Taakin Braad and Talking Broad:
Changing Indexicality of Phonetic Variants in Two Contact Situations

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In this paper we consider the changing indexicality of phonological variants in two different contact situations—Corby, England, and Kingston, Jamaica. We suggest that similar sociolinguistic phenomena may be observed in both places. Using a language ideology framework, acoustic and auditory phonetic data are interpreted through respondents' own metalinguistic comments about their dialect. This socially embedded interpretation of the data reveals that in both Corby and Kingston one phonological variant may in fact index distinct and different identities for speakers in the respective communities, thereby questioning the discreteness of "independent" variables, such as place or social class in sociolinguistic studies.

1. Introduction

In this paper we consider the changing indexicality of phonological variants in two contact situations: Corby, a former steel town in the English Midlands, and Kingston, the capital and commercial cen-

ter of the island of Jamaica. While different sites of contact, both locations are settings for the use of stigmatized varieties that have become badges of local pride for some members of the communities. These studies suggest that within one geographical area the same variant may index different identities for different groups.

2. Theoretical Framework

Although data from both studies are analyzed within a traditionally variationist paradigm, the interpretation of the results was conducted within a language ideology framework (Silverstein, 1992, 1995; Milroy, 1999; Irvine and Gal, 2000; Woolard, 1992).

Linguistic anthropologists have criticized much sociolinguistic work for assuming a direct correlation between linguistic features and social factors, a correlation Silverstein refers to as *first-order indexicality*. In Silverstein's view sociolinguists need to investigate *second-order indexicality*, that is, how speakers frame their understanding of linguistic varieties and map those understandings onto people, events, and activities significant to them (Irvine and Gal, 2000). These second-order indexical reactions are evident in language behavior (hypercorrection, style shifting) and in overt comments about language, as well as, we suggest, about other social phenomena. Thus, in this framework, speakers' own comments about language and other social phenomena are used as a means of interpreting and understanding linguistic variation in a community.

3. Corby, United Kingdom
3.1. Study Background

Corby, located 100 miles north of London and 400 miles south of Glasgow, Scotland, grew from a village of 1500 inhabitants with its own rural English accent in the 1930s, to the main steel-producing town in the UK with a population of 36,000 by the 1960s. With the steel plant, owned by a Scottish company from Glasgow, came workers from closing plants, mainly in the Glasgow area. Up until the 1970s Scottish families continued to migrate south to work in Corby, but in 1980 the plant closed, and the migration of Scottish families also ceased.

The aim of the original study (Dyer, 2000) was to discover the extent of Scottish influence on the Corby dialect. In fact, the only remaining traditional Corby dialect speakers are the oldest members

of the town, who were born before the steelworks was built. Dyer's intuition was that young Corby people sounded *Scottish* even when they had no Scottish ancestry. This was supported by comments of older inhabitants of the town, such as Scottish Tommy T in (1) below:

(1) Tommy T (Scottish M, aged 64)
    there's children probably never been in Scotland and they'll speak broad broad Scotch. never be- never even seen it, never on a map

However, because young Corby people expressed surprise at this evaluation of their speech, a second point of inquiry became identity. If young people did not claim a Scottish identity, what did historically Scottish features in their speech signify for them? This appeared to be an important issue, since some varieties of Scottish English, particularly Glaswegian, are highly stigmatized in England. Comments made by Corby speakers themselves, such as Betty in (2), refer to the stigma attached to Scottish-English:

(2) Betty (Scottish F, aged around 70)
    they used to make fun of us talking you know, . . . I don't know whether I had a right twang or not

In order to understand the changes that had occurred both in the dialect and in Corby people's identity, speech was collected from 27 speakers in three generations living in the town. The oldest generation—the first generation (aged 60-74)—were divided between those born in Scotland and England, but the second (aged 40-50) and third generations (14-23) were all (except one) born in England. All of the third generation were born in Corby. Speakers were audio recorded in their homes talking about their lives and experiences living in Corby. Since vowels primarily distinguish Scottish-English from Anglo-English (Wells, 1982:401), recordings were analyzed for 6 vocalic variables that functioned as relative indicators of Scottishness. Tokens of the variables, represented in this study by keywords, were auditorally coded by Dyer and two others.

Of interest in the present discussion is the adoption of *one* historically Scottish variant into the new dialect, although this must be viewed simply as a member of a *constellation* of features that may index

Scottishness.[1] The terms Scottish-English and Anglo-English, while simplifications, are used in this study because speakers themselves use such ideologically constructed categories.

3.2. Results

Of interest here is the Scottish merger in the GOOD/FOOD lexical sets. The vowels in these sets are distinct in Anglo-English [gʊd] and [fuːd] but merged in Scottish English [gʉd] and [fʉd] (Abercrombie, 1979; Wells, 1982; Aitken, 1984). The Corby data showed more complexity than merging vs. non merging, so tokens of the four different variants for the variable were counted (3):

(3) Realizations of GOOD/FOOD vowels

Variant		Association	Word-Class
[uː]	long, close, back, rounded	Anglo-English (established)	FOOD
[ʏː]	long, fairly close, front	Anglo-English (innovatory)	FOOD
[ʊ]	short, fairly back, fairly close	Anglo-English (established)	GOOD
[ʉ]	close, central, rounded	Scottish	GOOD and FOOD

In (4), (5), and (6), the distribution of variants for the GOOD/FOOD variable for the first, second, and third generations is shown. The data for the first generation (4) showed this variable to be a good indicator of ethnic identity, with all Scottish speakers (indicated "Sc") showing a high rate of use of the Scottish fronted variant, and correspondingly low rates of use of the other variants, indicating a merging of the vowels in these lexical sets. The data for the second generation (5), who are all English-born (except Tom), show only three speakers using the Scottish variant (Jackie, Carol, and Tom). The data for the third generation (6) show increasing use of the Scottish variant, but not necessarily with an increase in merging. Only Calum is categorical in merging the two lexical sets, while others display high use of the Scottish variant *without merging*. One hypothesis is that this

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[1] For a more detailed discussion of the new mixed dialect and the use of Anglo-English variants, see Dyer (2000; in press a; in press b).

variant is so marked that use of it even without a merger is being perceived as Scottish. In fact Aitken (1984) cites this Scottish variant to be overtly stigmatized and associated with the Scottish urban working class.

(4) Distribution of Scottish variant [] for first generation speakers as a percentage of the total realization of the GOOD / FOOD vowels

1ST GEN	[uː]	[ʏː]	[ʉ]	[ʊ]	Row total	% of [ʉ]
FEMALE						
Madge S (Sc)	4	0	**22**	0	26	85
Jemima C (Sc)	1	0	**31**	0	32	97
Rita T	32	9	**0**	11	52	0
June T	14	28	**9**	5	56	16
MALE						
Tommy T (Sc)	5	0	**41**	0	46	89
Ron S (Sc)	19	0	**22**	7	48	46
Ray P	4	49	**0**	26	79	0
Philip T	6	9	**0**	11	26	0

(5) Distribution of Scottish variant [ʉ] for second generation speakers as a percentage of the total realization of the GOOD / FOOD vowels

2ND GEN	[uː]	[ʏː]	[ʉ]	[ʊ]	Row total	% of [ʉ]
FEMALE						
Marion F	3	31	**0**	16	50	0
Karen J	3	22	**0**	16	41	0
Jackie D	0	11	**39**	3	53	74
Carol T	4	10	**47**	1	62	76
MALE						
John J	10	18	**0**	10	38	0
David H	25	0	**0**	17	42	0
Ian B	7	22	**0**	15	44	0
Tom F (Sc)	7	0	**60**	0	67	90

(6) Distribution of Scottish variant [ʉ] for third generation speakers as a percentage of the total realization of the GOOD / FOOD vowels

3RD GEN	[uː]	[ʏː]	[ʉ]	[ʊ]	Row total	% of [ʉ]
FEMALE						
Sharon B	1	18	**22**	0	41	54
Charlotte J	10	17	**18**	4	49	37
Sarah M	3	16	**23**	2	44	52
Leanne W	4	24	**22**	0	50	44
Kerrie F	12	16	**16**	13	57	28
MALE						
Calum T	0	0	**29**	0	29	100
Richard D	0	14	**34**	0	48	71
Michael B	8	0	**18**	5	31	60
Andrew D	0	9	**22**	0	31	71
John H	6	25	**12**	5	48	25
Graham S	3	16	**11**	5	35	31

3.3. Metalinguistic Commentary

A variationist sociolinguistic account of these data would conclude that Calum is indexing a Scottish identity, while others are indexing an identity that is simultaneously English (by maintaining a distinction in the lexical sets) and Scottish (by using the Scottish variant). Yet this does not appear to be a satisfactory explanation, since none of the younger speakers claim a Scottish identity. (One small but telling example is that they all supported England in the 1998 Soccer World Cup). Young people consider themselves English, but unlike their grandparents, they do not construct their identity in terms of ethnicity. For the first generation, ethnicity was apparently an important distinguishing characteristic in the town and was clearly manifest in language. Oppositions are frequently constructed in terms of language, as exemplified by Betty's comment in (7) below:

(7) Betty (Scottish F, first generation)
they were all Scots so we didn't have to, we could talk whatever way we liked. but when we went to stay with with Bill and Doreen [*an English couple*] they were more, we had to talk a wee bit more proper you know

For the third generation, however, this has changed, with ethnicity fading from the sociolinguistic landscape. In fact it appears that the third generation have ideologically reconstructed the perceived contrast between Scots and English as a contrast between Corby and Kettering, a town a mere seven miles away, with speakers even commenting on the Kettering dialect. The following comments about conflict display a similar change in orientation. First generation Scot, Archie, enacts an imagined dialogue in a pub between a Scot and an Englishman:

(8) Archie (Scottish M, first generation)
a lot of resentment if a Scotsman was in the pub and just saying,
"eh phew this beer's rotten."
"nobody asked you to come here."
yeh, "nobody asked you to come here."
"eh God almighty this is terrible look at this place here."
"Glasgow's a lot worse."

In contrast, third generation Richard describes similar antipathy between Corby and Kettering men.

(9) Richard (M, third generation)
but you can go out there [*Kettering*] one week, and you will get hassle, cos they don't like to see Corby people go over there like chatting up their girls and all that, but you never ever see a group of Kettering lads ever go to a night club in Corby

While the first generation were distinct dialectally and ethnically, the third generation perceive themselves as dialectally and ethnically homogeneous, comparing themselves instead to outsiders (Kettering people). Analysis of speaker comments indicates a shift in salient social groupings from Scottish-English in the first generation, to Corby-Kettering in the third generation. This suggests that the historically Scottish variants in the speech of the third generation may now be functioning as indexes of *local* rather than Scottish identity. If it is important for us to understand the meaning of variation for the *speakers*, then clearly we must understand how they construct their worlds. Assumptions based on first-order indexicality are therefore indeed insufficient for explaining the current distribution of this phonological variable in the Corby dialect. We hope it will become clear that such assumptions are also insufficient for the phonological phenomena to be described in the Kingston study to which we now turn.

4. Kingston, Jamaica
4.1. Study Background
The second study began as an acoustic phonetic examination of the vowel systems of speakers at distant ends of the post-creole linguistic continuum in Jamaica (Wassink, 1999; in press). The study included a "labeling task" designed to collect metalinguistic commentary from respondents regarding what linguistic features distinguish

Jamaican Creole from Jamaican English. The present discussion focuses on a subset of the labeling task results that proved vexing to earlier attempts at analysis. First, however, the language contact situation that gave rise to Jamaican Creole, and subsequent dialect contact on the island, will be described.

While the current situation in Corby outlined above has its roots in dialect contact, the Jamaican story begins with language contact. Jamaica was held by the British from 1655-1838. During this roughly 200-year period, West African slaves served as the workforce on British sugar and coffee plantations. A creole language emerged, showing retentions from Akan languages particularly in its syntax and phonology (LePage, 1960; Alleyne, 1984).

DeCamp (1971) was the first to describe the spectrum of language on the island as a post-creole continuum. Varieties range from the *basilect*—spoken mostly in rural areas and associated with working-class speakers, to a mutually unintelligible variety referred to as the *acrolect*—essentially a regional dialect of English associated with upper- and upper-middle class speakers and spoken in the capital of Kingston and other metropolitan areas. Intermediate forms are referred to collectively as the *mesolect*. Jamaicans themselves refer to the basilect as "Patois" and to the acrolect as "English". Thus, variation between Jamaican varieties patterns in part along a social dimension, and in part along a geographical one.

Near the close of the nineteenth century dialect contact occurred in Kingston. A major wave of immigration more than doubled its population in 20 years: from 30,000 people in the early 1900s to 62,700 by 1921 (Clarke, 1975). During this period, Jamaicans from the rural parishes of the interior flooded Kingston and its vicinity in search of work. Rather than resulting in the uni-directional re-orienting of personal network structures from the rural home district to the city, however, a pattern developed wherein work-seekers moved to the Kingston area while maintaining close first-order network ties in the rural home district. The urban-working individual served as the conduit whereby goods and new technology could reach those back home. Thus it may be argued that in Kingston, as in Corby, dialect contact occurred *vis á vis* massive influx of population to an urban center driven by employment pressures.

It is to the distribution of one linguistic feature, described by Akers (1981) as characteristic of the Jamaican basilect but not the acrolect, that the discussion will now turn. The feature is the variable palatalization of word-initial velar consonants, referred to as (KYA) (Patrick, 1999). The research issue, explored using a labeling task, concerns first, the role of (KYA) (and other forms associated with the basilect) in indexing the urban~rural distinction; and second, Jamaicans' language ideology and metalinguistic conceptualizations regarding what it means to say that someone "speaks Patois."

4.2. The Phonolexical Variable (KYA)

(KYA) refers to one of two phonological processes, both of which affect vowels which were low and front in seventeenth century British English, i.e., the /a/ "cat" word-class. Process (1) relates to the variable palatalization of velar stops /k,g/ to [ç,ɟ]. Alternatively, in process (2) palatalization takes the form of palatal glide insertion [kʲ,gʲ] in the same phonetic environment. Glide insertion occurs in disyllabic words where the [a] receives primary stress, e.g., "garlic" [gʲarlɪk], "cabbage" [kʲabadʒ], "garden" [gʲardɛn], but not "historical" [ʔɪstorɪkal]. Patrick (1999) has identified two social distributions for (KYA)-"prestige" and "traditional." The *prestige* pattern is associated with urban-oriented, upwardly-mobile middle class speakers (typically acrolect- and mesolect-dominant). For them, a vowel quality distinction is maintained between the "cat" and "cot" word-classes. Crucially, palatalization only occurs in words of the historical "cat" class: [kʲat] "cat" vs. [kɔt] "cot." The *traditional* pattern is associated with rural-oriented, working class speakers (typically basilect-dominant). For them, the front/back distinction between /a/ and /ɔ/ classes was lost; both vowels were merged to /a/. However, palatalization only occurs before those vowels that in the seventeenth century were historically front, i.e., the "cat" words. Thus, for the traditional speak^ers, (KYA) distinguishes minimal pairs: e.g., [kʲat] "cat" vs. [kat] "cot".

4.3. Methodology: The Labeling Task

The stimulus for the labeling task consisted of a two-minute excerpt of a casual, unscripted conversation between three Jamaican women, referred to below as S1, S2, and S3, who differed with respect to their age, urban vs. rural orientation, and social class. S1, aged early 50s, is an upper-middle class speaker living in an affluent Kingston neighborhood. S2, aged early 30s, is a lower-middle class speaker residing in a working-class Kingston neighborhood. S3, aged 70s, is a working-class speaker from a rural district.

Data for (KYA) and 7 other linguistic variables characteristic of basilectal Jamaican Creole were quantified for S1, S2, and S3, in order to characterize their usages. Production results for all 8 variables are presented in (10). A variationist sociolinguistic analysis of this constellation of variables would predict that S3 should unambiguously be judged a rural, basilect-dominant speaker. For the 7 utterances examined in which a targeted creole variant might emerge, S3 produces 7 basilectal variants. S2's productions are also consistent with rural basilect-dominant speech. She shows 16 out of 19 forms emerging with the basilectal variant. Judgement of S1, on the other hand, would be predicted to be less clear-cut. Most of her productions were classified as consistent with Jamaican English (e.g., presence of plural -s, copula + ING forms). However, she has only a slightly smaller number of Jamaican Creole forms than English ones (8 against 10). Notably, all three women show palatalization of (KYA). S2, the youngest, produces two palatalized and one non-palatalized stop.

19 respondents (9 urban- and 10 rural-oriented; aged 20-39) listened to the conversation between S1, S2, and S3. Respondents were given no details concerning the women's age or region of residence. They were asked to label the variety(ies) of speech they heard on the recording (e.g., Patois. English, etc.) and to indicate which speakers used the varieties they named.

4.4. Results

Metalinguistic descriptors volunteered by respondents are listed in (11). Repeated forms included "broad Patois," "rural," "urban," and "Kingston Patois." Surprisingly, respondents described S1 and S3 as sounding "rural," but never S2. Conversely, terms associated with urban orientation-e.g., "Kingston Patois" and "stoosh" (meaning "pretentious") were used *only* with reference to S2. These facts are interesting when it is recalled that S1 is an upper-middle class Jamaican of urban orientation, and S2 and S3 were born in rural parishes. Although she was then living in Kingston, S2 was not born in the city, but rather in a rural district. She attended rural schools, and moved to a working-class Kingston neighborhood in her teens. Despite the predominance

of basilectal forms in her speech, she is regarded as having a "Kingston" way of speaking. Thus, the vexing nature of the problem comes to light. If S2 is using forms that clearly index a rural basilectal identity, how is it that listeners can still regard her as having a "Kingston voice" while S1, who is urban-oriented, is regarded as being rural, characterized by basilect-dominant respondent TB.m as "taakin' di braad, raw-baan Patois," and never taken for a Kingston speaker?

(10) Differentiation of three Jamaican female speakers with respect to 8 linguistic variables. For each variable, the speaker is classified as producing either the basilectal, "JC," or the acrolectal, "JE," variant, where a clear distinction exists. (--) = no forms.

Variable		S1	S2	S3
(KYA)	*JC: glide present* ex., [kʲat]	1	2	1
	JE: no glide ex., [kat]	--	1	--
Serial Verb	*JC:* ex., "Get up fiya shaat"	--	1	1
	JE: does not occur			
3sg Past -ed	*JC: ø* ex., "Im tun dem into idiots"	2	6	1
	JE: 3sg past -ed ex.,			
	" He turned them into idiots"	--	1	--
Lexical	*JC:* ex., "firs' taim"	--	1	1
	JE: ex., "out of order," " pappy show"	--	1	--
Genetive (fi+PRN)	*JC: fi+PRN* ex., "look pon fi-im face"	--	1	--
	JE: 3sg 'his,', 'her' ex.,			
	"look on his face"	1	--	--
Plural -dem	*JC:NP+dem* ex., "piipl-dem"	2	3	2
	JE: NP+s ex., "idiots"	1	--	--
Copula +ING	*JC:* ex., "im a duu"	--	--	--
	JE: ex., "he is doing"	4	--	--
Copula +Pred Adj	*a'+Pred adj* ex., "Im s fuul"	2	2	--
	Ø ex., "Him ø fuul"	1	--	1
	Is: ex., "He is to be blamed"	4	--	--
# Creole variants		8	16	7
# English variants		10	3	0

(11) Respondent descriptors for the three women (S1, S2, S3) represented in the labeling task. Values reflect the number of times a descriptor was used for a given speaker. (Number of speakers: Kingston n=9, St. Thomas n=10)

Descriptor:						
	"Rural"; "From country"	"Kingston" Patois; "stoosh"	"Proper English"	"English and Patois"; "switches"	"Normal" or "Perfect" "well-versed in Patois"	"Broad," "Raw "staunch" Patois
urban:						
S1	1	--	--	--	2	1
S2	--	2	--	4	2	--
S3	2	--	--	--	2	--
rural:						
S1	--	--	--	--	4	6
S2	--	2	4	2	1	2
S3	1	--	--	--	4	6

It may be that an additional dimension has been added to respondent evaluation of rural~urban identity. A metalinguistic comment (in (12), below) made by one acrolect-dominant female listener, aged 24, suggests that the evaluation of S2 as urban but not rural may have to do with an ideology that use of Jamaican Creole in *younger* speakers does not necessarily index rural place of origin, but that it does index this for *older* speakers:

(12) KD.f: All were using Patois, but one woman [S2] is mixing her speech. The older woman [S3] uses the most Patois, but this is typical of older women.

This notion is echoed in the commentary of a 24 year-old acrolect-dominant male, in (13).

(13) KE.m: The youngest [S2] is from Kingston-has a Kingston voice. The middle woman [S1] sounds more rural. It's hard to tell . . . Age makes a difference in how they say the things they want to say.

4.5. Discussion and Interpretation

We suggest that second-order indexical reactions are changing for (KYA). Crucially, Akers (1981) identified (KYA) as characteristic of basilectal Jamaican Creole only. Occurrences of (KYA) were few in the present dataset; however, it seems clear that this variable is *not* solely in use by basilect-dominant speakers. This is not unexpected in and of itself. Patrick (1999) indicates that "traditional" and "prestige" speakers will be distinguished by the quality of their vowels, with "tradi-

tional" speakers' "cat" and "cot" class vowels merged. However, acoustic analysis shows S2's vowel qualities to be merged, like those of S3. Thus, S2 clearly produces the traditional pattern. We interpret these data to suggest that (KYA), perhaps particularly as it co-occurs with a constellation of other variables, may not currently serve to signal urban vs. rural orientation. A constellation of variables was examined because it seems unlikely that one variable would carry the whole weight of indexing a sociolinguistic distinction. And yet, when a constellation of forms historically associated with Jamaican Creole is examined, we see even further evidence that S2 should be judged a rural speaker. We suggest that earlier in Jamaica's history, before the recent valorization of Jamaican Creole, the rural vs. urban distinction was among those social categories indexed linguistically. In present-day Jamaican society, while the *distinction* between urban and rural speech is still indexed, Creole forms are becoming a sign of Jamaican nationalism and young, upwardly-mobile social identity. Where the status of the upwardly-mobile speaker was once marked by the absence of Creole forms, Creole forms such as (KYA) are now welcomed.

5. Conclusion

As Irvine and Gal (2000) and Eckert (2000) have observed, the study of second-order indexicality is not new, but rather "stands suspended in sociolinguistic practice" (Eckert, 2000). In his 1963 study of Martha's Vineyard, Labov evoked respondents' interpretations of the social meaning of linguistic forms to elucidate the social motivation for a sound change. In our view, sociolinguists may need to move beyond accounts of first-order to second-order indexicality and reconsider the value of allowing people to "speak for themselves."

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