Accent variation and attitude on the Merseyside/Lancashire border: A sociophonetic study of Southport and Ormskirk

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ABSTRACT

Recent sociolinguistic studies have argued that speaker identity is accentuated in border regions due to speakers' desire to project a strong sense of identity (Llamas 2007; 2010; Beal 2010, Britain 2010). The AISEB (Accent and Identity on the Scottish/English Border) project shows the effect of national political affiliation on linguistic output, observing that linguistic diversity along the Scottish/English border appears to be increasing in some areas in a way that coincides with heightened speaker attitudes in relation to the nearby boundary.

In the light of these findings, increased attention has been paid to urban zones which are geographically either next to perceptual and/or physical boundaries or within areas which have undergone a political boundary change. Following the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, the creation of the administrative county of Merseyside provides us with fertile ground for the study of the relationship between language variation and regional identity. Although Liverpool sits at the heart of the administrative county and the wider region, Merseyside and its immediate environs are a diverse mix of the urban, suburban and rural with quite different social, industrial and economic histories. In particular, the town of Southport, situated seventeen miles north of Liverpool, are often positioned by both residents of Liverpool and the towns themselves as quite distinct entities from the urban centre of the administrative county, despite both having been included within the borders of Merseyside from its inception (West 2013). These locations, peripheral to the urban core of the region, provide us with the opportunity to examine the interplay of language variation, speaker identity and the subsequent direction of linguistic change.

This thesis investigates the diffusion of local Liverpool features – the lenition of intervocalic and word-final /t/ and /k/ and the fronted merger of NURSE and SQUARE (Knowles 1973) – in speech from a corpus of 63 speakers stratified by age, socioeconomic status and gender. I show that despite the links with Liverpool, the features of the Liverpool accent are not diffusing as rapidly as originally hypothesised. To investigate possible reasons for this, the thesis examines whether there is a correlation between speakers' language use and their spatial mobility patterns by mapping their contact and attitudinal behaviour onto their linguistic production. I suggest that Liverpool's negative stereotype (Montgomery 2007) may be acting as a barrier to the diffusion of Liverpool features: a negativity that could potentially be heightened in Southport due to the movement of the political border.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents: Gillian and Geoff West.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work, and reports research that I have carried out.
No part of this work in any form has been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Background

1 Project outline

Increasingly, variationist sociolinguistic research has found that speakers' attitude and identity can have an impact on the direction of language change. Recent research into accent and identity, such as the AISEB[1] project (see Watt et al. 2013; 2014, Llamas 2010, Llamas et al. 2009), has revealed that the interplay between speaker identity and social practice can produce both a conscious and subconscious stylisation of speakers' linguistic output (see Bucholtz and Hall 2010).

Accordingly, fieldwork has increasingly focused on locations where the semiotic processes of identity construction, speaker attitudes and language use can best be observed. Llamas (2010) and Britain (2010) state places in-between or adjacent to major linguistic/urban centres, provide ideal sites for such an investigation as it is believed that in these areas we would expect to find an accentuated sense of identity (see Llamas 2009; 2010).

The current project, focused within the field of language variation and change, examines the interplay of linguistic, social and attitudinal factors. Starting from the hypothesis that border regions provide ideal locations for an investigation of speaker attitudes and orientation (Britain 2004, *Spatiality*), the project undertakes a sociolinguistic analysis of language variation and change in two towns either side of the Merseyside/Lancashire border in the North West of England, Southport (Merseyside) and Ormskirk (Lancashire). As these towns are adjacent to one of the most negatively perceived accents in England, Liverpool (see Montgomery 2007, 2010), Southport and Ormskirk are key sites to investigate attitudes, contact and orientation towards an urban centre.

Prior to the creation of the county of Merseyside (discussed in Section 1.4) Liverpool, Southport and Ormskirk belonged to Lancashire. However, due to the change in administrative boundaries following the Local Government Act of 1972, the county of Merseyside was created, including within it the city of Liverpool and the town of Southport. Southport,

[1] Accent and identity on the Scottish~English border. ESRC funded project.

however, still has a Preston (Lancashire) postcode. The town of Ormskirk, meanwhile, remains in Lancashire, yet has a Liverpool Postcode (see Table 1.1). In terms of hierarchical diffusion, Liverpool's role, as the largest city in closest proximity (less than 20 miles) to Southport and Ormskirk is central to this thesis (see Trudgill 1974). However, social orientation is also key: Southport's lack of affiliation with Merseyside could result in a reduced amount of fricated /t/ and /k/ (typical of Liverpool speech) and a more centralised NURSE and SQUARE (more typical of Lancashire speech, as opposed to fronted NURSE, which is commonly found in Liverpool speech). Ormskirk's affiliation with Liverpool could have the opposite effect in terms of the frequency of fricated /t/ and /k/ and realisation of the NURSE vowel.

Table 1.1: County affiliation and postcode for Southport, Ormskirk, Liverpool and Preston

TOWN	COUNTY	POSTCODE
Liverpool	*Merseyside*	*Liverpool*
Ormskirk	Lancashire	Liverpool
Preston	*Lancashire*	*Preston*
Southport	Merseyside	Preston

The immediate questions that underpin this investigation, then, are as follows: (a) Are the accent features associated with Liverpool English – often popularly referred to as Scouse[2] – spreading into Southport and Ormskirk speech following the predictions of linguistic diffusion? (Trudgill 1974) or (b) has the creation of Merseyside created a shift in identity, and (c) can such a shift in identity have altered the expected direction of linguistic change. As Beal (2010: 222) states:

> The question to be addressed is whether these shifts of identity and perception are mirrored by changes in actual linguistic usage. In areas where administrative reorganisation has led to a shift across a significant boundary, does the usage of older and younger people reflect this shift?

This investigation aims to answer this question by observing the rate of introduction of innovative forms into Southport in direct comparison with the linguistic usage of the politically unchanged location of Ormskirk. Taking an apparent-time approach supplemented with

[2] A discussion of the term Scouse as opposed to Liverpool English throughout this thesis will be addressed later in the chapter.

archive recordings, the study ascertains whether the transfer of Southport to Merseyside has altered the social and geographical trajectory of innovative forms originating from Liverpool English. However, as Montgomery's (2007) study of the perception of accents in England finds, Liverpool English is one of the most negatively perceived varieties in England. Further to this Montgomery notes that the negative attitude towards Liverpool extends beyond the accent, as opinions of the city as being high in criminal activity, run down and industrial were also voiced.

Given the close proximity of the towns to Liverpool, we would expect that the features associated with Scouse would be evident in Southport and Ormskirk speech. However, due to the shift in the political boundary and general negative perceptions towards the Liverpool accent (Montgomery 2007), it is suggested that the spread of Scouse features are not spreading as predicted (see Grey and Richardson 2007). This study finds that patterns of linguistic divergence are perhaps due to Southport speakers' lack of affiliation and negative attitude towards the negatively perceived city and accent of Liverpool, contrary to the prediction of change expected, with convergence to a linguistic centre of gravity (see Trudgill 1974, discussed in Chapter 2). In direct comparison, Ormskirk speaker's linguistic convergence with Scouse is suggested to be due to the speaker's more positive attitude towards Liverpool, encouraged by their regular contact with the city. However, despite regular contact and positive attitudes towards the accent and city of Liverpool, not all the Scouse forms are being acquired in Ormskirk speech, as more widespread forms are competing with local variants.

1.2 Research Questions

The investigation will examine a collection of consonantal and vocalic variables that are known to have local forms in Liverpool English/Scouse. The realisation of /t/ and /k/ will be analysed following the observation that these variables undergo lenition processes in Liverpool English in certain phonological environments, producing localised variants (Honeybone 2001, Watson 2007).[3] Second, the realisation of the vowels belonging to the vowel classes designated by Wells (1982) as NURSE and SQUARE will be examined. In Standard Southern British English, words belonging to these vowel classes are pronounced as [ɜ:] and [ɛə] respectively. In General

[3] /t/ and /k/ have undergone a similar process of lenition in Dublin and Middlesbrough English (Jones and Llamas 2008).

Northern, these vowel classes are realised as [ɜ:] and [ɛ:] (see Wells 1982).[4] In Liverpool English (henceforth LivE), the NURSE vowel is raised and fronted forming a merger with SQUARE. However, to the north of the localities a merger is also apparent in Lancashire English, with SQUARE centralised towards NURSE. A brief description of the realisation of the consonantal and vocalic variants will be introduced later in this chapter; however, a discussion of the variants in terms of phonological considerations and their analysis in previous studies will not be fully addressed until Chapter 2.

The primary research questions of this thesis are:

1a) What is the range of variants present in the accents of Southport and Ormskirk?

1b) Are the accent features that are associated with these variables in Liverpool accents spreading north to the localities of Southport and Ormskirk?

1c) Can an association between speaker contact with Liverpool and language use be observed?

2) Which social factors in terms of speaker age, gender, socio-economic status and phonological factors are conditioning the distribution of variants whether Scouse or otherwise?[5]

However, as this project notes that speaker attitude will affect linguistic variation, the following questions are also addressed:

3a) Can an association be observed between attitude and speaker's geographical orientation?

3b) What effect do speaker orientation and attitudes have on linguistic production?

[4] The use of Wells' lexical sets in this thesis is discussed further in Chapter 2.
[5] To date, the social distribution of the variants in LivE has not been examined.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The remainder of this chapter will introduce the social and linguistic history of Liverpool, Southport and Ormskirk, focusing on the origin of the settled in-migrants to the region and the linguistic systems they brought with them. The following sections, then, will begin with the growth of Liverpool and the unique linguistic contact situation that arguably gave rise to the Liverpool accent and its unique localised forms. The localised forms of the variables under scrutiny in this thesis will then be briefly introduced and a linguistic history of the variants of these variables will conclude the chapter. This will comprise an examination of the data presented in the Survey of English Dialects (Orton et al. 1962, henceforth SED) from the local area, supplemented by data from archive recordings of Southport and Ormskirk speakers provided by the North West Sound Archive (henceforth the NWSA).

Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive theoretical background for the social and linguistic considerations of this thesis along with the previous literature of relevance to this study. The chapter begins with a discussion of language variation and change in terms of the processes of levelling and diffusion, followed by an in-depth discussion of attitude and identity, and their potential role in language variation. The socio-theoretical discussion concludes with the consideration of previous investigations that have focused on the causal relationship between attitude and language. This chapter then continues with the theoretical concerns surrounding the linguistic variables of this thesis. For /t/ and /k/ this includes a discussion of lenition processes and the linguistic environments that promote these processes in LivE (Honeybone 2001, Watson 2007). For the NURSE and SQUARE vowels, the chapter assesses the process of merger (Labov 1994), and presents a discussion of the predicted nature of the merger that is expected to be present in Southport and Ormskirk, as either centralised towards NURSE (as in Lancashire accents, Barras 2006) or raised and fronted towards SQUARE (Liverpool accent, Knowles 1978).

The methodologies of this project are presented in Chapter 3. This chapter assesses the suitability of data collection frameworks for both micro and macro-scale studies. In its assessment of the pros and cons of the various frameworks, the chapter presents the methods that have been selected and applied to the current investigation. The chapter discusses what are considered the most suitable data elicitation and analysis methodologies to bridge the gap between small-scale ethnographic investigations and broad-scale variationist studies. The

former are often criticised as unable to represent large populations, yet a large dataset is necessary for this investigation to discern whether LivE is spreading to the neighbouring towns of Southport and Ormskirk. However, as speaker attitude and identity are also a key consideration of this study, some of the ethnographic processes that are the focus of small-scale studies (discussed in Chapter 2) needed examination in the broad-scale study here.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present the results of this thesis. Chapter 4 shows the contact and attitude results; this chapter first assesses quantified contact and attitudinal data before examining the attitudes that were offered during interview. Chapter 5 presents the results and subsequent discussion for the consonantal variables /t/ and /k/ according to social and linguistic categories. Chapter 6 then demonstrates the results and provides a discussion for the vocalic variables, NURSE and SQUARE.

This thesis is concluded in Chapter 7 with the predominant findings of this investigation, followed by a discussion of the relevance of this study to the field of linguistic variation and change.

1.4 A brief social and linguistic history: Liverpool, Southport and Ormskirk

Merseyside, taking its name from the river Mersey, has existed as an administrative county since 1974 and comprises 5 metropolitan boroughs (see Figure 1.1, below): Sefton (area 1 on Figure 1.1) Knowsley (area 3), St Helens (area 4), Wirral (area 5), and the city of Liverpool (area 2). Prior to the creation of this county, the city of Liverpool was situated in Lancashire. Southport, now in the borough of Sefton in Merseyside, used to be located in an independent borough also within the historic county of Lancashire (Grey and Richardson 2007). The town of Ormskirk, Lancashire, is the only locality concerned within this investigation that has not undergone such an administrative change.

The city of Liverpool is the largest commercial centre in close proximity to the localities at the focus of this investigation: Southport and Ormskirk. The following sections, starting with Liverpool, will provide a brief social history of these locations. Following this, Section 1.4.4 will present a linguistic background of the then South Lancashire area according to the SED (Orton et al 1962) and from archive material (provided by the NWSA).

In addition to the information from the SED (Section 1.4.4), the production of the Liverpool accent will be sourced from previous studies of the linguistic features associated with the Liverpool accent that is hypothesised to be spreading into the speech of the neighbouring towns of Southport and Ormskirk (Grey and Richardson 2007): Clark and Watson (ongoing) Knowles (1973), De Lyon (1981), Honeybone (2001, 2002 and 2004), Watson (2006, 2007, 2007b), Sangster (2001). Present-day linguistic data for Southport and Ormskirk will be sourced from interviews conducted and recorded for the purposes of this investigation (Chapter 3), in addition to the archive data, which will be first discussed in Section 1.4.4.

1.4.1 The development of Liverpool as an economic and linguistic centre

The growth of Liverpool as a major commercial centre can be dated back to 1207, when it was granted a charter by King John that allowed the inhabitants of the town to trade freely. Around this time period, as the major shipping ports of the river Dee silted over and ships were no longer able to sail from Chester (see Figure 1.1), the river Mersey became the new shipping route to Ireland (Bailey 1973). Bailey (1973) states that Liverpool, situated on the Mersey estuary, consequently became an expanding shipping port and centre for trade over the centuries following exploration and globalisation. Since the reign of King John, much of Liverpool's economic expansion is owed to trade with the colonies in the 1600s, as salt and wool were exported from Liverpool, while highly valuable cargoes such as sugar, rum and tobacco were imported from the West Indies and North America, as well as slaves from West Africa (Bailey 1973).[6] Post colonialism, the city remained as a major shipping port, with its largest industry centred on the import and export of cotton. As a result of this trade, Bailey (1973) reports that the population of Liverpool saw a steady increase from 840 inhabitants in 1272 to 79,777 by the 1800s.

[6] Indeed, Bailey (1973: 14) reports that Liverpool became 'the largest slave trading port in Britain' with 'slaves valued at £13,186,850'.

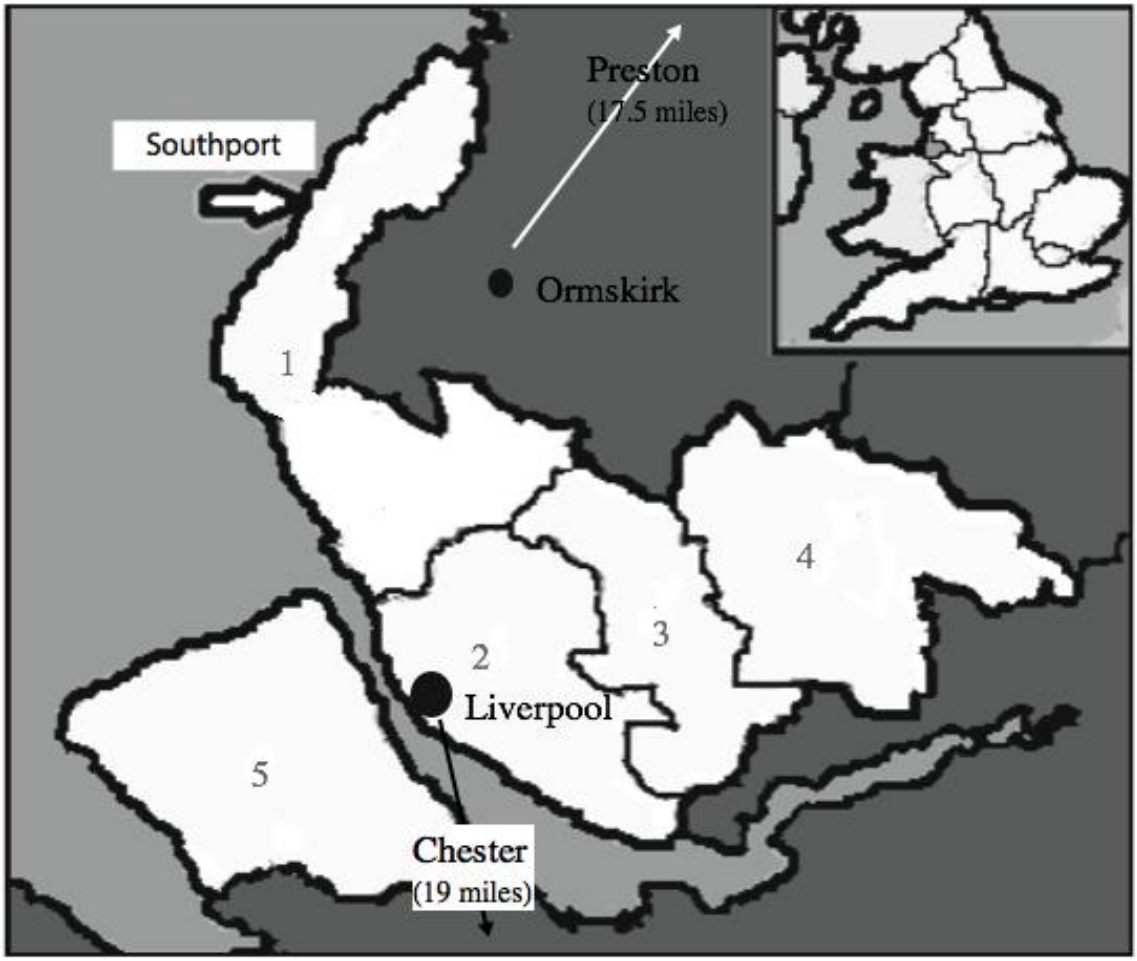

Figure 1.1: The districts of Merseyside and the location of Liverpool, Chester, Preston, Southport and Ormskirk.[7]

Due to the Irish potato famine of 1845-1847, the population of Liverpool increased more dramatically, as '280,000 Irish people came to Liverpool, of whom nearly 106,000 later went elsewhere' (Watson 2007: 22). As Table 1.2 demonstrates below (from Honeybone 2004), although the population increase in Liverpool was not solely due to Irish migration, the proportion of Irish in-migration is considerably greater than any of the other incoming groups.

[7] The distance from Liverpool to Chester is as the crow flies. The distance between Ormskirk and Preston is travelling distance along the A59 road, which is the most direct route. Map source: https://www.bluelight.gov.uk/portal/nwpolice/portal.nsf/vLiveDocs/PD-DEVA-82TMAE?OpenDocument (map has been altered from the original using Inkscape).

Table 1.2: Population of Liverpool: 1841-1901

	Population	% Irish-born	% Welsh-born	% Scots-born
1841	286 656	17.3	??	??
1851	375 955	22.3	4.9	3.6
1861	443 938	18.9	4.7	4.0
1871	493 405	15.6	4.3	4.1
1881	552 508	12.8	3.9	3.7
1891	517 980	9.1	3.4	2.9
1901	684 958	6.7	3.0	2.5

It is believed that the beginnings of the unique accent forms associated with LivE can be traced back to this period. Knowles (1978, cited in Watson 2007: 23) refers to the linguistic output of the dialect mixture as a 'Lancashire dialect with an Irish accent'. As Honeybone (2004) states, however, this description is too simplistic given that there were more than these two accents in contact here, with '41% of the 'head of households' [in 1871] from Liverpool, Lancashire or Cheshire' (Watson 2007: 23). Hence, as Honeybone (2004) and Watson (2007) emphasise, it is more appropriate to recognise Liverpool English as the result of a more complex process: 'the development of a new, mixed variety following dialect contact: koineisation' (Kerswill and Williams 2000: 65).

Due to the large influx of Irish immigrants, however, the extent of the influence that Irish varieties have had on the existing Liverpool accent is subject to much debate (see Honeybone 2001, 2007, Jones and Llamas 2008). The question of Irish influence on the variables discussed in this thesis will not be central to the investigation here, though it will be considered in the following chapter, which will discuss the phonetic variables that have been selected because of their localised realisation in LivE.

1.4.2 'Liverpool English' or 'Scouse'

Etymologically, the term *Scouse* comes from the word *lobscouse*, a stew like dish traditionally associated with sailors. Its association with a sailor's diet leads to the belief that the dish was introduced to the Liverpool docklands circa 1840 (Grey and Grant 2007). The use of the term *Scouse*, however, to refer to Liverpool accent, grammatical features and lexis, or for an

inhabitant of Liverpool, appears much later 'in the *Southern Daily Echo* [in] 1959' (Ibid 2007). As Grey and Grant continue, the term Scouse as a referent for either a person or the dialect variety is not uncontroversial. Indeed, the term Scouse could be considered to enregister working-class speech. In addition, the unique accent features that distinguish this accent variety from other regional varieties can be associated particularly with working-class speakers (Kevin Watson, personal communication).

To date, a complete systematic account of the social stratification of the linguistic variation of LivE is still a work in process (Clark and Watson ongoing). Regardless of social class, however, the term Scouse is frequently used to discuss the unique features of LivE in linguistic analyses, notably Knowles (1973) whose work is used as a reference in subsequent studies of the accent/dialect variety. For the purposes of the investigation here, the term Scouse will be used to refer to the unique accent features associated with LivE. This is in view of the fact that, due to socio-economic class differences, not all Liverpudlians may be users, nor frequent users, of the unique accent features more associated with working-class speech. However, it is the localised features that are more frequently used in working-class Liverpool speech that are considered in this investigation, and their potential spread into the surrounding region. Knowles (1973: 14) claims that,

> Scouse in a wider sense has influenced middle and working-class speech throughout Merseyside, and is spreading beyond its former boundaries. It is spreading north to Southport, north east to Maghull, Lydiate and Ormskirk...

Knowles' statement, however, is not presented with any evidence in support of it, which serves as motivation for the current research to investigate whether there is any truth behind such a claim.

Consideration has been given to the term 'Scouse' throughout this thesis in view of what this term may index, socially. As Grey and Grant (2007) state, within Liverpool inhabitants may prefer to refer to themselves as Liverpudlian and not Scouse given that the former is considered a neutral term for an inhabitant of the city, while the latter indexes a working class status. In terms of eliciting social information from the participants of this study, the term Scouse was approached tentatively: participants were asked what both the terms Liverpudlian and Scouse refer to and how these terms reflect, if at all, their own identity (see discussion of *indexicality* in Chapter 2).

1.4.3 Southport and Ormskirk

Southport is located approximately 19 miles to the north of the city of Liverpool, in the county of Merseyside. Despite its new affiliation, however, the town continues to have a Preston postcode. The city of Preston lies 19.2 miles north east of Southport and 17.5 miles north east of Ormskirk. According to the Lancashire County Council Historic Survey (2006), Preston expanded dramatically during the industrial revolution trading in cotton and textiles. The population grew from 12,000 in 1800 to 120,000 in 1901. Prior to the cotton trade it had been a wealthy market town trading in agriculture. Preston received city status in 2002. The city has a population of approximately 115,000 (Census 2008), a quarter of the size of Liverpool (469,017 according to the Census of 2011). It is therefore considered to have much less of an influence compared with Liverpool. In addition, as a result of Southport's transfer to Merseyside, the inhabitants enjoy a subsidised rail service direct to Liverpool city centre. However, should the inhabitants wish to travel to Preston by rail they must change stations at Ormskirk and the fare is twice the cost of a ticket to Liverpool.

The town of Ormskirk is situated 13 miles to the northeast of Liverpool, approximately 17 miles southwest of Preston and is located within Lancashire. In spite of the town's county affiliation, Ormskirk has a Liverpool postcode. The town's rail link is direct to both Preston and Liverpool, though the inhabitants do not have the benefit of subsidised travel to either city centre. Both Southport and Ormskirk, however, are popular/frequent destinations for Liverpool inhabitants; Southport as a picturesque seaside town with a vibrant nightlife receives lots of day-trippers and people attending nightclubs (http://www.visitsouthport.com). Similarly, Ormskirk is home to Edge Hill University, whose student body is comprised of a large number of Liverpudlians.

Southport and Ormskirk are not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 because 'settlements across (old) southwest Lancashire remained small until the eighteenth century' (Grey and Richardson 2007: 76). Ormskirk, said to be derived from the Old Norse word for 'church', *kirk,* that was believed to be erected by a Viking settler named 'Ormr' (see Duggan 1998), developed as a minor agricultural centre and market town in the eighteenth century

(Grey and Richardson 2007) and today still draws residents from surrounding areas to its weekly farmer's markets.[8]

Originally the area of South Hawes in which Southport is located (Figure 1.1) was a collection of fishing villages: Marshside, Hesketh Bank, North Meols, Birkdale, and Churchtown. In 1792, following the erection of the first hotel in the Churchtown area, the town subsequently became a fashionable seaside tourist destination in the nineteenth century and remains so today (Rimmer 2011). However, these former fishing villages remain to the inhabitants, perceptually, as distinct communities within the larger town (Ibid 2011)[9]. As this thesis will show, this strong sense of local identity is concluded to directly influence Southport's linguistic and social orientation.

According to the 2001 census, Southport has a population of 90,336 and Ormskirk a population of 23,392 in comparison to Liverpool, which has a population of 469,017 (466,400 according to the 2011 census). In alignment with Southport's history as a popular seaside town and with Ormskirk's market town history, recent census records (1981-2001) demonstrate that catering and service is the most important economic sector in which the inhabitants are involved in both towns.[10]

Due to the service and retail economy of Ormskirk (as opposed to industrial), many of the Ormskirk participants of this study reported that there are several societies for businessmen which marked the town, in their minds, as affluent/middle class. Equally, in addition to Southport's numerous hotels, Victorian promenades, botanic gardens and private schools, the town attracts many visitors with its golf course that hosts the prestigious Royal Birkdale golf tournament and through the annual televised event of the Southport Flower Show (Bailey

[8] Visits to the Ormskirk 'farmer's market' were mentioned by many of the younger and older Southport participants of this investigation who occasionally go to buy vegetables and dairy products.

[9] The local history society, from which much of the local history for this thesis was sourced, has published manuscripts detailing the distinct surnames and secondary economies (such as farming) of each of the districts. They also disclosed to me information of the many families that have remained within their original communities throughout the generations of the town. In addition, the participants in this study would refer to their self-assessment of class as being indexed by their particular district, often talking in opposition to other districts that they considered more or less affluent.

[10] These data are provided from a 10% census sample for both Southport and Ormskirk. Full census data is available for the borough of Sefton and the city of Liverpool.

1973). Similar to Ormskirk, the inhabitants of Southport and participants of this study perceive their town as middle class, listing the above as prestige markers of the town's overall socio-economic status.[11] Indeed, finding informants who self-identified as middle class in both locations was far easier than finding those who identified as working class (this will be returned to in the methodology of this thesis, Chapter 3).

In addition, it quickly became apparent that the majority of both the Southport and Ormskirk participants were aware of much of their local history, including the younger speakers. However, despite both towns' tertiary/quaternary economies, centred on tourism and market retail, only the Southport speakers reflected upon their economy as highly different from what they perceived as Liverpool's industrial and working-class economy. The affluent aspects of Southport served as a marker of a distinct, overall middle-class identity and therefore a lack of association with a county that has the 'working-class' city of Liverpool as its capital: this is a notable discovery which is central to the sociolinguistic focus of this investigation. This will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4, which will present the attitudinal data of this thesis.

1.4.4 Linguistic background: SED and archive data

Previous linguistic studies of the Liverpool accent have focused on three major variables: the production of /t/ and /k/ in intervocalic ([V_v], [V_#V], [V_#v])[12] and word-final, pre-pausal position and the realisation of the NURSE and SQUARE vowels (see Knowles 1973). The investigation here hopes to uncover whether the highly researched localised Liverpool variants are indeed present in the neighbouring towns of this study.

As stated in Section 1.2, Chapter 2 will discuss in full detail the rationale behind the selection of the variables under scrutiny in this thesis, their relevance to theoretical phonological issues and the variants that are produced in Scouse. Here, however, we will briefly consider the variants that are associated with Scouse (Table 1.3, from West 2013) without these further considerations, so that the differences between present-day Scouse and the variants uncovered

[11] Many of the Southport participants of this study reflected upon each of the attractions and events as marking the town as middle class. They also commented on the cost of housing, made higher by footballers selecting the town to live in as well as attracting wealthy people at retirement age. Frequently, participants stated that there were more and more Liverpudlians are moving into the town to improve their quality of living.

[12] Lower case (v) indicates an unstressed vowel, while uppercase (V) indicates a stressed vowel. The consideration of stress will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

in the SED and archive data can be considered. As the following chapters of this thesis will demonstrate, the variants here are simplified categorisations of the phonetically continuous realisations of the variables analysed under acoustic and auditory analysis.

Table 1.3: Realisation of /t/, /k/, NURSE and SQUARE in present day 'Standard Southern British English' and 'Scouse'

Consonantal Variables								
	Environment		**SSBE/ Non-Scouse**			**Scouse**		
/t/	**[V_v]**	'be**tt**er'	**[ʔ]**	**[tʰ][13]**	[ɾ]	**[ts]**	**[s][14]**	**-**
	[V_#(V)]	'bu**t** it'	**[ʔ]**	**[tʰ]**	**[ɾ][15]**	**[ts]**	**[s]**	
	[V_##]	**'**wha**t'**	**[ʔ]**	**[tʰ]**		**[ts]**	**[s]**	**[h]**
/k/	**[V_v]**	'spea**k**er'	**-**	**[kʰ]**		**[kx]**	**[x]**	-
	[V_#(V)]	'loo**k** at'	**-**	**[kʰ]**		**[kx]**	**[x]**	-
	[V_##]	'li**ke**'	**-**	**[kʰ]**		**[kx]**	**[x]**	-
Vocalic Variables*								
NURSE	**-**	**-**	**[ɜ:]**	**-**		**[ɛ:]**		
SQUARE	**-**	**-**	**[ɛ:]**	**[ɛə]**		**[ɛ:]**		

*Sourced from auditory data provided by Knowles (1973), see also Wells (1982).

As discussed previously, the formation of present-day Scouse is speculatively dated back to the influx of Irish and other groups in the mid 1800s (Knowles 1973, Honeybone 2007). However, it is not entirely clear when the forms presented in Table 1.2 began to materialise in

[13] This symbol conflates the [t] and [tʰ] forms.

[14] The adoption of the controversial representation of this variant as [s] will be discussed in Chapter 2.

[15] This form was originally considered under /t/ → /r/ environments, which is said to be phonologically restricted to following a short vowel but preceding a word boundary, preceding a vowel: [short V]_#V (see Wells 1982: 370). As Clark and Watson (2011: 524) state, 'the rule does not apply blindly across the board to all words which fit the phonological pattern. Instead, *t*-to-*r* shows evidence of being lexically restricted'. We will return to this discussion in more detail in Chapter 2.

the Liverpool accent, or how far they have spread to the surrounding region. To gain some insight into the history of these forms in the local area, other than through informal references in the media (Grey and Richardson 2007), the data provided by the SED, conducted in the 1950s, is one of the few linguistic sources available to identify whether these forms were apparent in South Lancashire prior to the creation of Merseyside.

Figure 1.2 maps the SED localities selected for this investigation and their proximity to Southport and Ormskirk. Liverpool, as the linguistic centre of gravity, and Preston, as the largest Lancashire city near to Southport and Ormskirk, are also mapped, as well as Skelmersdale from which archive data has been analysed to supplement the Ormskirk dataset (discussed below). The SED data sites are as follows: Ribchester (SED La_8), located 12 miles to the east of Preston, Marshside (SED La_10), now a suburb of Southport, Eccleston (SED La_11), located 14 miles to the east of Ormskirk (7 miles to the west of Skelmersdale), and Bickerstaffe (SED La_13) located 10 miles to the north of Liverpool, 3.8 miles south of Ormskirk and 12 miles south-east of Southport.[16]

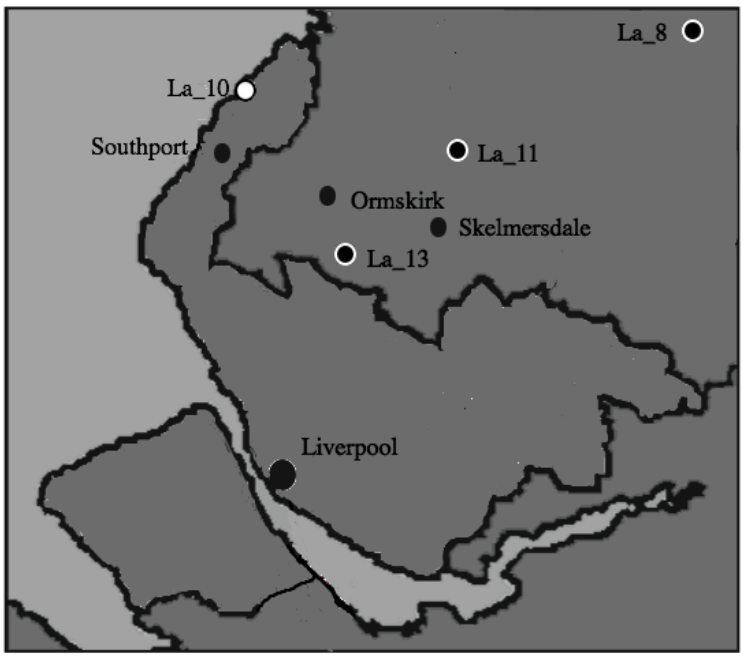

Figure 1.2: Locations of SED data collection sites in relation to Liverpool, Southport, Ormskirk (and Skelmersdale).[17]

[16] The distances here and throughout this thesis refer to most direct road link rather than as the crow flies.

[17] The county border is presented here for reference only; it was not present at the time that the SED was conducted. Map source: https://www.bluelight.gov.uk/portal/nwpolice/portal.nsf/vLiveDocs/PD-DEVA-82TMAE?OpenDocument (map has been altered from the original using Inkscape).

Before this chapter turns to the data provided by the SED, it is necessary to first recognise its limitations, particularly in relation to the data that has been collected for this investigation. Firstly, as the participants of the SED were Non-mobile Older Rural Males (NORMs, see Chambers and Trudgill 1980), it is recognised that the data are not fully representative of the accent, given that these speakers were chosen as likely preservers of traditional accent forms (Orton 1962). As such, it is appreciated that if the forms presented in Table 1.2 are not present in the data, it does not necessarily mean that they were not being used by other speakers in the area who may have typically experienced more contact with other accents and are in principle more receptive to innovative forms (see Labov 2001). Secondly, as the transcription is based on the auditory judgements of numerous data collectors we cannot be sure of the agreement between the analysts or the accuracy of the transcription. Nonetheless, the survey is a useful starting point to uncover some of the accent features that were present in the local area and have subsequently contributed to the current linguistic output of the accents under scrutiny in this thesis.

In addition to the data provided by the SED, an indication of the accent features that were present prior to the current investigation will be provided from the NWSA archive recordings. The archive speakers, who are aged between 67 and 91, were recorded between 2002 and 2005, more than 40 years after the SED was conducted. However, the archive had only two recordings of Ormskirk speakers, and six from Southport (three males and three females). To supplement the Ormskirk data, speakers from Skelmersdale, located 6.3 miles to the east of Ormskirk (see Figure 1.2), were added to the dataset. Prior to its designation as a new town in 1961 to house the overspill population of Merseyside, Skelmersdale was a small mining town (see Clark and Watson ongoing). It is recognised that the Skelmersdale archive speakers could exhibit relatively more Scouse forms, due to the influx of Liverpudlians post 1961.

Unlike the SED data, the archive data has been analysed using both acoustic and auditory methods conducted by the researcher (discussed in Chapter 3). The NWSA data will be presented again in Chapters 5 and 6 to demonstrate a visual presentation of change over time. The archive data will not be included in the statistical analysis with the data collected in this investigation, for two reasons. First, only a crude assessment of social class could be attributed to the speakers of the NWSA recordings based on their occupations prior to retirement, and the topics that speakers address in the recording; this assessment of social class is not in keeping with the more in-depth measures of ascribing social class to the interviewees of this

investigation (further discussed in Chapter 3, Methodology), and second, due to the other discrepancies of the dataset, such as the uneven speaker numbers.[18]

1.4.4.1 /t/

As Honeybone (2001) states, intervocalic and word-final pre-pausal position, in particular, promote the occurrence of Scouse variants (represented in Table 1.2).[19] The SED identified six variants of /t/: [t], [tθ], [th], [ts], [d] and [d̥]. The Standard Southern British English (SSBE) form ([th]) in word-final pre-pausal position, accounts for 90% or more of the production in all of the locations. Interestingly, in this environment, there are no instances of the affricate or fricative forms associated with present day Scouse (see Table 1.2). Instead, the remaining 10% of the production of /t/ is realised as [d] or [d̥], which is not considered typical of Scouse speech. In intervocalic environments, the standard variant [t] is overwhelmingly favoured in all locations. However, in the locations that are situated in present day South Lancashire, La_8 and La_11 (see Figure 1.2), the form [tθ] is apparent (less than 10%), which is again not associated with present day Scouse. Indeed, in the locations that are situated in what is now Merseyside (excluding La_8), the affricate form [ts] accounts for approximately 10% of the realisation of /t/ overall; La_10 (Southport) demonstrates 20% production of the affricate form.

The archive data, unlike the SED data, has been analysed using Praat.[20] More than 40 years after the SED was conducted, the standard variant is the predominant form overall in the NWSA recordings. However, in the archive data there is 20% glottal stop, a form that was not present in the SED data. The realisation of this variant is particularly favoured in Southport in word-final pre-pausal position (approximately 50%).

Moreover, there are a higher proportion of affricated forms compared with the data of the SED and the emergence of fricative forms, associated with the Scouse accent (Table 1.2). In the

[18] For example, some speakers talked about competing in the Southport flower show, a hobby that might be considered middle class given the prestige of the flower show.

[19] A full discussion of the effects of linguistic (and social) factors on the variables will be presented in Chapter 2.

[20] We will return to a discussion of the acoustic analysis of the variants of this thesis in Chapter 3. For the consonantal data, the release periods were coded as [h] if visibly and audibly short in duration and displaying relatively periodic energy, or [s] or [x] if a relatively lengthy period of aperiodic, high frequency energy formed the release of the segment.

analysis of the archive data according to environment and location, there is a divide between the localities. Southport speakers demonstrate a clear preference for the glottal and standard realisations in word-final pre-pausal (49%) and intervocalic position (approx. 50%). Ormskirk speakers, on the other hand, show the affricate variant as the preferred form in both environments (56% in intervocalic and 40% in word final pre-pausal position). Debuccalisation of /t/ to [h] was not present in any of the speakers' speech.[21]

1.4.4.2 /k/

The SED data for the production of /k/ mentions four variants in both word-final pre-pausal and intervocalic environments: a standard pronunciation [k], an aspirated realisation [k'], and two forms [kk] and [kk'] which correspond to the affricated form, [kx] (presented in Table 1.2) and [kx^{h}] (see Watson 2007). Similar to the production of /t/, [k] is considerably preferred in all locations. In word-final pre-pausal position however, aspirated [k'], accounts for approximately 15% of the overall production. The affricated form [kk] appears only marginally (approximately 5%) in Marshside (LA_10), which is a district of Southport (see Figure 1.2).

In intervocalic position, again the standard variant is preferred overall. The closer the location to Liverpool, however, the higher the proportion of the affricate form that is associated with Scouse production. For example, La_13, located 10 miles north of Liverpool demonstrated 20% production of the affricate form, compared with La_8 (located 47 miles north of Liverpool, see Figure 1.2), which showed categorical use of [k].

In direct comparison with the SED data, the archive data demonstrates the standard [k^{h}] form to be the preferred variant overall, similar to the production of /t/. Yet again, the data shows the emergence of glottal stop for /k/ in word-final positions, in particular word-final pre-pausal, shown in Table 1.5 below. As with glottal replacement for /t/, this feature is not associated with present day Scouse (see Watson 2007). Similar to the production of /t/ a divide between the locations is evident; Southport demonstrates the highest proportion of glottal stop, particularly in word-final pre-pausal position, and has an overwhelming preference for the standard variant across both environments, particularly in female speech.

[21] /t/ to [ɾ] was also present in the data and averaged 33.6% production in Ormskirk speech, while Southport speakers produced a much lower 7.5% of this form. The data for /t/ to [ɾ] and /t/ to [h] will be presented separately throughout this thesis due to the specific environments in which they occur. This phonological consideration will be returned to in Chapter 2.

Ormskirk, on the other hand, similar to this location's production of /t/, demonstrates an overall preference for the affricated form (approximately 50%). Finally, in the NWSA archive data, the emergence of the fricative form [x], which was not present in the SED data, is now apparent in both locations (15% use in both Southport and Ormskirk speech), particularly in intervocalic position.

To summarise the consonantal data: while there is evidence of the affricated forms associated with Scouse in the SED, the proportion of these forms stays below 20% overall for both /t/ and /k/. In addition, in the SED, for /t/ there are voiced and affricate forms, [d] and [t^{θ}] which are neither associated with Standard Southern British English or Scouse. In comparison with the archive data collected 40 years later, the forms associated with Scouse presented in Table 1.2 appear much more frequently, particularly in male speech.

However, in conjunction with the increase of Scouse forms, glottal replacement also became apparent in this data for both /t/ and /k/. The archive data also highlighted a considerable difference between the locations of this thesis, as Southport speakers showed a clear preference for the standard and the glottal forms, while the affricate forms are most frequent in Ormskirk speech.

1.4.4.3 NURSE and SQUARE

As demonstrated in Table 1.2, the production of Scouse NURSE (Wells 1982) is often produced with a more fronted realisation [ɛ:] (Knowles 1973). In Lancashire, however, the merger (where it is present) is centralised, with NURSE and SQUARE words often realised as [ɜ:] (Barras 2006).[22] As with the consonantal data, there are a couple of unexpected variants noted in the SED: [ɔ] and [ɒ]. In all instances, however, these representations corresponded to NURSE words with <or> such as *worse*. Excluding these variants, then, the production of NURSE words in the SED are categorically central, with no instances of the fronting that is associated with present day Scouse (Knowles 1973).

[22] The words in the SED for both NURSE and SQUARE all had following /r/ after the vowel and hence all the words presented here are followed by rhotic /r/, a traditional feature of Lancashire accent (Chambers and Trudgill 1974; see also Barras 2006, Lancashire and Greater Manchester).

The standard variant for SQUARE, [ɛ:], is considerably depleted in favour of the centralised variants [ɜ:] and [ə]. Indeed, though it is expected that we would find the standard variant in the locations which are situated closest to Liverpool, given the fronting of the NURSE set in present day Scouse, it is the locations situated in present day Lancashire which show some usage (10%) of [ɛ:] as the standard production of SQUARE.

However, as with the NURSE data above, an unexpected realisation, [ɪə], also appeared within the dataset; given the high fronted place of the onset of this variant, [ɪə] is perceptively close to the present day Scouse pronunciation (Knowles 1973).[23] Comparing the fronted variants [ɪə] and [ɛ:], then, with the centralised realisations of the SQUARE set, La_11, situated closest to Ormskirk, demonstrates the highest proportion of fronted forms (50%), followed by La_10 (40%), which corresponds geographically to Southport. Unexpectedly, the location closest to Liverpool (La_13) shows the highest proportion of centralised variants (85%).

The vocalic archive data will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters. Here and in the rest of this thesis, the analysis of the vocalic data raises two questions: (a) does the speaker have a merger between these vowels, and (b) how fronted or central is the production of the lexical items which correspond to Wells (1982) NURSE and SQUARE lexical sets. [24]

In response to question (a) the NWSA data shows that the majority of Southport speakers maintain a standard distinction between these vowels, [ɜ:] for NURSE words and [ɛ:] for SQUARE. The South Lancashire area of Ormskirk and Skelmersdale, on the other hand, contains numerous speakers who merge these lexical sets. Once again, in simplified detail compared to the acoustic data that will be presented in Chapter 6, the merger that these speakers have, including OM04 in the Southport dataset, is acoustically and audibly centralised.

Summarising the vocalic data, there is very little evidence of Scouse forms in either the SED or archive dataset, as speakers either maintain a standard distinction between the vowels or

[23] This form appeared in the following words: *wears, pears, perch, heard* and *chair*.

[24] The F1 and F2 of the vowels were measured using a single measure in the centre of the vowel. The distance between the vowel was then calculated in R using 'the Pillai-Bartlett statistic [henceforth Pillai], an output of a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), which represents the proportion of one variance that can be predicted by another variance. A higher Pillai indicates a lower degree of overlap between two vowel clusters in F1/F2 space' (Hall-Lew 2010: 1).

produce a centralised merger associated with Lancashire pronunciation, rather than the fronted merger associated with present day Scouse (Knowles 1973).

1.4.5 Summary

Overall, the consonantal and vocalic variables show varying rates of change between the SED dataset and the archive data collected approximately 40 years afterwards. The vocalic data in the SED suggests that the NURSE and SQUARE vowels were merged towards NURSE. The NWSA data, however, shows some speakers maintaining a distinction between these sets (particularly in Southport) while some speakers display a merger, which is again centralised. There is no evidence in any of the locations in the SED or in the NWSA data of a fronted realisation of NURSE, which would be associated with Scouse.

The consonantal data, on the other hand, displayed a more considerable change over time between the SED and NWSA datasets. There is an overall increase of Scouse forms of /t/, from 10% in the SED data, restricted to intervocalic environments, to 40% production across all environments in the archive data. The data for /k/ showed a similar overall increase to that of /t/, with an approximate 10% production of Scouse forms in the SED data, again predominantly restricted to intervocalic position, to approximately 40% Scouse realisations in the archive data across all environments.

A significant discovery for the purposes of this investigation was the difference found in the archive data between Southport and Ormskirk speech. While Southport speakers demonstrated some Scouse realisations for both the consonantal and vocalic variables, this location consistently preferred standard or glottal variants for /t/. Ormskirk speakers, on the other hand, demonstrated a clear shift in the consonantal data towards a more Scouse production in its high use of affricate forms. However, this location displays a convergence with Lancashire, rather than Liverpool in its centralised realisation of NURSE and SQUARE.[25]

[25] As mentioned above, the archive data presented here will be discussed again later in this investigation. This is to form a comparison with the more recent linguistic output of Southport and Ormskirk speakers and to present a visual representation of apparent change over time.

As mentioned in the overview for this project (Section 1), the research takes into account the effects of social and attitudinal factors on the direction of linguistic change over time. Hence it is recognised that, while the historical data here for the most part shows some evidence towards a convergence with Scouse pronunciation, the rate and indeed direction of this change may have since been affected due to the changes in local politics, namely the shift in the political boundary and the subsequent social and attitudinal effect that political change may precipitate. The following chapter will focus its discussion on the theorised and evidenced consequences of social and attitudinal factors on social practice, and on linguistic output.

CHAPTER TWO

Internal and external considerations in linguistic change
Part I: Social factors

2 Introduction

Liverpool, the closest large city to Southport and Ormskirk, is considered by residents of the Merseyside and South Lancashire region to be the capital of the new administrative county. The proximity of Southport and Ormskirk to Liverpool (situated approximately 20 miles to the south) begs the question: will the accent features of Scouse be present in the accents of these two towns? As noted in Chapter 1, Knowles (1973) and Grey and Richardson (2007) predict that Scouse accent features have an influence on the wider region, including Southport and Ormskirk.

However, as numerous recent studies have shown, the direction of language change can be disrupted in cases where speaker identities diverge (Llamas 2010, Beal 2010). Following the discussion of levelling and diffusion processes, this chapter considers the claims that Llamas (2000, 2006, 2007 and 2010), Britain (2010) and Beal (2010) have made regarding the psycho-sociological effects that speaker attitude may have on contact and, indeed, language change. As towns on either side of a relatively new political border with a possibly accentuated sense of identity (see Llamas 2007; Middlesbrough), Southport and Ormskirk are ideally suited to examine the relationship between speakers' psycho-sociological orientations, and their ways of speaking in terms of accent features. Indeed, the psycho-social orientation of speakers is of particular interest in the locations under scrutiny given that the Liverpool 'Scouse' accent is one of the most negatively perceived varieties of British English (Montgomery 2007; perceptual dialectology). The potential effects on identity with the creation of Merseyside, as well as the perception of the Scouse accent, are therefore central to this investigation.

The first half of this chapter considers the research questions presented in Chapter 1 in turn with reference to the relevant findings of previous investigations. First, we begin with the theoretical bases of dialect levelling and diffusion as a consequence of sustained contact and accommodation between speakers (see Williams and Kerswill 1999, Dyer 2002). Finally, in the second half of the chapter, we consider the linguistic variables under scrutiny in this thesis, and will include the rationale behind their selection and the considerations that need to be taken into account in their analysis.

2.1 What is the range of variants present in the accents of Southport and Ormskirk? And are the accent features associated with these variables in Scouse spreading north to the localities of Southport and Ormskirk?

The range of variants present in the accents of Ormskirk and Southport, as two previously unexamined varieties, remained an open question until after data collection. It was hypothesised, however, that due to the towns' close proximity to Liverpool, the Liverpool accent would have some influence on these accents following the theories of diffusion.

Focusing broadly on how language forms are spread across a wide geographical area, the theory of diffusion considers how demographic patterns can influence the direction of language spread. Boberg (2000: 1) defines diffusion in its broadest terms as '[t]he process by which linguistic changes spread geographically from one dialect or language to another'. Trudgill (1982, cited in Kerswill 2003: 223) provides a more specific definition of *geographical* diffusion describing how demographic patterns are conjectured to influence language change as a process that involves features spreading 'out from a populous, economically and culturally dominant centre to the surrounding areas'. In addition, the spread of linguistic forms is also theorised to be a hierarchical process, *hierarchical* diffusion, which specifically describes the spread of variants across geographical space between large cities before filtering down to smaller populations, or even on more rare occasions vice versa (see Kerswill 2003).[26]

An example study here is Trudgill's (1974) investigation of five Norwegian towns using a formalised 'gravity model' to account for the loci of influence. As Haynes and Fotheringham (1984) state,

> The gravity model, based on a concept borrowed from the physical sciences, makes use of the observations that interaction is likely to be greater among places with larger populations, and that interaction diminishes as a function of distance (as quoted in Bailey et al. 1993).

[26] In an analysis of FACE variants Kerswill (2003) compares the frequency of the variants in his 1983 study of Durham to the frequencies found in research of Newcastle in 1994. In particular, the innovative monophthongal variant [e:] demonstrates similar frequencies to the Newcastle study ten years later. Thus Kerswill concludes that this could be a product of geographical diffusion from Yorkshire, which traditionally has the monophthongal variant.

In his study, Trudgill analyses the towns within a small rural peninsula, testing the influence of a large town with a population of 10,000 on smaller towns with 2000 inhabitants or fewer. He posits the following equation (as schematised in Boberg 2000: 2):

$$\mathbf{I}ij = \mathbf{S} \bullet ((\mathbf{P}i\ \mathbf{P}j\ ) \div (\mathbf{d}ij)^2) \bullet (\mathbf{P}i \div (\mathbf{P}i + \mathbf{P}j\ ))$$

I*ij* =influence of center *i* on center *j*

P=population

d=distance

S= index of linguistic similarity[27]

Analysing the linguistic similarities of vowel variation between these towns, Trudgill's equation successfully accounts for the patterns of linguistic change through hierarchical diffusion, as the variant frequencies and variation point to small towns assimilating to nearby large towns, before filtering down to smaller settlements within that area. The gravity model, then, appears to provide levelling research with a quantifiable method of analysing the loci of influence between neighbouring dialects and predicting the geographical direction of the spread of change(s), based on population and proximity.

If we were to calculate the influence of Liverpool on Southport and Ormskirk using this formula we are met with numerous considerations, which could be deemed highly problematic. First, in the calculation of linguistic similarity, Trudgill assigns an index score to the value of 1-5 to each of the vocalic variants, where a variant with a value of 5 is a more broadly used variant; forms lower down the scale are more localised. Trudgill then calculates the frequency of each variant per speaker. If we were to attribute an index of linguistic similarity between Liverpool and Southport and Ormskirk speech, however, taking the example of /t/ lenition, it would be difficult to objectively evaluate whether the pronunciation of /t/ as, say, [t̰] ([bʊt̰]) is more of a marker of Scouse than the debuccalised variant [h], [bʊh] as both are considered to be frequent in Scouse speech and not shared by the surrounding accents of Lancashire and Manchester (see Honeybone 2001, though see Llamas and Jones 2008, for a discussion of /t/

[27] Towns are pre-assessed by their linguistic similarity based on numerous features that mark the linguistic varieties in question. Boberg (2000), for example, assesses the similarity of North American vowels between the urban areas, as well as the merger of /ɑ/ and /ɔ/ (found in Canada, in his study). From this, a score is given 1-5 (one point given for every shared feature).

in Middlesbrough).[28] Second, as Trudgill (1974) concedes, the diffusion model falls short of adequacy in its inability to examine the social and attitudinal factors that are relevant to linguistic change. In consideration of the model's inability to explain the sporadic distribution of /h/ dropping, Trudgill states that, 'if we are fully to understand the diffusion of linguistic changes we shall require to know the extent to which a feature has prestige or […] covert prestige' (p. 241).[29] The failure of such a model in its predictions can only serve as an indicator that there are potential ideological effects blocking the hypothesised direction of linguistic spread.

If we were to calculate the influence of Liverpool on Southport and Ormskirk using only population and distance, we might conclude the loci of influence to be greater on Southport than Ormskirk given that Southport has a larger population; not a problem.[30] However, this equation does not account for the potential effect of social factors, such as the varying contact that these localities may have with Liverpool (as noted in Chapter 1). Nor does it account for the possible effects that accentuated attitudes, caused by the presence of a political boundary, have on speakers' social orientation (Llamas 2010). As Labov (1972) concludes in relation to his study of Martha's Vineyard, 'a large center can have an influence on a smaller one only if the inhabitants of the smaller one hold a positive subjective evaluation of the larger center' (Boberg 2000: 23).

In the light of the failings of the gravity model, Boberg's (2000) study of the US–Canadian border takes account of contact as well as collective speaker identity, and finds that the latter may have a blocking effect on potential contact-induced levelling. The study sets out to test implications of identity on Trudgill's gravity model (as outlined above), analysing 12 cities either side of the US–Canadian border, which is claimed to have 'long been a linguistic barrier

[28] For consistency with other studies of /t/ lenition in Liverpool, [t̠] will be transcribed as [ts] (affricate form) and [s]. This notation will be discussed further later in this chapter.

[29] Trudgill states that the diffusion model is unable to fully explain why the rural areas in between London and Norwich retain 'h'; the model would predict that these areas would demonstrate /h/ deletion, due to their location between the h-dropping urban centres of London and Norwich.

[30] $\text{Influence of Liverpool on Southport} = \frac{469017 \text{ x } 90336}{19 \text{ x } 19} \text{x} \frac{469017}{469017 + 90336} = 98,411,273$

$\text{Influence of Liverpool on Ormskirk} = \frac{469017 \text{ x } 23392}{13 \text{ x } 13} \text{x} \frac{469017}{469017 + 23392} = 61,834\,640$

of considerable influence, just as it is a cultural divider' (Chambers 2000: 118, as quoted in Llamas 2010: 229).[31]

The study's initial hypothesis is that the city of Windsor in Ontario 'should be completely assimilated to Detroit within one generation', due to the population and proximity of the two cities (Boberg 2000: 8).[32] However, once both cities were analysed in terms of their phonetic output it was clear that they remained distinct, suggesting that contrary to the predictions of the gravity model, Detroit has no influence on Windsor. Boberg concludes that the reason for this is the effect of the border and the heightened sense of otherness this provides. He states:

> [i]n general, it seems safe to say that Canadians do not want to sound like Americans, so that when a variant is marked [+American] rather than, say, [+young] or [+trendy] it will not be readily transferred (Boberg 2000: 23).

It is clear, then, that Trudgill's gravity model does not account for counter-examples to diffusion, due to the model's inability to account for the social practices of speakers. Indeed, as noted with the studies of levelling, Milroy and Milroy (1987), Williams and Kerswill (1999) and Dyer (2010) have observed several important generalisations about the social distribution of linguistic features, for instance the widely accepted finding that women lead in the adoption of prestige features in a given speech community (see Labov 2001: 501). These patterns have led researchers to pose the question: why do these groups behave in a way that leads to the stratification of linguistic variation? As Holmes (1997) states, any variation in linguistic behaviour between social groups, for example men and women, needs to be explained by the varying social practices between men and women as a potential factor of how the difference in their language arises. As an example, she claims that the daily activities of women tend to mean that women have 'a wider range of social contacts than men' (p. 199). It is conjectured, then, that as a result, women lead in linguistic change as they are more frequently exposed to innovative forms. In a sociolinguistic study, these differing patterns of interaction lead to the

[31] This is similarly attested by Llamas (2010: 231) who states, 'It is also clear that as far as the attribution of national identity is concerned, linguistic behaviour is central to a categorisation.'

[32] As Boberg (2000) claims, due to the perception in the media, Ontarians perceive a linguistic similarity between the two cities.

examination of gender due to the potential variation this factor can have on linguistic behaviour as a consequence of these varying patterns of interaction.[33]

Human interaction, or specifically, as Trudgill (1986) argues, face-to-face contact between speakers (cf. Stuart-Smith, 1999, for a discussion of the influence of television on language change), is central to an investigation of language variation and change. Milroy and Milroy's (1978) study of Belfast foregrounded face-to-face interaction as a motivation in linguistic change; their investigation of contact (discussed in more detail below) found evidence to suggest that linguistic spread varies depending on the relative density of speaker networks, i.e. whether there is a mutual association between all the contacts of a speaker network (a dense network) or whether speaker contacts are non-mutually acquainted. They conclude that men more frequently retained vernacular forms due to the relative density of their networks, as opposed to women in the same socio-economic class who used regional variants more often.

Similar to the Belfast study, Williams and Kerswill (1999) analyse three separate communities chosen on the basis of their differing social network patterns: Hull, a 'close knit and territorially defined community' (p. 159), Milton Keynes, described as having weak and uniplex ties, and Reading, a 'long established local community [with] a mobile population of commuters' (p. 154), but which also had close-knit working-class communities. Williams and Kerswill found that Milton Keynes, the town with the most fluid networks, also had the most levelled dialect, while Hull was comparatively the most linguistically conservative, for example, in its preservation of localised features such as monophthongisation of the PRICE vowel when preceding a voiced consonant. From this, they concluded that intensity of face-to-face contacts outside the local community was strongly associated with accent levelling. Williams and Kerswill (1999: 149) define accent levelling as:

> [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.

They continue their discussion of this process as a consequence of changing demographic patterns in the last 40-50 years: as an increasing number of people are spreading to suburban

[33] The discussion of social factors, such as gender, age and class will be returned to in Chapter 3, in terms of methodological considerations.

areas of cities and dormitory towns away from the inner city, and with improved geographical mobility, dialects have come into contact with one another. As a result, some 'linguistic variants become more widespread' (Britain 2010: 193), while others in competition become reduced.

Similarly to patterns of interaction, claims have been made about relative uniformity in linguistic behaviour within social groups/categories. Williams and Kerswill (1999: 162) attribute the presence of SSBE features in young Hull speakers as an attempt to 'signal their identification with the peer group and youth culture'. In addition, Watt (2000) finds that young middle-class males in Newcastle adopt supralocalised [e:] and [o:] variants to express their regional affiliation and identity, while rejecting local diphthongal forms associated with older speakers so as not to sound 'old fashioned' (p. 95). Both studies indicate that speaker ideologies, are operative in language variation. Ideologies are defined here as the 'mental entities - ideas and beliefs - [that] are not seen as either pre-social, innate … [but] are culturally produced and collective … expressed or represented in a social and public form' (Cameron 2006: 421).

Further Dyer's (2000, 2002) study of Corby English demonstrates how speaker/group identities can override the general assumptions that are frequently placed on speaker gender, age and class with regard to language variation and change (see Labov 2001). The town of Corby, which is located in the Midlands region of England, experienced mass in-migration from Scotland as workers transferred from closing steelworks sites in Lanarkshire to the steelworks company in Corby constructed in the 1930's. The 1971 census indicates that 'Scots accounted for thirty percent of the population' (p. 101).

The study addresses the realisation of six phonological variables: GOOSE/FOOT, LOT/THOUGHT, TRAP/PALM, all of which are merged in Scottish English (SE) but are distinct in Anglo-English (excluding areas of the north of England, see Wells 1982). The study also investigates the realisation of the NURSE vowel, which can be realised as [ɛr], [ʌr] or [ɪr] in SE but is generally pronounced as [ɜ:] in Anglo-English (AE), and, finally, FACE and GOAT which are typically monophongised in SE ([e] and [o]) but diphthongs in AE ([eɪ] and [əʊ], again excluding areas of the north of England).

In view of the town's immigration history, Dyer hypothesises that the Scottish forms would be far less frequent in the younger groups due to levelling with the surrounding area. The informants were stratified by age, gender and heritage (Scottish and/or English parentage). The hypothesis holds for all of the groups except for the third generation men, who, instead of levelling to regional supra-local forms, used marked 'Scottish' variants, despite this group's lack of affiliation with the term Scottish. Dyer (2002) argues that the use of Scottish forms in third generation male speech is due to the negative opinions this group held of the neighbouring urban centres; men were adopting the otherwise considered stigmatised forms to assert a local identity.

To interpret a variant as a marker of identity we need to consider the theories of accommodation, social identity theory and attitude to understand the process of how these social factors are potentially causative in linguistic behaviour. Further to this, this thesis asks two specific questions (from Chapter 1):

1c) Can an association between speaker contact with Liverpool and language use be observed?

2) Which social factors in terms of speaker age, gender, socio-economic status and phonological factors are conditioning the distribution of variants, whether Scouse or otherwise?[34]

In relation to these research questions, the social distribution of forms requires an explanation, which perhaps attitude and identity can shed light on. As will be discussed in more depth in the following section, gender, for instance, is constructed through identity, social practice and performed rather than simply demarcated by biological sex. Ochs' (1992) analysis of women as 'caregivers' in Samoa and the USA is of particular relevance here. She recognises that the women are imaged with mothering and that consequently 'such images are socialized through communicative practices associated with caregiving' (p. 337). Through analysing the varying power statuses afforded to women in this role across cultures, Ochs finds that children in Samoa accommodate more to their mothers due to their higher status in this role, whereas women in the USA are ignored as children 'are not socialized to acknowledge her participation in

[34] To date, the social distribution of the variants in LivE has not been examined.

accomplishments' (pp. 354-355). Our consideration of the social factors outlined in question 2 then, is synonymous with a consideration of the attitudes that comprise identity that inform a speakers social practice. As the next section will address, attitudes are an observable window to, and are the microelements that comprise, identity (Hogg and Smith 2007). As this chapter will go on to discuss, these attitudes are suggested to have a directed causal relationship on social practice, and therefore language (Britain 2004; *spatiality*, discussed in this chapter).

2.2 Can an association be observed between attitude and speaker's geographical orientation? What effect do speaker orientation and attitudes have on linguistic production?

Hayes (1993: 91) states that, in social psychology, there are three main definitions of *attitudes:*

> as learned predispositions to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable way towards a given object, person, or event' [as] 'enduring systems or positive or negative evaluations , emotional feelings, and pro and con action techniques' [and as a] 'predisposition to respond … an attitude is a bit like a mental "set" but with underlying values.[35]

Each of these definitions varies slightly in terms of their emphasis; the first emphasises that attitudes are learnt and are consistent, the second two emphasise that our attitudes link to our actions and 'underlie behaviour' (p.91). Despite what we may perceive as analysts of social interaction about the complexity and fluidity of identities (see Bucholtz and Hall 2010, discussed later in this section), attitudes are considered more static and resistant to change. As Hayes states, although people strive towards understanding the world, their increase in understanding does not necessarily lead to modifications of attitudes. Instead, people are thought to retain attitudes due to the belief that numerous or drastic modifications to held

[35] Chapter 3 will discuss the methodological implications of exploring identity in studies that examine a relatively large cohort of participants (of approximately 30+ speakers) in a snap shot of time, compared with smaller-scale studies (of approximately 10-20 speakers), and/or studies which examine the same speakers over a considerable period of time.

attitudes at any one time may leave the person feeling 'threatened by too great a change' (p.94).[36]

As this thesis considers attitudes in a snapshot of time, the concept of attitudes as consistent and underlying behaviour is highly noteworthy for the research of attitudes in Southport and Ormskirk; if attitudes were highly changeable, than the attitude data would not be a reliable source for establishing a pattern of behaviour. In relation to the research questions of attitude and contact in this investigation: (a) Can an association be observed between attitude and speaker's geographical orientation?, and (b) what effect do speakers' orientation and attitudes have on linguistic production? If attitudes govern behaviour, then, hypothetically, we can expect that attitudes might consistently affect a speaker's group membership, contact patterns, orientation. As Harré and Secord (1976: 7) state, 'it is through reports of feelings, plans, intentions, beliefs, reasons and so on that the meanings of social behaviour and the rules underlying social acts can be discovered'. We will consider this notion of how attitudes are formed and how they govern behaviour in terms of group membership and broader social orientation. Second, it is important to discern whether all attitudes (whether highly important and central to the person, or not) can be expected to have an effect on behaviour.

As Harré and Secord (1976: 8) continue, 'regularities in human behaviour may be explained [as] the person … responding to the push pull of forces exerted by the environment'. Social Identity Theory (SIT), put forward by Tajfel (1978), takes account of the push pull forces that we respond to, paying particular attention to our behaviour when identifying, or de-identifying with the personas (attitudes of others) that we come into interaction with. Meyerhoff (2006: 71) summarises SIT as the recognition of these attitudes of others. As we store numerous attitudes we operate like for like in a given interaction:

> [w]e all identify with many personas at different times and places and in different contexts; nevertheless, it assumes that we simplify away from a lot of this

[36] Smith, Bruner and White (1964, cited in Hayes 1993: 94) argument that attitudes serve three distinct functions: 1/ Object appraisal: a developed attitude towards and object, which will inform our reactions to the object in the future. If an object has previously been deemed harmful, Hayes explains, we know to avoid the object in the future. 2/ Social adjustment: expressing opinions to confirm social relationships: Similarity in opinion aids social group affiliation. 3/ Externalisation: 'the matching up of unconscious motivations or inner states with something going on in the individual's immediate environment. …[s]omeone who experiences inner conflict as a result of a lack of stable relationships with others may express a deep scepticism of the institution of marriage'.

> complexity in any given interaction…That is, we generally perceive a particular personal or group identity to be most salient at a particular stage of interaction.

The relevance of social identity and attitude has been explored at length in social psychology. The study of these facets of human interaction is thought to underpin Giles (1973) Communication Accommodation Theory. As social actors, speakers are able to 'adapt their communicative behaviors' (Giles and Coupland 1991: 7) both linguistically and nonverbal (e.g. body language) in response to the behaviour of their interlocutors. Conversely, divergence stipulates 'accommodation away from the speech of interlocutors … triggered by conscious or unconscious desires to emphasise difference and increase social distance' (Meyerhoff 2006: 73). Pertaining to accommodation theory, then, SIT considers that we have different attitudes to 'the social groups we differentiate [and that] the differentiation between groups has a useful function. In order to feel good about Us, we need a Them to compare ourselves to' (Meyerhoff 2006: 73). As Hogg and Smith (2007) similarly claim, people represent a *category prototype,* such as a country or region (nationality), and/or a religion and so on. These prototypical groups, they continue, are a collection of attributes that capture the similarities between people within these groups, and simultaneously, the differences of those outside of the group.

Although many studies in social psychology point to the hypothesis that similarity between people in terms of attitudes is an important factor for a person, or a group of people, to develop a positive evaluation of another person or group (e.g. Giles and Smith 1979), SIT is criticised for falling short of a direct discussion of the influence of attitudes and how they relate to social behaviour (see Hogg and Smith 2007).[37] In their discussion of SIT, Hogg and Smith argue that:

> Attitudes are windows on identity…attitudes are grounded in group memberships and are therefore integral to group and intergroup processes… attitudes are normative, and are embedded in wider representational and ideological systems

[37] Giles and Smith (1979) detail three processes of evaluation involved in forming affiliations through the influence of attitudes: 1/ **Social Exchange Process**: "states that prior to acting, we attempt to assess the rewards and costs of alternate courses of action", 2/ **Causal Attribution Process:** "we interpret other people's behavior, and evaluate the individual themselves, in terms of the motivations and intentions that we attribute as the cause of their behavior", and, 3/ **Intergroup Distinctiveness,** which states "that when members of different groups are in contact, they compare themselves on dimensions which are important to them, such as personal attributes, abilities, material possessions and so forth".

> attached to social groups and categories – attitudes map the contours of social groups and shared identities (pp. 89-90).

In other words, as we evaluate the attributes of others and assess the similarities and differences (individuated attitude), our attitudes are simultaneously informed and created by those around us. While Hogg and Smith agree, for the most part, that attitudes are stable internalised mechanisms, their discussion of SIT opens up the possibility of attitude change. As people affiliate with groups, Hogg and Smith state that behaviour is prescribed by these memberships (the group becomes a framework for how we should behave to reflect the attributes of the group). In addition, membership of a group informs its members of 'what attitudes they ought to hold' (p. 91). In view of this, though group memberships maybe formed through recognition of similar attitudes between the individual and the group, once the individual affiliates with the group these attitudes may be altered, fine-tuned and strengthened.

Hogg and Smiths' discussion of attitudes in reference to SIT opens up the definition of attitudes as reactions to salient interactions, which are therefore subject to modification, rather than static pre-learned responses as previously mentioned definitions seem to suggest (see Smith, Bruner and White 1964 and Berscheid 1985).[38] However, that is not to say that Hogg and Smith entirely contradict the definition of attitudes as learned. Nor do they believe that attitudes are subject to major change. As stated above, they suggest that attitudes are sourced from other people and are *modified* and/or added to; that attitudes 'are rarely idiosyncratic' (p. 93):

> Attitudes are powerful bases for making group stereotypical, or normative, inferences about other attitudes and about behaviours and customs – they let us construct a norm-based persona that reduces uncertainty and regulates social interaction. Indeed our sense of attitudinal individuality may rest on the fact that we all identify or have identified with different groups, and along the way we acquire attitudes that are normative of these different groups (p. 93).

They recognise that, as members of several groups, there should be some agreement/similarity in the attributes of these groups (e.g. it is unlikely that someone who feels strongly about rainforest conservation would be a member of a tree-felling society), However, if a clash does

[38] Attitudes are learned and stored so that we can respond more rapidly to people, objects, or events that we have previously experienced, rather than relearning how to respond to these.

arise through group membership, there is an immense pressure to either (a) alter one set of attitudes to fit in with the other set of attitudes (e.g. the environmentalist enjoys cutting tress down but recycles the wood afterwards to reconcile with the environmentalist view), or (b) 'play down one attitude over the other (dis-identification)…[i]dentities and associated attitudes are cognitively relatively compartmentalised, and contextual factors trigger one identity at a time'(p. 95). In accordance with Tajfel's (1978) theory, people respond to the most salient identity of the present context. Overall, however, Hogg and Smith concur that attitudes are consistent, and where inconsistency arises, reconciliation is required.

In relation to Hogg and Smith's discussion of the ability to either suppress, change or play down one attitude for another for the necessity of avoiding inner conflict, social psychology divides attitudes into two major groups: those that are *central* to a person's functions and those that are *peripheral*. On the basis that '…[g]roup defining norms are more likely to be reflected in behaviour when people identify strongly with a group' (Hayes 1993: 120) it is held that only attitudes that are peripheral are suppressed or altered: alteration of a peripheral attitude or of an attitude which is held by a group that the person is peripheral to, as opposed to changing a strong attitude or belief, would be less of a challenge to the inner anxieties that people may hold (see Berscheid 1985).[39]

The implications of central/strong and peripheral attitudes with regard to the study of Southport and Ormskirk will be returned to in the Methodology of this thesis. For now, it is held that the current study can infer that if attitudes are successfully elicited, such data is believed to be a consistent reflection of a speakers evaluations/beliefs, and that these attitudes are hypothesised to strongly influence behaviour (orientation). However, the difference between central and peripheral attitude needs further consideration in view of the hypothesis that it may only be central/strong attitudes that are consistently acted upon and unchanging. For example, take the hypothetical situation of a group in Southport, which harbours a negative attitude towards Liverpool. If this negative attitude is not a particularly strong attitude held by the group, then following Hogg and Smith's theory, it (a) may not lead to this group acting upon this opinion (i.e. avoiding Liverpool) and, (b) it could be subject to change. Hence the interpretation of an

[39] Berscheid (1985) states that humans, as dependent and social beings, need to be able to evaluate one another in terms of if they are safe to approach or if they may cause harm. People subsequently rely on these evaluations, which are stored as attitudes so that people can readily respond to a person or object for their protection.

attitude, or set of attitudes, as strong or peripheral could be important to determining a divide in behaviour, in terms of both orientation (group affiliation) and linguistic behaviour, in terms of Communicative Accommodation Theory (discussed above).

So far, the discussion here has largely focused on the relationship between attitude and behaviour and action (group membership and orientation in particular) on the basis that affiliation with a group will lead to some form of linguistic accommodation; the member either subconsciously acquiring speech norms or consciously performing speech that is normative of that group (see Giles 1973, Giles and Smith 1979). We will now focus more specifically on the interplay between attitude and language. In relation to the aforementioned theories of how attitudes influence group membership and vice versa, Bucholtz and Hall (2010: 18), similarly, focus on the role of attitude and how identities 'emerge from contexts of interaction'. They posit five principles that reflect the evaluative process they considered to be involved in-group affiliation:

- *Emergence*: identity is not pre-existing but produced from semiotic practices;

Semiotic is defined as: 'the study of signs and symbols and their use or interpretation' (OED). Saussure proposed the philosophy of the sign and signifier: in linguistics, words are symbolic of their meaning, unless onomatopoeic, the symbol is not obviously connected with the concept that it represents. Similarly, semiotics relates to pragmatics; actions in an interaction and/or linguistic style are seen as representative of intentions and beliefs (Harris 1988).

- *Positionality*: 'identities encompass (a) macro-level demographic categories, (b) local ethnographic/cultural positions and (c) temporary interactional stances' (p. 21);
- *Relationality*: 'identities are constructed through several often overlapping complementary relations, such as genuineness/artifice' (p. 23);
- *Partialness*: 'any given construction of identity may be in part deliberate and intentional, in part habitual and hence often less fully conscious' (p. 25).

The principles of Positionality and Relationality have already been discussed at length in consideration of Tajfel's (1978) Social Identity Theory, continued by Hogg and Smith (2007)

as they consider how identity is negotiated and renegotiated through group membership; people affiliate with those who have similar beliefs, equally those beliefs are re-affirmed and modified through that group membership. The principle of Partialness posits a considerable problem for the current investigation: as some aspects of identity are formulated from a core belief that the 'speaker' holds, others may only be observed by studying the speaker's practices. Indeed, these four of the five principles affirm how complex and changeable identity and meaning are. The inter-relatedness of these principles provides a more complex view of identity as an ever-changing system. From the level of the individual, the process of self-identification can be seen not only to be a product of the individual receiving semiotic information provided by society, but also as a reassessment of this information depending on the speaker's pre-existing views or their need to adapt their affiliations between different socio-cultural contexts.

In terms of this thesis, in its examination of widespread language use, the examination of the complex process of identity in all its intricacies is not possible in a single 1-2 hour interview, or two such interviews. For a more reasonable understanding of a speaker's identity, the speaker would have to be observed over a period of time (see Eckert 2008). It is for this reason that the term identity is, for the most part, avoided when referring to the orientations of the speakers in this study. While identities are autobiographical and complex, attitudes are micro-units of that identity, and are therefore considered, here, as more accessible indications of a speaker's orientation (see Llamas 2007).

The fifth principle of identity proposed by Bucholtz and Hall (2010) is *Indexicality:*

- 'the use of linguistic structures and systems that are ideologically associated with specific groups' (p. 21).

This final process will be discussed with reference to linguistic salience. The relationship between repertoire and speaker stylisation 'how people look, dress, speak, what they do…and, of course, their attitudes towards objects, events, people and so forth (Hayes 1993), is schematised by Johnstone (2010: 31) in relation to Silverstein's 'n-th-order' paradigm, whereby variables are said to 'index demographic categories not directly but indirectly' (Silverstein 1985, as quoted in Eckert 2008: 455):

Table 2.1: Indexicality and the n-th-order paradigm (Johnstone 2010)

Layering of Indexicality			
	'A linguistic form is used by a particular person in performing an ... →	...interactional, pragmatic activity, which can then come to index a ... →	... social identity'
Silverstein's (2003) terms	'*n*-th-order indexicality'	'*n*+1-th order indexicality'	'(*n*+1)+1-th order indexicality'
Example	'A person from Pittsburgh monophthongises (aw)'	'This comes to be heard as speaking casually, showing solidarity with neighbours,	which comes to index the social identity of authentic Pittsburgher (example from Johnstone et al. 2006)'

Taking the example of Pittsburgh first, Johnstone and Kiesling (2008) assess the indexicality of numerous phonetic, phonological and lexical features associated with the Pittsburgh accent. They find that, in accordance with Bucholtz and Hall's (2010) relationality principle, speakers accommodate to each other by using Pittsburghese working-class features to stress a co-affiliation. This finding highlights the semiotising and resemiotising nature of indexicality. Johnstone (2010: 31) states that 'indexical forms can both evoke and construct identities, and they always potentially do both'. In this way speakers have 'given new meaning' to working-class features to encapsulate a broader Pittsburgh identity (Johnstone 2010: 31).

In a similar vein, Coupland (2010) finds resemiotisation of indexical working-class features in Welsh English. Coupland's study takes a community of practice approach (discussed in more detail below) in analysing the speech of a radio presenter accommodating to his loyal listeners, whom he addresses as 'flowers'. The presenter uses 'Valleys voice' (exhibiting numerous Welsh English features),[40] which, Coupland states, 'bears indexicalities of place and class of

[40] 'Valleys voice in the extract is marked in schwa-like tokens of Received Pronunciation [ʌ], [iw] for RP [ju:] (*you*), [o:] monophthongs for RP [əʊ], [e:] monophthongs for RP [eɪ], open short [a] for RP [æ], centralised onset

the sort that often leads sociolinguists to describe such varieties and their speakers as "stigmatised"' (p. 109). This, then, highlights the presenter's use of such features to accommodate to and assert his affiliation with his listeners and his own Welsh identity (see Agha 2003, Bell 2009).

As was the case with the 'Pittsburghese' variants, these features have been previously semiotised as working class, symbolising the 'tough mining economy' from the not too distant past. Yet the presenter, as a gay male, deidentifies with the industrial, working class, masculine perception associated with these forms, demonstrating reindexicalisation of these features as now 'general Valleys' Welsh English. Interestingly, Coupland (2010: 111) argues that, similarly to Pittsburgh, this process of reindexicalisation lends itself to the analysis of shifting identity in a much broader sense, in indicating a changed economy within this region. The presenter resemiotises Welsh features, once associated with a male working-class mining community, to indexicalised Valleys Welshness in the twenty-first century.

This emphasises the applicability of these micro-level observations within the much broader perspective of linguistic change. A single speaker's performance can prove highly indexical of a much wider social-cultural context. Thus, the speaker's chosen stylisation in a particular context can provide the researcher with a snapshot of information, which can indicate not only the speaker's perception of the culture, but provide the researcher with vital information about the culture itself.

For instance, Eckert (2000) and Mendoza-Denton (1999) identify several key semiotic processes as speakers can be seen to correlate their physical stylisations with their linguistic style. Mendoza-Denton claims that interactions could be found between 'Chicana girls' makeup and the larger discourses of ethnicity, language, and gender in California' (p. 388). Therefore, the relationship between the two is taken to be indicative of the relationship 'between micro-aspects of social meaning-making and macro-aspects of the socio-political setting' (p. 388). Equally, Eckert argues that different inter-gender stylisations can similarly be correlated with linguistic stylisation:

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of RP [aɪ] and [aʊ], the idiosyncratic south Walian use of schwa in *want*, h-dropping in *have*, alveolar 'ng' ... indexical features include south Walian intonation' (Coupland 2010: 109) and so on.

> [t]he most consistent gender-related pattern across variables is the relation between the social categories within gendered groups - between jock and burnouts girls on the one hand, and jock and burnout boys on the other (except (aeh)) whenever female burnouts lead female jocks, male burnouts lead male jocks and vice versa (p. 122).

From this, then, it is clear that such projections of stylisation from individuals to groups often lead to the semiotising relationship between the speaker(s), who display the image of their identity/behaviour, and their repertoire. From a social psychology perspective, Hogg and Smith (2007: 93) state that, 'we are autobiographically idiosyncratic, but attitudes themselves are attached to group membership that we internalise to define ourselves, rather than to the self in isolation of group membership'. Speaker identity is a fluid concept in the sense that it is made up of a collection of attitudes that are formed via group affiliation. However, as SIT stipulates we act upon the attitudes that are the most apparent/appropriate to signify our group membership in a given interaction. The use of linguistic features in signifying group membership leads to their indexical associations (see Johnstone and Kiesling 2008).

As Harré and Secord (1976: v) state, people are capable of consciously controlling their performances in social interaction. However, as mentioned above, salience in social psychology is clearly defined as 'the situation in which a specific social categorisation and associated identity becomes the psychologically engaged…' (Hogg and Smith 2007: 96).[41] It is noted that the *indexical* principle, in particular, stipulates the necessity that, for any given feature to be semiotised/indexical at all, it must first be *recognised* as a distinctive or unique feature of a particular group of speakers.[42]

[41] Bruner *accessibility* and *fit:* 'People draw on accessible social categorisations – ones that are valued, important, and frequently employed aspects of self-conception and social perception (they are chronically accessible in memory)… and because they are perceptually salient (they are situationally accessible) ' (cited in Hayes 1993: 96).

[42] Bucholtz and Hall (2010: 21) add to this principle by stating 'Identity relations emerge in interaction through several related indexical processes, including: (a) overt mention of identity categories and labels; (b) implicatures and presuppositions regarding one's own or others' identity position; (c) displayed evaluative and epistemic orientations to ongoing talk... and (d) the use of linguistic structures and systems that are ideologically associated with specific personas and groups'.

As Britain (2010: 195) states in relation to dialect levelling, it is clear that speaker perception and salience play a part in the spread of linguistic forms 'as regional forms which do *not* have strong social/regional connotations are likely to be successful'. It is evident, therefore, that not all features are recognised and/or evaluated equally. However, as Meyerhoff (2006) states, the definition of salience in social psychology/social identity theory is far more straightforward than the concept of salience relating to linguistic features.[43]

Further to this, Watson and Clark (2013) problematise the definition of salience, which varies considerably in the literature. They note, in particular, linguists who have stipulated various checkpoints in order for the salience of a form to be concluded: Style-shifting, an indicator of salience noted by Labov, may or may not occur even if other evidence suggests that the form is above the level of awareness; in reference to Trudgill (1986), Watson and Clark comment that this work states that 'one criterion is that the variable or linguistic unit can be said to be salient if it is undergoing change', while simultaneously claiming 'salience as an *explanation* of language change' (p.300); and, finally, they observe that while some linguists claim that a form must be frequent in order to be salient, they note that others have claimed that infrequent occurrences of a form promote their awareness.

Watson and Clark (2013), investigate the salience of the two types of NURSE~SQUARE merger found in the northwest of England. They analyse whether St Helens speakers/listeners, who have a centralised NURSE~SQUARE merger (her [ɜ:] hair [ɜ:]), are more aware of the fronted Liverpool merger (hair [ɛ:], her [ɛ:]) when they hear the two types of merger. Similarly, they investigate whether Liverpool speakers/listeners are more perceptive of the centralised merger, as it is not typical of their own speech. They hypothesise that fronted Liverpool merger would be the most salient in view of respelling of NURSE words in dialect literature (Honeybone and Watson forthcoming). Their data revealed two findings of note to the investigation of Southport and Ormskirk speech. First, both mergers (central and fronted) were perceived negatively regardless of the listener's origin; St Helens and Liverpool listeners viewed both the fronted and central merger negatively. Second, while centralised SQUARE forms received some recognition from all listeners, listeners only recognised centralised SQUARE when it occurred before fronted NURSE at the beginning of the recording. Meanwhile, fronted NURSE forms were

[43] '[A] maddeningly underdefined term when used in sociolinguistics' (p.71).

reacted to, particularly by St Helens listeners, regardless of the relative position to other NURSE and SQUARE forms or their position in the recording. This led the authors to conclude that fronted NURSE forms are the most salient, especially for non-users of this form.

Regardless of what leads to a form being salient, of particular relevance to this thesis is how we recognise whether a form is salient, and how we then infer what the form indexes. As Watson and Clark (2013) state, while we may receive some indication of salience if the speaker overtly comments on a linguistic form, and indexicality if the speaker attributes the forms to themselves or another, failure to mention the form is not evidence of its lack of salience. In such instances, without a perception test to explicitly provide this information, we can infer, at best, the indexical nature of a linguistic form. As Llamas (2000, 2001, 2007) finds in her study of Middlesbrough English (discussed in more depth in the following section) younger speakers labelled themselves as Middlesbrough, and were offended if labelled as Geordie. However, these speakers used salient Newcastle forms (glottalised voiceless plosives). Llamas, therefore, concludes that the glottalised forms are re-indexicalised as local, in view of the localised psycho-social orientation these speakers express. This study, therefore, shows that if a speaker indicates a clear social orientation, we can perhaps infer how they interpret their language based on attitudinal information regarding affiliation.

We have, so far, considered the processes of attitude formation and group membership and the relationship between attitudes and language. Before the discussion of attitudes is concluded, however, there is one final consideration: can attitudes be overridden entirely? We have seen that attitudes are theorised to be (a) constant, (b) consistent, and (c) governing behaviour, social action and group membership and orientation; that is we recognise similar traits in others, we affiliate with that/those group(s) and the groups that we are members of will tend to be similar because our attitudes govern our affiliation. However, as numerous studies have discovered in social psychology, orientation may or may not be governed by attitude. In fact, several studies of the formation of friendships have found that, irrespective of similarity between peoples' attitudes, positive evaluations between people can be borne out of regular contact. Zajonc (1968) introduced the *contact hypothesis* (otherwise known as the *exposure effect*), which proposes that positive attitudes are formed through regular contact, following several studies

that evidenced this effect.[44] This hypothesis stems from studies conducted by Festinger et al. (1950) and Newcomb (1961) who studied students in university accommodation in terms of how they formed friendships. Both studies found that, while similarity of attitudes were important in friendship formation, occasionally close proximity and regular contact was the most important factor; students formed friendships with roommates and neighbours even if their attitudes were dissimilar.

Once again, these findings hold major implications for the investigation of Southport and Ormskirk: the more an individual/group/town has in common with another individual/group/town the more likely they are to evaluate each other positively, and the more positively they evaluate each other the more likely the contact will continue. Relating to *Communication Accommodation Theory* (see Giles 1973), the high degree of contact and the hypothesised positive attitudes that this encourages should lead to convergence between accents. However, with regard to the formation of attitudes, the idea that frequent contact should lead to positive evaluation of *every* similarity and difference between two interlocutors would be problematic, as this would be to ignore the role of salience put forward by Tajfel (1978).[45] The effect of contact, then, will remain an open question until the results of this investigation are examined.

As the studies mentioned throughout this chapter have demonstrated, the assessment of the interplay between contact and attitude in the context of linguistic variation and change is achievable. Attitudes as measurable, constant and governing behaviour, may inform orientation, group membership and so on. On the other hand, the close proximity of Liverpool to Southport and Ormskirk could result in high levels of contact. In relation to the arguments of hierarchical diffusion in the previous section, the *contact hypothesis*, then, may lead attitude; this contact could lead to a positive evaluation, even if the attributes/beliefs/ prototypical categorisation of the people in Liverpool are believed to be different to those in Southport and Ormskirk. Through their examination of attitude via carefully planned interviews that elicited

[44] The contact hypothesis theorises more broadly that contact between in groups and out- groups will inevitably reduce animosity, prejudice and discrimination.

[45] We perceive the most salient identity within a given interaction and gravitate towards that identity behaviourally.

emic (culturally relevant) information, the following section discusses studies that have demonstrated their success in identifying social and linguistic orientation.

2.3 Is there an observable change in speaker attitudes and identities that could be ascribed to the change in the administrative boundary? Does the language of older and younger speakers mirror the shift of the administrative boundary (Beal 2010)?

This section focuses on studies that have held attitude and identity to be central to their examination of language variation and change. In particular, this final section will discuss studies that have examined accents that are situated near a physical (such as a canal) and/or political boundary; for example, an administrative boundary.[46] The studies deliberated in this section are particular relevant to the current investigation for two main reasons: Firstly, similar to the study here these studies investigate identity in relatively large speaker groups, as compared with, say, community of practice studies. Secondly, these studies conjecture and provide evidence to suggest that due to the presence of a boundary (whether physical or political) the inhabitants of these regions have an accentuated sense of identity (see Llamas 2010). In the light of this, this affords linguists the opportunity to examine the interplay of contact and speaker identity on language variation and change.

As Britain (2004) states, a speaker's *spatiality* is comprised of three aspects: *Euclidean space*: the physical landscape that is separate from social and cultural definitions of space, *social space*: the 'cultural organisation […] of the landscape, by the contextualisation of face-to-face interaction', (p.34) and finally, *perceived space*: society's perception of their environment. In reference to the speaker's notion of space, Britain continues that their perception is founded on their impression of the physical and social landscape; a speaker's perception of a physical, political, social and/or economic boundary may cause a barrier that prevents interaction across that perceived boundary (Britain 2012: 2040, see also Boberg 2000). As Trudgill (2009) remarks when discussing the linguistic usage of the upper working-class previous research has indicated that a 'border effect' can be explored with respect to a social category. Identifying this group as a 'border class', he states that 'the greater awareness of [upper-working-class] speakers of the social significance of linguistic variables can be explained by the borderline nature of their social position' (p. 62).

[46] There is no physical boundary between Liverpool and Southport and Ormskirk.

Similarly, Beal (2010: 218) notes that physical borders can serve to map a visual divide on to more abstract segregations: [47]

> [t]he Manchester Ship Canal formed a boundary between the two counties [Cheshire and Lancashire], and in the minds of the local residents, between the 'posh' districts in Cheshire on the south bank, and the more working-class areas to the north.[48]

Given that the abstract concept of social class can still provide a division to which speakers may orient themselves by semiotising linguistic features, the presence of a political and/or 'visual divide', such as a river, can serve to heighten this division (Beal 2010: 218).

Of particular note to the current investigation, Llamas (2000; 2001; 2006; 2007) questions the social and linguistic orientations of speakers in Middlesbrough, a town in-between the North East and Yorkshire in the North of England. Similar to Southport, Middlesbrough's county affiliation has changed under the Local Government act of 1972, as in 1974 it was no longer affiliated with the borough of Teesside, becoming part of the newly created borough of Cleveland. Prior to that, in 1968, Middlesbrough was affiliated with the North Riding of Yorkshire (Simpson 2009; Llamas 2000: 127). The media has also played a part in associating Middlesbrough with an increasingly North-East identity (Llamas 2000).

Llamas investigates the use of glottalisation ([ʔp], [ʔt] and [ʔk]) and glottal replacement of /p/, /t/ and /k/ in word-medial position. Glottalisation, Llamas (2000: 126) notes, is 'a salient feature of Newcastle, Tyneside English'. Glottal stop was the preferred variant for /t/, particularly in younger speech where it averaged 90% production. For /k/ the glottalised and fully released variants were, equally, the preferred form in older and younger male speech, while in female speech the released form was realised categorically in older speech and 90% in younger speech; the glottalised form averaged 6% overall. The glottalised form for /p/ was the preferred variant in younger speech (58%). This was particularly the case in male speech where [ʔp] averages 85%, compared with the younger females average of 30% [ʔp]. Older

[47] Beal (2010) and Llamas (2007b) both demonstrate that perceptual boundaries i.e. mountain ranges, rivers and canals can add to a heightened sense of identity.

[48] As Beal asserts the shift of the border between Lancashire and Cheshire caused much protest among inhabitants along its borders – the former being conceptualised as northern, industrial, blue collar and the latter as Midlands, historically agricultural and affluent.

females demonstrated less than 10% production of the glottalised variant, who preferred the standard variant overall. For /p/ and /k/, then, the high use of the glottalised variants in younger speech indicates convergence to Tyneside. As Llamas states, this convergence could be caused by face-to-face contact as most of the young speakers would travel to Newcastle for a day out.

In addition to ascertaining linguistic production of Middlesbrough speakers, Llamas investigates speakers' attitudes towards their accent and region to examine the causal relationship between attitude, social orientation and language. Younger speakers labelled their accent as "Middlesbrough", middle-aged speakers used the term "Teesside", and older speakers referred to their accent as "Yorkshire", reflecting their orientation. As Llamas notes, the very local sense of identity of the younger speakers, and their hostility towards Newcastle, indicates that they are not using the glottalised forms of /p/ and /k/ consciously as a means of affiliating with a Newcastle/Geordie identity. Instead, Llamas concludes that these forms are emerging below the level of consciousness and, due to their high percentage in older and younger male speech, are being re-interpreted (re-indexicalised) as local Middlesbrough forms by the female speakers, who are beginning to use the glottalised variants. Speakers, therefore, consider these forms to mark a local, Middlesbrough identity.

In keeping with Llamas, Chapter 3 details the interview questions of the current investigation that, similarly, are centred on eliciting cultural and research relevant information that concern speakers' attitudes towards their region, local affiliations, and accents. As Montgomery (2007) reports, however, the North East accent of Geordie is one of the most positively perceived accents of English in England. Indeed, Llamas (2000: 139) states that:

> [i]f North Eastern accents are becoming more socially influential (particularly in the youth market) as would be suggested by their increased use in the media, speakers from Teesside, being linguistically close to the model, would be most inclined to adopt patterns from the model.

Southport and Ormskirk, meanwhile, are geographically close to one of the most negatively perceived accents: Scouse (Montgomery (2007). It is of interest, therefore, to examine whether Southport and Ormskirk speakers perceive Scouse (and/or Lancashire) positively, due to their close proximity (*contact hypothesis*), and therefore 'adopt patterns from either of these accents' or negatively and therefore draw on another model to avoid sounding Scouse (or Lancashire).

On a broader scale, the AISEB (Accent and Identity on the Scottish/English Border) project investigates four urban areas along the Scottish-English national border to discover whether inhabitants on the periphery of their nation, in a way analogous to the upper working-classes mentioned above, 'have an accentuated sense of national identity' (Llamas 2010: 227) as well as how such perceptions of identity shape the linguistic behaviour of the speaker(s) [49].

As the study explains, the apparent interruption of the dialect continuum along this national border results in a bundle of isoglosses running along it (see Aitken 1992). Indeed, Glauser (1974) and Kay (1986) hypothesise that the dialects either side of the border 'look set to diverge further' (Llamas 2010: 230). In order to investigate this potential divergence either side of the border, the study investigates the production of the indexically Scottish feature of rhoticity in coda position (see Maguire et al. 2008). Strikingly, despite derhotacisation in most urban Scottish varieties an increase of this variant was found in young speakers in Eyemouth (located north of the border), while all other localities in both Scotland and England demonstrated a decrease in this variant.

This lack of consensus along the border between the two Scottish locations further highlights that the conceptualisation of a boundary may vary considerably between speakers not only 'on opposite sides of it, but also by people on the same side' (Cohen 1985: 12). In their study of Berwick upon Tweed[50], Kiely et al. (2000) drew attention to this lack of a fixed identity in border regions. Instead of holding a heightened sense of Englishness as expected, inhabitants had a much more localised evaluation of their identity, as national identity was too problematic (Llamas 2010: 230). Furthermore, they discovered that Berwickers held a negative attitude towards Newcastle (the closest large city), leading to a rejection of Newcastle features. Kiely et al. go on to suggest that the proximity and prestige of Edinburgh might have led to the adoption of Scottish features due to Berwick's relatively small distance from the Scottish capital. Similar conclusions have been drawn with regard to Eyemouth, as this town's close proximity to Edinburgh was suggested as a factor in this town's preservation of Scottish

[49] The results of this study are preliminary and my critique of this investigation in its exclusive analysis of ideological factors in linguistic levelling is in full recognition that this study is pending investigation of contact.

[50] Berwick upon Tweed, in Northumberland, lies 2.5 miles south of the Scottish border, 53 miles north of Newcastle (the largest town in proximity) and 9.4 miles to the south of Eyemouth (investigated in Llamas 2010).

features, while Berwick's great distance from London resulted in a negative perception towards the capital city through lack of association.

The results of the AISEB project have demonstrated that there 'is a clear connection between use of forms which can be said to be indexical of national identity and both a claiming of that identity and a strong disposition towards it' (Llamas 2010: 234). This positive correlation between linguistic output and identity presents a very strong argument for research into psycho-social orientation and language change. However, as it is yet to be analysed within the AISEB border study, contact-based effects may also play a key role in determining the linguistic distribution of coda /r/, particularly with regard to the varying remoteness and economic nature of the towns in question. For instance, Eyemouth, whose linguistic behaviour is attributed to a heightened sense of Scottishness, is largely a close-knit fishing community.

Berwick upon Tweed, on the other hand, receives many tourists and is on the main East Coast rail line between Edinburgh and Newcastle. Similarly, Carlisle as a large city in the north west of England is subject to much contact from visitors and is well connected by rail and motorway. Gretna in the western borders of Scotland, also, receives some tourists as well as being a major 'pit-stop' for motorists on the way to Glasgow. Hence, the relative isolation of Eyemouth is perhaps a major factor in its linguistic behaviour but also perhaps in its speakers' ideological assessment and subsequent lack of affiliation with those outside the community.

In view of Llamas' findings in the northeast and AISEB findings along the Scottish-English border (see Watt et al. 2014; 2013, Llamas 2010, Llamas et al. 2009), what can these studies afford us for hypothesising the orientation of identity and language along the Merseyside/Lancashire border? With respect to the presence of the political boundary, this thesis is positioned to examine whether the hypothesised contact-based direction of linguistic change can be overridden by the heightened sense of identity (consensus or individual) in border towns that lie on the periphery of an area where a putative negatively perceived accent is spoken (see Montgomery 2007 on Scouse) – the questions surrounding the perception of Scouse in conjunction with speaker identity and orientation being particularly foregrounded.

The AISEB study reveals a varying sense of Scottish identity between the two towns north of the border leading to an increase in the use of indexically Scottish features in one town but not the other. Similarly, the perception of 'Scouse' is not singular for all its speakers, (and as this

thesis hypothesises in relation to Southport and Ormskirk, perhaps speakers who do not have a Scouse accent). Sangster (2001: 1) states,

> The accent of Liverpool has a high profile as well as a low (overt) prestige. The social importance of using a non-prestigious variety to express solidarity with a group, and the enforcement of this by the network, should not be underestimated.

In their assessment of dialect attitudes, Preston (1999) and Montgomery (2007) distributed blank maps to participants asking them to indicate dialect areas in the United States and England, respectively. Preston (1999) asserts that '[i]nformants first draw stigmatised and then local areas most frequently' (Preston 1999b, xxxiv). In his discussion of the perception of English dialects, Montgomery (2007: 185) finds that '[t]he Scouse dialect area, as drawn by non-linguistic informants from the three survey locations, is far larger than we might have expected'. Montgomery takes this to be indicative, not only of dialect levelling in the area, but as a further indication that the Scouse dialect is generally one of the most stigmatised dialects of British English.

In summary, while the sphere of influence, i.e. the presence of a larger dialect area in close proximity, can predict the direction of a sound change, Boberg's study and the AISEB project demonstrate that attitude can be seen to have an effect on language. Their investigations appear to confirm Britain's (2010) suggestion that the presence of a political boundary serves to heighten speakers' awareness of identity. Though both of these investigations are concerned with a national border, there is, as Beal states, no reason to suggest that the presence of a county boundary will have less of an ideological impact on the speakers either side of it. It is necessary, then, to further explore the mechanism of speaker attitude and orientation in order to fully understand this as a driving force in linguistic change. Ultimately, then, in relation to the locations of Southport, now in Merseyside, and Ormskirk Lancashire, the research questions are reiterated (a) *is there an observable change in speaker attitudes that could be ascribed to the change in the administrative boundary? (b) Does the language of older and younger speakers reflect the shift of the administrative boundary (Beal 2010)?* We now turn to the linguistic variables that have been selected to examine this process.

2.4 Part II: Linguistic variables

Knowles (1973) and De Lyon (1981) provide a description of the phonetic and phonological system of Liverpool English, reporting a typically pan-northern lack of split between FOOT and STRUT as [ʊ], while BATH is characteristically pronounced with the TRAP vowel, [a] (see Wells 1982). However, there are a number of vowels, and indeed consonantal sounds, which do not follow the typical northern trend. The FACE and GOAT vowels are often realised as a diphthong, particularly in younger female speech, as [ɛɪ] and [ɛʊ] (Watson 2006), as opposed to the typical northern monophthong pronunciation of these vowels as [e:] and [o:] (Wells 1982). In addition, NURSE and SQUARE are often merged (Knowles 1973). Knowles reports that the vowel in *girl* is pronounced with the surface of the tongue flattened, which raises the realisation to [ɛ:] so that the same vowel is often used in *hers* and *hairs*. This chapter will later discuss the realisation of NURSE and SQUARE and their treatment in prior and current studies of Scouse: Knowles (1973), De Lyon (1981) and Clark and Watson (ongoing), from which a comparison can be drawn.[51]

In addition to his description of the vowel system of Scouse, Knowles (1973) argues that, in this accent, the production of /t/ and /k/ is lax in articulation, such that there is insufficient pressure for completion or maintenance of closure in plosives. This description of Scouse pronunciation as 'lax' is perhaps an oversimplification of the articulatory processes that led to lenition (see Watson 2007, and Honeybone 2002 for further discussion). This chapter will return to consonant lenition in the next section. For now, however, we can note that /t/ and /k/ in Scouse are 'impressionistically [realised] as fricatives or affricatives' (Knowles 1973: 106).

Liverpool, unlike other areas in the north (excluding Middlesbrough, see Jones and Llamas 2008) saw a dramatic population increase due to an influx of Irish immigrants in the 1840s (see Chapter 1). It is argued that as a consequence of the in-migration of this group, LivE developed its unique accent forms that are continuing to diverge from the 'general northern' system (see Knowles 1973, De Lyon 1981, Watson 2006, 2007). However, the precise influence that Irish English/Gaelic has had on the divergent trends of LivE is subject to much debate (see Jones

[51] Clark and Watson (ongoing) similarly consider the social and linguistic variables investigated in this thesis in reference to the Merseyside/Lancashire border; analysing the towns of Skelmersdale, St Helens as well as several districts within the city of Liverpool.

and Llamas 2008, Honeybone 2007) and, though not the focus of the study here, will be returned to in Section 2.4.4.

As this chapter will outline, these variables are particularly interesting in regard to the aims of this thesis, not only in terms of their localised phonetic realisation but also due to their potential salience across the region (Watson 2007). Their potential enregisterment as Scouse pronunciations could therefore have an impact on the spread of these forms into neighbouring dialects (as discussed in Section 2.2 above).

2.4.1 /t/ and /k/: Lenition

The following sections will discuss some of the issues surrounding lenition processes with reference to plosive lenition in Scouse. This will allow the meaning of the term as used in this thesis to become clear. Though this discussion will not attempt to resolve the issues of defining lenition within phonological theory, since this investigation is focused on the production of the variants of /t/ and /k/ in relation to social factors, this chapter will focus on some phonological issues surrounding what lenition is considered to be.

Lenition is broadly defined as 'any process by which a sound is, or conceived as being weakened' (Matthews 1997: 202-203). Expanding on this, Lass and Anderson (1975: 151) state that 'strength is equated to airflow through the vocal tract, and weakness with the lack of such resistance'. With regard to plosive lenition, following Lass (1984), Honeybone (2001: 242) set out two potential sequences of lenition as follows:

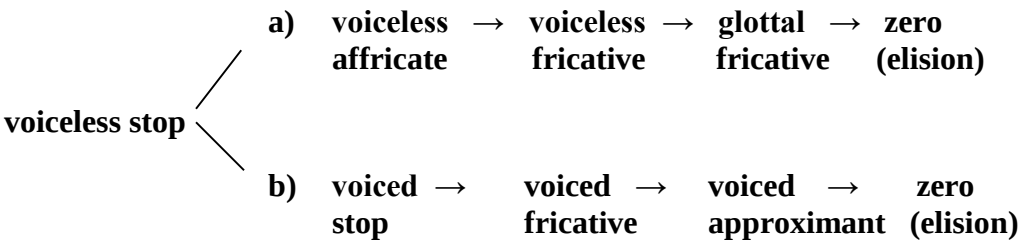


Figure 2.1: Sequence of lenition, Honeybone (2001: 242)

In Scouse, the voiceless sequence of lenition applies. Honeybone (2001: 242) states that, without considering phonological environment, lenition of /t/ and /k/ can be illustrated as follows:

Stage 1 **Stage 2** **Stage 3** **Stage 4**

stop - **affricate** - **fricative** - (h - elision)

t → **ts** → **s** → (h → Ø/ʔ)

k → **kx** → **x**

Figure 2.2: Lenition of /t/ and /k/ in Scouse (Honeybone 2001: 242)

Honeybone (2001: 220) considers the process of lenition within the models of Government and Dependency phonology, which assume that 'segments are divisible into a set of subsegmental "divisible features"'. The divisible features of these segments are considered by Honeybone to be either present or absent in phonology and it is the loss of these elements which constitutes weakening or lenition. Watson (2007: 89-90) demonstrates weakening in Scouse /t/ and /k/ as a result of segmental loss as follows, Figure 2.3:

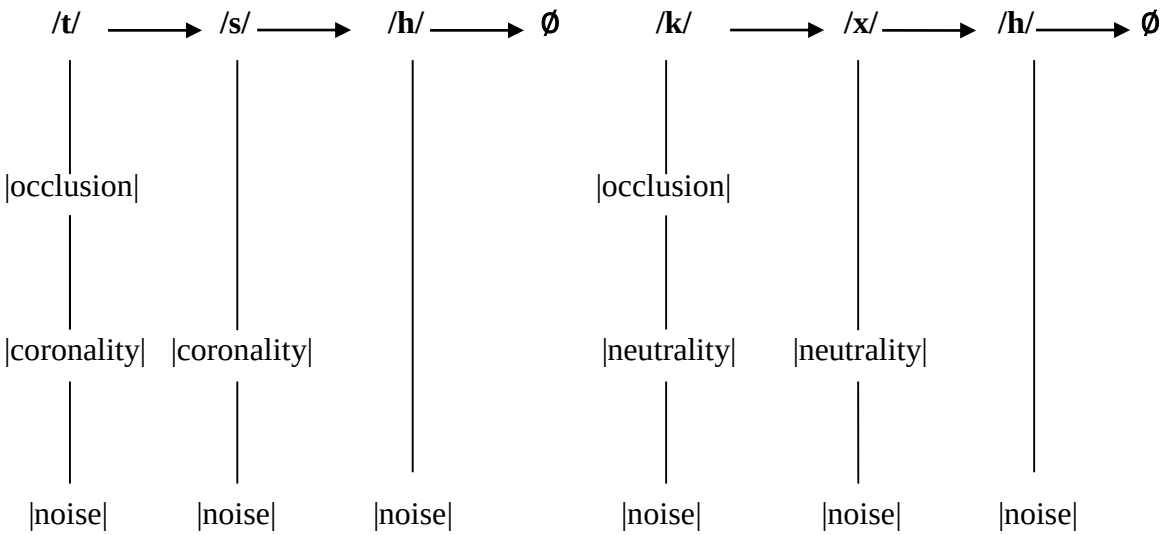


Figure 2.3: Watson (2007: 89-90), segmental loss and lenition

There is much debate, however, about which processes here are to be considered as lenition. If lenition is characterised as weakening through segmental loss then affrication, which is not included in Honeybone's schema above, poses a problem as an element is added at this stage in both Harris' (1990, see Watson 2007: 89 for /k/) and Honeybone's (2002, see Watson 2007: 90 for /t/) depictions of segmental loss in lenition. However, as Honeybone states, in the characterisation of lenition as the loss of perceptual salience, rather than elemental loss, stop-to-affricate reduction similarly poses a problem for this progression due to the salience of sibilant fricatives (see Honeybone 2001). In addition, Honeybone (2001) states that spirantisation would similarly fail to be considered as a process of lenition due to the high perceptibility of [s], yet 'spirantisation is one of the few processes which are never doubted as being types of lenition' (p. 228).

Following Lass and Anderson (1975), as a general principle of lenition, Sangster (2001), Honeybone (2001) and Watson (2007) suggest that adopting the singular principle of increased 'openness' may best serve to show the process of stop – affricate - fricative as a process of lenition in Scouse. As Honeybone (2002) argues with regard to affrication as a process of lenition, it is the increase in |glottal spread| which is key here as speakers reanalyse aspiration as affrication.

In addition, furthering the argument that affrication is a process of lenition, Honeybone states that this process occurs in a lenition-promoting environment and so is considered by Honeybone as a process of lenition.[52] This chapter will now turn to this point in consideration of Honeybone's (2001) processes of lenition, with regard to the phonological environments that promote or inhibit these processes.

2.4.2 Honeybone's promotion and inhibition of the lenition of /t/ and /k/ in Scouse

Lenition is defined by Honeybone (2001) and Watson (2007) not only in terms of the segmental and gestural processes that weaken consonants, but by the specific environments which promote this lenition. Honeybone (2001) states that the stage of lenition (Figure 2.2) depends on both the prosodic (position in relation to syllable, word boundaries and stress) and segmental

[52] Both Honeybone (2001) and Watson (2007) also note that Vennemann's definition of stop-to-fricative transition, which is inclusive of the affricate stage, can be seen in the consonantal shift in High German.

(place and manner of the preceding and following segment) environment conditions. Watson (2007) and Honeybone (2001, 2002) provide a more cross-linguistic analysis of lenition-promoting environments; however, for the purposes of the investigation here, the environmental distribution in Scouse will be the sole focus of the discussion.

Honeybone (2001) states that lenition of /t/ → [s] and /k/ → [x] (Figures 2.2 and 2.3) is most likely in environments where the consonant occurs intervocalically, word-finally and/or post-stress. With regard to the environments considered by Honeybone (2001: 230, shown in Figure 2.4 below), the lenition-promoting environments are **A, Ci** and **B.**[53] These environments, shown in Figure 2.4, are suggested by Honeybone to promote lenition as they are prosodically (referring to the segment in relation to syllable stress and word boundaries) and/or melodically weak (the nature of the preceding or following segment in terms of place and manner):

A [_#] – 'word-final'

B [_C] – 'pre-consonantal' or 'coda'

C [V _V] – 'inter-vocalic', 'medial'

Ci [V́ _(V)] – 'foot-internal', 'post-stress'

Cii [(V) _V́] – 'foot-initial', 'pre-stress'

D [C _] – 'post-consonantal' or 'onset'

E [# _] – 'word-initial'

Figure 2.4: Honeybone (2001: 230), lenition promoting (bold) and inhibiting environments

Environments **A** [_#] and **Ci** [V́_(V)], then, are considered prosodically weak as the segment precedes an unstressed segment. Pre-stress/onset and initial environments **Cii** [(V) _V́] and **E** [# _], on the other hand, provide prosodic strength to the segments and therefore inhibit lenition more strongly. Finally, environment **D** is considered to be the most inhibitive of lenition due to having both prosodic strength and, occasionally, melodic inhibition depending on the preceding or following consonant. For example, if /t/ was preceded by /l/, e.g. *silt* and *kilt*, then

[53] Honeybone notes that instances of environment B were rare within the corpus and so could not be as fully evaluated.

lenition would be inhibited as these share place of articulation, [+coronal], whereas /k/ would not be inhibited as it does not share manner or place with /l/.

However, as Watson (2007) notes, it is not only the localised Scouse forms which have the potential to occur in these environments, since the process /t/ → [ʔ] occurs very frequently in many other varieties of British English, despite being a stigmatised form. In the Scouse accent, nevertheless, the frequency of /t/ glottalling is not following the rising trend of many other accents of the UK. As Knowles (1973) and Watson (2006, 2007 and 2007b) report, the localised forms mentioned in the previous section are extremely common in Scouse, while glottal stop is rare, only appearing comparatively more frequently, according to Knowles, preceding /l/ and /n/ e.g. *bottle* [bɒʔɬ] and *button* [bʊʔn].

2.4.3 More lenition inhibition in Scouse: The special cases of /t/ → [h] and /t/ → [ɾ]

The discussion in this chapter has, so far, analysed the progression of lenition of /t/ and /k/ to [s] and [x], and the promoting environments in which the affricate and fricative forms can occur, with the deliberate exclusion of progression to stages 3 and 4 (Figure 2.3). These are represented by /t/ → [h] and /t/ → [∅], debuccalisation and elision. Although progression to stage 3, [h] and [∅], for /k/ has been reported in Newcastle English (Docherty and Foulkes 1999), and /k/ → [ʔ] has been reported as a feature of Lancastrian (Lancashire) speech, [ʔ] and [∅] for /k/ are not reported features of Scouse (see Honeybone 2001).[54] For this reason, the focus of this section will be on /t/ only, with a discussion of the remaining two variants of /t/ that are typical of the Scouse accent: /t/ → [h] and /t/ → /ɾ/. These variants are treated separately from the analysis of /t/ → [s] throughout this investigation due to the further lexical and environmental constraints which govern their distribution.

Harris (1994: 120) defines debuccalisation as a process of lenition due to the elemental 'loss of the supralaryngeal gesture'. This subsegmental loss also leads to the glottal stop, though as mentioned earlier, this feature is rare in Scouse (Watson 2007). Unlike the stage 1 and 2 affricate and fricative forms, stage 3 and 4 forms are more constrained by linguistic environment. It is reported as a feature of Dublin and Middlesbrough English (Jones and Llamas 2008), as well as of Scouse, in word-final pre-pausal position following a short vowel

[54] Lancaster is approximately 45 miles north of Southport, 50 miles north of Ormskirk; the realisation of /k/ as [ʔ] may not be entirely unexpected in Southport and Ormskirk speech in view of its presence in Lancashire.

(see Watson 2007 and 2007b, Hickey 1999). However, /t/ to [h] has further lexical constraints. Watson (2007: 353) states that, in Scouse, debuccalisation traditionally occurs only 'in a small set of high frequency monosyllabic (pseudo)function words (e.g. *it* [ɪh], *what* [wɒh], *not* [nɒh], *that* [d̪ah], *lot* [lɒh])'. However, more recently, in the speech of younger people, Watson reports that this process can be seen to occur more widely in polysyllabic words, with an unstressed final syllable, e.g. *cricket* [kɹɪɪxɪh], *bucket* [bʊxɪh].

The final process to be addressed here is /t/ → /r/, which is considered to be lenition due to the 'temporal reduction in the articulation of a segment' (Hickey 1996: 2), and is a feature which is not unique to Scouse but pan-northern (see Broadbent 2008 on West Yorkshire, Docherty et al 1997 on Newcastle). Similarly to debuccalisation, this production of /t/ as an approximant is phonologically restricted. Wells (1982: 370) posits the rule that /t/ → /r/ is restricted to the phonological environment following a short vowel but preceding a word boundary, preceding a vowel: [short V]_#V. As Clark and Watson (2011: 524) state, however, this rule provides an unsatisfactory description of the actual distribution of /t/ → /r/ in many instances. They state:

> *t*-to-*r* seems to be constrained by the preceding and following phonological environment in a largely systematic way, so it is often accounted for within a rule-based model of grammar. On the other hand, the rule does not apply blindly across the board to all words [that] fit the phonological pattern. Instead, *t*-to-*r* shows evidence of being lexically restricted.

In Liverpool, however, unlike in Yorkshire and other areas of the north, Watson and Clark (2011) find that /t/ can be realised in Scouse as an approximant, [ɹ], but it is more frequently realised as the tapped variant, [ɾ]. As the tapped variant was overwhelmingly the most dominant, they conflate the analysis of both variants to [ɾ] as this form only occurred in their dataset in /t/ → /r/ environments, excluding instances of this form in the word *whatever*. Watson (2007b) reports that /t/ → [ɾ] in Liverpool can occur in, but is not necessarily restricted to, the same set of frequent monosyllabic words that promote debuccalisation, the only difference being the presence of the following vowel.

Yet, as Clark and Watson (2011: 527) report, some words that this form is expected to appear with, due to the phonological rule, never exhibited /t/ → /r/, such as '*it, sit, fit, cut, set* and *wet'*. Moreover, in their investigation of Liverpool, t-tapping occurred in words which did not follow the short vowel rule, such as *about* or the morpheme boundary rule as it appeared (albeit

uniquely) in the word *whatever*. As Watson and Clark (2011) find, the tapped variant in intervocalic positions other than the specific environment for /t/ → /r/, which is typical of Standard Southern British English as well as other accents in the UK (see Tollfree 1999), the presence of the tapped variant in the present study is neither considered to be exclusively Scouse nor specifically /t/ → /r/. For this reason, the handling of this variant requires, for the time being, a corpus-internal approach by assessing all intervocalic environments rather than making any phonological or lexical pre-assumptions about where this variant will occur.

The following and final section of the consonantal variables will examine the final considerations for the realisation of the fricative forms of /t/ and /k/.

2.4.4 The actual realisation of stage 2 forms: Is the fricative /t/ the same as [s]?

In the case of /k/, there is no dispute that this form can progress to a full fricative [x] or [ç], depending on the nature of the preceding vowel (see Watson 2007, Honeybone 2001), since there is no 'possibility of any confusion with any other consonant' (Knowles 1973: 252). However, the actual realisation of fully lenited /t/, though impressionistically a full fricative, is the focus of much discussion as to whether this spirantised variant is distinguishable from /s/ in the same positions, for example, in the words *but* and *bus*. Hickey (2009 on Irish English), Sangster (2001 on Scouse), and Jones and Llamas (2008 on Dublin and Middlesbrough English) all argue that there is indeed a fine-grained distinction between spirantised [t̪] and [s] as the realisation of /s/. Jones and Llamas' (2008) analysis of lenited /t/ in Middlesbrough displayed considerable acoustic similarities to [s] (Dublin lenited /t/ patterned more closely with [ʃ]). However, they state that there are fine-grained differences in regard to length, peak of frequency and amplitude, usually with /s/ being longer in duration and having a higher frequency and amplitude than the forms for /t/ (see also Pandeli et al. 1997).

In transcription, to mark the difference between the 's-like' /t/ and /s/, Hickey (2009) transcribes the production of this form in Dublin English as [t̪]. Jones and Llamas (2008) transcribe the Middlesbrough realisation of /t/ as [t̪]. However, while the investigation here recognises the difference between spirantised /t/ and [s], in keeping with former and current studies of /t/ lenition in Merseyside, the symbol [s] will, similarly, be adopted here (Knowles 1973, Honeybone 2001, Watson 2007). In addition, as the study is concerned with the social

and geographical distribution and spread of all fricative forms of /t/ and /k/, both the palatal [ç] and velar [x] realisations of /k/ will be conflated to [x].[55]

While the study here is not concerned with fine-grained differences between the sibilant and spirantised forms, the duration of the release of the fricated variants of /t/ and /k/ is of interest here. As Sangster (2001) reports, the fricative form of /t/ in Scouse measures on average between 103 and 107 ms in younger middle and working-class speech, respectively. Though shorter than the sibilant form, the fricative form is longer in duration than the release of an affricate and the standard form [tʰ].[56] The application of Sangster's study in this thesis (Chapter 4) follows the hypothesis that the longer the duration of release, the more convergent the speaker is to Scouse. This method will be readdressed in Chapters 3 (methodology), and 4, 5 and 6 (presenting the results of this investigation).

2.4.5 Summary

To summarise, the aim of this study is to discover whether the localised features of Scouse are spreading via face-to-face contact and accommodation (as discussed in detail in Section 2.1) into the accents of the neighbouring localities of Southport and Ormskirk or whether extra-linguistic factors such as attitude can be seen to block the spread of these forms. The variants of /t/ and /k/ are particularly appropriate for the investigation of linguistic spread and their use in neighbouring accents due to the varying degree of salience each form is expected to have. The affricate and fricative variants for /k/ and their potential enregisterment as Scouse forms are predicted to be comparatively more salient than the variants of /t/ and the vocalic forms (Watson 2006). Speakers who harbour negative opinions towards the Scouse accent and/or Liverpool, then, are expected to display relatively low frequency of Scouse forms, perhaps due to social-attitudinal orientation.

[55] This study will not take into account the effect of the preceding vowel on the production of the fricative segment as it is not considered to have an effect on the realisation of /t/ and /k/ (see Watson 2007).

[56] Methodologically measuring the release of the variant will aid the categorisation of the variants of this thesis as standard, affricate and fricative, for both /t/ and /k/, if the distinction is not visibly or audibly clear (as discussed in detail in Chapter 3).

2.5 The NURSE~SQUARE merger

This section will discuss the theoretical considerations of vowel mergers with reference to the wealth of literature of the LOT~THOUGHT merger in North America (Labov 1994, Hall-Lew 2009, 2013), the NEAR~SQUARE merger in New Zealand (Holmes and Bell 1992, Gordon and Maclagan 1990, 1996 and Hay, Warren and Drager 2006), and NURSE~NORTH in Newcastle (Maguire 2008), in addition to the NURSE and SQUARE merger in Scouse and indeed in Lancashire.[57] Each of these studies on mergers has addressed several issues: (a) the spread of a merger in a community; (b) the degree of merger within an individual and (c) the perceptual effects of a merger and its subsequent adoption. Each of these points will be addressed in the final sections of this chapter.

The discussion here will begin with a standard definition of vowel mergers before looking at the analysis of mergers in terms of linguistic change. Finally, this section will consider the relevance of the NURSE~SQUARE merger in terms of speaker psycho-social orientation in Merseyside and Lancashire and the expected direction of linguistic variation and change.

2.5.1 Complete Mergers and Near-Mergers

Labov defines a vowel merger simply as 'two vowels falling together' (1994: 310). Labov (1994) states that the simplicity of the mechanisms of merger (such as a chain shift), in comparison to a phonemic split, means that vowel 'mergers spread at the expense of distinctions' (p. 313, Herzog's principle). Equally, Labov states that, in general, mergers are irreversible (Garde's Principle, see Labov 1994). The mechanisms of mergers are divided by Trudgill and Foxcroft (1978) into 3 types: *approximation:* the merger takes an intermediate position between the earlier distinction, *transfer:* 'a unidirectional process in which words are transferred from one phonemic category to another' (Labov 1994: 321-322) and *expansion,* 'the entire phonetic range formerly divided between the two phonemes becomes available for the realization of either' (Herold 1990: 91-92).

Labov states that such a change in the vowel system can only occur depending on multiple circumstances that affect and determine the likelihood of a merger (Labov 1994: 328-329):

[57] The labels NURSE and SQUARE are in accordance with Wells' (1982) lexical sets.

(a) *The functional load of the opposition*:

(ai) *The number of minimal pairs that depend upon that distinction.*
(aii) *The extent to which the distinction depends on minimal pairs.*

(b) *The number of distinctions made along that phonetic dimension.*
(c) *The number of phonetic features on which the opposition depends*[58].

In consideration of the NURSE~SQUARE sets in terms of these circumstances: (a) the NURSE~SQUARE vowels present very few lexical items which rely upon minimal pairs for distinction: *her/hair, fur/fair, burr/bear, blur/blare, purr/pair/pear, were/where*, where only a few words within those minimal pairs are considered frequent, for example function words such as *her, were* and *where,* (b) the phonetic distance between the vowels does not exceed two vowel spaces in height, fronting or backing, (c) [ɜ] and [ɛ] have a minimal vowel quality distinction, and do not differ in features such as length. [59]

Labov (1994: 359) defines *near* vowel merger as follows:

> (1) The opposing phonemes are differentiated by a smaller than normal phonetic distance;
> (2) This difference is most often an F2 difference, instead of a combination of F1 and F2;
> (3) There is considerable individual variation within the community: some individuals show a near-merger, others a complete merger, and still others a distinction;
> (4) Speakers who make a consistent difference in spontaneous speech often reduce the difference in more monitored styles;
> (5) Speakers judge the sounds to be the same in minimal pairs tests, and fail commutation tests;

[58]Labov's circumstances further include: (d) the discriminability of the phonetic features on which the opposition depends, and (e) limitations in the range of movements that would avoid merger. For reasons of relevance these will not be discussed here.

[59] Labov (1994) maintains that for a merger to occur phonemes cannot be opposed dimensionally anymore than 3 (rarely 4) vowel places in height and no more than two front/back.

(6) Phoneticians from other areas are better able to hear the difference than the native speakers.

Perhaps the most investigated vowel merger is the low/back merger involving LOT and THOUGHT in North American English, argued to be the 'largest single phonological sound change taking place in American English' (Labov 1994: 316). This merger is reported to affect the North East, Canada and the West and is continuing to expand geographically. Labov (1994) reports, in his investigation of Philadelphia, that the isogloss of merger and distinction runs through Pennsylvania. However, despite a rift in communication between the west and the east of Pennsylvania, the merger is present on either side of this rift of communication; the isogloss of merger and distinction instead lying further to the east. This finding, Labov confirms, is consistent with Herzog's principle of 'the pressure of mergers to expand' (p. 317).

Though the West is reported by Labov to be one of the four major areas in the US that is completely merged, Hall-Lew (2013; 2009) finds that in the Sunset District of San Francisco, the merger of LOT and THOUGHT is very much in progress; its gradual diffusion into the speech community, or even into the speech of an individual, is observed to be affected by social factors, such as age and ethnicity. The merger, however, is continuing towards completion, as the merger is significantly favoured in younger speakers more than any other age group.[60] Yet, even in the speech of the younger inhabitants of the Sunset District, the assimilation to a single vowel class is as yet incomplete, with some distinction maintained. Indeed Hall-Lew argues that the process of merger in the Sunset District to still be at the stage of near-merger (Labov 1994) for many of the speakers in the sample, and therefore, the community as a whole.

Interestingly, Hall-Lew hypothesises that the linguistic heritage and social orientation could be driving the varying frequency of merger in her speakers' speech. Similarly to Liverpool, Hall-Lew posits that immigration of speakers of Irish decent was the highest in the Sunset District of San Francisco, followed by a large influx of Asian immigrants. As Wells (1982) states that Irish English retains vocalic distinctions, Hall-Lew observes that speakers with Irish heritage demonstrated a relative reduction in the uptake towards merger. Indeed, although ethnicity does

[60] Hall-Lew states that the introduction of the merger in San Francisco is due to the city's demographic history, as North Eastern migrants inhabited San Francisco a distinction was maintained in this district of San Francisco compered with the merged West. As Labov's (1994) study of Pennsylvania identifies, LOT/THOUGHT are distinct in North East America.

not prove significant in Hall–Lew's study, a pattern emerges with the Asian community adopting the merger. The uptake of the merger in this group is suggested as positional, with the Asian community desiring to affiliate themselves to the American West more readily than those of European descent.[61]

In their analysis of the NEAR~SQUARE merger in New Zealand, Hay et al. (2006), similarly, report that the merger varies depending on social factors. Hay et al.'s inquiry, which focused on the perception of speakers and speaker error/confusion surrounding collapsed vowel classes, primarily highlighted that SQUARE varied more in the vowel space than NEAR. They conclude that the higher lexical frequency of NEAR tokens is conditioning the direction of the merger towards NEAR: the NEAR vowel is encountered more often, so SQUARE is, therefore, likely to be more frequently heard by a speaker as NEAR.

Preceding studies of the merger of these vowels in New Zealand have reported that the merger could be realised by some speakers as a merger by transfer towards NEAR, while other speakers demonstrated a merger towards SQUARE (Holmes and Bell 1992, Maclagan and Gordon 1996). However, as Holmes and Bell report, the direction of the merger as settling either as a transfer towards NEAR or SQUARE was unclear. Hay et al. conclude that the merger is now settling towards NEAR, given the prominence of this realisation in younger speech.

The direction that the merger takes, then, presents many questions in terms of both the internal and external mechanisms that drive it. The following section will now consider the role of contact and attitude in the assimilation of two vowel classes to a single vowel class.

2.5.2 Direction of change: Perception vs. production

As Labov (1994: 324) states,

> Sociolinguistic studies show that mergers rarely rise to the level of overt social consciousness. Listeners attend to the realization of particular sounds by other speakers, but not to how many distinctions they make.

[61] Women were also found to be potentially leading change, though again this did not prove statistically significant.

In his study of Philadelphia, Labov observes that speakers did not comment on the lack of distinction between *moor* and *more* in Philadelphian speech. Indeed, as we saw in Hall-Lew's study of San Francisco, the adoption of vowel mergers by members of the community is perhaps below the level of consciousness and is instead a consequence of contact. However, what happens when the merger itself varies in terms of its realisation, as is the case in New Zealand? Here it would not be the lack of distinction as such that would be at stake. Instead, as Labov states, we would expect listeners to reflect upon 'the realization of particular sounds by other speakers' (p. 324).

Holmes and Bell's (1992) analysis of the NEAR~SQUARE merger in New Zealand English highlights that not only do speakers vary in the percentage of merged forms present in their speech but that, within the speech community that they analysed, the process is not phonetically unidirectional due to several social factors, predominantly age and social class.[62] They find that, while the majority of their speakers show some merged words, which are realised as [iə], these speakers have fewer merged tokens in their speech compared with those who produce a downward shift to [e]. For example, they find that older Pakeha women, who show merger towards [iə], have an average of only 6% of their SQUARE tokens shifting to NEAR.[63] Holmes and Bell conclude that this realisation may be the target prestige variant for this group. However, most other groups demonstrate on average 50% or more merged tokens to [e]. The higher percentage of downward shift towards [e], particularly in younger working-class speech, suggests that the shift towards the open variant is dominant overall.

Gordon and Maclagan's (1990, 1996) analysis of this merger suggests that the direction of change is predominantly towards NEAR rather than SQUARE (1996) for most speaker groups. They find that social class has a significant effect on production as their study finds that non-professional younger males are maintaining a vowel distinction. Moreover, the older middle-class females demonstrate merger towards SQUARE as opposed to NEAR. This, they state, is a temporary hypercorrection as NEAR, which is gradually losing its stigma as the sound change progresses, temporarily causes the open variant to be a target/prestige form for this social group.

[62] They refer to this merger as the merger of EAR/AIR, but for consistency with other studies on this merger and in accordance with Well's (1982) lexical sets, I shall adopt the more common labels of NEAR/SQUARE.

[63] Holmes and Bell (1992) adopt the Maori term 'Pakeha' to refer to New Zealanders of European decent.

Although these investigations of the NEAR~SQUARE merger highlight clear associations between social group and speech production, which can lead to the conclusion that perception and subsequent target prestige are the drivers of the direction of change, overall these investigations agree that detailed analysis of the individual is crucial in order to assess the nature of the direction of change. Hall-Lew (2013) answers this call in her analysis of the speakers of the Sunset District. She finds that a small number of speakers were displaying a phonetic over-shoot or 'flip-flop' 'with the opposite phonetic cues that the vowel class had prior to the community-wide onset of merger' (p. 3). During the interview for the speakers in question, Hall-Lew notes a number of assertions these speakers make concerning their identity, which may be the cause of their linguistic behaviour.[64]

In the Sunset District, Hall-Lew finds that the Asian community are merging LOT and THOUGHT more than the other dominant ethnic group. Following this investigation, Hall-Lew examines the social-attitudinal orientation of two speakers who are exhibiting flip-flop or linguistic overshoot. Hall-Lew finds that these speakers demonstrate an acute awareness of the linguistic practices of their respective audiences, which they either hoped to identify or disassociate with. Mary, who is of Irish heritage, explains that a great number of her friends in her youth were Asian and highlights her hopes of complete affiliation and her own self-identification as a member of this group. Molly, on the other hand, is of Asian heritage, educated in an Irish school but unlike Mary, shows very little desire to affiliate with her peers at school.[65] Throughout Molly's interview, she refers to the social pressures of an Irish dominant, anti-Asian environment during her youth. Hall-Lew therefore sees their linguistic over-shoot as a hypercorrection due to these individuals' stylisation towards their intended linguistic market: Mary's desire to affiliate towards an Asian norm and Molly's desire to disassociate with Irish norms.

The final merger of consideration in this section is the NURSE~NORTH merger in Tyneside (northeast England). Wells's (1982) definition of this merger is that, in broad Geordie, NURSE is merged with NORTH in words where the /r/ was historically present e.g. *shirt, short* and *work*,

[64] Hall-Lew's (2009; 2013) data-elicitation approach was to gather as much social information during the interview as possible, asking emic/community-based questions to ascertain a speaker's identity and psycho-social orientation within the Sunset District. A similar approach is taken by the investigation here and will be discussed in Chapter 3.

[65] Both Mary and Molly are pseudonyms used in the Sunset District study.

while *walk* and *talk* are pronounced [wa:k] and [ta:k]. Further to this, Wells (1982: 375) states that:

> In a less broad Newcastle accent, NURSE words have [ɜ:] or something similar e.g. rounded centralised-front [Ø:]. It appears that no hyper-correction of the type *short* *[ʃØ:t] occurs: either the merger of NURSE and NORTH was never categorical, or speakers are unusually successful in sorting the two sets out again.

Maguire (2008) investigates the social distribution (according to gender, age and social class) of the NURSE~NORTH merger in Tyneside, and questions whether this merger is reversing. He finds that gender is the most important factor governing the distribution of NURSE with females preferring a fronted (more standard) production of NURSE, while males demonstrated a preference for a more backed NURSE vowel. Following this, younger speakers, in particular showed a preference for fronted forms of NURSE, as did speakers of higher economic status. NORTH remained in a back position but for some speakers this form demonstrated some degree of fronting to a central back position. Overall, Maguire finds that, 'of the 70 speakers analysed, 43 have a completely distinct NURSE and NORTH lexical sets' (p. 255); 27 had some degree of overlap with only 9% of all speakers demonstrating a complete merger. In addition, Maguire notes that speakers who have back pronunciations of NURSE, demonstrated fronting in a small number of words: *thirteen, girl* and *thirty.* In view of Wells's vague statement that the merger is not categorical, Maguire considers that this could mean that not all speakers have merged the forms, and/or that not all words are included in the merger. Maguire (2008) and Maguire et al. (2013: 236) conclude that due to the mergers partial or incomplete status, speakers 'were able to "turn off" the merger successfully because they had knowledge of the non-merging system which also existed in their speech community'.

Overall the studies in this section demonstrate that the intended linguistic targets seem highly dependent on the speakers' perception of the social and linguistic markets available to them. For this reason, it is essential to observe and understand speakers' orientations and affiliations if we are to understand the motivations for the direction of linguistic change.

2.5.3 The situation in Scouse and Lancashire: The nature of the NURSE~SQUARE merger

Before this section turns to the production of the NURSE~SQUARE merger in the North West of England, it is necessary to first consider the history of these vowel classes and their production pre-merger. The NURSE set refers to words which historically had /i/, /ɛ/ and /u/ preceding /r/ in Middle English before merging to the mid central vowel [ɜ: ~ ɜr] in most present-day English accents, where the vowel has 'coalesced with the /r/ to yield an r-coloured vocoid' (Wells 1982: 199), 'e.g. *burnt, shirt, verb, heard, work'* (Ibid: 139). The justification for classifying certain words under the NURSE set, as Wells states, often comes down to phonetic realisation which is affected by the presence of /r/ in certain dialects. For example, dialects which have undergone Middle English NURSE merger[66] still have a phonemic split with STRUT (both STRUT and FOOT are produced with [ʊ] in the north of England), so that the word *hurry* in RP and the north of England would be considered in the vowel class STRUT or FOOT, given the realisation of the vowel of this word as [ʌr] and [ʊr], respectively. In General American, however, *hurry* would be in the NURSE class with a pronunciation of [ɜr].

In Merseyside, Wells (1982: 139) reports that the predominant pronunciation of NURSE is of 'a front half-open quality [and] [ɐ̈:] is one of the variants common in Merseyside, where the NURSE vowel has merged with SQUARE'. Knowles (1973) adds a more sophisticated analysis of this vowel, stating that both social class and age can be seen to have an effect on vowel quality. He finds that in regard to social class, while working-class speakers produce a fronted [ɐ̈] typically, the middle-class realisation of this vowel is more similar to the central RP [ɜ]. He concedes, however, that even in middle-class speech this pronunciation is impressionistically fronted. Moreover, in the speech of the young, this system appears to have advanced further, as Knowles reports that 'the centre of gravity of the tongue [is] brought forward even further; however, the general auditory effect is not so much one of fronting as of raising' (p. 271).

Due to the large influx of Irish people to Liverpool in the mid 1800s (see Chapter 1), it would seem reasonable to suggest that this group may have influenced the fronted pronunciation of NURSE. Reports, such as Wells (1982), state that in Belfast fronted NURSE is common. However, the pattern of this merger in Hiberno-English is often varying in nature: in Dublin, Hickey (1999) states that the typical vowel is shifted towards a centralised realisation [ɚ].

[66] This excludes Scotland and Ireland.

Hence, it is unclear the influence these varieties had on Liverpool English at the time of koineisation (see Honeybone 2007).

The SQUARE set corresponds to words which originate from [a:] or [ai], like FACE and PRICE or [ɛ:] in Middle English, with following /r/, e.g. *care, air, bear, heir, scarce and vary* (Wells 1982: 157). The production of SQUARE in Liverpool is as yet unclear though the merger reported by Knowles (1973) states that this vowel remains within its historical vowel class as it is known to be a merger by transfer. In South Lancashire, however, the converse is apparent as Honeybone (2007: 122) points out, the merger 'is to a central vowel, such as [ɘˤ: ~ ɜ:] (with residual rhoticity still an option)'.

For NURSE and SQUARE, the residual /r/ needs to be considered in this thesis. Scotland and Ireland are excluded from Wells's Middle English NURSE merger as the rhoticity of these accents affects the quality of the vowel, with R-colouring of the vowel, or rhotic vowels, preserving a distinction as mentioned above. In the North West, then, we may have a residual effect on vowel quality, given that rhoticity, though very much reduced (see Chambers and Trudgills'1980 map of isoglosses for rhoticity in Britain), is still marginally present in some parts of South Lancashire. Barras's (2006) investigation of three towns in Greater Manchester finds that, though the Middle English merger of NURSE with the coalescence of /r/ is complete in the North West, the presence of /r/ is still a conditioning factor that affects the realisation of the vowel for the rhotic older speakers in the dataset. Contrary to predictions, however, Barras finds that, on occasion, the presence of following /r/, rather than having the expected centralising effect, was accompanied by the fronting of NURSE in the speech of the older speakers.

Social variation was also a factor, as Barras finds that the northernmost location, Bolton, has a centralised merger for all his speakers regardless of age, while the location closest to the city of Manchester maintains a distinction between these vowel classes. Most interestingly, the geographically intermediate location appears to be moving from merger (as present in the older speakers) towards a distinction (as present in the speech of the young). This leads Barras to conclude that the younger speakers in this location are converging towards a supra-local Manchester identity.

2.5.4 Summary

Basing ourselves on the studies and principles outlined above, we can hypothesise the expected realisation of NURSE and SQUARE in Southport and Ormskirk speech. Due to their geographical position, north of the merged Scouse accent and to the south of the merged accent of Lancashire, it would be reasonable to hypothesise that Southport and Ormskirk speakers will have a vocalic merger (Herzog's principle, above). However, in view of the social constraints to be investigated in this thesis, it is possible that attitude and social orientation could block the spread of the merger to the neighbouring accents of Southport, and possibly even Ormskirk where we might expect comparatively less negative attitudes towards Liverpool (Chapter 1). The questions to be answered, then, are (a) is there a vowel merger in Southport and/or Ormskirk?, (b) what nature will the merger take in these locations?, and (c) will external factors be seen to affect the production as we saw in the studies of San Francisco, New Zealand and Greater Manchester?

Though the presence of a merger may not be salient itself (see Section 2.5.1), the nature of the merger we would expect to be above the level of consciousness (Section 2.5.2). It is expected, therefore, that the nature of the merger, as either merged towards SQUARE or NURSE, would have social significance. For example, we might expect that a fronted merger may index a working class or young Liverpool identity (Knowles 1973). In light of the negative perception of the Scouse accent, a speaker's negative perception may affect the direction of the merger in Southport (and Ormskirk) speech so that it is contrary to the predicted direction of change as convergent to Liverpool/Scouse (Trudgill's 1974, gravity model).

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3 Introduction

The current investigation is faced with a seemingly major methodological issue: how can we examine language variation and change on the scale of two towns (which therefore requires a large number of speakers), while simultaneously assessing speaker identity? As will be discussed in more detail here, because of its complicated and fluid nature (Bucholtz and Hall 2010) an investigation of identity requires in-depth examination to fully explore its many facets (see Eckert 2008). The methods presented in this chapter are selected as a practical comprise to examine both identity and language change in a large cohort of speakers. As this chapter will conclude, by eliciting attitudes that are relevant to the current research, it *is* possible to gain access to the appropriate aspects of a speaker's identity in a snapshot of time (see Hogg and Smith 2007, discussed in more depth in Chapter 2).

In consideration of this problem, this chapter initially assesses the aims of existing paradigms of sociolinguistics. First, this section considers the advantages of ethnographic study within the Community of Practice (CofP) paradigm and its investigation of identity and language use. Wenger (1998) defines a CofP as an aggregate of people who partake in a shared activity, which is 'sufficiently intensive to give rise to a repertoire of shared practices'; hence speakers develop similar values and 'ways of doing things' (as quoted in Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1999: 185-186).

Second, in full recognition of the necessity of studying language as practice in order for any study of variation to be meaningful, this chapter moves on to identify the limitations of the CofP framework, in its inability to achieve the benefits of broad-scale paradigms. Thus, the application of ethnographic methods within an exclusively 'micro' paradigm can often be seen to fall short of the need to relate to more general patterns of linguistic variation and change.

In the light of these limitations, this chapter outlines the benefit of examining the accentuated attitudes (see Llamas 2010) that are a 'window to [speaker] identity' (Hogg and Smith 2007). Following on from the models outlined in the first half of this chapter, the discussion moves to the data collection and analytical methodologies conducted for the current research.

3.1 Theoretical implications for data collection

Despite evidence provided by Labov's (1963) study of Martha's Vineyard that varying speaker identities can have an empirically verifiable effect on variant selection, a new trend was set by Labov's (1966) study of New York in producing statistically viable data on variant distributions across selected social aggregates (see Eckert 2000).[67] Thus, the study of language as a science - considered to be more academically prestigious in its own right than when identified with sociology (Duranti 2003) - sought to validate language variation with an increase in speaker numbers, while the more social aspect of analysing how speakers perceive and produce language was side-lined by Labovian sociolinguistics.

The 'Speech Community' has the overarching criticism that, as a basic unit of analysis, it has 'no single agreed upon definition' (Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999: 178). As Patrick (2003) notes, speakers have been placed in a number of predetermined groups under this umbrella term: geographically by region or city (Labov 1966, New York City) or by social factors such as class, age, gender and so on. This notion of the 'speech community' carries the implication that speakers all agree on certain linguistic factors as normative, despite their varying social histories and lack of anything else in common with one another, other than the social bracket the researcher has placed them in (Bucholtz 1999).

Seemingly to the speech community model's advantage, however, the consensus model of society has given rise to the identification of certain regular patterns of linguistic distribution across these social divides, to such an extent that the research has enabled investigators to posit several generalisations about the trends of linguistic behaviour in these categories. For example, the gender hypothesis (Labov 1990) is said to be completely characteristic of the linguistic variation found in women's speech, while women lead in the use of innovative, non-standard forms (below the level of consciousness): in general, women use standard forms if the phonological variable is stable and above the level of consciousness (Labov 2001).

Such generalisations have been subject to criticism from third wave linguists as being open to the 'correlational fallacy', suggesting that such top to bottom investigations fail to identify

[67] The centralisation of the /aw/ on Martha's Vineyard was located by Labov to be identifiable to a particular kind of speaker identity – 'one of several distinct and even competing identities' (Eckert 2000: 23). In his ethnographic approach to Island identity, Labov discovered two distinctive groups with conflicting views of Island authenticity; between those of Native American and those of Portuguese descent.

'what the correlation might hold' (Cameron 2009: 111). Unlike the speech community, the CofP approach takes the more micro-scale interactions between speakers as the basic unit of analysis, predefined not by speakers' social make-up, but by language use in locally based everyday practice (see Eckert 2000 on jocks and burnouts).

As current theories of identity emphasise, the cyclic and ever-changing nature of identity has often been overlooked with the conceptualisation of these variables as static and unchanging (Bucholtz and Hall 2010).[68] Hence, the CofP has presented evidence highlighting speakers' performance of style, identity and semiotic processes through linguistic features. In the light of this, research has subsequently moved away from the a priori homogenisation of speakers, to the examination of speaker identity as a fluid concept, which the CofP framework is more than able to handle in its examination of individual speaker identity(ies) and orientation(s), before building up to a shared identity of a social aggregate.

Speaker stylisation and agency are, then, central to CofP research, providing an account of speakers' selection, rejection and treatment of linguistic variables; 'a theory of variation as social practice sees speakers as constituting, rather than representing, broad social categories, and it sees speakers as constructing as well as responding to, the social meaning of variation' (Eckert 2000: 3).

The social network approach (see Milroy 1980) initially avoids many of the problems encountered by the speech community in its avoidance of examining predefined social aggregates. Like the CofP, it identifies the distribution of language in a given community by establishing the strength of ties between the speakers examined. To this end, rather than hypothesising that a social group may lead in the adoption and spread of linguistic variants, social network research has highlighted that speakers who have numerous and weak ties (those who meet with other speakers regularly, but also have many other contacts outside the network) are often in a position to be 'linguistic innovators' (Milroy and Milroy 1992, as discussed in Chapter 2).

[68] In their discussion, Bucholtz and Hall propose five principles for the analysis of speaker identity (Chapter 2) providing a more complex view of identity as a fluid and changing system in need of in-depth ethnographic study, contrary to preceding paradigms which treat the notion as static.

Yet, many of the problems that undermine the concept of speech community can similarly be raised with regard to this framework in its over-generalising treatment of speakers. For reasons of space I will not go into too much detail outlining previous arguments here; however, as Holmes and Meyerhoff (1999: 180) state, 'a social network and a CofP can be differentiated by the nature of the contact that defines them. A social network requires QUANTITY of interaction; a CofP requires QUALITY of interaction'. Hence, while the social network model can be seen as a positive movement away from predetermined social aggregates toward a more meaningful investigation of speakers' interaction with linguistic usage and distribution, the paradigm does not account for the crosscutting effects of speaker identity.

Yet, as Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2007: 32) point out, the social network should not be seen as incompatible with the stance of the CofP. Instead, the frameworks should be used in conjunction with one another, the social network establishing the ties between speakers, and the CofP interpreting 'the social significance of that speech' (Eckert 2000). As Eckert (2000) notes (above), while the CofP paradigm recognises the speaker's ability to identify 'fashions' of language and apply them (or not, depending on individual interpretation) to their own linguistic system, this framework endeavours to establish the 'trendsetters' of linguistic innovation in a manner similar to the social network model, i.e. the core members of the CofP who are found to lead change due to their linguistic stylisations being associated with their desirable status (Holmes 2009). Thus, a constant reassessment of speaker status, based on perceived fashionable attributes (status, age, core involvement with a given group) takes place between speakers and hearers as to whether certain linguistic forms are desirable or not (see Kiesling 2009).

However, this constant reassessment of linguistic variation can often lead the CofP research framework to becoming more inward-looking, rendering it less useful for discovering any possible implications for general patterns on the macro scale. As (Rampton 2009: 700) states, there is often a tendency/temptation for 'CofP research to prioritise relations *within* groups rather than *between* or *across*'. While, unlike the speech community, the CofP starts with a predefined framework of how a community should behave in order to be defined as a 'practice' group, researchers find that as the study continues, defining people's roles in these groups becomes increasingly difficult to pin down (see Clark 2006). The response of many researchers within this paradigm, then, is to intensely examine one community in order to identify the speakers who are central and those who are peripheral and marginal to a given community of

practice, in a manner similar to the social network paradigm outlined above. Hence, for this thesis, an ethnographic CofP approach would be inappropriate since its in-depth analysis of the community it analyses often limits it from making generalisations about broader social systems (see Rampton 2009).

As Moore (2010) argues, the value of the research depends upon the stance it takes. Therefore, if the question is *how do individuals interact with one another and process language?*, a micro-scale study which scrutinises the individual facets of language processing is ultimately what is required. If, however, the research aims to identify the nature of language variation and change within a town or region, then the exclusive concentration at the level of ethnography falls short of the mark in that it does not provide an acceptable and transferable analysis to larger-scale patterns of language variation and change.

Hence, while it is argued that '[s]ignificance and numbers have parted ways [and that] statistically insignificant phenomena may prove to be decisive' (Bauman 1992: 192, as quoted in Rampton 2009: 706), I agree with the CofP approach inasmuch as the base level of investigation should start with individuals and groups and their treatment of language in context, rather than more or less arbitrary social aggregates. However, I agree that if the paradigm does not then search for correlations on a more macro scale, it is impossible to tell whether these findings have value within the broader system of language change, or whether they are purely idiosyncratic and applicable only to the individual research context. Thus, the initial aim of identifying the causation behind macro-scales of language variation and change would be unattainable, as the paradigm builds inwards as opposed to outwards, as Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) state:

> [w]e must study the relationship of the micro-culture of communicative action to political economic considerations of power and social inequality, confronting macro-social constraints on language and behavior (as quoted in Bergvall 1999: 284).

If the temptation to become overly embedded in the ethnography can be overcome and if the CofP in question can be observed in conjunction with other CofPs then the value of this research can really be shown to contribute to identifying generalising patterns of variation across broader communities and spaces.

In terms of this thesis, the research appears to require a methodology that is oppositional. On the one hand, it hopes to uncover an understanding of language variation and change in two towns; it therefore requires a reasonably large cohort of speakers. On the other hand, the examination of the complex process of identity in all its intricacies is not possible in a single 1-2 hour interview, or two such interviews. However, the potentially accentuated attitudes that are micro-units of identity, should serve as more accessible indications of a speaker's orientation (see Llamas 2007). The following sections outline the practical compromise of methods used to assess speakers' identity and language variation.

3.2 Data Collection

The data collection methods here have sought to elicit macro-scale sociolinguistic data, while at the same time, paying attention to ethnographic detail. This is done in the hope of identifying the extra-linguistic factors that may influence the direction of linguistic change.

3.2.1 Social factors: Age, gender and social class

Previous linguistic study has identified trends of linguistic variation as influenced by social factors. For this reason, age, social class and gender have become central to sociolinguistic study (see Labov 2001). The investigation here similarly addresses the potential of these social factors to influence the patterns of linguistic variation – see Table 3.1 for an outline of the sample. However, where applicable, local cultural and historical factors have been considered so as to take an emic approach (see Eckert 1997) in the social stratification of the participants of this study.

All participants had to have been born and lived in their town of residence (up to the age of 20). Past this age, however, the middle-aged participants had to have lived in Southport or Ormskirk for the vast majority of their lives, having not moved away for more than five years in adulthood. This decision was made on the assumption that 'speakers only minimally change the way they speak after the *critical period* or adulthood' (Meyerhoff 2006: 127).

The social variables of age, social class and gender are often inter-related. Age and social class were considered simultaneously in terms of the 'linguistic market'[69] (Sankoff and Laberge

[69] Bourdieu and Boltanski (1975) originally defined the concept of the 'Linguistic Market' in French.

1978). For Sankoff and Laberge, competence depends on the speaker's background, social class and so on. Depending on the speaker's social background, speakers have the ability to use the correct grammar, lexis, register and so on in a manner that compliments the social structure of the linguistic market: the language choices presented to the speaker depending on his/her role in society. With regard to the younger speakers in the dataset, the age-range of 16-19 was selected due to the linguistic choices speakers in their late teens are presented after the completion of compulsory education - work placement and lifestyle options that will demarcate their socio economic status in adulthood (Sankoff and Laberge 1978). Eckert (1997) notes that it is in this transitional time of leaving school (aged 16) or Sixth Form College (aged 18-19) that various linguistic choices become available to us (see Sankoff and Laberge 1978). For this reason, linguists often use education level as a measure of social class of teenage participants (see Eckert 1997 and Trudgill 1974).

Table 3.1: Social stratification of participants according to age, social class, gender and location.[70]

	16-19			**40-55**			**Archive**	
	Southport		**Ormskirk**	**Southport**		**Ormskirk**	**Southport**	**Ormskirk/ Skelmersdale**
	Working Class	Middle Class	Middle Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Middle Class	?	?
Male	4	4	4	4	5	4	3	4
Female	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4

The divisions of age, presented in Table 3.1, were also decided upon in relation to local/historical concerns. As mentioned in the introductory chapters, the town of Southport, prior to the shift of the Merseyside border in 1974, was situated in a separate borough (Grant

[70] A minimum of four speakers per cell was decided upon to produce statistically viable data.

and Grey 2007) that was associated with the county of Lancashire. The rationale for selecting speakers aged 40 to 55 is due to Southport's inclusion in the county of Merseyside, as these speakers were born around the time Southport became a Merseyside town. The older dataset, sourced from SED and Archive materials (Chapter 1), form a linguistic basis for how the accent would have sounded pre-border shift.[71]

Table 3.2: Archive data set (recordings were conducted between 2002 and 2005)

Southport	**Age**	**Ormskirk**	**Age**	**Skelmersdale**	**Age**
Sou_OF02*	74	Orm_OF02	90	Sk_OF01	82
Sou_OF03	69	-	-	Sk_OF02	76
Sou_OF04*	71	-	-	Sk_OF03	72
Sou_OM01*	81	Orm_OM01	91	Sk_OM01	81
Sou_OM02	77	-	-	Sk_OM03	76
Sou_OM04	80	-	-	Sk_OM05	67

*=middle class, O=older, F=female, M=male, Sou=Southport, Orm=Ormskirk, Sk=Skelmersdale.

As stated in Chapter 2, the expected direction of linguistic change (as predicted by the diffusion model) is that Southport would converge with the larger linguistic centre of Liverpool (Trudgill 1974). Contact is also hypothesised to encourage convergence due to the subsidised Mersey Rail link between these locations with Liverpool and Southport's unification in the same county. The first evidence of this linguistic convergence, then, should be evident in the first generation of Southport speakers (aged 40 to 55 years) as a Merseyside town.

The middle-class Ormskirk dataset in this age range by comparison with the middle-class speakers of Southport would be expected to show fewer features of Scouse.[72] In view of the expectation that Southport speakers will harbour more negative attitudes towards Merseyside and or Liverpool, however, it was hypothesised that these attitudes will affect the expected

[71] The speakers in this dataset largely comprises of non-mobile urban rural males (NORMS, SED) with the linguistic output demonstrating features that are associated with Lancashire English.

[72] The Ormskirk participants are all middle class despite efforts to find working-class speakers. For this reason, the Ormskirk dataset is compared directly with the middle-class Southport speakers only.

spread of Scouse features into their repertoire. As discussed in Chapter 1 with reference to the Southport White Paper of 1974, negative attitudes in the middle-aged group could have been influenced from an early age by these speakers' parents, in view of the new administrative county change (see Franklin 2012 for a discussion of the influence of parents in forming their children's political opinions).

With regard to the younger generation's attitude to the county change, it is hypothesised that due to the span of time since the shift of the border, younger Southport speakers will consider their Merseyside status as a cultural norm. Indeed, as Beal (2010: 220-221) states, young people show less of an allegiance to historic counties compared to older generations of the community:

> […] with the exception of Yorkshire, which seems to maintain its salience and perceptual performance, the counties (traditional and modern) of England do not serve as markers of linguistic identity for young people, being replaced by major conurbations or by larger regions such as East Anglia or the West Country.

Beal (2010) further notes that Lancashire is perceptually small, while Liverpool is perceived to be vast. This is evident in relation to Montgomery's (2010) study of dialect perceptions in the UK as participants, when asked to indicate dialect areas on a blank map, circle relatively large proportions of the map for Liverpool/Scouse. In addition, this variety is one of the most frequently mentioned as well as the most negatively perceived accents in the study. Given this perceptual sphere of influence and the negative perception of Scouse highlighted for the young speakers in Montgomery's study, it is possible that the younger judges of this investigation, in both Ormskirk and Southport, will similarly perceive the Scouse accent negatively.

The original aim of this investigation was to examine the effect of social class in both locations. However, while every attempt was made to locate a working-class society in Ormskirk, the investigation was thwarted by time and an inability to make any in-roads with these communities. Section 3.4 addresses how this discrepancy was handled in the data and statistical analyses of this investigation. In the measurement of social class, both social and economic factors were used as indicators: occupation (middle-aged speakers) or school (younger speakers), neighbourhood and housing and social network. In addition to the consideration of the linguistic market in terms of education/occupation, speakers' local affiliations were similarly examined in terms of class and linguistic choices (Sankoff and Laberge 1978, Eckert

2000). Hence, the decision was made to select informants with affiliations to certain local groups and societies. This was done in view of the theories that surround social networks (addressed below), in addition to this being an initial indicator of class under the assumption that types of societies pertain to different social classes (see Eckert 2000 and Maclagan and Gordon 1996).

In addition to social network, housing and neighbourhood were also considered as an indicator of social class using postcode data, though speakers were also asked about their home and neighbourhood in the questionnaire and in conversation in the interview. As Beal (2010: 221) points out, postcodes have not only been seen as markers of regional identity but can be used as an additional source of data when determining an informant's social class. Postcodes hold information regarding general environment, typical occupation, housing and health as documented by the UK office for National Statistics.[73] The office of national statistics maps the relative affluence of postcode areas (see website in footnote) based on the general statistics of occupation, housing, and so on, which formed part of the assessment of social class for the participants of this study. However, as Beal states, postcode data alone cannot be used as a sole indicator of class as certain inhabitants may not follow the general statistics for their local area.

Finally, the inclusion of gender as a factor in this thesis is in accordance with this social factor's known influence on linguistic variation and change (see Labov 2001). Ochs (1992) and Johnstone and Kiesling (2008) note the indexical and semiotic processes that make gender a central social effect with regard to the introduction of innovative forms and the direction of linguistic change. The term *gender* rather than *sex* will be adopted throughout this study, as the former denotes the complex abstract constructions of identity, stylisation and indexicality (see Cheshire 2002, Johnstone 2010) rather than a more simplistic biological distinction denoted by the term *sex*.

3.2.2 The participants

This investigation sought to investigate speakers from several *harmonious* local groups in which people elect to become members, such as sports groups. As Eckert (2000: 159) states, 'college and vocational activities do not spring from individual choice'. In addition, the

[73] http://www.maptube.org/map.aspx?mapid=960 (accessed 12/10/12).

communication between the members of a non-harmonious society (Meyerhoff 2002) may not be a result of individual choice. For example, in the workplace or at school speakers may feel they need to maintain a more formal repertoire. Furthermore, the hierarchical structures implemented in such a formal setting may not show the natural relationships between speakers (see Bucholtz and Hall 2010). Many of the participants were not only members of the same local society or community but also attended the same school, college or workplace. Speakers were interviewed in the more informal environment of their societies/groups because it was likely that this would provide the best environment for observing social connections between speakers; groups and societies are self selecting rather than formal or structured, such as in a workplace or a school (Meyerhoff 2002).

As Eckert (2000) states, local communities and societies can often serve as an initial indicator of speakers' social class, with 'tennis groups and orchestras' (p.40), for example, corresponding to a more middle-class identity, while 'unions and bowling teams' (p.40) often denoting a more working-class background. In view of this, younger participants were selected from a local singing group (middle-class), a youth centre (working-class) and members of a Duke of Edinburgh Award (http://www.dofe.org) group (middle-class). Middle-aged speakers were selected from two local history societies, one in Southport and one in Ormskirk (middle class) and from a union in Southport (working class).[74] All societies had both male and female members. The groups separated speakers by age and social class only.

Indeed, using groups and societies worked well in conjunction with Eckert's hypothesis since, when further classified by their housing (postcode data), schooling/occupation and their self-assessment of class, all but one speaker (who was removed from the study) fitted the classification for the class associated with the group that they attended.

Younger speaker groups were visited two or three times so as to gauge the social practices within the groups more carefully, given that they are in the 'critical age period' during which several linguistic markets are available to them (as discussed above with reference to Meyerhoff 2006, Eckert 2008, Sankoff and Laberge 1978). To preserve anonymity, the speakers have been coded as follows: YM01 = young male, YF01 = young female. In further

[74] The members of the union, though formulated through their occupation as volunteers for the local fire service, met socially on Wednesday and Saturday nights.

chapters Sou_YM01 = Southport, young male, Orm_YM01 = Ormskirk young male, Sou_MM01 = Southport middle-aged male, Orm_MF01 = Ormskirk middle-aged female, and so on.

The members of the singing community have at least some social connection to one another, making this a multiplex network (see Milroy 1980). Sou_YF01 and Sou_YF02 are best friends, as are Sou_YF03 and Sou_YM04, and Sou_YM01 and Sou_YM02. Speakers Sou_YM03 and Sou_YF04 are boyfriend and girlfriend. All the speakers attend the same college and socialise with one another outside of school, they also live in the same area of Southport and have similar aspirations to attend Drama College.

In contrast with the younger middle-class Southport group, the working-class group, though still multiplex, has members who are peripheral to the social network. Speakers Sou_YM05 and Sou_YM06 are the central figures of the group and are close to all members. They are the oldest, most confident members and associate with all other members in the youth centre.[75] However, they spend most of the time in the youth centre with the girls, except for Wednesdays when they play football with the boys. Sou_YM08 and Sou_YM09 know all members but only associate with Sou_YM05 and Sou_YM06. Speakers Sou_YM05, Sou_YM08 and Sou_YM09 attend the same vocational college, while Sou_YM06 and the girls attend a different college.

Sou_YM08 and Sou_YM09 are one year younger than the others. They are peripheral to this group but are connected to Sou_YM06 outside of the youth centre as the three live in the same area and share the frequent activity of riding and fixing mopeds. In the youth centre, however, Sou_YM06 associates with Sou_YM05 and the girls who are of the same age. Sou_YF06 and Sou_YM05 are boyfriend and girlfriend, though they were members of the same social group beforehand. Speakers Sou_YF05 and Sou_YF07 are slightly less central than the other two girls due to frequent arguments with the group, which leads to their social distancing. Other members of the network reported arguments between these two individuals and the rest of the group in interview.

[75] Indeed, when persuading speakers of this society to participate in the study, I first had to gain social acceptance from these two members of the society.

The Ormskirk younger middle-class network all associate with each other in the society as well as attending the same school. Unlike the Southport middle and working-class speakers, however, the members of this society had numerous close friendships outside of this group.

The contact patterns for the middle-aged speakers are not a primary concern here since it is believed that speakers' speech stabilises by the end of adolescence (Meyerhoff 2011). For this reason, these speakers were observed within their social network only once before interview. Unlike the younger speakers, the older speakers were interviewed at a time of their convenience at their home. Accessing these people through a Community of Practice for these speakers helped ensure that they had an affiliation to their town, so that their opinions and linguistic data were representative (see discussion of Attribute Networks above).

Archive recordings, provided by the NWSA were used so that more time could be spent locating middle-aged and younger speakers in two locations.[76] While the recordings are of excellent quality, the data here presented a few issues. First, as is clear in Table 3.2, there are only two recordings of Ormskirk speakers meaning that this dataset had to be supplemented with recording of speakers from the neighbouring town of Skelmersdale. Skelmersdale was a small mining town, prior to its designation as a new town in 1961 and is located no more than 7 miles to the East of Ormskirk (see Clark and Watson ongoing). It is assumed that the influx of Liverpudlians post 1961 would have had very little effect on these speakers' speech (Meyerhoff 2006, Critical Period). Second, while these recordings provide this investigation with some indication of what the accents of Southport and Ormskirk (and Skelmersdale) speakers sounded like prior to the creation of Merseyside, we have little knowledge of these speaker's backgrounds in terms of contact, orientation, attitude and social class. As this thesis includes these factors in the statistical models conducted in the analysis of this thesis (discussed in Section 3.4 below), it was not possible to include the archive speakers in the same models without this information.

[76] In fulfillment of the AHRC requirements of this thesis, collaboration was set up between the North West Sound Archive and myself. This collaboration was intended as mutually beneficial: I provided the NWSA with the recordings conducted for this thesis, and wrote a guide for conducting social interviews, while they trained me in how to digitize reel to reel recordings and provided me with recordings (there were no recordings of middle-aged or younger speakers to supplement this data).

3.3 The Interview

As mentioned in the previous section, the younger speakers were interviewed in a quiet room within their CofP, while older speakers were interviewed at home. Since the younger speakers were not in the controlled environment of a school, where participants are often instructed to take part by a teacher, it was necessary to persuade the speakers to participate during their leisure time.

This meant that, as the observer and interviewer, the perception of me as both an outsider and/or an authority figure had to be reduced from the outset. My decision to wear very casual clothing and engaging in initial conversation with the members about 'The X Factor' (a popular television programme) and football was to minimise 'the age difference asymmetry', presenting myself '"in roughly the same life stage" – eliminating obvious reminders of status difference' (Eckert 2000: 71) and to reduce the observers paradox (Labov 2001). As Eckert (2001: 71) states:

> An ethnographer has the opportunity to offer another kind of relationship, as someone who is interested in kids on their own terms, wants to listen to them, does not want to change them and is not part of the local authority structure.

Similarly, with regard to the middle-aged speakers, the methodology highlighted a few problems as the selected age-range meant that speakers had to be found who were often in full time employment. As a consequence, a considerable amount of time was spent on the data collection. This either meant integrating myself into a position of trust and social acceptance for younger speakers to participate, or arranging a suitable time for interview due to the middle-aged participants' work commitments.

3.3.1 Elicitation tasks, questionnaires and free speech

Participants were interviewed in self-selecting dyads to reduce the observer's paradox (Labov 2001). Speakers were already separated by social class and age since the practices of the societies associated with these social categories e.g. young working-class participants were accessed in youth centres, as mentioned above (see also Eckert 2000).[77] Social class was also

[77] The interviewer is from South Durham in the North East of England, and has a noticeable northeast accent. Many participants commented on my accent, stating it was clear that I was from the northeast. A

examined using housing and neighbourhood (postcode data) with occupation/schooling and speaker self-assessment as further indicators. Although speakers were kept separate with regard to age and social class in view of concerns of a potential power imbalance in conversation, speakers were not separated in terms of gender (see Fairclough 1989). Indeed speakers were often interviewed with their spouses/partners to encourage ease of conversation and confidence when offering personal opinions and attitudes (see West 2009).

During interview, participants were, first, asked to perform a short dialogue task lasting no longer than 5 minutes (Appendix 2). This consisted of a turn-taking reading exercise to alleviate pressure of reading continuously. Speakers were asked to read a seemingly local, though fictional, news story, which contained Lancashire and Scouse dialect words, sourced from local dialect literature (Fazakerley 2001 for Scouse, and Holcroft 1997 for Lancashire). The dialect words were capitalised and highlighted in bold so as to draw attention away from the NURSE and SQUARE words throughout the text. These dialect words were also discussed during the interview as speakers were asked if they had heard of or indeed used the Scouse and/or Lancashire terms. It was decided to do the reading task first for two reasons: 1/ to elicit data of speakers orientation from the offset; speakers were asked after the task to comment on the dialect words in the task, whether they used and/or understood them? Are the words Southport/Ormskirk, Scouse and/or Lancashire words?, 2/ speakers were apprehensive after they were told that the interview would include a reading task, once this was out of the way the speakers were more relaxed. [78]

The participants were then asked to complete a quantitative questionnaire, designed to elicit their opinions of Liverpool and Preston without asking explicitly about the accents of these towns and cities (see Appendix 1). The participants were asked for their perception of Southport, Liverpool, and Preston in terms of the people (humorous, intelligent, generous, and so on) and the town/city (clean, good for shopping, restaurants and so on) using a Likert scale. However, as Eckert (2000: 74) argues:

number of participants then asked why someone from the northeast is asking questions about the northwest. I replied by explaining that I knew enough about the region where I am from but nothing about the northwest - since moving to the northwest I have wanted to know more. This response was well received, encouraging participants to talk at length about the history and culture of the region.

[78] Most of the speakers correctly identified the words as either Scouse or Lancashire in origin and said that they would probably use them, though most speakers stated that these were 'slang' words so they may not use them often.

> Surveys and questionnaires are not sufficient for observing that day-to-day practice. Observation and interviews bring the researcher closer to discovering this but the former are also essential in unearthing the patterns through relevant questioning.

Therefore, participants were then recorded in free conversation discussing their responses to the questionnaires. In addition, further questions were asked about local politics (particularly with regard to the Merseyside/Lancashire border), which football team they supported and so on (see Stoddart 1999, Llamas 2007). The younger participants were asked whether they thought Liverpool was a 'cool' place, while middle-aged speakers were asked if Southport or Ormskirk had changed over the years (for the better or for the worse).

All speakers were explicitly asked about the Merseyside/Lancashire border. Southport speakers were asked whether they thought it was good or bad to be part of Merseyside and to justify their answer. In Ormskirk, speakers were asked what would they think/feel, if like Southport, Ormskirk became part of Merseyside. This question was asked in the light of the frequent criticism from 'Ormskirkians' of Southport speaker's perceived open resentment to the border shift. Figure 3.1 outlines the main questions asked during discussion in the interview. Chapter 4 returns to these questions, presenting a discussion of the answers that were volunteered.

Figure 3.1: Attitude and orientation questions asked during the interview

- Do you stay in Southport/Ormskirk to go shopping, day/eat/night out?
- What do you think of the surrounding region – Merseyside, Liverpool, Manchester, Skelmersdale, Preston?
- Do you support a football team?
- What are the local football rivalries? Which major rivals do you support over the other? (If they do not support one of the main teams mentioned)
- Are you a member of any other groups, charities, associations, church (actively or inactively) within or outside of the town? Which is your main association?
- **Southport:** Can you tell me about the white paper?
- **Southport:** Are you proud to be part of Merseyside?
- **Ormskirk:** If the boundary changed again and Ormskirk became part of Merseyside, would that be a good thing? Would you be happy about that?

- If someone asked you, 'what is your accent', what would you say?
- **Southport:** Has the town changed since becoming part of Merseyside?
- **Southport:** Would Southport be better off if it wasn't part of Merseyside?
- Are you able to distinguish your accent from Scouse, Liverpudlian, Preston. How?
- Give an impression
- Is there a difference between Scouse and a Liverpudlian accent? How does it differ from Lancashire? How does it differ from your accent?
- Friendship groups within the society and outsiders? Why?
- If someone who did NOT know Britain very well asked you where are you from, how would you respond?
- If someone asked you, 'what is your accent', what would you say?
- If you were to give your accent a label, what would it be?

Speakers were also asked about their general mobility and migratory patterns to Liverpool, Preston and other neighbouring areas (see Britain 2010) on a daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly and annual basis. In addition to being observed in their social groups, younger speakers were asked to draw friendship maps of their closest friends, labelling where they were from, to examine the accents that they were in regular contact with.

Towards the end of the interview, so as not to draw attention to their speech from the outset, speakers were asked about their accents. Speakers were, first, asked to complete a quantitative questionnaire (see Figure 3.2) that asked, on a scale of 1 to 5, how close they perceived their accent to resemble Scouse, Lancashire, General Northern (Wells 1982) and Standard English (1= very different, 5= not different). Speakers were then asked how offended they would be if labelled by their accent as Scouse, Lancashire, General Northern or Standard English (1= very offended, 5= not at all offended). Some of the participants checked the meaning of General Northern asking whether this meant 'ordinary northern', 'ordinary but with a northern twang'; I approved of these definitions. Most of the participants asked what 'Standard English' meant; some participants asked whether this meant 'posh' – I accepted this definition but also offered the definition 'southern' to make sure that this term was distinct from General Northern.

Figure 3.2: Quantified accent questionnaire

1= STRONGLY AGREE, 2=AGREE, **3= NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE,** **4=DISAGREE, 5=STRONGLY DISAGREE**

From the scale of 1-5 indicated below, how would you respond to the following statements? (Please circle).

(a) My accent is very **DIFFERENT** to:

1)	Scouse	1	2	3	4	5
2)	Lancashire	1	2	3	4	5
3)	General Northern	1	2	3	4	5
4)	Standard English (R.P.)	1	2	3	4	5

(b) I would be **OFFENDED** if someone referred to me as:

1)	Scouse	1	2	3	4	5
2)	Lancashire	1	2	3	4	5
3)	General Northern	1	2	3	4	5
4)	Standard English (R.P.)	1	2	3	4	5

2/ Have you had elocution lessons? (please circle) **YES/ NO**

Following the completion of the questionnaire, speakers were asked to discuss their answers and comment on their perception of the accents around them. Speakers were asked to imitate an accent if they perceived it to be different to their own, or impersonate an individual (see Hall-Lew and Stephens 2012, Eriksson 2010). The intention of this question was to ascertain which features of Scouse speakers perceived, whether these features were viewed positively or negatively and, finally, whether the speaker perceived themselves to have the feature or not.

Hall-Lew and Stephens (2012) examine the metalinguistic attitudes of inhabitants of two towns on the Texas/Oklahoma border in the US 'who self-identify as speakers of "Country Talk"' (p.257). Similar to Scouse (see Montgomery, 2010) "Country Talk" is ideologically and socially stigmatized (Hall Lew and Stephens 2012: 258). The participants of this study were asked to describe country talk and then perform an impression of, or imitate a speaker of, Country Talk. Finally, speakers were asked to compare Country Talk to the 'speech associated with other social categories [such as], *Southern, hick, redneck,* and *rural'* (p.261). Hall-Lew and Stephens find that Country Talk is used to index local membership. In addition, they note

that speakers construct the identity of Country Talk 'on multiple dimensions of social meaning: rural–urban, Southern–non-Southern, and stigma–prestige' (p.275). They are able to conclude that Country Talk speakers conceive of Country as unmarked and separate from the terms *hick* and *redneck*, which are described as having more non-standard features in comparison. More particularly, however, they note that speakers further separate country from the terms hick and redneck 'based on personality characteristics and behavioral patterns' (p.274).

In addition to ascertaining the metalinguistic attitudes of speakers, the aim of asking speakers to imitate features of Scouse, or sounds that they perceive Scouse speakers to have was also to avoid 'intentional fallacy' (Johnstone and Kiesling 2008: 24): the projection of the researcher's opinion of how the speakers are expected to interpret a given feature, rather than how speakers actually do so. For example, [x] may not be recognised as a Scouse feature but as an indexical feature of Southport and/or Ormskirk speech if used frequently within these particular speech varieties. As Johnstone and Kiesling (2008: 25) continue, 'indexical meaning varies from speaker to speaker'. These changes in meaning may perhaps be indicative of, for example, the change of county in Southport: older speakers may reject the incoming new variety while younger speakers may consider a city/Liverpool identity as more fashionable (see Watt and Milroy 1999, perception of traditional and newer features in Newcastle).

Overall an average of 40 to 50 minutes of free speech was collected per speaker.

3.4 Data Analysis

All the linguistic variables were coded and analysed acoustically using Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2009) and auditorily. The lenition of /t/ and /k/ follows the methodology of Sangster (2001, discussed in Chapter 2), using a specialised Praat script which measures the distance in milliseconds between boundaries marked in the selected speaker tier. Figure 3.3 shows the measure and coding of /t/ in the word *cotton*. Periods of vowel devoicing were excluded from the measurements of release periods, only the release of /t/ was marked in Praat and then measured in milliseconds using the Praat script. Approximately 20 coded and analysed variants were then reanalysed by another phonetician to ensure the accuracy of the analysis. The variants of /t/ and /k/ were collected from free speech data only, due to their frequent appearance in natural conversation.

Sangster applied this method only to word-final /t/ in Scouse. The method is expanded here, as it is applied to variants of both /t/ and /k/ in intervocalic environments, both word-medial (*bu**tt**er*, *lo**ck**er*) and word-final (*i**t** is*, *li**k**e a)*, as well as word-final pre-pausal position (*bu**t**... lo**ck**…*). In her analysis of word-final /t/ for young speakers in Liverpool, Sangster (2001) finds that the duration of release averaged at 103 ms for middle-class speakers and 107 ms for working-class speakers. The spirantised form is longer in duration of release than aspirated forms but the duration of release is shorter than forms of /s/ (see Jones and Llamas 2007). The use of Sangster's method in this thesis follows the hypothesis that the longer the duration of release, the closer the production of the form to a typically Scouse realisation (see Sangster 2001). In addition, Sangster's method has served as a further measure for accurately coding each form as either aspirated, affricated or fricative (mentioned above) due to the expected duration of release for each form.

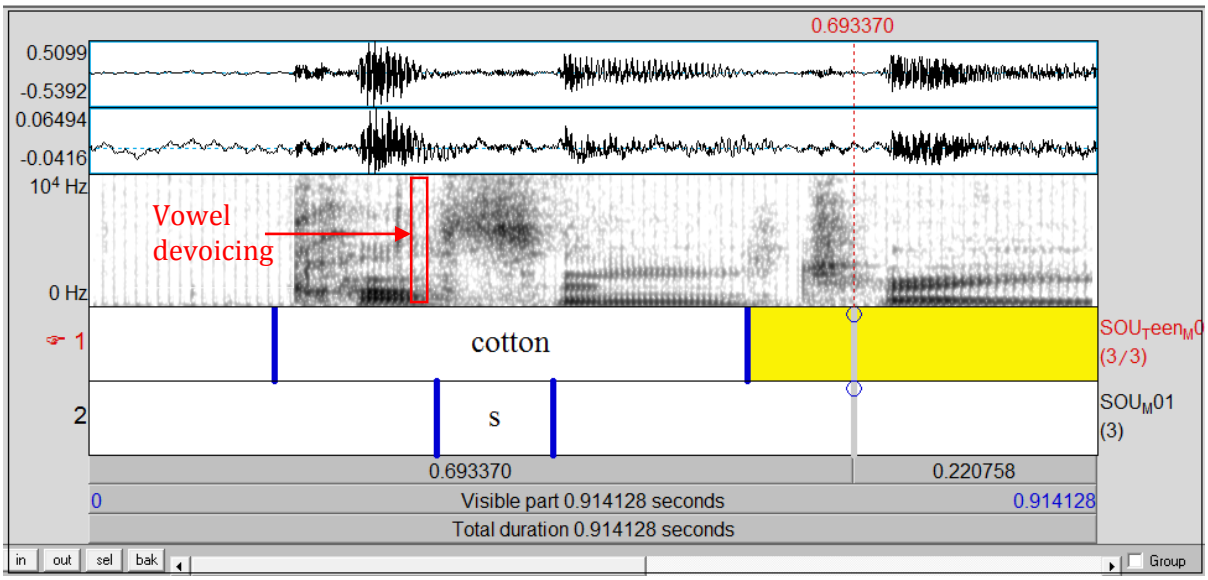


Figure 3.3: Coding of intervocalic (V_v) fricative in Praat, marking the duration of the release period.

Previous investigations of frication have normalised speech rate by calculating the period of release for /t/ relative to the following syllable in the carrier phrase '[test word] *again'* (Jones and Llamas 2008; Dublin and Middlesbrough English, and Sangster 2001; Liverpool English). The consonantal data for Southport and Ormskirk, however, are elicited from spontaneous speech. To account for differences in speech rate, the long vowels (/ɜ:/ and /ɛ:/, from free speech only) of each speaker were also measured. Port (1976, cited in Eimas and Miller 2013: 49) reports that 'an increase in speech rate reduced the rate of a long vowel ([i]) more than a

short vowel ([ɪ]) so that the absolute difference between the two vowels was reduced at a faster speech rate' (see also Agwuele et al. 2008).

For consistency, the nuclei of two long vowels, /ɜ:/ and /ɛ:/ (approximately 20 vocalic tokens per speaker), were measured from spontaneous speech. For consistency, the vowels were selected from CVC words with a following voiced segment, owing to the effect of voicing of the following segment on the duration of the vowel (Chen, 1970; Lisker, 1978). For each speaker, the average duration of [ts] and [s] was calculated by dividing the duration of each form by the speaker's average vowel length. The forms of /t/ (and /k/, Section 5.3.2) are already normalised in terms of environment (intervocalic), stress (preceding unstressed vowels except for in one instance [V_#**V**]) and syllable (all forms are in syllable coda as a lenition promoting condition, see Honeybone 2001). As the following segment is hypothesised to have an effect (Kirkham 2013, personal communication) consonantal forms have been measured separately according to these contexts (see Figure 5.4).

In the analysis of the production of NURSE and SQUARE, a single measure of the centre of the vowel, rather than a trajectory measure, was analysed using Praat. As both vowels are monophthongs in northern English (see Wells 1982) there was no need to account for an off-glide or any other movement in the vowel. Furthermore, this method is in-keeping with previous and ongoing studies of Merseyside and Lancashire realisations of NURSE and SQUARE, (Clark and Watson 2013, Barras 2006) and therefore forms a direct comparison with these data.

As discussed in Chapter 2, minimal pairs were not used (cf. Hay and Warren 2009, Hall-Lew 2009) in the collection and analysis of the tokens of NURSE/SQUARE, as these forms were collected predominantly from free speech data (see Holmes and Bell 1993). Indeed, few minimal pairs are available between these lexical sets (see Wells 1982, discussed in Chapter 2). Twenty tokens of NURSE and twenty tokens of SQUARE were analysed per speaker. The majority of vowel measurements for the F1 and F2 of NURSE and SQUARE were collected using a Praat script, while approximately 10% were collected by hand due to error (see Hall-Lew 2009). As mentioned earlier, half of the tokens of NURSE and SQUARE were collected from the dialogue task. For this reason, the tokens have been coded for style to account for the potential variation here.

A forced entry mixed-effects logistic regression model (Field et al. 2012) using R.3.0.0 statistical software (R Development Core Team 2009) and the R package lme4 (Bates & Maechler 2009) was used for the statistical analysis for the variants of /t/ and /k/. As Field et al. (2012) explain, the forced entry model is considered to be one of the most appropriate methods for testing factor effects, as, by adding all factors simultaneously, it makes no prior assumptions of the importance of the independent variables. This method of analysis was chosen due to its ability to process the effect of numerous independent variables on the dependent variable simultaneously. A hierarchical model, in which predictors are entered 'in order of importance' (Field et al. 2012: 246), was not used here as it is not clear which, if any, of the independent factors could be considered more important than another. However, they note that in a forced entry model, predictors should be entered for 'good theoretical reasons' (p.264), ideally based on previous research. In view of this the following independent factors were included in the model: linguistic environment, age, gender, location and class, contact, attitude score for offence (accent) and average attitude scores for town and people, as they are all expected to have an effect on the dependent variable (discussed in Chapter 2),

To overcome co-linearity between social class and location (all Ormskirk speakers in the dataset are considered to be middle class), social class and location were collapsed into a single category. As such, speakers were placed into three groups: Southport middle class (reference level in the logistic regression model), Southport working class and Ormskirk middle class. In the statistical analysis of /k/, due to expected variant association with discursive use of *like*, the variable 'discursive' was added as an independent variable. All instances of *like* were coded as 'discursive' or 'non-discursive' according to their usage, with all other words in the dataset coded as 'not applicable'.

Age was not run as continuous as the division of age created clustered age groups (younger and middle-aged) rather than a continuous range of ages. In addition, archive speakers were not included in statistical testing. These speakers have been excluded because of the discrepancies regarding speaker number per cell post-stratification of the dataset by gender and location, and the uncertainty in attributing a social class to the speaker that could be deemed directly relatable to the methods of attributing class to the speakers interviewed for this study. Thus it was believed that their inclusion would have skewed the statistical analysis.

The variants of /t/ and /k/ were run as dependent variables in the model. Each dependent variant was run in comparison with the other dependent variants of the variable. For instance, [s] was run in comparison to [tʰ], [ts] and [ʔ] combined, so that the model highlighted the effect of the independent variables on [s] vs. [other]. This was done with all variants of /t/ and /k/: [tʰ] vs. [other], [ts] vs. [other], [ʔ] vs. [other].[79] After each run of the model, the most insignificant dependent factor was identified and run in interaction with the other independent variables in the model. If the variable did not prove to be significant in interaction with any of the other variables in the model it was removed. This process was repeated, removing the insignificant variables until only variables that achieved significance remained in the model.

To examine the significance of the independent social and linguistic factors on the continuous dependent variables of this investigation, i.e. the duration of affricate and fricative release and the fronting and/or raising of the NURSE vowel and the centralisation of SQUARE, a forced entry mixed-effects linear regression model was used (again using R.3.0.0). The term linear, as opposed to logistic regression, refers to the dependent variables as continuous rather than categorised or binary. In the analysis of the vowels, NURSE and SQUARE were run separately with F1 and F2 as the dependent variants. As with the logistic regression models, all the social and linguistic factors were included in the model from the outset, removing the most insignificant variable at each stage if significance was not achieved in interaction with another independent factor. The strongest multiple regression model outputs for each linguistic variable are included in Chapters 5 and 6 with the results for the consonant and vocalic variables.

In the examination of the vocalic data, the investigation aimed, first, to ascertain whether the vowels were merged or distinct in the speakers of Southport and Ormskirk. Post-normalisation, using Lobanov (Flynn 2011), the F1 and F2 scores were then converted into Pillai Scores (R.3.0.0) to examine the distance between the vowels per speaker (see Hall-Lew 2009, Hay et al. 2006). Hall-Lew categorises her speakers' vowels based on the visual proximity of the LOT and THOUGHT in the vowel plots. Based on the distances between the vowels in the vowel chart, Hall-Lew arbitrarily assigns a Pillai score of between 0.2 and -0.2 for a near merger and

[79] The following was entered into R to produce the logistic regression (in this instance, with the fricative variant as the dependent variable) in R: > model1 <- lmer (fricative ~ Gender + Stress + Age + Contact + Att_Lang + Att_Place + Class + Location + Discursive + (1|Speaker) + (1|Word), family=binomial, data=a). Speaker and word were run as random effects.

a Pillai score between 0.1 and -0.1 for a complete merger. However, with recognition that the categorisation of these Pillai scores is an arbitrary judgement based on the vowel plots, the actual scores will be used in linear statistical analyses. Here, the Pillai Score will be presented with the vowel chart so that a comparison can be made between the indicated Pillai and the visual proximity of the vowel classes to assess the degree of merger/distinction (Chapter 6).

3.5 Summary

The data collection and analytical methods aim to elicit as much ethnographic data as is possible in a broad scale study, given that this investigation has two aims, which are often oppositional in terms of methodology (Dodsworth 2005). The study aims to examine the linguistic spread and direction of change for two towns with a combined population of approximately 120,000 people, while in addition, the study aims to uncover the social and linguistic orientation of these speakers via attitudinal data. The approaches adopted in this study, then, aim to be semi-ethnographic (Hall-Lew 2009) in a macro-paradigmatic investigation. For reasons of time, a perception test was not used in the current investigation. Yet, as Hall-Lew (2009) demonstrates, even without a perception test, orientation and attitude are still accessible through speaker profiling (see Chapter 2). In the light of culturally sensitive questions asked throughout the interview and through the numerous emically sensitive methodologies outlined above, such information has been made available for the purposes of this investigation. The results of these analyses are presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results and discussion I: Contact and Attitude

4 Introduction

This chapter presents individual speakers' contact and attitudes towards the accents, city and people of Liverpool and Preston. The results show that Ormskirk speakers have more frequent contact with Liverpool than Southport speakers. The city of Liverpool and Liverpudlians were perceived well by most speakers; however, the younger Ormskirk speakers rate the city and people the highest and are the most frequent visitors to Liverpool, with most travelling there on a daily basis. Preston was poorly perceived and rarely visited by most speakers; the Southport younger working-class males are the only group to have more contact with Preston than Liverpool.

The majority of the middle-class speakers in Southport and Ormskirk perceive their accent to be quite similar to Scouse. The working-class speakers consider their speech to sound more Lancashire, forming an association with their contact scores. Working-class speakers, equally, are the most offended if their accent is labelled as 'Scouse'; most Southport speakers share this opinion. Conversely, Ormskirk speakers are more positive about being identified as having a Scouse accent and believe their speech to be similar to this variety. This is particularly the case for the younger Ormskirk speakers.

As the results for consonantal variables will show (Chapter 5), despite the high proportion use of [ts], [s], and debuccalisation, no more than 20 miles from Southport and Ormskirk (Chapter 1 and 2), the spirantised and debuccalised forms are not spreading into Southport or Ormskirk speech as expected. Instead, /t/ in these locations appears to be part of a much broader sound change: /t/ → [ʔ]. Ormskirk speaker's positive attitude and frequent contact with Liverpool does not lead to the uptake of Scouse forms of /t/. However, younger working-class Southport speakers' significantly higher use of [ʔ] forms a statistical correlation with their infrequent contact and negative attitudes towards Liverpool and Scouse; this suggests a causal relationship between extra-linguistic factors and linguistic production.

Location proved to be significant with Ormskirk speakers leading in the use of the affricate form, as well as producing a significantly longer fricated /k/ (Chapter 5). Contact and attitude score did not prove to be independently significant, though a number of interactions were

established in the distribution of the affricate form: an interaction between age and contact indicates that younger speakers' more frequent travel to Liverpool is potentially a driving factor in the uptake of [kx]. Attitude was independently significant in the production of /k/ as [ʔ], with a positive attitude towards the Scouse accent forming a negative correlation with the production of [ʔ].

The results for NURSE and SQUARE in Chapter 6 show that the NURSE vowel is gradually becoming more fronted and raised towards the standard SQUARE space, more typical of Scouse speech, in the speech of younger Ormskirk females. However, while gender and contact score proved significant in interaction for the fronting and raising of NURSE, attitude and contact did not prove significant otherwise. The results of the multiple regression models are presented in Chapters 5 and 6 with the results for the production of /t/ and /k/, and NURSE and SQUARE.

4.1 Quantified contact and attitude scores

Each speaker was issued with two attitudinal questionnaires containing Likert scales to obtain quantifiable information. Information about their contact with Liverpool and Preston was obtained in free conversation in the interview and given a score afterwards. These data are not the only source of this information: speaker attitude will be further examined by comparing speakers' scores with the attitudes they expressed towards the accents and cities of Liverpool/Merseyside and Preston/Lancashire during interview (Hall-Lew 2009; 2013). The quantifiable data is employed here as a useful initial step for including attitude and contact into the statistical regression models (Chapters 5 and 6), to assess whether any associations exist between contact, attitude and language.

Contact scores were allocated by asking participants how often they travelled to Liverpool, Preston or elsewhere. Scores were given as follows: daily (5), weekly (4), fortnightly (3), monthly (2), annually (1) or never (0). In addition, participants were asked about their friends, family and networks and a score was allocated to this also: daily contact with close friend(s) from Liverpool and/or Preston: daily (5), weekly (4), fortnightly (3) and so on.[80] All speakers

[80] Middle-aged speakers were asked whether their contact patterns had changed since their childhood and teens. However, only one speaker (Sou_MM02) reported a variation in travel and contact in the local area, as this speaker used to travel monthly to Manchester as a teenager but now travels monthly to Liverpool due to improvements made to the city.

in this dataset went either to Liverpool or Preston; occasionally Southport speakers would go to the farmers market in Ormskirk and Ormskirk speakers to the seaside in Southport. None of the participants went to Manchester (except for speaker Sou_MM02) or other local towns and cities more than once a year.

A similar quantifiable approach was taken in order to elicit attitudinal data. Following the reading task (Chapter 3) speakers were asked to complete an attitudinal questionnaire where speakers were asked to give general opinions of Liverpool and Preston. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very poor, 5 = very good), participants were asked to score Liverpool and Preston based on area (good for shopping, clean, good restaurants, etc.) as well as people (friendly, generous, humorous and so on). This questionnaire formed the basis for discussion in the rest of the interview, with participants asked to discuss their answers, offer further opinions and discuss local politics.

Following this discussion, speakers were asked to complete an attitude questionnaire that explicitly asked for their opinion of their accent, as well as their opinion of Scouse, Lancashire, Standard English and General Northern. Participants were asked, first, how different they felt their accent was from these accents on a scale of 1-5 (1 = very different, 5 = not different) and, second, how offended they would be at being recognised as having any of the above accents (1 = very offended, 5 = not offended). A brief conversation then followed to give the participants the opportunity to discuss their answers - how they would identify their own accent to a stranger to the area, whether they could give it a label, as well as asking whether they thought all speakers in Liverpool spoke ‘Scouse’.

Before this chapter analyses these results, it is necessary to state here that it is recognised that using quantification methods to elicit attitudinal information is problematic, as speakers may, for example, produce more positive attitude scores in the presence of a stranger. In addition, when asking a speaker to rate an accent, the score does not elicit the complex social information that has led the speaker to produce the score. Because of this, a discussion followed the completion of the questionnaires, asking speakers to justify how they rated the cities and people of Liverpool and Preston, and their accents. Following the discussion, speakers were offered the opportunity to amend their original scores, though none of the speakers judged their original

score to be inaccurate. Later, this chapter will show a sample of speakers' justifications of their questionnaire scores and will discuss the relationship between the attitude scores in the following sections and the opinions that were offered in the discussions during the interview.

The data in Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show contact scores for Southport speakers (left) and Ormskirk speakers (right), for younger and middle-aged speakers, respectively. For both younger and middle-aged speakers, an immediate distinction can be seen between Liverpool and Preston, with a clear overall preference for contact with Liverpool. This is perhaps not surprising for Southport given that there is no direct rail link to Preston.

Further to this, of the younger speakers in the dataset, despite the subsidised rail link between Liverpool and Southport, it is those from Ormskirk who have the most frequent contact. Indeed, in Southport, none of the speakers has more than monthly contact with Liverpool or Liverpudlians, while in Ormskirk 5 out of 8 speakers have daily contact.[81] Speakers with a score of more than 5 have regular contact with Liverpool speakers as well as regular travel to the city.

A distinction is also apparent in this age group between classes with the middle-class speakers of Southport and Ormskirk (all of whom are middle class) showing a preference for Liverpool, while the working-class speakers (particularly the males) are the only group who favour Preston. These speakers had all recently learned to ride motorcycles, so the lack of a rail link between Southport and Preston did not constitute a problem, while in the middle-class group only Sou_YM03 was able to drive and owned a car.

Pointing briefly to the attitude data in the following sections, in relation to their contact preferences, it is perhaps not surprising that younger working-class speakers have the more negative attitude score for the Scouse accent and attitude towards Liverpool compared with their middle-class counterparts in both Southport and Ormskirk, due to their infrequent contact with the city.

[81] Pre-data collection, I spoke to a number of local residents in Ormskirk who informed me that they worked and shopped in Liverpool. They said that this was quite typical of Ormskirkians given the limited economy of the town: the main economy is a small number of shops and pubs compared with Southport, located down a single main high street, and the farmer's market.

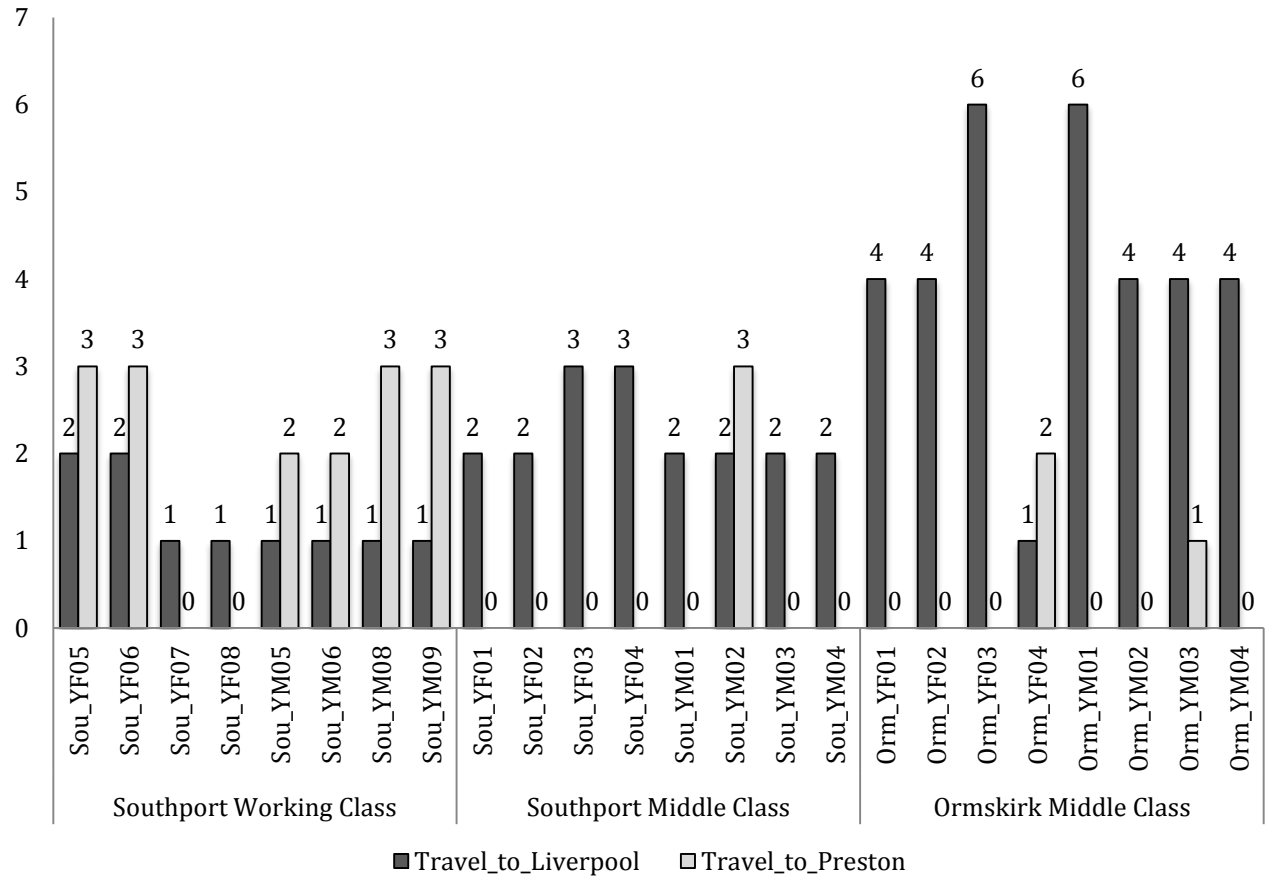


Figure 4.1: Younger individual speakers' contact with Liverpool and Preston

A distinction between socio-economic classes is not evident for the middle-aged data, shown in Figure 4.2. There does appear to be a gender-divide in Southport, with all of the males (excluding Sou_MM11) demonstrating a clear preference for travel to Liverpool. The majority of the females in Southport, on the other hand, showed no preference for either city, with the majority of females preferring to stay in Southport to do shopping and so on. Sou_MF01 and Sou_MF05 are married to Liverpudlians and have family in the city, yet, despite this, as the attitudinal data will demonstrate, their attitude towards the city and the accent is not necessarily positive.

In the Ormskirk dataset, the females show more frequent contact with Liverpool compared with their Southport counterparts. Orm_MF04, again, is married to a Liverpudlian and has family in the city.

Figure 4.2: Middle-aged individual speakers' contact with Liverpool and Preston.

Overall, then, when age groups are compared, the average contact for younger speakers for both locations is higher (average score 4.5) than middle-aged speakers, who averaged 2.5. In the presentation of the accent, and people and place attitudinal data in the following sections, a comparison with contact will be made in order to uncover any associations between contact and speaker attitudes.

Figure 4.3 shows the actual scores in response to the question, 'on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very different, 5 = not different) how different would you say your accent is from…' for young speakers, according to gender, class and location. With regard to using the term 'Scouse' rather than 'Liverpudlian' in the questionnaires, all speakers concede that not all Liverpudlians speak Scouse; Scouse to them indexing a speech associated with working-class Liverpool inhabitants whose discourse would include 'slang' and 'harsh sounds' (Southport speaker MF02).[82] A

[82] During my initial visits to Southport and Ormskirk, prior to data collection, I informally asked several local inhabitants if all Liverpudlians speak Scouse, as well as asking if Merseyside and Liverpool were synonymous terms. This informed my decision to include these questions in my data collection.

Liverpudlian speaker would ‘speak very normal, with only a very slight twang of the Scouse’ (Orm_MF02).

As with the contact data, a distinction is apparent between younger middle-class and working-class speakers, with the majority of the middle-class speakers in Southport and Ormskirk perceiving their accent to be quite similar to Scouse. The working-class speakers, particularly the males, instead show a Lancashire perception forming an association with their contact scores. Indeed, throughout the interview, the younger working-class speakers were quite open about their negativity towards Liverpool due to their support for Manchester United football club.

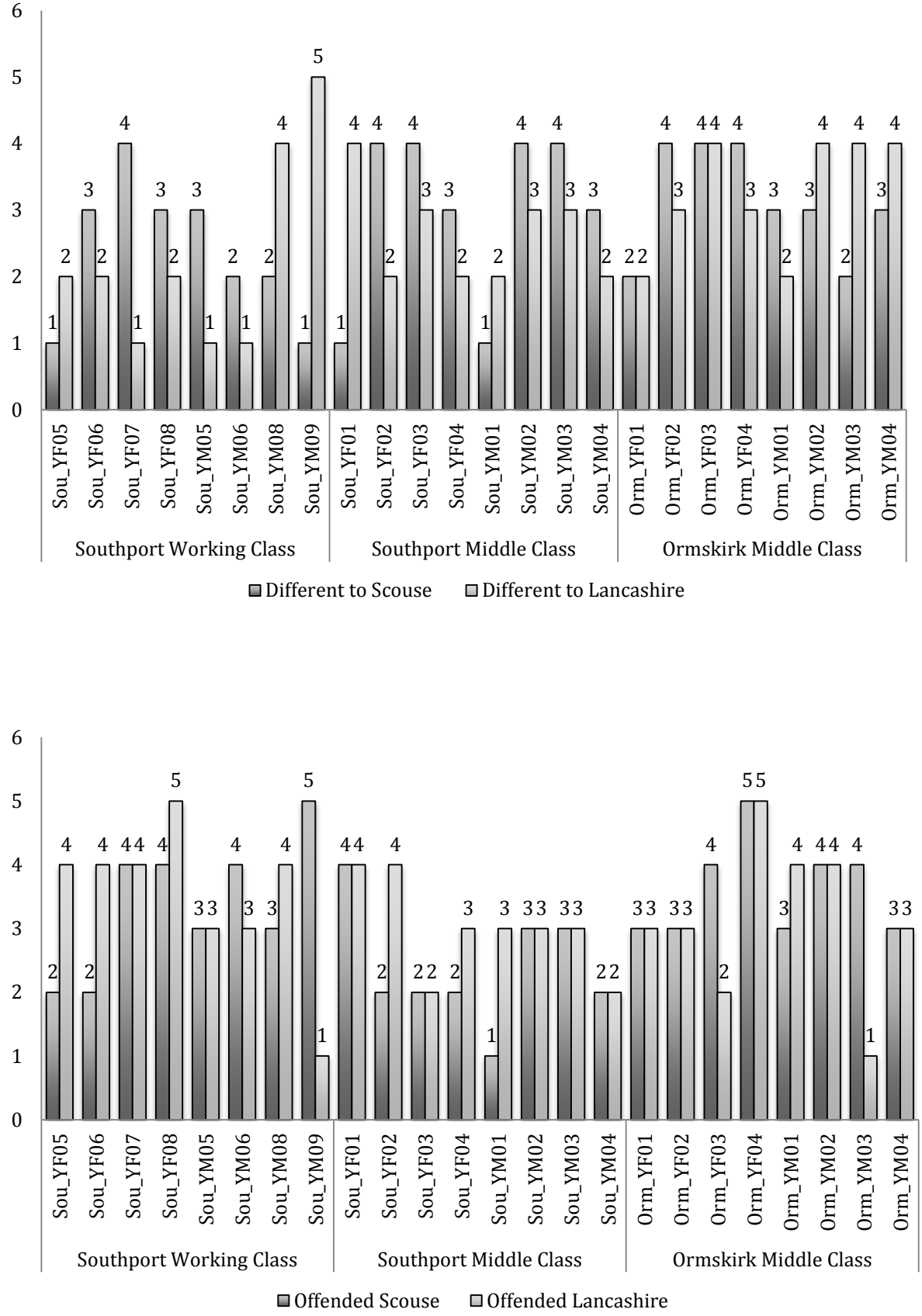


Figure 4.3: Younger individual speakers' attitude towards the Scouse and Lancashire accent (1 = very different, 5 = not different, 1 = very offended, 5 = not offended).

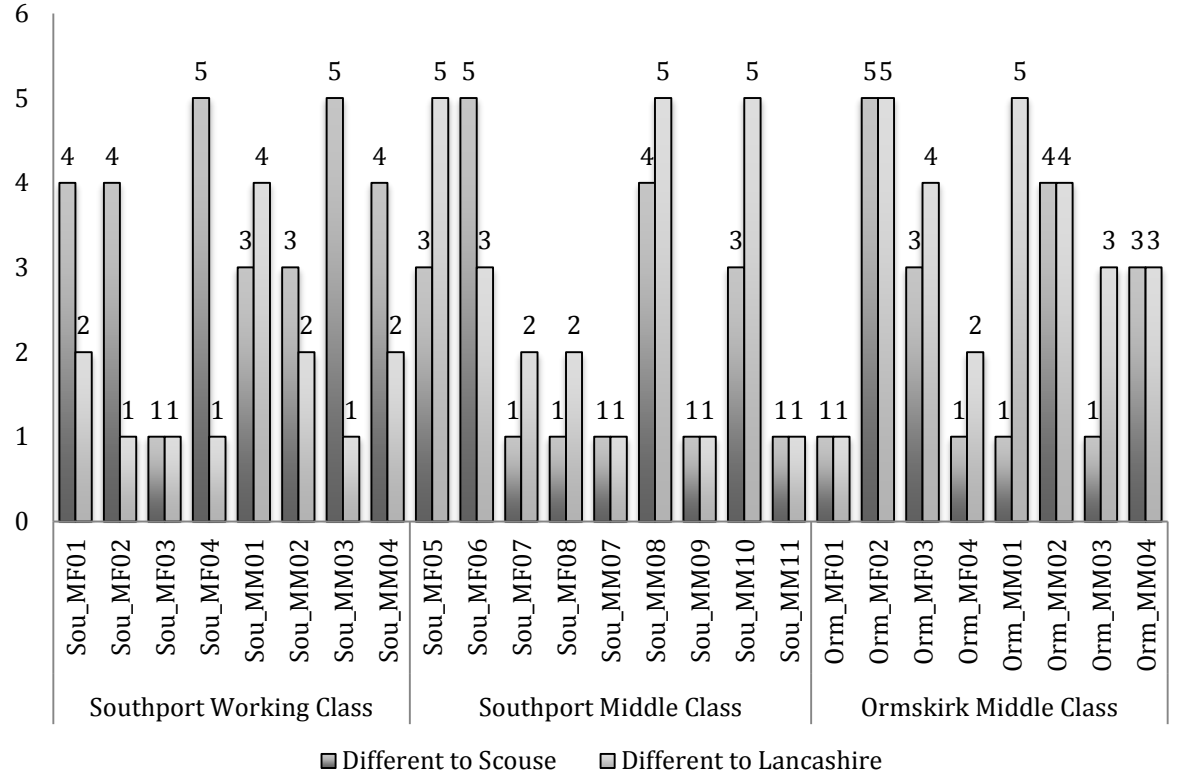
The middle-class Southport speakers appear to pattern very similarly with regard to gender. In Ormskirk, however, a clear distinction can be seen between the males and females, with the majority of the females perceiving their accent to be Scouse-sounding, while the males show a preference for Lancashire.

The middle-aged speakers' responses to accent difference, shown in Figure 4.4, similarly show a distinction between the social classes. However, this is contrary to the patterns with class in the younger dataset, with most of the Southport working-class speakers, here, perceiving their accents as sounding Scouse. The middle-class speakers of Southport and Ormskirk, on the other hand, show a preference for Lancashire.

We now turn from how these speakers perceive their own accents to their responses to how their accents might be perceived by others. Figure 4.4 shows the actual response scores to the question, 'on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very offended, 5 = not at all) how offended would you be if someone thought your accent sounded Scouse and/or Lancashire'. Again, an association can be seen between the scores for contact, perception of accent difference and scores for offence for the Southport working-class speakers, with high offence and difference scores associating with infrequent contact.

Interestingly, a number of the middle-class Southport speakers who responded that they perceive their own accent as sounding Scouse, demonstrate a high degree of offence when this perception is shared by others: Sou_YF02, Sou_YF03, Sou_YM02 and Sou_YM03. The converse, however, is apparent in the Ormskirk speakers, for example, Orm_YM02 and Orm_YM03 who perceive their accent to be somewhat different to Scouse but would not be offended at being identified as having a Scouse accent.

A distinction is also apparent with gender, particularly in Southport where the males perceive their accent to be more different to Scouse.



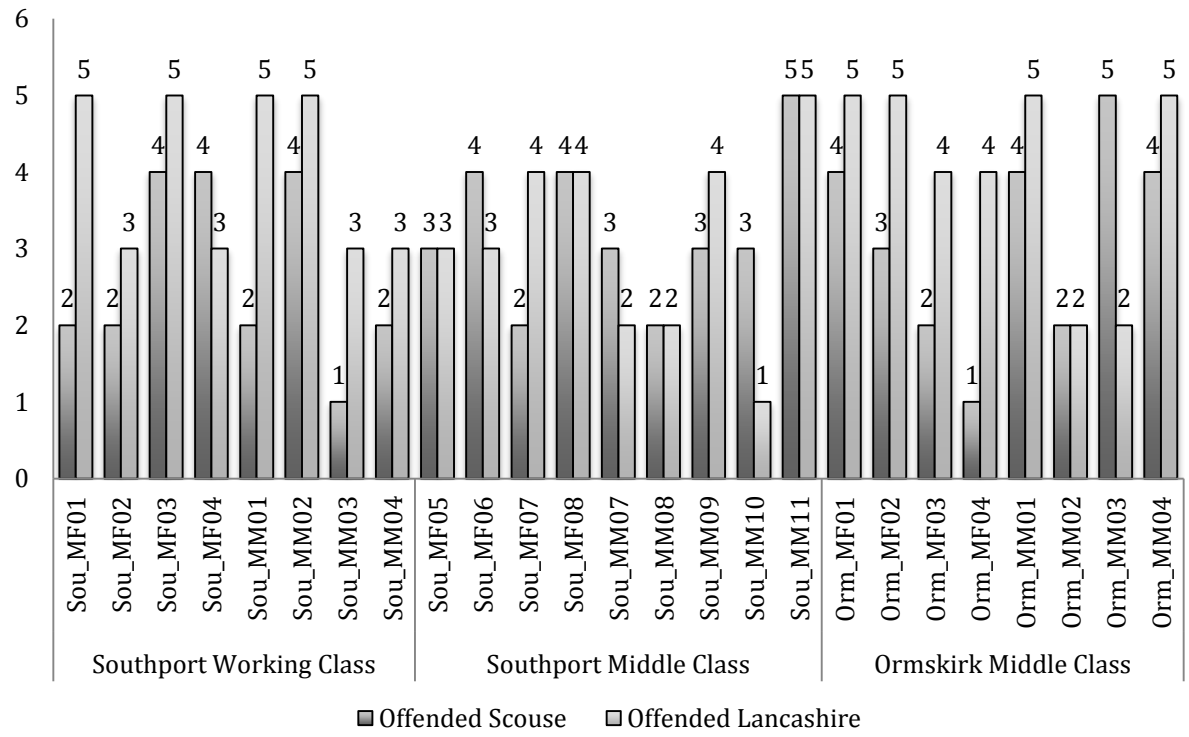


Figure 4.4: Middle-aged individual speakers' attitude towards the Scouse and Lancashire accent (1 = very different, 5 = not different, 1 = very offended, 5 = not offended).

Here a similar pattern for the degree of offence taken at Scouse or Lancashire identification to the younger speakers' responses to this question can be observed: Ormskirk speakers, as before, are more positive about being identified as having a Scouse accent compared with how similar they believe their speech to be to this variety.

Southport speakers, on the other hand, particularly the working-class participants, show the opposite and are more offended at being perceived as Scouse despite their perception of their own accent. In comparison to the younger speakers' attitude, it is clear that while there is no great change in attitude in Ormskirk, which remains relatively positive throughout, in Southport the middle-aged speakers have, overall, a more negative attitude towards the Scouse accent. This negative attitude has appears to have formed an association with contact as the young and middle-aged Ormskirk speakers, who travel to Liverpool most frequently, have the most positive attitude. In alignment with Zajonc's (1978) contact hypothesis, the Southport middle-aged speakers have the least association with Liverpool and display the most negative perception of the accent.

Speakers in both locations were asked during interview to comment on, or do an impression of, a Liverpudlian accent, a Scouse accent and a Lancashire accent.[83] In terms of the Scouse accent, speakers often recognised the frication of /k/. This feature was mentioned by nearly all of the younger speakers in both locations, while Southport speakers MF01 and MF02 were the only middle-aged participants to recognise and comment on this feature. However, during the interview, it became clear that speakers' recognition of this feature did not necessarily demonstrate that these speakers were highly linguistically attuned to the feature they were commenting on. When asked in which words the fricative sound occurs, after the speaker had reported the feature, speakers frequently commented that this happened only in the word *like* (discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5) or, as in the case of Sou_MF01 and Sou_MF02, showed no accurate awareness of where the variant patterned (as shown in quotes 1-3).

Only middle-aged speakers reported the fronting of the NURSE vowel. In addition, the reports of the fronting and raising of the NURSE vowel class were exemplified by speakers in the word

[83] Speakers said that a Liverpool accent only has a slight twang but they associated this with middle-class speakers who did not have the accent features of "Scouse". A discussion of these terms follows in the next section.

girl only. It is therefore unclear, when asked 'what do Scousers sound like?', whether these speakers were deliberately commenting on the vowel or the frequent use of this particular word in Scouse[84] (see Montgomery 2007 for a discussion of lexical salience in Scouse), even though the imitation of this word was always realised with an impressionistically fronted and raised NURSE vowel.

As we can see from the following extracts, the question of salience is by no means straightforward. As discussed in Chapter 2, Watson (2007: 352) describes the lenition of /k/ as a salient 'Scouse' feature 'which forms a major part of its stereotype'. Indeed, in the interview data here, and in accordance with Sibata's (1971) notion of salience as a consequence of linguistic difference between varieties, the presence of [x] in the Scouse accent is recognised by speakers from Southport, whose speech similarly contains this feature but at much lower frequencies (as the data in Chapter 5 will show):

(1) Younger, middle-class males (Southport) responding to the question **'**How do you differ from a Scouse accent?'

1a/ Sou_YM01: I don't go [χ χ χ] at the end of my words!

1b/ Sou_YM02: [laɪx]!

1c/ Sou_YM01: Yeah [laɪx]!

[Interviewer: Does it happen in any other words?]

1d/ Sou_YM02: [[Not that-]]

1e/ Sou_YM01: [[No]]

(2) Younger, working-class males (Southport) responding to the question **'**How do you differ from a Scouse accent?'

2a/ Sou_YM05 I love Lancashire accents!

[Interviewer do you?]

2b/ Sou_YM05 yeah

[84] The use of the word *girl* is frequently used towards a female interlocutor, and is similar to the use of *Sheila* in Australian English.

2c/ Sou_YM06 oh my accent is very [diff-]

2d/ Sou_YM05 [cos I ca-] they're just so funny

2e Sou_YM06 I'd be offe- If I got called a Scouser I'd cry so yeah

2f/ Sou_YM05 [[I'd be]] … same [inaudible]

2g/ Sou_YM06 [[I'd actually]] cry I'm not gonna be referred to them

2h/ Sou_YM05 Lancashire doesn't bother me at all

[Interviewer Can you do an impression of a Scouse accent?]

2i/ Sou_YM05 no I can't - I can't [do accents]

2j/ Sou_YM06 [χ χ χ χ], ahreet lad ahreet lad

(3) Middle-aged, working-class females (Southport) responding to the question **'**How do you differ from a Scouse accent?'

[Interviewer: If you were to think of a Scouse accent, is there any particular feature that you think of, any sound that comes to mind or -]

3a/ Sou_MF02: It's the clearing of the throat sort of [χ], mostly.

3b/ Sou_MF01: yes, yeah and, and what annoys me especially when the footballers – everything's 'youse' and I keep saying to my f- husband, where do they keep all these sheep [...]

[Discussion of negatively perceived lexical features, 'youse' and the frequency of 'erm', 'kids' (to refer to children) and 'you know' as a discourse marker in Scouse – approximately 2 minutes]

[Interviewer: What was the clearing of the throat thing?]

3c/ Sou_MF01: before they start they seem [to] –

3d/ Sou_MF02: [well] it's just, just some of the words and some of the sounds […]

3e/ Sou_MF01: [[they're clearing their throat]]

3f/ Sou_MF02: [[it's either the]] [tʃ] sound or the [k] and its sort of, it is very sort of like a guttural sound that it, that it does sound as though its coming from –

3g/ Sou_MF01: to be rude like you, you've swallowed snot and you're sort of [clear -]

3h/ Sou_MF02: [clearing your throat]!

As Montgomery's (2007: 181) study shows, lexical and prosodic items in particular seem to be the most salient. He states:

> The Scouse area had linguistic characteristics given in the greatest number of categories, with an example of stereotypical lexical/morphological data ("calm down"), prosodic characteristics ("sing song", "high pitched", "accentuation of some words") and a negative paralinguistic characteristic ("nasal").

However, though the interviews revealed some awareness of the frication of /k/, the speakers do not elaborate on precisely where this form is used. As Hall-Lew and Stephens (2012: 263) note in their study of metalinguistic attitudes of Country Talk speakers:

> The high degree of variability across participants may indicate that the country register, however conceived, indexes country identity, rather than any one of its associated variables. This supports Squires's (2010: 470) approach to the enregisterment of Internet language, in which she notes that "it is useful to talk about the enregisterment of a *variety* as partially separate from the enregisterment of the variety's *features*."

Indeed as Niedzielski and Preston (2009: 358) emphasise in their discussion of salience in folk linguistics, measuring linguistic performance in terms of the 'degree of *control* that a respondent possesses' is in itself a variable in research into speaker identity 'and might not be correlated with any other types of awareness'. This highlights numerous problems, particularly with regard to salience as Niedzielski and Preston (2009: 358) point out: '[t]he dichotomy between the conscious and unconscious does not do justice to the levels and types of awareness of the linguistic units that may stimulate responses'.

Also from (3) and indeed from all others who report this form, it is unclear whether it is only the uvular form that is apparent to the speakers' perceptions, or whether the speaker is merely emphasising the sound (see speaker Sou_YM01, Figure 4.5): it may be that the [χ] may remain a uniquely Scouse feature. However, the [x] form, which was the only form present in the dataset (discussed in more depth in Chapter 5), may not be salient to speakers (cf. Watson 2007).

As such, the researcher is faced with a number of difficult questions that are key considerations when assessing the production of the linguistic variables: (a) how does the speaker interpret the feature? (b) is this interpretation the same as the researchers' and/or other speakers' interpretations? (c) how much knowledge or ability does the speaker possess to be able to either adopt or reject this feature competently?

None of the Ormskirk speakers commented on /k/ frication when asked to comment on Scouse speech. The younger Ormskirk speakers, instead, impersonated the speech of Steven Gerrard (the Liverpudlian Liverpool football team captain); particularly with the phrase 'erm, you know' in a high pitched voice (see Montgomery 2007 for a discussion of pitch). This perhaps indicates that these speakers are not aware of any features that are considered more broadly to be associated with Scouse, as these speakers focused on the speech of a particular person rather than imitating a general feature (see Erikson 2010).

The evidence from the Southport interviews, however, indicates, in conjunction with Watson's (2007) belief, that this sound is a recognised feature of Scouse. However, the salience of this feature is still questionable as both interviews show that none of the speakers are necessarily aware of the specific phonological context(s) in which it occurs in 'Scouse', or even which sound it represents, especially as two of the speakers believe the form to coincide with [tʃ]. This, then, calls into question the impact that frequency effects have on salience: (a) is it the frequency of *like*, which is habitually used as a discourse marker in Scouse and Southport, that makes this feature so recognisable with this lexeme? The following section will return to the attitudes that were volunteered during discussion to offer meaning behind these quantified results (see Eckert 2008).

To examine their potential association with linguistic variation, the contact and attitude scores for offence only, as well as the averaged city and people attitude scores (discussed below), have been included in the mixed effects regression models, which will be presented in conjunction with the linguistic data in Chapters 5 and 6. Only the scores concerning Liverpool/Scouse have been included in the models.

The following data presents the average speaker attitude scores relating to the city and people of Liverpool. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very bad, 5 = very good), speakers were asked to rate the cities of Liverpool and Preston on each of the following: shopping, night life, restaurants,

cleanliness and how they would perceive living there. These scores were then combined to form an average per speaker.

Speakers were then asked, on the same scale, to rate the people of Liverpool and Preston based on each of the following: friendliness, generosity, intelligence, wealth and sense of humour. Again, these scores were averaged per speaker. Finally, due to the associations between scores for city and people of Liverpool, each speaker's score has been averaged so that a single score per speaker was included in the regression models.

In line with the accent attitude scores and contact patterns above, the younger middle-class speakers show a positive opinion of the city of Liverpool compared with Preston, particularly the Ormskirk speakers who have the most positive opinion and frequent contact overall. Interestingly, despite the negative attitude of accent and relatively low contact scores, the working-class speakers Sou_YM05 and Sou_YM06, rate the city of Liverpool highly. During the interview, these particular speakers conceded that, though they dislike the Scouse accent and have a negative association due to football affiliation, they like the city for its rock climbing and shopping facilities.

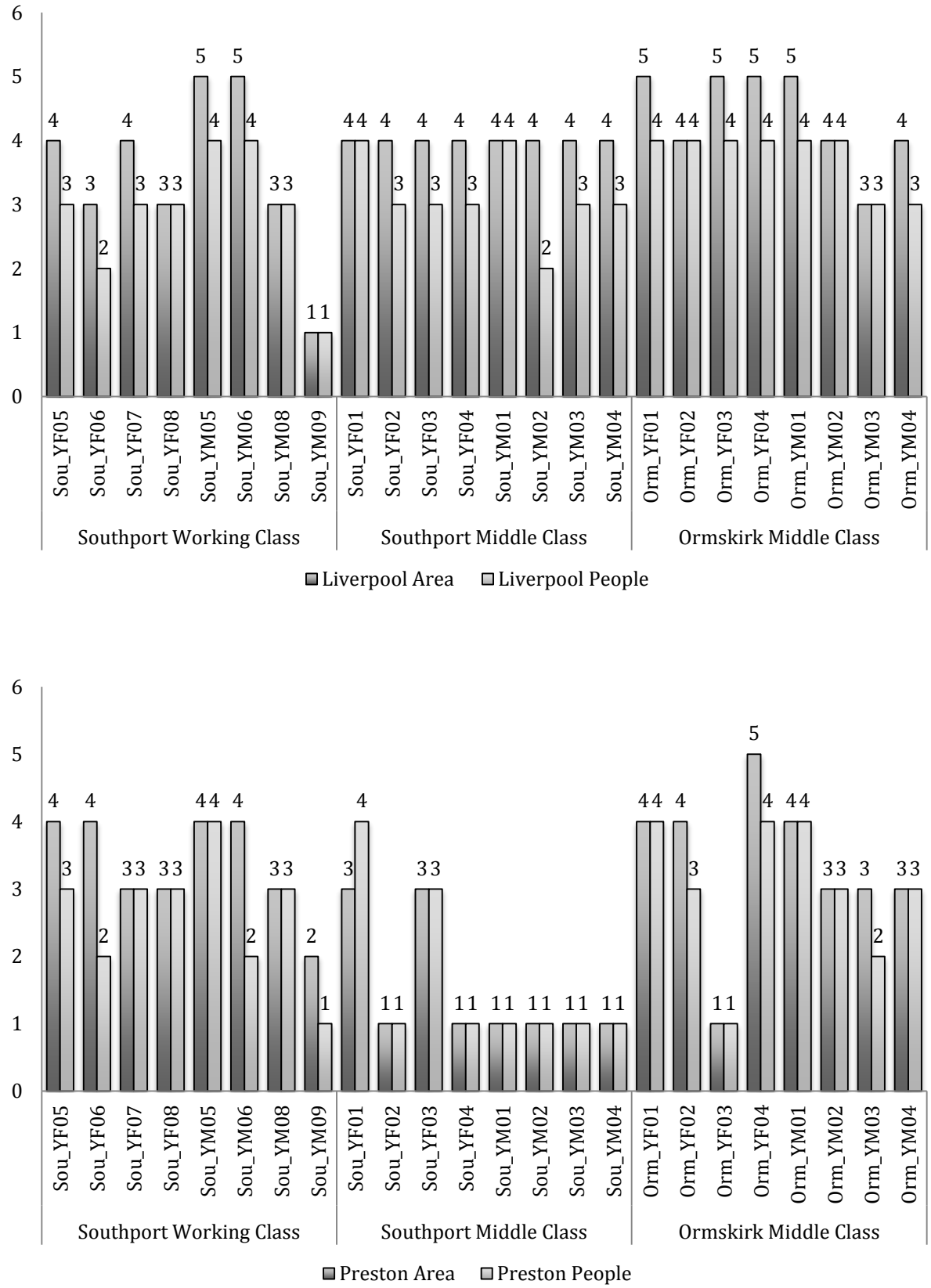
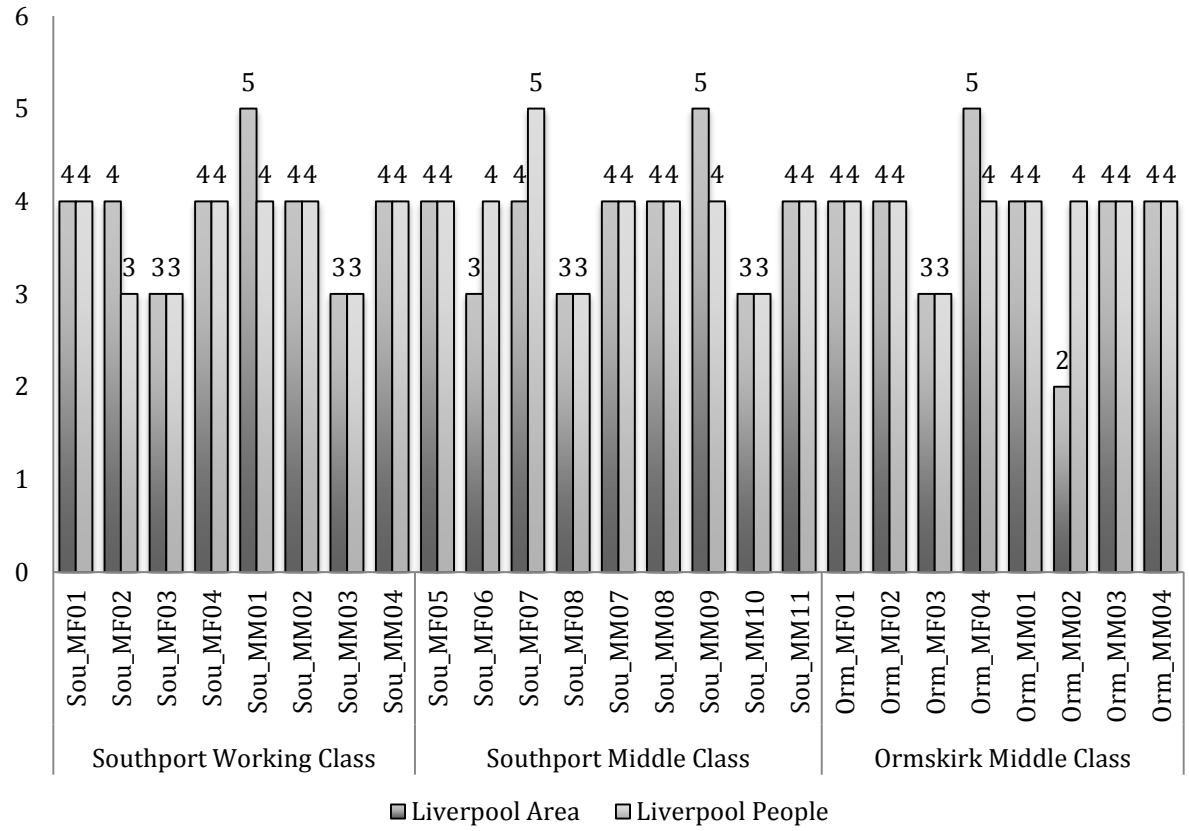


Figure 4.5: Younger individual speakers' attitudes towards the town and people of Liverpool and Preston (1 = very bad, 5 = very good).

Similar to the scores for city, all speakers rate Liverpudlians as on a par with or more positively than Preston people. However, unlike the perception of the city of Liverpool, the Southport participants rate the city of Liverpool slightly higher than the people. Overall, Ormskirk participants have rated the people of Liverpool more positively.

Turning to the responses of the middle-aged speakers, Figure 4.6 below, although the overall average for the city of Liverpool is higher than for Preston, in both Southport and Ormskirk the speakers' scores are lower compared with their younger counterparts' scores. As most speakers display middling opinions, no clear patterns concerning class, gender or location are immediately apparent. However, the middle-class speakers, Southport MM11 and Ormskirk MM02, are the only speakers in the dataset to be more favourable towards the city of Preston compared to Liverpool.



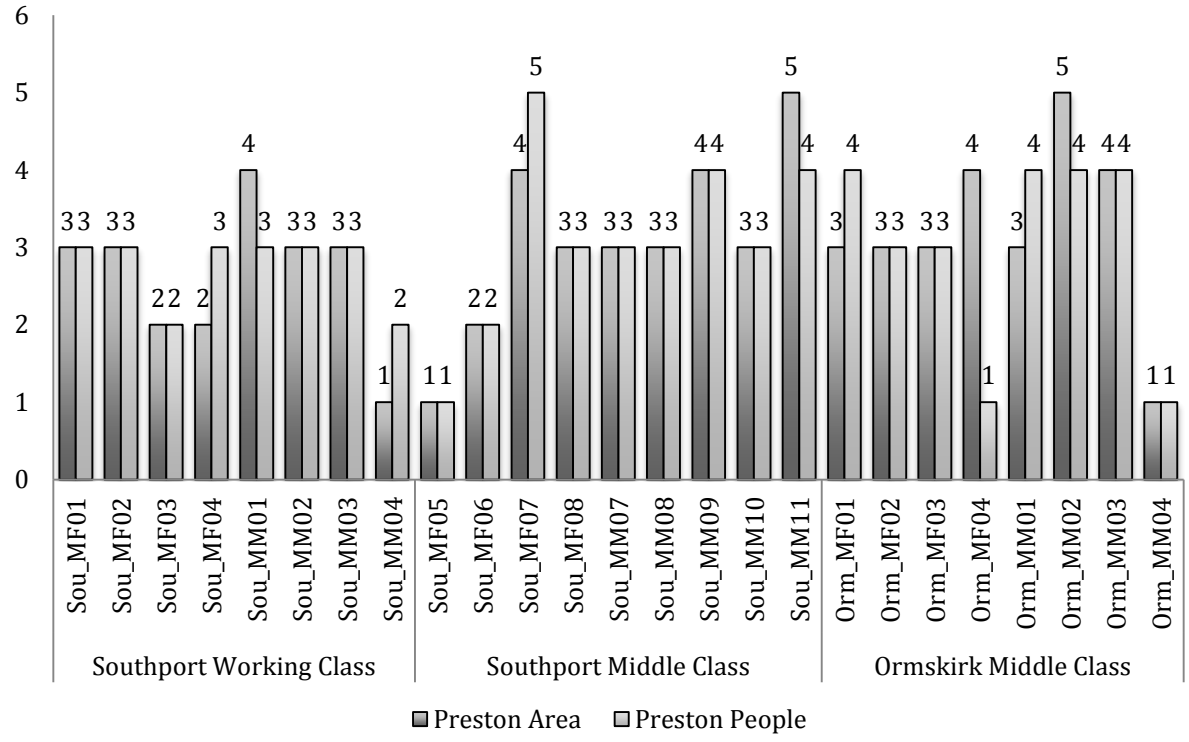


Figure 4.6: Middle-aged individual speakers' attitudes towards the town and people of Liverpool and Preston (1 = very bad, 5 = very good).

Comparing attitude scores towards city to those for people, the middle-aged speakers rate the people of both locations almost on a par with their rating of the city. Once again, for most speakers, Liverpudlians are rated more positively than people from Preston as most speakers opt for a middling or slightly positive score, while Preston is rated by most of the participants as average or negative.

Throughout the interviews, speakers reported Preston to be very run down, difficult to access for shopping and, with regard to the people, some speakers reported racial tensions with ethnic minorities. Moreover, during the interviews, most speakers, both younger and middle-aged, stated that they would be defensive of Liverpool to outsiders, though they would not be defensive of Preston.

4.2 Attitudes expressed during interview

As outlined in Chapter 2, attitudes are considered to be learnt, stored and therefore resistant to change (Hayes 1993). If we are to rely on the data above in the statistical analysis (Chapter 5 and 6) we need to discern how accurately they reflect speakers' attitudes. Indeed, as Hayes (1993: 109) states, while much research on attitude relies on quantifiability under the presumption that the degree or strength of an attitude can be accurately evaluated via quantifiable methods, in actual fact, an exact measurement of attitude is very hard to achieve. In view of this, this section takes a more in-depth look at the attitudes volunteered by the speakers of this study to see whether the scores that were volunteered in the questionnaire are similar to the responses offered during discussion, and bring to light any other opinions of note to this research that surfaced in the discussion part of the interview. The following categories group the most referred to topics volunteered by speakers that concern attitude: **social class**, **the county/border, football teams,** and **language** (see above).

Social class (and behaviour) was often discussed as a marker for differences between county and language. For example, the term Scouse is considered to index a working-class identity (Jane Stuart-Smith, personal communication); most of the middle-aged speakers (excluding speakers Sou_MF01 and F02 – see Figure 4.10) stated that someone from Liverpool can be middle-class but they would not be, then, considered a "Scouser" and therefore they would not necessarily have a 'broad Scouse accent' (Orm_MM04). None of the younger speakers stated

there was a difference between Scouser and Liverpudlian, using the terms Scouser throughout (as exemplified in the following extracts).

In spite of the recognition that the inhabitants of Liverpool are not unanimously of the working class, speakers commented that Liverpool has a predominantly working-class identity due to its industrial history (see Bailey 1973). All of the middle-aged Southport speakers, except the working-class males, commented that there was a lack of affiliation between Southport and Liverpool due to class difference; Southport is considered by these speakers as predominantly middle-class as it's economy is centred on tourism, set in comparison to Liverpool's dockyard working class identity (4) to (7). While the younger Southport speakers did not overtly discuss class difference, as is evident in Figure 4.8, they did refer Liverpool inhabitants with a sense of 'otherness' (see Tajfel 1978).

(4) Younger, working-class female speakers' (Southport) perceptions of Liverpool's social class and identity.

Interviewer	even though you think you sound more Scouse you'd still be offended if somebody called you that?
4a/ Sou_YF06	yeah, because of the bad reputation they have
4b/ Sou_YF05	people associate Scousers with
4c/ Sou_YF06	fights [and]
4d/ Sou_YF05	[yeah] crime
[Interviewer	yeah, okay, so if you had, erm, an image of a Scouse person in your mind, what - what does that person look like?]
4e/ Sou_YF05	in my mind they'd have like a tracksuit on

(5) Middle-aged, working-class female speakers' (Southport): perceptions of Liverpool's social class and identity.

5a/ Sou_MF02	Southport I mean … Liverpool yeah I mean the sort of working-class it would in the past and suppose I even these days it sort of it would be like your dock labourers and, and, and your dockers, which are sort of culturally … in the work they do they're sort of like […] men's men and the sort of the smoke - smoking and the drinking and the [sort of]
5b/ Sou_MF01	[yeah], yeah harder kind of, men yeah
5c/ Sou_MF02	swearing and sort of whatever

5d/ Sou_MF01 its part of [inaudible]

5e/ Sou_MF02 [it's sort of] part or their culture and way of life and the way they worked […] it was a hard, hard life and then not a lot of money whatever so […] so yeah so Southport is […] is different from that cos it hasn't really got […] that

(6) Middle-aged, working-class female speakers' (Southport) perceptions of Liverpool's social class and identity.

[Interviewer so you think Southport is getting more Scouse then?]

6a/ Sou_MF03 mmm definitely yeah, yeah

6b/ Sou_MF03 yep cos this is Southport – they all move here. How many here? Even in this street absolutely […] broad Scouse

6c/ Sou_MF04 it's because really as well with the council houses

(7) Younger, working-class male speakers' (Southport) perceptions of Liverpool's social class and identity.

[Interviewer where do you wana live, ideally?]

7a/ Sou_YM05 anywhere I don't know […] outskirts of Preston. I can see myself living there

[Interviewer yeah?]

7b/ Sou_YM05 in a flat

7c/ Sou_YM05 it's like when we go to college it's like it's mainly full of Liverpool [L- Scousers and people]

7d/ Sou_YM06 [Liverpud-] yeah Liverpool people

[Interviewer yeah]

7e/ Sou_YM05 Liverpudlians

7f/ Sou_YM06 Skem Heads[85]

Only one of the speakers from Ormskirk, however, commented on Liverpool's industrial history. Yet, unlike most of the Southport speakers, this speaker does not refer to a difference/disassociation in social class between Ormskirk and Liverpool but refers to

[85] People from the town of Skelmersdale. Many of the Southport and Ormskirk speakers reported that the inhabitants of this town sounded 'more Scouse than Liverpudlians' (Orm_F01 and Orm_F02).

Liverpool's industrial history through personal experience. As Section 4.1 showed, speaker Orm_MM03 indicated a middling attitude towards Liverpool and Liverpudlians. When asked overtly about accent, this speaker again gave a positive score when asked if he would be offended if identified as Scouse, though he rates his accent as very different to the variety.

During the interview, however, this speaker talked at length about his work as an engineer, stating he was frequently contracted to work on the Liverpool docks in the 1970's. This speaker expressed a pride in the industry he was involved in describing that it enabled him to meet lots of people and travel. He stated that he had a strong work ethic, enjoying working outside and for long hours. He also stated frequently that he proudly considered himself to be 'able to get on with everyone and anyone'. Despite this speaker's contact with Scouse, however, Orm_MM03 talked at length about being called the outsider or a 'woollyback'. Although this speaker reports that he considered his Liverpudlian colleagues as friends, he stated frequently that his distinct Lancashire sounding accent was frequently commented on. (8) presents this divergence from his colleagues/friends speech is perhaps due to a covert desire to remain distinct from his Liverpudlian colleagues, who he deemed as 'troublemakers' and presented a challenge to his strong work ethic. This dissonance of attitude between friendship and his work ethic could explain this speaker's middling questionnaire scores (see Hogg and Smith 2007).

(8) Middle-aged, middle-class males (Ormskirk)

8a/ Orm_MM03	in sixties really Liverpool it [went]
8b/ Orm_MM02	[yeah], yeah it was a [bit]
8c/ Orm_MM03	[the] docks declined you see […] really they struck theirselves out of existence […] too many strikes and that you know. We didn't agree with it but we had to go along with it y'see cos we were in the union, that's how it was then. Tarmac construction said 'we'll never take another job in Liverpool' afterwards […] [[and John Edwards]] …
8d/ Orm_MM02	[[did they, yeah?]]
8e/ Orm_MM03	they said we will not take another job in Liverpool after all this militancy as gone on here, that's right!
[Interviewer	what would happen if you did speak out against the union?]
8e/ Orm_MM03	well they didn't like you […] they['d] black [inaudible] you!

While there is some disagreement between younger and middle-aged speakers as to whether 'Liverpudlian' and 'Scouse' are synonymous, the term 'Merseyside' was never considered synonymous with Scouse or Liverpool. All speakers stated that Merseyside was a broader identity, which Liverpool was one part of. However, speakers recognised that those from outside of the local area may consider, for example, Merseyside to be synonymous with Scouse. For this reason, the majority of Southport speakers rejected a Merseyside identity (see quotes 9-12). As expressed above, speakers drew on numerous factors that separate them from Liverpool (perceived differences in social class, behaviour, and speech).

Although hypothesised that the younger speakers would not be as aware of the border change as the middle-aged speakers (see Beal 2010), only one speaker, younger working-class female Sou_YF07, overtly considered herself to be from Merseyside (9). All other speakers stated that they had a Preston postcode, and some of the younger working-class speakers expressed a desire to live in the city of Preston (7). Speaker Sou_YF08 was the only speaker not to mention the history of the border shift, discuss postcode or overtly mention whether she had a considered herself part of Merseyside of Lancashire (perhaps due to Sou_YF07's having already answered this question). This speaker's response is typical of younger speaker's perception of their identity; while they consider that they may sound "Scouse" they would be offended if labelled as such (see 1-3, Section 4.1). Despite this dissonance between their perception of speech and their identity, it is the lack of affiliation with Scouse, Liverpool and in most cases Merseyside that is the stronger attitude (see Hogg and Smith 2007). For this reason, the offense score, rather than how speakers scored their perception of accent, was entered into the regression model.

(9) Younger, working-class female speakers' (Southport) perceptions of the county and border.

[Interviewer so what about county though - would you say that you're from Merseyside or would you say Lancashire?]

9a/ Sou_YF08 erm

9b/ Sou_YF07 Merseyside!

[This discussion was recorded while the speakers were completing the accent questionnaire (see Chapter 3), responding to the question how of similar they considered their accent to be to other varieties.]

9c/ Sou_YF08 Oh God I don't know, I refer to me as […] dunno, I don't know if

mine is or not, Oh God I'm stupid […] I'll just put yes *(to Scouse)* […] Oh no, that's wrong cos my mum's from Lancashire so

[Interviewer oh]

9d/ Sou_YF08 I'll put general Northern […] right I know it sounds stupid but I'd actually be offended if someone referred to me as Scouse!

(10) Middle-aged, middle-class speakers' (Southport) perceptions of the county and border.

[Interviewer Erm, has Southport changed since it's become part of Merseyside?]

10a/ Sou_MF07 Yes!

10b/ Sou_MM08 Most definitely

10c/ Sou_MM10 and for the worst for the most part

10e/ Sou_MF07 Bring us back to Lancashire

10f/ Sou_MM09 Roads are terrible

10g/ Sou_MM10 We get no services whatsoever the money all goes, Sefton's money all goes to Bootle

10h/ Sou_MM08 yeah we're a cash cow for Bootle yeah

10i/ Sou_MM10 yeah we're just … a many … a way of making money for them

(11) Middle-aged, working-class female speakers' (Southport) perceptions of the county and border.

11a/ Sou_MF02 I suppose the higher you go up in Lancashire you'll have Lancashire hotpot and there are tonnes of variations and that - and Scouse was something that was, sort of, specifically comes from Liverpool cos it's just […]

11b/ Sou_MF01 yeah

[Interviewer yeah]

11c/ Sou_MF01 its just leftovers

11d/ Sou_MF02 you chuck everything in a pan and its leftovers left over from last night –

[Interviewer but they're not related they're [not]]

11e/ Sou_MF01 [no] – no cos my husband says, cos

	he's a Scouser, right, our hotpot is different to Scouse[86]
[Interviewer	oh]
11f/ Sou_MF01	cos that's we do we have hotpot, cos we're more Lancashire

(12) Younger, middle-class female speakers' (Southport) perceptions of the county and border.

[Interviewer	yeah cos some people like ... say would still to this day say right I'm from Lancashire [would would you]]
12a/ Sou_YF04	[yeah my parents]
[Interviewer	your parents do?]
12b/ Sou_YF04	yeah, my dad's like that [...] we won't accept it's Merseyside

The majority of the Southport middle-aged speakers expressed an overtly negative opinion towards being part of Merseyside. These negative opinions were expressed with a great deal of consensus that Southport had gone into decline since their inclusion in Merseyside. People commented on the rejuvenation of Liverpool city centre, stating that it was paid for with Southport money. All of the middle-aged speakers commented that the attractions in Southport, such as the botanic gardens and museums, were closing and the majority of the younger speakers stated that the Olympic size swimming pool did not get built to full size as the money afforded for this was instead used in Liverpool. In addition, other speakers commented that due to the Mersey rail link that connects Southport with Liverpool city centre, 'Scousers instead come here because it is not as well policed as Liverpool' (Sou_MM08), stating that Liverpudlians cause fights and have made Southport unsafe at night.[87]

On the other hand, Ormskirk speakers, were for the most part, much more positive about their Liverpudlian neighbours. A number of the younger speakers openly referred to themselves as Scouse, though admittedly this was often because they did not feel they had an alternative title (see quotes 13-15). Most of the Southport speakers, however, would use the term

[86] Speaker Sou_MF01 was one of the few middle-aged speakers to treat Liverpudlian and Scouse as synonymous. Though she stated frequently in interview that her husband does not have a 'broad accent', she referred to him as Scouse.

[87] This was reported by Southport speakers YM01, YM02, YF01, YF02, MM07, MM08, MM09, MM10 and MF07.

'Sandgrounder'[88] and even preferred 'Woollyback': a negative term used by Liverpudlians for those who live in the suburban or nearby towns outside of the city, rather than Scouse. In addition, some Ormskirk speakers, when asked what they would think if the Merseyside border were to be shifted north to include Ormskirk, welcomed the idea so that they might enjoy cheaper travel to the city. In addition, the majority of Ormskirk speakers commented that the 'L' in their postcode is for Liverpool, despite Ormskirk being a Lancashire town, when asked of their association with Lancashire or Liverpool. The difference in affiliation between Ormskirk and Southport will be discussed in more depth in Section 4.3 in reference to speaker spatiality (Britain 2004).

(13) Younger middle-class male (Ormskirk): Ormskirk speakers' expression of affiliation

[Interviewer erm, this sort of brought round another question if someone was to call you Scouse, what would you say? Would you be […]]

13a/ Orm_YM02 I'd say yes cos I'm from Li- well from near Liverpool […] I wouldn't know what else they'd call me!

(14) Younger middle-class male (Ormskirk): Ormskirk speakers' expression of affiliation

[Interviewer so you would you would choose to go to Liverpool rather than Preston?]

14a/ Orm_YM01 yeah! Well also the fact that, well it's not […] well it's near it is about the same distance but - the transport links are different like […] the trains only come like about every hour and a half from Ormskirk.

(15) Middle-aged, middle-class females (Ormskirk): Ormskirk speakers' expression of affiliation

[Interviewer so, erm, so you said that once Ormskirk was part- was planned to be partnered with Chorley then?]

15a/ Orm_MF01 it wasn't planned it was proposals that were being put forward erm

[Interviewer Okay [...] so what if it went with Chorley would that be as objectionable or?]

[88] The Southport speakers of this investigation all reported that this was a term used by Liverpudlians towards people who live in Southport due to the town being situated on sand dunes. They stated that though they think Liverpudlians use this term negatively it has been *reindexicalised* (Johnstone 2008) by the Southport inhabitants as a positive term for themselves, which they can use as 'not Scouse'.

15b/ Orm_MF02 oh [...] Chorley what would we want to go with Chorley for?

15c/ Orm_MF01 yeah exactly yeah

[Interviewer so if you had a choice between Merseyside and Chorley what would you choose?]

15d/ Orm_MF01 I'd go for Merseyside myself

15e/ Orm_MF02 It'd be simpler […] I don't know what our connection would be with Chorley

15e/ Orm_MF01 then we could have cheaper rail fare like Southport

Section 4.1 demonstrated that, like most of the younger Ormskirk participants, speaker Orm_M01 travels frequently to Liverpool. Attitudinally, this speaker perceives his accent to be quite different to Scouse, although he would not be offended if identified as such. This speaker's opinion of the city is equally as positive. As an avid Liverpool FC supporter, similar to Orm_M02, both speakers frequently travel to football matches as season ticket holders. Equally, Orm_M02 demonstrates positive attitudes towards Scouse and Liverpool, (Figure 4.11). Speakers Orm_YM03 and Orm_YM04, and the younger females expressed some interest in either Liverpool FC or Everton FC (another Liverpool based team); however, they did not attend matches as frequently as Orm_M01 and M02. None of the middle-aged Ormskirk speakers expressed an interest in sport.

As Section 4.1 demonstrates, unlike speaker Sou_MM09, speaker Sou_MM08 does not harbour a negative opinion towards the Scouse accent. In addition, both speakers demonstrated positive attitude scores towards the city itself. In interview, both speakers revealed that they were ardent Liverpool FC fans (discussion 16). Five of the middle-aged Southport speakers expressed an affiliation to a Liverpool based football team (either Liverpool FC or Everton FC); the rest of the middle-aged speakers expressed no interest in football or any other sport. Of the younger Southport speakers, only two of the middle-class speakers (Sou_YM04 and Sou_YF03) said that they were not interested in sports, while the rest of this social group supported either Liverpool or Everton.

The younger working-class Southport speakers, however, all supported Manchester United (excluding Sou_YF06), which causes a rift between themselves and Liverpool. As shown in Figure 4.3, younger working-class Southport speakers indicate annual contact with Liverpool

(tending to travel to Preston instead), though some positivity towards the city of Liverpool. During the interview, speakers Sou_YM05 and Sou_YM06's negative opinion towards the Scouse accent and positive attitude towards Lancashire were frequently and overtly stated. In addition, when asked about their orientation, they stated that they visited Liverpool once or twice a year to go rock climbing but tended to avoid the city due to football rivalry. Furthermore, as keen motorcyclists, they reported that they preferred to travel to Preston because of the dual carriageways that lead into the city.

(*16) Middle-aged, middle-class speakers' (Southport) football club affiliations*

16a/ Sou_MM09 there's only one football team

[Interviewer is that right? What, Manchester United?]

16b/ Sou_MM08 What!?

16c/ Sou_MM10 you're not your father in-laws team are you [inaudible]?

16d/ Sou_MM09 oh no they're scum […] that's another word for you!

16e/ Sou_MM08 they're Mancs!

16f/ Sou_MM09 don't mention that word!

[Interviewer so you're […]]

16g/ Sou_MM09 Liverpool!

[Interviewer of course!]

(17) Younger, working-class speakers' (Southport) football club affiliations

[Interviewer would you say the main - that the main rival for Man U(nited) is Liverpool?]

17a/ Sou_YF06 yes, because everyone likes united and Liverpool fans - when it comes to match days we absolutely despise each other because of the amount of history we've both got in terms of teams

17b/ Sou_YM06 there's a lad in my college course call Ash, he is … slap his … slam his head that's all I gotta say

[Interviewer why?]

17c/ Sou_YM06 he's just so arrogant he's just annoying I swear I was gonna hit (h)im with a hammer, at him today, just gonna fucking […]

17d/ Sou_YF06 chill gotta calm down

[Interviewer is he Liverpool fan?]

17e/ Sou_YM06 he actually is, which is the annoying thing

[Interviewer is it is it cos he's a Liverpool fan that you don't like him or?]

17f/ Sou_YM06 he's just a Scouser

17g/ Sou_YF06 don't skit Scousers, I'm a Scouser!

Unlike most of the younger working-class speakers, speaker Sou_YF06 perceives her accent to sound similar to Scouse (see Section 4.1). During the interview, as shown in Figure 4.12, she defends Scousers when speaker Sou_YM06 speaks negatively about a Liverpudlian classmate, even attributing the title of Scouse to herself. Indeed, during the interview, speaker Sou_YF06 stated that though she did not get along with her relatives, many of her family members were born in Liverpool though grew up in Southport. She stated, therefore, that her family members, and therefore herself, were Scousers. However, speaker Sou_YF06's defensiveness of Liverpool, and self-identity as a Scouser, is only revealed following speaker Sou_YM06's direct negative outburst towards a classmate who is from Liverpool. When speaker F06 was interviewed with speaker Sou_YF05, however, speaker Sou_YF06 was more inclined to agree to the negative perceptions stated by the group towards Liverpudlians, suggesting a dissonance between this speakers affiliation with her social group who reject markers of a Liverpool identity, and her self-identification as Scouse.

4.3 Chapter Summary

The data suggests that most Southport speakers harbour negative attitudes towards Scouse and/or Liverpool. In addition, speakers contact scores tell us that they rarely visit Liverpool, and/or in the case of the younger speakers stated that they did not have any Scouse friends. Ormskirk speakers display overall more positive attitudes and more frequent contact with Liverpool. The inclusion of contact and attitude scores in the regression models in the following chapters are essential to the aims of the project in its examination of the interplay of extra-linguistic factors (contact and attitude) and their effect on linguistic variation and change. This study relies on these scores to be accurate and constant representations of speakers' attitudes. As Hogg and Smith (2007: 93) state:

> …[o]ur attitudes are rarely idiosyncratic. More often than not our attitudes are grounded in the groups we belong to and they serve to define and proclaim who we are in terms of our relationships to others who are members of the same or different groups as ourselves.

However, some speakers did show evidence of dissonance – a conflict between associating and disassociating with a Scouse and/or a Merseyside identity (Speaker Orm_MM03 and Sou_YF06). As Hogg and Smith (2007) explain, when dissonance is apparent, this can lead to some form of attitude change or one attitude taking precedence over the other. While other speakers resolved the conflict by opting for the latter, as shown by Southport speaker YF08 (Figure 4.10), Speakers Orm_MM03 and Sou_YF06 who showed evidence of such a conflict gave a middling attitude score in the quantifiable data. For these two speakers then, the dissonance is perhaps unresolved. However, in speaker Sou_YF06's case the social context of the interview or her group affiliation could be the major cause, since, as Hayes (1993: 84) states 'social attraction is short term, strongly influenced by membership of social groups'. In view of this, Sou_YF06 would perhaps be clearer about her affiliation outside of the parameters of her social group. For most of the speakers in this study, however, the opinions that they shared during interview reflected the attitude scores indicated on their questionnaires. While there is some conflict with speakers self perception of their accent (most younger Southport speakers considering that they *may* sound Scouse) the same speakers stated that they would be offended if labelled as such.

Southport speakers' hostility towards Liverpool mirrors the attitudes expressed by Middlesbrough speakers in Llamas's (2007) study; younger Middlesbrough speakers in particular perceive a local identity, separate to Newcastle. However, the change in administrative county in the North East created the borough of Middlesbrough that is *separate* from Yorkshire and, though perceived to be North Eastern, is *separate* from Newcastle. The creation of Merseyside, on the other hand, *grouped* Southport with Liverpool, yet "Sandgrounders" perceive that they have their own local identity that is separate from Liverpool. Moreover, in Middlesbrough, Llamas finds that older speakers refer to their identity as Yorkshire, while younger speakers born after the administrative change self-identify as Middlesbrough, reflecting the administrative change (Beal 2010). In Southport, however, the majority of middle-aged speakers (who were born prior to the change in administrative county) and younger speakers (excluding those mentioned in this chapter) identified with both

Lancashire as well as the more localised identity of "Sandgrounder". It is suggested that this localised identity may have been fortified due to Southport's political, as well as perceptive, grouping with Liverpool. Younger and middle-aged speakers' association with *both* the localised term of "Sandgrounder" and an affiliation with the county of Lancashire further emphasises the perceptual boundary, and the pressure to disassociate with a Liverpool identity.

Indeed, we see considerable differences in affiliation and contact depending on the speaker's location. Ormskirk younger speakers have the most contact with Liverpool. In accordance with Zajonc's (1968) *contact hypothesis*, it is perhaps due to this regular contact that these speakers express the most positive attitudes towards Liverpool and Scouse, so much as adopting the term Scouse in self-reference. The majority of the middle-aged Ormskirk speakers similarly express positive attitudes towards Liverpool, yet this is in spite of contact as these speakers visit the city monthly at most. Ormskirk speaker's positive attitude and expressions of affiliation with Liverpool (i.e. in terms of postcode and football team and so on) suggests that, despite being on the Lancashire side of the border, Ormskirk speakers physical and social landscape, as described by Britain's (2004) theory of spatiality, includes Liverpool.

On the other hand, while located in Merseyside, we have evidence of a perceptual boundary for most Southport speakers between Southport and Liverpool; Southport speakers demonstrate, for the most part, infrequent contact with the city of Liverpool and negative attitudes towards the city and accent. As the interview analysis shows, this disassociation with Liverpool is marked by a perceived difference in social class, a Preston/Lancashire postcode and, for the younger working-class speakers an affiliation with Manchester United football club.

In the light of this, the following chapters that present the social distribution for /t/, /k/ and NURSE~SQUARE will now examine whether a correlation is evident between linguistic output and speaker affiliation (or lack of) to Liverpool.

CHAPTER FIVE

Results and discussion II: Lenition of /t/ and /k/

5 Introduction

This chapter shows the results for /t/ and /k/, which variants are present in speakers' speech and how frequently they are used. For fricated forms, the length of frication is also measured in milliseconds. The results show that glottal stop is dominating younger speakers; age proved to be the most significant factor with a 30% increase in the glottal variant with each generation in both locations. Ormskirk speakers' positive attitude and frequent contact with Liverpool (Chapter 4) has no effect on the uptake of Scouse forms of /t/*;* neither contact nor attitude was independently significant. However, age and class did prove significant in interaction in the production of [ʔ] with younger working-class Southport speakers preferring this form; this group has the most infrequent contact and most negative attitudes towards Liverpool and Scouse. The duration of the release of /t/ is significantly longer in word-final, pre-pausal position in Ormskirk compared with Southport speech, yet with such a low frequency of fricated forms, this result is very much secondary.

The results for /k/ show very little change over time with most speakers showing at least 30% use of [kx] and [x]. Location proved to be significant with Ormskirk speakers leading in the use of the affricate form, as well as producing a significantly longer fricated /k/. However, a significant change over time was apparent with increasing use of [ʔ/Ø]. Attitude proved independently significant in the regression model, with a positive attitude towards the Scouse accent correlating with a rejection of /k/ to [ʔ]. Contact and attitude score did not prove to be independently significant for other forms, though a number of interactions were established in the distribution of the affricate form: an interaction between age and contact indicates that younger speakers' more frequent travel to Liverpool is perhaps a driving factor in the uptake of [kx]. Only gender was significant for [x] with males using this form more frequently than females. All generations across both locations have a similar frequency of [x]. Interestingly, an interaction was produced between attitude towards Scouse and location, with negative opinions of the Scouse accent in Southport correlating with a relatively low production of the fricative form. An interaction was also revealed between contact and age; however, the result here unexpectedly pointed to a lower frequency of [x] in the speech of younger speakers' who have more frequent contact with Liverpool.

This chapter begins with the results for /t/, before turning to the realisation and distribution of the variants of /k/. Unlike /t/, it will be made clear that there is a considerable frequency of [kx] and [x] in Southport and Ormskirk speech. However, here we will also note that, despite the proportion of fricated forms of /k/, [ʔ] appears almost categorically with the item *like* when used as a discourse marker.

Statistical analyses were performed using a mixed-effects logistic regression model (using the statistical software R). In each model, the dependent variant was compared to the combination of the other variants: for example, glottal stop was compared to the combination of the other variants, [tʰ], [ts] and [s] (combined as 'other') to create a binary analysis. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 3, all speakers except the archive/older generations from each location are included in the model. All social (including contact and attitude) and linguistic factors were included in the model (see Chapter 3, for full discussion of statistical analytical methods).[89]

The results of speaker contact patterns and attitude have also been included into the statistical analysis here. The inclusion of these factors in the regression models is to ascertain whether they have any significant effects on linguistic variation. As detailed in Chapters 3 and 4, participants were asked about their travel patterns to Liverpool on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, as well as their friendships and networks around the local region. From this, a score was given to each speaker (see Chapter 4).

Similarly, participants were asked to indicate their opinion of the Scouse accent by stating on a scale of 1-5 how different they felt their accent was from Scouse and how offended they would be at being identified as having a Scouse accent. Only the speaker's score for offence was included in the model. A score of 1 indicates that the speaker is highly offended at being perceived as having a Scouse accent, a score of 5 indicates the opposite. Attitude scores, which elicited speakers' perception of the city (cleanliness, shopping etc.) and people (humorous, generous) of Liverpool were also entered into the model, 1 representative of very positive attitudes, 5 very negative (see Chapter 3, the scores for the people and city of Liverpool have been inverted in Chapter 4).

[89] Full list of factors in regression model: gender, age, class and location (Southport Middle Class vs. Southport Working Class and Ormskirk Middle Class), contact, attitude (language), attitude (Liverpool and Preston people and place) and linguistic environment with word and speaker ran as random effects.

5.1 Social distribution of /t/ → [s]

The lenition of /t/ to affricate and fricative forms occurs most frequently in Scouse in intervocalic and word-final positions. However, some of the variants discussed in this chapter are also specific to certain phonological environments, as well as being lexically specific (Honeybone 2001, Watson 2007). Debuccalisation, for example, despite more recent expansions of its domain to polysyllabic words in the speech of working-class Liverpudlians (Honeybone 2007), is primarily restricted to monosyllabic function words in word-final, pre-pausal position. In view of this, the analysis of the consonants is subdivided. First, /t/ → [s] is analysed in terms of the frequency of occurrence in speech of [ʔ], [tʰ], [ts] and [s] followed by an analysis of the duration of the release (see Sangster 2001, Jones and Llamas 2008). A separate analysis of debuccalised /t/ will follow due to this form's environmental and lexical restrictions.

In view of the high use of lenition in specific environments in Scouse (Chapter 2), the analysis of /t/ → [s] addresses whether these forms have spread to the neighbouring towns of Southport and Ormskirk in the intervocalic environments where lenition is found: [V_v] and [V_#v] as well as in the word-final, pre-pausal position [V_##].[90]

Figure 5.1 shows the social stratification of these variants in Southport speech by social class, age and gender. Figure 5.2 then compares this distribution to the production of /t/ forms in Ormskirk speech though with the Southport working-class speakers excluded, as the data set of the Ormskirk participants is exclusively middle-class.

[90] These environments are compared with [V_#V], where the following vowel is stressed in the statistical regression model.

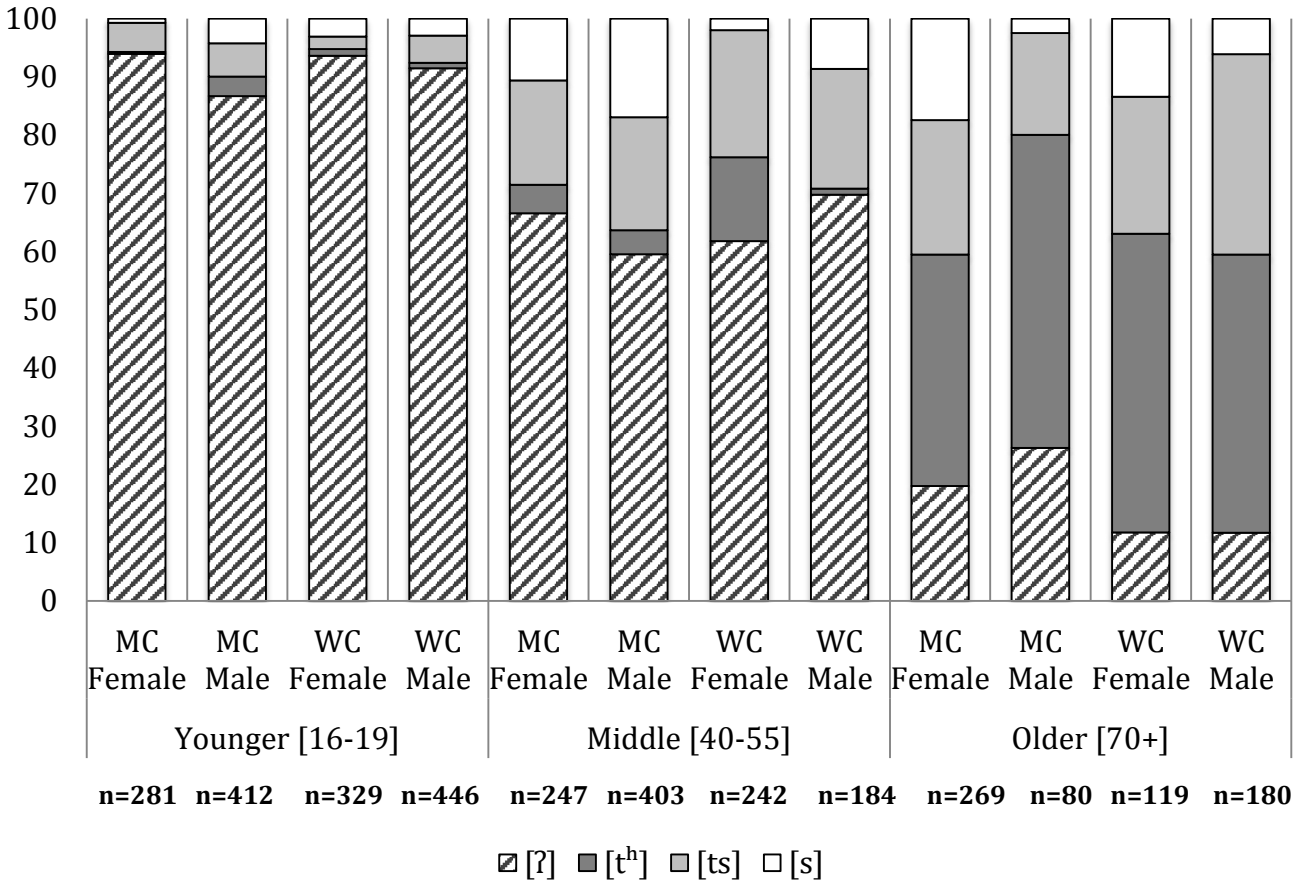


Figure 5.1: Realisation of /t/: All linguistic environments, distribution according to age, gender and class in Southport (%).

The apparent change over time shown in Figure 5.1 with the increased usage of the glottal stop is the most striking pattern here, with an overwhelming 90% of the total production in younger speech – an increase of approximately 30 percentage points with each new generation ($p<0.01$). Hence, despite Southport's close proximity and ease of access to Liverpool, the Scouse variants, [ts] and [s], here account for fewer than 30% overall. Despite the obvious pattern that it is within the middle-aged group that we begin to see glottalling take over at the expense of other forms, the spirantised form [s] demonstrates significant use in middle-class middle-aged speech ($p<0.05$), as well as the older age group (though significance testing is not available for the older cohort, see Chapter 3). This pattern is surprising given that the spirantised form is typically associated with working-class speech in Liverpool (Watson 2007).

Although the older generation demonstrate a preference for the standard forms (with an average 45%) as opposed to Scouse forms ([ts] and [s]), their average of 35% use of Scouse forms outweighs the younger and middle-aged speakers' use of these variants. Surprisingly, the older females are less standard than the older males, contrary to the general finding that middle-class females opt for prestige variants (Labov 2001). In comparison to the older generation, the middle-aged speakers display only a slight decrease in Scouse forms, with their overall usage amounting to approximately 20%. As with the older speakers, this is a relatively low percentage given the expectations which proximity and diffusion give rise to, as mentioned in the introductory chapters of this thesis. There is minimal increase in the affricate form in the middle-aged female working-class speech (an interaction between age and Southport working class proved to be significant, $p<0.01$).

Figure 5.2, which compares Ormskirk speakers with the Southport middle-class speakers, demonstrates a similar pattern with a significant increase in the glottal stop ($p<0.01$), though at a slightly reduced usage of 80% in younger Ormskirk speech as opposed to the 90% glottal production of their Southport counterparts. The glottal form appears to have changed also from being a traditionally male pronunciation to gradually being more of a feature of female speech in the middle and younger generations for both locations.

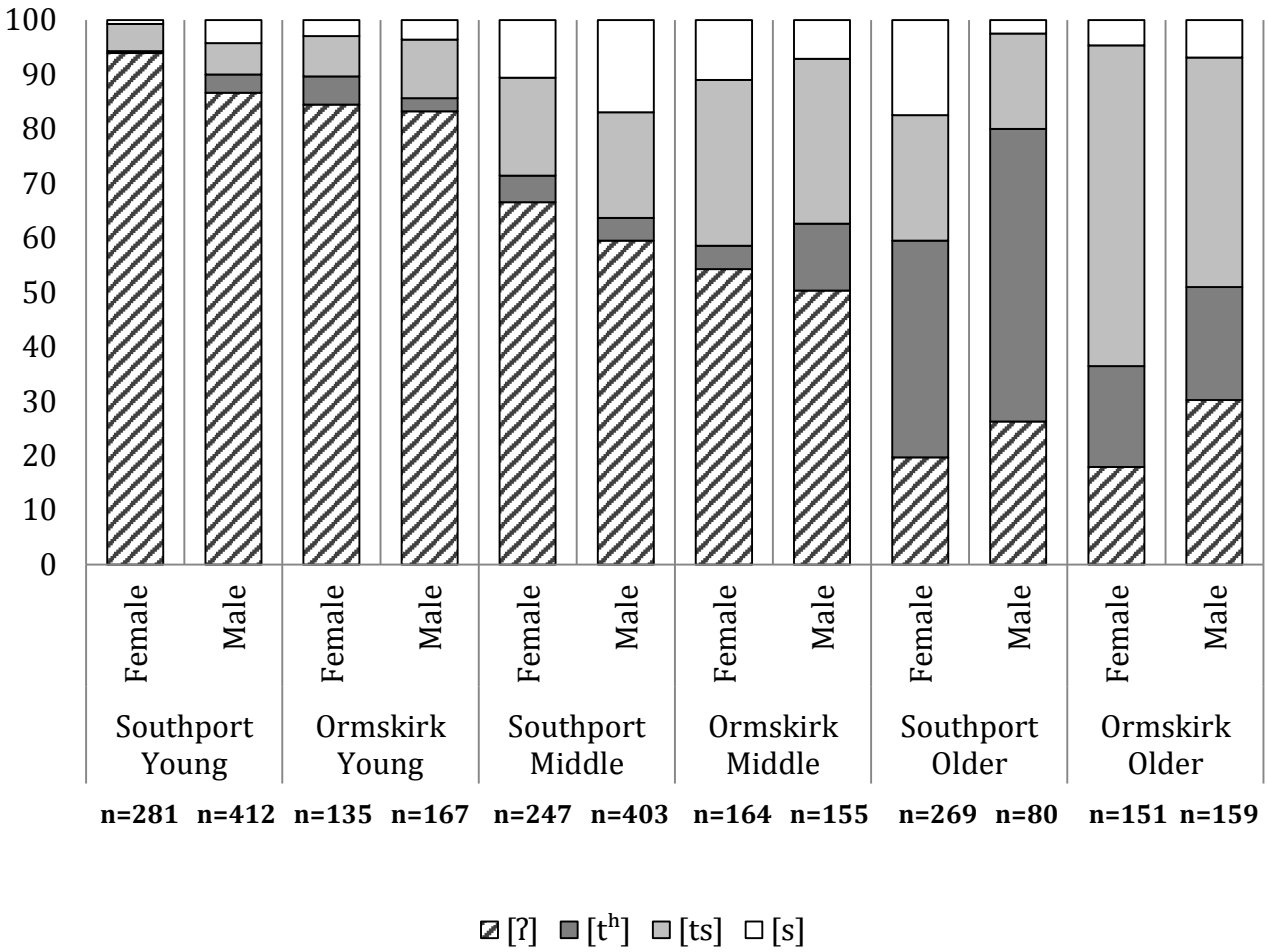


Figure 5.2: Realisation of /t/ in Southport and Ormskirk: All linguistic environments, distribution according to age, gender and location (%) (middle-class participants only).

The much higher proportion of the affricate form in middle-aged Ormskirk speech is immediately apparent with an average of 30% [ts], almost twice the average production compared with Southport speech for this form, with a significant interaction between age and location for the affricate realisation ($p<0.05$). Age also proved to be significant for [s] ($p<0.05$), as did gender ($p<0.05$) due to the slight prevalence of this form in male speech. The reduction of Scouse forms in Ormskirk speech, however, particularly affricate /t/, is perhaps more dramatic given that, despite the much higher usage [ts] and [s] in older speakers (approximately 60% overall), this proportion is reduced in the next generation to approximately 40% (though still 10% more than their Southport counterparts).

The younger Ormskirk speakers display barely less than 5% more Scouse forms overall in comparison to the younger Southport speakers. Hence the decrease of Scouse forms in Ormskirk speech (approximately 30% reduction of [ts] and [s] from middle to younger speakers) is considerably greater than the 20% reduction in Southport speech.

The regression model (Table 5.1) showed that contact and age also proved a significant interaction for the production of the glottal stop, ($p<0.05$). As shown in Chapter 4, younger speakers on average have more contact with Liverpool, yet this is contrary to expectation as glottal stop is rarely used in Scouse (Watson 2007; Chapter 2).

Table 5.1: Multiple regression significant effects for /t/ to [s]

		Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
	Glottal /t/				
	(intercept)	-0.5227	0.4007	-1.304	0.192063
Independent	Age_younger	1.6273	0.4799	3.391	0.000696***
	V_##	0.5124	0.2203	2.326	0.020041*
	V_#v	0.6876	0.2559	2.687	0.007214**
	V_v	-1.4548	0.3639	-3.998	6.39e-05***
Interactions	Age_younger:Sou_WC	1.4676	0.6884	2.132	0.033009*
	Standard /t/				
	(intercept)	-3.2775	0.332	-9.873	<2e-16***
Independent	V_v	0.7889	0.3255	2.423	0.01537*
	Age_younger	-0.92	0.3308	-2.781	0.00542**
	Affricate /t/				
	(intercept)	-1.20227	0.49763	-2.416	0.01569*
Independent	V_v	0.75056	0.23293	3.222	0.00127**
	V_#v	-0.54575	0.19193	-2.843	0.00446**
	V_##	-0.01762	0.14599	-0.121	0.90392
	Age_younger	-1.7297	0.23709	-7.296	2.97e-13***
Interactions	Age_younger:Orm	-1.214119	0.595418	-2.039	0.04144*
	Age_younger:Sou_WC	-1.558521	0.550285	-2.832	0.00462**
	Gender_M:Age_younger	1.17359	0.42059	2.79	0.00526**
	Gender_M:Contact	-0.34698	0.17113	-2.028	0.04260*
	Fricative /t/				
	(intercept)	-3.00783	0.36451	-8.252	<2e-16***

Independent	Sex_M	0.62265	0.26565	2.344	0.0191*
	V_v	0.98904	0.21742	4.549	5.39e-06***
	V_##	-1.54608	0.24818	-6.23	4.68e-10***
	Age_younger	-0.55836	0.26719	-2.09	0.0366*
Interactions	Age_younger:Contact	-0.50082	0.24237	-2.06	0.03879*

5.1.1 Duration of the release period for the variants of /t/

Figure 5.3 clearly illustrates the significant preference for the glottal variant preceding a word boundary ($p<0.05$), particularly in pre-pausal position ($p=0.02$), while the Scouse ($p<0.001$) and standard forms are preferred in the word-medial prevocalic environment ($p=0.01$). Indeed, [s] is particularly absent from word final pre-pausal position ($p<0.001$, cf. Sangster 2001).

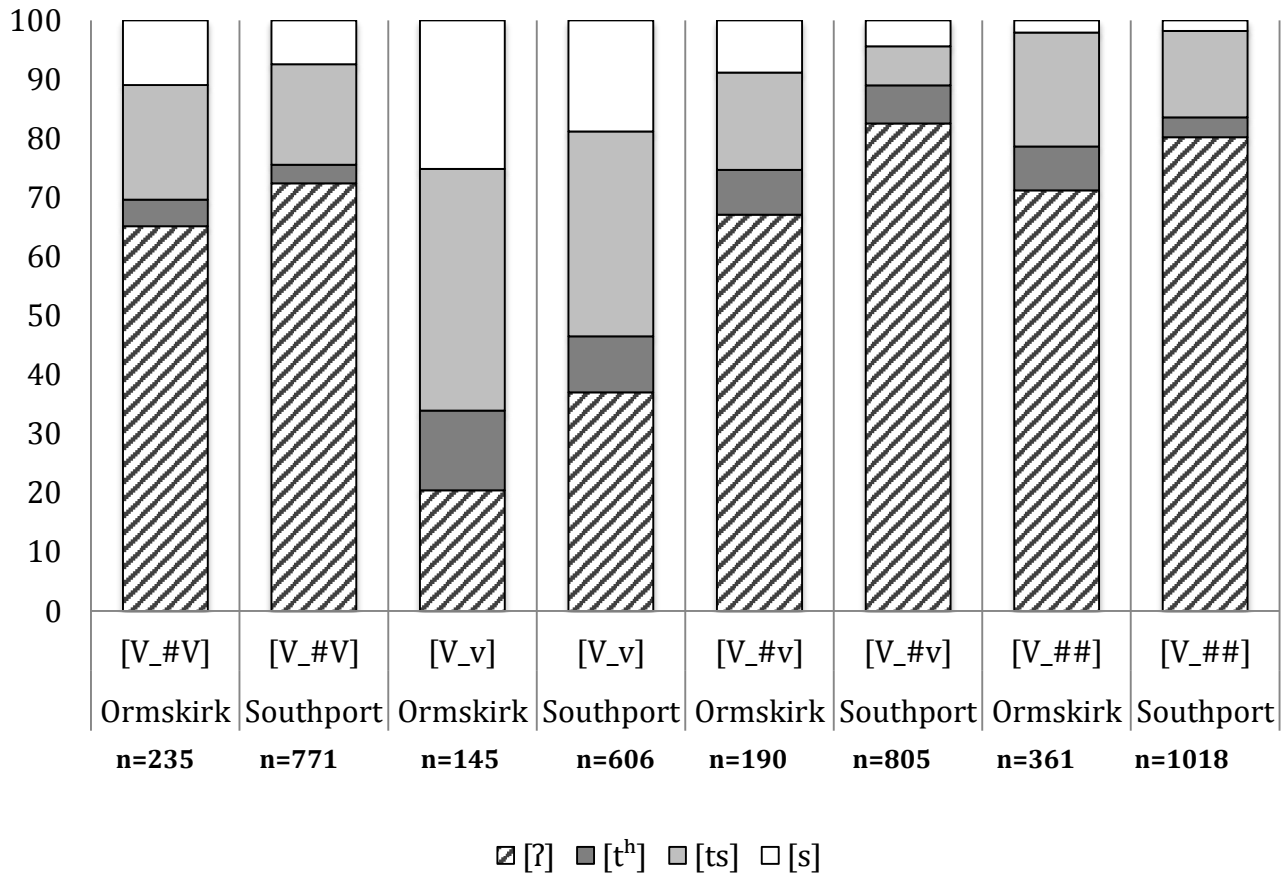


Figure 5.3: Distribution of /t/ variants: all speakers, according to linguistic factors in Ormskirk and Southport (%).

The preference of intervocalic environments for affricate and fricative forms, might suggest that these forms are closer to being connected speech processes with shorter release periods than typical Scouse forms which are longer in duration (see Sangster 2001).

Sangster (2001) finds that the release period of /t/ in Scouse averages between 103 and 107 ms in word-final pre-pausal position. With regard to forms that appear fully spirantised, Sangster states that where it is unclear that a stop gap is present, the release of /t/ is always comparably shorter than the fricative, /s/, which she measures as having an average duration of 150 ms.[91].

In their analysis of spirantisation, Jones and Llamas (2008; Dublin and Middlesbrough English) and Sangster (2001; Liverpool English) normalise speech rate by calculating the duration of the release of /t/ as relative to the duration of the following syllable in the carrier phrase '[test word] ***ag****ain'*. The Southport and Ormskirk data, however, comprise of /t/ (and /k/) forms elicited from spontaneous speech. In addition, the distribution of variants according to linguistic environment, shown in Figure 5.3, showed that the affricate and fricative forms were promoted most strongly in word-medial position, followed by other intervocalic environments. As Shockey (2003) notes in her analysis of RP, the presence of affricated forms and even spirantised forms is common in rapid connected speech. In view of this, this section suggests a method for normalising for intra-speaker speech rate in spontaneous speech, by measuring the average duration of the nuclei of long vowels as an indicator of overall speech rate. The average duration of /t/ was calculated by dividing the duration of [ts] and [s] by the speaker's average vowel length. The variants of /t/ were measured separately according to linguistic environment (see Section 3.4). Figure 5.4 demonstrates the relative duration of /t/, separated by context, according to gender, age, class and location. Table 5.2 shows the standard deviation of these results.

As this is an intraspeaker normalisation method, it is noted here that extrinsic factors may also affect speech rate. As Jecewicz (2009: 236) summarise:

> [Y]oung adults tend to speak faster than older adults do (e.g., Quené, 2008; Verhoeven et al., 2004). With regard to gender, most available evidence suggests

[91] A mixed effects linear regression model (R.3.0.0) was conducted for the analysis of duration; the duration of [ts] was tested against forms coded as [tʰ] in the dataset to check the coding of these variants, with the expectation that these forms would have a longer release than an aspirated variant. This reached statistical significance with p=0.0001. Glottal stop was not included.

that men actually speak somewhat faster than women do, as found for example by Byrd (1994).

In view of this, speaker groups are placed into comparative pairs, where speakers are not compared across gender, age or class: Ormskirk middle class younger males versus Southport middle-class younger males; Ormskirk middle-class younger females versus Southport middle-class younger females; Southport middle-class younger males versus Southport working-class younger males, and so on. Independent t-tests were then conducted on these pairings.

Table 5.2: Standard deviation of duration /t/ according to social factors and linguistic environment (N=2085)

Speaker Group	ST_DEV [V_#V]	ST_DEV [V_v]	ST_DEV [V_#v]	ST_DEV [V_##]
Orm_YF	0.42	0.16	0.23	0.26
Sou_YMF	0.09	0.07	0.14	0.33
Sou_YWF	0.18	0.05	0.08	0.23
Orm_YM	0.38	0.16	0.25	0.24
Sou_YMM	0.06	0.11	0.04	0.11
Sou_YWM	0.14	0.11	0.13	0.19
Orm_MF	0.21	0.24	0.20	0.22
Sou_MMF	0.14	0.10	0.05	0.20
Sou_MWF	0.11	0.08	0.19	0.29
Orm_MM	0.15	0.17	0.15	0.66
Sou_MMM	0.11	0.07	0.11	0.11
Sou_MWM	0.16	0.20	0.30	0.20
Orm_OF	0.06	0.26	0.40	0.36
Sou_OF	0.13	0.15	0.19	0.37
Orm_OM	0.12	0.25	0.12	0.26
Sou_OM	0.06	0.14	0.09	0.30

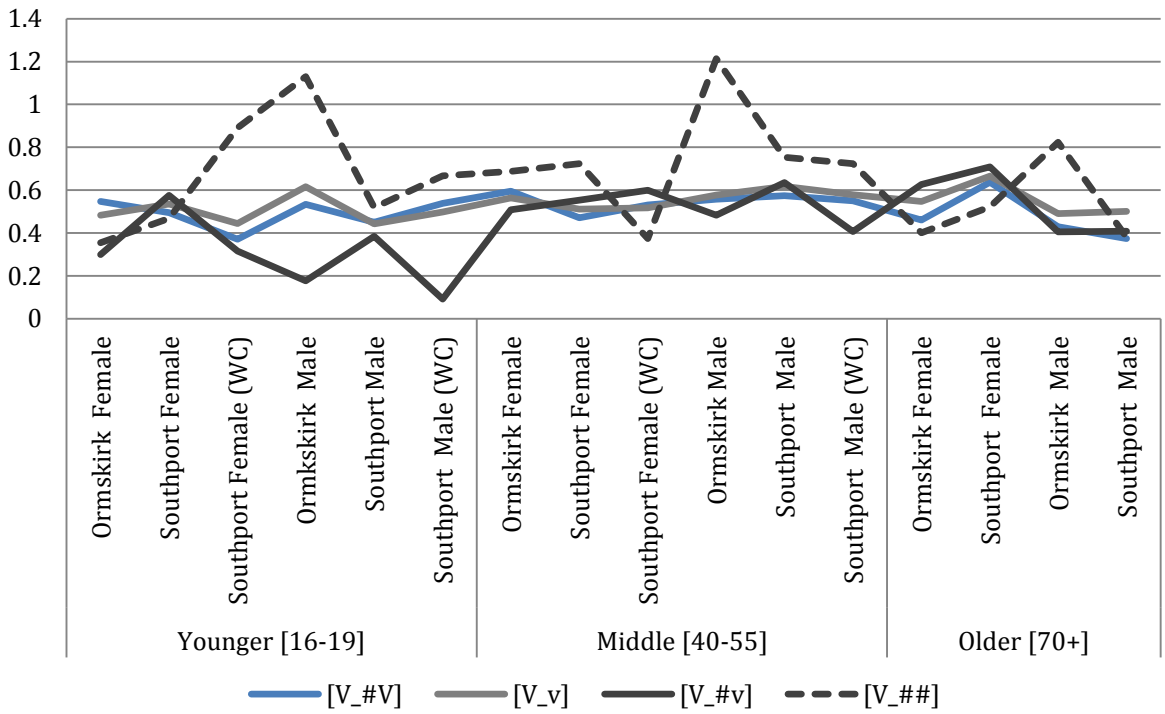


Figure 5.4: Average relative duration of release for /t/ according to gender, age, location and linguistic environment (N=2085).

Figure 5.4 shows that word final pre-pausal /t/ is affected most by social factors; the Ormskirk male speakers, in particular, demonstrate the longest average release period for both [ts] and [s] (p=0.0001). Although we would expect male speech rate to be faster than female (Byrd 1994) the Ormskirk males have the longest overall frication period, particularly in the middle-aged males. The standard deviation of /t/ in word final pre-pausal position in the Ormskirk males, however, demonstrates that a long release phase for /t/ is not a consistent feature of this group's speech. Elsewhere, the standard deviations show that duration is considerably less variable.

The independent t-test found linguistic environment to be significant with longer frication periods apparent in word-final pre-pausal position (p=0.0001). In line with the social data, above, age and environment proved significant (p=0.003), with younger speakers producing comparably shorter release periods in word-final pre-pausal position. Here, Southport working-class speakers display the shortest release overall in intervocalic environments. Indeed when combining the averages of [ts] and [s], [V_v] in Southport speech has a shorter release period overall (p=0.01). Similarly, working-class speakers (Southport) have a shorter duration of release in [V_#v] position (p=0.02). Hence, contrary to Sangster's study, the middle-class speakers have the longest intervocalic release.

5.1.2 Summary

As the frequency data shows, age is the main factor governing the distribution of variants. Contrary to the predictions of diffusion models that forms spread from nearby large urban centres to smaller ones (see Chapter 2), the increase in the glottal variant over time in both locations has resulted in the depletion of the Scouse variants. Though not supported by statistical significance, this decrease is most noticeable in Ormskirk speech, where Scouse variants of /t/ are almost twice as frequent in the middle and older generations compared with Southport. Yet, like Southport speakers, the younger Ormskirk speakers have less than 10% of Scouse forms.

The duration of the release of /t/ is significantly longer in word-final, pre-pausal position in Ormskirk speech compared with Southport. However, although this may increase the perception of Ormskirk production as more Scouse sounding, in intervocalic positions,

Southport speech displayed longer duration of release with the affricate form, compared with Ormskirk speech.

Overall, then, it appears that, from the data for /t/ for stage 1 and 2 forms at least, Scouse forms are being lost in both localities.

5.2 Lexically/phonologically conditioned forms: /t/ → [h] and /t/ → [ɾ]

We will analyse the processes /t/ → [h] and /t/ → [ɾ] separately because they are lexically and/or phonologically conditioned in specific ways. They are not like lenited /t/ variants up to stage 2 (affrication and spirantisation), which can occur in all the environments investigated in this study. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, although it is apparent that these variants are lexically and environmentally constrained, particularly for /t/ → [ɾ], the environmental rules governing the distribution do not appear to be stringent. For this reason, a corpus-internal examination of these variants has been undertaken, to identify the lexical distribution relevant to the locations of this study. [92]

5.2.1 /t/ → [h] (Debuccalisation)

Debuccalisation was traditionally restricted in Scouse to monosyllabic function words in word-final, pre-pausal position (Chapter 2). More recently, the conditions of debuccalisation have been seen to expand to polysyllabic words in younger working-class Scouse speakers (Watson 2007); in the dataset here, however, debuccalisation did not occur in any polysyllabic words.

[92] All social and environmental factors were run in the logistic model: age, gender, class and location (Southport middle class vs. Southport working class and middle class), attitude score for offence (Scouse accent), average attitude scores for town and people of Liverpool, and linguistic environment, with the linguistic variant as the dependent variable. As before, only the significant factors and interactions will be presented here.

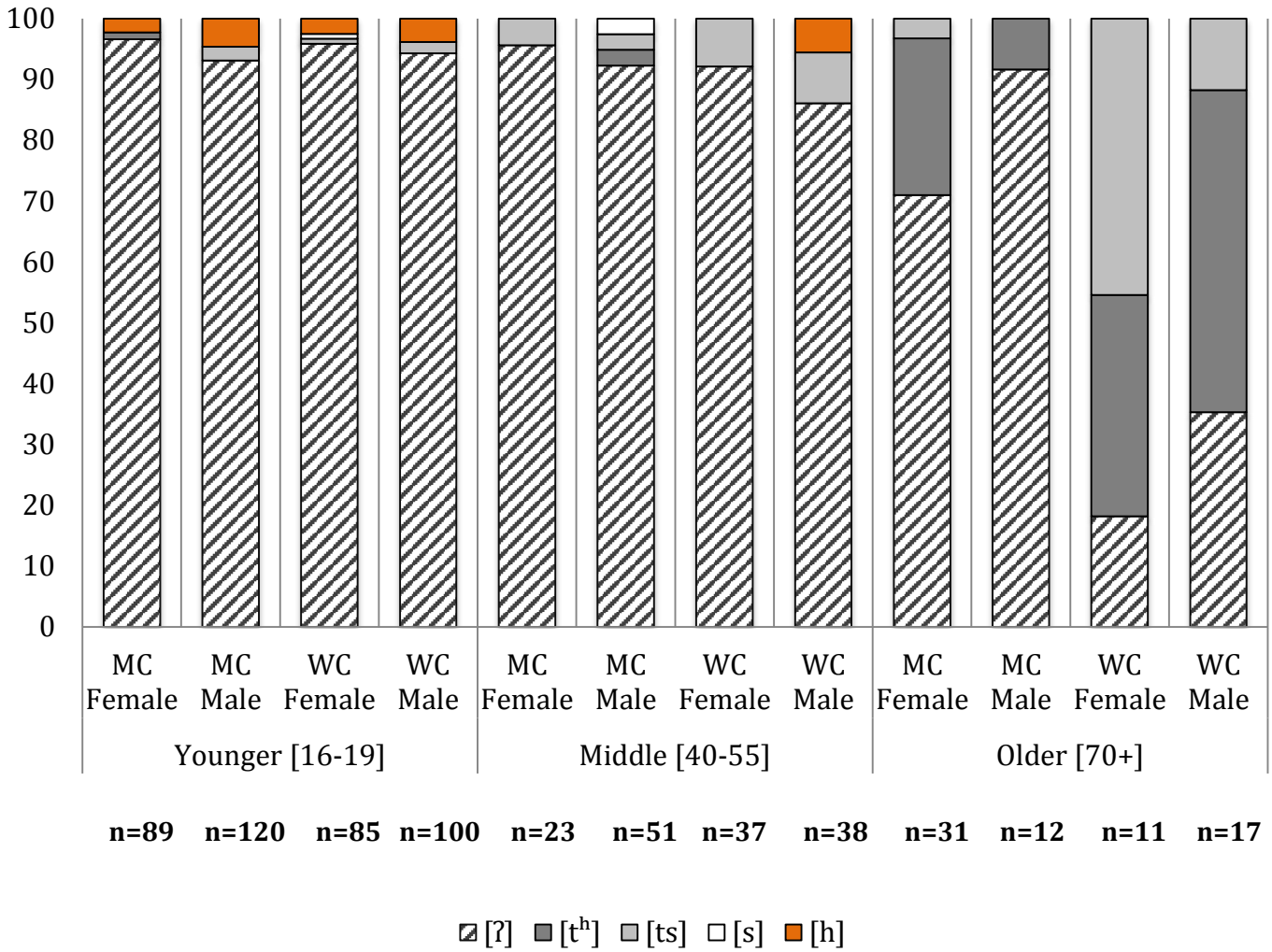


Figure 5.5: Realisation of /t/ variants in [V_##], distribution according to age, gender and class in Southport (%).

As Section 5.1 evidenced in this subset of data, we see an overwhelming preference for glottal stop in younger speech ($p<0.01$), inclusive of the older generation, who in other environments selected standard, affricate or fricative forms (Section 5.1).

Overall, given the massive proportion in glottal stop throughout the dataset, there are very few tokens of [h] or indeed any other Scouse forms. However, excluding the working-class middle-aged males, we see a small proportion beginning to appear in younger speech; although this is less than 10%, it is still an increase from previous generations as opposed to the decrease over time, which could be seen with the other Scouse forms, [ts] and [s] in Section 5.1. Although age alone is not statistically significant, the logistic regression model (Table 5.3) confirmed an interaction between age and location, ($p<0.05$): this result is not surprising given that debuccalisation is present (though marginally, as shown in Figure 5.6) in most of the younger

Southport speakers, while only two of the Ormskirk younger males demonstrated use of this form. Gender does not affect the distribution in the younger group.

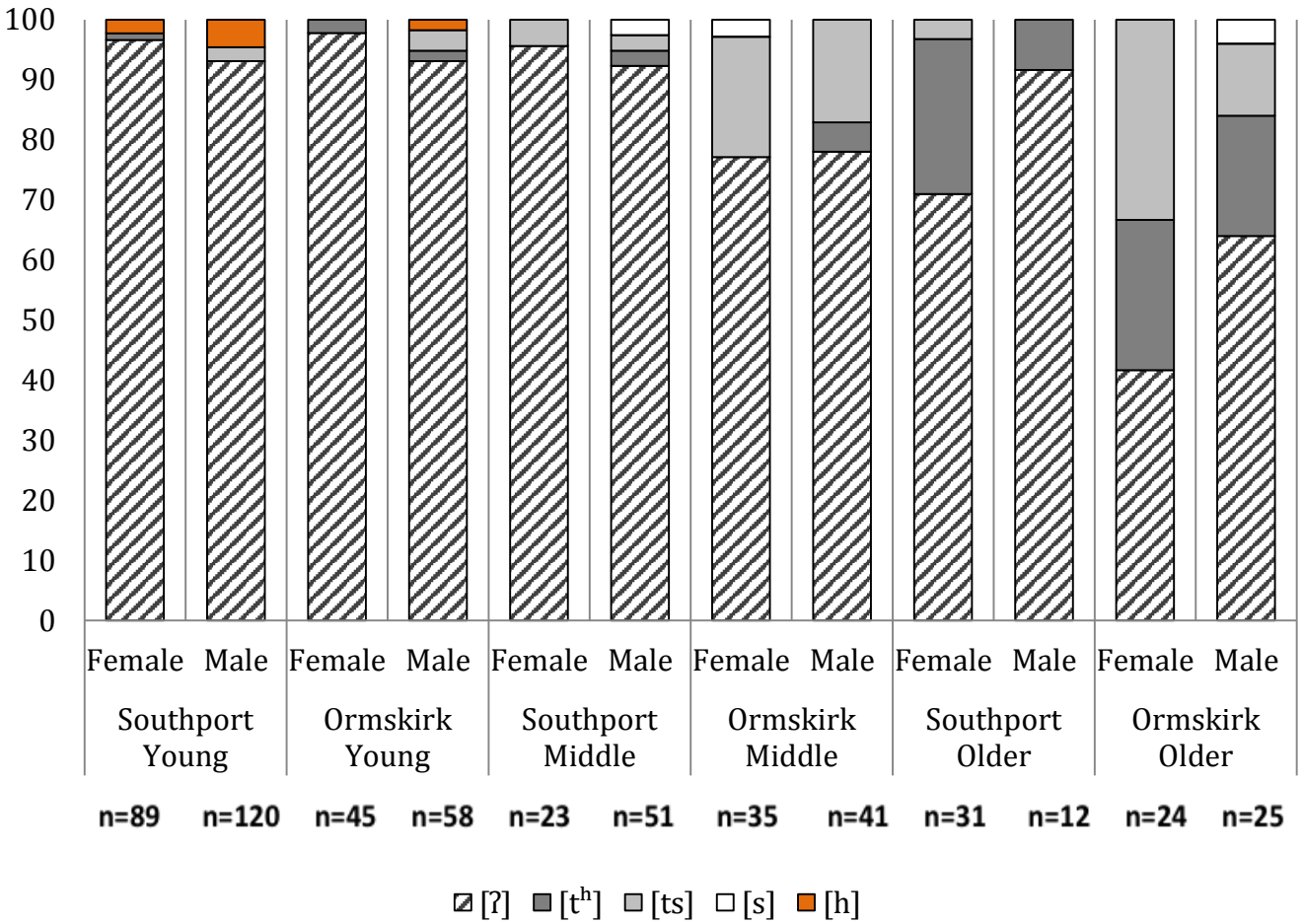


Figure 5.6: Realisation of /t/ variants in the environment [V_##], distribution according to age, gender and location (%) (middle-class participants only).

There is no debuccalisation in middle-class, middle-aged speech,. Once again, this distribution with this class may not be surprising given that this form is traditionally associated with working-class Scouse speakers. However, as with the broader linguistic environment, here as well, Ormskirk middle-aged speakers display more than twice as many affricate forms as their Southport counterparts.

Interestingly, when [h] was run as the dependent variant in the model, an interaction between contact and attitude to the Scouse accent proved significant ($p<0.05$); higher contact and attitude scores of the Scouse accent correlate with the production of the debuccalised variant.

Moreover, the model further highlights an interaction between attitude to Scouse and location, as well as attitude to Liverpool city and location; in Southport, those who harboured more negative the attitude toward the city of Liverpool, also produced more glottal stop for /t/.

Table 5.3: Multiple regression significant effects for /t/ to [h]

		Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
	Glottal /t/				
	(intercept)	2.1524	0.6056	3.554	0.000380***
Independent	Age_younger	1.1177	0.2988	3.741	0.000184***
	Accent	-0.3105	0.1531	-2.028	0.042586*
Interactions	Orm:Age_younger	3.4968	1.0647	3.284	0.00102**
	Gender_M:Age_younger	-1.06327	0.53892	-1.973	0.0485*
	Standard /t/				
	No significant independent effects or interactions				
	Affricate /t/				
	(intercept)	-2.63033	0.80181	-3.281	0.001036**
Independent	Age_younger	-1.60837	0.43605	-3.688	0.00226***
Interactions	Contact: Accent	-0.6064	0.2087	-2.906	0.003662**
	Sou_WC: Accent	-2.3034	0.7212	-3.195	0.001397**
	Age_younger: Orm	-3.7983	1.2204	-3.112	0.001856**
	Contact: Orm	1.7841	0.4906	3.637	0.000276***
	Contact:Sou_WC	-1.6417	0.6396	-2.567	0.010269*
	Gender_M: Age_younger	1.82265	0.80516	2.264	0.0236*
	Fricative /t/				
	(intercept)	-7.2812	1.3551	-5.373	7.73e-08***
Independent	Attitude_City	0.8121	0.4142	1.961	0.0499*
	Debuccalised				
	(intercept)	-4.85198	1.06288	-4.565	5e-06***
Independent	Orm	-1.82668	0.77476	2.358	0.0184*
	Contact:Accent	-0.8176	0.3342	-2.446	0.0144*

5.2.2 /t/ → [ɾ]

In their analysis of Scouse English, Clark and Watson (2011) find a tapped variant for /t/ occurs frequently in /t/ → /r/ environments in Liverpool, when compared with the approximant form in this restricted position – [short V] _#V (see Chapter 2). Indeed, in this specific environment in the dataset here, there were no instances of approximant variants, only [ɾ]. This rule does not include all lexical items in their analysis of Liverpool (and indeed other studies of /t/ → /r/ in the North-West, see Broadbent 2008), with approximant and tapped forms for /t/ occurring in words with a stressed preceding vowel. Further to this, they found that several lexical items which have the condition required, never produced /t/ → /r/.

As /t/-tapping is prevalent in many accents in the UK (including RP, see Hannisdal 2007) it is not claimed here that /t/ → [ɾ] is a specific feature of Scouse (cf. Clark and Watson 2011). In addition, while the tapped variant occurred in /t/ → /r/ environment, it likewise appeared in other intervocalic environments, following a long vowel and even in intervocalic word-medial environments, such as the word *whatever* (see Appendix 3). In the light of this, a decision was taken to analyse the distribution from a corpus-internal point of view, examining all intervocalic environments.

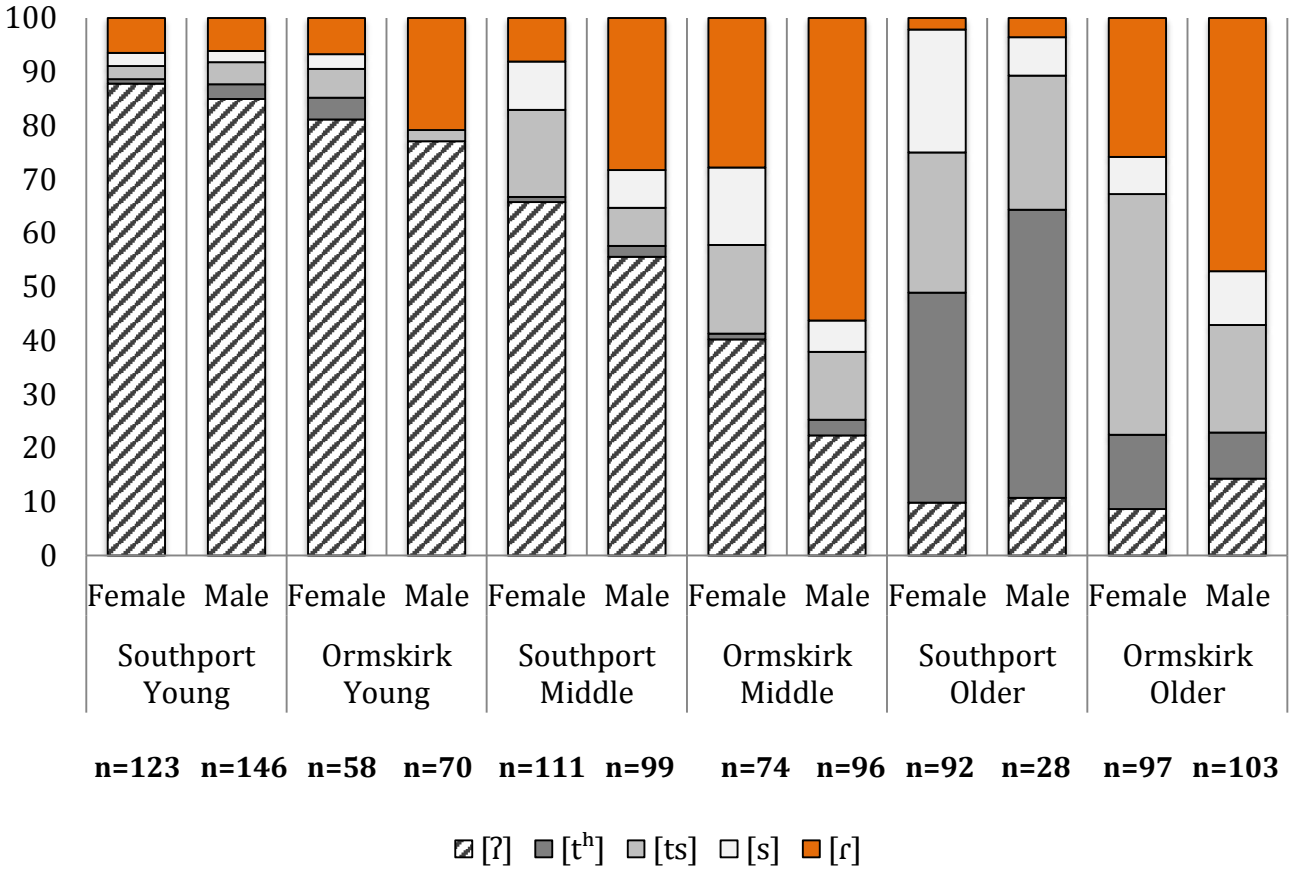


Figure 5.8: Realisation of /t/ variants in the environment [V_#v], distribution according to age, gender and location (%) (middle-class participant only).

Similar to the previous variants of /t/, the expected increase in glottal stop is prominent in Figure 5.7, with a near 90% usage in younger speech ($p<0.01$), as opposed to the 55% and less than 10% usage in the middle and older age generations, respectively. However, unlike /t/ → [s] and the debuccalised variant there appears to be very little change over time with the tapped variants, excluding the atypical high frequency in middle-aged, middle-class male speech, which is not continued in the speech of their younger counterparts. Indeed if we ignore the clear preference for this variant with this particular speaker group, the distribution of [ɾ] is marginally preferred in male, working-class speech across all age groups.

The preference for this variant in male speech is particularly apparent in Ormskirk as Figure 5.8 shows; here, [ɾ] is twice as frequent in the speech of the Ormskirk males as in that of the Ormskirk females, who produce a frequency very similar to the Southport males. Indeed, the regression model showed location and gender to be significant.

Given the high proportion of /t/ → [ɾ] in the Ormskirk middle generation, the change over time is more apparent when comparing the frequency here with the Ormskirk younger speakers ($p<0.01$). In the data for Southport alone, it was evident from Figure 5.7 that the middle-aged, middle-class males displayed an unusually high frequency than the other speakers. Hence the comparison of this age group's females with the younger Southport females demonstrates very little change over time. Gender proved significant in the regression model ($p<0.05$, Table 5.4). In Ormskirk, however, both the middle-aged males and females use three times as many tapped variants as their younger counterparts, demonstrating a clear decline in this variant for this location ($p<0.01$). Indeed, in view of the preference of this variant in middle-class, middle-aged male speech in both locations, this finding was unlikely to be a sampling error.

As with the debuccalised and the spirantised forms above, a number of interesting interactions regarding contact and attitude are established here with /t/ to [ɾ]; the model highlighted an interaction between attitude towards the Scouse accent and age ($p<0.05$) indicating that the negative attitudes of the middle generation (Chapter 4) perhaps promote the use of the tapped variant. In addition, an interaction was found between gender and contact ($p<0.05$), Southport working class and attitude towards Liverpool ($p<0.01$), and age and contact ($p<0.01$). In review of the contact and attitudinal data in Chapter 4, these significant interactions indicate that relatively infrequent contact and/or negative attitude scores are significant in the promotion of [ɾ].

Table 5.4: Multiple regression significant effects for /t/ to [ɾ]

		Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
	Glottal /t/				
	(intercept)	0.17275	0.56157	0.308	0.75837
Independent	Age_younger	1.88938	0.23094	8.181	2.81e16***
	Orm	-0.89592	0.30021	-2.984	0.00284**
Interactions	Gender_M: Accent	0.5596	0.2572	2.176	0.029545*
	Age_younger: Accent	0.5594	0.2635	2.123	0.033746*
	Orm: Accent	0.6705	0.2889	2.321	0.020302*
	Standard /t/				
	(intercept)	-4.4485	1.3779	-3.228	0.00124**
Independent	V_#v	1.1159	0.5309	2.102	0.03556*
Interactions	Sou_WC: Gender_M	-3.1388	1.4791	-2.122	0.00944**

	Affricate /t/				
	(intercept)	-1.28339	0.51119	-2.511	0.0121*
Independent	Gender_M	-0.66907	0.2899	-2.308	0.0210*
	Age_younger	-2.15172	0.32694	-6.581	4.66e-11***
	Orm	0.73611	0.37237	1.977	0.0481*
Interactions	Gender_M: Accent	0.8857	0.3256	-2.72	0.00653**
	Fricative /t/				
	(intercept)	-2.6463	0.5205	-5.084	3.69e-07***
Independent	Age_younger	-1.6914	0.37	-4.571	4.85e-06***
	Orm	1.006	0.4097	2.456	0.0141*
Interactions	Age_younger: Contact	-0.46587	0.23133	-2.014	0.0440*
	Gender_M: Sou_WC	2.3516	0.8323	2.826	0.004720**
	Tap /t/				
	(intercept)	-0.57177	0.95397	-0.599	0.548938
Independent	Gender_M	0.692297	0.270909	2.555	0.0106*
	Age_younger	-1.248976	0.273554	-4.566	4.98e-06***
	Orm	1.878287	0.370542	5.069	4.00e-07***
	V_#v	-0.413222	0.181261	-2.28	0.0226*
Interactions	Accent: Contact	0.23449	0.111	2.112	0.034645*
	Contact: Gender_M	-0.39527	0.17796	-2.221	0.026345*
	Contact: Age_younger	-0.72371	0.22807	-3.173	0.001507**
	Attitude_City: Sou_WC	-2.17046	0.72452	-2.996	0.00274**
	Accent: Age_younger	-0.6343	0.3207	-1.978	0.047914*

5.2.3 Summary

Similar to the other Scouse forms of Section 5.1, Southport speakers are similarly displaying a greater frequency of debuccalised forms than Ormskirk speakers. However, despite this finding, the difference in frequency of [h] between the two locations is minimal as glottalling is particularly favoured in word-final environments and in younger speech. Moreover, as the Southport dataset indicated, only the working-class males displayed any usage of this form in the previous generations. Hence, as there are no working-class middle-aged speakers in the

Ormskirk dataset, it is not possible to state that this form is not apparent in the middle-aged generation in this location.

In addition to the lower frequency of Scouse forms, Ormskirk speakers produced the highest frequency of the tapped variant compared with Southport speakers. The mean data also showed this variant to be a feature of older male speech, all of which have proved to be significant in the regression model. Despite the significantly more frequent usage of /t/ → [ɾ] in Ormskirk speech, there is a decline over time for this variant – compared to the consistent though lower frequency of usage in Southport speech. Hence the prospects for the survival of this form in both locations is bleak given the gradual increase of glottal and consequently low usage of the tapped variant in the younger generations of both places.

The overall analysis for /t/ has revealed that, excluding the debuccalised variant, Ormskirk speakers have consistently demonstrated the greatest frequency of Scouse variants in comparison with Southport. As a consequence, the consistently low frequency of /t/ → [ɾ] and Scouse variants in all younger speakers, then, indicates a greater and more rapid decline of these forms in Ormskirk speech. Hence, while the Ormskirk middle and older generations are certainly more Scouse sounding, the youth of both generations are orienting to a much widespread norm /t/ → [ʔ] as opposed to adopting local variants.

5.3 /k/ → [x]

This section presents the results for /k/ according to social and linguistic distribution. As discussed in Chapter 2, lenition beyond [x] to [h] or [ø] is extremely rare (Honeybone 2001) unlike /t/. In addition, it is important to mention at this stage that, while this study found fricative forms in both locations, none of the speakers in the present study produced the [χ] form, typical of working-class Scouse speech (see Honeybone 2001).

As with the variants of /t/, logistic mixed regression models were carried out in R (R Development Core Team 2009) using the R package lme4 (Bates & Maechler 2009), with the variant as the dependent variable and age, gender, class and location, attitude scores for the Scouse accent, attitude scores for the city of Liverpool, and linguistic environment as independent fixed effects, and word and speaker as random effects. As will become apparent

in Section 5.4.3 'discursive' was also run as an independent variable, given the unexpected variation in the realisation of *like* (particularly when used as a discourse marker).

5.3.1 Social stratification of /k/ → [x]

As Sangster (2001) states, perhaps due to there being no requirement to maintain a lexical distinction as with spirantised /t/, for example *but* and *bus*, we see a much greater overall frequency of the fricative form for /k/, compared to the affricate form. This pattern is converse to the results for /t/ lenition in Section 5.1. Moreover, in comparison with /t/ → [s] there is a far greater frequency of Scouse forms, as demonstrated in Figure 5.9 and Figure 5.10.

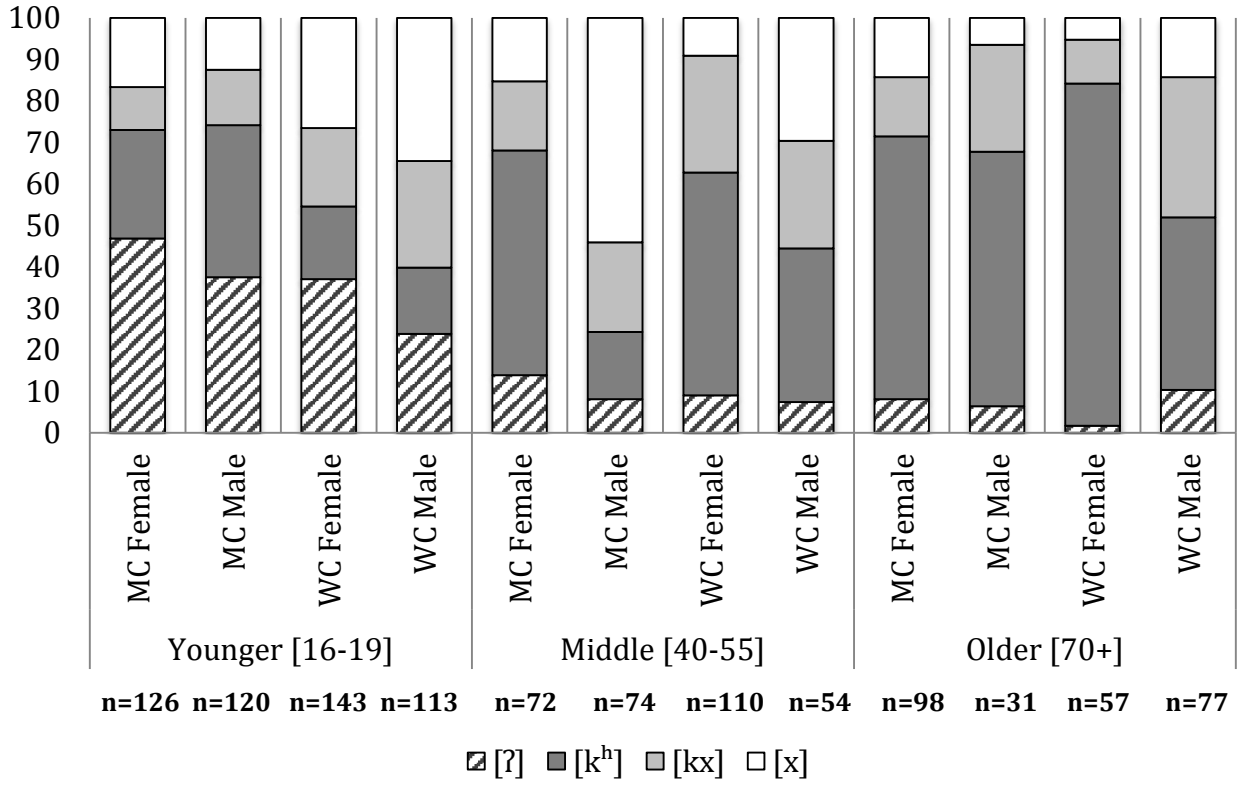


Figure 5.9: Realisation of /k/: All linguistic environments, distribution according to age, gender and class in Southport (%).

The fricative variant is preferred in male speech ($p<0.05$). As with the unusual distribution of the tapped variant, the middle-aged, middle-class males are similarly favouring [x]. Yet, if we ignore this age group, it is evident that this form is overall more prominent in working-class speech ($p<0.01$). Social class also proved significant for the affricate form due for the preference of this form in working class speech ($p<0.01$). Furthermore, if we exclude the

middle-aged, middle-class males, we see a slight increase in the production of [x] over time, most notably in working-class younger females. Indeed, the 30% production of affricate and fricative forms in younger speech is considerably more than their counterpart /t/ variants, which averaged less than 10% in this age group.

However, despite the relatively frequent production of Scouse forms, there are other variants in competition, which also appear reasonably frequently in Southport speech. As was evident with /t/, the standard form here is preferred by all older speakers, as well as in middle-aged female speech. Moreover, though there is an apparent decline in this variant over time, its reduction is not as rapid as its /t/ counterpart's and is particularly supported in the speech of the younger, middle-class ($p<0.05$). The standard form is also more prominent in Southport speech ($p<0.05$) as is shown Figure 5.10.

In addition, we have the realisation of /k/ as [ʔ]/[ø]. This form is not particularly expected, as there is little in the literature to suggest its presence in or around Liverpool speech (cf. Hirst 1914 who reports this form to be a feature of Lancaster speech, in north Lancashire). Glottal and zero release variants have not been analysed separately as they are not associated with Scouse and are also not reported as a feature of more general Lancashire speech (Chapter 2). Nonetheless, the social distribution data shows this form to be increasing over time with prominent use in younger, middle-class speech. However, it became apparent under closer investigation that the glottal/zero release form is strongly associated with the word *like*: hence there is a separate discussion of this word in Section 5.4.3 below.

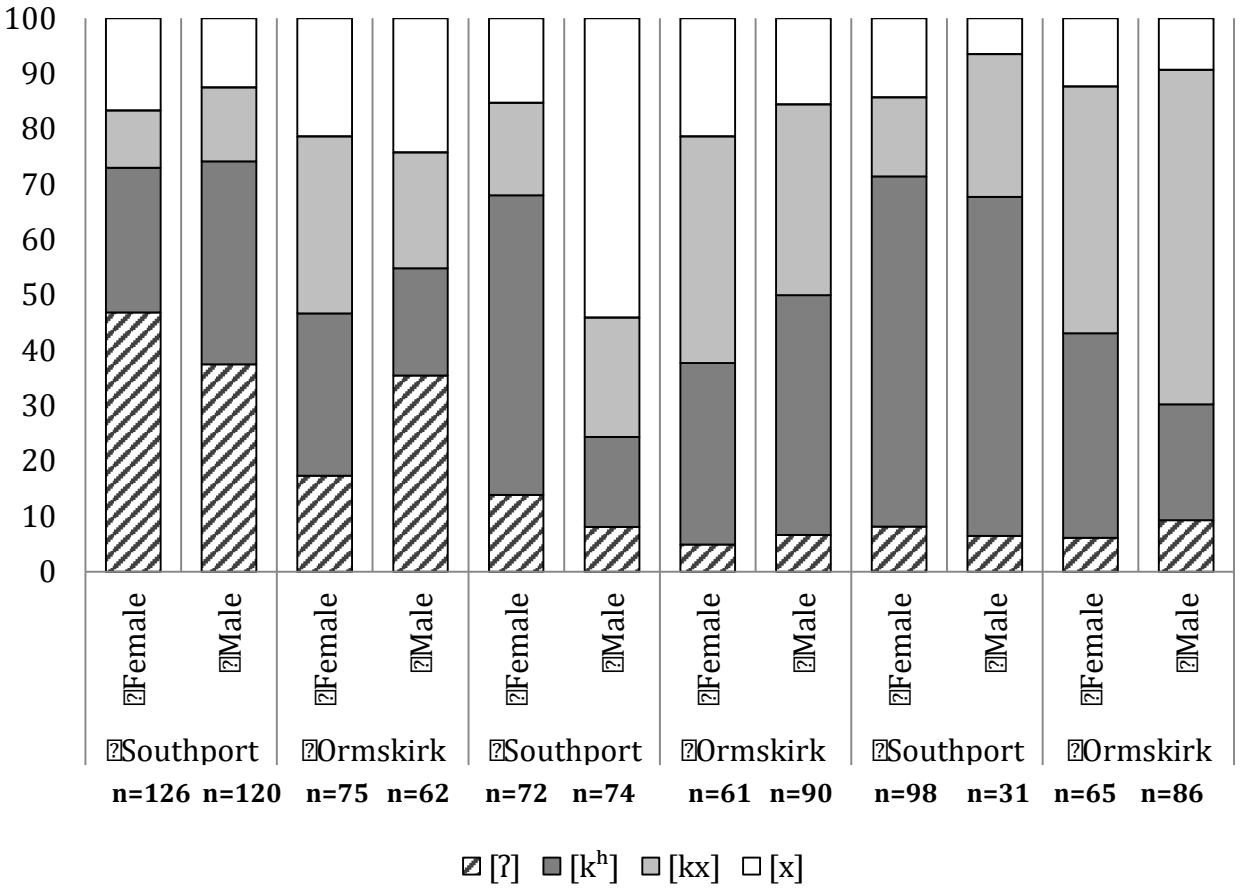


Figure 5.10: Realisation of /k/: All linguistic environments, distribution according to age, gender and location (%).

The fricative form in Ormskirk speech demonstrates a slight increase over time. Compared with Southport younger speakers, Ormskirk younger males display 10% more [x] than their Southport counterparts, while the Ormskirk females demonstrate a smaller increase of 5%. However, the regression model (Table 5.5) found that location was only independently significant with regard to the affricate form due Ormskirk speaker's clear preference for this variant ($p<0.01$).

The affricate form displays more use in Ormskirk than Southport speech across all age groups ($p<0.01$). In particular, the middle-aged Ormskirk speakers demonstrate twice the usage of this form as their equivalent male and female Southport speakers, a result that proved significant with $p<0.05$.

Once again, the glottal/zero release form, similarly, appears in Ormskirk speech with an increase over time, though with an overall reduced frequency compared with Southport speech ($p<0.01$). The Ormskirk younger males appear to match the production of this variant with that of their Southport equivalents. The younger, Ormskirk females, on the other hand, demonstrate considerably less production of glottal stop than the males, instead displaying the most frequent usage of the affricate form; this is the converse of the other younger speakers, who significantly use the greatest percentage of [ʔ/Ø] overall ($p<0.01$).

Contact and attitude also proved to be significant in the regression model, with a negative attitude towards the Scouse accent correlating with the use of the glottal variant ($p<0.05$). An interaction was also found between gender and attitude towards Liverpool ($p<0.05$). For [x] an interaction between contact and age was shown ($p<0.01$) with infrequent contact with Liverpool in the middle age group correlating with reduced use of this variant. Positive attitudes towards the Scouse accent ($p<0.05$) and Liverpool ($p<0.05$) significantly associate with the use of the affricate variant. An interaction between age and contact also proved significant ($p<0.05$) and between age and attitude towards Scouse ($p<0.05$) with more frequent contact and more positive attitudes, again, associating with the use of the affricate form. Similar correlations were found with the affricate form; an interaction between age and attitude towards Scouse ($p<0.05$) and age and contact ($p<0.01$) proved significant in the regression model. Social class and contact also proved a significant interaction ($p<0.01$) with the working-class speakers' infrequent contact with Liverpool correlating with a relatively lower frequency of [kx] in their speech.

Table 5.5: Multiple regression significant effects for /k/

		Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
	Glottal /k/				
	(intercept)	-1.67337	1.4293	-1.171	0.241695
Independent	Age_younger	0.8638	0.2729	3.165	0.00155 **
	Accent	-0.34595	0.1401	-2.494	0.01264*
	V_v	-1.031	0.599	-1.721	0.08518.
	V_#v	-0.5854	0.266	-2.201	0.02776**
	V_##	0.4916	0.2412	2.038	0.4158*
	Disc_No	2.3796	0.8826	2.696	0.00701**
	Disc_Yes	2.57	0.847	3.034	0.00241**
Interactions	Sou_WC: Disc_no	-2.37213	1.00004	-2.371	0.017731*
	Orm: Disc_Yes	-1.928	0.73828	-2611	0.009015**

	Orm:Gender_M	2.40972	0.60982	3.952	7.77e-05***
	Sou_WC:Sex_M	1.20545	0.53108	2.27	0.023220*
	Gender_M:Attitude_City	-1.12832	0.4644	-2.43	0.0151*
	Standard /k/				
	(intercept)	-0.69306	1.00706	-0.688	0.401328
Independent	Disc_No	-1.1756	0.4797	-2451	0.014251*
	Disc_Yes	-1.256	0.3698	-3.397	0.000682***
	Orm	-0.62013	0.31427	-1973	0.048467*
Interactions	Sou_WC: Age_younger	-1.14449	0.52447	-2.182	0.029096*
	Age_younger:Attitude_City	-0.94736	0.37843	-2.503	0.01230*
	Age_younger: Accent	0.60653	0.24317	2.494	0.01262*
	Attitude_City: Accent	-0.624525	0.255078	-2.448	0.0144*
	Affricate /k/				
	(intercept)	-0.189	0.5226	-0.362	0.71759
Independent	Orm	1.4064	0.2707	5.196	2.04e07***
	Sou_Wc	0.6813	0.2316	2.942	0.00326**
	Accent	-0.2124	0.1064	1.997	0.04579*
	Attitude_City	-0.3783	0.1691	-2.237	0.025226*
	V_##	0.448	0.1936	2.314	0.02066*
Interactions	Contact: Age_younger	0.37318	0.1873311	1.992	0.0464*
	Gender_M: Orm	-1.57793	0.47436	-3.326	0.000880***
	Gender_M: Sou_WC	-0.8831	0.41736	-2.116	0.034351*
	Age_younger: Accent	0.528935	0.23786	2.226	0.02605*
	Age_younger: Orm	-154773	0.60782	-2546	0.01088*
	Fricative /k/				
	(intercept)	-2.03786	0.54711	-3.725	0.000195***
Independent	V_##	-1.75442	0.25297	-6.935	4.05e-12***
	Gender_M	0.73933	0.36476	2.027	0.042671*
Interactions	Accent:Age_younger	-0.91744	0.36274	-2.529	0.01143*
	Accent:Attitude_City	0.81521	0.39404	2.069	0.0386*
	Sou_WC: V_##	-1.2049	0.59987	-2.009	0.04458*
	Orm:Disc_yes	1.70877	0.55867	3.059	0.00222**
	Sou_WC: Age_younger	1.78494	0.67226	2.655	0.00793**
	Sou_WC:Contact	-0.87974	0.33799	-2.603	0.00925**
	Contact:Age_younger	-1.04983	0.28784	-3.647	0.000265

5.3.2 Linguistic Environment

The data in Figure 5.11 displays the distribution of /k/ forms according to environment for both Southport and Ormskirk speech. Similar to /t/, the glottal/zero release variant appears most frequently preceding a word boundary ($p<0.05$), particularly word-final, pre-pausal position ($p<0.05$). The fricative form appears to be almost in complementary distribution, favouring the converse environments to glottal/zero release form; [x] in particular is rejected in word final pre-pausal position ($p<0.01$). Finally the affricate and standard forms appear to be affected more by social factors (as demonstrated in Section 5.4.1 above) as opposed to linguistic factors, here.

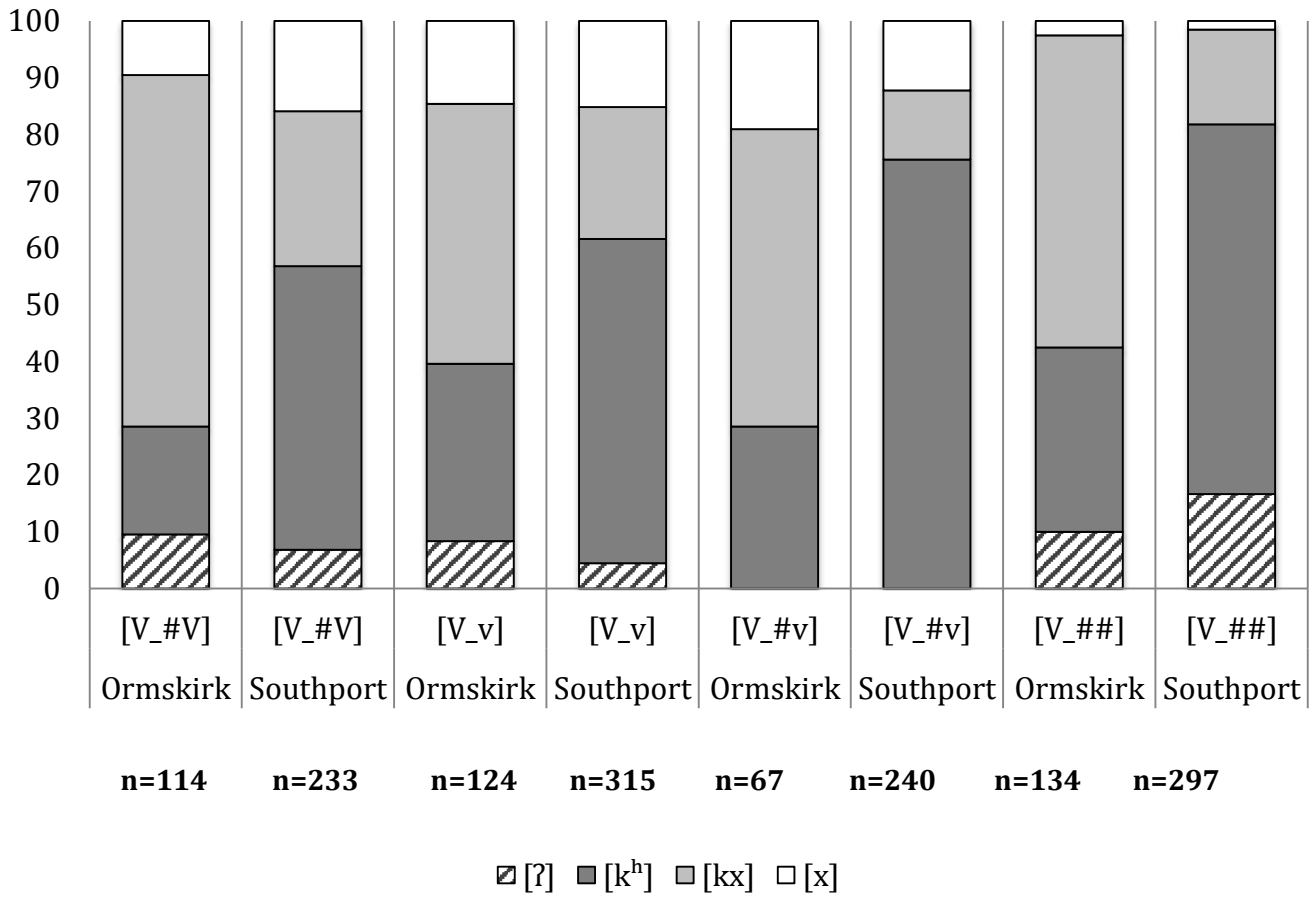


Figure 5.11: Distribution of /k/ variants according to linguistic factors in Ormskirk and Southport (%).

Also similar to the variants of /t/, there appears to be a relationship between [x] and intervocalic environment. The affricate form, however, remains significantly more frequent in word-final,

pre-pausal position ($p<0.05$). This suggests that [kx] is perhaps more similar to Scouse production, as opposed to connected speech processes caused by rapid speech (Shockey 2003).

Similar to /t/ then, it could be that this form in intervocalic position could be a connected speech process (Shockey 2003), which we would expect to be considerably shorter in length. This section will compare the production of fricative release with standard forms according to linguistic environment, as well as presenting an assessment of variation according to social factors. The aim of the latter is to determine which location, if any, is over all more Scouse sounding with a longer duration period. The aim of the former is to highlight if the intervocalic forms, though expected to be shorter than final, are still comparatively long in comparison to the standard form in these positions.

Figure 5.12 show the duration of the release period of all forms coded in the data as [kx] and [x].[93] Table 5.6 shows the standard deviation for these results.

[93] As with /t/, speaker groups are placed into comparative pairs for statistical analyses; speakers are not compared across gender, age or class due to the effect of these social factors on speech rate: Ormskirk middle class younger males versus Southport middle-class younger males; Ormskirk middle-class younger females versus Southport middle-class younger females; Southport middle-class younger males versus Southport working-class younger males, and so on. Independent t-tests were then conducted on these pairings. The average duration of /k/ was calculated by dividing the duration of [k^h], [kx] and [x] by the speaker's average vowel length. The variants of /t/ were measured separately according to linguistic environment (see Section 3.4).

Table 5.6: Standard deviation of duration for /k/ according to social factors and linguistic environment (N=881).

Speaker Group	ST_DEV [V_#V]	ST_DEV [V_v]	ST_DEV [V_#v]	ST_DEV [V_##]
Orm_YF	0.13	0.09	0.10	0.15
Sou_YMF	0.09	0.13	0.08	0.10
Sou_YWF	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.08
Orm_YM	0.08	0.15	0.19	0.30
Sou_YMM	0.12	0.07	0.13	0.19
Sou_YWM	0.12	0.07	0.09	0.04
Orm_MF	0.04	0.10	0.18	0.24
Sou_MMF	0.10	0.07	0.08	0.15
Sou_MWF	0.08	0.12	0.13	0.27
Orm_MM	0.08	0.12	0.12	0.19
Sou_MMM	0.06	0.05	0.22	0.12
Sou_MWM	0.17	0.11	0.08	0.16
Orm_OF	0.08	0.11	0.17	0.19
Sou_OF	0.11	0.14	0.03	0.35
Orm_OM	0.18	0.04	0.04	0.21
Sou_OM	0.16	0.10	0.20	0.08

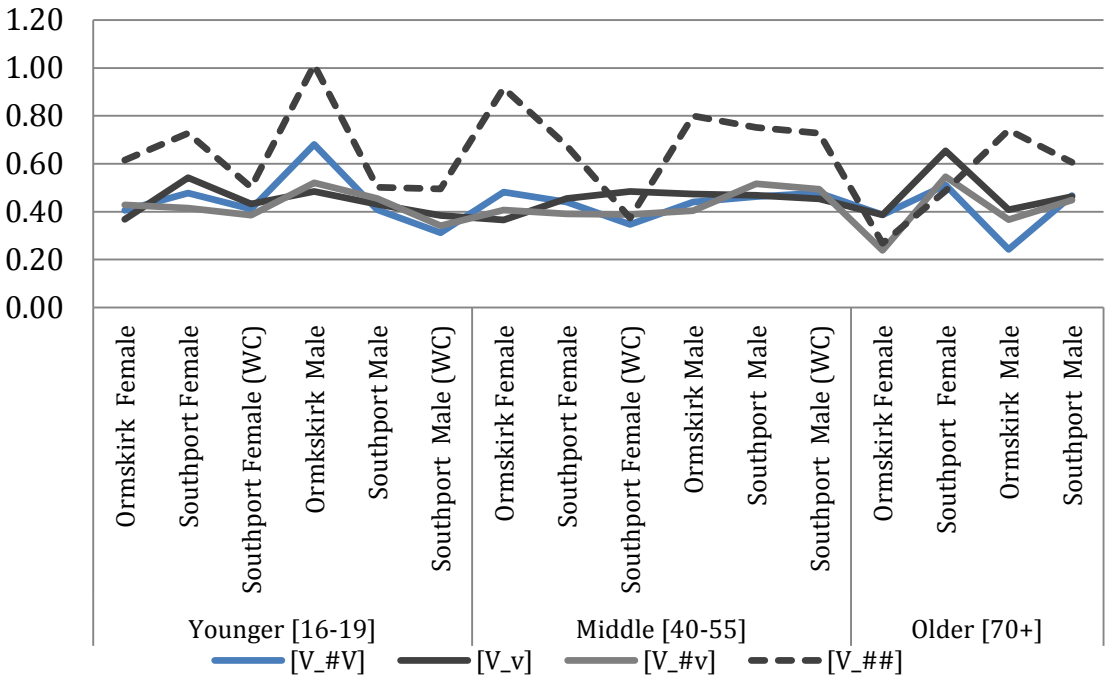


Figure 5.12: Average relative duration for /k/ according to gender, location, age, and linguistic environment (N=881).

As Figure 5.12 demonstrates, Ormskirk younger males have the longest average of release (p=0.007). In relation of the distributional data, Section 5.4.1 and 5.4.2, Ormskirk speakers produced a higher percentage of affricate forms, particularly in word final, pre-pausal position. When comparing word final, pre-pausal position for all Scouse forms, Southport working-class speakers demonstrate the shortest release period compared to the Southport middle-class speakers (p=0.02), while the Ormskirk speakers' averages are considerably longer (excluding the older archive speakers). Indeed as we would expect, [V_##] proved highly significant in the length of the release phase for /k/ (p=0.001). Compared with /t/ the standard deviations show that the release period for /k/ is considerably less variable.

In light of the results, with the greater proportion of Scouse forms and longer duration of frication, as with /t/, Ormskirk males resemble Scouse production more than Southport speakers (p=0.001). This pattern with location is perhaps more notable than the /t/ forms as these forms are arguably more salient (see Watson 2006), indicating that potentially there may be a contact and/or and attitudinal divide between the locations.

We will now, briefly, turn to the analysis of variants of /k/ according to *like*, due to this word's apparent direct effect on linguistic environment (Figure 5.11), as well as on the social distribution of the glottal/zero release form.

5.3.3 The special case of *like*

The analysis here focuses on 'intrusive' *like* (Underhill 1988), that is *like* as a discourse marker rather than a verb or conjunction. There were no instances of quotative *be* + *like* (see Buchstaller 2001) in any of the interviews, as none of the participants reported another's speech. While there were some 'systematically distributed' instances of *like* occurring pre-sentential or pre-clausally (see Tagliamonte 2005; Romaine and Lange 1991) the majority of *like* occurred 'non-systematically' as a filler during a pause (Underhill 1988; Anderson, 2000), hence the frequent occurrence of *like* (and therefore /k/, see Figure 5.12) pre-pausally (cf. Miller and Weinert 1995, discussion of clause-final *like* in Scottish English, which functions as an intensifier in a counter-argument).

Table 5.7 confirms that discursive use of *like* vastly outweighs standard forms (verb, conjunctive, or "similar to", coded in this section as non-discursive) with a considerable

increase over time in both Ormskirk and Southport speech.[94] Though there is less than a 20% increase of discursive *like* between the older and middle-aged speakers, we see up to a 40% increase of use in younger speech for both localities ($p<0.01$). Indeed, the production of discursive *like* by the younger speakers, particularly in the middle-classes, outweighs their production of other words with final /k/ in the dataset. The use of *like* as a discourse marker rather than a verb or conjunction as a feature of younger speakers' speech is widely reported (see Chambers 1995; Anderson, 2000; Tagliamonte 2005).

Table 5.7: Usage of <like> according to age and location (%)

	Younger [16-19]			**Middle-aged [40-55]**			**Older (Archive) [70+]**		
	Sou (WC)	**Sou (MC)**	**Orm (MC)**	**Sou (WC)**	**Sou (MC)**	**Orm (MC)**	**Sou (WC)**	**Sou (MC)**	**Orm (MC)**
Disc. *like*	20.4	35.0	60.6	7.5	12.3	17.2	1.5	11.6	14.6
Non Disc *like*	15.1	2.0	2.2	6.7	4.8	0.7	2.9	2.3	0.7
All other (k) words	66.5	63.0	37.2	85.8	82.9	82.1	95.5	86.0	84.8
N	**502**	**246**	**137**	**310**	**146**	**151**	**263**	**129**	**151**

The discursive form often occurred sentence finally or word-final, pre-pausally, acting as a discourse filler when the speaker was thinking of responses to questions, for example, 'I don't know, like [long pause]'. This, then, accounts for the increased proportion of *like* and therefore [ʔ/Ø] ($p<0.01$) in [V_##] ($p<0.05$), as Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14 show. Glottal stop in all other words other than discursive and non-discursive like occurs less than 10%. The salience of *like* (Tagliamonte 2005; Drager and Hay 2012) and the use of glottal stop and [x] with discursive *like*, will be returned to in the discussion (Section 5.6). In addition, the discussion

[94] See Underhill (1988: 234).

considers whether the glottal replacement of /k/ and or [x] form can be considered as stylistic markers (see Drager and Hay 2012).

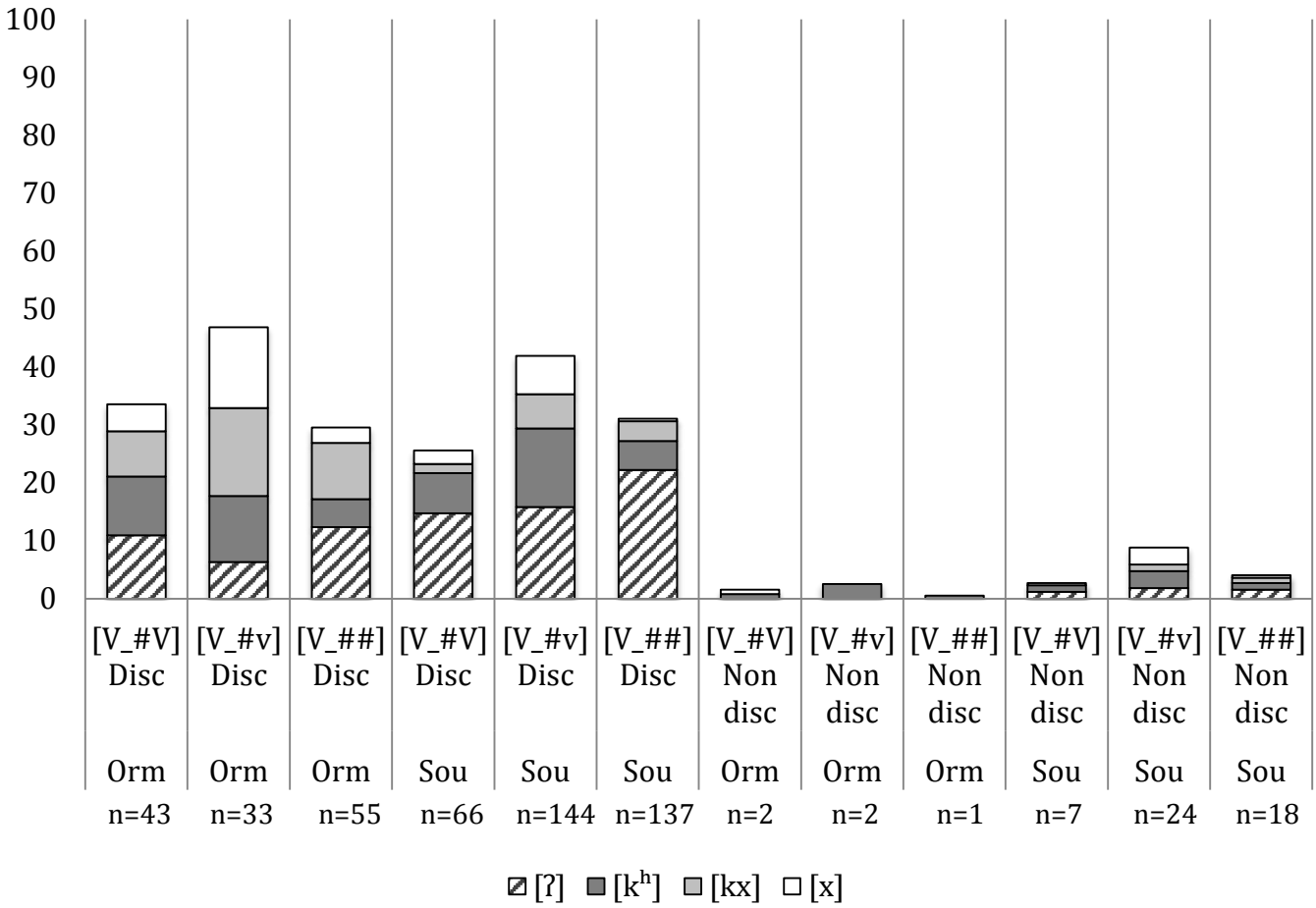


Figure 5.13: Distribution of /k/ variants according to <like> and linguistic factors in Southport and Ormskirk (%).

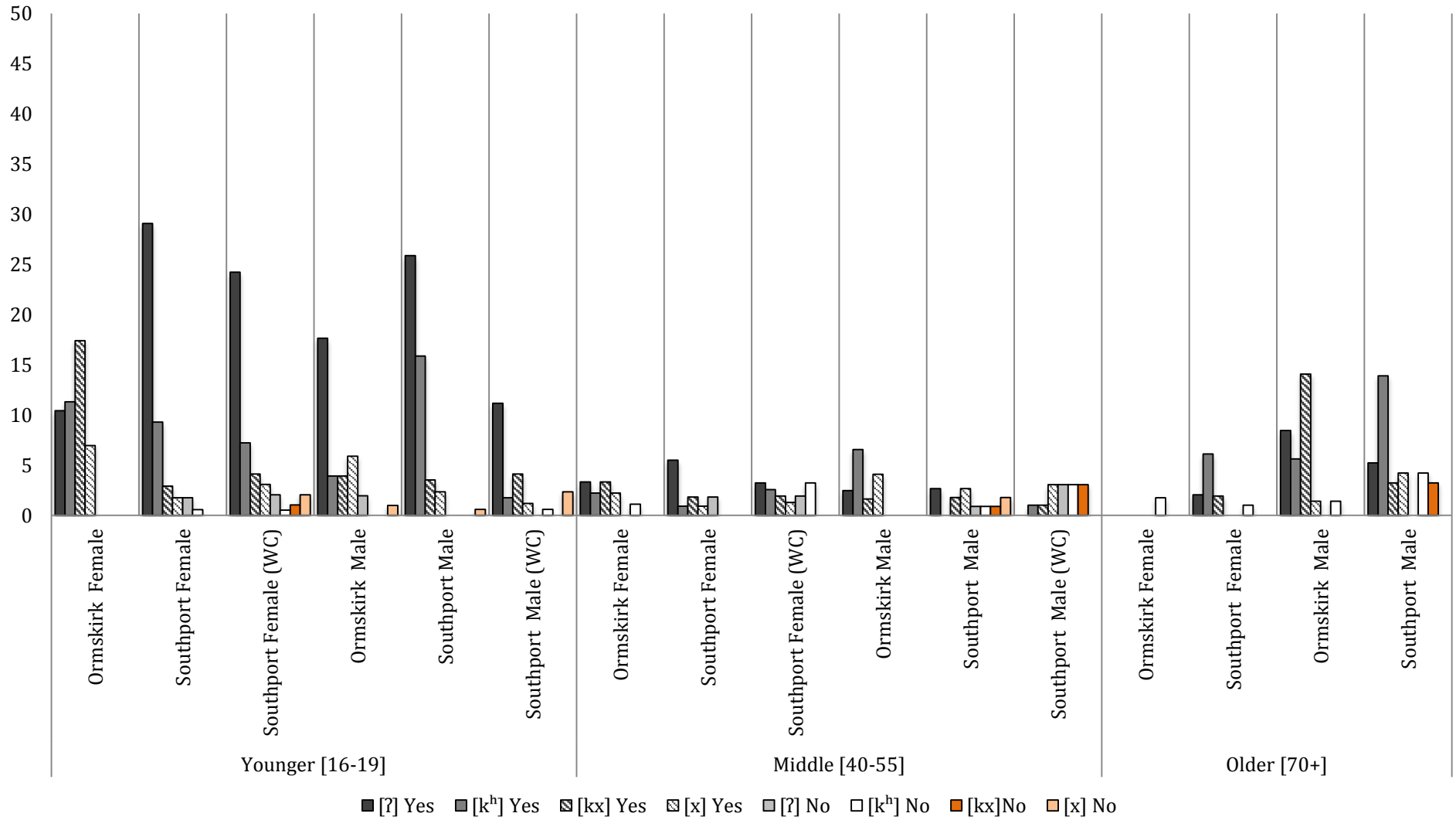


Figure 5.14: Distribution of /k/ variants of discursive (yes) and non-discursive (no) <like> according to age, location, class and gender (%).

As demonstrated in the previous sections, the glottal variant is most prominent in younger speech ($p<0.01$). Southport speakers have a higher frequency of glottal/zero release with discursive *like* ($p<0.01$), while the Ormskirk females produce the highest frequency of fricated /k/ with discursive *like*. Overall, across all words in the dataset this amounted to 81% of glottal/zero release of /k/, with a preference for middle-class speech ($p<0.05$). Usage of [ʔ/∅] in discursive *like* in Ormskirk younger speech is relatively lower than in Southport speech. The Scouse forms of /k/ for younger speakers, as discussed in Chapter 4, are particularly associated with the word *like*. Hence, the relationship of the glottal/zero release variants with discursive *like* here could indicate that speakers are avoiding using [x]. If this is the case, the younger Ormskirk speakers' higher proportion of [x] in discourse marker *like* ($p<0.05$) is notable.

5.4 Summary of /k/

Compared with /t/, there is very little change over time in regard to the Scouse variants, as the younger participants display an overall average of approximately 30% of [kx] and [x]. Indeed within this age group, the Southport working-class speakers displayed more use of these forms than their middle-class counterparts, with the younger Ormskirk speakers replicating the production of the Southport working-class speakers.

As expected, the change over time with increasing [ʔ/∅] proved significant in the model. The model also highlighted that a positive attitude (quantified data) towards Scouse correlated with a lower frequency of the glottal form.[95]

[95] As mentioned in Chapter 4, the actual scores included in the regression model were direct from the questionnaire data, so that a score of 5 = positive and a score of 1 = negative. The scores in Chapter 4 have been inverted for consistency with the other attitude scores which display a score of 5 = very negative and 1 = very positive.

The regression model did not show any independent significant factors with the distribution of the standard form. Due to the relatively high use of this form in younger speech, however, the model produced a significant interaction between age and contact as younger speakers who use this form relatively frequently have the most frequent contact with Liverpool overall.

Ormskirk speakers significantly favour the affricate form. Similarly, Southport working-class speakers show significant use of this form. Word-final pre-pausal environment also proved significant, with [kx] being adopted in [V_##], while [x] is rejected in this position. Contact and attitude score did not prove significant independently though a number of interactions were established in the model with these factors in the distribution of the affricate form. The interaction between age and contact indicates that, due to younger speakers' more frequent travel to Liverpool, contact could be the causal factor encouraging the adoption of this Scouse variant through accommodation. Equally, an interaction is apparent between attitude to the Scouse accent and age – a correlation between positive attitudes towards Scouse in the younger age group and an increase in the production of [x].

Finally, the regression model indicated that the higher use of [x] in male speech is significant. As with the affricate form, a number of interactions were highlighted with regard to contact and attitude. First, the interaction between age (younger) and contact demonstrates that despite this group's higher average contact with Liverpool, this age group significantly rejects this form. This is perhaps due to this group's preference for the affricate form instead, particularly in the Ormskirk younger speakers' speech. Interestingly, an interaction was produced between a negative attitude towards Scouse and location, with those harbouring a negative opinion of the Scouse accent in Southport producing fewer fricative forms.

5.5 Discussion

The duration of the release for /t/ in word-final, pre-pausal position is significantly longer in Ormskirk compared with Southport speech. This may increase the perception of Ormskirk speech as more Scouse sounding (yet in intervocalic positions, Southport speakers displayed a longer duration of release compared with Ormskirk speech). In

addition, /t/ → [h] is significantly more frequent in Southport speech. On the surface, Southport speakers, in spite of the less frequent contact with Liverpool than Ormskirk speakers and comparatively negative attitudes towards the Scouse accent and the city of Liverpool, would appear to be more similar with the Scouse accent in terms of /t/.

However, these findings are negligible when we consider the occurrence of the Scouse forms of /t/ as a whole. Both Southport and Ormskirk speakers demonstrated less than 10% of /t/ → [h] in the speech of the younger participants, and [ts] and [s] showed only a marginal but insignificant majority in younger Southport speech compared with Ormskirk younger speakers. In addition, the marginal difference between locations in younger speech is trivial in comparison to the reduction of Scouse forms over time, which is apparent in both Southport as well as Ormskirk speech. It is clear, then, that contrary to predictions of the influence of Liverpool as the largest city nearest to Southport and Ormskirk, the fricated/lenited forms of /t/ that are typical of Scouse (Watson 2007) are not continuing in their spread to either Southport or Ormskirk speech. Instead, the increase in the glottal variant over time to 90% in younger speech, as well as the high proportion of /t/ → [ɾ], particularly in middle-aged speech, in both locations has resulted in the depletion of the Scouse variants ([ts] and [s]) that are apparent in the older (archive) speech.

The statistics showed contact with Liverpool and age to be significant for the production of the glottal stop (p=0.03); younger speakers on average have more contact with Liverpool (Chapter 4). Although the glottal stop is said to be increasing in younger Liverpool speech (Watson 2011, personal communication) it is a rare phenomenon in Scouse (see Watson 2007). In view of this, the innovation of glottal stop in Southport and Ormskirk speech is unlikely to have come from Liverpool as caused by *hierarchical diffusion* (see Trudgill 1986). Instead /t/ in both places is considered part of a levelling process, which can be seen as an innovation that is sporadically spreading around the UK (see also Llamas 2007 for /t/ in Middlesbrough). Indeed, the appearance of a number of widespread forms, such as T-glottalling and TH-fronting, are seemingly unpredictable by any model of diffusion that predicts speaker interaction. As the origin of innovation is unclear, the spread of /t/ → [ʔ] cannot be described as *wave diffusion* (cf. Trudgill 1986, for a discussion of STRUT fronting "radiating" from London to the

surrounding area) given this form's co-occurrence in Glasgow, Scotland (Stuart-Smith et al. 2007) and London (Williams and Kerswill 1999).

Similarly, the origin of /t/ → [ɾ] that is particularly apparent in middle-aged speech, is unclear. Watson and Clark (2011) report a considerable proportion of this form in Liverpool speech, which is found in a similar distribution in Southport and Ormskirk speech, predominantly in /t/ → /r/ environments. However, though it is not as frequent in UK accents compared with General American (Rindal 2010), it is a widely reported feature in British speech (Tollfree 1999, London; Carr 1991, North East; Wells 1982, General Northern; Cruttenden 2001, Lancashire and West Yorkshire, and Hughes et al. 2005, Midlands and Liverpool). In view of this, it cannot be confirmed that the tapped form is expanding from Liverpool and not elsewhere. Further to this, there was a negative correlation between contact and numerous social factors: age ($p=0.001$), and gender ($p=0.02$), suggesting that infrequent contact with Liverpool promotes the use of this variant.

Speaker attitudes are also suggested to influence the use of supralocal variants; the negative attitudes in the middle generation, and negative attitudes of the Southport working class, as shown in Chapter 4, significantly correlate with the use of the tapped variant. The glottal variant follows a similar trend. In word final pre-pausal environment, where glottal stop occur most frequently, the statistics indicated an interaction between attitude towards Scouse and location, as well as attitude towards Liverpool and location; Southport speakers with more negative attitudes toward the Scouse accent and the city of Liverpool, have a higher frequency of glottal stop. In the light of the significance of negative attitudes towards the Scouse accent and the city of Liverpool associating with the use of supralocal forms of /t/, it could be suggested that speakers are aware of Scouse forms and are rejecting them (see, for instance, Wells 1982, for a discussion of ideological factors preventing the spread of [ɑ] to the north of England).

If this is indeed the case, speakers would (a) have to be aware of the fricated forms of /t/ and (b) associate them with an identity that they reject (see Watt 2000, for a discussion of young men in Newcastle avoiding local forms, which they associate with older Newcastle speech). Although none of the participants commented on fricated (or

debuccalised) /t/ when asked to describe a Scouse accent, younger speakers did, describe [χ], in the word *like* while middle aged speakers commented on the "air" sound in the word girl (Chapter 4). While it is clear that speakers recognise these sounds and index them as Scouse, it is not clear whether they associate these sounds only with the lexical items they report them in. Furthermore, it is not clear whether these speakers are reporting the use of the lexical items themselves rather than the pronunciation of these words. Finally, while speakers commented that the [χ], is a 'guttural sound' and stigmatised, it is not clear whether they perceive [x] as such, or whether they perceive this form at all.

As we have seen, the glottal form is evidenced to replace /k/ as well as /t/, particularly in younger speech in both Southport and Ormskirk speech. This is not wholly unexpected as /k/ → [ʔ] is a reported feature of Lancaster (Lancashire) speech (Hirst 1914). This form could therefore indicate a Lancashire influence on Southport and Ormskirk speech. Further to this, /k/ → [ʔ] is significantly prevalent in a salient lexical item: discursive *like* (Anderson 2000). As Tagliamonte (2005) and Chambers (1995) note, *like* as a discourse marker is apparent in child speech, but it is around about the age of 16 that its use substantially increases. Drager and Hay (2012), similarly find, in their study of year 13 and final year students in a high school in New Zealand, that discursive *like* (and quotative *like*) in younger speech is variably produced with either released /k/ or glottal stop; the release of the /k/ in either discursive and quotative *like* depended on group membership. Drager and Hay identify two social groups: girls who frequently spend their free time in the common room and girls who do not. Those which are positive non-common room girls were 'more likely to release /k/ in the quotative' (p. 66), while common room girls were 'more likely to release /k/ in the discourse particle' (p. 67). Further to this, Drager and Hay find that the more central members of each social group were more likely to comply to this trend, evidencing the production of /k/ in discursive and quotative *like* as an identity marker.

As the glottal form is most prevalent in this salient lexical item in Southport and Ormskirk younger speech, it is argued here that the salience of [x] is noted in this form and is avoided. Attitude also proved to be significant in the regression model, with a negative attitude towards the Scouse accent associating with the use of the glottal

variant. Indeed, as evidenced in Chapter 4, Southport speakers expressed negative opinions towards [x], stating that it sounded 'guttural' and as though 'someone is clearing their throat'. They also stated that this was a feature of Scouse and not a product of their own speech. In terms of linguistics market, the finding here is converse to that of Llamas (2007); the Newcastle accent is perceived positively in the media, therefore creating an attractive linguistic model. However, as Llamas (2007) notes, it is unlikely, due to the hostility expressed during interview that these speakers associate with a Newcastle identity. Instead speakers have reinterpreted these positively perceived linguistic forms to be native to Middlesbrough speech. In Southport, while speakers similarly expressed hostility towards Liverpool, they likewise expressed hostility towards the accent.

Unlike /t/, however, where we see a change over time in favour of non-Scouse forms [ʔ] (and [ɾ] in middle-aged speech), conversely /k/ Scouse forms remain relatively prominent in younger speech; at the exclusion of discursive forms of *like,* [x] is evident in Southport speech. In view of this there are two possible conclusions here: (a) speakers are only aware of [x] in the word *like,* which is itself salient (Tagliamtone 2005), or (b) Southport speakers perceive a difference between their production of /k/ and Scouse production; perhaps, as indicated in Chapter 4, Southport speakers perceive the uvular production of /k/ in Scouse (which is not apparent in their own speech), while the velar form [x] is entering the accent below the level of consciousness. In view of the commentary in Chapter 4, speakers are not assimilating to a Scouse linguistic market.

As Britain (2012) argues, speaker attitudes may also have an indirect effect (rather than a direct judgement of the linguistic form, see for example Campbell-Kibler 2007, Johnstone 2008) on language via the effect that attitude can have on speakers' choice of social interaction. The more infrequent the contact the more negative the attitudes are likely to become; the intensity of these boundaries are set to increase and divergence is set to continue (Britain 2004, *spatiality*). The rejection of these forms as a potential consequence of contact and/or attitude may provide a rationale for the younger Southport speakers' use of the glottal and tapped variant, but the younger Ormskirk speakers equally orientate to these widespread linguistic forms in spite of their more positive attitudes and more frequent contact with the city. As a consequence of this

result, it could be argued that the use of supralocal forms is a product of speaker stylisation; younger speakers are consciously adopting this form, perhaps due to association with younger or perhaps 'urban' speech. Bennett (2012) states, in his discussion of *chavspeak* (a form of language that is associated with a lower working-class stereotype that utilises features of 'Black Englishes' to index urbanness), that glottal stops and other widespread forms are prescribed features of this stylised form of speech (see Cheshire et al. 2011, for a discussion of Multicultural London English and 'urban identity'; Wells 1984, for a discussion of, the influence of London in the Anglophone world). Further to this, Bennett notes that this form of speech is broadcast frequently in the media. It could be that the younger speakers of Southport and Ormskirk are part of a broad acquisition process that is arguably driven by these forms availability through mass media (see Stuart Smith et al. 2007 for a discussion of media influence on the spread of supralocal forms).

In Ormskirk, on the other hand, speakers did not comment on the use of [x] in Scouse, and, like Southport speakers, Ormskirk speakers produced approximately 30% Scouse forms for /k/. Further to this, Ormskirk speakers significantly produced longer fricated forms than Southport speakers, increasing the perception of Ormskirk speech as more Scouse sounding. In addition, these fricated forms are significantly more frequent in Ormskirk speech than in Southport speech. It is argued, here, that in view of the perceived salience of fricated /k/ (Watson 2006), their more frequent production in Ormskirk speech is perhaps a more prominent finding compared to Scouse forms of /t/.

In terms of spatiality, Ormskirk speaker's inclusion of Liverpool in their social sphere is considered to be central in promoting these speakers positive attitudes towards the city, and acquisition of Scouse forms. As the data analysis revealed, positive attitudes towards the Scouse accent and Liverpool significantly associated with the use of the affricate variant. In addition, younger speakers more frequent contact and more positive attitudes towards the Scouse accent correlated with the use of the affricate form.

Similarly, for the fully fricated form ([x]) the younger speakers more frequent contact with Liverpool proved significant in the production of this form. Equally, the working-class Southport speakers infrequent contact with Liverpool proved significant with their infrequent use of this variant in their speech. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 4 the

negative attitudes of the younger Southport speakers toward Liverpool, due to football rivalry, significant associated with their lack of use of fricated forms. This negative attitude equally associates with the comparatively little contact the younger working-class speakers have with the city of Liverpool compared to the middle-class younger speakers.

5.6 Chapter Summary

The frequency data for /t/, at the exclusion of debuccalisation, highlighted no significant difference between the localities, due to the very marginal preference for Scouse forms of /t/ in Southport speech. Moreover, though the regression model highlighted a difference in location for /t/ → [h], both localities showed an increase of this form over time, although remaining typically below 10% in the speech of the younger participants, due to the massive increase in glottal stop. However, location and age did prove significant for the duration of release of Scouse variants of /t/ with Ormskirk younger speakers producing longer release periods compared with their Southport counterparts.

Overall, while we see a change over time with the variants of /t/ in favour of non-Scouse forms [ʔ] and [ɾ], for /k/ Scouse forms remaining relatively prominent in younger speech. Indeed, both location and age proved to be significant in the regression model for determining the distribution of the variants of /k/. The frequency of /k/ lenition in Ormskirk speech and the increased duration of this form is considered a more prominent finding, compared with /t/, due to the apparent salience of the Scouse forms of /k/ (Watson 2006).

CHAPTER SIX

Results and discussion III: NURSE and SQUARE

6 Introduction

The results show that, in most cases, Ormskirk speakers have the lowest Pillai scores overall in all age groups. While some older and middle-aged speakers have centralised SQUARE forms, NURSE remains in a central position. For younger speakers the opposite is apparent; the NURSE vowel is gradually becoming more fronted and raised towards the standard SQUARE space, and SQUARE is usually in a standard position, particularly in read speech. The fronting and raising of NURSE is significantly apparent in the speech of younger Ormskirk females. Meanwhile the vowels in Southport speech remain relatively distinct compared to Ormskirk speakers. In Chapter 4 we saw that younger Ormskirk females have the most positive attitudes toward the Scouse accent and frequent contact with Liverpool. Yet, while gender and contact score proved significant in interaction for the fronting and raising of NURSE, attitude and contact did not prove significant otherwise.

Style only proved to be significant for SQUARE. This is surprising as some speakers showed an awareness of fronted NURSE forms when asked to do an impression of Scouse during the interview (Chapter 4). The SQUARE vowel is widespread for younger speakers, from a standard to centralised position; however, the cluster of forms is more concentrated in the standard vowel space of SQUARE in read speech compared with conversation speech data.

6.1 Individual conversation and reading data

This chapter presents a two-part analysis of NURSE and SQUARE. First, do Southport and Ormskirk speakers have a merger or a distinction? We would expect that both Southport and Ormskirk speech will have some form of merger, given that Lancashire to the north and Liverpool to the south have merged these vowel classes. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, the nature of the mergers in Lancashire and Liverpool vary in direction; in Lancashire the merger is perceptually centralised, so that SQUARE is merged with NURSE (Barras 2006). Liverpool, on the other hand, has a more fronted

merger with NURSE perceptually more raised and fronted towards SQUARE, particularly in younger and working-class speakers (Knowles 1973). This chapter, then, analyses whether the NURSE vowel in Southport and/or Ormskirk speech will be fronted and raised towards SQUARE, as in Liverpool, or whether SQUARE will be centralised towards NURSE, as is more typical of Lancashire. In view of the gravity model (Trudgill 1974), it is predicted that NURSE will be fronted and raised to SQUARE, the expected direction of change in view of Liverpool's hypothesised influence. However, as this Chapter will show, attitudinal factors are modifying this expected direction of change.

The analysis will, first, visually examine the distribution of vowels (plotted using R) in terms of the relative position of NURSE and SQUARE in the vowel space. The tokens of NURSE and tokens of SQUARE were run in separate mixed effects linear regression models with Formant 1 and Formant 2 values run as dependent variants. This is to ascertain the significant social and linguistic factors conditioning the F1 and F2 movements for each vowel class. This follows the hypothesis that a high F1 and/or F2 in the NURSE vowel is indicative of a convergence with Scouse (Knowles 1973). A low F1 and/or F2 value for SQUARE, on the other hand, would be more indicative of a convergence with Lancashire English (see Barras 2006). Age, gender, class and location[96], contact, attitude score of the Scouse accent and attitude score of Liverpool (city and people) were included as independent variables in the regression model. Speaker and word were run as random effects. The linear model also examines the following segment, which were coded as follows: d, s, z, # and so on (see Hall-Lew 2009). It was decided to code the following segments phonetically as it was unclear whether place and/or manner of articulation after the vowel would have an effect (see Barras 2006). Few minimal pairs exist between the NURSE and SQUARE sets, with the majority of SQUARE vowels being word final, e.g. *hair, fair, care, share*, unless followed by a morpheme boundary, such as *fared, cared, hairy* (see Wells 1982). All speakers in the dataset were non-rhotic (cf. Barras, 2006) though following /r/ was frequent in the conversation data and in the passage in words followed by a morpheme

[96] Location and Class comprise a single independent category in the linear regression model, as Ormskirk is homogenous in terms of social class. To overcome co-linearity in the model, speakers were categorized into 3 groups: Southport middle class, Southport working class and Ormskirk. The Southport middle class was selected as the reference group in the model to compare the effect of class in Southport and the effect of location between Southport and Ormskirk.

boundary, such as *furry*, *scary*.[97] Therefore /r/ was also included as a following environment. The following segment was not found to have a significant effect on the first or second formant of the vowel classes.

Second, the distances between these vowel sets are analysed using the Pillai-Bartlett Statistic, otherwise known as the Pillai score (see Hay et al 2006, Hall-Lew 2010). This measure is considered to be the most appropriate for this particular dataset for two reasons. The first, as Hall-Lew (2010) states, is that the Pillai score is thought to be a more accurate MANOVA (multivariate analysis of variance) measure of mergers by approximation and mergers by expansion. The vowel clusters in both types of merger are unstable and are therefore predicted to be similar in their shape (see Hall-Lew 2010). As Nycz and Hall-Lew (2014) explain:

> Pillai score values range from 0 to 1 in all cases, with 0 indicating no difference between two clusters and 1 indicating no similarity. As with mixed effect regression, including phonological context in the MANOVA allows for a calculation of difference that takes into account possible imbalances between the clusters with respect to their representation in different contexts

The data here comprises both reading task and conversation data. Furthermore, as will become clear in the discussion of the distribution of the vowel classes, neither the NURSE nor the SQUARE set demonstrate stability. The combination of observing the relative position of NURSE and SQUARE in terms of the spread (fronted or centralised) and degree of overlap (merged or distinct) of these vowel classes should provide some indication as to the orientation of Southport and Ormskirk speakers in regard to these linguistic variables. As the results here will demonstrate, Ormskirk speech is undergoing merger, where NURSE is comparatively more fronted and while SQUARE is also shifting to a centralised position. Southport speakers' NURSE~SQUARE, meanwhile, remains comparatively distinct.

[97] Barras (2006) found that rhoticity, still present in some of the older Lancashire and Greater Manchester speakers (see Chambers and Trudgill 1980), has a fronting (rather than the expected centralising) effect on the vowel. Following /r/ did not have an effect on the current dataset; however, /l/ was removed from the current dataset due to the effect on the vowel.

Figure 6.1 shows the vowel distribution for NURSE and SQUARE for all male speakers in Southport and Ormskirk. Schwa is also included in these plots to give an indication of how centralised and/or fronted the NURSE and SQUARE vowels are compared to schwa's position. The vowels are Lobanov normalised (see Flynn 2011) and plotted using R.[98]

The Pillai Score is also included in the figures in this section as a useful measure to determine the similarity of spread of the vowel sets, and consequently to give us some indication of their proximity. However, the Pillai Score does not indicate the area of the vowel space that the vowels occupy. Indeed, while the Pillai Score tells us that the speaker has a distinction, it does not tell us whether the vowels have undergone flip-flop (see Hall-Lew 2009, Labov 1994). For instance, it could be that where the Pillai score indicates a distinction, for that speaker the SQUARE vowel may be in a centralised position (associated with Lancashire speech), while the NURSE vowel is realised as fronted and raised (typical of Scouse pronunciation). For this reason, the Pillai Score is presented here with a visual representation of the vowel space and both will be taken into consideration to examine the realisation and proximity of NURSE and SQUARE vowels.

As there were only two recordings of older Ormskirk speakers, the data of older Skelmersdale (10 miles to the east of Ormskirk) speakers have also been included (see Chapter 3 for a discussion of these speakers' inclusion).[99] A low Pillai score does not reach significance, while all high Pillai scores are significant: '[t]he point at which the phonemes merge (in production at least) comes when there is no statistical difference between their pronunciations' (Maguire et al. 2013: 232). The lower the Pillai Score, the more merged the vowel classes. For example, Figure 6.1 shows that speaker Sou_OM04 has a lower Pillai score than speaker Sou_OM02; therefore, Sou_OM02 has a greater distinction between the vowels than Sou_OM04 (which is visually

[98] See Di Canio's online blog (http://christiandicanio.blogspot.co.uk/2013_10_01_archive.html), which discusses the methods for displaying vowel mergers.

[99] Speakers have been coded as follows: (sk) = Skelmersdale, Orm = Ormskirk, Sou = Southport, OM = older male, OF = older female, MM = middle-aged male, MF = middle-aged female, YM = younger male, YF = younger female. These speakers are included in the discussion of the results here as a reference of how the vowel classes were realised prior to the boundary change.

evident).[100] However, a low p-value does not indicate a merger. As Nycz and Hall-Lew (2014) explain, a speaker may show overlap between vowels but the speaker may still perceive a contrast.

The relative distribution of the NURSE and SQUARE of the older speakers in Figures 6.1 and 6.2 shows that the male speakers have less of a distinction between NURSE and SQUARE compared with the females in both Ormskirk/Skelmersdale and Southport, whose vowels are relatively distinct. However, there is considerably more overlap between the NURSE and SQUARE of the Ormskirk/Skelmersdale females (excluding speaker Sk_OF02); in comparison to their Southport counterparts, the NURSE vowel extends towards a raised position, though equally the SQUARE vowel is spread from a standard position towards the centralised NURSE space.

[100] As mentioned earlier, older (archive) speakers are excluded from the linear regression analysis as their social class, and contact and attitude towards Scouse and Liverpool were unobtainable.

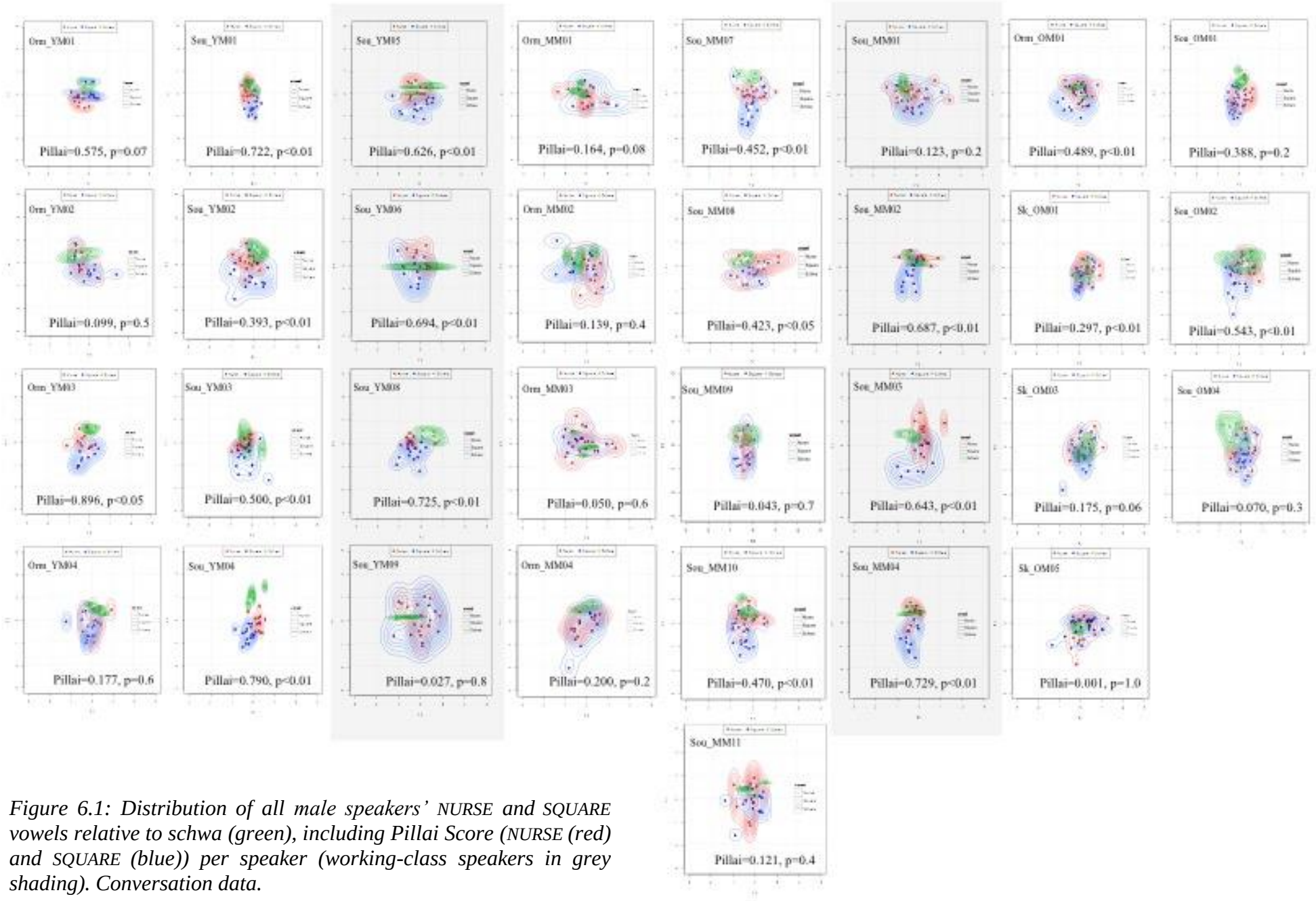


Figure 6.1: Distribution of all male speakers' NURSE and SQUARE vowels relative to schwa (green), including Pillai Score (NURSE (red) and SQUARE (blue)) per speaker (working-class speakers in grey shading). Conversation data.

As the Pillai Scores indicate, the older Southport males, similarly, display higher Pillai Scores compared with their Skelmersdale and Ormskirk counterparts with the exception of OM02. Although Orm_OM01's NURSE vowel appears to be completely merged with SQUARE, the contours show that the concentration of NURSE and SQUARE forms are not entirely overlapping, resulting in a higher Pillai Score compared with Sk_OM01. Of the Skelmersdale males, three of the speakers show low Pillai scores. The Skelmersdale females display a similar pattern, which tells us that, comparing the datasets by location, the NURSE and SQUARE vowels are comparatively less distinct in Ormskirk and Skelmersdale than in Southport speech.

The Southport working-class speakers in the middle-aged group stand out from the rest of the middle-aged males, as the majority of these speakers, with the exception of Sou_MM01, maintain a distinction compared to Ormskirk speakers and their Southport middle-class counterparts. The Southport middle-aged, middle-class males, however, still have a higher Pillai Score when compared with the Ormskirk middle-aged males. As the contour plots reveal, in Sou_MM08 and MM11's case, though the sets are overlapping, the spread of the NURSE vowel covers a large area, resulting in a less concentrated overlap with SQUARE. For speaker Sou_MM10, the SQUARE vowel is more concentrated in its original vowel space, while NURSE is more centrally clustered around schwa. This is not the case for the majority of the Ormskirk middle-aged males, where the SQUARE vowel has now shifted to a more centralised position. The distribution of the NURSE forms is quite widespread, as the NURSE vowel extends from the schwa to the SQUARE vowel space.

Similar to the middle-aged working class males, the younger Southport working-class males are maintaining a distinction between the vowel classes, with the exception of Sou_YM09 whose NURSE and SQUARE vowels are merged by expansion from a centralised to a raised position. The younger middle-class Southport males are similarly maintaining a distinction between the vowel sets, as are two of the Ormskirk males. Similar to their middle-aged counterparts, Orm_M04 and Orm_M02 show a merger between these vowels. Like Sou-YM09, Orm_M04 and Orm_M02 demonstrate a widespread use of both vowel sets from a centralised to a more raised position in the vowel space.

In Figure 6.2 (below), the difference between Southport and Ormskirk female speakers in terms of the overlap of NURSE and SQUARE is immediately evident; the Ormskirk females' vowels are considerably more merged than their Southport counterparts'. In addition, the Pillai Scores for the younger Ormskirk females are generally lower than the Ormskirk middle-aged females due to the younger females' NURSE vowels overlapping entirely with SQUARE. Indeed, the Ormskirk younger and middle-aged females have the most raised ($p<0.01$) and fronted ($p<0.01$) NURSE (see Table 6.1 which presents the significant effects of the regression model). The younger Ormskirk females in particular lead the fronting of this vowel ($p<0.05$), which is visible here from the distance of the NURSE vowel from schwa compared to other speaker groups inclusive of the male speakers in Figure 6.1. In comparison, the NURSE vowel of the younger Southport speakers is showing an extension to a raised position for most speakers, though the concentration of this vowel class is still clustered in a more centralised position around schwa. There is also less of an overlap between the NURSE and SQUARE sets when compared with the middle-aged Southport and all Ormskirk speakers.

Speaker Orm_F02 is the exception; this speaker has a distinction between the vowels yet her NURSE vowel is not a centralised position but is fronted and raised in the vowel space. The spread of both of these vowels from central to raised and fronted was audibly evident within a single speaker's speech. This spread, as the figures here suggest, was particularly evident in the speech of younger Ormskirk speakers. For example, in conversation, Ormskirk speaker F02 (Figure 6.2) produced the sentence "I was skitting *(making fun of)* her hair", where *her* was realised as [hẹː] and *hair* as [hɛː]. Without interruption, speaker F02 repeated the sentence; however, *hair* was realised [hëː]. Overall, this speaker's NURSE words, selected from conversation speech, had an audibly fronted and raised realisation, while less than half of the SQUARE words had a clearly centralised realisation. This distribution was similar for most young female Ormskirk speakers.

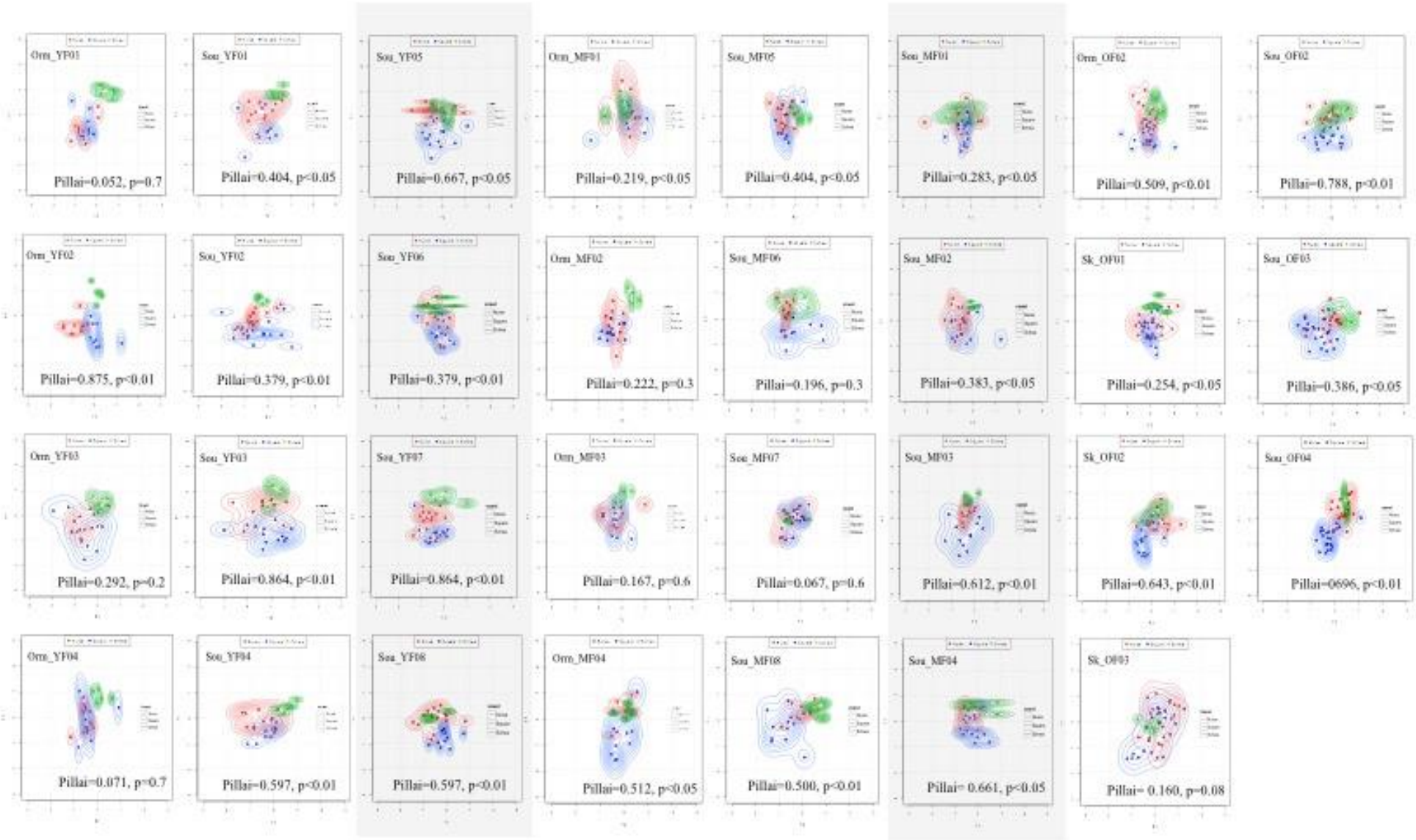


Figure 6.2: Distribution of all female speakers' NURSE and SQUARE vowels relative to schwa,(green) including Pillai Score (NURSE (red) and SQUARE (blue)) per speaker (working-class speakers in grey shading). Conversation data.

As Figures 6.1 and 6.2 show, the majority of the Southport working-class speakers follow the trend of maintaining a distinction between the NURSE and SQUARE vowel sets. The working-class speakers' NURSE vowel is overlapping the schwa, indicating that NURSE is in a centralised position. Although there are some instances of NURSE vowels in the SQUARE space, the NURSE vowels for most speakers do not deviate far from a centralised position compared with Ormskirk speech. Indeed for most speakers, the spread of SQUARE appears relatively larger than the spread of NURSE, particularly in younger female free speech. The SQUARE vowel in Ormskirk speech, in particular, for both male and female speakers appears to be spread from a more centralised position, associated with Lancashire speech, to a more standard raised position. Social factors did not demonstrate a significant effect on the F1 or F2 of SQUARE in the regression model due to consistently broad spread of this vowel for all speakers.

The middle-class, middle-aged female speakers show more of a mixture. The Ormskirk females (excluding Orm_MF04) have comparably more merged NURSE and SQUARE vowels; the NURSE vowel is extending towards SQUARE, though unlike their younger counterparts, a higher number of NURSE forms remain in a centralised position. Meanwhile, similar to their working-class counterparts, the middle-class Southport females are maintaining a distinction between NURSE and SQUARE. Social class did not prove significant in the regression model for NURSE or SQUARE. As noted earlier, the extension of SQUARE to a centralised space is the most notable spread for the middle-aged female speakers.

Table 6.1: Significant effects for NURSE

NURSE		Estimate	MCMC mean	HPD95 upper	HPD95 lower	pMCMC	(Pr(>|t|)
	F1						
	(intercept)	0.0685	0.0667	-0.036	0.17	0.194	0.209
Indepen.	Orm	0.1084	0.1075	0.0128	0.2106	0.0344	0.0359
Interact	Orm: Gender_M	-0.1235	0.1239	0.0503	0.1927	0.0008	0.001
	F2						
	(intercept)	0.3185	0.3219	0.0695	0.5789	0.016	0.025
Indepen.	Gender_M	-0.2112	-0.2102	-0.3069	-0.1061	0.0001	0.0001
	Age_younger	0.1099	0.1105	0.0063	0.2077	0.0348	0.0488
Interact	Orm: Gender_M	-0.1973	-0.1306	-0.0311	-0.2431	0.04	0.041
	Contact: Gender_M	0.1112	0.5752	0.6126	0.021	0.021	0.032

Table 6.2: Significant effects for SQUARE

SQUARE		Estimate	MCMC mean	HPD95 upper	HPD95 lower	pMCMC	(Pr(>|t|)
	F1						
	(intercept)	0.4134	0.4106	0.2106	0.606	0.0001	0.0001
Interactions	Style_read:Orm	-0.1912	-0.19	-0.3487	-0.035	0.0164	0.0201
	Style_read: Attitude_City	0.1345	0.1325	0.0303	0.233	0.0116	0.0094
	F2						
	No significant independent effects or interactions						

Figures 6.3 and 6.4 show the reading task vowel clusters for NURSE and SQUARE relative to schwa for younger and middle-aged speakers in Southport and Ormskirk, and individual Pillai Scores are also displayed here to give a clearer picture of the degree of merger and position of the NURSE and SQUARE vowels in the vowel space.[101] All data, conversational and reading, were statistically assessed in the same model but coded separately, with speech style run as an independent factor in the linear regression model. Thus, the social effects that proved to be significant in the section above are significant for the data presented in the Figures in this section.

[101] Older speakers are not included here, as the interviews conducted by the NWSA did not include a reading task.

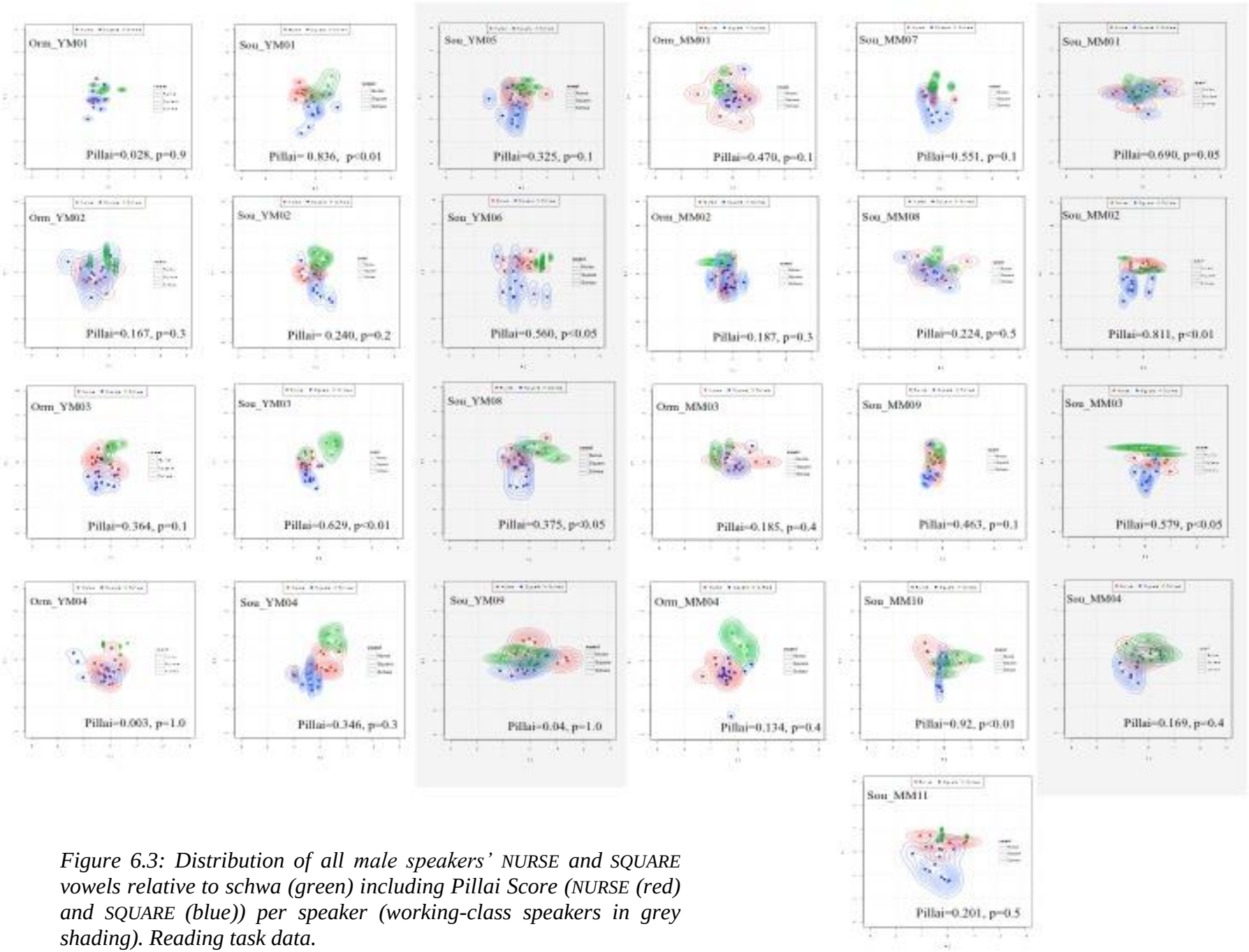


Figure 6.3: Distribution of all male speakers' NURSE and SQUARE vowels relative to schwa (green) including Pillai Score (NURSE (red) and SQUARE (blue)) per speaker (working-class speakers in grey shading). Reading task data.

As Figure 6.3 and Figure 6.4 show, in more formal speech, the NURSE vowel is in a more centralised position for Southport speakers when compared with the Ormskirk participants, whose NURSE vowel is, overall, more fronted and raised. However, when compared to the conversation speech data, the SQUARE vowel is showing some difference; though this vowel spreads into a centralised position, the concentration of forms in the central space is sparse in comparison to the number of forms in a more standard position for most speakers. Style proved significant in interaction with location ($p<0.05$) and attitude towards Liverpool ($p<0.05$) for the F1 of SQUARE.

Figure 6.3 shows a clearer distinction between Ormskirk and Southport speech that was not evident in the conversational data; Ormskirk speakers NURSE and SQUARE vowels are more merged and NURSE is more raised towards SQUARE compared with Southport speech. In Southport, younger speakers similarly have the greater distance from schwa compared with their middle-aged counterparts, though less so than their Ormskirk equivalents. As Figure 6.5 shows, NURSE remains central in Southport males' speech while SQUARE shows a broad spread from low to central. However, the spread of the vowel clusters is far greater in the conversation data than in the reading task data for all speakers, which could account for the lower Pillai scores here. The distribution of the NURSE vowel in read speech is not discernible from the distributions that are apparent in conversational speech style (Section 6.1).

The Southport females (Figure 6.4) demonstrate a similar pattern to the males; SQUARE is spread from a standard low position to the centralised position of NURSE. The NURSE vowel for these speakers, while comparatively central compared to Ormskirk speech, is more fronted and raised in comparison to Southport male speech.

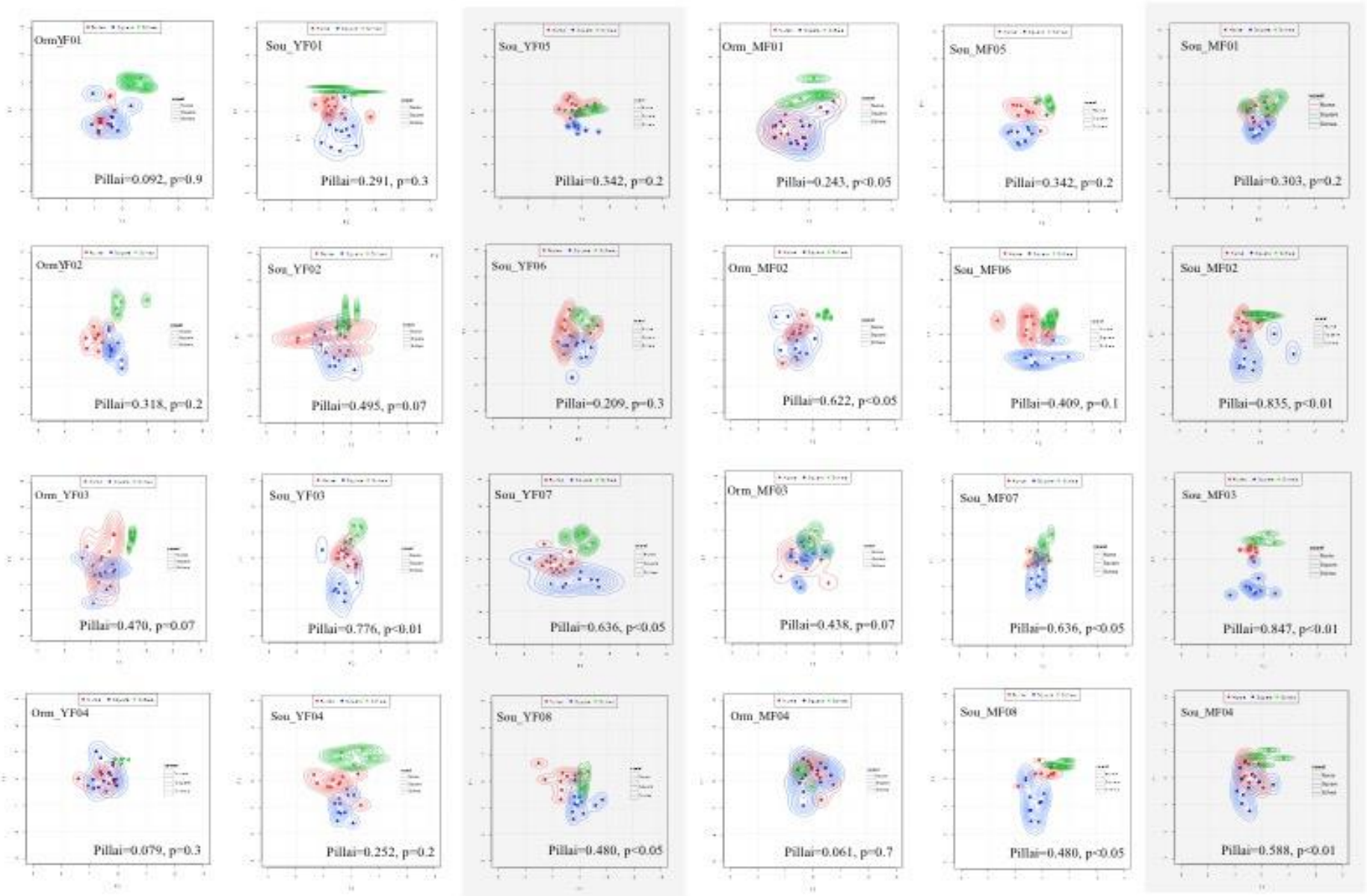


Figure 6.4: Distribution of all female speakers' NURSE and SQUARE vowels relative to schwa (green), including Pillai Score (NURSE (red) and SQUARE (blue)) per speaker (working-class speakers in grey shading). Reading task data.

Indeed, similar to the conversation data, both Figure 6.3 and 6.4 show that in more formal speech, the NURSE of the younger Southport and Ormskirk females is fronting and raising towards SQUARE; however most of the Ormskirk speakers vowels are more merged with SQUARE comparably more centralised than their Southport counterparts'. Yet, as noted above, SQUARE in the Ormskirk reading data is in a more standard position compared with the conversational data. This distance of the NURSE vowel from schwa in younger Ormskirk female speakers (Figure 6.4) is particularly clear when we compare the younger Ormskirk females with their middle-aged equivalents; the middle-aged females show some overlap between NURSE and schwa, while the younger females demonstrate a complete distinction.

6.2 Summary of significant effects

In summary, from the results for the proximity of the vowels and their overall distribution in the vowel space it is evident that where the Pillai Score indicated a near merger (a conclusion of complete merger could not be drawn, see Nycz and Hall-Lew 2014), for most speakers with a low Pillai Score the trajectories of both vowels is spread from a centralised to a fronted and raised position. Interestingly in both Ormskirk and Southport there are speakers that show a clear distinction, while other speakers are more merged. This is particularly evident in Ormskirk where most speakers' Pillai Scores are lower than their Southport counterparts'; however, as there are speakers with a distinction, the merger here is still in progress. With the exception of one speaker in the data set, the vowels of the younger Ormskirk females are comparatively less distinct than the vowels of nearly all of the other speaker groups; only the Ormskirk middle-aged males show the most similar Pillai scores to the younger Ormskirk females.

As Figures 6.1 and 6.2 demonstrate, it is the Ormskirk speakers that have the lowest Pillai scores overall in all age groups. As the data suggests, the NURSE vowel is gradually becoming more fronted and raised towards SQUARE, with the proportion of fronted and raised NURSE vowels outweighing the proportion of centralised SQUARE forms (more typical of middle-aged male speech) in the speech of the Ormskirk younger females. Meanwhile the distinction between the vowels in Southport speech remains, despite predictions that mergers spread (Herzog's Principle, see Labov 1994).

In the reading task data, while the overlap between NURSE and SQUARE was still apparent for these speakers, the Pillai Scores were in fact higher, indicating that the vowels produced in more formal speech are comparatively distinct. Compared with younger speakers, Figure 6.3 and Figure 6.4 showed that SQUARE in middle-aged Southport speech extends further into a centralised position, showing considerable overlap with schwa. The overlap of NURSE and schwa is particularly apparent in working-class male speech. However, as is the case with the conversational data, due to the overall similarity between the NURSE and SQUARE vowels of the Southport working and middle class groups, social class did not prove significant in the regression model.

This shift towards a fronted and raised NURSE in Ormskirk speech (Figure 6.5) suggests that, linguistically at least, these speakers in particular are orientating towards Scouse.

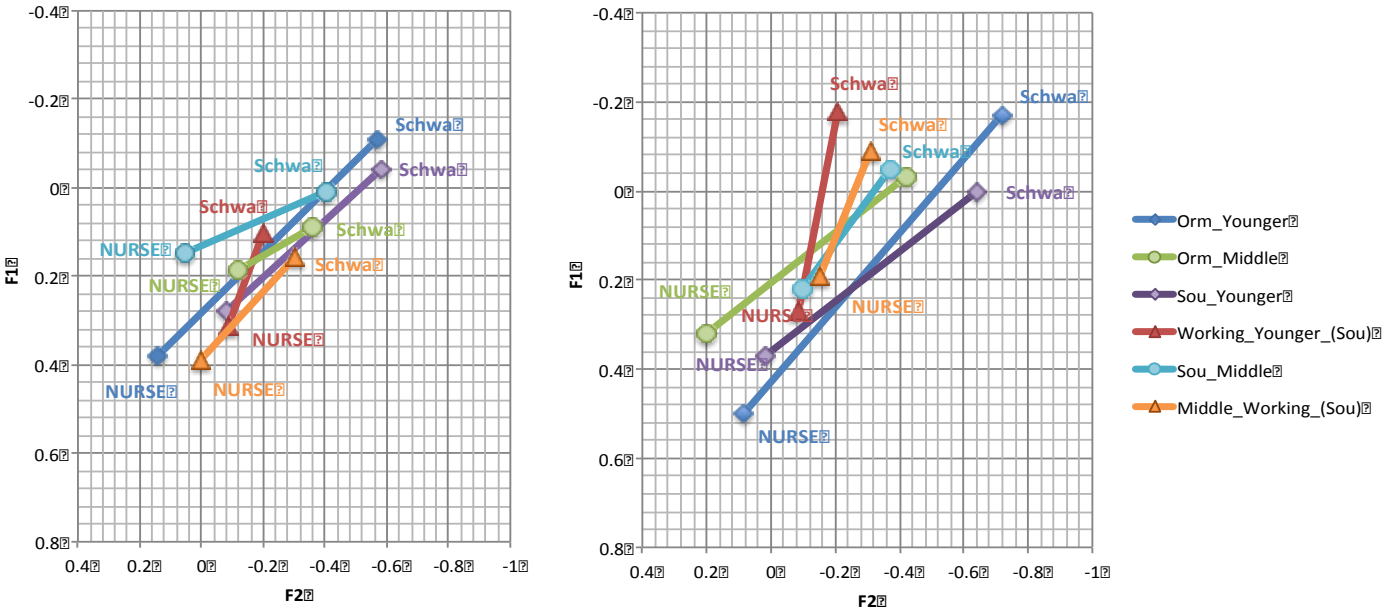


Figure 6.5: Mean relative position of NURSE and Schwa in Southport and Ormskirk according to style (conversational speech = left, read speech = right).

In Chapter 4 we saw that younger Ormskirk females have the most positive attitudes toward the Scouse accent and frequent contact with Liverpool. The male speakers' vowels, as Figure 6.6 shows, are clustered in a central position around schwa in both conversational and read speech; the NURSE vowel maintains a central position. The female speakers' vowels are remarkably different to the male speakers', particularly in view of the F1 distance from schwa.

While gender and contact score proved significant in interaction in the regression model ($p<0.05$) with the fronting of NURSE, attitude and contact did not prove significant otherwise.

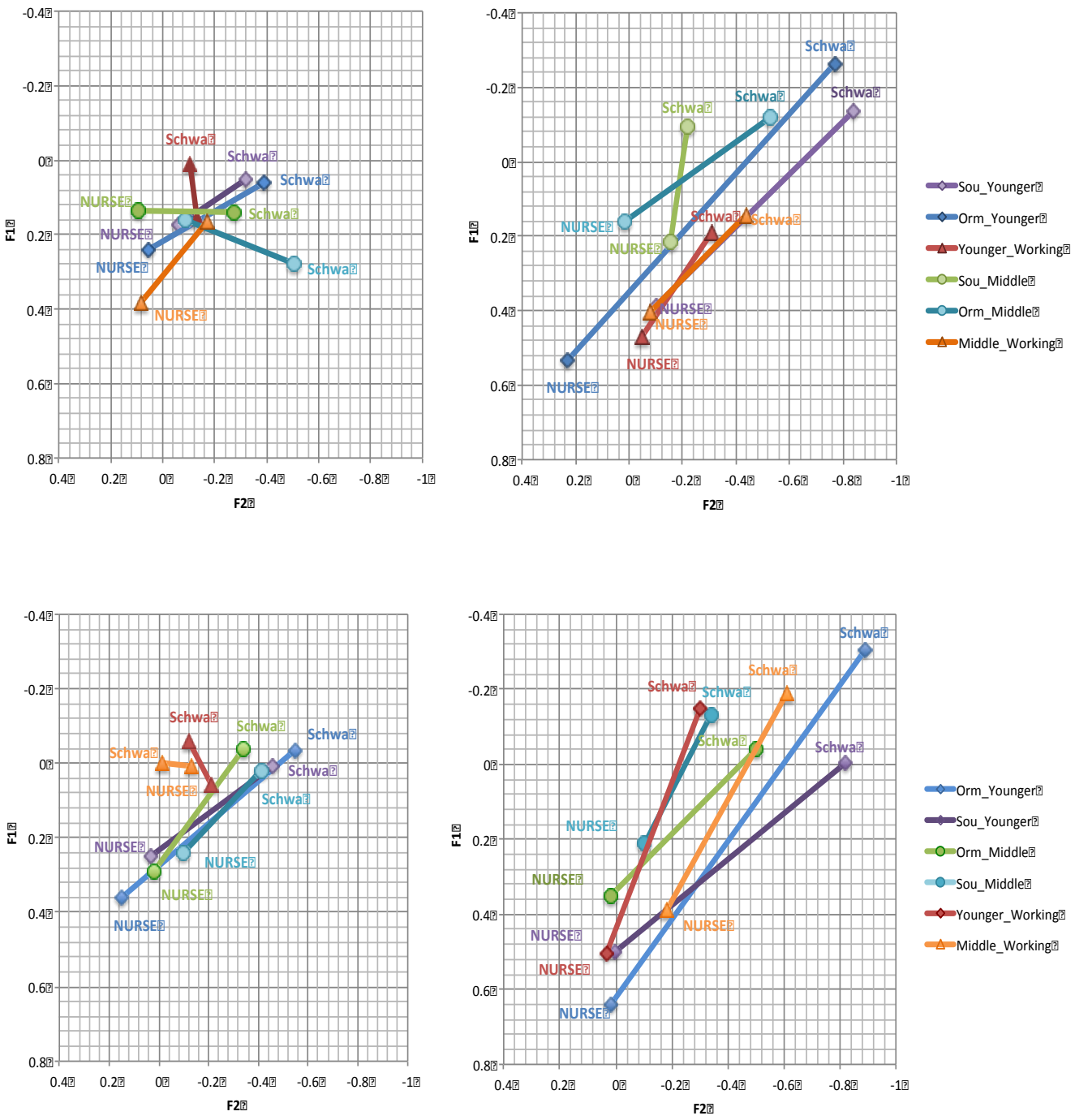


Figure 6.6: Relative position of NURSE and Schwa in Southport and Ormskirk according to gender (male = right, female = left) and style (conversational speech = above, read speech = below).

Despite the increased distinction between NURSE and SQUARE in read speech (as shown in Figures 6.1 to 6.4), the Ormskirk speakers' NURSE vowel remains similar to the conversation speech data in a raised position, particularly in younger female speech.

The SQUARE vowel, on the other hand, still showed a spread from a standard position to centralised, but the cluster of forms is more concentrated in the standard vowel space of SQUARE compared with conversation speech data, as opposed to the centralised position of NURSE for most speakers in Ormskirk. As style, in interaction with location, has a significant effect on the SQUARE vowel, and not NURSE (Figure 6.7), this indicates that Ormskirk speakers are aware of centralised SQUARE forms but unaware of raised and fronted NURSE forms (Figure 6.6).

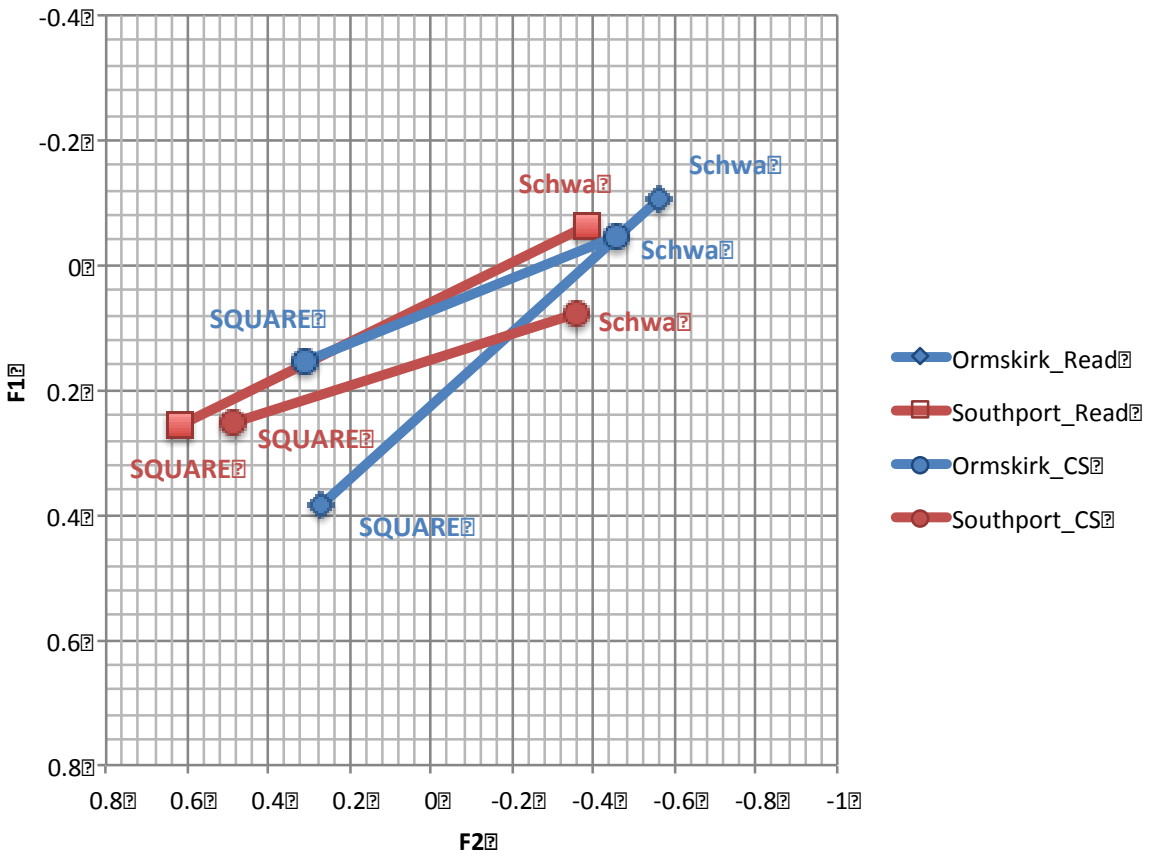


Figure 6.7: Relative position of SQUARE and Schwa in Southport and Ormskirk according to style (CS = conversational speech).

6.3 Discussion

Ormskirk speakers have a raised and fronted NURSE vowel when compared with the Southport speakers. In addition, most Ormskirk speakers demonstrate a considerable overlap between the NURSE and SQUARE vowel classes. For the younger Ormskirk speakers, in particular the females, both vowels are spreading; the majority of NURSE and SQUARE forms merge somewhere in-between the original position of the vowel classes but the original pronunciations for NURSE (central) and SQUARE (front) are still evidenced in speech (Labov 1994: 321, see also Maclagan and Gordon 2001, NEAR~SQUARE merger in New Zealand English). Other speakers, meanwhile, particularly the middle-aged Ormskirk males, show that SQUARE is shifting towards a central NURSE position, while NURSE remains relatively static.

In the light of the instability of the vowel classes that is apparent due to the intra-speaker variation of both NURSE and SQUARE forms, some speakers retaining a distinction while others collapse these vowels, the movement of both vowel classes is considered, in Ormskirk speech, to be a merger in progress. However, it is as yet, unclear which will be the final direction of the merger. Maclagan and Gordon investigated the NEAR~SQUARE (sometimes called EAR~AIR, see Hay et al. 2006) merger in New Zealand conducting real-time interviews of participants aged 14-15, in five-year intervals over a twenty-year period. At the beginning of these twenty years (1983), the vowel classes comprised of two distinct phonemes; however, similar to the data here, their intermediary data revealed a merger in progress with both vowel classes spread across the range of NEAR to SQUARE, so that NEAR words are perceived with the pronunciation "nair" as well as "near", and SQUARE as "Square" and "Squear". In view of this broad range of pronunciations for both sets, they conclude a *merger by expansion*, though were unable to conclude which direction the merger would continue to progress. In their most recent interviews (1998), their data revealed that the merger was near completion on NEAR (see also Hay et al. 2006).

Hay et al. (2013, LOT~THOUGHT merger in America and DRESS~TRAP merger in New Zealand) and Watson and Clark (2013, NURSE~SQUARE merger in north-west England) question the role of speaker perception, in the process of a merger in progress.[102] Even without perception data,

[102] "Sociolinguistic studies show that mergers rarely rise to the level of overt social consciousness. Listeners attend to the realization of particular sounds by other speakers, but not to how many distinctions they make" (Labov 1994: 324).

speaker awareness is in need of consideration with reference to Southport and Ormskirk NURSE~SQUARE, considering the data revealed a style-shift between casual and more conscious speech (a point that will be returned momentarily).

Hay et al. (2013) state that speakers do not report hearing a difference between near merged vowel classes, despite producing a consistent distinction in their speech. They consider variation in speaker production and perception to be a consequence of exposure and lexical frequency; if speakers have a single phoneme for both vowel classes in production, they are more likely to perceive a merger. However, Hay et al. consider that these speakers may draw upon exemplars from contact with, or experience of (i.e. via the media), accents that retain a distinction. Hay et al. further consider that speaker/listeners' perception may be influenced by their episodic memory; a speaker who now merges the vowel classes may have retained a distinction prior to the merger in progress taking hold, they may therefore draw on their previous knowledge to perceive a distinction when they actually hear two collapsed vowels. They conclude that listeners who were more likely to have two phonemic categories (i.e. those with higher socio economic status) were more likely to perceive a distinction even if the vowels were produced merged, in words with a higher lexical frequency.

The study of Southport and Ormskirk speech analyses only real words (contrary to Hay et al. who use nonsense words to test their hypotheses that exposure and memory influence speaker perception); hence, we can only draw on Hay et al.'s finding that exposure and/or the speaker knowledge may influence their production of these vowels. In terms of exposure, the result of the regression analysis revealed that there is a significant interaction of gender and contact with Liverpool on the fronting of NURSE. This indicates that fronted and raised NURSE, which is more typical of female speech, is a result of contact with Liverpool. As discussed in the previous chapters, which show the results of contact, attitude and consonantal data, female speakers in Southport (excluding the working-class speakers) and Ormskirk speakers have the most positive attitude towards Liverpool and the Scouse accent. Perhaps as a consequence of this positive attitude, Ormskirk speakers have more contact with Liverpool compared with the Southport males.

As a full range of realisations is evidenced for NURSE and SQUARE from central to fronted and raised in younger Ormskirk speech, any one of the following scenarios could take place in

Ormskirk speech: NURSE continuing to advance to the SQUARE, or perhaps flip-flop with NURSE transferring from the central space to the fronted position of SQUARE and vice versa, (see Chapter 2, Hall-Lew 2009; 2013, Labov 1994). However, as SQUARE, and not NURSE, is affected by style, the direction of the merger in Ormskirk speech may then settle towards SQUARE. Due to the style-shifting effect in Ormskirk on SQUARE and not NURSE, NURSE may continue to advance towards SQUARE, while SQUARE's progression towards the central NURSE space may be more restricted due to potential speaker awareness (Figure 6.7). In particular, NURSE does not centralise in younger female read speech, where fronted NURSE forms are significantly the most advanced. In the light of the Labovian (1972) analysis, the lack of style shifting indicates that fronted NURSE is an *indicator* in speech. Indeed, as noted in Chapter 4, when asked to comment on the features of a Liverpool accent, younger speakers consistently reported fricated /k/ (particularly with reference to the word *like*, see Chapter 5). Fricated or debuccalised forms of /t/ were absent from the commentary and they did not comment on fronted NURSE forms.

The middle-aged speakers of both locations, meanwhile, did comment on fronted NURSE, though this was particularly with reference to the word *girl*, a Scouse dialect feature to refer to a female of all ages. It is therefore unclear whether it is the fronted vowel or the lexeme that is being noted here. Equally, when asked to report features of typical Lancashire speech, both younger and middle aged speakers commented on article deletion (see Jones 2002) but did not mention centralised SQUARE forms.

In Southport, excluding the younger females the NURSE vowel remains in a comparatively central position. SQUARE shows considerably less stability and extends from a standard low position to a central position but, predominantly, SQUARE forms remain in a standard position in the vowel space regardless of speech style. Compared to Ormskirk, most Southport speakers are not orienting linguistically to Scouse (as NURSE remains in a relatively centralised state), and despite their adjacency to a merger, contrary to Herzog's Principle, Southport speakers are maintaining a distinction. Southport speakers' lack of contact with Liverpool, compared with Ormskirk participants could be the reason that speakers are retaining a distinction between the vowel classes and NURSE maintains a comparably central position. Although attitude scores did not prove significant in the model, attitude may still be a factor in terms of speaker

spatiality; a negative perception of Liverpool is perhaps leading to a perceptual barrier, which discourages interaction (Britain 2004, see also Boberg 2000).

6.4 Chapter Summary

Regardless of speech style, age or gender, Ormskirk speakers have a comparably raised and fronted NURSE vowel when compared with the Southport speakers. Ormskirk demonstrates a merger in progress between the NURSE and SQUARE vowel classes, with the full range of NURSE and SQUARE forms (from central to front raised) realised for both vowel classes (see Gordon and Maclagan 1996, Labov 1994: 321).

In the light of the instability of the intra-speaker variation of both NURSE and SQUARE forms (discussed in Section 6.1), the movement of both vowel classes is set to continue. However, as SQUARE, and not NURSE, is affected by style, the direction of the merger in Ormskirk speech may then settle towards SQUARE, as a fronted NURSE vowel does not appear to be salient. While gender and contact score proved significant in interaction in the regression model ($p<0.05$) with the fronting of NURSE, attitude and contact did not prove significant otherwise. This indicates that female speakers more positive attitude and frequent contact with Liverpool may be a driving factor in the fronting of the NURSE vowel.

In Southport, the NURSE vowel remains in a comparatively central position. SQUARE shows considerably less stability and extends from a standard low position to a central position in the vowel space. It is apparent that, compared to Ormskirk, Southport speakers are not orienting linguistically to Scouse, a finding that is in alignment with the results for /t/ and /k/ (Chapter 5; see also West 2013) and Mahmoud, (2013, for a discussion of lexis).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusions

7 Introduction

Due to their accentuated sense of identity (see Llamas 2010), the sociolinguistic study of speakers who are situated near to a political and/or perceptual boundary, affords us a more viable context to assess the interplay of external factors in linguistic variation and change on a macro-scale. In view of this, this thesis aimed to examine the speech of speakers who border one of the most negatively perceived accents in England (Montgomery 2007). In addition, this investigation sought whether there is a difference between the attitudes of a town that has undergone a political change with a town that did not**.** Does a town that has undergone a border change have a similar attitude to a town that maintains its identity but is nonetheless on the other side of the border? Ultimately, this thesis investigates whether a difference in attitude associates with a difference in language.

This final chapter discusses the final conclusions and implications of the findings, before focusing on the relevance of this investigation for examining linguistic variation and change, and addressing future directions for the research.

7.1 Summary of findings

The contact and attitude analysis presented in Chapter 4 showed that Ormskirk speaker's positive attitude and expressions of affiliation with Liverpool (younger speakers, in particular, referring to themselves as Scouse) indicates that Liverpool is included within Ormskirk speaker's physical and social landscape (Britain 2004). This is particularly the case for the younger speakers who have regular contact with the city. It is suggested that this regular contact is causative in Ormskirk speaker's positive attitude towards Liverpool and Scouse (Zajonc 1968, *contact hypothesis*), and this contact further indicates that the political border does not cause a perceptual boundary for these speakers.

Southport speakers, however, have relatively infrequent contact with the city compared to Ormskirk speakers. Although located in Merseyside, it is evident that Southport 'Sandgrounders' conceive of a perceptual boundary between themselves and Liverpool, as speakers, overall, expressed a negative attitude towards the city and accent. Chapter 4 showed

that most speakers disassociated themselves with Liverpool, drawing on a perceived difference in social class between Southport (middle class and tourism) and Liverpool (working class and industrial). Speakers also frequently commented on their postcode as Preston/Lancashire (see Beal 2010). Further to this, Southport speakers did not identify with the term 'Scouse' to refer to themselves. Instead, Southport speakers refer to themselves as 'Sandgrounders'. While Liverpudlians once mockingly applied this label to Southport inhabitants, Southport speakers have now adopted the term, reindexicalised as a marker of its own identity, which is not 'Scouse' 'Scouser', or 'Liverpudlian' (see Tajfel 1978, the perception of 'them' and 'us' in Social Identity Theory).

Southport speaker's disassociation from Merseyside, and confirmed self-identity as 'Sandgrounders' and as Lancashire, regardless of age, affirms the accentuated sense of identity, and strength of the perceived boundary between themselves and Liverpool; a finding very similar to Llamas (2006, 2007). As discussed in more depth in Chapter 2, while Llamas finds that young speakers are converging with Geordie, the well established use of glottalised /p/ in Middlesbrough is concluded to be reindexicalised as a Middlesbrough, rather than a Geordie, variant. It's increase in use in younger male, and particularly female, speech is therefore suggested to index a 'Middlesbrough identity' (Beal 2010: 225). Furthermore, the increase in /t/ → [ʔ] in younger speakers' speech is concluded to be a rejection of the glottal reinforced form that is associated with Geordie.

The Southport speakers' negative attitudes and infrequent contact with Liverpool, in view of their inclusion in Merseyside has, similarly, had an effect on language. The inclusion of quantified contact and attitude scores in the regression models aimed to provide a more robust method to examine the effect of contact and attitude on language. As Chapter 5 evidenced, however, age is the only significant factor governing the production of /t/, as both Ormskirk and Southport speech shows an increase of non-Scouse forms [ʔ] and [ɾ]. As glottal stop is rare in Liverpool English/Scouse (Watson 2007) this innovation is unlikely to have spread from Liverpool via *hierarchical diffusion* (see Trudgill 1986).

For /k/, however, Scouse forms remained prominent in younger speech. Indeed, location and age, contact and attitude proved to be significant for determining the distribution of /k/ variants; Scouse forms were significantly more frequent in Ormskirk speech than in Southport. In

addition, the younger speakers' more frequent contact with Liverpool significant correlated with the production [x], and a correlation was evident between [kx] and attitude, with positive attitudes associating with the use of this form. Finally, Ormskirk younger male speakers significantly produced the longest fricated forms. Due to the salience of fricated /k/ (Chapter 4, see also Watson 2006), the more frequent and Scouse-like production (in terms of duration of frication) of /k/ in Ormskirk speech is considered a more prominent finding, compared to Scouse forms of /t/; fricated /k/ is indexically Scouse (Chapter 4), yet still particularly present in the Ormskirk speakers' speech.

As the data indicates in Chapter 6, NURSE is, similarly, becoming more Scouse-like in Ormskirk speech, while Southport speech remains comparatively reticent to such a change; Ormskirk speakers have a comparably raised and fronted NURSE vowel when compared with their Southport counterparts. The raised and fronted NURSE is particularly evident in the Ormskirk younger females' speech, and as the statistical analysis indicated, these speakers more frequent contact with Liverpool may be a driving factor in the fronting of the NURSE vowel.

It is suggested here that a merger in progress is evident in Ormskirk between the vowel classes. It is further suggested that, in Ormskirk speech, NURSE will continue to move towards the SQUARE space, as fronted NURSE appears to be below the level of consciousness. In Southport speech, the NURSE vowel remains in a comparatively central position, while SQUARE shows considerably less stability and extends from a standard low position to a central position in the vowel space, more typical of Lancashire speech (Barras 2006).

Ormskirk speaker's convergence towards Scouse for NURSE and /k/ is predicted to continue, in view of the younger females' adoption of Scouse forms (Labov 2001). The reticence of Southport speech to converge to Liverpool is apparent when compared to the convergent trends of Ormskirk production.

The findings of this thesis are somewhat dissimilar to Llamas et al.'s (ongoing) study of the Scottish-English border (see Watt et al. 2013; 2014, Llamas 2010), which shows that the presence of the political boundary heightens speakers' awareness of their social and geographical surroundings and speakers' desire to affirm their nationality, given the close proximity of 'otherness' (Bucholtz and Hall 2010). Their investigation demonstrates that

speakers who strongly claim a Scottish identity are adopting linguistic forms, which index this Scottish identity so as to affirm their cultural heritage and belonging. As discussed in Chapter 2, the indexical nature of rhoticity, despite its decline in other Scottish accents (Maguire et al. 2008), is increasing in speakers who display 'an accentuated sense of national identity' (Llamas 2010: 227) and subsequent strong desire to affirm this identity as Scottish. In Ormskirk, however, the presence of a political boundary does not have the same effect that is witnessed on the East (not the West) side of the Scottish~English border. Ormskirkians instead demonstrate some affiliation with Liverpool, which the creation of a boundary does not appear to have affected. In Southport, a *perceptual* boundary is apparent, though, similar to Llamas's findings for Middlesbrough, the creation of Merseyside seems to have strengthened this town's pre-existing self-identity, rather than creating this perceptual distance.

7.2 Contribution of this thesis

As Llamas (2010) and Britain (2010) state, borders offer an ideal site for examining the effect of attitude, as it is in these areas that people's sense of identity is accentuated. This particular field site examines language and attitude of speakers who are adjacent to one of the most negatively perceived accents in the UK. From these aspects of the investigation, the thesis provides further evidence towards how attitudes affect language, and whether the attitudinal findings of previous investigation are evident in a different location.

This investigation compares the attitudes of a town that has undergone a political change with a town that did not, so as to further examine the potential effect of attitude on language. It was hypothesised at the beginning of this investigation that a parallel between language change and the creation of Merseyside would be observable; Southport's change in identity has seemingly further encouraged a strong perceptual boundary, which distances the town from their newly enforced identity. In Southport, as evidenced by the comparably centralised NURSE and shorter duration of frication compared to Ormskirk speech, we observe this parallel; an accentuated disassociation with Liverpool that is perhaps impeding linguistic convergence. However, despite the political boundary between Ormskirk and Liverpool, this boundary does not appear to cause a socio-spatial barrier for Ormskirkians (Britain 2004); their frequent contact with the city is suggested to encourage their positive attitude and linguistic convergence with Liverpool/Scouse.

From the offset, this investigation has faced a major challenge. The analysis of speaker attitudes, orientation and language spread requires the methods adopted to be ethnographic, while broad scale to assess language spread, variation and change: two aims which are seemingly oppositional in terms of methodology (Dodsworth 2005). For this reason, the assessment of attitude and orientation in studies with large datasets require that these social processes are observable in short spaces of time, as it is unreasonable to expect a close examination of semiotic processes for a large number of speakers within the (usually) restricted time frame of an investigation. A broad scale study by definition restricts the linguist to looking at broader linguistic patterns across a population, at the cost of identifying the key social patterns and negotiated identities. A small-scale ethnographic study, meanwhile, can devote more attention to a fine-grained social analysis. However, such an analysis is criticised for not stretching far enough to discern the broader patterns of linguistic change: for example, the sociolinguistic orientation of a town, as is the case here. However, investigations of accentuated attitude offer the possibility to observe speakers and linguistic forms in terms of Silverstein's (2003) (n+1)+1 (Stuart-Smith, personal communication): a form that has already achieved social indexicality (see Johnstone 2008, indexicality of /aw/ in Pittsburgh speech). It is for this reason that this thesis is reticent in using the term 'identity' as opposed to 'attitude'.

The research, here, has provided a multi-tiered approach in its application of several emically sensitive methodologies for the essential evaluation of attitudes. It is argued in this final section that, without these culturally sensitive and semi-ethnographic methods (Hall-Lew 2009), the opportunity afforded to border studies for the examination of attitude, even if accentuated, are in danger of under evaluation. In addition, the methods applied here are not used distinctively but in a systemic and some-what cyclic fashion[103], using quantitative methods to discern the significance of social factors, concurrently with qualitative methods for a more meaningful understanding of speaker attitudes.

An attitude score does not tell us of the actual attitudes and processes that lead to that judgement: it does not tell us who the person actually is and what is leading the participant to indicate a negative or a positive perception. While we can perhaps be more confident that

[103] The methods here are, in other words, used in triangulation. The analysis of attitudes offered during the conversation of the interview re-examines the quantified attitudinal data, while the quantified attitudinal data try to establish patterns of orientation that are indicated in the discourse during the interview, which can be used in statistical analysis.

attitudes are resistant to change as learnt and stored devices (Hayes 2006) the accurate elicitation of these attitudes is problematic; speakers may not offer a true reflection of their opinion in the presence of a stranger (Labov 2001, Observers Paradox). For this reason, speakers were given the opportunity to amend their scores after the reason for their score and had time to elaborate on their experience of Liverpool, Scouse and so on.

Although it is recognised that this investigation has not carried out an examination of semiotic processes to the extent of a small-scale CofP investigation, the decision to examine harmonious or self-selecting communities with a shared practice (Meyerhoff 2002) was in recognition of the ethnographic information that is uncovered in such studies. As Meyerhoff (2002) states, non-harmonious communities of practice, such as the workplace or school, are often hierarchically structured. The relationships in these structured environments, then, are not conducive to the examination of more natural informal speech, nor for the observation of self-selecting relationships and orientations of speakers (cf. Hymes 2009). Yet, as these communities themselves contribute to these speakers' repertoires, as demonstrated in CofP studies, it is important to observe and enquire about the relationships in these environments and the speech styles that surround the participants of the study, even within a short period of time.

In addition to the natural and partly observable orientations of the speakers, these informal and unstructured environments allowed for self-selecting dyads to, perhaps more freely, offer opinions, as well as produce more informal speech. In addition, within these self-selecting social practices, the interviewer is considered more of an outsider, rather than another figure of authority as in a school. This was due to the fact that speakers were not instructed to participate in the study by a teacher.[104] Instead, the interviewer has to negotiate a position of trust and acceptance: speakers' participation, therefore, is through choice, meaning that there is no transfer of authority from an instructor to the interviewer. The relatively decreased authority of the interviewer, then, perhaps, further encouraged more open opinions to be disclosed during interview.

[104] If applied in the workplace, transfer of authority may occur if a superior allows a participant time during work hours for interview.

The triangulation of approaches for acquiring socially relevant information requires a multitude of approaches for their analysis. In a paradigm that is both qualitative and quantitative it is beneficial to analyse the potential correlations with attitude using quantitative data in statistical analyses to add robustness to this social factor. In order to do this, this study relied on the quantified scores to be accurate and unchanging representations of speakers' attitudes (Hogg and Smith 2007). One question, therefore, remains: can we disentangle contact and attitude to establish a single causal link between attitude and language?

The regression models showed attitude to be significant for [kx] (an interaction was established between age and attitude towards Scouse suggesting that younger speakers more positive attitudes were promoting this form) and [x] (an interaction was established between age and accent, where despite positive attitudes this form was not promoted in the speech of younger speakers). Contact also proved to be significant in interaction with class, with Southport working-class speakers infrequent contact resulting in relatively infrequent use of this form.

For the majority of speakers, there is a concordance between contact and attitude in terms of the contact hypothesis and spatiality (Zajonc 1968, Britain 2004). In Southport, 60% of speakers have infrequent contact with the city and corresponding negative attitudes towards the Scouse accent. In Ormskirk, 57% of the participants had frequent contact with the city and a positive attitude towards Scouse – the complete opposite to Southport.[105] However, there are a handful of speakers that buck the trend. In both Southport and Ormskirk, 30% of speakers have infrequent contact with Liverpool yet hold a positive opinion of the accent. In Southport, one speaker had frequent contact with Liverpool though indicated a negative attitude towards the city (Sou_MM10). Despite this speaker's frequent contact with the city, he did not have a relatively higher use of Scouse forms or noticeably fronted NURSE. Yet, the 30% of Southport speakers who indicated positive attitudes towards Scouse do not show any relative increase in Scouse forms. In Ormskirk, the 30% of speakers who have less frequent contact with Liverpool do not show a relative decrease in Scouse forms compared to other Ormskirk speakers. In the light of this, it appears that although the regression model highlighted attitude and contact to be significant separately, in practice it is not possible from these results, on the basis of one

[105] Most speakers in both locations indicated a positive attitude towards the city overall, reflecting positively on the redevelopment of the city centre.

speaker (Sou_MM10), to conclusively draw a single causal link between phonetic variation and attitude.

7.3 Future directions

There are several directions the research following this thesis could take. First, there are areas in the current research that require investigation to strengthen the results, here. The analysis of a working class cohort in Ormskirk would provide valuable comparison for the working-class patterns found in Southport speech; this group of speakers, in particular, harboured the most negative attitudes toward Liverpool. In addition, this group produced the shortest release of frication for /k/. Furthermore, a perception test with the aim of ascertaining the salience of the forms under investigation in Southport and Ormskirk speech would enable a better understanding of how attitudes affect linguistic forms, in addition to the assessment of how attitude affects social-spatial orientation. This is particularly the case with the production of [x], which is evident in Southport speech yet negatively perceived. As Chapter 5 discusses, the presence of [x] in Southport speech despite the negative opinion of this form casts doubt on this form's salience.

This leads to two possibilities: (a) speakers are only aware of [x] in the word *like,* which is itself salient (Tagliamonte 2005), or (b) Southport speakers perceive a difference between their production of /k/ and Scouse production; perhaps, as indicated in Chapter 4, Southport speakers perceive the uvular ([χ]) production of /k/ in Scouse (which is not apparent in their own speech), while the velar form [x] is entering the accent below the level of consciousness. The follow up to shed more light on this would be two fold: First, a fine-grained analysis comparing the difference in frequency and duration (see Llamas and Jones 2008) between Southport (and Ormskirk) speakers' production of fricated forms of /k/ with Liverpool production. This would shed light on whether there is a marked difference that speakers could potentially respond to. Second, a perception test to ascertain whether the velar form is indeed salient, as Watson (2007) suggests, would offer more information of the social meaning/indexical nature of these forms.

Appendices

Appendix 1: City and People Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Reading/dialogue task

Appendix 3: Frequency of occurrence of /t/ → [ɾ] according to word

Appendix 1: Perception of City and People Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

Personal Information

1/ Date of Birth.....

1b/ Postcode .....

2/ Were you born in Southport? **YES / NO**

2b/ Have you lived in Southport all your life? **YES / NO**

3/ If **NO** to 2 and / or 2b, please give details below
.....
.....
.....

4/ Where are your parents from?
.....
.....

5/ Do you travel away from Southport a lot to see family and friends? **YES / NO**

5b/ If **YES,** please state below where and roughly how often
.....
.....
.....

6/ Do you work in the town? **YES / NO**

6b) If not, where do you work? .....

Town and Region

From the Scale of 1-5 indicated below, please circle the number you feel best describes the town. Please answer the following questions (1) – (5).

1=VERY GOOD 2=GOOD 3=AVERAGE 4=POOR 5=VERY POOR

1/ I think that the following is a **nice** place to live:					
Southport (Ormskirk)	1	2	3	4	5
Liverpool	1	2	3	4	5
Preston	1	2	3	4	5
2/ I am proud of where I live	1	2	3	4	5
3**/ Southport (Ormskirk)** town centre is:					
(a) Clean	1	2	3	4	5
(b) A nice place to shop	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Meets all my needs	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Good for a night out	1	2	3	4	5

(e) Has good restaurants	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Has good public houses	1	2	3	4	5

4/ **Liverpool** city centre is:

(a) Clean	1	2	3	4	5
(b) A nice place to shop	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Meets all my needs	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Good for a night out	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Has good restaurants	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Has good public houses	1	2	3	4	5

5/ **Preston** town centre is:

(a) Clean	1	2	3	4	5
(b) A nice place to shop	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Meets all my needs	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Good for a night out	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Has good restaurants	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Has good public houses	1	2	3	4	5

6/ My neighbourhood is:

(a) Well kept by the council	1	2	3	4	5
(b) A nice place to live	1	2	3	4	5

People

1= STRONGLY AGREE, 2=AGREE, 3= NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, 4=DISAGREE, 5=STRONGLY DISAGREE

1/ In general, **Southport (Ormskirk)** people are:

Friendly	1	2	3	4	5
Helpful	1	2	3	4	5
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5
Generous	1	2	3	4	5
Humorous	1	2	3	4	5
Polite	1	2	3	4	5
Well-to-do	1	2	3	4	5

2/ In general, **Liverpool** people are:

Friendly	1	2	3	4	5
Helpful	1	2	3	4	5
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5
Generous	1	2	3	4	5
Humorous	1	2	3	4	5
Polite	1	2	3	4	5
Well-to-do	1	2	3	4	5

3/ In general, **Preston** people are:

Friendly	1	2	3	4	5
Helpful	1	2	3	4	5
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5
Generous	1	2	3	4	5
Humorous	1	2	3	4	5
Polite	1	2	3	4	5
Well-to-do	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 2: Reading/dialogue task

Speaker A:

On the third of October a **BEVVIED** man was shot -
while lurking at the dock.
Did you read about that?

Speaker B:

It wasn't a bloke it **WERE** a girl who was shot.
She's called Mary and is from Merseyside.

Speaker A:

Oh that's right!
She was getting **BIFTAS** and milk - from the warehouse.

Speaker B:

AYE it was late at night but ...
I thought ...
Wasn't she in the Pear Tree pub getting **SCOUSE** with chicken and hot chocolate?

Speaker A:

So it was!
A local **CUT** worker heard the shot, - but he thought it was a cracker.
Could you get any thicker?

Speaker B:

So I heard!
What's worse is he actually saw the first shot -
as he **LEGGED IT** down the stairs

Speaker A:

Did he think it was a joke?
Did he just not care?
Or was he just a **MARD**?

Speaker B:

I think he was just in shock
but what a **NIT**!
He just biked on down the dock to his **GAFF**.
Didn't dare look!

Speaker A:

It was lucky for the girl that her mate was walking
outside the Pear Tree where she **HIT THE DECK.**

Speaker B:

I know!
There were splatters of blood all over her silk shirt.
And the **BIZZIES** were late because someone stole a boat that week.

Speaker A:

But ...
it took the ambulance thirty seconds to get there
COS a **KID** had hurt his foot on a grass cutter nearby.

Speaker B:

Stupid **BRAT**!
Why did he shoot her?
Was it a planned attack - or is the guy a **NUTTER**?

Speaker A:

It sounds like a random shoot out, but she was the one that got hit.
The shooter was called Percy Square.
He was **PROPER MENNAL!**

Speaker B:

Oh Yeah!
He lived without **LECKY** in Bearsden Curve and worked as a caterer in the Park Hotel.

Speaker A:

It was from the Park Hotel that he got the gun.
He **CHUCKED** it in the water at the back of the Unitarian Church

Speaker B:

But the water there isn't deep!
And the Unitarian Church is opposite the Pear Tree!
Surely the **BOBBIES** tracked it in seconds!

Speaker A:

That's right,
though they found him floating first!
He was a **TOTAL** wreck!
He tripped and clattered his weak head!

Speaker B:

I heard he broke his neck tripping over a bird table or a chair?
Do you know **WHAT**?

Speaker A:

Bird table, chair, who cares!?
At least Mary is okay and he's **PEGGED OUT** – seems fair!

Speaker B:

Yeah I'm glad she's okay,
but ...I'm not sure about that final **CRAIC.**

Appendix 3: Frequency of occurrence of /t/ –[ɾ] according to word

WORD	Ormskirk [Other]	Ormskirk [ɾ]	Ormskirk Total	Southport [Other]	Ormskirk [ɾ]	Southport Total
about	5	4	9	17	1	18
at	0	0	0	26	1	27
beautiful	0	0	0	2	1	3
bit	6	3	9	34	4	38
but	55	32	87	181	40	221
get	9	7	16	61	10	71
got	8	7	15	72	10	82
it	37	22	59	171	8	179
lot	13	19	32	91	3	94
matter	0	0	0	4	1	5
not	10	5	15	66	3	69
noticed	0	0	0	1	0	1
put	2	7	9	16	6	22
quite	10	2	12	0	0	0
shut	0	1	0	5	6	11
sort	5	13	18	63	1	64

that	28	7	35	79	4	83
thought	0	0	0	26	2	28
what	15	22	37	67	16	83
whatever	0	7	0	25	5	30
Grand Total	**203**	**150**	**353**	**1007**	**122**	**1129**

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