

# **“Theers gud stuff amung uz Darbysher foaks”: Dialect enregisterment in 19th-century Derbyshire**

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## ABSTRACT

The textual material included in the *Salamanca Corpus* bears witness to dialectal awareness in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Derbyshire, with an important number of literary texts that reflect the local people’s habits of speech. Despite the fact that this variety ought to be of particular interest since it was used in an area which marks the transition between the North of England and the West Midlands, and the East and West Midlands, literary representations of the Derbyshire dialect remain largely unexplored (García-Bermejo Giner 1991, 1993 is the most remarkable exception). According to research in the field, the analysis of this type of representation is crucial to investigate the processes of enregisterment of dialect varieties, as Johnstone et al. (2006) and Johnstone (2009, 2013) have shown. They examine the enregisterment of Pittsburghese by looking at non-standard discourse in a range of modern sources. Less attention, however, has been paid to the study of this process in historical contexts, the works by Beal (2009, 2017, 2019), Ruano-García (2012, 2020, forthcoming), Clark (2013), Cooper (2013, 2016, 2020), and Beal – Cooper (2015) being among the exceptions. This study takes a preliminary approach to the enregisterment of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Derbyshire dialect by examining a selection of instances of dialect writing, most of which are included in the *Salamanca Corpus*. I aim at identifying the main linguistic forms associated with this variety in terms of spelling, morphology and lexis, as well as determining the extent to which 19<sup>th</sup>-century instances of dialect writing contribute to the enregisterment and dissemination of such linguistic forms and the values they index.

Keywords: Derbyshire dialect, enregisterment, nineteenth century, dialect literature, literary dialect.

## **1. Introduction: Indexicality, enregisterment, or the making of a dialect**

Over the past decade, *enregisterment* – the “processes through which a linguistic repertoire becomes differentiable within a language as a socially

recognized register of forms" (Agha 2003: 231) – has become an increasingly important approach to the study of the mechanisms underlying the development and legitimation of the different linguistic varieties within the English language. As research has shown (Johnstone 2009, 2013; Beal 2009, 2019, among others), linguistic varieties are very often imbued with socio-cultural meaning that make them different from others and shape speakers' perceptions and attitudes towards different habits of speech. They endow varieties with legitimacy since speakers acknowledge and internalise the link between language and certain ideological connotations that make them perceive linguistic repertoires as stable. This, in turn, leads to their maintenance "across time and region via metapragmatic practices that reiterate [their value] and its link to social status and correctness" (Johnstone et al. 2006: 80).

Michael Silverstein (1976) describes various levels in the process of value assignment whereby certain socio-cultural notions are indexed or associated with linguistic varieties; he refers to three stages that he calls orders of indexicality. Johnstone (2009: 164) and Beal – Cooper (2015: 35), amongst others, have explained Silverstein's taxonomy, in which the first order of indexicality refers to the earliest step of the process, that in which a speech community is unaware of the correlation that an outsider would perceive between the set of linguistic forms they use and a certain social category. At the second order, there is awareness of this link thanks to factors such as language contact, and speakers start to rationalise, modify and accommodate their habits of speech taking into account criteria such as correctness, style, etc. When reaching the third order of indexicality, notions such as locality and social class are indexed to linguistic varieties, creating linguistic and socio-cultural stereotypes about specific speech communities. It is when this level of awareness has been reached that *enregisterment* may arise.

As highlighted by Johnstone (2009: 160), once a variety shows third order indexicality, its enregisterment is determined by discursive practices – or, as she puts it, "talk about talk" – in the form of oral or textual artefacts such as literature, dictionaries and other types of discourse that represent and exemplify it. The dissemination of these artefacts, Agha explains (2003: 243), is key in the process of enregisterment since it helps to spread, share and typify the linkages between language and social features, this way, in his own words, "making possible the large-scale replication of register stereotypes across social populations".

As shown by studies dealing with dialect enregisterment in historical contexts, the role of dialect writing is crucial in this process since literature

bears witness to the way language was used and perceived in the past. This is clearly acknowledged by Ruano-García, who highlights the role of dialect writing as a "clear conduit by which the correlation between language and sociocultural values, as well as the ideas derived from it, are foregrounded, circulated and consumed" (2012: 377). Similarly, Beal – Cooper stress that "a key element in observing processes of enregisterment is the production of dialect literature, literary dialect, and dialect 'commentary'", since "through these media we are afforded a glimpse into the social value of language features in historical periods" (2015: 52). In this sense, although literary representations of dialect do not provide detailed transcripts of the language, they provide valuable insight into how writers, as well as society, viewed and understood the dialect represented. They are rich sources of information about how regional varieties were perceived and the attitudes speakers had towards them.

In spite of this, and although literary representations of dialect have often been explored in order to improve our knowledge about certain historical traits (see, for instance, García-Bermejo Giner 1991, 1993 and 1994), relatively little attention has been paid to the role of dialect writing in the process of enregisterment; exceptions are Beal (2009, 2017, 2019), Ruano-García (2012, 2020, forthcoming), Clark (2013), Cooper (2013, 2016, 2020) and Beal – Cooper (2015). Accordingly, this paper aims to examine literary representations of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Derbyshire dialect from the point of view of enregisterment so as to gain insight into this variety's most salient features and the socio-cultural perceptions underlying its representation. My purpose is twofold. First, to identify which were the main linguistic and sociolinguistic characteristics of the dialect as represented in literature. Second, I seek to determine how the Derbyshire dialect was enregistered in the period analysed, whilst trying to ascertain the role of dialect writing in the process.

## **2. Literary representations of dialect in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: Dialect literature and literary dialect**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period of remarkable linguistic awareness due to the many social changes of the period. Beal – Cooper (2015: 42-43) explain that, during the first half of the century, industrialization pushed people to move to urban sectors, which made moving around the country more important than ever. Railway companies were quick enough to notice this new demand and take action. Railway systems were improved and expanded,

providing the English population with a quicker and more convenient way of travelling. As a result, the 1800s saw an unparalleled population flow circulating the country, thereby bringing the different varieties of English into contact.

Geographical mobility and language contact have been identified as key factors when it comes to enregisterment. They trigger the appearance of second-order indexical links by disrupting the otherwise closed social and linguistic networks and lead “people to link dialect and social identity more explicitly” (Johnstone et al. 2006: 94). Together with the advances in education that took place in 19<sup>th</sup>-century England, these factors led to the acknowledgement of linguistic difference and gave way to a growing dialect awareness among the population. Speakers became conscious of the linguistic diversity and the distinctiveness of their local varieties and started to be concerned about the loss of their particular linguistic identities due to the social and geographical upheaval that threatened to standardise the English language. Derbyshire author Joseph Barlow Robinson (c. 1820-1883) bears witness to this state of unease in the preface to his *Owd Sammy Twitcher’s Visit tu ‘t Gret Exibishun e Darby* (1870b), in which he justifies the necessity of preserving local varieties by means of the written word (1):

- (1) (...) the time is fast approaching when, by the spread of education, railways, and other means, all peculiarities will be lost, and merge into one general and universal manner of speech throughout the kingdom. A work of this character will then serve to give future generations some idea of those who lived before them, and prevent their many peculiarities from being totally lost (1-2).

Mirroring these concerns, the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the production and publication of a great number of dialect works, mainly in the form of dialect literature (DL) and literary dialect (LD). As is well known, DL comprises those “works composed wholly (sometimes partly) in a non-standard dialect, and aimed essentially, though not exclusively, at a non-standard-dialect-speaking readership”, whilst LD refers to “the representation of non-standard speech in literature that is otherwise written in standard English (...) and aimed at a general readership” (Shorrocks 1996: 386).

There are some key differences between these types of representation in terms of authorship, purpose and audience that are quite relevant and worth summarizing for the purpose of this paper. Concerning authorship and purpose, DL, on the one hand, is mostly produced by dialect natives,

which, to a certain extent, validates its linguistic realism and accuracy. As shown in (1) above, DL writers aim at reflecting manners of speech, instances of regional writing acting, thus, as relics that attempt to preserve and maintain a range of oral features. LD, on the other hand, is normally written by outsiders of the variety; authors with some knowledge of the dialect that typically use it in the dialogues of their works with characterization purposes in order to portray and identify dialect speakers so that they can be recognised by users and non-users of the variety alike. Hence, the traits employed must be salient enough so as to be understood and associated with a specific type of character embodying a particular set of extralinguistic features.

Instances of both LD and DL can be found in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Derbyshire. Although little can be traced about its earlier literary tradition, the county was, of course, no exception to the outburst of dialect writing in the 1800s. The first literary record of the Derbyshire dialect was made available by Thomas Tapping (1817-1886) in *The Rhymed Chronicle of Edward Manlove* (1851). The book adds a preface and a glossary of Derbyshire mining terms to a poem written by Edward Manlove (1615-1671). Although Tapping’s edition was published in 1851, Manlove’s poem dates back to 1653, being the earliest available literary representation of the dialect. During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Richard Furness’s (1791-1857) poem *Medicus Magus or the Astrologer. A Poem with a Glossary* (1836) was published, followed by *The Cat and the Vicar* in 1858. Both texts include instances of the Derbyshire dialect, some of which are recorded in the glossary appended to the first poem. Six years later, *Derbyshire Men* (1864) would be published in the journal *The Reliquary*; it is a short poem written by Walter Kirkland (1828-1899) that illustrates both the Derbyshire dialect and character.

However, it is in 19<sup>th</sup>-century prose that a higher awareness of the Derbyshire dialect as a distinct variety can be observed. Mary Howitt’s (1799-1888) *My Uncle, the Clockmaker* (1844) seems to be the earliest novel including dialogues written in the dialect. The second half of the century presents the largest availability of dialect writing in the county. Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu (1814-1873) set one of his most famous novels, *Uncle Silas* (1864), in Derbyshire, and thus some of its dialogues include passages representing the county’s speech. By the same token, *The Reliquary* published in its 1870-1871 edition *A Village Sketch, at Ashford-in-the-water, in Illustration of the Derbyshire Dialect*, a short story by Thomas Brushfield (1828-1910), whose main aim was to give evidence of the dialect spoken in the county. Similarly, Derbyshire author Frances Parthenope Verney (1819-1890) would also use

dialect in her novels *Stone Edge* (1868) and *The Greypool and other Stories* (1891); Mrs. Humphrey Ward (1851-1920), in turn, would represent it in her three-volume *David Grieve* (1892). Robert Murray Gilchrist (1867-1917) was a very prolific author with an interest in Derbyshire and the Peak District. He wrote a number of novels set here during the late 1800s and at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some of them contain representations of the dialect. We may refer to *A Peakland Faggot. Tales of Milton Folk* (1897), *The Courtesy Dame* (1900), *Natives of Milton* (1902), and *Good-bye to Market* (1908).

DL material is scarce in Derbyshire. Indeed, only one author provides us with this type of representation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Between the years 1870 and 1881, Joseph Barlow Robinson (c. 1820-1883) wrote a series of five stories whose protagonist and narrator, Sammy Twitcher, takes us to different events and exhibitions in the county. Three of these texts – *Owd Sammy Twitcher's Visit tu't Gret Exibushun e Darby* (1870b), *Owd Sammy Twitcher's Second Visit tu't Gret Exibishun e Darby, wi' Jim* (1870) and *Owd Sammy Twitcher's Visit tu't Watter Cure Establishment at Matlock Bonk* (1871) – include glossaries explaining some of the dialect words used, the lists added to the second and third stories being revisions of the original compilation.

By exemplifying and circulating the dialect, these literary works contributed to its circulation not only within 19<sup>th</sup>-century Derbyshire but also beyond its borders. This way, literary representations of the variety brought it into contact with non-natives of the dialect, contributing to its legitimation and shaping linguistic and socio-cultural ideas about the county, its language and its speakers.

### **3. The enregisterment of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Derbyshire dialect: A preliminary approach**

#### **3.1 Primary data**

In line with other studies that have explored the historical enregisterment of northern English (e.g. Beal 2017, 2019; Ruano-García 2012, 2020, forthcoming), this paper makes a quantitative and qualitative analysis of literary representations of the Derbyshire dialect published during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In order to undertake this study, I have considered four literary renditions of the Derbyshire dialect, three of which are included in *The Salamanca Corpus*, taking into account the following criteria:

- Publication in the period 1850-1900.
- Genre: Texts written in prose fiction.
- Type of representation: DL and LD.

Table 1. Corpus material

Text type	N texts	N words
DL	2	16,299
LD	2	98,688
Total	4	114,987

As Table 1 shows, my primary data for this paper consist of four texts which amount to 114,987 words.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.2 Quantitative analysis

#### 3.2.1 Spelling

A careful survey of the DL data makes it clear that the representation of the Derbyshire dialect was based upon a particular set of features that includes a consistently occurring set of spellings signalling dialect sounds. Table 2 summarises the repertoire of the most frequent spellings found in the corpus which I have classified according to their RP pronunciation and standard spelling.

As shown in Table 2, the spelling <u> for RP /ʌ/ is the second most frequent trait in the sample, suggesting an [ʊ] realization of the sound in words like *sum* or *tutch*. This suggests the lack of centralization and loss of lip rounding of ME /u/ in 1640 in the Derbyshire dialect, pointing to the lack of FOOT-STRUT split that, as is well known, is one of the main features that distinguishes northern from southern dialects (see Upton – Widdowson 2006: Map 7). Indeed, Ihalainen (1994: 213) notes that this is a typical characteristic of the linguistic north, which, as Clark explains, “includes the Midlands, incorporating the Birmingham-Wolverhampton conurbation, i.e., the West Midlands” (2008: 139). Furthermore, we can find instances of another feature which has traditionally been associated with the West Midlands in terms of phonology: the rounding before nasals (see Upton – Widdowson 2006: Map 2). The repeated rounding of /a/ into /ɔ/ in the texts analysed suggests an [ɔ] pronunciation which is uncommon in other varieties outside the West

<sup>1</sup> A *Peakland Faggot*. *Tales of Milton Folk* (Murray Gilchrist 1897): 32,147 words; *Owd Sammy Twitcher’s Crismas Bowk for the Year 1870* (Robinson 1870a): 8,535 words; *Owd Sammy Twitcher’s Visit tu ‘t Gret Exibishun e Darby* (Robinson 1870b): 7,764 words; *Stone Edge* (Verney 1868): 66,541 words. See the *Salamanca Corpus of English Dialect Texts* (2011–) for more information about these texts.

Midlands (Wakelin 1977: 96). Ihalainen highlights that this is “an exclusively west midland feature towards the end of the nineteenth century, when it disappeared from south-western English” (1994: 217). Its use in Derbyshire is documented by Pegge (1896), who records forms like *conno* ‘cannot’, *ony* ‘any’ and *mon* ‘man’ in the county (viii).

Table 2. Top spelling traits (DL) (> 150 tokens): raw data

Traits	Standard spellings	Types	Tokens	Some examples
<aa> for RP /aʊ/	<ou>, <ow>	51	324	<i>aat</i> ‘out’, <i>taan</i> ‘town’
<u> for RP /ʌ/	<oCe>, <o>, <ou>, <oe>	37	268	<i>sum</i> ‘some’, <i>tutch</i> ‘touch’
<oi> for RP /aɪ/	<iCe>, <i>	58	236	<i>woife</i> ‘wife’, <i>moind</i> ‘mind’
<ow> for /u:/	<oo>, <wo>, <o>, <ou>	15	214	<i>rowf</i> ‘roof’, <i>dow</i> ‘do’
<ee> for RP /eə/	<e + r + e>	12	206	<i>whээр</i> ‘where’, <i>theer</i> ‘there’
<o + n> for RP /æ + n/	<a + n>	18	172	<i>mon</i> ‘man’, <i>con</i> ‘can’
<ow> for RP /əʊ/	<o + l>	14	167	<i>owd</i> ‘old’, <i>howd</i> ‘hold’

There is one feature that is particularly frequent in the corpus, as Table 2 shows: the use of <aa> to represent words otherwise pronounced RP /aʊ/ (e.g. *aat*, *taan*), which points to the [a:] realization of the sound in this county. The *English Dialect Grammar* (henceforth *EDG* [Wright 1905]) records “ā” among the different pronunciations of this sound in Derbyshire (Wright 1905: 146), and so does Ellis (1889: 425, 427), who testifies to its use in several parts of the county in words such as *daats*. This feature notably outnumbers the other forms found in the sample, with the exception of <oi> for words pronounced /aɪ/ (e.g. *woife*, *moind*). As Upton and Widdowson show (2006: Map 10), [ɔɪ] is the most common pronunciation of RP /aɪ/ in the dialect, and it is also recorded in both the *EDG* (Wright 1905: 128) and Ellis (1889: 425).

This is in line with the data found in the LD sample.

Table 3 shows that <aa> for <ou>/<ow> nearly doubles the next feature as the most frequent form in the LD data, and that it is three times more common in terms of types. Likewise, the evidence reflects both the lack of FOOT-STRUT split and the rounding before nasals as two of the top non-standard traits in this type of dialect representation, which is in line



with the data found in the DL texts. This goes some way to suggesting that, together with the other features (e.g. <ow> for RP /əʊ/ or <ee> for RP /eə/), spelling <aa> for RP /aʊ/, the lack of FOOT/STRUT split and the rounding before nasals were commonly understood as characteristic of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Derbyshire dialect not only by a dialect-speaking readership, but also by a wider audience.

Table 3. Top spelling traits (LD) (> 90 tokens): raw data

Traits	Standard spellings	Types	Tokens	Some examples
<aa> for RP /aʊ/	<ou>, <ow>	32	259	<i>maase</i> 'mouse', <i>haa</i> 'how'
<u> for RP /ʌ/	<oCe>	8	149	<i>summat</i> 'something', <i>un</i> 'one'
<oo> for RP /ʌ/	<oCe>	6	128	<i>loove</i> 'love', <i>coom</i> 'come'
<o + n> for RP /æ + n/	<a + n>	11	112	<i>hond</i> 'hand', <i>lond</i> 'land'
<ow> for RP /əʊ/	<o + l>	11	107	<i>towd</i> 'told', <i>gowd</i> 'gold'
<ee> for RP /eə/	<e + r + e>	6	99	<i>theer</i> 'there', <i>where</i> 'where'

Table 4 summarises the most recurrent phonological traits in the texts analysed.

Table 4. Top spelling traits (DL/LD) (> 250 tokens): raw data and NF / 1,000

Traits	DL		LD		Total	
	Tokens	NF	Tokens	NF	Tokens	NF
<aa> for RP /aʊ/ ( <i>raand</i> 'round', <i>braan</i> 'brown')	324	19.87	259	2.62	583	5.07
<u> for RP /ʌ/ ( <i>cuntry</i> 'country', <i>luv</i> 'love')	268	16.44	149	1.50	417	3.62
<ee> for RP /eə/ ( <i>weer</i> 'where', <i>theer</i> 'there')	206	12.63	99	1.00	305	2.65
<o + n> for RP /æ + n/ ( <i>grond</i> 'grand', <i>stond</i> 'stand')	172	10.55	112	1.13	284	2.46
<ow> for RP /əʊ/ ( <i>cowd</i> 'cold', <i>sowd</i> 'sold')	167	10.24	107	1.08	274	2.38

When it comes to the comparison of both types of representation, <aa> spelling of words containing the diphthong /aʊ/ is clearly identified as the most salient feature of the dialect, followed by unsplit [ʊ]. Slight differences

can be observed with regard to spelling <ee> in words like *theer* or *weer*, which suggests an [i:] pronunciation of terms otherwise pronounced with the centring diphthong /eə/. This is recorded in the *EDG*, which gives “*ɪ*” as one of the possible realizations of the sound in Derbyshire (Wright 1905: 108). Despite the fact that this is the third most common trait in the whole dataset, DL texts use it more frequently than LD material, which employs the rounding before nasals and <ow> for RP /əʊ/ slightly more regularly.

### 3.2.2 Morphology and lexis

Dialectal morphology and lexis also receive attention in the works analysed. As regards morphological traits, the analysis of the data has revealed a repertoire of features which are consistently used in both the DL and LD material; they are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5. Top morphological traits (DL/LD) (> 500 tokens): raw data and NF / 1,000

Traits and examples	DL		LD		Total	
	Tokens	NF	Tokens	NF	Tokens	NF
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pron. <i>ye/yo</i> : “Wunna <i>ye</i> come an tak’ the wapses’ nest?”	34	2.08	774	7.84	808	7.02
past tense BE: “Hee <i>wor</i> a gud lowkin owd feller”	344	21.10	432	4.37	776	6.74
- <i>na</i> negation: <i>isna</i> ‘is not’, <i>shouldna</i> ‘should not’	99	6.07	467	4.73	566	4.92

As shown in Table 5, the use of *ye* and *yo* for the 2<sup>nd</sup> person subject pronoun is the most recurrent feature in the sample. Interestingly, its frequency in the LD material notably outnumbers that of the DL data, which suggests that this trait was particularly salient and widely recognised as part of the Derbyshire dialect by non-natives of the variety. This is in line with contemporary non-literary accounts of the dialect. The *English Dialect Dictionary* (henceforth *EDD* [Wright 1896-1905]) acknowledges the use of these two pronouns in the county, whilst both Halliwell (1881: xiv) and Pegge (1896: 85) record *yo* as a characteristic form of Derbyshire speech. The following example may illustrate the use of these forms in the corpus texts (2):

- (2) "I thowt as *ye'*d summat *ye* wanted sore to speak on to Nathan," burst out Bessie suddenly, remembering Roland's urgent messages, and wishing kindly to forward the business.

"'Twas my father wanting to know whether *yo* kep' them two sheep as is in the croft to joist," said Roland (Verney 1868: 35. My emphasis).

Non-standard past tense BE forms seem to be strongly associated with the dialect too, especially in DL, where the alternation between *was* and *were* is overwhelmingly more frequent than the rest of the features, both in the DL and the compared data. This morphological trait, thus, seems to be perceived as markedly Derbyshire not only by outsiders, but, most remarkably, by natives of the variety. However, there are differences in the way this feature is reflected in both text types: whilst only *-r* forms are found in the DL sample (e.g. "I thowt it *wor* a gud chance"; "t' yung men an wimmin *wor* theer" [Robinson (1870b: 6), (1870b: 4), my emphasis]), the LD data point to a more variable system in which *was* and *were* are used in singular and plural contexts alike: "et *was* her doin"; "et *were* a strange thing"; "them beech trees *wes* hard to do"; "mother and feyther *were* laid theer" (Murray Gilchrist [1897: 30], [1897: 6], [1897: 22], my emphasis). Nevertheless, there seems to be a tendency towards *-r* forms in the LD data, which, overall, reveals a "strong preference for generalized singular *were* forms" in Derbyshire (Pietsch 2005: 150). Finally, instances of *-na* negation, a characteristic north-west Midland feature (Ihalainen 1994: 218; Britain 2007: 84), are also considerably frequent in the corpus, which goes in line with contemporary and modern non-literary evidence of the dialect. We find examples such as: "ah *hadna* mitch wok e hond" (Robinson [1870a: 9], my emphasis). Halliwell (1881: xiv) recorded the use of *-na* forms such as *conner* 'cannot', *shanner* 'shall not' and *wooner* 'will not' in Derbyshire, as did Pegge (1896: 46), who referred to *munna* 'must not' in his list of Derbicisms. Some years later, the *Survey of English Dialects* (SED) would likewise testify to the use of *-na* negation in the county (Ihalainen 1994: 218).

Concerning lexis, Table 6 shows the most recurrent traits documented in the corpus. Terms like *mun*, *nowt*, *sin* and *summat* are consistently employed in all the works analysed, suggesting that they were generally accepted as part of the dialect both in and out of the community in which they were used. However, the use of the feminine subject pronoun *hoo* stands out as the most salient lexical trait in the texts considered, especially as regards the DL material, in which its frequency is four times higher than in the LD data. As is well known, this feature is one of the most widely recognised West Midland

traits (see, for example, Ihalainen 1994: 218-219; Upton – Widdowson 2006: Map 34). The *EDG* (Wright 1905: 273) testifies to the use of *hoo* in Derbyshire, while Pegge (1896) recorded several examples of this pronoun, as in “*hoo’l ne’er o’er’t*, she will never get over it” (xii). It is worth noting that all these words are documented in non-literary accounts of the dialect. *Mun*, *nowt/nought* and *summat/summut* are recorded in both the glossary appended to *Owd Sammy Twitcher’s Visit tu’t Gret Exibushun e Darby* (Robinson 1870b) and in Pegge’s work, which also glossed *sin*. Furthermore, all the terms are recorded and quoted from Derbyshire in the *EDD* (Wright 1896-1905), which, remarkably, cites from two of the works analysed to illustrate the use of *nowt* and *sin*: *Owd Sammy Twitcher’s Visit tu’t Gret Exibushun e Darby* (Robinson 1870b) and *A Peakland Faggot. Tales of Milton Folk* (Murray Gilchrist 1897), respectively.

Table 6. Top lexical traits (DL/LD) (> 50 tokens): raw data and NF / 1,000

Traits and examples	DL		LD		Total	
	Tokens	NF	Tokens	NF	Tokens	NF
<i>hoo/how</i> ‘she’: “but <i>hoo</i> were Johanna’s dowter”	92	5.64	161	1.63	253	2.20
<i>mun</i> ‘must’: “Handyfist <i>mun</i> be a cliver feller”	11	0.67	140	1.41	151	1.31
<i>nowt</i> ‘nothing’: “ye heerd <i>nowt</i> but good on him”	14	0.85	49	0.49	63	0.54
<i>sin</i> ‘since’: “Et ‘s thretty year <i>sin</i> ’ he died”	12	0.73	45	0.45	57	0.49
<i>summat/summut/su’mmut</i> ‘something’: “I’ll tell yo’ <i>summat</i> ”	19	1.16	34	0.34	53	0.46

All things considered, the evidence suggests that the literary representation of the Derbyshire dialect drew on a specific set of phonological, morphological and lexical features. These include spelling patterns such as <aa>, <u>, <ee>, <o + n> and <ow> for RP /aʊ/, /ʌ/, /eə/, /æ + n/ and /əʊ/, respectively, and a repertoire of morphological and lexical features which comprises the use of 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun *ye/yo*, non-standard past tense BE forms, *-na* negation, the feminine pronoun *hoo*, and terms like *mun*, *nowt*, *sin* and *summat*. Interestingly, these traits are the most salient features in both text types, which seems to confirm that they were identified as characteristic of the dialect during the period analysed both by insiders and outsiders of the variety.

### 3.3 Qualitative analysis

As has been shown, the analysis of both DL and LD representing the dialect spoken in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Derbyshire can give us some insight into its most salient linguistic features. Needless to say, the use of dialect in writing is often associated with a certain type of character, allowing readers to see how and to what purpose the language is used. All the texts selected for this study link the Derbyshire dialect to a very specific type of persona: farmers, peasants and country folk. In fact, at the beginning of *Owd Sammy Twitcher's Visit tu 't Gret Exibishun e Darby*, Joseph Barlow Robinson informs readers that he aims to provide (3):

- (3) (...) a fair representation of the thoughts and manner of speech of one of the many old farmers yet to be met with: jolly old chaps, with more genuine fun in them than half-a-dozen of the young ones growing up round them (1870b: 1).

This way, he establishes a link between the dialect he is about to depict and this specific identity. Similarly, instances of LD also use the dialect for characterization purposes. In them, country folk are the Derbyshire speakers, in contrast with the people coming from the city, who are presumed to be of a higher social class; example (4) may exemplify this:

- (4) On the night of William Townend's homecoming, before he discovered himself to his fellow natives, he sat in the bar-parlour of the Golden Bull, posing like the mysterious stranger of fiction, who eventually shines as the wealthy son or brother of the ruined lord of the manor. He was a tall, black-bearded man, with sparkling eyes and bottle-shaped nose. *His well-cut clothes concealed in some measure the Peakland slouch, and his hands and waistcoat were embellished with costly jewellery.*

[...]

“Ay, I ‘ve been here before. Time changes a man. I remember you ploughing against Tom Winterton at the Noe Valley Fair.” (Murray Gilchrist [1897: 180-181], my emphasis).

William Townend was born in Derbyshire but moved to Canada after being rejected by Emma Bamber, to whom he intended to get married. Many years later, he returns to the county after becoming a wealthy city

man that has stopped using dialect, which testifies to the strong dialect awareness in 19<sup>th</sup>-century England. Just like William Townend, characters in the texts accommodate to the different social and linguistic settings by means of language, which points to a shift from the first to the second order of indexicality in that they are able to evaluate their speech in terms of correctness and appropriateness, modifying it accordingly. This can also be observed in (5) when German Ashford, a farmer characterised by his profuse use of dialect, avoids it when he meets the Squire, a high-class gentleman who speaks standard English:

- (5) The old man himself, with one of the last queues left in England on one end of him, and short and blue stockings on the other, was sitting before a mass of papers at the table. After all, however, he was the squire, and German felt a certain “awe “ as he entered.

[...]

“It were my sister’s money,” said German in a low voice; “she’d gived him every penny she had” (Verney 1868: 238-39).

Interestingly, accommodation goes in both directions since characters who tend to use the standard consciously decide to speak the dialect depending on their interlocutor. Example (6) shows how William Townend, the standard speaker in (4) above, deliberately chooses to use regional traits to his advantage when he meets Emma Bamber, his former fiancée, again:

- (6) Old Maid Bamber came in at ten o’clock. (...) When she saw the boots she gave a wild and painful cry.

“Theer ‘s bin a ghoast here ! They ‘re Bill’s, my lad Bill’s. Nob’dy i’ th’ lond had feet that shiiape an’ size!”

He stole behind her and caught her in his arms.

“Emma, wench,” he said, *his speech losing the refinement which a broader life had given*. “I ‘ve coom to ask yo’ again. I ‘ve never sin ony as I could care for but yo’!” (Murray Gilchrist [1897: 184-185], my emphasis).

Dialect speakers are not only characterised by means of language, but they are also linked to certain non-linguistic attributes and stereotypes. As shown

in (6), the Derbyshire dialect is regarded as a vulgar variety that is worth avoiding. Hence, native speakers are seen as unrefined, humble, uneducated people. This is clearly shown in *Stone Edge* (Verney 1868), where the absence of academic training is persistently associated with dialect users. After highlighting that “writing was a rare accomplishment” in the county (117), the narrator goes on to present how characters acknowledge their lack of formal education. Farmer German Ashford, for instance, laments in (7) the fact that he is not “booklearned” (122), a rare complaint in the county since, as the narrator emphasises, intellectual aspirations were usually present in higher social classes only:

- (7) I bean’t a learnin’ nothin’; it’s just muddlin’ and milkin’ and wabblin’ i’ th’ mud arter plough tail. I’m like the little donkeys in the lane, I canna addle [earn] nought.” *The burgher blood from his mother was stirring curiously in the lad.* “Roland would ha’ learnt me to write and cipher, but feyther wouldn’t let me nigh him. Well, good by, uncle, I must go; the minits runs as fast as rats down here (Verney [1868: 134], my emphasis).

Derbyshire dialect speakers are, thus, associated with humility and lack of formal education, yet they are also regarded as rude, boorish people, as described in (8):

- (8) She lived in a little house beyond the Nether End of Milton, a quaint, pretty place, covered with ivy and Virginia creeper. It was her own property, and the desire of her heart was to keep up the reputation for good management which her mother, who was a “foreigner” from the Yorkshire Wolds, had acquired amongst *the rough-and-ready Peaklanders*. (Murray Gilchrist [1897: 179], my emphasis).

However, although the data in the LD sample trace an ideological link between the Derbyshire dialect and fairly negative social connotations, the DL representations point in a different direction. In the texts analysed, the dialect, far from being avoided, is encouraged both in speech and writing. In *Owd Sammy Twitcher’s Visit tu ‘t Gret Exibishun e Darby* (Robinson 1870b), for example, the characters visit an exhibition in which the names of the rooms, the sculptures, the catalogues, etc. are all written in dialect. Indeed, we learn that “t’pictor az fust towk [their] attenshun wor, “*Leyin daan t’Law*”, and then “annuther caw’d “*Hasses in a Shed*” (4), the dialectal equivalent to

“Horses in a Shed”. It seems that the writer is trying to advocate and dignify the use of the dialect, somehow reacting against and challenging the ideas and perceptions about the variety circulated in the LD texts analysed. In fact, he pleads for the county, encouraging the “Darbysher foaks” to feel proud of it:

- (9) Theers now uth'er kaanty con lick uz e meyin most things, an wee can mey ommast ivvery thing wee wanten. Theers gud stuff amung uz Darbysher foaks yet, an aar owd kaanty taan isna ta be sneezed at be a long chawk (Robinson 1870b: 20).

This ideological difference between both text types may be explained on account of the fact that, as noted by Beal (2004) and Wales (2006), due to the many social changes that took place in the period, attitudes towards dialect shifted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and its users started to feel proud of their localness and distinctiveness as regards their speech. As such, in the 1800s “dialect is by no means an object of shame, but cherished as an emblem of local identity” (Wales 2006: 129).

#### 4. Concluding remarks

In this study, I have taken a preliminary linguistic and sociolinguistic approach to 19<sup>th</sup>-century Derbyshire dialect by means of the framework of enregisterment. As I have attempted to show, the analysis of literary renditions of this variety reveals that they are useful sources of information not only about the main linguistic forms and features that distinguished the dialect, but also about the sociocultural ideas linked with it.

The data analysed reveal that there is a common set of spellings suggesting dialectal pronunciation that are consistently associated with the dialect in both text types considered. The consistent use of forms including spellings such as <aa>, <u> or <o + n> for RP /aʊ/, /ʌ/ and /æ + n/, respectively, suggests that these traits were salient enough and had been sufficiently circulated so that a non-native audience could recognise such forms as characteristic of this dialect. The analysis has also shed light on the morphological and lexical features most commonly understood as Derbyshire, which include 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun *ye/yo*, non-standard past tense BE forms, *-na* negation, and the use of terms like the feminine pronoun *hoo*, *mun* ‘must’, *nowt* ‘nothing’, *sin* ‘since’ and *summat* ‘something’. The fact



that all these features appear in instances of DL and LD alike testifies to the validity of both types of representation as linguistic portraits of the dialect since the features reflected in the LD texts, written for non-native users of the dialect, coincide with those employed in the DL material, which was produced by and for Derbyshire speakers. Although slight differences can be observed between the two types of dialect representation analysed, it seems evident that, by means of their use in writing, these linguistic traits were linked to a very specific type of speaker embodying certain non-linguistic attributes. As such, the Derbyshire people, characterised by their roughness, modesty and lack of literacy, were related to a recognizable linguistic repertoire which, in turn, became imbued with these socio-cultural connotations and came to index specific ideological features.

The production and circulation of DL and LD representing the Derbyshire dialect is in itself evidence of enregisterment since it points to the existence of third-order indexical links which indicate that the dialect was already regarded as a distinct variety within and outside the region where it was spoken. The circulation of the linguistic and cultural ideas described above through DL and, most of all, LD, allowed their propagation throughout the country, bringing the dialect in contact with larger audiences and helping to share the linkages between the variety and the values and identities associated with it. This way, collective linguistic and sociolinguistic ideas about the variety were created and incorporated to the public imagination, contributing, thus, to the enregisterment of the Derbyshire dialect.

However, extensive research still needs to be done in order to reach more comprehensive and representative results that may shed more light on the literary representation of this dialect. This would give further insight not only into the characteristics of the Derbyshire dialect, but also into the processes underlying its legitimation and enregisterment.

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