

**Liverpudlian social class in modern drama:
A study of Educating Rita (1980) and Paradise Bound (2006)**

**Master's thesis
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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan kahta näytelmää, jotka ovat Willy Russellin <u>Educating Rita</u> (1980) sekä Jonathan Larkinin <u>Paradise Bound</u> (2006). Molemmat ovat liverpoolilaisia ja kuvaavat paikallisen työväenluokan elämää eri näkökulmista. Tavoitteena oli selvittää, millaista työväenluokan kieli on näytelmissä: Vastaako se todellista työväenluokan kieltä? Onko kielessä eroja näytelmien välillä? Vastauksia haettiin niin yhteiskuntatieteellisen luokka-analyysin kuin kielitieteenkin avulla. Hahmot jaettiin yhteiskuntaluokkiin pääosin Kate Foxin teorian perusteella, eli sen mukaan, toivoivatko he kuuluvansa korkeampaan luokkaan. Jaottelun tukena käytettiin myös virallista yhteiskuntaluokittelua, jotka olivat käytössä Britanniassa 1990-luvulle asti, sekä sen korvannutta ammattien luokittelua.</p> <p>Tutkimustuloksena oli ensinnäkin, että näytelmien hahmot todella puhuvat oman yhteiskuntaluokkansa mukaisesti. Toiseksi selvisi, että työväenluokan kieli on erilaista eri näytelmissä. Tulokset tukivat osittain taustatutkimuksessa selvitettyä tietoa siitä, miten liverpoolilaisten murre on todellisuudessa muuttunut 1980-luvun alusta 2000-luvun alkuun. Suurin osa eroista koski ääntämystä, josta voi saada ainoastaan osittaisen kuvan näytelmät lukemalla, mutta myös kieliopissa ja sanastossa on eroja näytelmien välillä. Yleisesti ottaen tuloksena oli, että vanhempi näytelmä oli huomattavasti lähempänä standardienlantia kuin uudempi. Tutkimuksessa analysoitiin myös sitä, kuinka hahmot puhuvat yhteiskuntaluokista ja luokkaeroista. Tuloksena oli, että molemmissa näytelmissä ilmaistiin selvästi tietoisuutta luokkaeroista, ja tietoa omasta luokasta. Asenne ylempiä luokkia kohtaan riippui hahmojen omasta mielipiteestä ja tavoitteista.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

In 1980, Willy Russell's play Educating Rita (hereafter ER) premiered. The story is a comedy about a hairdresser, Rita, who wants to do something different with her life. She enrolls on an Open University English literature course and wants to learn, in her own words, everything (ER: 6). Frank is her tutor, who is reluctant to help Rita transform, as he fears she will lose her personality. The two develop an interesting and complicated relationship over the course of the play, and by the end Rita has completely changed the course of her life. The story is partly autobiographical, as Russell is from a poor background and used to be a hairdresser before becoming a playwright.

In 2006, Jonathan Larkin's debut play, Paradise Bound (hereafter PB), was first performed. This too was a success, although a contributing factor was probably its famous cast. Paradise Bound is a description of everyday life in a poor area of Liverpool, and tells the story of the 19-year olds Anthony and Danny, Danny's middle-aged mother Kathleen and her best friend Ann. Anthony is the most central character: He feels stuck in Liverpool and wants to move away. The play covers three days, during which Anthony finds out he has secured employment in Australia. He breaks the news to the other characters, reveals himself as a homosexual and makes arrangements for his emigration. At the same time, Danny works on a Capital of Culture development in the characters' home area, Kathleen sells stolen designer clothing and Ann struggles with fears of illness.

Both plays are set in Liverpool, which the local area of both writers. The plays have 26 years between them, but the city and the class boundaries remain. The plays are written by different people, but the common background enables their fair comparison. The present thesis aims to investigate aspects of social class in the speech of the characters (with the exception of Frank in ER), mainly in their use of language but also in how they talk about class. The most central research questions are as follows: How do the characters express membership of their class and class consciousness? How does the characters' speech compare with descriptions of Scouse in the background literature? By comparing the two plays it is possible to see changes in the Liverpoolian working class from the beginning of the 1980s to the

middle of the 2000s. Ideally, I would like to focus on real people in real situations, but organising trips abroad, finding subjects and recording their speech is beyond my resources at present. Naturally, the topics of conversation will have changed somewhat since the beginning of the Thatcherite era, and there must have been some development (such as new vocabulary) in the English language on the whole, not just within working class. Still, focusing on only one class is reasonable in a study of this scale.

Social class and social dialects have been studied extensively since the beginning of the 1960s, when, for example, Labov started his work (Mesthrie et al 2000: 77-80). There is always room for a new study which has a new perspective or a different set of subjects. Literally replicating an existing study is impossible because every investigation has its own unique subjects and circumstances, but comparisons between time periods or between types of subjects are certainly possible. At the Department of Languages in the University of Jyväskylä, there is one previous thesis on social class in fiction (Vänttinen 1992). Vänttinen (ibid.) focuses on how social class is evident in the actions of the characters, and in the narrative of prose fiction. In contrast, my study will focus on how class is evident in the characters' speech. I will also look for any direct references to their status. One of the primary sources, Educating Rita, too, has been studied at our department before, at least by Mansikkala and Pelkonen (1983), but their focus is on translation studies. While Educating Rita is the subject of many studies, the present thesis appears to be the first one to look at Paradise Bound, the other primary source, more closely. This alone is valid justification to carry out the present investigation. From a wider perspective, social class has been a theme of sociology for over a century, with Karl Marx as one of the founders of the concept. The background and origins of the concept "class" will be explained in more detail in chapter 2. As for studies on Liverpudlian language, there has been a focus on phonetics at least in the recent years, and two of such studies (Barbera and Barth 2007 and Sangster 2001) will be referred to in chapter 4.

The present thesis draws on and utilises my past work: My proseminar paper in English (Fetula 2008) shares some of the linguistic background and analysis with the present thesis. The paper was a more technical sociolinguistic analysis on Educating

Rita, and the present thesis aims to put the research into a wider context through the use of comparison and different methods. My proseminar paper in social science (Fetula 2009) focussed on the development of class society in Britain when the Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher (1979-1990), John Major (1990-1997), Tony Blair (1997-2007) and Gordon Brown (2007-2009; although he continued as Prime Minister until 2010) (O'Driscoll 2009: 87) were in power. The background research for the social sciences proseminar paper has helped by widening my knowledge of class in relation to political power, and providing information for the background chapter on English society.

Choosing plays as data is reasonable in the present thesis because they consist mostly of dialogue, and thus do not have many non-linguistic class indicators. At the same time, the author has to have thought carefully about what exactly is said (and how it is pronounced) in order to achieve the desired effect. Finally, there is no observer's paradox, whereby the subject would be influenced by the very fact of being studied: using real life situations as data is problematic because people tend to act differently when they are under observation. I will establish that all the relevant characters are indeed working class, and that they speak accordingly. Then I will analyse their class identity and class consciousness through relevant extracts from the play. Next, I will look for non-standard forms of language in each play, concentrating on vocabulary, pronunciation (*have* vs. *'ave*) and grammar, and finally I will compare and contrast the two plays to draw out changes that may have occurred in Liverpoolian language and society between the dates of the plays.

Chapters 2 to 5 will provide the background information necessary for analysing the two plays at hand. The first one of these covers English society by introducing different class divisions, definitions for class, and class consciousness. One of the class division models presented in chapter 2 will be chosen as a guideline for the present thesis, although the different systems are by no means mutually exclusive. Chapter 3 will cover the key points of English history over the decades in which the characters under scrutiny would have grown up, with a special emphasis on conditions in Liverpool. This enables speculation of how the characters turned out the way they are, as childhood experiences are commonly known to affect people even in their adulthood. Chapter 4, then, will cover the relevant sociolinguistic

theories, and establish a connection between the characters' "speech" and their class. There will also be some reference to attitudes towards different dialects and conversation analysis. Finally, the authors and plays in question will be introduced in detail in chapter 5, together with an overview of theatre as representing modern English society.

Chapters 6 to 8 will form the core of the present thesis. Chapter 6 focuses on cultural and social references made by the characters in each play, as this provides a valuable insight into how the characters may think, and how they are aware of differences between their social group and others. Chapter 7, in turn, will cover the linguistic aspects of the characters' class, pointing out non-standard features and class-related vocabulary. Some comparison of the two plays, and thus speculation over how the depiction of working class speech has changed, will be included in the first two chapters of analysis, but a broader account of this will be presented in chapter 8.

The main findings indicate, first of all, that the characters do speak according to their class and thus can be assumed to be reliable subjects for the class-focus of the present thesis. Furthermore, they are aware of their own class and class differences within the society they live in. In terms of language use, the two plays are distinctly different, although similarities were also found. Overall, the analysis indicates that the newer play, Paradise Bound, is more different from Standard English than the 30-year-old Educating Rita is. The findings are inconclusive regarding the relationship between real, genuine Scouse and the language used in the plays, as the two match in some aspects but not in others.

2 CLASS SOCIETY IN ENGLAND

English society is unequal because groups of people are in different positions on the property and labour markets, which creates inequality in financial status (Saunders 1990: 129). Class is a sociological concept whereby people are categorised into groups of different social prestige by their occupation, background or even wealth. While in everyday speech the word *class* is often used, sociologists object to this as class is in fact a Marxist concept, and should only be used in conjunction with the Marxist class theory. According to Marx and Engels (1888), class societies up to

their era had always presented a struggle between two groups (classes): those who own the means of production (Bourgeoisie) and those who are enslaved by having to work to stay alive (Proletariat). Marx's work has inspired many others, and it has introduced concepts such as class and stratification into sociology. However, many present-day sociologists prefer to talk about socio-economic groups, status, prestige and so on (for example Robinson 1979 and Saunders 1990). For the sake of clarity, the term class will be used throughout the present thesis. Another reason to do so is that the most interesting perspective here is that of ordinary people, so it is the most sensible option to use their terminology and concepts, especially as the approach in the present thesis is linguistic rather than sociological. In the present chapter, three class division models will be introduced: one to reflect the situation when the first play was written, and two others to demonstrate the change that had happened by the time the second play premiered. The choice of classification for the use in the present thesis will also be explained. The geographical focus in the present thesis is on Liverpool, which is in North-West England. However, many statistics and indeed volumes on class and other nationwide issues (such as Reid 2001: Class in Britain) cover the whole country or at least Great Britain. Thus, the terms England and Britain are used in the present thesis to indicate a wider geographical area in which Liverpool is situated. This is accurate enough in the present context, because there is only one area of focus. More accurate terms, such as Northern or Southern England will be used where appropriate to contrast Liverpool with the rest of the country (see especially chapter 3.2).

The position of social class in England is especially interesting because nowadays social class is largely a matter of speech and lifestyle rather than wealth, education or occupation (Fox 2004). Reid (2001: 34) supports this as there is evidence that people's ideas of which class they belong to do not always match their occupational level, suggesting that other factors affect the classification. In fact, according to Reid's (2001: 36) review of studies in this area, almost a third (31%) of the respondents answered that way of life is what decides which class a person belongs to. Traditional class indicators were seen as far less important (family 18%, job 17%, money 17% and education 10%), which is significant. In other words, almost a third thought that way of life defines class; whereas only less than a fifth thought money or work were deciding factors. The traditional class system, with which Reid's

results (ibid; above) are in contrast with, will be explained in the next section. The English are also highly class-conscious, which is clearly visible even to a foreigner. Almost all English people will know which class they belong to (Reid 2001: 31), although many do not like to talk about the subject. Naturally those visiting England will not be as aware of the fine nuances that exist between people and how to talk about them. As an example, two English upper-middle class girls around the age of eight had a conversation about how they are not *posh*, they are *fine*, and how one of them had been offended by others calling her family *posh* (Anonymous 2005a-b). Fox (2004: 79) explains that *posh* is a word that is used by lower-class people referring to higher classes. The example also demonstrates that even young children are aware of their class.

2.1 Traditional divisions of classes and occupations in England

Traditionally class has been determined by the person's occupation. Indeed, official class tables were in use in Britain in the 20th century: The Registrar-General's class schema was used by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) since 1911 (Saunders 1990: 29). It was used to divide people, more specifically males over a certain age, as they were assumed to be heads of families, into classes 1-5 with some variation (Rose 1995). Table 1 outlines the classification, which is very clearly occupation-based, and explicit terms, such as "social class 1" are used. The occupation-centricity is also evident in how everyone who is not working is grouped in an "un-class", whether they are unemployed, wealthy enough not to need to work, students or anything in between.

Table 1: The Registrar General's class division as used in the UK 1911-1998 (Rose 1995)

Social Class 1	Professional, etc Occupations
Social Class 2	Intermediate Occupations
Social Class 3	Skilled Occupations
Social Class 4	Partly Skilled Occupations
Social Class 5	Unskilled Occupations
Un-class	Students, retired, working outside UK, the wealthy class etc

The Registrar-General's scheme has been criticised for being theoretically unsound, as the OPCS has said in conjunction with different censuses that the list reflects

levels of occupational skill; and how classes stand in relation to each other in the community (Saunders 1990: 29). These views do not support each other, which creates an impression that not even the OPCS knew exactly what the system was measuring, or that the objective changed from one census to the next (ibid.). Furthermore, sociological theories provide no reason for either equating class with father's occupation (Robinson 1979: 214) or dividing people according to whether they work with their hands (Saunders 1990: 28).

Table 2, below, illustrates a recent division into occupational groups, which in practice forms a basis for social class divisions. The division is far more detailed than the Registrar General's one, and no direct reference is made to social class. This is evidence for talk of social class becoming politically less correct. Marwick (2003: 459) points out the strange logic in the new social stratification system (and goes on to prove that working class is still strongly present in society): The Registrar-General's class divisions were abolished in 1998, and the new "ranking of occupations" increased the number of people at the middle of the scale. Not unrelatedly, Saunders (1990: 96) estimates that 30% of the population was middle class at the time. As the system was abolished in 1998, though, it seemed as if the number of people in working class had decreased dramatically. Naturally, the size and significance of the working class has decreased over the past decades because the economy is less dependent on manufacturing, but most working class occupations still exist (Marwick 2003: 459).

Table 2: The major groups of The Standard Occupational Classification 2000 (National Statistics 2000: 19)

1	Managers and Senior Officials
2	Professional Occupations (engineer, general practitioner)
3	Associate Professional and Technical Occupations (anaesthetic nurse, journalist)
4	Administrative and Secretarial Occupations
5	Skilled Trades Occupations (baker, plumber)
6	Personal Service Occupations (hairdresser)
7	Sales and Customer Service Occupations
8	Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (bus driver, tyre moulder)
9	Elementary Occupations (cleaner)

Marwick (2003: 460) suggests that a new group, an "underclass" had appeared: after all, Thatcher's policies almost doubled the proportion of those with low income (=less than 60% of the average) in society in 1985, and the debate over the gap between the rich and poor is still heated. This would, in part, explain why the unemployed are now absent from the list (they were included in the un-class of the OPCS scheme), although the new version is, in strict terms, a list of occupations rather than a classification of people, and thus ignores everyone who does not work. The two biggest political parties in the United Kingdom, Labour and the Conservatives, have been fighting in the recent years over whether the chance of upwards social mobility of poor people who grew up during and immediately after Thatcher's era has improved or not (see for example BBC 2008). According to Saunders (1990: 69-70), inter-generational mobility is on the increase in all industrial societies, but defining mobility is complicated. Furthermore some of the development may only be an illusion, which supports the feeling of changing class consciousness:

In strict sociological terms, the fact that the working class has become more affluent and now owns a range of goods which was out of its reach just a short time ago does nothing to alter its class situation. (Saunders 1990: 106)

Saunders (1990: 106) suggests that the newfound affluence changes how working class people see themselves, which, I speculate, may be a reason behind the move towards a class system where way of life is the most important factor. At the same time, if the working class can buy more goods, the middle classes may try to differentiate themselves by developing behaviour patterns that exclude not the newly rich but the newly-less-poor. Interestingly, the wages of some undoubtedly working class occupations have soared: it is for example possible for a plumber to earn more than the average middle class person (Marwick 2003: 460). This is further evidence of class, occupation and wealth losing some of their connection. Despite this development, it is important to remember that there are still plenty of disadvantaged people in Britain, and poverty is a reality in some areas.

2.2 Class consciousness

Reid (1998: 31,34) has found out that 90% of British people aged 15 and over think that social classes exist and will place themselves in a class without difficulty. Furthermore, people's ideas about what class they and others belong to are in line

with official rankings: manual work is connected to the working class, and non-manual work to the middle class, although not without discrepancy. It appears from Reid's (ibid.) results that people know which class they "should" belong based on their occupation, but many think class is in reality defined by other criteria, as explained in chapter 2. Reid's (1998) results show that the abolishment of the official classes in 1998 certainly was not because the existence or significance of class had ceased. Finally, as many as 80% of respondents in the surveys reviewed by Reid (1998: 37) think there will never be a classless society in Britain, and very importantly for the present thesis, 59% think the right accent is needed to succeed in life. While in Reid's study, people classify themselves according to occupation, an American study by Robinson (1979: 238-239) shows that people do not rely on stereotypes (an example of which might be occupation) when they determine which class other people belong to, but that they use features like speech instead. Robinson (ibid.) suggests that children from less advantaged backgrounds do not succeed as well academically because they are treated differently in school as a result of their speech revealing their background. While social class, and especially class-defining features, functions differently in the United States and the United Kingdom, it is not too far-fetched to speculate on whether attitudes towards lower-class speech hinder social mobility in England as well. The attitudes towards different dialects will be addressed in more detail in chapter 4.3.

Interestingly, the Registrar-General's class division was abolished soon after power in Britain moved from the Conservatives to New Labour. The brilliant rhetorician Tony Blair became Prime Minister in 1997, so a feasible viewpoint to the move from "social classes" to "occupation classification" would be to see it as turning a subject which did not fit the New Labour politics into a taboo. It is perhaps worth noticing, that the terms occupation (as a means to survive) and profession (for which education was necessary) were used in opposition in older literature (for example Dunkerley 1975), but occupation is the term of choice for the new scale, even for high-end positions that are mentally very demanding. These observations show that class is in fact a political concept, so the way it is portrayed in public is inevitably influenced by the views of those in power at any given time. However, one should keep in mind that the majority of people will not change their view on whether classes exist, or which class they belong to, just because a new Prime Minister has been appointed.

2.3 Fox's class division

In any study related to social class the definition of how to divide the population into groups is essential. Various different systems have been developed for different purposes, and two of them have been explained above. In the present study I shall use an alternative one: class divisions as they are presented by Fox (2004). She explains that the English are highly sensitive to class and its complexity, and therefore dismisses "traditional" simple class divisions (such as in the tables in chapter 2.1) which are based on occupation and other factors that can be taken at face value. In her opinion such divisions do not correspond to how ordinary English people perceive and categorise people and their social classes (2004: 15), and given the evidence that has been reviewed in the present chapter, Fox's viewpoint is credible even though she is not a sociologist. As the present study aims to examine the relationship between class and language in England as experienced by English people, Fox's class division is a reasonable one to adopt. She divides English society into (1) working class, (2) upper working class, (3) lower middle class, (4) middle middle class, (5) upper middle class and (6) upper class. The groups are called classes, unlike the ones in the official system. This system does, of course, have its weak points as it does not include the unemployed or analyse how immigrants should be included in the class system. The traditional divisions have been criticised for exactly the same reasons, though, (by for example Saunders 1990: 29-30) so this should not be counted against Fox's credibility. In any case, none of these special groups feature in the present thesis, as unusual as it is when five out of six play characters under scrutiny are poor Liverpudlians. Furthermore, Fox's division includes the upper class, who are usually absent from any ranking of occupations, as the upper class survives on inherited rather than earned money. Indeed, the nobles have traditionally considered trading as a vulgar concept altogether (Wheeler 2008). Fox's (2004) investigation shows that within the classes there are three groups connected by similar behaviour patterns. The groups behave in their distinctive ways according to whether they aspire for a better life or not. The groups are presented in Table 3 on page 14.

Table 3: Social class groupings based on behaviour patterns (Fox 2004)

Group	Behaviour pattern
Upper class and upper middle class	Prestigious enough not to need to impress anyone
Middle middle class, lower middle class and upper working class	Want to be distinguished from the class below and identify with the class above them
(Lower) Working class	Have no interest in moving up the class ladder.

This division is, of course, drawn from aspirations rather than actual status, but it is based on people's acute consciousness of class differences. Fox's classification (above) has the advantage of relating to the plays that are used in the present thesis: the most central character in both plays stands out because of their aspirations, not because of their occupation.

The class divisions introduced in the present chapter are not the only ones available, but it is not necessary here to provide a detailed overview of various sociological approaches. For the present thesis, the classification by Fox (in the above table) shall be the primary system. However, the occupation of each character is known, so this too will be taken into consideration. In practice, the occupation may place a character in a three-fold class system (for example by establishing that he or she is middle class), but Fox's system will determine whether they are lower, middle or upper middle class. The next chapter will be devoted to finding out what kind of a life the characters might have lived in Liverpool, and what kind of political turmoil may have shaped their understanding of the world.

3 POST-WAR LIVERPOOL

The present chapter provides an overview of the Liverpool of the past—the surroundings in which the characters of the plays would have spent their formative years. The only person whose exact age is not explicitly revealed is the professor Frank in *Educating Rita*, but he is described as being “in his early fifties” (ER: 1), which means he was born in the 1930s. The 1930s is, then, the earliest point in time that is of any relevance to the characters in the plays. However, Frank is portrayed at the turn of the 1970s and 80s, and he is the only character who is not working class, so the present chapter focuses on the post-war era. It is also necessary to compare

present day Liverpool to the rest of the country, and this will be done by contrasting economic development in Southern and Northern England overall.

3.1 The social background of the Liverpudlians of 1980 and 2006

As demonstrated earlier, Frank was most likely born in the 1930s: between the world wars, and experienced the Second World War as a child. It is not revealed whether Frank has lived in Liverpool all his life, and if not, where he is from. The 1950s was spent recovering from the Second World War, and economic growth was re-established in the 1960s when social norms loosened, significant technological advances such as television sets and cars became available for the masses, and the contraceptive pill developed for women to control when and whether they wanted children (Underwood 2006). The women's movement was a dominant theme in 1970s society (Merz and Lee-Browne 2003). Frank would have been teaching for about twenty years in 1980, so he would have been an academic by the 1970s, which was a time of economic depression, unrest, rioting and trade union battles in England (ibid.). In addition, the 1970s saw the Irish Republican Army (IRA), whose goal was to remove Northern Ireland from the United Kingdom, begin a bombing campaign against England, which went on until the 1997 ceasefire (BBC 2001). The attacks were concentrated on Northern Ireland and London, although Liverpool's neighbouring city, Manchester was also hit. For Frank, the IRA campaigns might have been a second period of military unrest he had encountered. This may bear some significance, as Frank is an alcoholic, which may be caused by overwhelming stress.

Rita (from Educating Rita) was 26 years old in 1980, so she was born around 1954. Kathleen (47) and Ann (50) from Paradise Bound are middle-aged in 2006 (PB: 2), so were born roughly at the same time as Rita. In a way, they could be seen as a future projection of an uneducated Rita: how she might have turned out had she not decided to change the course of her life. Rita, Kathleen and Ann would have gone through the 1970s riots in their youth—and quite possibly participated in them—and Kathleen and Ann went on to witness the labour unions being dismantled by Thatcher (O'Driscoll 2009: 143). This must have been a significant change in the industry-driven north of the country, especially because of Liverpool's status as a

port city. Liverpool has had one of the largest ports in the country for centuries (Lambert 2010). Later on came the economic boom of the late 1980s, the depression of the early 1990s, and a near-continuous economic growth until after the events of Paradise Bound took place (Smith 2009). These ups and downs would have occurred at the time when Kathleen was bringing up her son Danny. It is easy to imagine how significantly life in the North changed from the women's childhood to their middle age, especially considering that tens of thousands of immigrants began flooding into Britain starting from the late 1940s (BBC 2010a). It is worth noticing that at least two characters in Paradise Bound have a negative attitude towards minorities, whereas the issue is not even touched upon in Educating Rita. With relation to the women's economic status, it is not difficult to imagine Kathleen and Ann struggling without a hope for a better future (as is also evident in e.g. PB: 104, where Kathleen explains why she has no choice but to avoid taxes). They are pictured at the height of an economic boom and yet they are not able to improve their situations.

Paradise Bound's Danny and Anthony were 19 years old in 2006 (PB: 2), so they were born around 1987. The two grew up in a very different world from the other characters in the two plays, as they do not have memories of war or rebuilding afterwards and they were hardly affected by IRA terrorism. Instead, they became adults in the so-called post-9/11 world (i.e. surrounded by suspicions towards Muslims and increased surveillance in the aftermath of an Islamist terror attack killing thousands in New York on 11 September 2001). Other new features in their childhood were information technology, which enabled worldwide communication, and a near-constant economic boom from when they were very young until beyond the events of the play (Smith 2009). Anthony has even found a profession in something the older characters might have problems grasping: selling fast internet connections to home users (PB: 2). On the other hand, there was a global depression in the boys' early childhood, so their families probably had even less money when the boys were young. In addition, their world is multicultural, as there have been significant cultural minorities in England—and in Liverpool—all through their lives. This is in contrast with the women, and especially Frank from Educating Rita, because the older people had witnessed the proportion of ethnic minorities grow. Furthermore, Danny and Anthony are used to seeing homosexuals in their environment, although they are not accepted as a part of the community. The still

intolerant atmosphere of Liverpool is one of the reasons Anthony decides to move, although there has clearly been significant development since the early days of the other characters.

3.2 The North-South division of occupations

It is well known that there is an economic division between the North and the South of England. This has been explained by the structure of the industries across the country: The North relies on manufacturing, which is prone to unemployment in a time of recession. The South, by contrast, is more dominated by service industries, which will not be as badly affected. Furthermore, those who do become unemployed are more likely to seek work from another industry in the same area instead of relocating and looking for work in their own industry. This will also affect the service industries of the North, as in a time of recession there will be more competition for the local vacancies. (Armstrong and Taylor 1993)

The range of occupations within the plays does not fully reflect the model of the North being industry-driven, and the South being more dependent on services. Of course, Armstrong and Taylor (1993; above) wrote their book about halfway between Russell and Larkin's publications, but their principles are true in all different stages of economic development: the big factories are in the north regardless of whether they are successful or not. Educating Rita was written at a time when economic growth had not yet begun after Thatcher becoming Prime Minister, and Paradise Bound soon before the next period of growth came to an end.

Northern England is also defined by other characteristics in addition to the type of occupations. Statistics (National Statistics 2009) describe the people of North-West England as, for instance, having a lower life-expectancy, worse school grades, and being less eager to recycle than the UK average. Furthermore, North-Westerners are more likely to become victims of crime, earn less and are less likely to be employed than the average person nationwide (ibid.). The statistics do not show any individual significant differences between this particular region and the rest of the country, however. It is more important that North-West England has lower scores across the different measurement criteria. Furthermore, some issues, such as lower pay, may be

partly cancelled out because of cheaper housing in the north than in the south. Finally, the statistics are fresh, so the information applies to the more modern setting of Paradise Bound, and it supports the long-term continuity of the conditions that Armstrong and Taylor (1993, above) described. In addition, Saunders (1990: 41-42) has found out that lower class people do not live for as long as middle class people, and their children are not as well educated. This implies further correlation—although not by any means causality—between being from North-West England and being working class. The geographical location of Liverpool will be explained in more detail in the following section.

3.3 Liverpool

In terms of administration, Liverpool is located on the coast in North-Western England in the metropolitan county of Merseyside. The neighbouring counties are Cheshire in the south, Greater Manchester in the east and Lancashire in the north. The most important geographic distinctions are presented in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. A Map of the United Kingdom showing the location of Liverpool, Merseyside and the North West region of England

Blank map: About.com (2010);
Details: Google Maps (2010a),
Liverpool Museums (2010) and
Pictures of England (2010).

Despite being in the North West, Liverpool is in the North Midlands dialect area (Wakelin 1978). This is important to notice to avoid any misunderstandings regarding the features of Scouse, the Liverpudlian dialect in the following chapter. Out of the different areas in or near Liverpool, Formby and Dingle are the only ones that are specifically connected to the plays: Frank in Educating Rita lives in Formby (ER: 12) and Paradise Bound is set in Dingle.

According to Google maps (2010b), Formby is a small, rather isolated area about 20 kilometres outside the centre of Liverpool. The area is surrounded by golf courses, and an informant, an educated Northern man who moved to Liverpool in his 20s, anecdotally describes the Formby of 2009 as follows: “[I am] surprised at just how nice and posh Formby is. There’s red squirrels and houses the size of the moon. And trees and grass” (Anonymous 2009, pc.). Dingle, in turn, is situated in the southern part of central Liverpool (Google Maps 2010c), and it is a particularly poor area (Dingle Opportunities 2010).

Liverpool was the European Capital of Culture in 2008, the preparation for which is mentioned frequently in Paradise Bound. All the characters of the play think that the city’s infrastructure is being improved to make it look as appealing as possible—in part by hiding the working classes. It is apparently because of the capital of culture project that Danny is on his current work assignment, which means the project has also brought some employment to him. However, Danny is building a fence around some new artificial turf in an area where there used to be a self-service laundrette (PB: 4). In other words, a building which housed a company was demolished to make way for the fenced turf. Thus, the net value of the “cultural” development may well be negative to the people of the area: they have lost a laundrette. According to the European Commission (2010), a European capital of culture has been selected since 1985 with the intention of bringing Europeans together. The programme was launched by the European Union. The main objectives are to bring out different kinds of culture from across Europe and “foster a feeling of European citizenship” (ibid.).

In practice, being selected capital of culture means that there will be many festivals and other cultural events during that time, the city in question gets extra media

coverage, and new investors will be lured into the city. In the case of Liverpool, which already had for example numerous museums and maritime heritage, recreating the city centre to impress the visitors was on the agenda. As demonstrated by the quotation below, Liverpool had quite high expectations about the impact of being the capital of culture. (Liverpool08 2010)

Liverpool will benefit from literally billions of pounds worth of investment, thousands of new jobs and massive regeneration which will see it reborn as a premier European city - one with a more competitive economy, healthier, safer and more involved communities and one where everyone has more opportunities to have a better life. (Liverpool08 2010)

It is not difficult to imagine that the local working class might have found the organisers quite over-enthusiastic, although the project did happen during excellent economic growth (Smith 2009), when there was public money available to spend on culture.

Overall, Liverpool is a fairly typical Northern city: it has relied on heavy industry for a long time in the past, and it is still in a worse position in terms of wealth, when compared to similarly sized southern cities. However, Liverpool has benefited from a large port, which helped the industry prosper and the city to grow in the 19th century, but which also helped in a wave of immigrants from Ireland to give the locals their distinctive tone of voice. The next chapter will focus on the linguistic background for the present investigation, including the features and background of the Scouse dialect.

4 LINGUISTICS

The present chapter has four themes, which are all central to understanding class from a linguistic perspective. The first theme is class-related sociolinguistic theories, which are the framework for the investigation carried out in the present thesis. The second theme is language attitudes. While the subject is difficult to define and measure, it is important to draw attention in this direction. After all, the attitudes of speakers create stratification between dialects, not the inherent qualities of particular dialects. The third theme of the present chapter is Scouse. Scouse is the dialect spoken in Liverpool, so it is clearly necessary to describe it to the reader. This is especially true because the most prominent Scouse features concern pronunciation,

so the more subtle features in vocabulary can otherwise go unnoticed. Finally, some attention is given to conversation analysis, whilst keeping in mind that it is usually applied to real-life conversations rather than written down, (and thus always planned) drama. Conversation analysis can, however, provide some clues to understanding the communication between the characters.

4.1 Sociolinguistic theories

Sociolinguistic theories that are relevant for the class discussion will be explained in the present chapter. Sociolinguistics will also have a key role in proving that certain phenomena (e.g. linguistic class distinctions) are visible in the plays. The relationship between social class and language is a basic area of interest in sociolinguistics. Speech cannot, however, be fully analysed based solely on the social class or classes of those involved. Factors such as the age, sex, region and context will invariably have an effect on the linguistic form of conversation. Labov and Trudgill's studies (both cited by Mesthrie et al. 1999: 77) are among the most known in the field, because they have discovered some basic principles in social stratification of language.

The relationship between class and speech has been extensively studied. A notable scholar in the field is Labov, who conducted his early work in the 1960s. He has a widespread reputation as one of the founders of sociolinguistics. Prior to his studies it was believed that variation between speakers within a certain area was either random or a result of dialect contact (Mesthrie et al. 1999: 77). Labov's early studies concentrated on phonetics, but there is no reason why similar methodology could not be applied to other features of language. Most famously, Labov (1966, as quoted by Mesthrie et al. 1999: 84) published an investigation regarding social stratification in New York City. Mesthrie et al. (1999: 85) explain that one of the main discoveries was that pronouncing certain words carefully (e.g. pronouncing *fourth* with an audible *r*) depended on two things: the social class of the speaker and the formality of the situation in which the word was uttered. There is variation within each social group but, generally speaking, the frequencies in which vernacular pronunciations are used do not overlap: The higher the class, the more reliably the subjects pronounced words carefully. Although Labov has an outstanding reputation in the

field of study, his work has been criticised by for instance Boyd (2010): she argues that Labov assumes everyone to have an equally good command of the English language (and, perhaps, further that everyone in New York speaks a New York dialect). In other words, Labov ignores that pronunciation is affected by where the person in question grew up, or whether they learnt English as a child or as an adult. This is fair criticism, especially in cities like New York where there are significant immigrant groups whose command of English may not be on the same level as native speakers'. Overall, Boyd finds sociolinguistics "tremendously monolingual" [translated by the present author], so this criticism is not only towards Labov. Nevertheless, the issue of mother tongue is not directly relevant to the present thesis, as mother tongue can be reasonably assumed. While Labov's significance in his field of study is unquestionable, his results are not directly applicable to British conditions.

Another important study in the field is one by Trudgill (1974, as cited in Mesthrie et al. 1999: 98). He studied social stratification in the city of Norwich in Eastern England. The methods were similar to Labov's, but the results were different in some aspects: males, especially, claimed to use prestigious variants less than they actually did, whereas earlier research had suggested that both sexes think they use prestigious variants more than they actually do (Trudgill 1974 as cited in Mesthrie et al 1999: 99). Trudgill (ibid.) suggests that the difference is due to the different kind of class consciousness in the United States and the United Kingdom: In the United Kingdom the regional variant has more prestige than it would in the United States because of the sense of belonging and community it brings to the users. However, the theory that phonetic variants form fairly clear-cut groups of social prestige has been criticised: Knowles (1978: 90) finds the model insufficient for describing social stratification in dialect because too little attention is given to the mechanisms speakers use to choose variants in their speech. In practice, it is possible to produce the same sound by over-emphasising certain aspects or by suppressing other ones, and the different methods may be utilised by different social groups, although they sound similar. Still, the criticism does not discredit the finding that dialects have some prestige in England.

4.2 Hypercorrection

The exception to the relatively clear-cut stratification between classes is hypercorrection, whereby a member of one of the middle classes has social aspirations and attempts to sound more prestigious, as though he or she was one step higher on the social class ladder (Mesthrie et al. 1999: 90). The result is speech that is more refined than the speech of those who actually belong to the desired class and thus a clear indication that the speaker is lower class (Fox 2004). Hypercorrection is caused by linguistic insecurity and, importantly, it only takes place when the speakers feel they are being observed (Mesthrie et al. 1999: 90). In practice, if a person forgets he or she is being observed, it is far more likely that they speak how they would in a casual situation. One method of acquiring genuine speech is asking the subject to tell an exciting, personal story, such as if the person closely avoided death (Mesthrie et al. 1999: 180). The relationship between drama dialogue and hypercorrection is problematic. On the one hand, the characters are usually unaware of being observed by the reader or the audience of a theatre performance and thus do not try to impress them with their speech; but on the other hand the author must write the dialogue with the audience in mind. In the present thesis, this aspect will be left out and the hypercorrection focus will be on characters trying to impress each other, not the audience.

Knowles (1978: 86) divides hypercorrection into two types: lexical confusion and confusion resulting from there being sensitive vowels nearby. Knowles' phonetic examples, transcribed according to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), will be used here despite us not being able to hear how the drama characters speak, because they are the clearest examples available. Firstly, lexical confusion occurs when the speaker does not remember how particular words should be pronounced, and vowels get mixed up. For example, *bush* can become [bʌʃ] instead of [bʊʃ], in which instance a Northern speaker does not know whether it is appropriate to use the northern-sounding [ʊ] in *bush*). This type of hypercorrection is characterised by speakers being unable to pronounce the words correctly even in isolation. Secondly, speakers may get confused or “tongue-tied” in speech when there are many confusing vowels in succession. For example, *gas mask* can accidentally become

[gɑ:s məsk], and Knowles himself confesses accidental use of *pulled a button* becoming [pʌld ə bʊtn]. To add to Knowles' (1978: 86) points above, it should be noted that similar mistakes can also occur in conjunction with consonants. For example, native speakers of German and Finnish have been heard to hypercorrect by pronouncing the word *very* as [wɛrɪ], possibly because the phoneme [w] does not exist in the native language, but is rather frequent in English.

Although most research into hypercorrection concentrates on phonetics, there is no reason it could not appear in other aspects of language. In addition to phonetic hypercorrection in Labov and Trudgill's studies and Knowles' examples above, there are also various lexical items that reveal whether the speaker (or the recipient judged by their reaction) has social aspirations. These will be more relevant in the present thesis, and include, as illustrated by Fox (2004: 77-78), words such as *toilet*, *serviette*, and *settee*. These words sound *posh* to the ears of lower middle and middle middle class speakers, who often wish they were of a higher class, but would never be used by the upper middle or upper class. The actual *smart* correspondents of the words are *loo*, *napkin* and *sofa*, respectively. These are simpler, more frequently used words, which at face value can understandably seem less prestigious. Unfortunately the research into class specific vocabulary lags behind: Robinson (1979: 232) comments that even the "elementary ground work" had not been done in 1979 regarding class-specific vocabulary or grammar. His (ibid.) examples of what should be studied are swear words and dining: "who eats lunch, dinner, tea and supper when?" This problem persists today as Fox (2004), who is an ethnologist, uses research methods which do not necessarily fit into the sociological or linguistic convention; and she concentrates on behaviour patterns so her main focus is not on the linguistic aspect. Nonetheless, the present study will take advantage of these kinds of linguistic tokens to help determine the class of the speaker in question.

4.3 Dialect attitudes and class language

Pronunciation is a key element in language attitudes, which in turn can affect how an individual chooses to speak. The higher classes and highly educated people in England generally speak Standard English instead of the dialect of the area where they live. Most people speak Standard English with an accent that gives clues to their

region of origin, although these clues can be very difficult to hear. According to Trudgill (1994: 7), only a few percent of the population speak geographically neutral English. The name of the geographically neutral accent is RP (Received Pronunciation), and it is spoken by the highest classes. RP originated in the South-East of England (Trudgill and Hannah, 1994: 9), which is where London is located. However, many highly educated people across the country—whether they are of upper class or not—speak an accent which greatly resembles RP, and indeed it probably would not be distinguished from RP by the lower classes. The shortcoming of Trudgill's (1994: 7) restrictive view of RP is that he analyses speech looking for the slightest hints of geographic markers, whereas ordinary people would simply think the accent is that of a higher social class. While Trudgill's view of RP is flawless when it comes to examining the speech of those who try to speak as prestigiously as possible, it is too narrow when the focus is working class speech, especially as the working class does not share the ambition (Fox 2004).

On the basis of Trudgill (1994) and Fox's (2004) views (above), I shall refer to the spoken form of Standard English as RP in the present thesis. This also enables using RP and Standard English as reference points from which the speech of the characters deviates. According to Trudgill (1994: 6-7), there is some variation in Standard English grammar as well: for example, southern speakers use the form *I haven't*, whereas northern speakers use *I've not*. Both forms are still considered Standard English. However, variation grows more and more significant the further down the social scale the investigation reaches, as is the case with Scouse and its features, which will be outlined in chapter 4.4.

Social class and language attitudes are closely related and there are several studies concentrating on which types of speech people prefer. These are useful for the present study because they help identify and evaluate instances where there are explicit comments made about the different dialects the subjects use. Hiraga (2005) studied Britons' attitudes towards different variants of British and American English and concluded that British people favoured American English over regional (i.e. lower class) variants of British English. In addition, Elyan et al. (1978: 129) have found out that English people associate women who speak RP with certain masculine attributes, such as independence and egotism. Furthermore, RP-speaking women are

seen as more successful in working life but less successful in social life than women who speak in regional accents. At the same time, some definitely feminine characteristics were attributed to female RP-speakers, so the notion of a woman speaking in a non-regional way seems to have been somewhat contradictory in the late 1970s, as people appear not to have known which conclusions to draw (Elyan et al. 1978: 129). A reason for this could be that women have traditionally looked after the home, so masculine, powerful speech was not expected of them in the same way. As explained in chapter 3.1, the women's rights movement was strong in the years coming up to Elyan et al's (1978) study, and the changing gender roles are probably behind the confused attitudes towards strong women. This study is particularly relevant because the contrasting accent to RP is a Northern English accent, and the plays analysed in the present paper are set in northern England. In one of the plays the female speaks in a regional accent and the male in RP. Even if the two used the same register and vocabulary, their accents (on stage) would reveal the social status with all the associated attitudes to each other.

It would have been impossible the 1970s to hear regional accents on the radio or on television, other than in a humourous setting, and even Margaret Thatcher had elocution lessons before and during her political career (Mullan 1999). Even very recently, and quite possibly to date, certain positions have been available only to those with a good enough accent, as Marwick points out (2003: 460): "somehow those whose accents remain unmodified do not make it to prominent parliamentary positions". Over the recent years it has become somewhat fashionable to use regional accents on television. One of the forces behind the change may be popular television programmes such as *Big Brother*, where a number of ordinary people are put in a house for weeks under around-the-clock surveillance for the entertainment of the general public on national television (Thornborrow and Morris 2004: 246). The participants are from across the country, or even abroad, so the viewers get to hear various types of accents, and non-standard speech becomes the norm. Even the narrator of the show has a Geordie accent (from Newcastle on the English-Scottish border). Shows like *Big Brother* have also enabled "regular" people, who are also speakers of regional accents, to become celebrities and be admired by young people across the country—and have their accents and mannerisms copied. At the same time, some highly unique regional accents are dying out as a result of urbanisation and

increased communication between the rural and urban areas (Mesthrie et al. 2000: 69-70).

Whatever the underlying causes, it is only natural that a new English accent has appeared to bridge the gap between RP and Standard English, and regional dialects and accents. The most famous example of this is Estuary English, which is spoken in the Thames valley around London, and mixes RP and Cockney Rhyming Slang of the deprived East End of London (Przedlacka 2001). Estuary English began to be studied in the 1980s and it is unlikely the phenomenon would have reached any significant levels in Northern England by that time. However, it is possible that the gap between Scouse and Standard English had started to diminish by the mid 2000s, when Paradise Bound takes place. In fact, research by at least Sangster (2001: 411) and Barbera and Barth (2007: 54) supports this theory. According to both studies, distinguishing Liverpool dialect features are starting to spread from the working class to the use of all Liverpudians.

Another reason for differences between social classes and dialects to become unclear is the general improvement in the standard of living. For example, owning one's own house was very unusual (and a sign of being middle class) before Thatcher enabled people who live in council flats to buy their own home (BBC 2010b). This was a significant distribution of wealth as nearly a million homes were bought by the working class, and owning ones' own home stopped being a sign of wealth and status (Saunders 1990: 36). When people who traditionally did not have such significant assets began to buy property, some of them may have altered their speech slightly to demonstrate their new-found "middle classness", even if the rest of their lifestyle was still working class. Thatcher may have created a false middle class and a perception of a wealthier nation through this means, although the only evidence of this view appears to be in public discussions (for example Anonymous 2008). I would expect hypercorrection to be quite common in situations where speakers assume they have moved on to a higher class, although their speech and lifestyle indicates otherwise. Regardless of all this development, however, class consciousness remained the same, as has been demonstrated in chapter 2.

Brown and Levinson (1979: 300-312) state that there are five linguistic markers of group membership: dialect, language, repertoire, social deixis, and prosodic and paralinguistic markers. In the present investigation the group under scrutiny will be a social class, and the marker with most relevance is dialect. It is still useful to take into account some of the other markers. Language as a marker is not relevant here because all characters speak English only, and prosodic features, such as tempo and intonation cannot be proved or disproved from the data so they will have to be ignored. Paying attention to repertoire (i.e. the control of different registers) is definitely useful, but the study of social deixis (which means that certain forms are only allowed to be uttered or received by a certain group, for example *your honour*) will not be utilised here, as the area does not appear to occur in either play. Regarding dialect as an indicator of group membership, Labov (1970, as quoted by Brown and Levinson 1979: 303) makes an interesting point. According to him, people stop being able to alter their dialect after the age of 23. Brown and Levinson (ibid.) doubt this, but they realise that if Labov's theory is true, this means that people will be forever associated with their original social class unless they manage to escape it at an early age. This is especially interesting because it renders such classic stories as Shaw's Pygmalion and of course Educating Rita, scientifically unsound. This is the case even though the age of the main character in Pygmalion, who is taught how to speak RP instead of Cockney, is "perhaps eighteen, perhaps twenty, hardly older" (Shaw 1912), as presumably the kind of a rigidity that develops in speech does so over a period of time rather than very quickly as the 23rd birthday approaches. Rita, then, is definitely past the limit at 26 years old, and by Labov's theory it should be impossible for her to fundamentally change her speech. In fact, her change in the play does support the theory, but it remains unclear whether her non-standard speech might be noticeable enough to impede her progress in life.

4.4 Scouse

The dialect which is spoken in Liverpool and the surrounding areas is called Scouse. Scouse originated during the time of the Irish potato famine of the 1840s, when thousands of Irish people immigrated to Liverpool among other places. As a result, there are noticeable parallels between Scouse and Hiberno English, and Scouse is

noticeably different from its neighbouring English dialects. (Barbera and Barth 2007: 51)

England can be divided into several dialect areas based on isoglosses, which are boundaries of certain dialect features. Wakelin (1978) divides England into three main dialect areas. They are the North; the Midlands and East Anglia; and the South and the South West. Unexpectedly, Wakelin explains the two most important dialect boundaries (*ibid.*: 8), but they do not divide the country into his three dialect areas. Instead, East Anglia is grouped together with the southern dialects according to the isoglosses. However, East Anglia is of no relevance in the present thesis and does not affect the status of the Liverpool area. The southern dialect boundary runs from the south-western corner of Wales and follows the northern borders of East Anglia, and it divides the country in north and south (Wakelin 1972: 85-87). The northern boundary separates Midlands from the North across Humber and Lancashire. These boundaries are illustrated in Figure 2 on page 30. The boundaries are made up of numerous isoglosses, and the present illustration is for the general location of the important bundles of isoglosses, which form boundaries between dialect areas. The lines do not represent any particular boundary between individual features. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are greyed out to demonstrate the western and northern boundaries of Northern and Midland dialects.

The dialects spoken north of the southernmost boundary are usually referred to as northern. On this basis Scouse, too, is a northern dialect. Additionally, the area that falls between the two important isoglosses is further divided into East and West Midlands, and Liverpool is situated in the West Midlands dialect area. It is important to notice, that dialect boundaries do not necessarily follow geographical ones: Liverpool is a part of the geographic North-West England (as seen in the map on page 18), which is north of the geographic West Midlands.

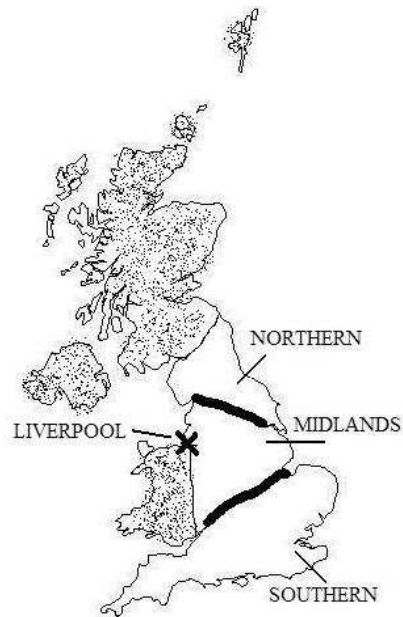


Figure 2. A map of the United Kingdom showing the main dialect borders (isoglosses) outlining the Northern, Midlands and Southern dialect areas.

Blank map: About.com (2010); Geographic boundaries and location of Liverpool: Google Maps (2010); dialect boundaries according to bundles of isoglosses in Wakelin (1972: 103; north) and (1972: 87; south).

As Scouse is noticeably different from its surrounding dialects, it has naturally attracted researchers' attention over the years. The overwhelming proportion of Scouse-related research concentrates on the phonology and phonetics thereof (such as Knowles (1978), Sangster (2001) and Barbera and Barth (2007)) and as such the research has limited use regarding the present thesis. The pronunciation-orientated research has, however, proved useful in building an overall picture of Scouse, and pronunciation will be reflected to some degree in the text of the data of the present thesis. Additionally, for example Elmes (2003) and Wakelin (1972; 1978) do pay some attention to other features in addition to phonology, but their literature does not have Scouse as a focal point, and Wakelin's work on vocabulary concentrates on data that is irrelevant for the present thesis, such as names of plants and mining equipment. Information regarding the vocabulary used by the drama characters will be extracted from three sources: Fox's (2004) lists of class-related vocabulary (and other class-distinctive features, such as dress codes); the glossary (Barton 1991) in the volume of Educating Rita which is used as primary source material here; and a glossary prepared by Fazakerley (2001). Items of vocabulary shall be referred to in

the analysis part of the present thesis, as a glossary here would be unfruitful without detailed context in which the words are used.

Todd, an Irish linguist (as quoted by Elmes 2005: 229), hears obvious parallels between various Irish dialects of English and Scouse in terms of intonation and rhythm. There are not many similarities in vocabulary (as most Irish people who fled The Famine did not speak English), but there is one interesting example: the distinction between a singular and a plural second person pronoun: *You* vs *ye* in Hiberno English, and *you* vs *yous* in Scouse (Elmes 2005: 249).

The present thesis does not have phonologic data, except for authors' decisions to leave out certain letters, or to spell words unconventionally. It is still worthwhile to look at Scouse from a phonological perspective. In fact, Scouse is most set apart from other dialects by pronunciation, and it has long had a reputation as a harsh, ugly-sounding accent (Barbera and Barth 2007: 53). However, as explained in chapter 4.3, Scouse working class features have spread to middle class speech in the recent years, and Liverpool in fact hosts a large number of call centres, from which for example telemarketing and technical support companies operate on a national scale (*ibid.*). Some northern pronunciation features were already covered in chapter 4.2 with reference to hypercorrection, and those also apply to Scouse among other Northern dialects. In addition, Barbera and Barth (2007: 59) explain that Scouse has often been described as nasal, and that in the nasality lies the reason why Scouse has been perceived as unpleasant by native speakers of (presumably British) English.

As explained previously, Scouse is greatly influenced by the Irish language. This is also evident in pronunciation. It is possible that the Celtic background is why Scouse, alongside with some other Northern and Midlands dialects, has a rising sentence tone in declarative sentences. The same feature is typical to questions both in Scouse itself and RP. In other words, Scouse declarations and questions both have a rising tone, whereas in RP a one of the ways to distinguish a question from a declaration is by the tone. Other Irish language features include fricatives becoming dental stops (e.g. *brother* being pronounced as *broder*, to simplify); and the pronunciation of a word-final *ng* as a cluster (e.g. pronouncing the end of the word *going* as [ɪŋg], whereas in

RP the pronunciation is [ɪɪŋ], and an alternative, informal pronunciation is [ɪn]) may also be from Hiberno English. (Barbera and Barth 2007: 54)

In terms of the vowel system, typical Scouse features include the homophony in word pairs like *her-hair*; pronouncing all [ɪ]s as long and tense (as in, *lovely* is pronounced [lʌvli:] instead of the RP [lʌvli]); and pronouncing [æ] as [ɑ] (Barbera and Barth 2007: 53). In addition, according to Trudgill (1994: 21-23), Liverpudlians use a short [æ]-sound where in Standard English a long [a:] is used. In other words, for example *last* has the same vowel as *cat*. The feature is not dependent on the position of the sound within the word, so for example *demand* follows the same rule. Such differences will not be evident in the plays under investigation, but this feature is worth mentioning as a cornerstone of Northern dialects. The same applies to the relationship between ʌ and ʊ, which was referred to in chapter 4.2, and whereby the words with ʌ in the RP pronunciation are often realised as ʊ in Scouse (and other Northern dialects) (Knowles 1978: 86): for instance, the word *butter* becomes [bʊtə] (or even [bʊʔə], i.e. with a glottal stop) instead of the RP [bʌtə].

Regarding consonant pronunciation features of Scouse, three features stand out. Firstly, according to Trudgill (1994: 34), glottal stops started to be common in Liverpool only in the 1990s. One potential instance for this phenomenon is the use of the tag *lad*, which, according to Elmes (2005: 240), is a typical Scouse feature in the form *la'*. Secondly, according to Barbera and Barth (2007: 54), a distinguishing Liverpool dialect feature of heavy aspiration or affrication of stops (e.g. an intervocalic *t* becomes [θ]; *invited* becomes “*invithed*”, and *lock* is pronounced like the Scots word *loch* [lox]) seems to be used by all Liverpudlians at present, not only working class. Lastly, according to Trudgill (1994: 27), Liverpudlians pronounce the *r* in for example *arm* in traditional forms of the dialect. This implies that the form might be used by older but not by younger speakers. Modern Scouse is non-rhotic, however, which means the *r* is only pronounced word-initially, and word-finally when the following word begins with a vowel (Collins and Mees 2003: 161). In addition to the above, according to Wakelin (1978: 10), most English dialects,

Scouse among them, have lost the word-initial pronunciation of the *h*. In this case, then, it could be said that the dialect deviating from the convention is in fact RP, which still retains the audible *h*.

4.5 Conversation analysis

In the present investigation plays are viewed as substitutes for real-life conversation. Understandably, most literature on conversation analysis is directed towards actual, live conversations that have not been planned in advance, but some authors have paid attention to drama as a type of conversation. For example, Burton (1982: 86) states that while drama dialogue is “meant to be overheard”, it does qualify as conversation which follows the same rules and patterns as regular speech. According to Laver and Hutchinson (1972; as quoted by *ibid.*: 86-87), there are three types of information available in dialogue: the topic, the attitudes towards the topic, and how the conversation is managed and organised (e.g. who introduces new topics and how the participants know a topic is over). Burton (1982: 88-89) explains that we judge the characters in drama based on their conversation patterns, and in this, especially the third type of information is helpful. For example, a person who decides when a topic is over may be perceived as dominant. With drama in particular, of course, an opportunity arises for the author to exploit this information and create a certain image for a person with the help of their conversation pattern (*ibid.*: 89). On the basis that an author may purposefully exploit this means, it is reasonable to pay some attention to conversation analysis in the present thesis. Conversation analysis can be utilised here through stylistics, which, according to Widdowson (1975: 4), fills the gap between linguistics, literary criticism, English language and English literature. According to Burton (1980: 8), if drama text is to be compared to real conversation, it should be done from the level of conversation as an aspect of discourse. She criticises the ad hoc, literary criticism style methodology which stylistics is often used with as unscientific, and claims that only a more measurable, linguistic approach is sound enough (Burton 1980: 93-95). However, it is reasonable to think of drama text as a mixture of art and statistically definable conversation, and as such, neither approach should be ruled out altogether. This is the approach in the present thesis: individual features are used to illustrate the speech and class status of the characters on the whole, but occasionally a simple count of tokens is used to support

the observations and integrated into the analysis. Overall, Burton (ibid: 115) agrees that drama text follows the patterns of real life conversations, but they are much tidier and thus present fewer practical problems in analysis than speech that would need to be transcribed, while still providing sufficient information regarding for example intonation.

Some more specific methods of conversation analysis which will be utilised in the present thesis are the preference not to correct others, and phatic use of language. Firstly, people dislike correcting other people's speech, and would rather wait for the speaker to correct themselves or repair their statement, because it is considered impolite to suggest that the speaker is being unclear (Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks 1977). In this context a correction is defined as correcting a clear mistake, whereas reparation is giving more information or otherwise altering the previous utterance although there was never an actual mistake (ibid.). Instead of correcting the speech of someone else, people tend to stay silent in order to give time for the speaker to try again. Thus, if there is a long enough pause in the conversation, it can be deduced that the speaker was silently invited to correct themselves. If the speaker does not think their sentence was problematic, the listener may be forced to ask a clarifying question or correct what the speaker said wrong. While it is naturally impossible in the present thesis to find out whether a pause in conversation is significantly long unless the play specifically states this, conversation analysis can be helpful for example in finding out whether a certain utterance is problematic to one of the characters. This, in turn, can help determine a difference in attitudes towards a certain subject and in some cases it can reveal how familiar the characters are with a topic. Secondly, phatic communion is one of the seven basic functions of language: the others include interrogative and directive language (Pyles and Algeo 1970: 233-236). Phatic communion refers to talk, which only happens to create social cohesion, and it is not to be taken literally (for instance, the phrase *How are you?* is not actually interrogative but phatic) (ibid.). According to Laver (1974; as quoted by Burton 1980: 19-20, 22), phatic communion occurs at the beginning and at the end of interactions, in which there is some kind of psychological insecurity because they are the points during which relationships among the participants are managed. It is possible that these kinds of instances are evident in the data of the present

investigation, as the relationships between characters evolve throughout the story, and thus presumably need to be managed.

To conclude the theoretical aspects of the background knowledge used in the present thesis, it is important to draw attention to a wider approach to the topic at hand. I hope to be able to provide a cohesive view to the two plays in the present thesis, using both linguistic and socio-cultural resources to form an overall methodology. However, it would be a waste to completely rule out a more casual, intuitive interpretation of the text in support of the factual methodology. It is inevitable that during a reading experience, some passages will stand out and evoke curiosity and emotion, and even if these passages do not correspond to a particular methodological approach, they are still valid passages to analyse in the hope of a better understanding of, for example, the everyday life of a Scouser. Before moving on to a close inspection of the data itself, the following chapter includes the necessary information regarding the authors and the plays under scrutiny.

5 DRAMA

In the present chapter I shall introduce the two plays that form the data for the present thesis. One is Educating Rita by Willy Russell, which is the book version of a 1980 play. The second one is Paradise Bound by Jonathan Larkin, which premiered on stage in 2006. I shall refer to these plays in the following chapters as ER and PB, respectively. Before introducing the plays and their authors in more detail, a short description of recent British theatre is in place to provide a framework in which the plays fit as works of art. Willy Russell and Educating Rita will be introduced in separate subchapters, but owing to limited information available, Jonathan Larkin and his work are included in a single subchapter.

5.1 British theatre in the late 1900s

According to Merz and Lee-Browne (2003), topical social and political conditions affect literature on the whole, including plays. For example, the most important movement of the 1970s Britain was women's liberation, and this was also one of the main themes in 1970s writing. The movement was also present in politics, as, for

instance, the Matrimonial Property Act of 1970 established joint ownership of property within a marriage through appreciating the wife's work effort even if it was within the household. In practice, the wife's contribution had to be taken into account in case of divorce and splitting the home. The women's movement serves as an example of the general drive for liberation in the 1970s, but by the end of the decade people felt that the movement had gone too far: they looked for order and authority. This is, of course, when Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister. The 1980s became a decade of individualism and nationalism. It must be noticed, however, that there were still industrial strikes and discontent at the beginning of the decade, and while the Irish and English governments reached agreement in 1985, the IRA has only been in ceasefire since 1997 (BBC 2001). The North-South division referred to in chapter 3.2 is also reflected in 1980s literature, in terms of regional (especially Scottish) and local identities being brought forward along with the growing patriotism across the United Kingdom. In addition, multicultural themes appeared in literature in the 1980s, written by many multicultural authors, and The Black Theatre Co-operative was founded in 1979 to perform black drama. (Merz and Lee-Browne 2003)

The themes of women's liberation and individualism are present in Educating Rita, in which a woman breaks free from her traditional role, and chooses to educate herself in the hope for a better life. Multinationality, however, is absent from the play, although this is easily explained by the play being a dialogue between two people, especially as one of them being woman brings enough socio-political tension to the story as it is.

Woolf (2000: 94-124) examines theatre as a reflector of the surrounding culture. He brings out three important themes: how drama used to be heavily centred on London; the threat of television; and the identity of the British. The post-war period is when high culture and art became less traditional (in terms of, for instance, venues) and independent of London, which is a striking difference from earlier, "traditional" drama. This movement is naturally also present in other forms of art, and The Beatles is "the clearest example of cultural development independent of (or alternative to) London" (ibid: 97). Another aspect of the "liberation" of the theatre is that the censorship of drama was abolished as late as in 1968, which allowed a wider range

of topics to be represented and a wider range of means to represent them. Another important aspect of post-war theatre is that a lot of drama (and possibly the best authors) moved from the stage to television, as it offered a wider audience. Indeed, modern soap-operas, such as *Coronation Street*, could be seen as “multi-authored plays that can, theoretically, last forever” (ibid: 98). Television-like features, such as very short scenes, are also present in modern on-stage drama. Finally, the identity of the British has become contested recently, as there are thousands of immigrants in the United Kingdom from across the globe, and national identities within the state are strong. In such a confused situation it is inevitable that some clearly definable groups will become minorities and as such they are easily graspable groups in art as well as in other areas of life. These marginal identities include, for instance, sexual and ethnic ones. It is, however, paradoxical that this “marginal” art is more and more considered the norm. (Woolf 2000)

It is clear that the above features explained by Woolf (2000) are present in both *Educating Rita* and *Paradise Bound*. Both are northern and were shown in a northern theatre. In this sense, one of the important features of Liverpoolian drama is the very fact that it is not centred on London. That said, Russell’s work has been performed in several places, including internationally, and on the silver screen, and indeed *Educating Rita* premiered in London (Willyrussell 2010). Similarly, *Paradise Bound* featured a cast with impressive, international television credentials. Furthermore, Larkin himself appears to have started a television career after writing *Paradise Bound*. In addition, his play features many minorities: one of the characters is homosexual (who is preparing to become an immigrant), and both ethnic minorities and criminals are referred to. Including criminals would not be unusual in a detective story, but *Paradise Bound* features descriptions of them as regular, everyday people with nothing unusual about their activities. In fact, certain crimes are considered a means of survival. Ethnic minorities in PB, on the other hand, are only referred to with derogatory terms.

In addition to the socio-political aspects, it is necessary to look at the use of dialect in literature on the whole. According to Wakelin (1972: 34), dialect has been used for literary purposes since the late 1300s. The first recorded use of dialect is in Geoffrey Chaucer’s writing, where an unspecified northern accent is imitated humorously.

This indicates that by Chaucer's era one variant of English was already more prestigious than others, as some characters were comic specifically because they spoke in a regional dialect (Wakelin 1972: 35). Dialect is still being used in writing, including plays, although authors are not as detailed with their descriptions as they used to be, and the exact style of speech tends to be assumed by the actors, who consider it important to speak accurately (Wakelin 1978: 53). Wakelin (ibid.) points out that in the late 1970s there was increasing interest in describing the industrial Northern areas (especially the North East) and its social history in drama. This is in line with Woolf's findings (2000; see above). Furthermore, Wakelin (1978: 52-53) has noticed that especially the working class dialect of that area was being "reproduced on a large scale", with local actors playing workers who spoke with a broad accent, and managers with a more restrained version, all the time keeping in mind that audiences may not be local but still need to understand the speech. Finally, regional dialects were dominant in stand-up comedy as well (ibid.), which is worth noticing as Educating Rita is a comedy. In light of all these findings, the use of language in Educating Rita fits well within the trends of its time.

Liverpudlian theatre has strong roots starting from the 1500s, and so far over three dozen theatres have been in operation (Williams 2005). Some of these are in fact the same theatre changing names, but it is nonetheless clear that the presence of drama is strong. When Educating Rita first came to Liverpool, it was performed at the Everyman Theatre (Willyrussell 2010). The Everyman had been operating since 1964, and indeed the theatre advertises itself as Willy Russell's "formative home" (Everymanplayhouse 2010). Everyman was known as young and political, and it united with the more conservative Playhouse in 1999 (ibid.) The Everyman and Playhouse, then, is where Paradise Bound was performed (introduction to PB, N.P.), so the two plays are connected in this way. The present day mission of the theatre is to create performances which appeal to the local community, and the locals are encouraged to participate, as the theatre also offers employment in the area (Everymanplayhouse 2010).

5.2 Willy Russell

Willy Russell was born on the outskirts of Liverpool in 1947 (Willyrussell 2010). His parents were working class and he had problems at school. He became fascinated with books as soon as he could read, however, and realised in school that he wanted to be a writer. He gave up the dream as unrealistic, but by chance ended up working as a ladies' hairdresser. This turned out to be a good decision because during the quiet days in the salon, he had the opportunity to write in the back room. After six years he left the hair salon, saved up money and went to college in order to pursue his writing career. (Russell 1991)

Russell has written and produced numerous plays, starting from the early 1970s. He became famous for his Beatles musical John, Paul, George, Ringo ... and Bert in 1974. Other works by him include the television series One Summer (1980) and the plays Our day out (which will also be referred to in the present thesis; 1976) Blood Brothers (1983) and Shirley Valentine (1986). He has also published music as a solo artist, and written a novel called The Wrong Boy (2000). Russell is still producing material and lives in Liverpool. (Willyrussell 2010)

Many of Russell's plays, including ER and Our day out, tell stories of regular working class people. Because of this, and his authentic Scouse writing, Russell's works can be assumed to be quite insightful regarding the ways of life of the working class. It is likely that his success is partly because regular people find it easy to relate to working class characters.

5.2.1 Educating Rita

The Open University in Britain offers a magnificent setting for clashing communication styles between classes because tuition is also available as evening classes, and even those who do not qualify for traditional universities can attend (Open University 2010). Educating Rita tells the story of a working class woman who enrolls on a course at the Open University in Liverpool.

The characters are a university teacher Frank and an Open University student Rita. Frank uses mostly Standard English. The play is partly autobiographical in nature, so the characters' speech is represented fairly reliably, especially given Russell's background with working class characters. Rita is a ladies hairdresser who aspires to become more educated. She enrolls on an Open University English course, despite not having any understanding of what literary criticism is. Over the course of the play, she befriends Frank who, in turn, has a romantic interest in her *delightful* and *charming* character (ER: 44). During the quiet days at the hair salon where she works, Rita writes essays for her course, in a clear parallel to Russell's own past. She goes on to transform completely as she learns to analyse fiction and poetry, and eventually passes her English literature exams easily. Her speech, too, moves closer to Standard English. The whole story is set in Frank's study, so there is no evidence of how Rita might speak with other people, but it is reasonable to assume that she does change her speech on the whole and not only within earshot of her tutor. The story is about the changes in their relationship as Rita becomes competent in literary criticism and does not need Frank's help any more. The play first appeared on stage in 1980 and is still produced successfully: the latest review on Willy Russell's own website is from 2009. Another review on the site points out that the play is still contemporary, as it provides a point of comparison to the present day academic world and social mobility (McMillan 2003, as quoted on Willyrussell 2010). McMillan's (ibid.) view on how class affects identity is also striking: "Rita...comes from a working-class background but, **like most real human beings**, is not wholly defined by that class identity" (emphasis by the present author).

Educating Rita was chosen as data for the present thesis because of the type of language in which the play is written, and because of the clear-cut difference in how the two characters speak. I shall only include passages where the characters are engaged in a conversation with each other: for instance, reading out loud and phone conversations with others will be excluded. This is because many studies show that when people read out loud, they alter their speech because the situation is more formal, and the audience has an effect on the speakers' language as well (e.g. Bell 1984, as quoted by Mesthrie et al. 1999: 181).

There is no exact information about what point of time the story is set in, but it was written in 1979, and given the realism it is very reasonable to assume it is set around the same time. The year of writing places the play around the beginning of Margaret Thatcher's years as Prime Minister (which was 1979-1990). However, in the early 1980s she did not have such a strong grip on English politics yet (Marwick 2003: xiv) so the play cannot be said to be set in "Thatcherist England". Marwick (2003: 151-152) describes the time before Thatcher as a decline period in English society, characterised by for example economic troubles, unemployment, and the presence of terrorism by the Northern Irish separatists, the IRA.

5.3 Jonathan Larkin and Paradise Bound

Jonathan Larkin became a playwright in the Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse Young Writers' Programme. Paradise Bound is his first play, and the premiere in Everyman Theatre in Liverpool featured an impressive cast, who have appeared in the popular TV dramas Emmerdale, Heartbeat, The Bill and Coronation Street (introduction to PB, N.P.). This may have contributed to the play's success. After Paradise Bound, Larkin has continued to work as a writer in Liverpool (Holloway 2008 and Hunt 2009). In addition, Larkin writes for the TV soap opera Hollyoaks (Internet Movie Database 2010a). Interesting intertextuality emerges here as some of the characters talk about having watched Emmerdale and Coronation Street in the play (PB: 42).

Paradise Bound is set in an inner city area of Liverpool, Dingle. It has four characters: best friends Danny and Anthony, Danny's mother Kathleen, and her best friend Ann. The play is acted out over three days in two locations: Kathleen and Danny's kitchen, and a piece of artificial turf on a nearby street, where Danny is working. The play does not have a clearly definable plot, as it illustrates the everyday life of the characters from one Sunday afternoon to a Tuesday. Over this period of time, however, Anthony finds out that he has got employment in Australia, breaks the news to the characters, makes travel arrangements and comes out as a homosexual. In addition, Danny works on building a fence, Kathleen receives stolen clothing to sell and Ann gathers up courage to go to a doctor because of abnormal test results. The story is mainly about Anthony, who dreams of a more successful life

in Australia. He struggles with the social life in Liverpool, because he feels uncomfortable in a city which is hostile towards minorities. Why he thinks he would be more readily accepted in Australia is not explained in full, although he seems to think that Liverpool and Dingle are particularly intolerant (PB: 76). In addition, the person who has put him in touch with the Australian employer is a lesbian (PB: 17), and this may have given him further encouragement. Towards the end of the play, Anthony reveals to the other characters his sexual orientation, and although the others try to support him and convince him that they are not discriminatory, he follows through with his plan of moving to Australia. The whole play has an undercurrent of the city preparing for the Capital of Culture year of 2008, by making cosmetic changes that do not benefit everyday people. For example, a laundrette gets replaced by some grass and a bench, even though one might assume a laundrette would be more useful to the people of the area (PB: 4). According to the few reviews available, Paradise Bound was praised—and quite possibly seen—for the sake of its character performances, but the plot and the setting were less impressive. For example, Baldock (2006) thinks the play is messy and has too much to say. It is true that it features quite a few themes, and each character's story is told along the way, in varying degrees of detail. This is not significant for the present investigation, however, because the aim is to concentrate on one aspect at the expense of others. The present thesis will not concentrate on sexual minorities or gender issues, even though there is sufficient data for those themes as well as for class.

5.4 Previous research on class in literature

There do not seem to be many studies regarding class in literature, and the few studies available have examined novels as data and the content of the story being told rather than the actual text and the ways in which social class is evident in characters' "speech" (such as Vanttinen 1992, as mentioned in chapter 1). In addition, drama has been studied from the perspective of conversation analysis and stylistics, but without special emphasis on class. There is therefore a gap in the field regarding social class in modern plays, and regarding investigation of speech as presented in text form by an author. The present thesis introduces a rare form of analysing speech and social class. The lack of similar research is mostly due to the restricted resources available for the present thesis. Professional academics who investigate similar issues normally

have the opportunity to use real people as their subjects, and such subjects have a higher value for those who fund the research.

The only available academic analyses about Educating Rita specifically concern education (and especially the position of women in it) and translation studies. As an example, there is an MA thesis on how Rita is portrayed in the Finnish translation of the play (Mansikkala and Pelkonen 1983). These topics are only indirectly, if at all, related to social class or sociolinguistics. With regard to Paradise Bound, no academic research is available to the present author, which alone is valid justification for the present study. Overall, research on which to build the present study seems to be very limited. This is not to be taken as a shortcoming but as an indication of that the issue has been overlooked in favour of different perspectives by other authors.

Overall the plays have much in common, but they still have their own distinctive character, which is an excellent basis for comparing and contrasting. A deeper analysis of them will be presented in the core chapters below. The analysis part of the present thesis will be divided in three chapters: Chapter 6 will focus on class issues such as attitudes, identities and evidence of which class the characters belong to. Chapter 7 will be devoted to the language used in the plays, and chapter 8 will provide a view of the differences and similarities between the plays.

6 THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THE PLAYS

The analysis section of the present thesis begins here by examining the social class and the social conditions of all characters in the plays based on the theoretical information in the preceding chapters. This is necessary to be able to examine the language credibly. The following chapter will be devoted to examining different aspects of Scouse and working class language on the whole as it is evident in the plays, whereas the present chapter focuses on class society as it is described in them. Chapter 8 concentrates on comparing and contrasting the two plays to draw out any changes that may have occurred between the dates of the plays, in other words between 1979 and 2006. To begin with, the most important issue is to determine the class of the speakers with certainty. Everyone in both plays is white, so there is no

reason to study racial or ethnic issues separately. The themes of tolerance and prejudice do feature, though. The position of women is always of great interest when analysing cultures and societies. However, the topic is ruled outside of the scope of the present thesis in order to gain a deeper analysis of class dynamics.

The characters of Educating Rita, Frank and Rita, are of different classes as per Fox's class schema (presented in chapter 2.3): Frank (in his early fifties) is upper middle or middle middle class, whereas Rita (26) is working class. Frank does not appear to have social aspirations, and on this basis he belongs to upper middle class. Whether Rita is upper or lower working class is slightly unclear, as she does have aspirations for a better life and she wants to come across as educated; but clearly her friends and family are relatively content with what they have. It is more likely that Rita is of lower working class like her family, and she stands out because of her social aspirations. This division between the characters is supported by their occupations: Frank is a university professor, and Rita is a hairdresser, although she also works in a restaurant over the course of the play. These occupations could be classified as class 1 (professional; at the top of the scale) and class 4 (partly skilled; the lowest but one group) on the Registrar General's 1971 social class list, as explained in chapter 2.1. It is important to remember here that the Registrar General's scheme excludes those wealthy enough not to work, which means that even though Frank is in the highest group, he is by no means upper class. At the same time, little value should be given to Russell's choice of character occupations in Educating Rita, as the play is partly autobiographical.

In Paradise Bound (PB), then, the characters' occupations and ages are revealed in the beginning of the play as background information for those producing the drama. The occupations are as follows: Ann (50) and Kathleen (47) are both waitresses, Danny (19) is a constructor and Anthony (19) is a telesales agent (PB: 2). Further information on the women's appearance is given, too: Kathleen is short and robust, dressed in an overall, and Ann is large and wears a lot of jewellery. Based on the occupations, all are "traditional" working class, either in manual labour or routine, unskilled occupations (class 4 or 5 on the Registrar General's scheme, and similar to Rita's position in ER). However, by the time PB was written, the new ranking of occupations had been introduced (see chapter 2.1). On the new scale of 1-9, everyone

but Danny would be in group 7, above only elementary and machinery operative occupations. Danny would be placed in group 5, as construction working falls under skilled trade occupations. Rita does not fit in this system as it had not been invented when ER was written, but she would be in group 6 between the Danny and the others in PB, as her occupation is personal care. In Paradise Bound, as in Educating Rita, one character stands out because of social aspirations. It is interesting, and indicative of the conflict between the ranking of occupation and Fox's class schema, that the one who stands out is not the one in the highest occupational group: Anthony, not Danny, has social aspirations, a wish to do something more with his life (although his aspiration is not to become middle class but to become a part of the homosexual community). He is also looking for a more tolerant place to live. Unlike Rita, Anthony does not plan to do this through education but by emigration, which implies that his aspirations are not as clearly class-oriented as Rita's. In addition to Anthony, Danny too had a dream of escaping his lifestyle: he was going to become a professional footballer but he got injured, and had succumbed to his fate by the beginning of the play.

The character's occupations do not reflect in full the old North-South division of occupations, whereby the north is more reliant on manufacturing (and thus, in a worse position in a time of recession). Out of all six characters, Danny of Paradise Bound is the only one who works in a typically northern manufacturing industry. Everyone else is in service industries. In addition, both plays are more about breaking free from dominant behaviour patterns than about succumbing to them. Many of the occupations are described when the characters explain what happened to them at work, and some of the scenes happen in a workplace. Indeed, all of Educating Rita is set in Frank's office. Nevertheless, the characters can be seen as reliable representations of their local areas even though they do not represent the stereotypical local occupations.

6.1 References to class society

The focus in the present chapter will be on direct references to society, as they can be taken as a part of the characters' speech, if not in the same way as for example grammar and vocabulary. It is useful, however, to also shed light on indirect

references to class and other social issues within the text. One of the important aspects, occupation, has already been covered above to support the classification of the characters. Other references include non-linguistic class indicators such as place of residence and dress code.

Both plays include references to different areas in or around Liverpool. In ER, Rita comments on a part of town where she would never like to live (ER: 12):

Rita: (explaining about how she does not want to have children yet)...I tried to explain that I wanted a better way of livin' me life. An' he [=Rita's husband] listened to me. But he didn't understand because when I'd finished he said he agreed with me and that we should start savin' the money to move off our estate an' get a house out in Formby. Even if it was a new house I wanted I wouldn't go an' live in Formby. I hate that hole, don't you?

Frank: Yes.

Rita: Where do you live?

Frank: Formby.

Rita: Oh.

Formby has been described in chapter 3.3, but here it is evident that Rita and Frank live in different places because of class: Rita's husband thinks that moving to Formby would constitute moving up the class ladder successfully. Most importantly, however, Rita says that she hates Formby. It is not revealed why, but one possible explanation is that the people who live there have too different lifestyles. Rita does, in fact, go to Formby to visit Frank's house for a dinner party, but she decides not to go in because she is an outsider (ER: 43-44):

Rita: All day Saturday, all day in the shop [the hair salon where she works] I was thinkin' what to wear. --- An' all the time I'm trying to think of things I can say, what I can talk about. --- I can't remember if it's Wilde who's witty an' Shaw who was Shavian or who the hell wrote Howards End.

Frank: Ogh God!

Rita: Then I got the wrong bus to your house. It took me ages to find it. Then I walked up your drive, an' I saw y' all through the window, y' were sippin' drinks an' talkin' an' laughin'. An' I couldn't come in.

Frank: Of course you could.

Rita: I couldn't. I'd brought the wrong sort of wine. When I was in the off licence I knew I was buyin' the wrong stuff. But I didn't know which was the right wine.

Perhaps the above extract provides a better understanding of why Rita finds Formby offputting. Superficially, she blames it on the fact that she bought the wrong kind of wine, but the truth is clearly more complicated. She wanted to fit in with a more sophisticated crowd, and was not brave enough to go in. It is simply not a world that she is a part of, and indeed she had been invited to have someone "funny, delightful

and charming” to “breeze in” at the party (ER: 44). It remains unclear where exactly Rita lives, as she just refers to her area as *round our way*.

Paradise Bound, in turn, is set in Dingle, which is one of the poorest areas of Liverpool, and quite possibly of the country (Dingle Opportunities 2010). Dingle is located near the centre of Liverpool, on the southern side. Occasional references to the nearby streets are made in the text (such as Park Road; PB: 40), although the name Dingle only appears on the back-cover text of the play. Furthermore, the bench and the artificial turf which have appeared in the area where the play takes place is on Mill Street (PB: 91), which too is in the area (Google Maps 2010c).

Both plays include some information about the appearance of the characters. In ER, Frank is disinterested in his appearance, and resists getting a haircut even though he looks like a *geriatric hippie* according to Rita (ER: 14). Rita is more aware of how she looks: she complains she has not bought a new dress in a long time, and she plans to buy a “proper” dress once she passes her first exam (ER: 18). However, the appearance of the dress she wears or hopes to achieve is not specified in any way. The characters of PB pay much more attention to their appearance: at least the men wear stolen designer clothing, which is sold by Kathleen (PB: 37-38), and according to the character descriptions at the beginning of the play (PB: 3), Ann is “swimming in jewellery”. According to Fox (2004: 286), wearing too much jewellery is a definite sign of being working class, along with too much make up and decorative clothes including big designer logos. Finally, some of the clothing sold by Kathleen is by the fashion brand Burberry (PB: 34), which became a *chav* brand (i.e. favoured by young working class people known for their love of designer brands and offensive behaviour; Oxford Dictionaries 2010a) and thus lost its reputation around the time when PB was written (see for example BBC 2005).

It is clear that Frank and Rita are from different social circles throughout the play. Below, Rita is trying to talk about a famous American actress, but has to give up as Frank does not understand. She concludes that the actress is on the wrong television channel for Frank to know her (ER: 10-11, overleaf):

- Rita: ...It's [being a hairdresser] worse when there's a fad on, y' know like Farrah Fawcett Majors.
- Frank: Who?
- Rita: Far-rah Fawcett Majors. Y'know, she used to be with Charlie's Angels?
- Frank: (remains blank)
- Rita: It's a telly programme on ITV.
- Frank: Ah.
- Rita: You wouldn't watch ITV though, would y'? It's all BBC with you, isn't it?
- Frank: Well, I must confess...

Later on, Rita describes ITV and the evening newspapers *The Sun* and *Daily Mirror* as *the people who are supposed to represent us* (ER: 30). This reveals that she is aware of which papers and television channels are for which class, especially as she knows which channels Frank watches. In addition, newspapers in the United Kingdom are divided into two very different groups: the quality papers, which are read by the educated people; and the tabloids, which sell four times as many copies as the quality papers, and their selling point is often scandal (O'Driscoll 2009: 153-154). The papers mentioned by Rita (*The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror*) are among the most popular tabloids. The difference in the size of the classes is also evident in the newspapers: in 2008, the ten biggest newspapers were five tabloids and five quality papers, but *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* sold between them twice as many copies as all the quality papers combined; and out of the nearly ten million copies sold by the top ten, only two million were quality papers (O'Driscoll 2009: 152). To sum up, the influential papers, i.e. those that are read by influential people, are by definition read by a small minority. After commenting that Frank must be a BBC viewer, Rita continues (ER: 11):

- Rita: It's all right, I know. Soon as I walked in here I said to myself, 'Y' can tell he's a Flora man'.
- Frank: A what?
- Rita: A Flora man.
- Frank: Flora? Flowers?
- Rita: No, Flora, the bleedin' margarine, no cholesterol; it's for people like you who eat pebble-dashed bread, y' know, with little hard bits in it, just like pebble-dashin'.
- Frank: (realising and smiling): Ah – pebble-dashed bread.

It is understandable that Frank does not understand what a Flora man is: Rita is referring to a television advert, in which the phrase “you can tell so-and-so is a Flora man” is used (Barton 1991: 75). As a BBC viewer, Frank does not see any adverts. Rita also thinks that it is people like Frank who eat pebble-dashed (i.e. wholemeal) bread, and that it is not meant for her social group. Presumably, the same group then

also eats the healthy margarine. However, according to Fox (2004: 313), margarine is used by the working class: the middle class and above use butter instead. Fox's and Rita's views are thus in opposition to each other. Furthermore, it is the viewers of ITV and other commercial channels that do see the adverts for Flora and probably other health foods too. A possible explanation here is that the social significance of choosing margarine or butter has changed over the past quarter of a century. Although there are a myriad of channels in the United Kingdom today, there were only three when ER was written: BBC1, BBC2 and ITV, the BBC ones being state funded and ITV relying on income from adverts (O'Driscoll 2009: 158). Television also comes up as a topic of conversation in Paradise Bound. One of the women reveals that she watches Emmerdale and Coronation Street (PB: 42), which are soap operas on ITV1 (O'Driscoll 2009: 159). This indicates that the women have similar television habits to Rita, and indeed they may well watch the same programmes even though over two decades has passed between the plays.

Rita has a striking explanation for what is wrong in the lives of the working class people, and it demonstrates her deep understanding of her class. According to her, the people she has grown up around do have food and housing, but no meaning to their lives: they just try to survive from one day to the next and pretend to be content (ER: 30). She likens her kind to drug addicts (ER: 31):

Rita: I can get through the rest of the week if I know I've got comin' here [to the tutorial with Frank] to look forward to. Denny [Rita's husband] tried to stop me comin' tonight. --- He hates me comin' here. It's like drug addicts, isn't it? They hate it when one of them tries to break away.

The above extract shows that Rita is aware that if she becomes educated, she will be separated from her old social group. In addition, Rita explains to Frank why she did not have a chance to go to university the usual way (ER: 17):

Rita: Nah, they [the teachers she had as a child] tried their best, I suppose, always tellin' us we stood more of a chance if we studied. But studyin' was just for the whimps, wasn't it? See, if I'd started takin' school seriously I would have had to become different from me mates, an' that's not allowed.

Frank: By whom?

Rita: By your mates, by your family, by everyone. So y' never admit that school could be anythin' other than useless.

Rita confirms above that being different is not allowed, which is very much in line with Fox's class aspiration theory: lower working class members do not want to

impress anyone and are quite content with what they have. If Rita was to behave differently, she would have been perceived as “posh”, and consequently excluded from the social group of the school.

A similar phenomenon is also evident in Paradise Bound, where Anthony is trying to reach a better life than he could achieve in Liverpool, what he calls a “factory of a city” (PB: 79). In contrast with Rita, who ends up breaking up with her husband and obtaining a new circle of friends, Anthony tries to retain his ties with the other characters in the play even though he is leaving. Perhaps the transformation is easier for Anthony’s friends to accept because it has a practical side to it in the emigration. On a more important level, of course, Anthony is making a transition from a heterosexual life to a homosexual one. Nevertheless, the other characters take personally Anthony’s criticism of the city and the society there, and they think he is above the others socially, as is evident from Danny’s comment in the extract below (all the characters are present; PB: 62-63):

Anthony:	I’m going to Australia

Ann:	Like our Ronnie?
Anthony:	No. Not like your Ronnie. Not to be some scouser who emigrated to live in a nice ‘ouse with a pool.

Ann:	But yer <i>will</i> be a scouser, emigratin’...
Danny:	Ooh, carefully, Simmo, yer don’t wanna be upsettin’ the lad now, callin’ ‘im a scouser.

It is noteworthy here that Larkin has chosen to spell *scouser* with a small *s*, indicating that it is not a noun based on place of residence (in the same way as for example *Londoner*), but it refers to a social group that lives within the city. Danny suggests that Anthony is not a part of this social group because he wants to leave. It appears that the course of the lives of women in Rita’s youth and that of Danny and Anthony’s is similar for the working class: Rita’s husband demands that they have children because Rita is already 26 years old (ER: 46). Along similar lines, Anthony and Danny talk about how few women they know from their age group who do not already have children at 19 years old (PB: 43, overleaf), as Danny suggest to Anthony that he takes his time with the emigration:

Danny: What's yer rush then? Stick around. Have a few kids!
 Anthony: Fuck that!
 Danny: Kids?
 Anthony: Not just kids! What comes with them?
 Bein' attached to some bird who's attached to a pram that's attached to a baby that's attached to a cheese an' onion pasty...

 Anthony: Swear to God! How many girls from our class do you know who actually 'aven't got kids by now?
 It's like if yer 'aven't got a pit bull to parade round yer've gotta 'ave a two-year-old called Chardonnay! What's that all about?
 Danny: Hey, yer shouldn't skit, mate! Bird with pram... it's bound to 'appen to yer sooner or later.

The above is specifically a reference to working class, because it is working class women who have children as especially young, whereas higher classes wait for longer, for example because they stay in education for longer. However, according to statistics (in Reid 2001: 132), five per cent of first-time mothers in classes 4-5 in the Registrar General's class scheme are under the age of twenty, which is five times more than classes 1-2. The statistic is from the mid 1990s, however, and there must be regional differences which have not been taken into account. This would explain in part why Anthony gives the impression that most of the girls in his class are mothers by 19. In Reid's table (ibid.), there are significant differences between classes: as many as 87% of first-time mothers of social classes 1-2 are over 25 years old, compared with only 63% in classes 4-5. According to this, Rita is not particularly unusual as a childless woman at 26 years old. In addition, Kathleen had her son Danny at the age of 28, although he was not her first child. Reid's statistics (2001: 132) do show that the age of first-time mothers is increasing.

6.2 Capital of culture

While the present thesis does not concentrate on the plot and content of the plays in question, it is still worthwhile to pay attention to cultural references within the text. Analysis of other topics of conversation has been left out, but it is meaningful to examine the characters' attitudes towards their social status. For Paradise Bound, the reception of Liverpool's Capital of Culture project takes quite a central role. Both Educating Rita and Paradise Bound are rich in references to the social status of the speakers, and such references cannot be left out when considering the class and class attitudes of the speakers.

In Paradise Bound, changes are made to the characters' local area in preparation for Liverpool becoming the European Capital of Culture two years later. The first time Anthony and Danny appear in the play, it is explained that a new spot of grass has appeared in the neighbourhood. Danny explains that his job is to put a fence around the area. Anthony is already quick to comment (PB: 4):

Anthony: That sounds about right. Put turf up, stick a bench on top, but get it fenced up before anybody gets a chance to...
 Danny: To what? I'm surprised it doesn't stink'v piss already!

Both characters are in agreement that a bench in that particular neighbourhood would not stay neat for a very long time, which begs the question of why it has been put there in the first place. The area which Danny is building the fence around is the backdrop for many of the scenes in the play. It is this early on that the first direct reference is made to the capital of culture preparations (PB: 4):

Anthony: It was the laundrette wasn' it?
 Danny: Up until a month ago, yeah.
 Anthony: They knocked it down to put a patch a' grass between the chippy an' the bettin' shop?
 Danny: Capital of culture, innit?

Throughout the play, many references will be made to the changes taking place in the city, although some of them may not be in connection with the Capital of Culture project. Kathleen and Ann, who are Danny's mother and her friend, have a more complicated, or perhaps subtler, view of the new project as they are having drinks at Kathleen's home after a night out. They had had fashionable cocktails, Cosmopolitans, at a night club (PB: 21):

Ann: Five quid for a glass of nail-varnish remover.
 Kathleen: Oh it took the linin' off me throat, that shite! Lovely frosted glass as well...
 Ann: I know, it looked gorgeous!
 Kathleen: That's what it's all about now, innit? The way it looks. The image!
 Ann: Capital of Culture, girl, polish everythin', make it look shinier than it really is.

Based on these extracts, all characters in Paradise Bound think that the city's image is being improved upon in preparation for Liverpool becoming Capital of Culture. The only one who sometimes appears to think the conditions will actually improve is Danny. It is interesting that he is the only one in manual labour and thus would, stereotypically, be the least interested in socio-political or cultural developments around him. However, as seen in chapter 6, Danny is in fact two occupation groups higher in the official ranking than the other characters. Danny remarks that the new grass area looks better than the laundrette it replaced (PB: 4). His response to

Anthony's comment about wanting real grass (below; PB: 40) could be interpreted at face value or assumed sarcastic, but it is not far-fetched to imagine him being proud of his own handiwork in "improving" the city. This would reflect on his overall cautiously positive view of what is happening to the surroundings.

Anthony: I want real grass that goes on for miles. Not false turf stuck in between a chippy an' a bettin' shop.
 Danny: You slaggin' off our Capital of Culture developments?
 Anthony: Na. Let them flatten the place. Tarmac over the eyesores on Park Road an' Milly... [which are nearby streets]

On the whole, the characters see the improvements as a question of image rather than genuine development of the locals' conditions. Furthermore, there is an undertone which implies that the new turf and the bench are not even for locals to sit on; and the £5 Cosmopolitans are more expensive than what the locals (i.e. the women in the play) are used to or can afford. Some more extreme opinions are voiced towards the end of the play (PB: 104):

Kathleen: If things were black an' white I'd be workin' on the side to screw the state an' take taxpayers' money. In colour, Ant, I'm workin' on the side because I am on the bones of my arse. Most people are. D'yer see any bastard throwin' us a bone?
 Anthony: No.
 Kathleen: No, they threw us a bench. Then they said, 'Oh no, yer can't even 'ave that, yer can look at it through this nice bit of corrugated iron. That you have to put up'.

Kathleen explains her financial situation in the above extract: To put it simply, she is avoiding taxes, but the more complicated truth is that she has no choice. Kathleen appears to think that the authorities are wasting money on superficial improvements, such as building the grass and the bench. In other words, the city has money to waste, but she, like many of her peers, is penniless. It would be especially understandable for Kathleen to think the money is not being used wisely if she is not aware that the EU is giving funds to the project. Ann, too, has a negative attitude towards the developments, as relayed by Kathleen (PB: 104-105):

Kathleen: Ann reckons they're gonna move that Chinatown arch across the middle of the road, then block it off so we can't get through.
 Anthony: (laughs)
 Kathleen: Can yer imagine?
 Keep the scum outta sight. Urban Splash, Beatles Museum and the Lambanana, that's what we need for 2008. Not Scousers.
 Not me.
 Anthony: Or me.

There is some bitterness in both the above extracts on Kathleen's part. She seems to view the 2008 Capital of culture project as a part of high-brow art that regular working class people, the scum, the Scousers, are not a part of. She refers to Urban Splash, which is a city development company which has transformed old Liverpoolian factories into for example office spaces and homes (Urban Splash 2010). The Lambanana refers to a collection of statues portraying a lamb-banana creature. These statues are scattered across Liverpool (Super Lamb Banana 2010).

Similarly to the undercurrent of the Capital of Culture project, Educating Rita carries a theme of literature and drama. Frank and Rita go to the theatre sometimes to support Rita's studies, and various works of literature are naturally often the topic of conversation. The most interesting high culture-related scene in the play has to do with the quality of theatre. At this point, Rita has never been to the theatre, and she is trying to persuade Frank to come and see a famous play, The importance of being earnest, with her (ER: 37-38):

Frank:	What is it that you want to see?
Rita	(helps Frank into his coat) The Importance of Bein' Thingy...
Frank:	But The Importance isn't playing at the moment...
Rita:	It is – I passed the church hall on the bus an' there was a poster...
Frank:	(throws off his coat, aghast) An amateur production?
Rita:	What?
Frank:	Are you suggesting I miss a night at the pub to watch The Importance played by amateurs in a church hall?

Frank eventually only agrees to go after Rita accuses him of being a snob. In addition to the references to high-brow culture, Rita and Frank also discuss working-class culture, and what culture is. Rita's observations are revealing of her definition of culture, which appears to be in line with the Capital of Culture development, over twenty years later. Whereas the characters in PB think that the working class is being hidden to make way for culture, Rita is only learning that her class too has culture (ER: 29):

Rita:	Frank, y' know culture, y' know the word culture? Well it doesn't just mean goin' to the opera an' that, does it?
Frank:	No.
Rita:	It means a way of livin', doesn't it? Well we've got no culture.
Frank:	Of course you have.
Rita:	What? Do you mean like that working-class culture thing
Frank:	Mm.
Rita:	Yeh. I've read about that. I've never seen it though.

The extract is especially revealing as Rita confirms her class as the lowest, but it is also significant as she gives no value to her *way of life*, which she gives as a definition for culture.

7 THE SPEECH OF THE SCOUSERS

Extracts from the plays will be used in order to highlight the characters' attitude towards their own language and that of the other person. Another interesting phenomenon to look for is instances where the two characters fail to communicate effectively because of their language differences. Regarding extracts from the play, the interpretation will draw on conversation analysis to find out the problem points in the situations.

7.1 Communication problems

There are not any communication problems between the characters in Paradise Bound, so the present subchapter concentrates on the difficulty of mutual understanding between Frank and Rita. Rita's language is very different from Frank's especially in the beginning of the play, so most instances where their conversation must sidetrack to explain and expand on what has been said are found in the first half of the play. Both characters are aware of their differences in spoken communication, and indeed Rita finds it difficult to become an educated woman and fit in with other like-minded people (ER: 45):

Rita: I can't talk to the people I live with any more. An' I can't talk to the likes of them on Saturday [she had been invited to Frank's dinner party but did not attend], or them out there [regular university students], because I can't learn the language. I'm a half-caste.

Rita feels trapped between two groups, a half-caste. Interestingly, the same term is used by Ann in Paradise Bound, although in a racial connection. Ann's comment on mixed race women resonates with how Rita was under pressure to fit in (The topic of conversation below is Anthony's ex-girlfriend; PB: 12):

Ann: That 'alf-caste girl wear yer out, lad?
 Anthony: We just...wanted different things.
 Danny: Yeah, you wanted someone who wasn't a bitch.
 Ann: She 'ave a chip on 'er shoulder?
 Anthony: Erm...
 Ann: I mean, she was beautiful, but they're all like that. Don't know whether they're black or white so they take it out on the rest of us poor bastards.

Rita's complaint above highlights the fact that she is transforming, and it is a description of the difficulty of social climbing. With the Right to Buy-scheme (as introduced in chapter 4.3; BBC 2010b), many working class people were able to buy their council homes, and they may have begun to feel like a part of the middle class as a group. However, attempting to move up the class ladder is far more difficult if it is done by the change of speech and ideas.

Rita has many non-standard features in her speech: even the kind that will complicate understanding between her and a speaker of a different regional or social dialect. In the play there are indeed a few occasions when Frank must ask Rita to clarify as he does not understand a phrase or a word Rita has used. Rita uses a very informal register, especially considering that she is talking to a university lecturer. Below are some examples to demonstrate Rita's overall style.

First of all, Rita uses phrases and vocabulary that Frank does not recognise (ER: 16-17):

Rita	...I told me mother once. She said I was off me cake.
Frank	What in the name of God is being off one's cake? (Exaggerated look on his face)
Rita	Soft. Y' know, mental.

In the example above, Rita uses the phrase [*to be*] *off me cake*, which also includes a non-standard pronoun *me* (the standard equivalent would be *my*). This idiom does not appear in the glossaries used in the present thesis, but Fazakerley (2001: 10) does include the expression *off his box*, which means the same as *mental*. Frank does not understand what Rita is saying, so she explains: *Soft*. It is possible that here is an instance of repair: Frank may not understand what *soft* means either, so he waits for Rita to explain again: *Y' know, mental*. He does not intervene because to do so would mean correcting Rita, which would be impolite as per Shegloff et al.'s (1977) theory (see chapter 4.5). To be able to prove or disprove the theory, the pause between the words *soft* and *y'* should be measured, but that is of course impossible here. Russell has, however, included a full stop after the word *soft*, so it is reasonable to believe the pause before the next word is slightly longer than pauses between words usually are. Once Frank understands what the phrase means, he comments that he should begin using it too (ER: 17, overleaf):

Frank Aha. I must remember that. The next student to ask me --- shall be told that one is obviously very off one's cake!

Rita Don't be soft. You can't say that.

Frank Why ever not?

Rita You can't. If you do it, it's slummin' it. Comin' from you it'd sound dead affected, wouldn't it?

Frank Dead affected?

Rita Yeh. You say that to your proper students they'll think you're off your - y' know...

Frank Cake, yes.

The above extract follows the previous one immediately in the original text. Some very interesting information emerges when Frank suggests he ought to tell his students *they are off their cake(s)*: Rita is opposed to Frank using the same phrase as her, on the basis that it would be *slummin' it*. The phrase *slummin' it*, in turn, means downgrading one's standard of living; in other words pretending to be of a worse social class than is the case (Barton 1991: 77). Rita's response is clear evidence that she is aware of how she and Frank do, and should, speak differently. Frank uses quite a formal version of the saying, namely *one is very off one's cake*. This does increase the social prestige of the idiom, but it may be that Frank chose to use the pronoun *one* because he did not know whether the more often used plural *they* would require a plural of the word *cake*. Thus, the more prestigious version is also automatically correct. Finally, Frank does not appear to understand what *dead affected* (i.e. very false; Barton 1991: 77) means in Rita's speech. Perhaps contrary to expectations, Frank does, in fact, begin to use the phrase which first confused him: he uses the form *off my cake* (e.g. *Completely off my cake, I know*. ER: 60). Even so, Frank adopts lower class language from Rita—even though Rita herself only uses the phrase once—but he adapts it to his own style. Frank also adopts the word *dead* in the meaning of *very* (ER: 59):

Rita: Honest?

Frank: Dead honest.

Finally, in relation to Frank borrowing words from Rita, it is possible that he is motivated by wanting to be in her favour. He comments that Rita is the first breath of fresh air the office has seen in years (ER: 11), and clearly has some romantic feelings towards her in several scenes throughout the play. Furthermore, Frank relays some of Rita's ideas even to his students, which puts him under ridicule (ER: 60).

Rita and Frank also have some communication problems that do not depend on vocabulary (ER: 3):

Rita: D' y' get a lot like me?
 Frank: Pardon?
 Rita: Do you get a lot of students like me?

The example above illustrates how Rita corrects her speech when she is asked to repeat herself. While repeating, Rita is aware that she should speak more clearly than she did the first time around, which is a phenomenon that emerged in Labov's pilot study (1962, as quoted by Mesthrie et al. 1999: 85) as well. In addition to pronouncing the words more clearly or more in line with Standard English, she adds further information to her statement to help Frank understand. It would be rather unusual if Rita did not modify her sentence at all the second time around. Another interesting point regarding the above example is Frank's response: *Pardon?* According to Fox (2004: 76), the word is used by those with social aspirations, and the ones at the top of the social scale have a particularly strong resentment against it. They would say *Sorry?*, *Sorry – What?* or *What – Sorry?* instead. The working class, in turn, would say *What?* and pronounce it according to their local dialect (ibid.). On this basis, again, Frank is middle middle class. This exchange occurs at the beginning of the play, so it is also possible that Frank tries to accommodate to Rita's speech by using less prestigious variants if, in fact, he was of upper middle class. However, Frank too begins saying *What?* after his first meeting with Rita, which is probably because the two become more familiar with each other and Frank begins to speak less formally. Furthermore, neither character uses *Sorry?* at any point, and this further demonstrates that Frank is not upper middle class.

To expand on the communication problems that occur when an utterance is not heard or understood, a brief reference to apologies and requests for repeats is in order. There are three ways to indicate that another person's statement was not heard or understood in Paradise Bound. Firstly, the phrase *Come again?* is used after Danny brings up the topic of an odd haircut they had seen earlier in the day (PB: 36):

Danny: Yeah, havin' a bit of a Mohican's one thing, but pink?
 Anthony: (shrugs)
 Danny: He loved 'imself to death!
 (there is a pause in the conversation)
 Anthony: It was red.
 Danny: Come again?
 Anthony: It wasn't pink, it was red.

Above, Anthony uses the vague pronoun *it* in his sentence to correct Danny on the hair colour of the person in question. This is why Danny does not realise at first what Anthony is talking about. In addition, the two had seen the unusual haircut at a football match, in which red cards are occasionally given to players of inappropriate behaviour. Thus, the mention of the colour red without a reference point may have confused Danny because of the football connotation. Danny asks Anthony for more information on what he means by saying *Come again?*, in other words he asks for repetition. Anthony repeats his sentence, but adds extra information (i.e. that he meant *red* as opposed to *pink*) to help Danny understand. Another way of expressing confusion in PB is the question *Eh?*. It is also used as a tag in both plays to ask for confirmation rather than repetition. As an example, Rita uses it when she finds Frank to be too drunk to hold a conversation, and she wants to cancel the class and try again the next week (ER: 61):

Rita: Frank, you're not in any fit state for a tutorial. I'll leave it [her essay] with y' an' we can talk about it next week, eh?

As established above, ER features *What?* (or derivatives, such as *A what?*) as a means to invite repetition, but PB uses *Eh?* in addition to the means already described. For example, when Anthony reveals to the women that he is going to Australia, Ann asks if his plans are similar to Ann's sisters', as Anthony's homosexuality has not yet been revealed (PB: 62):

Ann: Like our Ronnie?
 Anthony: No. Not like your Ronnie. Not to be some scouser who emigrated to live in a nice 'ouse with a pool.
 Ann: Eh?
 Anthony: I'm going to see it. See the life. See what it's like. Have a go.

Again, Anthony expands on his previous answer when Ann does not understand what he is saying. Finally, an interesting feature in PB but not ER, in addition to the overall variety of means to express confusion, is that instead of *What?*, characters in PB often say *Which?*, even if it is grammatically incorrect based on Standard English norms. Below is an example from a conversation between Danny and Anthony (PB: 38-39):

Danny: Wasn't long ago you were Mr Lacoste, remember? Just because yer've ditched the trackies altogether doesn't make you any different to me.
 Anthony: I never said it did!
 Danny: What's with that, anyway?
 Anthony: Which?
 Danny: The change in image.

The word *which* refers to a set from which one (or several) are to be chosen. However, Anthony uses the word in response to the pronoun *that* used by Danny. The grammatically correct question here would be *What?*. In any case, Danny does repair his question by adding more information, so Anthony's question has the desired effect.

In addition to the communication problems between Frank and Rita that happen because of their different dialects, there are some occasions when Frank must explain a term to Rita, as in the example below (ER: 19):

Rita:	Well, it's immoral
Frank:	Amoral

It is understandable for Rita not to know the terminology of her Open University course, so if she is being corrected on specialist vocabulary, it is the form of the correction that is of interest. The issue here is that of repertoire, one Brown and Levinson's (1979: 300-312) five linguistic markers of group membership, as outlined in chapter 4.3. In other words, Frank and Rita are separated into different social groups (as distinct from social classes) because they do not have the same repertoire. In the example above, Frank explicitly corrects Rita's speech. While the word Rita used was not the correct one by the norms of Standard English, it did not cause any difficulty in mutual understanding. Frank is, of course, Rita's teacher, so the relationship between the two is unequal at times. According to Schegloff et al. (1977) there is a noticeable pause in the conversation immediately before a repair or a correction. However, there is no written information available on whether Frank tried to get Rita to correct herself before pointing out that the word she meant to say is *amoral*. Assuming that Frank acted according to Schegloff's model and preferred Rita to correct herself, Frank was the only person to whom the non-standard word was problematic. Rita probably did not correct herself as she did not think there was a problem with what she said. This phenomenon demonstrates the clash of two different standards of conversation, and highlights the distance between the two social classes. Rita also has problems with repertoire and the correct use of certain expressions. Overleaf, she is complimenting the appearance of Frank's study (ER: 15):

Rita ---It's a mess. But it's a perfect mess. It's like whenever you've put something down it's grown to fit there.
 Frank: You mean that over the years it's acquired a certain patina.
 Rita: Do I?
 Frank: I think so.
 Rita: Yeh. "It's acquired a certain patina". It's like sometin' from a romantic film, isn't it? "Over the years your face has acquired a certain patina."
 Frank (smiles)

Frank does nothing to correct Rita, but it is clear to him and to the reader that Rita has used the expression *to acquire a certain patina* in an unsuitable way. According to Oxford Dictionaries (2010b), the phrase refers to a layer of some kind, on top of the surface of a person (i.e. a patina of old money) or an object (i.e. a literal patina which forms on for example metal). Rita's expression is therefore in contradiction with Standard English, although she has no problem with it at all.

Similar instances occur throughout the first half of the play, and some of them are more revealing in terms of cultural than linguistic differences (ER: 8):

Rita: What does assonance mean?
 Frank: (half-spluttering) What? (gives a short laugh)
 Rita: Don't laugh at me.
 Frank: No. Erm-*assonance*. Well, it's a form of rhyme. What's a-what's an example-erm-? Do you know Yeats?
 Rita: The wine lodge?
 Frank: Yeats the poet.

It is of little importance here what exactly assonance means. Even though Frank knows Rita is absolutely new to literary criticism, he seems to take control of a certain register for granted. More interesting is Rita's train of thought to the alcohol retailer Yates's, which is unlikely to have much to do with a form of rhyme. There are also some instances where Frank does not understand what Rita is talking about, which means that Rita too assumes shared cultural knowledge. The example below (ER: 9) illustrates this, although the issue has been touched upon in chapter 6.1 in relation to class society.

Rita: What's your name?
 Frank: Frank.

 Rita: Maybe your parents named y' after the quality.
 Frank (remains silent)
 Rita: Y'know Frank, Frank Ness, Elliot's brother.

 Rita: You've still not got it, have y'? Elliot Ness – y' know, the famous Chicago copper who caught Al Capone.
 Frank: Ah. When you said Elliot I assumed you meant T.S. Eliot.

In addition to the communication problems induced by vocabulary or knowledge of a register, the two characters in Educating Rita do not share a conversational pattern of asking for information indirectly. In the example below, Rita has just appeared in Frank's study for the very first time, and he tries to find out who she is (ER: 2-3):

Frank: (stares at Rita) You are?
 Rita: What am I?
 Frank: Pardon?
 Rita: What?
 Frank: (looks for the admission papers) Now you are?
 Rita: I'm a what?
 Frank: (looks up and returns to the papers)
 Rita: (hangs up her coat) That's a nice picture, isn't it?

It is of notice here that when Frank tries to ask Rita again, he uses almost exactly the same sentence, and, perhaps unsurprisingly, gets a very similar answer as to his first attempt. One would expect Rita to understand that she ought to introduce herself when she enters, or at least that the professor (whose name she does not know either; ER: 9) might be asking it when he says *You are?*. One possible explanation here is the sentence intonation in Scouse: statements have a rising tone, which is consistent with questions in RP, as explained in chapter 4.4. In other words, Rita probably does not "hear" the question mark at the end of *you are*. Quite oddly, as Rita does not reveal her name, she changes the subject and they proceed to talk for another five pages before returning to the topic. It is of course quite problematic in conversation not to answer questions, but Rita does not appear to think so. Instead, she asks Frank some quite personal questions before the two know each other by name. Frank asks Rita for her name again, in a very clear, direct manner, and finally gets an answer (ER: 8-9):

Frank: What's your name?
 Rita: Rita.
 Frank: Rita. Mm. It says here Mrs S. White.
 Rita: That's S for Susan. It's just me real name. I've changed it to Rita, though. I'm not a Susan anymore. I've called myself Rita – y' know, after Rita Mae Brown.
 Frank: Who?
 Rita: Y' know, Rita Mae Brown who wrote Rubyfruit Jungle? Haven't y' read it? It's a fantastic book. D' y' wanna lend it?

The first thing to notice in the above example is that Rita uses non-standard vocabulary in asking if Frank would like to *lend* a book from her; the correct word would be *borrow*. In addition, Rita seems to think she can change her name at a whim. Rita is not a nickname to her, and she regards Susan as *just* her real name, not of any importance. Ordinarily, one could expect new students to introduce

themselves to their professors by their real, full name, or at least a nickname that resembles the real name. A name like this might be for example Sue for Susan, but it is impossible for an outsider to guess that Rita is “short for” Susan. It may be the case that working class people are readier to take on different nicknames.

It is revealed early on in Educating Rita that Rita’s real name is Susan, but she has started calling herself Rita after the author of her favourite book, the sexually explicit novel Rubyfruit Jungle (Barton 1991: 75). Initially Rita was quite surprised Frank had not read or even heard of the novel. As she becomes more educated, however, Rita reverts back to her real name, although it is unclear when exactly that takes place. She comments at one point that Frank is the only one who calls her Rita anymore (ER: 69). Her transformation is further demonstrated very clearly by how her attitude towards the novel changes (ER: 63):

Frank: ...I got around to reading it you know, Rubyfruit Jungle. It’s excellent.
 Rita: (laughs) Oh go way, Frank. Of its type it’s quite interesting. But it’s hardly excellence.

Even at this point, though, Rita does not seem to think it was odd for her to change her name. It remains a mystery when exactly Rita changed her name to Rita and back to Susan, or how her friends and family react to it, but as the above example occurs before Frank finds out she is not Rita anymore, it is likely that she had changed her name a while before telling Frank about it.

In addition to Rita’s unconventional language use detailed above, she uses a very informal register, especially considering that she is talking to a university lecturer who she does not know very well. Instances where her style is highly inappropriate also cause communication problems, even if mutual understanding is not in jeopardy. For example, there is a religious nude painting in Frank’s office, which Rita comments on long before the two even know each other by name (ER: 3):

Rita: That’s a nice picture, isn’t it?
 Frank: Erm – yes, I suppose it is – nice...
 Rita: It’s very erotic.
 Frank: (looks at the painting) Actually I don’t think I’ve looked at it for about ten years, but yes, I suppose it is.
 Rita: There’s no suppose about it. Look at those tits.
 Frank: (coughs and looks away)

To begin with, the tag *isn't is* in the above extract may look like a typing error at first, but it reflects how a Liverpudlian might pronounce the phrase *isn't it?* (Barbera and Barth 2007: 54). It also appears elsewhere in the play. More to the point, however, it is obvious here that Rita's use of the word *tits* here has caused a problem in the communication between her and Frank: he has become embarrassed, but Rita keeps talking about the subject even beyond the above extract. Rita does also use the same controversial word in a phrase indicating her irritation because of the author whose work she is currently reading: *This Forster, honest to God he doesn't half get on my tits* (ER: 24). This is not as controversial, though, indicated by that Frank quickly knows how to reply: *Good. You must show me the evidence* (ER: 24). To sum up, Frank is able to accommodate to some of Rita's unusual choices of language and topic of conversation, but sometimes she goes too far and the communication between the two is disrupted.

Before moving on to the more tangible elements of language, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, it is worthwhile to pay some attention to apologies in the plays. Apologies are usually needed after confrontations, which can arguably be seen as quite difficult communication problems. Apologies do occur in both plays, but the word *sorry* is used for other reasons too (although, as seen above, Frank does not use it as an alternative to *pardon* or *what*). For example, Rita once apologises after making a joke which Frank does not understand. Rita has suggested that Frank might be named after a celebrity he has not heard of. After realising that Frank does not understand what she is talking about, she says (ER: 9):

Rita: I'm sorry – it was a joke.

Rita goes on to try to explain the joke, but even then she needs to try twice before Frank understands. It has, of course, been seen earlier in the present chapter that Rita does not apologise whenever she says something that Frank does not understand, so this instance is particularly striking. It is possible that the lengthy exchange between the two, in which Rita's joke failed, resulted in her feeling frustrated and wanting to get out of the situation and begin the conversation anew. In this sense, she apologises for causing the conversation to derail, not for telling an unsuccessful joke. Therefore, the apology is in fact phatic, as it is uttered in order to improve the relationship and communication between the two characters. Another instance where Rita's apology

is phatic is when she decides at the last minute not to go to Frank's dinner party. She has apologised on a sheet of paper, most likely out of politeness. (ER: 43):

- Frank: --- having to cope with six instead of eight [guests] was extremely hard on Julia [Frank's partner]. I'm not saying that I needed any sort of apology; you don't turn up that's up to you, but...
- Rita: I did apologize.
- Frank: 'Sorry couldn't come', scribbled on the back of your essay and thrust through the letter box? Rita, that's hardly an apology.
- Rita: What does the word 'sorry' mean if it's not an apology?---

Rita has written *sorry couldn't come* on a piece of paper to apologise, but it is clear that she could have come. Instead, she chose not to. Frank's reaction is revealing: he does not think that Rita's apology was sufficient. Although he says that he does not mind Rita not apologising, he does resort to using non-standard language, which is very unusual of him. This could indicate that he is upset by what has happened, and thus stops paying attention to the quality of his language. His lapse is not significant, however: he merely omits a conjunction in the sentence [*if*] *you don't turn up that's up to you*. A more likely explanation for Frank being upset is the fact that Rita did not come to the dinner party (although she had obviously been to the house, and left her apology in written form). There is further evidence of Frank being upset despite what he says: when Rita says that her husband refused to come, Frank immediately apologises to her, presumably for being hostile in the above extract (ER: 43; in continuation to the previous extract):

- Rita: What does the word sorry mean if it's not an apology? When I told Denny we were goin' to yours he went mad. We had a big fight about it.
- Frank: I'm sorry. I didn't realize. ---

In contrast to Rita's apologies, Frank seems to be genuine, which is indicated by him adding that he did not realise Rita had a good reason not to come. As explained in chapter 4.5, phatic communion occurs in insecure situations where the relationship between the participants needs to be negotiated. It is possible on this basis that Frank apologises (only) genuinely because he does not feel that the relationship needs negotiating – whereas Rita is starting to learn how to communicate with the middle class.

Communication problems cannot, of course, be fully separated from other types of language which are under scrutiny here. However, some instances are more useful

examined from a different perspective. The following chapter covers non-standard vocabulary in both plays.

7.2 Vocabulary

Both plays have a rich variety of vocabulary, and some examples have already been introduced in the previous chapter. The present chapter includes instances of more non-standard words in addition to non-standard conversation patterns where for example the word *please* is replaced by other means of indicating a request.

With regards to some words or word pairs in Educating Rita, it is clear that most often Frank is consistent and stays within the limits of Standard English, whereas Rita often uses forms that are of a lower level of formality, including dialectal forms. For example, the division between *yes* and *yeh* is very distinct as each person only uses one variant consistently, as here (ER: 25):

Frank:	But surely you can tell the difference between the Harold Robbins and the other two. [three books which Rita has read recently]
Rita:	Apart from that one bein' American like?
Frank:	Yes.
Rita:	Yeh. I mean the other two were sort of posher. But they're all books, aren't they?
Frank:	Yes. Yes. But you seem to be under the impression that all books are literature.

In addition to the division of the words *yes* and *yeh* in the above extract, Rita uses the lower-class word *posh*, which indicates that she associates books that are literature with higher classes, and other books with hers. Frank does not use *posh* or *smart*, as he refrains from making any direct references to class throughout the play. Instead, for instance, he talks about the Open University embracing a more comprehensive studentship (ER: 4). Such avoidance of the issue is, according to Fox (2004: 82), particularly characteristic of the middle classes. As an exception to the difference in vocabularies used by Rita and Frank, Frank does borrow certain words and expressions from Rita over the course of the play, as has been demonstrated above. However, it is Rita who adopts more of Frank's language, as she becomes educated over the course of the play.

The use of the word *please* is essential in English politeness, but it is strangely absent in both plays. Over the course of Educating Rita there are many situations in which

the characters offer each other drinks, cigarettes and so on, so multiple occasions arise for the word *please* to be used. In addition, the two meet for the first time at the beginning of the play, and continue to have a meeting on a weekly basis. Thus, they are not particularly familiar with each other and politeness should be required. However, the word *please* is not used by Rita at any time, and Frank uses it only once, although one would expect a highly educated professor to use it more frequently. The only time when Frank uses *please*, it is not as a politeness marker but quite literally as an indication of pleading (because Frank is jealous of Rita's new male friend) as opposed to a politeness marker in a request: *please stop burbling on about Mr Tyson* (ER: 59). In requests, Frank uses different means to indicate politeness: He often uses the conditional form of the verb, as in *Would* (as opposed to *will*) *you like to sit down?* (ER: 4) and *do you think I could* (vs. *can*) *have a cigarette?* (ER: 14) when he is offering or asking for something. Even though he is not as polite as he could be, there is a noticeable difference in politeness between him and Rita. She often says *all right* when she "should" say *yes please*, and shakes her head instead of saying *no thank you*. In addition, she occasionally uses the word *ta* for *thank you*. *No, ta* is therefore as polite as *No, thank you*, only in a non-standard form. However, there is even an instance when her reply to an offer is a rather blunt *No!* (ER: 4). Overall, the situations could be seen as fairly formal as there is (or should be) teaching in progress, but in terms of politeness the conversations seem quite informal and relaxed, and the topics vary a great deal.

Similarly to Rita's speech as explained above, all of the characters in Paradise Bound use limited indicators of politeness when making requests. This is partly to be expected, because all of the characters have known each other, presumably, for all their lives so there is less need for outspoken politeness between them. One means of indicating a request is the use of the phrase *will yer*. As a tag, it indicates a demand as below (PB: 24):

Ann: Chill out, will yer?

Above, Ann is telling Kathleen to relax as she is starting to be angry. She uses the tag *will yer?* again to plead when Kathleen keeps asking her questions about a sensitive topic (PB: 48):

Ann: Kath, leave it, will yer?

The word *please* does not feature at all in the play, but another means to indicate pleading is the use of the imperative case, as in *Give us it!* and the more persuasive *come on*. The phrase *will yer* is also used in a request by Danny, to indicate politeness (Kathleen has been ironing her work clothes earlier in the scene, and the ironing board is still out; PB: 31):

Danny: Oh, will yer run the iron over me T-shirt for us?
Kathleen: Do yer own shirt!

Kathleen refuses the request, although it is probably not because Danny's request is not polite enough. Another situation where the use of *please* might be expected is when something is being offered or asked for. For example, the following exchange takes place when all four characters are having dinner together at Kathleen and Danny's house (PB: 6):

Kathleen: Wanna glass of wine?
Anthony: Na, 'ave yer got anythin' softer?
Kathleen: Coke in the fridge, 'elp yerself.
Anthony (goes to the fridge)
Kathleen: There's cans a' Stella in there as well, y'know.

Above, Kathleen's offer is rejected with a simple *na*, and a request for a different drink. Kathleen offers two other options (cola and beer), but Anthony does not reply verbally to either of these, and indeed it is not revealed which drink, if either, he chose. Here, Anthony also uses the word *soft* in its literal sense, whereas in ER it was used solely as a synonym for mad or crazy. PB does also include *soft* in its dialectal meaning. Later on in the story, another group dinner is being planned: the women are in Kathleen and Danny's home, and the men are at the artificial turf. Anthony gets chosen as the person to collect the food as Kathleen rings Danny (PB: 110):

Kathleen: Fancy callin' into the Shanghai on yer way?

Above, Kathleen is again polite, despite not using the word *please*: She asks whether Danny would like to go to a Chinese takeaway to get dinner. Of course, this is a request, but in a politely disguised form. However, Danny explains that he is still working and asks Anthony to do it instead (PB: 111):

Danny: Wanna go to the chippy for me ma?
Anthony: OK.

Here, firstly, it is of interest that Danny refers to the Chinese takeaway shop as a *chippy*, which is supposed to refer to a fish and chip shop (Fazakerley 2001: 11), with the emphasis on deep-fried, often English food. It has also been indicated early on in the play, that the characters do, in fact, eat chips with their Chinese food (PB:

5). It appears that *chippy* is here assumed to mean any fast food shop. Nevertheless, Danny uses the same pattern of politeness as his mother: he asks whether Anthony wants to go. The actual meaning of the question is clearly to request, as Anthony's response is *OK*. If he was answering the literal question asked by Danny, his answer would be *yes* or *no*. Finally, as Anthony has agreed to get the food, Danny puts him on the phone with Kathleen (PB: 111):

Anthony: Hiya, Kath.
 Kathleen: Hiya, love.

 Anthony: What d'yer want [for dinner]?
 Kathleen: I'll phone the chippy, Ant, d'yer mind pickin' it up on yer way over?
 Anthony: No, no worries.

Anthony's question of what Kathleen wants is not to be interpreted as Anthony asking Kathleen what she wants him to do, as Danny has already agreed with Anthony that he will go to the Chinese restaurant. Otherwise, his question would be impolite as it would suggest that he wants to finish the conversation as quickly as possible. It is possible that the two exchange greetings in the beginning of the conversation (which Danny and Kathleen do not do), because although all characters know each other well, Anthony is the most distant person from Kathleen. Kathleen also asks Anthony whether he would mind collecting the order from the Chinese restaurant, instead of asking whether he wants to. This is also a more polite option, although it still does not include the word *please*. There is most likely a connection between making requests in the way of asking if the person would like to do it, and between using the verb *want* as a synonym for *should*, as below in reference to carrying stolen goods in public (PB: 33):

Ann: He [the person who gives Kathleen stolen clothing to sell] wants to be a bit more careful, just draggin' these out in the middle of the estate!
 Kathleen: Skiddy's bin doin' it for bloody years, Ann, he's an old pro!

Above, Ann is in fact saying that Skiddy should be more careful. This provides an insight into the train of thought whereby asking a person whether they want to do something is easy to understand as a request. The same use of vocabulary is evident in ER, where Rita complains about a broken door handle by saying *You wanna get it fixed!* (ER: 2). Furthermore, there are some clearly imperative statements in PB, where the phrase is used in an even stronger sense. For instance, the following exchange takes place when the two men have been arguing, and Kathleen tries to step in (PB: 61, overleaf):

Anthony: Ignore 'im, Kath, it's me he's pissed off with.
 Danny: D'you wanna stop tellin' people to ignore me?

Danny's question is clearly not a polite request, even though it is phrased as one.

In terms of the style of vocabulary, there is an interesting instance in ER where Rita changes her way of speaking quite noticeably when she becomes angry. It takes place towards the end of the play, where her dialect has become more standardised, both in terms of vocabulary and pronunciation. She sounds quite educated when she responds to feedback she has been given on one of her essays (ER: 62):

Rita: ...You told me to be objective, to consult recognized authorities. Well that's what I've done; I've talked to other people, read other books an' after consultin' a wide variety of opinion I came up with those conclusions [i.e. the content of her essay]"

Her speech still differs from Standard English in omitting letters in *an'* and *consultin'*, but overall her style is quite high-brow and she uses a wide vocabulary. In response to Rita's comment above, Frank asks her to be careful because he does not want her to lose the (working class) personality which he finds charming. Rita becomes angry because of the warning, and says (ER: 62-63):

Rita: What d' y' mean be careful? I can look after myself. Just cos I'm learnin', just cos I can do it now an' read what I wanna read an' understand without havin' to come runnin' to you every five minutes y' start tellin' me to be careful.

The vocabulary here is far more restricted: the words are quite short, and she uses many contractions. Not only does she omit letters at the ends of words like in the first example, she also uses shorter variants of the words *because* (*cos*) and *want to* (*wanna*). This is a clear example of a person reverting to their casual speech style when they forget that they are being observed (as explained in chapter 4.2).

Dialect literature contains information on when certain words appeared in Scouse and which form they are in. Some such words also appear in the two plays in the present thesis. According to Trudgill (1994: 30), Liverpool is on the isogloss of the words *married* and *wed*, which implies that there should be a mixing of both variants evident. The comparison of Trudgill's results against the plays under scrutiny here revealed an inconsistency: the term *married* is used exclusively in both plays. The contradiction is most likely explained by that the 1994 map is of traditional dialects,

which, by Trudgill's own admission (1994: 15) are disappearing and often spoken by older people. It is very possible, that if Frank in ER was working class, he would have used the word *wed*. As it is, however, my results indicate that the word *married* has taken over even in middle-aged working class, and had become the word of choice for young women already in the turn of the 1980s. In addition to the unclarity regarding the isogloss of *married* and *wed*, there are alternative versions of what the Scouse word for *food* is. According to Fazakerley (2001: 24) the Scouse word for *food* is *scram*. However, Elmes (2005: 249) indicates that the correct term is in fact *scran*. Perhaps incidentally, Elmes (ibid.: 46) identifies *scran* as a Wiltshire (significantly further south than Liverpool or its surrounding areas; Pickatrail 2010) dialect word for *awkward* or *left-handed*. The contradiction between these two explanations is of interest specifically because the dates of the sources are relatively close to each other, thereby excluding the possibility of the dialect having developed a new form. In any case, the only instance of either word in the two plays is in Paradise Bound, where one of the characters refers to food as *scran* (PB: 5). All other references to food are more specific, such as *dinner* (PB: 6) and *banquet* (PB: 19). A related issue to the term for food is the naming of different meals. Frank, for instance, refers to his evening meal as *dinner* (ER: 1), but Rita refers to her lunch break as *dinner hour* (ER: 39). Here, Frank does not accommodate to her when he suggests the two go out on for a *proper lunch* (as Rita is standing in his office during her lunch break; ER: 42). The reason why Frank does not adopt Rita's terminology here, although he sometimes does, is very clear: The names of meals are very clear class indicators. Rita has identified herself as unmistakably working class by referring to her midday meal as *dinner* (Fox 2004: 77). The same phenomenon is evident in PB. When Ann uses the word *dinner* (as exemplified above; PB: 6), she is in fact talking about an afternoon meal.

Other Scouse words which are used in the plays are plentiful, so there is space for only the most striking ones here. Some of the instances also correspond to some other dialects, but these words are still Scouse, albeit not exclusively. A word which is used almost constantly in ER is *dead*, meaning *very* (Fazakerley 2001: 13). Interestingly, the word in its dialectal meaning is almost entirely missing in PB, where it has been replaced by for example stronger adjectives. In other words, instead of, say, *dead pretty*, the characters in PB might say *gorgeous*, with no

qualifier. Forms such as *bloody* (in *bloody weird mood*, PB: 60) and *friggin'* (*friggin' massive*; PB: 7) are also used, but less frequently. There are also two instances of *dead* (e.g. *He's dead trendy, isn' he?*; PB: 37), but the form has definitely declined from the 1980s. Another word of interest is *half*, which was already used in an example in chapter 7.1. Although *half* carries a face-value meaning of *not full*, its dialect meaning is approximately the same as *dead's*: *very*. For example, Rita says that when she swears at work, *It doesn't half cause a fuss* (ER: 6). In other words, swearing does indeed cause a fuss. In PB, the word is also used, although with the initial *hs* omitted: *Don' 'alf know 'ow to cook, them Chinks* (PB: 8). Nonetheless, PB does not have many strengthening adverbs overall. In addition to the adverbs above, Rita's language includes the adjectives *soft*, which means *stupid*, *silly* or *mad*, and *narked*, which means *annoyed*. Neither of these words is used in the same meaning in PB, and neither of them is included in the available independent Scouse glossaries in the same form. However, the glossary for Educating Rita (explaining expressions and concepts as they are used in that particular text; Barton 1991: 75) does have an entry for *narked*, but not for *soft*. Elmes (2005: 246) defines *narky* as *miserable* or *moody*, and Fazakerley (2001: 25) includes an entry for *soft ollie*, which means *stupid*. This shows that similar vocabulary still exists even though the exact forms are absent from the newer play.

One visible aspect of vocabulary and sentence structure apparent in both plays, but especially PB, is the use of tags. However, there is little reference to tags in the relevant literature, except for the tag *la'*. As far as the glottalisation of the word-final *d* is concerned, there was no difference to be seen between the two plays. According to Elmes (2005: 240), the tag *lad* with a glottalised *d* (i.e. *la'*) is common in Scouse, but neither author has omitted the final *d* in *lad* whether it is a tag or not. In fact, *lad* is not used as a tag at all in Educating Rita. Russell does use it in his other play, Our day out, however, without omitting the final *d* in writing (for example *Are you listening lad? Our day out*: 36), so he presumably intends it to be pronounced with the *d* unglottalised. *Lad* is used as a tag in Paradise Bound (as in *Anthony, get that soy sauce for us, lad*; PB: 6), but without omitting the final *d*. It is also possible that a non-linguist would not be aware of the omission of the *d* in *lad*, because the most recognised glottal stop is that of the *t*, and the omitted *hs* are not replaced by glottal

stops but by silence. This could therefore be evidence of authors being inaccurate in their description of the dialect.

Of tags that appear in Paradise Bound, *innit* and *is it* are not specifically connected with Scouse. However, *innit* is a common tag in both senses of the word, so it deserves a closer look alongside its negative counterpart, *is it*. In Standard English sentence structure, tag questions are inserted at the end of a sentence to invite confirmation from another speaker. Specifically, the tag will be negative for a positive sentence and vice versa. For example,

It's a cold day today, isn't it? (=innit)
This isn't your bag, is it?

Using *innit* as tag sometimes rules out Standard English sentence structure, as in the example below (PB: 18). Translated to Standard English, the phrase would be *[You are] full of surprises, aren't you?*

Danny: Full'v surprises, you, innit?

The problem arises from *innit* being a contraction of *isn't it*, which is often grammatically unsuitable where *innit* is used. However, *innit* is often used in a grammatically correct manner, too (PB: 21):

Kathleen: That's what it's all about now, innit? The way it looks. The image!

Kathleen's utterance follows Standard English grammar when the tag *innit* is returned to its original form. Danny's comment below (PB: 4), on the other hand, is more charged. It includes information that is not visible. Danny means that the reason for the laundrette being replaced by a patch of grass is the Capital of culture development. All of this is very clear from his very short sentence below, and no other explanation is reasonable.

Anthony: They knocked it [= the laundrette] down to put a patch a' grass
 between the chippy an' the bettin' shop?
 Danny: Capital of culture, innit?

In addition to the tags derived from the verb to be, Danny uses a verbal tag *dunnit* (PB: 4), which is a contraction of *doesn't it*, and thus corresponds to *innit*.

Danny: Looks better than the arl bagwash, dunnit?

Educating Rita, too, has many verbal tags in it. However, the tag use is quite different from PB: the tags are usually in line with Standard English grammar, and do not have their *ts* glottalised. The only regular deviations from Standard English grammar and spelling in tags are instances where Rita uses the tag *isn't is* (which

reflects the Scouse over-aspiration of the *t*, as explained above), and that Rita's tags always have the word *you* contracted to *y'*, as in *don't y'?*. For comparison, PB usually has the *you* in a tag spelled as *yer*. There is also a striking difference in tag use between Frank and Rita: Rita uses them almost constantly, whereas Frank uses them very sparingly. Counting tokens throughout the play and statistically analysing their frequency is beyond the scope of the present thesis, but the first six pages of conversation between the two characters provide an idea of tag use in the play as a whole: Rita uses a verbal tag 22 times, in contrast to Frank's two tags. On the first six pages of duologue between them, Rita's tags include two instances of *isn't is?* and one instance of *won' I?*, where the *t* is glottalised and not included in the spelling. All other tags are spelled according to Standard English rules with the exception that all instances of *you* are contracted to *y'*. Another noteworthy phenomenon is present in ER. According to Trudgill (1994: 6-7), Standard English has some variation between the North and the South: Northerners who speak Standard English are more likely to say *I've not*, whereas their Southern counterparts say *I haven't*. In line with this discovery, Rita, too, uses the form *I've not* (ER: 10):

Rita: I've not half got a lot to learn, haven't I?

Rita manages to incorporate the Northern Structure with her Scouse dialect. Furthermore, the structure is very unusual in that it allows a negative main clause to be used with a negative tag question. Furthermore, the tag *isn't is?* (as mentioned above), is an excellent example of the phenomenon identified by Barbera and Barth (2007: 54) and Sangster (2001: 410). According to both studies, the lenition, or softening of stops such as the *t* is very usual in Liverpool, and Rita's phrase *isn't is* is in fact a softened pronunciation of *isn't it*. Both studies (*ibid.*) are fairly recent, and they indicate, that the feature has spread from the working class to the rest of Liverpoolians. Here, in ER is thus an example of the feature in its "original" setting.

Another major group of tags in Paradise Bound is tags of address, such as *lad* (see above) or *mate*. There are very few such tags in Educating Rita, and the few are usually terms of endearment spoken by Frank, such as *my dear*. In addition the two do refer to each other by name. The variety in PB is much richer. Firstly, the characters use various nicknames of each other. For example Ann is sometimes called *Simmo* (her last name is Simpson; PB: 2). According to Fazakerley (2001: 32), the word-final *o* has recently emerged as a diminutive in Scouse, Earlier in her life,

Ann's nickname might have been for example *Annie*. However, *Simmo* fits in well with the new trend. In fact, the example Fazakerley (ibid.) uses to demonstrate this is the nickname *Tommo* for someone whose last name is *Thompson*.

In addition to the name-use, there are various personal tags used in PB. In the first half of the play, the only tags of address that are used by all characters are *Ant* and *lad*. This supports Elmes' (2005: 240) view that *lad* is a popular tag in Scouse, although it emerges in a different form from what was expected. In addition, Fazakerley (2001: 18) has an entry in his glossary for *la*, which he "translates" to Standard English *lad*. However, Anthony's name as a tag is less significant, because its frequency is explained by the fact that it is the only name used for him in the play, whereas other characters have at least one alternative name. Furthermore, it is impersonal tags, such as *lad*, that are of more interest here. The tag use in the first half of the play indicates that Danny uses impersonal tags more often than the others, but the others use name tags more often. In addition, each character has a tag that is used (almost) exclusively by them: Danny is the only one who uses the tag *mate*; Kathleen is the only one who says *love* (and the only one who calls Ann by her real name); Anthony is the only one who says *ladies* (and the only one to use the tag *an' that*); and Ann is the only one who says *boys*. One more popular tag in the data is *kid*, which is used by everyone except for Kathleen. According to Fazakerley (2001: 18), the Scouse word *kid* means *brother*, although he recognises that it can also be used to refer to a sister. The frequent use of the tag by the characters of PB highlights their close relationship with each other. Using only the first half of the play is sufficient here to draw out information on which tags are most used, as the purpose is not to find out in detail the frequency of each tag that is being used. It is still possible that tag use would be different in the second half of the play, but any significant changes are unlikely to occur. The situation is different with ER, as Rita's speech changes throughout the play. It is also noteworthy that all the tags of address are spelled according to Standard English norms.

While examining the data, it must be taken into account that Rita's speech changes towards a more academic style as the story proceeds. Despite this, and both characters in ER accommodating the other's accent, there is a noticeable contrast in their speech. Both characters are from the same region, so if there are any regional

characteristics to be found, it is reasonable to assume they will be of the same region. However, no regional characteristics were evident in Frank's speech as he kept very strictly to Standard English with the exception of borrowings from Rita. Rita, however, does demonstrate Northern features in her speech. The very absence of such characteristics in Frank's speech is a clear indicator that he is of a higher social class than Rita.

To sum up the aspects of vocabulary covered in the present thesis, all characters use varying degrees of polite requests, depending on how they know the recipient. The verb *wanna* is used as a demand, a request and form of advice, although only the last use is employed in ER. PB includes overwhelmingly more tags than ER, especially in terms of tags of address. Within ER, however, Rita uses tags significantly more than Frank does. No noticeable differences in tag use emerged among the characters of PB, although *lad* appeared to be particularly popular, as expected.

7.3 Grammatical features

Using *me* for *my* is a feature of the Liverpool area dialect. It is, therefore, understandable that Rita favours the use of *me*, but worth noticing that Frank does not use such a common regional feature at all. In addition, there are situations where both *me* and *my* are grammatically correct according to Standard English norms (such as *Y' don't mind me swearin', do y'?*), so the study of these forms is not straightforward. Rita uses a smaller proportion of the non-standard *me* towards the end of the play, although she does still use *me* much more than *my*. The change is possibly a sign of the two characters converging in speech styles as they get to know each other better and Rita's level of education rises. The characters in Paradise Bound also use both *me* and *my* to mean *my*. In addition, they use *us* to mean *me*, which does not appear in ER at all. It is, however, a feature of Scouse, so the absence in ER is quite a surprising result.

According to Elmes (2003: 249), *youz* is a Liverpool area variant for the second person plural pronoun. The corresponding Standard English word is *you*, the same as for the singular. Most Paradise Bound scenes only feature two of the characters, so

there is limited need for the second person plural. The word *yous* does feature in these situations, such as below (PB: 63):

Antony: I'm just sick of this.
 Kathleen: What, sick of us?
 Anthony: No, not yous.

In addition, the words *you two* feature, and obviously indicate a plural meaning for the pronoun *you*. However, all instances of *you* on its own have a singular meaning. This supports Elmes' (2003: 249) view. *Yous* is present in Paradise Bound, but little can be said about Russell's use of the word as Educating Rita is a duologue. Russell does use the word in his other play, Our day out (1984: 11), in the form *youse lot*: spelled with a silent word-final *e*. In addition to the above, a very frequent pronoun in the text is *yer*, which too is always singular. *Yer* is used in a range of grammatical positions: mostly as the singular *you*, but also as the genitive, and even as the pronoun-verb combination *you're*. For example, in the single utterance below, Danny uses *you* in its standard form, *yer* once to mean *you are*, and *yer* again to mean *you* (PB: 42).

Danny: I don't know what *you're* going on for. I mean, once *yer* out'v 'ere *yer* won' 'ave to worry about the rapid decline of our fair ghetto.
 (Once you are out of here, you won't have to worry; emphasis and the explanation by the present author)

Instead of *yer*, the second person pronoun Rita uses in ER is *y'*, which does cover all the same positions and functions as *yer*. The two forms thus correspond to each other, and the only difference is in pronunciation.

Paradise Bound has numerous instances of non-standard grammar in the temporal forms of verbs. Specifically, the characters often use the past form of a verb when they should be using the third form. For instance (PB: 14):

Ann: Someone's ate the last of the sweet an' sour.

By Standard English grammar, clearly, she should have said *someone's eaten*. This kind of non-standard grammar is only visible with regard to irregular verbs, because otherwise the two forms which are being mixed up here look similar. This may also explain in part why it is that the characters use the wrong form: they may not distinguish between the two grammatical forms and choose the one that occurs to them first. It is, however, of interest that the forms are a part of their dialect, and their sense of language does not prevent them from using them. There is even an instance

where an unusual verb form—one that does not exist at all in Standard English—is used (PB: 78):

Anthony: Who'da thunk it, eh?

Anthony's comment, in Standard English, means the same as *Who would have thought it?*. The first word of Anthony's sentence is also interesting. Elsewhere, the word *woulda* is used in the meaning of *would have*, so the present contraction makes sense, although it is quite far removed from the Standard English version.

Other non-standard verb use in PB includes the omission of the verb altogether, as in *Who you tryin' to kid?* (PB: 55) or *He still not gone up* (PB: 27). It is possible that this is evidence of the influence immigrant groups in Liverpool because many creoles spoken by them do not use a copula, but there is no evidence to support this. ER features relatively few instances of non-standard grammar, but there is a sentence which combines two of the aforementioned issues. Below, Rita is telling Frank about her experience of going to professional theatre on her own (ER: 39):

Rita: --It wasn't borin', it was bleedin' great, honest, ogh, it done me in, it was fantastic.

Rita's sentence *it done me in* (meaning that it overwhelmed her; Barton 1991: 80), uses the incorrect temporal form: the correct one would be *did*. Furthermore, the third form of the verb (here, *done*) should be used with the auxiliary verb *to have*. In other words, Rita's utterance would be grammatically correct if she said *it has done me in*, or *it did me in*. Still, the phrase is vernacular, but not ungrammatical.

Inspection of the verb forms in PB resulted in the discovery of the word *been* being spelled in two different ways: *bin* and *been*. No distinguishable pattern in the use of the two forms has been found, although one possible explanation is that when the author has intended for the word to have stress, he has spelled it as *been*, and when it is unstressed, he has spelled it as *bin*. However, there are instances throughout the play, where the author has used italics to stress particular words, so the explanation is far from solid, especially as the following example does more to demonstrate the issue than to explain it. Overleaf, Kathleen has noticed that the two men are not getting along very well, and she is asking for an explanation (PB: 60-61; emphasis by the original author):

Kathleen: Have you two been windin' each other up or somethin'? The pair a' yers are in a bloody weird mood.
 Anthony: Na, we've just bin chattin' shit all night.
 Danny: No, *you've* been chattin' shit all night, I've bin listenin'.

The author's use of the two spellings here is especially interesting for a two-fold reason: The different spellings imply that the word should be pronounced differently according to some (undetected) pattern. However, if this is the author's intention, it is not successful because of the nature of Scouse pronunciation: According to (Barbera and Barth 2007: 53), all short [ɪ]-sounds in Scouse are pronounced as long an intense. In other words, while the words *bin* and *been* are pronounced differently in Standard English, they sound the same in Scouse.

As mentioned above, few ungrammatical sentences are used in ER. Rita does say *we was out* (ER: 22), however, which presents a different issue in verb use than the examples above. Here, the problem is in the choice of a singular or a plural of the verb: the correct form to use with *we* would be *were*. However, this is an isolated example in the text. Additionally, there is an instance where Rita says *I'll chose* (ER: 73), which does include an incorrect temporal form. However, it is very possible here that the issue is in fact a typing error, as it is not used anywhere else, and other incorrect temporal forms only mix the past form with the third form. In contrast, the correct form here would be the regular present tense *choose*. In order to fit in with the pattern of incorrect temporal use of verbs, the instance would have to be *I've chose* or *I'd chose* instead. Before moving on to less significant types of non-standard grammar, brief attention should be given to contractions in PB. It is common in Standard English to contract certain word pairs, such as *does not* (*doesn't*), *I will* (*I'll*) and so on. However, PB includes some unconventional ones in addition to what might be described as standard ones. For example, *what does* is usually not contracted in Standard English, but PB includes it as *what's*. In addition, auxiliary verbs are sometimes contracted to unusually long words (i.e. Usually the first word that is contracted is short, most often a personal or an interrogative pronoun, as in the examples above) An example of this phenomenon is *neither'll* (PB: 55).

In terms of other aspects of grammar, non-standard forms are, again, heavily concentrated in PB. In addition to the verb forms and wider pronoun issues

mentioned above, some less striking non-standard grammar is used in conjunction with prepositions and other pronouns. Firstly, the pronoun *them* is used in place for *those*, as in below (PB: 11):

Kathleen: Don't yer like them places, Ant?

In other words, an object form is used instead of a subjective one, and a personal pronoun is used instead of a demonstrative one. This use is frequent in PB, but does not feature in ER. Another non-standard feature in PB pronoun use is the omission of the pronoun altogether. Most often, the missing pronoun is a first person singular one, sometimes attached to a verb. For example, [*I'll*] *be up in a minute* (PB: 25). Similarly, a preposition can also be omitted, like in the example below (PB: 59):

Kathleen: We've 'ad a couple 'cos we were goin' the bingo!
 Danny: What, yer need to be pissed to go to the bingo?

The above example demonstrates that the omissions vary from one instance to the next: Kathleen doesn't use the preposition *to*, but Danny does. Prepositions do get omitted even when the characters are not under the influence of alcohol, although it must be taken into consideration that being drunk can affect the language that the characters produce. No direct evidence of this is to be seen PB, though, in terms of slurred language or others having trouble understanding. Similarly, there is a scene in ER, where the alcoholic Frank is unusually drunk (ER: 59-63), but his speech appears to be clear to Rita.

Regarding the use of the preposition *of* in PB, the results are somewhat more complicated: The pronoun has several alternative forms, some of which it shares with other words. *Of* is sometimes spelled as *'v* (*What's the point 'v that?*; PB: 4), *a'* (*They were too scared to bloody smile, 'alf a' them!*; PB: 22), and *-a* (as used in words such as *coupla: couple of* and *loadsa: loads of*). The standard variant *of* is also used, for example in *the amount of letters* (PB: 53), which, in turn, includes a different grammatical error: because *letters* is a countable noun, the Standard English version of the phrase would be *the number of letters*. In addition, the forms *a'* and *-a* are also used in the meaning of *I*, as in *What've a' missed?* (PB: 15) and *I'll do whatta like!* (PB: 29). Furthermore, *-a* is also used to contract many auxiliary verbs, such as *are* in *Whatta you on?* (PB: 59). The use of *-a* and *a'* is therefore widespread, but they have not replaced the Standard English forms altogether in any of the above

instances. In ER, *-a* is used in a far more restricted way: it can mean either the indefinite article *a*, or *to*, as evident in Rita's sentence below (ER: 12):

Rita: --- I don't wanna a baby yet. See, I wanna discover meself first.

To sum up the findings regarding grammatical features, the main conclusion is that these features are very heavily concentrated in PB. ER includes the non-standard use of the pronoun *me*, a non-standard spelling of the pronoun *you*, and occasional non-standard contractions. PB, on the other hand, has multiple instances of non-standard grammar, and several ways of spelling prepositions. In addition to the issues already mentioned, PB also includes unconventional word order in mainly the phrase *Give us it back* (PB: 23), the standard equivalent of which would be *Give it back to me*. The word order is most likely reversed because the non-standard pronoun *us* is being used. Finally, both plays include the contraction of *because* to '*cos*.

7.4 Pronunciation

The issue of pronunciation is explicitly brought up in Educating Rita when Rita purposefully starts speaking in what she believes is a prestigious way, but resorts to hypercorrection (ER: 56-57).

Frank: ...What is wrong with your voice?
 Rita: Nothing is wrong with it, Frank. I have merely decided to talk properly. As Trish says there is not a lot of point in discussing beautiful literature in an ugly voice.
 Frank: You haven't got an ugly voice; at least you didn't have. Talk properly.
 Rita: I am talking properly---

In the example above, Frank comments on Rita's odd speech after only two lines spoken by Rita, and he goes on to call her a Dalek (i.e. a monotone robot; Barton 1991: 83) based on her speech. The reader cannot, obviously, hear Rita's speech, but it is clear that she has tried to adopt a different accent. The type of hypercorrection here is most likely what Knowles (1978: 86) named lexical confusion. In other words, Rita would not be able to produce an RP accent even with isolated words. If she normally spoke with a prestigious accent and reverted back to a Scouse for a short period of time, the hypercorrection would result from the influence of surrounding phrases or words.

It is difficult to draw conclusions about pronunciation based solely on written information, but dialect writing often includes non-standard spellings of words that

are pronounced in a non-standard way. These adjustments do not mean that the speaker, as it were, would necessarily spell the word the way it is written in the text. For example, the word *yellow* is spelled *yeller* in the example below, where Ann imagines her fate if she has cancer (PB: 89; emphasis by the present author):

Ann: An' if I end up like what Sheila Gilfoyle was like – layin' stinkin' in some friggin' 'ospital bed, all bloated an' *yeller*... like I'm wearin' a friggin' 'alloween mask...

Another point of interest in the example is the use of '*ospital*, which is not the Scouse word for hospital: According to Fazakerley (2001: 22), the correct word would be *ozzy*, and Rita in ER also uses the word *hospital*. This indicates a conflict between real-life Scouse and the language of the plays.

The most prominent Scouse or working class feature in PB is that all characters routinely leave out the phoneme *h* in positions other than the beginning of a line, as in *How did that 'appen?! (PB: 7)*. However, according to Wakelin (1978: 10), the pronunciation has disappeared from everywhere on the British Isles with the exceptions of Standard English, very Northern England, Scotland and Ireland. Thus, it is not examined as a Scouse feature but as a working class one. Interestingly, the *h* is in consistent use throughout ER, which is in conflict with Wakelin's results, which pre-date the play. It is possible that the change has taken place more slowly than Wakelin expected, as the *hs* had indeed disappeared by the beginning of the 21st century. A quick count of tokens in PB reveals that of all lines beginning with the letter *h* in Act 1, three *hs* are left out, and 15 remain. The *h* is also pronounced when it has particular stress, as in below (emphasis by the original author; PB: 62):

Anthony: Doesn't matter.
Kathleen: Well it obviously does, the face *he's* got on 'im!

Counting all *h*-tokens is beyond the scope of the present study, but it seems that the *hs* are mostly left out when in unstressed positions. Interestingly, Larkin has left out the letter *h* in writing even when it is silent in Standard English (PB: 110):

Kathleen: What time are you comin' in, lad?
Danny: Barr 'alf an 'our, why?

In addition, the pronunciation of words where a word-initial *h* has been omitted is further confirmed by the adaptation of the preceding article: Kathleen, for instance, asks Anthony if he is planning to go to Australia for *an 'oliday (PB: 62)*. The above extract from Danny and Kathleen's conversation includes another unusual spelling

for a word: *barr*. The word is also used in PB as *abarr*, while the Standard English equivalent is *about*. This spelling is a clear demonstration of how the word is pronounced in Scouse: without the *t* in the end, and with a long vowel rather than the Standard English diphthong. In other words, [aba:] instead of [abaʊt].

In line with Trudgill's (1994: 34) view that glottal stops emerged in Liverpool only in the 1990s, word-final *ts* are often glottalised in Paradise Bound but not in Educating Rita. This phenomenon is in fact one of the most striking differences in language use between the two plays. It is probably partly explained by the simple fact that the plays have been written by different people with different views to language. Both authors have omitted the silent letter *g* in word final *ing*-clusters almost always. This result is surprising, because Barbera and Barth (2007: 54) stated that the presence of a hard pronounced *g* in *ing*-clusters is a feature of Scouse, and even hypothesised over what its origin might be. The data indicates, however, that the feature was not used in 1980 or 2006. This is a fairly reliable result because the authors have had to make an effort to remove the *g* from the end of *ing*-clusters, thus indicating that it definitely does not belong there. In addition to the almost consistent omission of the final *g*, the word-final *d* in almost all instances of the word *and* has also been omitted in the working class language of both plays. Finally, and importantly, the number of contractions and especially omitted word-final letters decreases from the beginning to the end of the play in ER. For example, Rita uses many contractions when she talks about the life she wants to leave behind (ER: 17):

Rita: ---Like what you've got to be into is music an' clothes an' lookin' for a feller, y' know the real qualities of life.

In addition to the contractions, she uses two tags: *like* and *y' know*. In contrast, the word-final letters are there in an extract from towards the end of the play (ER: 64):

Rita: I couldn't stand being at the hairdresser's any longer; boring irrelevant detail all the time, on and on... Well I'm sorry but I've had enough of that. I don't wanna talk about irrelevant rubbish anymore.

Even though Rita's language is much closer to Standard English, she still uses the contraction *wanna*. In addition, when she gets emotional over something even after this point, her language becomes less formal again, as seen in chapter 7.2.

The next chapter provides an overview of the similarities and differences found in the present chapter and chapter 6. Some reasoning for these differences will be suggested, and the results will be compared to the background literature which was overviewed in the first half of the present thesis. In addition, some time will be devoted to reflecting on the changes in society which have resulted in the different worlds of the characters in the plays.

8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The present chapter combines the discussion of the most significant results, and concluding remarks to recap the goals and the background information of the present thesis. Some ideas will also be given for further research. Grouping people into social classes has had a long tradition in the United Kingdom. Most often, this categorisation has been made on the basis of occupation, but in the recent decades other, more accurate means have been developed. It was also in the latter half of the 20th century that linguists realised that different classes speak differently, and that all variation was not due to dialects mixing on their border areas. Thus, a specific kind of language was connected with the working class: the regional dialect.

The present thesis investigates the relationships between the classes and between the languages of the classes, in the form that they are in the two plays, Educating Rita (by Willy Russell) and Paradise Bound (by Jonathan Larkin). With the help of sociolinguistic theories and conversation analysis, as well as a curious eye to unusual language use in the play, extracts were chosen to illustrate the Scouse of the characters. The extracts were examined from four different perspectives: direct and indirect class references; vocabulary and register; grammatical features; and pronunciation. Earlier research included information on some of the features in vocabulary and pronunciation that have changed in real-life Scouse over the past 30 years, and these were compared against the extracts from the play. Other frequently occurring non-standard language use was also examined more closely.

To my knowledge, there have been no previous attempts to study Jonathan Larkin's work academically. In addition, there is very little work which would approach

drama as linguistically realistic, even though there is literature on how drama reflects the social surroundings of its time (e.g. Woolf 2000), and how stylistics is adaptable to the study of drama (e.g. Burton 1982). Thus, the present thesis has its place within the academic realm of research into social issues in language and literature.

In ER, Rita's vocabulary is simpler and significantly less formal than Frank's because of her social class, a feature of which is adopting regional dialect. She does notice that there are differences between how she and Frank speak, but she shows no evidence of being aware of her lacking sense of register. The characters of Paradise Bound appear to pay no attention to each others' dialect, and regard higher classes as distant from their lives. This is the main difference in linguistic attitudes towards social classes in Educating Rita and Paradise Bound. Another difference is more dependent on the characters themselves: In Educating Rita higher class is something to be aspired, whereas in Paradise Bound even Anthony, the character who wants to leave his current life behind, wishes to start over somewhere else rather than move on to a higher social status. The differences in the dialects spoken by Rita and all the characters in Paradise Bound reflect the difference in their class attitudes and aspirations. In line with Fox's class theory (2004), Rita is of a higher social class than the characters of Paradise Bound. The difference between them is that in addition to wanting to achieve upward social mobility, Rita also wants to speak with a more prestigious accent. No one in Paradise Bound tries to modify their speech. As a result, the dialect in Paradise Bound is further from Standard English than the dialect in Educating Rita. The difference is most striking in grammatical features and the extent to which spelling has been modified to reflect non-standard pronunciation of the dialect. In terms of comparing the language used in the plays to real, spoken Scouse, the findings were inconclusive. The plays supported some of the dialectology of Scouse, but were in conflict with some of the results from earlier studies. Before a more detailed overview of the results of the linguistic analysis, a look at changes in Liverpool society at large is in order.

It has clearly emerged from both the background information and the analysis of the plays that social conditions have changed in Liverpool between 1980 and 2006. Perhaps most importantly, the standard of living has risen throughout the country, as modern conveniences have become more affordable and infrastructure has improved,

and in Liverpool old factories have been refurbished for modern use. However, as a part of this extensive, even real-time, communication over the telephone and the internet has increased, contributing to what I believe is a higher level of relative poverty among the working class. People do have more money, but they are much more aware of what they do not have. While Rita was troubled by not knowing which wine to buy and how to interact with richer, higher class people, the characters of Paradise Bound resort to wearing stolen designer clothing to impress others. It has become possible for ordinary, working class people to become celebrities, which is possibly seen as a quick way to climb up the class ladder. Danny had plans to become a rich sport star, but had to succumb to his fate after being injured right before his breakthrough (PB: 44). He still assumes, though, that had the injury not happened, he would have been successful. It is unclear whether the number of social issues within communities and families has increased over the past 30 years, but it seems from the plays that the attitudes towards the family are certainly different: Rita's community expects her to settle down, and her husband ends up leaving her because she wants to be educated first. As explained in chapter 6.1, statistics suggest that the age of starting a family is increasing (Reid 2001: 132), but this does not appear to be true in the plays, and especially not in PB. In fact, the age of starting a family seems to be decreasing, as Rita was considered "late" at 26, and while the boys in PB still live at home, many of the women their age already have children. In PB, however, Kathleen and Danny's family is very broken: Danny's brother is in prison and the father of the family has left them without support. The impression is that the value of the nuclear family was much higher in 1980, whereas it is an almost unreachable ideal in PB. Whether this is a class-related issue is unclear, but it is a significant change in society in any case, and affects the working class.

It is clear that class divisions still exist, although the formal class divisions were abandoned between the plays. There is, however, a difference between the plays when it comes to the attitudes towards middle class. ER seems to portray the middle class as another unreachable ideal, towards which the working class character strives. The emphasis is on the difference between the two characters: a working class person and a middle class one. In Paradise Bound, however, references to class and society contrast the working class characters with impersonal institutions: the council and the Capital of Culture project. As such, the distance between the working class and the

others is larger in PB than in ER. Both Rita and the characters of PB do, however, feel different from the middle class. Rita is very aware of the differences in speech and lifestyle between herself and Frank, and the characters in PB suppose that the Capital of Culture developments taking place around them are meant to hide the working classes and thus make the city more appealing. This may be because the play was written at a time of economic growth, and it seemed that the money the city had was used to make the surroundings look cleaner and nicer instead of spending it on for example welfare. In addition, the Capital of Culture development in the character's neighbourhood meant demolishing a laundrette, and replacing it with artificial grass surrounded by a fence. Arguably, this did nothing to help the welfare of the locals.

A continuum is visible between the working class described in ER and the statistics on Northern people from the time after the second play was written. Rita describes the middle class as people who eat healthy margarine and wholemeal bread, whereas her community of working class people, in addition to presumably eating butter and white bread, spend their evenings in the pub. It was established in chapter 3.2 that there is correlation between being Northern and being working class, suggesting that a higher proportion is working class in the North than in the South. Furthermore, being from the region of North-West is statistically connected (National Statistics 2009) to a lower life-expectancy, higher unemployment and other indicators of a poorer quality of life. While impossible to prove here, I suggest these statistics are partly a result of the way of life described by Rita in ER. Similar behaviour patterns are visible in PB, which dates back to only three years before the statistical information above. The characters in PB drink a lot of alcohol and eat unhealthy take-away food. To build on such evidence in the plays, it is conceivable that Anthony and Danny represent the lifestyle of the Liverpudlians of the future. Neither is anywhere near starting a family and both still live at home at 19 years of age. They do not hope to improve their situation by working hard but by moving somewhere where it is easier to improve their lifestyle, or by becoming famous. Danny has abandoned his dream, but he has not adopted a more practical way of reaching a better lifestyle, such as a similar plan to Rita's. Finally, it is worth noticing the social issue of home ownership. Between the dates of the plays it became possible for working class people to buy the council flats they were renting, turning many

working class people into property owners. Kathleen, too, owns her flat, and appears to be the only working class character in the plays in such a position. It is unclear, though, whether Rita and her husband owned their flat, although this is unlikely. Home ownership is important as it creates security and stability, and quite possibly also protects property from being neglected.

Various linguistic differences between the two plays have already been revealed in the preceding chapters, but a closer look at them here is in order. Some predictions were also made in the theoretical background section of the present thesis regarding what direction the development of Scouse might be taking, and a look at the results in this light will be presented here. First of all, background literature suggested, overall, that the gap between Scouse and Standard English may be narrowing: some Scouse features have spread from the working class to the general population of Liverpool, and in the style of Estuary English in the south (Przedlacka 2001), I speculated that similar development may be happening in the North, whereby a new accent would have appeared in the recent years to bridge the gap. In fact, Fazekesley (2001: 33) talks about “Posh Scouse”, which is spoken in some more affluent areas in Liverpool: it is described as softer as Scouse, but still distinctly Liverpudlian. However, the overall trend in the results of the previous chapter is that Educating Rita is in fact closer to Standard English norms than Paradise Bound is. According to this, Scouse would be developing further from Standard English. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that the average person does not speak grammatically correct Standard English with a neutral accent, so while the results indicate that Scouse is not nearing Standard English, it is still a viable option that Scouse is nearing the speech of the (imaginary) average person. Furthermore, it is possible that if, as has been assumed throughout the present thesis, Frank speaks RP, as far as the working class are concerned, Rita’s accent develops into a modified RP throughout ER. Obviously, her accent cannot be fully determined from the written data, but it is confirmed that the number of contractions and omitted letters in her speech decreases as time goes on in the play.

In the field of vocabulary, similarities and differences between the plays emerged. Firstly, both plays included various means of indicating politeness. Generally speaking, none of the characters used the word please, although it would have been

expected in ER, because the two characters did not know each other from the beginning and only met once a week. It is understandable that superficial politeness was abandoned in PB, because the characters formed a very close-knit social group, in which politeness was not necessary to create cohesion. It was also established based on class-related vocabulary that Frank is middle middle class (as per Fox's class schema; 2004). Rita continues to be working class throughout the play, and her family is lower working class as they do not have any interest in improving their social status. The characters in Paradise Bound were not designated into a class with certainty, although their dress-codes and habits indicate upper working class. The analysis on vocabulary also revealed that Liverpool is now in an area, where the word *married* is used instead of *wed*, although earlier research had shown that some people in the area were still saying *wed* in the mid 1990s (Trudgill 1994: 15). Tag use was also confirmed as widespread among all working class characters, and *lad* proved to be the most used tag in PB, as expected. However, it occurred in its Standard English form, although a glottalised *la'* was expected as per Elmes' (2005: 240) research. Such tags were not in use in ER, but a look into one of Russell's other plays, Our day out (1984), indicated that he too uses the tag *lad* (with a standard spelling) as a part of working class language when appropriate. No significant differences were found in any aspect of language use between the characters of PB, with the exception that the characters used slightly different tags in the first half of the play. This was, undoubtedly, somewhat incidental, but an interesting discovery nonetheless. The difference in tag use between ER and PB leaves room for the possibility that Rita would have used tags among her friends and family from the same class, but did not feel comfortable enough to use them with Frank. After all, many of the tags used in PB (such as *love*) indicate quite a warm relationship between the speakers when spoken in a private conversation.

In terms of pronunciation and grammar, the differences between the two plays are clear. The differences between Frank and Rita are to be expected. Rita also differs a great deal from all the characters in Paradise Bound: she uses extremely few glottal stops and pronounces her *hs*, which is in direct contrast to both the young and middle-aged characters in PB. This suggests that had Rita not become educated, she might have adopted the use of glottal stops by her middle age. In terms of grammar, Paradise Bound showed a larger number of deviations from Standard English than

Educating Rita. Both plays utilised an all-round second person pronoun (*yer* in PB; *y'* in ER), which covered different forms of the Standard English *you*. In addition, PB had a distinction between the singular and the plural in the second person pronouns, something which Elmes (2005: 249) included as a Scouse feature. ER does not have any opportunity for plural *you* to be used, but Russell does use it in his earlier play, Our day out (1984: 11). The findings that were the furthest from Standard English in terms of grammar were verb forms: missing copula and mixed up temporal forms.

In terms of the development of the Scouse dialect from the premier of the first play to the premier of the second, the analysis is inconclusive. Comparing the results to various different sources of Scouse development in the past, as detailed in the theoretical background section of the present thesis, did not yield consistent results. Features which seemed to comply with actual dialect development include the use of the tag *isn't is* in ER, which demonstrates a lenition in stops, which has spread to the rest of Liverpoolian population in the 21st century (for example Barbera and Barth 2007: 54). However, the phenomenon was not included in PB: perhaps the author considered it a self-evident part of the pronunciation or too complicated to transcribe in drama text. In addition, glottal stops are absent in ER and present in PB, in line with the earlier knowledge of them having spread to Liverpool in the 1990s (Trudgill 1994: 34). The distinction between the plural and singular second person pronouns predicted by Elmes (2005: 249) was clearly present in PB, and also in Russell's work. On a more general level, Rita showed signs of reverting back to a more vernacular speech style when she had already learnt to speak with a more prestigious accent but was in an emotional state of mind. This was to be expected, as similar results have been recorded in the past (Mesthrie et al 1999: 180). Finally, many expectations about class-related behaviour adopted from Fox (2004) were evident in the plays: the working class characters used class-revealing vocabulary and dressed in working class clothing, whereas the middle class character stayed between the extremes and tried to avoid the issue of class.

However, many expected results were not reached: contrary to earlier information, neither play included hard *gs* in the end of *ing*-clusters in working class language (Barbera and Barth 2007: 54)—in fact, the clusters were pronounced as [in]. Elmes' (2005: 240) result about *la'* being the most common tag in Scouse was partly verified

in the present thesis: the tag *lad* proved most common, but it always occurred with the *d* pronounced. In addition, Wakelin's (1978: 10) word-initial *h* should not have been evident in ER, but it was; and the lexical item *wed* should have disappeared from Scouse in the 1990s (Trudgill 1994: 15), but it was also absent from ER.

The field of sociolinguistic is expandable in any direction the author's imagination follows, by changing focus to specific groups or locations etc. One interesting idea is to carry out studies in as many different locations across the United Kingdom as possible, to map the current stage of working class dialects across the country. This approach also validates my study as a part of a larger entity. The research could also be expanded to the middle classes and to female authors' way of describing spoken language. Using gender as a backdrop to sociolinguistic studies has been quite frequent in the recent years, but many approaches remain uncovered. A possible expansion to the present thesis would be to contrast Russell's work with female writers from the same era. After all, the 1970s was the decade of women's liberation, and many female writers emerged across genres.

A slightly different approach to expanding the present thesis could be achieved by carrying out corresponding investigations using real life data, and thus determining to what extent Russell and Larkin (or any other authors) are accurate in their description of dialect. Furthermore, it would be interesting to find out what differences there might be between authors in describing certain classes. The result might be that authors of more prestigious backgrounds favour a more Standard English speech for all characters, whereas working class writers might not reach Standard English norms even for middle class speakers.

There is certainly a need for further investigation into the effect of social class into speech and especially the kinds of problems it creates in communication across classes. Robinson (1979: 232) complained in the 1970s that there was no academic research into class-related use of vocabulary and grammatical forms, and it seems that even today the evidence is slim and mostly available from authors who have relied on for example etymological observations for methodology (such as Fox 2004). Had more information been available in this area, the present thesis would have had a much stronger emphasis on class-related vocabulary. Learning about the

differences between different social dialects and the causes behind them should be helpful in preventing speech from being an obstacle in upwards social movement or access to higher education. Including racial minorities and immigrants could, in turn, ease our understanding of where different minorities fit in the current class system.

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