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RP y el Mancunian: variación lingüística en las Islas Británicas

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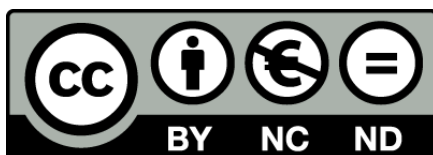
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# TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO

## Título

**RP and the Manc: language variation in the British Isles**

**RP y el Mancunian: variación lingüística en las Islas Británicas**

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## **Abstract**

This essay deals with variation within the English language, both from the synchronic and diachronic perspectives. The main aims of this work are to describe the main changes the English language has undergone in the diachronic axis and to compare the synchronic variation arising from the two accents analysed: Received Pronunciation (RP) and Mancunian (Manc). In order to do so, this work will look at the variation present in the English language, review some important linguistic changes, deal with terminology regarding *dialect*, *accent* and *variety*, revise the dialects that are identified within the British Isles and conduct an analysis between the RP and Mancunian accents. The methodology combines a bibliographic review of terminology and diachronic and synchronic linguistic features; and a contrastive analysis of linguistic features between RP and Mancunian accents. The main aspects considered in the analysis are the main morphological, syntactic, lexical and phonological contrasts. The main conclusions of this paper are the main diachronic changes that have been identified in the English language where we can find the reduction of the number of case forms in the declension of the noun and the adjective, the general simplification of verb forms, the loss of grammatical gender and the auxiliary *do*. Among the main linguistic contrasts between the RP and Mancunian. The analysis has identified the lexicon used, as well as the grammar and phonology. Finally, we can conclude these two accents are considered so and not dialects because they show little variation in grammar and vocabulary and those variations are limited to a geographical area or social group. If they were dialects, they would have variation in all of the features of the language.

**Keywords:** dialect, accent, RP, Mancunian, linguistic variation, English language

## **Resumen**

Este trabajo trata la variación lingüística de la lengua inglesa, tanto desde la perspectiva diacrónica como la sincrónica. Los objetivos principales de este proyecto son describir los principales cambios que la lengua inglesa ha experimentado en el eje diacrónico y comparar la variación sincrónica que se manifiesta entre los dos acentos analizados: Received Pronunciation (RP) y Mancuniano (Manc). Para conseguir eso, este trabajo se centrará en la variación en la lengua inglesa, revisaremos algunos cambios lingüísticos importantes, los conceptos *dialecto*, *acento* y *variedad*, aquellos dialectos identificados

en las Islas Británicas y realizando un análisis contrastivo entre el RP y el Mancuniano. La metodología combina una revisión bibliográfica de la terminología y de los rasgos lingüísticos diacrónicos y sincrónicos; y un análisis contrastivo de los rasgos lingüísticos entre los dos acentos. Los principales aspectos tratados son los cambios morfológicos, sintácticos, léxicos y contrastes fonológicos. Las conclusiones principales de este trabajo son los cambios diacrónicos más importantes que se han identificado en la lengua inglesa, entre los que podemos encontrar la reducción de las formas de caso en la declinación del nombre y del adjetivo, la simplificación general de las formas verbales, la pérdida del género gramatical y el auxiliar “do”. Entre los principales contrastes lingüísticos entre el RP y el Mancuniano, en el análisis se ha identificado el léxico usado, así como la gramática y la fonología. Finalmente, se puede concluir que estos dos acentos deben ser considerados como tal y no dialectos, dado que ambos exhiben poca variación en la gramática y el vocabulario y esas variaciones están delimitadas dentro de un área geográfica o un grupo social. Si fueran dialectos, tendrían variaciones en todos los rasgos de la lengua.

**Términos clave:** dialecto, acento, RP, Mancuniano, variación lingüística, lengua inglesa

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## **1. Introduction**

The English language has a complex but fascinating and large history. The first known written evidence in English is believed to be created in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, in the form of inscriptions on a piece of jewellery known as the Franks Casket (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 76). But this record is a mix of Old English, Latin and Runic. It was in the 9<sup>th</sup> century that English started to emerge as a distinct language with its own grammar and syntax (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 47). This was thanks to King Alfred the Great. He encouraged the translation of Latin text into English to make them accessible to a wider audience (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 79).

It is worth mentioning the diachronic evolution English has undergone. According to Baugh and Cable (2002, p. 28), English has undergone numerous changes and transformation over the centuries. Old English has a very different lexicon and grammar than Modern English. Middle English was witness of the introduction of new lexicon and of the Great Vowel Shift (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 83). Modern English is characterized by the standardization of spelling and new vocabulary (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 118). The diachronic evolution of the English reflects the changes the language has experienced and adapted.

The English language has expanded over the centuries, becoming a global language. In 2018, approximately 1.5 billion people were able to communicate in English (Crystal, 2018, p. 36). The rise of the internet has made English even more important as a language and with the growing importance, it is thought that the number of English speakers will not stop rising (Crystal, 2018, p. 36).

As said, billions of people speak English; therefore, there are variations in the way it is spoken. According to Kachru (1985, p. 8) there are three varieties of English: the Inner Circle (USA, UK or Canada), the Outer Circle (India, Nigeria) and the Expanding Circle (China, Brazil). Each of these varieties has their own lexicon, pronunciation and grammar. These changes could be attributed to historical, social and cultural factors. As English is spreading, it is very possible that more varieties of it will appear (Kachru, 1985, p. 9).

Because of the existence of variation within the English language that gives rise to distinct accents, I decided to base this project in the RP and Mancunian accents, explaining the context surrounding the English language and the features that differentiate both accents.

As for the sections, parts three and four will explain the theoretical framework in this essay. In three, English: a language in change, we will talk about the diachronic changes the English language has undergone, as well as the main changes and the development of a mixed word-stock. In four, English dialects and accents, we will define the terminology used in this project. Also, we will deal with the emerge of the accents, English variation within the British Isles and the World Englishes,

The analysis will be developed in sections five and six. Firstly, in section five, RP: the English standard, we will define the accent as well as explaining the social and geographical background of it and we will finish with the main features of the accent. In the next section, section six, The Mancunian accent, we will also talk about the geographical boundaries as well as the socio-historical background. Later, we will focus on its main features concerning its phonology, lexicon and grammar. We will conclude this part with the attitudes to language variation.

To finish up this project, we will develop some conclusions based on the major changes in the English language that have led to Present-Day English, the main accents and the Mancunian as a distinct English accent.

## 2. Objectives

The main objective presented in this essay is to understand the variations and changes, both diachronic and synchronic, the English language has undergone as well as to study more in depth the specific features of two of the accents found in the British Isles: Received Pronunciation and Mancunian.

The secondary objectives of the present dissertation can be broken down as follows:

- To study English language variations from the diachronic and synchronic perspectives.
- To offer a review of some of the main linguistics changes the English language has undergone in the diachronic axis, focusing on the phonological and lexical levels.
- To review the terminology concerning the concepts of *dialect*, *accent* and *variety*.
- To revise the main dialects that can be identified within the English language, with especial emphasis on those spoken in the British Isles.
- To carry out a contrastive analysis of the RP and Mancunian English accents, with a view to identifying the distinct feature that define the “Manc”.



### 3. English: a language in change

In this section, we will explain the main morphological, phonological and syntactic changes, as well as the development of a mixed word-stock.

Peter Trudgill (1984, p. 5) claims that, during the last centuries, English has gone through loads of changes. Old English was inflected by case, number, gender, tense and mood. In contrast, Present-Day English has been simplified. As for phonology, it has suffered a great number of changes. The lexicon has changed from Germanic to a mixed Germanic-Romance glossary. The syntax has varied mainly in the order of the words from a mixed SVO-SOV to a Subject-Verb-Object.

Studying English dialects without any context in history deprives us from one of the points of view which tells us about the present use of it (Wakelin, 1985, p. 44). We should start from the beginnings, when the Angles, Saxons and Frisians invaded Britain in the fifth century. They found the Celts and started to settle their kingdoms. We are not certain about the different dialects there may be within their spoken language but we have written Anglo-Saxon manuscripts that shows us the different written dialects corresponding to the tribes mentioned before. The dialects are: Anglian, West Saxon and Kentish (Wakelin, 1985, p. 44).

West Saxon was the most represented dialect in a written form and, therefore, accepted as a “standard literary dialect”. These dialects provide us the base of the Present-Day English. This period is known as Old English period that comprehend from the first Anglo-Saxon writing up to about 1100-1150 (Wakelin, 1985, p. 44).

We can find evidence of the Celtic dialect survival, such as the Anglo-Saxon law, river names and place names. There may be more evidence in the west of England up to the ninth or tenth century as we can find words in Present-Day English deriving from this period like *bratt* or *ass* (Wakelin, 1985, p. 44-45).

Also, we may talk about the Scandinavians, who had more impact on England and the language. Their invasion – mostly Norwegians and Danes – started in England at the end of the eighth century. Later, they started to settle and, around the eleventh century, we can find an integration of the two peoples (Wakelin, 1985, p. 45).

This Scandinavian invasion affected at first only a little in the language, founding only eighty words – like *husband* or *law* – in writings previous to 1150. Nevertheless, more words – like *dirt* or *ill* – started to appear in the thirteenth century (Wakelin, 1985, p. 46).

Lots of Scandinavian words survived the Middle-English period (1100 to 1450) to the nineteenth century or even until the Present-Day English. We have to take into account the possible influence of phonetics (Wakelin, 1985, p. 46).

Another significant influence is from France. The Norman Conquest resulted in the deterioration of the English literary production as well as the decrease of the West Saxon dialect as the standard. English literature was written now in a large variety of forms, one of them being Anglo-Norman, a dialect from France developed in England as a second literary and official language. Nonetheless, in the fourteenth century, English appeared again as the only official language (Wakelin, 1985, p. 47).

At the beginning, the French aristocracy only spoke in French meanwhile the English peasant continued speaking in English. The consequence was that by the twelfth or thirteenth century, the vast majority of the nobles were bilingual as well as some people from the middle class. This led to the extinction of French in England. Still, the period during which French was the dominant language, English borrowed a great number of words, both in written and spoken language. It is estimated English borrowed ten thousand words – such as *aunt* and *crown* – by the year 1500, and even more during the years (Wakelin, 1985, p. 47).

Apart from the influences already mentioned, England also had other foreign contacts. For instance, the Low Countries like the Flemish and Dutch, had great importance in things such as weaving or wool trade. Here, again, we find some loan words well-known in Standard English such as *slim* or *pack*. There has been too much contact with Germany especially in issues like mining. More contacts England may have are: Italy, Spain and Portugal (Wakelin, 1985, p. 47-48).

### 3.1 Main morphological and syntactic changes

A great number of syntactic changes such as the change from OV to VO in English have been discovered to involve long periods of structured variation, explains Susan Pintzuk (2002, p. 277). Some changes that occurred were:

- i. The reduction of the number of case forms in the declension of the noun and the adjective. For instance, in Old English we can find five cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative and instrumental. Nevertheless, Modern English has lost the inflection of the genitive and instrumental cases. This reduction of case forms may be linked to the changes occurred through centuries, such as the influence of French and the simplification of the English language (Curme, 1947).
- ii. The general simplification of verbs forms. According to Crystal (2004, p. 220), verbs in English have lost their inflection as a result of the evolution towards a simpler syntax and morphology. This means verbs do not have so many forms to express tenses or moods.
- iii. The loss of grammatical gender. In Old English, nouns were classified by three different classes: masculine, feminine or neuter. Those nouns had a corresponding adjective and pronoun form. Overtime, this system was lost and English only distinguishes now between natural and animacy gender, noted by Aitchison (2012, p. 210).
- iv. The auxiliary *do* that appeared in the sixteenth century but was not fixed until the eighteenth (*The Main Changes from the Old English Period*, 2022).

### 3.2 Main phonological changes

Now, we should talk about the phonological changes. Firstly, we should mention the combination of sound and sound change. At first, the changes in sound were occurring without taking into account the word division, remarks Henry Sweet (1888, p. 15). The result is a multiplicity of words that the speakers will try to stop.

Sweet (1888, p. 15) concludes that all sound-changes are gradual because we cannot find evidences of a sudden jump in the English phonetic system. Those sound-changes are also uniform because of the mis-hearing and mis-reproductions speakers make and that are repeated spontaneously.

These changes, explains Sweet (1888, p. 17), can be divided into two types: Internal changes that occur because of “tendencies of the organs of speech” or to the “acoustic quality of the sounds themselves”. And external changes, caused by external causes and always infer certain similarity to the old form.

Then, continues Sweet (1888, p. 17), there is another great distinction: Isolative, defined as changes that are not affected by the surroundings; and combinative that are changes that imply two sounds in juxtaposition.

The main changes that occurred can be divided into:

- i. Consonants: The simplification of some consonant sequences. For instance, the Old English *hleapan* was converted into Middle English *lepen*. Also, the loss of final affricate /tʃ/. For example, from the Old English ending *-lic*, it was developed to de Middle English *-ly*. Next, the loss of <f> before a consonant: from the OE *twa* to de ME *to*. Following we have the loss of /w/ between a consonant and a back vowel: OE *twa* to ME *to*. And finally the loss of final inflectional /n/: from OE *min faeder* to ME *my fader*.
- ii. As for the vowels we have the lengthening of short vowels in final syllable. From OE *stelan* (/e/) to ME *stelen* (/e:/). Or from OE *cepte* (/e:/) to ME *kepte* (/e/). Then, the shortening of long vowels followed by two consonants. From OE *fiftig* (/i:/) to ME *fifty* (/i/). We also found the levelling of unstressed vowels /a, o, u>e/. From OE *nacod* (/o/) to ME *naked* (/e/). Next, the Great Vowel Shift in the Early Modern English Period where the long vowels were raised. Thus, from /ma:k/ it developed to /me:k/. Last but not the least, the development of vowels before /r/.

The Great Vowel Shift deserves especial attention. We understand it as the “massive sound change in English that took place over a 400-year span, for approximately 1400 to 1800” (Menzer, 2002, p. 2). She observes that this is an extremely difficult topic because we have to take into account all of the stages. It completely renovated the English vowel system and studying it helps us understand certain aspects of English. For instance, Menzer (2002, p. 2) explains the three different representations the letter “a” has in the words “cat” (/ˈkæt/), “late” (/ˈleɪt/) and “father” (/ˈfɑːðə/), according to the Great Vowel Shift.

This topic may be the most controversial in the history of English because of the numerous theories about its beginning, according to John Perkins (1977, p. 123). These are the changes that occur between the stage of Middle English and Modern English:

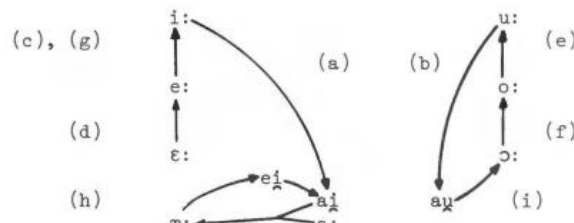
- i. In Late Middle English, the sound of the letter “i” (phonetically long “i”) was diphthongized resulting in the diphthong [ai].



- ii. In Late Middle English, the sound of the letter “u” (phonetically long “u”) was also diphthongized and the result was the modern [au].
- iii. In Late Middle English, the diphthongization of the, phonetically, long “e”.
- iv. In Late Middle English [ɛ:] was raised to [e:], or tensed.
- v. In Late Middle English [o:] was raised to [u:].
- vi. In Late Middle English [ɔ:] was raised to [o:] and then diphthongized to [ou].
- vii. The new [e:] of the Late Middle English (point iv) was raised more until it joined the [i:] from Late Middle English [e:] (point iii).
- viii. Early Modern English [a:] and the diphthong discussed in point i were developed to a point they fuse in modern [ei].
- ix. Finally, Late Middle English [au] was monophthongised to [ɔ:].

The Great Vowel Shift can be represented as a rotation of the long vowel and diphthong in articulatory space, as it is shown in the Figure 1 below:

Figure 1. The Great Vowel Shift



Perkins, J. (1977). *A sociolinguistic glance at the Great Vowel Shift of English*, pp. 123-151.

### 3.3 The development of a mixed word-stock

In English, there are some indications that language change occurred, according to Lilo Moessner (2003, p. 35). He says that English has adopted a great number of loan words, meaning, it has been influenced by another language, and therefore, its vocabulary has been restructured. Some changes may have happened without anyone noticing and other changes may have provoked commentaries by those who did not want the language to deteriorate.

Loan words are “words which have been borrowed from other languages” (Moessner, 2003, p. 35) and might be the start of the hypothesis of linguistic change. The process of adopting a new word only occurs under certain situations.

The speakers of the two languages must be in contact. The best situation for borrowing occurs when one speaker understands partly the other speaker. The language from which the word is borrowed is called the donor language and the word is named model. There are also some cases where the donor language is not a language but a dialect. The reasons of their contact vary from politics, economics or cultural reasons. For instance, the donor language of the English words *school* and *plant* is Latin; the models are *schola* and *planta*, in Latin (Moessner, 2003, p.36).

When borrowing happens, the process can go either direction but Moessner (2003, p.36) says it is more frequent to go through the direction of the language who wants to borrow, imitating the people whom we respect. For example, when England was suffering the Norman Conquest, the English language was set aside and French and Latin were imposed, which made English adopt the lexicon of those languages. Also, explains Moessner (2003, p. 36), English is currently a language considered prestigious. As a consequence, English is the language giving words.

English is full of words from Latin like *papa* or *episcopus*, from French like *ballet* or *restaurant* and Old Norse like *saga*; because those are the most important donor languages we have, says Moessner (2003, p. 37). The introduction of this lexicon was produced in the Old English Period and was favoured by the need of new words. For instance, when Christianity entered England, words like *creator* or *salvator* were adopted. Also, the Latin borrowing became popular when the classical Latin authors, under the influence of humanism, were admired by their literary and linguistic achievements. Some examples are *peninsula*, *aborigines* or *decorum*. Later on, it was fashionable to use as many Latin loans as possible but it quickly became despised (Moessner, 2003, p. 37).

According to a study carried out by the University of Leiden, approximately 60% of the English words have a Germanic origin, while approximately 29% are Latin words and the rest are words from other languages including French, Greek and Arabic (Booij et al., 2019, p. 6). However, it is worth noting that even within the Germanic lexicon, there are many words that are borrowed from other languages. For example, the English word “table” is borrowed from French.

#### 4. English dialects and accents

In section 4, some essential terms to understand the essay will be explained as well as how and when the accents emerged in the United Kingdom. Then, we will explain the different variations found in the British Isles and, finally, the World Englishes.

##### 4.1 Dialect, accent and variety

According to Martyn Wakelin (1985, p. 4) a dialect may be defined “as sub-forms of language which are mutually comprehensible”. Language, on contrast, is a form that cannot be mutually comprehended. He suggests that in every language, there are more than one type of dialect, in fact, we can find three types:

- i. The old regional dialects of countryside and town: these dialects are mainly spoken by old women and men who have spent their life in the same area. Nevertheless, there are also cases of children and middle-aged people who speak these kinds of dialects in a different level. These dialects are best found in countryside villages and hamlets but also in bigger towns.

Although it should be a fixed basis, dialects have become mixed with Standard English as well as with other strains. In the same city, there may be several varieties, especially if we are talking about larger industrial complexes.

When we talk about dialects, Wakelin (1985, p. 5) distinguishes between different levels:

- a) Sounds: Different sounds of the same words depending on where you are. For example, the pronunciation of the initial syllable in the southwest of England.
- b) Vocabulary: Different words depending on your location. For instance, in the north and midlands, we can find *gawp* for stare or *bonny* for pretty. In the southwest, we could find words like *soak* for make or *bladder* for blister. Finally, in the west words like *tundish* for funnel or *pool* for pond are used.
- c) Grammar: the use of old pronouns instead of the current ones and the forms of the verb to be in the west.
- d) Intonation: The patterns might have not been studied enough, but we may direct our attention to the varieties found in the north, in East Anglia and in Cornwall.

- ii. Social dialects: we might be able to find different variations between people from different classes and people from different areas. Nevertheless, there is a group of similar varieties that are held in what-is-called Received Standard English or RSE, typically used by professionals or educated classes. But, on the opposite way, Wakelin (1985, p. 6) states that there is another type of speech containing elements of local dialects and a great number of slang words. Between these two opposites we can find an infinite number of varied speeches. Some examples of social variation found mostly in large towns where Received Standard English is spoken are:
  - a) Sounds: Loss of the initial h in words like *hurt* or *happy*.
  - b) Vocabulary: New words such as *Summat* instead of something or somewhat.
  - c) Grammar: Use of *our* instead of my. Double negation such as in “I ain’t done nothing”.

The Received Standard English pronunciation tends to lose local pronunciation as well as words and grammar compared to the other type of variations we have discussed previously.

- iii. Occupational dialects: Also known as “technical jargon”, this kind of dialect is mainly full of specialised vocabulary used in different industries and occupations. It has typically no regional variations but when there is some, we can find different examples. For instance, in the semantic family of fishing, we have the short stick used in net-making that is called *kebble* in the north-west, *shuttle* in the north-eastern, or a *shale* in Humberside, East Anglia.

It is also suggested by Wakelin (1985, p.7) to distinguish between spoken and written forms. He says “speech is not based on writing”. If that would be the case, we should pronounce, as he explains, the *gh* in the word *knight*.

As for the definition of accent as a general term, we can define it as “the varieties of the pronunciation” (Hughes & Trudgill, 1996, p. 3). In this essay, we will take as a reference the most prestigious accent in England, Received Pronunciation or RP, according to Barber et al (2009, p. 5). In section five, we will deal more thoroughly with the RP phonology.

Our last definition to discuss is variety. As suggested by Barber et al. (2009, p. 40), the changes produced in the language because of the contact between speakers of different dialects may have led to the creation of the varieties of the language. We may create boundaries to explain the different varieties but that should not lead us to think that those varieties are completely separated (Kortmann & Upton, 2008, p. 24). Sometimes, Kortmann and Upton say, it is the way of how a hearer listen to the varieties, it is a matter of “more or less”. Not even speakers of the same place use the same set of features, it might change the level of intensity, how many they use, and the frequency. It is expected that speakers who sound more local to a particular place may be using features characteristic of an accent or dialect. Nonetheless, many speakers will not use the same features depending on the situation, closely related to social issues such as age, gender, ethnicity, etc. (Kortmann & Upton, 2008, p. 25).

In this essay, we will deal with two precise issues: Received Pronunciation (RP) and Mancunian. We will deal with their phonology, lexicon and grammar. Socio-economic or politic aspects fall outside the scope of this study.

Also, we will work on distinguishing between an accent and a dialect in order to properly classify RP and Mancunian. In this case, they will be considered as accents because they are distinct enough from others to be considered as such. They are considered accents and not dialects due to their shorted variation in grammar and vocabulary. Trudgill (1974, p. 76) says that accents are variation in pronunciation but they are limited to a geographical area or social group. On contrast, dialects involve variations in both. As we discuss in this paper, Mancunian presents some specific grammatical features in contrast with RP, but these differences are not significant enough for it to qualify as a dialect.

#### 4.2 The emergence of accents

All the varieties we know about English, says Kortmann and Upton (2008, p. 26), derived from one ancestral root-stock. Every change and every variety are linked somehow to developments in the history of the language.

According to Kortmann and Upton (2008, p. 26), there are clear echoes of the earlier structure of the English language that can be heard in the British varieties. The large amount of time in which English has been evolving is responsible for the complex variations in the British present-day dialects, also adding the region’s ethnic and political mix.

It is also important to mention the old dialects Old English had. There were three main dialects that correspond to the three tribal division of the Germanic invaders known as West Saxon or “the Saxon dialect of the kingdom of Wessex”, Kentish and Anglian (Quirk & Wrenn, 2002, p.4). Those dialects were derived from Saxons, Jutes and Angles, respectively.

West Saxon travelled through the South and South West due to the growth of Wessex. The second dialect was use in a large area in the South East of England. The Anglian dialect covered the Midlands and the North East of England as well as some parts in the South of Scotland. Later, it split into Northumbrian and Mercian due to geographical and political factors (Quirk & Wrenn, 2002, p.4). Because of this division, it is typical to say that Old English consisted of four dialects: West Saxon, Kentish or South Eastern, Mercian or West Midland and Northumbrian (Quirk & Wrenn, 2002, p.4).

According to Quirk & Wrenn (2002, p.4), we have almost no evidence of the language used in the East Midlands during the Old English period. However, we can find pieces of evidence in the Middle English period that suggest that it had different features from Mercian.

In fact, the only Old English dialect from which we have a great extent of information is West Saxon, as it is the dialect in which the higher number of written records have survived. Later in the Old English period, West Saxon became the cultural language dialect in England, although it was modified by other dialects. It was because of that fact that West Saxon has been taken as the foundation for the study of Old English and used to set the rules for grammar and dictionaries (Quirk & Wrenn, 2002, p.5).

#### 4.3 English variation in the British Isles

We understand as the British Isles as “the two large islands that contain the mainlands of Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Iris Republic, Wales, and England, together with a large number of other, smaller island that are part of the territories of these countries” (Kortmann & Upton, 2008. p. 23).

The varieties we can find in the British Isles are:

- i. Scottish English: speakers in Scotland use different syntactic structures from Broad Scots to Standard English. Different speakers make a different choice in

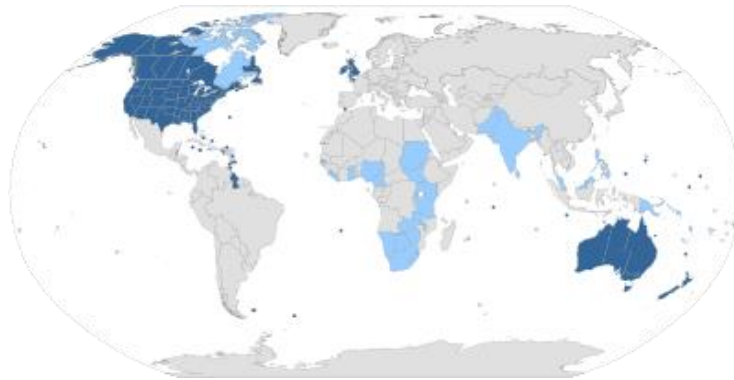
different situations. Broad Scots is a spoken variety with its own structures and properties.

- ii. Irish English: the morpho-syntax of Irish English follows the patterns found in the other British Isles Englishes. However, the rural dialect and urban working-class dialects varieties present a different view. They contain features that make them different from other regional or social dialects of British English.
- iii. Welsh English: the influence of the Welsh language is really evident in some areas of Welsh English morpho-syntax.
- iv. Different dialects in the North of England: typologies of English dialects tend to be based on phonetic and phonological criteria. As for morpho-syntax, there are few features that help us distinguish between the Northern and Southern dialects. Regarding morphology, syntax and lexis, the differences between the dialects found in the North are more easily linked to the external histories of the regions and cities.
- v. The English of the West Midlands: this dialect can be divided by areas as some parts have a stronger dialect than others, Dudley in the Black Country being an example. For instance, people tend to substitute a reply of “arr” for “yes”.
- vi. The dialect of East Anglia: the best known feature of this dialect is the third-person present-tense singular zero. Some examples are *he go* or *she come*.
- vii. Different dialects in the South of England: the Southwest has come with a great dialectological investigation for centuries. One of the factors that caused interest in the region was the rural character and the relative remoteness.
- viii. Channel Island English: the original language is a form of Norman French, but it is certain that English is now the predominant language in the isles. As a consequence, this dialect might become extinct in the future.
- ix. Received Pronunciation: this accent was considered as a model in dictionaries and language-teaching texts but it is becoming widely based than it used to be.
- x. British Creole: it is the product of the contact between the dialects of the Creole dialects varieties of migrants from the Caribbean. Speakers of this dialect are considered bilingual or multilingual.

#### 4.4 World Englishes

Last century, the number of speaking of English has increased significantly, says Jennifer Jenkins (2003, p. 4). In figure number 2, there is a graph that highlights the English-speaking countries all over the world.

Figure 2. English speaking countries



Wikipedia contributors. (2023). English-speaking world. *Wikipedia*.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English-speaking\\_world](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English-speaking_world)

Nowadays, says Jenkins (2003, p. 2), there are 75 territories where English is the first language (L1) or an official second language (L2). But we have to differentiate two types of L2 learners, the ones to whom English has no official function, which are called speaker of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and the ones to whom English has a function within the country, called speakers of English as a Second Language (ESL).

The use of English worldwide has not been undisputed (Jenkins, 2003, p. 5). Then, we will talk about the controversies surrounding this topic according to Jenkins's perspectives (2003, p. 5). We have two dispersals:

- i. First, when 25,000 people migrated from England to America and Australia. Consequently, it was a migration of the mother-tongue English speakers. Those dialects developed into the American and Antipodean English we know currently. The different varieties spoken in North America and Australia are not identical to the English of their early colonisers. They have been altered due to the constant changing context where the migrants found themselves. For instance, their range of vocabulary became wider. During the seventeenth century, English was



spreading to the south of America and the Caribbean because of the slave commerce. The Englishes which developed among slaves and captors were contact pidgin languages but, as a result of the use of that language as a mother tongue in the following generations, it became a creole. Next century, the eighteenth, there was a huge number of migrants from Ireland to Philadelphia who rapidly moved to the south and the west.

As a result of the discovery of Australia in 1770, a large number of convicts from Britain and Ireland were transported to Australia, claims Jennifer (2003, p. 6). Also, settlers, mainly from London and the south-east started to arrive. The result of this situation was a dialect mix which, later on, was influenced by the indigenous aboriginal languages. In New Zealand, the situation was similar to Australia.

Talking about South Africa, the British did not arrive until the eighteenth and did not settle until the nineteenth century. Those settlers were mainly from the south of England. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, more settlements occurred when people from the Midlands, Yorkshire and Lancashire arrived. English was declared the official language and it was also learned as a second language. (Jenkins, 2003, p. 6).

- ii. Second, where we have to take into account the colonisation of Asia and Africa which led to a new variety. Now, we have to separate between West Africa and East Africa.

West Africa has to be linked to the slave trade and, therefore, the growth of pidgins and creoles. From the fifteenth century onwards, says Jenkins (2003, p. 7), British merchants travelled from and to the coastal territories of West Africa. Though, there was not a proper settlement of British people. Instead, the use of English was like a lingua franca between the indigenous and the traders. English gained an official position and, as a consequence, the creoles and pidgins are now spoken by a great number of people

East Africa, claims Jenkins (2003, p. 7), hold a different relation with English. Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe were settled by the British in the nineteenth century. Hence, English played a truly important role in official issues. In 1960, those countries became independent. English stayed as an official language in all of the countries except from Kenya and Tanzania who the official language or their lingua franca is Swahili.

As for the Asian continent, English was introduced in the southern part during the eighteenth century. But the key point was the Macaulay Minute of 1835, says Jennifer (2003, p. 7), where it was proposed an educational system in English in India. And today, even though the official language is Hindi, English is considered as an “associate official language” but with some variations which made it distinctive to the place.

The influence in South-East Asia and the South Pacific began in the eighteenth century as the result of some expeditions. The countries involved were Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea (Jenkins, 2003, p. 7). This last one provides us the perfect example of an English-based pidgin called Tok Pisin.

In these last years, due to the increase of the use of English in Singapore, a local variety may had begun to emerge (Jenkins, 2003, p. 8). In contrast, it has decreased in Malaysia due to the use of the local language called Bahasa Malaysia.

These Englishes share many characteristics but they are also uniqueness in every each of them, especially in their accent, but also in idiomatic uses, grammar, and discourse strategies (Jenkins, 2003, p. 8).

## **5. RP: the English standard**

In section 5, we will deal with the background of the RP, how it raised socially and geographically speaking. Furthermore, we will explain the main features we can find in the RP phonology.

### **5.1 Social and geographical background**

Talking about Standard English, we know English reappeared in the fourteenth century. Therefore, numerous writings emerged in different literary genres and different dialects, known as “local standards”. One of these varieties started to grow, first in writing form and then in speech. This was the “upper-class dialect” that was developed in London influenced by the immigrants from the East. Consequently, dialects started to disappear and the London English was becoming more dominant. By the end of the seventeenth century, almost all written variations had vanished. Yet, we do not have evidence of the same thing in speech until later. At first, Standard English was mostly free in terms of pronunciation and grammar but there is an intention of uniformity towards the eighteenth century. At that time, there was no patterning of English dialect based on the towns and suburbs, but based on the social structure (Wakelin, 1985, p. 49-50).

Standard English is a prestigious variety of English usually associated to educated speakers. It is often used in formal occasions such as business meetings and media broadcasts (Crystal, 2018, p. 156). It is generally recognized as the standard accent or the reference accent in many English-speaking countries (Trudgill, 1999, p. 3). Standard English is not the only way of speaking English but it is sometimes considered the most desirable variety because of its clearness, easiness to understand and neutrality (Milroy, 2002, p. 146).

In the UK, Standard English is associated to the southeast of England, particularly London and the areas surrounding it (Wells, 1982, p.1).

As for the regional dialects, they continued to exist, but there was always a tendency to change because of Standard English. In a great number of areas, because they were isolated, their rural dialects have been preserved, for instance in Yorkshire Dales. However, they are considered “bi-dialectal”, therefore, they have the capacity of switching between their rural dialect and Standard English (Wakelin, 1985, p. 50).

Regarding the present situation, the regional dialects still remain within the elderly people in the countryside although this is always changing due to the use of Standard English. Anyhow, this change is different depending on the area, being total in some parts whereas partial in others (Wakelin, 1985, p. 51).

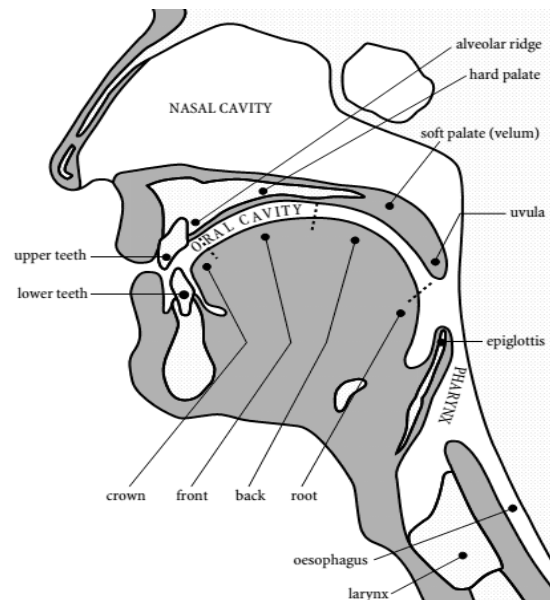
## 5.2 RP main phonological features

According to Hughes and Trudgill (1996, p. 33), in order to explain correctly the Received Pronunciation, we should distinguish between consonants and vowels. Received Pronunciation has its own unique phonological features including 24 consonants and 12 vowels, apart from the diphthongs we will study later.

As for the consonants, we should describe them depending on their presence or absence of voicing, where those consonants are articulated and how are articulated. For instance, in the word *bat*, we find a voiceless bilabial plosive.

As for the vowels, we should describe them depending on which part of the tongue is raised when pronouncing the vowel and how far, and the shape of the lips. Here, Figure 3 represents the vocal tract in the organs of speech. Depending on the position of each of them, we can produce one of the twelve vowels we find in the English language.

Figure 3. The vocal tract in the organs of speech



*It shows the vocal tract in the organs of speech. (s. f.). ResearchGate.*  
[https://www.researchgate.net/figure/shows-the-vocal-tract-in-the-organs-of-speech-image-1\\_fig1\\_323384389](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/shows-the-vocal-tract-in-the-organs-of-speech-image-1_fig1_323384389)

Although RP may be considered as a single accent, continue Hughes and Trudgill (1996, p. 36), there is certain variability we should mention. Three forms of RP can be distinguished: systemic, realizational and lexical. We talk about systemic or inventory variability when diverse speakers have different sets of phonemes, applying only to the group of vowels in this case. Realizational variability has to do with how a single phoneme may have different realizations depending on the speaker. Finally, lexical variability deals with how there are differences in speakers of RP pronouncing the same word by using different series of phonemes.

Besides, there are some factors contributing to this variability. Firstly, we have age. RP is constantly changing. Therefore, there are going to be differences between the younger and the older speakers. Next, we have the factor of social class. Upper class members have some distinct features that makes them different in a way from the majority of RP speakers. Thirdly, the age at which the speaker acquired the language. Generally speaking, speakers who learnt it in their childhood tend to avoid normal features of faster RP speech. Finally, we should also take into account the personal factors of the speaker such as the school they went to, their personality or what a person has been told is the correct pronunciation of that word.

To conclude, Hughes and Trudgill (1996, p. 38), talk about the individual sounds we can find in RP. We should differentiate, once again, between consonants and vowels. Consonants can be divided into different groups based on how they are articulated: plosives, fricatives, affricates, nasals, lateral /l/, post-alveolar approximant /r/ and semi-vowels.

As for the plosives, we should consider the closure of the vocal tract, how compressed is the air and the release of that compression. In Table 1, we can see the organization of the plosives:

Table 1. Plosive consonants

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Velar
Voiceless	/p/	/t/	/k/
Voiced	/b/	/d/	/g/

Fricative consonants need a narrow gap causing friction as the air passes through. In Table 2, we can see the representation of the nine fricative phonemes in this accent:

Table 2. Fricative consonants

	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Glottal
Voiceless	/f/	/θ/	/s/	/ʃ/	/h/
Voiced	/v/	/ð/	/z/	/ʒ/	

Affricates are similar to a plosive but with friction occurring during the release. In Table 3, we have represented the two affricates sounds:

Table 3. Affricates consonants

	Palato-alveolar
Voiceless	/tʃ/
Voiced	/dʒ/

Nasals contain a lowered velum so the air goes out through the nose and a closure in the mouth. Table 4 represents the nasal sounds:

Table 4. Nasal consonants

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Velar
Voiceless			
Voiced	/m/	/n/	/ŋ/

Lateral /l/ requires an incessant escape of air through one or both sides of the mouth. In RP, we can only find one lateral phoneme, typically voiced, although it can be considered voiceless in one of its allophones.

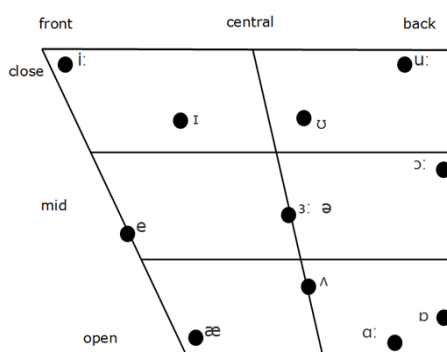
Post-alveolar approximant /r/ only happens before a vowel. It has some allophones but the commonest one is a voiced post-alveolar frictionless approximant. More cases are when it follows /d/, then it is fricative. When words end with /r/ and followed by a vowel, we find the linking /r/.

Finally, we find the semi-vowels. In English, we find only two semi-vowels: /w/ and /j/. They are treated like consonants but function as vowels.

The sound /w/ is labio-velar and it is articulated with the lips rounded and the tongue in a back half-close position. Generally speaking, /w/ is voiced but if it is following accented /t/ or /k/, it becomes voiceless. In this accent, some speakers omit /w/ when the word starts with /kw/ for other speakers.

Next issue to discuss is the vowels in RP accent. First, we will deal with the monophthongs. That is, the twelve vowels in English. In Figure 4, it is shown the chart of the English vowels.

Figure 4. Chart of English vowels

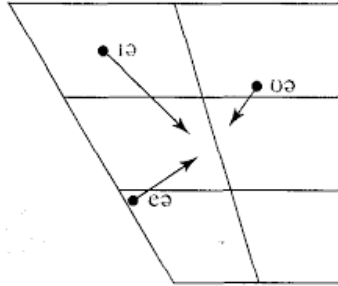


*Introduction – English Pronunciation.* (2016, 12 December). English Pronunciation.  
<https://www.englishpronunciationmadrid.com/es/vocales/>

We have the /i:/ as in *pea* where the lips are spread in comparison to /ɪ/ as in *bit* which are loosely spread. Next, we have /e/ like in *vet* where the lips are loosely spread and wider. We also have /æ/ like in *bat* where the lips are neutrally open as in the /ʌ/ in *putt* and in /ɑ:/ in *yard*. Then, we have a slight open lip-rounding in words containing /ɒ/ such as *pot*. Continuing with a medium lip rounding we find the /ɔ:/ sound as in *bored*. With the lips closely rounded we find /ʊ/ as in *foot* and /u:/ as in *food*. Finally, we have two vowels with no lip rounding which are /ɜ:/ as in *girl* and /ə/, known as “schwa”, as in *the* (before a consonant).

As for the diphthongs, there are different types. Firstly, we have the centring diphthongs in words like *beer* (/ɪə/), *bear* (/ɛə/) or *poor* (/ʊə/). Figure 5 shows us the chart of the centring diphthongs in English.

Figure 5. Centring diphthongs in English

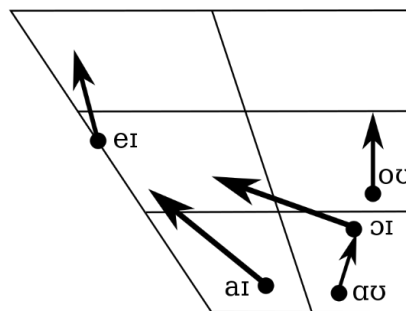


*The Vowels in English.* <http://www.tuninst.net/DJPD16/intro02-1/intro02-1.htm>

In the first two (/ɪə/ and /eə/) we cannot find any lip rounding but in the last one (/ʊə/) there is some.

As for the closing diphthongs, we find five different types: /eɪ/ as in *babe*; with the lips spread and the starting point may be half-closed or half-open, /aɪ/ as in *bye* with a bit of spread in the second element and with some variations in the openness of the first element, /ɔɪ/ as in *boy* with the lips rounded in the first element, /oʊ/ as in *boat*; lips a bit rounded for the second element similar to /aʊ/ as in *about*. In Figure 6, we have a chart of the closing diphthongs in English:

Figure 6. Closing diphthongs in English



*Roosevelt's Mid-Arlantic Closing Diphthongs – Wikipedia Commons.* (2023, January 1<sup>st</sup>). [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roosevelt%27s\\_Mid-Atlantic\\_Closing\\_Diphthongs.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roosevelt%27s_Mid-Atlantic_Closing_Diphthongs.svg)

All of these closing diphthongs may be followed by the schwa or /ə/ sound within a word. The process known as smoothing is occurring: three vowels' elements maintain all of the sounds in careful or slow speech. Nevertheless, in faster speech, the second element is usually omitted. For instance:

- *Tower* → /taʊə/ > [tə]

RP has a relatively flat intonation pattern, meaning that the pitch of the voice remains stable through the sentence.



RP, as said before, is subject to changes, some of them internally generated (Trudgill, 2001). Some examples are the GOAT vowel explained by Wells (1982, p. 146) as, traditionally speaking, the “long O”. This vowel is widely variable both regionally and socially and might be found next to a variety of monophthongal and diphthongal qualities; and the TRAP vowel, used to reduce foreign-language [a] (Wells, 1982, p. 143).

Other changes may be produced by external factors. Some features Trudgill (2001) defends that are now part of the RP are: the intrusive /r/; the replacement of long O by short O; glottal T; the merger of /ʊə/, /ɔə/ and /ɔ:/; the fronting of /u:/ from [u:] towards [ø:].

The criteria Trudgill (2001) used to include these features was that “it is not a regional feature”, implying the change of some features in time. We can see an example with the HAPPY-tensing mentioned by Wells (1982, p. 257). He explains it as the change of the final /ɪ/ to /i:/. Therefore, /hæpɪ/ becomes /hæpi:/. This change may be linked to the southern regional accents but it has been spreading to the north for decades.

RP has always had /ɪ/ in certain words, similar to accents sound in the north of England. Besides, there are many people that have near-RP accents, but the difference is that they use the HAPPY-tensing. We could define them as non-RP speakers because the HAPPY-tensing was considered as a regional feature. Nevertheless, there is no found evidence that HAPPY-tensing could be considered as a feature of RP (Trudgill, 2001).



## **6. The Mancunian accent**

In section 6, we will start with the geographical limits of the accent, the geographical boundaries it has. We will continue with some socio-historical background and with the most important features of the Mancunian accent. To finish up, we will study how the accent is considered socially, the attitudes towards it.

### **6.1 Geographical boundaries**

The Mancunian accent is spoken in and in the surroundings of Manchester, England. It is difficult to determine the geographical boundaries of it because of the variations found depending on where in the city it is being spoken (Kerswill, 2002, p. 36). Generally speaking, this accent is found in Greater Manchester, including not only the city, but also the surroundings.

Furthermore, the Mancunian accent has regional variations and sub-dialects. For example, the accent spoken in the Oldham area is identified as Oldham dialect, which is characterized by unique features like the replacement of “th” sounds with “f” sounds (Kerswill, 2002, p. 36).

There has been a discussion whether the Mancunian accent belongs to an accent known as “Lancashire English”, spoken in the northern part of Lancashire (Llamas & Johnson, 2010); or if it is an accent by itself, as the Mancunian accent is distinct enough to be considered its own variety.

### **6.2 Socio-historical background**

The Mancunian accent has been shaped by a great number of socio-historical factors during the years. One of the most important factors was the Industrial Revolution, which transformed Manchester into an industrial centre in the nineteenth century (Amos, 2015). The great amount of workers from different parts of the UK and migrants from other countries had as a result a diverse variety of accents within the city, which gradually mixed and evolved into what it is now known as the Mancunian accent.

Another important socio-historical factor is the role of Manchester as a cultural and artistic centre during the twentieth century (Lodge, 2014). This was the emergence of the “Manchester Sound”, a distinctive style of music that evolved from the city’s post-punk scene. Bands such as The Smiths and Oasis, which originated from Manchester, helped to popularize the Mancunian accent and further its place in popular culture.

This accent has also been shaped by the city's working-class roots. As mentioned, Manchester was once a thriving centre of industry and the accent developed by the working-class people who populated the city (Lambert & Watson, 2013). This accent is characterized by a distinctive lack of enunciation and a tendency towards glottal stops, which are commonly used by working-class speakers.

### 6.3 Main Mancunian linguistic features

#### 6.3.1 Phonology

This accent has different features that distinguish it from other British accents. According to Wells (1982, p. 349), an important feature is the vowel quality of the diphthongs /ɪə/ and /ʊə/, that are pronounced as [ɛə] and [ʌə].

Another important feature is the realization of the /t/ and /k/ sounds. In this case, the sound /t/ can be realized as a glottal stop, mainly in word-final positions. As for the /k/ sound, it can be fronted to a /tʃ/ sound before the front vowels /i/ and /ɪ/ (Hughes, Trudgill & Watt, 2012, p. 43).

The Great Vowel shift was also important for the Mancunian accent as it affected the pronunciation of long vowels. Among the most notable changes was the raising of the vowel /u:/ to /ju:/, as in moon (Watt, Llamas & Johnson, 2010, p. 283). Another vowel affected was /a:/ that become /eɪ/ as in day (Wells, 1982, p. 407).

Besides, the Mancunian accent also has some features of the Northern Cities Shift. Here, the vowel shifts tend to occur in a specific order in the vowel space. According to Hughes et al. (2012, p. 51), there is a change of /u:/ to [ʊ], a change of /ʊ/ to [ʊ] and a change of /ɪ/ to [əɪ]. The changes have been found in other accents in the North of England such as the Sheffield or the Newcastle accent.

Also, the intonation pattern in the Mancunian accent is easily recognizable from other regional accents. It has a rising intonation at the end of a sentence, especially marked when it is a question (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 200).

#### 6.3.2 Lexicon

The Manchester or Mancunian accent is one of the most recognizable accents in England (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 201). It has a distinctive regional vocabulary and the use of words and phrases specific to the region. For instance, “nowt” means “nothing” (Bucholtz

& Hall, 2005, p. 203). This type of features is what make the difference between North and South England, because similar words with the same meaning are not typically used in the South of England.

Also, the Mancunian accent tends to use diminutives to give to the conversation a more friendly tone (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 202). Some examples are “cuppa” for “cup of tea” or “brolly” for “umbrella”. This use of words goes back to the Industrial Revolution as the working-class used to use them.

### 6.3.3 Grammar

In Mancunian accent, we find the use of double negative such as saying “I didn’t see no one” instead of “I didn’t see anyone” (Leeman & Wanner, 2017, p. 486).

We should also discuss the use of the verb “to be” in past tenses in the Mancunian accent. According to a study by Johnson and Paolillo (1996, p. 104), Mancunians show variation in the use of “was” and “were”. They discover that the form “were” was more frequently use than the form “was”.

Another study carried out by Kauschke and Shaw (2012, p.69) also proved that the use of the verb “to be” in the past was influenced by syntactic factors. They realize that “were” was typically used when the subject was plural or in the second person. As for “was”, it was typically used when the subject was singular or in the first person.

Also, the use of the verb “to be” in the past in the Manchester accent has been linked to social identity and belonging. Another study by Stuart-Smith and Timmins (2016, p. 30) realize that “were” was an outstanding feature of this accent linked to community belonging. They mentioned that the use of “were” serve as an indicator of in-group identity.

### 6.4 Attitudes to language variation

The Mancunian accent is recognized as one of the most distinctive accents in Britain (Docherty, 2003, p. 83). Nevertheless, and despite its popularity, it is often linked to lower social status (Haddican et al., 2013, p. 98). Indeed, Mancunian speakers might suffer discrimination in some social sceneries (Haddican et al., 2013, p. 99).

A possible explanation for this negative view may be the association with the working-class (Docherty, 2006, p. 85). Years ago, Mancunians worked in industries and their accents are still linked to these professions (Docherty, 2006, p. 86).

Apart from the role of the Mancunian in the industry, it also played a part in popular culture (Gorre, 2016, p. 324). As mentioned before, iconic figures like members of Manchester-based bands like Oasis or The Smiths helped to popularize the Mancunian accent and make it recognized worldwide (Gorre, 2016, p. 325).

## 7. Conclusions

This paper has looked at the English language from both the diachronic and synchronic perspectives. In the first place, it has studied the main diachronic changes of the English language. The main changes identified include: the reduction of the number of case forms in the declension of the noun and the adjective, the general simplification of verb forms, the loss of grammatical gender and the emergence of the auxiliary *do* that appeared in the sixteenth century but was not fixed until the eighteenth.

As for the phonology, all of the sound changes that occurred were gradual. We could not find evidence of a sudden jump in the English phonetic system. Those changes became uniform because of mishearing and mis-reproduction that the speakers made and were repeated. One of the most important changes was the Great Vowel Shift, a change that renovated the English vowel system. That change may explain, for instance, the three different representations of the letter “a”.

Finally, concerning the lexicon, there are some indicators that language change occurred. English had adopted lots of loan words, which means, it was influenced by another language; specifically, from Latin, French, Old Norse, Greek and Arabic. The result is a restructuring of the vocabulary. Those changes may have happened without no one noticing it and others may have provoked comments by people who did not want the language to deteriorate.

Furthermore, the vocabulary we currently use is a consequence of, firstly, different (mostly anonymous) authors, who started to use and leave testimony of English with its own grammar, phonology and lexicon and, secondly, to the loan words English has been taking over the centuries from other languages, especially French and Latin.

Secondly, the main accents of English have been discussed. We had our focus on the RP and Mancunian accents. As discussed in this paper, the term dialect refers to a language that involves variations in all of the features of the language, while an accent can be defined as a language that has shorted variation in grammar and vocabulary and whose variations are limited to a geographical area or social group. As for the RP and the Mancunian, both are considered accents because of their small amount of variation in grammar and vocabulary.

The RP and Mancunian accents have been dealt with in more detail. As for the Mancunian accent, it has been seen that it is considered a distinct English accent. We have studied

the different features it presents. For instance, as for the phonology, we can see the vowel quality of the diphthongs /ɪə/ and /ʊə/, that are pronounced as [ɛə] and [ʌə]. Also, the realization of the /t/ and /k/ sounds that, depending on their position, can be pronounced differently. The long vowels were primarily affected by the Great Vowel Shift, for example, the raising of the vowel /u:/ to /ju:/. Another important shift was the Northern Cities Shift that made that the vowels shifted in a specific order. Finally, the rising intonation is easily recognizable. On contrast with the phonology of the RP, consonants are described depending their presence of voicing absence; and vowels depending on which part of the tongue is raised, how far and the shape of the lips. As for the former, simplification occurred in some consonant sequences. Also, the loss of the final affricate as well as the loss of <f> before a consonant. We also have the loss of /w/ between consonant and back vowel and loss of the final inflectional /n/. As for the latter, we have the lengthening of short vowels in final syllables. Next, the shortening of long vowels followed by two consonants. We also find the levelling of unstressed vowels /a, o, u<e>/. Then, the Great Vowel Shift raised the long vowels. Finally, a development of vowels before /r/ occurred.

We also have lexicon features in Mancunian, such as the distinctive regional vocabulary and the use of words and phrases specific to the region. Also, the common use of diminutives is very popular among the Mancunian accent. As for RP, the development of a new lexicon was due to the loan words borrowed from other languages. Therefore, the RP accent has a lexicon stock of about 60% Germanic origin, 29% Latin origin and the rest are words taken from other languages.

Finally, we have grammar, where the double negation or the use of the verb “to be” in the past takes an important role in Mancunian. In RP, it follows the rules of standard English like the use of subject-verb agreement, correct use of pronouns and correct verb tenses.

I would also like to mention the impact the Mancunian accent has in society as it is considered one of the most distinctive accents in Britain. Having said that, it is often linked to a low social status and Mancunian speakers may suffer from discrimination towards their accent in some social interactions. This negative view may be because this accent is associated with the working class because of the Industrial Revolution. Nevertheless, the Mancunian accent has played a popular role in culture with iconic



people from Manchester that helped to popularize the Mancunian accent and make it recognizable all over the world.



## 8. References

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