The (socio-)linguistic cycle of Definite Article Reduction

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Dialect speakers in the North of England use vowel-less forms of the definite article (the) which are unattested in English varieties elsewhere and have been termed Definite Article Reduction (DAR). Previous research on DAR has provided detailed phonological descriptions, but less insight has been gained into other aspects of DAR like its emergence and the northern pattern of occurrence. I demonstrate that a more complete understanding of DAR (including the forms DAR takes) may be obtained if we combine evidence from dialect geography and pragmatic, diachronic and sociolinguistic studies. Contrary to common assumption (as reflected in the naming), I argue that cumulative findings suggest that DAR might not have derived from the definite article. Rather, I suspect that the definite article and DAR each derived from separate forms of the Old English simple demonstrative paradigm (sē/sēo and ðæt, respectively). I propose this happened in an internal development in northern England, where definite markers first emerged. While DAR may have been competing with the, reduced forms do not seem to be disappearing but rather to take on social meaning. I assume that linguistic cycles potentially extend into sociolinguistics cycles and that competition between forms with loss of linguistic function is a condition for this.

Keywords: Definite Article Reduction, definite article, English dialects, (socio)linguistic cycle, grammaticalization

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1. Introduction

Dialect speakers in the North of England use vowel-less forms of the definite article the which do not occur in varieties of English elsewhere and have come to be known as Definite Article Reduction (DAR). While the precise pronunciation of DAR may vary, it is customary in the literature to represent DAR as t' in writing. Here are some data for illustration from the study of Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005: 335–336):

(1) a. It's in t' kitchen, did you not see it? My little Delft dish. (KF)
    b. You'd have thought they were going to chop you up and shove you in t' lake! (LH)
    c. They had a baby, and as soon as t' baby arrived he got jealous. (LL)

Following Jones (1999, 2002), DAR has been recorded at localities across all northern counties with the exception of Northumberland and some parts of Durham. Map 1 below gives the geographical distribution of DAR, which includes the historic counties of Yorkshire and Lancashire, and (to a greater or lesser extent) Cumberland, Westmoreland, Cheshire, Derbyshire, northern Staffordshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.
Contemporary studies exploring DAR (among others, Barry 1972, Shorrocks 1985–1987, Muldowney 1990 and Jones 1999) have largely focused on the phonology of DAR. They have provided valuable descriptions and analyses of the range of different realizations that occur. According to Jones (1999), a variety of phonetic forms for the reduced article is recorded in the Survey of English Dialects (SED, 1962–1971). These range between supralaryngeal forms [t, d, ð, θ], laryngeal forms e.g. [ʔ], affricated forms e.g. [tθ], and hybrid forms e.g. [ʔθ]. Note that outside the DAR area proper, the definite article can also be subject to what might be described as a reduction phenomenon. This concerns elision of the vocalic portion of Standard English the in prevocalic environments, leaving a voiced fricative realization [ð]. However, this ‘vowel-elided’ Standard English article can be distinguished from the reduced article in the DAR sense proper. Vowel-less fricative forms of DAR are usually voiceless and also occur in many more phonological environments other than before a vowel. As Jones (1999: 103) points out, DAR is an historical term and should not be interpreted as suggesting that realizations are somehow derived synchronically from forms approximating the Standard English and general dialectal the.

Thus, the phonology of DAR is well-documented in existing literature, but fewer studies have considered the following further aspects of DAR. First (as exemplified by the quote from Jones 2002: 327, 329 below), DAR is one of the most widely and consistently cited traditional dialect features of the north of England. However, relatively little is known as to why DAR is prevalent there.

The use of DAR as a stereotypical indicator of northern speech in numerous representations in various media shows clearly that it is perceived as a regionally restricted phenomenon.

No other region of the English-speaking world possesses this identifying characteristic.

Second, the term ‘Definite Article Reduction’ suggests that DAR historically derives from the definite article. As a matter of fact, there is no current evidence to permit the conclusive statement that the definite article is indeed the source of DAR. From the possible explanations that might be offered, the accepted majority view is that the original DAR form is the fricative (θ) variant, and that this variant developed from the Middle English definite article form be. Practically all studies assume that other DAR forms, like the [t] variant, subsequently arose through further processes such as assimilation. In spite of this, recent research by Jones (2002) has ruled out
the assimilation theory as an adequate explanation for the observed variety in forms. The origin of DAR is still uncertain. Thirdly, with their focus on phonology, previous studies have explored how phonological context may condition the particular form that DAR takes where it is being used. Note that at a different level, however, dialect speakers vary between reduced DAR forms on the one hand, and the standard full form *the* on the other. There has been less understanding of this differential use, and as to whether parts of the grammar and/or extra-linguistic factors play a role in this.

In this article I attempt to contribute new evidence to these isolated points, as well as to arrive at a fuller understanding of the complexities of DAR, by integrating perspectives afforded by dialect geography, pragmatics, historical linguistics and sociolinguistics. The structure of the article is as follows. In section 2, I summarize in some detail existing work on DAR. The most salient finding I extrapolate from this work is that DAR forms show greater differentiation across different geographical locations than across different phonological environments. In section 3, I outline specifics of the assimilation theory. The assimilation theory assumes an historical development from ME *pe* > *θ(ə) >* other realizations of DAR, including [*t*], but I describe problems associated with this analysis. In section 4, I consider two recent linguistic and sociolinguistic DAR studies. The first is Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) who, most notably, report that patterns of variability between *the* and DAR may be sensitive to specific pragmatic properties which are shared with the distal demonstrative. The second is Tagliamonte & Roeder (in prep.) who, among other things, show that use of DAR persists and is on the increase in the grammar of younger generations in the city of York, and that they even show a tendency to use DAR as a social marker. The origin of DAR is explored in section 5. Here, I consider different lines of evidence together and conclude that DAR might not have derived from the definite article in fact. Instead, I pursue the hypothesis that the definite article and DAR each developed from separate forms of the Old English simple demonstrative paradigm (*sē/sēo > pe* and *pæt > t*). I assume this happened in the late Old English/early Middle English period in an internal development in the north of England, where, so McColl Millar (2000) has shown, definite markers emerged first. I show that the proposed analysis has the advantage of providing an arguably more consistent account of the range of current DAR forms. Section 6 is the discussion. I suggest that in the competition with *the*, DAR may now be coming to the end of its linguistic cycle in the sense of Lyons (1999). However, rather than leading to the
disappearance of DAR, this may allow for DAR to come to be associated with social meaning, and for the life cycle to be extended into a sociolinguistic stage. In this way, DAR presents an interesting linguistic feature in which to examine in a broader context the conditions for grammatical variables to develop into social markers.

2. The phonology and geography of DAR

While practically all studies converge in assuming that DAR derived from the Middle English definite article *be*, traditional dialectologist studies (such as Ellis 1889, Wright 1905, Jones 1952, the SED 1962–1971 and Barry 1972) have recorded DAR in various forms other than a dental fricative [θ]. An overview of forms is presented in Jones (1999: 104). They include simple and glottalized plosives (e.g. [t] or [tʰ]), simple and glottalized fricatives, affricated forms (e.g. [tʰθ]) and glottal stops [ʔ]. In their classification of DAR forms, Ellis (1889) and Wright (1905) did not as yet make any distinctions between phonological environments, but ensuing studies (like Jones 1952 and Barry 1972) investigated to what extent phonological context is a factor in the various realizations of DAR. In these early studies, the role of the following segment was primarily considered as a conditioning factor, specifically whether that segment was a word-initial vowel, dental or other consonant. For example, following vowels are commonly said to favour fricative variants whereas following consonants favour different forms (cf. e.g. Jones 1952).

Jones (2002) suspects that the focus was on the following segment because the article forms a syntactic unit with the noun phrase to its right.\(^2\) In more recent years, he has argued that the preceding phonological segment should also be taken into consideration. Moreover, he has shown that identical phonological environments may in fact generate different articulations in different locations. For example, in the environment /n/ /_θ/ as exemplified by *in the road*, the SED location We4 has a [t] realization [int raud] and Y23 has the [ʔ] form [in? raud]. Also examining the effect of

\(^2\) While phonetic attachment of the reduced article is to the word to the left. This phenomenon is known as 'systematic asymmetry'. An alternative factor may be resyllabification. According to Kallen (1995), it is uncontroversial that lenition or weakening (and deletion, for that matter) is favoured in syllable coda position. Resyllabification as defined by Selkirk (1982) attaches consonants of unstressed syllables to the coda of preceding stressed syllables.
preceding context in the Basic Material of the SED (and some of the Incidental Material), Barry (1972) explored the form of the article in four environments: preceding an initial vowel (question V.6.6 Where do you bake the bread? In the oven), before an initial consonant (question IX.2.3 In summer you don’t water your garden in the middle of the day, you wait till the sun goes down), prior to initial [t] (question V.8.12 When you put things on the table ready for a meal, what do you say you do? To lay the table) and the followed by other (question IX.8.8 You cut an apple in half, and to your little girl you give one half, and to your boy you give the other). Map 2 and 3 present results for contexts with a following consonant and a following vowel, respectively. They show that while phonological environment has some effect, the primary differentiation appears to be geographical.\(^3\)

\(^3\) Maps 2–5 and Table 3 have been reproduced from http://www.yorksj.ac.uk/dialect by courtesy of Barry Rawling.
Following Barry, the SED shows [t] before consonants as well as before vowels in a large distinct northern area, including the greater part of Yorkshire (see also Wright 1965 for Windhill). Before an initial consonant, the [t] area is somewhat larger, also extending into the area which before vowels more frequently has a fricative [θ]. (Note here that this cannot be an exclusively phonological effect, however. Fricative forms are not restricted to contexts with initial vowels, as wrongly claimed in some studies, but occur before consonants also. Dyson 1960 reports that dental fricatives are a distinguishing feature of DAR articulation in the dialect of the Upper Holme Valley in the West Riding in the historic county of Yorkshire.) Within the larger [t] area, there is a southwestern subregion in which variation with glottalised allomorphs [ʔ] and [ʔt] commonly occurs, especially before consonants. For the south-east Lancashire location of Farnworth, Shorrocks (1991) also reports glottal stricture realizations before vowels [ʔθ] and consonants [ʔt] (potentially with assimilation e.g. give him the book [ʔt] > [pʔt] under influence of the preceding bilabial nasal) (also see Oxley 1940 for the Lindsey dialect in northern Lincolnshire).

As shown in Map 4 below, before [t], SED area boundaries reflect almost exactly those of the area showing [t] before consonants and vowels. The majority of locations show the glottalized forms of [ʔ] and [ʔt] in this context at further expense of the fricative area. The [ʔ] and [ʔt] realizations have been reported also by Muldowney (1990) for the two villages of Ricall and North Duffield in the Vale of York (and by Lodge 1984 for Stockport in Lancashire).

Map 4: The [t] before an initial [t]
Barry (1972) similarly reports some interdialect forms such as [tθ] to occur on the boundary between [t] and [θ] areas. The surveys of Ellis (1889), Jones (1952) and the SED all note Ø (zero) realizations in all phonological contexts in the Holderness area of eastern Yorkshire. This may be a maximally reduced form; that is, complete loss of realization of the definite article (see section 6 for further discussion with reference to lenition). While Tagliamonte & Roeder (in prep.) also report occurrences of a zero form for the city of York, they think that this zero variant is not in fact a further derivative of DAR. Instead, they assume that it is a separate, retained form from Old English, which (as discussed at greater length in section 5) did not as yet have a separate class of articles. Tagliamonte & Roeder, whose study is described in more detail in section 3, arrive at this conclusion in view of the fact that in York, the zero variant has a different sociolinguistic profile than other DAR forms, and it also differs in details of its lexical conditioning.4 Muldowney (1990) and Shorrocks (1985–1987) also consider zero forms for varieties spoken in the Vale of York and Farnworth in southern Lancashire. Finally, Map 5 indicates that the SED frequently records [t] before other (tother), even in areas which otherwise show no evidence of DAR. Some

4 See also Lyons (1999: 336), who shows that cross-linguistically, languages which have definiteness marking may vary considerably in their use of it, and they may increase the use of the definite article over time. For example, English uses the definite article largely with simple definites, French additionally with generics, and Greek with proper names also. The point is that within the semantic/pragmatic field that definiteness covers, there is room for a language to extend the ground which the category used to cover.
informants appeared to regard *tother* to be a word in its own right, giving rise to instances of *the + tother* and so on.

In summary, existing studies demonstrate that DAR does not show highly differentiated patterning according to phonological environment, but rather primary differentiation across geographical regions.

3. **Historical development: the assimilation theory**

Following Jones (2002), the traditional view of the development of DAR is known as the ‘assimilation theory’ (Viereck 1995 and others). According to the assimilation theory, DAR developed from the Middle English definite article *pe*. In addition to *pe*, Middle English texts also record a *te* form of the definite article. The assimilation theory assumes that this *te* form represents the first stage in the emergence of DAR, and that the form arose from an historical process of assimilation whereby the initial fricative of *pe* assimilated to a preceding segment [t] or [d]. Subsequent undocumented changes, including vowel elision and consonantal changes such as glottalization and affrication, are thought to have led to the current variety of different DAR forms. Jones (2002) agrees with Viereck (1995) that consonantal change must have preceded vowel elision as there are no vowel-less fricative DAR forms recorded until *A Yorkshire Dialogue* in 1673. Any vowel-less fricative forms of the definite article before this date only occur in vocalic environments. Thus, the position of the assimilation theory can be represented as in (2):

$$ (pe) \theta \sigma > to / [t, d] \_ > t'(\sigma), \theta'(\sigma) > ? \text{ etc.} $$

As can be seen in (2), the assumption is that the Middle English article had initial [θ]. Jones (2002) points out that it is usually assumed that initial *þ* in Old English represented a voiceless fricative, which only became voiced to [ð] in the article and other function words at a later stage, possibly by the fourteenth century (see also Barry 1972). Voicing is thought to have started in the south of England from where it gradually spread, and to have affected other initial fricatives in Middle English; southwestern dialects still show relatively widespread voicing. However, elsewhere voicing eventually began to die out and was retained only in the article and related words. Barry (1972: 166) speculates that as voicing of [θ] took place and diffused northwards, it stopped in the north-west Midlands, so that a number of northern areas
failed to take part and continued to use [θ] for some time. In his discussion of the assimilation theory, Jones (2002) notes that three points have been made in support of the assumption that the definite article had initial [θ] in Middle English. First, the majority of DAR forms are voiceless, and the development of [t] from [θ] is comparatively straightforward. A [t] form arising from [ð] would have required some additional devoicing process. Viereck (1995: 298) asserts that only voiceless [θ] could have changed to voiceless [t]. Secondly, a voiced origin for DAR is unlikely given the limited distribution of reduced [ð] realizations of the article (which one would expect to have resulted from [ðɔ]) as compared to [θ] realizations. A third argument that has been put forward in favour of taking [θ] as the original DAR form is that comparisons between earlier and later studies show changes in the geographical distribution of DAR forms. In particular, the claim goes that the fricative area is shrinking and giving way to other forms. For example, Viereck (1995) claims that in Wright’s (1905) time, the [θ]-area was slightly larger than at the more recent time of the SED. This claim has recently been refuted by Jones (2002), but it is in line with Barry’s (1972) comparison of the SED and Ellis (1889). A similar development is reported by Petyt (1985), who studied over a 100 randomly selected informants from the towns of Bradford, Halifax and Huddersfield in West Yorkshire. In the SED, an isogloss crosses the area of Petyt’s study. On one side of it, including Bradford, the reduced article was always [t]; on the other, including Huddersfield and at least part of Halifax, it was generally [θ → tθ] before vowels and [t] before consonants. Petyt’s survey of the urban areas shows that there has been a considerable expansion of glottal variants at the expense of [t] and especially fricatives, which, so Petyt found, were very rare and only occurred prevocally. Replacement of [θ] by [t] has also been reported by Hedevind (1967: 227) and Tidholm (1979: 126) in research on Dentdale in the historic West Riding of Yorkshire and Egton in North Yorkshire, respectively. Hedevind suggests that [t] replaced [θ] about a century ago, so that in the early nineteenth century [t] may actually have been on the increase. However, Viereck (1995) has questioned this dating in view of the large area that was covered by [t] already in the nineteenth century. More generally, there is actually very little to suggest how these studies arrive at the conclusion that [t] has replaced [θ] in the varieties under consideration.

As Jones (2002) notes, another possible origin suggested for DAR by only few scholars is the final /t/ of the Middle English demonstrative þæt. This is
the view expressed by Brunner (1962, II: 133, cited in Viereck 1995): “Daneben kommt schon m[ittel]e[nglisch] t als Artikel vor, das entweder auf das neutrale \textit{pat} zurückgeht oder eine Verallgemeinerung einer nach Dentalen entstandenen Assimilationsform ist (also in Verbindungen wie \textit{with the man}). Mundartlich ist diese Form des Artikels im nördl[ichem] Mittelland und in Nordengland erhalten, also [tman] für \textit{the man}.” Other researchers (including Barry 1972, Viereck 1995 and Jones 2002) accept that this may be true for the attested forms \textit{t'one} and \textit{t'other} for ‘the one’ and ‘the other’. Barry (1972) assumes that such forms have resulted from erroneous syllabic division of Old English \textit{pæt oper}, this became \textit{pæ toper} and subsequently the syllable \textit{pæ} was lost completely (though Jones 2002 notes that some examples of fricative forms with \textit{other} have nonetheless been recorded). By contrast, many have set aside the hypothesis as an explanation for DAR occurrences proper for the reason that they cannot see how it extends to the occurrence of for example fricative forms. Further (as a comparison of Map 2 and Map 5 shows), the distribution of the \textit{t} for \textit{(the) tother} does not parallel that of the \textit{t} of \textit{the} but is much wider. This has been interpreted as suggestive of their having different histories. Most work on DAR adopts the differentiation without much further consideration.

In section 5 I will argue that the alternative hypothesis does in fact offer a relevant perspective on DAR. In addition to this, doubts have been raised about the extent to which the assimilation theory can be put forward to account for the emergence of different DAR variants. Jones (2002) notes that Ellis (1889: 1325) explicitly rejected a link between DAR and Middle English assimilation, stating that “Ormin’s custom [the use of assimilated \textit{te} forms in \textit{The Ormulum}] must not be confounded with the vowel-less (t) for the article in Yorkshire and Cumberland.” In order to establish whether reduced article forms actually pattern as predicted by the assimilation theory, Jones (2002) has examined data from two Middle English texts which show the assimilation phenomenon (\textit{The Ormulum} and \textit{The Middle English Physiologus}), as well as contemporary data from two large-scale surveys of English dialects (Ellis 1889 and the SED). Jones points out that if the DAR development hypothesis is correct, and the textually recorded Middle English assimilatory change of \textit{pæ} > \textit{te} is responsible for the initial development of DAR, then we expect that modern dialects which have both fricative and non-fricative allomorphs (as in Map 2 and Map 3) fail to show fricative forms after word-final /t, d/. In other words, fricative allomorphs in the modern dialects should not occur in those phonological environments
affected by the historical change, nor should this occur in historical texts. Jones’s conclusion is that the assimilation theory fails in a number of ways. First, in the dialect survey data, fricative forms do occur in the hypothesized assimilatory environments at many localities across the DAR area. Second, te is not only found after word-final /t, d/ but also after word-final /s/, which, as Jones (2002: 330) points out, “considerably complicates the phonology of the assimilatory change, which can no longer be regarded as manner assimilation to a preceding /d, t/.” Furthermore, the textual record shows that Middle English pe assimilation was more lexically widespread than the modern phenomenon of DAR: a large set of function words other than the definite article was affected, such as conjunctions and pronouns. Middle English pe assimilation was also more widespread geographically: the assimilatory change was recorded across many Middle English dialects, not only those in the area in which DAR is now found. The relatively widespread of the Middle English te change relative to the geographical distribution of DAR raises the question of why te forms should have been retained by DAR dialects alone.

Given these results, Jones (2002) submits that various pieces of evidence militate against a direct link between Middle English pe assimilation and DAR. In section 5 I will propose an alternative explanation.

4. (Socio)linguistic aspects

Two more recent studies have investigated two further aspects of DAR which the literature otherwise provides little detail of and I turn to now. Rather than exploring the occurrence of different DAR forms, Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) address variation between DAR and the, and they inquire whether this exhibits any particular linguistic constraints. Tagliamonte & Roeder (in prep.) examine to what extent the use of the and DAR shows social differentiation. In the following sections I will show that what is important about their findings is that they help disentangle other aspects of DAR and the phenomenon of DAR as a whole.

Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) collected data from 8 adult speakers in a number of villages situated at the Yorkshire-Lancashire border. Tape-recorded conversations between the dialect speakers and an interviewer yielded a total number of 451 tokens of the definite article, 397 tokens of which (88%) were realized with a full definite article and 54 tokens (12%) with a reduced form. In view of the fact that the definite article has a
referential function, Rupp & Page-Verhoeff investigated whether pragmatic context might be a significant factor in the use of DAR. Following Lyons (1999), the general function of the definite article is to signal to the hearer that he is in a position to establish the identity of the referent of a noun phrase, and to invite the hearer to exploit clues to this end. This may, however, be done in a variety of different ways. According to Lyons, two characteristics are prominent in the notion of definiteness, ‘identifiability’ and ‘uniqueness’, which in turn may be divided further into a number of subcategories. Thus, in their corpus, Rupp & Page-Verhoeff distinguished between different subcategories, and they categorized tokens of full and reduced article forms accordingly. (3) below shows some examples of occurrences:

(3) a. **anaphoric reference**
   They had *a* baby, and as soon as *t’ baby* arrived he got jealous. (LL)

b. **situational reference**
   That’s my car out there.
   [INT: Which car is it?]
   *T’ little Fiesta.* (LH)

c. **shared speaker-hearer knowledge**
   [LH talking to AC about a frightening situation in the neighbourhood] You’d be petrified. You’d have thought they were going to chop you up and shove you in *t’ lake!* (LH)

d. **general knowledge**
   Travelling down *t’ M6* to Manchester ... (KF)

e. **associative use**
   Sunday School isn’t as good as it might be, but there must be about a hundred on a Sunday morning, mustn’t there?
   In *t’ congregation,* yes. (WC)

f. **cataphoric reference**
   Quite stressful, buying a house, like say, if your dad was a bit older and take on *t’ responsibility of a mortgage.* (KF)

Lyons’s notion of ‘identifiability’ concerns referential uses, and it is comparable to the notion of ‘familiarity’ as it was put forward by

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5 Rupp & Page-Verhoeff ultimately decided to restrict the focus of their investigation to the five categories described below. For other categories (such as ‘generic reference’ and ‘reference to body parts’), tokens in the corpus were not numerous enough for comment.
Christophersen (1939). In the case of identifiability, the identity of the referent is clear from the linguistic context or the non-linguistic situation. The hearer should be able to match the referent of the noun phrase with some real-world entity which he knows to exist because he has been introduced to it in the preceding discourse (anaphoric reference, as in (3a)), or because he can see it in the physical environment (situational reference, as in (3b); here Lyons also includes non-immediate or wider/larger situation uses as in *the theatre (in our town)*). The notion of ‘uniqueness’ concerns non-referential uses. In this case, the hearer may not be able to point out or even recognize the descriptive content of the noun phrase, but he can nonetheless establish the referent because there is just one entity satisfying the description. The uniqueness can be absolute (general knowledge, as in (3d)), or it or may be understood relative to a particular context (associative use (3e), and cataphoric reference (3f), where a postmodifying phrase imposes a particularized reading, in a manner similar to superlatives like *the first*. Compare also Hawkins’s 1978 notion of ‘inclusiveness’). Table 1 below shows the proportion of full and reduced definite articles that Rupp & Page-Verhoeff found per category, rounded to the nearest percentage point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of reference</th>
<th>Full articles (N)</th>
<th>Reduced articles (N)</th>
<th>Full articles (%)</th>
<th>Reduced articles (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anaphoric</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared knowledge</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General knowledge</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associative</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cataphoric</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Proportion of full and reduced definite articles per category*

While based on a very limited amount of data, speakers in the study of Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) showed the highest proportion of DAR with
the categories of situational and anaphoric reference, followed by shared speaker-hearer knowledge.

Note that the categories of situational and anaphoric reference have been considered to form a natural class in different studies. As described above, in Lyons's (1999) account of definiteness, they constitute the notion of identifiability. Kempson (1988) expresses the view that definiteness amounts to a degree of accessibility, and that the most accessible information is provided in immediate situation and anaphoric uses through the hearer's perception of the environment in which the utterance occurs and the content of the preceding discourse. To give another example, in Prince's (1981) taxonomy of given-new information, situational and anaphoric reference correspond to the class of 'evoked information'. Evoked information is already in the discourse model of the speaker and the hearer, and can either be situationally invoked by salient features of the extra-textual context or textually invoked. Evoked information involves the greatest degree of 'givenness' or what Prince terms 'assumed familiarity', to the extent that it is information that is 'hearer-old' as well as 'discourse-old'. Rupp & Page-Verhoeff's finding that use of DAR was also relatively frequent with the category of 'shared speaker-hearer knowledge' could derive from the fact that while this information may be 'discourse-new' ('unused' in Prince's terminology), it is 'hearer-old'. Fraurud (2001) has proposed that anaphoric use be defined more broadly to also include shared knowledge which is established either in the preceding discourse or by some earlier conversation or joint experience.

Another perspective explored by Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) is associating situational and anaphoric reference and the corresponding use of DAR with the notion of deixis. Lyons (1999) makes a distinction between on the one hand, deixis in the sense of closeness to or association with some spatio-temporal centre (typically the speaker and the moment or place of utterance), and on the other hand 'ostension' in the sense of directing the hearer's attention towards a referent. Determiners may be deictically neutral, and thus be ostensive without deixis: this is the definite article. The definite article does not so much point to anything in time or space in a distinction of the proximal-distal kind, and it gives no information about the location of the referent. Deixis is typically present in demonstratives and need not necessarily be spatial but may also be temporal, so that a distal demonstrative is likely to be used to refer to events further into the past than a proximal demonstrative. This is the link with anaphora. The relationship between an
anaphoric expression and its antecedent is itself a temporal one, and anaphoric reference involves the transference of basically spatial deictic concepts to the temporal dimension of the discourse. With a similar idea in mind, Rupp & Page-Verhoeff examined in their DAR study, for the category of anaphoric reference, whether relative distance from the antecedent Noun Phrase exerted an effect on the distribution of article forms. The results are presented in Table 2. Although a definitive statement cannot be made on the basis of a small number of tokens, Rupp & Verhoeff observed that the greater the distance between the definite article and the antecedent NP (for example, with two clauses intervening), the less frequent the use of DAR (10%). Here, rates of full articles were high (90%). Conversely, where the distance between the definite article and the antecedent NP was short (for example, where they occurred in the same sentence), the use of DAR increased (40%), while rates of full articles were relatively low (60%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance DAR-NP</th>
<th>Full articles (N)</th>
<th>Reduced articles (N)</th>
<th>Full articles (%)</th>
<th>Reduced articles (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same clause</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause before</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One clause</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two clauses</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than two</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2. Anaphoric reference: distance between DAR and the antecedent NP*

After Petyt (1985), Taglamonte & Roeder (in prep.) have been among the first to investigate the sociolinguistics of DAR in a large-scale study of speakers in the city of York. The York speakers showed four different realizations of the definite article: the standard variant *the*, and a glottal, a zero and a [t] variant. Taglaimonte & Roeder (in prep.) report a number of noteworthy results. One interesting finding is that the glottal form was favoured by the two youngest age groups in the survey, namely the 20–30 and 30–50 year olds. In contrast to this, the use of the [t] variant was
negligible (1.7% overall), and use of [t] was restricted to the male members of the oldest 70+ generation. This contrast argues for a linguistic change by which [t] is becoming obsolete in York and giving way to a glottalized form. The same direction of effect was found earlier by Petyt (1985) and Tidholm (1979) for a dialect of English spoken in Egton in North Yorkshire. Tidholm reports that the [t] variant was fairly frequent in his old and mid-age group (36.7% and 39.7%, respectively) but of rare occurrence in the young age group (5.6%). Petyt (1985) surveyed south-west Yorkshire localities in the SED, and found that the basic material largely shows [t] before consonants, and [?] only in a small region. However, in the incidental material, the area with glottal forms is greatly extended. The incidental material is arguably the closest the SED came to casual speech, and in view of this, Petyt suggests that [?] might be on the increase. Petyt also collected data in three towns in West Yorkshire. Though only representing a tiny fraction, the commonest form after the glottal stop was [t]. The great majority of these came from informants aged over 70, which corroborates the idea that [t] was the earliest form but has been giving way to [?].

Focusing on the glottal variant, Tagliamonte & Roeder go on to examine the use of this form by different social groups in different linguistic contexts, such as preceding or following phonological environment. A second point of interest is that while internal linguistic conditioning turned out to be remarkably parallel across generations and sexes (to the extent that each group maintained the same patterning according to phonological context), the speakers showed strong sociolinguistic stratification. DAR forms in York, in particular the glottal variant, are on the increase among the two youngest generations (20–30 and 30–50 year olds) as compared to the 51–69 age group. This result patterns with results from Petyt’s (1985) study of south-west Yorkshire. Petyt found that all socio-economic classes showed similar phonological patterning, and that among the DAR forms, there was a considerable expansion of [?] at the expense of [t]. Petyt also found that younger speakers were showing relatively high levels of DAR and speculated that DAR might act as an important signal of the speaker’s provenance.

Perhaps the most salient finding of Tagliamonte & Roeder’s (in prep.) York study is a contrast between male and female speakers in the youngest age group, where education exerted a strikingly different effect. For men across all generations, including the 20–30 years olds, the glottal definite article is a feature tied to education: throughout, the non-standard form is most frequently used by males who are less educated. Women in the older
age group pattern identically: less educated elder female speakers use the glottal definite article more than educated speakers, just like the men. In the 20–30 year old group, however, it is the educated women who favour DAR, and they are now doing it more than the less educated ones.

As Tagliamonte & Roeder point out, this result is a reversal of the traditional association of women with prestige norms, and unexpectedly unlike Labov's (1990, 2001) well-known principle of linguistic change, whereby women are predicted to favour standard forms and the effects of education on speakers' behaviour should go in the opposite direction. However, Dubois & Horvath's (1999) research on Cajun English has shown that younger speakers may recycle non-standard traditional features. Dubois & Horvath found that older (local) Cajun French variants were on the increase among the youngest male speakers. They argued that this development was the result of recycling and reallocation of the sociolinguistic value of Cajun forms to prestige markers of Cajun identity, a male-oriented development there. Tagliamonte & Roeder argue that DAR in York patterns in similar ways. In York too, younger speakers have recycled an older feature of the language, just as in the Cajun English speech community. However, the intriguing point to note here is that in York, it is the females rather than the males who appear to be implicated in the allocation of the social value of DAR. Tagliamonte & Roeder propose that this might be an interesting example of Le Page & Tabouret-Keller's (1985) view of language as acts of identity. Following Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, change takes place when the social values of the possible models change, and as a result the behaviour of the community may become refocused. Tagliamonte & Roeder note that as a matter of fact, considerable recent evidence reveals that the regional varieties in England are gaining prestige, and particularly so in the North (e.g. Wales 2000, Beal 2004). In the light of this, Tagliamonte & Roeder suggest that the use of DAR in York has developed a new social value. DAR affirms a positive new attitude toward local identity in the developing prestige for Northern Englishes more generally. In this way, the development is consistent with Labov's principles of language change according to which the forms females favour become prestige forms. Tagliamonte & Roeder suspect that DAR might become an even more long-standing feature of living Yorkshire dialect, as it is currently adopted by members of the community who most typically adhere to the standard language.

Tagliamonte & Roeder say that despite the dramatic social stratification evident in the patterning of the glottal variant, it is critical to highlight that
the ranking of internal constraints is consistently parallel across external linguistic factors. That is to say that changing sociolinguistic patterns of use in one community may still operate with the same underlying grammar. However, in section 6 I will speculate that the condition for DAR to be developing into a social marker might be loss of pragmatic function.

5. Distribution and source

The northern distribution of DAR has in the past been interpreted as suggestive that DAR might be traced to the contact situation with Scandinavian that pertained in the North of England in the late Old English/early Middle English period. Following McColl Millar (2000: 47), the areas of Lancashire, Yorkshire and northern Lincolnshire demonstrate more intense Scandinavian influence from that found either to the North or South. Samuels (1989) has termed these areas the Great Scandinavian Belt. Effects from Scandinavian are evident in lexical as well as in function words, most famously the paradigm of they. In recent years, Kroch et al. (2000) have argued that morphosyntactic particularities of the northern dialect also (namely, the emergence of third person singular -s and a historical Verb Second word order) might have derived from imperfect second language learning by Scandinavian settlers at the time. As illustrated with an example from modern Norwegian (from Julien 2002: 265) in (4), potentially in favour of extending the contact account to DAR is the fact that Scandinavian also has a bound definite article form. The difference is that contrary to northern English DAR, the Scandinavian bound form is attached to the right of the noun.

(4)  
hus-et  
house-DEF  
‘the house’

In this context, McColl Millar (2000: 25, fn. 8) notes that “[t]he argument could be made that at least at times the acts as a proclitic, particularly (and perhaps significantly) in the dialects of [...] the ‘Great Scandinavian Belt’”. Samuels (1989: 114) argues that “[v]ery striking [...] is the reduction of the definite article to t’ o th’ (e.g. t’man, th’man), or its complete deletion. [...] Why, we may ask, does this only happen to the definite article and not to other proclitics? Surely, this must be because the substratum had [...]
nothing in that position: the O[ld] N[orse] definite article was a postpositive enclitic (e.g. *mæpren*, acc. *mannen*, Norw. *mannen*), which in English would come to have been treated like any deletable inflectional syllable."

Thomason & Kaufman (1988), however, have been somewhat sceptical about the extent of Scandinavian influence. They point out, among other things, that the grammars of Old English and Viking Norse were very similar at any rate. They also argue that Norse dialects were not spoken in the North for a sufficient period of time for effects to materialize, as the Viking demographic presence, in their opinion, was not as great as has been stated elsewhere. In this relation, note also that Viereck (1995: 302) has argued that the area of the Great Scandinavian Belt is much smaller than the DAR area. An anonymous reviewer of Jones's (2002) work makes the suggestion that different patterns of settlement of Norse speakers may underlie different DAR forms, with areas of Old Danish contact having zero forms, and areas with Old Norwegian contact having a plosive form. Jones has discounted this idea for the reason that the development of [?] to ∅ may be regarded as phonologically natural. Thus, no external explanation is necessary (see also the discussion with reference to lenition in the next section). Further, following Wakelin (1977: 102–103), East Yorkshire does not show linguistic separation from the adjoining dialect area in major respects other than the occurrence of the zero variant, and Jones would find it surprising that a difference in contact effects had only affected the definite article.

Another fact that makes a Scandinavian account less persuasive is that the phenomenon of reduced article forms is not exclusively associated with Scandinavian or dialects in the North of England. From a review of the literature (in particular Lyons 1999) it becomes clear that the positioning, form and number of definite articles shows considerable cross-linguistic variation at any rate. Regarding positioning, the article may be positioned before or after the noun, as illustrated for Romance with Italian (5a) and Romanian (5b), respectively.

(5) a. _il professore_ ‘the teacher’ (Italian)
b. _profesor-ul_ ‘the teacher’ (Romanian)

Where form is concerned, there are affixal definite markers, clitics or morphophonologically weak forms, and independent words. For example, following Jagger (1985, cited in Lyons 1999), Hausa has a bound-form
definite article and a free-form definite article (d'in). Both of these follow the noun. The bound form is shown in (6) below.

(6) To, ashe ya bar hula-r a wuri-n da aka yi karo-n sai wani yaro ya ga hula
    OK, really AUX leave cap-DEF at place REL AUX do collision then a boy
    AUX see cap
    ‘OK, he had left the cap where the collision had happened, then a boy saw
    the cap.’

As for numbers, languages may lack articles altogether of have more than one. The North Frisian dialect of Fering (studied in detail by Ebert 1971, cited in Lyons 1999), for instance, has two free-form prenominal articles. These have been termed the A-article and the D-article. They are illustrated in (7a, b) and (7c), respectively.

    ‘Oki bought a horse. The horse is lame.’ (anaphoric)

b. Dön kaater kleesi.
    ‘The/those cats are scratching.’ (situational)

c. Jister wul er deel an Sina bischük, an üüs wo diar uunkem, do as a dör
    feest.
    ‘Yesterday we wanted to go (down) and visit Sina, and when we got
    there, the door was locked.’ (associative)

Note now that it appears that in languages and varieties where more than one definite article form occurs, these forms may similarly break down in different functions and divide the field of definiteness in very much the same way as Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) found for English DAR and the. This is either with the categories of situational and anaphoric reference on the one hand and other categories on the other, or with a distinction between proximal and distal anaphoric reference. Returning to the Hausa data in (6), for example, Jagger (1985, cited in Lyons 1999) has claimed that in Hausa, the definite article has an essentially anaphoric function in that it serves to direct the hearer to the preceding discourse. The definite article, then, may be omitted depending on the accessibility of the referent in the linguistic context. If, as in the first occurrence of cap ('hula-r') in (6), the referent is relatively far back in the discourse, speakers tend to heavy-mark the noun with a definite article form as a way of alerting the hearer to the need to find
the referent. Recall that the northern English speakers in the corpus of Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) preferred to use the full form *the* for this purpose. By contrast, in Hausa, a zero form or bare noun phrase may be used where the referent is easy to access because the referent has just been mentioned in the discourse. This is the case for the second mention of *cap* (‘hula’) in (6). Recall that speakers in the Rupp & Page-Verhoeff corpus preferred to use the reduced form *t‘* in such situations. The Fering dialect of (7) also shows a distinction of article form that corresponds closely to the division in Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005). In Fering, the D-article is used for anaphoric reference (as in (7a)), or for situational reference, where the referent is visible and directly identifiable in the extra-linguistic physical context (as in (7b)). This compares to the use of DAR in Rupp & Page-Verhoeff. The A-article is used in other contexts, for example where the referent is inferable through association (as in (7c)), which compares to the use of *the* in Rupp & Page-Verhoeff.

Given comparable phenomena elsewhere, then, a possibility other than Scandinavian influence is that DAR is an example of what Sapir (1921) has called ‘drift’, that is, that it has arisen from some internal development. Of potential significance here is that in the history of English, the development of the definite article *the* itself is of apparent Northern origin. Old English did not yet have a separate definite article. The common assumption is that following a large-scale breakdown in the English language of grammatical gender and Case systems, the definite article derived from what was essentially a simple demonstrative paradigm. As can be seen in Table 3 below, the simple demonstrative had the following nominative forms: *sē* (masculine), *sēo* (feminine) and *þæt* (neuter).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>sē</td>
<td>sēo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>þone</td>
<td>þā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>þæs</td>
<td>þære</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>þæm</td>
<td>þære</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>þy, þon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3* Simple demonstrative paradigm in Old English

In late Old English, many previously distinct forms of the simple demonstrative paradigm began to fall together into a lesser number of
distinctive forms. The <sV> forms were completely levelled with the initial voiceless p of the other cases, and se and seo fell together into pe. From an early period on, the ancestors of Modern English that and the split off from one another. They gradually showed semantic specialisation. While pe came to carry the article meanings, pet took on circumscribed distal demonstrative meaning separate from that of the rest of the paradigm, jettisoning the near-article function which it had been associated with in the sixth and seventh centuries. In his corpus study of a variety of historical texts from a range of different regions, McColl Millar (2000) claims that Northern speakers had developed this demonstrative and article system before their contemporaries in more southerly parts of England. The innovative system first took hold in the North in late Old English. From here it gradually spread, progressively working its way through Midland and southern dialects, reaching completion in the south-east of England around 1350 (Barry 1972 expresses a similar view). While McColl Millar allows for the possibility of drift, he envisages that the process of dislocation might have been reinforced by contact between Scandinavian and English dialects in the North. This is because Scandinavian already had a comparable system before or during the migration to England.

The idea I have in mind and will explore at more length in section 6 is that the definite article the and DAR forms arose at similar times in the North of England in more or less parallel developments, but derived from different sources. With respect to the source of DAR, there seem to me two further points to consider here. First, it is well known that with exceptions, many languages (including Germanic, Romance, Bantu and Niger-Congo languages; see Fraurud 2001 and references therein) have followed the same general route in the appearance of definite marking as English. They acquired definite articles where they previously lacked them from the grammaticalization of demonstratives through semantic weakening and weakening of form. Note that this historical development is synchronically

6 Whether the dislocation in the simple demonstrative paradigm involved the ancestors of the breaking away from that, or rather the semantic drift of that away from the does not, as far as I can see, bear on the central points made in the present and following section. I will therefore leave this matter open. McColl Millar (2000) assumes that Old English that specialised in function earlier than the collapse of forms into the.

7 The emergence of indefinite articles is in many ways parallel to that of definite articles. Cardinal articles similarly nearly always develop out of singular numerals;
reflected in the fact that there is some overlap in function between demonstratives and definite articles. Following Lyons (1999), demonstratives are generally considered to be definite, but their definiteness is not a matter of inclusiveness. Rather, identifiability is what links demonstratives with the definite article: the identity of the referent must be immediately accessible to the hearer. Hawkins (1978) says that demonstratives are distinguished by a 'matching constraint', which instructs the hearer to match the referent with some identifiable object: an object which is visible in the context or known on the basis of previous discourse. Thus, whereas with a definite article the referent may be inferable via association (*I got into the car and turned on the engine*), with a demonstrative the referent must be given in the linguistic or non-linguistic context (*I got into the car and turned on *this/*that engine*). The context in which either a demonstrative or a definite article may be used are, hence, contexts of anaphoric and situational reference. This is illustrated in (8) with examples from Lyons (1999: 164).

(8) a. I bought my first car [...] when I was twenty. [...] I only replaced the/that car when my new husband refused to be seen dead in it. (anaphoric reference)
   b. [In a room where there is just one stool] Pass me the/that stool, please. (situational reference)

Fraurud (2001: 246) discusses some examples of possessive determiners grammaticalizing into definite articles. She observes that, comparably but conversely, possessives may alternate with associative uses of the definite article, as in (9b) below:

(9) a. Beside the barn there is a little cottage. The/This cottage was built in 1875. (but: *Its cottage ...)
   b. Beside the barn there is a little cottage. The/Its roof is leaking. (but: *This/*That roof ...)

A second point to note in relation to the source of DAR is the following. In addition to being considered a natural class by various theoretical models for example, Old English *an* 'one' has given the modern indefinite article *a(n). Following Dahl (2004), grammaticalization may give rise to a split. It is not the case that the numeral *one* has turned into the indefinite article *a(n) altogether. Rather, the numeral *one* lives on in the old stressed contexts while the indefinite article thrives in the new unstressed domain.
of reference, and constituting a synchronic area of overlap between the definite article and demonstratives, anaphoric and situational uses bear a diachronic relationship. There may be some debate as to how precisely anaphoric and situational uses relate to one another. For example, Heim (1988) argues that the anaphoric use is most basic and the situational use derivative. Other scholars have proposed that anaphoric use is derived from situational use on the grounds that anaphoric reference involves the transference of basically spatial deictic concepts to the temporal domain of the discourse. There is, however, consensus in the literature that directly perceiving a referent in the physical surroundings, or recalling him from the preceding discourse, is arguably less complex than any other uses of the definite article. These other uses all require some inferencing to interpret. The hearer must calculate, using background knowledge and experience, what the referent is. Now Fraurud (2001) has argued that synchronic overlap of two forms is often indicative of the starting point for the expansion of one of the forms into the other's territory. Overlap may be the reflection of ongoing language change, for example, the grammaticalization of demonstratives into definite articles. Both Fraurud (2001) and Lyons (1999) think that it is no coincidence that demonstratives and definite articles overlap in the situational and in the anaphoric use, and that these basic uses form an early extension area for demonstratives to develop into definite articles. The point for diachrony is that a demonstrative does not immediately become a general definite article; the new article begins by being restricted to the area of overlap already available to the demonstrative. The article may subsequently expand from prototypical identifiability to develop other uses (such as inclusiveness) and become a more general definite article.

At this point recall the finding of Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) that speakers in their corpus used DAR most frequently in the context of anaphoric and situational reference. I find the convergence suggestive, and I would like to speculate that the most plausible perspective on the source of DAR is in fact that DAR developed from the simple demonstrative paradigm, rather than from the definite article. Of interest in this connection is that there appear to be parallels in Dutch. It is a common assumption among Dutch historical linguists (e.g. van der Horst & Marschall 1989) that in the history of the Dutch language, weakening of the demonstratives die and (neuter) dat gave rise to the definite article forms de and (neuter) 't. The current full form of the neuter definite article, het, so the claim goes, was only introduced later by analogy.
with the third person singular pronoun *het*. The older, bound form 't is said to have survived in a number of Dutch varieties. These include the Zeeuwse dialect spoken in the province of Zeeland in the south-west of the Netherlands. On 11 March 2005, the Dutch newspaper NRC reported that speakers from a Zeeuwse town called Tholen, like for example the well-known Dutch weather forecaster Marion de Hond, attach *t* to the following word so that *the weathergirl* becomes 't girl of 't weather.

6. Discussion

I have brought forward different lines of evidence in an attempt to situate and explain the complexities of DAR. One of the main outcomes is that I believe that the simple demonstrative paradigm might be the immediate source of DAR. I arrived at this perspective by integrating several research findings. These were most notably the finding of Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) that speakers showed highest rates of DAR in the context of anaphoric and situational reference, combined with the observation that they are the functions commonly covered by new articles that historically have developed from demonstratives. Specifically, I suspect that while the full definite article *the* derived from the nominative masculine *sê* and feminine *sêo* forms of the simple demonstrative paradigm (> *pe*), DAR developed out of a separate form. This is nominative neuter *paet*, the ancestor of contemporary *that*. As I will show directly, there are advantages gained from this analysis. Where facts do not appear to follow immediately from the hypothesis pursued here, it seems there are fruitful further lines of inquiry to explore in future research.

One of the advantages of an analysis which considers *paet* to be the immediate source of DAR, rather than the definite article, is that it allows for the possibility that the original DAR form is [t] (from the final [t] of *paet*) rather than the fricative [θ] (from *pe*), as it is assumed by most other DAR studies. This in turn provides a more adequate explanation of the variety of DAR forms that are attested. Recall from section 2 that distributional differences seemed geographical more than phonological. Jones (2002) has speculated that this may reflect the operation of two phonological processes in the development of DAR; in particular, assimilation for northern and western locations which have plosive [t] realizations, but lenition for other localities which have [θ]. At the same time, however, Jones has in fact been the first to point out that the assimilation theory can hardly explain the
emergence of [t] tokens from the [θ] form. On the assumptions of the current analysis, by contrast, the range of current DAR forms can all be considered lenited realizations of [t]. The trajectory of [t]-lenition, which is very common in British dialects at any rate, involves a progressive decrease in complexity or strength from stop > fricative > glottal > deletion, with the zero ∅ variant recorded in Holderness potentially representing the final stage of the lenition process.¹ We might ask why, if DAR forms have emerged from a system of internally motivated lenition, this has not led to a higher degree of convergence in forms among northern dialects. However, Kallen (2005) has elsewhere shown that even speech communities which share a process that is favoured by general principles can show significant divergence in linguistic behaviour. Divergent effects may arise when lenition is possible. Speakers do not necessarily pass through a sequence of points on the way to deletion, nor is there much evidence of convergence towards a favoured lenited realization, nor is it the case that any supposed stages in lenition lead to deletion as an endpoint. Dialects might nonetheless be said to show convergence in a broad sense. The phonological tendency is that /t/ becomes ‘weaker’ through reduction of obstruction.

A matter that is less apparent from the present research findings is the precise relationship between the demonstrative that and DAR t’ on the one hand, and the definite article the on the other. As I noted previously, it has been generally accepted in research on DAR that the definite article the emerged from the paradigm of the simple demonstrative, and that DAR subsequently derived from the definite article (not from the demonstrative). It is true that from other grammaticalization processes, we know that morphological change is usually from free to bound forms, so that in the case of articles, free-form articles are usually diachronically prior to bound articles, just like agreement clitics or inflections may arise from weak pronouns. As shown in (10), the reflex of this process in a language like

¹ The term ‘glottalization’ can refer to a number of different phenomena. It can involve the use of a glottal stop [ʔ] instead of a voiceless alveolar stop [t] in particular environments (glottal replacement), but it can also involve glottal closure co-articulated with [t] (glottalized articulation [tʔ]). While glottal replacement is a straightforward weakening process, glottalized articulation of [t] is arguably strengthening in so far as it increases stricture; it adds a point of glottal closure to the closure of the alveolar ridge (e.g. Lodge 1984). It is not self-evident if and how glottalized variants of [t] fit into the notion of lenition, and I will leave this matter unresolved here.
Icelandic is similarity in form between the bound and the independent article, the latter of which is also still used as a demonstrative (with the contrastive value ‘the or that other’).

(10) **Icelandic**

\[ \text{hin\u00f3n (MASC.NOM.SG) ‘that other/the’} > \text{inn ‘the’} \]

a. \text{hin\u00f3n sterki hestur} \quad ‘\text{the strong horse}’

b. \text{hestur-inn} \quad ‘\text{the horse}’

However, there have also been cases reported of grammaticalization of demonstratives into definite articles where the development of a free-form definite article into a bound form has been followed by the emergence of a new free-form article. The account proposed here is more apparently in line with this. As indicated in (11–12), in the Scandinavian languages Danish and Swedish, for instance, the bound-form articles (-et and -an in (11a) and (12a), respectively) are said to have derived from free-form determiners which no longer exist, but these have been replaced by new free forms (det and den in (11b) and (12b)).

(11) **Danish**

\[ \text{OBS} > -et ‘\text{the’} > \text{det ‘the’} \]

a. \text{hus-et} \quad ‘\text{the house}’

b. \text{det gamle hus} \quad ‘\text{the old house}’

(12) **Swedish**

\[ \text{OBS} > -an ‘\text{the’} > \text{den ‘the’} \]

a. \text{res-an} \quad ‘\text{the journey}’

b. \text{den langa res-an} \quad ‘\text{the long journey}’

The free form may complement the bound form and divide up the range of definite constructions, as in Danish (11) (that is to say that in Danish, the free form is used instead of the bound form in the presence of, among other categories, an adjective). Alternatively, the free form may reinforce the bound form, as in the so-called double determination structures of Swedish (12) (where the free form is added to the bound form in the presence of particular categories).\(^9\) Lyons (1999) proposes that double determination

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\(^9\) Formal accounts of double definiteness, such as Delsing (1993), typically treat this phenomenon as morphosyntactic in nature, and seek to account for it in terms of functional DP structure and movement operations. However, Dahl (2004) and others suggest that pragmatic factors may equally have a role to play. It would be
reflects a 'definite article cycle' on the model of Jespersen's (1917) 'negative cycle'. One article form may come to reinforce a prior article form. The new form ultimately replaces the prior form and takes over the sole component of definiteness, until the new form gets reinforced itself and is lost in the next step in the diachronic process, with repeated renewal of definiteness marking. Following Traugott's (1982) view of the cyclic nature of grammaticalization, cyclicity arises from the fate that may befall the grammaticalized element. The element may become weakened in form and weakened in function, in the end to be ousted by another form or to be reduced to zero, allowing the cycle to begin again. Dahl (2004) says that the normal development pattern for the definite article is to eventually come to be used with generic noun phrases and proper names. In some cases, it may be extended further to uses which would not normally be thought of as definite, and finally become attached indiscriminately to nouns and end up as a mere general marker of nominality (see also Greenberg 1978).

In addition to the Scandinavian data, Lyons (1999) discusses other cases where two articles have emerged from two different substantive forms, rather than one from the other. He argues that preposition contraction in German is one such other case. In German, it is common for noun phrase-initial definite articles to combine with a preceding preposition (e.g. *in dem* > *im* 'in the'). The standard assumption about the diachrony of these clitic forms is that they are reductions of the corresponding free forms, but Lyons has questioned this view of the relationship. One of Lyons's concerns is the fact that clitic forms do not exist for all free-standing forms, and that clitic forms are optional and show some stylistic restrictions. According to Lyons, this makes the clitic article look like a relic form of an earlier article, while the fact that the free-standing forms are always possible suggests that these may represent a more recent article rather than being the source of the clitic forms. Lyons also takes the two articles of the dialect of Fering (as illustrated back in (7)) to be of distinct origin. He assumes that the A-article is older, and that it once covered the whole range of definiteness. The younger D-article has partly replaced it, but only in the context of situational and interesting to investigate in future research to what extent DAR and Scandinavian bound forms show parallel conditioning, furthering the understanding of one another in this way.
anaphoric reference, the prototypical use of a new article. In the light of the phenomenon of preposition contraction, it has been suggested to me that English DAR might similarly be of frequent occurrence in the context of prepositions. As a matter of fact, this is what Hollman & Watson (2007) report to have found in data from Lancashire dialect. However, in the data of Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005), DAR did not occur significantly more frequently after prepositions. Furthermore, there is an important respect in which DAR differs from the German clitic article as well as from the A-article in Fering. This difference poses a difficulty for the idea that DAR developed from the ancestor of that, and that this was followed by the emergence of the free-form article the from another part of the demonstrative paradigm. The alleged greater age of the German clitic article and the Fering A-article (as compared to the free-standing form and D-article, respectively) is arguably shown by the phonetic reduction and weaker form of these articles, in combination with inflation in use and loss of functionality. What typically happens in grammaticalization is that an element loses word status and extends from its original domain of use to a set of contexts in which it has a lower, or even zero informational value. In the case of DAR we arrive at a paradox to the extent that phonological reduction has not been accompanied by extension of use. The weak form of DAR suggests that it is an older form, whereas the reported use of DAR in situational and anaphoric contexts suggests that it is a more recent form.

Perhaps an alternative perspective, then, is that DAR and the full form the arose from separate parts of the paradigm of the simple demonstrative at similar times in parallel developments. The two forms may have been rivalling each other, possibly (though as far as I can see not necessarily) from different geographical locations. Such is the account that Dahl (2004) has put forward of double determination structures in Scandinavian. On the basis of a corpus study, Dahl (2004) argues that the two main definite article types in Scandinavia, the bound form and the free form, reflect two different grammaticalization processes that are represented in overlapping areas with different centres of gravity. The bound article is historically the oldest in the region and has reached its fullest development in north-eastern Scandinavia. The free article is a newcomer from the south. From this perspective, Dahl

Lyons (1999) points out that this assumption is corroborated by the fact that in the Fering data, the D-article may be substituted by a demonstrative while the A-article may not.
argues, it is natural to see double determination, as in for example Swedish, as one possible outcome of the competition between two different grammaticalizing articles. Another solution has been chosen in standard Danish, where the two articles are in complementary distribution. Dahl points out that a common source of increased complexity in grammar are incomplete grammaticalization processes – incomplete in the sense that a new pattern takes over the domain of an older one, but only partially so. The development of DAR may be incomplete in the sense that DAR never developed uses beyond basic anaphoric and situational contexts, but has continued to live on next to the free form the, which did develop into a more general definite marker.

I would like to end by identifying a number of matters for further research on DAR which will help complete the perspective on this dialect feature, or may advance insights into broader linguistic issues. First, where DAR forms can be retrieved from the historical record, it is necessary to examine relative numbers and forms of the simple demonstrative, DAR and the full article in historical texts from different regions. In this way we will be able to make a more definitive statement about the historical and geographical emergence of these forms relative to one another.

Secondly, DAR findings may add to the theory of definiteness. Lyons (1999) points out that there seems to be no language in which identifiability and inclusiveness are coded by two separate articles. He concludes that it must be that the dichotomy between identifiability and inclusiveness does not reflect the reality, and that neither identifiability nor inclusiveness is the correct characterization. If that is the case, then they should be unified, either by deriving one from the other, or by deriving both of them from some as yet undiscovered concept of which they are manifestations. Lyons submits that it is also possible that what we are calling definiteness is in fact two or more distinct semantic categories, which only so happen to have the same lexical or morphological realization in many languages. A way to test this possibility would be to look for languages in which different kinds of “definiteness” are expressed in different ways, by different articles for example. We could explore whether DAR and the free form the have at some stage in the history of the English language come close to dividing the overall field of definiteness in the way Lyons suggests.

Finally, further study of DAR may contribute to the understanding of what the conditions are for grammatical variables to develop into social markers, as Petyt (1985) and Tagliamonte & Roeder (in prep.) argue has
happened with DAR in respectively south-west Yorkshire and the city of
York among younger generations of speakers. Both the studies of Petyt and
Tagliamonte & Roeder report that parallel phonological conditioning was
observed across all social groups. However, in such large-scale studies as
theirs, it would be interesting to examine whether the shift in the form of
DAR from [t] to [?] between older and younger speakers has gone hand-in-
hand with loss of particular pragmatic uses of DAR, as they have been
identified by Rupp & Page-Verhoeff (2005) in their study of adult speakers
on the Yorkshire/Lancashire border. Should this be so, then grammaticalized
elements like articles may come to the end of their life cycle and lose their
old, grammatical meaning but be recycled with a new, social one (compare
Lass's 1980 notion of exaptation). Following Dahl (1999), it is an extremely
common phenomenon for there to be several elements or constructions in
competition in a language that share the same or a similar function. Often,
such constructions are at different stages in their life cycles and a distribution
of labour may then arise among them. There is commonly a grey zone where
the choice between elements or constructions is determined by more or less
subtle semantic or stylistic factors. The spread of a construction may be
halted at a certain point, and a new opposition may arise. I speculate that the
spread of DAR was halted at basic anaphoric and situational uses, and that
division of labour between DAR and the has over time developed from a
pragmatic into a social division.

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