UNIVERSIDAD DE SALAMANCA

FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA

GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES

Trabajo de Fin de Grado

The Representation of the Yorkshire Dialect in *Downton Abbey's* Low-Class Characters

A Corpus-Based Study

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Salamanca, 2021

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This thesis is submitted for the degree of English Studies

Date: July, 2021

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Vº Bº

Signature

ABSTRACT [EN]

The aim of this study is to present a corpus-based analysis of the representation of the Yorkshire dialect in the Edwardian drama *Downton Abbey* by Julian Fellowes. Considering that two completely different social classes are depicted in the drama, the upper class and the lower class, the analysis pays special attention to the representation of this dialect as spoken by the characters from the lower class. Therefore, this study analyses how the linguistic-dialectal comprehension of the audience is able to influence the scriptwriters of *Downton Abbey* in their representation regarding the dialect of the northern English county of Yorkshire.

KEYWORDS: sociolinguistics, Yorkshire dialect, corpus-based analysis, Downton Abbey, Julian Fellowes, lower class, historical drama.

RESUMEN [ES]

El objetivo de este estudio es presentar un análisis basado en la metodología de corpus de la representación del dialecto de Yorkshire en el drama ambientado en la época Eduardiana, *Downton Abbey* de Julian Fellowes. Teniendo en cuenta que en el drama aparecen representadas dos clases sociales completamente diferentes, la clase alta y la clase trabajadora, el análisis presta especial atención a la representación de este dialecto a través de los parlamentos de los personajes pertenecientes a la clase trabajadora. Por tanto, este estudio analiza cómo la comprensión lingüístico-dialectal de la audiencia es capaz de influenciar en los guionistas de *Downton Abbey* a la hora de representar el dialecto del condado norteño inglés, Yorkshire.

PALABRAS CLAVE: sociolingüística, dialectos, análisis basado en corpus, *Downton Abbey,* Julian Fellowes, clase baja, drama histórico.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my grandfather. Wherever you are, I know you are proud of me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last decades, the study of sociolinguistics and dialect varieties has been increased, and films and TV series with dialect representation have become a focus of study, as is the case of Julian Fellowes' *Downton Abbey*. This award-winning historical drama follows the life of the Earl Grantham's aristocratic family and their servants at *Downton Abbey* in the 20th century Yorkshire and is characterised by the representation of the dialect of the northern English county, prompting linguists to study this dialect's presence exhaustively, occasionally employing the corpus methodology to achieve their purpose.

In this study I will analyse the representation of the Yorkshire dialect in the lower social class of the famous television series *Downton Abbey*. To conduct this analysis, I will employ corpus methodology to collect quantitative data in order to demonstrate that the representation of the Yorkshire dialect is influenced by the expectations that scriptwriters hold regarding the audience's comprehension of this dialect.

2. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1 Defining corpus linguistics

Corpus linguistics is defined as "a methodology that draws on systematic collections of naturalistic, machine-readable texts to make claims about linguistic phenomena and/or linguistic variation" (Boberg et al. 300). Many scholars have employed this methodology in their research, being the most relevant to this paper Lazzeretti and Ilc, who have used software programmes such as *Wordsmith Tools* or *Compleat Lexical Tutor* to achieve their purpose of analysing the characterization and the authenticity of the language used in *Downton Abbey*, respectively. Based on these two studies, I expect that corpus methodology will allow me to obtain quantitative results on how the Yorkshire dialect is adapted in the first season of Fellowes' drama series.

2.2 Adaptation of dialects on screen

English dialects have been extensively studied by scholars such as Trudgill or Anderwald and many scriptwriters have wanted to reflect them in their works in order to give a greater portrayal to the character (Culpeper 166). This dialect representation on the big screen began with the film adaptation of plays such as Shakespeare's, as established by Hornero Corisco in her study on the analysis of dialect dubbing in the films *Hamlet* (1948) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (1993). Nowadays, dialects can be represented not only in films, but also in television series such as *Game of Thrones* (2011), where, according to Montini and Ranzato, a northern English accent is used (173); or in the drama series *Downton Abbey* (2010), where the Yorkshire dialect is represented by the lower class and which is fundamental to the portrayal of low-class characters: "Language plays a very important role in shaping Downton's characters and has been used to depict them, no less than with costumes and sceneries in a very powerful way" (Lazzeretti 37).

Moreover, the Yorkshire dialect has not only been analysed from a stylistic perspective, as in the case of Lazzereti, but also from a grammatical and lexical point of view in the research of scholars such as Edensor and Ilc, being Ilc's very relevant for this thesis. In his study, Ilc analyses the linguistic authenticity and complexity of the upper class and lower class through the first three chapters of *Downton Abbey*. In order to achieve his purpose, Ilc uses software programmes such as *Flesch Readability Tests*,

Compleat Lexical Tutor and *Google Ngram Viewer*, which allow him to explore the dialogues of the selected chapters in terms of linguistic, lexical and grammatical complexity. As a result, Ilc concludes that, despite being a drama set in the early twentieth century, the Yorkshire dialect employed in *Downton Abbey* is contemporary: "From a linguistic perspective, the period drama under analysis does not reflect the linguistic reality of the Edwardian period, but should be seen more as a reflection of the present-day linguistic situation" (186).

Thus, this paper presents a corpus-based study of the representation of the synchronic Yorkshire dialect in the lower class of the first season of this drama series. Contrary to Ilc's research, which focuses on studying the verbal authenticity of the characters, concluding that there are no differences in language between social classes; this thesis contributes to analyse the use of the different dialectal features of the present-day Yorkshire dialect in *Downton Abbey*.

2.3 Yorkshire dialectal features

To begin with, this section will provide a review of all the characteristic features of the Yorkshire dialect, which appear in Meier's book, *Accents and Dialects for Stage and Screen*:

a. Yorkshire speakers generally uses the short, open vowel /a/, instead of Received Pronunciation (henceforth: RP) /ɑ/ or General American (henceforth: GenAm) /æ/.

b. 'Flat a' /a/ is used instead of short /ɑ/ meanwhile in RP and GenAm, it is used /æ/.

c. According to Meier, the rhoticity refers to "how a speaker treats the post-vocalic <r>, i.e, when it follows a vowel" (Meier 124). So that, the Yorkshire accent is a non-rhotic accent.

d. The Yorkshire speaker uses the monophthong /o/ but makes it longer /o:/.

e. The called 'long e' is usually a diphthong in RP and in GenAm /ɛɪ/. However, in Yorkshire dialects, it is commonly used either /e:/ or /ɛ:/.

f. The use of the phoneme /ʊ/, meanwhile RP and GenAm uses /ʌ/, is one of "the most distinctive of the Yorkshire signature sounds" (Meier 125).

g. The diphthong /aɪ/ in RP and GenAm, has a "closer onset in Yorkshire" (Meier 125), obtaining /æɪ/.

h. The voiceless plosives /p, t, k/ becomes less aspirated than in RP and GenAm.

i. It is usual the omission of initial /h/.

j. The glottalization of <t>, resulting /ʔ/, that occurs in intervocalic context.

k. In the Yorkshire dialect it is also presented the 'dark-l', /ɫ/, an /l/ that is more velarized than in RP and GenAm.

l. Words with endings such as <y, ie, ey>; are often pronounced as /e/; instead of /i/ or /ɪ/, as it is usual in RP and GenAm.

m. The diphthong /aʊ/ becomes /a:/.

n. The use of 'us' instead of 'our'.

o. 'Were' is used instead of 'was'.

p. When /t/ in word final position is followed by vowel-initial words, it is generally changed to /r/.

q. The definite article 'the' is reduced to /t/.

r. The pronoun 'us' is pronounced with /z/.

s. The final /ing/ sound is reduced to /ɪn/.

t. /th/ in word-final position is dropped.

u. Make and take become /mɛk, tɛk/.

Therefore, considering the theoretical framework of the study, I expect to obtain results that point to a slight modification of the Yorkshire dialect by the scriptwriters with the aim of facilitating the understanding of the dialogues to the audience.

3. METHODOLOGY

To begin with, it is important to clarify that, though *Downton Abbey* has many characters, the most significant in this study will be those who belong to a lower social class. However, within this group I must make a classification between characters who have more contact with the aristocrats of the house, who are those who will lack dialect; and between those who either have no or minimal contact with the upper class, who will speak in Yorkshire dialect. So that, the characters that are going to be analysed are Daisy Mason, Thomas Barrow, Sarah O'Brien, Gwen Dawson, Anna Bates, Mrs. Patmore and William Mason. Tom Branson will be excluded from the analysis since, though he belongs to the lower class in the first season, he has an Irish accent. Besides, only the first season of the drama is going to be compiled since at the end of this season one of the characters analysed, Gwen, leaves the series permanently, which would have an impact on the data collected as I would obtain a reduced amount of data as she is one of the characters who most frequently speaks with the dialect analysed.

3. 1 Corpus compilation

For the purpose of the analysis, the scripts from the episodes of the first season of the series were obtained from *Forever Dreaming Transcripts* (https://transcripts.foreverdreaming.org/viewforum.php?f=151&sid=5114a55e07242fb6915998fc33ad0ce7). Following with the procedure, I downloaded the master corpus in plain text format as, in order to achieve my purpose, I made use of the software programme *AntConc*. Thereafter, the study is based on the following corpus:

a. DOWNTON ABBEY CORPUS: The master corpus (henceforth: DAC) containing 67,404 words and 4,258-word types.
b. DAISY SUB-CORPUS, THOMAS SUB-CORPUS, O'BRIEN SUB-CORPUS, GWEN SUB-CORPUS, ANNA SUB-CORPUS, MRS. PARTMORE SUB-CORPUS and WILLIAM SUB-CORPUS: One sub-corpus for each character analysed in which all the dialogues of that character are gathered.

Once I had compiled the corpus, I tagged the words pronounced with Yorkshire dialect by the low-class characters, as I listened to the scenes in which the analysed characters participated and phonologically transcribing the dialectal features presented, contrasting the results with the *Cambridge Dictionary Online,* which provides phonetic transcription of words in RP and GenAm. The study focused on analysing the dialectal features presented in the selected characters as well as the frequency of usage of this dialect among the low-class characters with the aim of analysing how accurate is the television adaptation of Yorkshire modern dialect.

4. RESULTS

The analysis has revealed that DAC presents a total of 582 cases of words and only 9 Yorkshire dialectal features in low-class characters' speeches. In fact, the dialectal features in Figure 1 (see below) clearly highlight the feature of 'omission of initial /h/', tagged as <oh> (n= 142). This is followed by the 'glottalized /t/' feature with the tag <glottalized> (n= 146), as well as the 'phonological variation of /ʌ/ to /ʊ/' with the tag

<ʊ> (n= 137). It was also found the features of 'omission of final /t/' with the tag <ot> (n= 71); as well as the feature of 'final /ing/ sound being reduced to /ɪn/' tagged as <n> (n= 56); and the use of 'long o /o:/ instead of diphthong' with the tag <o:> (n= 13). Furthermore, to a minor extent, it is found the 'change of final <y> to /e/' tagged as <e:> (n= 9), the 'final omission of <th>' tagged as <oth> (n= 5), and finally '<ɪ> instead of /aɪ/' with the tag <ɪ> (n= 5).
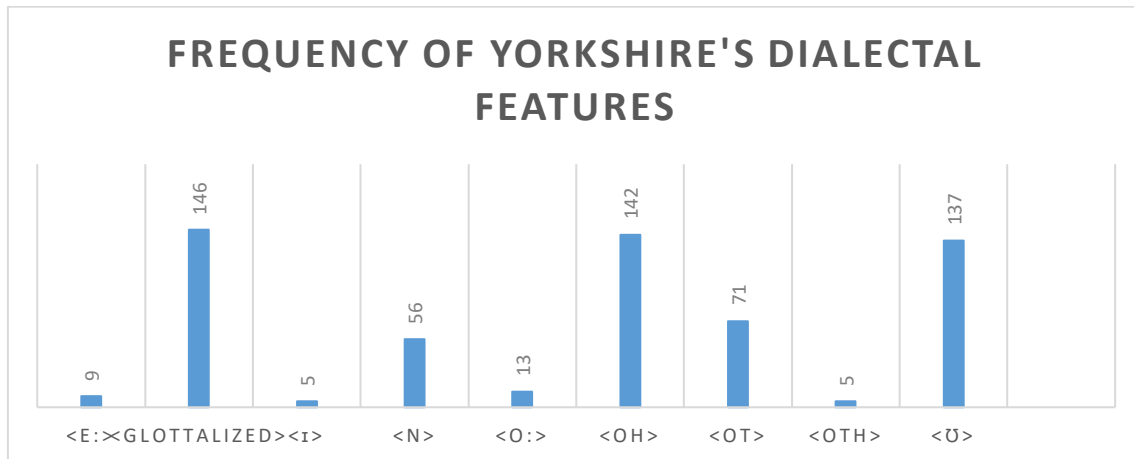

Fig. 1. Yorkshire dialectal features with higher frequency in DAC.

After getting an overview of the representation of the Yorkshire dialect in *Downton Abbey*, it is going to be analyse the low-class characters' dialectal words and features that are pronounced with higher frequency.

Firstly, a table of the characters and all the features has been made to find out which traits each character pronounces (cf. table 1). The results point out that all the characters use different dialectal features, as is the case of Daisy, who pronounces the highest number of traits (8) in contrast to, for instance, Anna, who only pronounces 6.

	Daisy	Thomas	O'Brien	Gwen	Anna	Mrs. Patmore	William
<ʊ>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<o:>	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
<e:>	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x	x
<oh>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<n>	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
<glottalized>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<ɪ>	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x
<ot>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<oth>	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	✓

Table 1. Yorkshire dialectal in the low-class characters' speeches.

In the following sections, I am going to present the most representative dialectal features of each character in relation to the words that represent them.

4. 1 Daisy

Daisy is one of the most distinctive characters in the series as a kitchen maid with a strong Yorkshire dialect. Her speech in the dialogues throughout the first season of the series consists of a total of 1,124-word tokens and 328-word type. Within this sub-corpus 137 cases of Yorkshire dialect were found (cf. Figure 2), being the feature with higher frequency the 'glottalized /t/' (n= 50).
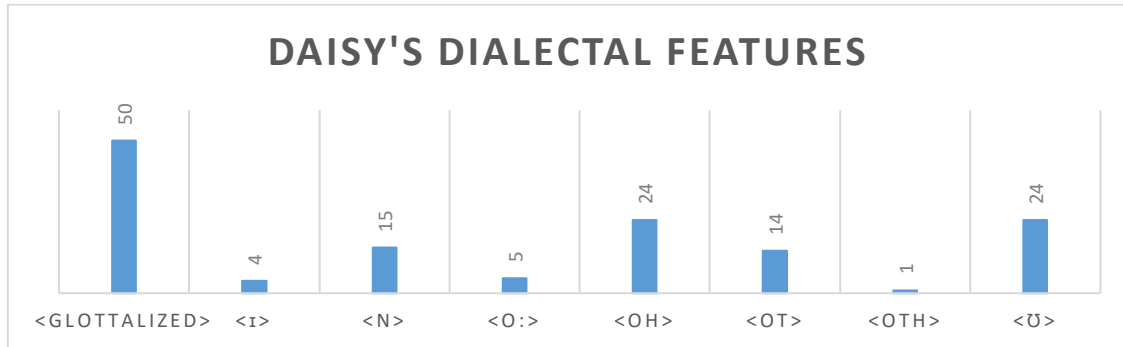

Fig. 2. Yorkshire dialectal features in DAISY SUB-CORPUS.

Within the 'glottalized /t/' feature, the word with higher frequency is 'that' (cf. Figure 3), being 9 tokens representing 0,80% of the total of the dialectal features found in Daisy's speech.

Fig. 3. Results obtained from *AntConc*'s concordance tool after searching the tag <glottalized> in DAISY SUB-CORPUS.

4. 2 Thomas

The following character, Thomas, is a footman who is noted for his flexibility regarding the switching of his accent, as Thomas speaks with Yorkshire accent when interacting with his lower-class counterparts, but he speaks with RP accent while addressing to the upper class. His dialogues across the series provide in the corpus a total of 2,129 tokens and 541 different word types. The number of cases of this dialect found in the character reaches 126 (cf. Figure 4), the most frequent being the 'omission of the initial /h/' (n= 40).
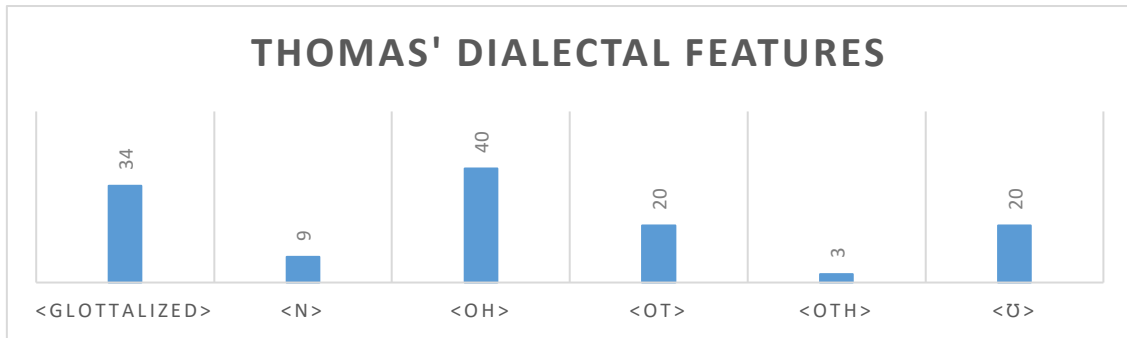
Fig. 4. Yorkshire dialectal features in THOMAS SUB-CORPUS.

The word with the higher frequency within the 'omission of initial /h/' in Thomas' speech is 'him' (cf. Figure 5), 9 tokens representing 0,42% of the total of the dialectal features of Thomas' corpus.

Fig. 5. Results obtained from AntConc's concordance tool after searching the tag <oh> in THOMAS SUB-CORPUS.

4. 3 O'Brien

O'Brien is the personal servant of Cora, the wife of Earl Grantham, and is characterised by her strong accent when speaking to his friend and work partner, Thomas. The sub-corpus of this character consists of 2,355 tokens and 538-word types, among which I found 88 cases of Yorkshire dialect (cf. Figure 6). The dialectal feature that most distinguishes this character due to the frequency of use is the 'omission of the initial /h/' (n= 29).
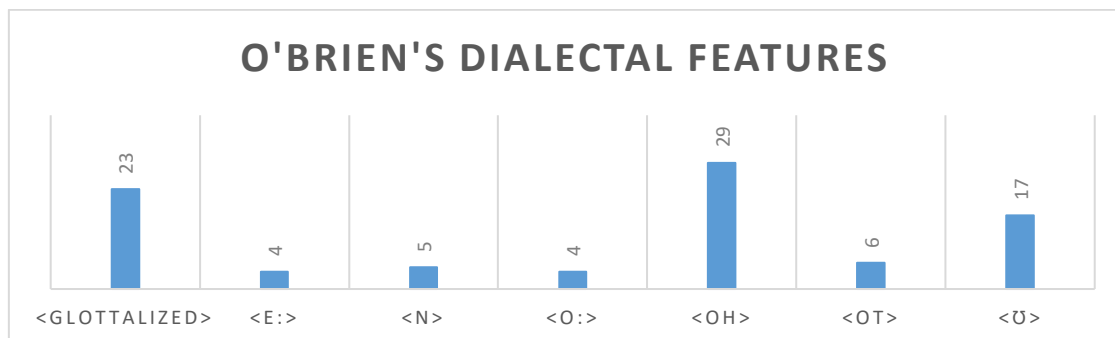

Fig. 6. Yorkshire dialectal features in O'BRIEN SUB-CORPUS.

Furthermore, the word with highest frequency within this dialectal feature is again a variant of 'he', in this case, the object pronoun 'him' (cf. Figure 7), 7 tokens representing 0,29% of the total of the dialectal features found in this character's speech.

22	rien> Her Ladyship's told <yk> <oh> him</yk> </oh> she thi O'Brien subcorpus.docx.txt
23	:O'Brien> We all thought <yk> <oh> him</yk> </oh> a very O'Brien subcorpus.docx.txt
24	Will we be seeing a lot of <yk> <oh> him</yk> </oh> ?</wc> O'Brien subcorpus.docx.txt
25	ght have taken a shine to <yk> <oh> him.</yk> </oh> </wc> O'Brien subcorpus.docx.txt
26	quick. Turn the tables on <yk> <oh> him</yk> </oh> before O'Brien subcorpus.docx.txt
27	we need to do is to make <yk> <oh> him</yk> </oh> a susp O'Brien subcorpus.docx.txt
28	ng</yk> </n> comes to <yk> <oh> him</yk> </oh> who w O'Brien subcorpus.docx.txt

Fig. 7. Results obtained from *AntConc*'s concordance tool after searching the tag <oh> in O'BRIEN SUB-CORPUS.

4. 4 Gwen

The following character to be analysed is Gwen, one of the maids and the closest friend of her also maid and roommate, Anna. Gwen's lines throughout the first season of the series consists of a total of 1,201 tokens and 355-word types. This sub-corpus presents 70 instances of Yorkshire dialect (cf. Figure 8), the feature with more frequency being the 'use of /ʊ/ instead of an apical 'a' /ʌ/', (n= 23).
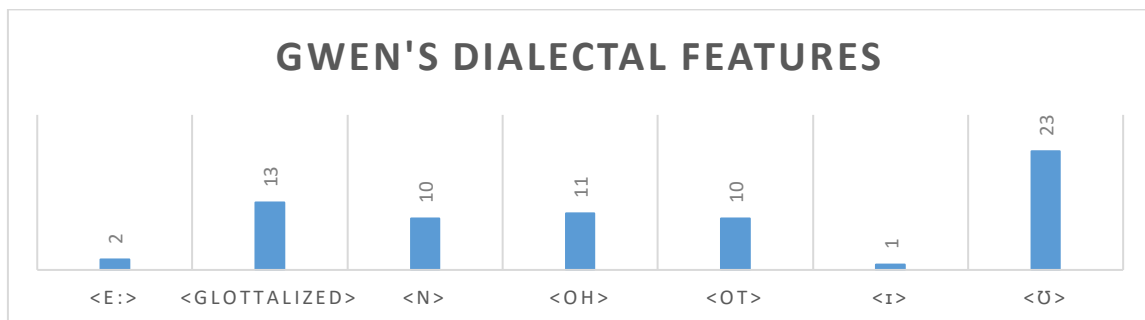
Fig. 8. Yorkshire dialectal features in GWEN SUB-CORPUS.

The word with higher frequency within the feature 'use of /ʊ/ instead of an apical 'a' /ʌ/' is the adverb 'up' (cf. Figure 9), 6 tokens representing 0,49% of the total of the dialectal features found in Gwen's speech.

16	n> I thought you'd given <yk> <ʊ> up.</yk> </ʊ> </wc> </(Gwen subcorpus.docx.txt
17	if I could just put my feet <yk> <ʊ> up.</yk> </ʊ> </wc> </(Gwen subcorpus.docx.txt
18	<wc> <Gwen> You came <yk> <ʊ> up</yk> </ʊ> , then?</w Gwen subcorpus.docx.txt
19	sure I left a trail of mud <yk> <ʊ> up</yk> </ʊ> the stairs.· Gwen subcorpus.docx.txt
20	: <wc> <Gwen> Bearing <yk> <ʊ> up.</yk> </ʊ> </wc> </(Gwen subcorpus.docx.txt
21	lized> it. You're brought <yk> <ʊ> up</yk> </ʊ> to think it' Gwen subcorpus.docx.txt

Fig. 9. Results obtained from *AntConc*'s concordance tool after searching the tag <ʊ> in GWEN SUB-CORPUS.

4. 5 Anna

Anna is a maid whose speech does not present many Yorkshire features, probably because of her relationship with Earl Grantham's valet, Mr. Bates. The sub-corpus of this character consists of 2,300 tokens and 532-word types. Moreover, within this sub-corpus there are 51 instances of Yorkshire dialect (cf. Figure 10), and she shares the feature with most frequency with Gwen, the 'use of /ʊ/ instead of an apical 'a' /ʌ/' (n= 32).

ANNA'S DIALECTAL FEATURES

<E:>	<GLOTTALIZED>	<O:>	<OH>	<OT>	<ʊ>
3	8	2	6	6	32
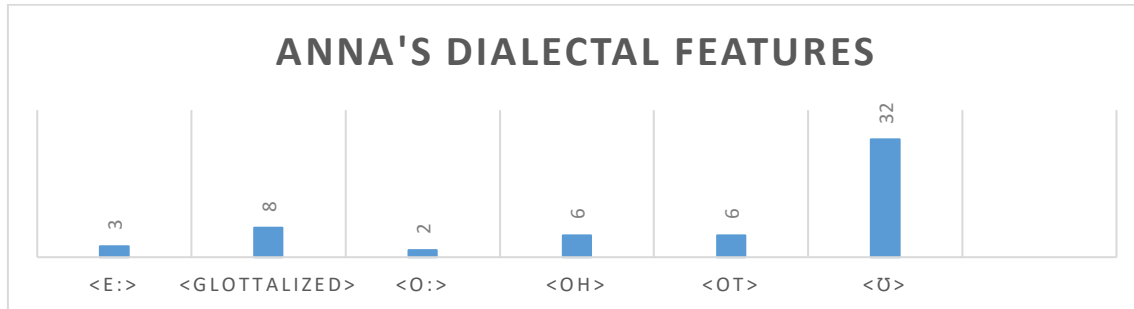
Fig. 10. Yorkshire dialectal features in ANNA SUB-CORPUS.

The word that Anna pronounces with the highest frequency for representing the feature 'use of /ʊ/ instead of an apical 'a' /ʌ/' of Yorkshire dialect is 'up' (cf. Figure 11), 7 tokens representing 0,30% of the total of the dialectal features used by this character.

22	I like to sleep until I woke \<yk> \<ʊ> up\</yk> \</ʊ> natural.\</	Anna subcorpus.docx.txt
23	and to take the other two \<yk> \<ʊ> up\</yk> \</ʊ> ?\</wc> \</	Anna subcorpus.docx.txt
24	ına> What are you doing \<yk> \<ʊ> up\</yk> \</ʊ> here?\</wc	Anna subcorpus.docx.txt
25	ought I'd take something \<yk> \<ʊ> up\</yk> \</ʊ> to Mr Bate	Anna subcorpus.docx.txt
26	eems they want to fix her \<yk> \<ʊ> up\</yk> \</ʊ> with Mr Ci	Anna subcorpus.docx.txt
27	h the vegetables. They're \<yk> \<ʊ> up\</yk> \</ʊ> in the serv	Anna subcorpus.docx.txt
28	\</ʊ> box. Has it turned \<yk> \<ʊ> up\</yk> \</ʊ> yet?\</wc>	Anna subcorpus.docx.txt

Fig. 11. Results obtained from *AntConc*'s concordance tool after searching the tag \<ʊ> in ANNA SUB-CORPUS.

4. 6 Mrs. Patmore

Mrs. Patmore is the kitchen maid in Earl Grantham's' house. Mrs. Patmore's speech in the dialogues throughout the first season of the series consists of a total of 1,556 tokens and 458-word types. She also uses 56 instances of Yorkshire dialect (cf. Figure 12), the most frequent being the 'use of /ʊ/ instead of an apical 'a' /ʌ/' (n= 17).

**MRS. PATMORE'S DIALECTAL FEATURES**

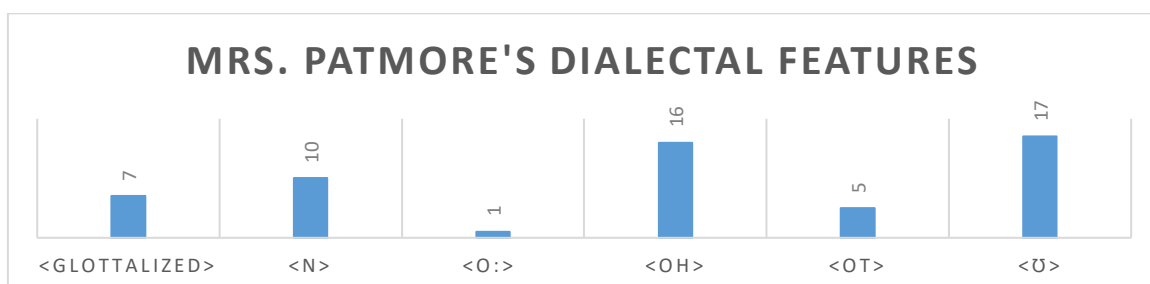| <GLOTTALIZED>	<N>	<O:>	<OH>	<OT>	<ʊ>
7	10	1	16	5	17

Fig. 12. Yorkshire dialectal features in MRS. PATMORE SUB-CORPUS.

Mrs. Patmore's word with higher frequency within this feature is, once again, the adverb 'up' (cf. table 14) with 10 tokens representing 0,64% of the total of the dialectal features found in Mrs. Patmore's speech.

7	ng and take this kedgeree \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up\</yk\> \</ʊ\> , and mind	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt
8	more\> Thomas, take that \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up. \</yk\> \</ʊ\> \</wc\> \</	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt
9	aven't\</yk\> \</oh\> sent \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up\</yk\> \</ʊ\> the egg ye	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt
10	e! And take those kidneys \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up\</yk\> \</ʊ\> to the serv	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt
11	drink of water, not a trip \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up\</yk\> \</ʊ\> the Nile.\<,	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt
12	re\> Well, you've cheered \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up\</yk\> \</ʊ\> a bit.\</wc	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt
13	everything\</yk\> \</n\> \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up\</yk\> \</ʊ\> before.\</\	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt
14	Maybe. I had a lot to put \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up\</yk\> \</ʊ\> with, I can	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt
15	Of course they're going \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up\</yk\> \</ʊ\> . What's w	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt
16	e\> Oh, haven't you gone \<yk\> \<ʊ\> up\</yk\> \</ʊ\> yet? Blow	Mrs. Patmore subcorpus.docx(1).txt

Fig. 13. Results obtained from *AntConc*'s concordance tool after searching the tag \<ʊ\> in MRS. PATMORE SUB-CORPUS.

4. 7 William

William, the other footman along with Thomas, is a character who may be largely unnoticed until the middle of the season, as his appearances are limited to his attempt to court Daisy. The sub-corpus of this character consists of 934 tokens and 324-word types, where I found 54 instances of Yorkshire dialect and the feature with more frequency is the 'omission of the initial /h/' (n= 16) (cf. Figure 14).

WILLIAM'S DIALECTAL FEATURES

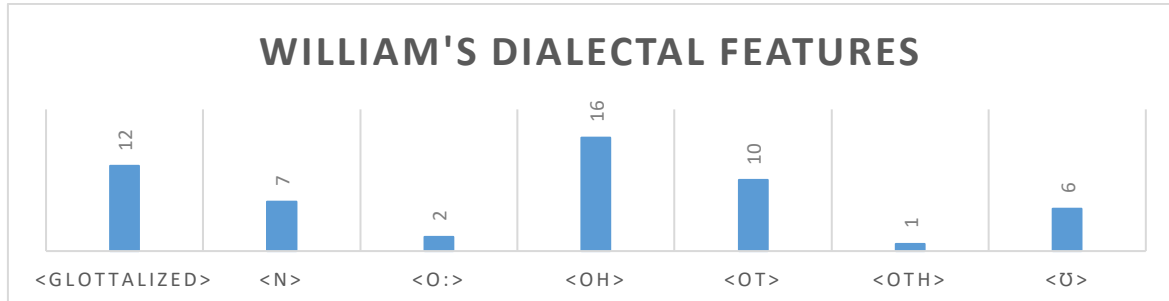| \<GLOTTALIZED\>	\<N\>	\<O:\>	\<OH\>	\<OT\>	\<OTH\>	\<ʊ\>
12	7	2	16	10	1	6

Fig. 14. Yorkshire dialectal features in WILLIAM SUB-CORPUS.

Within this feature, 'he' is the word with higher frequency (cf. Figure 15), 4 tokens representing 0,42% of the total of the dialectal features used in William's speech.

5	\> him\</yk\> \</oh\> , but \<yk\> \<oh\> he's\</yk\> \</oh\> not \<y	William subcorpus.docx.txt
6	e. Mr Carson won't mind. \<yk\> \<oh\> He's\</yk\> \</oh\> gone i	William subcorpus.docx.txt
7	\<ot\> what\</yk\> \</ot\> \<yk\> \<oh\> he's\</yk\> \</oh\> like wh	William subcorpus.docx.txt
8	ld never be like him. I bet \<yk\> \<oh\> he\</yk\> \</oh\> comes f	William subcorpus.docx.txt

Fig. 15. Results obtained from *AntConc*'s concordance tool after searching the tag \<oh\> in WILLIAM SUB-CORPUS.

5. DISCUSSION

This analysis has demonstrated that out of all the dialectal features that can be found in Yorkshire dialect, the ones with higher frequency are either those that are also usual in other dialects' speech or those that do not involve great phonetic difficulty such as the 'omission of initial /h/' or the 'use of /ʊ/ instead of an apical 'a' /ʌ/', two features that are found in all the speeches of all the low-class characters analysed. Consequently, all the character's speeches are perfectly understandable, not only for English speakers from different counties, but also for non-native speakers. In fact, these findings are consistent with those of Ilc's study, when he measures the complexity of the language used by the different characters and claims that both lower and upper classes "could be easily understood by an American second grader (7-8 years)" (Ilc 183).

As predicted, the representation of the Yorkshire dialect in the lower class of *Downton Abbey* seems to respond to the expectations that the series scriptwriters hold regarding the the audience's comprehension of this dialect, as the most phonologically understandable dialectal features are used so that the dialogue is easily assimilated by the audience and so that the spectator can follow the storyline easily. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that the dialectal words with the highest frequency are words that are very usual in English speech, such as 'he' or 'up', suggesting once again that the Yorkshire dialect is reduced to phonologically simple features and fairly common words to facilitate the audience's understanding of the speech of the low-class characters. Furthermore, another relevant finding of the analysis is that, occasionally, the same word is not pronounced in a consistent manner, which may be due to the fact that the Yorkshire dialect is not the one actually used in the daily speech of the actor or actress.

Another important aspect to consider is the connection between the variables of the representation of social class and the Yorkshire dialect. After analysing in depth the dialogue of these characters and their use of dialect, it has been established a direct influence of the scriptwriters on how the Yorkshire dialect is represented by the lower class, as it functions as a "linguistic feature that is employed throughout the series to differentiate social classes" (Ilc 184). This social distinction is slightly modified by the scriptwriters to make *Downton Abbey's* dialogue comprehensible to the audience, but still fulfils its function of representing the extreme rigidity of the British social classes in the 20th century.

6. CONCLUSION

In this Final Degree Thesis, an analysis of dialects has been addressed through corpus-based methodology, which has been of great benefit as I have obtained quantitative and accurate data from the compiled corpus, which has indeed answered my research questions of how the dialect of Yorkshire is represented by the lower class in *Downton Abbey*.

Moreover, both this methodology and the theoretical framework that has guided this analysis, have been used in previous studies, such as Lazzeretti, Edensor, or Baker and the multiple examples of sociolinguistic studies analysed in his book *Sociolinguistics and Corpus Linguistics*.

To conclude, although this analysis has only focused on the first season of the highly acclaimed series *Downton Abbey*, many studies regarding English dialects and their representation on the big screen have been developed by other academics such as Ilc

and Edensor. These scholars and their respective studies have contributed greatly to this Final Degree Thesis and to establishing that the representation of dialects in English tends to be modified so that the audience can understand the character's dialogue seamlessly. Thus, I sincerely hope that details as important as the representation of dialects by low-class characters in historical dramas will continue to be valued and cared for by the scriptwriters and the audience.

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