



Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès
UFR Langues, Littérature et Civilisations Étrangères Département des Études du Monde
Anglophone

The Sociophonology of a Speech Community of Young Adults in Birmingham - Towards a Definition

Mémoire de Recherche de Master 2

Présenté par Tanguy ENTRINGER

Sous la direction de Madame Anne Przewozny-Desriaux, DEMA
et laboratoire CLLE-ERSS

Relecture effectuée par Monsieur Daniel Huber, DEMA et laboratoire
CLLE-ERSS, membre du jury

June 2019

Acknowledgements

I would first like to express my warmest thanks to my supervisor, Anne Przewozny, for her invaluable advice, helpful guidance and total support throughout my time as her student. She regularly invited me to phonology conferences and university events in order to introduce me to various topics related to my dissertation research. Dr. Jane Stuart-Smith also deserves thanks for warmly responding to my requests and accepting to advise and share her extensive expertise in her office at the University of Glasgow, United Kingdom. Thank you also to The University of Glasgow Library, which gave me permission to access invaluable library resources. I warmly thank the personnel for giving me access to their phonology library.

I am indebted to my former French students at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom over the course of the 2017 and 2018 academic year. I thank them for being curious in the classroom as well as for their sense of humour. I would especially like to thank my fourth-year students who kindly responded to my requests and accepted to partake in my research project during their hectic exam period. I would like to particularly thank my friend for letting me assess his pronunciation and share it within the scientific framework of phonology.

I express my gratitude to my whole family, my parents and friends for their support and encouragement to the writing of this dissertation. Finally, I would like to thank Dóra for her genuine kindness, constant encouragement, constructive criticisms and invaluable advice.

Table of Contents

Introduction	6
I- Received Pronunciation, Cockney and Estuary English: The Intricate Task of Defining These Accents	9
1. Historical Background	9
1.1 The intricate definition of Received Pronunciation and its 'subjective' connotation	9
1.1.1 Origins.....	9
1.1.2 Paradoxes regarding EE's current perception: Standardisation and lack of regionalism?	10
1.1.3 Controversial labels	12
1.1.4 Varieties of RP?.....	13
1.1.5 Conclusion	14
1.2 Cockney: the 'working class' dialect?	15
1.2.1 Problematic definitions	15
1.2.2 More than an accent: The Cockney dialect and its 'rhyming slang'.....	18
1.2.3 Varieties of Cockney?	18
1.2.4 Strong sociological dimension.....	19
1.2.5 Cockney at the core of RP.....	20
1.2.6 Conclusion	20
1.3 Estuary English: An 'in-between' accent?	21
1.3.1 Introduction.....	21
1.3.2 David Rosewarne: The coiner of EE	21
1.3.3 Paul Coggle	22
1.3.4 Wells.....	24
1.3.5 Conclusion	28
2. Three phonological systems and various pronunciation variants.....	28
• Phonetics and Phonology	28
• Focus on /t/-glottalisation	29
2.1.1 Basis of the phonological system of RP	30
2.1.2 The phonological system of RP: A representative pronunciation of the British people?	31
2.1.3 Focus on /t/-glottalisation.....	32
2.2 Cockney: A 'working class' RP?	33
2.2.1 Phonological system of Cockney	33
2.2.2 Focus on /t/-glottalisation.....	34
2.3 EE: both RP and Cockney blended?	35
2.3.1 General phonological system of EE.....	35
2.3.2 /t/-glottalisation and its environments.....	37
• Conclusion.....	38
II- Corpora and Research.....	39
1. Substantial corpora hitherto conducted related to EE.....	39

1.1 Przedlacka: the pioneering researcher of EE	39
1.1.1 Aim.....	39
1.1.2 Methodology.....	40
1.1.3 Results	42
1.1.4 Conclusion.....	43
1.1.5 Observations and Discussion.....	44
1.2 Corpora conducted by Ulrike Altendorf (1997 and 1998/1999) and by Christina Schmid (1998)	45
1.2.1 Altendorf (1997)	45
1.2.2 Christina Schmid and her thesis on EE (1998)	48
1.2.3 Altendorf 1998/1999: London Project.....	49
1.3 Tamás Eitler and his corpus: a song.....	50
1.4 Conclusion and discussion	51
2. Britain's youth and their perception over accents.....	53
2.1 Sociological information as to the community of young adults today	53
2.2 The young community at odds with Received Pronunciation?	56
2.3 The young community in favour of EE?.....	58
III- The study carried out in June 2018 at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom	60
1. Methodology - corpus phonology and the PAC programme	60
1.1 The importance of phonology corpus, however big or small corpora are	60
1.2 PAC: definition, founders and co-founders	62
1.3 Objectives and methods	63
1.4 Conventions.....	65
1.4.1 The PAC protocol: 2 wordlists, 1 text and 2 conversations.....	65
1.4.2 The informal conversation and the analysis of /t/-glottalisation and its frequency.....	67
1.5 One informant	68
1.5.1 How did it work?.....	68
1.5.2 Why was this particular informant taken into account?	68
2. Location: Birmingham and The University of Birmingham	69
2.1 Historical and background information regarding Britain's schools	69
2.2 The University of Birmingham, United-Kingdom.....	70
3. Results: focalisation on /t/-glottalisation	73
3.1 General sociological portrayal of our informant	73
3.2 /t/-glottalisation - frequency.....	74
4. Definition of the pronunciation adopted by a community of young adults at university.....	79
4.1 RP, Cockney, Estuary, 'emerging' accent or a camouflage?.....	79
4.2 Can a definite profile be portrayed from our findings?.....	80
Conclusion.....	83

Bibliography	86
Websites	99
Appendixes	101

Introduction

The present dissertation investigates the sociophonological aspects of a community of young adults at the University of Birmingham. The multidimensional angle of research that ‘sociophonology’ implies lies at the intersection of interdisciplinary studies, namely ‘sociology’, hence the bound morpheme ‘socio’ and ‘linguistics’ with its sub-branch ‘phonology’.

One conspicuous figurehead that has drawn upon sociology, linguistics and phonology is undoubtedly William Labov and his significant contribution in sociolinguistics studies. In his work *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, Labov deals with “large-scale social factors, and their mutual interaction with languages and dialects” (1972: 183). In this dissertation, the paradigm that Labov termed ‘variationist sociolinguistics’ brings to the fore empirical research by means of corpora. The term ‘corpora’ refers to corpus phonology which, under the influence of variationism, has increasingly become a necessary tool for linguists (Durand and Przewozny, 2012: 25). This method is especially adopted by empiricists, such as Labov, as opposed to generativists, including Chomsky and Halle, who view language not as a property belonging to the language community (Viollain, 2014: 284) (see section III.3.1).

We do not consider corpora to be an end in itself in this research project, but rather a valuable means for comprehending how variation works in English phonology following in Labov’s footsteps. Thus, the sociological angle in the present dissertation focuses on a speech community of young adults who are twenty years old or so belonging to the middle class. Besides analysing our own corpus conducted in June 2018 at the University of Birmingham in this dissertation, in which a twenty-year-old upper-middle class male student was recorded, previous corpora-based projects are taken into consideration.

Sociophonology closely relies on the linguistic community an individual identifies with (Auer and Di Luzio, 2014: 77). All the more, linguists have more and more recognised the importance of social classes to understand language (Durand and Przewozny, 2012: 25). Consequently, the external parameters such as the social-economic class of an individual may explain the language change in a society as well as the historical and cultural context each speaker lives in (Labov, 1972: 3).

Likewise, phonology, a branch of linguistics that focuses on the specific linguistic system of a language, should not be confused with phonetics. This is due to the fact that phonetics is concerned with the physical realisation of the language (Giegerich, 1992: 31). In this thesis, one

particular variant from our informant is examined, that is to say, /t/-glottalisation. For the purposes of this research essay, we may specifically concentrate on the number of occurrences of this variant uttered by our informant in an informal context. The results are compared with the three phonological systems of Received Pronunciation (RP), Estuary English (EE) and Cockney.¹ When analysing EE, additional linguistic aspects such as lexical and grammatical features are drawn upon in an attempt to illustrate the contention that still prevails today in terms of label between ‘accent’, ‘dialect’, ‘variety’, ‘style-shifting’ or ‘dialect levelling’.

This dissertation strives to achieve various objectives. The first objective sheds light on former concepts and definitions related to RP, EE and Cockney that have not been updated. Secondly, by means of a personal corpus conducted beforehand, the dissertation is designed to offer a sociophonological analysis of a possible accent spoken amongst a community of young adults at the University of Birmingham. By the same token, the /t/-glottalisation variant is examined to confirm or reject the plausible hypothesis whereby EE is spoken amongst the youth in England. However, our attempt to pin down a putative accent spoken by the community of young adults remains complex. In fact, EE is a merger of concepts, notions and definitions that many linguists are at odds with. For instance, the real nature of Estuary English is still controversial as illustrated in our previous research project conducted two years ago as part of the first-year-Master’s-degree research project entitled, “The Definition of Estuary English Pronunciation in a Speech Community of Young Adults - an Empirical Study”.

We first adopt a top-down approach, which implies that we present the state of the art linked to RP, EE and Cockney by taking into account successive empirical research and theories suggested beforehand by others. By doing so, we may precisely deconstruct the underlying complexities attached to these three accents that our informant previously recorded is inclined to speak. Then, we adopt a specific method to achieve the best results. As implied previously, corpus phonology remains our first approach that allows us to draw satisfactory conclusions thanks to its pragmatic and empirical angle. To facilitate the classification and analysis of our audio data, we incorporated our investigation into the PAC programme (Phonologie de l’Anglais Contemporain or Phonology of Contemporary English) (see section III). All in all, this research project allows us to test out two hypotheses: to conclude whether EE deserves to be a source of interest, insofar as our informant might in fact use this accent through the study of one phonological variable proper to EE, namely

¹ To facilitate the reading of this thesis, Received Pronunciation and Estuary English are abbreviated to RP and EE respectively.

/t/-glottalisation. In this case, we may eventually conclude that a community of young adults in England belonging to the middle class speak EE. The second idea is that if EE is not the accent spoken by our informant, we may then consider the possibility of defining a new accent.

Our dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first one is devoted to examining Received Pronunciation, Estuary English, along with Cockney. Their historical background and their phonological system are also examined to put forward their similarities as well as their divergences and discrepancies.

The second chapter is dedicated to the empirical research conducted on Estuary English since then. More precisely, the problem linked with this intricate accent or dialect is fully dissected from a historical, sociological and cultural point of view. The perception of the youth with regards to RP and EE is also thoroughly analysed to observe whether a community of young adults inclines towards one of these two accents.

Finally, the third chapter deals with the corpus that was carried out in June 2018. The methodology adopted is taken from the conventions of the PAC programme. We also comment on the conditions in which the audio data was collected. We also offer a potential definition of our informant with sociological and phonological responses.

I- Received Pronunciation, Cockney and Estuary English: The Intricate Task of Defining These Accents

The aim of the following paragraphs is not to provide an exhaustive description of RP, EE and Cockney. Rather, the focus is shifted to the right terminology one ought to use as linguists have sometimes distorted the definition of EE and its nature.

Impressionistically, the pronunciation of our informant, recorded in June of 2018, may be classified on a continuum between RP and Cockney. In doing so, we may first analyse these two accents by presenting their historical background, their main phonological system and then compare EE with RP and Cockney. This first approach helps us deconstruct, frame and elaborate the accent of young English individuals with sociological information. As proved further in this research paper, the description of these three accents is extremely difficult to establish as EE may be viewed as a battlefield for linguists.

1. Historical Background

1.1 The intricate definition of Received Pronunciation and its ‘subjective’ connotation

1.1.1 Origins

To begin with, the first occurrence of the term ‘Received Pronunciation’ remains arguable even today as researchers’ answers still diverge. One possible coiner of the term ‘Received Pronunciation’ is the phonetician Daniel Jones in the third edition of the *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, published in 1926. John Wells, a well-known English phonetician who extensively wrote on the English language and Esperanto, considers Jones “the great describer and codifier of the Received Pronunciation of English (RP)” (1994a: 11). However, we prefer to use another definition of RP that appeared before 1926, since there is more material to analyse, especially from a sociological perspective. Alexander John Ellis, a mathematician and philologist, coined “received pronunciation”, with no capital letters, in the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1869. He advanced that received pronunciation is spoken: “all over the country, not widely differing in any locality, and admitting a certain degree of variety. It may be considered as the educated pronunciation of the metropolis, of the court, the pulpit, and the bar” (23). Ellis’ definition implies that there was already

an important social connotation that seemed to prevail at the time as RP is referred to as the community belonging to the upper-class (Ramsaran, 2015: 178). What Ellis alludes to is the dichotomy between two groups of speakers, namely on one side, RP incarnated by the hierarchy or the “educated”, and on the other side, the other regional accents of the United Kingdom spoken by individuals from low socio-economic backgrounds likely viewed in a derogatory manner. Similarly, although 150 years separate us from the definition above, the significant social overtone linked to RP still exists in today’s society. Indeed, as things stand today, it is generally accepted that “[a]s elsewhere, the standard language is associated with the upper part of the social hierarchy, and dialect with the lower” (Tosi, 2001: 21). Moreover, Ellis precisely considers the context in which RP is heard where “metropolis” symbolises London, which embodies the economic centre and capital of Britain in which the country’s wealth is established. Additionally, RP is the pronunciation of the “court”, which implies that it is adopted amongst certain fields, such as law but also religion. Likewise, the mention of “pulpit” is a metonymy alluding to priests and religious individuals. As a result, the “received pronunciation” at the time was clearly defined by rank of education and regarded as the English standard. Cruttenden contends that “there has existed in this country the notion that one kind of pronunciation of English was preferable socially to others; one regional accent began to acquire social prestige” (1989: 84). By the same token, this implies that the working class was eluded, since RP remained a pronunciation solely spoken by a minority. As it stands now, the notion may no longer be seen as a “clear-cut term” insofar as the social-class structure has undoubtedly changed since 1869 and regional accents may now be regarded favourably (Ramsaran, 2015: 178) (see section II.2).

1.1.2 Paradoxes regarding EE’s current perception: Standardisation and lack of regionalism?

Breaking down Ellis’ definition is a first step in circumscribing RP. Nevertheless, an in-depth analysis of RP may shed light on underlying paradoxes that are important to deal with, especially when reconsidering the definition provided above by Ellis. In fact, there are two underlying paradoxes linked to RP, namely the idea of standardisation and its lack of regionalism. Indeed, over the 20th century, there was a considerable necessity to codify the English language (Gimson, 1989: 84). It was particularly the case for the pronunciation of the British English variety as the language, spelling and grammar rules had already been fixed and largely accepted in

the 18th century amongst educated English speakers (84). With regards to the pronunciation of the British English standard, RP was an appropriate label as the latter comes from “Received”, which meant “accepted” (Cruttenden, 2014: 76). It also referred to the pronunciation during which Shakespearian plays were regarded as “an imprimatur of Britishness, especially when delivering in the Received Pronunciation (RP) accent” (Burnett, 2011: 551). RP began to be codified at the beginning of the 20th century through an extensive number of books published by Daniel Jones with *Pronunciation of English* in 1909, followed by *English Pronouncing Dictionary* in 1917 and *Outline of English Phonetics* in 1918. The pronunciation system of RP was then propagated in private boarding schools (Altendorf, 2003: 3-4). Jones’ publications went through numerous editions and remained standard works for generations (Przedlacka and Ashby, 2018: 3).

If RP was viewed as the standard of the British English pronunciation as shown previously, it was far from being adopted by the entire population of Britain. We observed that the accent, which was approved to be the British English standard, was solely adopted by individuals belonging to the oligarchy and elitist classes at the time (Tönnies, 2008: 3). Likewise, in addition to being a codification of the British variety, RP was aimed to hierarchise the population. As for today, Wells asserts that 10% of Britain population speak with an RP accent (1982: 118). Trudgill and Hannah are less optimistic as they conclude that between 3% and 5% of Britain’s population reportedly speak with an RP accent (1982: 9). Of 300 million native English speakers worldwide, the low number of RP speakers demonstrates that this standard is by no means representative of the anglophone world (Wells, 1982: 279). In other words, associating RP with the notion of ‘standard’ is correct, since it is a pronunciation model expected to be adopted when speaking the British English variety. However, we could claim that this ‘standard’, supposedly the speech model of Britain, is only spoken by a handful of individuals, which remains paradoxical.

Moreover, we may debunk the myth that RP refers exclusively to a non-regional or non-localised accent. One of RP’s specific characteristics is that this accent allows speakers to make up their birthplace and origin as implied in Trudgill’s assertion,

“it is a defining characteristic of the RP accent that, while it is clearly a variety that is associated with England, and to a certain extent also with the rest of the United Kingdom, it otherwise contains no regional features whatsoever” (2002: 171).

RP seems paradoxical, because it is claimed to be a distinctive variety of England, though no regional features characterise it. In truth, the phonological system of RP takes root in both the South

and South East of England (Gimson, 1980: 88-89). More specifically, RP is imbued with pronunciation features from London and its surrounding counties. It also distinguishes itself from them in that “unlike Kent and Sussex, it is a non-rhotic accent; unlike London and much of Essex, it is an h-pronouncing accent” (Ramsaran, 2015: 179). In other words, RP shares, to a certain extent, a phonological system similar to those of the South and South East of England. Therefore, the British English standard is regional in that it was born as a result of a combination of regional accents. An RP speaker may, in turn, be associated with the south of England, although the standard is often thought of as lacking regionalism.

1.1.3 Controversial labels

Another intricate point is the different labels that have been put forward to refer to ‘RP’. Indeed, many linguists resort to various labels to evoke the same RP accent. Today, RP may be termed ‘Queen’s English’, ‘BBC English’ or ‘Oxford English’ (Bauer, 2014: 93). Such names are only a few of the many labels mentioned in specialised books, press articles, websites and blogs. The variety of terms associated with RP appeared gradually throughout the decades. For example, PSP (or ‘Public School Pronunciation’) was coined by Jones in 1917, SBS (or ‘Southern British Standard’) by Wells and Colson in 1971 and RSE (or ‘Received Standard English’) by Orton in 1933 (Przedlacka, and Ashby, 2018: 2). The extensive number of labels referring to the same accent may be misleading for a lay person. This particular accent may be a source of confusion for linguists as well, particularly when it comes to distinguishing RP, strictly understood as ‘standard’ British English versus other variations of RP, such as ‘near-RP’, explained in more detail further in this thesis. Regardless of which label is most appropriate, linguists all share one common opinion regarding RP. As mentioned on the *British Library* website, RP should be regarded as “an accent, not a dialect, since all RP speakers speak Standard English” (Robinson: 1). Indeed, RP speakers “avoid non-standard grammatical constructions and localised vocabulary characteristic of regional dialects” (1). In other words, it is implied that RP is an accent whose speakers use standard grammar, unlike a dialect that possesses its own vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar that would not be present in standard RP.

1.1.4 Varieties of RP?

We have observed that deciding on the right label to characterise RP is by no means straightforward. However, when analysing RP in detail, another problem arises, which is how to correctly name its varieties. This issue is implied in Ellis' 1869 definition regarding RP. Indeed, besides the prestigious sociological connotation that his definition conveys, there is an important aspect that he hints at and which has become controversial since then. In fact, "admitting a certain degree of variety" implies that an RP accent with regional characteristics is still considered RP for Ellis (1869: 23). As a result, should we assert that RP is still considered 'strictly RP' if mixed with other regional features as suggested by Ellis? Is RP still the same if the pronunciation of an RP speaker slightly differs from its phonological system? Can we place RP on a continuum? If so, where should RP's boundaries start and end on this continuum?

To be more specific, it would be inaccurate to argue that an individual with a predominantly RP accent, yet influenced by marked regional features, should be strictly categorised as 'RP'. This point of view is equally shared by Trudgill who asserts that,

"speakers either have an RP accent or they do not. There are many who have a so-called 'near-RP' accent, but this is by definition not an RP accent. When it comes to employing a codified language variety, a miss is as good as a mile" (2002: 174).

Trudgill suggests that varieties of RP, which could be defined as a range of accents that share both the pronunciation of RP and those of regional accents, should be termed "near-RP". Cruttenden disagrees with Trudgill and argues that it should be simply named 'General British' or 'GB' to echo the American English variety termed 'General American' or 'GA', which was coined for the first time by Windsor Lewis (Cruttenden, 2014: 87). In other words, Cruttenden prefers to base his terminology on the American model, rather than finding a new, accurate denomination. In this manner, it is easier to organise existing varieties of English. Maidment (1994) agrees with Cruttenden and names these varieties of RP, 'General British English', choosing to define them as a "British accent whose varieties are least associated with any specific areas of Great Britain. It is the most frequent model employed in the teaching of British English as an additional language" (*Speech Internet Dictionary*, 2012). Another label that Cruttenden pays attention to is 'Regional General British', which is a hybrid of "GB with the inclusion of regional markers" (Cruttenden, 2014: 83). Therefore, there may be two different layers of regional RP,

namely ‘GBE’, which is a form of RP infused with slight regional features, as opposed to ‘RGB’, which shows a higher degree of salient regional characteristics.

Moreover, linguists have questioned the degree of variation present in RP regarding its regional features. RP may also vary depending on sociological criteria, such as the social-economic group that individuals belong to, their age or gender. Gimson disassembles RP into three other categories (Hughes, et al., 2005: 39). Firstly, ‘conservative RP’ may best reflect the older generation, certain professionals or social groups (Gimson, 1970: 88). Secondly, ‘general RP’ is defined as the least marked variety (88). Finally, ‘advanced RP’ may be an appropriate term to identify the accent of the younger generation of the upper class (88). Gimson’s assumption is consistent with Crystal’s perception over the variety of RP that exists in terms of social class. However, Crystal also inserts the notion of regionalism in his study. He affirms that “[m]ost educated people have developed an accent which is a mixture of RP and various regional characteristics – ‘modified RP’, some call it” (1995: 365).

1.1.5 Conclusion

By deconstructing the definition of RP, we have highlighted paradoxical preconceptions linked to RP. This accent is even more complex when it comes to naming its varieties, in part due to the many denominations used by linguists. Whether an individual should fall into the category of ‘RP’ or ‘near-RP’ remains a matter of judgment, especially when considering someone whose pronunciation is mostly RP, yet marked with regional phonemes. All the more, “in spite of the large number of descriptions of RP, there exists no universal definition of the accent” (Bente Rebecca Hannisdal, 2010: 5). Therefore, we may speculate that defining an accent is not an exact science like mathematics due to its subjectivity when under scrutiny. This section, which was designed to expose the underlying complexity of EE, may eventually be helpful in defining our informant’s pronunciation (see section III). In fact, the accent of our informant, which may be found between RP and EE, is likely to be hidden amongst the various denominations of RP, such as ‘near-RP’. Nevertheless, in order to support our hypotheses whereby our informant may be part of the continuum of RP, we should put our hands “dirty” as suggested by Johnson and Britain who assert that “theoretical phonologists tend not to get their hands dirty with ‘real’ data, preferring to rely on intuitions or on sanitised data produced by other researchers” (2007: 295). In other words, through

statistical and empirical results, we may successfully establish a phonological system close to that of our informant, especially by relying on the number of occurrences of the glottal stop allophone.

1.2 Cockney: the ‘working class’ dialect?

In this section, we seek to provide a clear insight into Cockney and its different definitions and connotations as well as its circumscription that marks off its boundaries. By doing so, we eventually come up with useful information to offer a definition that may accurately describe the accent of our informant incorporated into the PAC programme.

1.2.1 Problematic definitions

The first step when considering the nature of Cockney is to label it correctly, as previously done with RP. By doing so, shedding light on the various existing definitions may help us break preconceptions related to Cockney.

Let us first expose the differences between the terms ‘accent’ and ‘dialect’ that may be confusing, especially when associated with Cockney. As Ben and David Crystal put it, an accent is “a person’s distinctive pronunciation” (2014: 15). Consequently, the term ‘accent’ solely refers to the pronunciation of an accent, not its grammatical or lexical particularities. Ben and David Crystal add that an accent “tells you about a person’s social background - the social class they belong to, or their educational history, or their ethnic or religious affiliation [as well as] what job a person does” (15). Therefore, this definition backs up Ellis’ theory, who initially helped shape the research related to RP by incorporating sociological connotations. Likewise, Ben and David Crystal’s definition illustrates the common ground shared by many linguists who strongly believe that RP is an accent. In other words, an accent provides a snapshot of an individual’s pronunciation by considering their social class, gender, age and ethnic group.

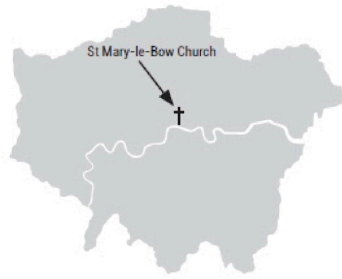
As opposed to an accent, Trudgill argues that a ‘dialect’ should include three criteria (Trudgill, 1994: 7). Firstly, a dialect should be spoken within a specific geographical area (7). Secondly, it may convey the speaker’s origin (7). Finally, a distinctive vocabulary and peculiar grammatical forms may qualify the dialect in question (7). Likewise, Joanna Przedlacka, a Polish phonetician who thoroughly conducted extensive research with regards to the nature of Estuary English similarly considers a dialect “a broader term [which] refers to a set of phonological, lexical,

morphological and syntactical features which make up a variety of a language” (2002: 3). For example, the Cockney dialect consists of a distinctive vocabulary illustrated by its ‘rhyming slang’, which is more analysed in section I.1.2.3. Put simply, rhyming slang implies that a term is replaced by a different word that rhymes with the first one. It is designed to express the same idea that makes the initial word difficult to recognise. Therefore, ‘plates of meat’ stands for ‘feet’ and ‘trouble and strife’ for ‘wife’ (Mott, 2012). One may conclude that Cockney is a dialect that has its own vocabulary as well as its own phonological system as examined later on (see section II.2.2).

It is noteworthy to point out that the term ‘variety’, understood in the context of ‘regional variety’, may also appear when talking about ‘dialect’. Kevin Watson considers “a regional variety [...] a form of language which conveys information about a speaker’s geographical origin via words, grammatical constructions or features of pronunciation which are present in some regions but absent in others” (Culpeper, et al., 2009: 271). In other words, ‘regional varieties’ account for boundaries that delineate the various variations of the English language just like a ‘dialect’. Thus, we can distinguish American English, British English, Australian English, New Zealand English, South African English and so on through the lexical, grammatical and phonological particularities of a speaker. If taking the example of the British English variety, a speaker may be native to the South of the United Kingdom with the simple phonological /ɑ:/ distinction pronounced phonetically [ɑ:], whereas [æ] is commonly uttered in Northern England. All in all, both ‘dialect’ and ‘variety’ refer to the same notion, yet ‘dialect’ focuses on the linguistic distinctiveness, whereas ‘variety’ is a broader term that evokes the varieties of the English language. Therefore, Cockney is a combination of both a dialect and a variety.

As explained above, Trudgill affirms that the label ‘dialect’ refers to a specific geographical region (Trudgill, 1994: 7). The linguist’s assertion suggests that if Cockney is a dialect, we may map its focal area in the United Kingdom. Indeed, according to Brian Mott,

“[t]here is a widespread, popular belief that a true speaker of Cockney is someone born within the sound of Bow Bells (which are mentioned in the children’s nursery rhyme “Oranges and Lemons” and constitute an important landmark in the story of Dick Whittington). However, these are the bells of the church of St Mary-le-Bow in Cheapside, which today is not in the East End but in the City of London [...] and are not bells pertaining to a church in Bow itself” (2012: 71).



Map 1: Retrieved from *The Little Book of Cockney Rhyming Slang* written by Sid Finch (2015: 5).

However imprecise it might be, Cockney speakers may inhabit the East of London and tend to move eastwards, which supports the hypothesis that the Cockney variety is a dialect measured through its geographical area. Mott explains that the difficulty of mapping Cockney is due to the historical changes that have been occurring in British society as the result of the industrial period (2012, 71). In the definition below, Mott refers to the Royal Navy Dockyard which is set in Kent. He asserts that,

“as long ago as the 18th Century, Chatham Dockyard expanded and acquired large numbers of workers who were relocated from the dockland areas of London, which resulted in Chatham also developing a Cockney accent as opposed to nearby Rochester, which had the Kentish one” (71).

An additional problem arises from the misused label when defining the nature of Cockney. For non-specialists without any knowledge of this specific field, knowing the underlying nuances of ‘dialect’ and ‘accent’ seems difficult. In fact, the internet misuses the right terminology associated to Cockney. If we take the example of an unreliable page from *Wikipedia*, there is a mistake made regarding the conjunction “or” in “Cockney English is the accent *or*, dialect of English traditionally spoken by working-class Londoners” (*Wikipedia*, emphasis added). “And” may be more appropriate as Cockney is not an accent, but a dialect of the British English variety. Perhaps, when referring to the phonological characteristics of Cockney, *Wikipedia* should change its terminology and opt for the term ‘pronunciation’, rather than ‘accent’. Naturally, when referring to the Cockney pronunciation, we naturally point to its phonological system. Nonetheless, as implied herein, Cockney is more than an accent, it is a dialect with its own linguistics features, vocabulary, phonological system and intonation.

1.2.2 More than an accent: The Cockney dialect and its ‘rhyming slang’

The ‘rhyming slang’ concept, as hinted at above, is specific to the Cockney dialect. This atypical way of speaking is close to our ‘verlan’ in French, which is a form of French slang. Firstly spoken by immigrants, this particular way of communicating is strongly associated with the working class today (Simone, 1995: 102). Thus, Cockney is a dialect measured through the individual’s economic-social class. The Cockney dialect is intrinsically linked to the migrants, since “many of these groups brought with them distinct slangs of their own, notably the Jewish population, the Irish, the Huguenots and the Romanies” (Smith, 2014: 1). What’s more, “in its early days it was the language of costermongers (street traders) and criminals who did not want word of their business to fall on the wrong ears” (1). Rhyming slang “involves finding a saying or expression which rhymes with the original word and then using that expression instead of the word. [...] For example, you are having a ‘butchers’ at this book (butcher’s hook - look)” (Finch, 2015: 8). This communication tool is evolving and not constrained by formal rules. “It is now used by community that lives far outside those narrow boundaries” (Smith, 2014: 1).

1.2.3 Varieties of Cockney?

The Cockney dialect is intricate to delimit in the same way as the RP accent, since there is not a unique form of Cockney. According to Mott, Cockney can be narrowed down to two other varieties, namely the Traditional Cockney (TC) and Popular London Speech (PLS) (2012: 70). These two distinctions are not to be seen as two clear, separate varieties. Instead, these should be viewed as a continuum of the London speech, “rather than two separate varieties” (2012: 70). Following this assumption, TC may be located on one end of the continuum and PLS on the other. Their positions are determined by social classes. TC should be close to RP as the latter embodies more social prestige, unlike PLS which may be situated towards Cockney, which in turn is regarded as the working-class accent. There can be a parallel between the two Cockney labels mentioned and the two other varieties of RP advanced by Gimson, namely ‘conservative RP’ and ‘advanced RP’ (1970: 88). TC could be close to the ‘conservative RP’, which are two careful varieties, whereas PLS may be similar to ‘advanced RP’, which is a more casual way of speaking RP. However, the notion of ‘continuum’, whereby two or more analogous accents may overlap, is problematic in that the boundaries that separate both varieties are extremely blurry. Likewise, the continuum on which all the varieties of RP and Cockney could be mapped suggests that EE is

supposedly located amongst this specific continuum, that is to say, between RP on one end and TC or Traditional Cockney on the other.

1.2.4 Strong sociological dimension

We previously pointed out that the socio-economic criteria were designed to separate Cockney from other accents and dialects, just like RP.

$$\begin{array}{c} [I \leftarrow \text{Cockney} \rightarrow F] [I \leftarrow \text{RP} \rightarrow F] \\ [I \leftarrow \text{EE} \rightarrow F] \end{array}$$

Illustration 1: Taken from Maidment (1994).

The illustration above was elaborated by Maidment by 1994. He essentially drew upon Rosewarne's standpoint regarding EE and its social position (1984). The illustration shows the position of RP, EE and Cockney in terms of social classes and status. Indeed, if EE exists and is measured on the basis of social classes, it is positioned in the middle of a continuum between RP and Cockney. Such classification is determined by means of specific realisations that we call 'variants'. In each accent or dialect, variants can be considered prestigious or, on the contrary, stigmatised (see section II.2). However, this system of classification is questionable due to today's context. In fact, Przedlacka argues that RP "can sometimes be treated with hostility", even if it is the British English standard (Przedlacka, 2002: 9). On the opposite, Cockney may also be perceived negatively, hence its position on the extreme left of the continuum above. For some, its variants may be thought of as lacking prestige (Davies, 2014: 125). Additionally, Maidment's illustration proves that RP, EE and Cockney can also be structured through language register. Thus, 'I', which stands for 'informal' and 'F' for 'formal', suggests that EE may be perceived as an informal form of RP and a formal way of speaking Cockney. It is similar with Cockney speakers who may tend to pay attention to their speech. These individuals could be mistaken for EE speakers and they would be more difficult to distinguish. Thus, from Maidment's perspective, we can conclude that social class correlates with language registers.

1.2.5 Cockney at the core of RP

Although Cockney can be viewed pejoratively, its influence over other varieties of the English language may foster its legitimacy. The following assertion may rightly exemplify the power of the Cockney dialect and perhaps enhance its image:

“[W]hat we analyse as a form of linguistic hierarchy seemed to place the British standard at the top, then the British varieties that were said to have influenced *AusE* and *NZE*, such as Cockney, and then *AusE* and, at the bottom, *NZE* that was seen as the result of both British and Australian influences” (Przewozny and Viollain, 2016: 4).

In other words, as Przewozny and Viollain imply, there was a clear relation between Cockney and the varieties of English, especially in the process of colonisation. More importantly, Cockney has also contributed in the development of RP. Wells comments on the importance of the London speech that has influenced the British English standard and claims that “its courtly and upper class speech lay the historical basis for Standard English and in many respects RP” (Wells, 1982: 301). Surprisingly enough, although the Cockney dialect is disapproved, the prestigious accent, that is RP, derives from the speech of London on which Cockney exerted influence. Today, the latter does not fuel criticism as “many other comedians have exploited their Cockney accents as a source of humour: Arthur Haynes, Tommy Trinder, Michael Medwin, Charlie Drake, Alfie Bass, Bernard Bresslaw, to name just a few” (Mott, 2012: 72). We can witness a shift in the negative connotation associated with Cockney, since prominent British actors have now turned the accent into a more acceptable pronunciation. In *Pygmalion*, a 1938 British film, a phonetician, Professor Higgins, intends to perfect Liza Doolittle’s accent considered Cockney. From a different perspective, the depiction of accents and dialects in *Pygmalion* could be interpreted as having covert prestige in that the film brings Cockney to the fore. In short, celebrities foster a positive attitude towards accents and dialects by adopting them. Such acceptability challenges the general preconception whereby a non-standard pronunciation is negative.

1.2.6 Conclusion

Deconstructing and analysing the Cockney dialect proved to be helpful to potentially compare its definition with the accent of our informant analysed further. Although Cockney is associated with derogatory judgments as shown, it has influenced varieties of English and

particularly RP along the way. Owing to today's context, the Cockney pronunciation is exploited by actors, albeit humorously. However, they recognise it as an existing British English variety. Besides, framing the definition of the Cockney dialect may have highlighted mistakes that appear on the internet, such as the tendency to resort to the label 'accent', rather than 'dialect' when referring to Cockney. At this stage, we cannot assert that Cockney and EE are linked to each other. Speculatively, EE might be found on a continuum between RP and Cockney.

1.3 Estuary English: An 'in-between' accent?

1.3.1 Introduction

The following overview is designed to shed light on the complexity of EE, which is supposed to be a recent British English accent coined by David Rosewarne in 1984. In addition, we set out to list the criteria that make up EE in the light of linguists' observations. Although our task remains ambitious, we may come to the conclusion that EE is an 'in-between' accent positioned on a continuum between RP and Cockney from a phonological and sociological point of view. In spite of the large number of definitions associated with EE, we have selected specific linguists and the most relevant observations based on their empirical research.

1.3.2 David Rosewarne: The coiner of EE

David Rosewarne, a British linguist, originated the term 'Estuary English' in 1984 in a press article named *Times Educational Supplement*. He defines it as,

“a variety of modified regional speech. It is a mixture of non-regional and local south-eastern English pronunciation and intonation. If one imagines a continuum with RP and London speech at either end, “Estuary English” speakers are to be found grouped in the middle ground” (1984: 29).

Prior to examining Rosewarne's definition, let us bear in mind that his wording dates back to 1984, which implies that it may lack precision and reliability. To define the nature of EE, Rosewarne takes into account several factors, as observed with RP and Cockney. He examines methodically its location, its spread, its variants and its sociological connotations. In his article aimed at exposing the main boundaries that frame EE, Rosewarne asserts that it is spoken “by the banks of the Thames and its estuary” from a geographical point of view (Rosewarne, 1984: 29). If EE firmly exists, we

may arrive at the conclusion that the main English varieties heard in London and in its suburbs can be represented by a circle in which three accents or dialects are mainly spoken.

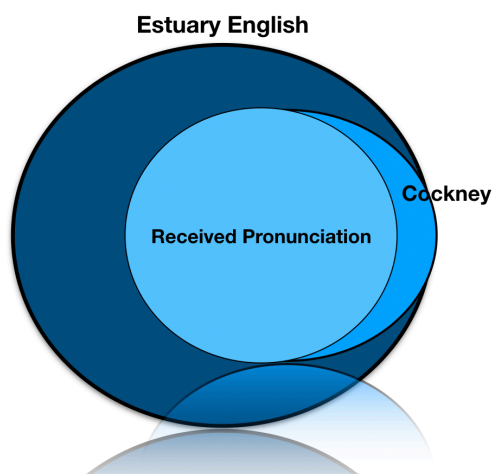


Illustration 2: Overview of RP, EE and Cockney in London and the Home Counties.

In the illustration above, London is represented through the microcosm inhabited by RP speakers. It is followed by a second circle where Cockney is spoken in East London. Finally, the third layer around the capital and along the river Thames illustrates the Estuary English speakers. Of course, the following representation is not comprehensive as the London speech naturally includes more accents than RP, EE and Cockney.

The influence exerted by EE may reinforce the idea that it is now part of the British English variety, since David Rosewarne asserts that it is heard “northwards to Norwich and westwards to Cornwall” (1994: 37). Norwich is in East Anglia, that is in the Centre East of England, not far from the capital. However, if Cornwall (situated in the extreme west of the country) is influenced by EE, it is more problematic for linguists to address the issue that this accent is firmly spreading to other large territories. The areas under influence would cover the South West of England, including Gloucestershire, Bristol, Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall. Likewise, South East of England would comprise Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey and West Sussex as well as Greater London.

1.3.3 Paul Coggle

Paul Coggle, a British senior lecturer in modern languages at the University of Kent, United Kingdom, published in 1993 *Do You Speak Estuary?* to clarify his point of view over the nature of

EE. His book helped popularise EE with a more familiar and accessible tone aimed at a larger public (Altendorf, 2003: 9). His argument can be summed up with the following graph that illustrates a continuum where EE is found in the middle between RP on the left and Cockney on the right end.



Illustration 3: Taken from *'A Native Accent is Always Attractive': Perception of British English Varieties by EFL Spanish Students* published by Tévar (2014: 49).

However, it is noteworthy to point out that 'continuum' does not refer to the notion of 'dialect continuum' whereby there is a gradual difference of variety over a certain distance (Downes, 1998: 18). Rather, we consider this notion to be an imaginary line on which three distinct accents or dialects exist. From the illustration above, Coggle's view regarding EE is relatively similar to Rosewarne's assumption whereby EE may be placed on "a continuum with RP and London speech at either end [...] found grouped in the middle ground" (Rosewarne, 1984: 29). The blue boxes form the boundaries of RP, EE and Cockney presumably based on their grammatical, lexical and syntactical elements as well as their salient phonological realisations. Furthermore, the illustration indicates that the position of each accent and dialect depends on sociological factors. The British community may sociologically assess EE between RP on the left, and Cockney on the right as the latter is viewed as less prestigious. However, the main limit of the illustration lies in the over-simplistic conclusion that a speaker has a uniform accent and can be classified as such. In fact, an individual is free to adopt variants that are characteristic of accents of London, such as a mix of RP and Cockney. Such pronunciation does not have to be automatically associated with EE on the pretext that it is an 'in-between' accent. This discrepancy is clearly developed in Coggle's definition below.

"Estuary English cannot be pinned down to a rigid set of rules regarding specific features of pronunciation, grammar and special phrases. A speaker at the Cockney end of the spectrum is not so different from a Cockney speaker. And similarly, a speaker at the RP end of the spectrum will not be very different from an RP speaker. Between the two extremes is quite a range of possibilities, many

of which, in isolation, would not enable us to identify a person as an Estuary speaker, but which when several are present together mark out Estuary English distinctively” (1993: 70).

However, in spite of his efforts to theorise the accent, Coggle eventually admits that the difficulty in defining EE lies in the lack of a rigid system or “set of rules”. We only know that EE is localised on a continuum between RP and Cockney. However, this definition is unsatisfactory as we agree that the only representation of EE by means of a continuum remains abstract and approximative. The only relevant criteria for him is to rely on the frequency of salient features that accounts for the boundaries of RP, EE and Cockney. We could compare the idea of continuum put forward by Coggle with the different existing varieties of RP that we have examined herein. In fact, an RP speaker using variants different from the phonological system of RP may still be regarded as a strict RP accent depending on one’s personal judgment. In the same manner, an individual may be mistakenly taken for an EE speaker and the appropriate label would be ‘near-RP’. All in all, the vague continuum might refer to ‘near-RP’, rather than ‘EE’.

1.3.4 Wells

As examined above, the extreme vagueness of the definition of EE has often led to the complete extinction of this accent. Consequently, Bergs and Brinton assert that “[a]t best its existence can be ignored or deplored, which some linguists have been trying to do since 1984. Hence the rare occurrence of the term ‘EE’ in studies on EE-related topic” (2017: 182). Inversely, theorising EE was an opportunity for some to unveil contentions that existed within the linguistic scenes. John Christopher Wells, a British phonetician who devoted most of his research to examining varieties of English, focused on EE and its definition. He even dedicated a website on the University College of London page entitled *Department of Speech, Hearing & Phonetic Sciences* that was created on his initiative to shed light on this confusing accent which lacks substantial material.² Wells agrees with Rosewarne and Coggle on the gist of EE, especially on the continuum that exists between RP and “broad” Cockney. In his document entitled *Transcribing Estuary English, a discussion document*, Wells clarifies his position on EE.

² Ranging from scholarly articles to press articles, Well’s website is dedicated to the EE accent. A comprehensive list of resources related to EE is available. For more information, please visit www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/estuary/home.htm

“Many of our native-speaker undergraduates use a variety of English that I suppose we have to call Estuary English, following Rosewarne 1984, 1994, Coggle 1993, and many recent reports on press and television [...] This means that their accent is located somewhere in the continuum between RP and broad Cockney [...] As with the equally unsatisfactory term ‘Received Pronunciation’, we are forced to go along” (1994b: 261).

The definition above provides a more exhaustive review of EE, especially in terms of sociological characteristics. Wells implies that EE is spoken by “native-speaker undergraduates”, which means that this community specifically study at university level. It is important to notice the word choice of Wells as he uses “undergraduates” but not ‘postgraduates’ or the hypernym ‘students’. This argument brings us back to our informant that may fit in with this specific type of profile, since the latter is an undergraduate at the University of Birmingham (see section III.1.4). Another important point in the definition above is that Wells clearly underlines the “recent reports on press and television” (1994b). For him, EE is the result of thorny debates sparked off by journalists and the media. They were sometimes tempted to distort and demonise EE, fearing that it would be likely to replace RP one day (Tönnies, 2008: 3). However, it is relatively different from others’ definition, since the linguist adds that, as with RP, which is an “unsatisfactory term”, “we are forced to go along”. Wells implies that RP is “unsatisfactory” because it may consist of many other accents and varieties that we simply group into one entity, as analysed previously (see section I.1.1). Such categorisation solely depends on one’s subjectivity. This issue also concerns EE as this “new” variety could potentially be spoken amongst “native-speaker undergraduates”. As Wells’ definition dates back to 1994, only further research can prove its existence, hence the mention “we are forced to go along”.

In the same document, Wells asserts that we may distinguish EE and RP on the basis of localisability as EE is from the Southeast of England, whereas RP is regionally neutral (1994b: 262). One could argue that Wells seems to make a mistake in terms of terminology. Indeed, if EE is only adopted in a young community, it is more accurate to consider EE a ‘style-shifting’, rather than a new ‘variety’ or ‘regional accent’. However, Wells believes that EE is a distinctive variety of English because the phonological system of EE may be different from RP. Also, according to him, EE speakers use standard grammar, as opposed to Cockney speakers who tend to opt for non-standard grammar (262). Thus, EE is closer to RP as it uses standard structure. However, due to the extreme confusion and uncertainty over EE, Wells admits that its nature and

existence are strongly arguable. The label 'EE' is even questioned by Wells who eventually suggests that "London English" would be more appropriate (261).

1.3.5 EE as a 'style-shifting' for Altendorf

As opposed to other accents, Ulrike Altendorf claims that the particularity of EE lies in the need for speakers to "conform to (linguistic) middle class norms either by moving up or down the social scale. The first group aims at EE in order to sound more 'posh', the second to sound less 'posh' both avoiding the elitist character of RP" (Altendorf, 1999: 1). Therefore, EE is clearly a 'style-shifting' for Altendorf because it is a sociological instrument for conforming to a specific community. In other words, a 'style-shifting' is a way for the middle class to converge linguistically towards EE in order to fit in with a particular community.

It is important to point out that if EE is regarded as a style-shifting, the main difficulty may rest upon the identification of its concrete variants as these are found in RP and Cockney. Indeed, the fact that EE "comprises features of RP as well as non-standard London English thus borrowing the positive prestige from both accents without committing itself to either" suggests that it possesses a hybrid phonological system borrowed from the RP accent and the non-standard London English speech (Altendorf, 1999: 1). We may be rapidly confused and simply assert that an individual is not an RP speaker, nor a London English speaker but an EE one. If such distinction cannot be possible, we could conclude that EE is not an accent but a 'style-shifting'.

When examining deeper Altendorf's article entitled *Estuary English: Is English Going Cockney?*, we could go so far as to claim that EE is more than an accent, since not only are "thank you/good bye" replaced by "cheers", but "there are more frequent use of question tags" (Altendorf, 1999: 1). Likewise, Rosewarne asserts that "cheers" is more frequently used amongst EE speakers. As a consequence, EE is potentially a dialect as it possesses its vocabulary and speakers may use specific forms more frequently. We could verify Altendorf and Rosewarne's assumptions by resorting to a corpus which provides extralinguistic elements, such as the age and gender of speakers that more frequently adopt "cheers". We used the oral corpus called *Spoken BNC 2014* from the *British National Corpus* and typed "cheers" as shown below.

Your query "cheers" returned 410 matches in 181 different texts (in 11,422,617 words [1,251 texts]; frequency: 35.89 instances per million words) [0.12 seconds - retrieved from cache]

|< << >> >| Show Page: 1 Line View Show in random order Choose action... Go!

No	Text	Solution 1 to 50	Page 1 / 9
1	S24A 93	'll show me whatever this particular special thing is ? S0262: yeah S0261: okay	(...)cheers thank you (...) so today we 're at the EM
2	S263 1030	S0590: >> no S0588: with a robot S0589: Alessi S0588: Alessi that 's probably it S0590: >> mm yeah	S0589: cheers do you want some more wine dear ? S0
3	S2C9 1420	she 'd be going (.) oh so (.) --ANONnameM 's round --ANONnameF 's S0336: yeah	S0362: cheers for the invite S0336: yeah S0362: right
4	S2DD 254	S0687: yes please thank you S0689: lovely thank you very much S0690: thank you	S0689: cheers UNKFEMALE ^[77] : enjoy UNKMULT
5	S2DD 756	very much S0687: thank you UNKFEMALE ^[77] : water ? S0687: >> to erm S0689: >> ta UNKFEMALE ^[77] : --UNCLEARWORD S0688: thank you	S0689: cheers S0687: do you remember that 's what st
6	S2KP 1258	Humpty Dumpty S0192: that 's a good one I should call you that	S0198: cheers S0229: get your little legs S0198: >> I'
7	S2LD 1023	were n't in that lesson but everyone wanted to watch that film	S0405: cheers what film was it ? S0556: Dracula S055
8	S376 440	S0188: no no it 's not it 's not just you you two	S0200: cheers S0188: but as as as a lot of us S0200: t
9	S376 595	for you mate S0200: there are ninety-two shifts on offer S0387: yeah exam period	S0200: cheers bud S0387: --ANONnameM 's having r

Illustration 3: Screenshot taken from *The BNC Spoken 2014*.³

In total, we eventually obtained over 400 occurrences of 'cheers'. We took into account three relevant sociological criteria, namely the age, the gender and the social class of each individual. We took into consideration the first 50 individuals who uttered the word 'cheers'. Firstly, in terms of age, we noticed that amongst the first 50 individuals, 1 was between 0 and 10 years old, 7 between 10 and 20 years old, 19 between 20 and 30 years old, 9 between 30 and 40 years old, 8 between 40 to 50 years old, 2 between 50 and 60 years old, 2 between 60 and 70 years old and 2 between 70 and 80 years old. Consequently, the highest number of occurrences was uttered by the community of young adults being aged between 20 and 30, which backs up Altendorf's and Rosewarne's assertions. Secondly, with regards to the gender, 20 women uttered 'cheers', while 30 men did so. As for the social class measured between A to E, A demonstrates the highest social class, whereas E stands for the lower class. 6 were part of the A category, 14 of B, 6 of C, 3 of D and 21 of E.

Therefore, the majority using 'cheers' fit the B and E categories, which respectively correspond to the upper-middle class and the working class. Of course, these results are not entirely reliable even though the *BNC* provides interesting sociological details. We can conclude that individuals using 'cheers' are between 20 and 30 years old and are likely to be male speakers. Finally, if EE is a style-shifting, we are already aware that speakers adopting it strive to take the appearance of middle-class individuals. Nevertheless, we do not know from which social class speakers come. Thanks to this corpus, the social-class criteria for each speaker is unveiled and from what we can see, speakers interestingly fall into the B and E categories which refer to the

³ For more information, please visit <https://cqpweb.lancs.ac.uk>

upper-middle class and the working class. Thus, we could speculate that the upper class seeks to keep a balance between adopting the English standard and a less ‘posh’ form of the language, since “cheers” is the informal and non-standard form of ‘thank you’. Of course, these observations are speculations. A deeper analysis would be required as only 50 individuals were taken into consideration.

1.3.5 Conclusion

The aim of this section was to question Rosewarne’s assumption whereby EE was a new ‘accent’ or ‘variety’. EE, which first emerged in 1984, was perhaps hastily coined to explain why contemporary changes had been occurring in the English language. In this dissertation, we agree with Altendorf’s assumption that EE is a style-shifting, which runs counter to what Rosewarne’s had previously asserted. As opposed to RP, EE can be the result of a new social phenomenon, rather than being an emerging accent of British English. Speculatively, languages may no longer be viewed as a means of communication but rather, it should now be regarded as a sociological technique for English young adults to fit in with a community.

2. Three phonological systems and various pronunciation variants

In this section, we present the phonological systems of RP, EE and Cockney, which helps us establish their boundaries. However, the major difficulty lies in the fact that their specific phonetic realisations sometimes overlap, since these three accents can be positioned on a continuum. We also provide historical context to conclude whether EE is merely a ‘near-RP’, a ‘hybrid’ that shares both Cockney and RP variants, a ‘style-shifting’ as asserted by Ulrike Altendorf or if we could go so far as to assert that it is a dialect levelling (see section III.2.3).

• *Phonetics and Phonology*

In order to achieve the best results, we should first clarify the terms ‘phone’, ‘phoneme’, ‘variable’, ‘variant’ and ‘allophone’. Moreover, as both ‘phonology’ and ‘phonetics’ are at times confused and used interchangeably, we should take the definition provided by Jean-Louis Duchet.

“En résumé, nous dirons que la phonétique étudie avec précision les sons en tant que réalité physique, acoustique et articulatoire, observable dans toutes les langues du monde, tandis que la phonologie cherche à dégager les principes qui régissent leur apparition et leur fonction dans les mots d’une langue particulière où ils forment un système” (1981: 41).

In his definition, Duchet also incorporates Kenneth Pike’s quotation who asserts that “[p]honetics gathers raw material ; phonemics cooks it” (1947: 57). In other words, “[l]a phonologie décrit les sons en tant que systèmes” (Durand, to be published: 1), whereas phonetics focuses on the concrete manner for a speaker to pronounce sounds. Phonetic transcription resorts to additional signs that we call diacritics, such as [t^h] for the /t/ phoneme. To put it simply, let us take the example of /t/-glottalisation and /l/-vocalisation. These two variants (also referred to as allophones) belong to the /t/ and /l/ phonemes. A phoneme is, as Saussure puts it in *Cours de linguistique* in 1916, “une entité différencielle [...] comme l’unité minimale de la chaîne parlée” (63). There are two or more different ways to utter a phoneme and [ʔ] is one of the possible realisations of /t/. For example, in this thesis, we focus on the /t/ variable but also on its [ʔ] allophone. As can be inferred, we can transcribe these sounds with slashes to represent phonemes. On the other hand, we resort to square brackets when referring to phonetic characteristics of a phoneme.

• ***Focus on /t/-glottalisation***

In the following sections, we only focus on /t/-glottalisation which is phonetically transcribed as [ʔ]. In addition to this variant, we provide an overview of the phonological systems of RP, Cockney and EE. Examining the [ʔ] variant has not been selected by chance. As implied in the following paragraphs, [ʔ] is an allophone of the /t/ phoneme heard amongst EE speakers but also at times amongst RP and Cockney speakers. Thus, we take into consideration the [ʔ] allophone heard in RP, EE and Cockney to establish the accent of our informant incorporated into the PAC programme. In turn, we strive to formulate a definition that portrays a community that is sociologically close to our informant. By the same token, Wells suggests that “although RP is by far the most thoroughly described accent of English, there has been very little in the way of objective quantified investigation of its variability” (Wells, 1982: 279). Therefore, if our informant’s pronunciation is assumed to be a form of RP or ‘near-RP’, we could make our own contribution to the lack of analyses regarding varieties of RP.

2.1 Received Pronunciation: a phonological model to follow?

2.1.1 Basis of the phonological system of RP

The phonological system of RP is made up of 44 phonemes, that is 20 contrastive vowels and 24 consonants (Brooks, 2015: 14). This system, elaborated by Wells in 1982, remains a strong basis for describing the standard of the British English variety. In spite of its relative stability, this system has experienced changes. For instance, the final vowel /ɪ/ in *bit* was progressively replaced by /i/ (Wells, 1997: 45). Such modifications were intended to reflect the changes that have occurred in the English language. Likewise, Wells states that,

“in *nephew* the /f/ form, preferred by 79% of all respondents, proves to be the choice of a mere 51% of those respondents born before 1923, but of as many as 92% of those born since 1962. There is a clear trend line, showing that the /v/ form (which happens to be the one I prefer myself) is due to disappear entirely before very long” (1997: 48).

From a phonetic point of view, this level of representation is by no means problematic when describing RP as phonetics allows for more physical realisations that can be represented by phonetic transcription and diacritics. However, even though phonology only provides a systemic overview of RP, it remains a strong basis for illustrating the problem linked to EE (see section I.2.1.2).

When comparing accents and dialects of British English, the reference point is the phonological system of RP as it represents the standard in the United Kingdom. In his book *Accents of English*, Wells presents the twenty-seven lexical sets that help describe phonologically two varieties, namely RP and GA (or General American) (1982). These two varieties are taken as the references of the English language. It is noteworthy to point out that their phonological systems are based on the International Phonetic Alphabet. “Pour l'étude scientifique du langage ou l'enseignement des langues, il est essentiel d'avoir un outil rigoureux permettant de noter les sons langagiers de façon uniforme : un signe pour chaque son, et un son pour chaque signe” (Durand, to be published: 1).

Here is the vowel and consonant chart established by Wells, which is available in *Accents of English* (1982). We draw upon Well's Vowel Chart in order to represent phonemically the vowels of the British English variety.

- *Vowels*

DRESS /e/ - KIT /ɪ/ - TRAP /æ/ - LOT /ɒ/ - STRUT /ʌ/ - FOOT /ʊ/ - BATH /ɑː/ - CLOTH /ɒ/ - NURSE /ɜː/ - FLEECE /iː/ - FACE /eɪ/ - PALM /ɑː/ - THOUGHT /ɔː/ - GOAT /əʊ/ - GOOSE /uː/ - PRICE /aɪ/ - CHOICE /ɔɪ/ - MOUTH /aʊ/ - NEAR /ɪə/ - SQUARE /eə/ - START /ɑː/ - NORTH /ɔː/ - FORCE /ɔː/ - CURE /ʊə/ - HAPPY /ɪ/ - lettER /ə/ - COMMA /ə/

- *Consonants*

/p/ ; /b/ ; /t/ ; /d/ ; /k/ ; /g/ ; /f/ ; /v/ ; /θ/ ; /ð/ ; /s/ ; /z/ ; /ʃ/ ; /ʒ/ ; /h/ ; /ŋ/ ; /dʒ/ ; /m/ ; /n/ ; /ŋ/ ; /l/ ; /r/ ; /j/ ; /w/.

2.1.2 The phonological system of RP: A representative pronunciation of the British people?

We previously concluded that RP was viewed as the standard of the British English variety, albeit spoken by a minority. Therefore, RP is by no means representative of the authentic speech adopted by speakers of the British English variety. Pragmatically, however, RP is a tool that serves two purposes. Indeed, its first objective is the prestigious and supremacist social image it connotes. Secondly, RP is the model of the British English variety not only taught in British schools, particularly in public schools and Oxbridge but also in foreign schools and universities (Altendorf, 2003: 29). The name itself, ‘Received’, has a double meaning. Its first connotation suggests that it is accepted as a standard in the United Kingdom. The secondary meaning implies that it is designed to be understood by others in a clear manner. From a phonological point of view, Wells’ RP chart above seems to depict a rigid system or rather, an idealistic, careful pronunciation model. This is especially the case in phonology as it remains abstract. One might even assert that phonology’s ultimate goal is to “relate such abstract forms to their concrete realisations”. (Davenport and Hannahs, 2013: 198). Owing to the idiolect of each speaker, it does not yield a homogenous, clear-cut phonological system. Likewise, extralinguistic factors, such as the context, gender, age, and social class of each individual, alter the phonological system of RP. For instance, RP is strongly subject to innovations as /r/ sandhi is more and more heard amongst speakers of this variety.⁴

⁴ Please, see Cécile Viollain’s thesis published in 2014 for more information over the /r/ sandhi.

2.1.3 Focus on /t/-glottalisation

When focusing on the manner of articulation of /t/-glottalisation, which is phonetically represented as [ʔ], it is an occlusive consonant, that is to say, it is produced by obstructing the airflow in the vocal tract. It is a plosive, voiceless consonant, which means that it is realised with no vibration of the vocal cords and the air only goes through the mouth. We would like to debunk the myth that [ʔ] is solely found amongst RP, EE and Cockney speakers. Indeed, [ʔ] is not geographically restricted to London accents as it is widely spread across Britain, such as East Anglia and North of Leeds, to name a few (Trudgill, 1984: 57). Nevertheless, [ʔ] may also be heard amongst speakers of other varieties of English. For example, Przewozny asserts that in Australian English “[la réalisation de la plosive alvéolaire non voisée /t/] peut également être réalisé[e] comme [ʔ] devant /n/ syllabique (*mutton* ['mʌʔn])” (2016: 167).

[ʔ] is constrained to specific environments, that is to say, the realisation of this variant depends on the preceding or following sounds. It is important to add that the social class can be determined on the basis of the environment of /t/-glottalisation. For instance, Wells asserts in *The Cockneyfication of R.P.?*, published in 1994, that we may differentiate between a Cockney speaker and an RP speaker based on the intervocalic position of [ʔ], that is to say, when it occurs between vowels. For example, *city*, which is represented phonetically as ['sɪʔi] in Cockney, remains excluded from RP and transcribed as ['sɪti]. If we agree with Wells who argues that ‘near-RP’ is part of RP, we may consequently accept the fact that *pick it up* may be phonetically transcribed as [pɪk ɪʔ ʌp] where the realisation of /t/ can be transcribed as [ʔ] before vowels or in final position, as in *Let's start* [leʔ sta:ʔ], especially by younger RP-speakers (Wells, 1991: 3). Likewise, Wells affirms that [ʔ] is formally uttered in ‘casual RP’ before obstruents, namely before a fricative or plosive sound, such as in *football* ['fʊʔbɔ:l] but also before other consonants, like in *Gatwick* ['gæʔwɪk]. There is a clear parallel between ‘casual RP’ and ‘style-shifting’ put forward by Altendorf. Indeed, a careful pronunciation that shifts to a casual speech undoubtedly alters the phonological system of RP. It should only be phonetically transcribed but not phonemically. Therefore, elaborating a new phonological system, which would best feature a casual pronunciation and a more faithful image of today's RP, is to be questioned.

Nevertheless, for Wells, “the increased use of glottal stops within RP may plausibly be the influence from Cockney and other working-class urban speech. What started as a vulgarity is

becoming respectable” (Wells, 1991: 3). By analysing the number of /t/-glottalisation from our informant’s pronunciation, we may validate or refute Wells’ assumption.

2.2 Cockney: A ‘working class’ RP?

To analyse the main variants of Cockney, we may first compare its phonological system with the RP standard. Its importance does not only lie in its cohabitation with RP and the other dialects and accents of British English, but it is also important to point out that the phonemes of Cockney are heard in other parts of Britain through ‘diffusion’ and ‘dialect levelling’ (see section III.2.3). For instance, according to Stuart-Smith’s study carried out in 2007, Glaswegian teenagers have adopted phonological features of Cockney (Nødtvedt, 2011: 42). For this reason, we set out to describe Cockney as much as RP and EE. In this section, we provide an overview of the phonological system of Cockney by describing one salient phonological feature, more particularly, /t/-glottalisation. We do not wish to share a comprehensive illustration of each variant as it is not the point of this dissertation.

2.2.1 Phonological system of Cockney

- ***Vowels: monophthongs and diphthongs***

In this paragraph, we briefly analyse certain variables that are uttered differently in the Cockney dialect. We also use slashes as we strive to establish a broad overview of Cockney from a phonological perspective. According to Wells, one feature that contrasts RP with Cockney is the difference in the phonetic qualities of their short vowels (1986: 305). Thus, /e/ is pronounced like /æ/ and /ə/ is uttered /ʌ/. Naturally, what also makes Cockney different from RP concerns the diphthongs (Hughes, and Trudgill, 2005: 75). Therefore, /ei/ becomes /æi/, like in *mate* which becomes /mæit/. As for /əʊ/, it becomes /ʌu/, as in *soaked* /sʌukt/. /aɪ/ becomes /ɔɪ/, like in *inside* /,ɪn'sɔɪd/. /aʊ/ may become /æə/, as in *surrounded* /sə'ræəndɪd/.

- ***Two particular consonants: /th/-fronting and /h/-dropping***

A particular pronunciation feature of Cockney is /th/-fronting “which collapses the contrast between labio-dental /f, v/ and dental /θ, ð/ fricatives. The examples of TH Fronting can be *thin* /fɪn/

or *father* /'fa:və/” (Čubrović and Paunović, 2011: 5). The use of /v/ or /f/ instead of /θ/ or /ð/ is so conspicuous that one could question the phonological system of Cockney. Indeed, we could even speculate that the /θ/ and /ð/ phonemes could be replaced by /v/ and /f/.

In order to test out this hypothesis, we should first observe whether the two phonemes affect the phonological system of Cockney. If there is no distinction between /θ/ and /ð/ in Cockney, it would suggest that these could be replaced by one [v] allophone. As the latter could represent a minimal pair if separated, we may conclude that [v] is not only an allophone of /v/, like in *vain* but also of both /θ/ and /ð/ phonemes. Consequently, [v] could merge the /v/ phoneme, provided it is uttered in every environment, namely between vowels, such as in *cathedral* */kə'vi:drəl/ and word-finally, like in *broth*, phonemically transcribed as */'brɒv/.⁵ Carr claims that Cockney lacks the contrast as /v/ would allow for a systemic difference between Cockney and RP (2012: 154). However, he asserts that “many speakers are variable with respect to this phenomenon, so we cannot conclude that they lack the /θ/ phoneme”. Likewise, as for /ð/ as a substitute for /v/, “it is rather difficult to find many minimal pairs involving the two (that vs vat and live/lithe are examples)” (154).

In addition, /h/-dropping “is essentially omission of initial /h/ in words such as *hammer*: /'æmə/, *have* /æv/ or *over here* /ʌʊvə 'iə/” (Wells, 1982: 253-254). Carr asserts that the ‘hyper-correction’ in careful Cockney speech is evidence of the lack of /h/ (2012: 154-155). Indeed, when Cockney speakers pay attention to their speech, they tend to wrongly add an [h] sound. For instance, *air* becomes *[’hɛə] and *ear* is transcribed as *[’hɪə] when hyper-correcting their speech (Carr, 2012: 155). Carr takes the example of the French learning English who may try to hyper-correct their speech and mistakenly pronounce the [h] sound, as in *hair* *[’ɛə]. Let us point out that the latter realisation is correct from a descriptive point of view as it exemplifies the phonological system of Cockney. However, linguists showing prescriptivism may not view this pronunciation as ‘correct’.

2.2.2 Focus on /t/-glottalisation

Wells quotes Matthews (1938: 80) who asserts that “the chief consonantal feature of the [Cockney] dialect is the prevalence of the glottal stop” (Wells, 1982: 323). /T/-glottalisation, which

⁵ We only discuss a potential change within the phonological system of Cockney. The two asterisks indicate that the phonological transcriptions of *cathedral* and *broth* are impossible. Indeed, *that* [ðæt] would still be correct but not *[væt].

is realised as [ʔ], may be heard in different environments. The first one can be pronounced intervocalically, that is to say, between two vowels, as in *butter* [/'bʌʔə/]. The occurrence of [ʔ] intervocalically is assumed to be the main feature that best marks the separation between a Cockney speaker and an RP one (Mott, 2011: 83). The second position where /t/-glottalisation may occur is before a pause, as in *wet* [weʔ] (Hughes, and Trudgill, 2005). Finally, [ʔ] may be realised after a nasal jump which replaces /p/ or /k/, as in *jump* [dzʌmʔ] (Trudgill, 1984: 57). All in all, we may conclude by assuming that [ʔ] for /t/ is possible in nearly all environments except syllable initial positions, as in *table* *['ʔeɪbl].

2.3 EE: both RP and Cockney blended?

The tables below are useful as these provide a comprehensive overview of the phonological features related to EE (see section 2.3.2). Moreover, these illustrate the difficult task of generating an accurate representation of the phonological system of EE. Indeed, many linguists unsuccessfully theorised EE and its phonological system, because Przedlacka and other linguists have backtracked on their initial observations over the boundaries that separate RP, EE and Cockney. For example, Wells asserts that he could easily refute his claims when it comes to associating /l/-vocalisation with ‘near-RP’ (the latter possibly considered EE) rather than ‘non-RP’ (1982: 295). Instead of enumerating the variants peculiar to EE, we have opted for a comparison between EE and RP on one hand, and EE and Cockney on the other hand.

2.3.1 General phonological system of EE

<i>Estuary English / RP</i>	<i>Cockney</i>
no H-dropping	H-dropping, e.g. <i>hand</i> [ænd]
no TH-fronting	TH-fronting, e.g. <i>think</i> [fɪŋk]
no MOUTH- monophthong	MOUTH-monophthong, e.g. <i>town</i> [te:n]
no intervocalic T-glottaling	intervocalic T-glottaling, e.g. <i>pity</i> ['piʔi]

Table 1: This table was taken from Smit, et al. (2007: 180).

The first category illustrates the similarities between EE and RP, unlike the second grouping that lists the specific features of Cockney. Firstly, /h/-dropping, which constitutes the typical variant of Cockney speakers, does not appear in EE, nor in RP. Likewise, /th/-dropping, the second

quintessential realisation of Cockney, is not present in RP, nor in EE. As for the MOUTH-monophthong, that is to say, the diphthong of MOUTH /aʊ/, pronounced with a long monophthong [ɛ:], appears in the sound inventory of Cockney. Finally, /t/-glottalisation is neither realised intervocally in EE, nor in RP. Consequently, it is impossible to hear an RP or an EE speaker uttering *city* ['sɪʔi].

<i>Estuary English / Cockney</i>	<i>Received Pronunciation</i>
variable HAPPY-tensing, e.g. <i>pretty</i> ['prɪti]	no HAPPY-tensing
vocalisation of preconsantal, final /l/, e.g. <i>spilt</i> [spɪʊt]	no vocalisation of preconsantal, final /l/
final T-glottaling, e.g. <i>cut</i> [kʌʔ]	no final T-glottaling
yod coalescence in stressed syllables, e.g. <i>tune</i> [tʃu:n]	no yod coalescence in stressed syllables
some diphthong shift in FACE, PRICE, GOAT, e.g. [fæɪs], [prɪɪs], [gɔʊt]	no such diphthong shift

Table 2: This table was retrieved from Smit, et al. (2007: 180).

From the second table, we should first point out that yod coalescence should not be confused with yod dropping. The first one “involves mutual assimilation of the glide /j/ and the preceding consonants [t, d] resulting in the palato-alveolar affricates [tʃV] and [dʒV]” (Altendorf, 2003: 67). For instance, *tune* ['tju:n] becomes [tʃu:n] and *dune* ['dju:n] is pronounced [dʒu:n] (67). As for yod dropping, it “involves the loss of the palatal glide /j/ resulting in the variants [tV, dV, nV]” (67). The table above may be limited in that Wells asserts that,

“the process of yod coalescence continues to widen its scope, extending now to stressed syllables. This makes *Tuesday*, conservatively /'tju:zdi/, begin /'tʃu:z/, identical with *choose* /'tʃu:z/. *Tune* and *duke* become /tʃu:n, dʒu:k/, and *reduce* comes to have a second syllable identical with *juice*” (1997: 4).

Therefore, the fact that “yod coalescence [...] extending now to stressed syllables” can be heard from an RP speaker contradicts the table above in which RP is said to have “no yod coalescence in stressed syllables”. Furthermore, in the table above, the diphthong shift in FACE, PRICE, GOAT indicates that the quality of the /eɪ/, /aɪ/ and /əʊ/ diphthongs are different. Thus, the RP realisation of *face* ['feɪs] is uttered [fæɪs] in both Cockney and EE, *price* ['praɪs] in RP may be pronounced

[prɔɪs] in both Cockney and EE, and *goat* ['gəʊt] in standard British English is uttered [gʌtɔ] in Cockney and EE. The third sound feature found in Cockney and EE but absent amongst RP speakers, is the HAPPY-tensing. According to Beal, the pronunciation of HAPPY-tensing can be defined “as a tense and sometimes long /i(:)/ rather than a short, lax /ɪ/ or even /ɛ/” (2010: 18). As a result, the chart suggests that RP has no HAPPY-tensing. However, when looking up the term *happy* in the *Cambridge Dictionary* for instance, the phonemic transcription of this term is /'hæpi/ with a tense /i/ but not with a lax /ɪ/, although the dictionary speculatively provides the phonological transcription of RP or General American.

2.3.2 /t/-glottalisation and its environments

Phonetic markers ¹ (Wells 1998)	Example	Cockney	EE
TH fronting	['fɪŋk] for <i>think</i>	+	-
/t/-glottalling in intervocalic position	['bʌʔə] for <i>butter</i>	+	-
/t/-glottalling finally etc.	['gæʔwɪk] for <i>Gatwick</i>	+	+
vocalisation of preconsantal and prepausal /l/ (' dark l /')	['miok] for <i>milk</i> ['pi:po] for <i>people</i>	+	+

Table 3: Phonetic markers of Wells 1998 taken from Altendorf (1999).

The last table above details the environment in which /t/-glottalisation and /l/-vocalisation occur, which are two realisations that mark off the EE and Cockney boundaries. In his table, Wells differentiates the realisation of EE and Cockney by means of + and -. Additionally, he puts + and - in bold to show that /t/-glottalling in intervocalic position is the specific variant that fundamentally distinguish Cockney from EE.

It is important to go back to the definition provided by David Rosewarne who coined ‘Estuary English’ in 1984. He asserted that “an Estuary English speaker uses fewer glottal stops for /t/ or /d/ than a “London” speaker, but more than an R.P. speaker” (1994: 5). Let us bear in mind that a “London” speaker refers to the continuum where Cockney is positioned on the opposite of RP. As a consequence, measuring the number of occurrences of /t/-glottalisation may lead us to conclude that our informant has an EE accent or tends to place himself towards Cockney or inversely, his pronunciation is closer to RP. This method brings us back to the first quantitative study which was carried out in 1958 in a New England town by the anthropologist Fischer (Labov, 2008: 4). He was interested in gender differences and focused on the use of (ing). Another

empirical research, which was later carried out, concerns the work of Trudgill, conducted in 1974 in Norwich, United Kingdom. The main variable on which he based his work was /t/-glottalisation.

- ***Conclusion***

To conclude, EE may potentially be an ‘in-between’ accent that can be pinned down on the continuum between RP on one side and Cockney on the other. More specifically, the position of EE can be determined from the frequency of /t/-glottalisation. Nevertheless, analysing previous empirical research, as well as our own corpus, was necessary to confirm or reject our initial hypotheses. We should bear in mind that from another perspective, EE may be a ‘style-shifting’, as put forward by Altendorf.

II- Corpora and Research

The next paragraphs are intended to analyse in more detail why EE is difficult to define by means of quantitative results. Section II is entirely devoted to examining EE as the phonological system of our informant may be similar to that of an EE speaker. In order to do so, we first need to discuss linguists' quantitative research. According to Jacques Durand, "pour comprendre le changement linguistique et la nature des variations observables de nos jours, les travaux de nos prédécesseurs sont indispensables" (Durand, 2018: 2). By the same token, we particularly analyse the methods adopted by the linguists in order to underline the discrepancies that may have skewed or impeded their results.

1. Substantial corpora hitherto conducted related to EE

The following part is devoted to discussing Przedlacka's findings regarding EE. We have separated this linguist from her other counterparts who worked on the same definition as she is considered the pioneer of the EE definition. The other corpora are fully explained in section II.1.2 and II.1.3.

1.1 Przedlacka: the pioneering researcher of EE

The following section discusses the extensive empirical research of Joanna Przedlacka carried out in 1997 and 1998. She then compiled her own empirical data into a book entitled *Estuary English?* and published it in 2002. This book was initially her unpublished Ph.D thesis presented in 1999 in Warsaw, Poland. She also discussed her findings in an article entitled *Estuary English and RP: Some Recent Findings* (2001) that we examine in particular.

1.1.1 Aim

According to Przedlacka, EE has an "impressionistic character" nurtured by many press articles that had been demonising it for a long time (2002: ix). Consequently, it was of paramount importance for her to carry out her own research in an attempt to explain the underlying complexity of EE. Her intentions are clearly laid out in her preface in which "[her] present work is to establish

the nature of an allegedly new accent variety” (ix). At the end of her book, Przedlacka wishes to have answered the two following questions: “Is there a coherent and uniform variety, frequently referred to as EE?” and “can we legitimately call it a newly emerging accent?” (97).

1.1.2 Methodology

Prior to defining EE and choosing the correct label, we may first examine the methodology that Przedlacka adopted. In her book *Estuary English?*, she opts for a comparative work between old data based on the SED (Survey of English Dialects) and her own recordings. She particularly compares the pronunciation of teenagers recorded between 1997 and 1998 in the Home Counties with rural speech recordings from the Survey of English Dialects which date back to 1950s (2002: 19). Przedlacka adopts a diachronic approach so as to observe whether EE is a new phenomenon or not.

In her corpus, Przedlacka classifies her speakers into three categories based on three accents, namely EE, Cockney and RP. We noticed that, in addition to EE, RP was also subject to a large number of definitions and labels. In this context, Przedlacka adopts Wells’ definition of EE as “the speech of London and the Southeast” (Wells, 1998: 36). She also takes into account sociological criteria, such as the social class of each informant. Determining whether a particular pupil was regarded as an RP speaker was left to the teachers’ opinion (2002: 21).

In total, the EE speakers were 16, 9 of whom were 14, 2 were aged 15 and 5 were 16 years old. Recording youngsters aged between 14 and 16 was a necessary condition for Przedlacka. Indeed, “that sound changes are most advanced in the youngest group of speakers is a fact well documented in sociolinguistic literature” (20). As it usually happens during sociolinguistic interviews, 2 EE speakers were removed from her statistics as their original permission was withdrawn (21). The key criteria was to select specific places of residence but not schools. They had to be native to their village or had to have previously moved into the location in question “not later than at the age of 5” (21). All the EE interviews took place between November 1997 and March 1998 (23).

As far as Cockney speakers are concerned, only 2 informants were interviewed, of whom one female and one male aged 14 and 15 respectively were recorded. They came from Bethnal Green, which is set in the traditional Cockney heartland (23). They were all recorded in an East London comprehensive school (23).

Only two speakers thought of as RP speakers were recorded. 2 males aged 13 were interviewed in Eton College in Berkshire (23). RP and Cockney speakers were interviewed in November 1998 (23).

Przedlacka divided her informants into three groups. The first category was social class, which comprised of 8 middle-class students and 8 working-class youngsters (23). Secondly, Przedlacka devoted her second grouping to gender, which included 8 male and 8 female speakers (23). Finally, she retained the county from which the speakers came (23).

During the interview, each student was isolated so as to reduce noise sources, which not only would have had disturbed the participant, but also may have had impeded the results (23). Prior to the interview, the procedure was fully explained to the pupils in advance (23). Nevertheless, the students were not informed of the real objective, which was to analyse the potential phonetic change (23). The interviews were conducted in the informants' schools, most of which were selective ones set in Buckinghamshire, Essex, and Kent (22). The others schools, situated in Buckinghamshire, Essex, Kent and Surrey, were non-selective (22).

The first task was a warm-up conversation between Przedlacka and one informant (24). The fieldworker asked questions about the pupil's name, age, family, hobbies and GCSE modules (24). However, Przedlacka did not judge this passage important as it was not included in her analyses (24). As one of the linguist's objectives was to draw comparisons between old recordings from the SED and her own, the localities selected were constrained to the SED. The samples of the SED were recorded in Buckinghamshire with 26 informants (21).

The questionnaires substantially drew heavily on those of the SED (29). They consisted of 116 lexical items that each informant had to guess based on simple questions, such as: "What is the name of the animal that gives milk?" (109-113). However, specific passages were removed as there were unfamiliar words that were known at the time of the SED interviews in 1950s. This method was specifically adopted so that the informant did not focus on the pronunciation of the word but rather, on their answers to the various questions. The other advantage is that written instructions are absent from this method, which may encourage informants to automatically utter the word without distraction. Nonetheless, one who expects to hear a specific word from a question may be complex for an informant but also for a linguist. If the answer was different from the linguist's predictions, the results were naturally skewed and the word had no significance. Likewise, the fact that informants had to utter specific words may have represented a source of stress, feeling that their knowledge was being assessed and consequently judged as uncultured. By contrast, the PAC

programme is not based on such protocol and it is demanded that each informant reads a word list and a text, followed by two formal and informal conversations (see section III).

1.1.3 Results

Przedlacka dissected 14 variables, namely 5 consonants and 9 vowels. In section II.1.1.3, we only examine the /t/ variable on which Przedlacka worked. After collecting her data, including 8 girls and 8 boys aged between 14 and 16, the linguist strived to divide each variable into three discrete classes (2002: 67). The three phonetic categories were the standard forms (or RP), the EE variants and the realisations different from RP and EE (67).

- */T/-glottaling*

	Tokens analysed	% of glottalled tokens [ʔ]
Bucks n=4	104	43.2
Essex n=3	72	8.3
Kent n=4	46F	56.5
	46m.	19.5
Surrey n=4	104	21.1

Table 4: From *Estuary English?* by Przedlacka (2002: 81).⁶

The table above provides other information, such as the number of occurrences of the variant [ʔ] in correlation with the location. The number of informants remains homogeneous, although one Essex informant is missing. A total of 326 tokens were analysed in order to examine the frequency of /t/-glottalisation. In Buckinghamshire, 4 speakers uttered 43.2% of [ʔ], whilst in Essex, 3 participants used 8.3% of this variant. In Kent, 4 female speakers adopted 56.5% of [ʔ], whereas male participants only uttered 19.5% of this allophone. Finally, in Surrey, 4 speakers used 21.1% of [ʔ]. Przedlacka concludes that informants, particularly from Kent and Buckinghamshire, tend to have more /t/-glottalisation than those from Essex or Surrey.

⁶ In the “Kent” category, “F” stands for female and “m” for male.

In addition, Przedlacka asserts that, on the whole, the speakers achieving the highest score of /t/-glottalisation were those from the working class, even though the difference was slim compared to the middle class.

	Tokens analysed	% of glottalled tokens [ʔ]
Females n=5	105	46.6
Males n=8	192	27.6

Table 5: Found in *Estuary English?* by Przedlacka (2002: 82).

As observed in the graph above, amongst the 15 informants viewed as EE speakers, 105 tokens of [ʔ] uttered by female speakers were analysed and 192 tokens of [ʔ] were uttered by male participants. Although there were more males than females, we can clearly conclude that females utter [ʔ] two times more than males.

1.1.4 Conclusion

Following her extensive and comprehensive research regarding EE speakers, Przedlacka demonstrates that certain features are uttered predominantly in Buckinghamshire and Kent but less in Essex and Surrey. Concerning the distribution of [ʔ] from a geographical point of view, there is not a clear-cut boarder as there are a few irregularities. Indeed, from Przedlacka’s data, we could have associated Essex and Kent with the Cockney dialect. These two areas are localised to the East of London, which is said to be the cradle of the Cockney dialect. Nevertheless, Essex, situated in the East, has the least number of glottal stops, which questions the geographical origin of Cockney. Likewise, Buckinghamshire and Surrey, situated in the West of London, might be linked with EE and RP, since the frequency of [ʔ] is speculatively lower amongst RP and EE speakers. Nevertheless, from Przedlacka’s results, informants from Buckinghamshire uttered 43.2 % of [ʔ], which refutes the hypothesis that individuals from the West cannot pronounce more glottal stops than in the East.

In the end, Przedlacka doubts that EE is an emerging accent. For her, it is not a single and definable variety of British English. However, she argues that in the various areas where EE is supposedly the dominant way of speaking, there is “a number of distinct accents” with influences of

London speech (97). Only potential trends, rather than absolutes, should emerge from Przedlacka's extensive empirical research, especially regarding the variability of the distribution of phonetic variables in male and female speech.

1.1.5 Observations and Discussion

The research project carried out by Przedlacka sheds light on two essential elements. Firstly, the linguist dissects her informants' speech in an attempt to conclude whether specific variants are heard in the Home Counties. Secondly, Przedlacka's undertaking raises awareness of the specific methodology to adopt, that is to say, the daunting task of gathering a whole empirical work in order to create a reliable corpus. Her work may highlight a few inconsistencies and discrepancies that are important to point out. The first problem is the quality of the results, especially regarding the preliminary stage consisting of warm-up questions, which was not incorporated into Przedlacka's analyses. Since authentic speech emanates from such informal tasks, it would have been interesting to examine it. The second inconsistency, albeit less problematic, is the fact that a few informants were not included in the data. For instance, a "male MC [middle-class] speaker with a low incidence of vocalisation was excluded from the Essex set" (83). Thirdly, one of the issues faced by many researchers is the fear that informants will withdraw from their interview, which occurred before Przedlacka's experiment. Although the information collected throughout such interviews is solely used for scientific purposes, the forms and questionnaires handed out to each informant at the beginning of the interview may intimidate some participants. All in all, the results may have been impeded by the three issues mentioned above. This discussion should remind us of always remaining meticulous and rigorous throughout the interview process regarding the classification of empirical data.

Another important aspect is the definition associated with 'social class', which was a factor through which Przedlacka classified her informants. Indeed, one could argue that the linguist took it for granted that, by selecting informants from three different schools, ranging from public to grammar schools, three distinct social classes could naturally emerge. Conversely, the PAC protocol goes beyond this simple assertion, since informants are asked to fill out the information sheet that helps linguists access confidential and sociological information regarding each individual (see appendix 5).

1.2 Corpora conducted by Ulrike Altendorf (1997 and 1998/1999) and by Christina Schmid (1998)

1.2.1 Altendorf (1997)

The following quantitative-based research projects, designed to examine the nature of EE, are not as exhaustively explored as Przedlacka's study. Ulrike Altendorf, a German linguist, carried out research studies related to EE. She published a book entitled *Estuary English: Levelling at the Interface of RP and South-Eastern British English* in 2003 as well as articles on which the following section is based. Her first study is not to be confused with her second research project carried out between 1998 and 1999 (see section II.1.2.3).

- *Methodology*

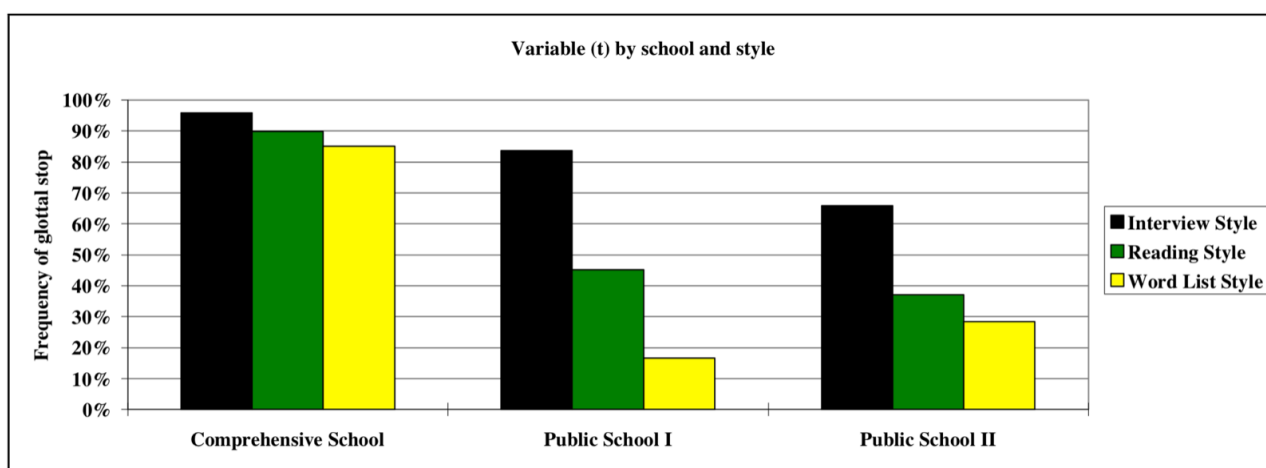
London Secondary School	Location	Accent 'classification'	Students: Lower Sixth	Style
Comprehensive School school fee: non	working class area in the East End	Cockney	2	(IS) Interview Style
Public School I school fee: £1000,00 +	residential area in the South of London	EE (?)	2	(RS) Reading Style
Public School II school fee: £3000,00 +	Central London	RP	2	(WLS) World List Style

Table 6: Taken from *Estuary English: Is English Going Cockney?* (Altendorf, 1999: 4).

In the table above, it is expounded that Altendorf's first investigation was conducted in London, specifically in the East End as well as in South and Central London. Her main objective was the same as Przedlacka's, though it was carried out not in the Home Counties but in the capital. In terms of classification, Altendorf divides London speech into three accents and dialects. Firstly, EE is spoken by the middle class in South London. Secondly, Cockney typifies the pronunciation of the East End of London, which symbolises its traditional cradle. Finally, RP speakers refer to informants recorded in a school in Central London. In order to dissect the pronunciation of her 6 young informants, Altendorf draws upon the notion of 'social background' which accounts for the amount of money that parents put into schooling. Altendorf's definition of 'social class' brings us back to what Przedlacka affirms. The latter asserts that 'social class' should be measured on the basis of the type of school of each individual. However, unlike Przedlacka, Altendorf uses the notion of 'social stratification', which is related to variationist sociolinguistics. This concept was

coined by Labov in 1972 when he extensively analysed the pronunciation of the /r/ variable in three New York City department stores in his book entitled *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. Altendorf’s methodology draws upon the informal interview stage, just like Labov’s research project in New York (Altendorf, 1999: 3). This is a stark contrast compared to Przedlacka, who withdrew the warm-up passage section of the interview.

In addition to the interviews in which the linguist asks questions about the school life and free-time activities of the informant, Altendorf resorts to a word list as well as the reading of a text (4). Consequently, Altendorf follows Labov’s concept whereby the notion of contextual style remains an important tool that reveals the authentic variation of an individual’s pronunciation (Labov, 1972: 209).



Graph 1: Taken from *Estuary English: Is English Going Cockney* (Altendorf, 1999: 6).

From the statistics above, Altendorf specifically investigates the frequency of /t/-glottalisation, just like Przedlacka. In order to divide her informants, Altendorf pays attention to the school from which each pupil comes. By doing so, the linguist determines the economic-social class of each participant, as done by Przedlacka in 1997 and 1998. The first group consists of pupils from a “Comprehensive School” in which there are no school fees, as opposed to ‘Selective Schools’ or ‘Public Schools’ (4). The second category, namely “Public School I”, refers to an educational institution where parents have to pay £1,000 per annum (4). Finally, “Public School II” is a school whose fees can amount to £3,000 a year.

As /t/-glottalisation is the only variant taken into consideration by Altendorf, the abscissa interestingly approximates to the RP-Cockney continuum. In that sense, we could assume that the

left, the less prestigious and conversely, the righter, the more prestigious. In other words, the abscissa symbolises Cockney on the left, EE in the middle and RP on the right.

From the graph, we may conclude that, during the interview stage, it is the “Comprehensive School” that demonstrates the highest frequency of /t/-glottalisation, whereas “Public School I” and “II” show less glottal stops. As for the reading of the text, /t/-glottalisation is less frequent, since the left, the more glottal stops. Finally, the ultimate stage that consists of a word list provides an overview of the frequency of /t/-glottalisation. The “Comprehensive School” shows a higher frequency of [ʔ] with about 85% of this allophone. By contrast, “Public School I” and “II” show a lower frequency of this variant. It is noteworthy to point out that a lower number of /t/-glottalisation in “Public School I” compared to “Public School II” may be a counterexample that contradicts the assumption whereby the right of the abscissa automatically refers to RP, and should naturally show less /t/-glottalisation. Indeed, almost 30% of [ʔ] was uttered by pupils in “Public School II”, whereas 20% of [ʔ] was used by youngsters in “Public School I”.

• *Conclusion and discussion*

Altendorf concludes that /t/-glottalisation in intervocalic position is regarded as a boundary marker between EE and Cockney. In addition, she adds that “[i]n the case of /t/-glottalling, there are, however, clear linguistic constraints (still) blocking the use of the glottal stop in pre-lateral and intervocalic position in formal styles by EE and RP speakers” (7). From the statistics above, the task which demonstrates the highest number of /t/-glottalisation was the interview style, which consists of informal questions, as opposed to the other formal tasks, such as the word list style. Therefore, EE may not be an emerging accent but rather, a style-shifting where the frequency of the [ʔ] variant varies depending on the context. As Laks affirms it, “le style le plus relâché favorise la suppression de la variable” of /t/ (Laks, 1992: 47). Therefore, the word list is perhaps too formal or it is a demanding task that requires hyper-correction and speech attention from young informants. Altendorf eventually comes to the conclusion that /t/-glottalisation has entered the “realm of RP” (1999: 7).

1.2.2 Christina Schmid and her thesis on EE (1998)

- *Methodology and preparation*

Christina Schmid's thesis was aimed at examining whether EE was influencing the non-standard variety of British English (1998: 2). She dedicated her dissertation to investigating the EE pronunciation by recording 48 informants in total, namely 13 men, 13 women as well as 22 teenagers (85). As the emphasis was shifted to the EE accent, she solely included the 22 teenagers in her analyses (85). The interviews took place in Kent (84).

As opposed to Przedlacka and Altendorf, Schmid had a good relationship with her informants. Schmid strived to elicit the most natural speech of her informants and avoid the 'observer's paradox' by integrating herself into the group for 8 months (84). Let us add that the 'observer's paradox' may be problematic as "our goal is to observe the way people use language when they are not being observed" (Labov, 1972: 61). Her classification is also different in comparison with Przedlacka and Altendorf as Schmid asserts that it was too difficult to determine the social class of each informant. Therefore, no attributions were given to her participants. Nevertheless, she takes into account other sociological information, such as each informant's gender and age. The first grouping is made up of informants aged between 14 and 15. The second group consists of participants who are between 17 and 18 years old. Schmid also divides her informants into two other categories, namely those whom she views as 'pupils' on one hand and on the other, more familiar informants considered as 'friends' whom she interviewed in local pubs.

Her study is based on an informal interview, since it was a face-to-face conversation about the participants' daily routine. All the more so as her 'friends' who were recorded in local pubs was a good technique to trigger spontaneous speech and avoid timidity. Therefore, Schmid tried to make her informants comfortable in an attempt to make the most of her participants' vernacular and natural speech.

- *Results*

Schmid concludes that there are some inconsistencies with respect to the variants used by her 22 informants. Males used 50% of glottal stops in different contexts. The vast majority of them used /t/-glottalisation as a glottal reinforcement in word-final position (145). Only two male informants did not match this pattern as they intensely used glottal stops in word-final positions

before a word beginning with a vowel (146). Moreover, female participants used fewer glottal stops in intervocalic positions compared to their other male counterparts. This observation runs counter to Przedlacka's findings whereby female speakers tend to utter more glottal stops than males. Although women tend to utter fewer glottal stops in her data, Schmid eventually affirms that they are more reluctant to use stigmatised features of EE than men (146). This assumption is in line with what Przedlacka thought to be a myth to debunk, especially when she contests the fact that in traditional dialectology, males have a more genuine form of a dialect (Przedlacka, 2002: 19). Overall, her informants clearly share characteristics of EE. Furthermore, Schmid agrees with Wells as she quotes him and writes that "Wells defined context-related accent switching prompts young people to adopt marked characteristics in informal settings" (146). She affirms that young people are extremely mobile and versatile (146). They are likely to switch to another 'accent' with which they feel comfortable depending on the situation (146).

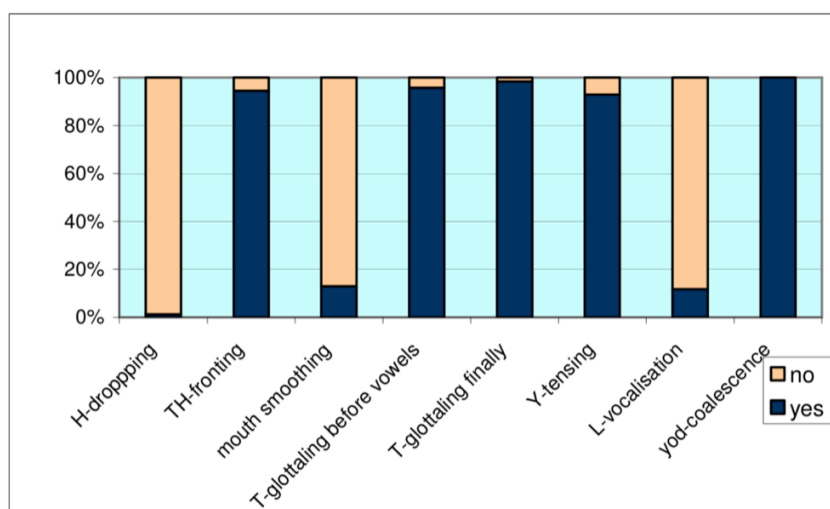
1.2.3 Altendorf 1998/1999: London Project

The second research project undertaken by Altendorf was carried out between 1998 and 1999 in South London suburbs. 6 informants were investigated, including 2 EE speakers, 2 Cockney informants and 2 RP participants. They were divided into three categories, based on social class. She particularly investigates three variants, that is to say, /t/-glottalisation, /l/-vocalisation as well as /th/-fronting.

Altendorf concludes that /l/-vocalisation significantly depends on social class. To clarify, the higher the frequency, the lower the social class. She also affirms that there is a wide gap between the middle class and the upper-middle class. Let us point out that this assertion underlines the mistake we usually make when differentiating various social classes that exist in today's society. We tend to forget that in the middle class category, other sub-classes may emerge, hence the difficulty to pin down the EE accent on a continuum. As far as the working class is concerned, speakers utter /t/-glottaling frequently in intervocalic and pre-lateral positions (10). She also comes to the conclusion that both /t/-glottalisation and /l/-vocalisation are widespread amongst the three social classes (11). Therefore, both variants are slowly but firmly seeping into RP. Once again, this assumption makes the boundaries of RP, EE and Cockney even more fuzzy.

1.3 Tamás Eitler and his corpus: a song

Other quantitative studies carried out to shed light on the uncertain definitions associated with EE have shown that it was not a homogenous accent but rather, a hybrid variety. In his research work, Tamás Eitler, a senior lecturer in sociolinguistics at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, examined Mike Skinner’s pronunciation, a British pop singer, who released his second album called *A Grand Don’t Come for Free* in 2004. In his song, Skinner’s pronunciation clearly testifies to his “EE-coloured idiolect” (Eitler, 2006: 1). His personal history is worth being investigated as it is characterised with important social mobility. Indeed, Skinner was born in West Heath, Birmingham in 1978 (8). He then moved to Australia at the age of 19 and moved back to England in Brixton, London (8). In an interview given in 2003 by the BBC, Skinner considers himself as belonging to the “Barratt class: suburban estates, not poor but not much money about, really boring” (BBC, 2003: 1). “From his international background, Skinner reflects the new society where it is easy to travel and lead an international life. His idiolect may be highly imbued with influences from everywhere, AusE, British English, English as a Second Language, etc” (1). Analysing the graph below may help us have a better insight into his atypical pronunciation:



Graph 2: Drawn by Tamás Eitler in *Identity construction, speaker agency and Estuary English* (2006: 9).

We could postulate that the variants selected by Eitler are peculiar to Cockney and EE. Therefore, the ultimate goal is to examine the continuum that refers to Cockney and EE but not the broader one that alludes to Cockney and RP. To conclude whether Skinner’s accent is linked with EE, we may divide the results into two categories. The first category supports the hypothesis that

Skinner's speech is imbued with EE phonetic features. The second grouping examines the phonetic realisations of Skinner which are regarded as Cockney.

First, /h/-dropping is a feature of Cockney but not of EE. We can observe that there is almost no occurrence of this variant in Skinner's speech. As for mouth smoothing, whereby the diphthong of the MOUTH-vowel becomes a monophthong, its frequency is relatively low, with only 10% of this variant. The other feature found amongst EE and Cockney speakers is /t/-glottalisation but only in final position, as in *take it* ['teɪk ɪʔ]. The results demonstrate that there is an extremely high frequency of glottal stops in final position, with almost 100% of [ʔ] being uttered. Likewise, the Y-tensing, present in both EE and Cockney, is frequent, with nearly 90% of occurrences. As for /l/-vocalisation, its frequency is surprisingly low, with only 10% or so. Finally, yod-coalescence, heard in both EE and Cockney, is very high, with 100% of yod being pronounced. Overall, we may infer that Skinner's pronunciation is highly characteristic of EE.

However, other statistics refute the claim that Skinner's accent is strictly EE. Indeed, the [ʔ] variant in intervocalic position, which is a characteristic of Cockney but not of EE, is highly present with over 90% of this allophone. Likewise, /th/-fronting, which is typical of Cockney, is very high as 90% of this variant is uttered.

When analysing the /a:/ phoneme, Eitler adds that Skinner pronounced the [æ] allophone instead. This variant is typical of Birmingham as [æ] is the Northern British English version of /a:/ (Wells, 1982: 134). It is noteworthy to point out that we put [æ] in brackets because /æ/ in parentheses would not refer to the allophone of the phoneme /a:/, as in the BATH vowel but rather, to the phoneme /æ/, as in the TRAP vowel. The lack of distinction between these two vowels is characteristic of the North of England (Wells, 1982: 134).

Eitler concludes that "Mike Skinner's idiolect can be claimed to represent neither Cockney nor RP; instead, it is a mix of certain Cockney/south-eastern and RP pronunciation features, with a slight Birmingham colouring" (2006: 10).

1.4 Conclusion and discussion

From the extensive empirical studies conducted to determine the nature of EE and its existing phonological system, the extremely fuzzy boundaries that separate RP, EE and Cockney make the task difficult. This issue could be summarised by means of a continuum, which constantly balances towards the left or right side (RP on one side and Cockney on the other). However, the

discrepancies that have resulted from the previous observations show that EE can be interpreted as a ‘style-shifting’. In this thesis, we view EE as a ‘style-shifting’, as suggested by Altendorf. The following table provides an overview of the main empirical studies that we previously examined.

	Przedlacka (1997-1998)	Ulrike Altendorf (1997)	Schmid (1998)	Ulrike Altendorf (1998-1999)	Eitler (2004)
Methodology	- 16 informants. - Questions asked to pupils. Specific words are expected.	- 6 informants. - Interviews with pupils at sixth-form college.	- 48 informants. - Informal interview at school or, in pubs.	- 6 informants (RP, EE and Cockney)	- 1 informant. Corpus based on a song.
[ʔ] intervocalic	- Buckinghamshire: 4 speakers 43.2% - Essex: 3 speakers 8.3% - Kent: 4 speakers (female 56.5% - males 19.5%) - Surrey: 4 speakers 21.1%	<u>Interview Style</u> CS: ≈ 95% PSI: ≈ 85% PSII: ≈ 65% <u>Reading Style</u> CS: ≈ 90% PSI: ≈ 45% PSII: ≈ 38% <u>Word List Style</u> CS: ≈ 85% PSI: ≈ 18% PSII: ≈ 29%	- In general, 50% males used [ʔ] in the two contexts, while females uttered less [ʔ] in intervocalic contexts.	- [ʔ] is present in both environments.	≈ 95 %
[ʔ] in final position					≈ 98%
Conclusion	- not a clear-cut boundary. - not a genuine accent. - not a single and definable variety of British English.	- /t/-glottalisation is seeping into RP. - Glottal stops are frequent during the interview stage.	- Women are more reluctant though to use stigmatised features. - Overall, informants’ pronunciation is close to that of EE. - She agrees with Wells who asserts that EE is a “context-related accent”.	- [ʔ] variant is seeping into RP.	- Accent neither Cockney, nor RP but rather, a mix of Cockney/south-eastern and RP pronunciation with influences from Birmingham.

Table 7: Summary of the research projects led by Przedlacka, Altendorf, Schmid and Eitler.

2. Britain's youth and their perception over accents

2.1 Sociological information as to the community of young adults today

The following section attests to the gradual change in the pronunciation of a community of young adults due to globalisation and new technologies. These societal changes have reshaped the structure of modern society in terms of social class and hierarchy. “[S]cientific socialism” is a notion that was extensively used by both Marx and Engels (Hook, 2009: 107). They claim that “the state is essentially a class-based institution, expressing the will and exclusive interests of the dominant political and economic groups in society” (Esenwein, 2005: 2228). In other words, society is inhabited by dominant and dominated classes where social conflict prevails. One could argue that this ratio of power may take the shape of conflicts over accents. One’s pronunciation “not only define people but also play an important part in showing their membership to a specific speech community” (Miller, 2000: 6). Accent “serves as a token of social identity” (6). Therefore, the high social-economic class, which symbolises the RP standard and the working-class, which may embody speakers of regional accents and dialects, such as Cockney, are in competition.

Individuals who identify with the working or middle class seem to have been brought to the fore, especially over the 20th century. For instance, although the BBC is thought of as spreading RP, BBC radio “has in recent years adopted a much more liberal policy towards the use of regional accents among its presenters” (Clark, 2013: 46). The particularly favourable economic growth, which “took off into sustained growth” in Western Europe made every social class benefit from it (Paxton & Hessler 2011, 504). Likewise, the Holiday with Pay Act 1938 may have allowed lower social-economic classes to be the focus of public attention (Barton, 2005: 133). Similarly, May 1968 may have heralded the abandonment of norms, which was a “defining moment” in France, characterised by the famous slogan: “It is forbidden to forbid” (Paxton, and Hessler, 2011: 526). Finally, what illustrated an increase in equality between peoples was the end of Apartheid and the sexual liberation throughout the 20th century (526). Therefore, the 20th century has given a voice to those who were disregarded. We could affirm that such freedom has left room for more acceptance over regional accents and dialects.

Furthermore, globalisation and economics have given birth to the Internet which has allowed for easy and rapid communication for almost anyone. It is naturally easy to access the radio

or TV channels and hear different varieties of English instantaneously. In addition, communication and the internet have laid the foundation for a society dominated by consumption. We could draw a parallel between consumerism and film industry. The dramatic number of films has allowed young adults to have more exposure to accents and dialects of English varieties. For instance, Netflix, an American video on demand service, has democratised the film industry. Culture is now at anyone's disposal as Netflix costs £7.99 per month (Waring, 2018). British young adults may now be watching videos in which American actors who perform on screen speak a variety different from theirs. Furthermore, diversity in society is at times imposed by the law. For instance, in France, the CSA (Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel) "will ensure, notably in relation to radio and television broadcasters, that their programmes reflect the diversity of French society" (Institut Panos Paris, 2009: 32). "This diversity is recognised as an essential factor in social cohesion" (32).

Consequently, accents and dialects have been exposed to variations. RP has undoubtedly been modelled over the 20th century, especially in time of liberation and acceptance. Hence, its classic phonological system is no longer faithful to today's authentic pronunciation. Likewise, the young adults' accents have presumably been subject to changes, especially due to the large number of resources available on the internet, including Netflix and TV shows. These, thought of as popular and trendy, are watched by thousands or millions of youngsters. For instance, *Love Island*, a British reality show, widely known by young Brits, spotlights actors with regional accents on screen. The finale was watched by over 4 million viewers in 2018 (Waterson, 2018). Accents, ranging from Liverpool, Scottish, Geordie and West Midlands can be heard.⁷ Although an extensive research project may be of interest, "[l]es linguistes ont souvent écarté les médias (radio, télévision, internet) comme facteur pertinent pour l'émergence de nouvelles normes. C'est pourtant une hypothèse qui est prise beaucoup plus au sérieux dans des travaux récents" (Durand and Przewozny, 2012: 30). This assumption is supported by Jane Stuart-Smith, an English professor from the University of Glasgow, who extensively examined the role of television in people's speech. Stuart-Smith contributed to the book *The Routledge Companion To Sociolinguistics* published by Llamas, et al. in 2007 and writes,

"[t]he advent of television represents one of the most significant social phenomena of the twentieth century, and yet, oddly, whether television might influence language – or not – is a neglected area of sociolinguistic research" (140).

⁷ For more information, please consult <http://theconversation.com/love-island-audience-reaction-shows-deep-snobbery-about-accents-98418>

Nonetheless, the key point is whether young Brits are willing to imitate variants uttered by actors in TV shows or, on the contrary, reluctant to act like them, considering actors' pronunciation incorrect or inappropriate. According to Jane Stuart-Smith, the impact of TV in the realm of sociolinguistics is controversial as many researchers argue that it does not affect the way people talk (2007: 140). Some seem to completely dismiss its social factor on people's speech. Yet, research projects have demonstrated that TV programmes may hugely impact our accent, like the London TV show called *EastEnders* in which a range of accents, such as the Cockney dialect, can be heard. Led by researchers, including Jane Stuart-Smith, they carried out experiments in 2013. They eventually conclude that "the programmes that we watch on television can help to accelerate changes in aspects of language which are also well below the level of conscious awareness" (2013: 1). They also add that the only long-lasting impact upon accent is to regularly "watch the show and become emotionally engaged with the characters" (1). If TV has a significant impact on people's speech, language change originates from the notion of 'diffusion' "or the spreading of linguistic innovations across geographical regions" (Llamas, et al., 2007: 140). Indeed, "geographical diffusion, by which features spread out from a populous and economically and culturally dominant centre" may help other London accents influence others (Kerswill, 2003: 4). Trudgill defends this hypothesis and argues that a speaker can acquire other idioms and lexis as well as a new pronunciation. Indeed, he asserts that "highly salient linguistic features, such as new words and idioms, or fashionable pronunciation of individuals words, may be imitated or copied from television or radio" (1986: 40-41). However, the main problem lies in the lack of interaction between spectators and actors that the process of diffusion cannot achieve. Naturally, only face-to-face interactions may influence the spectator's pronunciation. Nevertheless, some argue that the only prerequisite for such changes "require[s] conscious motivation by speakers to orientate towards, and imitate, such a model" (Llamas, et al., 2007: 140).

Moreover, as we observed that society was based on the ratio of power between the working class and the upper class, we may argue that a middle ground would be EE. In fact, young adults are strongly attached to their self-image (Montgomery, 2007: 19). Consequently, a middle ground would be an accent that would turn into a style-shifting, as strongly believed by Altendorf. Thus, any social class can converge to a common pronunciation in order to conceal any sign linked to social background. Other social classes may be involved in the same process, where the upper-middle class may converge, and the same can be imitated by the working class, as EE is

meant to make up someone's social background. All the more so as the youth is "capable of accent-switching, depending on the situation they [are] in" (Ryfa, 2003: 15). Likewise, British young adults may keep their local accent and adopt variants peculiar to the EE accent within specific social circumstances. This phenomenon is called 'linguistic accommodation' whereby "speakers may alter their speech in response to those with whom they are talking" (Llamas, et al., 2007: 140). They may converge or diverge depending on individuals to whom they are talking.

2.2 The young community at odds with Received Pronunciation?

We observed that young adults tend to make up their social class by converging their accent towards a middle class pronunciation. Research projects have been carried out to determine the youth's general perception by taking into account gender and age. By doing so, researchers examined whether standard or non-standard forms were preferred amongst speakers. For instance, Trudgill explained in his abstract that "women use linguistic forms associated with the prestige standard more frequently than men" (1972: 179). He goes on by asserting that "standard forms are introduced by middle-class women, non-standard forms by working-class men" (179). Consequently, middle-class females tend to adopt elements of RP, which suggests that their perception over non-standard forms might be negative. Inversely, working-class males do not pay as much attention to standard forms as their female counterparts. Speculatively, working-class male speakers might reject standard forms.

As previously examined, RP, viewed as a 'Received' accent, is not only designed for the sake of intelligible communication but also for the beauty of the sounds. Therefore, it remains a model to adopt and follow. One could qualify such encouragement as prescriptivist. Prescriptivism towards such an accent has been noticed in the media and in many press articles. In fact, the phonological system of RP has been under change and many linguists fear that the current RP is becoming less 'posh' than before. For example, *Is RP turning Cockney?* or *RP replaced by EE?* strongly demonise EE and defend the prestige of RP, which is assumed to be under threat. Needless to say that a language is changing as it is adopted by speakers who influence it, as opposed to a dead language, such as Latin (Perrot, 114: 2008). For example, Arthur Lloyd James, a member of *The BBC Advisory Committee of Spoken English*, condemns "the slurring of sounds, the missing of sounds, the untidy articulation of sounds" (Llyod, 1938: 115). For long, "the role of the

teacher was explicitly to combat ‘the evil habits of speech contracted in home and street’ by means of the systematic inculcation of ‘proper’ English” (Mugglestone, 2008: 200). Likewise, in the ‘About Us’ section of *The Queen’s English Society*, the president, Bernard Lamb, asserts that society was “formed in 1972 [...] deploring the current decline in standards of English” (1).⁸ The following assumptions suggest that RP, as the norm of British English, should be ideologically spread but not changed or replaced by any other ‘inferior’ accents or dialects, such as Cockney. We could also put forward the ratio of power not between social classes (as we have deduced that any social class tends to converge towards a middle-class accent) but between adults and the youth. EE can symbolise rebellion, since a high frequency of /t/-glottalisation may be thought of as a stigmatised variant (Altendorf, 2003: 64). We could even go so far as to assert that there is a parallel between EE and May 1968. Indeed, both EE and this political event illustrate the youth’s thirst for emancipation and freedom against traditional society that can be symbolised by RP.

Concretely, changes related to RP may be underway. Trudgill claims that /t/-glottalisation “is one of the most dramatic, widespread and rapid changes to have occurred in British English in recent times” (1999: 136). This change interestingly indicates that it is spreading in three directions: socially, from lower to higher-class accents; stylistically, from informal to formal speech; and “phonologically, from more favoured to less favoured environments” (Foulkes, and Dochery, 1999: 136). One could argue that such prescriptivism has led young adults to reject RP owing to its conventional image. The conservative pronunciation of RP can even be a source of mockery for some due to its lack of authenticity (Cruttenden 2014, 81). Thus, young adults are in a sense at odds with RP and its pronunciation.

Furthermore, the negative connotation of RP may also stem from rapid communication. Indeed, today’s young adults are more mobile and flexible, as opposed to RP, which conveys tradition and seems to be ‘frozen in time’. Firstly, let us introduce the notion of ‘MeWe generation’. “Il s’agit d’une génération qui a toujours connu le sida, le chômage, le divorce, le réchauffement de la planète, mais aussi la télévision, Internet, les blogs, les réseaux sociaux, les téléphones portables” (Olivier, 2016: 395). The extreme mobility of young adults can also be backed up by the following assumption:

“Everything we assumed was solid is in flux: identity, community, geographic boundaries, loyalties. Our children live in a time when they have far more choice than did any other generation at any time

⁸ For more information, please consult <https://queens-english-society.org/about/>

in history. Their connectivity through the Internet and a five-hundred-channel universe means they can pick and choose bits of their identity from around the world” (Ungar, 2009: 18).

The key word is ‘mobility’, which has several meanings. Firstly, this term should be interpreted as an easy, rapid way for students to move to England as things stand now compared to decades ago. Secondly, ‘mobility’ should be regarded as a simple tool that allows individuals to switch from an accent to another, that is to say, from their local accent to potentially EE or a more casual accent of the British English variety. Such mobility is also reflected in Britain’s universities, since they accept students from every part of the country (see section III.2.3). The MeWe generation reinforces the idea that RP may not be adapted to this flexible and mobile group of individuals who seem to detach themselves from tradition.

2.3 The young community in favour of EE?

EE, which is thought of as a style-shifting, is visibly made up of variants that are judged “accepted” by a community of young adults. However, paradoxically, individuals who adopt such pronunciation to reject the ‘posh’, ‘intolerant’ and ‘discriminatory’ image of RP believe, on the other hand that certain variants should not ‘enter’ the phonological system of EE. Indeed, Cockney remains a stigmatised dialect for them, since most of its variants are not present in EE. For example, “it is not yet considered respectable to exchange the t for a glottal stop between vowels and say: wa’er, bu’er, hospi’al”, which is peculiar to the Cockney pronunciation (Coggle, 1993: 41). Likewise, “the MOUTH vowel monophthong shows a clear low-prestige pattern of variation. It is confined to the working class and within this group to the speaker with the most basilectal London accent” (Altendorf, 2003: 103). Wells adds that the MOUTH vowel monophthong is “a touchstone for distinguishing between “true Cockney” and “popular London” (1982: 309). Consequently, these variants are directly linked with social connotations. All the more, it supports the assertion that EE is positioned in the middle of a continuum between RP on one side and Cockney on the other from a sociological perspective. Similarly, young adults visibly make a distinction between acceptable and unacceptable variants on the basis of social class. If EE is favoured by British young adults, it implies that they not only stigmatise RP due to its prestigious variants, but they also discriminate Cockney in the sense that it lacks prestige.

Moreover, the particular concern that new graduate students express is how to find a job following their studies. Interestingly, by being aware of which pronunciation students may adopt in

this particular context, we may observe whether they disapprove of RP. Without hesitation, RP may be a prerequisite to obtain a position after a job interview. However, we can affirm that the accent to adopt oscillates between RP and a more casual pronunciation. Indeed, Paul Coggle has demonstrated that “attitudes to regional accents are gradually relaxing. In professions such as doctors, lawyers, and bank managers, RP is no longer seen as the only “respectable” option. “The first high court judge who speaks Estuary English has recently been appointed”” (Houghton, 1997). In other words, EE is neither too ‘posh’, nor is it too ‘derogatory’. Therefore, as society is changing, we can assume that young adults are more willing to adopt EE, rather than RP during a job interview. Maidment asserts that,

“an alternative explanation is that the perception of formality and informality has changed and that, in this post-modern age, it is quite acceptable to pick and mix accents. Perhaps, we ought to call this new trend Post-Modern English, rather than Estuary English. This is a suggestion I make with my tongue only slightly in my cheek” (1994: 6).

In the above statement, Maidment proposes a new definition and insists that the term “Estuary English” is incorrect. More importantly, the linguist asserts that British young adults may be strongly in favour of EE. The latter may allow them to mix both formality and informality. It could also make them sound like individuals who neither lack prestige, nor considered themselves ‘posh’.

We may conclude that contemporary society has given the British youth a voice. From the previous statements, we propose the term ‘style-shifting’ as supported by Altendorf, rather than ‘accent’. We strongly believe that EE is a way of speaking that has been shaped by young adults. What highlights the fact that EE is not a distinctive ‘accent’ is that /t/-glottalisation, which constitutes a variant of its phonological system, is found in other accents and dialects, such as in Glasgow, Edinburgh, East Anglia and Wales, to name a few (Altendorf, 2003: 65). Therefore, it would be false to automatically associate a speaker uttering glottal stops with EE or Cockney.

III- The study carried out in June 2018 at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom

1. Methodology - corpus phonology and the PAC programme

1.1 The importance of phonology corpus, however big or small corpora are

In linguistics, a corpus “comprises two types of data: raw (or primary) data and annotations” (Durand, et al., 2014: 15). In other words, in the realm of phonology, primary material corresponds to the concrete “parole” of the “langue” that an informant utters, whilst annotations are indications left by the linguist for a specific purpose (De Saussure, 1916: 92). Durand specifies that phonology may be defined as “a representative sample of language that contains primary data in the form of audio or video data; phonological annotations that refer to the raw data by time information (time-alignment); and metadata about the recordings, speakers and corpus as a whole” (2014: 16).

In fact, ‘corpus’ and ‘phonology’ are closely related to each other, unlike other sub-branches of linguistics. Indeed, Viollain and Chatellier contends that “on peut établir que l’ensemble des phonèmes d’une langue sera observable au sein d’un seul et même corpus. Il est impossible de postuler la même chose en ce qui concerne la syntaxe ou la morphologie par exemple” (2018: 4). They add that “la phonologie d’une langue, ou d’une variété d’une langue, de par le fait qu’elle repose sur un nombre fini d’oppositions permettant de faire émerger le sens, peut être appréhendée dans son ensemble au sein d’un corpus” (2018: 4). A corpus is not to be thought of as an end in itself but rather, should be exploited as a tool to extract the “parole” of the informant by means of annotations.

For some linguists, the genesis of corpus phonology dates back to the 6th century with Justinien. Nevertheless, Laks points out that “il remonte au moins à Justinien (527-565) qui fit compiler le Corpus Juris Civilis -recueil à vocation exhaustive qui contenait les constitutions impériales, un manuel de droit et l’ensemble de la jurisprudence commentés” (2007: 4). If the specific period of the genesis of phonology corpus remains a source of contention even today, the thorny issue is on another matter. Indeed, the relevance of corpora is questioned by some linguists who totally dismiss it at times. If one disagrees with phonology corpus, one may in turn question the legitimacy of variationism. Viollain affirms that,

“d’un côté l’approche dite « formelle », « théorique », « rationaliste » ou encore « idéaliste », défendue par exemple par la Grammaire Générative de Chomsky et Halle (1968), et de l’autre l’approche dite « empirique » ou « matérialiste », adoptée par la linguistique historique, la sociolinguistique et la dialectologie” (2014: 283).

Likewise, Durand acknowledges that corpora now dominate phonology thanks to the high number of conferences, articles and books that have been devoted to this topic (2009: 26). On one hand, there are researchers who strongly believe that their research projects should be based on ‘corpus linguistics’, as opposed to others who “think that recourse to corpora is not the correct way of addressing the fundamental issues of linguistics” (26). Therefore, the data or ‘observables’ to examine depend on one’s position. Viollain adds that the answer to the question “que doit-on observer ?” significantly differs in phonology, especially when we bear in mind that linguists still work in the same scientific realm (2014: 283).

Of course, we strongly believe that in order to analyse language, we should focus on qualitative and empirical research, rather than simply speculating about how pronunciation works in a system. Additionally, linguists who support the use of corpora in phonology do not always agree with each other. Indeed, an internal conflict prevails in corpus phonology in that there is a competition between small and big corpora. In corpus phonology, we may exploit informants’ pronunciation by means of large corpora. One of these is undoubtedly the BNC or British National Corpus whose written part accounts for 90%, whilst the spoken samples represent 10%, that is to say, 100 million words. The COCA or Corpus of Contemporary American English comprises 560 million words, ranging from newspapers, fiction, academic texts to oral conversations.⁹ Albeit extremely useful, these important corpora may shadow smaller ones. “De nombreux corpus oraux, tel que le Lancaster / IBM Spoken English Corpus (53 000 mots), entrent donc dans la catégorie des petits corpus” (Viollain, and Chatellier, 2018: 5). However, the main weakness from such big corpora is the absence of oral samples available. The BNC is extensive, but it is difficult to retrieve oral samples, as opposed to the PAC programme (see section III.1.2). Viollain and Chatellier affirm that,

“il apparaît que le programme PAC dispose bien de petits corpus spécialisés, pensés pour l’étude d’une variété régionale spécifique et de phénomènes phonético-phonologiques particuliers [...] au sens où ils incluent des données primaires, des données secondaires variées (annotations

⁹ For more information, please consult the BNC and the COCA websites. Furthermore, a brand-new website, iWeb, has been created. It now comprises over 14 billion words. Please, see <https://www.english-corpora.org/iweb/>

prosodiques, segmentales, supra-segmentales, mais également potentiellement syntaxiques. [...] Au surplus, les corpus PAC sont accessibles aux chercheurs qui en font la demande, à la différence de nombreuses ressources orales” (2018: 13).

Although the PAC programme may not be as large as the BNC or the COCA, it is well worth knowing about this. The recordings of PAC contain authentic accents and dialects designed to provide an inclusive and comprehensive overview of the English-speaking world. The extensive annotations added by specialists allow for high-quality samples. “Qui plus est, la comparabilité garantie par le protocole commun permet d’envisager les petits corpus spécialisés comme une grande base de données, un corpus général sur l’anglais oral contemporain” (Viollain and Chatellier, 2018: 13).

1.2 PAC: definition, founders and co-founders

The PAC programme (Phonologie de l’Anglais Contemporain: usages, variétés et structure or Phonology of Contemporary English: usage, varieties and structure) is a multidisciplinary linguistics research project which was launched in 2004 by Jacques Durand (CLLE-ERSS, University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès) and Philip Carr (EMMA, University of Montpellier 3).¹⁰ It is coordinated by Sophie Herment (LPL, University of Provence Aix-Marseille), Sylvain Navarro (CLILLAC-ARP, University of Paris Diderot), Anne Przewozny-Desriaux (CLLE-ERSS, University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès) and Cécile Viollain (CREA, University of Paris Nanterre). The PAC programme has developed into various research groups. Indeed, LVTI (Language, City, Work, Identity) was launched in 2011 to offer a better sociolinguistic description of the English language in urban contexts in Toulouse, France, and Manchester, United Kingdom. Other projects, in Marseille, France, and Sydney, Australia, are in process. ICE-IPAC (InterPhonology of Contemporary English from the University of Paris), created in 2013, examines variation on the basis of learner corpora of English and investigates the acquisition and teaching of English as a foreign language. PAC-Prosody (University of Aix-Marseille) was launched in 2015. It deals with rhythm and intonation of the varieties of English. PAC-Syntax (University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès and Perpignan Via Domitia) was launched in 2013 and is aimed at studying the structure of oral discourse. PAC-Teaching of English (University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès), launched in 2011,

¹⁰ The following explanations are based on the PAC programme website. Please consult <http://www.projet-pac.net> for more information.

is designed to work on theoretical and methodological research interests in the field of oral English teaching and learning. Finally, PAC-research focuses on the links between the phonetic-acoustic study of corpora, annotations and sociolinguistic analyses in phonology.

The success of PAC lies not only in professors' contributions and collaboration but also in the active involvement of young researchers, amongst whom Master's degree students and Ph.D students have devoted their thesis to incorporate their research into the PAC programme. Eight theses, submitted or in preparation, have been dedicated to this scientific programme.

Country	England	Australia	Canada	Scotland	India	Republic of Ireland	New Zealand	Republic of Singapore	USA
Informants	100	25	15	47	13	24	42	4	44
Geographical coverage	Birmingham 6 Black Country 9 Lancashire 10 Liverpool 2 London 1 Manchester 64 Reading 2 York 6 <i>In progress (2016)</i> Bath	Sydney, NGS Northbridge 7 Balmain 5 Dennilquin NGS 2 White Cliffs NGS 1 Ulladulla, NGS 7 Melbourne, VIC Eltham 2 Perth, A.-O. 1	Alberta 2 Ottawa, ON 13	Ayrshire 22 Edinburgh 5 Glasgow 5 Politicians 9 TV presenters 6	Mumbai 1 Delhi 12	Cork 8 Donegal 4 Limerick 12	Christchurch 6 Dunedin 19 Rangiora 11 Wellington 6	Singapore 4	Boston, MA 15 Chapel Hill, NC 12 Lubbock, TX 2 Saint Louis, MO 5 Santa Barbara, CA 10 <i>In progress (2016)</i> Michigan (Upper peninsula)

Table 8: Taken from <http://www.projet-pac.net/corpora.html> (2016).

The above table illustrates the active implication of the researchers of the PAC programme. The illustration provides a snapshot of the various geographical locations in which the informants were recorded. In total, over 314 informants were interviewed since 2016 and more are expected.

To maintain the dynamic of this research project, constant work is required. Through conferences, such as “Phonology and interphonology of contemporary English: from native corpora to learner corpora” which took place in 2017 and other forthcoming events, like “PAC AIX 2019 - Phonetic and phonological variation in contemporary English: Xperience-Xperimentation”¹¹, PAC can prove its legitimacy amongst other research programmes. Other workshops organised as part of the PAC Summer School allow contributors to reflect on on-going research, methodological issues and potential improvements.

1.3 Objectives and methods

According to Przewozny, one of the cofounders of the scientific programme, “PAC a pour objectifs fondamentaux de définir l’anglais oral de façon systématique, comparative, transparente et

¹¹ Please, see <https://pacaix2019.sciencesconf.org> for additional information.

accessible des points de vue géographique, social et stylistique” (Przewozny, 2016: 45).

She adds that,

“le socle de recherche est la construction d’un grand corpus d’anglais oral provenant d’une multiplicité d’aires linguistiques du monde anglophone, sur la base d’un protocole unique et amendable [...] et d’une méthodologie labovienne étendue” (45).

As explained by Durand and Przewozny (2015, 63), the PAC programme strives to achieve various goals. First, it seeks to describe the authentic oral English language by paying particular attention to its geographical, stylistic and social diversity. The second objective is to question theoretical frameworks linked to phonology, phonetics and sociolinguistics by means of recordings (63). Thirdly, the PAC programme should advocate collaboration between phoneticians and phonologists (63). Finally, the scientific programme is designed to encourage researchers to consider how to teach English as a Second Language by using recordings (63).

The PAC programme naturally takes root in ‘variationism’ whose figurehead is certainly William Labov. This project strongly relies on the Labovian methodology that is fully explained in *The Social Stratification of English in New York City* published in 1966. The main focus of his book is particularly shifted to the notion of ‘style’ as he puts forward the important need to separate formal and informal conversations so as to make the most of informants’ speech (2006: 64). The formal interview passage is likely to reflect the ‘artificial’ speech of a participant, whereas the informal part lets researchers elicit informants’ real vernacular. Variation is plainly brought to the fore. As Cécile Viollain stresses it, when examining the formal passage, “un continuum est envisagé avec comme pôle inverse le discours informel, naturel, authentique : autrement dit le « vernaculaire »” (2014: 291).

Moreover, the PAC programme is based on a specific methodology which was adopted by another corpus-based project, namely PFC (Phonologie du Français Contemporain or Phonology of Contemporary French) whose founders are Chantal Lyche, Jacques Durand and Bernard Laks.¹² The main objective of PFC is to “construire un important corpus de référence permettant de rendre compte de la diversité des usages oraux du français sur le territoire national, mais aussi dans l’ensemble de la francophonie” (Laks, 2011: 10).

The particular method used in PAC and PFC proposes a solid framework for young researchers who closely work and collaborate with these two scientific programmes. In order to

¹² For more information, please consult <https://www.projet-pfc.net>

extract and annotate raw data, both research projects rely upon PRAAT, a free speech analysis software, which facilitates the extraction of specific passages and lets transcribe recordings orthographically, phonetically and phonemically.¹³ The methodology aspect of PAC and PFC is also important to comment on. Indeed, besides validating or rejecting hypotheses related to linguistics, we should also reflect on how to collect data. Thus, it questions the way we can elicit the most natural vernacular of participants from a methodological point of view. It is important to recall that social science is not an exact science. Only hypotheses and tendencies emanate from empirical research, which in turn should be analysed with care and be confronted with theory. For instance, Przewozny asserts that:

“D’autre part, parce qu’il n’est pas concevable de décrire et de modéliser une variété d’anglais dans laquelle on n’est pas soi-même immergé, j’ai opté pour une série de longs séjours australiens qui me permettraient intuitivement de *tester différentes thématiques d’enquête linguistique et techniques d’enregistrement au gré des interlocuteurs que je rencontrais*” (2016: 26, emphasis added).

In other words, the methodology to adopt may always be questioned, especially when conducting empirical research. Przewozny reinforces this assumption and claims that “[c]es données du terrain n’interdisent pas, au contraire, l’effort de réflexivité sur les options théoriques et méthodologiques mises en œuvre dans le programme PAC” (43).

1.4 Conventions

The interviews were all recorded in a classroom next to our French-assistant office at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. The entirety of the corpus is made up of 7 informants, including 5 male and 2 female students at the same university. All of them were British students doing their Bachelor’s degree in French.

1.4.1 The PAC protocol: 2 wordlists, 1 text and 2 conversations

The protocol established by the PAC programme can be narrowed down to 4 stages. Firstly, each informant is asked to read two wordlists. Secondly, there is the reading of a written

¹³ For more information regarding PRAAT, please visit <http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/>

passage. Thirdly, informants take part in a formal conversation. Finally, an informal conversation between an informant and the fieldworker ends the recording.¹⁴

More specifically, every informant is asked to read two wordlists. Each of these comprises a long list of 192 words in total (see appendixes 1 and 2). This first stage is designed to pay attention to segmental phenomena based on minimal pairs. In this dissertation, we do not consider this stage important as it is likely to reflect a formal pronunciation. Instead, we strive to elicit the vernacular speech of our informant.

The reading of the passage is originally based on a newspaper article which was later modified by the PAC programme to specifically concentrate on phonological phenomena (see appendix 3). The text, entitled “A Christmas Interview”, was not taken into account in our analyses. For each interview, there is always anxiety and timidity that may hide the most casual speech of informants. Therefore, we considered that it was too premature to elicit the natural speech of our informant at this stage. The reading of the text was viewed as too formal, since we believed that our informant was paying too much attention to his pronunciation. Nonetheless, one could refute this assertion. Indeed, Chatellier asserts in his thesis that,

“la lecture d’un article de journal à haute voix est certainement l’une des tâches de lecture auxquelles les locuteurs sont le plus souvent confrontés au quotidien : il arrive souvent que l’on souhaite partager une nouvelle ou une anecdote trouvée dans le journal avec son voisinage” (2016: 70).

As opposed to the wordlists, Chatellier hints at the relative natural speech that might emanate from the reading of a text. Nonetheless, we did not set out to incorporate this stage into our observations.

As for the formal conversation, it is based on a formal discussion between the fieldworker and an informant, which provides valuable information regarding our informant (see appendix 4). Naturally, although the formal interview was regarded as more representative of our informant’s speech, we did not wish to examine his pronunciation at this stage.

Finally, the informal conversation was of great interest to support or refute the state of the art that we have presented throughout our thesis (see appendix 4). Since the informal conversation was the last stage of the interview, chances were that we could elicit the most natural pronunciation of our informant. In an interview with Labov, the linguist asserts that the major question of linguistics that he has always tried to address was “to determine the structure of language—its

¹⁴ Please visit <http://www.projet-pac.net/protocol.html> for more information related to the convention of the PAC programme. The “Protocol” section details the different stages.

underlying forms and organization, and the mechanism and causes of linguistic change. Studies of the use of language in every-day life have proved very useful towards that end” (Labov, 2016: 2).

1.4.2 The informal conversation and the analysis of /t/-glottalisation and its frequency

For the purposes of this thesis, the informal conversation is the only passage kept from the PAC protocol. In order to analyse the sociophonological aspect of our informant, we set out to exclusively analyse /t/-glottalisation. More specifically, we consider the environments in which this specific allophone appears. We also reflect on its frequency to conclude whether it corroborates previous researchers’ statements whereby EE contains a high number of occurrences of glottal stops.

However, it is important to point out that the informal conversation passage was modified. It is advised that “the informal conversation is recorded either with two or more informants without the investigator being present or with one or more informants and a fieldworker” (*PAC*, 2004: 1). Nevertheless, asking two or more speakers to be present for each interview remained an issue. Let us add that informants were interviewed in June 2018, that is to say, before graduate students returned to their hometown. Most of them had already left. Consequently, we only called upon one informant for each interview. Nonetheless, the fact that the fieldworker was not an English-native speaker did not mean that he was unable to elicit the ‘natural’ pronunciation of our informant. In fact, the fieldworker was a French assistant at the University of Birmingham and the informant under scrutiny was one of his students. The informant became a friend with whom the fieldworker had previously met in pubs at the end of term two. Therefore, ties of friendship between the fieldworker and the informant developed, which recalls Schmid’s methodology. When analysing her data, Schmid particularly focused on the ‘friends’ category. We may argue that even though the fieldworker was not a native speaker, the fact that his informant became a friend was another alternative. Let us bear in mind that the “contexte de conversation libre est crucial pour que l’enquête soit réussie car elle donne l’occasion à l’enquêté d’atténuer l’intrusion de l’observation dans le fonctionnement réel de la langue” (Durand and Przewozny, 2012: 26). We could go so far as to assert that it questions the methodology of the PAC programme, particularly the final stage. We do not believe that there is a noticeable change when the fieldworker is involved in the informal conversation as he or she can replace another native speaker by befriending an informant.

1.5 One informant

1.5.1 How did it work?

The interview with our specific informant was recorded in June 2018 after the end of term two. This particular period also marked the end of exams. Therefore, it was easy to be allocated a room to quietly conduct our experiment. The interview, which occurred in the morning, took about an hour to be completed. If we take into account the seven recordings, the process was exclusively financed by the fieldworker. However, the CLLE-ERSS at the University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès kindly lent us a special recorder, an Edirol ROLAND R-09HR, in order to capture high-quality audio recordings.¹⁵

We should point out that recording an informant within the framework of a scientific programme was our first experiment, which might hinder our results. Nevertheless, after several interviews, we gained confidence. Although PAC provides a structured programme, it does not prevent fieldworkers from detaching themselves from conventions. For instance, we asked questions that had been phrased beforehand (see appendix 4). Therefore, our sociophonological interview can be regarded as a ‘semi-structured interview’, rather than a ‘structured interview’, as done by Labov in *The Social Stratification of English in New York City* (1966). Indeed, we conformed to the PAC programme convention, but we also brought our own contribution to the methodology of this scientific research project.

1.5.2 Why was this particular informant taken into account?

As previously asserted, our informant was viewed as a friend, rather than an unknown individual. Even though the fieldworker was his French assistant at the University of Birmingham, casual speech was constantly adopted except during French classes. Meetings always took place in relaxing and casual atmosphere, such as in pubs with other British friends. Therefore, although the informant was probably aware of being recorded, his pronunciation could be regarded as natural.

From a sociological point of view, his profile is of particular interest (see appendix 5). Indeed, our informant was born in Plymouth, South England and belongs to the middle class (or potentially the upper-middle class). Thus, in order to establish a definition of a community of young adults in England, we can only focus on individuals belonging to the upper middle class.

¹⁵ CLLE-ERSS is a multidisciplinary laboratory which deals with linguistics and language sciences at the University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès. Please visit <https://clle.univ-tlse2.fr/le-laboratoire-clle-369303.kjsp> for more information.

Likewise, we should only rely upon one specific part of the broad continuum between Cockney and RP. We can speculate that our informant is not part of the Cockney sphere as the dialect embodies the lower social class from East London. Consequently, we can infer that his accent is positioned between RP and EE, provided EE is regarded as an accent but not as a style-shifting.

2. Location: Birmingham and The University of Birmingham

2.1 Historical and background information regarding Britain's schools

Britain's universities could be viewed as research laboratories for phoneticians and phonologists. Indeed, universities are at the crossroads of many accents as students come from various parts of the United Kingdom. In order to understand the underlying sociological factors, we may first present background information regarding Britain's educational system. For the purposes of this thesis, we only focus on England as Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are territories in which education differs.

To begin, infant school is aimed at children aged between 5 to 7 years old, whereas junior school starts between 7 to 11 years old (Pickard 2014, 286). From 11 to 16 years old, youngsters attend secondary schools and then enter sixth-form colleges or technical colleges (286). Sixth-form colleges range from selective or Grammar schools, Secondary Modern Schools to Technical Schools (286). The boarding schools' or private schools' fees can go up to £13,000 per year (286).

Entering the desired university depends on marks of A2-Level exams. What is demanded is "a short letter of application from the student, a school teacher's report which includes the school's projected A2-Level grades for the student and possibly an interview with him/her" (302). If a university place is allocated to the student, the tuition to be paid is over £9,000 per annum. This amount was introduced by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition government (Nick Clegg) from 2012-2013 (302). Nevertheless, tuition fees have never been as high. In fact, from 1998-99, the Labour Government had initially abolished university fees (302). The same year, the New Labour introduced fees amounting to £1,000 (302). Today, students do not pay upfront fees when they enter university. Rather, payments are automatically debited at the end of their studies if their salary is more than a certain sum (308).

2.2 The University of Birmingham, United-Kingdom

In order to be granted a place at the University of Birmingham or in any other of Britain's universities, students are required to obtain satisfactory marks at the end of A-Level. As for British university entry requirements, especially at the University of Birmingham, a student wishing to do a Bachelor's degree in modern languages needs A-A-A or potentially A-B-B, as indicated on the BA Modern Languages entry requirements website (*University of Birmingham*). However, from the video designed to present the course overview undergraduate open day talk 2017, Emma Tyler, a French lecturer, asserts that students should obtain A-A-B in their main language (Tyler, 2017). She goes on by asserting that, as entry requirements depend on predictions, students eventually having B-B-C could potentially be accepted.

Initially, the university sought to promote equality so that students from any religion or social background could be accepted (*University of Birmingham*). In the 'About' section of the University of Birmingham's website, over 30,000 students are said to be enrolled in courses (*University of Birmingham*). Of course, one could speculate that, although the image nurtured by Chamberlain was to ideally accept individuals belonging to any social class, a year amounts to £9,000. Therefore, the large amount of money put into studies may dissuade youngsters from the lower class to enter university. Likewise, we could speculate that pupils from boarding schools are more inclined to enter university, as opposed to pupils from the working class. This assumption suggests that there is a selection based on social class before university. Therefore, Britain's universities are likely to welcome the middle class and the upper social class. According to statistics from *The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018*, 70% of students enrolled in British universities belong to the middle class (Long, 2018: 1). Consequently, one could assert that if there is a social selection amongst students at university, their accent may naturally be altered throughout their studies as a result of 'social mix'.

2.3 A fascinating location: a convergence of accents?

The aim of this section is primarily designed to advance hypotheses as to why the pronunciation of our informant could have been modified at university. The University of Birmingham, at which our informant is enrolled, is a specific place chosen by students for several reasons. As a French assistant at the University of Birmingham, it was particularly beneficial to learn how students and especially freshers considered their universities. Feedbacks were globally

positive. These are presented in order to prove that the University of Birmingham may attract young adults from different parts of the country. Such exposure to different accents may have affected the pronunciation of our informant. We should point out that we did not have the opportunity to record students' feedbacks. In fact, students affirmed that after A-Level, they selected universities which were far from their hometown. This assumption may, however, be seen as a generalisation, since some of them, whose parents lived in the vicinity of Birmingham, did not have their own student place. Consequently, they lived at their parents'. Moreover, they added that London was not their first choice, since it is regarded as an overpriced place. Birmingham seemed to meet their needs as they claimed that it remained a cheap city with a good reputation. The good quality of life as well as the attractive student life convinced them to select the University of Birmingham.

More concretely, Allan, a student of the same university who was interviewed by *The Guardian* may back up our students' feedbacks. He argues that "students are also attracted by the city's top-level football and cricket, while the club scene and "Balti triangle" jostle with Birmingham Symphony Hall and numerous theatres and concert venues on the city's packed entertainment programme" (Davidson, 2015). In the same press article, he adds that "with its cosmopolitan culture and exciting restaurants, music and theatre venues, Birmingham is a wonderful place to live and study" (2015).

Thus, such exposure to different accents may result in the emergence of a new pronunciation. Indeed, an interesting case of accent modification has been recently noticed at the University of Glasgow in Scotland. Although we take the example of students in Glasgow but not in England, it can still prove how students develop their own accent or pronunciation. Although not many researchers have set out to examine the accent spoken at the University of Glasgow due to its recent development, a few resources, especially press articles, have described this 'emerging accent'. An online press article published in *GlasgowLive* in January 2019 was dedicated to investigating the 'Glasgow Uni' accent.

"Students attending the likes of the University of Glasgow and Glasgow School Of Art, who, coming from places with their own placeable accents like Dundee and Perth, decide to shed their own accent under the influence of how others around them are speaking" (Williams, 2019).

The journalist goes on by asserting that, "simply put, with so many folk from other nations around, young people effectively 'mute' their local accents and adopt the homogenous 'Glasgow Uni' accent, in order to be understood clearly". Indeed, Scottish local accents, can be unintelligible for

some (Torgersen, et al., 2015: 108). Of course, we should remain cautious regarding the evidence put forward, since the journalist uses testimonies from inhabitants in Glasgow as well as the social media to testify to the existence of the ‘Glasgow Uni’ accent.

Even though it is another realm of sociophonology, that is dialectology, we could assert that a possible accent can emerge as a result of interactions between various accents. We do not wish to provide a comprehensive overview of the processes of ‘koiné’ and ‘dialect levelling’. Rather, we shed light on the main effects of these two processes as EE may originate from such factors. If EE is assumed to be adopted amongst a community of young adults, we could conclude that it derives from this process. EE may also have taken root in other linguistics processes, such as levelling, mixing, simplification and koinéisation. Thus, such contact and interaction can result in a new pronunciation that students agree to adopt at university. This assertion would also mean that this pronunciation is specific to the context linked to university. Students’ accent may in turn change in other contexts, such as at home, at university, in class or in pubs. Breivik asserts,

“[i]n dialect contact generally, it seems that we most often encounter a process of koinéization, in which levelling and simplification both play a role. By levelling we mean the loss of minority, marked, or complex variants present in the dialect-mixture in favour of majority, unmarked, or simpler forms also present. By simplification is meant in this case especially the growth of new or interdialect forms [...] that were not actually present in the initial mixture but developed out of interaction between forms that were present, where these interdialect forms are more regular than their predecessors” (1989: 228-229).

From this perspective, EE might be regarded as a koiné if we reject the idea that it is an accent or a style-shifting.

“The term koineization refers to a process of mixing of dialects (or mutually intelligible varieties of language) which leads to the rapid formation of a new dialect or koine, characterized by mixing, levelling and simplification of features found in the dialects which formed part of the original mix” (Llamas, et al., 2007: 185).

EE may be a set of dialects and accents that have merged together into one distinct pronunciation. EE might have been transformed so much that there are no longer salient non-standard features, since, in most cases, a new koiné moves towards standardisation, hence its position on the continuum between Cockney and RP (186). Williams and Kerswill assert that,

“what we are witnessing is the phenomenon of dialect levelling and by extension accent levelling, a process whereby differences between regional varieties are reduced, features which make varieties distinctive disappear, and new features emerge and are adopted by speakers over a wide geographical area” (1999: 149).

Moreover, another interesting investigation was carried out on the accent adopted in the city of Milton Keynes, which is situated between London and Birmingham. Milton Keynes is mostly inhabited by the working class as well as the middle class with high mobility. Interestingly, Milton Keynes is said to be strongly influenced by EE as Kerswill has devoted research projects to identifying this accent in this city in 1996 (Altendorf, 2003: 53-54). Evidence shows that the accent adopted in Milton Keynes is likely to be a dialect levelling (Beal, 2010: 75).

Finally, we should point out that our informant’s pronunciation cannot be defined as a typical Brummie accent, nor is it characteristic of the Black country accent, which is heard in the countryside of Birmingham. Likewise, our informant may have been influenced by the academic language spoken by lecturers and professors, which is, needless to say, far from the natural English spoken in everyday’s life, hence the focus on the informal conversation of our informant.

3. Results: focalisation on /t/-glottalisation

3.1 General sociological portrayal of our informant

In order to provide a general sociological description of our informant recorded in June 2018 at the University of Birmingham, we resorted to the informant sheet that allows the fieldworker to have additional background information (see appendix 5). Our informant was born and bred in Plymouth, Devon, which is set in the South of England. Regarding his education, he went to a grammar school in the same town. We consider him to belong to the upper middle class on the basis of his educational background as grammar school is highly selective and tuition fees are expensive. Furthermore, our informant was a student studying modern languages, more specifically French and German. He has now graduated from the University of Birmingham. He was 21 years old when he was recorded in June 2018.

Interestingly, the fact that he is a student in modern languages shows that he is open to other cultures and that he is mobile. All the more so as he had to spend a year as part of the Erasmus

exchange programme, especially during his 3rd academic year. He decided to select the University of Strasbourg, France. Students in modern languages are only able to graduate if they spend a one-year gap year. He has decided not to pursue a Master's degree. Instead, he has chosen to leave England and work in Germany at an international company. Therefore, we could easily draw a parallel between our informant and the MeWe generation. Our informant is extremely mobile as he studied modern languages and speaks three languages, namely English, French and German.

Likewise, in addition to being flexible and mobile, our informant is strongly connected to new technologies. He is particularly interested in films and Netflix, which the informal conversation attests to. Ungar asserts that "this generation is more connected than any other before it". (2009: 18). As explained above, our informant has been exposed to other accents of English adopted by actors in films.

Wodak asserts that for Labov, "the exacting empirical description of the speech community's linguistic system was the main point. The variables were only means to that end" (2010: 33). Consequently, although Labov is correct in that we need to go beyond the simple analyses of specific variables, we should, nonetheless, consider specifically the glottal stop variant. Explaining why glottal stops are likely to be uttered in certain environments is of particular interest. Such observations may contribute to the establishment of a phonological system adopted by a community of young adults.

3.2 /t/-glottalisation - frequency

The following empirical study is designed to substantiate our observations by relying on our own corpus carried out in June 2018. Many linguists have paid particular attention to glottal stops, such as Trudgill in Norwich (1974), Macaulay (1977 and 1991), Reid (1978), Newbrook (1986), Mees (1987) and Holmes (1995). In our thesis, only Przedlacka (1997-1998), Altendorf (1997 and 1998-1999) and Schmid (1998) were fully examined as their studies on EE and /t/-glottalisation were recent.

As previously explained, our results may be limited, since our experiment remains our first empirical research project. Indeed, the interpretation of audio data only relied on our hearing. Although PRAAT was extensively used, no other specific phonetic programmes were used. However, the large number of occurrences of glottal stops analysed is likely to help us formulate interesting hypotheses. Only 3 tokens have been removed because of the low-quality audio

recording in some passages. In fact, [ʔ] and [tʔ] could not be fully distinguished by listening to the conversation. A specific phonetic tool would have been required to this effect.

For the purposes of our thesis, we only transcribed orthographically the informal conversation passage (see appendixes 6 and 7). We also segmented phonemically the same informal conversation which lasted 19 minutes. We have analysed a total of 480 tokens of the /t/ phoneme. The /t/ variable could be realised as [t], [ʔ], [d] or [tʃ]. Likewise, because of fast speech, there were cases of deletion of /t/, the latter being turned into [n], [s], [ə] or [ʔ_t]. We dissected the /t/-glottalisation in two environments, namely in intervocalic position, as in *getting* as well as in final position, like in *about*. The following table below illustrates our results.

Realisations	Occurrences	Context
[ʔ]	234	Overall, regular and irregular occurrences depending on the context and speech pace - phrasal verbs: <i>flying out</i> - final position: <i>deposit, eliminate, quiet, flat-share, Frankfurt, street</i> - intervocalic (few): <i>city, little, getting, sort of</i>
[t]	133	Content and grammatical words, specifically auxiliaries
[n] t-elision	39	Auxiliaries (<i>don't - didn't - couldn't - wasn't - haven't - wouldn't</i>); Verbs (<i>want - went</i>); Adverbs (<i>recently</i>); Nouns (<i>student</i>)
[s] t-elision	34	<i>just</i> (19 occurrences) - <i>almost</i> (6 occurrences); Others (<i>August - last - rest - first - best - nicest - most</i>)
[ə] t-elision	26	weak forms only (<i>at - that</i>)
Liaison (t-elision?)	7	<i>about twenty - what to - what TV series</i>
[d]	5	<i>but - pretty</i>
[tʃ]	2	two occurrences of <i>first year</i>
TOTAL	480	

Table 9: Illustration of the variants of the /t/ phoneme, its frequency as well as its environments. These results are taken from our informant's speech recorded in June 2018 at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.¹⁶

From our data above, we can determine the specific environments in which /t/-glottalisation may occur. We should also examine the different phonetic constraints which depend on specific environments (De Vogelaer, and Katerbow, 2017: 306). In the following paragraphs, we set out to draw up rules by adding figures and letters in order to facilitate the reading. We should bear in mind that /t/-glottalisation may always be phonetically represented as [ʔ]. Indeed, [ʔ] is not a phoneme as

¹⁶ Please see appendix 8 for an illustration of a glottal stop extracted with PRAAT.

there is still a distinction between [ʔ] and [t] in our informant's speech. [t] needs to be uttered as such when it occurs in first position, as in *tip*.¹⁷

- **[ʔ] in final position**

1) To begin, [ʔ] is possible in final position after vowels (full monophthongs and diphthongs). Thus, /ɔ:/ *caught* ['kɔ:ʔ] ; /ʌʊ/ *about* [ə'baʊʔ] ; /ɪ/ *bit* ['bɪʔ]; /eɪ/ *mate* ['meɪʔ]; /aɪ/ *might* ['maɪʔ]; /æ/ *cat* ['kæʔ]; /ɜ:/ *skirt* ['skɜ:ʔ]; /i:/ *beat* ['bi:ʔ] are realisations that are possible. Thus, C+V+ʔ is acceptable.

2) As we did not use a specific phonetic software, [ʔ] and [t̪ʔ] could not be distinguished. However, we strongly believe that [ʔ] may either be reduced or completely deleted. (A) Thus, [ʔ] after /n/, as in *twenty* ['twɛni] and ['twɛnʔi], is possible. Interestingly, Wells asserts that “Americans tend to pronounce *twenty* as ‘**twɛni** rather than ‘**twɛnti**. That’s because they have an **nt** reduction rule that allows the deletion of **t** between **n** and a weak vowel” (2014, 63). He later asserts that “Londoners, too, often say *twenty* in this way” (63). This assertion may lead to other discussions, namely whether the American English variety influences British English. (B) The same rule is applicable after /s/, provided it is followed by another word. For instance, there can be a deletion of /t/, as in *best mark*, which is phonetically transcribed as ['bɛs 'mɑ:k]. A glottal stop can also be uttered, which would be phonetically represented as ['bɛsʔ 'mɑ:k]. However, *best* *['bɛs] in isolation would not be correct as it is pronounced ['best] from our data. What (A) (or /n/), (B) (or /s/) and /t/ have in common is that these consonants are central alveolar realisations. Therefore, as (A) and (B) are phonetically close to /t/, we could claim that /t/ could be easily absent without any significant difference of pronunciation. The rule could be summarised as [/n/ or /s/] + [/ø/ (deletion of /t/) or /ʔ/]. This interpretation is supported by O’Connor in his book *Better English Pronunciation*. He asserts that words in company can affect pronunciation (1980: 102). He goes on by affirming that “normally we pronounce *one* as **wʌn**, but *one more* may be pronounced **wʌm mɔ:**, where the shape of *one* has changed because of the following /m/ in *more*” (102).

¹⁷ In the following paragraphs, we use other signs, such as C that stands for ‘consonant’ and V for ‘vowel’ to establish specific rules.

• *[ʔ] in intervocalic position*

Although few intervocalic [ʔ] were uttered by our informant, we can establish one rule. Intervocalically, that is to say, V+C+V, [ʔ] is possible between C+V+[ʔ]+V, as in *city* ['sɪʔi] and C+V+[ʔ]+V+C, like in *getting* ['gɛʔɪŋ]. If we take into account the mid central vowel /ə/, [ʔ] is possible in *little* ['lɪʔəl] C+V+ʔ+V+C for instance. Therefore, [ʔ] can be uttered in V+C+V.

We have pointed out the constraints in specific environments where [ʔ] occurred from our informant's speech. However, there may be other reasons as to why /t/ is particularly replaced by [ʔ].

- 1) [ʔ] may be realised as such to mark weak form, as in *at* [əʔ] and *that* [ðəʔ].

O'Connor asserts that,

“English people often think that when they use these weak forms they are being rather careless in their speech and believe that it would be more correct always to use the strong forms, like **wɒz**, **tu:**, etc. This is not true [...] The use of weak forms is an essential part of English speech and you must learn to use the weak forms of 35 English words if you want your English to sound English” (1980: 92).

Therefore, [ʔ] seems to follow the weak form rule. The weak form does not only affect the vowel, which is replaced by the /ə/ schwa, as in */'wɒz/ /wəz/, it also influences the /t/ consonant, which turns into a glottal stop, like in *but* ['bʌʔ], *at* [əʔ] and *that* [ðəʔ].

- 2) [ʔ], which is present in weak forms, seems to be in correlation with constraints and physical articulations, especially in fast speech. Consequently, [t] may be a physical constraint which impedes the speech flow. For instance, when our informant speaks about his friends and his former living situation, he utters 7 glottal stops out of 7 tokens in a 10-second time span.¹⁸ Only [ʔ] is used in an attempt to avoid [t], which can represent a physical effort in fast speech.
- 3) Moreover, surprisingly enough, the [d] allophone, which is an American variant used to replace the /t/ phoneme in some environments, is preferred over [t] and [ʔ]. The [d] realisation can be uttered to mark a pause in speech. Our informant realised [d] five times in an attempt to make a pause. We could speculate that [ʔ] is not appropriate when

¹⁸ This particular passage of the informal conversation can be heard between 537 seconds and 547 seconds on PRAAT.

pausing or slowing down. Indeed, [ʔ] could be regarded as a quick variant that is designed to facilitate the pronunciation of the speaker, especially when the speech pace is fast (we have just observed that the quicker the individual's speech, the more [ʔ]).

- 4) We could assert that weak form, fast speech and physical constraint can lead to more occurrences of [ʔ]. These reasons correlate with the notion of 'style-shifting' that we strongly support. Indeed, our data are taken from the informal conversation part, which may suggest that a style-shifting has been operated. One may argue that [ʔ] proves the absence of the observer's paradox as the number of [ʔ] is two times higher than [t] from our data. In total, our informant uttered at least 234 occurrences of [ʔ] and 133 of [t] (if we do not include deletion and [tʔ]). Such a high frequency of [ʔ] may be put down to the casual topics brought up. It is noteworthy to point out that the informal conversation stage can be divided into micro contexts in which there are more or less realisations of /t/-glottalisation. Indeed, the first context was when we talked about the students of the University of Birmingham being likely to be robbed and mugged by individuals who were troubling them in the neighbourhood. In this particular context, there are 41 tokens of /t/, of which 26 are realised as [ʔ] and 15 as [t]. What is conspicuous in this same passage is that, when he particularly refers to students who either belong to fortunate backgrounds or, on the contrary, to low-income backgrounds, 10 [ʔ] are consecutively uttered and only one [t] is spotted. Consequently, we may infer that when particularly referring to students who may symbolise casual attitudes, university and fun, [ʔ] is more frequent. Likewise, when talking about his girlfriend with whom he was partying at night, he utters 12 [ʔ] but only one [t]. Finally, another interesting micro context is when films, TV series and Netflix are brought up. There are 48 realisations of [t] and [ʔ]. 33 realisations are pronounced as [ʔ] and 15 as [t]. In other words, 68.75% of /t/ is realised as [ʔ], whereas 31.25% of [t] is uttered. Nevertheless, when our informant wants to show that he prefers practising Muay Thai over karate, which he finds too disciplined and formative, the entirety of /t/ is uttered [t]. Speculatively, we could infer that the formative aspect of karate may have an impact on his pronunciation as there is no [ʔ] but 6 [t]. RP, which may be perceived as traditional and formative as well, is represented by the [t] realisation.

- 5) Finally, the principle of least effort can account for the high number of [ʔ], especially within a context where two young adults amicably converse (Perrot, 2018: 39). However, this conclusion is questioned by Cruttenden who asserts that,

“there are those who claim, from an elocution standpoint, that modern speech is becoming increasingly slovenly, full of ‘mumbling and mangled vowels’ and ‘missing consonants’ [...] There is, in fact, no evidence to suggest that the degree of obscuration and elision, is markedly greater now than it has been for four centuries” (2001: 77).

4. Definition of the pronunciation adopted by a community of young adults at university

4.1 RP, Cockney, Estuary, ‘emerging’ accent or a camouflage?

In this thesis, we intended to deconstruct RP, Cockney and EE. On the surface, these accents and dialects were supposed to be similar to the pronunciation of our informant. We tried to bring their weaknesses and paradoxes to the fore in an attempt to deduce whether our informant’s speech could potentially fit into such categories (see section I).

From our observations, we can now assert that Cockney is not linked to our informant’s accent as it is clearly a dialect spoken in the East of London “from suburban working-class popular London” (Wells, 1982: 306). Secondly, we take the risk of saying that the pronunciation of English young adults is not qualified as an EE pronunciation, supported by Przedlacka (2002) and Altendorf (2003). EE can be an emerging accent of the Estuary, as Rosewarne and Coggle claimed. However, this ‘new’ accent was too quickly associated with the English youth because their pronunciation was changing and they had some common phonetic realisations linked to EE. All the more so as the glottal stop is not confined to the Home Counties. Milroy, et al. observe that “the first reports of a ‘glottal catch’ are from Western Scotland in the 1860s, and by the early 1900s it had been noted also in northern England, the Midlands, London and Kent” (1994: 3). Consequently, it would be ludicrous to automatically associate any speakers uttering glottal stops with EE. Finally, if the pronunciation in question is not Cockney, nor EE, it can refer to RP. Young adults’ pronunciation may be associated with a variant of RP, that is ‘near-RP’.

However, what we strongly support is the assumption that the youth do not adopt a new accent, but alter their pronunciation by changing variants, such as /t/-glottalisation. Schmid asserts

the following assumption: “I found that teenagers are experts in camouflaging their original accent, adopting a more ‘trendy’ accent in informal situations, and more conservative accents in formal and serious contexts” (1999: 142). Therefore, we support the idea that the youth use a linguistic technique to hide their social class. They converge their accent towards the middle class by changing their pronunciation judged as too ‘posh’ or ‘RP’. Others, whose accents are local, can opt for a ‘camouflage’. Such modification seems to be used by a specific sociological type of informant, such as ours who belongs to the upper middle class and who exemplifies the MeWe generation.

Of course, the present thesis has put an emphasis on the notion of style-shifting, rather than accepting the existence of EE. However, we have questioned Rosewarne’s initial statement whereby EE was influencing British English varieties as well as RP. Indeed, even though Rosewarne’s definition was advanced in 1984, a lot of empirical research was conducted, such as Przedlacka’s (1998-1999), Altendorf’s (1997 and 1998-1999) and Schmid’s (1998). Nevertheless, in spite of efforts to examine all aspects of the problem, the extreme fuzziness of EE’s boundaries still tend to overlap between RP and Cockney. In fact, our incapacity to clearly pin down EE is due to its non-existence. EE can be regarded as a fantasy which has been subject to an extensive press coverage. Maidment did not agree with Rosewarne as “a much more worrying feature of the description of EE by Rosewarne is its naivety” in that this supposedly emerging accent is only positioned on a continuum between RP on one side, and Cockney on the other (1994: 6). Instead, Maidment proposes another terminology and speculates that “we ought to call this new trend Post-Modern English, rather than Estuary English. This is a suggestion I make with my tongue only slightly in my cheek” (7).

4.2 Can a definite profile be portrayed from our findings?

We could assert that variants can be isolated or in ‘free variation’. Viollain, who examines this notion, claims that,

“Labov showed, however, that the variation is not free [...] That is, you could not predict on any one occasion whether individuals would say cah or car, but it could be shown that, if speakers were of a certain social class, age and sex, they would use one or the other variant

approximately x per cent of the time, on average, in a given situation. The idiolect might appear random, but the speech community was quite predictable” (2015: 292).

Labov argues that “all of our previous studies of language indicate that phonological behavior is not amorphous: on the contrary, it is the most highly structured aspect of language” (2006: 30). Therefore, analysing our informant’s pronunciation was not carried out in vain as the data may provide a sociophonological portrayal of a community of young adults. If ‘free variation’ is not free, it suggests that glottal stops, rather than [t], is a clear indication that it is uttered by a specific community that our informant may belong to. As demonstrated from our informant’s speech, there were twice as many realisations of glottal stops than ‘pure’ [t].¹⁹

The community in question includes male students, preferably having graduated, aged 21 years old. They may have been to a grammar school in which RP is spoken by teachers, which suggests that they have been influenced by the British English standard (Trudgill, 1984: 46). They may belong to the middle class or the upper-middle class. Students may come from the South of England but can also be native to other parts of England, such as London or the Home Counties. Such individuals may be regarded as flexible, that is to say, they have spent a year abroad through the medium of Erasmus for instance. They may be willing to live abroad once graduated. They may be connected to social media and like watching films thanks to Netflix. Such distractive tools may also be regarded as linguistic opportunities for young adults. Thus, it may prove that our informant has been exposed to these other accents.

Therefore, English students, who can be qualified as mobile, perfectly exemplify the MeWe Generation. One can argue that, as students spend time in a prestigious higher institution until they graduate, they are likely to adopt a ‘posh’ accent as the RP standard is used by teachers (Wells, 1982: 117). However, in other relaxing contexts, young adults’ pronunciation may move towards a casual pronunciation through the process of style-shifting. The university’s sphere is made up of RP teachers along with young adults who have a more casual way of speaking.

However, shedding light on the MeWe generation does not only show that there is strong movement mobility associated with these young adults. In fact, there is also the sign of a strong mobility in their pronunciation, which may explain why EE, which is versatile, is difficult to pin down. Indeed, our informant seems to utter a blend of RP and more casual pronunciation. Even

¹⁹ The term ‘pure’ is extensively used by Cruttenden in *Gimson’s Pronunciation of English*. 6th ed., 2001. It is designed to describe the typical phonetic realisations of RP.

though further analysis would be required to test out this hypothesis, we can claim that his speech is generally close to the RP phonological system.

Conclusion

Defining EE in terms of label is a complex undertaking because ‘accent’, ‘dialect’, ‘variety’ and ‘standard’ are subjective. As observed previously, RP and Cockney, which are viewed respectively as an accent and a dialect, are still arguable. RP is regarded as the British English standard. It is generally agreed that no regional features are associated with RP, as if a standard pervaded by regional pronunciation features was derogatory. However, our research project has proved that, historically speaking, RP was essentially rooted in South East accents of English. As for Cockney, establishing its focal speaking area is problematic. Research has shown that it was supposedly from East London. However, we cannot formally assert that an individual who utters more glottal stops in intervocalic position adopts automatically a Cockney pronunciation. Likewise, we cannot claim that the individual is native to East London. In this thesis, the purpose of theorising RP and Cockney was firstly to demonstrate that defining an accent is intricate and secondly, that the inconsistencies of these two definitions could leave room for EE.

Thanks to the qualitative research, as well as the quantitative experiments, we can now take a stand. EE, which was coined in 1984 by David Rosewarne, seems to have been coined too quickly. However, he was right when asserting that British English was changing. As the British English standard, which we tried to demystify, has always been regarded as the prestigious standard, it was perceived as untouchable. Therefore, RP was thought to be under threat by a less ‘posh’ pronunciation, that is EE, whose effects could have deteriorated the perfect image of the British English standard. Press articles have transformed EE into a fantasy, blaming it for the decadence of British society.

Qualifying EE as an accent may suggest that it does not possess its own vocabulary, as opposed to Cockney that, additionally, has its rhyming slang. If EE is a genuine accent, it is assumed to be spoken within a circumscribed area of England. However, EE is not an accent that can be judged on the basis of localisation. Rather, the accent is adopted in a specific community of young adults at university. We have tested out this hypothesis by compiling our own empirical data which we have later incorporated into a scientific programme called PAC. The latter has allowed us to conduct confidently our fieldwork in a structured manner thanks to a well-defined protocol. What we have deduced is that our informant may strongly represent a broader community of young adults, specifically students from the South of England who belong to the upper middle class. Through the analysis of /t/-glottalisation, we have contributed to the elaboration of

a phonological system, although further work would be welcome. As Labov claims that the analysis of variables only remains a means in a sociological study, we argue that the historical context may help us explain why /t/-glottalisation appears more frequently. Today, the MeWe generation, to which our informant is thought to belong, illustrates the strong mobility and flexibility that youngsters show. Such spatial flexibility can also be reflected in their pronunciation. Thus, this versatility present in their pronunciation is the result of a style-shifting. Indeed, this technique which consists of changing one's pronunciation depends on the context.

However, we cannot assert that EE is clearly a style-shifting, rather than an emerging accent by only relying upon /t/-glottalisation. Likewise, the study of one variant cannot provide a formal portrayal of an individual who would in turn reflect a whole community. All the more so as /t/-glottalisation is spotted in other accents. This particular variant only serves as a means to prove the separation between Cockney and EE. As our informant uttered only a few glottal stops in intervocalic position, his pronunciation is not thought of as Cockney. What we can clearly claim, however, is the fact that he pronounced two times more glottal stops than the 'pure' [t] realisation. Hence, his pronunciation is found on a continuum between RP and Cockney. In other words, if EE does not exist, we can still assert that our informant's pronunciation is closer to RP, rather than a typical regional accent. The correct label can also be 'near-RP', which is a variation of RP. Further examinations could still be possible from our recordings. We could compare in more detail the informal conversation stage with the formal conversation passage. Likewise, focusing on other realisations, such as /l/-vocalisation, would allow us to substantiate our results and interpretations.

To finish, whatever labels we eventually choose to characterise the pronunciation of our informant (EE, style-shifting, koiné or dialect levelling), there is a strong change in British English varieties. It is a general problem, which, as seen above, may have occurred a long time ago. In spite of the widespread use of /t/-glottalisation amongst individuals' pronunciation, we would like to point out that there is no real mention of it in dictionaries. The fact that this variant is dismissed can be put down to prescriptivism whereby dictionaries may not want to provide a faithful representation of the real British English spoken today. The issue is that students who learn English as a Second Language should be aware of its existence. It is especially problematic as students going for the first time to England may have trouble understanding native speakers who use glottal stops. The other important point in knowing /t/-glottalisation is that it does not solely exemplify the supposedly 'EE accent'. It is the standard of English that may be under change as glottal stops are seeping into RP. Therefore, it is necessary to teach this phenomenon to students who learn English

as a second language at university. This conclusion may lead us to reflect on another topic from a didactic point of view. Perhaps we should now consider whether phonetic variants should be taught at university.

Bibliography

ACHIRRI, Karolina. "Perceiving Identity through Accent Lenses: A Case Study of a Chinese English Speaker's Perceptions of Her Pronunciation and Perceived Social Identity". *MSU Working Papers in Second Language Studies*. Vol. 8, no. 1, 2017.

ALTENDORF, Ulrike. "Estuary English: Is English going Cockney?". *Moderna Sprak*. 93, 1999, 2-11.

ALTENDORF, Ulrike. *Estuary English: Levelling at the Interface of RP and South-Eastern British English*. Gunter Narr Verlag, 2003.

ALTENDORF, Ulrike. "What would Eliza Doolittle be taught today? or How to define a target variety for British English pronunciation today". *Englisch*. 4, 2003, 145-152.

ANDROUTSOPOULOS, Jannis. *Mediatization and Sociolinguistic Change*. Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2014.

AUER, Peter, and DI LUZIO, Aldo. *Variation and Convergence: Studies in Social Dialectology*. Walter de Gruyter, 2014.

BARBER, Bernard. *Social Stratification: a comparative analysis of structure and process*. Harcourt, Brace, 1957.

BARTON, Susan. *Working-Class Organisations and Popular Tourism, 1840-1970*. Manchester University Press, 2005.

BARWICK, Sandra. "Why Mrs Briscoe's voice didn't fit". *The Independent*. 12 March 1994. Online.

independent.co.uk/voices/why-mrs-briscoes-voice-didnt-fit-1428548.html

BAUER, Laurie. *Watching English Change: An Introduction to the Study of Linguistic Change in Standard Englishes in the 20th Century*. Routledge, 2014.

BEAL, Joan. *Introduction to Regional Englishes*. Edinburgh University Press, 2010.

BERGS, Alexander, and BRINTON, Laurel. *Volume 5 Varieties of English*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2017.

BREIVIK, Leiv, et al. *Language Change: Contributions to the Study of Its Causes*. Walter de Gruyter, 1989.

BROOKS, Greg. *Dictionary of the British English System*. Open Book Publishers, 2015.

BURNETT, Mark Thornton. *Edinburgh Companion to Shakespeare and the Arts*. Edinburgh University Press, 2011.

CARR, Philip. *English Phonetics and Phonology: An Introduction*. John Wiley & Sons, 2012.

CHATELLIER, Hugo. "Nivellement et contre-nivellement phonologique à Manchester: étude de corpus dans le cadre du projet PAC-LVTI". *Linguistics*. Ph.D. Université Toulouse le Mirail - Toulouse II, 2016. Online.

tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01910242/document

CHRISTOPHERSEN, Paul. "In defence of RP". *English Today*. 11, 1987, 17-19.

CLARK, Urszula. *Language and Identity in Englishes*. Routledge, 2013.

CLIFTON, Joe. *The Queen's English Society*. 1972. Online.

queens-english-society.org/about/

COGGLE, Paul. *Do You Speak Estuary?*. Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 1993.

CRUTTENDEN, Alan. *Gimson's Pronunciation of English*. 6th ed., Routledge, 2001.

CRUTTENDEN, Alan. *Gimson's Pronunciation of English*. 7th ed., Routledge, 2008.

CRUTTENDEN, Alan. *Gimson's Pronunciation of English*. 8th ed., Routledge, 2014.

CRYSTAL, Ben, and CRYSTAL, David. *You Say Potato: The Story of English Accents*. Pan Macmillan, 2014.

CRYSTAL, David and POTTER, Simeon. "Varieties of English". *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 19 Oct. 2018. Online.

britannica.com/topic/English-language/Varieties-of-English

ČUBROVIĆ, Biljana, and PAUNOVIĆ, Tatjana. *Exploring English Phonetics*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011.

CULPEPER, Jonathan, et al. *English Language. Description, Variation and Context*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

DAVIDSON, Jonathan. "Birmingham: Britain's second-largest student city". *The Guardian*. 9 Sep. 2015. Online.

theguardian.com/best-of-birmingham/2015/sep/09/birmingham-britains-second-largest-student-city

DAVIES, Diane. *Varieties of Modern English: An Introduction*. Routledge, 2014.

DE SAUSSURE, Ferdinand. *Cours de Linguistique générale 1916*. Payot, 1971.

DEVENPORT, Mike, and HANNAHS, S. J. *Introducing Phonetics and Phonology*. Routledge, 2013.

DE VOGELAER, Gunther, and KATERBOW, Matthias. *Acquiring Sociolinguistic Variation*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2017.

DOWNES, William. *Language and Society*. 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, 1998.

DUCHET, Jean-Louis. *La Phonologie*. Ed. Que sais-je, Paris: PUF, 1981.

DURAND, Jacques. “On the scope of linguistics : Data, intuitions, corpora”. In Y. Kawaguchi, M. Minegishi et J. Durand (éd.). *Corpus analysis and variation in linguistics*. Amsterdam : John Benjamins, 2009, 25-52.

DURAND, Jacques, and PRZEWOZNY, Anne. “La phonologie de l'anglais contemporain : usages, variétés et structure”. *Revue française de linguistique appliquée*. Vol. xvii, no. 1, 2012, 25-37.

DURAND, Jacques, et al. *The Oxford Handbook of Corpus Phonology*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

DURAND, Jacques, and PRZEWOZNY, Anne. “La variation et le programme PAC : phonologie de l'anglais contemporain”. In I. Brulard, et al. *La prononciation de l'anglais contemporain dans le monde. Variation et structure*. Toulouse : Presses Universitaires du Midi, 2015, 55-91.

DURAND, Jacques. “De Daniel Jones au présent : cent ans d'évolution dans la description de l'anglais”. Presented at the University of Toulouse Jean-Jaurès, France, 2018. Online.
aloesfrance.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/j-durand_je-agregation_daniel-jones_16-02-18.pdf

DURAND, Jacques. “L'alphabet phonétique international”. In Herrenschmidt, C., Mugnaioni, M.J., Savelli, M.J., Touratier, C. (eds.). *Le Monde des Écritures*, Paris : Gallimard, (To be published).

EITLER, Tamás. “Identity construction, speaker agency and Estuary English”. *The Even Yearbook*. 7, Department of English Linguistics, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, 2006. Online.
seas3.elte.hu/delg/publications/even

ELLIS, John Alexander. *On Early English Pronunciation*. Greenwood Press: New York, 1968.

ENGELS, Friedrich. *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. Cosimo, Inc., 2008.

ESENWEIN, George. "Socialism". *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. Edited by Maryanne Cline Horowitz, vol. 5, 2005, 2227-2235. Online.

link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/CX3424300734/GVRL?u=toulouse&sid=GVRL&xid=d638cf5e

FINCH, Sid. *The Little Book of Cockney Rhyming Slang*. Summersdale Publishers Ltd, 2015.

FOULKES, Paul, and DOCHERTY, Gerard. *Urban Voices: Accents Studies in the British Isles*. Routledge, 1999.

GIEGERICH, Heinz J. *English Phonology: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press, 1992.

GIMSON, Alfred Charles. *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*. 2nd ed., Edward Arnold, 1970

GIMSON, Alfred Charles. *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*. 3rd ed., Edward Arnold, 1980.

GIMSON, Alfred Charles. *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*. 4th ed., Edward Arnold, 1989.

HANNISDAL, Bente Rebecca. "What's happening in RP? An empirical look at variation and change in Received Pronunciation"? Presented at the University of Bergen, 2010.

HICKEY, Raymond. *A Dictionary of Varieties of English*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2014.

HOOK, Sydney. *Reason, Social Myths and Democracy*. Cosimo, Inc., 2009.

HOUGHTON, Emma. "It's not what you say, it's the way that you say it". *The Independent*. 15 October 1997. Online.

independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/its-not-what-you-say-its-the-way-that-you-say-it-1235894.html

HOWLEY, Gerry. "Love Island: audience reaction shows deep snobbery about accents". *The Conversation*. 19 June 2018. Online.

theconversation.com/love-island-audience-reaction-shows-deep-snobbery-about-accents-98418

HUGHES, Arthur, et al. *English Accents and Dialects: an Introduction to Social and Regional Varieties of English in the British Isles*. 4th ed., Hodder Arnold, London, 2005.

INSTITUT PANOS PARIS. *Media and Cultural Diversity in Europe and North America*. Karthala, 2009.

JOHNSON, Wyn, and BRITAIN, David. "L-vocalisation as a natural phenomenon: explorations in sociophonology". *Language Sciences*. Vol. 29, no. 2-3, 2007, 294-315.

JONES, Daniel. *Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

KERSWILL, Paul. "Dialect levelling and geographical diffusion in British English". In D. Britain and J. Cheshire (Eds.) *Social dialectology. In honour of Peter Trudgill*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2003, 223-243.

KOPŘIVOVÁ, Jana. "Analysis and Comparison of RP and Cockney accent". B.A. Thesis. Brno, 2018.

LABOV, William. *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. 1st ed., Washington: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1966.

LABOV, William. *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.

LABOV, William. *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, 2006.

LABOV, William. "Sociolinguistics: an interview with William Labov". *Revista Virtual de Estudos da Linguagem - ReVEL*. Vol. 5, no. 9, 2007.

LABOV, William. "Quantitative Reasoning in Linguistics". *Linguistics* 563. University of Pennsylvania. 2008.

ling.upenn.edu/~wlabov/Papers/QRL

LADEFOGED, Peter. *A Course in Phonetics*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 2001.

LAKS, Bernard. "La linguistique variationniste comme méthode". In *Langages*. no. 108, 1992, 34-50. Online.

persee.fr/doc/lgge_0458-726x_1992_num_26_108_1649

LAKS, Bernard. "La phonologie du français et les corpus". *Langue française*. Vol. 169, no. 1, 2011, 3-17.

LLAMAS, Carmen, et al. *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*. Routledge, 2007.

LLOYD James, Arthur. *Our Spoken Language*. London: T. Nelson, 1938.

LONG, Jonny. "New data reveals exactly how many students are middle class at your uni". *TheTab*. 2017. Online.

thetab.com/uk/2017/11/08/new-data-reveals-exactly-how-many-students-are-middle-class-at-your-uni-52654

MAIDMENT, John. "Estuary English: Hybrid or Hype?". Paper presented at the 4th New Zealand Conference on Language & Society, Lincoln University, Christchurch, New Zealand, 1994.

MAIDMENT, John. *Speech Internet Dictionary*. 2006. Online.

blogjam.name/sid/

MILLER, J. M. "Language use, identity, and social interaction: Migrant students in Australia". *Research on Language and Social Interaction*. Vol. 33, no. 1, 2000, 69-100.

MONTGOMERY, Mark. *Youth Handbook: Young People and Worship*. Church House Publishing, 2007.

MOTT, Brian Leonard. "Traditional Cockney and popular London speech" *Dialectologia*. no. 9, 2012, 69-94. Online.

raco.cat/index.php/Dialectologia/article/view/259233/346495

MUGGLESTONE, Lynda. "Spoken English and the BBC: In the Beginning". *Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik*. Vol. 33, no. 2, 2008, 197-215.

NØDTVEDT, Harald Ottensen. "Phonological Variation and Change in London Cockney English: A Sociolinguistic Study". Linguistics. Ph.D. Department of Foreign Languages, University of Bergen, 2011. Online.

bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/5366/82632886.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

O'CONNOR, Joseph Desmond. *Better English Pronunciation*. 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, 1980.

OLIVIER, Nathalie. *La bible des ressources humaines pour les PME: 95 fiches pratiques*. Editions Eyrolles, 2016.

PAXTON, Robert O., and Hessler, Julie. *Europe in the Twentieth Century*. Engage Learning, 2011.

PERROT, Jean. *La Linguistique*. 19th ed., PUF, 2018.

PICKARD, Sarah. *Civilisation Britannique*. 9th ed., Langues pour tous, 2014.

PIKE, Lee Kenneth. *Phonetics: A critical analysis of phonetic theory and a technique for the practical description of sounds*. The University of Michigan Press, 1943.

PIKE, Lee Kenneth. *Phonemics: a technique for reducing languages to writing, Volume 1*. University of Michigan Press, 1947.

PRZEDLACKA, Joanna. "Estuary English and RP: Some Recent Findings". *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia*, 36, 2001, 35-50.

PRZEDLACKA, Joanna. *Estuary English? A Sociophonetic Study of Teenage Speech in the Home Countries*. Peter Lang, 2002.

PRZEDLACKA, Joanna, and ASHBY, Michael. "Comparing the Received Pronunciation of J. R. Firth and Daniel Jones: A sociophonetic perspective". *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*. 2018, 1-20.

PRZEWOZNY, Anne. *La langue des Australiens - Genèse et description de l'anglais australien contemporain*. Lambert-Lucas, 2016.

PRZEWOZNY, Anne. "De la phonologie de corpus à la sociolinguistique. Enjeux de définition de la communauté linguistique australienne". *Linguistics*. HDR. Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès, 2016. Online.

hal-univ-tlse2.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01423731v2/document

PRZEWOZNY, Anne, and VIOLLAIN, Cécile. "On the representation and evolution of Australian English and New Zealand English". *Anglophonia*. Vol. 21, 2016. Online.

journals.openedition.org/anglophonia/727

RAMSARAN, Susan. *Studies in the Pronunciation of English: A Commemorative Volume in Honour of A. C. Gimson*. Routledge, 2015.

RASTIER, François. "Sur les Études phonologiques de Jakobson". In: *L'Homme*. Vol. 7, no. 2, 1967, 94-108. Online.

persee.fr/doc/hom_0439-4216_1967_num_7_2_366888

RECKNAGEL, Silja. *Cockney and Estuary English - a comparison*. GRIN Verlag, 2006.

ROBINSON, Jonnie. "Received Pronunciation". *British Library*. Online.

bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/find-out-more/received-pronunciation/

ROSEWARNE, David. "Estuary English". *Times Educational Supplement*. 19, 1984.

ROSEWARNE, David. "Estuary English: tomorrow's RP?". *English Today*. 37, 1994.

RYFA, Joanna. "Estuary English: A Controversial Issue?". Linguistics. MA Thesis. Poznan: Adam Mickiewicz University, 2003.

SAZLAY, Tünde. "Vocalisation in Three English Dialects". Written for the *OTDK* conference, 2013.

SCHMID, Christina. "Estuary English". Linguistics. MA Thesis. University of Vienna, 1999.

SIMONE, Raffaele. *Iconicity in Language*. John Benjamins Publishing, 1995.

SMIT, Ute. et al. *Tracing English through time: explorations in language variation*. Vienna: Braumüller, 2007.

SMITH, Daniel. *The Language of London: Cockney Rhyming Slang*. Michael O'Mara Books, 2014.

STAWARSKA, Beata. *Saussure's Philosophy of Language as Phenomenology: Undoing the Doctrine of the Course in General Linguistics*. Oxford University Press, 2015.

STUART-SMITH, Jane. "The influence of the media". In Llamas, et al. *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*. Routledge, 2007, 140-148.

STUART-SMITH, Jane, et al. "'Talkin' Jockney": Accent change in Glaswegian". *Journal of Sociolinguistics*. 11, 2007, 221-261.

STUART-SMITH, Jane. "Watching Television Can Be a Factor in Accent Change". *University of Glasgow*. 9 Sept. 2013. Online.
gla.ac.uk/news/archiveofnews/2013/september/headline_289308_en.html

TÉVAR, Jesús Martín. "'A native accent is always attractive": perception of British English varieties by EFL Spanish students". *Lenguas Modernas*. 43, 2014, 45-77.

TÖNNIES, Swantje. *Estuary English: Dialect Levelling in Southern Great Britain*. GRIN Verlag, 2008.

TORGERSEN, Eivind, et al. *Language Variation - European Perspectives V: Selected papers from the Seventh International Conference on Language Variation in Europe*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2015.

TOSI, Arturo. *Language and Society in a Changing Italy*. Multilingual Matters, 2001.

TRUDGILL, Peter. "Sex, Covert Prestige and Linguistic Change in the Urban British English of Norwich". *Language in Society*. Vol. 1, no. 2, 1972, 179-195.

TRUDGILL, Peter, and HANNAH, Jean. *International English: A guide to varieties of standard English*. London: Edward Arnold, 1982.

TRUDGILL, Peter. *Language in the British Isles*. Cambridge University Press, 1984.

TRUDGILL, Peter. *Dialects in Contact*. Blackwell, 1996.

TRUDGILL, Peter. *Sociolinguistic Variation and Change*. Georgetown University Press, 2002.

TURNER, Lewis. "Is it literally the end of the world to use 'literally' figuratively?". *Language Debates*. 4 May 2019. Online.

languagedebates.wordpress.com/page/1/

UNGAR, Michael. *The We Generation: Raising Socially Responsible Kids*. Hachette UK, 2009.

VIOLLAIN, Cécile. "Sociophonologie de l'anglais contemporain en Nouvelle-Zélande : corpus et dynamique des systèmes". Linguistics. Ph.D. Université Toulouse le Mirail - Toulouse II, 2014. Online.

tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01212503/document

VIOLLAIN, Cécile, and CHATELLIER, Hugo. "De petits corpus pour une grande base de données sur l'anglais oral contemporain : quels enjeux à la lumière du programme PAC ?". *Corpus*. 18, 2018. Online.

journals.openedition.org/corpus/3222

WARING, Olivia. "How much Netflix cost in the UK for Basic, Standard and Premium?". *Metro*. 17 Apr. 2018. Online.

metro.co.uk/2018/03/30/much-netflix-cost-uk-basic-standard-premium-7429160/

WATERSON, Jim. "Love Island final attracts more than 4 million viewers". *The Guardian*. 31 July 2018. Online.

theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2018/jul/31/love-island-final-attracts-more-than-4-million-viewers-dani-dyer-jack-fincham

WELLS, John Christopher. *Accents of English 2: The British Isles*. Cambridge University Press, 1982.

WELLS, John Christopher. "The Cockneyfication of R.P.?" In Gunnel, Melchers, and Nils-Lennart, Johannesson (ed.). *Nonstandard varieties of language*. Papers from the Stockholm Symposium, 1991. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1994a, 11-13.

WELLS, John Christopher. "Transcribing Estuary English: a discussion document". *Speech Hearing and Language: UCL Work in Progress*. Vol. 8, 1994b, 259-267.

WELLS, John Christopher. "Our Changing Pronunciation". *Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society*. 19, 1997, 42-48. Online.

phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/online.htm

WELLS, John Christopher. "Estuary English". *Department of Speech, Hearing & Phonetic Sciences*. UCL Division of Psychology & Language Sciences, UCL, 1998. Online.

phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/estuary/home.htm

WELLS, John Christopher. *Sounds Interesting: Observations on English and General Phonetics*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.

WILLIAMS, Craig. "The Glasgow Uni accent - and why it drives half the city up the wall". *GlasgowLive*. 7 Jan. 2019. Online.

glasgowlive.co.uk/news/glasgow-news/glasgow-uni-accent-glaswegians-hate-14615840

WODAK, Ruth, et al. *The SAGE Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. SAGE, 2010.

Websites

“A brief history”. *University of Birmingham*, 2019. Online.

birmingham.ac.uk/university/about/history/index.aspx

BOERSMA, Paul, and WEENINK, David. *PRAAT*. 1995. Online.

fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/

British National Corpus 2014. Lancaster University and Cambridge University Press. Online.

corpora.lancs.ac.uk/bnc2014/

“Cockney”. *Wikipedia*. 4 June 2019. Online.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cockney

Corpus of Contemporary American English. 1990. Online.

english-corpora.org/coca/

DURAND, Jacques, and CARR, Philip. *Phonologie de l'Anglais Contemporain*. 2004. Online.

projet-pac.net

FRANCARD, Michel. *Phonologie du Français Contemporain: Base PFC recherche*. 1999. Online.

projet-pfc.net

“Mike Skinner: Voice of The Streets”. *BBC*, 2003. Online.

news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/2262033.stm

PAC AIX 2019 - Phonetic and phonological variation in contemporary English: Xperience-Xperimentation. 2019. Online.

pacaix2019.sciencesconf.org

Pygmalion. Directed by Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard. Pascal Film Production, 1938.

TYLER, Emma. "Modern Languages: Course Overview - undergraduate open day talk 2017".
YouTube, uploaded by The University of Birmingham. Online.
[youtube.com/watch?time_continue=154&v=ET3Dfb_7VAU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=154&v=ET3Dfb_7VAU)

Appendixes

Appendix 1: Wordlist 1

Wordlist 1 © PAC 2016

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| 1. pit | 30. foil |
| 2. pet | 31. furl |
| 3. pat | 32. bird |
| 4. pot | 33. bard |
| 5. put | 34. beard |
| 6. putt | 35. bared |
| 7. sea | 36. board |
| 8. say | 37. barred |
| 9. sigh | 38. bored |
| 10. sue | 39. bode |
| 11. stir | 40. bowed |
| 12. steer | 41. bead |
| 13. stairs | 42. bid |
| 14. err | 43. bed |
| 15. far | 44. bad |
| 16. war | 45. bard |
| 17. more | 46. pant |
| 18. purr | 47. plant |
| 19. moor | 48. master |
| 20. feel | 49. afterwards |
| 21. fill | 50. ants |
| 22. fell | 51. aunts |
| 23. fall | 52. dance |
| 24. full | 53. farther |
| 25. fool | 54. father |
| 26. fail | 55. row |
| 27. foal | 56. rose |
| 28. file | 57. rows |
| 29. foul | 58. pore |

Appendix 2: Wordlist 2

Wordlist 2 © PAC 2016

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. pat | 23. wet |
| 2. bat | 24. yet |
| 3. tuck | 25. witch |
| 4. duck | 26. which |
| 5. carter | 27. lock |
| 6. garter | 28. loch |
| 7. fan | 29. earthy |
| 8. van | 30. worthy |
| 9. this | 31. sinner |
| 10. thick | 32. simmer |
| 11. seal | 33. singer |
| 12. zeal | 34. supper |
| 13. bishop | 35. rubber |
| 14. leisure | 36. little |
| 15. heart | 37. middle |
| 16. batch | 38. metal |
| 17. badge | 39. meddle |
| 18. rum | 40. bicker |
| 19. run | 41. bigger |
| 20. rung | 42. degree |
| 21. lack | 43. decree |
| 22. rack | 44. betting |

Appendix 3: Text “A Christmas Interview”

A Christmas interview © PAC 2016

If television personalities are anything like the rest of us, all they really want to do in Christmas week is snap at their families, criticize their friends and make their neighbours' children cry by glaring at them over the garden fence. Yet society expects them to be as jovial and beaming as they are for the other fifty-one weeks of the year. If anything, more so.

Take the Reverend Peter Smith, the TV vicar who sends out press releases in which he describes himself as “the man who has captured the spirit of the age”. Before our 9 a.m. meeting at his media office on Crawshaw Avenue, South London, he faced, he says, a real dilemma. Should he make an effort to behave like a Christian, throw his door open, offer me a cup of tea or should he just play it cool, study his fingernails in a manner that shows bored indifference and get rid of me as quickly as possible? In the end, he did neither.

“As a matter of fact, John”, he says in a loud Estuary English twang, “St Francis said, ‘At all times preach the gospel and speak whenever you have to’. But hey, he didn't mean ‘Be on your best behaviour and be happy all the time’. I could have been extra-polite to you, but the real me would have come out as I was talking. You cannot disguise what you are.”

“And what are you then, Peter?”

“Well, I'm a Christian, John. I've been one since I was 14. And I know for sure that Christianity will be judged more on what you do rather than what you have to say about it.” In many ways, Peter Smith looks exactly how you'd expect a high-profile television personality to look: tall, handsome, clean-cut and evenly sun-tanned. He doesn't wear a dog-collar. In fact, when doing his various religious programmes on Sunday mornings, he has been known to wear a black leather jacket instead, in casual mode. Today, the look is more business-like: metal-rimmed glasses, a grey suit, a blue open-neck shirt, and fashionable black shoes with large buckles. Smith is 44 but he looks a mere 24.

During the whole interview, Peter Smith stressed the need to be on the side of the poor and the needy. He also talked about his forthcoming trip to China and the masses waiting for his message there. I ventured a few questions relating to the charity trust he founded some ten years ago and which, it is generally agreed, employs eight hundred staff and runs schools, hospitals and hostels around the world. I did mention criticisms in the press of the way charitable organizations are run these days but tried not to sound hostile. He just sighed in answer to my remarks and said: “I'm only human, John. God knows I do my best and often fail, But it's no skin off my nose if our enemies sneer at some of the good work we do. Truth will out.”

Appendix 4: Formal and informal conversations (samples of questions asked to the informant recorded in June 2018 at the University of Birmingham. The recordings were incorporated into the PAC programme).

I - FORMAL CONVERSATION

- So what did you think of the text and the wordlists?
- Do you personally think that your accent is different when you're at home and when you're in Birmingham?
- Can you tell us a bit more about your childhood, where you grew up?
- Can you explain to us your year abroad in France?
- Do you reckon that your year abroad you did last year was beneficial and why?
- So your year abroad was an asset? Especially for someone like you who is ready to enter the working world?
- Now that you're fresh out of uni, what are your plans for next year or from September?

II- INFORMAL CONVERSATION

- Have you got anything lined up for the rest of the day or for the week?
- What about Selly Oak?
- Do you think you made the most of your time at uni?
- Did you go out a lot?
- Were you involved in societies or sports at uni?

Appendix 5: Information sheet 1

Information sheet - © PAC 2016

Date of recording:

First name:.....

Name:.....

PAC Identifier:

Age at date of recording:.....

Place of birth:

Current place of residence (village, town, etc.):

.....

Previous places of residence:

place	number of years	at the age of
.....
.....
.....
.....

Occupation:.....

Other previous occupations:.....

.....

Education (specify until what age and what type of education):.....

.....

.....

Languages spoken:

language	level of proficiency	(basic)	(intermediate)	(fluent)
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

language	frequency of use	(rarely)	(monthly)	(daily)
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Informant's father, year of birth:.....

Place of origin:.....

Occupation:

Education:.....

Languages or local dialect spoken:

Informant's mother, year of birth:.....

Place of origin:.....

Occupation:

Education:.....

Languages or local dialect spoken:

Informant's husband/wife/other:.....

Place of origin:.....

Occupation:

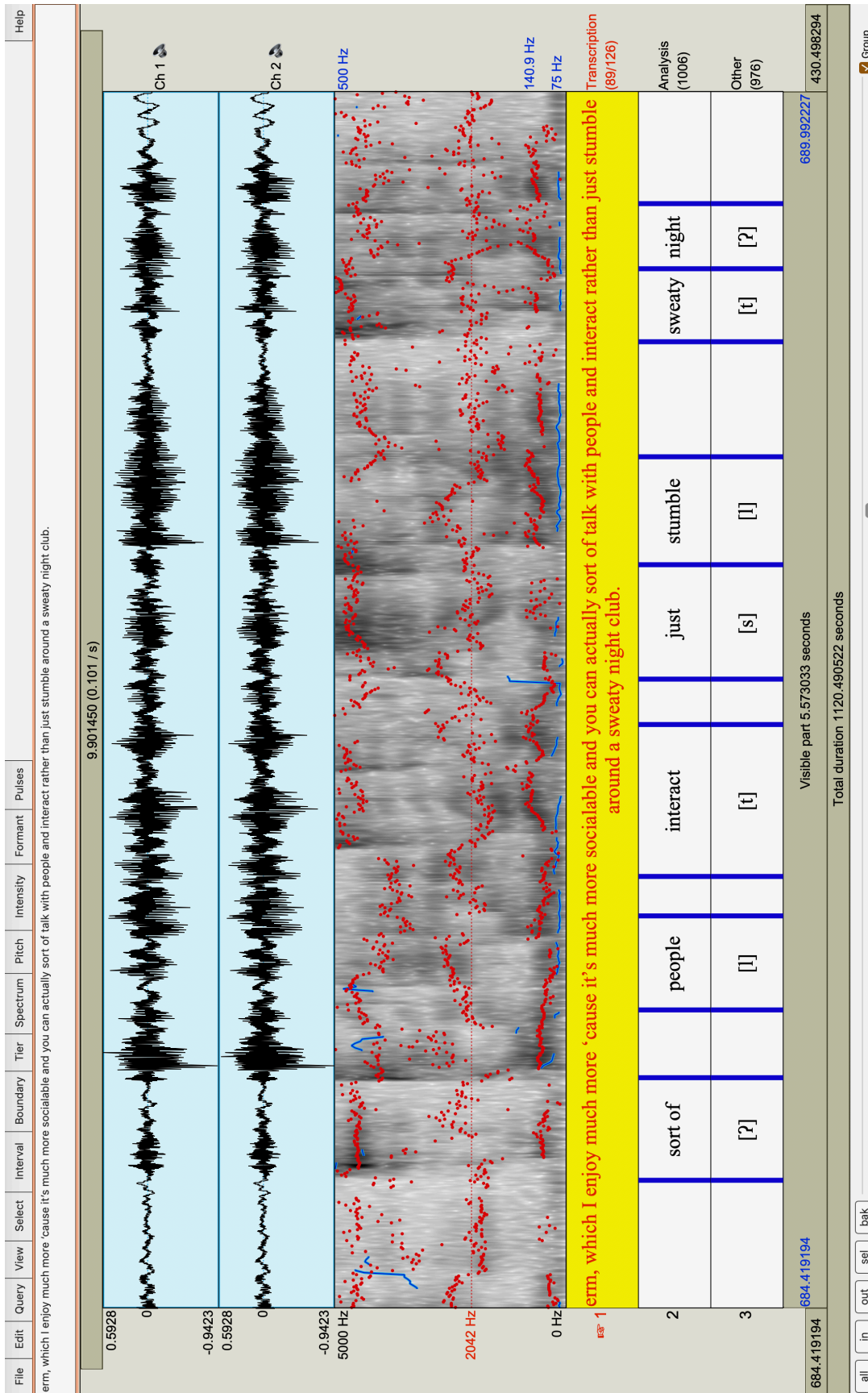
Education:.....

Appendix 6: TextGrid

```
File type = "ooTextFile"
Object class = "TextGrid"

xmin = 0
xmax = 1120.49052154195
tiers? <exists>
size = 3
item []:
  item [1]:
    class = "IntervalTier"
    name = "Transcription"
    xmin = 0
    xmax = 1120.49052154195
    intervals: size = 126
    intervals [1]:
      xmin = 0
      xmax = 3.023965520889211
      text = ""
    intervals [2]:
      xmin = 3.023965520889211
      xmax = 7.464405647389365
      text = "F: All right so, have you got anything lined up for the rest of the day or for the week?"
    intervals [3]:
      xmin = 7.464405647389365
      xmax = 12.10409629238632
      text = "JW: erm, today I haven't got a huge amount left on, I'll be going home"
    intervals [4]:
      xmin = 12.10409629238632
      xmax = 17.332776515421507
      text = "after this, and then, I'll be shooting off to Northfield"
    intervals [5]:
      xmin = 17.332776515421507
      xmax = 21.85875429618787
      text = "for my tai class, erm, that runs about an hour and a half"
    intervals [6]:
      xmin = 21.85875429618787
      xmax = 26.03866415324808
      text = "and then I'll be back home and I'll probably skype with my girlfriend"
    intervals [7]:
      xmin = 26.03866415324808
      xmax = 29.784155754400885
      text = "and then straight to bed, erm,"
    intervals [8]:
      xmin = 29.784155754400885
      xmax = 34.20613944416877
      text = "erm, the rest of the week I haven't got much on, other than Wednesday I'm travelling to London"
    intervals [9]:
      xmin = 34.20613944416877
      xmax = 43.41224174513404
      text = "erm, I recently got a job, erm, so I'm travelling to London to meet the people at the office in person for the
first time"
    intervals [10]:
```

Appendix 7: Transcription with PRAAT



Appendix 8: Physical realisation of a glottal stop with PRAAT

