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Perception of borders and boundaries in the North of England

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This chapter uses data gathered in two perceptual dialectology studies in the North of England to investigate the perception of the North-South divide. The importance of this divide is evident in the large amount of commentary in numerous discourses. The chapter uses non-linguist respondents' additions to 'draw-a-map' tasks as part of which they were asked to place a North-South line. Most respondents completed this element of the task, and an analysis of their placements reveals that these are largely conditioned by respondent location. In general, respondents from further south in England demonstrated more agreement about the placement of the line, whilst respondents from further north showed less agreement. It is claimed that respondents from further south have 'more to lose' by being considered Southern, whereas those from further north are safely Northern, explaining the difference in line-placement.

1. Introduction

The number of papers in this volume which deal with various conceptions of 'the North' testify to the numerous different ways in which the North of England can be defined. The border of the northern edge of the region, which runs along the Scottish-English border, is well-defined (cf. Ihalainen 1994, 248; Aitken 1992, 895), although ambiguity about where its southern border might begin and end means that the North of England is both highly important and highly contested for those living in England (Wales 2006).

This chapter will discuss the perception of this southern limit using data gathered from 5 locations in the North of England between 2004 and 2008. Using a perceptual dialectology framework (Preston 1989), in which respondents were invited to draw lines on blank maps, the perception of the North-South divide will be shown to differ according to respondents' locations. The patterns within these data reveal the importance of latitude in the perception of the north-south divide. The chapter will demonstrate that the more southerly a location, the more likely are respondents from this location to agree on the placement of the line, and the more southerly are they likely to place it. This 'shifting' (Montgomery 2007) of the north-south divide demonstrates the importance of respondent location in determining mental maps of language variation (Montgomery 2012a).

The different ways in which real and imagined borders impact the perception of language variation is important as it has been posited that perceptions can influence behaviour (e.g. Britain 2010). Therefore, if respondents' perceptions of borders and boundaries vary according to specific local factors, it could provide justification for the adoption or rejection of specific linguistic features.

1.1 'The North' versus 'The South'

An oppositional relationship between North and South is of importance in many countries and regions across the world (Davidson 2005) and this is no less so in England. Here this opposition has given rise to the idea of a 'divide' between the two regions and 'the North-South divide' is a concept invoked regularly by journalists (The Economist 2013; Cox 2013), politicians (Skelton 2013), linguists (Wales 2006), and academics working in other fields (Dorling 2007). Such frequent mentions testify to the salience of the concept for those living in England.

Although often thought of as a modern phenomenon, 'the North-South divide' has a long historical pedigree and is said by Jewell (1994, 28) to be "literally, as old as the hills. A formal division of the country was established as early as the time of Roman rule, as the governance of the country was separated into *Britannia Inferior* due to its relative distance from Rome (the North of the country) and *Britannia Superior* (the South) (Wales 2000, 8). The Northern portion of the country had a secure regulatory boundary at its Northern edge in the form of Hadrian's Wall (a fixedness that endures today, as I discuss below) and a Southern boundary running roughly north of a line from the Wash to the River Mersey on the West coast (Musgrove 1990). After Roman rule an area running roughly from the Humber to the Firth of Forth (The Kingdom of Northumberland) enjoyed an "independent existence for 400 years" (Musgrove 1990, 44). Northumberland had two large estuaries, the Humber and the Clyde (facing east and west respectively), which enabled it to enjoy global trade routes. Despite this, the Kingdom was eventually destroyed by invasions perpetuated by Danish warriors, after which Alfred of Wessex was forced to partition England, creating the Danelaw. This area occupied the area to the north of a line running roughly along the ancient road of Watling Street although not the counties of "Cumberland, Westmorland and … Northumberland"[1] (Musgrove 1990, 54).

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, and throughout the nineteenth, industrial revolution swept through England. Although other areas of England were not untouched by industrialisation, its greatest effects were felt in the North, and "many of the current stereotypes of the North of England … derive from the industrial revolution and the huge expansion of industry and growth of the Midland and northern towns" (Wales 2000, 5–6).

The 'Golden Age' of British industrial revolution lasted for around the first seventy-five years of the nineteenth century after which it started to decline before dramatically crashing "in ruins between the two world wars" (Hobsbawm 1969, 207). After this point the North's remaining industry declined yet further due to lack of domestic demand for coal and the other products of heavy industry. Mass unemployment and depressed areas in the North caused various hunger marches, most famously from Jarrow in 1936. Added to these problems were those of strikes, concentrated in the industrial North, of which there were over 900 per year in the inter-war years. The Second World War supported a limited halt of decline in the North of England although this was short-lived for many industries. The coal industry continued its decline but industries such as steel prospered along with the

[1] These three counties (pre-1974) can be found in the approximate locations of the two counties of 'Cumbria' and 'Northumberland'.

engineering and chemical industries. There was no return to the North as the primary manufacturing centre because the South's light industry was easily converted to cope with war-time demand.

In the years since the Second World War perceptions of the depressed North and prosperous South were perpetuated. Although unemployment remained a problem, the North was able to slowly grow. Despite this, the perception of the North being 'stunted' remained, allowing older ideas of the North as a "strange country" (Orwell 2001) to remain. Such ideas continued into the 1980s and 1990s where the abandonment of regional policy, designed to remove blanket northern assistance and give more targeted aid to specific areas, accelerated industrial decline in the area. Such rapid decline in the North during this period sustained interest in the idea of a divided nation. The notion of the North-South divide remained a particularly important cultural phenomenon in the 1980s during which time the issue garnered a large amount of attention from journalists (Jewell 1994, 1). Such attention perpetuated old stereotypes as "in the headlines and cartoons of the national broadsheets … black puddings, mushy peas, flat caps and mufflers regularly appear in stories or news items relating to the north, reeking of condescension" (Wales 2000: 5).

Due to both historical factors and more recent policy decisions, opposition between 'the North' and 'the South' has a special significance in England. This significance helps to perpetuate ideas of the North as somewhere 'strange' or 'alien' to those in the South as well as permitting negative stereotypes (of weakness (see footnote 4 in Beal 2009), unfriendliness, or 'poshness') of 'the South' to be perpetuated in the North. This antipathy between the two regions is clearly important, and means that misidentification as 'the other' matters a great deal. Such 'misidentification' is made more likely due to the lack of a fixed definition of 'the North'.

1.2 Defining 'the North'

Despite the importance of the idea of 'the North', it is not at all easy to arrive at a satisfactory definition of the region, testified to not only by the presence of this section but also the devotion of 14 pages of Wales' (2006) book on the social and cultural history of the North. Although regions are "dynamic, shifting entities" (Russell 2004, 14), that are "as much as state of mind as a place" (Hill and Williams 1996, 6), this section will discuss the various competing attempts to provide definitions of 'the North'.

1.2.1 The Southern Boundary

The Southern Boundary of the region is the most contentious, and it is at this edge of 'the North' that most attention has been focussed. Some of these are based on voting patterns, income or employment rates (Town and Country Planning Association 1987; Smith 1989; Jack 1987; Dorling 2007), and others are historical (Jewell 1994). The Government has three Northern regions, and the Ordnance Survey has a definition of the North for mapping purposes. Of course linguistic

features (or clusters of features) have also been used to delimit the North (Ellis 1889; Kolb 1966; Wells 1982; Trudgill 1999). These varied attempts to provide a southern limit for ‘the North’ are summarised in Figure 1.

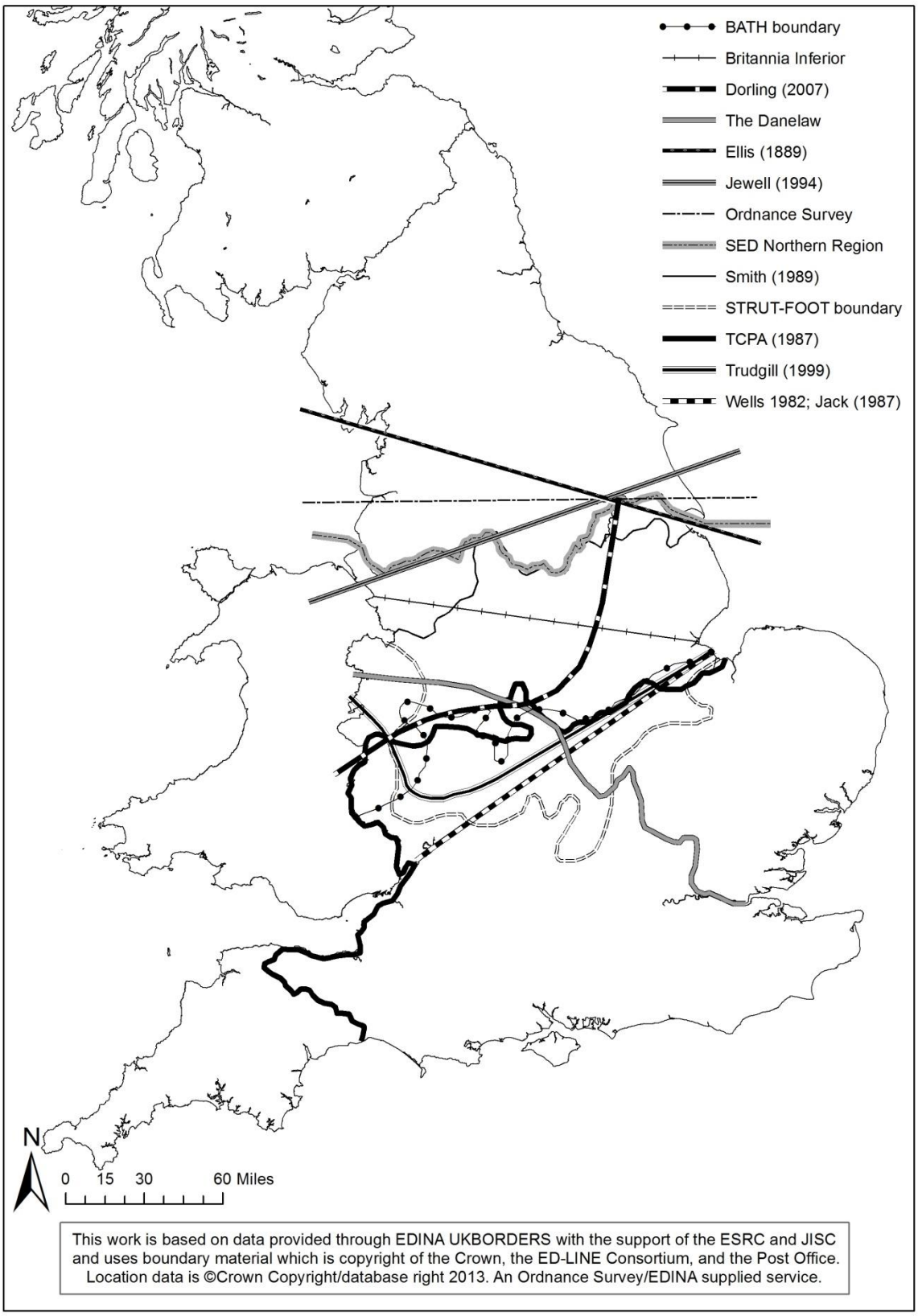

BATH boundary
Britannia Inferior
Dorling (2007)
The Danelaw
Ellis (1889)
Jewell (1994)
Ordnance Survey
SED Northern Region
Smith (1989)
STRUT-FOOT boundary
TCPA (1987)
Trudgill (1999)
Wells 1982; Jack (1987)
N
0 15 30 60 Miles
This work is based on data provided through EDINA UKBORDERS with the support of the ESRC and JISC and uses boundary material which is copyright of the Crown, the ED-LINE Consortium, and the Post Office.
Location data is ©Crown Copyright/database right 2013. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.

Figure 1: Differing definitions of the North[2]

Research that has examined the wealth of social and economic data gathered from the national census, along with data relating to voting patterns in local and general elections has arrived at very different definitions of 'the North'. Perhaps the most striking example of the use of such data to construct a 'North-South' line is that drawn by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) (1987). This line is drawn so as to include the counties of Devon and Cornwall in 'the North' (along with Scotland and Wales) on the basis of a lack of economic resources in comparison to the South East of England. Other socioeconomic lines are not as 'extreme' as this, although Dorling's (2007) line was drawn with the disparity between London's wealth compared to the rest of the country in mind. Modern political divisions provide an 'official' and sanctioned version of 'the North' which comprise the three Northern Regions of England (Office for National Statistics 2013): the North West, the North East, and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Although arriving at a definition of 'the North' along such official lines is tempting to many (Smith 1989; Rossiter, Johnston, and Pattie 1999), boundaries recognised and understood by people are of the greatest significance (Jewell 1994, 24–25; Russell 2004). The discipline of perceptual dialectology aims to access such boundaries by asking non-linguists directly about their perceptions of dialect areas and other significant borders, as I discuss below. Non-linguistic factors do affect the maps that these respondents draw, although the linguistic facts will most likely be forefront in their minds as they complete their tasks. The division between North and South is always something that has preoccupied dialectologists involved in production studies. This desire to enquire further about the differences between Northern and Southern speech was no doubt motivated by the persistence of the concept outwith linguistic study, as well as historical folk-linguistic commentary about precisely this (e.g. Hart 1589; Bullokar 1616). The majority of linguists who have attempted to classify dialects of English have done so using criteria largely based on phonological differences, as these offer "the greatest amount of variation" (Ihalainen 1994, 248).

On the basis of four phonological criteria (Ellis 1889, 15–22) Ellis made five primary dialect divisions of England: Southern, Western, Eastern, Midland and Northern, which were then subdivided into further dialect districts and varieties. The approximate location of Ellis's southern boundary for his Northern area can be seen in Figure 1. 'The North', for Ellis, occupied the area to the north of a line running from the River Lune to the Humber Estuary (see Figure 2 for the location of geographical entities discussed in this chapter). The importance of the Humber in defining the eastern edge of a southern limit for the North is underlined by others, including Rohrer (1950) and Hedevind (1967), although the western border for these two scholars is said to be slightly further south (the River Ribble, echoing the Ordnance Survey's dividing line). The Survey of English dialects (SED) Northern area also takes its approximate boundary from the Humber in the east, although the

[2] All maps in this chapter are based on data provided through EDINA UKBORDERS with the support of the ESRC and JISC and uses boundary material which is copyright of the Crown, the ED-LINE Consortium, and the Post Office. Location data is ©Crown Copyright/database right 2013. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.

Mersey is the eventual limit in the west of the country as this research relied on county boundaries to organise its data collection (Orton and Halliday 1962, 9) and publication (Upton 2012, 259).

More recent linguistic divisions between 'the North' and 'the South' have relied on data collected by the SED (Wells 1982; Trudgill 1999). Trudgill's line, which divides the South from the North and Midland areas (see section 4 for a discussion of the place of the Midlands), is based on the STRUT-FOOT split (Wells 1982, 349). Trudgill's line can be seen on Figure 1, and it runs south from the Wash towards Bristol before curving through the county of Shropshire to the Welsh-English border. Wells' line is further south than Trudgill's, as it also takes account of the vowel quality difference in BATH words, which is "typically short /a/ in the North and lengthened with a change of quality in the South /ɑ:/" (Wales 2006, 20).

1.2.2 The northern boundary

If defining the southern boundary of 'the North' is contentious and difficult, there is much less difficultly when fixing its northern edge. Necessarily, the north of England ends at the Scottish-English border, and this is also the terminus of 'the North' (although 'Northern Englishes' are spoken throughout Scotland). Not only is this a border between two countries, but it is also the site of the "most numerous bundle of dialect isoglosses in the English-speaking world" (Aitken 1992, 895) which serve to create "a strong linguistic barrier" (Ihalainen 1994, 248). Researchers in other fields have also highlighted the importance of the border. Ratti et al. (2010) investigated land-line telephone usage and demonstrated the central importance of the Scottish-English border. In a series of network analyses of the location and destination of land-line calls, the Scottish-English border forms a particularly strong border.

Although the literature does demonstrate an important and robust boundary, recent research (Watt, Llamas, and Docherty 2011) has indicated that the border might be becoming more permeable, at least in the west of the country. Here, younger speakers from the Scottish side of the border have begun to restrict their use of coda /r/ and to limit their use of rhoticity in much the same way as their counterparts on the English side of the border (Llamas 2010, 233). Despite this, the border remains as salient as ever for numerous other factors.

One such factor is the increasing political importance of the border. In the years since devolution (which took place in 1999 following legislation in 1998), Scotland has acquired increasing powers of government. Although, at present, the British government still deals with a good deal of legislation which pertains directly to the whole of the United Kingdom (which, at the time of writing, still includes Scotland), there is a large amount of Scottish-only legislation enacted by the Scottish government. A devolution referendum will be held in 2014 that could see Scotland become an independent country, which means that the Scottish-English border is not only politically significant, but also ideologically and financially important.

I have demonstrated elsewhere the impact of the Scottish-English border on the perception of dialect variation across Great Britain (Montgomery 2012a; Montgomery, forthcoming). This research demonstrated the important role that the

border plays, and particularly highlighted the barrier effect of the border for respondents in England. In effect, this meant that the border resulted in English respondents being much less able to perceive dialect variation in Scotland than their Scottish counterparts were able to with respect to England (Montgomery 2012a, 656–657). This highlights the perceptual and ideological significance of the border, at least for English respondents.

It should be noted that, despite its undoubted significance, the Scottish-English border is (presently) highly porous, with no controls on moving between the two countries. The porous nature of the border means that there is a large amount of travel between Scotland and England, as evidenced by commuting and migration data from the 2001 census (Office for National Statistics 2007a, 2007b). As I discuss in Montgomery (forthcoming), differing amounts of travel across the border from the English and Scottish sides can be demonstrated to affect the way in which dialect areas are perceived. Such travel is important but it does not negate the impact of the border. Instead, it appears to increase knowledge of the border, which means that it is perceived in very much the same way as by Ihalainen (1994, 248).

1.2.3 The role of the Midlands

Although 'the North' versus 'the South' are convenient shorthands, they ignore another prominent region of the country. 'The Midlands' is a region that is possibly as difficult to define as 'the North'. There are two English Regions (the West Midlands, and the East Midlands) with the name 'Midlands', creating an 'official' definition of the region. This appears (at best) to suggest that it is inappropriate only to think of a binary division between North and South.

In a review of the dialect evidence which problematises binary divisions of the country (and indeed the whole concept of neat dividing lines), a tripartite view of England has been urged by Upton (2012). He argues, contrary to some suggestions that the Midlands area is a transition zone, that it "might warrant attention in its own right rather than being thought of as a mere junction between contrasting varieties" (Upton 2012, 262). Recent research has been engaged in investigating the linguistic situation in the Midlands, as urged by Upton (2012, 267). As well as projects investigating the West Midlands (ESRC 2013), there have also been recent efforts to investigate the perceptions of dialect variation across the East Midlands area (Braber 2012). Such projects demonstrate that the Midlands is an area that has cultural and perceptual salience.

Of course, as I mentioned above, Ellis also recognised a 'Midland' area, which occupied space south of the North region and to the west of the East region. Ellis's Midland area was viewed as a region in its own right and not as a subdivision of a larger area. This contrasts with the way in which Trudgill's (1999) divisions of the country treat the region. In both his 'traditional' and 'modern' dialect (accent) divisions of the country, Trudgill treats the Midlands as subsidiary divisions of either the South or the North. Trudgill's 'traditional' dialect map echoes Ellis's North-South division. This essentially splits the country into 'the North' and the rest (Trudgill 1999, 35), with the Central (Midlands) area part of the rest. In his classification of the 'modern' dialects of English, the Central area is placed in the

North (Trudgill 1999, 67), due to the importance of the STRUT-FOOT split in contemporary English usage.

The Midlands area is somewhat of a difficultly for those that wish to imagine a primarily North-South division for England, although as I will demonstrate below, this is precisely the fiction that I asked respondents to engage with. Over time, the Midlands have been variously thought of as part of the North or as part of the South, although there is certainly an argument for considering it as a region of the country in its own right.

1.3 The data and study

The data in this chapter are taken from a perceptual dialectology investigation that took place from 2004 to 2008. As I mentioned above, the focus of research in perceptual dialectology is the perceptions of non-linguists, and particularly their beliefs about:

a) How different from (or similar to) their own do respondents find the speech of other areas?
b) What [i.e., where] do respondents believe the dialect areas of a region to be?
c) What do respondents believe about the characteristics of regional speech?

(Preston 1988, 475–476)

Researchers working in the field of perceptual dialectology aim to answer these questions by asking respondents to complete numerous tasks. The most well-known task involves respondents adding lines to blank or minimally detailed maps which indicate where they believe dialect areas to exist. Such 'draw-a-map' tasks (Preston 1982; Hickey 2005: 99-107) are designed to access the mental maps (cf. Gould and White 1986) of respondents which inform researchers about the perception of the location, placement and extent of dialect areas. During such tasks, respondents are asked to undertake further activities in which they add labels to dialect areas, as well as providing additional attitudinal information about the areas they have drawn. Maps from large numbers of respondents are sought, in order that the data they have added to maps can be aggregated (Preston and Howe 1987; Montgomery and Stoeckle, 2013) and generalised perceptions of the linguistic landscape investigated.

Figure 2 shows the location of the respondents who participated in the draw-a-map task, along with other geographical entities mentioned in this chapter. Brief biographical information about the respondents can be found in Table 1.

Figure 2. Survey locations, and locations of other geographical entities mentioned in this chapter

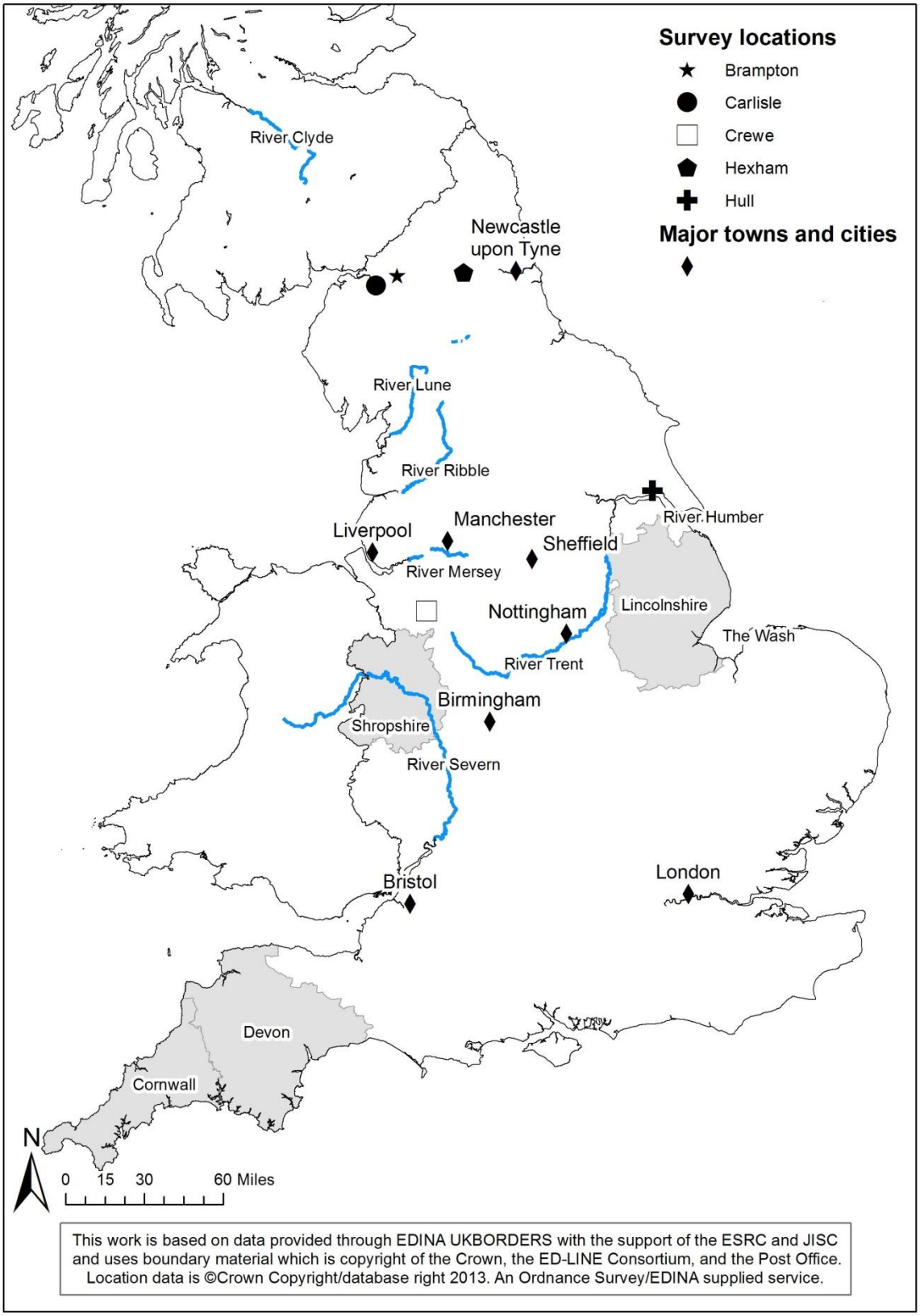


Table 1. Respondent biographical details and date of data collection

Data collection	2004			2008	
	Carlisle	Crewe	Hull	Brampton	Hexham
Respondents	93	85	98	55	20
Female	53	64	62	38	11
Male	39	21	34	17	9
Mean age	23.5 years	16.5 years	19 years	17 years	16.5 years

In each survey location, respondents were provided with a minimally detailed map which contained information relating to country borders, along with city location dots.[3] They were asked to add data to the map with a pen or pencil by responding to the following questions:

1) Label the nine well-known cites marked with a dot on the map.
2) Do you think that there is a north-south language divide in the country? If so, draw a line where you think this is.
3) Draw lines on the map where you think there are regional speech (dialect) areas.
4) Label the different areas that you have drawn on the map.
5) What do you think of the areas you've just drawn? How might you recognise people from these areas? Write some of these thoughts on the map if you have time.

The task had a 10 minute time limit. In order to assist the respondents, a location map which contained a number of major cities and towns was projected for respondents for the first five minutes of the task.

After the draw-a-map task had been completed, the data were processed by the Geographical Information Systems package (ArcGIS), following methods outlined in Montgomery and Stoeckle (2013). I have discussed the results of this research in relation to the perception of dialect areas elsewhere (Montgomery 2007; Montgomery 2008; Montgomery and Beal 2011; Montgomery 2011; Montgomery 2012a; Montgomery 2012b), and will only focus on the perception of the North-South divide here.

1.4 Geographical perceptions of the North-South divide

Table 2 shows the number of respondents who drew a North-South divide line, along with those who divided the country into three (drawing 'Northern-Midland-

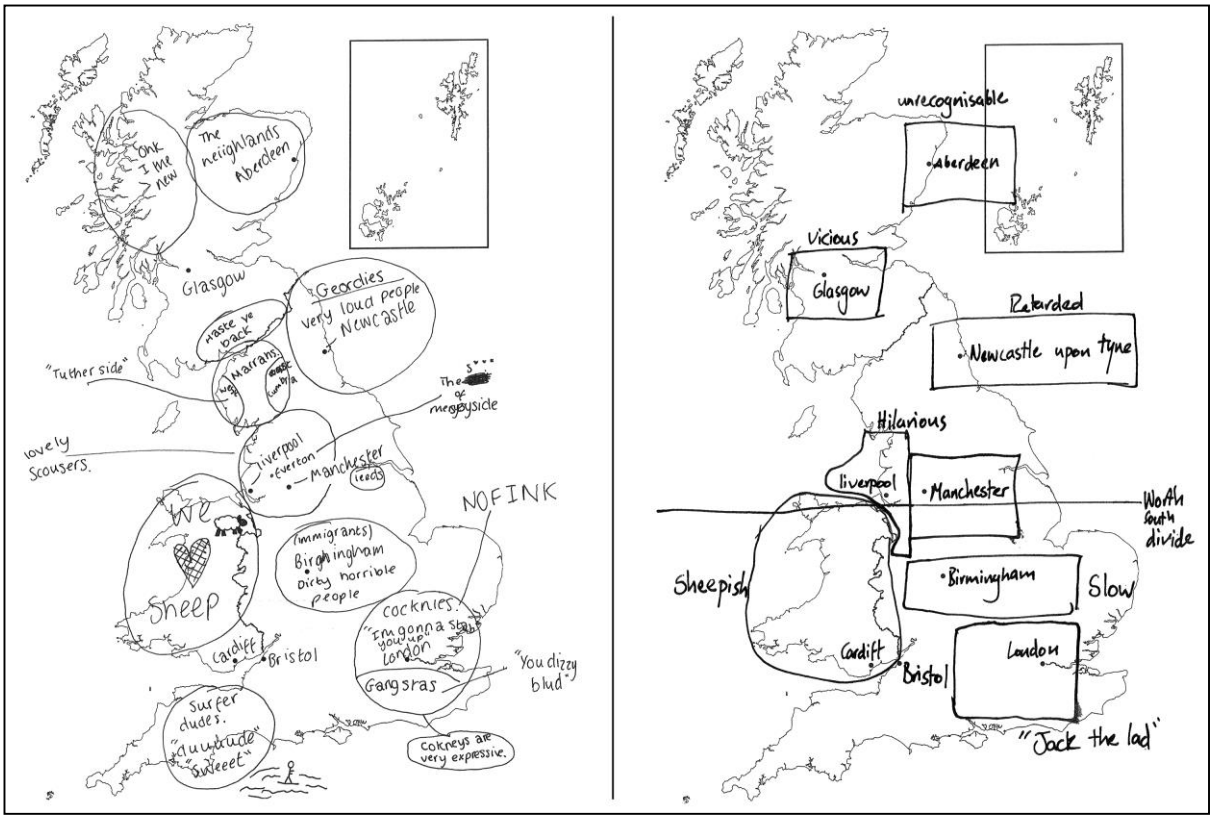
[3] The decision to include these city location dots was made to ensure that respondents' geographical knowledge was consistent and the spatial data they provided could be treated as accurate (cf. Preston 1993:335)). Further details relating to this methodological decision can be found in Montgomery (2007).

Southern' (N-M-S) lines). It is important to note that, despite explicitly being asked to draw such a line as part of their response, some 113 (32.2%) respondents did not add the line to their maps. This could be because they did not recognise such a line, or wished to divide the country in another manner. 33 (9.4%) respondents across all survey locations (with the exception of Hexham) did this, as is demonstrated by the figures for N-M-S division of the country. In total, 77.2% of all respondents drew some sort of 'primary' division of England, either as a single North-South line or two lines indicating an 'N-M-S' division.

Table 2. Ways of dividing the country, by survey location

	Brampton (n=55)	Carlisle (n=93)	Crewe (n=85)	Hexham (n=20)	Hull (n=98)	Total (n=351)
North-south	29 (52.7%)	67 (72%)	54 (63.5%)	17 (85%)	71 (72.4%)	238 (67.8%)
N-M-S	4 (7.3%)	13 (13.9%)	11 (12.9%)	0 (0%)	5 (5.1%)	33 (9.4%)

Figure 3. Completed draw-a-map tasks, by 17 year old male respondent from Brampton (left) and 18 year old male respondent from Brampton (right)



It might be tempting to think that respondents who did not draw country divisions as requested did not do so because they were not engaged with the task. As the map in the left of Figure 3 demonstrates, this was not the case. In most instances, the

type of richly detailed map seen here was the result of the draw-a-map task whether or not a North-South line was drawn. In addition to this, when a line was drawn, it did not impact the respondents' likelihood of adding other dialect areas to the map, as the map on the right of Figure 3 demonstrates.

Figures 4-8 show the North-South lines drawn by respondents in each of the survey locations on map on the left, along with a line density analysis undertaken in ArcGIS on the right-hand side map The line density analysis performs a calculation of how many lines coincide (in this case, units of five square kilometers were used). The resulting maps show the concentration of North-South lines. It should be noted that the line density model is slightly distorted when there are relatively few numbers of lines drawn in certain locations (such as Brampton and Hexham). This means that shading can be present in some Figures as a result of single lines, which will not be the case in locations with a greater number of responses (i.e. Carlisle, Crewe, and Hull).

Figure 4. Brampton N-S lines (left) and line density analysis (right)

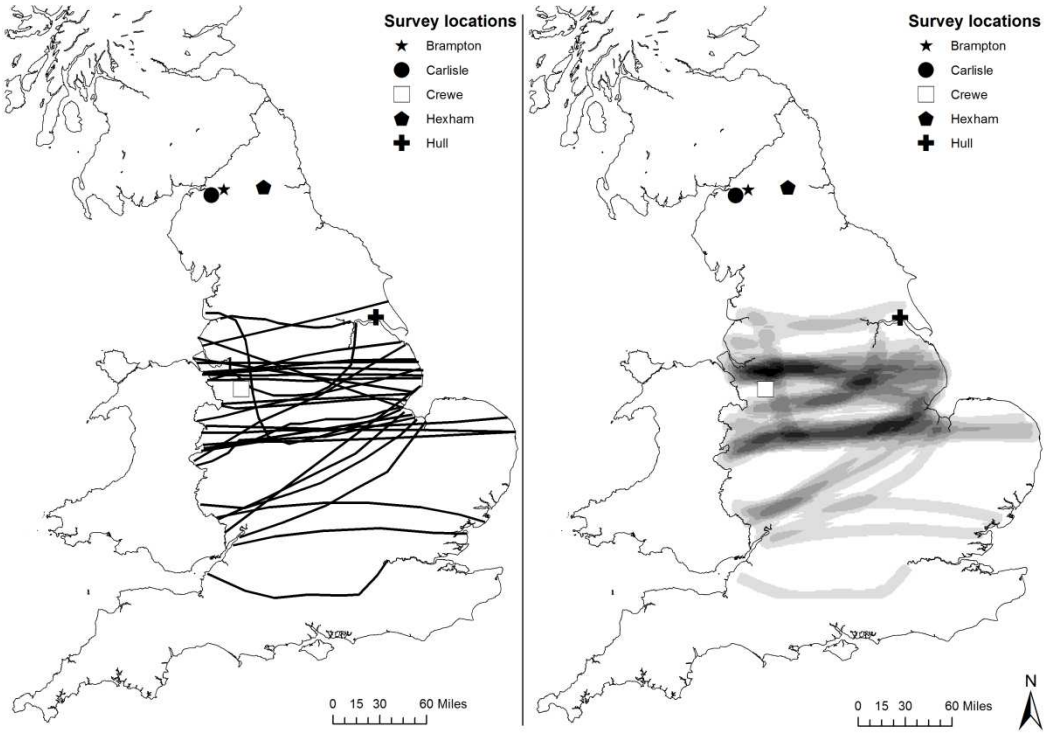


Figure 5. Carlisle N-S lines (left) and line density analysis (right)

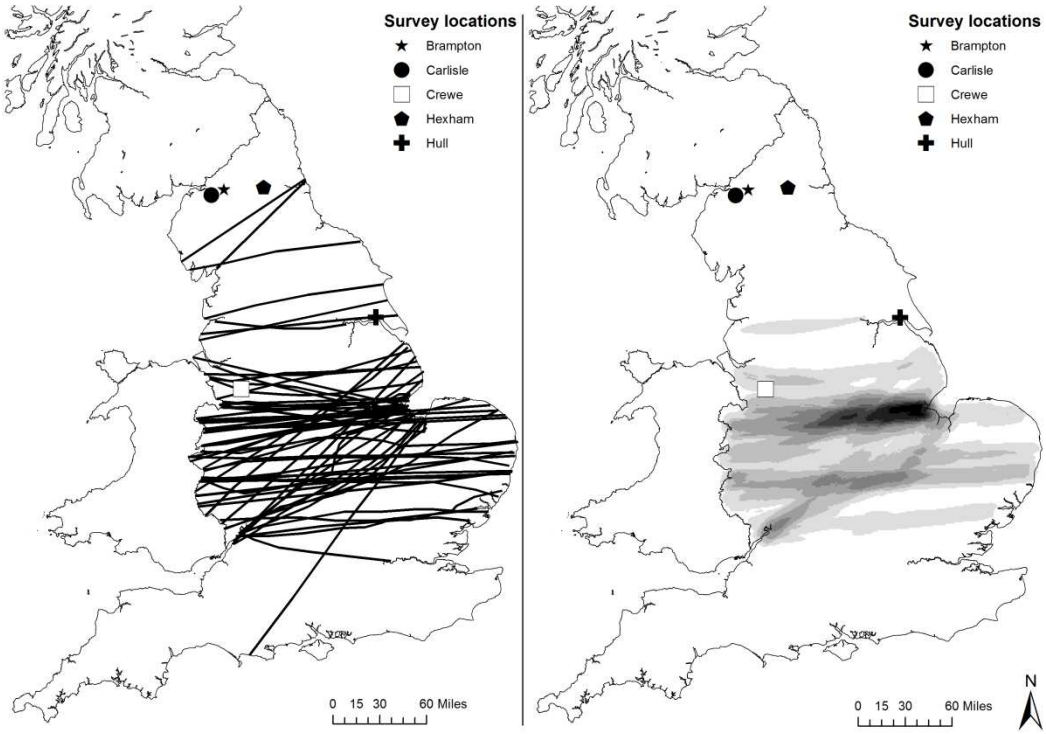


Figure 6. Crewe N-S lines (left) and line density analysis (right)

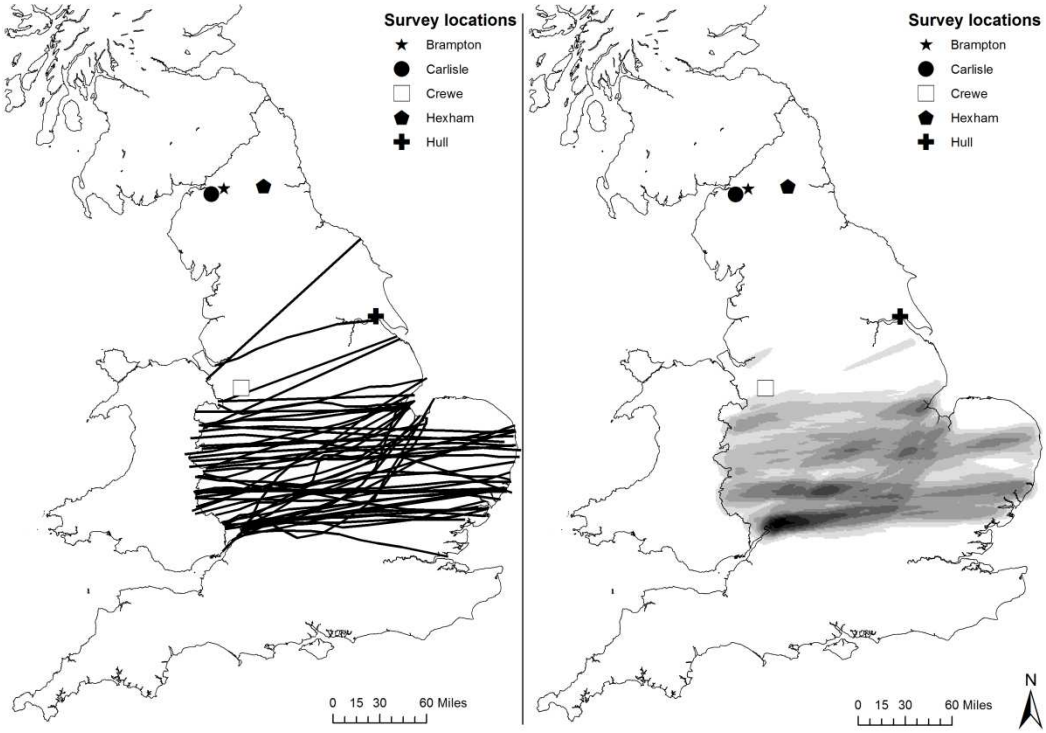


Figure 7. Hexham N-S lines (left) and line density analysis (right)

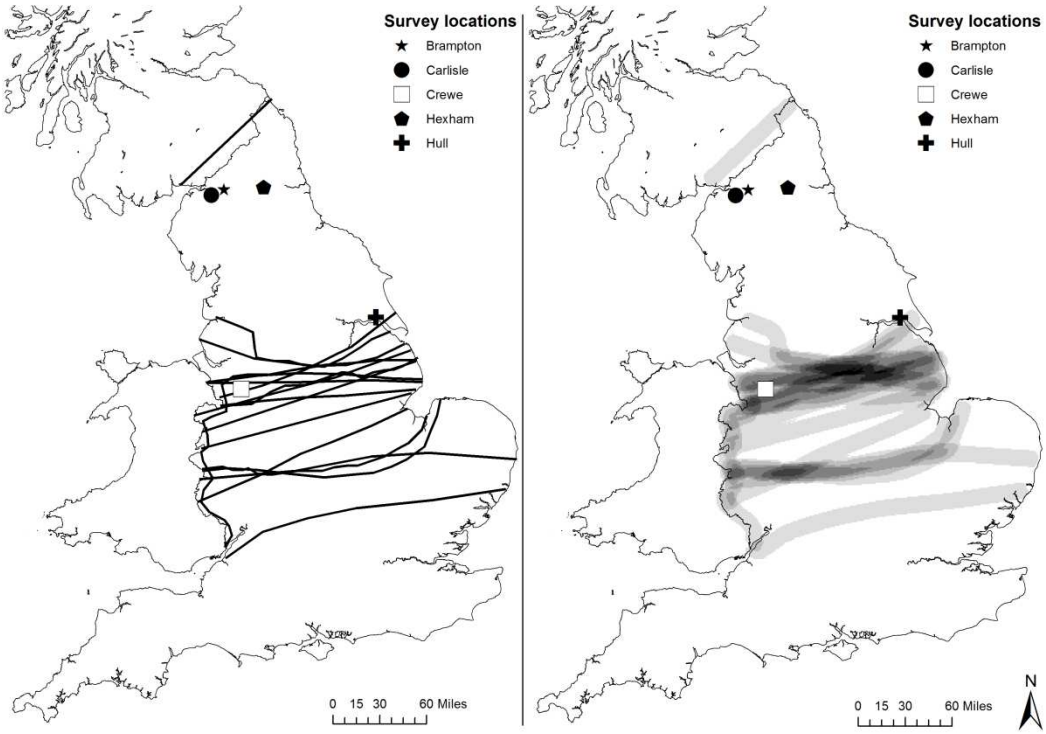
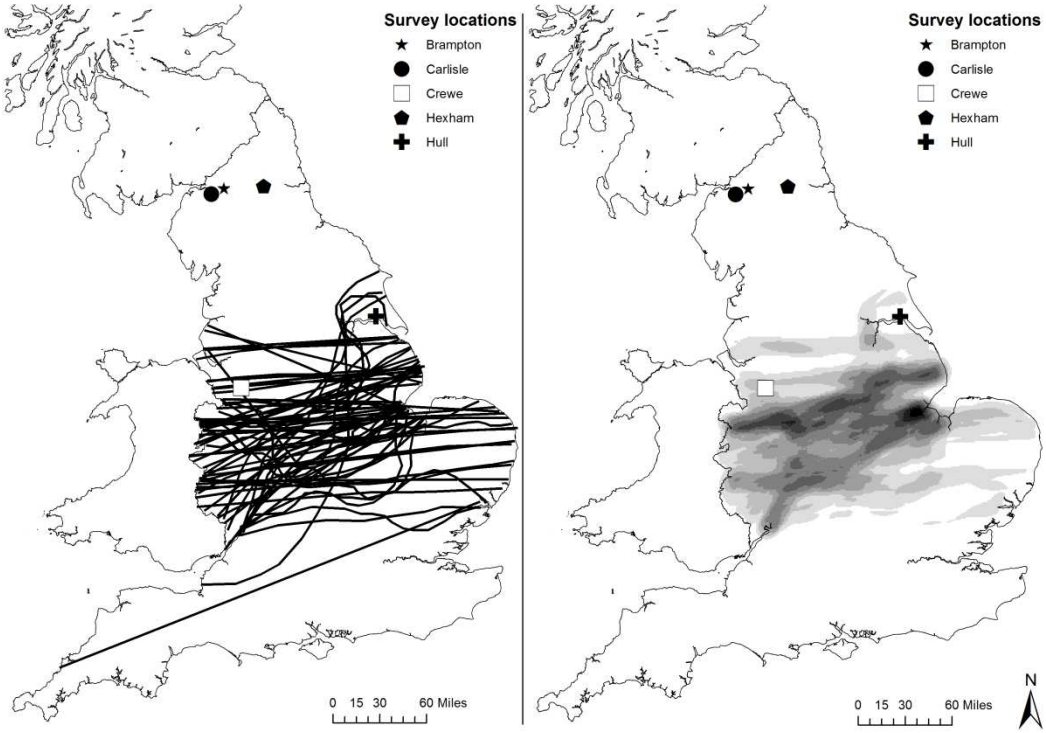


Figure 8. Hull N-S lines (left) and line density analysis (right)



The placement of the North-South divide by respondents is demonstrated across Figures 4-8 to vary widely both within and across survey locations. I will deal with

the intra-location variation here first, which in some cases is quite wide. Each of the respondents in each of the survey locations completed maps quite differently, and this is no different when it came to the North-South line task. The task itself, as is clear from the discussion above, was never going to be straightforward. As Figure 1 reveals, there is a huge amount of debate about the location of 'the divide', and no doubt the range of responses to the task reflects these disputes. Of course, respondents were asked about a linguistic North-South divide, about which Figure 1 also demonstrates disagreement (although less than other definitions). It is perhaps the case that respondents here were reflecting these varied definitions, and were certainly demonstrating that although the divide mattered to them its precise location is very much disputed.

Turning to the differences between locations, the results from Brampton (Figure 4) demonstrate a relatively wide amount of variation in terms of placement. Despite this it is clear to see that there is some agreement over the placement of the North-South line. There are two principal sites of this agreement: an area from the county of Shropshire to the Wash, and a line from south of the Mersey to the coast in the middle of the county of Lincolnshire. There are lesser amounts of agreement to be found further north and south.

Carlisle is a location close to Brampton, and the results for this survey location (Figure 5) are similar to those seen in Figure 4. Individual lines were drawn by respondents in this location very far to the north and south. The means that this location shows the largest range of North-South lines of all survey locations, as I discuss below. The line density analysis reveals one clear area of agreement relating to the location of the North-South line. This lies at its eastern limit, and is situated just to the north of the Wash. The western limit of the line is less clear from the line density analysis, although the greatest amount of agreement can be found at the Welsh border in the north of the county of Shropshire.

Figure 6 shows that the respondents from Crewe drew the smallest range of lines indicating the North-South divide. With the exception of two lines drawn to the north of the town, respondents demonstrated much more agreement with each other about the placement of the line. The line map shows a clear preference for lines drawn from the Severn to the Wash (echoing the lines suggested by Trudgill (1999) and Wells (1982)), something also demonstrated by the line density analysis. By contrast with the lines drawn by Carlisle-based respondents, the western edge of the line is the site of most agreement.

The lines drawn by Hexham respondents (Figure 7) are similar to those added to maps by respondents from Brampton. The line map in this Figure shows the most northerly line drawn by any respondent. This line, just north of the Scottish-English border, could have been the result of a misunderstanding. Such a misunderstanding was possible, and the line is sufficiently differently placed to the other lines to indicate that this is what might have happened. Alternatively, this respondent could have been indicating the dialect boundary discussed by Aitken (1992) and Ihalainen (1994). The line density analysis is very similar to that seen in Figure 4, with most agreement seen from the approximate location of the River Mersey to the coast in the middle of the county of Lincolnshire.

Figure 8 demonstrates that the lines drawn by respondents from Hull show characteristics of the other four locations. There is a line drawn far to the south

which includes the counties of Devon and Cornwall in the North, although this is the only 'outlier' that is present in the line map. There are some interesting aspects to some of the lines that run close to Hull itself which appear to include Hull in the South. The line density map shows that the level of agreement over the placement of the line is quite high amongst respondents, with clear agreement at both the western and eastern edges of the map.

1.5 Motivations for the placement of the North-South divide line

Tobler's first law of geography states that "everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things" (Tobler 1970, 236), and as I have discussed elsewhere in relation to the placement of dialect areas in draw-a-map tasks (Montgomery 2012a), proximity is a particularly important factor in perceptual dialectology. The important role of proximity leads to a greater likelihood of recognising nearby dialect areas, and a more subtle perception of such dialect areas (perhaps subdividing them as can be seen in the case of the Cumbria dialect area in the left-hand map in Figure 3). In addition to recognising close-to dialect areas, a greater amount of 'accuracy' can also be observed in their placement (perhaps by shrinking an area in order to accommodate others). Figures 4-8 demonstrate that the effect of proximity can also be seen to impact on the placement of the North-South divide.

In keeping with findings illustrated elsewhere, proximity should affect the placement of the North-South divide line by increasing the accuracy in which it is placed. This being the case, closer proximity should increase respondents' agreement over the placement of the north-south boundary with those further away exhibiting greater amounts of disagreement. Despite this, assessing proximity to a boundary as disputed as the North-South divide (see the discussion above) is by no means straightforward. Accordingly, and following the aims of perceptual dialectology, I allowed the respondents in the study to define the boundary for me. Figure 9 shows all of the lines drawn by respondents from all locations which indicate the location of the North-South divide, along with a line density analysis of the same.

Figure 9. All respondents' N-S lines (left) and line density analysis (right)

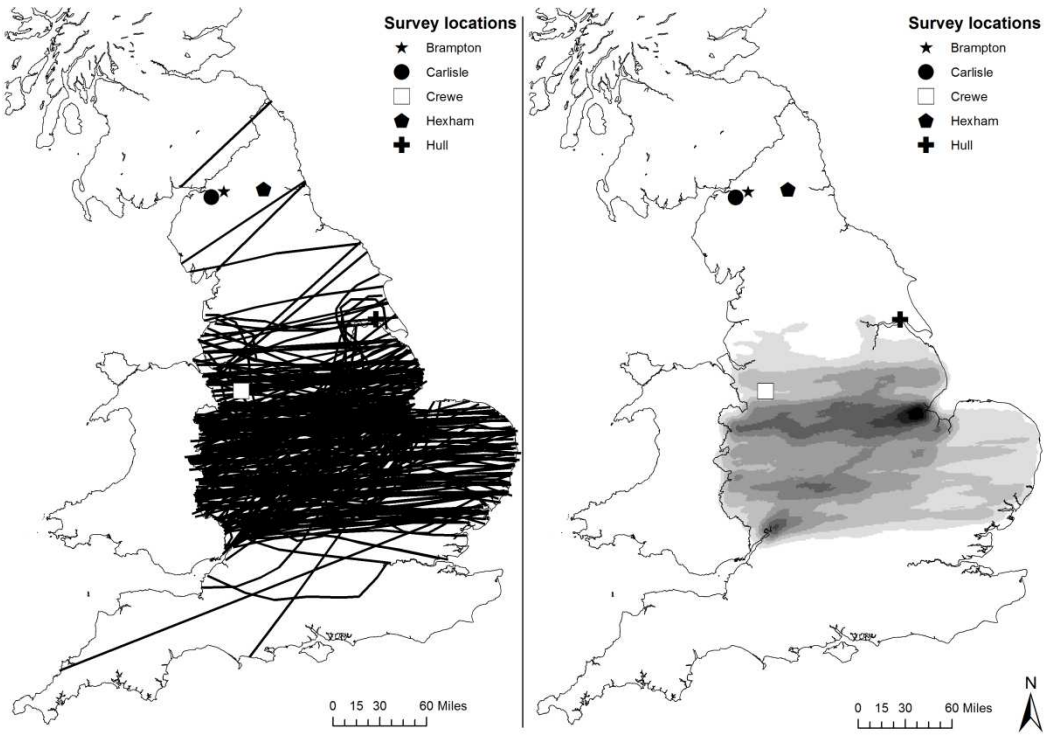


Figure 9 clearly demonstrates the wide range of perceptions of North and South amongst the respondents. It also permits examination of the area of most agreement about the location of the dividing line. Familiar patterns can be observed here, as is discussed in the analysis of Figures 4-8 above. Suffice to say, the area of greatest agreement is to the east of the map, and centres on the Wash. Lines of agreement can also be seen to the west, around the county of Shropshire, as well as at the mouth of the River Severn. Of interest to the discussion here is the location of the area of most agreement in relation to the survey locations. Brampton, Carlisle, and Hexham are the most northerly locations, and as such are in no way proximal to the area of agreement (although they are all in the South according to one respondent). Hull is further south, and as such is closer to the line than the three locations previously mentioned. It does not occupy an area covered by the line density analysis, however, unlike the final location, Crewe. Crewe is much further south than the other survey locations and not surprisingly is included in the South by many respondents, and is positioned in the northern part of the line density analysis. Figure 9 helps to establish a 'hierarchy of proximity' to the generally 'agreed' location of the North-South divide line which will be used in further analysis below.

Table 3 shows the result of a measurement of the distance from the most northerly line to the most southerly line for each survey location. It reveals a pattern that appears to be primarily conditioned by proximity. Although Brampton respondents' lines result in the smallest range of North-South divisions (this could have been due to this location having fewer respondents than the other locations with the exception of Hexham, which perhaps distorted the data), the pattern is otherwise as one might expect. Crewe-based respondents have the smallest range of lines, and Carlisle the largest. Hexham respondents' range is similar to that of their

Carlisle counterparts. Hull respondents occupy a middle ground, in keeping with their position further south than Carlisle and Hexham but north of Crewe.

Table 3. North-South line ranges, by survey location

Location	Miles	Km
Brampton	192.4	309.6
Carlisle	305.8	492.1
Crewe	209.1	336.6
Hexham	293.0	471.5
Hull	253.5	408.0

Examination of the patterns of line placement also reveals a proximity effect. As well as more agreement over the location of the line (demonstrated by the smaller range shown in Table 3), Crewe respondents' 'centre of gravity' for the line is shifted southwards compared to the results from the other locations. As noted above, areas of highest agreement are further to the north if the survey locations are further north.

What is exhibited here is a phenomenon that I have termed 'shifting' elsewhere (Montgomery 2007). In this case 'southern shifting' can be observed, which means that the further south a survey location is, the further south the area of greatest agreement will be located. The results of this 'shifting' effect are clearest amongst results from Brampton, Carlisle, Crewe, and Hexham respondents. Those from Crewe show the clearest 'shifting' effect, both in the level of agreement across all lines, and in the location of greatest agreement. Here it seems that proximity to the 'agreed' location of a North-South divide has resulted in the shifting of this boundary southwards. Such a 'shifted' perception of the North-South divide guarantees Crewe-based respondents their own Northern identity. Comments referring the South being 'posh', and the people across the divide being 'up themselves' indicate that such an identity is important. Such comments echo broader ideological factors which associate 'Northernness' and Northern dialect areas with values such as honesty, friendliness, and trustworthiness whilst associating 'Southernness' and Southern dialect areas with aloofness, a lack of trustworthiness (Montgomery 2007, 245–253), and 'softness'(Beal 2009, footnote 4).

Salience is an important factor that impacts on the identification and location of the North-South divide. This phenomenon, especially 'cultural salience' (Montgomery 2012a), has an important role to play in the perceptions of dialect areas, but also has a different and specific role to play in the perceptions of boundaries. In the latter case, salience is not simply demonstrating the feature(s) differentiating one area (or region) from another, but also in the boundary itself. Thus, if the boundary is known but not salient then there will be very little agreement over where it lies. Conversely, where a boundary is known and also salient there will be a greater amount of agreement.

The salience of the North-South boundary has a different effect on respondents from each of the survey locations. For Crewe-based respondents the boundary has the largest amount of salience as the 'agreed' boundary zone surrounds the town.

Therefore if respondents from Crewe want to claim a Northern identity they have a vested interest in having a clear idea of where the boundary is located. This is the case, as shown in the low range of disagreement in Table 3 and the high level of agreement in Figure 6. In this case, the shifting that is exhibited in Figure 6 is an attempt to guarantee a Northern identity for Crewe respondents and the high agreement level is a result of close proximity and high salience.

I believe that a similar interaction between proximity and salience affects respondents from Brampton, Carlisle, and Hexham. For respondents in these locations the northern limit of the North is perhaps of more concern. The situation is different in these locations, however. There is a national and linguistic border to the north and a relatively large distance from the agreed location of the North-South line. Both factors mean that for these respondents their Northern status has never been in dispute. This results in the wide disagreement seen amongst respondents from Carlisle and Hexham (with Brampton functioning as an outlier). This disagreement is present due to respondents not attaching a great deal of importance to the boundary: respondents from these locations are Northern and the precise location of the boundary is of no concern.

The results from Hull are of interest as the survey location occupies the 'middle point' between the other locations as well as representing the east coast in the study. In addition to this, the city is situated on the north bank of the River Humber, which forms a major natural North-South boundary. Although Figure 8 demonstrates that some respondents drew some interesting lines that placed Hull in the South, most respondents appeared to ignore it. Instead, the results from Hull show a middle level of disagreement (see Table 3), and the pattern of line placement also shows highest levels of agreement placed to the north of those from Crewe, (marginally) to the south of Carlisle, and much further south than lines drawn by respondents from Brampton and Hexham.

2. Summary and conclusions

I have demonstrated in this chapter that the North-South divide, an idea that consistently arises in the media and public discourse, is also something that is recognised by respondents completing draw-a-map tasks. The divide is something that matters for many of the respondents in this study, and they were very willing to add a line to their maps. Although some of the respondents did not add North-South lines, either because they did not wish to, or because they preferred to add lines dividing the country into three, the large majority of respondents wished to indicate the presence of the divide.

Of course, as I have demonstrated throughout the latter part of the chapter, the willingness amongst respondents to add lines did not result in high agreement by all of them. Such low levels of agreement echo that seen amongst the lines drawn by experts in varied fields and summarised in Figure 1, but they do not share this Figure's seeming haphazardness. Instead, the lines added by respondents in different survey locations have been shown to vary relatively predictably in their placement according to the site of the survey location itself. Thus, I have demonstrated that proximity to a general 'agreed' location for the North-South divide line increases the agreement over the placement of the line. In addition to

this, the area of agreement for this line is also 'shifted' southwards for survey locations which are further south. That such shifting is ideologically motivated seems clear but is as yet untested, and future research will seek to ascertain the extent to which ideological factors condition the placement of a line dividing North from South.

That the placement of a North-South line might vary according to the location of the line drawer is of course something that has been observed before (Wales 2006, 10; Upton 2012, 258), although the importance of this for matters of language variation and change have not yet been considered in detail. It is interesting that, when taking all respondents' lines in account, the area of most agreement about the location of the North-South dividing line is the Wash. This is the site of Chambers and Trudgill's (1998) reanalysis of SED data which looked at the mixing and fudging of Northern and Southern variants, as well as the research by Britain (2013) which suggests a narrowing of the [a]/[a:] transition zone in the BATH lexical set.

Perceptions of who is, or which places are, in 'the North' are important. Such perceptions, and the impact of these, could affect the features that speakers are likely to adopt. If certain variants are viewed as 'Southern' by those close to the 'agreed' North-South boundary, and these speakers consider themselves 'Northern', it seems logical that such features would not be adopted as readily as other, less salient features. The relationship between the perception of borders and boundaries and linguistic behaviour therefore needs more investigation, as does the perception of the North-South divide from Midland and Southern locations.

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