2
REGIONAL DIALECTOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Every two miles the water changes, and every four miles the speech. (North Indian proverb)

Swâben ir wörter spalten	Swabians split their words up
Die Franken ein teil si valtent	The Franks run them together
Die Baire si zerzerrent	The Bavarians tear them to pieces
Die Düringe si ûf sperrent	The Thuringians open them out

(excerpt from *Der Renner* by Hugo von Trimberg (1300), cited by Barbour and Stevenson 1990: 57–8)

The above extracts reveal an awareness common in many cultures that spoken forms of a language are not uniform entities, but may vary according to (respectively) the area people come from, or the social group they belong to. The way in which language varies systematically is one of the central concerns of sociolinguistics. There are three more ways in which a language may vary: according to context, time and the individual. Chapters 2 to 4 will discuss research on these types of variation, though the last has not been studied in any detail by sociolinguists. Within sociolinguistics, the focus falls more on the social group than on the individual, even though 'the uniqueness of individuals, arising out of differences in their memory, personality, intelligence, social background, and personal experience makes distinctiveness of style inevitable in everyone' (Crystal 1995: 3). The term 'idiolect' is sometimes used by linguists for an individual's distinctive way of speaking.

This chapter is concerned with **regional dialectology**, that is, the systematic study of how a language varies from one area to another. We survey the roots of dialect study in nineteenth-century Europe, and contrast monolingual dialectology in Europe with a survey carried out in India, a multilingual territory. We trace the decline of methods of traditional regional dialectology that focused mainly on rural areas in the second half

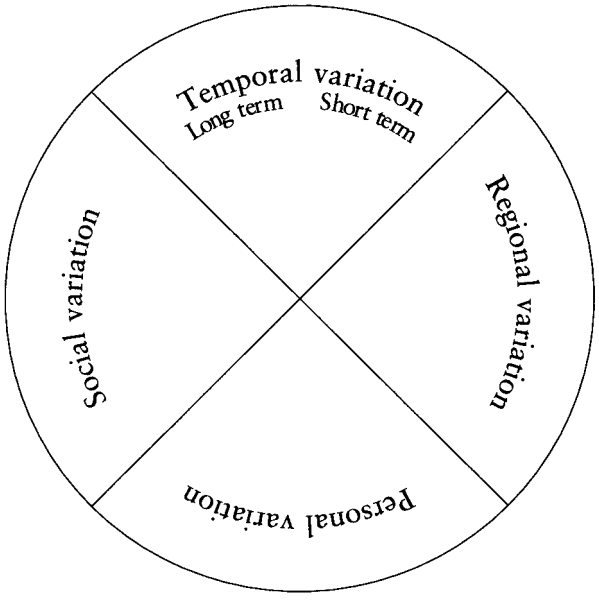


Figure 2.1 The dimensions of speech variation (from Crystal 1995: 3)

of the twentieth century, and cite newer studies that are interested in more modern themes like urbanization and labour movement and their effects on peoples' dialects. We also outline some aspects of language use that have eluded dialectologists thus far.

The term 'dialect' in sociolinguistics is used to describe the speech characteristic of a region (**regional dialect**) or of a group of people defined by social or occupational characteristics rather than by region alone (**social dialect**). Thus we may speak of the dialect of Cologne, the dialect of the upper classes of Boston, the dialect of farmworkers in south-east England and so on. Before discussing the concerns and methods of the approach to language that is known as regional dialectology, it is necessary to reiterate the key points mentioned in Chapter 1 concerning 'dialect' and related terms.

- In ordinary usage, the distinction between language and dialect is a political rather than a linguistic one. The way a speech continuum is cut up and labelled in the 'real world' is often based on political factors.
- Where the distinction between the two (language and dialect) is not significant for the analysis being done, linguists prefer to use the term 'variety'.
- Many linguists consider all dialects of a language to be equal, unless proven otherwise. That is, everyone's way of speaking is equally valid and capable of conveying fine nuances of meaning.
- Some linguists, however, believe that not all dialects are equal. In particular, the standard variety of a community may have the advantage over others

in matters like vocabulary development for more technical and formal purposes.

- The standard form of a language is a sociohistorical product rather than an entity that necessarily pre-dated other varieties of that language.
- Because of the above two considerations, it can be said that everyone speaks a dialect. However, the dialect of the most prestigious (and powerful) speakers on which the standard is based is seldom labelled a dialect by non-linguists.
- Accent is often part of the defining feature of a dialect, but may be separated from it.
- It is possible to speak the standard form of a language while using an accent associated with a particular region.

Two examples of dialect humor

Very often, small differences in language can serve large symbolic purposes, in marking off one group from another and sustaining social difference. This can be seen in the first excerpt from p. 102 of Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart*, set in nineteenth-century Nigeria.

> When they had all gathered, the white man began to speak to them. He spoke through an interpreter who was an Ibo man, though his dialect was different and harsh to the ears of Mbanta. Many people laughed at his dialect and the way he used words strangely. Instead of saying 'myself' he always said 'my buttocks'. But he was a man of commanding presence and the clansmen listened to him. He said he was one of them, as they could see from his colour and his language . . . 'Your buttocks understand our language,' said someone light-heartedly and the crowd laughed.

The second excerpt is from Frank McCourt's book, '*Tis*, dealing with an Irish immigrant's experience of US English.

> If I had the money I could buy a torch and read till dawn. In America a torch is called a flashlight. A biscuit is called a cookie, a bun is a roll. Confectionery is pastry and minced meat is ground. Men wear pants instead of trousers and they'll even say this pant leg is shorter than the other which is silly. When I hear them say pant leg I feel like breathing faster. The lift is an elevator and if you want a WC or a lavatory you have to say bathroom even if there isn't a sign of a bath there. And no one dies in America, they pass away or they're deceased and when they die the body, which is called the remains, is taken to a funeral home where people just stand around and look at it and no one sings or tells a story or takes a drink and then it's taken away in a casket to be interred. They don't like saying coffin and they don't like saying buried. They never say graveyard. Cemetery sounds nicer.

2.2 A MULTILINGUAL PROJECT:

The Linguistic Survey of India

Sir George Grierson, a British magistrate resident in India for half a century and a trained Sanskritist and philologist, provided a classification of the languages of India (from 1894 onwards). He had been hired by the government of India to undertake a survey of north and central India, then containing 224 million people.[1] This task was all the more daunting as the India of the nineteenth century was a vast subcontinent that included what are now Pakistan and Bangladesh. Although the *Linguistic Survey of India* (or *LSI*) excluded the Dravidian-speaking parts of south India (which were being covered in another study), it did include languages belonging to historically different families (Austronesian, Sino-Tibetan and Indo-Aryan). The data collected included the following specimens of language:

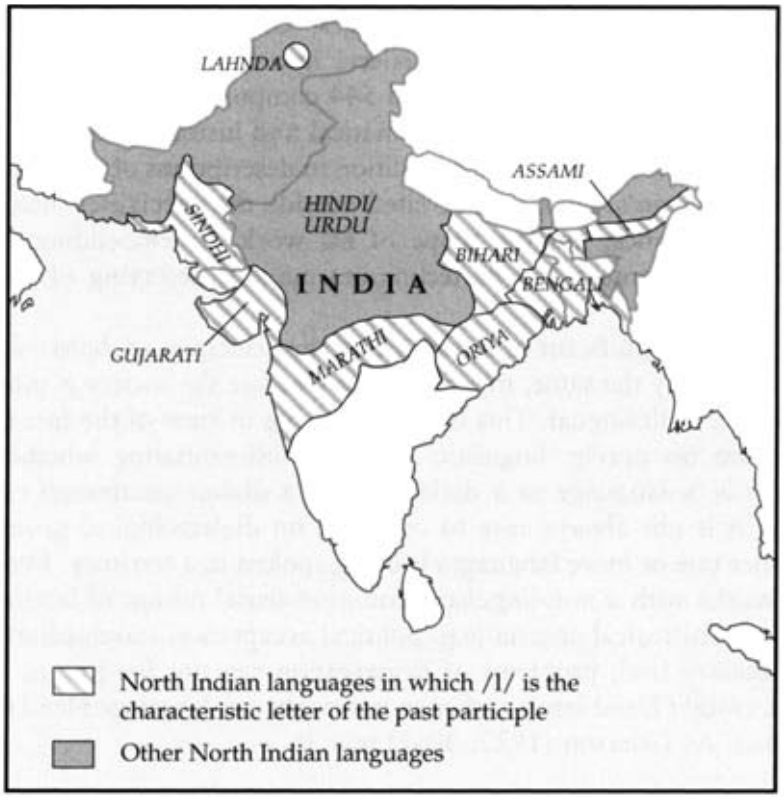
- recital of a standard passage (the Biblical parable of the Prodigal Son) in a local village dialect, based on a version circulated in a widespread language like Hindi or Bengali;[2]
- an impromptu piece of folklore, prose or verse;
- translation of a list of 241 words and phrases.

Grierson used local government officials (district officers and their assistants) in different localities to write down specimens from suitable consultants in the local script and in Roman characters. On the basis of degrees of similarity across villages, Grierson grouped village speech into dialects and then dialects into languages. He posited the existence of 179 languages and 544 component dialects of these languages. The LSI included grammatical and historical descriptions and notes on local literature, in addition to descriptions of vocabulary items. Grierson's work is little cited outside the specialised field of Indian linguistics; but the scope of his work, its embedding in a multilingual context and its techniques make it deserving of wider recognition.

The LSI is significant in showing that the principles of dialectology remain largely the same, irrespective of whether the society is monolingual or multilingual. This is not surprising in view of the fact that there are no purely 'linguistic' ways of differentiating whether a variety is 'a language or a dialect'. With a dialect continuum especially, it is not always easy to conclude on dialectological grounds whether one or more languages is being spoken in a territory. Even if one works with a non-linguistic 'common-sense' notion of language based on historical criteria (e.g. political acceptance, standardisation and literary use), problems of demarcation remain, for just as one dialect *might* blend into another so too *might* one language blend into another. As Grierson puts it:

> [Most] Indian languages gradually merge into each other and are not separated by hard and fast boundary lines. When such boundaries are spoken of, or are shown on a map, they must always be understood as conventional methods of showing definitely a state of things which is in its essence indefinite . . . (1927: 30–1) Although Assamese differs widely from Marathi, and a speaker of one would be entirely unintelligible to the other, a man could almost walk for twenty-eight hundred miles, from Dibrugarh to Bombay and thence to Dardistan, without being able to point to a single stage where he had passed through eight distinct tongues of the Indian Continent, Assamese, Bengali, Oriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Sindhi, Lahnda, and Kohistani . . . (1927: 141)

Just as dialects can be classified on the basis of key phonetic elements, languages can too. Map 2.1 shows Grierson's classification of north Indian languages based on the presence or absence of an /l/ in the past participle. Thus the words for 'beaten' in the shaded languages in Map 2.1 are as follows: Assamese *mār-il*, Bengali *mār-ila*, Bihari *mār-al*, Oriya and Marathi *mār-ilā*, Gujarati *mār-el*, Sindhi *mār-yalu*. On the other hand Hindi, which does not belong to this outer ring of north Indian languages, has *mar-a*.



Map 2.1 North Indian languages of India which use an /l/ in the past participle (based on Grierson 1927: 140)

Although Grierson did not use phonetic transcriptions, he did compile gramophone recordings of some of the specimens in the survey. It is not surprising that many of Grierson's characterisations, labels and classifications should have been modified by more recent scholarship. But it is a tribute to his work that the *Linguistic Survey of India* still forms the baseline for historical-linguistic and sociolinguistic studies of the subcontinent.

2.3 MONOLINGUAL DIALECTOLOGY IN EUROPE

Initial interest in dialectology in Europe in the nineteenth century was a result of theories within historical linguistics, in particular the claim that 'sound laws are exceptionless'. For a long time, linguistics was chiefly concerned with the study of written texts, with a view to establishing which languages of the world were related, and to propose laws showing the phonetic correspondences between words of those languages. An example of a **sound law** is the correspondence identified by linguists between <bh>; in Sanskrit <b>; in Germanic languages and <f>; in Latin. (The angled brackets denote spellings.) Thus the word for 'brother' is *bhratar* in Sanskrit; *brothor* in Old English and *frater* in Latin. Linguists eventually turned their attention to sources that would supplement textual evidence and, they hoped, corroborate some of their theories. In particular they raised the possibility that dialect speech would preserve older and more regular forms than those of standard written forms of a language. The claim that sound laws were exceptionless turned out to be false; but it did serve as an impetus to the scholarly study of dialects. A second motivation for dialect research in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was the feeling that rural speech was being rapidly eroded by the pressures of modernisation and urbanisation, especially in Europe. The need for surveys that would record as much of traditional rural dialect as possible was stressed. Dialectology began to proceed along independent lines, rather than being necessarily linked to historical studies. If anything, the model that began to play a more significant role was that of human geography, rather than history. Dialectology is therefore sometimes labelled 'linguistic geography' or 'geolinguistics'. Harold Orton and Nathalia Wright (1974: 21), two twentieth-century British practitioners of dialectology, describe their task as follows:

> A primary aim of linguistic geography is to reveal the occurrence and distribution of speech usages, especially those characteristic of particular regions. Their diffusion can be mapped clearly and simply. Close study of the resultant maps permits significant deductions to be drawn about the movements of those usages: whether, for example they are spreading or contracting, or whether, indeed, they have been partly supplanted by other features.

The following is a brief outline of the procedures associated with traditional dialectology (adapted from Petyt 1980: 49–51):

1. A preliminary investigation or pilot survey is often carried out, to gain some idea of the way usages vary over the area to be covered and to decide what sort of items are worthy of detailed investigation.

2a. A network of geographical localities where the fieldwork is to be conducted is decided upon. The number of such localities and the density of coverage is constrained by time, finances and number of fieldworkers, and possibly by the density of population in the area.

2b. A list of items to be investigated is drawn up in the format of a questionnaire. (Typical items are given in the box below.)

3. Fieldwork is then conducted. One or more trained investigators travel to the localities selected and make contact with people who they consider to be most suitable informants. Questionnaires are completed in the presence of the consultant. Since the 1950s, greater flexibility has been afforded by the advent of the tape recorder, as some parts of the interview can be recorded and transcribed later.

4. Data analysis is then undertaken. Lists are produced showing geographical patterns of distribution, usually with the aid of maps. Publication of lists and maps is a time-consuming and expensive undertaking which often occurs many years after the initial survey.

Some questions excerpted from the Survey of English Dialects (Orton and Wright 1974)
Vocabulary: e.g. *What do you call the thing you carry water in?* (Shows whether *pail* or *bucket* or some other item is used in an English-speaking area.)
Semantics: e.g. *People starve from hunger; what else can people starve from*? (cold in the north of England and Scotland.)
Grammar: e.g. *We say today it snowed; yesterday* it also — (The answer shows whether *snowed* or *snew* or some other form is the usual one.)

Some Pioneers of Dialectology

Georg Wenker, a German schoolteacher who tried to construct an accurate dialect map of Germany starting in 1876, and Jules Gilliéron, a French scholar who did a national dialectology survey in France in the 1880s, are acknowledged as pioneers of dialectology. Wenker carried out his investigation by post, contacting every village in Germany that had a school. His questionnaire comprised forty sentences having features of linguistic interest, which the local headmaster/teacher was asked to rephrase in the local dialect. The rather stilted nature of his approach

can be seen in the very first sentence, *Im Winter fliegen die trocknen Blätter durch die Luft herum*: 'In winter the dry leaves fly around through the air'. Over 45,000 questionnaires were completed and returned (Barbour and Stevenson 1990: 62). The volume of data turned out to be more of a problem than a resource for the original aims of the project. Out of this research the *Sprachatlas des Deutschen Reichs* ('Language Atlas of the German Empire') was compiled, containing a series of maps each illustrating a single feature over north and central Germany. It was the first linguistic atlas ever produced, with the original hand-drawn version coming out in 1881.

Unlike Wenker, Gilliéron used on-the-spot investigation, rather than a postal survey. He employed a single fieldworker, Edmond Edmont, a greengrocer by trade and an amateur linguist trained in phonetics. Petyt (1980: 41) puts it as follows: 'Gilliéron bought Edmont a bicycle, and sent him pedalling off around 639 rural localities in France and the French-speaking parts of Belgium, Switzerland and Italy'. He chose one consultant per locality (occasionally two), usually a male aged between 15 and 85 years. The fieldwork was conducted between 1897 and 1901. Publication of the findings was relatively quick: thirteen volumes with 1,920 maps appeared between 1902 and 1910. Though his coverage was less comprehensive than Wenker's in terms of localities studied, Gilliéron's work provided the model for subsequent dialect surveys in Europe and America. In Britain, the *Survey of Scottish (English) Dialects* began in 1949, and the *Survey of English Dialects (SED)* was planned in the late 1940s and published between 1962 and 1971. There was no national survey in the USA, where dialectologists preferred to work more intensively on individual areas. The best-known early work of this nature is Hans Kurath's *Linguistic Atlas of New England*, published in three volumes between 1939 and 1943. More recent dialect work in the USA is discussed later in this chapter and in Chapters 3 and 4.

Drawing and Interpreting Dialect Maps

A key feature of dialectology is the **isogloss:** a line drawn on a map separating areas according to particular linguistic features.[3] These features can be items of vocabulary, sounds or relatively simple features of grammar. Isoglosses serve to mark off clearly areas in which a feature is found from those adjacent areas where it is not recorded or occurs only exceptionally, or together with another form. Map 2.2 shows an isogloss from the SED separating areas according to whether *brambles* or *blackberries* is the preferred term. Map 2.3 shows the distribution of *folk* vs *people* in the SED. Map 2.4 shows a famous isogloss separating the north of England from the south according to the vowel in the lexical

set STRUT, CUP, LUCK. The term 'lexical set', which we use frequently in Chapters 2 and 3, was devised by John Wells (1982) as a convenient way of identifying vowel categories not by symbols, but by a set of words in which they occur. Although the vowel in a set like STRUT, CUP, LUCK may vary from one variety of English to another, within a given variety there is usually consistency within a set.[4] The lexical set is useful for students who do not have a background in phonetics, since it allows them to identify the sounds involved, even if the symbols for them are not known. Obviously, more advanced work in dialectology requires a good background in phonetics. To return to the isogloss in Map 2.4, to the north of the line the vowel is pronounced [ʊ] (the vowel sound in the word *book* in RP). To the south of the line it is pronounced [ʌ], which is the RP pronunciation as well. (The RP pronunciations are cited here

Map 2.2 The lexical isogloss: *blackberries* vs *brambles* (from Orton and Wright, *A Word Geography of England* 1974: 37)

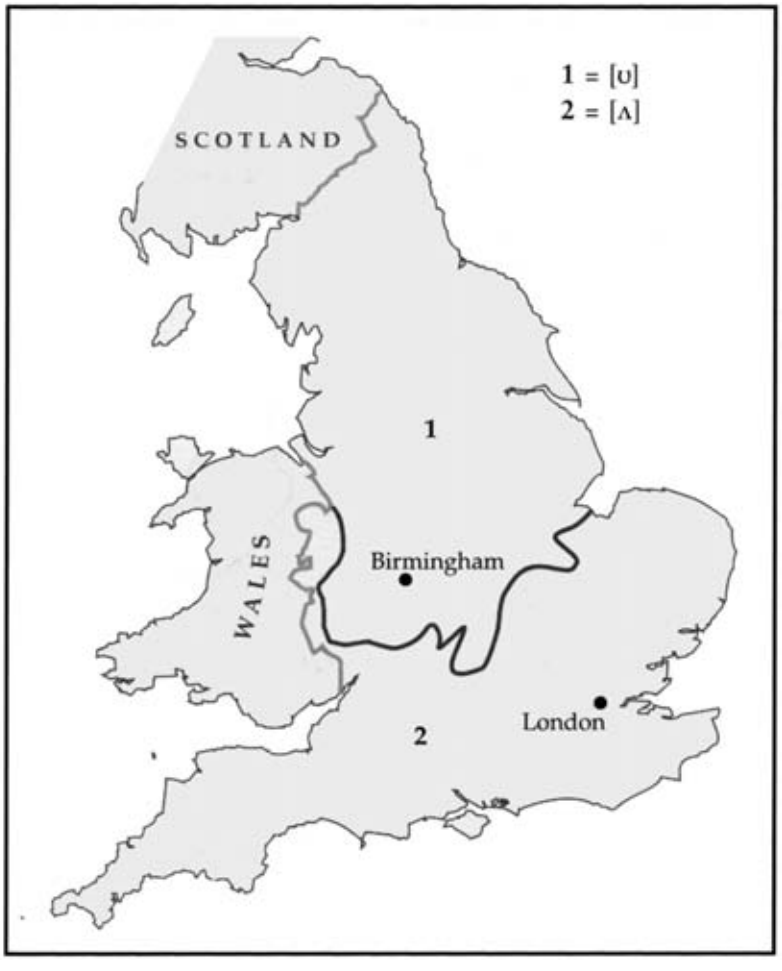
as reference points that will help you to associate the phonetic symbols given with the sounds they represent. RP is useful since it is considered 'standard' by many people in Britain. Moreover, it is available internationally as a model on the BBC World Service.) Note that the RP vowel [a] in STRUT, CUP, LUCK, is the newer form. A. C. Gimson (1989: 110–11) dates this change to the seventeenth century, but stresses that the [ʌ] form finally emerged only in the early twentieth century and is arguably still undergoing modification.

Taken together, Maps 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 show that isoglosses within one geographical area may exhibit quite different patterns. In detailed surveys, the geographical dispersion of words and sounds in particular words can be so disparate that dialectologists were led to claim that 'every word has its own particular history' (Jaberg 1908: 6). This hardly augured well for a theory of dialectology. However, some generalisations can be made from a reading of isogloss patterns.

Major dialect areas

If several isoglosses exhibit similar patterning (occurring close together, rather like a bundle), they are likely to represent a major dialect boundary.

Map 2.3 The lexical isogloss: *folk* vs *people* (from Upton and Widdowson, *An Atlas of English Dialects* 2006: 84–5)



Map 2.4 The [ʊ] vs [ʌ] isogloss in England (based on Trudgill and Chambers 1980: 128)

Map 2.5 shows a bundle of isoglosses dividing France into two well-known dialect areas known as *langue d'oc* and *langue d'oïl* (Trudgill and Chambers 1980: 111).[5] In England, there is a bundle of isoglosses for several phonetic and lexical features along the north–south line depicted in Map 2.4, but to maintain clarity these have not been shown.

Centres of prestige

Concentric (or near-concentric) isoglosses show a pattern involving the spread of linguistic features from a centre of prestige (usually a city or town). Here the isoglosses resemble the ripples created by a stone thrown into a pond. Hence the term 'wave theory', for a branch of dialectology that attempted more dynamic representations than static isoglosses. The essential belief of its theorists (like Johannes Schmidt in the nineteenth century

Map 2.5 A bundle of isoglosses that divide France into two (from Trudgill and Chambers 1980: 111)

and C. J. Bailey in the twentieth) was that linguistic innovations spread in wavelike fashion. In the idealised Figure 2.2, each circle represents the outer limit of a particular feature. While the concentric patterns are interpreted in particular ways by historical linguists, from the viewpoint of dialectology the most important point is that areas A and B are centres of prestige from which linguistic features (or innovations) spread outwards.

More recently, Peter Trudgill (1983a: 170–2) has suggested that the spread of innovations in modern societies occurs in other ways too. Certain sounds 'hop' from one influential urban centre to another, and only later spread outwards to the neighbouring rural areas, including the areas between the two centres. We discuss this theory further under Chapter 4 when discussing language change.

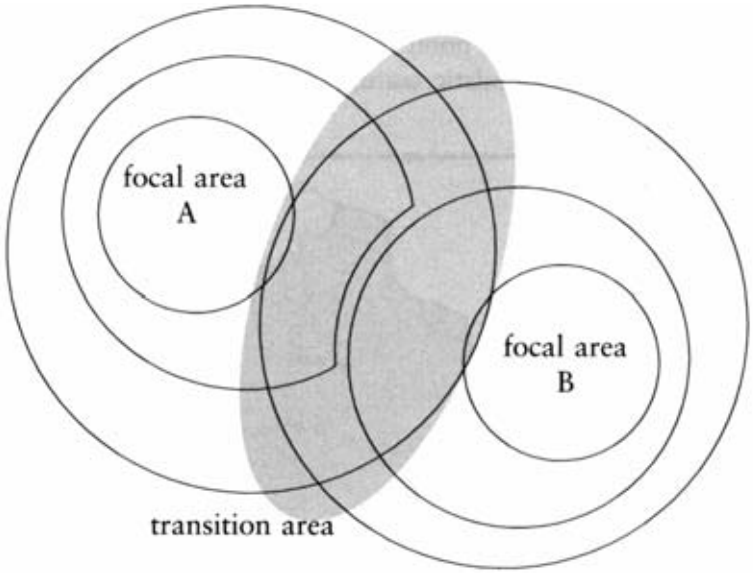


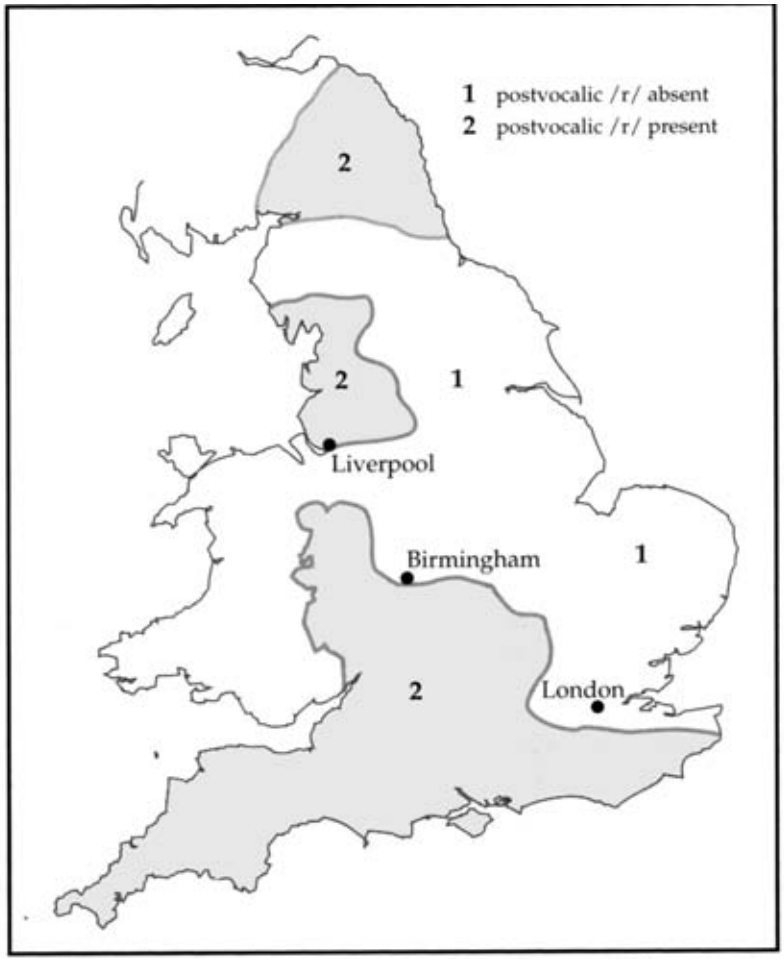
Figure 2.2 Focal and transitional areas (from Petyt 1980: 61)

Relic areas

A pattern sometimes occurs showing several small areas far apart exhibiting similarities with respect to a particular feature. Since these areas do not include a centre of prestige (such as a town), the isoglosses may be assumed to show the retention of old forms. They are relic areas into which newer forms have not spread. An example of a relic area is given in Map 2.6. The feature represented here is one we shall turn to frequently: the pronunciation of [r] after a vowel, or **postvocalic /r/**. 'Vocalic' is the linguistic term for vowels or vowel-like sounds. 'Postvocalic /r/ thus refers to the use of [r] after a vowel (e.g. *car*, *park*), but excludes the occurrence of [r] between vowels (e.g. *very*). Some writers prefer the term 'nonprevocalic /r/' instead of 'postvocalic /r/'. The three shaded areas indicate parts of England in which [r] still occurs after vowels (e.g. in words like *car*). The alternative pronunciation without [r] is more widespread and includes the prestigious centre of London. The shaded areas are therefore to be read as islands which the waves of sound change have not yet covered.

Transitional areas

Figure 2.2 also shows the possibility of a speech area developing which lacks sharply defined characteristics of its own, but shares characteristics with two or more adjacent areas. This is known as a 'transitional area'. We discuss an example which has come to be known as the Rhenish fan as a special case study below.



Map 2.6 Isogloss for postvocalic /r/ in England (from Trudgill and Chambers 1980: 110)

Generally speaking, the patterning of isoglosses may be explained by geographical barriers which, especially in former times, kept speech communities from regular contact with each other: a deep river, a mountain range, a swamp and so on. The barriers may also be of a sociopolitical nature. People in a particular area may be subject to a particular set of political and social influences and accordingly develop a culture different from people in adjacent areas. They may, in the process, stabilise words and pronunciations that mark them as different from people from adjacent areas. On the whole, isoglosses are descriptive devices, which characterise the geographical dispersion of linguistic forms. As such, they have not really been central in the building of sociolinguistic theories. However, they do play an important role in developing an understanding of how the history of a language and the communities that use it is

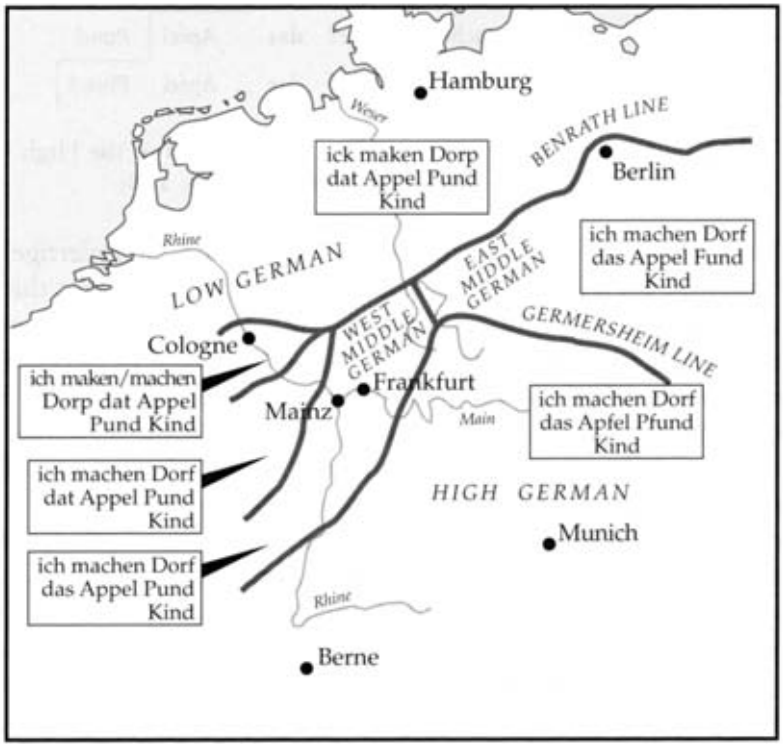
enmeshed with geographical and historical factors. A famous example of this is the bundle of isoglosses which has come to be known as the Rhenish fan.

The Rhenish Fan: A Case Study in Dialect Transition

The High German Sound Shift			
English	**p**ound/slee**p**	**t**ide/ea**t**	ma**k**e/brea**k**
Dutch	**p**ond/sla**p**en	**t**ijd/e**t**en	ma**k**en/bre**k**en
German	**Pf**und/schla**f**en	**Z**eit/e**ss**en	ma**ch**en/bre**ch**en

An interesting and well-known pattern of isoglosses shows variation in a transitional area in the northern Rhine region. These isoglosses represent a set of changes in pronunciation that differentiates contemporary standard German from other modern West Germanic languages (Dutch, Frisian, English, Afrikaans) and from other modern German dialects. This set of changes, which took place between the sixth to the eighth centuries AD, has come to be known as the **High German Sound Shift.** It affected the voiceless stops /p/, /t/ and /k/ which became fricatives in the south German dialects on which modern standard German was later based. The results of this shift can be seen in the box, which shows modern German forms as compared to related languages (English and Dutch) which were unaffected by the change. The terms 'High' and 'Low' German refer to the geographical location of the varieties, essentially the mountainous geography of the south ('High German') compared to the lowlands of the north ('Low German'). The variety spoken in the area intermediate to these two areas is known as 'Middle German'.

In Map 2.6, the main isogloss, called the 'Benrath line' after the town of Benrath, separates Low German from the other dialects. While Low German generally retains /p/, /t/ and /k/, the rest of the territory shows a differential response to the shift. In the latter area, different regions show the effects of the shift in different ways. Dialectologists use the following set of words to show how systematic this variation is: *ich, machen, Dorf, das, Apfel, Pfund, Kind*. This is the set of modern standard German words for 'I', 'make', 'village', 'the', 'apple', 'pound' and 'child' respectively. A second isogloss in Map 2.7, called the 'Germersheim line' after the town of Germersheim, separates the (High German) areas in the south, in which the sound shift has occurred in almost all words, from the Middle German area which has been only partly affected by the change. Only in Swiss German is word initial /k/ (as in *Kind*) pronounced as a fricative (*Chind*). The Middle German area is thus a transitional area between the Low German of the north and High German of the south.



Map 2.7 The Rhenish fan

Within this Middle German territory, the greatest differentiation occurs in the west, that is, the northern Rhine region. Here the isoglosses branch out according to differences in the way the set of words is pronounced. This pattern has come to be called the Rhenish Fan (*Rheinischer Fächer*), since it resembles the folds of a fan. The differences between the areas in the folds of the fan can be read off from Map 2.7. They can also be read off from the stepwise formation in Table 2.1, in which the numbers represent subdialects of the fan. Line 3 in Table 2.1, for example, corresponds to usage in the Cologne area, while line 5 is that of the area around Mainz.

Theodor Frings (1950) interpreted the layered (*staffelartige*) distribution of the High German Sound Shift as evidence that the shift had originated in southern Germany and spread gradually northwards, losing its effect the further it moved from its area of origin. He drew upon political and cultural history to explain the location of the isoglosses within the fan. For example, the two isoglosses for *maken* vs *machen* and *Dorp* vs *Dorf* coincide with the old diocese of Cologne (Frings 1950: 6). However, it is unclear why the spread should have proceeded from south to north, as the territories in middle Germany were culturally and politically superior in the early Middle Ages. A spread from north to south would, therefore, have been more likely. Some dialectologists have accordingly suggested that a

Low German	1	ik	maken	Dorp	dat	Appel	Pund
	2	ich	maken	Dorp	dat	Appel	Pund
	3	ich	machen	Dorp	dat	Appel	Pund
Middle German	4	ich	machen	Dorf	dat	Appel	Pund
	5	ich	machen	Dorf	das	Appel	Pund
	6	ich	machen	Dorf	das	Apfel	Pund
High German	7	ich	machen	Dorf	das	Apfel	Pfund

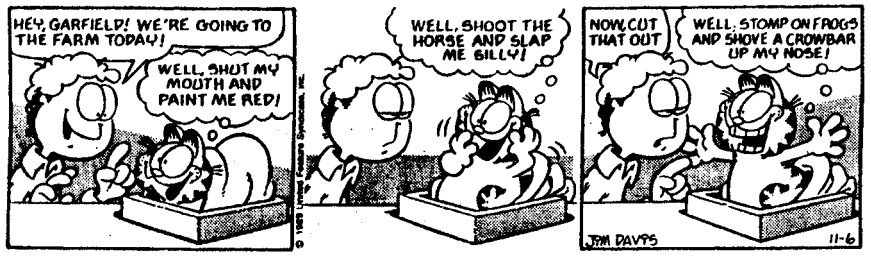
Table 2.1 Dialect differences according to the effects of the High German Sound Shift (from Romaine 1994: 138)

separate shift took place in the Middle German dialect area, independently of developments in southern Germany (see Wells 1987: 427–8).

Criticisms of Traditional Dialectology

Critics of traditional dialect surveys point to severe flaws in conception and execution. The first criticism is of the type of people interviewed. Dialect surveys targeted native residents who were believed to speak the traditional local dialect rather than a form contaminated by modern city dialects. These were usually older people, often males (believed to speak local dialect more consistently than women) who had not left their area for any length of time. Trudgill and Chambers, who used the ironic acronym NORMs for this type of informant (**N**on-mobile, **O**ld, **R**ural, **M**ale), conclude (1980: 35):

> However clear the motivation seems, it is nevertheless true that the narrow choice of informants in dialect geography is probably also the greatest single source of disaffection for it in recent times. Readers and researchers have questioned the relevance of what seems to be a kind of linguistic archaeology. Young people who have been natives of a particular region for their entire lives have often been disturbed to discover that the speech recorded in field studies of their region is totally alien to anything that seems familiar to them. That discovery is not at all surprising when one considers that nowadays the greatest proportion of the population is mobile, younger, urban and female – in other words the diametrical opposite of NORMS.



That is, although traditional dialectology serves the important function of recording archaic speech, it is not representative of the speech of the areas studied.

The main focus of the traditional surveys fell on bits of language, rather than on speakers of a language. Language seems to have been considered as an organism having a life of its own, and individuals of interest 'only as a source of data for a given location, as human reference books rather than as members of complex social groups' (Barbour and Stevenson 1990: 74). That is, the methodology held little promise for a sociolinguistic theory of language.

From theoretical linguistics came the criticism that the approach to language itself was inadequate. Items studied were treated atomistically, as individual unrelated parts of language. This was in contrast to the emphasis in twentieth-century linguistics on language as a tightly-knit system, comprising abstract elements which derive their value from their contrast with other elements in the system. For example, maps drawn on the basis of isoglosses for vowel systems would be preferred by modern linguists to the isolated vowels on traditional dialect maps.

Social scientists (e.g. Glenna Pickford 1956) questioned the validity of the surveys, in terms of whether their survey methods were appropriate to the task set. They raised questions about the questionnaire design. For example, the extreme length of the questionnaires (sometimes requiring more than a day with the consultant) may lead to interviewer and interviewee 'fatigue bias' errors (especially if the consultant was old to begin with). Questions of fluctuations in fieldworkers' judgements of vowel quality have also dogged traditional dialectology.

Reservations like these about the treatment of crucial aspects of language variation led some dialectologists to turn their attention to social and urban dialects and to conduct their investigations along very different lines. In this they were assisted by the newer computer-based technologies not available to the pioneers of dialectology.

2.4 MODERN APPROACHES TO DIALECT

As noted above, traditional dialect study concerned itself with the differentiation of a language into dialects, and with older, rural speech forms which were often becoming obsolete. In contrast, modern studies focus on urban speech, often involving new speech forms arising from contact between speakers of different backgrounds.

Map 2.8 Places in Britain and Ireland cited in the text

The Border Dialect

Trudgill has been a pioneer in applying insights from modern sociolinguistics to the study of geographical variation. One of the issues he has been interested in is the 'border dialect', that is how one variety within a

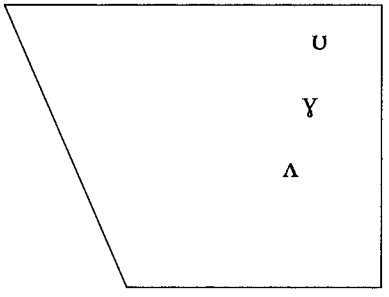


Figure 2.3 The vowels [ʊ], [ʌ] and [ɣ] on the vowel chart (See Note to Readers, pp. xxiii–xxv, for a general explanation of the principles underlying the vowel chart. Here [ʊ] is high, back and rounded; [ʌ] is mid, central and unrounded; [ɣ] is mid, back and unrounded.)

dialect continuum shades off into another. Traditional dialectology never adequately explored the linguistic behaviour of people living in the linguistic borderlands. By carefully re-examining the records of the SED (Survey of English Dialects), Trudgill and Chambers (1980: 132–42) posited two types of subvarieties or 'lects' characteristic of such areas: mixed and fudged lects. (The term 'lect' is widely used by linguists for smaller groupings within a dialect: one may speak of 'genderlects', 'ethnolects' or particular 'sociolects'). We use the example of the major ʊ/ʌ isogloss separating the northern dialects from the southern dialects of England (see Map 2.4). You will recall that there is a more or less clear-cut distinction where the north, has the older pronunciation [ʊ] in the lexical set STRUT, CUP, LUCK while the south has [ʌ] in this set. Trudgill and Chambers found some areas on the borderline of the isogloss which had mixed lects: that is, speakers used both [ʊ] and [ʌ]. They also found some areas where speakers produced an intermediate pronunciation between [ʊ] and [ʌ], phonetically [ɣ]. This sound is a 'fudge' (that is, a kind of compromise) since it is phonetically unrounded like [ʌ], but closer to [ʊ] in terms of vowel height, and intermediate between them in terms of backness.

David Britain (1997) has studied the border dialect area known as the Fens in England, a marshy area about 75 miles north of London and 50 miles west of Norwich. At one time, the sparse population lived on a few islands of higher ground. Only after the seventeenth century when the marshes were drained did the Fens become fertile, arable land attracting greater human habitation. The lack of communication between the eastern and western sides of the Fens before reclamation is reflected in the fact that this is still one of the major dialect transition zones in England. One of the features studied by Britain was the variation between east and west with respect to the diphthong [**aɪ**] (i.e. the vowel sound in the lexical set PRICE, WHITE, RIGHT). The eastern Fens have a centralised [**əɪ**], while the western Fens have [**aɪ**]. Britain describes an interesting compromise in the

Phonetic note
Diphthong: a vowel sound that is itself made up of two simple vowels. For example, the vowels [a:] and [ɪ] in combination give the diphthong [aɪ], as found in the set PRICE, WHITE, RIGHT.

Centralisation: the tongue position is relatively central compared to 'front' or 'back' positions.

The set [b, d, g, v, z etc.] is the set of voiced sounds, i.e. ones which are accompanied by vocal-cord vibration. This happens when the vocal cords (in the larynx) are close together and vibrate when air passes periodically through them.

The set [p, t, k, f, s etc.] is the set of voiceless sounds, i.e. ones produced without vocal-cord vibration. This happens when the vocal cords are kept apart momentarily.

The only vowel before which the diphthong [aɪ] occurs is the unstressed vowel [ə] as in *fire, liar, friar*.

This pattern of distribution (where a unit is pronounced in one way in certain environments and in another way in all other environments) is known technically as 'complementary distribution' in phonology.

central Fens, the part more recently opened to habitation. Here both pronunciations are found, but in a special pattern, determined by what kind of sound they are followed by. The centralised [əɪ] pronunciation occurs before voiceless consonants (like *p, t, k, f, s*), while [aɪ] occurs in other phonetic environments, namely before voiced consonants (like *b, d, g, v, z*) and before vowels. Britain argues that such 'fudging' occurred when newcomers tried to assimilate to the norms of more settled communities which were themselves divided in terms of pronunciation.

The Birth of New Dialects

The central image in traditional dialectology is that of diversification. Languages that were localised in centuries gone by gradually spread geographically and eventually diversified into dialects. Traditional dialectology ignored processes like urbanisation and colonisation. The invention of modern means of transport has resulted in intercontinental and internal movements of people that are quite different from those connected with

Historical note
Two notable areas outside the British Isles which retain the [əɪ] pronunciation are Martha's Vineyard in the USA (described in Chapter 3) and Canada.

traditional dialect formation. In this section, we briefly review two studies of new dialect formation in territories that are far removed from the original base of the dialects. These are sometimes labelled 'extraterritorial varieties' or 'transplanted varieties'.

New Towns: The Milton Keynes Study

During the 1960s, the British government targeted several rural areas in south-eastern England for industrial development. One of these areas was Milton Keynes, a former village about fifty miles north-west of London, which was designated a 'new town' in 1969. The rapid social and industrial development of Milton Keynes led to the influx of large numbers of people from other areas in the UK. New arrivals came mainly from London and other parts of south-east England, northern England and Scotland. In this new environment, speakers of a range of dialects came into direct and prolonged contact with each other. To investigate the linguistic outcomes of this situation of dialect contact, Paul Kerswill and Anne Williams carried out a developmental survey in the early 1990s (Kerswill 1996). They compared the speech of three groups of children (of ages 4, 8 and 12) with that of their parents or caregivers. In all, forty-eight children and one parent or caregiver per child were recorded on tape and video. From their detailed analysis of ten phonetic features, the researchers showed that the accents of the children neither closely resembled those of the nearby dialect area nor showed any influence from their parents' speech. This process is called **dialect levelling** in which the speech of a group of people (in this case children) converges towards a common norm, with extreme differences being ironed out. Dialect levelling in Milton Keynes results from two different

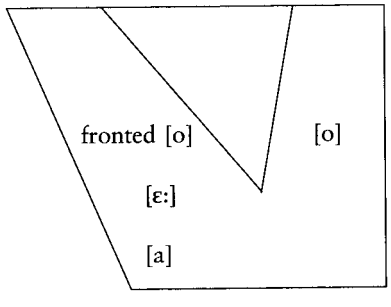


Figure 2.4 The vowels [o], fronted [o], [ɛ:] and [a] on the vowel chart

strategies: (1) linguistic features of the wider south-eastern area are adopted by the children; and (2) broad, regional variants are avoided and replaced by less localised sounds, including some RP-like vowel sounds.

One of the features investigated by Kerswill and Williams was the diphthong [oʊ] in the lexical set GOAT, HOME, GO. In the wider area of south-eastern England, the first vowel of this diphthong is being increasingly fronted. In Milton Keynes, the fronted pronunciation is found mainly among children, an example of strategy (1) above. The children's pronunciation of the word *boat*, for example, almost sounds like *bait* as pronounced in RP. The fronting of [oʊ] is part of the new dialect evolving in Milton Keynes. This dialect is relatively homogeneous, as the speech of children contains far less variation than that of the older generation.

As an example of the second dialect-levelling strategy, Kerswill and Williams refer to the pronunciation of the diphthong [oʊ] in the lexical set MOUTH, HOUSE, NOW. This sound has a range of regionally marked pronunciations in south-east England, ranging from [ɛ:] in broad London dialect to the RP-like [aʊ]. Adults in Milton Keynes use a range of broad, regionally marked variants, while children favour the less marked RP-like variants.

Tea Cakes in MK

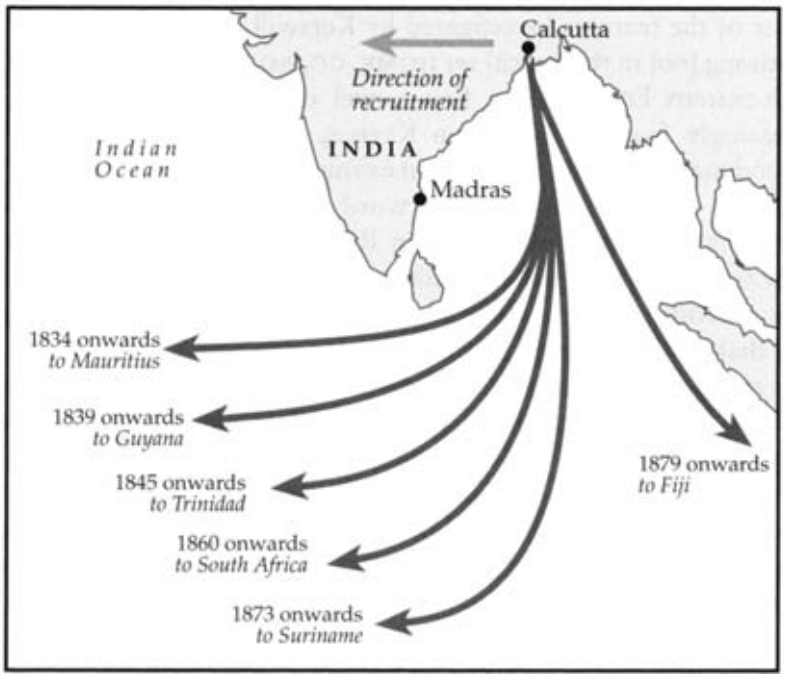
I was at this canteen and placed in my order to the woman behind the counter. She looked a bit confused at my order, and to my surprise brought me a tray of cakes. I had ordered two cokes; she apparently thought I'd said 'tea cakes'.

(Young woman from Milton Keynes on being misunderstood by a northerner whose first language was also English. To hear *two* as *tea* suggests fronting of the [u:] vowel characteristic of young middle-class speakers of English worldwide. To hear *coke* as *cake* is an example of the fronting of the second element of the diphthong [əu].

Anecdote told to Anne Williams, researcher on the project on children's language in Milton Keynes.)

'Transplanted' Dialectology: The Eastern Hindi Diaspora

In the nineteenth century the British and other European governments sought to supply cheap labour to their various colonies throughout the world, by inducing Asians to emigrate as indentured workers. The term 'indenture' signifies the contract signed by workers tying them to a particular employer for a fixed number of years. In this way, over a million speakers of Asian



Map 2.9 Recruiting patterns and the eastern Hindi indentured diaspora of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries

languages came to inhabit islands in the Caribbean (e.g. Trinidad, Jamaica), the Pacific (e.g. Hawaii, Fiji) and the Indian Ocean (Mauritius, Reunion) and mainland territories like South Africa, Guyana and Malaysia. We take as a brief example of new dialect formation in a 'transplanted' context the case of people from north India, speaking one or more of the varieties of the North Indian speech continuum (see sections 1.1 and 2.2). Recruitment of workers started out in the north-easterly parts (with Calcutta as a focal port for the shipment of the workers) and gradually moved westwards into the interior (see Map 2.9). Accordingly, it was speakers from the more eastern parts of the speech continuum who migrated. Their languages included Bhojpuri, Magahi and Awadhi, which may be loosely described as forms of 'eastern Hindi'. The earliest migrants were sent to Mauritius (1834); successive migrants went to Guyana (from 1839 onwards), Trinidad (1845), Natal (1860), Suriname (1873) and Fiji (1879).

Three salient processes occurred as speakers from a wide variety of related languages of north India communicated with each other and formed new identities in the new territories.

1. *Focusing:* that is, the stabilising of a new variety out of the wide range of antecedent varieties. This new variety tended to resemble Bhojpuri, a language of what are now the north-east Indian states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Uttarkhand.

Mauritius	*dekh-lak*	(1834)
Guyana	*dekh-le*	(1839)
Trinidad	*dekh-al*	(1845)
South Africa	*dekh-lak* or *dekh-las*	(1860)
Suriname	*dekh-is*	(1873)
Fiji	*dekh-is* or *dekh-ā*	(1879)

Table 2.2 The verb 'she saw' in transplanted varieties of eastern Hindi (times of initial migrations in brackets – based on Mesthrie 1992b: 72–6)

2. *Dialect mixing:* the new focused variety shows a blend of features from other dialects and languages of the north Indian speech continuum as well.
3. *Dialect levelling:* selection of some features from Bhojpuri and other varieties led to other features being lost. Only a small residue of alternate forms from different antecedent varieties survived: for example two alternate forms for 'she saw' are equally acceptable in South Africa (see Table 2.2).

These broad processes occurred, with slightly different results within each colonial territory, depending on the numbers of speakers of the various antecedent varieties. Mesthrie (1992b: 72–6) gives the example of forms that stabilised in the different colonies for the verb 'she saw' (i.e. third-person, singular, past, transitive verb):

Since the territories involved are not geographically adjacent, isoglosses cannot be drawn. However, a more abstract type of dialectology is possible, since there is a clustering of the varieties in Table 2.2 according to the initial time of immigrations. The first four territories show a past transitive form with *-l*, the last two do not. Mesthrie (1992b: 72–6) shows that the transplanted varieties which are more 'adjacent in time' (with respect to the initial migrations) are linguistically more similar. Mauritius has a type of Hindi that is the most 'eastern' in its linguistic characteristics, while the Hindi of Fiji has a more 'westerly' character. The territories between these two in Table 2.2 are intermediate in terms of their linguistic characteristics, especially in their verb suffixes. This, in turn, is a consequence of the recruitment patterns cited above. Recruiters in the employ of the British worked over a continuous geographical area in India, starting from the east near the port of Calcutta and proceeding westwards into the interior. Their activities are reflected in the fossilised dialect forms of varieties of Hindi that are far-flung in time and space.

Traditional Dialect in the Modern World

The study of traditional rural dialects has become increasingly divorced from the main concerns of linguists. Yet, despite the encroachment of the city, rural dialects are still in use in many parts of the world. One study of how traditional dialect survives in an urban setting is that of Caroline

McAfee (1983) on Scots. Based on questionnaires, her work provides a rich account of working-class Glasgow speech and of the extent to which traditional dialect survives in an industrialised world. Cities like Glasgow contain urban villages with strong community life and the corresponding ability to maintain traditional modes of speech, at least to some extent. Macafee concluded from her questionnaires that:

- Much use of the traditional vocabulary has given way to passive knowledge (that is, working class Glasgow speakers still understand older traditional dialect terms like *fernietickles* (for 'freckles'), but do not use them themselves).
- Knowledge of dialect forms has become more individual and idiosyncratic (suggesting gradual loss). For example one family remembered the word *peasewisp* (for 'a bundle or wisp of pea-straw') because *hair like a peasewisp* was a favourite saying of a grandfather.
- Many traditional dialect words survive only in metaphorical or idiomatic uses.
- Words that were once commonplace are now regarded as colourful or slang, on account of infrequent use, for example *brace* for 'mantelpiece'.
- Older speakers underestimate younger people's knowledge of the traditional dialect, probably because much of it has become passive.

These findings apply to vocabulary. For grammar and phonology, there is little difference between the norms of older and younger speakers: for example, both groups use terms like *hame* 'home' and *hoose* 'house'. Macafee's study suggests the importance of studying vocabulary separately and in a more probing way than done by modern dialectologists.

A sample entry from the DARE webpage for Adam's housecat

Adam's housecat n Also *Adam's cat, ~ house* chiefly S Atl, Gulf States See Map =Adam's off-ox 1.
1908 *DN* 3.285 eAL, wGA, *Adam's (house-)cat.* . . . "He wouldn't know me from Adam's house-cat." 1965–70 *DARE* (Qu. II26, . . *"I wouldn't know him from* _____.") 83 Infs, chiefly S Atl, Gulf States, Adam's housecat; LA25, OH90, VA69, 71, Adam's cat; AL10, Adam's house; FL48, A housecat, [corr to] Adam's housecat. [Of all Infs responding to the question, 26% had less than hs educ; of those giving these responses, 56% had less than hs educ.]

Abbreviations: S Atl: South Atlantic; eAL: East Alabama; wGA: west Georgia; Qu: Question; LA: Louisiana; OH: Ohio; VA: Virginia; FL: Florida; corr: corrected to.

In the US a project called DARE (*The Dictionary of American Regional English*) aims to document regionalisms, i.e. elements of US English that are not found everywhere in the country. These include words and phrases that vary from one area to another, and are learned at home rather than at school as part of oral rather than written culture. So far four volumes have been produced (from A to Sk) with a fifth and final volume to follow. DARE is based on face-to-face interviews with 2,777 people carried out in 1,002 communities throughout the country between 1965 and 1970. It also used print materials from letters, diaries, novels and newspapers.

2.5 MORE CHALLENGES FOR DIALECTOLOGISTS

Some prominent aspects of dialect identification either have not received sufficient attention within dialectology or have proved elusive when studied.

Prosody

Traditional dialectology has mostly concentrated on segmental units of sound (e.g. individual vowels and consonants) rather than continuous prosodic characteristics like rhythm, pitch, intonation and voice quality. The linguist Wolfgang Klein (1988: 147) claims that he can recognise a speaker of Berlin dialect 'after a few words', but finds it difficult even as a practising linguist to identify what it is that creates this perception of the 'flavour' of the dialect. He speculates that the specific 'flavour' may be a composite of features seldom studied by dialectologists: speech rate, pause structure and pitch range. Yet prosodic features are acquired first in childhood and are hence more deeply imprinted. For this reason, they are often retained when adults acquire a new language or a new dialect (for one such case study, involving a change from the Tsuruoka dialect of Japanese to the Tokyo standard with regard to prosody, see Chambers 2003: 213–16).

In many dialects of English, questions are formed by a change in the word order and by a high rising intonation contour (as in *Is Harriet coming over to dinner tonight*? or even *Harriet's coming over to dinner tonight?*). On the other hand, the statement *Harriet's coming over to dinner tonight* ends with a falling intonation. Gregory Guy et al. (1986) studied a phenomenon known as High Rise Terminals (HRT) or Australian Questioning Intonation (AQI).[6] This involves a new pattern of intonation for ordinary statements, with a rising intonation at the end of the statement, rather than the falling intonation expected of statements in many dialects of English. Guy et al. found that this pattern was a recent development, most common among teenagers, fulfilling the interactive function of enabling the speaker to check

or confirm that the addressee is following the conversation. This type of variation in intonation pattern is only a small part of the prosodic characteristics of dialects that Klein had referred to. Phoneticians and sociolinguists have some way to go in characterising prosodic variation systematically, though new computer-based techniques make this more and more feasible.

Articulatory Setting

In addition to the movements of speech organs associated with the articulation of particular vowels or consonants, the organs of the vocal tract have certain preferred positions, which differ from those they have in a state of rest. The preferred shape (or general setting) of the vocal tract is known as the 'articulatory setting'. It may give a speech variety its characteristic 'colour' and is one of the ways in which dialects tend to be identified by lay people (for example, identifying a particular dialect as 'nasal').

Speaking of Scouse, the dialect spoken in Liverpool, the phonetician David Abercrombie (1967: 94–5) suggests that

> people can be found with adenoidal voice quality who do not have adenoids – they have learnt the quality from the large number of people who do have them, so that they conform to what, for that community, has become the norm. (Continuing velic closure, together with velarization, are the principal components needed for counterfeiting adenoidal voice quality.)[7]

G. Knowles (1978: 89) attributes the Scouse voice quality to the following:

> In Scouse, the centre of gravity of the tongue is brought backwards and upwards, the pillars of the fauces are narrowed, the pharynx is tightened and the larynx is displaced downwards. The lower jaw is typically held close to the upper jaw, and this position is maintained even for 'open' vowels.[8]

Articulatory settings and their relation to dialects present the same difficulties to researchers as the study of prosody. Phoneticians have not yet developed systematic descriptions of a range of possible articulatory settings that dialectologists can draw on. Descriptions of dialect articulation thus tend to be very specific, rather than comparative, for example Knowles (cited above) and Trudgill (1974: 185–8).

Discourse and Dialect

Ronald Macaulay (1991) has suggested that yet another area awaiting systematic exploration by sociolinguists is the possibility of locating dialects in everyday discourse. That is, dialectologists should pay attention to how the characteristic 'flavour' of a dialect may also reside in the special norms for interaction, special types of speech events that may be embedded within a conversation, and the use of elements whose function is to

smoothen interaction and conversation. Macaulay attempted to characterise the dialect of English in Ayr, Scotland, by quantifying the use of **discourse particles** like *I mean, y' know, you ken, oh,* and so on. These particles serve to keep conversation flowing, and simultaneously give it a local and personal ('you and me') flavour. Perhaps more significant from the viewpoint of relating dialect and discourse are other norms of organising conversation and interaction. Such aspects of speech culture involve genres like narratives, children's language games, the use of riddles and proverbs in ordinary speech. Their potential in characterising dialect has still to be researched in detail. One of these which has been researched in detail – narratives – will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Register and Dialect

The term 'register' denotes variation in language according to the context in which it is being used. Different situations call for adjustments to the type of language used: for example, the type of language that an individual **uses** varies according to whether s/he is speaking to family members, addressing a public gathering, or discussing science with professional colleagues. Such variation contrasts with variation according to the **user**, that is, the regional background described in the first part of this chapter, and the social background of the user described in Chapter 3.

In this poem, the conventions of the legal register, are parodied by using them in a register where they do not apply (children's rhymes and stories)

The party of the first part
hereinafter known as Jack,
and the party of the second
part hereinafter known as Jill,
ascended or caused to be
ascended an elevation of
undetermined height and
degree of slope, hereinafter
referred to as 'hill'.

(D. Sandburg, *The Legal Guide to Mother Goose*, 1978, cited by Benson 1985)

Clear-cut registers involve the law (sometimes called 'legalese'), sports broadcasting and scientific discourse. However, the concept of register need not apply to specialised professions only, as Wallwork (1969: 110) makes clear:

> Every time we insist on a letter which starts 'Dear Sir' ending with 'Yours faithfully', rather than 'Yours affectionately', every time we tell a child not to use slang in an essay; every time we hesitate as to 'how best to put it' to the boss; every time we decide to telephone rather than to write, we are making decisions on the basis of the selection of the appropriate register for our purpose.

The significant point is that a register acquires its characteristics by convention, which people are then more or less obliged to use. Variation by person becomes minimal (except perhaps for accent). That is, the study of dialect without attention to contexts of language use makes traditional dialectology one-dimensional. Halliday et al. (1964) stressed three dimensions along which register may vary: field, tenor and mode.

> **Field:** nature of the topic around which the language activity is centred ('what is happening').
> **Tenor:** relations between people communicating ('who is taking part, and on what terms')
> **Mode:** medium employed ('is the language form spoken, written, signed etc.?')[9]

Halliday and Hasan (1985: 41) insist that registers are not marginal or special varieties of language, rather they cover the total range of language activity in a society:

> [R]egister is what you are speaking at the time, depending on what you are doing and the nature of the activity in which the language is functioning. So whereas, in principle at least, any individual might go through life speaking only one dialect (in modern complex societies this is increasingly unlikely; but it is theoretically possible, and it used to be the norm), it is not possible to go through life using only one register. The register reflects another aspect of the social order, that of social processes, the different types of social activity that people commonly engage in.

Register studies have not had as big an impact in dialect study as the authors had hoped, though some researchers have pursued a broader related area which has come to be known as genre theory, which we do not pursue in this book. The concept of register does however overlap with the concept of style, an aspect of language variation that we discuss in Chapters 3 and 6. Register and traditional dialect study have to a large extent been overtaken by interactional sociolinguistics, a branch which looks closely at conversational strategies employed by different groups of people when they communicate with each other (see Chapter 6).

2.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we focused on studies of the geographical spread and diversification of speech. Some difficulties over the terms 'language' and 'dialect'

were noted. The techniques of traditional dialectology were described, including the questionnaire-based survey. The analysis of survey data is usually presented by means of dialect maps, which show the distribution of key linguistic features via isoglosses. Dialect maps help linguists interpret certain patterns of usage: for example, where a new item originates from, and how it spreads. Patterns of isoglosses show whether an area is a focal area (a centre of linguistic prestige), a relic area or a transitional area. The *Linguistic Survey of India* shows that the techniques and results of dialectology are essentially the same for monolingual and multilingual surveys, provided that the latter involves a speech continuum (and not languages that belong to different families). This chapter points out the limitations of traditional dialectology in dealing with dynamic aspects of linguistic geography like the border dialect, the growth of new towns and transcontinental migrations. Aspects of language that seem salient in dialect identification, but which have still to be studied in detail by dialectologists, are identified: prosody, articulatory setting and discourse particles. Register is a feature of language use which cuts across dialect variation and also shows the limitations of a geographical focus alone.

A major shortcoming of this field as it has been traditionally practised is that it elevates regional characteristics above the social groupings that people fall into. Moreover, the field has traditionally been concerned with the forms of language that vary (accent, vocabulary, grammar), rather than the sociological functions fulfilled by such variation. Chapters 3 and 4 will look more closely at the social motivations for variation and change.

Notes

1. The south of India had a further 70 million then.
2. The idea of a Christian parable being used in India is odd, though it has to be said that the tale lent itself to very lively retellings. Grammatically, there was the added advantage of the tale involving three pronoun forms, three personal verb endings and a full range of tenses and noun cases.
3. 'Isogloss' is parallel to the terms 'isotherm' and 'isobar' in geography.
4. Wells (1982) calls this the STRUT vowel. We use three words per set to ensure that readers can identify the full set. Each set contains hundreds (even thousands) of words for which spellings may be inconsistent. Hence *monk*, *ton* and *country* belong to the STRUT set while *put* does not.
5. The terms were coined by a twelfth-century poet, Bernat d'Auriac, for varieties that used *oc* or *oïl* as the word for 'yes'.
6. The phenomenon also occurs in New Zealand, and is even suggested as having originated there rather than in Australia. It is also found in other parts of the English-speaking world including Canada, California and the southern USA. So the issue of origins is unclear.
7. Abercrombie tried to relate these to the health and physical conditions in the

poorer areas. This type of explanation linking accent with environment is rather dubious.

8. The speech organs referred to here are diagrammed in most introductory linguistic and phonetic texts, for example Ladefoged (1993). The anatomical term 'fauces' is more usually referred to as 'mouth cavity'.
9. The term 'mode' (coined by Spencer and Gregory 1964) replaced the term 'style' which Halliday et al. (1964) had used in their earlier work.