

Headline findings

- Finding 1: Enregisterment of features as 'dialectal' is important for noticeability in real time
- Finding 2: Degree of non-standardness is unimportant for the noticeability of enregistered features
- Finding 3: Mismatch between data elicited in different ways reveals ideological standpoints relating to 'home' accent features

Stoke-on-Trent

Sporadic prior linguistic attention (Poole 1880; Nicholls 1934; Leach 2012; 2018). Vowels of city and surrounding region described by Trudgill (1990) and Weiling, Shackleton and Nerbonne (2013: 35)



Figure 1: Stoke-on-Trent location

Trudgill (1990: 42)	Lexical set	Transcriptions
bait is pronounced like beat	FACE	[eɪ] → [i:]
beat is pronounced like bait	FLEECE	[i:] → [eɪ]
bought is pronounced like boat	FORCE	[ɔ:] → [ɔʊ]
boat is pronounced like boot	GOAT	[ɔʊ] → [u:]
boot is pronounced like bout	GOOSE	[u:] → [aʊ]
bout is pronounced like bite	MOUTH	[aʊ] → [aɪ]
bite is pronounced like 'baht'	PRICE	[aɪ] → [a:]

Table 1: Trudgill's (1990:42) description of the vowel system. Shaded cells show features also identified by Weiling, Shackleton and Nerbonne (2013: 35)

Method 1 – Questionnaire

Online attitudes and feature-recognition survey undertaken in 2013. Targeted at people who lived in Stoke-on-Trent. One specific question (*Are there specific pronunciations and words that you would associate with the local accent? List any of these below*) forms the basis of our questionnaire dataset. 157 respondents completed the questionnaire.

Method 2 – Real-time feature identification task (see also Montgomery & Moore 2018)

113 listeners used an online click button interface to react to a Stoke-on-Trent speaker according to the following instructions: *...listen to the voice sample and listen out for anything in the way this person sounds which makes you wonder where he is from (or confirms where you already think he is from) ... When you hear something that sounds distinctive, please click the button below the sound wave straightaway.*

Listeners then reviewed all of their clicks and provided reasons for them.

Overall patterns

Variable (examples of comments in brackets)	Type	Rank	
		Real-time	Questionnaire
NURSE (way he pronounced 'first')	V	1	17
OOK (book...pronounced the same as...suit)	V	2	1
h dropping ('ad instead of had)	C	3	5=
PRICE ('like' is often elongated to sound like laaaiik)	V	4	2=
FORCE (sure – shooser)	V	5	5=
MOUTH (rind = round)	V	6	10
STRUT (the way the word 'comes' was pronounced)	V	7	18
FACE (say = sea)	V	10=	11
GOAT (goo for go)	V	10=	12
t (No 't' sound on 'went')	C	15	19
horses (eeet used instead of it)	V	16	5=
lateral (bow meaning ball)	C	18=	2=
t release (salt (strong accent on the t)	C	18=	19
th (replacing a 'th' with an 'eff' sound)	C	18	17
GOOSE (SKUEL INSTEAD OF SCHOOL)	V	23=	8=
NEAR (YEAR (YUUR))	V	24	22=
s (Buz instead of bus)	C	25	4
DRESS (switching e and a ... selling becomes salling)	V	27	12=
FLEECE (see = say)	V	28	8
TRAP (broad 'a' [...] in pronunciation of 'family')	V	29	22=

Table 2: Features commented on by respondents in both tasks, with examples of comments for each variable. Shading equals rank order of recognition in each task

Pattern 1: high recognition in questionnaire / low recognition in real-time task

Demonstrated by: horses

Two fronter (more local, FLEECE-like) tokens, three backer (more standard, KIT-like) (Leach 2012)

Most clicked token was fronter → link between degree of non-standardness and level of recognition?

Results suggest the feature has high saliency locally, but is not attended to as a non-standard feature by non-locals. The feature is only otherwise noted in varieties of West Midlands English (Clark & Asprey 2013), and not with the same linguistic spread as Stoke-on-Trent. The feature seems to have a lack of national saliency, hence only a more phonetically 'extreme' token being clicked.

Note: The second 'extreme' token went unclicked. However, it was shorter than the first (0.6s:0.8s), and Leach (2012) points out the link between fronted horses and -es plurals.

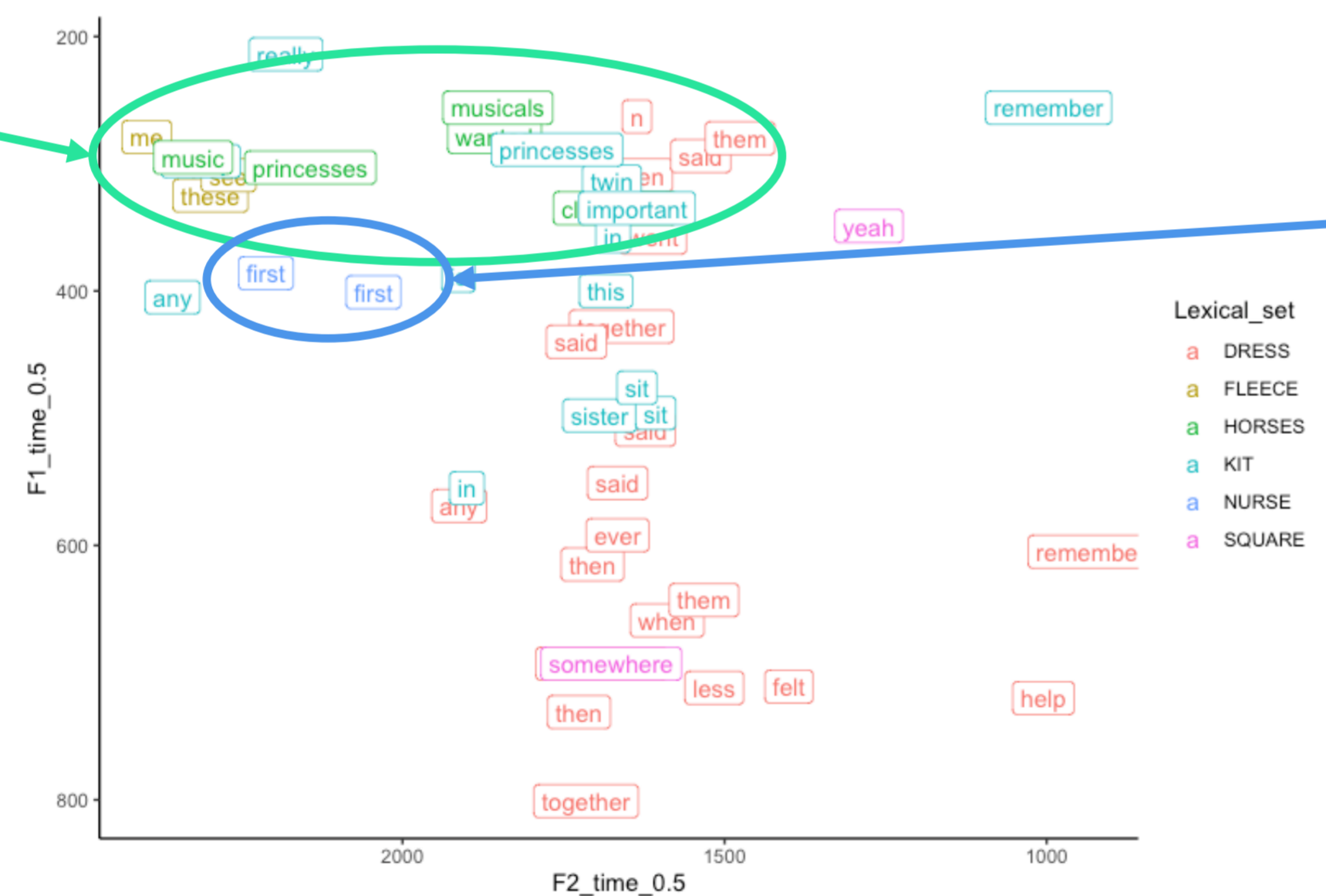


Figure 2: F1x F2 plot of a selection of monophthongs from the real-time speaker's recording

Pattern 2: low recognition in questionnaire / high recognition in real-time task

Demonstrated by: NURSE

Two NURSE tokens in sample, both fronted but not merged with SQUARE as in Liverpool (Watson 2007)

No recognition in questionnaire, or by S-o-T respondents to real-time task

NURSE-SQUARE merger salient (Watson & Clark 2013) and strongly linked to Liverpool English (Honeybone & Watson 2013). Despite lack of merger in Stoke-on-Trent, the link to Liverpool perhaps provided listeners with a frame of reference for expected non-standardness (cf. Preston 2011:12). Similarly, possible that the strong link between Liverpool and fronted NURSE discouraged claim/recognition of the feature by locals, who are *not* Liverpudlian – "Visitors from outside the area sometimes mistake the accent for Scouse! How rude!" (questionnaire comment).

Pattern 3: high recognition in both tasks

Demonstrated by: PRICE (and -OOK)

No linear relationship between degree of diphthongization and noticeability of PRICE.

The price vowel is variable in many more dialects of the UK, perhaps giving it a higher noticeability and a stronger **indexical link to regionality**. As such, even 'less' regional tokens are clicked.

Broad recognition and lack of ties to a specific region may also account for it being 'claimed' by residents

Regionality, noticeability and what counts as a dialect feature seem to differ based on the feature itself, and who is evaluating it.

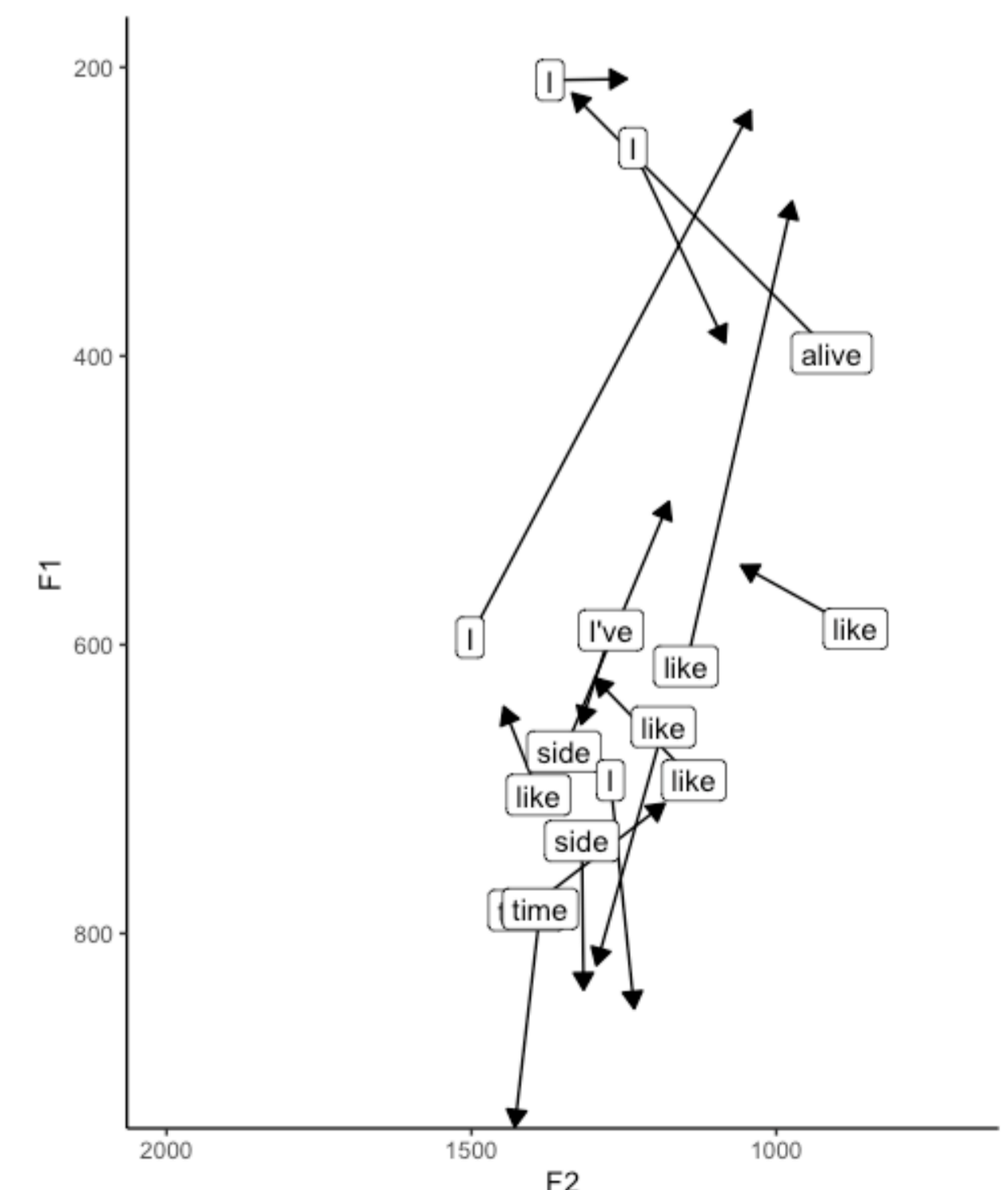


Figure 3: PRICE vowels from the speaker's recording