“Oh, you’re from Hull? First question – where’s that?”

Explorations of Personal Accent Perception alongside Diphthong Phonological Variability in the Construction of Social and Linguistic Identity in Hull.

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts by Research

York St. John University

School of Education, Language and Psychology

September 2022

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his/her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks must go to Dr Kate Whisker-Taylor and Dr Maja Skender-Lizatovic, for their supervision of the project. Thank you for your invaluable support, guidance, and feedback across all stages of the thesis, and for the lending of audio equipment for data collection. I honestly can't thank you both enough.

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To all lecturers in the Languages and Linguistics Department at York St. John University who have been a part of my 4 amazing years at YSJ: Clare Cunningham, Helen Sauntson, Chisato Danjo, Chris Hall, Indu Vibha Meddegama, Rachel Wicaksono, Nikki Swift, Leesa Clarke, Magdalena Sztencel and Dai O'Brien - thank you for sharing your passion with me and inspiring me to continue studying within an amazing subject.

*****

I would also like to thank my friends and family who have continuously supported me behind the scenes. Mum, Josh, Rich, Charlotte, Amina – thanks for the ongoing encouragement, advice, moral support, and patience you have given me for the duration of this degree. Thanks to Charlotte for accommodation whilst visiting York, and for solving all my printing needs. Thanks to Liam and Georgia for the proofread and sense check (with bid-writer scrutiny!)

Your support has not gone unnoticed.

*****

Finally, this project would not have been possible without the contributions from my sixteen participants from lovely 'Ull! Thank you for sharing your time with me– I could not have written this thesis without the help of your fantastic Hull accents and attitudes! You have all done Hull proud.

Abstract

This thesis presents a sociophonetic study of Hull, an urban city located on the coast of East Yorkshire. The gathered data for the present study are from a group of fifteen speakers, who are divided by gender and grouped into two emically defined age cohorts – 'younger' (18-34 years-old) and 'retired' (over 65 years-old), to test for generational differences suggestive of accent divergence, phonological resistance and linguistic continuity and innovation. Two linguistic variables, PRICE, and GOAT diphthongs, are investigated using data gathered through a sociolinguistic interview methodology, comprising of word list, reading passage and interview styles of speech. Impressionistic analyses supported with annotated spectrograms of PRICE and GOAT tokens uncover patterns in phonological variation across the speaker cohorts. The phonological findings reveal that the Hull speakers predominantly produce monophthongal variants of diphthong vowels, adhering to local, allophonic forms, with some speakers acknowledging an awareness of such features in their linguistic inventory.

The study also explores speakers' overt perceptions towards their accent and language variation, and discusses how such perceptions inform their linguistic, social, and regional identities. Through comparing the language ideologies, elicited through the identities questionnaire, with the patterns of phonological data, the study offers insight into whether perceived individual linguistic identity is reflected through one's phonological variability. Perceptions of age and sex variation, perceptions of place, and speaker's affiliation towards Hull, are all found to be pertinent to constructing social and linguistic identity. Despite the negative stigma and media portrayal attributed to Hull, all speakers feel a sense of pride for their city, concluding how personal accent perceptions do not act as a motivation for language change, but rather act as a motivation for linguistic continuity and phonological resistance in Hull. Suggestions for future research in the field are also considered.

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INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The sociophonetic study aims to build upon and contribute to the growing field of contemporary accent and dialect research through investigating language change and attitudes in Hull, East Yorkshire. Language use alongside speakers' personal attitudes towards their accent and city will be uncovered to determine speakers' perceptions and awareness of particular variants. Motivation for the present study arises from the researcher's personal experience in receiving negative responses towards being from Hull, as well as the city being subject to frequent negative stereotypes (see Bianchini, 2018; I Live Here, 2021, for example).

Characterised by Wells (1982a:349) as 'linguistically northern', Hull forms part of the Humberside accent group, wherein a five-part monophthong vowel system of /ɪ, ɒ, ʊ, a, ɛ/ is typical. Previous work in Hull, notably Williams and Kerswill's (1999:156) *dialect levelling* study, has denoted the Hull accent as being 'distinctive', emphasising how the city's unique accent has been maintained over time, due to limited social and geographical mobility. Investigating a variety of social factors will determine the extent to which phonological variation is socially constrained and determine whether the accent is actively being retained or is converging towards standard forms. Moreover, incorporating an *Identities Questionnaire* (henceforth IdQ) (Llamas, 1999; 2001) into the study will gauge how participants' feel toward their accent and city, offering an insight into the current social and regional identities in Hull.

The specific objectives of the study are threefold:

1) To investigate patterns of phonological variation apropos of two diphthong sounds, considering various social factors, and discuss whether Hull is retaining or diverging from its local phonological features.
2) To explore each informant's personal attitudes and perceptions towards Hull and their own Hull accent and determine whether social constraints influence their realisations and awareness of local diphthong features.
3) To investigate whether perceived individual linguistic identity is reflected through one's phonological variability. This objective involves determining whether possible differences in degree of accent levelling/phonological resistance can be explained through differing attitudes and perceptions, thus depicting whether personal accent perception acts as motivation for language change.

STRUCTURE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

Chapter 1 outlines various theoretical approaches to language variation research. The chapter considers variables that sociolinguistic researchers utilise, including the social parameters of age, sex, and social

class. Necessary discussions of theories and motivations for language change are offered: frameworks including *social networks* and *dialect contact* highlight the range of approaches open to the researcher.

Chapter 2 discusses the contextual background of Hull. Highlighted is the isolated location, the current demography, and social and economic climates. The chapter also explores the impact on Hull as UK City of Culture 2017 and addresses the frequently negative media representations associated with Hull. The chapter discusses the advantages sought from investigating one's own regional variety.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology and study design of the current study. This is split into three main sections: (a) evaluation of the pilot studies and a review of selected linguistic variables, (b) the participant sample criteria and (c) the design of the data set. This chapter also outlines the transcription process and the method of analysis.

Chapter 4 analyses phonological data. General findings are discussed, followed by any observed trends and patterns arising from the variable realisations, with respect to age and sex. Findings for PRICE[1] and GOAT are discussed, evidencing individual speakers' phonological examples through transcriptions, spectrograms alongside their perceived awareness of the features.

Chapter 5 considers the qualitative data collected through participants' responses to the Hull IdQ. A discussion of common themes arising from the responses will highlight views of local linguistic forms, and determine how the informants identify socially, linguistically, and geographically.

Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the thesis, focusing on whether the research objectives have been fulfilled, summarises key results, and offers suggestions for future research as a result of limitations arising with the present study.

[1] This notation corresponds to Wells' (1982b) lexical sets. Lexical sets are based on the concept that one word represents many others which contain the same vowel sound, corresponding with Received Pronunciation. They are represented with small capital letters.

CHAPTER ONE – LITERATURE REVIEW

1.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss various methodologies within variation studies, including the Labovian paradigm (Labov, 1978) and Eckert's (2012) 'three waves' of variation studies, as well as discussing the 'macro-analyst constructs' (Milroy and Gordon, 2003:116) which became the focus within variationist studies. Theoretical approaches and motivations to language variation are discussed, including the *dialect levelling* phenomenon and *Accommodation Theory*. Also discussed is the notion of localness, as well as salience and indexicality, all of which are embedded within language ideology frameworks.

1.1 Approaches to Language Variation Research

The following subsections discuss traditional approaches to language variation research, which have been refined for use in future studies. The benefits and risks sought through studying language as a social practice are also discussed.

Sociolinguists felt that urbanised populations had been forgotten about due to the Survey of English Dialects (SED) concentration on non-mobile, older, rural males as participants (NORMs), and that it remained ignorant to the way in which much of the population speak (see Orton, 1963; Chambers and Trudgill, 1998 for further on SED). New methodologies transformed dialectology, moving from a regional focus to a social focus, wherein linguistic variation across England was to be captured using an innovative approach, permitting studies of covariation of linguistic and social phenomena (Trudgill, 1983). This was later deemed as the 'first wave' of variation studies by Eckert (2012); fundamental to establishing overt correlations between linguistic variables and various macro-sociological parameters.

Regarding the foundations of variationist sociolinguistics, Labov conducted research with an aim of systematically studying variations in speech patterns and determining potential correlations with social class, social context, and speakers' attitudes (Pope *et al.*, 2007). In his 1963 study regarding diphthong realisations in Martha's Vineyard, Labov's 'first wave' sociolinguistic investigation focused on social parameters including age, sex, socioeconomic class and ethnicity, and the role they play in externally motivating language change (see Labov, 1978:1-42). The foundational approach of isolating socially significant linguistic variables and correlating them with patterns of social parameters gave further insight into the mechanisms of linguistic change: the techniques developed on Martha's Vineyard were to be refined and used within future studies of urban dialectology (Labov, 1978). They informed subsequent variationist research, including other well-known 'first wave' empirical studies such as Labov's work in New York City (see Labov, 1978:42-69; 2006) and Trudgill's (1974) work in Norwich and many other urban dialectology investigations (see Milroy and Milroy 1978; Watt and Milroy 1999; Llamas, 2001;

Atkinson, 2011; Haddican *et al.*, 2013). Martha's Vineyard has since been replicated in a real-time study, confirming results predicted by the original apparent-time investigation (see section 1.2.1), thus strengthening the theoretical and methodological principles central to variationist sociolinguistic research (see Pope *et al.*, 2007).

Termed by Eckert (2012) as the 'second wave' of variation studies, ethnographic approaches are viewed as antithetic to former large-scale methods such as the SED, with numerous techniques 'reducing formality in face-to-face interviews and obtaining data on a wide range of styles' (Labov, 1984:28). As per the aims of 'second wave' variationist studies, the attribution of social agency to vernacular as an expression of social identity was investigated by Milroy and Milroy (1978), aiming to argue against the principles of the 'first wave' framework through investigating regional usage in Belfast's working class. Milroy and Milroy (1978) uncovered a correlation between language variation and the multiplexity and density of working-class social networks (see section 1.3.2), with reduced mobility and strong ties reinforcing local linguistic norms. Tagliamonte (2006) further explores how ethnographically informed research consists of strategies that give the researcher insight into the dynamics of a speech community and explores the social factors in greater detail, with the most ubiquitous strategy being participant observation. Critically, when paired alongside survey techniques, a well-developed ethnographic approach has become fundamental in any research studying 'language in its social context' (Tagliamonte, 2006:20).

In keeping with the aforementioned 'second wave' research, a key ethnographic study involving detailed participant observation is Eckert's study regarding the 'jocks' and 'burnouts' social categories in a Detroit high school (see Eckert, 2000). Detailed in this study, however, is the notion of representativeness within the broader community that is often removed when conducting detailed ethnographic research within subgroups of the population (Eckert, 2000). For this reason, Tagliamonte (2006:28) asserts how it is critical to employ a 'hybrid methodology' to decide which type of representativeness is sufficient or attainable for the study focus. Detailed ethnographic studies (Milroy and Milroy, 1978; Eckert, 2000) evidence how attaching oneself to a social group allows for a primary understanding of group dynamic which influences patterns of language use, thus large amounts of spontaneous speech can be collected and correlated with social parameters (Tagliamonte, 2006). Naturally, immersing oneself in a variety is advantageous for the researcher: this is also the case for investigating the researcher's own regional variety (see section 2.4)

More recently, Eckert (2012) proposed a theoretical framework regarding a 'third wave' of variation studies, wherein ideology is located within language itself. Shifting perspective from language and its correlation with social identity and towards a viewpoint of uncovering how variation both reflects and constructs social meaning (Eckert, 2012). In other words, 'third wave' studies uncover how linguistic practices are the manner wherein speakers position themselves as social beings, and how speakers link

linguistics features to particular social meanings (Dyer, 2007; Haddican *et al.,* 2013; Wardhaugh and Fuller, 2015) The latter is known as 'indexicality' and is discussed further in section 1.3.3.

1.2 Variationist Paradigm: External Social Factors

The term 'macro-level analyst construct' is taken from Milroy and Gordon (2003:116), wherein social factors including class, age, ethnicity, and sex are claimed to 'have proved useful to variationists in revealing remarkably consistent sociolinguistic patterns'. The following subsections assess the various standpoints taken by sociolinguistic researchers surrounding various macro-level constructs. Each social factor is discussed in view of previous studies and evaluated in relation to the present study.

1.2.1 Age

As a sociolinguistic category, age is, as Llamas (2007a:69) claims, 'perhaps the least examined and the least understood in sociolinguistic terms'. For this reason, a variety of methodological approaches have been adopted when grouping informants by age. Both *real-* and *apparent*-time methods are considered, as well as a review of the principles of *etic* and *emic* categorising of age, outlining the rationale adopted for the present study's age sample.

Following the Labovian paradigm, sociolinguists have demonstrated how tracking an individual's language use across the life span can reveal variation and language shifts over time (Atkinson, 2011). *Real-time* variationist studies involve recording instances of linguistic use within a particular community at different points in time, separated by a set period, with an aim of returning to the community and replicating the study several years later, to determine if 'linguistic change' is evidenced (Atkinson, 2011). Citing Labov's definition, 'linguistic change' refers to 'gradual alterations of the linguistic habits of a population through the course of time' (2006:199). Real-time studies occur in two ways. Llamas (2007a) notes how most community studies are *trend* surveys (see Fowler, 1986; Trudgill, 1988; Pope *et al.*, 2007), consisting of different yet comparable sample groups from the same community over a period, whereas *panel* studies involve re-interviewing the same sample group at two different life stages (Labov, 2006). Labov (2006:200) further expresses how: 'the ideal method for the study of change is diachronic: the description of a series of cross sections in real time.' This is corroborated by Cukor-Avila and Bailey (2018:254), who note how seemingly, real-time evidence appears as the 'ideal mechanism' for language variation and change analysis, since the linguistic variables and speech sample remain consistent, meaning a comparison can be made between the studies.

However, an exact replication is seldom possible. It is inevitable that complications arise which permit a perfect replication: demographic changes in the original informant sample such as mobility, emigration and moving upward socially mean that they may no longer meet the criteria of the study and thus cannot re-participate (Chambers and Trudgill, 1998). Moreover, external factors including unwillingness to

participate, issues of comparability and sample design, informant death, and many other alterations in informant's circumstances omit them from re-participation (Chambers and Trudgill, 1998; Cukor-Avila and Bailey, 2018). Considering these logistical impracticalities, real-time studies are more complicated to execute and thus are deemed by sociolinguistics as rarely possible to undertake on a large-scale basis (Labov, 1994; Chambers and Trudgill, 1998; Llamas, 2007a; Cukor-Avila and Bailey, 2018). Nevertheless, real-time studies (whilst often paired alongside apparent-time framework) have still been attempted. Haddican *et al.*, (2013) investigated vowel production in a replication of Tagliamonte's (1998) York study, using a subsample of the original data corpus and comparing it with their newly gathered data. The 1998 subsample was utilised to match the new speaker sample as closely and faithfully as possible with regards to age, sex, occupation, and educational profile, to ensure suitable comparisons could be made (see Haddican *et al*., 2013) A further classic example of real-time methodology is Labov's follow-up study in New York City in 1994 after the original study in 1966 (see Labov, 2006), as well as the precise replication of Labov's department store survey in Fowler's trend study which corroborated the data from the earlier study (see Fowler, 1986).

Apparent-time research adopts a synchronic approach to variationist studies, aiming to track change across generations of speakers through simultaneously observing the speech of different age groups and whether any differences observed are because of linguistic change (Chambers and Trudgill, 1998; Llamas, 2007a). Atkinson (2011:16) highlights how apparent-time studies are an 'isolated inquiry in the linguistic repertoire of a community which is not investigated at a later point in time,' meaning apparent-time studies are frequently implemented in sociolinguistic research (Llamas, 2007a; Cukor-Avila and Bailey, 2018). Sociolinguists report apparent-time data as being an excellent 'surrogate' for real-time evidence, as it offers a more immediate method of data collection for comparing the speech of different generations, and acts as a good predictor of real-time linguistic changes (Chambers and Trudgill, 1998; Cukor-Avila and Bailey, 2018).

The present study explores language change across two generations of speakers of Hull English, thus reflecting the accent at different time periods, and looks to see whether the use of Hull English is predictable from informants' attitudes and perceptions towards the dialect. Thus, the methodology adopted for this study coincides with an 'apparent-time' framework. The apparent-time methodology will also serve to explore language attitude data in the same way, seeking to answer the question: how do such attitudes differ across generations?

The stratification of speakers into different categories is necessary for comparable apparent-time data collection. Eckert (1997) reviews how studies including Fowler (1986) have demonstrated how largely combined age groups can often disguise potential explanations for linguistic use. To combat this, Fowler (1986:157) argues for 'the grouping of speakers into fairly narrow age ranges or cohorts'. Such cohorts can be defined *etically* or *emically*. Classic etic studies (e.g., Trudgill, 1974; 1988; Labov, 2006) involve arbitrarily determined speakers categorised by equal age spans, such as decades (Eckert, 1997).

Conversely, Eckert (1997) addresses how emic approaches categorise speakers according to some shared experience, such as life-stage (e.g., Eckert, 2000; Atkinson, 2011). Emic cohorts are viewed by Eckert (1997) as being dominated and governed by different stages of life, as illustrated in her *linguistic life course* in Table 1.1:

Table:1.1: Eckert's (1997) linguistic life-course categories

[1] Childhood (pre-adolescence)	**[2] Adolescence**	**[3] Young adulthood**	**[4] Middle age**	**[5] Old adulthood**
Governed by school	Governed by school	Governed by university/first job	Governed by working career	Retired

Sociolinguists have long debated as to which life stage vernacular is most beneficial to study. Eckert (1997) notes how the middle-age life stage overwhelmingly pervades sociolinguistic studies in language variation compared to the speech of other life stages. However, some researchers have argued that a middle-age bias may be present within language and social science research (cf. Eckert, 1997), with linguistic conservatism attributed as a major factor in work-place pressures for standard language use (Eckert, 1997). Despite quantitative research into early childhood being 'quite recent' (Eckert, 1997:159), most variationist work in British English focuses on the analysis of adulthood linguistic use (Milroy and Milroy, 1978; Watt and Milroy, 1999; Watt and Tillotson, 2001; Barras, 2006; Atkinson, 2011; Haddican *et al*., 2013; Burland, 2017). Although it is 'well established that children develop sociolinguistic competence from the earliest stages of speech' (Eckert, 1997:160), Atkinson (2011) notes how the general formula adopted by sociolinguists is to conduct research with groups of adults, often a generation apart, which allows for patterns of linguistic variation to be observed within a community across different generations of speakers. Such generational gaps include variation between adolescents and pensioners (see Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Barras, 2006; Burland, 2017), adolescents and middle-age (see Watt and Milroy, 1999) and young adults and middle-age (see Milroy and Milroy, 1978; Atkinson, 2011).

Relevant to the present research location, in their study of Milton Keynes, Reading and Hull, Williams and Kerswill (1999) chose to interview the speech of adolescents (14-15 years-old) and pensioners (70+ years-old). Opting for a large chronological age difference between cohorts was thought to uncover evidence of 'linguistic innovations along with levelling tendencies' (Williams and Kerswill, 1999:159), particularly within the adolescent category, whereas the older generation were expected to preserve local linguistic forms in Hull.

On the other hand, certain etic studies have elected to focus on comparing close age ranges rather than life-course generations. Finnegan's (2015) Sheffield study makes use of close etic cohorts: young (20-35 years-old), middle-aged (36-55 years-old) and older (56-70 years-old). This, then, questions the reasoning

for distinguishing a 35-year-old from a 36-year-old, or a 55-year-old from a 56-year-old, when they are likely to have been in the same year at school and thus had similar experiences and exposure to language. Despite being chronologically separated by one *age* year, the above examples have been categorised as different linguistic life-stages, highlighting ambiguity in how *age* reflects 'a person's place at a given time in relation to the social order' (Eckert, 1997:151), that is, a stage in history. Moreover, individual differences in age are relatively small in relation to the human life span: Llamas (2007a:72) notes how such etically defined age ranges 'can be broad and can conceal much intragroup variation'. Therefore, it is necessary to take assumptions about norms of behaviour associated with closely categorised chronological age ranges as not necessarily offering 'indubitable explanations for age-correlated variation in linguistic behaviour' (Llamas, 2007a:73). Sociolinguistic implications arise when the universal process of ageing is viewed as a 'homogeneous continuum based on time' (Eckert, 1997:155), as life stages are fluid and dynamic, and observe a different experience of movement between them (Llamas, 2007a). Eckert (1997) argues that the marking of distinctive life stages, and thus emically defined cohorts, is critical for exploring differences in life experiences which give age meaning.

Thus, for the present research, the proposed age sampling is made up of an apparent time study, two age sample groups separated by a significant generational gap, with both cohorts being an 'adult' life stage (see section 3.3.1).

1.2.2 Sex

Modern variationist studies differ from traditional usage of NORMs (see section 1.1) – the exclusion of female speech in traditional studies has led to a deeper understanding of the importance of using sex as a social parameter in future studies. Lakoff's revolutionary publication '*Language and Woman's Place'* (1975) highlighted such differences between male and female speech, which increased the need to include sex as a sociolinguistic variable. Labov (2006) and Trudgill (1974) implement this in their classic studies, with Trudgill offering several explanations for his results in the linguistic variation of the prestige [ɪŋ] between males and females in Norwich. Perhaps the most significant observation was that women use forms associated with the standard more frequently than men (Trudgill, 1974; 1983). Further studies have led to generalisations emerging which corroborate Trudgill's (1974) findings, in which women are likely to converge their language towards the 'standard', whereas men are likely to converge toward more vernacular forms (Milroy and Milroy, 1978; Trudgill, 1983; Labov, 1990; 2001; 2006; Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Llamas, 2001; Wardhaugh and Fuller, 2015). This frequently attested observation is encapsulated by Chambers (1995:102) whereby:

> [In] virtually all sociolinguistic studies that include a sample of males and females, there is evidence for this conclusion about their linguistic behaviour: women use fewer stigmatised and non-standard variants than do men of the same social group in the same circumstances.

The linguistic conformity of women was found to be the case in many sociolinguistic studies which encompassed sex as a variable, including Norwich (Trudgill, 1974) and Belfast (Milroy and Milroy, 1978): this is viewed by Labov (1990; 2001:266) as the second principle in his *Gender Paradox*:

> *Principle 2: "for stable sociolinguistic variables:* women show a lower rate of stigmatised variants and a higher rate of prestige variants than men"

Further to the early *deficit model* (as in Lakoff, 1975) and subsequent *Gender Paradox,* Llamas (2001) highlights other interesting approaches to modelling male and female speech which report the difference as being a result of asymmetrical power relations in society, known as the *dominance approach* (see Zimmerman and West, 1975), or as being the consequence of cultural differences in the *culture approach* (see Maltz and Borker, 1982). However, criticisms towards the polarisation of gender through asserting concrete differences in male and female speech have become apparent. Llamas (2001) notes how this view ignores both the heterogeneity within speech, and the interaction between other social variables alongside gender.

It seems appropriate here to distinguish between both 'sex' and 'gender,' as both terms are used interchangeably within published sociolinguistic research. Giddens (1989:158) defines 'sex' as 'biological or anatomical differences between men and women,' whereas 'gender' involves the 'psychological, social, and cultural differences between males and females.' Thus, when analysing differences in the linguistic behaviours of speakers, we are largely encountering gender variation rather than biological sex variation, with 'gender' existing as a social construct which does not necessarily map onto binary sex (Llamas, 2001). Labov (2001:263) states that 'all analyses of gender variation begin by dividing the population into males and females,' as it is 'easily accessible' and 'can be gathered without inquiry into the construction of gender in the community' (Eckert, 1989:247). Similarly, Llamas gracefully summarises how:

> …generally, gender variation is largely what is of interest in variationist studies, the binary category of biological sex is that which is commonly used to analyse and explain gender variation" (2001:16).

Therefore, in sociolinguistic research, while the term 'gender' is frequently referred to, the researcher is likely to be modelling the biological category of 'sex' (Eckert, 1989; Wodak and Benke, 1997; Milroy and Gordon, 2003). For the current study, it is the biological differentiation of 'sex' against which personal accent perceptions and phonological variability will be discussed.

1.2.3 Social Class

Despite notoriously being the most problematic social variable to define, Chambers and Trudgill (1998:153) assert that social class 'has proved to be the most likely independent variable to correlate with linguistic innovation'. Thus, many sociolinguistic studies incorporate the parameter of social class into

their variationist research, as it regularly produces valuable insights into the nature of linguistic variation, despite the irony in such a significant variable being defined so loosely (Ash, 2018). Interestingly, Atkinson (2011:21) claims how there is 'no sociolinguistic blue-print' available when approaching the variable of social class. As such, treatments of social class within variationist studies differ: the subjective measures of prestige, reputation, and status alongside objective economic measures, deriving from Marxist theories, mean that different approaches have been taken when categorising speakers through class (Ash, 2018, see also Kerswill, 2007). These components make it difficult to form a universal definition and thus a systematic methodology of implementing the social class variable. In other words, what works for one study may not work for another. Despite the ambiguity, Ash (2018:365) encapsulates how:

> The dimension of social class has been repeatedly found to be highly productive in sociolinguistic research, despite the lack of a single unified theory of social class.

In his 1966 study of New York City speech, Labov (1978; 2006) successfully interviewed speakers of three social classes to determine linguistic variation in pronunciation of postvocalic /r/. Rather than using occupation solely as an indicator of class (e.g., Macaulay, 1977), Labov incorporated three objective indicators of: (1) education, (2) occupation and (3) income as means of categorising speakers, thus forming a composite class index (Kerswill, 2007). This approach was built upon in Norwich by Trudgill (1974), wherein a six-tier index of social class was developed: (1) occupation, (2) father's occupation, (3) income, (4) education, (5) locality and (6) housing (see Trudgill, 1974 for further explanation). Each category was detailed further which resulted in five social class groups being distinguished, as shown in Figure 1.1 (Trudgill, 1974:118).

MMC	Mid middle class
LMC	Lower middle class
UWC	Upper working class
MWC	Mid working class
LWC	Lower working class

Figure 1.1: Trudgill's (1974) social class categories in Norwich

Building upon Trudgill's categorisation, Chambers and Trudgill (1998:153) note that LMC and UWC are actively seeking to 'improve' their place on the social scale, meaning they are also most likely to diverge from the local linguistic norms used by groups below them on Trudgill's class scale, and hence use greater standard features. This is reinforced through examples of linguistic variation observed within different social classes, with generalisations emerging which attribute lower social classes to frequent uses of

unstandardised features, and to a greater degree, compared to higher social classes (Trudgill, 1974; Chambers and Trudgill, 1998; Labov, 2006). Kerswill (2007) summarises his discussion of class-related variation in Western societies with relation to sex, wherein working-class males typically orientate towards non-standard, local forms of speech in comparison to females. Recent variationist studies also corroborate these early findings (Watt and Milroy, 1999; Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Atkinson, 2011; Finnegan, 2015), reinforcing how linguistic variation arises when considering different social classes of speakers alongside other social variables.

Relevant here is Williams and Kerswill's (1999) study involving Hull, whereby speakers from both working- and middle-class socioeconomic backgrounds were interviewed. Notable linguistic differences between the classes were apparent in certain realisations of consonantal variables of [ʔ] for intervocalic /t/, [f] for /θ/ and [v] for non-initial /ð/. In all instances, a higher percentage of working-class teenagers produced the non-standard variant compared to middle-class speakers of whom used the standard variant, thus corroborating findings and the subsequent generalisations elicited in earlier literature. It appears, then, that in Hull, 'working-class teenagers appear to be resisting any movement towards standardisation of accent features' (Williams and Kerswill, 1999:159), with conclusions which attribute the working-class as strongly adhering to conservative features.

Contrary to early methods of categorising social class, Foulkes (2006:639) notes how 'class is often no more than a general label for the type of neighbourhood being investigated', thus frequently avoiding complex and often subjective measuring systems surrounding social class. Indicative of both Williams and Kerswill (1999) and Foulkes (2006), the study's proposed sample group will focus solely on speakers from typically working-class neighbourhoods, as non-standard features and maintaining of local features have been found to be more frequent within the working-class community as opposed to middle-class. As stated by Williams and Kerswill (1999), in Hull, the middle-class population tend to live in the surrounding East Riding villages such as Beverley, Hessle and Brough, with the working-class typically living in the numerous estates across the city.

To suit the scope of the current study, the sample will be categorised through occupation as well as neighbourhood, information of which will be obtained prior to the sociolinguistic interview, ensuring a constant variable wherein all participants are either MWC or LWC.

1.3 Social Identity

The following subsections discuss various parameters which contribute to constructing one's social identity. Firstly, the *notion of localness* is discussed with reference to *covert prestige*, with particular focus on working class communities. Connections are thereafter made with *social networks*. Furthermore, the concept of *salience* is explored, with previous studies uncovering relations between stereotyped variants, language attitudes and the construction of social and linguistic identities. The section ends with

a discussion surrounding *language ideology*, which forms the foundational frameworks for attitudinal data collection.

1.3.1 The Notion of *'Localness'* and Covert Prestige

As discussed, it is working-class speakers who have been regarded as linguistically more conservative and thus more likely to use frequent non-standard variants in their speech (Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Kerswill, 2007). Working-class culture has been explored in relation to linguistic use, particularly in male speech, wherein Trudgill (1983:172) believes strong connotations of masculinity associated with the supposed 'roughness and toughness' characteristic of working-class life construct a stereotype, and to a certain extent, are considered 'desirable masculine attributes'. This proposition, however, requires evidence in the form of objective data which demonstrates that non-standard speech carries prestige and value, particularly dominant in male speakers. Such prestige is termed *covert prestige* and was introduced by Labov through his recognition that speakers who use a high amount of stigmatised linguistic markers, such as /t/ = [ʔ] will believe that such forms are inferior, acknowledge the stigma and show displeasure, yet will continue to use them (Chambers and Trudgill, 1998; Haigh, 2015). Thus, covert prestige carries a sense of associating oneself with a particular group, as well as being favourably regarded by peers and other similar networks (Chambers and Trudgill, 1998).

The effects of covert prestige on the social parameters of sex and social class was evidenced in Norwich. Trudgill (1974) established that it is possible to obtain evidence of covert prestige associated with non-standard variants. Both male and female informants were asked to complete a 'self-evaluation test,' where they were asked to mark on a chart which pronunciations, they believed, resembled the way in which they realised it, e.g., *tune* as [tjuːn] or [tuːn], or *better* as [bɛtə] or [bɛʔə] (Trudgill, 1983). Results showed that men were more likely to downgrade their linguistic performance, suggesting that men are more influenced than women by the covert prestige acquired through low status non-standard forms (Trudgill, 1974; Chambers and Trudgill, 1998). Thus, for Norwich men, working-class speech carries prestige and status (Trudgill, 1983). Many informants, both male and female, initially stated a dislike in the way they spoke, however when pressed to elaborate, they in fact admitted that if they did change their language to resemble a more 'standard' variety, 'they would almost certainly be considered foolish, arrogant or disloyal by their friends and family' (Trudgill, 1983:173).

It seems, then, that covert prestige is evidenced through speakers continuing to use non-standard realisations despite the attached negative stigma. Haigh (2015) notes how such non-standard variants become important markers in denoting socially attractive traits in the form of class loyalty and group membership, as well as reinforcing the linguistic solidarity, integrity, and the nature of 'looking after one's own' (Milroy, 1987:73), all frequently associated with working-class communities.

1.3.2 Social Networks

Working-class communities have been investigated with regard to *social networks*. Milroy and Milroy (1978:22) stress how sociological literature surrounding social networks 'justifies the psychological importance of an informal approach,' wherein a mutual understanding of local area norms is beneficial to the researcher as it signifies trust, warmth and friendliness within the loyal community networks and thus helps create an informal and natural speech style. In Belfast, Milroy and Milroy (1978) utilise social networks in their reasoning for instances of linguistic variation within the working-class community. They argue that with little movement both into and out of the network, linguistic changes of external influence are unlikely (Milroy and Milroy, 1978). Such dense local ties reinforce maintenance of local linguistic norms, and signal attachment to the community, displaying association with covert prestige. Similarly, in Hull, continued use of (h)-dropping by adolescents was explored by Williams and Kerswill (1999) and discussed with regards to networks, whereby young Hull speakers adopted non-standard southern features, such as (h)-dropping, enabling them to identify with youth culture. Simultaneously, such attribution to peer groups also retains strong links with both their social class as well as their home location, which again, directly links with the notion of covert prestige in language use (Williams and Kerswill, 1999).

1.3.3 Salience, Indexicality and Language Ideology

Affiliations and awareness of non-standard features which contribute to one's feeling of localness may also be reinforced through the concept of *salience*. According to Kerswill and Williams (2002:88), salience is:

> A notion which seems to lie at the cusp of language internal, external and extralinguistic motivation […] which we can provisionally define rather simply as a property of a linguistic item or feature that makes it in some way perceptually and cognitively prominent.

Salience can be further discussed in terms of Labov's (1978) triadic continuum of *indicators* > *markers* > *stereotypes*. Different features of linguistic variation are argued as more salient than others: variables which are non-salient are termed *indicators* (Jensen, 2016). Jensen (2016) further distinguishes how *markers* are salient only to in-group users, often displaying variation amongst social classes. Markers, such as /t/ = [ʔ] are often liable to change due to the assumption that such salient features can be controlled, giving the speaker a linguistic choice in the construction of their utterance (Jensen, 2016). The point at which speakers become especially conscious of a marker which carries social and regional connotations is liable to become a *stereotype* (Chambers and Trudgill, 1998). It is worth noting how stereotypes are salient to both in-group and out-group members and are often highly stigmatised: Jensen (2016) express how stereotypes hold 'dual status', meaning they function as a basis for negative comments, attract overt social commentary, and are often misrepresentations of non-standard speech with frequent correction to the standard variant. Moreover, speakers are able to report on the stereotype without

difficulty, though not accurately, and crucially, from a non-linguistic viewpoint (Chambers and Trudgill, 1998). Contrastingly however, stereotypes may enjoy esteem amongst in-group speakers, through the denotation of localness and sense of community, thus reinforcing the covert prestige and resistance to linguistic change. Notably, Chambers and Trudgill (1998) report that in Britain, a change from marker to stereotype is apparent in widespread, stigmatised non-standard realisations of (t)-glottaling and (h)-dropping, which are often subject to overt criticism.

Salience has also been used in the reasoning and explanation for language change (see Trudgill, 1986 for overview; Kerswill and Williams, 2002). In his Newcastle study, Watt (1998) argues that reduced use of local variants is the result of younger speakers' desire to sound modern and in keeping with youth linguistic trends, with results demonstrating that local vernacular forms are often replaced with more geographically wide-spread forms. Honeybone and Watson (2013) corroborate this through stating that such reasoning implies that certain linguistic features that are undergoing variation and change must be salient to the ingroup, thus appearing as either a marker or stereotype.

Alongside reviewing various empirical studies on salience, Kerswill and Williams (2002) conducted research surrounding the salience of non-standard grammatical features in Milton Keynes, Reading and Hull adopting a constructionist approach. From an analytical perspective, Kerswill and Williams (2002:105) acknowledge that:

> There are no necessary and sufficient conditions which must be met in order for a linguistic feature to be salient – barring the obvious one that differences between its presence and absence must be noticeable in a psychoacoustic sense.

Considering this, they formed conclusions which attributed socio-demographic and extra-linguistic factors as mainly accounting for the salience of a particular variable, although it is debatable as to the extent to which other factors contribute to the salience of a linguistic feature (see Honeybone and Watson, 2013).

Building upon previous research, Watson and Clark (2013) implemented an experimental method in their research in Liverpool. They explored the 'visibility' and subsequent salience of the NURSE~SQUARE merger in the North-West through correlating listener's reactions to accent stimuli with the occurrence of linguistic variation instances, with results demonstrating a reaction between the variations (see Watson and Clark, 2013). Further experimental methodologies, such as Campbell-Kibler's (2008) [ɪŋ] salience study, have successfully made use of speaker reactions to instances of single-variants. Although successful in examining the salience of one linguistic feature, Honeybone and Watson (2013) note how a consequence of this is that the relative salience of features within a whole dialect is not uncovered, due to the ubiquity of the relevant features. Critically, then, it seems necessary to isolate features when considering research focusing on salience in a dialect, to control the data for a true and accurate analysis (Honeybone and Watson, 2013).

Salience can also be operationalised in terms of Silverstein's (2003) *orders of indexicality*, whereby higher orders of indexicality are more salient (Honeybone and Watson, 2013). Silverstein (2003) directly correlates his theorised social indexicality levels onto Labov's triad, and details how one's identity is constructed through multiple indexicalities (Kiesling, 2018:464). Jensen (2016:3) notes how the indexicality of language can be divided into two levels:

> (1) *First*-order (indicator), which describes 'a linguistic form whose frequency of use patterns to the socio-demographic background of the speakers.'
> (2) *Second*-order (marker), which describes 'a linguistic form which has acquired a social meaning which reflects dominant ideologies in the speech community,' with social meaning being acknowledged by speakers.

Thus, certain linguistic forms will adopt an association to a particular social group (Atkinson, 2011). This view is extended by Eckert (2012) in her 'third-wave of variation' framework, which attributes variation to social meaning through an increased focus on the mutability of indexical signs. For the current study, gathering attitudinal data will therefore exhibit overt instantiations of second order indexicality for use in discussion surrounding correlations between linguistic form and social meaning.

Similarly, such indexicalities are said to underpin social identity and thus form a viewpoint on language ideology. Language ideology has been researched across a variety of sociolinguistic studies and acts as a key framework for the investigation of attitudinal data and offers explanation for motivations for language change (Llamas, 2001; 2007b; Atkinson, 2011; Finnegan, 2015). For the purpose of the current study, the concept of language ideology is described as 'sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use' (Silverstein, 1979:193). Llamas (2007b) corroborates this through asserting how language ideology is upheld by social identity. Likewise, Finnegan (2015) argues how utilising a language ideology framework and implementing instantiations of second order indexicality by way of attitudinal and perceptual data about language and location allows the researcher to gain access to informants' linguistic and social ideologies. Hence, the latter may influence speakers' use of phonological variants, notably nonstandard variants, and may provide explanations for social meanings and wide-spread stigmas that are attached to particular variants in a regional variety (Finnegan, 2015). Unlike ethnographic studies (e.g., Eckert, 2000), in most variationist sociolinguistic research, Llamas (2007b) argues how place is often viewed objectively and is largely unexamined.

The extent to which one is aware of the linguistic markers and stereotypes used by themselves and by others has been explained by Trudgill (1986:11), who outlines four explanations for speaker awareness:

1. Greater awareness attaches to forms which are overtly stigmatised in a particular community. Very often, this overt stigmatisation is because there is a high-status variant

of the stigmatised form and this high-status variant tallies with the orthography while the stigmatised variant does not.

2. Greater awareness also attaches to forms that are not currently involved in linguistic change.
3. Speakers are also more aware of variables whose variants are phonetically radically different.
4. Increased awareness is also attached to variables that are involved in the maintenance of phonological contrasts.

The above explanations will be considered alongside the gathered attitudinal data to determine the extent of phonological awareness exhibited by the informants. Trudgill's (1986) explanations become crucial in integrating awareness into present and future explanations of style variation, with features that undergo obvious linguistic transformation being more recognisable to the speaker, and thus more liable to accommodation strategies (see section 1.4.2) as well as acting as a motivation for speech variation (Peterson, 1996).

To allow for investigation of perceptions of language and place in determining phonological awareness, different sociolinguistic studies have utilised different methods of eliciting attitudinal data. Traditional methods include the *matched guise technique*, where participants judge speakers of different accents, based upon recordings of their voices. Evaluations are then made surrounding perceived social attractiveness, trustworthiness and so on (see Giles and Powesland, 1975; Campbell-Kibler, 2011). Moreover, Labov (1978) discusses self-evaluation tests as a means of gathering attitudinal data, in which participants evaluate characteristics of their own speech, considering both standard and non-standards forms. More recently, Jensen (2016) incorporated an 'affiliation questionnaire' within her study in Tyneside. This technique required participants to respond to ten statements by indicating the extent to which they agreed. The responses generated a 'local affiliation score' calculated as an average of the previous ratings, meaning a more quantitative approach was utilised, with qualitative responses being acquired as a result of question topic. In the context of the present study, uncovering informants' attitudes and perceptions of language and place will be achieved through proposing a form of Llamas (1999; 2001) innovative *Identities Questionnaire* attitudinal data collection technique to the informants (see section 3.4.3 for detailed discussion). This method was selected due to the intended nature of the present data analysis being qualitative: the responses to the interview questions are to be analysed and discussed thematically as opposed to quantitatively, with a focus on informants' own experiences and perceptions.

1.4 Theories and Motivations for Language Change

The following section discusses various elements of the 'dialect contact' framework which offer reasoning for any linguistic changes, maintenance, or divergence. Giles and Powesland's (1975)

Accommodation Theory is considered, alongside recent research surrounding the dialect levelling phenomena and geographical diffusion.

1.4.1 Dialect Contact and Mobility

Significant to language variation and change research is Trudgill's (1986) publication *Dialects in Contact*, which highlights that contact between speakers of two different dialects through social and geographical mobility may result in linguistic variation (Atkinson, 2011). Haigh (2015) emphasises how Yorkshire has an industrial history: many urban occupations including dock working and fishing caused an increase in people migrating to developing cities, such as Hull, to find employment (see Chapter 2). However, as the demand for such occupations declined over time, modern employment has shifted towards more flexible and in-demand industries, meaning migration to larger cities, such as Leeds or Sheffield, is frequent (Haigh, 2015). This results in reduced mobility and lessened in-migration to Hull, meaning the accent has little experience of contact with speakers of other varieties (Haigh, 2015). However, this is not to say that dialect contact, in any form, has never played a role in potential linguistic changes in the Hull accent.

1.4.2 Accommodation Theory

When discussing dialect contact between different dialects, various linguistic modifications can occur. One socio-psychological theory which attempts to explain such modifications is termed *Accommodation Theory* (Giles and Powesland, 1975). Accommodation Theory argues that language can be altered both towards or away from the interlocuter which in turn may aid communication through lessening clear dialectal differences (Giles and Powesland, 1975). This can result in the accommodated form becoming the preferred form for the speaker, hence incorporating linguistic features which are not typically observed within their particular dialect (Haigh, 2015).

Accommodation Theory proposes two opposing processes: accent *convergence,* whereby a shift in speech style toward that of another occurs if a speaker wishes to gain approval from the interlocuter, or as a means of social integration (Tabouret-Keller, 1997; Llamas, 2001). The opposing process is termed accent *divergence* and is tactically employed by a speaker to disassociate themselves from the interlocuter through shifting away from their speech style or dialect (Tabouret-Keller, 1997; Llamas, 2001). Since the researcher is a native of the variety under investigation in the current study, one would assume accommodation through convergence and divergence may be less likely to occur, as the researcher and the interviewee share a mutual ground on their dialect. However, in situations where recording of a speaker is necessary, it is common that the speaker may adjust their realisations towards a more 'perceived' form – Labov (1978) terms this *Observer's Paradox* (see section 3.4.4). It is worth noting that speakers may also maintain their regional features in situations where neither divergence nor convergence occurs.

In an increasingly mobile population, Llamas (2001) expresses how dialect contact and accommodation between speakers inevitably replicates throughout a speech community, which may lead to the disuse, or strikingly, the disappearance of marked local variants. Such local variants may be replaced with variants seen on a wider geographical and social scale and can potentially lead to permanent language change in a location (Llamas, 2001). This process is known as 'levelling' and has been investigated in recent studies, notably in Newcastle by Watt and Milroy (1999), and relevant to the present study, in Milton Keynes, Reading and Hull by Williams and Kerswill (1999).

1.4.3 Dialect Levelling and Geographical Diffusion

Another process within language variation and change which corresponds with the dialect contact framework is *dialect levelling.* Watt and Milroy (1999:26) highlight how the concept of dialect levelling refers to 'the eradication of socially or locally marked variants' as a result of the geographical and social mobility of speakers through dialect contact. This results in the disappearance of local linguistic forms which normally distinguish between regional varieties, notably marked variants (Watson, 2006), and instead unfolds new features which are adopted by speakers over a wider geographical area (Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Kerswill, 2003; Watson, 2006). In this sense, levelling is assumed to arise from the speech accommodation, where speakers either converge or diverge linguistically (Kerswill, 2003). Hence fewer phonological differences are observed between pronunciations in different parts of the country (Atkinson, 2011). In the same vein is *geographical diffusion*, whereby features spread out from a populous centre, often surpassing rural areas, and are adopted by more urban conurbations (Kerswill, 2003). Critically, Kerswill (2003) highlights the terminological ambiguity when defining both concepts, wherein both offer explanations for language variation, change and linguistic mobility. For the current study, and as distinguished by Kerswill (2003:1), the term *regional dialect levelling* is used as it is 'an outcome of various partly geographical-based language change processes' by way of both dialect levelling and geographical diffusion.

Recent research surrounding regional dialect levelling around Britain is plentiful (see Watt and Milroy, 1999; Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Llamas, 2001; Watson, 2006; Syversten, 2016), though Haigh (2015) notes how it is necessary to assess the extent to which it is also likely to have emerged in Yorkshire. Hull's isolated location on the East Yorkshire coast results in limited mobility between major cities within Yorkshire, thus reducing instances of dialect contact. Hence restricted mobility reduces opportunities to encounter different dialects, which explains why the Hull accent is often discussed as being more resistant to change compared to other varieties (Williams and Kerswill, 1999). Following patterns from previous research on Hull accent features and considering the city's geographical positioning (Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Haigh, 2015), we might expect to see features that were evident in Hull over decades ago to still be heard in the city today – these features are detailed in section 3.1.

Williams and Kerswill (1999) investigated the phenomenon in their dialect levelling project comprising three urban cities: Milton Keynes, Reading and Hull. They concluded that, out of the three cities, there was the strongest evidence of close-knit networks in Hull, meaning resistance to linguistic change was more frequent than the other cities, often maintaining linguistic choices which signal their social and geographical identity as northern. In the older generation, preservation of local linguistic forms and resistance to change was more apparent than for the younger generation, of whom were also evidenced as being more open to linguistic innovations coming from outside of Hull (Williams and Kerswill, 1999). For this reason, in the present study, younger speakers have been included as previous research expects this generation to show evidence of 'linguistic innovation along with levelling tendencies' (Williams and Kerswill, 1999:159). The dialect levelling project concluded that regional dialect levelling is present in each city, however the underlying processes for such linguistic changes differs.

It was reasoned that structural factors (e.g., migration patterns, geographical distance, economic prosperity) have played a large role in the spread of linguistic features throughout Britain, though affective factors were also highlighted in their discussion. Significant affective factors include strong affiliations with 'youth norms,' wherein regular active and passive exposure to southern accents on TV signals association with young people and young culture, leading to the widespread use of both non-standard and informal variants, of which largely emerge from London and the south (Williams and Kerswill, 1999, see Stuart-Smith, 2007 for further discussion). It is worth noting that Williams and Kerswill (1999) uncovered that Hull speakers were adopting features that do not extensively affect their sense of Northern regional identity: this was apparent in variation in '(t)-glottaling' and 'TH -fronting', both of which are possibly less salient compared to vowel realisations in STRUT or BATH for example, which Wells (1982a:356) expresses as fundamental in determining the 'linguistic north'. The dialect levelling project highlighted that whilst young Hull speakers are open to adopting non-standard southern features, they are not doing this at the same rate as those in Milton Keynes and Reading and are not losing their traditional local features. As such, Hull speakers are able to continue identification with their location, and at the same time maintain strong links with their social class and community, which may explain why levelling may not be as overt in comparison to other cities (Williams and Kerswill, 1999). These factors will be considered in discussion of the present study's results.

With the theoretical background of the present study considered, the contextual background of Hull is now evaluated.

CHAPTER TWO – CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF HULL

2.0 Introduction

The city of Hull has been selected for this study for three reasons. Firstly, the Hull accent is often attributed to extensive negativity, particularly in the media (Bianchini, 2018). This is the main motive for studying each participant's own perceptions and will help determine whether the constant negativity has an impact on their personal language use and their identity. Secondly, the variety has often been compared with other regional accents and dialects (Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Haigh, 2015), however there is minimal research hitherto which focuses solely on diphthong production in Hull English and its correlation with personal accent perception. Thirdly, the Hull accent is also the researcher's own regional variety, which can be advantageous for the fieldworker.

This chapter explores a variety of historical, geographical, and cultural background relating to Hull. Highly emphasised in this chapter are the isolated location, cultural investments, and negative representation of Hull. These factors are central to uncovering and analysing phonological variability within Hull, whilst offering an explanation as to whether personal accent perception and external attitudes impact residents' language choices.

2.1 Demography and Geographical Position

Current demography and the location of Hull are highly important when considering present-day phonological variability and shifting linguistic identities.

Hull is regarded as a large urban city with a population of 259,100 (ONS, 2020), and is situated on the east coast of England, as the main city within the East Riding of Yorkshire, and as a major international seaport (Britannica, 2018). The city is often defined by its geographical location. Figure 2.1 highlights Hull's geographical position in relation to surrounding East Riding villages, showing significant distance between Hull and other large conurbations within Yorkshire. Closest cities include Leeds (80 km) and York (55 km).

Figure 2.1: Map showing geographical position of Hull (Google Maps, 2021)

Moreover, Hull is separated from Lincolnshire by the Humber Bridge and the River Humber estuary, and ABP (2021) state how Hull's port is one of the 'busiest and fastest-growing trading areas in Europe'. When considered alongside having one main motorway connection which leads into and out of the city, Hull is remote from other large conurbations, resulting in limited mobility between major cities. Thus, in-migration is restricted, which is reported by Milroy (1987) and Williams and Kerswill (1999) as being a major factor for language change.

2.2 A Shifting Identity: The Current Economic and Social Climate

Bianchini (2018) outlines how Hull has struggled economically resulting from the triggering of large-scale deindustrialisation, that is, the reshaping of port flows alongside new technologies such as automation. The heavy reconfiguration and loss of heavily relied on industrial and maritime functions led to socio-economic decline, heightened by the city's isolated location (Bianchini, 2018). This has resulted in high levels of unemployment and deprivation. Such difficulties have stimulated perceptions that are linked with 'poverty, urban decay, and social and economic disadvantage' (Bianchini, 2018:23).

These perceptions, however, are somewhat true. Recent figures from the ONS (2020) corroborate Bianchini (2018). Hull has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country (Williams and Kerswill, 1999), with recent figures estimating 5.5% of the city's population being economically inactive (ONS, 2020). When paired with low educational achievement, whereby an estimated 11.3% of the Hull population are reported to have no qualifications (ONS, 2020), Hull is said to be constrained by high poverty levels (Williams and Kerswill, 1999:154) which results in a lack of opportunities. As expressed,

factors including low educational achievement across the city show reality to the deeply rooted negative perceptions linked with poverty, deprivation, and social disadvantage.

2.2.1 Impact of UK City of Culture 2017

More recently, Hull was awarded UK City of Culture in 2017: great economic advances were welcomed to the 'up and coming' city (Welcome to Yorkshire, n.d). Heavy investment into Hull's appearance alongside purpose-built attractions and frequent media coverage transformed the city, enhancing Hull's sense of identity and place to residents and external visitors. Strengthening perceptions of Hull, both internally and externally, was reported as being a critical aim of the UK City of Culture project (Bianchini, 2018:118). Upon securing the UK City of Culture status in 2013, a clear shift in perceptions towards Hull was documented, though the increase in residents' positivity is more significant once the 2017 year began (Bianchini, 2018:118). A 5% increase was reported regarding residents' agreeing that they are proud to live in Hull, and a further 7% increase in residents' speaking highly of Hull, indicating an increase in residents' positivity towards the city (Bianchini, 2018:118).

Moreover, wider developments, including major investments by firms such as Siemens, contributed to raised confidence within the city (Bianchini, 2018:188). Qualitative feedback regarding residents' perceptions towards their city played an important role in increasing residents' pride, where an increased positivity towards their own sense of place and identity was uncovered. Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3 are 'word clouds' constructed through focus-group interviews before and after the commencement of UK City of Culture (see Bianchini, 2018:121). As expressed in Figure 2.2, negative terms such as 'unemployment,' 'deprived' and 'rough' are dominant and disregard any positivity towards the city and its appeal, highlighting the residents' own negative perceptions towards Hull before the initiation of UK City of Culture activities.

Figure 2.2: 2016 Word Cloud

Figure 2.3: 2017 Word Cloud

(Source: Residents' focus group, taken from Bianchini, 2018:121)

Despite attempts to promote and culturally enhance the city across 2017, negative terms such as 'poor', 'dull' and 'dirty' are apparent, and remain within residents' perceptions. However, it is important to note that an increase in positive terms used to describe Hull was recorded: terms including 'important,' 'improved,' 'vibrant' and 'culture' denote the city in a positive manner (see Figure 2.3). This demonstrates the success of the cultural advancements with regards to resident's attitudes towards the city. Hull's experience as UK City of Culture 2017 has had an enormous impact on the city: it could be argued that the title has put the city on the map. It will be interesting to uncover whether the present study's informants share similar opinions and use the same lexis to describe their city.

2.3 Media Representation

Perhaps the most significant reason for selecting Hull for this study is the negativity the city faces on a regular occurrence. This is most dominant within the media: Hull suffered the damaging portrayal of ranking as the worst city in the country in the 2003 publication *The Idler Book of Crap Towns: The 50 Worst Places to live in the UK* (Bianchini, 2018:23). Since then, Hull has consistently been voted within the Top 10 of 'Worst Places to Live in England' public surveys, (I Live Here, 2021). In 2021, Hull ranked fifth in this survey and is reported to have placed first an illustrious three times prior to this. Despite being conducted for entertainment purposes, it shows real responses and perceptions towards the city, the majority of which are negative. One contributor claimed that:

> [Hull] is like God's little experiment; if he put the worst of everything into one pot and stirred it up a bit (I Live Here, 2021).

The accent has also featured in popular media articles, including the BBC's Guide to the Hull Dialect (BBC, 2005), listing the most used words and phrases heard within Hull, including entries such as 'Rerd' (road), and 'Narn' (nine). However, the negative media portrayals of Hull have exerted a negative image of the city, which has detrimental effects regarding attracting external visitors, skilled workers, and investors, as well as further diminishing the confidence of locals (Bianchini, 2018). This study will uncover whether negative stereotypes are acknowledged by Hull speakers and determine if these negative perceptions influence their local language use.

2.4 Investigating the Researcher's Regional Variety

Investigating one's native regional variety is a fairly common practice (Trudgill, 1974 cf. Llamas 2001). In reviewing Labov's (1978) cumulative sociolinguistic proposition, '[t]he more we know, the more we can find out', Trudgill (1983:34-35) adds how:

> [T]he more we know about a variety, the more insight we obtain about its nature and structure, and the more we know what questions to ask ourselves next in planning further research.

This is corroborated by Llamas (2001), who outlines how investigating a hometown locale brings advantages for the researcher, with access and the recruitment of informants becoming easier and ensures a sound knowledge of the investigated variety. Thus, it seems beneficial to integrate a native speaker's knowledge of their variety into research, notably when considering which linguistic variables are most dominant within the variety and therefore assessing which linguistic variables to investigate within a sociolinguistic study (Llamas, 2001). Moreover, Trudgill (1983:43) acknowledges how an interviewer of the investigated regional variety, or someone 'less obviously foreign' to the informant, has the possibility of higher success in activating and assessing the informant's phonological variability in their most informal speech style, as the informant is more at ease within the interview process: this view is further supported by *Accommodation Theory* (see section 1.4.2). Douglas-Cowie (1978) successfully demonstrated this in her study of her home village in Northern Ireland. Douglas-Cowie (1978:39) figured that:

> Villagers would be more likely to switch to a more standard linguistic code in the presence of a stranger, particularly if he was a well-educated Englishman with an RP or modified regional accent.

Results from the study supported her hypothesis: when evaluated with self-collected data a second time in acting as a fieldworker, Douglas-Cowie (1978:40) observed that 'the presence of the English outsider very often initiates a switch to more standard speech codes'. Thus, it is beneficial to the researcher as they can 'tap into the speech community vernacular' through immersing themselves into the research as both a sociolinguistic observer, and as a person with similar local forms (Tagliamonte, 2006:8).

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the linguistic variables selected for investigation. It further summarises two pilot studies and examines any changes required for the present study in consideration of the pilot results. The chapter also outlines the study design, including the participant sample and methodological structure, wherein the construction of the sociolinguistic interview is detailed, explaining the rationale for the inclusion of each data elicitation method. There is also acknowledgement of Labov's (1978) *Observer's Paradox* and ways in which this can be reduced in sociolinguistic research. The chapter concludes with an outline of the interview transcription and analytical process.

3.1 Linguistic Variable Selection

This section explores previous sociolinguistic investigations surrounding the Hull accent. An overview of relevant variables is provided before a discussion of the spread of the variables within the surrounding area of Yorkshire and Northern England. The section will then focus on the status of the variable in Hull. A discussion of two pilot studies relevant to linguistic variable selection is also present.

Vowel variables were selected for this study rather than consonantal variables. Reasons for selecting various diphthong vowels are threefold: Di Paolo *et al*., (2011:87) highlight how:

> Research has shown that vowel variation generally occurs below the level of conscious awareness, and [vowel research] provides evidence of both linguistic and socio-psychological influences of sound change.

This allows for attitudes and perceptions towards non-standard and non-prestigious features to be discussed and helps to determine whether speakers are aware of features in their own language use. Secondly, significant research has been previously conducted on Yorkshire vowel production, meaning comparisons between future synchronic studies of phonological variation in apparent-time data can be made between past and present findings in both Hull and surrounding areas. Thirdly, Di Paolo *et al*., (2011) highlight how variation in regional vowel systems means that initial hypotheses are often based on existing knowledge concerning the phonology of the target variety, whereby certain vowel sounds are often highly recognisable and immediately associated with various locations, with vowels varying regionally in comparison to consonants. This study will determine whether such vowel variants are viewed as stereotypes within the Hull accent, as well as highlight speakers' potential awareness of any non-standard features present in the variety.

The following subsections discuss the two vowel variables selected for investigation.

3.1.1 PRICE vowel

The phonetic realisation of PRICE in Received Pronunciation (RP) is formed by a closing diphthong in the form of [aɪ] (Wells, 1982b:149). However, Williams and Kerswill (1999) state that the realisation of the PRICE vowel in Hull is rather 'distinctive', making it a key variable of interest in recent studies of the Hull accent, though it has not been discussed in the same volume as other phonological variables, such as the increasingly widespread (h)-dropping. Nevertheless, interesting observations have been made surrounding the pronunciation of PRICE in Hull.

It is characteristic of the traditional Hull accent to employ an allophonic distinction between the RP diphthong /aɪ/, and either a differing long, near-open central vowel [ɐː] or a long, open front vowel [aː] within realisations of the PRICE vowel (Trudgill, 1990:69). Such realisations are dependent upon the phonemic environment of the diphthong, notably the voicing of the following consonant, though it is reported that this distinction also differs across social class (Williams and Kerswill, 1999). In WC speech, [aɪ] is used before voiceless consonants (e.g., *like, bike, price*), whereas [aː] is commonly used before voiced consonants (e.g., *side, time, pride*) – this distinction is not typically found in MC speech, who produce the diphthong throughout (Williams and Kerswill, 1999:146). Though Wells (1982a:358) does not mention the difference in realisation when followed by voiced and voiceless consonants, he does acknowledge that the diphthong is '(variably?) monophthongal', particularly within Northern English accents, produced via a front [a] in the middle north (e.g., Hull), and towards a less open [ɛ] in the far north (e.g., Newcastle, see Watt and Milroy, 1999). Moreover, in their cross-dialectical acoustic study of British vowels produced by male speakers, Ferragne and Pellegrino (2010:14) concluded that the PRICE vowel realisation in Hull showed narrower formant movements, with 'a definite front vowel as its starting point', thus corroborating that of Wells (1982a). As in previous research, the context of monophthongal realisations dependent upon the preceding consonant voicing in WC speech was also acknowledged.

Significant to the present study are the reported WC realisations of the PRICE vowel. Williams and Kerswill (1999) found that all older WC participants categorically observed the allophonic distinction, as did all the younger WC speakers except for one male. Conversely, only one young MC speaker observed the distinction; the remaining fifteen MC teenagers had merged the two allophones, producing [aɪ] in both voiceless and voiced contexts, demonstrating how this feature is notably more frequent in WC speech compared to MC speech. Haigh's (2015) results followed a similar pattern, wherein a distinction between voiced and voiceless context realisations was found to continue existence in Hull. Critically, Haigh (2015:121) signifies how such maintenance of the local feature over a significant period supports the view that convergence towards the standard appears to be resisted, even in the face of seemingly strong influences and close geographic presences of standard-like patterns in nearby West Yorkshire.

Both Williams and Kerswill (1999) and Haigh (2015) formed conclusions which support how the WC youth are continuing to preserve local, traditional features that have remained in Hull for over a century. For this reason, PRICE has been selected as a variable of interest in the current study, with the difference

in voicing contexts will be referred to those followed by voiceless segments and those followed by voiced segments, to reflect the local difference of [aɪ] and [aː] respectively. It will also be interesting to uncover whether the informants are aware of this allophonic distinction to determine awareness of the feature by speakers of the variety. It is also key to investigate the subsequent maintenance or divergence of the PRICE allophonic distinction within the Hull variety, to determine whether language change in the form of levelling with other varieties is present.

3.1.2 GOAT vowel

In RP, the phonetic realisation of the GOAT vowel is the stressed diphthong [əʊ] (Wells, 1982b:146). However, monophthongisation of the GOAT vowel (to varying degrees) is a particularly salient feature of Northern English accents (Wells, 1982a; Watt and Tillotson, 2001; Ferragne and Pellegrino, 2010; Haddican *et al*., 2013; Syversten, 2016), though its realisation differs dependent upon location. In his Newcastle study, Watt (1998) found evidence of different variants of GOAT present in Northern English, described as follows:

(1) Closing diphthong [əʊ]
(2) 'Pan-northern' monophthongs [eː] and [oː] which differ across the North of England, often varying in vowel height
(3) Fronted monophthong [ɵː] - typical of certain Yorkshire accents, varying in vowel height

Significant to this study is the acknowledgement of the fronted GOAT monophthong [ɵː] being present in Yorkshire – both Haddican *et al*., (2013) and Syvertsen (2016) corroborate this in their studies in York, claiming how centralised variants of GOAT are commonly found in Hull and surrounding East Yorkshire, frequently amongst WC speakers. Watt and Tillotson (2001) maintain how fronting of [ɵː] is heavily associated with Hull and is typically affiliated with realisations made by young women in the city. Due to its apparent salience, the feature is often subject to reference within newspaper columns and websites, with recognition of GOAT-fronting by way of "err nerr" (oh no) being displayed on a local road sign[2]. Critically, however, Watt and Tillotson (2001) state that as the GOAT monophthongisation has reached such a high level of general recognition, such as featuring within published media, the variant can be argued to have gained stereotype status. This centralised variant was also found to be used in their study in Bradford, West Yorkshire, though it was concluded that it was 'not far enough advanced that natives even recognised it as a feature of Bradford English,' and consequently, is very much regarded as being associated with the accent of Hull and East Yorkshire (Watt and Tillotson, 2001:228), thus differing greatly from the accents of neighbouring boroughs of Yorkshire and the rest of the East Riding.

[2] https://www.hulldailymail.co.uk/news/err-nerr-hull-road-sign-2324619

Moreover, Hughes *et al*., (2012) argue how the fronted GOAT monophthong variant continues to be highly variable within Hull, illustrating how the fronted monophthong [əː] is also a highly stereotyped feature of the Hull variety. Haigh's (2015) results corroborate these claims, uncovering how Hull speakers from the *Millennium Memory Bank* consistently preferred a monophthongal variant of GOAT, with varying degrees of fronting being evidenced. Varying degree in realisations of [ɵː] and [əː] demonstrate instances of GOAT-fronting, as well as monophthongisation, though differ only in vowel rounding. Figure 3.1 demonstrates the typical vowel position in producing centralised monophthong variants [ɵː] and [əː] compared to the diphthong, showing articulation further front in the vocal tract from the diphthong reference point. In light of this, Hughes *et al.*, (2012) describe how a Hull speaker typically uses a vowel quality that is fronted compared to the fully back rounded monophthongs such as [ʊ̈], typical of other Yorkshire English accents.

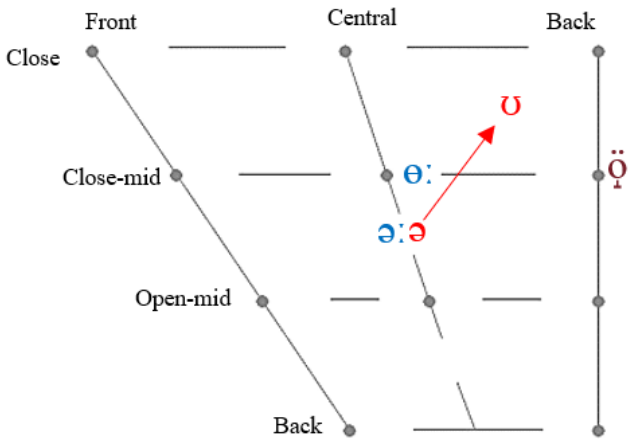


Figure 3.1: Fronted GOAT monophthongs observed in Hull

Thus, if we consider Watt and Tillotson's (2001) claim regarding stereotypes, we may expect to hear responses within the Hull Identities Questionnaire (see Chapter 5) which corroborate the view that monophthongal realisations, namely GOAT-fronting, are a stereotypical feature of the Hull accent, with the potential to be used, recognised, and identified by the participants. Acoustic analysis of the feature will determine the extent to which the monophthongal variant occurs within varying degrees across the sampled participant demographic.

3.2 Pilot Study

Prior to the current study, two pilot studies were conducted to test the design of interview structure and materials for use in the full study.

Results from the first pilot study highlighted interesting instances of diphthong variation between the informant's Hull accent and RP (Dennett, 2020). The traditional allophonic PRICE vowel distinction, attributed by Williams and Kerswill (1999:156) as being 'distinct' to Hull, was successfully maintained by the pilot study informant, demonstrated through a difference in realisation within different phonemic environments. Such results are consistent with Williams and Kerswill (1999), highlighting both monophthongal and diphthongal realisations of PRICE dependent upon the preceding consonant voicing (further discussed in section 3.1.1). This pilot study also tested the success of word lists and reading tasks, through determining a suitable length to not fatigue the informant but also ensure that sufficient linguistic data can be gathered. In this pilot study, a WLS comprising of 30 words was used, and the reading passage was one paragraph in length. As such, the first pilot study informed the sociolinguistic interview material to be used.

Thus, the significant variation in the vowel system of Hull brought to light within PS1 suggests that further investigation of PRICE and GOAT on a larger scale, and with differing speech styles, would be justified.

The second pilot study was conducted in December 2021, whereby one informant who expressed interest in the study was invited to answer the proposed Hull IdQ questions as well as the newly designed word list and reading passage. In light of the first pilot study, the second pilot study WLS was extended to 60 lexical items, with a higher frequency of PRICE and GOAT tokens. The second pilot study RPS was also extended in length to elicit more PRICE and GOAT tokens. The participant was a younger female, from a 'working-class' upbringing, and had lived all her life in Hull. Trudgill (2000:87-9) explains how when social class is kept constant, the less formal the style, the greater the incidence of the nonstandard variant. Hence, incorporating different speech style offers the possibility for further analysis in relation to contextual style (Trudgill, 2000).

The Hull IdQ was adapted from Llamas (1999) core IdQ. The Hull IdQ element of the second pilot study was designed to uncover which questions elicited the most thorough responses in regard to accent perception, and also challenged whether the questions should be given to the participants prior to the interview (see Majid *et al.*, 2017, for further on piloting interviews). This was achieved through allowing the participant access to half of the proposed questions, with the remaining half being produced for the first time during the interview. The participant was not timed during her responses to the Hull IdQ. Implementing this allowed for the researcher to determine whether participants should be given access to the full IdQ prior to the interview and helped to understand which questions elicited thorough responses and alter any questions found difficult by the participant. No questions were eliminated as a result of the second pilot study.

The second pilot study also provided the opportunity to consider the feasibility of using online video-call platforms for the study, for if situations regarding future circumstances arising from the Covid-19

pandemic were to occur during the data collection period, of which would affect the ability to conduct in-person fieldwork. The video-call audio was of high quality and successfully internally recorded via the video-call platform, and via through a second recording device, meaning a hybrid approach to data collection was available to the researcher in case of unexpected Covid-19 changes.

The results from the second pilot study highlighted no significant issues within the proposed methodology and thus no change in the scale of the research, and it was concluded that future participants were to be provided with the full Hull IdQ prior to the interview, in line with Llamas (1999) administrative technique, and that the WLS and RPS were suitable. This innovatory step of allowing the informants to have awareness of content, however, carries both positives and implications. Llamas (1999) argues how providing informants with the questions prior to the IdQ has a dramatic effect upon the data yielded through reducing the danger of the informant's mind going blank when responding to a question for the first time, thus necessitating input and prompts from the researcher. Moreover, harmful effects on the speech style and informant willingness to speak may appear, as a result of nervousness for the interview situation. Obtaining prior knowledge of the interview content diminishes this considerably, thus allowing informants to settle into the conversation as quick as possible, crucial to "tapping into the vernacular" and eliciting the most natural responses (Tagliamonte, 2006:8).

When asked whether it was useful to have seen particular questions prior to the interview, the second pilot study participant "appreciated [the researcher] sending the questions before" as she was able to "have a bit of a think about it" and not feel "on the spot" when posed with an unseen question, allowing for in depth responses to be given. Moreover, despite only being familiar with half of the Hull IdQ, the participant produced full responses to all questions, and so was included as a participant in the current study, referred to as "Lisa." Unlike quantitative data, qualitative pilot data is often included within final data, particularly when there is no detrimental change in the structure, meaning data contamination is less of concern (Zainal-Abidin, 2016). In light of this, "Lisa's" responses were transcribed and later formed part of the full analysis and speaker sample. As concluded by Llamas (1999:102), "the technique of administering the materials prior to the interview maximises the amount of data yielded" - this approach was also found to be successful and subsequently implemented into the present study's design.

3.3 Study Design

The study design divided sixteen informants by two social variables of age and sex, discussed in section 1.2. This created four cells, with each cell comprising of four speakers (age x sex = 16 participants), as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Informant matrix by age and sex

	MALE	**FEMALE**	**TOTAL**
YOUNGER	4	4	8
RETIRED	4	4	8
TOTAL	8	8	**16**

A minimum of four speakers per cell is the general approach within sociolinguistic fieldwork, as it:

> Ensures that should one speaker in the subgroup prove linguistically 'atypical' with respect to other speakers in the group, the (hypothesised) similarity of the other speakers in that group should balance out the anomalies (Watt, 1998:131).

Naturally, a larger speaker cohort provides larger amounts of data which increases the credibility of the analysis. However, this may incur data handling difficulties and as such, electing to interview a larger cohort is clearly beyond the scope of this study. As in Atkinson (2011), the speech samples gathered from each informant were designed to uncover potential changes in linguistic behaviour within different formalities of speech styles (see section 3.4.2).

The following subsections detail the main three variables in which the informants were categorised, concluding with a summary of the final speaker sample.

3.3.1 Age

Different approaches to age in sociolinguistic studies were discussed in section 1.2.1, as the social parameter is notoriously difficult to categorise, because chronological age does not necessarily correlate with the stages of life (Llamas, 2007a). The choice was made to study two emically defined speaker cohorts, separated by at least one generation to capture phonological variability effectively. Previous studies which employed two generational cohorts reported interesting linguistic differences (see Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Barras, 2006). For the present study, two generational cohorts of eight informants were selected, totalling sixteen speakers.

Nevertheless, for the current study, the first speaker group (18-34 years-old) is intended to exclude the speech of adolescents, as social identities and vernacular are still developing through exposure to a secondary school environment (Eckert, 1997). As such, the interested life-stage corresponds to Eckert's (1997) 'young adulthood' and is named throughout as the 'younger' generation. The second speaker group (over 65 years-old) is denoted as the 'retired' generation. The final participant sample is discussed in section 3.4.1.

3.3.2 Sex

The differences between the terms ‘gender’ and ‘sex’ were discussed in section 1.2.2, with gender variation commonly being referred to as ‘sex’ in most sociolinguistic investigations (Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Labov, 2001; Llamas, 2001). Thus, the social variable of ‘sex’ is denoted through binary classifications of both ‘male’ and ‘female’ speech within the current study, whilst he ‘non-binary’ nature of gender classification was not included.

3.3.3 Social Class

As discussed in section 1.2.3, the present study focused on speakers from typical working-class backgrounds, in conjunction with Trudgill’s (1974) MWC and LWC categories. This is considering findings from Williams and Kerswill (1999), wherein maintenance of local, nonstandard variants was found to be more apparent in working-class speakers. Figure 3.2 shows a map which outlines Hull’s city boundaries based on ward. Residents of whom live in any of the marked wards were eligible for participation in the study.

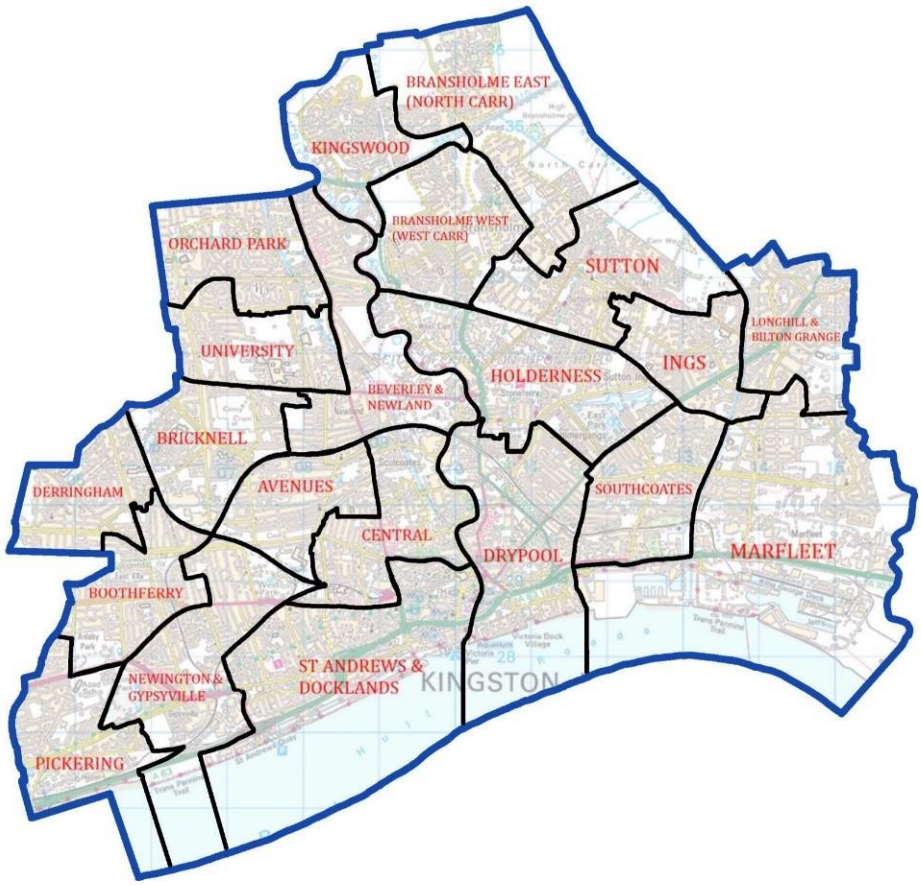


Figure 3.2: Map of wards in Hull[3]

[3] https://maps.hull.gov.uk/myhull.aspx

As the middle-class population typically live in surrounding East Riding towns and villages (Williams and Kerswill, 1999), speakers were asked to confirm the area of Hull in which they have lived all, or a significant period, of their lives, after being shown the above map. Informant's occupation was also to be confirmed as certain occupations, such as the teaching profession, are often pressured to adjust or silence regional accents, as working-class accents are often stigmatized by others in the field (see Donnelly *et al*., 2019). The latter applied to one participant and was taken into consideration during their phonological analysis. Due to the scope of the current study, consistent maintaining of the social class variable allowed for a clear representation of working-class speech in Hull to be obtained.

3.4 Data Set Design

This section discusses the final subject sample and how the informant recruitment process was structured. The rationale of the sociolinguistic interview sequence adopted by the researcher is explained, and a justification of incorporating various speech style elicitation strategies in the present study is detailed. Strategies for mitigating Labov's (1978) O*bserver's Paradox* axiom are also considered. The section concludes with an account of the interview transcription process carried out by the researcher and briefly describes the analytical process adhered to.

3.4.1 Details of Informant Selection

Table 3.2 shows the final subject sample, stating participants' age at the time of recording and the pseudonym given by the researcher. Interviews with participants with * were conducted via video-call due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Table 3.2: Final participant sample matrix

	MALE	**FEMALE**
Younger Generation (18-34 years-old)	Jack (19) *	Daisy (22) *
	Levi (19) *	Evie (22) *
	Luke (22) *	Paige (22) *
	Sam (33) *	Lisa (34) *
Retired Generation (over 65 years-old)	Alan (78)	Doreen (75)
	Tony (68)	Lorna (69)
	Eric (75)	Leanne (73)
	Charlie (89)	Elsie (88)

Of the sixteen participants, eleven were known to the researcher prior to the start of participant recruitment. Those unknown to the speaker were recruited as they had a mutual connection with one of

the participants, and as such were recruited through 'friend-of-a-friend', using a *snowball technique*, which 'guarantees the good faith of the researcher' (Llamas, 2007a:14, for further see Milroy, 1987). This form of recruitment is invaluable to the researcher as they are already embedded into the network, which allows for more casual responses as the researcher is not a complete stranger (Tagliamonte, 2006). Howsoever the informants were recruited, ethical considerations including guaranteed anonymity, informed consent and good fieldwork practice were the researcher's priority (Llamas, 2007a). In both cohorts, it was important to control environmental factors such as speaker location, whereby speakers were selected if they had lived all their lives in Hull[4]. Similar to Atkinson's (2011) justification, this criterion was employed with an aim of reducing influences from other accents through keeping geographical mobility to a minimum.

It necessary here to note that Lorna was excluded from the data analysis, as the researcher concluded that since she was not born in Hull, and rather moved at a young age. Lorna herself acknowledged that her accent is "not fully Hull", implying an awareness of her retention of particular southern features. Thus her data was not included in the auditory analysis and the final participant sample for data analysis is fifteen.

As in Atkinson (2011:71), the selected participants were all of 'normal hearing and speech'[5], meaning they were not impaired in any way. Inevitable hearing losses within the retired speaker sample, however, were taken into consideration within the interview.

3.4.2 Sequence of Sociolinguistic Interview

For each of the fifteen informants, the following sequence of sociolinguistic interview was adhered to, and the data subsequently elicited:

(a) Background Information
(b) Reading Word List - *Word List Style* (henceforth WLS)
(c) Standardised Reading Passage – *Reading Passage Style* (henceforth RPS)
(d) Hull Identities Questionnaire - *Interview Style*

As per the first pilot study, sections (a) and (b) were adhered to as the methodologies had been proven to be successful, though the new word-list material was successfully tested in the second pilot study. Background information including participants age, occupation, parent's occupation, and area of Hull was gathered at the start of the interview. Not only did this provide the demographic information required, but it also helped the participant to relax and feel comfortable within the presence of the researcher.

[4] No ethnic information was gathered as all participants are White-Anglo.
[5] This information was checked by the researcher prior to the interview.

The WLS comprised 60 lexical items. Incorporating WLS allows for elicitations of isolated lexical items which, as Watt (1998) claims, are generally produced with greater 'care' compared to casual pronunciations. Watt (1998:134) further encourages use of WLS as realisations are typically 'comparatively clean in terms of background noise' and are 'free of interference of word-external phonetic contexts'. Similar to Atkinson (2011), the items were separated into 'token' and 'distracter' words by the researcher and were then embedded within the final list to minimise any sound patterns which may have formed in the speakers' minds as they read aloud, in the phenomenon known as *priming* (see Spivey *et al.*, 2021 for further detail). The items were organised into three columns and the participants were asked to read down each column from left to right, thus isolating each pronunciation in a formal context. Discounting the 39 distracter items, the final list of 21 tokens (see Appendix A) encompassed a set of vowel variables for analysis in differing phonemic environments, as highlighted in previous studies within Hull (Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Haigh, 2015) as well as those uncovered within the first pilot study. The variables and total number of tokens are displayed in Table 3.3. All tokens were then phonetically transcribed for each participant.

Table 3.3: Variables and number of tokens in WLS and RPS

Vowel Variable	WLS Token Total	RPS Token Total
(1) **PRICE**	**12**	**20**
(1a) Followed by voiceless segment	6	11
(1b) Followed by voiced segment	6	9
(2) **GOAT**	**9**	**26**
(2a) Word initial position	3	1
(2b) Word medial position	3	5
(2c) Word final position	3	20

The second pilot study successfully confirmed use of interview sections (c) and (d), wherein the RPS was read aloud by the participant followed by responses to the Hull IdQ. Several reading passages were considered for the study, including a reading of *Little Miss Sunshine*, which demonstrated significant instances of PRICE tokens. However, it was decided that this may cause the informant to deduce which potential sound patterns are of interest to the researcher, and thus influence their pronunciation. It was concluded that a shorter reading passage, with a more even distribution of vowel tokens was to be used in the study. The selected standardised *Rainbow Passage* (see Appendix B, Fairbanks, 1960) consists of three successive paragraphs and offers a slightly less formal speech style to that of the WLS, through offering a continuous flow of speech compared to isolated realisations (cf. Labov, 1978). The actual RPS provided to participants was of a larger font size for accessibility. Labov (1978:81) claims that 'people have little conscious control over their use of variable in reading style,' making it an invaluable form of

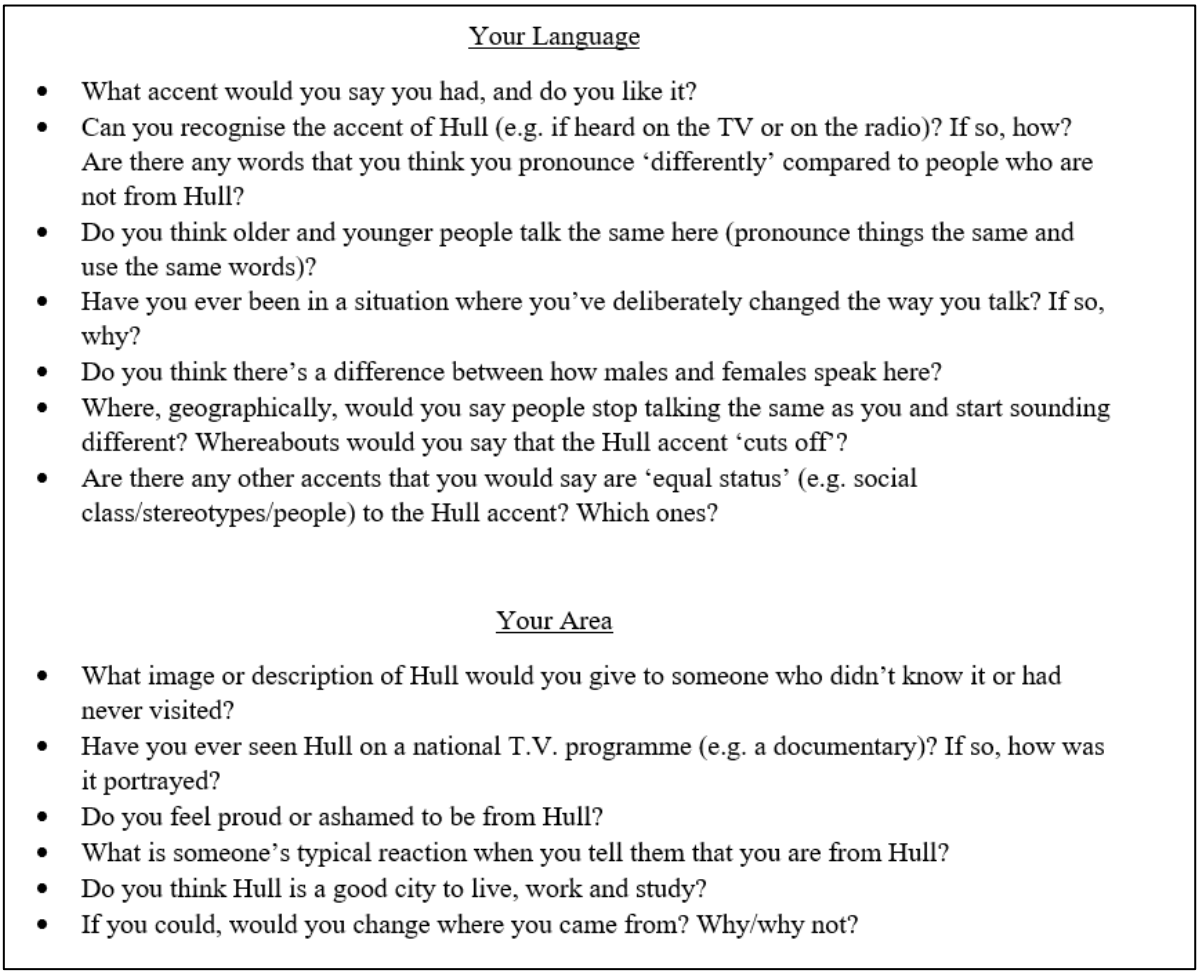
collecting data close to natural speech. A number of phonemic contrasts of interest likely to induce variation and change were juxtaposed within the passage and are demonstrated in Table 3.3. Any mispronunciations of tokens for analysis in the WLS and RPS were acknowledged and disregarded from the final statistics – this is discussed further in section 3.5.

3.4.3 Identities Questionnaire

The concluding element of the sociolinguistic interview involved a Hull IdQ. Llamas (1999; 2001) first proposed a core IdQ which comprised of fifteen questions with an aim of eliciting attitudinal and perceptual information on language and place, advantageous as it can be adapted for use in particular fieldwork locations. Llamas (1999:105) outlines how the core IdQ is 'designed to obtain an insight into people's attitudes towards language and their area,' achieved through posing questions which elicit relatively extended responses from the informant. Naturally, IdQ questions will differ dependent upon research location; topical content varies regionally and often defines communities yet is largely subjective in nature. For this reason, Llamas (1999) advocates for the inclusion of area-specific questions, as they allow for the researcher to tap into a natural resource of the speaker for their subjective view on accent, location, geographical boundaries, and attitudes found throughout Britain.

In light of Llamas (1999; 2001; 2007b) IdQ methodology and for the purpose of this research, the Hull IdQ questions were designed to elicit information about informants own awareness, affiliation and use of lexical variants in the form of markers and stereotypes (Jensen, 2016), their attitudes towards language and social identity (Llamas, 2001; 2007b; Atkinson, 2011; Finnegan, 2015), the awareness of macro-analyst constructs including sex and age differences within accent (cf. Trudgill, 1974; Williams and Kerswill, 1999), their awareness of speech accommodation (cf. Giles and Powesland, 1975), accent status surrounding "class" (Milroy and Milroy, 1978), and finally their attitudes, conformity and reactions towards stereotypes of their location and place. Thus, an investigation into which linguistic variants are overtly recognised by Hull English speakers, alongside correlation with their own speech use will be achieved in the current study. Moreover, attitudinal, and perceptual responses alongside phonological variability will offer a representation of the current Hull identity, with a conclusive aim to address how speakers assess which vernacular variants index their personal social identities (Silverstein, 2003).

Figure 3.3 outlines the structure of the Hull IdQ, wherein questions are organised into two sections, (a) 'Your Language' and (b) 'Your Area' and consisted of fourteen questions. Tagliamonte (2006) expresses how it is ethical within fieldwork to disclose the aims of the project prior to the interview. Considering this, the aim of uncovering attitudes towards Hull and the Hull accent are explicitly stated within the Hull IdQ subheadings and are also specified within the participant information sheet.



Your Language

- What accent would you say you had, and do you like it?
- Can you recognise the accent of Hull (e.g. if heard on the TV or on the radio)? If so, how? Are there any words that you think you pronounce 'differently' compared to people who are not from Hull?
- Do you think older and younger people talk the same here (pronounce things the same and use the same words)?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you've deliberately changed the way you talk? If so, why?
- Do you think there's a difference between how males and females speak here?
- Where, geographically, would you say people stop talking the same as you and start sounding different? Whereabouts would you say that the Hull accent 'cuts off'?
- Are there any other accents that you would say are 'equal status' (e.g. social class/stereotypes/people) to the Hull accent? Which ones?

Your Area

- What image or description of Hull would you give to someone who didn't know it or had never visited?
- Have you ever seen Hull on a national T.V. programme (e.g. a documentary)? If so, how was it portrayed?
- Do you feel proud or ashamed to be from Hull?
- What is someone's typical reaction when you tell them that you are from Hull?
- Do you think Hull is a good city to live, work and study?
- If you could, would you change where you came from? Why/why not?

Figure 3.3: Hull Identities Questionnaire

Unlike the WLS and RPS, the informants were given a copy of the Hull IdQ prior to the interview to familiarise themselves with the questions, which would give scope for more detailed and thoughtful responses, in light of the second pilot study results (see section 3.2). This method is corroborated by Llamas (1999), who argues that the technique of giving informants the Hull IdQ material prior to the interview maximises the amount, and quality, of data yielded, as the informant will gain knowledge of the content which allows them to settle into a casual speech style as quickly as possible, as well as reducing any interview anxieties. However, the specific linguistic variables were not disclosed as this may influence participants' natural pronunciation and thus affect the results of the study. Observing these measures allowed for the participant to feel more comfortable with the researcher as they are aware of the study rationale, which allows for a more informal interview to take place. Moreover, the participants were not timed during their responses to the Hull IdQ, thus, lack of spontaneity and 'on-the-spot' interview pressures discussed in the second pilot study were mitigated. It is also worth addressing that the informal speech style data gathered through the Hull IdQ responses was explicitly on the theme of language use: this may potentially increase speakers' awareness of their local realisations, leading for the potential changing of natural pronunciation due to effect of topic. Attempts to mitigate this included a

comparison between formal reading tasks and attempts to elicit casual vernacular through the informal interview speech style.

However, evidence in previous research is conflicted in approach as to whether such attitudinal data should be collected in the form of written questionnaire or spoken answers. Implementing written questionnaires in sociolinguistic fieldwork is contested by Chambers and Trudgill (1998), who argue that the absence of the researcher often results is lack of detail with the responses. To ease this, as in Atkinson (2011), a spoken IdQ was used in the current study, wherein each question was termed in the exact same way when asked to each speaker. This maintained a set of structured questions which limited the threat of deviation by both the researcher and by the informant and thus mitigate the risk of researcher bias. This allows for the prescribed question order to be kept consistent throughout. Hence, the linguistic behaviours of both the informant and the researcher are not in question when completing the Hull IdQ. However, it must also be acknowledged that the interview style nature of the Hull IdQ elicits casual speech through 'asymmetrical distribution of power suggested by the roles of questioner and respondent' (Milroy, 1987:49). Though this is not ideal for eliciting true vernacular, it proves to be the only practical way to obtain the necessary attitudinal data. Thus, it is imperative that measures are taken to reduce the formality of the interview setting and to ensure an unintimidating situation for the informant, permitting the interaction to appear more as a conversation rather than a formal interview (Llamas, 1999).

It is necessary to note how the Hull IdQ data has been discussed both phonologically and orthographically. The Hull IdQ is strongly associated with Labov's (1978) notion of *interview speech style*: when referred to the phonological element gathered as part of the Hull IdQ, the term *interview style* is adopted. Incorporating the Hull IdQ data within the present analysis of phonological variation within the Hull accent will be invaluable in contributing to the current trend of sociolinguistic studies surrounding language ideology (Llamas, 1999; 2001; 2007b; Atkinson, 2011; Finnegan, 2015). Findings from the Hull IdQ are discussed in Chapter 5.

3.4.4 Observer's Paradox

Within any form of recorded interview, the act of being 'observed' by a person will subconsciously influence the casual and spontaneous speech style that is particularly desired by sociolinguistic researchers (Labov, 1978). Speakers who are aware of the fact they are being recorded may diverge from their regionally marked realisations and avoid overtly stigmatized forms, thus changing their speech towards a more prestigious form (Atkinson, 2011). Hence, we are faced with what Labov (1978) labels the *'Observer's Paradox'*. Llamas (2007b) highlights how many studies have employed techniques to mitigate the effects of the *Observer's Paradox*, though it can never be eliminated absolutely as it is a natural response to being observed. As a researcher, one can only assume that the informant has a more casual speech style in their everyday interactions than what appears within the observation (Labov, 1978).

Such methods include friend of a friend recruitment (see section 3.4.1), and the concealment of recording devices when in-person. Labov (1978) further notes how such constraints can be mitigated through diverting attention away from speech and rather allowing the vernacular to emerge; this is often achieved through less formal speech styles. In the case of the present study, this occurred through IdQ questions which generate a keen sense of emotion and opinion. Labov (1978:209) proposes a solution of maintaining recording whilst the speakers are diverted by an interview break, wherein they 'unconsciously assume that [they are] not at the moment being interviewed.' However, Tagliamonte (2006) notes how such a technique is now considered unethical as the principle of informed consent and subsequent ethical guidelines have both been violated, meaning creative ways of eliciting vernacular data have been encouraged in recent variationist research. Moreover, being a native speaker of the variety is advantageous in terms of mitigating the paradox, as rapport is built with the informant, further discussed in section 2.4. On the other hand, Watt (1998:101) highlights that it is not uncommon for speakers to overplay their local language features, as they 'wish to demonstrate the idiosyncrasies of the variety' for the researcher's benefit.

In the current study, attempts have been made to mitigate this through implementing reading tasks of different speech styles, and through the concealment of the particular linguistic variables of interest, aided through a mutual connection between the researcher and the participant.

For virtual interviews, the participant was visually notified of recording only at the start, meaning they did not have a physical recording device in their proximity. Arguably, not being in the presence of a physical recording device overstated the paradox to an extent, notably as the second pilot study informant stated that she 'forgot [she] was being recorded' due to the interview being virtual and becoming engrossed in her IdQ responses. This is advantageous to the researcher as any potential interview anxieties or nerves surrounding recordings are immediately reduced, allowing for a more natural speech style. Furthermore, in light of Covid-19, people are perhaps more used to online interactions with others, meaning it is less daunting compared to online interactions 3-4 years ago, for example.

3.5 Transcription

WLS and RPS tokens of interest were transcribed impressionistically by the researcher. Trimmed audio files for each token of interest within the WLS and RPS were made, wherein phonetic transcriptions were made and recorded for each informant, whereas orthographic transcriptions were made for the tokens within the interview style data. Since this study is primarily a qualitative analysis, and due to the impressionistic analysis, the subjective nature of transcription must be acknowledged. Subjectivity is inherent within independent auditory analysis, wherein Ochs (1979:44) enhances how 'transcription of any kind is invariably a selective process'. Considering this, it was decided to include a second opinion for a selection of phonetic transcriptions in the present study, offered from the researcher's supervisory

team, to ensure they were as accurate as possible and thus increase the degree of inter-rater reliability. These were considered against the researcher's transcription, and a final transcription was recorded. In situations where an impressionistic transcription was difficult to gauge, Praat software was used to confirm via spectrogram as to the variant produced, as impressionistic auditory transcription alone may underrepresent the actual sound heard (Di Paolo *et al*., 2011). When transcribing the relevant WLS and RPS phonological variables, diacritics were used to reflect the variation in place and manner of articulation for each informant. Similar to Syvertsen's (2016) transcription methodology, allowing for the various realisations of PRICE, and GOAT to be placed into more general categories of realisation should a pattern begin to emerge.

All instances of PRICE and GOAT within the interview style data were also transcribed impressionistically by the researcher, adhering to the process described above. Moreover, the participant's Hull IdQ responses were transcribed orthographically, with linguistic distinctions of interest (such as informant's specific phonological impersonations of relevant vowel sounds) also being transcribed. Transcribing the Hull IdQ both orthographically and, in parts, phonetically, meant that a subjective judgement could be made by the researcher in determining whether the participants responses to their accent and location were predominantly positive, negative, or neutral. This transcription protocol, as denoted by Tagliamonte (2006), allowed for readability to be maintained as well as facilitating a structured process for both the quantitative phonetic analysis and qualitative attitudinal response analysis.

3.6 Mixed Method Analysis

For each informant, the tokens of interest within the WLS, RPS and interview style data were counted and grouped together into broader vowel categories which reflect the variation in realisation, and a percentage of relative frequency was calculated, excluding any mispronunciations or omissions from the WLS and RPS. Upon relative frequency calculation, the results were then tabulated and represented in the form of graphs and figures. Hence, the results from the impressionistic phonological analysis form a quantitative analytical framework, common in phonology studies (Di Paolo *et al*., 2011). Where relevant and necessary, Praat software was used to generate spectrograms to provide, for example, auditorily and visibly monophthongal and diphthongal productions.

However, since this variationist study is also considering qualitative attitudinal responses, and due to the scope of this study, it was not possible to undertake a detailed comprehensive analysis of informant's phonemic inventories, as well as an exhaustive discussion of each of their Hull IdQ responses. Considering this, responses which were significant to contributing to one's overall view of language, awareness and social identity in Hull were explored, as well as a brief account of each informant's realisations of the linguistic variables under investigation, considering speech style as a variable. Thus, a mixed method analysis was adopted for the current study.

CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: PHONOLOGICAL DATA

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, results from the phonological analysis are presented. The vowel variables are selected as previous research indicates that they are particularly stereotyped to the Hull accent variety (see 2.3). Thus, an impressionistic analysis of the following linguistic variables has been carried out: PRICE and GOAT. A descriptive analysis concerning general trends and patterns across the speaker variables of age and sex is discussed. Both phonological and phonetic differences are considered throughout the analysis; where relevant, spectrograms are included to support the auditory analysis. Phonological environment is also considered in analyses, with exploration of internal constraints, e.g., phonological context and external constraints on the data, e.g., speech style and social interpretation. Evidence of awareness of features through extracts of informants' Hull IdQ responses are offered, to determine whether awareness acts as a motivation for language change.

4.1 Overall Findings

Analysis of each informant's tokens of PRICE and GOAT yielded a total of 2495 tokens across three speech styles, wherein the YF group encompassed 929 tokens for analysis, the YM group encompassed 707, the RF group exhibited 357 and the RM group elicited 502 instances of the tokens for analysis. Table 4.1 illustrates the distribution of tokens across the speaker group for each linguistic variable.

Table 4.1: Overall PRICE and GOAT token distribution across speaker group

	YF	**YM**	**RF**	**RM**	**TOTAL**
PRICE	527	360	165	250	1302
GOAT	402	347	192	252	1193
TOTAL	929	707	357	502	2495

As displayed above, the younger generation generate a larger number of tokens as their Hull IdQ responses were substantially longer in duration compared to the retired generation. Relative frequency of each variant realisation was calculated, excluding any mispronunciations or omissions. From this, trends, and patterns in realisations across speaker group can be observed. The following sections discuss the phonological data for each variable separately.

4.2 PRICE Vowel

This study corroborates that of previous Hull PRICE vowel realisation research, whereby the following three broad categories of realisations were observed:

1) RP diphthong - [aɪ]
2) Long, open front monophthong - [aː]
3) Long, near-open central monophthong- [ɐː]

An allophonic distinction between the diphthong and monophthong variants of PRICE with following voiceless and voiced segments respectively is characteristic of the traditional Hull accent (Williams and Kerswill, 1999), and such a distinction is recorded as being maintained today (see Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Haigh, 2015). Results from the present study corroborate this claim. Within the following subsections, PRICE has been distinguished into two phonological contexts: the sound followed by a voiceless consonant/segment, and the sound followed a voiced consonant/segment. Both open and closed syllable context are considered within the same group, though it must be acknowledged that all tokens of the high frequency "I" were not included in the data analysis as it is very often reduced, and thus receives little sentence stress. As such, the analysis is based upon phonological environment, though word-final instances of price have been touched upon briefly.

Both Tables 4.2 and 4.3, and Figures 4.1 and 4.2 demonstrate the distribution of PRICE variants across both of the aforementioned phonological contexts, across the speaker age groups and in consideration of speech style.

Table 4.2: The distribution of PRICE when followed with voiceless segments, by speaker age, sex, and speech style (%)

	WLS			**RPS**			**Interview Style**		
	[aɪ]	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**	**[aɪ]**	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**	**[aɪ]**	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**
YF	100	0	0	95.3	4.7	0	99.6	0.4	0
YM	100	0	0	75	9.1	15.9	96.2	0.7	3.1
RF	100	0	0	78.8	18.2	3	100	0	0
RM	100	0	0	81	19	0	98.4	0	1.6

Table 4.3: The distribution of PRICE when followed with voiced segments, by speaker age, sex, and speech style (%)

	WLS			RPS			Interview Style		
	[aɪ]	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**	**[aɪ]**	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**	**[aɪ]**	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**
YF	62.5	37.5	0	42.9	51.4	5.7	26.4	66.8	6.8
YM	45.8	4.2	50	5.7	0	94.3	0	76.5	23.5
RF	61.1	22.2	16.7	14.8	40.7	44.5	28.6	42.8	28.6
RM	41.7	8.3	50	5.9	38.2	55.9	0	45.1	54.9

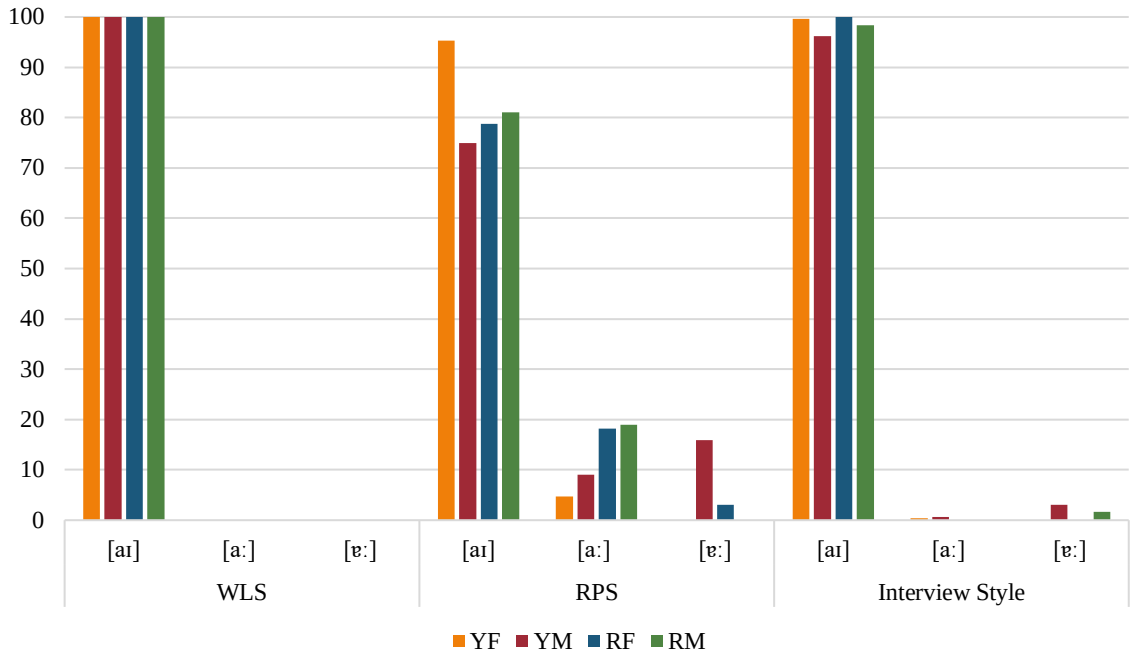


Figure 4.1: The distribution of PRICE when followed with voiceless segments, by speaker age, sex, and speech style (%)

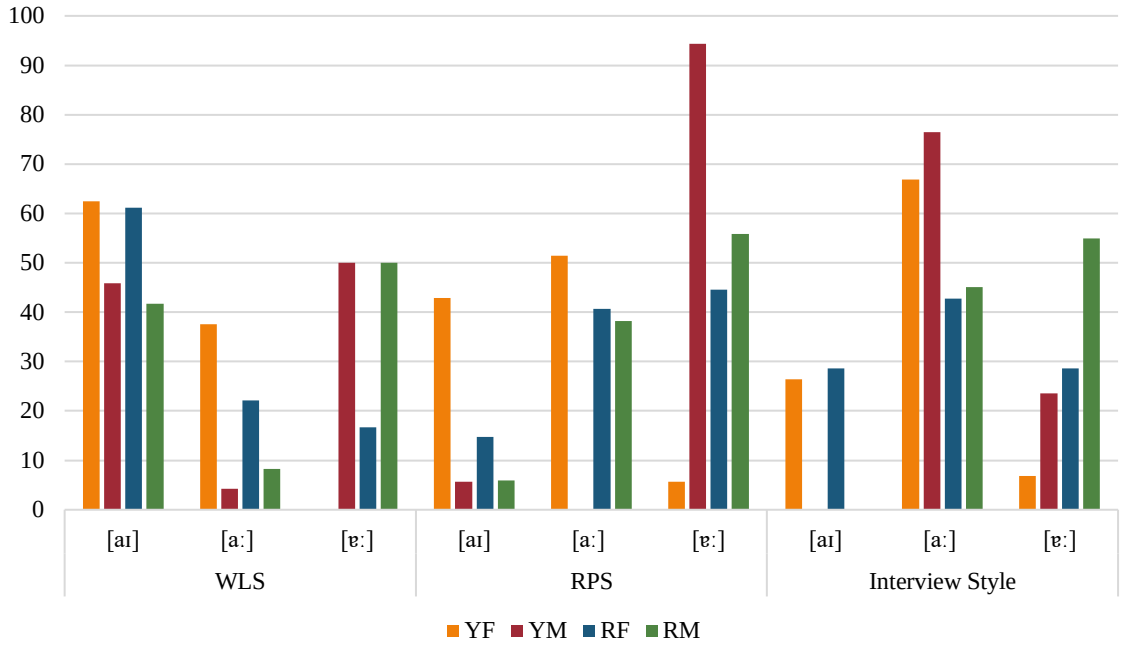


Figure 4.2: The distribution of PRICE when followed with voiced segments, by speaker age, sex, and speech style (%)

Generally, it appears that the speaker sample are observing the allophonic distinction of the PRICE vowel in differing phonemic contexts, though to different extents. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show larger amounts of variation in realisations when a voiced segment follows, compared to a more consistent realisation of [aɪ] when a voiceless segment follows. Based on the current data, it seems the allophonic distinction is being maintained at a similar rate by the younger generation as it is the older generation, corroborating Williams and Kerswill's (1999) findings. However, as demonstrated in Figure 4.1, there is a substantial difference dependent upon speech style: in voiceless PRICE contexts, WLS realisation was 100% [aɪ] for all speaker age groups. Being the most formal of the investigated speech styles, it is not uncommon for speakers to diverge from their local linguistic norms and shift away from their regional dialect (Tabouret-Keller, 1997), as linguistic behaviours are often adjusted dependent on the degree of formality of the conversation or speech style (Labov, 1978; Llamas, 2001; Atkinson, 2011). In the same vein, [aɪ] was also the preferred variant in RPS and interview speech styles in PRICE realisation when followed by voiceless consonants, in line with previous studies (see Haigh, 2015).

In comparison, substantial variation in realisation across the speech styles in voiced PRICE contexts is evident in Figure 4.2, whereby a mixture of variants of PRICE when preceding voiced segments were recorded for each speaker cohort, notably often losing the offglide, and producing a monophthong realisation rather than the RP diphthong. The following subsections break down the phonological results for each speaker group and individual in further detail.

4.2.1 PRICE – Younger Females

For the YF speaker sample, 527 tokens of PRICE were recorded. This was the highest of the groups by age and speaker sex for this variable, namely due to the fact that all YF had a distinctive, repetitive use of *'be like'* in their IdQ responses compared to other age groups. The YF Hull IdQ responses averaged at 11 minutes 52 seconds in duration: this was the longest of all the age groups. Table 4.4 shows the raw data regarding the number of tokens (N) realised as each variant.

Table 4.4: Number of PRICE tokens by individual YF speakers in voiceless and voiced contexts (N)

	Followed by voiceless segment (N)			**Followed by voiced segment (N)**		
	[aɪ]	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**	**[aɪ]**	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**
DAISY	66	0	0	21	10	1
EVIE	118	2	0	4	75	0
LISA	47	0	0	13	30	11
PAIGE	86	1	0	31	11	0
TOTAL	317	3	0	69	126	12

As demonstrated, all of the younger females in the sample observed, to an extent, the distinction in realisation between PRICE in voiceless and voiced phonological contexts. The data for each speaker are further collapsed into their average relative frequencies of PRICE realisation for combined speech styles across both voiceless and voiced phonological environments, displayed in Table 4.5 and the associated Figure 4.3.

Table 4.5: Variants of PRICE when followed with voiceless and voiced segments, by individual YF speaker (%)

	Followed by voiceless segment (%)			**Followed by voiced segment (%)**		
	[aɪ]	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**	**[aɪ]**	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**
DAISY	100	0	0	65.6	31.3	3.1
EVIE	98.3	1.7	0	5.1	94.9	0
LISA	100	0	0	24.1	55.5	20.4
PAIGE	98.9	1.1	0	73.8	26.2	0

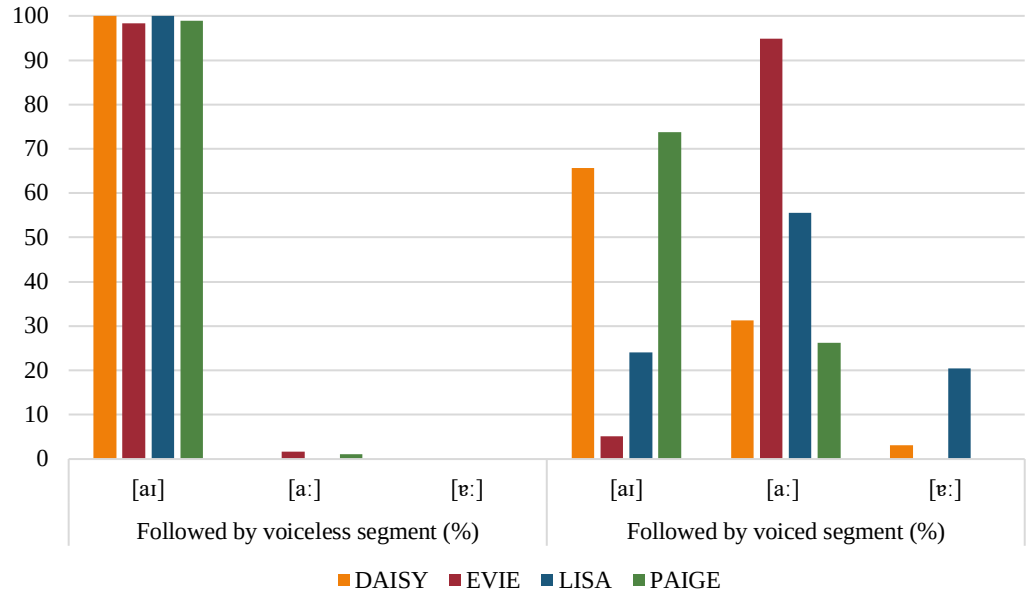


Figure 4.3: Variants of PRICE when followed with voiceless and voiced segments, by individual YF speaker (%)

As presented in both Table 4.5 and Figure 4.3, all the YF predominately used [aɪ] when occurring before a voiceless consonant, as predicted: both Daisy and Lisa in 100% of recorded tokens, Paige in 98.9% of recorded tokens, and Evie in 98.3% of tokens. However, when compared to their respective realisations when followed by a voiced segment, substantial variation in realisation can be seen. Evie, who acknowledged avoidance of her "teacher voice," was recorded as having the highest relative frequency of monophthongisation in her PRICE realisation with a following voiced segment, with 94.9% of her recorded tokens being realised as the monophthong [aː], as depicted Table 4.5.

> **(1) Evie:** "Yes as a teacher I slightly change my voice…..Definitely sometimes at school I do, not all the time, but the kids call me posh at school.….I don't think the way that I speak is posh, 'cos I don't really put on a voice that much, but I do at school, especially when I'm reading….. So, I would definitely say I would at school…..I've always kind of put a bit of a voice on, or not quite dragged my vowels out as much as I would do, I've been very conscious of not doing it too much."

It is worth noting how Evie presents an interesting case with her realisations: a possible explanation for her substantial use of [aː] in comparison to the other YF speakers, who display more variation, may arise from her own awareness of her "slightly chang[ed]" teacher voice, and the fact that she attempts to diverge from this form of speech for the purpose of the interview style responses. Evie explicitly stated that she "[does] not quite drag [her] vowels out as much… [Evie is] very conscious of not doing it too much", suggesting an awareness of her vowel pronunciation in a school setting. When in conversation with the researcher, Evie may have accommodated to the researcher as a result of the nature of the sociolinguistic

interview, meaning an intensified use of local linguistic norms were present in her speech by way of *accent convergence* (see section 1.4.2) and possibly heightened through the Observer's Paradox, whereby conscious knowledge of a recorded interview influences one's natural speech (Labov, 1978). It could also be argued that Evie's profession enhances constraints on her regional variety, with working-class teachers often being pressured to diverge from their regional variety and thus use more standard variants (see Baratta, 2017; Donnelly *et al*., 2019). Baratta (2017) has conducted research surrounding the connection between accent and teacher identity. He uncovered that linguistic pressures to match the 'standard' and what are perceived as prejudices within an educational environment often cause discrepancy across teachers in the field, resulting in teachers shifting away from their regional variety whilst in the classroom. As such, class-based stereotypes associated with particular British regional varieties have become engrained into society, so much so that is has become a live issue for teachers in training. Thus, Evie may have felt that in order to convey her natural accent within her speech, certain phonological features may have been heightened to consolidate her linguistic identity as a teacher in Hull.

Similarly, Lisa uses monophthongal variants of PRICE in preceding voiced segments, though differs from Evie by way of vowel positioning: Lisa's recorded voiced PRICE tokens highlight a mixture of both near-open central [ɐː] and open-front [aː], produced collectively in 75.9% of recorded tokens, whereas Evie exclusively maintains the latter, though both variants have been recorded as being local Hull variants. An example of Lisa's realisation of three consecutive interview style PRICE tokens in preceding voiced consonants is *ninety-nine point nine* as [ˈnaːntɪ naːn pɔɪnt naːn], as shown in Figure 4.4.

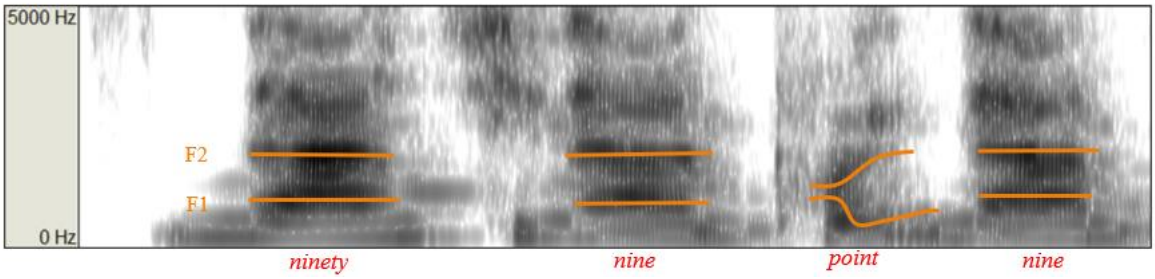


Figure 4.4: Spectrogram of Lisa's realisation of PRICE in *ninety-nine point nine* [ˈnaːntɪ naːn pɔɪnt naːn] showing F1 and F2

The consistency and clarity of parallel formants between F1 and F2 amongst the three consecutive tokens in the Figure 4.4 spectrogram provide further evidence as to the monophthongal allophones of PRICE which are apparent in Hull English, as produced by Lisa. These tokens occurred within Lisa's interview style question responses: the most informal of the investigated speech styles, when the participant was recalling a personal experience (Labov, 1978). Nevertheless, Evie and Lisa's monophthongal realisations

corroborate that of previous research in Hull, evidencing the maintenance of the distinctive allophonic PRICE realisation within their Hull linguistic repertoire.

Although recorded monophthongal tokens of PRICE in preceding voiced segments for Daisy (34.4%) and Paige (26.2%) are evidenced, their relative frequencies are substantially lower than Evie and Lisa. Daisy and Paige both elicit a larger proportion of the diphthong [aɪ] in voiced contexts, with relative frequencies of 65.6% and 73.8% respectively, compared to Evie (5.1%) and Lisa (24.1%) (see Table 4.5). Figures 4.5 and 4.6 are comparable spectrograms of Evie and Daisy's WLS realisation of *decide*, visually highlighting the difference between the speakers' monophthongal and diphthongal realisations.

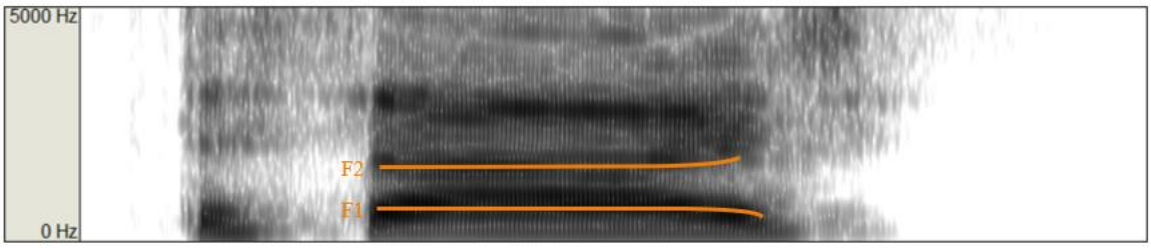


Figure 4.5: Spectrogram of Evie's realisation of *decide* [dɪˈsaːd] showing F1 and F2

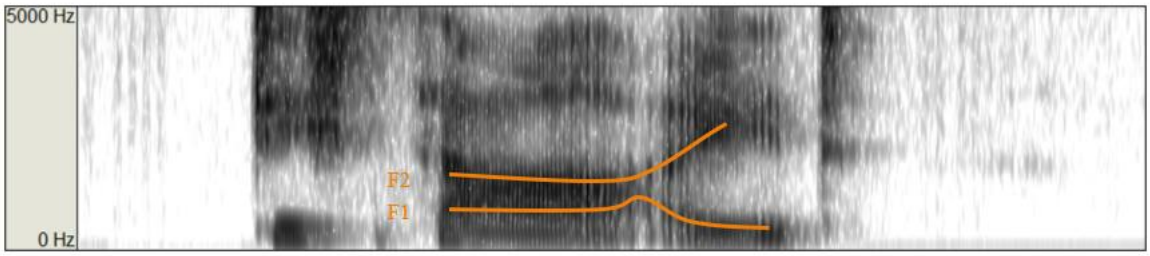


Figure 4.6: Spectrogram of Daisy's realisation of *decide* [dɪˈsa̰ɪ̯d] showing F1 and F2

A prominent monophthongal realisation can be seen in Evie's isolated WLS production of *decide* (see Figure 4.5), whereas a clear diphthong, though creaky, is evidenced in Daisy's realisation (see Figure 4.6), as distinguished through the parallelity of the formants. For sake of comparison, Figures 4.7 and 4.8 below illustrate both Evie and Daisy's WLS realisations of *alike*, whereby both speakers produced a clear diphthong.

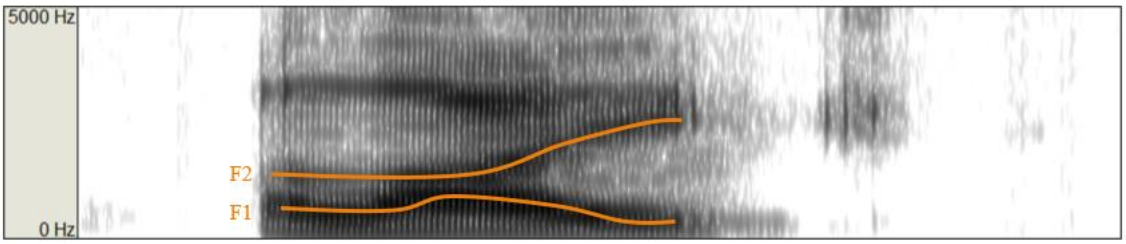


Figure 4.7: Spectrogram of Evie's realisation of *alike* [əˈlaɪk] showing F1 and F2

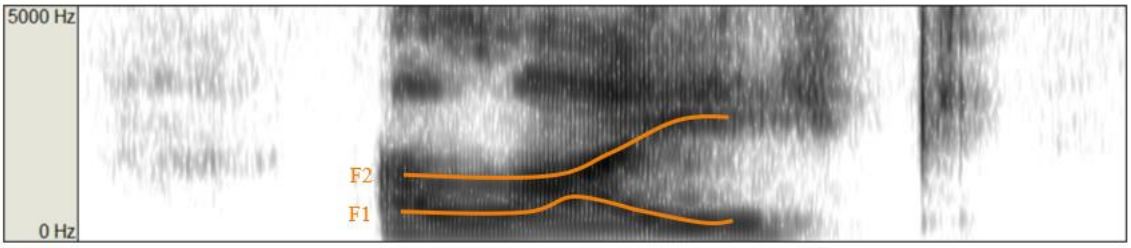


Figure 4.8: Spectrogram of Daisy's realisation of *alike* [əˈlaɪk] showing F1 and F2

As apparent in the spectrograms above, both Evie and Daisy produced diphthongs in realisation of *alike*; this was also the case for both Lisa and Paige. The difference in Evie's tongue movement in Figures 4.5 and 4.7 highlights that there is a clear difference in realisation dependent upon phonemic environment. In comparing the four realisations, the spectrograms all illustrate formant movement throughout their durations, however, the formant transitions of diphthong realisations move substantially towards the end of the vowel sound, with F1 and F2 moving to represent the difference in diphthong vowel height and degree of backness, particularly during the offglide movement. Comparably, Evie's monophthong realisation shows reduced formant transitions, as the vowel sound is continually produced at the same height and relative degree of backness.

Conclusively, then, the YF PRICE data provides evidence that, to differing extents, the traditional allophonic distinction in PRICE contexts is being maintained.

4.2.2 PRICE – Younger Males

360 tokens of PRICE were recorded for the YM sample. The number of tokens (N) realised as each variant for each YM speaker is demonstrated in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Number of PRICE tokens by individual YM speakers in voiceless and voiced contexts (N)

	Followed by voiceless segment (N)			**Followed by voiced segment (N)**		
	[aɪ]	**[a:]**	**[ɐ:]**	**[aɪ]**	**[a:]**	**[ɐ:]**
JACK	47	0	3	1	6	21
LEVI	40	3	4	0	32	21
LUKE	36	0	3	5	19	14
SAM	60	0	3	7	22	13
TOTAL	183	3	13	13	79	69

Similar to the YF speaker group, the associated relative frequencies of realisation are illustrated in Table 4.7 and Figure 4.9. Both highlight how the YM speaker group appear to observe the allophonic PRICE distinction, whereby all YM speakers show consistency in primarily producing [aɪ] in voiceless PRICE phonological contexts, and further producing an monophthongal allophone in voiced PRICE contexts, in line with previous literature (Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Haigh, 2015).

Table 4.7: Variants of PRICE when followed with voiceless and voiced segments, by individual YM speaker (%)

	Followed by voiceless segment (%)			**Followed by voiced segment (%)**		
	[aɪ]	**[a:]**	**[ɐ:]**	**[aɪ]**	**[a:]**	**[ɐ:]**
JACK	94	0	6	3.6	21.4	75
LEVI	85.1	6.4	8.5	0	60.4	39.6
LUKE	92.3	0	7.7	13.1	50	26.9
SAM	95.2	0	4.8	16.7	52.4	30.9

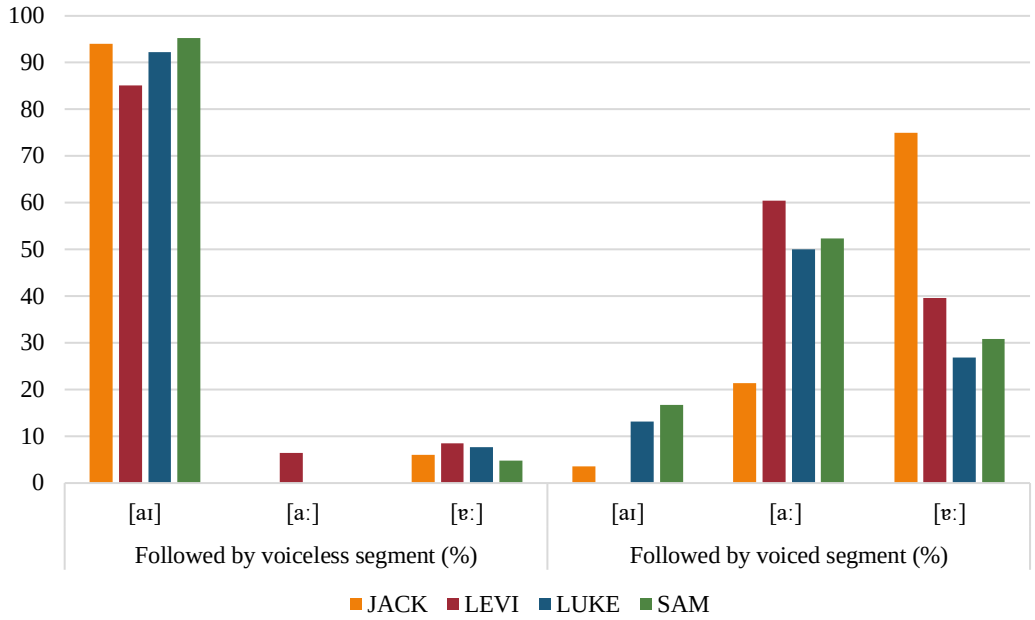


Figure 4.9: Variants of PRICE when followed with voiceless and voiced segments, by individual YM speaker (%)

Thus, regular patterns in monophthongal realisations highlight how the distinction between PRICE when followed by voiceless and voiced segments is very much prevalent in YM speech. To a point, it appears that the distinction is almost a phonological rule for YM – Figure 4.9 demonstrates that they clearly never use the diphthong when there is a following voiced segment, unlike the YF group, who appear to be more variable in this context. Individually, similarities in YM PRICE realisations are evidenced: *all* YM use a higher relative frequency of monophthongs in voiced contexts rather than in voiceless contexts. Levi was the only YM who did not use [aɪ] in any voiced phonological contexts across all speech styles, hence 100% of his PRICE realisations in preceding voiced segments were monophthongal, suggesting that his linguistic choices may not be influenced by speech style. Figures 4.10 and 4.11 depict spectrograms of Levi's realisations of *size* and *site*, with the differing parallelity between F1 and F2 clearly highlighting a difference in vowel sound. Note the difference in formant movements towards the end of the vowel sound: whilst most of the F1 and F2 formant movement in [ˈsaɪɚ] is found in the latter half of the vowel duration, there appears to be very little formant movement in [ˈsɐːz], hence a monophthong is produced.

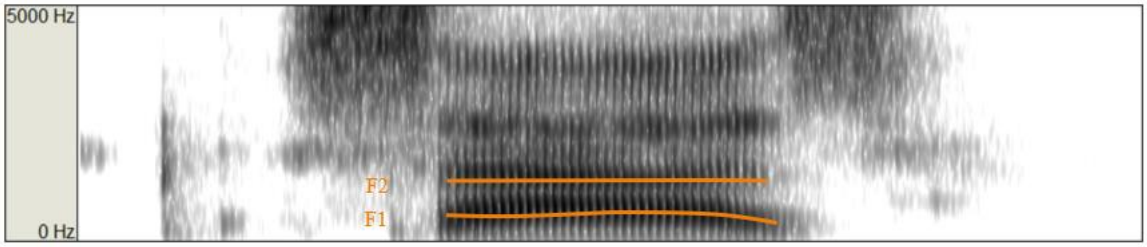


Figure 4.10: Spectrogram of Levi's realisation of *size* [ˈsɐːz] showing F1 and F2

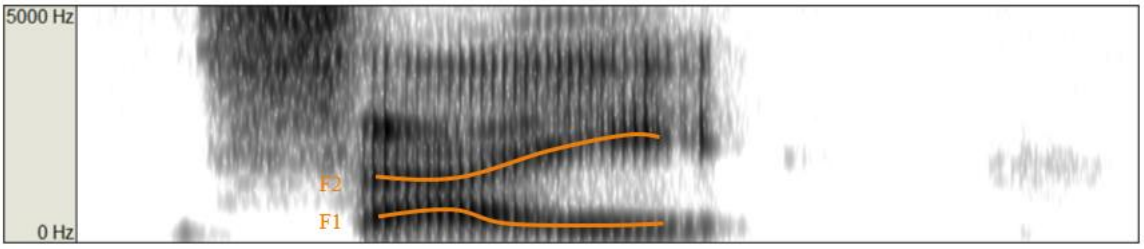


Figure 4.11: Spectrogram of Levi's realisation of *site* [ˈsaɪɔ] showing F1 and F2

Levi consistently, although at slightly differing vowel positionings, produces a monophthongal allophone in voiced PRICE contexts, thus it can be said that from the recorded data, Levi categorically observes the allophonic distinction in phonological context. This particular finding further supports the claim made by Williams and Kerswill (1999), whereby all but one working-class male in their study followed this pattern in realisation.

Moreover, both Luke and Sam recorded similarities in results, both producing instances of [aɪ] for PRICE when preceding a voiceless segment, yet the majority of their PRICE tokens with a following voiced segment are realised as either [ɐː] (Luke - 26.9%, Sam - 30.9%), or [aː] (Luke - 50%, Sam - 52.4%), as demonstrated in Table 4.7. Notably, Jack's monophthongal realisations of PRICE when followed by a voiced segment are largely positioned as the near-open central [ɐː], with a relative frequency of 75% - this is the highest frequency of the entire speaker sample for this variant. Similar to Levi, Jack appears to prefer monophthong variants in his realisations when preceding voiced segments. A clear comparison between Jack's realisations of *alike* and *alive* is illustrated in Figures 4.12 and 4.13, highlighting the clear difference in, and his preservation of, the distinct allophones of PRICE in Hull English.

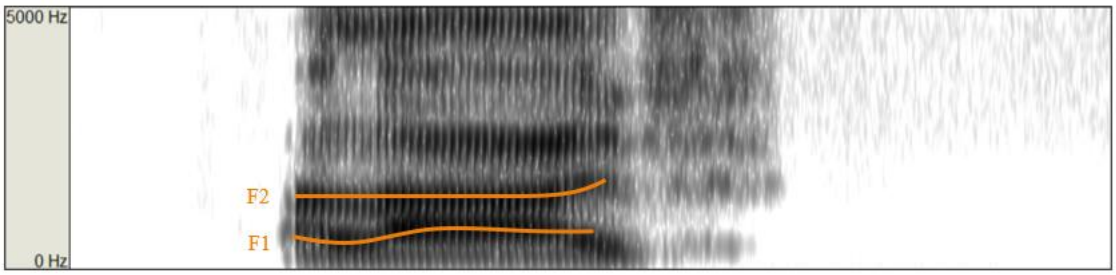


Figure 4.12: Spectrogram of Jack's realisation of *alive* [əˈlɐːv] showing F1 and F2

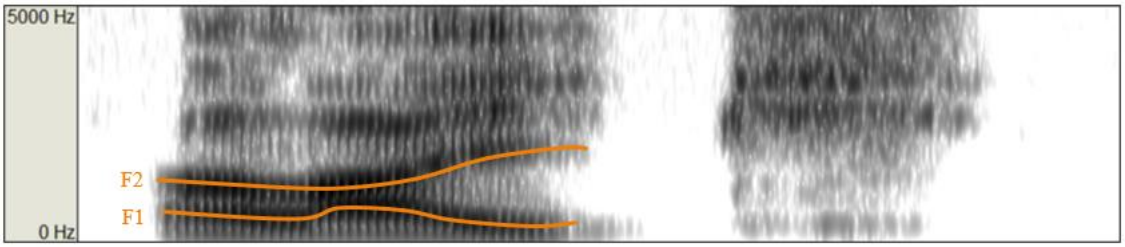


Figure 4.13: Spectrogram of Jack's realisation of *alike* [əˈlaɪk] showing F1 and F2

In total, the average relative frequency of YM monophthong realisation in PRICE when followed by voiced segments is 89.15%. When compared against previous literature, these results are consistent with that of other studies (see Williams and Kerswill, 1999), supporting the view that working-class YM are paramount in maintaining and preserving the allophonic PRICE distinction found in Hull. To evidence this claim, Williams and Kerswill (1999) found that that a monophthongal variant of PRICE when followed by a voiced consonant occurred in 82.5% of realisations for their working-class YM sample, whilst 7.5% of realisations in the same phonological context were as the diphthong [aɪ]. In the present study, the diphthong variant was produced when followed by a voiced segment in average of 8.4% tokens, thus showing close similarity to Williams and Kerswill's (1999) results.

The interest, however, lies in the fact that of the data collected in the current investigation, it appears that both YM and YF are continuing to distinguish between the allophones, though the results show that the YM sample have a substantially higher relative frequency of monophthongal realisations of [ɐː] and [aː] in PRICE phonological contexts when followed by a voiced segment compared to the YF sample, at 89.15% and 57.85% respectively. Reasons for this clear difference may be linked to covert prestige (see section 1.3.1), in which previous studies have attributed working class males as using more non-prestigious, stigmatised linguistic markers as a form of social group and network association. Females on the other hand, may be more aware of the stigma attached to certain variants and as such, reduce the frequency of their use. Chapter 5 will further consider this notion alongside the informant's Hull IdQ responses surrounding opinions of male and female language use in Hull.

4.2.3 PRICE – Retired Females

For the RF speaker sample, 179 tokens of PRICE were recorded, and the Hull IdQ responses were shorter in duration compared to the younger generations, with RF Hull IdQ responses averaging at 6 minutes 52 seconds in length: the shortest average of all the age cohorts. The number of recorded PRICE tokens when followed by voiceless and voiced segments (N) for each RF speaker is shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Number of PRICE tokens by individual RF speakers in voiceless and voiced contexts (N)

	Followed by voiceless segment (N)			**Followed by voiced segment (N)**		
	[aɪ]	**[a:]**	**[ɐ:]**	**[aɪ]**	**[a:]**	**[ɐ:]**
DOREEN	34	2	1	17	10	4
ELSIE	31	1	0	7	11	6
LEANNE	27	3	0	1	9	15
TOTAL	92	6	1	25	30	25

The data for each RF speaker is yielded into relative frequencies of PRICE in both phonological contexts, as shown in Table 4.9 and Figure 4.14.

Table 4.9: Variants of PRICE when followed with voiceless and voiced segments, by individual RF speaker (%)

	Followed by voiceless segment (%)			**Followed by voiced segment (%)**		
	[aɪ]	**[a:]**	**[ɐ:]**	**[aɪ]**	**[a:]**	**[ɐ:]**
DOREEN	91.9	5.4	2.7	54.8	32.3	12.9
ELSIE	96.8	3.2	0	29.2	45.8	25
LEANNE	90	10	0	4	36	60

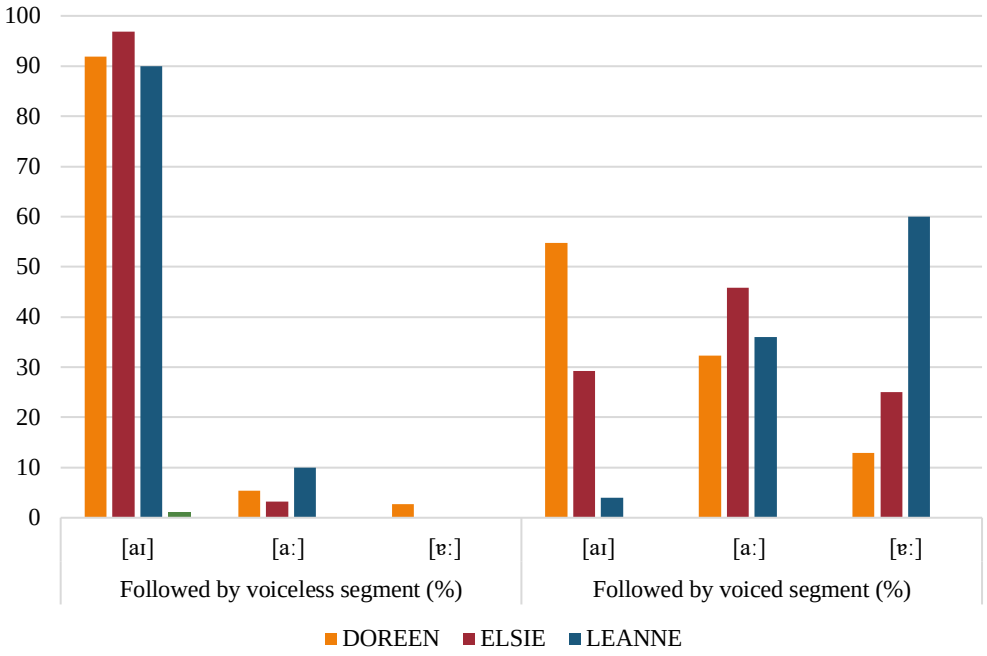


Figure 4.14: Variants of PRICE when followed with voiceless and voiced segments, by individual RF speaker (%)

As shown, the data is consistent with the findings for the younger sample, with each RF producing over 90% of their PRICE vowels when preceding voiceless consonants as [aɪ], in line with findings from the current study as well as previous studies in the field (Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Haigh, 2015). Leanne, Doreen, and Elsie all showed evidence of observing the allophonic distinction. Leanne produced the largest number of preceding voiced segment PRICE tokens as monophthongs, with 36% as [aː] and 60% as [ɐː], with the remaining 4% as [aɪ]. This is characteristic of the traditional Hull accent, and Leanne's data corroborates that of Williams and Kerswill's (1999) findings regarding the older generation of working-class females. For example, Leanne produced clear monophthongal allophones of PRICE in voiced contexts in the RPS. Figure 4.15 depicts a spectrogram of her RPS realisation of *horizon* as [ərɑːzɒn], using the PRICE allophone [aː].

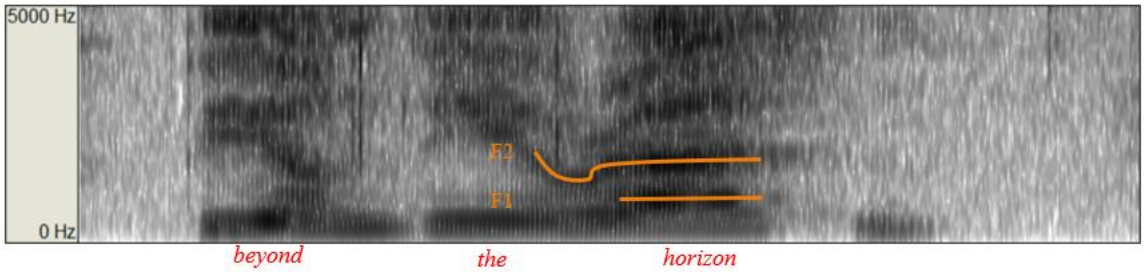


Figure 4.15: Spectrogram of Leanne's realisation of *horizon* [əˈraːzɒn] showing F1 and F2

Within this realisation is an instance of *h-dropping*, another typical non-prestigious, widely stigmatised consonantal variant often used by Hull's older working class (Williams and Kerswill, 1999), and is particularly apparent within casual, spontaneous speech. This feature is visible on the spectrogram in Figure 4.15, whereby blending of F2 tokens of *the* and *horizon* is visible as a result of initial voiceless glottal fricative [h] deletion, thus resulting in [ðiəˈraːzən] being produced as one smooth realisation. Corroborating the preceding voiced-context PRICE vowel spectrograms of the younger generation, Leanne's spectrographic analysis further highlights limited movement, thus a monophthongal variant is produced.

As shown in Table 4.9, we see that Elsie's PRICE vowel when preceding voiced segments is mainly monophthongal in 70.8% of recorded tokens. Of the recorded tokens, Doreen produced a relatively balanced combination of PRICE variants with following voiced segments, with 54.8% diphthongal and 46.2% monophthongal. Doreen produced a larger proportion of diphthongal voiced-context PRICE variants within her WLS and RPS readings in comparison to her interview style realisations: this may be as a result of the more formal speech styles subconsciously influencing her realisations (Labov, 1978). When compared with Williams and Kerswill's (1999) findings, similarities can be seen, wherein the older generation frequently use non-prestigious, largely monophthongal variants of PRICE when followed by a voiced segment. Finally, we will now consider the RM findings for this linguistic variable.

4.2.4 PRICE – Retired Males

250 tokens of PRICE were recorded for the RM sample. This was the lowest of the age groups for this variable group, and, like the RF sample, this was due to shorter IdQ responses resulting in fewer recorded tokens for analysis, at an average of 8 minutes 47 seconds in Hull IdQ length. The number of recorded PRICE tokens per variant (N) for each RM speaker is shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Number of PRICE tokens by individual RM speakers in voiceless and voiced contexts (N)

	Followed by voiceless segment (N)			**Followed by voiced segment (N)**		
	[aɪ]	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**	**[aɪ]**	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**
ALAN	58	2	0	5	11	26
CHARLIE	18	2	0	0	9	8
ERIC	25	1	0	7	10	9
TONY	20	3	1	0	13	22
TOTAL	121	8	1	12	43	65

From the above data, the relative frequency of PRICE tokens in each phonological environment for each RM speaker is calculated - see Table 4.11 and Figure 4.16.

Table 4.11: Variants of PRICE when followed with voiceless and voiced segments, by individual RM speaker (%)

	Followed by voiceless segment (%)			**Followed by voiced segment (%)**		
	[aɪ]	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**	**[aɪ]**	**[aː]**	**[ɐː]**
ALAN	96.7	3.3	0	11.9	26.2	61.9
CHARLIE	90	10	0	0	52.9	47.1
ERIC	96.2	3.8	0	27	38.5	34.5
TONY	83.3	12.5	4.2	0	37.1	62.9

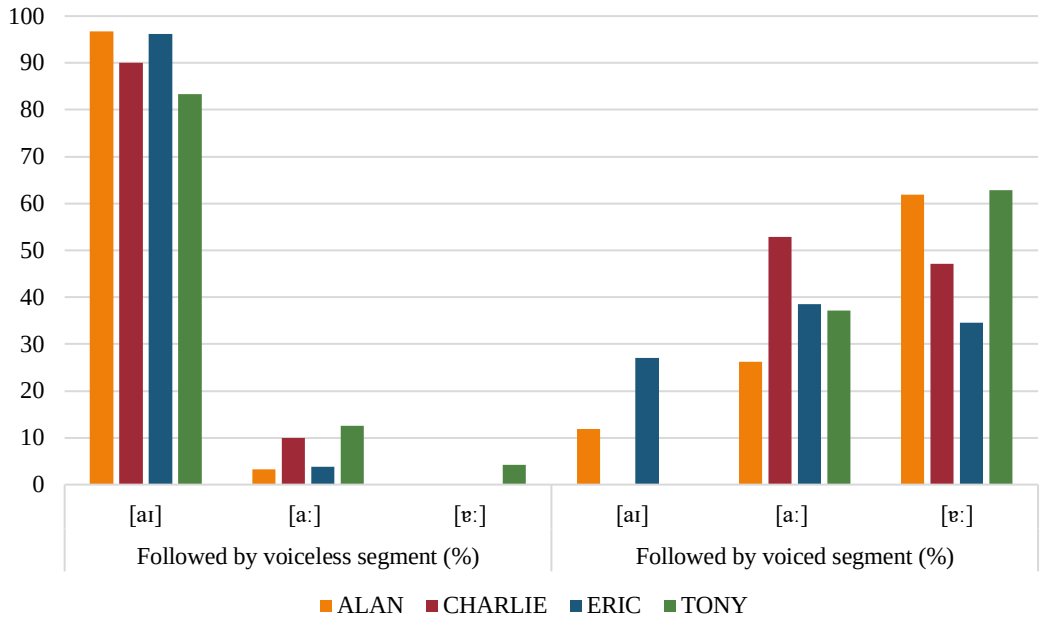


Figure 4.16: Variants of PRICE when followed with voiceless and voiced segments, by individual RM speaker (%)

In line with the previous age group results, there appears to be minimal variation in RM PRICE production when followed by a voiceless segment, with *all* RM producing [aɪ] over 83% of the time. Interesting in this speaker category are Tony's results: he produces a monophthong variant of PRICE when followed by voiced segments 100% of the time, and his allophonic monophthong use extended to 16.7% of PRICE realisations in the context of following a voiceless sound. This may be explained through Tony naturally elongating some of his voiceless context PRICE words in the reading passage - particularly notable in phonological environments with the vowel in the word-final position, e.g., *by*, [baː], *try*, [traː], with no following segment. To address this further, Figure 4.17 shows an example of Tony's elongation of the [aː] PRICE vowel in the word-final position in the token *by*, occurring within the reading passage.

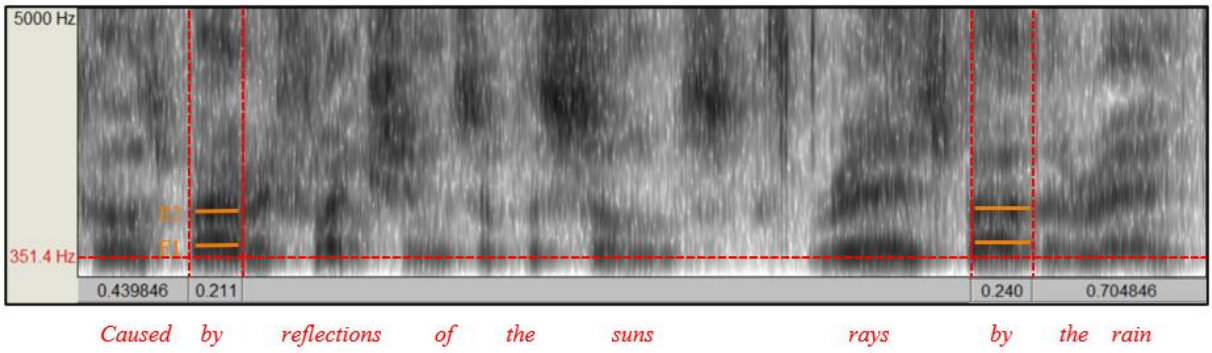


Figure 4.17: Spectrogram showing the vowel duration of Tony's monophthongal realisations of *by* as [baː] showing F1 and F2

As shown, a monophthong is produced in both of Tony's realisations of *by*, with the tokens measuring 0.211 seconds and 0.240 seconds in duration, respectively. In comparison, Alan produces both a diphthong variant measuring at 0.249 seconds, and the final *by* token as a monophthong at 0.179 seconds for the PRICE sound in the same word-final position, as demonstrated in Figure 4.18.

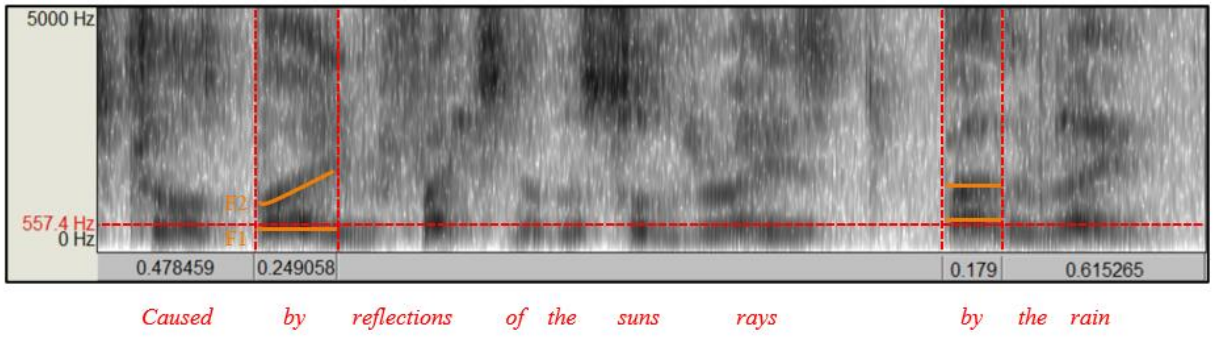


Figure 4.18: Spectrogram showing the vowel duration of Alan's diphthongal and monophthongal realisations of *by* as [baɪ] and [baː], showing F1 and F2

Tony's realisations of the above instances of *by*, then, show to be longer in duration by over 0.030 seconds, which is basic evidence showing that Tony's monophthongal realisations of PRICE when preceding voiced segments also extends to when the vowel is in the word-final position. It is worth noting, however, that within running speech, word-final tokens do have a following segment – the next sound in the next word. Perhaps Tony's use of monophthongal variants in open syllables in this context is a phonological effect as a result of syllable structure as opposed to a phonetic effect (e.g., vowel length). Further statistical analysis would highlight the significance of this - a greater number of examples of the

PRICE vowel within this environment are needed to form any substantial conclusion surrounding realisation in this context.

However, such a realisation in word-final PRICE vowel words is commonly seen in West Yorkshire accents, including Bradford, whereby Hughes *et al.,* (2012) report that /aɪ/ (in Bradford) may sometimes lose its offglide and become a monophthong, offering the example of *white car* as [waːˈkʰaː] to represent this. This is also the case in Lancashire, with the short lax offglide often dominated by a long nucleus in the same phonological position (Hughes *et al.,* 2012). Of interest here is that the present data shows this feature as being predominately used by the older generation of speakers, notably the working-class males, who frequently offglide the PRICE vowel when in the word-final position. This may be a generational difference that has remained in the North of England, or it may be specific to regions including Lancashire and Yorkshire, however further data is required from a wider range of geographical areas to investigate this phenomenon further, and thus provide a more conclusive explanation.

Similar to Tony, Charlie also produced either [aː] (52.9%) or [ɐː] (47.1%) in voiced phonological environments, with zero tokens being realised using the diphthong [aɪ]. Like Tony's realisations, Charlie also extended his allophonic monophthongal realisations of the PRICE variant when occurring in the word-final position: 10% of his PRICE realisations were [aː], and in line with Tony's phonological patterning, were also most apparent in word-final positions in within the RPS (see above for explanation). To further evidence their monophthongal realisations when followed by a voiced consonant, Figures 4.19 and 4.20 depict spectrograms of Tony and Charlie's realisations of *size*, with the monophthong [ɐː].

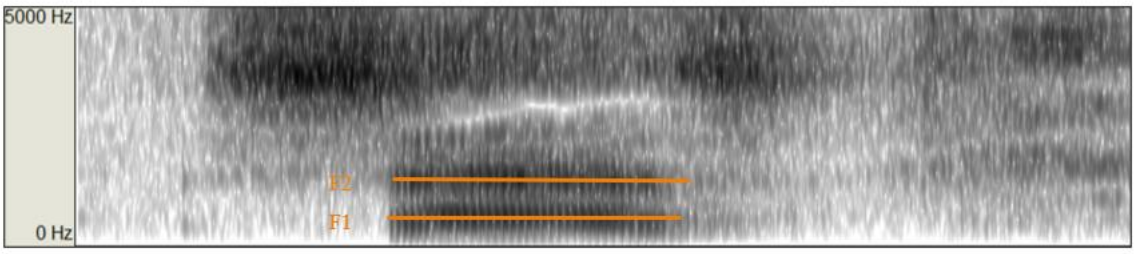


Figure 4.19: Spectrogram of Tony's realisation of *size* [ˈsɐːz] showing F1 and F2

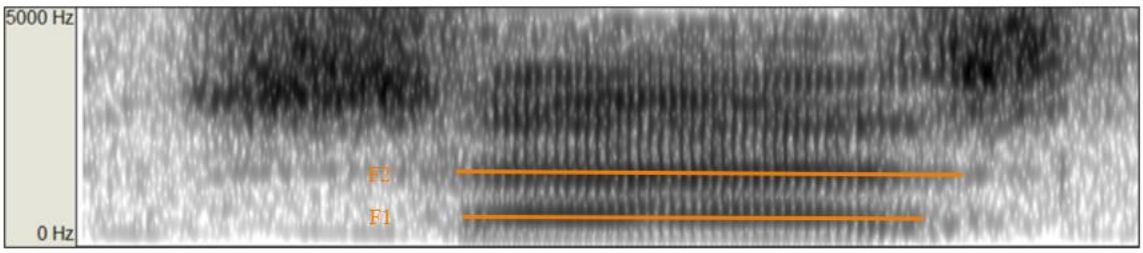


Figure 4.20: Spectrogram of Charlie's realisation of *size* [ˈsɐːz] showing F1 and F2

As in previous spectrographic examples, the parallel formants of F1 and F2 depict no movement in tongue positioning, with a monophthong produced as a result. In comparison, Figures 4.21 and 4.22 illustrate spectrograms of both Tony and Charlie's diphthongal realisations of *site*, distinguished through non-parallel F1 and F2 formants, and increased formant movement in the offglide of the vowel duration.

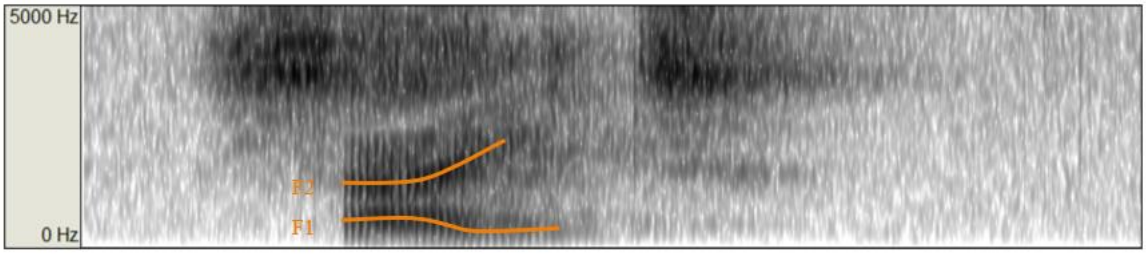


Figure 4.21: Spectrogram of Tony's realisation of *site* [ˈsaɪt] showing F1 and F2

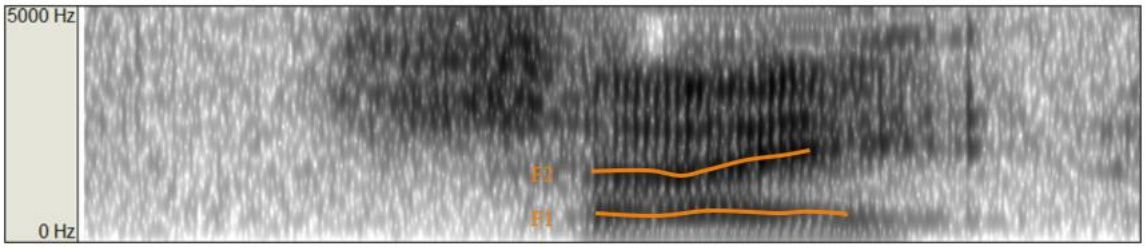


Figure 4.22: Spectrogram of Charlie's realisation of *site* [ˈsaɪʔ] showing F1 and F2

Thus, it can be said that Tony and Charlie appear to observe the traditional allophonic distinction. To an extent, Eric's PRICE realisations when followed by a voiced consonant were fairly consistent, with similar percentages of variants being produced: 27% [aɪ], 38.5% [aː] and 34.5% [ɐː]. Many of Eric's [aɪ] PRICE tokens in preceding a voiced segment were apparent in the WLS, with five out of six typical tokens in this phonemic environment being produced with the diphthong vowel. However, as the speech style gradually became more informal, Eric's realisations became more monophthongal, as shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Breakdown of Eric's PRICE vowel realisation across each speech style when followed by voiced segment

ERIC PRICE (with following voiced segment)	WLS	RPS	IdQ	TOTAL	Relative Frequency
[aɪ]	5	2	0	7	26.92%
[aː]	0	5	5	10	38.46%
[ɐː]	1	2	6	9	34.62%
TOTAL	6	9	11	26	100.00%

As discussed in sections 1.4.2 and 2.4, speech style can have a subconscious influence on one's accent: this concept may explain Eric's difference in realisation across the three speech styles, and potentially reason as to why there is an increase in his non-standard monophthongal realisations in voiced contexts. When considered against the results of the RF sample, similarities can be seen, in that there is a continued preference for the monophthongal allophonic variants of [aː] and [ɐː] in PRICE contexts when preceding voiced segments. This is in line with previous literature surrounding the distinction in Hull (Williams and Kerswill, 1999; Haigh, 2015); the following subsection evaluates conclusions made regarding the current study's PRICE data.

4.2.5 PRICE – Conclusions

From the above discussion, various conclusions regarding the PRICE vowel distinction in Hull can be made. The data corroborates previous findings regarding PRICE realisation in Hull, wherein the allophonic distinction in contexts where the vowel is followed by voiceless and voiced segments does not seem to be shifting away (Williams and Kerswill, 1999). Present findings show that the highest average relative frequency of PRICE monophthong tokens in preceding voiced segments observed came from the RM speaker sample (90.38%), followed by the YM sample (89.15%), thus suggesting how the feature appears to be more prevalent within working-class males compared to working-class females, although the latter social group continues to maintain the distinction, though at a lesser extent: RF group (70.6%), YF group (57.85%). Interestingly, the younger generation was also evidenced as clearly maintaining the distinction; this is in line with Williams and Kerswill's (1999) proposal in which the working-class younger generation in Hull were appearing to resist any movement towards standardisation of the PRICE distinction.

The results from this study – conducted over 20 years after Williams and Kerswill (1999) – appear to evidence that the same distinction is continuing to be preserved, suggesting how language change in the form of levelling with other regional varieties, with regards to the PRICE vowel, is not yet occurring.

Further research into the PRICE use in the surrounding area would identify whether the Hull distinction is spreading. Such resistance towards dialect levelling of other widespread linguistic features has been noted in previous studies. For example, Watson (2006) uncovered evidence that the glottal stop is resisting spread to utterance-final position in Liverpool, wherein the Liverpool marker of t→h rather than (ʔ) in this phonological context continues to occur. Hence linguistic markers' resistance to change is not a new phenomenon for sociolinguistic researchers.

Critically, an explanation for the preservation and maintenance of the unique allophonic markers in PRICE may be due to the salience of this feature amongst Hull's working-class community – it may be a subconscious identity marker, signalling strong identification with the close-knit social networks, and as a way of signalling their northern geographical identity. From the data, it appears that historical phonological conditioning is being maintained in Hull, and is being transmitted to the next generation, in line with the Labovian framework of transmission (Labov, 1978).

However, there is an assumption of speaker agency here in that speakers' are using their community attachment as motivation to uphold the local dialect features. The variation in price that does exist appears to be, for the most part, variation between male and female preferred local variants as opposed to variation between local and non-local variants. Since the feature is phonologically conditioned in Hull, it may be that speakers maintain the distinction as it surrounds them, as opposed to making conscious linguistic choices.

4.3 GOAT vowel

Previous research surrounding the production of the GOAT vowel in Yorkshire highlights numerous variations. Previous research indicates that monophthongisation of GOAT is typically salient within northern English accents, with all investigations claiming that centralised variants are frequently found in, and are heavily associated with, the Hull and East Yorkshire region (Watt and Tillotson, 2001; Haddican *et al.*, 2013; Syvertsen, 2016). As outlined in section 3.1.2, GOAT realisation is highly variable in Hull (Hughes *et al.*, 2012), with previous literature recording variation by way of fronting, rounding, vowel raising/lowering and duration. The results from the current study corroborate this.

A total number of 1193 GOAT tokens were recorded. Table 4.13 and Figure 4.23 display the relative frequency of GOAT variants across the recorded tokens for the informants, considering speech style.

Table 4.13: The distribution of GOAT by speaker age, sex, and speech style (%)

	WLS					RPS					Interview Style				
	[əʊ]	[əː]	[ɵː]	[ǫː]	[ɒ]	[əʊ]	[əː]	[ɵː]	[ǫː]	[ɒ]	[əʊ]	[əː]	[ɵː]	[ǫː]	[ɒ]
YF	0	52.7	47.3	0	0	3	83.4	13.6	0	0	1.9	92.8	5.3	0	0
YM	0	0	30.6	69.4	0	3	0	12.7	83.3	1	1	1.4	23	74.6	0
RF	4.3	21.8	73.9	0	0	5.1	8	81.8	3.8	1.3	1.2	49.4	48.2	1.2	0
RM	16.7	0	36.1	47.2	0	25.6	0	12.2	61.2	1	21.3	0	4.3	70.1	4.3

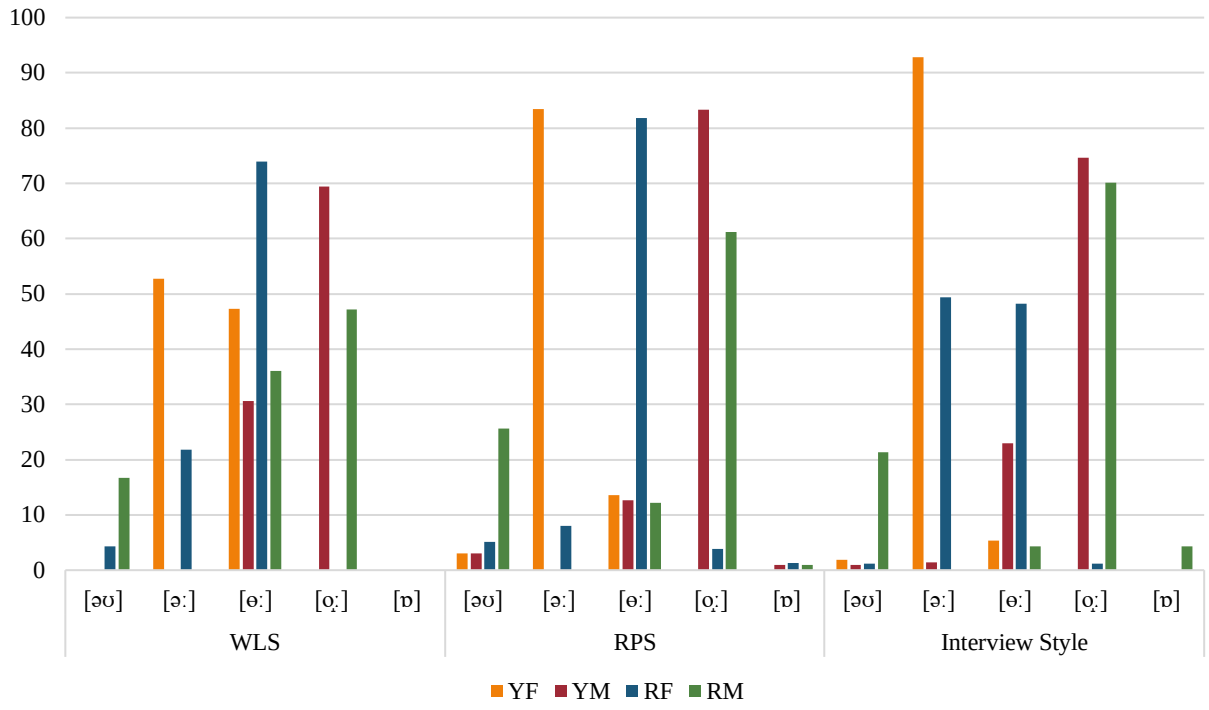


Figure 4.23: The distribution of GOAT by speaker age, sex, and speech style (%)

Based on Figure 4.23, a clear pattern can be seen surrounding GOAT realisation preference. General observations can be made from the data across all speech styles: the female participants preferred the centralised [əː] and [ɵː] monophthongal variants, though these are variable in terms of vowel height and rounding, whereas the male participants preferred variations of the long back peripheral monophthong vowel [oː], with [ǫː] occurring most frequently, hence this category has been named [ǫː] to reflect the majority. To an extent, all speakers observe this monophthongal pattern in realisation, exhibiting a tendency to use forms of the marked localised variants in preference to the RP /əʊ/ diphthong. This corroborates Ferragne and Pellegrino (2010), who explicitly state that the GOAT vowel in East Yorkshire is a monophthong. Due to the vowel categories observed being sufficiently different from one another, a comparative discussion across the variables of age and sex can be performed with relative ease. The following subsections break down the informant's GOAT data in further detail.

4.3.1 GOAT – Younger Females

For the YF sample, 402 tokens of GOAT were recorded – the highest of the age categories, namely due to their longer Hull IdQ responses. During the impressionistic transcription, a pattern in realisation across the four YF participants began to emerge. Table 4.14 demonstrates the frequency of GOAT tokens in their respected variants (N) for each YF.

Table 4.14: Variants of GOAT by individual YF speaker (N)

	GOAT variant (N)				
	[əʊ]	**[əː]**	**[ɵː]**	**[o̞ː]**	**[ɒ]**
DAISY	1	55	16	0	0
EVIE	7	119	8	0	0
LISA	0	106	10	0	0
PAIGE	0	69	11	0	0
TOTAL	8	349	45	0	0

These figures can be aggregated into their average relative frequencies as in Table 4.15 and Figure 4.24.

Table 4.15: Variants of GOAT by individual YF speaker (%)

	% GOAT variant				
	[əʊ]	**[əː]**	**[ɵː]**	**[o̞ː]**	**[ɒ]**
DAISY	1.4	76.4	22.2	0	0
EVIE	5.2	88.8	6	0	0
LISA	0	91.4	8.6	0	0
PAIGE	0	86.3	13.7	0	0

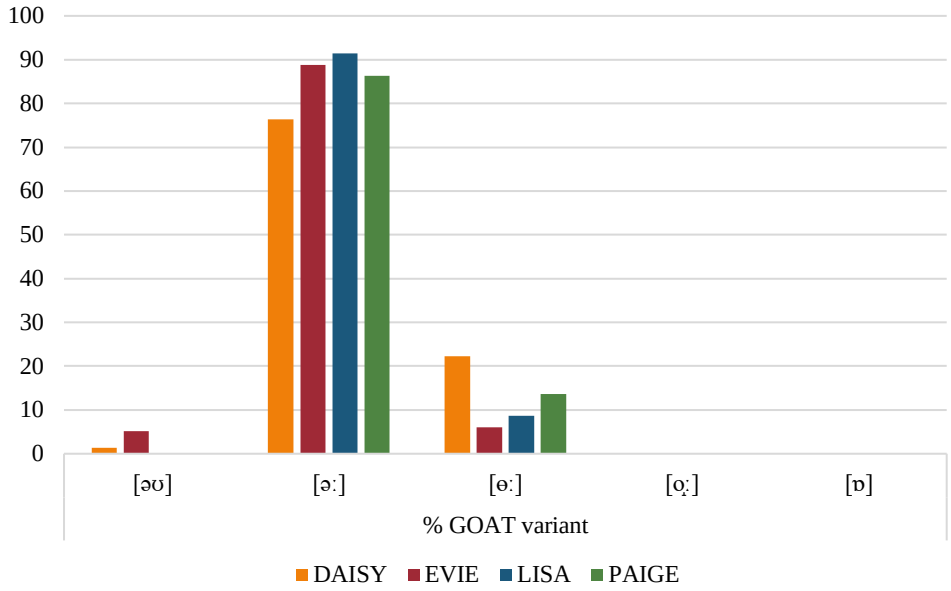


Figure 4.24: Variants of GOAT by individual YF speaker (%)

As illustrated, there is an obvious pattern in GOAT realisation across the YF GOAT data: the preference amongst this age category for centralised monophthongal variants of [əː] is clear, with all YF speakers producing a form of the variant over 75% of the recorded tokens across all speech styles. Specifically, the most frequent variant of lexical set was [ə̟ː], denoting fronting within vowel realisation. Table 4.16 shows the phonetic transcriptions of three recorded GOAT tokens for each YF, each varying in phonemic environment: the examples include word-initial (*open)*, word-medial (*home)* and word-final (*throw)*.

Table 4.16: Phonetic transcriptions of three GOAT realisations in different phonemic environments by each YF speaker

	Realisation of ***open*** (word-initial position)	Realisation of ***home*** (word-medial position)	Realisation of ***throw*** (word-final position)
Daisy	[ə̟ːˈpən]	[hə̟ːm]	[θrə̟ː]
Evie	[ə̟ːˈpən]	[hə̟ːm]	[θrə̟ː]
Lisa	[ə̟ːˈpən]	[hə̟ːm]	[θrə̟ː]
Paige	[ə̟ːˈpən]	[hə̟ːm]	[θrə̟ː]

As evidenced, the monophthong [əː] appears to be the preferred GOAT variant for Evie, Lisa, and Paige in the given examples, whereas Daisy produces a sound that is slightly more centralised in realisation. This is reflected within Daisy's recorded tokens of data: of the four YF speakers, Daisy produces the

fewest instances of fronted [əː] variants for GOAT (76.4%), in comparison to Evie (88.8%), Lisa (91.4%) and Paige (86.3%). 22.2% of Daisy's recorded realisations are of the centralised monophthong [ɵː], again, slightly retracted in the vocal tract compared with [əː]. In instances where the vowel is not followed by a pulmonic consonant, e.g., *throw*, all YF speakers produce a monophthongal variant, as shown in Table 4.17. Similarly, where the traditional GOAT diphthong sound occurs word medially, e.g., *home*, all YF speakers continue to provide a monophthongal GOAT variant. When considered against previous literature surrounding GOAT realisation in Hull, the results from the YF data sample corroborate Haigh's (2015) claim that younger Hull speakers consistently use a form of a slightly fronted monophthongal variant, and is in line with Finnegan (2011), who suggests the GOAT-fronting is more favoured by female speakers within the Yorkshire region.

It seems suited here to discuss the apparent awareness of GOAT fronting in Hull as highlighted in the YF Hull IdQ responses. Watt and Tillotson (2001) regard GOAT fronting as being heavily associated with the accent of Hull and East Yorkshire, meaning its position as a stereotype and immediate association with the region. The feature appears to be fairly stereotyped to the Hull accent, with all four YF participants acknowledging their awareness and recognition of GOAT monophthongisation in the cities accent. When asked whether they could recognise the accent of Hull if they heard it on TV, each YF participant cited the monophthongal pronunciation of the GOAT vowel typically heard in Hull, often imitating the frequently stereotyped fronted monophthong in doing so, apparent in the Hull IdQ extracts below:

> **(2) Paige:** "…. it's by the like (imitate [əː]), so like *'snow'*, *'no'* (both imitate [əː]), you know with the dragging out of the (imitate [əː]). That, I think, is what I recognise it by."

> **(3) Evie:** "….especially the saying *'oh no'* (imitate [əː])....probably just kind of a lot of words that have like the (imitate [əː]) sound in it, so like *'home' 'phone' 'cone'* (imitate [əː])…. It's always the (imitate [əː]) sound that I get picked upon by other people, like taking the mick out of me or saying, 'oh that sounded so Hull then'. It's the dragging out of the (imitate [əː]), just anything with an (imitate [əː]) in it basically."

> **(4) Lisa:** "….if they were ordering a diet *'coke'* (imitate [əː]), anything mainly that has a vowel in the middle of it – if something was made of *'gold'* (imitate [əː]), you know.

> **(5) Daisy:** "People like, they drag out their (imitate [əː])'s…. my main thing is the (imitate [əː])'s, like when people say *'yellow'* (imitate [əː]), and *'road'* (imitate [əː])."

The extracts appear to show an overt association between GOAT monophthongisation and the Hull accent and is used frequently enough that it can be recognised and commented on by the YF participants. Like Haddican *et al.*, (2013), GOAT monophthongs were one of the most frequently invoked kinds of evidence for a person to have a 'Hull accent'. Interestingly, Evie associates GOAT monophthongisation with negative experiences: in (3), Evie addressed how her awareness of GOAT monophthong use often results

in being "tak[en] the mick out of" and claims that it is one of the linguistic features that results in her "getting picked upon by other people". Despite such negative comments towards her experience and awareness of her GOAT vowel use, Evie continues to produce a monophthong variant in 94.8% of recorded tokens. In extracts (2), (4) and (5), a common theme arises, wherein awareness of GOAT monophthongisation is primarily commented upon when the vowel is in word-medial and word-final position, in *coke* (4) and *snow* (2) for example, which correlates with the comments highlighting the "dragging out" of the vowel sound. The phrase "dragging out" can be interpreted as an acknowledgment of a monophthongal vowel sound, which is noticed more by the YF speakers when in the aforementioned phonemic environments – this phrase was used by Paige, Evie, and Daisy, suggesting an overt awareness of the feature in their linguistic inventories. Figure 4.25 shows an example of GOAT-monophthongisation by Paige in her realisation of *ghost*, showing the "dragging out" of the vowel sound lasting 0.306 seconds.

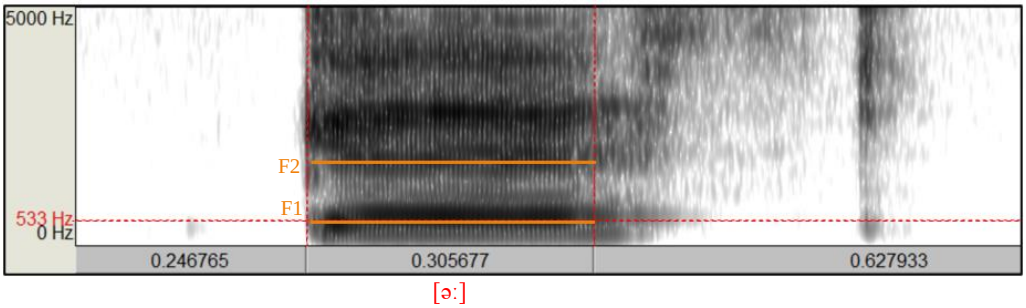


Figure 4.25: Spectrogram showing the vowel duration of Paige's monophthongal realisation of [əː] in *ghost*, showing F1 and F2

The YF perceptions of the GOAT vowel are in line with Trudgill's (1986:11) explanations, with speakers being more aware of a variable which is considered phonetically radically different to its traditional form, often overtly stigmatised within the community, as well as having an increased awareness attached to forms that are not currently involved in linguistic change – in this case monophthongal variants of GOAT.

Thus, it can be said that the YF participants appear to be aware of a distinction in GOAT realisation in Hull, offering evidence for the attribution of GOAT-fronting in Hull as being a stereotyped feature rather than a marked variant. As in YF PRICE, a fronted variant is preferred here, showing a potential for further investigation regarding diphthong fronting and gender.

We will now consider the GOAT data for the YM sample.

4.3.2 GOAT – Younger Males

347 tokens of GOAT were recorded for the YM sample. Like the YF data, a pattern began to emerge during the impressionistic transcription, with a clear preference of fronted variants of the monophthong [oː]

apparent across all speech style tokens. The number of tokens (N) realised as each variant is demonstrated in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Variants of GOAT by individual YM speaker (N)

	GOAT variant (N)				
	[əʊ]	**[əː]**	**[ɵː]**	**[o̞ː]**	**[ɒ]**
JACK	1	0	12	88	1
LEVI	1	3	47	28	0
LUKE	2	0	12	60	0
SAM	1	0	1	90	0
TOTAL	5	3	72	266	1

The YM GOAT data can be further represented as relative frequencies across all the speech styles, as depicted in Table 4.18 and Figure 4.26.

Table 4.18: Variants of GOAT by individual YM speaker (%)

	% GOAT variant				
	[əʊ]	**[əː]**	**[ɵː]**	**[o̞ː]**	**[ɒ]**
JACK	1	0	11.7	86.3	1
LEVI	1.3	3.8	59.5	35.4	0
LUKE	2.7	0	16.2	81.1	0
SAM	1.1	0	1.1	97.8	0

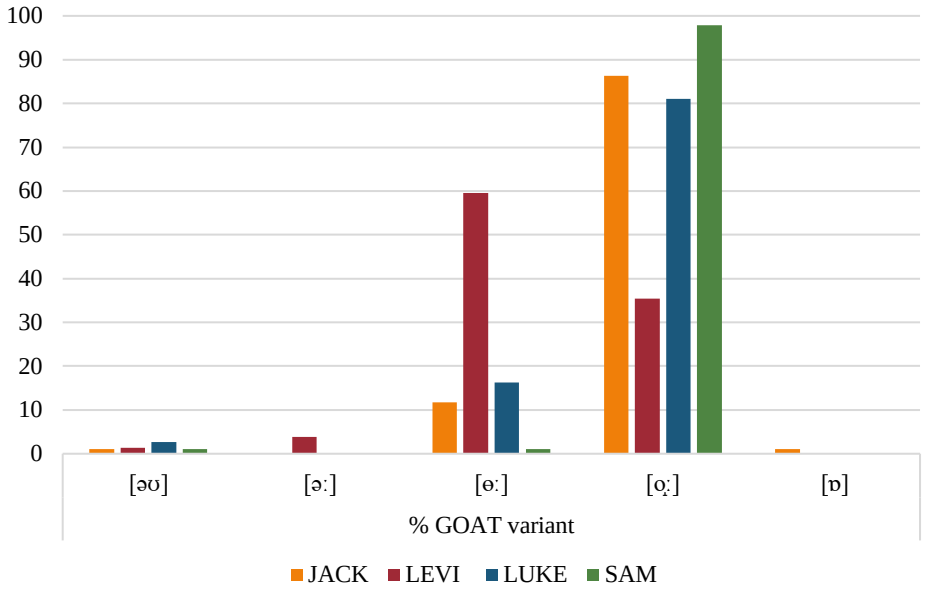


Figure 4.26: Variants of GOAT by individual YM speaker (%)

Similar to the YF GOAT data, an obvious preference for a form of GOAT variant is clear. Specifically, the variant [o̞ː], which denotes fronting of the back close-mid monophthong, was recorded for an average of 75.15% of tokens for the YM sample, as well as the more centralised variant [ɵː] recorded for an average of 22.13% of YM tokens. When compared against the YF GOAT data, fronting continues to be observed in the YM data, though originating at a sound further back in the vocal tract in [oː] compared to the YF preference of the centralised [əː].

To address this further, Table 4.19 shows the phonetic transcriptions of three recorded GOAT tokens for each YM, each varying in phonemic environment: the examples include *only* (word-initial), *road* (word-medial) and *blow* (word-final).

Table 4.19: Phonetic transcriptions of three GOAT realisations in different phonemic environments by each YM speaker

	Realisation of ***only*** (word-initial position)	Realisation of ***road*** (word-medial position)	Realisation of ***blow*** (word-final position)
Jack	[ɵːnli]	[ro̞ːd]	[blo̞ː]
Levi	[o̞ːnli]	[ro̞ːd]	[blɵ̞ː]
Luke	[öːnli]	[ro̞ːd]	[blɵ̞ː]
Sam	[o̞ːnli]	[ro̞ːd]	[blo̞ː]

As shown in the Table 4.19, there is obvious variation in GOAT realisation, ranging between the close-mid central monophthong [ɵː] and the back close-mid monophthong [oː]. All the YM speakers predominantly produced a monophthong, corroborating previous literature (Haigh, 2015), with notably minimal relative frequencies of the traditional diphthong [əʊ]. The [əʊ] variant occurs within each YM realisation of *showing*, whereby the GOAT vowel sound precedes a second vowel-initial segment [ɪŋ] – each YM produced this RPS style token as [ˈʃəʊɪn]. In total, [əʊ] occurred at a total frequency of 1.4%, considering all YM GOAT tokens across all speech styles. However, further research consisting of additional examples of the GOAT vowel in this phonemic environment is required here to produce a more effective conclusion.

As evident in Table 4.18, Levi produces the more centralised variant [ɵː] in 59.5% of his recorded tokens, with 35.4% realised as [ọː]. In comparison, the recorded tokens for Jack, Luke, and Sam all show a clear preference in realising GOAT as the monophthong [ọː], occurring in over 81% of their realisations. Despite the difference in vowel positioning within the vocal tract, it is worth noting that 341 of the 347 YM GOAT tokens were produced as the monophthongs [əː], [ɵː] and [ọː] – an overwhelming majority across all speech styles. Tokens produced with minority variants include the diphthong [əʊ] (1.4%) and Jack's one instance of [ɒ] in the RPS token *over*, in which he produces as [ɒvə]. When considering previous literature, the latter is also uncovered in the Hull and Sheffield informant realisations within Haigh's (2015) research regarding past and present GOAT vowel usage in Hull, Leeds, and Sheffield.

Again, it is valuable to consider the YM Hull IdQ responses to determine whether participants' have an awareness of particularly salient features, including GOAT, within their accent. Below are extracts from Jack, Luke and Sam's Hull IdQ responses when asked if they can recognise the Hull accent.

> **(6) Jack:** "Erm, *'no'* ([imitate [ọː]), so rather than saying *'no'* ([imitate [ọː]), they go something like *'no'* (imitate [əʊ])….they [outside of Hull] don't make it a long word.... I think the main one is *'no'* ([imitate [ọː]), just saying to someone *'no'* as you prolong the ([imitate [ọː]) sound."

> **(7) Luke:** "It's similar to other northern accents in a way, but it's the '*so's'* (imitate [ọː]) and the *'no's'* (imitate [ọː])…. it sticks out like a sore thumb. You can tell [someone is from Hull], straight away.....I think it is just the 'moangy'- you know the *'so's'* (imitate [ọː]) and the *'no's'* (imitate [ọː]), anything with an (imitate [ọː]) in it."

> **(8) Sam:** "….instead of *'sofa'* (imitate [əʊ]), they'd say *'sofa'* (imitate [ọː]). It's just like not pronouncing it properly."

Levi did not acknowledge an awareness of GOAT in his response. However, like the YF responses, there is an overtly negative association between GOAT realisation and the Hull accent, with Luke stating that

the feature "sticks out like a sore thumb," and also considers the feature as "moangy"[6] (7). Nevertheless, Luke continues to conservatively produce monophthong variants in 97.3% of his realisations, thus the negative stigma he associates with GOAT monophthongisation does not appear to be influencing his realisation, though he appears to be aware. In (6), Jack also identified a difference in vowel duration between realisation in Hull compared to elsewhere, stating that the latter "don't make it a long word". This non-linguistic description sufficiently reflects the difference between diphthongal and monophthongal realisations, arguing that Jack has an awareness of the difference, and continues to use a monophthong variant in 99% of recorded tokens. In (8), Sam highlighted the same distinction as Jack, though progresses to state that it is "just like not pronouncing it properly" - this comment may be interpreted as associating [əʊ] as the standard form of pronunciation and thus acknowledging that this own realisation diverges from this into a regional variety monophthongal form. Again, the YM responses regarding GOAT vowel awareness appear to corroborate Trudgill's (1986:11) explanations, whereby a greater awareness acknowledged to forms that are overtly stigmatised in a local community and that is not currently involved in linguistic change.

4.3.3 GOAT – Retired Females

192 tokens of GOAT were recorded for the RF speaker sample. Table 4.20 shows the number of tokens (N) realised as each variant.

Table 4.20: Variants of GOAT by individual RF speaker (N)

	GOAT variant (N)				
	[əʊ]	**[əː]**	**[ɵː]**	**[o̞ː]**	**[ɒ]**
DOREEN	4	43	36	0	0
ELSIE	1	11	52	1	0
LEANNE	1	5	34	3	1
TOTAL	6	59	122	4	1

The data can be further represented as relative frequencies across all the speech styles, as depicted in Table 4.21 and Figure 4.27.

[6] This has been interpreted as a negative term, from the word origin of the verb to moan (+gy). Surrounding lexical context is also negative.

Table 4.21: Variants of GOAT by individual RF speaker (%)

	% GOAT variant				
	[əʊ]	**[əː]**	**[ɵː]**	**[o̟ː]**	**[ɒ]**
DOREEN	4.8	51.8	43.4	0	0
ELSIE	1.5	17	80	1.5	0
LEANNE	2.3	11.3	77.3	6.8	2.3

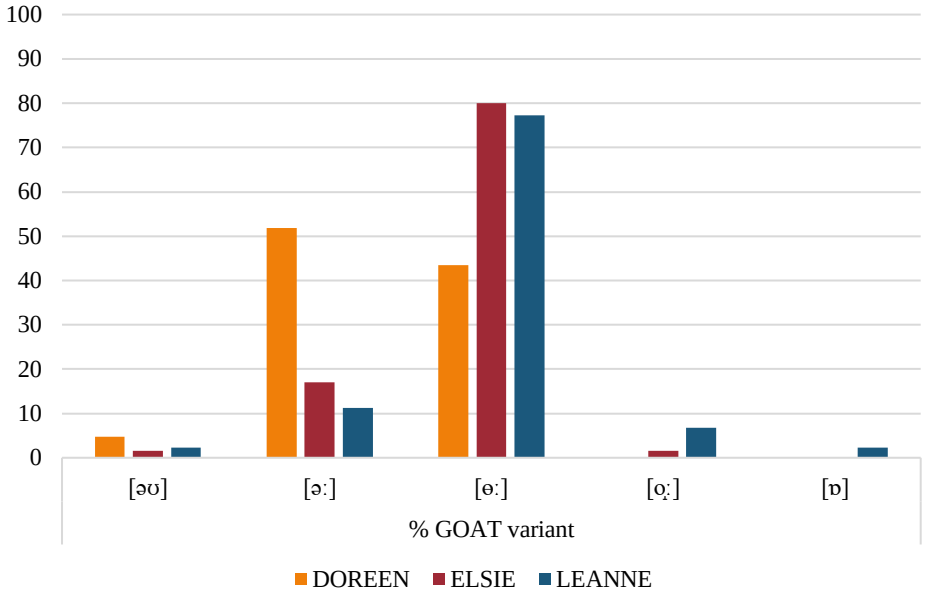


Figure 4.27: Variants of GOAT by individual RF speaker (%)

As evidenced, for all RF speakers, there is a clear preference for monophthongal variants of GOAT. Figure 4.26 shows that the centralised [ɵː] monophthong is the preferred variant for Elsie (80%) and Leanne (77.3%), whereas Doreen realised an almost equal frequency of [ɵː] (43.4%) and the fronted [əː] (51.8%). As clear in Table 4.22, Leanne demonstrates the most variety within her GOAT realisations: she uses the typical monophthongal variants in a total of 95.4% of tokens, with the remaining 4.6% split equally between the diphthong [əʊ] and the open-back monophthong [ɒ]. Like Jack, Leanne produced [ɒ] when realising the token *over* as [ɒvə] within the RPS.

In comparison to the younger generation's responses when asked whether they could recognise the Hull accent, the RF sample collectively struggled to identify anything to do with the GOAT vowel. As evident in (9), Elsie referenced the realisation of GOAT using the MOUTH vowel, /aʊ/.

> **(9) Elsie:** "Well, the vowels are different for a start, especially 'o's' (imitate [ɵː]) and 'ow's' (imitate [aʊ]), you know, we say perhaps its 'cold' (imitate [aʊ]), when it's really cold (imitate [ɵː])."

This feature was also commented on by Lisa in (10). However, no instances of this realisation were recorded in the present data by any informant – this variant may only occur in certain phonemic environments, meaning a greater amount of data is required to evidence whether this variant occurs in Hull.

> **(10) Lisa:** "...like you wouldn't say 'cold' (imitate [əː]) like what I'd say – me nana would say isn't it 'cold' (imitate [aʊ]), or its not made of 'gold' (imitate [əː]), it's made of 'gold' (imitate [aʊ]), proper 'gold' (imitate [aʊ])."

As well as this feature, Leanne identified that Hull speakers "don't pronounce some of [their] letters, 'h's' and things like that," referring to (h)-dropping, a feature that Leanne uses. Dialectal differences between Hull speech and other areas appeared to be more common within the RF Hull IdQ responses in comparison to accent differences: both Elsie and Daisy mentioned various terms including "*baines"* for 'child'. Thus, when compared to the younger generation speakers in the present study, an overt awareness of GOAT is certainly not as common across the older speakers as it is for the younger speakers. This may be due to external influences largely affecting the younger generation – Sam captivated this in his Hull IdQ extract below:

> **(11) Sam:** "I think it depends on what [young people] are actually watching on TV and stuff, because you hear people on, say things like Reality TV series, and like the younger people like sort of mimic them, so their accent goes from Hull language to a London Southerner accent or something – I think it's sort of media based driven how an accent sounds from younger people."

Exposure to different accents may heighten awareness of features that are notably different, thus an awareness of certain features forms – Sam notes how in his experience, younger people 'mimic' the accents they hear on TV through passive exposure. This is in line with Williams and Kerswill (1999) who associated affective factors including innovative youth forms with signalling youth culture (see section 1.3.1)

To form any conclusion between younger and older generation's awareness of GOAT monophthongisation in Hull, we will now consider the RM GOAT data.

4.3.4 GOAT – Retired Males

252 tokens of GOAT were recorded for the RM sample. As with previously discussed speaker groups, a pattern began to emerge within the impressionistic transcription. Table 4.22 shows the number of tokens (N) realised as each variant.

Table 4.22: Variants of GOAT by individual RM speaker (N)

	GOAT variant (N)				
	[əʊ]	**[əː]**	**[ɵː]**	**[ɒː]**	**[ɒ]**
ALAN	53	0	3	31	6
CHARLIE	1	0	15	31	0
ERIC	1	0	4	54	0
TONY	1	0	8	43	1
TOTAL	56	0	30	159	7

The data can be further represented as relative frequencies across all the speech styles, as shown in Table 4.23 and Figure 4.28.

Table 4.23: Variants of GOAT by individual RM speaker (%)

	% GOAT variant				
	[əʊ]	**[əː]**	**[ɵː]**	**[ɒː]**	**[ɒ]**
ALAN	57	0	3.2	33.3	6.5
CHARLIE	2.1	0	31.9	66	0
ERIC	1.7	0	6.8	91.5	0
TONY	1.9	0	15.1	81.1	1.9

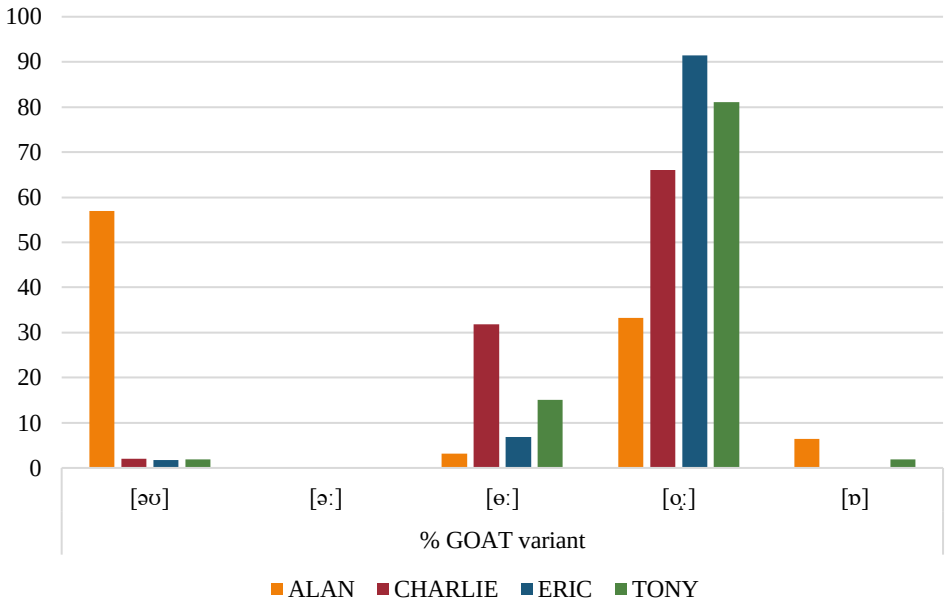


Figure 4.28: Variants of GOAT by individual RM speaker (%)

As apparent in Table 4.23 and Figure 4.28, there is a substantial preference for the fronted monophthong GOAT variant [ọː] for Charlie (66%), Eric (91.5%) and Tony (81.1%), whereas Alan produces a larger proportion of his realisations as the diphthong [əʊ], in 57% of the time. Alan has resided in Hull his entire life and considers himself to have a "local accent," thus a possible explanation for the range of GOAT variants, both diphthongal and monophthongal, may be due to his awareness of the interview being recorded, and thus the influence of the *Observer's Paradox* (see section 3.4.4). Conversely, Alan's former profession as a police officer may have influenced his linguistic choices, particularly when public speaking or conducting interviews, for example. Such a profession, like Evie working as a teacher, will have had much more call to conform to a more standard accent, may be subject to overt criticism of regional accents and thus promote a convergence to linguistic forms that are considered more prestigious – this is to meet the *linguistic marketplace*. To evidence this, Alan's use of the diphthong [əʊ] appears across all investigated speech styles, apparent in Table 4.24.

Table 4.24: Breakdown of Alan's GOAT vowel realisation across each speech style

ALAN GOAT	**WLS**	**RPS**	**IdQ**	**TOTAL**	**Relative Frequency**
[əʊ]	6	22	25	53	56.99%
[əː]	0	0	0	0	0%
[ɵː]	1	2	0	3	3.22%
[ọː]	2	1	28	31	33.33%
[ɒ]	0	1	5	6	6.46%
TOTAL	9	26	58	93	100.00%

Unlike Eric's PRICE realisation pattern, wherein a gradual shift from prestigious diphthong to the less prestigious monophthongs [aː] and [ɐː] was notable (see Table 4.12), Alan appears to be consistent in using [əʊ] within each speech style. Furthermore, within his Hull IdQ responses, Alan did not state any awareness of GOAT monophthongisation occurring in Hull, or to a further extent, identify any regionally defining linguistic features, stating that he "wouldn't be able to recognise [them]." As with the RF responses, the RM speakers generally did not identify monophthongal realisations of GOAT as typifying the Hull accent, excluding Eric, who referred to a potential merger between [ọː] and the open-mid back rounded vowel /ɔ/ typically found in words such as *roared*.

> **(12) Eric:** "They'll [in Hull] say *'road'* (imitate [ọː]) and it might sound like road as in a public road, but it could also sound like *'roared'* (imitate [ọː]) as in a crowd. And you can still tell the difference."

Eric's comment is interesting, as this variant of GOAT has not been discussed in previous literature surrounding Hull, and no evidence of this was uncovered within the present data. Thus, further token examples across a wider range of informants would help form a more conclusive approach to this variant of GOAT in Hull and surrounding areas. With regards to Eric's GOAT realisation, a clear preference for the fronted monophthong [ọː] can be seen, with 91.5% of tokens realised with this variant.

Generally, however, the RM GOAT data is considerably similar to the YM data, wherein most GOAT tokens are realised as [ọː], in comparison to the more centralised female speaker preferences of [əː] and [ɵː]. Such conservation of local monophthong forms, including those of all degrees of fronting and vowel height, suggests allegiance with the local community, as well as associating their social identity with their foundations of living in the northern city of Hull. It is striking, however, that it is the phonetic realisation that is salient, but the retired generation have predominantly struggled to associate such salient with a particular lexical set in comparison to the comments made by the younger generation.

As well as showing variation between monophthongal and diphthongal forms of GOAT, Alan also produces six GOAT tokens using the open-back monophthong [ɒ] - in line with previous discussion, this variant appears to be more common when in the word-initial position, in tokens such as *over*, realised as [ɒvə]. The use of [ɒ] appears to occur more frequently amongst the older generation, although the limited number of GOAT tokens recorded within the word-initial position means that sufficient evidence to cite this as an additional GOAT variant in Hull has not been gathered. Further research providing additional phonological examples would strengthen the claims made and offer further insight into the spreading of linguistic features.

4.3.5 GOAT – Conclusions

In consideration of all the acquired GOAT data and discussion, several conclusions can be made. Monophthongisation of the GOAT vowel continues to be the predominant preference for speakers all of ages and sexes in Hull. Interestingly, both younger and retired female speakers produced a larger proportion of fronted central monophthongs – Haddican *et al.*, (2013) propose how for younger speakers, fronted variants offer a way of 'participating within the phonetic practices associated with young people', along with back vowel fronting, typical of males continuing to preserve local monophthongal forms. Data from the current study corroborates this claim, and further extends the difference to be marked for sex – we can hypothesise that fronted central GOAT variants facilitate both pragmatically and socially significant functions to female speakers, which reflect their social and linguistic identities as coming from Hull (Tagliamonte, 2006).

Despite the negative connotations and comments made toward GOAT -fronting and monophthongisation, for fourteen out of fifteen participants, monophthongal variants correlate well with allegiance and association with the local community, based on impressionistic assumptions of relative 'proudness' of

the speaker's in coming from Hull (discussed further in section 5.2.3). This is also in line with Haddican *et al.,* (2013:397), who assessed the relationship between speaker attitudes and fronting, concluding how:

> The temporal stability of [GOAT-fronting] sociolinguistic distribution is plausibly one factor explaining the strong symbolic link between GOAT monophthongs and meanings of place in northern communities.

Thus, from the present data, it could be argued that GOAT monophthongisation remains a common and stereotyped phonological feature of Hull English, and of the wider Yorkshire region (e.g., Watt and Tillotson, 2001), evidenced through overt participant awareness and substantial usage in varying phonemic environments. Specifically, GOAT-fronting appears as being typical of all ages and sexes, evidenced through acoustic data which denotes a preference for [əː] and [ɵː] monophthongs, in comparison to the wider Yorkshire preference of the back monophthong [oː] (Watt and Tillotson, 2001). It may be said, then, that despite an awareness of the feature by nine participants, their views do not appear to motivate language change, but rather reinforce and strengthen their social identity as a Hull speaker.

We will now consider the Hull IdQ data in further detail.

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION: PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE AND PLACE

5.0 Introduction

To capture insight into the motivations behind linguistic variation, the Hull IdQ procured perceptions of language and place, which provided primary evidence into community constructions and informants' social identities through instantiations of second order indexicality. In this chapter, an exploration of informants' responses is presented, interpreting the qualitative data to denote the ideologies which underpin the informants' choices of linguistic variants. It is beyond the scope of this study to address each informant's responses, therefore various themes within the responses have been identified and collated, and are discussed alongside participant extracts.

5.1 Theme 1 – Language

5.1.1 Accent Evaluation

Informants' insights into attitudes towards their own accent were uncovered through the following question: What accent would you say you had, and do you like it?

As the responses were gathered qualitatively, interpretations based upon informant's comments have been made by the researcher through thematic analysis. Ten of the fifteen speakers stated that they specifically have a Hull accent, with three speakers evaluating their accent as 'Yorkshire' or specifically 'East Yorkshire.' Lisa commented how "the Hull accent is different to a Yorkshire accent," although did not elaborate on this further in terms of linguistic differences between the specific and broader regions. It is worth acknowledging, however, that this is difficult for an untrained linguist or layperson who is not able to verbalise and describe complex vowel sounds, as they are reported as occurring "below the level of conscious awareness" (Di Paulo *et al.,* 2011:87). Thus, impressionistic interpretations of such accent descriptions made by the informants have been discussed in relation to the phonological or sociolinguistic term.

Jack highlighted the "slightly different accents in East, North, and South Yorkshire," though evaluated his own accent as 'East Yorkshire.' Detailing these figures further, ten of the fifteen informants viewed the Hull accent positively. A key informant here is Evie: after active exposure to various accents at university "where no-one sounds like you," Evie highlighted how she has "learnt to love [her Hull accent] so much more" since returning to Hull for work. Extract 13 depicts Evie's positive perception towards her accent.

> **(13) Evie:** "I definitely have a Hull accent and I love my accent!.... I love where I'm from, I'm happy to be [in Hull] now and I'm happy to sound the way I do, like I wouldn't change my voice for anyone."

Contrastingly, five out of fifteen informants exhibited a negative attitude towards the Hull accent: a clear pattern in perception emerged within their responses. The views encompassed by three retired speakers and two younger speakers are qualified by overwhelmingly negative comments depicting the accent as "awful" (14), "not very clever" (15), and "terrible" (16).

> **(14) Sam:** "I wouldn't say I've got 'Hullish' language cos Hull language is awful, in my opinion."
>
> **(15) Paige**: "I don't think it sounds very clever, if you know what I mean."
>
> **(16) Alan:** "I've got a local accent, I don't like it....Nobody wants to hear my accent, 'cos I don't think it's very nice. When you hear your own voice you're thinking bloody hell, that sounds terrible."

However, despite describing a strong dislike towards their accent, the informants who presented negative perceptions towards their accent also recognised awareness of certain local features and, most importantly, continued to use these in their own speech, as uncovered in Chapter 4. Thus, the negative stigma they associate with the Hull accent alongside their overt awareness of local forms does not appear to have invoked a convergence toward more standard forms: this reinforces the strong local ties across generations within the community.

The remaining informant (Luke) chose a neutral view towards the Hull accent, describing that "I don't hate it, I'm kind of indifferent, it's just an accent." As with the informants who evaluated the Hull accent negatively, Luke also continues to produce local forms of PRICE and GOAT diphthongs (see sections 4.2.2 and 4.3.2) and acknowledges awareness of further local consonantal innovations which are typical of Hull speakers.

Lisa made an interesting evaluation that the Hull accent is "quite a northern working-class accent" - the connection between accent and social class has been reinforced in previous studies (e.g., Trudgill, 1974; Chambers and Trudgill, 1998), with relationships forming which attribute working class accents as frequently using unstandardised variants and an increased variety of local innovative forms. Lisa's awareness of this connection is reinforced through her positive attitude towards the city in general, being "a hundred percent proud" about coming from Hull. This provides evidence as to how the negative stigma attached to the city is not reflected in the attitudes and perceptions of residents, discussed in section 5.2.1.

5.1.2 Perceived Age Variation

Insight into perceptions of age variation within Hull English were sought through the following question:

> Do you think older and younger people talk the same here (pronounce things the same and use the same words)?

Eleven out of fifteen speakers commented on some form of difference between the speech of the younger and older generations, with five speakers having the perception that the different generations speak the same or similar. Interesting perceptions are made by the younger generation through commenting on the accents and language use of the older generation. Five out of eight young speakers directly referenced the accent of the older generation, stating that their accent is "stronger" and "stereotypical" (17), is considered an "old-style Hull accent" (18), and often use "language [that is] very different" (19).

> **(17) Paige:** "I think that older people have a stronger accent than younger people…..I feel like they just pronounce stuff more properly as a younger person, probably 'cos they see like social media and stuff and they get the accent from that. But I feel like older people definitely have more of a stereotypical accent."

> **(18) Lisa**: "I think there's a massive generational difference in the Hull accent. For me, there's 2 levels. The older generation have what I always call an old-school Hull accent."

> **(19) Daisy**: "Like I think older people- like they say 'baine' for a child. I think that's an example. I think they talk the same, but the language is very different"

It is worth noting the significance of dialectal awareness in comparison to accent awareness: perhaps to a layperson, dialect is highly prominent and commented on as it is viewed as lexical items and thus can be described easily, in comparison to verbalising complex vowel sounds (see section 5.1.1). Both Sam (20) and Jack (21) commented on the perceived influence that social media and television has on the younger generation. Here, insightful comments are made which argue that younger generations' accents are "social-media driven" and are considered "chavvy," alluding to a social identity which is typically associated with lower-class council estate communities.

> **(20) Sam:** "Yeah, I think their accent is similar, I think it depends on what they're actually like watching on TV and stuff, because you hear people on say things like Reality TV series and like the younger people like sort of mimic them so their accent goes from Hull language to a London Southerner accent or something – I think it's sort of media based driven how an accent sounds from younger people."

> **(21) Jack:** "I know my Grandma and Grandad say different words and they use old words as well which I probably don't know what they mean ….I think the younger generation is a bit more chavvy, that's probably- well because it's a newer generation maybe social media has an influence on that."

Paige (17) also commented on the influence of social media on age-correlated variation, which she perceives is through younger people "pronounc[ing] stuff more properly". This links with the attitudes of Jack and Sam: as younger Hull speakers themselves, they may have a primary awareness of features within their own language which have derived from social media and television interactions. This view corroborates both Williams and Kerswill (1999) and Stuart-Smith's (2007) discussions surrounding the influence that regular active and passive exposure to various accents on TV and the media may lead to an increased use of innovative features of which largely emerge from the south. Further investigation into the relationship between social media specifically and language use would further to determine whether an increase in spread of regional features is apparent. Nevertheless, Paige, Jack and Sam's realisations of PRICE and GOAT, as uncovered in this study, maintained the local monophthongal realisations, and do not appear to be diverging from this. It can be said, then, that despite their awareness of potential age-correlated variation, their accent continues to identify them with the city of Hull. Another observation of relevance is that younger peoples' accents are described as "lazier" by Luke (22).

> **(22) Luke**: "I actually don't think [there is a difference]. I think older people…..their accent is more purposeful. Younger peoples' accents are a bit lazier, older people, it's…. more experienced and purposeful. If that makes sense."

Luke initially stated that there is not a perceived difference in the speech of older and younger generations. However, Luke continued to describe a difference immediately after denying one exists, and his comment can be interpreted in numerous ways. Here, "lazier" may refer to the previously mentioned "missing letters" in (h)-dropping, or the fronting of sounds in TH-fronting. If interpreted this way, then Luke perceived that older speakers do not use such features that Luke attributes as "lazy" and are instead considered by him as being "experienced" and "purposeful" with their speech. Whilst it is an interesting perception, it is unclear what Luke means by this comment, although the notion that older people are more "experienced" in their language use may be related to their increased use of traditional, local forms, which are considered by the younger generation as being "old words" (21).

The older generation also considered themselves to have a differing accent and dialect to the younger generation. Tony perceived that "the dialect is less in the younger people than in the older people" – it could be argued that this view is similar to Luke, whereby the older generation use more traditional linguistic features and terms in their speech in comparison to the younger generation. Contrastingly, Elsie perceived no difference in age-correlated variation in stating "…I think we all talk the same." This view was also apparent for four of the retired speakers.

Moreover, responses highlighted that there is the frequent perception that Hull speakers 'miss out letters' in particular words. Expanding on this perception, this comment is often found to refer to (h)-dropping in the word-initial position, suggesting that (h)-dropping in this phonemic position has an elevated level of

speaker awareness. Levi (23) highlighted how this innovative, widespread feature, in his experience, is often immediately attributed to the Hull accent during a conversation.

> **(23) Levi:** "So like if you say 'Hull' you'd tend to miss the 'h' off the start of it and people automatically say, 'yeah he's from Hull'."

In fact, seven of fifteen speakers commented on 'missing out letters' in the speech of people from Hull, with Doreen and Elsie referring specifically to occurrence within the speech of younger speakers, claiming that "they [younger people] miss a 'h' in a lot of things". However, most speakers considered this feature as being used by Hull speakers of all ages, and do not make a specific association between this feature and the age variable.

The older speakers' detail in connecting this feature with the younger generation was interesting, as this demonstrates an overt association between their awareness of (h)-dropping and can further attribute this to members within society. In the same vein, Elsie (24) described a different innovation in her response.

> **(24) Elsie:** What I don't like to hear, is when they say 'bruvva' instead of 'brother', they pronounce the 'th' as a 'v' which I think is dreadful. They should learn it at school."

Linguistically, this innovation is referred to as TH-fronting, whereby dental fricatives [θ] and [ð] are realised as labiodental fricatives [f] and [v] respectively. TH-fronting is stereotypically associated with the Cockney accent, though has been reported as spreading across Britain, geographically diffusing to accents within Edinburgh and the North of England (see Schleef and Ramsammy, 2013, for further TH-fronting discussion). Elsie considered this low-prestige realisation as incorrect, reinstating her perception and awareness of the innovative feature by claiming '[young people] should learn it at school'. This is an example of an overt awareness between generational speech in Hull; although not directly linked to vowel production as analysed in this study, the comments surrounding age difference through (h)-dropping and TH-fronting usage are highly valuable, providing evidence into the levels of awareness speakers have, and the linguistic associations they attribute to the Hull accent. As previously discussed, such accent awareness may be due to vowel differences "generally occur[ing] below the level of conscious awareness" (Di Paulo *et al.*, 2011:87), meaning they are notably tricker to comment on in comparison to consonantal and general dialectal differences. Contradicting this, however, are the many overt comments made by informants about GOAT, to such an extent that it could be considered a stereotype of the Hull accent. Although no direct association between age and the diphthongs investigated within the study was commented on, there is certainly an awareness amongst participants that accent and language use differs across generations in Hull, thus forming a relationship between phonological variability and perception.

5.1.3 Perceived Sex Variation

Insight into awareness of variation across the variable of sex was sought out through the following question: Do you think there's a difference between how males and females speak here?

Awareness of perceived sex differences in the Hull accent revealed interesting attitudes across age groups. Jack (25) described the language use of males as "chavvy", similar to his comments in (21) surrounding perceived age variation, commenting that younger speakers are also more "chavvy".

> **(25) Jack:** "I think males….they lean more towards chavvy."

Amongst the retired speakers, those who felt that a perceptible difference between male and female speech can be observed described this difference in terms of the males as using more "slang" (26), and thus more broadly used terms, whereas females are "more conscious" (27) with their language use. This attitude may be felt due to a possible awareness of increased use of prestigious variants in females, comparable to the localised variants used by males themselves.

> **(26) Leanne:** "I would say the men, if you like, more slang than the ladies."

> **(27) Eric:** "I think the ladies are more conscious of how they come across speaking."

Similarly, younger speakers have the same view: Paige (28) commented how males maintain a "slightly stronger accent". This may be interpreted as using a higher frequency of local forms, including monophthongisation of certain diphthong sounds.

> **(28) Paige:** "I feel like maybe males have a slightly stronger accent....I don't think there's a huge difference, but if there was, I'd say males more than females."

Interestingly, three of the four YF speakers perceived no difference in language use dependent on sex – this was also the case for one RM, two RF and two YM speakers. It was felt that no sex difference is observable and that "[males and females] all sort of sound the same." Thus, a split in perception can be seen across the speaker sample: there is the view that males and females use the same realisations in Hull, as well as the view that male speakers have a "slightly stronger" accent, use more slang, and are often attributed as "chavvy." Coming from a younger speaker, this view evidenced how the perception of sex as a variable in language change does not appear to have changed in Hull, with the general viewpoint being that males use more local linguistic forms than females. Though when considered against the PRICE and GOAT phonological data within Chapter 4, it appears that both males and females use local linguistic forms predominantly, with females often preferring a fronted variant in comparison to males, who prefer a more centralised variant. None of the female sample stated the idea that female speakers have a stronger, or more noticeable Hull accent compared to males. In terms of the phonological data, this suggests that the two types of PRICE monophthong may carry the same social meaning, and that the difference in vowel

centrality is solely due to gender as opposed to carrying social meaning (Di Paulo *et al.*, 2011). The observed responses link directly to Labov's (2001) *Gender Paradox* (see section 1.2.2), and further correlates with Chambers (1995), extending the view that fewer stigmatised and non-standard variants are acknowledged more frequently as being typical of males.

5.1.4 Perceived Accommodation

The following question was proposed to the informants to assess their perceived reasons and awareness of linguistic accommodation.

> Have you ever been in a situation where you've deliberately changed the way you talk? If so, why?

Overall, most speakers displayed an awareness of the fact that they adjust their speech dependent upon context (nine out of fifteen informants), whilst six informants overtly stated that they have never changed their speech dependent upon environment. It appears that females are more aware of such accommodatory behaviours and are willing to admit this view. The perceived formality of the situation was reported to influence speech behaviours: frequently cited contexts such as "on the phone" (29) and "in a job interview" (30) were mentioned by speakers, commenting that they would shift towards a less regional accent. This was particularly notable in responses from the younger informants, all of whom emphasised that they adjust their speech to appear "posher" in certain contexts.

> **(29) Sam:** "….for work I speak to people like all the time on the phone and its sort of putting on a bit of a professional phone voice so I sound completely different to what I would actually normally."

> **(30) Paige:** "....subconsciously maybe you know like in a job interview or something like that, I'd try to pronounce words a bit more properly, and put on like a 'posher' accent....I haven't deliberately done it.... I've never walked into somewhere and thought I'm gonna try and hide my Hull accent."

> **(31) Jack:** "I'd try and speak less chavvy in a formal interview for example than with mates out and about."

Jack (31) made an interesting association between his personal language use in both formal and informal contexts. He acknowledged a speech accommodation dependent upon social group, tending to use more casual, "chavvy" speech when amongst friends, in comparison to during a job interview, thus attributing this to his own social identity. Tabouret-Keller (1997) notes how dialectal differences are often lessened during interviews and other formal environments to converge towards the speech style of the interlocuter:

when in an interview setting, this may be to gain approval, meaning a divergence in localised linguistic features to disassociate any connotations attached to the regional variety. Such divergence was not uncovered when analysing Jack's linguistic data, exhibiting a continued preference for local, monophthongal forms of PRICE and GOAT in most phonemic environments.

Other speech situations in which adjustments to localised variants are made include for clarification when in a different country, and in the presence of those considered by the speaker as "posher." Some male informants held the strong attitude that they have or would never attempt to accommodate towards a less localised accent. Luke holds an interesting view in stating: "Personally, no. I make a point of not doing it." Arguably, Luke's comment indicated a level of awareness that he could use less localised forms in various situations, though he actively chooses not to – this may be due to his strong affiliations with Hull and is reinforced by his preferred, conservative monophthongal forms of GOAT and PRICE uncovered within Chapter 4. Similar attitudes are also held by Levi, who states that he "doesn't shy away from it," and by RM's Alan (32) and Eric (33), as shown in the extracts below.

> **(32) Alan:** "No I've never done that. Never ever. People can take me as I am. If they don't like my language, they can go to somebody else."
>
> **(33) Eric:** "No I can't say I have if I'm honest. I just speak it as it is."

Interestingly, Daisy (34) was the only female informant to state no awareness of linguistic accommodation, reinstating her view that she "wouldn't change it" in reference to formal situations.

> **(34) Daisy:** "I wouldn't change the way I talk. I think people like recognise the Hull accent, but I wouldn't change it. Even though people say they don't like it, I wouldn't change it.... I don't think I'd ever change it, even if I was to go to something like a formal thing, I don't think I can change it. So, no!"

As previously discussed, people use the Hull accent, whether they like it or not, because it is locally marked and signals them as being from the area. This, however, implies a level of agency that may not be available to the speaker. Given how few variants of Standard English occur within the reading and interview data, the question of whether the participants' have a choice to use standard forms is raised. The standard forms (at least for GOAT) are uncommon variants within this speech community, thus exposure to them is minimal. Since the local variants of PRICE and GOAT occur with such high frequency in Hull (see Chapter 4), the data may simply be due to a frequency effect. In other words, the overwhelming pattern is for Hull speakers to use and hear local variants, resulting in these being available to them in their exemplar cloud. Changing such 'set-in-stone' variants would take extreme effort, and they may wish to override all vowel sounds completely. This is encopposaed by Daisy (34), who overlty comments that she "[doesn't] think she *can* change [her accent]", reinforcing the notion of exposure to frequency.

Nevertheless, it appears, then, that attitudes towards Hull English in a wider social context often suggest that the local linguistic forms often associated with city are perceived to denote a lower social status, and thus are viewed as disadvantageous in a formal situation. Accommodation in this sense was also uncovered in IdQ responses in Llamas (1999) research, meaning it is not uncommon to researchers. As such, a shift to a less regionalised accent is reported as being achieved by "pronouncing words properly" (30) and, as Elsie (35) commented:

> **(35) Elsie:** "You might sound your 'h's', and don't shorten words, and don't miss out letters, like 't'."

Thus, informant awareness of linguistic accommodation appears to veer more towards consonantal innovations rather than vowel sounds. Nevertheless, valuable insights into awareness through second order indexicality were elicited: most female informants appear to be more aware, or perhaps more willing, to admit linguistic adjustments in particular contexts, whereas males, typically RM, are more conservative in their local forms and rarely change their accent to accommodate a situation.

5.1.5 Further Comments

The following points briefly summarise the findings for the informants' Hull IdQ responses regarding perceptions towards their accent and language use.

- Most speakers evaluated their accent as either Hull, Yorkshire, or East Yorkshire in a positive light.
- Five out of fifteen speakers exhibited negative attitudes towards the Hull accent, although this did not cause divergence from local, stigmatised forms. This may be due to their phonology being 'set-in-stone', with local variants occurring in such high frequencies and Standard English variants being almost non-existent in the speech community.
- Most speakers reported on some form of age-correlated variation across the speech of the younger and older generations.
- The perception that the younger generation speak differently from older and retired generations adults is noted by both younger and older speakers.
- Four out of eight retired speakers perceive no difference in age-correlated variation.
- Five out of eight young speakers directly reference the accent of the older generation as being "stereotypical."
- Insightful comments are made regarding the correlation between social media exposure and younger speakers' accents and language use.
- (h)-dropping is frequently cited as an innovative feature used by all Hull speakers.
- Males are generally reported as having a "stronger" accent compared to females, and thus use a higher proportion of localised forms. The data, however, depicts both males and females as using

local variants, with females preferring fronted variants, whilst men prefer more centralised variants.

- None of the female informants reported that female speakers have a stronger, or more noticeable Hull accent compared to males.
- Most informants are aware of shifting away from using localised linguistic features, depending on context formality.
- More females than males claim to be aware of, or are willing to admit to, such accomodatory behaviours depending upon situation.

5.2 Theme 2 – Place

5.2.1 Perceptions of Image

Responses which obtained insight into the perceived image of Hull by informants be interpreted both positively and negatively. It became clear that younger speakers do not overstate the popular culture within the city. For the YM, local sport has a drastic influence on their identity, with rivalry across West and East Hull apparent in rugby, and the success of the local football team being a significant predicator for inspiring the youth. For the retired generation, comments describing the architecture of the Old Town as "lovely" were made by Doreen (36), denoting the city in a positive light.

> **(36) Doreen:** "People don't realise how lovely [Hull] is."

Similarly, Alan provided a detailed account of Hull's history is his interview, concluding with a statement which contracts the negative media attached to the city (37).

> **(37) Alan:** "If you haven't visited Hull, I would say to anybody 'go and visit it, you'd be pleasantly surprised'."

Moreover, six of the fifteen informants stressed the 2017 City of Culture as having a positive impact on image perception, with opinions correlating with the residents' surveys conducted after (see section 2.2.1). The informants used similar terms such as "lovely," "beautiful" and "friendly" to describe Hull, with Elsie commenting how "the year of the culture opened [Hull] up a lot". Overall, fourteen of the fifteen informants stated they would give a positive image of Hull to an outsider. One said they would give a neutral image. However, one responded that they would give a negative image, with Luke's negative attitude (38) demonstrated below:

> **(38) Luke: "**I would describe Hull as small and friendly, as in the people are friendly. The town centre's lovely. We've got updated paving stones, and nice bars, other than that, can I swear? Other than that, it's a s***hole. Apart from the town centre, S***hole. I have [told people that] many a time."

Adding to this further, when asked whether there any cities considered to be similar to Hull, three informants declared that Hull is "a place on its own" (39) and a "separate entity from the rest of the country" (40), as demonstrated in the extracts below.

> **(39) Sam:** "I honestly think Hull's in a bracket of its own, I really do."
>
> **(40) Eric:** "I think we're just a complete separate entity from the rest of the country, I really do."
>
> **(41) Luke:** "Anywhere else I've been, nowhere else sounds like [Hull]."

These views promote interesting attitudes, as they can be interpreted in various ways. From a geographical and thus a literal viewpoint, Hull's isolated location on the east coast means the city is on its own in comparison to mainland conurbations. Though, these comments could also be interpreted as the types of people living in the city being different to elsewhere, as well as the accent features, as indicated by Luke (41). Similarly, eleven informants highlighted that when conversing with an outsider, they are often faced with a negative reaction towards Hull, with the outsider regularly misunderstanding or not knowing where Hull is, and often has an overtly negative opinion of the city. This is encapsulated by Levi, who stated that he is usually greeted with a "frowned face" (42), and reiterates how, in his experience, people rarely know where Hull is. A similar opinion was provided by Eric (43).

> **(42) Levi:** "Probably a bit of a frowned face. 'Oh, you're from Hull? First question – where's that?' To be honest with ya. They don't know where it- like I've travelled up and down Yorkshire, up and down England for rugby, 'Where you from?' 'Hull' 'Where's that?' They know the team you play for, but they don't know where Hull is."
>
> **(43) Eric:** "Some don't even know where Hull is. They honestly don't even know where Hull is, or the Humber Bridge, which I find quite amazing."

Responses further illuminated frequent negative associations from those who do not live in Hull, reflected on by the informants who often claim to counteract the negative opinions. Examples of this in responses by Paige (44), Sam (45) and Daisy (46), show counteraction of the negative stigma with a positive claim (represented in italics) are depicted in the extracts below.

> **(44) Paige:** I've never met anyone who's thought it's a good place to come from. Like never met anyone. So, I feel like it's got a very bad rep, *but that's usually from people who have never visited it*."
>
> **(45) Sam:** "I think people see that it's at the end of the motorway and you can't go no further and it's basically the dumps and rough, *but it isn't, it really isn't.*"

> **(46) Daisy:** "I think the people are really great. Like you'll always have bad people everywhere else, *but I think generally, people from Hull are proud to be from Hull.*"

Speakers appear to be willing to defend any negative comments attributed to the city with a positive response. When asked how Hull is portrayed on TV and in the media, the retired speakers often mentioned historical developments associated with Hull, e.g., the successful fishing industry, thus arguing that the media portrays the city positively. However, negative portrayals of Hull in the media were typically identified by younger speakers: Levi claimed that "you never see the good side." (47)

> **(47) Levi:** "To be honest I think Hull's portrayed bad on TV. You see all this '24 Hours in A&E', 'Teen Moms' and all this stuff. That's like, you never see the good side of Hull on national TV."

It seems, then, that a variety of attitudes are held by the speakers regarding perceptions of image and place, both positive and negative. Negative perceptions, however, are often counteracted with a positive comment, suggesting how residents' sense of pride with coming from and living in Hull is apparent, heightened by their preferred use of local linguistic forms.

5.2.2 Geographical Delimitation:

With many outsiders not knowing where Hull is, the informants were asked to provide what they felt were the delimitation boundaries of the Hull accent. The most frequently cited location in response to being asked where the Hull accent 'cuts off' is Beverley, mentioned by seven informants, followed by Lincolnshire, referred to by six informants, and East Riding villages[7], referred to by five informants. As depicted in Figure 5.1, the perceived delimitation boundary ranges from East Riding villages to the neighbouring county of North Lincolnshire, south of the river Humber.

[7] Including: Cottingham, Skidby, Willerby, Kirk Ella, Hessle, Brough, North Ferriby, North/South Cave.

Figure 5.1: Locations where Hull accent is perceived to be different (Google Maps, 2021)

Considering this, Sam (48) reflected on the inadvertent class difference between Hull and Beverley, corroborated by Jack (49), who explicitly acknowledged an awareness of "expensive areas" as being more "posh".

> **(48) Sam:** "I'd say it cuts off definitely at Beverley, I think they want to sound a little bit more posh than we do, 'cos people from Beverley don't say that they're from Hull, they say that they're from Beverley."

> **(49) Jack:** "I want to say Beverley, I feel like Beverley is so much more posh than us, so Beverley, you've got North Ferriby, Brough, up there, near the more expensive areas..... I'd say Beverley and places like that are more posh than us and they speak differently because of it."

Evie (50) further commented how the "affluent villages" around Hull appear to "trap" and "surround" the accent, restricting it to the city only.

> **(50) Evie:** "….you've got a lot of very affluent villages around Hull….it's basically surrounded. You've got like Skidby, Cott, Willerby, Kirk Ella, Hessle, Brough, like all these places around the edges, suddenly kind of switch for me into not being from Hull….that's why I think that Hull is kind of like trapped almost with its accent, 'cos everyone in the centre and just outside of it sounds very Hull but after that, the affluent villages sound a lot different to me."

As such, those living outside of the Hull boundary may reflect this through their social identity: consciously stating that they are from specifically Beverley rather than Hull as a means of portraying their higher perceived social class. Thus, any association with Hull, including the use of local linguistic forms, are likely to be removed, as they identify less strongly with the Hull community and thus can be hypothesised as producing more diphthongal variants of GOAT and PRICE compared to those who express the strongest allegiance to the city, producing more monophthongal variants, as discussed in Chapter 4.

5.2.3 Sense of Pride

Speakers were finally asked whether they feel proud or ashamed to come from and live in Hull. Despite any previous negative comments made, all fifteen informants said they are proud to come from and live in Hull, and that the only reason they would change where they come from would be due to being born abroad. Such pride associated with the city is reflected in informants' speech: speaking highly of Hull and defending it when faced with negative stereotypes and offering the city in a positive light. Levi stated he "wouldn't change [coming from Hull]; I think that speaks for itself," thus identifying strongly with Hull both socially and geographically.

It seems that such linguistic, social, and geographic pride does not act as motivation for linguistic change or accent levelling, and rather acts as a motivation for linguistic continuity and phonological resistance.

5.2.4 Further Comments

- Informants gave mixed attitudes regarding their perception of image and sense of place.
- Most informants state that they are often faced with negative comments when speaking to an outsider about Hull, though some are willing to defend such comments.
- The East Riding town of Beverley is frequently cited as the delimitation boundary - responses highlight a perceived change in social class as the reason for this.
- All fifteen informants stated that they are proud to come from and live in Hull.

CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSION

6.0 Fulfilment of Research Objectives and Further Areas of Study

Chambers (1995:250) asserts that '[t]he underlying cause of sociolinguistic differences, largely beneath consciousness, is the human instinct to establish and maintain social identity'. To explain sociolinguistic differences requires an attempt to deconstruct social identities (Llamas, 2001). The results of the present study have contributed to the growing body of research surrounding Hull English, providing a recent account of PRICE and GOAT realisations, as well as a scope for the current social and linguistic identity, as recorded from a sample of sixteen participants, with the final analysis sample consisting of fifteen speakers. Though discussed both impressionistically and qualitatively, the data gathered from the sociolinguistic interview has demonstrated a relationship between perceived linguistic identity and phonological variability, with local monophthongal variants of diphthongs being uncovered within the investigated speech styles.

The study also explored informants' personal attitudes and perceptions towards Hull and their own Hull accent. It can also be said that speakers' orientation towards Hull correlates with their linguistic use, with speakers with positive affirmations, a strong sense of pride and those who express the strongest allegiance to Hull, tending to use local monophthongal variants, in line with Haddican *et al's.,* (2013:396) findings. The present linguistic data showed that the Hull informants are maintaining use of the typical linguistic forms associated with the city, with monophthongisation of diphthong vowels evidenced through spectrograms and basic acoustic analysis. Monophthongisation and fronting of the GOAT vowel as well as observation of the PRICE vowel allophonic distinction dependent upon the voicing of the following segment were also evidenced, supported by annotated spectrograms, and compared across the variables of age and sex.

The centrality of language in the construction of one's identity, alongside the perceived awareness of phonological variants has been successfully demonstrated within this study. Patterns across awareness of particular innovative features, namely (h)-dropping and GOAT –fronting were most apparent across all informant age groups. Perceptions of age and sex variation, perceptions of place and speakers' orientation towards Hull, as uncovered within Hull IdQ responses, have all found to be pertinent to constructing social and linguistic identity and allows for various interpretations of linguistic variation to be discussed. It can be said, then, that there is a clear relationship between perceived individual linguistic identity and phonological variability, concluding how personal accent perceptions do not act as a motivation for language change, but rather act as a motivation for linguistic continuity and phonological resistance in Hull. All informants showed great pride in their city, with most understanding, but refusing to accept the negative stigma and stereotypes that have been attached to the city for so long, and most acknowledging that their accent is something that they will rarely change.

Due to the scope of the study, neither the entire vowel system of Hull nor every participant response could be analysed and discussed. Future investigations concerning localities in the surrounding area (e.g., East Riding villages or neighbouring counties) or a focus on the complex identities of those from one specific area of Hull would be beneficial to the examination of the correlation between linguistic use and identity construction. Adding to this, a more substantial body of data collected, either through vowel and/or consonantal systems, would be beneficial to research, in order to assess its distribution across the wider population. In the same vein, a wider range of speech styles recorded, in addition to WLS, RPS and interview style, would offer a more cohesive account of the influence of formality of speech, and perhaps provide a more reflective viewpoint of natural, free flowing speech. Implementation of the same methodological process as used in this study would effectively uncover the linguistic choices of speakers in different speech styles, measure socio-phonetic use, language ideology and offer discussion on how these integrate to construct one's linguistic performance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Reading Word List

noise	path	road
argue	alike	idea
rare	turn	work
type	day	air
play	careful	annoy
throw	write	count
ship	gap	early
decide	over	price
ice	south	save
church	ghost	car
safe	fur	suck
only	site	open
skull	fair	alive
bet	book	beard
size	soup	home
dairy	clear	father
age	yellow	ache
wild	time	sure
cot	share	speak
blow	sauce	purse

Appendix B: The Rainbow Passage (Fairbanks, 1960)

When the sunlight strikes raindrops in the air, they act as a prism and form a rainbow. The rainbow is a division of white light into many beautiful colours. These take the shape of a long round arch, with its path high above, and its two ends apparently beyond the horizon. There is, according to legend, a boiling pot of gold at one end. People look, but no one ever finds it. When a man looks for something beyond his reach, his friends say he is looking for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Throughout the centuries people have explained the rainbow in various ways. Some have accepted it as a miracle without physical explanation. To the Hebrews it was a token that there would be no more universal floods. The Greeks used to imagine that it was a sign from the gods to foretell war or heavy rain. The Norsemen considered the rainbow as a bridge over which the gods passed from earth to their home in the sky. Others have tried to explain the phenomenon physically. Aristotle thought that the rainbow was caused by reflection of the sun's rays by the rain. Since then, physicists have found that it is not reflection, but refraction by the raindrops which causes the rainbows.

Many complicated ideas about the rainbow have been formed. The difference in the rainbow depends considerably upon the size of the drops; the width of the coloured band increases as the size of the drops increases. The actual primary rainbow observed is said to be the effect of super-imposition of a number of bows. If the red of the second bow falls upon the green of the first, the result is to give a bow with an abnormally wide yellow band, since red and green light when mixed form yellow. This is a very common type of bow, one showing mainly red and yellow, with little or no green or blue.