Preliminary investigations into some vowels of Dublin English

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1. Introduction

This paper begins with an overview of the language situation Dublin, Ireland and the perceived sound changes that have occurred. These changes involve a retraction of diphthongs with a low or back starting point, and a raising of low back vowels. I then go on to outline the results of a study that compares data collected in the beginning and end of the first decade of the millennium. Some results include that there is a shift in the pronunciation of the /ai/diphthong by younger speakers of Dublin English. The final section of the paper features some newer, preliminary data regarding this feature. Before that, I discuss details of a follow-on project that aims to progress our knowledge of Dublin English, with attention being paid to sociolinguistics, ethnography and sociophonetics.

2. Dublin English

The capital of Ireland, Dublin, is home to some 1.2 million people and has seen many changes in the last 30 years. The boom and bust years have, no doubt, had an influence on the language there. These changes may be reflected through language variation, with this variation reflecting local identity and culture. Language and other social practices play a role in individuals aligning or disassociating themselves to local identities.

The traditional north-south divide of Dublin is in part is based on the traditional geographic boundary of the Liffey river. Respondents to perceptual work by Hickey (2005) divided the city into northern "strong" and "hard" variety and a "posh"

southern one. Recent perceptual work by Lonergan (2012) would note the most salient perceived linguistic variety in Dublin is its southeast coast. This is could be continuing from the media coverage of the 'Dublin 4 accent'. Dublin 4 refers here to a postal address of a more affluent area of the city, from which emerged from an accent that that aspires toward prosperity and trendiness. It has long become a point of ridicule in the media, but the term is still used to connote the speech of prosperous Dubliners, or those that would like to be seen as affluent or trendy. Lonergans' respondents also noted a tough city accent, and in most part a regular Dublin accent for the rest of the city and its environs.

Raymond Hickey (2005) views Dublin English (DubE) as being divided using a twofold division, with a further subdivision: *local* DubE and *non-local* DubE (dividing into *mainstream* and *new* DubE). The first group consists of those who use the inherited popular form of English in the capital. The term 'local' is intended to capture this and to emphasise that these speakers are those who show strongest identification with traditional conservative Dublin life of which the popular accent is very much a part. The reverse of this is 'non-local' which refers to sections of the metropolitan population who it is claimed do not have strong identification with popular Dublin culture. This group then subdivides into a larger, more general section which Hickey labels 'mainstream'.

Hickey follows that from around 1970 the city expanded greatly in population, due to both internal growth and migration from the rest of the country. It then underwent an economic boom from 1990-2005, reflected in its position as an important financial centre and a location for many international firms. Hickey observes the increase in wealth and international position meant that many young people aspire to an urban sophistication which is divorced from strongly local Dublin life. This local dissociation, thought to be motivated by the desire of speakers to hive themselves off from vernacular forms of a variety spoken in their immediate surroundings, expressed itself in changes in realization of vowels. Once the shift

had been initiated it is thought it will be picked by other sectors of the population, especially those who aspired to a new status beyond what was conceived of as typical of traditional Dublin. Hickey argues the new pronunciation spread and slowly became a model for young Dubliners without a strong identification with popular culture in the city. The changes were most apparent in younger sections of the population, mostly female. The sociolinguistic significance of this fact can be considerable and is evident in the vowel shift perceived to be currently in progress in the capital.

2.1 *Changes in Dublin English*

These changes involve a retraction of diphthongs with a low or back starting point, and a raising of low back vowels. Hickey (2005: 52-74) sums up the changes as follows:

The variable /ai/ [əɪ] → [aɪ] → [ɑɪ] [ɑɪ] preferentially occurs before voiced segments e.g. STYLE [stɑɪl]

Raising of back vowels:

NORTH [a:] retracting to [ɒ:] raising to [o:]

THOUGHT [a:] retracting to [ɒ:] raising to [ɔ:]

CHOICE [ɑɪ] → [ɔɪ], [oɪ] toy [tɒɪ] → [tɔɪ], [toɪ]

LOT [ɒ] →[ɑ] → [ɔ]

In terms of the variable /ai/, a conservative pronunciation of /ai/ is maintained in local DubE whereas the (supraregional) mainstream has a low mid of low front starting point i.e. either [aɪ] or [æɪ], sufficiently delimiting from local DubE. But increasingly a back starting point came to be used with this diphthong. Particularly noticeable before retracted /l/ style [stɑɪl] (l is velarized in many forms of DubE) and /r/ [ɑɪrlənd] rather than [aɪrlənd]. [ɑɪ] preferentially occurs before voiced segments. This makes phonetic sense; the retracted onset of the diphthong requires the tongue travel a slightly longer distance than for the unshifted [aɪ] and that the jaw muscles

relax somewhat. In respect of restrictions on the diphthong shift are similar to those on diphthong realizations in Canadian English, commonly known as Canadian Raising (Chambers 2006). Here a centralized onset is used of the diphthong /ai/ and /au/ before voiceless segments, before voiced ones an onset in the region of /a/ is found. It is difficult to predict whether this distribution will remain typical for the Dublin vowel shift. It may very well be that it is only characteristic of an initial phase and the shift will spread to all instances of /ai/, masking the present distribution. Or it may freeze at this stage, as has been the case with Canadian Raising. And of course the shift may peter out and an unretracted [aɪ] pronunciation may be reinstated for all instance of the diphthong.

Irrespective of the situation with there is a general raising of low vowels in newer varieties of DubE. Compared with traditional values all the vowels show raising in the vowel shift. The degree of raising depends on age of the speaker, particularly for the diphthong in the CHOICE lexical set, and the low and mid vowels in the LOT and THOUGHT sets (which have a lower realization than in Britain).

In the course of the 20th century the mainstream realization of the GOAT lexical set was pushed along a path of further diphthongization (and not raised) from [go:t] to [goʊt]. If raised would have intruded on the phonological space of the GOOSE vowel [gu:s]. For new DubE realization was further diphthongization to [gəʊt]. This may look at first sight the adoption of an RP pronunciation but it has an internal motivation stemming from the raising of the THOUGHT vowel to [ɔ:] as part of the Dublin vowel shift. The GOAT vowel has been developing a central starting point, very different from the back or low initial position for traditional Dublin English, is a prominent feature of new DubE. The fact that this vowel shift is not that old offers the opportunity to observe a change in its early stage and provides evidence how a change begins to spread.

Hickey (2007: 91) notes the vowel values which are associated with the now

unfashionable Dublin 4 accents are not shared entirely by younger fashionable Dublin English speakers. Further studies would be very useful to verify such viewpoints. The fact that this vowel shift is not that old offers the opportunity to observe a change in its early stage and provides evidence how a change begins to spread. The data below attempts to provide this evidence.

3. DubE vowel shift Study

I will outline here the results of a study that compares data collected by Hickey between 2000 and 2002, and data I collected in 2009.

3.1 *2000-2002 Data*

The *A sound of Atlas Irish English* (Hickey 2005) data collection between 2000 and 2002 involved 1,500 recordings in all of Ireland, with 314 in Dublin. The Dublin recordings were made up of: 1. Set of short sentences (54) each containing a token of a particular lexical set (e.g., The CHOICE was the right one)

2. Free text, written by Hickey, read 'in a natural voice at their normal speed'. The text was deliberately constructed so as to have words illustrating all the lexical sets of interest in Irish English.

3. A Word list which checks pronunciation of key sounds e.g. /ai/ /ɔi/

These words embody certain sounds which are of interest for the changes in Dublin English which have been in evidence during the 1990's in the capital. The wordlist style of speakers captured by these recordings was useful in determining the presence or absence of the features, indicated in brackets, among the informants recorded. Needless to say, the speakers were not told what features were being checked in their recordings. Some relevant sections of the word list are found in Table 1.

Word 1	Word 2	Feature(s) examined
MILD	WILD	retraction of /ai/ diphthong
TIGHT	RIGHT	retraction in voiceless context
CORK	THOUGHT	raising of back vowels
TOY	CHOICE	raising of back diphthong
LOT	BOAT	(i) raising, (ii) diphthongisation
TOWN	MOUTH	onset fronting for /au/ diphthong

Table 1 Word list

The vast majority of speakers were young people. This fact reflects a conscious decision made by Hickey at the beginning of his investigations into Dublin English. The broad intention was to offer an overview of what contemporary Dublin English is like and in what direction it is presently evolving. For this goal the speech of the younger generation is of special significance for it is this social group which is setting the stage for the future development of English in the capital city. Over 100 recordings of these speakers are available as sound files on the CD-Rom of Hickey (2005). This data was then compared with data collected by the present author in August 2009.

3.2 *Methodology of 2009 study*

The methodology of this study replicated that of Hickey, collecting recordings of the word list and set of short sentences mentioned above. The data extracted from the Hickey 2000-2 data included 80 speakers, split equally between male and female. The data was also balanced by location: North Dublin and South Dublin, the traditional divide of the city, as noted above in Section 2. These locations which further divided into localities: North Dublin (Central North Dublin, Far North Dublin, North-East Dublin, North-West Dublin, West Dublin, East Dublin, Central Dublin) and South Dublin (Immediate South Dublin, South-West Dublin, Inner

Far South Dublin, Coastal Far South Dublin). The August 2009 data included 82 speakers with 40 female speakers and 42 male speakers. The target features included the retraction of /ai/ diphthong in both voiced and voiceless contexts, and the lexical sets of THOUGHT, CHOICE, LOT, GOAT. Analysis of the NORTH lexical set is not included here as it seems that in terms of the raising of back vowels it seems that the raised pronunciation in the NORTH lexical set has stabilized. All the target vowels were transcribed after auditory analysis by the author with occasional reference to free on-line clickable IPA charts (http://www.paulmeier.com/ipa/charts.html http://web.uvic.ca/ling/resources/ipa/charts/IPAlab/IPAlab.htm).

3.3 *Data analysis*

Comparison of 2000-2 data available on CD-ROM with 2009 data

Early 00s data n=80 Female (F) =40 Male (M) =40 2009 data n=82 F=40 M=42

A brief analysis follows the data for each feature.

Feature: retraction of /ai/ diphthong in voiced context (Word list: Mild Wild)

2000		2009
7.5%	əɪ	8.5%
32.5%	aɪ	13.5%
60%	ɑɪ	78%

General Notes: There was a big shift to the new/retracted pronunciation, with figures for males and females on both sides of the city shifting. Males are following in this voiced context (from 50% in 2000 to 75% in 2009), with 88% of females (70% in 2000) now realizing a retracted pronunciation.

Feature: retraction of /ai/ diphthong in voiceless context (Word list: TIGHT RIGHT)

2000		2009
11%	əɪ	12%
39%	aɪ	28%
50%	ɑɪ	60%

General notes: There was a moderate shift to the new/retracted pronunciation. The realization of this pronunciation remains under 50% for males but this shift continues to be taken on board by females (from 60% to 76%). No real change in north side figures for new pronunciation (40%; south side male figures at just over 50%).

Lexical set: THOUGHT [a:] retracting to [ɒ:] raising to [ɔ:]

2000		2009
6%	a:	4%
44%	ɒ:	52%
50%	ɔ:	44%

General notes: There was moderate shift from traditional to retracted pronunciation, with less raised pronunciation. More north side males are retracting, while more north side females, south side males, and north side females are raising.

Lexical set: CHOICE [ɑɪ] → [ɔɪ], [oɪ]

2000		2009
15%	ɑɪ	15%
40%	ɔɪ	38%
45%	oɪ	47%

General Notes: There seems to be the same numbers for traditional to raised. There is a gradual shift from ɔɪ, with moderate shifts in north side females. There was slight shift to oɪ in males. But no real change here, so this remains to be seen.

Lexical set: LOT [ɒ] →[ɑ] → [ɔ]

2000		2009
20%	ɑ	9%
41%	ɒ	30%
27%	ɔ	61%

General note: As in the retraction of /ai/ in voiceless context, the big shift to raising of LOT was led by females (53% to 73%). Southside females shifted from 50% to 83%.

Lexical set: GOAT [gʌot] →[goʊt] → [gəʊt]

2000		2009
8%	ʌo	7%
81%	oʊ	43%
11%	əʊ	50%

General note: There was a huge shift to əʊ for BOAT in both males and females, with a huge shift on the south side, with a big shift also on the north side.

3.4 *Conclusions on the DubE vowel shift study*

Hickey (2005: 65) has suggested that the shift spreading to all instances of /ai/ being a likely option. Males have followed in the voiced context (over 70% of males,

from 50% in 2002, now have a raised pronunciation) so is it a case that in time males will also catch up in the voiceless context? There has not been a big shift in figures for males (still just under 50%) but this shift continues to be taken on board by females (from 60% to 76% now realize a raised pronunciation in a voiceless context).

There has been a big shift to raised pronunciation for the LOT lexical set. A large majority of females (80%) show a raised pronunciation. For the THOUGHT and CHOICE lexical sets we cannot see a large change. For the GOAT lexical sets there has been a huge shift to the new pronunciation for both males & females. There was a big shift on the south side (20% to 68%), and the north side (now 33%). Future research into DubE could illustrate the nature of this change in progress, and the above data can be used as a base for future projects.

Rather than focusing on the vowel change, I am proceeding to conduct a locally centred study that can contributes to a greater understanding of greater understanding of social identities in relation to phonetics in DubE. I present a general overview of the research design of this *Language and identity construction in a Dublin suburb* project, and will follow up with more specific details.

4. Future directions: The *Language and identity construction in a Dublin suburb* project

The *local*, *mainstream* and *new* DubE labels can be seen to be imposed upon the Dublin English by a researcher, rather than emerging from lived reality of Dublin English speakers. This piques interest in ethnographic approaches to language variation. The aim of this project is to develop an in-depth understanding of a few. A sample of a relatively small group of informants is designed to provide detailed attitudes of individuals and the specific contexts in which they hold these views. There may be tension between quantitative and qualitative research here- quantitative researchers perceive truth as something which describes an objective reality waiting

to be discovered. Qualitative researchers are concerned with the changing nature of reality created through people's experiences. "Validity" to a quantitative researcher would mean that results correspond to how things really are out there in the world, whereas to a qualitative researcher "valid" is a label applied to an interpretation or description with which one agrees. Similarly, the phrase "research has shown . . . " or "the results of research indicate . . . " refers to an accurate reflection of reality to the quantitative researcher, but to a qualitative researcher it announces an interpretation that itself becomes reality (Sale, Lohfield & Brazil 2002: 48, 50).

4.1 *General outline*

While Hickey (2005) hypothesized significant phonological changes motivated by local disassociation, to date we know very little about social distribution of the features, the functions that they perform, and how they relate to social identities in Dublin. The results of the study, which adopts an ethnographic approach to study language use in a Dublin suburb, will have implications for an urban variety of English that has not been explored in much depth, along with aiming to extend and enhance methodological practices when engaging with social networks and/ or communities of practice. The heterogeneous area in question, 7 miles from the centre of the city, can be seen to represent the changing face of Dublin and Ireland. I intend to centre the research on the emergence of language identities and the role of language practices in this process. Although language is one of the symbols and values that are locally important when it comes to signal membership, it is no more than one of the socio-cultural factors that contribute to the construction of local identity. As I am locally born, I will be able to access background knowledge of local social practices.

The following principal research question will guide matters: What are the fundamental sociolinguistic processes and linguistic behaviour that contribute to identity construction in a Dublin suburb? The intention is to identify salient variable

linguistic patterns at the phonological and sociopragmatic levels, and to understand the social meanings of variation: the relationship between linguistic behaviour and adolescent speech communities. As male respondents will be the predominant focus, it may be possible to enhance understanding of the nature of masculine identities hitherto developed by Kiesling (2005) among others. The focus here will be the exploration of local categories, identities and social meaning as defined locally. The view of personal style, tied in with communities of practice and social networks, as being the locus of social meaning (Eckert 2000) has been an influential concept in sociolinguistics. Her work, on the jock and burnout social groups in an American High school, used ethnographic practices, such as observation and interviews, to obtain insights that cannot be obtained by more traditional methods like surveys or questionnaires alone. Rather than relying on objectifying social characteristics, ethnographic studies aim to understand people's actions based on their own understanding of the situation. It is exploratory in nature with, among other things, a search for the discovery of local categories, identities and social meaning. In general, this project will aim to be a progression of the DubE vowel shift study, with keener attention to sociolinguistics, ethnography and sociophonetics.

The field of sociophonetics makes use of the principles and techniques of sociolinguistics and phonetics to try to explain socially-structured variation in speech (Di Paolo & Yaeger-Dror 2011a: 1). A discussion of auditory versus acoustic analysis of the realization of phonetic variables will be useful here. Auditory work depends on phonetic transcription, which itself can be troublesome (Ladefoged & Johnson 2011). The vowels of English can be described in many different ways, partly because accents of English differ greatly in the vowels they use, and partly because there is no right way of transcribing a single accent of English (83). Furthermore transcription of vowels work upon the notion of targets, tongue articulations as movements toward certain targets: a target is something that the tongue aims at but does not necessarily hit, perhaps because it is drawn off by having to aim at a

second target/the next articulation (70). Traditional articulatory descriptions such as *low, high, back and front* are not entirely satisfactory and remain in use as a matter of tradition: when phoneticians describe a vowel as high or low, they are in fact describing an acoustic quality, how it sounds, rather than tongue gesture necessary to describe it (which we cannot be precise about unless using x-ray or MRI to monitor the tongue) (88-89, 94).

Phoneticians now prefer acoustic analysis to describe vowel articulation and formant frequencies quantitatively. To give a brief review, based on Catford (2001: 153), the majority of sounds are produced by complex sound-waves. In addition to the fundamental (perceived) frequency, measured in Hertz, there are regular lesser or partial vibrations of air in the vocal tract giving rise to numerous higher frequencies (or harmonics). The quality of any particular vowel-sound is determined by the way which amplitude peaks are distributed over the frequency scale (locations of loudest or most prominent frequencies in the complex sound). As sound passes through vocal tract, the tongue and cavities act as a series of resonators, which pick out and reinforce some frequencies in the sound wave and subdue others. It is these resonances that determine the form of the complex sound waves. These resonances can be called formant frequencies or simply formants. The first formant, typically abbreviated F1, corresponds to vowel height. The second formant, F2, corresponds to vowel advancement. These frequencies are typically measured by acoustic software such as Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2012). The advantages of acoustic analysis outweigh the auditory analysis used in the DubE vowel shift study, and future progressions of this project will rest on the former method.

Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie (2007: 251 - 253) give a good example of how a phonetic variable can index a specific identity, they consider [f] to be involved in a complicated process of locally based language ideologies. In this process the use of [f]: 1) Indexes the speaker as Glaswegian

2) Indexes the speaker as a different type of Glaswegian from middle-class adults

and adolescents

3) Indexes the speaker as a different type of Glaswegian from working-class adults.

The use of [f] is a supralocal variant which is not a feature or marker of Glaswegian, and by using such a variant, working-class adolescent speakers distance themselves from both the traditional working-class variant [h], as well as the standard (or 'posh' variant) [ʔ] (Stuart-Smith et al. 2007: 252). Oxley (2009 cited in Di Paolo, Yaeger-Dror & Wassink 2011: 101) calculated the slope and direction of the /ay/ diphthong of speakers in Texas. She found variation among different generations: older speakers weakened off-glide by producing a F1 with lower slope. Middle aged had a weakened glide by lessening both vowel raising and fronting (when compared with younger speakers). Such ideas can be developed in the research design of the *Language and identity construction in a Dublin suburb* project.

4.2 *Research design*

This project seeks to understand male adolescent identities within a Dublin suburb and the role of language in negotiating these identities in contemporary urban Ireland. Specifically, I want to find out what kinds of social groupings exist and how people make use of language and other social practices to negotiate their alignment with and dissociation to these grouping. In order to do that, I will focus on the members of a Dublin sports club which functions as a central social institution in the area. The identities, as defined locally, will be explored using participant observation, free recordings and semi-guided interviews. The data and recordings will be analysed qualitatively and quantitatively to determine how language contributes to the construction of these identities. The analysis will focus on salient variable linguistic patterns at the sociopragmatic (humour), and sound levels. The investigation will examine (a) the variants for each variable, (b) their social and linguistic distribution, and (c) seek to understand the social meanings they negotiate. I will analyse and interpret how linguistic behaviour, attitudes and sociocultural

factors contribute to the construction of local identity.

Observation and free recording techniques, successfully employed by Eckert (2000), lead to general interviews that provide linguistic data, and language ideology attitudinal information. It is possible to gain insights on identity construction, orientation and affiliations which reflect respondents' social and cultural positions, and give insights into inter-group relationships and identity negotiation. In order to verify this data, the methodology tools of the Survey of Regional English (SuRE, see Asprey, Burbano-Elizondo & Wallace, 2006), such as the Identification Questionnaires (IdQ) and an Affiliation Score Index (ASI), can be suitably employed. Identity construction can involve several often overlapping complementary relations, a series of boundaries and symbols (e.g. values, beliefs, ways of talking etc.) that distinguish speech communities in a context (Bucholtz and Hall 2010). I aim to create a thick sociolinguistic description of linguistic realities for the adolescents in question. The significant sociolinguistic processes and sociocultural factors that contribute to the construction of local identity will be examined alongside indexical fields, and other factors that determine employment of linguistic resources.

Relevant sections of recordings will be transcribed, saved as text files and analysed using variable rule (or other appropriate) analytical tools. The ELAN tool (Sloetjes & Wittenburg 2008) will be used to transcribe, annotate and time-align chosen extracts of the audio data. Once all tokens of the chosen features have been selected they will be analysed using the phonetic analysis program Praat. Analysis will include the percentage of occurrence of variants realized, and note of constraints on these variants (Eckert 2000: 97). Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2012) will be used for conversion of audio data into visual representations of formant frequencies. I will inspect waveforms and spectrograms made to determine the range of the chosen features. I will work toward establishing a scale to capture the gradience of phonetic realization of the variant, for example to distinguish between two degrees of raising for example (Mendoza-Denton 2008: 242).

In the analysis of the tokens of one phonological feature in my corpus, I will code the feature as the dependent variable (the item whose behaviour I am trying to predict) and other relevant independent variables (that possibly influencing the dependent variable, such as the phonological environment, social affiliation etc.). I will use these independent and dependent factors to perform a multivariate logarithmic analysis on the data set of realization of the phonological features. The Rbrul/R programmes can be used for variable rule analysis to decide the significant factors in realization of the variables. All data will be normalized for vocal tract size using a suitable algorithm available through the online vowel normalization suite, NORM (Thomas & Kendall 2007).

4.3 *Focus on diphthongs*

The DubE vowel shift study data can be embellished and informed with information about locally constituted categories. In order to keep things manageable, a focused and motivated choice of features to be examined is needed (Di Paolo, Yaeger-Dror & Wassink 2011: 104). In essence you need to figure out which features are doing the sociolinguistic work. A study of vowels begins with becoming familiar with the previous literature concerning vowels in the target dialect area. Due to budget and time constraints, the number and scope of linguistic variables under analysis must also be limited in specific, motivated ways. Based on the brief description of vowels above, the data above, preliminary investigations of spoken data collected from speakers the area in investigation, I currently favour focusing on the /ai/ diphthong [PRICE PRIDE etc.] and maybe low to mid back vowels [THOUGHT CHOICE- possibly favouring the diphthong CHOICE, if a choice is necessary]. I will deal with preliminary data and ideas about the former below.

The general reason I feel the /ai/ diphthong in voiced and voiceless contexts would be a useful feature to analyse is that it meets many of the criteria laid out by Tagliamonte (2006: 70) to select a variable for sociolinguistic investigation. That is

it is high in frequency, easily quantified, there is adequate variation between forms, other researchers are talking about this variable (e.g. see September 2012 discussion on Canadian raising on The Variationist List - discussion of everything related to variationist sociolinguistics. VAR-L list: https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=VAR-L), and it has capacity to answer timely and relevant questions. It seems to be a variable undergoing change as data here suggests. Hickey (2007: 83)) noted how a retracted starting point began to be used by speakers he class fashionable who he perceives began to move away from traditional Dublin speech. An investigation of this variable could track how this use is spreading. Recent work by Lonergan (2012) suggests that the PRICE and PRIDE vowels are merging. In terms of identity, to my ear the variable has social value.

It is important to ensure that tokens are selected in a coherent way, i.e. to include a sufficient number of tokens to represent each word class and adequately represent each vowel in the exact same phonetic environment (Di Paolo, Yaeger-Dror & Wassink 2011: 89). Di Paolo & Yaeger-Dror (2011b: 18-19) encourage us to adhere to the principals of accountability: we must include every token of the variable under investigation which occurs in a sample (whether or not token is manifestation of the innovative/conservative/other variant). Only by taking every token of the variable can we determine if change is happening and the demographic and linguistic correlates of the variation leading to the change are.

Section 4.2 and 4.3 are outlines of work in progress and very much open to change. Any feedback or advice is much appreciated. I will conclude the paper with a brief presentation of preliminary results, using some of the methodology outlined above.

4.4 *Preliminary Data and Possibilities*

This, very preliminary, data taken from speakers selected from the 2009 DubE Vowel shift study and beginning sociolinguistic interviews conducted in September

2012. The purpose is to give us an idea of how the project can develop, and outline some possible directions the project may pursue. All of the tokens here are for the realization of PRICE only. In the case of the sociolinguistic interview data tokens from similar phonetic environments were used. All tokens were analysed using the Praat software (Boersma & Weenink 2012), and normalized using the BARK algorithm, through the online vowel normalization suite, NORM (Thomas & Kendall 2007). In the following Figure 1, you can find measurements for 10 males. In Figure 2, there are 7 females. The horizontal axis corresponds to F1, and advancedness (see Section 4.1). The vertical axis corresponds to F2, and height.

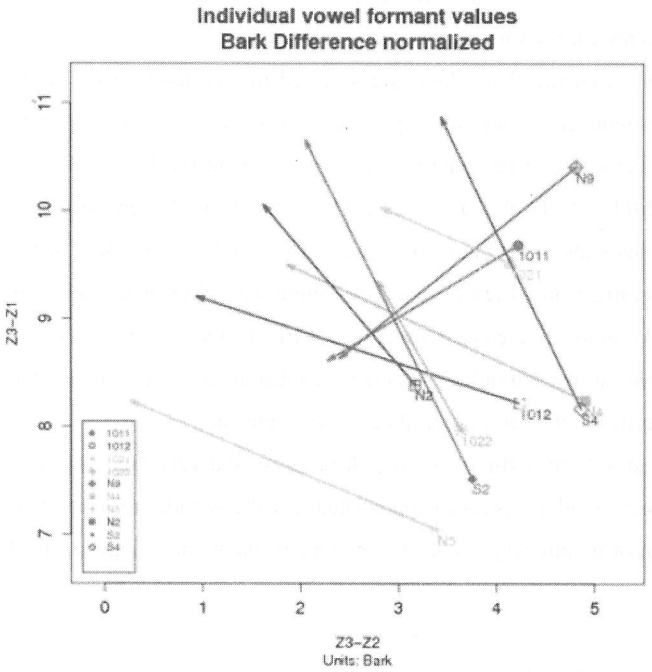

Figure 1 Measurements of the PRICE vowel for 11 males

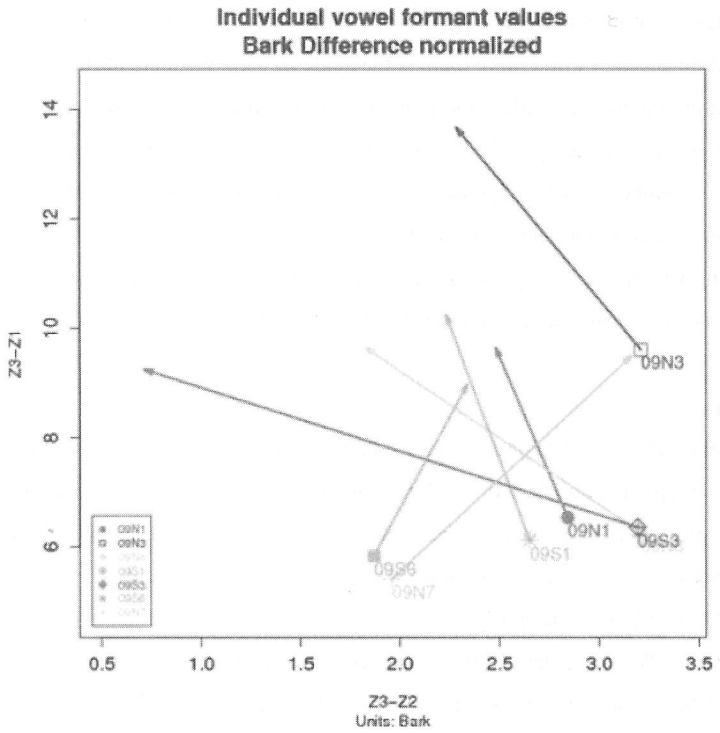

Figure 2 Measurements of the PRICE vowel for 7 females

Possibilities for further analysis include the height of the onset of the diphthong, and the slope and direction of the diphthong movement. Possible questions that arise here is does such phonetic variation index a specific identity, as Stuart-Smith (2009) and Oxley (2009 cited in Di Paolo, Yaeger-Dror & Wassink 2011: 101) among many others have shown in other contexts. Preliminary insights into identity-related discussions from September 2012 interviews noted social categories of "scanger/ city" accent, "normal straight Dublin" accent, "posh" accent (like the way talk on the news), and "D4 heads". A possible angle is that the older centralising variant of

PRICE indexes a traditional Dublin persona, which could be connected to normal straight Dublin accent. Furthermore there is the angle of core members of the sports club, may align themselves with a traditional Dublin persona, and disassociate with those speakers who speak "posh". This is a question which needs to be resolved: How do core members position themselves in terms of language identities? Do they position themselves as not being "D4 heads"/or how they talk on the news, by using a centralising variant? What lays ahead, along with continuing data collection, is to slowly and steadily tease out the issues outlined in this section.

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