Leeds Studies in English

A DIACHRONIC-STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS
OF A NORTHERN ENGLISH URBAN DIALECT *

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Linguists as well as non-linguists have nowadays come to accept the fact that "local English dialects are not simply Standard English badly pronounced; they are varieties of speech with a pedigree as good as that of Standard English, which is simply one of the English dialects which, for various non-linguistic reasons, has acquired greater prestige than the other dialects."[1] When dealing with dialects, it is also important to notice that "a language can change and develop differently in different parts of the country, and some of its older features can remain in some parts whilst dying out in others."[2] Much has been said about the future of dialects. There is no doubt a certain truth in what seems to be a unanimously shared dictum, namely that dialects are dying out. Yet the time within which this is going to happen has been exaggerated by many.[3] There will always be differences in speech to observe, and it is therefore much more appropriate to say that the nature of dialect will change and that this change is already taking place.

Dialect-speech in the traditional (European) sense is, of course, still best preserved in rural areas, whereas in towns it is exposed to various influences which undermine its traditional character. We refer here to education, to mass media—radio, television, and film[4]—and to the whole linguistic climate of a large commercial centre. We should mention, however, that these influences are making themselves more and more felt on the rural dialects as well.

The following is a historical-structural study of the vowels of accented syllables of an urban area: Gateshead (Co. Durham).[5] Since it is urban, it has not been studied by the *Survey of English Dialects.*[6] As regards the two-dimensional structural approach of the analysis, this can be considered a fairly recent innovation in the field of dialectology.[7]

Gateshead, which forms part of Tyneside, has been subject to a change of population lately, since a great number of people have poured into this area from other parts of the country. It is, therefore, extremely important for the proper understanding of Gateshead, as well as any

other urban dialect, to study its traditional local features, or the survivals of them, before it is too late.

Basically, our approach is the same as that made by the *Survey of English Dialects,* i.e. we have sought for the oldest features still extant. Furthermore, the speech patterns of the lowest social classes are here taken as representative of the whole urban community. The social composition of the population of Gateshead completely justifies this, as 89.4% of the occupied and retired males belong to social Classes III, IV and V, and only 10.6% to the highest two.[8] Had the composition of the population been different and had it been the aim to investigate the speech patterns of the whole community, then, of course, it would have also been necessary to follow a different procedure.
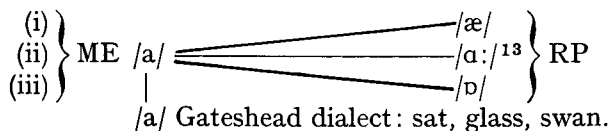
The survey outlined here shows the development of Middle English (ME) short and long vowel phonemes as well as diphthongs in the living dialect[9] as compared with the Standard Modern English development.[10] Only the most important pre-ME sources have been mentioned. As is well known, the phonemes of Old English are a rather controversial question today.[11] In this survey, Standard Modern English words are given as examples for every period. Letters between slant lines represent ME and Modern English phonemes (Received Pronunciation [RP] as well as dialect).[12] Only the "normal" development and the most significant exceptions have been stated.

SHORT VOWELS

ME /a/

SOURCES:

1. (i) Old English (OE) *æ* (sat), OE *a* (hammer), OE *ea* (flax); Old Norse (ON) *a* (anger); Old French (OF) *a* (anguish); OE *a* before intervocalic *r* (marry);

    (ii) OE *a, æ* and OF *a* before fricatives and /n/-clusters (staff, glass, path, dance, answer);

    (iii) OE *w* before *a, æ* (swan, was).

$$
\left.\begin{array}{c}\text{(i)}\\\text{(ii)}\\\text{(iii)}\end{array}\right\}\text{ME /a/}\overbrace{}\quad\left.\begin{array}{c}\text{—/æ/}\\\text{—/ɑ:/}^{13}\\\text{—/ɒ/}\end{array}\right\}\text{RP}
$$

/a/ Gateshead dialect: sat, glass, swan.

Since the dialect has in each case the same vowel as in ME, we must assume that it has remained at the ME stage and has never made any of the developments which have given us the present RP phonemes.

2. ME /ar/   We can assume that in preconsonantal and word-final position the same development has taken place in RP and the dialect, yielding /ɑ:/ in both cases (as in hard, far). The ME sequence first changed to /aə/ and then became the new phoneme at the end of the eighteenth century. It has remained unchanged in RP as well as in the dialect up to the present day. It is also important to note that in RP 1 (ii) and 2 have merged, whereas they are kept distinct in the dialect. In the latter the vowel is usually burr-coloured.

ME /e/
SOURCES:
OE e (west), OE eo (seven), OE ē (bless), OE ēo (friend), OE ǣ (cleanse), OE ēa (left); OF e (jest).
    ME /e/ occurs as /ɛ/ in RP as well as in the Gateshead dialect. Both speech forms have therefore developed in the same way.

ME /i/
SOURCES:
OE i (sing), OE y (hill), OE e (link), OE ī (grist), OE ȳ (fist); OF i (issue).
    In RP and the dialect ME /i/ has become /ɪ/. However, it must be noted that whereas ME /i/ before ht appears as /ai/ in RP, it has remained at the early Modern English stage in the dialect, in which (about 1500) ME /ix/ merged with ME /i:/. Examples: night, right, sight, light, which appear in the dialect as /ni:t, ri:t, si:t, li:t/. But the fluctuation in pronunciation must not be neglected. Variants with /ai/ in these words are probably due to the influence of RP.

ME /o/
SOURCES:
OE o (lot), OE ō (gospel); OF o (rock).
    Here again we find the same development both in RP and the dialect: /ɒ/. Before ng OE /a/ was lengthened and became ME /ɔ:/ in the South and /a:/ in the North.[14] Both forms were later shortened. This is documented by the fact that in RP we find the southern "normal" development, which is /ɒ/ in words like long, wrong, whereas in the Gateshead dialect ME /a:/ merged in these cases with ME /a/ and remained /a/ (see also ME /a/). However, RP pronunciations are becoming more frequent in this dialect area now and are gradually replacing the original feature.

ME /u/

SOURCES:

1. OE *u* (nut), OE *y* (much), OE *ū* (dust, husband); OF *u, o* (button, supper), OF *u, ui* (judge, usher).

2. OE *u* (pull, full); OF *ou, ui* (bushel, push); chiefly between a labial and /l, š/.

In RP 1 and 2 developed to /ʌ/ and /ɷ/ respectively. Except in the positions outlined in 2, ME /u/ was gradually unrounded and lowered in Standard English during the first half of the seventeenth century. In the dialect, however, this distinction is not made. Here ME /u/ remained /ɷ/ in both groups. Thus the phonemic split has not taken place.

ME /er, ir, ur/ (in preconsonantal and final position)

SOURCES:

1. ME /er/   OE *eor* (earth); OF *er* (herb).

2. ME /ir/   OE *ir* (church), OE *ri* (bird), OE *yr* (first).

3. ME /ur/   OE *ur* (curse), OE *yr* (worm), OE *eor* (work); OF *or, our, ur* (curtain, fur, nurse).

The development of these sequences into RP and the dialect has only been the same insofar as ME /er, ir, ur/ merged in both in early Modern English in /ʌr/. This merging took place shortly after Shakespeare's time. Later, however, RP and the dialect took a completely different course: /ʌr/ became /ɜ:/ in RP. This change is parallel to that of ME /ar/ via /aə/ to RP /ɑ:/ in the same positions. The present-day dialect, however, has /ɔ:/ in all these cases because of a different development of /r/ in this region. We have here an instance of a burr-modified vowel.[15]

The most important development of the ME short vowels into RP as contrasted with the dialectal development is shown schematically in the following tables:

(a) ME:	/a/	/e/	/i/	/o/	/u/	
RP:	/æ/	/ɛ/	/ɪ/	/ɒ/	/ʌ/	/ɷ/

(b) Nthn.ME:	/a/	/e/	/i/	/o/	/u/
Gateshead dialect:	/a/	/ɛ/	/ɪ/	/ɒ/	/ɷ/.

LONG VOWELS AND DIPHTHONGS

As regards the ME long vowels and diphthongs and their development into RP and the dialect, the situation is much more complicated. Considerable changes, resulting in a number of phonemic mergers, took place mainly between 1350 and 1600, but phonemic changes also occurred later.

ME /aː/
SOURCES:
1. OE *a* (spade, bake, made, name, ape, hate, lake), OE *æ* (blade, late, grave), OE *ea* (gate); ON *a* (cake, flake); OF *a* (date, gable).
2. OE *ā* (stone, bone, home, boat, goat, road, oak, pope, loaf, most, soap, whole).

The "normal" development of ME /aː/ into the dialect is /jɛ/. This is true of the above two groups and is to be seen today in the pronunciations /bjɛk, kjɛk, mjɛd, njɛm, spjɛd, gjɛt/ "bake, cake, made, name, spade, gate" (group 1) and /stjɛn, bjɛn/ "stone, bone" (group 2).

The standard language took a different course. In the first group ME /aː/ merged with ME /ai/, finally yielding /ei/ in RP today. In the dialect, however, this phonemic merger did not take place. In the words listed as belonging to group 1 above we find, in addition to the regular dialectal /jɛ/, pronunciations with /eː/ today, resulting from a substitution of earlier Standard English /ei/ (see ME /ai/). In the following words belonging to the same group Standard English influence has completely replaced the genuine dialectal development: blade, ape, hate, flake, lake, late, grave, date, gable. They are pronounced only with /eː/ in the dialect today.

Group 2: North of the Humber-Ribble line OE *ā* remained unchanged and merged with ME /aː/, thus quite normally yielding /jɛ/ in the dialect (as above). In the South, however, OE *ā* became ME /ɔː/ which, in turn, normally developed to RP /ou/ (see ME /ɔː/ and ME /ou/). Thus in the standard language "snow" and "stone" merged in /ou/, whereas they are kept distinct in the dialect, in which they are represented by /ɑː/ and /jɛ/ respectively. Apart from the pronunciation /jɛ/ in "stone, bone" and "home" we can also hear an /oː/ substitution in the dialect today. This is an earlier form of RP /ou/. Owing to Standard English influence /jɛ/ seems to be dying out gradually. The following words would occur with /jɛ/ in Gateshead if regularly developed; they are, in fact, always pronounced with /oː/: boat, goat, road, oak, pope, loaf, most, soap, etc. /eː/ and /oː/ occur where the genuine dialectal development has been replaced by Standard English-

influenced forms. To determine this with absolute certainty in every case it would be necessary to investigate the syllable structure in ME. To take an example: contrary to the present-day situation, were the initial consonant clusters /blj/, /flj/, and /grj/ possible at all at that time in the dialect (and RP)? If so,they were probably rather unstable. If not, a different development must be assumed. What has been said here also applies, *mutatis mutandis,* to cases mentioned under the different developments of ME /o:/.

ME /ai/
SOURCES:
OE *æg* (day, slain), OE *ǣg* (clay), OE *eg* (play, rain), OE *ēg* (hay); OF *a* before /nj̆/ (change, strange), OF *ai* (bay, plain).

In RP and the dialect the first element of ME /ai/ was lengthened and raised, while the second became weaker and was finally absorbed by the first. The result was /e:/, the form occurring in today's dialect. In RP, /e:/ was later diphthongized, i.e. in the early nineteenth century, and became /ei/. In this case, therefore, the standard language developed further, whereas the dialect has remained at an earlier stage. It is also worth noting that, in RP, ME /ai/ and ME /a:/ merged in /e:/, today yielding /ei/. In the dialect, however, both phonemes are kept distinct (see ME /a:/).

ME /au/
SOURCES:
1.   OE *ag* (saw, law), OE *aw* (claw), OE *āw* (thaw), OE *ēaw* (raw, straw).
2.   OE *ea* (walk), OE *æ* (small); ON *a* (call); OF *a* (false). Shortly after 1500 ME /a/ before /l/ was diphthongized to /au/.
3.   OE *āw* (blow, know, snow), OE *āg* (own), OE *ēaw* (show).

The second element of ME /au/ was weakened and finally dropped, whereas the first was lengthened and retracted, yielding /ɑ:/ in the standard language and the dialect. In the latter this is the form we usually encounter today (in groups 1, 2, and 3). Thus ME /au/ is levelled with ME /ar/ (+ cons.) in Gateshead speech. In the standard language /ɑ:/ developed further in groups 1 and 2, was raised and finally became /ɔ:/. Today, however, the RP phoneme /ɔ:/ is gradually replacing the dialectal /ɑ:/.

In group 3, the basis for the RP development was southern ME /ou/, which first became /o:/ and was later diphthongized to /ou/. In the dialect /o:/ is today increasingly being substituted for the "normal"

dialectal /ɑ:/ in words belonging to group 3. In "show" we recorded only /o:/. This, again, must be attributed to the influence of Standard English.

Before *ht,* ME /au/ has remained /au/ in the dialect, but not in RP where it developed to /ɔ:/, as in taught, slaughter (OE *āh, ēah*). Forms influenced by Standard English, however, are becoming more and more frequent in the dialect now.

Around 1500, ME /ou/ before /x/ merged with /au/, remained as /au/ in the dialect, but developed further to /ɔ:/ in RP (see above). Examples: daughter (from OE *o*), brought, thought (from OE *ō*). "Fought" (from OE *o*) was recorded only as /fɔ:t/ in the dialect, a form no doubt due to the influence of RP, which is making itself more and more felt here, too.

ME /e:/
SOURCES:
OE *ē* (field, shield, feet, bleed, meet, steeple, he), OE *ēo* (deep, fleet, cheek, tree, see), OE *ǣ* (needle, eel, seed), OE *y* (evil), OE *i* (week); OF *ē* (degree, agree), OF *ie* (brief, piece).

ME /e:/ had the same development in the dialect as in RP. In such words as those mentioned above it was raised already in late ME and became /i:/ in both speech forms.

ME /ɛ:/ merged with ME /e:/, a development common to the standard language and the dialect.

Two other developments of ME /e:/ which will have to be mentioned here are shared by RP and the dialect:

1. ME /e:/, when shortened before the raising to /i:/, appears as /ɛ/ in RP and the dialect. Examples: wet, let (from OE *ē*).

2. ME /e:/, when shortened after the raising to /i:/, appears as /ɪ/ in the dialect and RP. To this category belong: sick (from OE *ēo*), rick (from OE *ēa*), strip (from OE *īe*).
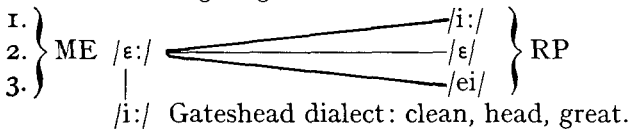
ME /ɛ:/
SOURCES:
OE *ǣ* (reach, clean, deal, wheat), OE *ēa* (leap, leaf, team, cheap), OE *e* (eat, steal, speak); OF *e, ai* (cease, treat, peace, please).

In the above words the development in the standard language and the dialect has been the same. ME /ɛ:/ was first raised to /e:/ in early Modern English and then to /i:/ in the early eighteenth century, thus merging with ME /e:/. The result in both speech forms today is /i:/.

In a considerable number of words early Modern English /e:/ was shortened and lowered to /ɛ/. This was the case in bread, dead, death, head, red, threat (all from OE *ēa*), breath, ready, sweat (all from OE *ǣ*), heavy (OE *e*), heaven (OE *eo*), etc. As is well known, /ɛ/ regularly appears in RP in these words, thus being levelled with ME /e:/. But this is not true of the dialect. Here the vowel was not shortened and, therefore, it developed in the same way as above, i.e. to /i:/, in the following words: bread, dead, head. In the others only /ɛ/ was recorded. However, in some words, variants with /ɛ/ are also heard today: /hi:d/ ∼ /hɛd/, so that Standard English influence is noticeable here, too.

A small group of words shows yet another development: break (OE *e*), great (OE *ēa*), steak (ON *ei*). These have /ei/ in RP. In the eighteenth century the pronunciation varied between /i:/ and /e:/ in England. Then /e:/ gained priority in the standard language, was diphthongized and became /ei/ in RP. In the Gateshead dialect /i:/— the regular development—can still be heard in "great" and "break" today as in 1786 when Granville Sharp noticed this pronunciation "in the northern parts of England." However, owing to the influence of Standard English, /gri:t/ and /bri:k/ are now often replaced by /gre:t/ and /bre:k/.

The following diagram illustrates the different developments:

$$
\left. \begin{matrix} 1. \\ 2. \\ 3. \end{matrix} \right\} \text{ME} \ /\epsilon{:}/ \Longleftarrow \begin{matrix} /i{:}/ \\ /\epsilon/ \\ /ei/ \end{matrix} \left. \right\} \text{RP}
$$

/i:/ Gateshead dialect: clean, head, great.

ME /i:/

SOURCES:

OE *ī* (ice, pipe, white, time), OE *ȳ* (lice, mice, pride, bride), OE *ēag* (eye), OE *ēo* (thigh); ON *ȳ* (sky, mire); OF *i* (arrive, bribe, cry).

ME /i:/ has normally developed into the diphthongal phoneme /ai/ both in RP and the dialect, i.e. the two forms of speech have taken the same course.

OE *i* before /nd/ was lengthened (like OE *u* before /nd/) and then merged with ME /i:/ which, in turn, became /ai/. Here the dialectal development was different from that in the standard language, since the dialect either retained the short vowel in this position or shortened it again before its diphthongization. Thus, contrary to RP, "blind" and "find" are today /blɪnd/ and /fɪnd/ in the dialect. But occasionally RP /ai/-forms also occur in traditional Gateshead speech in these words. (For the development of ME /i/ before *ht* [/ix/] into the dialect and RP see ME /i/.)

ME /ɔ:/
SOURCES:
OE *o* (foal, stove, hole, coal, smoke); OF *o* (coat, note, roast, close).
ME /ɔ:/, which coalesced with ME /ou/ in the dialect and in RP, was first raised to /o:/. This form we regularly find in Gateshead speech today. In the standard language /o:/ was diphthongized in the early nineteenth century and became /ou/ (see ME /ou/ and also ME /a:/).

ME /ou/
SOURCES:
OE *ōw* (grow, row *vb.*, flow), OE *og* (bow, flown).
    As mentioned above, ME /ou/ was first monophthongized to /o:/. Up to this point we find the same development in the standard language and the dialect. In RP /o:/ was later diphthongized to /ou/. Thus an earlier form is preserved in the dialect today.
    In the seventeenth century ME /ou/ merged with ME /ɔ:/ in RP as well as in the dialect, the first phoneme being monophthongized and the second raised (see ME /ɔ:/).

ME /o:/
SOURCES:
OE *ō* (cool, school, moon, tooth, spoon), OE *ēo* (choose, shoot); ON *ō* (boon, booth); OF *o* after labials (fool, boot).
    ME /o:/ merged with ME /iu/ both in RP and the dialect—after /o:/ had been raised to /u:/ in the second part of the fifteenth century. ME /iu/ became /ju:/ in early Modern English. After that the dialect and RP took a different course. Whereas in the latter /j/ was lost in all positions and /u:/ retained, /u:/ was shortened in the dialect and /j/ preserved in most positions.
    The following words are usually pronounced with /u:/ in the dialect today: bloom, mood, cool, stool. This is to be attributed to Standard English influence. However, also in the other words mentioned above, the influence of the standard language becomes more and more noticeable, gradually replacing the genuine dialectal feature. Thus /mu:n/ "moon" will soon be heard more often than /mjɔn/. As noted above, ME /o:/ was normally raised to /u:/ in late ME and merged with /ju:/ (from ME /iu/).
    Apart from the development just outlined, two other developments must be mentioned here that concern the standard language:
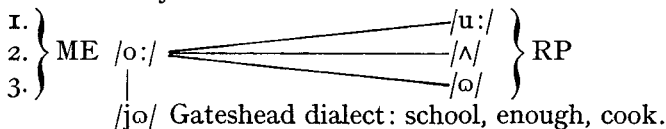1.   Early shortening of the vowel phoneme in certain positions in early Modern English before the unrounding of earlier /u/, and thus levelling with ME /u/. The result is /ʌ/ in RP (see ME /u/). /ʌ/ appears regularly

in the standard language in words belonging to this category: rough, suck, dove (from OE *ū*) and blood, done, flood, glove, month, other, mother, enough (from OE *ō*). As above, the regular dialectal development is /jǫ/. However, we recorded this sequence only in "enough." In all the other paradigms /j/ is no longer preserved today. Thus in traditional Gateshead speech the result in these cases is the same as that of ME /u/, namely /ǫ/.

2. Late shortening of the vowel phoneme after ME /u/ had already been unrounded to /ʌ/ in RP during the first half of the seventeenth century. This shortening, therefore, cannot have begun before the seventeenth century. In several words (book, cook, look, took—all from OE *ō*) RP /ǫ/ did not gain priority before the first half of the nineteenth century.

   In the dialect, the regular development is still apparent in the pronunciations /bjǫk/ "book," /kjǫk/ "cook," and others. However, variants with /ǫ/ are becoming more and more frequent now. In bosom, foot, brook, shook, etc. we recorded only /ǫ/-forms. Whether this is due to Standard English influence or simply to analogy cannot be determined with certainty. (See in this connexion also ME /a:/.)

   The three different developments outlined above can be illustrated schematically as follows:

$$
\left.\begin{matrix} \text{1.} \\ \text{2.} \\ \text{3.} \end{matrix}\right\} \text{ME } /o:/ \quad \overset{\text{/u:/}}{\underset{\text{/ǫ/}}{\text{/ʌ/}}} \left.\right\} \text{RP}
$$

/jǫ/ Gateshead dialect: school, enough, cook.

ME /iu/

SOURCES:

OE *īw, ēow* (chew, knew, true); OF *ieu* (suit), OF *eu* (blue), OF *u* (duke, fume), OF *ui* (fruit, June), and OE *ēow, ēaw* (spew, few, dew), yielding ME /ɛu/, which merged with ME /iu/ in early Modern English.

   ME /iu/ became /ju:/ in early Modern English. Both in RP and the dialect /j/ is still preserved today, except after affricates and /l, r/. Thus the same development has taken place in the dialect and the standard language.

   In RP and the dialect ME /o:/ merged with ME /iu/ (see ME /o:/).

ME /ui/

SOURCES:

OF *ui, oi* (poison, join, joint).

   This diphthong occurs in words of French origin only and has developed in the same way in RP and the Gateshead dialect, yielding /ɔi/ in both forms of speech.

ME /oi/
SOURCES:
OF *oi* (joy, noise).

Like ME /ui/, /oi/ also occurs in words of French origin only. The two ME phonemes merged both in RP and the dialect and appear as /ɔi/ today. This is the only foreign vowel phoneme in the standard language and the dialect.
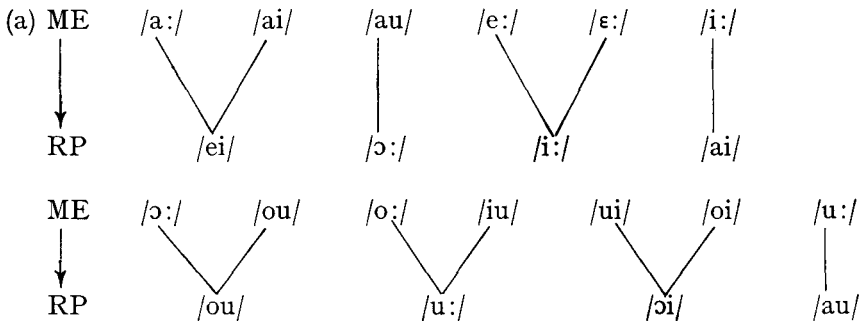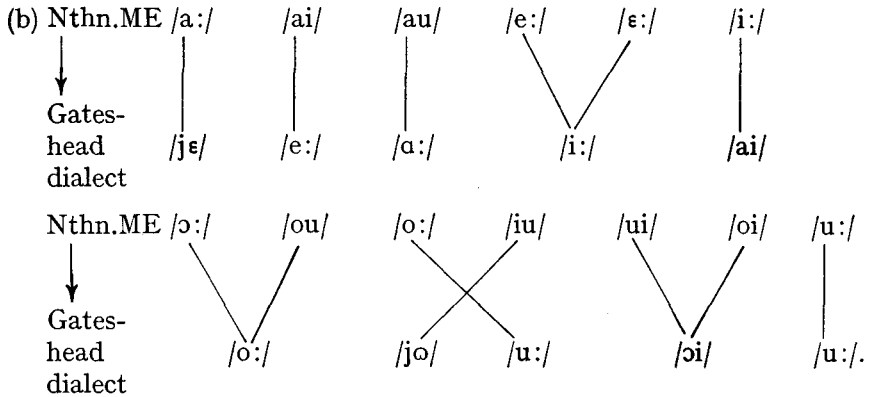
ME /u:/
SOURCES:
OE *ū* (down, how, cow, house, cloud, south, mouse, mouth, about);
OF *ou, o* (count, doubt).

ME /u:/ remains as /u:/ in the dialect, except in final position, where /u:/ is dying out and is generally being replaced by /au/ through the influence of Standard English.[16] In the dialect /u:/ is not positionally restricted as is /au/, the normal development of ME /u:/ in RP. It is well known that the ME phoneme was not diphthongized in RP—and, of course, in the dialect—in words like room, stoop (from OE *ū*), i.e. before labials. OE *u* in ground, pound, etc. was lengthened in late OE—like OE *i* before /nd/—and merged with ME /u:/ in the standard language, finally yielding /au/. In the dialect, either this lengthening did not take place at all or the long vowel was shortened again before it could be diphthongized. In any case, the present-day regular realization in the dialect is /ɷ/. It must be noted, however, that /u:/ also occurs sometimes in words belonging to this category. In "wound," for example, we recorded only /u:/. This substitution is probably due to analogy with words like /du:n, hu:s/ "down, house," although in "wound" Standard English influence is likewise possible since ME /u:/ is also not diphthongized in RP after /w/.

The following two tables show the normal development of ME long vowel and diphthongal phonemes into RP and the dialect:

(a) ME   /a:/   /ai/   /au/   /e:/   /ɛ:/   /i:/

RP   /ei/   /ɔ:/   /i:/   /ai/

ME   /ɔ:/   /ou/   /o:/   /iu/   /ui/   /oi/   /u:/

RP   /ou/   /u:/   /ɔi/   /au/

(b) Nthn.ME /a:/ /ai/ /au/ /e:/ /ɛ:/ /i:/

Gates-
head   /jɛ/ /e:/ /a:/ /i:/ /ai/
dialect

Nthn.ME /ɔ:/ /ou/ /o:/ /iu/ /ui/ /oi/ /u:/

Gates-
head   /o:/ /jɔ/ /u:/ /ɔi/ /u:/.
dialect

Some dialectal features seem to be more stable and less likely to succumb to Standard English influence in the near future. Others, however, will no doubt soon be completely replaced, especially since the area under investigation is urban and consequently the pressure of the standard language rather great, so that the traditional dialect is bound to become increasingly mixed. Further, the fluctuation of the population must be reckoned with as well as sociological factors, all of which contribute to a dilution of traditional dialect. Since the time will soon come when historically developed, genuine dialectal phonemes are no longer heard in several instances, the possibility of false reconstructions is increased. All this, we feel, increases the urgency of studying archaic, traditional dialect before these features disappear completely.[17]

The present study has made it possible to draw the following conclusions:

1. Older pronunciations have remained in one dialect while disappearing in others (including RP, which is a non-linguistic label characterizing the sound system of an English dialect as being socially acceptable).[18]

2. The growing influence of the class dialect Standard English is responsible for the gradual disappearance of older dialectal features.[19]

3. A dialect can develop the same way as—and even further than[20]— RP.

4. A dialect can take an altogether different course from RP.

NOTES

* It is both an honour and a particular pleasure for me to dedicate this paper to Professor Orton, who several years ago introduced me to the manifold problems of dialectology. Thirty-five years ago, Professor Orton published a monograph on his native village dialect Byers Green: *The Phonology of a South Durham Dialect: Descriptive, Historical, and Comparative* (London, 1933). Thus, geographically speaking, we are only a few miles apart.

1 G. L. Brook, *English Dialects* (London, 1963), p. 32. In addition, excellent accounts of dialect in general can be found in R. Quirk, *The Use of English*, 2nd impr. (London, 1963), pp. 81 ff. and H. C. Wyld, *A History of Modern Colloquial English*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 1936), pp. 1-16.

2 John and Joan Levitt, *The Spell of Words* (London, 1959), p. 20.

3 This becomes apparent on comparing Joseph Wright's rather pessimistic outlook in *The English Dialect Grammar* (Oxford, 1905), p. iv, with the first lexical maps of *The Survey of English Dialects*, covering the whole of England. They still show a great variety of local expressions for the same Standard English word. Some of these maps (words for "weakest pig of the litter" and "newt") are reprinted in G. L. Brook, *op. cit.*

4 For other factors conducive to the decline of regional dialect see S. Potter, *Our Language* (Harmondsworth, repr. 1961), p. 139.

5 A purely descriptive analysis of this dialect—in accordance with modern linguistic methods— is Wolfgang Viereck, *Phonematische Analyse des Dialekts von Gateshead-upon-Tyne/Co. Durham* (Hamburg, 1966).

6 For a detailed discussion of the methods of the English and the Scottish dialect surveys see Wolfgang Viereck, "Der *English Dialect Survey* und der *Linguistic Survey of Scotland*— Arbeitsmethoden und bisherige Ergebnisse," *Zeitschrift für Mundartforschung*, XXXI (1964), 333-55.
   Apart from our own material, we have consulted both the *Survey of English Dialects* Vol. I and the evidence provided by Eduard Kolb, *Phonological Atlas of the Northern Region: The Six Northern Counties, North Lincolnshire and the Isle of Man* (Bern, 1966).

7 Adherents to the American schools of descriptive linguistics have been carrying out their research to the exclusion of the history of the language, partly with unjustified appeal to Leonard Bloomfield, whose views were not entirely anti-historical. See his book *Language*, 7th impr. (London, 1962), pp. 281 and 508 ff. The Prague School, however, has from its very beginning considered the diachronic approach to language just as scientific as the synchronic approach and has successfully combined both aspects. For an early statement of the structural approach in the diachronic analysis see Roman Jakobson, "Prinzipien der historischen Phonologie," *Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Prague*, IV (1931), 247-67; in French translation, "Principes de Phonologie Historique," as Appendix I to N. S. Trubetzkoy, *Principes de Phonologie* (Paris, 1949), pp. 315-36. Josef Vachek was especially engaged in historical-structural investigations of Standard English. See his papers, "On the Interplay of Quantitative and Qualitative Aspects in Phonemic Development," *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik*, V (1957), 5-28; "Notes on the Quantitative Correlation of Vowels in the Phonematic Development of English," *Mélanges de Linguistique et de Philologie: Fernand Mossé in Memoriam* (Paris, 1959), pp. 444-56; "On the Interplay of External and Internal Factors in the Development of Language," *Lingua*, XI (1962), 433-48; "On Peripheral Phonemes of Modern English," *Brno Studies in English*, IV (1964), 7-109; "The Place of [ɔɪ] in the Phonic Pattern of Southern British English," *Linguistics*, XIV (1965), 52-9. Similar to the approach advocated by the Prague School is that of André Martinet. See the exciting ideas in his *Economie des changements phonétiques: Traité de phonologie diachronique* (Bern, 1955, repr. 1964). In the field of dialectology, the most thorough recent application of the synchronic and diachronic structural approach is that by Marthe Philipp, *Le Système Phonologique du Parler de Blaesheim (Bas-Rhin): Etude Synchronique et Diachronique* (Nancy, 1965). Also William G. Moulton has contributed a number of excellent studies in this field, mainly on Swiss German dialects.

8 Class I—Professional, etc., Occupations; Class II—Intermediate Occupations; Class III— Skilled Occupations; Class IV—Partly Skilled Occupations; Class V—Unskilled Occupations. For a detailed description of the different social classes see *Census 1951: England and Wales—Occupation Tables* (London, 1956), pp. x-xii. The above figures are taken from *Census 1951: England and Wales—Housing Report* (London, 1956), pp. 86 ff. and from *Phonematische Analyse des Dialekts von Gateshead-upon-Tyne/Co. Durham*, pp. 56 ff. Figures for the total population are not available. They would, however, show a still higher percentage of the population belonging to Social Classes III-V. This is indicated by the fact that 92·4% of *all occupied* persons are "Operatives" and "Working on Own Account." See *Occupation Tables*, pp. 184 ff. All figures refer to the 1951 Census. Since the affiliation of the population with social classes was not asked for in the 1961 Census, no figures are available. See in this connection also John T. Wright, "Urban Dialects: A Consideration of Method," *Zeitschrift für Mundartforschung*, XXXIII (1966), 232-47.

9 It is a regrettable fact that not enough research has been done in the field of Middle English dialectology. We need much more work of a *phonemic* orientation in this area, in which the spellings of all obtainable local texts and wills are carefully examined. A study of this kind

is Bertil Sundby's *Studies in the Middle English Dialect Material of Worcestershire Records,* Norwegian Studies in English 10 (1963). Regrettably this does not cover our region. The one that does is not phonemically orientated, viz. Gillis Kristensson, *A Survey of Middle English Dialects* 1290-1350: *The Six Northern Counties and Lincolnshire,* Lund Studies in English 35 (1967). We have therefore taken as a basis for the dialect development the phonemic system postulated for late Northern Middle English by Bertil Hedevind in *The Dialect of Dentdale in the West Riding of Yorkshire,* Studia Anglistica Upsaliensia 5 (1967), whose inventory comprises 5 short, 7 long and 6 diphthongal phonemes. His late NME /y:/ is here treated as early NME /o:/.

10 As regards the history of Standard English, the following works have been consulted: K. Brunner, *Die englische Sprache: Ihre geschichtliche Entwicklung,* 2nd ed. (2 vols., Tübingen, 1960-62); O. Jespersen, *A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles,* Pt. I (Heidelberg, 1909); K. Luick, *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache* (Leipzig, 1914-40, repr. with index, Oxford and Stuttgart, 1964); W. Horn—M. Lehnert, *Laut und Leben: Englische Lautgeschichte der neueren Zeit (1400-1950)* (2 vols., Berlin, 1954); E. J. Dobson, *English Pronunciation 1500-1700* (2 vols., Oxford, 1957); A. C. Gimson, *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English* (London, 1962, repr. 1964); Börje Holmberg, *On the Concept of Standard English and the History of Modern English Pronunciation,* Lunds Universitets Årsskrift, Bd. 56, Nr. 3 (1964) and Hans Kurath, *A Phonology and Prosody of Modern English* (Heidelberg and Ann Arbor, 1964). This last important book compares the pronunciation of RP with the main types of cultivated American English and traces their history. Furthermore, it is phonemically orientated. As far as the diachronic part of it is concerned, we acknowledge our indebtedness to it, and in particular our use of it as a basis for the description of the Standard English development. Since the evidence furnished by orthoëpists and phoneticians often cannot be interpreted unequivocally, scholars consequently disagree on the time when certain phonetic changes took place. It is for this reason that in a number of cases we have dispensed with datings. What is important for our purpose is not to state the "exact" time of a certain change, but rather to establish the exact succession of a number of changes.

11 The discussion on the phonemic value of Old English vowel graphs was opened by Marjorie Daunt in her paper "Old English Sound-Changes Reconsidered in Relation to Scribal Tradition and Practice," *Transactions of the Philological Society* (1939), 108-37, and was taken up again by M. L. Samuels in "The Study of Old English Phonology," *Transactions of the Philological Society* (1953), 15-47; see also Marjorie Daunt's rejoinder "Some Notes on Old English Phonology," *ibid.,* 48-54. On some of these problems see Sherman M. Kuhn, "On the Syllabic Phonemes of Old English," *Language,* XXXVII (1961), 522-38 (with an extensive bibliography of the research done on the phonemic system of Old English).

12 Symbols and conventions used are those of the International Phonetic Alphabet.

13 The phonemic value of length in RP is controversial. Some linguists accept its phonemic status, although they may disagree on the phonemic representation, while others deny that quantity is phonemic in Modern English. In this analysis, contrary to the situation in ME, length is phonemic neither in RP nor in the dialect, since it is always connected with a difference in quality. Length marks may therefore be regarded as redundant. To mention an alternative solution, it would have been possible to adopt a so-called overall frame, as advocated by a number of American linguists and as objected to by others, in dealing with historical data, e.g. to analyse all long vowels as diphthongs, i.e. as biphonemic, even when they occur in ME or early Modern English.

14 The line of this and other ME boundaries referred to in the article is established exactly by Gillis Kristensson, *op. cit.*

15 On the origin and significance of the uvular *r* in English (the so-called "burr"), found in places in and around Gateshead, as compared with the situation in French and German, see Wolfgang Viereck, "Zur Entstehung und Wertung des uvularen *r* unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Situation in England," *Phonetica,* XIII (1965), 189-200. A fuller account of this problem has appeared in *Jahrbuch des Marburger Universitätsbundes* (1965), 125-34. On the uvular *r* in Northern English folk speech see also Oliver Heslop, "Dialect Notes from Northernmost England," *Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society,* Pt. V, Vol. 1 (1903), 7-31 (with a map on "Limit of the Burr"); Harold Orton, "The Dialects of Northumberland," *Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society,* Pt. XXXI, Vol. 5 (1930), 14-25; and Eduard Kolb, "Skandinavisches in den nordenglischen Dialekten," *Anglia,* LXXXIII (1965), 127-53, especially map 12.

16 As regards allophonic variants of this and all other phonemes we refer to *Phonematische Analyse des Dialekts von Gateshead-upon-Tyne,* where these have been listed in detail.

17 Language is constantly changing. This is true of the conservative dialect (above all through internal change or through the influence of Standard English) and of RP. On some notable trends in the standard language see Charles Barber, *Linguistic Change in Present-Day English* (Edinburgh and London, 1964).

18 In the United States of America there is not one canonized form of pronunciation as in England; instead, educated speech has regional varieties of equally accepted status, which, of course, are left out of consideration here. For details see Kurath's book mentioned in footnote 1c.

19 In an article entitled "The Isolative Treatment in Living North-Midland Dialects of OE *e*

lengthened in Open Syllables in Middle English," *Leeds Studies in English and Kindred Languages,* VII-VIII (1952), 97-128, Harold Orton draws our attention to an important point. Before traditional sounds are lost the distribution of dialect sounds may become confused in certain cases under the influence of RP. If two vowels, for example, are kept distinct in the dialect but not in RP, the dialect speaker may use these two vowel sounds indiscriminately. Some "erratic usages" may well be accounted for in this way.

[20] See Josef Vachek, "Some Thoughts on the Phonology of Cockney English," *Philologica Pragensia,* V (1962), 159-66, which is a review of Eva Sivertsen, *Cockney Phonology,* Oslo Studies in English 8 (1960). An important and interesting observation in this respect was made by W. Horn—M. Lehnert, *Laut und Leben,* I, 69 ff. They make the point that as one approaches the southeast and London one reaches up-to-date Standard English and, since a standard language is conservative too, one begins to find forms in advance of it in popular speech. See also W. Horn, "Die gesellschaftliche Hemmung der natürlichen Lautentwicklung in der englischen Hochsprache," *Die Neueren Sprachen,* L (1942), 10-17.