

The Future of Northern English
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The decline and disappearance of English dialects generally has been predicted for well over one hundred years, and many of the alleged factors in causation have continued to be cited until the end of the twentieth century. In this paper which focusses on Northern English I shall argue that, although recent advances in dialectology and sociolinguistics mean that we can perhaps understand more fully what is actually going on in contemporary regional speech, nonetheless views and conclusions are to some extent hampered by models and metaphors that need to be 'refreshed', since they can blind us to potentially significant phenomena which indicate a more positive situation. Trudgill's map of 'possible future dialect areas' (1999) will also be discussed.