
Plan Overview

A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline

Title: Accent, Space and Place in US Country Music, English Choral Music and British Indie Rock

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Project abstract:

The multimodal and interdisciplinary turn in voice studies has yet to address how singers' accent and pronunciation contributes to the ways their music is received and understood, in part because musicology lacks some of the analytic and conceptual tools needed to isolate its function and elucidate its meanings. However, such tools are often deployed in sociolinguistics - a field with its own tradition of popular music research - and may help us better understand the relationships connecting accent to place, genre, and identity.

Using three genres of Anglophone vocal music as case studies (commercial country music, Celtic folk-rock fusion and chamber vocal music), I explore how singers modify their pronunciation to position themselves in relation to generic and stylistic norms. While sociolinguistic investigations (Beal 2009, Coupland 2012) have theorised the role of linguistic behaviour in this process, their disciplinary perspective necessarily marginalises some of the musical facets of singing. My research seeks to redress this imbalance by establishing how the phonetic-phonological and musical characteristics of vocal performance combine to create the impression of someone singing 'with an accent', before conceptualising how that impression influences secondary judgements about style and genre.

In the tradition of authors such as Victoria Malawey (2020) and Steven Rings (2015), I draw upon spectral analysis (a technique common to both sociolinguistics and voice studies) and conceptual and embodied approaches (Heidemann 2016, Jarman-Ivens 2011, Kane 2015), as well as introducing key sociolinguistic frameworks such as audience design (Bell 1984, 2002). Ultimately, I hope this project will demonstrate the viability of an approach that integrates critical perspectives and analytic techniques from voice studies and sociolinguistics, paving the way for future collaboration between the two disciplines.

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Accent, Space and Place in US Country Music, English Choral Music and British Indie Rock

Data Collection

What data will you collect or create?

The project will involve generating, storing and analysing two main forms of data: spectrograms generated from commercial studio recordings of music; and formant frequencies (which are recorded as numerical frequencies in units of Hertz (Hz)) derived from those spectrograms.

In line with best practice in phonetics and phonology, the spectrograms generated in Praat are saved as screenshots within Word documents saved in a secure OneDrive location. Numerical data is similarly stored in both Word and Excel files and is also backed up to OneDrive. Neither form of data requires large storage space and cannot be saved within the software packages used to generate it; the approach I have used therefore represents the most practical, efficient and secure means of storing the data.

How will the data be collected or created?

Both forms of data are generated using Praat, an open-source acoustic analysis package designed for, and used by, researchers in the fields of phonetics and phonology. As well as the 'raw' formant frequencies in Hz, I will also work with normalised versions of this data. This will be done using NORM, an online vowel normalisation suite, which I will also use to plot the formant frequencies (both raw and normalised) in graph form.

Documentation and Metadata

What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?

The PhD thesis will contain all the data generated during the course of the project, either in the main body of the thesis or in appendices. Because the PhD is in Music but uses data generation and analytic techniques more commonly employed in linguistics, the thesis itself will contextualise the data and provide guidance for readers as to its interpretation. Linguists or musicologists with expertise in acoustic analysis, meanwhile, will have no difficulty in accessing and interpreting the data in its 'raw' form, since it will be recorded and made available in easily accessible formats (i.e. Excel workbooks and Word documents) that require no further processing to render them useable.

Ethics and Legal Compliance

How will you manage any ethical issues?

As the data is not sensitive or confidential, there are no ethical concerns surrounding its storage and access. The recordings from which the spectrograms and frequencies are derived are publicly available via download or streaming services so there are no issues pertaining to consent.

How will you manage copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues?

Upon completion of the PhD, my data will either be declared public domain or shared under a Creative Commons licence (likely the former).

Storage and Backup

How will the data be stored and backed up during the research?

In line with best practice in phonetics and phonology, the spectrograms generated in Praat are saved as screenshots within Word documents saved in a secure OneDrive location. Numerical data is similarly stored in both Word and Excel files and is also backed up to OneDrive. Neither form of data requires large storage space and cannot be saved within the software packages used to generate it; the approach I have used therefore represents the most practical, efficient and secure means of storing the data.

I am solely responsible for backing up the data and ensuring it can be recovered. If I am unable to recover the data in the event of an incident, I will seek help from IT Services at Newcastle University.

How will you manage access and security?

Since the data is not sensitive or confidential, the security risks are minimal. All the data generated will ultimately be published in my thesis (either in the main body or in appendices), which I understand will be stored in Newcastle University's institutional research repository. Similarly, I understand that the data itself will be stored in the institution's research data repository upon completion of the PhD. As I am the sole author and investigator, there will be no need to ensure the data can be shared with collaborators.

Selection and Preservation

Which data are of long-term value and should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?

None of the data I generate will be subject to restrictions on how long it can be retained. Other researchers carrying out work in this area will be able to access all the data directly via the thesis itself, or via Newcastle University's research data repository, upon completion of the PhD.

What is the long-term preservation plan for the dataset?

I envisage that the data will be stored in Newcastle University's research data repository. It will therefore be stored and curated in line with the institution's research data policies and procedures.

Data Sharing**How will you share the data?**

I plan to share the data via Newcastle University's research data repository. This will be done upon completion of the PhD and will be made accessible to anyone who wishes to use it for future research in this field. Anyone reading the thesis (which will be stored in Newcastle University's research repository upon completion of the PhD) will also be able to view the data within the thesis itself.

Are any restrictions on data sharing required?

No restrictions are required.

Responsibilities and Resources**Who will be responsible for data management?**

I am solely responsible for implementing the DMP and ensuring it is reviewed and revised.

What resources will you require to deliver your plan?

I do not require any additional resources to deliver my plan. All software packages I have used to generate and store the data are either free/open source or available to me via institutional subscriptions.