Staging Language in Bermuda: Phonology and Parodic Performance of Bermudian English

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Abstract

This thesis examines the link between social conditions and linguistic practice in Bermuda, a British Overseas Territory in the North Atlantic Ocean. Bermuda is an under-studied, often misunderstood context, home to a unique dialect of English which is under-represented in the literature on Lesser-Known Varieties (LKVEs). It is also an unusual, not-quite-post-colonial, 'offshore' setting with an unusual immigration pattern to match, which has led to intense debates about the meaning of national identity and 'authentic' Bermudian-ness. These debates are, inevitably, related to and reflected in language.

This thesis argues that Black Bermudian English (BBerE) is a sub-variety of BerE arising from a history of enslavement, segregation and socioeconomic inequality, and goes on to show that BBerE is both mocked and simplified in parodic dialect performances, both written and spoken, common among white Bermudian men. The first part of the thesis gives a phonological overview of BBerE, and introduces Bermuda as a sociolinguistic setting, providing a foundation for further analyses of the variety. The second part focuses on various forms of dialect performance among a white male community of practice well-known for theatrical stylisations of BerE.

Qualitative and quantitative analyses of performances which occurred during sociolinguistic interviews find them to be a form of racialised mock language. Contextual analysis shows that they construct a caricature with socially undesirable tastes, skills, and habits, and link these qualities to salient features of BBerE. Sociophonetic analysis compares the pronunciations of phonological variables among black and white speakers, and finds that white speakers' performances target black variants missing from their own repertoire, while failing to produce the same complex patterning found in the black group.

The speakers interviewed for this thesis overtly express the view that their performances represent legitimate self-parody, based on the idea that all Bermudians are immigrants from somewhere or another; 'there's no such thing as a native Bermudian.' I argue, however, that the performances themselves reveal contradictions in this ideology. A 'colourblind' political stance is invoked to justify the appropriation of a black variety which the performers do not themselves speak, and which they deploy in ways that reproduce racist stereotypes; at the same time this appropriation is motivated by an essentialist idea of black Bermudian speakers as being 'authentic' in a way white speakers are not. The thesis introduces a wealthy island context to the literature on racialised dialect parody, prompting further investigation into privileged peripheries like Bermuda and advocating a nuanced and particularistic approach to the difficult sociolinguistic problem of authenticity.

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Every time you hear an expansive white man drop into his version of black English, you are in the presence of blackface's unconscious return.
(Lott 1993:5)

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* * *

A great deal has happened in Bermuda during the years I have been working on this project. A Consultative Immigration Reform Working Group was commissioned following intense political debate over immigration, which coincided with my fieldwork. There was a change of government in 2017. Most recently, the dialect performances which are at the centre of this thesis were celebrated in a dedicated public event, and then — I believe for the first time — challenged openly, and subjected to frank discussion (White 2018b,c,d,e). I hope this thesis will contribute to the conversation about dialect parody, race and identity in Bermuda, in support of the voices that need to be heard the most.

Abstract

This thesis examines the link between social conditions and linguistic practice in Bermuda, a British Overseas Territory in the North Atlantic Ocean. Bermuda is an under-studied, often misunderstood context, home to a unique dialect of English which is under-represented in the literature on Lesser-Known Varieties (LKVEs). It is also an unusual, not-quite-post-colonial, 'offshore' setting with an unusual immigration pattern to match, which has led to intense debates about the meaning of national identity and 'authentic' Bermudian-ness. These debates are, inevitably, related to and reflected in language.

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The speakers interviewed for this thesis overtly express the view that their performances represent legitimate self-parody, based on the idea that all Bermudians are immigrants from somewhere or another; 'there's no such thing as a native Bermudian.' I argue, however, that the performances themselves reveal contradictions in this ideology. A 'colourblind' political stance is invoked to justify the appropriation of a black variety which the performers do not themselves speak, and which they deploy in ways that reproduce racist stereotypes; at the same time this appropriation is motivated by an essentialist idea of black Bermudian speakers as being 'authentic' in a way white speakers are not. The thesis introduces a wealthy island context to the literature on racialised dialect parody, prompting further investigation into privileged peripheries like Bermuda and advocating a nuanced and particularistic approach to the difficult sociolinguistic problem of authenticity.

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List of Abbreviations

ABerE . . . . . African Bermudian English

AAE . . . . . African American English

BBerE . . . . . Black Bermudian English

BDA . . . . . Bermuda Democratic Alliance

BerE . . . . . Bermudian English

CD . . . . . Compact Disc

{BR} . . . . . Transcription: audible breath

{CG} . . . . . Transcription: cough

CUREC . . . . Central University Research Ethics Committee

GenAm . . . . . General American English

IPA . . . . . International Phonetic Alphabet

ISAE . . . . . Indian South African English

JamE . . . . . Jamaican English

JC . . . . . Jamaican Creole

{LG} . . . . . Transcription: laughter

LKVE . . . . . Lesser-Known Variety(ies) of English

{LS} . . . . . Transcription: lip smack

LVC . . . . . Language Variation and Change

NTUU . . . . . *Not The Um Um Show*

{NS} . . . . . Transcription: noise

OBA . . . . . One Bermuda Alliance

PLP . . . . . People's Labour Party

PRC . . . . . Permanent Resident's Certificate

RP . . . . . Received Pronunciation

SAE . . . . . Stylised Asian English

UBP . . . . . United Bermuda Party

UK . . . . . United Kingdom

USA . . . . . United States of America

WhBerE . . . . White Bermudian English

(( )) . . . . . Transcription: quiet or unclear speech

Part I

ARIEL: Safely in harbour
Is the king's ship; in the deep nook, where once
Thou call'dst me up at midnight to fetch dew
From the still-vex'd Bermoothes, there she's hid.

Shakespeare, *The Tempest* 1.2: 226-229

1 Introduction

The territory of Bermuda has been the subject of myths and legends throughout its history. The *Sea Venture*'s shipwrecked survivors discovered that the 'Isle of Devils,' rumoured among mariners to be 'the most dangerous, infortunate and most forlone place in the world' was 'in truth the richest, healthfullest, and pleasing land. . . as ever man set foote upon' (Jourdain 1610, in Jarvis (2010:15)). Bernhard explains that 'historians of European colonisation have also bypassed Bermuda, preferring the larger, richer terrain of the Americas and the Caribbean islands,' but overlooking 'a history unique in the annals of colonisation' (1999:1). Today, stories of the 'Bermuda Triangle' dominate public perception of the islands, and Bermuda's physical location is commonly believed to be over 1000 miles south of its actual latitude.

Until recently, Bermuda's linguistic status has been equally as overlooked and mythologized. Although Bermuda is the oldest remaining and the most densely populated British Overseas Territory, its dialect is chronically under-studied. The only 20th century study of any length was Ayres' description of the dialect in 1933, and only in the last ten years have empirical studies begun to emerge (Eberle and Schreier 2013; Eberle 2018; Fubler 2011). Bermudian English (BerE) thus represents an *even lesser*-known LKVE, 'still vex'd' as a site of linguistic enquiry.

Bermuda is also 'still vex'd' as a (post-)colonial territory, and as a deeply divided and unequal society. I will begin with a history of the island and of its population

in Chapter 2, noting how accounts of Bermuda and Bermudian society, particularly those coming from a white perspective, have often glossed over the issue of race, from the brutality of slavery to the islands' contemporary political landscape. I will argue in Chapter 3 for at least two sub-varieties of BerE, brought about by social identity factors and conditions of dialect contact in Bermuda; it is clear that the historic and continued racial segregation of Bermudian society is reflected linguistically in differences between the speech of its racialised populations. Part I will introduce Bermuda and Black Bermudian English (BBerE), proposing that the social and historical conditions in Bermuda from 1609 to today necessitate a race-conscious approach to describing its linguistic varieties (c.f. Alim (2016a)).

The variationist tradition of sociolinguistics began, of course, with a study of a small island. Labov's work on diphthongs in Martha's Vineyard paved the way for examining language variation and change through the lens of social conditions and related speaker identities (1963). Labov found that young Vineyarders' positive orientation towards island life was reflected in the reallocation of archaic features, formerly declining in usage, among young males, and explained this pattern as an identity-signalling response to the island's influx of 'summer visitors' and increasing contact with the mainland. In Martha's Vineyard, 'different groups have had to respond to different challenges to their native status' (1963:36); as this thesis will show, the same is very much true in Bermuda.

The idea of 'native status' as it relates to language is of great interest to sociolinguists. Increasingly, as the field has developed, this has led to a focus on the relationship between geographically mobile speakers and discourses about national identity, and how this is reflected not only in language change, as examined by Labov, but also in stylistic practice. Part II of this thesis addresses these questions in Bermuda, where belonging, nationality, and 'native status' are hotly debated subjects.

The inspiration for this project came from an interview I conducted with a white Bermudian woman in 2011, as part of my undergraduate degree. At the close of the interview, I asked, 'what makes someone Bermudian?' — and she replied:

> I think you kind of have to have the accent actually, or at least be able to mimic it if you're gonna be Bermudian. . . cause if you can't copy a Bermudian accent, then, you're not really so sure. ("Ryan")[1]

The implication that *being able to mimic* an accent might be grounds for 'Bermudianness' fascinated me. Was it true? What do skills in impersonation have to do with belonging and national identity? How convincing must the mimicry be, and what are the parameters? Would other Bermudians agree? And how should we approach this question as sociolinguists?

At the same time as being fascinated, as a white 'paper Bermudian'[2], I was not completely new to this type of discourse about Bermudian identity. I was born in Bermuda to British immigrant parents and was granted Bermudian status in 2010. I grew up with, and for a number of years participated in, a type of complicated ideological footwork undertaken by white Bermudians and residents of Bermuda who feel their belonging to be in question, or their access to legal citizenship to be under threat. Throughout the course of the fieldwork for this project, white participants gave impressively creative answers to the same question I asked the speaker in the above. One participant called Bermudian identity 'almost a self-designation'; it appears that, for some, Bermudian identity can be whatever you want it to be.

Immigration, citizenship and identity are highly charged subjects in Bermudian society, and 'how Bermudian are you?' is a central social question. I will explain in Chapter 2 how this is inextricably linked to the history of Bermuda and Bermudians. In large part, it has to do with the demographic controls and systematic disenfranchisement of black Bermudians that have been in operation since the settlement of the islands, and it is also related to Bermuda's 20th century turn to international business as its primary industry. Later in the thesis, Chapter 5 will demonstrate that this setting has given rise to a range of linguistic performance practices, and outlines these in their written, spoken, and computer-mediated forms.

[1] Information about participants, including pseudonyms, is given in later chapters, and in Appendix A.

[2] 'Paper Bermudian' is a term used in Bermuda to refer to residents with legal citizenship but short or no ancestral heritage on the islands. This is discussed at more length in Chapter 2.

Chapters 6 and 7 will look in close detail at a specific type of linguistic display in Bermuda: parodic performance of BerE among a white male community of practice (Eckert 2000; Wenger 2000). These chapters are concerned with investigating the social meaning of these performances. How do they relate to their social and political setting, and, specifically, to race in the Bermudian context? What motivates them, and how are they evaluated locally? Chapters 6 and 7 address these questions differently, since, as Schilling has noted, it is useful to combine 'the broad approach of the quantitative sociolinguist and the in-depth approach of the discourse analyst/interactional sociolinguist' (2004:190) in the examination of linguistic features and the ways in which they are used to construct personae.

Chapter 6, therefore, will take a qualitative approach, analysing performances, metalinguistic commentary and discussions about race and identity which took place in interviews conducted with members of this group of white men in 2016. There I assess the content and shared themes of the performances, and the characterological figure (Agha 2003) they construct. Chapter 7 will approach the same data from a quantitative sociophonetic perspective. I will examine the behaviour of a number of stereotyped variables among black and white speakers and across linguistic styles, in order to establish whether the white speakers' performances are racialised. Do white performers aim at black variants in their theatrical displays of Bermudian-ness? If so, are they accurate in their impersonations? And what can the phonetic properties of stylised dialect performances tell us about their social meaning? Ultimately this thesis will ask, by way of historically contextualised qualitative and acoustic phonetic analysis, whether the parodic performances of a group of white Bermudian men represent a type of racialised dialect mockery.

Racial stereotyping via dialect parody has been the subject of public discussion in recent years. In 2017, comedian Hari Kondabolu released the documentary *The Problem with Apu*, addressing the representation of *The Simpsons* character Apu Nahasapeemapetilon, the Indian immigrant who owns the Kwik-E-Mart. Apu is voiced by the actor Hank Azaria, whom Kondabolu has described as 'a white guy doing an impression of a white guy making fun of my father' (2012). For Kondabolu and the

interviewees in the documentary, Apu represents a caricature of a South Asian-American immigrant, and his voicing by a white actor for the purposes of entertainment can be compared to blackface minstrelsy in the early 20th century.

Linguistics has a part to play in exposing this type of language-mediated racial stereotyping, or 'linguistic blackface' (Bucholtz and Lopez 2011). As Sclafani has commented, work on dialect parody 'has revealed covert racist meanings present in the parodic imitation of marginalised speech varieties' (2012:124). There is, however, a need for research on language mocking in a more diverse range of contexts. Although there is a well-established literature — to be discussed in Chapter 4 — on racialised mock language, island contexts and particularly privileged peripheries like Bermuda are under-represented. In this thesis, I will propose that looking at language, identity and belonging in a context like Bermuda can shed light on the ideologies surrounding dialect performance, and highlights the importance of a nuanced, particularistic approach to the difficult sociolinguistic issue of authenticity.

In 'Three Waves of Variation Study,' Eckert (2012) describes the fundamental change in variationist sociolinguists' analytic practices from the birth of the discipline until now. In many ways, the study of performance requires perspectives both from first- and third-wave approaches to variation, and allows us to draw connections between the two. Importantly, third-wave approaches to speaker agency have allowed performance to become a central source of data for variationists. Further, through performance we can see highlighted the features that are enregistered, stereotyped, *perceived* as part of the style of a certain group, and then used as stylistic resources. Often, however, these are not the *actual* features — or are not performed with the same acoustic or other specific properties — used by the group being voiced or parodied. This highlights the tensions between, for example, approaches which attribute features to groups defined on a macro-social level (first-wave), and 'stylistic features as resources' (third-wave) approaches. Both are needed, and both are relevant, since performances draw on social and linguistic distinctions between groups — both real and imagined — and at the same time reinforce them. The structure of this thesis is designed to reflect this need; a study of stylised performances of BBerE (to be found in Part II) must be informed by

an understanding its history, social context, politics, and the phonology of the variety being performed (provided in Part I).

It is tempting to present Bermuda as an exceptionally unusual sociolinguistic setting; set apart as a tiny, originally uninhabited, geographically isolated but internationally connected island; a tax haven with a very particular immigration pattern and politics to match. These characteristics of Bermuda certainly make it an interesting place to study and explore as linguists. As Labov points out, however, 'most investigators describe their own community as exceptional, rife with dialect mixture and chaotic variation as compared to the homogeneous nature of traditional speech communities' (1972:109). In fact, 'homogeneous communities are also myths' (*ibid.*), and really every linguistic context is as 'unusual' as the next, the common denominator being that whatever the local conditions, they are inevitably connected to language. Accordingly, this thesis will show how the local conditions of Bermuda can be related to the linguistic attitudes and practices of its inhabitants.

An understanding of linguistic variation, language attitudes, and the stylised performance of dialect is enhanced by exploring the historical and ideological processes that make resources for these practices available.

(Johnstone 2006:77)

2 Introducing Bermuda

2.1 32°19'59" N / 64°45'0" W

Bermuda is a British Overseas Territory with a land area of 20.6 square miles, colonised in 1612 by the British following the wreck of the *Sea Venture* in 1609. The question *where is Bermuda?* is a complex one which can be answered in a number of ways and from numerous perspectives. A map of the islands, also showing their location relative to the USA and Caribbean, is given in Figure 2.1. Geographically speaking, Bermuda is located in the North Atlantic. Although it is often mistakenly thought to be part of the Caribbean, Bermuda is actually around 1000 miles further north; the Bahamas, which represent the most northerly landmass in the Caribbean Sea, are 909 miles away from Bermuda.

This being said, Bermuda occupies an ambiguous socio-geographical space. As a British dependency that is physically located much closer to the North American mainland than to the British Isles, Bermuda has been subject to cultural and linguistic influences from both sides of the Atlantic, with their relative dominance fluctuating over the centuries. And, although physically distant from the Caribbean, Bermuda is significantly culturally affiliated with it owing to the heritage — either far-removed or recent — of many Bermudians. This is often overlooked in descriptions of Bermudian culture, as Outerbridge captures in her observation that ‘ Bermuda is not only isolated geographically, but is also outside of any academic discourses concerning other Caribbean islands and

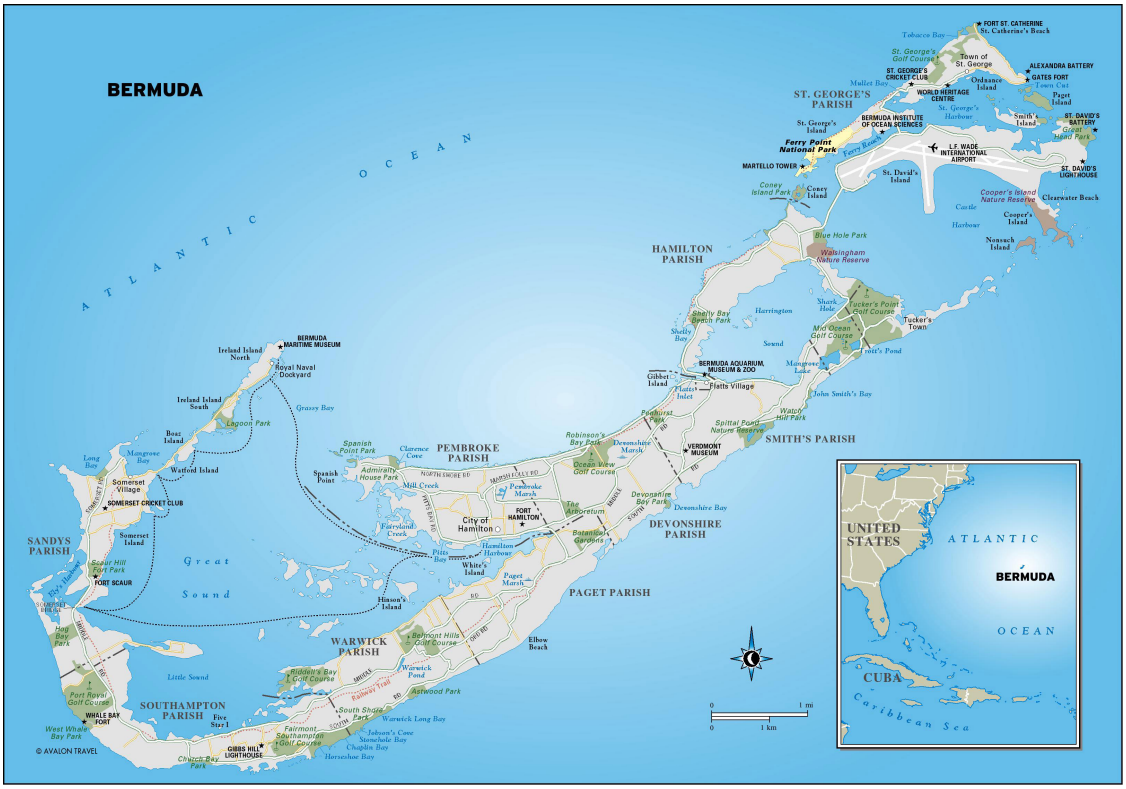


Figure 2.1: Road and political map of Bermuda (Vidiani 2018).

Africa: especially discussions about enslavement, colonisation and decolonisation of its people, politics, economics, history and education systems' (2013:61-62).

From a political standpoint, 'Bermuda's not quite colonial, not quite postcolonial status bears utmost importance in understanding Bermudian identity' (Ross 2018). Bermuda is the oldest and the most populous surviving British colony. It also has a degree of autonomy: a self-governing territory, Bermuda is home to one of the oldest continuous parliaments in the world, which held its first session in 1620. The issue of whether Bermuda should become independent has been an important theme in Bermudian politics for nearly a century.

Characterisations of Bermuda and interpretations of its history often carry an ideological agenda, and it is important to recognise that a large proportion of research and education on Bermudian history has come from a white perspective (e.g. Tucker (1983); Zuill (1983); Bernhard (1999)). In the sections that follow, I have tried to present a brief but balanced account of the islands' history, demographic makeup and political landscape, since a full understanding of social conditions is an essential foundation for any

linguistic analysis of BerE. This is all the more important when investigating linguistic differences between racialised groups and the social meaning of linguistic performances, which are key goals of Part II of this thesis.

2.2 The history of Bermudians

Bermuda was probably discovered in 1503 by the Portuguese explorer Juan de Bermúdez (Zuill 1983:3). Neither he nor subsequent Spanish and Portuguese passers-by attempted to settle the island, probably because of its treacherous reefs, and myths that it was haunted by devils. Significantly, the island was uninhabited when it was discovered — making it as close to a linguistic tabula rasa as is possible — and it remained so until the British ship the *Sea Venture* was wrecked on its shores in 1609, marking the beginning of human settlement on the island. The absence of an indigenous group at the time of settlement is a politically charged issue, and often mentioned in debates about Bermudian identity and immigration — this is discussed at greater length below. This section structures the story of Bermuda around the various groups of people who have come to live there, since race and immigration are both crucial to an understanding of the island, past and present, as a sociolinguistic landscape.

Three 17th century texts provide us with accounts of the *Sea Venture* landing and early colonisation: William Strachey's *True Reportory of the Wreck* (2013)[1610], Sylvester Jourdain's *Discovery of the Barmudas* (2013)[1610], and Captain John Smith's *Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England and the Summer Isles* (1632). Strachey's and Jourdain's accounts are generally accepted to have inspired Shakespeare's 1611 play *The Tempest*[1]. The *Sea Venture*, also known as the 'Third Supply', was bound for the colony of Jamestown, Virginia, but was wrecked deliberately by Admiral Sir George Somers on 28th July, 1609, in order to survive its battle with a severe hurricane. Over a nine-month period, 150 survivors lived on Bermuda and constructed two vessels from Bermuda cedar and wood salvaged from the wreck. During this time the first native Bermudian was born:

[1] Popular comparisons of Bermudian with Elizabethan English based on this fact, however, are misguided, not least because of these diarists only Strachey actually went to Bermuda, and his was only a very fleeting visit.

Bermuda Rolfe was daughter to John Rolfe (who later famously married Pocahontas in Virginia), and Strachey's goddaughter, but died shortly afterwards (Strachey 2013 [1610]).

The *Deliverance* and the *Patience* set sail from Bermuda for Jamestown in May 1610, carrying all the survivors but two. Edward Waters, who had murdered a co-adventurer, and Christopher Carter, who had been convicted of unknown offences, are reported to have fled into the woods to escape punishment, preferring 'to end their days [there] than stand to their trials and the event of Justice' (Smith 1632). A third survivor, Edward Chard, joined them in November of the same year, when Sir George Somers returned to Bermuda from starving Jamestown to gather supplies. Somers did not survive the voyage and his heart is now buried in the former Bermudian capital of St. George's.

Chard, Waters and Carter, also known as the 'Three Kings,' remained alone in Bermuda for two years until the arrival of Bermuda's first governor, Richard Moore, who brought 50 settlers with him aboard the *Plough* (Zuill 1983:62). Chard and Waters later left Bermuda, making Carter the first true Bermudian settler in the sense that he was the only *Sea Venture* passenger to stay in Bermuda until he died (*ibid.*). As William Zuill points out, 'the real settlement of Bermuda starts with the arrival of the ship *Plough* in 1612, bringing white settlers from England, and the return of the ship *Edwin* from the West Indies in 1616 with an Indian[2] and a Negro on board. Therefore, representatives of each of Bermuda's main races were already on the island by early in the seventeenth century' (1983:51).

Very little information about the precise geographical origins of early settlers is available. Sir John Henry Lefroy, a former governor of Bermuda and editor of Nathaniel Butler's *Historye of the Bermudaes*, complained in his preface that 'it is much to be regretted that no trace exists in the colony of the list of passengers and immigrants' (1882:xiv). The same problem bothers the modern researcher, as most passenger lists or shipping manifests relating to Bermudian settlement have not survived, and therefore any investigation into the linguistic input of early settlers is limited. Ayres reports that 'Dr [Henry C] Wilkinson offered me as his opinion, based on unpublished researches,

[2]Typically, 'Indian' in the 17th century texts is used to describe slaves or indentured servants who were brought to Bermuda from North America — further detail on the origins of North American slaves in Bermuda is given below.

that the Bermudian settlers came largely from the Eastern counties and the city of London' (Ayres 1933:4), but the basis for these speculations is unclear. Between 1612 and 1615, the Virginia Company dispatched 600 settlers to Bermuda (Jarvis 2010:12). Smith records ships bringing a steady supply of settlers every few months from 1612 onwards, one of them in 1619 carrying 'diuers Gentlemen of good fashion, with their wiues and families' (1632) but further detail about the passengers is very rarely given. My own preliminary archival survey of early Bermuda deeds and church records, however, corroborates Wilkinson's belief that many came from London and its surrounds, since many entries link named parties to those regions. Contemporary Bermudian names also support this: 'names of a number of the earliest settlers who arrived during the first fifteen years still crop up in Bermuda today' (Zuill 1983:68) and these include traditionally Southern English names such as Atwood, Ball, Burrows, Cooper, Frith, Norwood, Paynter, Pitt, Reynor, Smith, Swan, Trott, Tucker and Watlington. Of course, this does not give enough information for any comprehensive overview of the early population's origins, but it does cohere with the predominant pattern in the Caribbean and, later, colonies in the Southern Hemisphere, whose 'most influential founder stock' came from Greater London (Schreier 2008:96).

In their early histories, Bermuda and British America had a mutually influential relationship. Jarvis describes how Bermuda's 'intercolonial diaspora' helped to knit early America together' and 'underpinned [Bermuda's] maritime economy (Jarvis 2010:318-319). As Mercer points out, 'many of the leading Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia families either were descended from or closely related to early Bermuda settlers' (Mercer 1982:1). Although, due to overcrowding in early Bermuda, it is unlikely that there was significant migration to the island from America, it seems likely that over the years some cultural (and linguistic) influence was brought to bear through the connections of these 'Atlantic families,' and recent research has suggested that early Bermudians had a significant part to play in colonial North America (Jarvis 2010).

Information about the origins of Bermuda's black population is also relatively scarce. In 1616, the *Edwin* brought 'one Indian and a Negro (the first thes Ilands ever had)' (Butler 1882:84) to Bermuda from the Caribbean (Zuill 1983:91). Packwood explains

that 'these two were treated as indentured servants, but arrivals, later in the century, were slaves. This was the beginning of trade in human beings, which lasted until Emancipation, in 1834' (1975:54). In 1623 Bermuda became one of the earliest territories to introduce laws to 'restrayne the insolencies of the Negroes' (*ibid.*:7), and indentured servitude was fully replaced by chattel slavery by 1626. Slaves were primarily abducted and brought to Bermuda from the Caribbean and North America, and few black Bermudians came directly from Africa; this fits with Bermuda's lack of a creole. Two Bermudian ships, however, 'actually sailed from Bermuda to Africa, for the sole purpose of securing slaves' (Packwood 1975:54) in Callebar on the Guinea coast, and it is known that at least some slaves were brought to Bermuda as 'prizes' captured from other ships en route to the 'New World' by Bermudian privateers. Captain John Powell brought the first large group of African slaves to Bermuda this way in 1617 (Winfield 2014; Heywood and Thornton 2007; Packwood 1975) and since Bermuda was England's main base for privateering prior to 1635, some West Africans of the Charter Generation are likely to have been acquired and brought to Bermuda during the earliest years of slavery (Heywood and Thornton 2007:255). These slaves may have encountered English before their arrival in Bermuda; Bernhard speculates that some may have been English-speaking 'white negroes' from coastal West Africa (1999:23).

Today, some Bermudians can trace their heritage back to the Caribbean, particularly to those territories with which Bermuda had close relationships in the first two centuries of settlement. Slaves were transported between Bermuda and the Northern Bahamas, where Bermudians settled the colony of Eleuthera in the late 1640s, and the Turks and Caicos Islands, which were controlled by Bermudian salt traders from 1676 to 1803. The *History of Mary Prince* (2000)[1831] gives a revealing account of the traffic of slaves between Bermuda and the salt ponds of Grand Turk. Additionally, many Bermudians have ancestral connections in the islands of Barbados, Saint Thomas, and Saint Christopher (St Kitts) (Packwood 1975; Philip 2003; Famous 2014).

When chattel slavery became entrenched, it was under different conditions from those common in other colonies. Bermuda's topography prevented it from developing a plantation-based economy; attempts at tobacco cultivation largely failed, and large-scale

sugar and cotton plantations such as those found in North America and the Caribbean did not develop in Bermuda due to limited land area (Tucker 1983:62). There were, therefore, 'no large groups of men, women and children gathered under the control of one estate' (Zuill 1983:90), and no system of absentee ownership (Hodgson 1974:143); instead slaves were primarily forced into labour that brought about relatively close contact between slaves and slave owners on small 'homesteads' (see Cutler et al. (2006:2066) and Outerbridge (2013:7). Packwood (1975) gives a thorough account of the occupations of Bermudian slaves, which included carpentry, domestic labour, field work, masonry, pearl-diving, ship-building and sailing.

This is linguistically important, since it suggests that the conditions of language contact in Bermuda were different from those in colonies where slavery gave rise to creolisation. These differences between Bermuda and other contexts of enslavement, however, have given rise to the popular myth that Bermuda was a site of 'mild slavery,' also present in scholarly texts (e.g. Smith (1976:76)). Packwood emphasises the prevalence of this myth in *Chained on the Rock: Slavery in Bermuda*:

> The few books, dealing with 17th through early 19th century Bermuda, are more concerned with the white settlers and their survival, than with slavery. Slavery is mentioned, but in a condescending way, stating slaves were treated benevolently... A benevolent slave system would never have resulted in the numerous slave escapes and conspiracies, which occurred throughout slavery (1975:xi).

Slavery was anything but benign in Bermuda. The *History of Mary Prince* gives a first-hand account of Prince's treatment by slaveowner Robert Darrell: 'To strip me naked — to hang me up by the wrists and lay my flesh open with the cow-skin, was an ordinary punishment for even a slight offence' (2000:15)[1831]. Punishments for petty offences by enslaved Africans encoded in law included hanging, whipping, mutilation, and beheading (Winfield 2014:4). New laws and extreme periods of punishment often followed slave conspiracies and uprisings; Smith cites a youth having his head "fixed upon a spicke upon the top of the Island to the terror of all slaves that shall attempt the like feat and offence" (1976:36). Gibbet Island in Smith's Parish is named after the many hangings which took place there, and black Bermudian slave Sally Bassett was famously burned

to death in public at the 'Foot of the Lane' in Hamilton in 1730. However, the myth of benign slavery persists in Bermuda: as recently as 2013, an article entitled 'Blacks were not the only ones that suffered! Move on!' was published in the *Royal Gazette* newspaper, arguing that black Bermudians should 'count [them]selves lucky' (2013). As Outerbridge has discussed, 'simplistic and reductionist statements about the benevolence of Bermuda's white elite [convey] an underlying message to black Bermudians that they were in a better position than other Africans in the Caribbean and should not complain about their 'mild' exploitation and oppression' (2013:87).

Irish and Scottish indentured servants were imported to Bermuda largely as a result of Cromwell's invasions of both territories (Zuill 1983:91), although, again, I could find no records that shed light on their numbers or other exact details. It is believed that as a result of social ostracisation by the English settlers, Irish and Scottish immigrants intermarried with the black and Native American populations in Bermuda. Like the myth of benign slavery, the brutal treatment of Irish and Scottish indentured servants in early Bermuda is commonly confused with 'white slavery,' and used for political ends today (Royal Gazette 2013).

With regards to early Bermuda's Native American inhabitants, most are likely to have been 'members of the Pequot, Mohican, Wampanoag, and Narrangsett tribes from New England' (Bernhard 1999:114), some were brought from Central America or via the West Indies (Packwood 1975:54), and some may have been captives from wars between Europeans and Native Americans. Available records are scant and refer to small numbers — for example, Butler mentions one "Indian" slave brought from Puerto Rico in 1661 (1882:630) and records show that one Mohican man was sent from New York to Governor William Sayle in Bermuda in 1644 (Bragdon 1998:55). Bragdon's list of recorded Native American slaves, including 'all references to Indian slaves in bills of sale abstracted from the British Colonial Records as well as those mentioned in probate inventories, wills and census records' (*ibid.*), includes 130 names. According to Smith, in the latter half of the 17th century 'about eighty…Pequod Massachusetts Bay Indians,' who had been taken in the Pequot war of 1637, were sold in Bermuda, mostly to a Captain White, 'one of the largest landowners on St. David's island' (Smith 1976:25). Packwood suggests,

however, that the numbers of Native American slaves in Bermuda may be exaggerated, since many who were supposed to be brought to the islands, including this particular group, were in fact sold in Providence, Bahamas (1975:8). As explained by Bragdon (1998), it is believed that Native Americans were enslaved chiefly on the Bermudian island of St. David's, and there intermarried with black slaves.

An island-born non-white population was established early in Bermuda, and thus the period during which potentially non-English or creole-speaking slaves were arriving in Bermuda from the Americas and the Caribbean was relatively short. By the middle of the 17th century, children 'came to outnumber their African and Hispanic American parents' (Jarvis 2010:29). Zuill notes that 'most of the island's slaves were imported in the early days of Bermuda's history'; by 1670 the Government was already trying to limit their importation 'because large numbers of slaves were not necessary on a small island where the economy was based on shipbuilding and sailing' (1983:91).

This is only one of many reasons why Bermuda's black majority is and always has been slim, and its white minority large. Bermuda is unusual among (post-)colonial societies in this regard, and this is an aspect of its demographics which is essential to an understanding of power, immigration politics and race relations there today. From the beginning of Bermuda's history and throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the white oligarchy took steps to limit the black population, and to increase the white, including the banishment of freed slaves (Packwood 1975:78) and a range of social policies, family planning programmes and birth control clinics, discussed by Hodgson (1997), Bourbonnais (2016) and Winfield (2014).

Slavery was abolished in Bermuda on 1st August 1834. Eight years later, '…an Act was passed to encourage [white] Emigrants coming to these Islands from the United Kingdom…the first post-Abolition endeavour to increase, instantly, the relative size of the white populations was launched' (Robinson 1979:218). In 1847, 'the Legislature voted 400 pounds as bounties to vessels which brought in Madeira immigrants' (Zuill 1983:126), marking the beginning of Bermuda's Portuguese-descended population. Although the very first Portuguese immigrants arrived from Madeira, subsequently the majority came from the Azores (*ibid.*). While history books have often framed the government's recruitment

of Portuguese immigrants as a solution to a shortage of agricultural labourers (Tucker 1983; Zuill 1983), the timing of these bounties co-incided with the end of the eight-year apprenticeship period of former slaves, meaning they were very likely to have been 'clearly calculated to injure the black workers' (Philip 1988:3). Labour protests took place in 1853, 1903 and 1945 against government importation of Portuguese workers (*ibid.*).

Portuguese immigration accelerated in the 1920s. At first, Portuguese workers were treated as an underclass; the *Hotel and Innkeepers Act* of 1931 allowed hotels and caterers to refuse service and accommodation to Portuguese and black Bermudians (Philip 1988; Winfield 2014). During this time Portuguese immigrants lived, worshipped and intermarried with the black population and the groups became to an extent united as a labour class (Winfield 2014:10). This solidarity caused concern among the white oligarchy, however, and, as explained by Winfield in the extract below, steps were taken to renew the 'divide and conquer' strategy which had motivated Portuguese recruitment in the previous century:

> Sensing the growing power of this labour class, the government ensured the complete separation of the races by building separate schools for the Portuguese community (e.g. Gilbert Institute). Slowly over the years Portuguese Bermudians were 'whitened' in the eyes of the white dominant society and allowed access to the privileges of being white, providing access to loans, mortgages, and eventually education at the white private schools, which enabled a number of them to elevate themselves in Bermudian society. In order to facilitate their assimilation as 'white', a number of Portuguese changed their names in an attempt to be accepted. Sadly, this created a rift between the Portuguese and black Bermudian communities, which was encouraged by the white oligarchy thus ensuring that many Portuguese would vote 'white' (2014:10).

This 'divide and conquer' strategy was also brought to bear on the relationship between black Bermudians and Caribbean immigrants who came to Bermuda from the late 19th century; Outerbridge (2013) and Hodgson (1997) have discussed the troubled relationship between Bermudian and Caribbean cultural identity. Between 1901 and 1904, West Indian construction workers were specifically brought to Bermuda for the Dockyard Extension Works Project (Philip 1988). White Bermudians were concerned that these immigrants would bring 'radical' views to the island and encouraged animosity

between black Bermudians and West Indians, who were referred to using the derogatory term 'jump-up' (Winfield 2014:8). Despite poor relations early on, however, post-war consciousness movements in the Caribbean had an important influence on Bermudian black power groups (Swan 2009; Ross 2018). Bermuda's black labour and civil rights movement was led by Trinidadian-born Dr Edgar Fitzgerald Gordon from 1924 until his death in 1955 (Hodgson 1997).

Owing to its mid-Atlantic position, Bermuda was a strategic military base for both the UK and the USA in the 19th and 20th centuries. In 1940, Winston Churchill granted the USA 99-year base rights on Bermuda as a part of the *Destroyers for Bases* agreement. As a result, the US military commanded a number of naval and air bases in Bermuda between 1941 and 1995; these acted as a catalyst for post-war social, economic and political change in Bermuda. Significantly, with regards to population structure, the presence of these bases further augmented the number of white residents, and limited the black:

> By agreement, all of the American civilians brought in to build the bases were white. In part, this was a result of Bermuda's effort to limit the growth of the colony's majority black population. The commanding general of the U.S. Army's Fort Bell, for example, was told in June 1943 that the government 'would object strongly to the importation of non-white labor and would be obliged to withhold the issuance of landing permits to any non-white Base worker' (High 2009:121).

Demographic developments in 20th and 21st century Bermuda are again linked to immigration, influenced by Bermuda's newer roles of tourist destination and international business centre. The economic growth caused by a burgeoning tourist industry in the first half of the 20th century attracted international businesses in the second, which led the island to become, quite suddenly, an offshore financial centre and global leader in the insurance and re-insurance industries. This again had the effect of augmenting the white minority (and the white vote), since it led to the arrival of large numbers of workers primarily from the UK, USA and Canada employed in the private sector. Many have stayed in Bermuda permanently. In 2016, 21% of the population was non-Bermudian, and non-Bermudians held 26% of jobs (Government of Bermuda Department of Statistics 2017:206).

In many ways Bermuda's modern status as an immigration destination is unusual, particularly in comparison with the USA and UK, since immigrants, who are chiefly white and wealthy, tend to be financially better off than locals. The median income for non-Bermudians is $70,601, but $50,991 for Bermudians (Government of Bermuda Department of Statistics 2017:212), and for white non-Bermudian workers it is $102,356 (*ibid.*:213). White immigrants are known as 'ex-pats,' or, if they have been granted legal citizenship, as 'paper Bermudians'[3]. For obvious reasons, immigration is a sore subject, and often interpreted as a continuation of the historic government population control outlined above. In some cases, the growth of international business has been directly linked to the oppression of black Bermudians: a number were forced to sell their homes in the island's east end community of Tucker's Town to make way for wealthy American executives' new homes (Winfield 2014:8). Tucker's Town is now a luxury white enclave.

Bermuda was listed in 2014 as having the fourth highest per-capita GDP in the world (Central Intelligence Agency 2014), although the economy has been impacted over the last decade by the global financial crisis and British and American governmental crack-downs on corporate tax avoidance. As discussed further in 2.3 below, however, modern Bermuda remains a deeply divided and unequal society. Despite its wealth, Bermuda suffers a significant wage gap between rich and poor, aggravated by the islands' extremely high cost of living; Bermuda is regularly listed among the most expensive countries in the world, and sometimes at the top (Martin 2017). The wealth gap in Bermuda corresponds closely to the islands' racial groups (Lawrence and Codrington 2014:28). The ongoing effects of slavery, segregation and institutionalised racism are discussed in further detail in the next section.

Today, Bermuda's population (approximately 63,800) comprises descendants of all the groups discussed here. The most recent census, held in 2016, recorded a population of 63,779, made up of 52% black, 31% white, 9% mixed race, 4% Asian, and 4% 'other' (1% not stated) (Government of Bermuda Department of Statistics 2017). The white population is made up of a Portuguese-descended minority and a British-descended

[3] As in so many immigration destinations, and as discussed by Koutonin (2015), the labels given to 'non-native' residents vary according to class and race in Bermuda. For example non-white immigrants in low-pay occupations are not given the name 'ex-pat,' but simply referred to as 'immigrants.'

majority, although the census does not quantify this. Throughout this thesis I focus on the social and linguistic relationships between black and white Bermudians and residents; it is important to note that the Portuguese-descended community in Bermuda is chronically under-researched both socially and linguistically, and for many years was racialised as a separate group.

2.3 'The two Bermudas'

The importance of race to an understanding of Bermuda as a political and sociolinguistic landscape cannot be overstated. In April 2017, the Bank of Bermuda Foundation stated in its two-year comprehensive review that 'Bermuda is a historically, overtly racially segregated and fundamentally unfair society' (Burt 2017). Racial inequality is demonstrated by comparative levels of income, inherited wealth and incarceration, and roughly 98% of prisoners in Bermuda are black (Lawrence and Codrington 2014). Median incomes are $72,317 and $47,965 for white and black Bermudians respectively (Government of Bermuda Department of Statistics 2017), meaning Bermuda's extremely high cost of living hits black residents the hardest. The majority of land and wealth on the island is owned by 'old white' Bermudian families and foreign white professionals, and upward mobility among poor black residents is low, particularly owing to a failing state education system whose student population is 90% black (Lawrence and Codrington 2014:17-18). Affluent families in Bermuda tend to educate their children abroad; since the majority of wealth in Bermuda is held by white residents, this augments the existing gap in educational opportunities between groups. Figure 2.2 illustrates the percentage by race for different income categories, calculated from data on annual household income from the 2010 Bermuda census (Government of Bermuda Department of Statistics 2010).

The phasing out of legally sanctioned segregation began in 1959, following the efforts of 'The Progressive Group' and the movie theatre boycott of that year (Hodgson 1997:142-164), but as Winfield points out, 'the last vestiges of segregation codified in law were not eliminated till 1971' (2014:14). The lateness of de-segregation in Bermuda is clearly reflected in ongoing social segregation today, and left-leaning political discourse makes frequent references to the 'two Bermudas' as being racially defined:

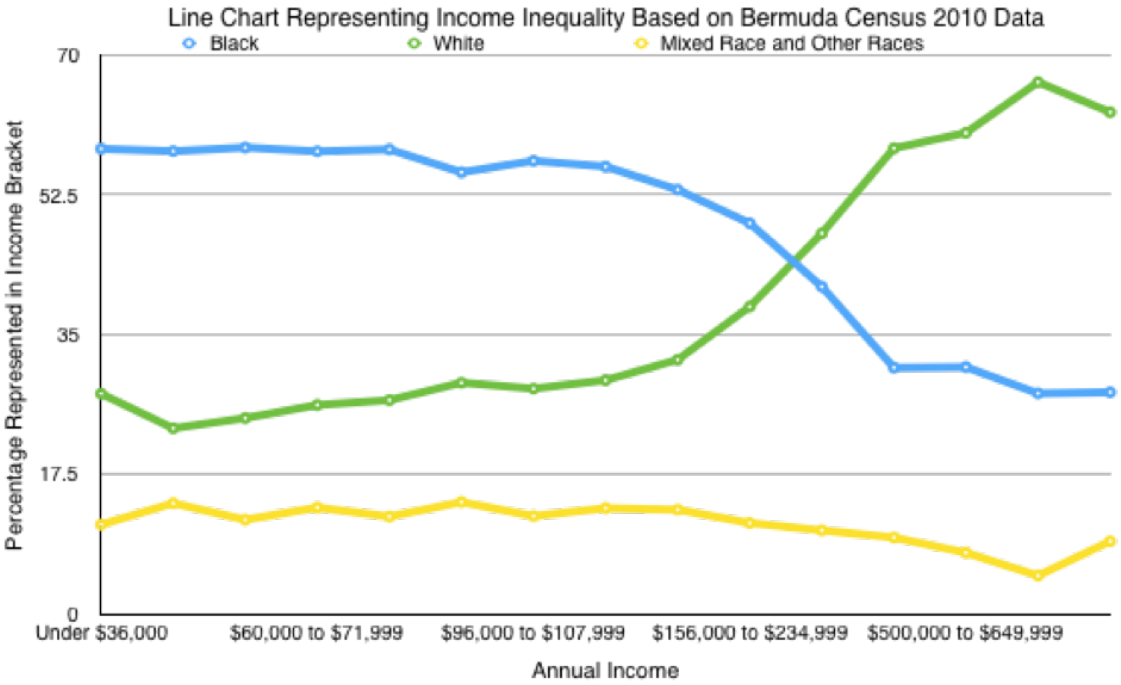


Figure 2.2: Line chart representing income inequality based on data from the 2010 Bermuda Census (Starling 2014).

> Clearly at least with respect to the employment market, there are two Bermudas, one white, one black and becoming more unequal (Burt 2017).

While this statement refers to economic inequality, the 'two Bermudas' are also used in popular discourse to refer to the very different worlds inhabited by black and white Bermudians. Broadly speaking, this is notable not only in terms of economic activity but also culturally, reflected in leisure activities, holiday traditions and culinary styles. The 'two Bermudas' were discussed directly in my data, as in (1) and (2).

(1) FOSTER : You've got the — all these mixed feelings, so on a on a day which is Bermuda Day, you'll have those who will {BR} uh, go down to watch the parade, and all that sort of stuff, and you'll have those who are out on the water and you'll have those who are on the beach. {BR} Ex-pats largely on the beaches, old Bermudians on the water, black Bermudians in town. So, you know we've got this big day when we're celebrating our unity and we're actually doing different things on the day.

(2) SIMMONS : If I was to go to Bay Club[4]? Or if he and I wants to go to Bay Club or any social club? We will fit right in, fine. One of… or a Canadian or Michael Fahy[5] or somebody come down there? Then there's gonna be a problem.

DICKINSON : In the same, in the same, in the same thing though, by the same thing, if we were to go to you know Tucker's Town for instance, we might be perceived the same way. I think that within Bermuda there are sort of — although we're all Bermudian, I think that some may perceive variations of what a Bermudian is.

Hall (1996) has emphasised that 'the central issues of race always appear historically in articulation, in a formation, with other categories and divisions and are constantly crossed and recrossed by the categories of class, of gender and ethnicity (1996:444). In Bermuda, 'questions of race and ethnicity [are] never far removed from ones of social class' (Hall 2017:18), and this is reflected not only by metrics like income, property ownership and incarceration rates, but also by the organisation of neighbourhoods, which are racially segregated often regardless of levels of affluence. Ross has shown that "'middle-class" or high-earning black families are unlikely to move from their communities, regardless of social mobility' and that 'in this sense, black Bermudians are united through race and family irrespective of class' (Ross 2018). For this reason, and in light of the ongoing socio-economic inequality described here, it is clear that, as in many societies, 'race is a more salient mechanism of social organisation than class in Bermuda' (*ibid.*).

Unsurprisingly, the 'two Bermudas' have very different political affiliations; Bermuda is even featured as a case study on Wikipedia's page on racial polarisation in politics (2018). Today, the island has two main political parties. The People's Labour Party (PLP), currently in power, was founded in 1963 and has its roots in Bermuda's civil rights movement; its adherents are primarily black and working class, and almost no white Bermudians vote PLP (Johnson 2012). The opposition, the One Bermuda Alliance (OBA) was formed in 2011 by a number of United Bermuda Party (UBP) and Bermuda Democratic Alliance (BDA) members when those parties disbanded. The UBP has

[4]Bailey's Bay Cricket Club.
[5]Michael Fahy is a white OBA senator and former Home Affairs minister.

historically been associated with white interests, the 'forty thieves'[6] and 'old money' in Bermuda, and was in power continuously from 1968 until 1998, when the PLP had their historic first win. The BDA and then the OBA were both formed on the basis that only a new party could win votes from the PLP. The OBA won the 2012 elections but lost to the PLP in 2017. Independence has been a key PLP goal since the party was founded.

2.4 Immigration, identity politics & cultural citizenship

Those who feel that they truly own this island... have a hard time holding on. Summer people, who have earned big money in big cities, are buying up the island (Labov 1972:28).

As I have already mentioned, a history of government agendas designed to limit and impoverish the black population (including birth-control policies and the deliberate courting of white immigrants) has caused immigration to be a highly sensitive topic in Bermuda. Since the islands, 21 square miles small, depend on international business as their primary industry, immigration supporters argue for a 'trickle-down' effect – 'immigration policy is economic policy' – while anti-immigration protesters argue that newcomers will take the best jobs and opportunities away from Bermudians and erode Bermudian culture.

In February 2016 there were protests and a week-long general strike following the proposals of the former Government (OBA) for immigration reform. The 'Pathways to Status' bill would have granted Bermudian citizenship to around 800 non-Bermudian residents, and permanent resident's certificates (PRCs) to around 700. Subsequently, about 100 people per year would be granted Bermuda citizenship. New Bermudians would have all rights including the vote, and holders of PRCs would be able to apply for jobs without work permits. The numbers of non-Bermudians who stood to be granted status may seem tiny, but, given the size of the community, they are significant — particularly in light of the fact that all children born to these new Bermudians (who are usually privately educated) would gain status automatically and would also be eligible to apply

[6] A local term for the 'old white' families running businesses on Hamilton's prestigious Front Street.

for jobs without restrictions. The bill was eventually postponed, but heated debate continued in print and online media, because the unrest initiated conversations about social inequality and race relations in Bermuda.

The related question of cultural citizenship is an ever-present and contentious issue, often rising to the forefront of public debate during periods of political tension over immigration; this is evident in Bermudian newspapers, online commentary and social media, and indeed in the interviews for this study. What constitutes real 'Bermudianness' is a focus of sharp disagreement in Bermuda, usually between black and white groups, since 'the colonial history of Bermuda means that race also becomes an issue of homeland. . . it is the identification of who is [the] native population, who has the greater claim to 'Bermudianness' that sets the foundation for modern social dynamics on the island' (Ross 2018). This is further complicated by the fact that 'Bermudian' is often used by white Bermudians as a 'polite' term for black[7] — one speaker in my data referred to this as a 'conspiracy of euphemism' (Williams)[8].

The fact that Bermuda was uninhabited when it was discovered is at the foundation of one viewpoint which argues that 'all Bermudians are really immigrants' and theorises equal cultural citizenship for all inhabitants — and potential inhabitants — of Bermuda. Bermudians' lack of indigenous ancestors is regularly weaponised in response to black Bermudian nationalism or 'island pride', and 'there's no such thing as a native Bermudian' is a common catch-phrase of immigration supporters, who are mostly white.

In the following quotation, Hall discusses the problem of a loss of cultural memory in post-colonial Jamaica; owing to the territory's relatively short 'pre-colonial' history, there is ambiguity surrounding the concept of 'the people'.

> Certainly in Jamaica, colonial incursion broke up local knowledges and indigenous ways of life more completely than in many other colonial encounters — in Africa, for example, or in South Asia. There the nationalist movements had the advantage of a much longer pre-colonial history, enabling their independence movements to call upon a more deeply held conception of 'the people'. But in Jamaica this was not so. 'The past' was already 'missing', 'the origin' permanently deferred, the future unfixed. This abetted an acute social forgetfulness' (Hall 2017:93).

[7](Hall 2017) notes the similar use of 'Jamaican' to signify 'non-white' in Jamaica.

[8]Full details about participants are given in Chapter 3 and in Appendix A.

Bermuda represents an even more extreme case of this cultural ambiguity; since the territory had no aboriginal population, modern nationalist movements have no 'pre-colonial history' to call upon whatsoever, meaning that the concept of 'the people' is easily undermined in political debates. Crucially, the 'no such thing as a native' stance fails to acknowledge the fact that 'Bermuda's racialised inhabitants were abducted from their place of origin and relocated to Bermuda' (Outerbridge 2013:18).

Jackson has observed that 'debates about racism and anti-racism... can be defused if they are represented as debates about 'multi-culturalism' where attitudes are less polarised and where the liberal demand for tolerance and fair play obscures deeper questions of inequality and racism' (Jackson 1989:7). Similarly, in Bermuda, multiculturalist rhetoric is a traditional UBP/OBA strategy in immigration debates as they relate to race and racism. The emphasis on tolerance normally used by immigration supporters in Western countries (where immigrants are more likely to be economically disadvantaged) is commonly used by those in Bermuda. In other words, concerns about immigration are often framed by the opposition as xenophobic (Wright 2014), and claims that black Bermudian protesters are 'reverse racist' are common. So are white Bermudians' claims to 'colour-blindness'. In other words, the idea that 'it is racist to oppose immigration' tends to be applied wholesale in Bermuda. The stance of the PLP is sometimes even compared to that of the UK Independence Party and President Donald Trump's administration, despite contextual differences. As an example of this narrative, consider the following poem by white Bermudian Jeremy Frith.

Send 'Em Back

If we sent back all the Portagees
From six generations;
If we sent back all descendants
Of the Caribbean nations;
If we sent back all the Limeys
That have come here since the wars,
And Canadians, and Americans
Who've made homes upon our shores
Then we wouldn't have a Quinton
Harry Viera or Sir John
We wouldn't have a Dr. Saul

To rest our future on;
We wouldn't have a Freddie Wade
Or even Lois Browne
We wouldn't have a lot of folks
In front or back of town.
'Cause either we're all immigrants
Or else we send 'em back.
We cannot make distinctions of
White or brown or black.
Either we're together
Or we've got to weed 'em out!
We've got to make decisions
And then act without a doubt.
For the Islands have been peopled
For about four hundred years;
They've seen a lot of happiness,
Soaked in a lot of tears.
They've watched their forests crumble
And their farmland turned to homes,
But they've always held a welcome
For those who crossed the foam.
There was no one here before us
'Cept the pigs that swam ashore[9],
And I think the pigs were Spanish
But I'm really not too sure.
So if we got really ruthless,
Stuck to true Bermudian vows,
We'd give these lovely islands back
To the cedars and cahows (Frith 1996:12).

The poem, which makes reference to Bermudians' diverse ethnic origins, reads as a sort of cosmopolitan manifesto; national borders are arbitrary; humans are humans. Frith presents Bermuda as belonging to both nobody and everybody, and paints the idea of 'true Bermudians' as a myth only those ignorant of Bermuda's history could fall for; because only cedar trees and cahows are truly 'native' to the island, 'either we're all immigrants,' or all are Bermudians on equal footing.

During a period of political turbulence in 2014, the *Royal Gazette* re-printed Frith's poem in an opinion piece. One of the comments on the article, which took the form of

[9]Frith is referring to the feral pigs that were found living on Bermuda when it was settled, probably having survived other shipwrecks, or left behind as a food source by passing sailors. The pigs are commemorated on Bermudian coinage, hence the term 'hog penny.'

a 'response' poem in the same format as Frith's, demonstrates objections to the view that no Bermudians are really 'native':

> Send them back
>
> I read Frith's poem about those adrift upon our shores
> Masterly crafted if only added a couple concepts more
> The Portuguese and Spanish discovered but the Brits stayed
> As first colonisers a new name Bermudian they made
> They brought Africans and Native American Indians we call
> And in that broth was made a new people from them all.
> Might sound strange but this is true
> Some people are not from that hue
> While most or all of us have other strains
> The DNA of 14 generations cannot be estranged
> For two hundred years alone we bred
> A distinct pedigree with unique dialogue with ummum spoken
> 1857 the bloodlines began to spread first the Portuguese then in 1880 the West Indians
> Across all the bloodlines a new breed was acroachen
> 200 more years we continued to breed
> A cosmopolitan world arguing about what now is it's seed
> Welcome both old and new
> A sample of blood will tell which one is you
> Yes after the cahows and the pigs we came
> But the first 200 years entitles us the indigenous name
> I am truly happy with all that has become a part of us
> But don't deprive me and kin the title indigenous (Royal Gazette 2014).

'Send 'Em Back' and this commentator's response clearly show that language is a part of the political debates discussed here; 'unique dialogue with ummum spoken' in the latter refers to the BBerE filler *um-um*, and Frith's collection of eye dialect poetry, entitled *Oh Gawd, I Vish Dis Ig'rance Vud Stop!* (1996), was published in the year following — and as a political commentary on — the 1995 Bermudian referendum on independence. A survey of more eye dialect material and other forms of linguistic display in Bermuda makes clear that linguistic parody has been used as a tool for voicing political views; this is addressed in Part II of this thesis. In order to understand the social meaning of linguistic parody, however, we first need a baseline description of what it is that is being performed. In Chapter 3 I give a phonological overview of Black Bermudian English

(BBerE), which, as shown in later chapters, is the variety of BerE that is enregistered as stereotypically 'local,' and invoked in dialect performances by white men.

No dialect is an island.

(Wolfram and Schilling 1997:97)

3 Introducing Bermudian English

The study of World Englishes adds to our knowledge of the processes of linguistic change, language contact and dialect contact in postcolonial settings. Many of them are spoken by small numbers, and disappearing, and thus the documentation of minority varieties represents an urgent academic priority. Accordingly, over the past 50 years there has been an increasing scholarly focus on LKVEs given that the literature on 'mainstream' varieties with large numbers of speakers (such as Australian English, Canadian English, New Zealand English and so on) is well-established (Schreier et al. 2010; Watts and Trudgill 2002). The area of sociolinguistics focusing on LKVEs has investigated hitherto un-researched dialects of English around the world for the insights they may bring into theoretical contact linguistics and dialect typology, with the aim of establishing a more inclusive global profile of English.

> Non-standard dialects of English have histories too, and these histories are sometimes especially helpful because, as a result of the absence of standardisation, many of the forces of linguistic change are played out in these varieties in a much more unfettered and revealing way than in the standard dialect... The disregarding of varieties of English [is] short-sighted in that it disregards an enormous mass of historical data from some of the most interesting and diachronically revealing varieties of the language in existence (Watts and Trudgill 2002:27).

The scope for investigating lesser-known varieties, of course, is vast; due to the extreme diversification of English caused by its colonial transplantation and diffusion,

countless offspring varieties have developed. Accordingly there has been a rapidly expanding focus on varieties such as Tristanian and St Helenian English (Schreier 2003, 2008), Falkland Islands English (Sudbury 2005) and so on.

Despite these developments, it is still the case that we know more about some Englishes than others. As Schreier notes, 'there is a discrepancy in how much we know about certain varieties of English (regional or social) vis-a-vis others' because 'amassing knowledge is often a selective rather than a representative process' (Schreier et al. 2010:1-2). It is fair to say that Bermudian English (BerE) is one of these *even lesser*-known LKVEs, since until very recently it has been missing from this new canon. Although Bermuda is the oldest remaining British Overseas Territory, and the most densely populated, its dialect is chronically under-studied. As discussed in Chapter 2, Bermuda occupies a somewhat ambiguous geographical and cultural space: it does not fit neatly into any of the geographical categories that structure Schreier et al.'s edited collection on varieties of English (2010), not being located in the British Isles (vol. 1), Americas and the Caribbean (vol. 2), South Atlantic Ocean, Africa (vol. 3), or Australasia and the Pacific (vol. 4). Perhaps for this reason, BerE is mentioned in only a small number of studies over the last century; details of the available literature are outlined below in 3.3.

3.1 Origins and influence

Bermudian English is a stabilised, non-standard koiné which was probably fully nativised around three centuries ago. As shown in Chapter 2, diverse groups have come to live in Bermuda over the course of its history, thereby contributing a range of linguistic input. Owing to the scarcity of extant historical and genealogical material, hypotheses about the origins of BerE can only be tested so far, and I do not attempt to do so in this thesis. However, based on the information available we can make a number of educated guesses about BerE and the conditions of its formation.

BerE was probably formed by the contact of multiple mutually intelligible varieties of English in a *tabula rasa* setting. To place BerE within the literature on new dialect formation, it is 'extraterritorial' (involving transplantation from one country to another) but did not involve contact with an existing variety in the new territory, unlike many

immigrant koinés (Siegel 1985) and postcolonial Englishes (Schneider 2007). Scholars of new dialect formation have recently highlighted the importance of distinguishing the evolutionary contexts of settler colonial Englishes *vs.* postcolonial Englishes (Deterding 2008; Denis and D'Arcy 2018), since in 'places such as North America, Australia and New Zealand . . . the language that has emerged has by and large been dominated by the [settler] strand and the contribution from the [indigenous] strand has had little impact' (Deterding 2008:233). As an originally uninhabited territory Bermuda does not fit neatly into either of these categories; probably the most closely comparable linguistic contexts are Tristan da Cunha (Schreier and Trudgill 2006) and St Helena, although Bermuda has not been nearly as isolated as these territories. Again, 'Bermuda's not quite colonial, not quite postcolonial status bears utmost importance' (Ross 2018) in understanding Bermuda as a sociolinguistic context.

Bermuda was not a site of significant language contact, and it is unlikely that language contact played an important role in the formation of BerE. The combination of Bermuda's lack of an aboriginal population with the social and demographic conditions in early Bermuda means that creolisation probably did not occur there (though it is possible that slaves may have brought pidgins or early creoles with them to Bermuda). As mentioned above, slaves were only transported to Bermuda from elsewhere between 1626 and 1670 before a stable Bermuda-born population of slaves was established, and the importation of slaves was limited by law. The period during which potentially non-English speaking slaves was brought to Bermuda was relatively short. Further, as discussed in Chapter 2, contact between slaves and white settlers was relatively frequent and close, in domestic or trade settings rather than plantations. In light of this, slaves are likely to have acquired English relatively quickly if they had not already come into contact with it in North America or the Caribbean. However, it is impossible to confirm these hypotheses for certain, and while it is doubtful that significant *language* contact contributed to the development of BerE, it will be important for future scholars of BerE typology to acknowledge the contrasting conditions of *dialect* contact for different groups; while Bermuda was not a settler colony involving the displacement of an indigenous

population, racial hierarchies are nonetheless central to its language ecology; this is discussed further in 3.3.

Corresponding to the groups of people who arrived in Bermuda during the course of its history, we can identify a number of varieties of English likely to have contributed to the development of BerE. In early Bermuda, these are London English, varieties of English from the southern ports of England, and developing Caribbean English varieties, particularly from the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands. From the mid-17th century, speakers of Irish and Scottish Englishes arrived in Bermuda following the Cromwellian invasions of Ireland and Scotland (Zuill 1983:91). In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the arrival of Caribbean and Azorean Portuguese migrants introduced further input. And over the last century, large numbers of American, Canadian and British English speakers have settled in Bermuda.

Having been populated as an indirect result of the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia, Bermuda has had close ties to the coastal South of the US throughout its history. During the 18th century, Bermuda and Bermudians were particularly closely linked to Virginia and Charleston, South Carolina, where Bermudian diaspora communities and intercolonial trade links were established (Jarvis 2010). Given the prominence of Bermudians in the settler communities of Southern US states, it may well be the case that BerE influenced varieties in these locations more so than the other way around. It may also be possible to view early BerE as a donor variety in some parts of the Caribbean (Eberle and Schreier 2013; Eberle 2018). Cutler, Hackert and Seymour discuss a possible 'historical Bermuda-Bahamas-Carolina triangle' (2006:2067) and connections between Bermuda, the Bahamas and the North American South are noted by La Ban in 'From Cockney to Conch' (1971).

From this description it is clear that describing BerE as an isolated variety would be misguided. Its various roles as mid-Atlantic victualling station, trading post, strategic military base, holiday destination and financial business centre make it better characterised as a hub of international activity than as a remote hideaway, and a good reminder that globalisation is not a new phenomenon (Mintz 1998; James and Steger 2014). As is evident in the phonological overview in the second half of this chapter, BerE reflects its diverse range of linguistic input over a 400-year time depth in a wide range of features;

in fact, the input and output are both so varied as to potentially confound *which* features came from *where*. Nevertheless, BerE is often presented as a perfectly preserved relic of a 'founder' variety, much in the same way as Englishes of Appalachia (Montgomery 2008), Tristan da Cunha (Schreier 2003), and the North Carolina Outer Banks (Wolfram and Schilling 1996). Ayres, for example, claimed in 1933 that the dialect 'presents us with an exact picture of what it is necessary to suppose English of the 17th and early 18th centuries to have been' (1933:6) while a current Government-produced 'Media Information Kit' states that 'the typical Bermudian accent can still be traced to Elizabethan English' (Gallagher and Gregory 2015:2). A recent travel feature in the Boston Globe advertised Bermuda thus: 'a surprisingly short hop from Boston, this friendly little island has plenty of superlatives to keep you busy — all served with a British accent' (Gehrman 2015). Of course, some features of BerE probably serve as evidence of 'colonial lag' (Görlach 1987), but the variety also demonstrates many unique features, and this is likely to be because of its significant time depth. In light of this complexity, I do not attempt in this overview to trace nor to account for every feature of BerE.

3.2 Early studies

Cutler et al. call BerE 'one of the most severely under-researched varieties of English' (Cutler et al. 2006:2066), and Aceto and Williams state that, as part of their aim of surveying under-represented parts of the Caribbean, they 'would have welcomed a paper on the English of Bermuda, but no researcher stepped forward to provide us with one' (2003:xvi). Their comments neatly summarise BerE's status in the sociolinguistic literature: under-represented, and usually mentioned only to say that information is scarce or unavailable (Wells 1982; Trudgill and Hannah 2002; Aceto 2008; Williams 2010). In the last decade, however, BerE has received more attention from scholars. In the remainder of this section I give an overview of the early sociolinguistic material relating to BerE; 3.3 includes details of more recent studies.

The first written description of BerE was by Harry Morgan Ayres, a Professor of English at Columbia University, and appeared in *American Speech* in 1933. Although the article is brief and impressionistic — Ayres excuses himself for any omissions in the

Example in Ayres	Lexical set	Realisation
hat	TRAP	[ɛ]
grass	BATH	[ɑː], [æ]
log/haunted	LOT/THOUGHT	[ɔ], [ɑ]
ten	DRESS	[æ]
fair	SQUARE	[əɪ]
place	FACE	[ɛː]
hit	KIT	[ə]
home	GOAT	[ʌː], [y]
school	GOOSE	[ɪ], [y]
bird	NURSE	[ɜɪ]
high	PRICE	[əɪ], [ɔɪ], [ɑə]
boy	CHOICE	[əɪ], [oɪ]
hour	MOUTH	[ɑu], [æu], [ɑə]

Table 3.1: BerE vowels according to Ayres (1933).

Example in Ayres	Realisation
/ŋ/ in *going*	[n]
/ɹ/ in *shirk*	[ɹ]
/z/ in *shillings*	[s]
/ð/ in *the*	[d]
/ʍ/ in *which*	[ʍ]
/v/ in *very*	[w], [β]
/w/ in *witness*	[v], [β]

Table 3.2: BerE consonant features according to Ayres (1933).

piece, written 'on a too brief holiday in what are appropriately named the isles of rest' (1933:3) — it does describe a number of phonological features (twelve vowels and six consonants) with examples. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 detail the features identified by Ayres, and, where applicable, the standard lexical sets (Wells 1982) to which they refer[1]. Several of Ayres' observations are confirmed in my own data.

Ayres is guilty of a little of the romanticism discussed above in his description of BerE:

> Here for three centuries Englishmen have dwelt undisturbed... It would not therefore be surprising if in a small and isolated community of this sort some peculiarities of speech should exist which elsewhere have disappeared or persisted only in very restricted dialectal use (1933:5).

[1] see 3.4.3 below for a discussion of these.

> In saying that this language is a variety of American speech, I mean that it is a variety of the English speech that was carried to America in the seventeenth century and that it can, with all due caution, be used to tell us something about what the English language was like in that century and the early eighteenth century (1933:3).

Ayres' classification of the variety, however, is interesting. He describes BerE as having 'the level tone of American speech, the briskness of the coastal type, a characteristic crispness and would create least remark, if indeed any at all, between, say, Norfolk, Virginia, and Charleston, South Carolina' (1933:4). The 'briskness' and 'crispness' of BerE are subjective and untestable, of course, but Ayres' proposal of similarities between Bermudian, Virginian and South Carolinan speech aligns with some of the historical connections discussed above.

After Ayres' description in 1933, there is no mention of Bermuda until Wells' *Accents of English* (1982). Wells does not include information on BerE features besides 'v-w confusion', stating only that it 'belongs linguistically with the English-speaking West Indies' (1982:561). Also grouping BerE with Caribbean varieties, Aceto (2008) discusses two features, recording [æ] for /ɛ/ and [w] for /v/ (*ibid.*:294). Here, as in all the other mentions of BerE in the literature, Aceto uses the example of [wɪlɪdʒ] for *village*, which suggests that very little new, first-hand research had been carried out on the variety since Ayres.

3.3 Bermudian English, Bermudian Englishes?

The contrasts between these early studies demonstrate that the question of how BerE should be categorised in the taxonomy of English dialects remains outstanding. Fubler, in her acoustic profile of a set of BerE vowels, notes that 'it would be beneficial... for more acoustic research to be conducted in order to draw conclusions about the origins of the dialect and which dialects, if any, it most closely identifies with today' (2011:7). The existing literature groups BerE with modern Caribbean varieties (Wells 1982; Aceto 2008; Williams 2010) and Englishes of the American South (Ayres 1933; Trudgill et al. 2009). Alternatively, BerE is claimed to preserve Elizabethan English (Ayres 1933; Gallagher and Gregory 2015) or is simply presented as a British variety (Gehrman 2015),

thus adding it to the long list of isolated varieties that have been presented as relics of the English of their colonisers.

It is also unclear whether BerE should be described in terms of ethnically categorised sub-varieties: does ethnicity persist as a 'sociolinguistic boundary' (Rickford 1985) in Bermuda? This question has not been addressed until recently, despite the fact that differences between the speech of different groups are likely to explain why impressionistic categorisations of BerE vary so dramatically — these competing claims may be referring to different speakers, and different Bermudian Englishes. Early studies do not address linguistic differences between ethnoracial groups in Bermuda, perhaps because they rely on the history available which, as discussed in 2.2, tends towards revisionism, emphasising 'mild' slavery, and contact between black and white groups, while downplaying racial inequality on the islands (e.g. Bernhard (1999:xiii)). While the absence of plantations and large-scale language contact are significant linguistic factors explaining Bermuda's lack of a creole, they do not justify a 'colour-blind' approach to describing BerE. Recognising the possibility of multiple BerE sub-varieties is part of recognising the different, as well as the shared histories that have brought them into being. For example, it is likely that Black Bermudian English (BBerE) is more influenced by Caribbean and Portuguese input than White Bermudian English (WhBerE), and, like African American English (AAE), it is likely to have diverged from white varieties as a result of segregation (c.f. Wolfram and Thomas (2008)).

In recent years, studies have acknowledged the probability of differently affiliated sub-varieties, although this has not been investigated in-depth. First, Trudgill and Hannah commented in 2002 that 'there are noticeable differences between the speech of blacks and that of whites — the former being more Caribbean in character, the latter more like the English of coastal South Carolina' (2002:32)[2]. Meanwhile, Williams lists Bermuda as one of the sites for 'Euro-Caribbean English,' a 'continuum of lesser-known varieties of English spoken in small, relatively isolated enclave white communities in the West Indies' (Williams 2010:136). This is an interesting yet not unproblematic claim; it is more than likely that some of Bermuda's white population is descended from the

[2]Trudgill, Schreier, Long and Williams have also discussed the status of /v/ and /w/ in BerE (2009).

'poor whites' and 'Redlegs' described by Williams — probably from Irish and Scottish indentured servants. There is, however, no identifiable community of 'poor whites' today, since Bermuda is starkly socioeconomically stratified along racial lines, and white Bermudians are almost exclusively very affluent. Nevertheless, there *is* an identifiable 'traditional white Bermudian' dialect among a small number of elderly Bermudians with long-standing ancestry on the island, which contrasts with the speech of newer Bermudians. It is more likely, however, that the BerE of this group reflects influence from North American varieties and 'Atlantic families' (Jarvis 2010), rather than Caribbean 'poor white' communities.

Eberle and Schreier focus on "African Bermudian English" (ABerE) in a morphosyntactic profile, showing similarities between this variety and selected Caribbean Englishes (2013). Aiming to gain some 'typological insights whether or not it aligns with English in the Caribbean,' they compare 'ranking rates' of twenty-four features found in ABerE with 'Atlantic' and 'World-wide' creole features to create a 'cross-dialectal profile' (2013:296). They conclude that there has been a 'two-way transfer pattern' in Bermudian morphosyntax: 'Caribbean Englishes are likely to have influenced the evolution of English on Bermuda, while BerE itself was an influential input variety in other locations (particularly the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands)' (*ibid.*). They also record a 'close relationship' between ABerE and Bahamian English, based on nine shared features with the same ranking rates[3].

Finally, in her phonetic study of black BerE speakers, Holliday notes the 'potential for significant differences between demographically different groups of speakers, especially with respect to race, educational levels, and contact with other English varieties' (2016:7). These kinds of differences are evident in my data; unsurprisingly, long-standing segregation and socioeconomic inequality in Bermuda and very different experiences of Bermudian life are inevitably reflected in significant linguistic contrasts between black and white Bermudians' speech. I argue, therefore, that WhBerE and BBerE are separate; just as there are 'two Bermudas,' there are at least two sub-varieties of BerE. It would

[3]Significantly, it is with these same territories — with which Bermuda has specific historic connections — that BBerE appears to overlap phonologically according to my own data. Future research will establish the phonological alignment of TIE, BahE and BerE.

be beyond the scope of this thesis to compare and contrast every feature of WhBerE and BBerE in order to establish them as separate varieties. Instead, I provide acoustic phonetic evidence for group differences in a select number of variables in Chapter 7, where I show from an sociophonetic perspective that white speakers are performing race in their linguistic stylisations.

Throughout this thesis, I use the terms black and white not uncritically, but in line with the goal of understanding a set of linguistic performances as they relate to and indeed construct these racialised categories in Bermuda. Additionally, I use the terms as an aid to the examination of the language of differently empowered groups. They are useful to some extent in contradicting the colour-blind ideology used by performers to justify their racialised language mocking practices. With this approach, I follow Alim's emphasis on the importance of 'both doing and undoing race' in sociolinguistics (2016a:47).

3.4 Methodology

The aim of the remainder of this chapter is to fill the current gap in the literature by providing a phonological baseline description of BBerE based on detailed auditory-impressionistic analyses of data collected in Bermuda in 2014. Using illustrative examples, I present the major features of the vowel and consonant systems of BBerE, including the phonological conditioning of variants, and describe patterns of inter- and intra-speaker variation.

3.4.1 Data collection

The following description is based on data collected as part of a six-week field visit to Bermuda in the Spring of 2014. Since so little sociolinguistic research has been undertaken in Bermuda, I took an exploratory approach to data collection, interviewing as many speakers as possible in the time available, both male and female, black and white, and from a wide range of ages and social backgrounds in order to get a general impression of the distribution of BerE. In total, 31 Bermudians were interviewed.

Bermuda is a remarkably friendly place, and I had few unsuccessful attempts at recruiting speakers. Elderly citizens in particular were very happy to participate: many

are used to being approached by Bermudian students and other researchers for historical research purposes, giving oral histories for school projects and cultural initiatives. I recruited speakers through a mixed range of methods. Initially, I used a Bermuda Government publication, issued by the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs, entitled *Senior Citizens 2013* (2013). The publication is made up of short biographies of a selection of elderly Bermudians celebrated for their contribution to society or long Bermuda heritage, making it a useful means of identifying potential participants. I looked up names from the book in the Bermuda Yellow Pages and then contacted them by telephone (the advantage to the fieldworker in Bermuda being that the island and population are small enough to allow this approach). I also used personal contacts and casual acquaintances to arrange a small 'first-round' of interviews, before using the friend-of-a-friend technique, asking all speakers to recommend another participant at the end of their interview. Additionally, I approached Bermudians in public places such as bars, restaurants and shops to request their participation.

For the purposes of preparing this phonological overview of the variety, I selected a sub-group of 10 older black males, based on the following criteria:

- Level of 'conservativeness' of the participant's BerE and the perceived influence of the Observer's Paradox and other interviewer effects. I aimed to select the most relaxed, most conservative BerE for analysis, judged on the fluency of the conversation, and paralinguistic channel cues such as laughter (Labov 1972; Tagliamonte 2006).

- Clarity of the recording and of the individual's speech.

- Amount of the individual's speech on the recording (in some paired interviews, one speaker was dominant).

This dialectological approach is the necessary first step in exploring Bermuda's uncharted linguistic landscape. Based on the speech of the island's oldest residents, who are seen locally as the 'strongest' BerE speakers, I provide an overview of the variety that is enregistered as the most stereotypically Bermudian. Of course, while this represents a

rather reductive view of authenticity (discussed in more depth in Chapter 4), the local folklinguistic perception of 'authentic Bermewjan' is nonetheless sociolinguistically important, particularly so in considerations of stylised speech which are central to the second half of this thesis.

3.4.2 The interviews

The interviews were conducted using a Marantz PMD660 data recorder and either one or two Audiotechnica AT8531 lapel microphones, depending on the number of interviewees. All interviews were conducted in the speakers' own homes, except two, which took place at my own residence at the participants' request. This approach made controlling acoustic conditions a challenge, but probably allowed more data to be collected, since it did not require participants to travel and made them more likely to agree to an interview.

Although I was born in Bermuda and attended primary school there, I am not a speaker of any variety of BerE and have no Bermudian ancestry. My family left Bermuda when I was 10 years old and returned again when I was 18, and I completed all of my secondary education in the UK. While I am very familiar with the island, as a white, non-BerE speaking investigator, the interviewer effect was a real concern. Although Bermuda does not have a creole, the methodological challenges of post-colonial language studies as described by Patrick apply in Bermuda:

> Much research on Caribbean creoles is based on data gathered by nonnative speakers, or even non-speakers, of the creole studied; often there are obvious racial, ethnic or class differences between scholar and community members. Ethnographers have long recognised both the advantages of the outsider status automatically granted to such researchers, and the biases that status introduces. In post-colonial language studies, a recurring problem lies in the powerful positive social evaluations attached to metropolitan speech varieties. These norms and the economic pressures they reflect inevitably create a desire in creole speakers to shift in the direction of their non-creole-speaking interlocutors, and thus make the Observer's Paradox an even more critical concern than usual (Patrick 1999:66).

With this in mind, interviews were conducted in pairs where possible[4]. At the recruitment

[4]Communication accommodation theory (Giles et al. 1987), based on Giles' theories of speech convergence (1973) and accommodation (Giles and Smith 1979) 'proposes that speech convergence reflects... a speaker's or a group's need (often non-conscious) for social integration or identification with

stage, potential speakers were asked whether they had a close friend or family member who would also be willing to participate. At times, this made arranging interviews more difficult for participants, and in these cases obtaining an interview within a reasonable time frame was prioritised over trying to secure a paired appointment.

In total, twenty-five interviews were conducted, and nine of these were done in pairs. Of these, five interviews involved two BBerE speakers together. The remaining three paired interviews involved one BBerE speaker and one other speaker close to the main participant who either spoke a different variety (for example, one speaker's partner was a Jamaican English (JamE) speaker) or did not qualify for the study for other reasons (e.g. speech impediment). In these cases, the presence of the second interviewee was still perceived to be beneficial, in that participants were relaxed and talkative, and I was outnumbered as a non-speaker of BerE in most the paired interviews. Of the participant sub-group, four speakers were interviewed alone, and six with a second interviewee.

Table 3.3 gives details of the sub-group participants, who have all been given a pseudonym. All were given a consent form approved by Oxford's Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC)[5] to complete at the beginning of the interview, with the opportunity to ask questions about the study. A copy of the consent form is given in Appendix B. Only three participants opted out of making their recordings available to other researchers; the remaining data is stored securely as a small corpus at Oxford University Phonetics Laboratory.

The sociolinguistic interview was the main method of data collection, this being the most appropriate elicitation technique for the large quantities of high quality, continuous recorded speech needed for this study. All interviews comprised a long discussion and short reading passage[6]. Since two of the speakers were illiterate, the read data are not analysed further in this thesis. The long discussion lasted an average of 75

another' [71](Giles and Coupland 1991). Interviews in which speakers of the interviewer's language variety are outnumbered, therefore, are thought to minimise the possibility of undesired accommodation towards this variety (in cases where it is different from the variety under investigation).

[5]Reference number SSD/CUREC1A/14-059.

[6]The reading passage selected was *The North Wind and the Sun*. This short text version of Aesop's well-known fable, long-established as a tool in phonetic fieldwork, is the passage recommended by the International Phonetic Association for illustrating the phonemic contrasts in English dialects and is routinely used in the Journal of the International Phonetic Association's 'Illustrations'.

Speaker (pseudonym)	Age at interview	(former) Occupation
Hughes	86	(Mason)
Moss	82	(Mason) and Preacher
Day	80	(Shipwright)
Roberts	80	(Mason)
Clarke	79	(Garbage Collector) and Kite Maker
King	67	(Motor Mechanic)
Bell	67	(Prison Officer)
Edwards	66	(Mason)
Wade	65	Painter/Decorator
Allen	61	Civil Servant

Table 3.3: Sub-group participants.

minutes, although some continued for over two hours. I designed an interview schedule of conversational modules based on Labov (1984) and Tagliamonte (2006). These were made up of 'hierarchically structured sets of questions' (Tagliamonte 2006:37) within a series of topics, and designed to elicit relaxed speech and a wide range of demographic information about the participant, with questions becoming progressively more personal and specific. The topics were: basic personal information, family, school, local life, news and politics, memories, personal interests, and key Bermudian historical events (e.g. 'do you remember where you were during Hurricane Emily?')[7]. A series of deeper, more sensitive questions designed to stimulate personal narrative (such as Labov's well-known 'optimal' questions 'did you ever have a dream that really scared you?' and 'were you ever in a situation where you thought, "this is it"') were listed in the schedule, but saved for moments when these questions seemed relatively 'natural,' rather than being in a module of their own.

In keeping with the exploratory nature of the study, I closed each discussion with questions about Bermudian language, identity and the relationship between the two (e.g. 'what makes someone Bermudian?' and 'how does an authentic Bermudian speak?'). This prompted many lively conversations about language attitudes and ideologies in Bermuda, and in many cases allowed insights into which features of BBerE are most salient and stereotyped. A copy of the interview schedule can be found in Appendix C.

[7] 'The most useful questions for elicitation of the vernacular depend on the age of the speaker and on the type of community. Questions which ask a speaker where they were, or what they were doing, at a momentous time in history are excellent at tapping personal stories' (Tagliamonte 2006:38).

In a large proportion of the interviews, however, the schedule proved redundant. Often, participants spoke at great length, and intercepting with pre-prepared questions would have seemed stilted and strange. Free-flowing, voluntary speech was always prioritised over the interview schedule: 'one of the worst things an interviewer can do is interrupt the informant' (Tagliamonte 2006:46).

3.4.3 Analytic methodology

The short phonological overview provided in 3.5 is based on analytic parametric listening (Kelly and Local 1995:30), illustrated with canonical examples, and modelled on other preliminary descriptions of LKVEs (Schreier 2010a,b; Cutler 2003b). To prepare the data, and as a 'first-round' of listening, I orthographically transcribed each speaker's interview using ELAN (Sloetjes and Willenburg 2008), and then created searchable documents by exporting the ELAN transcripts to text files (.txt). I listened to the data repeatedly and in increasingly fine detail, focussing in turn on different qualitative parameters (e.g. vowel height, vowel frontness/backness, lip-roundedness, nasality). I did this with the aim of first compiling an inventory of BBerE's vowels and consonants, and then establishing all possible variants for each feature and a qualitative estimate of each speaker's range of variability. I selected clear and canonical extracts demonstrating each variant, and then extracted tokens into separate sound files (.wav) to allow for more fine-tuned listening and transcription into International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Finally, I noted the phonological conditions acting on each variable according to my observations of their behaviour in different contexts.

Throughout this chapter, I use Wells' (1982) system of lexical set classification to refer to the BBerE vowels. The lexical sets group together English words 'which behave the same way in respect of the incidence of vowels in different accents' (1982:120), and have provided phoneticians with a means to construct comparable descriptions of Englishes around the world. As Schreier points out in his characterisation of St Helenian English, 'the adoption of a conventionalised reference set is most promising... not only to ensure an accurate hands-on description of the variety but also for a cross-comparison with other forms of English, where this practice has been adopted successfully' (2008:166).

	RP	GenAm	Keyword		RP	GenAm	Keyword
1.	ɪ	ɪ	KIT	13.	ɔː	ɔ	THOUGHT
2.	e	ɛ	DRESS	14.	əʊ	o	GOAT
3.	æ	æ	TRAP	15.	uː	uː	GOOSE
4.	ɒ	ɑ	LOT	16.	aɪ	aɪ	PRICE
5.	ʌ	ʌ	STRUT	17.	ɔɪ	ɔɪ	CHOICE
6.	ʊ	ʊ	FOOT	18.	aʊ	aʊ	MOUTH
7.	ɑː	æ	BATH	19.	ɪə	ɪr	NEAR
8.	ɒ	ɔ	CLOTH	20.	ɛə	ɛr	SQUARE
9.	ɜː	ɜr	NURSE	21.	ɑː	ɑr	START
10.	iː	i	FLEECE	22.	ɔː	ɔr	NORTH
11.	eɪ	eɪ	FACE	23.	ɔː	or	FORCE
12.	ɑː	ɑ	PALM	24.	ʊə	ʊr	CURE

Table 3.4: The Standard Lexical Sets (Wells 1982:123).

RP	GenAm	Keyword
ɪ	ɪ	happY
ə	ɚ	lettER
ə	ə	commA

Table 3.5: Weak vowels (Wells 1982:120).

Table 3.4 gives Wells' original list of twenty-four correspondences and keywords, with the vowel realisations for RP and GenAm. In addition to these, Wells also uses the word-final unstressed vowels in words like *happy, letter* and *comma* for their 'indexical and diagnostic value in distinguishing accents' (1982:165). These are given in Table 3.5. The lexical sets and word-final unstressed vowels can be used to create a 'table of lexical incidence' characterising one variety; this is provided for BBerE in 3.5.1 below.

Wells uses 'Received Pronunciation' and 'General American' as 'reference accents' for the lexical sets. Of course, the notion of these accents as 'standard' norms and as homogeneous in themselves is problematic. As Wells acknowledges, the labels are '... less than happy' (1982:117), but he uses them nonetheless (and with 'defensive quotation marks' (*ibid.*) because they provide a 'convenient basis for comparison' (*ibid.*:118). Likewise, where I use these terms it is for convenience and for comparative purposes.

KIT	iː, ɪ, ɪjə	FLEECE	i, ɪː	NEAR	ɜˠ
DRESS	æ, ɛə	FACE	eː, eɪ	SQUARE	ɜˠ
TRAP	æ, ɛə	PALM	ɑː	START	ɑː, ɑɪ
LOT	ɑ, ɔː	THOUGHT	ɔː, ɔə	NORTH	ɔː, ɔə
STRUT	ɒ	GOAT	əː, əʊ	FORCE	ɔː, ɔə
FOOT	ʊ, ʉə	GOOSE	ʉ, y, i̯ə	CURE	ɔə, ʊə, ʊɪ
BATH	ɑː	PRICE	ɐɪ, ɑːɪ	happY	i
CLOTH	ɔː, ɔə	CHOICE	ɔɪ	lettER	ə
NURSE	ɜˠ	MOUTH	ɑː, əʊ	commA	ə

Table 3.6: The lexical incidence of Black Bermudian English.

3.5 The sounds of Black Bermudian English

As discussed by Milroy (1981) and Williams (2010) 'the phonologies of non-standard varieties are more complex than those of standard varieties, and additionally mergers are more common in koinés as well' (Williams 2010:145). BBerE, a non-standard koiné, displays an unusual combination of phonological features in complex variation, which I will describe in the remainder of this chapter.

3.5.1 Vowels

Table 3.6 summarises the lexical incidence of the variety in the style of Wells. Where more than one variant is given, this reflects either phonological conditioning or 'free' variation; indications of possible mergers are given in the set-by-set analysis that follows. In the following sub-sections I give an account of inter- and intra-speaker variation in the data within each lexical set, with illustrative examples from my data. Examples are presented with the surrounding text transcribed orthographically, and the example word also transcribed in IPA, with speaker pseudonyms in brackets.

KIT

BBerE KIT is considerably variable, and conditioned by coda voicing. Before voiceless consonants, as in (1), KIT is not different from RP and GenAm [ɪ]. When followed by a voiced velar consonant ((2), (3)), KIT is typically realised as a lengthened, high front, unrounded vowel [iː]. In other pre-voiced contexts, KIT displays a tendency towards

diphthongisation or triphthongisation in stressed monosyllables [ɪjə], as in (4) and (5), which Wells refers to as 'southern Breaking' (1982:533). Breaking is also evident in merged DRESS/TRAP (discussed below).

(1) I gotta break it down a little **bit** [bɪʔ] right I'm got older now right? And I had a little **sickness** [ˈsɪknɪs] (King)

(2) Some of those good **things** [θiːŋz] that tied us together (Allen)

(3) Oh that was when I was thirteen, my first **gig** [giːg] (Hughes)

(4) I'll tell you about Swizzle **Inn** [ɪjən], right (Hughes)

(5) Start at the top of a **hill** [hɪjəw] (Allen)

DRESS and TRAP

A perceived DRESS-TRAP 'switch' is one of the most popularly reported and commented-on features of BerE (Smith and Barritt 2005). DRESS and TRAP are found to be merged in the data, sharing a large set of variants. The most common realisation in BBerE is [æ̟], although vowel height varies and can be anything between [ɛ] and [æ̟] (see (6)-(8). It is likely that this is interpreted by outsiders as a switch rather than a merger owing to the value of BBerE DRESS and TRAP relative to their respective vowel height in RP, GenAm and many other varieties. During fieldwork I observed homophone pairs such as *celery/salary* and *pedal/paddle*. A breaking variant [ɛə] in stressed monosyllables is also present (e.g. (9)-(10), and in pre-velar contexts DRESS-TRAP is realised as [e], as in (11) and (12), meaning *beg* and *bag* are homophonous.

(6) Some of those good things that tied us together, **fabric** [ˈfɛbɹɪk] wise, well…it was a good **aspect** [ˈɛspɛkt] (Allen)

(7) Yeah he works for the **bank** [bæŋk] of Bermuda (Moss)

(8) Take a **pencil** [ˈpæ̟nsəw], mark it, mark it **centre** [ˈsæntə] (Clarke)

(9) Feed them with you know…your own **bread** [bɹɛəd] (Hughes)

(10) You know I mean the plumbing was **bad** [bɛəd] (Bell)

(11) Big brown um bowl full of **eggs** [eːgz] and used to have a penny a **egg** [eːg] (Hughes)

(12) Can I get a **bag** [beːg] (Allen)

NORTH/FORCE/CLOTH/THOUGHT

NORTH, FORCE, CLOTH, and THOUGHT are merged in the most conservative BBerE. The realisation for this merged set is most commonly a 'breaking' diphthong [ɔə] ((13)-(16)), although a monophthong [ɔː] is also found ((17)-(20)), causing overlap with pre-voiced LOT (see below). Both variants are subject to contextual nasalisation, as in (14) and (17).

However, most BBerE is now variably rhotic, probably reflecting rapid rhotacisation over the last century. NORTH/FORCE, therefore, is acquiring an additional rhotic variant [ɔɹ], and occasionally has some rhoticity in the off-glide of the diphthongal variant (see ((16) and (20)). With time it is predicted NORTH/FORCE will fully un-merge from CLOTH/THOUGHT. The lexical item *does* is commonly pronounced as a centring diphthong, as in (21), and therefore appears to belong with this set, rather than with STRUT (no other STRUT tokens behave this way).

(13) So you have the **cross** [kɹɔəs] stick and you have the head stick (Clarke)

(14) You just say hi, hi, and you're **gone** [gɔ̃ən] (Clarke)

(15) Church in **North Shore** [nɔəθ ʃɔə] (Moss)

(16) **Before** [bəfɔə], like the **airport** [ˈəˑpɔəˑt] (Hughes)

(17) For a **long** [lɔ̃ːŋ] time (Allen)

(18) Remodelling the cabinet **office** [ˈɔːfɪs] (Roberts)

(19) A new gas station now, on the South **Shore** [ʃɔː] (Hughes)

(20) One of the **more** [mɔːɹ] academically esteemed kind of schools... Saint **George's** [ˈdʒɔɹdʒəz] Sec came after us (Allen)

(21) But it **does** [dɒ̹əz] (Moss)

LOT

LOT is pronounced [ɑ] before voiceless codas, as in (22) and (23). Before voiced consonants, LOT is pronounced with a long mid back rounded vowel [ɔː] and therefore overlaps partially with CLOTH/THOUGHT, as in (24) and (25).

(22) We were **chopping** [ˈt͡ʃɑpn̩] our way through (Roberts)

(23) **Dockyard** [ˈdɑkyɑːd] (Moss)

(24) What would it be like if you suddenly lost your **job** [dʒɔːb] (Allen)

(25) He was carrying **on** [ɔːn] (Clarke)

STRUT

BBerE STRUT is normally a low, back, slightly rounded vowel [ɒ̹] as in (26) and (27), meaning that in rapid speech *duck* and *dock* (LOT) are near-homophones. A more central variant [ʌ] is relatively rare, but also occurs across all phonological contexts ((28))

(26) We used to use a straight pin to catch white **grunts** [gɹɒ̹nts]! Just bend it, we go in the pond get the **mullets** [ˈmɒ̹ləts], and that was our bait (Roberts)

(27) Anything that needs to be done, it's **us** [ɒ̹s] (Wade)

(28) And we **hug** [hʌg] and we have a few drinks (King)

FOOT

This vowel is pronounced [ʊ] or sometimes [ʊ̟] ((29)-(31)). In environments preceding /d/, the vowel is a distinctive centring diphthong [ʉə], as in (32) and (33). Since very few FOOT words end in voiced consonants other than /d/, and even fewer occurred in the data, it is difficult to investigate whether this patterning is based on coda voicing, or /d/ specifically.

(29) We used to have a piece of board, you would **put** [pʊt] your **foot** [fʊɾ] on it and a guy would **push** [pʊʃ] you (Allen)

(30) We didn't call it **bullying** [ˈbʊɬijɪŋ] back then (Allen)

(31) Everywhere you **look** [lʊ̟k] there's a music **book** [bʊ̟k] (Wade)

(32) Bermuda's changing, and neighbour-**hoods** [hʉəds]. . . are not as close as they used to be (King)

(33) Warehouse where they kept the **goods** [gʉədz] (Edwards)

GOOSE

BBerE displays GOOSE-fronting, common in many world Englishes (Mesthrie 2010). This is not the young phenomenon that it is in Britain (Docherty 2010; Cheshire et al. 2011), but the norm among the oldest speakers of BBerE; GOOSE ranges in quality from [ʉ] to [yː], as shown in examples (34)-(37). In contexts before [l], a falling diphthong [ɨə] with a front, unrounded first element [ɨə] is displayed, as in (38) and (39).

(34) I was the head of the **group** [gɹʉp] (Day)

(35) We **moved** [mʉːvd] over to Westgate (Bell)

(36) Cause they didn't have much **room** [ɹyːm] (Hughes)

(37) And it wasn't like if I was **rude** [ɹyːd] (Allen)

(38) Today they say that's **cool** [kɨəl] (Moss)

(39) I never went abroad to **school** [skɨəl] (King)

BATH

This vowel is usually [ɑː] in traditional BBerE, as in (40) and (41). This extends to words belonging to the TRAP set such as *Atlantic* and *Atlanta* ((42)-(43)), suggesting hypercorrection based on an RP norm [8]. Since the English of Bermuda's earliest settlers pre-dated the BATH/TRAP split in England, it is probable that BBerE BATH was affected by the realisations of speakers arriving later on the island. [aː] is now increasingly common, however; it is categorical in young Bermudians, and the speakers of this study used it occasionally (see (44)-(46)).

(40) Christ **answers** [ˈɑːnsəz] my problems (Moss)

(41) So I learnt my old fashioned **dances** [ˈdɑːnsəz] with them (Hughes)

(42) Right out there and in the **Atlantic** [əʔˈlɑːntɪk] (Moss)

(43) He's been to **Atlanta** [əʔˈlɑːntə] to check the school out (Roberts)

(44) And what we done was **mastered** [ˈmaːstəd] Mister Warner's signature (Allen)

(45) I got a **chance** [t͡ʃaːns] to meet all my friends (King)

(46) And she saw me with a **cast** [kaːs] (Hughes)

NURSE, NEAR and SQUARE

While NEAR and SQUARE are merged in many Caribbean varieties, the NEAR, SQUARE and NURSE sets are all merged in BBerE, and with a different phonetic realisation. While Caribbean varieties have [ɪɛɹ] (JamE) or [eːɹ] (Bajan and Guyanan Englishes) in merged NEAR and SQUARE, for example (Wells 1982:576-585), BBerE seems to be exceptional in that it has a rhotacised, mid-central monophthong for all three sets [ɜˠ], as seen in (47)-(53). Word groups such as *purr/peer/pear* and *burr/beer/bear* lack contrast, and, as shown in (49) and (50), *work*, *here* and *square* all have the same vowel. This sound is much commented-on and tends to come up in discussions about — and performances

[8] Ayres also noted hypercorrection, recording a 'broad A' in *Hamilton* (1933:6).

of — dialect (an example can be found in 5.2.2). Two speakers occasionally produced a vowel with a slightly more advanced quality in NURSE, as in (54) and (55).

(47) He was a **reserved** [ɹiˈzɜˠvd] kind of guy (Allen)

(48) But I am a **person** [ˈpɜˠsn̩] (King)

(49) When I came to **work** [wɜˠk] **here** [hɜˠ] (Allen)

(50) Take it out and just go round in the **square** [skwɜˠ] right round in **here** [hɜˠ] and **here** [hɜˠ] and **here**[hɜˠ] (Clarke)

(51) We lived every- **where** [wɜˠ] (Bell)

(52) The store, or the **ware**-house [wɜˠ]-house (Edwards)

(53) Yeah and when the **engineers** [ɛndʒɪˈnɜˠz] came up they just shook their head (Roberts)

(54) You know the old Seventh-Day Adventist **church** [t͡ʃɐ̆ɹt͡ʃ] (Hughes)

(55) I designed it like I said to make it all **work** [wɐ̆ɹk] for me (Clarke)

FLEECE

Before voiceless consonants, FLEECE in BBerE is a monopthongal short [i], as in (56). It is almost always lower and longer [ɪː] before voiced consonants, as in (57) and (58) but not categorically so, as (59) demonstrates.

(56) I was strutting up that **street** [stɹit] (Day)

(57) When I was in my **teens** [tɪːnz] (Bell)

(58) Put them in the **deep freeze** [dip fɹɪːz] and I use them whenever I want to (Roberts)

(59) Anything that **needs** [nidz] to be done, it's us (Wade)

FACE

Before voiced consonants, FACE is typically a long, high-mid front monophthong [eː] as found in most Caribbean English varieties (see (60)-(61)), although a rising diphthong [eːɪ], often with a long first element, can also occur, as in (62)-(64). This diphthongal variant is categorical before voiceless consonants.

(60) We created a little group and the band was called **Wave** [weːv] (Wade)

(61) And the carts were **made** [meːd] from recycled **baby** [ˈbeːbi] carriage wheels (Allen)

(62) She's a very religious young **lady** [ˈleːɪɾi] (King)

(63) That can't **make** [meːɪk] it, **take** [teːɪk] them to the hospital (King)

(64) So I would go to bed and I would say **grace** [gɹeːɪs] like you know (Day)

PALM

This vowel is [ɑː] in BBerE. The very small PALM set has few words ending in voiceless consonants, all of which are 'words relatively recently borrowed from foreign languages' (Wells 1982:144), and none occurred in the data, but during field visits I have repeatedly heard *pasta* pronounced with [ɑː]. *Tomato* belongs with FACE in BBerE rather than with PALM.

(65) My **father** [ˈfɑːðə] actually rowed the ferry, before we had power ferries (Wade)

(66) So, **rather** [ˈɹɑːðə] than put that much in the glass, you put that much in (Day)

(67) You know it was **Palm** [pɑːm] Sunday (Roberts)

GOAT

GOAT is a central monophthong [əː] before voiced consonants ((68)-(69)), and an RP-like diphthong [əʊ] before voiceless consonants and in open syllables ((70)-(71)). Nothing approaching Cockney [æʉ] (Fox 2012) or Caribbean [oː] (Wells 1982:571) occurs in the data.

(68) I'm not going to my heavenly **home** [həːm] (Roberts)

(69) Go down the **road** [ɹəːd] a little further (Hughes)

(70) Then I have the um-um, the **brochure** [bɹəʊˈʃɔəz] (Roberts)

(71) I was down **below** [bɪˈləʊ] (Day)

Along with [ɑː] in MOUTH, the monophthongal variant of GOAT is one of the most stereotyped sounds of BBerE, and noted by Ayres in his discussion of the Bermudian pronunciation of *home*: 'by this…you may know your Bermudian anywhere' (1933:8). Monophthongal GOAT is commonly showcased in the Bermudian 'stock phrase' *dahn de road*, which is discussed at length in the second half of this thesis.

PRICE

Before voiced consonants, PRICE is a rising diphthong with a low-back, unrounded and noticeably lengthened onset [ɑːɪ] ((72)-(74)). As in MOUTH, and as in many world Englishes, BBerE PRICE displays a raised and fronted first element before voiceless consonants; typically the pre-voiceless vowel is [ɐɪ] shown in (75) and (76).

(72) The Morgans had an **island** [ˈɑːɪlənd] (Hughes)

(73) Well, for a long **time** [tɑːɪm], I never knew (Allen)

(74) We have **tried** [trɑːɪd] to **revive** [ɹɪˈβɑːɪv] the Bermuda Technical Institute (King)

(75) How did I meet my **wife** [wɐɪf] (Roberts)

(76) Uh **lining** [ˈlɑːɪnɪŋ] of the **kite** [kɐɪt] (Clarke)

CHOICE

CHOICE normally shares the pronunciation found in GenAm and RP [ɔɪ] ((77)-(78)). Occasionally, the first element is unrounded, giving [əɪ] or even [ɑɪ] and causing neutralisation of the distinction between *point* and *pint*, for example (see (79) and (80)). This variant is evident in the heavily stereotyped pronunciation of *boy*, spelled *bie* or *bye*, which is used in greetings and in stylisations of BerE[9]. Examples of this variant were only found preceding clusters ending in voiceless consonants, however, and the most common pronunciation in casual speech is [ɔɪ]. This suggests that the unrounded variant, also noted by Ayres in *oil* and *point* (1933:8), is declining in usage.

(77) They knocked that down and then the next place they **joined** [dʒɔɪnd] on (Edwards)

(78) We used to go over there and they'd drop all all the **boys** [bɔɪz] and girls (Hughes)

(79) He would row the ferry from Paget over to **Albuoy's Point** [ˈɑːwbɔɪz] [pɑɪn] (Wade)

(80) The high **point** [pɑɪnt] on the hill (King)

MOUTH

MOUTH has two major variants, again phonologically conditioned by coda voicing. A low-back long monophthong occurs in pre-voiced contexts, causing overlap with BATH and PALM: this is shown in examples (81)-(82). A diphthongal variant with so-called 'Canadian' raising of the first element occurs before voiceless consonants, as in (83)-(84). This is found in many world Englishes, but here it alternates with a monophthong before voiced codas. As mentioned above, the monophthongal variant of MOUTH represents one of the most stereotyped sounds of BBerE.

(81) That was **around** [əˈɹɑːnd] the time when we changed from **pounds** [pɑːndz], shillings and pence (Allen)

(82) They split it up into uh, those condos or **town** [tɑːn] **houses** [ˈhɑːzəz] **down** [dɑːn] there **now** [nɑː] (Edwards)

[9] 'BYE: 1) A male child. 2) Plural BYES: "WE BYES wrote this book and US BYES and THEM BYES and we sold it to YOU BYES"' (Smith and Barritt 2005)

(83) That's **about** [əˈbʌʊt] it (Allen)

(84) That **house** [hʌʊs] right there (Hughes)

START

START in BBerE displays unconstrained variability between rhotic and non-rhotic variants [ɑː] and [ɑɹ], reflecting the ongoing rhotacisation of the dialect (see NORTH/FORCE above, CURE below, and section 3.5.3).

(85) I was looking for the **car** [kɑː] I ain't seen no **car** [kɑː] (Hughes)

(86) **Mark** [mɑːk] it, **mark** [mɑːk] it, centre, yeah **mark** [mɑː] it (Clarke)

(87) After you did all that nice **hard** [hɑːd] work (Clarke)

(88) The boats used to bring **cargo** [ˈkɑːgəʊ] stuff in, down in Flatt's (Edwards)

(89) And the **parking** [ˈpɑɹkɪn] lot that's there (Edwards)

(90) Whereas cricket they use a **hard** [hɑɹd] ball, we used to use a tennis ball (Allen)

(91) It wasn't pulled that **hard** [hɑɹd] (Clarke)

CURE

This vowel is highly variable, sometimes aligning with the monophthongal and diphthongal variants found in NORTH/FORCE/CLOTH/THOUGHT (as in (92)-(94)), but sometimes produced with a higher onset non-rhotic diphthong [ʊə] as in (95). While CURE is almost always non-rhotic, occasionally a rhotic variant is heard, as in (96).

(92) Well I had to join the **tour** [tɔː] (Roberts)

(93) The foundation's been **poor** [pɔː] (King)

(94) So I thought **sure** [ʃɔə] (Day)

(95) I don't know if I want to call being **poor** [pʊə] good (Allen)

(96) Make it **secure** [səˈkjʊɹ] (Clarke)

happY (unstressed vowel)

BBerE displays '*happy*-tensing' (Wells 1982:165); words like *happy, city,* and *ready* have a high-front [i] word-finally, as seen in (97) and (98). Compounds of *day* (*Sunday, holiday*) have this vowel (as in (99)) and therefore *day* in these compounds groups with happY, rather than with FACE.

(97) We would go to the pond, and find an old **baby** [ˈbeːbi] carriage (Allen)

(98) They're always welcome to, to you know **happy** [ˈhæpi] to see me (Wade)

(99) I told her I'm not going to church on a **Sunday** [ˈsn̩di] (Roberts)

lettER, commA (unstressed vowels)

The unstressed final syllable of words like *letter* and *comma* in BBerE is [ə]. lettER so far does not appear to be affected by the ongoing rhotacisation evident in other sets, as shown in examples (100) - (104); younger speakers who otherwise display significant rhotacisation always produce [ə] for lettER.

(100) Three hundred **dollars** [ˈdɑləz] (Day)

(101) I met my wife by her **sister** [ˈsɪstə] (Roberts)

(102) Cause tyres are a little bit **heavier** [ˈhævɪə] than they used to be, or **bigger** [ˈbiːgə] (Allen)

(103) We're doing the **Bermuda** [bɜ˞ˈmʲʉdə] College graduation (Wade)

(104) Because a lot of people from the islands they have to have um a **visa** [ˈviːzə] (Day)

3.5.2 Consonants

The consonant inventory of BBerE (Table 3.7) is not notably different from other Englishes around the world, with the exception of the sounds [β] and [β̞], which are allophonic of merged /v/ and /w/ (discussed below). However, BBerE has an interesting number of 'non-standard' consonantal features; these are outlined in this section.

	Bilabial	**Labio-dental**	**Dental**	**Alveolar**	**Post-alveolar**	**Palatal**	**Velar**	**Glottal**
Plosive	p b			t d			k g	
Affricate					tʃ dʒ			
Fricative		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ			h
Nasal	m			n			ŋ	
Approximant				ɹ		j	w	
Lateral approximant				l				

Table 3.7: BBerE Consonants.

Stops

There are voicing distinctions in BBerE between pairs of obstruents. BBerE has three voiced and three voiceless stop consonants at three places of articulation, as in other varieties of English, with the voicing contrast in initial position realised as short *vs.* long-lag VOT. Syllable-initial voiceless stops are aspirated before vowels in stressed syllables. Voiceless stops are unaspirated following /s/ in the same syllable ((107)). In unstressed onsets and in coda contexts, voiceless stops are either unreleased or weakly aspirated. Glottal reinforcement of voiceless stops is common in in syllable-final, non-pre-vocalic environments. Unlike JamE, JC and other Caribbean varieties, BBerE has no palatalised allophones of velar stops (Wells 1982:596; Patrick 1999:83-119) (see, for example, *car* in example (85) above).

/t/ has a number of variants in BerE which are also found in other varieties of English, but with different distribution. [ʔ] is the most common variant in final position ((105)-(108)), preconsonantally ((109)) and before syllabic /n/ ((110)-(111)), although it is not found before syllabic /l/ or /m/ (see (113)-(114) below).

(105) And that was our **bait** [bɛɪʔ] (Hughes)

(106) **Not** really [nɑʔ], **Not** really [nɑʔ] (Bell)

(107) But I did that out of **spite** [spɑɪʔ] because of what they did (Day)

(108) Nail it to the **cart** [kɑɹʔ] (Allen)

(109) But he lives in **Scotland** [ˈskɑʔlən] (Moss)

(110) And I didn't believe in **fighting** [ˈfɑɪʔn̩] (Roberts)

(111) And I was **strutting** [ˈstɹɒʔn̩] up that street (Day)

BBerE does not have the intersyllabic glottalisation typical of London English (*bottle, bottom, butter*) (Fox 2012:2022). Intervocalically, following /ɹ/ and before syllabic /l/ or /m/, both /t/ and /d/ are usually produced with an alveolar flap, [ɾ] as in (112)-(116).

(112) Put aloe in the **water** [ˈwɔəɾə] (Hughes)

(113) So I gave them one of the **bottles** [ˈbɑɾl̩z] (Day)

(114) And he whaled my **bottom** [ˈbɑɾm̩] (Roberts)

(115) She's a very religious young **lady** [ˈleɪɾɪ] (King)

(116) We all used to **party** [ˈpɑɹɾi] (Hughes)

Fricatives and affricates

BBerE shares all nine 'Standard' English fricatives. /s/ and /z/ are pronounced as in most other varieties, but examples of non-standard plural allomorphy are occasionally observed in these data, as in (117)-(119), confirming Ayres' observation that '[z] final is frequently but not uniformly without voice, as *shillings* [ʃɪlins], *penalties* [pɛnəltis]' (1933:9).

(117) You measure for the **shoes** [ʃyːs] (Hughes)

(118) I have, uh, four **siblings** [ˈsɪblɪŋs] (Day)

(119) That used to be a bicycle shop **upstairs** [ɑpˈstɜˠs] if I remember right (Edwards)

Some TH-stopping and TH-fronting features in BBerE. Stopping of word-initial /ð/ is common (e.g. *the, that, there, this* in (120) and (121)), but the data yielded no examples of [t] for /θ/ (i.e. *tin-thin* neutralisation (Wells 1982:564)). Medial and final stopping of /ð/ (e.g. in *brother, bathe*) do not occur. This combination of features means that there is neutralisation of the distinction between *though* and *dough* in BBerE, but not of that between *breathe* and *breed*.

(120) **The** [di] headstick as I say **that** [dæʔ] little split **that** [dær] I did **there** [dɜˠ](Clarke)

(121) All **this** [dɪs] uh fancy equipment we have, technology, we give them **this** [dɪs] (King)

TH-fronting is common; while [θ] always occurs word-initially ((122)), [f] is the primary allophone of /θ/ word-finally and word-medially, as in (123)-(125). /ð/ is usually fronted to [v] in syllable codas ((126)-(127)), but [v] does not occur word-medially in words such as *brother and mother* (see (128)).

(122) And the same **thing** [θiːŋ] (Green)

(123) They were doing the channel — the **north** [nɔːf] channel (Hughes)

(124) If it was John **Smith** [smɪf] (Allen)

(125) **Nothing** ['nʌfɪn] really serious (Bell)

(126) She saw me **with** [wɪv] a cast (Hughes)

(127) Go down there... and **bathe** [beːɪv] (Hughes)

(128) Me and my **brother** ['bɹɒðə] (Clarke)

As in most English varieties, postalveolar consonants are usually slightly rounded in all contexts, e.g. [ʃʷ], [ʒʷ]. /h/-'dropping' occurs in unstressed function words (*have*) but never in stressed content words, and there is no evidence of /h/-insertion. BBerE lacks both the voiceless velar fricative /x/ and the voiceless labiovelar approximant /ʍ/; [k] and [w] are produced in words such as *loch* and *which*.

'v-w confusion' or 'v-w interchange' is a feature of BerE that is identified repeatedly in the available literature (Wells 1982; Ayres 1933; Aceto 2008). Ayres calls it the 'most interesting of all Bermudian peculiarities' (1933:9), and its ongoing salience as a Bermudian feature is evident in folk descriptions of the dialect, discussed further in Chapter 5. From these entries, however, the nature of the patterning of /v/ and /w/ is unclear. Wells and Aceto refer only to one-directional switching, the use of the velar approximant [w] for the labiodental fricative /v/. Wells writes that 'Bahamians, Bermudans (sic), and Vincentians are among those for whom the use of [w] for standard

[v], or a bilabial fricative [β] for both, has been reported' (1982:568), and gives the example [wɪlɪdʒ] for *village*, but does not mention the possibility of [v] for /w/ (e.g. [vɛn] for *when*). Aceto's description matches Wells', also using the example of *village* (2008:295). Ayres, on the other hand, reports a merger on a bilabial fricative; his summary of the behaviour of /v/ and /w/ is worth repeating in full:

> Krapp's observation, based on the statements of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century observers, that 'w for v seems much more common than the reverse' is not borne out by the facts of Bermuda speech. There the apparent interchange is so complete as to confirm Jespersen's theory that it is not really an interchange but an 'intermediate sound like Middle German 'w' in *schwester*, which the hearer wrongly interprets. So far as I could analyse it, it is usually a frictional bilabial sound but sporadically an actual substitution (1933:9).

Trudgill et al. agree with Ayres, positing that /v/ and /w/ were once fully merged in BerE 'on some articulation intermediate between [w] and [v], and that the pattern in BBerE is commonly interpreted as a two-way 'switch' rather than a merger since 'it is a principle of phonological perception that listeners notice what is different about accents other than their own, not what is the same' (2009:36). What is more, it is not possible to represent [β̞] orthographically, and so dialect writing tends to imply a switch by selecting the 'non-standard' grapheme.

In my data, /v/ and /w/ appear to be merged, with highly variable realisation. As shown in (129)-(134), [v], [w], [β] and [β̞] all occur.

(129) Until **eventually** [ɪˈβɛnt͡ʃəli] (Clarke)

(130) I **wedge** [β̞ædʒ] this side in here like this, and it'll stay (Clarke)

(131) Made them **wait** [vɛɪʔ] (Day)

(132) **We** [vi] give our children too much (King)

(133) **We** [wi] have tried to **revive** [rɪˈwɑɪβ̞] Bermuda Technical Institute (King)

(134) **Never** [ˈnæwə] heard about that (Hughes)

Clusters

In onset consonant clusters with /ɹ/ (in words like *through* and *street*), the first element is often palatalised, as in (135)-(138).

(135) Sixty-**three** [ʃɹi] years (Hughes)

(136) One two **three** [ʃɹi] four five (Clarke)

(137) Well right across the **street** [ʃtɹiːʔ] there's a beach (Roberts)

(138) Come **straight** [ʃtɹɛɪʔɾ] across, **through** [ʃɹu] your cut (Clarke)

The deletion of coronal stops /t/ and /d/ in final clusters following sibilants, fricatives, stops and nasals is a feature of BBerE. The examples below evidence the variable behaviour of (t, d) in a wide range of phonological contexts. An in-depth quantitative analysis of these variables would be needed in order to clarify the status of (t, d) in BBerE, but from these preliminary observations it is clear that the pattern of coronal stop deletion is markedly different from that found in modern British English (Tagliamonte and Temple 2005), and more closely resembles patterns in AAE (Green 2002; Labov et al. 1968). As in other varieties, deletion before obstruents is common. Pre-vocalic deletion (as in (139)) and pre-pausal deletion (as in (140)) also occur frequently. Deletion is possible both in monomorphemes ((142)-(143)) and in past verbs ((144)). /t/ and /d/ can be deleted morpheme-finally but word-internally before a vowel ((145)-(146)).

(139) The **last** [lɑːs] one, next to where the **guest** [gæs] house is now (Edwards)

(140) Warwick **west** [wɛːs]. . . and he done Warwick **east** [iːs] (Hughes)

(141) Bierman concrete **products** [ˈpɹɑdʌks] (Bell)

(142) Find an **old** [əʊl] baby carriage (Allen)

(143) Coral **island** [ˈɑːɪlən] (Edwards)

(144) I never knew none of my grandfathers, they had **deceased** [dəˈsiːs] (King)

(145) All my **benders** [ˈbænəz] eleven and a half (Clarke)

(146) I never **wanted** [ˈwɔənəd] any (King)

Metathesis of /sk/ to [ks] in *ask* (but not *task* ((147)) or other lexemes) is a common phenomenon in BBerE, although not categorical; the data show inter- and intra-speaker variation within the small set of tokens available. As seen in (148)-(151), [ks] is found with both variants of BATH; both [ɑːks] and [aːks] occurred in the data. In *asked*, metathesis is found both in the presence and absence of the surface suffix (i.e. whether or not suffixal /t/ is deleted — see (148)-(150)). Inflected forms (*asks, asking*) have [ks], although none occurred in the data.

(147) She was a person that was only focused on the **task** [taːsk] at hand (Wade)

(148) I went behind this building and **asked** [ɑːkst] (Moss)

(149) Now anything in particular you want to **ask** [ɑːks] me, you haven't **asked** [ɑːkst] me no questions (Roberts)

(150) And **asked** [ɑːks] the chap (Roberts)

(151) Only when they come up here and they **ask** [aːks] for Bruce (Allen)

(152) Each time John would **ask** [ɑːsk] (Roberts)

(153) Most people you will **ask** [aːsk] (Allen)

Nasals

Like most Englishes, BerE has three nasals, /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/. Nasals may be syllabic in unstressed syllables, e.g. *button, bottom*[10]. With the exception of adjectives like *young*, morpheme-final *ng*-coalescence before vowel-initial suffixes (in words like *singing, singer*) is categorical in BBerE (see (154) and (155)).

Nasal flapping (*wanna*) and the alveolarisation of velar nasals in (-ING) are both common processes. (-ING) is a stable variable in BBerE, as in most Englishes, with [in]

[10]This is demonstrated above in (110), (111) and (114).

and [ən] being the most common pronunciations, both in present verbal and gerundive suffixes, and in words like *Stirling* and *building* ((156)-(158)). [ɪŋ] occurs more frequently in formal or self-conscious speech, as in (155). Suffixal /ŋ/ can also be pronounced as a syllabic nasal ((159)).

(154) She was a **singer** [ˈsiŋə] (Hughes)

(155) In my **younger** [ˈjʌŋgə] days it was always **being** [ˈbiːjiŋ] outside, always **inventing** [ɪnˈβæntɪŋ] (Allen)

(156) After the operation these folks **running** [ˈɹɑnɪn] to me every ten minutes…and all I heard was **beeping** [ˈbiːpɪn] **going** [ˈgəːʊən] (Roberts)

(157) He lives in **Stirling** [ˈstɜ˞lɪn] (Moss)

(158) It was a three storey **building** [ˈbɪldɪn] (Hughes)

(159) I was **strutting** [ˈstɹɒʔn̩] up that street (Day)

Liquids and glides

BerE has the liquids /l/ and /ɹ/ and the semivowels /w/ and /j/. Where /ɹ/ occurs, it is an alveolar approximant [ɹ] in all environments, with a voiceless allophone in onset clusters with a voiceless stop or fricative (as in (161).

(160) We used to play cricket **round** [ɹɑːnd] the back (Roberts)

(161) **Friends** [f̥ɹæns] I grew up with (King)

Linking-*r* and intrusive/epenthetic *r*, though possible, appear to be relatively rare in BBerE, which is surprising in a primarily non-rhotic dialect (Wells 1982:222); rather the speakers of this study frequently used epenthetic glottal stops in intervocalic contexts as in (162) and (163) (potential *r*-sandhi contexts following NEAR/SQUARE words (e.g. *near and*) were excluded, since words in this set are universally rhotacised).

(162) I'm not leaving here because I have a ticket to go to United States of **America and** [əˈmɛɹɪkəʔ ən] I don't need a visa (Day)

(163) Betrayed his **master and** [ˈmɑːstəʔ ænd] so on (Moss)

The most conservative BBerE is non-rhotic, except for the NURSE/NEAR/SQUARE set (examples are given above under the sections for the relevant lexical sets). This is changing, however, probably owing to influences from North American varieties over the last 100 years.

/l/ has three main variants in BBerE. 'Clear' and velarised /l/ are in complementary distribution (see (164) and (165)). As in southern British Englishes, the anterior variant occurs in syllable-onset position. *L*-vocalisation is common (except at a word boundary preceding a vowel), while coda-position /l/ is either velarised or vocalised to a high-back vowel or semi-vowel [ʊ] or [w] (see (166)-(168)).

(164) **Aloe** [ˈæləʊ]... **cools** [kɨəɬz] them (Hughes)

(165) I **like** [lɑɪk] what you've done, but today they say that's **cool** [kɨɬ] (Day)

(166) We would take the **wheels** [wɪːɬz] off, take the **axle** [ˈæksʊ] (Allen)

(167) **Blue** [blu] **hole** [həʊ] **hill** [hiːəw] (Hughes)

(168) He died rowing the ferry, got **killed** [kɪəwd] by a ship (Wade)

'Yod-dropping', or the loss of the palatal approximant /j/ before [uː] (*tune*), is typical in BBerE. /j/ is absent after all tautosyllabic alveolar consonants, including /t/, /d/ and /n/ ((169)-(173)). Thus yod-dropping in BerE follows the GenAm pattern (Wells 1982:126).

(169) It was a light tan coloured **suit** [sʊːt] (Day)

(170) Get a inner **tube** [tʰuːb] from a tyre (King)

(171) You don't have to pay **duty** [ˈdurɨ] on my kites (Clarke)

(172) Everybody down the airport **knew** [nuː] they would send me (Bell)

(173) I'm not a gifted biology **student** [ˈstuːdn̩t] (Roberts)

3.5.3 Overview

The data in 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 summarise the segmental phonology of BBerE and introduce its complex variability. BBerE vowels and consonants display the complexity we might expect from a non-standard koiné, showing a diverse mixture of phonologically constrained and 'free' variants, and an unusual combination of vocalic and consonantal features. For the most part, these data do not contradict the few observations made in the existing literature and popular material about individual phonological features of BerE, although, as is to be expected, they complicate them to an extent by revealing variability.

The data suggest three significant vocalic mergers in BBerE. DRESS and TRAP are merged, sharing a range of variants, and NURSE, NEAR and SQUARE are merged on /ɜˤ/. Finally, NORTH, FORCE, CLOTH and THOUGHT are merged, although NORTH and FORCE appear to be un-merging from this set and becoming rhotacised, this change in progress reflecting American influences on BerE. BBerE is unusual with regards to rhoticity, again most likely reflecting centuries of contact with speakers and norms from both sides of the Atlantic. BBerE is primarily non-rhotic, but (unlike most *r*-less varieties) has a number of categorically rhotic sets, and mainly lacks r-sandhi. NURSE, NEAR and SQUARE are categorically rhotic, but START, NORTH, FORCE, CURE, and lettER only variably so, with the most conservative BBerE tending towards *r*-lessness.

The pattern of phonologically conditioned variation in BBerE vowels is complex. Only the PALM, happY, lettER and commA sets are not variable, and only the BATH, START, STRUT and CURE sets have unconstrained alternation between variants. There is a notable pattern of conditioning based on coda voicing in BBerE vowels, which is evident in eight or nine sets: KIT, FLEECE, LOT, MOUTH, GOAT, FACE, CHOICE, PRICE and possibly FOOT[11]. Monophthongisation is another common phenomenon, seen in the iconic MOUTH and GOAT sets as well as FACE, NEAR and SQUARE; this may be behind the folk perception, found in many interviews, of BBerE as 'flat.' At the same time, there is a pattern of diphthongisation seen in the allophonic off-glides of several BBerE vowels, which include the sets that Wells describes as subject to 'southern Breaking' (KIT, DRESS,

[11] As discussed above, insufficient tokens were yielded to establish whether the diphthonal allophone of /ʊ/ occurs before all voiced consonants, or only before /d/.

and TRAP (1982:533-537), but also before /d/ in FOOT, before /l/ in GOOSE, and in the merged set NORTH/FORTH/CLOTH/THOUGHT. The variability in BATH likewise most likely reflects the fluctuating influences over time of North American and British input.

In terms of consonants, BBerE has a set of relatively straightforward features. Their combination is unusual, however, and reveals the variety's diverse input; BBerE mixes parts of Caribbean TH-stopping and British TH-fronting patterns (Wells 1982:96, 565). It has North American alveolar flapping, African American/Caribbean (t, d) deletion and /sk/ metathesis (the latter also being a feature of early London English) as well as a /v/-/w/ merger. The behaviour of /l/ matches that found in London and southern USA territories.

All in all, BBerE is a complex variety with an interesting range of phonological features and innovations commensurate with diverse linguistic input and a lengthy history. While this chapter has given a broad introduction to the sounds of BBerE, further work will shed more light on the patterning of individual features; The baseline I have offered here highlights features of the dialect that may require quantitative investigation owing to unclear patterns of variation, as well as iconic features that provide fertile ground for sociolinguistic research exploring how Bermudians express their identities linguistically. Part II of this thesis focuses in particular on the iconic MOUTH and GOAT vowels, and on the behaviour of the definite article in stylised performances of BBerE, which are presented in Chapter 6.

3.6 Language attitudes and ideologies

Like other 'non-standard' varieties of English, BerE is subject to negative attitudes based on deeply entrenched 'standard' language ideologies and is commonly referred to as 'broken,' 'lazy,' 'improper' and so on. A selection of quotations from participants[12] illustrates as much:

(174) INTERVIEWER : Any Bermudian artists that you listen to?

[12] Some examples are taken from interviews conducted in 2011 as part of a study of /v/ and /w/ in BerE; participants, who are included in the participant list in Appendix A, completed CUREC-approved consent forms and have been anonymised here.

TAYLOR : No, I tend not to listen to Bermuda music, because they have that Ber — and this is so wrong — that Bermudian talk. You know what I mean, and even when they sing, you could hear it?

INTERVIEWER : Do you mean the accent?

TAYLOR : **The** [di] — **the** [di] road, **the** [di] road, like, ok, talk proper.

INTERVIEWER : You don't think it's proper?

TAYLOR : It's not proper! **The** [di] is not a word, **nothing** [ˈnɒfɪn] is not a word.

(175) HARRIS : It's rough, the Bermudian Bermudian it's rough, I, I, you know, I hear my girls sometimes when they're talking amongst each other, it's like, wow, ok.

(176) REID : My grandmother spoke well, my mother spoke well, my uncle spoke well…I know my daughter used to speak, and I'm like "…that's not making any sense, just repeat that", um, and I will say to you that I *remember* [riˈmɛmbə], but I was just talking to my brother the other day and he was like "**'member** [ˈmæmbə]? **'member** [mæmbə] when we?" — **'member** [ˈmæmbə]? What happened to the re-?

(177) RYAN : To have a Bermudian accent I think I'd sound really like uneducated, and like, not in a mean way but it doesn't sound particularly intelligent.

(178) DANIELS : A lot of thems words are despised now…like for example I think Bermudians, we use D instead of T H.

(179) INTERVIEWER : How does an authentic Bermudian speak?

ROBERTS : Some of them speaks terrible!…I speak you know the broken English at times.

Unsurprisingly, however, prescriptivist attitudes such as these co-exist with feelings of dialect pride, and a strongly-held link between dialect and local identity in Bermuda.

(180) I'm very yeah I'm very proud of my accent. (Daniels)

(181) Yeah it is absolutely a part of me. (Foster)

I discuss in later chapters evidence that black Bermudians are disproportionately subject to pressure to 'switch up' to a perceived standard (see 5.2.2). In fact, there is no singular 'standard' exonorm in Bermuda, but several; both British and American

Englishes are accepted and encouraged in the workplace — but not BerE, and, I would argue, especially not BBerE. This is likely to be an indirect response to the speakers of the sub-variety, rather than any of its linguistic features. As in so many contexts, racial prejudice colours attitudes towards dialect in Bermuda, and language policing acts as proxy for racist views.

I also discuss in later chapters the many ways in which BerE is stylised. Examples include dialect writing, tourist-targeted merchandise, street art, and on-stage performances, all making use — and in many cases making fun — of so-called 'Bermewjan'. Also known as ''Mujan,' or ''Mujian,' 'Bermewjan' is a folk term for the local dialect. I argue that 'Bermewjan' is effectively a label for BBerE, this being the variety displayed in stylised linguistic practices used to demonstrate the variety for outsiders and/or to demonstrate knowledge of the variety, and because, as shown in Part II, stylisations often invoke racialised stereotypes. BBerE is the sub-variety of BerE that is 'locally imagined' (Johnstone 2017:285) as the 'authentically Bermudian' way of speech, probably because it is 'othered' as being the most deviant from 'standard' English, and associated with elderly, black, working-class speakers. In other words, the stereotype of the 'authentic Bermewjan' is racialised in Bermuda. These speakers are simplistically construed locally as 'real Bermudians' or 'authentic Bermudians' in much the same way as other racialised and classed groups (Bucholtz and Lopez 2011; Hall 2017:792) — often, as discussed in 2.4, this is only subtly or implicitly, as in the common use of 'Bermudian' as a euphemism for 'black.' The designation of 'authentic' makes BBerE the most exportable, marketable variety, and the favoured candidate for stylisation and caricature. The evidence I present in Part II shows that it is not BerE generally, but BBerE specifically that is both ridiculed and used for identity work in dialect performances.

This chapter has laid the foundations as a description of BBerE which can be used as a baseline for future studies, including my own study of racialised dialect performance in Bermuda in the second half of this thesis. In many ways, this type of stylised linguistic practice may be the best illustration of attitudes towards and ideologies surrounding BBerE.

Part II

Performance matters — it cannot be dismissed as mere aesthetic embellishment layered upon some independently constituted social reality. . . performance is a consequential, efficacious mode of linguistic practice, a potent means of creating, negotiating, and displaying social meaning and value in the communicative accomplishment of social life.

(Bauman 2000:4)

4

Critical perspectives on linguistic performance

As Bell and Gibson have pointed out, 'the term "performance" has been used in many ways over the last 50 years in linguistics and sociolinguistics' (2011:556), ranging from general theories of language to work on specific, theatrical linguistic styles. Performance is a complex idea and, as it is referred to by linguists, has been influenced by a number of schools of thought, including sociology, literary studies and anthropology. With this in mind, this chapter is dedicated to untangling the concept of performance, surveying the ways in which it has been conceived and studied by various scholars in order to establish the critical foundation for my own examination of linguistic performance in Bermuda. Since this thesis is about the performance of race, I also discuss relevant sociolinguistic literature on ethnicity and racialised dialect performance.

4.1 What is performance?

'We are all just actors trying to control and manage our public image, we act based on how others might see us' (Goffman 1956).

Sociolinguists have long recognised that 'performance occurs not only on stages and under spotlights but in frequent and fleeting interactional moments throughout daily life'

(Bucholtz and Hall 2003:381). The dramaturgical approach to speech was pioneered by sociologist Erving Goffman (1956; 1981). His seminal work *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1956) was heavily influenced by literary theorist Kenneth Burke, who approached interaction as theatrical, and treated language and thought 'primarily as modes of action' (Burke 1945:xxii). Like Burke, although in a more metaphorical sense, Goffman saw speakers as social actors, and therefore all talk as performed. For Goffman, speakers attempt to see themselves through the eyes of their audience in everyday interactions, and shape their behaviour accordingly. Much of the anthropological work on performance builds on this perspective (Bauman 1977), and Goffman's work is at the root of the turn to performance which continues to shape modern social sciences, including sociolinguistics.

While recognising the importance of this general perspective, other scholars have shown that it is also necessary to define 'a more marked conception of verbal performance' (Bauman 2000:1) — that is, specific, situated speech acts which take the form of reflexive linguistic display before an audience. This distinction makes possible a theoretical approach to those overtly theatrical linguistic practices which listeners instinctively categorise as performance, or which literally take place on stage, while still allowing for the over-arching performed nature of spoken interaction. This is what Hymes captures in his term 'breakthrough into performance' (1981) and represents the type of linguistic practice with which I am concerned in Bermuda.

The approaches to performance that I have discussed above have been important to the development of modern sociolinguistics. This is most evident in contemporary sociolinguists' social constructionist approach to spoken language as an agentive, identity-making practice (Bucholtz and Hall 2005; Eckert 2000, 2008). Hymes, influenced by Goffman, was one of the first to bridge the gap between anthropology and linguistics. Challenging Chomsky's basic distinction between 'competence' and 'performance' (1965), Hymes (1974) introduced the concept of 'communicative competence' to represent speakers' capacity to use language intentionally, carrying through to sociolinguistics the notion of speaker agency that is now central to 'third-wave' scholarly approaches (see Eckert (2012)).

4.2 The 'problem' of self-conscious speech

Language variationists can no longer afford to treat this type of truly natural speech as if it were a mere aberration (Schilling 1998:77).

Sociolinguists have not always treated speakers as agents, however. Early on, variation in spoken language was seen as reactive in response to formality, and, according to Labov (1984), arranged along a stylistic continuum of attention paid to speech, with 'unselfconscious' speech being prized as the most 'natural,' and the most reliable source of the 'vernacular' — traditionally the holy grail of variationist sociolinguistics. For this reason, performance has not received much attention in the study of language variation and change until relatively recently.

Imagining styles along an artificial continuum allows little room for speaker agency — only speaker reaction — and the varied range of ways in which speakers employ linguistic and paralinguistic resources to shape their identity or identities. As more agentive theories of style have developed, so the Labovian attention to speech approach has been problematised. And as sociolinguists began to conceive of 'styling' — that is, the manipulation of accent and dialect as semiotic resources for strategic identity management (Coupland 1988; Cameron 2000) — performance speech came to be more relevant to the study of style as a social constructionist phenomenon; as 'SOCIAL PRACTICE rather than VARIATION' (Coupland 2001:348). Since performed speech represents speakers' very clearly concerted efforts to assert linguistic control over their personae, it forms both a part of, and supporting evidence for, these approaches to style as proactive.

It is therefore in our interests to accept, to seek out, and to operationalise self-conscious speech, rather than treating 'communicative reflexivity' as a 'methodological problem' (Coupland 2007:24). As part of this critical discourse, Schilling (2007) has pointed out that highly self-conscious styles (such as performance speech) are valuable to us as sociolinguists, and may be no less 'vernacular' than casual speech, although they do give an accurate insight into what is *seen* locally as 'vernacular' — in other words, performance speech usually includes features that are salient and stereotyped

in a given speech community. As Sclafani explains, overt performance contexts are special, 'since in these contexts style has been strategically manipulated, exaggerated, and framed as a non-serious act to serve multiple purposes, including demonstration... and entertainment' (Sclafani 2012:122). Further, it is now thought likely that there are 'circulating relationships' (Bell and Gibson 2011:559) between performed and everyday language (see also Coupland and Kristiansen (2011)), and therefore it is important to consider performance data in studies of language change as well as in studies of style and attitudes.

For these reasons, performance speech is no longer excluded from investigation as an undesirable form of hyper-self-conscious speech, but rather treated as a valuable source of information about patterns in variation and the salience of features. Developing a healthier relationship with self-conscious styles allows us to use a wealth of existing data, since the sociolinguistic interview, a reliable source of high-quality speech recordings, need no longer be disdained for the attention to speech that it inevitably occasions; in fact the sociolinguistic interview 'appear[s] to offer speakers a stage for the artful performance of language' (Moll 2014:397) and therefore proves to be as fruitful for the scholar of self-conscious speech as it is for the Labovian variationist, if not more so.

Like anthropologists, sociolinguists have approached performance both generally and more specifically; it has become important to the field both as a basic aspect of talk (speakers actively self-style according to a number of factors) and as a more specific practice (performance speech) over the past twenty years. Performance can be seen, on the one hand, as an aspect of all language use — all speakers are performers, and all talk is performed — and, on the other, as a marked and theatrical speech genre with specific characteristics. There exists in the literature a spectrum of performance which may be best described as a spectrum of *theatricality*; for Coupland this ranges from 'mundane' to 'high' (2007) and for Bell and Gibson from 'everyday' to 'staged' (2011). At the most theatrical extreme of this spectrum, 'high' or 'staged' performances involve what Hymes calls 'the trappings of theatre' — that is, features such as scheduled start and finish times, a stage or theatre-like location, costumes, and so on. At the other end of the spectrum, 'mundane' or 'everyday' performance occurs spontaneously, interrupting the course of 'normal' speech.

4.3 'Local language as it is locally imagined': Stereotypes and stock phrases

The de-prioritisation of the unselfconscious 'vernacular' has led to a number of sociolinguistic studies focusing on performance speech. Schilling puts this into practice in her study of performance in Ocracoke, a central precedent for my own study of performance in Bermuda. Schilling's definition of performance speech is 'that register associated with speakers' attempting to display for others a certain language or language variety, whether their own or that of another speech community' (1998:53). In the Ocracoke study she examines one variable, the (ay) diphthong, in the speech of one representative speaker named Rex O'Neal, who spontaneously and repeatedly performs a phrase which appears to be designed for displaying the 'quaint' Ocracoke brogue for outsiders:

> High tide on the sound side, last night the water fire, tonight the moon shine. No fish. What do you suppose the matter Uncle Woods? (Schilling 1998:57).

Schilling focuses on the first section of the phrase, *high tide on the sound side*, which is known and used by most Ocracokers, known as 'hoi toiders'. By way of comparing (ay) across the four phonological contexts in which it occurs in the phrase, combined with more ethnographic methods of observation, Schilling identifies three major findings:

> First, performance speech may display more regular patterning than has traditionally been assumed. Second, it lends insight into speaker perception of language features. Finally, the incorporation of performance speech into the variationist-based study of style-shifting offers support for the growing belief that style-shifting may be primarily proactive rather than reactive (1998:53).

Thus the study of overtly performed speech is not ruled out by the third-wave notion that *all* speech is performed; rather it is made possible by the deconsecration of the unselfconscious 'vernacular', and, as one of the most self-conscious forms of talk possible, represents a special genre that provides evidence for style-shifting as pro-active.

Schilling's work on 'hoi toid' is part of a larger literature on the sociolinguistics of the stereotyped 'stock phrase' as a means of dialect display. Bell (2014a) has discussed stock phrases at length, giving a list of stock phrases and the varieties they display; this is reproduced in Table 4.1. Bell characterises the shared features of stock phrases as follows:

Stereotype	Standard Orthography	Origin
fush and chups	'fish and chips'	New Zealand
dahntahn	'downtown'	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
hoi toide	'high tide'	Ocracoke, North Carolina
hoi toide	'high tide'	Mersea Island, UK
oot and aboot	'out and about'	Canada
toity-toid and toid	'thirty third and third'	New York City
ee bah goom	'oh by gum'	Yorkshire, UK

Table 4.1: Stock phrases and their origins. Reproduced from Bell (2014a).

- These are formulaic, expressions that have been frozen in their particular lexical and syntactic form [...]
- They usually contain more than one feature distinctive to the variety that they represent, ranging from the dialectal lexicon and phonology of Yorkshire *ee bah goom*, to the triple repetition of three salient New York City features in *toity-toid and toid* (/th/ stopping, /r/-lessness, diphthong realisation).
- The same variable may represent different accents depending on the features of the accent itself: both *dahntahn* and *oot and aboot* represent different local pronunciations of the MOUTH diphthong.
- The stock phrases are respelled nonstandardly enabling the accent contrast to be displayed in writing, often in an exaggerated form (New Zealanders do not actually say 'fush and chups') (2014a).

Bell shows that the history of critical approaches to linguistic stereotypes in many ways reflects the history of sociolinguistics as a discipline. Sociolinguistic variables have traditionally been divided into three groups: indicators, markers and stereotypes, which correlate with speech community members' awareness of forms (Labov 1972). Indicators are variables which correspond with geographical and/or social groupings but go unnoticed by non-linguists. Markers are similar to indicators, but subject to stylistic variation in a Labovian sense. Stereotypes, including stock phrases (or, as Labov calls them, 'local stereotypes') are markers which have become the subject of metalinguistic commentary and 'overt social consciousness' (Labov 1972:248). As Preston explains, they are often the 'key players in discussions of such matters as "good" and "bad" language use and users' (1992:327). For Labov, stereotypes — such as 'toity-toid' in 'Brooklynese' — are of relatively low interest to linguists, as 'sketchy and unsystematic'

evidence as to the patterns of 'real' vernacular speech (1972:248), this being the main goal of first-wave studies of language variation and change.

As I have already discussed, as sociolinguists' interest in style increased, objections to self-conscious speech data diminished. This meant that stereotypes became more interesting to scholars as a sub-category of performance speech, and led to work such as Schilling's (1998), Bell's work on New Zealand radio presenters' use of a range of stereotyped features (1992), and Coupland's on the Cardiff stock phrase *hark hark the lark in Cardiff Arms Park*, which demonstrates the high-front START vowel in Cardiff English (1985). In her work on the social meaning of rhoticity in Beijing, Zhang notes that stock phrases often have a reflexive element; the terms for 'Beijing speech style' and 'Beijing flavour' discussed by Zhang are rhotacised themselves, 'projecting a "sound image" of the local style of speech' (2008:207), and thus these phrases represent 'key cultural terms that semantically denote the distinctiveness of a Beijing style' (*ibid.*). Agha notes a similar pattern in his work on the social meaning of so-called 'h-dropping' relative to 'Received Pronunciation'; the word ''umble' (textually represented in the speech of Charles Dickens' Uriah Heep) represents a 'reflexive trope' in which the semantic content of the stock phrase (or, in this case, a single word) matches the quality indexically associated with the linguistic feature it demonstrates (in this case, 'humble'). This makes the stock phrase 'repeatable, humorous, memorable, and hence capable of widespread circulation' (Agha 2003:256) — in other words, ideal for the reproduction and propagation of stereotypes. The semantic content of stock phrases is not always directly linked to the characters, places, or national stereotypes they are intended to invoke, but it is rarely completely arbitrary.

4.3.1 Stereotypes, indexicality, and enregisterment

These studies share not only an interest in the stereotyped stock phrase, but also a 'motivational, less deterministic perspective' on style-shifting (Coupland 1985:153). This perspective has been extended as part of what Bell calls a 'third movement' of approaches to style. This movement is characterised by a focus on stereotypes, as linguists have built on the work of Ochs (1992) and Silverstein (2003) to conceive of the indexicality of

variables (Eckert 2008), with indicators, makers and stereotypes corresponding to first, second and third-order indexes respectively (Bell 2014b; Eckert 2008). Bell illustrates this in his 'Indexical Cycle', reproduced in Figure 4.1.

Agha explains the process of features becoming linked with styles and associated identities as 'enregisterment' (Agha 2003, 2005, 2007): 'processes and practices whereby performable signs become recognised (and regrouped) as belonging to distinct, differentially valorised semiotic registers by a population' (Agha 2007:45). Performances, especially stock phrases, are reliable sources of salient features enregistered in a particular style and imbued with particular social meanings, since they represent opportunities to demonstrate these 'performable signs.' Performances can also *create* new connections as well as reinforcing existing ones; as Pratt and D'Onofrio point out, 'performances are ripe for the heightened use and creation of links between linguistic styles and social meanings' (2017:286).

Enregisterment has proven a useful way of understanding how dialects have come to be recognisable entities with associated stereotypes and stock phrases, as Johnstone has demonstrated in her work on the dialect of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She explains that as Pittsburghers became more socially and geographically mobile after the Second World War, they gained an awareness of dialect variation. 'Once forms became variable, the choice among variants could, for some people, be invested with second-order indexical meaning such as class or correctness' (Johnstone 2006:89) and 'Pittsburghese' was born.

In recent studies of performance, sociolinguists have built on Agha's idea of registers and their enregistered features becoming associated with 'characterological figures': 'image[s] of personhood that [are] performable through a semiotic display or enactment' (2007:177). These characters may be imagined or they may have some form of physical reality, such as the Pittsburgh 'Yinzer' dolls examined by Johnstone (2017), pictured in Figure 4.2. Johnstone shows that 'artefacts like these dolls invite their consumers to re-enregister a set of forms that are already enregistered with place and known as "Pittsburghese" with a particular communicative style and stance associated with a post-industrial stereotype of the working class' (2017:285). In other words, character traits and personae invoked in performances — in this case, a working-class stereotype — may

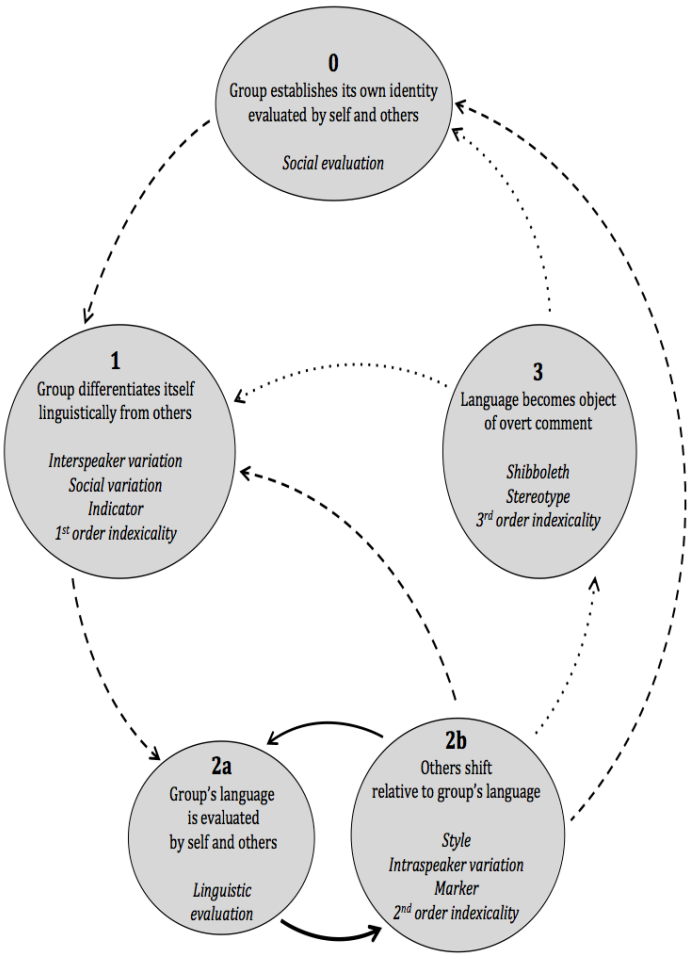


Figure 4.1: The Indexical Cycle: processes of creating social meaning in language. Reproduced from Bell (2014b:269).

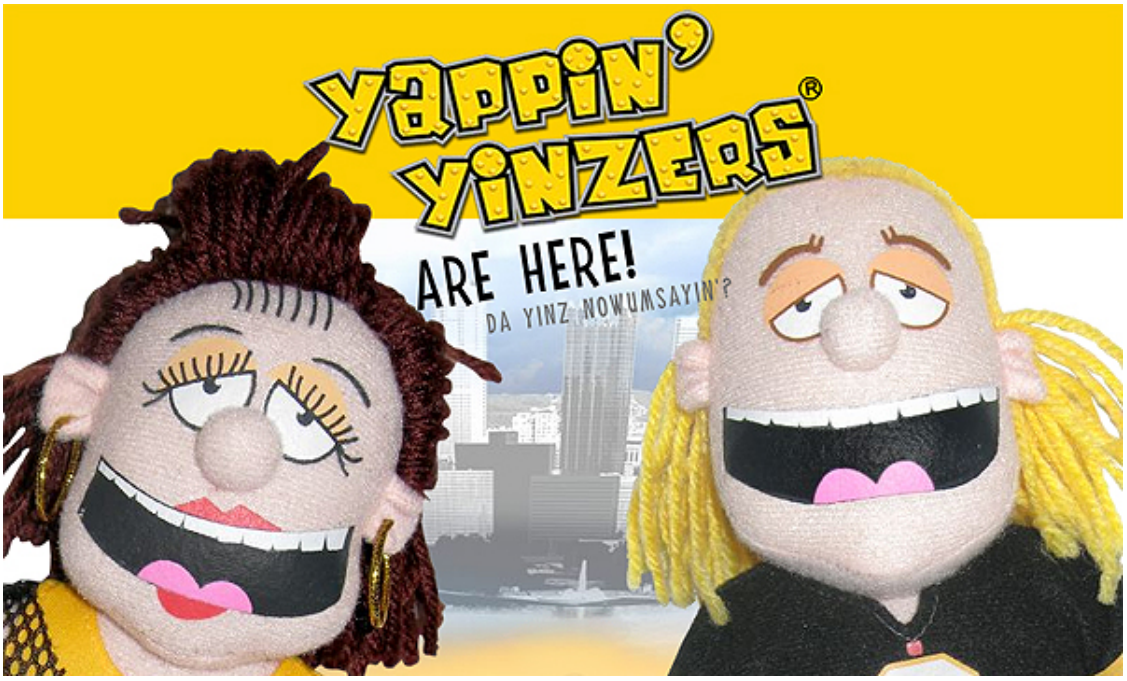


Figure 4.2: The 'Yappin' Yinzers' dolls, sold by Colloquial Enterprises.

come to be linked with enregistered features of a particular style. In the case of Pittsburgh, the dolls 'Nebby Debbie' and 'Chipped Ham Sam' are portrayed as unsophisticated, nosy enjoyers of television and junk food, these character traits being semiotically linked to the local dialect by way of the stock 'Pittsburghese' phrases emitted by the dolls when they are squeezed in their middles. Johnstone shows that the same characterological figure can be evaluated in multiple ways, either as a positive and nostalgic 'reminder of working-class Pittsburghers of the past' or as a more 'stigmatised' contemporary figure. Relatedly, Coupland (2007), Eckert (2004) and Zhang (2008) have all noted that stereotypes' imbued meaning potentials 'become more specific when employed in situated contexts' (Zhang 2008:217); in other words, audience, context, performer identity and a host of other factors have significant effects on how a performed stereotype is interpreted.

As discussed, stereotypes have traditionally been seen as an unreliable source of evidence of linguistic structure in a given dialect (Labov 1972). Schilling challenges this in her Ocracoke study, showing that performances by Rex O'Neal display similar structural patterns to non-performed speech, and thus may be used for 'traditional' variationist study. In fact, the question of whether or not a stereotyped performance provides any insight into the structure of the dialect it displays appears to depend upon

whether the performer is demonstrating their own variety or that of another group of speakers. Rex is, in his everyday life, a 'real' speaker of the Ocracoke brogue, and so perhaps it is unsurprising that his performance of certain features, while exaggerated, displays 'regular patterning' (Schilling 1998:77). Speakers performing a dialect they do not themselves normally use, however, tend to be less successful; I discuss this at greater length below in 4.4. In any case, stereotypes shed light on a different kind of structure which is of great interest to sociolinguists of style. As Bell points out, 'staged performances of identities form a rich field for linguistic, social and semiotic analysis' (2014b:309) since they provide important information about folklinguistic belief, speaker perception and indexicality of features — in other words, an insight into 'local language as it is locally imagined' (Johnstone 2017:285).

4.4 Voicing the other

Our speech... is filled with others' words, varying degrees of otherness or varying degrees of 'our-own-ness,' varying degrees of awareness and detachment (Bakhtin 1981:89).

Just as the work of linguistic anthropologists such as Goffman might lead us to the conclusion that all speech is performance, the work of literary theorists like Bakhtin could lead us to the notion that all speech 'voices the other' in some sense. While this may be true, again it leaves us with the practical conundrum of how to approach instances of overt impersonation of another speaker or type of speaker in linguistic practice. Sociolinguists have been careful not to 'throw out the baby with the bathwater' in this area; Coupland, for example, recognises the importance of drawing a distinction between multiple voicing as a general quality of language and direct impersonation in his discussion of style *vs* stylisation (emphasis my own):

> It is valuable, following Bakhtin, to construe all acts of speaking as the activation or unlocking of social meanings, through utterances being linked to pre-existing social formations, and it is interesting to construe all speakers as ventriloquists. But it maybe more profitable, at least as preliminary, to define stylised utterances as bounded moments when others' voices are, *in a somewhat more literal sense*, displayed and framed for local, creative, sociolinguistic effect (Coupland 2004:249).

Coupland explains stylisation as a literal interpretation of multiple voicing, which contrasts with a speaker's 'normal' style as a 'self-aware, strategised, staged alternative' (2004:250). Stylisation is marked its re-framing of the speaking context; 'rendered salient by its out-of-context-ness' (*ibid.*). Like metaphorical code switching, it involves a 'partial violation of co-occurrence expectations' (Gumperz 1982:98); in other words, speech and context clash noticeably as speakers imitate the speech of another in a transparently performed way:

> Stylisation is a metaphorical construction that brings meanings and values from outside the current context of talk into play, and recontextualises them. It tends towards hyperbole, with clear and often 'over-drawn' or cartoon-like representations of characters and social types, selected from known repertoires (Coupland 2009:4).

Double-voiced performances can 'generate symbolically condensed dialogues between self and other' (Rampton 1999:422) and are often motivated by 'self-presentational goals' (Coupland 2004:252). Coupland discusses the kinds of 'inferential work' a listener must do in assessing a stylised utterance. The first is a kind of 'distance assessment': 'if another persona is being voiced... what sociolinguistic distance is there between the heard and the "normal" voices, and along what dimensions of difference?' (2004:254). Secondly, listeners need to determine whether a stylisation is an 'act of in-group identification' (signalling closeness between the speaker and the voiced persona) or a parody (signalling difference).

Coupland notes that, although 'stylisation' is his own coinage, studies of stylisation pre-dated the term, and indeed a growing literature now focuses on the use of linguistic features by groups who do not traditionally use them (Hill 1993; Rampton 1995; Cutler 1999; Sclafani 2012; Pratt and D'Onofrio 2017). A number of recent studies have focused on clearly parodic stylisations, often drawing on nationally or internationally recognisable stereotypes. Pratt and D'Onofrio, for example, examine the personae of the Californian 'Valley Girl' and 'Surfer Dude' as they are performed on the television satire *The Californians*, exploring the link between embodied practice (in this case, 'jaw-setting') and phonetic variation (the California Vowel Shift) (2017). Sclafani (2012) has discussed parodic performances which mock public figures Martha Stewart and Newt

Gingrich, demonstrating that double-voiced parody can help scholars to 'overcome the difficulty of attributing social meaning' to individual sociolinguistic variables, since, in parodic performances, the indexical qualities stereotypically associated with features in a community are foregrounded and mocked (2012:134). Slobe (2018) has discussed the construction of the 'mock white girl' persona in the USA by way of semiotic variables and varying ideological stances. Studies such as these have shown double-voiced performances to be extremely useful to scholars investigating the social meaning of stylistic variables, in particular as they are used to 'indexically associate expressive forms with social personae' (Jaffe et al. 2015:135).

Other types of performances may be far less overtly parodic, or ambiguously so. For Coupland, the 'most sustained and successful' analysis of stylisation is Rampton's study of language crossing in multiethnic youth culture in the English Midlands (1995), and generally speaking this falls into the category of signalling in-group closeness. In the community he calls Ashmead, Rampton investigates the linguistic practice he calls crossing among teens of Anglo, Asian and Afro-Caribbean descent, including Panjabi and Anglo teens' use of Creole, Afro-Caribbean teens' use of Panjabi, and the use of 'Stylised Asian English' (SAE) by all three groups. Like most types of performance, SAE is 'often marked out by a change in loudness, pitch, voice quality and/or speed of delivery' (Rampton 1995:68).

Rampton shows that 'intergroup contact' in Ashmead can be 'reconstituted as a new, mixed ingroup' (1995:75) by way of language sharing in this context. When crossing occurs, the ownership of speech styles is temporarily transgressed or suspended, and performances can be 'cross-ethnically we-coded' in some contexts (1995:59). This is related to Woolard's concept of bivalency (1998) — the simultaneous membership of two or more speech communities. Rampton notes that this is very specific to its sociolinguistic setting — in which the Panjabi population is the significant majority — and has a number of complex social constraints. Crossing can be risky, and performances can 'flourish' or 'flounder' depending on the identity of the speaker and the other people present (Rampton 1995:92). Further, crossing had different meanings in different contexts;

SAE was used as a form of subversion in front of adults, whereas among peers it often represented or constructed solidarity.

Of course, not all instances of crossing have the potential to be socially cohesive. The study of 'crossing' brings with it questions about ownership, legitimacy, cultural entitlement and access to features and styles. This is especially true in cases of an empowered group's use of the variety associated with a less empowered one, especially in inter-ethnic contexts; there is a tension between possible interpretations of crossing as, on one hand, fostering social cohesion in racially diverse groups (Rampton 1995:75) and, on the other, as a form of cultural theft (Bucholtz 2011a:257). Significantly, Anglo teens' use of Creole was not considered acceptable in Ashmead (Rampton 1995:1). How to interpret linguistic performances in Bermuda is a central question of this thesis, and the intersection of crossing and race is discussed further later on in this chapter.

4.5 The elephant in the room: Performance and authenticity

Authenticity is not so much a condition of a research design; it is a social meaning (Coupland 2007:26).

In a special issue of *Journal of Sociolinguistics* in 2003, Eckert, Bucholtz and Coupland discussed one of the problematic, but long-unquestioned, ideas behind sociolinguistic research: the idea of the 'Authentic Speaker'. The Authentic Speaker, as Eckert explains, is conceived as 'locally located and oriented,' and 'produces linguistic output that emerges naturally in and from that location' (2003:329). Similar to the idea of the 'Native Speaker', the notion of the Authentic Speaker is part of the ideology of 'language as a natural object' (*ibid.*:329), and thus closely tied to sociolinguistics' traditional commitment to unselfconscious speech. While sociolinguists have moved on from this focus, the idea of the Authentic Speaker remains 'an elephant in the room' (*ibid.*) in the field, at odds with sociolinguists' attention to agency in linguistic practice in recent decades.

What are the implications of this deconstruction of authenticity for the study of linguistic performance? If we divorce 'unselfconscious vernacular' from 'authentic,'

it might seem difficult to distinguish the type of speech addressed in this thesis, for example, or any other speech we would categorise instinctively as 'put on' in some way. Eckert addresses this in her introduction, acknowledging that 'clearly intentional variability…constitutes a conscious manipulation and as such is qualitatively different from the unconscious patterning of the vernacular' (Eckert 2003:393). Importantly, a rejection of 'authenticity' as an organising principle does not mean ignoring the obvious differences between speech which is intentionally altered and speech which is not. In fact, by rejecting the simple alignment of 'authentic' with 'unconscious' and 'natural,' Eckert argues, we can bring the 'acts of identity' that are abundant in sociolinguistic data from the margins to the heart of research. In keeping with this proposal, Bucholtz proposes that authenticity be re-framed as the *outcome* of discursive action, rather than presupposed, nostalgically, 'as an object to be discovered'; this 'makes the notion of authenticity available for analysis' (Bucholtz 2003:400) and emphasises speakers' and hearers' perceptions of authenticity while bringing it under scrutiny as a scholarly categorising principle.

Another problem with the traditional sociolinguistic notion of authenticity is that it assumes, at least by today's standards, relatively static communities both geographically and socially, and emphasises research on a particular type of speaker — the non-mobile, older, rural male (the *NORM*) of traditional dialectology (Chambers and Trudgill 1998). Not only is this is out of step with ongoing linguistic processes resulting from globalisation (Moll 2014; Blommaert 2010), it also runs the risk of essentialising speakers. As Bucholtz explains, eliminating essentialism from sociolinguistic scholarship is a challenge, because 'strategic essentialism' — for example, early sociolinguistic work on inner-city youth, AAE, and language and gender — has been a key strategy in combating discrimination, and in bringing the language of marginal groups to the centre of scholarship (Bucholtz 2003:401-2) Modern studies now aim to do full justice to these groups by investigating variation within them, rather than presenting them as monolithic and invariant.

A similar challenge applies to the study of performance speech, since the interactional goals of performance — in particular the performed stock phrase — are so often based around displaying the 'authentic' and/or the 'authentically local', based on starkly

perceived differences between groups or styles. More often than not, authenticity is associated with and constructed around less privileged groups of speakers. Essentially, performance is based on folk ideas of authenticity which are basic, but nonetheless socially significant in their communities. Coupland acknowledges the importance of authenticity in his 2003 article, reminding us that despite its constructed nature, 'authenticity matters' and 'remains a quality of experience that we actively seek out, in most domains of life, material and social' (2003:417). On the other hand, local ideas of authenticity may be more complex than we give them credit for. In their recent work, Emma Moore and Paul Carter have discussed the multiple authenticities which can be associated with a place, and, relatedly, with the linguistic features that index them, in this case depending on the 'alternative life trajectories' of inhabitants of the Scilly Islands (Moore and Carter 2017:276). As always in sociolinguistics, context is everything, and the local meaning of 'authenticity' is constructed and construed very differently across places and spaces.

There is a problem here, however, and perhaps another elephant in the room which needs to be discussed. It is possible that translocal, multicultural deconstructions of authenticity have the potential to obscure prejudice as well as to counteract it. While the speech differences between groups are too often oversimplified, they do exist, particularly between unequally empowered groups, and often it is these differences which linguistic performances draw upon. In researching these types of linguistic practice, sociolinguists need to distinguish, if not between 'authentic' and 'inauthentic,' then between 'stylistically congruent' and 'stylistically incongruent,' and between entitlement and appropriation. Further, if we deny speakers of a variety the label 'authentic' in our deconstruction of the term, we may be failing to recognise the heritage and experiences that have led them to speak that variety, which an 'inauthentic' imitator lacks. In 'Displacing the Native Speaker', Rampton distinguishes between 'two aspects of language loyalty… inheritance and affiliation,' emphasising that 'it is particularly important to use a specific term to stake out the claims of the second (language affiliation) in order to make sure that the shadowy authority of notions like native language don't lead us to give pride of place to the first (inheritance)' (1990:109). However, despite the problems with one-to-one conceptions of, for example, nation and language, it is important to remember the social

and psychological reality of 'authenticity' for speakers and listeners. Karimzad and Catedral have discussed this recently:

> The power inherent in chronotopes that link nationhood with specific languages makes the notions of discrete languages and static identities "real" for speakers, and therefore, 'discussions of language and identity as flexible and socially constructed, we argue, must not obscure the power of these notions in shaping the perceptions of sociolinguistic subjects (2018:89).

Furthermore, in many cases it is the inheritors of languages and dialects who are disadvantaged both socially and linguistically, and ridiculed by temporary and parodic language affiliations affected by performers. It is important, therefore, in examining issues of authenticity surrounding performance, to take a particularistic approach, examining performances in their localised settings in order to 'enhanc[e] our understanding of the interplay between reified structures and speaker agency' (Schilling 2004:164), and keeping in mind the difference between scholarly theorising about 'authenticity' and its everyday reality for speakers. This is especially true in instances where linguistic performance intersects with race.

4.6 Performance, race, raciolinguistics

There is a rich literature devoted to the study of performance in inter-ethnic contexts, ranging from socially cohesive 'crossing' (Rampton 1995) to cultural appropriation (Bucholtz 2011a; Cutler 1999) and language mocking (Hill 1995; Ronkin and Karn 1999; Mesthrie 2002; Chun 2004; Bucholtz and Lopez 2011). In this section I will outline these studies, and the approaches to language and race that have developed alongside them.

The idea of crossing to an extent must always rely on a fairly early line of research in sociolinguistics that Chun and Lo have called the *Distinctive Ethnic Language* paradigm (2015). This approach 'approximat[es] a one-to-one mapping of people, linguistic varieties, and cultures' (2015:221) — in other words, it links linguistic patterns to social groups, defining 'ethnolects' such as AAE (Labov 1972; Smitherman 1977; Baugh 1983) or Chicano English (Santa Ana 1993). Although sociolinguistics has moved on from the idea of the Distinctive Ethnic Language, it allowed important early work on

the language practices of marginalised groups to be carried out: highlighting the internal structure and systematicity of varieties such as AAE, largely with the aim of exposing and dismantling linguistic racism (Chun and Lo 2015:221). This could be seen as an instance of what Alim calls 'strategic racialisation' (2016b:47).

The Distinctive Ethnic Language paradigm is the first of three approaches to language and race outlined by Chun and Lo (2015). The second — the 'Acts of Ethnoracial Identity' approach — developed alongside sociolinguists' social constructionist focus, concentrating on 'how linguistic elements index — that is, point to and create — ethnoracial meanings' (2015:222). As part of this approach, two important studies appearing in the same volume of *Journal of Sociolinguistics* examined white American teens' use of features associated with African American communities. Bucholtz focuses on the narrative of a young white Californian boy 'who aligns with black youth culture and uses elements of AAE in his speech' (1999:443). Cutler analyses the not dissimilar case of Mike, 'a white upper-middle class New York City teenager who employed linguistic features of AAE' (1999:428). In both cases, the attempted adoption of AAE preserves, in Bucholtz's words, 'the racial hierarchy that enables white cultural appropriation of African American culture through language crossing' (1999:443). This appears to be motivated in general by 'an ambivalent and anxious desire for blackness' in America (Bucholtz and Lopez 2011:682) and, in these cases, the 'complex prestige of African American youth culture' for white American teens heavily influenced by hip-hop (Cutler 1999:429). Both studies found the white teens' interpretation and adoption of AAE to draw upon basic stereotypes of hip-hop and African American culture.

While these studies address attempts by speakers to integrate the features and styles of other racial groups into their own repertoires, studies of more overtly parodic linguistic racialisation have discussed the 'symbolic power' (Bourdieu 1991) of white-on-non-white mockery in linguistic practice, both written and spoken (Hill 1995; Ronkin and Karn 1999; Mesthrie 2002; Chun 2004; Bucholtz and Lopez 2011). Whereas practices like 'Yorkville Crossing' (Cutler 1999) represent an attempt — successful or otherwise — to indicate membership or alignment with a group, direct language mocking usually has the effect of creating or exaggerating *distance* between the imitator and the imitated.

Often, this is because the content of language mocking speech 'construct the imagined speaker as comical' (Chun 2004:274) and assign them negative or ridiculous qualities which, as a result, become indexically linked with the linguistic features on display. At the same time, since the humour of the parody is in part based on the contrast between the speaker and their performed character, the speaker is elevated and empowered (Hill 1993, 1995; Chun 2004). For example, Applesammy and Naidoo, the fictional Indian South Africans in the 1940s radio satire of the same name, are portrayed as ignorant and law-breaking, whereas the narrator and all the white characters are law-abiding, 'better informed' and, inevitably, speakers of standard English (Mesthrie 2002:101). Similarly, strategies of pejoration in Junk Spanish (Hill 1993, 1995) and Mock Ebonics (Ronkin and Karn 1999) work to belittle Hispanic and African Americans, and white attempts to 'talk black' 'evoke[d] stereotypes about violence, laziness and welfare' (Preston 1992:343-344).

Discussing these types of linguistic practice, Chun has described language mocking as social privilege (2004:272-273), and Bucholz and Lopez note the double standard involved in white-on-non-white mockery: 'through linguistic minstrelsy, these characters exercise white privilege by utilizing linguistic features indexical of blackness without being affected by the stigma that usually accompanies the use of such language. Once they have no further need for their black-influenced personas, the white protagonists return to their standard language variety with a newfound racial and gender authentication conferred by their experience, while leaving hegemonic racial arrangements intact' (2011:701-702). Preston, too, notes that talking black is a common 'white pastime' (1992:351), while speakers of colour are usually under pressure to 'become white' via linguistic and other means. Race-based language mocking, then, is part of a strategy of Anglo domination (Hill 1993, 1995) which strengthens stereotypes and reinforces existing social hierarchies.

As mentioned above, there is debate as to whether highly self-conscious performances constitute reliable evidence about structure in the dialect variety on display, and this appears to be contingent on whether the speaker is voicing their own, or another group's variety. In their analysis of performance, Bell and Gibson observe that stylised performances have four main sociophonetic characteristics: selectivity, mis-realisation,

over-shoot and under-shoot. Data on language mocking confirms their conclusion that, perhaps unsurprisingly, 'these characteristics appear to be more likely when a performer is targeting a variety which they do not use in their everyday life' (2011:568). This is well-attested in the literature on language and race, in which studies have repeatedly found mock language to be a distorted and inaccurate reflection of the dialect being performed. Bucholtz and Lopez found practitioners of 'Mock AAE' in Hollywood films to employ socially stereotyped features of AAE, but 'not applied in the same range of environments,' and with other widespread AAE features missing (2011:686). Likewise, grammatical structures stereotypically associated with AAE were employed, but not according to the same constraints found among African American speakers. Similarly, Mesthrie finds that although Mock Indian South African English (ISAE) draws on features that *do* occur in ISAE, these are overgeneralised and 'grossly distorted,' (2002:111). Meanwhile, Preston found that requests for imitations of black language by white speakers resulted in performances which did not include key morphosyntactic features of AAE (such as remotive "been" and completive "done"), and that phonological imitation took place 'at a nonsegmental level' only (1992:334). According to studies such as these, language mocking reveals more about performers' perceptions of their subjects than it does about the linguistic structure of mocked varieties.

These patterns are related to the question of whether speakers can acquire non-native features, which has been debated by scholars since Hatala's (1976) proposal of 'Carla,' a white 13-year-old growing up in an African American working-class neighbourhood, as an 'authentic' speaker of AAE. Labov (1980) contested this claim, since Carla acquired only a limited range of phonological and prosodic features. Accordingly, in their studies discussed above, both Cutler (1999) and Bucholtz (1999) find reductionism in white teens' acquisition of AAE. While the notion of the 'authentic speaker,' as discussed, has since been complicated by sociolinguists, studies agree that speakers such as these rarely acquire the 'benchmark morphosyntactic features' of native speakers (Cutler 2003a:49), and that, even when ethnoracial groups live in the same environment under similar socioeconomic conditions, ethnicity persists as a 'sociolinguistic boundary', with morphosyntactic differences as a primary reflection of social distance (Rickford 1985).

While these studies are asking whether speakers can acquire features in high-contact situations rather than whether speakers can *imitate* features, the questions are clearly related; if speakers fail to acquire features in good faith, they almost certainly cannot perform them at will. As summarised by Chun, 'speakers have agency, but…their choices are influenced by social and linguistic structures' (2004:266). This is important background for the analysis carried out in Chapter 7.

Another key feature that various guises of racialised dialect parody have in common is that they are protected in some way from public censure. Hill points out that while linguistic mockery of this type is 'bold,' 'it is also subtle, relatively invisible in a way that ethnic insults [and] racist joking…are not' (1993:150). Meanwhile, objectors risk being accused of pettiness, of 'Political Correctness,' and of having 'no sense of humour', an effective means of protection not just in racialised mockery but in many types of parody. Chun notes that language mocking is often 'ostensibly playful (2004:263), and that the frame of stand-up comedy is used to sanction a departure from social conventions of politeness or political correctness' (2004:281). Daniel York Loh has recently discussed this issue, highlighting the difficulty of standing up to racist abuse that is framed by the perpetrator as 'just a joke':

> Of course, the Golden Rule that all 'minority ethnic' people learn when we're growing up in Britain is that we're simply not supposed to get angry about [racist abuse]. To do so is to invite all kinds of accusations about having a chip on both shoulders and so forth…we soon learn that we're supposed to be 'reasonable' about racism.…Even now, the 'victory' we 'politically correct killjoys' have 'won' has come at a price, I that we're rarely allowed to point out the indignities of having one's own race/gender/orientation/disability used as the butt of jokes without being implored to 'get a sense of humour, for God's sake' (2016:49).

Both the 'Distinctive Ethnic Languages' and the 'Acts of Ethnoracial Identity' approaches pose problems for the study of performance in general, and language mocking in particular. On the one hand, the study of inter-ethnic crossing and parody depends to an extent on an ethnolectal approach: when we think of a speaker 'crossing' into another group's language or language variety, we assume that one variety belongs to one group, and one to another. At the speaker level, the intended humour of mock language

practices (discussed further below) is based on the assumption of essential differences between racial groups, corresponding to straightforwardly defined 'ethnolects' such as 'black English' or 'Asian English.' On the other hand, the academic position that 'race is a social construct' and the idea of features as available to all for identity-making purposes could in theory be deployed by speakers to justify linguistic practices which borrow from other groups. If race is constructed, then 'crossing' is not crossing at all, or at least must represent a progressive breaking-down of artificial barriers. Constructed though those groups may be, however, 'racial categorisation is an ideological process that defines the material conditions and embodied experiences of many' (Chun and Lo 2015:220) and more often than not, the use of another group's features co-occurs with content which reinforces, rather than contests, racialising stereotypes (Bucholtz and Lopez 2011:702).

Chun and Lo's third, current approach to language and race — 'Racialisation' — addresses this problem. Linguistic racialisation refers to 'the sociocultural processes through which race — as an ideological dimension of human differentiation —comes to be imagined, produced, and reified through language practices' (2015:220). In other words, language plays a key role in the naturalisation of social difference. Enregisterment is central to this process: features and languages become racialised as they are 'mapped onto social differences' (*ibid.*:223) by speakers and listeners. This process makes 'ethnolects' seem far more different from each other than they really are, since social experience pre-disposes us to perceive distinctions sooner than overlap between groups (Irvine and Gal 2000). The racialisation approach, therefore, acknowledges common folklinguistic perceptions of stark, exaggerated differences between groups, allowing for their constructed nature and, at the same time, their real-world effects.

In line with this is Alim et al.'s recent proposal of 'transracialisation as a political project,' which emphasises the need for 'a more nuanced, strategic stance' towards race. Alim recognises that both essential race categories *and* scholars' 'wonderfully theorizing race as performative' are insufficient, arguing that transracialisation is about 'both doing and undoing race' (2016b:47) with a strong emphasis on context:

> . . . as long as societies are structured racially, the transracial political project necessitates the alternative subversion and maintenance of racial categorisation.. . . the idea that our theorizing should *always* be about destabilizing the

> idea of race — no matter the context — is naive, at best, and counterproductive at worst (Alim et al. 2016:8).

It is from this theoretical standpoint that we can interpret crossing in Ashmead (Rampton 1995) as extremely context-dependent in its social meaning and effectiveness, ranging from harmless and socially cohesive to offensive and racist. And it is from this theoretical standpoint that we can confirm that white parodists of black language tend to reinforce socially imposed categories of race, rather than heroically breaking them down by transgressing them. In other words, a (trans)racialisation approach allows us to take into account the balance of power in a sociolinguistic situation, neither totally subscribing to nor denying racial categories. The genre of performance — in particular mock language — prompts the need for this nuanced and localised approach. The question of how performances of Bermudian English by white residents of Bermuda should be characterised is a central question of this thesis. In Chapter 5 I describe the range and nature of these performances and begin to analyse their racialised meanings.

Perhaps the most striking, overt proof of the salience of speech differences to nonlinguists occurs when they imitate another variety.

(Preston 1992:327)

5

Going *dahn de road*: Linguistic performance in Bermuda

Bermuda is a site of various linguistic performance practices, motivated in particular by two factors; first, Bermuda is a tourist destination home to a non-standard variety of English, and secondly, as discussed in Chapter 2, it is a deeply divided and socially segregated society, with racial inequality broadly being reflected in both linguistic differences and polarised political affiliations. This chapter will introduce the most common performance practices, giving an overview of written and spoken linguistic performance in Bermuda and drawing together their shared themes.

The various types of performance described in this chapter, which I have divided into written and spoken, may also be categorised based on their intended audience. Performance in Bermuda can be targeted towards outsiders (usually tourists) or towards locals and resident 'ex-pats'. Tourist-targeted projections of Bermudian-ness vary widely depending on the desired audience, ranging from an 'exotic' idea of Bermudian-ness implying friendliness, a laid-back attitude and a tropical setting, to a 'buttoned-up' colonial style emphasising British influences on Bermudian culture, which appeal in particular to American visitors. There is also a trend towards pirate-themed merchandise and associated 'pirate speak' (see Figure 5.1); this draws on the history of privateering in Bermuda and the image of Bermuda as a dangerous and antiquated outpost, but

Figure 5.1: Pirate-themed merchandise on sale on Front Street, Hamilton.

linguistically bears no real resemblance to BerE. Locally-targeted performance, on the other hand, is much more clearly motivated by political and social goals rather than commercial ones; these will be explored in depth in the remaining chapters of this thesis.

These two types of performance do have some features in common; both have humour as a key interactional goal, and both tend to emphasise alcoholism in the imagined speaker (like a number of other island contexts, Bermuda is sometimes referred to as 'n,000 alcoholics clinging to a rock' (Urban Dictionary 2011)). Both types of performance often employ Bermuda's stock phrase *goin' dahn de road* and related others such as *up de hill* and *rahn de cornah*. It is unclear whether there is any significance to the shared theme of these phrases — whether *dahn de road* stands for anything in particular — other than the idea of their being used to demonstrate the accent at the same time as giving directions to outsiders, an explanation volunteered by some interviewees. However, another iconic 'Bermewjan' phrase, *goin' shrew de trees*, is used to refer to a number of

things, most of them taboo in some way. The entry in *Bermewjan Vurds*, a joke dialect dictionary discussed further in 5.1.2, reads:

> SHREW DE TREES — all the way. Specifically
>
> (1) get laid
> (2) get married
> (3) get full hot[1]
> (4) die: "He went SHREW DE TREES last night" (Smith and Barritt 2005).

While its origins are unclear, *Dahn de road* is clearly designed to demonstrate key stereotyped features of BerE, in the same way as *hoi toid on the sound soid* in Ocracoke and the other stock phrases discussed in Chapter 4. The BerE features targeted are the monophthongal variants of the MOUTH and GOAT vowels, and the definite article pronounced with an alveolar stop and a high front vowel.

In this chapter and in my thesis as a whole I discuss performances of BerE only; however, the use of Caribbean varieties by black and white Bermudians, particularly JamE, represents another type of 'voicing the other' in Bermuda. This is a more recent trend, reflecting improved attitudes towards Caribbean immigrants in Bermuda, and also the global rise of reggae and its association with Jamaican culture and language (Mair 2011). Gerfer (2017) has explored this as part of her work on white appropriation of Jamaican Creole (JC) in reggae music, commenting on the linguistic features used by white Bermudian reggae artist Collie Buddz, among others.

In illustrating the different types of linguistic performance in this chapter, I refer to and quote publicly available print, online, and video materials. I also refer to relevant examples from my own data; these are from a number of different fieldwork visits to Bermuda, the methodology for which is explained in other chapters (3, 6, 7).

5.1 Written performance

According to Krapp, 'it may be safely put down as a general rule that the more faithful a dialect is to folklore… the more completely it represents the actual speech of a group of

[1] *Full hot* is a BerE phrase for 'drunk.'

people, the less effective it will be from the literary point of view (1926:523). Although their approaches have differed, linguists and literary theorists since Krapp have largely agreed that written representations of dialect are rarely reliable as sources of linguistic evidence. Since 'literary dialects are not phonetic alphabets' (Ives 1971:155), writers are always subject to the limitations of orthography in trying to convey a character's pronunciation, even with the best intentions.

Intentions, however, are usually not unbiased when it comes to the representation of the 'other', literary or otherwise, and are another central reason for distortion. As noted by Preston, most literary dialect is filtered through prescriptivist stances, and 'almost all respellings... have as their primary effect on the reader a demotion of opinion of the speaker represented' (1982:323). More often than not, this reflects and fuels social and geographical stereotypes (Bowdre 1971; Farrison 1971; Preston 1983), the 'social symbolism of orthographic choice' (Jaffe 2000:562) revealing the author's 'covert attitudes towards the "different"' (Preston 1983:336).

Written parodies and folk accounts of Bermudian English have much in common with literary representations of dialect. Amongst re-spellings which do convey features of BerE, there occurs also a generous helping of 'eye dialect' (Krapp 1926) — that is, mis-spellings which reflect no deviation in pronunciation from 'standard' varieties, but instead imply non-standardness in general, and the usual negative social evaluations. In the sections that follow, I give a brief summary of a range of written BerE parody.

5.1.1 Poetry and prose

One of the earliest available examples of dialect writing in Bermuda is *Elice's Adwentures in Vonderland*, a 'Bermewjan' re-writing of Lewis Carrol's *Alice* which was printed serially in the *Royal Gazette* in the summer of 1924. An image of the first instalment is shown in Figure 5.2[2]. Written approximately nine years before Ayres' description of BerE (1933), *Elice* attempts orthographically to portray many of the features noted there including v-w interchange (*woluminous veepin*), DRESS-TRAP interchange (*axchange, Edmiral*), and a low-back BATH vowel (*larst, sarmple*). Other features not noted by

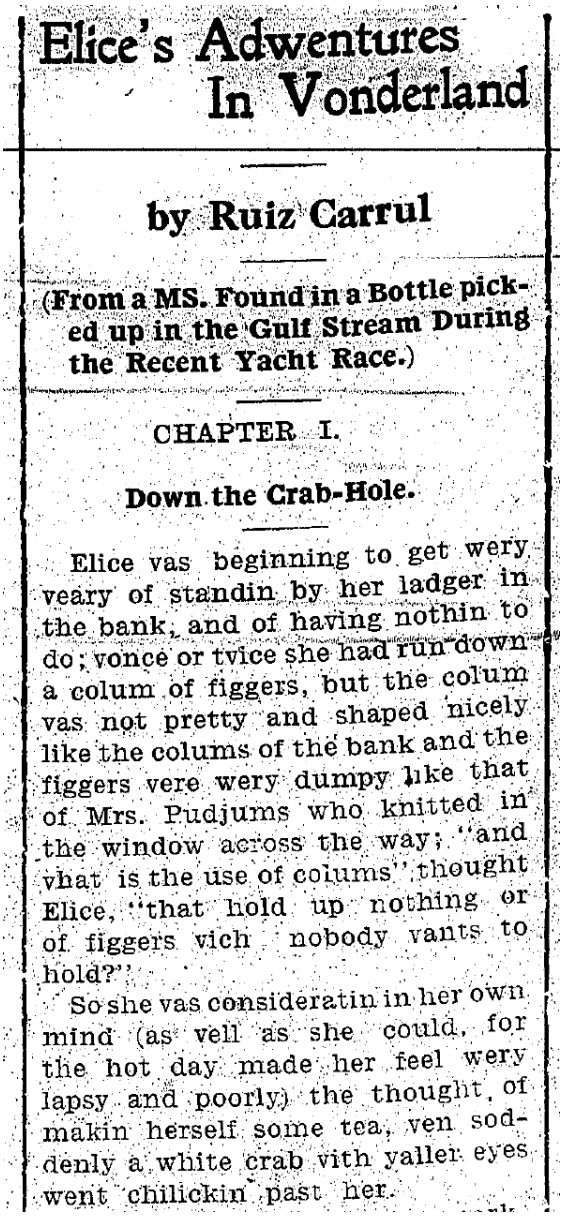
[2]Images of the full set of instalments are available on request from the Bermuda National Library.

Ayres but confirmed in my own data occur, such as TH-fronting (*mouf, troof*) and a rounded STRUT vowel (*tonnel*).

Predictably, the text is also riddled with mis-spellings which convey nothing phonetically meaningful, but which give a clear indication of the attitude of the writer towards speakers of BerE (*Carrul, figgers, annything, biskit, igreediants, honner, committy* etc.). Present also are the usual culprits of phonetic variants occurring outside their normal phonotactic constraints, resulting from straightforward graphemic swaps regardless of context (*belov* and *knov* for *below* and *know*), as well as features which are *not* present in BerE, and are unlikely to have been at the time of writing (*Ruiz* for *Lewis*).

BerE is indexically linked to alcoholism in *Elice*, achieved in two ways. First, Alice — whose speech is all dialectal — is portrayed as prone to drinking. Throughout the tale, she seeks alcohol in the 'little bottles' transposed from Carrol's original ("'I am varm all over, ; just as if I ver half-baked"') and upon her waking from her dream to find herself at her place of work, her manager smells her breath and exclaims, "'I do believe you hev been usin gin on your shradded vheat biskit instad of milk!"'. Secondly, Alice's voice is claimed to become *more* Bermudian upon drinking: "'carouser and carouser!" cried Elice in a Seturday night woice (she vas so effacted by the little bottle vhat she had drunk thet she quite forgot how to speak tamperate English)'. Drinking and Bermudian non-standardness are in turn indexically linked to blackness; the effect of alcohol on Alice is that her voice turns 'dark brown…her woice sounded thick and wery brown, and the words did not come as they used to do.' Throughout the piece, BerE is aligned with ignorance, both Alice's and other characters': "'speak 'Mujan" said the Cahow. "I don't know the meanin of von of tham long words."' Although I have offered only a brief overview of *Elice*, it is clear that it is part of the 19th and 20th century vogue for writing so-called 'Negro dialect', as discussed by Farrison (1971) and DeBose (2005).

Eye dialect still appears occasionally in the *Royal Gazette*, and in recent years this has been in the form of re-prints of poetry by white Bermudian Jeremy Frith (c.f. 2.4). Upon his death in 2009, Frith was described by his family 'as a visionary and a maverick in all aspects of life with a remarkable sense of humour…a fixer and a thinker, a dreamer and a doer, a poet, musician and storyteller' (Royal Gazette 2014). Poems from Frith's



Elice's Adwentures In Vonderland

by Ruiz Carrul

(From a MS. Found in a Bottle picked up in the Gulf Stream During the Recent Yacht Race.)

CHAPTER I.

Down the Crab-Hole.

Elice vas beginning to get wery veary of standin by her ladger in the bank, and of having nothin to do; vonce or tvice she had run down a colum of figgers, but the colum vas not pretty and shaped nicely like the colums of the bank and the figgers vere wery dumpy like that of Mrs. Pudjums who knitted in the window across the way; "and vhat is the use of colums" thought Elice, "that hold up nothing or of figgers vich nobody vants to hold?"

So she vas consideratin in her own mind (as vell as she could, for the hot day made her feel wery lapsy and poorly) the thought of makin herself some tea, ven soddenly a white crab vith yaller eyes went chilickin past her.

Figure 5.2: The first serialised section of 'Elice in Vonderland,' *Royal Gazette and Colonist Daily*, 9 July 1924.

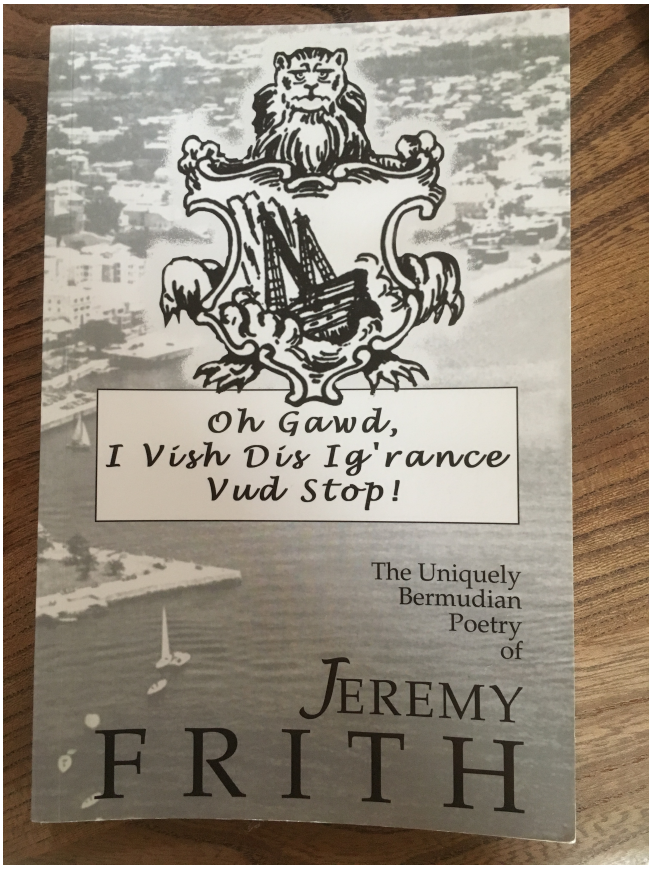


Figure 5.3: Front cover of *Oh Gawd*.

collection *Oh Gawd, I Vish Dis Ig'rance Vud Stop!* (pictured in Figure 5.3) have been re-printed a number of times, most recently during the political turbulence in 2016 in response to the 'Pathways to Status' bill discussed in Chapter 2. The book and a subsequent recording of Frith reading the contents aloud prove to be useful sources, both for the white 'no such thing as a Bermudian' ideology and associated pro-immigration politics (also discussed in Chapter 2), for written and spoken dialect performance, and for the link between the two. I analyse Frith's audio recorded performances in Chapter 7; here I discuss aspects of his written representations of BerE.

The timing of *Oh Gawd* is significant; it was first published in 1996, the year following Bermuda's referendum on independence, and many of the poems – most notably 'Indy' – address the issue. In terms of genre, the book is a sort of manifesto whose narrator takes on a number of bardic guises, denoted through language styles, to 'preserve' Bermudian culture, to give moral lessons and impart Frith's political agenda. Three main language

styles are represented through orthography and lexicon on paper: a sort of 'olde worlde' archaic English, 'strong' Bermudian (similar to that found in *Bermewjan Vurds*) and what Frith calls 'light Bermudian' (1996:53), but also present are poems whose narrators are Portuguese ('Tony Arruda') and Jamaican ('Rastaman Xmas Eve'). Frith signs the collection with the self-given moniker 'Ras Jeremiah.'

The book is divided into three sections. The first, entitled 'Poems in the Vernacular' contains sixteen dialect poems which can be further divided into political pieces and nostalgic poems about Bermudian customs and the island's natural landscape. The second section of the book, made up of seven poems, is called 'Reflections' and includes portraits of Frith's family members and personal reflections about his childhood. The book's third section, 'Songs' comprises four bawdy sea-shanty style poems about alcohol, sex and ageing, and appended to this is the 'Post-Script: A Cautionary Tale' - a moralistic poem in iambic trimeter entitled 'A Boor.'

Frith closes *Oh Gawd* with a series of 'Notes on Poems' (1996:53-59) including explanatory glosses for local terms and short biographies of named individuals. In these notes, Frith gives instructions as to how the poems should be read aloud, corresponding to the different sections of the book. The 'Poems in the Vernacular' are to be read according to a 'list of rules for Bermudian pronunciation,' clearly reflected in Frith's orthographical choices in the poems. On the other hand, 'Reflections,' Frith explains, 'are poetry in English with no accent expressed or implied so read them in your best mid-Atlantic' (1996:59). The association of seriousness with 'standard' and non-seriousness with 'Bermewjan' (and other non-standard varieties) is clearly drawn, then, and further reinforced by the subtitle of 'Reflections,' which is 'Poems (in English) of a more Serious Nature'. Frith also describes his approach in the *Notes*: 'I have tried to write as phonetically as possible and still remain comprehensible in those poems which are 'browad Mujian'. Where the written language is less pronounced it indicates a milder accent reflecting the diversity of speech current in society' (Frith 1996:51-51). The collection's title piece, which is worth quoting in full, is a good example of Frith's 'broad' written BerE.

Oh Gawd I Vish Dis Ig'rance Vud Stop

Dis place is quite miraculous, vif all its many hues,
Vif "Phlips" an "Jumps" an' Portagees (but not too many Jews),
Ver Vhite is "gray" an' tan is "black" an' aryvun's mixed up,
But Gawd I vish dis Ig'rance vud stop!

Ve'r a werry Christian country, you'll be so glad to her,
Tho' half the byes spend veekends gettin' hot on rum an' ber.
But ve go to church on Sundays an' show aryvun ve pray.
Dan go home an hate our neighba for bein black or vhite or gay;
An' if religion is a crutch, val racism's jus' a prop!
Oh Gawd I vish dis Ig'rance vud stop!

Naa I'd be the first to say dat theengs before ver bad:
Prajudice an bigotry ver all dese Islands awa had;
Ve're gotta chance to start afrash or make a intanashnal flop.
Oh Gawd I vish dis Ig'rance vud stop!

Some cry "lat's study history to see how our folk ver treated",
But forget dat history's verth is makin' sure it's not repeated,
And black treats vhite as vhite treats black, keeps spinnin' like a top.
Oh Gawd I vish dis Ig'rance vud stop!

The byes and garls in Parliament, like peegs at feeding time:
Spandin' taxes, makin' laws to put daan "drugs and crime";
The're jus' there to line their pockets an' put their frens on top.
Oh Gawd I vish dis Ig'rance vud stop!

See ve've got a chyce in this, ve have oursalves to blame;
Although the playas come an go, the teams remain the same:
One side lets dolla's trickle daan "The others baund to maas theengs up".
Oh Gawd I vish dis Ig'rance vud stop!

But perhaps there's a solution, ve can stop dis seesaw ride;
Ve can vaulk ahead as equals an find true "Island pride";
Ve can live in lowe — vun people, United ve vud be!
But to do so ve mus' all wote NLP!
Oh Gawd I vish dis Ig'rance vud stop! (Frith 1996:11-12).

In this poem, throughout the collection, and in the *Notes*, Frith makes his position on Bermudian identity and politics clear. In the above is expressed the common 'reverse

racism' rhetoric popular among white Bermudians and ex-pats in the debate over immigration (discussed in Chapter 2). Ostensibly, the poem mocks all Bermudian politicians and propounds equality; the notes read: 'on an island as small as ours, the counter productivity and divisiveness we create daily through racism, sexism, homophobia and just plain greed only benefits politicians' (1996:53). Through its form, however, the poem mocks black Bermudian politics in a black Bermudian accent, liberally sprinkled with eye dialect (*the're, baund, intanashnal*). If there is any ambiguity about whose accent is being used, this is eradicated by the poem's mockery of the "island pride" associated with black nationalism's commitment to Bermudian independence in the late 20th century.

'Indy,' quoted below, also addresses the political question of whether Bermuda should become independent. Here, the idea of 'nation' is mocked ('some trumpet justice/nationhood') and Frith reminds readers that Bermuda had no indigenous population (but was inhabited only by wild hogs) upon discovery: 'There are things of great importance about which we must think,/Like drawing up our nation's flag - a rampant pig in brown and pink' (1996:27). Frith's proposal of a multicultural, cosmopolitan ideology is also apparent in the notes for the same poem, in which he argues that 'our recent sojourn into the land of Independence thought, referenda etc. should hopefully have been accompanied by a consideration of the global context and reality of connectedness' (*ibid.*:58).

> There ought to be a law you say, there ought to be an Act,
> And so there should since global interdependence is a fact!
> So if you seek the truth in this, forget the argument and strife,
> There's no such thing as independence; that's just a fact of life (1996:27).

The following extract is taken from the notes for 'Send 'em Back':

> There is an ongoing mystique or just plain confusion about the definition of Bermudian and Bermudianness, as if it was a matter of skin colour, family's arrival date or some similar exclusive qualification. I hope the actions proposed here are sufficiently absurd as to be thought provoking. This piece is written 'straight' and usually spoken in a 'light' Bermudian accent (*ibid.*:53).

There is an unintended irony to Frith's work, since his denial of objective criteria for authentic Bermudian-ness is communicated through — and undermined by — the

representation of 'Bermewjan' linguistic features and a clear delineation throughout his work — often achieved linguistically — between Bermudians and non-Bermudians. Although less direct, there is a similar irony in the appearance of *Elice* in the *Royal Gazette*; a traditionally white and conservatively oriented newspaper whose full title was at the time the *Royal Gazette and Colonist*, the paper today has a reputation for supporting immigration, as shown by their regular citations of Frith. Although no information is available about the author of *Elice in Vonderland*, we can speculate fairly confidently that, writing in 1926, they are likely to have been white, and male. It appears, then, that there is a curious contradiction between the politics and the linguistic practices of white male performers of BerE; they are associated with the political stance that Bermudian identity is flexible and subjective, and at the same time they are also creators of a caricature of Bermudian-ness, very clearly racialised, and voiced as 'other' from themselves. This is supported by the evidence presented in Chapters 6 and 7, and explored in more depth in Chapter 8.

5.1.2 Guides and dictionaries

Bermewjan Vurds, pictured in Figure 5.4, is a folk dictionary sold in bookshops and tourist outlets in Bermuda, designed to appeal to both tourists and locals. Like other folk dictionaries (Johnstone 2013; Hilliard and Wolfram 2003; Schneider 1986), it contains a short chapter for each letter of the alphabet, with the orthography of lemmata aiming to reflect local pronunciation. *Vurds* 'translates' phonetic as well as lexical dialect features of BerE, as explained in the introduction:

> In addition to original words and phrases that have little or no significance outside the Island, Bermudian conversation is subject to unique mutations of pronunciation which can render the English Language unintelligible to the uninitiated.
>
> The main differences are:
>
> (1) V is often pronounced W and wice wersa: "vunderfully wiwasious vimen"
>
> (2) E is often, but not always, pronounced as an A. Both are correct: "Ve collacted these terms" (Smith and Barritt 2005)[3].

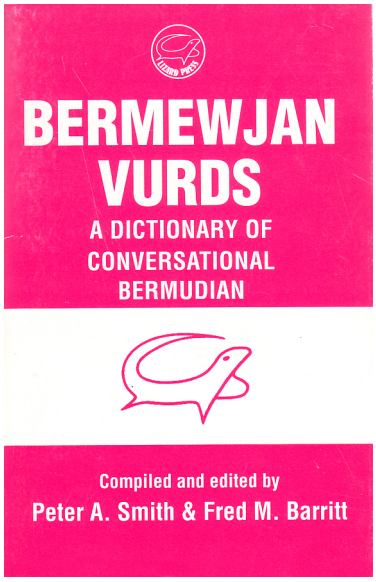


Figure 5.4: Front cover of *Bermewjan Vurds*.

Like *Elice*, *Vurds* links BerE and Bermudian-ness to alcoholism; Smith and Barritt sign their introduction to the volume 'yours under the influence,' and dictionary entries throughout the book reference drunkenness and Gosling's rum on nearly every page, as in the following extracts:

> BLACK — Black Seal Rum
>
> BREFFALIZER — a device the police use to prove that the average motorist has more than twice the legal limit of alcohol in his blood
>
> CROWS — drinking buddies
>
> ON THE TACK — no longer consuming alcoholic beverages, usually only a temporary condition (Smith and Barritt 2005).

BerE is racialised in the fake reviews printed on the back of *Vurds*, which mock the nicknaming practices common among black Bermudians, and use typically black Bermudian first names and surnames:

> "Them byes are fullish!" — GLADWIN "STRING" BEAN
>
> "I don't get it." — WENDELL "STUPID" BASSETT (*ibid.*).

[3] *Bermewjan Vurds* is published without page numbers.

Vurds (whose authors were also members of the dialect stage production *Not The Um Um Show*, discussed below) was designed as a tool for de-coding BerE for new residents working in the corporate sector, as explained by Barritt in a video interview (Barritt et al. 2004) and also in interviews with me, quoted here in (1) and (2):

(1) SMITH : There was a guy in my office, English guy and he was like um {LS} fascinated with the way not necessarily the accent but we the the wrong words? Here and there like you know it's like gonna run a message. Meant {LG} oh you know I'm just going off on a errand and he said – he started writing some down and he got getting em all wrong. {CG} and so I said no no, let me help you out here, so we wrote like twelve of them down or something, said that's good. Then I was talking to Fred about it, and we were like {BR} I don't know how we decided to do a book, but we just did.

According to the pair, *Vurds* constitutes a 'welcome to Bermuda package' for ex-pats:

(2) SMITH : Uh people buy them for their uh f- for their office mate like a English guy moves into your office and you go

BARRITT : Yeah it's your welcome to Bermuda package.

SMITH : (( )) well yeah yeah! {NS}

Mockery of BerE, then, begins in the white-dominated corporate workplace, where it is measured up against British and American standard exonorms. *Bermewjan Vurds* can be used as a handbook for linguistic performance, and by giving it to ex-pat work-mates, white Bermudians encourage the practice and reinforce the message it sends; it's okay to mock BerE, and you can become Bermudian if you do.

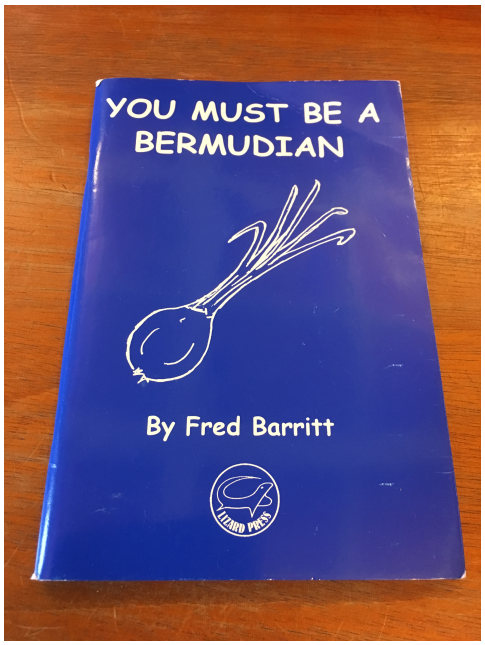


Figure 5.5: Front cover of *You Must Be A Bermudian*.

A similar publication available for purchase, singly authored by Fred Barritt, is *You Must Be a Bermudian*: a small book in the same physical format as *Vurds*, with each page describing an apparently uniquely Bermudian activity. The front cover (see Figure 5.5) pictures a sketch of an onion — 'onion' being a nickname for Bermudians owing to the vegetable being Bermuda's primary export crop in the 19th century. Entries demonstrate cultural traditions, linguistic features, or both, as in the extracts below:

> If your phone book listing includes your nickname because no one knows your given name, you must be a Bermudian.

> If you've ever caught a Cowpolly using Suck Rocks, you must be a Bermudian [4].

> If you've ever been corked while micin', you must be a Bermudian[5] (Barritt 2007)[6].

[4] A *cowpolly*, also known as a 'Sergeant Major' is a black and yellow variety of damselfish common in Bermuda's reefs. *Suck rocks* are a species of mollusc.

[5] *Corked* in BerE means 'to be hit in the head'; *micing* means 'daydreaming'.

[6] *You Must Be A Bermudian* is printed without page numbers.

While this text has obvious commercial motivations as an 'add-on' to *Bermewjan Vurds*, it appears to communicate a political message, too. This is demonstrated by the author's foreword to this catalogue of 'Bermewjan' activities and identity markers.

> It comes as a shock to some people, but there were no indigenous Bermudians. The Island was completely uninhabited when the English were shipwrecked here in 1609. However, over the centuries we Bermudians have developed our own unique culture. It's important to note that there is not just one Bermudian way of doing anything. In fact there are very few things that ALL Bermudians do. However, there are many things that ONLY Bermudians do. May is Heritage Month in Bermuda and as part of my regular columns in the Bermuda Sun Newspaper I have produced an annual list of these activities to help readers determine if they are Bermudian. This book is a compilation of those lists (*ibid.*).

Barritt's emphasis on Bermuda's lack of an indigenous population upon discovery contributes to the book's message that Bermudian identity is forged through action, as Bermudian culture has been forged since the islands' settlement. As well as a guide 'to help readers determine if they are Bermudian,' the text could conceivably be used, like *Bermewjan Vurds*, as guidance for *becoming* Bermudian. Further, the foreword is presented in a discourse of inclusion ('there is not just one Bermudian way of doing anything'), and the book crafted so that almost any reader could find in it some justification for calling themselves 'authentically' local.

5.1.3 Computer-mediated performance

Bermemes, founded by black Bermudian Déjon Simmons, is a popular Bermudian social media brand which describes itself as 'a funny take on life and the elements which make up Bermudian dialect and culture' (2018). Bermemes posts online content to its own website, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, in the form of short, parodic video skits, recurring satirical features and memes with 'Bermewjan' captions (e.g. Figures 5.7, 5.8, and 5.6) which, like other forms of written performance discussed above, often include eye dialect. In recent years the brand has also developed a much wider range of content, including coverage of cultural events, interviews with local celebrities and major news stories. In

Figure 5.6: Content from Bermemes (referencing the common practice of warning other drivers of police speed checks).

2015, Bermemes launched an online, updated and extended version of *Bermewjan Vurds* on the Bermemes website[7] with the permission of Smith and Barritt (BerNews 2015).

In interviews, Simmons and a number of his employees explained Bermemes as having been designed to take part in global trends, the digital medium allowing 'Bermewjan' to become popular in the mainstream.

(3) SIMMONS : Social media was fairly new to Bermuda back then. I mean we had Facebook, we, some people — we didn't — people weren't even on Twitter like that! Um, I decided to like, well let's make something Bermudian... So when we first started, like I said it was more like taking a Bermudian — what we are offline, and putting it online.

(4) LUCAS : I do a bit of work with Bermemes, and that's really great because you know when the whole memes thing came about and we started seeing, you

[7] `http://bermemes.com/vurds`.

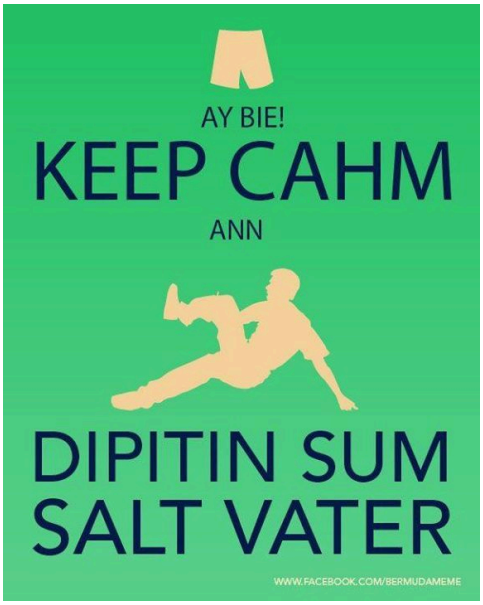


Figure 5.7: Content from Bermemes (referencing Bermudian wisdom on the healing properties of sea water).

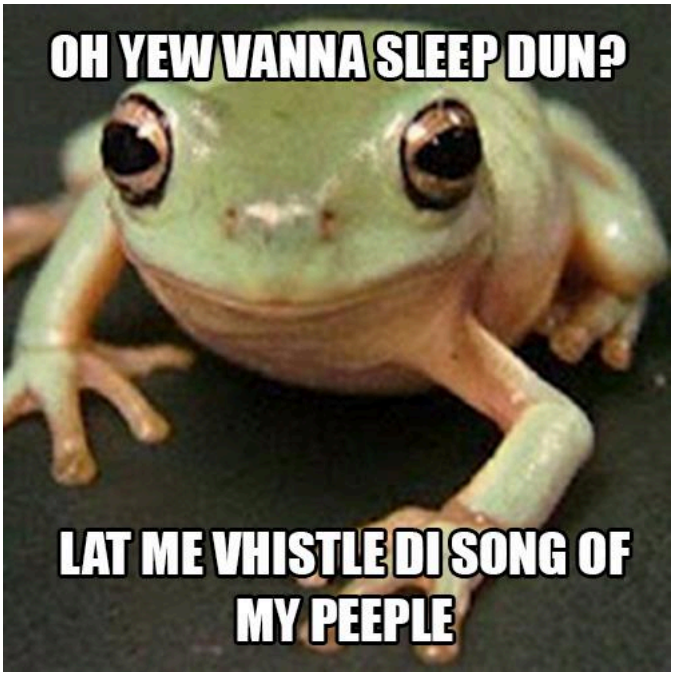


Figure 5.8: Content from Bermemes (referencing the sound of Bermuda tree frogs at night).

> know, 'black moms be like' and you know 'Jamaicans be like' and all that type of stuff, I was like wait a minute why isn't somebody from Bermuda doing these videos and these memes about Bermuda? Then Bermemes came about and they brought the images, but I had always talked about uh with my friends, you know, we need to have some videos like we need to put Bermuda on the map!

As Johnstone has discussed, globalisation has often gone hand in hand with an increased awareness of regional variation; even as levelling causes some dialect differences to 'collapse,' the *idea* of regional dialects is often strengthened with increased global mobility and communication (2006:79). Bermemes offers evidence of the same situation in Bermuda; over time and as international contact has increased, Bermudians have become more conscious of the uniqueness of their own dialect, and BerE has come to be recognised as a symbol of the local, as an identity marker, and as a marketing resource.

Like 'Cyber-Jamaican,' online performance of BerE can be seen as an 'orthographic "act of identity"' (Moll 2014), and as such follows a reallocation pattern found on many small islands, but in a digital medium. The increased use of traditional features in the speech of island-oriented young men, of course, was first observed in Labov's famous study of Martha's Vineyard diphthongs (1963), but is an effect still noted by scholars in a number of small island contexts. In globalised, mediatised Bermuda, reallocation occurs not only in written and spoken, but also in digital forms of linguistic display.

5.1.4 Merchandise

Johnstone has commented that dialect-themed material artefacts are a part of 'the widespread cultural schema that links places with dialects and dialects with places' (2011:660). Like many other dialects of English, BerE has been commodified and can be bought and sold not only in the form of dictionaries but also on t-shirts, mugs and hoodies. These usually involve textual representations of salient BerE features such as v-w interchange (as in Figure 5.9) and stock phrases like *dahn de road* (as in Figure 5.10)[8].

[8] `http://bermudasfinest.com/estore`

Figure 5.9: Bermuda's Finest 'Bermudian Dialect Mug'.

Figure 5.10: Bermuda's Finest 'Men's Premium T-Shirt'.

In his work on 'commodities and the politics of value,' Appadurai quotes Simmel's observation that 'we call those objects valuable that resist our desire to possess them' (Appadurai 1986:3). This is basic to the understanding of commodification as an economic process, but also gives a neat insight into why dialect is appealing to non-BerE speakers in particular — as buyers, but also as sellers and performers. Of course, the appeal to holiday-makers is relatively unsurprising and occurs in many tourist contexts (Hall-Lew and Lew 2014; Heller et al. 2014; Thurlow and Jaworski 2010; Heller 2003); through the linking of dialect with place via purchasable items, tourists can in a sense take a piece of the place they are visiting home with them. In the Bermudian context, however, it is interesting to consider also the motivations for *selling* 'Bermewjan,' which could also be interpreted as a type of performance.

Johnstone has noted recently that 'when people make/sell artefacts, they are not just (or even not necessarily) representing a way of speaking. Primarily they may be evoking a world, a world of which a way of speaking is just a part' (2018). Both buying and selling dialect, then, enables the speaker to signal and to aspire to group membership, to being a part of the world that BerE represents through ownership. Retailing the dialect may be a way of sellers positioning themselves as authentic in some way, and as keepers of the commodity on offer. Particularly in cases where purveyors of BerE are not speakers of BerE, are not locally perceived as 'strongly' Bermudian, or both, selling BerE becomes linked to the heated debate over Bermudian identity. It seems, then, that Appadurai's claim that 'what creates the link between exchange and value is *politics*, construed broadly' (1986:3) can be construed more literally in the case of certain 'Bermewjan' merchandise.

5.1.5 'Chingas': Appropriation of BBerE

This has recently become apparent in a debate relating to a piece of Bermudian dialect merchandise: a belt printed with dialect words sold by white-owned business Coral Coast Clothing. After posting a picture of the belt on social media, accompanied by the caption

Figure 5.11: The Bermemes'We Are BDA' dialect mural on Reid Street.

'chingas aceboy that's a dickty belt'[9] Coral Coast was criticised for plagiarising a dialect-themed mural organised by Bermemes (Figure 5.11) and for mis-using BerE. Figures 5.12, 5.13 and 5.14 picture the belt and reproduce the comments by Instagram users[10]. This sparked debate about appropriation of black Bermudian culture by white Bermudians, particularly in terms of language. As seen in Figure 5.14, one Instagram user commented that 'appropriation without compensation will not be tolerated on this side of the millennium... What you are doing is theft.' Below I also include a number of comments on the issue by black Bermudian blogger Kristin White.

> I'm done with our dialect being mass-produced and worn by people who don't talk like that and would likely not hire someone who did (White 2017).

[9] *Chingas* means 'wow' or 'shucks' in BerE; *aceboy* is a term for friend; *dicty* is an old Bermudian term for 'posh,' 'affected' or 'stuck-up'. In the discussion that followed Coral Coast's post, commentators pointed out that this is an inappropriate use of 'dicty' (since traditionally it has negative connotations), and not the usual spelling.

[10] `https://www.instagram.com/p/Bbx14tdAI5b/?taken-by=coralcoastclothing`.

Figure 5.12: Coral Coast Clothing's 'Chingas' belt and Instagram user comments (1/3).

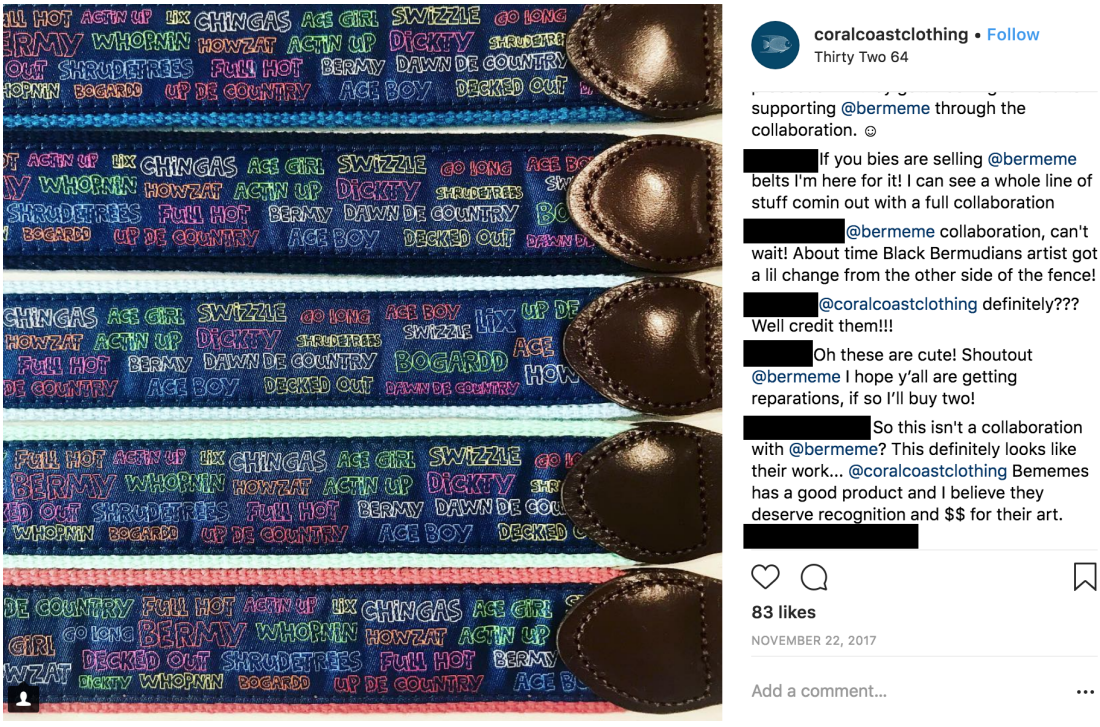


Figure 5.13: Coral Coast Clothing's 'Chingas' belt and Instagram user comments (2/3).

Figure 5.14: Coral Coast Clothing's 'Chingas' belt and Instagram user comments (3/3).

> These preppy, Martha's Vineyard belts... are plastered with a ton of black-isms. Most importantly — using a design that is clearly stolen from Bermuda Memes' mural, and giving them ZERO credit UNTIL they got called out on Instagram, whereupon they claimed to be 'inspired' by the mural... when was the last time that [redacted] said 'dickty' without jest? How about 'shrudetrees'? 'Ace girl'? You are LYING if you don't acknowledge that the slang and accent comes mostly from a certain community (White 2018a).

It is obvious, then, that there is tension in the Bermudian community over who has the right to commodify BerE. This is not the first time Bermemes has experienced plagiarism; in their interview (which took place before the Coral Coast incident), Bermemes partners Déjon Simmons and Qian Dickinson noted the 'fine line between appreciation and appropriation' when discussing 'copycat' versions of their site and memes:

(5) SIMMONS : ...and what happened was it built so much pride that you had other sites being like yeah I'm gonna try and do this too well like I said we we came, we pivoted so hard and people knew that like yeah if you tried something, Bermemes... Royal Gazette tried to, in fact, in fact Royal Gazette tried to start make comics in our, very similar to ours they tried to get um, what's the

name, Elizabeth (( )) or somebody? Tiny the Tree Frog? And all of a sudden they had a comic in the paper that started the, that was using the Bermudian dialect! And I saw it, we didn't have to touch it! Our, the people, our users, our fans were like yeah, this is all Bermemes type of thing like what are you doing Royal Gazette, like they started like I just left it alone! Um so it wasn't like a bad thing, it wasn't like copycats, people started to realise like this is authentic, this is authentic Bermudian I want this, I wanna be like that and you started seeing like you said, 'our Bermuda', um 'we are Bermuda' um, pink sand had a (( )) you started seeing all these different Bermudian pages, like authentic Bermudian pages and like I said, I'm not mad, I'm glad to see it but I sometimes it gets a little bit vexing.

(6) SIMMONS : I know what I'm doing — trying to say, but it's like it's very technical and very simple at the same time. Cause you have people that want to imitate something or be like something but you also have cultural appropriation. So these clines of respect. . . it's like a very thin line to where it's like yeah OK I like Bermudian rum swizzle, this and that, I'm going to sell this to you kind of thing. It comes,. . . I don't know does that make sense?

In 2016 I interviewed black Bermudian Laureen Bassett, the owner and founder of Bermuda's Finest, whose merchandise is pictured above. Bassett had recently purchased trademarks for a number of BerE phrases including *dahn dee rode* and *bermudiful*, and she drew a clear link between her need to protect the trademark and the sense that black Bermudians have been disadvantaged.

(7) BASSETT : I have concerns about my country. I've found that for many many years people have taken advantage of us and {BR} and the reason why Bermuda's Finest came about is because — and the uniqueness about the language — is because I didn't want anybody else to get that. . . I think I've become very selfish with this Bermuda's Finest thing because everything else has been taken away and I'm not gonna allow this to be taken away so that's another

> reason why I trademarked.... And so yes, I've tried to tie up a little bit of something that's uniquely Bermudian that's held by a Bermudian.

The range of written dialect material explored here demonstrates that orthographic 'Bermewjan' has been commodified as a means of attracting tourist spending and promoting Bermuda, and has come to be indexical of 'authentic' Bermudian-ness both for insiders and outsiders. This means it is often invoked playfully, but has also been put to more serious ideological work as a means of participating, somewhat covertly, in Bermuda's highly sensitive identity politics.

5.2 Spoken performance

Written and spoken performances of BerE are different, of course, but they are often related; many of the well-known performers discussed in this section are also responsible for various forms of written dialect parody. In the following sections I describe spoken dialect parodies of BerE, which occur both publicly (on stage) and privately. Again, these two sub-types are linked, since on-stage performers, including those studied in Chapter 6, often reproduce in private phrases and skits that were once performed in front of an audience, re-framing what was 'high' performance in a more 'mundane' context.

5.2.1 On stage

Not The Um Um Show (NTUU) was a live sketch comedy production performed over a 25-year period by a troupe of six white Bermudian men known as the 'Not The Um Um players'. The name of the show refers to the BBerE filler 'um-um' and signals the show's central focus on Bermudian speech as a vehicle for parody. 'Um-um' is much-maligned in newspapers and popular discourse much in the same way as 'like' (D'Arcy 2007), and its entry in *Bermewjan Vurds* shows as much:

> UM UM — Has no particular meaning. It's just inserted into conversation to give the speaker time to think of something to say (Smith and Barritt 2005).

The players, five Bermudians and one 'ex-pat,' are pictured in Figure 5.15. They are all white, wealthy residents of some influence in the community, employed as bankers,

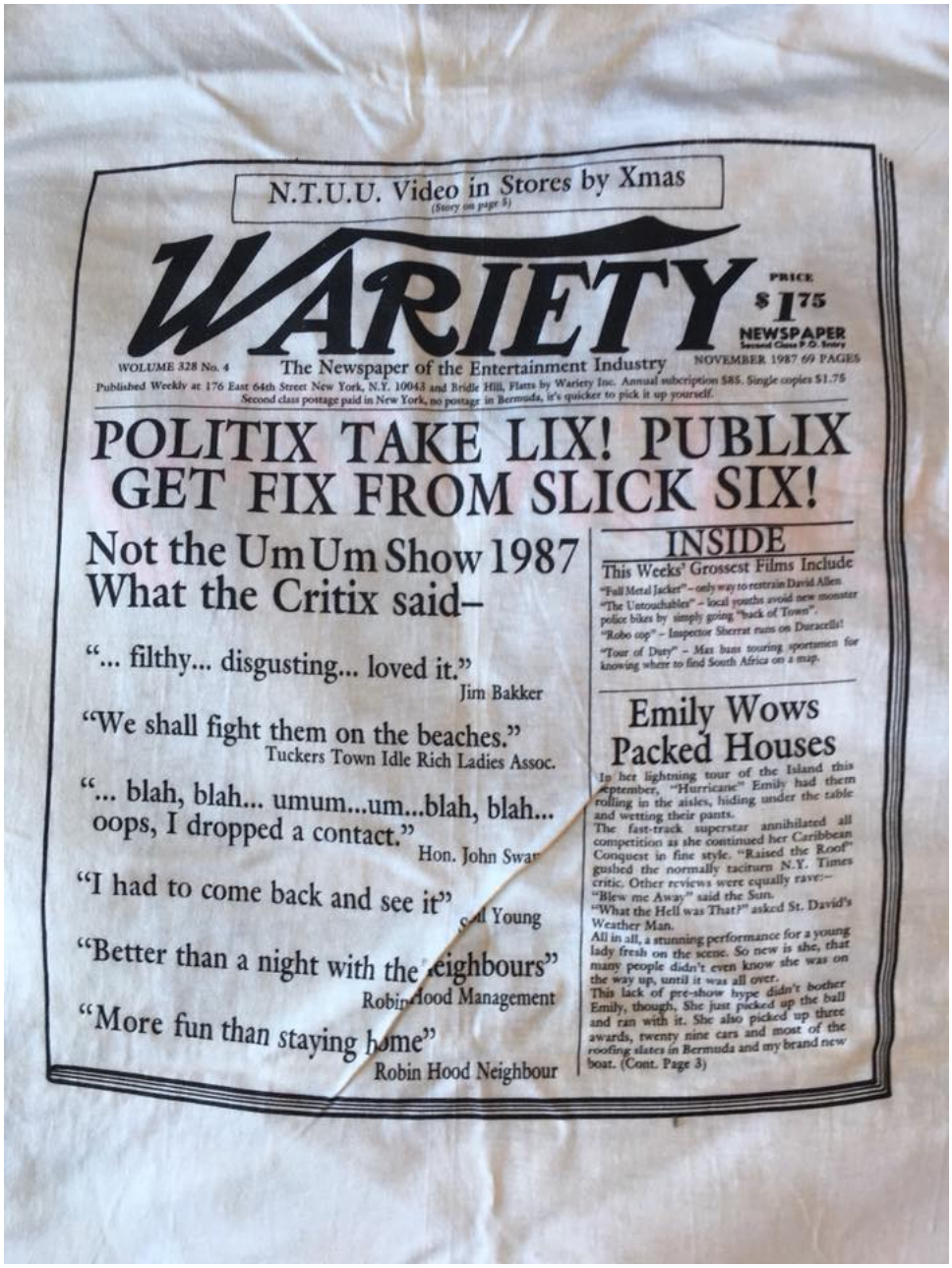
Figure 5.15: The *Not The Um Um* players performing their 'chingas' dialect chant.

business owners and broadcasters. From time to time they have staged reunions, and in 2004 released a 20-year anniversary DVD. Importantly, both the audience and setting for the shows were predominantly white; NTUU originated as a charity-raising skit for the ex-pat dominated 'Save Our Cinema Society' in 1984 (Barritt et al. 2004), and was originally performed at Front Street's 'Forty Thieves' club, a venue named after the group of politically and economically powerful 'old white' families descending from Bermuda's original white settlers. The audience's white majority is commented on in a blog post about the show entitled 'Racial Um Umbalance,' whose author asks: 'why, in an audience of around 700 people, could I count less than 10 black faces?' (Wells 2004)[11].

The show, branded as 'rough and ready local humour and satire' (Royal Gazette 2011) represents one of the most important instances of public dialect performance in Bermuda. Sketches, which can be viewed on NTUU's YouTube channel[12], and on their anniversary DVD (Barritt et al. 2004), poke fun at local politicians and current affairs, all in heavily

[11] Some of the players dispute this claim, and emphasised in interviews with me that they believed they had a diverse audience.

[12] `https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQyhK51nArs5XWBhIJkunHg`



N.T.U.U. Video in Stores by Xmas
(Story on page 5)

WARIETY

PRICE $1.75 NEWSPAPER

WOLUME 328 No. 4 The Newspaper of the Entertainment Industry NOVEMBER 1987 69 PAGES

Published Weekly at 176 East 64th Street New York, N.Y. 10043 and Bridle Hill, Flatts by Wariety Inc. Annual subscription $85. Single copies $1.75
Second class postage paid in New York, no postage in Bermuda, it's quicker to pick it up yourself.

POLITIX TAKE LIX! PUBLIX GET FIX FROM SLICK SIX!

Not the Um Um Show 1987
What the Critix said–

"... filthy... disgusting... loved it."
Jim Bakker

"We shall fight them on the beaches."
Tuckers Town Idle Rich Ladies Assoc.

"... blah, blah... umum...um...blah, blah... oops, I dropped a contact."
Hon. John Swa

"I had to come back and see it"
Young

"Better than a night with the Neighbours"
Robin Hood Management

"More fun than staying home"
Robin Hood Neighbour

INSIDE
This Weeks' Grossest Films Include
"Full Metal Jacket" – only way to restrain David Allen
"The Untouchables" – local youths avoid new monster police bikes by simply going "back of Town".
"Robo cop" – Inspector Sherrat runs on Duracells!
"Tour of Duty" – Max buss touring sportsmen for knowing where to find South Africa on a map.

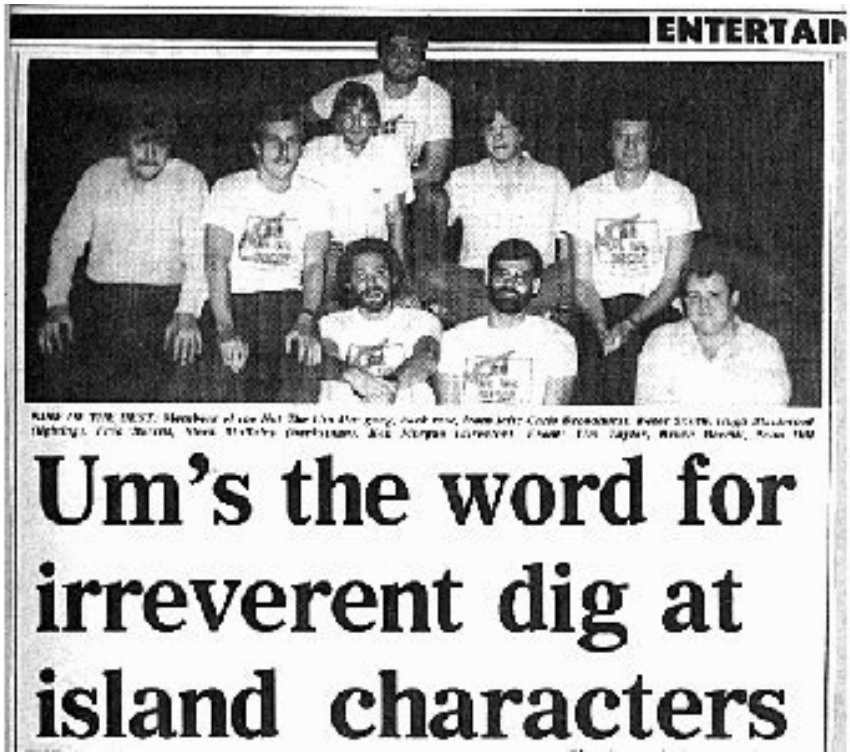
Emily Wows Packed Houses

In her lightning tour of the Island this September, "Hurricane" Emily had them rolling in the aisles, hiding under the table and wetting their pants.
The fast-track superstar annihilated all competition as she continued her Caribbean Conquest in fine style. "Raised the Roof" gushed the normally taciturn N.Y. Times critic. Other reviews were equally rave:–
"Blew me Away" said the Sun.
"What the Hell was That?" asked St. David's Weather Man.
All in all, a stunning performance for a young lady fresh on the scene. So new is she, that many people didn't even know she was on the way up, until it was all over.
This lack of pre-show hype didn't bother Emily, though. She just picked up the ball and ran with it. She also picked up three awards, twenty nine cars and most of the roofing slates in Bermuda and my brand new boat. (Cont. Page 3)

Figure 5.16: A mock newspaper advertisement for a NTUU show.

stylised BerE. Recordings of interviews with a number of NTUU players are included in qualitative and quantitative analyses of performance in Chapters 6 and 7.

Another white Bermudian known for performing BerE on stage is Gavin Wilson, who ventriloquised BerE through a custom-made, life-size muppet nicknamed 'Lockjaw' (Figure 5.18) in live shows extremely popular with white Bermudians and ex-pats in the 1980s and 90s. Wilson and NTUU are connected, and part of the same network of


ENTERTAI

Um's the word for irreverent dig at island characters

Figure 5.17: Review in the *Mid Ocean News* for a NTUU show in 1985.

Figure 5.18: Photograph of Wilson's muppet Aloysius 'Lockjaw' Fox.

white Bermudian comedians; Wilson was an original member of *The Um Um Show*, of which NTUU was a spin-off, and members of NTUU have done collaborations with Wilson in the past (Bermuda Sun 2009).

5.2.2 In the workplace

In 2011 I interviewed five black women working in one of the island's largest insurance companies. They all explained the need to adjust their accent at work to make it easier for their American or British bosses to understand them. Several described their supervisors mimicking and mocking their accent. All participate in a language ideological commentary that contrasts BerE with 'better' or 'proper' speech, in keeping with the language attitudes discussed above in 3.6. In the examples below, performed BerE is indicated in bold type, and emphases (in italics) are my own.

(8) HARRIS : Um, I think, well some Bermudians are more Bermudian than others I don't think I'm as Bermudian as some I've heard and I think that's because the last job I worked at um *we had a lot of ex-patriates and they would tease us*

INTERVIEWER : Awh!

HARRIS : Yeah. Well not in a in a in a bad way they would just, you know, when we would say something they would sort of mimic us. So you got into the habit of trying to pronounce the words you know, better.

(9) TAYLOR : But I think it's more because where I work, I have to deal with professionals

INTERVIEWER : Right

TAYLOR : Mind you, and like Sarah[13] is just — Sarah's always on my case, because she can hear me on the phone, and she was like, "you're talking to us and you're saying **here, there, over the road, there** [hɜ˞dɜ˞ˈəːvə di rəːd dɜ˞][14] blah

[13] Sarah (anonymised) is Taylor's white American boss.

[14] Taylor's performance-of-a-performance here focuses on the merger of NEAR/SQUARE and NURSE, discussed above in 3.5, and also gives a version of iconic *dahn de road* in 'over the road'.

> blah blah blah blah... but you're on the phone and you're so professional!" I said because I DO know how to talk properly... [as Sarah]: "Well, stop shuttin it off!" {LG}

According to these examples, speakers of BerE must do a different kind of performance in the workplace (and elsewhere), turning BerE off and on again according to requirements. Two more extracts from interviews with black Bermudians highlight this further. The first ((10)) is taken from an interview with Ruth Thomas MBE, former Government Cultural Officer. Thomas recalls a telephone conversation with a representative at Bermuda Telephone Company in the 1960s, demonstrating the advantages to black customers and service providers who could disguise their Bermudian accent. The second example is taken from a discussion about code-switching with a Bermemes employee ((11)).

(10) THOMAS : When I first came back from England, I'm going back now to, to... the 1960s I found, I used to bring in uh, a drama company to perform in schools. A children's theatre. And one year this particular day I needed to get in touch with the company immediately.... So I phoned the telephone company. The young lady there then, I don't know if she'd had a bad morning or what but she wasn't being helpful. She was being nasty in fact. So I said to her I said you know you seem to have a problem. And I'm sorry that you do, I haven't caused the problem, but I do need to get through to England, may I speak with your supervisor please. I thought she was gonna pull up her socks. But no she turned me over to the supervisor... I put on the poshest English accent I could put on at the time at the time it was real English, 'cause I'd been in England for several years, came back with a strong English accent. So the supervisor had a very strong American accent. So she said to me in her American accent now may I help you, and me with my English accent told her what I needed and then she listened and then she said may I have your name please, so I said it's Ruth Thomas. She immediately lost her American accent and she said **'Ruth! That's you?**' Blew my cover! And I said **'who's this!'** she

said **'it's Fina!'** This was somebody I knew as a child we lived in the same neighbourhood! We laughed, she said you sound nice you've been out and away? [laughter] I told her I'd been living in England for a couple of years and she hadn't been in the US though! She had this strong East Coast accent, you know. But I got immediate service because I had this English accent. *And she couldn't see me, so she didn't know I was black.* And even if you were dealing with whites and you had this English accent you got immediate service and you got good service. So I think we learnt from that too there, well, *we had to put on a show to get what we wanted.*

(11) INTERVIEWER : What is it that makes it funny about those videos, what are you —

LUCAS : What makes it funny is the fact that it's actually relatable like we've all seen that... we're all been at our desk talking like I'm talking to you now with this accent and then as soon as the phone rings we pick up and say 'Good afternoon Bermuda Hospitality Institute how can I be of assistance?'[15] like we've all done that and it's just good to see that...

INTERVIEWER : So why do Bermudians change their accent when they pick up the phone?

LUCAS : Because there's a certain... it's it's with any accent it's with Jamaican Patwa, it's with Bermudian in general it's with the African American the black accent it's with the a strong Mancunian accent or you know a a Cockney accent, you know, they just have negative connotations to them, you know you can't get a good job if you don't know how to enunciate. You can have an accent, but if you don't know how to string sentences together if you're not well spoken you're not really gonna go far. So I think that is where the confusion lies I think that's where we start to get confused... in terms of like whether or not our accent is accepted in the workplace, or whether we should be proud of our accent.

[15] In this extract, Lucas is discussing a Bermemes skit in which he satirises Bermudians code-switching at work. The skit is entitled 'De Professhanul Bermudian Woice' and captioned 'all Bermudians know bout de switch!'.

These conversations highlight the double standards of language practice and language policing in Bermuda. The workplace appears to be the site of practically opposite stylistic shifts in racial groups; while the predominant narrative about stylistic practice among the white group celebrates their ability to 'do' BerE, it is in the social and economic interests of BerE speakers to develop skills in 'switching up'[16].

The ultimate encapsulation of this double standard is literally played out in one NTUU sketch, based around the supposed humour of a BerE speaker interviewing for a management position (Barritt et al. 2004). Williams described the sketch in an interview with me:

(12) WILLIAMS : There'd be times when I'd be playing someone else who'd be like a caricature. Um, so we did a sketch which was based on the premise that um people who have international companies here in Bermuda head-quartered here in Bermuda have to hire a certain number of Bermudians in order to, you know w- — get the permissions they need to operate here in our beautiful you know tax light and bureaucracy light environment. Um so it was like well, like what would happen if the most rapacious scallywag you can think of actually applied to be the you know the director of an international insurance company? Well, you know. So we wrote this sketch. (redacted) played the very British boss, and you know Williams played the very um played the Bermudian man who was being interviewed at nine o'clock in the morning with a flask of rum in a paper bag {BR} and you know sipping while he was talking {BR} and so that that that (( )) that accent was like real like you know um extreme.

5.2.3 Constructing white masculinity

According to the range of linguistic performances presented in this chapter, mocking BerE seems to be a gendered practice, occurring predominantly in interactions between men.

[16]Nicki Sunshine makes the same point about the social necessity of code-switching abilities for AAE speakers in the USA in the Language and Life Project's documentary *Talking Black in America*, commenting 'I know I'm gonna have to do that song and dance' for the purposes of achieving equal treatment in society (Wolfram et al. 2017).

This is unsurprising, since public linguistic performance — for example 'fraternal banter' (Walsh 2006:127) — is typically a male-dominated domain cross-culturally (Baxter 2006; Cameron 2006; Philips 2014). While some of the women I interviewed did give some double-voiced stylisations, more of these were in response to direct requests than spontaneous performances. There are no Bermudian women known for performing on stage or in a single-sex troupe in the same way as the *Not The Um Um* players, and publications like *Bermewjan Vurds* are all authored by men. Both spoken and written mock BerE often contain sexist content, as in the following extracts from *Vurds* below.

> LONGTAIL — Young, unattached female tourists.
>
> WEBB — To peek illicitly:... "Mirrored shades are crisp for WEBBIN at de longtails."
>
> PURR — Two-of-a-kind: "She's got a nice PURR!"
>
> STINKY — Slut or sluttish: "Bye, she's a real STINKY!"
>
> UNDER HEAVY MANNERS — Subservient to one's lover/spouse/parent to the point of the subject of ridicule: HE: "Isn't this a great party?" SHE: "Let's go home now." HE: "Yes, dear" — He is UNDER HEAVY MANNERS (Smith and Barritt 2005).

As suggested in the extracts discussed above in 5.2.2, Bermudian women appear under pressure to use prestige forms, particularly in the corporate workplace, whereas men are encouraged to perform in the same setting (c.f. 5.1.2). Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate the gender ideologies underlying BerE performance in more depth, it appears that white men's stylisations construct white masculinity through the appropriation of black language much in the same way as has been discussed by Bucholtz (1999). In her study of the language of a white male Californian high schooler, Bucholtz shows that 'via language crossing and other discursive strategies such as constructed dialogue, the narrative positions black masculinity, in contrast to white masculinity, as physically powerful and locally dominant. At the same time, the narrative preserves the racial hierarchy that enables white cultural appropriation of African American culture through language crossing' (1999:443).

In the various types of performance I have presented in this chapter, BerE is both the vehicle for and the subject of humour. Much like Mock Spanish, performed BerE in its different guises associate the variety… 'irrevocably with the non-serious, the casual, the laid-back, the humorous, the vulgar… [it] is available for joking and for insult; it cannot lend gravitas or sophistication' (Hill 2008:147). It is important to note that the types of Bermudian performances discussed here do not only occur in public and on stage, but also happen in private — again in predominantly white spaces and among men. It is clear from my interviews with a number of the NTUU players, but also from my experience growing up on the island as a white 'paper Bermudian,' that dialect mimicry is common practice; a type of default humour reverted to often during the course of casual conversation. Chapters 6 and 7 are dedicated to examining in different ways these types of informal, private performances among members of one particular community of practice in which they occur — that is, a group of wealthy, white Bermudian males also known for their public parodies of BerE.

Through linguistic minstrelsy, these characters exercise white privilege by utilizing linguistic features indexical of blackness without being affected by the stigma that usually accompanies the use of such language. Once they have no further need for their black-influenced personas, the white protagonists return to their standard language variety with a newfound racial and gender authentication conferred by their experience, while leaving hegemonic racial arrangements intact.

(Bucholtz and Lopez 2011:701-702)

6

Performing Bermewjan, performing race? Bermuda's white dialect parodists

I highlighted in Chapter 5 that dialect parody occurs in Bermuda both in written and in spoken forms, and is performed publicly as part of live and video-recorded comedy. I also noted that dialect performance is especially common among white men, and in many contexts appears to be racialised. During fieldwork conducted in 2014 (described in Chapter 3) it became apparent that parodic dialect performance is also an important linguistic practice in less public contexts — including the sociolinguistic interview; white participants performed BerE very frequently in their interviews with me. In light of this, and with my own experiences as a 'paper Bermudian' in mind, I decided to investigate this linguistic behaviour more closely.

In Chapters 6 and 7 I will examine in depth the parodic performances by seven white Bermudian men, whom I interviewed during a six-week fieldwork session in 2016 with the specific aim of investigating linguistic performance in Bermuda. This group of men is known in the community for their public stylisations of BerE. With the aim of establishing their place in the literature on performance speech, and to determine whether they are racialised, I present and analyse performances which occurred during the course of the interviews. In this chapter, the performances are subjected to contextual analysis. In Chapter 7, I approach the same data from an acoustic phonetic perspective.

During interviews, white speakers performed often, both spontaneously and — with almost clockwork regularity — in response to questions about Bermudian identity and language. Often these performances included Bermuda's stereotyped stock phrase *dahn de road*, which, as discussed in Chapter 5, offers 'phono-opportunities' (Coupland 1985) for displaying a number of salient sounds of BerE; these features are analysed acoustically in Chapter 7. In this chapter, I thematically analyse the content and scrutinise the delivery of these performances in order to establish their social and political meanings in relation to the Bermudian context. I determine whether and in what ways they suggest that white speakers may be performing race when they perform 'Bermudian-ness'. I also ask whether these performances reduce ideological and social distance between groups of speakers (as in Rampton (1995:75)) or represent a type of the racialised mockery described in Chapter 4 (Hill 1995; Mesthrie 2002; Chun 2004). Of course, this is partially determined by the reception of the performances in Bermudian society; evaluations by various audiences and listeners, including the speakers' own reflections on their performances, are discussed in Chapter 8. Significant excerpts of the performances are included in the body of the text, with performance speech itself marked in bold type. Surrounding conversation has been included where gaps between performances are short and/or where the content gives significant information about the performance speech it accompanies.

6.1 Methodology

6.1.1 Data collection

Seven participants were recruited specifically with performance in mind; all are white men well-known for performing BerE publicly in one way or another. Five speakers were members of, or closely associated with, NTUU, and two speakers are prominent community figures known for performing BerE in public addresses. All these men are wealthy, well-known and successful professionals in the community, and either work or have worked in senior managerial positions in local or international businesses. They all received secondary and/or higher education abroad. All have a long family history on the island, with some even tracing their heritage back to the arrival of the island's

Speaker (pseudonym)	Age at interview
Williams	57
Parker	70
Davies	72
Foster	52
Turner	approx. 60
Martin	52
Baker	approx. 60

Table 6.1: Performer participants.

earliest settlers. These speakers share life experiences, opportunities, and are all known to each other, some having performed together as part of the comedy troupe *Not The Um Um* players. Accordingly, and in light of the shared linguistic practices demonstrated in this chapter, these men can be considered to be members of a community of practice (Eckert 2000; Wenger 2000). Table 6.1 lists the speakers (under pseudonyms) with their age or estimated age at the time of recording[1].

The sociolinguistic interview was the main method of data collection. All interviews comprised a long discussion, with natural flow of conversation prioritised, and closed with two questions about Bermudian language and identity ("what makes someone Bermudian?" and "how does an authentic Bermudian speak?"). For the purposes of investigating the key issues of performance, language and identity, discussions about nationality, immigration, race, and linguistic performance itself were prioritised. Interviews took place in the speakers' homes, except one, which was conducted at my own home as requested by the participant.

In the interviews, the speakers performed BerE frequently, both freely and in response to prompts. The types of performances ranged from 'old Bermudian' one-liners to extended narratives. Since all seven speakers have performed BerE in public, many of their performances involved re-enacting their favourite jokes, scenes or skits from previous shows, and often co-occurred with explanations of characters and ways in which they prepared sketches. The direct questions about language and authentic Bermudian identity almost always elicited performances, but dialect parody also occurred throughout

[1]Two speakers declined to provide their date of birth.

the interviews, especially during the course of discussions about race, Bermudian identity and politics.

All seven interviews were transcribed orthographically using ELAN (Sloetjes and Willenburg 2008). During transcription, I annotated the output files in ELAN, marking out performance speech, notable comments and conversations relevant to the themes investigated in this chapter, and linking these to observations made in field notes. To analyse the data qualitatively, I reviewed the recordings and corresponding transcripts in detail.

6.1.2 Interviewer effects

As discussed in Chapter 3, since I am a white interviewer and not a speaker of BerE, the interviewer effect was a real concern in my interviews with black speakers, despite my many years spent living on the island. In the interviews with white Bermudians, however, I was not an out-group member in every respect, and in fact, my status as a white interviewer brought advantages to the fieldwork situation because it made the interview setting optimal for eliciting the types of performances addressed in this thesis. I was assumed by these speakers to be an appropriate audience and an enjoyer of linguistic parody, and occasionally invited to join in or give a display of my own, suggesting that the performers felt what Bucholtz calls 'racialised affiliation' (2011b:84) with me.

Additionally, my status as a 'paper Bermudian' almost definitely played a similar role, for two reasons. First, as someone who has clearly benefitted from pro-immigration policies (my parents moved from the UK to Bermuda in the 1970s, and I was granted Bermudian citizenship in 2010), it is likely that I was assumed to agree with the political standpoint on Bermudian citizenship which I believe is deeply linked to these performances – that is, to the idea that BerE, like Bermudian citizenship, belongs both to everybody and nobody.

The second reason relates to BerE performance's roots in white Bermudian-to-white-ex-pat communication, discussed above in 5.1.2. The interviews to an extent reproduced this dynamic in that they comprised an 'old Bermudian' educating a white, British English-speaking 'paper Bermudian' about the sounds and phrases of 'Bermewjan',

although as a woman I would not have been fully seen as a potential member of this all-male community of practice (c.f. 5.2.3).

6.1.3 Ethical considerations

Participants in all fieldwork rounds were given a consent form approved by CUREC[2] to complete at the beginning of the interview, with the opportunity to ask questions about the study. A copy of the consent form is included in Appendix D.

The question of anonymity presented a significant challenge in writing up this project. Given the small size of Bermuda and its population, and since many of my participants are well-known, it is difficult to protect the identity of the speakers. In considering this ethical problem, it is important to remember that the relationship between researcher and researched here is different from that found in many linguistic fieldwork situations. As this thesis will show, my subjects represent a highly privileged group whose linguistic performances reflect and reinforce racist hierarchies; the aim of the project, therefore, is not to empower them but to examine, and to an extent, to challenge and to expose, their linguistic practices and the ideologies they project. Rampton has discussed the 'scope for empowerment in sociolinguistics,' summarising the issue thus:

> ...it is not hard to imagine situations in which researchers felt that in the interests of broader political justice, they should employ disempowering methods, which were either subversive (on-and-against) or re-educative (on-against-and-with) (Rampton 1992:58).

Despite this, and despite the fact that several of the sub-group participants opted on their consent forms to have their real name used in research outputs associated with the recordings, I have assigned pseudonyms to the speakers in light of the potentially controversial content of the interviews. I have also omitted all information (including certain passages of speech, and participant data such as occupation) that would give away their individual identities.

[2]Reference number R45302/RE001.

6.2 Findings

In the following sections I draw together shared themes and other features of the performances which together form a body of evidence to help answer the question of whether the speakers are performing race. Extracts from the data are included as numbered examples.

6.2.1 Becoming black: Bermudian chameleons

For Hymes (1981), one of the key characteristics of 'breakthrough into performance' is that 'mode of speaking' is more significant than content, and Schilling has observed that performance speech derives its significance 'not from content but from being interjected at points where linguistic display seems appropriate' (1998:56). It is true that 'mode of speaking' is a central strategy of the Bermudian performances; all the examples quoted in this section use a range of the BBerE features described in Chapter 3, and the work of a selection of phonetic variants is investigated in depth in Chapter 7. Lexical items are important too; all the speakers except Williams used stereotypically black *bye/bie* (BBerE *boy*), *girl*, and *man* as terms of address in their performances (but never in their non-performance speech), as in examples (1) - (5):

(1) DAVIES : **Say *bye* what you talking about goin- +going d- +down – go down the road!**

(2) DAVIES : U- +um um, they had me do an ad one time. And I had to talk Bermudian **No *girl*, what you saying?**

(3) FOSTER : **But come on now *bye* what you talking about!**

(4) MARTIN : You know um I'm (( )) **I'm look *man* I'm gone**

(5) PARKER : **Um, oh hello there Rosy how you doing *girl*, nice to meet you you know, that kinda thing, talk like that!**

While it is clear, then, that 'mode of speaking' is important to these performances, their content is important too, and certain clues show that these men are in some way performing blackness when they 'do' BerE. The most obvious sign that these speakers are voicing a black Bermudian is that they tell me plainly that they are doing so, as in (6) and (7) (emphasis mine):

(6) PARKER : And then and then (( )) in the (( )) the sorta in *in the black pop-+population* — I don't I don't don't know all the expressions but *they're always saying,* say **you know what I mean, you know, see it, see it? You know, y- +you y- +you y- +you you know what I'm talking bout? You know (( )) right? right?** You know get all that

(7) DAVIES : I can recall going to this party Jane and I were the only white people there! You know? But I got along with all these people! **You know, I was talking to them like they was buddies from way back, you know what I'm saying! And I can talk like I can talk you know I can talk *their language!* You know what I'm saying?** But thinking like a black is a difficult thing to do!

Other, more indirect hints that the speakers were voicing a black Bermudian in their performances occurred in the interviews. Although it is less explicitly stated, the fact that Foster voices a black speaker in (8) is woven into the context of his performance — that of a 'Bermuda Foster' confronting him as a 'white Foster' and an ancestor of a slave-owner, while visiting St. Monica's, a well-known black-congregation church in Pembroke Parish:

(8) FOSTER : And St Monica's is up on the hill, in the area where just near where I grew up, and there are a lot of Fosters there, so ...{BR} uh, somebody came up to me and said {LS} **"Oh, you know there's some Bermu- Ber-Bermuda Fosters round here you know"** And I said yes yes I'm one of those, I'm come from Dock Hill. You know and they said **"Oh. "I guess that means I was your slave."**

Elsewhere in his interview, Foster also compares his own BerE performances to the self-confessed racialised dialect mockery he engages in in other contexts, including an Indian restaurant, as in (9). The lighthearted guilt he expresses about this ('I'm naughty') would seem to undermine his claim that his accent changes are unconscious and 'not mockery.'

(9) FOSTER : so ((it's just)) these little expressions come out and make connections I've always been I'm I'm been horrible, my children th- +think uh get so embarrassed {BR} because I um I'm a chameleon in terms of accent, I don't intend to be, {BR} but my accent changes according to whom I who I'm speaking with and that's just {NS} I have to watch myself? A little bit

INTERVIEWER : {LG}

FOSTER : They say it's very un- P C

INTERVIEWER : Oh really.

FOSTER : Oh yeah, they think it's dreadful, dreadful.

INTERVIEWER : Why do they say that?

FOSTER : Oh I don't know they think it's sort of you're you're um {LS} uh i- +it i- +it unfortunately it comes out you know when we go to the local Indian restaurant as well, you know it's a bi- +bit – it's not a mockery ((it's just)) well, ((you know)) anyway. I'm naughty. {BR} So I, it's (( )) so these accents, I do accents.

The performers also suggest that they perceive differences between black and white Bermudian speech in their characterisations of themselves as linguistic chameleons. In the examples below, the speakers describe themselves and others style-shifting when they are with black Bermudians. Often, as in (10)-(12), race is referred to only indirectly. In (11), for example, Martin signals that he is discussing interactions with black Bermudians in his references to the county games (summer cricket matches between four predominantly black neighbourhoods) and Cup Match (the annual public holiday centred around a cricket match which commemorates emancipation in Bermuda). All the speakers use

'Bermudian' to mean 'black Bermudian,' both in the examples below and throughout interviews (this is also seen as in (8) above, and discussed in 2.4).

(10) MARTIN : I I lapse into deep Bermudian when I'm speaking with Bermudians... I find the way that I talk you know to guys at the plant or when I'm out on the road speaking to different people is different from when I'm in the office speaking to my brother or or uh {BR} and it's it's an unconscious thing. Um to me, anyway.

(11) MARTIN : When I'm again speaking speaking to other groups {BR} of Bermudians. I can definitely lapse into deep stuff. If we were to walk around a county game in St Davids or Bailey's Bay at Eastern County or Cup Match you know that that was that's just a day long exercise in in speaking in the vernacular. Which is fun.

(12) FOSTER : Because I um I'm a chameleon in terms of accent, I don't intend to be, {BR} but my accent changes according to whom I who I'm speaking with.

(13) FOSTER : I know at my kids school at Warwick Academy, the cool kids are the black ones I mean they they're that's yeah they're the cool ones um and everyone {BR} when my son came, when we first came back to Bermuda he was {NS} my eldest son was about uh fourteen or something like that? And he went through he was definitely gangster. You know, he shaved his head, he wore bling, and you know he was putting on this sort of ridiculous Bermudian accent but he wanted to fit in and the group that he wanted to fit in ((with)) the cool black guys at school. {BR} um and so they're yeah they're considered the in-crowds a, as it were, but so that's a big change.

At other times, speakers were more direct in making distinctions between black and white speech. In discussions about language and about the performances themselves, some speakers made outrightly racist claims about black Bermudians, linking these to specific features of BerE, as in (14).

(14) DAVIES : And and you know, the Vs Ws thing? Black people have difficulty making a W sound. Wa. Is not a, their lips aren't (( )) not incapable, but it, they have difficulty doing it. I don't know if (( )) 'cause of big, the thicker lips they have generally?

Here, Davies makes sweeping generalisations about the physical characteristics of black Bermudians, and ties these to linguistic generalisations. Comments like these reveal harmful folklinguistic beliefs, and demonstrate the re-mapping of race from biology onto language discussed recently by Rosa and Flores (2017). They also show that performers are parodying features they attribute to black speakers (the conversation in (14) occurred immediately after Davies performed v-w 'interchange' repeatedly). This further strengthens the evidence that the white speakers are performing race and racism. While the image of the chameleon, quoted in (12), is intended to support the performers' conceit that they 'naturally' speak a rainbow of accents, in fact the dialogue in the examples above emphasises that this style-shift is context-dependent, and that the context depends on the race of the interlocutor. If the interlocutor is black, the linguistic shift that takes place is characterised as a 'lapse' ((10), (11)), and certain features (such as v-w 'interchange') are linked by some speakers to essential blackness. Inadvertently, the chameleon metaphor is a very apt one.

6.2.2 Extra-linguistic features...and funerals

It's not just an accent it's a whole manner of delivery (Foster).

Several of the performances of this study could have been identified solely by way of the extreme variations in voice quality, pitch and amplitude which marked them out; these speakers appear to be exaggerating the 'voice quality-race connection' established in linguistic literature by scholars such as Podesva and Callier (2015:180) and Thomas and Reaser (2004) (see also Irwin (1977)). Occasionally performances in the data were all voice quality and no content – speakers simply made noise or babbled 'in character' with noticeable "gravelly" voice (see below).

As Podesva and Callier explain, 'while studies have not endeavoured to isolate the specific components of voice quality that might participate in racial identification, studies

have nonetheless found that non-modal voice qualities are used in a variety of African American styles, such as a falsetto "battlin" style commonly used among users of Hip Hop Language (Alim 2004:65-73) and a preacher style characterised by a "gravelly" and "strained" quality' (Britt 2011:216, 223) (2015:180). This 'preacher style' occurred in one of Parker's most memorable performances. In the following extract, Parker recounts attending a black funeral, an event that he says provided much inspiration for his linguistic performances. A tense muscular voice setting is obvious in auditory analysis, as well as exaggerated elongation of vowels (e.g. *afternoon* and *hole*) and exaggerated changes in intensity.

(15) PARKER : And then um, and then out comes the pastor and he says **"Bretheren! We are gathered here, at five o'clock in the afternoon, against the wishes of the deceased, who wanted to be put down in the hole in the morning so he could spend the day getting used to the hole!"**

Of course, the content of this reported speech (which seems likely to have been fabricated) is intended to add humour to the performance, this humour being based on the deceased's personality (for example, having superstitious beliefs about human burial; giving unreasonable instructions in advance of one's own funeral, etc.). This gives one of many insights into the nature of the characterological figure being enacted in these white performances, which I explore further below in 6.2.3.

Churches and funerals are a common theme in the performances and in the discussions surrounding them. One of NTUU's signature sketches involved imitating the funeral notices often heard on Bermudian radio stations (an example is quoted in (20) below) and, as discussed, many performances are set in black churches (see (8) and (15) above, and (24) below). This recurring theme is further evidence for the racialised nature of the performances, and for the idea that the parodies perform an impression of black politics, because black and white communities in Bermuda contrast sharply in terms of religious affiliation, church attendance, and support for (sometimes corresponding) social policies[3].

[3]This is also evident in Jeremy Frith's poem *Oh Gawd, I Vish Dis Ig'rance Vud Stop!*, reproduced in 5.1, which refers to church opposition to same-sex marriage in Bermuda: 'But ve go to church on Sundays an' show aryvun ve pray/Dan go home an hate our neighba for bein black or vhite or gay' (1996:11-12).

The performances draw on — and ridicule — a stereotype of conservative, church-going black Bermudians, both in terms of content and voice quality.

6.2.3 Foul-MOUTHed: The 'Bermewjan' characterological figure

Agha explains his concept of enregisterment as 'processes and practices whereby performable signs become recognised (and regrouped) as belonging to distinct, differentially valorised semiotic registers by a population' (2007:45). In order to determine whether and what type of characterological figure was being constructed by these performances, I looked closely at several aspects for information about the characters behind them.

In his interview, Parker claimed that 'each community has one' while considering the character of his performances, and how they would fare on stages overseas; his solution being to re-voice them in an East London accent ((16)), while Davies drew analogies between his performances and other non-standard dialects such as 'southern drawl' ((17)). The idea that 'each community has one' highlights that the character behind these performances is a basic stereotype, transposable into different national and/or dialectal guises — Williams describes some of his skits as performing 'like a caricature.' This sentiment is also found behind the 'ethnic jokes' that occurred in interviews, as in extracts (18) - (20) below.

(16) PARKER : **Ah hello mate, (( )) you alright then?**

(17) DAVIES : And Bermudians generally don't talk slowly. Um, it it's diffi- +difficult – it's difficult for me to do it without ((having)) {BR} having something to read or a script or some- +something {BR} **"Say bye what you talking about goin- +going d- +down — go down the road!** L- lot of um the accent is um {LS} a drawl? You know like a southern dr- +drawl – there's another one, southern drawl. {BR} **Y'all y'all come back now, you hear?** Coming from the south? You can tell a southern person mile away. And they do a drawl that's — and they speak slowly. {LS} but if they (( )) talking amongst themselves? {LG} I don't understand them! I really can't!

(18) MARTIN : Well, it's it's funny it started out as a way to recycle (( )) you know standard jokes about Aussies and and Irish people and all the rest of that you know {BR} how do you get a St David's Islander on the roof? {BR} tell him the drinks are on the house!

(19) PARKER : There are old Bermuda jokes, like um, uh teacher um writes on the blackboard a sentence, and the sentence is 'The king asked the passer-by who cut down those trees.' And she said um, "Dwayne, Dwayne, will you come to the front of the class and pick up a piece of chalk and punctuate that sentence as you think it should be punctuated." {BR} The king asked the passer-by who cut down the trees. So Dwayne goes up to the Dwayne goes up the blackboard, (( )) "Alright, now read back to the class what you have done." **"The king asked the passer, bye, who cut <u>down</u> those trees?"** Right. (( )) Just an old Bermuda, you know.

(20) WILLIAMS : So I did this funeral notice, and I just did it in a voice that **that sounded right. Sounded like someone who comes from here. Comes from somewhere local. Somewhere on the island...It was about the death of a man who died when he was out fishing. And he was throwing the anchor over-board and something happened. And um he got pulled over-board and he was never seen again. And the last sentence he ever ever said in his life started with the word holy. Two words sentence, started with the word holy. So at least you know half of – half of him was righteous when he went down**! {LG}

The personae invoked by the performers in performances are ridiculed and share socially disdained qualities. They will do anything for alcohol ((18)), and they cannot spell or punctuate ((19)). In (21), Williams describes a NTUU sketch in which he played a 'rapacious scallywag' who turns up to a job interview drunk, linking this habit directly to the 'extreme accent' employed in the scene. The character in Parker's performances, meanwhile, is crude and fond of swearing ((22)), and Parker describes him as 'street-wise' in (23). When, in one interview, a BerE performance is given in the context of

a Bible reading (John 14:5-6), the 'Bermewjan' voice is assigned to a character with a bad reputation: 'doubting' Thomas (24).

(21) WILIAMS : I played the very um... played the Bermudian man who was being interviewed at nine o'clock in the morning with a flask of rum in a paper bag {BR} and you know sipping while he was talking {BR} and **so that that that (( )) that accent was like real like you know um extreme. Extreme accent like it's not on you don't hear people talk like this 'cause this is a complete exaggeration but the idea being that if someone's like inebriated the whole time, {BR} their whole life, they may be a little wet-brain from a life of drinking, they might talk like that, you know...**

(22) PARKER : **Uh (( )) I was um um I was um bitten by a goat. I was um bitten by a goat... Uh yeah I had ringworm or something. Anyway I was a young boy, sitting up to the table chomping down on a piece of christophine, when whop! My jaw was locked up one time. I couldn't speak for two years!...The only way I was able to communicate was to um um fart in Morse code. And uh one time I was up to the kitchen fire expressing myself almost blew up the fucking house!**

(23) INTERVIEWER : Is he a smart guy, [your character]?

PARKER : Yes he is, he's str- +street — he's streetwise.

INTERVIEWER : Mhm.

PARKER : He's streetwise.

(24) FOSTER : Jesus says you know in my father's house there are many rooms. {BR} I go to prepare a place for you uh um I will go and take you to be with myself that where I am you may be {BR} and you know the way to where you are going {BR} and Thomas says to him, **"I don't know where you're going so how can I know the way?"**

The types of personal qualities observed in the characters of these performances are also present in video data of staged performances by members of NTUU. Characters are unsuccessful job-seekers, homeless, or unhelpful customer service assistants, all with strong BBerE accents. One scene, set in a court-room, involves a criminal on trial having to be 'translated' into 'standard' English by an interpreter for the benefit of the judge (Barritt et al. 2004).

The contextual evidence presented in this section make a case for the enregisterment of lexical items, extra-linguistic features and a range of negative personal traits to form a 'Bermewjan' register. On their own, of course, the character traits displayed in these examples are not tied to any one group of Bermudians. It is clear, however, that the performances link these traits with blackness, since, as shown in 6.2.1 and 6.2.2, the speakers acknowledge both directly and indirectly that they are 'talking black' in their performances, and link these stylisations to style-shifts they say happen "naturally" in the presence of black Bermudians. Since these acknowledgements co-occur with, and are expressly linked by the speakers to the performances, the data make a strong case that the characterological figure in which these linguistic features are enregistered is black: 'a sign is indexical if it is related to its meaning by virtue of co-occurring with the thing it is taken to mean' (Johnstone 2017:283). The white speakers of this study perform race in their linguistic parodies of BerE, and these performances draw on and propagate negative and racist stereotypes.

How easy is it to alter one's accent, and how consistently can one do it? For someone who is highly motivated, changing some aspects at least is quite straightforward; but to change other aspects may inevitably be very difficult.

(Wells 1982:111)

7

The MOUTHs of others: A phonetic analysis of parodic performance

As discussed in Chapter 4, the last 20 years have seen a marked increase in sociolinguistic research centring on performance speech and stylisation (Schilling 1998; Rampton 1999; Eckert 2000; Coupland 2001; Chun 2004; Johnstone 2011). At the same time, as Podesva explains, 'the field of sociolinguistics has witnessed a growing interest in the sociophonetic aspects of segmental variation' (2007:478). Despite this, only a small number of studies have used acoustic phonetic analysis to investigate linguistic parody (Schilling 1998; Pratt and D'Onofrio 2017). More research using this methodology is needed, since phonetic analysis allows us to give an account of performance in fine-grained detail, which is important in unpacking the meaning of stereotyped features and associated practices.

In Chapter 6 I examined the content and context of white 'Bermewjan' performances, investigating the nature of this linguistic practice and asking whether white Bermudians perform race when they perform dialect. The evidence presented there finds the answer to this question to be a firm 'yes.' In this chapter, I approach the same data from an acoustic phonetic perspective by comparing the same set of parodic performances with the speech of older black male Bermudian speakers — that is, speakers of the variety of BerE enregistered as stereotypically 'Bermewjan,' which is also, I believe, the target

variety for white performers. In Chapter 3, I described that variety, presenting a large number of BBerE's phonetic and phonological characteristics. Here, in order to explore how the phonetic detail of the performances might shed further light on their social meaning, I focus on the three features which occur in the iconic stock phrase *dahn de road*: the vowels in MOUTH and GOAT lexical sets, and the definite article, THE. Given the emblematic status of *dahn de road* (discussed in Chapter 5), the features it displays made for an ideal selection of variables for a sociophonetic study of dialect display.

7.1 Methodology

7.1.1 Speakers

The present study is based on the data from a sub-group of 16 participants, made up of eight black and eight white men. These speakers were chosen from my wider corpus based on the central research goal of the study, which was to compare the patterning of MOUTH, GOAT and THE in two contrasting social groups: older, working class black speakers of BBerE and white, wealthy Bermudians known for performing BerE who also did so in a one-to-one interview context. It is important to note that the goal of this study is not to provide a representative, comprehensive sample of Bermudian society, nor to draw general conclusions about the linguistic practices of black and white speaker groups in Bermuda, but rather to examine variables in the speech of one very specific community of practice in two contrasting styles, and to compare this to the same variables in the community of practice they appear to be impersonating in performances.

The black group comprises six speakers from the 2014 group analysed in Chapter 3, and two additional speakers, interviewed in 2016. The white group comprises the seven speakers whose performances were analysed qualitatively in Chapter 6, and Jeremy Frith, whose 1996 audio recorded reading of the poetry collection *Oh Gawd I Vish Dis Ig'rance Vud Stop!*[1] I transcribed and aligned in the same way as the other fieldwork interviews. Of course, there are methodological issues with this decision which need to be considered. Since Frith was a member, like my other white speakers, of the group

[1] See 2.4 and 5.1 for discussions of poems from *Oh Gawd*.

of men well-known for performing BerE in public, it seemed important to include him in the study. It was not possible to interview Frith because he died in 2009, so using publicly available audio recording offered a solution. As a recorded Compact Disc (CD) of poetry, however, this could be argued to represent a different genre from the face-to-face interviews conducted with other participants.

In fact, listening to the CD revealed its marked similarities to the interviews, and the themes and content of the poetry prove to be an important source of the ideology for which this group is a voice. The structure of *Oh Gawd* lends itself well to a study of performance. As discussed in Chapter 5, the book and corresponding audio CD are divided into two main sections, which clearly correspond to performance and non-performance, as signalled not only by Frith's own reading of them on the audio recording, but also by the orthography in the text and by instructions included for readers. Despite obvious differences in medium, the CD recording of *Oh Gawd* was found to bear strong resemblance to the structure of the interviews I conducted with other white participants, and the performances on the CD were in fact exactly the type of display elicited from other speakers. Patterns in Frith's pronunciation in performance and non-performance styles were not divergent from those of other speakers. Therefore I decided to include data from the recording in order to augment the data set and include an important member of the community of practice with which this chapter is concerned.

Table 7.1 lists the 16 participants of the study. Specific details about their occupations have not been included in order to protect their anonymity, but the black speakers' occupations ranged from mason to civil servant, while the white speakers had worked as senior executives at international business firms and banks, as managers/owners at well-established local businesses and/or in high profile positions in public office. As discussed in 6.1.3, I decided to anonymise all the participants. The only speaker who is not anonymised is Frith, since his data was taken from publicly available sources.

7.1.2 Data preparation

The basic methodology of the study in this chapter is to compare black and white production of MOUTH, GOAT and THE across two styles: performance and non-performance

Speaker (pseudonym)	Race	Age at interview	Year recorded
Frith	W	64	1996
Williams	W	57	2016
Parker	W	70	2016
Davies	W	72	2016
Foster	W	52	2016
Turner	W	60 (approx.)	2016
Martin	W	52	2016
Baker	W	60 (approx.)	2016
Hughes	B	86	2014
Roberts	B	81	2014
Clarke	B	82	2014
King	B	70	2014
Edwards	B	66	2014
Allen	B	63	2014
Green	B	83	2016
Lewis	B	60	2016

Table 7.1: Phonetic study participants.

speech. Accordingly, I treated these two styles separately in preparing and analysing the data, and draw a simple distinction between them throughout this chapter. Of course, as discussed in Chapter 4, style is not so easily delimited; to an extent, the 'third wave' of variationist sociolinguistics considers all speech as performative, and whether a speaker is accommodating towards or actively performing a style may at times be difficult to judge. However, the type of linguistic display with which I am concerned here — that is, the extremely overt, theatrical performances of BerE which occurred during the course of interviews with white Bermudian men — represent a specific performance genre and leave little room for confusion. In fact, as discussed in Chapter 6, the white performers are well-known for their participation in publicly staged dialect comedy, and their performances for me were often versions of something that had at some point been performed on stage. Nonetheless, a set of objective criteria, listed below, was used to distinguish performance from non-performance.

- Marked change in voice quality
- Marked change in pitch

- Increased pitch variability
- Speaker responding to interviewer's direct request for BerE performance
- Speaker announcing that they are about to perform or anticipating the performance with a quotative.

As mentioned in Chapter 6, all the interviews were orthographically transcribed using ELAN (Sloetjes and Willenburg 2008), and instances of overtly performed BerE were marked using the comments function in ELAN's annotation mode so that they could be easily found and analysed later. For the purposes of the acoustic analysis presented here, transcription was carried out using the the guidelines for automatic alignment issued by the Linguistic Data Consortium (2003). Transcripts were then exported as tab-delimited text files and automatically force-aligned with their corresponding sound files using FAVE-align (Rosenfelder et al. 2011). Since all my speakers were male and of a similar age, I did not normalise the data.

I prepared Praat scripts (Boersma and Weenink 2015) in order to extract relevant tokens of MOUTH, GOAT and THE from the aligned files after reviewing the data. Owing to the different phonological behaviour of the diphthongs MOUTH and GOAT and the definite article THE, tokens of each were extracted according to specific conditions, with the extraction script allowing users to specify the desired phonological contexts. The circumscription of each variable is described in the relevant sections below, as are the different analysis techniques applied to THE *vs* the diphthongs, owing to their different phonetic and sociolinguistic properties.

7.2 The diphthongs MOUTH and GOAT

7.2.1 MOUTH in BBerE

As shown in Chapter 3, the realisation of MOUTH in BBerE is phonologically conditioned by coda voicing. A low-back monophthong [ɑː] occurs before voiced codas, and MOUTH in pre-voiceless contexts is subject to 'Canadian' raising [əʊ]. The monophthongal variant of MOUTH is highly salient locally as a stereotypical Bermudian sound, not only in *down*

(*dahn de road*) but across the lexical set, as evidenced in dialect literature. *Bermewjan Vurds*, for example, has entries for 'sahn' (*sound*), 'ron' (*round*), 'tawn/tahn' (*town*), and 'pahnd' (*pound*) (Smith and Barritt 2005). Frith gives instructions for the 'authentic' pronunciation of MOUTH in the 'Notes on Pronunciation' appended to his poems:

> Pronunciation of vowels is slightly more ambiguous and difficult to describe but generally *ow has a long nasal a sound e.g. *naa* (now) or *haa* (how) (Frith 1996:52).

Given the voicing constraints on MOUTH, only pre-voiced tokens were extracted for this study. The sample was further narrowed to include tokens of pre-nasal MOUTH only, in order to exclude the possibility of results being affected by variability between different voiced contexts.

7.2.2 GOAT in BBerE

Like MOUTH, the pronunciation of BBerE GOAT is also phonologically conditioned by the voicing of the following context. An RP-like diphthong [əʊ] occurs before voiceless codas, and the central unrounded monophthong [əː] in pre-voiced contexts. Again, the monophthongal variant is highly stereotyped. Textual evidence for this is scarce, perhaps because it is difficult to represent this pronunciation orthographically. In his 1933 description of BerE, Ayres noted the feature, although his example of *coat-curt* neutralisation is not consistent with the phonotactic constraints found in my own data:

> *Cold* one easily mistakes for a Massachusetts pronunciation of *curl*; *at home* sounds like *a term*, *coat* like *curt* and *hole* like *hurl* (Ayres 1933:8).

Owing to the phonological conditioning of GOAT, only pre-voiced tokens were extracted. Further, tokens of GOAT preceding liquids were excluded to eliminate possible assimilatory effects.

7.2.3 Analysing diphthongs

I analysed the diphthongs MOUTH and GOAT in the same way. After extracting all possible tokens for each variable, I used a 'check-and-save' Praat script to examine each individual token, rejecting unacceptable tokens affected by noise and checking the alignment of

usable ones. Tables 7.2 and 7.3 overleaf show the number of tokens per variable per speaker in both performance and non-performance styles, as well as the number of rejections. Rejections were largely made owing to conditions of the interview including overlapping speech (in paired interviews when another speaker was talking over a token) or noise interference (in interviews which took place outdoors, often the sound of vehicles interfered with tokens)[2]. Occasionally, owing to the altered voice quality of performances (discussed above in 6.2.2), performed tokens were excluded because the waveform was clipped as a result of extreme pitch and amplitude changes.

Very occasionally the aligner failed to correctly identify the boundaries of the vowel, usually owing to failed alignment within the portion of speech in which the token was found. In these cases I adjusted the alignment, taking care not to exclude any final portion of the vowel and thus miss possible diphthongisation. In determining and marking the boundaries of the vowel, I used auditory and visual-acoustic criteria:

- Auditory: auditory judgements were used to check visual acoustic judgements, making sure no portion of preceding consonant or following consonant was included within the vowel boundaries.
- Visual acoustic:
  - Intensity of the waveform
  - Formant patterning of the vowel and following consonant (using Praat's formant tracker)
  - Anti-formants: In the case of pre-nasal MOUTH, I looked for white space indicating the weakened acoustic energy of a nasal following a vowel.

Adjusted boundaries were always placed at the first zero-crossing of the waveform after the first boundary at the first pulse of the vowel, and the last zero-crossing of the waveform before the oral closure.

[2]Interviews with Baker, Turner, Hughes, Edwards had another speaker present. Williams' interview was conducted outdoors. Clarke's interview took place near a workshop, and the sound of tools was a major disruption. One speaker, Parker, had two noisy pets present during the interview.

Speaker	Race	Total Potential Tokens	Accepted Performance Tokens	Accepted Non-Performance Tokens	Rejected Tokens
Frith	W	54	24	21	9
Williams	W	37	5	19	8
Parker	W	99	7	68	17
Davies	W	87	2	73	10
Foster	W	32	2	19	9
Turner	W	32	1	23	7
Martin	W	49	0	41	8
Baker	W	42	0	28	14
Roberts	B	53	N/A	43	10
Clarke	B	98	N/A	75	23
King	B	26	N/A	23	3
Allen	B	54	N/A	48	6
Edwards	B	61	N/A	41	20
Hughes	B	41	N/A	38	3
Green	B	101	N/A	101	80
Lewis	B	67	N/A	56	11
TOTAL		933	41	696	179

Table 7.2: Number of MOUTH tokens per speaker in two styles, and number of tokens rejected.

Speaker	Race	Total Potential Tokens	Accepted Performance Tokens	Accepted Non-Performance Tokens	Rejected Tokens
Frith	W	59	14	25	20
Williams	W	47	1	40	6
Parker	W	87	7	58	22
Davies	W	86	3	64	19
Foster	W	49	0	36	13
Turner	W	32	0	16	16
Martin	W	58	1	42	14
Baker	W	20	0	12	8
Roberts	B	67	N/A	47	20
Clarke	B	50	N/A	30	20
King	B	31	N/A	26	5
Allen	B	77	N/A	59	18
Edwards	B	36	N/A	25	11
Hughes	B	54	N/A	30	24
Green	B	34	N/A	25	9
Lewis	B	37	N/A	32	5
TOTAL		824	26	568	230

Table 7.3: Number of GOAT tokens per speaker in two styles, and number of tokens rejected.

In my analysis of MOUTH and GOAT, I was interested in two main measures for each variable: the frontness or backness of the onset, and the amount of trajectory change, or degree of diphthongisation. In order to assess these, I used a Praat script to measure the first and second formants (F1 and F2) in all acceptable tokens at three time-points measured from the start of the vowel: 25%, 50%, and 75% of the vowel's duration. Results were exported and saved as .csv files.

Because the static dimension of most interest is the frontness/backness of the vowel, I used the value of F2 at 25% of the duration of the vowel as my measure of onset vowel quality. For analysis of trajectory change, I used Euclidean distance (see below) as a measure of diphthongisation, calculated from F1 and F2 values measured at 25% and 75% of the duration of each token (Di Paolo et al. 2011:101-2).

Euclidean distance:

$$\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^{n}(p_i - q_i)^2}$$

Euclidean distance formula for calculating diphthong trajectory, where i = 75% measurement point and j = 25% measurement point:

$$d_ij = \sqrt{(F1_i - F1_j)^2 + (F2_i - F2_j)^2}$$

I conducted two types of t-test on the Euclidean distance measurements and onset F2 values for MOUTH and, separately, for GOAT tokens. Because unequal sample sizes were involved, I used Welch's unequal variances t-test to test the differences (a) between black and white tokens of each diphthong in non-performance style and (b) between white performed and black non-performed tokens of each diphthong. Paired Student's t-tests were used to test whether white performed and non-performed tokens were significantly different from each other, this being comparable to a 'repeated measures' experiment, with each speaker being used as their own 'control'. Owing to the fact that not all white

speakers gave performances of MOUTH and/or GOAT, the paired tests could only be conducted using data from those speakers who did. All the p-values presented in this chapter are the results of these two statistical tests.

In order to generate plots of the MOUTH and GOAT data, I used the PhonR package (McCloy 2012) in R (R Development Core Team 2012) with the RStudio interface (R Studio Team 2015), with inverted x and y axes representing F2 and F1 respectively so that the plot approximates auditory impressions of tongue height in vowel production. I wrote scripts which used the 'plotVowels' function in PhonR to plot F1 and F2 at the three time-points I measured, joining these with lines and arrow-heads to show the trajectories of the vowels. Five tokens of /i/ (FLEECE) per speaker were included in order to give an indication of the speakers' overall vowel space on the plots (these were extracted in the same manner as the other vowels in the study).

In the following subsections I present the findings of the phonetic study for MOUTH and GOAT. For each variable, I first present results from each speaker group (black and white) in non-performance style and then compare them, before introducing the results for the linguistic performances of the white group. I then compare the results for white performance with black and white non-performance in order to address the two main questions of the phonetic study: how acoustically different are white speakers' realisations of these stereotyped features in and out of performance style? And how does this compare to black speakers' production of the same variables?

7.2.4 Findings: MOUTH

Acoustic results show two main variants of pre-nasal MOUTH among the black speakers. The first of these is the same variant discussed above (7.2.1) and in Chapter 3: a low-back monophthong as in (1) below and Figure 7.1. The other variant shown by the results is a low-back vowel with a rising-fronting offglide, as in (2) and Figure 7.2. A rising-backing diphthong, although rare, is also possible, as in (3).

(1) Go **down** [dɑːn] there (Hughes)

(2) Look **around** [əɹɑɪn] try (Edwards)

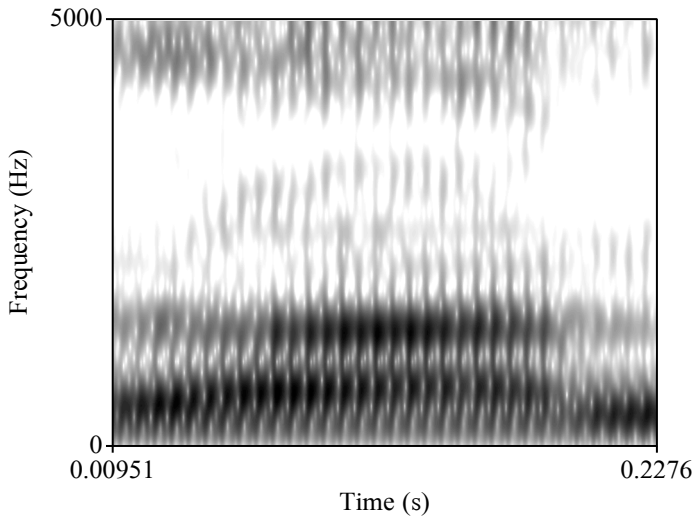


Figure 7.1: Typical monophthongal black token of MOUTH (Hughes token 643 'down,' (1)); Euclidean distance 32.

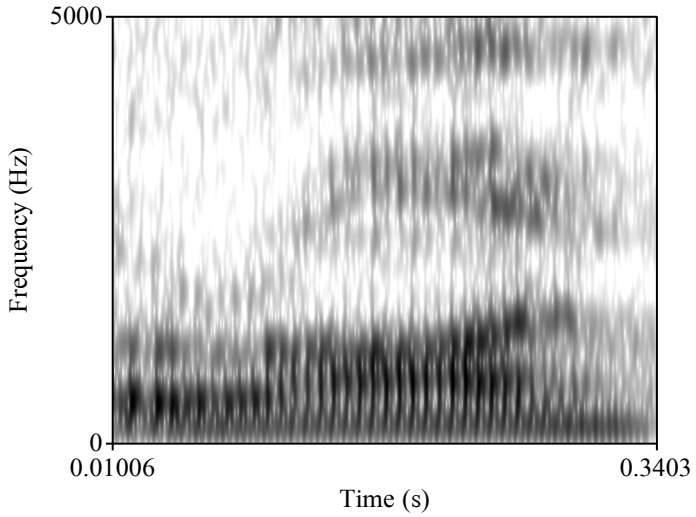


Figure 7.2: Black token of MOUTH with a rising fronting diphthong (Edwards token 488 'around,' (2)); Euclidean distance 273.

(3) Go **down** [daʊn] (Lewis)

Table 7.4 gives the mean and median values for F1 and F2 at the three measurement points (25%, 50% and 75% of the duration of the vowel) for MOUTH in the black group, as well as the mean change between 25% and 75%, and the mean Euclidean distance. Importantly, the latter has been affected by the tokens with a rising-fronting offglide,

	25%		50%		75%		Change 25>75		Euclidean distance
	F1	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	114
Mean	625	1170	632	1151	627	1183	3	13	*Standard Deviation*
Median	621	1170	621	1154	617	1190	2	9	72

Table 7.4: Black group statistics for F1 and F2 values for MOUTH at three measurement points, change in vowel and Euclidean distance.

which are less common than the low-back monophthong, but have a Euclidean distance similar to a 'standard' rising-backing variant, thus artificially increasing the mean.

Figure 7.3 presents the raw data in all eight black speakers. Each narrow-weight line shows the trajectory of a single vowel token. Super-imposed on these is the overall group mean, represented by the thicker green line. The trajectory for this mean (and for the individual speaker means in later figures) was generated by calculating the mean value at each of the three measured time-points of the vowel in each token. The tokens and mean of /i/ are plotted in red to provide a reference point in the vowel space. Figure 7.4 also displays all black tokens of MOUTH, this time colour-coded by speaker and with individual speaker means super-imposed. Again, speaker means were calculated using the values for the three measured time-points, and illustrative tokens of /i/ are included. Although there is some variability in the data, Figure 7.4 clearly shows that each speaker's average MOUTH has a short trajectory and occupies a low-back position in the vowel space relative to /i/.

Figure 7.3: Raw data and mean of MOUTH in the black group, with illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

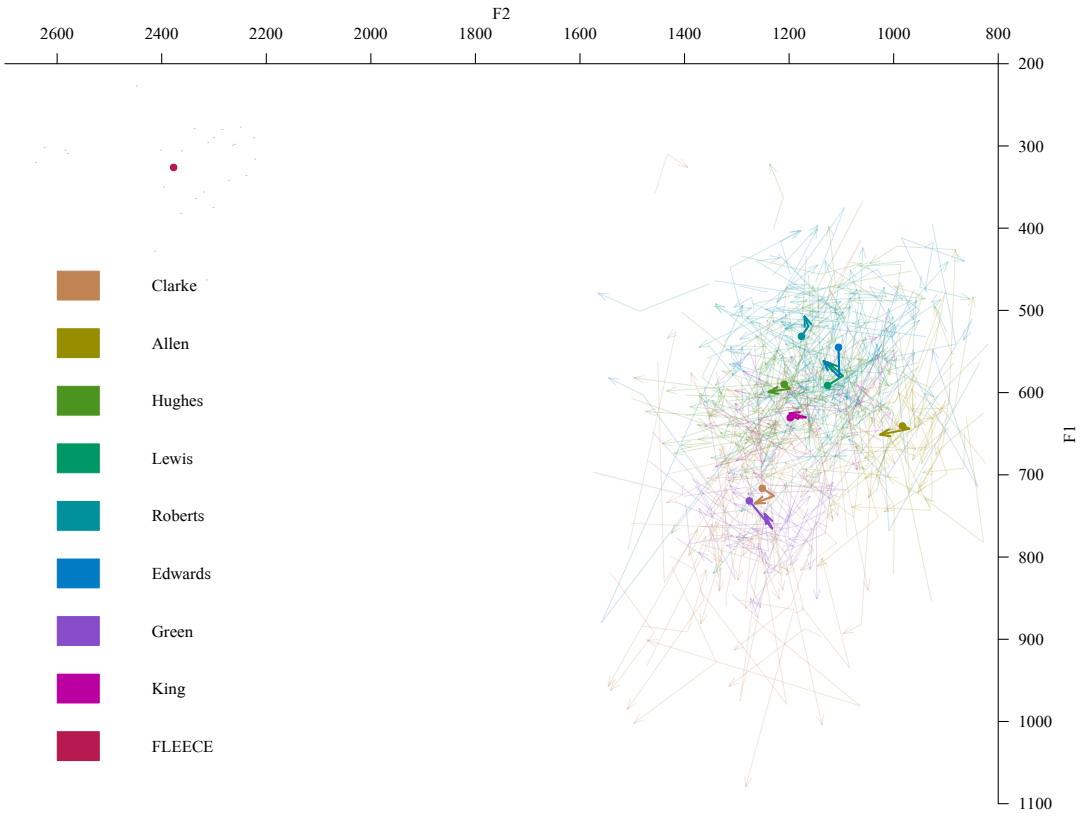


Figure 7.4: Raw data for MOUTH in the black group, with individual speaker means and illustrative tokens and mean for /i/.

In the white group, in non-performance style, pre-nasal MOUTH is typically a rising-backing diphthong, as in (4) and Figure 7.5, similar to that in Wells' descriptions of GenAm and RP (1982:151). Occasionally the vowels in these data have a short trajectory giving the auditory impression of a low front monophthong, similar in quality to the onset of the usual white diphthongal variant. This is illustrated in (5) and Figure 7.6.

(4) People **round** [ɔɹæʊnd] (Williams)

(5) Is **down** [dæːn] there (Baker)

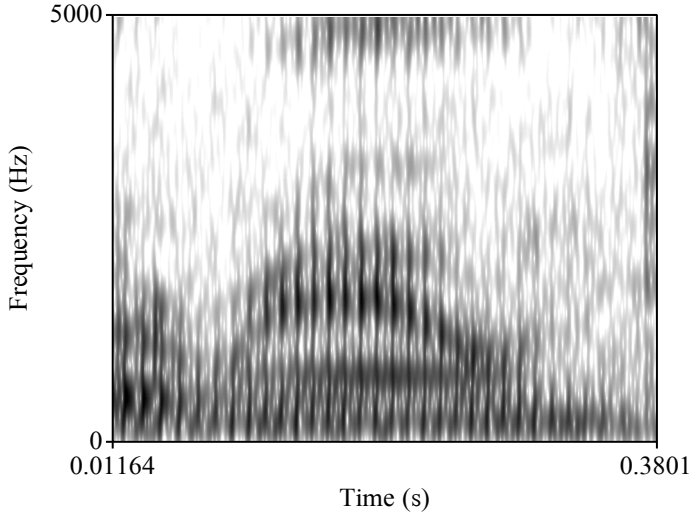


Figure 7.5: Typical white token of MOUTH (Williams token 148 'around,' (4)); Euclidean distance 808.

Table 7.5 gives the basic statistics for MOUTH in the white group. Figures 7.7 and 7.8 presents the raw data for MOUTH in all eight white speakers of the study in the same manner as Figures 7.3 and 7.4, with all tokens and the group mean displayed in Figure 7.7, and individual speaker means in Figure 7.8. Figure 7.8 clearly shows the diphthongal quality of MOUTH in all these white speakers, with the exception of Baker, who mostly used the low-front [æ] variant.

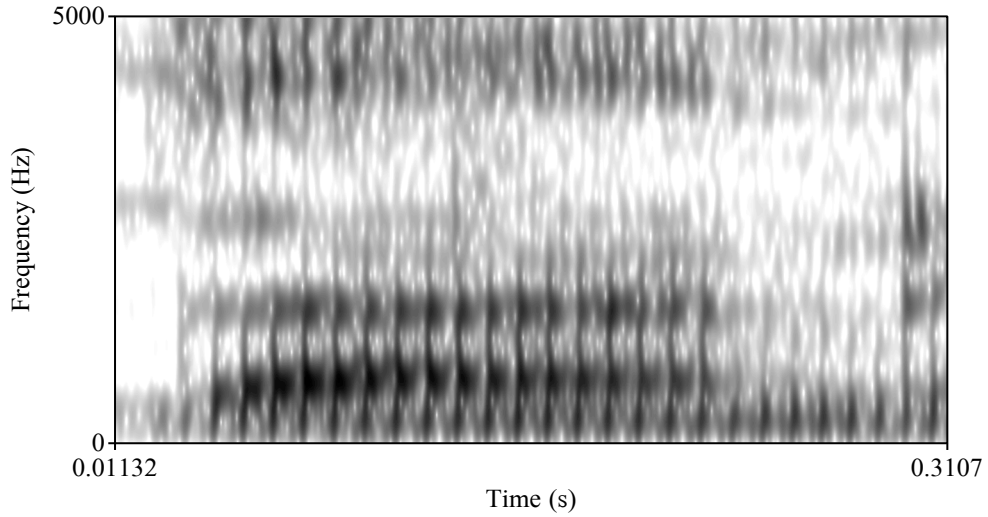


Figure 7.6: White token of MOUTH with a low front monophthong (Baker token 317 'down,' (5)); Euclidean distance 28.

	25%		50%		75%		Change 25>75		Euclidean distance
	F1	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	233
Mean	639	1470	634	1393	578	1284	-62	-186	**Standard Deviation**
Median	636	1482	626	1397	568	1274	-55	-181	148

Table 7.5: White group statistics for F1 and F2 values at three measurement points, change in vowel and Euclidean distance.

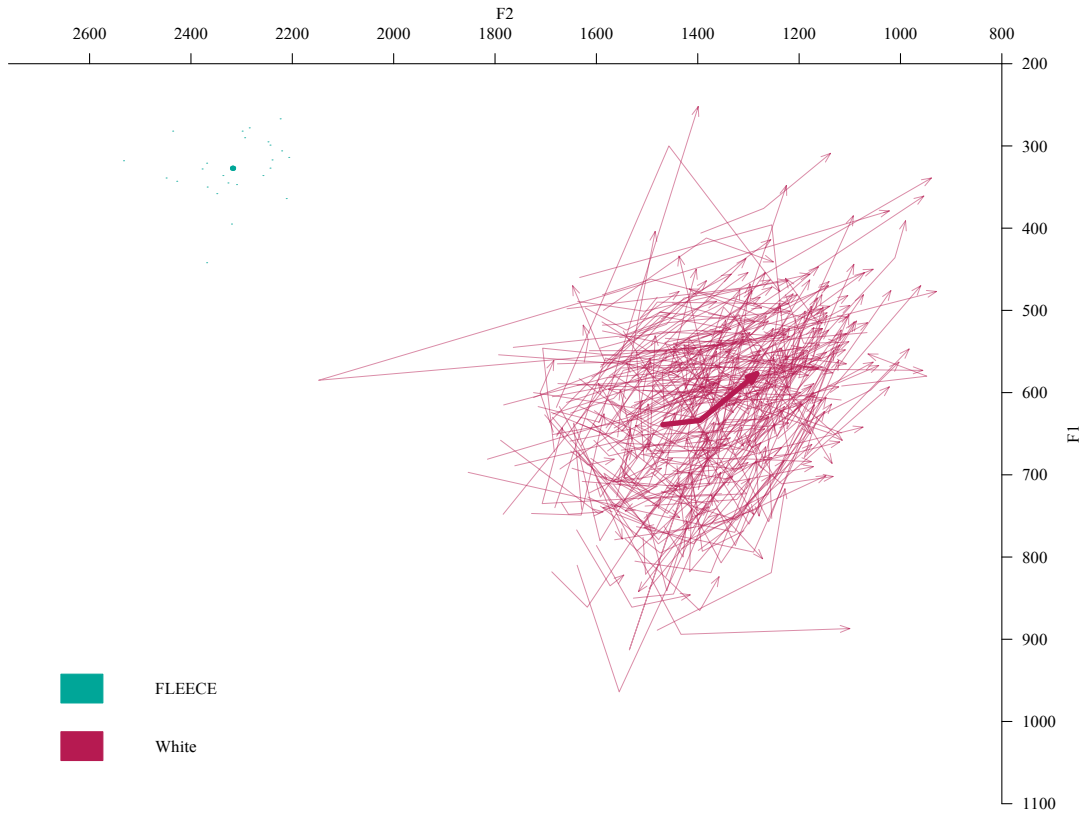


Figure 7.7: Raw data and group mean of MOUTH in the white group, with illustrative tokens and mean for /i/.

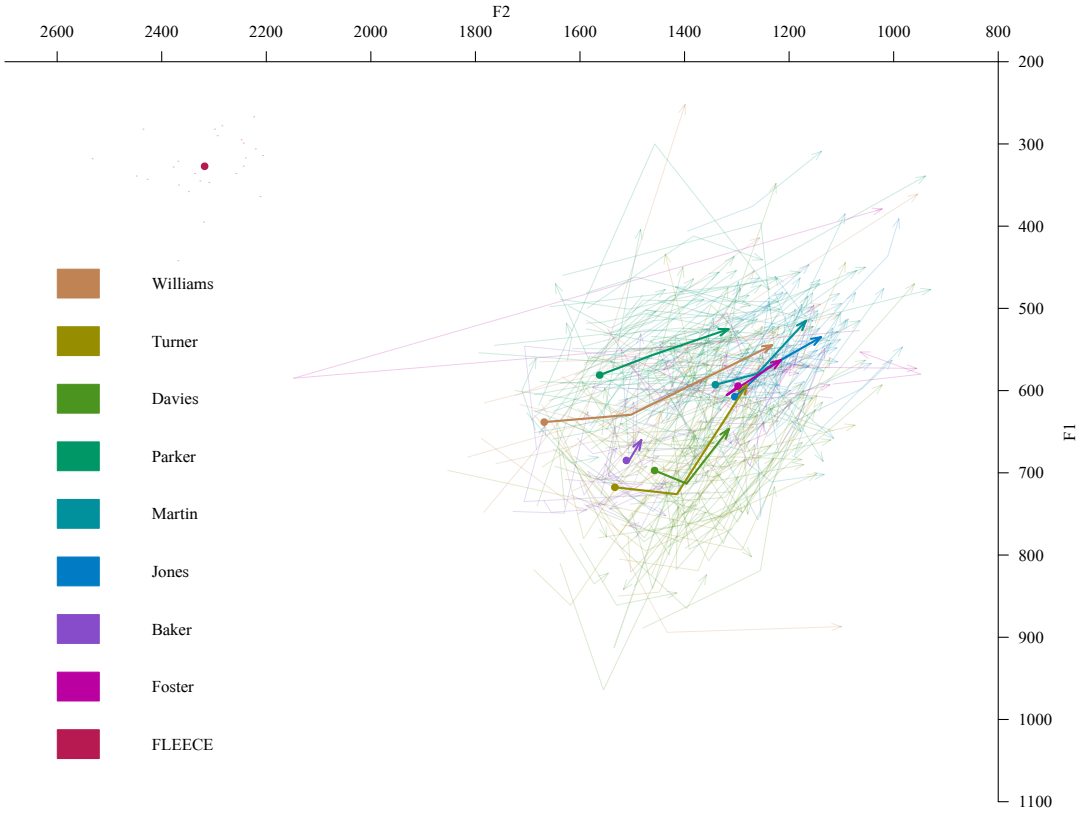


Figure 7.8: Raw data of MOUTH in the white group, with individual speaker means and tokens and mean for /i/.

The data presented so far show that the non-performance MOUTH vowels of the black and white groups of this study contrast considerably. First, the white speakers' MOUTH has a more front onset than the MOUTH of the black speakers: the mean F2 at 25% of the vowel duration is 1470 Hz, compared to 1170 Hz in the black group. Secondly, the white speakers' MOUTH is a diphthong, with an average Euclidean distance of 233, whereas the black speakers typically produce a monophthong, although a relatively short low-back vowel with a rising-fronting off-glide is also possible: the mean Euclidean distance for this group is 114. Figure 7.9 presents this contrast. It shows all tokens (narrow lines) and means (thick lines) for black *vs.* white speech (green and red respectively). The mean for white speakers is a rising-backing diphthong, whereas black speakers' mean MOUTH is basically monophthongal and much further back in the vowel space.

Statistical analysis shows that these differences between black and white MOUTH are significant. As predicted, the black speakers' onset F2 values are significantly lower than the white speakers ($p < 0.0001$), and their MOUTH tokens show significantly less trajectory change than the white speakers' ($p < 0.01$). The difference in trajectory length between groups would be even more significant were it not for the rising-fronting diphthongs found in the black group — which have Euclidean distances similar to that of the 'standard' white tokens, despite having an opposite direction of change. Still, the frequency of low-back monophthongs among the black speakers is high enough that the mean Euclidean distance of that group is around half that of the white speakers.

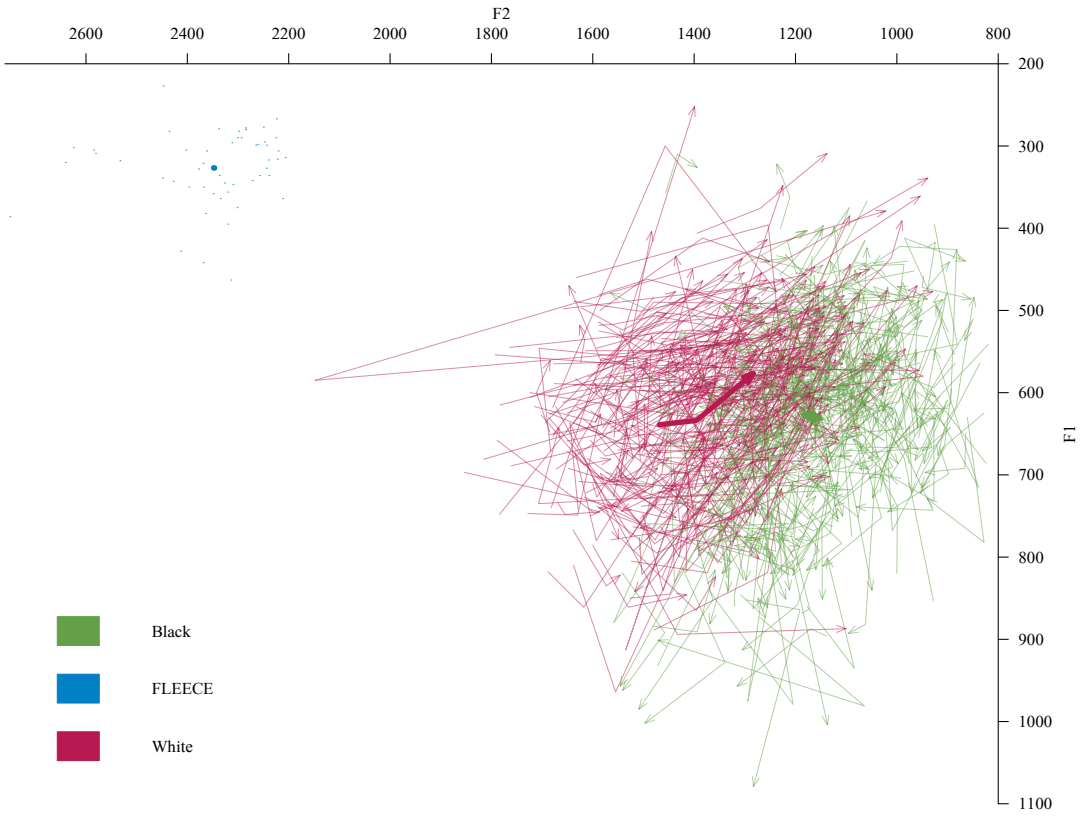


Figure 7.9: Raw data and group means for non-performed MOUTH in the black and white groups, with illustrative tokens and mean for /i/.

I will now discuss the results for MOUTH in the performances of the white group. One of the central auditory impressions which prompted this study is that the white speakers' performed tokens of MOUTH sound phonetically very different to their non-performed pronunciation of the same vowel, and at the same time sound similar to the monophthongal MOUTH vowel of the speakers in the black group. In other words, MOUTH in the white speakers' performances is generally a low-back monophthong, as in (6) and Figure 7.10.

(6) Chomping **down** [dɑːn] on (Parker)

Acoustic measurements largely confirm these observations. As seen in Table 7.6, the white speakers are in their performances producing a low-back MOUTH vowel with a short trajectory. In fact, the mean Euclidean distance for MOUTH in white performances (85) is considerably lower than that of the black group shown in Table 7.4 (114).

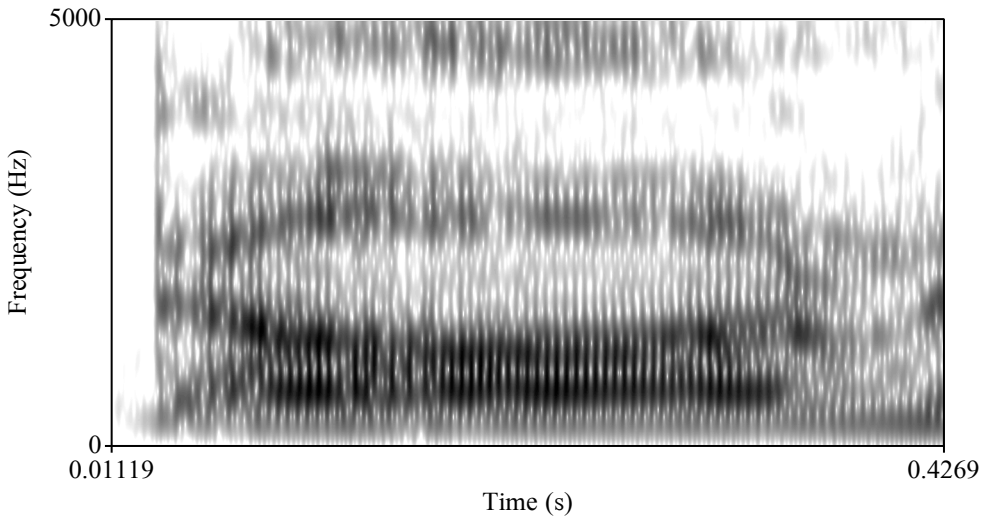


Figure 7.10: Typical white performance token of MOUTH (Parker token 136 'down'); Euclidean distance 36.

	25%		50%		75%		Change 25>75		Euclidean distance
	F1	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	85
Mean	631	1180	615	1165	615	1168	-16	-12	**Standard Deviation**
Median	632	1148	605	1141	615	1163	-17	-5	63

Table 7.6: White group performance statistics for F1 and F2 values at three measurement points, change in vowel and Euclidean distance.

Figure 7.11 presents the raw data for MOUTH in performance style. There is some variability in the performances, but almost all tokens have very short trajectories, and, with a few exceptions, are tightly grouped around the mean — more so than the tokens of the black group, consistently with the lower mean Euclidean Distance. This suggests the possibility of exaggeration and also that speakers are consciously aiming at a target sound. The rising-fronting token which stands out on the plot (the only token with such a trajectory) is similar to the variant with this type of off-glide occasionally noticed in black MOUTH. Williams is the only white speaker to produce such a token, however, and does so only once; this provides further evidence that white speakers are not attempting to mimic (or are not aware of) the black variant with a rising-fronting off-glide, but only the socially stereotyped low-back monophthong. This may also suggest that the rising-fronting variant is not socially salient.

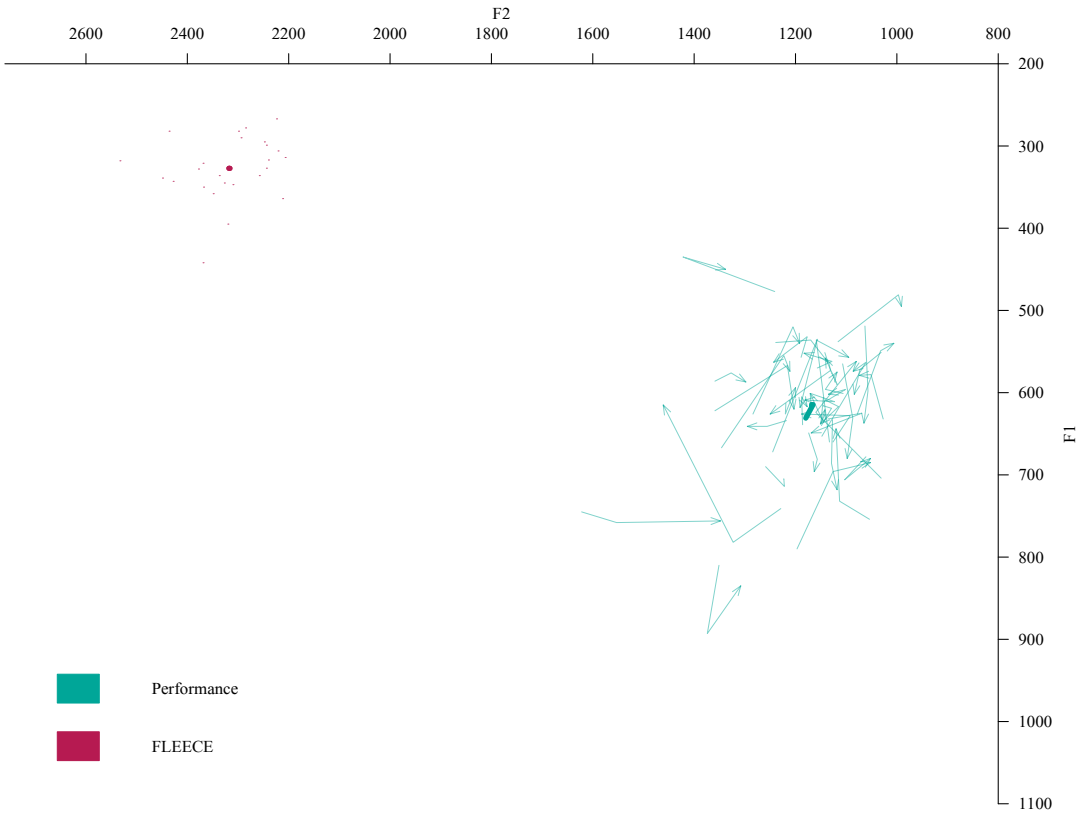


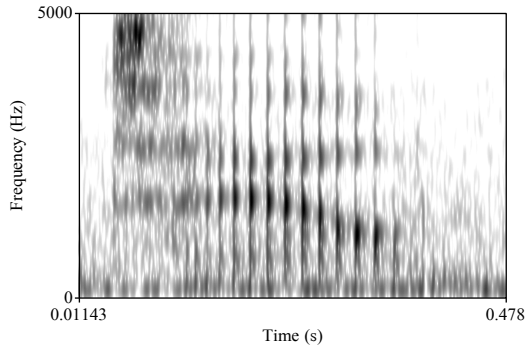
Figure 7.11: All tokens and mean of MOUTH in white performance.

Two main contrasts central to the questions of this chapter are discussed here: that between MOUTH in performance and non-performance in the white group, and that between MOUTH in white performance and black non-performance. Table 7.7, which reproduces the means for black and white data (including white performance), helps us to understand the relationship between these three groups of tokens. White performed and non-performed MOUTH are very different from one another. Non-performance tokens have an average Euclidean distance of 233 and a mean onset F2 value of 1470 Hz, whereas performed tokens are much shorter (with a mean Euclidean distance of 85) and more front at the onset (1180 Hz).

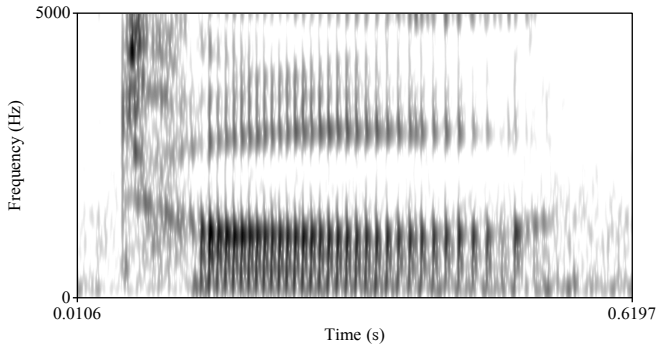
Figures 7.12(a) and 7.12(b) illustrate the differences in onset and diphthongisation between MOUTH in the same word, spoken by the same speaker, in two styles , and Figure 7.13 displays all tokens and the means for white performance and white non-performance. Statistically, the difference between MOUTH in the two styles is found to be significant,

	25%		50%		75%		Change 25>75		Euclidean distance
	F1	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	
White non-performance	639	1470	634	1393	578	1284	-62	186	233
Black non-performance	625	1170	632	1151	627	1183	3	13	114
White performance	631	1180	615	1165	615	1168	-16	-12	85

Table 7.7: Means for all three speaker groups.



(a) Non-performance; Euclidean distance 633



(b) Performance; Euclidean distance 117

Figure 7.12: (a) Non-performance and (b) performance tokens of MOUTH in the same speaker (Williams tokens 469 and 025, 'town').

both in terms of onset F2 ($p < 0.05$) and Euclidean distance ($p < 0.01$).

The figures show that white performed MOUTH is similar to black MOUTH; both have a low-back vowel with a short trajectory, and similar values for the onset values of F2 and vowel change (as seen in Table 7.7). This is illustrated in Figure 7.14, which presents tokens and means for all three sets of tokens, this time on a smaller scale, without illustrative tokens of /i/, to give a clearer picture. White performance and black non-performance are not found to be significantly different, either in terms of onset F2 value of

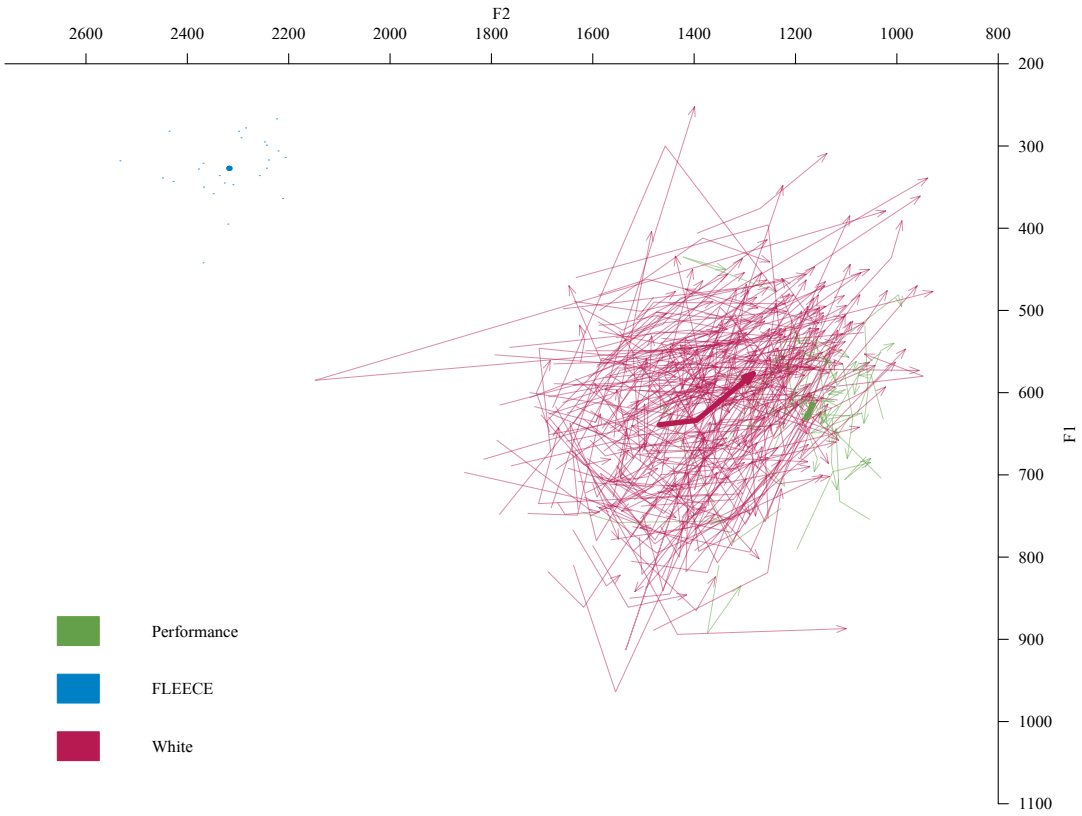


Figure 7.13: Raw data and group means of MOUTH in the white group in performance and non-performance speech, with illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

MOUTH ($p = 0.31$) or of trajectory change measured by Euclidean distance ($p = 0.27$). The values for Euclidean distance, however, suggest that the white performers are aiming at a low-back monophthong but not at a rising-fronting offglide, since the Euclidean distance for white performances of MOUTH (85) is actually lower than for the black speakers (114).

In summary, these acoustic and auditory results confirm significant phonetic differences between the black and white groups' pre-nasal MOUTH in non-performance contexts, both in terms of the Euclidean distance (corresponding to degree of diphthongisation) and the F2 value of the onset (corresponding to an auditory impression of frontness/backness). The results also indicate that the white speakers' performances of MOUTH are different from their non-performed tokens in both respects, and bear some phonetic resemblance to the MOUTH vowel produced by the black speakers of this study. However, a key finding of the acoustic analysis of this section is that white performances of MOUTH generally do not reflect the full complexity of black practice in that they do not incorporate the

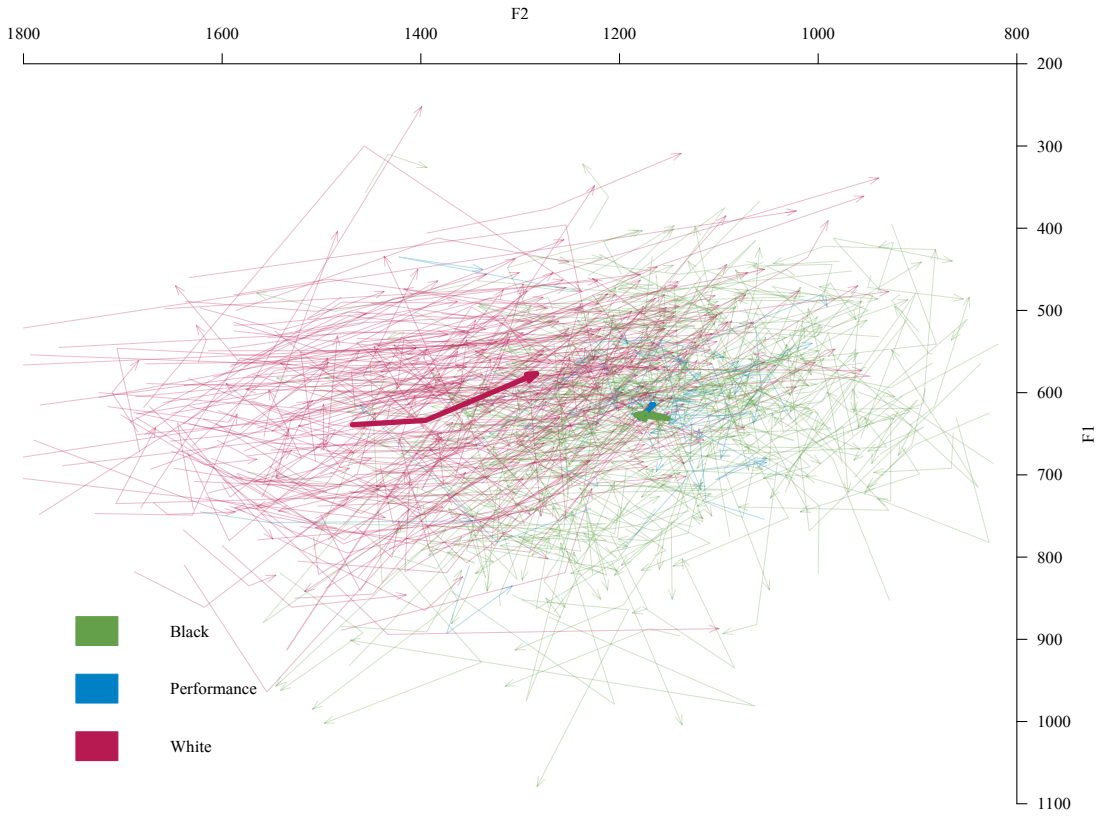


Figure 7.14: Raw data and group means of MOUTH in black and white speakers, including white performance.

less common, off-gliding variant.

7.2.5 Findings: GOAT

As I did for MOUTH, in this section I present results for GOAT from each group in non-performance style, compare them, and then present the results for white performance. Throughout, the data is presented in the same manner as MOUTH was in the previous section, with individual tokens, group means and speaker means plotted along with data for FLEECE to give a visual impression of the vowel space.

Among the black speakers, the main variant of GOAT is a central, unrounded monophthong [əː], as in (7) and Figure 7.15, although an RP-like rising-backing diphthong occurs occasionally, as in (8).

(7) House **those** [ðəːz] days (Edwards)

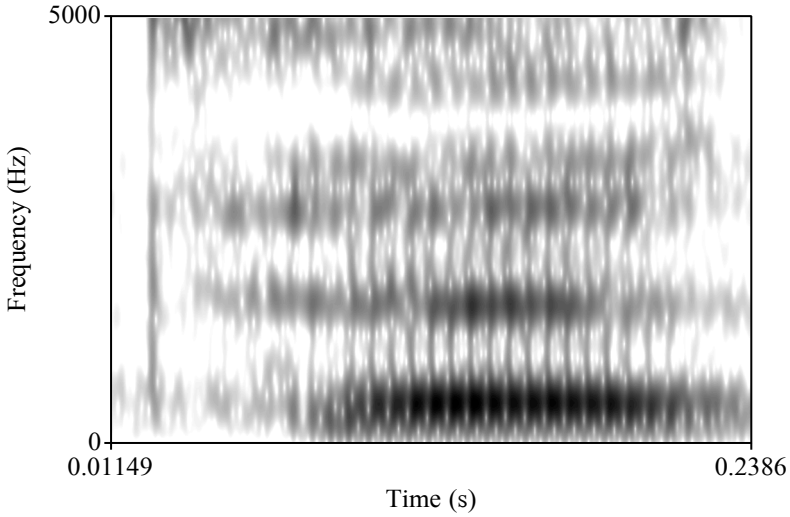


Figure 7.15: Typical black token of GOAT (Edwards token 203 'those,' (7)); Euclidean distance 4.

(8) It was **home** [həʊm] (Green)

Table 7.8 gives the basic statistics for GOAT in the black group, including mean and median values for F1 and F2 at the three measurement points, the mean change in vowel between 25% and 75%, and the mean Euclidean distance.

	25%		**50%**		**75%**		**Change 25>75**		**Euclidean distance**
	F1	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	71
Mean	449	1476	450	1470	442	1472	-7	-3	**Standard Deviation**
Median	440	1485	442	1473	436	1472	-5	-2	61

Table 7.8: Black group statistics for GOAT: F1 and F2 values at three measurement points, change in vowel and Euclidean distance.

Figures 7.16 and 7.17 display the raw data for GOAT in the black group. For these speakers, GOAT is typically a fairly central monophthong, with individual speaker means clustered between F2 values of 1400 - 1800 Hz, displaying a minimal average trajectory.

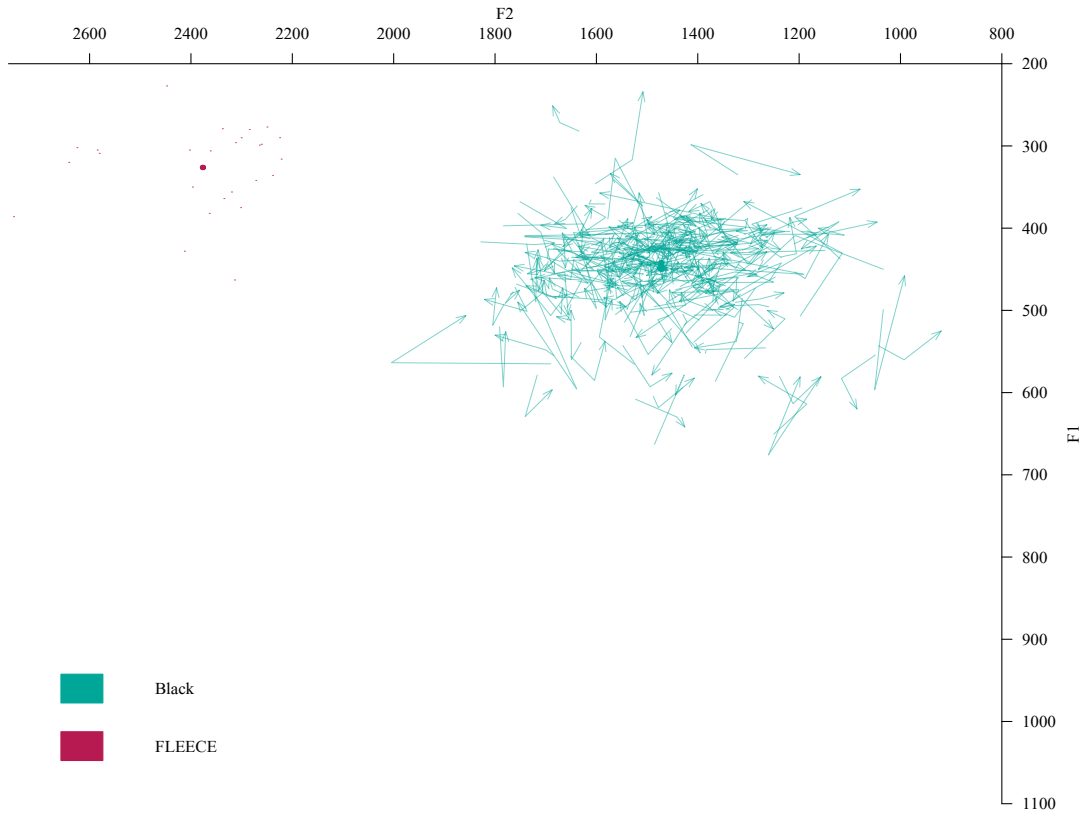


Figure 7.16: Raw data and mean of GOAT in the black group, with illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

Figure 7.17: Raw data for GOAT in the black group, with individual speaker means and illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

In the white group, the non-performance data show GOAT to be quite variable. All speakers had a rising diphthong, but the F2 value of the offset varied widely and trajectories were often fairly dynamic. (9) and Figure 7.18 give an example of a rising-backing token, while (10) and Figure 7.19 illustrate a rising-fronting example.

(9) Happy **home** [hʌːʊm] (Foster)

(10) And **close** [klʌʊiz] your (Frith)

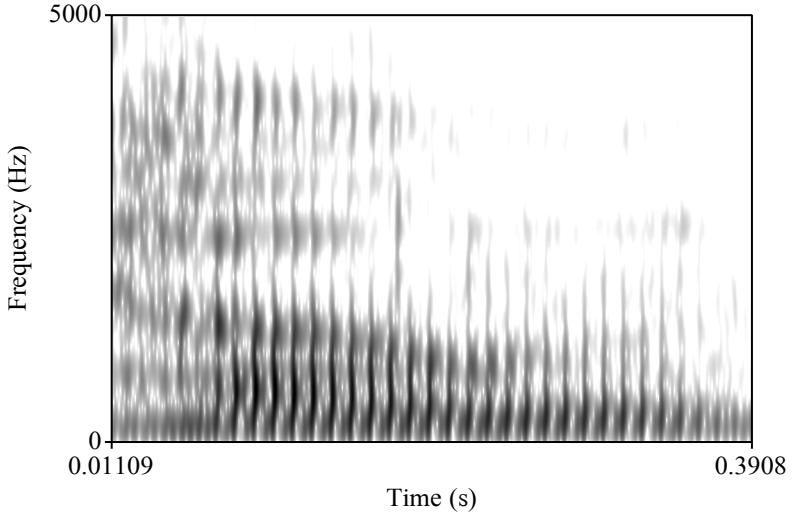


Figure 7.18: Rising-backing white token of GOAT (Foster token 288 'home,' (9)); Euclidean distance 274.

Table 7.9 gives the white group statistics for GOAT, and Figures 7.20 and 7.21 show the raw data for GOAT in this group, with group and individual means respectively.

	25%		**50%**		**75%**		**Change 25>75**		**Euclidean Distance**
	F1	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	143
Mean	499	1324	473	1276	427	1270	-72	-54	**Standard Deviation**
Median	493	1315	464	1276	418	1273	-68	-44	95

Table 7.9: White group statistics for GOAT: F1 and F2 values at three measurement points, change in vowel and Euclidean distance.

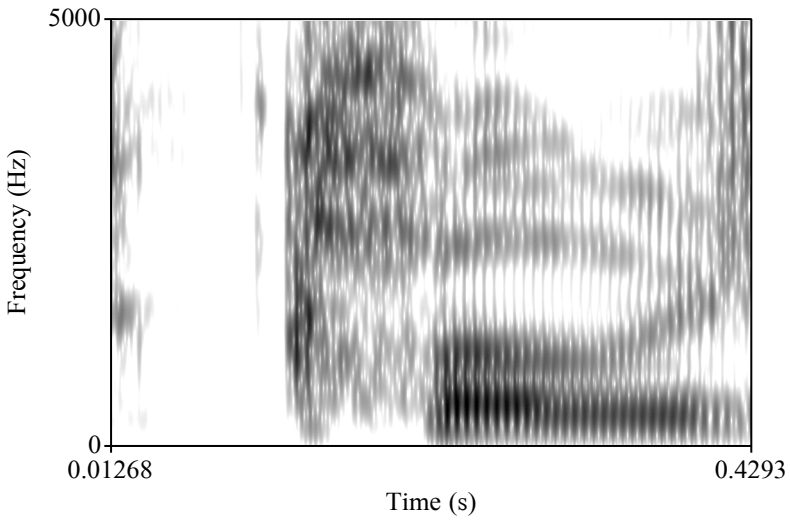


Figure 7.19: Rising-fronting white token of GOAT (Frith token 44 'close,' (10)); Euclidean distance 249.

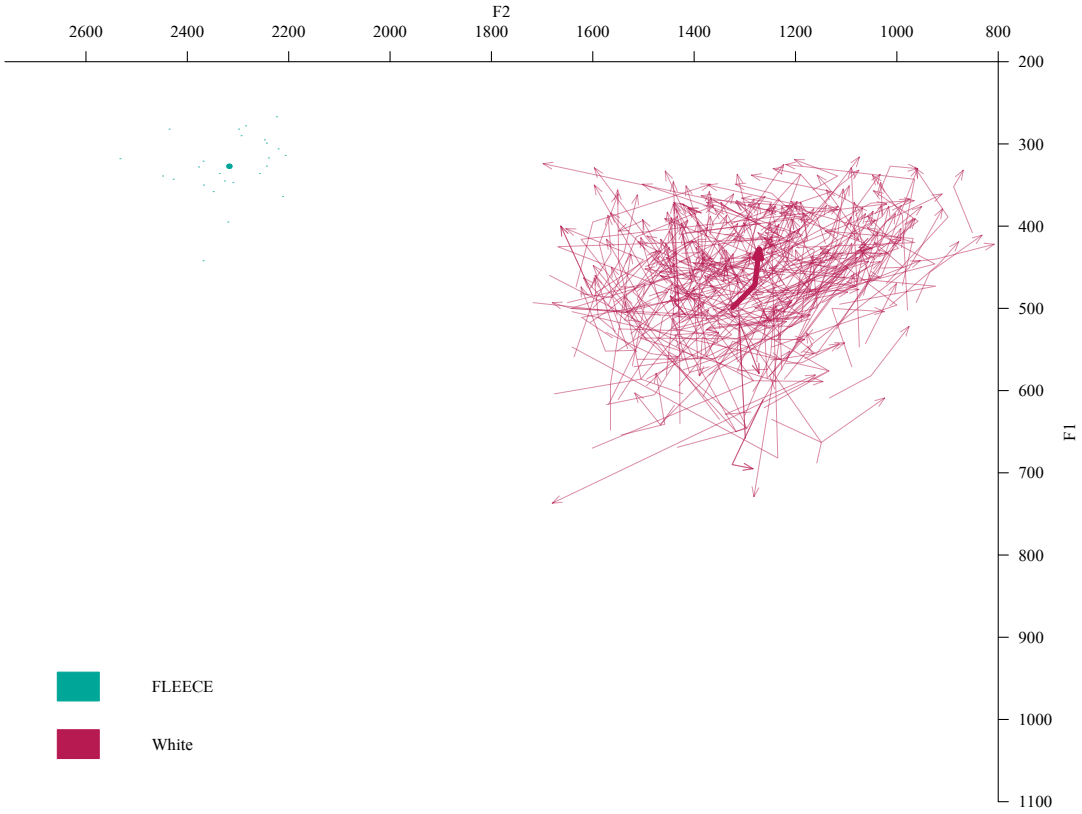


Figure 7.20: Raw data and group mean for GOAT in the white group, with illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

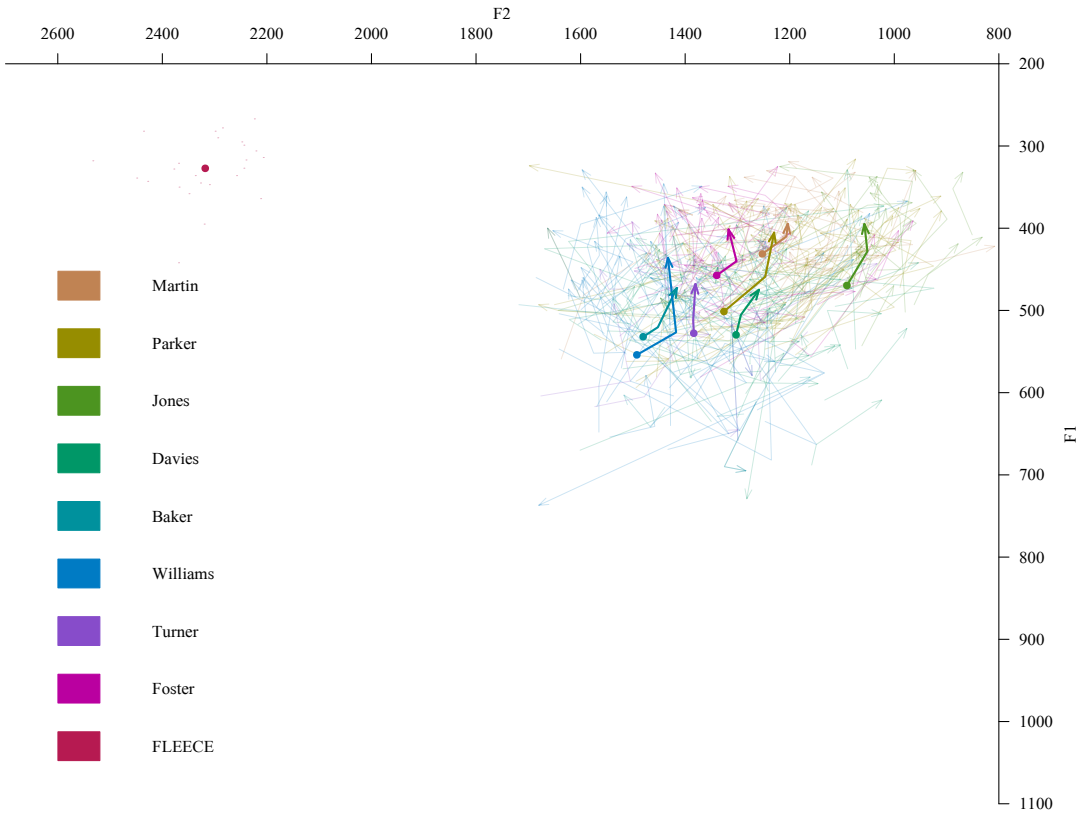


Figure 7.21: Raw data and individual speaker means for GOAT in the white group, with individual speaker means and illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

These data show that the non-performance GOAT vowels of the black and white groups of this study are very different from each other. First, the black speakers' GOAT has a more front onset than the GOAT of the white speakers; the mean F2 at 25% of the vowel duration is 1476 Hz, compared to 1324 Hz in the white group. Secondly, the black speakers' GOAT is a monophthong, with an average Euclidean distance of 71, whereas the white speakers typically produce a diphthong; the mean Euclidean distance for this group is 143.

Figure 7.22 presents this contrast. It shows all tokens (narrow lines) and means (thick lines) for black *vs.* white speech (green and red respectively), as well as FLEECE tokens in both groups (blue). The mean for white speakers is a rising diphthong, whereas black speakers' mean MOUTH is monophthongal, and further forward in the vowel space. These differences are statistically significant, both in terms of onset F2 or 'frontness' ($p < 0.05$), and in terms of diphthongisation or Euclidean distance ($p < 0.001$).

Figure 7.22: Raw data and mean of GOAT in the black and white groups, with illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

I will now present the results for GOAT in white speakers' performances. White performers typically produce a central unrounded vowel in GOAT with a short or negligible trajectory, as in (11) and Figure 7.23.

(11) For **those** [ðʌːz] who (Frith)

	25%		50%		75%		Change 25>75		Euclidean distance
	F1	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	53
Mean	490	1261	491	1254	479	1274	-11	-12	**Standard Deviation**
Median	478	1247	485	1250	471	1266	-6	-10	31

Table 7.10: White group performance statistics for GOAT: F1 and F2 values at three measurement points, change in vowel and Euclidean distance.

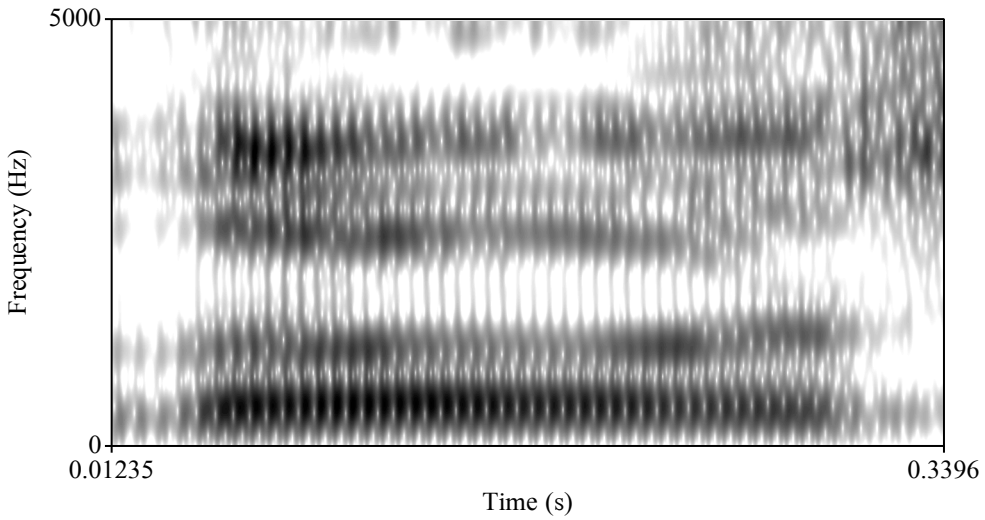


Figure 7.23: Typical white performance token of GOAT (Frith token 701 'those'); Euclidean distance 22.

In auditory impressions, it was observed that GOAT in performance style sounded different from the same speakers' 'everyday' production of the same vowel, and similar to the vowel typical among black speakers. The mean acoustic results only partially confirm these observations. As seen in Table 7.10, the mean Euclidean distance is 53, meaning that the white performances are overall more monophthongal than in non-performance, and in fact more so than GOAT in the black group, whose mean Euclidean distance is 71. In terms of onset, however, GOAT in performance is slightly less front than in white non-performed styles, and further back than the black mean onset F2 value. All tokens and the mean of GOAT in performance style are presented in Figure 7.24.

This is even clearer in Table 7.11, which reproduces the means for GOAT in all these groups. The data show that performed and non-performed GOAT are different from each other in terms of trajectory. The mean Euclidean distance for non-performance tokens of GOAT is 143, whereas performed tokens have a mean Euclidean distance of 53.

	25%		**50%**		**75%**		**Change 25>75**		**Euclidean distance**
	F1	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	
White non-performance	499	1324	473	1267	427	1279	-72	-54	143
Black non-performance	449	1476	450	1470	442	1472	-7	-3	71
White performance	490	1261	491	1254	479	1274	-11	12	53

Table 7.11: Means for GOAT in all three speaker groups.

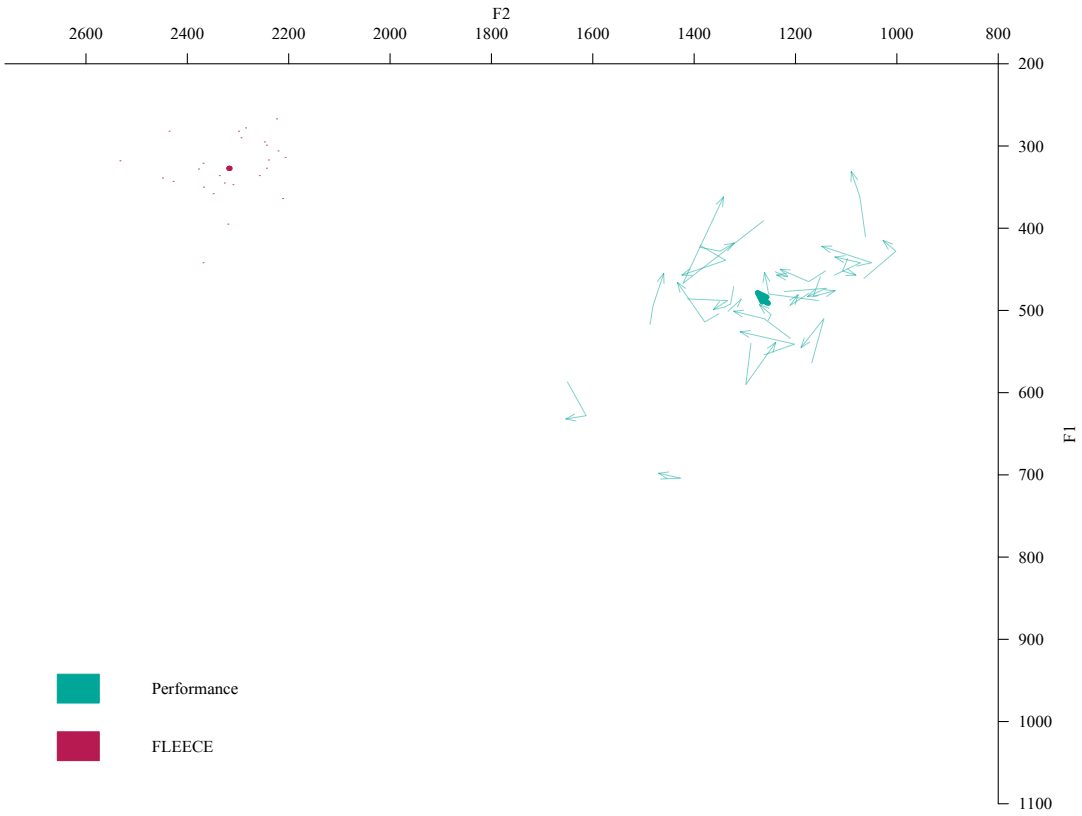
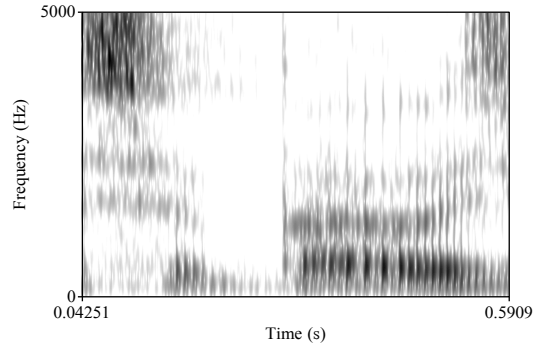


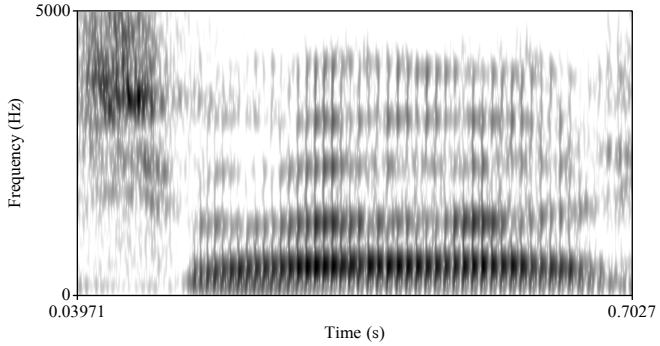
Figure 7.24: All tokens and mean of GOAT in white performance, with illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

This contrast is seen in Figures 7.25(a) and 7.25(b), which show the same word produced by the same speaker in two different styles, and in the trajectory of the GOAT mean in Figure 7.26. The data do not, however, show a notable contrast between performed and non-performed GOAT in terms of onset quality. Non-performed GOAT has a mean onset F2 of 1324 Hz, and the mean for performed GOAT is 1261 Hz. Statistical tests confirm this analysis; performed and non-performed GOAT are significantly different in terms of Euclidean distance ($p < 0.01$) but *not* significantly different in terms of onset F2 value ($p = 0.07$).

White performed and black non-performed GOAT are *not* significantly different in terms of ED ($p = 0.1$) OR F2 ($p = 0.24$) onset. Importantly, however, an outlier clouds this picture. The single performance token collected from Williams (which is noticeably lower and more front on the plot in Figure 7.27) is high-pitched, since he is performing, as he describes, a female post-office worker character he names 'Gladolene.' The token



(a) Non-performance; Euclidean distance 110



(b) Performance; Euclidean distance 47

Figure 7.25: (a) Non-performance and (b) performance tokens of GOAT in the same speaker (Parker tokens 303 and 017, 'suppose').

in question has an onset F2 value of 1690 Hz - much higher than all other performance tokens. If the same statistical test is carried out on the data excluding this token, the difference between the onset F2 value of GOAT in white performance *vs* black non-performance is found to be significant ($p < 0.05$). It appears, therefore, that with the possible exception of Williams, white performers are producing a vowel similar to the black vowel in terms of trajectory (monophthongal GOAT), but not in terms of onset quality, which matches the finding that the onset F2 value of white performers' GOAT is not significantly different from GOAT their non-performed style. This is apparent in Figure 7.27, which displays tokens and group means for white and black non-performed GOAT alongside GOAT in white performance, including Williams' outlier. As in the equivalent plot for MOUTH, these data are presented here on a smaller scale, without illustrative tokens of /i/, to give a clearer picture.

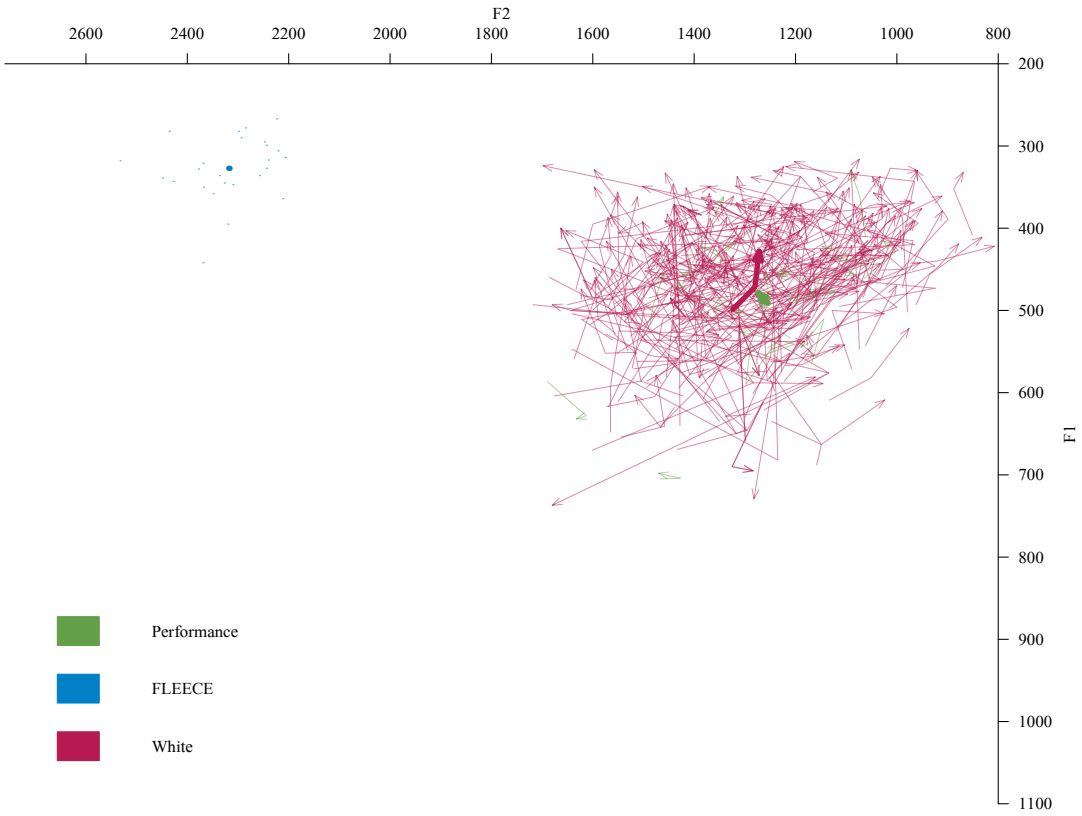


Figure 7.26: Raw data and means of GOAT in the white group in performance and non-performance speech,with illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

In summary, these acoustic and auditory results confirm significant differences between GOAT vowels in black and white non-performed BerE, both in terms of F2 value of the onset and in terms of Euclidean distance (indicating degree of diphthongisation). The results comparing white performance with both black and white non-performance, however, are mixed, and suggest that, if white speakers are aiming to imitate black speech, they are 'achieving' only one aspect of their target vowel production, in that they are producing a monophthong, but they are not successfully approximating the onset quality of GOAT as it is produced by black speakers. Significant differences are found between the onset F2 value of black GOAT and white performed GOAT, and insignificant differences for the same parameter between the two white styles, performed and non-performed. As it was discovered for MOUTH, therefore, it appears that white performances of GOAT do not accurately reflect pronunciation in the black speaker group.

Having presented the results for the diphthongs MOUTH and GOAT, in the following

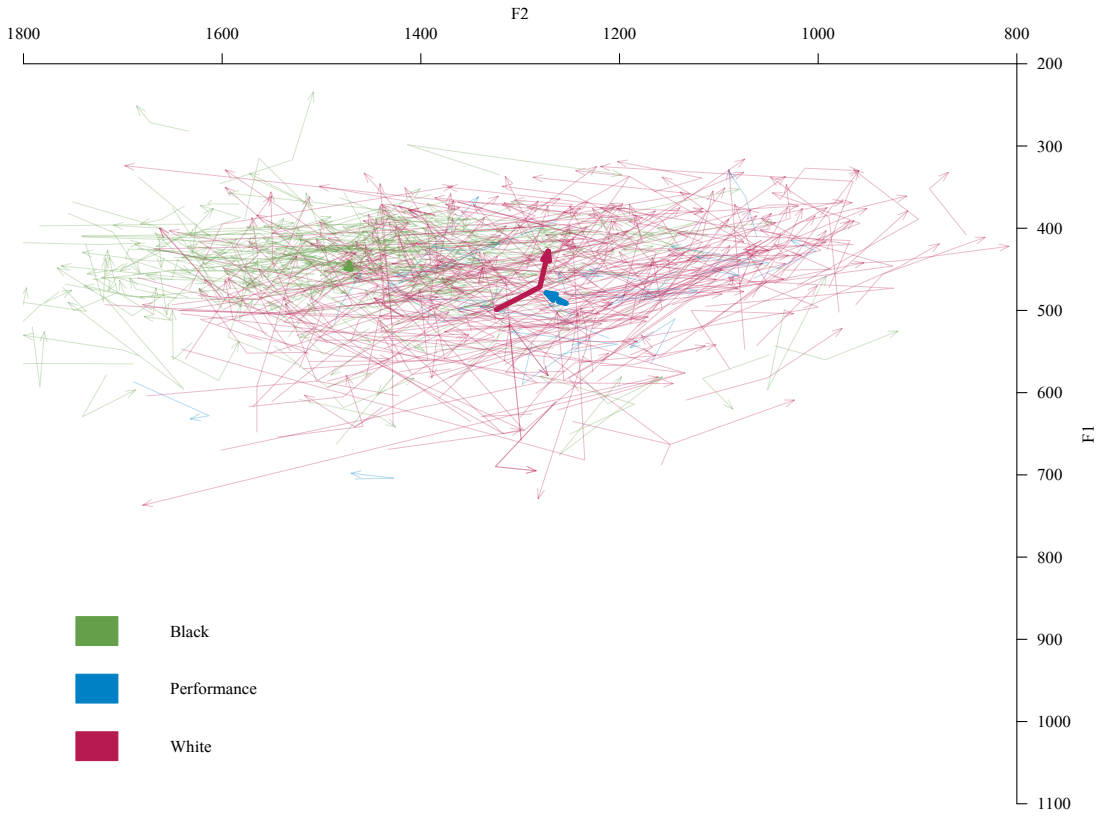


Figure 7.27: All tokens of GOAT in black and white speakers, including white performance.

sections I now introduce the definite article in BBerE, followed by my analytic techniques and the results of this study for this complex variable.

7.3 The definite article

7.3.1 The definite article in BBerE

The stereotyped idea of the definite article in BerE is [di], with an alveolar stop consonant and a high front vowel. Textual references to this pronunciation are usually spelled 'de,' as in *dahn de road*; in this way they follow the practice common in stereotyped representations of AAE as discussed by DeBose:

> Many examples may be cited of a tendency for conventional orthography, by its very nature, to engender stereotypical representations of typical speech patterns of a particular group. A case in point is the tradition of spelling the definite article, *the*, as it is sometimes pronounced in African American language, with an initial alveolar stop, [d], by substituting the letter "d"

> for the diagraph "th". The common "dialectal" spelling of *the* as *de* tends to be read, not with the neutral schwa vowel, common to standard and dialectal pronunciations, but with the vowel of *we*, which is inauthentic, and encourages a stereotypical conception of black language that is divorced from reality (. . .)
>
> The stereotypical dialect spelling of *the* as *de*, and *more* as *mo'* are just two of a considerable number of words that have come to be spelled traditionally in a stereotypical manner, and used in contexts intended to demean or make fun of black people; if not to exploit ingrained positive complimentary stereotypes of their culinary genius in the marketing of such products as Uncle Ben's rice, and Aunt Jemima pancake mix.They include *this* and *that* spelled with "d" substituted for "th," *child* spelled "chile" by analogy with words with which it rhymes when pronounced without the final "d" o the standard pronunciation, and spelling of one of the biblical names of the deity in a typical African American manner, i.e.: *De Lawd* (DeBose 2005:213).

In practice, THE is highly variable in BBerE; [di], [də], [ði], [ðə] are all possible, as well as combinations involving assimilation with the previous consonant (e.g. nasalisation, with *down the* pronounced [dɑːˈni]). Both variants of the vowel in THE may occur before both vowels and consonants (*the apple* vs. *the book*), although the 'standard' pattern of a high front variant occurring before vowels, and a schwa vowel before consonants, appears most prevalent, meaning DeBose's description of 'inauthentic' orthographic stereotyping in the USA also applies in the Bermudian context. This study was partially prompted by the auditory impression that [di] is being produced in performances of BerE.

7.3.2 Analysing THE

As a lexically specific, socially salient variable involving two different sounds with numerous possible realisations, THE can be challenging to analyse. In order to establish phonological patterns and to narrow my sample, I analysed it first in terms of the realisation of the vowel before vowels *vs* before consonants (these results are presented in this section), and then moved on to examine how the two 'sub-variables' (ð) and (ə) interact (these results are presented below in 7.3.3).

Speaker	**Race**	**Total Tokens**	**Performance Tokens**	**Non-Performance Tokens**
Frith	W	243	37	206
Williams	W	241	11	230
Parker	W	484	22	461
Davies	W	344	1	343
Foster	W	296	2	294
Turner	W	163	0	163
Martin	W	338	7	331
Baker	W	137	0	137
Roberts	B	386	N/A	386
Clarke	B	412	N/A	412
King	B	191	N/A	191
Allen	B	532	N/A	532
Edwards	B	157	N/A	157
Hughes	B	247	N/A	247
Green	B	206	N/A	206
Lewis	B	230	N/A	230
TOTAL		4606	80	4526

Table 7.12: Number of THE tokens per speaker in two styles.

To establish the behaviour of the vowel sound in THE in black and white groups across phonological contexts, I first used a Praat script to extract every token of THE in each recording, so that the behaviour of the vowel in pre-vocalic *vs* pre-consonantal contexts could be tested. Owing to the frequency of the definite article in speech, a much greater number of THE tokens was yielded than for MOUTH and GOAT, providing a more reliable sample; for this reason I did not carry out the check-and-save process used for the diphthongs for tokens of THE. Instead, I checked 50 tokens per speaker and found between 46 and 49 tokens for each speaker to be perfectly aligned. Owing to this high acceptability rate, I used the entire set of tokens of THE, totalling 4,606. Table 7.12 shows the total number of tokens per speaker in both performance and non-performance styles

To measure the vowel in each token of THE, I used the same method to that applied to MOUTH and GOAT, except using only the mid-point measurement to determine vowel quality since I was not interested in trajectory analysis for this categorical monophthong. Results showed that black and white groups have a similar vocalic realisation in tokens of THE before vowels (e.g. *the apple*), whereas before consonants, the groups definite article

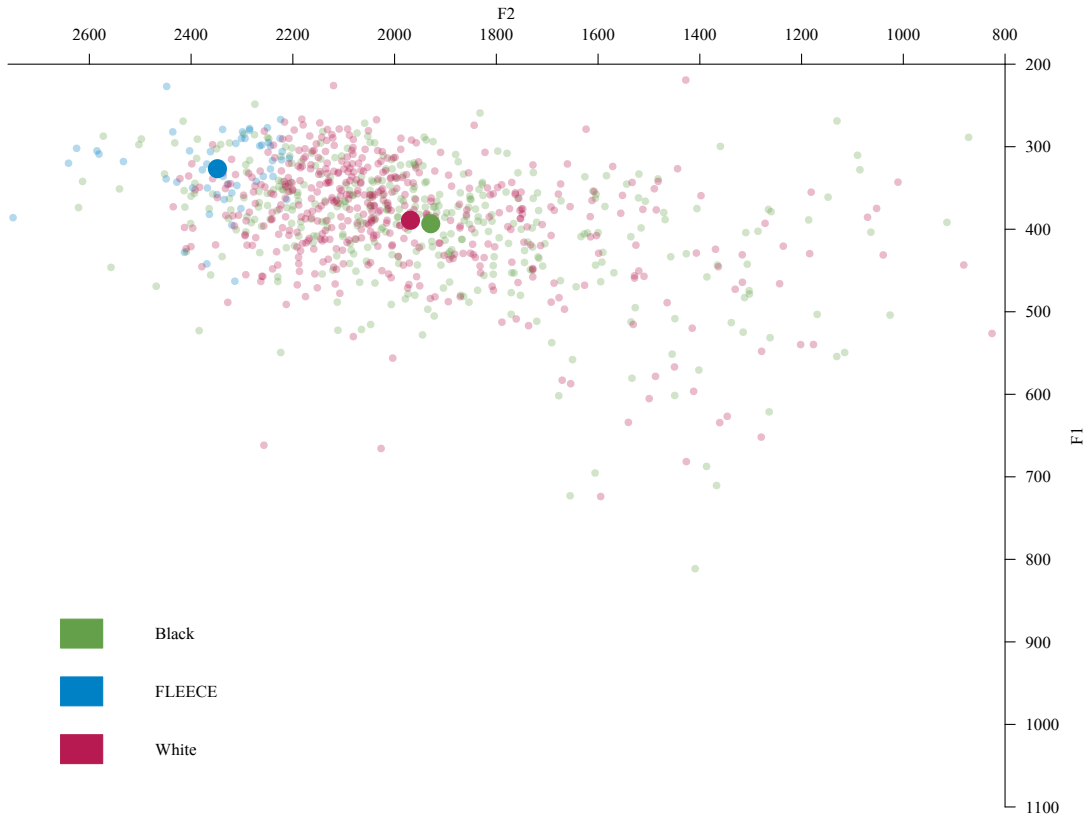


Figure 7.28: Raw data for prevocalic THE in black and white groups, with illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

vowels contrasted considerably (e.g. *the book, the road*). Prevocalic THE is typically pronounced with a high front vowel in both black and white speakers. The difference between the vowel in black and white groups is not significant, either for F1 ($p = 0.97$) or F2 ($p = 0.5$). This is illustrated by Figure 7.28, which plots all individual tokens and group means for prevocalic THE in both groups. There, as for the diphthongs, five tokens of FLEECE per speaker are included here in order to give an illustration of the speakers' vowel space. As seen, although there is some variability, the means are close together and tokens grouped around a fairly high-front position, although pre-vocalic THE is noticeably different from FLEECE.

The behaviour of pre-consonantal THE, on the other hand, contrasts considerably between black and white groups in terms of vowel quality. For the white group, the vowel is typically central, whereas the black group shows a high level of variability between possible realisations. The difference between the vowel in black and white

Figure 7.29: Raw data and means of the vowel in pre-consonantal THE in black and white groups, and in white performance, with illustrative tokens and mean of /i/.

groups is statistically significant both for F1 ($p < 0.05$) and F2 ($p < 0.001$). This is illustrated by Figure 7.29, which plots all individual tokens and group means for pre-consonantal THE in both groups, including performance style (discussed below). In this case, the means are much further apart, with the black group mean being higher and more front than that of the white group.

In performance style, my data yielded six tokens of prevocalic THE and 74 tokens of pre-consonantal THE. The number of prevocalic tokens was too small to perform any meaningful analysis, but it was noted that all six tokens were pronounced with a high-front vowel. In pre-consonantal performance tokens analysed using the acoustic method (using scripts to measure the F1 and F2 values at the midpoint of the vowel), performers were found to be producing a THE vowel that was both higher and further front than the black group, with a mean of 365 Hz for F1, and 1861 Hz for F2. This is also illustrated in Figure 7.29, and discussed further below, since it agrees with the

Speaker	Race	Total Tokens	Performance Tokens	Non-Performance Tokens
Frith	W	213	35	176
Williams	W	180	9	169
Parker	W	339	20	317
Davies	W	288	1	287
Foster	W	242	2	240
Turner	W	139	0	139
Martin	W	270	7	263
Baker	W	106	0	106
Roberts	B	332	N/A	332
Clarke	B	363	N/A	363
King	B	154	N/A	154
Allen	B	449	N/A	449
Edwards	B	135	N/A	135
Hughes	B	204	N/A	204
Green	B	167	N/A	167
Lewis	B	171	N/A	171
TOTAL		3752	74	3672

Table 7.13: Number of preconsonantal THE tokens per speaker in two styles.

results of my alternative method of analysis using FAVE-align.

Given these results, I then used a narrowed sample for my analysis of the interaction between (ð) and (ə) (the results for which are presented in the next section). Table 7.13 gives the total number of tokens per speaker in both performance and non-performance styles (3,752). With these data I used a relatively new method for automating variable analysis, as outlined in Bailey (2016). This method '[takes] forced alignment one step further towards the goal of complete automation; specifically, it expands the functionality of FAVE-align to fully automate the coding of...sociolinguistic variables.' This involves 'the expansion of pronouncing dictionaries to reflect the surface output of these variable rules; FAVE then compares the fit of competing acoustic models with the speech signal to determine the surface variant' (Bailey 2016:10). In other words, all possible output values for a given variable are entered into FAVE's pronouncing dictionary, and the aligner is left to automatically assign the best 'fit' to each token.

According to this method, I re-aligned the 16 sound files for this study with the input pronouncing dictionary edited to include all possible realisations of the definite article.

IPA variant	ARPABET
ð	DH
d	D
ə	AH
i	IY

Table 7.14: IPA sub-variants of THE and their ARPABET equivalents.

These included [di], [də], [ði], [ðə], and, to account for cases of assimilation with the previous consonant, [i], and [ə]. To edit the dictionary, I added the relevant variants of THE to the pronouncing dictionary input file using ARPABET – the phonetic transcription codes recognised by FAVE, the relevant IPA equivalents for which are given in Table 7.14.

After re-aligning the files, I ran a Praat script to extract all aligned pre-consonantal tokens of THE, followed by a script which extracted information from those tokens, including FAVE-align's allocation for the 'best fit' vowel and consonant in each token. I was then able to calculate the frequency of every possible vowel-and-consonant combination among the THE tokens, and compare results between groups and styles. The results of the FAVE analysis of THE, given in the next section, are presented with stacked percentage bar charts generated with the ggplot2 package (Wickham 2016) in R.

7.3.3 Findings: THE

Having established the similarity of the behaviour of prevocalic THE in black and white groups using acoustic analysis as described above, and given the pattern noted in pre-consonantal performance tokens, I then moved on to analyse the interaction between the two sub-variables in pre-consonantal tokens of the definite article using FAVE-align as outlined above (7.3.2). In this section I present the results from the narrowed pre-consonantal sample.

Results from the FAVE-align method further confirmed my auditory impressions that pre-consonantal THE in the black group is highly variable. As shown by Table 7.15, the tokens are spread between all possible variants, with [ðə] being the most common (27%), followed by [ə] (with an assimilated consonant) (22%) and [də] (21%). Tokens containing an alveolar stop ([də], [di]) account for 31% of the data (as opposed to 69% with a dental

Speaker	[də]	[di]	[ðə]	[ði]	[ə] (assim)	[i] (assim)	Speaker Total
Roberts	63	7	161	15	80	6	332
Clarke	77	41	85	39	93	28	363
King	56	5	39	7	44	37	154
Allen	82	44	108	61	110	44	449
Edwards	17	35	14	13	30	26	135
Hughes	34	39	34	49	14	34	204
Green	52	6	73	13	21	2	167
Lewis	42	15	28	18	54	14	171
GROUP TOTAL	423	192	542	215	446	157	1975
PERCENTAGE	21%	10%	27%	11%	23%	8%	100%

Table 7.15: Numbers of variants of preconsonantal THE per speaker in the black group.

fricative), and tokens containing a high front vowel ([ði], [di], [i]) account for 33% (as opposed to 66% with a schwa). Crucially, both features occurred together to give the 'stereotyped' variant [di] only 10% of the time. Figure 7.30 shows the proportions of each variant produced by individual speakers.

For the white speakers, the results automated with FAVE-align again confirm auditory impressions, in this case because they confirm that the dental fricative variant of pre-consonantal THE ([ðə]) is the most common among the white speakers, accounting for 58% of the tokens. Following this is [ə] with an assimilated consonant (23%) and with an alveolar stop (12%). In this group, tokens with a central vowel account for 93% of the data (as opposed to 7% with a high-front vowel), and tokens with a dental fricative account for 63% (as opposed to 37% with an alveolar stop). Again, Figure 7.31 breaks down the results by individual speaker.

The differences between pre-consonantal THE in black and white groups are relatively subtle. On the one hand, the white speakers use the 'standard' variant considerably more than black speakers (58% *vs* 27%), and black speakers have higher instances of the sub-variants [d] and [i]. However, these occur simultaneously (giving [di]) only 10% of the time, making clear that the stereotype so prevalent in mediatised representations (such as *Bermewjan Vurds* and dialect-themed merchandise) is a gross exaggeration. Further, both groups commonly assimilate with the previously occurring consonant (24% and 31% in

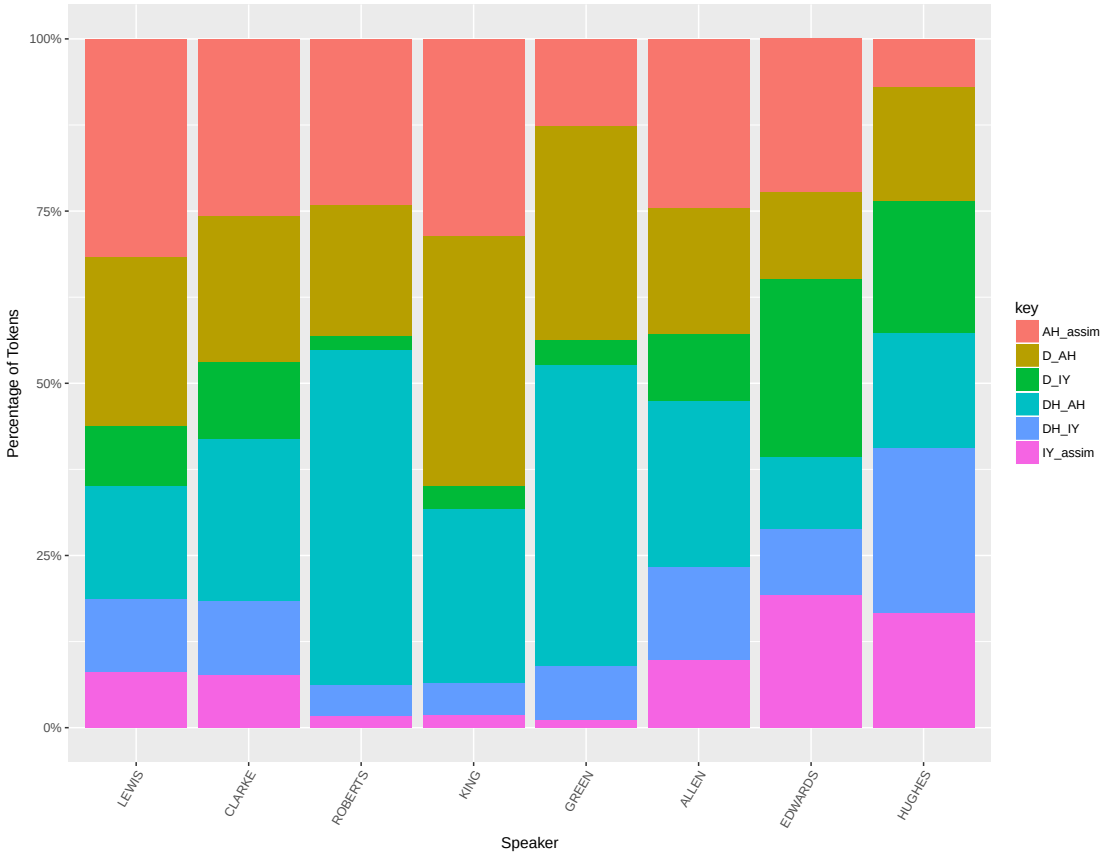


Figure 7.30: Percentage realisation of possible variants of preconsonantal THE in the black group.

Speaker	[də]	[di]	[ðə]	[ði]	[ə] (assim)	[i] (assim)	Speaker Total
Martin	31	1	167	5	56	3	263
Davis	55	6	119	12	88	7	287
Turner	32	1	55	15	35	1	139
Parker	15	4	210	20	67	1	317
Frith	21	7	122	3	22	1	176
Foster	18	0	151	4	66	1	240
Baker	14	6	27	7	38	4	106
Williams	10	1	130	7	21	0	169
GROUP TOTAL	196	26	991	73	393	18	1697
PERCENTAGE	12%	2%	58%	4%	23%	1%	100%

Table 7.16: Numbers of variants of preconsonantal THE per speaker in the white group (non-performance style).

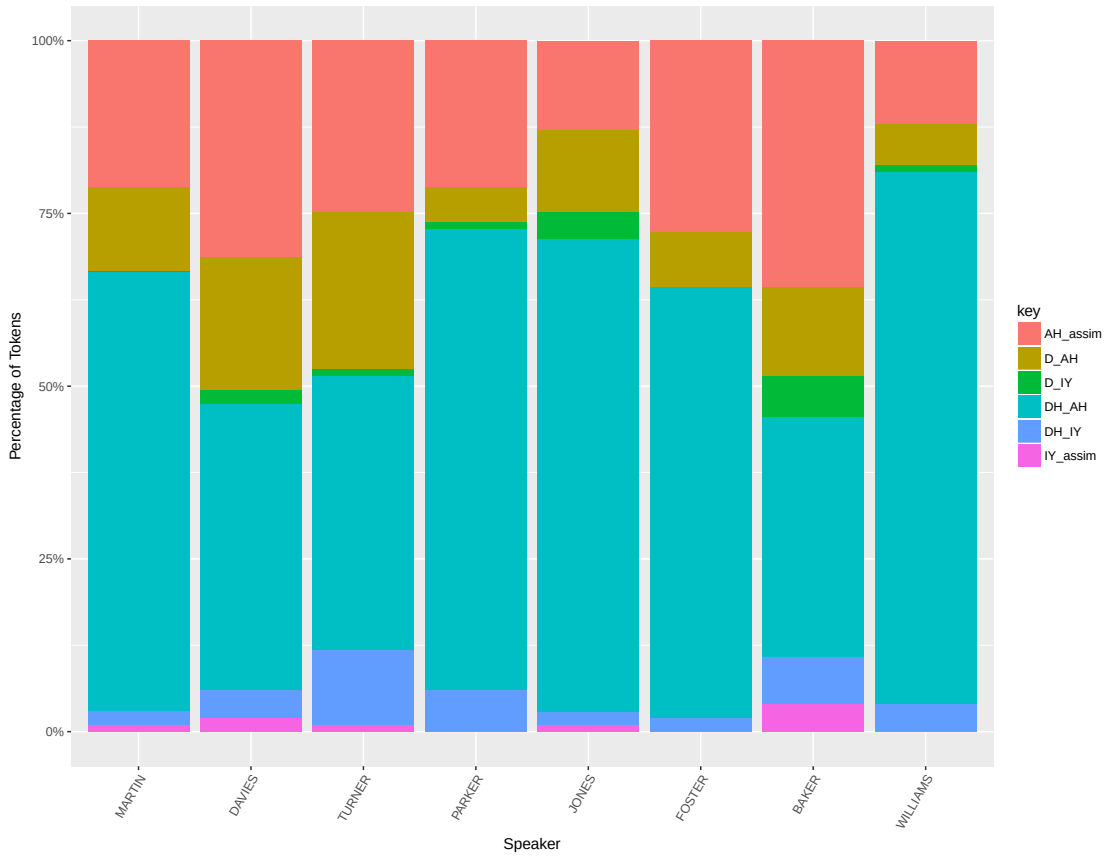


Figure 7.31: Percentage realisation of possible variants of THE in the white group.

the white and black groups respectively), and white speakers do produce an alveolar stop (13% of tokens), as expected from the descriptions of *the* in the literature (Mañuel 1990).

The 'standard' variant [ðə] is the most common variant for both groups, but it makes up a considerably greater proportion of the white speakers' tokens. This difference is made up in the black group's slightly elevated use of [di], [də], [ði] and [i] relative to the white group. The most striking difference between pre-consonantal THE in these two groups appears to be in vowel production: tokens containing a high front vowel account for 29% of tokens among black speakers, but only 7% among white speakers.

I will now present the results for THE as it occurred in white performances. Six out of eight white speakers gave performances of THE, yielding a total of 74 performance tokens. The number of tokens per variant per speaker is given in Table 7.17. The table shows that tokens were unevenly distributed between speakers, for example, Frith performed THE 35 times, but Davies only once.

It is difficult to draw conclusions about the patterning of THE in performance based on this small and unevenly distributed number of tokens. Figure 7.32 illustrates that the speakers behaved quite differently from one another in their performances with regards to the pronunciation of THE's two sub-variables. However, if we compare these results to those for white non-performance (see Figure 7.31) it is generally apparent that the number of 'standard' [ðə] tokens is reduced for all speakers, and the number of tokens containing 'non-standard' sub-variants [d] and [i] is increased. Perhaps this is most obvious in Frith, the speaker with the highest number of performance tokens (35). In non-performance style, [di] accounts for just 3% of THE tokens in Frith's speech, whereas in performance, this increases to 30%. More generally, white performance is made up of 77% 'non-standard' tokens, and 23% 'standard' tokens, if 'standard' is taken to mean either [ðə] or the assimilated 'standard' vowel [ə] common in connected speech and in the white group's non-performance style.

Speaker	**[də]**	**[di]**	**[ðə]**	**[ði]**	**[ə] (assim)**	**[i] (assim)**	**Speaker Total**
Martin	0	2	3	1	1	0	7
Davis	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Turner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parker	0	2	2	10	0	6	20
Frith	8	11	5	3	2	6	35
Foster	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Baker	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Williams	0	1	4	3	0	1	9
GROUP TOTAL	9	17	14	17	3	14	74
PERCENTAGE	12%	23%	19%	23%	4%	19%	100%

Table 7.17: Number of variants of THE per speaker in white performance.

Generally speaking, white performance is simply more 'non-standard' than both black and white non-performance, and does not accurately reflect the distribution of variants in the black group. The white performers use [di], [ði] and [i] more than the black group, and use [də] and [ə] less. If we take black practice to be the target, the white performers are exaggerating the proportion of high front vowels in BBerE, which was also the result of acoustic analysis (see Figure 7.29 above). White speakers also

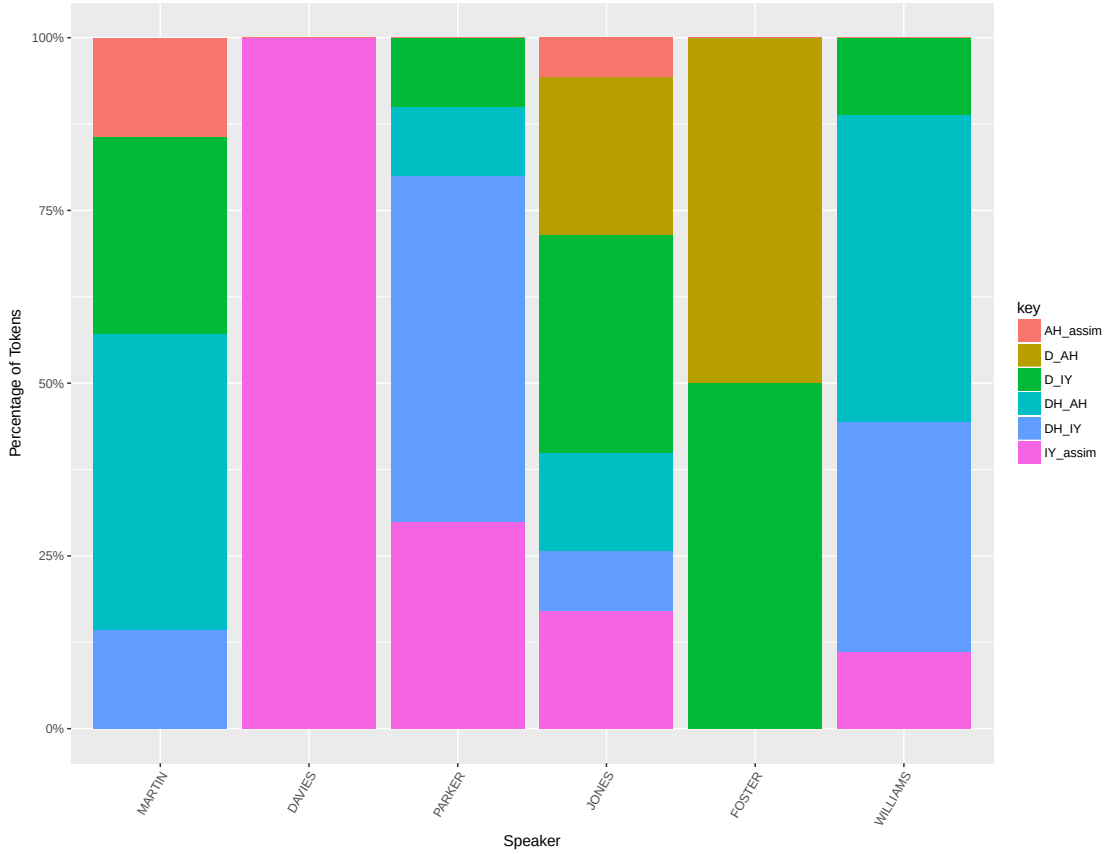


Figure 7.32: Percentage realisation of possible variants of THE in white performers.

underrepresent the proportion of the 'standard' central vocalic variant, including [ðə], the most common variant in the black group. Table 7.18 allows for a comparison of the percentage distribution of variants in all three data sets. Figure 7.33 illustrates these distributional differences.

If we compare Figures 7.32 and 7.30, we can see that none of the white speakers reproduces in their performances the distribution of variants found in any of the individual black speakers. It is important to note, however, that the speaker with the highest number of tokens, Frith, comes the closest; his distribution is relatively similar to that of Hughes,' although it still under-shoots the number of 'standard' [ðə] variants.

Group	[də]	[di]	[ðə]	[ði]	[ə] (assim)	[i] (assim)
Black	21%	10%	27%	11%	23%	8%
White	12%	2%	58%	4%	23%	1%
White Performance	12%	23%	19%	23%	4%	19%

Table 7.18: Percentage of variants of THE in black and white groups, and in white performance.

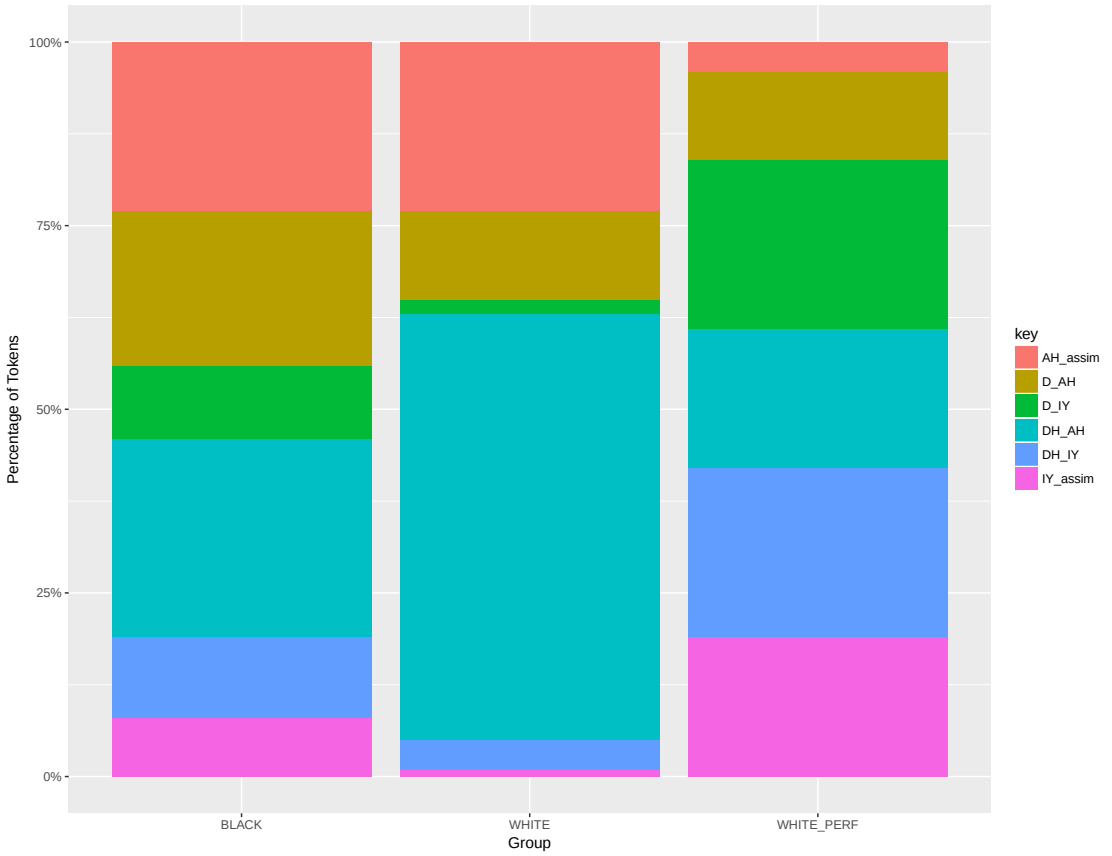


Figure 7.33: Overall percentage of variants of THE in black and white groups, and in white performance.

7.4 The phonetics of *dahn de road*

In this chapter I have presented acoustic evidence in order to address the question of whether a group of white speakers perform race in their distinctive, stylised genre of linguistic parody, and how the phonetic properties of performances relate to their social meaning. The acoustic and auditory results for MOUTH, GOAT, and THE confirm the impressionistic observations that prompted this study – that is, that white performers of BerE approximate variants of MOUTH, GOAT and THE that are different from their

'usual,' non-performed production of those variables, and similar in some respects to variants found in black speech.

The phonetic evidence shows significant differences between variants in the 'everyday' style of black and white speakers for all three sociophonetic variables, confirming that there are dialectal contrasts between these historically segregated groups. At the same time, results show overlap between black and white speech in certain variables (in particular the definite article) which contradicts social stereotypes and a basic, 'ethnoracial' approach to variation; of course, black speakers use the 'standard' variant [ðə], and white speakers TH-stop.

The phonetic evidence also shows significant differences between white speaker styles — performance and non-performance — for all three variables. The pattern in performance is consistent across speakers, which indicates a shared target, and the *direction* of change from performance to non-performance — always becoming more like the pronunciation of the black group, whether statistically or phonetically — strongly suggests that that shared target is BBerE.

The results also show that, if their target is BBerE, the white speakers are not always 'good' performers in terms of phonetic precision. For each variable, in different ways, the results suggest that the white speakers in their performances aim at a black variant, and succeed in some aspects while failing to reproduce black practice fully or accurately. For MOUTH, variability is absent in performance (only one of two black variants is successfully imitated), while, for GOAT, complexity is obscured; performance successfully mimics only one of the two main phonetic aspects of the black variant examined here. For THE, performances are indiscriminately 'non-standard' without accurately representing the real distribution of variants in black speech. The performers produce, for all three variables, forms which over-exaggerate salient aspects of the relevant stereotyped 'Bermewjan' variants, but also simplify or obscure other aspects. In this sense, DeBose's comment that the orthographic stereotyping of THE as *de* 'is inauthentic' also applies to the representation of BBerE in spoken performance; in much the same way as eye-dialect, these performances 'encourage a stereotypical conception of black language that is divorced from reality' (DeBose 2005:213). In other words, they represent a reduced,

crude impression of BBerE, and are 'inauthentic' to the extent that they do not share the patterning nor the phonetic qualities of a native speaker of the variety (see 4.6), but rather target the 'low-hanging fruit' of salient stereotypes.

In this way, my findings agree with those of Mesthrie, who, in his study of the South African radio satire *Applesammy and Naidoo*, shows that mock language is an unreliable source of information about the exact realisation of stereotyped dialect features (Mesthrie 2002). Of course, the performers are not phoneticians – it would be surprising for them to reproduce all the acoustic aspects of their target variables with total precision, unless, of course, those same targets were already a part of their everyday repertoire. In Chapter 4, I discussed the principle that speakers imitating a dialect that is not part of their own repertoire — of which they are not *inheritors*, to use Rampton's term — are usually able to do so only crudely. The evidence presented here provides overwhelming evidence in support of this. As Mesthrie observes, while they may contain a 'kernel of truth' (2002:111) these types of performances cannot be relied upon by dialectologists; instead, they represent a distortion of the dialect on display and a racist caricature of its 'real' speakers.

The direction of change from non-performance to performance style in these white speakers is consistently *towards* similarity with a contrasting black variant in all three variables. This pattern seems too regular to be purely co-incidental, and I predict that this would be all the more evident were a larger set of variables to be tested in the analysis of performance speech, which, of course, constitutes a package of features beyond MOUTH, GOAT and THE, and syntactic and lexical forms as well as phonological ones[3]. Furthermore, the suggestion in the data discussed in this chapter — that the white performances aim at black variants of BerE — is corroborated by the contextual evidence for racialised dialect mockery discussed in Chapter 6. Based on the evidence presented in Chapter 6 and 7, therefore, we can conclude that white speakers appropriate features from BBerE which are outside their own repertoire, and, in doing so, mock and belittle the speakers with whom those features are normally associated.

[3]Further research might establish a list of prototypical mock Bermewjan features, as in Chun's (2004) prototype of Mock Asian (2004).

Overgeneralisations in linguistic and social stereotypes whilst having fragments of a kernel of truth in them, fail to acknowledge the underlying socio-economic relations giving rise to inequality.

(Mesthrie 2002:111)

8

The social motivation of a stylisation

In Chapters 5, 6 and 7 I introduced the performances of a set of white Bermudian men, and analysed these from qualitative and quantitative points of view. It is clear that the performances represent a form of racialised mock language, offering crude approximations of features of BBerE which are indexically linked to a negative black stereotype. In this final chapter, I consider the possible reasons for this kind of racialised performance, discussing the interrelated political and identity-driven goals which seem to motivate the performers. Based on their metalinguistic commentaries, I also examine the speakers' own views about their performances, as well as discussing the ways in which they have been evaluated by others locally. Finally, in 8.3, I draw together the themes, findings, and implications of the thesis as a whole, as well as exploring directions for possible further research.

8.1 Why do white Bermudians perform?

8.1.1 Performing authenticity

If there is one thing that wealthy white Bermudian men do not have, it's the reputation of being culturally authentic. This is in spite of their often lengthy family histories on the island and a result of multiple factors including time spent off-island, internationally-oriented employment, and political affiliation with ex-pats; all of these factors have

considerable linguistic and socio-economic effects which the performances appear to try to reverse, if only temporarily.

Eric Lott has discussed linguistic blackface as 'expressing an ambivalent and anxious desire for blackness' (Bucholtz and Lopez 2011:682), although appreciation of black culture is typically expressed only for music and other forms of entertainment. Along the same lines, one of the authors of *Bermewjan Vurds* once commented publicly that 'what the black population of Bermuda does set the trends for what's cool' (Government of Bermuda Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs 2000), and one of my own participants commented in an interview that 'the cool kids are the black ones' in Bermuda (see Chapter 6, example (13)). To some extent, then, there appears to be an 'ambivalent and anxious desire for blackness' among white Bermudians — expressed, perhaps, through their performances of BBerE. Ross explains that 'although no race in Bermuda technically holds greater claim to Bermuda as a homeland, the connection between whiteness and colonial power and blackness and 'island identity' means that many white Bermudians feel excluded from the Bermudian identity' (2018). This is the case in a number of Caribbean islands, and a similar situation is discussed by Stuart Hall in *Redemption Song*, his documentary about the Caribbean. Below, he reflects on an interview with a member of the Barbados Yacht Club and his attitude towards island identity. This white Barbadian claims his accent is the same as Barbadians of African origin. In the same vein, Foster commented in his interview that he identifies more with the black Bermudian community than with the white ((1)).

> Ralph is the life and soul of the party. He belongs to those white families who are guardians of a certain colonial lifestyle and also the island's purse strings. . . . Ralph and his friends are anxious to convince you of how truly Barbadian they feel: "I think I'm closer to African than the European, because I was brought up to be Barbadian. We learn to eat, party, quarrel fight, even talk, uh all of our dialect is the same thing, so I mean, without a doubt I'm more Barbadian African than Barbadian European. Without a doubt . . . That sort of spirit of enjoyment which is called Latin American or Caribbean. It's as much a part of me as the black people" (Hall 1991).

(1) FOSTER : And so I have a I feel an affinity and a kinship {BR} with my fellow Bermudians of every colour, and probably more with black Bermudians than I

> do with white Berm- +Bermudians — with the established white Bermudians who I don't particularly {BR} I don't hang out with much.

The performance of dialect, then, could be interpreted as a linguistic strategy used as part of an attempt to minimise the social distance and historical differences that dialect normally signifies, and a way in which white Barbadians — and the group of men in this study — try to bolster their claim to cultural authenticity. This seems particularly plausible in light of the fact that the performances of this study were often responses to direct questions about Bermudian authenticity (see 6.1). Of course, among both these groups, the simple ascription of 'authenticity' to 'black' is an 'essentialising language ideology', also found in the USA, as noted by Bucholtz and Lopez:

> Such representations of AAE not only reduce the linguistic complexity of the variety and reproduce racial divisions but also perpetuate seemingly positive yet essentialising language ideologies of AAE as indexical of coolness, physicality, and authenticity — all in the service of buttressing an increasingly unstable white masculinity' (Bucholtz and Lopez 2011:702).

Therefore, and with the work of Moore and Carter (2017) in mind, it may be useful to conceive of there being not one Bermudian authenticity, but two contrasting ones. As discussed in 4.5, Moore and Carter find there to be two Scillonian authenticities based on the very different viewpoints, 'life trajectories' and related language ideologies of inhabitants of the Scilly Isles. Similarly, in her most recent work on 'authentic Pittsburgh,' Johnstone notes that it is made up of multiple chronotopes — that is, different sets of time, place, and character which represent the 'authentically' local (2018). These analyses aim to depart from simplistic conceptualisations of the authentic, focusing on what is locally meaningful to speakers. Accordingly, although I do not discuss BerE in terms of chronotopes in this thesis, one could certainly conceive of two contrasting Bermudian authenticities which correspond broadly to the 'two Bermudas' (see 2.3) and their ethnically delimited membership. One would be characterised as focusing on the island's first settlers, maritime heritage, Shakespearean connections, English traditions such as afternoon tea, and leisure activities such as sailing, golf and tennis. This is the Bermuda marketed to wealthy executives and American college students

for 'spring break'; it is cosmopolitan and luxurious yet quaintly British. The other Bermudian authenticity would be much more island-affiliated, associated with Gombey dancing[1], Bermudian and Caribbean dishes such as codfish and potatoes and peas 'n' rice, and Bermudian traditions which celebrate emancipation such as the annual Cup Match holiday and Bermuda Day Parade on Front Street.

Crucially, however, it is BBerE that is enregistered in the 'Bermewjan' as it is performed locally, and it is the authenticity associated with 'non-standard' speech and with blackness which is normally selected for performances of the local. If there are multiple authenticities in Bermuda, they are not created equal, and it is clear from the evidence presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that the stereotype of the 'authentic Bermewjan' is racialised. White Bermudian authenticity is not linguistically enregistered in the same way; it is hard to imagine the possibility of anyone aspiring to an 'authentically white Bermudian' image, and it appears that the speech style associated with white Bermudianness is what Frith describes as 'your best mid-Atlantic,' 'straight' or 'light-Bermudian' (see 5.1). Nevertheless, and somewhat counter-intuitively, 'chameleon'-like style-shifting abilities and a flair for theatrical performance seem to have become part of what it means to be an 'authentic' white Bermudian man.

I discuss further below that one of the performers' 'excuses' for their performances — that of being Bermudian, and therefore entitled to perform — uses their membership of one Bermudian authenticity to explain their appropriation of the other. The white speakers' linguistic practices suggest that they want to access — and to profit from — *both* Bermudian authenticities, though they normally are associated only with one of them. Affecting a linguistic alignment with representatives of the 'other' authenticity appears to be a strategy used by the white performers to try to achieve this, even while holding the dialect at arm's length by mocking it and commanding a 'standard' in their everyday speech. In a sense, however, the white performers have fallen victim to their

[1]Gombey dancing is a folk tradition in Bermuda which originated in the slave population and is thought to be related to the Junkanoo/Goombays in the Bahamas; troupes of dancers in colourful masks and costumes perform around Christmas time (Government of Bermuda Department of Community and Cultural Affairs 2008).

own ideology, since their racialised performance practices only strengthen the idea that only BBerE and black Bermudians are 'authentically Bermudian.'

8.1.2 Performing politics

In one respect, racialisation is about categorising groups with respect to their perceived relationship to the nation (Reyes 2016:309).

Ultimately, the question of who is an authentic speaker in Bermuda is linked closely to Bermudian politics. There is a decidedly political element to these performances in that they repeatedly mock the goals of black-majority political positions, often in the context of conversations espousing the typical UBP/OBA position on immigration. As discussed in Chapter 2, the support of the white population for the OBA and for open immigration policy is almost categorical. Parker's views on politics and nationhood are a case in point. In the extract below, Parker passionately opposes independence and the idea of 'the nation' in Bermuda (which he voices below in stylised BBerE), while praising ex-pats as heroes preventing economic collapse.

(2) INTERVIEWER : Uh, well you were saying um there's no such thing as a Bermudian, right?

PARKER : {BR} well no that that's only – uh because there isn't. You know, I mean uh the the um – Bermudians get very, you know **"Love, let's talk about the nation, you know, things of national importance, and we got national playing fields, we got national libraries, and uh, (( )) the nation!"** (( )) come on, you know.

INTERVIEWER : Mhm. What about the attitude towards ex-pats and visitors and stuff these days, all the debates

PARKER : {LS} I'd say that that's education. I think education plays a big role in that. {BR} My father, my father was a banker, and he used to tell people in the bank he says {BR} you see that uh – he used to call them he didn't call them ex-pa- +ex-pats – he never liked the word ex-pat, he felt that {BR} that

someone had been a traitor to their own countr- +country {BR} it's a v- – it's a v- – it's a not a nice word. {BR} but sort of guest worker or whatever like that, he said when you ever see one walking by, get down on your knees and pray they stay here. Because if we don't have them here {BR} we're gonna end up like Jamaica. {LS} and that was his view of it. It's what my view is too.

INTERVIEWER : It is?

PARKER : God bless them. God bless them that they'll come out here. {BR} and uh shame on you Bermudian for treating them you know as second class citizens because they're stopping us from becoming a third world country. I I I I think the Westminster system is the worst thing that could've ever happened for Bermuda {BR} uh, that uh and that we should go back and run Bermuda like you would a company. And you appoint a board of directors, And all the voters become stockholders. {BR} and you bring people in just like a director, {BR} because you've got an expertise, and I don't care if you're a rabid communist {BR} or a rabid fascist {BR} the fact is, you understand finance. We want you.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the case for immigration in Bermuda, which is largely white and wealthy, is constructed on the basis of multicultural rhetoric and the fact that Bermuda was uninhabited when it was discovered. The central premise of Jeremy Frith's poem 'Send 'Em Back' — that is, 'we're all ex-pats/colonials' or 'there's no such thing as a Bermudian' — was repeated by almost every white Bermudian I interviewed when the subject of immigration came up. Foster even called Bermudian-ness 'almost a self-designation.' As well as being a political position, this appears to be an identity strategy used by these men: re-defining the criteria for Bermudian-ness to make sure that they meet them, much like the strategy in *You Must Be A Bermudian* (Barritt 2007) discussed in Chapter 5. 'There's no such thing as a native Bermudian' is an attempt to down-play cultural (and perhaps linguistic) differences between black and white populations because the white population is usually 'standard'-ly accented and internationally affiliated. In

response to the question 'what makes someone Bermudian' the white performers all responded with a list of subjective personality traits (whereas black participants usually cited birth-right or family history). Ironically, these were usually things like tolerance, open-mindedness and 'getting on with all races' (Davies). Moveable goal posts like these are used to accuse opponents to immigration, who are mostly black, of being unwelcoming, old-fashioned, and 'racist against whites.'

There is evidently a tension between the political philosophy of these men and their own desire to be seen to 'belong' in Bermuda. They uphold colonial, anti-independence views and take a cosmopolitan approach to citizenship, and yet, they repeatedly stress their own local identity. Their social and political allegiance to expat workers wishing to 'become' Bermudian, in combination with the cultural and linguistic effects of time spent off island — as well as their own essentialist view of authenticity discussed above — appears to have caused the men some insecurity about their Bermudian identity, and their repeated references to their lengthy Bermuda heritage ('there's nobody in the world more Bermudian than me' — Davies) are a manifestation of this. The data in this chapter suggest that linguistic performance is another strategy in attempting to resolve this tension. Performance allows these men to showcase their knowledge of BerE while conveniently holding it at arm's length — that is, without speaking it every day, and indeed with room for disdain and mockery. Just as they have (among themselves) re-defined the criteria for citizenship, they have also re-written the traditional, unspoken rules for linguistic authenticity: it appears that these speakers see (limited) performance *competence* as adequate proof of belonging, and everyday use of the dialect is not required. This is supported by the bragging and bravado that surround the performances:

(3) DAVIES : And I can talk like I can talk you know I can talk their language!

(4) INTERVIEWER : Can you do it?

FOSTER : Oh yeah bye for sure you know! I can do, I can do it!

Of course, the strategy is deeply illogical; if there was no difference between the perceived 'authenticity' status of different Bermudians, there would be no need to perform.

These men use anti-nationalist rhetoric and the denial of the indigenous Bermudian to justify their right to the very performances that they hope will make them seem more legitimately local. Politically, white Bermudians are invested in blurring the lines between the 'two Bermudas,' and the performances arguably aim to do this, particularly when they are framed as being similar to style-shifting as in 6.2.1. However, in appealing to a black political stance, 'island identity,' and 'authentic Bermewjan,' all by way of black language, the performances undermine this goal. The need to appropriate BBerE features which are absent from their own speech in order to perform the 'authentically' local not only exposes these speakers' insecurity about their own Bermudian-ness, but in the end draws attention to the differences between groups rather than erasing them.

8.2 Evaluations of performance

How do these speakers explain their performances, and how are they evaluated locally? NTUU ran on stage for over 20 years without any kind of public scandal. In the sections that follow, I discuss some of the ways that performance is evaluated in Bermuda. First, I present the performers' own analyses of their performances, before going on to explore how the performances are interpreted by others locally.

8.2.1 Ideologies of (il)legitimate mockery

In her work on the 'mock Asian' in the performances of the comedian Margaret Cho, Chun has discussed 'ideologies within mainstream U.S. discourses that define particular voicings of mock language... as legitimate' (2004:266). Based on the mainstream ideology that 'mock language' is not offensive if it is performed by an in-group member, the performers of this study explain their performances as a type of 'legitimate mockery.'

(5) INTERVIEWER : But you guys are in a way making fun on stage, right?

TURNER : Oh abso- +absolutely g- I'm allowed to make fun of my own people!

BAKER : Of oh yeah abso- +absolutely Yeah that's (( )) yeah actually it's like, you know

TURNER : {LG} I'm gonna make fun of us!

This exchange sums up the strong belief apparently shared among the white speakers of this study that they are entitled to perform the way they do. They do not acknowledge a difference between 'being Bermudian' and 'speaking Bermudian,' and they frame their performances as legitimate self-parody, regardless of their everyday speaking voices.

(6) WILLIAMS : A lot of people who saw the show um assumed that the voices that I were doing that I was doing were sort of based on black Bermudian characters and either thought it was funny or thought it was distinctly un-funny that a privileged white Bermudian would be you know, parodying a a black Bermudian, I never had that in my mind consciously when I was writing that stuff. Doing those characters, I knew white people who spoke like that. Um, I knew people who spoke like that. Um, white.

These attempts to down-play or deny the existence of separately racialised groups in Bermuda represent a 'colour-blind' raciolinguistic ideology which is clearly at odds with the speakers' own acknowledgements of differences between black and white speech, which, as shown in 6.2.1, they explicitly say their performances traverse. Here lies one of the deepest contradictions of the performances; their meaning and interactional effects stem from their out-of-contextness, and yet the men claim neither to see *nor hear* race, that they are performing their *own* dialect. Unlike Margaret Cho, an Asian American woman who subversively uses mock Asian for the purpose of its 'ideological critique' (Chun 2004:281), these performers' race and class privilege makes it highly unlikely that they are mocking themselves rather than voicing the racial other. Like the performances discussed by Bucholtz and Lopez, these speakers 'maximise the linguistic and cultural divide' (2011:701) between black and white, but explain the legitimacy of their performances by denying such a divide. In this way, the performances represent a strategy of historical erasure; the speakers deny differences and inequalities while actually performing them, and profiting from them socially.

8.2.2 'Cultural heritage preservation'

It didn't matter much back then if you was rich or poor
There was fresh food on the table and no locks on the door (Frith 1996).

For the white Bermudians of this study, older black or mixed-race working class Bermudians and their accent seem to represent 'old Bermuda,' which they evoke nostalgically despite having never shared this group's experiences. A romanticised version of poverty (or 'hardship,' as in (7) below) usually accompanies these narratives, and stylisations which claim specifically to 'keep this part of Bermuda alive'; Parker describes the 'sole purpose' of his on-stage performances as an important act of cultural heritage preservation ((8)), but then goes on to say BerE should be used more in entertainment, because it is 'funny' and 'unattractive.' This adds to evidence that BBerE is celebrated only superficially in Bermuda.

(7) PARKER : We've just said goodbye to the last of the old icons, you know they were they're all gone, oh just a whole group of these guys who were just m- they were – they were iconic.

INTERVIEWER : What was so distinctive about them?

PARKER : {NS} {LS} they they were just old um uh, th- +they they they were from a a a forgotten past, they were remnants from a forgotten past where the main industry was whaling... they had these you know um these just these idiosyncrasies, they the they were they were lovely lovely people and they were very very adept fishermen, boat builders, and uh {BR} uh, whatever like they were lovely people (Parker).

INTERVIEWER : What do they all have in common?

PARKER : Well, {NS} hardship. Hardship.

INTERVIEWER : Hardship?

PARKER : Yeah. The best humour comes out of hardship.

(8) PARKER : Yeah. Yeah – I – j- +just – what it did it filled a void. It filled a void. And the greatest compliment I think we got back on it was a guy – friend of mine came up to me he said "Thank you very much for keeping that part of Bermuda alive." And I said "Man, you nailed it." That was the sole purpose. Because the th- +the – going back to you looking how Bermudian is spoken in in Bermuda, {BR} it's not used very much in entertainment. It's not. And it should be.

INTERVIEWER : Mhm.

PARKER : Because it's a very funny way to speak.

INTERVIEWER : What makes it funny?

PARKER : Um, (( )) it it's um, {BR} I — because I think it's unattractive. I and and, uh I think it's unattractive, and I said and and therefore in a certain way, it becomes very attractive.

Strangely, the authors have in the past been celebrated locally as authorities on BerE, helping to celebrate it, and occasionally asked to speak on panels at cultural events. Perhaps, in a place where standard ideology is strong and attitudes towards BerE are poor, parody has been seen as promotion of 'quaint' heritage, and the appropriate medium for dialect use. Furthermore, it is likely that the picture of public reception is skewed; critics may prefer to remain silent, lest they risk being accused of 'political correctness.'

8.2.3 'Political correctness gone mad'

The only example of objections to NTUU I could find was in the comments on a blog post (Wells 2004), the anonymity of which was clearly instrumental in making frank commentary possible. In fact, the patterning of the comments is extremely revealing. Commenters debated, under pseudonyms, whether or not the show was racist and why the audience was predominantly white. On one side of the debate, concerns are raised about the whiteness of the audience and the mockery of black Bermudians, as in the extracts below:

> The fact that the Um Um shows haven't become fashionable amongst the black community in 20 years is a reflection of just how far apart the two cultures are in Bermuda.
>
> With all the comics being white and the theme of using a Bermudian accent that is aimed at our ignorance and one racial group (Wells 2004).

These concerns were scorned by supporters of NTUU, who called the criticisms racially divisive and mean:

> The key to integration is to make it a non-issue.
>
> The $50 goes to charity!... NTUU has donated thousands of dollars to local Bermudian Charities (*ibid.*).

These responses suggest that mock BerE and its speakers are protected by its genre, immune to public criticism much in the same way as mock Spanish in the American Southwest as discussed by Hill (1993; 1995). Objectors risk being accused of pettiness, of 'being overly precious and correct' (Hill 1995:203), and of having 'no sense of humour.'

Accordingly, 'political correctness gone mad' was a narrative that came up repeatedly in interviews. The authors of *Bermewjan Vurds* described writing it 'with a few pops in us, and before political correctness existed' and later in the interview lamented, 'political correctness, man. Gotta suck.' The issue was also openly discussed in the broadcast interview with the NTUU players, quoted below. Smith's comments in particular show that the members of NTUU needed an active strategy to manage for the potentially inflammatory nature of their performances.

> Political correctness has been, we consider it in the show, and we hope it doesn't limit us too much. ... Um, I mean everyone s- makes politically incorrect statements amongst their friends and and you say it and it's funny and then you go no we can't put that in the show and and you agree with it yourself even if you might've come up with it and it's funny as hell. We do have a uh a veto power amongst ourselves, if if one person really objects to anything, it doesn't go in the show (Peter Smith, in Barritt et al. (2004)).
>
> The spectre of political correctness uh rears its head every now and again ... We're a bit more conscious now of of um sensitivities and things and certainly some stuff we did early on we wouldn't do now ... But um, we we

> certainly try not to be politically correct, we try to be politically *in*correct if we can. Without being rude {LG} That's sometimes a hard thing to do. But the main goal is to be funny I think. As long as we can be funny and not offend anybody. Well not offend everybody. If you're not offending somebody you're not being you're not doing your job (Fred Barritt, in Barritt et al. (2004)).

Jeremy Frith's *Oh Gawd* collection and recording also appear to be accompanied by a caveat about 'sense of humour': Frith's introduction the poetry at the beginning of the recording concludes with a plea: 'please, please, don't ever take yourselves too seriously' and in the opening commentary, producer Jeffrey Marshall claims that the humour of Frith's work is important because 'we've been taking ourselves too serious lately' (1996). As Hill explains, 'the imbrication of "light talk," "plain talk," "humour" and "common sense" have created an impenetrable tangle under which a great deal of racist and sexist talk . . . can be produced, and a shield by which critique of these practices can be very effectively deflected' (1995:209).

The danger of criticising mock BerE was suggested in my interview with Green, one of the black speakers in the quantitative study of Chapter 6. Green was a prominent civil rights activist and led some of the most important industrial action in 20th century Bermuda. And, as confirmed in interviews with the white performers, Green was himself directly mocked on NTUU. But he refused to comment on the show:

(9) INTERVIEWER : Did you ever watch um, the Um Um Show or Not The Um Um

GREEN : {BR} I never saw it but I know of it.

INTERVIEWER : What did you think about it.

GREEN : I I'm af- +afraid I I can't comment because I didn't know I just know Mister ((redacted)) even now, a bit – I don't know him all that well, but {BR} I could see he's a hell of a nice guy and {BR} and um I used to what little bit I heard over the radio or news (( )) wherever it was I thought it was all f- good fun and games.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah?

GREEN : Yeah yeah yeah. And I'm OK with that. Yeah yeah. Yeah.

Even the most outspoken opponents of racism in Bermuda, then, seem to be uncomfortable openly criticising these men for their performances. Of course, Green may well have been genuinely unoffended by NTUU, and it is impossible to infer that his 'real' feelings about the show differ from his comments. It is perhaps especially important, however, for political figures in Bermuda to be seen to possess a 'sense of humour,' particularly on an island so small. Recently, this appears to have changed; in the following section I discuss more open criticism that has been levelled at this type of linguistic practice over the last year.

8.2.4 'Frithery'

The poetry of Jeremy Frith has been discussed at length in this thesis: in this chapter, in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5. On January 31st 2018, an event celebrating the life and work of Frith entitled 'The Uniquely Bermudian Musings of Jeremy Frith & Friends,' was held at Bermuda's City Hall. The event showcased the work of Bermudian artists and musicians, with programme numbers interspersed with recordings of Frith reading his poems aloud (the same recordings are analysed acoustically in Chapter 7). A section of the introduction included in the programme is reproduced below. This extract demonstrates that the event was framed very much in the same terms as the performances already discussed in this thesis — that is, they emphasise the 'one-ness' of the Bermudian people and of Bermudian speech (emphases mine):

> Jeremy Frith was *Local*. He knew the varied voices of Bermudians and recognised the beauty of this island, and, perhaps even more significantly, *the singularity of her people*. *We Bermudians* who live here on this secluded rock recognise our land as idyllic; no surprise that from this island's earliest days, she inspired tempestuous tales and served as the perfect setting for Tom Moore's complicated passion. As we lived and worked and loved, our culture was born. And then *our own voices, our Bermudian voices*, came to the fore: first gently, then with strength (Bermuda Festival of the Performing Arts 2018).

This event set in motion an unprecedented public debate about dialect mockery and white privilege, led by black Bermudian writer and tourism consultant Kristin White. White published a series of blogs and vlogs in response to 'Jeremy Frith and Friends'

(2018d; 2018e; 2018b; 2018c). The first, entitled '. . . and Friends' introduced the topic and addressed the dilemma White faced in openly criticising such an event; she notes that 'by the end of the night, I knew that anything I wrote would be super-contentious, likely further alienating me from white Bermudians' (2018d). The second (2018e) took the form of a review of one of the pieces on the programme: a poem by white Bermudian Nick Hutchings entitled 'White Gombey,' which is reproduced in full below.

> White Gombey
>
> Hey Bye! Dance with the Gombey, set yourself free
> From the spirit jailer called bigotry
>
> How can you refuse to move your feet?
> It's an African rhythm with a British beat.
>
> Observer status? That reality?
> Reserved for the white minority!
>
> Oh, but the mask will make them blind
> And protect you from the crooked mind.
>
> Hey Girl! Put on the mask and dance with me
> We'll dance the dance anonymously.
>
> They'll never know, so who's to say
> There'll never be a white Gombey (Hutchings 2006).

In her response, White reminds readers of the origins of the Gombey dancers; Afro-Caribbean slaves permitted to dance only once a year, wearing masks and colourful costumes in order to hide their identities from their slave-masters. As she comments, the theme of Hutching's poem seems to be a feeling of exclusion among white Bermudians from this central part of black Bermudian culture; I argue that the same sentiment drives the linguistic performances discussed in this chapter. The same defence of white participation is present too, in Hutching's mention of the 'British beat' influencing Gombey drums; similarly, the participants of this study repeatedly referenced their ancestral connections to early Bermuda settlers to emphasise their supposed right to perform BerE.

> Question: How many places are there in the world where a red carpet isn't rolled out for rich, white men? Where they don't feel welcome? Two, maybe three? But nah, Nick's big mad.
>
> * stomps feet and bangs on a Gombey's door *
>
> "LET ME IN. LET ME INNNNNNNNNN!"
>
> In my video rant, I speak about how the opportunity was there for a thoughtful piece about the conflict a white man might feel at wanting to be a Gombey, while at the same time knowing and understanding that Gombeys only exist because of colonialism and white shenaniganery. Gombeys were slaves. Gombeys today are descendants of slaves...
>
> So yeah...
>
> You wanna a-yo. You wanna ska-dank-dank.
>
> But that isn't your space (White 2018e).

White closed the series with a two-part blog, 'Code Switching and Colourblindness' (2018b; 2018c). These posts note that Frith's work — particularly *Oh Gawd* (reproduced in 5.1) — is not only offensive, but also commonly used to silence political debates about race and immigration. In a private communication, White let me know that she and other critics of the *Jeremy Frith and Friends* event have since dubbed the practice of politicised mock language as 'Frithery'.

> How hard is it to accept that what was once thought of as innocent is actually an insensitive mockery, and in some cases, downright appropriation of the Bermudian accent and slang? (White 2018b).
>
> Over the last few weeks, I've read a fair bit about Jeremy Frith and realised how often people share his words when they want everybody to stop talking about race, immigration and the wealth gap (White 2018c).

The data presented in this section make clear that these white performers act as spokespeople for the 'we're all immigrants' multicultural ideology of white Bermuda, and that the raciolinguistic colour-blindness used to explain the performances plays into a wider colour-blind political strategy. The performances suggest a longing for a

'Bermewjan' or 'island' 'authentic' identity among these men, and, at the same time, an absolute belief in their entitlement to bolster such an identity using BBerE. Ultimately, the performances are deeply illogical, and explained by the participants with a mishmash of incompatible reasoning: they are linguistic chameleons, yet they are voicing their own group; they are preserving unique Bermudian heritage, but BerE is best suited to entertainment; they are outspoken challengers of political correctness not to be silenced, and yet must carefully censor their stage performances. Nevertheless, in their humorous guise, the performances have — until recently — been relatively safe from critique.

These speakers conflate their legal and historical Bermudian-ness with ownership of a social dialect that is not their own. Of course, as linguists know, accents do not just originate geographically or with founders — they develop and change according to social patterns of contact and power. Thus white imitation of BBerE is problematic for the same reasons as the 'all Bermudians are ex-pats' sentiment: it erases and ignores the very different circumstances under which black and white Bermudians came to be Bermudian, which ultimately are deeply connected to the reasons why there are at least two distinct varieties of BerE. It goes hand in hand with the fantasy that all Bermudians have equal status, as immigrants from somewhere or another.

> The identity composite of black Bermudians is not fixed or immutable given the history of abduction that facilitated their ancestors' arrival to the island. As a result of this interruption, one cannot imagine what life would have been like "if there had not been any intervention of colonialism or enslavement" (Asante, 2009, p.1.). This imaginative scenario erases my existence, as well as those of the majority of black Bermudians. The questions I pose are this: we are here now, where do we go from here? And, how do we move pass this dichotomous relationship, or can we?' (Outerbridge 2013:70).

8.3 Conclusions

This thesis has explored in a number of different ways the stylised dialect performances of one particular community of practice in Bermuda. In order to establish the social meaning of this linguistic practice, Part I situated it in its social, political, economic and linguistic context. Chapter 2 gave an overview of Bermudian history, with an emphasis on the racial inequality and segregation that led both to the image and the reality of the 'two Bermudas,'

and two corresponding sub-varieties of BerE. Chapter 3 argued for these sub-varieties, and described the phonology of BBerE as an LKVE as a baseline for future investigations.

This also provided the basis for the thesis's own examination of mock language in Part II. Chapter 4 summarised the relevant literature on performance speech and on language and race, and argued for a more nuanced approach to the sociolinguistic conundrum of authenticity that takes into account empowerment, inheritance, lived experience, and above all, the particularities of the local context. With this in mind, Chapter 5 surveyed the range of dialect performance practices in Bermuda, ultimately showing the historical conditions described in Chapter 2 to have led to a tense modern political scene in which the ownership of BerE is in question. In this setting, 'island' identity is both desired and enacted, in particular by a group of white men whose linguistic practice was then explored in depth in the remainder of the thesis.

The contextual analysis presented in Chapter 6 covered a range of evidence showing that the white speakers' performances are racialised, in terms of content, voice quality, cultural references and the characterological figure they invoke. The speakers' open statements that they are referring to black speakers confirm the more indirect suggestions of the same in the subtext of their performances, while the content and surrounding narrative construct a race and class caricature with socially undesirable tastes, skills, and habits.

Chapter 7 presented phonetic analysis supporting the conclusion that the same stylisations perform crude, racialised caricatures. The results show significant differences between black and white speech in three variables, with white performances always moving in the direction of — but never quite matching — the black variant, in various ways. As such, the chapter confirms sociolinguistic principles — discussed in Chapter 4 — that the reliability of performance speech as evidence about a given dialect depends on whether the performer is displaying a variety within or outside their own repertoire. If a native speaker of a variety performs their own dialect for an outsider, the structure of this, even if it is exaggerated, is likely to remain and may be a useful source for dialectologists (Schilling 1998; Johnstone 2011), while performances of the 'other' lack structure. The latter, however, give rich insights into local sociolinguistic hierarchies and stereotypes, the perceptual salience of features and their indexical value in a community.

Importantly, the phonetic and contextual evidence for racialisation in these performances co-occur. Together, they reveal a style in which phonetic features and personal qualities are enregistered and associated with a black male characterological figure, placed at the centre of the performances' intended humour. The nature of these personal qualities leaves no room for doubt that the performances reproduce a basic and harmful racial stereotype, and, in linking these with a fairly crude approximation of black Bermudian English speech, clearly fall into Mesthrie's category of 'mock language... which serves to reinforce relations of what Bourdieu describes as 'symbolic power' (2002:99). In other words, the linguistic practice that I have explored in Part II of this thesis serves to reflect and reinforce the racial and linguistic hierarchies of contemporary Bermudian society.

In this final chapter, I have explored the speakers' explanations for their stylisations, showing them to be motivated by linked political and identity goals. The performances mock majority black political stances by way of mocking black speech, at the same time as bolstering the performers' claims, in their own eyes, to 'island identity' and authenticity. The metalinguistic commentary presented in this chapter shows the performances to be deeply illogical, and deeply self-contradictory. On the one hand, the performances are based on an essentialist ideology that sees only black, BBerE-speaking Bermudians as authentic. On the other hand, the performances aim to blur the lines of this folk authenticity through crossing, citing multiculturalism and a raciolinguistic ideology of colour-blindness as justification. As discussed in 8.2.4, recent reactions to public versions of these performances — and to events dedicated to celebrating them — show that a long-established of their acceptability in Bermudian society is now beginning to be challenged openly; this is also evident in the critiques of performance in other media presented in 5.1.5. This increase in publicly expressed pushback is encouraging, although the fact that it has occurred only very recently is testament to the dominance of the 'political correctness gone mad' argument discussed in 8.2.3.

Finally, this thesis demonstrates that colour-blindness cannot destabilise race, neither among scholars nor in the political ideology of stylisers. As linguists, if we fail to acknowledge the historically-influenced linguistic divergences between groups who have been segregated and unequally empowered, we give an incomplete sociolinguistic picture

of a community which confounds a full understanding of stylisation. And as the data in this thesis has shown, speakers' framing of performances with colour-blind rhetoric does more to reinforce racialised categories of a society than to challenge them.

As an under-researched context, Bermuda and BerE are ripe for many lines of further investigation. This thesis prompts further research in three particular areas: these are Language Variation and Change studies (LVC), stylised linguistic practice and socio-geographic context. In terms of LVC, future research must further explore variation within and between racialised groups in Bermuda. I have argued for BBerE and WhBerE as related but distinct sub-varieties of BerE, and provided a phonological overview of BBerE to complement the one for WhBerE forthcoming in Hall et al. (under review), and the syntactic profile of BBerE in Eberle and Schreier (2013). To complete this picture, syntactic work on WhBerE and further acoustic comparisons of the varieties are needed. Further, the speech of Portuguese-descended Bermudians and their influence on BerE from the 19th century onwards is in urgent need of research. Work is also needed on regional variation among Bermudians, which was commented upon by many participants; in particular speakers from the eastern- and western-most points of the islands (St David's and Somerset) are said to have recognisably distinct speech patterns.

In terms of the study of stylised linguistic practice, this thesis leaves room for expansion in a number of ways. Of course, speakers and listeners do not interpret dialects in single features or isolated chunks, but whole, whether they are speaking 'normally' or constructing a 'high performance' for an audience. My thesis lays the baseline by giving a full overview of the dialect in Part I, so that future research can examine not only other features, but also what package of features stylisers might be using besides those stereotyped variables examined in detail here. Future work might aim to establish a prototype of mock 'Bermewjan,' in the style of Chun (2004).

Further, this thesis is centred on the stylised practices of white speakers only, showing them to be very much a part of 'the everyday language of white racism' (Hill 2008). In analysing the performances of white Bermudians, I hope to participate in the recent move towards focusing on the 'listening subject' (Rosa and Flores 2017; Inoue 2003), since looking at the linguistic practices of this privileged group is one way of examining listener

perceptions of BBerE speakers. Of course, because 'indexicalities are context-sensitive' (Bell and Gibson 2011:569), stylised performance in other communities of practice and among other racialised groups in Bermuda will have different social meanings and require separate, in-depth treatment. I discussed in Chapter 6 that my whiteness was significant to the interviewer-interviewee relationship during fieldwork, in that I was assumed to be complicit in the 'humour' of the performances; it follows that a study on performance in the black community would ideally be carried out by a black Bermudian researcher (c.f. Preston (1992); Rickford and McNair-Knox (1994)).

Finally, while this thesis contributes to an existing body of literature on stylisation in general and mock language in particular, it also draws attention to the limited range of contexts in which these have been examined. My focus on stylistic practice in a wealthy island setting prompts further investigation into privileged peripheries like Bermuda. How might the raciolinguistic landscapes of similar 'offshore' LKVE contexts compare with Bermuda's? The nuanced approach to linguistic authenticity proposed here, and a particularistic approach to performance in its sociolinguistic context will help shed light on issues of belonging and linguistic inheritance in such settings.

Appendices

A
Quoted Participants

Speaker (pseudonym)	Sex	Race	Recorded age	Year recorded
Frith	M	W	64	1999
Harris	F	B	55	2011
Reid	F	B	54	2011
Taylor	F	B	28	2011
Ryan	F	W	23	2011
Hughes	M	B	86	2014
Moss	M	B	82	2014
Day	M	B	80	2014
Roberts	M	B	80	2014
Clarke	M	B	79	2014
Bell	M	B	67	2014
King	M	B	67	2014
Edwards	M	B	66	2014
Wade	M	B	65	2014
Allen	M	B	61	2014
Daniels	M	B	39	2014
Thomas	F	B	83	2015
Lucas	M	B	24	2015
Green	M	B	83	2016
Davies	M	W	72	2016
Parker	M	W	70	2016
Bassett	F	B	67	2016
Lewis	M	B	60	2016
Baker	M	W	approx. 60	2016
Turner	M	W	approx. 60	2016
Williams	M	W	57	2016
Foster	M	W	52	2016
Martin	M	W	52	2016
Dickinson	M	B	36	2016
Simmons	M	B	28	2016

Table A.1: Quoted participants.

B

Participant Information and Consent Form (2014)

FACULTY OF LINGUISTICS, PHILOLOGY AND PHONETICS

Clarendon Press Centre

Walton Street

Oxford OX1 2HG

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

- This study is entitled: Bermudian English
- The purpose of this study is to investigate the local accent of Bermuda and its relation to others throughout the world. You are being asked to participate as you are a resident of Bermuda.
- This research is being conducted by Rosemary Hall who is first year MPhil student. She can be contacted in the following ways:

Tel: (+44) (0)7910 927147 (UK) 293 4061 (Bda)
Email: rosemary.hall@new.ox.ac.uk
Mail: New College, Holywell Street, Oxford, OX1 3BN

- Rosemary's supervisor is Dr Rosalind Temple of the University of Oxford. She can be contacted in the following ways:

Tel: +44 1865 271978 (UK)
Email: rosalind.temple@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk
Mail: New College, Holywell Street, Oxford, OX1 3BN

- If you agree to take part you will be asked questions about yourself, your family history and about life in Bermuda. I hope to have a really nice long chat with you. Conversations with previous participants have typically lasted about 1 hour. Before we finish, there will be a reading task to complete which will involve reading a short passage out loud. All of this will be recorded so you will be asked to wear a microphone.
- After you have taken part, the recordings will be used by Rosemary Hall for the study described above. Documents associated with the recordings will also be created by Rosemary such as transcriptions and entries in a database. If (and only if) you agree, the recording and associated documents will be stored by the University of Oxford and be used by researchers other than Rosemary for other research and educational purposes (for example, very short extracts may be played as illustrations in lectures or conference presentations).
- The recordings and all personal information will be stored securely on Rosemary Hall's personal computer and a secure backup device. You will not be identified by name when the recordings are used for the above purposes unless you wish to. If the data is used by other researchers with your consent, it may be stored securely on their personal computers. All personal information shared with other researchers will be anonymised.
- This project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee.

Please complete the questions below:

I understand that I will be recorded and I agree to being recorded: yes / no

I agree to the recording and associated documents being used by Rosemary Hall: yes / no

I understand that my words may be quoted in publications, reports and other research outputs by Rosemary Hall: yes / no

I understand my personal details such as name, phone number and address will NOT be revealed to people outside the project: yes / no

Please choose **ONE** of the following two options (tick as appropriate):

I would like my real name used in the above ( )

I would **NOT** like my real name used in the above ( )

I do / do not agree to the recording and associated documents being stored by the University of Oxford.

I do / do not agree to the recording and associated documents being used by any researcher for research and education purposes.

Before we continue, do you have any questions about any of this or about anything else? yes / no

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you have a concern about any aspect of this research, please speak to the researcher concerned Rosemary Hall who will do her best to answer your query. If you remain unhappy and wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford using the following contact information:

Tel: 01865 614871

Email: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk

Mail: Social Sciences & Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee, Oxford University, Hayes House, 75 George Street, Oxford, OX1 2BQ, UK.

DECLARATION

- I have read the participant information at the top of this document.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and have received satisfactory answers to questions and any additional details requested.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the study without penalty at any time by advising the researcher of this decision.
- I understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee.
- I understand who will have access to personal data provided, how the data will be stored; and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.
- I understand that wherever possible identifying information will be removed from the recordings and associated documents.
- I understand that the copyright of the recordings belongs to the University of Oxford.
- I understand how to raise a concern and make a complaint.
- I agree to participate in this study.

PARTICIPANT NAME	PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE	DATE

RESEARCHER NAME	RESEARCHER SIGNATURE	DATE

C
Interview Schedule

Basic personal information

(1) Where were you born?

(2) Tell me about where you live.

(3) Have you always lived in this neighbourhood? In this house?

(4) What's the community like?

(5) Tell me about where you work, what do you do for a living?

(6) What did you do before?

(7) How do you get along with your colleagues? Your boss?

Family

(8) How big is your family? Do you have brothers and sisters/children?

(9) How often do you see each other?

(10) Do you get along? Do you ever argue?

(11) How did you meet your partner?

(12) What's the nicest thing about being a (grand)mother/father? What's the hardest thing?

(13) If you could give one piece of advice to kids today, what would it be?

(14) Did you ever get in trouble for staying out late?

School (taken from Tagliamonte (2006:38))

(15) Where did you go to school?

(16) What was it like?

(17) How far was your school from your house?

(18) Did you ever get into trouble at school?

(19) Did you ever pass notes? Did you get caught? What did the teacher do?

(20) Did you ever get blamed for something you never did?

(21) Did you have any teachers that were really tough?

(22) What would they yell at a kid for?

(23) What kind of group did you have in your school? Did you have groups, like cool kids/nerds?

(24) Could a guy from one group go out with a girl from another group?

Local life, news and politics

(25) What do you do on May 24th? Cup Match? Good Friday?

(26) If you could take a tourist round the island for one day, what would you show them?

(27) Who do you support at Cup Match, St George's or Somerset?

(28) What's your favourite thing about living in Bermuda? Is there anything you don't like?

(29) How do you think Bermuda is doing nowadays?

(30) What do you think is the biggest challenge Bermuda faces today?

(31) Do you think Bermuda should be independent?

(32) Do you use the bus in Bermuda? What did you think about the strikes a few months back?

Memories

(33) Do you have any memories of learning to ride a bike/tie your shoelaces?

(34) Tell me about growing up in Bermuda. What's your nicest memory?

(35) Was Bermuda very different then to the way it is now?

(36) What games did you use to play?

(37) What would you say was the happiest moment of your life? And the saddest?

Personal interests

(38) How do you like to spend your leisure time?

(39) What do you do on the weekends?

(40) What kind of music do you like?

(41) Do you like to travel?

(42) If you had time to learn something new, what would it be?

Key Bermudian historical events

(43) Where were you during Hurricane Emily/Fabian?

(44) Do you remember the assassination of the Governor in 1973?

(45) Do you remember what it was like in Bermuda during the war?

Deeper questions

(46) If you were going to tell your life story, what would be the big points?

(47) What's your greatest fear?

(48) Did you ever have a dream that really scared you?

(49) Were you ever in a situation where you thought, 'this is it'?

(50) What do you think has been your greatest achievement?

D

Participant Information and Consent Form (2016)

FACULTY OF LINGUISTICS, PHILOLOGY AND PHONETICS

Clarendon Press Centre

Walton Street

Oxford OX1 2HG

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

- This study is entitled: Bermudian English
- The purpose of this study is to investigate attitudes towards Bermudian speech. You are being asked to participate as you are a resident of Bermuda.
- This research is being conducted by Rosemary Hall who is a PhD student at the University of Oxford. She can be contacted in the following ways:

Tel: (+44) (0)7910 927147 (UK) 702 0910 (Bda)
Email: rosemary.hall@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk
Mail: Magdalen College, Oxford, OX1 4AU

- Rosemary's supervisor is Dr Rosalind Temple of the University of Oxford. She can be contacted in the following ways:

Tel: +44 1865 271978 (UK)
Email: rosalind.temple@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk
Mail: New College, Oxford, OX1 3BN

- You have the opportunity to ask questions before you decide to participate. You can choose whether or not to participate, and you can withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.
- If you agree to take part I will ask you questions about yourself, your family history and about life in Bermuda. I hope to have a really nice long chat with you. The interview will be conducted wherever is most convenient for you; either in your own home, or mine, or an agreed public place. Conversations with previous participants have typically lasted about 1 hour. I will also play you some clips of Bermudian speakers and ask you to comment on them. All of this will be recorded so you will be asked to wear a microphone.
- After you have taken part, the recordings will be used by Rosemary Hall for the study described above. Documents associated with the recordings will also be created by Rosemary such as transcriptions and entries in a database. If (and only if) you agree, the recording and associated documents will be stored by the University of Oxford and be used by researchers other than Rosemary for other research and educational purposes (for example, very short extracts may be played as illustrations in lectures or conference presentations).
- The recordings and all personal information will be stored securely on Rosemary Hall's personal computer and a secure backup device. Only Rosemary will have access to these data. You will not be identified by name when the recordings are used for the above purposes unless you wish to (you can indicate whether you would like your real name used below). If the data is used by other researchers

with your consent, it may be stored securely on their personal computers. All personal information shared with other researchers will be anonymized. In order to comply with the university's research data policy, the data will be retained and stored securely by me for a minimum of 3 years.

- The results of this study will form part of my DPhil thesis. The University of Oxford is committed to the dissemination of its research for the benefit of society and the economy and, in support of this commitment, has established an online archive of research materials. This archive includes digital copies of student theses successfully submitted as part of a University of Oxford postgraduate degree programme. Holding the archive online gives easy access for researchers to the full text of freely available theses, thereby increasing the likely impact and use of that research. If you agree to participate in this project, the research will be written up as a thesis. On successful submission of the thesis, it will be deposited both in print and online in the University archives, to facilitate its use in future research. The thesis will be published open access.
- This project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you have a concern about any aspect of this research, please speak to the researcher concerned Rosemary Hall who will do her best to answer your query. The researcher should acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how she intends to deal with it. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford (using the contact details below) who will seek to resolve the matter in a reasonably expeditious manner:

Tel: 01865 614871

Email: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk

Mail: Social Sciences & Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee, Research Services, University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD UK.

Please complete the following:

I understand that I will be recorded and I agree to being recorded: yes / no

I agree to the recording and associated documents being used by Rosemary Hall: yes / no

I understand that my personal details such as date of birth, phone number and address will **NOT** be revealed to people outside the project, unless I have explicitly agreed to this below: yes / no

I understand that my name will **NOT** be revealed to people outside the project, unless I have explicitly agreed to this below: yes / no

I understand that my words may be quoted in publications, reports and other research outputs by Rosemary Hall: yes / no

Please choose **ONE** of the following two options (tick as appropriate):

I would like my real name used in the above ( )

I would **NOT** like my real name used in the above ( )

I do / do not agree to the recording and associated documents being stored by the University of Oxford (it will be anonymized).

I do / do not agree to the recording and associated documents being used by any researcher for research and education purposes (it will be anonymized).

I do / do not agree to short anonymized excerpts of my recorded speech being played by Rosemary Hall in other interviews with Bermudians.

Before we continue, do you have any questions about any of this or about anything else? yes / no

DECLARATION

- I have read the participant information at the top of this document.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and have received satisfactory answers to questions and any additional details requested.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the study without penalty at any time by advising the researcher of this decision.
- I understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee.
- I understand who will have access to personal data provided, how the data will be stored; and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.
- I understand that the data will be written up at a DPhil thesis and that this will be published online.
- I understand that wherever possible identifying information will be removed from the recordings and associated documents.
- I understand that the copyright of the recordings belongs to the University of Oxford.
- I understand that audio recordings will be used in research outputs, e.g. academic conference presentations and journal publications
- I understand how to raise a concern and make a complaint.
- I agree to participate in this study.

PARTICIPANT NAME	PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE	DATE

RESEARCHER NAME	RESEARCHER SIGNATURE	DATE

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