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The repercussions of (sociolinguistic) meaning: defining what Tyneside English means to its speakers

{ Marie Møller Jensen, Northumbria University
Regional Varieties, Language Shift and Linguistic Identities
Aston University, September 2012

- ⌘ Salience
- ⌘ Corpus study
- ⌘ Questionnaire study
- ⌘ Enregisterment and Tyneside identity

Outline

- ⌘ According to the Oxford English Dictionary, if something is salient it “stand[s] out from the rest; prominent, conspicuous”
- ⌘ In social cognitive psychology salience is defined as “[a] property of a stimulus that makes it stand out in relation to other stimuli and attract attention.” (Hogg and Vaughan 2008:61)
- ⌘ In linguistics, salience is “a notion which seems to lie at the cusp of language internal, external and extra-linguistic motivation [] which we can provisionally define rather simply as a property of a linguistic item or feature that makes it in some way perceptually and cognitively prominent.” (Kerswill and Williams 2002: 81).

Salience – what is it?

- ⌘ Any operationalization of the salience notion must involve a match between three components:
- ⌘ 1) Language change through diffusion of forms from one variety to another the explanation of which is suspected to be due to salience of the feature involved.
- ⌘ 2) Language-internal explanations (e.g. phonological contrast, semantic transparency, syntactic environment)
- ⌘ 3) Extra-linguistic factors (e.g. cognitive, pragmatic, socio-psychological) which are linked with the linguistic feature undergoing change.

⌘ (Kerswill and Williams 2002: 105)

⌘ It seems that the presence of a language internal explanation (component 2) is a precondition for salience and that the presence of extra-linguistic factors (component 3) are not only crucial in order to avoid circularity but also “ultimately the cause of salience” (*ibid*: 105) as these directly influence speaker behaviour.

Model of salience and language change

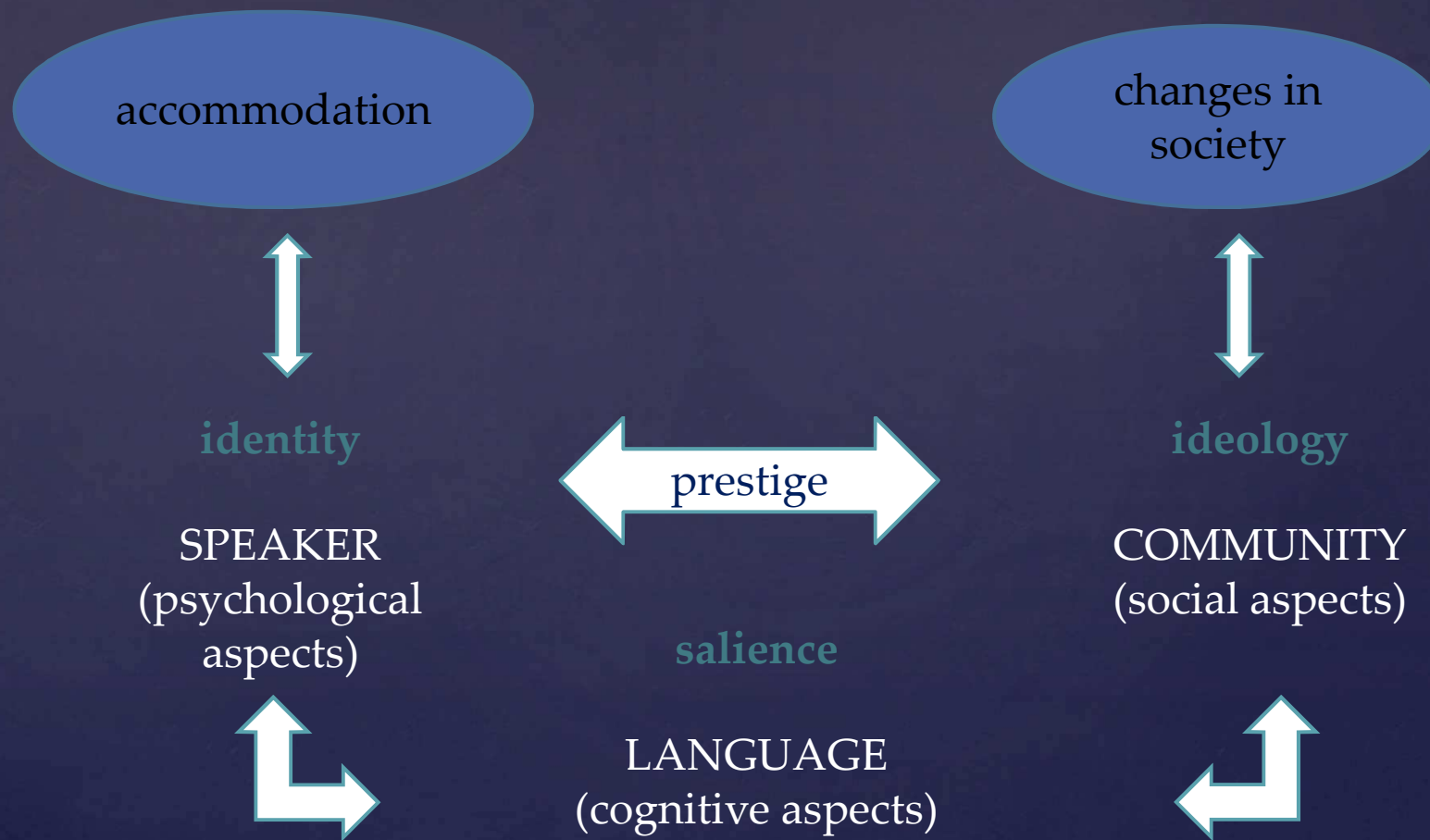
⌘ Salience

⌘ Working definition of “salience” within socio-cognitive linguistics: **the property of a linguistic form which makes it prominent relative to other forms in the cognitive domain.**

⌘ The socio-cognitive framework allows for the crucial unification of structural, sociolinguistic and psychological aspects of language change needed in the conceptualisation of this complex construct.

Salience / meta-linguistic awareness

Model of factors in language change



□ Corpora:

■ TLS (1960s)	-	37 speakers
■ PVC (1990s)	-	36 speakers
■ NECTE2 (2007-2009)	-	48 speakers

□ 7 variables in 3 categories

□ Category 1: sentential negation with *do* (do + NEG)

- you know and I divn't suppose he ever come back I don't suppose he ever showed his face in Newcastle again (PVC02b, male, old, MC)

□ Category 2: personal pronouns (1st pers) and (2nd pers)

- Keeps us on my toes (NECTE2, 07-08/G/DM/456, young, male, MC)
- it's just yous were good weren't you oh apart from that time yous collapsed (PVC09a, male, young, MC)

□ Category 3: verbal constructions (can + NEG), (go), (throw), (told)

- it canna be doing you no good (PVC18b, old, female, WC)
- we often gan on about it now (TLS03, old, female, WC)
- you have to hoy the boxes though you see (TLS37, old, female, WC)
- but you telt me it was a fact (PVC06b, young, male, WC)

Corpus study – data and variables

⌘ Category 1: (do + NEG)

⌘ Variants included: *do, don't, don-t, div, divn't, divn-t, divn, does, doesn't, doesn-t, dinna, divven't.*

⌘ Category 2: (first person pronoun)

⌘ Variants included: *I, we, us, me, my, our, wor, mi.*

	Standard	Tyneside
Subject singular/plural	I / we	I / us
Object singular/plural	Me / us	Us / we
Possessive singular/plural	My / our	Me / wor

⌘ Category 2: (second person pronoun)

⌘ Variants included: *you, yous, ye, yees, ya.*

	Standard	Tyneside
Subject singular/plural	You / you	(ye) yous / yous
Object singular/plural	You / you	You / yous (yees)

Variables – categories 1+2

& (can + NEG)

∅ Variants included: *can not, cannot, can't, canna, cannae, can-nae, can-not, can-na, canne, can-ne.*

& (go)

∅ Variants included: *go, goes, goin, going, gan, gans, gannin, ganning.*

	Standard	Tyneside
1 st person singular	I go	I gan / gans
2 nd person singular	You go	You gan
3 rd person singular	He / she / it goes	He / she / it gans
1 st person plural	We go	We gan / gans
2 nd person plural	You go	(no occurrences)
3 rd person plural	They go	They gan / gans

Variables – category 3

⌘ (throw)

⌘ Variants included: *throw, throws, threw, thrown, throwing, throwin, hoy, hoys, hoyed, hoying, hoyin*

	standard	Tyneside
1 st person singular	I throw	I hoy
2 nd person singular	You throw	(no occurrences)
3 rd person singular	He / she / it throws	(no occurrences)
1 st person plural	We throw	(no occurrences)
2 nd person plural	You throw	(no occurrences)
3 rd person plural	They throw	They hoy

⌘ (told)

⌘ Variants included: *telt, told*.

Variables – category 3

- ⌘ Tokens were extracted from the corpus using R.
- ⌘ Coding was done manually in excel
- ⌘ Statistical analyses carried out in SPSS 19.0
 - ⌘ Category 1+2: ANOVA
 - ⌘ Category 3: non-parametric tests (chi-square and Kruskal-Wallis)

Methodology

	(do+NEG)	(1 st pers pronoun)	(2 nd pers pronoun)	(can+NEG)	(go)	(throw)	(told)
Significant ANOVA	NO	NO	YES				
Significant Chi sq				YES	YES	NO	NO
Significant K-W				YES	NO	YES	NO

- ❖ Differences between results for the variables (go) and (throw)
- ❖ Results of ANOVA for (do + neg) different from results obtained for this variable in pilot studies (which used the Chi square test).

Results overview

- ⌘ Aim of study: to investigate the salience of the morphosyntactic variables tested in the corpus study
- ⌘ Structure of study: questionnaires, interviews
- ⌘ Speaker awareness of forms (salience) and its role in language change: does language change lead to forms becoming salient or does salience of forms lead to language change?

Questionnaire study

- ⌘ Test sentences given in direct speech + in context. Participants asked to disregard spelling. Examples given of how participants should indicate their replies.
- ⌘ Task 1: Participants asked if they have ever heard the examples sentences in Newcastle/Gateshead and to indicate on a scale from 1 (I have never heard this) to 7 (People say this all the time). INDIRECT.
- ⌘ Task 2: Participants asked if they would ever say the example sentence and to indicate on a scale from 1 to 7. They were then asked if the sentence contained any features specific to Newcastle/Gateshead and, if yes, to indicate this by circling the specific word(s). DIRECT.
- ⌘ Task 3: local affiliation based on 10 questions covering 5 areas (network, self definition, attitude to language, orientation, opinion of Newcastle), scale of 1 (Disagree) to 7 (Agree). Social information.
- ⌘ Counterbalancing: 12 versions of the questionnaire. Task 1 testing 4 variables, task 2 testing all 12 variables.

Questionnaire study

- ⌘ 143 questionnaires collected (summer 2012)
- ⌘ Friend-of-a-friend method
- ⌘ Split into age groups after collection (median split: 47yrs)
- ⌘ Class: self-reporting (although participants were also asked for their educational background. 6 participants did not indicate class.)

WC				MC			
young		old		young		old	
male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female
12	34	7	32	11	14	4	23

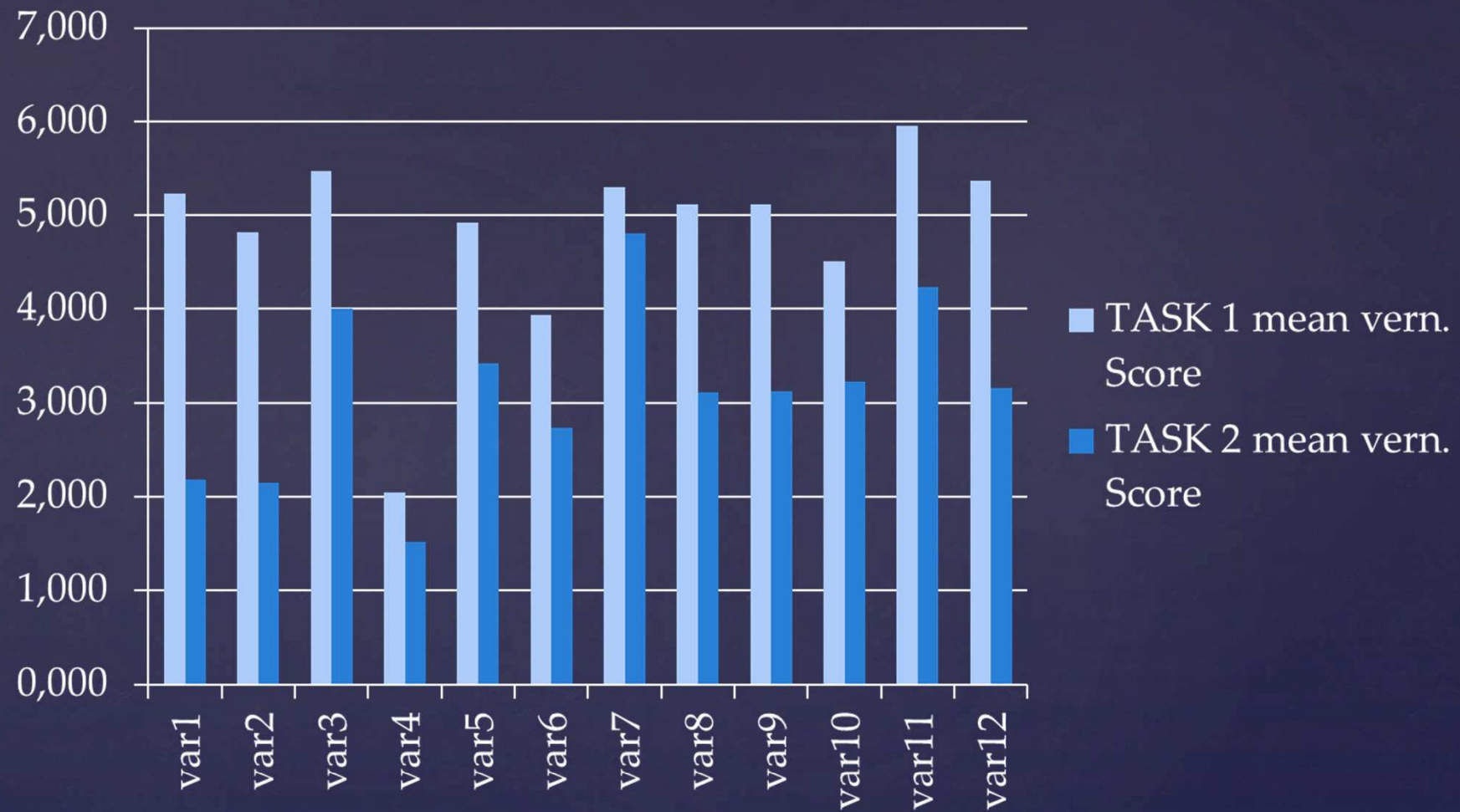
Questionnaire study



Task 1 vern. + stand. mean scores

task1	st.dev vern	mean vern. score	st.dev stand	mean stand. score	difference (vern-stand)	significance
var1	1,502	5,225	1,445	5,286	-0,061	0,828
var2	1,576	4,816	1,411	4,944	-0,128	0,660
var3	1,377	5,463	1,037	5,231	0,232	0,281
var4	1,117	2,043	1,351	5,395	-3,352	0,000
var5	1,712	4,924	1,405	4,785	0,139	0,624
var6	2,328	3,932	1,188	5,174	-1,242	0,002
var7	1,522	5,290	1,421	4,565	0,725	0,002
var8	1,280	5,115	1,265	5,093	0,022	0,936
var9	1,230	5,109	1,168	5,585	-0,476	0,036
var10	1,752	4,507	1,699	4,725	-0,218	0,430
var11	1,082	5,958	1,207	4,882	1,076	0,000
var12	1,297	5,367	1,034	5,694	-0,327	0,187

Task 1 vern. + stand. descriptives + t-tests



Task 1 + 2 vern. mean scores

	TASK 1 st.dev vern	TASK 1 mean vern. score	TASK 2 st.dev vern	TASK 2 mean vern. Score	difference (1-2)	significance
var1	1,502	5,225	2,201	2,18	3,045	0
var2	1,576	4,816	2,246	2,14	2,676	0,003
var3	1,377	5,463	2,334	4	1,463	0
var4	1,117	2,043	1,382	1,52	0,523	0,063
var5	1,712	4,924	2,269	3,42	1,504	0,003
var6	2,328	3,932	2,253	2,74	1,192	0,003
var7	1,522	5,290	2,015	4,8	0,490	0,002
var8	1,280	5,115	2,295	3,11	2,005	0
var9	1,230	5,109	2,252	3,12	1,989	0
var10	1,752	4,507	2,226	3,23	1,277	0
var11	1,082	5,958	2,278	4,23	1,728	0
var12	1,297	5,367	2,242	3,16	2,207	0

Task 1 + 2 vern. scores descriptives + t-tests

task3	st.dev	mean
opinion	1,227	6,112
self def	1,38	5,462
attitude	1,46	5,168
network	1,506	4,668
orientation	1,543	3,444
total	1,008	4,971

Task 3 affiliation

task 1 + 3	task 1 vern. mean	task 3 total mean	Pearson's Correlation	Significance	Strength of correlation
var1	5,225	4,945	0.456	0.001	medium
var2	4,816	5,148	-0.011	0.942	small
var3	5,463	4,821	0.135	0.354	small
var4	2,043	4,945	0.41	0.005	medium
var5	4,924	5,148	0.007	0.96	small
var6	3,932	4,821	0.203	0.162	small
var7	5,290	4,945	0.131	0.385	small
var8	5,115	5,148	0.442	0.002	medium
var9	5,109	4,821	0.126	0.387	small
var10	4,507	4,945	0.236	0.115	small
var11	5,958	5,148	0.481	0.001	medium
var12	5,367	4,821	0.128	0.382	small

Task 1 vern. + affiliation

task 2 +3	task 2 vern. mean	task 3 total mean	Pearson's correlation	significance	Strength of correlation
var1	2,18	4,96	0.414	0	medium
var2	2,14	4,941	0.174	0.4	small
var3	4	4,962	0.208	0.013	small
var4	1,52	4,956	0.096	0.256	none
var5	3,42	4,951	0.155	0.07	small
var6	2,74	4,948	0.101	0.234	small
var7	4,8	4,962	0.299	0	small/med
var8	3,11	4,964	0.313	0	medium
var9	3,12	4,945	0.349	0	medium
var10	3,23	4,97	0.338	0	medium
var11	4,23	4,967	0.36	0	medium
var12	3,16	4,956	0.333	0	medium

Task 2 vern. + affiliation

- ⌘ Gender, age, class?
- ⌘ Correct identification in task 2?
- ⌘ Looking at the individual parameters in task 3?

- ⌘ Comparison with results of corpus study?

Work in progress...

⌘ Enregisterment / social indexicality

- **Enregisterment:** the identification of a set of linguistic norms as a linguistic repertoire differentiable within a language as a socially recognized register which has come to index speaker status linked to a specific scheme of cultural values (Agha 2003, Beal 2009).
- **Commodification:** social and linguistic stereotype of 'Geordie' entrenched in the community.
 - Embrace of 'commodified' dialect by Tyneside speakers (Beal 2009).
 - Enregisterment of stereotypical linguistic features which become meaningful to the vernacular speakers → performance of local identity.

Enregisterment and commodification

- ⌘ **Cultural re-generation:** Major social changes in the region in recent years: change from coal mines and ship yards to 'cultural capital of the North' (Miles 2005)
- ⌘ Urban development and "culture-led regeneration" emphasising middle class values and a lack (or loss) of what (used to?) characterise Newcastle.
- ⌘ Revival of vernacular morphosyntactic forms and construction of Tyneside linguistic identity in the face of external changes
- ⌘ **'Culture-led regeneration' of the urban townscape → 'linguistic regeneration' of local vernacular forms (through processes of enregisterment of commodified forms)**

Regeneration

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Thank you!

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