

1 Dialectology, Philology, and Historical Linguistics

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1.1 Introduction

The term “dialect” is understood today to refer to a geographically delimited form of language. The purpose of the present chapter is to trace the history of this meaning of the word and to outline the rise of dialectology, which is the historical study of dialects in this sense (Fisiak ed. 1988). Furthermore, this study seeks to set dialectology in relation to the disciplines of philology (Turner 2014; Momma 2015: 1–27) and historical linguistics. These latter two are closely related in that the former fed into the latter. Indeed, the modern discipline of linguistics arose at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries out of earlier concerns of philology, which is the study of the textual records of languages.

The etymology of “dialect” can be traced back to Classical Greek, in which the word *διαλεκτος* originally referred to discourse, conversation, or way of speaking, and later came to mean a regional variety of a language. It is this last meaning that initiated the modern understanding of the word (the older meaning of “investigative discussion” can still be recognized in the term “dialectic”). However, one cannot say that once the meaning of “regional variety” was established one had a usage similar to that today. The essential difference is that nowadays “dialect” stands in a contrastive relationship to “standard,” a form of language favored in the public domain and employed in compiling official documents in a country. The reference to “country” is important here: the modern sense of “standard,” with all its prescriptive connotations, is essentially an artifact of modern nation states. Thus, the often negative connotations of dialect did not hold until the notion of a preferred form of language arose, a form that enjoyed preference in writing, education, and public speaking. How early this preference occurred historically is difficult to say with certainty. True, there were historical constellations of language varieties in which one was used more than others. This applied in the Hellenistic period of Greek (roughly three centuries before the beginning of the common era), when the dialect of Attica (including the city of Athens) was used widely as a *koiné* or common form of language in the eastern Mediterranean (Woodard 2008). In England, during the later Old English period, the language of the West Saxon region was employed in written documents (Gneuss 1972), such as religious or legal texts, and thus enjoyed a similar status to Attic Greek in ancient Greece. But in neither case did later attributes of standard forms of language apply, above all codification and prescriptivism, which involved the censure of dialect forms of the same language.

To trace the history of dialects and their study, that is, dialectology, one should distinguish three aspects of this complex: (i) awareness of dialects, (ii) attitudes toward dialects, and (iii) the description and study of dialects. These aspects stand in chronological order: first awareness arises, and mention of dialects is found in the textual record. Somewhat later, attitudes toward dialects seem to have developed. In the Western world these are invariably negative, with mention made of a preferred form of the language in question. Later still, one finds descriptions of dialects, usually of one particular language with which an author has a specific connection, either by birth or interest.

1.2 Dialect Awareness and Attitudes

An awareness of dialect differences in England goes back at least to the Middle Ages: Geoffrey Chaucer used Northern English (Hickey 2015) for the purpose of character portrayal in *The Reeve's Tale* (Tolkien 1934; Wales 2006, 75). The north/south dichotomy is referred to by later authors on language, notably George Puttenham, who, in his *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), states his preference for "our Southerne English," which is the "usual speech at court and that of London and the shires lying about London within lx. myles and not much about" (Mugglestone 2007, 9). One of the earliest listings of dialect areas was made by Alexander Gil in his celebrated *Logonomia Anglica* (1619). On discussing the main features of the different dialectal areas, he mentions the northern lack of rounding in *beath* "both," and the northern forms *sal* "shall," *sud* "should," *fula* "follow," and *briks* "breeches." There was also an awareness of the Englishes spoken in the Celtic regions: Shakespeare in the "Four Nations Scene" in *Henry V* portrays the speech of English, Welsh, Scottish, and Irish characters.

In France, the primary north/south dialect division was also characterized as early as 1284, by the poet Bernat d'Auriac. Here the forms of the keyword "yes" are essential, and have even resulted in the names of two large parts of France—Languedoc and Languedocil—the former referring to the region south of the River Loire, the latter to that north of the Loire (which later developed into modern French).

There would seem to have been two attitudes to English dialects in the early modern period. One was neutral and the other decidedly in favor of southern speech. John Hart (d. 1574) spoke of "the flower of the English tongue," referring to the language of the London court. The more neutral attitude is seen in dictionaries of the time, for example, William Bullokar (1616): "So every country hath commonly in divers parts thereof some difference of language, which is called the Dialect of that place," a view echoed by Thomas Blount (1656): "Dialect is a manner of speech peculiar to some part of a Country or people, and differing from the manner used by other parts or people, yet all using the same Radical Language, for the main or substance of it." But the great lexicographers of the eighteenth century—Johnson, Sheridan, Walker—showed no interest in regional variation, meaning that dialects were excluded from the emerging ideology of a standard in English.

1.3 The Description of Dialects

Early descriptions of dialects differ from later studies in that they largely consist of dialect words. The gathering of such words and their publication as lists has a long tradition in England and other European countries. The most significant early English work is John Ray's *A Collection of English Words not Generally Used* (1674). Ray states that "in many places, especially of the North, the Language of the common people, is to a stranger very difficult to be understood" (Preface *To the Reader*), and was hence motivated to record northern words.

In some dictionaries, northern words that were not current in the south of England are given. For instance, John Palsgrave's *Lesclarcissement de la Langue Francoyse* (1530) mentions words such as *sperre* "to shut" and *that ylke day* "that same day" that are representative of "the northern language" (Palsgrave 1530, fo. CCC. lxxviii; see also Ruano-García 2010, 109–128; Stein 1997). Another significant work in this respect is the unpublished compilation by Bishop White Kennett (1660–1728) titled the *Etymological Collections of English Words and Provincial Expressions* (1690s, MS Lansdowne 1033).

1.4 The Antiquarian Tradition

Kennett's collection is representative of a genre of early dialect studies in which the ultimate origin and the subsequent history of English are of interest. This type of work is part of an antiquarian tradition that arose in the early modern period and has continued into modern times, albeit usually without the wild claims for the genesis of languages that were typical of early antiquarian works. The writers were well-meaning amateurs, often members of the clergy or military. An example of the latter was the English army officer Charles Vallancey (1721–1812), whose interest in dialects led him to compile a glossary of the archaic dialect of Forth and Bargy, Co. Wexford, in the southeast of Ireland (Hickey 2007, 66–84).

1.5 Dialects in the Age of Prescriptivism

The lack of academic concern with dialects prior to the nineteenth century could be attributed to the absence of a scientific framework for the study of language in general. However, in the eighteenth century one recognizes a deliberate neglect of regional features in English (Beal 2010a), and indeed severe condemnation of all language traits that do not correspond to "standard" usage, whatever the latter might mean. More neutral attitudes are visible in the detailed entries offered in some seventeenth-century English dictionaries. As we saw above, William Bullokar and Thomas Blount gave definitions of dialect that look very objective to modern readers. Bullokar's entry continues:

... [I]n England the Dialect or manner of speech of the North, is different from that in the South, and the Western dialect differing from them both. The Grecians had five especial Dialects: as in The property of speech in Athens: 2 in Ionia; 3. In Doris; 4. In Eolia: and 5. that manner of speech which was generally used of them all.

(Bullokar 1616 [no pagination]).

Blount's definition is yet more comprehensive:

In *England*, the Dialect, or manner of speech in the North, is different from that in the South; and the Western differs from both. As in this example: At *London* we say, *I would eat more cheese if I had it*, the Northern man saith, *Ay sud eat mare cheese gin ay hader*, and the Western man saith, *Chud ee'at more chiese on chad it*: *Chud ee'at more cheese un ich had it*. The Grecians had five especial Dialects ... So every Country commonly hath in diverse parts of it some difference of language, which is called the Dialect or Subdialect of that place. In *Italy*, there are above eight several dialects or Subdialects...

(Blount 1656 [no pagination]).

Blount is remarkable in that he gives examples to illustrate different dialects of English. However, he is not followed by others. Somewhat later (1676), Elisha Coles published *An English Dictionary* in which he sees dialects as "Logick, speech; also a particular Propriety or

Idiom in the same speech,” with no reference to regions whatever. Some authors do at least specify that dialects are found in different parts of a country, for example, John Kersey, whose *Dictionarium Anglo-Britannicum* (1708) defines dialect as “a Propriety of manner of Speech in any Language, peculiar to each several Province or Country.” Reference to region is also found in Thomas Spence (Beal 1999) who says of dialect that it is “A polite manner of speaking, or diversity made in any language by the inhabitants in any part of the country where it is spoken; stile; speech” (Spence 1775 [no pagination]).

As noted earlier, the great lexicographers of the eighteenth century ignore dialect’s regional essence, at most referring to dialects of classical Greek. Instead, they concentrate on its meaning as a manner of expression. Samuel Johnson offers the following in his authoritative *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755):

DIALECT

1. The subdivision of a language; as the Attic, Doric, Ionic, Æolic dialects.
2. Stile; manner of expression.

When themselves do practise that whereof they write, they change their dialect; and those words they shun, as if there were in them some secret sting. Hooker, b.v.s. 22.

3. Language; speech.

Later language commentators and prescriptivists, above all, Thomas Sheridan (1719–1788) and John Walker (1732–1807), were content to adopt and repeat Johnson’s definition. Neither Sheridan nor Walker had time for dialectal variation, which directly conflicted with their standard English ideology; hence, their derisory comments on the regional speech of Britain and Ireland.

Besides the prescriptivism of authors like Sheridan and Walker, another motivation is recognisable in the eighteenth-century neglect of dialect. Consider this statement in George Puttenham’s *The Arte of English Poesie*: “After a speach is fully fashioned to the common vnderstanding, & accepted by consent of a whole countrey & nation, it is called a language.” This is the view of language as a unifying factor, in Puttenham’s case among the different regions of Britain. Here we have a very early reference to a “national language,” a notion picked up by later authors such as the Scot James Buchanan in his 1766 *Essay Towards Establishing a Standard for an Elegant and Uniform Pronunciation of the English Language Through the British Dominions*. Attention to dialects, let alone their valorisation, would not have been reconcilable with the desire for a “national language.”

By the close of the eighteenth century, notions of national language and standard language would seem to have merged, at least for many authors. The variation which was to be suppressed was regional (Beal 2010b), with the parallel promotion of the English of southeast England. As the variation was principally phonetic, one’s accent came to indicate one’s relative standardness as a speaker (Beal 2004), which remains the case today (Beal 2008).

1.6 The Denigration of Dialects

After the early eighteenth century the assessment of pronunciation appears to have changed (Beal 2010b). While Defoe in the 1720s could remark non-judgmentally on the attitude of Northumbrians to features of their pronunciation, after the mid-eighteenth century comments are far more critical. A vocabulary was adopted by authors on language that is condemnatory of all features that were not part of received southeastern English usage.

“Vulgar” is a censorious epithet used to describe a variety disapprovingly. The term was very common in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in evaluative treatments of

language like Savage's *The Vulgarisms and Improprieties of the English Language* (1833). However, before the eighteenth century "vulgar" simply meant "of the people" (cf. Latin *vulgus* "common people"). John Walker is particularly keen to specify what he thinks merits the label "vulgar." For instance, given that provincial speakers had to look to the capital for phonetic guidance, any "vulgarisms" used by Londoners are especially to be condemned. In his *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* he lists "faults of the Londoners," who, "as they are the models of pronunciation to the distant provinces, ought to be the more scrupulously correct" (1791, xii).

The early and late modern periods saw increasing divergence of English pronunciation and spelling, not solely as a result of the Great Vowel Shift (Pyles and Algeo 2004, 170–173). Several other developments contributed to this divergence, for example, the lowering and unrounding of short [u] to [ʌ] in the STRUT lexical set and vowel lengthening in BATH words. Many changes in this period resulted in homophony and hence led to distinctions in spelling which did not correspond to pronunciation differences (e.g., the merging in southeastern English of the TERM and TURN sets to a rhotacised schwa, which then simplified solely to schwa). But many dialects retained this distinction, which led to the stigmatisation of these varieties.

Twentieth-century scholars revisited the issue of social stigma (Lippi-Green 1997) both for those dialects with an ethnic basis—for example, African American English (Rickford 1999) or Chicano English (Fought 2006)—and those on the periphery of industrialised societies, for example, the "Ocracoke Brogue" of North Carolina's Barrier Islands (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 2004). The educational implications of the stigma experienced by speakers was often a primary concern (see Wolfram, Adger and Christian 1999; Baugh 2004).

1.7 From Philology to Linguistics

In scholarly literature the term "philology" has two similar but distinct meanings. The first is the study of older texts, whereas the second is the comparison of older stages of languages. The second meaning usually has the longer designation "comparative philology." This scholarly activity was common in the nineteenth century, when the family relationships among languages, chiefly Indo-European ones, were reconstructed on the basis of older textual records.

Hale (2007) states in his handbook of historical linguistics that he sees philology as the scrutiny and analysis of historical artefacts, which do not represent language but are imperfect windows on language. He claims that "Philology is responsible for establishing the attributes of a text, many of which may be relevant for subsequent linguistic analysis" (2007, 21), and continues, "[t]here are two goals, related to one another, of this enterprise: to understand the linguistic structures present in the text itself (let's call this the 'local' goal) and to understand the structures, entities, and processes which made the grammar of the 'composer' of the text (let's call this the 'ultimate' goal)" (2007, 23).

In the present chapter it is the second meaning of "philology," which is used. In this sense, "comparative philology" is synonymous with historical linguistics as practised throughout the nineteenth century. Because at the time the concern of linguists was overwhelmingly with members of the Indo-European language family, the field is commonly known as Indo-European studies (German *Indogermanistik*). It arose in the late eighteenth century, triggered by the work of Sir William Jones (1746–1794), who insisted on the relatedness of the Indo-European languages, then as now one of the major language families of the world and certainly the best researched. Jones was followed by others such as Rasmus Rask (1787–1832) and Jacob Grimm (1785–1863), who established the science of comparative philology at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was the dominant school of linguistics until the advent of structuralism at the turn of the twentieth century.

1.8 Features of Indo-European Studies and Comparative Philology

1. The dissociation of linguistics and philosophy
2. The establishment of a sound foundation for etymology
3. The abandonment of attempts to prove putative relationships between Hebrew (the language of the Old Testament) and various European languages
4. The development of a descriptive apparatus for phonetics

In the latter half of the nineteenth century the Neogrammarian hypothesis was developed by a group of young linguists (the *Junggrammatiker*, lit. “new grammarians”) working in Leipzig. They assumed that language change proceeds gradually on a phonetic level, affecting all input sounds simultaneously. The Neogrammarians’ confidence in their assessment of sound change was fuelled by additional discoveries, most notably that by Karl Verner (1846–1896). Verner gave a satisfactory account—now known as Verner’s Law—of the apparent irregularity in many word forms in Germanic, which had been a concern since the days of Jacob Grimm. Subsequently, belief in the regularity of sound change, tempered by analogy, was fully established. The theoretical underpinnings of the Neogrammarian hypothesis were provided by Hermann Paul in his seminal *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte* (1886), in particular the much-debated view that sound laws were exceptionless.

The manner in which the Indo-European languages are assumed to have divided is envisaged by the *Stammbaum* “family tree” metaphor, a notion introduced by August Schleicher (1821–1868). A *Stammbaum* is an inverted tree, with branchings from top to bottom. At the top is Proto-Indo-European, and at the bottom the individual languages of the various branches. The tree representation has also been used to show the interrelationship of dialects.

Indo-European studies/comparative philology involved comparing cognate forms from genetically-related (usually Indo-European) languages with a view to reconstructing the proto-language from which the others were thought to have derived. This allowed scholars to trace superficially different forms back to a single (generally unattested) form. For instance, English *heart*, German *Herz*, Latin *cordia*, and Greek *kardia* can be shown to derive regularly from an Indo-European root **kerd*. The same principle was assumed to be possible when investigating dialects: comparing dialectal forms helped scholars in reconstructing earlier stages of languages, often because key forms missing from more standard varieties were attested in dialects. For example, the northern word *thole* “suffer, endure” is a continuation of Old English *þolian* (cf. German *dulden*), although the form does not exist in present-day standard English.

Indo-European studies/comparative philology was initially a German endeavor, but over the course of the nineteenth century scholars from other countries, for example, Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, and France, became involved. In England, the main scholar was Henry Sweet (1845–1912), the author of books on phonetics and the history of English in general. He also developed a system of phonetic transcription, the *Romic Alphabet*, an important precursor of the International Phonetic Alphabet primarily promoted by Paul Passy (1859–1940) and a necessary instrument for the documentation of dialects.

1.9 The Dawn of Modern Dialectology: The Beginnings of a New Discipline

The systematic study of dialects began in the latter half of the nineteenth century, although as we have seen there is a long history of observation of dialect differences prior to this. The linguistic analysis of dialect variation is associated with the rise of historical linguistics,

which led to publications such as Walter Skeat's overview of historical dialects (Skeat 1912). But it was the activity of scholars dedicated to documenting traditional dialects in danger of dying out, which was to prove more relevant for later dialectology. Investigations of dialects usually produced maps on which isoglosses were drawn. An isogloss is a line separating the occurrence of two different but related forms, for example, the isogloss which separates the occurrence of [ʊ] (in the north of England) from [ʌ] (in the south of England) in the STRUT lexical set (Wells 1982, 131–133), or that separating the regions in which non-prevocalic /r/ is present (the “rhotic” areas) versus absent (“non-rhotic” areas, which account for practically the whole of England other than the southwest and a small area of Lancashire). While isoglosses seem useful and present a neat picture of sound distributions, they only apply to speakers of traditional dialects and even then cannot depict the co-occurrence and statistical distribution of variants in transitional regions, let alone do justice to relevant factors such as age, gender, class, rural/urban divisions, and so on (all of which would be relevant to the documentation of a feature such as word-initial /h/ in English).

Nonetheless, isoglosses were an integral part of surveys of traditional dialects in the twentieth century before the advent of sociolinguistics. The prime example of such a survey in England is the comprehensive *Survey of English Dialects* (SED), initiated by Harold Orton (1898–1975), who had studied under Joseph Wright and Henry Wyld. He was appointed professor at Leeds after World War II, and together with Eugen Dieth (Zurich) supervised the SED. The survey involved over 1,000 questions per questionnaire, covering pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary on topics such as farm life, nature, household matters, weather, health, and social activities. It appeared between 1962 and 1978 with the *Basic Material* being published as four volumes containing informants' responses to interview questions. Further interpretative volumes were published based on the SED's findings, for example, Kolb's *Phonological Atlas of the Northern Regions* (1966), *A Word Geography of England* (Orton and Wright 1974), and *The Linguistic Atlas of England* (Orton, Sanderson, and Widdowson 1978). Further works based on SED data are Upton, Sanderson, and Widdowson (1987), Viereck and Ramisch (1991), and Upton and Widdowson (1996).

Despite the collaborative work that characterizes the SED, there were also key individuals working in dialectology. In England, the most prominent was Joseph Wright (1855–1930), who set dialect study on a new footing in the early twentieth century. Wright studied in Heidelberg and Leipzig and at these centers came into contact with leading linguists of the day. Later he accepted a professorship at Oxford. He is now known for two works, the *English Dialect Dictionary* (5 vols., 1898–1905) and the sixth volume of this work, his *English Dialect Grammar*, all of which are still consulted today, although the coverage is incomplete. Wright's predecessor, Alexander Ellis (1814–1890), was to become one of the foremost phoneticians and dialectologists of his day, and is remembered for his five-volume *On Early English Pronunciation* (1868–1889).

In Europe there were also early pioneers of dialectology. The main work of Jules Gilliéron (1854–1926), a French linguist who was instrumental in the development of modern dialectology and areal linguistics, was a multi-volume atlas of French dialects produced at the beginning of the twentieth century. Gilliéron sent out trained fieldworkers to conduct interviews and record data using a consistent phonetic notation. One of Gilliéron's fieldworkers, Edmond Edmont (1849–1926), conducted no fewer than 700 interviews across France between 1896 to 1900, using questionnaires involving over 1,000 items. The results of his observations, chiefly drawn from male informants, together with results from Gilliéron and his other assistants, were subsequently published between 1902 and 1910 as the *Atlas linguistique de la France*. In Germany, similarly pioneering work was carried out by Georg Wenker (1852–1911). In 1876, he began sending out questionnaires of some 40 sentences to over 1,200 schoolmasters across the north of Germany, asking them to provide equivalents of words in their local dialect. Over a decade he received about 45,000 completed questionnaires. Wenker

transferred the information to maps that in 1881 were published as *Sprachatlas des Deutschen Reiches* "Linguistic Atlas of the German Empire," covering north and central Germany. Wenker continued gathering questionnaires, and in 1926 the first volume of the *Deutscher Sprachatlas*, based largely on Wenker's data, was published under the editorship of Ferdinand Wrede. Another notable German is Wilhelm Doegen (1877–1967), who had an interest in recording minority languages and dialects. Doegen studied phonetics in Berlin and later under Henry Sweet in Oxford, where he increased his knowledge of English and the anglo-phone world. He also became a member of the International Phonetic Association. Doegen's original recordings of English dialect speakers were destroyed during World War II, but shellac copies survived and in the 1990s the Humboldt University in Berlin started digitizing this material to form the Berliner Lautarchiv corpus.

An exception to the general orientation of traditional dialectology and a precursor of modern studies of language and society is Louis Gauchat (1866–1942), a French-speaking Swiss scholar who in 1905 published a study of language use in the Alpine town of Charmey. His recognition that young people used different pronunciations from older ones, and that females led in the use of new variants, that is, are the vanguard in change, anticipated many of the insights of sociolinguistics as it developed in the 1960s and 1970s (Labov 1972).

1.10 Dialect Societies and Materials

Societies for the study of dialects arose in the nineteenth century in parallel to the activities of scholars. In England, the *English Dialect Society* was founded by Walter Skeat and lasted from 1873 to 1896, after which it was dissolved voluntarily. In this relatively short timespan the society published some 80 works on the dialects of England.

In America, a similar institution was founded in 1889. The *American Dialect Society*, mainly dedicated to the study of the English language in North America, published (and still publishes) the academic journal, *American Speech*, which has successfully adapted to modern developments in linguistics.

Journals dedicated solely to dialectology have sometimes had a precarious existence. The Belgian journal, *Orbis*, began in 1952 with a focus on dialectology, but went into sharp decline in the 1980s. The recently founded *Journal of Linguistic Geography* (2013–) is an online journal published by Cambridge University Press. Journals with a broader remit, mainly those that deal with variation from a contemporary sociolinguistic perspective (e.g., *English World-Wide* (1980–), *World Englishes* (1981–), and *Language Variation and Change* (1989–)), have been more successful.

The nineteenth century also saw the publication of dialect dictionaries, often dedicated to specific regions of a country. The North of England is the subject of Brockett's *Glossary of North Country Words* (1825, 1846), whereas more restricted locales are treated in works such as Dinsdale's *Glossary of Provincial Words Used in Teesdale* [Co. Durham] (1849), Nodal and Milner's *Glossary of the Lancashire Dialect* (1875–1882), and Dickinson's *Glossary of Words and Phrases pertaining to the Dialect of Cumberland* (1878–1881). Other dictionaries have a broader scope, for example, Pickering's *Vocabulary or Collection of Words and Phrases which have been supposed to be peculiar to the United States of America* (1816), whereas some consist of extractions of dialect words from more general works (Wakelin 1987; Görlach 1995), for example, Axon's *English Dialect Words in the Eighteenth Century as Shown in the Universal Etymological Dictionary of Nathaniel Bailey* (1883).

The twentieth century saw comprehensive dialect dictionaries attempting complete coverage of a country or clearly delimited region (Penhallurick 2009). The five-volume *Dictionary of American Regional English* (DARE), compiled under the supervision of Frederick Cassidy and Joan Hall at the University of Wisconsin and published between 1985 and 2012 by

Harvard University Press, gives complete coverage of regional vocabulary in the United States. The comprehensive *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* covers dialect vocabulary in Newfoundland, Canada. It was compiled by George Story, William Kirwin, and John Widdowson, and first published in 1982.

The list of dictionaries could be extended considerably if those dealing with a single anglophone country were to be included (see Hickey 2014). For instance, the *Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles* (1967) is a major lexicographical work compiled under the supervision of Walter Avis (1919–1979). In 2006, a comprehensive revision was initiated at the University of British Columbia as the project DCHP-2, which contains much lexical material of dialect origin in the British Isles.

1.11 Dialect Studies

Monographs on dialects come in various guises. Apart from popular literature on local dialects there is academic literature, which can be for a general audience, for example, Trudgill (1990), Hughes, Trudgill, and Watt (2012), or for scholars, basically all other studies. Some studies are in a more traditional mode, for example, Brook (1978 [1963]), Petyt (1980), Wakelin (1972, 1977), Kirk, Sanderson, and Widdowson (1985), or Kolb *et al.* (1979). Other works have taken the insights of modern linguistics on board, for example, Milroy and Milroy (eds, 1993), Kortmann *et al.* (2004), and Dossena and Lass (eds, 2009). One can also mention the studies of forms of American English found in Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (2006) as well as, in a more popular vein, Wolfram and Ward (2005).

1.12 Data Collection Methods

The initial source of data for dialectology was the wordlist, a collection of words supposedly peculiar to the speech of a region. This plotted a trajectory for dialect studies that was characterized by lexical issues. The words sought were frequently those concerning traditional lifestyles (farming, crafts, and domestic issues in rural life). To glean such data, researchers devised lexical questionnaires containing questions like “What do you call the animal which builds dams in streams and rivers?” or, during interviews, “What do you call this part of the body?” with the interviewer touching his/her knee. The limitations of such methods are obvious, and clinging to them spelt oblivion for many dialect studies.

The techniques of modern sociolinguistics (Podesva and Sharma, eds. 2013), above all the rapid anonymous interview promoted by William Labov (Labov 1966), were often adopted to circumvent the observer’s paradox (speakers’ alteration of their speech while under observation by the linguist). But apart from short stretches of speech used for phonetic analysis, this method was not very suitable. For better or worse, informants were usually aware that they were being interviewed for a survey. Indeed, the increased attention paid to ethical issues demanded that the purpose of a survey be revealed to potential informants in advance. When collecting syntactic data, furthermore, much longer stretches of speech in which constructions might occur are necessary, and so anonymous recording would be impractical.

Other data collection issues moved centre-stage during the later twentieth century. One is randomness: for a survey to be representative, all speakers in a community must in principle have the same chance of being selected for a survey. This principle has been followed in surveys such as Telsur, which formed the basis for the *Atlas of Northern American English* (Labov, Ash, and Boberg 2005). Another is the issue of speech registers, which speakers have at their disposal. It may be of specific concern for a survey to determine how speakers alter their

speech as a function of formality. To capture this, some dialect studies record people speaking freely, reading a text passage, then a wordlist, to see where linguistic features fall on a cline of formality.

Parallel to these concerns, alternative methods of interfacing with informants were trialled. Interviews in groups generally led to a relaxation in speech style. The withdrawal of the interviewer, with informants being recorded on their own, offered another means of avoiding the observer's paradox, albeit with new issues of reliability and control arising. These elicitation techniques were chiefly employed for the collection and later analysis of syntactic data (Buchstaller and Corrigan 2011; Walker 2013), which requires a considerable amount of informal material (Schilling 2013).

1.13 Accessibility of Data

Once data have been collected, the issue of presentation to and accessibility for the public is addressed. Traditionally, dialect material has been presented in print, often in several volumes of maps with entries for speakers illustrating specific dialect forms (see Wagner 1958–1964). Increasingly, such information is being presented in a digital format. Some surveys have combined print material with a CD-ROM/DVD, for example, Labov, Ash, and Boberg (2006), often containing clickable active maps linked to sound files associated with speakers from specific locations (see Hickey (2004) as an example). Websites dedicated to dialects/varieties act as sources of general information, for example, the *International Dialects of English Archive* at <http://www.dialectsarchive.com>, whereas others are more research-based, for example, *Variation and Change in Dublin English* (<http://www.uni-due.de/VCDE>).

1.14 Dialectology and General Linguistics

Dialect geography built upon the Neogrammarian hypothesis that sound change was regular, that is, rule-governed and exceptionless. Although the Neogrammarians' claims concerning the rules of sound change are substantially correct, dialect situations are more complex and reveal that sound changes are not always exceptionless. Much discussion surrounding this issue has taken place (Labov 1981), with the level of language on which a feature is located playing a role, as well as the attitudes of speakers to incipient or ongoing change that can lead to their promoting or disfavoring changes.

Already by the nineteenth century the issue of how dialect features spread spatially was an issue addressed by scholars. Schleicher's tree model (see above) regarded dialect diversity as arising through a process of binary branching. A later view is the wave theory developed by Johannes Schmidt around 1870. This sees language changes as spreading out from a center like concentric waves in water.

In the twentieth century, with the focus on urban rather than rural forms of language, new conceptions of feature spread arose. The cascade model of diffusion regards changes as spreading from one urban centre to another without affecting the intervening countryside. An example is the spread of TH-fronting to urban centers around England, which are distant from London, without the intervening rural areas being affected. The size factor seems to be important, with larger cities adopting changes before smaller ones (Britain 2012). There would appear to be some instances of spread in the opposite direction, as captured by the term "counterhierarchical diffusion" (the opposite of what usually happens), whereby features spread from rural to urban settings. An instance of such spread would be *fixin' to*, which has been adopted into urban areas of Oklahoma.

1.15 Structuralism and Generativism

The heyday of American structuralism, between the 1930s and 1950s, saw some attempts to apply its principles to dialectology. The best-known of these is probably Weinreich (1954), in which the author argues for a “diasystem,” a superordinate level of structure above individual dialects, which would account for their perceived structural similarities (Weinreich 1954, 389–390). However, this notion proved untenable for many dialects, which developed as separate systems in geographically distinct areas, despite having common historic origins.

The ghost of a unifying underlying structure to dialects was not easily put to rest. In the 1960s and early 1970s attempts were made, for instance by Brian Newton investigating Greek dialects (Newton 1976) or by Martín Ó Murchú examining Irish dialects (Ó Murchú 1969), to show that the assumptions of generative linguistics could help explain dialect-relatedness. This strand of research was not very fruitful, however, and was discontinued. Ultimately, the historical relatedness of dialects was accepted as the source of present-day similarities, and abstractions across synchronic varieties were disfavored.

1.16 Dialectometry

Addressing the question of dialect relations without assuming a single superstructure continues via the approach known as “dialectometry” (Szmrecsanyi 2013). Essentially a European approach to dialectology—employed, for instance, in the analysis of Romance languages (Goebel 1982) or Dutch (Nerbonne and Heeringa 2010; Heeringa and Nerbonne 2013)—it uses numerical classification methods to analyze the apparent relatedness of dialects, and to measure the “distance” between them. The proponents of dialectometry highlight its ability to quantify dialect differences and to offer a measure of language change (Nerbonne 2003), whereas its critics see in its deterministic and mechanistic analysis of dialect variation a relative neglect of sociolinguistically determined variation.

Another approach to the grouping of dialects has become available with the increase in computers’ computational power. This makes use of phenograms, which are graphic representations of the structural similarities across groups of dialects (or languages; see Brato and Huber (2012) for a typical instance of such grouping based on African Englishes). Phenograms do not take the history of forms into account, only their synchronic manifestations. Thus, in the analysis of Spanish varieties discussed in Heggarty, McMahon, and McMahon (2005), Spanish in Madrid and in Bogotá show considerable similarities, but it is not clear whether this is due to accidentally shared developments or to continuity of the original Spanish input to Colombia (Heggarty, McMahon, and McMahon 2005, 85).

1.17 The Rise of New Dialects

Many European languages experienced diversification as a result of colonialism in the key period from 1600 to 1900. New forms of Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French and English arose outside Europe. This development led several scholars to consider the processes by which new dialects of established languages arise and acquire specific profiles. There are two main models in this field: Trudgill’s “New Dialect Formation” (NDF; Trudgill 2004, 2008) and Schneider’s “Dynamic Model” (DM), see Buschfeld, Hoffmann, Huber, and Kautzsch (eds. 2014).

NDF is viewed as a historical process whereby a new focused variety arises from a series of dialect inputs, for example, in late nineteenth-century New Zealand. Trudgill postulates the following stages: (1) rudimentary leveling, (2a) extreme variability, (2b) further leveling, (3) focusing. Thus new dialect formation has as its beginning a mixture of dialects, and as its

endpoint a single new dialect. In New Zealand, new dialect formation followed the initial immigration of speakers from different regions of the British Isles. This was a process of dialect mixture from which, over just a few generations, a focused variety arose that was then uniform and distinct from other existing varieties of English. Whereas the progression from input to output is uncontroversial, the question of just what input features survived into the later focused variety has been a matter of debate. Trudgill's stance is deterministic: the quantitative representation of features across speakers of input dialects (given in percentages) determines whether they become part of the output, with an appeal to linguistic markedness to explain the survival of minority variants such as schwa in, for example, *trusted*. If a feature was used by more than 50% of the English, Scottish, and Irish communities of early anglophone New Zealand, then it survived. For this to have worked, early anglophone New Zealand society would have had to be uniform, with contact among all speakers. Trudgill did not consider the status of immigrants and disputed the role of social factors for the young in following generations, for example, the fact that New Zealand was a British colony and hence, southeastern English features would have been favored by later generations; he also rejected any embryonic identity function for the combination of features that emerged in the later, focused variety (Hickey 2003). Additionally, there is no evidence that in a scenario where sociolinguistic factors apparently played no role the quantitative occurrence of a feature across the early communities would determine its survival. It might well be that in such a situation, if it ever obtained, the survival of features might be random.

The Dynamic Model was devised by the Austrian-German linguist Edgar Schneider to account for the development of English in former British colonies. It stresses the manner in which overseas varieties of English have evolved in specific ecologies and strives to account for which combinations of features have emerged. The model stresses the essential interaction of social identities and linguistic forms, the nature of which accounts in large measure for the profiles of post-colonial Englishes. Contact occupies a central position in Schneider's model, both between dialects present among settlers, as well as between English speakers and indigenous-language speakers in various colonial locations. Contact-induced change produced differing results depending on the social and demographic conditions under which it occurred, that is, on the local ecology, and on its linguistic triggers (e.g., code-switching, code-alternation, bilingualism, or non-prescriptive adult language acquisition).

The model was first presented in Schneider (2003) and later in more detailed form in Schneider's (2007) monograph *Postcolonial English*. It assumes that former colonies underwent various stages, which can lead ultimately to the development and differentiation of independent endonormative varieties of English, though this stage has not been reached in all cases. Schneider also proposes that there is a shared underlying process—a unilateral causal implication—driving the formation of postcolonial Englishes, as follows: sociohistorical background > identity of early groups > sociolinguistic conditions of communication and contact > resulting features of the emerging post-colonial variety.

Schneider identifies five stages in the development of post-colonial Englishes: Phase 1: foundation—dialect mixture and koineisation (for locations with multiple dialect inputs); Phase 2: exonormative stabilization—a “British-plus” identity for the English-speaking residents when the colony is established and has secured its position *vis-à-vis* the home country, mostly England (or the United States in the case of the Philippines); Phase 3: nativization involving the emergence of local patterns, often associated with political independence or the striving for this; Phase 4: endonormative stabilization, for example, “national self-confidence,” with codification, usually soon after independence; and Phase 5: differentiation—the birth of new dialects, internal developments now linked to internal socioethnic distribution processes. Further issues considered in Schneider's model include the distinction of settler and indigenous strands in the early stages of new varieties, the impact of accommodation, and the importance of identity formation.

1.18 Conclusion

Where does dialect study stand today? The scholarly investigation of dialects (Maguire, McMahon, and Dediu 2010) is as dynamic as ever, as evidenced by the present volume and by many recurring conferences such as *Methods in Dialectology*, and the orientation of research has changed considerably since the advent of modern sociolinguistics in the mid-twentieth century (Shorrocks 2000, 2001). The old style, in which older rural males formed the focus, has been abandoned completely, and is only referenced nowadays where a certain dialect shows nothing but literature of this type. Some of the stock components of older dialectology, such as the isogloss (see above), are no longer viewed as particularly useful as they rest on older, less inclusive conceptions of language variation.

The scope of dialectology has increased manifoldly with its exact extent resting ultimately on terminology. If dialectology is taken to encompass urban, sociolinguistic investigations—many authors speak of “social dialects” (Wolfram and Fasold 1974) or “urban dialects”—then its scope is wide indeed. But this would represent a weakening of the original focus of dialectology comparable to the overextended use of “pidgin” and “creole,” which is often found in the literature. In the sense of the linguistic study of regional forms of language, dialectology has matured considerably in the past half century and has proved its ability to adopt and incorporate insights from neighboring fields in linguistics. Examples are the compilation of corpora (Anderwald and Szmrecsanyi 2009) and the digitisation of existing literature, for example, Wright’s 1910 *English Dialect Dictionary* (Markus 2009; Markus, Upton, and Heuberger 2010), or the application of methods from the “language variation and change” paradigm (Chambers and Schilling 2013), which evaluates the social determinants of microvariation in speech communities. The ability of dialectology to be enriched by such inputs amply proves its vitality and robustness as a linguistic discipline in its own right.

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