Vowel Dynamics and Social Meaning in York, Northern England

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Introduction

- As time-varying acoustic events, speech sounds offer a wide range of variable cues which could potentially attach to the social meanings available in a speech community.
- However, research into the social perception of phonetic variation has typically focused on 'static' properties of speech events – for example, by testing listeners' ability to use variation in average formant frequencies as a cue to social identity (Fridland, Bartlett & Kreuz, 2004).
- To address this gap, the present study explored listeners' social perceptions of the GOAT vowel (/o/) in York, Northern England, with a view to discovering how variable patterns of fronting and diphthongization might be available as indexical cues in this community.

Data

- 52 sociolinguistic interviews conducted in York, Northern England.
- Social perception data from the same individuals.

Birth year	Female	Male
1935-1960	7	5
1961-1980	8	11
1981-2000	10	11

Fronting and diphthongization in York

- Change in /o/ involves the interaction of fronting and diphthongization
- Older speakers produced either a back diphthong or back monophthong
- Younger speakers produce a front diphthong OR a back monophthong
- A minority of younger speakers front /o/ primarily at the offglide, resulting in an upgliding diphthong
- GAM models:
- F1-F2 trajectory plotted by decade
- F2 intercepts plotted by YOB
- F2 slope vs intercept

Social factors

- Somehow show social factors (trajectory plots?)

Experimental design

Social-indexical perception as signal detection

Results

Conclusion

References

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