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NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN ENGLISH DIALECTS AND ACCENTS COMPARED FROM A GEOGRAPHICAL, LINGUISITIC, AND SOCIAL POINT OF VIEW BY EXAMPLE OF THE COCKNEY ENGLISH, ESTUARY ENGLISH, TYNESIDE AND YORKSHIRE DIALECTS AND ACCENTS

Bachelor Thesis

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Abstract

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to geographically, linguistically and socially compare the two southern dialects of Cockney English (CE) and Estuary English (EE) with the two northern dialects of Tyneside and Yorkshire.

This thesis is structured into three major sections. The first part puts forward fundamental information concerning the history of the English language in England, including the development of English accents and dialects. In the second part, the concept of varieties and accents as well as their division will be introduced and the concept of Modern English dialects will be highlighted. This encompasses a description of major pronunciation features of English dialects.

The third part constitutes of a comparison of the Cockney English (CE), Estuary English (EE), Yorkshire and Tyneside dialects from a geographical, linguistic and social point of view.

The goal of the thesis is to introduce and explain similarities and differences in the selected dialects and to refute or validate social assumptions connected with the concept of northern and southern English dialects.

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Index of abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini
AmE	American English
BrE	British English
CE	Cockney English
EE	Estuary English
EMoE	Early Modern English
GVS	Great Vowel Shift
IPA	International Phonetic Association
ME	Middle English
MoE	Modern English
NE	Norman English
OE	Old English
RP	Received Pronunciation
StE	Standard English

1 Introduction

English is the *lingua franca* of our century, a language everybody wants or needs to learn in order to be able to communicate with people from other countries and cultures. The need to understand one's interlocutor, however, is not restricted to situations where two people speak each in a different language and have to overcome a language barrier. Even when speaking in the same language someone's accent or dialect is just as important and it is one of the first things we notice about someone else in a conversation. Someone's accent or dialect can reveal the person's identity, origin and social class.

The present study deals with the question of how English dialects and accents differ and what consequences this has on their general perception by the English population. In this thesis two northern and two southern English accents and dialects are compared from a geographical, linguistic, and social point of view. To give a better insight the representative Southern dialects and accents of Cockney English (CE) and Estuary English (EE) are compared with the representative Northern dialects of Tyneside and Yorkshire.

Since this is a bachelor thesis and its length restricted to a certain page number, the focus of the study will be on English dialects and accents only. It will not include all British accents and dialects, namely the Scottish and (Northern) Irish of Welsh varieties. Furthermore, the insight given into the historic background will be restricted to the development of English accents and dialects in England and even though English has become a global language no mention will be made of varieties in any other English speaking country.

This study is structured in three major sections. Firstly, the historic origins of the English language will be explained with a particular emphasis on the development of the English dialects. Furthermore the concept of accents and dialects will be introduced for the scientific analysis of the four dialects. The third part includes a comparison between the two northern dialects Tyneside and Yorkshire with the two southern dialects and accents of Cockney English (CE) and Estuary English (EE) under geographical, linguistic and social aspects.

The phonemic transcription used in this thesis is realized by using the symbols suggested by the International Phonetic Association (usually abbreviated by the initials IPA), a full list of which can be found in the appendices for further reference. The

abbreviations used in this paper are all official abbreviations used by linguists and dialectologists.

2 Historic overview of the English language in England

This chapter aims to give a brief introduction into the history of the English language and describes how the English spoken in England today came to pass. Linguists have classified four different time periods in which the English language developed: Old English (OE), Middle English (ME), Early Modern English (EModE) and Modern English (MoE). To give a full overview of the development of the English language, the beginnings and settlements before the official first period (OE) will be noted as well.

2.1 Before English (before 450)

English is an Indo-Germanic language which belongs to the West-Germanic language family. It was brought to England in the first half of the fifth century AD by settlers from the European continent called Angles. Around the time Britain was a known colony of the Roman Empire, named Britannia (Freeborn et al. 1993:22) and its inhabitants, called Britons, spoke dialects of Celtic in a language now referred to as *Common Brittonic*. Traces of the Roman rule can be found in place names such as *Chester* (from the Latin *castra* for camp), or loan words such as *stræt* (for street, road) (Chrystal 1990:152).

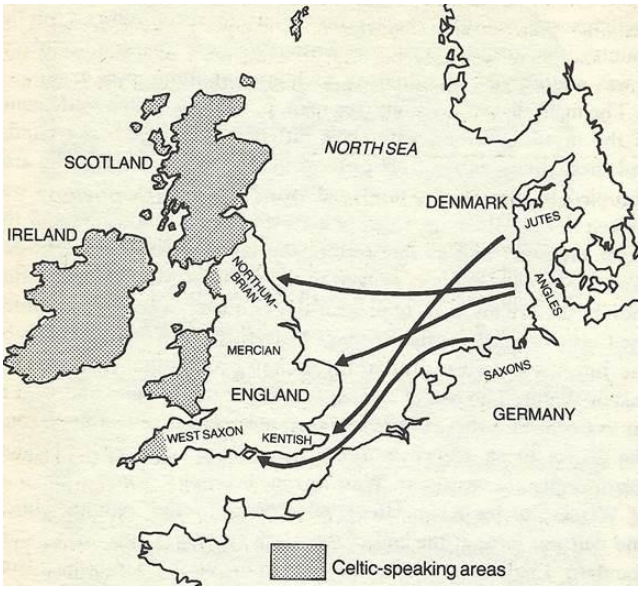

Fig. 2.1: The Origins of the Germanic Tribes (from Fischer et al. 2006:28)

By 410 AD, however, Roman legionnaires were withdrawn from the British island to defend other regions of the Roman Empire. This left the indigenous population largely undefended (Upton and Widdowson 1990:xi) . To ward off Scottish attacks from the west and Pictish attacks from the north the Britons invited "Germanic invaders … (to

settle in England) to protect the British settlements" (Gramley 2012:16). The British coastline had been under attack by Germanic raiders for quite a while and Germanic invasions increased and soon the Germanic tribes Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Frisians settled permanently on the island. The Anglo-Saxon historian Bede states 449 AD as the year of the main influx of Germanic tribes onto the island. (Viereck et al. 2002:51).

In the following centuries the different languages and dialects spoken by the invaders slowly merged into one language. As it happens, these different languages were actually different dialects of one source language: North Sea Germanic, also known as Ingvæonic. It is therefore quite possible that the invaders did understand each other on some level (Gramley 2012:25).

2.2 Old English period (450-1150)

Old English (OE), sometimes called *Anglo-Saxon* or *Englisc*, is the language which was spoken in Britain after the Romans had left. It is the oldest known form of the English language and replaced Common Brittonic and Latin under the Roman rule as a primary language. As suggested by its name Anglo-Saxon, OE developed due to the invasion of the Germanic tribes by whom it was introduced and spoken on the British isle. Old English used other vowels than the English we use today: additionally to the modern vowels /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/, OE vowels included /æ/ as in the phonetic transcription [æ], and /y/ similar to the German /ü/ in *Bühne* and *fünf* and was pronounced accordingly [ü:] and [ö] (Algeo 2010:87). From a modern point of view OE has more in common with German than English. Like German it was a much more complex language. OE distinguished number, gender (masculine, feminine and neuter) and used four main cases (nominative, genitive, accusative, and dative). Words were more pronounced the way they were written. Verbs were either "strong" or "weak" and "their endings changed for number, tense, mood and person" (Mastin 2011). OE word order was relatively free and the relation of words in a sentence was indicated by inflexions, of which there were five (Fischer et al. 2006:40-45).

Today we can distinguish four dialectal regions of the Old English language which had been spoken around the time: Northumbrian, Mercian, Kentish and West Saxon.

Fig. 2.2: The four Old English dialects (from Wales 2006:37)

Those dialects were spoken in the 7 independent kingdoms of Northumbria in the North, Mercia in the Centre, East Anglia and Essex in the East, Kent and Sussex in the Southeast and Wessex in the Southwest. Those 7 kingdoms are commonly referred to as the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy.

Fig. 2.3: The Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy (from Fischer et al. 2006:29)

The German linguistic professor Roswitha Fischer points out that the boundaries of these kingdoms were not fixed but changed over time depending on which kingdoms were united under which ruler. In the seventh century the wealth and power belonged to Northumbria and was passed on to Mercia during the eighth century. It finally changed to Wessex during the ninth century, a region where the dialects of West Saxon was used (2006:29). Many manuscripts of the OE period are therefore written in West Saxon, even though the Modern English of today is based much more on the Mercian dialect.

During the OE period the native Celtic inhabitants either assimilated with the new arrivals or were driven northward and westward and settled in the present-day areas of Cumbria, Scotland, Wales and Cornwall (Chrystal 1990:152 ff.). They kept their Celtic roots and language and later some migrated to France to the regions of Brittany (or Bretagne) and Normandy (Freeborn et al. 1993:22). The languages which developed from Common Brittonic are *Breton* in the Bretagne region and *Welsh* in Wales, but also *Scottish Gaelic* in Scotland. However, neither Roman Latin nor Common Brittonic did have a lasting impact on the OE language, although some Celtic vocabulary found its way into OE regardless, e.g. recognizable names such as *Thames* and *Avon* (for river) and town names such as *Dover* (for water) (Chrystal 1990:153).

David Chrystal also states two major influences in the OE period which influenced the development of the English language during that time: the Christianizing of Britain and the Viking invasions. After the decrease of the Roman influence Latin still remained an important language. Christian Roman missionaries, the most famous among them Saint Augustine, caused an increase in the production of Latin manuscripts (especially the Bible) around 597 AD. Earlier drafts and manuscripts of Old English had been customarily written in runes. The British runic alphabet *futhorc*, which consisted of 31 runic symbols, was especially used in the region of Northumbria. Runic descriptions could also be found on stones, weapons and on jewellery (Chrystal 1990:161 ff.). The Christian monks also introduced literacy to the population and the Roman alphabet, but some runic letters were kept in OE, e.g. þ (thorn), ð (eth), and *ȝ* (yogh). The two former developed into the th-sound, the latter was used to describe /y/,/j/, and /g/ sounds (Mastin 2011). An estimated 450 Latin words was adopted into the Old English vocabulary (1990:153-157).

In the second half of the Old English period Viking invasions, starting in 787 AD and continuing intermittently until the 11th century, caused another shift in the

language (Chrystal 1990:157). The Vikings settled primarily in the north-eastern parts of England in the regions of modern Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, but later also in the eastern region of East Anglia. Called Danes by the Anglo-Saxons (even though the new settlers also originated from Sweden and Norway) the Viking invaders later cemented their rule under the Danelaw and gained political dominance in the regions of Northumbria and East Anglia, where Danish law held sway (Algeo 2010:83).

Fig. 2.4: Danelaw and Wessex in 878 (from Gramley 2012:47)

With another invasion in 911 AD the English King Æthelred was forced into exile and replaced by a Danish ruler, who held his power for twenty-five years (Chrystal 1990:157).

Despite these hostile beginnings, the Viking settlers proved to be peaceful and willing to assimilate with their Anglo-Saxon neighbours. This was helped by the similarities in their language. Old Norse, the language of the Vikings, and Old English shared many similar words, such as *man, wife, mother, summer* or *winter* (Algeo 2010:84). Because of the considerable Danish influence we can find many words in Modern English, among them about 1,500 place names, especially in the aforementioned historic regions. Place names such as *Grimsby*, *Derby* and *Rugby* all end with the Scandinavian suffix –by (for town, farm). The suffix -thorp (for village) describes places such as *Linthorp*, the suffix -twaite (indicating an isolated area) places such as *Braithwaite*, -toft (piece of ground) places like *Nortoft*. Another indicator of how much Scandinavian vocabulary influenced OE is the replacement of the Old

English personal pronouns with the Scandinavian *they, them* and *their*. The most Scandinavian linguistic influence, however, was the introduction of the verb *to be* (Chrystal 1990:157-160).

2.3 Middle English period (1150-1500)

The Middle English period was a transition between the OE period and the Early Modern English period and is characterized by dramatic grammatical changes as well as significant pronunciation changes in the English language.

Middle English was heavily influenced by French and was much determined by the events of the Norman Conquest in 1066. William the Conqueror, the seventh duke of Normandy, and his Northmen did not come to assimilate with the local population but as conquerors. This is important insofar as their language – Norman French (NF) – became the language of the upper classes and of law, government and administration. Therefore, it did not affect the language of the local population as much around the time. England became in fact trilingual, with French spoken by the ruling classes, Latin spoken by the Church, and English spoken by the population (Algeo 2010:114).

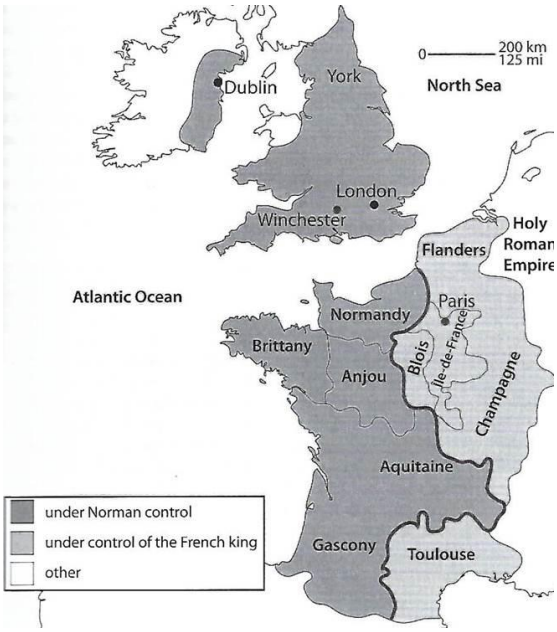

Fig. 2.5: The Norman Empire around 1200 (from Gramley 2012:71)

William the Conqueror based his claim on the English throne not only on right of conquest but also on more or less tenuous reasons of birth right. He took the throne from King Harold, a son of the powerful Earl of Wessex, who had been elected King after the last English King Edward the Confessor had died without issue. William the

Conqueror, however, happened to be a second cousin of the late King Edward and assured his ascend to the throne with an arrow through the eye of King Harold and the defeat of King Harold's brothers in the Battle of Hastings. The Normans had been Viking descendants, who had settled in northern France around the ninth and tenth century (Algeo 2010:113).

The Norman Conquest was the last major invasion on the British Isles and it had a profound impact on the development on the English language. OE persisted and was still spoken by the majority of the population, even though now it was considered inferior and uncultivated in comparison to Norman French (Fischer et al. 2006:54). NF later developed characteristics of its own and was termed Anglo-Norman but it was the most prominent language in England until the 13th century. An estimated 85 per cent of Anglo-Saxon words were lost due to the Norman influence (Mastin 2011), whereas an estimated 10,000 words of Norman origin entered the English language (Chrystal 1990:174) together with a multitude of Latin and Francien vocabulary (Mastin 2011). Since 1100 grammatical changes could be noticed in OE. Inflectional distinctions became fewer, unstressed word endings (similar to French) were less pronounced and therefore ceased to exist. Due to the loss of most OE inflections the word order changed and English developed from a synthetic to a more analytical language. Noun endings died away, but verb endings remained close to OE. Spelling and especially pronunciation started to change considerably, e.g. /f/ and /v/ were differentiated and the OE letters ð, þ and 3 were replaced with –th and /g/ (Mastin 2011). During the 14th century, the Great Vowel Shift (GVS) started to cause major changes in the quality of the six vowel sounds, which started to be diphthongized (see chapter 2.4) (Chrystal 1990:184).

Political events, however, such as the loss of the Duchy of Normandy under King John in 1204, The Hundred Years War in 1337, which promoted English nationalism, the Statute of Pleadings in 1362, which required all court proceedings to be conducted in English, and the outbreak of the plague, which killed a large amount of the population and helped the rise of the middle and merchant classes, caused a return of the English language as the primary language in England. By the end of the 14th century the Norman population identified more with the English than the French. Finally in 1399, for the first time since the Norman Conquest, a King ascended to the throne, who spoke English as his mother tongue (Fischer et al. 2006:54).

The dialectal areas of the ME period stayed very much the same, but for the Mercian dialect area in the centre. Mercian split into Eastern and Western and the four dialectal regions became five. Also they were now known as Northern, East Midland, West Midland, Southern and Kentish.

Fig. 2.6: The five Middle English dialects (from Fischer et al. 2006:54)

Especially the East Midland dialect of the former kingdom of Mercia replaced West Saxon as the new Standard in literature and official writing during the 15th century (Fischer et al. 2006:54). The East Midland area was the most populous region and became the new commercial, agricultural, and educational centre. The East Midland dialect influenced the speech of the then largest city London, a phenomenon which was helped by the invention of printing in 1476. This is why the modern English we speak today is based on the characteristic traits of the Mercian and East Midland dialect respectively (Fischer et al. 2006:55).

2.4 Early Modern English period (1500-1700)

Early Modern English (EMoE) followed Middle English (ME) and differed considerably in pronunciation and vocabulary due to a linguistic occurrence known as the Great Vowel Shift (cf. Appendices). The GVS was a radical change in pronunciation during the 15th, 16th and 17th century and caused long vowels to be pronounced higher and further forward in the mouth (Mastin 2011). Words such as *time* used to be pronounced like the modern pronunciation of *team*, *see* like *say*, and *fame* like *farm* in ME (Chrystal 1990:183). Now the long vowels [a:], [e:], [ɛ:], [o:] and [ɔ:] were raised and the vowels [i:] and [u:] diphthongized, which led to the diphthongs [aɪ] as in *ride*

and [aʊ] as in *cloud* (Fischer et al. 2006:76). The GVS resulted in words being pronounced less the way they were written.

The EMoE period was the time of the Renaissance and ruled by a Queen, after whom a whole era was henceforth named after. Queen Elisabeth I ascended the Throne of England aged 25 in 1558 and led England into an era, which was transformative for both England and the English language. Thanks to her regency England's culture and economy prospered. This led to an increase in the production of books (around 20,000 in 150 years), among them dictionaries as well as a wealth of prosaic literature (the most famous works from the poet William Shakespeare). This is why this period is often referred to as the Golden Age of English Literature (Mastin 2011).

The promotion of education, especially in the fields of medicine, art, and science led to an increase in the English word stock. Often words were borrowed from Greek and Latin, Portuguese or Italian in order to keep up with the rapid creation of the new vocabulary needed to deal with these new scientific fields of interest. This also led to a heated discussion among scholars whether to invent English equivalents or simply to adopt foreign words into the English vocabulary (Chrystal 1990:189 ff.). One of the main problems faced during the EMoE period was the simultaneous existence of dialectal words with the same meaning in the different English dialectal areas. The five dialectal regions of the Middle English period remained, but even in one dialectal area a huge variety of spelling options existed. For example the word *church* could be spelled in 30 different ways, *people* in 22, *she* in 60 and *though* in remarkably 500 ways (Mastin 2011). William Caxton, a linguist and scholar and the one to introduce printing in England, often complained about this because it posed a problem for the book industry. Which words should be used in printing in order for everybody to understand the contents of the book correctly? This in turn led to the standardization of the English language and the beginning of a Standard and Non-Standard English (see chapter 3.1.4) (Chrystal 1990:189 ff.).

2.5 Modern English period (1700-today)

Modern English (ME) is the language spoken today on the British Isles and around the world. According to Charles Barber the development induced by the GVS on the English pronunciation was all but completed by 1700 (2000:199). The English language had developed to such an extent that "there … (was) very little in morphology, syntax, or vocabulary that would not be acceptable in present-day English" (Barber 2000:200). Since the Elizabethan Era English has spread around the globe thanks to the colonization of the American continent which begun in the 15th century and the colonial period under Queen Victoria around the turn of the 19th century. Today increasing Americanization and the political and cultural influence of the United States of America led to the adoption of "American" vocabulary into British English as well as the Australian English language, among others. English has become the *lingua franca* of the world in the 20th and 21st century. This is helped by the invention of the internet and the computer, which leads to a more connected world where language has a greater impact (Chrystal 1990:252 ff.).

3 Variations in English

The previous chapter dealt with the history of the English language and its development during the ages. This chapter seeks to shine light on the characteristics of the Modern English language, namely the development of dialects, accents and varieties we find in England today. It also aims to explain what other factors influence a language in general and what affect this has on the English language.

3.1 The difference between dialect, accent and variety

The terms *accent* and *dialect* are often confused with one another and are used rather interchangeably even by native speakers. An accent refers to varieties of pronunciation only. A dialect, on the other hand, describes varieties which differ not only in pronunciation, but also in grammar and vocabulary (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:2). Therefore, an accent may be part of a dialect but a dialect not part of an accent.

To end the confusion J. C. Wells speaks simply of *varieties*, a more neutral term, which encompasses a difference in "any of the following categories: grammar, syntax, vocabulary and pronunciation" (1982:3). Here a variety does include accent as well as dialect and refers to regional variety. The term *variety* is also used to indicate the standard or general variety of a language, e.g. say American English (AmE) and British English (BrE). Both are varieties of the English language.

3.1.1 Regional variety

A regional dialect is a variety of a language that is spoken by people in a certain region. Regional variation is common in any language in any country. Many linguists and dialectologists have tried to pinpoint the determining factor which provokes regional variation and their general conclusion is usually the existence of multiple factors. Davis speaks of a "complex of reasons" (1983:4-5).

England as a country is comparably small but offers a rich variety of dialects and accents. Upton and Widdowson confirm this by saying that "British English has always been, and continues to be, a language of dialects" (1996: x). Among other reasons, they explain this with the fact that English has been spoken in England for around 1,500 years and therefore had much more time to develop. The longer a language is spoken by a people, the more likely differentiation in the language occurs. Also the simple fact that most people, in the past, had been illiterate proved to be a major factor. Usually the

common people only spoke the language in their respective accents and dialects in everyday life. By the time Christianity and an increasing education influenced the conformity and necessity of an English Standard, the English language was "well established in the country in a wealth of spoken forms" which gave the people next to no reason to write it down anyway (Upton and Widdowson 1996: xiii).

Davis states the main reasons for regional variation are the country's size or geography, its political boundaries, immigration and territorial conquest (1983:4 f.).
This holds certainly true for England. As we have seen in chapter one territorial conquest and immigration proved to be a major influence on the development of the English language during the ages.

Modern linguists speak of isoglosses when trying to separate regional dialects and accents from one another. Isoglosses are regional boundaries that separate certain linguistic features from one another. However, isoglosses are boundaries drawn by linguists and are in no way rigid structures but can be seen as overlapping and shifting. This is why it is so difficult to pinpoint regional variety to certain borders. Many sound features are shared by different regional areas (Upton and Widdowson 1996: xviii).

3.1.2 Social variety

A language is not only determined by the regional origins of its speakers but also by their social standing in society. Freeborn correctly points out that "accents vary not only geographically, but according to certain social variables (…)" (Freeborn 1993:75). These social variables include social class and gender, but also in a broader sense ethnicity, age, styles and certain rôles an individual has to play in society (J.C. Wells 1998:13 ff).

It is fair to say that social variables have a considerable impact on the language of any country, such as the variables age and style. When growing up we inevitably enhance our vocabulary and may use a different style of language at home when speaking with family and friends than at school or at work when speaking with a superior. Whether we use formal or informal language depends on the occasion and the person we are speaking to. It often depends on social respect.

Anyone who has lived in and/or visited England for a time will probably confirm the importance of social class in Britain even today. Over centuries the British distinguished between the working classes and the upper classes, blue colour workers

and white colour workers, the monarchy and its subjects. Even though the class system is not as rigid as it was in the past its impact can still be felt today. The correlation between language and social class is particularly apparent in English-speaking countries (J.C. Wells 1998:13). This may be due to the fact that class played and plays a much more important role than in non-English-speaking countries and therefore has had a much higher impact on the English language, as well. This correlation of accent and social status can be captured diagrammatically in a triangle.

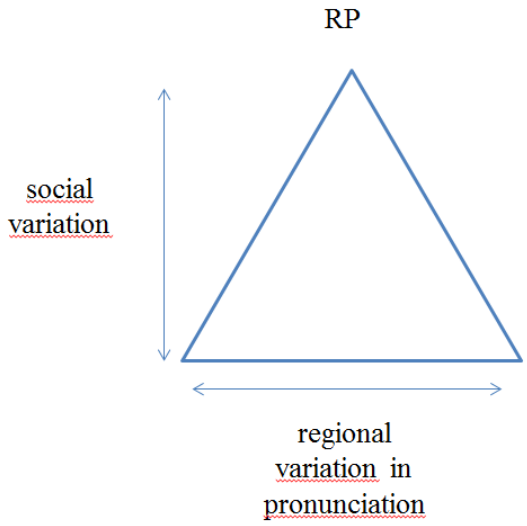

Fig. 3.1: Relation between social and regional accents in England (adapted from Hughes et al. 1994:6)

It shows the broadest regional accents at the bottom and RP, a non-regional accent, at the very top of the triangle (see chapter 3.1.4.1). RP speakers are considered the most prestigious in British society. RP is spoken by a very small percentage of people in Britain and gives no clue as to where the speaker comes from. Regional accents, on the other hand, are spoken by the vast majority of the British population which is why the bottom of the triangle is accordingly broader (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:6 f.). Wells lists three defining criteria for a broad accent which make it differ from RP:

> *"A maximally **broad** accent reflects (i) regionally, the highest degree of local distinctiveness, (ii) socially, the lowest social class, and (iii) linguistically, the maximal degree of difference from RP" (Wells 1998:14).*

Like in any country social mobility allows individuals to climb the social ladder. People in Britain generally do not speak with their regional accent or with an RP accent but adopt RP additionally to their natural accent. Natural RP speakers are rare and make up a very small percentage of the overall population (only about three per cent of the overall population) (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:3). Usually RP speakers are of the upper classes that have been taught in expensive private schools (public schools). The higher up a person is on the social scale, the less regional his or her accent is and the more likely this person will speak with an RP accent.

3.1.3 Attitudes to accents and dialects

Chrystal points out that "views about accents are among the most strongly expressed of all" (2014:40), an opinion that is shared by Upton and Widdowson, who claim that "variation in dialect, and especially in pronunciation, is a subject, about which most people when pressed, (…) are quite prepared to express an opinion" (1996:x).

Social class also has a direct impact on the recognition and the approval of dialects and accents in England. A *social dialect* is "a variety of a language which is spoken by a definable social class" (Davis 1983:5). Davies and Wells seem to agree that dialects and accents tend to be perceived by people as something non-relating to them. Most people generally associate negative connotations with the term *dialect* and reserve it for people who speak differently from the way they do (cf. Davis 1983:2). Wells agrees with Davies when speaking about the term *accent*, claiming that "many people think of an accent as being essentially a pronunciation different from their own" (J.C. Wells 1998:8). This is important, because it proves that the concept of accents and dialects is perceived as something unwanted and that most people customarily tend to perceive accents and dialects as something strange to them.

One of the main consequences of this attitude is the continuous comparison of English dialects and accents to Standard English (StE) and the Received Pronunciation (RP) accent (the respective dialect and accent perceived as the most prestigious and desirable to adopt), especially by English native speakers. Also it leads to the inevitable discussion as to what a correct dialect or accent is. Many consider Standard English the "correct English" and that all other dialects are wrong (Trudgill 1991:12). For this to fully understand it is necessary to explain the importance and significance of the

concept of Standard English and the RP accent, as well as the concept of a standard and non-standard dialect.

3.1.4 Standard and non-standard English or the concept of a standard dialect

3.1.4.1 Standard English (StE) and Received Pronunciation (RP)

Standard English is a dialect of the English language which over time had been adopted as the Standard used on formal occasions, the media (especially the BBC) and is taught in school and to non-native speakers. Standard English can be pronounced with any accent but the accent with which it is pronounced is usually the RP accent. It is "not the dialect of any social group, but of educated people throughout the British Isles" (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:12), a dialect which is "spoken by the most educated and powerful members of the population" (Trudgill 1991:2). Obviously this fact alone makes it a dialect that is not spoken by the majority of the English, because the most educated and powerful only make out a small percentage of the overall population. Only about 12-15 per cent of the overall population are native speakers of Standard English. And among those few who speak StE as their native dialect, 7-12 per cent speaks it with some degree of regional accent (Trudgill 1991:2-3).

Likewise, RP is the most prestigious accent in England. Unlike Standard English, which is the standard dialect of British English, RP is not a standard accent of British English, because a Standard does not exist for accents. However, RP was and still is predominantly spoken by the upper and upper-middle classes, which is why it is attributed with such an importance. RP is the most used accent in the media and the BBC and its command used to be an obligatory requirement for employment at this channel until the early seventies, which is why it is sometimes colloquially referred to as "BBC accent" (Trudgill and 1991:2). The *received* in the name *Received Pronunciation* signifies "generally accepted" (Trudgill 1991:117). And certainly it is the most accepted accent in the UK, as it is shown in the triangle discussed above. What is important to know about the RP accent is that it is non-localisable, meaning it is not associated with a specific geographical location. Expensive private schools, known as public schools in the UK, taught their privileged students this particular accent and it did not matter where this particular public school was geographically located on the map. To give an example, one of the most well-known public schools is Eton College

and Harrow School. Its attendants were usually sons of diplomats, bankers and politicians who were able to afford the exorbitant tuition fees and who would later follow their parents into high-ranking positions in politics, diplomacy and banking.

3.1.4.2 Concept of a standard dialect

Now why is Standard English so important? As Davis and Wells have pointed out, dialects and accents as such are not perceived positively by the English population. Standard English is the most prestigious dialect in England and the corresponding accent with the highest prestige is RP (Received Pronunciation).

> *"In a particular society, for a variety of economic, political, and cultural reasons, one dialect usually emerges as the standard, and we can identify such standards by turning to the upper classes in major cultural centers [sic!] (Davis 1983:14)"*

What Davis expresses with this is that the emergence of a standard dialect is due to multiple factors but when looking at it from an objective point of view the current standard dialect originates from a centre with usually coinciding cultural and political influence. In the case of British English this is clearly the Southeast of England and England's capital London, where the court and government, and the big universities of Cambridge and Oxford are located (Trudgill 1991:13). A standard dialect is not different from any other dialect and bears no intrinsic features which qualify it to be superior to other dialects. Standard English, therefore, is not the "better English" but just one dialect of British English. The only reason a standard becomes a standard is, that it is accepted by the people as the superior dialect (Wells 1998:35-36).

3.1.4.3 Concept of a non-standard dialect and a correct dialect

A non-standard dialect is essentially any other dialect which has not been established as the Standard by the government and/or the population. Therefore, non-standard dialects clearly outnumber the one "correct" standard dialect.

The idea of non-standard dialects brings up the question of what a correct dialect is. There exist people who worry about changes in the language and claim it to be deteriorating by new influences. This is not inherent to the English language but to all

languages, because language changes over time and these modifications are usually embraced more quickly by the younger rather than the older generation of speakers.
This aspect – the correctness of accents and dialects and its perception– is highlighted by many linguists and dialectologists. Hughes and Trudgill list three main aspects which make speakers of a language perceive changes in it as incorrect:

Firstly, new elements in a language are often met with some degree of resistance by its speakers. This can be new words, phrases, new pronunciations, new lexical terms such as loanwords etc.

Secondly, features of informal speech. Hughes and Trudgill clarify this to be a matter of style rather than correctness but it has no less an impact on what people perceive as the correct use of language. In this case the style of a language refers to what people consider the appropriate use of language in a certain social situation. Informal language is frowned upon in formal circumstances. As it happens changes in style are often more frequent and apparent in informal language and slang.

Thirdly, features of regional speech. New features of regional speech leave more or less the same impression on speakers than new words and elements in formal and informal speech, an impression of unfamiliarity. However, here the authors deem the question of correctness to be irrelevant once the new element of regional speech is officially recognized and adopted to the official vocabulary of Standard English (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:11-12).

In all these instances, new features of speech are compared with the British English Standard, and considered inferior to Standard English. As Peter Trudgill puts it when talking about English grammar: “All English dialects have their own, perfectly valid grammars … and the fact that these grammars may differ in some respect from Standard English does not make these grammars wrong or inferior, merely different” (Trudgill 1991:13).

3.2 Major dialects and accents in England today

One of the first noticeable things when speaking with other people is their accent and their pronunciation. When travelling through England from north to south one will inevitably notice distinctions in the way people speak. The further north one travels the more clouded the speech of the locator will become. This chapter highlights the Modern Dialect regions of England and their characterisation by Peter Trudgill.

3.2.1 Modern Dialect regions according to Trudgill

Trudgill classifies sixteen Modern Dialect regions in England today. The dialects spoken in those regions can either be classified as Northern or Southern (1991:63-66). Following the northern branch the dialects split in northern and central dialects. The southern dialects are divided into south-western and eastern dialects. These dialects split again into different dialects until the total count of Modern dialects sums up to sixteen.

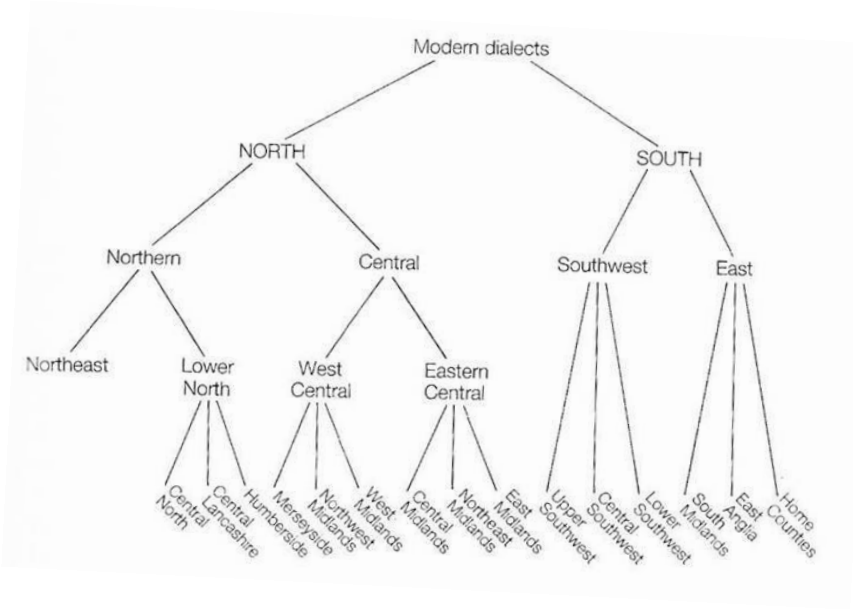

Fig. 3.2: The 16 Modern Dialect regions according to Trudgill (from Trudgill 1994:65)

Trudgill's classification is based on seven pronunciation features which determine the differentiation of these dialect areas.

1. the pronunciation of u in but (FOOT-STRUT split)
2. the pronunciation of r in arm (rhoticity),
3. The pronunciation of ng in singer (velar nasal plus),
4. The pronunciation of ew in few (Yod-dropping),
5. The pronunciation of ee in coffee (happY-tensing),

6. The pronunciation of a in gate (TRAP-BATH split), and finally
7. The pronunciation of l in milk (l-vocalisation)

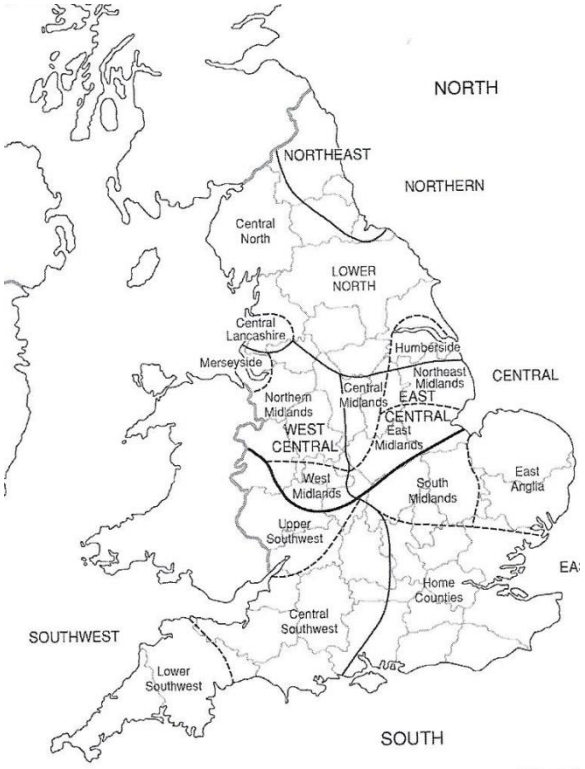

Fig. 3.3: Modern Dialect areas (from Trudgill 1994:63)

These pronunciation features determine the modern dialect regions and are the salient features which will be analysed when comparing the northern and southern dialects and accents in chapter 4.

3.2.1.1 The pronunciation of /u/ in *but* or the FOOT-STRUT split

The letter /u/ is listed as one of the most salient features given as an example by dialectologists to determine the pronunciation split between northern and southern dialects. It is also known as the FOOT-STRUT split. Whereas in the north FOOT and STRUT are essentially homophones and are pronounced with the short vowel [ʊ], the southern dialects distinguish between the two words and pronounce FOOT with the vowel [ʊ] and STRUT with the vowel [ʌ]. Another example for this is the word *butter*. In the North this word is pronounced with a short [ʊ] or with a vowel resembling the [ə] sound, in the south it is pronounced with a short [ʌ] (Beal 2010:13). Hughes and Trudgill point out that the vowel [ʌ] is a relatively recent development in the history of

English and replaced the vowel [ʊ] in the southern parts of England, whereas the North has not yet taken part in this development (1994:28).

3.2.1.2 Rhoticity

Rhoticity describes the pronunciation of the letter /r/- after a vowel (also known as postvocalic /r/) or the lack thereof. Most English accents allow words to be pronounced with a prevocalic /r/ in words such as *trap* or *carry*. Here the pronunciation of /r/ is allowed when the letter appears before a vowel (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:32 f.).

The postvocalic pronunciation of /r/ does occur in words such as *arm* or *car* and these are also the words which are generally given as an example of rhoticity and rhotic pronunciation. Here the letter /r/ is strongly pronounced. Historically the pronunciation of /r/ was the norm in British English and the recommended correct pronunciation. The increasing development of non-rhotic instead of rhotic word pronunciation can be traced back to the eighteenth-century London English. Beal describes this phenomenon as a "change from below", meaning that non-rhotic pronunciation was originally considered the wrong pronunciation which happened to be spoken by the lower social classes. However, non-rhotic pronunciation became so popular that it was adopted by the higher social classes of London until it became one of the most desired features of the RP accent (Beal 2010:15 f.)

3.2.1.3 Velar nasal plus

The pronunciation feature of [ŋ], called "velar nasal plus" by J.C. Wells (1992:365), describes the sound [ŋ] in words such as *finger* and *singer*. Most English regions pronounce the word *singer* [sɪŋə] without emphasizing the /g/. Some speakers in the North-West and West Midlands on the other hand pronounce the /g/ and words like singer become [sɪŋgə]. Beal also describes this feature as "very stable and not at all stigmatised" in these geographical areas (2010:17). The distinction between the pronunciations of [ŋg] and [ŋ] is also the determining pronunciation feature separating the West Midlands and East Midlands as different dialectal areas (Beal 2010:17). Hughes and Trudgill furthermore describe the non-pronunciation of /g/ in the suffix -ing in words like *shooting* and *hunting* as a characteristic pronunciation feature by the older aristocracy (1994:36).

3.2.1.4 Yod-dropping

Yod-dropping is a phenomenon where words such as *new*, *few*, which are normally pronounced like [nju:] and [fju:] in RP, tend to be pronounced without the /j/ sound feature by certain accents and dialects. *New* and *few* become [nu:] and [fu:]. This is a development especially inherent to the Northern and South-Eastern dialects (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:36).

3.2.1.5 HappY-tensing

HappY-tensing describes the pronunciation of the letters /i/ and /e/ in words such as *coffee*, *very* or *lucky* where the /ee/ and /y/ letters are pronounced as a long [ɪ]. This pronunciation was especially common during the 17th century. However, there seems to be an increasing tendency to pronounce the last letters in the abovementioned words as something resembling the pronunciation feature [i:]. HappY-tensing is not as commonly used as in the past and used to be a common feature of upper-class English or traditional RP (Wells 1998:257 ff.)

3.2.1.6 [æ] versus [ɑ] or the TRAP-BATH split

The TRAP-BATH split is, similarly to the FOOT-STRUT split, one of the most salient pronunciation features separating Northern and Southern English. Whereas the letter /a/ as in TRAP is pronounced [æ] and the letter /a/ in BATH is pronounced [ɑ:] in traditional RP and the southern English accents and dialects, the /a/ in TRAP is pronounced [ɑ] and the /a/ in BATH [æ] in the Northern English accents and dialects (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:30 ff.).

3.2.1.7 L-vocalization

The vocalization of /l/ or lack thereof is another distinctive feature which determines one dialect from another according to Trudgill (2000:60 ff.). In words such as *milk* some dialects refrain to pronounce the /l/ and replace it for example with the vowel [ʊ] or [o] (Wells 1992:258). Both Trudgill and Wells describe l-vocalisation as a relatively recent change in the English language, which presumably started in London and its surrounding areas and is increasingly influencing the RP accent. It is spreading so rapidly and influences other English dialects that Wells even thinks it likely that "it will become entirely standard in English over the course of the next century" (1992:259).

3.2.1.8 Other pronunciation features

Other features worth mentioning, although not listed by Trudgill as defining features of the Modern English dialects, are h-dropping, th-fronting, and t-glottaling. They do not impact the determination of the dialectal areas by Trudgill but are commented on here because they will be important for the dialects compared in this thesis. Also all of the pronunciation features mentioned below are stigmatized forms of English pronunciation.

H-dropping is a common feature of urban English accents and dialects and defines the pronunciation of the letter /h/ in words beginning with the same letter. H-dropping can be found in nearly all dialects and accents of British English. The only regions where the /h/ is kept are in the Northeast of England around the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and in East Anglia around the city of Norfolk as part of the distinct Essex accent (Altendorf 2003:62). Beal describes h-dropping as more of a social rather than a geographical phenomenon (2010:21). Wells even portrays the h-dropping phenomenon as "the single most powerful pronunciation shibboleth in England" (1998:254). The h-dropping pronunciation feature seems to be quite stigmatized among the English.

Th-fronting describes the replacement of dental fricatives (such as [θ] and [ð] in words like *think* and *weather*) by labiodentals (such as [f] and [v]) (Wells 1992:328). *Think* and *weather* are hence pronounced as /fink/ and /weaver/.

T-glottalling happens when the /t/-sound in words is exchanged for an air constriction of the vocal chords, also called glottal stop (Knight 2012:30). According to Wells preglottalization and glottalling "are found in many kinds of English […], yet the glottal stop is widely regarded as a sound particularly characteristic of Cockney" (Wells 1992:323). Words which would be preglottalized and glottalized are e.g. *nothing* like [ˈna–θɪŋʔk^{x}] and *that* [thatʔ]. The IPA symbol for the glottal stop is the symbol [ʔ].

3.2.2 Modern Dialects in England today

Based on the sound features listed and explained above, Trudgill establishes three major dialectal areas.

3.2.2.1 Northern dialects

When speaking about Northern dialects people usually refer to the dialectal area north of the river Humber. The Northern dialects, as shown on the map, comprise the north-eastern dialect areas of Tyneside and Tees-side (famous for its Geordie accent) and other Northumbrian dialects, the Central North regions of Lancashire and Cumbria (with accents such as Barrovian in Barrow in Furness), the Lower North region dialects such as (Yorkshire dialect) and well as the Humberside dialects around Hull and Grimsby. (Trudgill 1991:67 ff.) The Northern dialects can be described as closer to the traditional dialects because they have not made the shift introduced by the Great Vowel Shift (GVS) during the sixteenth century (Wells 1998:184 ff.).

3.2.2.2 Central dialects

The Central dialect area is phonetically part of the northern dialect area and distinguishes between West Central dialects in the West Midlands and East Central dialects in the East Midlands. West Central dialects include famous dialects such as Scouse (Liverpool), Mancunian (Manchester) and the Birmingham dialect of Brummie, an accent repeatedly voted as the least popular among the English. The East Midland dialect area includes Nottingham, Derby, Loughborough, Leicester and Lincoln and Petersborough (Trudgill 1991:69 ff.).

3.2.2.3 Southern dialects

The southern dialects distinguish South-western and Southern dialects. The Southern dialects include the London area and Home Counties (the counties surrounding London) dialects and accents such as Cockney, Estuary English and Southwestern accents and dialects including the Cornwall, Bristol and Somerset accents and dialects (Trudgill 1991:72 ff.).

4 Southern and Northern English varieties compared by example of CE, EE, Tyneside and Yorkshire

This chapter deals with the distinction between southern and northern accents and dialects and the way they are perceived by the British population and society today.

As mentioned in chapter 3 the Modern English dialects can be classified as either Northern or Southern. In this chapter the representative southern dialects of the London area Cockney English (CE) and Estuary English (EE) are compared with the representative northern dialects of Tyneside/Geordie and Yorkshire.

4.1 Separation of these accents and dialects

4.1.1 Cockney English

Cockney is the traditional working-class dialect of England's metropolis and capital London. The name Cockney does not only describe the dialect itself but also its speakers. Only someone born within the sound of the Bow Bells, the bells of the St Mary-Le-Bow Church in the City of London is allowed to call itself a true Londoner. The origins of Cockney can be found in the East-London suburbs of Bethnal Green, Stepney, Mile End, Hackney, Whitechapel, Shoreditch, Poplar and Bow (Wells 1992:302 ff.). Cockney English (CE) can be described as a dialect and not only as an accent because it features its own typical vocabulary and usages, including the Cockney typical rhyming slang. Moreover, Cockney is a non-standard dialect and includes stigmatised negative forms, such as multiple negation and pronunciation features like t-glottaling, h-dropping and th-fronting.

4.1.2 Estuary English

Estuary English (EE) is a relatively new occurrence and was mentioned for the first time by David Rosewarne in 1984 who describes it as a "variety of modified speech" (Rosewarne 1999). It was coined by him after the banks of the "Thames and its estuary" in London. EE is generally considered as somewhere between Cockney and RP, but tends to be linguistically closer to the RP accent which is why it is considered by some as the "new RP" (Wells 1997). Estuary English is especially common among the younger Londoners who naturally adopted a mix of the Popular London, Cockney and RP accents and dialects. Youtuber Jade Joddle, for instance, claims to speak naturally

with an EE accent (Joddle 2013). Wells confirms this by saying that "many of the features that distinguish (Estuary English) (…) from RP are features it shares with Cockney: things that may mark it as being distinctively south-eastern" (Wells 1997).

4.1.3 Tyneside/Geordie

The Geordie accent refers the speakers and to the actual accent of the people of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and its surrounding areas, Tyne and Wear. According to Simmelbauer the spread of the Tyneside dialect is restricted geographically to 10-12 kilometres to the north and south of the river Tyne (2000:27). Newcastle is one of the northernmost cities in England and famous for its distinct Geordie accent. The Geordie accent does not only differ in pronunciation but also in vocabulary which is why it might be more accurate to define it as a dialect. It differs in several ways from other urban speech varieties of the north of England, some of which will be discussed in the following (Wells 1998:374).

4.1.4 Yorkshire

Yorkshire is a county in the northeast of England. It also happens to be the largest county of England. The Yorkshire dialect does not describe one dialect specifically "but, rather, a variety of speech patterns across the region" (The Yorkshire Dialect Society 2014). The Yorkshire dialect is fairly well-known and is recognized by the English, not least because it is featured in popular TV programmes such as the TV drama series *Downton Abbey*. The Yorkshire dialect is often given as an example of a typical northern dialect of English, simply because it features many typical northern linguistic features.

4.2 Geographical differences

From a modern perspective the geography of a country is not as important anymore insofar as the world is now connected via internet, telephones and other communication networks. In the past, however, geographical boundaries had a direct effect on how far and wide people would travel and therefore on the spread of their local dialect. Rivers and mountains as natural obstacles hindered the spread of local speech. This had an impact on the development of the language spoken in England and therefore on the development of the English dialects.

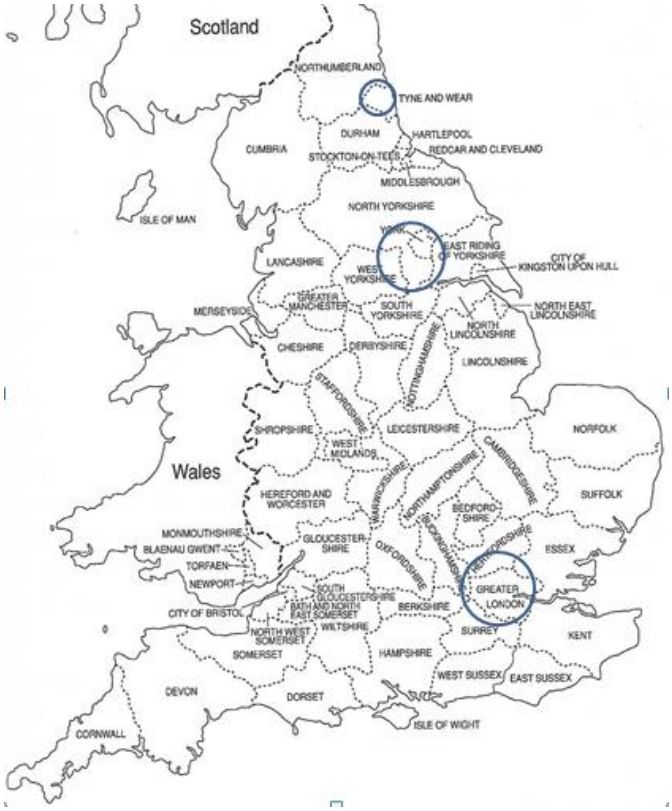

Fig. 4.1: Location of the Cockney, EE, Tyneside and Yorkshire dialects and accents on the map (adapted from Wales 2006:15)

4.2.1 Cockney English and Estuary English

Geographically the London accents and dialects of Cockney and Estuary English are situated in the South of England or more correctly in the Southeast. Both Cockney and EE are urban varieties and restricted to London (Wells 1997).

By applying the geographical dimension to the depiction of the southern dialects and accents it is noteworthy to refer to the historic development of the English dialects and accents (see chapter 2). The linguistic south may be described as everything south of the River Humber by some (close to Kingston-upon-Hull), but when applying the criteria established by Peter Trudgill, it is probably more correct to say the southern dialects are located south of the Severn-Wash-Line (see Fig. 4.3) . This excludes a large part of the Central dialects in the Midlands which are in part classified as northern dialects.

London is located at the River Thames. The London speech does not only include Cockney and EE, but is a mishmash of a multitude of different accents and dialects, commonly referred to as popular London (Wells 1992:302). The Cockney speakers of London are geographically restricted to the East End of London. Estuary

English is geographically restricted to the River Thames and its Estuary, but unlike Cockney it tends to spread to the outskirts of Greater London and its surrounding counties.

4.2.2 Tyneside/Geordie and Yorkshire

The Yorkshire and Tyneside dialects are located in the North of England in the Northeast. The most obvious natural border for the northern accents and dialects has historically been the river Humber. Northumbria is a historical region of Britain and describes everything north of the River Humber. The northern dialect, however, does not only refer to the accents and dialects spoken north of the River Humber but linguistically include the northern parts of the Midland regions, as well. This includes Yorkshire, Merseyside, and the northern parts of the East and West Midlands. Wells supports this idea and suggests that what people generally refer to as "northern" dialects would more accurately be described as "midlands and northern" (1992:349). Likewise, the northern dialectal areas of the Northeast and Central North differ because they are separated by the natural border of the Pennine mountain range. This mountain range is the reason why the two dialectal areas exist. The Pennine Chain constitutes of a natural border between the Lancashire and Yorkshire counties.

The Yorkshire dialect can be separated in to two different dialectal regions: the dialectal region in the south and west, and the dialectal region in the north and east. These two regions are separated by an isophone (a phonetic isogloss, see chapter 3.1.1), also called the Humber-Lune-Line. The dialects spoken south of this line can be classified as Central dialects, the dialects north of this line as Northern. One hundred years ago, there would have been an audible difference between these two areas. However, over time the "line" shifted somewhat to the north, which is why now the two dialectal areas of the Yorkshire dialect are not as clearly separated by the Rivers Humber and Lune (Yorkshire Dialect Society 2014).

Fig. 4.2: Humber-Lune-Line http://www.universalteacher.org.uk/lang/britishisles.htm (accessed 10/07/2017)

The Tyneside dialect is also geographically restricted to the city of Newcastle-upon Tyne and the surrounding areas in 10 to 12 mile radius (Simmelbauer 2000:27). Often the Tyneside English dialect and the dialect of Northumbria are confused with one another and people tend to describe the Northumbrian dialect as Geordie. Geordie, however is a synonym for the Tyneside English dialect and is geographically restricted to the area mentioned by Simmelbauer, whereas the Northumbrian dialect includes the area "expanding from the River Tweed to the River Blyth, thus covering the county of Northumberland" (Simmelbauer 2000:27). The third Northumbrian dialect is the Durham dialect which covers the area south of the River Tyne and to the north of Yorkshire.

In conclusion, natural geographical boundaries and the location on the map had an impact on the development of the London varieties of Cockney and Estuary English and Geordie and the Yorkshire dialects respectively. Notable linguistic differences in these dialects and accent can be traced back to their geographical location, simply because these dialects and accents have been spoken by people from different origins whose natural speech developed differently due to their geographical "isolation".

4.3 Linguistic differences

This segment serves to show in what way northern and southern varieties differ linguistically by showing examples of the Cockney English, Estuary English, Tyneside and Yorkshire dialects and accents. For the analysis the pronunciation features classified by Trudgill as described in chapter 3.2.1 are applied. Furthermore the four aforementioned dialects and accents will be contrasted grammatically and to an extent lexically.

4.3.1 Pronunciation differences

4.3.1.1 Cockney English

Typical pronunciation features of Cockney are the h-dropping and the sound feature glottal stop [ʔ]. Cockney speakers pronounce words such as house [ˈouse] dropping the /h/ completely. Words such as *butter* are pronounced without the /t/. Another common feature of Cockney is the substitution of the feature [θ] with [ð] or /f/. The sharp th-sound [θ] in words like *think* is either substituted with the softer [ð] (like the th in the word *weather*) or replaced with a simple /f/. So the word *think* would be pronounced as /dink/ or /fink/. Speaking of which, the th [ð] in *weather* is often pronounced as /v/ like wevver, a phenomenon known by linguists as th-fronting. Words like *the* might be pronounced /de/, the th-sound [ð] replaced with a /d/. Cockney is a southern dialect so the [ʊ] and [ʌ] sound features are generally distinguished from one another. The /l/ in words such as *milk* is often not vocalized and instead replaced with a [ʊ] sound. Milk then is pronounced as [mɪʊk]. And the velar nasal plus sound [ŋ] in the words *finger* and *singer* is pronounced but the suffix –ing pronounced as –in or –ink (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:44-45).

4.3.1.2 Estuary English

Estuary English shares many phonetic characteristics with Cockney and RP. For instance it shares features such as the l-vocalisation and words such as milk are pronounced similarly to Cockney [mɪʊk] or [mɪok], a bit like miwk including a /w/.
T-glottaling is also a very common feature but the t-sound is not omitted altogether but in a way tapped ([ɾ] or [t̬]). This is common in words such a *Gatwick* which is more pronounced like “Gaˈwick”. Unlike in Cockney, h-dropping is not as common a feature and th-fronting does not occur.

4.3.1.3 Tyneside/Geordie

The most uniquely sound feature which distinguishes Geordie from other accents, even in the North, is the phonemic /h/ (Wells 1998:374). As stated in chapter 3.2.1.8 h-dropping is a common pronunciation feature in nearly all dialects of English, but especially in the North the /h/ is usually pronounced in one way or another, not dropped. However, Geordie is the only accent where the /h/ is consequentially pronounced and never dropped in any word. When speaking with somebody from the north and then

speaking with somebody from the south of England asking them to recite the alphabet from A to Z, the person from the north will most likely pronounce it as haitch and the one from the south as aitch: the aspiratory /h/ is likely even dropped by the southern speaker when pronouncing the letter alone.

Furthermore words such as *butter* are pronounced with a glottal stop /ʔ/, a feature it shares with the Cockney dialect (Wells 1997). Another characteristic feature is the pronunciation of the letter /u/, which is pronounced as [ʊ] instead of [ʌ]. The Tyneside area is one of those regions least affected by the GVS. The result was that the pronunciation of vowels continued to be monophthongs instead of diphthongs like in RP. *night* is pronounced [i:] with a long /i/ instead of [ai] as is customary in RP and *face* with [e:] instead of [ei:] (Simmelbauer 2000:27). The /l/ is always clearly vocalized, in words such as *milk*.

4.3.1.4 Yorkshire

The Yorkshire accent is a typically Northern accent where words like *dance* and *daft* are pronounced with a short /a/, whereas the RP pronunciation would be [æ] in *dance* and [aː] in *daft*. Words like *put* and *putt* are not differentiated in their sounds. Both use the vowel [ʊ], where RP would use [ʊ] in *put* and [ʌ] in *putt* (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:62). A common feature for the Yorkshire accent is also the use of the glottal stop in words like *that*. This is a similar feature to the southern accents of Cockney and EE. A very famous feature of the Yorkshire accent is the Yorkshire Assimilation, a feature which "arises when a final voiced obstruent comes into contact with a compound word or across a true word boundary (…) with the effect of completely devoicing the former consonant" (Wells 1992:366). This means that compound words such as *wide trousers* are homophonous with *white trousers*. In Yorkshire the /g/ after a [ŋ] sound in words such as *finger* is usually not pronounced, except in the county's capital city of Sheffield (Hughes and Trudgill 1994:62).

4.3.2 Grammatical differences

Additionally to distinct varying pronunciation features dialects differ in grammar and vocabulary. O'Donnell and Todd name grammar as one of three strata for the description of a language (1995:23). They furthermore split grammar into the two branches of morphology and syntax. The morphology describes "the branch of grammar

which structures the study of words", whereas "the syntax studies the way words combine into sentences" (Chrystal 1992:49). O'Donnell and Todd also state that morphology is the one branch that has been thoroughly researched and syntax "considerably less so" (1995:23). This is why the grammatical analysis in this chapter will focus on primarily on morphology. However, also lexical variations in these four dialects will be pointed out to the reader.

4.3.2.1 Cockney English

Cockney as a dialect features some grammatical differences from Standard English. It uses constructions of typical non-standard dialects like *ain't*. Cockney is also famous for its rhyming slang. For words such as *stairs*, Cockney uses the construction "apples and pears". The word *stairs* rhymes with *pears*, which is why it is used as a substitute for the former. So this construction would appear in sentences like "I came down the stairs" and it would say "I came down the apples and pears". To make it even more confusing for the casual listener the last rhyming word is often dropped and the sentence would go "I came down the apples". Anyone not familiar with the original construction would be lost to understand the original meaning of the sentence.

Cockney speakers add –s of the first singular present and form sentences like "I walks to work every day" and "I likes my bike" (O'Donnel and Todd 1995:24). Cockney speakers tend to use the words *mate* to refer to a close friend.

4.3.2.2 Estuary English

Both J.C. Wells and Ulrike Altendorf describe the grammar of Estuary English to be very similar to Standard English. As outlined in chapter 3, a dialect can only truly be described as a dialect if it differs not only in pronunciation but also in grammar. In fact, many renowned linguists question the validity of EE as a dialect. Paul Coggle, for instance, is one of the few who claims EE to have features of a dialect, whereas J.C. Wells clearly opinionated EE to be an accent only (Altendorf 2003:10). This means unlike Cockney, Estuary English barely qualifies as a dialect and it is entirely plausible to call EE an accent of British English.

4.3.2.3 Tyneside/Geordie

Tyneside grammatical constructions are different from Standard English and many non-standard grammatical constructions are used to speak proper Geordie. For instance, Tyneside uses “ye” and “thou” to indicate the Standard English possessive pronoun “you” (Trudgill 1994:86). An interesting contrast with the Yorkshire dialect is the usage of “I am” similarly to Standard English, whereas the Yorkshire dialect uses “I is” (Trudgill 1994:99). Geordie speakers often address people they like affectionately with “pet”. Non-standard constructions in Geordie include also endings like *-nae* and *-na* in sentences like “I dinnae ken” (I don’t know) and “I canna come” (I cannot come) (Trudgill and Chambers 1991:49).

4.3.2.4 Yorkshire

The Yorkshire dialect differs in some grammatical forms from Standard English. For instance in West Yorkshire constructions such as “Give us us books” can be heard. Here the “us” occurs as the first plural possessive adjective (O’Donnell and Todd 1995:25). The Yorkshire dialect also includes former possessive pronouns such as “thou” in sentences. This is an archaic feature left from a time where the spoken language in that area distinguished between “you” and “thou” similar to the French and German distinctions between “vous” and “tu” and “Sie” and “du” respectively. Similarly to “tu” and “du” the word “thou” is used to address a person one is familiar with (Trudgill 1990:85). Depending on where exactly one is in the county of Yorkshire speakers would say phrases like “They send us till London”. The Standard English form here is “They send us to London”. The implementation of “till” instead of “to” in those grammatical constructions can be explained by the areas Scandinavian heritage (see chapter 2). The Norwegian word for “to” is “til”. This form developed to “till” and is used accordingly (Trudgill 1994:100). Similarly to speakers of Geordie who address people as “pet”, speakers of the Yorkshire dialect tend to use the word “love” for somebody well liked. For the Standard English word *ear* dialectal synonyms are used and *ear* becomes *lug* or *tab* (Trudgill 1994:105). When saying that children are playing, Yorkshire dialect speakers use “to lake” instead of “to play”, another relict of the Scandinavian influence in this area. The Norwegian word for *play* is *leike* and *leike* became *lake*, and has nothing to do with the Standard English word *lake* which describes a sizable body of fresh or salt water surrounded by land.

4.4 Social differences

We have seen the geographical and linguistic aspect of Northern and Southern the dialects and accents by example of the Cockney, EE, Tyneside and Yorkshire. The third aspect is the social perception of Northern and Southern dialects and it will be explained here by example of the four dialects and accents. In this section the concept of the North-South devide will be introduced and how this affects the perception of northern and southern dialects specifically and generally.

4.4.1 North-South divide

The social connotations between northern and southern English accents and dialects cannot possibly be fully understood without introducing the concept and phenomenon of the North-South divide.

By reading the former chapters it may have become apparent to the careful reader that England is a divided country. England is a country which has been determined by social class over centuries. Much like the gap between East and West in Germany, England today is divided into North and South. This phenomenon is also known as the North-South divide. Of course no actual border can be found between the northern and southern counties of England. However, barely a day goes by where the economic gap between northern and southern England is not discussed in the UK. The North-South divide is such a prominent issue in England that newspapers like the Guardian offer a special column dedicated solely to news regarding the split of north and south. Here articles such as “At first it was a disaster: northern readers on moving to London” and “We are divided by more than north and south” are paid special attention to (The Guardian, accessed 21/06/17).

Historically the North has always been poorer than the South. This has had a direct impact on the economy in the southern parts of England. The North, on the other hand, used to be the centre of the Industrial Revolution and many factories can be found in the East and East and West Midlands and in Yorkshire, which is why the North has always been home to the poorer working classes. Helen Jewell points out that the North-South divide is not a new phenomenon of the 20th century but has been “a north-west/south-east divide which is literally as old as the hills” (Jewell 1994:28). It must be said that the concept of the North-South divide is not recognized officially. The first female Prime Minister of the UK for instance, Margaret Thatcher, dispelled it as a myth (Jewell

1994:1). The North-South divide can be literally traced on the map shown by the distinction of northern and southern accents and dialects. Danny Dorling describes the geographic boundary between North and South as a line "that separates upland from lowland Britain, the hills from the most fertile farmland, areas invaded by Vikings from those first colonised by Saxons" (Dorling w.y).

Fig. 4.3: The "North" (red, including Scotland) and the "South" (blue) http://www.sasi.group.shef.ac.uk/maps/nsdivide/north-south_divide_UK_no_labels_blue_red_small.jpg (accessed 30/07/2017)

4.4.2 The social recognition of northern and southern dialects

London has been the cultural and political capital of England for a very long time. Southern English dialects are therefore perceived much more favourably than the Northern English dialects. This aspect will be highlighted in this segment.

4.4.2.1 Cockney English

The Cockney dialect is generally regarded as a working class dialect (Wells 1997). This implies that Cockney is regarded as secondary to Standard English and speakers of Cockney sound "rough" and "harsh" in comparison to softer London speeches spoken in the better boroughs of Mayfair and Kensington, where speakers tend to pronounce words with an RP accent and their speech is closer to Standard English and therefore "characterized by a velvety smoothness" (Wells 1998:331 ff.). Despite its close geographical proximity to the court and government, Cockney is deeply entrenched as

the speech of the working classes and did not absorb many features of RP English and the speech of the upper classes.

4.4.2.2 Estuary English

Estuary English is viewed as the "new RP" by many and therefore automatically has a better social standing than the Cockney dialect. EE is not too posh and not too working class which means it used by many London speakers who do not want to sound too upper-class and not too working class (Rosewarne 1999). Jade Joddle, for instance, claims that many speakers of EE use this accent in particular when either not trying to sound too posh (in which case they would speak with an RP accent) or not too working class (in which case London speakers would speak in Cockney) (Joddle 2013).

4.4.2.3 Tyneside/Geordie

The Tyneside dialect seemed to have a bit a bad reputation among the English and is not first and foremost recognized as a desirable dialect to adopt (Fehringer et al. 2015:38 ff.). It is difficult to determine the reasons for its bad social acceptance but one of the reasons might be its northern urban working-class origin, the fact that it considerably varies in pronunciation from the Standard and RP accent and its geographical distance to the cultural centre of London. Wales suggests that Tyneside English used to be perceived by Southerners as the speech of "foreigners" and originated from a place perceived as a "separate nation" (2006:163). However, this used to be the common perception during the 1960's and Wales also points out that since then Tyneside English has become much more popular due to closer media attention and a resurgence of the popular cultural activity in the Tyneside area. Many comedians and television hosts are featured in British TV today and therefore their speech became much more accepted also. A very prominent celebrity speaking the Geordie accent is Cheryl Fernandez-Versini (formerly Cheryl Cole) and the comedian Sarah Millican.

4.4.2.4 Yorkshire

The social acceptance of the Yorkshire dialect seems to be higher than the one of the Tyneside dialect and is often cited as the first dialect when asked to name a "northern" English dialect. The Yorkshire dialect was equally disliked in the past as shown by the bad acceptance of the Hull-born Deputy PM John Prescott during the 1990's and South

Yorkshire-born William Hague (Wales 2006:167). In the past decades northern dialects and accents became much more popular and today this new positive perception is mirrored and used by the media in adverts. Often northern-speaking celebrities are shown to market products to insinuate northern hospitality and openness (Wales 2006:166). The Yorkshire dialect is not only a rural variety but also deeply connected with the working class.

4.4.3 Perception of Northern and Southern dialects and accents today

The perception of northern and southern dialects by the British population has somewhat shifted over the last few decades. For instance, the phenomenal musical success of the Beatles has contributed to a more open view towards their Liverpudlian accent Scouse during the 60s. Today famous TV shows are partly responsible for a new appreciation of urban northern dialects and accents. The most famous TV shows in England are the daily soaps *Coronation Street* and *East Enders*. Whereas *East Enders* was a long established TV show playing in the London borough of East End, *Coronation Street* was thought to become a failure upon its inception due to its setting in the urban City of Manchester with Mancunian to be an accent utterly unpopular among the English (Wales 2006:160). Even though both accents of Cockney and Mancunian were working-class accents, the Cockney accent was regarded in a better light than Mancunian. Cockney, at least was a southern accent. As it turned out, *Coronation Street* became just as popular as *East Enders* and today those two soaps are the most aired in British television (Wales 2006:161). The most recent TV shows which contributed to the exposition of northern English accents to a larger audience are shows such as *Downton Abbey* and *Game of Thrones. Downton Abbey*, aired by British TV channel ITV, is a period drama revolving around the aristocratic family, set in northern Yorkshire. *Game of Thrones* is an American fantasy drama television series by HBO. The significance of the RP accent is shown to be on the decline and is not regarded as important as in the past. Many speakers adopted the RP accent additionally to their native accent or dialect and vary their speech depending on the social situation they find themselves in. In place of RP, London speakers tend to speak either with an Estuary English or Cockney accent.

4.5 Summary

By comparing the two southern varieties of Cockney and Estuary English with the two northern dialects of Tyneside and Yorkshire it becomes clear that not only do they differ significantly in their respective pronunciation and to some extent in their grammar and vocabulary, but are also affected by their geographical location and social perception of society.

Even though CE, EE, Tyneside and Yorkshire share similar pronunciation features to a varying degree due to the fact that all of them are English dialects and therefore include similar linguistic traits (see chapter 3.2.1), they do differ mostly due to their geographical location. This consequently led to a distinction of northern and southern dialectal features, which in turn results in a distinction in how they are perceived by their speakers.

The southern dialects of Cockney and EE are both closer to Standard English and the RP accent, by virtue of their southern pronunciation features. Because RP shares southern linguistic traits it stands to reason that also Estuary English consequently has a higher prestige among the British English speakers. Even Cockney English is more loved than hated due thanks to its London origins.

The northern dialects of Tyneside and Yorkshire have been much less influenced by the GVS and both share archaic pronunciation features. Their speakers are traditionally members of the working classes. Whereas Tyneside is an urban variety and geographically restricted to Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the area of Tyne and Wear, the Yorkshire dialect is a rural variety. Out of the four dialects and accents compared it is the only rural dialects. Cockney, EE and Tyneside English are all urban varieties. What becomes clear upon closer inspection is that urban varieties seem to have a larger impact on the future development of the English language. This may be because more young people live in cities and urban areas than oldr people and it is the younger generation of speakers who determine the future development of a language.

The social connotations related to these four dialects and accents are important insofar as they used to be determining in how someone was perceived by the British society and it had an impact on, e.g. their employment chances. It is remarkable how important the RP accent still is in England and it lead to a development where its speakers learned to alter their speech, especially their accent according to the social

situation. One interesting feature of EE is its linguistic variability which allows its speakers to alter their speech either closer to the RP or Cockney spectrum.

5 Conclusions

The aim of the present thesis was to explore the dialectal variety in England today by comparing two major southern dialects with two prominent northern dialects from a geographical, social and linguistic point of view. To this end the two representative southern dialects and accents of Cockney English (CE) and Estuary English (EE) have been contrasted with the two representative northern dialects of Tyneside/Geordie and Yorkshire.

Firstly, the historic development of the English language had been explained. This short segment served to introduce English as a multi-layered language and tried to explain the historic implications of English and the emergence of dialects and accents in England. Secondly, the concept of accents and dialects was introduced and the Modern English varieties explained from a scientific standpoint. The third part included a comprehensive analysis and comparison of the four abovementioned accents and dialects, which had been examined geographically, linguistically and socially.

The findings of this thesis indicate major differences but also many similarities between these four varieties. Most prominently it can be reaffirmed that northern and southern English dialects and accents differ significantly in their pronunciation and therefore linguistically. Many pronunciation features introduced by Trudgill are shared by all English dialects, but a major difference between CE, EE and Yorkshire and Tyneside varieties is the [ʊ]/ [ʌ] split (also known as FOOT-STRUT split). Moreover, social connotations related to the concept of northern and southern dialects and accents are still valid today, but not so much as in the past. Surprisingly Tyneside English and Yorkshire English are much more positively perceived by the English today, despite their Northern origins and significant sound qualities different to the desired RP accent. Geographically, there is a perceivable split between the northern and southern dialects and therefore also between the London varieties introduced and the Tyneside and Yorkshire dialects. Thanks to increasing media coverage of rural speech and especially the Northern dialects and accents their social acceptance seems to have equally increased among the English population. Socially the gap between North and South has decreased at least in terms of the perception of these varieties.

As shown in the former chapters, the English language and its dialects are ever-evolving and changing and will so in the future. The simple fact that dialectologists have such trouble to determine dialectal boundaries is an indication that language

changes, sometimes very quickly and with it the social connotations associated with it. It can be presumed that the London dialects will continue to influence all dialects of English in England. Especially the Estuary English accent will have an impact on the London speech in particular. Urban centres such as Newcastle-upon-Tyne will have a larger impact on their surrounding areas and the Tyneside speech will continue to influence the speech of other Northumbrian dialects. Generally speaking urban varieties tend to have a larger influence on the development of accents and dialects in the future and changes in speech do occur more frequently in urban centres than in the countryside. The research conducted by e.g. Peter Trudgill to determine the future development of the English dialects points to such a development.

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Appendices

The Old English runic alphabet

Rune	Anglo-Saxon	Name	Meaning (where known)
ᚠ	f	feoh	cattle, wealth
ᚢ	u	ūr	bison (aurochs)
ᚦ	þ	þorn	thorn
ᚩ	o	ōs	god/mouth
ᚱ	r	rād	journey/riding
ᚳ	c	cen	torch
ᚷ	g [j]	giefu	gift
ᚹ	w	wyn	joy
ᚻ	h	hægl	hail
ᚾ	n	nied	necessity/trouble
ᛁ	i	is	ice
ᛄ	j	gear	year
ᛇ	ȝ	ēoh	yew
ᛈ	p	peor	?
ᛉ	x	eolh	?sedge
ᛋ	s	sigel	sun
ᛏ	t	tiw/tir	Tiw (*a god*)
ᛒ	b	beorc	birch
ᛖ	e	eoh	horse
ᛗ	m	man	man
ᛚ	l	lagu	water/sea
ᛝ	ng	ing	Ing (*a hero*)
ᛟ	oe	eþel	land/estate
ᛞ	d	dæg	day
ᚪ	a	ac	oak
ᚫ	æ	æsc	ash
ᚣ	y	yr	bow
ᛠ	ea	ear	?earth
ᛡ	g [ɣ]	gar	spear
ᚳ	k	calc	?sandal/chalice/chalk
ᛣ	k̄	(*name unknown*)	

Fig. A.1: The Old English Runic Alphabet Futhorc (from Chrystal 1990:162)

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (2005)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

	LABIAL		CORONAL				DORSAL			RADICAL		LARYNGEAL
	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Epi-glottal	Glottal
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	N			
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k g	q ɢ		ʡ	ʔ
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	H ʢ	h ɦ
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ				
Trill	ʙ			r					R			
Tap, Flap		ⱱ		ɾ		ɽ						
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ								
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ				
Lateral flap				ɺ								

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a modally voiced consonant, exept for murmured *fi*.
Shaded areas denote articulations judged to be impossible.

Fig. A.2: The (English) International Phonetic Alphabet (from Gramley 2012:363)

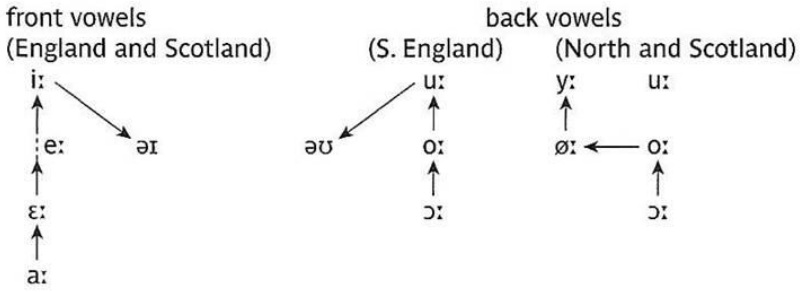

Fig. A.3: The GVS in Southern and Northern England and Scotland (from Gramley 2012:134)

Statement of authorship

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this bachelor thesis and that I have not used any sources other than those listed in the bibliography and identified as references. I further declare that I have not submitted this thesis at any other institution in order to obtain a degree.

_____ _____

(Place, Date) (Signature)