FIRST APPROACHES TO THE UNEXPLORED DIALECT OF SUNDERLAND

LOURDES BURBANO ELIZONDO
University of Sheffield

1. Sunderland city, its people and dialect: Issues of local identity

Sunderland, located in the north-east of England, is one of the two conurbations that constitute the metropolitan county of Tyne and Wear. It is a young city: it attained its status of "city" only in 1992.[1] It used to belong to the Old County Durham; however, with the re-organisation of county boundaries in 1974, it passed to form part of the then newly created county of Tyne and Wear together with Newcastle upon Tyne, which Robinson defines as the "unofficial 'capital' of North-East England" as having the best public facilities in the county (e.g. roads, transport, shopping centres, university) (Robinson 1988: 4). Because of this, Sunderland has been overshadowed by the proximity of Newcastle, the main urban centre in the North-east. It can be said that it is the 'poor sister' of the two cities that constitute this metropolitan county; or, at least, the less favoured one, since there is a feeling that Newcastle always gets all the latest improvements. This was clearly reflected in an article published in *The Guardian* in September 1979. In it, the author spoke from a clearly Mackem[2] perspective in the following terms

> The problem was it [Sunderland] always suffered from Newcastle. […] Why, they'll tell you, Newcastle has even pinched the design of their wonderful bridge —a beautiful orange and white iron bow, once reckoned the biggest in the world. The

feeling that somehow they always deserved better than they got is still strong in Sunderland today, and who can say it is wrong?

From the opposite point of view, i.e. the Geordie one, Mark Jensen explained in *The Independent* that

The Mackems have always had a chip on their shoulder because Tyneside —at least in local terms— has the superior facilities, such as the Metro underground railway and huge shopping centres. (*The Independent*, 19-8-1992: p. 26)

This is only one of the reasons that explains the rivalry that exists between the inhabitants of the two cities. The rivalry between the supporters of the two regional football teams, Newcastle United and Sunderland F.C. (both in the English Premier League), is certainly another reason. The rivalry between the two groups of fans becomes evident in the regional derbies.

Thus, although we can speak of a strong regional identity that brings together all north-easterners, within the North-east we can definitely identify subdivisions that distinguish Newcastle, Sunderland and Middlesbrough people, somehow setting them apart. Driven by their local pride Sunderland and Middlesbrough people seem to struggle for their own independence. North-eastern people are often classified by outsiders as "Geordies", at which Mackems and Middlesbrough people take offence since they do not consider themselves Geordies, hence the strong feelings of identity that emerge in each of these localities.

In this context of strongly contrasting local identities, local dialects play an important role. They emerge as symbols of local identity. Through them, the inhabitants of the three conurbations emphasise their tight bond with their respective localities, and distinguish themselves from one another. On the one hand, Middlesbrough English distinguishes its speakers' speech from the Yorkshire varieties to the south of Teeside (Llamas 2000) and from those to the north of the city (e.g. Durham, Sunderland and Tyneside English). On the other hand, Sunderland English, the English which concerns us in this paper and on which we will concentrate from now on, seems to be an essential resource for Sunderland people, firstly, to differentiate themselves from Geordies and, secondly, to emphasise by linguistic means their own local identity, thus reasserting themselves as Mackems, as opposed to Geordies. This identity was probably strengthened when Sunderland itself became a city. Since then, as Beal (2000: 369) points out, "Mackems are increasingly aware, and proud, of their separate status as citizens of Britain's newest city", and, consequently, they have adopted some dialect markers as "shibboleths" of their identity.

Still, Sunderland English is often mistakenly referred to as Geordie because people who are not from the North-east often think that Newcastle English is the dialect

that is spoken in the whole region. However, there is nothing worse for someone from Sunderland than being told that s/he speaks Geordie or that s/he is a Geordie. Indeed, there are similarities between these two neighbouring varieties, but also differences (you may ask someone from the area whether Geordies and Mackems speak the same). In a way it is as if the boundary that formerly separated the Old County Durham from Northumberland (henceforth Du and Nb, respectively) still existed as the line that delimits Geordie and Mackem territories as well as their dialects. Of these two dialects, Tyneside or Newcastle English has generally attracted the attention of most of the dialectologists that have shown an interest in the varieties of this region probably because Newcastle is the main city in the North-east, while not much attention has been paid to Sunderland English.

2. Previous dialect studies carried out in the area: Aiming at filling the gap

From the second half of the 19th century, traditional dialect studies like the *Survey of English Dialects* (SED, Orton and Dieth 1962-1971), carried out in the 1950s and 1960s, focused on the rural varieties spoken in Nb and County Du. They sought to record and study traditional dialects. This means that until the new urban sociolinguistic approach emerged in the 1960s out of necessity, urban varieties had barely been studied at all. The circumstances of the moment made it necessary to turn to urban dialects since there had been a population movement towards the cities and a considerable increase in communications. Cities had become a melting pot of people and dialect features from very different places. Consequently, "the invention of capturing the traditional dialect of a region was itself less relevant in the context of complex, heterogeneous cities" (Coupland 1992: 8). This largely explains why most of the dialect research into north-eastern English carried out since then has concentrated mainly on the Newcastle variety. This was already the main city in the region; so its dialect probably came to be seen as the stereotypical north-eastern one. Besides, Sunderland, did not obtain the status of city until 1992, as mentioned before; perhaps its dialect did not attract so much attention, then, on the grounds that, being so close to Newcastle, its dialect was bound to be the same or at least extremely similar.

Among the major sociolinguistic studies that have been carried out on Tyneside English (TE) in the last few decades, it is worth mentioning the *Tyneside Linguistic Survey* (TLS) carried out in 1969 at the University of Newcastle to "determine the ecology of varieties of spoken English in urban areas", that is, "having identified the speech varieties themselves, to determine commonness or rarity of each and define their distribution across social attributes" (Pellowe *et al.* 1972: 1). After the

TLS other studies followed, like McDonald's study of the modal verb system (1981), which would lay the ground for later publications on TE grammar: e.g. Beal and McDonald joint paper on the "Modal verbs in Tyneside English" (1987), or Beal's "Grammar of Tyneside and Northumbrian English" (1993a), and her "Geordie accent and grammar" (1993b). Also, Milroy and others developed in 1994 the survey of *Phonological Variation and Change in Contemporary Spoken British English* (PVC), a sociolinguistic study of the phonological changes that TE was undergoing. From the data recorded in the PVC, Watt and Milroy went on to focus on the issue of dialect levelling (1999).

In addition to this, some research has focused on the strong Geordie identity as a determining factor that helps to preserve some of the most stereotypical features of this urban dialect: e.g. unshifted ME /ʊ:/ in words like *toon* for *town* or ME /ɪ:/, as in *neet* for *night*.[3]

Currently, a project is being developed in the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne to create a single corpus of data out of the TLS and PVC collections, and eventually make it available to the research community in various formats (digitised sound, phonetic transcription, standard orthographic transcription and so on). This project is known as NECTE (*A Linguistic Time-Capsule: The Newcastle Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English*).[4]

In contrast, the amount of research that has been done into Sunderland English is scarce, not to say non-existent. This is what has led me to concentrate on the urban dialect of Sunderland, which is so close to Newcastle. Despite their proximity and their belonging to the same county, there are differences between these two varieties which are easily recognisable and more or less familiar to any north-eastern speaker: e.g. /ŋ/-dropping and the pronunciation /ɛɪ/ in words like *beer*, *here* (both found in Sunderland English), the pronunciations /μακ/, /τακ/ and /μεκ/, /τεκ/ for *make* and *take* in Sunderland and Newcastle respectively, or the use of *dinnet* in the former and *divent* in the latter for StE *do not*, to mention a few differences. The emergence of these differences between Wearside and Tyneside English are very likely to have been favoured not only by the rivalry existing between Geordies and Mackems, but also partly by the fact that until 1974 Newcastle and Sunderland belonged to different counties, i.e. County Du and Nb. Another factor that may play an important role in this is the geographical situation of both cities. Although the two of them are outside the area that felt the effects of Scandinavian settlement most heavily, historically Sunderland may have received a stronger influence being closer to the Scandinavian-speaking areas. On the other hand, the Scottish influence will be more heavily felt in Tyneside than in Sunderland**.** Finally, it should not be forgotten that Sunderland English descends from the traditional "pitmatic", which also characterises this variety. All this means

that Sunderland English is a linguistic variety that is well worth looking at in order to determine

(a) to what extent it actually differs from TE,
(b) what its main features are and,
(c) to what extent its speakers' strong sense of local identity helps model this dialect and preserve it as distinct from TE.

Finding answers to these questions would allow us to locate Sunderland English within the linguistic continuum of the North-east and its resemblance to TE or, on the other hand, to Du English, as Sunderland once belonged to County Du. The purpose of my current PhD research is to answer precisely these and related questions. The groundwork was done in my earlier MLitt research, a comparative sociolinguistic study of the dialectal lexicon of Newcastle and Sunderland English, whose most relevant findings I will report in the following section.

3. Lexical Erosion and Lexical Innovation in Tyne and Wear: Reporting some evidence of dialect differences between Sunderland and Newcastle English

3.1. Objectives

To date *Lexical Erosion and Lexical Innovation in Tyne and Wear* (Burbano 2001) is the only study that has focused closely and specifically on the dialect of Sunderland. The aim of this lexical study was

> to find out the extent to which traditional dialect words are still alive in the speech of secondary-school children in the Tyne and Wear area. To do this I took the *Survey of English Dialects* (*SED*) as a starting reference study and aimed at determining whether some of the dialect words that were in use in the 50s (when the survey was carried out) have died out or are currently dying out and, consequently, are not frequent in the speech of my informants. (Burbano 2001: 1)

Thus, taking a group of traditional dialect words characteristic of the traditional dialects of the region,

> I intended to check how far Tyne and Wear teenagers' knowledge of dialect goes and whether or not they still use the same dialect words as their grandparents. If they do not, I aimed at discovering what words have replaced the traditional dialectal words in their speech: new dialect forms, dialect forms that have spread from other counties, standard English words, or simply colloquial ones. (Burbano 2001: 2)

3.2. Methodology

The informants were a total of 80 secondary-school students from two schools: *Castle View* in Sunderland and *Gosforth High* in Newcastle. There were 40 students from each school: 20 thirteen-year-olds and 20 sixteen-year-olds. The sample of informants would enable us to record any vocabulary differences between the two groups and ultimately between Newcastle and Sunderland English.

Data was collected by means of a questionnaire which was especially designed for this study and which the students had to complete in my presence.[5] It focused only upon 21 traditional dialect words, all of which were selected bearing in mind that the subjects were adolescents living in urban areas. Consequently, words whose referent was not likely to be familiar to urban adolescents had to be discarded: e.g. words related to agriculture, which had been the basis of traditional studies like the SED. Nearly all the 21-word sample had been previously recorded in County Du and Nb by the SED and Simmelbauer's study (2000). In both surveys, they had proved to be fairly common, as can be observed in Table 1, below. Due to this attested popularity, there were more chances that these words could be recognised by my informants.

3.3. Results

The global conclusion that was drawn from the analysis of the data recorded was that in general the traditional dialect words whose survival was being tested were not as widespread among my informants as they had been in earlier studies. As can be seen in Figure 1, the APA (Average Positive Answers)[6] added up to less than 50% in each school, which suggests that nowadays other words must have replaced these traditional ones both in Newcastle and Sunderland English.

As shown in Figure 2, below, there were no intermediate positive scores. The number of positive answers for every word tended to be either in the upper part of the table, above 25, or in the lower one, below 15: i.e. the dialect words surveyed were either very common or very uncommon among my informants. In this figure three different distribution patterns emerged:

(a) Firstly, those words which scored more than 25 both in Sunderland and Newcastle. This group included *lug, gob, chuck, hoy, tattie, gadgie, bairn* and *netty*. Traditionally, the first three were considered words in general dialect use, whereas the rest of them were defined as general northern dialect words (cf. SED and EDD). The high level of occurrence in both schools in the survey might well mean that these words have acquired the status of colloquial or slang vocabulary, losing some of their dialectal or regional character.

Sample of words and their meaning	Positive answers in Simmelbauer's 10+-group	*SED*: Positive answers in Nb	*SED*: Positive answers in Du
1. Gowk ('cuckoo')	0/9	n.i	n.i
2. Cuddy ('donkey')	0/9	9/9	5/6
3. Paddock ('frog or toad')	0/9	6/9 ('frog') 0/9 ('toad')	2/6 ('frog') 0/6 ('toad')
4. Burn ('small river')	5/9	9/9	4/6
5. Lugs ('ears')	9/9	9/9	6/6
6. Gob ('mouth')	9/9	2/9	5/6
7. Neb ('nose')	n.i	*Neb* was elicited in the *SED* with the meaning of 'beak'	
8. Brambles ('blackberries')	9/9	6/9	4/6
9. Tatties ('potatoes')	9/9	9/9	6/6
10. Hoy ('throw')	8/9	1/9	2/6
11. Chuck ('throw')	4/9	3/9	1/6
12. Loup ('jump')	0/9	7/9	6/6
13. Wag ('play truant')	9/9	n.i.	n.i.
14. Bullets ('sweets')	6/9	8/9	6/6
15. Paste egg ('easter egg')	1/9	9/9	6/6
16. Gadgie ('a bloke or old man')	8/9	n.i.	n.i.
17. Bairns ('children')	n.i.	9/9	6/6
18. Glaky ('thick, stupid')	5/9	0/9	0/6
19.Cuddy/car handed (left-handed)	n.i.	3/9 (car-handed)	2/6 (cuddy-handed)
20. Skinch ('truce')	n.i.	n.i.	n.i.
21. Netty ('toilet')	n.i.	9/9	6/6

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TABLE 1: Words selected for the questionnaire and rates of positive answers recorded for each of them in both the SED and Simmelbauer's survey
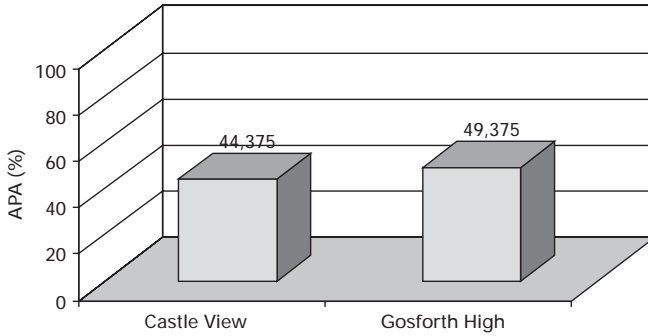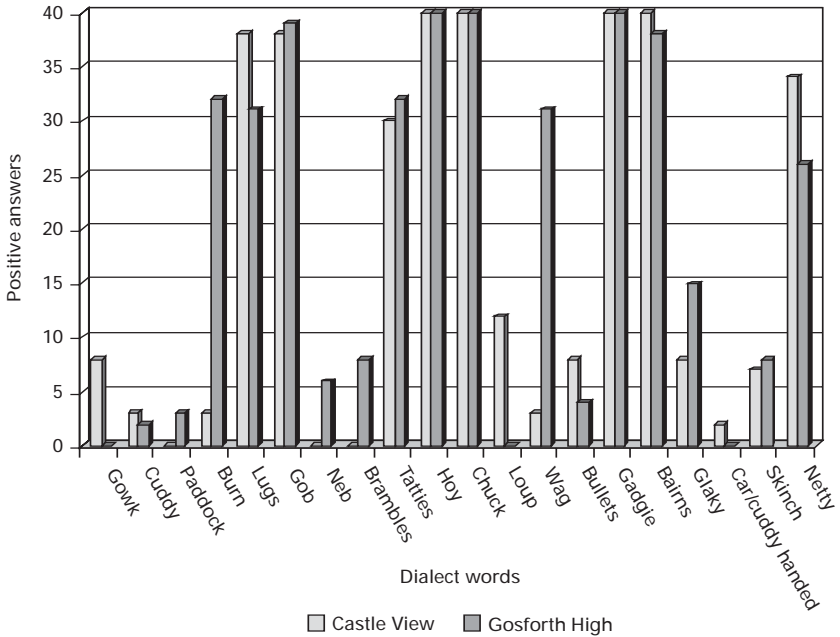
FIGURE 1: APA recorded in each school.

FIGURE 2: Positive answers elicited for each target dialect word in each school

(b) The second pattern to emerge from Figure 2, above, was of those words whose score was remarkably low in Newcastle and Sunderland, generally lower than 10. This group of traditional dialect words consisted of *gowk, cuddy, paddock*, *neb*, *bramble, bullets, car-/cuddy-handed* and *skinch*. All of them were northern words, with the only exception of *neb*, a word commonly found in general dialect use. The most frequently elicited counterparts for these words were the equivalent StE terms. The words *gowk*, *cuddy* and *paddock*, surveyed by means of multiple-choice translation questions (Francis 1983: 62-63), proved to be unknown to most informants. It was interesting, however, to observe that for the notions 'sweets' and 'nose' the range of words collected was fairly varied, *bullets* and *neb* being less frequent than expected. The StE terms were almost unanimously elicited, but, apart from them, other alternatives were preferred to *bullets* and *neb*, as shown in Figures 3 and 4:

(i) For 'sweets' Newcastle informants did not seem to have a preferred word: *kets, mix-up, jellies, sweeties, bullets* and so on were all recorded; yet none of them was elicited from more than 20 informants, not even *bullets*, which was expected to be more popular since the SED defined Nb and Du as its relic area. In Sunderland, the scores were even lower for all these alternatives except for *kets*, which clearly arose as an indisputably local word. It had been elicited from almost 95% of the informants in this city.
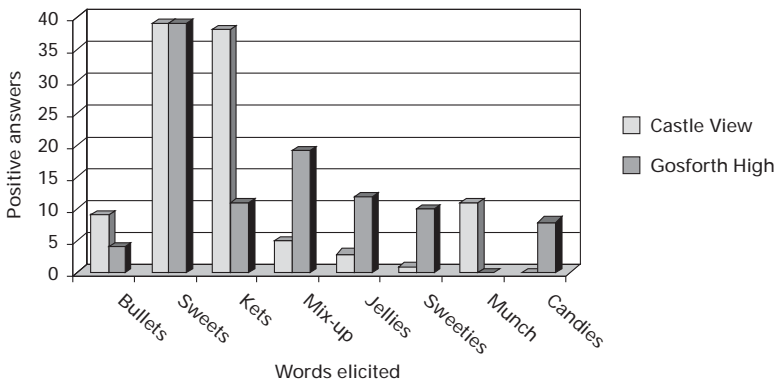
FIGURE 3: Main answers elicited in the quesion for 'sweets'

(ii) For the notion 'nose', the StE word was the most popular answer. Other more informal words were recorded, but neither of them seemed to predominate over the others, as we can see in Figure 4.
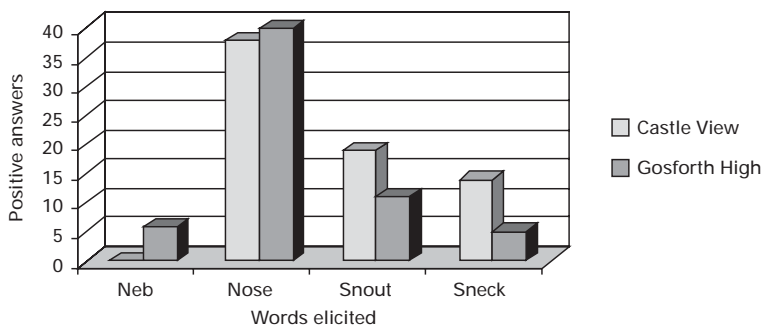
FIGURE 4: Main answers elicited in the question for 'nose'

(c) Finally, the third pattern revealed in Figure 2, above, is that of the words which showed a remarkably different score in Newcastle and Sunderland. Thus, whereas *wag, burn* and *glaky* turned out to be more popular in Newcastle, *loup* was more popular in Sunderland. The SED established Nb as a relic area for the former three, which would explain these regional differences between Newcastle and Sunderland, as Sunderland was part of County Du at the time. However, the level of occurrence of *loup* both in Nb and County Du had been quite high in the SED (cf. Table 1, above). Therefore, the word may well have receded in the last few decades because, despite the fact that it was more frequently recorded in Sunderland in my survey, it was not so popular among teenagers.

Of the four words included in this pattern, *burn* (a 'small river, stream') and *wag* ('play truant') were the ones that revealed the most interesting data:

(i) Newcastle teenagers were far more familiar with *burn* than those from Sunderland, which confirms that this traditional dialect word is still widespread in Tyneside. The distribution recorded for *burn* in my study agrees with that established by the SED data, according to which *burn* was a Nb word. This explained its exclusive presence in Newcastle. Nevertheless, it was surprising not to find *beck* as the most frequently recorded word in Sunderland as I would have expected, since this had been the most frequent word for 'small river' in Du in the SED.

(ii) For 'play truant', a number of non-standard expressions were recorded apart from *wag* and StE *play truant*: e.g. *skive (off), bunk (off), doll off, skip, knock off* (cf. Figure 5, below). The scores recorded for some of them make them fit within the third distribution pattern: such is the case of *skive (off)* and *doll off*, as well as *wag*. Thus, whereas *wag* was exclusively elicited in Newcastle (although not as frequently as *skive*), *doll off* was exclusively and unanimously elicited in Sunderland.

As this last expression was completely new to me, I tried, without success, to find some evidence of it in previous dialect studies and in the OED. Further inquiries revealed that this item was not spelt *dole*, as many of the informants had spelt it, but *doll*. According to the informants' English language teacher, the expression did not come from *to be on the dole*, as I first thought, but from *to play the doll*. She also confirmed that she had never heard this expression anywhere else outside Sunderland, which suggested that probably we were in the presence of a genuine Sunderland dialect word. Finally, *skive* was also almost unanimously elicited in Newcastle: 97.5% of the informants reported it, against 77.5% that reported *wag*. Nonetheless, this expression seems to be in more general dialect use as it is also used in other areas: for instance, it is used in other northern areas like Sheffield and the Opies (1959: 372) located it in Staffordshire and Cheshire.
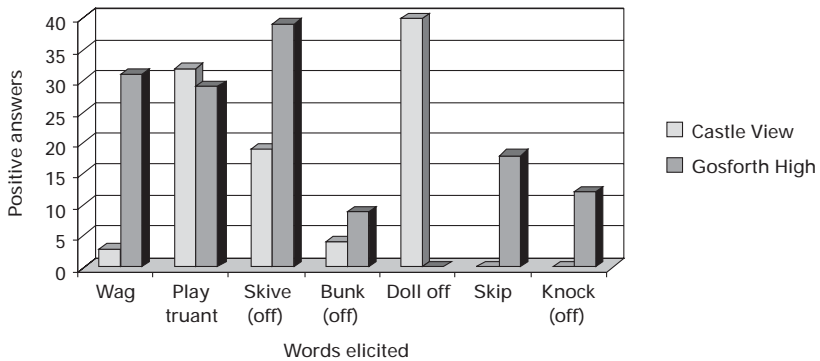

FIGURE 5: Main answers elicited in the question for 'playing truant'

Apart from all these words, another two that were recorded in my study also fitted in this 3rd pattern due to their noticeably different scores in the two schools: they are *kets* (already mentioned in the 2nd pattern as a variant of *sweets*) and *chatties* for 'potatoes'.

Kets (cf. Figure 3, above) was far more frequent in Sunderland. This dialect word was elicited in the SED in Durham, Yorkshire, Westmorland and Cumbria. According to the EDD *kets* was an eDu word for 'rubbish', although it was also often applied to 'sweetmeats'. Consequently, *kets* could have eventually taken on the meaning 'sweets' as a result of the metaphor 'sweets' = *rubbish*.

Chatties was exclusively recorded in Sunderland to refer to 'potatoes'. Interestingly enough, this word was elicited from 82.5% of my Sunderland informants. It was slightly more usual than *tatties*, elicited from 75% of them.

	Potato	**Tattie**	**Chattie**	**Spud**
Castle View	40	30	33	23
Gosforth High	40	32	—	33

TABLE 2: Number of answers recorded for each variant of potato and for the StE word itself in each school.

In search of earlier evidence of *chatties*, I found that the SED had recorded *chitties* in Somerset and Wiltshire. Yet the geographical distance between these counties and Sunderland made it unlikely that there were any connection between the two variants. The students' English teacher explained that

> *chattie* is a very common word in Sunderland and stems from *tattie*. [...] She explained that changing [t] for [tS] is a characteristic feature of the dialect of Durham, and suggested *chable* (from *table*) as an example. (Burbano 2001: 91)

This pointed at *chattie* as a phonological variant, different from *tattie*, which with time has acquired a semi-phonetic spelling in Sunderland. Nevertheless, neither the teacher's explanation nor that of the possible link with *chitties* were really conclusive. *Tatties* is a "dial[ect] variant of potato", according to the OED, so we could say that *chattie* is itself simply a variant of *tattie*.

This classification of the words into three groups based on the frequency with which they were elicited shows that since the 1960s, when the SED was carried out, changes have occurred in the traditional vocabulary of the region. Some traditional dialect words like *gowk, cuddy, paddock, car-/cuddy-handed, skinch* do not seem to exist in teenagers' vocabulary or are rarely known. Instead, their StE counterparts have usually taken their place. Other words are still very popular, such as *lug, gob, chuck, hoy, tattie, gadgie, burn,* and *netty*. However, the high level of popularity of these words among teenagers suggests that these words have acquired a colloquial status and teenagers tend to use them in their peer-group conversations. Finally, other words that used to have a more local character, as is the case of *wag, burn* and *glaky* in Nb, and *loup* in Du, are still locally known and/or used. Obviously, new words have also appeared such as *doll off*; others have acquired new meanings, e.g. *kets* was elicited as referring to 'sweets' by my Sunderland informants; and others have been modified, e.g. *chatties* (from *tatties*).

4. Conclusion: Discussion and current state of affairs with respect to the Sunderland dialect

The sample of words on which I focused in my MLitt research was probably too small to allow many new words or differences between Newcastle and Sunderland English to come out. Nevertheless, it was big enough to prove that there are differences between these two urban dialects, and therefore further research needs to be done, especially into the dialect of Sunderland. The absence of any previous research into this variety made it necessary to explain some of the findings on the basis of, firstly, the data collected from Du and Nb rural localities by traditional studies like the SED or the EDD, and secondly, of the more recent research on urban TE. This sometimes involved assuming that Sunderland English was likely to be similar to all those surrounding dialects. This is a good reference point but we need to be careful not to be misled looking for similarities with TE or to over-generalise from it because this could let important dialect features of Sunderland go unnoticed. Sunderland English needs to be studied as an unexplored field, starting basically from scratch, yet it should be seen within the linguistic continuum of the North-east as this can give clues to explain some of the local features.

A more thorough study of Sunderland English will probably reveal that this variety has features in common with TE and others that distinguish the former from the latter. Moreover, it would probably also reveal to what extent Sunderland English bears a resemblance to Du English as a result of its formerly belonging to County Du. This, however, would entail gathering a considerably larger amount of data to provide enough information to study this north-eastern variety in some detail. This is precisely the next phase in my PhD research: in it I intend to look at the phonological, grammatical and lexical dimensions of this dialect and how it might vary according to gender, age or social class. Moreover, as the North-east is an area with very strong local identities and the rivalry between Geordies and Mackems is well-known, I will also be focusing on

(a) the influence the Mackem identity may have upon Sunderland English providing them with a means of differentiating themselves from Geordies.

(b) popular perceptions about where the Geordie-Mackem boundary lies.

In order to get all the data I need about the Sunderland dialect and the local identity, in my fieldwork, which I am about to start, I am going to use the SuRE methodology. The Survey of Regional English, known as SuRE, is a joint project of the Universities of Leeds and Sheffield whose purpose is to create a computerised database of data which will reflect present-day dialect variation around the British Isles (Llamas 1999: 96).The SuRE methodology, therefore, aims at eliciting informal speech which will provide researchers with enough phonological,

grammatical and lexical data that is comparable both socially and regionally. Moreover, since modern dialect studies are interested in studying linguistic variation in correlation with social variables, a higher number of informants will have to be interviewed than in traditional dialect studies, which means that this methodology has to ensure that data is elicited as quickly and easily as possible (Llamas 1999: 97-98).

Although the original version of the methodology was designed by C. Llamas, over the last year two PhDs from the University of Leeds (Esther Asprey and Kate Wallace) and myself have been working together under the supervision of Dr. J. Beal and Dr. C. Upton (from the Universities of Sheffield and Leeds respectively) in order to refine the original design before setting the project in motion by implementing this new methodology ourselves in our respective research areas.

Appendix. Questionnaire

Full name: _____

Age: _____

Male ☐ / Female ☐

Place of birth: _____

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Before beginning to answer the questionnaire, do not forget to complete the section above with your personal details.
- When completing the questionnaire, bear in mind that you are dealing with dialect words, that is, words that are typical of your area.
- Read each question carefully before answering it.
- Write down as many answers as you can think of whenever it is required.
- If you do not know the answer of a question, just mark the "I don't know"-option represented by (???)

Let's see if you know these dialect words!

1. What is *a gowk*?

    a. A hamster   b. A cuckoo   c. A pigeon   d. ???

2. What is *a cuddy*?

    a. A small bird   b. A donkey   c. A hug   d. ???

3. What is *a paddock*?

    a. A frog or toad   b. A narrow path   c. A parrot   d. ???

4. What do you call a small river?

    a. Burn   b. Beck   c. Pond   d. ???

5. What do you call these parts of the body? (Write all the words you can think of for each one)

    a. _____

    b. _____

    c. _____

6. What can you see in these flashcards? (Write as many words as you can think of)

    a. _____

    b. _____

7. What are you doing if you *hoy* a ball?

    a. bounce it   b. blow it up   c. throw it   d. ???

    And if you *chuck* it?

    a. bounce it   b. blow it up   c. throw it   d. ???

8. If a dog is *louping*, what is it doing?

    a. Turning around and around happily

    b. Jumping

    c. Digging a hole to hide a bone

    d. ???

9. What are your words for staying away from school without your parents or teachers' authorisation? (Give your own answers)

    _____

    _____

10. What do you call the things you are going to see? (Give as many answers as you can for each of them)

    a. _____

    b. _____

11. What do you think *gadgie* means?

    a. An old car   b. A hook   c. A bloke or   d. ???
                                                    an old man

And *bairn*?

a. Garage   b. Child   c. An old horse d. ???

12. If someone tells you that you are quite *glaky*, what is he calling you?

a. Thick, stupid b. Cheeky   c. Clown   d. ???

13. What do you call someone who writes with his left hand? (Give as many answers as possible).

_____

_____

14. What do you say to your friends in the middle of a game if you want to take some time out?

a. I need a barley

b. I need some overtime

c. I need a skinch

d. Others _____

15. What is *a netty*?

a. A toilet b. A laundry room c. A small fishing net d. ???

16 Can you think of any other words that you, your friends or people of your family use that are characteristic of the speech of the area where you live? Make a list with them and try to explain their meaning or give examples of situations where you would use them. You can discuss them with a partner.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Notes

1. http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/ public/editable/themes/theCity/CityHeritage.asp

2. The term 'Mackem' refers to anyone who is originally from Sunderland, as opposed to 'Geordie' which refers to Newcastle people.

3. cf. Beal (2000 and forthcoming).

4. http://www.ncl.ac.uk/elll/research/ language/npecte.htm

5. See the questionnaire in appendix 1.

6. "APA only includes those answers which evidenced that the informant was familiar with the target dialect words of the questionnaire" (Burbano 2001: 95).

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