a distinction that will become important in the next section. Each region is marked with a large bold number showing the percentage of *shone* with /ɑ/, that is, rhyming with *gone*. (The smaller number is the factor weight, indicating the log likelihood of the pronunciation.)

The most conspicuous observation about Map 1 is the dramatic change in percentages at the border. On the Canadian side more than 90 percent of the respondents pronounce *shone* so that it rhymes with *gone*, but on the American side fewer than five percent do. The drop-off is cataclysmic. In the terms we have been using, the dialect continuum is disrupted decisively at the border – indeed, the concept of continuum becomes meaningless in this context. As I said, pronunciation differences are expected to be quantitative rather than qualitative, and in other variables we look at they will be more graduated than this one.

The second border setting we will look at is almost 1000 km east of the Niagara region along the Atlantic seaboard. The Canadian province of New Brunswick (N.B.) adjoins the American state of Maine at its southwestern border. The town of St. Stephen, N.B. (pop. 5,000) is separated from Calais, Maine (pop. 3,000) by the narrow St. Croix River. Short bridges with customs kiosks carry considerable traffic between the two towns, the most traveled international crossing in the Atlantic region. This border is physically marked by the river though not nearly as decisively as the Niagara gorge. Traffic across the border is increased because the two relatively small border towns pool certain services (Burnett 2006). The fire department serves both sides of the border, and villagers on both sides share the movie theater and the civic center. High school students interact for social, academic and athletic activities, and adults sometimes shop, work and marry across the border.

With such cultural symbiosis, you might expect that dialect differences would be negligible. Not so. Looking again at the variable *shone*, the past tense of *shine*, we find a marked difference on the two sides: in New Brunswick, 66.2 percent say shone with /ɑ/, rhyming with *gone*, but in adjoining Maine, on the American side, almost no one does (4.7 percent). The difference is not as close to absolute as in the Niagara region but it is large, and statistically significant. Whether the milder result at the New Brunswick/Maine border is caused by the permeability of the border is impossible to rule out, but lexical and pronunciation differences between New Brunswick and Maine are at least as profuse as they are at the Niagara border, as we shall see in the next section when we look at other variables. The general profusion of dialect differences indicates that there is no prima facie reason for assuming the physical differences of the borders carries any weight at all.

That conclusion is reinforced by looking at a third border point, this one about halfway between the Niagara region and New Brunswick, at the southernmost reach

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of Quebec, in what is known as the Eastern Townships, where an English-speaking enclave developed in the nineteenth century. English speakers in the Eastern Townships are now a minority, as they are in all parts of Quebec, but they remain a hardy minority with long, continuous Anglophone roots. The Eastern Townships abut with the American state of Vermont on their southern border, and this border interests us in this context because it is imperceptible. The town where the borders meet is Stanstead – Stanstead, Quebec, on the Canadian side and Stanstead, Vermont, on the American side. The border has no physical definition whatsoever, consisting of a thick white line painted on the road with CANADA in large letters on one side and U.S.A equally large on the other. Unlike the impassable Niagara gorge and the fordable St. Croix River, the Stanstead border is one you can step across. In fact, the borderline bisects a traditional frame house so that the master bedroom is in Canada and the bathroom in the United States.

Such a border is purely cultural. Does the absence of a physical barrier have linguistic consequences? Not noticeably. When we look at the *shone* variable, for instance, we find variation comparable to the other border regions we have looked at. In the Eastern Townships, 80.9 percent say *shone* with /ɑ/, rhyming with *gone*, but in adjoining Vermont, on the American side, almost no one does (1.4 percent). The difference is striking here no less than at the other two borders, and statistically significant.

The physical component of the borders obviously counts for much less than does the cultural component, judging by the persistence of dialect differences under these three different physical conditions. As Burnett (2006, 167) says, summarizing copious dialect differences at the New Brunswick/Maine border, “Proximity counts for much less when there is a political border between neighbours.” In the light of the results we shall look at in the next section, it might even be fair to say that proximity can promote differences rather than similarities.

3. Borders as bastions

When we look at numerous dialect differences at political borders, we discover a curious tendency for places on the immediate border to maximize their distinctive traits. The border apparently becomes a bastion, a kind of bulwark for upholding the variants that make them different from the people on the other side of the border. This bastion mentality is a tendency, not a principle. Often the immediate border region simply reflects the consensus, maintaining proportions that are typical of the region as a whole. But the discovery of increased differences at the geographic adjunction, though impressionistic, is frequent enough to constitute a reasonable

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hypothesis about a natural human tendency to maximize the indigenous standard at the point where it comes face-to-face with the other side.

Map 1 above, the regional breakdown of *shone* with /ɑ/ in the Golden Horseshoe, provides a simple illustration. The Golden Horseshoe bends around the western tip of Lake Ontario. The urban centers on the north shore (from Halton to Oshawa on the map) are geographically removed from the American border compared to the south shore regions (Hamilton to St. Catharines and Niagara on the map), which together are known as the Niagara Peninsula. Looking at the percentages of variable usage in the two regions shows considerably higher proportions in the more proximate Niagara Peninsula than in the north shore. In fact, the Niagara district averages 94.2 percent (range 90–98) compared to 90.2 (range 88–93) on the north shore.

The people in the more proximate Niagara Peninsula show what we have called the bastion mentality. It arises either because people at borders tend to maintain indigenous standards more rigorously than people who are further removed, or because people at borders resist incursions from the other side more vigorously. Either way, people at borders use the indigenous variant more frequently than is the norm away from the border. The bastion mentality presumably comes about quite naturally because people at borders are more conscious of what is on the other side, that is, they are more sensitive to what needs to be resisted. If so, it is interesting because the more common assumption, the social stereotype, presumes that border groups are more vulnerable to influence from the other side, that their values are more permeable. I grew up with that stereotype as a youngster in the Niagara Peninsula where we clung to the belief that the folks in the border cities were more 'Americanized' than the rest of us. The evidence shows that, linguistically at least, they are likely to be less so, if only in minor (but measurable) ways.

The tendency toward the bastion mentality shows up in numerous variables all across the country in the Dialect Topography database. Where it applies most ostentatiously, we find it holding on both sides of the border. This kind of symmetry occurs commonly at the Niagara border. Map 2 illustrates it with the variable pronunciation of *semi-*, the bound prefix in words such as *semi-final* and *semi-conscious*. The final vowel in *semi-* is usually [i] on the Canadian side and frequently [aj] on the American side. Map 2 shows the border differences in the Niagara Peninsula in the high percentages for *semi-* with [i] on the Canadian side (range 86–93 percent) and the abrupt fall in percentages across the U.S. border. Our main interest here is the observation that the highest percentage of all (93 percent) is found right on the frontier, and also that the lowest percentage occurs in the immediately adjacent American region (13 percent) whereas a short distance away the percentage rises considerably (36 percent). People on both sides are maintaining

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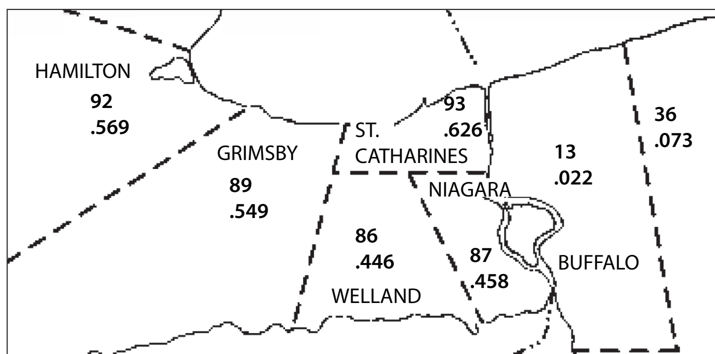

Map 2. Pronunciation of *semi-* with /i/, not /aj/, in the Niagara peninsula including the Niagara border between Canada and the United States shown as percentages (in bold)

their standard more rigorously, and as a result the dialect difference is greatest right at the border.

The most dramatic example of the bastion mentality we have seen so far occurs at the New Brunswick/Maine border where, as discussed above, the towns of St. Stephen, NB, and Calais, Maine, are separated by short bridges with lots of traffic between them. The word for carbonated soft drinks differs across the border. Table 1 shows the word *pop* used by 96 percent in New Brunswick but only by 4 percent in Maine, where *soda* is the common term. The difference is great, but when we look at the border towns it is even greater, in fact, maximal (100 percent and Ø). The likely explanation is that we are dealing with the name of a very familiar object, and people who used the word that belonged to the 'other side' would certainly draw comments from their peers.

Table 1. Some variables at the New Brunswick/Maine border illustrating bastion mentality in St. Stephen, NB

	pop (vs. soda)	supper (dinner)	progress (with [o])	lever (with [ij])
New Brunswick	96.1	91.5	31.3	61.6
St. Stephen, NB	100	100	62.5	75.0
Calais, Maine	Ø	58.1	18.6	16.3
Maine (USA)	4.3	21.7	Ø	8.7

Most variables are further from consciousness, and more nuanced in their differences. Table 1 shows three other variables that illustrate a range of responses, though all show bastion behavior in St. Stephen. New Brunswickers use *supper* as the name for the evening meal, where *dinner* is more commonly used in Maine, and

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people in St. Stephen maximize the difference beyond the norm of the rest of the province. Pronouncing *progress* with [o] as the stressed vowel actually is majority use in St. Stephen though it is minority in the rest of the province, but it is almost unheard in Maine, where unrounded [ɑ] is commonly used; it appears that St. Stephen is perpetuating a difference that is diminishing in the rest of the province. The word *lever* is a Canadian/American shibboleth all across the continent, with Canadians rhyming it with *fever* while Americans rhyme it with *never*, and here too people in St. Stephen raise the proportion compared to the rest of the province. Notice that Calais, the border town in Maine, does not conform to the bastion mentality on these three variables, but in fact appears to capitulate, however slightly, to the usage on the other side of the border. We will also see this capitulation at the third border point, and bring it into the discussion there.

The third border, marked only by a line painted on a road, has no physical barrier but nevertheless shows dialect discontinuities and also bastion mentality. In Table 2, I have shown the gradations at the Quebec/Vermont border for the same three variables discussed for New Brunswick/Maine. At this border point, *progress* with [o], not [ɑ] marks a Canadian/American difference, but the border town, Stanstead, Quebec, does not show evidence of the bastion mentality; instead, it reflects the regional norm without increasing its use, the pattern expected of variables that do not carry awareness of regional difference. The other two variables do show the bastion mentality. *Supper* as the name for the evening meal is the standard term on both sides of this border but it is apparently changing faster on the Vermont side, where *dinner* is becoming the common term, as it is in most parts of North America. *Lever* rhyming with *fever* prevails on the Canadian side, as expected, and the increased proportions in Stanstead, Quebec, make the difference more marked than it would be if the border town reflected the provincial norm.

Table 2. Some variables at the Eastern Townships (Quebec)/Vermont border illustrating bastion mentality in Stanstead, Quebec

	supper (dinner)	**progress (with [o])**	**lever (with [ij])**
Eastern Townships	75.2	49.0	55.0
Stanstead, Quebec	82.5	47.5	62.5
Stanstead, Vermont	59.2	4.1	12.2
Vermont (USA)	54.8	16.0	7.5

With these two variables, *supper* and *lever*, we again see an increase in the use of the Canadian variant across the border in Stanstead, Vermont, as we also noticed in Calais, Maine. This capitulation, so to speak, on the American side runs counter to the bastion mentality. It appears to represent, instead, influence from the other

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side, however mild. It is interesting in this context because it is not seen at the third border we looked at, the Niagara border. I believe the difference has nothing to do with the decisive physical differences at the three borders but rather with the demographic differences at the borders. The regions on both sides of the Niagara border are densely populated, highly industrialized urban conglomerates; they contend with one another on roughly equal terms. By contrast, the other two borders are set in rural districts, and in both places the Canadian town is larger and more developed than its American counterpart. Under these circumstances, it appears as if influence from the dominant center can seep across into the smaller place in spite of the cultural difference. This interpretation of the results is hypothetical and requires testing, but it is consistent with other observations.

4. When is the border permeable?

In keeping with this minor phenomenon of seepage across borders from culturally dominant centers on the one side to less populous communities on the other, we have also found cases, though not many, in which border variants have disappeared completely and homogeneity has won the day. In those cases, the national borders are obviously no longer preservers of differences, much less bastions. The three well-documented variables all bear one salient trait – all involve standardizing changes in which speakers of the language on both sides of the border, English in this context, have adopted the same variant in order to identify the referent not only at the border but more widely, even globally.

The first of these came to light with the replacement of the Canadianism *chesterfield* with what appeared to be the American interloper *couch*. Among Canadian linguists, this replacement was tinged with not altogether professional chauvinist regret. The word *chesterfield* originated in England for a very specific piece of furniture, a large, horsehair stuffed, leather seat for several people that was found in great manor houses (Chambers 1995). The word was never widely used in England but somehow it got transported to Canada as the everyday name for all manner of couches, sofas, divans, davenports, settees, and all the other words that were used for that piece of furniture. By the 1920s *chesterfield* became established in Canadian newspapers and advertisements as well as colloquial use, and in the 1970s it was declining in use. In the Dialect Topography survey of 1990 it was no longer used by people under 30 (< 5 percent) and it was not only unused but unknown by some teenagers. I imprudently interpreted these results as an incursion from American English into sovereign Canadian territory (and titled my 1995 article "the Canada-U.S. border as a vanishing isogloss"). Soon after, the dialectologist

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Harold B. Allen pointed out to me that "couch" was not General American at all, but was originally the northeast American word, and, Allen said, it was displacing not only "chesterfield" in Canada but "davenport" in the Upper Midwest, "sofa" in the American South, and virtually all the other regional variants. The change at the Canada- U.S. border was indisputable, but it was part of a much larger phenomenon that was taking place at dialect borders all over the continent.

I did not make the same rush to judgment with other developments that resulted in homogeneity at the Canada-U.S. border. One of them involved *snuck*, the past tense of *sneak*, that had persisted in its traditional (weak) form *sneaked* in Canada for a decade or so longer than in the United States. The Dialect Topography of Canada captures the change from *sneaked* to *snuck* in all regions of the country (Chambers 2007: 29–32). Although the change establishes the variant *snuck* in standard use across the country, including the border points where the Americans use the same form, we know it is not a breakdown of national norms. As Creswell (1994: 144, 147) says, "In the slightly more than 100 years since its first appearance, *snuck* has become the standard variant for *sneaked*, both as preterit and past participle…. *Snuck*, whatever its status in the past, is now well established, fully standard, and in widespread general use in both the U.S. and Canada, and in growing use in Britain and Australia." If the leveling of *chesterfield* to *couch* reflected a continental change, the leveling *sneaked* to *snuck* appears to be global.

With the accelerated mobility of our time, not only geographic mobility but also occupational and social, linguists should not be surprised when they find widespread standardization obliterating formerly insular diversities. Your grandparents' *darning needles* and *snake feeders* and *spindles* are now all *dragonflies*. Yesterday's *bureaus* and *chester drawers* are now all *dressers*. Last week's *gotchie-pulls* and *snuggies* and *roonies* are now all *wedgies* (Chambers 2018).

The impulse toward the standard on the one hand and the border as bastion on the other brings a special tension to language at border points. Why has *snuck* capitulated so completely while *shone* has stoutly maintained its shibboleth status? Why has *chesterfield* given way to *couch* while *pop* holds its territory against *soda* and all other variants? Dialectologists may some day broach these questions with a chance of discerning their differences and weighing their saliences. Language at borders brings them to light. That, surely, is a start.

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5. Fences and neighbors

Will the impulse for trans-national standardization eventually snuff out the border as bastion? It would be imprudent to say it was impossible, but borders have exerted a powerful influence on our behavior seemingly forever. "Good fences make good neighbors," says Robert Frost in *Mending Wall*, his iconic 1914 poem about physical and cultural barriers. He also says, "Before I built a wall I'd ask to know/What I was walling in or walling out." That makes an eloquent statement of my aim in this discussion of language across borders. Superficially, the evidence I have presented might suggest that borders serve to wall out fairly trivial little differences – a different vowel in *shone*, an alien word for carbonated drinks, different times for the meal called 'dinner', and the like. Literally, that is what we are "walling in or walling out." Those are the overt, measurable differences, the things we can actually hear and count. But those trivial little differences add up to something much larger. Cumulatively, they amount to dialects, viewed as the gestalt of numerous trivial linguistic differences, but that is not the end-point. The dialect differences form one stratum that we must then put together with differences in fashion, cuisine, recreation, manners, politics, and preferences in all kinds of things. These differences may also be trivial, taken one by one, but they amount to culture. Unlike the dialect variants, the other differences are not overt, and hardly measurable. They are the real substance of what is being walled in and walled out, and they are so important that they come into existence with or without an actual fence. They persist, as we have seen, whether the 'fence' is a gorge or a meandering river or just a line on the road. A line on the road, if you think about it, is nothing at all, except when it marks a national border.

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