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Chapter 6

Aw'm Lancashire, Owd Cock, and Gradely Hearty

Enregistered Lancashire Voices in the Nineteenth-Century Theatre

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This paper places theatrical performances of the Lancashire dialect into the context of enregisterment, dialect stylisation, and the sociolinguistics of performance. I examine a selection of plays represented in Manchester and London in the late nineteenth century, including pantomimes, drolleries, comic sketches, and melodramas. The Lancashire dialect is analysed here to determine, on the one hand, the repertoire of linguistic features that were voiced on stage. On the other, I aim to ascertain whether such a repertoire varied on account of the target audience and the fact that the text of the performance was aimed for publication. The argument is made that stylisation of the Lancashire dialect in the nineteenth-century theatre shows variation as regards the set of enregistered features, which were drawn from more or less localised inventories that different audiences linked with social types that took different forms.

SUGARSTICK. What a strange dialect! Who is this party?
MRS. ANG. MEAD. Aw'm Lancashire, owd cock, and gradely hearty;
How's thysen?
(Layne 1864–65)

6.1. Introduction

On 31 December 1864, *The Manchester Guardian* published a review of *Mother Goose*, one of the three Christmas pantomimes that were presented that year to the Manchester

public. It had been premiered only a few days before at the Prince's Theatre, and, as was customary after the first night performance of such popular plays, the review acknowledged that some revisions and changes had been made afterwards. "It now runs very smoothly, with some additions and some omissions from what was originally intended," the reviewer wrote (Anonymous, 1864). Whilst alterations were made to the stage set and the vocal music, the reviewer qualified the acting itself as "scarcely subject to criticism" and praised the performance of Mr Frederick Maccabe, who had produced "a capital imitation of the Lancashire dialect" when impersonating Mrs Angel Meadow, a native of Newton Heath.

Such observations on the staged dialect were not uncommon in newspaper reviews. Dialect was indeed a regular feature of Manchester pantomimes and other forms of popular drama, which reviewers were quick to criticise on account of a poor performance. Mr Elton's characterisation of Dame Nursery, the Lancashire speaker of the Queen's Theatre pantomime *Little Boy Blue* (1868–69), was advertised in the *Guardian* as "unable to speak the Lancashire dialect" (Anonymous 1868b) as Mr. Elton's performed voice did "not possess the brogue" (Anonymous 1868a). Nevertheless, his "clog dance at the end of the first scene" minimised an otherwise "harsh portrait of a Lancashire schoolmistress in the coarser days of old" (Anonymous 1869). Critical acclaim largely rested then on the successful voicing of accent and its interplay with references to traditions and related meanings, which playwrights should be careful enough to draw from identifiable inventories, and actors perform as recognisable social types. The Lancashire dialect, like other dialect varieties, was "particularly well configured for stylized performance" as it "generally constitute[d] known repertoires with known socio-cultural and personal associations" (Coupland 2001a, 350). Of course, the fact that dialect imitation was reviewed as (in)accurate implies awareness of what the Lancashire dialect was like, one that the audience were able to read within the framework of prevailing socio-cultural as well as linguistic norms.

This chapter places theatrical performances of the Lancashire dialect into the context of enregisterment, which Agha (2003, 231–32) defines as "the processes through which a linguistic repertoire becomes differentiable within a language as a socially recognized register of forms." In other words, it refers to the process "whereby distinct forms of speech come to be socially recognized (and enregistered) as indexical of the speaker attributes by a population of language speakers" (Agha 2005, 38). Although "work in enregisterment has reawakened scholarly interest in literary texts" (Hodson 2016, 28),

this type of evidence awaits further and detailed examination, especially in the case of plays, which have rarely been explored within this framework, if at all. This chapter analyses a selection of plays represented in Manchester and London in the late nineteenth century, including pantomimes, drolleries, comic sketches, and melodramas. Because access to contemporary voices is impossible, I examine dialect performance in written form, considering both published and unpublished material, some of which remains in manuscript. The Lancashire dialect is scrutinised here to determine, on the one hand, the repertoire of linguistic features that were voiced on stage. On the other, I aim to ascertain whether such a repertoire varied on account of the target audience and the fact that the text of the performance was aimed for publication.

The analysis engages with recent research that sees staged performance "to often be linguistically stylized" (Bell and Gibson 2011, 558). I invoke Coupland (2007, 146–76) and look at these plays as instances of high performance in which the dialect acts as a "semiotic resource…for constructing personal identities" (Coupland 2009, 312) and is thus best understood as a "social practice rather than as variation" (Coupland 2001a, 348) alone. My interest does not lie, therefore, in reconstructing nineteenth-century Lancashire speech in the light of the dialect performed. Rather, this paper frames the dialect within the context of theatrical practices in which the performance of enregistered linguistic forms and associated indexical meanings makes stylisation possible. In fact, as Bell and Gibson (2011, 561) note, "[s]taged performance plays a central role in the enregisterment of styles and associated characterological figures." While this is stated in relation to "mediated and digitalized environment of the 21st century" (561), the analysis suggests that historical evidence of dialect performance can be read in much the same light.

This chapter is divided as follows. I first provide an overview of Agha's theory of enregisterment in relation to recent work on dialect stylisation and sociolinguistic approaches to staged performance. Then, I look at nineteenth-century performances of the Lancashire dialect, paying special attention to pantomimes, which have rarely been explored from a linguistic angle (Coupland 2009 is the exception). Section 6.4 provides some methodological remarks along with the analysis and discussion of the data. This chapter aims to contribute to recent third-wave historical sociolinguistic studies where the analysis of self-reflexive, performative speech has gained prominence in "the broad sociolinguistic research on intra-speaker variation in public" (Hernández-Campoy 2016, 160). So far, this framework has not been applied to historical performances of dialect speech, and is here addressed for the first time in relation to Lancashire.

6.2. Enregisterment, Stylisation, and the Performance of Dialect

Over the past few years, sociolinguistic research has witnessed an increasing interest in the agentive use of language whereby speakers "might design their speech production instrumentally to subtly but continuously change their image and their social world as a particular communicative strategy" (Hernández-Campoy 2016, 148). Unlike traditional deterministic and system-oriented approaches, the focus has turned to investigate how speakers make stylistic choices in unfolding discourse in order to enact stances, personae, and identities; that is, to create social meaning.[1] Schilling (2013, 328) notes that such a socio-constructionist and speaker-oriented approach has "become central not only in discussions of intra-speaker variation per se but variation analysis more generally." This shift, she goes on to explain, correlates with the third wave of variation study (see Eckert 2012), so that the first and second waves of sociolinguistic research are best represented by early approaches to style, namely Labov's Attention to Speech (1972) and Bell's influential Audience Design theory (1984), respectively. In this framework of stylistic variation, the study of self-reflexive and performative speech has gained considerable attention. This is essentially because, as Johnstone (2013, 198) writes, "all language is performance in the sense that we are putting some sort of persona, playing some sort of part." Paradoxically enough, this is the kind of language that has traditionally been excluded from sociolinguistic enquiry, as performance builds upon intentional and self-conscious speech; in other words, because it is non-vernacular, non-everyday language.

Coupland (2007, 146–49) draws a distinction between two types of performance. While "mundane performance" designates performance-like speech that is spontaneously produced in the context of everyday language, "high performance" comprises institutionalised events that are public and pre-planned. It refers to instances of language produced in such settings as onstage theatre, radio broadcasts, and political speeches. It is worth noting that high performance involves communicative focusing concerning different dimensions. Amongst them, we may refer to form (i.e., it shows a degree of metalinguistic awareness), meaning (i.e., the audience assume that the language and action produced are significant), situation (i.e., the audience gather to see the performance), and relation (i.e., performance is *for* the audience, not *to* the audience) (see further Coupland 2007, 147–48).[2] Put differently, as Thornborrow (2015, 38) explains, high performance involves a series of relationships between "what is said

and how it is said, who it is said to, in what context and by whom, how it is evaluated and what kind of performance it is." It is thus rehearsed and self-reflexive, while at the same time it draws attention to its performativity, both socio-cultural and linguistic. In this sense, language is performed agentively to evoke values and enact social personae, which performers put on to convey specific outcomes. Meanings are thereby constructed and negotiated, allowing performers to do identity work drawing on significant creative language. This suggests that identity is not simply inherited or given. Instead, it is dynamic, fluid, and created "intersubjectively rather than individually produced and interactionally emergent" (Bucholtz and Hall 2005, 587). However, Bell and Gibson (2011, 561) claim that it is a combination of structure and agency; identity is seen rather as both process and product. Schilling (2013, 342) highlights in this respect that identities cannot be crafted "out of nothing" as "we are all bound by structures and norms." As such, the linguistic forms deployed to create meaningful identities embody a wide range of pre-established linkages and references the audience are aware of. The plays discussed in this chapter support Schilling (2013) and suggest that the configuration of Lancashire identities in the nineteenth-century theatre drew upon such pre-existing associations that were negotiated and (re)shaped attending to the context of performance where dialect took centre stage.

High performance is thus coupled with stylisation, which Coupland (2001b) defines as "a knowing and self-aware performance of a style or genre drawn from a pre-established repertoire" (422) (see further Coupland 2007). In this framework, as already noted, the performance of dialect transcends the recreation of linguistic variation. Speaking "in altera persona" (Coupland 2001a, 349) is not only concerned with imitating another person's speech. Also, and as a result, it is critically intended to perform another persona linked with speaking in a specific way. Dialect is understood as a useful resource able to fabricate identities and evoke meanings, which are in turn drawn from common linguistic and socio-cultural references that the audience are able to interpret against the backdrop of prevalent values and mores. Dialect stylisation in high performance is therefore metalinguistic, metacultural, and markedly indexical in that it rests upon a recognisable inventory of forms and associated meanings which are reflexively (re)worked and circulated in front of an enculturated audience.

Agha's (2003, 2005) influential framework of enregisterment is relevant here. In fact, Johnstone (2013, 198) defines stylisation as "[p]erformance of enregistered varieties of speech like language and dialects." As already noted, enregisterment refers to the process whereby specific linguistic forms become associated with particular ways

of speaking that are indexical of social values. Drawing on Agha's definition, Hernández-Campoy (2016, 150) remarks that it "accounts for how meaning gets attached to linguistic forms and how these indexicalized forms metapragmatically circulate and reproduce in social interaction, permeating discourse." Enregisterment is thus critically grounded in Silverstein's (2003) orders of indexicality, which comprise the three levels at which linguistic forms take on social significance. Enregisterment works at the third order, where socially meaningful linguistic forms are the object of overt comment and public representation, being thus "deployed as part of deliberate and reflexive identity performances" (Bucholtz and Lopez 2015, 681). Performance thus relies on and contributes to the process of enregisterment, whilst enabling stylisation. In other words, dialect stylisation builds on enregisterment and at the same time adds to the process by consciously performing and circulating linkages that, as I have pointed out, may be reshaped before the audience. Interestingly, Johnstone (2013, 197) underlines in this regard that oral performance may be seen as a "centrifugal force in the process of enregisterment," which can "also expand the inventory of possible local forms and loosen the semiotic links between local-sounding speech and particular social meanings." This way, performance may open up a reflexive and dynamic space where the pre-existing associations between language and social meanings are liable to be reinterpreted within a fluid indexical field (see Eckert 2008).

Like other types of historical evidence, dialect performance of older dialects has only survived in the form of written representations of speech. This is not a minor disadvantage, as "[t]he question thus arises as to how stylistic variation is reflected in written documents" (Auer 2015, 134). Historical sociolinguistic studies on style remain so far characteristically scarce as a result. Of special relevance are a few very notable exceptions that have examined written discourse (e.g., correspondence) in the light of third-wave sociolinguistic frameworks that include speaker design (see Conde-Silvestre 2016; Hernández-Campoy and García-Vidal 2018) as well as enregisterment and indexicality. The important implications of Agha's and Silverstein's concepts have underlain recent sociolinguistic work on literary recreations of dialect, showing that such materials further our understanding of past dialect identities and related meanings. The major concern of these studies has been northern British English, considering representations of the "northern" dialect generally (Beal and Cooper 2015; Ruano-García 2012a, 2020c), as well as of localised varieties, such as those of Newcastle and Sheffield (Beal 2009; 2018), Yorkshire (Cooper 2013, 2020), and Lancashire (Ruano-García 2020a, 2020b). This chapter aims to go beyond this body of historical

sociolinguistic work by combining the key concepts of enregisterment and indexicality with dialect stylisation in the context of high performance. The type of evidence that I describe in the following section provides useful insight to identify Lancashire repertoires and indexicalised voices that may enable us to uncover patterns of style in the nineteenth-century theatre.

6.3. Staging Lancashire

Unlike fiction and poetry, theatrical representations of the Lancashire dialect have gained comparatively little linguistic attention. There seems to be scanty surviving evidence of the dialect in the form of such representations before the twentieth century, "although [they] certainly existed," Russell (2004, 150) notes. He points out that "[t]he nearest thing to a 'northern school' in this period is a thin strand of mainly Lancashire-based factory melodramas, not necessarily written by indigenous writers" (150).[3] This largely explains that linguistic research looking at literary recreations of the dialect has been chiefly interested in "standard" renditions circulated in mainstream genres, including novels and verse often written by well-known and leading native dialect authors. Examples are John Collier (1708–86), Edwin Waugh (1817–90), and Benjamin Brierley (1825–96). Many of their works, especially those that saw the light in the social and cultural milieu of industrial Lancashire, were expensive editions published by prominent provincial houses such as Abel and John Heywood in Manchester, as well as by London publishers like William Nicholson and Sons. Beetham (2009, 25) stresses that "[l]ocal publishers, notably Abel and John Heywood, were shrewd business men, well able to exploit the public's appetite for local and especially dialect writing." They targeted "a select, higher-class market" (Joyce 1991, 263) in which Waugh and Brierley, amongst others, had their dialect writings circulated and produced. Joyce (1991) rightly claims that "[d]isproportionate historical attention has been given to this form of dialect" (263). Minor forms of writing and entertainment that include popular performances such as pantomimes, burlesques, and the music hall likewise represent key contributions to the social, literary, and linguistic heritage of Lancashire not only for their massive social appeal, but also because they enshrined and staged a dialect that worked as a meaningful resource for the configuration of identities (see Vicinus 1974, 185–285).

As elsewhere in the country, pantomimes were major forms of popular entertainment in Victorian Lancashire, which were nearly institutionalised as a central ritual of Christmas. Often premiered on Boxing Day, pantos, as they are commonly known, built

on plots that combined fairy tale and magic elements with comedy and farcical devices, while blending songs and dance with spectacular effects within a rather predictable yet changing format (see Sullivan 2011a, 26–32). More often than not, the names of leading artists of the burlesque and the music hall featured in the cast of performers in the attempt of theatre managers to attract audiences, which at the same time witnesses the versatility of actors and actresses to take on different personae when acting in different places and thus speaking to different audiences. For example, Frederick Maccabe (?-1904), the Lancashire speaker of *Mother Goose* (1864–65), was a Liverpool-born ventriloquist and actor of the music hall well known to British audiences, with fame in the US and the colonies too. During a tour to New Zealand, he was advertised as "the renowned character, delineator, and vocal illusionist" (Anonymous 1883b, 2) that *Public Opinion* had previously defined as particularly able to display "his versatility in the delineation of various characters" (Anonymous 1872, 666). Of course, the incorporation of such stars not only worked as a strategy to promote the successful quality of the performance. It also catered to the appetite of an audience avid for Christmas pantos which, in the case of Lancashire, were often performed in Manchester theatres: the Prince's Theatre, the Queen's Theatre, the Theatre Royal, and the Comedy Theatre.

As already noted, pantos appealed to people of all ages and different social classes who sometimes came from other localities and counties. Sullivan (2011a) finds evidence in provincial newspapers reporting that "Christmas trips to Manchester were advertised from Sheffield and Liverpool, the manager of the Theatre Royal in the 1890s boasting audiences 'from as far south as Swansea…Carlisle in the north, and Hull in the east'" (7). In spite of this, and as in other urban centres, Manchester pantos were often written by local authors, who targeted local audiences that they engaged through topical referencing which responded to people's expectations and built on communal experience.[4] For instance, the *Manchester Guardian* review of Forsyth's *Jack and the Beanstalk* (Anonymous 1877) noted that its chief merit was that

"its tone and colouring throughout are local, and that it deals with contemporaneous and recent incidents; and consequently every hit that is made tells at once, and is caught up by the audience readily and responded to with hearty cheers and laughter."

This colouring was accomplished through the naming of places, for which real names of locations in and around Manchester were frequently included: for example, Deansgate in Forsyth's play, whereas St Ann's Square is referred to in one of scenes of Shepley's *Little Boy Blue* (1868–1869), and *Little Red Riding Hood* (Anonymous 1883a) features

a lass from Shudehill. Often, they were framed within contemporary events like the Salford election, as well as traditions that spoke to the audience's local knowledge. Clog dancing and the Knott Mill Fair were thus instrumental in shaping the Lancashire taste of *The House that Jack Built* (Anonymous 1862), while appealing to the spectators, who were able to read the meaning of rural traditions like rush-bearing and morris dancing alluded to in Layne's *Mother Goose* (1864–1865). Such pertinent references aligned the audience, testifying not only to their awareness of Lancashire facts, locations, and events, but also, and more importantly, to their sense of belonging, their sense of place.

The vernacular did play a pivotal role in this process of identity performance and construction. Sullivan (2011a, 116–17) notes that it was usually a distinctive feature of the Dame character, a comic maternal figure that spoke in the dialect, especially in those plays produced at the Queen's. In fact, dialect performance was more often associated with this theatre, which, Sullivan adds, points at "a largely working-class audience, for whom the accent would have signified their shared and inherited regional identity, maintained in the urban environment" (116). The pantos scrutinised here suggest that dialect was utilised as a missing link between the city and rural Lancashire, evident in the settings where the strong-willed Dame is often placed: a farm in *The House that Jack Built* (Anonymous 1862) and a cottage "in the Village of Treaclesfield" (fol. 2v) where we find Dame Daw in *Jack and the Beanstalk* (Forsyth 1877). Dialect likewise marks social distinctions being allocated to some servants, while on occasion employed as a resource for framing values of self-esteem and solidarity linked with the region:

(*Enter* SALLY IN OUR ALLEY*, with pail and mop*)
SALLY: (*Striking attitude with mop*) I'm your man!
BARON: What you?
SALLY: Yes, me! I'm Sally in our Alley.
DAME: Looks like the front row of the corps-de-ballet.
SALLY: I'm Lancashire, tha' knows.
BARON: Well, lass, what then?
SALLY: You'll find that I'm a match for twenty men.
A gradely lass from Shudehill. Dash my cap! (*throws down cap*)
Watch how I'll polish off this lawyer chap.
(Anonymous 1883a, fol. 11v)

Only rarely can we find explicit metalinguistic commentary on the use of dialect. Those cases in which it is attested reveal sensitive awareness of the Lancashire dialect as a distinct variety, which is in fact evaluated as strange by a "candied member of the

aristocracy" (5) named Sugarstick in *Mother Goose* (Layne 1864–65) and by the King in *Little Boy Blue* (Shepley 1868–69):

KING: From your appearance, I did not expect
That I should hear so strange a dialect.
Who are you?
DAME: As yo're honor's deigned to ax, well
I's a 'umble follower of Missis Maxwell. (13)

Passages like this one encourage us to assume that neither writers nor audiences were unfamiliar with the dialect circulated in other forms of published literature produced by acclaimed authors. Waugh and Brierley, for example, wrote pantos and songs for the Prince's in the 1860s and the 70s (Sullivan 2011a, 118–19) in which the dialect built on linguistic inventories displayed in the rest of their work. The following extract from the song that Brierley wrote for *Puss in Boots* (1878) makes it clear:

I'll tell yo' in rhyme
Of a very quare time
This owd England of eaur's i'th' year seventy-eight,
For what we're o' gone through
An' what we're goin' on to,
Is enough to make ony mon strip him to fight.
We've pinin' an' clemmin', …
(cited in Sullivan 2011a, 175)

It would not be striking, therefore, that pantos echoed such linguistic forms known to Manchester audiences. Unfortunately, the written evidence of the dialect employed in these popular works is not particularly abundant. A few surviving books of words constitute the only source of information to revive the performance of the vernacular. As is known, these versions of the script that were on sale to the audience "represented the pantomime prior to the first night performance," so they are "closer to the author's text than to the performance the audience witnessed" (Sullivan 2011b, 109). This naturally implies that the available dialect is essentially a reflection of the writers' stylistic repertoires, which prevents any access to possible shifts and adjustments made by performers in the course of acting. Nevertheless, because books of words functioned as subsidiary, yet necessary, elements that helped spectators follow what was being spoken, they move "necessarily to centre stage as a research tool" (Sullivan 2010, 156) when it comes to the study of dialect.

This likewise applies to the remaining evidence of other forms of popular theatre that include drolleries and comic sketches. Unlike pantos, however, these were sometimes

published, and the surviving texts constitute the full version of the intended performance. Pieces like Ralph Parr's *Wanted a Wife* (1880) and native James Augustus Atkinson's (1832–1911) *Merry Andrew o'Manchester* (1884) show that dialect is equally employed as a device that unites rural and urban Lancashire, and which writers allocate to recognisable social personae that take different shapes. On the one hand, Parr links the dialect with a "straightforward Lancashire woman. Wearing a big bonnet and print dress" and a manservant "full of wit and fond of fun" (1). On the other, Atkinson exploits it for comic purposes in the characterological type of the merry Andrew, here a clownish Manchester-born man who prides himself on his own foolishness: "Aw'm Merry Andrew. I conno' help foolin'. Aw'm nobbut a foo'!" (15) The Lancashire dialect delineates social distinctions between, for example, a manservant and a retired gentleman in Parr's play, which recreate the hierarchy of the time (see Joyce 1991: 279–304). Interestingly, the use of dialect here is not concerned with underscoring working-class pride and solidarity. As a matter of fact, these two instances of popular entertainment do not touch upon social criticism nor the affairs of the working classes, which were major subject matters of the melodramas referred to above. As already noted, many of them were written by outsiders and represented in London and Lancashire. An example is Dion Boucicault's *The Long Strike* (1866) where we can find working-class characters like Noah Learoyd, a delegate from the workmen, and Jack o'Bob's, a working man. The evidence suggests that the dialect employed in them differed from the repertoires deployed in pantos and published comic plays both regarding the sense of linguistic detail and the localisedness of the forms voiced on stage. At the same time, the analysis undertaken in the following section goes some way to indicating that the vernacular circulated in comic plays was more closely aligned than in the case of pantos with the linguistic inventories attested in other forms of published Lancashire literature.

6.4. Analysis

6.4.1. Methodological Remarks

As already pointed out, the aim of this study is to identify the set of Lancashire forms that were associated with particular social meanings in stylised performances of the dialect. I endeavour to show that such pre-established linkages and references were reshaped on account of the audience and the context of the representation, while suggesting that the repertoire of linguistic features varied if the text of the performance was aimed for publication.

The analysis is thus based on a selection of high performances of the Lancashire dialect. They have been chosen according to two criteria. Firstly, I have considered plays produced for and performed in front of local audiences. Instances of published and unpublished performance have been taken into account. The sample comprises, on the one hand, the books of words of three pantos represented at the Prince's, the Queen's, and the Theatre Royal, all of which were presumably written by local authors. They were printed for sale before their performance and are preserved as such in Manchester Central Library. On the other, I examine a drollery and a comic sketch written by secondary Lancashire writers, which were issued and circulated by the local publishers Abel and John Heywood. They are now part of the *Salamanca Corpus*.[5] Secondly, the selection has considered plays including performances of the dialect written by outsiders that were not necessarily produced for and staged in front of local audiences. The analysis thus looks at two melodramas that were represented in London: they are held at the British Library in the Lord Chamberlain's Collection, one of which is only preserved in manuscript form. The sample excludes dramatised versions of Lancashire novels written by leading native writers (e.g., Brierley's *The Layrock of Langleyside*, performed at the Queen's in 1866), mainly because they reproduce the set of features used by these writers in their fictional works. As shown in Table 6.1, the selection comprises seven texts, which amount to c.14500 words representing the performance of the dialect, thus considering the speech of dialect speakers alone (e.g., the Dame character, Merry Andrew, Jack o'Bob's, etc.). The sample contains a balanced number of different types of high performance, which may help us ascertain enregistered Lancashire voices in the nineteenth-century theatre.

6.5. Data and Analysis

Table 6.2 displays the repertoire of dialect forms that are commonly found in the pantos scrutinised. As in Tables 6.3 and 6.4, they have been identified thanks to a wordlist retrieved with the *Corpus Presenter* suite (Hickey 2003), which I have classified according to the linguistic features they represent.[6] They include traits that have been reported as characteristic of traditional Lancashire speech, as I discuss in more detail below.

As regards morphological features, Beal (2004, 118) explains that "In most of the North, excluding Tyneside, Northumberland and Liverpool, singular *thou* and *thee* are retained in more traditional dialects," which the *Survey of English Dialects* (1962–71) (*SED*) documents for Lancashire with different realisations of "thou" in stressed

position: [ðæ:], [ðɛ:] and [θaʊ] (Upton et al. 1994, 486). Indeed, Wright's *English Dialect Grammar* (*EDG*) (1905, §173) records *th*-forms for the second person singular pronoun across the county. Similarly, Upton and Widdowson (2006, Map 34) find *hoo* "she" in an area comprising most of Lancashire and adjacent districts of South-West Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, which the *EDG* (406) and the *SED* confirm, as Upton et al. (1994, 487) show. Of interest are also Definite Article Reduction (DAR) (see Ruano-García 2012b), as well as the first person singular subject pronoun *Aw* "I." Ellis (1889, 333) reports on various pronunciations of stressed "I," which include the low monophthongs "A", "aa," and "A`" in the western localities of Skelmersdale, Burnley, and Westhoughton; the forms "a" and "A" are recorded in unstressed position. Evidence available from the turn of the century points in the same direction. Taylor (1901, s.v. *a*) notes that "I" was "[p]ronounced 'ah'" in the South of the county, whereas Hargreaves (1904, 79) refers to "*ā*" and "*a*" respectively as the stressed and unstressed forms in the southern locality of Adlington. As regards lexis, a distinctive feature of the dialect is the epithet *gradely* "fine, proper," whose recurrent use in vernacular writing "creates and confirms a community's self-image," as Wales (2006, 133) states. The widespread distribution of this word in nineteenth-century Lancashire is also witnessed by the large number of works in which it was glossed. Heywood (1861, s.v.) describes it as "a very common word," whereas Morris (1869, s.v.) highlights that it was a "word of almost universal application."

Contemporary records likewise provide valuable qualitative insight into the phonological features identified. By way of illustration, Milner (1874), refers to *l*-vocalisation (i.e., "aw" instead of "all," "howd" instead of "hold"; see Wells 1982, 313). He observes that "in place of 'au' in 'fall' and 'all,' we get the broad and open 'o,' as in 'fo' and 'o,'" (32) a sound which, Heywood (1861, 28) notes, was "both archaic and not partially colloquial." Such observations also emphasised the old pedigree of the dialect in relation to forms like *mon* "man" and *lond* "land." As Heywood (1861, 25) explains, they were "firmly retained amongst us," pointing out that the rounding of /a/ + nasal "although a common archaism it is in the present day one of the distinctive characteristics of the dialect." The archaic connotation indexed by the rounded vowel sound was underlined by Gaskell (1854, 12), who understood it as "nothing more than Anglo-Saxon." Actually, Picton (1865, 29) relies on similar examples to illustrate the ancient heritage of "the rough pronunciation of Lancashire" which includes other peculiarities as well. We may refer to the "tendency to retain the diphthongal pronunciation in words where modern English uses only a single vowel…Meeons [for]

Means" (30), as well as the realisation of the MOUTH diphthong that he qualifies as "the South Lancashire shibboleth" (32) often represented <eaw>: *eawer* "our," *neaw* "now." This was a prominent trait that Heywood (1861, 28) also notes and that had variant pronunciations (see Maguire 2012; *EDG*: §170). It remains a salient feature until today of a more restricted area that includes Wigan and Greater Manchester.

Some of these forms are shared by the published comic plays analysed. Table 6.3 shows that they commonly drew upon an inventory that was comparatively more detailed in linguistic terms. Not only did it comprise features such as *l*-vocalisation, the development of ME /u:/ in MOUTH words, and second person *thou*, but also a number of traits that occur consistently in both works and that have likewise been documented in the dialect. Amongst them, we may refer to the [ʊ]-type realisations of the GOAT diphthong, which Bamford (1854, 182) and Axon (1870) illustrate with *gooa* "go" and *nooàs* "nose" (see *EDG*, §§93, 120; Ellis 1889, 330, 353). Also, the stylisation of the dialect builds upon clitics that, according to Heywood (1861, 19), were "one of the greatest causes of the unintelligibility of the dialect" to outsiders.

Interestingly, this repertoire is closely aligned with that found in other forms of published literature, including prose fiction and verse dialogues. I have shown elsewhere that the dialect circulated in such works during 1700–1900 was enregistered as a commonly occurring set of traits that includes nearly the same linguistic forms (Ruano-García 2020a). This would suggest that performances of the dialect aimed for publication drew upon the features that had been conventionalised in and thanks to the works of leading authors, thereby catering to the expectations of potential readers and performers. The fact that some of these traits were not employed in stylisations of the dialect performed in pantos does not seem to indicate, therefore, that they did not exist, nor that Manchester audiences were unaware of them. The evidence from pantos is not ample enough for reliable generalisations and, as already noted, it represents the actual performance only partially. Yet it is likely that some writers of pantos may have not seen these traits as immediately relevant to their spectators either because they were understood as forms peculiar to published literature, or because some of them were not specifically localised to Lancashire and were not thus seen as particularly salient. In this regard, forms such as *mich* "much" and *sich* "such" (both showing OE /ü/ > ME /i/) were found in Northern Englishes more widely, whereas *summat* "something" was also common in other northern and Midland dialects according to Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary* (1896–1905) (s.v. *somewhat*, sb).[7] This also applies to the realisations of the

PRICE diphthong (i.e. [ɔɪ], [i:]), neither of which were localised to Lancashire alone, as I have shown (2020a).

The degree of localisedness of the linguistic traits may also explain the differences observed in the repertoire found in melodramas. Table 6.4 shows that these differences are clear concerning the sense of linguistic detail of the features performed and their distribution. Whilst building upon identifiable traits like *l*-vocalisation, melodramas comprised other features that were widely employed in Northern dialects (e.g., *mun*) and/or other varieties (e.g., uninflected BE; see Britain 2007, 87–88; Upton et al. 1994, 494).

Clark (2019, 6) stresses that it is not "accidental that in closely knot communities the more local the audience…the more dialect features are enregistered that are in tune with the locality in which they are being performed. It is also evident that in performance contexts, the further away from the region, the fewer are drawn upon by the performers." The pre-established linkages between dialect and related meanings that pantos and other comic plays relied on were thus reworked in London theatres and for London audiences for whom these features may have indexed the meanings associated with what they knew or imagined as the Lancashire persona. As such, the values of comicality and strong-mindedness linked to the figures of the Dame character and clownish Andrew performed through the vernacular in Manchester plays were reshaped outside Lancashire where the dialect was most commonly associated with ideas of working class. Indeed, the evidence suggests that the working-class characterological figure circulated in factory melodramas was not necessarily activated on the basis of localised forms shared and expected by local audiences (e.g., MOUTH). The data rather suggest that the stylisation of the dialect outside Lancashire was reworked and adapted to the context of the performance. It drew on a changing set of enregistered traits that took different shapes, evoked different meanings in front of different audiences, and were voiced by performers who aligned themselves with the characterological figure performed through the dialect that those audiences recognised. In this sense, the plays scrutinised here testify to the "centrifugal force" (Johnstone 2013, 197) of performance in the process of enregisterment insofar as performance acts as a dynamic space where the repertoire of dialect forms is expanded and the links between Lancashire speech and related meanings reinterpreted, as we have seen.

6.6. Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I have examined the enregisterment of the Lancashire dialect by looking at nineteenth-century performances of the dialect in the context of stylisation and the sociolinguistics of performance. By combining the notions of enregisterment and indexicality within such frameworks, I have been able to identify shifting patterns of style that drew upon varying linguistic inventories linked with different characterological types. The comparative analysis undertaken here has shown, first, that while the Lancashire persona associated with the dialect in Manchester pantos and published comic plays often embodies comicality and recreates social distinctions, the set of traits deployed to perform such a characterological type differs. In the case of comic plays, I have identified a repertoire that is largely comparable to that found in other forms of Lancashire literature written by leading native dialect authors and published by influential local houses. As noted, this goes some way to suggesting that the Lancashire dialect performed in these plays drew upon forms that had been enregistered in and thanks to the publication of such popular works.[8] Pantos relied on a more restricted set of items that yet seem to have been more localised. Second, the analysis has revealed that the speech of the working-class Lancashireman circulated in factory melodramas performed outside Lancashire was crafted through a set of linguistic traits that combined forms traditionally associated with the dialect, as well as other non-standard features that were more widely employed in the North and elsewhere in England.

Limited though the evidence explored is, the analysis suggests that stylised performances not only relied on but also contributed to the enregisterment of the dialect. It was not circulated as a static repertoire of linguistic features indexical of a set of pre-established meanings, but rather took the form of a dynamic inventory that playwrights and performers adapted to the place of the representation, the audience, and their shared ideas about the social persona associated with such forms. In the process of social circulation through performance, the enactment of Lancashire identities through the dialect was therefore reworked, which would attest to the fact that "register models undergo various forms of revalorization, retypification, and change" (Agha 2005, 38). By exploring hitherto unresearched material, the analysis thus hopes to have opened the way for further scrutiny of historical dialect performance given the implications that such intentional speech has for the broad study of sociolinguistic style both past and present. All in all, this chapter has sought to enhance our understanding of dialect enregisterment as a dynamic process of immediate relevance to historical third-wave sociolinguistic enquiry.

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Table 6.1 Sample

Date	Title	Type	Theatre	Locality	Form	N words
1861	*Mary Barton*	melodrama	Grecian	London	MS	3483
1862	*The House that Jack Built*	pantomime	Th. Royal	Manchester	printed	682
1864–65	*Mother Goose*	pantomime	Prince's	Manchester	printed	417
1866	*The Long Strike*	melodrama	Lyceum	London	published	5666
1868–69	*Little Boy Blue*	pantomime	Queen's	Manchester	printed	1227
1880	*Wanted a Wife*	comic sketch	unknown	Manchester	published	1443
1884	*Merry Andrew o'Manchester*	drollery	unknown	Manchester	published	1537
Total						*14455*

Table 6.2 Repertoire of Lancashire features: pantos (N = 2326 words)

Features and examples		Tokens	NF / 1,000
1p pronoun *Aw*	"*Aw* have a dawter—but hoo's not much use"	79	33.9
MOUTH	*ceawncil* "council," *neaw* "now"	47	20.2
2p pronoun *thou*, *thee*, etc.	"Get forrud with *thy* tale—*thou*'st not dun yet"	46	19.8
DAR	"*Th'* owd cat gets up when *t'* kitlins start to purr"	42	18.05
l-vocalisation	*kawve* "calf," *tould* "told"	30	12.9
ME /ɛ:/	*cleon* "clean," *theer* "there"	13	5.6
hoo "she"	"*Hoo* would'nt be her, if *hoo* no lad were wooing"	12	5.1
/a/ + nasal	*connot* "cannot," *stond* "stand"	12	5.1
FACE	*mak'* "make," *tak* "take"	12	5.1
verbal *-n*	they *lick'n* "lick," they *looken'* "look"	12	5.1
FOOT-STRUT	*coom* "come," *sum* "some"	10	4.3
gradely "proper"	"Aw ses to't droiver, yo'res ar *gradely* tits"	8	3.4
j-formation	*yed* "head," *yezzy* "easy"	7	3.09

brass "money"	"Sum nat'ral *brass*, ut shoines eawt ow his face"	5	2.1
preterites	*come'd* "came," *cotch'd* "caught," *seed* "saw"	3	1.3
reflexive pronoun	*eawrsels* "ourselves," *thysen* "yourself"	3	1.3

Table 6.3 Repertoire of Lancashire features: published comic plays (N = 2980 words)

Features and examples		Tokens	NF / 1,000
1p pronoun *Aw*	"*Aw* should think *aw* have, by gum!"	122	40.9
PRICE	*surproise* "surprise," *toneet* "tonight"	55	18.4
DAR	"Aw'm noan *th'* foo' folk tak' me for"	50	16.8
/a/ + nasal	*hont* "hand," *onyone* "anyone"	48	16.1
2p pronoun *thou*, *thee*, etc.	"Gi' me howd o' *thi* leg, I'll put it reet, mon"	38	12.7
MOUTH	*heaw* "how," *witheaut* "without"	29	9.7
/l/-vocalisation	*aw* "all," *gowd* "gold"	28	9.4
past tense BE	"It *wur* on'y a marlock, owd mate"	25	8.4
verbal *-n*	"Aye, who else *don* yo' think aw am?"	21	7.04
ot / *ut* "that"	"sir, aw fund th' papper *ut* yoa want"	20	6.7
ME /ɛ:/	*deol* "deal," *wheere* "where"	17	5.7
GOAT	*boath* "both," *gooin* "going"	16	5.4
nowt "nothing"	"ther's *nowt* to sup—nayther tay nor ale"	14	4.7
FACE	*mak'* "make," *takkin'* "taking"	12	4.02
mi "my"	"aw couldna keep up *mi* pranks"	12	4.02
j-formation	*unyezzy* "uneasy," *yerb* "herb"	11	3.7
clitics	*didner* "did not," *wilto* "will thou"	10	3.3
summat "something"	"Didsto ax me to have *summat* to ait"	10	3.3
OE /ü/	*mich* "much," *sich* "such"	9	3.02
reflexive pronoun	*hissel'* "himself," *yoursels* "yourselves"	7	2.3
owt "anything"	"Aw wouldna ax yo' to gi' me *owt*"	6	2.01
FOOT-STRUT	*amung* "among," *somebudy* "somebody"	3	1.01
lengthening ME /e/	*weel* "well"	3	1.01
-ong > *-ung*	*amung* "among," *wrung* "wrong"	3	1.01
w-formation	*(a)whoam* "home"	2	0.7

Table 6.4 Repertoire of Lancashire features: melodramas (N = 9149 words)

Features and examples	Tokens	NF / 1,000

2p pronoun *thou*, *thee*, etc.	"*Thou* wert a workman thysen once"	68	7.4
uninflected BE	"Jane, she *be* in Filler's Lane, wi' young Radley"	17	1.8
FOOT-STRUT	*Lunnon* "London," *oop* "up"	17	1.8
clitics	*munna* "mun not," *tellee* "tell thee"	12	1.3
reflexive pronoun	*mysel* "myself," *thysen* "thyself"	7	0.7
mun "must"	"Then I *mun* go elsewhere!"	5	0.5
l-vocalisation	*cowld* "cold," *ould* "old"	5	0.5
preterites	*know'd* "knew," *seed* "saw"	3	0.3
naught "nothing"	"and so we be *naught* to do, but despair and die!"	2	0.2

[1]The concept of *style*, as it has been and is used in sociolinguistics, is explored in detail by Hernández-Campoy (2016) from a wide range of perspectives.

[2]They show some correspondence with the dimensions described by Bell and Gibson's (2011) sociolinguistics of performance: identities, reflexivity, audience, authenticity, genre, etc.

[3]They include pieces such as Douglas Jerrold's (1803–57) *Factory Girl* (1832), John Walker's *The Factory Lad* (1832), and Watts Phillips's (1825–74) *Lost in London* (1867), all of which were performed in Lancashire and London. Of interest are also two dramatisations of Elizabeth Gaskell's (1810–65) industrial novel *Mary Barton* (1848) that are explored in this chapter: William Thompson Townsend's (1806?–1870) *Mary Barton* (1861) and Dion Boucicault's (1820–90) *The Long Strike* (1866).

[4]Of special mention are J.J.B. Forsyth and John Fox Turner (pseud. Pyngle Layne). According to Robinson (2015, 22) other authors writing for Manchester audiences between 1880 and 1903 are John Wilton-Jones (1853–97), George Dance (1857–1932), William Wade, and Thomas Finnellan Doyle (1838–?). Doyle wrote mainly for the Theatre Royal, whereas Wade did it chiefly for the Comedy Theatre, Jones being credited as the writer of pantos performed at the Prince's, Queen's, and Comedy theatres. Not all of them were local writers (e.g., Doyle was born in Ireland, whereas Dance was original from Nottingham).

[5]*The Salamanca Corpus: Digital Archive of English Dialect Texts* is the first electronic corpus of texts containing literary representations of dialect from the sixteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, which is available at http://www.thesalamancacorpus.com (García-Bermejo Giner et al., 2011–). It includes instances of both literary dialects and dialect literature from all over England, as well as examples of prose, verse, and drama, many of which are otherwise hard to access. The plays analysed here are two examples: both of them have been transcribed from rare copies held at the University of Manchester Library.

[6]Following the usual practice in related studies, John Wells's (1982) lexical sets are employed in this paper to identify some of the features found in the corpus, namely the FACE (i.e. /eɪ/),

GOAT (i.e. /əʊ/), and MOUTH (i.e. /aʊ/) diphthongs, along with the lack of split between FOOT and STRUT words (e.g. *foot* /ʊ/, *strut* /ʌ/), which is "[o]ne of the most salient markers of northern English pronunciation" (Beal 2004, 121). OE and ME are used respectively for Old English and Middle English.

[7]*Little Boy Blue* (1869) has these two instances of OE /ü/ > ME /i/, whereas *summat* is not employed in any of the pantos.

[8]This opens the path to explore the linguistic practices of the community of publishers that produced Lancashire works so as to determine any possible impact on the crafting of the textual dialect and thus on the enregisterment of Lancashire written styles.