



PUNK'S DEAD! OR IS IT?



A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Language Variation, Style and Social Identity in Contemporary Punk Rock Music

BACKGROUND

Language variation in British music

Pre-1970s → Neutralised, Americanised accent (Trudgill, 1983; Simpson, 1999)

1976 → **PUNK!**
The Clash, Sex Pistols...
Local accents (London – Cockney)
Working-class youth

Now → New wave of punk rock artists
Research: ?

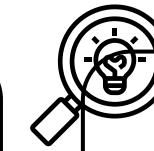


KEY TERMS

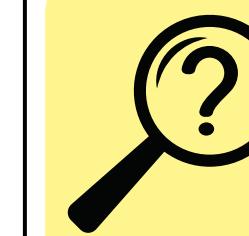
Variation = different ways in which language is used by individuals or groups of people

Accent = a speaker's specific way of pronouncing words, with a focus on sounds

Style = a speaker's deliberate language choices, the way speakers make social meaning through linguistic choices



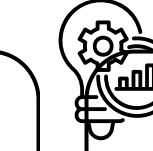
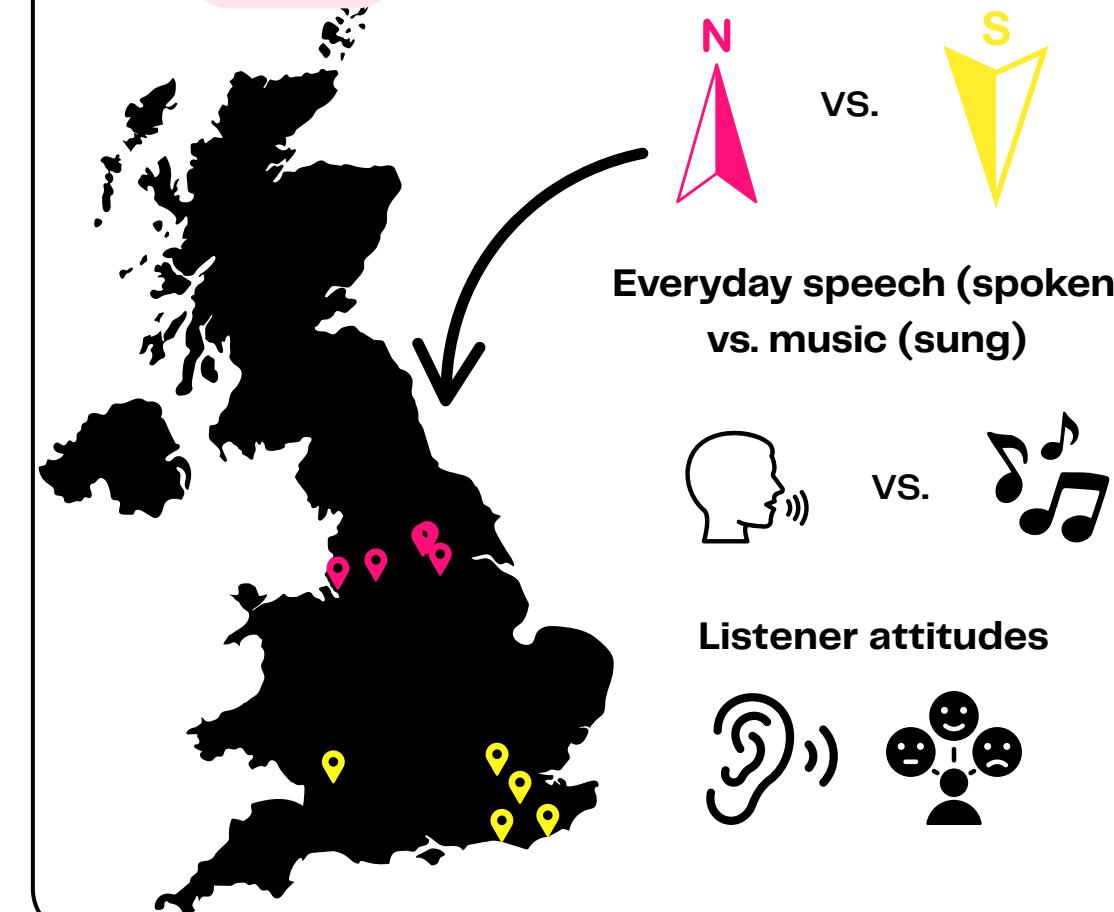
MY RESEARCH



What can the way **modern-day punk rock artists** use their **accents** tell us about **identity construction** in their music, and how do **audiences** react to this?

How?

→ Northern vs. Southern artists



RESULTS & INSIGHTS



Artists

- N and S → keep their **own accents** in their music
- no different accent or heavy accent emphasis
- ! interesting case: **Cabbage** → echoes a **more classic 70s 'Cockney punk'** sound (e.g. Sex Pistols' Johnny Rotten)



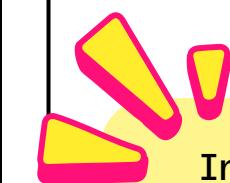
Listeners

- **Interviews** → N = strong, working-class, authentic
- **Songs** → sudden **flipped** perceptions: S = strong, working-class, authentic



Meaning

- Accent choice → **identity construction**
- Connection to **place, audience, punk values & history**
- **Audience interpretations** shape what the **style choices** mean in practice



In (today's) punk rock music, **accents** are not just random: they're deliberate **tools** for **expressing identity**. The **meaning** of these accents, however, is shaped just as much by how **audiences hear them** as by the **choices artists** make.