

# Sociolinguistics: Aspects of Accents

Mgr. Pavel Čanecký  
Brno, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021

# DEFINITION OF BASIC TERMS

- *1. The roads are dirty.*

vs

- *2. The roads is mucky.*

# DEFINITION OF BASIC TERMS

- **Accent**

- pronunciation

- **Dialect**

- syntax, morphology, lexicon and pronunciation

- **Idiolect**

- from the Greek *idio-* meaning “one’s own” and *-lect*
- the specific way that a single person speaks
- “[A person’s idiolect is] not just vocabulary; it’s everything from how we pronounce certain words to how we put them together to what we imagine they mean. Ever have a disagreement with someone over whether an ambiguously-shaded object was actually blue or green? Congratulations, you’ve witnessed differences in idiolect....”

(Gretchen McCulloch)

# TRADITIONAL DIALECT

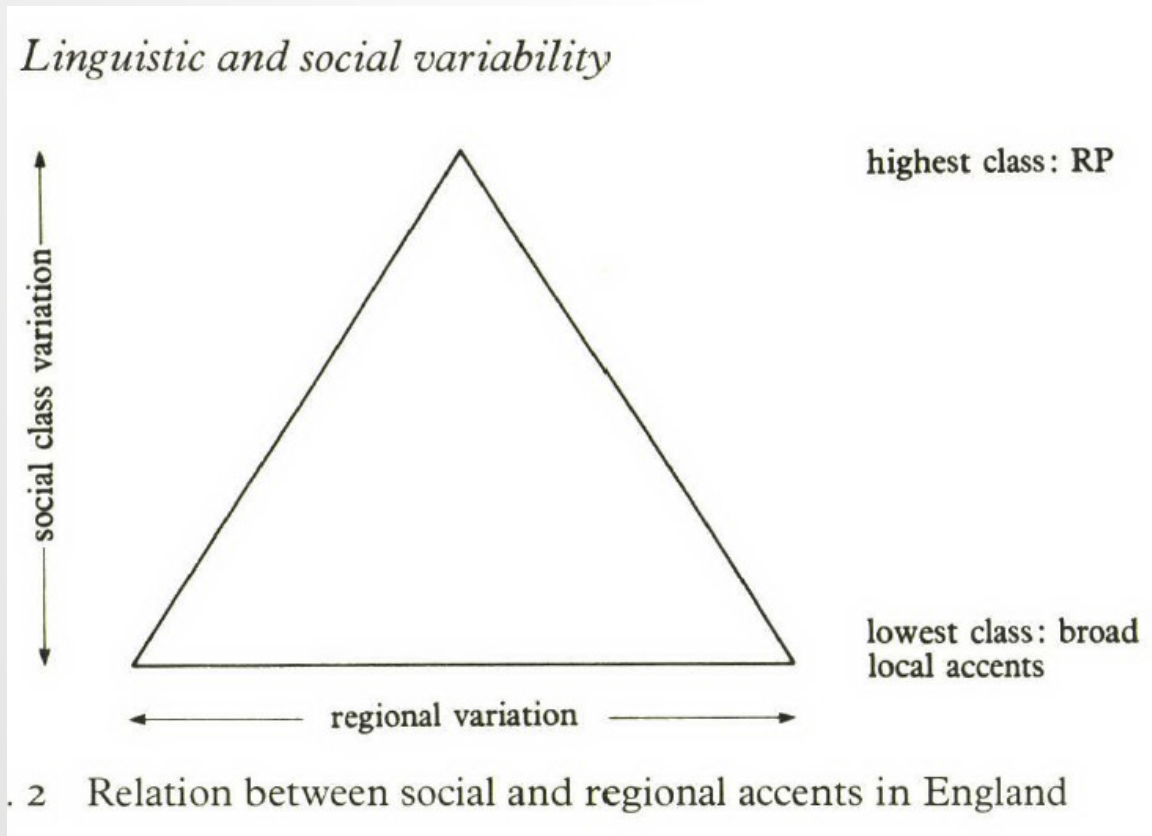
- a coherent alternative language variety
- found in various parts of England
- not so common outside the British Isles
  - Newfoundland and the Appalachians
- **relexification**
- **primary vs secondary dialect features**

# GEOGRAPHICAL VARIATION

- Accents as powerful indicators of geographical identity
- Socially distinct: vulgar vs posh
- Geographically distinct: Scottish accent, Australian accent, southern accent, American accent,...
- **regionality**
- RP vs GenAm
- urban vs rural
- geographical diffusion (Trudgill)

# SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS

- **Speech stratification** correlates with **social stratification**



# SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS

- William Labov
  - The Social Stratification of English in New York City (1966)
  - -> Variability in a New York accent is socially stratified

	(r)	(dh)
Middle class	25	17
Working class	13	45
Lower class	11	56

(Derived from Labov 1966: 221)

# AGE

- Innovations in the speech of children and adolescents
- mouse -> mouses
- thin /f/



# STYLES AND ROLES

- social context
- **casual style** (CS)
- **formal style** (FS)
- **reading-passage style** (RPS)
- **word-list style** (WLS)

	WLS	RPS	FS	CS
Middle middle class	0	0	3	28
Lower middle class	0	10	15	42
Upper working class	5	15	74	87
Middle working class	23	44	88	95
Lower working class	29	66	98	100

# STYLES AND ROLES

- Labov-hypercorrection

# PROJECTING AN IMAGE

- **convergence x divergence**