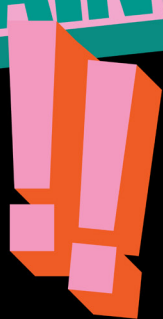


SOUNDS
LIKE **BRITAIN**

**LOUD.
PROUD.
LOCAL.**



**OAN YER
ACKSINT**

**OOWN YAH
AKSCENT**

SOUNDS LIKE BRITAIN

By Amelie O'Sullivan

**PEAK
UP!**

**SOUNDS
LIKE US.**

**SPEAK
UP!**



**OAN Y
ACKS**

**OAN YER
ACKSINT**

**SOUNDS
LIKE **BRITAIN****

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DISCOVER



BRAND BRITAIN

WHAT IS THE BRIEF?

This project was developed in response to WHM&I's 'Brand Britain' brief, which asked designers to develop a unifying identity for the UK in a time when national pride has sharply declined. The task called for a strong insight, creative strategy and a bold reimagining of Britain's brand.

I chose this brief because national identity is something I've always experienced as layered rather than singular. I'm half English, with Irish heritage, and grew up in a border town on the English side of the River Wye, while studying and working across Wales. Ireland, Wales and England are all places I consider home and a central part of who I am. This project allowed me to reflect on that complexity and explore how design might better represent the depth of Britain's cultural and regional diversity.

CREATIVE BRIEF -

BRAND BRITAIN

PROBLEM

Over the last decade, there has been a sharp fall in the proportion who take pride in Britain's achievements.

OBJECTIVE

Create the new Brand Britain to create a kingdom united.

DELIVER

Brand tools

- TOV guide
- Brand values
- Iconography
- Typography

Activations

- Launch/Presentation
- Pop-up
- Road/ToV
- Flag
- Currency
- Visa stamp
- Passport

BRITISHNESS

NOUN

THE QUALITY OF BEING
BRITISH OR OF HAVING
CHARACTERISTICS REGARDED
AS TYPICALLY BRITISH.

A DIVIDED NATION

WHY ARE BRITS NOT PROUD?

Recent research shows that pride in British identity is declining. "Britishness" now feels outdated to many. Political events such as Brexit and dissatisfaction with the government, alongside rising awareness of inequality, systemic racism, colonial legacies and climate inaction all have contributed to this decline, particularly with Gen Z.

National Centre for
Social Research, 2024

49%

of people said they would rather
be a citizen of Britain than any
other country

falling from

62%

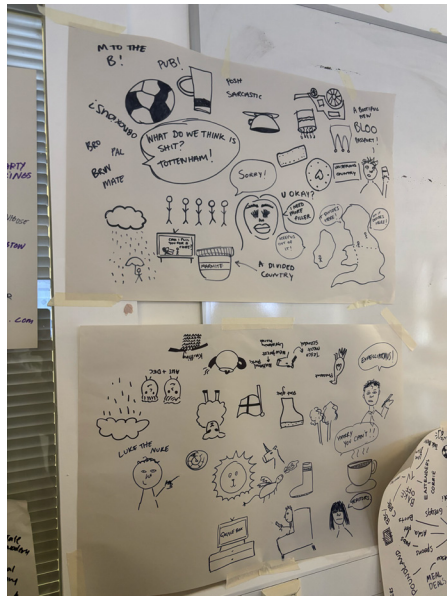
in 2013



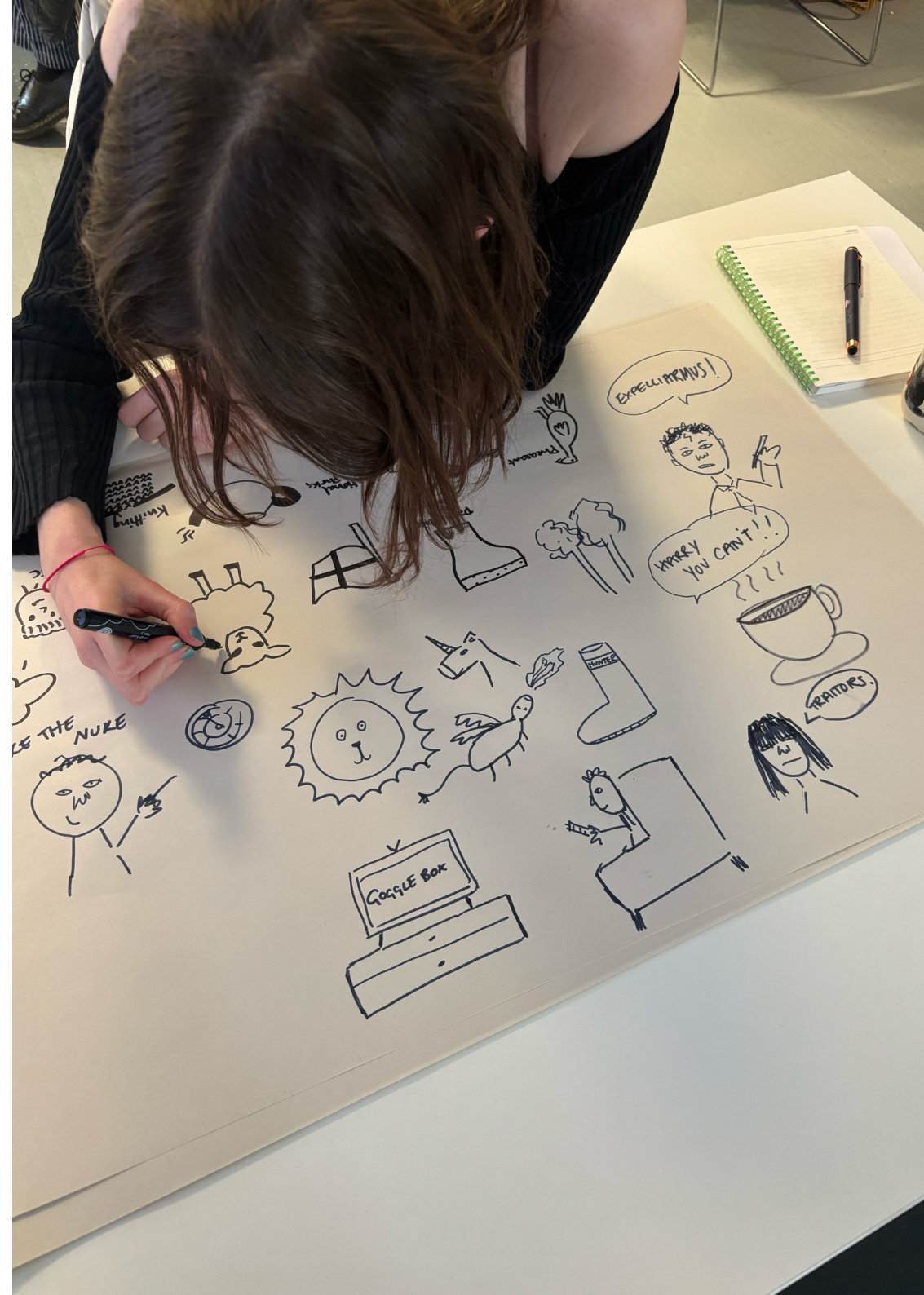
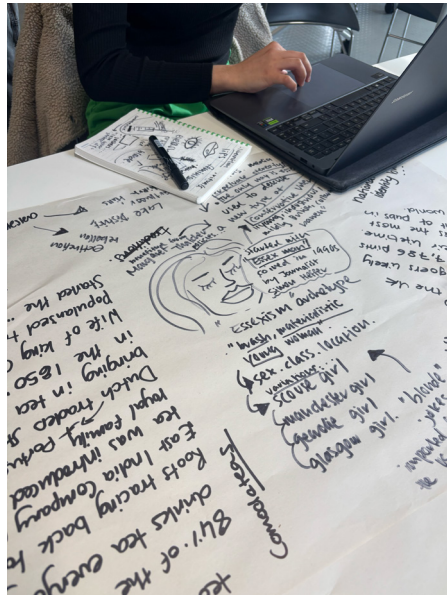
INITIAL WORKSHOPS

EXPLORING THE BRIEF & GENERATING IDEAS

I attended workshops to visually map out themes connected to British identity. Through sketching and conversation, we explored cultural symbols related to the UK. This helped to identify recurring ideas and stereotypes, which shaped the direction of my research.



Exploring themes within the nation.



FLAG MAKING

IDENTIFYING MY 'TRIBE'

During a workshop, I was asked to create a flag representing a British tribe. Unsure of my direction at the time, I experimented with flags for both the UK's 'party people' and the 'Essex girl'. I chose to continue with the Essex girl as it felt more visually distinctive and offered more to explore in terms of identity and stereotype.



Party flag.



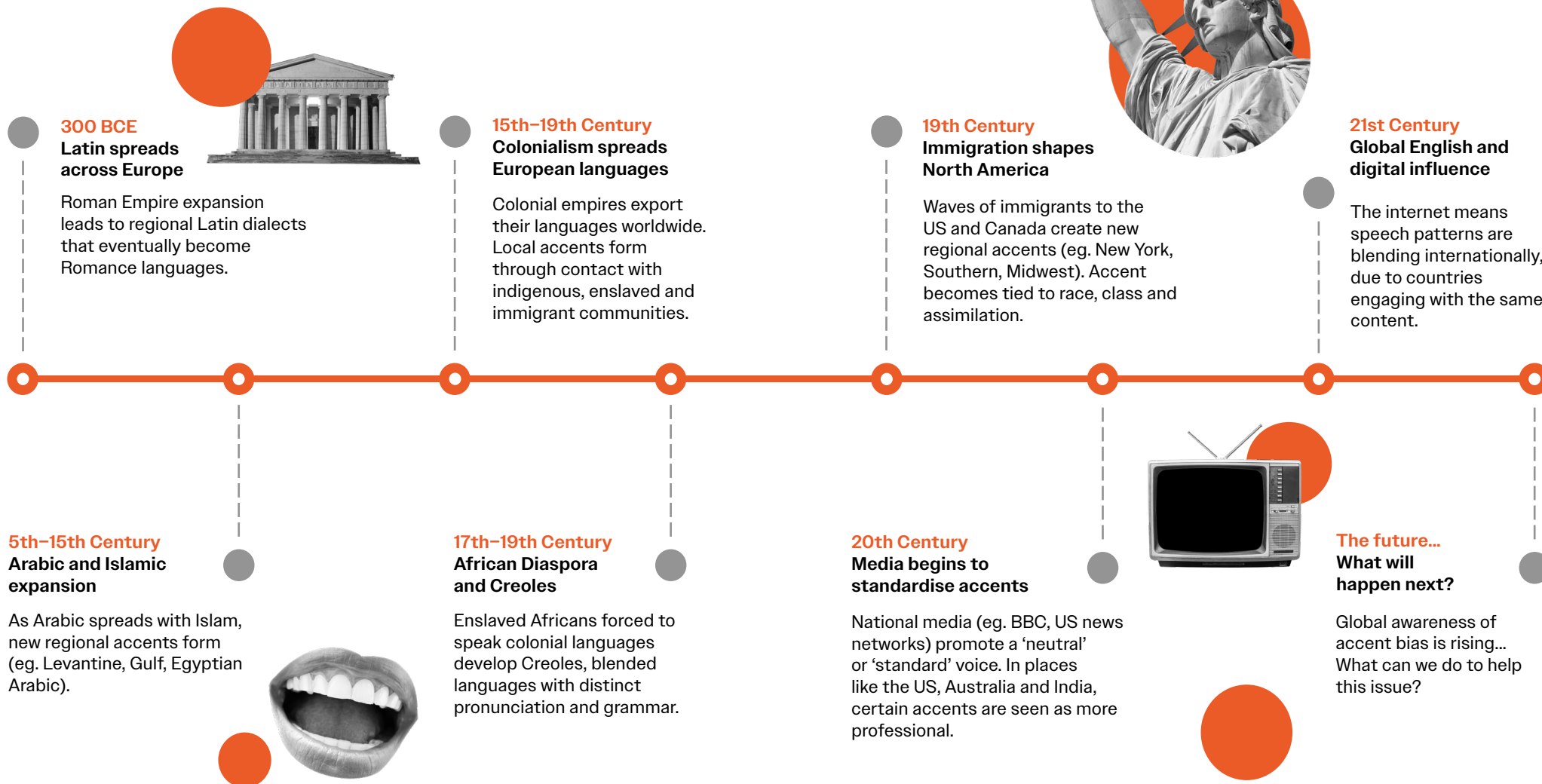
Flag exploring essex girl stereotypes.

**“IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR AN
ENGLISHMAN TO OPEN HIS
MOUTH WITHOUT MAKING SOME
OTHER ENGLISHMAN HATE OR
DESPISE HIM.”**

- GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

HISTORY & CULTURE

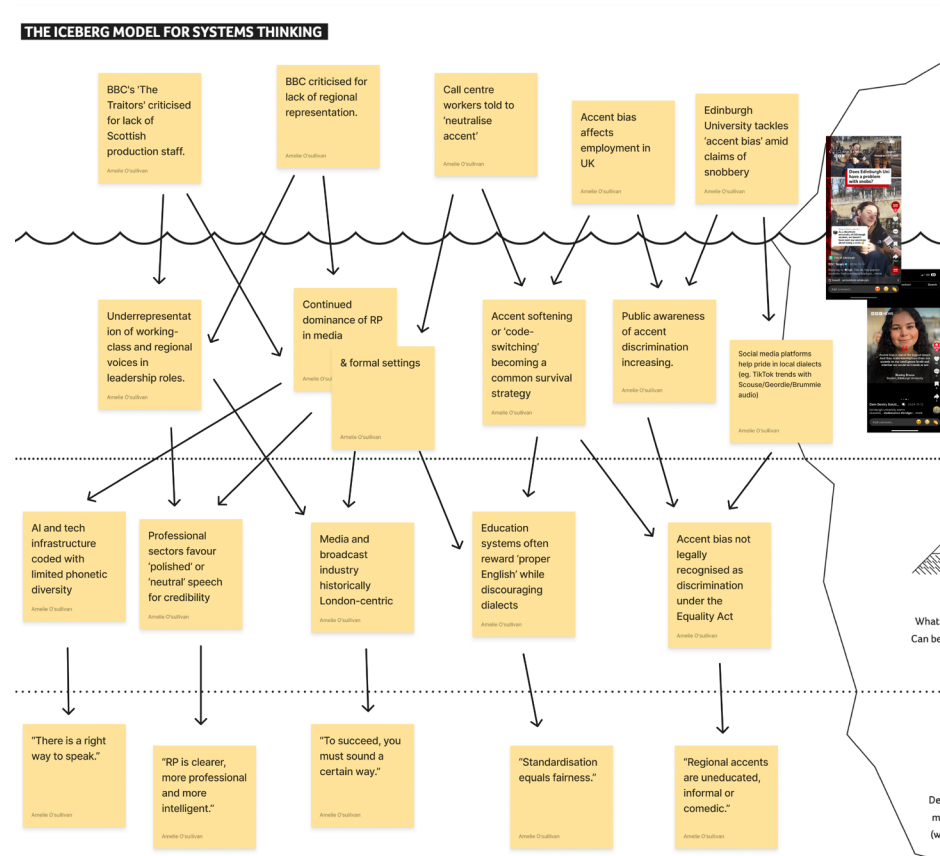
HOW HAVE ACCENTS SPREAD GLOBALLY?



ICEBERG MODEL

LOOKING PAST THE SURFACE OF ACCENT BIAS

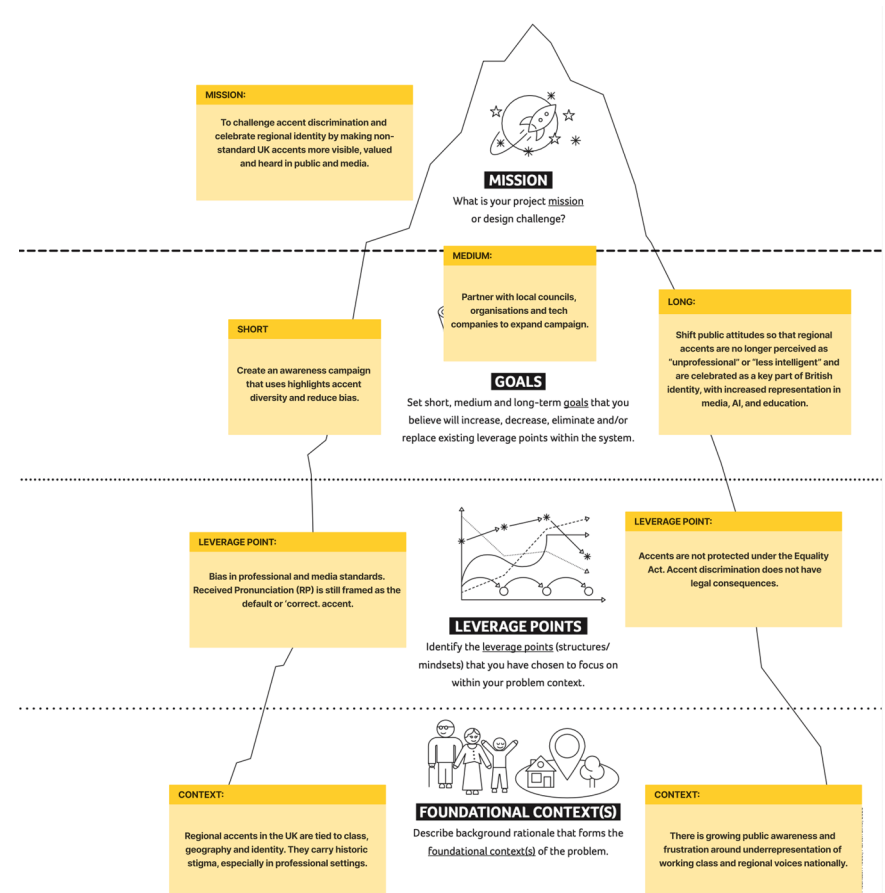
I used the iceberg model to explore the deeper systems, beliefs and structures within the UK that sustain accent bias in the UK.



MOUNTAIN MODEL

DEFINING THE INTENTION OF THE BRIEF

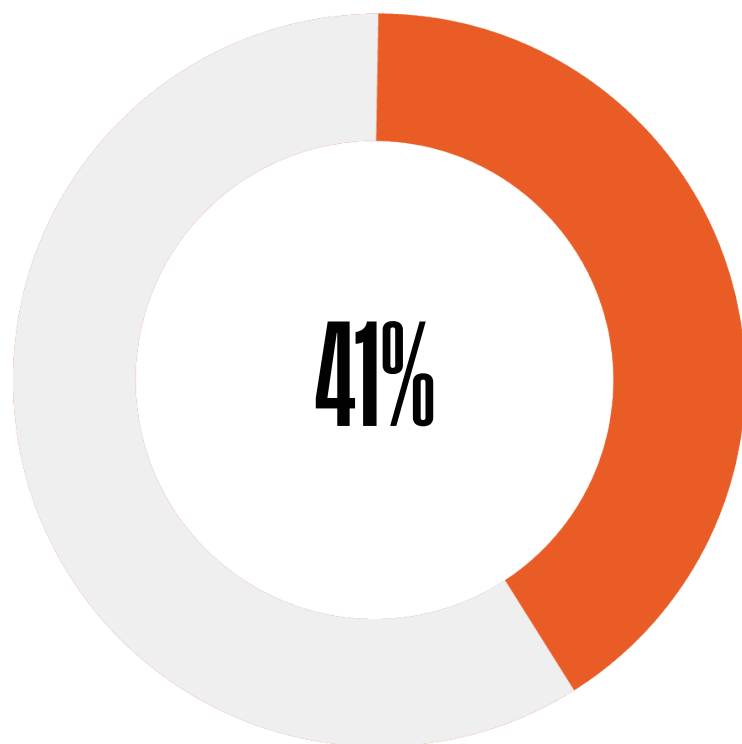
The mountain model helped me define the intention of my brief by identifying the foundational contexts and pinpointing leverage points that could create impactful change.



ACCENT BIAS

WHO IN THE UK IS AFFECTED?

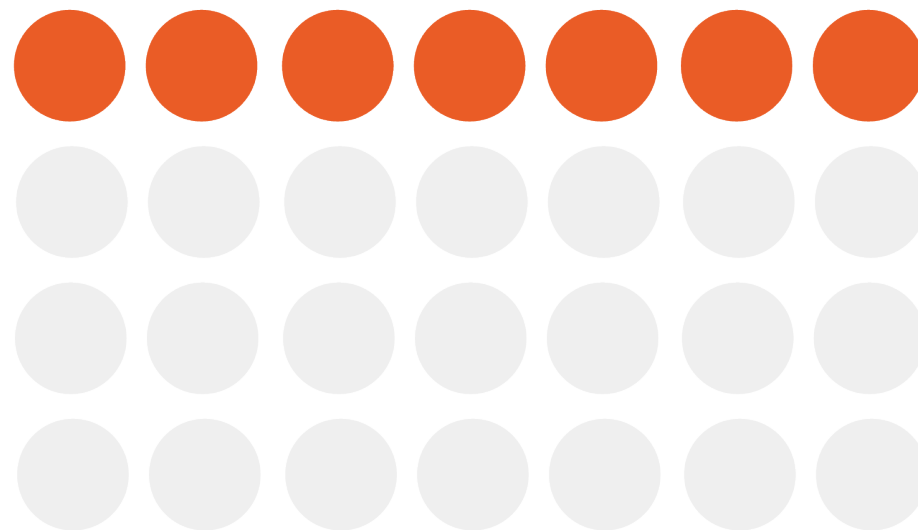
41% of students from the north see their accent as a barrier to success.



HOW CAN I USE THESE INSIGHTS?

- Amplify underrepresented regional accents.
- Redefine what a “professional voice” sounds like.
- Create spaces where accents are heard and celebrated.

25% of adults say their accent has been mocked or criticised at work.



47% of university students and 46% of adults said their accents had been singled out or mocked in social situations.



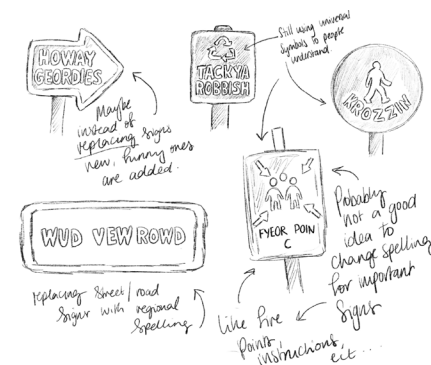
DEFINE



SPACE ANALYSIS

HOW DOES LANGUAGE SHAPE PUBLIC SPACE?

I explored how public signs shape the way we receive and understand information in the UK. Looking at both England and Wales, I noticed that while Welsh signs often include two languages, most rely on simple text and symbols for clarity. This made me question, what if accents shaped signage too? I created a prototype using spelling to reflect regional speech.



Sketches.



Prototype.

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

A CREATIVE WORKSHOP

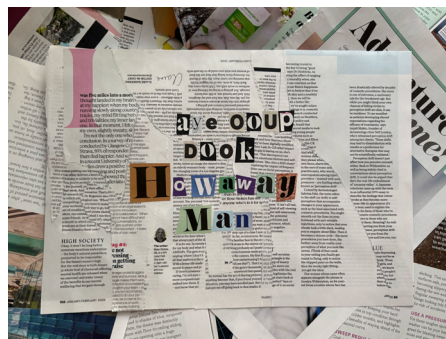
This project focuses on behaviour change, so I used participatory design to shape the campaign. In a workshop with Tash, a 20 year old student with a Northern accent, she created a collage showing her vision for a campaign that celebrates accents. As we spoke, I designed a visual alongside her, based on her experiences and ideas.



Tash's finished visual.



Tash creating her campaign visual.



My finished visual.

“I WANTED TO SHOW HOW FRUSTRATING IT IS WHEN PEOPLE ACT LIKE YOU’RE NOT MAKING SENSE JUST BECAUSE OF YOUR ACCENT. THE WORDS ON THIS [VISUAL] DON’T FORM A PROPER SENTENCE. THAT’S HOW IT FEELS WHEN PEOPLE DON’T TRY TO UNDERSTAND YOU.” – TASH

INITIAL EXPERIMENTS

EXPLORING TYPOGRAPHY

I began experimenting with how type could visually represent a dialect through spelling, font size and font weight, inspired by my participatory design led workshop and sign prototype. I used Shakespearean quotes as my copy write for this and the variable font 'fixture'.

THERE IS
NUFFINK
EEVAH GOOD
OR BAD, BUT
FINKIN'
MAKES IT SO

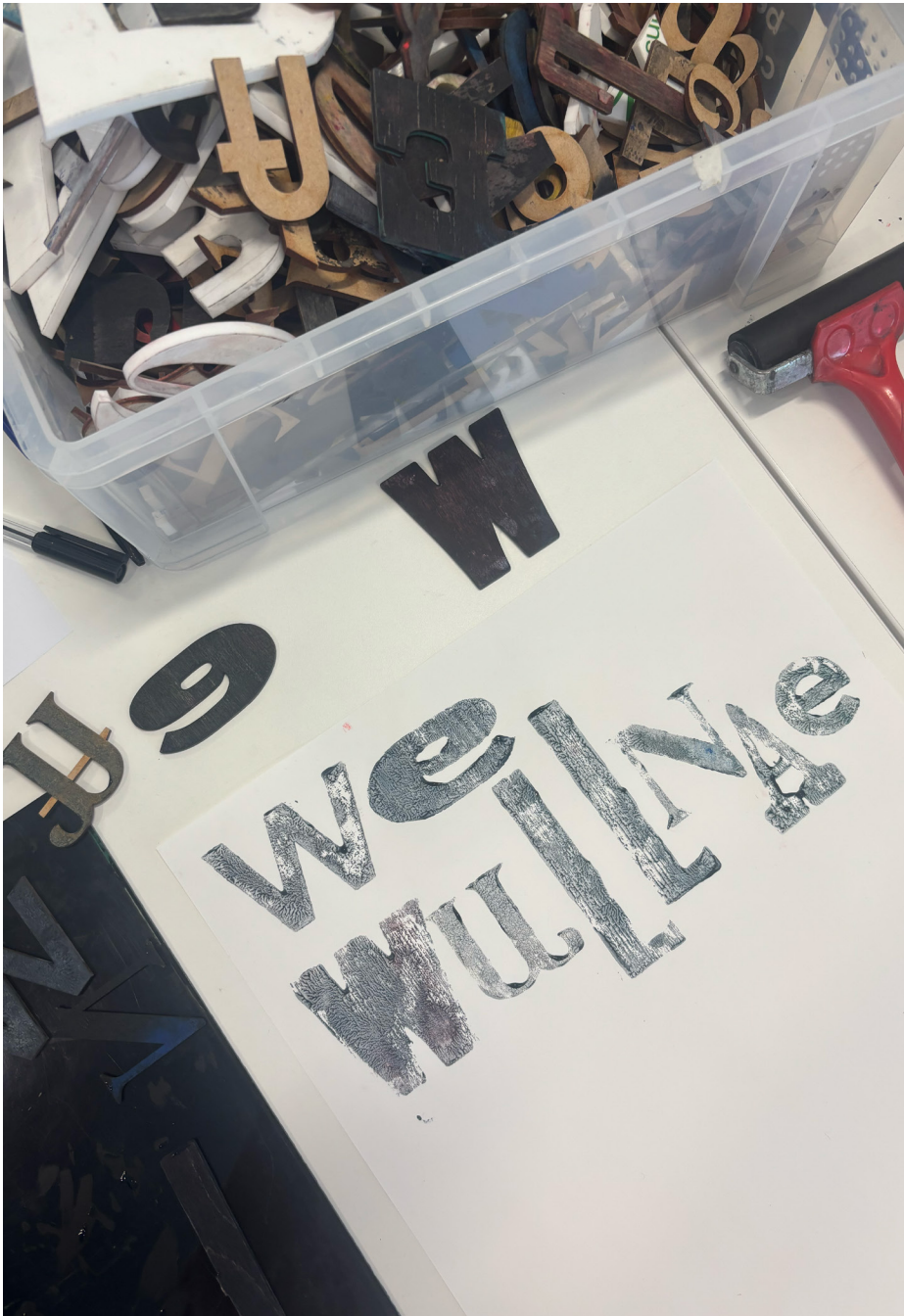
Essex accent.

LUV AWWL,
TRUST A
FEW, DO
RONG T'
NUN

Welsh accent.

TUH BEE
ER NOT TUH
BEE, THA IZ
DEH KWES
CHUN
WILYUM SHAKZPEEUH

I used motion to explore how type could represent accents through font or spelling. These are frames from various videos/GIFs exploring how type could react to regional sound.



Making a physical version of my accent posters.



Exploring stretch.



Exploring rhythm.



Exploring typeface.



Exploring spelling.

INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWING POTENTIAL TARGET USERS

To understand the effects of accent bias, I interviewed Cara, 22, from Cardiff, Wales.



How would you describe your accent?

"A mix, I guess. I grew up in Cardiff, so I have a mostly Welsh accent, but my dad's Italian and I've always spoken English at home to my parents. Its just me, my sister and my friends who communicate in Welsh. My accent has never sounded 100% Welsh or totally English. Whenever I'm on holiday people hear me and go 'English!,' but I'm like no no! I'm Welsh! It's very different."

How do you feel about your voice or the way you speak?

"Honestly? It depends. At home I never thought twice about it, but since moving to London I've definitely become more aware of it. I love being Welsh I'm so proud, but I do feel like people don't take me as seriously. People always ask me to say 'bore da' and 'hoffi coffi'. It gets so boring."

Have you ever been treated differently because of your accent?

"Not in a really obvious way, but people do that thing where they ask, 'Where are you from?' like three times. I guess it doesn't help that I don't look the most British. Or they repeat something I've said in a different tone. It makes you second guess yourself a bit."

Is there a time you felt proud of how you speak?

"Yes absolutely. When I've spoken Welsh around people who've never heard it before, people find it really cool and exciting. I feel like I'm showing a part of myself they don't expect, and I'm so proud to be Welsh."

What do you wish would change around how accents are treated?

"I wish people didn't assume intelligence based on how you sound. I think people look at me and just see Gavin and Stacy sometimes."

KEY INSIGHTS

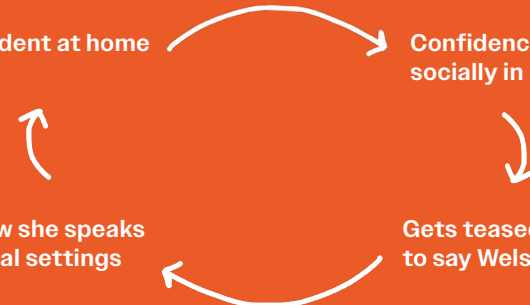
- Moving environments changes self perception
- Stereotypes are still active (Gavin & Stacey)
- Subtle bias can have big effects
- Accents can be a source of pride or power

Feeling confident at home

Confidence speaking socially in London

Changing how she speaks in Professional settings

Gets teased and asked to say Welsh words



TARGET AUDIENCE

DEFINING SPECIFIC USERS

My target audience are people with regional accents. However, here, I also consider those whose mindset helps explain why these biases still exist today.

I created a group of user personas to better understand how accent impacts identity, confidence and communication. I used the behaviour change wheel to think about their opportunities, capabilities and motivations. Whilst this is a small group, they reflect a large, diverse population across the UK that I explored in my research.



Name:
Graham

Occupation:
Retired

Age:
72

Sex:
Male

Race:
White British

Location:
Surrey

Mindset: Graham has never had to question how he speaks. He holds traditional views on what sounds "proper".

Psychological capabilities: Mentally capable but not reflective. Potential to learning new things, but it would take convincing.

Physical capabilities: Physically unfit but able to manage basic activity, low stamina.

Motivations: Graham values wisdom. He wants to feel that he still has something to offer, especially to younger generations.

Opportunities: Intergenerational projects, public design interventions, storytelling or heritage based campaigns that explore how language evolves.

Graham reflects an older generation, who believe RP is 'proper'.



Name:
Cara

Occupation:
Post Grad
looking for
work

Age:
22

Sex:
Female

Race:
White, Half
Italian, Half
Welsh

Location:
Cardiff &
London

Mindset: Cara is used to changing how she speaks to be taken seriously.

Psychological capabilities: Emotionally intelligent and highly self-aware, but prone to internal doubt.

Physical capabilities: Physically very fit, runs and goes to the gym.

Motivations: She wants to connect and feel like she belongs in both professional and social spaces. Shes looking for validation.

Opportunities: Access to everyday supportive environments, potential for mentorship roles.

Cara represents young adults questioning whether their natural accent is 'professional enough.'



Name:
Amira

Occupation:
Student

Age:
17

Sex:
Female

Race:
South Asian

Location:
Manchester

Mindset: Amira is confident at home, but holds back in school after being teased for her accent.

Psychological capabilities: She's emotionally aware but tends to hold back. Her confidence is easily lost through judgment or teasing.

Physical capabilities: Fully physically able and energetic. Comfortable using her voice when she feels safe.

Motivations: Wants to feel heard without changing herself. She's driven by seeing people like her celebrated.

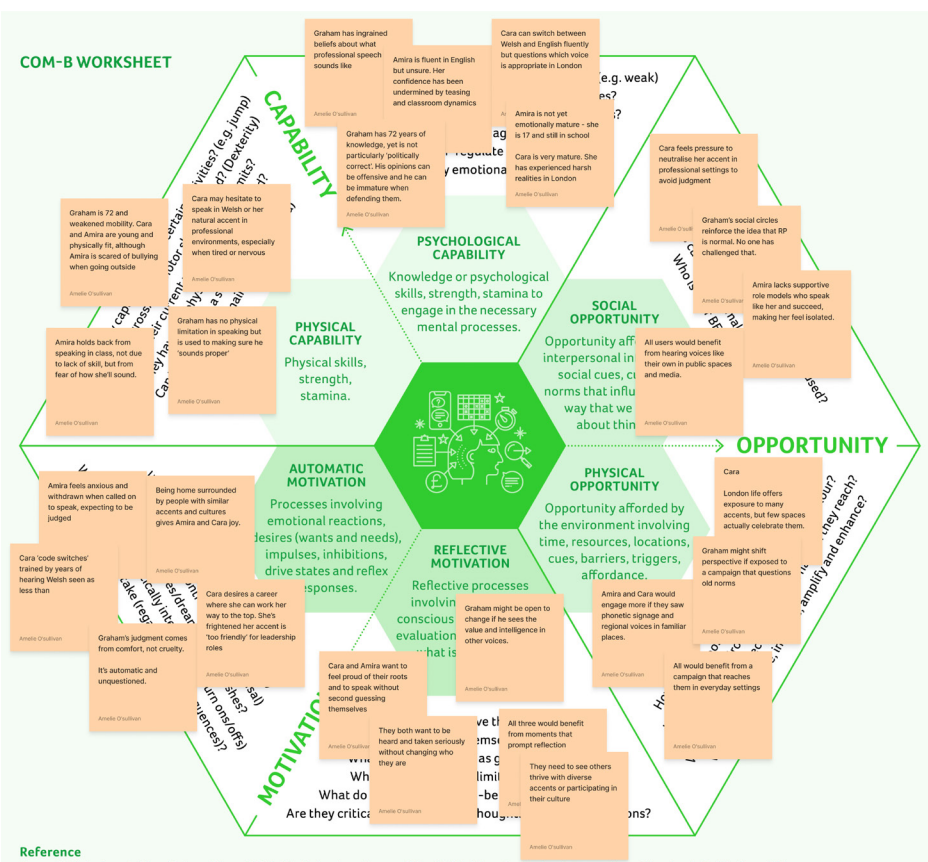
Opportunities: Supportive peer environments, creative platforms and campaigns that normalise accent diversity.

Amira represents those balancing cultural identity and younger voices growing up with strong regional accents.

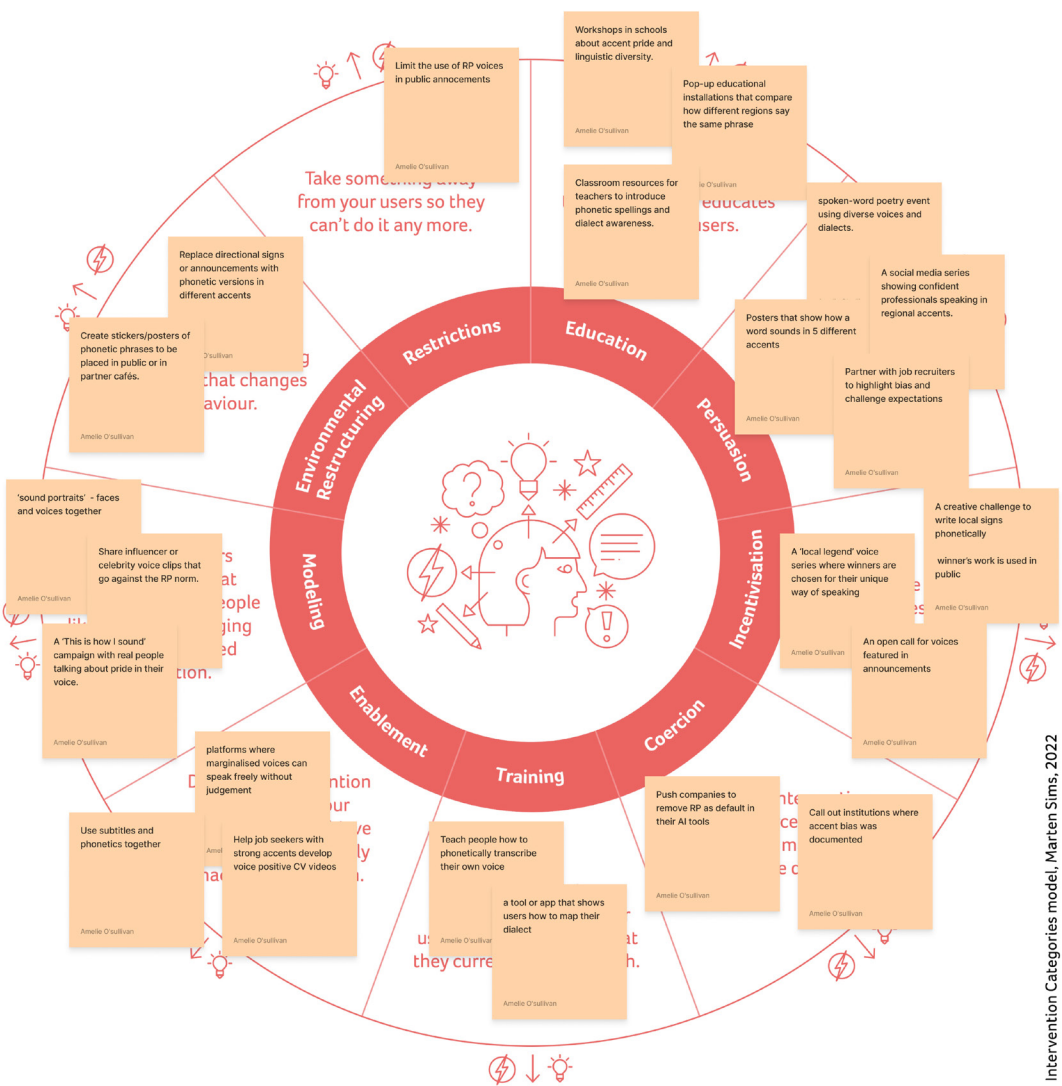
THEORIES

USING THEORIES TO IDEATE

After my research and defining my target users, I used different theories/models/strategies to begin the ideation process. I used the COM-B worksheet to explore my users behaviour, then used this as reference when using the intervention categories model.



COM-B model



Using the intervention categories model to develop multiple initial ideas.

DEVELOP



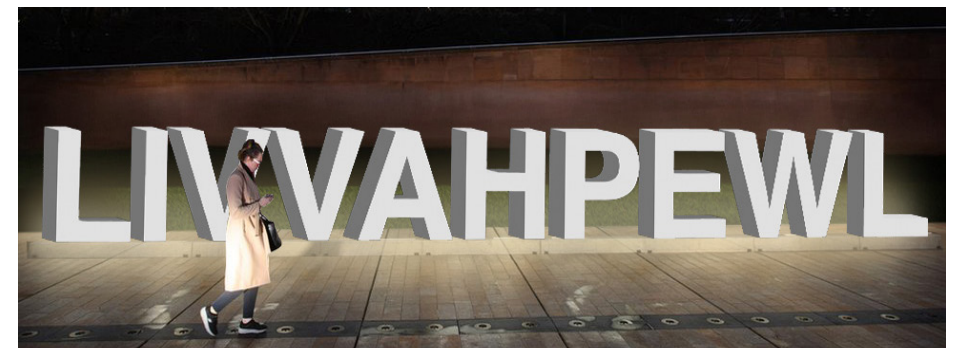
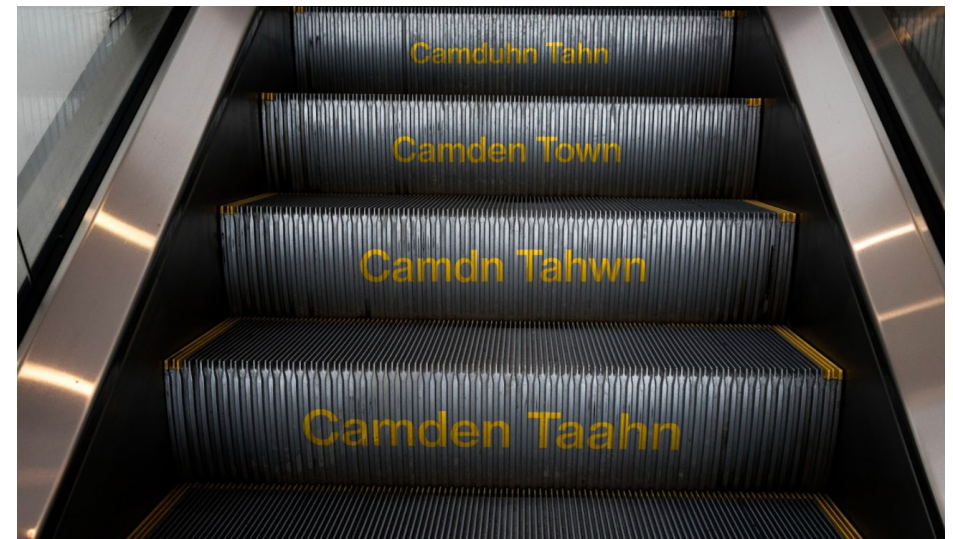
IDEA ONE

EXPLORING ACCENTS THROUGH SPELLING

This idea creates a phonetic typography system that makes Britain's diverse accents visible, celebrating linguistic differences rather than reinforcing stereotypes. This could be applied to signage, public spaces and branding to help people appreciate the variety of ways Britain speaks.



Initial sketches.

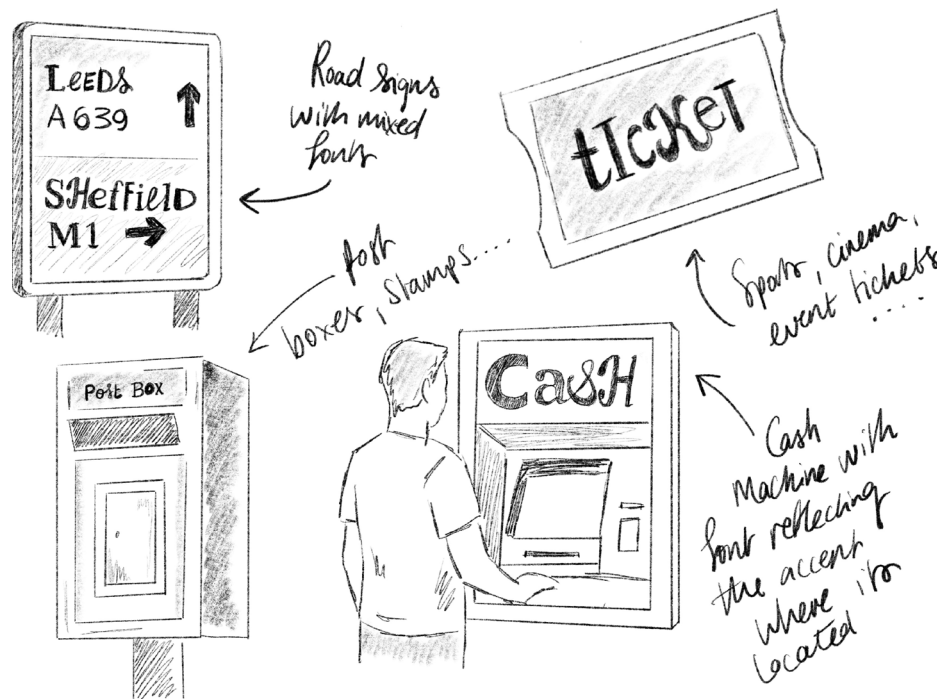


Replacing signage with type spelt according to the regions accent.

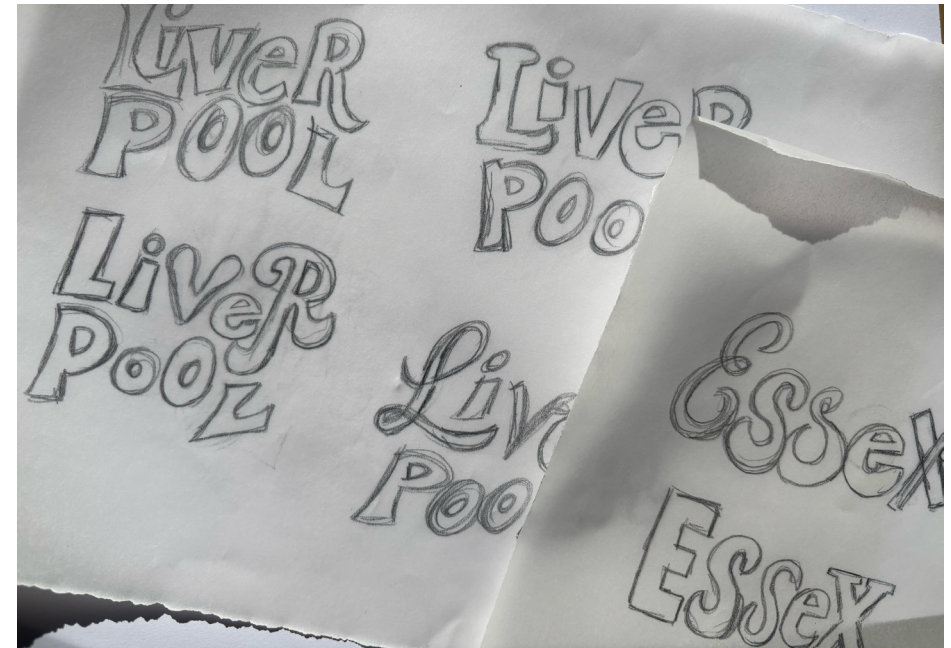
IDEA TWO

EXPLORING ACCENTS THROUGH TYPEFACE

Accents don't just sound different, they feel different. This idea creates a regional font system where each area has a typeface influenced by its history/accent, yet all work together in one visual identity. This system would appear in signage, branding and national campaigns, reflecting a Britain that is diverse, but united.



Initial sketches.



Using tracing paper to combine fonts, reflecting the regions accent and identity.



Logo design using mismatched fonts.



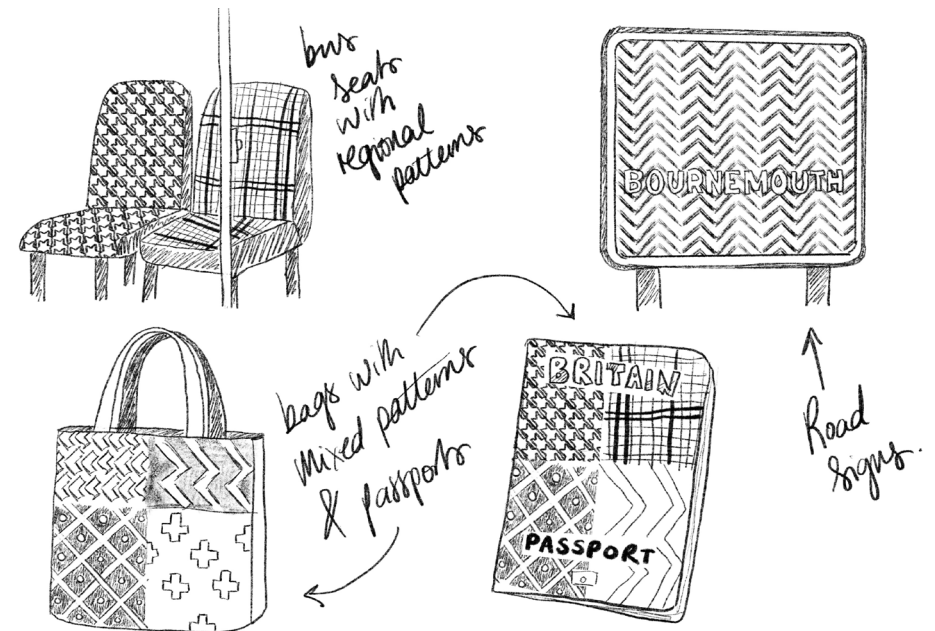
IDEA THREE

EXPLORING IDENTITY THROUGH TEXTILES

This route uses textiles to mirror the texture of UK accents; woven with rhythm and history. Just as accents vary by region, so do textiles across the UK (like Scottish tartan or English houndstooth). I've combined regionally designed patterns with international ones to reflect the global influences shaping UK accents today. This was inspired by my deep dive into the history of accents and how they're currently blending due to the internet. The mixed visuals reflect how accents clash, blend and evolve.



Applying the type in public spaces.



Initial sketches.



Mixing African mudcloth pattern with Scottish Tartan. Physical prototype.



Mixing traditional African patterns with Scottish Argyle. Digital design.



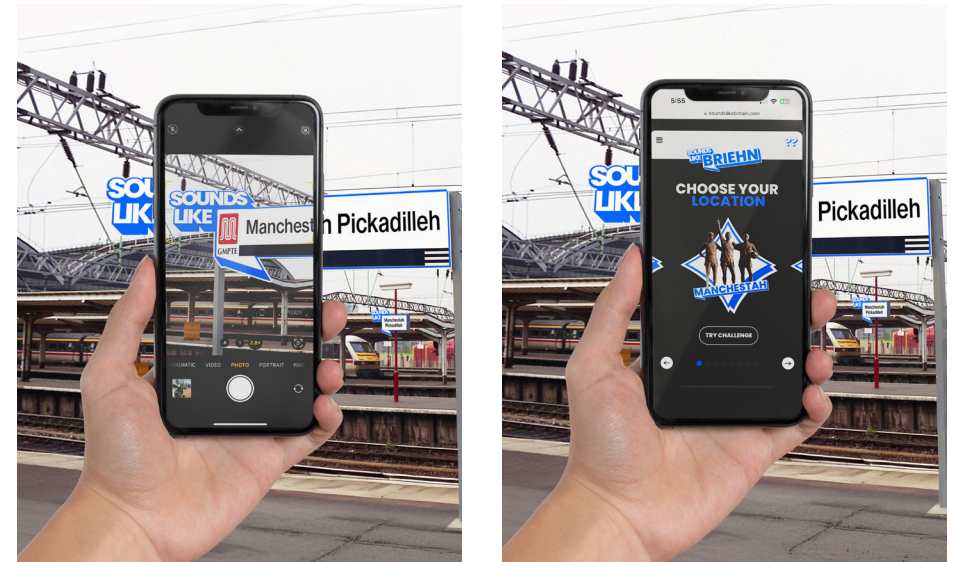
Applying the brand pattern in public spaces.



Logo design using negative space to create traditional British textile patterns.



Sounds Like Britain's initial logo designs. The spelling of Britain changes depending on the region where it is featured.



My first version of a Sounds Like Britain website, where the user can scan signs to play accent related games.



Initially I planned to include a podcast in this campaign, however I decided not to continue with this.

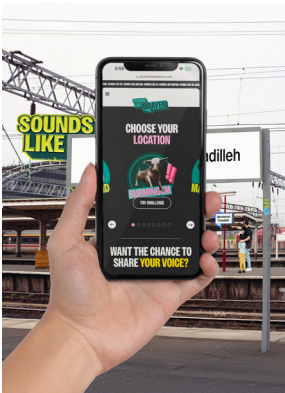
REDESIGNING

CHANGING BRAND COLOURS AND TYPE

I didn't like how corporate the branding was beginning to feel, so I redesigned the logo with a different, brighter colour palette and a friendlier font.



Changing my previous designs.



Sticker designs to support the brands identity.

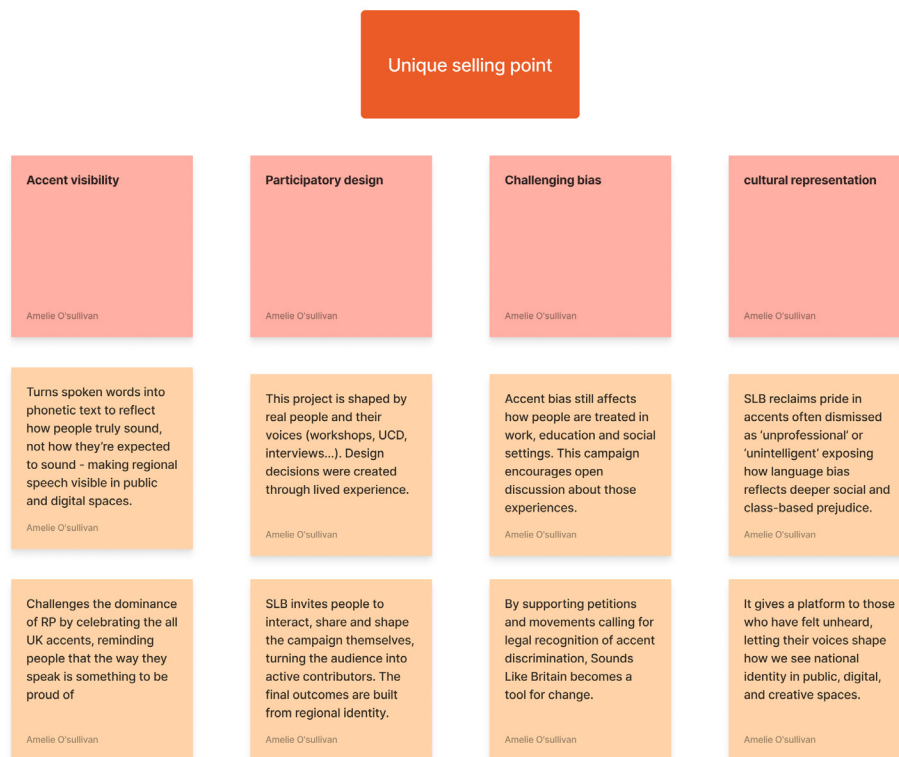


All signs with accent led type are framed within the Sounds like Britain logo and brand marks.

THE FINAL IDEA

DEFINING THE USP OF THE CAMPAIGN

Sounds Like Britain is a campaign that celebrates UK regional accents by making them visible through phonetic text and interactive design. It challenges accent bias and is shaped by participatory design through real voices. The goal is to empower people to feel proud of how they speak and criminalise accent discrimination.

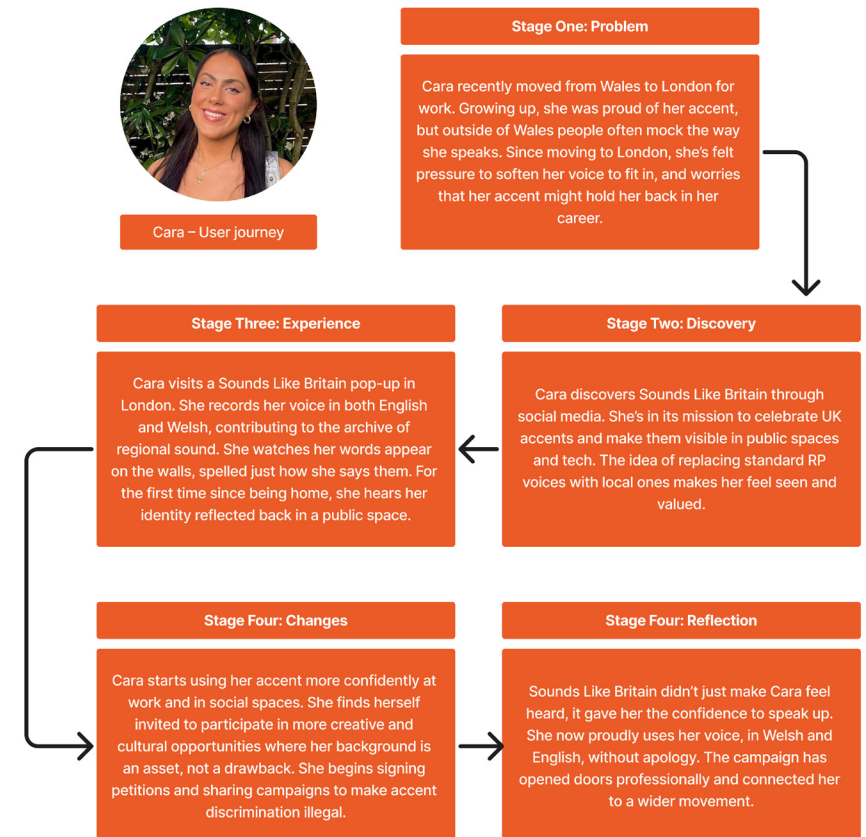


Finalising my idea through defining the USP of the campaign.

USER JOURNEY

HOW WILL THIS HELP USERS?

Sounds Like Britain helps users feel seen and heard by celebrating the way they naturally speak, as the campaign challenges outdated biases and encourages pride in identity. For people like Cara, it not only boosts confidence but also opens up opportunities.



Cara's user journey.

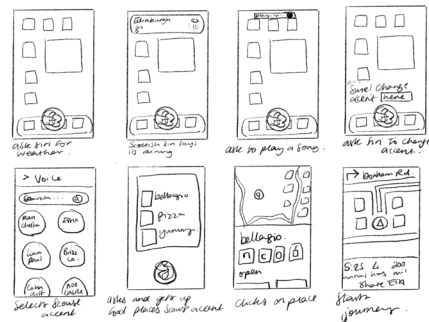
COLLABORATIONS

EMBEDDING THE BRAND INTO EVERYDAY TECH

To respond to the presentation feedback, I made a short video showing how Sounds Like Britain could collaborate with Siri and Google Maps. Hearing regional voices like Scouse and Scottish in familiar tech helps challenge the idea that RP is the standard for success.



A still from the final video.



Storyboard.

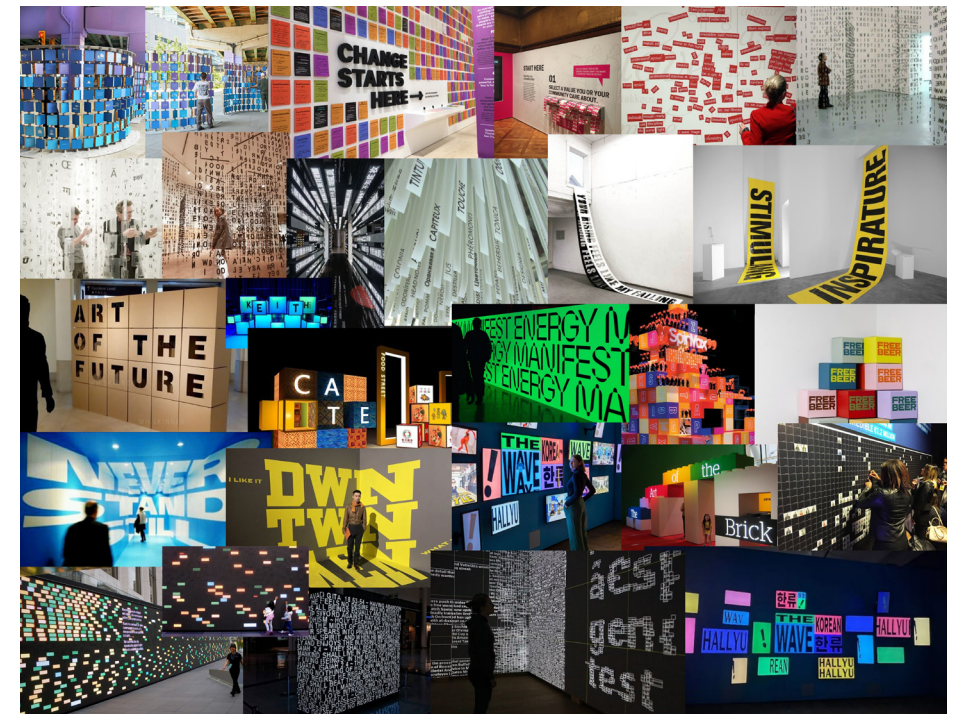


Making the animations in after effects. Premier pro was used to add sound.

EXHIBITION SPACES

INSPIRATION

I created a mood board of exhibition spaces or installations that involve type to gather visual inspiration before designing my own. I love the bright colours in a lot of these, as its similar to the brand identity I have designed, as well as the interactive element of them.



Moodboard of ideas.


```

function preload() {
  ukMap = loadImage('mapuk.png');
}
function setup() {
  let c = createCanvas(1200,
    windowHeight);
  textAlign(CENTER);
  textSize(14);

  baseScale = width / ukMap.width;
  scaleFactor = baseScale;
  offsetX = (width - ukMap.width *
    baseScale) / 2;

  let mic = new p5.AudiIn();
  mic.start();
  recorder = new p5.SoundRecorder();
  recorder.setInput(mic);
}

```

- A section of code from the UK map visual. This section places the image of the map and sets up mic audio for recording.

To try this code please visit:

https://editor.p5js.org/epic_ams/full/9RObMHA7

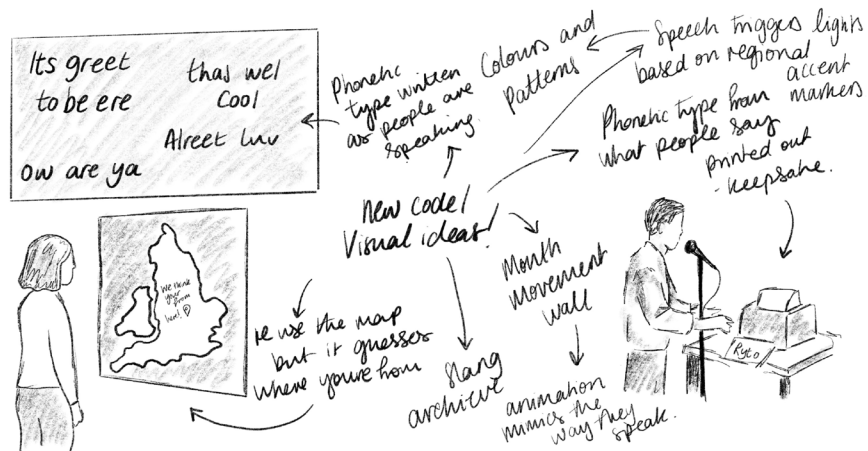
Search Google Maps



RETHINKING...

CODING NEW DESIGNS

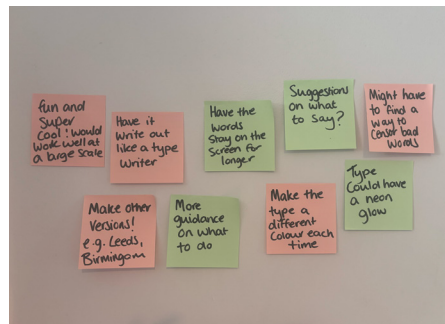
Although user testing went well and the idea was received as fun and engaging, I felt it didn't leave a strong enough impression. I decided to explore a new direction that would better communicate the message and visually represent the idea of voice.



Idea generating



User testing.

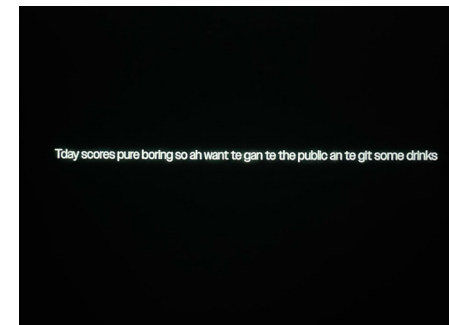


User feedback

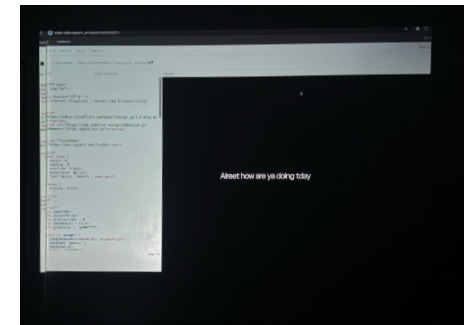
My final idea for the exhibition is an interactive space that visualises regional voices through phonetic text and sound. It invites people to see and hear how the UK really speaks, challenging ideas of what a 'normal' or 'professional' voice sounds like. This idea ties into the campaign more effectively, as it builds on the use of phonetic spellings already seen in the signage. It keeps the brand's purpose consistent, while also creating a stronger visual impact than my earlier design concepts.



To try this code please visit: https://editor.p5js.org/epic_ams/full/tmitq2ITU



Testing how the visuals would look projected.



BRAND ELEMENTS

PROTOTYPING STICKERS AND BADGES

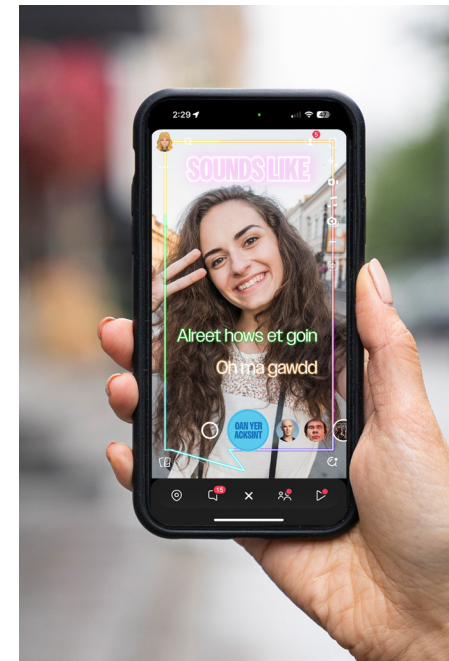
To support the branding I digitally designed, I made stickers and badges that would be given out at Sounds Like Britain events. They're a way for users to show they're part of the campaign and also help signal that the sign changes are intentional, not mistakes.



SOCIAL MEDIA

CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA FILTERS

To appeal to younger users, I have made a social media page and a filter to use as part of the campaign. The filter lets people record themselves speaking and see their words pop up on screen in their accent, just like the installation, but right on their phone. It's a way to make the idea more shareable and playful.



The social media filter in situ.



- Cash machine
- Telephone box



- Exhibition entrance
- Inside exhibition



- Cardiff train sign
- Manchester train sign

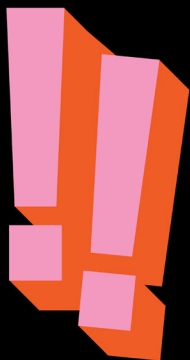
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SHOUT.

**LOUD.
PROUD.
LOCAL.**



**SPEAK
UP!**

**SOUNDS
LIKE US.**

**OAN YER
ACKSINT**

**OOWN YAH
AKSCENT**

**SPEAK
UP!**

**SOUNDS
LIKE
BRITAIN**

**SOUNDS
LIKE US.**

**OAN YER
ACKSINT**

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