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Contact, the feature pool and the speech community: The emergence of Multicultural London English

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Abstract

In Northern Europe's major cities, new varieties of the host languages are emerging in the multilingual inner cities. While some analyse these 'multiethnolects' as youth styles, we take a variationist approach to an emerging 'Multicultural London English' (MLE), asking: (1) what features characterise MLE? (2) at what age(s) are they acquired? (3) is MLE *vernacularised*? (4) when did MLE emerge, and what factors enabled its emergence? We argue that innovations in the diphthongs and the quotative system are generated from the specific sociolinguistics of inner-city London, where at least half the population is undergoing *group second-language acquisition* and where high linguistic diversity leads to a *feature pool* to select from. We look for *incrementation* (Labov) in the acquisition of the features, but find this only for two 'global' changes, BE LIKE and GOOSE-fronting, for which adolescents show the highest usage. Community-internal factors explain the age-related variation in the remaining features.

Key words: multiethnolects, youth language, language contact, new dialect formation, London English
Running title: Multicultural London English

Dans certaines villes importantes de l'Europe de Nord, on observe l'émergence de nouvelles variétés de la langue hôte dans les quartiers multilingues. Tandis que certains ont analysé ces variétés « multiethniques » comme appartenant au langage des jeunes, nous adoptons ici une approche variationniste pour analyser une telle variété émergente à Londres, que nous appelons « Multicultural London English » (MLE), en nous posant les questions suivantes : (1) quels traits structuraux caractérisent le MLE ?; (2) à quel(s) âge(s) sont-ils acquis ?; (3) le MLE est-il « vernacularisé » ?; (4) à quel moment le MLE est-il apparu/a-t-il vu le jour, et quels facteurs lui ont permis à émerger? Nous soutenons que les innovations dans les diphtongues et le système du discours rapporté résultent de la situation sociolinguistique spécifique des quartiers multilingues et déshérités de Londres, où au moins 50 pour cent de la population acquiert l'anglais comme langue seconde « au sauvage » avec des amis, et où la grande diversité linguistique entraîne un réservoir de traits linguistiques (« feature pool ») hétérogène. En ce qui concerne l'acquisition des traits, nous ne trouvons le phénomène labovien d'incrémentation que pour deux changements globaux (BE LIKE et l'avancement de la voyelle en GOOSE), ces deux formes nouvelles étant les plus fréquentes chez les adolescents. Pour les autres traits linguistiques, la variation selon l'âge des locuteurs s'explique plutôt par des facteurs internes à la communauté.

1. New language varieties in the inner city: language contact and group second-language acquisition

In a number of European cities, the latter part of the twentieth century has seen the emergence of new, distinct varieties of the host languages in multilingual, working-class neighbourhoods. A considerable amount of research in Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Great Britain has focused broadly on adolescent ways of talking in these neighbourhoods, applying a range of approaches reflecting not just particular research interests, but also the complexity and multidimensionality of the phenomenon. One major thrust deals with the new varieties as 'lects' which can be described linguistically in relation to the majority language (Wiese 2009), while others avoid reifying the varieties by adopting a quantitative variationist methodology to the speech communities concerned, focusing on individual features (Cheshire and Fox 2009). Others investigate the new varieties qualitatively, preferring to see them as either practices or repertoires, consisting of individual features which are deployed strategically in conversation management and identity projection (Svendsen and Røyneland 2008; Quist 2008).

How can we describe these new ways of speaking? How did they come into existence? We are clearly talking about new contact varieties, though in doing so we are inevitably idealising, because they are less homogeneous than either 'dialects' or 'sociolects' are assumed to be, and they are in any case to varying extents context bound and (to the extent that they are 'youth languages') transient. That said, within any one location these varieties are recognisable to local people, even if naming practices are rather uncertain. For example, the German term *Kiezdeutsch* ('neighbourhood German') was first used in print by Wiese (2006), adopting a term used by speakers (Wiese, p.c. 2011), referring to multiethnic youth language in Germany. From this academic usage, it was subsequently taken up by the media (Androutsopoulos 2007: 127–8). On the other hand, the term *Jafaican*, used to refer to youth language in multiethnic parts of London and beyond, most likely has media origins and is strongly associated with hip-hop; it is likewise not essentially a 'members' concept', young people preferring the word 'slang' to characterise their way of speaking. The term *rinkebysvenska*, referring to the Swedish characteristic of multiethnic districts of Stockholm and named after one such district, Rinkeby, shows a third pattern: it is an academic coinage, by Kotsinas (1988). In all three countries, the language varieties and their labels are to differing extents part of public discourse.

Despite the differences in naming, there are increasing indications that these varieties have become the unmarked Labovian 'vernacular' for many speakers, and that it is this that older people are reacting to when they claim that young Londoners, for example, sound as if they are 'talking black'. The term that has gained some acceptance among linguists is *multiethnolect*, originally coined by Clyne (2000), and we use this here, with due caution.

The reasons for the emergence of European multiethnolects at this point in history is presumably linked to specific types of community formation in urban areas which have seen very large-scale immigration from developing countries. People of different language backgrounds have settled in already quite underprivileged neighbourhoods, and economic deprivation has led to the maintenance of close kin and neighbourhood ties. Castells (2000) writes of prosperous metropolises containing communities such as these: 'It is this distinctive feature of being globally connected and locally disconnected, physically and socially, that makes mega-cities a new urban form'.

In these communities, there is often a rapid shift to the majority language by the children of the migrants, possibly accelerated by the fact that there are a large number of languages spoken in areas without strong residential segregation. Because majority-language speakers may be in a minority in parts of these districts, the availability of local, native models of the majority language is weaker than elsewhere. This means that the majority language may be acquired from other second-language speakers. This scenario is similar to the kinds of community language shift which took place in Ireland and elsewhere (Hickey 2006), with the difference that it is a minority population that is shifting (albeit often as a majority at neighbourhood level), and that the group that is shifting is linguistically heterogeneous. This makes the scenario an example of what Winford (2003: 235) calls 'group second language acquisition', or shift-induced interference (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 75), where minority linguistic groups form part of a larger host community and acquire the target language mainly through unguided informal second language acquisition in their friendship groups. Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 43) argue that if the minority group learners are well integrated into the host community, they may initiate linguistic changes by using forms resulting from their imperfect learning of the target language. Given suitable sociocultural conditions, these forms may then be taken up by native speakers. However, our work in London suggests that although speakers from minority groups may spearhead some linguistic changes, this is not necessarily the result of imperfect learning (Cheshire, Fox, Kerswill and Torgersen 2008).

Our research stems from two recent research projects, which we describe in more detail in section 3: The *Linguistic Innovators* project[1] and the *Multicultural London English* project.[2] Based on this research, this article asks the overarching question: "What are the sociodemographic and linguistic dynamics underlying the emergence of new varieties of English in inner-city London at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries?" We use the term 'Multicultural London English' (MLE) to refer to the overall range of distinctive language features used in multiethnic areas of London, conceptualising MLE as a repertoire of features. We take a quantitative, variationist view, analysing selected features from phonology, morphosyntax and discourse and thereby avoiding unnecessary labelling (as a 'lect' or 'variety'). We will argue that language contact is an important

determining factor in the emergence of MLE, though the number of languages that are in contact in inner London makes it unlikely that there is direct language transfer from any one language to English.

2. Speech community change: transmission, incrementation and diffusion

Multiethnolects arise within cities which, with respect to their native populations, and despite substantial in-migration, can be considered 'speech communities', in Labov's sense:

> 'The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behavior, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage' (Labov 1972a: 120).

Within such a speech community, a primary mechanism of change is *transmission with incrementation* (Labov 2007). It is assumed that children first acquire the language of the primary caregiver (Kerswill 1996; Kerswill and Williams 2000) and then, during a period of vernacular reorganisation, focus on a new norm, driven by social forces, gradually increasing their use of the new forms. Labov explains that 'Children's incrementation of the change may take the form of increases in frequency, extent, scope, or specificity of a variable' (2007: 346). Most studies assume that 17 is the age at which the increases level off, leading to the 'adolescent peak' at this age. Much of the evidence in Labov (2001) points to peaks in late adolescence, but in Labov (2007) he does not refer to a specific age. Not all variables show a peak, but where there is a peak it is around 16 or older. Tagliamonte and D'Arcy (2009) point out that 17 is the age at which people's phonologies stabilise (p. 70), and that this is reflected in age at which the peak occurs.

In terms of what it is that increases, most research on incrementation investigates phonological change in the sense of gradual, sub-phonemic phonetic shifts conditioned by phonological and morphological factors. Thus, Labov (2001) examines the vowel system in Philadelphia, finding effects in terms of preceding and following segments which either inhibit or promote changes. Less straightforwardly identifiable are the 'increases in ... scope [,] or specificity of a variable' which may occur as part of incrementation. Phonological and morphological conditioning tend to be highly uniform within each North American city, as for example the intricate, but different patterns for the tensing of short *a*, as in *man*, *bag*, etc., in New York City and Philadelphia (Labov 1994: 430; 1989), or the fronting of the GOOSE[3] vowel which, in most US varieties, is strongly promoted by preceding coronals. These conditioning factors are generally transmitted faithfully across generations, and changes are minor – an example being the spread of Philadelphia's irregular short a pattern to more lexical items (Roberts and Labov, 1995). It is largely only when changes are adopted from

other speech communities that radical and rapid changes in conditioning occur – a crucial point which we return to shortly.

For vowels, the social-psychological mechanism for incrementation involves children detecting the direction of change in the speech community, and then carrying it forward. In the case of morphosyntactic and discourse-pragmatic features, incrementation involves changes in frequency in relation to other functionally equivalent forms. Tagliamonte's and D'Arcy's (2009) study of several morphosyntactic variables as including the grammaticalisation of the quotative BE LIKE shows increases in the frequency of newer forms at the expense of other available forms. Most of these features, including BE LIKE, show the familiar adolescent peak. Later in this article, we address the acquisition of a new quotative, *this is + speaker*, by young Londoners, as well as their use of BE LIKE.

In his (2007) study of the spread of the New York City vowel system to other cities, Labov distinguishes between community-internal change and changes which arrive from another speech community by diffusion. There is a fundamental difference in terms of how change is propagated in the two situations:

> It is proposed here that the contrast between the transmission of change within speech communities and diffusion of change across communities is the result of two different kinds of language learning. On the one hand, transmission is the product of the acquisition of language by young children. On the other hand, the limitations on diffusion are the result of the fact that most language contact takes place among adults. It follows that structural patterns are not as likely to be diffused because adults do not learn and reproduce linguistic forms, rules and constraints with the accuracy and speed that children display.
>
> (Labov 2007: 349)

As a consequence, we would expect structural change, usually in terms of simplification, to take place in cases of diffusion. Then, once a feature is accepted into a speech community, we can assume it 'goes native', and is adapted by speakers to fit the existing linguistic structure and sociolinguistic repertoire (see Britain 2002a: 618 on the local adaptation of 'global' features). Labov finds that the New York City vowel system is replicated in its most nearly intact form in cities where the founding population came overwhelmingly from the New York City area, in other words where an existing speech community had been transplanted, allowing transmission and incrementation to take effect as a continuation of those found in the original location. In cities where the system had been modified and simplified, the contacts with New York City were largely the result of steady migration leading to adult-to-adult contacts.

Both quotative BE LIKE and GOOSE-fronting are current global changes in English, and as such are features which diffuse to ever more communities (indeed, their spread is virtually complete today). The question arises, then, of the kind of adaptations they undergo. We have already seen that BE LIKE behaves like community-internal phonological features in showing a peak in adolescence, a fact which suggests, we believe, that it is not always possible, on frequency grounds alone, to distinguish between endogenous changes which are driven solely by intergenerational transmission and changes which are adopted from outside and have become nativised. Looking at the function of and constraints on BE LIKE, however, changes have been detected as the feature spreads: Buchstaller and D'Arcy (2009) show that linguistic and functional constraints on this quotative differ between American English (the source) and British and New Zealand varieties of English (whose speakers have adopted the construction). For example, in American English it is used for mimetic re-enactment far more than in the other two varieties. Buchstaller and D'Arcy see these differences as resulting from the transfer of the feature, which is heavily mediated by film, TV and the Internet, rather than arising from face-to-face contacts between young people.

Later in this article, both BE LIKE and GOOSE-fronting will be the subject of investigation within a sociolinguistic system which is itself highly characterised by both language and dialect contact. There have, in fact, been few speech community studies which explicitly allow for contact by incorporating immigrants and their descendants. An exception is Horvath's 1985 study of Sydney, comparing the Anglo-Irish (founder) population with people of Greek or Italian origin. The Greek and Italian immigrants took on well-established Australian accent features, exaggerating them. Horvath calls this variety 'Ethnic Broad', but notes that subsequent generations are in fact in the lead in reversing these features again. From this account, it is clear that there was at that time no strong move towards a Greek or Italian 'ethnolect'. In London, the position is very different, for reasons which will become apparent.

The change model advocated by Labov, comprising transmission, incrementation and diffusion, gives us a 'toolkit' with which to examine the emergence of a multiethnolect. In particular, we ask: Given that, in a high-contact community, transmission between generations may involve a stage of language shift, how do features first form and then develop? Given that these types of high-contact communities are often isolated from the mainstream for both sociocultural reasons and the economic factor of poverty, how are global changes adopted, and adapted there?

3. The London projects

London, the locale for this study, has seen in-migration throughout its history, both from Britain and abroad. The population saw a steady rise from the Middle Ages until the Second

World War. However, until 1800 it also saw the highest death rates in the country, far exceeding the birth rate. This meant that both population replacement and increase were dependent on migration, a situation which only changed at the start of the nineteenth century (Inwood, 1998: 159, 271).

The two projects we report in this article were designed to explore the language of working-class children and adolescents in London from two perspectives: (1) looking for innovations in relation to earlier descriptions of London English, as well as the extent to which young Londoners' speech forms part of regional dialect levelling in the south-east, and (2) discovering how the London multiethnolect patterns in terms of its acquisition, the use of the various features constituting it across ethnic groups, and its status as an ethnically neutral variety. In each project, young people were divided into 'Anglos' and 'non-Anglos', with the Anglo group being composed of members of families of British origin who had resided in the area for two or more generations. This corresponds roughly to 'White British' in official terminology, and we find participants occasionally using this term. This resulted in socially and demographically rather homogeneous Anglo groups, while the non-Anglo groups were (intentionally) highly mixed, roughly representing the ethnic composition of the districts where they were recruited. In the first project, which we call *Linguistic Innovators*, the inner city, represented by the multiethnic East End borough of Hackney, was compared with outer-city Havering, located at the eastern edge of London and which has a very much lower rate of immigration. In the second project, which we will refer to as *MLE* (standing for Multicultural London English), all participants were from the inner city and lived in a contiguous, multiethnic area covering parts of Islington, Haringey and Hackney. We refer to this as 'North London'. Figure 1 shows the locations of these boroughs. For the first project, the age groups were 17–19 and 70–86, for the second, 4–5, 8–9, 12–13, 16–19, c. 25 and c. 40. This last group was composed of caregivers of some of the children; as a consequence a number had not arrived in the UK until adulthood – unlike all the other participants, who were born in the UK or had arrived as pre-schoolers. Each project recorded between 120 and 130 individuals attending vocational (as opposed to academic) courses in local Further Education colleges, as well as (in the MLE project) children from a local comprehensive school, a primary school and a pre-school. These figures also include 16 elderly white working-class Londoners The older, main interviewer was a female white Londoner, while the second, younger interviewer, who recorded many of the younger children in the MLE project, was a male British Asian from Birmingham. The sociolinguistic interviews were conducted in pairs, small groups or sometimes individually. Some self-recordings were also made, but are not considered here. In total some 2.8 million words have been transcribed and stored in two databases in which the signal is aligned with the transcription at the turn level. In the remainder of this article, we discuss some of the innovations in London inner-city English, which we label MLE – with all the provisos mentioned above in relation to the term 'multiethnolect'.

4. Vowels: innovation through contact

The most striking changes in the inner-city accents lie in the diphthong system. Figure 2 shows the system of a man born in 1918.[4]

INSERT FIG. 2 ABOUT HERE

It manifests what Wells (1982: 306–310) calls diphthong shift, i.e. rising diphthongs with peripheral onsets (low for FACE and GOAT, mid-front for MOUTH and mid-back for PRICE) and long trajectories. A number of young inner-city speakers, especially non-Anglos, have a system similar to that shown in Figure 3.

INSERT FIG. 3 ABOUT HERE

As can be seen, the trajectories of FACE and GOAT are much shorter, with FACE now high-front and GOAT now high-back, while both MOUTH and PRICE have been lowered and the trajectories shortened or absent. In addition, GOOSE is characteristically very front. All the young speakers show these changes, regardless of ethnicity, but in many cases to a less extreme extent; predictors of more extreme pronunciations are male gender, non-Anglo origin and Hackney residence.

Alongside the diphthong changes, there were changes in the short vowels as well as extreme fronting of GOOSE, though in these cases the main predictor of change was speaker generation (teenage vs. elderly) with few gender or ethnic differences among the adolescents. The exceptions were the vowels of FOOT and GOOSE, with FOOT being more front and GOOSE being more retracted in the outer-city borough of Havering than in Hackney.

Together, these changes and others on the morphosyntactic and discourse levels (some of which we discuss later in the article) constitute MLE. The questions we need to answer are:

1. When did the changes we call MLE first emerge?
2. How are these changes acquired?

4.1 Roots of MLE: real-time data

To answer the first question, we need to look for evidence of a situation which is clearly prior to the emergence of MLE. Figure 4 shows the vowel systems of 11 young London Afro-Caribbeans recorded by Mark Sebba in 1981–4 when speaking 'Patois' (3(a)) and when speaking with the interviewer (3(b)). (Patois, or London Jamaican, is a recreolised variety using a number of salient Jamaican Creole features on a London English base; see Sebba 1997: 231–233.)

INSERT FIG. 4 ABOUT HERE

To obtain the 'Patois' recordings, Sebba asked pairs or threes of young people to talk in 'Patois' while discussing a topic given to them, upon which he left the room. The interviews

were conducted by Sebba with the same pairs/threes. Despite the 'set up' nature of the Patois recordings, the conversations sounded natural and unforced, while the interviews were a natural response to the setting. Because the Patois recordings were relatively short, we present composite vowel systems of the whole groups (109 tokens for 'Patois', 429 for 'interview style'). Normalisation using the Lobanov formula (Lobanov 1971) ensures comparability across all speakers. Although inter-individual variability is masked, the differences between the two styles are large and entirely in the expected directions. Thus, in Patois we see a raised FACE, back GOOSE, back and raised STRUT, open and back TRAP, and raised GOAT. In interview style, we do not see any of these values. Instead we see a 'modern' London variety with an open, but not back TRAP and a back STRUT. These are combined with a conservative front onset for MOUTH and a back onset for PRICE (resulting in the tradional London 'PRICE–MOUTH crossover' (Wells 1982)), as well as a back FOOT, shared with Patois. GOOSE is central, and not front as it is in the south-east today (Kerswill and Williams 2005).

In the early 1980s, young Afro-Caribbeans could clearly code-switch between Patois and local English. The local English itself, as evidenced by these recordings and as discussed by Sebba (1993), is clearly very much of its time, a mainstream variety of 'Cockney'.

4.2 The emergence of MLE in apparent time

The 1980s data does not suggest the existence of a multiethnolect (nor do they show evidence of an ethnolect – given that we only have data from one ethnic group). In order to establish whether there has actually been change since then, we need to consider recent data collected under similar conditions with people of similar backgrounds. In order to do this, we adopted an apparent-time methodology using several child and adolescent age groups, in a manner similar to that of Kerswill and Williams (2000) in a study of the new-town dialect of Milton Keynes. As already mentioned, in the *MLE* project we recorded individuals representing age groups from 4 to 40. These were chosen so as to take into consideration significant life-stages, those of the preschool years, early childhood, puberty, adolescence, early adulthood and mature adulthood.

With a multiethnolect, it is difficult to talk of a 'target variety', because of the high degree of variability and (quite possibly) its transient nature. However, we can operationalise the target by first presenting data from the young adult and adolescent speakers, on the assumption that they will already have acquired the new set of features characteristic of this variety. In order to make the comparison as direct as possible with Sebba's recordings, Figure 5 shows vowel data just from adolescent participants with an Afro-Caribbean heritage.

INSERT FIG. 5 ABOUT HERE

There is a high degree of correspondence with the Hackney Afro-Caribbean shown in Figure 3. We note that, as expected, GOOSE is very front. In accordance with the south-east short

vowel shift (Torgersen and Kerswill 2004), TRAP is an open-central vowel, while STRUT is a back vowel overlapping with START.

To obtain a fuller picture, we show the vowel systems for the complete data set in Figures 6(a) and 6(b). Data for females and males is shown separately.
INSERT FIG. 6 ABOUT HERE
Comparing Figure 6 with Figure 5 shows that non-Anglos as a group (including the Afro-Caribbeans) share the same distribution – in other words, there is little difference between the non-Anglo ethnicities. Differences, however, are to be found if one looks at ethnicity and gender together, particularly in FOOT, FACE and GOAT. Anglo females are strongly in the lead in the fronting of FOOT, with Anglo males, non-Anglo females and non-Anglo males following behind in that order. Recall that fronted FOOT had previously been found in outer-city Havering, a change which matches a general south-eastern trend (Torgersen 2002), while it was not found among Anglos in Hackney – these participants did not differ from the non-Anglos in backness. The second difference is the more open onset of FACE among the Anglos, reflecting a broader, more traditional diphthong. Finally, non-Anglo males have a fully back onset for GOAT, in this case representing the near-monophthongal back quality seen in Figure 3. In sum: MLE as represented in this data seems to show distinctions between (1) conservativism (Anglo female FACE), (2) use of regional innovations (Anglo female FOOT), and (3) use of inner city-specific innovations (non-Anglo male speakers' GOAT vowel, a change structurally parallel to the same speakers' raised FACE).

We are now in a position to compare the modern MLE data with the 1980s recordings. The most striking single difference is between the interview speech of the 1980s on the one hand and that of today's non-Anglos, as shown in Figures 3, 5 and 6. Each set of data was recorded under roughly the same conditions with demographically similar participants, but separated by 20–25 years. The later speakers all show unshifted (i.e. raised) FACE and GOAT, have MOUTH and PRICE as low vowels with no crossover, and a very front GOOSE. The earlier recordings show vowels which resemble those of the elderly, Anglo speakers as well as (to some extent) the Anglo females in the new data. The older data also shows a very back FOOT, which reflects today's non-Anglo pronunciation. Where do the newer non-Anglo vowels come from? All the diphthongs (FACE, GOAT, MOUTH and PRICE) have almost identical values, not to the interview style of the earlier speakers, but to their Patois styles. Without suggesting that present-day MLE has borrowed these directly from Jamaican Patois, we can see that the correspondence is striking. A single source is unlikely, however, because Afro-Caribbeans are nowhere an absolute majority, but live alongside people of a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Fox (2007) finds very similar pronunciations for FACE and PRICE in a predominantly Bangladeshi community in East London, as does Khan (2006) for GOAT and PRICE among Afro-Caribbean and Pakistani communities in Birmingham. The fact, too, that GOOSE is so strongly fronted, especially among non-Anglos, when Patois has a fully back

vowel, suggests various origins for the MLE features. This insight is one we will develop in this article in the context of a 'feature pool'.

It can be argued that the data collection in the later projects did not tap into a wide enough range of the speakers' repertoires, compared to Sebba. However, the phonetic changes in speech used in paired interviews with a fieldworker are consistent across the dataset. This is not an indication that Afro-Caribbeans no longer use Patois in particular contexts (it is still used in 'crossing', for example – Rampton 2010), but rather that the vernacular base line has changed from one which was largely Cockney (in the 1980s) to a variant of MLE today. A further question arises as to why MLE speakers are routinely heard as 'black' by outsiders. It is likely that young people's orientation towards Caribbean and African American youth culture, especially hip-hop and rap, makes the use of 'black' features attractive. As evidence for this attractiveness, Rampton (2010: 138) cites his finding that young people 'cross' into Creole much more often than they 'cross' into Punjabi. Perhaps, then, the salience of 'black' culture accounts for the association made between innovative pronunciations and sounding 'black'. A further reason may be that MLE speakers routinely use vocabulary items such as *yard*, *whagwan* and *man* (the first two meaning 'home' and 'what's up', respectively, and the third used as an address term), which are associated with Caribbean speakers.

Figure 7 shows the young adult speakers.
INSERT FIG. 7 ABOUT HERE
Here, the sample is unbalanced, with Anglos being represented only by two females and the non-Anglos by five men and one woman, from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Again we note the front GOOSE vowel, though it is more back in relation to KIT by comparison with the adolescents. The two female Anglos again have a fronted FOOT and a FACE onset which is lower than the adolescents'. They also share a conservative feature only weakly present in the younger group, the very marked distance between the onset of MOUTH (front) and that of PRICE (mid-back) – the PRICE–MOUTH crossover. Predictably, GOAT is central for the Anglos (more so than for their adolescent counterparts) and raised back for the non-Anglos. What we see here is an adult group of non-Anglos (all but one of whom are male) who use a mainly MLE repertoire, and a (small) group of Anglo females whose vowels are relatively conservative, more so than their younger equivalents. We cannot easily say whether we are dealing with an ethnic or a gender difference; it is apparent, however, that MLE is not just a youth variety, since these young adults use features associated with it.

The question now arises as to when MLE features are acquired, and by whom – given that these two Anglo adults do not appear to use them. This is the second question listed above. We turn first to the youngest age group, the 4–5 year olds. Unfortunately, it proved impossible to record any Anglo 4–5 year olds at the primary school we contacted, so the display shows only non-Anglos (again from a range of ethnic and therefore linguistic backgrounds – see Appendix). Figure 8 displays the vowel data for this group.

INSERT FIG. 8 ABOUT HERE

Surprisingly, Figure 8 shows a more or less complete set of MLE values, with a small amount of gender differentiation in the expected directions, viz. fronter FOOT and lower GOAT among the females. However, this group's GOOSE is considerably backer than that of the adolescents. This finding is similar to that of another study of children's vowels in the south-east, in Milton Keynes, where four year olds had a relatively retracted GOOSE vowel (Kerswill and Williams 2005). The Milton Keynes 4 year olds were not only conservative in GOOSE, but also in respect of GOAT-fronting – this being a south-eastern regional variable largely absent among MLE speakers, who tend to back and raise this vowel. In Milton Keynes, there was a highly significant relation between female caregivers and 4 year old children for GOAT-fronting, while there was no such correlation for GOOSE-fronting (Kerswill and Williams 2005). Unlike in Milton Keynes, the patterning of GOAT in London is multidimensional, involving *either* backing *or* fronting as we have seen, so it is instructive instead to compare GOOSE in the two locations. Figure 9 shows correlations between children's and caregivers' production of another vowel, FACE, alongside GOOSE, on the salient dimensions of F1 for FACE and F2 for GOOSE.

INSERT FIGS. 9(a) AND 9(b) ABOUT HERE

Overall, there is no significant association in Figure 9(a) (r^2=0.008, p=0.612). There is some age differentiation, in that 4–5 year olds have a lower F1 – a more raised vowel – for FACE, though this may be associated with the fact that all the caregivers for this age group are non-Anglo. Figure 9(b) shows a more complex picture for GOOSE (axes for normalised F1 and F2 are shown). The children's scores cluster around a normalised F2 of around 1.0. Unlike the case for FACE, the caregivers have a distinct bimodal distribution for GOOSE , with one group resembling the children in clustering around 1.0 while the other has a much lower F2 of around -1.0, representing a back vowel. It is apparent that very few children whose caregiver has the back vowel actually follow it – the only exception being a 4–5 year old, near the bottom left of the chart. There is no significant relationship between the normalised F2 of caregiver and child (r^2=0.57, p=0.174). From this, we conclude that, as with the Milton Keynes GOOSE VOWEL, the youngest children are not influenced by their principal caregiver's pronunciation of these two vowels. In terms of the 'feature pool' of available variants (see further below), we can see that those represented by the parents appear to be rejected. Instead, the children already orient towards community norms, both existing and emergent.

There are no significant differences between these three younger age groups in the London data, suggesting no further move on their part towards the fully front GOOSE of the adolescents' data. If we add adolescents' data (cf. Figure 6), however, we find a significant difference for this age group and the youngest age group ($p<0.05$).[5] The lack of correlation with the caregivers is consistent with Milton Keynes, however (Kerswill and Williams 2005), though we can now go further and consider why this might be. Figure 10 is a replotting of Figure 9(b), this time showing whether or not the caregiver was born in the UK.

INSERT FIG. 10 ABOUT HERE

It can be seen that a majority of non-UK born caregivers have a very back GOOSE vowel (a minus value for the transformed F2), which can be transcribed [ụ]. As we saw, there is virtually no tendency for the children to adopt this back vowel (there is no significant relationship between the normalised F2 of caregiver and child (r^2=0.57, p=0.174)). It could be argued that the caregiver vowel is too 'deviant' in relation to the local norm to be copied, and the child instead favours a more mainstream front pronunciation. In any case, in some of the families the caregivers speak their community language at home, and if English is used at all in the home it is between young children and their older siblings, so the question of a caregiver model does not arise. Assuming that the phonologies of those parents who do speak English at home are non-British, it is tempting simply to see in this an example of what Chambers calls the 'Ethan Experience': children whose parents have a non-local accent are unaware of the accent, and filter it out even as pre-school children (Chambers 2002: 121–123). In our view this underestimates the young child's capacity for identity formation: some do after all follow parental models for some variables, such as GOAT in Milton Keynes. As we shall see, we prefer to see the parental variants as part of a 'pool' of available forms – rejected, in this case, as we have seen, perhaps because they are too saliently non-local; we return to the interaction between salience and the feature pool below. In any case, the children's rejection of the back GOOSE vowel may well represent a lessening of the linguistic tie between parent and child in comparison to majority-community language speaking families, where the local accent/dialect is being transmitted cross-generationally in a way that is not the norm in a highly multiethnic district like East London.

In the absence of Anglo data for the 4–5-year-old age group, we cannot tell whether they, too, will have acquired an MLE-like phonology in the same way as the non-Anglos. Looking at the next age group up can give us some indications. Figure 11 shows a mainly MLE-type system for the 8 year olds, with FACE level with DRESS, and a half-close back GOAT for all groups, with no ethnicity or gender effects.
INSERT FIG. 11 ABOUT HERE
The by now predictable ethnic and gender differences for FOOT are present (Anglos more front, male non-Anglos fully back), though the pattern for GOOSE is not as clear. There is no trace of the conservative PRICE–MOUTH crossover, with the onsets of these vowels overlapping to a considerable extent.

By age 4–5, and certainly by 8, children have moved firmly away from their caregivers – except of course in those cases where they acquired English from peers, older siblings or other people. This appears to be true especially of the Anglo children, whose parents are highly likely to have the Anglo system illustrated in Figure 6, but it is also true of those non-Anglos who do not follow their immigrant caregivers' back GOOSE, in some cases doubtless because the caregivers did not use English in the home. Next, we look for a further approximation to MLE by examining data for 12–13 year olds: we would expect an increase

in GOOSE-fronting, at the very least. Figure 12 shows a similar basic system, but with some deviations.

INSERT FIG. 12 ABOUT HERE

These are mainly the result of conservative realisations on the part of the Anglo girls, who have a low/retracted FACE vowel ($p<0.01$ for F2) and a raised and backed PRICE ($p<0.01$ for both F1 and F2), giving rise to a marked PRICE–MOUTH crossover. In this figure, the expected ethnic alignments of FOOT and GOAT are less clear: for these, visual inspection suggests an interaction with gender, with non-Anglo girls resembling the Anglo girls. Finally, there is no further GOOSE-fronting.

If we take our data as representing apparent time, then the 12–13 year olds' data does not show any particular move towards the MLE pattern shown in Figure 5: the system, with its ethnicity and gender variation, is already present among the younger speakers. The apparent 'regression' to an older, Anglo London norm by the Anglo 12–13 year old girls is in fact similar to the pattern shown by the adolescent MLE speakers (Figure 6), but in a more marked form (though the differences are not significant). We conclude from this that there is some gender differentiation in the MLE vowel system, which increases as children pass into adolescence.

The striking exception to the early acquisition of MLE is the relative lack of GOOSE-fronting by all the pre-adolescent groups. We briefly turn now to this variable, examining it more closely in terms of incrementation.

4.3 GOOSE-fronting: the acquisition of a global feature

For GOOSE -fronting we have already seen that there is a flat distribution across the three youngest age groups, and an apparent jump to the adolescents. We have seen that the specificity of the BE LIKE quotative changes when it is adopted into a new speech community; we now ask the question whether this is so for GOOSE-fronting, too, by considering whether there is variation in phonological constraints. Labov (2001) shows how, in most North American cities, preceding coronals strongly favour the fronting of this vowel. A number of American varieties lack this strong effect (Labov 2010: 262). In the London data, might a change in constraints underlie the difference between the younger speakers and the adolescents? In the adolescent data, there is no significant effect of a preceding coronal on the second formant of GOOSE (Mann-Whitney test). This is not true, however, of the 8–9 year olds and 12–13 year olds, for whom there is a significant effect ($p<.001$ and $p<.01$, respectively; Mann-Whitney test). This means that, besides an increase in F2, the fronting process includes having words with non-coronal onsets join the coronal-onset words in their frontness. It is not known if this effect is found in other varieties of British English, but the pattern is clearly in line with Labov's (2007) definition of incrementation.

4.4 Summary of evidence from the vowels

Given this information, it is possible to outline some tentative conclusions from our apparent-time investigation:

- MLE-type phonologies are acquired early on by non-Anglo preschool children. There is little or no correlation between 4–5 year olds and their caregiver, unlike the case for at least one variable in Milton Keynes (Kerswill and Williams 2005) and also for a phonological variable described by Smith et al. (2007) in Buckie, Scotland. This suggests that children in multilingual communities in London attend to the speech of their peers at a younger age than in monolingual communities like Milton Keynes and Buckie. This point, which we will elaborate on in the next section, may be characteristic of group second-language learning, where native models are not necessarily available, either because the caregivers use a non-native variety or because English is not spoken at home or, if it is, it is used mainly between siblings.

- There is evidence of incrementation for just one variable, GOOSE-fronting, where the peak lies with the 16–19 year olds. In the speech of the young adults, which (at least for the non-Anglos) we take to represent (an earlier manifestation of) MLE, the production of GOOSE is slightly less front than that of the adolescents. This, too, can be taken as evidence for incrementation. Incrementation is present in this global, diffusing variable, but not in the endogenous variables.

- The age distribution for the remaining vowels appears to be flat, with no consistent change as the children become older. There is, however, evidence of the emergence of increasing gender differentiation with age, and this conclusion is probably supported by the very conservative young adult Anglo female scores in Figure 7. We will be arguing shortly that incrementation does not apply when a new form (in the case to be considered, a new quotative expression) is being generated from within a multilingual community undergoing group second-language learning. This explanation is also available for vowels, where we can argue that there is a distinction between general south-eastern changes, especially GOOSE-fronting where incrementation is present, and the other vowels, like FACE-raising and GOAT-raising/backing, where we suspect a community-specific, endogenous change. In these cases, we find flat age distributions.

- Comparing the 8–9 and 12–13 age groups suggests that the ethnic/gender groups already show some of the differentiation that is characteristic of the adolescents and adults. In particular, the Anglo females have realisations that are relatively

conservative. (Anglo data from 4–5 year olds is not available, so we cannot easily tell at what *age* the convergence takes place.)

5. Beyond phonology

How do the preliminary conclusions just presented transfer to other levels of language? It is not easy to decide which forms in other components of language may form part of "MLE", but some candidates are innovative forms used by both Anglo and non-Anglo adolescent speakers in inner London but not heard in our outer London data. In this second part of the article, we consider three features of this kind: first an innovative discourse-pragmatic feature (a new quotative expression), then a morphosyntactic feature (agreement patterns with past tense BE) and finally a morphophonological feature (allomorphy in the definite and indefinite articles). Investigating these features clarifies some of the questions concerning the emergence of a multiethnolectal variety space, and helps us to build a model.

5.1 A new quotative

Examples 1 to 5 illustrate a new quotative expression, *this is + speaker*.

1. *this is them* "what area are you from . what part?"
   this is me "I'm from Hackney"

2. *this is her* "that was my sister"

3. *this is him* "don't lie . if I search you and if I find one I'll kick your arse"

4. *this is my mum* "what are you doing? I was in the queue before you"

5. *this is my mum's boyfriend* "put that in your pocket now"

Table 1 shows that in our first project *this is + speaker* was used only by adolescents in inner London. The adolescents in outer London never use this form.
INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE
The table also shows that the innovative quotative is a minor part of the quotative system, accounting for only 4.8 per cent of the quotatives used by the Hackney adolescents. It could, therefore, be a transient phenomenon, but the fact that several different individuals use the form suggests otherwise: 7 speakers contributed *this is + speaker* forms to the Hackney data set, and 14 speakers to the North London data set. Furthermore, although this quotative expression is infrequent in our data it nonetheless occurs often enough in young people's speech generally for it to have been noticed by non-linguists: it has been taken up by UK

television personalities when they portray disaffected youth (for example by the comedian Catherine Tate and by actors in the Armstrong and Miller show on BBC TV).

Table 2 gives the age distribution for the different quotative forms used in North London.
INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE
The Table shows that *this is + speaker* is not confined to Hackney, though in North London it is still a minor part of the quotative system. Table 2 also shows that the form is used by the 12–13 and 8–9 year olds as well as the adolescents: 5 speakers in the 16–19 year group, 2 in the 12–13 year old group, and 7 in the 8–9 year old group. Note, though, that it is not used by the caregiver group or by the 4–5 year olds. The caregivers, we assume, have not acquired this very new quotative form, which is being introduced into the system by younger speakers. The 4- 5 year olds tell few narratives (the most frequent context for reported speech) and they have not yet acquired the full range of quotative forms. *Say*, *go* and *be like* are acquired by children in an orderly progression, as Table 3 shows. The table shows the forms used by those children who contribute the most tokens to the data base, arranged as an implicational scale for *sa*y, *go* and *like*. *Say* is the first form to be acquired, followed by *go* and then *be like*. As the group figures in Table 2 show, once *be like* is acquired, the frequency of both *go* and *say* declines. The zero quotative and *this is + speaker* seem to be wild cards, used at any stage once children have become proficient in telling stories, presumably because they serve specific pragmatic functions in a narrative, highlighting particularly dramatic points in the story (Fox in press). Most children do not use them until they have progressed beyond using merely *say* (Uzay and Derya are the only exceptions to this pattern).

INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Table 2 shows that the peak in the frequency of use of the innovative *this is + speaker* quotative is in the 8–9 year old age group. The 8–9 year olds also use a high proportion of *this is + speaker* forms with non-quotative functions. The importance of this for language innovation will become clear below. Like the quotative form, these occurrences are all in narratives: they refer to the protagonists' states, feelings, actions, gestures and expressions, as in examples (6) to (9):

6. he's sitting on a chair **this is him** like he's drunk or something
7. I been on it **this is me** I'm scared I'm like this...it go slow and then I say "yeah"
8. this is the **this is the boy falling asleep** he went "<sound effect>"
9. alright right this is **this is me knocking at the door** yeah and I'm knocking at the door yeah and **this is the dog** "<makes gesture?>". he just went and **this is the dog** "woof woof woof"

Table 4 shows that these non-quotative uses account for nearly half the *this is + speaker* tokens in the 8–9 age group, but are less frequent in the speech of the 12–13 age group and rare for the 16–19 year olds.

INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

What is the source of the *this is + speaker* form? Deictics are not unusual in quotative expressions, so as a quotative form it is unremarkable, even though it has not been attested before for English. Macaulay (2001) for example notes that when BE LIKE first appeared in Glasgow it was with deictic *that* in expressions such as (10)

10. **I was like that** "on you go" (Macaulay 2001: 9)

This is + speaker is a "speaker-predicating quotative" (Güldemann in press): the speaker is foregrounded by being positioned clause-finally (assuming, albeit simplistically, that the speaker is the predicate of *this is*). Identificational quotatives are common in the world's languages and especially widely attested in African languages (Güldemann in press). They also occur in some varieties of English: Irish English, for example, has *here's + speaker*, as in (11).

11. <EXTREMELY HIGH PITCHED> **Here was I** "Then I must be hard of hearing or something - you rapped the door and I didn't hear you"… out the back and everywhere they were. **Here's me** "Have youse took leave of your senses? <HIGH PITCHED> He says - uh - "get everybody up, everybody up (Milroy and Milroy 1977: 54)

Although the form of the new quotative expression is unremarkable from a linguistic point of view, we do need to explain its sudden emergence. Despite the occurrence of similar forms in Irish English and In African languages, its emergence in London is unlikely to represent a case of direct language transfer from Irish English or some of the African languages spoken in London. Too many different languages and varieties of English are spoken in the multiethnic communities we are researching for us to expect direct language contact from any one variety to London English. Nonetheless, the type of language contact inherent in group second language acquisition seems to be at the heart of the innovations that we observe in our data.

As noted earlier, we find Mufwene's concept of the *feature pool* helpful in explaining the innovations we find in the group second language acquisition situation in inner city London. Mufwene (2001: 4–6) depicts both dialect contact and language contact situations as producing a "feature pool" from the range of input varieties, with speakers selecting different combinations of features from the pool, sometimes modifying them into new structures in the output varieties. A crucial difference between dialect contact and language

contact is that in the first case the speakers share typologically, genetically related input varieties, whereas in the second case there may be typological diversity and therefore greater complexity of competition in the feature pool. Havering is a good example of a dialect contact situation. Until the 1950s it was a small rural town in the county of Essex, but it was transferred to the greater London administrative area in 1965. Many families from East London were relocated there during the postwar slum clearance and reconstruction of London. There has therefore been recent dialect contact between London English and Essex dialects, as well as other southeastern English dialects spoken by other incomers. The town remains profoundly monolingual. In Hackney, by contrast, some 95 different languages are spoken as a first language by school children (Hackney Council 2010; cf. Baker and Eversley 2000). Bilingual children acquire English partly at school and partly through unguided language acquisition in multiethnic friendship groups where a range of interlanguage varieties are spoken alongside traditional London English, AfroCaribbean English and indigenized second language varieties such as Indian English and Nigerian English. The pool of features in Hackney is therefore more heterogeneous than it is in Havering, which we assume allows more scope for innovation and restructuring.

What, though, determines the features that speakers select from the feature pool? The frequency of a feature is known to be an important determining factor in several kinds of language contact situations (for example, in the development of pidgin and creole languages, second language learners' interlanguage and indigenized second language varieties (Siegel 1997: 139), but this can hardly account for the emergence of *this is +speaker*, which is still a minor part of the quotative system for all speakers who use it. The available evidence suggests that it occurred with even lower frequencies in some of the input varieties to the feature pool in Hackney (perhaps, then, it existed as what Trudgill (1999) terms an 'embryonic form'). For example, Mark Sebba's recordings of London Jamaicans, made in the 1980s, contains a single token of the form, and we are aware of 2 tokens in the COLT corpus (Corpus of London Teenage Speech) recorded in the 1990s, from ethnic minority speakers of unspecified origin (Fox in press). Its more frequent use in our recordings confirms Mufwene's suggestion (2001: 6) that language contact can result in more complex competition in the feature pool and that in some cases this in turn will favour an option that was already available in some of the input varieties but was "statistically too insignificant to produce the same output under different ecological conditions" (see also Lapidus and Otheguy 2005: 157). Use of the form both then and now may also have been indirectly influenced by language transfer, if some of the languages spoken by bilingual children in Hackney contain identificational quotatives.

However, frequency is not the only factor that guides the selection of forms from the feature pool. Siegel's list of constraints on selection (1997: 139) includes regularity (lack of exceptions), transparency (one to one relationship between form and meaning) and, importantly for *this is +speaker*, salience. These factors are rarely clearly defined in the

literature, as Siegel points out, and the concept of salience is perhaps particularly difficult to define (Kerswill and Williams 2002) but *this is +speaker* meets some of the suggested characteristics of salient forms (Siegel ibid). It tends to contain free morphemes rather than bound morphemes, since it mainly occurs in the conversational historic present tense: compare, for example, *this is him* with the inflected verb forms in *he says* or *he goes*. The semi-fixed construction is a useful form for language learners who want to keep the floor and maintain the pace of speech. *This is +speaker* is presumably easy to perceive as a quotative expression (ease or perception is another suggested characteristic of salient forms; again, see Siegel 1997), with the speaker put into focus by the deictic *this* and the empty verb BE. Furthermore, the form typically occurs at a salient point in a performed narrative, at moments of high drama (Fox in press).

How does the age distribution of the new quotative expression compare to the distribution found for the vowel changes in MLE? The 4–5 year olds are like their caregivers in using mainly *say*, but this, we have argued, reflects developmental tendencies rather than the influence of the caregivers. The 4–5 year olds, in fact, differ from their caregivers in that they do not use BE LIKE and they rarely use the zero form (see, again, Table 2). They are not yet at a stage of language development where they can be expected to quote reported thought, so they do not use *THINK* (and perhaps this accounts, to some extent, for the non-existence of BE LIKE in their speech: BE LIKE tends to be favoured with reported thought in the early stages of its introduction).

As with all but one of the MLE vowels, there is no adolescent peak in the use of the new quotative, and no incrementation across the 8–9, 12–13 and 16–19 year olds groups. In fact, the 8–9 year old group uses twice as many forms as the other two age groups. They also use a large number of non-quotative *this is (NP)* forms, as we saw earlier. The number of non-quotative forms shows a regular decrease with increasing age (and they do not occur at all in our recordings of 16–19 year olds in Hackney). The 8-9 year old age group seems crucial, then, for acquisition of the MLE quotative *this is + speaker*.

Investigating the function of the form in the speech of this age group helps explain their increased usage of the form relative to the other age groups. The other age groups use quotative *this is +speaker* almost exclusively to introduce reported direct speech. The 8-9 year olds, however, use it with roughly equal frequency to introduce both direct speech and non-lexicalised sound and gesture, as in (12) and (13).

(12) then. then this is me “xxxxxx<making noises>xxx”
(13) this is me <does an action which makes the interviewer laugh>

This age group quotes non-lexicalised sound and gesture far more frequently than the other age groups: this accounts for almost a quarter of the content of the quote for them, whereas

it is negligible for the other age groups (Kerswill et al in press). Seen in conjunction with their non-quotative uses of *this is + speaker*, it seems that the narrative style of the 8-9 year olds predisposes them to adopt *this is +speaker* for mimesis: to perform not only reported speech, gestures and sounds but also actions in a way that mimics the way they actually occurred. The animated discourse style of the 8-9 year olds is important, then, in explaining their more frequent usage of the form and their expansion of the form into other, non-quotative discourse contexts.

We suggest that the explanation for the age distribution we observe for the innovative quotative expression rests on the difference between the type of change represented by BE LIKE on the one hand and *this is + speaker* on the other hand. BE LIKE is a new, vigorous, rapid change affecting all English-speaking communities. It shows incrementation with an adolescent peak, in a manner consistent with Tagliamonte and D'Arcy's (2009) findings for this feature in Toronto. Borrowing a phrase from Eckert (2003), Milroy refers to it as an 'off the shelf' feature, which is easily borrowed: '... [*O*]*ff the shelf* changes are relatively freely available to appropriately positioned social actors as a stylistic and social resource, regardless of the structure and location of their primary social networks' (Milroy 2007: 152) – though the detailed constraints on its use might not be borrowed, as we have seen (Buchstaller and D'Arcy 2009). By contrast, 'under the counter' features require relatively close-knit networks for their transmission, and these tend to be linguistically more complex and localised. The only other variable in our data which shows the same pattern of increasing frequency with increasing age is GOOSE-fronting, and this, too, is cited by Milroy as an off the shelf feature. GOOSE-fronting is widespread in the English-speaking world and, in contrast to vowel changes generally, it is not linked to (i.e. embedded in) changes elsewhere in the phonology of the particular variety (see review in Mesthrie 2010: 3–4). It 'does not appear to be sensitive to local social indexicalities or dependent on participation in close-knit networks' (Milroy 2007: 165). It is, then, highly 'available' and, linguistically speaking, simple to acquire. As 'global' features, both features are constantly 'available' in the general linguistic community, as we pointed out above. Because these changes are both global and rapid, face-to-face contact cannot be a necessary condition for people to acquire them, and nor do they involve adult-to-adult diffusion (cf. Meyerhoff and Niedzelski's 2003 discussion of the spread of such features). With this in mind, we can see that BE LIKE in our North London data shows exactly the age distribution that is expected: developmental factors must be taken into account, but once acquired, the frequency increases gradually with advancing age until it peaks in the 16–19 year old group. Older speakers use BE LIKE, but less frequently than the adolescents. Although developmental factors do not count in the same way in the acquisition of a vowel quality, a similar pattern emerges for GOOSE-fronting.

We turn now to the particular sociolinguistic conditions of inner-city London, and the origin and spread of *this is + speaker*. It is even newer than BE LIKE: it is in the early stages and, at present at least, it is confined to inner London. Its spread is less rapid than BE LIKE (it still

represents a minor part of the quotative system) and its origins do not fit conventional models of change. The origins of *this is + speaker* lie, we have argued, in contact, but the primary agents are not adults: some of the primary caregivers are only just beginning to acquire English themselves, and cannot act as a target model for their children's acquisition of English. Instead, the agents are children growing up in a multilingual, multiethnic community and acquiring English in an unguided informal setting from their peers. Of course, some children may initially acquire the English of the primary caregiver: this is likely for the Anglo children in our sample, as well as the Afro-Caribbeans and some of the Indian and Black African children who speak English at home, though their Englishes will be quite diverse. Other children, however, who speak a language other than English at home, are likely to acquire English from their peers or their older siblings, with varying degrees of formal language teaching from the school.

The early English of many of these children, we assume, is a range of what can be considered as interlanguage varieties. The 4–5 year olds in our North London sample are very fluent but their syntax is not native speaker-like, and the same can be said of some of the older non-Anglo children. Consider, for example, the forms used for negation by Yeliz, a 5 year old Turkish girl, as well as her subject pronoun form him and uninflected third singular verb form *go*.

14. Yeliz: I not got a pony .. not got it I not got the pony now
Arfaan: you haven't? where is it? Has it run away? Where is he? Has he run away? Has he gone?
Yeliz: him go there

There is no clear target for acquisition, and norms are consequently fluid. We have argued that the concept of the feature pool best fits their linguistic situation. Perhaps the 8–9 year olds show how *this is + speaker* develops from the feature pool: it is acquired first ('created' might be a better term) as a high-involvement deictic form used with gestures and to act out moments within a narrative, as well as to quote speech. This kind of animated deixis is probably part of younger children's style, and its use in this context may be an example of an innovation on the part of children. As a quotative, our North London data show that it is more often used when the content of the quote is a gesture or a nonlexicalised sound. This too may be part of young children's style. The semi-fixed construction avoids the morphosyntactic agreement necessary with other quotatives, which makes it a useful quotative for learners who want to keep up with the pace of speech in the conversations of their friendship groups. As a salient form, its emergence is in line with the constraints found to be relevant in other language contact situations, though we have argued that discourse function is also relevant. The uses of *this is + speaker* are then refined with increasing age and increasing language proficiency, perhaps alongside a decrease in animated deixis, until it is used almost exclusively as a quotative expression by the 16–19 year old group.[6] This

expansion in domains as children grow older is in line with the incrementation model, even if the peak comes earlier than expected: what we have is a link from incrementation back to the social and linguistic maturation of the child. This is not to say that this factor is always present in incrementation. It is likely, instead, that it is a consequence of the particular sociolinguistic set-up under discussion.

The way in which *this is + speaker* is generated, within the community as an output from a feature pool, accounts for the different age distribution, with its much earlier peak, of this innovation compared to the distribution that is associated with exogenous changes such as BE LIKE. In the same vein, we can argue that the acquisition of the MLE vowel qualities, with the exception of GOOSE-fronting, is a result of the same feature pool with its specific ecological conditions of unguided second-language acquisition: monophthongal face and goat are characteristic of Caribbean, African and Subcontinental Englishes, creoles and pidgins, and are also found in many foreign-language varieties too.

5.2 Past tense BE

We turn now to a well-known morphosyntactic variable, to explore further the social dynamics of changes taking place in multiethnic areas of inner London. Usage of *was* and *were* as past tense forms of BE varies immensely around the English-speaking world. In addition to the standard English pattern, where *was* occurs with first and third singular subjects, and *were* with second person and plural subjects, there are two dominant patterns of (paradigmatic) levelling involving nonstandard forms:

(1) variable use of *was* throughout the past tense paradigm, e.g. *we was wasn't we?; I was wasn't I?*;

(2) variable use of *was* in positive contexts and *were* in negative contexts, e.g. *we was weren't we?; I was, weren't I?.*

Both the levelled patterns respond to system-internal pressures, but in different ways. Pattern (1) results in a uniform past tense paradigm. It is said to be a basic 'vernacular primitive' (Chambers 1995) and is acquired in child language (Brown 1973), second language English interlanguages (Schumann 1978) and decreolising English Creoles, where according to Bickerton (1975: 115) *was* occurs first as a lexical insertion, followed later by *were* as speakers use more standard English forms. The *was/wasn't* pattern is the most common, occurring throughout the English-speaking world. Pattern 2 brings past forms of BE into line with English *will/won't, do, does/don't* and *am, is, are /ain't*, and responds to the typological tendency to have a distinctive negative form. This pattern is widespread in England (Britain 2002b) (and also occurs in some relatively isolated mid-Atlantic coastal communities in the

US; see Schilling-Estes and Wolfram 1994). Although in some large urban centres in the UK nonstandard *was* seems to be declining, nonstandard *weren't* is increasing (see Cheshire and Fox 2009 for further details).

Our first project found clear differences between inner-city Hackney and the outer London borough of Havering. Table 5 shows that the Havering 16–19 year olds have the pattern that is widespread in England: relative to the more standard elderly speakers in Havering they show an increase in the use of nonstandard *was* and they have a very frequent use of nonstandard *weren't.*

INSERT TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

There is no use of nonstandard *wasn't* in Havering. The adolescents in Hackney, on the other hand, have both levelled patterns. In positive contexts they use nonstandard *was* somewhat less frequently than the older Hackney speakers, but in negative contexts their use of both nonstandard *wasn't* and nonstandard *weren't* is higher than that of the older speakers (again, see Cheshire and Fox 2009 for more details of the analysis).

We have proposed (Cheshire and Fox 2009) that language contact explains the difference between Havering and Hackney. In Hackney the linguistic backgrounds of the adolescents include English-lexifier Creoles, African English and Indian and Bangladeshi English, all of which favour the *was/wasn't* pattern. Interlanguage varieties of English also favour this pattern. Although numbers of speakers in different ethnic groups were low, we observed high rates of both nonstandard *was* and *wasn't* among speakers from ethnic groups where these Englishes were found, while the Anglo adolescents tended to favour the *was/weren't* pattern. Friendship patterns were relevant in that speakers with multiethnic friendship networks, including Anglo speakers, tended to favour *was/wasn't*. MLE differs from other varieties of English in England, then, in exhibiting both the *was/wasn't* and the *was/weren't* pattern (as well, of course, as the standard English pattern). A question that arises is whether one of these patterns will come to dominate in London.

Table 6 shows the frequencies in North London where there is a different ethnic mix, and where we can analyse the age distribution of the nonstandard forms.

INSERT TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

In positive contexts, use of nonstandard *was* by the 16–19 age group is approximately the same as that of the 16–19 year olds in Hackney (37% in North London, 42% in Hackney). The frequencies for both older and younger speakers, however, are higher. The peak, this time, is in the 12–13 year old age group. Unlike other urban centres in England, then, in London nonstandard *was* does not seem to be declining, though there is a falling off in late adolescence when speakers use more standard forms.

Table 7 now shows the frequencies of nonstandard *was* for the different ethnic groups in the North London sample (note that numbers of speakers are quite low in these groups).

INSERT TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE

The number of tokens for the 4–5 year olds is low, so we do not include this age group in the analysis. The peak in the 12–13 year old group is maintained in each ethnic group. The age distribution is the same, then, for both the Anglo and the non-Anglo groups. The Anglo caregivers use nonstandard *was* with approximately the same frequency as elderly speakers in Hackney (47% in North London and 51.5% in Hackney), confirming that nonstandard *was* is not in decline in London.

It is, of course, the nonstandard negative forms that allow us to see which of the different levelling patterns is being followed. Table 6 showed that, for each age group, nonstandard *wasn't* is more frequent than nonstandard *weren't*; and again we see a peak in the use of nonstandard *wasn't* in the 12–13 year old age group. What is not yet clear is whether nonstandard *wasn't* forms are favoured by the non-Anglo speakers, as for the Hackney adolescents, or whether in North London, and especially in younger age groups, they are used equally by Anglo and non-Anglo speakers. Negative forms do not occur often enough in the data to allow a breakdown by ethnic group, so we combine the non-Anglo speakers into a single 'non-Anglo' group (for the caregivers, the non-Anglo group consists entirely of Afro-Caribbean speakers). Table 8 gives the frequencies for nonstandard *wasn't* and nonstandard *weren't* (the empty cell for non-Anglo 8–9 year olds indicates that there were no data for this age group).

INSERT TABLE 8 ABOUT HERE

Numbers are low for plural subjects (the site for nonstandard *wasn't*) even when speakers are combined in this way, but even so it is clear from Table 8 that non-Anglo speakers prefer nonstandard *wasn't* to nonstandard *weren't*, and that the Anglo speakers use both patterns. For the 16–19 year olds, the frequencies for both non-standard negative forms are roughly the same as for the same age group in Hackney. This confirms, then, that use of both patterns is characteristic of MLE. We can no longer, though, discern a peak in the 12–13 age group, as we could for nonstandard *was* in positive contexts (we discount the figures for nonstandard *wasn't* for which there are only 7 tokens). For nonstandard *weren't*, the age distribution after 8–9 (a group for which again the number of tokens is low) is flat. The 16–19 year olds use nonstandard *weren't* with the same frequency of 41 per cent as their peers in Hackney (see, again, Table 6); a much lower frequency than adolescents in Havering, who follow the general pattern attested throughout England of high frequencies of nonstandard *weren't*.

Again, the concept of the feature pool is helpful in explaining the differences between Havering and the two multiethnic areas of inner London. This time the main factor governing the outputs from the pool is clearly frequency. The input varieties, we assume, contain large numbers of *was* forms in positive contexts: they include interlanguage varieties, Creole-influenced varieties, perhaps African and Indian varieties of English. Nonstandard *was* is also used in London English (elderly speakers in Hackney used this form with an overall rate of

51.5 per cent, as we saw earlier, and the Anglo caregiver generation in North London also uses it with approximately the same frequency (47 per cent). Furthermore, in London nonstandard *were* does not occur at all in positive contexts: the form used with first and third person singular past forms of BE is always *was* (Cheshire and Fox 2009). First and third singular subjects are more frequent in speech than other subjects, and speakers use past BE frequently. In negative contexts, frequencies of nonstandard *weren't* (i.e. with first and third singular subjects) are relatively low, at least compared to outer London. This means that with first and third singular subjects *was* is the more frequent form, making *was* the most frequent form overall in negative contexts as well as in positive contexts. There is enormous pressure, then, to use *was*, since *was* must dominate the feature pool. Although frequency seems to be the over-riding factor here, the increased use of the *was/wasn't* pattern may also reflect a drive towards economy in the system (also relevant in the selection of certain features over others in contact situations generally; see Siegel 1997: 139): the use of two forms, *was* and *were*, to indicate past tense, can be seen as redundant.

Like *this is + speaker*, changes in the use of past forms of BE constitute neither a conventional transmitted change nor a conventional diffused change. The high frequency of nonstandard *was* in inner London is out of step with frequencies outside London, and the use of two levelled patterns (*was/wasn't* as well as *was/weren't*) is also different from elsewhere in England. We assume that these uses are generated within the speech community, and owe much to the presence of speakers from a range of different language backgrounds (the non-Anglos). Numbers of tokens were low for negative contexts, but even so there is little evidence of incrementation with increasing age, and there is no adolescent peak. For positive contexts the number of tokens allows us to state with confidence that the age distribution does not follow the incrementation pattern: if there is a peak, it is in the 12–13 year old age group. Indeed, rather than finding an adolescent peak, the rates of nonstandard *was* decrease sharply for the 16–19 age group. If we infer usage of the standard English variants from Table 8, it is the standard English pattern that has become dominant for this age group (as well as for the Anglo caregivers). An explanation for this apparent standardisation does not immediately present itself. Maturation is one explanation, but can only be a contributory factor because nonstandard features are not strongly subject to maturational change. However, the feature pool contains many features that speakers are exposed to, including standard features; it may be that with increasing age speakers become more inclined to select standard features from the pool in inner London than in more focused speech communities (in the sense of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985).

The importance of the non-Anglo speakers in determining the output of the feature pool can be seen by examining the usage of speakers who have recently arrived in London, to see which forms they choose to use. Table 9 shows the frequency of use of nonstandard *was* by Abigail, a 12 year old Albanian girl who lived in London between the ages of 4 and 7, then

returned to Albania until she was 11, the age when she came back to live permanently in London.

INSERT TABLE 9 ABOUT HERE

Her English is fast and fluent but she is sometimes lost for a specific word and her syntax is often non-native speaker-like. Her use of nonstandard *was* is almost categorical. She uses only 3 negative past tense forms, all of which are nonstandard *wasn't*. Perhaps her usage reflects the vernacular primitive form that is typical of interlanguage varieties of English (as mentioned earlier; again, see Chambers 1995); perhaps, also, it reflects her desire to be recognized as a member of her peer group – especially acute in her case because she is a recent member whose English is not yet entirely that of a native speaker (of course, the concept 'native speaker' is complex in this kind of linguistic setting). It is noteworthy that Abigail also has very high frequencies of *this is + speaker* and BE LIKE (Table 10);

INSERT TABLE 10 ABOUT HERE

in fact she contributes almost all of the *this is + speaker* tokens for her age group. Her production of MLE vowels is also very advanced (see Fox and Torgersen 2009). Abigail's usage seems a heightened example of the contribution of speakers who have acquired English as a second language and helps to further explain the social dynamics of the emergence of MLE: in their efforts to be accepted in the multiethnic friendship groups that are characteristic of the group second language situation, some non-Anglo pre-adolescents may overshoot the usage of the age groups immediately below them, and above them.

5.3 Simplification of indefinite and definite article allomorphy

Finally, we turn to the use of indefinite article [ə] and definite article [ðə] plus glottal stop before word-initial vowels, instead of standard and mainstream [ən] and [ði], and show that simplification in the allomorphy system is led by ethnic minority young people. These variables have only recently been researched within sociolinguistic studies but Fox (2007) showed that high frequency of use of prevocalic [ə] and [ðə] among Bangladeshi male adolescents in London appeared to be influencing the English of their white Anglo male peers with respect to these features, with multi-ethnic friendship networks playing a key role in their diffusion. Similarly, Gabrielatos et al. (2010) found that non-Anglo males had the highest use of indefinite article *a* before vowel-initial words in their analysis of the *Linguistics Innovators Corpus* (LIC). Furthermore, this change is not restricted to London. Guzzo, Britain and Fox (2008) demonstrated the use of these innovations among third generation immigrants of Italian descent in the town of Bedford where, once more, multi-ethnic peer group networks appear to provide the means of transmission between users. In our analysis of the North London data we find again that the change appears to be led by non-Anglos

with high frequencies of use among all age groups. The results are presented in Tables 11 and 12.

INSERT TABLE 11 ABOUT HERE

INSERT TABLE 12 ABOUT HERE

The use of articles in prevocalic position is fairly infrequent (particularly the indefinite article) so the numbers of tokens are low in some cells; nevertheless, a distinct and similar pattern emerges in both cases. First of all, if we look at the Anglos we see that there is a decrease in frequency of use of both [ə] and [ðə] with increasing age. Studies which have looked at developmental trends in child language acquisition of these features suggest that children acquire the standard rules and adopt more 'adult-like' pronunciations between the ages of four and five years old with full acquisition almost complete at around the age of seven (Newton and Wells 1999: 70). The 4–5 year olds in our study have almost categorical use of [ə] and [ðə] and support this argument. The assumption here, though, for children acquiring these rules is that the input that the children receive is always the standard. This may help to explain why the Anglo speakers have lower usage of the [ə] and [ðə] variants relative to the non-Anglo speakers. There is more competition from the input they receive – the newer forms of their non-Anglo peers against the standard forms of their caregivers (who rarely use [ə] and [ðə]). By contrast, the high use of [ə] and [ðə] among the non-Anglos of *all* age groups seems to be consistent with other studies of contact varieties of English where these forms have been reported in varieties such as AAVE (Labov 1972b; Mufwene 2001), Afrikaans English (Watermeyer 1996), South African English (Lass 1995) and Singapore English (Fraser-Gupta 2005, pc). The much higher frequency of use among the Black Caribbean caregivers also suggests that these forms have arisen among speakers of contact varieties of English. Patrick (2005, pc) reports that Jamaican English has [ðə] whether stressed or unstressed and whether it occurs before a vowel or not, and so this is a likely component of the feature pool. Furthermore, we could speculate that the standard rules may not be fully acquired among second language learners of English. Krashen (1987: 95) notes that users of English as a second language often fail to make the *a/an* distinction. It seems likely, therefore, that the caregivers who are acquiring English will also have the newer forms in their varieties of English. So for the young non-Anglo speakers the dominant variants in the feature pool are [ə] and [ðə], both from the majority of their peers and their caregivers with much less competition from the traditional [ən] and [ði] variants. This can account for the essentially flat age distribution of [ə] and [ðə] among the non-Anglos: for them, there is little evidence of change. Change, however, is found among the Anglos, in that the teenagers' frequency is higher than their caregivers'. We cannot talk of an adolescent peak, however, because of the interaction between opposing forces: *maturation*, leading to a gradual shift towards the *standard* forms with age, and *contact with non-Anglo peers*, who are high users of the *nonstandard* variants. This pattern, we suggest, is characteristic of many contact situations including those with group second language learning.

We would argue, then, that this is another feature of language change which has its origin in language contact. More generally it is a simplification of strategies for hiatus resolution in English (Britain and Fox 2009). The clear patterns suggest that the dominant variants in the feature pool are [ə] and [ðə], which are being acquired by the majority of non-Anglos and to a lesser extent by the Anglo speakers, perhaps due to the different distributions of the variants in the input varieties that the different groups of speakers are exposed to. Again, then, the output is governed by frequency of the forms that are available in the feature pool (articles in prevocalic position are less frequent than articles in preconsonantal position); it may also be constrained by a drive to reduce redundancy in the definite and indefinite article systems, resulting in the use of both a single indefinite form and a single definite form.

In conclusion, the analyses we have conducted for features beyond phonology suggest that the emergence of the set of contact features we call Multicultural London English in the present-day inner city is best seen as the result of group second language acquisition, and most usefully conceptualised in terms of a feature pool. The 'output' varieties from the pool reflect competition within the pool between the various input varieties (and may well involve restructuring). Selection of features from the pool is constrained by the same factors that have been found relevant in other language contact situations. For some features the output reflects both the frequency of features in the input varieties and social factors (such as multiethnic friendship patterns or the desire of non-native speakers to be accepted by their peer group). We illustrated this with the example of *was/were* variation and the nonstandard indefinite and definite article forms. For other features the output cannot be explained in terms of frequency but by other factors that govern selection in language contact generally, such as salience. The output may (also) reflect 'natural' communicative strategies, as for the *this is + speaker* innovation. By comparing these innovations with more conventional changes, such as the spread of the BE LIKE quotative, we see that the role of children and adolescents in these contact-based changes does not fit with conventional models of language change. Nevertheless the role of children and adolescents is as important for these types of change as it is for others.

6. The emergence of multiethnolects as a typologically distinct mode of dialect formation

In the emergence of these new contact-based varieties, there seem to be differences in the role of age in changes in phonology, morphosyntax and discourse markers. In each case, a particular age group seemed to be in the lead: for phonology, to the extent that differences between the child/adolescent age groups were present, we see an adolescent peak for just one of the features studied, GOOSE-fronting. However, even the youngest children appear to have rejected local adult English models, in a way that is less true of non-contact situations

where changes are transmitted intergenerationally. Those whose primary caregivers speak non-local varieties of English appear to have rejected these, too. This gives rise to a flat age distribution among the child speakers, or one in which the youngest speakers appear to be in the lead. We argued that this was because, in this context of group second language acquisition, adults do not constitute a target-language model. We can see this particularly clearly in the discussion of the indefinite and definite articles. Either this is because the child perceives the parent as too remote from community norms (as we argued for the high back GOOSE variant), or else the parent does not provide any model at all. This leads to absence of any adolescent peak.

For BE LIKE there is a clear adolescent peak, in line with the incrementation model. For the remaining non-phonological features, for which we claim a community-internal origin, the peak, if present, was earlier, falling within the 12–13 age group. We argued that the child selects from a feature pool, and is guided to some extent by typological tendencies (as in the favouring of the *was/wasn't* pattern) or by general communicative strategies (as in the use of the *this is + speaker* quotative). In the case of the indefinite and definite articles, maturation (favouring acquisition of the standard) interacts with the presence of a feature pool in which the nonstandard forms are heavily represented, leading in the long run to convergence between Anglo and non-Anglo groups. Interaction between maturation and the presence of a feature pool is also arguably evident in the case of *was/were* variation.

However, the adolescent peak *is* present in the case of GOOSE-fronting, the only phonological feature which is global and not a local innovation (as we argue is the case for the remaining phonological features). In this respect, it patterns identically to the global quotative BE LIKE. In its adoption of these two features, London does not differ from other types of speech community.

What distinguishes London's inner city from other cases of language change generated community-internally is the presence of an exceptionally high proportion of speakers of language varieties other than the local variety, here, London English – 50% or higher in parts of some boroughs, sustained over a considerable time by continued immigration. By using a quantitative variationist methodology, we gain a detailed and dynamic picture of new forms of English in this multilingual environment: we see the development of a set of innovative linguistic features (radical diphthong changes and the discourse-pragmatic form *this is + speaker*), new, divergent distributions of existing forms (past tense forms of BE), a big increase in a latently present feature (simplification of article allomorphy) and, finally, the adoption of two global changes (GOOSE-fronting and BE LIKE). Individual speakers use these features variably, and we have labelled the resulting 'variety space' Multicultural London English, in recognition of the fact that the features are only loosely associated with specific ethnicities or language backgrounds.

Real-time data allows us to place the beginnings of MLE to some time in the early 1980s. Looking in detail at usage within very narrow age bands allows us to see how the various features comprising MLE are differentially distributed across the lifespan. In doing so, we can see differences and similarities between MLE and structured variation in canonical monolingual urban communities. Acquisition and age distributions are different for MLE, but the variation is no less structured, both linguistically and socially. In this respect, MLE speakers are part of a speech community.

By contrast, insights from second-language acquisition and creole studies allow us to argue that acquisition is fundamentally different from that in canonical speech communities. In particular, the linguistic conditions needed for the transmission of a local dialect are only present to a limited extent. Instead, group second language acquisition gives rise to much of the initial set of available variants, and concepts taken from research into language contact, most notably the notion of a feature pool, help us model the selection of linguistic features taken from the original set. The factors constraining the selection of features from the pool conform to those that are relevant in other language contact situations. Although the circumstances giving rise to this type of dialect formation are complex, they are today far from unique. We would argue that, at least in Europe, they are sufficiently common – and well enough understood – for the formation of multiethnolects to be seen as a distinct and important type of community language change.

NOTES

[1] *Linguistic innovators: the English of adolescents in London* 2004–7, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, Principal Investigator Paul Kerswill, Co-investigator Jenny Cheshire, Research Associates Susan Fox and Eivind Torgersen (ref. RES 000-23-0680). See Kerswill, Torgersen and Fox (2008) and Cheshire and Fox (2009).

[2] *Multicultural London English: the emergence, acquisition and diffusion of a new variety* 2007–10, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, Principal Investigator Paul Kerswill, Co-investigator Jenny Cheshire, Research Associates Susan Fox, Arfaan Khan and Eivind Torgersen (ref. RES-062-23-0814).

[3] Following Wells (1982), this word is used mnemonically, to represent the vocalic lexical set of words containing this vowel. We follow Wells's system of mnemonics throughout this article.

[4] Here and in the remainder of the article, the vowels shown were analyzed using Praat. Measurements were taken of the onset of diphthongs (at 35 ms after onset of voicing). The LPC pole prediction order that corresponded best with the location of the formants on the spectrogram was used for each measurement. The data was normalised using the Lobanov formula (Lobanov 1971).

[5] The statistical results are from a univariate linear mixed model (i.e., it has speaker as a random factor to account for dependence between of observations on the same speaker). The statistical testing was carried out in Sabre which is a package for R that analyses multi-process random effects data (Crouchley et al. 2008).

[6] On the other hand, without more conclusive data, we have to admit an alternative explanation whereby it is acquired, or created, first by the adolescent age group as an innovative quotative, and is then taken up by younger speakers with an expansion of functions.

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APPENDIX

Participants in the Multicultural London English project

age group	total/no. speakers	sex		ethnicity		
		male	female	'Anglo'	non-Anglo ethnicity	mixed race
4-5	28	18	10	16	2	
8-9	20	8	12	6	13	1
12-13	27	15	12	11	14	2
16-19	25	12	13	4	17	4
young adult	8	4	4	2	6	
caregivers	29	10	19	8	21	

With the exception of the 4-5 year olds, ethnicities are self-defined. They include Afro-Caribbean, Albanian, Bangladeshi, Black African, Bengali, Congolese, Filipino, Ghanaian, Kenyan, Kosovan, Kurdish, Jamaican, Moroccan, Nigerian, Portuguese, Somali, Turkish, Turkish Cypriot and Zanzibar.

Table 1. Quotatives in Hackney (inner London) and Havering (outer London)

	Hackney elderly	Havering elderly	Hackney young	Havering young
say	70.8% (261)	73.5% (200)	27.4% (351)	31.2% (328)
think	4.1% (15)	10.3% (28)	12.8% (164)	6.1% (64)
go	4.6% (17)	0.4% (1)	11.7% (150)	26.5% (279)
zero	18.9% (70)	12.9% (35)	15.1% (193)	12.3% (129)
be like			24.4% (313)	20.8% (219)
this is + speaker			**4.8% (61)**	
tell			1.9% (24)	
others	1.6% (6)	2.9% (8)	2% (26)	3.2% (33)
TOTAL N	370	272	1282	1052

Table 2. Quotatives in North London

	4–5 years	8–9 years	12–13 years	16–19 years	Caregivers
say	93.9 (46)	39.5 (202)	25.4 (163)	17.0 (218)	50.3 (174)
think	-	0.6 (3)	1.9 (12)	7.2 (92)	10.7 (37)
go	4.1 (2)	31.1 (159)	23.8 (153)	7.3 (94)	5.2 (18)
zero	2.0 (1)	2.0 (10)	14.5 (93)	12.5 (160)	18.2 (63)
be like	-	17.0 (87)	25.9 (166)	45.7 (584)	10.1 (35)
this is + speaker	-	**5.3 (27)**	**2.0 (13)**	**3.0 (38)**	
tell	-	1.6 (8)	0.3 (2)	2.2 (28)	1.2 (4)
others	-	2.5 (13)	1.6 (10)	2.7 (34)	3.2 (11)
Total no. quotatives	49	512	642	1279	346

Table 3. Implicational scale showing acquisition of quotative expressions

SPEAKER (AGE)	***Say***	***Go***	***Be like***	***This is + speaker***	***zero***
Nisha (5)	√				
Tamila (5)	√				
Neelan (5)	√				
Kenneth (5)	√				
Rachel (5)	√				
Talullah (8)	√				
Kareen (8)	√				
Ikram (8)	√				
Derya (8)	√				√
Saddiki (8)	√				
Dafne (8)	√				
Uzay (8)	√			√	√
Rasgur (5)	√	√			
Din (5)	√	√			
Nandita (8)	√	√			
Catherine (12)	√	√			√
Junior (8)	√	√		√	√
Stephen (8)	√	√		√	√
Louise (8)	√	√	√		√
Wahid (8)	√	√	√		
Madeleine (8)	√	√	√		
Mahir (8)	√	√	√		
Dumaka (8)	√	√	√	√	
Howard (8)	√	√	√	√	
Lydia (8)	√	√	√	√	√
Ben (8)	√	√	√	√	
Scarlett (13)	√	√	√		
Christopher (13)	√	√	√		√
Sadik (11)	√	√	√		√
Barry (12)	√	√	√		√
Meg (12)	√	√	√		√
Abigail (13)	√		√	√	√
Henry (12)	√	√	√		
Darren (12)	√	√	√		√

Table 4. Quotative and non-quotative uses of *this is + speaker*

this is + speaker	8–9 year olds	12–13 year olds	16–19 year olds
quotative uses	51% (N=27)	87% (N=13)	93% (N=38)
non-quotative uses	49% (N=26)	13% (N=2)	7% (N=3)

Table 5. Percentage (total N) nonstandard *was, wasn't* and *weren't* in Hackney and Havering (elderly and adolescent age groups)

	Havering age 65+	Havering age 16–19	Hackney age 65+	Hackney age 16–19
POSITIVE CONTEXTS				
Nonstandard *was*	19.2% (98)	58% (410)	51.5% (268)	42% (615)
NEGATIVE CONTEXTS				
Nonstandard *wasn't*			30% (20)	46% (39)
Nonstandard *weren't*	41% (51)	69% (180)	17% (69)	41% (220)

Note: numbers of contexts for non-standard *wasn't* in Havering are too few to comment on

Table 6. Percentage (total N) nonstandard *was, wasn't* and *weren't* in North London

Age	4–5 year olds	8–9 year olds	12–13 year olds	16–19 year olds	Caregivers
POSITIVE CONTEXTS					
Nonstandard *was*	**78** (9)	**56** (162)	**77** (208)	**37** (357)	**45** (157)
NEGATIVE CONTEXTS					
Nonstandard *wasn't*	**100** (1)	**50** (10)	**73** (15)	**48** (27)	**27** (15)
Nonstandard *weren't*	**33** (6)	**25** (32)	**22** (54)	**31.5** (89)	**22** (59)

Table 7. Percentage (total N) nonstandard *was* in North London in positive contexts: age and ethnicity

Ethnicity (total no. speakers)	8–9 year olds	12–13 year olds	16–19 year olds	Caregivers	Percentage for all age groups (total N)
"other" (11)	**24** (17)	**90** (39)	**37** (19)		**63** (73)
Anglo (27)	**65** (49)	**71** (108)	**36** (100)	**47** (116)	**53** (373)
Turkish/Kurdish (8)	**71** (28)	**80** (25)	**26** (68)		**48** (121)
Black African (9)	**43** (23)	**70** (20)	**45** (49)		**50** (92)
Black Caribbean (18)	**72** (25)	**75** (4)	**36** (95)	**39** (41)	**43** (165)
Mixed race white/Black Caribbean (4)	**78** (9)	**92** (12)	**54** (26)		**68** (47)
Bangladeshi (2)	**0** (11)				**0** (11)
Percentage for all ethnicities (total N)	**56** (162)	**77** (208)	**37** (357)	**45** (157)	

Table 8. Percentage (total N) nonstandard *wasn't/weren't* in North London in negative contexts: age and ethnicity

Age groups	8–9 year olds	12–13 year olds	16–19 year olds	Caregivers	total
wasn't					
Anglos	**0** (1)	**50** (8)	**50** (4)	**29** (14)	**38** (26)
Non-Anglos		**100** (7)	**50** (22)	**100** (1)	**60** (30)
weren't					
Anglos	**78** (9)	**39** (28)	**41** (17)	**32** (40)	**40** (94)
Non-Anglos	**0** (21)	**4** (23)	**24** (67)	**0** (19)	**13** (130)

Table 9. Use of nonstandard *was* in positive contexts – Abigail

	Abigail	
Subject	No. of tokens	% *was*
First person *We*	11/12	92
Second person *You*	1/1	100
Third person *They*	8/8	100
Total	20/21	95

Table 10. Percentage (total N) use of quotatives – Abigail

	Innovators project: Hackney young	MLE project: 12–13 years	MLE project: Abigail
Say	27 (351)	25 (163)	26 (11)
Think	13 (164)	2 (12)	
Go	12 (150)	24 (153)	
Zero	15 (193)	14 (93)	7 (3)
Be Like	24 (313)	26 (166)	37 (16)
This is (subject)	5 (61)	2 (13)	28 (12)
Tell	2 (24)	0.3 (2)	
Others	2 (26)	2 (10)	2 (1)
TOTAL N	1282	642	43

Table 11. Use of prevocalic indefinite article [ə] plus hiatus-resolving [ʔ]

	4–5 year olds	8–9 year olds	12–13 year olds	16–19 year olds	Caregivers
Anglo	-	**50%** (N=4/8)	**26%** (N=10/38)	**11%** (N=5/44)	**2%** (N=1/51)
Black Caribbean	**100%** (N=1)	**100%** (N=13)	**100%** (N=4)	**78%** (N=29/37)	**32%** (N=6/19)
Black African	**100%** (N=11)	**100%** (N=6)	**50%** (N=3/6)	**70%** (N=7/10)	
Mixed race Anglo/ Black Caribbean	**100%** (N=1)	**0%** (N=0/5)	**67%** (N=2/3)	**50%** (N=2/4)	
Turkish	**100%** (N=1)	**67%** (N=2/3)	**80%** (N=4/5)	**79%** (N=11/14)	
'Others'	**100%** (N=1)	**50%** (N=1/2)	**100%** (N=8)	**67%** (N=4/6)	

Table 12. Use of prevocalic definite article [ðə] plus hiatus-resolving [ʔ]

	4–5 year olds	8–9 year olds	12–13 year olds	16–19 yr olds	Caregivers
Anglo	-	**53%** (N=9/17)	**47%** (N=27/57)	**28%** (N=33/119)	**9%** (N=16/187)
Black Caribbean	**100%** (N=8)	**78%** (N=18/23)	**30%** (N=3/10)	**70%** (64/91)	**49%** (N=40/81)
Black African	**100%** (N=6)	**100%** (N=8)	**100%** (N=9)	**75%** (N=64/91)	
Mixed race Anglo/ Black Caribbean	**0%** (N=0/1)	**33%** (N=3/9)	**23%** (N=3/13)	**75%** (9/12)	
Turkish	**100%** (N=2)	**25%** (N=3/12)	**81%** (N=13/16)	**77%** (N=34/44)	
'Others'	**100%** (N=7)	**85%** (11/13)	**84%** (16/19)	**69%** (9/13)	

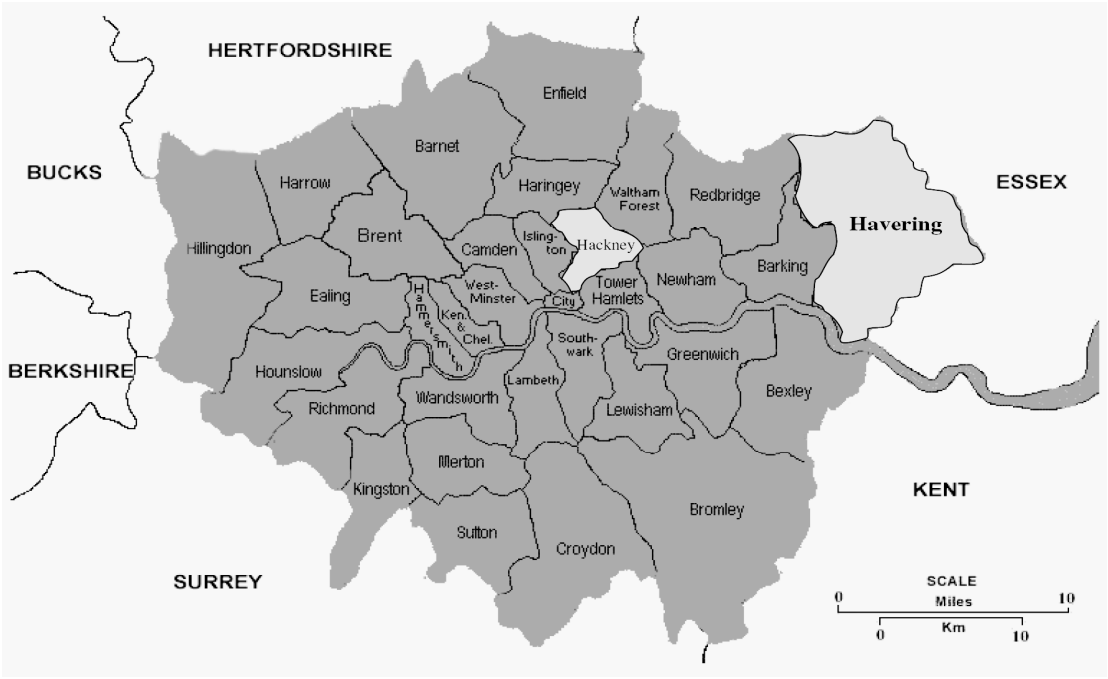


Figure 1 Map of London, with the boroughs of Hackney and Havering highlighted (from www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/maps/london_map.htm). Haringey and Islington are, respectively, to the North and East of Hackney.

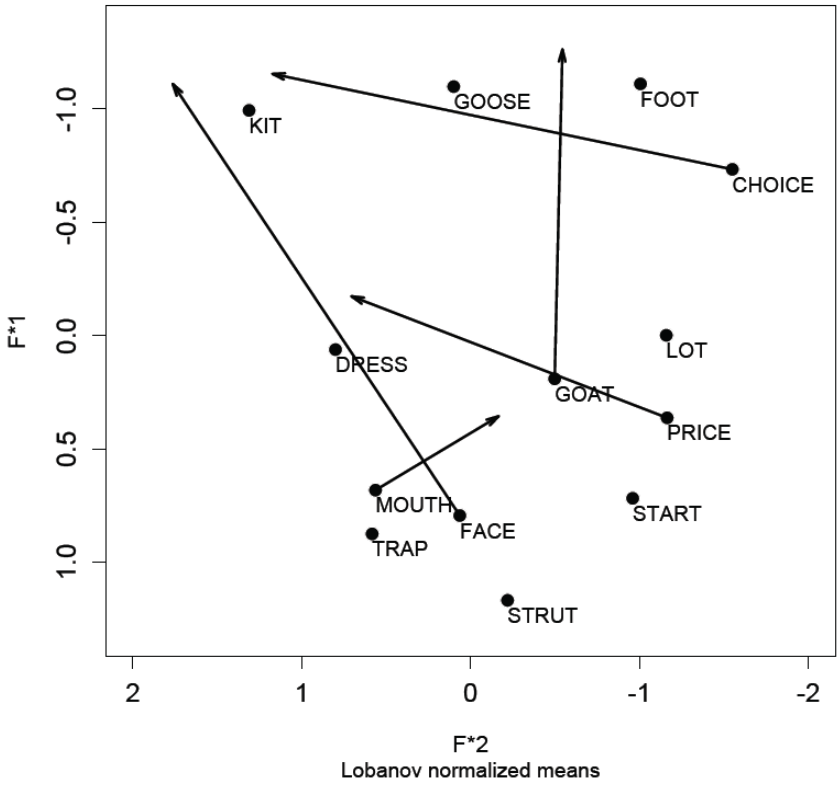


Figure 2. Diphthong system of elderly male speaker from Hackney born 1918.

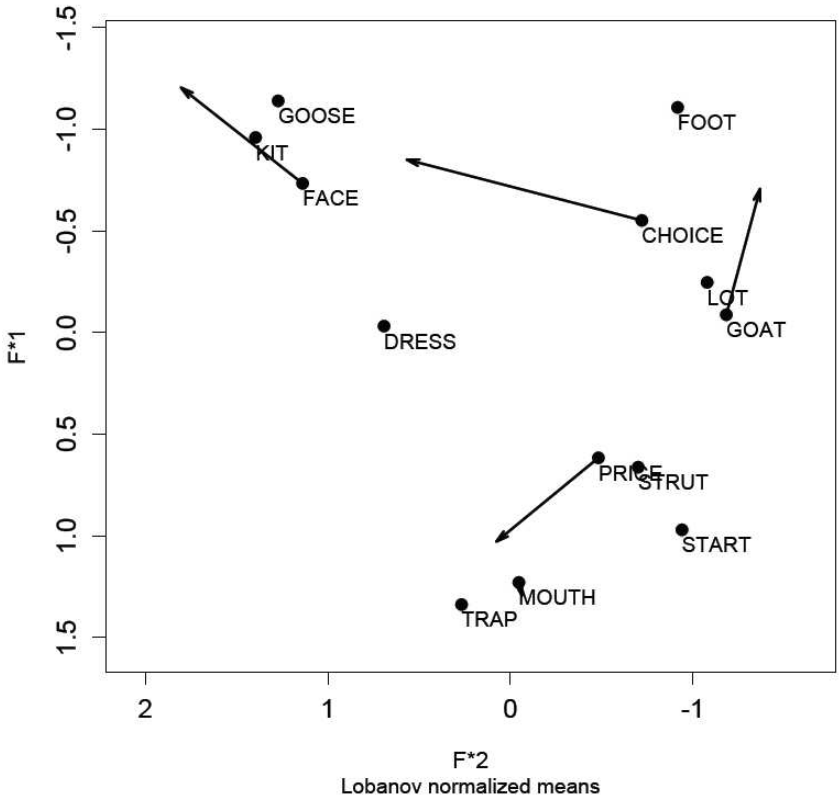
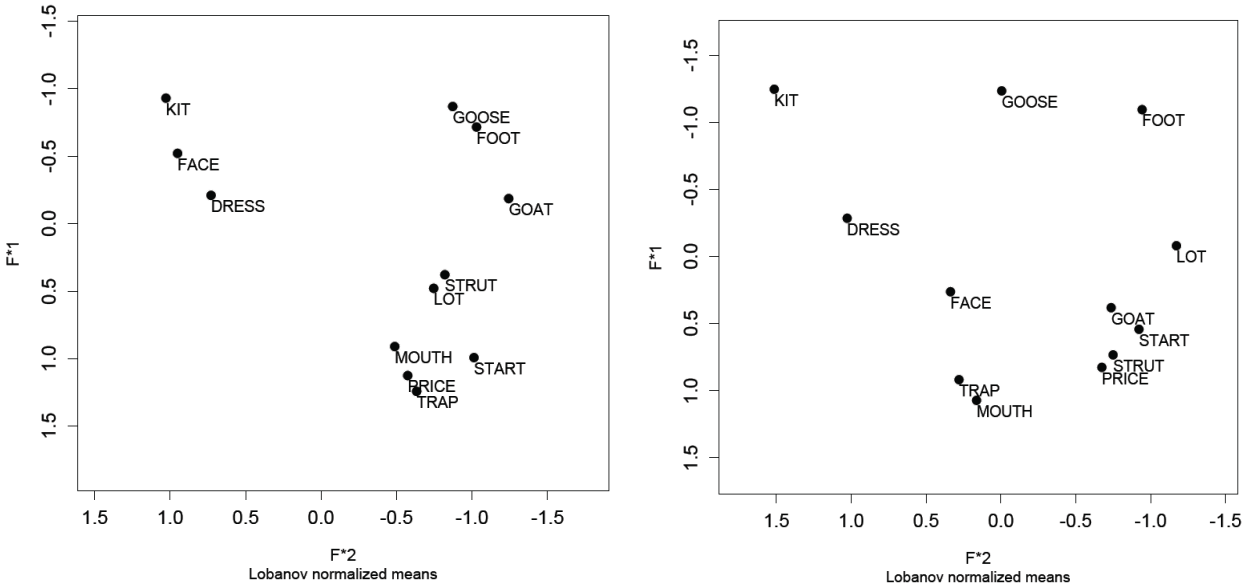


Figure 3. Diphthong system of young male from Hackney, Afro-Caribbean origin, born 1989.



(a) (b)

Figure 4. Composite vowel systems of 11 adolescent London Jamaicans recorded in 1984. (a) 'Patois' style, (b) interview with white fieldworker. (For diphthongs, only onsets are shown.)

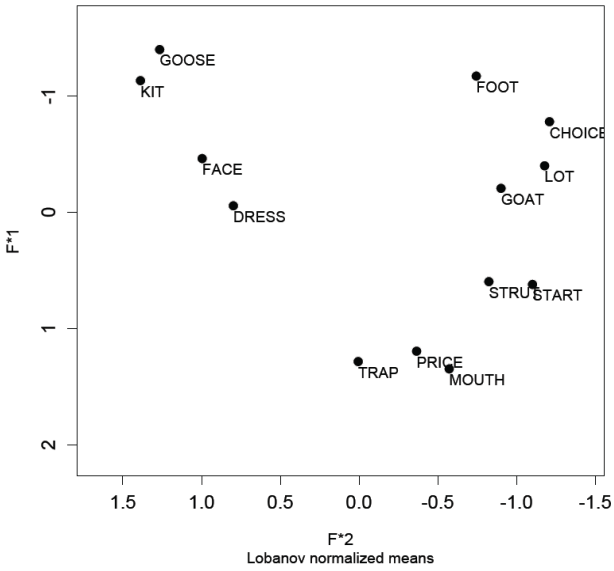
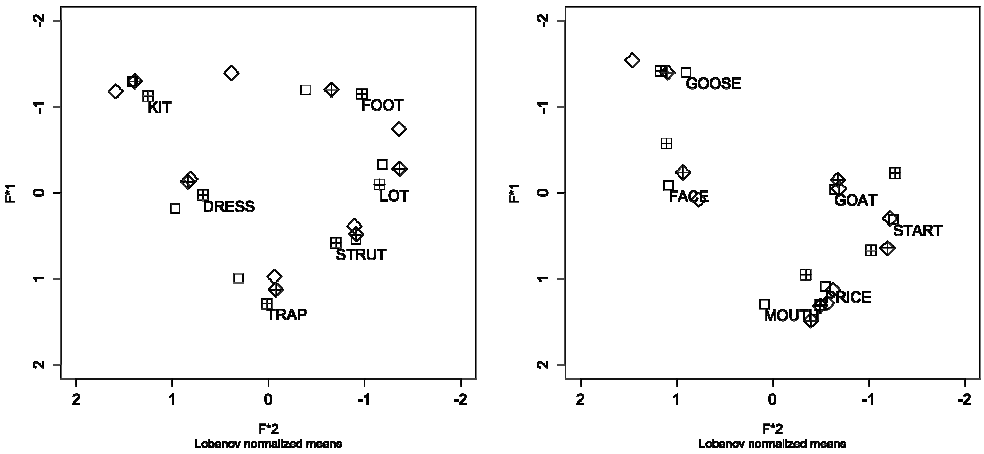


Figure 5. London inner city vowels: *Multicultural London English* project adolescent speakers (aged 16–19) of Afro-Caribbean origin. (For diphthongs, only onsets are shown.)



(a) (b)

Figure 6. London inner city vowels: Multicultural London English project adolescent speakers (aged 16–19). (a) Short monophthongs, (b) diphthongs plus GOOSE and START. (For diphthongs, only onsets are shown.)

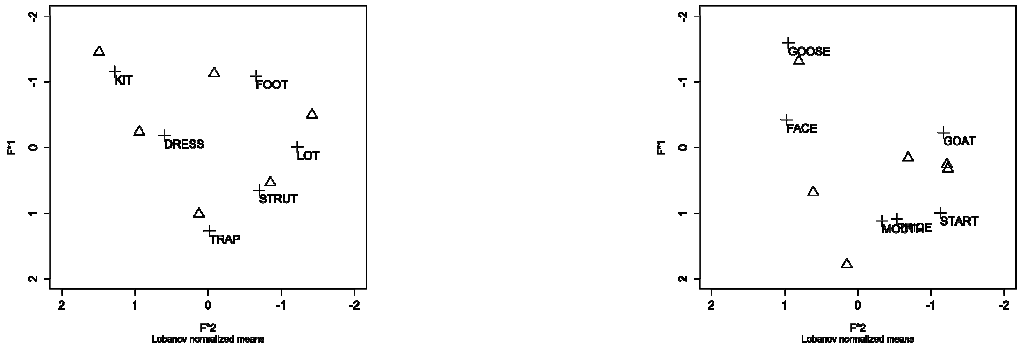
Key:

◇ = Anglo female (N=5)

□ = Anglo male (N=3)

◈ = non-Anglo female (N=10)

⊞ = non-Anglo male (N=8)



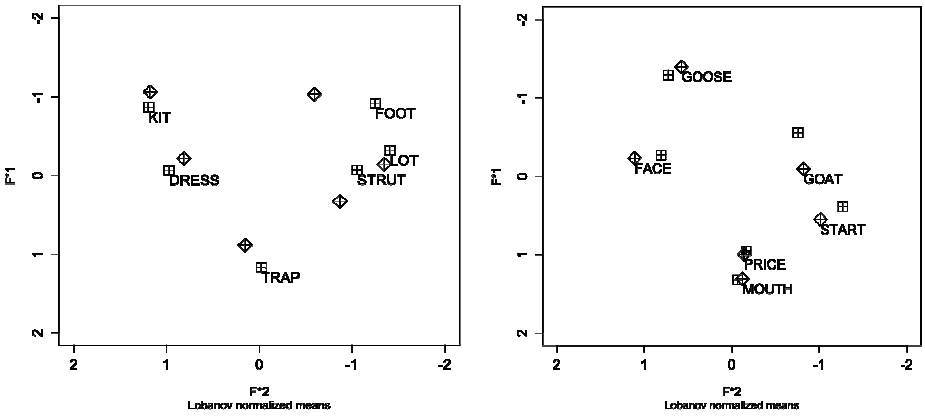
(a) (b)

Figure 7. Vowels, London inner city: young adult speakers (aged 20–35, median 23, mean 24). (a) Short monophthongs, (b) diphthongs plus GOOSE and START. (For diphthongs, only onsets are shown.)

Key:

\+ = non-Anglo (5 males, 1 female)

△ = Anglo (2 females)



(a) (b)

Figure 8. London inner city vowels: 4–5 year old speakers (all speakers are non-Anglo). (a) short monophthongs, (b) diphthongs plus GOOSE and START. (For diphthongs, only onsets are shown.)

Key:

◈ = non-Anglo female (N=8)

⊞ = non-Anglo male (N=9)

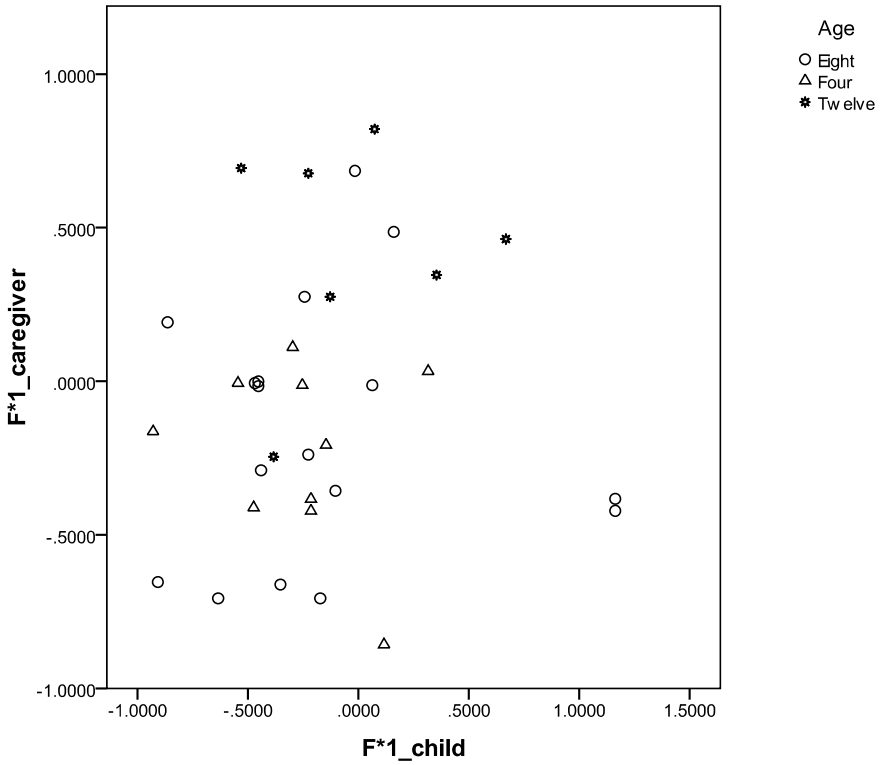


Figure 9(a) Correlation between children's and caregivers' FACE (F1)

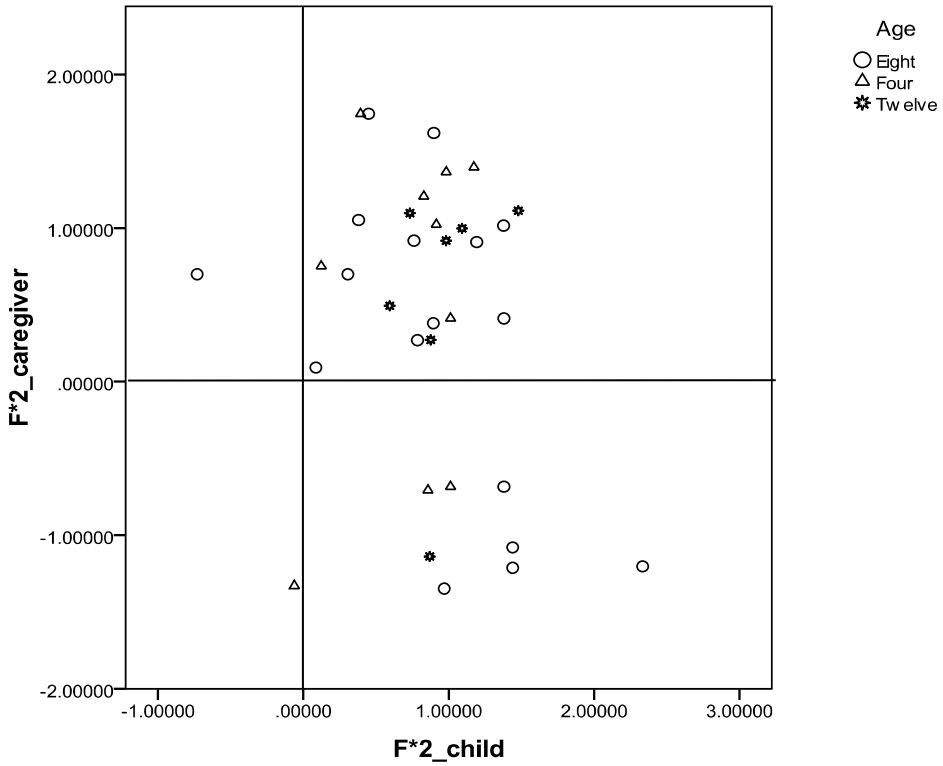


Figure 9(b) Correlation between children's and caregivers' GOOSE (F2)

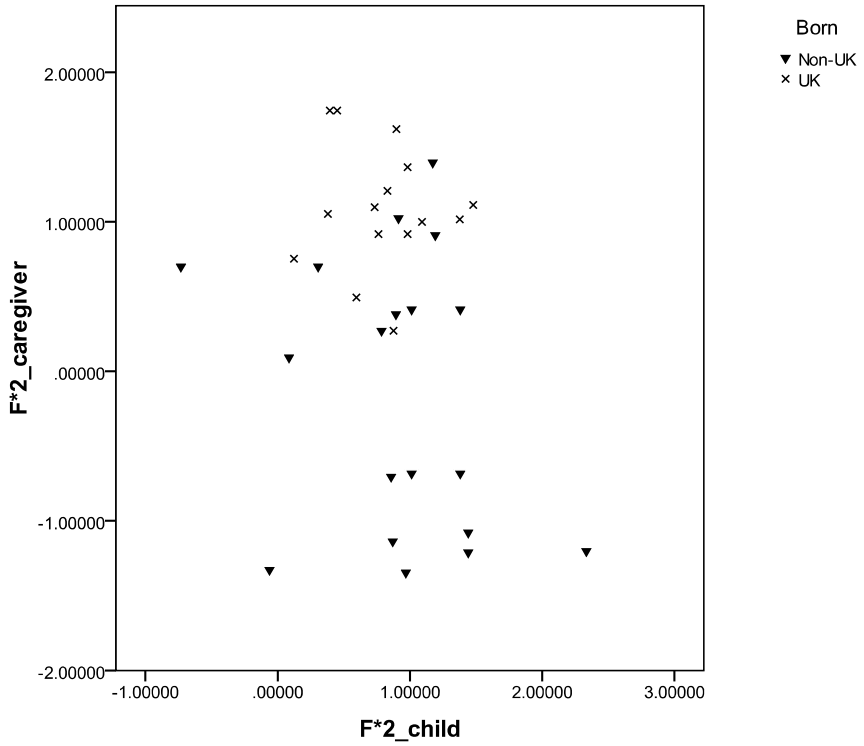
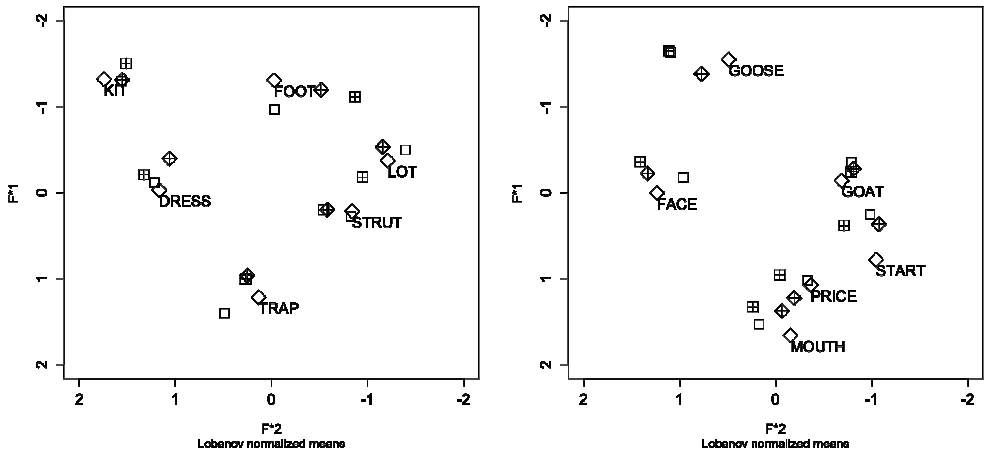


Figure 10. Correlation between children's and caregivers' GOOSE (F2), by place of birth of caregiver.



(a) (b)

Figure 11. London inner city vowels: Multicultural London English project 8-year-old speakers. (a) Short monophthongs (b) diphthongs plus GOOSE and START. (For diphthongs, only onsets are shown.)

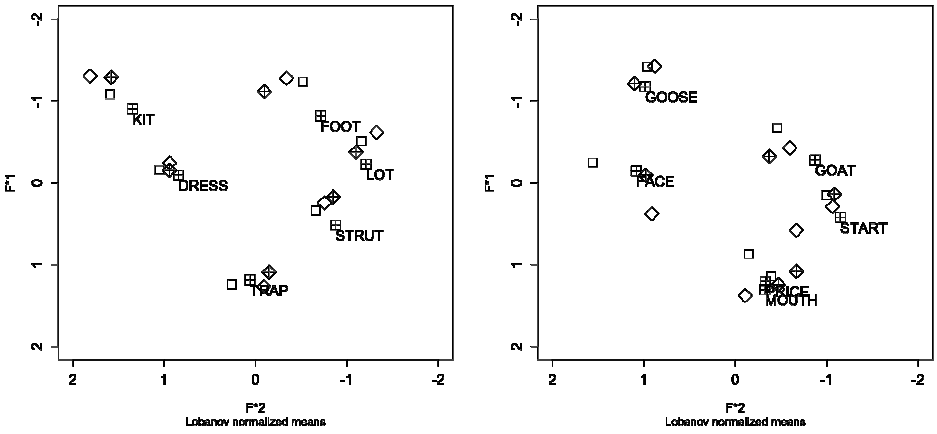
Key:

= Anglo female (N=3)

= Anglo male (N=3)

= non-Anglo female (N=9)

= non-Anglo male (N=5)



(a) (b)

Figure 12. London inner city vowels: Multicultural London English project 12–13-year-old speakers. (a) Short monophthongs, (b) diphthongs plus GOOSE and START. (For diphthongs, only onsets are shown.)

Key:

= Anglo female (N=7)
= Anglo male (N=5)
= non-Anglo female (N=7)
= non-Anglo male (N=8)