

Bakalářská práce

An Analysis of the Phonetic Variability in Pronunciation Among the Members of a Family Living in South Yorkshire

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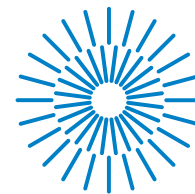
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Vedoucí práce:

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Zadání bakalářské práce

An Analysis of the Phonetic Variability in Pronunciation Among the Members of a Family Living in South Yorkshire

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Tato bakalářská práce se bude zabývat fonetickou analýzou anglické výslovnosti čtyřčlenné rodiny žijící v South Yorkshire, přičemž platí, že pro tři členy z rodiny je rodným jazykem čeština a pro jednoho urdština. Cílem práce bude podrobná diagnostika týkající se variability zvukových charakteristik v řeči jednotlivých členů z pohledu standardní britské výslovnosti a yorkshirského akcentu. Ústřední otázkou práce bude, jaké tendence ve výslovnosti lze u jednotlivých členů rodiny pozorovat a jaké je pro to možné vysvětlení.

Metody:

Data potřebná k provedení analýzy budou čerpána z dotazníku, kde z podrobného profilu každého člena rodiny bude získán bližší pohled na jejich lingvistické pozadí. Druhá část analýzy bude provedena na základě hlasového záznamu jednotlivých členů a následného fonetického rozboru variability ve výslovnosti. Získaná fonetická data budou podrobena komparativní analýze z pohledu standardní britské výslovnosti a yorkshirského akcentu.

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Anotace:

Práce se zabývá fonetickou analýzou anglické výslovnosti čtyřčlenné rodiny žijící v South Yorkshire a zkoumá, jaké tendence ve výslovnosti mají jednotliví členové rodiny a jak lze tyto tendence vysvětlit ze sociolingvistického hlediska. Potřebná data byla získána prostřednictvím dvou metod. Nejprve byl vytvořen dotazník, jehož cílem bylo odhalit lingvistické pozadí zkoumaných účastníků, a poté byly pořízeny jejich hlasové záznamy. Nahrávky byly následně ohodnoceny rodilým a nerodilým mluvčím angličtiny. Dále byla pro potřeby této práce provedena fonetická analýza nahrávek pomocí programu pro analýzu řeči PRAAT. Nakonec tento výzkum odhaluje, zda daný účastník ve svém mluveném projevu inklinuje k výslovnosti standardní britské angličtiny nebo yorkshirského akcentu. Zjištění dokazují, že si účastníci mladší generace osvojili yorskhirský akcent, zatímco účastníci starší generace inklinují k výslovnosti standardní britské angličtiny, i když do jisté míry došlo k osvojení yorkshirského akcentu.

Klíčová slova:

Akcent, standardní britská angličtina, Received Pronunciation, Yorkshire accent, fonetická analýza, výslovnost, Accent acquisition, sociolingvistické faktory, čtyřčlenná rodina žijící v South Yorkshire, PRAAT

Abstract:

This bachelor's thesis examined the phonetic variability of the English pronunciation of a family of four living in South Yorkshire and investigated tendencies in the pronunciation of individual family members and how these tendencies can be explained from a sociolinguistic perspective. The necessary data were obtained using two methods. Firstly, a questionnaire was created with the purpose of outlining the participants' linguistic background, and

secondly, their voice recordings were taken. The recordings were subsequently commented on and evaluated by native and non-native speakers of English. Furthermore, for the purposes of this paper, a phonetic analysis of the recordings was utilised using the speech analysis program PRAAT. Finally, the research revealed whether a participant tends to pronounce in Standard British English or the Yorkshire accent during their speech production. The findings displayed that the younger participants had acquired the Yorkshire accent. The older participants were more inclined to use Standard British English, although some acquisition of the Yorkshire accent was present.

Keywords:

Accent, Standard British English, Received Pronunciation, Yorkshire accent, phonetic analysis, pronunciation, Accent acquisition, sociolinguistic factors, four-member family living in South Yorkshire, PRAAT

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List of Abbreviations

BrSE – Standard British English

F1 – Formant 1

L1 – First Language

L2 – Second Language

L3 – Third Language

N – Neutral accent

N/A – Not applicable

P1 – Participant 1

P2 – Participant 2

P3 – Participant 3

P4 – Participant 4

RP – Received Pronunciation

YA – Yorkshire Accent

Introduction

Multicultural intermarriage has been on the rise due to the effects of national and international migration with 1 in 10 people being in an inter-ethnic relationship in the UK; as a result, the linguistic landscape has also witnessed a growth in the number of multilingual families (Curd-Christiansen and Lanza 2018, 1; Potter-Collins 2014). As families and communities are becoming more linguistically complex, the boundaries between community and lingual homogeneity are becoming blurred. A significant aspect to consider amongst those with a complex linguistic background is their use of language as it is a medium through which individuals reflect their social identity. The use of specific linguistic repertoire is influenced by various sociolinguistic factors such as educational background, socioeconomic class, cultural influences, regional upbringing as well as L1.

A significant aspect of the linguistic repertoire is pronunciation, which refers to how people produce sounds whilst speaking to create meaning. This includes segments such as consonants and vowels, as well as suprasegmental aspects such as rhythm, stress and timing (Hassan 2014, 32–35). Pronunciation encompasses accent and also includes both segmental and suprasegmental features, which are all a part of what can make an accent distinguishable. Accent greatly influences lingua-cultural identities and is the result of the individual's sociolinguistic factors such as their social class and the region they are from or situated in amongst many other factors. Some may actively pursue a desired identity through intentional accent modification by altering the way in which they produce sounds in speech.

Despite the small size of the UK, there are believed to be over 38 regional accents of English, not including the plethora of foreign accents (Sharma, Levon and

Ye 2022, 2). Accents in the UK are often associated with social class as accents which are or are close to the standard form British English (often referred to as Received Pronunciation), primarily spoken in the Southern parts of England, are considered more standard. Broad accents such as Northern accents, on the other hand, are associated with the working class and the lower class and are often perceived as less standard.

This accentism is one of the factors which is leading to the decline of regional accents. This has influenced and contributed to the decline of regional accents, as the younger generations perceive regional accents to be ‘old fashioned’ and the standard accent is the more favourable accent form spoken amongst youth (Beal, 2009, 230–231). It is therefore the older generation that tends to preserve regional accents (Beal 2009, 230).

This case study is a qualitative approach to phonetic variability in pronunciation, focusing on accent. The individuals examined in this research are all members of a multilingual nuclear family residing in the South Yorkshire region. The aim of this research is *to closely analyse the tendencies in the English pronunciation among a four-member multilingual family living in South Yorkshire*. Subsequently, the aim is *to examine possible sociolinguistic factors influencing the participants' pronunciation*.

There is a research gap in relation to the Yorkshire accent. The Yorkshire region is the largest county in the UK, and it is important that speakers from this region are represented, and their accent documented as it evolves and changes due to factors such as globalisation and changing perspectives. Publications in this field have primarily focused on large cohorts, and although this gives us strong quantifiable data, it leads to a lack of qualitative data which is necessary to

understanding *why* speakers pronounce a certain way or choose certain words. This research is therefore expected to contribute to the field by providing a detailed analysis of a linguistically diverse family.

The first hypothesis for this research is based on Beal's findings (2009, 225–226), thus, the author is expecting the younger family members to be more likely to display tendencies of Standard British English in their speech, as two of the participants were born and/or raised in the Yorkshire region. The second hypothesis for this research expects the older members of the family to have adopted the Yorkshire accent as Brulard and Carr (2013, 153) found that foreign speakers, especially migrants, are highly likely to accommodate a regional accent to provide them with a sense of identity socially and regionally. Furthermore, as the older participants are likely to be within a social network amongst speakers around their own age, and the older generation is the most likely to speak using a broad Yorkshire accent (Beal 2009, 230; Holmes 2013, 197), the expectation is that the older participants have been more exposed to and influenced by the regional accent.

This thesis consists of a theoretical part which defines the terms *accent*, *dialect*, and *idiolect* and provides an insight into the Yorkshire Accent and Received Pronunciation (Standard British English) alongside sociolinguistics factors influencing accent. The practical part introduces the methods utilised to examine the data collected. Finally, the findings and a summary of the results will be presented.

1. Theoretical Background

The following part of this paper will be the theoretical background – its purpose is to provide a deeper understanding of the terms *accent*, *idiolect* and *dialect*. This will be followed by a section regarding English accent variation, within this section, the two primary accents of concern for this thesis, the Yorkshire accent and Received Pronunciation, will be discussed to provide historical context alongside their phonetic features. Likewise, the sociological impacts these accents hold will also be analysed in relation to social class and self-perception as this will provide a foundation for the analysis as well as a prediction and expectation for the findings.

1.1 Accent, Idiolect and Dialect

Firstly, it is important to define *accent*, which will be followed by the historical background and the distinguishing phonetic features of the key influential accent, the Yorkshire Accent (YA), which has been chosen to be discussed throughout this text. *Accent*, *idiolect* and *dialect* are terms which are commonly used interchangeably in speech; nevertheless, although overlapping at times, these concepts do in fact differ. Recognising this distinction is necessary as Sikorski (2005, 119–120) points out, ‘dialect’ can be considered as the umbrella term which ‘accent’ and ‘idiolect’ falls under and is often misused due to this.

The largest difference between these two concepts lies in dialect referring to a form of language spoken and written in a particular part of a country, containing differing words and grammar (Sikorski 2005, 119; Petyt 1985, 343–344). According to Petyt (1985, 345), similarities between these two linguistic concepts overlap as both an accent and dialect emerge from regional factors such as an area, country and

also are the result of a social group. However, an accent is distinguishable from dialect due to the fact that it does not concern with the syntax and lexis but rather the pronunciation of words which are associated with a region or a social group. More simply, an accent can be defined as “the cumulative auditory effect of those features of pronunciation which identify where a person is from, regionally and socially” (Crystal 2003 in Levis, Moyer and Jessner 2014, 3).

Likewise, *idiolect* also overlaps with the concepts of *accent* and *dialect*, but once again, there are nuances through which distinctions can be made. Idiolect has been described to be a subcategory of *accent*, as the language which is social in nature and unique to the individual in question, it is a form of communication which can encompass factors such as accent and dialect, but it is not limited or bound by this (Barber 2008). As idiolect is the language which a person acquires through habits and their individual personality, it is a form of communicative means which features the personality of the speaker (Seminck et al. 2022, 2). Accent and idiolect will be focused on exclusively in this thesis as understanding the idiolect of the participants can provide us with the sociolinguistic reasonings for their accent articulation tendencies. It is unnecessary to focus on dialect as it encompasses grammar and lexicon – aspects which are not being assessed in this research. For the purposes of the present study, only accent and idiolect will be examined. Therefore, categories which distinguish accents also need to be outlined next, and scholars have identified two key forms of accents: ‘standard’ and ‘non-standard’.

1.2 Classification of Accents

Considering the relatively small size of the United Kingdom, which could fit inside the United States of America around forty times or to Russia approximately

around seventy times, it is a very rich country in terms of the number of accents. It is not possible to specify the exact number of accents in the UK as there are many of them, however, the most known one is Received Pronunciation (RP), also called Queen's English or Standard British English (Wells 2013, 13). Every accent has its own typical features that differ from other accents, but some features are shared across some. This subchapter will be distinguishing between the two key variations of accent, 'standard' and 'non-standard', as well as their subcategories. Based on these categories, the following diagram has been created to visualise the proposed subcategories which fall under accent according to Hendriks and Meurs (2022, 2):

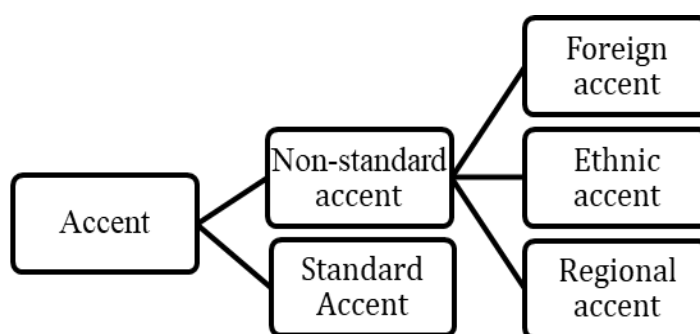


Figure 1. *Subcategories of accent*

A *standard accent* refers to the form which has been nationally, and often even internationally, recognised – these accents tend to be associated with high socioeconomic status and authority. This includes accents such as Parisian French in France, Hochdeutsch in Germany and significantly for this research, Received Pronunciation in the UK.

On the other hand, a *non-standard* accent encompasses 'regional accents', 'ethnic accents' and also refers to non-native speakers who produce what is known as a 'foreign accent'.

Firstly, Hendriks and Meurs (2022, 2) describe a ‘regional accent’ as one spoken by the residents of a particular area or region such as the Scottish accent (primarily spoken in Scotland), or as we are discussing, the YA (primarily spoken in the Yorkshire region). It is important to remember that accent can be a combination of these subcategories as linguistics is more often than not intertwined.

Whereas an ‘ethnic accent’ is one which can be heard in ethnic minorities which are often in fact native speakers of the language in question, but their heritage affects their accent, influenced by their community, this can be witnessed in Latin-American influenced English and many more minorities (Hendriks and Meurs 2022, 2).

As aforementioned, foreign accents refer to the production of speech by an individual speaking in a language which they do not speak to a ‘native’ standard and is often recognised due to the characteristics of their L1 being present in their speech when speaking a foreign language (Hendriks and Meurs 2022, 2). Linguists such as Flege (1981, 443) and Major (2001, 91) theorise that speakers of a foreign language (this being their L2, L3 etc.,) tend to have a foreign accent when speaking their non-native tongue which is primarily the result of their L1, as they tend to process new phonetic sounds in the foreign language to those of a similar sound from their L1 – pairing them rather than distinguishing them apart. Hence, their phonetic first language acquisition causes them to be unable to reproduce unfamiliar phonetic variations in the target language. However, whether this is always the case or if there is “a bigger fundamental difference between children and adults in phonetic learning ability” is something which linguists do not always agree on, as the extent to which age plays a role has been debated in the field for decades (Flege 1981, 443–444).

1.3 Received Pronunciation and the Yorkshire Accent

The author of this thesis understands the terms Received and Standard British English (BrSE) to be synonymous. This is because RP has been referred to through various names, including General British English, Educated Southern British English BBC Pronunciation/Accent, and more relevantly to this research and commonly used, Standard British English (Roach 2004, 238).

First, the RP form of English will be discussed as it is necessary for it to be referred to in order to compare the similarities and differences between the standard form of English to the YA. Discussing Received Pronunciation (RP) will therefore allow for a more holistic approach in understanding and discussing the findings of this case study. As RP is considered to be the ‘standard form’ of pronunciation in British English, its inclusion within this thesis can help to provide a baseline for the phonetic variabilities at play when comparing.

1.3.1 Received Pronunciation

To provide further context, Received Pronunciation (RP) is the form of English which has become the agreed upon as the standard form of British English and has been used as the standard in phoneticians' description of pronunciation of British English for centuries. There is debate as to when the term RP was originally coined, as although many believe that the term was first coined by linguist A J Ellis in 1869, there is record of this term dating back to 1710 (Beal 2020, 25–26). Although it cannot be determined whether it was Ellis who had in fact coined the term, it is generally agreed upon by linguists that he brought notoriety to the term. Ellis considered RP to be a *sociolect* – a sociolect refers to a dialect associated with a particular social class, in this case referring to the upper class (Beal 2020, 26). Beal

(2020, 23–24) referred to RP as a form of accent which was ‘generally accepted’, synonymising with ‘received’; this was later utilised as the uniform of pronunciation to standardise the English language across the nation, particularly influencing the form of English taught in schools. In Contemporary Britain, the majority of speakers of this accent live in, or originate from, the south-east of England (Roach 2004, 239). In order to describe the pronunciation of RP, Roach (2004, 239–240) mentions in his article that the accent is used by most ‘official’ BBC speakers of English origin – it is recognisable, well-accessible and distinct. Although RP is the standard form of British English, it has been documented that non-standard forms of English are more prevalent throughout the United Kingdom, as only 2–3% of the population uses it (Robbinson, 2019). This means that although this RP form of British English is the most taught and researched, it is in fact the least used in practice. There are three categories which RP can be divided into:

1. Conservative RP (traditional form – primarily spoken by older-speakers and is considered aristocratic)
2. Mainstream RP (neutral form – age and lifestyle are irrelevant)
3. Contemporary RP (up-to-date form – primarily spoken by younger-speakers)

Although these are three categories which RP can be divided into, they share one thing in common, and that is that there is no pattern in particular which would reveal where in the UK the speakers are from (Robinson, 2019). Although their location can be generally presumed to be from the South of England, it cannot be distinguished as easily as with other British accents such as the distinct accent from Glasgow, or ‘Sheffieldian’. For this thesis, the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

transcription will be utilised to ensure that there is a consistency when comparing the regional YA to the standard RP accent.

Even though RP has been described by Robinson (2019) as one which cannot be used to distinguish where in particular an individual may be from, the vowels which make the RP accent distinguishable from others are in fact well-documented due to its standardised status. Below, in Figure 1., we can see that the vowels are rather closed in RP and that each vowel is distinguishable for one another.

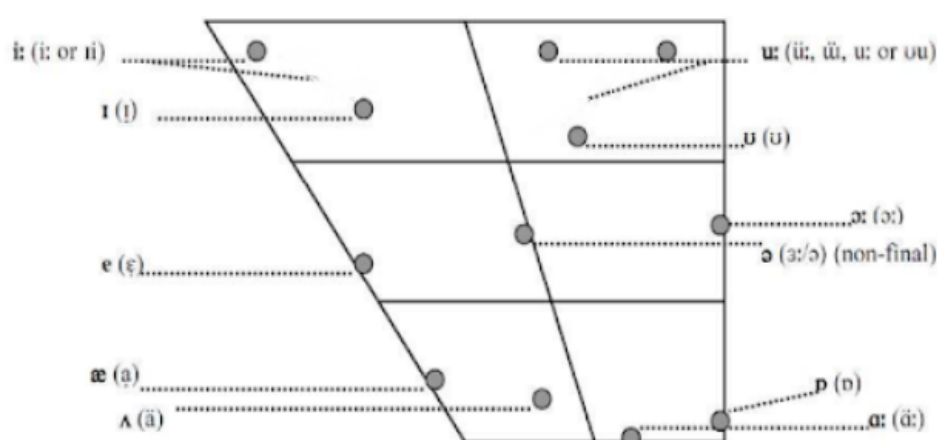


Figure 2. *Vowel chart for the (relatively) pure vowels of RP* (Wilhelm 2018 following Cruttenden 2011, 7)

1.3.2 The Yorkshire Accent

The Yorkshire accent, known for its specific features in pronunciation, sometimes referred to as Broad Yorkshire, Yorkshire English, Yorkie or Tyke, originates from the language of the Anglian tribesmen who invaded and colonised Yorkshire about 500 AD (Waddington-Feather 2003, 5). However, the Yorkshire region had not officially existed until 1974, and the geographic region, although now having no active mines, is recognised for its mining heritage which dates back to the early nineteenth century (Cooper 2018, 68). Despite its prominence, both the

Yorkshire dialect and accent have faded, and according to some scholars, it even faces extinction, but as of now, it is still actively spoken in the Yorkshire region of Northern England (Keane, 2005). Although there are accent nuances throughout the various regions of Yorkshire, for the purpose of this thesis, the accent focus will be generalised to the whole Yorkshire region as shown in the map below.

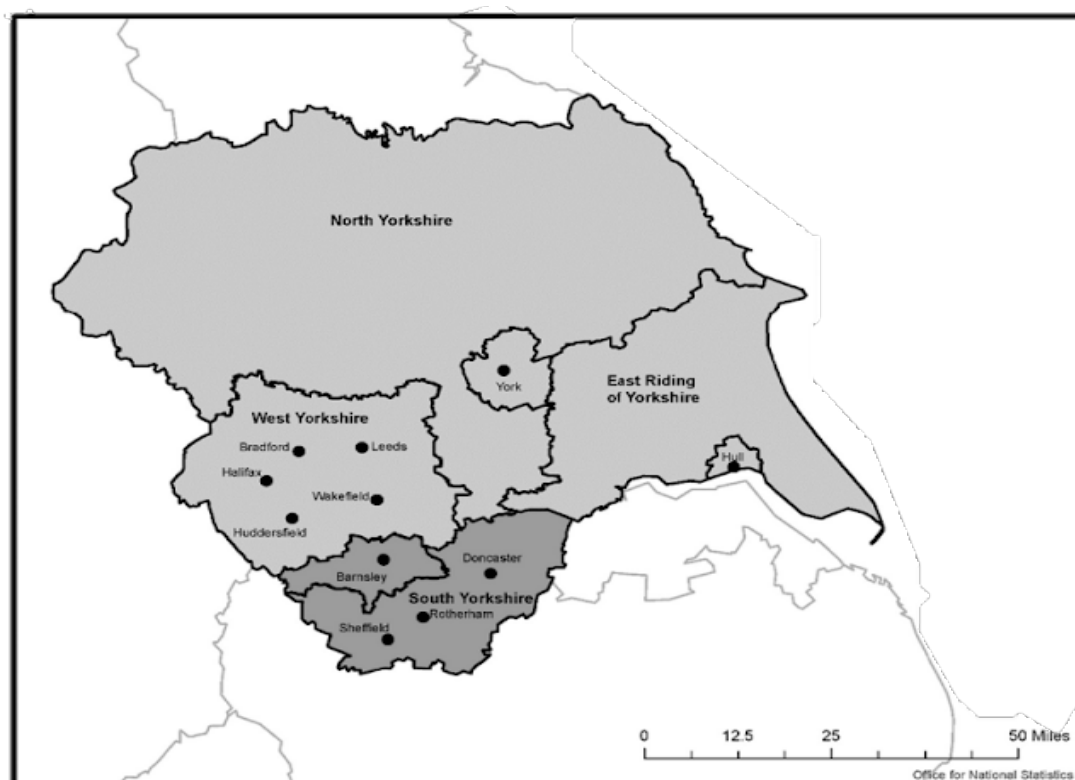


Figure 3. A map of the Yorkshire Region in which the Yorkshire Accent is spoken (Cooper, 2018, 69)

1.4 Phonetic Differences between Received Pronunciation and the Yorkshire Accent

This thesis is looking into the phonetic variability of the YA in relation to a linguistically complex family. Specifically, the focus will be on these following selected phonetic YA sounds which will be compared to the RP: /ʊ/ instead of /ʌ/, /æ/

instead of /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/ instead of /əʊ/. These sounds were selected as they are to some extent unique to the Yorkshire accent and are also easily distinguishable to the standard accent (RP). To display this, Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 below provide a brief overview of the most salient pronunciation features between RP and YA as well as provide information on the general characteristics which can be found within YA.

Pronunciation of /ʊ/ instead of /ʌ/	In RP in words such as love, some, cup, fun, strut, country, above, the vowel is pronounced with the following phonemic symbol – /ʌ/. However in YA, the vowel in these words is pronounced with /ʊ/.
Pronunciation of /æ/ instead of /ɑ:/	In RP in words such as bath, past, last, chance, laugh, the vowel is pronounced with the following phonemic symbol – /ɑ:/. However in YA, the vowel in these words is pronounced with /ʊ/.
Pronunciation of /ɔ:/ instead of /əʊ/	In RP in words such as goat, tone, spoke, no, go, alone, the vowel is pronounced with the following phonemic symbol – /əʊ/. However, in YA, the vowel in these words is pronounced with /ɔ:/.
Pronunciation of /e:/ instead of /eɪ/	In RP in words such as late, compensate, great, reign, weight, eight, plate, the vowel

	is pronounced with the following phonemic symbol – /eɪ/. However, in YA, the vowel in these words is pronounced with /e:/.
Pronunciation of /ɪ/ instead of /i/	In RP in words such as lovely, clearly, silly, the vowel is pronounced with the following phonemic symbol – /i/. However in YA, the vowel in these words is pronounced with /ɪ/.

Table 1. *General features of Yorkshire accent in vowels*

These general features of vowels in the Yorkshire accent can be seen more clearly in Table 2 below as they show the IPA transcript and distinguish the differences between the RP and YA accent.

	RP Phonetic Transcript	YA Phonetic Transcript
country, cup	/kʌntri/, /kʌp/	/kʊntri/, /kʊp/
bath, chance, last	/bɑːθ/, /tʃɑːns/, /lɑːst/	/bæθ/, /tʃæns/, /læst/
alone, goat, no	/ələʊn/, /gəʊt/, /nəʊ/	/əlɔːn/, /gɔːt/, /nɔː/
great, late, reign	/greɪt/, /leɪt/, /reɪn/	/gre:t/, /le:t/, /re:n/
clearly, lovely	/klɪəli/, /lʌvli/	/klɪəlɪ/, /lʌvɪ/

Table 2. *Differences in vowel sounds between the standard British form (RP) and the Yorkshire accent (YA) form*

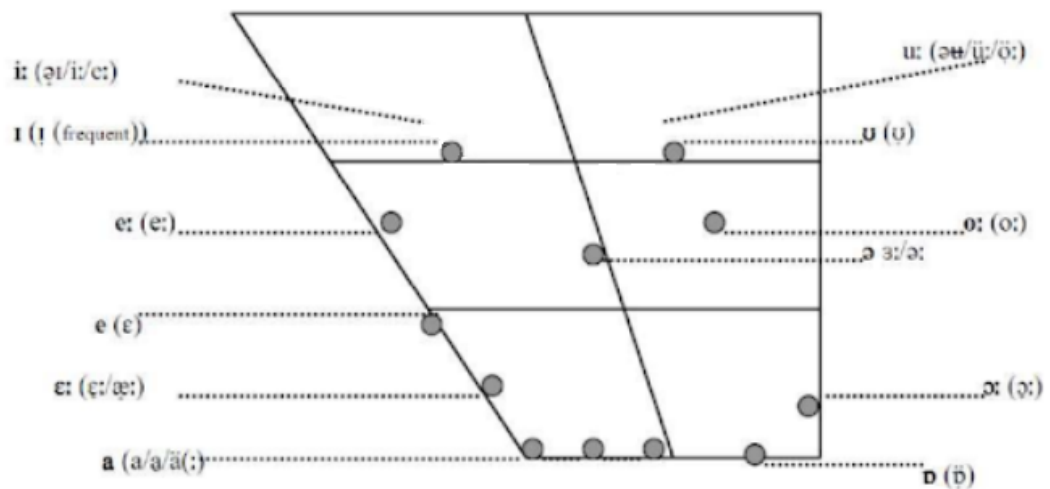


Figure 4. *Vowel chart for the (relatively) pure vowels in the Yorkshire Accent* (Wilhelm 2019 following Cruttenden 2011, 7)

The vowel production can be seen in Figure 4 – this also displays that unlike RP (refer to Figure 1), the vowel production is rather closed. Furthermore, in the bottom left, we can see a cluster in which the vowels are almost indistinguishable as there is very little placement difference in terms of production. Therefore, we can infer that the YA is a vowel shifted accent, and is easy to distinguish from the standard RP form when it comes to vowels.

Omission of /h/	Omission of /h/, or H-dropping, is a type of elision marked by the omission of the voiceless glottal fricative or "H-sound", /h/, in words such as happy, here, behind, hope, home.
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Glottalisation of /t/	In Yorkshire accent the middle /t/ or the double /t/ may be glottalised in words such as important, water, start-up, better, kettle. The glottal stop is transcribed with the apostrophe /' / or the symbol /ʔ/.
Pronunciation of dark /ɫ/ instead of light /l/	In words such as little, level, look, left, click, in the Yorkshire accent, a dark /ɫ/ is pronounced instead of a light /l/, which is the way of saying an /l/ sound, in which the back of the tongue is raised slightly.
Pronunciation of /n/ instead of /ŋ/	A typical feature of Yorkshire accent is that 'ng' is treated as /n/ instead of /ŋ/ in words such as going, singing, walking, sting, wing.

Table 3. *General features of Yorkshire accent in consonants*

Based on table 3, a more detailed description of the omission of /h/, the glottalisation of /t/ and the dark /ɫ/ will be discussed. As the omission of /h/ refers to h-dropping or 'aitch' dropping, is a phenomenon common in most regions of England (Crisma 2007, 59). In IPA transcription the sound /h/ is described as a voiceless glottal fricative, however, when /h/ is omitted, elision occurs and physically, the sound /h/ is not uttered (Lindsey 2019, 73–74). Therefore, in words such as home, hair, behind, where the RP IPA transcription would be /həʊm/, /heər/, /bɪ'hænd/, in YA these words would be transcribed and pronounced /ɔ:m/, /eər/, /bɪaɪnd/.

Similarly, glottalization is also a common phenomenon as it is present within all accents of British English; however, its usage is primarily prevalent within the Cockney and Yorkshire accents, as within these accents, the practice of glottal replacement is commonplace (Roach 1973, 240; Alderton 2020; Crisma 2007, 59). The glottalisation of /t/ always takes place in the middle or the end of a word. From a phonological perspective, physically, this refers to the complete or partial closure of the glottis while articulating another sound. In other words, it is a phenomenon where the vocal folds come together and stop the breath which causes the stop of the sound, followed by a sudden release of air causing the omission of the /t/ sound which is then released (Roach 1973, 240). For example, in the word water, which is phonetically transcribed in RP as /wɔ:tə/ would instead be transcribed and pronounced as /wɔ:ʔə/ in the YA as the sound /t/ is glottalized, which is marked as a glottal stop in the IPA as follows: /ʔ/.

Another feature typical of the YA described in Table 3 is the dark /l/. The consonantal /l/ sound in RP is called the alveolar lateral approximant, which is also known as light /l/ or clear /l/. When pronouncing the light /l/, the tip of the tongue touches the upper teeth and the air is pushed around the sides of the mouth. While the dark /l/ is called velarized alveolar lateral approximant and pronounced with additional raising of the tongue to the same position it has for a high back vowel. Therefore, for example, in the word love, which is phonetically transcribed in RP as /lʌv/ would instead be transcribed and pronounced as /ɫʌv/ in the YA as the tongue dorsum is more retracted and the tongue body is lowered.

Below, Table 4 displays the characteristics in consonant sounds between RP and YA using the IPA, clearly demonstrating both the glottalization and /h/ dropping phenomenon which can be considered a staple in the YA.

	RP Phonetic Transcript	YA Phonetic Transcript
happy, home, hope	/hæpi/, /həʊm/, /həʊp/	/æpi/, /ɔ:m/, /ɔ:p/
better, kettle, water	/betə/, /ketəl/, /wɔ:tə/	/beʔə/, /keʔəl/, /wɔ:ʔə/
click, level, left	/kɪk/, /levəl/, /left/	/kɪk/, /levəl/, /left/
going, singing, wing	/gəʊɪŋ/, /sɪŋɪŋ/, /wɪŋ/	/gəʊɪn/, /sɪŋɪn/, /wɪn/

Table 4. *Differences in consonants sounds between the British standard form (RP) and the Yorkshire accent (YA) form*

As this thesis is looking into the phonetic variability within the YA in relation to a linguistically complex family, based on the tables above displaying the difference between RP and the YA, three phoneme pairs have been selected for the purposes of the present study:

RP	×	YA
/ʌ/	×	/ʊ/
/əʊ	×	/ɔ:/
/ɑ:/	×	/æ/

These phonemes were chosen as they are to some extent unique to the Yorkshire accent as well as because they are easily distinguishable from the standard accent (RP).

1.5 Sociolinguistic Factors

1.5.1 Sociolinguistic Status of Received Pronunciation and the Yorkshire Accent

Accents are able to convey a plethora of information about our individualistic traits and our social history as they can reveal which region an individual was born and raised, or even spent a predominantly long time living – they can also reveal factors such as gender, age, occupation and even the speaker's ethnic background. As accents are able to reveal such a large amount of information, often unsolicited, this can have both a positive and a negative impact on the individual. The reason behind this judgement of character is that sociolinguists agree on the notion that listeners consciously and subconsciously refer to accent to determine whether the speaker is native or non-native, whether their accent is standard or non-standard, whether they are educated or uneducated, the extent to which they are being formal, informal, casual or intimate (Levis, Moyer and Jessner 2014, 3). Therefore, the perception one might give is dependent on the listeners' personal experiences, beliefs and stereotypes to name a few factors behind this cognitive process.

Based on Figure 1, the Yorkshire Accent can be categorised as a non-standard regional accent as opposed to Received Pronunciation which is classed as a standard accent. This is an important differentiation to make as standard accents have been found to have a more positive sociolinguistic outlook than non-standard accents (Hendriks and Meurs 2022, 3). This is because they tend to be perceived as more competent as they are usually spoken by those of a higher socioeconomic standing and are therefore associated with characteristics such as power and education (Hendriks and Meurs 2022, 3). This does not mean that standard accents are viewed

entirely positively as the RP accent has also been found to be viewed as pretentious and dishonest (Beal 2009, 225–226).

Non-standard accents such as the YA tend to be perceived as inferior to their standard counterparts and are associated with blue-collar workers (Hendriks and Meurs 2022, 3–8). Although this may lead to the belief that non-standard accent users are perceived to be unlikable, this is not the case. This is because the way accent is perceived is in fact much more complicated, as even though there is research which almost unanimously does indeed display that the commonly held perception in society that a non-standard accent speaker is of a lower economic standing, this does not reflect the way they view the individuals in regards to other characteristics. Cooper (2018, 68), one of the leading researchers, of the Yorkshire Accent has shown this to be the case as he found that although the YA is still associated with manual labour due to its mining history, the accent within the region is viewed as more likeable, and friendly and is believed to be spoken by those with a good sense of humour. Hendriks and Meurs (2022, 2) also discussed how, in some cases, non-standard accents are viewed as honest and are believed to be spoken by hard-working individuals. Nevertheless, the YA is becoming obsolete in recent years due to two main contributing factors:

1. Migration and internationalism being on the rise within the region alongside the influence and impact of the social media and aired entertainment.
2. The rising perception of the younger generation viewing the YA as ‘old-fashioned’.

These two factors are based on the research made by Beal (2009, 223–238) who found that a large proportion of the younger-generation of Yorkshire residents associate the YA with an older generation. Nonetheless, the accent has not

disappeared entirely, but has merged and lost some of its attributes, which as the author points out is not entirely due to the fact that the accent is viewed as out-of-date but because of the external influences which are introducing a large variety of accents into the region which has caused an extent of merging (Beal 2009, 223–238). It cannot be assumed that the YA decline is the fault of a disinterested generation, but is rather a result of the times. Beal (2009, 223–238) further mentions that those residing in Yorkshire believe that not speaking in the YA is fake and pretentious. This suggests that individuals living in the region are more likely to speak using the regional accent, rather than switching to a standard one. In this instance, non-standard accents such as the YA can be assumed to be more socially rewarding than their standard counterparts, but economically and professionally, they can be detrimental to some extent due to the aforementioned stigmatisation and stereotyping which associate the YA with manual labour and poor education.

1.5.2 Conscious and Unconscious Accents

This may be a contributing factor to the myth of the ‘north-south divide’ across the UK as this is what may lead to northerners as being stereotyped to be just ‘bleak industrial workers’ in comparison to southerners who are perceived to be ‘more cultured’ people from a middle to higher class upbringing (Hall and Hiteva 2020, 44–48). Such myths are representative of *‘important social, economic and cultural rifts, perpetuating distinctive stereotypes of people from both regions’* (Holloway and Hubbard 2001, 161). Such myths and stereotypes are important to consider in relation to metalinguistic awareness, conscious and unconscious accent modification. Simply put, metalinguistic awareness refers to an individual becoming socially aware of having an accent which belongs to a specific region and/or social group (Brulard

and Carr 2013, 154). If the accent the user speaks is perceived as unfavourable, such as a non-standard accent in a professional environment, this can lead to conscious or unconscious accent modification. A conscious accent change occurs when the individuals 'natural' accent in a given language is viewed as being of a low social status in the situation given; this leads to the speaker consciously making the decision to change their accent to one which is perceived to be more socially apt (Brulard and Carr 2013, 154–155). Similarly, an unconscious accent can happen in the same situation; however, the speaker has not made this alteration with an awareness, instead, this has happened without their knowledge or conscious effort (Brulard and Carr 2013, 153–155). An unconscious accent change is more common in speakers who are able to speak the language in question to a native level, as when it comes to those speaking in a language which they have learned or acquired at a later stage in life, an accent change is much more likely to be conscious.

1.5.3 Foreign Speakers and Accent Acquisition

Furthermore, foreign speakers, particularly migrants, are more like to accommodate to the accent in the region, even if this accent is viewed as less-favourable in a wider context due to its non-standard status as this can often provide them with a sense of identity in both a social and regional context (Brulard and Carr 2013, 154). It was also found that this is however more complex when it comes to children who are able to speak more than one language fluently, as linguistically, their identity is not established – they '*lie at the interface of linguistics, philosophy, history, sociology, antryphology*' (Bruland and Carr 2013, 153). Therefore, how they identify can be related to their dominant language, their ethnic identity – which can be multiple, the region they were born in, the region they were

raised in or the one they are currently living in. This means that it becomes difficult to find a clear pattern when it comes to their accent choice, given that they have obtained metalinguistic awareness.

However, Holmes (2013, 196) discusses an important factor to consider when it comes to accent choice, this being the importance of social networks. This is because people tend to communicate with individuals within their own class which creates tightly knit communities in which accent is often shared (Holmes 2013, 197). This leads to social networks influencing the accent of the members within it, often leading to vernacular accents to be used in working-classes, and more standard accents to be used in upper-middle and upper classes (Holmes 2013, 197–202).

The idea of a social network would also affect individuals speaking a foreign language, particularly in an immersive environment as recent studies have shown that although age is a factor attributing to being able to acquire a ‘native’ accent in a foreign language, there is in fact no particular cut-off age. Although there is a critical period in which accent acquisition is the most significant and ‘easiest’ to acquire, this being up until the beginning of puberty, a ‘native’ accent can still be acquired even in adulthood (Dollmann, Kogan and Weißmann 2019, 788). Acquiring an accent in adulthood is not as easily obtainable as it is in childhood, however, as long as ‘certain preconditions related to learning efficiency and language exposure are met’, this is something that has been proven to be achievable (Dollmann, Kogan and Weißmann 2019, 787). One of the key conditions being continued input, particularly in an immersive environment (Kupisch et al. 2014, 145). Therefore, if conditions such a strong social network is present, and the individual is communicating in their target language, they are very likely to obtain and replicate at least some native level accent features.

2. Methodology

This section aims to describe the methodological approach of this research and will discuss the audio recordings, segmental analysis, and PRAAT, a phonetic speech analysis programme. Alongside this, the following two research questions will also be posed.

Research questions:

1. *What tendencies can be observed in the English pronunciation among a four-member multilingual family living in South Yorkshire?*
2. *How can the observed tendencies in pronunciation be explained from a sociolinguistic perspective?*

2.1 Participants

This thesis investigated a four-member nuclear family residing in South Yorkshire, Sheffield. The participants are aged 60, 48, 26 and 16 and the 3 older members have been residing in the UK since 2005. The youngest was born in the United Kingdom in 2007. Although the family are Czech nationals, only two of the members, females aged 48 (Participant 2) and 26 (Participant 3) were born in the Czech Republic, the 60 year old male (Participant 1) in Pakistan and the youngest participant (Participant 4) was born in the United Kingdom. Participant 2, Participant 3 and Participant 4 speak Czech as their L1 but is the L2 of Participant 1. Participant 1's L1 is Urdu and their L2 is English which they began studying during their primary education. The two youngest individuals, Participant 3 and Participant 4, were educated in the British school system and are both bilingual with their English language level standing at C2 in accordance with the CEFR (Common

European Framework of Reference for Languages). The English level of the two older participants corresponds to the CEFR level B1 for Participant 2 and B2 for Participant 1. With the exception of Participant 2 who is a housewife and has not worked or studied in the UK, the other participants speak English on a daily basis whilst at school/studying, work as well as during their other daily activities including social interactions. More information about the participants can be found in Appendix A which contains all their answers to the questionnaire – this will be referred to throughout the discussion of the findings in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Due to these varied upbringings, the participants speak various languages despite being members of the same nuclear family and all have differing upbringings regionally; this makes for a more complex background which is often ignored (or perhaps avoided) in studies relating to accent acquisition.

2.2 Materials and Procedure

Two methods were utilised to acquire data for this research, audio recordings and a questionnaire; this was obtained via email communication as well as through face-to-face meetings.

As the aim of this research is to determine accent acquisition in relation to phonetic variability in pronunciation, the data gathered were not sensitive. Therefore, in order to avoid participation bias during the questionnaire and audio recorded activities, the participants were provided with incomplete disclosure; nonetheless, the participants were made aware that the thesis is related to linguistics when their consent was granted and were also provided the right to withdraw; full disclosure will be given to the participants during a debrief which is set to take place before the submission of this thesis. Disclosing the full brief of the research prior to this could

have potentially invalidated the results, hence, this step was necessary to ensure that an honest account of when the participants first came into contact with the English language and the Yorkshire accent as well as to obtain authentic data to determine in which situations they are more likely to use BrSE or the YA. For the purpose of this thesis, the term Standard British English (BrSE) will be used exclusively due to its general qualities as it covers a wide range of English. Additionally, as the participants in this study are not native speakers, they are not being held to a 'pure' RP standard; similarly, Assessor 2 is a linguistically inexperienced native speaker and this term is more suitable for a non-specialist in the field.

Alongside the questionnaire discussed prior, the participants were audio recorded whilst completing three tasks: reading words, reading sentences and describing a picture. The content which the participants were asked to read was created by the researcher allowing standardisation of the texts, likewise, the pictures were also selected by the researcher. These recordings were analysed and evaluated by two assessors – Assessor 1 is a non-native speaker, the researcher of this thesis, Assessor 2 is a native speaker living in Sheffield and is familiar with both BrSE and the YA. Their task was to assess whether the participants used Standard British English or the Yorkshire Accent when enunciating selected phonemes within words when reading and speaking. Assessor 2 was communicated with via email during the period of this research and was also provided with a questionnaire with Likert Scale Multiple Choice Questions which consisted of three pointer scale questions which required them to select whether the participant was more likely to pronounce the selected phonemes with BrSE, the YA or neither. The inclusion of Assessor 2 provided further validity by preventing observer bias, furthermore, blinding was also

utilised as the assessors did not share their findings/results and only shared the raw material (the audio recordings), further reducing potential bias.

2.2.1 Questionnaire

To understand which sociolinguistic factors might be the most likely to influence phonetic variability, a questionnaire was developed on Google Forms in order to create a profile of the four members who consented to sharing this data. The participants were sent a link to the questionnaire, in which all the questions posed were in English, via email and were asked to answer all 29 questions with the aim to gather a better understanding of the family members' linguistic background in terms of the languages they were exposed to and are able to speak, their age, sex, educational background and occupation. In particular, the respondents' preference between the Yorkshire Accent and Standard British English was examined. Generally, the questions investigated the respondents' linguistic environment and factors that may have influenced their accent usage. Using this information, a profile was built, allowing for a more holistic approach towards the understanding of the participants' accent preferences in relation to their individual sociolinguistic background.

The structured questionnaire consisted of dichotomous closed-ended questions, multiple choice closed-ended questions and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions did not permit the respondents to answer the question in their own words; instead, the respondents had to select one of the predetermined answers. This question format was chosen for questions which required the participants to be objective. Conversely, the open-ended questions permitted the participants to provide written answers in their own words by filling out the blank space provided.

2.2.2 Recordings

The audio was recorded using a mobile phone and formed a major part of the research as this provided samples for further analysis of both careful and spontaneous speech.

A major part of the thesis was selecting and creating a suitable list of words, sentences, and pictures in order to gather careful speech during reading activities versus their spontaneous speech during the picture describing activity. The texts created contained words with phonemes that are the focus of this bachelor's thesis. The selected word segments needed to be repeated at least four times in order to determine whether the participant was more inclined to pronounce using BrSE or the YA.

Similarly, pictures which would prompt the participants to use words that consist of the selected phonemes were selected as this would indicate whether they adopted the Standard British or the YA in their pronunciation. Three pictures were chosen in which objects appear that can be described by words containing the phonemes required for analysis, for example objects such as *bucket, sun, boat, post, castle, park* etc. As it was not possible to control the number of words spoken by each participant with the necessary phonemes in the case of the describing pictures activity, the first four words with a certain phoneme were utilised for analysis.

2.2.3 Assessing recordings

Two techniques were used to evaluate the recordings, this consisted of an evaluation completed by two assessors (a native speaker and a non-native speaker) as well as the PRAAT program in some cases. When assessing the reading of the texts and the description of the pictures, a global impression from the assessors was

obtained. The reason for the overall summary measure by a native speaker was that the recordings had to be assessed by an adept individual who would distinguish with certainty the differences between Standard British English and the Yorkshire Accent. In this case, the aforementioned native speaker lives in Sheffield and is familiar with both accents. Furthermore, for all three tasks (word list reading, sentence reading and a description of pictures), both assessors (Assessor 1 and Assessor 2) performed a segmental analysis – an auditory evaluation which deals with the analysis of the speech sounds in terms of segments via a Likert scale (see Table 6). The Assessors' task was to listen to and assess the participants' recordings by filling in the Likert scale. It consists of statements to which the assessors can answer on the scale, representing the opinion. The Likert scale focused on the phonetic features in the words containing the phonemes /əʊ/, /ɑ:/ and /ʌ/. The assessors focused on these phonemes of the participant' speech and ticked on the Likert scale whether the participant approached a Standard British English, Yorkshire Accent or a neutral accent. The neutral accent signifies that the assessor did not observe neither Standard British English nor Yorkshire accent in the recording.

	Standard British English	Neutral accent	Yorkshire Accent
ROPE /rəʊp/ vs /rɔ:p/			
GLASS /glɑ:s/ vs /glæs/			
TRUST /trʌst/ vs /trɒst/			

Table 5. *Illustrative table of Likert Scale Multiple Choice Questions*

The second method in which the data was analysed was through the PRAAT system which can provide a more accurate voice analysis results which the human ear cannot determine. The software allows analysis, synthesis and the manipulation of speech in phonetics. It can generate waveforms, wide and narrow band spectrograms, intensity contours and pitch tracks. This computer program made it possible to analyse the individual phonemes of the participants in more accurate detail. Through this programme, it was possible to detect whether the respondents were closer to a Standard British English accent or the Yorkshire Accent in cases in which no consensus was made by the assessors in their segmental analysis. The PRAAT findings were utilised and compared to the findings of both assessors, if the results of PRAAT matched the results of one of the assessors, this result was used to determine in which accent the phoneme was pronounced. In cases that the PRAAT findings did not correspond or support either of the assessors' evaluations and no consensus was made, the findings for that specific phoneme were determined as 'inconclusive'.

2.3 Measurements

The selected segments in the words containing phonemes the assessors did not agree on the pronunciation were analysed in PRAAT, a freeware computer program. Formant 1 (F1) is essential for a more detailed investigation of the analysed vowels. F1 is inversely related to vowel height: the higher the vowel, the lower F1, which is expressed in units of frequency – Hertz (symbol Hz). It assesses whether the vowel is open, half-open, half-closed, or closed.

Firstly, it is important to adjust the settings correctly, which includes a formant ceiling, the number of formants, the window length, the dynamic range, and the dot

size. Some of these values differ for men's recordings and women's recordings. The formant ceiling represents the highest frequency of the highest monitored formant and was set to 5000 Hz for a male voice and 4600 Hz for a female voice. The number of formants depicts how many formants are to be monitored, and this number was the same for male and female voices – 4 formants. The window length is the average energy over a window and was 0.025 s for men and 0.04 s for women. The dynamic range (in dB) and dot size (in mm) remained the same for both sexes at 30 dB and 1 mm.

In order to measure the value of Formant 1, it is necessary to mark the vowel in its entire length. The obtained values will then be compared with the values in the table *Formant frequencies for RP pure vowels in connected speech* (Cruttenden, 2001 cited in Gonet and Róžańska 2007, 4).

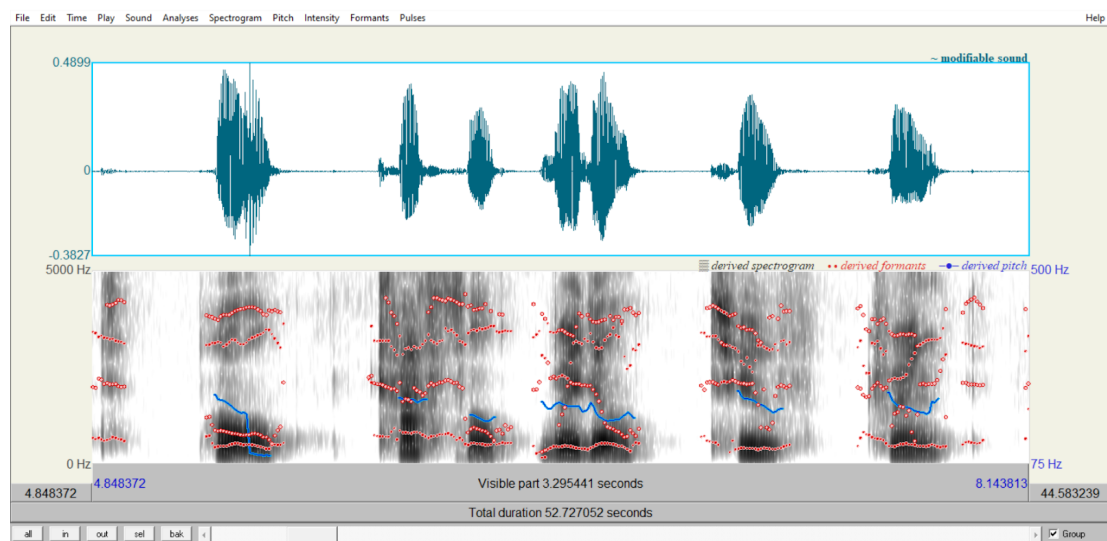


Figure 5. Illustrative image of the PRAAT software settings for a female voice

3. Findings

This chapter describes the results of all research methods which will consist of the findings of the global impression, segmental analysis and the results of the PRAAT program. These results are displayed using tables for the global impression results and pie charts for segmental analysis. Additionally, these tables and pie charts are accompanied by detailed descriptions. Moreover, this chapter contains the results of all activities alongside the overall results and their possible explanations.

3.1 Global Impression

An indispensable part of the phonetic analysis is the global impression, or simply referred to as the ‘overall impression’, of both the careful and spontaneous speech, which was conducted by both assessors, a native speaker and a non-native speaker. Their task was to evaluate which accent the participants are more likely to pronounce based on listening to the recordings. In contrast to the segmental analysis, in which the assessors evaluated each individual selected phoneme separately, here, they had to assess the entire recording. For this purpose, a five point Likert scale was used.

3.1.1 Global Impression: Findings of Assessor 1

	Standard British English	Rather Standard British English	Neutral accent	Rather Yorkshire Accent	Yorkshire Accent
Participant 1		X			
Participant 2	X				
Participant 3					X
Participant 4					X

Table 6. *Reading Sentences Activity. Findings of Assessor 1: Global Impression*

Based on Table 16, in which the evaluations of the recordings of the ‘reading sentences activity’ can be found, Assessor 1, the author of this case study, assessed that Participant 1 speaks *rather Standard British English*, Participant 2 speaks *Standard British English*, while Participant 3 and Participant 4 speak with a *Yorkshire Accent*.

	Standard British English	Rather Standard British English	Neutral accent	Rather Yorkshire Accent	Yorkshire Accent
Participant 1		X			
Participant 2	X				
Participant 3				X	
Participant 4					X

Table 7. *Describing Pictures Activity. Findings of Assessor 1: Global Impression*

Table 17 shows the results of the ‘describing pictures activity’ evaluated by Assessor 1, this is based on the overall impression of the recordings listened to by the

assessor for this activity. Assessor 1 assessed Participant 1 to speak *rather Standard British English*, Participant 2 to speak *Standard British English*, Participant 3 to speak with a *rather Yorkshire accent* and Participant 4 to speak with a *Yorkshire accent*.

3.1.2 Global Impression: Findings of Assessor 2

	Standard British English	Rather Standard British English	Neutral accent	Rather Yorkshire Accent	Yorkshire Accent
Participant 1		X			
Participant 2		X			
Participant 3					X
Participant 4					X

Table 8. *Reading Sentences Activity. Findings of Assessor 2: Global Impression*

Table 18 describes the overall impression of Assessor 2, a native speaker, from the recordings of the ‘reading sentences activity’. Based on this table it is evident that Assessor 2 evaluated Participant 1 and Participant 2 as readers speaking *rather Standard British English*, but found Participant 3 and Participant 4 as readers speaking with a *Yorkshire accent*.

	Standard British English	Rather Standard British English	Neutral accent	Rather Yorkshire Accent	Yorkshire Accent
Participant 1		X			
Participant 2		X			
Participant 3				X	
Participant 4					X

Table 9. *Describing Pictures Activity. Findings of Assessor 2: Global Impression*

Table 19 displays the results of the global impression of Assessor 2 based on the recordings of the ‘describing pictures activity’. In this activity investigating spontaneous speech, Assessor 2 rated Participant 1 and Participant 2 as speakers of *rather Standard British English*, Participant 3 as a speaker of *rather Yorkshire accent* and Participant 4 as a speaker of the *Yorkshire Accent*.

3.1.3 A Summary of the Global Impression Findings

The previous tables 16, 17, 18 and 19 illustrate the results of the global impression of the two assessors of this bachelor thesis. Assessor 1 and Assessor 2 always agreed on whether BrSE or a YA was pronounced. Differences appeared only in whether it is ‘rather’ a given accent or the accent is ‘one hundred percent’. Therefore, these results indicate that Participant 1 (male, 60) and Participant 2 (female, 48) are rather inclined or incline to pronounce BrSE, however, Participant 3 (female, 26) and Participant 4 (male, 16) rather incline or are inclined to pronounce in the YA.

3.2 Segmental Analysis Results

The intention of this chapter is to provide more in-depth descriptions of the findings and to discuss the possible explanations for the results which are being presented through a pie chart to provide visual statistical data. These graphical representations depict the auditory evaluations made by Assessor 1 and Assessor 2. More detailed results of this segmental analysis through PRAAT and both assessors and can be found in Appendix B providing tables and further descriptions. First, the results for each individual activity will be provided, this will be followed by the overall findings for each participant combining the findings of the three activities they had completed.

3.2.1 Reading Words Activity Results

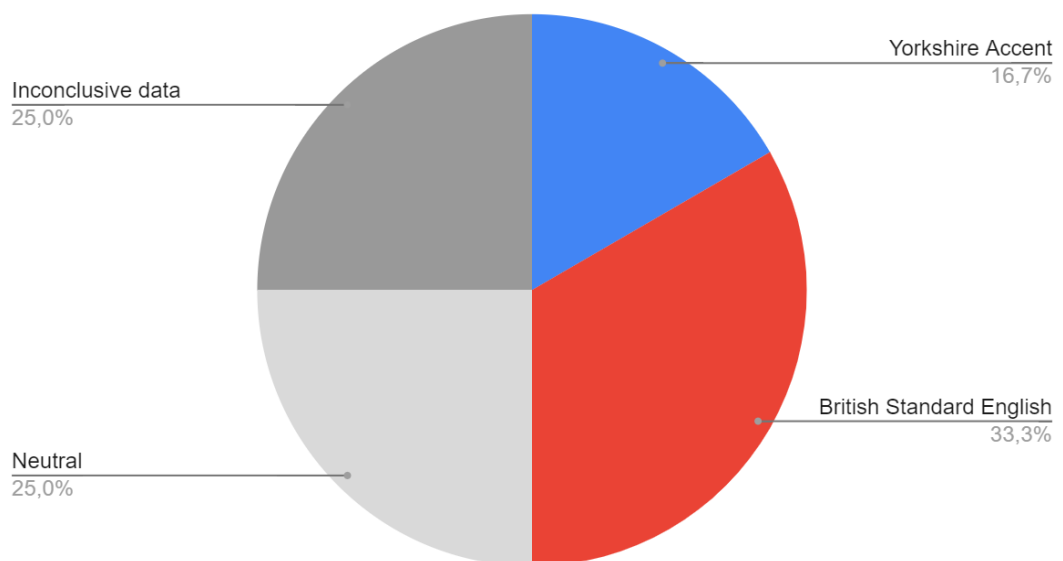


Figure 6. *Reading Words Activity Results: Participant 1*

Assessor 1 and Assessor 2 agreed a total of five times, and in the remaining cases in which the assessors did not concur on the phoneme pronounced, PRAAT

was used for analysis; however, the PRAAT data findings were inconclusive on three of these instances. Overall, the findings of this graph show that in the word reading activity, Participant 1 (male, 60) pronounced the most words, exactly one third, in Standard British English.

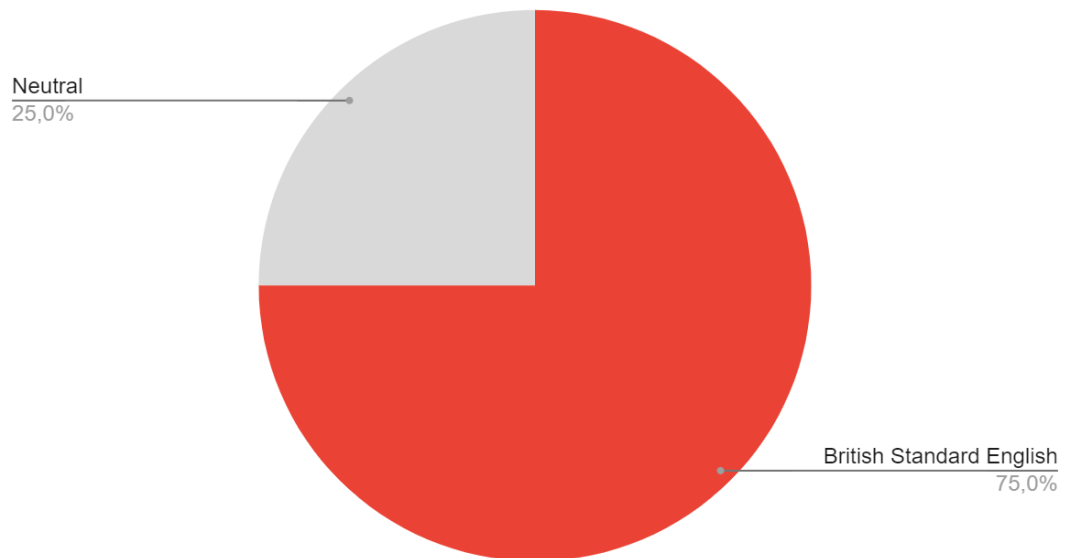


Figure 7. *Reading Words Activity Results: Participant 2*

As for the results of Participant 2 (female, 48), Assessor 1 and Assessor 2 agreed a total of ten times, and for two words PRAAT's results agreed with Assessor 2 that neither YA nor BrSE were pronounced. It is clearly visible from the graph that Participant 2 strongly tends to pronounce Standard British English when reading individual words.

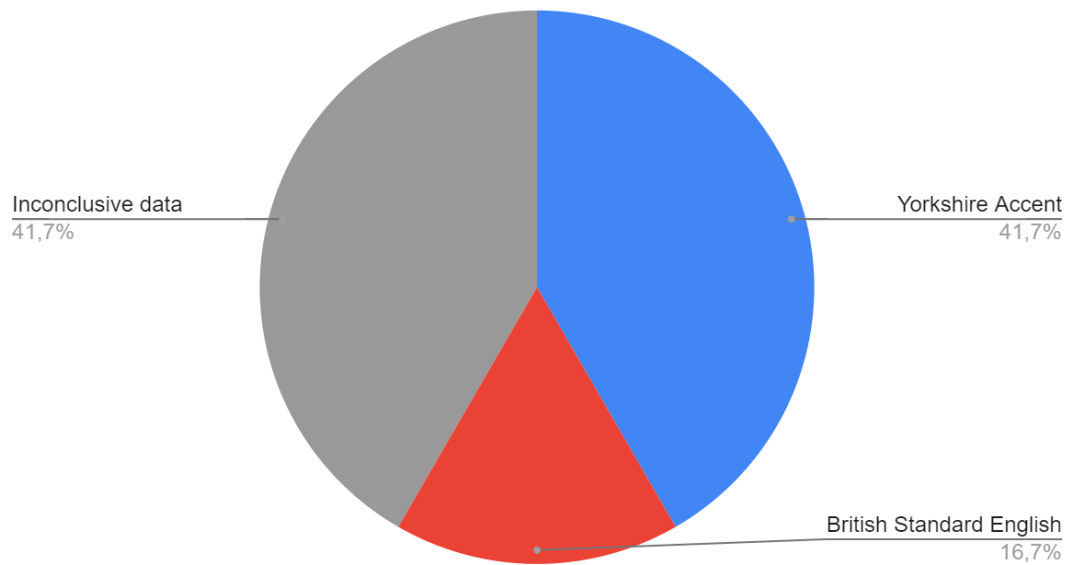


Figure 8. *Reading Words Activity Results: Participant 3*

The results of Participant 3 (female, 26) in the reading activity illustrates that they are rather inclined to pronounce in the YA. In regards to these findings, the assessors agreed in half of the cases; however, as a consensus was not made by the assessors in the other half of the words, PRAAT was used to determine the results. PRAAT only supported one of the assessors once, the rest of the PRAAT data was inconclusive.

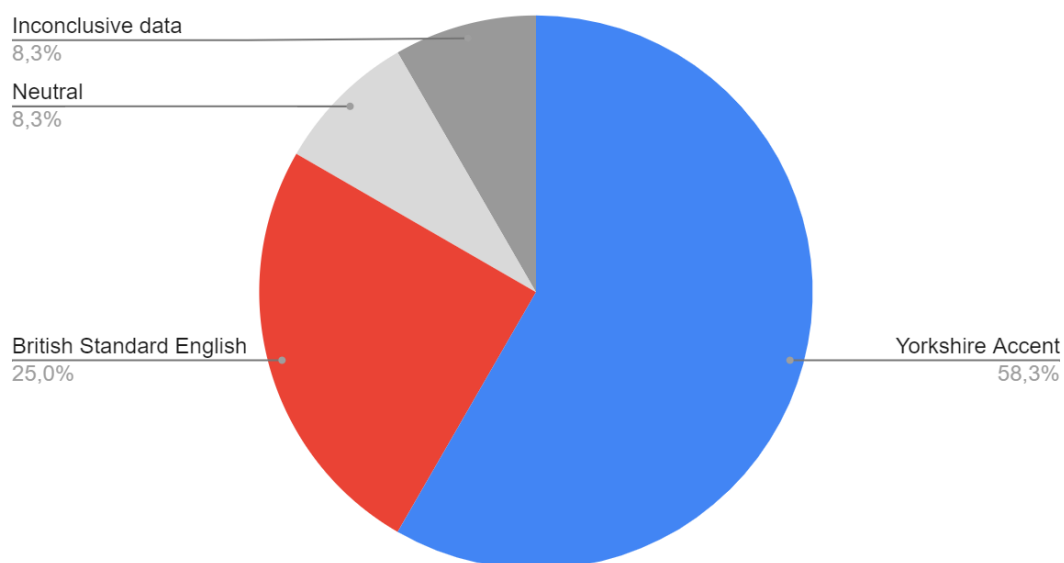


Figure 9. *Reading Words Activity Results: Participant 4*

In the case of Participant 4 (male, 16), the assessors concurred a total of eight times, in the remaining cases PRAAT helped to accurately determine the investigated phoneme three times as the results were able to support an assessor, but one of the results was inconclusive. From the graph it is evident that Participant 4 is strongly inclined to pronounce in the YA when reading isolated words.

3.2.2 Reading Sentences Activity Results

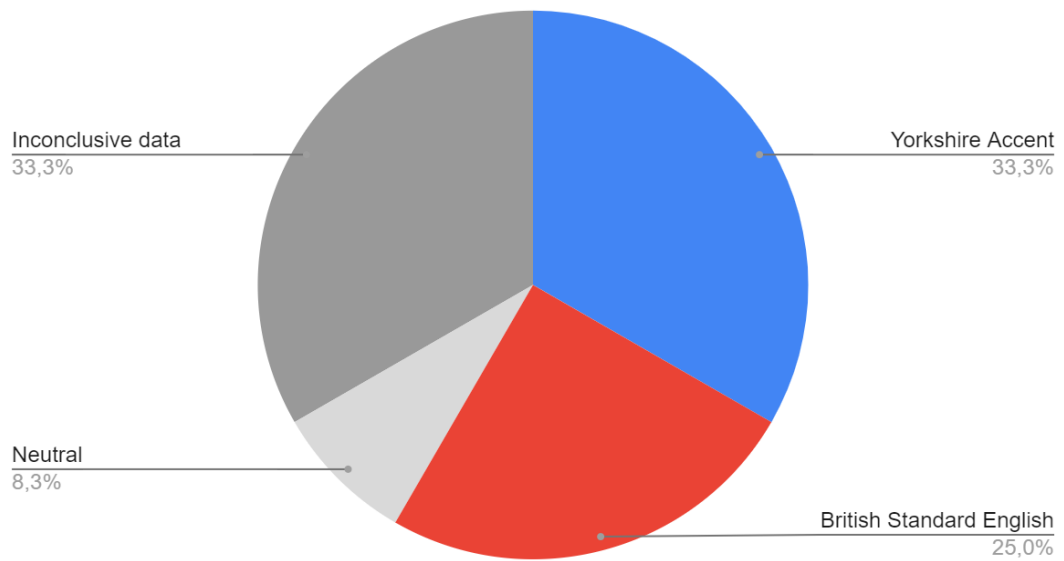


Figure 10. *Reading Sentences Activity Results: Participant 1*

In the sentence reading activity Assessor 1 and Assessor 2 agreed seven times in regards to the phoneme utterances made by Participant 1 (male, 60). In the remaining five cases in which the assessors did not come to an agreement, PRAAT helped to determine one of the phonemes – however, the remaining four phonemes were found to be inconclusive. The graph demonstrates that Participant 1 tends to pronounce in the YA in the activity in which careful speech was examined.

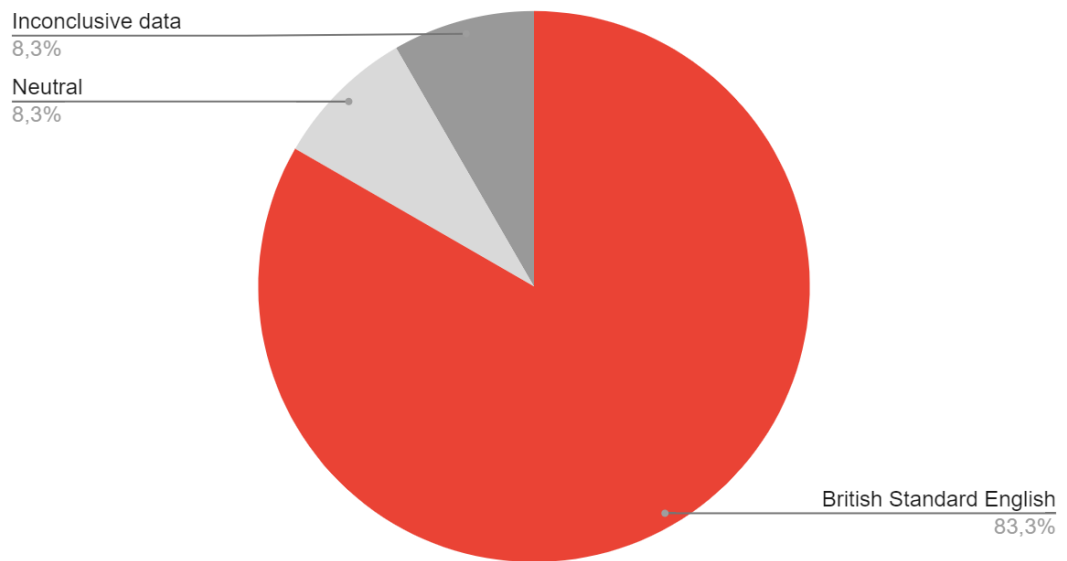


Figure 11. *Reading Sentences Activity Results: Participant 2*

It was found that the assessors coincided the majority of the time when analysing Participant 2 (female, 48) as on ten occasions they agreed upon their analysis finding. They also found that on most occasions, the participant was strongly inclined to pronounce using Standard British English during the sentence reading activity which is also clearly displayed in the graph.

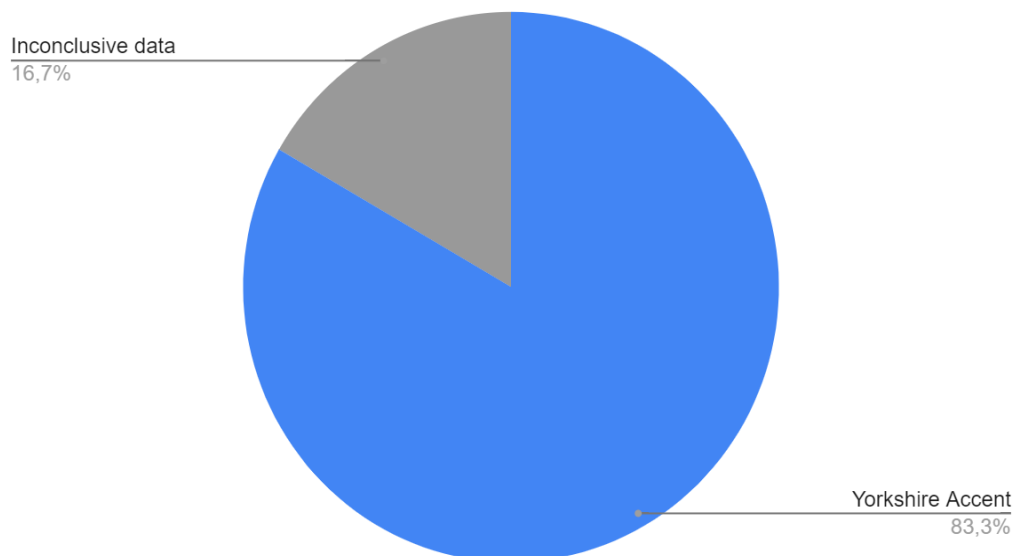


Figure 12. *Reading Sentences Activity Results: Participant 3*

Regarding Participant 3 (female, 26), Assessor 1 and Assessor 2 agreed in nine cases, with PRAAT once being able to distinguish which phoneme was being used, the rest of the data was found to be inconclusive. Despite the inconclusive data, a strong clear trend towards the YA accent can be observed in the graph displayed above.

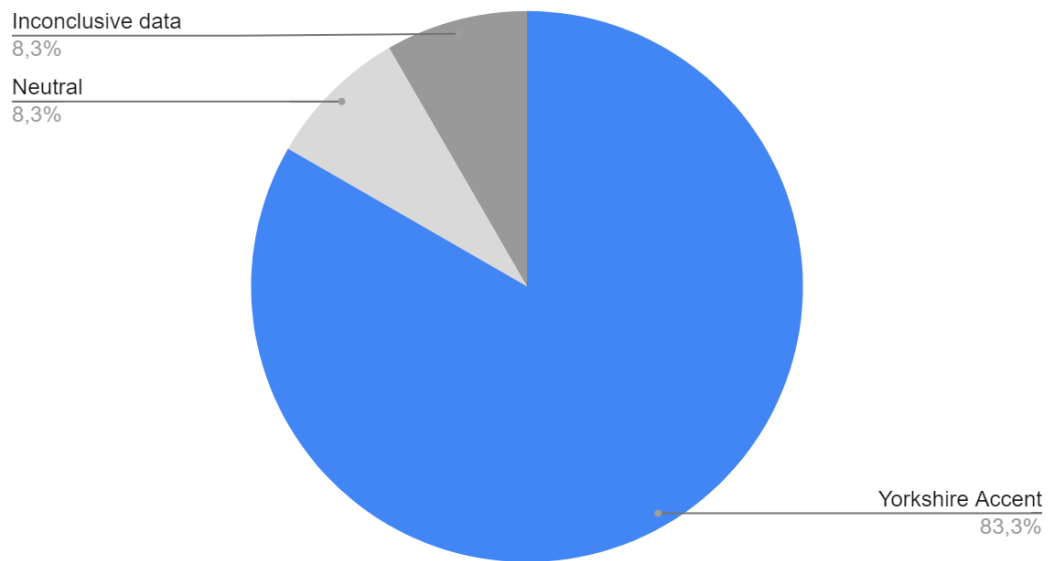


Figure 13. *Reading Sentences Activity Results: Participant 4*

Assessor 1 and Assessor 2 came to an agreement ten times when analysing Participant 4 (male, 16), however, it was still necessary to use PRAAT on two occasions to determine the phonemes which the assessors were unable to agree upon, On one of these occasions PRAAT helped to identify the examined phoneme but one of the result remained inconclusive. The results, which can be seen in the graph, show that Participant 4 pronounces in the YA in the sentence reading activity.

3.2.3 Describing Pictures Activity Results

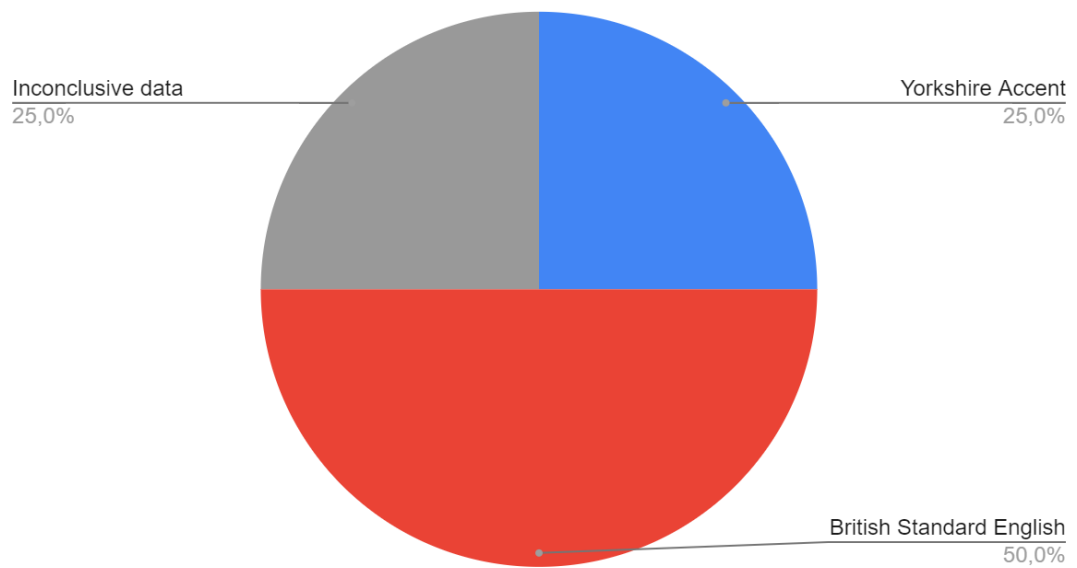


Figure 14. *Describing Pictures Activity: Participant 1*

Overall, a strong consensus between Assessor 1 and Assessor 2 was established as they came to an agreement on eight occasions when analysing Participant 1's (male, 60) spontaneous speech activity. The remaining four words which the assessors analysed differently to one another, PRAAT was used as the final decision maker and was able to identify the examined phoneme once, however, the result of the other three words were inconclusive. Nevertheless, the graph illustrates Participant 1's apparent tendency to pronounce using BrSE in the descriptive activity.

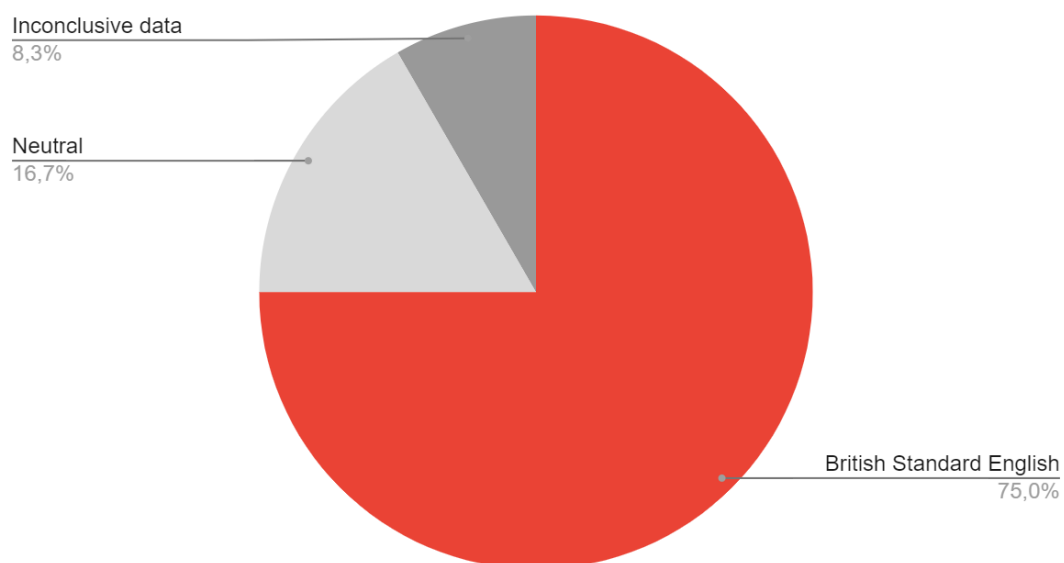


Figure 15. *Describing Pictures Activity: Participant 2*

The analysis of Participant 2 (female, 48) resulted in agreement between the assessors nine times. For the remaining phonemes, PRAAT helped to determine which phoneme was uttered on two occasions, and one of the results was inconclusive. It is clear from the graph that Participant 2 tends to pronounce Standard British English during spontaneous speech.

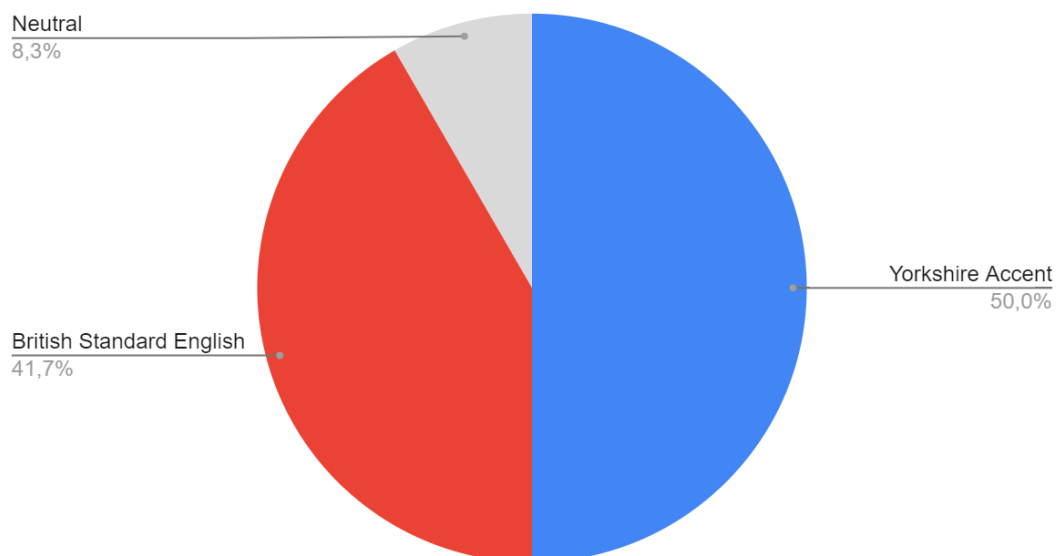


Figure 16. *Describing Pictures Activity: Participant 3*

Regarding the results of Participant 3 (female, 26), the highest number of concurrences between assessors was recorded as the assessors agreed with each other on eleven occasions, and the one occasion which they did not come to an agreement was able to be determined by PRAAT. The graph displays that in this activity, Participant 3 is strongly inclined to pronounce in the YA.

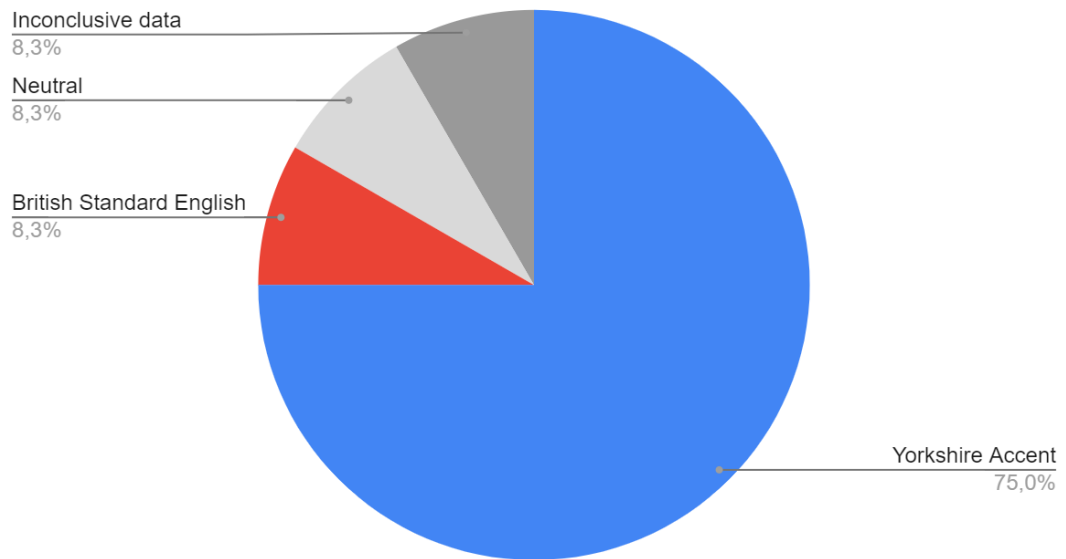


Figure 17. *Describing Pictures Activity: Participant 4*

Out of twelve occasions, Assessor 1 and Assessor 2 were in agreement ten times in regards to analysing phoneme utterances made by Participant 4 (male, 16). In the remaining two cases that an agreement was not established, PRAAT determined one of the phonemes and the final result was inconclusive. It is clear from the graph that Participant 4 has a strong tendency to pronounce in the YA in the activity that examines spontaneous speech.

3.2.4 Overall Results

This subchapter summarises the results of each individual participant by combining their results from the *reading words activity*, *reading sentences activity* and *the describing pictures activity*. Combining these results should provide an answer to the key research questions of this thesis as they should display whether the participants are more inclined to use the YA, BrSE or neither. The combined results are clearly captured by graphs that are described in detail alongside the possible

explanations for these findings. These possible explanations are based on the theoretical background chapter and the data gathered from the answers provided in the participants' questionnaires.

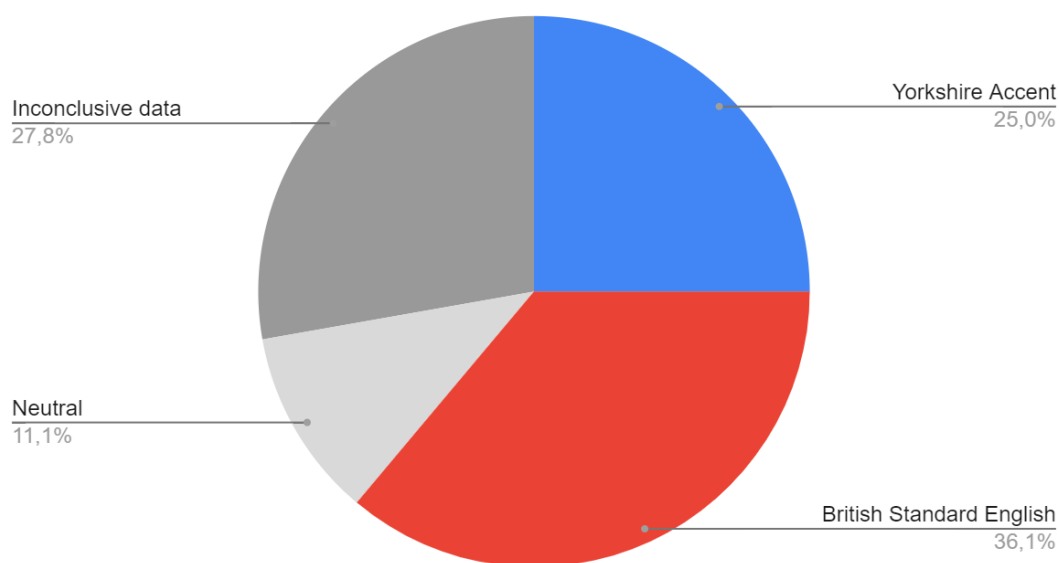


Figure 18. *Overall Results: Participant 1*

As displayed in the graph above, Participant 1 (male, 60) pronounced the majority of phonemes which were examined in BrSE as this accounted for 36.1% of their phoneme production; however, this marked only a 11.1% higher occurrence than their YA phoneme production. Thus, although the graph indicates that Participant 1's strongest tendency is to use BrSE, they have still adopted the YA to a large extent.

These findings seem to fit with accent acquisition research which suggest that those who learn English as a foreign language in a school setting are more likely to use a standard accent of English, in this case, the BrSE – as the participant studied English from their 1st year of primary school to university level in Pakistan, a country documented to teach the RP accent form on English due to the lasting

effects of colonialism (Anwar and Qureshi 2018, 1). Furthermore, as research suggests that language acquisition is crucial in childhood to early teens, it is also likely that the accent acquired in childhood is the one which is the most likely to be ‘ingrained’.

As the participant still displays some acquisition of the Yorkshire accent as this accounted for 25% of their phoneme utterances in the three completed activities, there are possible explanations which could also explain this phenomenon. The most significant explanation is that the participant has lived and worked in the Yorkshire region for over eighteen years. This has exposed Participant 1 to the YA for the longest period of time out of all the participants, and although they are still influenced by the RP due to their educational background, working in the blue-collar field in the Yorkshire region has still had a strong influence. The strong link between accent and class has been well established by linguists, and Cooper (2018, 68–70), a Yorkshire accent expert, found that the YA is particularly closely associated with manual labour. This is reinforced by the belief that those who speak in non-standard accents are much more likely to be perceived as honest and hard-working individuals (Hendriks and Meurs 2022, 3). This shows us that Participant 1's occupation has had a significant effect on their pronunciation, nevertheless, it can still be determined that their early education has been more impactful in influencing their accent.

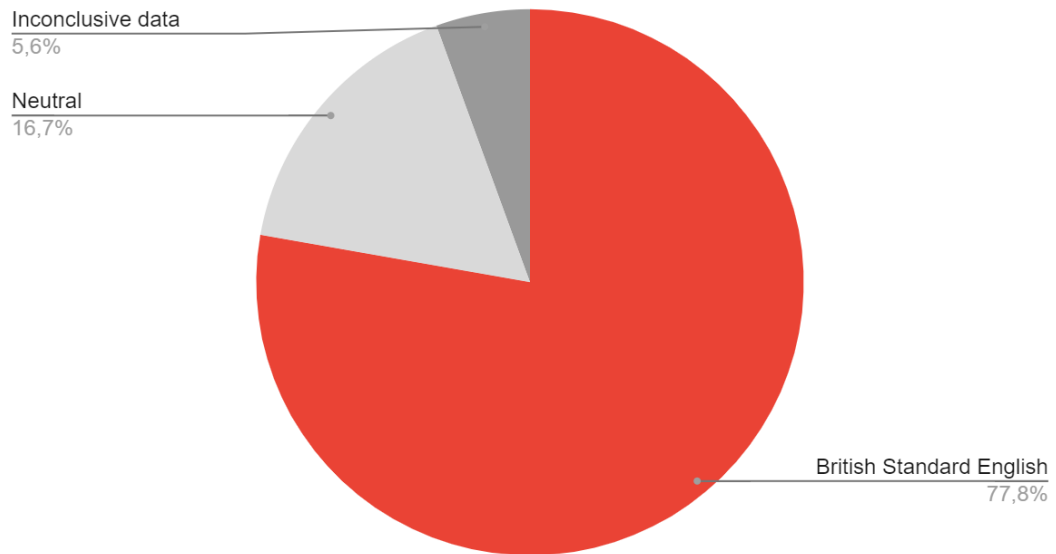


Figure 19. *Overall Results: Participant 2*

The overall findings of Participant 2 (female, 48) are rather straight-forward as they display a strong tendency towards Standard British English with 77.8% of their phoneme production being concluded as being in-line with BrSE throughout the three activities completed. Interestingly, unlike the other participants, Participant 2 did not exhibit any acquisition of the YA despite having lived in the region for seventeen years, so although Participant 2's results are uncomplicated, understanding why they did not display the YA on even a single occasion is rather complex.

This is because linguists such as Brulard and Carr (2013, 153) discuss the importance of acquiring a regional accent, particularly for migrants as this can often provide the speaker with a sense of identity in a social as well as a regional context. However, Participant 2 strays from this theory in regards to phoneme production as instead they display a great inclination towards BrSE with no evidence of YA production. Despite this not coinciding with the theory proposed by Brulard and Carr (2013, 153), this can instead be understood from the lifestyle of Participant 2. The

findings of the questionnaire revealed that Participant 2 is a housewife, and although she has lived in the UK for seventeen years, she has not worked in the UK and only uses the English language to perform basic tasks such as shopping, visiting the doctor or attending office appointments. Unlike the other participants, Participant 2 has no formal English educational background as instead she learned Russian as her L2 throughout her primary and secondary education instead and began learning English for the first time upon arriving in the UK seventeen years ago. This provides insight into Participant 2's sociolinguistic background and it suggests her lack of need to utilise the English language could be explained by her having no need to feel a sense of identity in a social nor a regional context as she does not socialise with English speakers unless necessary.

Considering that Participant 2 did not learn English in a formal setting also provides us with a better understanding of her strong BrSE tendencies as she primarily learned English by watching TV in which the Queen's English is predominantly aired, particularly on official channels such as the BBC as aforementioned in the theoretical chapter of this thesis.

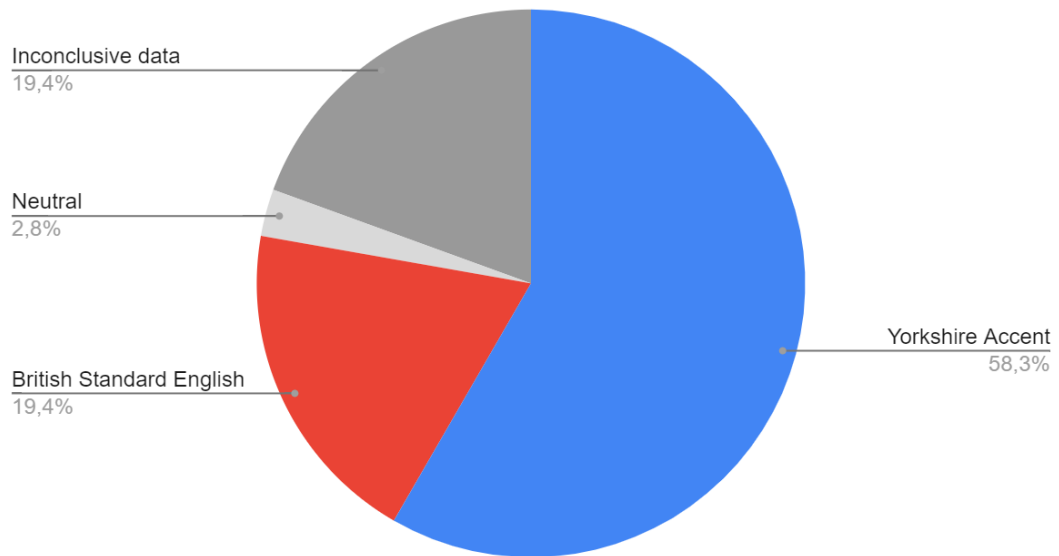


Figure 20. *Overall Results: Participant 3*

The graph shows that the overall results for Participant 3 (female, 26) display a strong inclination towards the YA when pronouncing phonemes. Although the YA accounts for a high majority with 58.3%, BrSE makes up a rather significant portion of phoneme utterances at 19.4%.

According to Beal (2009, 230–231) the younger generation of English speakers has witnessed a shift away from the YA within the Yorkshire region as it is increasingly being perceived as ‘old fashioned’. As Participant 3 is twenty-six years old and acquired the English language naturally after moving to the UK at the age of eight, the results should have shown a stronger inclination towards BrSE instead in accordance to Beal's (2009) study. Furthermore, Hendriks and Meurs' study (2022, 6–8) found that educated people tend to pronounce in Standard British English; however, Participant 3 once again does not follow this trend despite being educated to a master degree level. This suggests that the level to which an individual is educated may not be as significant in determining accent and that other sociolinguistic factors play a much more significant role.

Instead, these findings which exhibit that Participant 3 is more inclined to use the YA appear to be better explained by Brulard and Carr (2013, 153) who consider the importance of regional accent acquisition in migrants. As prior mentioned in the theoretical chapter, migrants are more likely to acquire and use a regional accent in order to acquire a sense of regional and social identity and their decision could be made due to a combination of various factors such as their current location, the location they were raised in, their dominant language and/or their ethnic identity (Brulard and Carr 2013, 152–153). As Participant 3 is able to speak English at a native level, it is likely that their accent choice is an intentional one. This would also explain why Beal's findings did not explain Participant 3's accent trends as it appears that the participants' sense of identity is more important than wanting to be viewed as trendy. This is further supported by Participant 3's sense of identity being answered as 'British' and dominant language being 'English' in accordance to their answers in the questionnaire despite being born in the Czech Republic and still holding a Czech nationality – their accent choice is likely a result of their metalinguistic awareness.

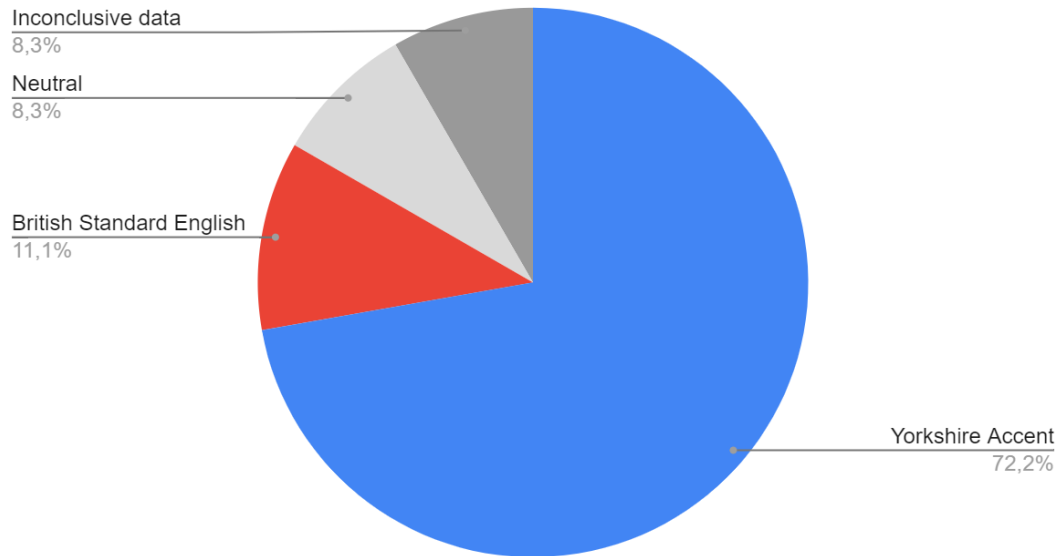


Figure 21. *Overall Results: Participant 4*

Participant 4 (male, 16) displayed the highest tendency to use the YA as only 4 words were pronounced using the BrSE form. This strong inclination towards the YA is unexpected as Beal (2009, 230–231) found that the younger generation is shifting away from YA usage towards more standard forms as the YA is viewed as ‘old-fashioned’. As Participant 4 is a teenager aged sixteen, and unlike the other participants was born and raised in the UK and does not have the experience of being a ‘migrant’, their results are the most complex to interpret sociolinguistically. However, although Participant 4 is not a migrant, their self-identity is complex as they are the child of a Czech mother and a Pakistani father, born in the UK but taught Czech as their L1, and although they just as Participant 3 identify as ‘British’ and speak English (L2) as their dominant language, Brulard and Carr (2013, 153–155) found that when it comes to children who are able to speak more than one language fluently are complicated to pinpoint in regards to their accent usage. Therefore, it could be assumed that Participant 4's accent is a byproduct of their self-identity as

being born and raised in the Yorkshire region, once again indicating that Beal's (2009, 238) findings do not seem to be as important at determining accent.

Another possible explanation for Participant 4's strong YA usage is that they were raised in a working-class area and continue to live there. As we already established, working-class and regional accent usage have a strong connection, therefore, it would not be absurd to assume that the YA is more prominently spoken within the area Participant 4 interacts in English on a daily basis such as in school. Thus, their YA phoneme usage is certainly affected and most likely mimicked by the English spoken around them in their day-to-day activities.

Conclusion

The aim of this bachelor's thesis was to determine to what extent a four-member family residing in South Yorkshire have adopted the Yorkshire accent in relation to three selected phonemes. The main research questions:

1. *What tendencies can be observed in the English pronunciation among a four-member multilingual family living in South Yorkshire?*
2. *How can the observed tendencies in pronunciation be explained from a sociolinguistic perspective?*

To answer these questions, the participants completed three oral activities which were recorded and analysed phoneme production in careful speech and spontaneous speech by two assessors, a non-native and a native speaker, and in some cases, the PRAAT programme was used.

Firstly, it was found that the three of the family members had acquired the YA accent to some extent, with Participant 2 (female, 48) showing no acquisition of the YA. Participant 1 (male, 60), Participant 3 (female, 26) and Participant 4 (male, 16) had all acquired the Yorkshire accent to some degree. The Global Impression results indicated a strong consensus between Assessor 1 and Assessor 2. The assessors did not agree with one another only on one occasion. The final assessments made in the Global Impression section overall agree with the findings of the segmental analysis.

Participant 1, Participant 3 and Participant 4 were socialised in a blue-collar environment which appeared to have an impact on their accent. However, as Participant 2 did not socialise in English, her lack of exposure to the accent was key in determining her phoneme findings as she had not displayed any YA acquisition

throughout this research as instead her exposure to RP via TV was the most influential in attributing towards her phoneme production. Formal education was also a dominant factor in determining the outcome of phoneme utterances which was particularly evident with Participant 1 who was taught English using the BrSE form, reflecting his results of primarily inclining towards BrSE usage. Participants 3 and 4 completed (or are in the process of completing) their formal education in the UK and had attended school/ University in the Yorkshire region which has exposed them to the YA naturally over a prolonged period of time. Whereas Participant 2's lack of a formal English education meant that she has mimicked the English accent which she has been exposed to the most, this being the BrSE form. From this, it can be determined that the accent a language is taught in greatly determines the speaker's production as it was revealed that students tend to pronounce using the YA. Although the participant who works manually speaks more Standard British English, the participant still adopted the Yorkshire accent to a certain extent, which was assumed due to Cooper's study.

Furthermore, it was found that although age is an important factor, the findings of this research seem to contradict the current literature field in some aspects. This is because it has been cited by various scholars that younger speakers are more likely to avoid regional accents, whereas adult migrants tend to use a regional accent in order to create an identity and a sense of belonging to the region they are residing in. This research however shows us the opposite results as the two participants in mature adulthood tend to pronounce BrSE, even though they both live in a blue-collar neighbourhood. While the teenage participant and the early adult participant tend to pronounce in the YA.

These findings are important as they show the complexities of regional accent acquisition. Although all of the family members have lived in South Yorkshire for over sixteen years, their accent usage is greatly varied amongst these family members. Therefore, this shows that it is important to consider the sociolinguistic factors that affect each individual. This was achieved in this research through a small sample size of participants providing a large amount of qualitative data in this case study. This research has also displayed that despite studies and theories into accent acquisition placing a strong importance on foreign speakers tending to incline towards regional accent usage in their additional language, there are more important factors which determine accent production. This can, in fact, be the result of metalinguistic awareness which is difficult to assess. However, the present study has shown that the key factors in determining accent usage for all participants were social class, exposure to the accent and formal education (of the English language).

However, these findings cannot be generalised as a small group cannot represent all similar groups or situations. There are a number of recommendations which could be made to improve the validity of the research surrounding this topic and overcome some of the limitations of this research. Firstly, increasing the sample size of assessors would also improve the quality of future research in that the segmental analysis section would provide more reliable results. Secondly, focusing solely on the phonetic features of a bilingual child would provide a deeper analysis into the complexities of the factors affecting their speech. Furthermore, as the analysis on the Yorkshire accent here was general, the Yorkshire accent (and other regional accents) varies across cities/towns/villages and amongst different social classes. Therefore, suggesting a more narrowed down approach to this topic geographically and by social class, or to draw a comparison between various social

classes would also be appropriate. Another factor to consider is that this research only assessed three phonemes in relation to accent acquisition. Thus, it does not provide an overall view of the participants' pronunciation patterns, and does not consider other articulation factors.. Hence, it fails to consider foreign accent in depth. Future studies should continue this research and expand the focus of analysis in relation to accent acquisition.

It should also be recognised that further qualitative research into this field needs to be completed as families and communities are becoming more linguistically complex in this era of globalisation causing accents to fade or take on new forms.

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Appendix

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Appendix A: The Questionnaire

1) Please select your gender.

P1 – male

P2 – female

P3 – female

P4 – male

2) How old are you?

P1 – 60

P2 – 48

P3 – 26

P4 – 16

3) In which country were you born?

P1 – Pakistan

P2 – the Czech Republic

P3 – the Czech Republic

P4 – the United Kingdom

4) What is your nationality?

P1 – Czech

P2 – Czech

P3 – Czech

P4 – Czech

5) For how long did you live in the country you were born in?

P1 – 30 years

P2 – 31 years

P3 – 8 years

P4 – 16 years

6) Which language is your mother tongue? (This should be your FIRST language).

P1 – Urdu

P2 – Czech

P3 – Czech

P4 – Czech

7) Are you bilingual (= you are able to use two languages especially with equal fluency)? If yes, in what languages?

P1 – no

P2 – no

P3 – yes, English and Czech

P4 – yes, English and Czech

8) In what year did you move to the UK?

P1 – 2004

P2 – 2005

P3 – 2005

P4 – N/A

9) In which city or town in South Yorkshire do you currently reside?

P1 – Sheffield

P2 – Sheffield

P3 – Sheffield

P4 – Sheffield

10) How many years have you lived in South Yorkshire?

P1 – 18 years

P2 – 17 years

P3 – 17 years

P4 – 16 (since I was born)

11) Have you lived outside of the Yorkshire region in the UK?

P1 – no

P2 – no

P3 – no

P4 – no

12) What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

P1 – university level (BSc)

P2 – vocational school

P3 – university level (MSc)

P4 – general secondary education

13) If you have completed further education, in what field of study did you major?

P1 – Biology, Chemistry, Physics

P2 – agriculture

P3 – East Asian Business

P4 – N/A

14) In which country or countries did you go to school?

P1 – Pakistan

P2 – the Czech Republic

P3 – the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom

P4 – the United Kingdom

15) In which language(s) were you (or currently are being) taught in?

P1 – Pakistani

P2 – Czech

P3 – Czech, English

P4 – English

16) Did you learn English at school? If so, for how long or since when?

P1 – yes, since primary school

P2 – no

P3 – N/A

P4 – N/A

17) If applicable, please state which job roles you have held whilst residing in the UK?

P1 – a factory worker, a shift manager in a chocolate factory

P2 – a housewife

P3 – a student

P4 – a student

18) What is your current occupation?

P1 – shift manager in a chocolate factory

P2 – housewife

P3 – PhD student

P4 – secondary school student

19) Where is your workplace and/or educational institution situated?

P1 – Sheffield

P2 – N/A

P3 – Sheffield

P4 – Sheffield

20) What language(s) do you speak at your workplace and/or educational institution?

P1 – English

P2 – N/A

P3 – English

P4 – English

21) When was your first contact with the English language?

P1 – At primary school.

P2 – When I moved to England.

P3 – When I started attending primary school in the UK. I was 8 years old.

P4 – At nursery school.

22) What foreign language(s) do you speak (put them in the order you started learning them)?

P1 – English, Czech

P2 – Russian, English

P3 – Japanese, Chinese

P4 – Spanish, French

23) In total, how many languages are you able to speak at or above proficiency level (C1)? Please refer to the self-assessment table below before answering.

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Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
Self-assessment grid

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	A1 Basic User	A2 Basic User	B1 Independent	B2 Independent user	C1 Proficient user	C2 Proficient user
Understanding	<p>Listening</p> <p>I can understand familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.</p>	<p>I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.</p>	<p>I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.</p>	<p>I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.</p>	<p>I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.</p>	<p>I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.</p>
Speaking	<p>Reading</p> <p>I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.</p>	<p>I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.</p>	<p>I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.</p>	<p>I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.</p>	<p>I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.</p>	<p>I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.</p>
Speaking	<p>Spoken interaction</p> <p>I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.</p>	<p>I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.</p>	<p>I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).</p>	<p>I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.</p>	<p>I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.</p>	<p>I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.</p>
Writing	<p>Spoken production</p> <p>I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.</p>	<p>I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.</p>	<p>I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.</p>	<p>I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</p>	<p>I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.</p>	<p>I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.</p>
Writing	<p>Writing</p> <p>I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.</p>	<p>I can write short, simple notes and messages. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.</p>	<p>I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.</p>	<p>I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.</p>	<p>I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select a style appropriate to the reader in mind.</p>	<p>I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.</p>

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P1 – 3 (Urdu, Czech)

P2 – 1 (Czech)

P3 – 2 (English and Czech)

P4 – 2 (English and Czech)

24) Using the self-assessment grid, please determine your level of English (based on the previous table).

P1 – B2

P2 – B1

P3 – C2

P4 – C2

,

25) In which language(s) do you dominantly communicate?

P1 – English and Czech

P2 – Czech

P3 – English

P4 – English

26) On what occasions do you use English?

P1 – Every day, especially at work.

P2 – Only in necessary cases, for example when buying food, ordering food, at the doctor's office or in offices.

P3 – I speak English in every situation (at school, with friends,...). The only time I don't speak English is when I'm with my family.

P4 – At every occasion except when I'm talking to my parents.

27) In what language do you think?

P1 – Urdu

P2 – Czech

P3 – English

P4 – English

28) Do you consider yourself a Yorkshire accent speaker?

P1 – no

P2 – no

P3 – yes

P4 – yes

29) What nationality do you personally identify with?

P1 – Pakistani

P2 – Czech

P3 – English

P4 – English

Appendix B: Results of Segmental Analysis

The following tables display which accent each participant was more inclined to use when uttering words which included one of the three selected phonemes: /əʊ/, /ɑ:/, /ʌ/. Whether the tendencies in pronunciation of these phonemes during the observation of the three tasks for individual family members is in standard British English, the YA or does not fall under either category will be analysed. The tables indicate the number of words pronounced in the YA (Yorkshire Accent), in BrSE (Standard British English) as well as the number of words which were not pronounced with either accent which has been indicated with the letter N (Neutral). For clarity, in the last column, the arrow points to the accent, which prevailed, while ‘X’ indicates the same number of phonemes pronounced in BrSE as in YA. It is also important to note that the words home, bath and sun, which can be found in tables in the IPA form are only illustrative and serve for better orientation. The first IPA of each word is in the RP form and is then followed with the IPA of the YA form as illustrated in the example below:

RP × YA

/həʊm/ × /hɔ:m/.

Auditory Assessment of Assessor 1: Analysis of Careful Speech: Reading Words Activity

	/həʊm/ × /hɔ:m/	/bɑ:θ/ × /bæθ/	/sʌn/ × /sʊn/	
Participant 1	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	3 BrSE / 1 YA / 0 N	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	BrSE ← YA
Participant 2	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	3 BrSE / 0 YA / 1 N	BrSE ← YA
Participant 3	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	2 BrSE / 2 YA / 0 N	BrSE X YA
Participant 4	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	1 BrSE / 3 YA / 0 N	BrS → YA

According to the analysis made by Assessor 1, the table displays that Participant 1 has shown some tendencies of YA usage as they tend to not conform to the BrSE, particularly when it comes to /əʊ/, despite this, they appear to primarily use the BrSE form when reading. Similarly, the results reveal that Participant 2 is more inclined to use the BrSE form, but unlike Participant 1, they did not display any instances of the YA whilst reading. Participant 3 does not display a clear tendency to either accent as the number of words pronounced in BrSE is the same as the number of words pronounced in YA; nonetheless, they display that acquisition of the Yorkshire accent has occurred to some extent. Participant 4's results depict that when reading individual words they have adopted the YA for words containing the vowels /ɑ:/, this was also the case for the majority of words with the vowel /ʌ/, they deviated from this trend of YA only in relation to the vowel /əʊ/, presenting all words including this vowel in Standard British English.

Auditory Assessment of Assessor 1: Analysis of Careful Speech: Reading Sentences Activity

	/həʊm/ × /hɔ:m/	/bɑ:θ/ × /bæθ/	/sʌn/ × /sʊn/	
Participant 1	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	2 BrSE / 2 YA / 0 N	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	BrSE X YA
Participant 2	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	3 BrSE / 0 YA / 1 N	BrSE ← YA
Participant 3	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA
Participant 4	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA

From the findings in the table, it can be deduced that Participant 1 has adopted the Yorkshire Accent when pronouncing /əʊ/, as they pronounce it as /ɔ:/ instead, while for the pronunciation of /ʌ/, Participant 1 has not adopted the YA. As for the pronunciation of /ɑ:/, it is not possible to determine whether they have adopted the YA or BrSE as they alternate between the features which are typical of both of these accents. Participant 2 does not display the acquisition of the YA whilst reading. Interestingly, Participant 3 displays a deviation from the BrSE pattern in all the preselected words within the text presented. As shown in the table, Participant 3 presents a strong inclination that they have acquired the YA, even when reading, as they pronounce /əʊ/ as /ɔ:/, /ɑ:/ instead of /æ/ as well as pronouncing /ʌ/ as /ʊ/ – all these features are typical of the YA. This same pattern can be observed in relation to Participant 4, as like Participant 3, the participant displayed the YA throughout their reading of the text. As all twelve words observed were pronounced with phonetic features in line with the YA, it can be concluded that Participant 4 has acquired a Yorkshire Accent in all the vowels that are the focus of this bachelor thesis.

Auditory Assessment of Assessor 1: Analysis of Spontaneous Speech: Describing Pictures Activity

	/həʊm/ × /hɔ:m/	/bɑ:θ/ × /bæθ/	/sʌn/ × /sʊn/	
Participant 1	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	BrSE ← YA
Participant 2	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	BrSE ← YA
Participant 3	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	2 BrSE / 2 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	BrSE X YA
Participant 4	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	3 BrSE / 1 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA

The table presents the results obtained for the final activity the participants were presented with. This part of the research involved having the participants describe three different pictures that featured objects that would prompt them to use words which contain the vowels that this thesis is focusing on. The table displays that when Participant 1 was speaking freely whilst describing a picture, they pronounced words with the diphthong /əʊ/ in the YA, while words with the vowels /ɔ:/ and /ʌ/ were pronounced in-line with the Standard British English. Participant 2 however displayed strikingly differing results which can be deduced from their pronunciation of all twelve words which contained the phonemes /əʊ/, /ɔ:/ and /ʌ/ as they reflect the IPA expected to be uttered by those who use BrSE. In accordance with this, it can be deduced that Participant 2 did not acquire the YA during spontaneous speech. Whereas Participant 3's results do not display a clear trend towards a particular accent as they pronounced the same number of words in BrSE and the YA; thus, it can be concluded that they have acquired the YA to some extent. Participant 4's results demonstrate the dominant usage of the YA during spontaneous speech, thus it can be deduced that they have acquired the YA from these results.

Auditory Assessment of Assessor 2: Analysis of Careful Speech: Reading Words Activity

	/həʊm/ × /hɔ:m/	/bɑ:θ/ × /bæθ/	/sʌn/ × /sʊn/	
Participant 1	0 BrSE / 1 YA / 3 N	2 BrSE / 2 YA / 0 N	1 BrSE / 3 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA
Participant 2	3 BrSE / 0 YA / 1 N	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	2 BrSE / 0 YA / 2 N	BrSE ← YA
Participant 3	1 BrSE / 2 YA / 1 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	3 BrSE / 1 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA
Participant 4	2 BrSE / 0 YA / 2 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	1 BrSE / 3 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA

According to Assessor 2, the table shows that Participant acquired the YA to a certain degree, particularly in their use of the /ʊ/ sound; however, some of the phonemes were found to be pronounced in neither one of the investigated accents reinforcing the findings made by Assessor 1 for this particular activity. The findings also indicate that Participant 2 did not pronounce the YA variant on any of the occasions during this task; BrSE appears to be the dominant accent for this participant. Despite some of the phonemes being pronounced in Standard British English or with neither accent by Participant 3 and Participant 4, they showed a strong tendency towards the YA in their pronunciation of phonemes whilst reading.

Auditory Assessment of Assessor 2: Analysis of Careful Speech: Reading Sentences Activity

	/həʊm/ × /hɔ:m/	/bɑ:θ/ × /bæθ/	/sʌn/ × /sɒn/	
Participant 1	0 BrSE / 2 YA / 2 N	2 BrSE / 2 YA / 0 N	1 BrSE / 3 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA
Participant 2	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	3 BrSE / 0 YA / 1 N	3 BrSE / 0 YA / 1 N	BrSE ← YA
Participant 3	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	3 BrSE / 1 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA
Participant 4	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	1 BrSE / 2 YA / 1 N	BrSE → YA

In accordance with the table, Assessor 1 concluded that during the sentence reading activity, Participant 1 pronounced the preselected phonemes within words with the YA the majority of the time; meanwhile Participant 2 did not pronounce the words in the YA on any occasion, instead, the Standard British English pronunciation was dominant for this participant. The Assessor also found a similar trend in Table 11 and Table 10 as both Participant 3 and Participant 4 pronounced most of the pre-selected words containing the examined phonemes with the YA, therefore the acquisition of this accent is observable for these two participants.

Auditory Assessment of Assessor 2: Analysis of Spontaneous Speech: Describing pictures Activity

	/həʊm/ × /hɔ:m/	/bɑ:θ/ × /bæθ/	/sʌn/ × /sɒn/	
Participant 1	1 BrSE / 3 YA / 0 N	3 BrSE / 1 YA / 0 N	2 BrSE / 2 YA / 0 N	BrSE X YA
Participant 2	4 BrSE / 0 YA / 0 N	3 BrSE / 0 YA / 1 N	2 BrSE / 1 YA / 1 N	BrSE ← YA
Participant 3	3 BrSE / 0 YA / 1 N	2 BrSE / 2 YA / 0 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA
Participant 4	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	1 BrSE / 2 YA / 1 N	0 BrSE / 4 YA / 0 N	BrSE → YA

The evaluation of the recordings for the final activity of describing pictures through spontaneous speech made by Assessor 2 are presented in the table above. The findings indicate that Participant 1 uttered the same number of words in the YA as they did in BrSE; likewise, Participant 3 used the pronunciation of both accents and an inclination to a specific accent cannot be determined. Whereas the results of Participant 2 demonstrate that they are strongly inclined to pronounce phonemes during spontaneous speech in Standard British English. By contrast, Participant 4 displays a clear tendency towards the use of the YA.

PRAAT Results

PRAAT, a phonetic speech analysis programme, was used in cases in which no consensus was made by the assessors in their segmental analysis. In the three following tables, the words for which the assessors disagreed on phonemes are recorded in the first column. In the second column, there is the IPA transcription of the word, the phoneme that was examined is marked in bold and its value was measured. In the third and fourth columns, the results of the auditory assessment of Assessor 1 and Assessor 2 are noted. In the fifth column, the measured value of Formant 1 is entered in the Hertz unit. In the sixth column, the results of PRAAT are recorded. These were detected thanks to the values obtained which were subsequently compared with the values in the table Formant frequencies for RP pure vowels in connected speech (Cruttenden 2001). In the last column, the overall result is noted. If the PRAAT result agrees with one of the assessors, it is possible to see the option YA, BrSE or N, if the result differs from the assessors, therefore the result is Inconclusive.

PRAAT Results: Analysis of Careful Speech: Reading Words Activity

	IPA Transcription	Assess or 1	Assess or 2	F1 (Hz)	PRAAT	Result
vote (P1)	/vəʊt/	YA	N	471	N	N
summer (P1)	/sʌmə/	BrSE	YA	624	BrSE	BrSE
summer (P3)	/sʌmə/	YA	BrSE	544	N	Inconclusive
roup (P1)	/rəʊp/	YA	N	489	N	N
roup (P3)	/rəʊp/	BrSE	N	401	YA	Inconclusive
roup (P4)	/rəʊp/	BrSE	N	412	YA	Inconclusive
episode (P2)	/epɪsəʊd/	BrSE	N	444	N	N
episode (P3)	/epɪsəʊd/	BrSE	YA	425	YA	YA
public (P1)	/pʌblɪk/	BrSE	YA	521	N	Inconclusive
public (P2)	/pʌblɪk/	BrSE	N	760	N	N
public (P3)	/pʌblɪk/	BrSE	YA	507	N	Inconclusive
public (P4)	/pʌblɪk/	BrSE	YA	638	BrSE	BrSE
path (P1)	/pɑːθ/	BrSE	YA	663	N	Inconclusive
trust (P1)	/trʌst/	BrSE	YA	548	N	Inconclusive
trust (P3)	/trʌst/	YA	BrSE	490	N	Inconclusive
money (P4)	/mʌni/	YA	BrSE	393	YA	YA
smoke (P1)	/sməʊk/	YA	N	504	N	N
smoke (P3)	/sməʊk/	BrSE	YA	482	N	Inconclusive
smoke (P4)	/sməʊk/	BrSE	N	566	N	N

PRAAT Results: Analysis of Careful Speech: Reading Sentences Activity

	IPA Transcription	Assess or 1	Assess or 2	F1 (Hz)	PRAAT	Result
home (P1)	/həʊm/	YA	N	564	N	N
fastest (P2)	/fɑːstəst/	BrSE	N	993	YA	Inconclusive
runner (P1)	/rʌnə/	BrSE	YA	467	N	Inconclusive
runner (P3)	/rʌnə/	YA	BrSE	483	N	Inconclusive
runner (P4)	/rʌnə/	YA	BrSE	479	N	Inconclusive
country (P1)	/kʌntri/	BrSE	YA	421	N	Inconclusive
country (P2)	/kʌntri/	BrSE	N	792	N	N
country (P3)	/kʌntri/	YA	BrSE	511	N	Inconclusive
tone (P1)	/təʊn/	YA	N	634	BrSE	Inconclusive
stunk (P1)	/stʌŋk/	BrSE	YA	535	N	Inconclusive
loves (P3)	/lʌvz/	YA	BrSE	430	YA	YA
loves (P4)	/lʌvz/	YA	N	529	N	N

PRAAT Results: Analysis of Spontaneous Speech: Describing pictures Activity

	IPA Transcription	Assessor 1	Assessor 2	F1 (Hz)	PRAAT	Result
boat (P1)	/bəʊt/	YA	BrSE	452	N	Inconclusive
sun (P2)	/sʌn/	BrSE	N	770	N	N
bucket (P1)	/bʌkɪt/	BrSE	YA	623	BrSE	BrSE
park (P2)	/pɑ:k/	BrSE	N	729	N	N
summer (P2)	/sʌmə/	BrSE	YA	728	N	Inconclusive
yellow (P3)	/jeləʊ/	BrSE	N	431	N	N
lunch (P1)	/lʌntʃ/	BrSE	YA	450	N	Inconclusive
large (P4)	/lɑ:dʒ/	BrSE	YA	581	N	Inconclusive
path (P1)	/pɑ:θ/	BrSE	YA	603	N	Inconclusive
park (P4)	/pɑ:k/	BrSE	N	742	N	N

A ZIP File Containing a Total of 18 MP3 Recordings is a free attachment to this bachelor's thesis.