Language, culture and identity:
With (another) look at accents
in pop and rock singing*

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Abstract

Taking as its principal point of departure the work of Peter Trudgill, this article offers a linguistic analysis of the accents used in pop and rock music. It examines the singing styles of various performers across a number of decades and across a range of musical genres. It also seeks to develop Trudgill's original framework mainly by bringing in additional linguistic research, including some recent work on register analysis, and by drawing on a variety of culturally-situated models from the sociology of pop and rock. Through a largely qualitative analysis, a longitudinal picture is sketched of the way certain styles of singing have shifted over time. Wherever possible, these linguistic changes are charted against the broader cultural, cross-cultural and sociopolitical changes which parallel them and which, arguably, have helped shape them.

Introduction

In a study of the techniques used by rock and pop vocalists, Lee (1982) identifies a problem which, he suggests, typifies 'lay' perceptions of singing:

> ... it may be a little surprising to link the word 'technicalities' with pop singing. 'Surely', it is sometimes argued, 'pop singing is largely adolescent drivel in a mid-Atlantic accent? Far from having technique, pop singers have little but an affected manner and bad vocal habits.' (Lee 1982: 102)

The principal concern of this paper is to investigate the 'vocal habits' and the perceived 'affected manner' that characterize pop and rock singing. The basic premise on which this investigation is founded is that pop and rock singers, when singing, often use accents which are noticeably different from those used in their ordinary speech styles. It will also be argued that the accents of pop and rock musicians offer a valuable and intrinsically rich site for sociolinguistic and stylistic exploration and that these 'vocal habits' can be accom-

modated systematically within the theoretical paradigm of contemporary variation studies.

The point of departure for the present study is Trudgill's seminal paper, published two decades ago, which focussed on 'acts of conflicting identity'. Initially published as Trudgill (1980), the most widely accessible version of the paper appeared later as Trudgill (1983) and it is to this version that reference will be made in the study that follows. Trudgill's article offers a fascinating insight into, *inter alia*, the sort of modification towards American speech styles that is made by British performers when they sing. The specific details and implications of Trudgill's study will be outlined in the next section, and this outline will pave the way for the refinements and revisions suggested in subsequent sections.

Acknowledging that Trudgill's analysis still stands as pivotal – its recent reprinting in an important volume of essays (Trudgill 1997) is testimony to that – it follows that the rationale for the present study, which after all seeks to develop and elaborate Trudgill's findings, needs to be made explicit. First of all, Trudgill himself is at pains not to foreclose on the discussion; indeed, the framework he sets out is intended both to be replicated and to be subjected to 'theoretical refinements' (1983: 160). The present study therefore offers an opportunity, in the light of intervening years, to develop a longitudinal, diachronic perspective on a cultural form that is as fickle as it is pervasive. To this extent, this paper will focus on the changing cultural patterns and influences that have shaped the singing styles of the subsequent decades. It will also attempt to embellish Trudgill's original analytic framework principally in two ways: by building in additional theoretical material using models in discourse analysis, and by drawing on work in ethnomusicology and in the sociology of music. That sociologists of rock and pop are also preeminently aware of the highly constructed nature of popular music genres, is borne out by Frith's remarks:

In getting their effects – giving us pleasure, constructing cults, becoming stars – rock and pop musicians of whatever type are acting according to *conventions*.... (Frith 1988: 4; original emphasis)

One of the key aims of the present study is to attempt to extrapolate upwards from the analysis of linguistic phenomena at the micro-level to an assessment of wider issues, of the sort touched on by Frith, at the macro-level. And finally, in view of the primary emphasis of this journal, this paper sets out to examine the ways in which cross-cultural influence (principally that between the UK and the USA) impacts on intralinguistic variation in English. As a corollary to this, the paper will also suggest that exploring styles of pop singing can serve as a useful pedagogical tool both for language teaching in general and for the teaching of culturally-situated varieties of English in particular.

Establishing the patterns: Trudgill's study

The general thrust of Trudgill's argument is that from the early days of pop and rock, there has been a general tendency for British singers to attempt to model their linguistic behavior, when singing, on that of Americans. He notes that 'singers of this form of music employ different accents when singing from when they are speaking, and that deviations from their spoken accents are of a particular and relatively constrained type' (1983: 141). In altering their accents, the British singers (with some notable exceptions) import features that they consider to be stereotypically American, even if these features do not always tally with any specific variety of American English.

Trudgill focuses on a number of phonetic and grammatical variables in a range of musical genres, but, as just noted, his main interest is in those variables that are perceived by British speakers as prototypical 'Americanisms'. In view of the types of data that be will collected over the next few sections, it will be worth isolating, in the first instance, five of the principal phonetic variables which Trudgill argues are adopted by British performers when they sing. For ease of reference, I propose to label this set of variables the 'USA–5 model':

USA–5 model

 (i) The voiceless stop consonant /t/, when occurring intervocalically or before a lateral approximant (as in 'ci*t*y', 'li*tt*le', 'bo*tt*le' or 'be*tt*er'), is realized as [d], a voiced alveolar flap. This contrasts with typical British English use of either [tʰ] or[ʔ] in such environments.

(ii) The Southern British English long open vowel [ɑ:] in words like 'd*a*nce', 'l*a*st', and '*a*sk' has a shorter, more advanced realization close to [a]. In those lexical environments where Northern British English accents also contain an /ɑ:/, as in 'h*a*lf', a similar change occurs.

(iii) Non-prevocalic /r/ is frequently present in words like 'girl' and 'farm', even when the singers' normal speech patterns are manifestly non-rhotic.

(iv) The /aɪ/ glide in words like 'life', 'my', 'I' and 'like' is realized, not as [aɪ], but as [aˑ].

(v) Words such as 'body' and 'top' receive an unrounded type of vowel [ɑ], rather than widespread British English [ɒ]. Through this process, words like 'bomb' and 'balm' become homophones.

As far as can be attested, the adoption of these features when singing represents a significant departure from the spoken vernacular of the performers. Moreover, as further testament to the existence of this singing 'code', Trudgill highlights the measure of convergence on these variables by a number of artists from a number of musical genres spanning two decades (1983: 142–143). He also notes that uneven targeting and application of the variables by British artists leads to a situation where both British and

American varieties can occur within the confines of a single clause or even phrase. There is something of a paradox here: the USA–5 model as a whole is drawn upon by many different singers from different backgrounds, yet it is applied erratically and unevenly in individual instances of use. In other words, although pervasive as a perceptual model, the USA–5 is rarely if ever implemented fully in any given singer's repertoire.

By way of illustration, it will be appropriate to offer here some specific examples of how the USA–5 model is adopted in pop songs. In the transcribed examples here and *passim,*[1] the following notation conventions are adopted:

Symbol	*purpose*
[ ]	encloses transcription of a significant phonetic feature.
italics	highlights an important lexico-grammatical feature.
...	indicates an intervening passage of text that has not been transcribed.

The following set of examples, 1–4, are taken from songs released in the 1960s and contain some of the earliest evidence for the USA–5 singing 'code'. Extracts 1 and 2 are both by the Beatles and are taken from, respectively, 'Back in the USSR' (1965) and 'Hey Jude' (1968):

(1)   ... been away so long I [aˑ] hardly knew the place
      Gee it's good to be back home
      Leave it till tomorrow to unpack my [maˑ] case ...

(2)   remember to let her under your [lɛdə | ˈʌndəjə] skin ...
      then you begin to make it better, better, better, better
      [bɛtʰɔ ~ bɛdə] ... (alternation repeated).

The first extract illustrates the American-style realization of /ai/ in the two environments available for it (indeed, the second of these rhymes with the second vowel in the preceding word 'unpack'). The italicized expressive particle 'Gee', which is manifestly non-Liverpool vernacular usage, is also a perceived 'Americanism'. Features of interest in the second extract include the alternation between two variants of /t/, [tʰ] and [d]. This alternation, while endorsing the widely held assumption in language study that there is no such thing as a single-style speaker, consolidates the point made earlier that application of the American model is unevenly imported. However, in spite of the prediction of rhoticity in the USA–5 model, the /r/ is *not* realized in the repeated 'better' sequence in Extract 2. This accords with Trudgill's observation that British non-rhotic singers manage /r/ insertion best when it occurs in prominent syllables, while fewest /r/s are inserted in unstressed syllables, such as those in the repeated 'better' pattern above.

The next excerpt, again epitomizing the linguistic profile of the fledgling rock and pop scene of the 1960s, is from the Rolling Stones' 'Little Red Rooster' (1964):

(3) ... if you see my [maˑ] little [lɪdɨ] red rooster [ruːsdʒˑ]

please drive [draˑv] him home ...

ain't had no peace in the farmyard [fɑˑmjɑˑd] ...

On the face of it, there is very strong orientation here to the USA model with features such as /t/ voicing and the use of the preposed negative auxiliary with multiple negation in 'ain't had no'. This is supplemented by the monophthongal realization [aˑ] for the glide in 'my' and 'drive'. It is worth noting that this particular variable, although common in African American varieties in many parts of Northern USA, is most strongly associated with the Southern United States; pervasively so, and to the extent that it has acquired the sometime nickname 'confederate vowel' (Underwood 1988: 421). Nevertheless, in the face of such clear indices of the American model, there is an absence of rhoticity in 'rooster' and, more strikingly, in 'farmyard'. One explanation for this deviation from the otherwise co-textually dominant USA–5 model is that Mick Jagger has to some extent targeted a sub-variable: many Southern US varieties, including African American Vernacular English (AAVE), are non-rhotic. This ties in with Trudgill's contention that Southern States styles offer a paradigm for Northern American singers, like Bob Dylan, who actually lose their rhoticity when singing (1983: 146). When placed alongside his use of the 'confederate vowel', this does offer one possible interpretation of Jagger's practice.[2]

The last illustration in the group of early exponents of the USA–5 model is Cliff Richard, Britain's 'answer' to Elvis Presley during the 1960s. His hit song 'Bachelor Boy' (1961) is generally rich in USA–5 features, but the short sequence reproduced below is especially telling:

(4) ... I'll be a [ər] bachelor [bætʃələr] boy ... (repeated many times)

Apparently working from the principle that 'any /r/ is a good /r/', Richard over-applies the rhoticity rule by adding an /r/ after the schwa in the first transcribed segment. Referring to this particular sequence from the song, Trudgill classifies this hypercorrected feature as 'hyper-American /r/' (1983: 148), on the grounds that a non-rhotic speaker misses the target, so to speak, by inserting an /r/ into an environment where it is not present in the targeted accent. It is worth noting that this creates a potential decoding problem for listeners: with the palatal glide leading from /iː/ to the segment containing the schwa ([biːʲər]), the emergent form sounds very much like 'I'll be your bachelor boy'. This is certainly *not* what Cliff Richard is singing.

Trudgill offers a series of explanations for the sorts of phenomena outlined above. One is that the British singers simply follow their intuitions about what constitutes American English – a consequence of which is both hypercorrection and uneven distribution of the features targeted. The singers' motivations for attempting to import these alien features, Trudgill argues, was largely driven by the then dominant influence of America on modern popular music. In sum, admiration leads to imitation, and there is no doubt that the American model, at least in the early period of the development of British pop music, was the dominant one.

Developing a satisfactory sociolinguistic model which adequately explains the mechanisms underpinning the particular choices singers make, proves rather more difficult. An obvious candidate is the social psychologists' theory of 'accommodation' (e.g., Giles and Smith 1979), which seeks to account for the ways in which speakers strive to approximate to the speaking style of their interlocutors by importing either high-prestige or low-prestige features. Trudgill, however, rejects this model on a number of grounds. For a start, the model group (American singers) seem unaware of the attempted approximation to their own styles, while the imported features represent a shift away from rather than an accommodation to the spoken vernacular of the intended audience. More useful analytically, according to Trudgill, is Le Page's work on linguistic modification (e.g., Le Page 1978) which plots orientation in language against the style of a group with which a speaker may wish to identify. Le Page's model allows that the target group can be something other than the interlocutor. It also highlights how the quality of access to that model group exercises a constraint on the ability of speakers to adopt targeted features: in short, partial access engenders partial imitation, which to some extent explains the uneven application of the USA–5 model noted above. Yet the most important aspect of Le Page's framework (1978), as far as a chronological survey of pop and rock patterns goes, is his rider that conflicting motivations towards different models exercises a constraint on the degree of influence or dominance that any model may have. It is this notion of 'conflicting motivation' that helps explain the fracture in the USA–5 model that was to take place a decade and a half after it had first been adopted by British singers.

The second half of 1970s saw the advent of the 'punk' movement. According to its largely (and ironically) art-school, avant-garde practitioners, punk sought to represent the voice of an alienated, unemployed British working class youth. The movement strove to redefine fashion – witness the safety pins, ripped and zipped clothing, and hair held starkly erect by lacquer and Vaseline. It also generated a 'pub rock' musical response to what punks and their followers perceived as the self-indulgent, 'technobore' superbands like Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd who were dominant at that period (Clarke

1990: 88). Upholding working class roots and values through a manifestly proletarian stance, punk bands such as the Sex Pistols, The Clash, Sham 69, the Stranglers, and Ian Dury and the Blockheads attempted to offer a release from what Street describes as 'the technical blandness and superficiality of the mid-seventies' (1986: 85).

In sociolinguistic terms, the ideology of the punk movement brought with it a new set of linguistic motivations which made substantial inroads into the USA–5 model. The vernacular working speech of urban London became the new paradigm, and its influence led to the modification (or complete replacement, in some limited cases) of the USA–5 set. Consider, for instance, the Sex Pistols' 'Anarchy in the UK' which was banned from BBC radio and television stations on its release in 1976. Throughout this song, the realization of /ai/, which produced [aˑ] in the USA–5 paradigm, is either [ai] or, more significantly, a widened diphthong [ɔi] of which the first element is backed and rounded. It is this latter realization which is the more prototypically low-prestige vernacular form, with the lip-rounding on the first element making it 'more vigorous, "dialectal" Cockney' (Wells 1982: 308). The two non-USA variants are present in the following sequence:

(5) It's coming sometime [samtɔɪm] and maybe
    ... 'cos I [ai] wanna be anarchy
    ... in the city [sɪdɛi]. (Sex Pistols 'Anarchy in the UK')

In spite of the obvious drift away from the USA–5 model here, some vestigial features of the old paradigm remain, most notably the /t/ voicing which is clear from Johnny Rotten/John Lydon's realization of the word 'city'. This variant tends generally to be unevenly distributed across the Pistols' *oeuvre*, producing a [tʰ] ~ [d] alteration uncannily similar to that of the Beatles from twenty years earlier (see extract 2 above). For example:

(6) ... we're so pretty [prɪtʰɨˑ] oh so pretty [prɪdɨˑ]
    we're vacant ... (pattern reverses on additional repeats)
    (Sex Pistols 'Pretty Vacant', 1977)

Arguably the most 'core' of the punk rockers of the 1970s, at least in a linguistic sense, is the singer Ian Dury. Trudgill notes (1983: 157–158) that Dury's style of singing exhibits almost total observance of the notional 'Cockney' model. Consider this rhyming couplet, for example:

(7) I would rendezvous with Janet [dʒænɪʔ]
    Quite near the Isle of Thanet [fænɪʔ]
    (Ian Dury and The Blockheads, 'Billericay Dickie', 1978)

Cockney indicators, such as word final glottal stops and the realization of /θ/ as a labio-dental fricative, are foregrounded in the context of a line-final

two-syllable rhyme scheme. This type of metrical scheme often functions as a comic device, against which it is interesting to set Trudgill's point that Dury's style owes as much to the music hall tradition as it does to the pop tradition (1983: 157–158). However, the situation with Ian Dury is not quite as straightforward as Trudgill suggests. Dury's singing style is restricted to a very limited tonal range; in fact, whether he is actually 'singing' at all is debatable, given that his vocalization often resembles a voice-over set as accompaniment to a musical track. In a sense, this markedly 'a-melodic' performer tends to collapse the distinction between speaking and singing *per se*, which arguably results in the abandonment of a singing 'code' in favor of the singers' own spoken vernacular. We shall have cause to return to this issue in a later section when we address the varying singing styles of Irish performer Van Morrison.

Regarding the least 'core' of the punk groups listed above, Trudgill suggests that the Stranglers' degree of membership of the punk movement is most questionable. Reflecting this peripheral relationship, their singing style offers perhaps the most uneven and unstable mix of the new Cockney features with relics from the USA–5. The first of the following two examples, for instance, contains no break whatsoever from the older paradigm:

(8)   ... you've got some sun tan lotion in that bottle [bɑdɬ] of yours
      ... that feels *real good*. ('Peaches'; from *Rattus Norwegicus*, 1977)

Yet in extract 9, which is from the same album, there are three features which symbolize Cockney; namely, the non-voiced /t/, the widened diphthong in 'time' and the realization of /eɪ/ with a more open first element characteristic of 'broad Cockney' (Wells 1982: 306):

(9)   ... something is happening and it's happening right now
      ain't got time [tɔɪm] to wait [waɪtʰ].
      ('Something Better Change', 1977)

Again, we shall have cause to return to the specific case of the Stranglers in a subsequent section, when the impact on singing styles of the later political and cultural climate of the 1980s is assessed.

Not only is Trudgill's (1983) study insightful in its own terms, but his method is sufficiently replicable and his explanatory model sufficiently generalizable to be applied to musical genres beyond those from the Anglo-American tradition which formed his initial object of study. However, in the next section, a few of the issues which Trudgill's study raises will be problematized and, in the light of recent work in sociolinguistics, some new interpretative paradigms will be suggested. The analytic model developed along these lines in the next section will then be used to examine, in later sections, the singing patterns that have emerged in the post-1970s era.

Additional constraints on linguistic choice: Register and topic-influenced style-shift

Irrespective of the particular linguistic variety employed, the basic principle that links most of the singing styles examined so far is that they exhibit some degree of style-shift. Although these shifts are realized primarily at the level of *dialect*, they also mark a concomitant shift at the level of *diatype*. As Finegan and Biber remark:

> Social dialect variation, we believe, depends upon register variation, and register variation is largely shaped by communicative constraints inherent in particular situations. (Finegan and Biber 1994: 339)

In sum, variation in register can be realized by, amongst other things, variation in dialect. Highlighting the interrelatedness of dialectal and diatypic variation, Coupland points out that when 'speakers manipulate their dialects in different contexts by dialectal switching or shifting, the dialect forms themselves have significance on the register plane' (1988: 3). However, while a shift in dialect equates to a shift in register, this equation does not work in reverse: marked register variation can still occur within the confines of a single social dialect such as Standard English.

Allowing that register variation is multidimensional, then, it follows that different aspects of discourse context can exercise variable constraints on choice of register. In Halliday's functional model, for example, *tenor* of discourse – that is, the participants in discourse and their role relationships – acts as a significant influence on the selection of linguistic forms (see Halliday 1978 and *passim*; Eggins 1994). Indeed, the primacy of tenor as a determinant of style shift over other contextual factors has been spelled out by other commentators such as Bell (1991: 105) and Rickford and McNair-Knox (1994: 266). However, the discourse genre that is pop and rock singing is not quite so easily accommodated into this type of framework. It was pointed out in the previous section that the notional linguistic code which is mediated through a singer's vocal style does not necessarily coincide with the accent of the intended audience. Rather than seeking to match or accommodate to the speech style of the addressee, the type of style shifting embodied by pop and rock is more the result of a change in what Coupland calls the 'projected social role and persona' of the speaker (1988: 139). While tenor of discourse is undeniably significant, it is worth thinking about what part the other two contextual determinants of register in Halliday's tri-stratal model, *field* and *mode*, have to play in influencing singing styles. Mode of discourse, referring rather narrowly to the physical medium of language, will be commented upon in the next section. Field of discourse, which extends to both the topic and the purpose of the language event, will be discussed here.

Consider the following sequence from Dire Straits's hit single 'Money for Nothing':

(10)   Now look at *them yoyos* that's the way you do it [ɖʊˀɪ̃ˀ]
　　　　Play the guitar [giːtɔɽ] on the MTV
　　　　That *ain't* workin', that's the way you do it
　　　　Money for nothin' and your *chicks* for free
　　　　... *them guys ain't dumb*
　　　　Maybe get a blister on your little [lɪdɫ] finger ... (chorus)
　　　　The little *faggot* with the earring and the make up
　　　　Yeah buddy, that's his own hair
　　　　The little faggot got his own *jet-airplane*
　　　　The little faggot he's a millionaire.
　　　　(Dire Straits 'Money for Nothing'; 1985)

On a first reading, the phonetic, lexical and grammatical patterns used here by British singer Mark Knopfler might suggest that the USA-model has been comprehensively reinstated within the adult-oriented rock genre of the post-punk era. However, it is the very density of the American forms exhibited by this piece which, in my opinion, militates against this reading. For a start, virtually every clause is saturated with non-British lexico-grammatical features. Phonetic sub-variables beyond those of the basic USA–5 paradigm are targeted: the sequence 'do it', for instance, contains both a clearly-sounded initial dentalized stop, a nasalized diphthong and a word-final glottal stop. Taken as a whole, these features, which are repeated over several subsequent refrains, are more in keeping with the specific urban vernacular of New York City (Wells 1982: 515) than with any generalized American variety.

Knopfler's vocals, then, are manifestly divergent from his speech patterns, and as such conform to the general blueprint for style-shifting in rock singing which was drawn above. Yet the reasons for the over-application and hyper-specificity of the model he uses are less obvious. One possible explanation lies in Knopfler's own rather telling account of the influences that led him to write this song.[3] He contends that it represents a conversation overheard in a bar in New York. The main source of the lyrics, he explains, is a drunk man's running commentary on the Music Television (MTV) channel which happened to be showing in the bar at the time. On this evidence, Knopfler is effectively seeking to adopt a linguistic persona for which the principle stimulus is *field* of discourse. Rather than simply slotting into a generic singing 'code', the singing style here is cued by the particular content and purpose of the text; in other words, the importing of another 'voice' triggers a style-shift which is topic-influenced rather than addressee-influenced. The adoption of a persona by a singer in this way is akin to the

sort of *metaphorical* code switching engaged in by speakers when, with situational features held constant, they alter speech patterns according to topic of discourse or according to when they want to project a particular social role (Blom and Gumperz 1972: 424).

If the notion of metaphorical code switching is placed alongside the 'canonical' code switching of the sort presented in examples 1–9, this tends to problematize the original unidimensional model proposed by Trudgill. For a start, it may be difficult in certain instances to pinpoint which of the two stimuli – that is to say, field of discourse or situational context – activates the code-switch. Consider, for example, the following brief excerpt from Meatloaf's single 'Bat out of Hell':

(11) ... like [laˑk] a sinner [sɪnə] before [bəfɔː] the gates of heaven ...
    ('Bat out of Hell'; 1979)

As the word-final vowels on both 'sinner' and 'before' suggest, here is a rhotic American speaker who switches to non-rhoticity when singing. Meatloaf's shift is akin to the sorts of modification towards AAVE styles noted by Trudgill (1983: 146; and see above) and is perhaps no surprise coming from a Texan-born performer who in his formative years was trained as a gospel singer. However, as the lyrics of the song suggest, field of discourse has a highly evocative liturgical orientation which suggests to some degree a coalescence of topic and situation. In other words, Meatloaf's accommodation towards, say, a notional 'Southern Baptist' style may have as much to do with what he is singing about as with what constitutes a general praxis for American pop and rock singing. In short, variable configurations of context and topic make it very hard to assess which is the primary trigger for a code switch of this sort.

Another significant ramification of the concept of metaphorical code-switching is to do with how singers 'cover' other artists' work. By imputation, a cover version confirms the existence of an anterior text. Moreover, the style of the original may exact varying degrees of faithfulness on its subsequent reproduction. It is worth recalling the AAVE patterns observed in Mick Jagger's pronunciation in excerpt 3 above. Like many white pop artists who found their 'inspiration' in the black roots of rhythm and blues, Jagger is covering a song originally written by Willie Dixon, a black musician from Vicksburg, Mississippi. Dixon (and, incidentally, Howlin' Wolf, who was also from the Southern States) had recorded the song before the Rolling Stones released their version in 1964. In the absence of retrievable evidence, it is therefore impossible to asses with precision whether Jagger is observing his own notional AAVE sub-model or whether he is attempting to reproduce faithfully the anterior texts of Dixon and Howlin' Wolf.

Whatever the precise mechanics of their implementation, topic-influenced style shift and the production of cover-versions preeminently require the use of a projected social role or persona to bring about some sort of 'self-presentational shift' (Coupland 1988: 139). Essentially, this results either in the impregnation of a pop music text with the voice of 'other', whether real or virtual, or in the importing of another text-type wholesale. Such a practice has been well documented in stylistics and critical theory: Bakhtin, describing this polyphonic interplay of voices in a text, talks of 'complex speech genres' (1986: 62), while Carter and Nash reserve the term 're-registration' for a similar technique (1990: 38–39). Whether the precise terminology stems from a sociolinguistic or stylistic domain, the phenomenon creates a dualism in the motivation for the singing code. Basically, singers can respond primarily to the constraints of genre and situation (who you are singing to and for) or the constraints of topic and field (what you are singing about). And while evidence from research on style shifting suggests that the former constraint exercises the strongest influence on linguistic modification (Bell 1991: 105; Finegan and Biber 1994: 337–339), topic and related features need nevertheless to be factored into the analysis. With this in mind, the next section will pick up chronologically where the previous section finished and will assess the developments that have taken place since the punk era. This assessment will also be supplemented by reference to recent work in the sociology of rock and pop which, amongst other things, will offer evidence to explain the directions pop singing styles have taken since the 1970s.

Changing patterns and the 1980s

There is much agreement among ethnomusicologists and sociologists of rock and pop that the beginning of the 1980s stands as a watershed in terms of the way popular music was produced and consumed (Frith 1988; Grossberg 1990; Negus 1992). By 1979, the punk movement in Britain, although the cultural consequence of an earlier socialist government, was already in inexorable decline and its final collapse in the reactionary political climate of Margaret Thatcher's new Conservative government was hugely ironic. The punks were soon replaced by the glitzy yet anodyne 'new romantics' whose own somewhat uninspired reign was itself short-lived. The aftermath of punk also saw changes within the structure of the music industry itself. By 1981, the release of 'the video' in tandem with the release of a single had become *de rigueur*, the impact of which was that quality of music no longer had primacy over quality of visual image. Around the same time, and serving to consolidate the importance of video, Music Television (MTV) was launched on

satellite and cable, and within ten years was being transmitted to 204 million homes in 41 countries worldwide (Negus 1992: 93). Record companies were themselves 'growing up', so to speak, insofar as many Artist and Repertoire (A&R) staff, of whom several had been active musicians in the bands of the sixties and seventies, were now both middle-aged and comfortably middle-class. Accepting that A&R staff, like everybody else, have changing musical tastes and values, the influence of these 'cultural intermediaries' (Bourdieu 1986) on the production and packaging of popular music cannot be underestimated.

It is worth considering how the new political and social context of the early 80s impacts on the singing styles of what Frith, rather controversially, refers to as the 'Tory music' that flowed through the charts at that time (1988: 203). Although greater emphasis on visual image in the new epoch is well-attested,[4] it is more difficult to assess with precision how this was extended, if at all, to patterns of vocalization. Having said that, there is some evidence that indicates, if not exactly the birth of a new model, at least the appearance of a cluster of features which mirrored the new influences. Consider this short couplet from a single released by the Anglo-Nigerian singer Sade in 1984:

(12) No need to ask [ɑːsk]
   He's a smooth operator [ɒpəˌreɪdə] (repeated many times)
   ('Smooth Operator')

Two aspects of this short extract are relevant to the present discussion. The first concerns the t-voicing in 'operator' and the third-syllable stress in the same word (where British English places it on the first syllable). Both features confirm the continued presence of a vestigial USA model which had never really been fully excised from British singing styles even at the height of the punk movement (see above). However, there is also here a vowel sound which is markedly at odds with the five variables established earlier as the USA–5 set. In 'ask', here and *passim* in the song, the shorter, more advanced realization [a], which has typified the bulk of the singing styles covered so far, is replaced by the Southern British English long, open [ɑː] vowel. This vowel, significantly, also happens to be a feature of Received Pronunciation, the high-prestige accent of British English. Interestingly, in Trudgill's corpus, which extends up to the punk movement, this high-status variety is not attested which suggests the emergence to some extent of a new paradigm. It may well be that this type of style-shift, moving in the direction of a notional prestige model, is a reflex of the sociopolitical macrocosm of 1980s Britain.

Of course, the existence of one variable, no matter how widespread in a particular singer's repertoire, is not sufficient foundation upon which to build a theory of style-shift. And while the direction which a full-blown quantitative study might take can only be glossed here, qualitative investi-

gation of this feature can still be productively developed. For instance, do this and related 'prestige' variables start to appear in the output of older bands who have 'survived' into the 1980s? As a former 70s punk band who continued to have top ten hits in the 1980s, the Stranglers provide an excellent focus for this sort of longitudinal examination.

The following extract is from their 1982 single 'Golden Brown', which reached number 2 in the British charts:

(13)   Golden Brown [brɒʊn] texture like sun
       Lays me down [daʊn] with my mind she runs
       Throughout the night no need to fight
       Never a frown with golden brown [braʊn]
       Every time [taɪm] just like the last [lɑːst]
       On her ship, tied to the mast [mɑːst].

Formally, the dominant musical motif in this track is a harpsichord-style arpeggio pattern set to a fast waltz tempo, while the video which accompanies it portrays a suave, tuxedo-attired band playing against a backdrop of the Egyptian pyramids. A very far cry indeed from the safety pins, lacquered hair and the thunderous four-four rhythms that epitomized the Stranglers' punk output. However, the absence of any thematic or musical continuity with their earlier work is also paralleled by a possible linguistic shift away from the partial Cockney model that typified their punk singing style. First, the diphthongs in both 'down' and 'brown' approximate to a more prestige realization, rather than to the other available urban London varieties such as [bræʊn] or the 'basilectal' form [bræːn] (Wells 1982: 302). Second, in a manner similar to that noted in extract 12, both of the rhyming line-end vowels in 'last' and 'mast' (and in all repeats throughout the song) receive the higher-status [ɑː] style realization. Third, and perhaps most tellingly, the realization of the vowel in 'time', which had previously received the full 'Cockney' treatment – as its production in extract 9 above will confirm – has now a realization much closer to RP. In sum, in the space of only a few years, the Stranglers have not only overhauled their visual appearance and musical format, but have partially shifted their linguistic style to match the new cultural and social context. Moreover, a reinvention on this scale shows just how tightly interwoven and interdependent are the levels of image, music and language.

On the basis of this admittedly limited evidence, what appears to be emerging in the 'era of afterpunk' are the beginnings of a new code: whereas punk tended to retain elements of the USA–5 model overlaying them with features of working-class vernacular, the tendency of the post-punk rock and pop bands of the 80s seems to have been to blend the vestigial USA model with higher-status features of British English. As Frith observes, the punks

had had their day and were 'absorbed into the commercial mainstream with hardly a hiccup' (1988: 174), while the under-25 pop consumers, overwhelmingly through their voting preferences, had fully endorsed Thatcherite politics. It was perhaps no surprise that the linguistic profile of mainstream pop singing was thus dragged along by developments in the wider sociocultural context of early 1980s Britain.

This is not to say, of course, that every British performer felt compelled to ape the dominant bourgeois code of the period. As Trudgill himself points out (1983: 158–159), singers, as with users of language generally, are often confronted by *conflicting* motivations. Thus, rather than try to quantify the totality of singing styles available to all performers, it is more realistic and more productive to try to identify, as the present study has sought to do, the nature and source of these conflicting motivations. For instance, as well as responding to influences in their cultural and social context, pop singers have the capacity to 'reinvent' themselves at different stages in their career. Any concomitant impact that such reinvention has on singing style could be classified, following Bell (1991: 105), as *initiative* style-shift given that language is being used to redefine the relationship of the speaker to their audience. This stands in contrast to the kind of *responsive* style-shift (using language to respond to various aspects of situation) that was observed in the examples from Sade and the Stranglers.

A good illustration (but by no means the only illustration) of how initiative style-shift can function in the context of pop and rock singing may be drawn by looking at the work of Northern Irish singer-songwriter Van Morrison. Van Morrison is interesting is a number of respects not only because his career has spanned thirty years and a great variety of musical genres, but because he is a singer whose own (Belfast) speech patterns neutralize considerably the explanatory power of the American model. For example, typical Belfast realizations of three of the original five variables of the USA–5 model are either identical to or approximate to the American variants. These are, namely, rhoticity, t-voicing and the use of the unrounded vowel [ɑ] in words like 'body' and 'top' (see J. Milroy 1981; Harris 1984). Nevertheless, it is still easy to adduce lexico-grammatical evidence to suggest that Van Morrison in his early days was locked squarely into the general American paradigm. This fragment from 'Crazy Love' is a case in point:

(14)   And when I'm returning, from so far away
       She give some sweet lovin', *brighten* up my day
       And *it make* me righteous, and *it make* me whole
       And *it make* me mellow, down in to my soul
       She give me love . . . (repeated).
       ('Crazy Love'; from *Moondance*, 1970)

This type of nonstandard subject–verb concord, repeated many times throughout the song, has not, as far I know, been attested in any Northern Irish speech community or in any corpus of transcribed Irish speech. It is, of course, widespread in many nonstandard dialects of American English, including AAVE and other varieties from the Southern States (Fasold 1972; Wolfram 1974). It is worth noting also that the lexis employed here, with its gospel-oriented references to 'righteous' and 'soul', underscores the African-American/Southern theme and suggests a degree of topic-influenced style-shift that parallels that noted in the Meatloaf example, extract 11, which was discussed in the previous section.

Indicators at the phonetic level, including the remainder of the USA–5 set and other perceived 'Americanisms', can be detected in Van Morrison's early output. Consider the following sequence from 'Madame George':

(15)   Down on Cyprus Avenue [avənuː]
        With a child-like [tʃaɨ laˑk] vision creeping into view.
        ('Madame George'; from *Astral Weeks* 1968)

This sequence realizes the familiar 'confederate' vowel, which is clearly sounded twice in the second line, and an elided palatal glide in the final syllable of 'avenue' in the first line. Whereas this latter feature, 'later yod-dropping', is generally widespread in American English, its occurrence in the British Isles is restricted only to certain localized regions of England (Wells 1982: 247–248, 338–339). Moreover, Van Morrison's yod-dropping, which extends to all relevant phonetic environments in the same song (e.g., '. . .and he *knew*'; '... a *new* day'), is bolstered up by other strongly AAVE lexico-grammatical patterns such as copula-deletion (e.g., 'He much older now').[5] Thus, it is still possible, even in the case of a British-Irish singer whose speech style approximates to the USA–5, to isolate a number of variables that testify that his early singing style, like that of his peers, is influenced by the American model.

The middle of the 1980s saw a change of musical direction for Van Morrison which was characterized principally by his attempt to rediscover to his 'Irish roots'. The most obvious indicator of this musical *volte face* was the release of the album *Celtic Heartbeat*, recorded with the Irish traditional group The Chieftains in 1988. Yet even before that there had been signs of self-reinvention with his solo album *A Sense of Wonder* (1985). Although few of the tracks on this album had any discernibly Irish phrasing, traces of 'celticization' were apparent in Van Morrison's use of backing instruments such as Uilleann pipes and in his inclusion of musicians who were well-known on the traditional Irish music scene. In the light of the comments made about extract 15, notice what is happening in the following sequence from the album:

(16) If you only knew [njuˑ] ...
      All the stupid [ʃtjuprɪd] things ...
      ('If You Only Knew'; from *A Sense of Wonder* 1985)

It would seem that the yod element, dropped in the earlier singing style, has now been reinstated – and comprehensively reinstated at that, with its insertion into all ten of the available environments in the song. As Trudgill notes with respect to the later output of both the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, the impact of the USA model had begun to wane as early as the late 1960s (Trudgill 1983: 152). That the Van Morrison of the 1980s had shifted away from the American paradigm is fairly unremarkable then, although what the USA model is being replaced with is more intriguing. An extended passage from *A Sense of Wonder*, where Van Morrison voices over some lines from William Blake's *Songs of Experience*, contains an especially striking sequence. Significant phonetic realizations are highlighted:

(17) That destroy our [ɑr] enemy's house [hɑʉs] ...
      are quite forgotten [fərgatn̩]
      and the slave [slev] grinding at the mill [mʌɫ]
      and the captive in chains [tʃɪənz]
      ('Let the Slave';1985)

This sequence, and much of the untranscribed text which surrounds it, is rich in the linguistic indicators of urban Belfast vernacular speech (L. Milroy 1980: 119–120; J. Milroy 1981; Harris 1884: 125–129). Notably, Van Morrison refuses to import the sort of abstract prestige model employed by other performers of the mid-1980s; nor does he seek to target some notional Irish model even though certain realizations, such as the vowels in 'house' and 'chains', are widespread in the north of Ireland. What does emerge, through vowel sounds such as those in 'mill' and 'forgotten', is something which approximates closely to the *specific* vernacular norms of Belfast English and, as L. Milroy (1980: 119) notes, variables such as these have *social value*. What Van Morrison is doing is very much tied up to a sense of place and identity. This highly marked cluster of variables serves to create, rather than simply reflect, a particular universe of discourse in his music. The type of style-shift which results from this strategy is therefore much more initiative than responsive in character.

Extract (17) also throws up an issue which was touched upon in the previous section and which makes the interpretation of the last example from Van Morrison to some extent partial. This is principally to do with the amount of influence *mode of discourse* can exercise on style shift. As in the case of Ian Dury discussed earlier, Van Morrison's delivery in this passage approximates more to a spoken voice-over than to tonal singing. This and the

Dury data would suggest that the less a singer 'sings', so to speak, the weaker the influence of the external code and the stronger the approximation to the singer's own vernacular usage. There is a curious paradox here: while singing allows – and even on occasion demands – a degree of style-shifting towards an external code, it would sound odd to hear a performer mimic a spoken variety other than his or her own during a voice-over sequence. As Zwicky suggests, singing is 'articulated in a register notably different from ordinary speech and showing certain distortions' (1976: 689). And while there is no doubt that pop songs work with and on spoken language (Frith 1996: 166), the basic medium of vocalization, *mode*, needs to be factored into the analytic apparatus alongside both tenor and field of discourse.

This section has offered a diachronic interpretation of linguistic patterns in singing and has suggested some reasons as to why certain artists modify their singing styles at different points in their musical careers. This is not meant to imply that all singers in all musical genres succumb sooner or later to conflicting motivations. On the contrary, it is possible for certain genres to achieve relative linguistic stability over time. The case of Heavy Metal is interesting in that it has demonstrated consistency of form and musical phrasing across the decades (Straw 1990). Linguistically, in spite of organizational changes within the music industry and of changes in the political landscape of the punk and post-punk eras, Heavy Metal has resolutely followed the USA model. For instance, the vocalization patterns of later generation British and Australian hard rock bands, such as Iron Maiden, AC/DC or Whitesnake, are almost indistinguishable from those of the early practitioners such as Black Sabbath, Deep Purple and Led Zeppelin.[6] By way of (necessarily brief) illustration, here is short extract from British performer Gary Moore's album *Victims of the Future*, with relevant features high-lighted:

(18) He ditched his chick and he sold his car [kaˑr]
　　　He bought himself a hot [hɑt] guitar [giːˌtɔɾ]
　　　... he's a teenage idol [aˑdəɫ] ... (repeated many times)
　　　('Teenage Idol'; from *Victims of the Future* 1983)

Amid the host of other phonetic and lexico-grammatical indices of the American model is a chorus line which contains a clearly sounded confederate vowel on the initial syllable of 'idol'. What is particularly striking on the recording is that the entire five-piece band – none of whom are American – all produce this vowel in perfect uniformity!

Acknowledging that further empirical work is required in order to understand better the particular characteristics of the hard rock paradigm, the explanation of why this code is seemingly so fixed may in part lie in Straw's intriguing account of the network structures of Heavy Metal fans (Straw

1990). Straw suggests that Heavy Metal, unlike other genres such as glitter, punk or disco, is targeted at a largely displaced audience comprising largely young men. Furthermore, the fact that live Heavy Metal concerts tend to be rare leads to a fragmented fan base with little internal communication to cement it. It is worth quoting Straw at some length here:

Heavy metal is at once the most consistently successful of forms within rock music and the most marginalised within the discourse of institutionalised rock culture ... [Heavy Metal] provides one of the purest examples of involvement in rock music as an activity subordinate to, rather than determinant of, peer group formation. While involvement in disco or punk may determine people's choices of types and sites of love and friendship (and even the selection of places to live and work), heavy metal – perhaps because of the inaccessibility of the institutions that produce and disseminate it – does not.

... I regard the 1970s as significant precisely for the ways in which certain types of rock (glitter, punk) accomplished important interventions in sexual politics. That these interventions and their effects were major, while heavy metal remained the most popular form of rock during this decade, is evidence of the complexity and breadth of rock culture. (Straw 1990: 109)

If we accept Straw's interpretation, then a truly comprehensive account of influences on singing style needs to consider three interwoven factors: the perceptual model aspired to, the groups who adopt it and the social make-up of the groups' fan base. With respect to the last of this triad of factors, changing tastes among the targeted audience as well as changes in the larger political picture are clearly important mechanisms in the construction of a singing style. The punk and post-punk examples covered in this and the previous section have hopefully offered some evidence for this. However, to recast Straw's sociological point in a sociolinguistic way, the weaker personal network structures of the hard rock aficionados may afford them less ability to participate in and interact with the discourse of Heavy Metal. In turn, this may explain why this generally conservative model has remained intact across time. It may also explain why it has been largely unresponsive to those shifts in the wider sociopolitical and cultural context that have impacted on the singing patterns of other genres of contemporary music. For the moment, however, these issues must remain only partially sketched as we move on to consider some current and future trends in the sociolinguistics of pop and rock singing.

The 1990s and beyond: Coming full circle?

The shifts in the way rock and pop was produced and consumed which occurred at the beginning of the 1980s became further consolidated as the decade progressed. By the start of the 1990s, popular music had been massively globalized with seventy percent of all production resting in the hands of just

five companies (Negus 1992). This globalization was accompanied by the advent of 'synergy'. This is the strategy of diversifying into directly related technologies such that a single corporation will control the production of both the music and the video, as well as the accompanying technologies such as VCR, Satellite and Hi-Hi equipment. Offset against the globalization of the industry in the 1990s was its decentralization. All five of the big music companies developed semi-autonomous divisions in many different countries, while MTV evolved into a host of regional variants. Even Indie Music, produced ostensibly by 'independent' record labels, was often ultimately controlled down the line by the big transnational corporations. As Negus remarks acerbically, indie music, while imbued with connotations of a more radical and sincere way of producing music, was really no more than 'a romantic ideology informing the buying habits of a student subcultural group' (1992: 16).

A consequence of these changes in its methods of production has led commentators to suggest that rock and pop has become fragmented into a collection of 'scattered taste markets' (Frith 1988: 5). Furthermore, video images, in spite of their pervasiveness and their 'glittering surface', tend only to homogenize the music by exhibiting 'an extraordinary sameness' of genre and performance (Frith 1988: 218). It is not surprising that this perceived homogeneity has forced bands to try to carve out their identity by searching for some generic label that marks them out as different or unique. This has resulted, not surprisingly, in massive overlexicalization of this sphere of discourse. For instance, a glance through some recent student entertainment guides reveals the following collection of designated musical genres:[7]

britpop, indie, metal, hip hop, house, goth, garage, gabba, handbag, grunge, acid, baggy, jungle, rave, retro, techno

This list, which does not even include derived subgenres like 'trip hop', 'speed garage' or 'deep house', would itself merit a separate study in lexical innovation and linguistic change. Within the remit of the present study, though, the impact of this plethora of subgenres on the singing styles of the 1990s is not easy to assess. First impressions are that a vestigial form of the US model has been retained as a general paradigm, while the punk and 1980s prestige models have variable distribution according to specific subgenre. However, these conflicting patterns are as much influenced by rock and pop's own expanding history as they are by external linguistic models. While acknowledging that these remarks require further and sustained empirical study, there is space here to offer one final, brief illustration of a singing style that perhaps raises more questions than it can answer. This is from Liam Gallagher of the band Oasis, who are (at the time of going to press, at any rate!) one of the 'phenomena' of the 1990s. Oasis's Manchester background is well-documented and band members have demonstrated their core

allegiance in many ways, including the running of benefit concerts for the ailing Manchester City football club. That lead singer Gallagher speaks in working-class Mancunian vernacular, then, is unsurprising,[8] but what is rather more intriguing is the style he employs when he sings. Here are the first few lines of the single 'Wonderwall', with significant features highlighted:

(19) Today [t ʊdɛɪ] is gonna be the day that they're gonna throw it back
      to you, [b̥ak̚t əjəʊ]
      By now you shoulda somehow realized what you
      gotta [gɑdə] do [d əʊ] ,
      I [aˑ] don't believe that anybody [badiˑ] feels the way I [aˑ] do [d̥əʊ]
      about you now ... (from *(What's the Story) Morning Glory* 1995)

   First of all, the familiar relics of the USA model are here: the t-voicing, the 'confederate' vowel in 'I' and the unrounded vowel in '*got* to' and 'any*bo*dy'. However, what is curious is the pronounced affricated realization of the word-initial alveolar stops in 'today', 'to' and 'do'. The speakers in England most commonly associated with this linguistic indicator are not from Manchester, but from Liverpool (Knowles 1978). Why should Gallagher, proud both of his Mancunian roots and of his football allegiances, adopt a feature used by perceived rivals on Merseyside? A possible explanation lies in musical influence. Risking accusations that theirs is a derivative music, Oasis make no secret of their collective admiration of the Beatles and, in particular, of John Lennon. Given the primacy and singularity of this musical influence, it is perhaps not surprising that features of the speech of vernacular Merseyside should filter into Gallagher's singing style. If so, then there is a curious circularity about all this: thirty years on, here is a band who are singing the way the Beatles might have sung had they not been trying to sound like Americans at the time. This also brings into question the current status of the USA model. Although many of its features are still widespread, the model arguably no longer has the resonances it once had, simply because of the longitudinal expansion that has taken place in rock and pop genres across the intervening years. Modern 'Britpop' bands like Oasis are now assessed in terms of how they resemble older bands in the British popular music tradition. Take, for instance, Oasis's 1997 cover version of the single 'Cum on Feel the Noize', originally released in 1973 by the glam-rock band Slade. The Oasis version sounds very 'American', it is true, but this is probably because of Slade's original, which emerged in a genre and at a time when the influence of the USA model was much stronger. To that extent, the Americanisms produced by Oasis, and possibly by other Britpop bands, are epiphenomena rather than true indices of sociolinguistic motivation. Although it may seem like a curious parallel to draw, the development of the early seventeenth century English madrigal appears to have followed a

similar pattern. Durant (1984: 120–121) explains how madrigals originated in the Netherlands, were moved from there into Italy by itinerant musicians and were eventually brought to England in the 1580s. Yet by as early as 1610, this musical form had become established as a very 'English' genre while the European sources and influences gradually faded into the background. Elsewhere in the same study, Durant notes of rock and pop music that it exhibits 'continuing conflicts in meanings and social relationships which are re-articulated through musical forms of one period, then inherited – but with differing relations between the forms and their range of possible reference and implication – by subsequent generations' (Durant 1984: 188). In the current popular music idiom, none of the certainties of the previous decades remain. In fact, as Frith predicted towards the end of the last decade, the pattern of fragmentation that began in the 1980s resulted in a 'cult of margins around a collapsed centre' becoming the 'pop world's version of the "postmodern condition"' (Frith 1988: 5). Translating this into the present framework, whereas the USA-model might seem alive and well in many musical arenas, its associations and resonances – what the sociologists of music might refer to as its 'affective organization' (Grossberg 1990: 122) – have altered inexorably over the years. Put bluntly, a mid-Atlantic accent now is a very different thing from a mid-Atlantic accent back then.

This article began with a review of Trudgill's seminal study of pop and rock singing styles. It then suggested ways in which Trudgill's original theoretical model might be adapted in order to account for subsequent developments in linguistics, especially in discourse analysis and register studies, and in ethnomusicology and the sociology of pop. At the most general level, it has been argued that a study of influences on singing styles needs to focus on three interrelated factors: the nature of the perceptual linguistic model aspired to, the nature of the pop and rock bands who adopt it and the nature of the bands' targeted audience. Such a study also needs to take into account those aspects of the wider sociopolitical and cultural context which act as determinants on particular singing styles. However, the findings of the present study, while perhaps foregrounding some important issues and areas for investigation, must remain to some extent provisional. For a start, stronger empirical evidence is needed to help consolidate claims about linguistic patterns in the data. Whereas the present study has attempted to extrapolate from narrow, qualitative linguistic analysis to wider sociocultural concerns, there is no doubt that an extensive quantitative investigation of phonology and lexico-grammar would be a valuable next step in the development of a comprehensive sociolinguistic model of pop and rock singing.

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Notes

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1. All but one of the passages transcribed here and throughout this paper have been selected by the author, although the earlier pieces have been chosen specifically to illustrate Trudgill's categories. The exception is the sequence from Cliff Richard's 'Bachelor Boy' which appears in Trudgill (1983: 149).

2. Mick Jagger pronounces this slightly lengthened and rounded schwa with lower mandible articulation which Gunn (personal communication) suggests is a characteristic of certain speech styles found south of the Mason-Dixon line in the USA. (Readers might be able to picture Jagger's 'jawy' articulation in his performances of this and other songs). Although this tends to support the idea that he is strongly accommodating towards a localized target group, this issue will be returned to and re-assessed in a later section of the paper.

3. Reported in feature interview, on VH–1 cable music channel, 20/11/90. Curiously, Knopfler's 'New York pattern' is seemingly code-mixed in the subsequent line of the song, where he offers a Southern States style realization of the item 'guitar' [see transcription].

4. Although video became the pivotal mode of image transmission, Negus reports a telling example of how an album of re-released material by Bryan Ferry, a former member of 70s 'glam rock' band Roxy Music, was marketed in the early 1980s (Negus 1992: 79). Market research revealed that earlier images of Ferry, in the sequins and glitz that was the stock-in-trade of glam rock attire, were unlikely to 'sell' if used on the album cover, so in their place was put a full length black and white shot of Ferry in an expensive classic tailored suit. By all accounts, sales of the album were excellent.

5. It is worth noting that, in spite of earlier remarks about subject matter and style-shifting, topic of discourse is not enough to steer the USA model off course in this extract. This song is allegedly about a transvestite who lived in the university area of Belfast, and the song is laden with references to actual place-names and locations in the city.

6. The USA-model was also drawn upon extensively over the years by European hard rock bands whose singers were non-native speakers of English. Examples include: Yngwie Malmsteen (Swedish), Golden Earing (Dutch) and the Michael Schenker Group (German). In Japanese heavy metal, the USA model is comparably strong, though of course their formative English language model is as likely to be derived in the first place from General American as it is from British English.

7. The entertainment guides from which these terms are taken (and this is only a selection from a much larger pool) are: *SUB Special* Term 3, summer 1998; *Wipeout*, April 1998 and *Hot Press* 1998, Volume 22, No. 5.

8. The data used to support the claim that Liam Gallagher speaks the working class accent and dialect of the Greater Manchester area is taken from two recorded interviews with the singer released on the following special edition CDs: *Oasis: Interview Disk and Fully Illustrated Book* (1996) and *The Story and the Glory: The Rockview Interviews* (1996). The linguistic parameters used to identify this urban vernacular are taken from Wells (1982: 349–376) and (1984), and Shorrocks (1980). These interviews, and their supporting documentation, also give some measure of just how substantial has been the impact of the Beatles on Oasis.

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