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FISHER, FARMER, TEUCHTER, CHAV: HYPERLOCAL PERCEPTIONS OF NORTH EAST SCOTTISH SPEECH

From the outside, the North East of Scotland may be perceived in fairly uniform terms as the home of 'the Doric'. However, speak to those from within the region, and a complex picture of intraregional identities soon emerges. Inevitably, the ideologies surrounding these identities often go hand in hand with perceptions of linguistic variation.

Using Diercks' (2002) notion of the *linguistic homeland* as a starting point, I will present findings from my perceptual dialectology study of the North East region, with a focus on the importance of considering hyperlocality when interpreting results. Surveying 320 informants from across the region, the study uses an adapted version of Preston's (1999) five-step methodology in which informants draw maps of perceived variation, rate places on several different scales, evaluate speech samples and engage in conversations about language. The results of this process reveal several common ideas about linguistic variation in the region; however, when perceptions are examined at a more hyperlocal level, there is a considerable level of heterogeneity in the responses. This is manifested in the linguistic labels participants use to geographically categorise speakers, in the frequency with which they mention certain speech communities, and in the way they react to clips of speakers from different parts of the region (with the latter point containing several examples of what Coupland et al. (1999) have termed *claiming* and *denial*). Such results offer insight into the feelings of linguistic identity evident in these communities – with some still tied to more traditional constructions of local identity, while others are adapting in a manner reflective of the changing times. The study also reveals a hyperlocal 'shifting' of the 'Doric' boundary, resulting in what I propose can be viewed as a series of perceived 'micro-Dorics' within the region. This will be considered in reference to Cramer's (2018) discussion of *etic* and *emic* descriptions.

Finally, I will consider the impact of these findings: both for those engaged in perceptual dialectology research elsewhere, and for those interested in Scots language issues affecting the region.

References

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