

# The interaction of /h/- dropping and /r/- dropping in a corpus of Bolton English

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# Roadmap

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**5/ conversational data**

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# Introduction

*for him*

[fəɹɪm]/[fɔ:ɹɪm]

or

[fəhɪm]

*India has*

['ɪndiəɹəz]

or

['ɪndiəhəz]

# Introduction

This interaction between [ɹ]# and #[h] is related to the more general problem of the

*loss of /h/* (“h-dropping”)

(Trudgill 1990: 27-28, 50)

# Introduction

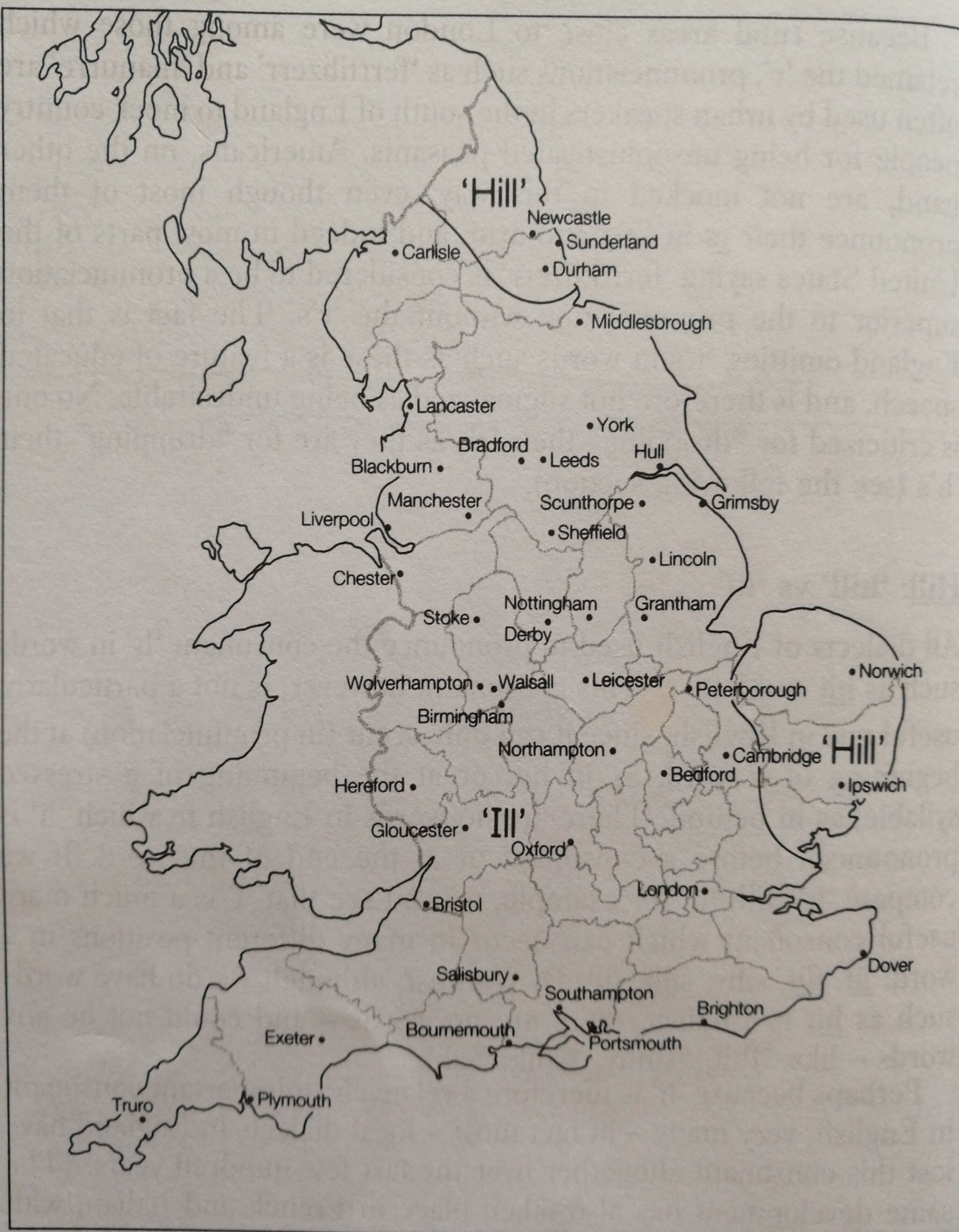
This interaction between [ɹ]# and #[h] is related to the more general problem of the

*loss of /h/* (“h-dropping”)

...and is complex for speaker who variably rhotic

# Introduction

**This interaction between [ɹ]# and #[h] is particularly interesting in accents that show variable rhoticity and traces of “h-dropping”**



# Introduction

Trudgill (1990: 28)

# The corpus

## The PAC Project Protocol

5 tasks (Labov 1966, 1972, 1994, 2001, 2010):

word lists (vowels, consonants)

text passage

interviews (semi-guided and free)



# The corpus

**The PAC Bolton, Lancashire (UK) corpus**

network principle (Milroy 1980, 1987)

9 female informants

1 male informant

(for detailed presentation: Navarro 2013: 195ff)

# The corpus

SPEAKER ID	LENGTH
MO1f	14:49:00 (889s)
LC1f	17:36:00 (1056s)
MC1f	15:01:00 (901s)
PK1f	14:21:00 (860s)
SC1f	14:36:00 (876s)
LB1f	16:44:00 (1004s)
DK1f	14:39:00 ( 879s)
MD1f	18:39:00 (1119s)
JM1f	13:22:00 (802s)
total:	139:47:00 (8387s)

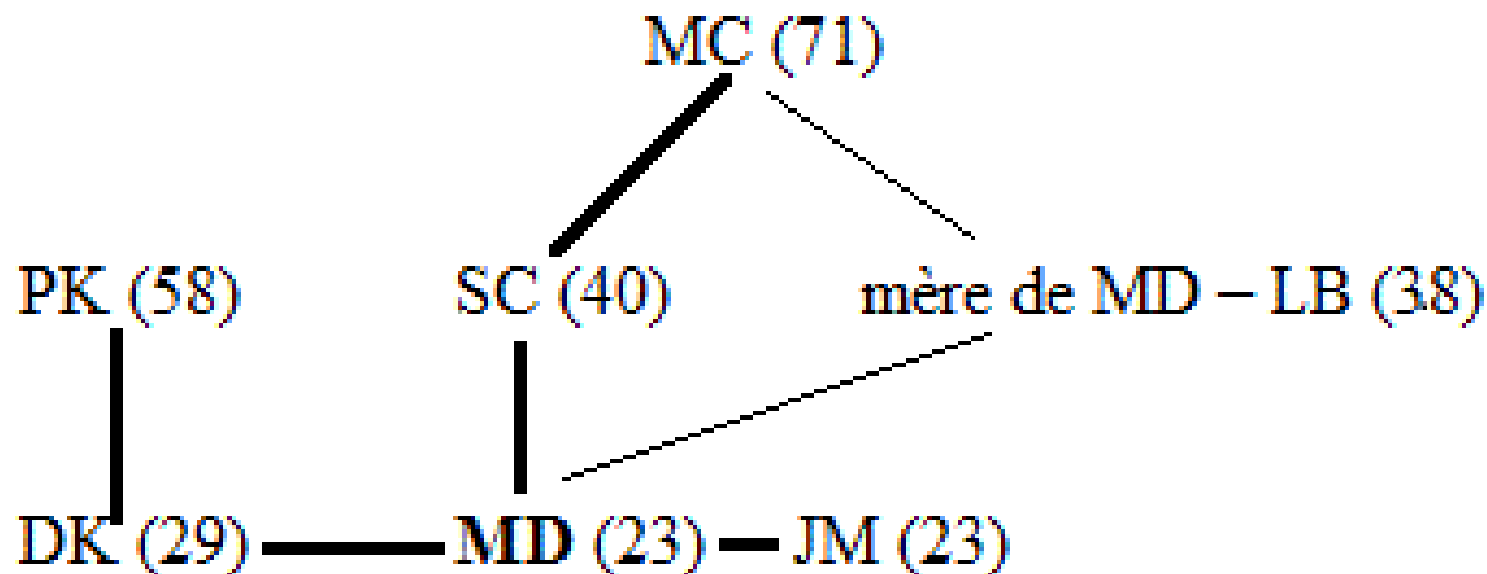
**2h:19':47"**

SPEAKER ID	LENGTH
<b>MO1i</b>	<b>38:57:00 (2337s)</b>
<b>LC1i</b>	<b>38:57:00 (2337s)</b>
MC1i	25:40:00 (1540s)
PK1i	18:43:00 (1123s)
SC1i	21:03:00 (1263s)
LB1i	12:31:00 (751s)
<b>DK1i</b>	<b>25:12:00 (1512s)</b>
<b>MD1i</b>	<b>25:12:00 (1512s)</b>
JM1i	17:22:00 (1042s)
	159:28:00 (9568s)

**2h:39':28"**

# The corpus

LC (77) – MO (83)



ST (30)

# Methodology

- search for words with orthographic <h> in the transcriptions**
- check the preceding phonological context**
- decide whether or not interaction between /r/ and /h/ can be established for that speech style for a given speaker**

# Word list data

**Help establish whether**

**-the speakers have /h/ in their inventory**

**-they are consistently non-rhotic or variably rhotic in isolated words**

**BUT: couldn't test interaction btw [ɹ] and [h]**

# Word list data

**consonant list, for testing /h/:**

***'heart, be'have, 'anyhow***

**vowel list, items possibly containing /h/:**

***'horse, 'hoarse, 'here, 'hurry and 'heaven***

# Word list data

expected distribution of /h/ in RP:

'hV-            *'heart, 'horse, 'hoarse, 'here, 'hurry, 'heaven*

-'hV-           *be'have*

'[...] [, hV-] *'any, how*

> 'hV

# Word list data

**expected distribution of /h/ in RP:**

**Cruttenden (1994: 174)**

**“/h/ occurs only in syllable-initial, pre-vocalic positions”**

**This would assume “silent” /h/ in words like  
*neon* ['ni:ən] < /'ni:hən/**



# Word list data

**> all informants have /h/ in all the words above  
in their word list style**

**except one speaker**

# Word list data

SC (f40)

[h]:     *'heart, 'horse, 'hoarse, 'here, 'hurry*

0:       *be'have, 'any, how*  
          *'heaven*

# Word list data

**SC (f40)**

**distribution of /h/ (word list reading style)**

**#['/h/V-**

**where # is a pause and [ is a word boundary**

# Word list data

**SC (f40)**

**'*heaven* ['ɛvn]**

**“(120) *earth*”: [hɜ:θ]**

**Cruttenden (1994: 174):**

**the choice of the article or a [h] or [ʔ] or a weak glottal constriction can cue a boundary mark**

# Word list data

## Rhoticity

**MO (f83) 50% of the tokens rhotic realizations**

including *for* and *here*

**LC (f77) rhotic realizations in *moor, bard, pore-poor-pour***

but not in *for* or *here*

**MC (f71) a tiny handful of rhotic realizations not in *for* or *here***

# Word list data

## Rhoticity

**PK (f58); SC (f40); LB (f38); ST (f30); DK (m29); MD (f23); JM (f23) were found to be consistently non-rhotic**

# Reading passage data

**Help detect**

**any differences in the connected speech style**

# Reading passage data

lexical words with /h/ in the passage

*be'have, be'haviour*

*(tend to) 'have, 'hospitals, 'hostels, 'happy, a 'high-profile 'N, 'handsome, '(eight) hundred staff, 'human*



# Reading passage data

SC (f40)

No [h] in any of the lexical words but:

*throw #his door open*

distribution of /h/ in her text reading style:

#[/h/V-

# is an utterance-initial pause, [ is a word boundary

# Reading passage data

LB (f38) no /h/ in *behave* and *behaviour* (also in grammatical words such as *himself* and *have to*)

distribution of /h/ in lexical words in her text reading style:

[ '/h/V-                      where [ is a word boundary

# Reading passage data

grammatical words

forms of *have* show mostly reduced forms:

across all 10 speakers, **50%** (41 / 80) **had [h]**

# Reading passage data

grammatical words

*he:*

across all 10 speakers, 24 / 160 lacked [h], **85% did!**  
(13 of which coming from informant SC)

# Reading passage data

grammatical words

determiner *his*:

across all 10 speakers, 6 / 70 lacked [h], **91,4%** did!

# Reading passage data

“for his” in the reading passage

MO (f83) foɹ [h]is

LC (f77) foɹ [h]is

MC (f71) foɹ [h]is

PK (f58) foɹ [h]is

SC (f40) foɹ his

LB (f38) foɹ '[h]is

ST (f30) foɹ his

DK (m29) foɹ [h]is

MD (f23) foɹ [h]is

JM (f23) foɹ [h]is

# Reading passage data

ST (f30) pronounces [hɪz] everywhere (*in his, of his, at his*)  
except in the only case where *his* is preceded by *for*

no [ɹ] in *for the other, for sure*

no linking in *before our*

> [fɔɹɪz] is evidence for actual interaction

# Conversational data

**SC (f40) has no [h] in her conversation data**

*I were quite an **h**appy child*



# Conversational data

**SC (f40)**

**SCi:** *afte[ɹ] hɪs driving lesson*

**SCf:** *not having that freedom like we do ove[ɹ] hɪre*

**SCi:** *be strange not having grandma[ɹ] hɪre.*

# Conversational data

**all other speakers have /h/ in their phoneme inventory, in lexical and in grammatical words**

# Conversational data

**Lexical words with initial /h/** (variably rhotic speakers)

**MO<sub>f</sub>** (f83): *on your knuckles of your<sub>r</sub> [h]ands*

**MO<sub>i</sub>** (f83): *xxx and he<sub>r</sub> [h]usband*

**LC<sub>f</sub>** (f77): *who, was with the, [h]er<sub>r</sub> [h]usband*

**LC<sub>i</sub>** (f77): *back to work/ [h]er [h]usband would say*

**MC<sub>f</sub>** (f71): *thei<sub>r</sub> [h]ouse for tea*

**MC<sub>i</sub>** (f71): *no trouble selling you<sub>r</sub> [h]ouse*

# Conversational data

**Lexical words with initial /h/** (variably rhotic speakers)

**MOF (f83):** *they were [h]appy places*

**MOF (f83):** *we[r]e [h]appy family*

**MOF (f83):** *we we[r]e [h]appy well cared for*

**LCi (f77):** *some of your [h]appiest memories*

# Conversational data

**Lexical words with initial /h/** (variably rhotic speakers)

**LC<sub>f</sub>** (f77): *who, was with the, [h]e<sub>r</sub> [h]usband*

**LC<sub>i</sub>** (f77): *back to work/ [h]e<sub>r</sub> [h]usband would say*

**LC<sub>f</sub>** (f77): *all the boys in the neighbour<sub>r</sub>[h]ood*

**LC<sub>i</sub>** (f77): *he probably put him in a better<sub>r</sub> [h]ome*

**LC<sub>i</sub>** (f77): *he was in a nice<sub>r</sub> [h]ome*

> shows rhoticity in **function words** in this context

# Conversational data

**Lexical words with initial /h/** (non-rhotic speakers)

**PKi (f58):** go over the top of your **re [h]**ob

**PKf (f58):** I could never **re [h]**it the ball

**DKf (m29):** we were **re [h]**indered

**DKf (m29):** I remember **re [h]**ating it

# Conversational data

*him, he, his, etc*

variably rhotic speakers:

MOi (f83): *You could hea[r] [h]im gurgle*

LBf (f38): *all fo[r] [h]is son*

LBf (f38): *eve[r] h̥ave to put my kids through that*

# Conversational data

*him, he*

variably rhotic speakers:

LCi (f77): *it was the makings of h̥im*

LCi (f77): *#[h]is mother [h]ad told h̥im that*

LCi (f77): *Oh I've never [h]eard of '[h]im*

LCi (f77): *it was very sad fo[r] [h]im because*

LCi (f77): *after [h]e been in the army, afte[r] h̥e done  
[h]is stint in the army, [h]e*



# Conversational data

*him, he*

non-rhotic speaker:

JMi (f23): *offe[r] ~~h~~im*

JMi (f23): *a job whe[r]e ~~h~~e did [h]is placement*

# Conclusions

- variably rhotic speakers show variably rhotic realizations between [ɹ] and [h] across a boundary and**
- they tend to produce more rhotic realizations as formality of speech style decreases**
- loss of /h/ in grammatical words increases in younger speakers**

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# References

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