

Reversing Babel

Declining linguistic diversity and the flawed attempts to protect it

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*For Tom,
who first got me thinking.*

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THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (2005)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

| | LABIAL | | CORONAL | | | | DORSAL | | | RADICAL | | LARYNGEAL |
|---------------------|----------|--------------|---------|----------|-----------------|-----------|---------|-------|--------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| | Bilabial | Labio-dental | Dental | Alveolar | Palato-alveolar | Retroflex | Palatal | Velar | Uvular | Pharyngeal | Epi-glottal | Glottal |
| Nasal | m | ɱ | n | | | | ɳ | ɲ | ŋ | ɴ | | |
| Plosive | p b | ɸ β | t d | | | | ʈ ɖ | c ɟ | k g | q ɢ | ʔ | ʕ |
| Fricative | ɸ β | f v | θ ð | s z | ʃ ʒ | ʂ ʐ | ç ʝ | x ɣ | χ ʁ | ħ ʕ | ħ ʕ | h ɦ |
| Approximant | | ʋ | ɹ | | | | ɻ | j | ɰ | ɤ | | |
| Trill | ʙ | | r | | | | | | | | ʀ | |
| Tap, Flap | | ⱱ | ɾ | | | | ɽ | | | | | |
| Lateral fricative | | | ɬ ɮ | | | ɮ | ɬ | ɮ | | | | |
| Lateral approximant | | | l | | | | ɭ | ʎ | L | | | |
| Lateral flap | | | ɭ | | | | ɮ | | | | | |

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a modally voiced consonant, except for murmured *ɦ*. Shaded areas denote articulations judged to be impossible. Light grey letters are unofficial extensions of the IPA.

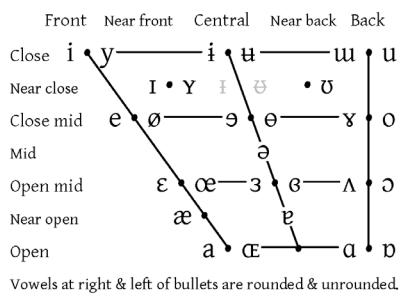
CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

| Anterior click releases (require posterior stops) | Voiced implosives | Ejectives |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|
| ⦿ Bilabial fricated | ɓ Bilabial | ʼ <i>Examples:</i> |
| Laminal alveolar fricated ("dental") | ɗ Dental or alveolar | pʼ Bilabial |
| ! Apical (post)alveolar abrupt ("retroflex") | ɟ Palatal | tʼ Dental or alveolar |
| ‡ Laminal postalveolar abrupt ("palatal") | ɠ Velar | kʼ Velar |
| Lateral alveolar fricated ("lateral") | ɣ Uvular | sʼ Alveolar fricative |

CONSONANTS (CO-ARTICULATED)

- M Voiceless labialized velar approximant
- W Voiced labialized velar approximant
- ɥ Voiced labialized palatal approximant
- ɕ Voiceless palatalized postalveolar (alveolo-palatal) fricative
- ʑ Voiced palatalized postalveolar (alveolo-palatal) fricative
- ɧ Simultaneous x and ʃ (disputed)
- kp ts Affricates and double articulations may be joined by a tie bar

VOWELS



SUPRASEGMENTALS

- ' Primary stress
- ˈˈ Extra stress
- ˌ Secondary stress [*ˌfoʊnəˈtɪʃən*]
- eː Long
- e Short
- ˌ Syllable break
- ˌˌ Minor (foot) break
- ˌˌˌ Major (intonation) break
- ↗ Global rise
- ↘ Global fall

TO NE

- Level tones
- ˥ Top
- ˥˥ High
- ˥˥˥ Mid
- ˥˥˥˥ Low
- ˥˥˥˥˥ Bottom
- Contour-tone examples:
- ˥˥˥˥˥˥ Rising
- ˥˥˥˥˥˥ Falling
- ˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥ High rising
- ˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥ Low rising
- ˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥ High falling
- ˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥ Low falling
- ˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥ Peaking
- ˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥˥ Dipping

DIACRITICS Diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, as *ɲ̥*. Other IPA symbols may appear as diacritics to represent phonetic detail: *t̚* (fricative release), *bʰ* (breathy voice), *ʔa* (glottal onset), *ɤ* (epenthetic schwa), *oʷ* (diphthongization).

| SYLLABICITY & RELEASES | PHONATION | PRIMARY ARTICULATION | SECONDARY ARTICULATION | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------|--|---------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| ɲ ɳ | Syllabic | ɲ̚ ɳ̚ | Voiceless or Slack voice | t̚ b̚ | Dental | t̚ʷ d̚ʷ | Labialized | ɔ̚ ɰ̚ | More rounded |
| e̚ ɔ̚ | Non-syllabic | ɲ̚ ɳ̚ | Modal voice or Stiff voice | t̚̚ d̚̚ | Apical | t̚̚ d̚̚ | Palatalized | ɔ̚̚ ɰ̚̚ | Less rounded |
| t̚ʰ h̚t̚ | (Pre)aspirated | ɲ̚̚ ɳ̚̚ | Breathy voice | t̚̚̚ d̚̚̚ | Laminal | t̚̚̚ d̚̚̚ | Velarized | ẽ̚ ̥̚ | Nasalized |
| d̚ⁿ | Nasal release | ɲ̚̚̚ ɳ̚̚̚ | Creaky voice | ɰ̚̚̚ t̚̚̚̚ | Advanced | t̚̚̚̚ d̚̚̚̚ | Pharyngealized | ɤ̚̚̚ ɤ̚̚̚̚ | Rhoticity |
| d̚ˡ | Lateral release | ɲ̚̚̚̚ ɳ̚̚̚̚ | Strident | ɰ̚̚̚̚ t̚̚̚̚̚ | Retracted | t̚̚̚̚̚ ɰ̚̚̚̚̚ | Velarized or pharyngealized | ɤ̚̚̚̚̚ ɤ̚̚̚̚̚̚ | Advanced tongue root |
| t̚̚̚̚ | No audible release | ɲ̚̚̚̚̚ ɳ̚̚̚̚̚ | Linguolabial | ä̚̚̚̚ j̚̚̚̚̚ | Centralized | ũ̚̚̚̚̚ | Mid-centralized | ɤ̚̚̚̚̚̚ ɤ̚̚̚̚̚̚̚ | Retracted tongue root |
| ɸ̚ β̚ | Lowered (β̚ is a bilabial approximant) | ɸ̚̚̚̚̚ ɰ̚̚̚̚̚̚ | | ɸ̚̚̚̚̚̚ ɰ̚̚̚̚̚̚̚ | Raised (ɰ̚̚̚̚̚̚ is a voiced alveolar non-sibilant fricative, ɰ̚̚̚̚̚̚̚ a fricative trill) | | | | |

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Phonetic_Alphabet

For audio demonstrations, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/earmstro/ipa/>

Abstract

This is an investigation about linguistic diversity, examining its decline in different societal conditions over the last century, and interrogating claims in language policy and planning to be ‘protecting linguistic diversity’, using the UK as its main example.

Chapter 1 comprises a review of variationist sociolinguistics, showing how it has never fully defined linguistic diversity. Adjustments are suggested, and a working definition of linguistic diversity offered. Chapter 2 presents data from two major nationwide dialect surveys, in 1889 and 1962, showing how local dialects were weakening in this period. The main focus is declining diversity, but information is presented about possible conditioning factors, primarily increases in literacy. In the absence of such nationwide reports after 1962, Chapter 3 collates individual dialect studies from two regions of England, the northeast and southeast, describing dialect convergence across these large geographical areas. These changes are contrasted to those reported in Chapter 2. Again the main theme is declining diversity, but information is reviewed to help explain these contrasts, primarily increases in geographical mobility in the latter half of the 20th century, concentrated around these regions. Chapter 4 examines dialect weakening that some researchers have attributed, at least in part, to the media. This also represents a change in societal conditions undergirding declining diversity. Some theoretical work is done to distinguish such changes from those observed in Chapter 3. Chapter 5 reviews the rhetoric of minority language policy and planning, and its frequent and explicit claims to be ‘protecting linguistic diversity’. The insights developed in Chapters 1-4 are applied to two modern UK language revivals, Cornish and Welsh, to see how diversity overall is faring here. The conclusion sums up the gaps in our thinking about linguistic diversity, and clarifies the limitations of planned interventions upon language.

Introduction

There is already an extensive literature ostensibly on the subject of linguistic diversity and its decline; but this is mostly about language death, when a minority language is abandoned in favour of a dominant majority language. To be sure, a language completely disappearing is a dramatic loss for diversity, but to concentrate on this alone can steal attention from the kinds of changes that happen within languages, but without that language necessarily ‘dying’ as a result.

One reason for the focus on whole language loss is the close relationship between language death and its sister subject, language policy and planning, whose aim is to support endangered languages, and empower their speakers (usually minority groups) to oppose the perceived domination of a majority language. Oppositional movements do not thrive on massive diversity. They require agreement about what is being opposed, who is in the group doing the opposing, and what are the demands of that opposition. For a minority wishing to defend the use their language, agreement is required about just what constitutes their language.

The purpose of this investigation, then, is to reach a fuller description of linguistic diversity and its decline, and to use this to evaluate the explicit claims within language policy and planning to be protecting linguistic diversity.

Chapter 1 comprises a brief review of variationist sociolinguistics and how this discipline, despite fully describing all facets of linguistic diversity, has under-articulated the term itself, leaving it without a definition. Some minor changes are suggested in order to emphasise the full extent of diversity, for the purpose of a working definition.

Chapters 2-4 demonstrate how linguistic diversity has been declining in British English over the last hundred some years, in different societal conditions. The purpose here is to select a supposedly powerful language to illustrate the pervasiveness of declining diversity.

All this is in preparation for Chapter 5, examining two modern day minority language revivals, Cornish and Welsh. Claims regarding linguistic diversity are reviewed – first at a general level of language policy and planning as a whole, then at the European political level – before examining how linguistic diversity is faring in these two revivals. The aim is to question whether these overarching policy claims are borne out in practice, and how this contributes to a better understanding of the limitations of attempts to influence human language.

Finally, I am making no moral, ethical, practical or other type of case in favour of linguistic diversity. These things have been attempted elsewhere. There is no normative element to this investigation, no suggestions for how linguistic diversity might actually be protected. If there is a recommendation, it is simply a greater attention to what is meant by linguistic diversity; and a more careful approach to the various interventions undertaken in its name.

Chapter 1

(Re)defining linguistic diversity



1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to use insights from variationist sociolinguistics, to develop a definition of linguistic diversity – a term that so far has been under-defined. What definitions exist tend towards reductionism, often reducing diversity to a series of distinct languages.

Nettle's 1999 volume *Linguistic Diversity* is a case in point and a good introduction. He defines linguistic diversity as "the total number of languages" (p.3). Although he then discusses how languages borrow from each other and their boundaries are never certain, this is part of a philological procedure to establish historical relationships between languages, and their histories as distinct entities. He then lists three types of linguistic diversity (p.10): *language diversity* (total number of mutually unintelligible languages); *phylogenetic diversity* (different lineages of languages, i.e. number of branches on language trees); and *structural diversity* (range of permutations in linguistic structure, such as sentence word order). Though these categories may be related and change over time, they are nevertheless distinct. Indeed his overall aim is to explain "[t]he way in which the languages of the world have diverged" (p.12). In a co-authored follow-up to this volume focussing on language death (Nettle & Romaine, 2000), which regularly mentions linguistic diversity, the authors are still quite candid about this reductionism:

There are a number of reasons why it is difficult to say precisely how many languages there are in the world. In addition to languages, there are also varieties or dialects of languages, many of which are also at risk. We confine ourselves here, however, to the topic of language endangerment.

Nettle & Romaine, 2000:27

Despite this caveat, their frequent use of the term linguistic diversity, without qualification, suggests that *all* diversity is under discussion. This chapter reviews research in variationist sociolinguistics to explore more fully the extent of linguistic diversity, and how this includes but goes beyond a series of languages and language varieties. Variationist sociolinguistics contains

all of the necessary information to define linguistic diversity in this way; but has not spelt this out as a definition of the term. This has allowed a situation in which linguistic diversity can be explicitly named and discussed, yet reduced to discrete languages.

1.1.1 Applying a working definition of linguistic diversity

Linguistic diversity has two main elements: existing, *synchronic* differences in language (at a single point in time); and ongoing, *diachronic* change (across time). Marcellesi (2003, cited in Jaffe, 2007:71) calls these respectively *variation* and *variability*. The first is three-dimensional, the second four-dimensional.

Based on these tenets, we can say that *linguistic diversity can be represented by all the dialects of all the languages in the world; and the potential for language to change in new ways*. The total number of languages does not encapsulate this; but nor does the total number of dialects or other language-internal varieties, howsoever recorded. It is ongoing change and the potential for new differences that are equally essential (for a related argument see Mac Giolla Chríost, 2007:104). Put another way, while variation demonstrates *heterogeneity* in language, variation and variability together demonstrate diversity.

The rest of this chapter reviews variationist sociolinguistic studies, exploring the way that this discipline, despite fully describing all aspects of linguistic diversity, has not defined the term itself. Explanations are attempted, mostly looking at how a concentration on discrete linguistic entities – dialects, languages, Creoles and so on – tends towards a description of variation, and takes descriptive space away from perpetual ongoing variability. Social dialectology and Creole studies are dealt with separately; not to suggest that these are linguistically incomparable, but because their academic discussion differs enough to warrant this separation. Creole studies is

included here even though subsequent chapters concentrate on social dialectology. This is to represent the breadth of variationist sociolinguistics, and show important commonalities.

1.2 The development of variationist sociolinguistics

Variationist sociolinguistics began in the 1960s with a range of goals, one of which was to counter assumptions of linguistic homogeneity, that languages exist as homogeneous units and that there is a ‘perfect’ way to speak each language:

[M]ost languages have been studied and described as if they were standard languages. The conspicuous absence of statements about variation and gradience in most volumes called grammar should indeed give the reader cause to reflect on their ontological status. Far from being iconic of a reality ‘out there’, they are the products of professional practices which determine what should be included and what should not, what descriptive categories should be set up and such like. More precisely, they are based on the assumption that it is possible to restrict the number of parameters one can appeal to in explaining a particular grammatical construction.

Mühlhäusler, 1999:256

Recounting the emergence of sociolinguistics, Murray describes how American structuralists displayed a “lack of interest in the systematic character of the heterogeneous language of a community” (2004:7, citing Weinreich et al., 1968:123). Demonstrating linguistic heterogeneity emerged as an objective; to explain how, within one language, the speech of certain groups is identifiably different in terms of grammar, syntax, phonology and so on. The main discovery of early work in this area was that linguistic variation could be mapped along existing social differences, and was systematic and explicable. Moreover, this discovery of the distribution of variable forms across speaker groups demonstrated *systematicity* in language-internal variation:

Over the past few decades, sociolinguistic research has concentrated on the structured heterogeneity inherent in all speech and how this variation is conditioned by both internal and external constraints.

J. Smith et al., 2007:63

Because sociolinguists' treatment of language focuses on its heterogeneity, they seek a unit of analysis at a level of social aggregation at which it can be said that the heterogeneity is organised.

Eckert, 2000:30

Variation is typically examined in a number of linguistic *variables*, a category of two or more linguistic alternatives co-varying in one of three ways: categorically (the variation always occurs given certain circumstances); quasi-predictably or probabilistically (in line, for example, with another linguistic variable or a social variable); or in an apparently unpredictable, random way ("free variation") (Watt, 2007). These linguistic alternatives, or *variants*, operate at different levels of linguistic structure. For example:

- morphological (e.g. plural marking, as in 'two years' / 'two year');
- syntactic (e.g. single / multiple negation, as in 'I haven't got anything' / 'I ain't got nothing');
- phonological (e.g. pronunciation of /t/ in 'butter').

A sociolinguist may record, say, the speech of people in certain locations in England, and demonstrate that their language use differs in systematic ways. Diagnostic pronunciations can be added, as can other social groups and subgroups, but this remains a process of collecting data sets. Hence "the universe of linguistic analysis is a single language or dialect, a body of verbal signs abstracted from the totality of communicative behavior" (Gumperz, 1962:460). Aggregated linguistic groups like dialects are heuristic devices, names for things that would not otherwise exist in a tangible sense – what scholars of rhetoric might refer to as a *catachresis* (Groppo, 2006, 2007). This occasionally comes across in forewords and introductions to sociolinguistic research. A good example is provided by Trudgill (1999), worth quoting in full:

People often ask: how many dialects are there in England? This question is impossible to answer. After all, how many places are there to be from? If you travel from one part of the country to another, you will most often find that the dialects

change gradually as you go. The further you travel, the more different the dialects will become from the one in the place where you started, but the different dialects will seem to merge into one another, without any abrupt transitions.

There are no really sharp dialect boundaries in England, and dialects certainly do not coincide with counties. Yorkshire Dialect, for instance, does not suddenly change dramatically into Durham Dialect as you cross the County Durham boundary. Indeed, the dialects of northern Yorkshire are much more like those of County Durham than they are like those of southern Yorkshire. Dialects form a continuum, and are very much a matter of more-or-less rather than either/or. There is really no such thing as an entirely separate, self-contained dialect. Dialectologists often draw lines on maps dividing areas which have a particular word or pronunciation from those which don't. If they then put all these lines together on a single map, they find that none of them are in exactly the same place. Dialects differ from immediately neighbouring dialects only slightly, and can be heard to change slowly and word by word, pronunciation by pronunciation, as you travel from one village to the next.

All the same, in this book we shall be talking about Traditional Dialect and Modern Dialect areas *as if* there were such things as separate dialects. This is a convenient thing to do. We realize that dialects form a continuum, but for the sake of clarity and brevity, we divide this continuum up into areas at points where it is least continuum-like. That is, we draw boundaries between dialect areas at places where we find a situation most closely resembling an abrupt transition. This has the advantage of fitting in with most people's perceptions of how dialects work. After all, if you can tell a Liverpudlian from a Mancunian by their speech, it will not necessarily worry you that there may be places between Liverpool and Manchester whose dialects you will have trouble in placing. However, in our discussions of dialect areas, it must always be borne in mind that these areas are not particularly firmly or permanently fixed, and that they can only be a simplified approximation to what actually happens in real life.

Trudgill, 1999:6-7 (orig. emphasis)

There is reflexivity here about what the dialect represents,¹ both epistemologically (in the mind of the linguist) and ontologically (in the mouths of speakers). The dialect may be an abstracted category, but it is intuitive, accessible, reliable and defensible; and is adequate for the task of explaining social and linguistic covariation. This chapter explores how the use of these discrete linguistic entities has enabled heterogeneity to be distinguished from homogeneity, but not so much from diversity; and that this has left linguistic diversity under-defined. For example Mufwene stresses the plurality of "American Englishes [...] simply to emphasize *diversity* over the typically suggested uniformity" (2001:81 – emphasis added). Diversity is defined less by what it is than what it is not: uniform homogeneity. Exploring this conflation in sociolinguistics is the main task here.

¹ See also Mülhäusler (1997:227-8) for comparable methodological reflections.

1.3 Approaches to linguistic diversity in sociolinguistics

1.3.1 Social dialectology

The principle of accountability [...] requires not only that occurrences of a particular variant (such as a glottal stop) should be noted; it is necessary also to identify sites where it can occur and to note not only instances of that variant but all the variants that occur in these sites, even if the pattern revealed does not immediately support a priorly specified theoretical position. Characteristically, variationists handle these data quantitatively, specifying distributional constraints in terms of a greater or lesser likelihood of occurrence rather than as categorical.

Docherty et al., 1997:277

Usually, a dialectological study selects one or two linguistic variables and identifies a number of diagnostic examples – say, three typical vowel sounds. The dialectologist then finds statistically significant variation in a selection of linguistic features. S/he might identify a group of people living in one town, and another group in a town 50 miles away and then analyse plural marking in both groups (e.g. ‘two year’ / ‘two years’). If one group tends to use plural *-s* and the other group tends not to, then heterogeneity has been demonstrated. If these frequencies of usage are changing over time, then this can be used to interpret ongoing variability and change between these dialects.

Hernández & Jiménez-Cano (2003) analyse changes in spoken Spanish, in the province of Murcia. They identify certain pronunciations typical to Murcia – calling this “Murcian Spanish” – and others typical to the northern Peninsular – calling this “standard Castilian Spanish” (cf. Hernández-Campoy, 2003). They show that over a 26 year period, Murcian people used ever more Castilian features; and that this represented a move toward standard Castilian. This demonstrates both variation and variability, and appears to demonstrate a decline in diversity; but diversity is not specifically mentioned or defined. By describing the data in relation to distinct language varieties, the description is weighted towards heterogeneity.

In the English village of Corby, Dyer (2002:101) compares “the original Corby village dialect” with “Glaswegian English”. Features of these two dialects are contrasted, and “the new Corby dialect” (p.118) is described as a result of contact between them. Distinct entities are changing in relation to each other, and a new linguistic entity is emerging. A comparable method is employed by Kerswill & Williams (2000a) in their account of the “development of a new variety in the English New Town of Milton Keynes” (p.65). Although both variation and variability are at the heart of these, by narrating the emergence of distinct language varieties, the emphasis tends towards heterogeneity (cf. Brown, 2003, on “Louisiana French”; and Horvath & Horvath, 2002, for a comparative analysis of “nine speech localities in Australian and New Zealand English”).

As Docherty et al. explain in the passage above, sociolinguistic data are not arranged in terms of categorical usage but likelihoods. Still, the focus on individual language varieties serves to deemphasise ongoing changes and future variability. As Rampton notes:

Admittedly, sociolinguistics has long fought against the view that language and society are homogeneous and it has championed heterogeneity, but on encountering diversity and variation, its strongest instinct has been to root out what it imagines to be the orderliness and uniformity beneath the surface [...] and when sociolinguists have looked at intercultural contact, there has been a strong tendency to emphasise the integrity of tradition *inside* particular cultural groupings, the concern being that ‘sociolinguistic interference’ was likely to occur in cross-cultural encounters where people with very different backgrounds had to interact.

Rampton, 2001:276 (orig. emphasis)

Singler’s (2000) study of “Vernacular Liberian English” (VLE) is another case in point. “In the present study”, he states, “I distinguish between Coastal and Interior varieties of VLE” (p.336). A linguistic distinction characterises the language of two places. Singler then compares verbs and word classes between the two, and describes two distinct varieties (cf. Klausmann, 2000, using lexemes as dialect boundary-markers; or Holes, 1986 and Bortoni, 1991, using individual phonological variables).

The point being pursued here is that heterogeneity and diversity are not separated out, as concepts, in the way that heterogeneity and *homogeneity* have been. This allows the two to be legitimately conflated (e.g. Chambers, 2002a:118; Williams, 1992:100). That this approach is widely deployed and reinvested in – for example the four editions of Hughes et al. (2005) – indicates a fitness for purpose. Distinguishing heterogeneity and diversity has not been a priority.

1.3.2 Regional dialect levelling

A clearer move towards discussing linguistic diversity is embodied by *dialect levelling*, and in a more recent development, *regional dialect levelling*. Building on models of dialect contact (Trudgill, 1986) and speech accommodation theory (Giles et al., 1991), dialect levelling describes one outcome of speakers of different local dialects coming into contact, and their dialects mixing together. Where a range of dialect variants was once spoken, now fewer are recorded. This separates levelling from *innovation diffusion*, where one sound spreads at the expense of one other, resulting in no net loss; for example glottal [ʔ] displacing voiceless alveolar /t/ in many parts of the UK (Milroy et al., 1994:334-337). Britain defines levelling as:

the eradication of marked or minority forms in situations of dialect competition, where the number of variants in the output is dramatically reduced from the number in the input.

Britain, 2001a:1

Or as Torgersen & Kerswill (2004) have it:

the reduction in the number of realisations of linguistic units found in a defined area, usually through the loss of geographically and demographically restricted, or ‘marked’, variants, and the closely related notion of *dialect convergence*, by which two or more varieties become more alike through convergent changes.

Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:24 (orig. emphasis)

This process is one possible outcome of *koineisation*, the mixture of erstwhile distinct dialects:

Koineisation can have a number of different outcomes, perhaps the most common of which is leveling, whereby marked or minority linguistic variants in a dialect mix are eradicated in favor of more common, less marked variants that have a wider social currency in the locale.

Britain, 2008:217

When dialect levelling occurs simultaneously in many contiguous speech communities across a broad geographical area, Kerswill proposes the term regional dialect levelling:

I suggest that the phrase *regional dialect levelling* should be applied to this wider geographical outcome, reserving the unqualified *levelling* for the outcome of the social psychological process of accommodation.

Kerswill, 2002:187 (orig. emphases)

To be sure, regional dialect levelling is not just dialect levelling multiplied. A number of more complex processes come into play, like interdialect, reallocation etc. (see Britain, 2002a, 2005). These details, however, are not so consequential for our purposes. More important is the ontological scope of the regional levelling model, and the progress this represents towards an articulation of changing linguistic diversity.

As a terminological aside, dialect levelling should be distinguished from *analogical levelling*, a different phenomenon whereby a structural distinction found in the standard language is not found in a non-standard variety: for example in Fenland English (Britain, 2002a) the standard *was/were–wasn't/weren't* contrast is often simplified or 'levelled' to invariant *was– weren't* – as in 'The farms was', 'The farm weren't' (see also Parrott, 2007, who identifies a similar pattern on Smith Island). This is structural, describing the disappearance of a particular grammatical distinction. Whilst this could conceivably lead to dialect levelling – for example the spread of a non-standard simplification – the two are conceptually distinct. The shared use of the word levelling is just a somewhat confusing case of terminological duplication.

The effect of regional dialect levelling on overall diversity is negative. As supra-local dialect features begin to displace local dialect features, “the number of variants in the output is dramatically reduced from the number in the input” (Britain, 2001a:1).

[T]he reduction in the number of realisations of linguistic units found in a defined area, usually through the loss of geographically and demographically restricted, or ‘marked’, variants, and the closely related notion of *dialect convergence*, by which two or more varieties become more alike through convergent changes.

Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:24 (orig. emphasis)

Torgersen & Kerswill (2004) describe the dialects of Ashford and Reading (two towns roughly equidistant from London, east and west respectively), and how certain features of these dialects are being displaced by pronunciations from a supposed London epicentre. In their conclusion, they compare this with other studies of dialect weakening around the southeast (esp. p.30), noting the apparent spread of certain pan-regional linguistic features. They surmise the ongoing development of a “regionally levelled variety” of southeast British English. Dialects are not disappearing altogether, but are forming into regional conglomerations. “Most changes today lead to regional dialect levelling, but only some involve the whole language area, others being geographically quite restricted” (Kerswill, 2003b:1). The result is “levelled supralocal varieties, with few local differences within a region” (Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:25).

The regional dialect levelling model allows a clearer articulation of diversity; but the “regionally levelled variety” is still a linguistic entity emerging into clarity. This does not obscure perpetual ongoing change, but does not force attention to it either. On this note Britain (2002b) criticises much of the literature on the spread of linguistic innovations, because it

appears to suggest that the spreading innovation obliterates everything in its path, leaving a new dialectological landscape devoid of evidence of its past. The role of local dialects in the path of advancing innovation has received much less attention [...].

Britain, 2002b:60

This appears to be mostly due to the focus on emergence of linguistic varieties, diverting attention away from ongoing variability. A person either adopts an innovation, or does not: “a speaker adopts, or rejects, a linguistic form [...] used by another speaker with whom he or she is in contact” (Kerwill & Williams, 2000b:64). If dialect mixing is described in terms of changes becoming complete, deemphasising what happens after that, then the space between heterogeneity and diversity is under-explored.

The “regionally levelled variety”, a single, supra-local variety, is not designed to conceal local differences or to claim that change is occurring unequivocally; but still this is describing the ascendancy of one distinct *levelled* entity. The linearity of this narrative presents an implicit binarity between ‘the local’ and ‘the regional’, downplaying the constant and ongoing process of adaptation.

1.3.3 Creole studies

In discussions about Creoles, pidgins and other contact languages, accusations abound that these are simply broken, corrupted versions of other languages (Mühlhäusler, 1997:22). This produces an additional challenge for linguists, to demonstrate that “Creoles [...] are as systematic as any other language” (ibid. p.27), and that their speakers deserve respect. Indeed, “since its inception [...] in the late 1960s, a tacit assumption in creole studies has always been that our job is partly to show the linguistic community and the world beyond that creoles are “real languages” ” (McWhorter, 2005:4).

Heine & Kuteva (2005), in a comparative study of progenitor languages and Creoles, argue that in the formation of a Creole, speakers “use what they find in one language [...] to shape another language in novel ways” (ibid. p.37). Similarly, Sutcliffe notes that

when Afro-American languages found an awkward mismatch, so to speak, between the word order template provided by Kwa and the word order template of the lexifier language – in this case English – they followed the latter.

Sutcliffe, 1992:35

Hinskens (2001) describes the “evolution” of koines, delimiting “pre-koine” from “stabilized koine”. Koch (2000) notes the “formation of Australian pidgin grammar” from Aboriginal languages and English. Siegel et al. (2000) narrate the emergence of the French Creole Tayo, from French and certain Eastern Oceanic languages; and Roberts (2000) relates the “genesis of Hawaiian Creole”. In a study of “Haitian Creole”, Lefebvre (2004) explains that pidgins and Creoles “diverge abruptly from their source languages (see Thomason and Kaufman 1991) such that within one or two generations, a different language is created” (Lefebvre, 2004:10). This is expanded upon in her working hypothesis:

the creators of a creole language, adult native speakers of various languages, use the properties of their native lexicons, the parametric values and the semantic interpretation rules of their native grammars in creating a creole [...].

Lefebvre, 2004:42

Lefebvre compares these respective languages – their grammars, lexicons, morphologies and so on – and how this relates to the current form of Haitian Creole (cf. Sutcliffe, 1992). These processes of contact and change, leading to creolisation, are also applied by the authors in the emerging *Cambridge Approaches to Language Contact* series (Mufwene, 2001; Clyne, 2003; McWhorter, 2005, esp. pp.102-41). (For further examples see DeGraff, 2001:54-66; Jones & Singh, 2005:22-25.) Although these accounts are centrally concerned with both variation and variability, the description of separate language varieties evolving steers discussion away from perpetual ongoing change. This is furthered in some ways by the emphasis on Creoles as respectable and legitimate languages.

Let me now explore in more detail the tendency in Creole studies to under-articulate diversity by focussing on heterogeneity, with an extended passage from Mufwene (2001). What follows the excerpt is a breakdown of certain key phrases, and how they reflect this tendency.

As shown by several papers in Traugott and Heine (1991), especially those by Hopper and Lichtenberk, grammaticalization (a form of restructuring) is a concomitant of shifts in patterns of usage. As explained in chapter 1, creoles' structural peculiarities have developed largely by exaptive processes, thus similarly to grammaticalization processes. Some brief examples will suffice here in which emphasis lies more on Chaudenson's "**matériaux de construction**" than on how the selected materials were exapted. In several English creoles, the general PERFECT-marker *done* may easily be derived both in function and in meaning from constructions such as *I'm done* "I have finished" and from its clearly PERFECT function in the lexifier, as in *you've done broke it now*. The fact that in the emerging vernaculars copula-less nonverbal predicate phrases, as in *dem tall* "they [are] tall," were becoming the norm rather than the exception made it possible to use *done* predicatively without a copula in perfect constructions. A contributing factor to this evolution is the reanalysis of *done* as a verb meaning "finish," as in *mi don mi jab* "I (have) finished my job." The normal option of using it with a verbal object produced constructions such as *mi don taak* "I have finished talking" which would be exapted to express PERFECT. All this happens within the limits of what either the lexifier or the new system evolving from it allows (including in this case the absence of any inflections on the verbal complement of *done* in creoles, although there are fossils of this such as *im don lef/gaan* "he/she has left/gone"). In AAVE, the verbal object of *done* is still required to be in the past participle or past tense, as in *he done eaten/ate? *eat* or *I done did/done/*do it*, just as in other non-standard English vernaculars.

Mufwene, 2001:54-5 (orig. emphases, and inconsistencies with parentheses)

"grammaticalization (a form of restructuring)". This is an identifiable process leading to the formation of the Creole, emerging into distinctiveness (see also Tagliamonte, 2000; Kotsinas, 2001:145-8; Heine & Kuveta, 2005:13-21, 79-122; cf. Backus, 2003, 'conventionalization').

"patterns of usage". A pattern is predicated on a group of people exhibiting that pattern, following the variationist explanation of social and linguistic covariation (cf. Samarin, 2000).

"creoles' structural peculiarities". This expounds the boundary around the Creole (cf. Baptista, 2000). Mufwene does mention features common to other Creoles (e.g. p.68 on Atlantic creoles); but the main orientation of the narrative is towards the systematicity of each.

“emerging vernaculars”. The Creole is a list of linguistic features associated with a group. The list is growing, and the features are gaining usage. This does not deny ongoing change; but by foregrounding their respective peculiarities, that perpetual variability is somewhat overlooked.

“becoming the norm rather than the exception”. Amidst themes of grammaticalisation, restructuring and emergence, to speak of something “becoming the norm” is to expand on the Creole as a discrete unit.

“made possible”. Invoking a divide between the possible and the impossible brings in normative overtones of legitimacy (cf. Jahr, 2003). This is furthered later in the excerpt – including what is a “normal option”, and what the lexifier language “allows”.

“In AAVE, the verbal object of done is still required” Having focussed on Creoles arising on separate islands (cf. Holm et al., 2000; Baptista, 2000; Schreier, 2003; Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 2003; Holm, 2004), Mufwene compares the same processes in African American Vernacular English (AAVE), arising in mainland North America, and what is “required” by its grammar (see also e.g. Sutcliffe, 1992:38-68; Holm, 2004; Trudgill, 2000). These processes are then applied to “other non-standard English vernaculars”.² Mufwene periodically draws the discussion back to variation among individual speakers (e.g. pp.147-53); but the overall direction of his account is towards the emergence of systematic, distinct language varieties.

Overall, Mufwene has a targeted research strategy with specific goals to describe systematicity in contact languages and varieties; but in the final analysis this leans towards heterogeneity, downplaying ongoing variability and under-articulating the nature of diversity. This is reflected

² And, subsequently, “Louisiana Creole” (Mufwene, 2001:66)

in his attention to “American Englishes [...] simply to emphasize diversity over the typically suggested uniformity” (2001:81). As L. Milroy notes of the literature on AAVE (or AAE: African American English),

in conceptualizing the AAE speech community as separate, researchers have tended to focus on the distinctiveness of the dialect rather than on dialect contact issues, despite repeated diaspora and migration in the history of the African American population.

L. Milroy, 2002:5

This seems explicable at least in part by the naming of discrete language varieties (see also Mous, 2003). As mentioned earlier, there is an added incentive to show that the peculiarities of the Creole follow a political boundary; that the Creole belongs to a particular people, reinforcing other claims for sovereignty. As Hinskens argues, “[k]oineization is one of the roads which can lead to the development of what is usually referred to as a standard language” (2001:212). Mülhäusler describes “stabilization” as “the gradual replacement of free variation and inconsistencies by more regular syntactic lexical structures” (2003:138), and the increasing orderliness of “viable Creoles” (Mülhäusler, 1997:59), with “socially sanctioned grammars” (ibid.) (see also Thomason, 2003; Croft, 2003). The political discourse around Creoles has extended in many cases to nonstandard dialects (howsoever delimited), including AAVE, often popularly regarded as substandard. An example is the introduction to Baugh (1999), entitled “Some Common Misconceptions about African American Vernacular English”. “Many native speakers of standard English assume that nonstandard speakers are ignorant, lazy, and less capable” (ibid. p.4). This view is “woefully uninformed and simplistic. It fails to recognize the unique status of AAVE” (ibid. p.5). A job of linguistics in this case is to

view black dialects from a different perspective; they see a coherent linguistic system. For example, in AAVE we observe sentences like the following, with *be*:

They be standin on the corner

He be talking when the teacher be talking

[...] *Be* provides a grammatical tool that is unavailable to speakers of standard English. [...] AAVE [...] has unique grammatical forms that serve important communicative functions; it is far from being an impoverished dialect.

Baugh, 1999:6 (orig. emphases)

Baugh's pursuit of legitimacy relies on the identification of systematicity and regularity. This is complemented elsewhere by discussion of variation within AAVE, its porosity and innovations; but like the analyses of language change reviewed so far, this description of AAVE as a variety in its own right does not distinguish heterogeneity from diversity.

1.4 Conclusions

Social dialectology and Creole studies both share certain goals: to show that there is, as it were, method to the madness of language. To draw this back to the initial comments about the epistemological and ontological orientation of sociolinguistics, my point is not that language is being explicitly packaged into these categories; but that heterogeneity and diversity are not distinguished; and the latter, though fully described, is not explicitly defined. This leaves the term 'linguistic diversity' available for use in other disciplines, without being checked by otherwise well-equipped variationists.

Siegel (2001:184) suggests that the use of Creoles and dialects is just an "idealization"; but without which "there is often no clear linguistic means of distinguishing one language from another" (ibid.). He is reacting to Mufwene's claim (1997:53) that "koine" is a redundant term as it is practically indistinguishable from pidgins or Creoles. In its defence Siegel argues that

we would not want to abandon the term language just because in some cases it is difficult to decide linguistically where the dividing line is between two varieties. Similarly, the prototypical distinctions between dialects and languages, and between koines and pidgins/creoles, are generally clear, especially according to sociolinguistic

criteria, and so the terms are still useful. To abandon them for the reasons given by Mufwene would be like abandoning “black” or “white” because of “grey”.

I am not saying that for every contact variety it is “black or white” whether it is a koine or a pidgin/creole. [...] But it is useful to have sociolinguistic terms characterizing various parts of the contact variety continuum, just as it is to have colour terms for the spectrum.

Siegel, 2001:184

Similarly to Trudgill’s caveat quoted earlier, Siegel is tacitly acknowledging a focus on heterogeneity (cf. Matras & Bakker, 2003:2). Lefebvre (2004:341-4), in a methodological appendix laying out research proposals for pidgin and Creole studies in the 21st century, remains within this comparative framework, suggesting that current methods will suffice into the future. The job in the following chapters is to place more emphasis on that process of ongoing change, on variability, as an equally important part of diversity. In reference to describing both variation and variability as core parts of linguistic diversity, I agree with Milroy that linguists

cannot “observe” language change in progress (even though it is sometimes claimed that we can). This is because we cannot observe dynamic processes directly in abstract objects: we can observe the products of change, as historical linguists always have. The claim can therefore be rephrased as a claim that we can *detect* change in progress in synchronic states by comparing outputs or products of variation in present-day states of language.

Milroy, 2003:149 (orig. emphasis)

The current investigation shares this limitation. My contribution if anything is to attract attention towards this constraint, as a way of stressing the complexity of linguistic diversity. This does not debar the use of heuristic categories; it simply urges a more humble surrendering of their function. As Berruto elegantly summarises the problem:

The fact that reality is anything but discrete, the fact that it is fluctuating, nuanced, subject to continuous microvariability does not authorize us to think that the theoretical models that describe and possibly explain it must also be equally continuous, fuzzy, lacking strong categories, almost a one-to-one representation of reality. Quite the contrary. The fact that often the borderline between [language] varieties appears out of focus and vague, to the extent that, at times, one variety of language is barely distinguishable from another in the empiricism of the data, a jumbled mass of individual facts, and the fact that the concrete phenomenology of language appears

indeterminate and infinitely variable, almost fractal, is not sufficient reason for abandoning the idea of working with abstract, well-defined categories. On the contrary, it should represent a stimulus and challenge to improve and refine them. [...] The non-discrete nature of the world must not imply the non-discrete nature of theoretical categories.

[...]

[I]nvoicing the notion of a *continuum* must not be seen as a general justification for rejecting strong, discrete, if you like, Aristotelian abstract categories.

Berruto, 2004:306-7, 315 (orig. emphasis)

This investigation, then, aims to articulate linguistic diversity more closely in two main ways: firstly, by analysing changes in a wide range of language varieties simultaneously, pursuing the advances made by regional dialect levelling to get a broader picture of changing diversity; and secondly, by emphasising the perpetual nature of language change in terms of ongoing variability. Chapter 2 primarily addresses the first point, looking at dialect change across two broad swathes of England between the late 19th and mid-20th century. Chapters 3-4 address both points, examining more recent, ongoing changes in British English, and taking a range of dialect reports together to investigate this. All of this is done using existing data and analyses from social dialectology, but presented slightly differently, to articulate linguistic diversity on its own terms.

Throughout, attention is paid to linguistic innovations: what is new in a given dialect; and whether these are specific to that dialect or shared with others – and if the latter, whether the innovations are spreading between dialects (potentially decreasing diversity), or whether they represent independent parallel innovations. Innovations specific to a dialect would represent an addition to diversity, as a contribution to both variation and variability. Innovations spreading between dialects would suggest a decline in both, and thus of overall diversity. These insights are mobilised together in the final chapter, to critique explicit claims in modern language policy and planning to be protecting something called linguistic diversity.

Chapter 2

Universal literacy and dialect standardisation

The regard formerly paid to pronunciation has been generally declining; so that now the greatest improprieties in that point are to be found among people of fashion; many pronunciations which thirty or forty years ago were confined to the vulgar, are now gaining ground; and if something be not done to stop this growing evil, and fix a general standard at present, the English is likely to become a mere jargon, which every one may pronounce as he pleases.

Sheridan, 1780:6

There can be no doubt that pure dialect speech is rapidly disappearing even in country districts, owing to the spread of education, and to modern facilities for intercommunication. The writing of this grammar was begun none too soon, for had it been delayed another twenty years I believe it would by then be quite impossible to get together sufficient pure dialect material to enable any one to give even a mere outline of the phonology of our dialects as they existed at the close of the nineteenth century.

Wright, 1905:v

The older peasantry and children who have not been at school preserve the dialectic sounds most purely. But the present facilities of communication are rapidly destroying all traces of our older dialectic English. Market women who attend large towns, have generally a mixed style of speech. The daughters of peasants and small farmers, on becoming domestic servants learn a new language, and corrupt the genuine Doric of their parents.

Ellis, 1871:vi (cited in Crowley, 1996:168)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter, and the following two, explore how linguistic diversity has been declining in British English – a supposedly powerful language – over the last century. This information is used in Chapter 5 to examine claims in minority language policy regarding linguistic diversity.

The present chapter compares Ellis' (1889) account of late 19th century English with the *Survey of English Dialects* in the mid-20th century (Orton et al., 1962, hereafter SED). The southeast and the northeast of England are concentrated on, for the purposes of comparison with Chapter 3.

The Ellis-SED comparison shows a predominance of local dialects weakening towards Standard English, a process referred to by Kerswill (2007:17) as *dedialectalisation*. The SED is “the most recent nationwide survey of the dialects of England” (Britain, 2008:210), after which smaller individual dialect reports prevail and thorough nationwide surveys are no more. Chapter 3 therefore looks at a range of small-scale dialect reports in these two regions, to compare dialect change in the two periods. These post-SED reports demonstrate weakening of local dialects not just in the direction of the Standard, but also by the increasing mixture of local dialects. Kerswill (2007:17) calls this *accent/dialect supralocalisation*. Change in the prominence of each type of dialect change in both periods, and their effects on overall diversity, underlies these chapters.

2.1.1 Contributions of this chapter

This chapter builds on Britain (2002b), which begins by comparing Ellis and the SED across England, to detect changes in the language area as a whole. My contribution is to add some more linguistic detail from both sources, and to frame this within an explicit discussion of linguistic diversity. The only critical detail in Chapters 2-4 is to describe changes in linguistic diversity. Some sociological and geographical information is offered as an insight towards potential explanations; but a full treatment of these is beyond the scope of this investigation.

The comparison of dialect change at different times is discussed here in terms of the emergence of regional dialect levelling (as outlined in Chapter 1). This is a reportedly recent phenomenon. Williams & Kerswill (1999) describe dialect levelling in Milton Keynes and Reading, two towns in southeast England, occurring since the time of the SED. Dialect forms noted in the SED are found to be much less common in their contemporary data – demonstrating discontinuity with the older dialect forms – while speakers are simultaneously adopting dialect forms “increasingly characteristic of a wide area in the south-east” (ibid. p.152). Comparably Kamata (2006:5, after Hawkins & Midgley, 2005:188), within a group of speakers in London, identifies a dialectal “break group” born between 1976 and 1981, showing similar evidence of the beginnings of regional dialect levelling. By comparing Ellis and the SED, this chapter looks in more detail at when regional levelling was *not* happening, which can be used to more fully recount its emergence as a modern phenomenon. The brief reviews of sociological and geographical information in Chapters 2 and 3 are included to illustrate the different societal conditions at these times, and how these might help explain the different types of dialect change observed.

Finally, this chapter aims to more clearly distinguish dialect levelling from regional dialect levelling. As cited in the last chapter, Kerswill distinguishes these as follows:

I suggest that the phrase *regional dialect levelling* should be applied to this wider geographical outcome, reserving the unqualified *levelling* for the outcome of the social psychological process of accommodation.

Kerswill, 2002:187 (orig. emphases)

To underscore the different geographical scopes of dialect levelling and regional dialect levelling, I would like to make a small terminological alteration and refer to the former as *local dialect levelling*, or just local levelling. This will be useful in narrating the historical emergence of regional levelling, and the different societal conditions underlying both.

Local levelling is “necessarily restricted to smaller geographical areas, such as new towns or compact regions” (Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:26). This requires only the sudden throwing together of erstwhile disparate groups, not the large-scale continuous mobility pinpointed by researchers of regional levelling. As such, late 20th century Milton Keynes or Corby – towns experiencing heavy in-migration and dialect levelling (Williams & Kerswill, 1999; Dyer, 2002) – are comparable to much earlier examples like the English Fens in the 17th century, where levelling occurred as migrants moved onto the newly drained marshland (Britain, 2005); or mid-19th century Middlesbrough as workers moved in from Ireland, Wales, Yorkshire and elsewhere (Fennell et al., 2004).

Similarly, Watt (2002:50-1) notes the population movements that created present day Newcastle, speculating about the mixture of dialects going back centuries. By the same token Trudgill notes of early American pilgrims that

none of the early anglophone settlements on the east coast of what is now the United States was settled from a single location in England. We can therefore assume that, very early on, contact between different British dialects would have [...] led to [...] new, mixed dialects not precisely like any dialect spoken in the homeland.

Trudgill, 2004:2

Although this does suggest dialect contact and mixing, and may result in a less diverse output, it only involved isolated pockets of the population. This is what appears to make regional levelling peculiar to later times, and with the potential to affect overall linguistic diversity.

As a last proviso, before claiming that regional levelling is quite so recent, it should be said that Ellis does report something similar (i.e. dialect mixing amid a constant flux of population) in the busier, demographically less stable parts of the country (as outlined in Britain, 2002a). He describes what is now Inner London as “the Metropolitan area where the enormous congeries of

persons from different parts of the kingdom and from different countries, and the generality of school education, render dialect nearly impossible” (Ellis, 1889:231). Still, this appears to have been the exception; perhaps a germinal stage of the process. Moreover, the aim in this chapter is not to claim the absolute ascendancy of one type of language change or another at a given time, but their relative influence at different times and in different societal conditions.

2.1.2 Limitations

There are a number of constraints on what can be compared between Ellis and the SED. As a baseline of variation in late 19th century British English, Ellis divides the country as follows:

The first broad points in the phonology of English that struck me were the treatment of Wessex U and U’ [...], of the letter R, and of the definite article. To my surprise I found that the lines separating these different treatments could be traced completely across the country from sea to sea, and hence I obtained TEN TRANSVERSE LINES, which form the first broad phonetic distribution of English speech. [...]

Then by tabulating and comparing, especially by means of the cwl. [classified word list], I obtained SIX DIVISIONS, with sufficiently distinct differences and characters, to which I give the geographical names of Southern, Western Eastern, Midland, Northern and Lowland, the last being almost entirely in Scotland. [...]

Then commenced the more difficult task of separating these Divisions into such DISTRICTS as had a considerable claim to be considered uniform in the pron. [pronunciation] they used, and were sufficiently distinct from their neighbours. [...] [F]inally I [...] contended myself with mostly large districts, in which I recognised VARIETIES only roughly located, and not always accurately or completely characterised.

The result of this has been to divide the whole country into 42 numbered districts, of which 21 contain 89 varieties. In eight of these varieties I have even distinguished 19 subvarieties. [...] The whole of these 10 Transverse Lines, 6 Divisions, and 42 Districts, with the Celtic Border, are clearly shewn [sic., arch.] in the little maps of England and Scotland [...] given with this treatise [...].

Ellis, 1889:6-7 (orig. capitalisation)

These divisions could be remeasured in the SED to gauge how these differences had fared; but this would rest on the presumption that, if these distinctions had disappeared, then no others would have arisen in their place. This could be addressed by making a note of any new divisions in the SED, and weigh them up against the losses; but the SED may simply have investigated features that Ellis did not, demonstrating different distinctions. For these reasons, the comparison

is led not by dialect boundaries but by the use of particular local dialect features found in both studies, and how strongly these have survived from Ellis to the SED.

For reasons of reliability, some features must be excluded for which Ellis gives insufficient contextual detail; for example non-standard *be* as in *I be, he be, they am, we am* (e.g. p.96, 115, 118, 129). Ellis just quotes these on their own, providing no context or example sentences. To look at a modern day example, invariant *be* typically denotes habitual action in African American Vernacular English: ‘I be going to work at 9’, roughly ‘I [usually/habitually] go to work at 9’. Without this detail, it is impossible to make a comparison with the SED, even if apparently similar examples occur.

Another exclusion from this study, representing a major limitation, is vowels. Although vowel differences at different ends of the country were clear enough for Ellis’ data to be reliable (e.g. the north-south BATH split – Britain & Trudgill, 2005:188), Ellis is not accurate enough to record variation in smaller geographical areas. This paucity and indistinctness has posed problems for previous historical analyses of vowel change. For example C. Jones (2006:205-21) aims to demonstrate “the emergence of compromise or levelled forms” of vowels in late 18th century British English. He reviews various historical sources; but these are mostly of isolated words, and provide little conclusive detail. He is limited to saying what “we might conclude” from these sources (ibid. p.206), what a source “seems to point to” (ibid.); and what we “might therefore perhaps expect” (ibid. p.207). He discusses reports of changes in the /u/ vowel, which “might represent some kind of centralised [ʌ] segment, perhaps the product of a process of pre-[r] lowering and centring” (ibid. p.212). These informed speculations are useful as part of a broader historical examination of vowel change, but not for the current discussion of changing diversity.

Additionally, some of the locations studied by Ellis must be excluded. In the south-westernmost counties of Cornwall and Devon, Ellis only makes note of highly contestable consonantal features, and no grammatical particularities. This, however, deserves a brief explanation. While Ellis is quick to generalise on the “character” of most dialects, in western Cornwall he is unusually, yet revealingly, stumped; offering only a short list of words and their pronunciations. For this he makes a lengthy, and for our purposes extremely informative apology:

Character. None can be given. The mode of speech is said to vary much from place to place, not more than ten or twelve miles apart [...]. Down to 200 years ago some Cornish was still spoken in these regions. How the change to English came about, I do not know; but it was clearly not imported from the e. [east], because we find scarcely a vestige of Dv. [Devon] phraseology or pronunciation. The miners, who abound, are a mixed race. Many words of Cornish which the dialect-writers of west Cornish have adopted is also rather picturesque than phonetic. It would be necessary to study the pronunciations of each neighbourhood on the spot from the mouths of natives, and for such a haphazard speech as appears to prevail, this would be hardly worth while. At the same time, any tolerably complete view would demand too much space.

Ellis, 1889:171 (orig. emphasis)

The fact that Orton et al. feel able to sample representative individuals from such large areas, whereas Ellis did not, suggests that much diversity was lost in the intervening period. Sadly this can only remain as speculation for now, and cannot be pursued in the main analysis.

Another notable exclusion from the comparison is London. This is for two reasons. Firstly, Ellis does not provide any actual samples from London. He just reviews some literary sources pertaining to central-east London; and as Görlach points out: “Stereotypes are very likely to occur in [19th century] literary representations of non-standard speech” (1999:36). Secondly, the SED records only two locations in London: Harmondsworth in the west and Hackney in the east. Comparing potentially stereotyped 19th century central-east London English with 20th century Harmondsworth and Hackney English is at least dubious, if not downright pointless. Even if we accept Ellis’ descriptions, we would not be comparing like with like.

2.1.3 Method

Ellis' study was novel, one of the first attempts to really 'do' dialectology, recording a linguistic cross-section of society in a way not achieved by the pronouncing dictionaries and elocution guides that came before. He stepped away from the normative highlighting of 'errors' in elocution, taking instead an accepting and even enthusiastic stance towards dialect peculiarities (C. Jones, 2006:290). He is also arguably the first dialectologist to recognise the observer's paradox: that the presence of the observer may cause affected or otherwise unnatural speech (ibid. p.280). This leads C. Jones to label Ellis' five-volume opus "an unsurpassed masterpiece of philological scholarship" (ibid. p.274). Nevertheless, it does have its shortcomings, which present notable obstacles for comparison with the SED.

Ellis and the SED have distinct methodological differences, reflecting different historical paradigms. Both concentrate on the speech of manual workers, mostly uneducated, presuming their dialect to be the 'purest'. SED respondents had to be native to the area (preferably with native parents) and to have lived there most of their lives. These details seemed to matter less to Ellis. The SED contains only transcriptions of speech, the results of a questionnaire delivered in person to hundreds of individuals, prompting each to produce a specific word, and recording the various realisations of that word. By contrast Ellis collected much information by post, often going on people's *recollections* of dialect, even those who did not speak the dialect natively but had just lived there a long time. An example is the "mid-Cambridgeshire" dialect, reported by a "Mr. John Perkins of Downing College, Cambridge, who was very familiar with the peasant speech" (p.249). Ellis also gives frequent personal opinions, and debates that he had with his fieldworkers. The SED contains only transcriptions, no analysis. Ellis collects unreliably sized samples, and decides with his informants what is typical in each dialect. This has had its critics:

The Ellis survey has been rejected as a reliable source of dialect data by some notable figures in the field of English dialect studies and completely ignored by others. The general attitude can be summed up by Eugen Dieth, who claimed that the work was a ‘tragedy’ (Dieth, 1946:76). The main criticisms of Ellis’s work are that the data were collected from unreliable non-native educated residents of the localities concerned, using unreliable techniques (postal questionnaire) and a transcription system (palaeotype) which was ‘tortuous and imprecise’ (Wakelin, 1977:50).

M.J. Jones (2002:331)

By modern standards Ellis’ approach seems in places overly anecdotal. His conclusions are impressionistic and mostly retrospective – involving no audio recordings. Still, this was by no means guesswork. He and his informants were highly skilled, and the fieldwork usually rigorous:

Data in the form of spontaneous transcriptions of reading passages and word lists were sent to Ellis by a combination of trained dialect enthusiasts (such as Thomas Hallam) and interested locals.

Britain, 2008:204

Nor does Ellis naïvely trust the accuracy of these data; frequently dispatching Thomas Hallam back to locations to check over particular sounds. Also, by including information from interviews, literature and folklore, he provides insights on local intuitions about dialects. Recent analyses have in places favoured Ellis over the SED:

Whatever methodological criticisms there might be of Ellis’s [sic] approach, and whatever counterclaims might be used to negate them, his data have been found to be extremely reliable when compared with modern studies of various areas [...]. Peter Trudgill (p.c. July 2000) states that the Ellis data for Norfolk can be considered more reliable than the SED data.

M.J. Jones (2002:332)

A similar “methodological pluralism” informs Mair over a century later, who stresses that:

No method, not even the notoriously unsystematic collection of examples, should be ruled out. All methods serve a purpose, however limited it may be, and very often they complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses. Impressionistic observation, for example, despite its obvious shortcomings, may provide valuable hints as to phenomena worth investigating systematically [...].

Mair, 2006:33-4

Both studies, then, have strengths and weaknesses; and a comparison between them, while perhaps not ideal, should give some useful information.

There is one final critical difference between the two studies. Ellis is interested mainly in what he calls peasants, but still records people of different ages and sexes, in urban and rural locations, and does not scrutinise longevity of residence in each place. He therefore collects a mix of traditional and innovative dialect features. By contrast the SED sought only rural, non-mobile working class men, middle-aged to elderly, mostly with local parents. This was an intentionally unrepresentative sample, premised on an assumption that these thoroughbred lifelong natives were the most conservative in the use of traditional dialect features (see also M.J. Jones, 2002:332). Indeed these old men were not even representative of old men generally, because of the restrictions on location and class. Although this is a clear disparity, it actually helps the current investigation. The SED aims to show what local dialect features are present, *in any detectable amount*. If dialect forms found in Ellis are not found in the SED, then we can conclude with more confidence that those features are more or less gone, since even the most conservative speakers no longer produce them. This in turn gives some ground for a broader discussion of overall diversity.

The SED is divided into four volumes: Southern Counties; East Midlands and East Anglia; Midlands; and Northern Counties. This is not supposed to suggest dialect divisions; it is just a practicality of publishing. These volumes are divided into subsections detailing particular locations, and the pronunciations recorded there. This makes it relatively straightforward to compare the location of Ellis' reports with locations in the SED.

Let me now outline what is to be compared between the two studies, and how; starting with some basic sociolinguistic principles about analysing dialects.

Firstly, here are three hypothetical claims that could be made while analysing a corpus of speech data, working towards a heuristic description of dialects:

1. *Pronunciation X* does not occur in this dialect, as it was not found in the corpus.

Example: non-prevocalic /r/ was not found in the corpus, so it does not occur in the dialect.

2. *Grammatical construction X* does not occur in this dialect, as it was not found in the corpus.

Example: copula deletion (e.g. ‘he going’ for ‘he is going’) was not found in the corpus, so it does not occur in the dialect.

3. *Word X* does not occur in this dialect, as it was not found in the corpus.

Example: the word ‘squit’ was not found in the corpus, so it does not occur in the dialect.

Where dialects are observed to be losing pronunciations, grammatical constructions or words in favour of Standard English forms, Kerswill (2007:17) proposes the terms *phonological*, *grammatical* and *lexical dedialectalisation*, respectively. In analysing Ellis and the SED, I would argue that claims 1 and 2 are defensible, but claim 3 is not. If something is not observed in a (limited) sample, that does not mean it does not exist; and this applies much more to words than it does to structural features. The word ‘squit’ may exist strongly in the dialect, but was just not used in a recording. It would be much less likely for no words to be produced containing a certain vowel. Indeed this leads Ellis to conclude that “vocabulary is a very uncertain test” of dialect (1889:36). The small size of the samples in Ellis and the SED – and their inconsistency in Ellis – means that claims 1 and 2 are untenable when analysing these two sources. For this

reason I compare mainly structural features between the two sources. (For a discussion of historical lexical change and variation, see e.g. E. Johnson, 1996.)

Avoiding vowels, I am limited to grammatical and consonantal variables. Within these, there are some further constraints. As regards grammatical variables, Ellis set out to examine phonology, largely excluding grammar (hence the title of his volume); so there are not many available. As for consonants, because of Ellis' lack of audio recordings, I can only use variables with the most dissimilar variants, which his researchers and authorities would be least likely to mishear or misremember. (This must not be confused with *salience*, which is whether a dialect feature is palpable to the wider population.) This mostly limits me to consonantal variables with only two variants, giving the least possible scope for error.

Ellis gives a “character” for each dialect, naming its most distinctive features. He then provides some illustrative material: exemplary sentences, passages and word lists that were read out, excerpts from literature, dictations from his informants, and so on. Those features that fit the criteria above, and also appear in the SED, are compared in what follows.

Ellis is usually content to describe in prose how present a given dialect feature is. Though he provides phonetically transcribed lists of examples, it is unclear whether he intends these to be statistically defensible, or simply to illustrate various realisations of dialect features in question. His data are still generally deemed reliable (Britain, 2002a; C. Jones, 2006), but I suggest that they do not bear quantification at the level of percentages of use (contra M.J. Jones, 2002). On balance it seems more reliable instead to take his prose descriptions and example transcriptions together to make an ordinal judgment of STRONG, PARTIAL and ABSENT. This is an imperfect compromise, but anything else would be to invest too much faith in the reliability and accuracy

of Ellis' data. Given this situation, for the sake of comparability a somewhat untidy reduction of the SED data is necessary, namely the same reduction to ordinal measures of STRONG, PARTIAL and ABSENT. In doing so I am following, and adapting slightly, the approach taken by Britain (2002a:53-54).

Three volumes of the SED are used: for the southeast, 'The Southern Counties' and 'East Midland Counties and East Anglia'; for the northeast 'The Six Northern Counties and the Isle of Man'. To reinforce an earlier point, this is not testing whether Ellis' dialect divisions survived to the SED. These divisions just allow a straightforward geographical comparison between the two studies. The SED notes the location of each recording; and so to improve reliability, I also exclude speakers in the SED located at the margins of Ellis' districts.

I refer to *dialect* throughout, despite mostly focussing on features of *accent* (although I include some morphological and grammatical variation). In this I accept that accent can be indicative of diversity overall (Foulkes & Docherty, 1999:4-5; Trudgill, 1988:38). Further methodological details, peculiar to the southeast and northeast, are pointed out below in the relevant sections.

2.2 The Southeast in Ellis & the SED

2.2.1 Method

The tables below contain data from Ellis and the SED, normalised to compare the strength of a range of local dialect features. Both studies record these features across large geographical areas, so the data are tabulated for ease of reference. This contrasts with the northeast (§2.3) where dialect features are much more localised. In the SED data, the incidence of each feature is noted in a sample of five words, and aggregated above into an overall ordinal rating.

For the Ellis data, PARTIAL or STRONG means that Ellis stipulates specifically that the dialect feature in question is present, either partially or in abundance. Page numbers are given if he mentions this in an unexpected place – for example recalling a dialect feature of one area while he is discussing another area. A short quotation is occasionally provided if he is particularly concise.

Ellis always mentions if a defining feature is present, but is inconsistent about absence.

Sometimes he specifies that the feature is absent; sometimes he simply does not mention or record it at all; or, more cryptically, notes that there is ‘very little to distinguish’ one dialect from another, apparently indicating that they both share this feature – a suggestion redoubled if he later notes that said feature is absent in another dialect. He may consistently mention certain features that he is trying to keep track of, for example substitution of initial (f, s) with [v, z] as in *voal* for *foal*, and *zoot* for *soot*; but he is sporadic with others, like reversal of initial (v) and (w) as in *vest* for *west*, and *west* for *vest*. Therefore the data are scored ‘ABSENT [page number]’ if Ellis specifically states that a feature is absent, and simply ABSENT if he does not say either way and makes no other indication that the feature is present.

In the SED ratings, PARTIAL plus a county (e.g. PARTIAL (Ha.))’ means the feature is peculiar to that county. ABSENT or PARTIAL plus a number and county (e.g. ABSENT (1 Nf.)’, or PARTIAL (2 Nf.))’ means the feature was only found that many times, only in that county. These lower numbers are used as well as the ordinal ratings in case the reader feels that ones and twos deserve to be labelled as something else, perhaps RARE. If ABSENT appears on its own then the feature was not recorded at all.

| Ellis | SED |
|-------|--|
| D4 | Wiltshire and Dorset |
| D5 | East Hampshire (locations 1-5 only); Berkshire; Surrey |
| D9 | Kent; East Sussex (locations 4-6 only in Sussex) |
| D15 | Buckinghamshire |
| D16 | Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire |
| D18 | Cambridgeshire |
| D19 | Suffolk, Norfolk |

Table 2.1 Counties in SED vis-à-vis Ellis' dialect 'districts'

The tables are separated as per Ellis' dialect regions, and listed in a roughly southwest-northeast direction across the southeast of England. The corresponding SED counties are laid out in Table 2.1.

2.2.2 Features weakening

First to mention some more detail from Britain (2002b), who notes a marked decline in rhoticity (i.e. production of non-prevocalic /r/, a non-standard feature) (Fig. 2.1-2.2), with the westward spread of (standard) non-rhoticity. This demonstrates a decline in diversity, where there had been

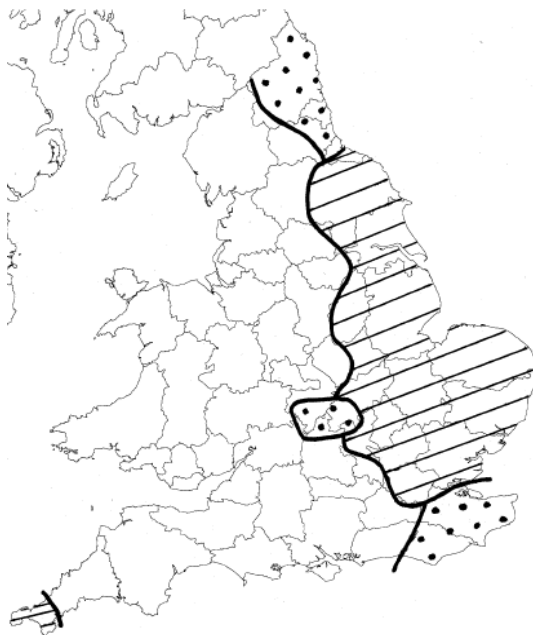


Figure 2.1 Non-rhoticity in Ellis (shaded = non-rhotic; dotted = variable) (Britain, 2002b:53)

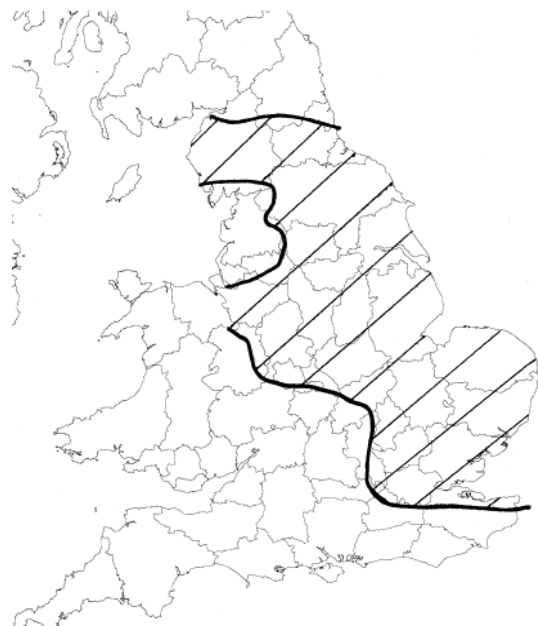


Figure 2.2 Non-rhoticity in SED (shaded = non-rhotic; dotted = variable) (Britain, 2002b:54)

two sounds but increasingly only one. Following Britain, I consider each feature separately, with a brief note followed by tabulated comparisons of Ellis and the SED. Due to the volume of data and constraints of time it has regrettably not been possible to draw maps for each feature.

2.2.2.1 insertion of schwa before gerund (e.g. “a-robbing the English folk”)

Ellis gives many examples of this (e.g. pp.58, 74, 79, 98, 125).

| | <i>D4</i> | <i>D5</i> | <i>D9</i> | <i>D15</i> | <i>D16</i> | <i>D18</i> | <i>D19</i> |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | STRONG | PARTIAL (p.98) | PARTIAL (p.133-4) | PARTIAL (p.190) | PARTIAL/STRONG (p.198, 202, 212, 215) | STRONG (p.252,3,6) | STRONG (p.264,76, 84) |
| SED RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>scratching, p.637</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>squinting, p.655</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>putting/poking, p.669</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>laughing, p.1022</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>doing, p.1107</i> | ABSENT** | ABSENT | ABSENT | PARTIAL | PARTIAL | ABSENT | PARTIAL |

**partial in locations to the west

2.2.2.2 insertion of schwa before past participle

Ellis discusses this especially clearly on p.85, transcribed as e.g. ‘a-eaten’, ‘a-had’.

| | <i>D4</i> | <i>D5</i> | <i>D9</i> | <i>D15</i> | <i>D16</i> | <i>D18</i> | <i>D19</i> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | STRONG (p.43) | ABSENT (p.92, 98) | PARTIAL (p.133-4) | PARTIAL (p.190) | PARTIAL [inconclusive] (p.198) | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| SED RATING: | PARTIAL | PARTIAL | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>tasted, p.593</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>found, p. 1069</i> | ABSENT** | PARTIAL (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>broke, p.1075</i> | ABSENT** | PARTIAL (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>made, p.1077</i> | ABSENT** | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>done, p.1112</i> | STRONG | STRONG | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |

**partial in locations to the west

2.2.2.3 [w] for /v/ (Ellis, p. 132, 141, 143)³ e.g. ‘winegar’

The area where this feature is found is dubbed by Ellis “the Land of Wee” (p.132): Kent, through Essex to Suffolk.

³ Although I have disregarded Ellis’ account of London dialect, it is perhaps noteworthy that he claims [w] for /v/ was strong in London in 1817, but gone by time of his publication (p.228).

| | <i>D4</i> | <i>D5</i> | <i>D9</i> | <i>D15</i> | <i>D16</i> | <i>D18</i> | <i>D19</i> |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---|-------------------|--|------------------|------------------------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | "never" (p.132), partial on p.133, "constantly" (p.229) | PARTIAL (p.193-4) | PARTIAL-STRONG (partial in Herts (p.197), strong in Essex (p.221)) | STRONG (p.251,5) | STRONG (p.261,68,70,76) |
| SED RATING: | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>PARTIAL</i> [‡] |
| <i>harvest, II.6.1</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>very, IV.11.5</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | NO DATA | ABSENT | NO DATA | ABSENT (1 Nf.) |
| <i>vinegar, V.7.19</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT (1 Bk.) | PARTIAL [‡] | ABSENT | STRONG [‡] |
| <i>vomit, VI.13.14</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | NO DATA | ABSENT | NO DATA | ABSENT |
| <i>vest, VI.14.9</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | NO DATA | ABSENT | NO DATA | PARTIAL [‡] (2 Nf.) |

[‡] flagged as "older"

2.2.2.4 [v] for /w/

Ellis is keen to note that the feature previously noted, (*w*) for (*v*), is "the only hereditary sound" (p.270), whereas [v] for /w/ "is a new one" which, "once acquired, is through ignorance and used in the wrong place" (ibid.).⁴ [v] for /w/, then, "appears to be a modern refinement, the speaker knowing that many of his (*w*) should be (*v*), but not knowing which they are" (p.261). In modern sociolinguistic terminology, he is describing *overgeneralisation* or *hypercorrection* of a rule presumably learnt in education – to use [v] not [w] in words like 'vinegar', and just applying this rule too often. This appears to have been checked by education, since Ellis notes that it "may now be 'corrected' " (p.261). C. Jones (2006:343-4) provides some additional information about both of the (*v*) and (*w*) alternations throughout the 19th century; and that both were on the wane among those aged under forty.

| | <i>D4</i> | <i>D5</i> | <i>D9</i> | <i>D15</i> | <i>D16</i> | <i>D18</i> | <i>D19</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|--|
| ELLIS RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT (p.222) | ABSENT | PARTIAL (over-correction of [w] for /v/, p.261,70), STRONG (p.284) |
| SED RATING: | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> | <i>ABSENT</i> |
| <i>wool, III.7.5</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>weasel, IV.5.6</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>wattles, IV.6.19</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>wasps, IV.8.7</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>worms, IV.9.1</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |

⁴ This is in the section on north-east Norfolk but it is a point reflected across his discussion of this feature (e.g. p.261).

2.2.2.5 initial /ð/ as [d]

“The peculiar character which separates D9 sharply from the adjoining D5 and D8 is the pronunciation of the initial *th* as (d) in *this, that, the, there, their, theirs, them, then, these, those, they*” (p.131, orig. emphases).

| | D4 | D5 | D9 | D15 | D16 | D18 | D19 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | STRONG (p.131) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| SED RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>the, V.6.6</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | PARTIAL (3 Ke.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>that [rel. pron], III.3.7</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>than, VI.12.4</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>them, III.3.1</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>theirs, XI.8.5</i> | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |

2.2.3 Features unchanged

2.2.3.1 [z, v] for /s, f/ in *say, saw, sand, fair, farm, fast* (p.32, 36-8, 64)

The words Ellis mentions only show these consonants in prevocalic environments, implicitly excluding preconsonantal ones like *slug* or *snail*. Certainly in the SED, this dialect feature is much weaker in preconsonantal position. I cannot go into details of this; but it suffices to note Ellis’ distinction, and follow it myself: viz. selecting only prevocalic environments in the SED. In these cases, the results are somewhat inconclusive, possibly weakening. Ellis mostly discusses these two features together but they are tabulated separately here.

[z] for /s/

| | D4 | D5 | D9 | D15 | D16 | D18 | D19 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | STRONG | PARTIAL ["die out eastward", p.92] | "never" (p.131) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| SED RATING: | STRONG | STRONG | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>sowing-basket, * p.191</i> | STRONG [‡] | STRONG (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>scythe, p.242</i> | STRONG | PARTIAL (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>cinders, p.544</i> | STRONG | STRONG (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>soot, p.546</i> | STRONG | STRONG (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>suet, p.575</i> | STRONG | STRONG (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |

*including synonyms with the same prevocalic environment, e.g. seed-lip, seed-cup

[v] for /f/

| | <i>D4</i> | <i>D5</i> | <i>D9</i> | <i>D15</i> | <i>D16</i> | <i>D18</i> | <i>D19</i> |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | STRONG | PARTIAL ["die out eastward", p.92] | "never" (p.131) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | PARTIAL (p.270) |
| SED RATING: | STRONG | PARTIAL | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>furrow</i> , [†] p.183 | STRONG | PARTIAL [‡] (STRONG in Ha.) | PARTIAL (Sx.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>foal</i> , p.295 | STRONG | PARTIAL [‡] | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>filly</i> , p.295 | PARTIAL | PARTIAL [‡] | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>forelock</i> , p.300 | STRONG | PARTIAL | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>fire</i> , p.531 | STRONG | STRONG (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |

[†] this initial /f/ is sometimes realised as θ, but only in this word – I therefore attribute it to lexical variation (unimportant for my purposes)

2.2.3.2 initial /θ/ as [ð]

| | <i>D4</i> | <i>D5</i> | <i>D9</i> | <i>D15</i> | <i>D16</i> | <i>D18</i> | <i>D19</i> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | STRONG (p.44-5) | PARTIAL (p.98) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | once , p.256, no. 544 'thin') |
| SED RATING: | STRONG | PARTIAL | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>thistle</i> , p.182 | STRONG | PARTIAL [‡] | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>thatch</i> , p.229 | STRONG | PARTIAL (Ha. mainly, 1 Brk.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>thirsty</i> , p.750 | STRONG | PARTIAL (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>thousand</i> , p.804 | STRONG | ABSENT (2 Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| <i>thursday</i> , p.844 | STRONG | PARTIAL (Ha.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |

[‡] flagged as "older"

2.2.4 Features arising?

The following three features are not reported at all by Ellis but do appear in the SED, albeit rarely. Not only are they absent from Ellis' transcriptions; if they had occurred, they seem exactly the kinds of sounds that Ellis would highlight as a characteristic of a given dialect. It would be unlike him not to notice such non-standard features. Nevertheless it is important to stress that no conclusion can be based on negative data from Ellis. These are presented as speculative only.

2.2.4.1 /l/ vocalisation

C. Jones notes: "Most commentators in the early part of the eighteenth century are strangely silent on the phenomenon of [l] vocalisation" (2006:112). He mentions it in the period 1750-1800, but specifies this is mostly [l] omission as in *salmon* (ibid. pp.263-66).

In certain contexts, namely after present day /ɑ:/ and /ɔ:/ and before labials and velars, /l/ was vocalised in the 16th century. In almost all dialects of English today, therefore, a lateral consonant is absent in ‘calf’, ‘palm’, ‘talk’ and ‘stalk’, for example. In some dialects, sporadic and apparently rather localised occurrences of vocalisation have also been found. [...] However [...] the current wave of /l/-vocalisation affecting south-eastern England (and many of the other locations [...]) is a fairly recent phenomenon.

Johnson & Britain, 2007:298

C. Jones cites one commentator mentioning vocalisation in Cockney (p.264); but nothing conclusive on its origins.

| | <i>D4</i> | <i>D5</i> | <i>D9</i> | <i>D15</i> | <i>D16</i> | <i>D18</i> | <i>D19</i> |
|----------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| SED RATING: | ABSENT | PARTIAL | PARTIAL | ABSENT | PARTIAL | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| stall, p.70 | ABSENT | PARTIAL | PARTIAL | ABSENT | PARTIAL (Essex) | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| thistle, p.182 | ABSENT | PARTIAL | PARTIAL | ABSENT | STRONG (Essex) | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| grass-nail, p.244 | ABSENT | PARTIAL | PARTIAL (1 Sx.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| little, p.919 | ABSENT | PARTIAL (Sr.) | ABSENT (2 Sx.) | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| useful, p.518 | ABSENT | STRONG | STRONG | ABSENT | PARTIAL (Essex) | ABSENT | ABSENT |

2.2.4.2 glottal /t/

| | <i>D4</i> | <i>D5</i> | <i>D9</i> | <i>D15</i> | <i>D16</i> | <i>D18</i> | <i>D19</i> |
|----------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|------------|----------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| SED RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | STRONG | PARTIAL | PARTIAL | PARTIAL |
| suet, p.575 | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | STRONG | PARTIAL (1 Hrt., 1 Bd) | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| soot, p.612 | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | STRONG | ABSENT (1 Hrt.) | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| squinting, p.655 | ABSENT | PARTIAL (Ha.) | ABSENT (1 Sx.) | STRONG | STRONG | PARTIAL | PARTIAL |
| last night, p.952 | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | STRONG | ABSENT (1 Bd.) | ABSENT | ABSENT (1 Nf.) |
| little, p.919 | PARTIAL | ABSENT | PARTIAL | STRONG | STRONG | PARTIAL | STRONG |

2.2.4.3 (th)-fronting, voiced and voiceless, e.g. ‘fink’, ‘bovver’

| | <i>D4</i> | <i>D5</i> | <i>D9</i> | <i>D15</i> | <i>D16</i> | <i>D18</i> | <i>D19</i> |
|----------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| ELLIS RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | inconclusive (p.231) | ABSENT | ABSENT | "TH and F are not confused" (p.256) | ABSENT |
| SED RATING: | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | PARTIAL | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| thistle, p.182 | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | PARTIAL (Essex) | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| thresh, p.232 | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | PARTIAL (1 Bk.) | ABSENT (1 Essex) | ABSENT | ABSENT (1 Sf.) |
| thumb, p.698 | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | PARTIAL (Essex) | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| thirsty, p.750 | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | ABSENT | PARTIAL (Bd.) | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| three, p.793 | ABSENT | PARTIAL (Sr.) | PARTIAL (K.) | ABSENT | PARTIAL | ABSENT | PARTIAL (Sf.) |

These apparently arising do not occur in Ellis and then suddenly occur across large areas in the SED, so it is impossible to interpret whether they have ‘spread’ or just developed independently in all these places.

2.2.5 Summary

| Features weakening: | Features unchanged | Features arising? |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| ə-gerund, e.g. ‘a-going’ | [z] for /s/, e.g. soot/zoot | /l/ vocalisation |
| ə-past part., e.g. ‘a-gone’ | [v] for /f/, e.g. fire/vire | glottal /t/ |
| [w] for /v/, e.g. ‘winegar’ | initial /θ/ as [ð] | /th/-fronting |
| [v] for /w/ initial /ð/ as [d] | /h/-dropping, e.g. ‘andles’ | |

There are some noticeable absences from this list. One is *-s* suffixing on present tense first person verbs, e.g. *I likes, I loves*. This feature is simply not recorded systematically enough either in Ellis or the SED. Another is periphrastic *I do go* for *I go*, quite widely reported in the dialectological literature, and recorded by Ellis in D4 (p.43); but nowhere in the SED. Similarly in D18 Ellis records *do you go* as an imperative (p.251), a well known feature in parts of East Anglia; but again the SED does not record it. These absences in the SED are mostly because the words and phrases elicited do not provide environments where these could occur. To be sure, these features do not really lend themselves to being elicited. Still, no comparison is possible.

2.3 The Northeast in Ellis & the SED

2.3.1 Method

In the northeast of England, things are less straightforward than the southeast. Ellis’ overriding remit is to study vowels. In fact, his mentions of consonants and grammatical features in the southeast – the basis of my work – feel as if they were to him no more than distractions.

Whatever was diverting him in the southeast appears not to have troubled him in the northeast,

and he focuses much more on vowels. Frustratingly this leaves little to analyse. Nevertheless, what little he does mention is gratifyingly informative.

The local dialect features reported by Ellis in the northeast mostly cover only small geographical areas. This means that it is no longer useful to tabulate the data. The task is instead to see if the feature has survived to the SED, and if so how strongly.

2.3.2 Features weakening

2.3.2.1 Reduction of *-ld* codas

In Northumberland, Ellis transcribes (p.640) ‘cold’ as either *kood* or *kaad*, and ‘balled’ as *bood* or *baad*. The codas of these words are both transcribed with just one phoneme, /d/, which appears to suggest that the coda was reduced to this one phoneme, and the central vowel extended over the place that /l/ would have occupied. This is also the way *old* and *hold* are transcribed in nearby Warkworth (p.667,669), and *old* further south in Market Weighton and Marshland (between Hull and Leeds) (p.498). It is possible that this is not the case, that these were mis-transcriptions and were instead just early instances of /l/ vocalisation (as Johnson & Britain, 2007:299, suggest in some northern English dialects at this time); but Ellis did periodically visit these areas himself (e.g. p.653); and given that he is otherwise very particular about vowels, there is a case to be made that this was coda reduction and not /l/ vocalisation. If so, then by the time of the SED these extended monophthongs have fractured into diphthongs in comparable words: *mouldboard* (I.8.8); *bald* (VI.2.3); *cold* (VI.13.17); *gold* (VII.7.10); *old* (VIII.1.20). What Ellis reports as *kood*, the SED typically reports as *koʊd*, i.e. vocalisation. If the *-ld* coda was reduced to /d/ in Ellis, then this local dialect peculiarity had weakened by the SED, with the recognition of /l/ in the coda but the introduction of a vowel in its place.

2.3.2.2 Deaffrication of ‘ch’ to ‘sh’

Another northeast dialect feature identified by Ellis is the realisation of /tʃ/ as [ʃ], so that tʃi:z ‘cheese’ becomes ʃi:z ‘sheese’. He reports this around locations in the extreme northeast tip of D30 (and therefore of England): Chillingham, Chatton and Chirnside (p.641), and Alnwick (p.668). This feature is not reported across the northern counties in the SED: *cheese* (V.5.4); *churn* (V.5.5); *choke* (VI.6.4); *chickens* (IV.6.11); *chip* (IV.6.10).

2.3.2.3 Realisation of initial /tr/ and /dr/ as [θr] as [ðr]

Around Market Weighton and Holderness in Yorkshire, Ellis (p.497) reports widespread realisation of initial /tr/ and /dr/ as [θr] as [ðr], e.g. ðrai ‘thry’ for drai ‘dry’. Interestingly, Ellis reports this as less prevalent “among the younger people” (ibid.), giving the words *dry* and *through* as examples. Of these two words, only *dry* is listed in the SED (in two contexts: of a cow, III.1.9; of the weather, VII.6.19). Ellis’ realisations are absent in corresponding northern locations, though three instances are reported further west in Lancashire.

2.3.2.4 [v] for /b/

In D32, Ellis reports that /b/ is often realised as [v]. He reports *maybe* in Newcastle as both (mEbi) and (mEvi) (p.684), with (mEvi) the most common (p.664). In nearby Warkworth “they habitually confused (b, v) in some words” (e.g. *marbles*, *maybe*, p.665). The SED lists neither *maybe* nor *marbles*; but there are six words with (b) in the same environment, i.e. at the onset of an unstressed syllable: *stubble* (II.1.2); *rubbish* (V.1.15), *cabbage* (V.7.18); *table* (V.8.12); *gobble* (VI.5.13) and *gable-end* (V.1.5). Of these, the realisation of /b/ as [v] is present only in *gable-end*.

2.3.2.5 *'Doubled' affricates*

In D31 (west Yorkshire, Cumbria, Westmorland) Ellis states that in 'edges' and 'matches' the consonants become "doubled", hence "mat'tches", "ed'dges" (p.542). These are both two-part consonants: the first made of /t/ and /ʃ/; the second of /d/ and /ʒ/. In his examples, the consonants remain intact in the onset of the second syllable, but the first part of the consonant is also copied into the coda of the first syllable; hence not the standard *ma-tches*, but dialectal *mat-tches*. He seems quite specific that this is not, for example, a geminate (e.g. the doubled 'n' in 'thinness'), but the splitting of a two-part consonant and the doubling of its first half. If so, then this feature has disappeared by the SED in all reported potential words: *ridges* (II.3.2); *thatcher* (II.7.5); *butcher* (III.11.1); *hedging-bill* (IV.2.5); *badger* (IV.5.9); *pigeon-toed* (VI.10.4).

2.3.2.6 *Inversion of infinitive marker to*

Ellis reports that the infinitive marker 'to' is pronounced (ət) in parts of Yorkshire and Cumbria (p.549-50), e.g. 'to see' /tə si/ as (ət si) (not to be confused with the more famous definite article reduction, as in 't'chair' for 'the chair'; Ellis is also quite clear that this is not some other word, e.g. 'at'). While (ət) and (tə) are reported in equal measure, "the tendency in the case of *ut* is rather to become obsolete" (p.550, orig. emphasis). Indeed the SED records (ət) as an infinitive marker just once (p.1045), in Lancashire. All other tokens are some approximation of 'to'.

2.3.3 Features unchanged

2.3.3.1 *The oo/aa contrast*

I have steered clear of vowels so far. However, there is one particularly striking feature that would be especially hard to confuse. Contrasting the Redesdale district⁵ with the North Tyne valley in Northumberland, Ellis notes a central *oo* vowel in Wark-on-Tyne, but an *aa* vowel

⁵ Confusingly Ellis often uses 'district' in its political/administrative sense, not his dialect-region sense.

between the rivers Tyne and Wansbeck: thus he writes ‘cold’ as *kood/kaad* (p.640), ‘balled’ as *bood/baad* (ibid.), and ‘old’ as *ood/aad* (p.498). Sure enough, these two very different vowels remain equally distinct in the northeast in the SED: *cold* (VI.3.17); *old* (VII.1.20); *bald* (VI.2.3) (as a substitute for *balled*).⁶

2.3.3.2 *The Northumberland burr*

A highly salient and localised feature that Ellis identifies across “the greater part of D32” (p.639) is /ɹ/, a uvular /r/ similar to the /r/ of French and German (p.641), calling it the Northumberland burr. C. Jones (2006:260) notes this feature in the same area as far back as 1750-1800. In the SED, just as in Ellis, the burr prevails strongly in Northumberland and nowhere else, in a range of phonetic environments: *badger* (IV.5.9); *rooms* (V.2.4); *every* (VII.8.19); *three* (VII.1.3); *drought* (VII.6.20); *dare* (IX.4.17). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that one of Ellis’ respondents in Haltwhistle (10 miles west of Newcastle), Mr Howchin, claims the burr “is often heard among the elder people, but is disappearing among the younger” (p.664).

2.3.4 Summary

| Features weakening | Features unchanged |
|---|---------------------------|
| - <i>ld</i> coda reduction | the Northumberland burr |
| <i>ch/sh</i> deaffrication | <i>oo/aa</i> contrast |
| initial (<i>tr-</i>) and (<i>dr-</i>) as (<i>θr</i>) as (<i>ðr</i>) | |
| (<i>v</i>) for (<i>b</i>) | |
| ‘doubled’ affricates | |
| inversion of infinitive marker <i>to</i> | |

⁶ This substitution would not work for examining the coda, since the ‘-ed’ in ‘balled’ has a syntactic function whereas ‘-ld’ in ‘bald’ does not. I would suggest, however, that the vowels have no such critical function.

2.4 A pattern of change between Ellis & the SED

The purpose of the foregoing comparison was to look for changes in the use of local dialect peculiarities across large areas of the country, in order to make some initial claims about overall linguistic diversity.

There is a general weakening of dialects which follows a pattern, with certain dialect features surviving fairly well intact and others faring less well. However, the data show little evidence of *supralocalisation* (Kerswill, 2007:17) – the spread of local dialect features between contiguous dialects. Instead the main trend is *dedialectalisation* (ibid.) – the gradual decline of local dialect features in favour of features from Standard English. However, there is an important qualification to this. What the weakening features have in common is that they all stand in contrast to the *written* language only. That is to say, when reading Standard English, certain local dialect features stand out as being noticeably at odds with what is on the page; and it is those features that appear to have weakened. Features that did not present a contrast to the written language appear to have fared better. This trend, explored in more detail below, can be interpreted as an instance of *salience*, “which we can provisionally define [...] as a property of a linguistic item or feature that makes it in some way perceptually and cognitively prominent” (Kerswill & Williams, 2002:81; see also Trudgill, 1986:11). This resembles the kinds of changes described by Chambers (1992:700) in which reading allows dialect speakers to more accurately approximate the standard language, “abetted by orthographic distinctiveness” (ibid.).

Two caveats are due at the outset. Firstly, the data presented are not fully representative, and are certainly open to debate. For example whereas I show local dialect features declining in the direction of written Standard English, Britain (2002b:53-5; Figures 2.1-2.2) shows rhoticity, a feature that *is* represented in the written standard, declining nationwide between Ellis and the

SED. That may reinforces the general theme of declining diversity, it seems to suggest dialect mixing, the like of which I am suggesting was less common at this time. This is a timely reminder that the purpose here is not to claim a given type of dialect change as exclusive to a particular period; but that they have had different levels of prominence at different times.

2.4.1 Declining features contrast to the written language...

The weakening of local dialect features recorded above can be distinguished four ways:

Something missing. This is where the written form clearly requires a sound or sounds that are not being produced in the local dialect pronunciation:

- *-ld* coda reduction. The fracturing of the *kood* and *kaad* vowels into diphthongs could be seen as recognition of the /l/ consonant in the standard written language.

Something extra. Here the local dialect form produces more sounds than the written standard appears to require:

- *a-going*. When reading the word “going” aloud, there is something quite clearly ‘extra’ about “a-going”, marking it out as non-standard.
- ‘doubled’ affricates. The written language shows there is no hiatus in the middle of, for example, ‘matches’, so that the dialectal doubling of the affricate stands in contrast to the written form.

Something disordered. The local dialect form produces all the standard sounds of a word, but in a non-standard order, which is highlighted by reading aloud:

- inversion of infinitive marker *to*. The production of (ət) for *to* is ‘corrected’ by reading the word in contrast to the spoken dialectal form.

Minimal pair clashes. The written language frequently demonstrates that two sounds, interchanged in the local dialect form, are different in the standard, and have different locations in the lexicon.

- [w] for /v/, e.g. west/vest, wile/vile.
- initial /ð/ as [d], e.g. those/doze, there/dare.
- [v] for /b/, e.g. vole/bowl, vile/bile.
- Deaffrication of ‘ch’ to ‘sh’, e.g. shock/chock, shore/chore, shoe/chew.
- Initial /tr-/ and /dr-/ as [θr] and [ðr], e.g. true/through.

2.4.2 ...But the unchanged features do not

Unlike the declining dialect features, the features that remained unchanged are not demonstrated as being non-standard by the written language alone. If dialect speakers never (or rarely) hear the standard form being produced, then the written language does not show them how to produce it.

- The Northumberland burr. The written standard does not contain any information about how to produce /r/, so this uvular /r/ does not stand out as non-standard from reading alone.
- Initial /θ/ as [ð]. Standard initial /θ/ and non-standard [ð] are both written as ‘th’. Without a spoken cue, there is no way to know when to produce which one.
- The *oo/aa* contrast. The written form does not contain any explicit information about how to produce this vowel, so the local dialect form can persist without correction.

Even if someone rigidly adhered to all available information from the written standard about how to produce which sound, without actually hearing the standard language being produced, there is nothing to show these dialect features as being non-standard.

2.4.3 Exceptions

[z, v] for (s, f) survive despite showing a contrast to the written word. Taken together though, they demonstrate a regular exception, in that their only difference is voicing. So there seems to be a certain level of salience, above which the feature of voicing does not pass. This may add another explanation for initial (θ) as [ð] surviving, in addition to their orthographic equivalence.

Two non-standard features appear to have been increasing between Ellis and the SED, which poses questions for claims about a lack of regional dialect levelling. The dropping of word- and syllable-initial /h/ was in the late 18th century “strictly lexically constrained and apparently without any widespread or significant sociolinguistic salience” (C. Jones, 2006:109) but picked up a strong presence – and high salience and disdain – in the 19th century (C. Jones, 2006:256-7, 344-5), borne out by the data above. This stands in contrast to the written standard – coming under the ‘something missing’ category⁷ – but increases regardless. Likewise glottal /t/ appears to have cropped up around the southeast between the two studies. Whilst it is impossible to tell whether these features ‘spread’ between dialects, these two anomalies demand explanation.

As with the spread of non-prevocalic /r/, it is possible that these are cases of dialect contact and innovation diffusion (although not ‘levelling’, since these do not involve the loss of many different dialect features, only one for another). One counter to dialect contact is supplied by Mair (2006), who explains that /h/-dropping is “a natural and expected development for the simple reason that it has been one of the most venerable long term trends in the history of English pronunciation” (p.159). Likewise glottal /t/ is “similar to aitch-dropping in that its impact on the phonemic system is minimal” (ibid.), and is a “preferred” variant in that it is simpler to produce (Altendorf, 2003:148-9). (Note: this was only found in the southern data; and

⁷ Although, it should be noted, the written standard is somewhat ambiguous on this point, ‘hour’, ‘honest’, etc.

should be contrasted with the very different behaviour of glottal activity in present day northeast England: see §3.4.1.4.)

These may have been supralocalisation borne of dialect contact between Ellis and the SED; it is beyond the scope of this investigation to pursue this either way. Nevertheless, the data suggest a relatively greater role for dedialectalisation towards written Standard English. That this represents a general decline in linguistic diversity is the only critical detail for our purposes; but a brief explanation for this trend will now be attempted.

2.5 Explaining changes between Ellis & the SED

[E]ducation [...] has gone on with its silent and inevitable effacements, reducing the speech of this country to uniformity, and obliterating every year a fine old local word. The process is always the same: the word is ridiculed by the newly taught; it gets into disgrace; it is heard in holes and corners only; it dies, and worst of all, it leaves no synonym.

Hardy, 1908:iii (cited in Görlach, 1999:31)

The data in this chapter suggest that dialects in the Ellis-SED period were weakening in the direction of the written standard language. Görlach claims “the end of dialect speech as the dominant form of communication in the first two generations after general education became available, with a slight delay in the countryside” (1999:31). Sidestepping the totality of this assertion, it will be worth having a brief look at whether the kinds of conditions arising during this period could have increased the influence of written language. There is insufficient time or space for a substantive argument about this; these are just some insights onto the kinds of information that might explain the trends observed.

2.5.1 A widespread standard language ideology

An orientation towards written Standard English could be traced back to popular acceptance of a standard language. This does seem to intensify in the UK during the period in question. As C. Jones describes the beginnings of this process among the nascent professional classes (cf. e.g. Longmore, 2005 on the national standard movement in the US):

between 1750 and 1800 (and even more so post-1800) there is a sea change in the way linguistic usage is perceived to relate to criteria such as social status and place of geographic origin (the two often vitally interconnected) [...]. [...] The values of the late-eighteenth century Enlightenment in England and Scotland emphasized [...] a view widely held in the period by philosophers, social and political commentators that a betterment of society was possible through the rational framework of science, education and hard work [...].

The linguistic observers in this period in many ways reflect [...] a desire for improvement and betterment in native language use and description [...]. Linguistic improvement is itself seen as an adjunct to economic and social advance. [...]

C. Jones, 2006:118

It is in this period, C. Jones suggests, that an interest in linguistic hygiene and ‘proper English’ grew. Emblematic of this are the words of Thomas Sheridan in 1780, author of *A General Dictionary of the English Language*: “Low as the state of the written language is, that of the spoken is infinitely worse, nothing has been done even to render a right pronunciation” (1780:4 – cited in C. Jones, 2006:121). With his dictionary he “endeavoured to fix two anchors to our floating language, in order to keep it steady against the gales of caprice, and current of fashion” (1780:6 – cited in Douglas, 1991:5, also in C. Jones, 2006:121).

Throughout the late 18th century a distaste for non-standard language increasingly became a class issue, attributed “more and more to the usage of those who were seen as having a lower socio-economic status” (C. Jones, 2006:123). Even the “artisan ‘middleocrat’ groups” (ibid.) were berated for grammatical impropriety. This desire for uniformity was encouraged by a feeling of competition from other European nations: prescriptive orthoepists aiming for “purity of

pronunciation, permanence of proper usage and a status for English raised to that of French and Italian (C. Jones, 2006:139).

C. Jones goes on to suggest that a normative position on British English, which had been a topic for debate in the late 18th century (2006:125-36), gained inexorably more popularity thereafter. “Indeed, there is hardly anything in the eighteenth century to rival the output of many writers in the following century, where we find explicitly normative and condemnatory productions” (ibid. p.129). As well as just prescribing the standard, these publications began “listing and identifying what are seen as negative pronunciations, vulgarities, rather than propitious forms; in many instances they are treatises on linguistic ‘don’t’s rather than ‘do’s” (ibid.; also pp.282-3). These loudening concerns over the corruption of language (ibid. pp.117-36) pointed towards a common solution: education. Strict schooling of the masses would help to maintain pure, grammatically correct and superior English.

It has to be said, prescriptive opinions of linguistic wickedness may have been no more than hot air. However, the introduction of universal education across the country in the late 19th century lent a certain edge to this ideology: not propagating completely uniform Standard English, but apparently eroding some of the more marked features of local vernacular speech.

2.5.2 A nationwide normative schooling environment

It is worth noting first just how salient education was to Ellis himself as a cause of dialect weakening. According to one of his authorities, the Hampshire dialect

is rapidly dying out, and has been for the last two generations. Even the oldest farm-labourers are so much accustomed to educated (London) pronunciation, that this certainly influences their natural speech.

Ellis, 1889:99

This compares to similar comments peppering Wright (1905) on “the influence of the literary language” (p.146). Another such comment from Ellis comes from a visit to Bishop Middleham (8 mi SSE of Durham), where he notes:

Through the kindness of the vicar, Rev. C.A. Cartledge, I was taken to see two natives, George Lazenby and William Greenwell [...]. They told me that the talk used to be much broader than it is now, and that the school had knocked up the dialect.

Ellis, 1889:653

In Cambridgeshire he relates another comment (with a noteworthy caution):

Mr Little says that “the fen country generally is the home of pure speech, by which I mean of language but little differing from the ordinary literary English.” [...] Received English, however, probably descended from E. [east of England] speech, especially the inland variety, and that would account for the marked resemblance between the two.

Ellis, 1889:254

To add some detail to these remarks, English education in the UK has conventionally concentrated on reading and conforming to standards of spelling and grammar, not concerning itself with the far more intricate matter of elocution:

The density of such statements [on correct pronunciation, in the early 18th century] is, as a whole, extremely low, and there is no suggestion that the principal aim of the works in question [about how to pronounce English words] was the achievement of any kind of wholesale change to national pronunciation habits in the direction of some socially accepted norm.

C. Jones, 2006:14

In terms of pronunciations, there were limits for any education programme based on printed materials, the intricate minutiae of standard pronunciations remaining an improbable goal:

The shades of difference in the variation of the vowel sounds are frequently so slight, and the marks necessary to discriminate them so numerous, that to instruct children in the knowledge of the one, by initiating them in the other, becomes a work of immense labour, and the greatest difficulty.

Scott, 1796:2-3 (cited by C. Jones, 2006:147)

Articulate sounds can be formed by imitation alone, and described only by similitude. [...] The sounds of some letters may, with tolerable exactness, be ascertained by rules for the management of the organs of speech in pronouncing them. The consonants more readily admit of such description; but the nice discrimination of vowel sounds, on which the principle harmony of language depends, will generally elude the efforts of the most subtle definer.

Nares, 1784:xx (cited by C. Jones, 2006:147)

Moreover, even if there were a focus on elocution, this would end at the school gate. Reading, by contrast, does not necessarily finish on leaving school. Around the time of Ellis' study in the late nineteenth century, basic literacy was increasing across England. After the first state investment in elementary education in 1833 (Curtis, 1952:7), successive governments made ever larger provisions, taking over from private and voluntary bodies. Eventually the Elementary Education Act 1870 guaranteed (at least in theory) universal elementary education, and basic numeracy and literacy for all (ibid.):

For the first time in history the nation's children had to attend school on a full-time basis for a minimum of five years, a period that extended to nine for many by 1914.

[...]

By the mid-1890s the Education Department estimated that 99 per cent of the seven to eleven year-old group eligible to attend elementary schools were on the school registers.

Hurt, 1979:3,204

The leaving age climbed ever higher until by "1918 [...] full-time education to the age of 14 became the general rule in England and Wales" (Hurt, 1979:188). All this saw progressive increases in exam performance (Sanderson, 1999:1-13). In addition to nationwide increases in further and higher education cultivating the professional classes – driven largely by an industrial sector hungry for brainpower (ibid. pp.26-54) – developments elsewhere were encouraging basic education right across the social hierarchy. Legislation banning child labour, the gradual nationalisation of education (removing fees), and punitive measures for non-attendance, all helped to bring ever more children into some form of schooling (ibid. pp.1-13).

Within a short time of the passing of the 1870 Act [...] C.H. Parez, who inspected schools in Cumberland, Westmorland, and [...] Lancashire, welcomed the ‘large influx of rough and ragged children; and in those bare feet and tattered clothes’ [...]. E.P. Arnold [...] [in] Devonshire schools [...] found, ‘Compulsion is reaching the very class which it was intended to reach Already I recognize in some of the street arabs, selling pipelights under the railway arches and at the corner of streets boys who have passed a successful examination in two or three subjects at some recent inspection [...]’
Hurt, 1979:69 (dots outside parentheses present in original)

Did increased school attendance really mean increased lifelong literacy? Based on the proportion of people who were able to sign their name on their marriage certificate (a widely used yardstick of adult literacy – see e.g. Stephens, 1998:26), yes it did. In England and Wales, this was at 50% in 1754. In Scotland, when records began in 1855, the figure was 83%. This rose steadily until in 1900 England, Wales and Scotland all reached around 97% (ibid. p.26). There was still a clear urban-rural divide; nevertheless, “[m]ost non-industrialised rural areas [...] experienced improving levels [of literacy], though remaining inferior to industrial towns” (ibid. p.28).

Beyond school, occupational conditions in the early 20th century began favouring literacy (Sanderson, 1999:1-13). Reports commissioned for the 1851 Census showed that across the country, working class parents wanted basic literacy in their children, for employment (Hurt, 1979:25-39). The sentiment remained strong well into the 20th century (ibid. p.30), surviving in one form or another to this day (Mizen, 1995:98-100).

During the 20th century literacy found increasing purchase in leisure also. While Searby (1982:113) notes “intensive private reading” among the middle classes, Stephens (1998:144-61) stresses how leisure reading was becoming increasingly popular in the working classes too. A proliferation of books, religious and political pamphlets, cheap fiction, trade journals, and not least nationally circulated newspapers, allowed leisure reading evermore to transcend class divides – while national transportation continued to lessen geographical barriers (ibid.). Unlike state-run education programmes, these publication ventures were privately run. Just because

more people were attending school does not mean they enjoyed it (although there is evidence of this, e.g. Sanderson, 1999:1-13); but the sales of leisure publications is a stronger indication of enjoyment, and presumably a warmer reception of the written word.

Literacy continued to grow steadily throughout the 20th century, fuelled especially by the world wars. As well as spurring growth of a professional class in war-related industries – chemistry, mathematics, pharmaceuticals etc. (Sanderson, 1999:56) – it also further promoted literacy in the working classes. As Sanderson summarises for WWI:

[B]asic literate and numerate skills [...] were needed by truck drivers, map readers, gun layers and navigators at work. In leisure too the War stimulated the avid reading of newspapers. Soldiers at the front and loved ones at home maintained communication with more letter writing than they would have undertaken in peacetime while official forms and ration books required a reading comprehension and penmanship. A population which had achieved virtually total literacy by the 1900s found that the cruel circumstances of War confirmed the necessity of such skills [...].

Sanderson, 1999:55-6

To put all this in a longer term historical perspective, the conditions that allowed literacy to spread so rapidly can be seen as part of a centuries-long transition in England from Malthusian-Darwinian patterns of reproduction – i.e. survival of the fittest – to an increasingly skills-based, knowledge-rewarding pattern – or, survival of the smartest. As Clark puts it:

Before 1800 all societies, including England, were Malthusian. The average man or woman had 2 surviving children. Such societies were also Darwinian. Some reproductively successful groups produced more than 2 surviving children, increasing their share of the population, while other groups produced less, so that their share declined. But unusually in England, this selection for men was based on economic success from at least 1250, not success in violence as in some other pre-industrial societies. The richest male testators left twice as many children as the poorest. Consequently the modern population of the English is largely descended from the economic upper classes of the middle ages. At the same time, from 1150 to 1800 in England there are clear signs of changes in average economic preferences towards more “capitalist” attitudes. The highly capitalistic nature of English society by 1800 – individualism, low time preference rates, long work hours, high levels of human capital – may thus stem from the nature of the Darwinian struggle in a very stable agrarian

society in the long run up to the Industrial Revolution. The triumph of capitalism in the modern world thus may lie as much in our genes as in ideology or rationality.

Clark, 2007:1

This burgeoning of a literacy-oriented “middle-class” (albeit unrecognisable from the middle-class we refer to today) appears to have engendered acceptance of reading, and reading for life. This brief review of changing societal conditions contemporaneous to the interval between Ellis and the SED, and its potential to increase the influence of the written language, is all there is space to mention here. The main theme has been declining linguistic diversity in this period; the explanations, though preliminarily explored above, would require further investigation.

2.6 Conclusion

Recalling the focus on *linguistic innovations*, what is new to the local dialects of British English reviewed above in the Ellis-SED period is the introduction of features from written Standard English. That this is so widespread, and that local dialect peculiarities were simultaneously being displaced, suggests a drop in overall diversity, apparently due to increasing literacy. This causal interpretation would need massively more detail to give it any weight, both in terms of how widespread reading was really becoming (a social-historical question), and the actual influence of reading on speech (a psycholinguistic question). Still, this is a start. Moreover, this chapter has given some more linguistic information about when dialect contact, supralocalisation and regional dialect levelling seemed less prevalent. This can be joined up with the previously cited claims about when these processes began in the UK, to more fully recount its emergence.

Chapter 3

Mobility and regional dialect levelling

I recognised the dialect I was supposed to be speaking according to the books. It was the dialect I heard in the villages and on the farms to the south of Teesside but it was no longer the speech of Teesside. Not even ocatagenarians (sic) in Middlesbrough spoke like that. Also according to some dialect maps, the River Tees was some linguistic iron curtain. So how was it when I walked over the Newport bridge from the Yorkshire side to meet my cousins from the Durham side at Billingham Beck they spoke exactly like me?

Wood, 2004

3.1 Introduction

The last chapter argued that most changes in the local dialects of British English between Ellis' study in the late 19th century and the SED in the mid-20th century may be explicable mostly on the basis of literacy. This was based on the linguistic data, and a preliminary explanation was pursued with some information about contemporaneous widespread increases in literacy.

The current chapter reviews post-SED dialect reports whose results suggest significantly increased dialect contact and mixing, noticeably complementing – though not replacing – the influence of literacy. As in the previous chapter, a brief explanation is attempted, this time by reviewing research in human geography on increases in population flow in this period. In sum, previous mass movements of population – the clearest examples being the two World Wars – amounted to major, yet only historically momentary upheavals of population, and bore none of the hallmarks of the constant churning flow of persons characteristic of more recent times.

3.1.1 Contextualising regional dialect levelling

Regional dialect levelling must first be set in the contexts of other models of the spatial diffusion of linguistic innovations. A review is given by Britain (2005:996-997), summarised as follows:

- *wave* or *contagion* diffusion, where an innovation spreads outward from a central point, in a 'ripple' effect;
- *urban hierarchical* diffusion, from a large city to smaller towns, then to villages, and so on;
- *cultural hearth* diffusion, the innovation simultaneously taking hold across part of a country or language area, in both urban and rural areas, before spreading to other parts of the country;
- *contra-hierarchical*, diffusion from rural to urban areas.

Britain then goes on to stress the ways that innovations are adapted as they spread – a theme that runs through Chapters 3 and 4. The current chapter discusses regional levelling in relation to the above models of diffusion.

It was in the mid 1990s that the participants of a European Science Foundation Research Network entitled *The convergence and divergence of dialects in a changing Europe*,

identified the need for sociolinguistic models capable of capturing changes accompanying the social and geographical mobility conspicuously characteristic of the last half century, which allows speakers access to the social and linguistic practices of distant communities.

L. Milroy, 2002:3

As outlined in Chapter 1, regional dialect levelling represents an advance in this direction. Nevertheless, despite an ostensibly regional focus, research has largely focussed on distinct individual speech communities, with comparisons to other speech communities around the region – a vital part of the narrative – confined mostly to post-analysis discussion sections and conclusions. As Chapter 1 discussed, contemporary discourse on the development of “levelled varieties” (e.g. Watt & Milroy, 1999:43; Fabricius, 2005:123) can under-articulate the constant ongoing nature of language change. This can be exacerbated by a focus on the completeness of a given dialect change, with less discussion of what happens after this – namely that language keeps on changing in new ways. This is exemplified in the following passage:

In general, levelling gives rise to greater and greater linguistic *homogeneity* (in the sense that distinctive dialects *disappear*) and a tendency for localized norms of the kind supported by a close-knit network structure to become *obliterated*. [...] A prominent example of a *levelled* dialect is the south-eastern English variety popularly known as ‘Estuary English’ [...] which *has expanded* over the last twenty years or so both socially and geographically (Trudgill (1999:81-82).

L. Milroy, 2002:8 (emphases added)

Although methodologically this is fully concerned with both variation and variability, analytically it delivers greater emphasis to variation, by emphasising end points of dialect change and implicitly foregrounding heterogeneity. This presents a certain impediment to fully describing linguistic diversity as consisting of both. There is a tendency here to downplay what Thrift refers to as the “state of becoming” embodied by language:

[L]anguage [...] gains its meaning from doing as doing gains its meaning from language. Language is therefore always in a state of becoming. [...] It is a semantic field that shifts as the practices and projects of the material world alter, setting new limits as old ones are overtaken, inventing new meanings for old words, or bringing new words and meanings into existence.

Thrift, 1983:46

By focussing on the predominance of a certain list of supralocal dialect forms, the “levelled variety” foregrounds a hypothetical end product of regional levelling. It is the linearity of this narrative that inhibits an articulation of diversity. The spread of these features is significant, but if this is described as being completed, then there is no more process. The becoming has become. Equally important are adaptations of those features and ongoing change (e.g. Britain, 2005). Dialects may weaken, but in so doing they adapt. Simultaneously considering these processes of reception and adaptation enables a fuller description of overall diversity and how it is changing.

More fully describing variation and variability together – with a view to articulating diversity – can be achieved by slightly adjusting the term regionally levelled variety. The word *regional* is unproblematic, given a geographically informed conception of regions (discussed below). The term *variety* is also sufficient, given what has been said about using varieties as heuristics (§1.4). The only hindrance is the word *levelled*; and in fact, only its inflection in the past tense. This suggests completion – what has developed, taken shape, emerged into clarity – taking descriptive space away from ongoing variability. To rebalance this I suggest a seemingly superficial but hopefully ontologically significant change to *regionally levelling variety*. A practical effect of

this is to encourage attention toward the ongoing nature of the levelling process. We can legitimately talk of dialect features ‘spreading’, as long as equal attention is paid to the disparate ways they are adapted and the potential for innovation in the future. Taking all these things together can enable a discussion of the trajectory of linguistic diversity.

To reprise the focus on mobility, the regionally levelling variety can be described in terms of widened spheres of interaction within regions. This hinges on delimiting the borders of these regions, and what constitutes a high degree of interaction. These things are unpacked below; but a starting point is the following passage, which serves as an invitation to the discussion that follows:

Since diffusion [of linguistic features between dialects] depends on contact, it is not altogether unsurprising that where breaks in contact frequency are found, we also find that linguistic breaks – isoglosses or dialect transitions – occur (Chambers and Trudgill 1998). These breaks often arise because of physical barriers to inter-regional communication [...]. They are also shaped, however, by routinised human activity within speech communities. [...] The geographies and histories of our social networks and those of the social, economic and political institutions which guide our daily lives in the West [...] are played out, routinised and reproduced within functional zones usually centred around (or in the sometimes distant shadow of) one or a number of urban areas [...]. Intra-regional mobility, whilst breaking down networks and routines at the very local level, reinforces *supra-local* structure. Whilst this supralocalisation of English society (and its linguistic consequences) has been ongoing for well over a century now, improvements in transportation routes, the shift from primary and secondary to tertiary sector employment as the backbone of the economy, the expansion in higher levels of education (at sites often well away from the local speech community), the normalisation of long(er)-distance commuting, labour market flexibility and the consequent geographical elasticity of family ties and other social network links have meant that these supralocal functional zones are probably larger than ever before.

The previously mentioned social and geographical mobility within these supralocal zones has led to dialect contact between the varieties spoken within them. The result has been the emergence over time of regional koines – levelled supralocal varieties which are replacing some of the linguistic diversity that once reigned within individual regions.

Britain, 2002a:62 (orig. emphasis)

3.1.2 Speech communities and regional dialect levelling

The term *speech community* (stemming from Bloomfield, 1926) came about as a way of explaining how people from the same place (town, city, hill village etc.) shared certain ways of speaking. Over time this has come to refer to more diffuse groups of people, eventually with little identifiable sense of scale (Patrick, 2002; Croft, 2003). This could be a dialect, a Creole, a professional jargon, a subcultural slang; any shared code. The only condition is that there is a theoretically finite group of people interacting with each other, sharing and maintaining language norms – an “interactional collectivity” (Patrick, 2002:583). This breadth of meaning has allowed it to encompass even the disparate speakers of the south Pacific language Niuean, some of whom use and maintain their language in online chat forums with no face-to-face contact at all (Sperlich, 2005).

This chapter examines the “interactional collectivity” view of the speech community in respect of the “region” as discussed in recent research in human geography. The relation between regions and regionally levelling varieties is explored in terms of heightened levels of mobility since the latter half of the 20th century.

[D]ialect features which are used only in a geographically restricted area will be given up earlier than geographically widespread ones.

Auer et al. (1998:167)

Supra-local, regionally levelling varieties are pursued here with reference to two regions: the southeast of England; and the northeast of England. As we will see, the residents of these two areas move around predominantly *within* these regions, rather than between them; and in this sense the two regions can be seen as interactionally discrete. At the same time, mobility within the two regions is increasing apace and local dialect features are weakening. Dialectally these two regions are becoming internally more similar, but nevertheless maintaining mutual

differences; and this compares to their interactional discreteness from one another. This is not to carve up the linguistic landscape into a heterogeneous map. It is the constant and unending process of change and adaptation that is of interest.

For the purposes of this analysis, then, regional dialect levelling can be defined as the spread of dialect features that:

- do not originate in the written standard language (which may be accounted for by literacy);
- displace a range of local dialect features;
- come to be used evermore *frequently* across the region, increasing in use over time, not just stable age-graded variation that young people routinely discard as they get older;
- come to be used evermore *regularly* across the region, i.e. with speakers using them in evermore similar amounts, with variability in their use decreasing;
- constitute such intensive, extensive and prolonged mixing as to cause an overall drop in the diversity of the language, at least of that region – this is the key contrast between regional and local dialect levelling (as discussed in §2.1.1).

“Speech communities, broadly conceived, can be regarded as collectives of social networks” (Gumperz, 1996:362). The speech community grows with the regionally levelling variety, as the region represents broadening – and fragmenting – collectives of social networks.

3.1.3 Contributions of this chapter

Chapter 2 dealt with the *dedialectalisation*, apparently influenced by the written language. The current chapter focuses on *supralocalisation*, convergence between contiguous dialects, and its relation to increased and regionally concentrated mobility.

The main task in this chapter is to see how regional dialect levelling has affected linguistic diversity in British English. Attention is also paid to how this correlates with regional concentrations of population movement from the mid-late 20th century onwards. Comparisons are drawn between those who engage in regional levelling the most, who less so, and how this relates to their relative levels of mobility. Finally, brief consideration is given to who is not engaging in regional levelling at all, and what this can add to our understanding of the process.

The exploration of human geography, although quite brief, nevertheless provides a contribution to current debates on dialect change and mobility. This interdisciplinary dialogue has so far been less than complete, despite regional dialect levelling being discussed as a recent phenomenon, and with reference to changes in population movement:

The pattern of geographical diffusion suggests very strongly that face-to-face contact, as a result of mobility and immigration [...] must be involved.

Trudgill, 1988:44

[A] high degree of mobility, which leads to the weakening of group-internal linguistic norms, will render a population more receptive to linguistic (and other) innovations.

Kerswill, 2003:225

Convergence of this kind has been shown to occur in mobile populations where there is a high level of dialect contact (see in particular the Milton Keynes project). And this is exactly the case in the south-east of England.

Altendorf, 2003:140

In Britain, it is mobility, manifested in commuting and other forms of short-distance travel as well as relocation, that is perhaps the most marked indicator of high degrees of contact. L. Milroy (2002:7) argues that such mobility leads to the “large-scale disruption of close-knit, localized networks which have historically maintained highly systematic and complex sets of socially structured linguistic norms”. We can reasonably suppose that a high degree of mobility, which leads to the weakening of group-internal linguistic norms, will render a population more receptive to linguistic (and other) innovations. A consequence of this increased receptiveness is that speakers can be expected to take up diffusing changes more readily, with the result that these changes move more rapidly across the language area.

Kerswill, 2003a:224-225

[D]ialect mixing and koineization [...] has been provoked by [...] sociogeographical mobility. Supralocalisation is most extreme in areas with high daily mobility through commuting and visiting and high rates of internal migration

Britain, 2005:999

[Dialect] Supralocalisation is most extreme in areas with high daily mobility through commuting and visiting and high rates of internal migration.

Kerswill, 2007:26

In a preamble to contemporary dialect change in East Anglia, Britain remarks on the

gentrification of the countryside with its supposed ‘green and pleasant land’ drawing in middle class residents and second-home buyers to rural villages in many areas.

Britain, 2002b:55

Although these assertions seem reasonable, it remains unclear what is meant by “mobility”, “deindustrialisation”, “gentrification” and so on. These shortfalls have led dialectologists into something of an epistemological blind alley, unable to locate regional dialect levelling in space. A goal of what follows, then, is to introduce some geographical data to contextualise the dialect reports more so than has been done before.

In terms of the historical uniqueness of regional levelling, this has itself been questioned, and that should be acknowledged. C. Jones reports “the emergence of compromise or levelled forms” (2006:205-21) between 1750 and 1800: dialect mixing that seems explicable only by contact between speakers of different dialects. This seems similar to the supposedly more recent phenomenon of dialect levelling. Still, he appears to be reviewing sources that deal with wealthy, mobile minorities. Likewise Nevalainen (2000) and Hernández-Campoy & Conde-Silvestre (2005), who make similar claims of mobility-based dialect mixing centuries ago, look to be focussing on the language of mobile elites. This is not claimed to be as widespread as 20th century dialect levelling. However, it has to be said that Ellis, writing in the 19th century, did make mention of similar sorts of contact-based dialect mixture even in the working classes:

This levelling is not entirely new. Ellis [...] highlighted a number of locations where ‘localisms’ or ‘provincialisms’ had given way to more regionally widespread forms. He described the region covering the South Midlands, Oxfordshire and London as ‘an area of continual conflict and mixture of the South, West, Midland and Eastern populations’... ‘a mutilated Southern character’ (Ellis 1889:110). For London and the rest of the South East of England he notes that:

‘the composite nature of a very shifting population in this district renders the growth of any dialect proper impossible (ibid.:119)... There are so many causes for interference with the natural development of speech, and the population is so shifting, that it would be misleading to suppose that there was any real hereditary dialect or mode of speech... the enormous congeries of persons from different parts of the kingdom and from different countries, and the generality of school education, render dialect nearly impossible (ibid.:225)... For the rural portions of the SE district, I have very slender information. My informants find a shifting population, and nothing distinctive to record. They imagine that if there is nothing different to their hearing than uneducated London speech, there is nothing to report (ibid.:234-5)... the inhabitants of this locality are mainly strangers from every corner of the country who have settled here for a brief space and never remain long. They represent any and no special pronunciation’ (ibid.:235)

Britain, 2002a:62-63

Elsewhere Ellis quotes one of his informants, the late Rector of Bushey (near Watford, extreme north of present day Greater London), who reports:

This place offers no opportunity of assisting your work. The inhabitants come and go, from various places, and remain but a very short time, but chiefly from London. I will not call this place a *colluvies omnium gentium* [roughly: ‘the dregs of all mankind’],⁸ but very much like it, and hence has no special language or dialect.

Ellis, 1889:231 (orig. emphasis)

This seems to be the germinal stages of the process though, confined to relatively small areas.

Even by the mid-20th century, more remote locations were still geographically and linguistically much more isolated:

In Norfolk and Suffolk and the Isle of Ely, in Wiltshire and Dorset, in Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and rural Leicestershire, in Hereford and Salop, in the North Riding and in dozens of other truly rural parts of England, a life of grim but comparatively tranquil beauty is still being lived, by millions of excellent people whose ideas and

⁸ My thanks go to Rebecca Oakes, historian and friend, for this translation.

ambitions, *like their language*, would be completely unintelligible to the metropolitan mentality.

Burton, 1943:3 (emphasis added)

Moreover, far from claiming zero mobility in this period, the goal here is to show that literacy and mobility had different relative influence at different points in time. Levelling may well have occurred during or before Ellis' study; but its intensity and geographical spread has increased significantly since then, alongside increases in population mobility.

Lastly, although a number of sociolinguists have made forays into ethnography to substantiate their linguistic data (e.g. Gal, 1979; Eckert, 1986, 1989, 2000; Rampton, 2006; Stuart-Smith & Timmins, 2007), there has been less attention paid to the kinds of population data presented here. Though limited in scope, the presentation of these data will hopefully add useful insights.

3.2 Nationwide changes from the mid 20th century onwards

This section reviews some broad socio-geographical trends across Britain. These are elaborated on for the southeast and northeast, in §3.3 and §3.4 respectively.

3.2.1 Migration

Migration often leads to the mixing of populations and their dialects; but there are exceptions. Wolfram et al. (2004) report on an enclave of permanent and semi-permanent Mexican migrants in Siler City, North Carolina, who appear to maintain typically Mexican dialect features despite the enclave being surrounded by white and African American neighbourhoods. The authors explain this by virtue of the negligible contact between these groups, "limited to employment, school, and other institutionally mandated social occasions" (p.355). This demonstrates that, with limited mixing of people, even close proximity will not cause dialect mixing. By contrast though,

as people migrate around England, they mostly do not settle into enclaves or ghettos, but integrate more or less into their new communities. Note that I am saying *around* England, and not *into* England. Certainly in-migrants exhibit significant ghettoisation, and the linguistic effects of this are discussed briefly at the close of this chapter. For the time being though, I concentrate on existing residents and their patterns of movement.

3.2.1.1 Urbanisation...

For much of the UK, despite the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution, the 18th century was a period of relative immobility. As Royle has it, in an ostensibly representative example:

At Coylton in Devon between 1765 and 1777, 89 per cent of the mothers of infants born there came from the parish or from within ten miles of the parish, and the proportion was practically the same in 1851.

[...]

[T]he overall evidence suggests that the rate of population mobility increased slowly, if at all, during the eighteenth century.

Royle, 1997:59

Although migration and urbanisation picked up in the nineteenth century (Royle, 1997:60-1), even between the interwar Censuses of 1921 and 1931 “only six counties [out of 49 in England at the time] actually lost population” (ibid. p.62). Nevertheless, urbanisation increased apace and

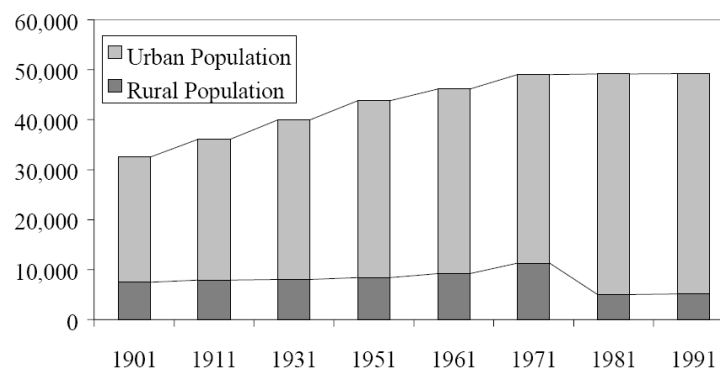


Figure 3.1 Urbanisation in England, 1901-91, millions (Hicks & Allen, 1999:13). [The apparent post-1970s drop is caused by change in measurement method].

cities and large towns burgeoned at the expense of smaller settlements (Fawcett, 1932:107; Wood & Carter, 2000:423; Abercrombie & Warde, 2000:131-144) amid plummeting agricultural employment (Gallie, 2000:284). There was a clear rise in urban living:

During the inter-censal period 1921-31 the total population of Great Britain has increased by 4.7 per cent., while that of the seven “million-cities” combined has increased by 6.5 per cent., so that they contain a larger proportion of the population now than they did ten years ago. On the other hand, the combined population of the thirty other large towns, of more than 100,000 people, has increased by only 4.4 per cent., and that of the thirty-eight towns between 100,000 and 50,000 by only 2.6 per cent., both less than the general rate of 4.7 per cent. In the same period the population in all rural areas has increased by only 1.9 per cent. Hence it is clear that the greater part of the increase is in the big conurbations, which, in fact, have absorbed more than half the total increase in the population of the country.

Fawcett, 1932:107

Over the ensuing century, UK employment moved progressively to urban centres: in 1921, 14% of UK workers living in rural areas were employed in urban centres. In 1966 it was 37.1%, by which time almost a fifth of rural districts had a *majority* of workers commuting to urban jobs (Wood & Carter, 2000:423; see also Abercrombie & Warde, 2000:131-144). Figure 3.1 shows the steady urbanisation of the English population throughout the 20th century (the changes in the 1970s being accounted for by changes in measurement methods – Hicks & Allen, 1999) and the plateauing of the rural population, decreasing in relative terms. (By way of comparison, the USA had a similarly stable rural population through the 20th century: Brown & Cromartie, 2004:283.)

Increases in urban employment can be interpreted in light of major declines in agricultural employment in Britain over the 20th century – falling 45% between 1911 and 1961 (Royle, 1997:94), then a further 39% between 1966 and 1991 (Gallie, 2000:284). This came as the result of the widespread concentration, mechanisation and automation of agriculture, with its roots in a “post-war agricultural modernization project” (Marsden, 1999:503). Employment moved progressively away from the British countryside, into urban and semi-urban locations.

Compounding the declining employment in rural areas were two additional factors: generally lower wages for rural jobs; and increasing property prices in rural areas due to increased desirability on the one hand, and restrictions on building on the other (Shucksmith, 1990:91-4). There are a range of additional reasons why council housing is more likely to be built in the urban areas, not least the high concentration of undecided voters in these spots, “where the electoral return on spending is likely to be highest” (ibid. p.99). All this served to pile incentives on rural residents to move into urban areas in search of work and housing. As Thorns has it:

The population was attracted from the land by the growth of employment and by the structural reform of agriculture which created a labour surplus. Here it was this reform rather than the population pressure which led to the ‘push’ of migrants from the countryside to the growing cities.

Thorns, 1976:24

Also the white-collar population rose by 147% between 1911 and 1961, and the clerical sector by 260% (Royle, 1997:94); during which time the manual workforce rose only 2% (ibid.).

At this point it is germane to eschew a “geographic determinist” perspective, that “the type of environment people live in has an independent and causal effect on their attitudes and behaviour” (Brown & Cromartie, 2004:271). Rurality does not automatically equal the maintenance of local dialect features; nor does urbanity entail their loss. The point of what follows is precisely to review how these different factors interplay upon dialect change and regional levelling.

Although urbanisation was intensifying, throughout the first half of the 20th century this was mostly a one-way move, with workers converging on large industrial conurbations. This left rural residents in relative isolation, and their dialects relatively unadulterated by contact – a phenomenon that Schilling-Estes & Wolfram (1999:486) term *linguistic concentration*. While

such cities may have been the sites of intense *local* dialect levelling, still there were not the region-wide changes that arose in the mid-late 20th century. That had to wait for a very different type of population movement...

3.2.1.2 ...and counter-urbanisation...

While urbanisation saw large chunks of rural populations moving (temporarily or permanently) into more urban areas, more recently there has been a growing number moving the other way. Counterurbanisation in the UK arguably has its roots in the 1920s when “the spectacular growth of motor transport” allowed “hundreds of thousands of English people of the working and clerical classes” (Burton, 1943:1) to discover the countryside. A measure of this was the 1926 launch of the *Society for the Preservation of Rural England*, of which an article in the Guardian at the time noted: “It is certain that there is a widespread alarm about the steady spoiling of rural England, and one hopes that this new movement will catch on and be effective” (Guardian, 1926). Burton continues about the lust for tranquillity among townsfolk, making useful mention of the kinds of two-way movements in a manner that would not sound out of place today:

In our thirst for speed we had built fine straight roads and the crazy winding lanes were disappearing fast. To get close to Nature’s very heart we had built our villas and our hotels in such delectable spots that, alas, they were no longer delectable. [...] With our town voices and our noisy machines we had so shocked the simple villagers that they had packed up, those who did not make money out of us, and gone to live in the towns themselves.

Burton, 1943:2

At the time though, ‘the countryside’, for those expressing anxiety about its destruction, constituted no more than some quite small rural areas immediately surrounding London – as Burton notes (1943:3, cited earlier), many “truly rural parts of England” remained insular.

Still, counterurbanisation grew apace. By the 1960s a trend arose for urbanites to move not only out into the country, but to a fully rural lifestyle; a “back-to-the-land counter-culture” (Halfacree, 2006) that fetishised the countryside as a place of calm and an embodiment of non-conformist ideals. There is an important disconnect here. The increasing mechanisation and concentration of UK agriculture tended to marginalise the very tactile sensations that counterurbanisers might have been seeking. But then, counterurbanisers most likely never were moving in search of actual agricultural work; but rather – whether for political or aesthetic reasons – looking for some “rural idyll” (ibid. p.328; Halfacree, 2004:289-92, 2006:328).

The combination of aesthetic and political attractiveness, Halfacree argues, has slowly declined since the 1960s;⁹ but nevertheless the country has maintained “an association with non-conformist ideals” (2006:319, citing Smith & Phillips, 2001:459) that remains appealing, alongside the growing lure of cheap housing (ibid.). As Marsden summarises:

The movement of people (and indeed enterprises) into rural areas can therefore be partly attributed to the new values placed on rural space – clean environment, community life, space for leisure, pleasant landscapes, healthy ‘lifestyles,’ rural culture, and so on – as well as, in some cases, availability of redundant buildings, reliable and lower cost labour, and lower cost housing.

Marsden, 1999:514

Increasingly, then, counterurbanisation has little to do with integrating into rural life, still less to do with actual manual labour, but rather a transplanting of (sub)urban lives into a tranquil setting. The early stages of a dissolving urban-rural divide have been traced to this time:

By the 1960s, it was possible to cite the emergence of even less compact urban forms such as ‘metropolitan areas’ and ‘megalopolis’, [...] based primarily on functional criteria that lay stress on the high degree of mutual interdependence of activities.

Champion & Hugo, 2004:11

⁹ He gives many examples of present-day counter-cultural counterurbanisers, but overall these are outnumbered by the more bourgeois counter-urbanisers.

Moving on from the 1960s, between 1971 and 1981 London lost half a million residents (Royle, 1997:63). This could be explained by ongoing post-war policies to restrict London's growth and deflect migration to the regions and new town developments (Thorns, 1976:25); but even discounting London: "All the major cities, except Aberdeen, Bradford, Leeds and Sheffield, were losing population in the 1970s" (Royle, 1997:63). Boyle (1994) performs a number of statistical operations on the 1981 Census "which confirm the general pattern of population decentralisation" at the national level (p.1712).

[P]opulation deconcentration [in Britain] is not merely, or even primarily, the result of retirement migration, but instead has involved large numbers of people of working age, including 25-34 year olds and their young families.

Champion, 1989:56

This was more than just *suburbanisation* (city dwellers moving "out of central urban areas into other areas within the broad functional urban system" – Boyle, 1994:1708). People were moving en masse far away from the cities into previously isolated locations. Like urbanisation, counterurbanisation per se in England is nothing new, being merely "a continuation of a general drift from the centres of the largest cities that had begun in the last half of the nineteenth century" (Boyle, 1994:1712). What was different in the later stages of the 20th century was the intensity of this urban exodus, ultimately eclipsing urbanisation by the 1970s.

In 1973, Best & Rogers speak of "the urban countryside" in Britain. Despite its attempt to challenge the notion of rurality, this description still relies on a tacit understanding that these are separate things being combined: urban, and countryside. Indeed Best & Rogers spend a lot of time talking about the relatively ghettoised counterurbanising commuters, living in "dormitory villages". More recently that two-way flow has accelerated, and these distinctions have become less clear. Latterly, geographers have begun to move beyond the juxtaposition of urban and rural, and toward a more thorough mixing of these erstwhile distinct conditions:

The large literature on counterurbanisation [...] may be missing the mark because it depends on data systems and geocoding schemes that reflect a prior era of socio-spatial organisation.

Brown & Cromartie, 2004:270

[P]eople are moving about more and dividing their lives between areas conventionally designated urban and rural, to a large extent on a daily basis but also in terms of weekly or seasonal movements. [...] The result is the emergence of zones of transition around large urban centers where urban and rural functions are mixed together.

Champion & Hugo, 2004:11

According to one polemical account, a growing division between hedonistic counterurbanisers and profit-driven mega-agriculture runs the risk of reducing the countryside to “rural theme parks for the urban middle classes and wide expanses of chemical monoculture” (Fairlie, 1999:82, cited in Halfacree, 2006:329). In less dramatic tones, we can say that changes in the demographic profile of the British countryside have come alongside changes in its function and purpose. “In recent years almost all rural areas have seen an increase in their resident populations” (Marsden, 1999:514). Simultaneously there have been changes in the nature of British farming: “twenty-first century agriculture is [...] about adopting a ‘super-productivist’ model so as to compete within an increasingly globalized market” (Halfacree, 2006:327). There has also been “increasing significance of the non-farm parts of the food supply chain, and the growing non-agricultural character of rural populations and labour markets” (ibid. p.502).

Agriculture no longer dominates rural areas in terms of employment, although it remains the main user of land, and other economic and social sectors, such as manufacturing, services and tourism, combine with changing patterns of recreation and environmental concern to place new demands upon rural space.

Marsden, 1999:509

“The countryside is no longer seen primarily as a food factory but as a place for leisure and residence; it services the ‘external’ (Marsden, 1999) demands of urban residents” (Halfacree, 2006:311). It is becoming, in Marsden’s words, “a repository for selective consumption of goods

and services” (1999:508), with rural locales “tie[d] [...] much more into their urban and regional contexts” (ibid.). These ongoing changes, he continues, will “physically and socially shape the countryside into the images and identities of those who consume these rural resources” (ibid.).

There have been, it should be said, concerns of “a systematic bias within the census migration data” (Simpson & Middleton, 1999:389) – that counterurbanisers are simply more likely to complete the Census than urbanisers (who are more likely unemployed and in temporary accommodation). Nevertheless Simpson & Middleton (1999), having recalculated the data to compensate for these biases, still find that the “counterurbanisation cascade” remains intact: “The exodus is seen to be more a moderate river than a gushing flood, but it remains in all its features” (p.402).

Counterurbanisation does not mean a total emptying of cities into the countryside. People are moving both ways; and it is this two-way traffic that is critical for the current investigation. It represents a change from dormitory villages to a more thorough dissolution of the rural. This has important consequence for dialect change. Schilling-Estes & Wolfram (1999:486) contrast linguistic concentration with *linguistic decay* (or ‘dissipation’), where a dialect area is inundated with outsiders who swamp the local dialect (see also Britain, 2004). Thus it is both the loss of local dialect speakers, taking with them the density of local dialect features, and infiltration of rural areas by counterurbanisers, that may cause overall diversity to drop.

In terms of interaction, it is worth pointing out that small towns and rural locations gain least from international in-migration, and most from within-UK migration (Champion, 2006:9). This suggests that all or most of the incoming counterurbanisers will be, as it were, dialectally compatible with the prior residents, and able to effect a trend of regional levelling.

3.2.1.3 ...concentrated within regions

The last century has seen significant rises in the distance and frequency of migration within the UK, but still certain limits to these. Not only do people in England appear to concentrate their lives within a fairly small ‘orbit’; if they do move house, they predominantly do not move very far.

Almost 3 out of every 5 moves within England observed in the pre-Census year [1990-1] did not involve crossing a district boundary, while between one-fifth and one-quarter [...] were moves within the same Census ward. At the other extreme, 1 in 8 moves were between the eight standard regions of England. Finally, around one-quarter of within-England moves took place within regions but between districts [...].

[...] [F]or within-Britain migration, almost half of all changes of address involve moves of less than 5 km (roughly 3 miles), 3 out of 5 less than 10 km, and three-quarters less than 50 miles.

Champion et al., 1998:46

The fluidity and dislocation of residence demonstrated here, into and out of urban centres, is still predominantly concentrated within certain limits. It is also not conditioned solely by large urban centres. When thinking about interaction in the southeast of England, for example, it is insufficient to think of the seven million or so people who inhabit London, the EU’s largest city (ONS, 2003a); or even the 723,000 who commute daily into its cosmopolitan bustle (of whom 91% reside in the southeast or east of England) (GLA, 2005:13). The *regional* theme is the key. Increased migration and the stretching of life-work distances is occurring across broader spaces than just these concentrated urban nodes. Champion (1989) speculates that,

perhaps it is misleading to conceive of recent trends in terms of a long-term process of deconcentration. Instead, they may represent the early stages of a new urban formation, with economic changes causing older industrial cities to adjust, and leading to the emergence of new centres which may develop into the major metropolitan centres of the future.

Champion, 1989:56

3.2.2 Commuting

The more one commutes, the less likely one is to maintain local dialect features. This correlation underpins much dialectological research, beginning arguably with Milroy (1980). Again some caveats are due. ‘Commuting’ in its purest form may not always do this. As Freeman (2002) shows in a study of dialect use among workers in Yemen who travel to work in the week and go back to their home towns and villages at the weekends (whom he refers to as migrants):

The distinctness of the Şan^çāni dialect as compared to the dialect spoken by the migrants from Ta^çizz and Aden shows that these two dialects rather than merging are maintaining some noticeable differences and are apparently developing separately. The migrant population and the Şan^çānis for the most part do not mix. Most of the migrants live in boarding houses with their close friends and only have close contact with other long-term friends from their place of origin. Currently most migrants do not arrive in Şan^çānis until their late teen and early 20's and will never master the Şan^çāni dialect which by all accounts is distinctive.

Freeman, 2002:199

All the same, this sort of temporary commuting seems rarer in the UK, where it tends to go hand in hand with permanent counterurbanisation: “an increase in average distance travelled is evident with decreasing urban size” (Green et al., 1999:54). That is, people are moving address more, but predominantly keeping their jobs and just commuting ever greater distances. Moreover, this has grown steadily throughout the period under analysis in this investigation:

over the century since 1890 the mean journey-to-work distance in Great Britain has increased more than three times, from less than 4 km in the 1890s to 13 km by the 1980s. This trend towards longer journeys-to-work is explicable mainly in terms of changes in the mode of transport used for work journeys, with walking as the most common form being replaced by the bus, which in turn has been replaced by the car.

Green et al., 1999:55

Green et al. (1999:56) describe families increasingly opting to have a residential ‘base’ and simply commute to different places as their jobs change. Time spent travelling has also stayed much the same, but distances have increased – reflecting more efficient transport systems –

hence lives have been stretched over ever greater distances but still contained within certain spheres. This is particularly significant for regional concentrations of population. Although the prospect of teleportation nudges closer (Ursin et al., 2007), in its absence people's lives remain limited in this way.

One potential counter to the idea that increased commuting means weakening local dialects is that people might not really 'interact' with anyone at work. They may commute in, hate every moment, speak to practically nobody, and then go home to their real lives where all their conversations take place. There is also the rising number of people working from home (Green et al., 1999:64). An answer to both these points is that it matters less that people are interacting with people outside their community whilst at work. What matters is simply that they are not in their local community, and that this daily absence occurs for more and more people. (See e.g. Putnam, 2000:212-4, on increases in daily commuting adversely affecting involvement in community affairs.) Furthermore, owing to the increased migration outlined previously, their 'home communities' are increasingly made up of people who recently moved into that area. This forms the backdrop for the discussion of regional dialect levelling that follows.

3.2.2.1 Regional concentrations of employment

Nowadays employment accounts for only 1.86% of all household moves in the UK (Clark & Huang, 2003:333, see also Green et al., 1999); so we are dealing with quite different data to those for migration. Two things need to be explored with regard to employment: the ways that work (or more generally, production) is being concentrated around distinct regions of the country; and the increasingly long distances of commuting nationwide (Green et al., 1999). In a study of the location of businesses in the UK, Bennett et al. (Figure 3.2) claim that,

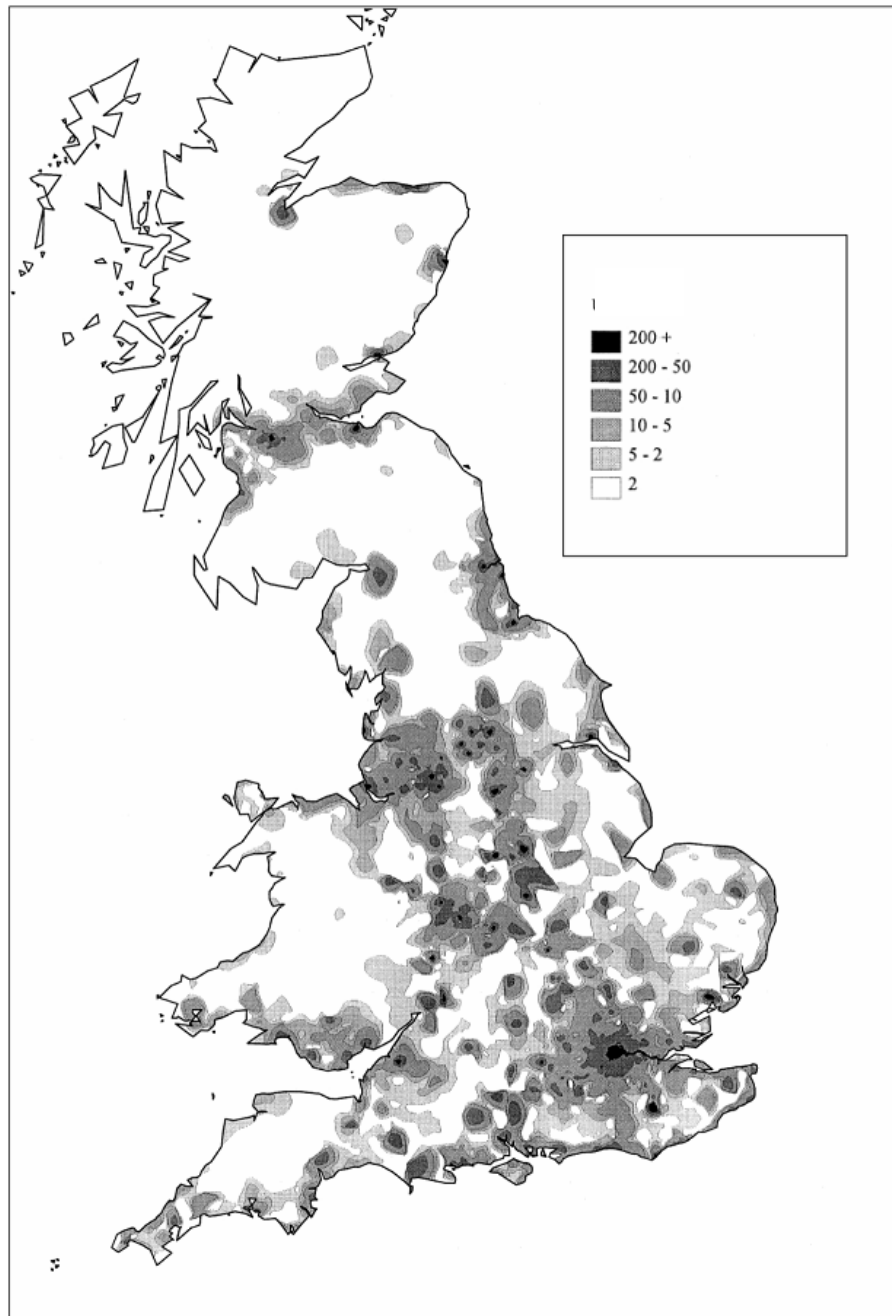


Figure 3.2 *Density of businesses location in Britain (number of businesses per sq. km). (Bennett et al., 1999:400)*

there is quite a large number and wide range of concentrated business foci, with about a hundred locations recognizable as a 'centre', distinguished from its surrounding area and other nearby centres by the level of concentration evident on the map. However, in many areas the number of centres located in close proximity to each other is relatively large and their scale of business concentration fairly low. For example, many small centres are scattered across the outer SE [southeast], the Midlands, the North-West and West Yorkshire. This suggests that there are not only highly focused clusters of businesses in Britain, but clusters of clusters overlapping with each other.

Bennett et al., 1999:401

Regardless of the supposedly spaceless nature of some service work, businesses still favour certain urban locations. In addition, businesses tend to cluster around each other – both those that are directly related, and other, supporting type businesses. While “businesses as a whole are geographically concentrated in a few major centres in Britain” (Bennett et al., 1999:409), it is also essential to note: “This pattern includes businesses across the whole spectrum from manufacturing to services” (ibid.). The ubiquity of these concentrations is another important detail for the forthcoming discussion.

Castree et al. (2004:19) note the de facto segregation of regions owing to differential investment of funds and locations of businesses. In time, despite the relative unimportance of employment to migration noted above, populations cluster around these regions (ibid.). This gives rise to functional zones; and while (post-) industrial patterns of development and employment may bring people together from far and wide, there are still internally coherent and comparatively discrete zones:

Although the world is increasingly well-connected, we must hold this in balance with the observation that most people lead intensely local lives: their homes, workplaces, recreation, shopping, friends and other family are located within a relatively small orbit.
Pratt & Hanson, 1994:24 (cited in Castree et al, 2004:69)

This chapter, then, compares dialect changes in the southeast and northeast with geographical concentrations of people and business in these regions. Underlying this is the kind of thinking developed by Allen et al. (1998) that

regions may have, indeed are likely to have, holes in them. [...] What we are working towards, in other words, is an ability to define regions/places for certain purposes (in order to be able to ask certain questions) while at the same time holding on to the notion that this is one way of viewing [...] a fuller spatiality which may be full of incoherences (sic) and paradoxes.

Allen et al., 1998:58



Figure 3.3 Locations mentioned in this section (N.B. The Fens are not amenable to such a small pinpoint, see Fig. 3.2 for more detail.)

3.3 Southeast regional dialect levelling

More recently, the levelled variety known as ‘Estuary English’ has apparently extended both geographically (to oust locally marked varieties in a very large area of southeastern England) and socially in that it is now used by upper class speakers [...]. This change in British sociolinguistic structure may be interpreted as reflecting current patterns of mobility following deindustrialisation and the end of the century-long monopolisation of the linguistic market by RP.

Milroy, 2001:240

This section first presents reports of regional dialect levelling in the southeast; and then investigates some geographical information that might explain these developments.

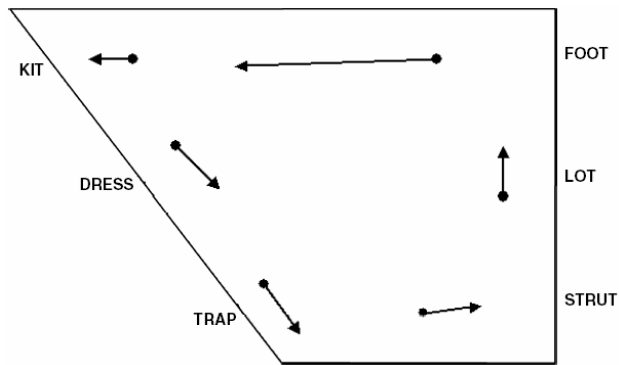


Figure 3.4 Short vowel changes in Ashford (Torgersen & Kerswill (2004:40))

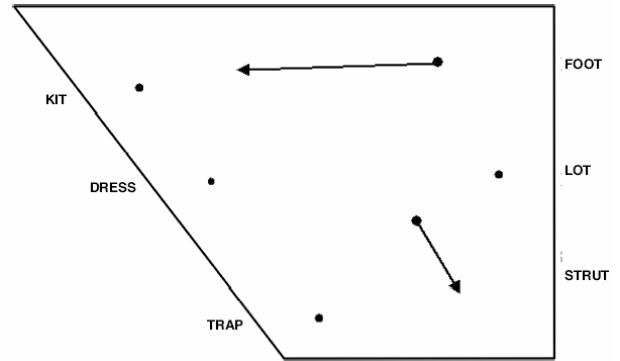


Figure 3.5 Short vowel changes in Reading (Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:45)

3.3.1 Linguistic features of a southeast levelling variety

Beginning with aggregated data of different features, Torgersen & Kerswill (2004) conduct an apparent time study to show a pattern of regional levelling across the southeast, eroding local dialect peculiarities and resulting in “entirely new forms, which, in the case of vowels, may be phonetically intermediate between the older, more [geographically] marked forms” (p.24). Their data, for Reading in Berkshire and Ashford in Kent, are reproduced in Figures 3.4 and 3.5. They show changes between two age cohorts of working class informants: 14-15 year olds; and those in their 70s and 80s. “The result is convergence between the vowel systems east and west of the city [London] – an obvious sign of regional dialect levelling” (Kerswill, 2003:230).

Given the age differences, and their additional use of the SED to compare with the younger speakers, Torgersen & Kerswill’s data appear to be showing a change occurring over the mid-late 20th century. In Ashford they present “two representative female informants”, “Mrs C.” and “Emma”, older and younger respectively. Median values are plotted and compared between the ages; this “suggests the presence of an anticlockwise shift”¹⁰ (2004:37). Subsequent analysis of the Ashford males “also suggests a systematic chain shift” (ibid. p.39), “very much a ‘classic’

¹⁰ Phoneticians draw the mouth as a trapezium (Figures 3.4 and 3.5) – lips on the left, throat on the right. ‘Anticlockwise’ therefore means: forwards at the top, downward behind the lips, backwards at the bottom, and upwards at the tonsils.

chain shift, involving all the vowels within the short vowel subsystem” (ibid. p.45). Combined with the male data, an abstracted diagram is drawn of the chain shift in progress (ibid. p.40). In pursuit of the regional dialect levelling thesis, they explain that:

The reason for the absence of the chain shift in Reading is, simply, that the front vowels already had the positions in the vowel space which were the targets for the change farther east in London, Kent and East Anglia (represented by Norwich: Trudgill 1999b:127)

Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:46

Reading is, as it were, further ahead in the southeast levelling process, with Ashford catching up. Comparing other dialectological reports, Torgersen & Kerswill conclude that “the short front vowels in southern British English are lowering” (ibid. p.31), as part of a regional trend. As they conclude, “the apparent-time changes over the past two generations have resulted in two vowel systems which are remarkably similar” (Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:46).

3.3.1.1 TRAP vowel backing/lowering

Torgersen & Kerswill (2004) demonstrate a converging trend between Ashford and Reading in this vowel. Przedlacka reports a somewhat less clear-cut convergent trend, but still a general regularising of these vowels:

Speakers in Buckinghamshire prevailingly use the closer variants [æ] and [ɛ], while the open realisation [a], characteristic of the county’s speech in the 1950s, is still present, but constitutes about only one fifth of the tokens.

Przedlacka, 2001:43

Backing and lowering of TRAP is also reported by Kamata (2006:29) among working class Londoners; with TRAP in upper middle class informants

also backing [...] as in WC but not lowering. Instead, it is slightly raised to the central [...]. It seems the area that UMC TRAP is towards is the similar area that Y-WC TRAP is moving to.

Age comparison shows that the TRAP vowel is apparently backing both in WC and UMC converging to the similar vowel space [...].

Kamata, 2006:29 (1st para.), 34 (2nd para.)

This represents, on the one hand, participation in a southeast regional levelling trend by these speakers; and on the other hand, increasing similarity across social class groupings. The different vowels are also less distant from each other in the younger cohort.

3.3.1.2 DRESS vowel lowering/backing

Torgersen & Kerswill (2004:40,45) note a lowering and backing of the DRESS vowel among working class speakers in Ashford and Reading, supposedly more advanced in Reading. This appears similar to changes identified by Kamata (2006:5) in his review of the literature on modern RP in London. Kamata argues (citing Hawkins & Midgley, 2005:188) that this lowering/backing began in a “break group” born between 1976 and 1981 – so the change beginning in the 1980s. This trend is partially reflected in his own data from lifelong London residents, who show similar lowering and backing; but only among the upper middle class informants (p.29).

| | Bucks | Essex | Kent | Surrey |
|---------|-----------------|----------|-------|---------|
| FLEECE | iː ~ i | | | |
| TRAP | a ~ æ ~ ɛ | æ ~ ɛ | a ~ æ | |
| STRUT | ɜ̃ ~ ɜ | ʌ | | |
| THOUGHT | ɔ̃ | ɔ | ɔ̃ | ɔ |
| GOOSE | u ~ ʏ | ʊ ~ ʉ | u ~ ʏ | ʉ |
| FACE | ɛi | ɛi ~ ɛ̃i | ɛi | |
| PRICE | ɔi ~ ɔ̃i | aɪ ~ ɔ̃i | | |
| MOUTH | æʊ ~ æʏ aʊ ~ aʏ | | | |
| GOAT | əʏ | əʏ ~ əʊ | əʏ | əʏ ~ əʊ |

Table 3.1 Typical vowel realisations in four home counties (Przedlacka, 2001:42)

Among all the younger participants, Kamata notes “no significant difference [...] in three different speech styles” (p.32) in the realisation of DRESS; whereas the older speakers all adjusted their speech according to these changes in formality. This suggests not only increasing similarity across class and geographical boundaries, but a blurring of previously noted lines of formality.

3.3.1.3 GOOSE fronting

The GOOSE vowel shows fronting to [u] in four and [y] in three locations in Przedlacka (2001). Similarly, Britain finds that “/u:/ fronting is well underway for all three groups of adolescents in the Fens” (2005:1011). Kerswill & Williams (2005) report this trend in Milton Keynes, where children “are converging on a new, fronted norm with respect to this vowel” (p.1033). These results are likened to the results for Reading, where

the younger speaker’s pronunciations are much more fronted than the older speaker’s, overlapping with FLEECE to some extent. These patterns were repeated for four elderly men and four boys analyzed in Reading and Ashford (Kent).

Kerswill & Williams, 2005:1028

3.3.1.4 FOOT fronting

The most extreme vowel movement in Torgersen & Kerswill (2004), in both Ashford and Reading, is the fronting of the FOOT vowel. FOOT fronting is also identified in the Fens by Britain (2005:1012); but unlike with the universal fronting of GOOSE, there is a clear east-west divide:

Only 25% of the tokens used by Spalding [western Fens] adolescents were fronter than [ʊ] or unrounded. In the east only 15% were not. The failure of the Spalding adolescents of the western Fens to participate as wholeheartedly in this change may well be due to the fact that they have yet to develop (in the vast majority of cases) a FOOT-STRUT split. [...] Further east, where a clear(er) /ʊ/ – /ʌ/ split exists, there has been greater progress in the fronting and unrounding.

Britain, 2005:1012

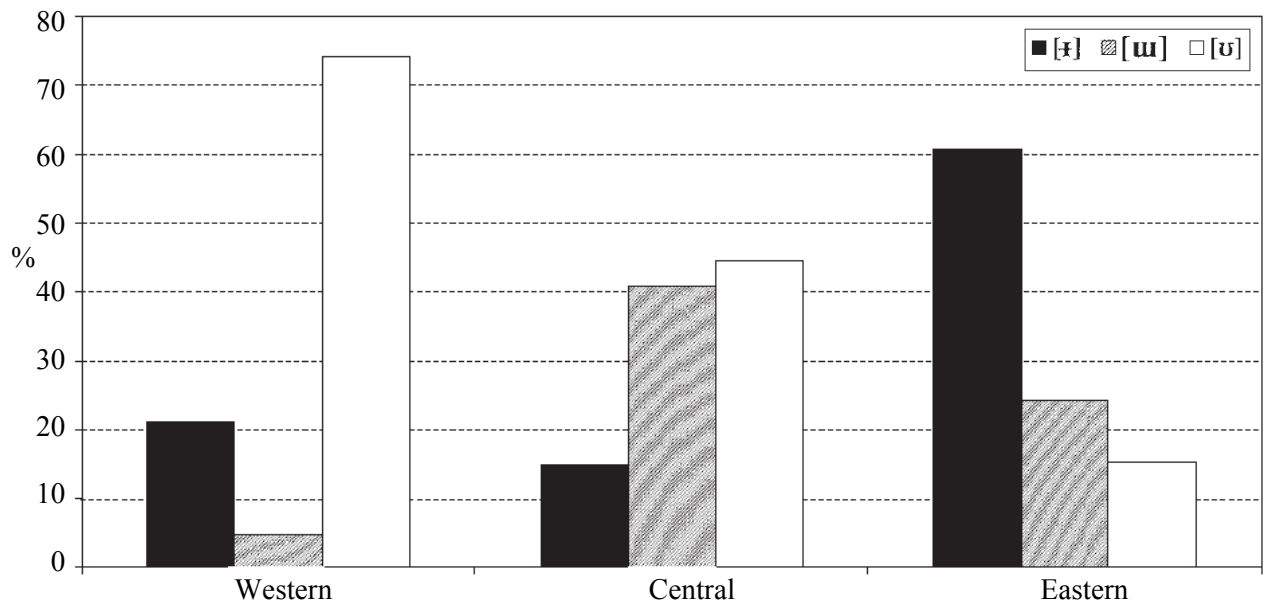


Figure 3.6 % realisations of FOOT vowel (u) among young Fenlanders (Britain, 2005:1012)

A typically northern English lack of a FOOT-STRUT split has persisted in affecting speakers in the western Fens, suggesting a possible limit to the southeast FOOT fronting trend around here. This in turn suggests a possible boundary for the southeast – a point returned to later.

3.3.1.5 STRUT vowel lowering/centring/backing

For STRUT [vowels], the data are conflicting, as both fronting and backing have been reported. In addition, we notice that dialect levelling seems to be having an impact on the vowel systems.

Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:31

The STRUT vowel in these two locations appears to be moving in different directions. This is not explicable by pressure from other vowels; and instead just seems part of the regularising trend of growing similarity between dialects:

the fronting of GOOSE, GOAT and FOOT vowels [...] is arguably a natural shift, motivated by the smaller auditory space available for back vowels than for front vowels. For STRUT, however, the data are conflicting, as both fronting and backing have been reported. In addition, we notice that dialect levelling seems to be having an impact on the vowel systems.

Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:31

Torgersen & Kerswill compare their Ashford data with data from Reading, concluding that:

For Reading, there does not seem to be any particular pattern to the vowel changes, by sharp contrast with the situation in Ashford. Indeed, two of the vowels, FOOT and STRUT, appear to be moving in opposite directions, running counter to any chain shift.

Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:44

They are, nevertheless, becoming more similar to each other, participating in southeast levelling.

3.3.1.6 MOUTH vowel

In Milton Keynes, this vowel appears to be levelling (see Tables 3.3 and 3.4): “The tables show that this variant and the unrounded [ɛɪ] have almost completely given way to [aʊ] over two or three generations” (Kerswill, 2003a:228), “a form which, as our research in Reading shows, is increasingly characteristic of a wide area in the south-east” (Williams and Kerswill, 1999:152).

| | [ɛʊ] | [ɛɪ] | [ɛ:] | [a:ʰ] | [æʊ] | [aʊ] |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|
| <i>SED</i> informants (1950-60) | ✓ | | | | | |
| Elderly (2f, 2m) | 63.2 | 25.6 | 9.8 | 0 | 1.2 | 0 |
| Women 25-40 (n=48) | 0 | 0 | 11.7 | 17.2 | 38.6 | 31.5 |
| Girls aged 14 (n=8) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.9 | 4.7 | 88.8 |
| Boys aged 14 (n=8) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12.3 | 3.8 | 83.1 |

Table 3.2 Percent use of variants of /aʊ/ (as in MOUTH) in Milton Keynes, working-class speakers, interview style (Kerswill, 2003a:229)

| | [ɛʊ] | [ɛɪ] | [ɛ:] | [a:ʰ] | [æʊ] | [aʊ] |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|
| <i>SED</i> informants (1950-60) | ✓ | | | | | |
| Elderly (2f, 2m) | 53.5 | 38.1 | 3.3 | 0 | 4.1 | 0.7 |
| Girls age 14 (n=8) | 0 | 2.3 | 0 | 8.0 | 0 | 90.4 |
| Boys age 14 (n=8) | 3.8 | 3.2 | 0 | 5.7 | 0 | 87.1 |

Table 3.3 Percent use of variants of /aʊ/ (as in MOUTH) in Reading, working-class speakers, interview style (Kerswill, 2003a:229)

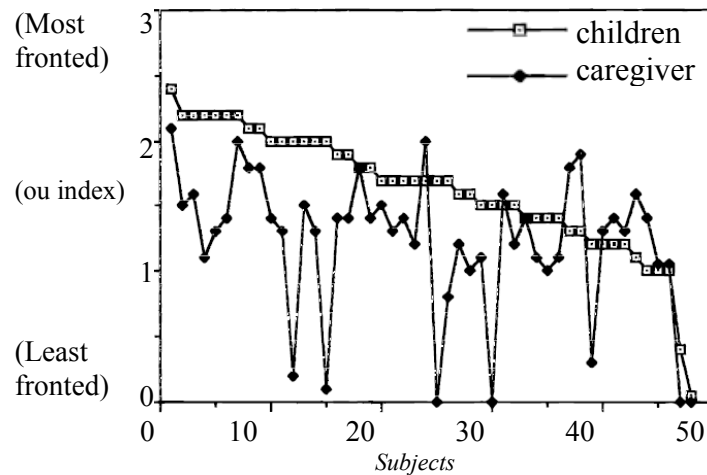


Figure 3.7 Focussing of (ou) fronting among children in Milton Keynes (Kerswill & Williams, 2005:1029)

As Kerswill & Williams put it in a later article:

in Milton Keynes and Reading: in both towns, the youngsters almost exclusively favor [aʊ]. We conclude that this vowel shows both regional levelling (towards a supra-local form) and social levelling (the difference between working-class and middle-class speakers is reduced, in favor of middle-class forms).

Kerswill & Williams, 2005:1035

They go on to explain that this change appears to have been quicker in Milton Keynes, owing to the relative newness of the town and consequent lack of contact between incomers and their elders – allowing older dialect forms to be lost more quickly and innovations to spread more rapidly (ibid. pp.1037-1040; see also Williams & Kerswill, 1999:151-156). The result in both places, however, is increasing involvement in regional levelling, and weakening local dialect features.

3.3.1.7 PRICE lowering/backing

Kerswill & Williams (2005:1037) report growing similarity of vowels in the PRICE lexical set among adolescents in Reading and Milton Keynes (Tables 3.5-3.6), both towns seeing a trend of lowering and backing. Przedlacka (2001) reports a similar trend in Buckinghamshire and Kent.

| | [aɪ] | [ɑɪ] | [ɑɪ] | [ɔɪ] | [ʌɪ] | [Λɪ] |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Elderly age 70-80 (2f, 2m) | 0 | 0 | 24.4 | 56.6 | 15.3 | 3.4 |
| Girls age 14-15 (n=8) | 25.4 | 44.6 | 29.2 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 |
| Boys age 14-15 (n=8) | 1.0 | 38.0 | 60.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Table 3.4 Percentage use of PRICE variants, Milton Keynes working class, interview style (Kerswill & Williams, 2005:1037)

| | [aɪ] | [ɑɪ] | [ɑɪ] | [ɔɪ] | [ʌɪ] | [Λɪ] |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Elderly age 70-80 (2f, 2m) | 0 | 12.4 | 47.8 | 21.8 | 1.7 | 15.7 |
| Girls age 14/15 (n ¼ 8) | 2.8 | 21.2 | 45.1 | 21.1 | 4.3 | 5.1 |
| Boys age 14/15 (n ¼ 8) | 0.6 | 19.1 | 63.7 | 13.7 | 2.7 | 0 |

Table 3.5 Percentage use of PRICE variants, Reading working class, interview style (Kerswill & Williams, 2005:1037)

3.3.1.9 GOAT fronting

Evidence of southeast regional levelling here is presented by Przedlacka in the form of “offset fronting [...] in the lexical set of GOAT, as well as fronting of the vowel in the lexical set of STRUT” (2001:46). Of note, she appears to show that GOAT fronting may have originated in Buckinghamshire (2001:47), not London. Indeed, in a discussion of the same innovation arising in Milton Keynes, Williams & Kerswill (1999:152) note that:

These fronted variants are new, since they are not part of the older rural dialects [...] nor are they characteristic of traditional RP or London speech. [...] As with MOUTH, this vowel is in fact participating in a change affecting the whole south-east region [...].

Adoption of GOAT fronting has been so dramatic as to be almost categorical:

Only 11 of 48 caregivers have a more front offset. The children would seem to be moving towards a new norm.

[...]

For the eight- and twelve-year-old groups, the children’s (ou) index is significantly higher than that of their caregiver. [...] This suggests that there is an increase in homogeneity with age.

Kerswill & Williams, 2005:1029,1032

This “increase in homogeneity” can be read in two ways: children in Milton Keynes are becoming linguistically more similar not only to each other, but in their increasing use of this pan-regional feature, more similar to the region as a whole. In terms of the age of this trend, Kerswill & Williams note:

the child’s fronting is greater than that of the caregiver; this suggests that Milton Keynes children, as a group, are taking part in this general southeastern change. Some of the youngest mothers, themselves brought up in Milton Keynes, also have high scores, which suggests that this feature has been characteristic of the town for some time.

Kerswill & Williams, 2000:102

This has contemporaneously arisen in locations across the southeast – found also by Torgersen & Kerswill in Ashford and Reading (2004:31).

In his Fenland data, Britain divides the GOAT lexical set as per “the historical MOAN-MOWN distinction” (2005:1012) in the eastern Fens, which makes fronting phonologically more applicable to the MOWN class. This causes a phonological constraint upon the adoption of fronting among the eastern Fenlanders.

The central Fens have higher levels of fronting overall, with two-thirds of the tokens being [ɸʌ] or fronter. This figure drops to less than 30% for the western Fenland adolescents.

[...]

I found that adolescents in the Terringtons [eastern Fens] fronted words in the MOWN set quite readily, but did so for the MOAN set hardly at all and for the most part retained the historical split of the traditional dialect.

Britain, 2005:1012-1013,1018

Unlike with FOOT fronting, the phonological restriction keeps GOAT fronting from advancing as rapidly in the eastern Fens, which disrupts the regional trend. Nevertheless there is considerable progress in the east given this restriction; progress that is particularly instructive when compared to the slower progress of FOOT fronting in the western Fens. That the eastern Fenlanders have



Figure 3.8 % informants with /r/ = [v] in Norwich – birth cohorts (Trudgill, 1988:41)

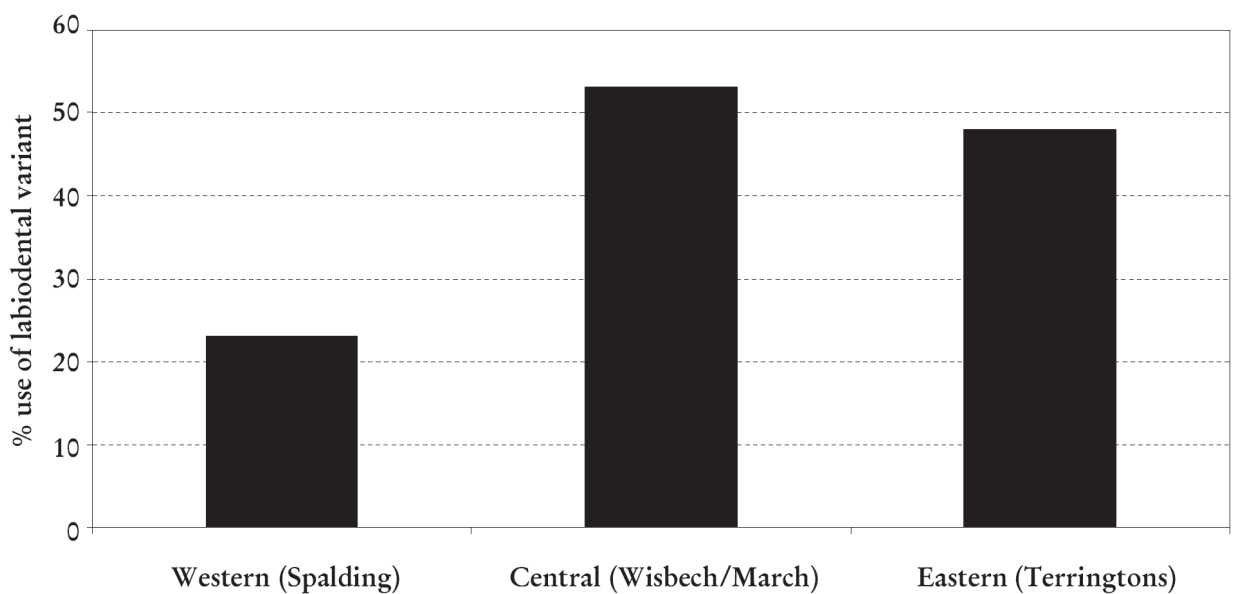


Figure 3.9 % use of labiodental (r) in young Fenland speakers (Britain, 2002b:89)

made comparatively more progress in this southeastern change given a similar phonological limitation suggests that the eastern Fens may be under greater influence from the southeast generally. That is, the western Fenlanders are less involved in the southeast linguistically – a point returned to later when reviewing the geographical data.

3.3.1.10 Labiodental /r/

Trudgill records non-standard labio-dental approximant [v] for /r/ in Norwich in the mid-1980s, noting that it was not present in 1968 (Figure 3.8). The rapid rise of this “suggests very strongly

that this pronunciation will be the norm or at least the majority pronunciation within the next few decades” (1988:40), and that: “Observations suggest, incidentally, that this will be true of very many other varieties of (at least) southern EngE [England English] also” (ibid. pp.40-41).

Likewise he describes the mergers of [ʊu] and [ʌu] in the lexical set *moan, road, rose*, and of “the front vowels /e:/ as in *made* and /æi/ as in *maid*” (p.41 – orig. emphasis), arguing that these occurred “under the influence of RP and the neighbouring dialects” (p.41).

If we accept the idea tentatively advanced by Foulkes & Docherty (2000:35-40) that labiodental /ɾ/ originated somewhere around the London-southeast area, then it appears to be spreading north, at least as far as Norwich; and in the Fens it is stronger to the east than the west (Figure 3.9), again suggesting greater southeast levelling engagement in the eastern Fens.

3.3.1.11 BATH vowel

The BATH vowel in the UK maintains a clear north-south split, with “typically Northern short vowel forms of BATH-[a]” (Britain & Trudgill, 2005:199) “in contrast with [ɑ: - a:] further south and east” (Britain, 2005:1017). Indeed: “The distribution of long and short vowels in the BATH lexical set is astonishingly consistent over time” (Gupta, 2005:24).

Of interest here is the “interdialectal” zone between north and south, a possible boundary for southeast regional levelling (see also Britain, 2001c). For the BATH vowel, part of that boundary crosses the central Fens; a boundary that appears to be shrinking (Figure 3.10). This is reinforced by other such persisting contrasts across the Fens (Table 3.6), making this “the site of one of the most important bundles of isoglosses in English dialectology” (Britain & Trudgill, 2005:191). In this respect the southeast region, despite its declining internal diversity, appears to be maintaining – even strengthening – its distinguishability from contiguous regions.

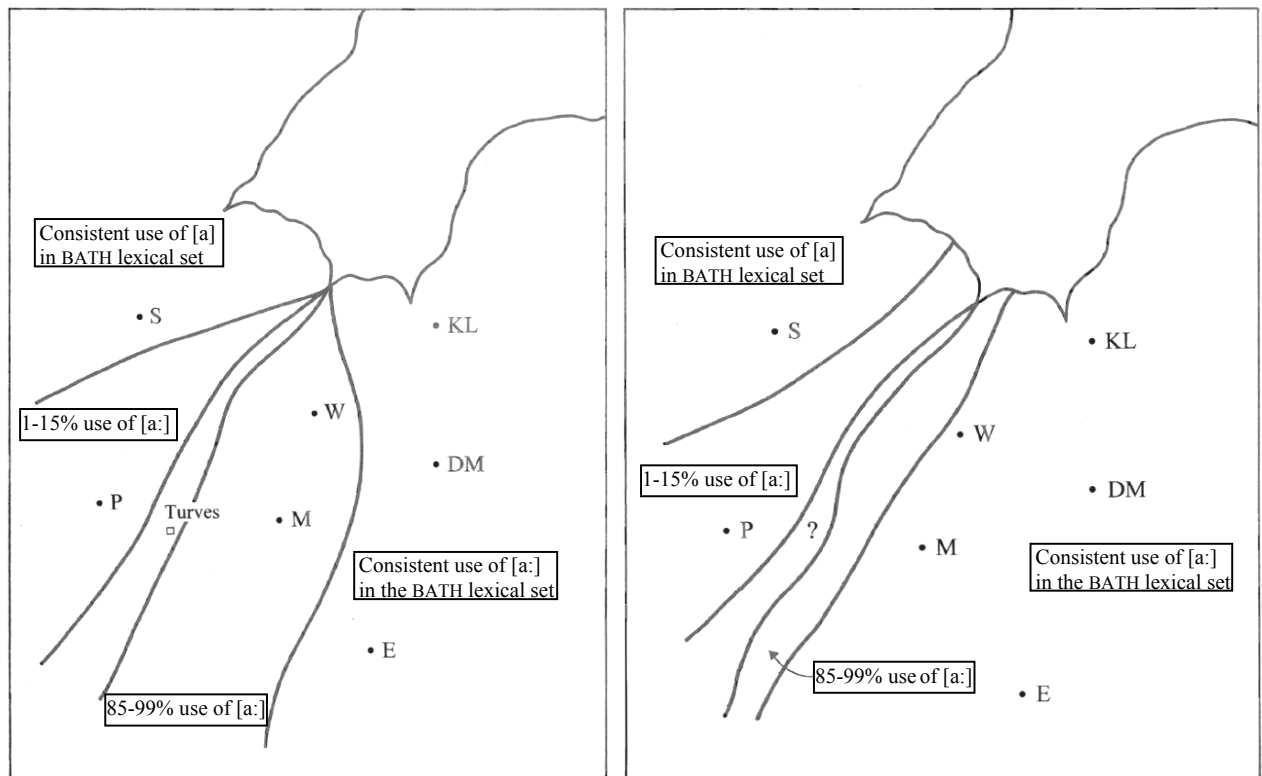


Figure 3.10 Shrinking interdialect zone in the Fens (Britain, 2001c:236-7): older speakers in left diagram, younger speakers on the right. S = Spalding; KL = King's Lynn; W = Wisbech; DM = Downham Market; P = Peterborough; M = March; E = Ely.

3.3.1.12 Lexical diversity

Amongst mainstream sociolinguists, it is relatively rare to discuss lexical variation (although see e.g. Kerswill, 1987; Johnson, 1996); that is, different words for the same meanings, or in Saussurean terms, different signifiers for each signified. Nevertheless, in the introductory stages of his 1988 paper on Norwich English, Trudgill is moved to point out how a number of words peculiar to Norwich had recently become so rare as to be absent from his recordings:

many dialect words such as *dwile* (dishcloth) and *mawther* (girl), which had been used by older speakers in the 1968 sample and were at least known by most middle-aged and younger speakers, were totally unknown to the 1983 sample. The one exception to this was the word *squit* (nonsense) which continues to be both known and used by speakers of all ages.

Trudgill, 1988:38 (orig. emphasis)

| Lexical set (after Wells 1982) | Western Fens | Central Fens | Eastern Fens |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| STRUT | [ʊ] | [ʏ] | [ʌ] |
| ONE | [ɒ] | [ʏ] | [ʌ] |
| CASTLE | [a] | [a:] | [a:] |
| MOUTH | [ɛ:] | [ɛ:] | [ɛu] |
| NOSE | [ʌu - əu] | [ʌu - əu] | [ɔu] |
| Hill | ∅ | [h] | [h] |
| buyING | [ɪ] | [ən - ɪ] | [ən] |
| TAKE/MAKE | [tɛk/mɛk] | [tæɪk/mæɪk] | [tæɪk/mæɪk] |
| 3 rd person singular present tense marking | present | present | variable |
| do-conjunctions? (Trudgill 1995) | absent | variable | present |

Table 3.6 Typical realisations of a number of variables in Western, Central and Eastern Fenland English (Britain & Trudgill, 2005:191)

This could be an example either of levelling (supralocalisation) or the persistent intrusion of the standard lexicon (dedialectalisation) as identified in Chapter 2. If the latter then it is still worth mentioning; if only to reiterate that literacy continues to affect linguistic diversity. The point here is not to claim the declining importance of literacy, but just the increased importance of dialect contact and mixing.

3.3.2 Where is the southeast levelling variety?

Regional dialect levelling is about involvement in a trend, not the absolute adoption or abandonment of any linguistic features, nor the predominance of new target variants or the absence of new innovations. With this in mind, from Torgersen, Kerswill and Williams' data it appears that Reading and Ashford are heavily involved in this "south-east English short vowel chain shift" (Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:46).

From Przedlacka's data we can say that at least some of Buckinghamshire, Kent, Surrey and Essex are also participating in this trend (though it is unclear how representative she intends these locations to be). From Trudgill's reports it appears that Norwich, while holding out for longer than other locations in its local dialect specificities, is now participating more fully

(Britain 2002b:56; Trudgill, 1999:129). The locations so far appear to constitute a kind of ‘core’ to the southeast levelling variety.

Milton Keynes shows strong involvement, albeit with some minor persistent peculiarities. This might usefully be seen as a kind of ‘outer core’ of the southeast levelling variety.

In terms of koineization, what is happening is that the children are faced with an input composed of different variants, all of which have particular regional and social distributions. In principle, none is associated specifically with Milton Keynes. They select one variant, [æʊ], which becomes the main variant of the new, stable variety of the town. Since this is also a standard, or RP, variant, this adoption can be viewed as a strategy of neutrality [...]. But [...] *levelling is not complete*, since both [ɛ:] and [æʊ] are sometimes used by a number of the girls.

Kerswill & Williams, 2000:89 (emphasis added)

It seems legitimate to locate part of the ‘edge’ of the southeast levelling variety in the Fens, “the site of one of the most important bundles of isoglosses in English dialectology” (Britain & Trudgill, 2005:191). Britain shows the resilience and even strengthening of dialect boundaries here, particularly acutely in the BATH vowel. This appears to be where southeast levelling peters out somewhat; and thus where the southeast levelling variety could be said to end.

Within the core of the southeast, it is probably true that regional dialects are losing their distinctiveness as the dialect mixing becomes ever more intense – thanks to very high levels of social and geographical mobility in the area [...]. The Fens [...] are well beyond, at the very peripheral outer reaches of this region.

Britain, 2005:999-1000

The persistent northern character of the western Fens is illustrated by its use of a number of other typically northern features:

- Happy tensing is still not categorical, so ‘happy’ is often still heard as [hapɪ] as opposed to [hapi:];
- [a] is used almost exclusively both in the TRAP lexical set (as opposed to [æ] further south and east) and in the BATH lexical set, in contrast with [ɑ: – a:] further south and east);

- Short [ɛ] for /ei/ in the words ‘take,’ ‘make’;

Britain, 2005:1017

Moreover, the simultaneous shrinking of the intermediate, interdialectal zone between the western and eastern Fens suggests an ever tighter definition of these two linguistic regions. That these isoglosses are persisting, and in some cases tightening, and that the respective dialect features are typically northern and southern respectively, suggests a possible boundary for the southeast levelling variety. Looking at Figure 3.11,¹¹ Leicester and Nottingham to the west of the Fens can be seen as reasonably well outside of the southeast; whereas Milton Keynes a little further south is more convincingly inside the region by this account. Still, taking Figure 3.11 overall, the question is not so much where is in and where is out; but how levels of engagement in southeast regional levelling match up with levels of involvement in population movement around the southeast, and what explanatory capacity this adds to the regional levelling narrative.

On a terminological note, it is important to highlight that “the southeast” is being discussed here (as per Allen et al., 1998) “in terms of relations”; as a reiterative construct of, in this case, linguistic trends. It should be noted, though, that this differs from the administrative “South East of England” (Figure 3.12), which is very much established along specific boundaries.

3.3.3 Changes in the southeast

Owing to constraints of space, this is a very brief presentation of socio-geographical data. Still, it should add to what is currently discussed in the dialectological literature, a good first example of which is Altendorf & Watt (2004), who note:

¹¹ My thanks go to Owen Jones (owencjones.com), graphic designer and friend, for assembling Figure 3.11 from the separate maps cited, and also for overlaying the radii in Figure 3.17.

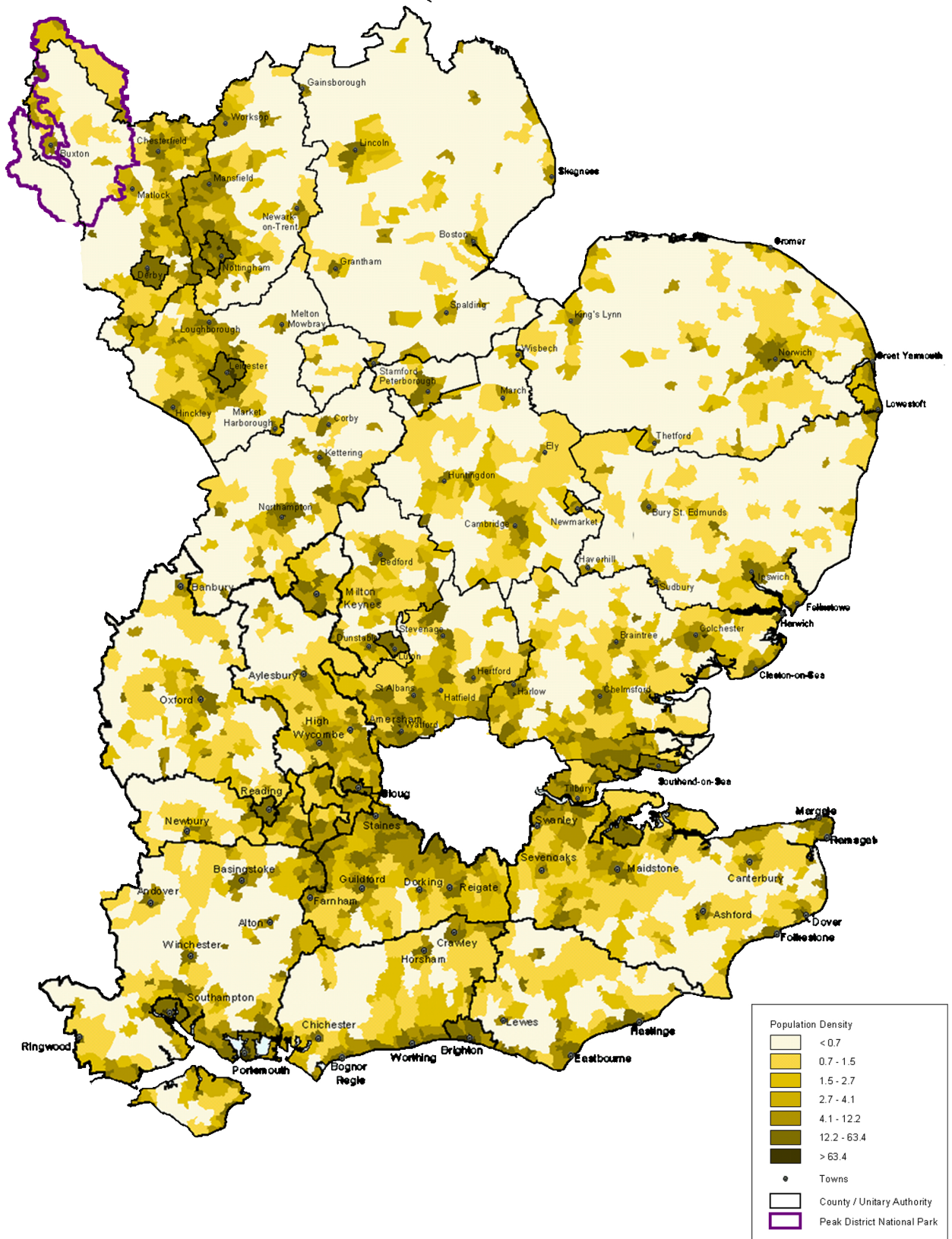


Figure 3.11 Population density around parts of the southeast in 1991 (adapted from three separate maps: MAFF, 2002c:41, 2000d:42, 2000e:30). (N.B. London is not being excluded in order to suggest disengagement in southeast levelling (although see §3.6); but only because its population density is less varied.)

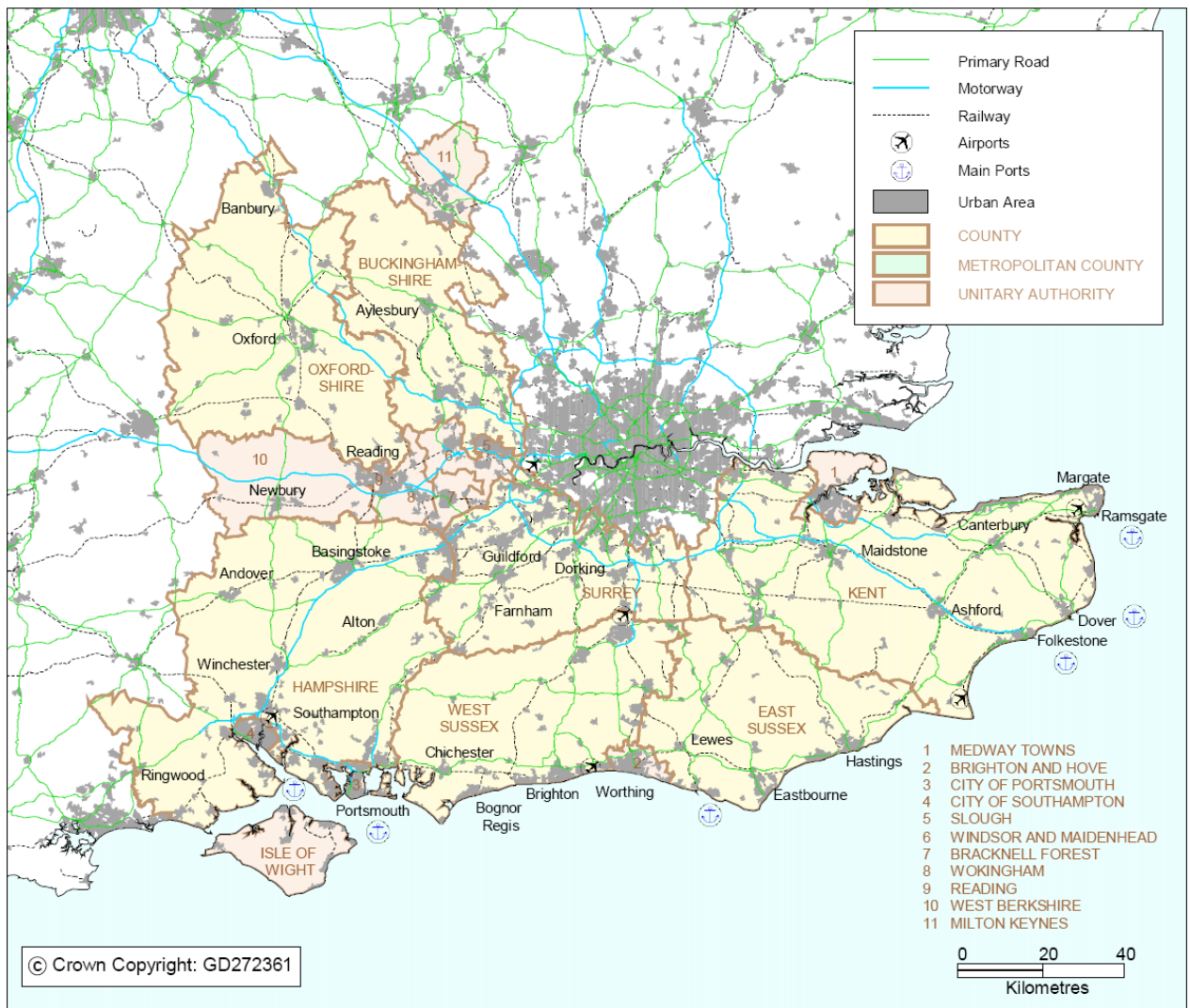


Figure 3.12 The administrative South East of England (MAFF, 2000e:8)

The restructuring of the Southeast dialect area is in large part due to processes of linguistic convergence [...]. These processes have, it is argued, been promoted by an increase in geographical mobility in the second half of the 20th century.

Altendorf & Watt, 2004:182

They go on to describe three different types of mobility in this period (ibid. pp.182-184):

“centrifugal migration”, out-migration from London, including the creation of new towns like Milton Keynes; “centripetal migration”, migration into the southeast; and “internal migration within the Southeast”:

As people resident in the Southeast now tend to change their place of work more often than they used to, there has been a resultant increase in the levels of admixture of the population within the region. These processes of mobility have increased face-to-

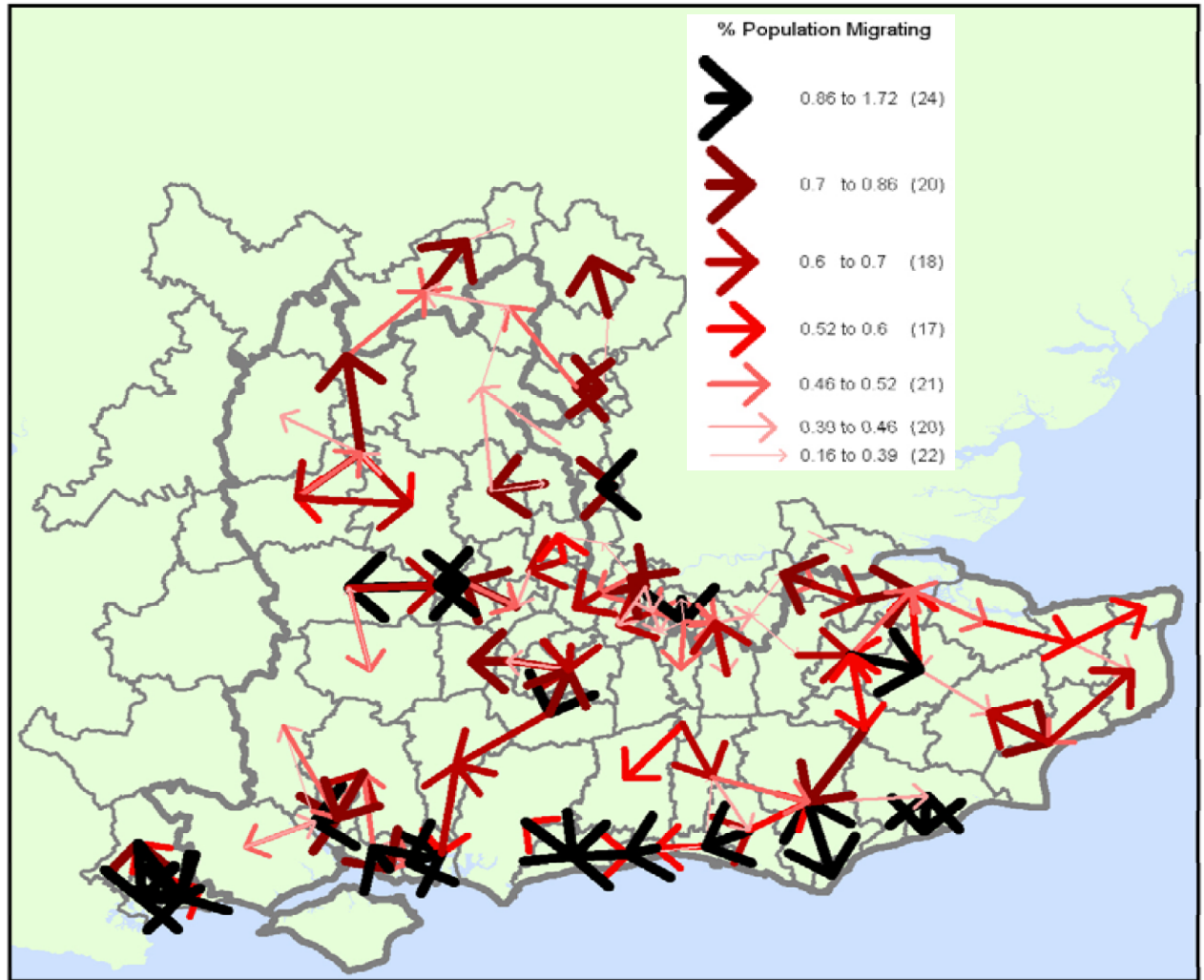


Figure 3.13 Cross-district migration flows above 500 people in southeast England (DTZ, 2004:8)

face interaction among speakers of different accents. This kind of communicative situation tends to bring about short-term accommodation among the interlocutors, which in turn can then lead to long-term accommodation, accent convergence and change [...]. In addition, mobility has been shown to weaken network ties and to promote the diffusion of “new” variants.

Altendorf & Watt, 2004:184

The aim in the remainder of §3.3 is to present additional geographical data to substantiate further this explanation of southeast regional dialect levelling based on population movement.

3.3.3.1 Migration around the southeast

Regarding intensified population flow in the southeast in the period 1980-1, Boyle notes:

This counter-urbanising effect is particularly noticeable when the flows out of outer London into the south of England and Wales were (sic) considered. Far fewer migrants from this origin chose either inner or outer London as a destination than expected [...]. Again, there is evidence that migration was filtering down the urban hierarchy with the larger and smaller cities, industrial and new town districts all attracting more migrants than expected. Most significantly, though, a considerably larger number of migrants also moved into [...] the mixed urban-rural and the remote rural areas than anticipated [...] especially [...] the most remote, rural districts. [...] These flows were much larger than expected and were over relatively long distances.

Boyle, 1994:1717

Certain things stand out about the southeast. Firstly, “the greatest concentration of dual career households [i.e. both parents employed] in Great Britain is in London and the South East” (Green et al., 1999:52). Secondly, “dual career households display a strong residential preference for accessible semi-rural areas with good communications links” (Green et al., 1999:52). So, the southeast contains the greatest concentration of people who are most likely to counterurbanise. From a purely structural perspective, this creates conditions conducive to regional dialect levelling.

Although limited to the administrative southeast, Figure 3.13 provides some important data for our purposes. Despite a net outflow of counterurbanisers from London (Figure 3.14), this is not just a straightforward dispersal of people out into the surrounding areas. What appears to be happening in the southeast is that people are migrating more and migrating further; but predominantly concentrating their moves within the region. There is certainly a significant outflow of people from London, but simultaneously a continual churning of people around other parts of the region.

3.3.3.2 Commuting around the southeast

Allen (1992) notes a succession of political and business decisions in the last quarter of the 20th century that favoured the southeast, developing its infrastructure, transport networks, residences, and employment prospects. Similarly Castree et al. (2004:146-50) outline the various ways that

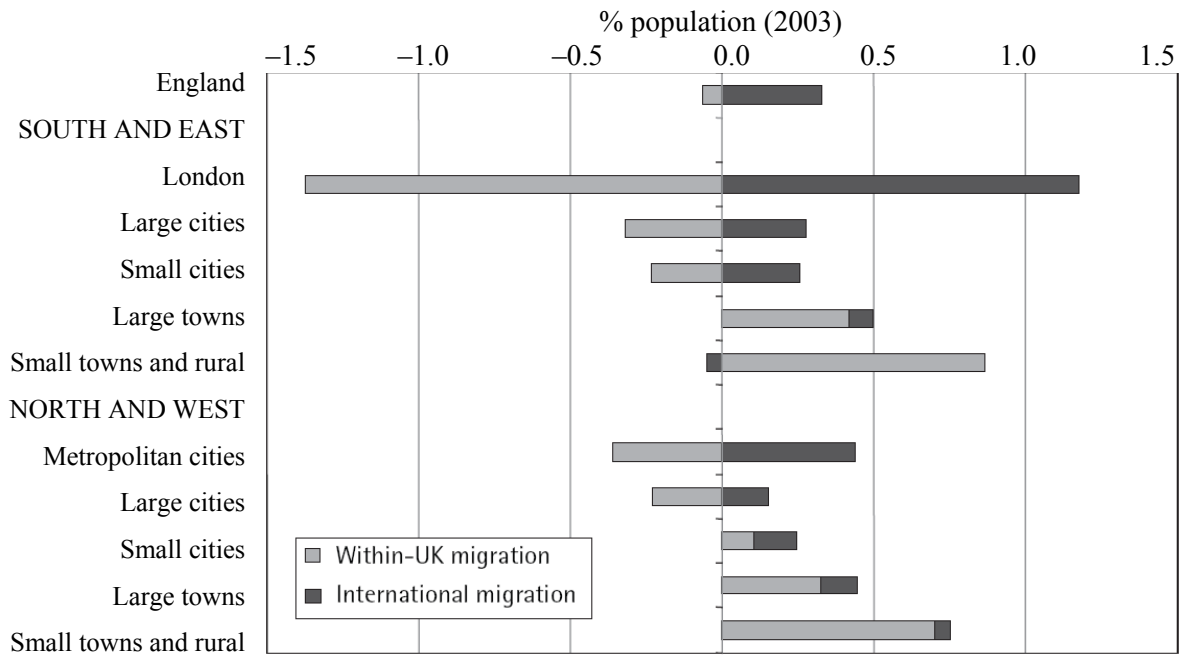


Figure 3.14 Rates of within-UK and international net migration, for England, by settlement types, 2003-2004 (Champion et al., 2007:8)

business activity, investment, growth and development has been concentrated within, and spread neatly around, the southeast. As mentioned previously at the national level, this is reflected in statistics of mobility around the southeast.

In focusing upon the financial services industry therefore, the geography of both production and circulation relations is central to an understanding of how different patterns of growth are laid down across the country. In this case London and the south east represent the hub of this growth, not simply because they dominate the pattern of employment in the financial and commercial services sector in the UK (with over half the total jobs in the region), but rather because of the type of economic activities performed in the London city region which tie it into the flows of the global financial markets.

Allen, 1992:298

Allen is careful to note, moreover, that while much of the growth of business in the southeast has had a distinctly global flavour, nevertheless this has been concentrated within this specific part of the country. Furthermore, although other regions have been catching up, they have been doing so on their own terms, not by leeching from the southeast or aping its approach. Allen refers to these parallel development processes as “regionalization”: “more than the co-existence of

| Distance | Men | | Women | | Total | |
|----------|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
| | 1981 | 1991 | 1981 | 1991 | 1981 | 1991 |
| <5km | 32.3 | 28.8 | 54.4 | 47 | 41.2 | 36.8 |
| 5-9km | 23.2 | 21.8 | 21.2 | 22.1 | 22.4 | 21.9 |
| 10-19km | 22.5 | 23.4 | 15 | 17.8 | 19.5 | 20.9 |
| 20-29km | 7.6 | 8.3 | 3.7 | 4.7 | 6.1 | 6.7 |
| 30km+ | 14.3 | 17.7 | 5.6 | 8.5 | 10.8 | 13.6 |

Table 3.7 *Travel-to-work distances of employees and the self-employed with a workplace in Greater London, 1981 and 1991 (Green et al., 1999:54)*

| Region of residence | 1981 | 1991 | Change, 1981-91 | % change, 1981-91 |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Greater London | 2,970,990 | 2,676,620 | -294,370 | -10 |
| Rest of South East | 574,100 | 608,420 | 34,320 | 6 |
| Bordering South East* | 12,990 | 23,210 | 10,220 | 79 |
| East Anglia | 7340 | 12,890 | 5550 | 76 |
| South West | 7440 | 10,800 | 3360 | 45 |
| West Midlands | 4030 | 6430 | 2400 | 60 |
| East Midlands | 4200 | 9690 | 5490 | 131 |
| Yorkshire & Humberside | 3310 | 4500 | 1190 | 36 |
| North West | 5750 | 5230 | -520 | -9 |
| North | 2740 | 2950 | 210 | 8 |
| Rest of GB / outside GB | 20,000 | 11,820 | -8180 | -41 |

Table 3.8 *Change in the number of people commuting to workplaces in Greater London by administrative region, between 1981 and 1991 (Green et al., 1999:57)*

*The 'Bordering South East' category is an aggregate of counties immediately bordering the rest of the South East (i.e. Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Dorset).

regionalized modes of growth, [...] a number of dislocations in the UK economy which have taken a spatial form" (Allen, 1992:330). While these may all have a global character, this does not entail the mixing of the UK population. To the contrary, it can mean its continuing segregation into functionally and interactionally discrete regional zones (see also Castree et al., 2004:19).

Table 3.7 shows increasing distances commuted to work in Greater London. Slightly more detail is provided by Table 3.8, showing the relative levels of commuting into Greater London from various parts of the country. Of relevance for our purposes is the drop in commuting from within Greater London – spreading the movement of people further around the southeast. It is worth

noting the increases in commuters from other parts of the country; but still, these figures are outnumbered almost ten to one by commuters from around the southeast.

Over 500,000 commuters from the South East and East of England [administrative regions] fill about 18% of London jobs. Commuting extends across the whole of the region, although the biggest influence of London is in the areas immediately adjacent or extending out along routes such as the M4 corridor.

MAFF, 2002e:8

Also critical for our purposes are the commuter flows between places outside the capital (Figure 3.15). “Commuting also takes place extensively between villages and towns for example Norwich, Ipswich, Cambridge and Peterborough” (MAFF, 2002b:45). Combined with the data on migration, this has consequences in terms of dialect contact. Although London has a strong

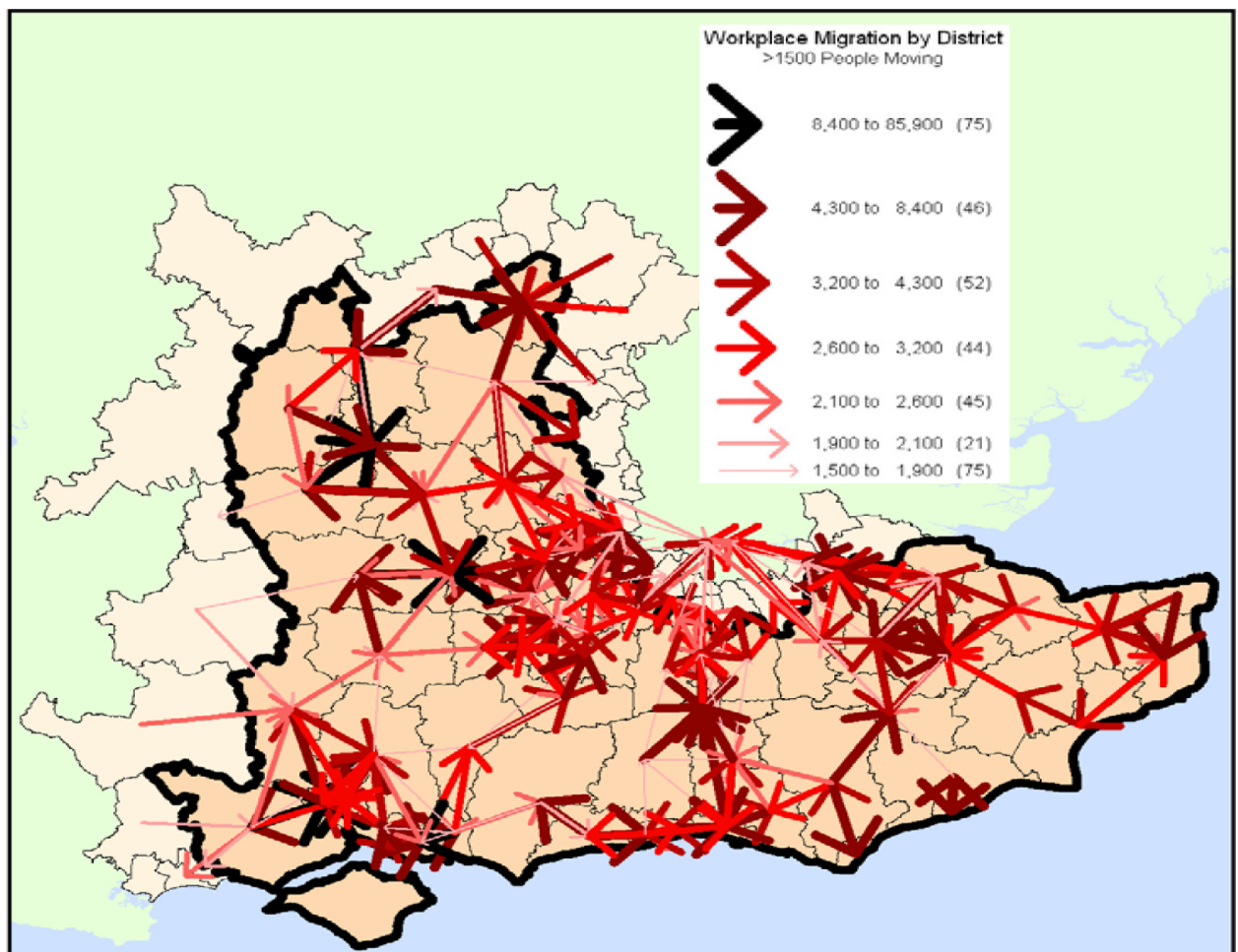


Figure 3.15 Travel to work patterns (<1500 people) in southeast England (DTZ, 2004:11)

effect – in its contribution of people around the area and its gravitational pull as the centre of the region – nevertheless there is also a sizeable movement around and between southeast locations that pays little attention to London as such.

3.3.3.3 The southeast levelling ‘core’

It appears that the ‘core’ locations of southeast levelling discussed in §3.3.2 are experiencing high levels of in- and out-migration, as well as having high population density and, more importantly, continuous areas of highly densely populated areas connected with each other, actuating a regional flow. There are also dense networks of commuting journeys criss-crossing these locations. To return to the models of diffusion outlined in §3.1.1, and that regional levelling is a case of urban hierarchical diffusion, these observations allow a further insight into the nature of that hierarchy. Areas like Reading and Ashford, which appear heavily involved in a southeast population flow, are correspondingly involved in southeast levelling.

London, the “populous, economically and culturally dominant centre” (Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:26), is occasionally hinted at as the progenitor of southeast regionally levelling features, suggesting something more akin to the wave model of diffusion. For example Torgersen & Kerswill’s summarisation of Trudgill (1986): “The degree of fronting is dependent on age and proximity to London” (Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:30). Later on they review the results of Hurford’s 1967 PhD dissertation showing fronting of the STRUT vowel in a London family; and that, since this fronting has subsequently been found elsewhere in the southeast: “20th century STRUT fronting probably originated in London and spread out from there” (p.32). Still, the explication is lacking somewhat as to why these features necessarily originated in London, or what routes these features took ‘from’ London ‘to’ dialects across the southeast. The recurrent

echoing of London as the dialectal originator in this literature is demonstrated further in the following passage:

The lowering of the centralised mid short vowel of STRUT is [...] structurally unmotivated, since the move does not make STRUT notably more distinct from neighbouring vowels. However, in this case, there is a very clear geographical connection. As already noted, Trudgill (1986:50-52) describes a phonetically and geographically gradual diffusion, radiating north and east from London, of a lowered fronted STRUT in East Anglia, where in the far north of the region the traditional realisation is a close-mid back [ɜ]. We can see the development in Reading as parallel to that, with an incoming, more peripheral, lower vowel. However, there is a difference: we do not see any sign of fronting in Reading, rather the opposite. The target vowel, in the Reading case, is an open back vowel. With the new information gained from the present study, and from Kerswill and Williams (2000), for example, we can see that STRUT in the London area is now being backed, a process that, we have argued, started in the middle of the 20th century. The East Anglian and Reading data fit very well: both regions are receiving open, London-type pronunciations. Part of this involved fronting, at least in East Anglia where the original vowels were high and back. Now, the fronting has been arrested as a result of the newer backing of the vowel in the London area, evidenced by our data from Ashford and by observations in Milton Keynes – both towns which have received a large influx of Londoners in the last 30 years (Kerswill and Williams 2000; Rudiman 1994).

Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:46

Regional levelling by this account is the result of innovations originating in the major urban centre, and diffusing outward. Torgersen & Kerswill appear to base this on a process of elimination, whereby London must be performing this function because no other place is big enough. For example, the fact that Reading is further ahead in the levelling process

might lead us to suppose that Reading (and the area west of London generally) is the focal point from which the change is radiating outwards. On demographic grounds, this is highly unlikely. This view is supported by the fact that, where Reading did not already have vowels corresponding to the end-point of the chain shift, as was the case for STRUT and FOOT, it has simply adjusted its vowels in order to conform to the new system. In both cases, the resulting changes were not part of a chain. In sum, we are dealing with geographical diffusion from London, combined with a measure of levelling (resulting from face-to-face contacts and accommodation) at the local level.

Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:46

To reject Reading as the dialectological epicentre of these changes seems reasonable; but this may not on its own mean that: “On demographic grounds [...] we are dealing with geographical

diffusion from London” (ibid.); and that regional dialect levelling can be thought of as “an epiphenomenon of geographical diffusion” (Kerswill, 2002:187).

Kerswill has elsewhere countered the suggestion that London as the dialectal prime mover of the southeast, as in the following discussion of geography in relation to dialect change, which ends with a noteworthy caution:

The geographical limit to levelling depends precisely on the degree of mobility, something which in turn is related to the geographer’s notion of the functional urban region (Champion & Coombes, 1983; Champion & Dorling, 1994). As an indication, consider the fact that, in the London area, there are commuters who travel up to two hours in each direction – the time it takes (traffic permitting) to travel the 120 miles between Ashford and Reading. Most commute to London, but many also travel to other locations around London. One could find similar patterns in the densely populated hinterlands of other big cities.

[...]

Without new research we cannot come to any conclusions about the origins of the innovations we have logged in Reading, Milton Keynes and Ashford. At this point we might mention the work of Sandøy (1998), who shows that linguistic innovations involving simplification may diffuse in a counter-hierarchical fashion from the periphery to the centre. This would have consequences for the way we approach the investigation of innovations in London and its satellite towns.

Kerswill, 2003a:230-231

Still, to describe features “radiating north and east from London” (Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:46) at least downplays the distinction between wave and urban hierarchy models. This in turn can take attention away from the substantial non-London human traffic around the southeast. If movement of people equals dialect contact, then there appear to be equally significant numbers of people moving between places around the southeast.

[T]he rise of euromarkets, together with the growth of international banks in London have effectively tied London and parts of the south east into a network of international relations which are very different from growth patterns across other UK regions.

Allen, 1992:298

Przedlacka's (2001:46) finding that GOAT fronting may have originated in Buckinghamshire gains a new resonance here. This should not lead us to believe that Aylesbury is in fact the dialectal epicentre of the southeast. Possibly this feature originated there, but its route of dispersal was likely not a radiation from Aylesbury outwards; but instead around the southeast in no particular direction, as Aylesbury has become immersed in the regional flow.

The term *Estuary English* itself implies a London-Thames Estuary origin for southeast levelling features. While southeast dialects certainly seem to be mixing together, and while London does seem to represent a kind of gravitational core for this flow, nevertheless there is little clear evidence that London is the main point of origin for levelling features. Perhaps it is for some, and this must be accounted for; but the evidence seems predominantly to suggest spatial diffusion of linguistic innovations between urban areas around the southeast as a whole. The urban hierarchy model in this case seems to relate to involvement in the regional population flow, rather than just sheer size of the conurbation.

3.3.3.4 The southeast levelling periphery and borders

Places like Milton Keynes and Norwich, less carried up in a southeast population flow, demonstrate a more negotiated, partial engagement in the regional levelling process. The Fens, meanwhile, “at the very peripheral outer reaches of this region” (Britain, 2005:1000), and also more isolated in population density (Figure 3.11), remains the least engaged of all, in many ways representing a boundary of southeast levelling:

Milton Keynes lies firmly within this fuzzy “southeast” as do Cambridge and Oxford. The Fens [...] are well beyond, at the very peripheral outer reaches of this region. This article considers the extent to which the Fens are integrated (or otherwise) linguistically into the southeastern region (have local dialect differences mostly been levelled away, for example?), or whether they are simply the recipients of some particularly vigorous innovations being diffused beyond the koine core.

Britain, 2005:1000

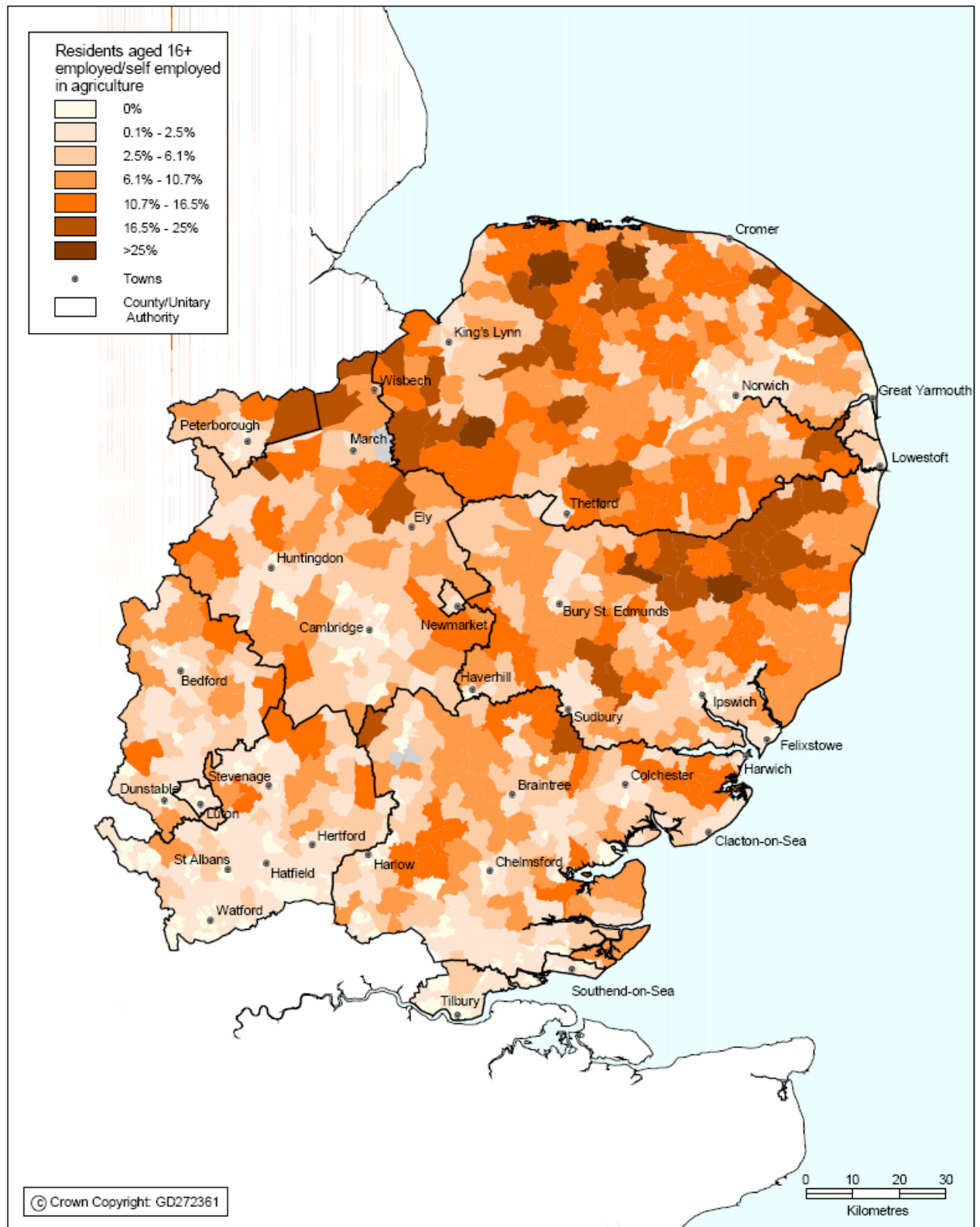


Figure 3.16 *Agricultural Employment in the East of England in 1991 (MAFF, 2000:81)*

This is significant because Norwich and its surrounding rural areas – further away from London than the Fens – participate more fully in southeast levelling:

The members of the 1983 sample [unlike the 1968 sample] failed to make such a distinction between the urban and rural dialects [of the Norwich area], which reflects the reality of the rapid spread of speech forms from the city into the surrounding countryside, as well as considerable suburbanisation of the villages surrounding Norwich. [...] This is most probably to be ascribed to increased geographical mobility, and to a very heavy increase in immigration to Norwich, particularly from the Home Counties, in the past 15 years.

Trudgill, 1988:39

This resonates clearly with the account given so far about urbanisation and counterurbanisation in the southeast. Norwich, although in a sense more remote, is more connected with the southeast region. This is reflected in the data for concentration of businesses (Figure 3.2), population density (Figure 3.11), and types of employment (Figure 3.16). The high retention of school leavers in agricultural occupations in the Fens keeps these youngsters among the least likely groups to migrate (T. Champion, 2005:95), further disconnecting them from this population flow. Fenland England represents a special case in more than just a linguistic sense. As Shucksmith reports (1990:98), during the early-mid 20th century Norfolk received proportionately more council housing in its rural areas (Fenland parts included), stemming the flow of migrants to the cities. This may also help explain its high rates of school leaver retention in local agricultural work.

Britain's data further elucidate the urban hierarchy model – “whereby innovations descend down a hierarchy of large city to city to large town, to town, village and country” (Britain, 2005:997). The meaning and function of urbanity in this model can therefore be developed further, taking into account measures of population flow and consequent engagement in the region.

Moreover, as these different dialects demonstrate, levelling is not a process of absolutes. It is a constant process of becoming; and while this does appear to involve an overall drop in diversity, it is nevertheless characterised by persistent change, readjustment and local appropriations.

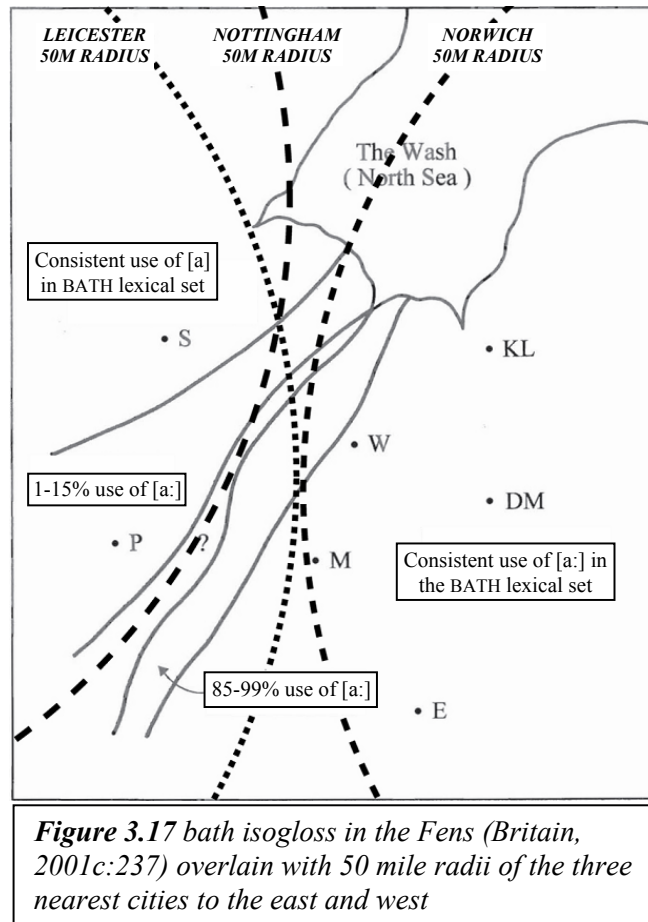
Language change is grounded in the geographical reality of contact between persons, and this is the key to understanding the ongoing progress of regional dialect levelling.

Lastly, to return to the point made about the ‘edge’ of the southeast levelling variety, let me briefly discuss the spatial location of the Fens, and make a final and extremely tentative suggestion as to how this might help to explain its dialectal split, namely:

Those eastern areas of the Fens that rightly form part of East Anglia, however, still show some similarity with dialects of Norfolk, and those of the Western Fens show affinities with Lincolnshire and Peterborough.

Britain, 2005:1000

Recall the map of the BATH isogloss, the latter part of which is reproduced in Figure 3.17. The isogloss – which appears to be strengthening between generations – is overlain by the intersection of the radii of three cities: Leicester and Nottingham to the west with their typically northern dialectal character (Gupta, 2005:24), and Norwich to the east which, as we have seen, is a strong participant in southeast levelling. I have been arguing all along that Euclidian distance cannot be considered on its own; but in the Fens it might matter in a different way. Firstly, as the population density map shows (Figure 3.11), the areas in between the Fens and these cities are very sparsely populated. Secondly, as reported above, around 75% of migrations within the UK are less than 50 miles (Champion et al., 1998:46). Combining this with the information about urbanisation and counterurbanisation, it seems plausible that these cities have an effect on the population around them which could extend around 50 miles. There is also anecdotal evidence of different circles of interaction either side of the Fens, with people in Spalding (western Fens) favouring Leicester over Norwich as an urban centre, and vice versa for people in Kings Lynn in the eastern Fens (Britain, pc.).



It is beyond the scope of this investigation to pursue this further. Still, some kind of dialectal tug of war seems to be happening down the middle of the Fens, at the point where the 50 mile radii of adjacent major centres of population meet. If this is so, then the boundary of southeast regional levelling lies at the boundary of southeast interactions, returning us to an account based on mobility, interaction between persons, dialect contact and regional flows.

3.4 Northeast regional dialect levelling

[C]omparison of speech samples for older and younger TE [Tyneside English] speakers reveals [...] an increasing reduction in the use of forms specific to the Tyneside region accompanied by the adoption of less regionally marked, supralocal forms. This process can be seen as an aspect of the leveling of TE with respect to other forms of British English. The results of the present study are fairly similar to those emerging from research being carried out elsewhere in the United Kingdom, much of which suggests that the sound changes underway in dialects of English around the country are part of a broad convergence of localized varieties on less localized ones.

Watt, 2000:71-3

In the northeast, like the southeast, there appears to be a gradual decline in highly localised dialect features and adoption of supra-local, northern and northeastern forms, demonstrating regional levelling. In this section data are reviewed showing levelling of the FACE and GOAT vowels, across an area stretching at least from Tyneside in Newcastle down into North Yorkshire. Meanwhile a typically Tyneside feature of *glottal reinforcement* seems to be spreading around the northeast – from Newcastle/Durham to Middlesbrough – but not beyond, again suggesting a regionally concentrated change. There do appear to be some innovations coming into the region, apparently from southern England; but these are adopted and adapted around local repertoires, taking distinctly northeast social and linguistic distributions.

3.4.1 Linguistic features of a northeast levelling variety

As with the southeast analysis, these data are not new; the only novelty is combining these individual reports as part of a regional narrative, and within a discussion of linguistic diversity.

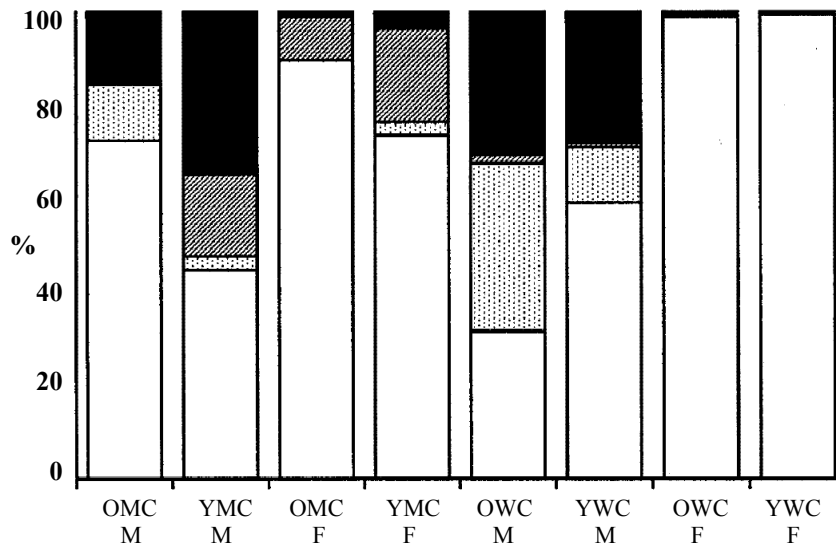
3.4.1.1 FACE and GOAT monophthongisation

[Watt's (2000, 2002)] study of the Tyneside (Newcastle) vowel system shows phonetic variation in the vowels FACE and GOAT (following Wells 1982). Older, localised variants, such as [ɪə] and [ʊə], are being supplanted by new variants common to a wider geographical area, in particular [e:] for FACE and [o:], or a fronted variant, [ø:], for GOAT.

Torgersen & Kerswill, 2004:25

This summarises the changes reported in the FACE and GOAT vowels, with a range of locally distinguishable diphthongs gradually becoming more monophthongal. The demographic breakdown of this change – explored further in §3.4.2 – is summarised by Watt:

The most obvious pattern in the data for both FACE and GOAT is an overwhelming preference for Type I variants by almost all speaker groups. Exceptions to this are the OWC [older working class] males, who for FACE appear to prefer the Type II variant [ɪə], and for GOAT marginally favour Type II [ʊə]; the 'extra' GOAT variant [ø:],



| | FACE | GOAT |
|------------------------|------|----------|
| Type I (supralocal) | e: | o: |
| Type II (local) | ɪə | ʊə |
| Type III (national) | eɪ | oʊ ə: |

Table 3.9 FACE and GOAT variants in Newcastle (adapted from Watt, 2002:47)

Figure 3.18 GOAT variants, conversation style. White = [o:]. Dotted = [ʊə]. Hashed = [ou]. Black = [ə:] (Watt, 2000:70).

meanwhile, accounts for around one third of the GOAT samples for OWC, YWC and YMC male groups. Here we see evidence of a marked gender-related distribution: the localised Type II diphthongs and [ə:] are avoided almost completely by female speakers, who instead make heavy use of Type I monophthongs and sporadic use of the Type III closing diphthongs [eɪ] and [oʊ]. Unsurprisingly, it is the MC females who favour Type III variants more strongly than the WC females; this might be predicted on the basis of the perceived prestige of the Type III forms. However, the use of [eɪ] and [oʊ] is also notable among the YMC males.

Watt, 1999:1622

Kerswill notes that “Yorkshire, the county to the immediate south of county Durham, traditionally has [e:]” (2003a:227). Two details here are important: firstly, there is growing similarity across the northeast; and secondly, distinguishability from the south is persisting, with the standard forms “serving as insignificant minority variants and used only among middle class speakers” (Britain, 2002b:63). Watt adds:

The figures for the phonetic variants of FACE and GOAT in TE are fairly typical of patterns reported in other studies of dialect leveling in British English, inasmuch as the decline of traditional, localized speech forms is balanced (or caused) by the substitution of less marked forms typical of a broader area. [...]

[T]he patterns in the FACE and GOAT data are part of a process of dialect leveling, the hallmark of this process being a situation whereby heterogeneous speech varieties over time become more homogeneous, either by converging upon a pre-existing variety or by coalescing into an entirely new one.

Watt, 2000:85-86

| Sex | Durham:1983 | | Newcastle:1994 | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Men | Women | Men | | Women | |
| Age group | 26-59 | 26-52 | 45-67 | 15-27 | 45-67 | 15-27 |
| % [ɪə] | 45 | 8 | 63 | 36 | 8 | 5 |
| % [e:] | 55 | 92 | 37 | 64 | 92 | 95 |

Table 3.10 /e:/ (as in FACE) in two dialects in the North East of England (per cent use of two variants by working-class subjects) as reported in Kerswill (1984) and Watt (2002) (reproduced from Kerswill, 2003a:226)

As an aside, his assertion that “heterogeneous speech varieties [...] become more homogeneous” is a timely example of variationist sociolinguistics evidencing declining linguistic diversity, but not defining the term itself – instead conflating decreased diversity with homogeneity.

Comparing Watt’s results with contemporaneous data from nearby Durham, and their apparent growing similarity (see Table 3.10), Kerswill surmises the occurrence of regional levelling:

On the basis of the figures for both cities, it is clear that the use of the [traditional] diphthong [ɪə] is practically the preserve of male speakers. The Newcastle data additionally shows that their use of the variant is declining. [...] Variants such as these [[e:] and [o:]] are neutral in the sense that they do not signal a strong or specific local affiliation – even though they are not necessarily standardised towards an external norm such as Received Pronunciation, which uses [eɪ].

[...]

[W]e can be relatively sure that the feature is *not* spreading from Newcastle to Durham. [...] Whatever the motivation, we are dealing here with an example of regional dialect levelling.

Kerswill, 2003a:226-7 (orig. emphasis)

With one exception (young middle class men) the FACE and GOAT vowels in the Tyneside speakers under investigation appear to be participating in a north/northeast trend with a decline of localised features and an increase of supra-local alternatives; less locally specific, but still particular to the region.

[e:] and [o:] are [...] generally typical of English in northern England and [...] are thus marked for northernness but not for locality more narrowly than this.
[...] Presumably, then, the increase in Type I monophthongs as a general feature of TE

can be seen as convergence on a broader regional pattern, as one might expect where leveling is taking place.

Watt, 2000:94

In addition to the northeast levelling trend, Watt also notes “the adoption of southern-type closing diphthongs [eɪ] and [oʊ] by female speakers” (1999:1621). These features ostensibly derive from southern England. Like other features apparently spreading from the south – elsewhere Watt mentions labiodental /r/ (2000:71) – this suggests that “the influence of southern English may be gaining ground” in Tyneside (ibid.). Nevertheless, Watt deflects suggestions of imitation based on location:

The adoption of Type III diphthongs into the TE FACE and GOAT repertoire among women and younger MC speakers would suggest the same conclusion: [eɪ] and [oʊ] are more characteristic of accents used to the south of Tyneside [i.e. southern England] than they are of TE itself and therefore may be evaluated as more attractive than the local options by these speakers, although it is probably true to say that such perceptions have little to do with the geographical origin of these variants; as we saw earlier, Wells located their origin in “polite English usage,” an association which may persist.

Watt, 2000:94

The question of motivations aside, Watt presents a decline of highly localised Tyneside features in the face of two alternatives: southern English features; and supra-local northern/northeastern features. The northeast appears to be picking up some innovations from the south, but maintaining regional specificity. This change, Kerswill notes, “began with the women, an interpretation that is in line with findings elsewhere that women adopt linguistic features with a relatively wide geographical distribution” (2003a:226-7).

3.4.1.2 oo/aa contrast

Chapter 2 mentioned a contrast identified by Ellis and apparently still present in the SED: words such as *cold* and *balled* Ellis transcribed as *kaad* and *baad* in an area to the immediate northwest of Newcastle; whereas further west in Wark he transcribed them as *kood* and *bood*. Ellis

therefore identified a dialectal peculiarity around the Tyneside area, which was found to have survived healthily in the SED. Watt & Allen (2003:269) mention “the archaic [a:] [...] in words like *snow* [sna:]”. Elsewhere Watt mentions that “[a:] can be found in TE GOAT words such as *cold*, *snow*, and *know*, although this is an increasingly recessive feature” (2000:73). This intra-regional contrast, then, appears to be declining.

3.4.1.3 NURSE vowel

As the localised [ɔ:] of Tyneside declines, two non-local variants are on the increase:

[The] supra-local (unmarked) central variant [ɜ:] [...] preferred by younger men, seems to have a limited supra-local distribution in the north of England. The rounded variant, preferred by younger women, represents a closer approximation to a variant with a wider distribution in the English south and midlands.

Watt & Milroy, 1999:38-40

The distribution of the highly local variant – skewed toward older working class men and falling away sharply in all other groups – “confirms [...] it was once a much more widely [socially]

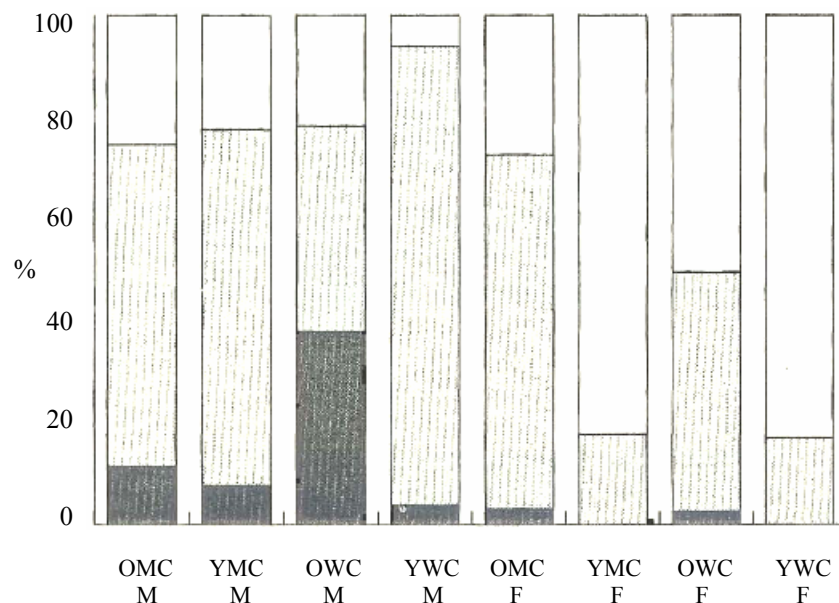


Figure 3.19 NURSE variants, free conversation style. White = [ɔ:]. Striated = [ɜ:]. Black = [ɔ:]. (*Watt & Milroy, 1999:38*).

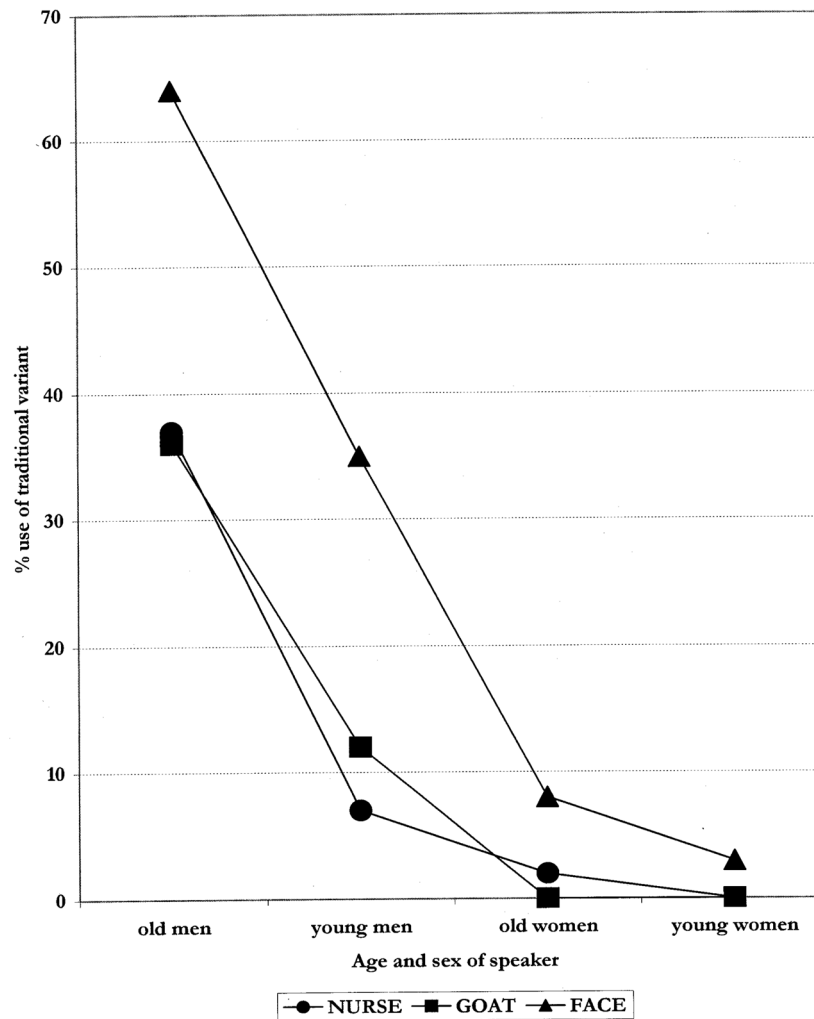


Figure 3.20 Use of local Newcastle variants of NURSE, GOAT and FACE vowels (Britain, 2002:52, after Watt & Milroy, 1999: 38, 36, 35)

distributed Tyneside variant which has since lost ground to less localised forms” (Watt & Milroy, 1999:39). The middle classes are pioneering the supra-local forms, with men preferring the regional norm and women the ostensibly pan-national. Kerswill (2003a) shows Durham and Tyneside participating in this regional trend, making an account of regional levelling.

3.4.1.4 Glottaling and Glottalisation

In the UK, glottal /t/ is quite a famous feature, popularly maligned (Milroy et al., 1994:332), where the alveolar plosive [t] is replaced by a glottal plosive [ʔ], as in /bʌʔə/ ‘butter’. This is referred to as *glottal replacement* or *glottaling*. The spread of glottal replacement in the UK has

| Variant → | ɹ | ɻ | t | ɿ | ʔ | N |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Older WC females | 40 | 18 | 27 | 12 | 2 | 404 |
| Older WC males | 15 | 35 | 7 | 42 | 2 | 178 |
| Young WC females | 21 | 39 | 5 | 20 | 13 | 402 |
| Young WC males | 3 | 59 | 4 | 23 | 12 | 230 |
| Older MC females | 12 | 27 | 39 | 20 | 2 | 366 |
| Older MC males | 6 | 32 | 5 | 53 | 4 | 398 |
| Young MC females | 2 | 42 | 5 | 17 | 34 | 383 |
| Young MC males | 1 | 46 | 4 | 27 | 23 | 305 |

Table 3.11 Percentage realisations of T in word-final pre-vowel position in Newcastle (Watt & Milroy, 1999:29)

been “one of the most dramatic, widespread and rapid changes to have occurred in British English in recent times” (Trudgill, 1999:136). In terms of its origins it appears to have “London and Edinburgh-Glasgow as dual “epicenters” ” (Kerswill & Williams, 2000:103), making its nationwide spread all the more understandable. In the northeast of England, however, this spread has been checked somewhat, with the glottal stop having to compete with “a highly complex set of T variant patterns” (Watt & Milroy, 1999:29; see also Docherty et al., 1997) – Table 3.11 (cf. Patrick & Straw, 2007, on instances of glottal variation in the southeast). Of particular interest here is *glottal reinforcement* or *glottalisation*, whereby a glottal stop occurs alongside the plosives /p/, /t/, /k/, instead of replacing them completely.

In most accents [that exhibit it], reinforcement is achieved by pre-glottalisation with the reinforcing glottal gesture being established just prior to the supralaryngeal gesture and being removed before the latter’s release.

Docherty & Foulkes, 1999:1037

This combination of consonant and glottal stop is “a more localized Tyneside feature” (Milroy et al., 1994:327), “also characteristic of Northumbrian and conservative southern Scottish rural dialects” (ibid. p.350). As Docherty et al. elaborate:

syllable-initial glottalisation of /t/ is frequently found in items like *nineteen*, *sometimes*, *three times*, *see you tonight* (usually, but not always, under secondary

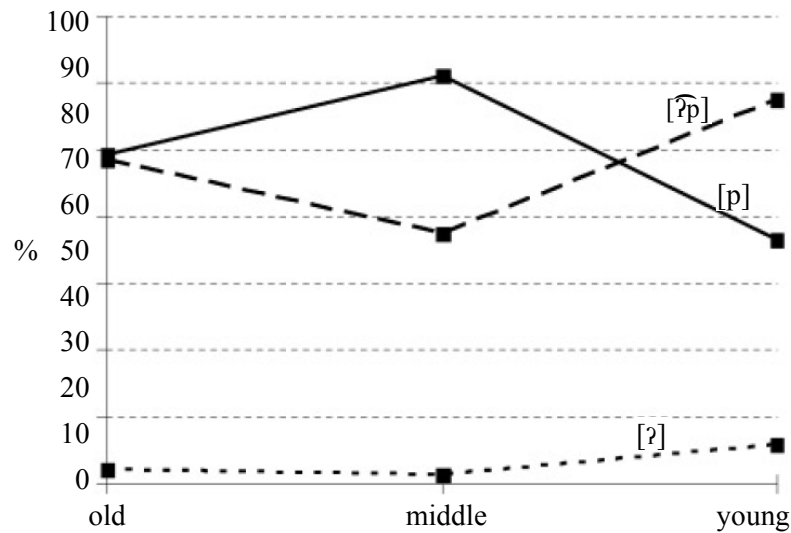


Figure 3.21 (p) variants by age, Middlesbrough (Llamas, 2007:592)

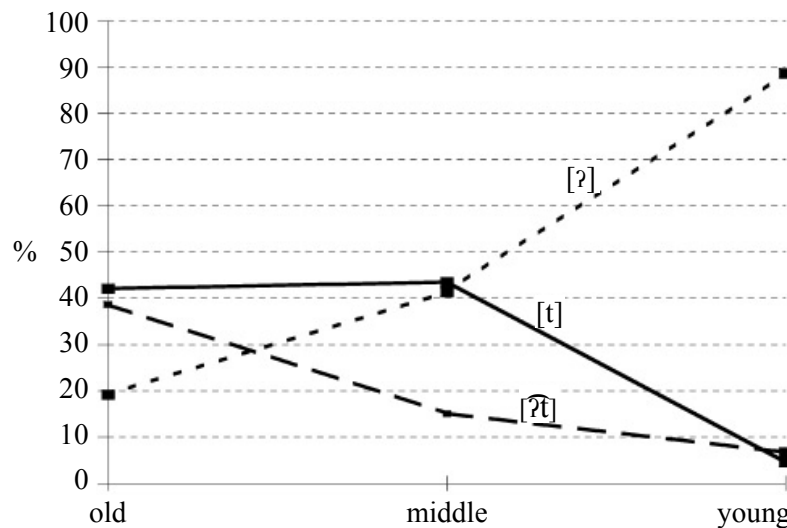


Figure 3.22 (t) variants by age, Middlesbrough (Llamas, 2007:592)

stress). This feature distinguishes Tyneside from most southern British patterns and associates it (as elsewhere) with Central Scots. [...]

Glottalisation also affects syllable onset /t/ in contexts of a preceding rhymal consonant where it is reported by Harris & Kaye as blocked in London English.

Docherty et al., 1997:290 (orig. emphasis)

Glottal reinforcement “is not, however, characteristic of Yorkshire varieties of English” (Llamas, 2007:587), making it “a localized feature of the North East of England” (ibid.). Far from dying away though, this feature appears to be spreading beyond Tyneside and around the northeast, demonstrating regional levelling. In Durham, a little over 10 miles south of Tyneside:

Glottalization of /p/, /t/, /k/ is similar to that of nearby Tyneside, though its scope is probably greater; for instance, it appears in such pronunciations as [təw 'pʷɒnd] for *two pounds*, [ə ,lɒŋ tʷaɪm] for *a long time* and in [,a:l ðə tʷaɪm] for *all the time* (where it occurs after a fully unstressed syllable).

Kerswill, 1987:35-6

It is hard to tell whether glottal reinforcement of /p/, /t/, /k/ actually spread to Durham from Newcastle. Clearer evidence of such spread is given by Llamas (2000, 2007) in “Middlesbrough English” (or “MbE”), 38 miles south of Newcastle. She finds glottally reinforced /p/ on the increase, glottally reinforced /k/ declining very slightly, and glottally reinforced /t/ declining quite markedly in the face of glottally replaced /t/. (She refers to glottally reinforced variants as “localised”, confined to the northeast but not native to Middlesbrough.) Her age groups are “old” (60-80), “middle” (32-45), “young adult” (19-22) and “adolescent” (16-17). The youngest two she groups together as “younger” unless otherwise specified.

The distribution of variants of (p) in MbE [...] appears highly complex. Data presented reveal marked variation between male and female speech and considerable variation in apparent time. In many ways, the data support many other reports of male speakers using a higher proportion of localised forms, and female speakers using more unmarked forms. The sudden increase in the young females’ use of the localised [ʔp], however, which has increased in apparent time from virtual rejection at 4.6% to the preferred variant at 48.2%, suggests that MbE is converging with the varieties found further north in Tyneside, Wearside and Durham.

Llamas, 2000:133

This rise in the glottal reinforcement of (p) she posits as being part of: “Linguistic trends that converge with North Eastern varieties and diverge from those associated with Yorkshire” (2007:579). She goes on:

Older and middle speakers show similar patterns to those found in the variant usage of (p), as marked gender differences are revealed in the use of [ʔt] (as preferred by the males) and [t] (as preferred by the females). The young speakers, however, have converged on a variant which seems to have taken the role of a supra-local norm and, in doing so, they have levelled out the gender variation found in the older groups.

Llamas, 2000:134-5

Llamas shows declining gender differences within Middlesbrough, where “adoption of the forms by the young females may demonstrate convergence toward male speech” (2007:595). This geographical/gender convergence is further demonstrated by glottally reinforced (k), for which “the combined young group has the highest incidence of [ʔk] in the sample” (Llamas, 2000:137).

There is, moreover, growing similarity between Middlesbrough and Tyneside:

The overall increase in use [of glottal reinforcement] by the young speakers [...] suggests a degree of convergence of MbE with speech of farther north, where use of the glottalized forms was found to be higher.

Llamas, 2007:595

Unlike the findings for (p) and (t), however, [ʔ] for (k) surprisingly declines slightly amongst young speakers, with older and middle speakers having virtually the same incidence as one another.

Llamas, 2000:135-6

Meanwhile, glottal replacement is increasing. One could possibly argue that glottal replacement developed on its own in the northeast, a development of the pre-existing glottal reinforcement, merely coincidental with its spread elsewhere. Phonetic evidence against this comes from the observation that: “Although glottalization affects all three stops [/p/, /t/, /k/] in Tyneside, glottalling was essentially found to affect only (t)” (Llamas, 2007:588). Its conspicuously low use for /p/ and /k/ suggests the adoption of the nationwide innovation. Nevertheless, it has to be said that glottal replacement does appear to be spreading to these other plosives, and that

the increased use of [ʔ] for (p), which has risen over time from 0% and 4.6% (amongst the old males and old females respectively) to 11.6% (amongst the adolescent females), may suggest that [ʔ] is extending its distribution. Rather than just being a variant of intervocalic (t), [ʔ] is increasingly used as a variant of intervocalic (p).

Llamas, 2000:133

The Middlesbrough data suggest that, in males, glottal replacement gains ground at working age:

use of [ʔ] rises steadily and sharply from old to young speakers, peaking at a virtually categorical 95.8% in the young adults, but then, interestingly, a significant decline is revealed among the adolescents as compared with the young adults ($p \ll 0.001$).

Llamas, 2007:591

Among females though, adolescents use marginally more glottal stops (Llamas, 2007:592).

Nevertheless the biggest differences are still between old and young: differences between genders are less than 15% of all tokens; the contrast between young and middle-old age exceeds 35% (ibid.). Unlike the relative stability in use of glottal replacement in the southeast (e.g. Przedlacka, 2001:44; cf. Patrick & Straw, 2007), the age differences in the northeast suggest that glottal replacement is a spreading change in progress.

Increasing glottal replacement in the northeast may be part of a national trend, especially given its increasing use in locations nationwide (Milroy et al., 1994:334-7). However, closer inspection reveals that this is being adopted but also *adapted* around an existing local phonetic constraint: namely that if /t/ occurs before a pause (say, at the end of an utterance) then it is usually a fully released plosive: “in pre-pausal position voiceless stops are never glottalised, being clearly released instead” (Docherty & Foulkes, 1999:1038).¹² Similarly Docherty et al. find that

glottal or glottalised variants do not occur in turn-final and other pre-pausal contexts in Tyneside. This constraint appears to be localised, since it does not hold not true for Kerswill & Williams’s (1992) data from Milton Keynes, nor for our own from Derby, where glottal variants occur freely in such contexts.

Docherty et al., 1997:307

Kerswill reports glottaling in nearby Durham; and similarly, “unlike in much RP, word-final, pre-pausal /t/ is never glottalised, but is always a released, heavily aspirated [t^h]” (Kerswill, 1987: 47).

¹² See Patrick & Straw (2007) for a more detailed consideration of this environmental constraint.

This exclusion of glottaling from pre-pausal environments, based on an existing phonetic constraint, is comparable to the MOWN-MOAN distinction in the eastern Fens inhibiting GOAT fronting (Britain, 2005:1012-4). An incoming innovation has had to compete with an existing constraint, leading to negotiated, locally unique outputs. What we have is the partial adoption of a feature spreading nationwide, its local appropriation, and its obeisance to an existing rule. The regional levelling narrative is therefore remobilised in this new context – declining overall diversity, but negotiated by local appropriations and ongoing innovation.

3.4.2 Changes in the northeast

Levelling of localised variants in Tyneside English appears to have been going on for at least forty years. Vierick's studies of the Gateshead dialect (1966, 1968) attributes the levelling process to 'various influences which undermine its original character', namely 'education, [...] mass media – radio, television and film – and to the whole linguistic climate of a large commercial centre' (1968: 65). The last of these includes Gateshead's 'change of population' brought about by 'a great number of people [who] have poured into this area from other parts of the country' (1968: 65).

Watt & Milroy, 1999:31-32

Similarly to §3.3.3, the current subsection aims to add some geographical data specific to the northeast of England, to preliminarily explore avenues of explanation for these regional trends. As before, this is only a cursory presentation of additional information – the main point of this chapter being to discuss dialect reports collectively as evidence of declining linguistic diversity.

Castree et al. (2004:141-6) describe changes in the northeast of England over the latter half of the 20th century, and how the region has emerged as a distinct area characterised by specific forms of industry, labour, investment and development. As with the southeast, migration and commuting are considered here in turn.



Figure 3.23 Migration to Middlesbrough, late 1800s (figures from Fennell et al., 2004:6)

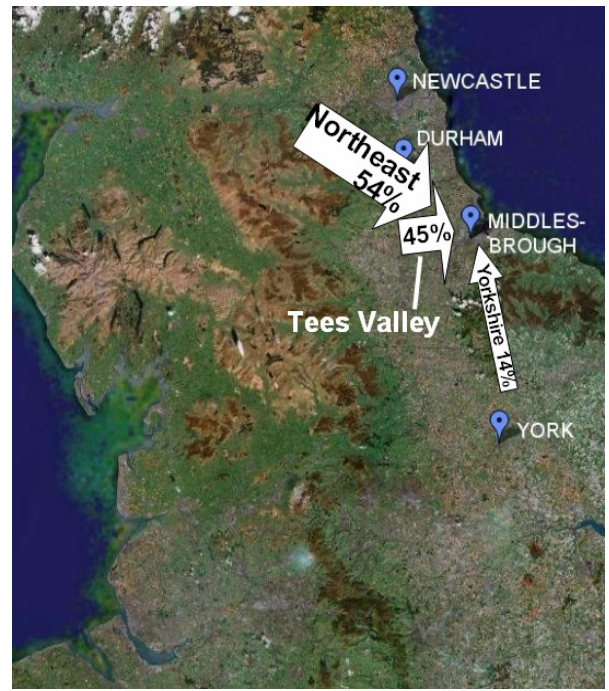


Figure 3.24 Migration to Middlesbrough, 1998-2002 (figures from ONS, 2005b)

3.4.2.1 Migration around the northeast

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the northeast population grew rapidly as workers migrated in to fill jobs in the burgeoning mining industry. As Fennell et al. (2004) report, this had quite dramatic results for dialects: namely the mixing of features from natives of Yorkshire, Ireland, Wales and elsewhere to create some of the characteristics currently associated with northeast England. This is a good example of *local* dialect levelling, and is straightforwardly comparable with the situation in 17th century Fenland England as reported by Britain (2005), or late 20th century Milton Keynes, as reported by Kerswill & Williams (2000).

The growth experienced by the northeast was quite vividly reversed in the latter half of the 20th century. With widespread industrial decline came rapid loss of population. As shown in Figure 3.25, it was the only part of the country whose rate of loss actually accelerated in the last two decades of the 20th century.

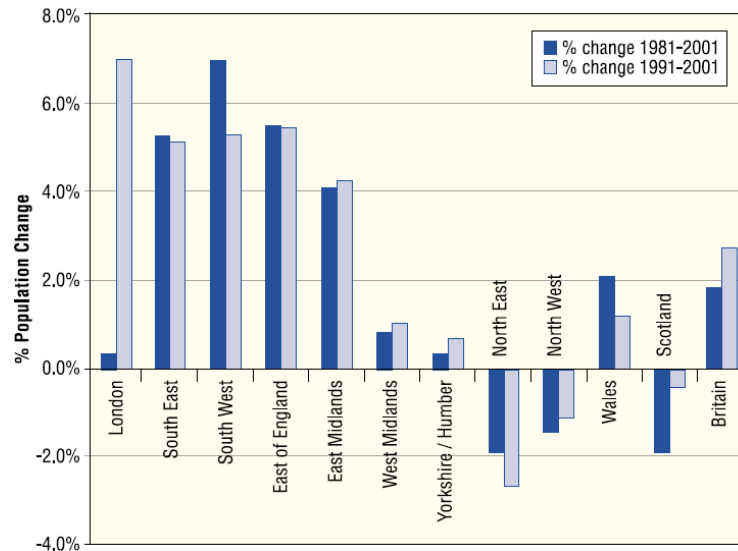


Figure 3.25 Regional Trends in the 1980s and 1990s
(Lupton & Power, 2004:11).

In terms of regional flow of migration, the situation is shown in Table 3.12. The northeast nowadays experiences mostly intra-regional migration. There are still significant numbers coming in from elsewhere, but overall this is a small minority. The numbers for Middlesbrough are represented in Figures 3.23 and 3.24.

Recalling the theme of counterurbanisation, Migley et al. note that “the counterurbanisation trend is now well-established in the North East” (2005:6). This is represented in Figure 3.25, of which Lupton & Power note: “The North East [...] shows a general pattern of decline, with even rural districts showing only small growth or even decline” (2004:13). Table 3.12 demonstrates this trend in greater detail, showing most urban areas of the northeast – like Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Sunderland and Middlesbrough – losing residents to less built-up areas.

Broadly speaking, then, the northeast has seen comparable changes to the southeast, albeit more recently: increased interconnection of erstwhile segregated locations; more and longer distance migrations mostly within the region; and a fairly consistent trend of counterurbanisation away from city centres and out into the surrounding suburban and rural areas.

| | MIGRATION WITHIN SUB-REGION | | | MIGRATION WITHIN REGION | | | MIGRATION WITH REST OF ENGLAND & WALES | | | TOTAL INTERNAL (DOMESTIC) MIGRATION | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------|-------|-------------------------|------|-------|--|-------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| | IN | OUT | NET | IN | OUT | NET | IN | OUT | NET | IN | OUT | NET |
| TEES VALLEY | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3190 | 2990 | 200 | 15610 | 17240 | -1630 | 18800 | 20230 | -1430 |
| Darlington UA | 540 | 380 | 170 | 1720 | 1390 | 330 | 1700 | 1830 | -130 | 3430 | 3230 | 200 |
| Hartlepool UA | 380 | 430 | -50 | 1020 | 950 | 70 | 910 | 1000 | -90 | 1930 | 1950 | -30 |
| Middlesbrough UA | 1990 | 2770 | -780 | 2410 | 3240 | -830 | 2040 | 2840 | -800 | 4450 | 6080 | -1630 |
| Redcar & Cleveland UA | 1620 | 1790 | -170 | 1850 | 2100 | -250 | 1600 | 2000 | -400 | 3450 | 4100 | -650 |
| Stockton-on-Tees UA | 2370 | 1540 | 830 | 3090 | 2210 | 880 | 2460 | 2660 | -210 | 5550 | 4880 | 680 |
| DURHAM | n/a | n/a | n/a | 6040 | 5500 | 540 | 13490 | 13650 | -170 | 19530 | 19150 | 380 |
| Chester-le-Street | 630 | 750 | -120 | 1790 | 1650 | 150 | 480 | 580 | -100 | 2280 | 2230 | 50 |
| Derwentside | 750 | 720 | 30 | 1940 | 1580 | 360 | 840 | 840 | -10 | 2780 | 2430 | 350 |
| Durham | 1250 | 1280 | -30 | 2400 | 2250 | 160 | 3650 | 3510 | 150 | 6050 | 5750 | 300 |
| Easington | 340 | 490 | -160 | 1270 | 1580 | -310 | 630 | 770 | -140 | 1900 | 2350 | -450 |
| Sedgefield | 1260 | 1090 | 170 | 2120 | 2030 | 100 | 880 | 1000 | -120 | 3000 | 3030 | -30 |
| Teesdale | 520 | 380 | 140 | 800 | 650 | 150 | 530 | 480 | 60 | 1330 | 1130 | 200 |
| Wear Valley | 1130 | 1160 | -20 | 1590 | 1640 | -50 | 610 | 620 | 0 | 2200 | 2250 | -50 |
| NORTHUMBERLAND | n/a | n/a | n/a | 4950 | 3670 | 1280 | 4130 | 4160 | -30 | 12450 | 11200 | 1250 |
| Alnwick | 530 | 460 | 80 | 940 | 730 | 210 | 640 | 570 | 70 | 1580 | 1300 | 280 |
| Berwick-upon-Tweed | 210 | 210 | 10 | 410 | 410 | 0 | 470 | 340 | 120 | 880 | 750 | 130 |
| Blyth Valley | 590 | 680 | -90 | 2220 | 1950 | 270 | 730 | 750 | -20 | 2950 | 2700 | 250 |
| Castle Morpeth | 850 | 960 | -110 | 1860 | 1630 | 230 | 740 | 820 | -80 | 2600 | 2450 | 150 |
| Tynedale | 300 | 230 | 70 | 1480 | 980 | 510 | 1070 | 1120 | -60 | 2550 | 2100 | 450 |
| Wansbeck | 890 | 840 | 50 | 1410 | 1350 | 60 | 490 | 560 | -60 | 1900 | 1900 | 0 |
| TYNE & WEAR | n/a | n/a | n/a | 7220 | 9240 | -2020 | 14420 | 16170 | -1760 | 34530 | 38300 | -3780 |
| Gateshead | 2670 | 2470 | 200 | 3960 | 4370 | -410 | 1760 | 1880 | -120 | 5730 | 6250 | -530 |
| Newcastle upon Tyne | 3600 | 4920 | -1320 | 6100 | 7820 | -1720 | 7060 | 7490 | -430 | 13150 | 15300 | -2150 |
| North Tyneside | 3800 | 2440 | 1370 | 5240 | 4150 | 1100 | 1910 | 2210 | -300 | 7150 | 6350 | 800 |
| South Tyneside | 1370 | 1460 | -90 | 1750 | 2070 | -320 | 1150 | 1310 | -150 | 2900 | 3380 | -480 |
| Sunderland | 1450 | 1610 | -150 | 3060 | 3730 | -670 | 2540 | 3300 | -760 | 5600 | 7030 | -1430 |

Table 3.12 Migration in northeast England, mid 1998 to mid 2002 (ONS, 2005b:2)

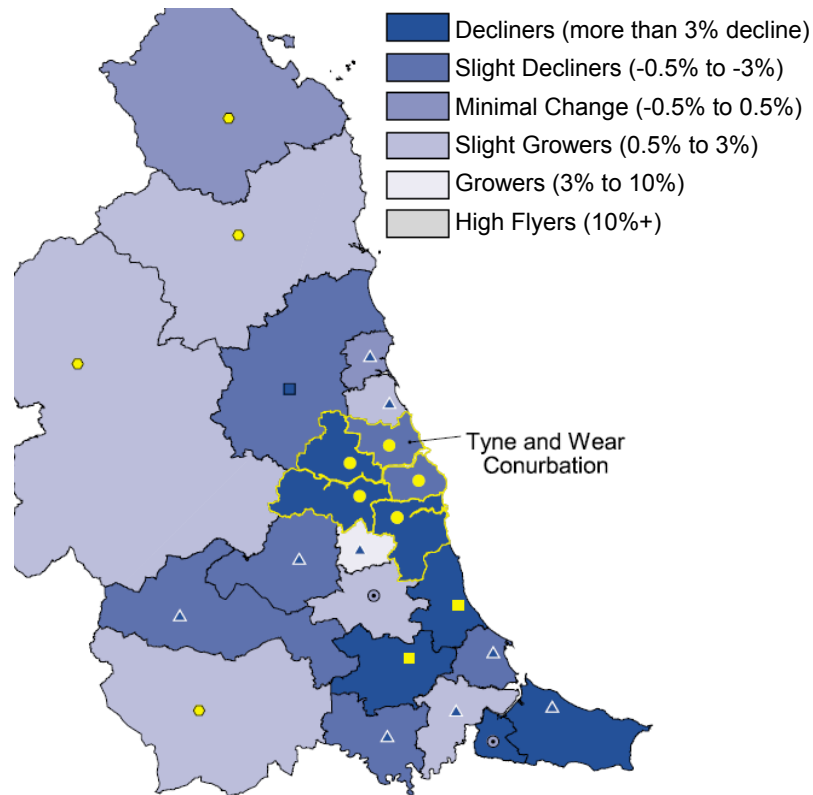


Figure 3.26 Northeast counterurbanisation, 1991-2001 (Lupton & Power, 2004:13)

| Distance | Men | | Women | | Persons | |
|------------------------|------|------|-------|------|---------|------|
| | 1981 | 1991 | 1981 | 1991 | 1981 | 1991 |
| Tyne & Wear | | | | | | |
| <5km | 54.2 | 48.5 | 69.9 | 65.2 | 60.8 | 56.4 |
| 5-9km | 28.3 | 27.8 | 22.6 | 24.0 | 25.9 | 26.0 |
| 10-19km | 12.6 | 16.6 | 6.0 | 9.0 | 9.8 | 13.0 |
| 20-29km | 1.4 | 2.0 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 1.4 |
| 30km+ | 3.6 | 5.1 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 2.5 | 3.2 |
| Cleveland | | | | | | |
| <5km | 48.4 | 43.4 | 71.6 | 67.9 | 57.8 | 54.9 |
| 5-9km | 32.7 | 30.2 | 19.9 | 20.7 | 27.5 | 25.8 |
| 10-19km | 13.7 | 17.1 | 7.0 | 8.8 | 11.0 | 13.4 |
| 20-29km | 1.0 | 2.3 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 1.7 |
| 30km+ | 4.2 | 7.0 | 0.8 | 1.5 | 2.8 | 4.5 |

Table 3.13 Travel-to-work distances (%) of employees and the self-employed resident in selected high-unemployment urban areas in northern England, 1981 and 1991 (Green et al., 1999:54)

3.4.2.2 Commuting around the northeast

Faced with industrial downturns in the late 20th century, the northeast faced challenges in retooling and retraining its workforce. Massey (1995, cited in Castree et al., 2004:92) argues that this was part of a strategic spatial division of labour around the UK, concentrating certain tasks in certain areas to exploit differential labour costs. Importantly for our purposes, these “new industrial spaces” are characterised by a “relatively self-contained labour market” (Castree et al., 2004:146). This concentration of work in the northeast, and its simultaneous spread around the region, is reflected in the increases in commuting, and big changes from large centralised mines, mills and factories to smaller, more numerous and more spatially distributed office spaces and other service sector workplaces. The increase in commuting in two northeast districts is given in Table 3.13; the 2001 commuting data for Newcastle are given in Figures 3.33 and 3.34. These developments have required fundamental changes in how the region is planned and structured, joining up previously distinct urban locations around Tyneside and Teeside into what have been termed “city regions”. The following passage is worth quoting in full:

What was significant though during the 1960s and 1970s [in Newcastle] was the knitting of the old industrial communities into a single city region as a result of deliberate planning – new road networks to connect the industrial areas, the metro to integrate the communities along the Tyne, and new town and expansion projects which built up the areas between former villages. [...] The most significant consequence of the restructuring process that commenced in the 1980s was the decline of many of the traditional engineering companies in the region [...].

[...]

The city region is based on the travel to work area for Newcastle and the Tyne and Wear conurbation. At the heart are the five local authority districts of the former Tyne and Wear County [...]. These five authorities are highly interdependent with intense commuting flows in multiple directions, supported by an integrated transport network, and with a multitude of city-wide public service functions. [...]

In addition [...], the city region spreads out into the neighbouring counties of Northumberland and Durham. [...] To the south, the districts of Derwentside, Chester-le-Street and Durham have very strong interactions with the conurbation, with some parts having development that is physically coterminous with the built-up area. Easington also has very strong links with Sunderland and could be included in the city region, although the southern part of the district also has very close links into the Tees Valley city region.

CURBS, 2005:7

This report goes on to list key features demonstrating integration between Tyneside and Teeside:

- growth over several decades in the commuting flow from nearby areas
- slower and more recent growth of out-commuting by the city's residents
- gradual lengthening of average commute trip length
- narrowing difference between men and women's commuting patterns
- widening of variation in trip length, related to widening pay differentials
- longer commute trips most common for better qualified workers, and
- flows are more likely to be *across* or *around* the city, not just in or out.

Above all, these changes are facilitated by the increasing use by almost all groups of workers of cars for commuting.

[...] These features of local commuting patterns are partly due to the long-term loss of jobs in previously dispersed industries such as coal mining and shipbuilding; one consequence of this decline is that the one-time 'competitor city' Sunderland was by 1991 clearly becoming part of Newcastle's commuter zone.

CURBS, 2005:17-8 (orig. emphases)

Here then we see the emergence of a Newcastle-Gateshead, Tyne Valley city region, along with a similar Tees Valley urban conglomeration to the south, as well as growing integration between the two. Busy as the southeast region might seem, it is worth noting that “the prevalence of long-distance commuting is greatest amongst employed residents in Merseyside and north-east England” (Green et al., 1999:57). We therefore have a region that, in the last few decades of the

20th century, has become increasingly interconnected as people move around and across it more frequently and intensely, while remaining peculiarly insular in both migratory and commuting patterns.

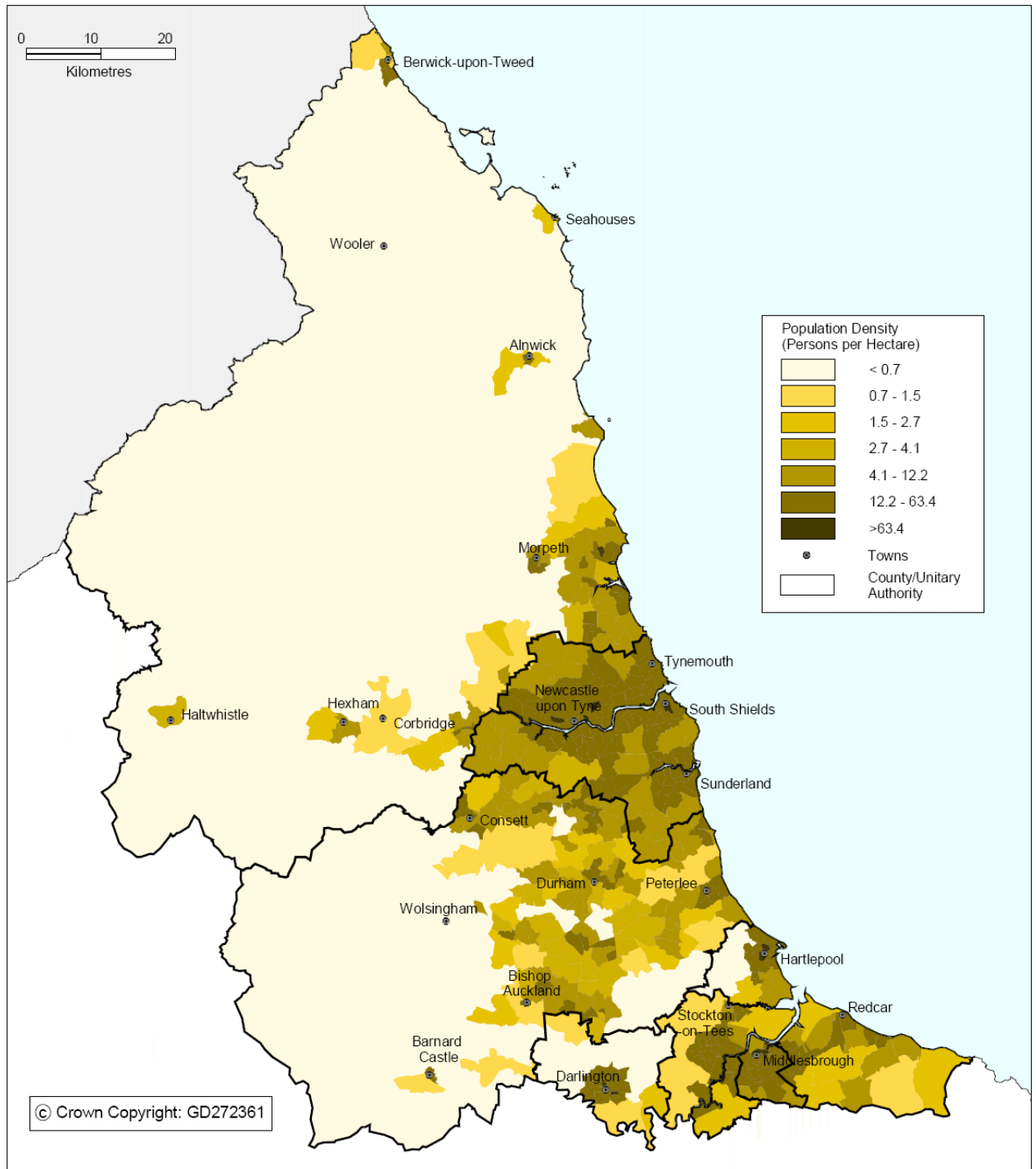


Figure 3.27 Northeast population density, 1991 (MAFF, 2002a:46)

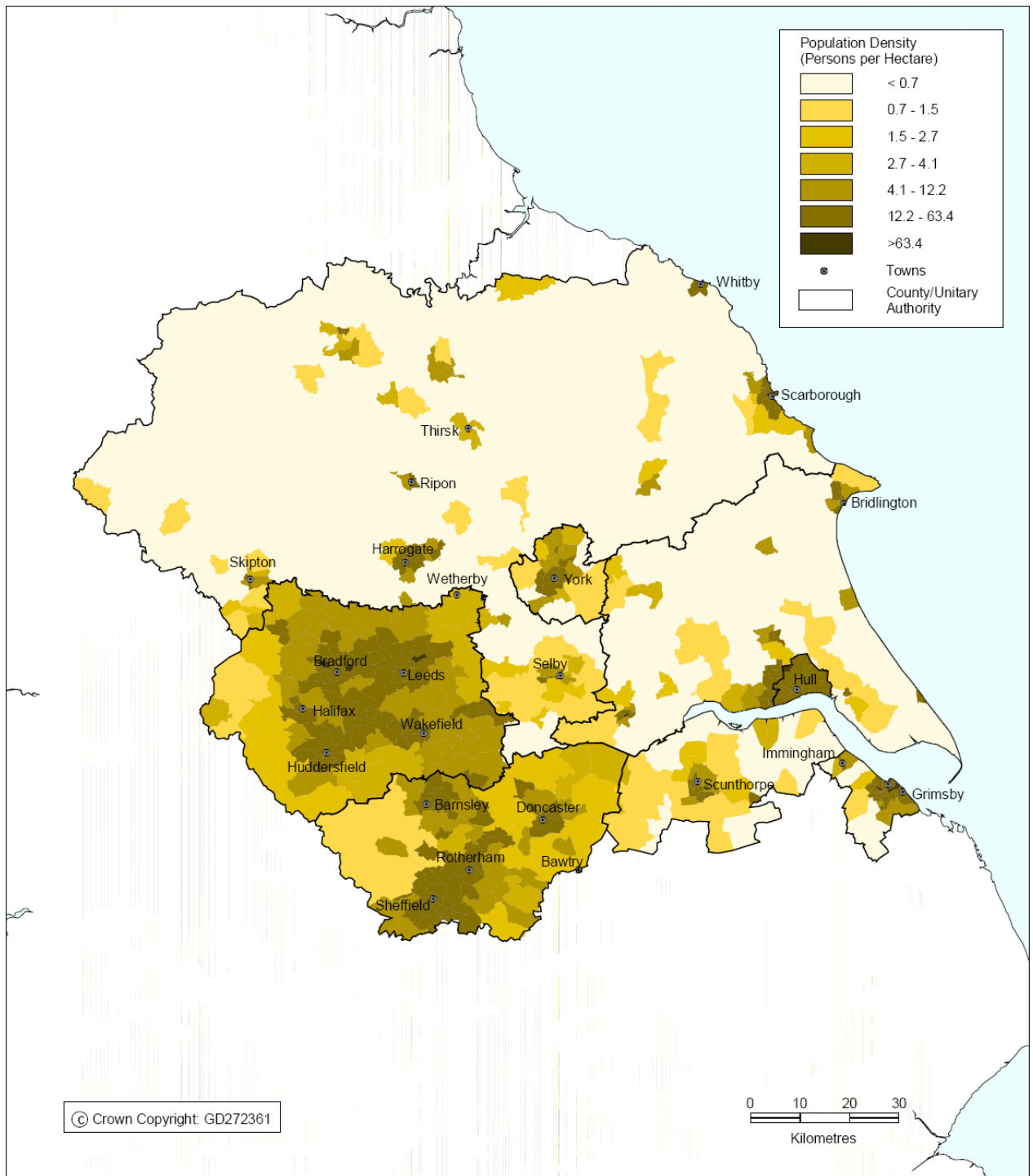


Figure 3.28 Yorkshire & The Humber population density, 1991 (MAFF, 2002b:42)

3.4.2.3 Population flow and dialect change in the northeast

The locations mentioned as part of the Tyneside city region are just those that Watt (1999, 2000, 2002) and Kerswill (2003a) point out as being involved in northeast levelling. The geographers and dialectologists also seem to specify broadly similar dates for the emergence of these:

roughly, the last few decades of the 20th century. We therefore seem to have a correlation, similar to that in the southeast, for the rise of regional levelling in the northeast.

The change that Llamas (2000, 2007) reports in Middlesbrough English, away from Yorkshire and towards the northeast, appears to correlate with changes in its population, and specifically with changes in the makeup of its in-migrants. As Figure 3.23 depicts, Middlesbrough once tended to attract large numbers of migrants from unusually far away on account of its booming industry: in 1861, 73.2% of its population were Yorkshire-born; in 1871 it was 50.1% (Fennell et al., 2004:6). Thus we may expect some dialectal legacy. However, with the decline of these industries came a drop and eventual reversal of this trend. Middlesbrough is located

some 38 miles (61 kms) south of Newcastle in the North East of England and around 50 miles (80 kms) north of York in Yorkshire, Middlesbrough lies in something of a transition area between the lower part of the North East and the upper part of Yorkshire in the North of England.

Llamas, 2000:123

In contrast to its proximity with, and connection to, urban locations further north, Middlesbrough is much further from the Yorkshire conurbations in and around Leeds, Bradford and Sheffield. It is, in fact, well beyond the 50 mile zone in which, as noted earlier, around three-quarters of internal UK migration occurs (Champion et al., 1998:46). With the decline of industry skewing migration into Middlesbrough, this 50 mile limit appears to be re-asserting itself in the present day, with only 9% of all Yorkshire out-migrants moving to the northeast (ONS, 2004b:21); and only 14% of Middlesbrough in-migrants coming from Yorkshire (calculated from ONS, 2005b:12-13). Meanwhile the proportion coming from within the immediate Tees Valley area has reached 45%, with migrants from around the north-east region as a whole making up 54% of the total (ibid. p.2). A partial dialectal convergence with Tyneside and simultaneous divergence from Yorkshire (Llamas, 2000:137) correlates with all these changes.

From the migration data we can interpret the growing insularity of the northeast, and a much higher integration of Middlesbrough with its northeast neighbours. This helps further explain northeast regional levelling, and simultaneous divergence from Yorkshire. Indeed Llamas is drawn to mention that the adoption of typically Tyneside features in Middlesbrough “is combined with the fact that there appears to be an increase in short-term contact between the localities as a result of improved roads and public transport systems” (Llamas, 2007:595). We can then begin to build a useful account of the declining importance of Yorkshire dialect features based on migration patterns, in addition to the changing political, administrative, local media and other orientations cited by Llamas (2000, 2007).

Llamas is keen to stress the unique way that Middlesbrough speakers adopt and adapt supposedly Tyneside dialect features. This compares well with the account of partial involvement in a regional flow developed earlier for the Fens in the southeast. Middlesbrough is sufficiently distant from Newcastle to keep migration between the two to much less than two-fifths of all moves. A degree of interactional segregation – and consequent partial maintenance of dialectal discreteness – can equally be expected.

3.5 Who engages in regional dialect levelling most, and why?

Having compared linguistic and geographical data in two regions, §3.5 takes a look at some correlations between social categories and dialect use in both regions, i.e. who engages in regional levelling the most, and why. The ‘who’ part will be more detailed than the ‘why’. It is beyond this investigation to go into a detailed argument about individual motivations for linguistic behaviour. The linguistic tendencies outlined so far are compared with some data about the types of groups found to be pioneering regional dialect levelling, and how this relates to the overarching argument about mobility and contact.

First, a distinction is needed between *spatial mobility* and *linguistic mobility*. Spatial mobility here is taken to mean the distance a person travels, both in everyday life and in terms of migration (see e.g. Forrest, 1987; Buck, 2007; Gough, 2008). Linguistic mobility here is an adaptation of the term as used in Kraenzle (2006), to mean the *range* and/or *number* of interlocutors a person has, irrespective of distance travelled, building somewhat on the notion of “virtual travel” developed by Urry (2002). From this can be derived a person’s *contact* with dialects other than their own.¹³ This is intended to hold apart two elements of social network theory (L. Milroy, 1980, 1987; L. Milroy & J. Milroy, 1992; Marshall, 2003); emphasising that people may move around more without necessarily speaking to more (or any) people; and that speaking to lots of people may or may not mean going anywhere.

Another area of theory to consider here is that of linguistic change “from above” and “from below”, i.e. innovations being adopted ostensibly due to their low- or high-prestige. The former involves

alterations in the social distribution of well-known linguistic variants [...]: they may take the form of the importation of a new prestige feature from outside the speech community, or the re-distribution of forms with known prestige values within the community.

Labov, 1994:272-3

This presumes a conscious recognition of such prestige, and a positive reaction towards it. Change from below, meanwhile,

originates in a central social group, located in the interior of the socioeconomic hierarchy [...] central in terms of local activity, local interaction, and local prestige.

Labov, 1994:272-3 (orig. emphasis)

¹³ This is different from ‘language mobility’: adoption of a language other than the mother tongue (see Termote & Gauvreau, 1988).

Class here is taken as a rough indicator of spatial mobility (“local activity”) and linguistic mobility (“local interactions”), with the uptake of non-prestigious variants explained on the basis of heightened contact. Correspondingly, variationist sociolinguistic studies tend to define class using characteristics such as “car ownership, proportion of adults in employment, educational attainment” (Watt, 2000:77). “[S]ociolinguistic surveys have used different methods for determining social class (Macaulay 1977: 57). However [...] occupation seems always to play an important role in deciding people’s social class” (Kamata, 2006:14). In a critique of Labov, L. Milroy (2003) suggests the changes from above and below are both “ideologically motivated”, and claims that many types of language change fit neither of these patterns, and are instead “ideologically free”. These points inform the (brief) discussion that follows.

3.5.1 Who? Age, class and gender

3.5.1.1 Why is regional dialect levelling pioneered by the middle class?

Aside from its regionally distinguishable phonetic deployment, Milroy et al. (1994) note a differing social profile for glottal replacement. While in the southeast it is “stereotyped as a feature of Cockney or some other low-status dialect” (p.332), as it spreads around the country this ideological baggage does not travel with it. They cite a range of studies around the UK where glottal replacement is making inroads (pp.334-7), claiming that this neutrality, this break with its “low-status” background, is why it is usually pioneered by the middle classes in these locations. It is not necessarily *positively* evaluated in these places, but just neutrally; and all things being equal, the spatially and linguistically mobile middle classes are best placed to receive it. Other data from the studies cited above reflect greater involvement of the middle classes in regional dialect levelling.

The middle classes also tend to migrate and commute the most. In the 2001 Census data, Champion (2005:95) reports the highest rates of migration amongst full time students, higher professionals, health professionals, those employed in culture, media and sport, in customer service occupations, security and protective staff. By contrast:

At the other extreme migration rates were lowest for people in agricultural occupations, for people in skilled metal and electrical trades and for transport and mobile machine drivers and operators.

Champion, 2005:96

This relationship of CLASS = SPATIAL MOBILITY surfaces more or less explicitly in the sociolinguistic literature; for example Britain, in a discussion of dialect maintenance, mentions that research on social networks

has taught us that it is the central classes of society who, with weaker networks, tend to be more mobile (in the hunt for job stability and socioeconomic advancement) whilst at the extremes are those who can't move or don't need to.

Britain, 2004:40

The adoption of supra-local forms in regional levelling suggests avoidance of, as much as allegiance to, a particular way of speaking. This comes across in Britain & Trudgill's (2005:186) observations of middle class speakers in Norwich approximating RP the most closely. This seems less driven by the standard nature of these variants, and more by their geographical non-specificity – reflected also in Kerswill's discussion of Durham:

[W]hile the City [of Durham] has a substantial RP- or near-RP-speaking middle class (many of whom are not native) consisting of business people, civil servants, professional people and academics, in the villages these groups are still largely absent [...].

For the informants in this study (who are all village residents), RP is, then, likely to be less relevant as a model for 'talking properly' than it is for the inhabitants of the City. Instead, the target for the strong 'vernacular' speakers [...] seems to be a phonologically localised variety in which (1) the vernacular variants of the lexical variables are almost entirely absent, (2) near-standard syntax is used, (3) certain

phonological features (such as t-glottalling) are variably suppressed, and (4) certain connected speech processes are avoided.

Kerswill, 1987:28

Linguistic mobility, meanwhile, comes across in Kerswill's mention of who is least likely to maintain locally specific dialect features:

'Durham Standard' [...] seems to me to be fairly uniform, and is typically heard among people in occupations which involve verbal communication, for example shop assistants, secretaries and salesmen. [...]

Kerswill, 1987:28

This is where linguistic mobility is of particular use, in highlighting the kinds of professions that might have increased exposure to a greater range and number of interlocutors, and therefore exposure to other dialects (a point returned to in §3.5.1.3). This potentially adds a more structural, "ideologically free" (L. Milroy, 2003) explanation to higher middle classes engagement in regional levelling, given their higher spatial and linguistic mobility.

3.5.1.2 Why is regional dialect levelling pioneered by the young?

Deconstructionist critiques of sociolinguistics have already questioned its treatment of age, querying whether the number of years one has lived is a reliable indicator of social and cognitive development – in other words, whether everyone is as old as they feel (e.g. Coupland, 1997; Aronson, 1997; Coupland, 2004). In terms of spatial mobility, Census data show the retired as the least migratory (Figure 3.29; Champion, 2005:95), the least likely to have access to a car (Figure 3.30), or have a job to commute to (Figures 3.31 and 3.32). These indicators of lowered spatial mobility may in turn mean lower linguistic mobility, in providing a lower range and number of interlocutors. Milroy et al., after testing for statistical significance across various groups, note of the Tyneside glottal distribution "the following effects, in decreasing order of importance: Age, Class, Gender, Age x Class" (1994:349). They add: "in the older age group

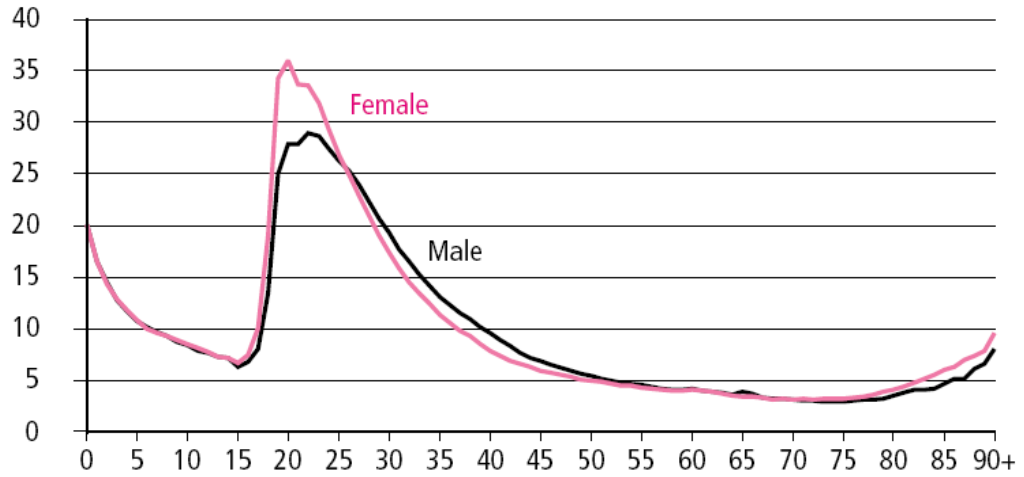


Figure 3.29 % known to have changed address in UK by age and sex, 2000-1, excluding immigrants and those with no known address a year before (Champion, 2005:94)

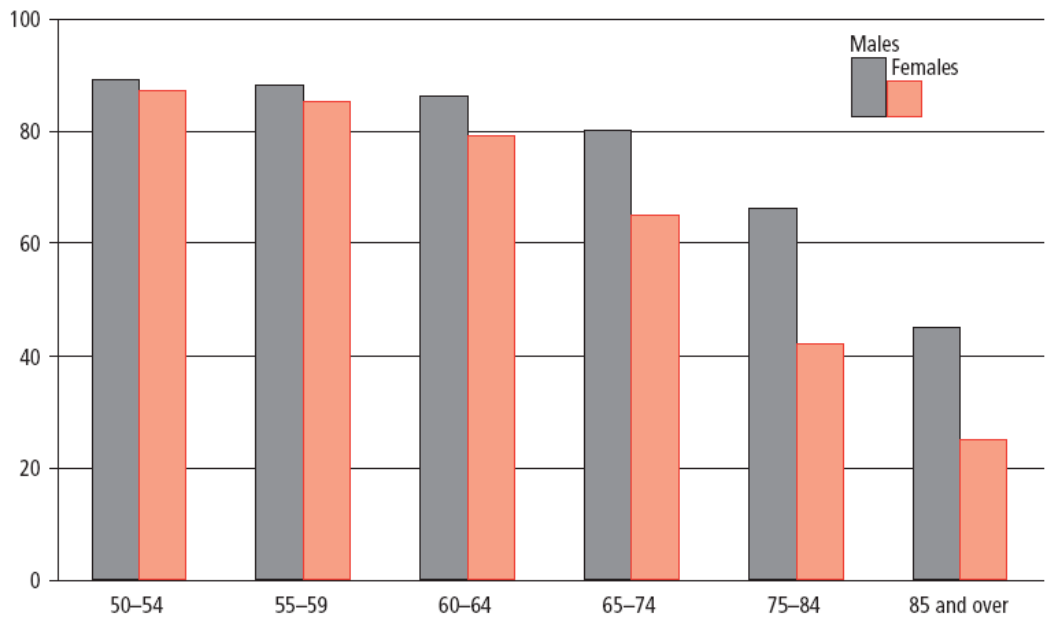


Figure 3.30 % of over 50s with a car in the household: by sex and age, 2001. England & Wales (ONS, 2004b:12)

there is little difference between working-class and middle-class speakers” (ibid.). That is to say, regional levelling has little class difference beyond working age. Retired middle class individuals are not subject to the same types of spatial and linguistic mobility as younger middle class individuals, possibly removing some of the influences towards levelling.

The remaining question is why adolescents of school age appear at the vanguard of some changes outlined so far – for example glottally reinforced /p/ in Middlesbrough (Llamas, 2007:589); and GOOSE fronting in Milton Keynes (Kerswill, 2005:1033). This is partly explicable by ‘internal’ factors, in that dialect change, while possible throughout the life course (Sankoff & Blondeau, 2007), is generally incomplete and imperfect post-adolescence (Chambers, 1992). Still, children in certain locations seem to have higher use of supra-local dialect forms than in other locations – for example the contrast between children in Milton Keynes (Kerswill & Williams, 2000) and the Fens (Britain, 2005). In both cases, the children themselves have low spatial mobility; but the former group have comparatively high linguistic mobility, on account of the disparate origins of their parents, most of whom migrated to Milton Keynes, bringing with them a variety of non-local dialect forms, from which the children appear to be deriving compromised, levelling features. Beyond these possible explanations, the question of adolescents pioneering sound change despite low spatial mobility is returned to in Chapter 4.

3.5.1.3 Why is regional dialect levelling pioneered by females?

In linguistic change from above, women adopt more prestige forms at a higher rate than men.

Labov, 1994:274

As noted earlier, some accounts have shown that, when non-standard features ‘leave’ their place of origin, they may lose their non-standard associations (e.g. glottal /t/ leaving southeast England/lowland Scotland – Milroy et al., 1994:334-7). Early work on social networks highlighted a potential cause of female adoption of non-local features:

Work by Milroy (1980) has shown that this phenomenon appears to be attributable not directly to sex but to the relative *absence* of dense female [social] networks.

Brown & Levinson, 1987:31

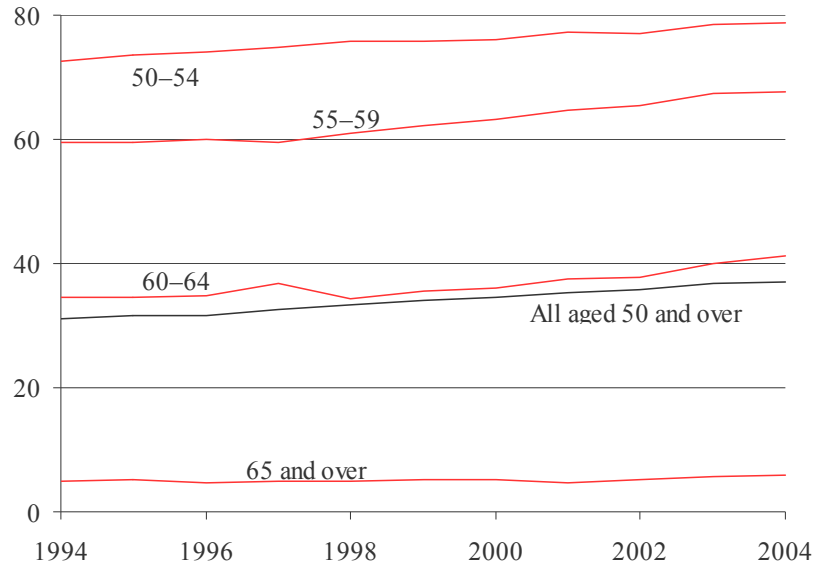


Figure 3.31 % employment of older people (ONS, 2006:55)

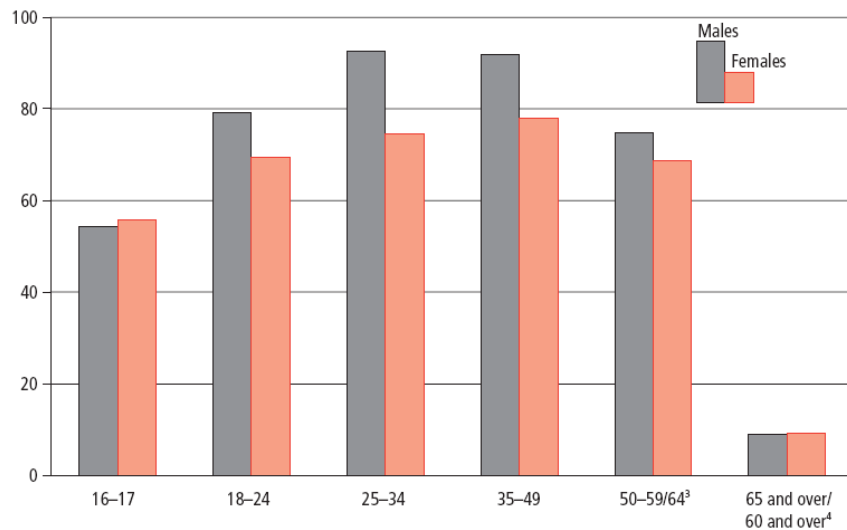


Figure 3.32 Economic activity rates:¹ by sex and age, 2003²
¹ Number in employment or unemployed as a percentage of the population.
² At spring. Seasonally adjusted to take account of the Census 2001 results.
³ Males aged 50-64, females aged 50-59.
⁴ Males aged 65 and over, females aged 60 and over.

In Tyneside, Watt & Milroy (1999) demonstrate the decline of Tyneside pronunciations of FACE, GOAT and NURSE, and the ascendancy of pan-northern, as well as some typically southern forms. Kerswill (Table 3.10) maps the levelling of FACE in the northeast. Women lead both changes, with young middle class men actually showing conspicuous retention of the highly localised [ə:]

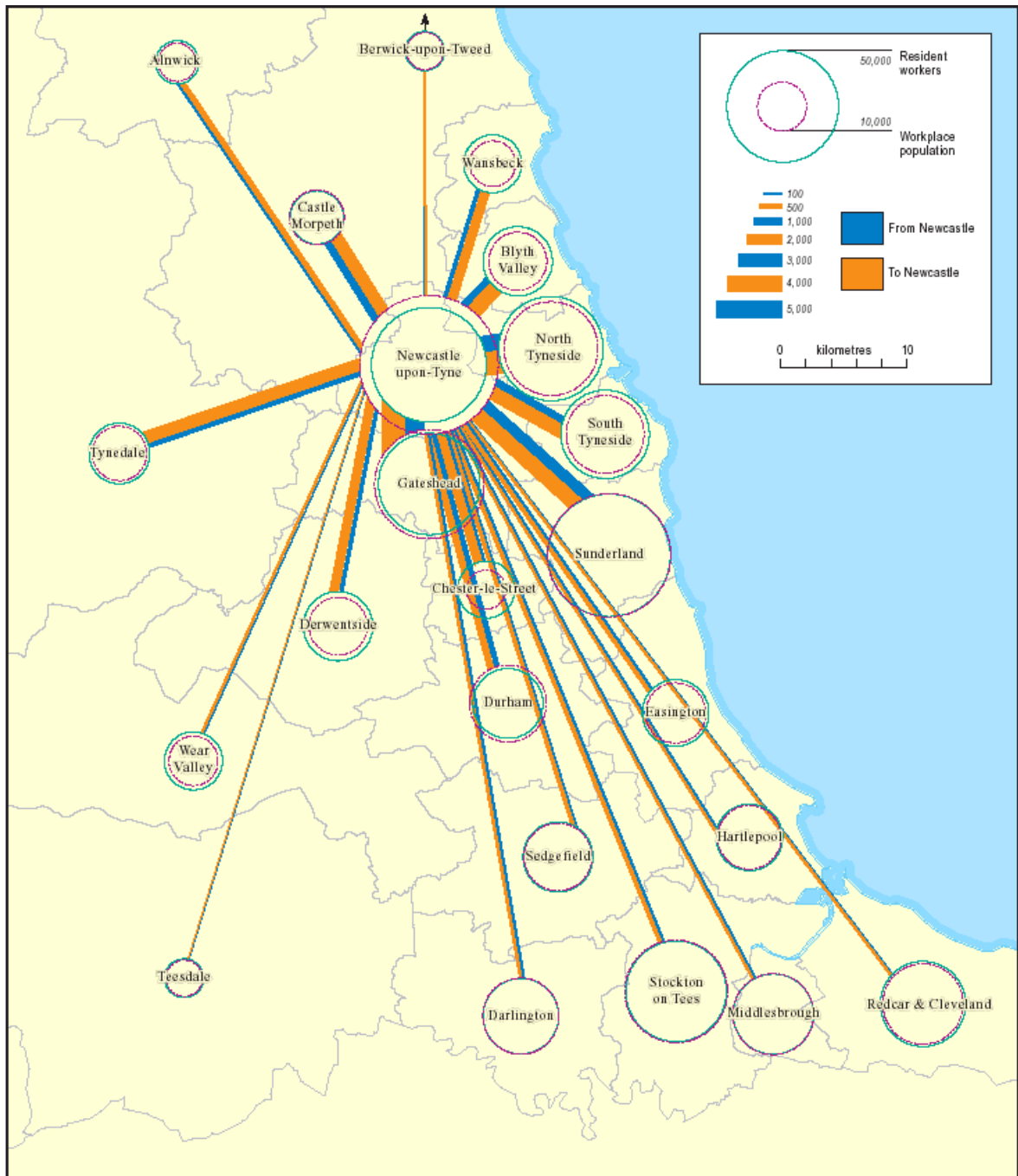


Figure 3.33 Newcastle work flows (male), 2001 (CURBS, 2005:10)

GOAT vowel (Watt, 2000:95). Likewise the pan-national “glottal variants are [...] particularly associated with young middle-class speakers, especially females” (Milroy et al., 1994:348).

There are some exceptions, as in Middlesbrough where young adult males lead in glottal replacement – followed by adolescent girls, young adult women then adolescent males (Llamas,

2007:592). Nevertheless, in general northeast levelling seems dominated by women. This is not clearly explicable on the basis of spatial mobility. Women migrate more in early adulthood but only marginally, peaking at around a 7% disparity (Figure 3.29). Likewise Simpson & Middleton note that “the excess of young female migrants in the census statistics is eliminated when an allowance for non-response is made” (1999:399-401). Although nationally men represent 80% of “long-distance commuters” (over 50km) (Green et al., 1999:58), in Newcastle both genders commute about the same (Figures 3.33-3.34) – probably a reflection of a gender-equalising of employment opportunities in the mid-late 20th century, with female employment in the northeast jumping from 38% of the workforce to 48% between 1971 and 1997 (Castree et al. 2004:143-4).

There may be similar spatial mobility between men and women in the northeast; but their linguistic mobility is less balanced. Recall the observation made by Kerswill that regionally levelling speech in Durham is “typically heard among people in occupations which involve verbal communication, for example shop assistants, secretaries and salesmen” (1987:28). These data invoke the concept of the *marché linguistique* or “marketplace dialect” (Chambers, 2002b:195, after Sankoff & Sankoff, 1973; Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1975), which

begins with the common-sense observation that some people have a greater stake in [...] using standard or prestigious variants. These people are not always identified readily by their social class or other major social attributes. [...] For instance, laborers in a maintenance crew in a factory have less incentive to for standardizing their speech than do laborers [...] servicing private homes [...] [who] must deal daily with the people who hire them.

Chambers, 2002b:195

These occupations, in which regional levelling appears most intense, are dominated in the UK by women. In 2004: “Occupations where employees were most likely to be female were personal service (83 per cent), administrative (79 per cent) and sales and customer service (70 per cent)” (ONS, 2006:60). Similarly in 2005:

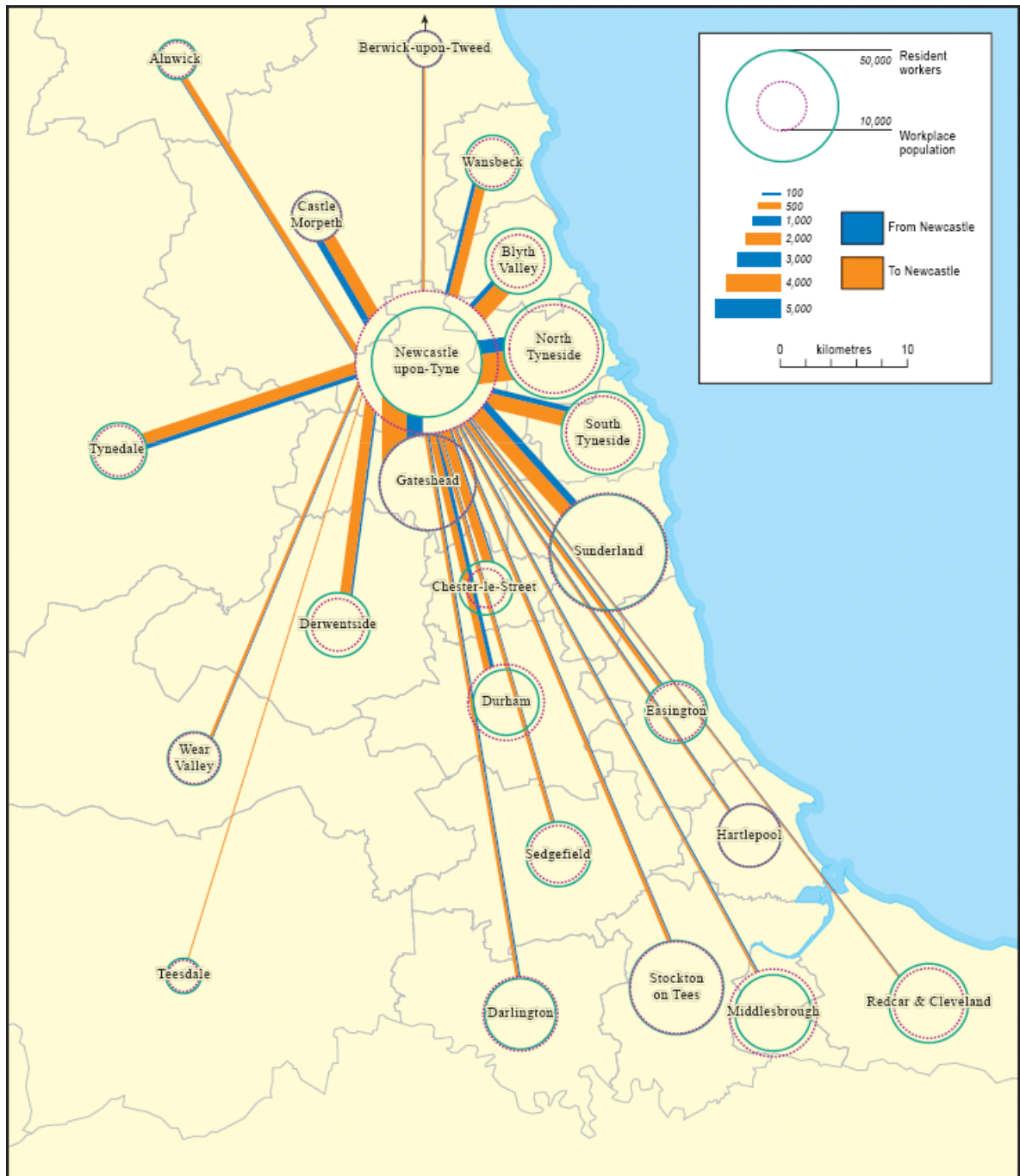


Figure 3.34 Newcastle work flows (female), 2001 (CURBS, 2005:11)

just over a fifth of women in employment were employed in administrative and secretarial work, while men were most likely to be employed in skilled trade occupations or as managers and senior officials. These occupations were among the ones least likely to be followed by women. Conversely women were more likely than men to be in employment in the personal services (for example hairdressers and child care assistants) and in sales and customer services.

ONS, 2006:57

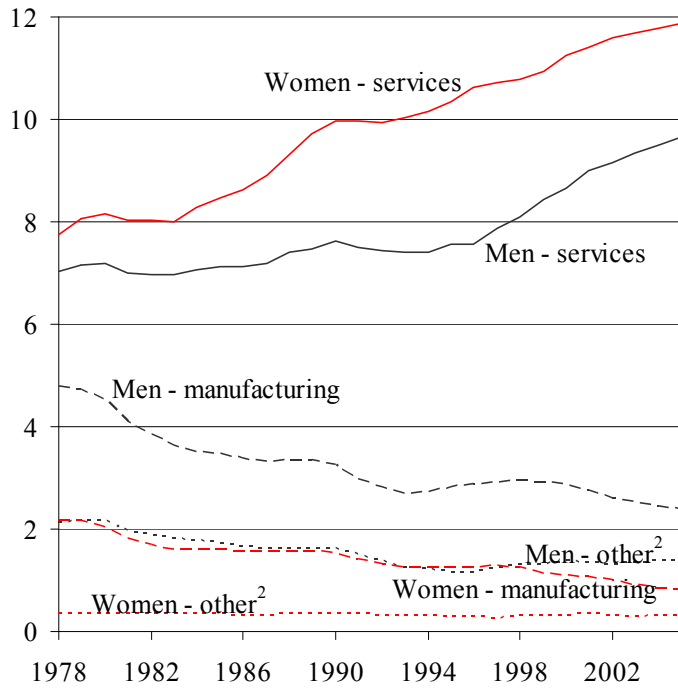


Figure 3.35 UK employment by sex and occupation in 2005,¹ millions (ONS, 2006:57)
¹ At June's end ² Incl. agriculture, construction, energy and water

| | % | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| | Men | Women |
| Managers and senior officials | 18 | 11 |
| Professional | 14 | 12 |
| Associate professional and technical | 13 | 15 |
| Administrative and secretarial | 4 | 22 |
| Skilled trades | 20 | 2 |
| Personal service | 2 | 14 |
| Sales and customer service | 5 | 12 |
| Process, plant and machine operatives | 12 | 2 |
| Elementary | 12 | 11 |
| All occupations | 100 | 100 |

Table 3.14 UK employment by sex and occupation in 2005 (ONS, 2006:57)

The dominance of women in administrative, personal, and customer facing jobs is represented more fully in Figure 3.35 and Table 3.14. With all this in mind, it seems that women's greater recourse to supra-local forms may potentially be down to a higher awareness of audience design, hypothetically involving more practice of 'speaking clearly' and a heightened readiness to release localisms when speaking for an imagined audience; that is, during the kinds of elicitation tests that sociolinguists use to test for 'formal' speech. This echoes the remarks of, for example, Holmes, that:

Women are often the family brokers in interaction with outsiders: it is more often women than men who interact with others in shops and neighbourhood interactions, as well as in communications with schools, and between institutional bureaucracies and the family (see Chambers 1992, Moonwomon 1989, Tannen 1990). Women's social activities and jobs often involve them in interaction with a wider range of social contacts than men's (e.g. Escure 1991, Milroy 1980, Nichols 1983). In such contexts, in order to be effective in their interactions, they are responsive to a variety of pressures, and they consequently tend to accommodate to the speech of others.

Holmes, 1997:199

By contrast, as Watt mentions of the unexpected finding that working class men use *more* localised forms in a formal situation:

The relative increase in the use of the Type II variant [ɪə] by WC men in WL style [...] is not entirely expected, however. It may be that these speakers are simply less sensitive to the pressures that cause female and/or MC speakers to adjust their pronunciations in a direction away from the localized forms.

Watt, 2000:82

Following Kerswill's remarks cited earlier about employment types and dialect use (1987:28), it is at least worth pursuing the possibility that the jobs dominated by women involve more conversation, with a greater range and number of people. The gender differences reported may therefore occur against the backdrop of quite different patterns of interaction.

3.5.2 Structure, agency, identity, interaction

Trudgill (e.g. 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008) has recently argued against the role of agency in positively ascribing to emergent dialects. He qualifies this (2007) by noting that identity and agency may affect dialect at the micro level; specifically causing *hyperdialectalisms*, accentuations of localised speech against the grain of an ongoing trend. He cites Labov's (1963) study on dialect retention and accentuation amongst fishermen on Martha's Vineyard; but he stresses that these are always minority cases, reactions against a prevailing tendency.

An example from the studies cited above may be the retention of the highly localised [ə:] GOAT vowel amongst Tyneside middle class men (Watt, 2000:95); but again this appears to be – indeed Watt describes it as – a (semi-)conscious rejection of an ongoing trend, not the reversal of it. Of note here, Tyneside is “the urban area with the highest proportion of older people [over state pension age]” in the UK (ONS, 2005a), providing if nothing else ample source material for anyone wishing to accentuate traditional dialect features.

Auer (2005), summarising Barden & Großkopf (1998), notes that Saxonian migrants who maintained their Saxonian dialect, even diverging from local dialect features, were the minority who were unhappy with life in their new setting. It is important to note that these are a minority, and may recognise on some level that a change is going on which they can and will resist.

Meanwhile, for those engaged in regional levelling, if people were positively aspiring toward supra-local features then they might demonstrate hypercorrection; overuse and misapplication of these features in an overt attempt to use them more. Instead though, these innovations appear to be adopted and creatively appropriated (e.g. Britain, 2002a, 2005). Furthermore, many regionally levelling features have very little salience; they are not recognised as being especially non-standard. An example is labiodental /r/. That this is actually introducing a non-standard feature where once the standard prevailed, and that this is socially non-salient, shows an inapplicability of prestige/stigma on the one hand, and of standardness on the other. This returns the analysis to to L. Milroy's characterisation of "ideologically free" language change. The regionally levelling variety, as a process of surrendering local peculiarities, does not seem to represent a motivated attempt to adopt or maintain a particular dialect; but simply by the abandonment of locally specific forms, falling back on ambient, geographically non-specific alternatives. A reaction away from locally specific features is reflected by Trudgill, who notes of his Norwich data:

[T]here was also a much greater awareness than there had been in 1968 of the way in which outsiders regard local speech forms. This is most probably to be ascribed to increased geographical mobility [...] in the past 15 years. There was, for example, a definite recognition that people from outside the East Anglian region tended to regard all East Anglians, rural and urban, as "sounding like farmers". We are thus presented with the interesting paradox of an improved self-image as far as Norwich dialect is concerned combined with an increase in defensiveness with respect to the attitudes of outsiders, particularly Londoners. It is possible that these attitudinal factors have been involved in the development of at least one linguistic change, that involving (θ) and (ð).

Trudgill, 1988:39

If the only ‘goal’ in regional dialect levelling is to escape associations with any particular place, then the southeast regionally levelling variety is not about people imitating speakers from, say, London. Rather, speakers are simply in more contact with more people from around the southeast, making pre-existing local dialects less relevant and less useful, ushering in a shift toward neither the national standard nor the local vernacular, nor anything else, but simply away from the local. If this takes a class dimension, it may well be away from the working class (associated with localised dialects), but much less clearly associated with any particularly identifiable middle class. This resonates well with Skeggs’ (2001) ethnographic account of working class women, claiming of her informants that they are more likely to “escape” their roots; yet are clearer about what is being escaped *from* than the destination of that escape:

they made strenuous efforts to deny, disidentify and dissimulate [...]. They attempted to display their distinction from being classified as working class through [...] investments in their bodies, clothes, consumption practices, leisure pursuits and homes. [...] But it was only an imaginary middle class that they wanted to be. They did not want to take on the whole package of dispositions. Their responses to classification were born of fear, desire, resentment and humiliation.

Skeggs, 2001:124

To conclude, structure is not being favoured over agency. The only claim is that agency may not be a necessary part of the equation; and should complement considerations of mobility and contact; who is talking to whom, and how this correlates with use or abandonment of dialectal peculiarities. It is the undoing of the conditions that favour local dialect features that is reducing linguistic diversity. This is the key to the question of agency, to turn it around on itself: asking not why people leave their dialects behind, but what conditions are necessary for people to *maintain* local dialect features, and that increasingly these conditions no longer obtain.

3.6 Who does not engage in regional dialect levelling, and why?

In order to do socio-linguistics that may have some explanatory potential, what we need to do is to look for propositions about the forms of human language and to look for propositions about the nature and structure of our societies; deduce what we expect to find; and carefully, consciously, deliberately and, if necessary, painfully look for counter examples that will help us to revise these principles [...]. There is, unfortunately, no point in saying that Cambodians have two legs, Singaporeans have two legs, the British have two legs, and Americans have two legs. It is insufficient to say that homo sapiens has two legs. One should be busy looking for people that might have three.

Singh, 1996:29

The final question is: who does not engage in regional dialect levelling at all, and does that reflect a total disconnection from the regional flow? That is, not just renegade individuals who cling on to this or that local pronunciation in the face of encroaching levelling norms (as in the young middle class men in Middlesbrough: Llamas, 2007:592), or instances of partial engagement with regional levelling (as in the Fens: Britain, 2005), but whole communities whose dialect use does not fit the levelling trend at all, and in fact goes in new directions? Does this undermine the regional levelling narrative, or add new insights? A basic scientific imperative should drive us to investigate such apparent anomalies:

we must take data that don't work into serious account, and we must not try to force them into the model at all costs [...]. Often, the data that don't work are the ones that give us the insight to understand how things stand, to reformulate the model either in part or entirely. On the other hand, one should not be too hasty in rejecting one model to adopt another more attractive one [...]. Far from being a paradox, up to a certain extent, therefore, we can say that there is no such thing as data that don't work.

Boretto, 2004:310

In southeast England, the greatest rejection of regional levelling turns out to be not at the edges, but right at the very core. A recent research project in the inner London borough of Hackney (Kerswill et al., 2005; Torgersen, Kerswill & Fox, 2006; Kerswill, Torgersen & Fox, 2006a,b) found a hotbed of linguistic innovation, unrelated to the southeast levelling trends, and occurring

among its ethnic minority contingent. And like those who do engage in regional dialect levelling, there appears to be a geographical explanation for those who do not.

3.6.1 Who? Ethnicity, inner cities and language contact

The discussion so far has intentionally avoided one social category often used to map language variation: ethnicity. This is because ethnic minorities represent some of the most linguistically dynamic and creative sections of the British English-speaking population. Of London in particular it seems that “many young Londoners are engaged in a process of innovation and divergence, not levelling” (Kerswill, Torgersen & Fox, 2006a:1). For example, in contrast to the diphthongal southeast levelling of FACE, PRICE and GOAT, inner London teenagers appear to be reducing these vowels to monophthongs. This monophthongisation correlates with

four interacting scales:

1. non-Anglo > Anglo
2. non-Anglo [social] network > Anglo [social] network
3. Male > female
4. Inner London > outer London > London periphery (Milton Keynes, Reading, Ashford)

These innovatory monophthongs are **centred on the inner city**. They are rare outside.

Kerswill, Torgersen & Fox, 2006a:22 (original emboldening)

In contrast to the Siler City example cited in §3.2.1 where Hispanic immigrant maintain typically Spanish dialect norms due to “limited interaction with the members of the adjacent, resident European American and African American communities” (Wolfram et al., 2004:355), in Hackney there is intense contact between ethnicities, fuelling linguistic innovations. These innovations originate in “non-Anglo” (Kerswill, Torgersen & Fox, 2006a:22) communities and social networks but take hold through inter-ethnic contact between native and non-native dialects. Critically though, these innovations do not show evidence of spreading outside the inner city, and have been labelled “innovation without diffusion” (Kerswill et al., 2006a:25). This

leads Kerswill (2007:50) to note: “There is now more diversity in the English spoken by young people in large cities than in their grandparents’ generation” (orig. emphasis and underlining).¹⁴ Yet this new diversity appears contained within the urban centre, unable to leave.

3.6.2 Why? Mega-cities, discontinuities and social exclusion

How can we explain linguistic innovations, going against the southeast regional trend, occurring in inner London at the heart of the southeast region? Kerswill et al. suggest that the inter-ethnic linguistic innovations “may have difficulty diffusing [outside Hackney] because of supposed lack of contact” (2005:8). This appears to be borne out by geographical data. For example, of all London employees, inner London ethnic minorities are among the least likely to commute, and most likely to seek work locally (Owen & Green, 2000). Alongside this general information, Hackney is highlighted among the “significant areas of poverty” in the inner city, part of the EU Objective 2 programme for locations suffering particularly high rates of “unemployment, children in low earning households, households with no car, overcrowded households and 17 year olds no longer in full time education” (MAFF, 2000d:26; Figure 3.36). It is the fourth most deprived local authority in England (12 out of the 20 most deprived are elsewhere in inner London) (Power & Wilson, 2000:4). These dense, close-knit, multi-ethnic communities with low mobility are fostering linguistic innovations, which cannot leave. This new diversity, trapped within London, represents one of a few reported cases

in which urban dialects demonstrate *insular conservatism*, where they resist an exogenous innovation longer than the dialects of the surrounding rural areas do. Such resistance has a *divergent* effect.

Taeldeman, 2005:268 (orig. emphasis)

¹⁴ This use of the term diversity is compatible with the definition developed in Chapter 1, though Kerswill does not define the term specifically in this way.

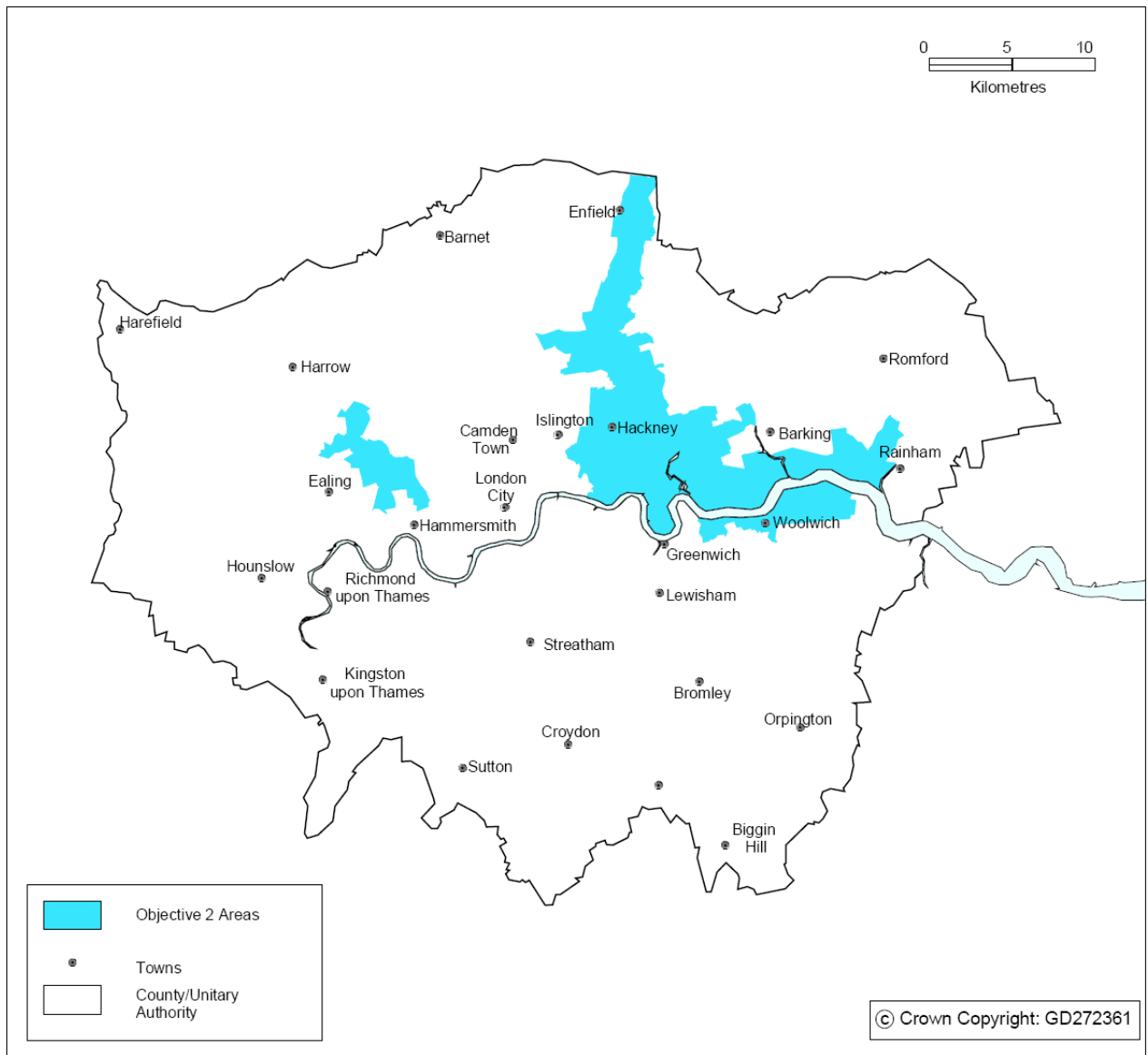


Figure 3.36 EU Objective 2 areas, inner London, 2000 (MAFF, 2000f:27)

To explain this disconnection of inner London communities, we must turn to Castells' account of mega-cities:

what is most significant about mega-cities is that they are connected externally to global networks and to segments of their own countries, while internally disconnecting local populations that are either functionally unnecessary or socially disruptive. [...] Mega-cities' functional and social hierarchies are spatially blurred and mixed, organized in entrenched encampments, and unevenly patched by unexpected pockets of undesirable uses. Mega-cities are discontinuous constellations of spatial fragments, functional pieces, and social segments.

Castells, 2000:436

Castells cites London as a prime example of a mega-city, at once “globally connected and locally disconnected” (2000:436); and it is this picture of “discontinuous constellations” that draws everything together. London is characterised by, on the one hand, intense population mobility, with an overwhelming daily tide of workers washing in and out; but on the other hand, underneath this dizzying blur of human traffic, are insular, disconnected communities whose lives are not plugged into this flow. They remain close-knit, local, geographically and socially non-mobile, and multiethnic and multilingual; in short, fertile ground for linguistic innovations. ‘London’ is, in these terms, more strongly connected to Reading, Ashford, Milton Keynes and Norwich – even to the rural Fenland – than it is to its own centre. Linguistic diversity appears to fare best at the centre of this buzzing regional flow, while all around it is slowly declining.

To complicate things a little, inner London is not alone in this phenomenon of a disconnected multiethnic urban area producing dialectal innovations. As Guzzo (2006) demonstrates, Bedford, a town 60 miles north of London, is also producing linguistic innovations against the grain of southeast levelling, through contact between Italian and Afghan immigrant speech communities. Her account of low mobility, foreign English dialects, and non-native English dialects, bears many of the hallmarks of the Hackney case study. The uniting theme, then, appears to be regional disconnection and contact between ethnolinguistic groups. This goes hand in hand with low geographical mobility in disconnected inner cities (see also Green & Owen, 1998, 2006; Green & White, 2007). Indeed: “The 100 most deprived local authority areas in the country are all urban and the 20 most deprived are all in major industrial conurbations and inner London” (Power & Wilson, 2000:1). (Labov, 2008, gives a comparable account of the persistence of AAVE in conditions of inner city deprivation.)

Importantly, these inner city sites of linguistic innovation do represent an addition to overall linguistic diversity, but since they do not diffuse further afield, and occur within a minority of the population, they are in a sense the exceptions that prove the rule. Diversity overall is decreasing, propped up only in relatively small and disconnected areas. This nuances the role of innovation and augments the picture of declining diversity, offering completeness to the regional levelling narrative, made possible only by considering a range of cases from across the region, at different times, and in different walks of life.

3.7 Conclusion

The ‘regions’ of England described in this section are not in any sense hermetically sealed; yet there appear to be certain centres of gravity, zones of urban growth and employment around which sections of the population are concentrated. People in the northeast do not tend to circulate all around the country. They move a lot, and this is increasing, but chiefly within the northeast. People in the southeast are also highly mobile, commuting and migrating further and faster than ever before; but this is also mostly between places within the southeast. It is in this sense that these regions are interactionally discrete; and it is these conglomerations that regional dialect levelling appears to follow.

To draw back to the historical comparison with Chapter 2, the rise of regional population flows, belying urban and rural divides, has gradually eclipsed literacy as the main cause of dialect change in England. Increasing contact of people from erstwhile isolated and distinct locations in an accelerating flow of migrants and commuters is weakening dialectal differences. However, this is not to say that mobility was inconsequential between Ellis and the SED. It is interesting here to recall the notion of the *marché linguistique* or “marketplace dialect” (Chambers,

2002b:195, after Sankoff & Sankoff, 1973; Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1975), and compare this to Ellis' claim a century earlier, cited at the outset of the last chapter, that:

Market women, who attend large towns, have generally a mixed style of speech. The daughters of peasants and small farmers, on becoming domestic servants, learn a new language, and corrupt the genuine Doric of their parents.

Ellis, 1871:vi (cited in Crowley, 1996:168)

But this is precisely the point: at this time, the sorts of mixing that Ellis refers to were still relatively restricted: either spatially, as in the cases of mining towns experiencing localised influxes of people; or socially, as in the historical cases of wealthy literate minorities. Regional levelling requires mobility and contact on a larger scale; and those conditions seem historically newer. This distinction is useful not only for understanding the very different societal conditions underlying these changes; but also for keeping in mind what this means for linguistic diversity overall, rather than just individual dialects.

Chapter 4

Mass media, global linguistic innovations, and the linguistic virtual collective

We have all been told by non-linguist acquaintances that language change comes from the television. The idea that language change could be accomplished in such a trivial fashion is part of the popular ‘bag o’ words’ view of language [...] that we’re all tired of dealing with. However, we shouldn’t ignore the possibility that not all changes are equal. We need to ask ourselves what kinds of changes require the kind of repeated exposure that regular social interaction gives, and what kinds can be taken right off the shelf.

Eckert, 2003:395

4.1 Introduction

In the last twenty years, there has been a growing body of research on the spread of linguistic innovations between highly distant, isolated speech communities, with increasing mention of the media as a factor. These innovations have been labelled *global linguistic variants* or *global linguistic innovations* (Buchstaller, 2008). They do not necessarily spread across the globe, nor must they even leave their country of origin. The ‘global’ tag refers to their peculiarly disparate proliferation in such a short time.

As the citation introducing this chapter suggests, the effect of mass media on language has often been dismissed among dialectologists. There has long been an acceptance that fairly superficial innovations like individual words and phrases, even certain pronunciations, could ‘jump’ between highly distant places possibly due to the media, since these are relatively easy linguistic changes to make. For example Meyerhoff (1991) shows the adoption of putatively American words in New Zealand, like *flashlight* for *torch*; while Charkova (2007) examines Bulgarian learners of English picking up English slang supposedly from English-medium TV. These types of superficial changes have been termed “lexical flow” (Risager, 2006:96-7). The spread of more complex structural features in language, however, has conventionally not been explained on this basis:

[A]lthough there is increasing agreement that ‘off-the-shelf’ changes (involving a sound or a form) can diffuse easily, it is generally accepted that the transmission of complex linguistic variables, along with their associated frequency and (socio)linguistic conditioning, requires face-to-face contact.

Dion & Poplack, 2007:1

Discussing the diffusion of structurally complex innovations, Britain argues:

The diffusion of a linguistic form from a community in which that form is the norm to a community in which it is foreign necessarily involves dialect contact between speakers of the old and new forms.

Britain, 2002:57

Similarly Kerswill argues (with a noteworthy caveat about the media):

I have argued that levelling [...] can only apply in its ‘pure’ form in cases where there is high mobility within a relatively compact area (for example, a new town, but also a region like the North East or, perhaps, the South East), with a consequent high probability that individuals will have contact with others throughout the area. This mechanism is unlikely *a priori* to apply over a large and demographically complex area, such as Great Britain. Here, we must suppose (other things, especially *media influences*, being equal) that geographical diffusion is the more likely mechanism.

Kerswill, 2003a:239-240 (2nd emphasis added)

Despite these conventional reservations, there have been growing claims about the causality of the media in the spread of complex grammatical, syntactic, morphological, “high-context” features (Buchstaller, 2006b). Perhaps the most heavily researched example is quotative *be like*, as in ‘I was like, no way!’, which differs from other colloquial instances of *like*, such as ‘we’re like totally there’. Quotative *be like*, presumed to be of Californian origin (Blyth et al., 1990:224; Macaulay, 2001:3), has spread rapidly across the English speaking world, displacing existing quotatives such as ‘said’ and ‘thought’, and appearing in Britain and Canada (Tagliamonte & D’Arcy, 2004; Tagliamonte & Hudson, 1999), Glasgow (Macaulay, 2001) and Australia (J. Winter, 2002), among other places. The sheer speed of this spread, and the fact that it has been pioneered by youngsters with low spatial mobility, has posed questions for the role of face-to-face interaction, and swayed attention toward the media.

The point of departure for the literature on global innovations was a general inability of face-to-face accounts to explain certain types of language change, leaving only speculation. For example Mair, usually a painstakingly evidential researcher, claims that,

Creolized English emanating from Jamaica now has a speaker base in the Caribbean diaspora in Canada, Great Britain, and the US, and, through reggae music and its derivatives, has become a formative influence on the language of global youth culture.

Mair, 2006:9

He offers no additional explanation, leaving undistinguished the “Caribbean diaspora” on the one hand (i.e. face-to-face contact) and “reggae music” on the other, presumably in the form of physical records, tapes and CDs, as well as broadcasts via TV, radio or the internet. He indicates the possibility that these media play some role, but does not pursue this. Similarly Kerswill & Williams make the following claim about the media, but without indicating evidence:

Interacting with these developmental factors are general sociolinguistic changes in Great Britain, whereby *t*-glottaling is increasingly tolerated in more careful registers, and formality is being eroded in previously formal situations [...]. This is particularly evident in the spoken media, to which children are increasingly oriented.

Kerswill & Williams, 2000a:105

Or as Trudgill puts it:

[TH-fronting] has long been well-known as a feature of the English of London. And we can observe that Norwich is not the only area of southern and central England to be affected by this change: reports and observations suggest that this merger is spreading very rapidly indeed out from London in all directions. What is surprising, however, is the extreme rapidity of this change. Some observers have been inclined to ascribe it to the influence of television programmes that have Cockney heroes popular with young people. This of course fails to explain why it is this feature of London English and no other that has been adopted, and in any case cannot be correct, for if it were we would expect all areas of the country to be affected simultaneously. This is not in fact what is happening. In spite of the rapidity of the change, we are nevertheless able to detect geographical patterning, with areas close to London being affected before areas further away, and areas in the north of the country being totally unaffected as yet. The pattern of geographical diffusion suggests very strongly that face-to-face contact, as a result of mobility and immigration [...] must be involved (see Trudgill, 1986). The sheer speed of the change, however, may be due to a softening-up process produced by the engendering of favourable attitudes through television programmes, as well as to the salience of this feature (Trudgill, 1986) and the naturalness of the change.

Trudgill, 1988:43

This is similarly articulated by Przedlacka, who states that: “The speed of the change [adoption of th-fronting around the country] is also attributed to the influence of the media” (2001:45); but without mention of how this might play out.

A main point of contention in this area has been whether changes such as quotative *be like* are actually all that complex, or just further instances of “lexical flow” (Risager, 2006:96-7).

Fortunately this sometimes heated debate is relatively unimportant for the current discussion.

What is of interest is the way their spread contributes to declining diversity, and whether the involvement of the media represents a new societal context for that decline.

Compounding the confusion in this area has been a shortage of explanations from those investigating global innovations about quite how the media might be involved:

A stock explanation is that innovative forms such as *be like* are transmitted through the media. There is surprisingly little empirical support for this assertion, however.

Dion & Poplack, 2007:1 (orig. emphasis)

All this demonstrates an interest in, and preliminary engagement with, a possible role for the media in language change; but a lack of the means to explore this empirically.

4.1.1 Contributions of this chapter

Chapter 3 looked at dialect changes explained on the basis of spatial mobility (movement of persons in space) and linguistic mobility (the range and/or number of interlocutors a person has); two different processes that can increase exposure to other dialects, enabling dialect mixture and, on a larger scale, regional dialect levelling and declining linguistic diversity. It was argued that regional levelling follows regional concentrations of population movement. Chapter 4 examines changes that seem at least partly to ignore patterns of population movement, and have been

variously attributed to mass media – which is intuitively much less localisable. This shifts the emphasis further away from spatial mobility and towards linguistic mobility. However, this is an important modification to the concept of linguistic mobility, namely just what kind of an ‘interlocutor’ the media can be said to be. This point is returned to in §4.6.

A range of research reports are reviewed on the subject of global innovations, and these are then arranged into a new theoretical framework, with a view to better demarcating the possible role of the media. Like the last two chapters, the primary aim is to describe declining linguistic diversity in this new context. Possible explanations are pursued, but not in great depth.

An interesting parallel arises here with Chapter 2, which was concerned with dialect changes attributed to the printed word, and literacy. This too seems to subvert interpersonal interaction in certain ways; and Ellis’ warnings that “the present facilities of communication are rapidly destroying all traces of our older dialectic English” (1871:vi – cited in Crowley, 1996:168) are especially resonant here. Perhaps the following theoretical model could be just as well applied in some form to those processes as well. The aim here is not to pigeonhole any particular type of language change; only to show how linguistic innovations are shared across different speech communities, and how diversity is changing in different conditions.

4.2 Beyond the speech community

Chapter 3 was partly concerned with the way that increasing geographical mobility causes enlargement of speech communities, as “interactional collectivities” (Patrick, 2002), around regional concentrations of population movement. Global linguistic innovations present a challenge to the speech community model; and it will be useful to undertake some theoretical work to accommodate that. Let me begin by discussing how far this speech community model

can be stretched (how flexible an interacting group of people can be), then identify its breaking point, and suggest ways to fill the theoretical space that lies beyond.

‘Interacting’ in a speech community means contributing and receiving language (speaking and listening)¹⁵ at about the same rate, an implicit reference to face-to-face conversation between persons. It is not necessary for all the members of a speech community to actually meet each other. Of the millions of AAVE speakers¹⁶ in the “African American speech community” (Morgan, 1994; Rickford, 1997:ch.14), most will never meet; but by conversing mostly with other AAVE speakers – in this case courtesy of widespread racial segregation in the USA (Fridland, 2003; Anderson, 2002) – they maintain a continuous interactional collectivity, sharing and maintaining group norms. Other speech communities have different reasons for talking mostly among themselves, but the same logic prevails: a distinguishable group is maintained by predominantly in-group interactions.

In Siler City, North Carolina (§3.2.1), Wolfram et al. (2004) describe an “emerging Hispanic English” in a Mexican enclave. The community is ghettoised and insular, and typically Mexican linguistic forms persist in their English, under little influence from southern US forms used in surrounding neighbourhoods. The authors explain this firstly by the insularity of the community, and secondly because of the high level of contact they maintain with their Mexican hinterland.

The vast majority of residents have limited interaction with the members of the adjacent, resident European American and African American communities, limited to employment, school, and other institutionally mandated social occasions. The predominant use of Spanish within the community also augments this ethnic segregation. The steady stream of in-migrants, proficient only in Spanish, fosters the need to maintain Spanish as the primary means of communication within the community and within the home, even among children [...] born in the United States.

Wolfram et al., 2004:355

¹⁵ Or, in the case of the internet, typing and reading as well.

¹⁶ Most but not all of whom are African American – and not all African Americans use AAVE.

Typically Spanish forms are being maintained between Siler City and various distant parts of Mexico, hundreds of miles away. These Hispanics are not talking very much to their southern US neighbours, while receiving a steady influx of in-migrants from Mexico. This could be thought of as a speech community that stretches all the way back into Mexico, with Siler City just an outer extremity of it. The salient issue here is that it is defined not by locations, but by face-to-face interactions. It is a highly stretched speech community, but still an interactional collectivity.

Flexible as it has become, the speech community model still requires an interacting body of speakers using and maintaining norms. Furthermore, each speaker maintains a fairly balanced form of communication, giving and receiving language in roughly equal measure, mostly via conversation. Certain things fall outside this model, and require explanation on their own terms. To extend the AAVE example, consider one of its related music genres, hip-hop¹⁷ (for more about this relation, see e.g. Cutler, 1999; Omoniyi, 2006; Lüdtke, 2006). For our purposes, hip-hop consists of a body of musicians and performers, all interacting members of the AAVE speech community, receiving and maintaining language norms in conversation. When they become superstars, however, some important changes take place. They begin contributing massively more to the speech community than they could ever possibly receive. They also communicate far beyond the speech community itself, opening a rift in the fabric of a speech community model based on interaction between persons. In Swedish immigrant communities for example, Kotsinas notes: “Lately, many English words originating in various American youth cultures, particularly that of hip-hop, have become frequent” (2001:151). Something has happened well outside the normal bounds of the speech community to cause this.

¹⁷ I am concentrating here on AAVE hip-hop, though there are of course non-AAVE, and non-English forms of hip-hop.

| <i>Study</i> | <i>Location and time of data collection</i> | <i>Type of data</i> | <i>Number of speakers</i> | <i>Age of speakers</i> | <i>Number of quotatives in the dataset</i> |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|---|
| Blyth, Recktenwald and Wang (1990) | New York City; time not specified | Sociolinguistic interviews | 30 | 20–72, divided into 3 age groups (20–24, 27–32, 38–72) | Not reported |
| Ferrara and Bell (1995) | Texas; 1990, 1992, 1994 | Narratives of personal experience | 405: 115 (Corpus 1), 200 (Corpus 2), 90 (Corpus 3) | 6–86; most young speakers aged 18–25 | 284 tokens of <i>be like</i> : 98 (Corpus 1), 143 (Corpus 2), 43 (Corpus 3) |
| Tagliamonte and Hudson (1999) | Ottawa, Canada; 1995 York, England; 1996 | Narratives of personal experience | 66 (?) | 18–28 (university students) | 1 277 (665 from British English, 612 from Canadian English); 199 tokens of <i>be like</i> |
| Dailey-O’Cain (2000) | Michigan; 1995 | Sociolinguistic interviews | 30 | 14–69, divided into 3 age groups (14–29, 30–49, 50–69) | 95 tokens of <i>be like</i> |
| Singler (2001) | New York City; 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1999 | Sociolinguistic interviews | Not specified | 5 age groups (9–15, 18–24, 27–33, 36–42, 45–51) | 6 117; 3 400 tokens of <i>be like</i> |
| Macaulay (2001) | Glasgow; 1997 | Same-sex dyadic conversations | 32 | 13–40, divided into 2 age groups (13–14, 40+) | 800 (35–68 tokens of <i>be like</i>) |
| Cukor-Avila (2002) | Springville, Texas; 1996, 1998, 1999 | “conversational recordings” | 14 | Speakers born between 1907 and 1982 | 3,202 (approximately 1,066 quotatives produced by 3 adolescents) |
| Winter (2002) | Melbourne, Australia; time not specified | Sociolinguistic interviews between same-sex speakers | 30 | 15–16 | 218 (18 tokens of <i>be like</i>) |
| Tagliamonte and D’Arcy (2004) | Toronto, Canada; 2002-2003 | Sociolinguistic interviews | 44 | 10–19, divided into 4 age groups (10–12, 13–14, 15–16, 17–19) | 2,058 (1,198 tokens of <i>be like</i>) |
| D’Arcy (2004) | St. John, Canada; 1999–2002 | Sociolinguistic interviews | 14 | 8–17, divided into 2 age groups (8–11, 16–17) | 184 (114 tokens of <i>be like</i>) |

Table 4.1 Overview of previous empirical studies of quotatives in English (Barbieri, 2007:28)

The speech community model still holds in the sense of bodies of speakers interacting; but the communicative imbalance exemplified by hip-hop artists represents an important departure from, and addition to, that model. These imbalances require a separate theoretical explanation.

4.3 Approaches to global linguistic innovations

The speech community has been favoured as a theoretical model in much of the literature on global innovations, despite not being particularly suited to account for them. This constrained the explanation of global innovations in critical ways. More recent discussions have moved beyond this limitation, by empirically investigating phenomena that lie outside the speech community – most prominently the media. Still, this methodological departure from sociolinguistic convention advance has not been met with new theory to accommodate it. This literature is very new; but it will be instructive to pursue the development of this debate, and start building a theoretical framework in order to better conceptualise this instance of declining linguistic diversity.

4.3.1 First approach: one speech community at a time

Early studies on the emergence of quotative *be like* are somewhat conservative in their methodology. Though they acknowledge to a greater or lesser extent that these innovations are somehow global, they constrain their analysis to a single speech community. Blyth et al. (1990) examine *be like* in Cornell University, New York, according to the “social factors of age and gender” (p.216). Ferrara & Bell (1995) investigate its “gender-marking, age-grading, ethnic distribution, and rural-versus-urban usage” in Texas (p.270).

Mention is made of *be like* being popularly associated with California (Blyth et al., 1990:224), but these studies do not ask how it might have got from there to New York and Texas. They concentrate entirely on how the innovation is used *after* it has made this journey. Of note,

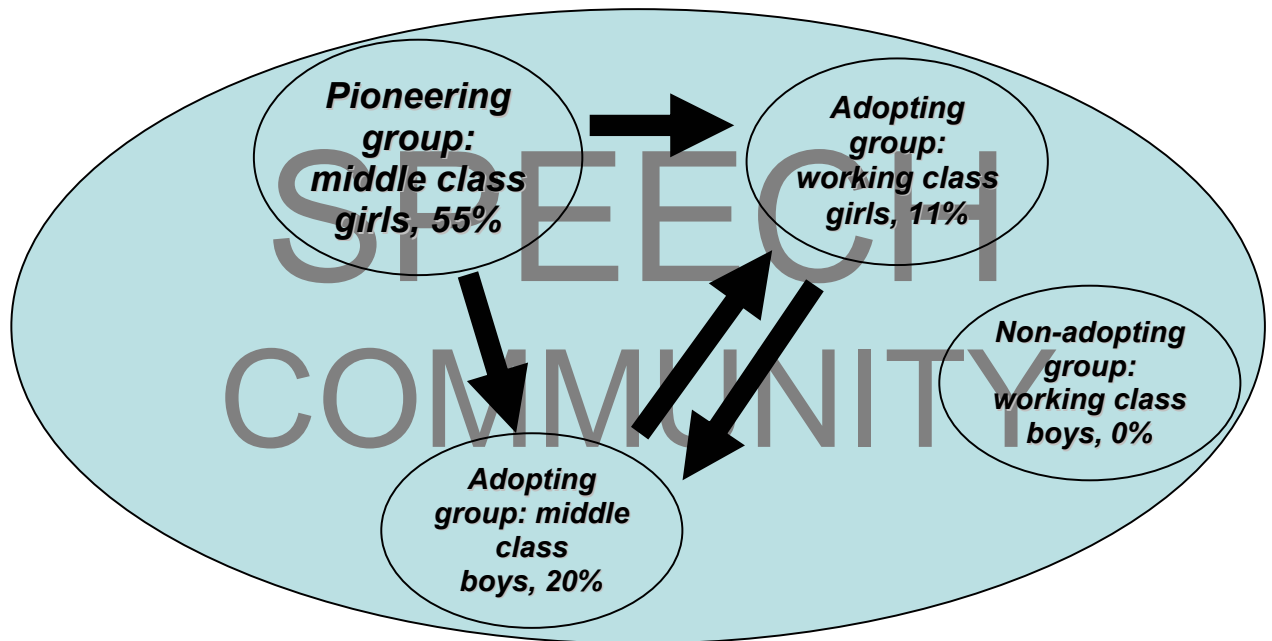


Figure 4.1 Simplified representation of Macaulay's (2001) study of the Glasgow usage of quotative *be like* (spreading around the speech community, but no information given as to its origin).

Ferrara & Bell mention in a footnote that: “Use [of quotative *be like*] on television by popular entertainers in their 40s and older is readily observable” (1995:288); but this is just an aside, apparently not directly suggesting a causal role.

Macaulay (2001) investigates *be like* in Glasgow. He provides detailed empirical evidence of how the feature is pioneered by adolescent girls, and how it appears to be spreading around the Glasgow speech community (represented in Figure 4.1). He claims it to have originated in California (2001:3), and mentions the media as a possible factor in how it reached Glasgow. On this though, he ends inconclusively: “the question remains of how *be like* reached teenagers in Glasgow. It is unlikely to have been through direct contact with young Americans [...]. (p.17 – orig. emphasis).¹⁸ He makes some mention of increasing usage of quotative *be like* in American films in the preceding two decades (pp.17-8), adding that “it is possible that the innovation [...]

¹⁸ This seems to be based on intuition about migration statistics, but it is borne out by the official data; for example in 2004, only 85,540 US citizens were admitted to the United Kingdom for long periods (study, employment etc.), or as dependents thereof (TSO, 2005:32).

owes something to the media” (p.17); but from here he moves on to his conclusion, where he simply recommends “[m]ore attention to archival media materials” (p.18) to establish such a link.

Baird (2001) analyses “new” quotatives in New Zealand, repeatedly stating that these innovations originated in the USA. After a technical linguistic analysis detailing the various ways that these innovations have been appropriated into New Zealand speech, on the last page of the article she makes some remarks about “worldwide language change” that “may be indicative of the global nature of communication systems, and the popularity of leisure activities such as television” (p.18). Her article ends:

How much a trend catches on might depend on our (subconscious) attitude toward, and the amount of our exposure to, the nation responsible for starting it, in this case, the United States. This kind of trend may simply show that large political and economic powers influence language, both their own and other languages, along with the behaviour and habits of people everywhere.

Baird, 2001:18

4.3.2 Second approach: comparing disparate speech communities

The global innovations debate quickly progressed, and researchers began undertaking comparative analyses of the use of global innovations in disparate speech communities around the world – to more clearly foreground their global spread. Tagliamonte & Hudson (1999) take Ferrara & Bell’s (1995) data from Texas and compare it to their own data collected from British and Canadian young adults. They suggest the “remarkably parallel” (p.147) usage in these locations is “evidence for a systematic global diffusion of *be like* across geographically separated speech communities” (ibid. – orig. emphasis); “a very good linguistic indicator of the types of developments and changes we might expect from the putative ongoing globalization of English” (p.168). These nods towards globalisation and global spread are an epistemological step forward,

| Discourse Quotative | AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH | | BRITISH ENGLISH | | CANADIAN ENGLISH | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----|-----------------|----|------------------|----|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| GO | 98 | 45 | 120 | 18 | 135 | 22 |
| Say | 52 | 24 | 209 | 31 | 219 | 36 |
| be + like | 18 | 8 | 120 | 18 | 79 | 13 |
| null/zero | 39 | 18 | 66 | 10 | 123 | 20 |
| Think | 1 | 0.4 | 123 | 18 | 27 | 4 |
| Miscellaneous | 10 | 4 | 27 | 5 | 29 | 5 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>218</i> | | <i>665</i> | | <i>612</i> | |

Table 4.2 Distribution of discourse quotatives in Australian, British and Canadian English (J. Winter, 2002:10)

but they fall short of explaining the mechanisms underlying this spread. The final sentence of the article suggests that:

While the social mechanism(s) underlying these processes are beyond the scope of the present investigation, the findings of this study suggest that further research on *be like*, in conjunction with other linguistic features rapidly innovating in urban areas throughout the English-speaking world, will be a good place to look for, and ‘catch,’ the burgeoning global ‘mega trends’ of language change.

Tagliamonte & Hudson, 1999:168 (orig. emphasis)

Despite noteworthy correlations between data sets, analytically this does not proceed far beyond the noting of coincidences. Moreover, this is still a fairly straightforward use of conventional dialectological methodology, comparing discrete speech communities, but just picking ones that are highly distant from one another.

J. Winter (2002), building on Tagliamonte & Hudson (1999) and Ferrara & Bell (1995), investigates quotative *be like* among adolescents in Melbourne, Australia; undertaking “a comparative analysis with other varieties of English” (p.8), and arriving at the data in Table 4.2. Again we have a striking coincidence, but little penetration of why this global spread has come about. Winter does make occasional comparisons to the “stereotypical” use of these quotatives by an Australian TV character, a teenage girl *Kylie Moll*; and how “the exaggerated usage [...] for the *Kylie Moll* performances is indeed apparent in the AE [Australian English] data” (p.12 –

orig. emphasis). Still, like Ferrara & Bell (1995:288) noted previously, this aside does not impinge on the main comparative analysis.

Cukor-Avila (2002) analyses quotatives among African American adolescents. She makes some remarks about how these innovations might have got there, for example that “quotative *go* has spread from white vernacular to African American vernacular” (p.8 – orig. emphasis); but these are not elaborated. Similarly Meyerhoff & Niedzielski (2003) present a study that

considers some general principles found, in the social sciences, to be associated with globalisation and considers what the theoretical and methodological implications are for the study of language variation [...].

Meyerhoff & Niedzielski (2003:534)

Their analysis of “the spread of some innovative forms in New Zealand English” (ibid.) is intentionally located within discussions of “globalisation” and “localisation”, and the “apparent conundrum” that linguistic innovations are spreading without face-to-face contact yet in the presence of the media. “Resolving this”, they concede, “is beyond the scope of this article” (p.541). They concentrate instead on the different realisations of certain innovations as they spread from “British English” and “U.S. English” to “New Zealand English”. They note that quotative *be like* has been “informally identified as evidence of U.S. English exerting an influence over New Zealand English norms” (p.540); and suggest that “the transmission of linguistic innovations across non-proximate (slippery) space resembles, or is autonomous of, other forms of globalisation” (p.545). They are primarily interested in whether these innovations, “instead of being seen as borrowings, are perceived to be home-grown variants” (p.549). This shows an attempt to include explanatory themes derived from sociology, but the conventional comparative methodology persists, just located within a discussion about “the tensions between globalisation and localisation” (p.550).

Tagliamonte & D’Arcy (2004:506) examine sex differences in quotative *be like* among children, concluding that they receive quotative *be like* from the speech community (p.509), and that the role of the media is at least in question. However, despite reference to similar grammaticalisation of *be like* in the USA and Britain (p.511), they do not speculate about its origins.

Buchstaller (2006b) conducts a somewhat similar attitudinal study to Meyerhoff & Niedzielski (2003), setting out to complement the “[v]ariationist research [on *be like*, which] has amply documented its intralinguistic and extralinguistic constraints in various localities” (Buchstaller, 2006b:363). This is designed to show how global innovations are adapted not just grammatically and demographically but also ideologically, receiving a new “perceptual load” (ibid.). As Buchstaller & D’Arcy (2007) put it in a later conference paper, “when spreading from the US, is *be like* adopted with its functional and social boots on?” (orig. emphases).

After exploration of demographic, regional and intelligence-related associations of *be like* either side of the Atlantic, “the comparison of global features in locally discontinuous varieties reveals that their perceptual load is similar in some respects and different in others” (Buchstaller, 2006b:373). In other words, perceptual load shows similar global-spread-yet-local-appropriation as linguistic function. Again though, the method of transportation between speech communities is somewhat overlooked. Moreover, although attitudinal data are presented, the link between this and actual usage remains caught at the point of speculation, with little in the way of substance about how or why people might react to media stimuli in this way:

Attitude research on *be like* [...] has shown that this quotative is heavily loaded with stereotypes in the U.S. and that it carries strong associations, mainly with uneducated dizzy women. Blyth et al. (1990) report that *be like* is perceived as ‘silly, airheaded, California’. While quotative *go* carries negative evaluations as well (Blyth et al. 1990), the attitudes attached to it are clearly quantitatively and qualitatively different.

Buchstaller, 2006a:17 (orig. emphases)

In a subsequent study, Barbieri (2007) completes a lengthy linguistic analysis of quotatives in a large speech corpus, revealing a new and complex pattern of sex and age differentiation; offering the following somewhat brief interpretation:

Several attitudinal studies have reported that *be like* is generally perceived as being more common among women [...], and is strongly associated with “Valley Girl Talk” (Blyth, Recktenwald and Wang 1990; Dailey-O’Cain 2000), the talk of teenage girls from Southern California, a social dialect that is typically stigmatized because of its social and regional connotations. [...]

The negative attitudes and stereotypes associated with *be like* may offer a plausible explanation for the less common use of *be like* among young men, as well as for the drop of *be like* among women in their late 20s and in their 30s [...].

Barbieri, 2007:41 (orig. emphases)

Similarly Tagliamonte & D’Arcy (2007), after analysing the distribution of quotatives in Toronto, end with relatively unsubstantiated assertions about the origins and associations of *be like*, and a speculation remarkably similar to Macaulay’s (2001:17) six years earlier:

The issue remains, however, as to what catapulted *be like* into the adolescent vernaculars of the 1980s. Labov (2001:462) observed that the “acceleration of linguistic change logically begins when the incipient change is attached to or is associated with a particular style or social group [...]” In this case, we would like to suggest that the associated social category was *Valley Girl* and the place was *California*. Indeed, such an association is part of the received wisdom surrounding *be like* (see, e.g., Blyth et al., 1990:224; Dailey-O’Cain, 2000:76). As part of the “preppie” movement of the 1980s, *be like* gained prestige as a trendy and socially desirable way to voice a speaker’s inner experience. In other words, linguistic change begins with a hospitable grammatical environment, but requires a social force to drive it forward.”

Tagliamonte & D’Arcy, 2007:212 (orig. emphases)

This mention of a “received wisdom” about “prestige”, “social desirability”, “social force” and so on seem to betray a lack of methodological resources for their exploration. Most of the accounts reviewed so far name California as the *source* for quotative *be like*, but the link from there to the speech communities in question is not empirically investigated. This explanatory setup is represented in Figure 4.2.

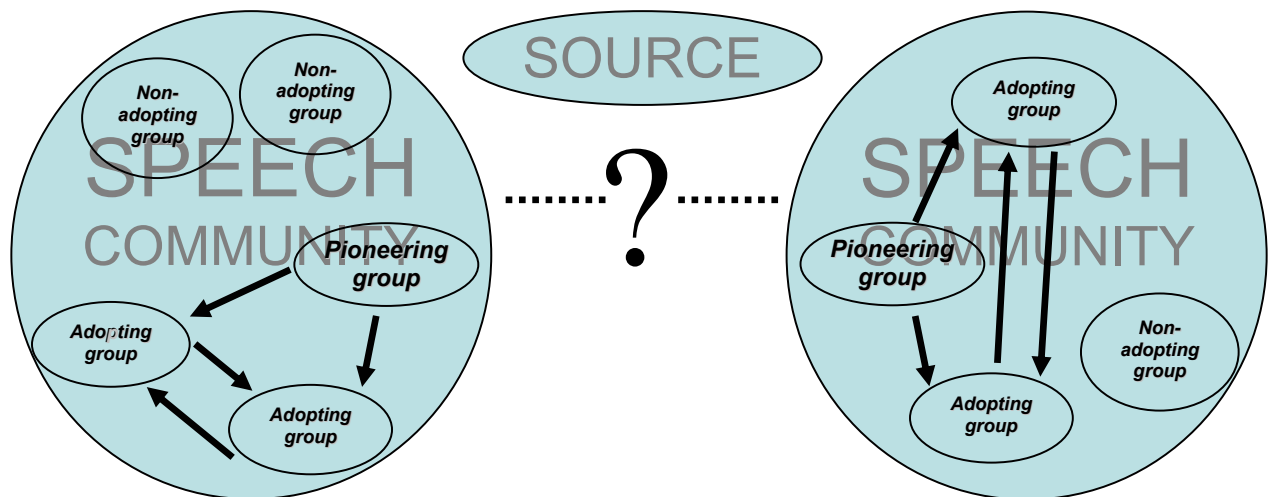


Figure 4.2 Representation of comparative analyses of global linguistic innovations, showing localisation but making only vague reference to a source for the innovation and no information about its route into the speech community.

4.3.3 Third approach: pinpointing the media

The next stage in the debate has been to name not only the source, but also the method of transmission: the media. Buchstaller's PhD thesis, a "cross-variety comparison [...] based on an analysis of very large corpora of spontaneous spoken British and American English" (2004a:ii), compares the ways that speakers in both countries have differentially appropriated quotative *be like*. The media are frequently named as a causal mechanism, though with little specific detail:

The very social group which introduces *like* into the linguistic system is also the one we can assume to be most likely to pick up a new lexical variant through soaps, talkshows, etc.

Buchstaller, 2004:289 (orig. emphasis)

The closest intimation of causality comes in a discussion of the importance of face-to-face interaction, involving a straw-man type refutation of the role of the media, whereby the media cannot do everything, but, implicitly, is still doing something:

Note that this finding also further corroborates claims that the mass media is an insufficient transmission channel for the whole variant (surface item, functional value and social value). If *like* was transmitted from the USA to the UK, the social

information adherent to it in the donor variety was not taken over but seems to have been re-created in the borrowing variety [...]. What seems to be taken over is the surface form but not the systematic functional and social load.

Buchstaller, 2004:290 (orig. emphasis)

Subsequently, Buchstaller (2006a) discusses the various competing linguistic accounts for these changes, “incorporating formerly conflicting information into a coherent account” (p.5). She compares data from the USA and the UK to track a change in progress, reporting that the innovations are age-graded, and preferred by younger speakers. After a linguistic corpus analysis of the use of the innovations in question, she makes some explanation for this age pattern:

At this stage of life [...] fashion, music, substance use and ways of speaking, as well as other linguistic variables, are increasingly exploited and become semiotic resources for the ‘creation of distinction’.

Buchstaller, 2006a:12

Tagliamonte & Roberts (2005), following Macaulay’s recommendations to pay “[m]ore attention to archival media materials” (2001:18), analyse the use of intensifier *so*, in the collected scripts of the American sitcom *Friends*. They compare existing speech data from North America and Britain. This produces some correlations, showing that

media language actually does reflect what is going on in language, at least with respect to the form, frequency, and patterning of intensifiers.

Tagliamonte & Roberts, 2005:296

The authors then begin to suggest a kind of causality:

these media data appear to pave the way; language is more innovative in the media than in the general population. If the use of intensifier *so* on *Friends* is any indication, *so* is the new favorite in American English. The once primary intensifier *really* in North America is being usurped.

Tagliamonte & Roberts, 2005:296 (orig. emphases)

However, they end up inconclusive on this critical point, stating only that:

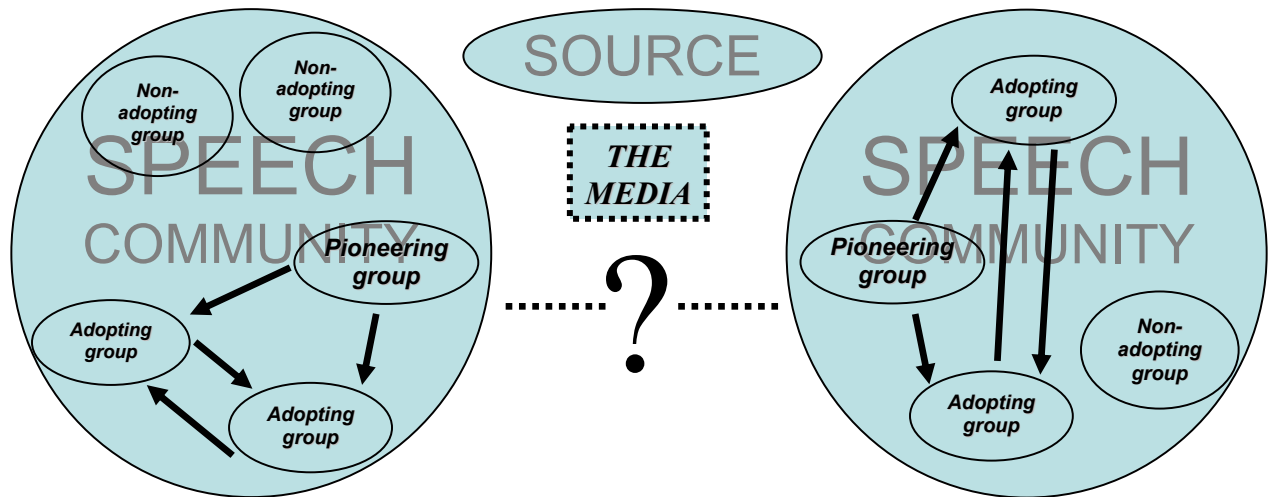


Figure 4.3 Representation of comparative linguistic analyses of global innovations with analysis of media texts, showing correlation between media use and speech but no clear link between them.

At the very least, the inextricable link between language and society—often self-evident for sociolinguists and dialectologists—stands out in this icon of pop culture.

Tagliamonte & Roberts, 2005:297

Dion & Poplack (2007) take a similar approach towards Quebec English:

We assembled and analyzed a corpus of popular television shows and top-grossing movies aired during the period the Quebec English data were collected, retaining those most likely to contain reported dialogue and to target an audience under 35. Each instance of reported speech was extracted and coded to permit comparability with our community studies.

Dion & Poplack, 2007:1

Their results, though useful, are again indecisive about the specific causal role of the media:

Although the precise mechanisms underlying the diffusion of this, and most other changes, remain unresolved, our results provide important evidence that linguistic conditioning of variability can be acquired in the absence of direct contact.

Dion & Poplack, 2007:1

These studies seem to come up against similar barriers. Although they do go beyond the speech community and towards media texts, this only serves to extend Macaulay's speculation and demonstrate conspicuous correlation between media and speech. This still does not explore the

process of transmission from source via media to speech community. The missing link here is how people engage with these media sources; the actual point of contact between media text and individual speakers, and how that figures in their adoption and adaptation of these global innovations. This approach is represented in Figure 4.3.

A lengthier and more humble reflexivity about the possible but unexplored effect of the media is shown by Altendorf, in the following passage:

[T]here are some variants, which also (happen to) belong to the EE [Estuary English] group of variants and which have been spreading regionally and socially to urban accents as far as away from the south-east as Hull and Glasgow. We have already identified these variants as “youth norms” and have claimed that they are adopted as such and not as south-eastern accent features [...]. We have not been able to explain how they could have spread without extensive face-to-face interaction, which is generally regarded as a necessary pre-requisite for diffusion to take place [...].

[...] It is possible but not yet proven that the combined effect of linguistic preference + social attractiveness + constant exposure through the media might have an effect the strength of which resembles that of face-to-face interaction although its exact workings might be different. Here the cause is not accommodation to an interlocutor but adoption of a fashionable behavioural pattern. [...]

In any case, the development has reached a point where we might have to re-evaluate the role of television in bringing about new linguistic trends. Foulkes and Docherty (1999, 15), for example, draw attention to the increasing qualitative and quantitative importance of television and radio in today’s world. They quote expert studies demonstrating that if TV watching trends continue, “many children will come to spend more time exposed to non-local varieties than to their local vernacular” (Foulkes & Docherty 1999, 15).

Altendorf, 2003:148-9

Foulkes & Docherty approach this subject with equal humility:

The possible effects of such exposure [to media] on acquired speech patterns remain to be formally tested, but are certainly worth considering in the context of continuing changes in the next few years.

Foulkes & Docherty, 1999:15

Overall, then, these studies struggle to explain how these “globally travelling features” (Buchstaller, 2006b:375) actually travel, what they travel in, who greets them when they arrive,

and what this tells us about any societal conditions that are necessary for such transport to take place. The relative importance of the media on the one hand, and of the speech community on the other, is hinted at – especially when couched in the discourse of globalisation and localisation – but no explication is possible based on comparative linguistic analyses alone.

While borrowings from globalisation literature are useful, they tend to sidestep a meaningful discussion of how people engage with global media – or whatever else is facilitating this global spread – and thus how global innovations get from place to place. These studies make yet less headway in modelling these discrete levels of communication into a coherent theoretical framework. Relying on speech corpora alone and not engaging methodologically with media engagement has kept sociolinguistics, as it were, trapped inside the speech community, an ontological victim of its own device. To investigate what lies beyond, something new is needed.

4.4.4 Fourth approach: testing the effect of the media

Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie (2007) provide the first detailed exploration of how global innovations might travel, in a discussion of dialect changes among 36 working-class adolescents in Glasgow, over a period of two years; specifically examining the possible effects of television.

The authors took their lead from Trudgill (1986, 1988) who, they note, found

TH-fronting, a feature usually associated with London accents, in relatively non-mobile working-class speakers in Norwich. He suggests that the change is the result of a combination of factors working together, including less overt opportunities for contact between Norwich speakers and those from London, but he also speculates about the potential role of television programmes based in London in promoting positive attitudes towards London dialect features: ‘television may be part of a ‘softening-up’ process leading to the adoption of the merger [of /f/ with /th/], but it does not cause it’ (Trudgill 1986: 55).

Stuart-Smith, 2006:141

This represents a somewhat more nuanced approach, beginning to conceptualise the specific role that media engagement might play. Their study in Glasgow was motivated by the adoption of

features ostensibly deriving from southeast England, especially TH- and DH- fronting occurring in distinctly non-Glaswegian environments, as in ‘fink’ *think*, and ‘bovver’ *bother*, and the emergence of “a consonantal system which in many respects is more similar to that of London English” (Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie, 2007:222).¹⁹ This was especially hard to explain purely with face-to-face interaction; not just because of the distances involved, but because these changes are being pioneered by working-class adolescents, who they found to be the least spatially mobile members of the speech community. Meanwhile these innovations were largely rejected by their more spatially mobile middle-class peers:

When compared against predictions from social network structure and personal mobility, our results seem odd: middle-class speakers with more opportunities for contact with English English speakers and weaker social networks are maintaining Scottish features, while less mobile, strongly-tied working-class speakers are losing some Scottish features and using innovative features the most.

[...]

[...] the exploitation of these features seems to be difficult to explain solely in terms of dialect contact when they occur in less-mobile, strongly-tied, working-class adolescents.

Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie (2007:222,224)

Spatial mobility was not correlating with adoption of non-local innovations. Middle-class adolescents in the sample “largely maintain Scottish regional standard norms [...] but at the same time show no instances of [southern England features] TH- or DH-fronting, only low L-vocalisation, and moderate rates of T-glottalling” (Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie, 2007:250).

Middle class adults are even more conservative in their use of Scottish Standard English; and while working class adults are losing some vernacular forms – apparently due to relocation during rearrangements of social housing (Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie, 2007:250-1) –

¹⁹ These apparent influences of ‘Cockney’ over Scottish ‘jock’ speech had previously been picked up on by the media and labelled “jockney” (Braber, 2007).

working class adolescents are pioneering innovations whose origin the authors trace to “London Cockney”. They are the “leaders of change” (ibid. p.251). The authors see this as a very conventional attempt to sound “as anti-middle-class, and anti-establishment as possible” (ibid.); but to achieve this, they are not using features developed locally, but apparently from faraway London. In their initial analyses of these data, the role of the media is mentioned; but left tantalisingly under-explored, ending with what can only be called a cliffhanger:

Descriptively they *are* using a mixed consonantal system, with local and non-local features. Whether they intend this repertoire to sound mixed, or anything other than ‘pure Glaswegian’, seems unlikely, though that in itself does not rule out interaction with television or the media as additional contributory factors in these changes. But that is another story altogether.

Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie, 2007:255 (orig. emphasis)

The possibility of the media affecting language like this is, to say the least, contentious territory in sociolinguistics.

It’s taken me a while to drag myself off the (socio)linguistic fence with respect to the media and language variation and change. But our data just have to be accounted for.

Stuart-Smith, p.c., email 28/09/2007

Stuart-Smith and her team subsequently went back into more ethnographic depth with their informants, pursuing the disparity between low spatial mobility and high adoption of supposedly southern English innovations. They found certain individuals who were pioneering these innovations, but who had little or no contact with anybody in England yet had exceptionally intense contact with London-based TV shows – representing comparatively high linguistic mobility.

Correlation is not causation; and so to probe this apparent link Stuart-Smith and her team ran further tests, in collaboration with a statistician and an academic in Media Studies. A preliminary

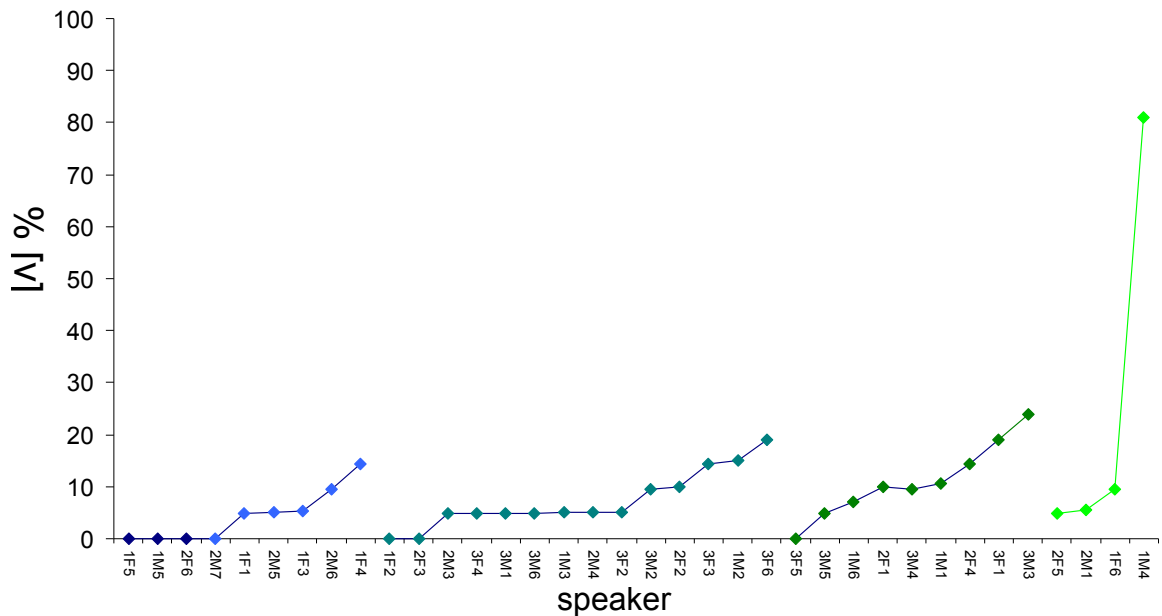


Figure 4.4 DH-fronting and adopter category in Glasgow (Stuart-Smith & Timmins, 2007:19)

report by Stuart-Smith & Timmins (2007) showed which individuals were pioneering each feature (Figure 4.4 shows rates of DH-fronting), and how this compared with their friendship networks, their contact with people inside and outside of Glasgow, and their engagement with London-based TV. The results of this ethnographic study were highly complex, and raised multiple competing influences on language use. Respondent 1M4, who had by far the highest rates of DH-fronting, showed no contact whatsoever with people outside Glasgow – in fact relatively low contact inside – yet a very high engagement with, and intense interest in, the London-based soap opera *EastEnders* (ibid. p.20). Likewise, one of the innovators for TH-fronting had “negligible dialect contact” but was “very engaged with *EastEnders*” (p.24). Further analysis of other innovators revealed similar correlations between peculiarly high interest in *EastEnders*, and pioneering use of Cockney innovations. These are snapshots of their overall data; and the authors are duly cautious in attributing causality to media engagement. Still, the data suggest that although media engagement was by no means fully responsible, nor could it be entirely eliminated as a causal factor.

Preliminary results from a large-scale multi-factorial model using multiple regression confirm that television variables which capture engagement with *EastEnders* show significant correlations with the linguistic variables analysed to date, namely (th) and (dh).

Stuart-Smith, 2006:143 (orig. emphasis)

Multifactorial regressions showed positive correlations between production of these southeast England innovations and engagement with London-based TV, alongside social practices (peer interaction) and dialect contact (speaking with English people). Of utmost importance, none of these factors alone accounted for the dialect changes observed; but *nor could any of them be completely excluded*. Spatial and linguistic mobility both play a part, with the latter sometimes taking an initial lead in the case of media engagement. “There seem to be different causal pathways, and combinations of pathways, for different speakers” (Stuart-Smith & Timmins, 2007:28). All this points to a priming effect of the media – Trudgill’s “softening-up process” (1986, 1998) – after which the innovations are rapidly reworked during face-to-face communication. As Stuart-Smith has commented:

we have to be thinking in terms of dynamic processes. So the idea of media as an initial stimulus may be right, but I suspect that in reality what one has are continual processes of appropriation which resonate more or less strongly with the viewers’ existing sociolinguistic systems (which in turn are shaped and shaping at a faster rate in response to interaction with others, whether in their own community or beyond).

Stuart-Smith, p.c., email 02/10/07

To get a firmer grasp on this priming effect, Stuart-Smith & Timmins (2007) set up an experiment, showing two groups of Glaswegian working class adolescents different TV shows: a test group was shown “media-Cockney” shows including *EastEnders*; a control group was shown Glasgow-based TV. Immediately afterwards both groups were given a mock quiz based on the content of the shows, and their speech recorded. The London TV group produced significantly more features identified as Cockney. This goes some way towards pencilling in the

actual point of reception between media and speech community, missing from the earlier studies reviewed so far in this chapter.

Critically though, despite there appearing to be some influence of media text on vernacular speech, these features are still treated as nothing but local by the adolescents themselves:

[F]or L- and R-vocalisation and TH-/DH-fronting [...] we seem to have a stylistic choice not to conform to regional standard norms, even when reading a wordlist [...]. In fact, these findings coincide with the fieldworker's impressions [...]: that the teenagers treated the task as an opportunity to display to her instances of 'their' speech, and one can hear them laughing and playing up to the microphone as they read through the list. [...] The adolescents are certainly speaking in a 'voice', but it is one which seems to be representing their own group, or at least a possible version of their own group's repertoire for that particular context [...]. What is interesting is that the non-local non-standard variants are selected for this particular stylistic repertoire.

Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie, 2007:247

Similarly to Tagliamonte & D'Arcy's (2004) results for quotative *be like*, the supposedly London/Cockney features in Glasgow appear not to be given any association with London. They have received, as Buchstaller puts it, a new "perceptual load" (2006b:363). There need be no positive association with England itself – indeed Scottish disdain for England appears generally strong (McIntosh et al., 2004). These features have been refunctionalised, linguistically, demographically and ideologically, taking on a new sociolinguistic profile. This, then, is a continuation of the arguments reviewed earlier, regarding the localisation of global linguistic innovations.

The use of new features and the reduction of traditional features means that the constellation of consonant variants used by working-class adolescents looks increasingly similar to the non-standard consonant system of (Southern) English English. Taking Glaswegian in the overall U.K. context, we might think that this is dialect levelling in its broadest sense [...], and in time, this may be the outcome. But there are also important differences, both in the ideological processes involved [...] and linguistically [...].

Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie, 2007:247

The crucial development in the work of Stuart-Smith and her team has been to extend the methodology to draw in the point of reception between media source and speech community. This also stresses continual reengagement with that source, and factors in face-to-face interaction as an inherent part of that process. Reprising a theme underlying Chapters 2-4, innovations are being shared by different speech communities, representing a decline in overall diversity. In the case of global innovations, this appears to be happening in a new societal context, requiring a specific explanation.

4.5 The linguistic virtual collective

The role of the media outlined by Stuart-Smith and her team I have represented in Figure 4.5. This is the new theoretical model advertised in §4.1.1. Some terminology will be helpful in addition to this diagram. The spread of innovations based on contact between interacting people is normally referred to as innovation *diffusion* (see Britain, 2005). Global innovations move differently. First is their ‘jump’ from a putative source speech community to other, disparate speech communities via mass media,²⁰ which can be referred to as innovation *transmission* (purposefully reminiscent of media broadcast). The next step is the *reception* of the global innovation in a particular speech community, closely followed by its *adoption* and *adaptation*. This particularised, locally appropriated innovation then spreads across the speech community through normal innovation *diffusion*. The process therefore comes full circle in a multi-level model. Furthermore, this model needs to be understood in conjunction with the “different causal pathways, and combinations of pathways, for different speakers” identified by Stuart-Smith & Timmins (2007:28). Face-to-face interaction does connect these disparate speech communities in some instances, and this also plays its part. In a full depiction, therefore, this model would be

²⁰ This point will always benefit from retesting in each case the conclusion that “media language actually does reflect what is going on in language, at least with respect to the form, frequency, and patterning of intensifiers” (Tagliamonte & Roberts, 2005:296).

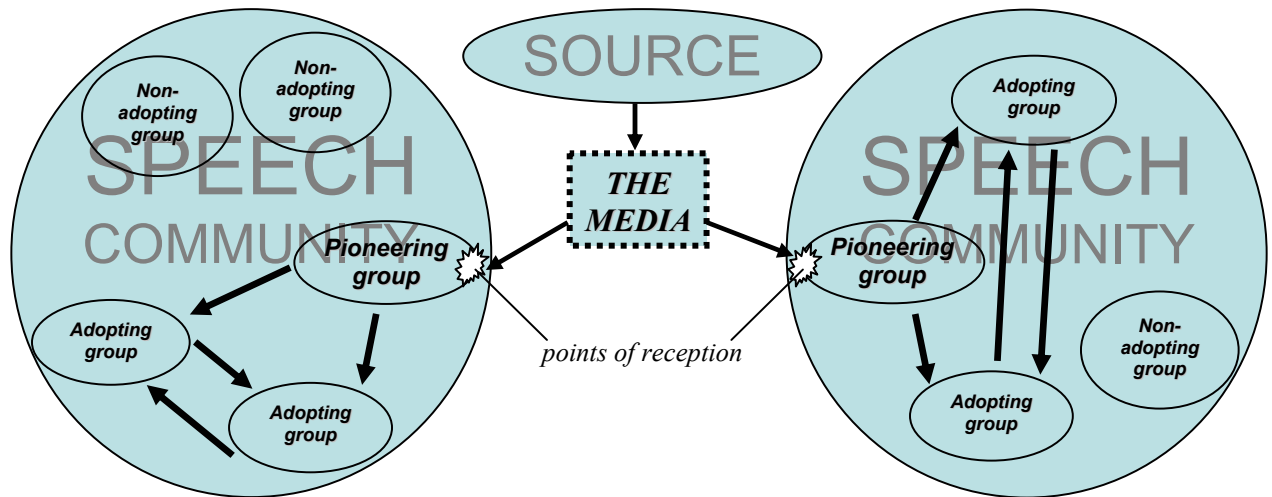


Figure 4.5 *The linguistic virtual collective: demonstrating 'transmission', 'reception', 'adoption', 'adaptation' and 'diffusion' of global innovations, together constituting 'innovation dispersal'.*

overlain with these other patterns of interaction; the model above only applies to media engagement as one among these many causal pathways.

I would collectively refer to this multi-level process of transmission, reception, adoption, adaptation and diffusion, as innovation *dispersal* (to complement innovation diffusion). The grouping of these various levels of communication I refer to as a *linguistic virtual collective* (to complement the speech community). This grouping is based on interactions that are no longer solely face-to-face; and the members of the collective need have nothing in common other than the linguistic feature in question. This collective is at least partly virtual.

A speech community in the Labovian tradition is characterized by a relatively uniform distribution of linguistic variants across social entities, *and an evaluative consensus pertaining to the status of such forms.*

Owens, 1999:663 (emphasis added)

Smith & Timmins (2007) show how this evaluative consensus of global innovations is developed anew after they are received into the speech community. This in turn delivers a lot of power to the speech community. If an innovation is used that came from London-based TV, this does not have to be about wanting to emulate Londoners – at least not entirely. It could just be about

emulating, or accommodating to, people within the speech community who are also adopting this innovation. This is absolutely the tone of the Stuart-Smith team's work, stressing how these putatively London-originating features are now considered "pure Glaswegian" (Stuart-Smith, 2007:12). Innovations spread around the speech community just like they always have – between individuals in successive social groups. All that has changed is where the innovations initially come from.

Aside from the speech community, the linguistic virtual collective also needs to be distinguished from the "linguistic community" (Silverstein, 1996). This is similarly defined as a grouping of disparate speech communities all sharing some external target language variety. This could either be a shared normative-ideological orientation towards a standard language, as with Classical Arabic among the Arabic-speaking diaspora; or it could be a less official identification with, and orientation towards, any other target variety. The difference is that the linguistic virtual collective represents little or no actual recognition of the source variety. British users of *be like* did not show recognition of it as an American feature (Buchstaller, 2006b:363). Nor did the Glaswegian adolescents in see the London features they adopt as being associated with anywhere but Glasgow (Stuart-Smith, Timmins & Tweedie, 2007:255).

The linguistic virtual collective, as a model, allows some classical sociolinguistic theory to be applied the phenomenon of global linguistic innovations. First of all, *actuation*:

What factors can account for the actuation of changes? Why do changes in a structural feature take place in a particular language at a given time, but not in other languages with the same feature, or in the same language at other times?

Weinrich, Labov & Herzog (1968:102 – orig. emphasis)

This relates to *transmission* and *reception*, the specific and complex way that individuals engage with media sources. Next comes the issue of *embedding*:

How are the observed changes *embedded* in the matrix of linguistic and extralinguistic concomitants of the form in question?

Weinrich, Labov & Herzog (1968:101 – orig. emphasis)

This relates to *adoption*, *adaptation* and subsequent *diffusion* of innovations. The ways that global innovations take on a different distribution and meaning in each speech community relates straightforwardly to embedding. The linguistic virtual collective allows a mapping of how all these changes happen, and involving which forms of communication. This gives a picture of how global innovations are able to spread, but remain identifiably distinct, in their global journey and their local appropriations. As Mair puts it:

Particularly when it is nonstandard forms of American English which are spreading in other communities, closer analysis shows that we are rarely dealing with simple processes of linguistic Americanization but with a more complex phenomenon: the negotiation of vernacular norms in a globalized communicative habitat [...].

Mair, 2006:195

All this opens up a new meaning of the observation that:

Essentially, a close-knit network will resist the adoption of changes, unless these changes come via an “insider” who also has “weak ties” elsewhere (Milroy & Milroy, 1992).

Kerswill & Williams, 2000a:92

That idea of an “insider” feeding innovations from “outside” can be readjusted by thinking that these links to “outside” could be served by media input, just as much as contact from someone who happens to periodically leave the speech community. These models complement and cross-cut each other; and help to conceptualise this new context for declining diversity in a particular societal condition.²¹

²¹ See Appendix 4 for a brief re-evaluation of existing dialectological studies using linguistic virtual collectives.

| | 1926 | 1937 | 1947 | 1957 | 1967 | 1977 | 1987 | 1997 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Wireless | 24.7 | 79.2 | 87.1 | 52.2 | 15.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B&W TV | 0 | 0 | 0.1 | 48.1 | 88.1 | 44.2 | 12.4 | 2.1 |
| Colour TV | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 54.4 | 84.8 | 97.2 |

Table 4.3 Broadcast licenses as a % of the no. of census households (Gershuny & Fisher, 1999:25)

4.6 Possible explanations

Like Chapters 2 and 3, a brief explanation for the recentness of this type of language change will be attempted; in this case the pervasiveness of mass media, and potential effects on the types of people participating in global innovation dispersal. Again this is little more than a series of signposts towards relevant related research, but will hopefully add some useful detail. More to the point, that work is currently underway by Stuart-Smith and her colleagues. All that I can do here is to make some general points about TV penetration in the UK, and review existing research on TV audiences. I concentrate here on TV because that is the predominant focus of the accounts reviewed above. Engagement with other media – radio, the internet, etc. – is equally important, just beyond the scope of this chapter.

“Television in the United Kingdom is an essentially post-war phenomenon” (Hand, 2002:4), with TV ownership increasing to near saturation in the last half century (Table 4.3 and 4.4) – and with a detectable urban-rural

| YEAR | ALL HOMES | TV HOMES | % |
|------|-----------|----------|-------|
| 1956 | 15.6 | 5.7 | 36.54 |
| 1957 | 15.8 | 7.0 | 44.30 |
| 1958 | 15.9 | 8.2 | 51.57 |
| 1959 | 16.1 | 9.4 | 58.39 |
| 1960 | 16.3 | 11.0 | 67.48 |
| 1961 | 16.5 | 12.3 | 74.55 |
| 1962 | 16.6 | 12.8 | 77.11 |
| 1963 | 16.7 | 13.6 | 81.44 |
| 1964 | 17.0 | 14.2 | 83.53 |
| 1965 | 17.3 | 14.6 | 84.39 |
| 1966 | 17.8 | 15.4 | 86.52 |
| 1967 | 18.0 | 15.9 | 88.33 |
| 1968 | 18.2 | 16.4 | 90.11 |
| 1969 | 18.3 | 16.7 | 91.26 |
| 1970 | 18.4 | 16.9 | 91.85 |
| 1971 | 18.5 | 17.2 | 92.97 |
| 1972 | 18.4 | 17.2 | 93.48 |
| 1973 | 18.5 | 17.5 | 94.59 |
| 1974 | 18.7 | 17.8 | 95.19 |
| 1975 | 19.2 | 18.6 | 96.88 |
| 1976 | 19.3 | 18.7 | 96.89 |
| 1977 | 19.5 | 19.0 | 97.44 |
| 1978 | 20.0 | 19.5 | 97.50 |
| 1979 | 20.2 | 19.7 | 97.52 |
| 1980 | 20.4 | 19.9 | 97.55 |
| 1981 | 20.8 | 20.3 | 97.60 |
| 1982 | 20.7 | 20.3 | 98.07 |
| 1983 | 20.9 | 20.4 | 97.61 |
| 1984 | 21.0 | 20.5 | 97.62 |
| 1985 | 21.2 | 20.6 | 97.17 |
| 1986 | 21.2 | 20.6 | 97.17 |
| 1987 | 21.3 | 20.7 | 97.18 |
| 1988 | 21.5 | 20.9 | 97.21 |
| 1989 | 21.7 | 21.1 | 97.24 |
| 1990 | 22.2 | 21.5 | 96.85 |
| 1991 | 22.6 | 21.9 | 96.90 |
| 1992 | 22.7 | 22.0 | 96.92 |
| 1993 | 22.8 | 22.1 | 96.93 |
| 1994 | 22.8 | 22.2 | 97.37 |
| 1995 | 23.0 | 22.4 | 97.39 |
| 1996 | 24.0 | 23.3 | 97.08 |
| 1997 | 24.2 | 23.5 | 97.11 |
| 1998 | 24.5 | 23.7 | 96.73 |
| 1999 | 24.7 | 23.9 | 96.76 |
| 2000 | 24.9 | 24.1 | 96.79 |
| 2001 | 25.1 | 24.3 | 96.81 |
| 2002 | 25.2 | 24.5 | 97.22 |
| 2003 | 25.4 | 24.7 | 97.24 |
| 2004 | 25.2 | 24.6 | 97.62 |
| 2005 | 25.4 | 24.9 | 98.03 |
| 2006 | 25.8 | 25.2 | 97.67 |
| 2007 | 25.9 | 25.3 | 97.68 |

Table 4.4 UK TV ownership: 1956-2007 (millions) (BARB, 2007)

divide in use of all telecommunications (Ofcom, 2007; Table 4.5). This could help explain the timing of the types of innovation dispersal outlined so far, given the concentration on urban speakers in the literature reviewed above. And although children do not watch the most TV, they may be most susceptible to its influence, since “children will absorb more than adults per hour of TV because they are always trying to learn about the world, but [...] at a slower rate as they get older and more discriminating” (van Evra, 2004:39).

Papa et al. describe engagement with media stimuli as “parasocial interaction”, “the process through which community members enact system-level changes as a result of exposure to [...] media messages” (2000:31). This gives a vantage point onto the kinds of actuation issues involved in the linguistic virtual collective, and illustrates how media engagement could be said to constitute a form of linguistic mobility: this is not face-to-face interaction, but some kind of interactive process that appears to have a recognisable linguistic effect. The partial, gradual, negotiated adaptation and appropriation of global culture has a notable history in other types of mass messages, as in 1970s British subcultures where:

working-class youth constructed a cultural, or *subcultural*, response pertinent to their life experiences by fusing together elements of their ‘parent’ culture [...] with elements derived from other cultural sources – in particular, the products of the various media and consumer industries.

Osgerby, 2004:118 (orig. emphasis)

Such negotiated conformity finds its place in the 1990s with a debate about “neo-tribes”, loose associations of “creative consumers” (Osgerby, 2004:135) attracted to similar styles of cultural products and media, but showing neither strict loyalty to particular genres, nor consistent interpretation of them (ibid. p.131). As Ang has it:

| <i>Activity level in the last week</i> | <i>Degree of urbanisation</i> | | | | <i>Accommodation type</i> | | | <i>Total</i> |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------|------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| | Urban % | Suburban % | Rural % | Detached % | Semi-detached % | Terraced % | Other % | |
| Males | | | | | | | | |
| Group 3 - high | 44 | 57 | 57 | 53 | 59 | 54 | 46 | 55 |
| Group 2 - medium | 19 | 15 | 16 | 19 | 16 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| Group 1 - low | 37 | 28 | 27 | 28 | 25 | 32 | 39 | 29 |
| Females | | | | | | | | |
| Group 3 -high | 33 | 39 | 41 | 40 | 39 | 38 | 35 | 39 |
| Group 2 -medium | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 19 | 16 | 20 | 18 |
| Group 1 - low | 49 | 43 | 41 | 42 | 42 | 46 | 45 | 44 |

High = 60+ mins 5+ days a week; medium = 30-59+ mins 5+ days a week; low = anything lower

Table 4.5 *Levels of inactivity (including TV viewing) among 2-15 year olds in England, by sex and urban/rural location (DoH, 2000, Table 8.15)*

local realities can themselves present an unpredictable interpretive screen through which the intruding electronic screen images are filtered. [...] In other words, global media do affect, but cannot control local meanings.

[...]

Media reality has not completely erased social reality, [...] counterposed as it is by the centrifugal forces of the local micro-circumstances in which people live out their everyday lives, where different concerns take on priority.

Ang, 1996:151-152

Gillespie (1995) provides an ethnographic account of British Asian youths of Punjabi descent in Southall, Greater London, who combine elements of ostensibly British culture and Punjab culture in their lives. In creating this pastiche, something new comes about; but it is not a dissolved Punjab identity. It may be less distinct from the Punjab cultural artefacts that went into the mix, but it is still unique to this group. Of particular relevance to the current discussion, Gillespie analyses engagement with the Australian soap opera *Neighbours*, and how the show is related to individuals' own lives and given a unique, negotiated meaning based on pre-existing cultural norms.

Mrs Mangel, the elderly woman who observes, reports and censures young people's behaviour, incarnates for Southall youth the network of relatives and neighbours, particularly aunts and other female elders, who act as the moral guardians of their neighbourhood and whose 'gossip' is feared as a force of constraint on young people's freedom.

[...]

Neighbours is part of young people's shared culture and acts as a collective resource through which they compare and contrast, judge and evaluate the events and characters in the soap and those in 'real' life.

Gillespie, 1995:142,145 (orig. emphasis)

Similarly Gauntlett & Hill (1999:112) note that "watching soaps such as *EastEnders* [...] is a shared social activity that provides an easy topic of conversation" (orig. emphasis). The soap text is a resource "that young people can draw upon collectively to make sense of their own lives" (Gillespie, 1995:149). As Fiske notes of a study involving Australian children watching the American soap opera *Prisoner*:

Prisoner provided Australian students with a language, a set of cultural categories complete with connotations, value systems, and ideological inflection with which to think through their own experience [...]. The children inserted the meanings of the program into their social experience of school in a way that informed both – the meanings of school and the meanings of *Prisoner* were each influenced by the other, and the fit between them ensured that they both validated the other.

Fiske, 1987:69 (orig. emphases)

Much the same take on the inherent reworking of TV content is achieved when insights from literary theory are brought to bear; specifically, reception theory. As Livingstone explains,

soap operas [...] not only specify multiple viewpoints on the events portrayed, but also thrive on interplay between these viewpoints [...]. Any text draws upon cultural meanings, does not (cannot) fully specify contexts, and so gains its meanings from paradigmatic selections.

[...]

Hence, soap opera is unusual among highly popular culture genres in providing a considerable role for the viewer.

Livingstone, 1998:42, 52 (see also pp.91-94)

This negotiates a path between the totalising cultural hegemony of 'global culture' on the one hand (traceable at least back to Adorno, 1941, and surviving through to the likes of Ritzer, 1998), and the persistent reassertion of local cultures on the other (e.g. R. Winter, 2003:214-217). There is a sense in which globally available media texts are locally received and reworked by their audiences, both in the moment of engaging with the media, and subsequently as the text

is reworked by people during face-to-face interaction. Hall (1980) refers to this process as “encoding/decoding”, an inherently creative practice:

it is [...] possible (and useful) to think of this process in terms of a structure produced and sustained through the articulation of linked but distinctive moments – production, circulation, distribution/consumption, reproduction.

Hall, 1980:197

Neither total homogenisation nor ceaseless dynamism prevails, but a tempered, more incipient form of normalisation. It is in these more subtle, less readily detectable forms of cultural erosion that the sociology of globalisation dovetails with the examination of global linguistic innovations. Media stimuli are received, but that engagement cannot happen without interpretation and complex individual differences (see also France, 2007:123-131).

4.7 Conclusions

There is an understanding that television audiences are “engaged in a constant active struggle to make sense of their social experience, and that television plays an important role in that struggle” (Fiske, 1987:68). As R. Winter has it: “Symbols, signs and ideologies are signed out of their original contexts and gain a new meaning by mixing with other cultural elements” (2003:217). This constitutes a “creative everyday practice under global conditions” (ibid. p.215), an “attempt by individuals and groups to construct [...] a united front to defend common interest, feelings and needs” (ibid. p.214). The spread of global linguistic innovations seems to be causing a decline in linguistic diversity, but by no means a total homogenisation. These innovations are spreading and displacing existing local dialect forms; but they are undeniably reworked anew in each context. Nevertheless, the equilibrium of that balance deserves close attention:

‘consumption’ becomes a form of *bricolage*, in which goods are selected, combined, and manipulated [...]. [...] Nevertheless, [...] there are distinct limitations in this model

of ‘creative consumption’; and [...] crucial distinctions [...] between the appropriation or manipulation of *existing* texts and the production of new ones.

Sefton-Green & Buckingham, 1998:62 (orig. emphases)

The linguistic virtual collective is designed to help map media effects on language change, in distinction to the effects of face-to-face interaction. This hopefully allows a clearer understanding of the limits of the speech community model, and a firmer theoretical structure upon which to pursue the possible role of the media.

Finally, these points about TV viewing and language change can be joined up with the points made in the last chapter about the conditions needed for the maintenance of local dialects.

Specifically, I claimed that it is not so important who we are in contact with, but who we are not in contact with; and how increased spatial and linguistic mobility draws people away from the kinds of dense, close-knit social networks understood to be the nurseries of local dialects. When home-based leisure activities increase to the detriment of community-based activities; when conversation is displaced or adjoined by media engagement; in sum, when people are not predominantly spending their time talking to other people in the local community, then local dialect features face additional pressure. As Putnam has it,

[TV] privatizes leisure time [...]. TV watching comes at the expense of nearly every social activity outside the home, especially social gatherings and informal conversations.

Putnam, 2000:236-237

This does not result in a total obliteration of local differences, but a negotiated decline:

Global identities are additive, and need not affect existing social or regional identities; and, if the spread of globally diffusing [linguistic] forms does not rely exclusively on face-to-face contact, speakers of all social and regional groups may acquire the forms simultaneously.

Cheshire et al., 2005:156

This fact of *different* places becoming swept up in *similar* economic, political and cultural flows is, of course, one thing that the concept of globalization directs our attention to. The spread of McDonalds fast-food outlets has, perhaps, become the classic example of this heightened place interconnection. But this does not necessarily mean that places worldwide are becoming more alike. The point, following Massey [1999], is that ‘non-local’ processes *combine* with existing local differences to yield unique outcomes. Places ‘internalize’ these processes in distinctive ways, which is why place interconnection does not imply increased homogeneity among places.

Castree et al., 2004:68 (orig. emphases)

Will this decline in diversity last? As Mair puts it dryly, “generations of teenage linguistic rebellion will not lead to a lasting change in community norms” (2006:29); yet this may not be the case here. To draw back to quotative *be like*: “In sum, there is homogenization of the Canadian quotative system”. (Tagliamonte & Hudson, 2004:18); and “the evidence suggests a profile of communal change, with speakers increasing their use of *be like* throughout their lifetime” (Tagliamonte & D’Arcy, 2007:213). Through dispersal, global innovations are adopted and adapted in myriad different places, potentially affecting diversity on a larger scale.

Like the changes outlined in Chapter 3, distant speech communities are sharing linguistic innovations but these are worked into existing repertoires, finding unique linguistic and social functions. The result is the spread of noticeably similar innovations, but with subtle differences foreshadowed by the intricate sociolinguistic particularities of each locale. We are returned to the two concepts of variation and variability: declining diversity overall, but persisting differences in different speech communities, and individual people.

Chapter 5

Linguistic diversity in the rhetoric and reality of language policy and planning

[W]hile [...] modern conditions are indeed most unfavourable to the preservation of local specificity and village-green cultures, the new homogeneity will emerge around points of attraction, hollows in the ground [...] separated by quite high ridges. [...] For 'hollows', read attractive, emulation-inviting cultural models, cultures already equipped with writing and codified norms, and capable of absorbing the previously localised cultural patterns, either by possessing affinity with them, or by persuasively proclaiming their own superiority and authority, or both.

Gellner, 1997:34

In order to increase our knowledge of the past, antiquities of every kind have been examined; the sites of ancient cities have been laid bare, coins dug up and deciphered, inscriptions copied, alphabets restored, hieroglyphics interpreted, and, in some instances, long-forgotten languages re-constructed and re-arranged.

Buckle, 1857:2

That which we propose to ourselves is, to examine the present State of the Language, to fix what is right by Grammars and Dictionaries, to fill up what is wanting, straighten what is crooked, and make it easy to be learnt by Youth and Strangers.

Wilson, 1724:4-5 (cited by C. Jones, 2006:11)

5.1 Introduction

So far this investigation has reviewed variationist sociolinguistics, suggesting that this discipline has fully described all the facets of linguistic diversity, but does not mention it by name. We now turn to language policy and planning, which, in contrast, often mentions linguistic diversity by name, but never fully defines it. Discussion largely centres on the total number of discrete languages or language varieties; but this tends to obscure the inherent duality of *variation* and *variability* discussed so far. A routinely cited aim of “protecting linguistic diversity” is therefore not grounded in a clear conception of what that might mean. Chapter 5 argues that this mismatch allows key declines in linguistic diversity to go on unnoticed, some even encouraged by efforts to promote minority languages, which leaves a rift in the logic of the enterprise. The insights of Chapters 1-4 are applied to this disjuncture: examining the discourse of modern language policy and planning; its political and historical contexts; and then looking at how linguistic diversity so defined is faring in two modern language revivals, Cornish and Welsh.

The case studies of Cornish and Welsh consider, from different perspectives, two key topics. The first is language standardisation, or what has to happen to a minority language for it to be officially protected – specifically, how the need for standardisation develops, and what political and administrative requirements motivate this concern. The effects of this on linguistic diversity are examined, picking up the themes of Chapter 2. The second topic is ambient declines in diversity, of the kind reviewed in Chapters 3-4; and whether these are recognised in language policy and planning. Overall this is aiming toward a fuller understanding of what ‘counts’ as linguistic diversity in this field, and what this means for the original claims to be protecting it.

In safeguarding endangered languages, perhaps overall diversity could be seen as a necessary sacrifice. This position can be read into some accounts in support of language standardisation as

a way to strengthen a group language – for example M.C. Jones (1994) championing Standard Welsh; suggesting the end justifies the means and this is a price worth paying. Lepschy (1994), discussing regional languages of Italy, takes the opposite view, arguing that non-codified “home” languages should simply operate in different domains to standardised lingua francas. Opinions on this are many and varied, and the aim here is not to contribute another. The aim here is to explore what linguistic diversity is, and to evaluate the explicit claims to protect it.

Heeding the warnings of Chapter 1, we can say that dialects and other language varieties can be used to indicate changes in linguistic diversity, as long as these are understood as heuristics. If these are weakening – if we notice dialects becoming more similar amid a relative paucity of linguistic innovation – then diversity is in decline. These are the criteria against which the following analysis will take place.

5.1.1 The existing debate

There is a small but growing literature offering critical reflections on language policy and planning, some of which touches on the subject of linguistic diversity. The following is a brief review of these – for reasons of space somewhat skewed towards the most recent accounts. This is followed in §5.1.2 with an outline of what remains for the current investigation to explore.

Broadly speaking, existing critiques mostly centre on themes of nationalism, otherness, ideology, morality and power, (e.g. Catenaccio, 2003; Bartha & Borbely, 2006; Edwards, 2006; Milani, 2007). A representative range of viewpoints is captured in an edited volume published in 2007, *Discourses of Endangerment*. It sets out to “take some critical distance from this explosion of discursive material” in the field (Heller & Duchêne, 2007:2), asking “What ideologies of language are involved?” and “In whose interests is it to promote or contest such discourses?”

(ibid. p.4). A similar critical approach is taken in King et al. (2008a), asking who benefits, and what costs (human and financial) are involved. This angle is also taken up by Jaffe (2004):

given the long tentacles of the dominant ideologies of language and identity, the celebration of multiplicity, hybridity and ambivalence is not a powerful discursive position. You do not get money, or books, or official recognition by claiming ambiguous relationships with several identities, and shifting and contingent forms of identification with multiple linguistic codes.

Jaffe, 2004:278

As Kibbee notes:

The planning efforts to re-establish an imaginary linguistic ecology proposed by western researchers can very easily give rise to new injustices. The use of any given local or regional language requires the standardisation of those languages, an effort that reproduces at the local level the same procedures condemned by Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas on an international scale [viz. the spread of English].

Kibbee, 2003:53-54

A number of researchers have similarly noted how struggles for minority language recognition often require unity within minorities, and that this shoe-horning is somewhat ironic, given the nature of the struggle. Language standardisation, it is argued, exacerbates this: “the dominant, ‘scientific’ conception of discrete, ‘hard-edged’ languages has considerable symbolic power [...] and is strategically useful to minorities in their struggle for language rights” (Freeland & Patrick, 2004:8). And as Jaffe remarks: “institutions in which language revitalization take place (like schools) are not set up to recognise multiple norms and mixed codes” (2007:73).

Wright (2007a, 2007b, citing Bourhis, 2001) refers to the “Russian doll” aspect of language, and the potential for new injustices: “What is less often considered is that the problem may be replicated for the minorities that minority groups themselves have among them” (2007a:204).

Mobilising poststructuralist theory, she distinguishes “language-as-practice” from “language-as-system”. In terms reminiscent of the duality of variation and variability, she flags up a “constant

tension [...] between the acceptance of the heterogeneity of practice and the necessity of fixing a set of forms that will remain invariant across all domains” (2007a:221) to the detriment of “creativity and evaluation of meaning” inherent in language-as-practice (ibid. p.208):

The trade-off seems clear. Where a language becomes a language of power of any kind (the language used in democratic institutions and in bureaucracies and the language spread through a state-run education system), the cost is acceptance of that language as system – a codified, stable written standard that may not entirely reflect the practice of those designated as its speakers.

Wright, 2007b:96

Wright having posited standardisation as a compromise, Muehlmann (2007) problematises the term linguistic diversity in language planning promotional literature. She argues that revival efforts tend to essentialise minority languages and peoples, seeing languages as a resource to be extracted, like other minerals and pharmacological bounties. She singles out the Hans Rausing project for concentrating on language documentation, and the “apparent de-prioritization of the lives in question” (p.20). In fairness, Peter Austin, director of the Hans Rausing project, has gone to some lengths to stress the division of labour – and ideals – between language documentation and revitalisation (e.g. Austin, 2007); and has also taken on board criticisms of reductionism in documentary linguistics (Dobrin et al., 2007). Nevertheless, Muehlmann maintains a pertinent point that cataloguing and archiving does not equate to protecting either diversity or people.

In a similar vein to Muehlmann, Jaffe (2007) reviews the wording of funding bodies relating to projects on minority languages, and their “implicit emphasis on the properties of language-as-code (that can be documented) and its iconic identity with the identity of bounded cultural groups” (p.61). Also evocative of the variation-variability nexus, she relates how, during the legitimisation of Corsican in Corsica: “Corsican language purism, while good for Corsican, stigmatized many habitual language practices, including codeswitching between Corsican and French and the use of contact-induced forms” (p.63).

Also of relevance is Stroud & Heugh's (2004) study in South Africa, describing

a 'non-standard' hybrid language (including elements of Zulu and Afrikaans) called 'Tsotsitaal' from the working class outskirts and townships of Johannesburg [...] used by (would-be) gangsters and rebellious township youth.

Stroud & Heugh, 2004:201

Discussing its complex and innovative "multi-refunctionalization" in different settings, they note that this dynamism comes at a price in relation to official language protection measures:

The importance of informal and at times stigmatized local varieties in intimate contexts of this type challenges the emphasis of LHR [Linguistic Human Rights] discourse on formally sanctioned and publically (sic) recognized linguistic practices. Language or educational policy based within LHR paradigms, with their narrow conception of ethnolinguistic identity do not fit complex and ever shifting identities, and there is no sense in which facts such as these can be productively employed in educational contexts within the LHR paradigm. In other words, languages like Tsotstitaal are not legitimated in the rights paradigm [...] and their speakers are marginalized.

Stroud & Heugh, 2004:202

Makoni & Pennycook (2007) pursue the notion that languages are philological constructs – "not just new names for extant objects (languages pre-existed the naming), but rather the invention and naming of new objects" (p.10) (referred to in §1.2 as a *catathresis*). They build a postcolonial argument about language ideology, minority rights and so on, in order to counter "Western linguistic and cultural suppositions" (p.27) about languages as pre-existing units.

The necessity of language standardisation as part of these compromises is examined more clearly elsewhere (e.g. Ricento, 2000:201-202; Grenoble & Whaley, 2006:154; Blake, 2003:217). This in turn draws from and contributes to a broader literature critiquing minority rights, which may engender new pressures to conform within groups so protected (e.g. Kuper, 1999: 236-237; Kelly, 2002). Grin (2003) concludes his monograph with a note on this compromise:

a socially preferable level of linguistic diversity is probably not ‘infinite’ for cost reasons [...]. However, a socially preferable level of linguistic diversity is certainly *positive* (and, therefore, larger than zero). For this general reason, it is [...] morally appropriate to preserve threatened languages.

Regional or minority languages do not have a monopoly as incarnations or guardians of linguistic diversity; they are, quite simply, key components of linguistic diversity.

[...] If linguistic diversity is to be efficiently preserved, the presence and use of all languages must be considered *normal*.

Grin, 2003:202 (orig. emphases)

This reflexivity about what is being protected is echoed by Milani (2007), who describes official promotion of Swedish as a metonymic representation, with Swedish a “bearer” of Sweden’s cultural heritage; a policy that “reproduces a static relationship between one language indexing and symbolically standing for one, in reality diverse, blended and always changing culture” (p.191). Similarly Blommaert (2001), in a rebuttal of what he sees as essentialist undertones in the Asmara Declaration, recalls the “sociolinguistic truism” that “within ‘French’, ‘English’, ‘Dutch’ or ‘Swahili’ there is massive diversity” (p.135). Or as Romaine puts it: “The discourse of authenticity is basically an essentializing one at the same time as it is oppositional; what is constructed as authentic is about whatever is different from the dominant culture” (2006:446). Strubell (2007), in a dissection of the term linguistic diversity in EU language policy, notes:

it would seem reasonable to argue that ‘safeguard’ and ‘preserve’ refer to the maintenance of an existing state of affairs that may be under threat [...]. Clear support for this view can be gleaned from the many Calls for proposals published up until 2000 by the European Commission to provide measures to *promote and safeguard regional or minority languages*. The object is much less abstract, and therefore much clearer: it is not ‘diversity’ [...] being addressed, but rather minority languages and cultures.

Strubell, 2007:159 (orig. emphasis)

These various accounts make useful inroads into the slippery problem of diversity: the compromises involved in minority struggles for recognition; and how the institutions charged with affording such protections may not be best equipped to protect something so volatile. Useful as these points are, still there is something to add.

5.1.2 Contributions of this chapter

Four main contributions are made in this chapter (not listed in order, but threading through the discussion). The first is to complement existing critiques of human rights and ideology with a sociolinguistically grounded conception of linguistic diversity. Despite some of the authors above clearly mentioning compromises in diversity in relation to issues like standardisation, still this is not matched with a clear description of what diversity is, or exactly how it is neglected. That issue seems surpassed by a concern with issues of rights and power, for example “how these discourses serve to further or obstruct particular social actors’ claims in the linguistic marketplace” (Jaffe, 2004:273). Similar themes come across in Jaffe (2007), Wright (2007a) and Kraus (2007). Compromises in language are of interest, but their aim was never to make such a linguistically detailed argument.

Even when Strubell (2007:159) specifically cleaves apart the meaning of “linguistic diversity” and “minority languages and cultures” in EU political discourse, this is not matched with any sociolinguistic detail. Although he clearly states what linguistic diversity is not, he is less clear about what it is. By the same token, as we will see later, actual dialectological reports on minority languages do not make recourse to the term “linguistic diversity”, much less its rhetorical application in language policy and planning. The space therefore remains for this chapter to fill, stepping back from the rights argument, and adding linguistic detail to the description of changing linguistic diversity.

Secondly, the critiques reviewed above are articulated mostly in absolute terms: that there is something language policy and planning cannot do, regardless of whether it claimed to be able to do those things. This also applies to critiques of other aspects of the field, for example Petrovic’s (2005) reproach of what he sees as “neoliberal” undertones in bilingual education in the US. This

rests on the assumption – of which he is not shy – that neoliberalism is inherently distasteful, at odds with language policy and planning whose guiding rationale surely lies elsewhere. This leaves Petrovic open to a challenge from McGroarty (2006), arguing that neoliberalism is a kind of necessary evil; that “articulation of multiple rationales for language policy is strategically essential” (p.3). Petrovic’s absolute argument is grounded in externally justified moral positions, without reference to the claims and stated goals contained within language policy itself. The second contribution of this chapter, then, is to construct a more relativistic approach, binding a description of declining linguistic diversity firmly against the explicit claims to be protecting it. This proceeds on the basis of *reductio ad absurdum*. Far from pedantry, this is strengthened by highlighting an internal paradox within a given argument, over and above pointing out unrecognised limitations. As Rescher puts it:

The overall lesson is that when a hypothesis-engendered paradoxical situation becomes *too* paradoxical, the appropriate course may be to dissolve the paradox by concluding that the underlying suppositions on which it rests are simply inappropriate. [...] For when suppositions run too far afield of the reality of things the lesson that emerges is that they themselves are deeply problematic, hoisted into untenability [...].

Rescher, 2005:132 (orig. emphasis)

The third contribution of this chapter is to separate failure to encourage diversity from actual *damage* to it, caused by language planning efforts themselves. The absence of this distinction from current literature seems to be caused first by the under-theorisation of linguistic diversity, borne of its lack of dialogue with social dialectology. However, this is compounded by conflating two goals in language policy and planning: *protecting existing speakers*, and *attracting new ones*. In opening out this distinction, the current chapter aims to bring new insights on the “range of interindividual and intersubgroup variability” in minority languages (Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998:24) – as Tully puts it, that cultures must be understood as “overlapping, interactive and internally negotiated” (2002:104).

Fourthly and finally, the present focus on ideology and rights tends to overlook crucial changes in governmental doctrine in the last quarter of a century, corresponding with the rise of language policy and planning. Authors like Heller & Duchêne (2007) have a keen focus on politics, but this is about broad themes of power and struggle, not the infrastructure of government. Quite apart from the machinations and debates of language ideologues are the more mundane decisions over the distribution of resources in state-sponsored language revivals. These two decision-making arenas, although intertwined, are quite different. The fourth contribution then is to relate contemporaneous changes in governmental climate to language policy and planning, and the consequences of this for the treatment of linguistic diversity.

This chapter takes its lead from Wright (2007a,b), who asks “What is a language?” and answers that it is a certain identifiable code, not the entirety of linguistic variation and variability.

Similarly Calvet (2006) tries to see past “languages” as ontological constructs, and into linguistic diversity as an uncategorisable chaotic mass. He grounds his argument upon

a hypothesis that [...] is fundamental: *languages do not exist*; the notion of a *language* is an abstraction that rests on the regularity of a certain number of facts, of features, in the products of speakers and their *practices*.

Calvet, 2006:241 (orig. emphases)

This is similarly articulated by Makoni & Pennycook, asserting “the premise that *languages*, *conceptions of languageness* and the *metalanguages* used to describe them are inventions” (2007:1 – orig. emphases). The division of practices and representations outlined by Calvet is discussed at greater length by theorists of culture and citizenship; perhaps the closest match being the distinction between “identity politics” and “diversity politics”:

diversity politics focuses on the centrality of transgression. It entails the questioning of the relation between reality and linguistic representation.

Squires, 2002:118

Squires' "reality and linguistic representation" echoes Calvet's "practices and representations"; reflecting the impossibility of recording diversity in its entirety, much less officially supporting it. The current chapter should be seen as an extension of that line of inquiry. This then is the crux of the matter: the gap between diversity as a process of ongoing change, and the ability of humans to understand and categorise, and then protect, noticeable differences in language; and problems arising when the two are conflated under the umbrella term 'linguistic diversity'.

The readiest oversimplification of what follows is that 'language policy just protects standard languages, not dialects'. That is not my argument. I aim to demonstrate that linguistic diversity is more than a series of discrete linguistic units – units that include dialects. A case in point is Guy & Zilles' (2008) discussion of "Popular Brazilian Portuguese", and their plans to fortify and protect it, in similar terms to other language standardisation efforts. Likewise Ó hÍfearnáin (2008), discussing Irish Gaelic, foregrounds public concern over the authenticity of the emergent Standard in relation to historical dialects. The themes of purity and uniformity transcend both camps. This does not pass Ó hÍfearnáin by; yet his subsequent discussion of protecting Irish dialects, alongside the Standard, ultimately does not counter this essentialist discourse.

In sum, these protective approaches rely on "defining, documenting and developing minority and endangered languages and language varieties" (King et al., 2008b:2). To return to Calvet on the impossibility of fully representing diversity, he ultimately concludes that "linguistic ecology is [...] not synonymous with the protection of endangered languages" (2006:248) – an assertion that encapsulates, and aptly summarises, the rest of this investigation.

One notable absence, having said all this about language revival, will be its relation to debates over the "invention of tradition" (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983): positing tradition as piecemeal

and retrospective, jumbled together from fragments of the past (real or imagined) to create ‘authentic’ and meaningful cultures in the present. This relation has been taken up for example by Makoni & Pennycook (2007). This in turn feeds into an array of research on minority rights, justice in multicultural societies, and inclusive democracy (e.g. Lyotard, 1986:39-60; Kymlicka, 1996; Ingram, 2001, 2004; Kelly, 2002; Young, 1990, 2002). These debates, as well as related arguments over social capital and the benefits and drawbacks of cultural diversity more generally (e.g. Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998; Putnam, 2000; Tully, 2002), do not directly inform the following discussion. The purpose here is not to debate whether language policy and planning is justified; but to hold language policy and planning up to its own claims about linguistic diversity. If there is any recommendation, it is limited to rethinking how linguistic diversity is discussed; and whether it deserves any place in the lexicon of language policy and planning.

5.2 Origins of modern language policy and planning

As far as languages are concerned, we are in permissive times. It is no longer commonplace to be prosecuted for using a minority language,²² and across the world there has been a recent upsurge in tolerance, encouraging minorities to use and revivify their languages. This resulted in the field of language policy and planning emerging in the 1970s (Grin, 2003:27).

Judge (2007) demonstrates that efforts to officially control language date back many centuries. Focussing on Britain and France, she pinpoints 1636 for French with the creation of the French Academy. In Britain, she names Chaucer in the 14th century as kicking off a vogue for written standards; a trend given enduring support in 1496 with Caxton’s first English printing press (ibid. p.52). Meanwhile laws were being enacted regarding regional or minority languages, usually to exclude them from officialdom. This is given an even longer legacy, beginning in

²² Such cases still exist, e.g. Macedonian in Greece, and Kurdish in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria (Wright, 2004:44).

1366 with the Statutes of Kilkenny in Ireland, banning Irish use among English people living in Ireland (and Irish living among English people), with the threat of repossession of all property and incarceration.

The modern meaning of language policy and planning generally refers to minority language promotion efforts. Ferguson (2006) dates this back to Haugen (1959), in his “description of the development of a new standard language in Norway following independence from Denmark” (Ferguson, 2006:1, after Karam, 1974:105). In a way though, this is reminiscent of the much earlier efforts to officialise, for example, English in Britain (as described by Judge, 2007). Similarly Ferguson (2006) reviews other cases in which emergent nations in the 19th and 20th centuries focused on a national language.

The [French] Revolution codified individual rights and freedoms as attributes of national citizenship, thus linking the individual and the nation-state. Citizenship acquired exclusionary properties through compulsory education, conscription, and national welfare, all of which defined culturally unified and sacred entities by creating boundaries around them. [...] These institutions erected a variety of barriers – physical borders, ideological boundaries, *national languages*, and moral obligations to the state [...].

Soysal, 1994:17 (emphasis added)

The nascent model of a unified nation-state stressed not only the importance of linguistic unity; but the danger of disunity. This view promoted the rise of national languages, and led in many cases to forced expulsion of ethnolinguistic minorities, ostensibly in order to purify the nation-state (Soysal, 1994:18-9). This same approach was adopted more or less faithfully in subsequent secession movements from nation-states by sub-national minorities. As Gellner has it:

There is frequently a profound conflict of interest between early and late entrants [to modernisation]. If late entrants can only approach the new order as fellow citizens of more privileged predecessors, who have already eaten the forbidden fruit and accommodated themselves to it, the latecomers are liable to suffer particularly acute disabilities. If they can distinguish themselves culturally from their exploiters and

oppressors, it is very much to their advantage to hive off politically, when the opportunity arises, and to modernise under their own flag, in their own sovereign territory. Here they can protect their development from lethal competition by the more advanced, and here their own dialect is spoken with pride, as the state language, rather than muttered with shame as the badge of backwardness and rusticity.

Gellner, 1997:34-5

Gellner cites this process as “one of the commonest and most typical forms of nationalism” (1997:35) throughout the era of nation-states. This in turn dovetails with calls for secession among those “latecomers” to nationalism:

The principle of self-determination further reinforces expressions of nationalism, since, for sovereign statehood, a nationally bounded and unified population is imperative. Therefore, collectivities that have been previously defined simply as ethnicities, religious minorities, or language groups, reinvent their “nationness,” accentuate the uniqueness of their cultures and histories, and cultivate particularisms to construct their “others”.

Soysal, 1994:160

A common theme, surviving from the earliest national language projects, is bringing a vernacular language ‘up’ into ‘proper’ use (not to deny that this may be complemented by other measures, of which more later). As C. Jones notes of an 18th century scholar of English:

Lane (1700) takes an especially strong ‘vernacular grammar first’ line: “it seems to be contrary to Sense and Reason, as well as to Antiquity, to put English Youth to toil in any Foreign Tongue whatever for the attainment of good learning, while their own excellent language lies neglected and uncultivated’.

C. Jones, 2006:8

It is not legitimate to claim that present day policymakers and planners draw inspiration from these historical forebears. Precedence does not imply ancestry. Still, certain rationales clearly survive insofar as fortifying historical and heritage languages for defined groups of people.

In the post-WWII era, drives for solid singular national unity – while still important – were joined by a new enthusiasm to empower sub-national minorities. This was underpinned by a

battery of post-war international agreements, foremost among these the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) (Grin, 2003:81). Declining interest in secession meant a change of scope for language policy: from *which* language to use officially, to *how many*. It is this latter endeavour to which the term *minority language policy* refers, since these are to remain minorities and not dissociate.

From the 1960s onwards, devolution of national governments, the granting of rights to minority groups, and a rise in tolerance for multiculturalism and ethnic plurality, were all spurred on by a more fluid definition of citizenship (Soysal, 1994). For language, this has meant tolerance and even overt promotion of minority tongues: Welsh in Wales, Breton in Brittany, French in Québec, and so on. Although these concessions represent an important challenge to the nationalist ideal, nevertheless this is not a free-for-all: Welsh is promoted in Wales for the Welsh, Breton in Brittany for the Bretons, and so on. In this sense it is a reworking of nationalist principles for sub-national groups. Of particular relevance to the current discussion is an emphasis on uniqueness, reiterating the need to identify a particular form of the minority language, and protect it from perceived infiltration. Soysal continues:

An intensifying world-level discourse of “plurality” that encourages “distinct cultures” within and across national borders contributes to this new dynamism. [...]

A growing tendency toward regionalisms (sometimes separatisms) and their recognition by the central states, fragments existing nations and nationalities into infinitely distinct ethnicities and cultural subunits. In Europe more and more groups seek economic and linguistic autonomy on the basis of their regional identities – Bretons, Corsicans, Basques, and Occitans in France; Scots and Welsh in Britain; Lombards and Sardinians in Italy. The multiplication of particularisms and subsequent fragmentation disrupt the presumed contiguities of nationness and undermine the territorial sanctity of nation-states.

Soysal, 1994:160-1

Unity and resistance notwithstanding, minority language policy need not necessarily entail political sovereignty or secession. Here it is useful to invoke the distinction between “political rights” and “social rights”:

Since political rights, as enacted in the principles of suffrage and popular sovereignty, were codified at a time when the nation-state was at its ideological apex [19th and early 20th century], they came to be associated exclusively with national citizenship. The notion of social rights, on the other hand, emerged in the twentieth century, when most Western states had already completed their nation building process. Social rights are hence more expandable, both in scope and content, and are less exclusive than political rights.

Soysal, 1994:131

The Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms mandated against arbitrary discrimination based on language, and required basic provisions like translation in court. Soysal goes on to describe international conventions developing in the 20th century requiring mother tongue education (1994:146-147) and how this can be seen as a right (*ibid.* pp.154-5).

From the mid-1980s, as human rights was being discussed in ever more universal terms, so too the scope of language policy grew: away from each individual minority toward ‘minorities’ in general (Ricento, 2000:203-207); and correspondingly, from individual languages to linguistic diversity. This was part of a broader transnationalisation of political debate, deemphasising individual cases and foregrounding common causes; driven forward in Europe by the growing legislative power of the EU (Zürn & Joerges, 2005). This carving up of the nation-state, and its dissolution in transnational politics, forced attention toward the breadth of cultures, ethnicities, religions and languages within each polity, and how these might be catered for. This challenged the old belief of “to each nation its language” (McArthur, 1998:32) with something like ‘to each ethnolinguistic group its language’.

An existing emphasis in language policy on *negative* rights, dictating what states cannot do, was joined by a focus on *positive* rights, stipulating what the state *can and should* do to encourage use of minority languages, beyond merely lifting barriers (Grin, 2003:81-82):²³

From a legal perspective, the need for positive rights is rooted in the principle of substantive equality. In order to enjoy the same conditions as members of the majority, members of the minority must be given particular protection, which is aimed at creating or maintaining the conditions that are practically necessary for those conditions to be realised by them as well (and not just for members of the majority).

Grin, 2003:81-82

In other words, the state must create an atmosphere in which the minority language can be used freely anywhere, not just when it is necessary to achieve justice and basic freedom.

Alongside the expanding political discourse, from the 1970s onwards the human rights approach to linguistic minorities was being complemented by a different concern (Grin, 2003:27). It became apparent that languages can also fall out of use because they lack the prestige or vocabulary to be useful in some domains of modern life, not just because of overt discrimination. Attention therefore moved in some circles toward protecting languages themselves; gradually decoupled from concerns over rights. As Hinton has it:

In the 1970s and 1980s, there was an emphasis instead on language *maintenance* – the attempt to keep the status quo for minority languages. The fact that the languages were actually dying was not the uppermost thought in this movement. It is only in the 1990s that we see communities and linguists in a last-ditch effort to save these disappearing languages [...].

Hinton, 2003:45 (orig. emphasis)

Given all this, the roles that have evolved for language policy and language planning can be understood as follows. Language policy lays down some (increasingly generic and wide-ranging) requirements for the protection and promotion of particular languages; while language planning

²³ See Vizard (2005) for a broader discussion of negative vs. positive human rights.

executes various measures accordingly. Romaine (2008) argues that sentimentalising about an idealised past is not the goal of contemporary language planning; rather sustainable inclusion of minority languages in a modernising, developing project is the goal. Sentimentality, of course, will not simply disappear; and it is this mixture of traditional ideals and modern political discourse that sets the stage for the discussion and case studies that follow. From this brief history of the field as it stands we can outline some aims of language policy and planning, as an overall enterprise, to consider as a backdrop.

5.3 The aims of language policy and planning

[N]either cultural freedom nor respect for diversity should be confused with the defence of tradition. Cultural liberty is the capability of people to live and be what they choose with adequate opportunity to consider other options.

UNDP, 2004:4

Among the original tenets of language policy and planning is “ethnolinguistic vitality” (Giles et al., 1977), comprising: *demography* (number and distribution of speakers); *status* (their prestige and socioeconomic standing); and *institutional support* (engagement with the language by government, media, education etc.). This is complemented in more recent work by a measure of *subjective vitality* (Coupland et al., 2005) – roughly, how people feel about the language.

Corresponding to demography, status, and institutional support, respectively, are three ‘types’ of language planning: *acquisition planning* (causing people, usually children, to learn or relearn the language); *status planning* (essentially public relations, raising the profile of a language); and *corpus planning* (the creation or expansion of orthographies, written materials etc. for institutions). This tripartite model is expounded by Hornberger (2006) in her integrative framework for language planning goals (reproduced in Table 5.1).

One particular distinction is played down somewhat in Hornberger's framework, and in the existing literature on which it is based. The same can be said for C.H. Williams' (2008:86) more recent "summary of language planning goals". That is the difference between protecting the speakers of a language, and protecting the language itself – referred to respectively as "language

| Types | <i>Policy planning approach (on form)</i> | <i>Cultivation planning approach (on function)</i> |
|--|---|--|
| Status planning (about uses of language) | Officialization Nationalization Standardization of status Proscription | Revival Maintenance Spread Interlingual communication – international, intranational |
| Acquisition planning (about users of language) | Group Education/school Literacy Religious Mass media Work | Reacquisition Maintenance Shift Foreign language/second language/literacy |
| | Selection Language's formal role in society <i>Extra-linguistic aims</i> | Implementation Language's functional role in society <i>Extra-linguistic aims</i> |
| Corpus planning (about language) | Standardization of corpus Standardization of auxiliary code Graphization Codification Language's form <i>Linguistic aims</i> | Modernization (new functions) Lexical Stylistic Renovation (new forms, old functions) Purification Reform Stylistic simplification Terminology unification Elaboration Language's functions <i>Semi-linguistic aims</i> |

Notes: LPP types are in plain typeface, approaches in *italics*, goals in **bold**.

The goals are shown in six cells. Haugen's (1983) fourfold matrix is indicated by shading and interpretive comments on those four quadrants are placed below the dashed lines.

Additional interpretive comments are enclosed in parentheses throughout.

The figure incorporates the work of Cooper (1989); Ferguson (1968); Haugen (1983); Hornberger (1994); Kloss (1968); Nahir (1984); Neustupny (1974); Rabin (1971); Stewart (1968).

Table 5.1 *Language policy and planning goals: an integrative framework (Hornberger, 2006:29)*

rights” and “language survival” by Freeland & Patrick (2004). The first is concerned with the freedoms of linguistic minorities, most frequently discussed in terms of educational achievement among children. This approach

comes in part from an increased understanding of the academic disadvantages that children face when they are educated in an imposed language [...] – an awareness that has arguably been the major force behind the drives to make education in vernacular languages a universal right.

Freeland & Patrick, 2004:1

In the UK this manifests itself in schemes for immigrant minorities to acquire English, “for example through English as a Second Language (ESL) programmes, in order to assist their integration into British society” (Dunbar, 2004:103). This may involve the minority language, but mostly as a means to better acquisition of the majority language. As Hinton notes in the US:

For the national bilingual education movement of the 1970s and 1980s, the primary impetus was a civil rights concern that children who don’t know English receive their early education in their first language, while at the same time learning English.

Hinton, 2003:46

This kind of effort has been described as a form of paternalism: an attempt to influence people’s behaviour in their interests. As Petrovic puts it acerbically for US language planning: “Coercion is the key to helping non-English speakers learn English and assimilate, ostensibly for their own good” (2005:399). Similarly in England during the 1980s:

Bilingual [...] learning was still funded provided the case was made that the post aimed only to support early-stage learners into the English of the curriculum, and not to develop or maintain the use of the other language.

Bourne, 1997:55

As Kraus has it:

language policy programs developed especially for immigrants usually do not have the protection of cultural diversity as their main objective. They are not designed primarily to provide institutional protection to the identity of a minority group, but rather aim at mitigating the social and economic discrimination of minority members by facilitating their integration into the majority society.

Kraus, 2008:100

“Language survival”, by contrast, is motivated less by the plight of people, more by a concern

voiced in particular by linguists, over the rapid decrease in the number of languages throughout the world as they are pushed aside by state education policies or by the wider processes of globalization.

Freeland & Patrick, 2004:1

“Indeed a frequent critique of language endangerment discourse is that it displaces concerns with speakers on to a concern with languages” (Heller & Duchêne, 2007:7, after Blommaert, 2001; Heller, 2004).

Clearly only the most extreme totalitarian regime can quash a minority language by force;²⁴ but there is debate over where force ends and coercion begins in the abandonment of a language. Still, the basic difference remains between encouraging people to feel comfortable using a language they already know, and inviting people to acquire a language afresh. This is where the widely cited term “Reversing Language Shift” (RLS) (Fishman, 1991b) comes in: actively halting and turning back abandonment of a language.

The language rights / survival distinction is given a different perspective by Grin (2003:83-84). Couched in a wider liberal debate over “individual” vs. “collective” rights, Grin argues that positive rights entail not only protecting existing speakers, but enabling and encouraging people

²⁴ Indeed it is possible for majority language education to have no detectable impact upon the use of minority languages outside school – as Landweer (2006a,b) shows in two Papua New Guinean communities, who show no detectable shift to English despite English-medium education.

in the vicinity, who did not previously speak the language, to acquire it. This he argues is essential since language is primarily maintained between people, not alone:

The point is that certain individual rights can only be exercised socially, in interaction with other individuals. The ‘social’ or ‘collective’ provision of such rights must therefore be seen as a logical condition for the full exercise of those individual rights [...].

Grin, 2003:84

As C.H. Williams has it:

Although the most satisfactory method of ensuring cultural autonomy is to allow individuals to determine group membership for themselves, this dilutes the geographical concentration of ethnic groups and renders many of them vulnerable within a multicultural framework [...].

C.H. Williams, 2008:47

For Grin, this is about building what he calls

the *capacity* to use a language. This simply means that members of [the] language community (and perhaps persons who do not identify with that community) must know the language, and if they do not [...] they should be given the opportunity to learn it. [...] Obvious as it may seem, it bears repeating that ‘capacity’ is an absolute requirement.

Grin, 2003:43 (orig. emphasis)

Similarly, as Hinton has it:

For many native activists in the communities where the language is being lost, to document a language is just to “pickle” it; but to *save* a language is to train new speakers—to find ways of helping people learn the language in situations where normal language transmission across generations no longer exists.

Hinton, 2003:45 (orig. emphasis)

This echoes an assertion made by Ó Riagáin & Shuibhne that “both positive and negative elements are essential prerequisites to effective enforcement of minority language rights” (1997:18). Or in Wright’s words:

positive rights are *de facto* group rights, even if they are presented *de jure* as individual rights. Where governments accede to demands from minority groups for educational provision in their language, for access to government and the legal process in their language, they usually cater for the group as a whole. When this happens, it is difficult for an individual to opt out.

Wright, 2007b:81-82 (orig. emphases)

Grin describes negative and positive rights as “two pillars”. Positive rights might involve creating new speakers, but still this is about rights, namely of those speakers who might otherwise feel isolated. Grin then goes on to describe a “third pillar”, promoting languages as goods in themselves, without consistently referring to existing speakers and potentially irrespective of whether anyone speaks it. This pursuit of language promotion as its own end, he states, “cannot be understood strictly in terms of rights” (2003:84). Indeed this is consistent with wider debates in human rights, especially in respect of “freedom restricting conditions” (Vizard, 2005). If a language is being promoted where nobody speaks it, then disuse of the minority language does not restrict the freedom of anyone. Promotion of the language, moreover, does not fit within the “tripartite relationship between freedoms, rights and obligations that characterises many ethical and political theories” (Vizard, 2005:18).

To illustrate the independence of this latter type of language planning from the pursuit of rights and freedoms, Grin provides a hypothetical problem where a government “decides to support the printing of literary works in a regional or minority language”, but that there is no guarantee this will “actually engage actual and potential users, and result in effective minority language use” (2003:85). The trouble with such measures, the “chink in the armour” (ibid. p.84), is that “it leaves much of the burden of language maintenance on people themselves” (ibid. p.85). In the absence of a clear incentive to use a language, people may need additional prompting to do so, beyond that mere liberty. It is at this point, where “effective minority language use” emerges in itself as a main priority, while themes of oppression fade from view.

In these “third pillar” activities, language policy and planning has become quite unique. Other spheres of legislation protecting a certain way of life – religion,²⁵ sexuality etc. – do not specify that new participants should be recruited, even though their full expression may involve other people. Nor do they spring from a concern that such practices might die out.

Grin expounds the disconnection from human rights in his discussion of how to evaluate the success of this third pillar: by gauging the number of people demonstrating “proficiency” and “competence” in the minority language (2003:172-173). He is quiet about whether these people were disadvantaged by lacking such proficiency, or would benefit from gaining it; or even whether disadvantage is of interest. Rather, the priority is to cause the language to be used. Baker makes a related contrast in discussing bilingual education:

Bilingual education is a central part of national or regional language planning that, on some occasions, seeks to assimilate indigenous and immigrant minorities, or integrate newcomers or minority groups. On other occasions, bilingual education is a major plank in language revitalization and language reversal (e.g. among Native American Indians, the Sámi in Scandinavia, and the Māori in New Zealand).

Baker, 2003:95

Baker then contrasts “weak” and “strong” bilingual education. The former aims to assimilate linguistic minorities into a dominant language (see also Hinton, 2003:46-47). The latter

typically has bilingualism, biliteracy, and cultural pluralism as intended outcomes. It achieves these outcomes mainly through students learning content (e.g., mathematics, social studies) through both languages.

Baker, 2003:97

There is, however, an important omission here. Baker tacitly assumes that all students in bilingual classes already speak the minority language. Kraus (2008) makes the same presumption

²⁵ Many religions aim to recruit new members, but the legislation protecting those religions does not require it – although this distinction is less clear in non-secular states.

that “minority groups” are already in place, and only require recognition. This overlooks the conspicuous *recruitment* function highlighted by Grin’s “third pillar”. Baker conflates these two distinct aims further in the following two passages:

When a child’s home language is replaced by the majority language, the child, the parents and the child’s community may seem to be rejected. When the home language is used in school, then children may feel themselves, their home and community to be accepted, thus maintaining or raising their self-esteem.

Baker, 2003:100

Bilingual education develops a broader enculturation, a more sympathetic view of different creeds and cultures [...], fosters a broader understanding of differences, and at its best, avoids the tight compartmentalization of racism, the stereotyping of different social groups, and fosters a more multiperspective and sensitive-to-difference viewpoint.

Baker, 2003:99

C.H. Williams creates a similar conflation, in a particularly interesting way, arguing that recruiting new speakers is about maximising equality:

[S]everal of the more astute regional governments, such as the Generalitat de Catalonia and the Wales Assembly Government (sic), are recasting their principal language policies in terms of the social inclusion of migrant and immigrant populations, most of whom feel bypassed by recent gains in establishing a bilingual [...] regime.

C.H. Williams, 2008:17

Catering to existing speakers and integrating disadvantaged newcomers are combined within the same emancipatory venture – obfuscating the point that these are, in effect, inequalities created by the promotion of these minority languages to begin with. This seems to confuse the distinction between language rights and language survival, and of the independence of “third pillar” planning activity from human rights. For this investigation, occupied as it is with how languages are conceptualised as discrete entities, this distinction will need to be briefly clarified before going further.

5.3.1 Language rights to language survival: An expanded typology of language acquisition planning

The following six-fold list builds on the *language acquisition* section of Hornberger's integrative framework (Table 5.1), expanding the distinction between language rights and language survival, in order to assess how this relates to claims about diversity. This is a list of ideal types, not suited to categorising whole language revivals, but goals within those revivals at certain points in time.

1. **Majority language integration for non-speakers of the majority language** is the most basic accommodation of a minority language. The language is recognised as existing, perhaps even celebrated, but the aim is to transition minority language speakers into the majority language. This is premised on raising quality of life (usually employability) and decreasing discrimination. This is not about eradicating the minority language; but language maintenance, strictly speaking, is not the priority. Examples include the African American Vernacular English “dialect readers” programme (Rickford, 1999: ch.13), transitioning from literacy in AAVE to Standard American English (see also Labov, 2008). This also comes across in some instances of Spanish-English bilingual education in the USA (e.g. Crawford, 2004:312-335); and in Germany for children of Turkish immigrants (Beck, 1999).

2. **Minority language maintenance for non-speakers of the majority language** is the next level of support for a minority language, where a largely monolingual minority language community rejects the language of the wider polity or an imposed standard language. Again this may come with positive overtones about the minority language, but not necessarily; just a disinterest in the majority/imposed language, whose usefulness is in question. Examples include Quechua in parts of South America (Hornberger & King, 1998) and Miskitu in certain Honduran communities (Margolin, 2003), both in preference to Spanish; and Xironga in Mozambique, especially in legal circles, instead of Portuguese (Lopes, 2001); as well as

the officialisation of certain native languages in Papua New Guinea (Wurm, 2003:26-27).²⁶

This also applies to the 18th century push in England for literacy in English instead of Latin (C. Jones, 2006:8).

3. **Minority language maintenance for minority-majority language bilinguals** embodies a more explicit interest in the minority language. Most people are natively bilingual in minority and majority languages (with no minority language monolinguals), but both languages are officially endorsed, and the former often given preference. This may not be entirely language-centric; there may be good reason to use a language that is highly regarded and widely spoken; but still a decision has been made for its promotion. Examples include certain elements of Basque in the Basque Country of Spain (Haddican, 2005; Cenoz, 2008) and of Welsh in Wales (§5.8.1, Figure 5.11), in those communities that are mostly bilingual.

4. **Minority language integration for minority language semi-speakers** shows a more candid language-centric approach. Everybody in the minority group speaks the majority language, and most do *not* know the minority language, the aim being to encourage any remaining semi-speakers to use the minority language more. The utility of this is not immediately clear, and so arguments tend towards heritage qualities, and generic claims about the benefits of knowing extra languages. Examples include elements of Basque language planning (Haddican, 2005; Cenoz, 2008), and the initial design of the *Twf* ('growth') project in Wales (§5.8.3), aiming to encourage reluctant Welsh-speaking parents to use more Welsh with their children (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005); and also aspects of Maori language planning since the late 20th century, facilitating the remaining elderly speakers to transmit the language to young children, often in day nurseries set up for this purpose (Spolsky, 2009).

²⁶ Although as Wurm notes, relatively few local languages are privileged in this way, recalling the themes of potential new injustices reviewed earlier (e.g. Kibbee, 2003:53-54).

- 5. Minority language integration for non-speakers of the minority language** represents a further step toward maintaining lesser-used minority languages as goods in themselves. Here, there are relatively few remaining native speakers of the language, and the aim is to create more speakers for them to talk to (roughly Grin’s “positive rights”), integrating non-speakers *into* the minority. Examples include elements of Irish language planning in Northern Ireland where only 10% of citizens self-report any knowledge of Irish (many of these having first acquired Irish at school – Nic Craith, 2006:91), elements of Scots Gaelic in Scotland where the figure is just 1% (Judge, 2007:188), and of Catalan in Catalonia where “newcomers and new citizens” are encouraged to learn Catalan (C.H. Williams, 2008:141).
- 6. Extension or creation of a minority language group** aims to recruit new speakers, potentially including those with no prior exposure or even ancestral/ethnic link, where there are few or no existing native speakers (roughly Grin’s “third pillar”). This is fully detached from supporting an existing speaker base, and necessarily posits the language as a good in itself. The clearest example is the initial spread of Hebrew across Palestine (latterly Israel) from the late 19th century onward, propagating a language into everyday use that had previously become entirely ceremonial and literary and with no native speakers (Spolsky, 2009).²⁷ Elements of other revivals fit here, if they cover locations where nobody speaks the minority language, as with parts of the Irish Gaelic revival in Ireland: “founded on an ideology of planning a language revival for the majority of the population who are a post-language shift speech community, people whose forebears spoke Irish but for whom it is now an additional language” (Ó hIfearnáin, 2009). Type 6 planning is also demonstrated by Cornish in Cornwall (see §5.7), reviving a language that had died.

²⁷ Although the creation of the State of Israel was bound up with the discourse of rights, the language revival (which predated by several decades the partitioning of Palestine in 1947), was logically detached from that discourse – given the lack of native speakers – and was primarily ideologically driven (Spolsky, 2009). If the revival were focussed on promoting, say, Yiddish, then this would have related more clearly to Type 2 language planning.

Taking this typology overall, we can see that Type 5 represents an inversion of Type 1. Whereas Type 1 aims to “shift the child from the home, minority language to the dominant, majority language” (Baker, 2003:97), Type 5 does the same in reverse, shifting majority language speakers into a lesser-used minority language. This can be seen as the inversion of a much older principal of nationalism, that of “forgetting” one’s origins:

the members of the nation [...] have simply *forgotten* their diversity of cultural origin. The average Frenchman [...] does *not* know whether [...] his ancestors were Gauls, Bretons, Franks, Burgundians, Romans, Normans or something else. It is this national Cloud of Unknowing, this blessed amnesia, which *makes* France.

Gellner, 1997:45-6 (orig. emphases)

The forgetting of nationalism is reversed, inducting minority language non-speakers into the minority language. Type 6 then takes this to its logical extreme, creating a language group from nothing – in contradistinction to the “citizenship-through-roots” approach based on ancestry (Gellner, 1997:74).^{28,29} For language policy and planning this marks a special kind of departure from other minority debates, by which May (2000a) is particularly struck:

surprisingly, there is almost no attempt to address the complexities surrounding what actually constitutes a ‘group’, let alone the difficulties involved in allocating ‘group rights’, both of which remain fiercely contested in debates in political theory.

May, 2000a:375

On the one hand this could be caused by shallow dialogue between multicultural citizenship studies and language policy and planning – especially so in the UK (McLeod, 2008). On the other hand, this lack of inquisitiveness can be seen as a corollary of the aim to recruit new

²⁸ In the Israeli case, although citizenship was premised upon Israeli ancestry, the language issue is essentially encompassed within that initial discrimination.

²⁹ To repeat, this typology is not primarily designed to cover whole language revivals, and many Types could occur in one place; for example in parts of Wales, Welsh native speakers live alongside semi-speakers and non-speakers (including immigrants), and different schools operate fully, partially or hardly at all in the medium of Welsh. There is no particular discrimination over who enters which school, and so various Types of language planning co-occur.

speakers. Given this aim, the question of who already speaks those languages natively becomes less important; and eventually irrelevant by Type 6, where the answer may be nobody.

What is apparent, then, between Type 1 and Type 6, is a shift of priorities from the freedoms and welfare of people towards the maintenance of languages – from language rights to language survival. Moreover, while Type 1 proceeds with the purest of economic rationales (to better equip a workforce), and while Type 2 is more or less neutral on this point, Types 3-6 necessarily leave “speakers of the others [non-minority languages] at a disadvantage, dependent on interpretation and translation, with all the delay and distortion that may accompany the process” (Wright, 2007b:82). Economic arguments therefore give way to concerns about languages as goods in themselves. That this has become normative is reified by C.H. Williams’ assertion that

language legislation [...] can, and should, induce changes in the behaviour of speakers of the minority language itself. It can assist in the acquisition of the language, and in deepening command of the language across a range of domains. It can increase opportunities for the use of the language. It can increase the visibility and prestige of the language.

C.H. Williams, 2008:174

This continual refocusing on “the language” – and implicit distancing from the speakers – is indicative of relative priorities. The six-fold typology above is designed to make that distinction clearer, and separate reactive protection of the right to use a language from proactive efforts to promote its use, especially beyond an existing speaker base. It is this distinction that is important for the forthcoming case studies.

5.4 New Public Management (NPM) and the role of the state

Although Grin (2003), Heller & Duchêne (2007), Judge (2007) and C.H. Williams (2008) explore political debates surrounding language policy and planning, this is mostly about

opposing interest groups and activists, and the process leading to the creation of various pieces of legislation. In narrating the rise of modern language policy and planning, a somewhat overlooked topic is the concomitant expansion of the role of the state in managing public life. Far from coincidence, this has fundamentally shaped the enterprise as it stands.

5.4.1 Strategic partnerships and performance targets: NPM in the UK

As outlined in Chapter 2, the 18th to the 20th century saw a growing international realisation of the economic benefit of universal literacy. In Europe this happened to coincide with a vogue for national languages and so European literacy drives mostly took place separately in each of these (May, 2003:211-212). Otherwise this could have happened across Europe in Latin; and indeed this should be contrasted with literacy campaigns in supra-national languages, a clear example being Arabic. In all cases though, these followed basic economic premises of productivity, employability, and international competitiveness.

Chapter 2 also discussed how, in the UK, education in this period was gradually taken over by the state; but strictly on the understanding that this was a public good – similarly to issues like health, public security, and, in the late 20th century, food safety (Dawson & Dargie, 2002:50). At this time in the UK, “from the late nineteenth century onwards [...] [g]overnment provision was seen, at best, as a *necessary evil*” (Osbourne & McLaughlin, 2002:7 – orig. emphasis). Where universal literacy was proceeding in a national language, there was no obvious economic imperative for literacy in minority languages, especially among already bilingual populations. For positive rights and especially “third pillar” efforts to happen, changes were needed.

It was in the mid-late 20th century that a series of reforms in UK government radically increased the range of public goods needing state attention. The country was experiencing acute economic

sluggishness, mostly blamed on an outdated and dogmatic civil service. That regime, “very much a product of a period where the role of the state was limited”, was “incapable of managing the large public sector created by the rise of the Keynesian welfare state” (Saint-Martin, 2000:76). The civil servants steering this lumbering state machine were predominantly “generalists” and “all-rounders” with little input from specialists or “skilled managers” (ibid.). Growing awareness of this problem culminated in 1968 with the publication of the *Fulton Committee Report on the Civil Service*, which spearheaded a range of initiatives to “strengthen and rationalize the intervention of the state in society and the economy” (ibid. p.72). It urged exchange with the private sector – both of ideas and personnel – in particular the emerging field of management consultancy. This signalled the beginning of a slow but sure sea change in UK government.

Fulton’s recommendations were in fact stymied for years by high-ranking civil servants for whom they posed only threats, yet to whom their implementation had been fatally delegated. Sure enough they recruited private sector managers, but they were “appointed to middle and lower level positions and placed under the authority of an under-secretary” (Saint-Martin, 2000:83). These initial entanglements notwithstanding, “Fulton’s ideas nevertheless shaped much of the discussion about civil service reform [...] in the 1970s and 1980s” (ibid. p.84). This ironically delivered many of the key ideas to a resurgent Conservative opposition, overthrowing the Labour administration that had commissioned, published and endorsed the Fulton report.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Fulton-esque managerialism enjoyed greater deployment, but with a significant twist. During spells of right-wing Conservative rule, this was seen as a way not only to increase the efficiency of the state, but also to reduce its size and function (Saint-Martin, 2000:85) – an approach redoubled during the Thatcher years. In 1979 the government launched its Scrutiny Programme, headed up by the Efficiency Unit (ibid. pp.93-97), to propose ways to

“achieve savings and increase efficiency and effectiveness” in all areas (ibid. p.99). Similar bodies and initiatives were subsequently created, leading up to the National Audit Act 1983, implemented by the newly created National Audit Office (ibid. p.103). All of this grew from a nascent neoliberal agenda of the “minimal state”, interminably popular among UK voters as well as abroad, most notably the USA (Mitchell, 1987:922).

In the last quarter of the 20th century, a challenge arose to neoliberalism in the shape of New Public Management. The term originated in New Zealand, “describing the reforms initiated there in the 1980s” (Schedler & Proeller, 2002:163), and has in essence three defining characteristics. Firstly, the state would change from predominantly reactive, addressing emergencies, to proactive, foreseeing problems, seeking pre-emptive solutions to improve society above and beyond the necessities of economics and security (Wilson, 2001:293). Secondly it would seek continuous improvement in its services, even if there was no specific deficiency. At first blush this seems like a wholesale return to the Fulton remit, but this is checked by the third characteristic: a tightened focus on cost-effectiveness and accountability, more reminiscent of neoliberalism (e.g. Mitchell, 1987). NPM therefore emerged as a kind of amalgam of the two:

Over the last 30 years in the UK [...] [w]e have moved from large, state-owned bureaucracies [...] to quasi-independent operational units [...] to networks of organizations which can operate with a fair degree of autonomy providing they meet specified performance targets. Persistent failure, however, invites state intervention.

Dawson & Dargie, 2002:53

The caveats are critical. This has meant a broadening of state activities, but intense introspection based on measurable performance. This mixture of interventionism and minimalism formed the basis of NPM: a government doctrine designed to micro-manage behaviour and change society, but with a distinctly managerialist attention to productivity.

NPM quickly spread not only to the UK, but to Australia, the USA and Scandinavia (Dawson & Dargie, 2002), mainland Europe (Schedler & Proeller, 2002), and “is seen as having increasingly dominated public governance and public service delivery in most Western democracies” (Martin, 2002:129). It has spread ever further worldwide since: to Jamaica (McKoy, 2004), Mexico (Barragan & Roemer, 2001), South Africa (Mwaniki, 2004), sub-Saharan Africa (Hope, 2002), East Asia (Cheung, 2002), and a range of developing countries (McCourt, 2002). In sum it has become “a standard international model for public administration reform” (Schedler & Proeller, 2002:163) – though not quite a “global paradigm” (McCourt, 2002:234) and certainly deployed multifariously (Pollitt, 2002). Since we are focussed on the UK, this global spread will not be pursued in more detail; but can be borne in mind for any tentative generalisations.

The popularity of NPM has been attributed to the intuitive attractiveness of ideals like efficiency, accountability and progress; and quite how difficult these are to argue against:

Academics who traditionally had the public sphere to themselves found it invaded by concepts of management. [T]his [...] posed a crude choice, either critique and reject the concepts of (new public) management [...] or adopt it as your own [...]. Conceptual discussions of NPM in the late 1990s suggest that many commentators have taken the latter choice, not least, one may surmise, because to appear to stand against ways to improve efficiency and so on would be to assume the role of a Luddite and lose the ear of those whom they may be trying to influence.

Dawson & Dargie, 2002:41

NPM has seemed almost propelled by its own inertia. Meanwhile, increased scrutiny inside government was matched from outside, via the media and pressure groups. This has often overtaken discussion of the actual problems at hand; for example during the foot-and-mouth disease crisis in 2001: “attention has been focussed on the government’s management of the crisis rather than speculation about its cause and long-term impact” (Dawson & Dargie, 2002:37). This should come as no surprise since NPM has an eternal cycle of scrutiny built into it: public services cannot be perfect, so striving for improvement can never end. As a result,

ministers have become evermore fixated on producing initiatives whereas previously their job was to deal with events (Crewe & King, 2008); and civil servants evermore reluctant to question these directives, focussed as they are on productivity and performance (ibid.). This is of greatest concern for us in terms of the overarching need for reliable measurement of progress.

In 21st century UK local government, a burgeoning NPM programme has led to a proliferation of Scrutiny Committees, checking progress against targets (Brooks, 2000; Cole, 2001; Cole & Fenwick, 2003; Leach & Copus, 2004). The Local Government Act 2000 strategically tied together local and central government, bestowing greater powers to local authorities but with tighter central checks. In this arrangement, perhaps euphemistically called “partnerships”, the British government had “found a new purpose for local government” (Brooks, 2000:593). Spread under the seemingly innocuous banner of “modernisation”, NPM bound local authorities to “secure continuous improvement in the way functions are exercised” (HMSO, 1999, clause 3.1, cited in Martin, 2002:131).³⁰ This delivered – ironically but perhaps predictably – much greater control of local government by central office (Wilson, 2001:294), much to the chagrin of “disenfranchised” local councillors (Cole, 2001:241; Leach & Copus, 2004:334).

In this context, it is questionable whether the government’s actions will be of lasting benefit to local government; or whether it continues [...] reducing self-government in the localities to a system which merely administers nationally decided policies.

Brooks, 2000:594

These jaws were given teeth by the creation a number of regulatory bodies, including the Standards Board (Wilson, 2001:292), the Improvement and Development Agency, and the Best Value Inspectorate (ibid. p.295; Brooks, 2000:597), complementing existing bodies like the

³⁰ It is worth noting what a uniquely opportune moment this was – a few years after the notorious Poll tax – for central government to exercise such control. Widespread refusal to pay the Poll tax caused major shortfalls in local authority budgets, often requiring central government bailouts (Crewe & King, 2008). This may have softened up local authorities for such central oversight.

Audit Commission and the District Auditor (Brooks, 2000:598; Newman, 2002:83) to more deeply regulate local government. The “Best-Value regime” (Newman, 2002:83; Martin, 2002) required all local authorities to “draw up a programme of performance reviews [...] to ensure that continuous improvements to all services are made, not just those where there are serious shortcomings” (Wilson, 2001:297). This was built on “accounting logic”, whereby:

any activity needs to be evaluated in terms of some measurable outputs achieved and the values added in any course of activity. [...] Thus, a central element of this mode of thinking is the view that it is possible to quantify outputs and outcomes [...].

Broadbent & Laughlin, 2002:101

Cole (2001:599) suggests that such manoeuvres symbolised “the most recent expression of a deeply held, historical belief that the localities could not be trusted to regulate themselves and central controls are essential”. Or as Newman (2002:82-83) has it:

two conflicting discourses are in play [...]: [...] One is that of ‘partnership’, the other of ‘principals and agents’ [...] in which local services are the agents mandated to deliver government policy but under tight monitoring and control.

Newman, 2002:82-83

“A movement away from input controls, rules and procedures towards output measurements and performance targets” (Hope Sr., 2002:211) signalled the primacy of quantifiable outcomes as a measure of progress. This simultaneously deemphasises anything that cannot be measured in this way, and it is here that the implications for language policy and planning begin to creep through:

‘Accounting logic’ [...] produces an aura of factual representation, [...] that it generates ‘neutral, objective, independent and fair’ information [...]. It is a public language that creates visibilities and downplays as unimportant anything not made visible [...]. This process itself also emphasizes notions of standardization and a search for common measurable yardsticks which aid that standardization process.

Broadbent & Laughlin, 2002:102

Accounting logic is hindered in this respect by the “lack of ability to define outputs” (Broadbent & Laughlin, 2002:102). To this problem, “two logical solutions exist” (ibid. p.103):

One is to admit that the prerequisites for control approaches based on markets or hierarchies are inappropriate [...]. The other, characteristic of [...] NPM, is to systematise the tasks in question and standardize the outputs, i.e. to reinvent the tasks [...] for the application of such logic.

[...]

A possibility is that an attempt to define and control through output measures may, in fact, lead to a change in the nature of the activity [...]. This may be because there has been a ‘colonization’ [...] of the activity by the values imposed by the measurement system, for example where school teachers see that the achievement of particular examination grades is more important than any other element of school life.

Broadbent & Laughlin, 2002:103

The precise interplay between NPM and language policy is touched upon by Pal (1990); and somewhat more clearly by Mwaniki (2004) in the South African context:

when [...] new public management is applied to language planning activities, it marks a radical shift from current practices [...]. Management theory so applied [...] means [...] that the pre-occupation of language planning [...] is [...] on the results [...]: multilingual policy and planning initiatives must be able to provide policy and pragmatic outcomes that engender multilingualism.

Mwaniki, 2004:209

Regarding the field of documentary linguistics, Dobrin et al. (2007) give useful introspections:

the reductionist discourses and commodifying practices prevalent in contemporary documentary linguistics derive from two forces particular to our time. One of these is digitization, which requires language data to be formalized and standardized [...]. The other is Euro-American “audit culture” (Strathern 2000), in which accountability, quantification, and competitive ranking are pervasive.

Dobrin et al., 2007:1

The sum of this equation – support for minority languages plus NPM – is illustrated by Grin in his “policy-to-outcome” model (reproduced in Figure 5.1). He does not mention NPM specifically, but does give a brief “review of the use of those terms [‘best practice’ etc.] in the

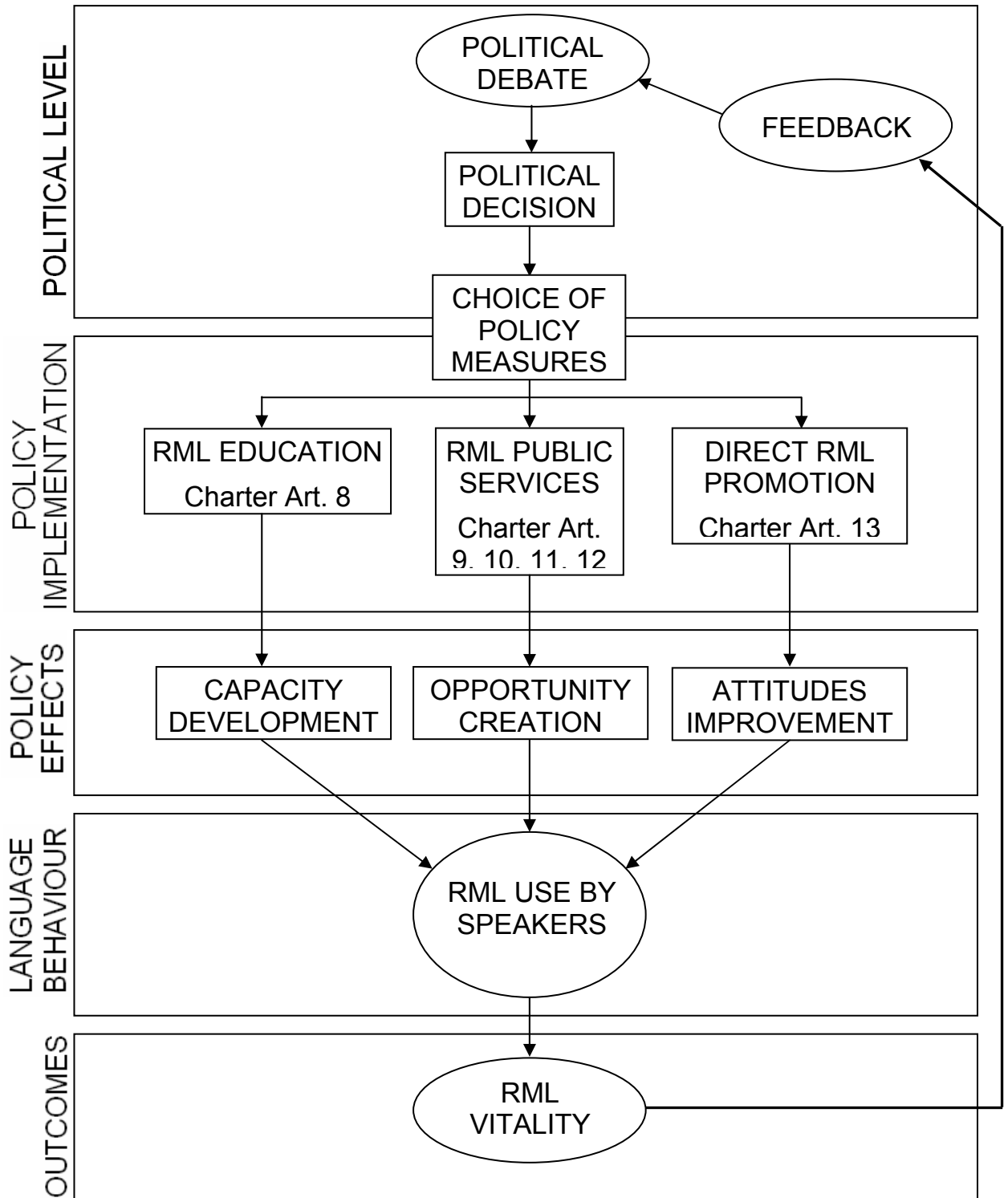


Figure 5.1 'Policy-to-outcome path' in regional or minority language policy (Grin, 2003:47)

materials produced by international organisations, governmental agencies or non-governmental organisations”, in relation to policy outcomes:

There are, in particular, ‘improvement’, ‘effectiveness’, ‘efficiency’, ‘equity’, ‘better services’, ‘better quality’, ‘reduction of expenditure’, ‘performance’, ‘accountability’, ‘citizens’ satisfaction’, ‘more responsive government’, and ‘sustainability’.

Grin, 2003:89

He then highlights that

applying this technique [...] in the case of *language* policies is made more difficult by the lack of policy experience documented *in those terms*. More precisely, policy discussions [...] that refer to ‘good/best’ ‘policy/practice’ typically focus on other (that is, non-language) policy issues, such as public finance management [...]. This [...] confirms that an application of those terms to language policies probably is a novel enterprise.

Grin, 2003:89 (orig. emphases)

This demonstrates, on the one hand, the newness of language policy shaped in this way, and on the other, its debt to the existing NPM discourse and reliance upon it for guidance and structure.

An important omission from Grin’s “policy indicators” (Table 5.2) is to ask what it means to say that something has happened “in the regional or minority language”. How, for example, could “the number and percentage of oral interactions taking place between civil servants and the public [...] in the regional or minority language” be recorded (Grin, 2003:108), described as “a perfectly valid final policy outcome” (ibid.)? Such checks relate straightforwardly to “defining, documenting and developing minority and endangered languages and language varieties” (King et al., 2008b:2); but to linguistic diversity? That question is the reason for this brief review of NPM as a governmental doctrine, and directly informs the case studies.

5.4.2 Education and NPM in language policy and planning

Quite apart from any purist ideologies that surround a language when a standard form is developed – the like of which Fishman (2006:28-30) recounts for French – are the more basic and emotionless demands of the apparatus used to enact these protections. Education provides

| Art. | Area | Main condition targeted | Indicators |
|------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 8 | Education | Capacity | 81 - Number and percentage of RML users at different levels of competence, in different age groups |
| 9 | Judicial system | Opportunity | 82 - Competence levels of RML learners at different stages in the education system 91 -Number and percentage of court cases handled in all or in part in RMLs 92 -Amount of translation into RML of court proceedings requested and supplied |
| 10 | Administration and public services | Opportunity | 101 - Number and percentage of RML oral (face-to-face and telephone) interactions 102 - Number and percentage of RML written (mail, e-mail, etc.) interactions 103 - Percentage of official forms available in RMLs 104 -Time spent by RML-users interacting with officials in the RML 105 - Percentage of civil servants fluent in RML 106 - Average competence level of civil servants in RML |
| 11 | Media (audiovisual) | Opportunity | 107 - Percentage of RML signs and information displays in public administration premises 111 - Total number of RML radio and TV programming, differentiated by genre as well as between new programmes and replays 112 - In case of bilingual stations: relative share of RML programming in prime time 113 - Audiences of RML radio and TV programmes, differentiated by genre of programme and by viewer profile (age, sex, etc.) |
| 12 | Culture | Opportunity | 121 - Total number of RML books published per year 122 - Sales figures of RML books (c) Number of RML periodicals (dailies, weeklies, monthlies, etc.) 123 - Circulation figures of RML periodicals 124 - Reader profile of RML materials 125 - Amount and distribution of state subsidies to RML publishing and distribution 126 - Total number of RML live arts productions per year 127 - Number of RML films showed (usually majority language works with dubbed in RML or with RML subtitles) 128 - Attendance figures for RML live arts and cinema shows, with audience profile 129 - Amount and distribution of state subsidies to RML live arts, film production, dubbing or subtitling |
| 13 | Economic and social life | Opportunity/ (Desire) | 131 - Percentage of RML and/or bilingual commercial signs visible from the street 132 - Percentage of RML and/or bilingual signs visible inside shops and other commercial establishments (restaurants, etc.) 133 -Percentage of consumer goods with RML or bilingual packaging and labelling 134 - Percentage of consumer goods with RML safety instructions (e.g. electrical appliances and drugs) 135 - Share of RML or bilingual advertisements in written and audiovisual media 136 - Type of goods and services advertised in RML or bilingually 137 - Frequency of RML use on the workplace, by economic sector, position held and language of owners or managers 138 -Ownership of firms by language group 139 - Usefulness of RML skills for access to employment 140 - Amount of wage premia for bilingual workers |

Table 5.2 'Policy indicators' with reference to Articles of the ECRML (Grin, 2003:105-6)

the most recordable and accountable means of producing results; and it is this climate of accountability that is critical for the current discussion of linguistic diversity:

diagnoses of the problems that governments are seeking solutions to [...] do not arise automatically from the 'objective' problems but are constructed within economic, political, institutional and cultural contexts.

Flynn, 2002:58

Put another way: “Diagnosis [...] presupposes a type of solution” (Flynn, 2002:68). A corresponding tendency towards education as a tool is understandable, given the abundance of research on its use in increasing language proficiency, and relative paucity from other fields:

Research results can be accessed in a number of specialised journals on language and education. There is, however, far less information about the effects of language policy measures in other domains.

Grin, 2003:102

There is virtually no “hard” scientific evidence to indicate that the initiation of an indigenous language media service helps to restore or revive its usage.

Browne, 1996:169

Education is the main focus of Grin’s (2003) analysis – and the other analyses reviewed here. Following the introduction of a National Curriculum in the UK in 1988 (Bourne, 1997:51), as with other aspects of empowering local authorities while simultaneously increasing central control, so too in education: “There seems to have been a delegation of responsibility to the local level” (Broadbent & Laughlin, 2002:101), constantly checked by

a strong element of process control through the use of inspection. [...] Thus the tendency to centralize control is based on the implementation of both output and task controls that are implemented by external bodies [...]. The changes [...] bring together the logics of accounting [...] to give even tighter forms of control.

Broadbent & Laughlin, 2002:101

There has been [...] an overriding anxiety [...] to enhance the performance level of students in a world of competitive economy [...].

The response in England and Wales has been one of far-reaching government-driven changes [...]. Regarding the curriculum, whereas this was previously left largely to the individual schools [...] a centralized national core curriculum has been instituted, with a prescribed content and attainment targets [...] and assessment of results at the end of key stages such as seven, eleven, fourteen and sixteen years.

Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994:95

In Britain, Canada and North America, [...] public sector education is changing fast in response to a crisis of funding and the need for greater ‘performance’ in the eyes of government. [C]ompetition between education providers is being encouraged [...]

where the individual institution must be more and more financially self-managing, judged and funded on criteria of performance.

Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994:119

These measures have met with understandable resistance from teachers (Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994:98-103), but nothing to stall them completely (*ibid.* pp.118-120). Overall, then, a level of state intervention necessary for “third pillar” language revival programmes has become widely tolerated; but matched by strict checks on productivity, with attendant ways to measure this in reliable ways. This has been decisive for how linguistic diversity is discussed, and managed.

Having said this about the predominance of education, as we will see that is not the only measure of success. Education has been centred on here because of its ubiquity in the literature; what needs to be taken from this discussion is that outcomes, in whatever protection measures are adopted, need to be held against claims regarding linguistic diversity, and evaluated on that basis.

5.5 The rhetoric of language policy and planning

Having now discussed some political background, §5.5 examines how the term linguistic diversity is deployed in modern language policy and planning – the ‘claims’ about linguistic diversity mentioned at the outset, to be reflected on in the case studies. I suggest here that these claims can be usefully interpreted as a form of rhetoric. This is not to suggest deception or guile; there are just elements of the way diversity is described, and its relation to the effects of language planning, that can be fruitfully analysed using rhetorical tropes.

To begin with, linguistic diversity operates as an *empty signifier*, a term frequently mentioned but never defined. Comparable examples include ‘freedom’ for persecuted groups, or ‘racial

purity’ for racist supremacists. The point is that the ideal is defined less by what it is than what it is not: freedom vs. oppression, racial purity vs. multiracialism, linguistic diversity vs. linguistic homogeneity. Efforts to ‘achieve’ these will mainly work against the perceived problem, rather than towards any robustly defined conditions of the ideal.

Linguistic diversity also works as a form of *synecdoche*, in which the whole refers to a part (as in ‘the planet’ for the inhabitable troposphere) or a part to the whole (as in ‘blade’ for knife). In this case the whole of linguistic diversity (all linguistic variation and variability) is used to refer to a series of discrete languages. To put this in Lacanian terminology, linguistic diversity is what is lacking. Language policy and planning operates against that lack, and the desire for diversity drives the enterprise forward. Any symbolic move away from total linguistic homogeneity – bolstering a particular language, for example – can be seen as helping diversity. If homogeneity is defined but diversity is not, then language policy and planning can proceed on the basis of saving diversity. The implications of this for actual change in diversity are of interest here.

5.5.1 The language policy and planning enthymeme

Pursuing diversity by countering homogeneity can be seen as an *enthymeme*. This is a truncated syllogism in which some premises are omitted, yet assumed to be true, and the conclusion based on that assumption. A famous example is ‘Socrates is human, therefore he is mortal’. The first premise is ‘Socrates is human’; the conclusion is ‘Socrates is mortal’; the second (missing) premise is ‘all humans are mortal’, unstated yet assumed to be true. The conclusion is obvious; and the audience is invited to complete the syllogism by deduction.

In the above example the unstated premise is true; but in another enthymeme it may not be, and thus deliver a falsehood. This could be intentional – as in advertisements associating attractive

lifestyles with particular products, the unstated premise being that the product begets the lifestyle – or unintentional, where neither party is aware of the falsehood. As Finlayson argues (2008), all these uses of enthymemes are important rhetorical devices, encouraging the audience to become involved in making a given assertion. Here I describe the claims of language policy and planning regarding linguistic diversity as a very large enthymeme:

Premise 1: linguistic diversity is declining (stated).

Premise 2: protecting minority languages will protect linguistic diversity (assumed).

Conclusion: therefore we must protect minority languages (stated).

This enthymeme is succinctly articulated in all its parts by Grin, when he asserts that “diversity is good and regional or minority languages should be protected and promoted” (Grin, 2003:110). It is equally expressed by C.H. Williams: “Insofar as we wish to maintain linguistic diversity around the world, we have to give special protection to languages in their historic homelands” (C.H. Williams, 2008:364). Diversity is set up as an ideal, a goal is formed to promote discrete languages, and the audience invited to link the two – that the latter will achieve the former. Let me now demonstrate the enthymeme with some more detail and evidence from the literature.

5.5.1.1 Premise 1: linguistic diversity is declining

Linguistic diversity, even if not strictly defined, is consistently seen as a priority. As Ferguson puts it (2006:7), “the preservation of linguistic diversity is a central, if not overriding, goal for language policy”. Spolsky highlights “the desirability of linguistic diversity” (2004:ix) in the field. In Europe from the 1990s onwards “diversity is perceived more and more as something which has to be protected” (von Toggenburg, 2001:218).

The key to Premise 1 is in foreshadowing Premise 2, setting out linguistic diversity as something that can be protected: a countable series of discrete languages and/or language varieties. This typically begins with descriptions of the disappearance of entire languages. As Romaine (2008) sets the scene in a recent edited volume on the subject, *Sustaining Linguistic Diversity*:

One of the most striking features of our world is its astonishing diversity. This diversity is reflected not only in the rich variety of plant and animal species and ecosystems in nature but also in the variety of cultures and languages in human societies. [...]

[T]here is [...] an impending extinction crisis in [...] both biological and cultural-linguistic diversity. We are crossing a threshold of irreversible loss of species and languages into a fundamentally changed and less diverse world.

Romaine, 2008:7

Muehlmann has a pertinent yet brief critique of this approach:

Linguists may argue that there are anywhere between 3,000 and 8,000 distinctive languages in the world [...]. [A]ll of these enumerations assume a particular ideology of language as a bounded, identifiable and autonomous system – an ideology which depends on the assumption that languages can be individuated as a unit (Heller, 2002; Hill, 2002; Mülhäusler, 1996).

Muehlmann, 2004:142

In *Debating Diversity*, Blommaert & Verschueren (1998:132-133) describe “recognizing linguistic diversity” as an awareness of “the existence and role of different languages and language varieties”. Spolsky (2004:67) cites the “thirty-seven languages” of France as a sign of “obvious diversity”; and that the permitted dominance of English in the USA demonstrates “no overriding commitment to the maintenance of linguistic diversity” (ibid. p.93). C.H. Williams comparably notes that:

Hundreds of languages have no adolescent speakers at all and thus we are continuously losing parts of our global linguistic diversity [...].

C.H. Williams, 2008:52

With regard to an enlarging EU, Ó Riagán writes:

Finding ways to accommodate diversity is a real challenge [...]. In the European Union alone almost forty autochthonous languages are spoken. [...]

In a word, linguistic diversity is the norm in Europe – not the exception.

Ó Riagáin, 2001:32

Austin (2007a), in a section entitled *Language diversity*, begins: “The world’s languages can be ranked in terms of the size of the populations who habitually speak them [...]” (p.81). Despite a brief note on what it means to be a “speaker”, his main focus is the worldwide total of “6700 languages” (ibid.). “Probably the most linguistically diverse places in the world”, he continues, “are to be found in the Pacific” (p.82). He mentions Papua New Guinea with its “1100 languages” (p.82), and Vanuatu with “an incredible 120 languages” (ibid.). Grenoble & Whaley (2006:37) choose a different area, part of Nigeria, as having “arguably the greatest linguistic diversity, with between 250 and 400 languages” (p.37). Romaine (2006:463) states that “India, Tanzania and Malaysia [...] are among the world’s most linguistically diverse countries, with 415, 128 and 140 languages respectively”; but that “half the known languages have disappeared in the last 500 years” (pp.441-442), which signals “the loss of linguistic diversity” (ibid. p.442). Grenoble & Whaley (2006) equate language death – the loss of whole languages – with “the loss of linguistic diversity” (p.2). Austin describes this as “the loss of language diversity” (2007:83).

Austin describes how “these diverse languages” (ibid. p.82) are “marginalised and under pressure from the larger [languages]” (ibid. pp.82-83). This is because “[e]conomic, political, social and cultural power is in the hands of the speakers of the large languages” (ibid. p.83). Nic Craith’s (2006) frequent mention of “minority languages” and “minority language groups”, and their varying fortunes in the European Union, consistently falls back on a characterisation of these languages as being either used, or not used. Likewise Austin (2007:83-84) lists four factors in the decline of minority languages: intergenerational language transmission; percentage of speakers; domains and functions of use; and attitudes and language ideology. In each case,

although the underlying notions like semi-speakers and domains are not binary, the narrative tends to depict this loss in absolutes: whether people do or do not speak a given language.

Grin & Korth (2005) use “linguistic diversity” and “multilingualism” interchangeably; and, like Nic Craith, set this in the context of resource-sharing between distinct language groups. May (2004:38) juxtaposes phrases like “the destruction of linguistic diversity” and “language death”. Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas (2001), in a rebuttal of an accusation from Blommaert that they “reduce diversity [...] to inter-language diversity” (p.147), go on in the same article to claim that Swahili in Tanzania is “understood and spoken by a majority of the people, and is probably diminishing linguistic diversity in significant ways” (p.150). This seems precisely to return them to a reduced notion of “inter-language diversity” (ibid. p.147)..

The various contributions to *Respecting Linguistic Diversity in the European Union* (Arzoz, 2008a) all deploy the term “linguistic diversity”, and all refer to it as a series of languages and/or language varieties. Of these Juarista et al. (2008) is emblematic, giving an account of “linguistic diversity in Europe” by presenting “a general overview of the languages spoken in the EU, as well as the numbers of speakers and the status of these languages” (p.48). Arzoz’s contribution (2008b) approaches a finer analysis, but eventually arrives at a fairly heterogeneous conception:

Unlike general notions such as pluralism and diversity, linguistic diversity refers to a more defined object: ideas in theory may be unlimited and undetermined because they can be reworked and combined ad infinitum to produce new ones; but, since languages are a means of communication, there is always a defined number of languages and linguistic communities in use within a given territory.

Arzoz, 2008b:153

Arzoz states that “languages” are simply codified means of communication; but he then conflates this with linguistic diversity – which is not defined. This conflation is carried through to his conclusion, asserting that the EU “can contribute to raising awareness of linguistic diversity

within Europe and to fostering a political climate more committed to its preservation” (Arzoz, 2008b:165) – echoed by de Witte (2008), that the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights “could play a role [...] in the protection of linguistic diversity” (p.187). It is this pervading notion that diversity is something amenable to preservation, protection and stabilisation that is of such fundamental significance for the measures enacted as a result.

Beyond published academic literature, ongoing teaching and research activities demonstrate a reduction of diversity into discrete languages. There are campaign bodies operating under the banner of linguistic diversity, focussed on supporting particular languages, albeit often very many at a time, such as Maaya (the ‘World Network for Linguistic Diversity’) and Terralingua.

The surge of interest in linguistic diversity is evident in the proliferation of a number of NGO’s that emerged in the 1990’s to protect the biocultural or biolinguistic diversity of the earth. These include: Linguapax (1987), the Foundation for Endangered Languages (1994) and Terralingua (1996).

Muehlmann, 2004:139

Other examples, with somewhat more candidly parochial interests, include the Toronto-based International Network for Cultural Diversity, every one of whose newsletters (at least for the past five years) has at least one story about French or the successes of La Francophonie. The Network for the Promotion of Linguistic Diversity, an EU body essentially led by the Welsh Language Board (the Chair of the former is the CEO of the latter), was formed in December 2007 with slightly broader sights, but mainly specific endangered languages within the EU.

Aside from lobby groups, there are academic research projects with similar characteristics. One such project at Radboud University Nijmegen entitled ‘Linguistic diversity: typologies, families, contacts’ aims to explore “how languages differ from one another (language typology) and which properties are cross-linguistically common (language universals)” (CLS, 2007). Similarly

the LL-MAP project, jointly run by Eastern Michigan University and Stockholm University, aims to “relate geographical information on the area in which a language is or has been spoken to data on resources relevant to the language”, and “increase public knowledge of lesser-known languages and cultures, underlining the importance of language and linguistic diversity to cultural understanding and scientific inquiry” (LL-MAP, 2006). The Leipzig Spring School on Linguistic Diversity, co-organized by the University of Leipzig and the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, “offers courses [...] which look at language from the point of view of linguistic diversity (comparative syntax, areal typology, comparative phonology, language contact, typological psycholinguistics)” (LSSLD, 2008). Diversity is presented as a range of discrete datasets, laid out for comparison. Reflected across these various examples is a reduction of linguistic diversity which can be schematised in terms of complexity and reductionism:

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|
| Complexity | ← | → | Reductionism |
| Linguistic diversity | ← | → | X number of languages/varieties |

The point is not that anybody claims outright that linguistic diversity is a static series of languages; but that linguistic diversity is not really defined at all. The term is used, and placed alongside a description of a multiplicity of languages and language varieties; but no explicit link is drawn between the two. That descriptive function, that ontological workload, is implicitly palmed onto this description of a series of languages, leading to its reduction. It is from here that language policy and planning can attempt to protect diversity by bolstering individual languages.

5.5.1.2 Premise 2: promoting minority languages protects linguistic diversity

The maintenance of language diversity and the promotion of language learning and multilingualism are seen as essential elements for the improvement of communication and for the reduction of intercultural misunderstanding.

Extra & Yağmur, 2005:37 (emphases added)

Promoting linguistic diversity means actively encouraging the teaching and learning of the widest possible range of languages in our schools, universities, adult education centres and enterprises.

European Commission, 2003:9, cited in Extra & Yağmur, 2005:37 (emphases added)

[The EU] shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced.

EU, 2007: Article 2.3

Premise 2 is articulated in a way, but not 'stated' in the sense of evidence being presented. What needs to be drawn from the literature are statements that "languages" must be promoted, that this will protect "diversity". A first example:

I want to examine three responses to the threats posed to linguistic diversity.

1. Do nothing.
2. Document endangered languages.
3. Sustain/revitalize threatened languages.

Romaine, 2008:7

Or as Patten has it, with specific reference to EU policymaking:

Linguistic diversity is among the most exciting – and most challenging – features of the new Europe. The fifteen member states of the EU prior to the 2004 enlargement together contributed eleven 'national' or majority languages to this diversity as well as numerous regional or minority languages and many non-territorial or 'immigrant' languages. [...]

The fact of linguistic diversity poses two broad questions [...].

Patten, 2007:15

This "fact of linguistic diversity" is set out as equal to and synonymous with a series of languages. Kraus, after performing a similar headcount of official, indigenous minority and immigrant languages, concludes in like manner:

Accordingly, it should be easy to concede that cultural diversity in Europe is, first and foremost, linguistic diversity.

What are the implications for Europe's pronounced multilingualism [...].

Kraus, 2007:61

A similar stance is taken by C.H. Williams (2008), frequently citing “linguistic diversity” as both reality and ideal (e.g. p.6, 52, 63, 116, 124, 126, 155, 370), and consistently setting this against a backdrop of “long beleaguered [minority] languages and their speakers” (p.400), suffering under powerful, hegemonic, dominant languages:

Many European minorities, despite being bi- or trilingual, face extreme pressures as a result of superstructural changes and are threatened by a double marginalisation from both the state language and its associated rationalities and by the spread of English as an instrument of global hegemony.

C.H. Williams, 2008:40

In a later chapter, *Enhancing linguistic diversity in Europe* (ibid. pp.120-161), he extends this polarity between powerful and disempowered languages:

Telecommunication changes and mass migrations have empowered world languages, such as English and French [...]. Technology further empowers such languages [...] and endows them with a cumulative relative advantage vis-à-vis all other languages.

The key question then becomes whether “smaller” languages such as Irish, Lithuanian, Welsh and Breton can benefit from the same liberation from time and space?

C.H. Williams, 2008:121

Crawford (1994, cited in May, 2000:368) asserts that “language death seldom occurs in communities of wealth and privilege, but rather to the dispossessed and disempowered”. Or as Romaine puts it subsequently: “Language death does not happen in privileged communities; it happens to the dispossessed and disempowered” (Romaine, 2008:9). Having defined linguistic diversity as the disappearance of whole languages, the deliverance for both becomes a counter-hegemonic process, emancipating disenfranchised groups:

Because the historical causes of the threats facing the earth’s languages, cultures, and biodiversity are the same, the solutions are also likely to come from the same place: empowering local people.

Romaine, 2008:14

Or as Nic Craith has it:

Ultimately citizens speaking a minority language have benefited enormously from the international [EU] framework and a resolution by Eluned Morgan [Labour Party for Wales MEP] to the European Parliament in 2001 considered the promotion of linguistic diversity and language learning in the context of the European Year of Languages.

Nic Craith, 2006:79

Elsewhere, in an article entitled Planning for the survival of linguistic diversity, Romaine (2006) describes language revitalisation efforts as “campaigns supporting linguistic diversity” (p.444); but simultaneously refers to “the [minority] language” as a single entity (six times on page 444; frequently thereafter). Through a range of binary cases – Basque/Spanish, Welsh/English, Irish/English, Maori/English, Kiswahili/English, Malagasy/French – Romaine shows how attempts to encourage use of these languages have broadly fallen short, despite significant state funding. Romaine nevertheless suggests that, had these efforts succeeded, linguistic diversity would have been saved. The design is sufficient; its execution is wanting.

Stroud & Heugh (2004) critique the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB), set up “for the development and promotion of African languages” (p.193). “LHR [linguistic human rights] discourses, far from being able to accommodate linguistic diversity, actually reinforce trends towards *reduction* of the world’s languages in favour of large metropolitan ones” (p.192 – orig. emphasis). Nevertheless, PANSALB embodies “the legislative acknowledgement of linguistic diversity, and recognition of African languages [in South Africa]” (p.199). Perhaps the authors intend to foreground the emptiness of this acknowledgement; but there remains a basic under-theorisation of linguistic diversity. The authors have an insightful conception of rights and citizenship in *relation* to language, but not of language itself. This is demonstrated in their reading of the structural inequities of language planning:

Processes such as [language] standardization are crafted from the specific understandings of language held by dominant elites, and traditionally deployed in the spread and consolidation of prestigious varieties of language. When applied to ‘minority’ languages, standardization serves to remodel these languages in the image of the dominant language.

Stroud & Heugh, 2004:211-2

Stroud & Heugh call for a “ ‘broadening of the standard’ so as to encompass forms of speech previously excluded as substandard and impure” (2004:212). “An important role of experts”, they continue, “would be to authenticate different narratives or versions of language and culture, by crafting novel resources and new social meanings into legitimate and authoritative repertoires” (ibid.). Although this “broadens the linguistic database for standardization” (ibid.), it seems to rest on, and reproduce, the same standardisation paradigm. This is also hard to reconcile with their earlier appeal that “civil society needs to shake off the disempowering yoke of liberal capitalism and ethnically conceived practices and choices in order to become liberal” (ibid. p.207). There is a fundamental contradiction here, borne of crucial theoretical limitations.

May (2000a) equates protection of “cultural and linguistic diversity” (p.379) with opposition to “stigmatisation and marginalisation [...] of minority languages” (p.380). Bolstering these languages will protect diversity. Rindler-Schjerve & Vetter (2006) synonymise “linguistic diversity” and “multilingualism”, to be enshrined by incorporation of “minority languages” into administration and education. Yves (2004) discusses “linguistic diversity” in terms of translation in EU officialdom, and which should be the official languages of the Union; presupposing standardisation as a means to translation.

Nic Craith (2006) stresses awareness of “languages spoken in Europe by Europeans and non-Europeans alike” (p.19). Extra & Yağmur (2005) urge attention to immigrant minorities (IMs), lamenting European politicians’ conception of “cultural and linguistic diversity, mainly in terms of the national languages of the EU” (p.24). Their solution is to add “IM languages” (ibid.).

Kiwan & Meinhoff also lament the European Commission's approach to the "diversity and richness of European cultures", in that: "It does not appear to take postmigrant heritage into account as its focus remains regional and national" (2006:59); and: "It does not embrace the diversity and richness of the cultures of [...] migrant cultures" (2006:61).³¹ Linguistic diversity means more languages, a longer list, and the official use of them all.

To repeat a quotation given previously in this chapter, the aim of "defining, documenting and developing minority and endangered languages and language varieties" (King et al., 2008b:2), assumes that each of these units exists independently, and can be buttressed against (further) erosion. Similar themes arise in the emerging series of monographs published by Multilingual Matters, *Linguistic Diversity and Language Rights* (e.g. Woods, 2004; Garcia et al., 2006). (For comparable stances see de Varennes, 2007; Holt & Packer, 2007; Cilevičs, 2007; Henrard, 2007; Romaine, 2007; Kraus, 2007.)

Grenoble & Whaley (2006) combine protection of "diversity" with standardisation of discrete languages and their use in education. Interestingly, they do mention that "[s]tandardization has been argued to contribute to the loss of linguistic diversity, as a written standard inhibits the amount of variability allowed in a language and thereby inevitably causes some varieties to be lost" (p.154) – see also Ricento (2000:201-202). Yet this is only a momentary aside; and sits alongside their more frequent claims to be protecting linguistic diversity with just such standardisation efforts. Mac Giolla Chríost (2007) approaches a more nuanced view of differences within and between linguistic groups in relation to language policy. Ultimately though he conflates variation with variability (e.g. p.207), concluding affirmatively that:

³¹ For a fuller legal discussion of the multiethnic limits of EU law see Mitsilegas (2007).

“Language planning and policy can [...] play a role in helping to sustain the global linguistic diversity” (p.203). In the end, it remains unclear how.

Broadly then, protecting linguistic diversity appears to be characterised as recognising *more languages*. This essentialises – to a greater or less degree, depending on the author – each language, amenable to policies based on such categorisation. The aim is to emphasise how long the list of languages is, rather than reassessing what such a list means.

5.5.1.3 Conclusion: protect minority languages

Nic Craith (2006) states a goal to “maintain and promote linguistic diversity in contemporary Europe” (p.19), outlining the relevant legislative and political conditions, and ending with some policy recommendations (pp.182-187). Brief attention is paid to language-internal varieties (pp.184-185), but her main suggestion is that the EU “focus on the advancement of [each] community as a whole [...] and support transfrontier co-operation in fields such as education, training, cultural production, broadcasting, information technology and so on” (p.186).

It is critical to note that language policy and planning developed at the same time as the field of bilingual education. “Classroom teaching of endangered languages was extremely rare until the advent of bilingual education in the United States and elsewhere in the 1970s” (Hinton, 2001b:180). Reliance on education needs to be considered alongside New Public Management as a central part of the makeup of modern language policy and planning.

Because education is the one domain where the use of many minority languages is actually increasing, schools themselves become, in effect, new speech communities, and very powerful ones too. Yet, in many cases such schools provide only a small minority of the population with access to linguistic resources which have become scarce in [...] the public at large. [...] Through such schooling, a small élite comes to possess a new variety of the traditional language equipped with modern terminology suitable for use in the new domains of use it has claimed.

[...] The original defining group of speakers meanwhile becomes increasingly removed from control of their language as committees of experts coin new terms needed for specialized subject areas, and the language transmitted at school increasingly diverges from that spoken at home.

Romaine, 2006:466

Romaine's meaning here is hard to discern; but she appears to support delivery of these languages into schools, for safe keeping; "that small indigenous communities should aim to have school as one of several safe culture and language havens" (Romaine, 2006:466). Likewise Grin states that: "Education [...] is arguably the key element in favour of regional or minority languages" (ibid. p.79). May affirms that "the promotion of minority languages in the private domain still requires active intervention by the state – as, for example, in allowing for minority language education" (May, 2000a:381). Or as Baker has it:

Bilingual education has become a major tool in language reversal planning (sic), since language transmission within families within minority languages typically provides a considerable shortfall in language reproduction.

Baker, 2003:95

Extra & Yağmur (2005) report on language usage in various European cities to provide "tools for educational policies on the teaching of both the national majority language [...] and the teaching of IM languages" (p.25). They present "[t]he maintenance of language diversity and the promotion of language learning" (p.37) as complementary goals; and endorse the claims of the European Commission (2003:9) that: "Promoting linguistic diversity means actively encouraging the teaching and learning of the widest possible range of languages in our schools, universities, adult education centres and enterprises". This approach is mirrored in a wide range of research in this field (e.g. McPake et al., 2004; Balboni, 2004; Ricento, 2005; García et al., 2006; De Schutter, 2007; Loos, 2007), taking the recognition of "competence" and "proficiency" (as per Grin, 2003:172-173) in minority languages as equal to promoting diversity as an abstract ideal.

Imagining Multilingual Schools (Garcia et al., 2006) frequently names “linguistic diversity” as an ideal (26 times in total). As described above (§5.5.1.1) though, no clear definition of diversity is offered: that descriptive workload is implicitly palmed on to the plurality of languages mentioned throughout. The authors emphasise the need to “transform the linguistic and cultural diversity of [...] pupils into a learning resource, and to change their attitudes towards multilingualism” (p.70). There is no specific proposal to use these languages as codified teaching resources; rather it is left as a gap to fill – a deduction neither pre-empted nor countered given the lack of a definition of linguistic diversity. In *Sustaining Language Diversity in Europe*, G. Williams makes these pertinent remarks:

In all states, regardless of the home language, the school is the main agency whereby the production of the state language is guaranteed. This universal function of language can also apply to the production and reproduction of minority language groups. [...] The function of education has always been to inculcate a sense of normativity associated with state nationalism, and an adequacy in relation to the economic needs of the state. Thus the entry of minority languages into the labour market is paralleled by their entry into formal education.

G. Williams, 2005:31-33

The following extended excerpt demonstrates the rhetorical interplay between official language promotion and diversity in some more detail, reiterating the perceived importance of institutionalisation to the survival of minority languages, and therefore, by this account, linguistic diversity:

Only under very special circumstances will a minority group whose language does not play a role in the labour market survive. Only when devolved government has significant power *vis á vis* education policy, where the numbers are considerable and where the labour market incorporates the minority language are we likely to see any real development in minority language education, allowing education to have a relevance for both language production and reproduction. Educational policy will involve immersion education at pre-school level, leading to primary level provision and a coherent awareness of the relevance of secondary education for the regional labour market that operates, at least partly, by reference to the minority language.

Rather than recognising the value of diversity for the economy, most states develop outmoded policies associated with state homogeneity or policies from a time when minority language educational provision was imposed on them following the two

World Wars. Others have failed to be sufficiently self-confident to engage with a positive conception of diversity. Minority language provision is either missing, or merely serves as a concession to supporting a reproduction function that engages with civil society rather than the labour market. [...]

[...] There are states which do not give stateless languages any status, ignoring them entirely in their educational systems. Others limit the use of minority languages to pre-school and/or primary education. Those that accept the relevance of minority languages across the broad range of education are few, but are much closer to the normative construction of the relationship between language and education [...].

G. Williams, 2005:88

Although Williams here stresses that “[t]he family is crucial to minority language production and reproduction” (2005:88), nevertheless his main policy focus is education and the labour market. This helps to redefine the boundaries of normative, state-sanctioned languages; but also tends to obscure what first needs to happen to those languages in terms of standardisation.

Writing about managerial style, but applicable to language policy, Flynn notes: “Clearly changes that increase individual discretion will have problems in cultures wedded to the universal application of rules” (2002:71). The main measure of success for language policy, then, is generally focussed on rates of success in examinations in the language:

[S]tatistical procedures [...] are used in order to isolate the relative contributions of various inputs to the desired output, by comparing the results achieved by learners schooled under the policy being evaluated with those of learners from a control group. For example, does a group who has been taught language X using a new textbook perform better [...] than a control group who has been using a standard textbook? Do classrooms who have been split into sub-groups according to ability or inclination achieve higher competence [...] than heterogeneous classrooms?

Grin, 2003:173

The question is of the efficacy of different teaching methods in reaching intended learning outcomes. Such education may be complemented with “representative surveys” (Grin, 2003:175) to gauge everyday language use; yet these are supplementary to quantifiable outcomes.

The above review, then, is a brief window into how “diversity is rhetorically turned into a problem that needs to be ‘managed’ ” (Muehlmann, 2007:16). The development of the field in this way can be seen as what Farrell calls “professionalism”, where a new industry starts off small and exploratory, but soon “norms are formed, reinforced and diffused [...] through codification in professional literature and the setting of professional standards” (2004:9).

This positing of diversity as a goal, but the simultaneous lack of a definition of diversity, locates language policy and planning within a deontological moral philosophy:

a deontological approach [...] focuses on universal rules that serve as guides for moral action [...]; a teleological approach [...] focuses on the consequences of actions as the determining factor [...]. [O]ne judges the morality of the act by the reasons for the act (a deontological approach) and the other [...] by the outcomes or consequences of the act (a teleological approach).

Denhardt, 1988:44, cited in Evans & Lowery, 2006:153-4

Two assumptions are manifest: that intervention is justified to protect linguistic diversity; and that this need not be evaluated against a robust definition of diversity. This is not based on the knowledge that what is being done will protect diversity, but that something must be done, and something must be measured. One function of the enthymeme as described above is to rhetorically address these gaps and support this moral foundation. It is the shape of this enthymeme, and its implications for declining linguistic diversity, that occupy this chapter.

5.6 The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML)

Published in 1992, eight years in the making, the ECRML lists a series of language planning activities for ratifying states to undertake. It goes beyond the passive tolerance of previous international law, as “the only international legal instrument whose primary aim is the protection and promotion of regional or minority languages” (Grin, 2003:67). Recalling the theme of New

Public Management, Grin states that it “represents the vanguard of a trend in legal instruments, because it shifts the emphasis towards the effectiveness of the policies to be adopted” (2003:86).

It follows that the desired outcome of the policy measures to be adopted under the Charter ought to be the continuing vitality of those languages, meaning that they ought to be known – and used.

Grin, 2003:41

The ECRML is strongly occupied with training people to speak and reproduce each language nominated for protection. Most pointedly this includes people whose first language is the dominant majority language. In this, the Charter is weighted towards the latter end of the six-fold typology described in §5.3.1.

To begin with, the plight of languages is established as the main problem, as in Paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Report (CoE, 1992a): “For many years various bodies within the Council of Europe have been expressing concern over the situation of regional or minority languages”. No like concern is expressed or implied about the people to whom these languages ostensibly relate. All language policy, even Type 6, could conceivably rest on an argument that people have been coerced or discriminated into abandoning a particular language, and that there is an inherent benefit in reintroducing it; but that is not the purpose of the ECRML (although this has had limited purchase in some research, e.g. Maître & Matthey, 2007). This disinterest in human rights, in preference to languages, is made clearest in Paragraph 11 of the Charter:

The charter sets out to protect and promote regional or minority languages, not linguistic minorities. For this reason emphasis is placed on the cultural dimension and the use of a regional or minority language in all the aspects of the life of its speakers. The charter does not establish any individual or collective rights for the speakers of regional or minority languages. Nevertheless, the obligations of the parties with regard to the status of these languages and the domestic legislation which will have to be introduced in compliance with the charter will have an obvious effect on the situation of the communities concerned and their individual members.

Dunbar elaborates on this predominant focus on languages:

[B]oth the question of what constitutes a “minority” or “national minority” and that of who is entitled to membership in such a group have not been defined in the minorities instruments or generally in international law.

The Charter avoids these issues by linking State obligations to languages themselves, and not to groups such as “minorities” or “national minorities” or individual membership in such groups. One rather peculiar result of this approach is that, as the explanatory report acknowledges, the Charter does not establish any individual or collective rights for the speakers of regional or minority languages. In this, the Charter is in some ways a step backward from the Framework Convention [for the Protection of National Minorities]. [...]

[...] By eschewing a rights-based approach, the Charter represents a missed opportunity to advance the notion that language rights are fundamental human rights under international law.

Dunbar, 2000:49

The “third pillar”, then, is fully severed from the preceding two, the principle measure of success being numerical increase in language usage. “This Jesuitical approach”, Ó Riagáin writes, “sidesteps the psychological block some States have about minorities, national or otherwise, and focuses on the languages themselves” (2001:35).

Like the academic literature that precedes and follows it, the ECRML embodies the language policy and planning enthymeme outlined so far – describing linguistic diversity as a series of languages, claiming that this is under threat, and setting out to protect it:

Linguistic diversity is one of the most precious elements of the European cultural heritage. The cultural identity of Europe cannot be constructed on the basis of linguistic standardisation. On the contrary, the protection and strengthening of its traditional regional and minority languages represents a contribution to the building of Europe, which, according to the ideals of the members of the Council of Europe, can be founded only on pluralist principles.

CoE, 1992a: Paragraph 26

C.H. Williams echoes this perceived dichotomy between “attempts to maintain linguistic diversity and the increasing linguistic standardisation apparent throughout the world” (2008:52).

Similarly, Dunbar notes “the overriding concern of the Charter with the protection of cultural

and linguistic diversity” (2000:54), then describes “the Charter’s objectives – the preservation and protection of threatened languages” (ibid. p.55). By way of comparison, a similar claim is found in the Maastricht Treaty:

The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organization of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity.

EU, 1992: Art.126

The ECRML is worded in a purposively non-specific way, to attend to “the specific conditions and historical traditions in the different regions of the European States” (CoE, 1992b: Preamble). This acknowledges differences between linguistic minorities (Grin, 2003:76), but not within them. Moreover the requirements of the ECRML are all binary, to provide services in “the regional or minority language” and “the dominant language”; and then “present periodically to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe” (Art.VI.15.1) on their progress. There is a presumption that these languages can be readily applied in a measurable manner, to achieve quotas of use – reflected also in the legal literature behind the Charter (e.g. Shuibhne, 2002).

However, what is essential is that nowhere in the ECRML is there any explicit call for standardisation. The Charter simply notes that there are these languages, and that they should be protected. The existence of these languages is not problematised; it is presupposed, in the technical sense of a non-cancellable proposition (Levinson, 1983:207). Decisions over what constitutes “the regional or minority language” are left to the unspecified “authorities” in each case. As we will see, it is in the subsequent planning process – ‘downstream’ from the initial policy – that pressure upon diversity materialises.

There may be some qualms over diversity in its broadest sense, since the ECRML is limited to languages “traditionally used within a given territory of a [European] State by nationals of that State” (CoE, 1992b:I.1.a.i); which “does not include [...] the languages of migrants” (ibid.) – a stance not without its discontents, e.g. the millions of Turkish speakers in Europe (Nic Craith, 2006:147-159). One might contend that all languages, indigenous or otherwise, contribute to diversity (Barni, 2006); and should all receive protection if diversity is the goal. Nevertheless, the ECRML effectively covers itself from criticisms about diversity in these terms, precisely by restricting itself in this way. The best scrutiny is therefore whether this policy, and the planning measures it describes, encourage diversity within these particular languages.

The articles of the ECRML are concerned, respectively, with: “education”, “judicial authorities”, “administrative authorities and public services”, “media”, “cultural activities and facilities”, “economic and social life” and “transfrontier exchanges”. The judicial, administrative, economic and transfrontier requirements are mostly reactive, limited to providing translations upon request. Media provisions are hedged to apply only where “the public authorities [...] play a role in this field, and respecting the [...] independence and autonomy of the media” (CoE, 1992b:XI.1). Cultural provisions meanwhile are fairly highbrow, concerning “especially libraries, video libraries, cultural centres, museums, archives, academies, theatres and cinemas, as well as literary work and film production, vernacular forms of cultural expression, festivals and the culture industries” (CoE, 1992b:XII.1). The main muscle of the ECRML is in education, where the biggest commitments of time and funding are required; namely to make available primary and secondary education in the regional or minority language.

The ECRML is geared towards producing new speakers of each language designated for protection, most of whom will acquire the language via education. While Hogan-Brun & Wolff

(2003:4) argue that the ECRML “clearly states the areas in which states have an obligation to take action on behalf of the speakers of minority languages”, it is also heavily involved beyond acting on behalf of existing speakers, aiming also to expand their number. This is reiterated in its numerous requirements to “encourage” use of the languages regardless of previous usage or non-usage, at its clearest in Article III.8.2:

With regard to education and in respect of territories other than those in which the regional or minority languages are traditionally used, the Parties undertake, if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it, to allow, encourage or provide teaching in or of the regional or minority language at all the appropriate stages of education.

The consequence of all this for linguistic diversity is the overarching focus of the two case studies below. For Cornish, I look at recent efforts to standardise the language, and the pressures to agree on a single standard form for use in education – the principal site designated for its revival. For Welsh, the focus is the current sociolinguistic profile of the language, and how its diversity is faring in the context of this longer-running and reportedly successful revival.

A key contrast is that Cornish has few if any native speakers (Hinton, 2001a:103), whereas Welsh has a large pre-existing speaker base. The Cornish case study is therefore not about existing diversity as such, since the language is being literally reconstructed from nothing. Rather the analysis focuses on whether the Cornish revival is setting up the conditions under which diversity might flourish. The question of existing diversity is taken up with Welsh – examining the sociolinguistic effects of a language revival, decades after such standardisation took place.

There is no great detail in these case studies about rhetorical claims regarding linguistic diversity in specific instances of British language policy, either by government or language planners. The

purpose so far has been to illustrate how language policy and planning as a whole has constructed linguistic diversity as a rhetorical target. The Charter itself is just that, a charter; it cannot be enforced, and requires national legislation to be created in its name. The question is how the issue of diversity filters down and plays out in modern revivals, and whether the measures enacted in the name of linguistic diversity can actually encourage such a thing.

5.7 Cornish: an early stage language revival

Cornish is a dead language, its last recorded native speaker – Dolly Pentreath – having died in 1777. A few unrecorded speakers may have survived her (B. Ellis, 1974:116-124); and traces of Cornish persisted in speech for some decades – as isolated borrowings into English, as well as counting, certain prayers and other incantations (ibid. pp.125-128); but it declined steadily, and “despite gentlemen antiquarians and their efforts to recreate a literature in the language, the days of Cornish were clearly numbered” (ibid. p.95). Even such academic interest was not sustained: “As the amateur antiquarians began to die there were no enthusiasts to replace them and interest in the language began to die also” (ibid. p.108).

Finally, as one historian wrote in 1871: “The close of the 18th Century witnessed the final extinction, as spoken language, of the old Celtic vernacular of Cornwall” (Bannister, cited in B. Ellis, 1974:124) – its influence remaining only as dialectal colourings of English, similarly to how Scandinavian languages have influenced English dialects in Yorkshire (Pons-Sanz, 2004; Rupp & Page-Verhoeff, 2005; Griffiths, 2005). Vestiges of Cornish survive to this day in place names, but after the 18th century, in every other sense – conversational, administrative, even literary or ceremonial – it was gone.

5.7.1 Brief history of the revival

Given its lack of native speakers, and scant written records, the revival of Cornish began with what Hinton refers to as *reconstruction* or *reconstitution*:

Sometimes [language] documentation itself is inadequate, and “reconstruction” is necessary if a community wishes for language revitalization. Reconstitution is extrapolation from whatever information exists to guess what the language might have been like. Related languages may also be used to help with reconstitution.

Hinton, 2001c:414

For Cornish this began in the 19th century, with different scholars, working independently and at different times, reconstructing the language from its scarce written remains (B. Ellis, 1974).

Formal grammars and spelling conventions were abstracted; and lexical and structural gaps filled by adaptations from Welsh and Breton, the two surviving related languages. In this way “Cornish [...] has literally been resuscitated” (Strubell, 2001:268). Critically, these different scholars each produced a slightly different form of the language (Price, 1984:141), with minor but noticeable differences in spelling and orthography – though following broadly the same grammar and pronunciations. These manually reconstructed forms we might call ‘versions’ of Cornish since they are not varieties in the sociolinguistic sense. As Deacon has it, “in the Cornish case no dialect is tied to a living community of speakers in any real sense of a community using a Cornish dialect as its everyday means of communication” (2006:19).

In the 20th century, a following of adult enthusiasts grew, learning Cornish in evening classes and correspondence courses. The different versions attracted different followers, which in time led to factions, with competing claims over their relative worth. These groups arranged themselves under the banners of semi-official organisations, none publicly elected or officially sanctioned (despite some involvement from local government), and all with claims to authority over Cornish. These have been termed NGOs in one report (PFECMR, 2007), but could also be seen

as interest groups given their prime interest in language survival, rather than addressing a particular social ill. Division aside, what is important to note is that all sides identified as speaking Cornish, allowing claims of a “language movement” as per Annalamai (1979).

Burgeoning in number from the 1970s onwards (B. Ellis, 1974:201), “today it is estimated that around 300 persons have knowledge of the language, of whom about 100 are fluent speakers and use the language in daily life” (PFECMR, 2007:6). These are almost exclusively adult learners, although some have managed to pass Cornish on to their children, a handful of whom carried the language through to adulthood in some form. McLeod (2008) calls these “neo-native” speakers.

Given the lack of native speakers, Cornish language planners have not had to deal with natural variation or variability. As Deacon puts it wryly, “the lack of such a community gives full rein to the schoolteacherly tendencies within the revivalist movement” (2006:20). It is worth noting here that around 40% of Cornish activists are retired teachers and 60% higher educated (Hirner, 1999:27). This makes it one of the clearest examples of Type 6 acquisition planning, and an illuminating contrast to Welsh.

Efforts to promote Cornish in the mid-late 20th century were mostly voluntary. There was a modest £5000 annual language support budget set up by Cornwall County Council (PFECMR, 2007:7), and contributions from bodies like the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Duke of Cornwall’s Fund, the European Commission, and the UK Bureau for Lesser-used Languages (GOSW, 2000). By the end of the century this growing movement began pursuing central government, brandishing the ECRML as their main bargaining tool. By virtue of a technicality, the Charter does actually cater for languages that have died. As Dunbar notes:

Based on the definition of “regional or minority language” under Article 1, paragraph a, there does not appear to be any reason why Cornish should not qualify for protection, at least under Part II. While this definition requires that such languages be used “traditionally” within a territory in the State, which Cornish has, it does not seem to require that such languages must have been spoken by native speakers up to the present.
Dunbar, 2000:68

Responsibility for Cornish was delegated to Government Office South West (GOSW), which commissioned a report from Professor Kenneth MacKinnon, a Celtic linguist, which was delivered in 2000 (MacKinnon, 2000). The report described a level of vitality and cultural relevance that made Cornish viable for ECRML protection; and on 5 November 2002, the government announced recognition of Cornish under Part II of the ECRML (BBC, 2002; CCC, 2004:4). Local Government and Regions Minister Nick Raynsford delivered the following response to a Parliamentary Question on the issue:

After careful consideration and with the help of the results of an independent academic study on the language commissioned by the government, we have decided to recognise Cornish as falling under Part II of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The government will be registering this decision with the Council of Europe.

The purpose of the Charter is to protect and promote the historical regional or minority languages of Europe. It recognises that some of these languages are in danger of extinction and that protection and encouragement of them contributes to Europe’s cultural diversity and historical traditions.

This is a positive step in acknowledging the symbolic importance the language has for Cornish identity and heritage.

Cornish will join Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Irish, Scots and Ulster Scots as protected and promoted languages under the Charter, which commits the government to recognise and respect those languages.

HC Deb 2 Nov 2002 cc206W-207W

Part II recognition for Cornish has been referred to as “a groundbreaking step forward” (Dunbar, 2000:69). One noteworthy detail is that although the Cornish language was recognised under the Charter, the Cornish *people* were not recognised as a “national minority” under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (McLeod, 2008). This underscores the detachment between people and language made available by the Charter, favouring the latter.

5.7.2 Contributions of this case study

Like much of the literature on language policy and planning outlined so far, accounts of the Cornish revival focus either on scholarly documentation and orthographic reconstruction (e.g. Smith, 1947, 1969; B. Ellis, 1974) or on broad themes of ideology and identity (e.g. Payton, 1997, 1999; M.C. Jones, 1998). Language standardisation, when mentioned, has been described as either philologically or aesthetically motivated. This has tended to exclude another significant force towards standardisation, namely the bureaucratic needs of the state, manifested in discussions regarding the distribution of resources. The ideologies and academic preferences of activists and linguists are important here, but the actual execution of the revival comes down to the priorities and practices of government, if it is government who will be responsible, and accountable, for the venture.

A detailed account of the factional decision-making process in the Cornish revival is provided by Deacon (2006). His account is informative and frank about the trials and tribulations of individual groups; but this does not involve ethnographic reporting of events, or interviews with activists or officials. He does lessen the authorial distance of earlier accounts, but still there is room for elaboration. The focus in this case study, then, is the process from activism to official recognition, and how the politics of the revival have engendered the drive for standardisation.

The specific linguistic details of the versions of Cornish, and their authorships, are not of concern here. What is important is the barriers they presented for the language revival, and how that was resolved. These versions do represent a form of difference, but not natural linguistic variation or variability, not diversity in the sense outlined so far. It is not the case that, had they all been supported, then diversity would be protected. It would not matter if two, four, or ten versions were officially promoted. The question in this case study is therefore not whether

diversity is diminishing, or even whether the plurality of versions can be equally supported, but whether the Cornish revival is encouraging diversity to develop.

5.7.3 Research method

My exploration of the Cornish language revival was constructed as a grounded enquiry, based on first-hand experience; and supplemented with analysis of policy documents and other literature. I started out by registering with various online Cornish language forums, and contacting people listed on websites relating to the revival. Fortunately, language activists are usually fairly keen to express their opinion so this soon snowballed into a useful group of respondents, ten of whom I visited Cornwall to interview. In all three visits were made: to the annual Cornish Language Weekend 2005 (a teaching and strategising event), then later that year for individual interviews with key activists and officials; and lastly to a conference in 2007 where the standardisation issue came to a head. The first visit was essentially a pilot. The second was planned in more detail, involving semi-structured interviews with a selected list of individuals. The third visit, like the first, was mostly observational but involved useful conversations, some details of which are reported below.

As noted above, the different factions of the revival are represented by different semi-official organisations. There had always been debate and occasional tension between these, and at first the issue of standardisation might seem a thin veil for championing a particular version above all others. This then was a main area for clarification in the interviews; and whether standardisation had arisen for ideological reasons or due to more practical concerns.

The research question motivated the selection of the method. It was essential to understand the plans of the Cornish language activists, how they have been influenced by the Charter, by their

own ideals, and by involvement in the decision-making process with government. Semi-structured interviews were deemed most appropriate: having a list of specific questions in mind, but asking them in the flow of conversation. This kept the interview focused but flexible (Flick, 2002:287-90), allowing consideration of other, often equally valuable, information. This was deemed preferable to either structured questionnaires – that can oversimplify the ideals and wishes of interviewees (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996:205) – or “nondirective” (ibid.) or “narrative” (Flick, 2002:96) interviews – that might hinder comparison of key themes between interviews. In this I gained much direction from a similar study by Lowy et al. (1985), researching language revivals in New York City: Yiddish, Spanish, and French.

For reasons of space the full list of questions used in the interviews is not reported here (for this see Sayers, 2005). Instead the decision-making process is described from 2002 to 2008, using data from the interviews to evince and illustrate the points raised.

Epistemologically, this case study embodies a positivist stance that “interview data give us access to ‘facts’ about the world” for reliable, viable, generalisable conclusions (Silverman, 2001:86-7). It also represents an empiricist stance that “[i]f respondents [...] agree on a statement, there is much better ground for accepting it as true than if only one [...] makes the statement” (Selltiz et al., 1965:245; in Silverman, 2001:88). All interview quotes are anonymised, and all information given without citation has come from these interviews. Responsibility for the accuracy of these details is my own.

5.7.4 The Cornish language weekend

The Cornish Language Weekend is the biggest annual gathering of Cornish speakers. It was at this event where the subject of standardisation initially arose as a theme for the interviews.

Speaking with activists individually, they were quite upfront and forthcoming that Cornish needed to be presented in a standardised form for the revival to progress, indicating that this had been an issue for some time. Although this event is held by the Cornish Language Board, which backs a particular version of Cornish, they clearly held their partisan interests separate from standardisation as an issue in its own right. This provided the initial stimulus toward pursuing standardisation as the main theme.

On the first evening, there was Cornish poetry from Pol Hodge, in Cornish then translated into English. Resounding with themes of nationalism, he described Cornwall as a “half-nation”. He made frequent comparisons to Wales, Ireland and Scotland, conjuring images of solidarity and kinship with other Celts. He satirically described Cornwall as “the weakest link” among them, soon to be “voted off”.³² Speaking with Pol in person, he said that Cornish would be strengthened by being presented as one language. This followed comments about miscommunications with GOSW, and the need to appear more pragmatic.

The second night saw a meeting about a logo for Cornish, with ideas scattered around a flip chart. Someone mentioned the importance of public recognition, and the need for something instantly recognisable as Cornish. A voice from the back referred to the success of the clothing store Gap in being so well known. There was a rumble of agreement about their success, seeing it as a good example. It was agreed that the committee would take these ideas away and develop them. In a sense this was about marketing Cornish in competition with English.

I spoke with one activist who recalled the difficulty of raising children with Cornish; that teachers see it as disruptive; and that since English is the language of recreation, Cornish loses its

³² This is a reference to the game show *The Weakest Link*, where contestants answer questions simultaneously and are voted off by each other based on their performance, until only one remains to claim the prize money.

enjoyment and relevance as the kids grow up. Asked whether Cornish should be made into its own mainstream to counter English, she was neither contemplative nor hesitant in saying that it should. On the subject of the different versions of Cornish, she said that “hard decisions” must be made for the revival to progress, stressing that Cornish needs to gain a “global relevance”, recognised internationally as the language of Cornwall. Again there was less focus on which version to use and more just settling on a standard. There was no ill will in her desire to reach agreement, no disdain for the other versions; her tone was far more one of embattled necessity.

5.7.5 Cornish language and nation

The interviews themselves demonstrated that, among its supporters, the Cornish language is usually tied up with feelings of Cornwall as a kind of nation – not a distinct ethnicity, just a group separate from the English and with a language as a key element of that. “You can’t separate the two things, there must be some overlap between the two”, said one interviewee. In this way the Cornish language “clearly is a national symbol”.

Cornish political nationalism, institutionalised in the *Mebyon Kernow* (‘Sons of Cornwall’) political party, was at least partly a product of the language revival in the early-mid 20th century (B. Ellis, 1974:203). Yet in recent decades, language activists have distanced themselves from these more explicit nationalist movements. This had broadly two elements. First was a disinterest in the spurious and sometimes criminal activity of extremist groups like the Cornish National Liberation Army. This was heavily magnified at the time of Charter recognition in 2002 by the contemporaneous start of the global War on Terror, and a feeling that any association with such activity would alienate authorities and the public alike. Secondly there was a realisation that the ECRML itself does not rely on land claims or sovereignty, and so nationalist aims were not strategically useful. An interviewee summed up this mild ethnonationalism:

It doesn't necessarily mean we want to change the politics, we're not necessarily talking, you know, free independent Cornwall, but we're talking a recognition of, a sense of belonging, a sense of place, a sense of identity, a sense of what the place is about.

The question now was whether this ethno-nationalist imperative had created the emphasis on unity, or whether this had more to do with bureaucratic concerns, arising during the subsequent decision-making process over the distribution of resources.

5.7.6 A history of criticism

The debate over the versions of Cornish had traditionally been a largely academic one, albeit with occasional raised voices. In the mid-late 20th century though, funding allotted to certain groups had caused outcry from others. This had sometimes driven away potential funding bodies, unaware of factional disputes and disinterested in fuelling such a conflict. One such loss came in the 1980s when the European Bureau for Lesser-used Languages (EBLUL) swiftly withdrew interest after just such a protestation. As one interviewee recalled of a European Commission project for Cornish under its Objective 1 programme for economically deprived areas:

These tensions have always been there, but as they get closer to real plans and real money, it's more and more of an issue. [...] Objective 1 wanted to do some of their documentation in Cornish but [...] they're worried about criticism [...]. So that's the problem you see, it's the history of criticism really, of getting slammed for using one version rather than another.

This “history of criticism” might not have mattered if the Cornish issue had been taken away from the activists and decided in official circles; but exactly the opposite transpired. Following the 2002 recognition of Cornish, a series of political manoeuvres occurred that gradually saw the decision-making power devolved and delivered squarely onto the disparate factions. Their opinions about the language were suddenly all important, with the future of large-scale funding resting on their decision.

5.7.7 The strategy process 2002-4

Before GOSW was given responsibility for Cornish, the issue was delegated around a number of other government departments. As one interviewee summarised this chain of delegations:

Up until very recently, it's been going through [...] DEFRA [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs], and various government departments, and to Cornwall County Council and everybody's been like throwing the ball back to everybody else, but [...] now Government Office South West are saying yes [...] government are committed financially.

GOSW internally delegated the Cornish issue to their Department for Ministerial Business, Communications & Intelligence. From here Cornwall County Council were contacted, and a series of strategic partnerships and consultation committees were formed. This was the beginning of the decision-making process over the distribution of resources, and the seeds of some strategic partnerships of the kind described in §5.4.1.

5.7.7.1 Strategic partnerships being planned

In early 2003 GOSW opened discussion with the factions through an Advisory Group gathered by Cornwall County Council, on how best to serve Cornish groups and people wanting to learn the language. They were following protocol here, as this is the first step required by the ECRML:

Article 7, paragraph 4 [...] requires that in determining their policies, States shall take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use regional or minority languages, and encourages States to set up bodies to advise the authorities on all matters pertaining to such languages.

Dunbar, 2000:55

Incidentally, this fairly narrow consultation requirement, limited to users of the language, was how such small organisations were devolved such power. (See Appendix 5 for a brief discussion of the implications of this for the democratic basis of language policy and planning.) The

Advisory Group, convened in April 2003, resolved to create a Strategy for developing the language, and established a Steering Group which also involved GOSW. Here then was the first manifestation of a strategic partnership. The incentive for this group was the prospect of a coherent funding package from local, central, and European government:

The next step with the strategy is that funding package coming together between ODPM [Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which encompasses GOSW], Objective 1, County Council, Learning Skills Council, and a Strategy Manager in place.

Attention of the Steering Group quickly centred on education, again guided mostly by the ECRML. Concern centred on the cost of producing and distributing materials, and assessing proficiency in Cornish to measure the outcome of the programme. It was with these two priorities – efficient production of materials, and transparency of testing – that the urgency of finding a single standard form of the language came to the fore. One interviewee with particular experience of discussion among education officials explained that:

I think there is going to have to be some compromise in order to get the authorities [...] engaged, because you have got to contend with the LEA [Local Education Authority], you've got to contend with DfES [Department for Education and Skills] [...] who all want something they can predict [...] because if a child moves from here to there, they want them to be able to work in the same system.

If you're actually talking about putting resources into producing materials and in training teachers [...] how are you going to produce it in three or four forms? That's the problem.

Another reason for standardisation can be pinpointed in the quote above, regarding the movement of pupils between schools. Transparency of testing for reasons of efficiency is one thing; but quite another is the question of how pupils would adapt to moving schools. The imperative for this to be as unproblematic as possible was manifest, requiring the least interruption to their proficiency and performance in tests:

It would be very difficult to have kids in one school spelling Cornish in a different way from kids in another school, so I think there has to be a standard version of Cornish.

As education had been flagged as the main vehicle for the revival, the views of official education bodies became salient. This came through especially clearly from reports of discussions with individual education officials:

It does need to be done in mostly one form. The differences are used by people who have an anti-Cornish language slant like [critical education figure] [...] to say oh well we can't have any Cornish in schools because they can't even decide what system.

Similar sentiments had been expressed from local and central government officials, foregrounding standardisation (or lack of) as the main problem. As one interviewee related such an encounter where this was presented as an issue:

I'm not clear in my own mind, having met with [two significant government officials], whether they were deliberately being obstructive, or whether they were acting on order from higher up.

And as another put it:

County councillors [...], people like that, [...] say things like [...] why should we support you if you can't agree on a spelling system?

It is worth stressing here that the interviewees were not prompted specifically about whether standardisation was important; it was a common theme expressed frequently in the interviews.

The scale of this obstacle was summed up similarly by another interviewee:

It's been used by the policymakers to that effect, because they say 'well why are you still arguing amongst yourselves? [...] Which group should we support?'

Politically it plays into the hands of those who don't want to support it, and who say 'come on, you've got a small language base and you can't even agree what they're using'. [...] The biggest weakness is that.

Whether the officials referred to here were being evasive or simply aiming for the most efficient expenditure of public funds is relatively unimportant. In fact, it matters little whether they had focussed on standardisation at all. What matters is that the language activists had got that impression, and it was they who had the responsibility to decide collectively. Standardisation therefore became the greatest issue, not because of the language policy, but through the planning process. These remarks about standardisation were distinctly non-partisan, laced with practicalities that had arisen in countless committee meetings; and the issue had clearly emerged irrespective of individual ideals. A result of all this was a general acceptance that agreement was necessary, and that this would resolve most if not all of the problems currently besetting the revival.

A separate problem explained to me, probably more specific to the Cornish case, is that although there are people 'teaching' Cornish in semi-official capacities, there are very few qualified teachers (or at least, who have not yet retired). The logistics of recruitment and teacher training requires standardisation just as much as the teaching that follows. This is an especially clear example of how a shortfall of native speakers sharpened the need for standardisation.

Meanwhile local government also required a standard:

You could say well it's up to each [local] authority [...] to say what they want to do [in terms of selecting a version of Cornish] but they're not going to. [...] Essentially it comes down to what the County Council does – because that's most official documentation – will become the norm.

Similarly one interviewee said that, “it doesn’t make a lot of sense to have lots of different forms being used in the same council”. As another interviewee summarised the process in one district council, the standardisation issue emanated from a scrutiny committee:

The Cornish language advisory group on [the district council] [...] was set up from [...] the Individual Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, which actually was considering the Cornish Language Strategy and all those sorts of things, and decided there needed to be a Cornish Language advisory group to help people within the council but also people in other councils within the district, I mean parish and town councils, to use the language.

5.7.7.2 Efficiency, cost-effectiveness, accountability

With small project grants there is little requirement for the language used to be replicable or readily translatable. It is the large-scale programmes that require efficiency and uniformity.

When you’re just presenting the language [in one-off events] it doesn’t matter about which form, [...] it’s when you actually want to encourage [...] it to become a community language [with large-scale programmes], then it gets more important.

And as another interviewee remarked:

All we’re saying is that there are certain contexts where you have to pick one [standard], because you can’t produce forms in four, you know it’d just be a nonsense. [...] If we’re going to be producing a form bilingually [...] you have to pick one, whichever one that is, and that’s just common sense really.

The interviews demonstrated that standardisation was held apart from factional loyalty; and that through a long and complex chain of meetings and other exchanges it had gradually accrued salience as the main issue. To differing degrees, every interviewee recognised the need for a standard form of Cornish in education, while also seeing education as the most important route for the revival.

5.7.7.3 *The emergence of standardisation as a priority*

The 2002-4 strategy consultation process culminated in 2004 with the publication of the *Strategy for the Cornish Language* by Cornwall County Council, who urged agreement from the Cornish factions on standardisation, but would not proceed without it, stating that:

The existing co-operation between different language groups needs to be encouraged and further developed to enable a consensus to be reached on the written form of the language. A clear message came from the consultation that the spelling issue was a priority which needed to be resolved.

CCC, 2004:17

The main proposal of the *Strategy* was to agree a single standard written form of the language, and work out ways to efficiently and effectively propagate that standard. Some exemplary targets from the Strategy reflect the existing governmental practice within the NPM framework, delivering outcomes in efficient ways, supervised centrally to ensure systematicity:

- Assess existing good practice and disseminate knowledge of it e.g. existing work in schools, the role of Sense of Place in raising early awareness, the take-up and potential development of distance learning.
- Establish a central contact point for Cornish in education.
- Identify opportunities within the existing provision for access to the Cornish language.
- Develop more effective promotion for adult learning opportunities.
- Address issues of cost and standard of classes, both formal and voluntary.
- [...]
- The establishment of structures for monitoring progress and ensuring ongoing consultation.
- A single written form of Cornish for use in official documentation and formal education.

CCC, 2004:11,18

It would be convenient to say that GOSW had called for standardisation; but patently things were more complex. GOSW had always been totally egalitarian to the different factions, but with an eye on future practicalities. One high ranking official explained to me by email:

no one group has had dialogue with Government – the dialogue has been with the Cornish language movement. No one group or form of the language has been favoured by the Government. Yes, of course, the existence of a number of written forms presents issues when considering things like the future in education [...]. If there is to be a single written form (as the consultation on the Strategy [...] identified as a priority), it is for the Cornish language movement to take forward that debate.

This quite subtle immovability, expressed almost as an unwelcome restraint, inviting a decision from the disparate language groups on how those restraints might be lifted. This was underscored by the carefully worded target in the Strategy of a “single written form of Cornish for use in official documentation and formal education” (CCC, 2004:18).

A subsequent *Evaluation report of the Committee of Experts* from the Council of Europe reported the progress of Cornish at the time as follows:

The Committee of Experts welcomes the adoption of a strategy and the fact that it was developed together with the authorities and the language organisations and involving the public. One of the first tasks under the strategy will be to resolve the issues relating to establishing a common orthography, which appear to have held back the promotion of Cornish.

PFECMR, 2007:22

So far no single written standard form of the Cornish language has been agreed upon. At present, at least three different orthographical systems co-exist. The Committee of Experts was informed during its visit that the process of finding and agreeing on one standard orthography for its official use was a high priority in the objectives. This is to be achieved through the guidance of an advisory panel of impartial academic experts. It is difficult to enhance the visibility of the language, for example through signage and printed media and most importantly in the field of education, until there is an agreement on the use of one common orthography.

PFECMR, 2007:23

These are if anything acknowledgements of how the need for standardisation developed during the planning process – not pre-given requirements, but reports back from the Council of Europe on difficulties faced during Charter implementation.

A further drive towards standardisation lies in the inevitable aspiration for Cornish to go from Part II Charter protection to Part III, given a purportedly popular view that this is what constitutes a proper language:

What seems to be symptomatic and recurrent for Part II languages is a lack of the standardisation or codification needed for the use of the language in many aspects of public life, often a low prestige attached to the language, and finally a lack of an overarching language strategy and plan. This leads the speakers to perceive the current policies as being merely half-hearted.

PFECMR, 2007:22

5.7.8 The Cornish Language Commission and the Standard Written Form: 2005-9

The suspended animation status of the Cornish revival, pending standardisation, was reflected in the official documentation of council meetings soon after the Strategy had been published; for example the minutes of a meeting of the Social, Economic and Environment Committee of Penwith District Council, which resolved that:

1. The Strategy for the Cornish Language be adopted in principle by Penwith District Council, subject to budgetary restrictions;
2. A Cornish Language Advisory Group be established and incorporated into the service plans of relevant officers;
3. The Advisory Group works with the official version of the language once it is adopted; and
4. The Advisory Group reports to Members with recommendations for early priorities within 3 months of its initiation.

Penwith DC, 2005:S.26

Official use of Cornish is accepted as per the Strategy, but clearly dependent on standardisation (Point 3); and this is set in the context of budgeting, planning, and reporting on progress. The themes of New Public Management are equally clear, with a requirement for progress to be measured, and within specified timeframes. This in turn evokes familiar hallmarks of devolved responsibilities checked by central oversight:

The UK Government [...] recognises that central government has ultimate responsibility for the fulfilment of the UK's Charter obligations. The UK Government still believes that devolved administrations are better placed to carry out the implementation of policy on regional or minority languages given their local expertise, and does not foresee a centralisation of this process.

However, it is accepted that co-ordination between London and the regional capitals could be improved as a means of sharing best practice and forming a more coherent strategy on language protection across the whole of the UK. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is currently considering a variety of ways to establish a mechanism to monitor compliance with the Charter and intends to have something in place before the next Periodical Report.

PFECMR, 2007:10

In 2005 one activist expressed severe doubt to me via email that any existing version could be officially adopted; and called for “compromise on [...] all sides and a recognition that all sides must be able to save some face, whilst having to make sacrifices”. This turned out to be remarkably prescient.

In June 2005, the *Strategy* quickly gained purchase among county and local government:

Cornwall County Council adopted the Strategy on 6 April 2005, Kerrier District Council adopted it on 19 May 2005 and the other five District Councils are all going through the process towards adoption. The Strategy has been adopted by the Cornish language Non Governmental Organisations including the Gorseth, Cornish Language Board Agan Tavas, Cussell an Tavas and Kowethas an Yeth.

The Minister for Local Government has, on 14 June 2005, endorsed the Strategy as providing the framework for implementing Part II of the Charter and agreed for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to provide up to £80,000 a year for three years towards a new Strategy Manager appointment and a supporting package for administration, consultancy and projects in order to take forward the detailed implementation plans.

PFECMR, 2007:16

From here, the local-national-transnational funding package took shape, with an initial three-year investment to consult among all Cornish groups and decide upon a standard form of the language, after which long-term funding could be committed.

Cornwall is receiving EU funds (‘Objective One’) amounting to £100 000 per year over three years (2006 – 2009), directed towards the promotion of the Cornish

language. This money has to be matched by the same amount of UK money, and will be done so in the form of contributions of £80 000 from central government [GOSW] and £20 000 from Cornwall County Council.

PFECMR, 2007:22

This funding package helped establish the Cornish Language Development Project, ‘maga’, and the Cornish Language Partnership, comprising various levels of government. In May 2006 the new post of Cornish Language Development Manager was taken up, followed shortly thereafter by the appointment of a Cornish Language Development Administrator.

The Partnership went about an extensive branding exercise, introducing a logo (Figure 5.2). This was accompanied by branding of other materials and paraphernalia, including the iconic orange gazebo for use at events around Cornwall (Figure 5.3), with the new slogan, *Think Cornwall – Speak Cornish*. The May 2006 Newsletter of the Cornish Language Partnership ended with the

cornish language partnership
maga

Figure 5.2 ‘maga’ logo



Figure 5.3 ‘maga’ promotional gazebo and stall

logos in Figure 5.4. By the August newsletter this had changed to those in Figure 5.5. The November newsletter has all three logos (Figure 5.6). A fourth “Kernow” logo appeared in the December issue (Figure 5.7). In later newsletters this was left out, leaving only the three funding bodies. The partnership theme was clear throughout though, in these newsletters and other correspondence and advertising.



Figure 5.4 Logos in May 2006 Cornish Language Partnership Newsletter



Figure 5.5 Logos in August 2006 Cornish Language Partnership Newsletter



Figure 5.6 Logos in November 2006 Cornish Language Partnership Newsletter



Figure 5.7 Logos in December 2006 Cornish Language Partnership Newsletter

However, despite growing officiality for Cornish, the issue of standardisation proved formidable, with the factions staking out seemingly intractable positions. Promotion activities had to be conducted by maga equally in all versions of Cornish. It was this impasse that spurred the creation of an independent commission of externally appointed experts, to gather opinions from all sides and propose a solution.

5.7.8.1 The independent Cornish Language Commission

With the funding package from EU Objective One, GOSW and Cornwall County Council limited to three years, the January 2007 maga newsletter reported the establishment of an international Cornish Language Commission to try and break the deadlock, consisting of:

Mr. Chaspar Pult – a Swiss representative who has worked on the standardisation of Romansch; **Dr. Trond Trosterud** – a Scandinavian expert with knowledge of the problems facing Norwegian and Finnish; **Prof. Miquel Strubell** – a Catalan linguist and language planner who has worked at both governmental and university level on language policy and planning; **Mr Dónall Ó Riagáin** – an independent consultant who was previously the Secretary General of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages for a number of years and also has particular knowledge of the standardisation issues in Ireland; **Prof. Joshua Fishman** – an internationally respected expert on language growth and revival; and **Prof. Colin Williams**, a socio-linguist with expert knowledge from a Welsh perspective.

For the Commission members, much of the next 11 months was occupied by trawling through myriad emails, websites, online discussion forums, and meetings with language groups to facilitate agreement. Such was the authority given to the opinions of the various factions, and the impossibility of progress without their mutual agreement.

Finally, at a landmark public meeting on 14 October 2007 (Figure 5.8), the Cornish Language Commission delivered their recommendations. The event had the air of a concluding meeting of an arbitration panel. Miquel Strubell in his address reminded attendees how in the 1980s the EBLUL had walked away from Cornish after factional unrest. He pointed out the imminent



Figure 5.8 Audience of the public address of the Cornish Language Commission, 14 October 2007

expiry of the funding package; and that agreement was a precondition for further such funds.

Later on Jenefer Lowe, Cornish Language Development Manager, reminded the audience of the deadline of December 2007 for inclusion of Cornish on the Language Ladders programme (for teaching languages other than EU official working languages in schools).

The meeting, which also involved a series of group discussions and further talks, concluded with a previously unknown level of harmony. The authority of the commission, and the apparent urgency of a decision, set in motion a series of agreements that would ultimately see the Cornish language movement unite around a single standard for official use.

5.7.8.2 Adoption of a single standard form of Cornish

Subsequent to the meeting of the Cornish Language Commission, an Ad-Hoc Group of linguists from outside the revival movement was drafted in, who worked to create a new “Standard Written Form” (SWF) incorporating aspects of all existing versions. The purpose, according to

their first report, was “to provide public bodies and the educational system with a universally acceptable, inclusive, and neutral orthography” (Bock & Bruch, 2008:1). A principle of uniformity based on educational practicalities was evident: “To reduce the burden on teachers and learners, the number of permitted variants will be kept to a minimum” (ibid. p.2). The upshot was an entirely new version of Cornish which, by simultaneously dismissing and incorporating all versions, precluded further disagreements.

On 9 May 2008, representatives of all factions met to agree the SWF. Opinions were hardly unanimous, but dissenters appeared beyond the point of causing fatal disquiet. A vote ratified the SWF; and on 19 May 2008 it was announced as the working standard version for all official purposes. Thus the erstwhile disparate and amateur Cornish movement came of age, crystallised around a common goal to promote a single form of the language for propagation across Cornwall. This represents the final agreement after which funds could be committed in earnest. At time of writing, the Cornish language revival is now poised to take on a level of prominence and activity previously confined to fantasy for its supporters.

For the purposes of the current discussion, it is immaterial whether the propagation of Cornish actually happens, or whether it stalls for some unforeseen political, legal or practical reason. The important detail is that in order to reach this point, standardisation had become necessary. Also crucial is that, in the end, the importance of standardisation overrode the loyalties of any particular faction, and agreement was finally reached with a totally new version of Cornish. This made real the view of the activist cited earlier, about the need for “compromise on [...] all sides and a recognition that all sides must be able to save some face, whilst having to make sacrifices”.

The activists, while undoubtedly partisan, held this loyalty as a lower priority than the success of Cornish in some form. The final defeat of every existing version, and the rise of an entirely new one in their place, serves as the ultimate demonstration of the primacy of standardisation and its triumph over pre-existing aesthetic and academic preferences. Lastly, standardisation did not emerge as an issue either because it was accepted as some basic tenet of language promotion, or because it was stipulated in language policy; but because of the more basic practical demands that arose during the planning process. It was in the implementation of the Charter, which itself is quite non-specific about standardisation, that these pressures materialised.

5.7.9 The future for Cornish

Given its local, national and European financial backing, alongside the emphasis on meeting goals and improving services, as well as a historically unique commitment to languages both native (ECRML) and non-native (Language Ladders), it seems likely that Cornish will continue to receive support. Media attention for the Cornish revival had previously picked up on the “spelling row” as a major obstacle (Morris, 2004). More recent reports, however, have hailed the agreement on standardisation as a breakthrough (Morris, 2008; de Bruxelles, 2008). The Cornish language story will no doubt continue to break, as mainstream schooling becomes a reality.

The Cornish issue will for now necessarily be a Type 6 language planning exercise, summed up by Miquel Strubell in his Cornish Language Commission address, that the revival must work together “in order to create a living Cornish language community”. Still, it would be egregious to claim this will always be so. In 2001, 34,000 Census returns had “Cornish” written in the “ethnicity” box, despite this not being provided as an option. Indeed the minutes of a meeting of the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee of Cornwall County Council report that this figure was “thought to be far fewer than the real number [...] who might have

identified their Cornish ethnicity should more publicity have been given to the question” (CCC, 2007a:134). That committee resolved to include recommendations for a Cornish ethnicity tick-box and a Cornish language question in the 2011 Census – recommendations that were formally submitted in their *Consultation on Ethnicity, National Identity, Language and Religion in the 2011 Census*, as follows:

We want ONS to investigate seriously the feasibility of a Cornish tick box option. This would be consistent, for example, with new approaches to School Censuses where DFES have recognised Cornish as a category.

Finally, following the recognition by the Government in 2002 of the Cornish language under Part 2 of the Council of Europe’s European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, we believe that it is necessary to give serious consideration to a Cornish language question. We understand that the Government Office for the South West supports this. On this and the issue of Cornish ethnicity, which are both very particular to Cornwall, we would hope that ONS would consider special more detailed (sic) consultation with interested parties.

CCC, 2007b:1-2

By comparison, in Wales, in the 2001 Census reports, a link was highlighted between language, ethnicity and nationality (ONS, 2004d). If only a small percentage of the Cornish ethnicity respondents had an interest in language, then widespread availability of Cornish education may well create a new link between language, ethnicity and ethnonationalism there too. It is possible to imagine a time in the not too distant future in which Cornish is used widely. This possibility, a distant castle in the sky for the revivalists only ten years ago, would certainly increase the use and viability of Cornish. For this investigation though the question remains: what of diversity?

To relate all this to the criteria for linguistic diversity: is there variation and variability in revived Cornish? The revival is entirely focussed on a single standard form. Crucially though, even if more versions had been accommodated, this would still be about reproducing language through education – in Wright’s words (2007), as “language-as-system”. Beyond education, other measures like bilingual government documentation and signage, also rely on a standard, if only

to define what is Cornish, and to demonstrate its use in order to measure progress. As defined in Chapter 1, linguistic diversity requires innovation and change: more than different language-internal varieties or versions, but continuing variability. The Cornish revival may represent a contribution to a heterogeneous linguistic landscape in the form of a new language; but the reproduction of and reliance upon a standard language is fundamentally at odds with something as complex and fluctuating as linguistic diversity.

There is, of course, a fundamental problem in using Cornish to demonstrate inhibited diversity in language revivals. For the same reason that Cornish is a useful example – its lack of native speakers – it is also a weak one. Its revival is just beginning, so diversity might somehow arise spontaneously later. For this reason it is necessary to compare a language revival with a longer history, and a reported success: Welsh.

5.8 Welsh: a mature and successful language revival

The modern revival of the Welsh language in the UK is about half a century older than Cornish. The following brief summary will suffice for our purposes, concentrating as we are on the current sociolinguistic profile of this revived language:

5.8.1 Brief history of the revival

The Welsh Courts Act 1942 repealed the provisions of the 1536 Act [the Act of Union, designating English the sole language of the courts] [...] and the Education Act 1944 enabled the establishment of Welsh-medium schools. The Welsh Language Act 1967 removed the remaining barriers to the use of Welsh in the courts, and allowed ministers to prescribe Welsh versions of official documents. The Broadcasting Acts 1980 and 1981 established Sianel Pedwar Cymru (S4C), the Welsh language television channel, which started broadcasting in 1982. Then, three acts of the Westminster parliament further greatly enhanced the status of the Welsh language in crucial areas of Welsh life: the Education Reform Act 1988 (education), the Welsh Language Act (public life generally), and the Government of Wales Act 1998 (devolved government in Wales).

Dunbar, 2004:109

Welsh-medium education began as a private endeavour in the 1930s, finally receiving state-funding in 1951 (May, 2000b), considerably ramped up after the Education Reform Act 1988.

[B]oth Welsh-medium education and the teaching of Welsh as a subject was significantly enhanced by the Education Reform Act 1988, which provided Welsh with a fundamental place in the national curriculum in Wales.

Dunbar, 2000:57

Thus, in 2001-2, there were 442 primary schools in which Welsh was the sole or main medium of instruction with 51,334 children in attendance, and 53 secondary schools [...] with 38,817 pupils.

Dunbar, 2004:110

The two per cent rise in Welsh proficiency between 1991 and 2001 is routinely attributed to Welsh-medium education (ONS, 2004c; C.H. Williams, 2008:254). This is reflected by Aitchison & Carter (2000:141) who show that Welsh children in Welsh-medium education use demonstrably more Welsh. Farrell et al. (1997) broadly concur, on the basis of a range of regression analyses on school examination results and Census figures comparing pre-school age (3-4), school age (5-15), and post-school age (16-19). They show that although the number receiving Welsh-medium education exceeds the number actually speaking Welsh, and although a proportion do abandon Welsh after education ceases, nevertheless:

Claims based on the 1991 Census that any net gains in Welsh speakers are offset by losses in the time after school commit the ecological fallacy. [...] There are no drops after the age of compulsory schooling commensurate with the increases at the beginning of schooling.

Farrell et al., 1997:494

May (2000b) relates the resurgence of Welsh to three major “developments”: firstly the 1964 establishment of the Welsh Office of the UK government and all subsequent related legislation; secondly a political movement since the 1960s advocating public and civic use of Welsh (to

which he attributes increasing demand for public services in Welsh, and the creation of S4C); and thirdly Welsh-medium education in schools.

Following almost a decade of petitioning by the Welsh Language Board, the ECRML was ratified in respect of Welsh in 2001 (McLeod, 2008). Upon ratification, the British government decided that “the existing range of measures in place to support Welsh meant that the

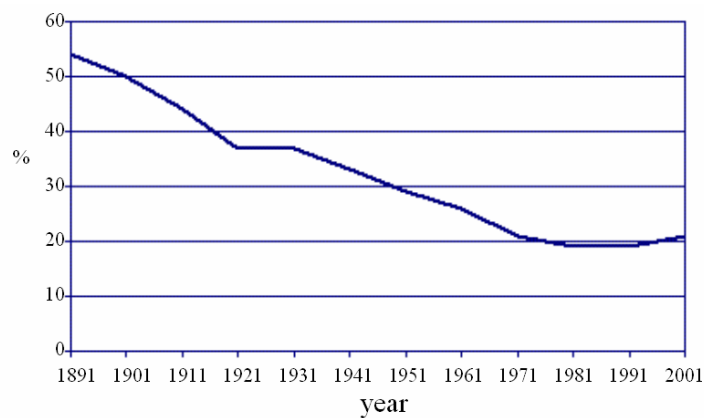


Figure 5.9 Percentage of people aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh (ONS, 2004c)

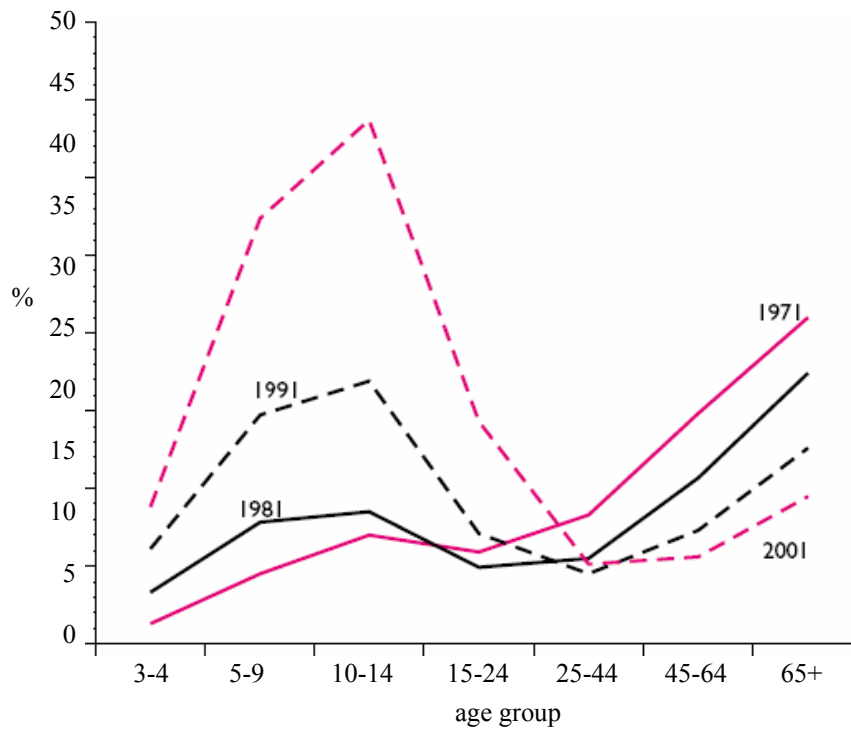


Figure 5.10 Percentage of Welsh speakers by age and census (ONS, 2005c:84)

requirements of the Charter were already more than being met in Wales” (Dunbar, 2000:65). In fact, Farrell et al. (1997) claim that similar provisions had been in place before 1993, and that this had “not been necessarily to do with language planning” (p.489), i.e. led not by statute but by “parent-led demand” (ibid.). Policy or no, the provision of Welsh-medium education was being made, just in different amounts; and this was already proceeding under the general auspices of the ECRML. This allows a potential glimpse into the future for Cornish and other such revivals proceeding under the Charter. This is complicated by the fact that Welsh never died out as Cornish did, but the similarities of approach allow some pertinent comparisons.

The success of the Welsh language revival is normally defined with reference to Census figures and other surveys showing increased numbers of people in Wales self-reporting as Welsh-speaking, and/or demonstrating Welsh literacy (Figure 5.9) – those people, in Grin’s terms, demonstrating “proficiency” and “competence” (2003:172-173).

Demography – the numbers and distribution of people reporting themselves to have ability in Welsh, based on census data – is the usual focus of debate on the current ‘health’ of the language.

Coupland et al., 2005:2

Census data from 2001, analyzed in detail by Aitchison and Carter (2004, pp. 33, 49), show 20.5% of self-declaring Welsh speakers (a total of 575,640) with different levels of literacy [...]. These numbers are widely interpreted to reflect a demographic revitalization of the Welsh language, after the period of stabilisation between 1981 and 1991, which halted a seemingly inexorable decline through the 20th century.

Coupland et al., 2006:352 (see also Coupland & Aldridge, 2009:5)

The success of Welsh, defined numerically in this way, is widely agreed upon, with “a consensus in government, the press, popular discourse, educational and academic circles in Wales that Welsh is being revitalised at present” (Coupland et al., 2005:1). Also significant in this regard is Dunbar’s remark that:

It is not likely that any new legislative initiatives will occur in the foreseeable future, particularly given the apparent successes of the existing mechanisms.

Dunbar, 2004:117

Inside and outside Wales, the Welsh language revival is hailed as “a rare and celebrated exception to the general pattern of minority languages suffering language shift and decline in a globalising world” (Coupland, in press). Like many a cause célèbre, Wales has found itself a model for imitation among language revivals (May, 2003:218). “In the context of the lesser used languages of Europe, and the celtic (sic) languages in particular, the situation of the Welsh

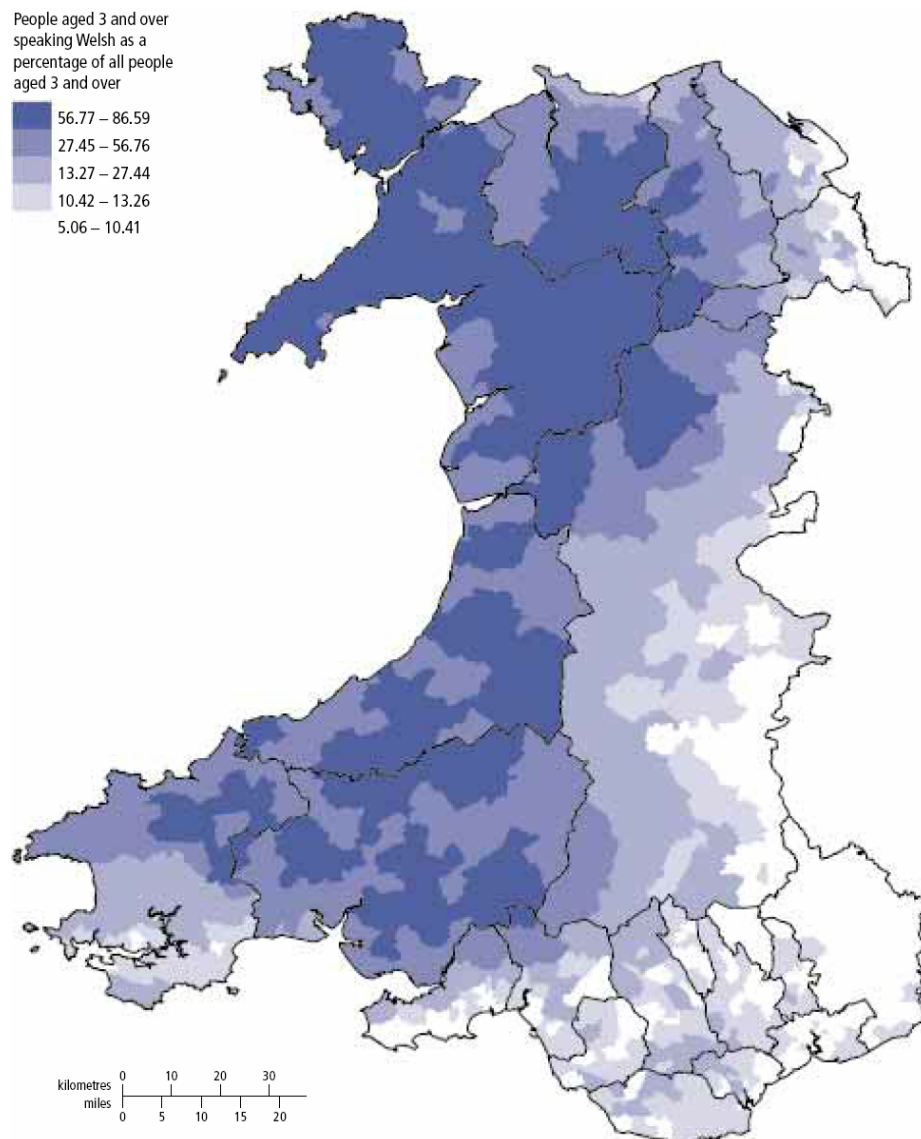


Figure 5.11 People aged 3+ speaking Welsh in 2001 (ONS, 2004e:69)

language in Wales is regarded with envy” (Huws, 2006:147). (For a discussion of Scottish Gaelic aspirations towards the Welsh situation, see Dunbar 2004; McLeod, 2008). This high esteem, and the continuity of Welsh language policy outlined by Dunbar above, demonstrates that this is how an ECRML language revival should be done; and makes it especially germane for reflecting on the stated aims of the ECRML regarding linguistic diversity.

In England, from the 1980s onwards, bilingual education policy was strictly limited to Type 1 language acquisition planning – aiming only to “support early stage learners into the English of the curriculum” (Bourne, 1997:55). From 1991 onwards, the Census recorded no monolingual Welsh speakers (R.O. Jones, 1993:550), so all revival efforts fall between Types 3 to 5 – arguably Type 6 in some instances – depending on location, given the wide differences in Welsh use across Wales (Figure 5.11 – for more detail see Appendix 6).

The Welsh language is an entity that is endangered, and due to receive protection:

The very notion of ‘the Welsh language’ is itself organicising. It treats ‘the language’ as if it truly were a living entity, opening the door to ecological and somatic interpretation, in terms of ‘language death’, ‘revival’, ‘nurturing’ and ‘remediation’.

Coupland et al., 2005:2

In terms of prioritising language as a good in itself, the decline of Welsh is singled out as a problem independent of any other:

In Wales, there is a marked lack of parental success in ensuring children’s acquisition and use of Welsh, particularly in cases when one parent speaks Welsh and the other not. Such a trend, should it continue, seriously threatens the future of the Welsh language.

Morris & Jones, 2007:484

[S]ignificant proportions completing primary education as L1 Welsh speakers commence secondary education as L2 speakers. [...] The proportions who undertake

further and higher education through the medium of Welsh are very small. [...] But there is little sign that any one (sic) in authority is acting to remedy this weakness.

C.H. Williams, 2008:165

Claims are rarer that this decline affects standards of living, or health, or other aspect of quality of life. These themes come across in places, but they are not the bedrock of the revival, the Welsh language itself being the priority. The initial response came predominantly in the form of the aforementioned British governmental legislation:

In short, the 1988 Act has accomplished a fundamental transformation of Welsh education within the last decade. This is most evident in the curriculum where the Welsh language is now not only formally recognised as a principal language of instruction within Welsh-medium schools, but also as a national language that should be taught *as of right* [i.e. not requiring special permission] to *all* pupils within Wales.

May, 2000b:110 (orig. emphases)

This reflects a principal desire to increase use of Welsh, detached from a humanitarian discourse. In a subsequent article, Dunbar highlights how this might indeed go the other way, away from the promotion of rights and towards the blanket application of Welsh in education:

[T]he 1988 Act has, in a sense, an element of coercion to it, in that it makes instruction in the Welsh language a fundamental part of the national curriculum, and therefore one which students generally cannot avoid, but it does not coerce or even create a right to Welsh-medium instruction. The significant expansion of Welsh-medium education shows that such an educational model can be created without necessarily relying on a statutorily-based right.

Dunbar, 2004:110

The language was suffering, and the language received help. The welfare of the people involved, while clearly not ignored, was also not the primary concern. Like the articulation of the problem, the solution is articulated as an increase in Welsh use:

The uptake of Welsh among children resulted in larger proportions of children than adults speaking Welsh in 2001. This trend is promising for the future of the language [...].

H. Jones, 2005b:84

A key strategy document, *The Welsh Language: A Vision and a Mission 2000-2005*, outlines four areas of activity: acquisition planning; usage planning; status planning; and corpus planning. The first is indicative: “producing new speakers of the language, through the school system and by teaching the language to adults” (C.H. Williams, 2008:268). The second, “usage planning” – actually an addition to the conventional tripartite typology outlined in §5.3 – is also of particular interest, including as it does “marketing campaigns to encourage people to take advantage of the opportunities [created to use Welsh]” (ibid.). The commitment towards Welsh as a good in itself is demonstrated perhaps most clearly by the commitment towards literacy in *either* English *or* Welsh, for example a 2005 Welsh Assembly Government education strategy paper:

We define basic skills as the ability to read, write and speak in English or Welsh, and to use mathematics, at a level necessary to function and progress both in work and in society.

Welsh Assembly Government, 2005:6

Either Welsh or English is sufficient for a full education – a stance borne out by the option of a fully Welsh medium education, and taking all examinations through the medium of Welsh (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007). As discussed in §5.3.1, this represents an inversion of Type 1 language planning where people are inducted from a minority language into a more widely used language. The Welsh effort proceeds on the basis that literacy in this lesser-used language only is an acceptable educational outcome.

Beyond education, Coupland (in press) claims that Welsh language policy enshrines certain rights in other areas of public life:³³

A particular set of language rights are formalised in a 1993 Act of (the UK) Parliament, which places a duty on public sector organisations in Wales to treat Welsh and English on an equal basis, when they provide services to the public in Wales. Local

³³ See also Huws (2006) on the availability of Welsh in the judicial system as a reflection of rights.

government services, post offices, universities, for example, are required to develop and maintain 'language schemes', detailing how they will make provision for the use of Welsh.

Coupland, in press

The Type 5-6, "third pillar" aspect of Welsh acquisition planning comes across especially in two contexts. Firstly, the greatest increases in speaker numbers have been "in the densely populated areas of South-East Wales where it is several generations since Welsh has been a community language" (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:137; see also Coupland & Aldridge, 2009:6):

While the language continues to be under some strain in its traditional heartland in the rural North-West, it has shown a marked expansion in certain urban centres, most notably in the region of the Welsh capital, Cardiff, and among the professional middle classes.

Dunbar, 2000:56-7

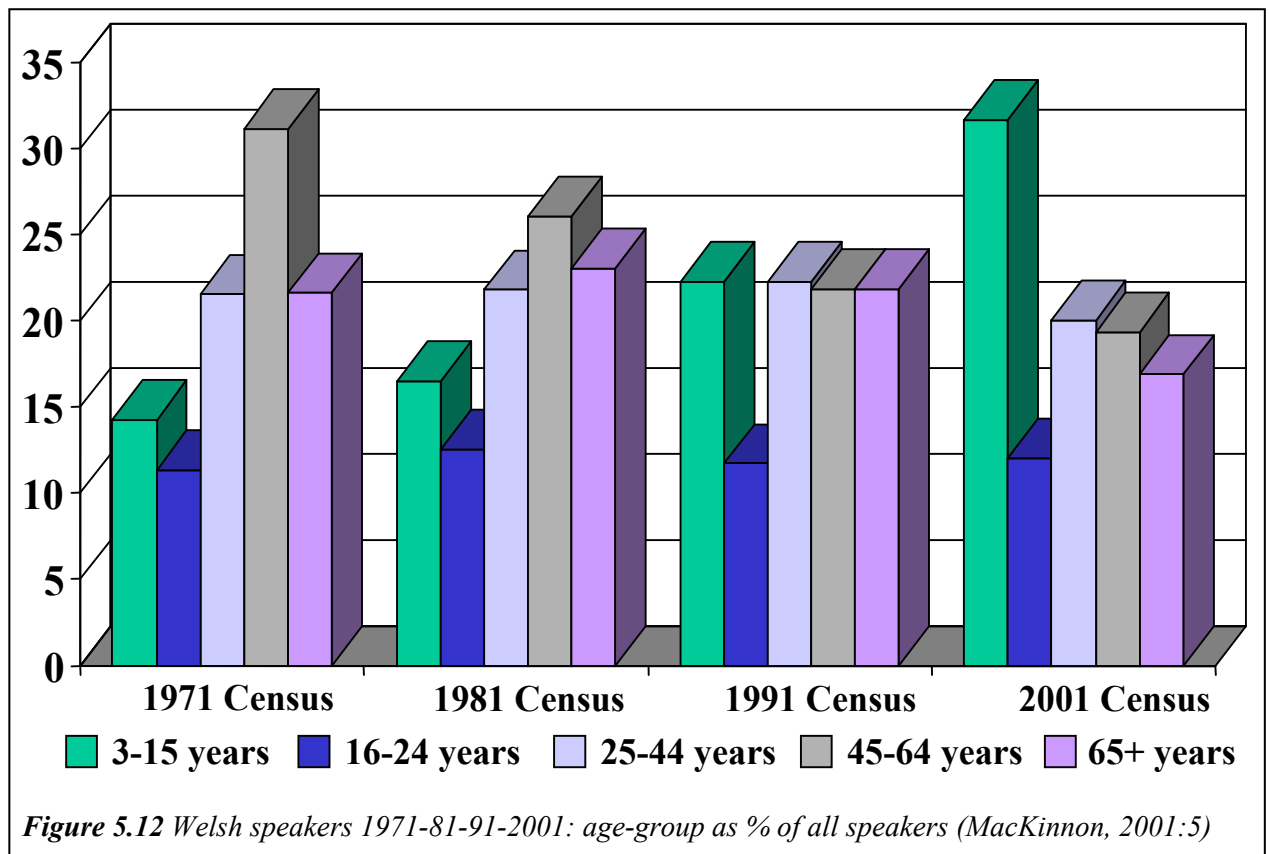
The second is the high proportion of Welsh residents born outside Wales: around a quarter according to the 2001 Census – compared to like figures of 13% for England and Scotland, and 9% in Northern Ireland (Drinkwater & Blackaby, 2004:1). Wales is a net importer of migrants from elsewhere in the UK (ibid. p.10), more so than any other part of the UK (ibid. p.13). With 80% of in-migrants coming from England (ibid.), a significant function of the Welsh language revival is to create new speakers of Welsh among those with no personal or family experience of the language, or any ethnic connection. "At the time of the 2001 census 11 per cent of the total population able to speak Welsh were born outside Wales" (C.H. Williams, 2008:256).

The key detail is the foremost position of education in the Welsh revival. "Simply stated, without the growth of bilingual education, there is good reason to believe the Welsh language would not survive" (Baker, 1993:23). "In Wales, Welsh-medium education is perhaps the single most important factor in turning the demographic tide" (Dunbar, 2004:118). "[T]ertiary-level students [...] are members of the demographic group on whom the future vitality of Welsh is

acknowledged to depend” (Coupland & Aldridge, 2009:7). This is borne out by further statistical analyses of Census data, for example H. Jones’ (2005a) comparison of Welsh use between the Censuses of 1971 and 2001 (see also Figure 5.12). Although he records significant abandonment of Welsh post-education, the remaining increases in Welsh use are still consistently put down to Welsh-medium education. Halesden (2003) compares a range of non-Census surveys examining Welsh language use. This throws up some contrasts to the Census, especially in the Welsh Local Labour Force Survey (WLLFS) in which “estimates of the proportion of people with Welsh language skills are considerably higher than the respective Census estimates” (Halesden, 2003:16) – this being attributed to parental over-reporting:

parents answering on behalf of their children often assume that their children have learnt Welsh at school and so must be able to understand it, even though some of these children may not have been so confident about their skills.

Halesden, 2003:1



Statistical discrepancies aside, there remains a trend of increased knowledge and use of Welsh; and this trend is more or less unequivocally attributed to Welsh-medium education. The significance of this is straightforward. If education is the main reason for increasing Welsh use, then the *kind* of Welsh being used is more likely to be influenced by that education. This is thrown into sharper relief by “the continuing shrinkage of the “heartland” zones for intergenerational Welsh language transmission” (Coupland et al., 2006:353), further privileging education as the main life support of Welsh.

Also important – reprising the theme of New Public Management – is the positive feedback mechanism created by the reported increases in use: the Welsh language is the main priority; the Welsh revival is succeeding on that basis; this is down to Welsh-medium education; therefore Welsh-medium education should continue. This is magnified by the scarcity of competing claims for other measures having any such effect, and the predicted continuity of current policies outlined earlier, “given the apparent successes of the existing mechanisms” (Dunbar, 2004:117). On the subject of NPM, strategic partnerships etc., consider the following remarks of one commentator, that:

the emphasis is now on partnership – between central and local [government] and between public and private – as well as on subsidiarity. This partnership arrangement is best seen in terms of language and governance in the National Assembly for Wales’s conception of the triangular relationship between the Welsh Language Board, its various sponsored partners, such as the National Eisteddfod, the Urdd, the Mentrau Iaith and the general public.

C.H. Williams, 2004:6

Education seems also the predominant theme of contemporary political debate over Welsh in Wales (Cardinal et al., 2007) – i.e. how much Welsh-medium education there should be, not whether a different approach is necessary.

5.8.2 Contributions of this case study

As Ball notes (1988), dialectological research of one kind or another in Wales dates back to 1884. The first comprehensive study he identifies is Sommerfelt (1925), examining the dialect of Cyfeiliog in the Dyfi valley, mid-north Wales. This and subsequent work largely focussed on either in-depth dialectological recordings of single speech communities, or simultaneous recordings of many speech communities to construct dialect maps. In both cases, however, little attention was paid specifically to ongoing language change. Indeed the various contributions to Ball (1988), although examining variation in Welsh, stay mainly within the framework of mapping extant differences, not recording change and variability. Roberts (1988) comes close, noting age-related variation in a Welsh dialect, but this is not quantified, nor is an explanation offered. This is significant for the current investigation because it is precisely this capacity for innovation that is of interest for the account of linguistic diversity.

A.R. Thomas (1987) gives perhaps the first age-graded comparative dialectological study of Welsh in two communities, useful for interpreting language change in progress. Subsequently M.C. Jones (1994, 1998) performs similar and more detailed analyses in two Welsh speech communities. I therefore concentrate here on these two studies, to construct a sociolinguistic profile of contemporary spoken Welsh. The contribution of the present discussion is to take this sociolinguistic information, and place it into the narrative about overall linguistic diversity; relating that evidence back to claims in language policy and planning.

Education is the main focus of the Welsh revival, but not the only one. Indeed: “In an attempt to address the dangers of over-reliance on education, increasing attention has been paid to the use of Welsh in other domains” (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:137). There are “major policy initiatives by the Welsh Assembly Government, geared to further strengthening the status of

Welsh particularly within the family and community” (Bishop et al., 2005:352). After looking at education, then, two other areas are considered: media usage, in the form of a Welsh language soap opera *Pobol Y Cwm*; and a micro language planning project, *Twf* (‘growth’), designed “to encourage families to bring up their children to be bilingual” (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:136). The subject of linguistic diversity will be held up to both of these in turn.

Needless to say, for many in Wales, Welsh is still very much alive, acquired naturally as a first language alongside English. Welsh still has a resonance both for people in Wales (Garrett et al., 2003:132,140) and for the global Welsh diaspora (Bishop et al., 2003; Wray et al., 2003).³⁴

There is a considerable literature on regional, social and register variation in Welsh, on loans from English and code-switching (e.g. Deuchar, 2006; Deuchar & Davies, 2009), and mixed attitudes towards the kind of Welsh transmitted in school: “a vocal stereotype of the “new south-eastern Welsh speaker” [...] that, by some, [...] is considered less legitimate than some other Welsh varieties that have been transmitted intergenerationally” (Coupland & Aldridge, 2009:8). In the Welsh-language media too, there has been a good deal of debate about issues relating to standardisation and dialect/register variation. Further exploration of these would greatly enrich the current analysis; but there is not space to discuss them here, focussed as we are on dialectological detail.

Lastly, it may appear that attention is being unduly centred on the present situation, seeing issues such as the tension between standard and dialect as resulting only from the effects of recent legislation. The situation is patently far more complex, with a longstanding awareness among Welsh speakers of the tension between the standard literary language and natural, informal usage which reflects regional dialectal variants (see e.g. Robert, 2009). These details are outside the

³⁴ For a discussion of the “iconising” of Welsh in a Welsh-language US newspaper, see Coupland et al. (2003); Bishop et al. (2005); Garrett et al. (2005).

current remit, the breadth of material covered so far having restricted this case study to the very narrowest of details: namely a profiling of modern spoken Welsh, and its relation to the activities of the official revival. The only substantive contribution is to relate this to a sociolinguistically grounded conception of linguistic diversity, in relation to overarching claims in language policy.

In examining dialectological reports of modern spoken Welsh, I am looking at language-internal varieties as *detectable indications* of linguistic diversity – the weakening of which suggests declining diversity. To repeat a warning offered at the outset, the readiest oversimplification of what follows will be to conclude that standard Welsh is triumphing at the expense of its dialects, and that diversity is therefore not being protected. Dialects are not diversity in its entirety; they are just heuristics, allowing a window onto diversity as an ongoing process of change.³⁵ That caveat – a sociolinguistic truism that I have tried to re-articulate more clearly in this investigation – is the most important thing to hold on to in what follows.

5.8.3 Standard Welsh?

As A.R. Thomas (1987) explains, a “spoken standard” for Welsh is a relatively modern phenomenon, engineered as an amalgam of dialectal forms:

[T]he major spoken model within the educational field is the result of language-planning policy during the 1960s and 1970s. [...] Welsh has never had a recognized ‘standard accent’ [...] despite the fact that there has been an acknowledged written standard for prose at least since the translation of the Bible in 1588.

A.R. Thomas, 1987:99

The model thus devised is multidialectal. We have a dialectal hybrid, which encompasses regional tolerances in some cases, but in others applies rigid orthographic determinism to select forms idiosyncratically from one dialect or another. It is a purely prescriptive model which relates to no reality outside the classroom.

A.R. Thomas, 1987:104

³⁵ A somewhat related argument is made by Surkova (2008), who shows comparatively low “creativity in target [i.e. second] language use” compared to native speakers; though this is mostly a psycholinguistic/pedagogical analysis.

Thomas then makes the following assertion, little more than a speculation, that:

Despite the lack of a codified model of pronunciation, there is evidence that speakers of varied dialect backgrounds display common tendencies toward standardization of speech in public secular usage – that is, that a norm for pronunciation is emerging.

[...]

It derives its structure from that which underlies the standard orthographic conventions.

A.R. Thomas, 1987:104-105

One other detail worth holding on to here is how regional differences are simplified in the written standard. Relating the grammatical details of preverbal particles, he argues that:

In effect, if the written and spoken paradigms were conflated, all possible contrasts for positive, negative, and interrogative sentences would be overtly marked by preverbal particles. It is, perhaps, understandable that such a fully marked pattern of contrasts for sentence typology would prove irresistible to the language planner who is concerned primarily with constructing devices of immediate classroom utility. The model proposed in *Cymraeg Byw* adopts this very solution; at the grammatical level it proposes a medium hybrid – mixed speech and writing – to go along with the dialectal hybrid of its pronunciation model. Nowhere else in speech or writing does this model occur, although the written paradigm is regularly produced in speech which has a written cue, as in oratory and media newscasting – a fact which suggests that, for grammar as for pronunciation, the written language is in practice regarded as the authoritative arbiter of usage.

Thomas, 1987:106 (orig. emphasis)

5.8.4 Welsh-medium education

Both A.R. Thomas (1987) and M.C. Jones (1994, 1998) examine the use of Welsh among pupils in Welsh immersion schools, where Welsh is the main language of instruction for all subjects – a popular form of bilingual education designed “to provide the quantity and quality of involvement in the use of the target language that ensure the development of a high level of proficiency” (Johnson & Swain, 1997:xiii). The purpose is for the school to fill gaps in transmitting the language to children, where there may be insufficient input from parents – or none. The effect of this on their spoken Welsh is the focus of both authors.

5.8.4.1 A.R. Thomas' study (1987)

Thomas (1987) takes a Labovian social dialectological approach, analysing variation in spoken Welsh across age cohorts, comparing those who learnt Welsh at home and at school – respectively referred to as “primary” and “secondary” bilinguals. This is motivated by survey reports on lexical variation in Welsh collected between 1964 and 1967, of which he notes:

The erosion of traditional lexicon has clearly been very considerable in its extent [...]. For older age groups, the dominant process is anglicization by borrowing; for children of school age – and particularly for those who attend Welsh-medium schools – the substitution of standard lexical items for those of dialectal provenance is a common [...] occurrence. Thus, for instance, the regional term *blodau'r haf* ‘freckles’, lit. ‘the flowers of summer’ may be replaced by the loan ‘freckles’ in adult speech, and by the standard *brychni* in that of children.

A.R. Thomas, 1987:102 (orig. emphases)

Thomas concentrates on what he identifies as local dialect pronunciations, making qualitative remarks about lexical items. He conducts his fieldwork in two speech communities: “Aberdaron [extreme Northwest Wales], in an area of high-density Welsh incidence [still 89% daily use in 2004 (WLB, 2006:14)], and Merthyr [South Wales], in one of low-density incidence” (A.R. Thomas, 1987:108). These would represent, respectively, Type 3 and Types 4-5 planning.

In each case, eight informants with Welsh-speaking parents were selected from a primary school, and eight from a secondary school, together with a group of adult informants [...]. Additionally, seven secondary schoolchildren with non-Welsh-speaking parents were interviewed in the area of low-density incidence.

A.R. Thomas, 1987:108

He analyses three variables. The scoring system is a little complex, with “positive” scores assigned to indicate the integrity of the dialects:

1. The initial consonant mutation system, in which the initial consonants of words alternate in accordance with their grammatical or lexical context. This is a defining feature of Celtic languages, and one which has been identified as being particularly prone to breakdown in the context of what has been labeled ‘language death’ [...]. In this investigation, speakers are scored positively for the percentage of mutations which

| | % primary bilinguals (n=7) | % secondary bilinguals (n= 8) |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Features: | | |
| mutations | 64 | 47 |
| final syll. vowel | 20 | 36 |
| possessive pronoun | 38 | 64 |

Table 5.3 Percentage “correct” usage for primary and secondary bilingual children in Merthyr (A.R. Thomas, 1987:110)

| | Age in years | | |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| | 5-19 n=16 | 20-49 n=16 | 50+ n=13 |
| Aberdaron | | | |
| Features: | | | |
| mutations | 79% | 95% | 95% |
| final syll. vowel | 9% | 13% | 8% |
| possessive pronoun | 57% | 82% | 74% |
| Merthyr | | | |
| Features: | | | |
| Mutations | 52% | 79% | 78% |
| final syll. Vowel | 20% | 19% | 14% |
| possessive pronoun | 30% | 72% | 66% |

Table 5.4 Percentage “correct” usage of linguistic features by age and location in Wales (A.R. Thomas, 1987:109).

they ‘get right’. An example is the alternation /k > x/ in the initial consonant of /ka:θ/ ‘cat’, following the numeral /tri:/ *tri*, ‘three’: /tri: xa:θ/ *tri chath*, ‘three cats’.

2. The pronunciation of final-syllable orthographic diphthongs, like the *ai* diphthong [...] in words like *tamaid* ‘morsel’, which can be pronounced as /tamed/ (southern), /tamad/ (northern) or /tamaid/ (standard) which appeared, on the evidence of earlier research, to be a marker of pronunciation in formal contexts. In this case, informants are positively scored for percentage of standard pronunciations rather than dialectal ones.

3. The occurrence of the possessive pronoun, before either a noun, as *fy* in *fy het i* ‘my hat’ (lit. ‘my hat I’), or a verb, as *fy* in *fy ymladd i* ‘to fight me’ (lit. ‘my fight me’). The nonstandard forms, without the preposed possessive pronoun, are used widely to caricature the language of people regarded as having ‘poor speaker’ status, and they have also been connected with the usage of children – particularly of children who are secondary bilinguals. Speakers are scored positively on this feature for percentage of standard forms produced.

A.R. Thomas, 1987:108-9

The comparison of primary bilinguals in the two speech communities is reproduced in Table 5.3.

Here he gauges “correct” use of Welsh dialectal features, i.e. not the prescribed standard, but the

local dialect form. Consonant mutation, for example, is a typical irregular feature, requiring “a

great deal of unstructured knowledge (such as the gender of nouns, which is seldom formally marked) which cannot be quickly assimilated” (1987:110). In other words, learning the nuances of this feature takes exposure in conversation, above and beyond the structured acquisition of skills in the classroom. His purpose was to gauge the integrity of these dialects, and their “breakdown in the context of what has been labeled ‘language death’ ” (ibid. p.108). It is sufficient to note his summary on this point:

For the mutations and the possessive pronoun, informants from the low language-density area (Merthyr) score lower than do those from the high language-density area (Aberdaron). For both features, too, the youngest age group scores lower than any adult group – strikingly so in Merthyr.

A.R. Thomas, 1987:109

Where the language is on the wane, then, so too come detectable weakening of dialects – representing declining diversity. This decline is occurring among people who all ‘use Welsh’; so the number of people speaking Welsh may be stable, but overall diversity is declining. He then compares primary bilinguals with secondary bilinguals in Merthyr (Table 5.4). The secondary bilinguals, whose knowledge of Welsh is mostly limited to the classroom, have a noticeably weaker grasp of dialect norms:

The scores for the final syllable vowel suggest that secondary bilinguals are less dialectal in their pronunciation than are primary bilinguals [...]; secondary bilinguals, on the other hand, perform less well on mutations, reflecting the fact that applying the mutation rules ‘correctly’ requires a great deal of unstructured knowledge [...].

A.R. Thomas, 1987:110

He concludes that primary bilinguals show “a conflict between dialectal and standard usage” (1987:110), whereas for secondary bilinguals “a major determinant of usage is the ‘knowledge of’ the language which is necessary for performance according to the perceived standard” (ibid.). The native speakers are swayed by dialectal features, the second language learners affected by their incomplete acquisition of Welsh; yet both apparently influenced increasingly by the

emergent standard. These represent disparate pressures on diversity within Welsh, some pre-existing, some apparently introduced by Welsh-medium education itself. However, Thomas is keen to stress that, “because of the small numbers [of respondents] involved”, the results represent only “trends in usage, and the kind of data which it would be useful to investigate in a fuller enquiry” (p.108). To that task rises M.C. Jones (1994, 1998).

5.8.4.2 M.C. Jones’ study (1994, 1998)

With a broadly similar research design to A.R. Thomas, M.C. Jones compares two Welsh-speaking speech communities: low Welsh density Rhymney, in South Wales, with 6.7% of residents (aged 3 and over) Welsh-speaking according to the Census (M.C. Jones, 1998:45); and high-density Rhosllannerchrugog,³⁶ in Northeast Wales, with 38.1% (ibid. p.158).³⁷ Again these would represent, respectively, Type 3 and Types 4-5 language planning.

In Rhymney, Welsh is primarily acquired at school and so only secondary bilinguals are recorded. In Rhosllannerchrugog, owing to the higher levels of home use, primary bilinguals are also recorded, and comparisons made that are especially instructive for the current investigation. The two communities, Rhymney and Rhosllannerchrugog, will be reviewed in turn. To begin with, four main trends can be identified in both:

- language loss – abandonment of Welsh for English;
- language obsolescence – structural simplifications, e.g. non-inflection of certain verbs;
- dialect loss – “progressive elimination” or “disappearance” of local dialect features in favour of Standard Welsh;

³⁶ Maps seem to spell this ‘Rhosllannerchrugog’, but M.C. Jones’ spelling will be used here.

³⁷ This is actually something of an island of high-density Welsh use, located as it is in Wrexham, where Welsh use is a lot lower – 14.4% (aged 3 and over) with *any* ability, according to the 2001 Census, or 19.3% according to the 2004 Welsh Language Use Survey.

- dialect disappearance – categorical absence of local dialect features from the data;
- dialect mixing – unrelated to the standard, this occurs where “dialect forms of a particular area were being generalized to other parts of the country” (M.C. Jones, 1994:254).

Language obsolescence involves reduction in complexities of language, for example gender distinctions in pronouns. Dialect loss refers to the decline of local dialect features, including distinctive local words and pronunciations, as well as morphological features. M.C. Jones notes that these processes are common to other supposedly “healthy” languages, like English and French (1998:235) – as Thomason notes, “most of the linguistic processes that are common in language death situations are also common in contact situations in which no languages are dying” (2001:230). Still: “What is noteworthy [in] modern spoken Welsh [...] is the *amount* and *rate of change*” (M.C. Jones, 1998:235 – orig. emphasis).

In Rhymney, the 6.7% of Welsh-speaking residents (aged 3+) suggests predominant acquisition at school (M.C. Jones, 1998:45). Nevertheless the local dialect, known as Gwenhwyseg, is

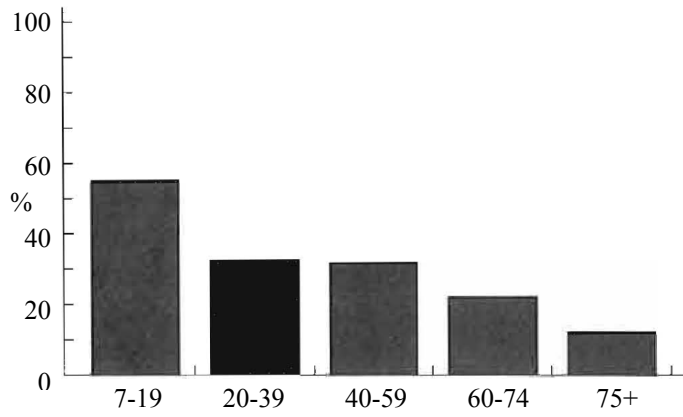
a well established, prestigious variety with the support of a literary tradition. Accordingly, it was in a good position to resist being lost.

M.C. Jones, 1998:46

Signs of declining diversity are detected in a range of features. In terms of *language obsolescence*, a range of linguistic simplifications is recorded, a sample of which is reproduced here. Figure 5.13 shows the declining use of soft mutations; that is, the replacement of voiceless with voiced consonants in certain environments, as in [k], [p], [t] becoming [g], [b], [d].

[W]hile still used in a historically appropriate way by two-thirds or more of the adult informants, the soft mutation was far more unstable amongst the younger generation who, in most cases, omitted it altogether [...].

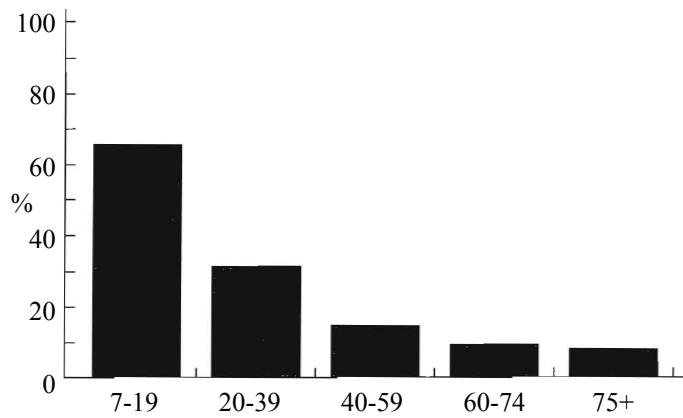
M.C. Jones, 1998:59



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 416 | 125 | 346 | 362 | 247 |

$\chi^2 = 152.26 > 9.49, p = 0.05$

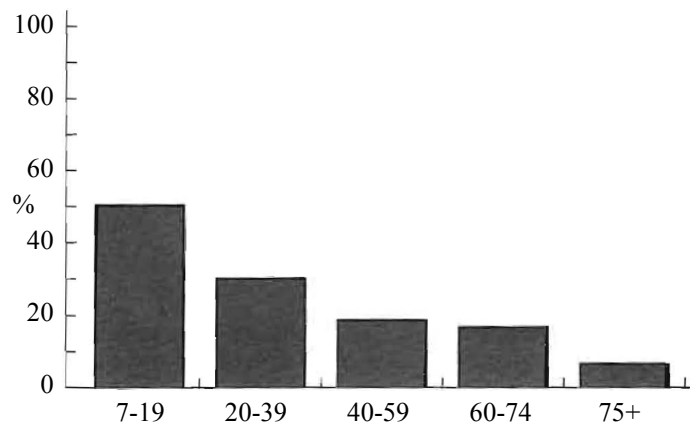
Figure 5.13 % absence of Soft Mutation (all contexts) in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:60)



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 52 | 39 | 61 | 41 | 43 |

$\chi^2 = 57.21 > 9.49, p = 0.05$

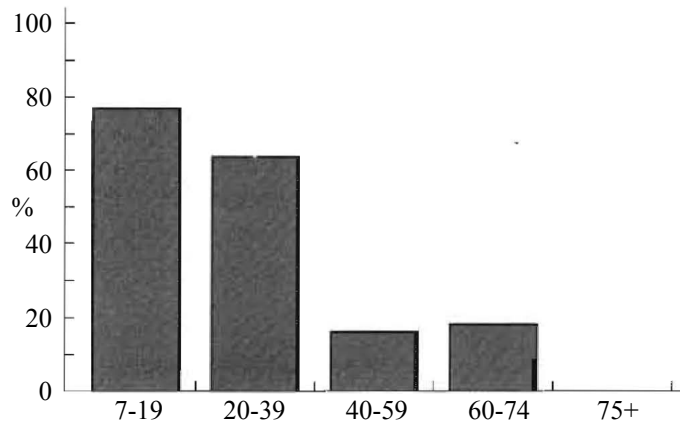
Figure 5.14 % non-mutation of attributive adjectives after feminine nouns in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:65)



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 30 | 10 | 16 | 12 | 14 |

$\chi^2 = 11.3 > 9.49, p = 0.05$

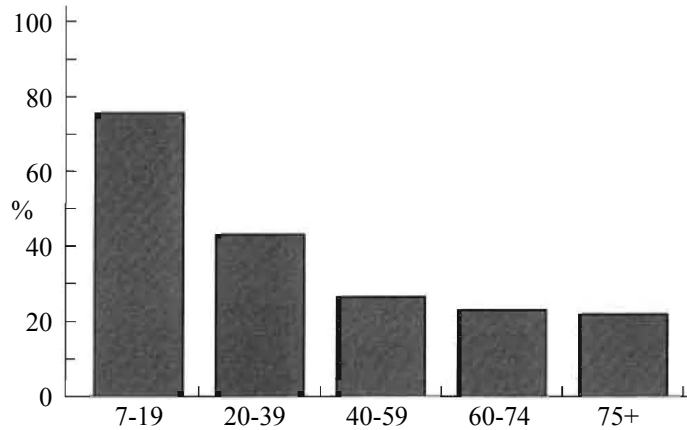
Figure 5.15 % inappropriately-gendered numeral used with noun in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:68)



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 90 | 38 | 45 | 70 | 51 |

$\chi^2 = 120.99 > 9.49, p = 0.05$

Figure 5.16 % use of a historically inappropriate form of 'yes' in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:72)



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 61 | 46 | 38 | 39 | 49 |

$\chi^2 = 45.44 > 9.49, p = 0.05$

Figure 5.17 % elimination of the pre-nominal possessive pronoun in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:74)

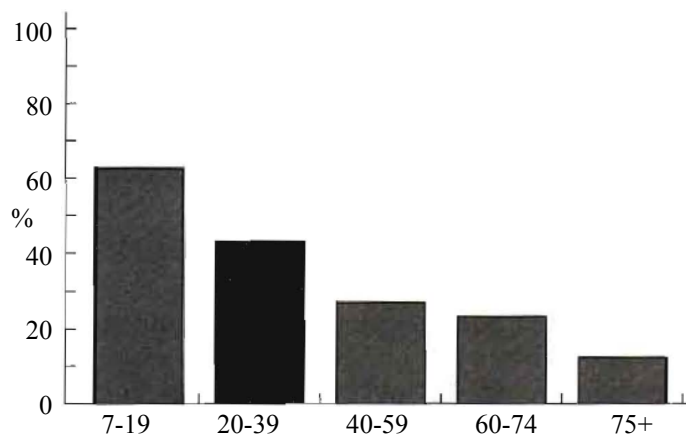


Figure 5.18 % cross-variable, inter-group comparison of language obsolescence in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:80)

Another feature of Welsh found to be weakening was the mutation of attributive adjectives when appearing after a feminine noun (Figure 5.14).

Adjective lenition after a feminine noun was not well preserved either, [...] the ‘tip’ had obviously occurred with the younger generation [...].

M.C. Jones, 1998:66

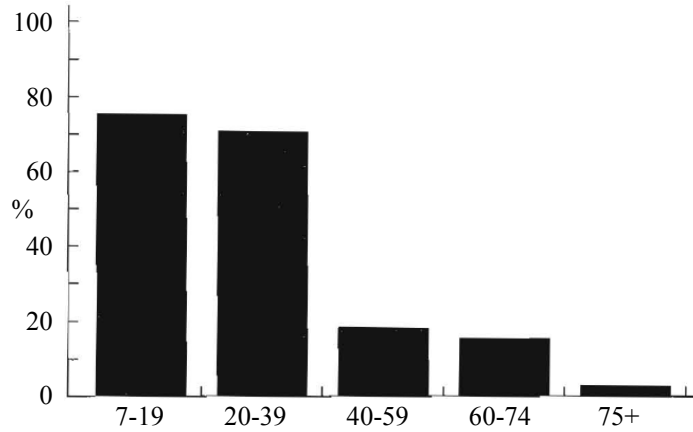
Numerals were also given the inappropriate gender for the noun they were applied to (Figure 5.15). All this demonstrates a decline in syntactic distinctions, and gender marking. M.C. Jones also speculates about how and why the particularities of these structural rules are breaking down among younger informants:

It seems strange that, among younger informants, feminine gender-marking is retained to a greater extent with the numerals than in nouns after the definite article. This leads me to speculate that either selection of the appropriate numeral-form is often a ‘lucky guess’ or that, in many cases, the children no longer associate the concept of gender with the linguistic operations they are performing [...]. The high instance of soft mutation made in feminine nouns after the numeral *un* (‘one’) and the relatively high maintenance of gender-marked numerals also suggests that these are grammar points which may have been emphasized in the classroom.

M.C. Jones, 1998:68-71 (orig. emphasis)

Another conventional distinction is in the word for ‘yes’, which changes depending on the verb used in the preceding question. This distinction also appeared to be breaking down, with progressive simplification shown in Figure 5.16, representing “the extensive generalization of the *ie* form to the exclusion of all others, again a clear sign of the elimination of redundancy” (M.C. Jones, 1998:71 – orig. emphasis), “unequivocally most apparent in the speech of the under-forties” (ibid. p.72).

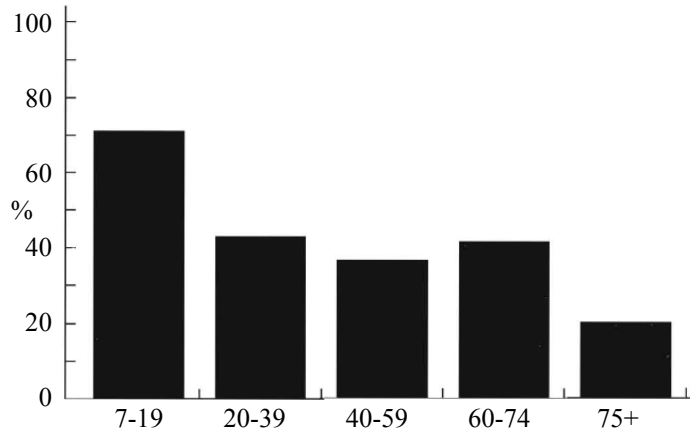
As shown in Figure 5.17, “[t]he over-generalized use of the post-nominal possessive for pronominal possession” (M.C. Jones, 1998:72) is noted in “all age-groups, although less frequent in that of the over-forties” (ibid. p.74).



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 83 | 37 | 60 | 62 | 57 |

$\chi^2 = 121.65 > 9.49, p = 0.05$

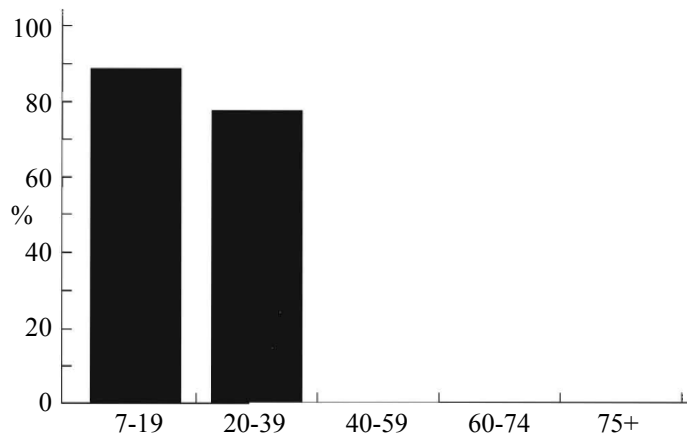
Figure 5.19 % introduction of standard [j] in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:91)



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 247 | 152 | 312 | 207 | 160 |

$\chi^2 = 121.65 > 9.49, p = 0.05$

Figure 5.20 % insertion of standard /h/ in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:92)



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 56 | 34 | 41 | 59 | 27 |

$\chi^2 = 162.9 > 9.49, p = 0.05$

Figure 5.21 % use of standard 'dweud' ('to say') in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:92)

Figure 5.18 represents M.C. Jones' combined data for obsolescence, showing a general decline in structural distinctions. She is careful to caution that "it is not claimed that the figures involved give an unequivocal measurement of the degree of language obsolescence" (ibid. p.80); and also that, as was mentioned previously, these are tendencies found in most other "healthy" languages (ibid. p.81). What is unique about these Welsh cases is "the quantity of changes that are occurring together with the accelerated rate at which they are taking place" (ibid.).

Dialect loss is recorded in the data, as shown in Figures 5.19-5.21. To begin with, standard [j] is making its way into environments where dialectally it would not arise (Figure 5.19):

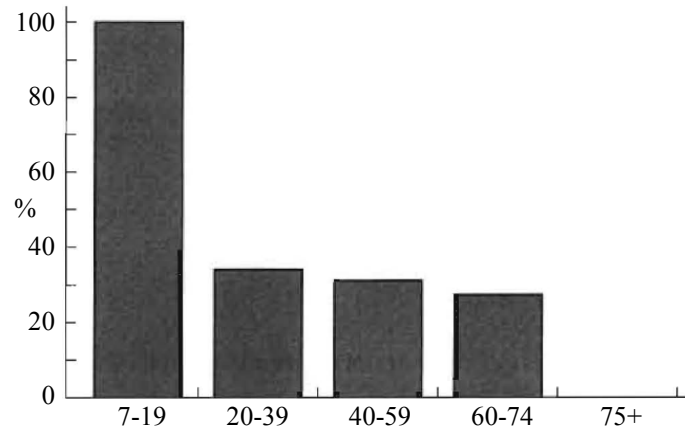
The group [jɔ], observable in both verb-noun endings such as *gweithio* [gʷəiθjɔ] ('to work') and nouns such as *cinio* [kɪnjɔ] ('dinner') becomes reduced to [ɔ] in Gwenhwyseg, hence [gʷiθɔ] and [kɪnɔ]. The results [...] demonstrated quite dramatically the extent of the dialect loss.

M.C. Jones, 1998:91 (orig. emphasis)

Likewise with standard /h/ (Figure 5.20), although "/h/ does not feature as part of the phonemic inventory of the Gwenhwyseg dialect" (ibid. p.91), it is nevertheless being "progressively introduced into the dialect in all environments" (ibid.)

An example of lexical simplification, standard *dweud* ('to say') is recorded as displacing "the dialect forms *gweud* [gwid] or *weud* [wəid]" (1998:93) (Figure 5.21).

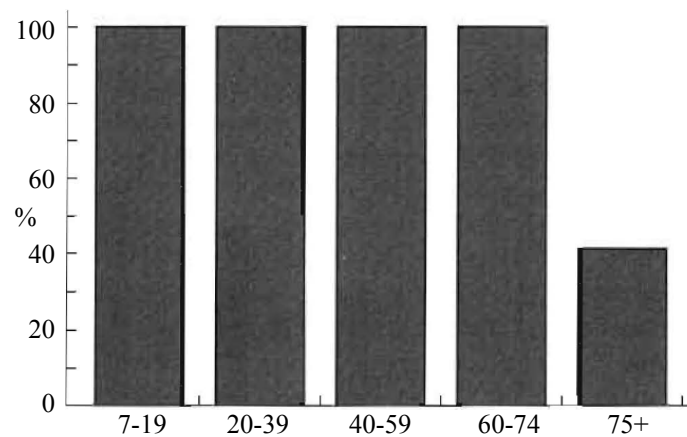
Dialect loss turns to *dialect disappearance* in other cases, with the absence from the data of various local dialect features, for example post-tonic devoicing (provection) in various words, such as *rhywbeth* ('something') (Figure 5.22). This feature "has been eliminated from the speech of the younger generation, which showed no evidence of the phenomenon" (1998:93). Similarly, the local feature 3rd person singular preterite ending *-ws* (Figure 5.23) "has almost totally



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 41 | 29 | 32 | 30 | 28 |

$$\chi^2 = 81.35 > 9.49, p = 0.05$$

Figure 5.22 % absence of post-tonic devoicing (provection) from 'rhywbeth' ('something') in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:94)



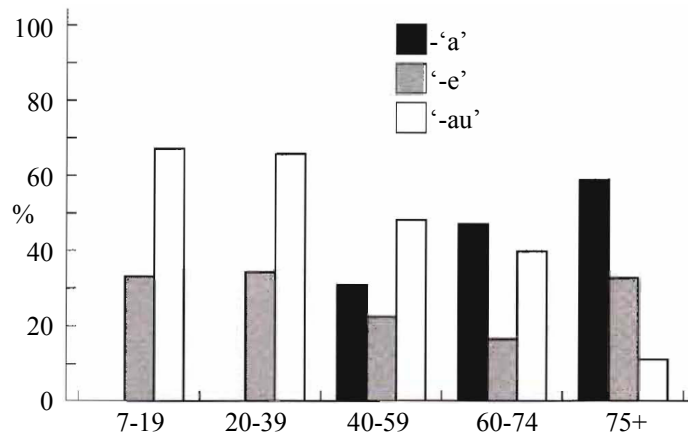
| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 76 | 57 | 82 | 43 | 69 |

$$\chi^2 = 175.31 > 9.49, p = 0.05$$

Figure 5.23 % replacement of 3rd person singular preterite ending '-ws' by standard '-odd' in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:95)

disappeared from Gwenhwyseg – [...] completely replaced by Standard *-odd* in the speech of all but the oldest informants” (ibid. p.95 – orig. emphasis).

There is overall “a large degree of standardization of the speech of the under forties, this drops dramatically in the speech of informants aged between 40 and 74, while informants aged 75 and over show no evidence of standardization” (ibid. p.101).



| Age-group | 7-19 | 20-39 | 40-59 | 60-74 | 75+ |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| No. of opportunities | 128 | 87 | 91 | 70 | 62 |

$\chi^2 = 45.44 > 9.49$ $p = 0.05$

Figure 5.24 % plural Suffixes in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:96)

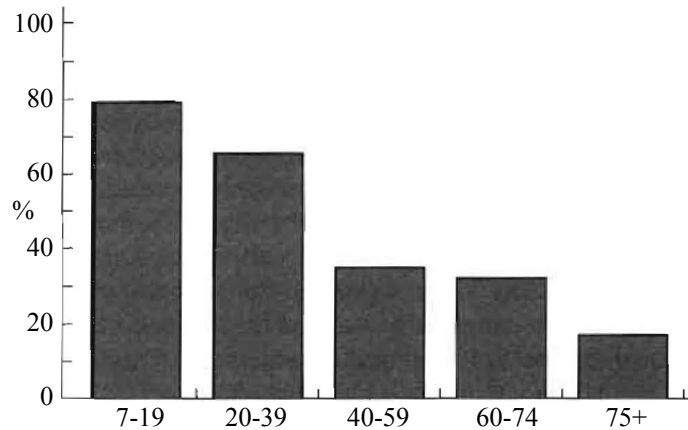


Figure 5.25 % cross-variable, inter-group comparison of dialect loss in Rhymney, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:101)

Finally *dialect mixing*, the spread of certain local dialect features beyond their historically recorded locations, is noted alongside simultaneous adoption of standard forms. This is noted primarily with reference to lexical convergence and loss of locally specific words. It is also shown in structural features, for example plural suffixes (Figure 5.24):

In the case of Rhymney, although there was the already established pattern of decrease of the dialect feature [a] down the generations (51.94 per cent – 19.97 per cent – 4.65 per cent), accompanied by an increase in the use of the standard suffix [ai] (12.16 per cent – 68.5 per cent – 71.63 per cent), there was also evidence of the proliferation of the [ɛ] suffix, which is more characteristic of the South-West and North-East of the country.

[...]

This confirms that the speech of the younger generation is displaying evidence of quite marked dialect mixing.

M.C. Jones, 1994:254-255

It is unclear whether this mixing is the same as the regional dialect levelling of Chapter 3. Still, this represents a comparable decline in diversity aside from the effect of the Standard.

The results of dialect loss are collated to show an overall trend (Figure 5.25), concluding that,

two parallel developments are underway – one affecting features of the dialect, which are disappearing and being replaced by those of Standard Oral Welsh, and one affecting features of Welsh common to all varieties [...].

M.C. Jones, 1998:109

Overall, the dialectological results in Rhymney provide “a clear indication of the fact that the Gwenhwyseg dialect had to all intents and purposes been eliminated from the speech of the schoolchildren” (1998:109).

In the second speech community, Rhosllannerchrugog, similar trends to Rhymney are found among Welsh secondary bilinguals. Comparisons with primary bilinguals, who acquired Welsh from their family and have *not* received Welsh-medium education, make for a particularly useful demonstration of the effects of such schooling. Primary bilinguals are only recorded between 7 and 19 years old, with the express aim of comparing Welsh speakers currently in Welsh-medium education with those in English-medium education. The statistical tests do not include primary bilinguals, for the sake of comparability to the Rhymney data (M.C. Jones, 1998:164).

Language obsolescence in Rhosllannerchrugog compares clearly to Rhymney. Simplifications in soft mutations, pre-nominal possessive pronoun and gender marking occur in like fashion – all greatest among the primary bilinguals. This is attributed to the corrective influence of schooling:

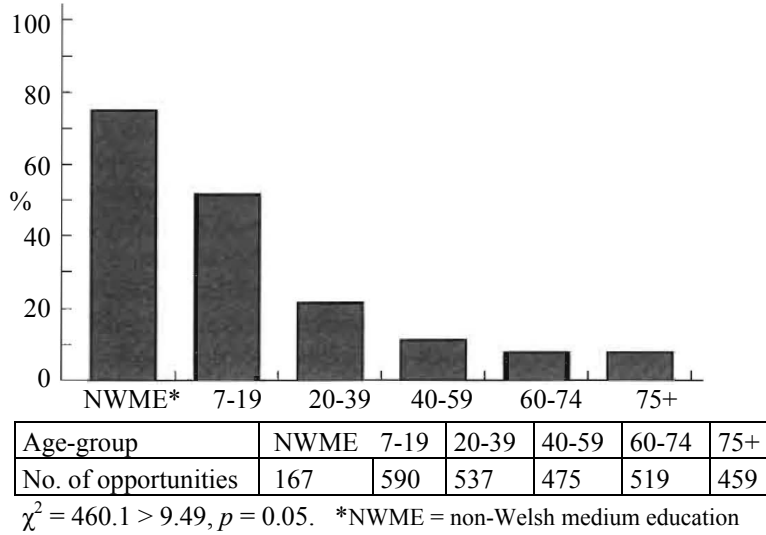


Figure 5.26 % absence of soft mutation (all contexts) in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:164)

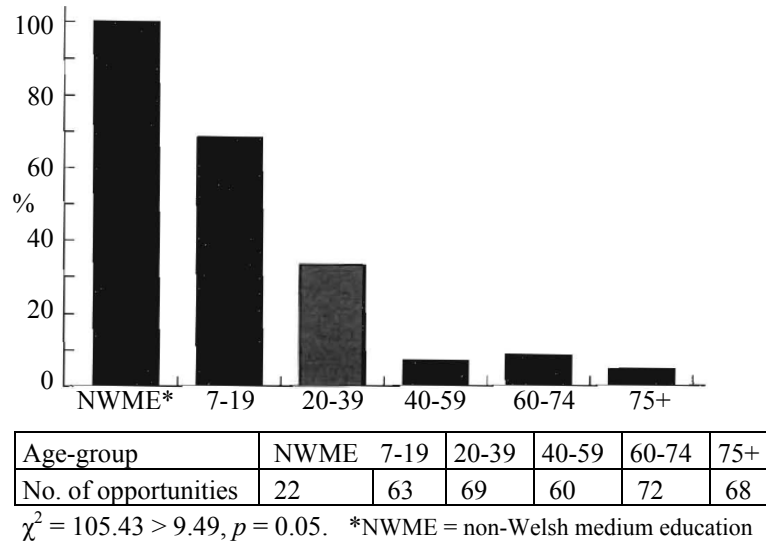


Figure 5.27 % non-mutation of attributive adjectives after feminine nouns in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:171)

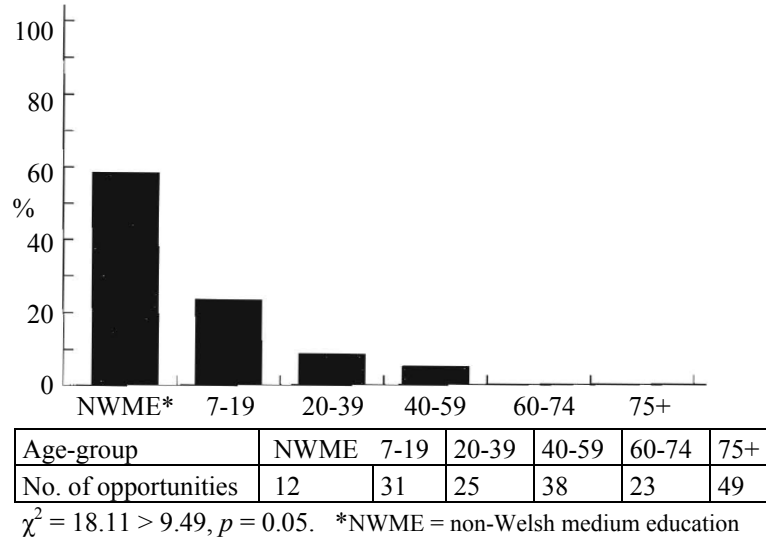


Figure 5.28 % inappropriately-gendered numeral used with noun in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:178)

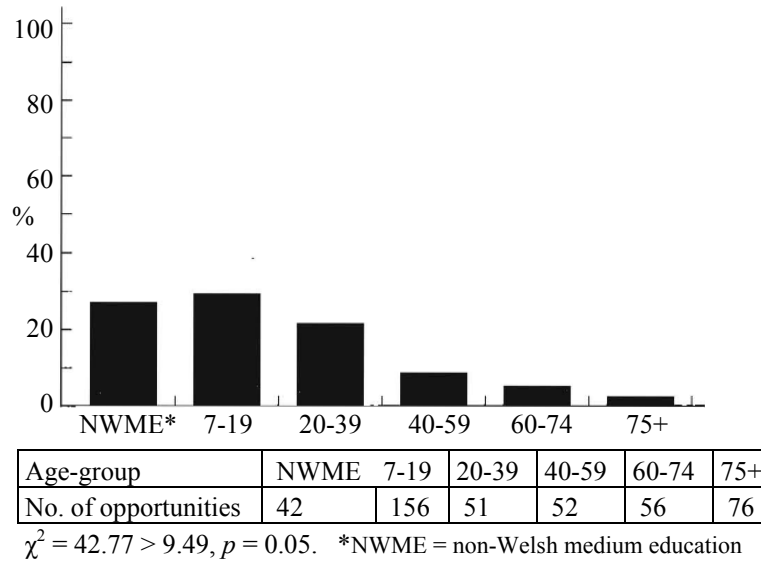


Figure 5.29 % use of a Historically Inappropriate Form of 'yes' in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:177)

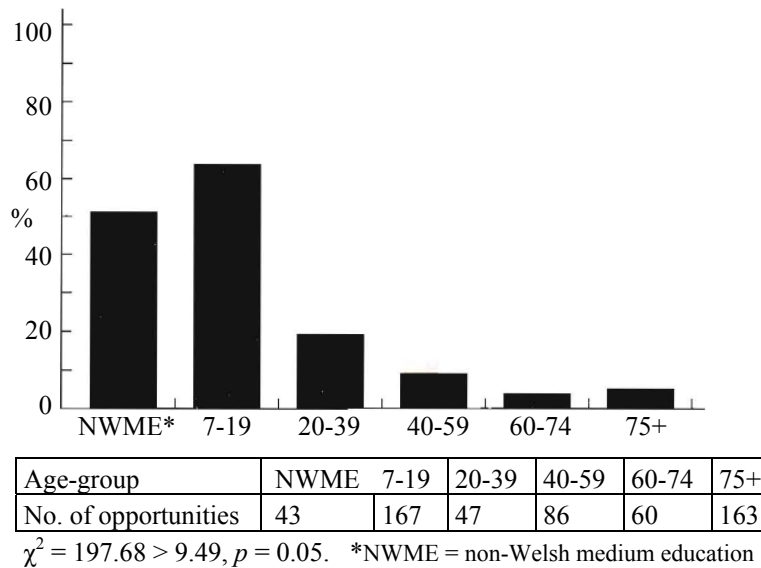


Figure 5.30 % elimination of the pre-nominal possessive pronoun in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:178)

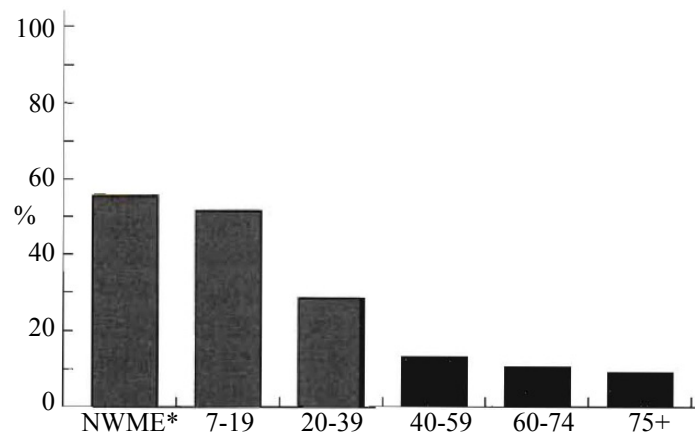


Figure 5.31 % Cross-variable, inter-group comparison of language obsolescence in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:183)

Although mutations are highly common in Welsh, the system is not an easy one to master. The greater retention by the pupils in Welsh-medium education could be accounted for by the fact that mutations will be encountered by these pupils in almost every lesson and will be practised continually in their written homework. They are considered to be an important part of writing grammatically ‘acceptable’ Welsh and are emphasized accordingly.

M.C. Jones, 1998:165

Adjective lenition (Figure 5.27) shows “a pattern not unlike that recorded for Rhymney, namely a trend towards progressive language obsolescence” (M.C. Jones, 1998:172). This also occurred in “all four features able to be compared” for gender marking (ibid. p.174). It is concluded that simplification of gender-marking is occurring in both communities (ibid.). As for the differences between primary and secondary bilinguals, “it was plain that the children attending Welsh-medium schools were observing the masculine/feminine distinction to a greater degree than their counterparts receiving English-medium education” (ibid.). Likewise: “A similar pattern was found in the cases of both the remaining gender-based variables” (ibid. p.172), the latter of which is reproduced in Figure 5.28.

Simplification of the form of ‘yes’ used in answers is shown in Rhosllannerchrugog (Figure 5.29); although the differences between primary and secondary bilinguals is “too close [...] to be of any significance” (ibid. p.177). Elimination of pre-nominal possessive pronouns shows “[t]he same general pattern” (ibid. p.178), as do “each of the remaining four variables under consideration” (ibid.) – not reproduced here.

Overall, there appear to be simplifications and generalisations being made in contemporary spoken Welsh, leading to a decline in linguistic variation. This is being held back somewhat by Welsh-medium education, which appears to have the effect of instilling these rules:

Informants at the English-medium comprehensive school obtained scores which were consistently lower than those of their counterparts receiving Welsh-medium education,

indicating that daily use of Welsh for academic study seems to be conducive to a greater mastery of the mutation system.

M.C. Jones, 1998:170

Some types of variation, codified in Standard Welsh, are therefore buttressed by their reinforcement in normative education. This is nevertheless the protection and maintenance of standard forms, and says nothing about variation in local dialect features, or about the other major part of linguistic diversity outlined so far: variability. The analyses of dialect weakening are particularly enlightening here.

Dialect loss in Rhosllannerchrugog is apparent, as in Rhymney. What stands out is the general reversal of the trends seen in the obsolescence data: namely secondary bilinguals using significantly fewer dialectal forms than primary bilinguals not in Welsh-medium education. Samples of the data are shown in Figures 5.32-5.34. The Rhosllannerchrugog feature of inserting an epenthetic vowel in certain word-final clusters (Figure 5.32) appears on the wane, but English-medium educated Welsh speakers “were retaining this dialect feature to a greater extent” (M.C. Jones, 1998:189).

Use of Standard Welsh [ɛ] as outlined in Figure 5.33 was also displacing dialectal [e], this feature “progressively disappearing from the dialect” (ibid. p.190). Primary bilinguals, again, were “more likely [...] to retain this dialect feature” (ibid.).

Lexically, two prominent features of North-East Wales, *nene* (‘that over there’) and *dene* (‘there’s’) (the latter reproduced in Figure 5.32) are facing similar patterns of decline, “being replaced respectively by Standard *dyna* (a form corresponding to French *voilà*) and *yna* (‘that’)” (1998:197 – orig. emphases). They are also retained significantly more by Welsh speakers outside Welsh-medium schools. M.C. Jones comments on this, noting that

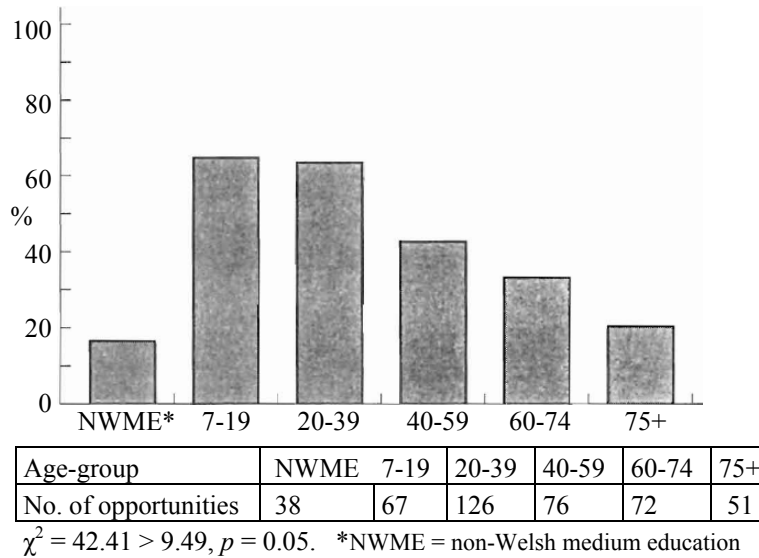


Figure 5.32 % Standard Welsh non-insertion of epenthetic vowel in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:189)

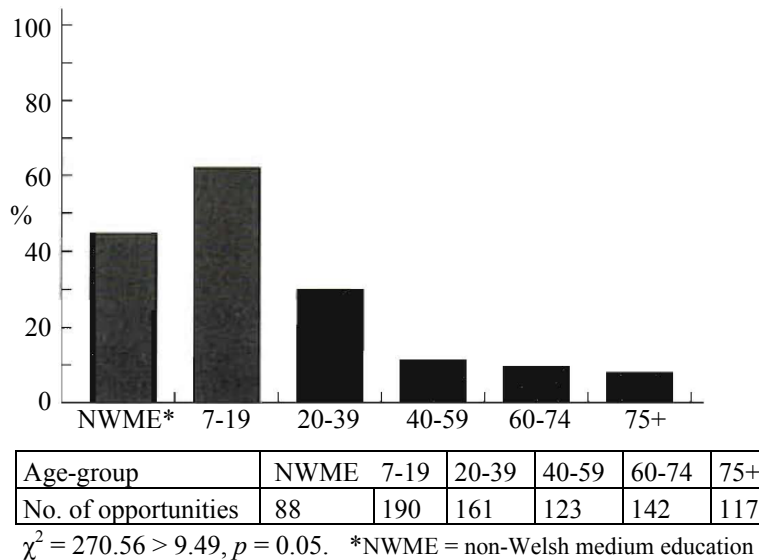


Figure 5.33 % Standard Welsh realization of [ɛ] in penultima of words having [l], [i], [u], or [σ] in their final syllable in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:190)

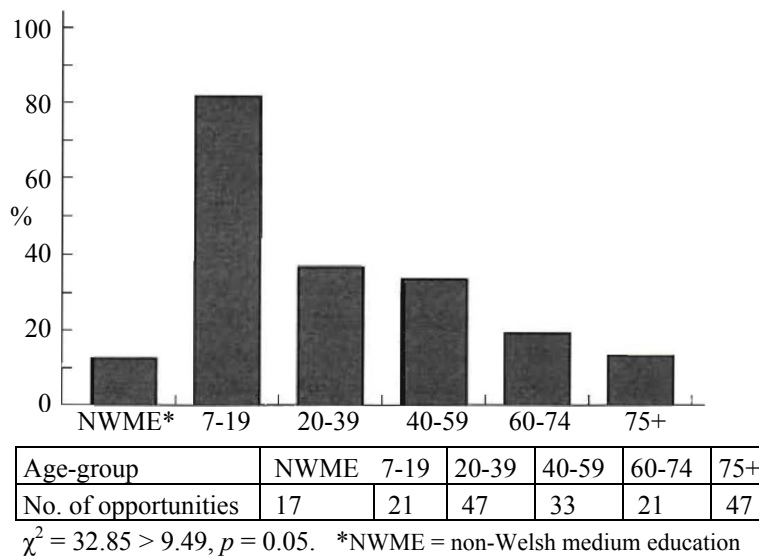


Figure 5.34 % absence of dialectal 'dene' ('there's') in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:197)

recordings made of 3 to 7 year olds revealed that this age-group used *nene* in 93 per cent of all possible contexts. This also seems to confirm the hypothesis that dialect loss may be in part attributable to Welsh-medium immersion education. This age-group were too young to have been subjected to the ‘corrective’ influence of their teachers and peer-group and, as yet, have not mixed with a sufficient number of non-Rhosllannerchrugog dwellers to have become self-conscious about their speech.

M.C. Jones, 1998:197 (orig. emphasis)

The suggestion of peer influence on the one hand, and normative “corrective” pressure on the

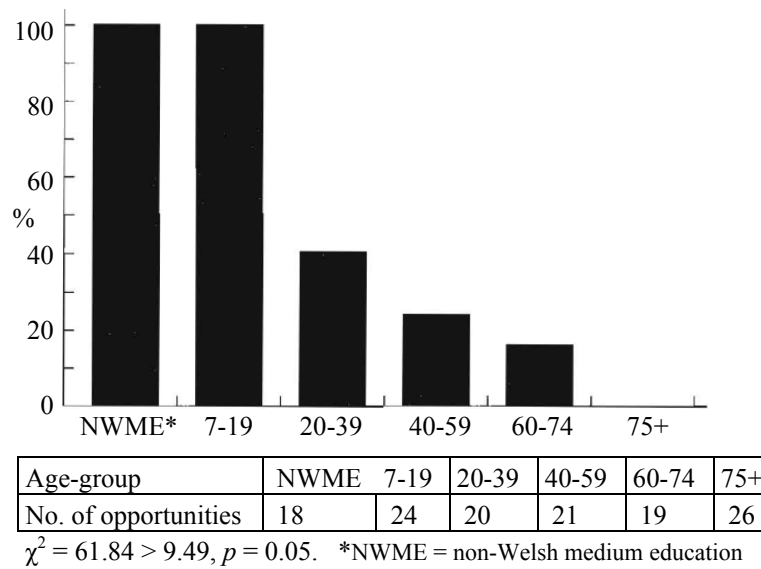


Figure 5.35 % absence of the local dialect feature additional aspirate mutation after ‘ei’ (f.) (‘her/their’) in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:191)

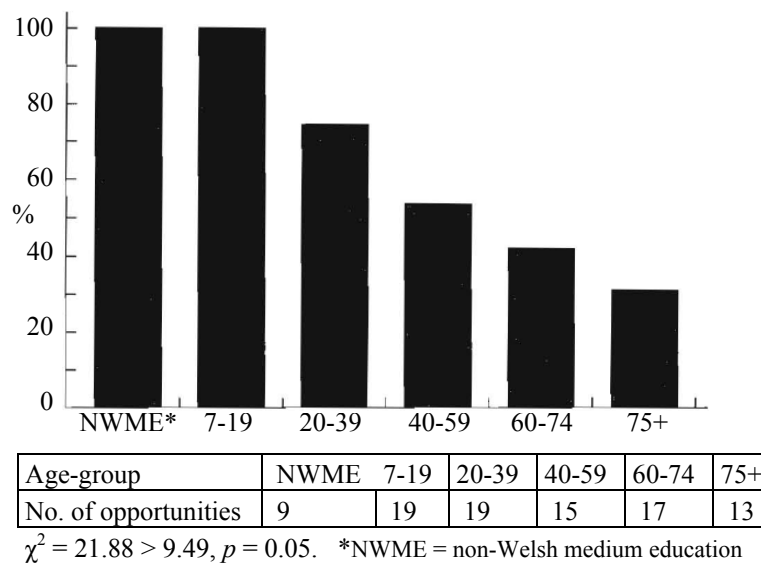
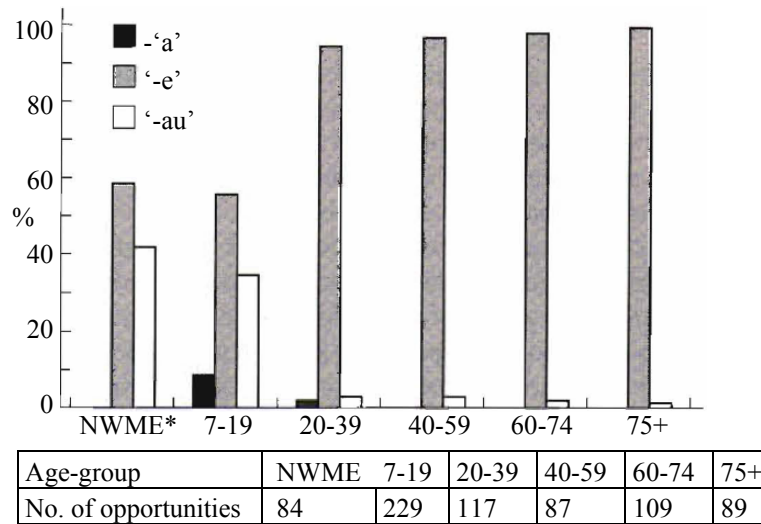


Figure 5.36 % absence of local dialect features [r̥] to [h] and contraction of verbal forms in the word ‘rhaid’ (‘to have to’) in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:192)

other, is expounded in the discussion of *dialect disappearance*. Of the disappearance of aspirate mutation after ‘ei’ (f.) (‘her/their’), she notes:

Since the mutation was not present in either the speech of pupils receiving Welsh-medium education or pupils at the English-medium comprehensive school, its absence is possibly due to the fact that it is not a feature of written Welsh, not taught alongside the other mutations at school and probably ‘corrected’ in the speech and writing of these pupils.

M.C. Jones, 1998:191



*NWME = non-Welsh medium education

Figure 5.37 Plural Suffixes in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:193)

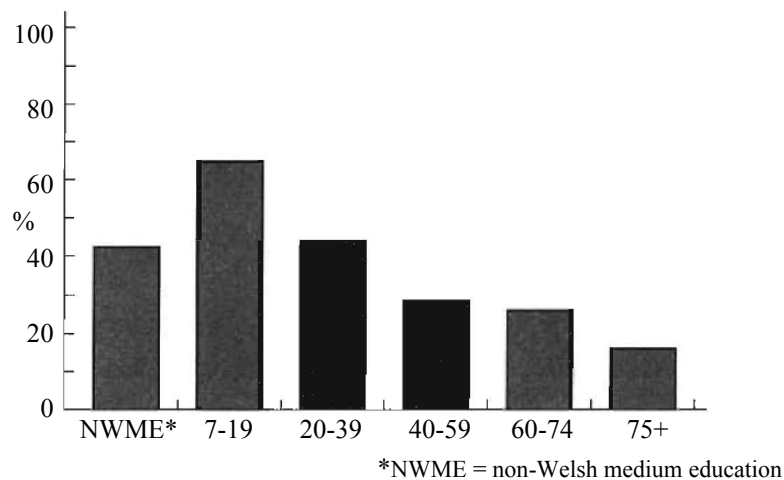


Figure 5.38 Cross-variable, inter-group comparison of dialect loss in Rhosllannerchrugog, by age (M.C. Jones, 1998:204)

Similarly, [r] to [h] and contraction of verbal forms in the word *rhaid* ('to have to') (Figure 5.36), "had been totally replaced by Standard forms in that of all the schoolchildren" (1998:191).

Dialect mixing is reported in a range of locally specific lexical items; and, as in Rhymney, in plural suffixes (Figure 5.37). M.C. Jones argues that these dialects increasingly "retain what they have in common and lose what is different" (1994:260; cf. 1998:236,290). The results for the plural suffix showed "a similar trend to those obtained for its Gwenhwyseg counterpart" (1998:192). As for the "Standard [aɪ] suffix", it is "only those currently attending [Welsh-medium] school who make any real use of this suffix" (ibid.). She suggests:

as the suffix found most commonly in written Welsh, [aɪ] is being encountered on a daily basis in school by these informants and accordingly, it is having an effect on their speech. The fact that use of the Standard suffix is so high in the speech of the schoolchildren but so low in the speech of the group aged between 20 and 39, many of whom would also once have been pupils at the Welsh-medium comprehensive school reinforces the speculation that use of [aɪ] is precipitated by the school environment and is correlated with the 'correct' Welsh that one speaks at school. On leaving school and its emphasis on 'correct' Welsh, pupils are obviously replacing the suffix by the one that they hear predominating around them in the community.

M.C. Jones, 1998:192

The "indigenous [ɛ] suffix" (ibid.) was also found in decline. Further analysis of this variable showed that the local, Rhosllannerchrugog variant was

not present at all in the speech of schoolchildren at the Welsh-medium primary school nor, indeed, in that of the pupils attending the English-medium comprehensive school. This point is significant as it suggests that the fact that Welsh-medium comprehensive schools typically have such wide catchment areas, bringing together pupils from many different communities [...] [is] resulting in many different varieties being spoken in these schools, creating an environment conducive to dialect mixing.

M.C. Jones, 1998:192

This remains as speculation; yet it is a noteworthy decline in diversity – in this case down to the mixture of local dialects, not the effect of the Standard. The data are summarised in Figure 5.38, concluding that

although standardization and dialect mixing may be occurring at a slower rate than in Gwenhwyseg, their existence can by no means be denied. The fact that only a very small degree of dialect loss was present among informants aged 20 and over demonstrates the continued use of Welsh in the home and the community. It is significant that such a leap in the loss of dialect features should occur in the Welsh of the first generation to have Welsh-medium media and a complete system of Welsh-medium education.

M.C. Jones, 1998:194 (see also 1994:256)

In most cases, declining diversity was more advanced in Rhosllannerchrugog. Comparing the two communities, a number of common tendencies emerge, for example: “inflection of prepositions may represent a simplificatory tendency common to the speech of immersion pupils throughout [Wales]” (M.C. Jones, 1998:176). The English-medium Welsh speakers show greater obsolescence of Welsh; but use significantly less standard Welsh, maintaining the local dialect more strongly (and never showing greater dialect loss). The greater standardisation of Welsh in Welsh-medium pupils is explained on account of the corrective influence of the school:

It is significant that the [...] English-medium [pupils] obtained an overall score of 42 per cent [dialect use] [...] 23 per cent lower than [those in] Welsh-medium education. The speech of these children, who learn Welsh at home [...] is still heavily coloured by local features. This is irrefutable evidence of the influence of Welsh-medium education [...].

[...]

Most significant of all was the [...] correlation [...] between Rhosllannerchrugog – a relatively strong Welsh-speaking community – and [...] Rhymney – a relatively Anglicized community. ... [T]he Standard is gaining substantial ground [...] with each successive age group.

M.C. Jones, 1998:204

In Rhosllannerchrugog peer pressure is exerted, with “teasing [...] by classmates [...] from Wrexham, Llangolen” (1998:196) about local dialect features. “The stigma attached to the dialect [...] provoked in them a conscious attempt to conform to a more standardised variety in

order to be more like their friends” (ibid.). This can be related back to Census findings that proficiency in Welsh is the factor most associated with “Welsh” identity (ONS, 2004a). Increased Welsh proficiency may buttress feelings of Welshness,³⁸ but simultaneously de-prioritise local affiliation. M.C. Jones describes her respondents “adopting a broader identity” (1998:236) as their contact with other Welsh people increases; and suggests that her younger respondents saw local dialects as irrelevant, even divisive (ibid. p.227), feeling that: “It’s important for people from all over Wales to understand one another” (ibid.). (See also Robert, 2009:95, on secondary bilinguals “drowning out” primary bilinguals in Welsh schools.)

M.C. Jones goes on to note how her respondents also showed “growing nationalistic, or militant tendencies [...] adopting increasingly protectionist attitudes [to Welsh] in order to safeguard its future” (1998:230); and remarks on the “decline in importance of Welsh as a [local] community language” (ibid.). Setting aside whether language can be quite so consciously controlled, the linguistic effect of declining diversity is at least reflected in the dialectological data.

The main dialectological analyses in Rhymney and Rhosllannerchrugog are followed up by matched guise perceptual tests, where children are played recordings of the local dialect of their area, and asked where in Wales the speaker came from: north, south, west or east. In Rhymney, 21 percent of respondents correctly identified the Gwenhwyseg speaker as coming from South Wales, the remainder locating the speaker elsewhere:

not only are the children questioned unable to precisely identify Gwenhwyseg [...] but some of the words and phonological features are so unfamiliar that they are thought to belong to areas as far away as North and West Wales.

M.C. Jones, 1998:117

³⁸ Unfortunately the Census data (ONS, 2004c) only began asking about national identity in Wales in 2001. Specifically, they asked whether the respondent considered their national identity to be Welsh, English, Scottish, Irish, British, or other. The result was 67% Welsh. This is high, but comparison is impossible.

By comparison Garrett et al. (2003:200), examining dialects of English in Wales, report an average of 27.6 percent correct dialect recognition among 15 year olds in south Wales.

In Rhosllannerchrugog, 32 percent of respondents correctly identified the local dialect speaker as being from north Wales. Of this figure M.C. Jones notes:

the children are not [...] able to identify positively what they are hearing as the dialect of their area. They are aware of the fact that *they* do not speak in this way [...]. [M]any of the words were so unfamiliar [...] that they identified them as coming from the opposite end of the country.

M.C. Jones, 1998: 209-210 (orig. emphasis)

This compares to an average 48.3 percent recognition of northeast Wales English dialects among northeast Walian 15 year olds (Garrett et al., 2003:200).

The closer identification of English dialects may or may not be statistically significant (the numbers involved are probably too small to warrant such tests), but it should be noted that Garrett et al. did not provide a multiple-choice selection, and also divided Wales into six, not four, to code the responses; lowering their respondents' chances of identifying correctly. From the dialectological data linguistic diversity appears to be declining whether or not people can pinpoint local dialect features; and so these perceptual tests are a little tangential to the main argument. Still, they add a useful reflection of the interpretation and recognition of language.

In summary, between the two case studies, the dialectological tests record

a progressive decline in the occurrence of dialectal features through the generations, the older generation maintaining a relatively high percentage of local traits, the middle-aged speakers gradually starting to divest their speech of such features and the schoolchildren retaining very few regionalisms indeed.

M.C. Jones, 1994:248

The decline in local dialect usage is attributed by M.C. Jones to the predominant exposure of second language Welsh learners to “Standard Oral Welsh” in the classroom, “a nationwide, non-localized variety of the national language” (1998:116). Together with dialect mixing, this is having consequences for the overall profile of the language: “Their Welsh is becoming a non-locatable amalgam of elements drawn from all over Wales” (ibid. p.117). This generic nationwide character of Welsh is underscored by attitude data (ibid. pp.128-134), in which Welsh principally signals national identity and pride, also acting as a “secret” language; but is significantly less associated with local community membership.

Complexities of the data aside, two main conclusions are important. Firstly, there appear to be noticeable declines in the diversity of modern Welsh – more so than other “healthy” languages in “the *amount* and *rate* of change” (M.C. Jones, 1998:235 – orig. emphases). Secondly, some of these declines – namely where Standard forms are displacing local dialect forms – appear to be caused by Welsh-medium education itself, the mainstay of the official language revival.

Wary of over-generalising, M.C. Jones remains inconclusive as to whether the changes observed are happening right across Wales (1998:206). This is shrewd both on general scientific grounds, and also because Wales is an extremely variegated place (Garrett et al., 2003), wherein “small-scale localised studies are often limited in their generalizability, even within Wales” (Coupland et al., 2006:354). These caveats notwithstanding, M.C. Jones does tentatively mention that “the Welsh-medium schools visited are [...] typical of their kind” (1998:229); and that:

in Rhymney and Rhosllannerchrugog (and, I would posit, several other areas of Wales) we are witnessing an instance of language suicide [in] which [...] the dialects of Wales are becoming progressively divested of some of their phonetic regional features and idiosyncratic lexical items [...].

M.C. Jones, 1994:256

She speculates that, if these trends continue, “the result could well be the generalization throughout the country of [...] a variety of Welsh with uniform phonology, grammar and so forth and devoid of all regional features” (1998:208).

In addition to language obsolescence and dialect weakening, M.C. Jones notes how English is finding its way into modern Welsh, positing this as an equal sign of decline. She distinguishes three phenomena (1998:81):

- *borrowing*, where English words replace Welsh equivalents but are “made to correspond to the phonotactics of Welsh”, e.g. *spoilyo* ‘spoil’ (p. 184) – A.R. Thomas (1987:107) also notes e.g. *miwsig* ‘music’, *magned* ‘magnet’, *drimo* ‘dream’, *bilifo* ‘believe’;
- *calques*, where “a native word acquires certain meanings attached to the literal equivalent in the creditor language” (M.C. Jones, 1998:82), i.e. Welsh words changing their meanings to the English equivalents – Thomas (1987:107) gives *fmdio allan* ‘find out’, *rhoi allan* ‘put out, extinguish’;
- *word substitution*, where English words are used, unaltered, in Welsh utterances (see also Deuchar, 2006, on intra- and inter-sentential code-switching between Welsh and English).

The first two are effectively making new words, neither Welsh (standard or dialectal) nor English. The last is also unique since it “is totally unpredictable, even within the speech of a single individual, for although the English term might be borrowed in one sentence, there is no guarantee that the ‘indigenous’ term will not be used the next time” (M.C. Jones, 1998:186).

The mixing of Welsh with English is perhaps the most noteworthy for our current purposes.³⁹ While M.C. Jones is careful to compare the same features of Welsh in the main tests where possible, these mixtures receive no systematic comparison as they are “too numerous to list in full” (1998:184). Moreover, although Rhymney and Rhosllannerchrugog seem similar in the main tests for obsolescence and dialect loss, these Welsh-English mixes appear to have no regularity, and no apparent causal link to schooling – indeed appear to be deviations from it. They seem instead more particular to these speech communities, less predictable and more innovative. That is to say, they seem more diverse. These are real innovations; new diversity hovering somewhere between Welsh and English. But this is precisely where they come loose from a model based on promoting Welsh as an independent language.

Whether or not M.C. Jones’ vision of “a variety of Welsh [...] devoid of all regional features” (1998:208) is fulfilled, the point remains that modern spoken Welsh appears to be declining in diversity, and the efforts of the Welsh revival appear not to be stemming that decline; and may be introducing new pressures against diversity. Furthermore, the most potent source of diversity in modern Welsh may lie not in the language propagated in the school, but in the borrowings, calques and word substitutions that go against this effort.

Teaching a standard language does not automatically cause mass linguistic conformity, nor crush innovation. However, it does seem to introduce pressures that did not exist before, pressures that cause reductions in structural variation within the language. As the Welsh revival spans from Type 3 planning to Types 4, 5 and possibly 6, so too the pressures on diversity seem to increase. A victory can be, and most certainly is, claimed for Welsh overall; but as M.C. Jones concludes: “while the status of the Welsh language as a whole may be improving, the fate of its dialects is

³⁹ For more detailed examples of Welsh-English code-switching, see e.g. Deuchar & Davies (2009).

more pessimistic” (1998:137). The declines in dialectal variation may be only partially caused by Welsh-medium education; but it seems reliable to conclude that they are not being addressed by it. Variability, meanwhile, is fully neglected; with new linguistic innovations falling well outside the normative framework of the school curriculum. Innovation and variability do not seem to be the prerogative of this arm of the Welsh language revival.

To repeat a point made earlier, the argument here is not simply that ‘dialects are not protected’ in Welsh-medium education. Even if dialects were somehow recognised, this would be thrown back on the same questions of what is ‘the dialect’, presupposing characteristics that can be listed and demonstrated, and that are more or less invariable. M.C. Jones does touch on this, outlining national plans to teach “the vocabulary and syntax of a particular dialect” (1998:136). She later notes plans for the National Curriculum in Welsh to include “awareness of the characteristics of different dialects” (ibid. p.283). For the possible shape of such dialect programmes, one can look to Irish-medium education in Ireland, whose teachers are “expected to be familiar with three Irish dialects” (SCG, 2008). This approach does seem inherently to overlook innovation (Mac Giolla Chríost, 2007:100-101). As Cheshire & Trudgill note of educationalists engaging with dialects (1988:103): “There is [...] a widespread tendency to regard rural [historical] dialect forms as acceptable [...] but to treat urban [new] dialect forms simply as ‘errors’ ”. There is a basic mismatch between recognising extant variation and fostering variability.

5.8.2 Welsh-medium broadcasting

Another, albeit lesser, focus of the ECRML is media broadcasting. This became part of the Welsh revival with the Broadcasting Acts 1980 and 1981 establishing Sianel Pedwar Cymru (‘Channel Four/For Wales’, S4C), the Welsh language television channel, which started

broadcasting in 1982 (Dunbar, 2004:109). A question for this investigation, then, is how media presentation of Welsh represents and/or encourages diversity. Owing to constraints of space, this will barely scratch the surface of the question at hand. Still, as with most of the material in this investigation, the main contribution is to place evidence within a discussion of linguistic diversity, and relate this back to policy claims on the subject.

The case study to be examined is the Welsh-language soap opera *Pobol Y Cwm* ('People of the Valley'), produced by BBC Wales for S4C, and set in rural Carmarthenshire, aiming ostensibly to showcase different sorts of Welsh speakers in contemporary Wales. The representation of local dialects of Welsh in *Pobol Y Cwm* is the question at hand, and specifically whether these dialects are 'toned down' to ensure comprehensibility for all Welsh speakers.

By looking at how local dialects are represented in this way, this section is a sociolinguistic interrogation of the argument that "the existence of a unified public culture requires that minoritarian perspectives be brought together and made available for the majority" (Born, 2004:515). Minority language media must represent its target minority and yet maintain wide appeal, since "most people prefer to watch television programs [...] which feature their own language or one close to it, familiar [...] ethnic types, familiar values, and addressing relevant regional, national or local issues" (Straubhaar, 2000:200). It is this balancing act that will be explored, as a way of opening up new perspectives on how diversity in language is represented in mass media.

I begin by looking at how the language debate has played out in Wales vis-à-vis the media, then very briefly review some theories about cultural homogenisation in global conditions, in relation to dialects in Public Service Broadcasting (PSB); and finally report the results of an email

interview with Bethan Jones, Executive Producer of *Pobol Y Cwm*, and discuss the potential for further study in this area.

5.8.2.1 Dialectal Diversity in PSB

Insofar as the BBC dominates UK PSB, it faces three main problems in representing minorities: regulatory changes making television more competitive; budgets becoming increasingly performance-related; and programmes becoming less adventurous and creative (Cottle, 2000). These three are sequentially linked, actuated by a “television industry increasingly led by market logic” (ibid. p.110):

If we are to move beyond the colourful but safe ‘steel bands, saris and samosas’ approach to multiculturalism [...] institutions like the BBC must provide a programme making environment where programmes have teeth, and [...] programme makers are not afraid to make them bite. Unfortunately [...] competitive, corporate and professional forces [...] undermine the production of politically engaging, culturally challenging representations.

Cottle, 2000:109 (orig. emphasis)

Multicultural broadcasting “must at one and the same time be both ‘broadcast’ and narrowcast” (Mullan, 1996:93). The BBC has steered between the extremes, avoiding the “cultural ghetto of minority areas” (Barker, 1997:45) and aiming to “complement commercially-funded television by providing programmes that the market will not” (ibid.). Another concern is that the BBC must legitimise its public funding: it cannot chase ratings and appear to dumb down; but nor can it cover topics only of special interest and appear parochial and esoteric (Born, 2004:54-55). If minority PSB involves a struggle against “prevailing social attitudes that marginalize particular groups” (Scannell, 1995:34), then this naturally entails defining the boundaries of each minority. The BBC has attempted to represent minorities, but with limited airtime this often saw minorities “arbitrarily yoked together” (ibid. p.35) into ‘representative’ programming.

A static quota for the BBC on the number of independently produced programmes does not necessarily foster experimentation. In reviewing the possibilities embraced by (and awaiting) the BBC, Born is optimistic about the “extraordinary renewal and greater ambition of its public service vision” (2004:490). Still though, “[t]he question is: where are the policies to ensure real diversity and to nurture [...] new entrants and small independents?” (ibid. p.499). These quandaries serve as a context for the running of a minority language PSB soap opera.

5.8.2.2 Welsh Language TV in Wales

After long protests about the dominance of English language TV in Wales, S4C was established as a kind of counter-hegemonic project (Howell, 1992:221-5). The Welsh National Council on Broadcasting and the Welsh Language Society focused heavily on replacing “English” TV with “Welsh” (ibid. p.224); but were quiet about representing differences within Welsh (see also Price, 1984:109). Likewise, Rees’ (1973) and Betts’ (1976, esp. pp.190-218) impassioned arguments for Welsh in TV and education are framed solely as oppositions to English. Pro-Welsh efforts over the last several centuries have become increasingly national affairs (Price, 1984:94-133), mass provisions of Welsh in official domains. Given that Welsh-language PSB faces continual competition from mainstream English broadcasting (Howell, 1992:228-229), it is plausible that unity in opposition to English hegemony may have relegated the importance of internal diversity.

Minority PSB represents “intra-cultural communication”, “ethnic minority niche media which [...] foster reflection, association and solidarity among minorities” (Born, 2004:516). As the BBC’s Managing Director of Regional Broadcasting has argued: “Regional broadcasting [...] must have [a] sense of place [...]. In Wales, of course, it must have an additional ingredient, a sense of nationhood” (cited in G. Jones, 1990:156). Indeed his concluding remarks resound

particularly strongly with this tug between representation and unity: “What is BBC Wales for? It is there to serve the nation of Wales in all its diversity, and with united purpose” (ibid. p.160).

5.8.2.3 Contributions of this discussion

There is little existing research on the fictional representation of dialects. Ross (2000) describes how the mannerisms and habits of black and Asian characters are reduced to stereotypes on British television; but makes no mention of language. What linguistic analyses exist mainly focus on the media text, not whether this accurately reflects vernacular speech. Marriot (1997) discusses the affectation of working class speech in a 1942 British war film. Stuart-Smith & Timmins (2007) examine “London Cockney” in *EastEnders*. Tagliamonte & Roberts (2005) examine the use of intensifiers in *Friends*. These latter two, as discussed in Chapter 4, compare dialect use in TV broadcasts and in their audiences, i.e. their effects after broadcast; but are not concerned with how accurately these TV texts represent vernacular speech to begin with. Bell (1991, ch. 6) shows how New Zealand radio newscasters use more standard dialect features while presenting on radio stations with (what is perceived to be) a more educated audience. This demonstrates audience design, the presenter accommodating to their target demographic. Ball et al. (1988) conducted a similar study on Welsh radio, comparing language style in situations of differing formality, finding that the more formal the situation, the more Standard Welsh was used. This shows a stylistic attention to formality. Still, none of these studies, nor any other I could find,⁴⁰ questions how closely these relate to the local dialects apparently being represented. That is the question pursued here, albeit briefly.

⁴⁰ In addition to my own literature search, I contacted linguists specialising in Welsh dialects and Welsh media at Aberystwyth, Cambridge, Cardiff, Ulster and York universities, none of whom could point me to anything in this area.

5.8.2.4 *The Interview*

I originally contacted two Associate Producers, the Series Researcher, one of the Directors, and the Executive Producer (who is also the Series Editor) of *Pobol Y Cwm*. The Executive Producer, Bethan Jones, elected to answer in lieu of her staff, but her responses are perhaps the most useful, considering her overview and authority. The results shed light on how the makers of this show manage the issue of representation vs. accessibility. After an introductory discussion about the nature of the research and my role, a questionnaire was sent to her for completion. That questionnaire, and her answers, are as follows:

***Pobol Y Cwm*, and indeed the whole output of BBC Wales, has an important role in reflecting Welsh life and representing Welsh culture; however, it must reach the widest possible audience. This is a particular concern when representing the various dialects of Welsh. Some dialects, or some regional expressions and sounds, may not be understood widely enough. Regional dialects are certainly important in creating the ‘flavour’ of *Pobol Y Cwm*. This questionnaire aims to investigate the decisions behind the presentation of those dialects.**

Please aim to spend as much time as possible on this. If you only have time to write a sentence for each question, that’s fine; but it will greatly assist this research if you can go into more depth (just allow the answer boxes to expand with your answer). If possible, please also include examples of when each of the issues has arisen.

Question 1. Is there an understanding that *Pobol Y Cwm* should be accessible to the widest possible Welsh-speaking audience?

Yes – the programme consistently attracts S4C biggest audience per week. It is also attracts a substantial non welsh speaking audience for the subtitled omnibus.

Question 2. The characters in *Pobol Y Cwm* have a range of dialects, which stems from a time when the programme represented the whole of Wales. Are there any dialects that, for any reason, could not realistically be included in *Pobol Y Cwm*? If so, why?

Any Welsh dialect could be used if it stems from the character and/or there are story reasons why it would be natural to that situation. Primarily though the dialect used is West Wales/Carmarthenshire, and all characters brn and bred in the Cwm have this accent – or at least try to achieve it!

Question 3. Some dialects naturally contain certain words or phrases that the rest of the population would not understand, because they are not widely known. Is it ever felt that such features should not be used in *Pobol Y Cwm*?

If the words are native to the area in which the series is set, we tend to use them. Some words have become unique to Cwmderi. Occasionally if a word or phrase can mean two different things depending on which part of Wales it is used, we would avoid it in order to minimise confusion.

Question 4. If certain words or phrases in some dialects are generally avoided, how is this manifested (i.e. is it an editorial policy, or just an understood requirement)?

A combination of both. If in doubt the Exec Producer would have the final say.

Question 5. Do you think that *Pobol Y Cwm* represents the full cultural and linguistic diversity of the Welsh people?

Not really. There are many areas of culture and language which are not included. The emphasis is on creating stories for our characters as opposed to being all things to all people. We do from time to time review our cultural and linguistic balance.

Question 6. Over the last 20 years, the BBC has seen significant regulatory changes, with an emphasis on efficiency and competitiveness. Has this increased the importance of mass appeal in the output of BBC Wales?

Pobol Y Cwm, like every soap, was created with mass appeal in mind. Although it is broadcast on S4C there is still significant emphasis placed on its ability to draw large audiences.

5.8.2.5 Analysis

The responses reflect both the opposing needs of representation and accessibility, and the efforts made to address them. The answer to Question 1 addresses accessibility, describing a general recognition among the producers that, as the most popular show on S4C, it must remain accessible to the widest possible Welsh-speaking audience.

The programme originally featured dialects from across Wales (BBC, 2004), but has since focussed on a particular county, Carmarthenshire. The answer to Question 2, explaining that for most characters “the dialect used is West Wales/Carmarthenshire”, shows dialect being used to add regional flavour, a stylistic application of language. This addresses the issue of

representation, to give the show a sense of geography, a regional grounding. It originally had a range of dialects used together, but has since been consciously located.

Question 3 enquires specifically whether certain dialect features are omitted in the interests of accessibility. The answer suggests some avoidance of geographically ambiguous dialect features, preferring words or phrases with more widely comprehensible meanings. The answer to Question 4 elaborates that these decisions are mandated explicitly, in editorial policy, and also implicitly, since the final decision lies with the Executive Producer.

What is the importance of representing diversity, in light of the dichotomy outlined so far? How does the producer negotiate between representation and accessibility? The response to Question 5 expounds this quite specifically. The aim of the show is not to be “all things to all people”; but rather to create a certain story about a certain group of people in a certain place. This needs to be grounded in a geographical context, and given authenticity with a recognisable dialect; but this need not detract from the wide appeal of the show. That would be an unnecessary obstruction.

Pobol Y Cwm is about the residents of a certain Carmarthenshire village. Representation of their linguistic peculiarities is attempted but, as the response to Question 6 shows, the value of “mass appeal” to “draw large audiences” means this must remain widely accessible, and not unduly broad. This is informatively upheld as a requirement of “every soap”.

5.8.2.6 Conclusions and further work

Local dialects are represented in *Pobol Y Cwm*; but certain broad or ambiguous dialect features are not known widely enough for national broadcast. From the brevity of the primary data, this discussion is only the shallowest of preliminary explorations. Further analyses could compare

dialect features in the scripts of this and other shows with the speech of minority individuals they represent, somewhat comparably to Tagliamonte & Roberts (2005). The only contribution of this brief inquiry is to raise some questions, perhaps some doubts, as to whether linguistic diversity can be represented or encouraged in minority language broadcasting. Finding an answer to that question will have to wait for further research.

5.8.3 Welsh micro language planning⁴¹

The possibility that Welsh may become confined to the classroom, or otherwise watered down by propagation via education, has not gone unnoticed. M.C. Jones herself (1998:150), citing Lyster (1987), refers to public anxieties about secondary bilinguals “speaking immersion”: “school-created dialects with specific phonological characteristics” (M.C. Jones, 1998:150). (For a breakdown of Welsh intergenerational transmission, see WLB, 2003.)

More recent official provisions for Welsh have acted on such concerns, looking increasingly towards home and community use. This has been spurred on by recent research demonstrating that even Welsh-speaking parents may not use Welsh in the home, highlighting “the importance parents place upon the bilingual education system in supporting language reproduction within the home or even substituting parents’ role in their child’s acquisition of Welsh” (Morris & Jones, 2007:493). The *Twf* (‘growth’)⁴² project (Baldauf, 2006:157) is the clearest manifestation of this, designed to “influence parents to transmit the Welsh language to their children” (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:137).

Funded by the Welsh Language Board since 2000, and employing 20 field officers across Wales (Jones & Morris, 2009:119), *Twf* approaches parents via the health sector, mostly during ante-

⁴¹ Further examples of micro-language planning are discussed in Appendix 7.

⁴² In English, *Twf* can be used as an acronym for ‘Transfer Within Families’ (Jones & Morris, 2009:136).

and post-natal care – an area already designed to influence parent behaviour. Health workers are trained to inform parents about using Welsh, and also to provide parents with “a range of marketing materials likely to appeal to the widest possible audience” (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:143), including a leaflet *Six Good Reasons for Making Sure Your Children Can Speak Welsh* (Figure 5.39). (See also García et al., 2006:144, on language planning as marketing; and Mac Giolla Chríost, 2005, on the increasingly explicit marketing vocabulary used by the Welsh Language Board, unambiguously positing citizens as “customers”.)

Also noteworthy is that, despite initially targeting “families where only one parent spoke Welsh” (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:142), in practice this proved “difficult, if not impossible” (ibid.).

It also rapidly became clear that the Twf message was of potential value to *all* families, irrespective of language background. In shifting the focus from mixed-language families to *all* families, the project has made a virtue of necessity.

Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:142 (orig. emphases)

Twf has therefore taken an additional role in propagating Welsh among non-speakers (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:145). *Twf* boasts a distribution of 40,000 for its promotional materials, for example: “A compact disc of Welsh songs for parents to sing with their children has also proved extremely popular” (ibid. p.143). Of note for the current discussion, regardless of whether this follows Standard Welsh as such, it still involves reproduction of language in a distinctly imitative way for those who do not themselves speak Welsh. Outside the *Twf* programme, Morris & Jones (2007) describe the proliferation of similar materials:

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of Welsh-language television programmes, books, DVDs, CDs and interactive websites aimed at preschool children. There are therefore plenty of opportunities for parents to make use of Welsh language media and materials in their early language socialisation of their children.

Morris & Jones, 2007:497



6

**rheswm da dros
ddysgu Cymraeg i'ch plant**

**good reasons for making sure
your children can speak Welsh**

-  **Yn yr ysgol**
At school
-  **Yn y teulu**
In the family
-  **Yn y gwaith**
At work
-  **Yn y gymdeithas**
In the community
-  **Yn y byd**
Around the world
-  **Mewn bywyd**
In life

**Rhowch y cyfle
gorau i'ch plant.
Fe fyddan nhw'n
diolch i chi.**

**Give your children
the best start.
They'll thank
you for it.**

 **Twf**
Magu plant yn ddwyieithog
Raising children bilingually

 **BYRDED
YR IAETH
CYMRAEG** **WELSH
LANGUAGE
BOARD**

Figure 5.39 'Six Good Reasons for Making Sure Your Children Can Speak Welsh', promotional poster from the Twf movement (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:144).

This demonstrates a shift of emphasis from encouraging reluctant Welsh-speaking parents to use Welsh, to spurring non-speakers to learn Welsh; that is, from Type 3 to Types 4-5 and potentially Type 6 language planning. (M.C. Jones also notes Welsh-medium schools increasingly providing for secondary bilinguals – 1998:22.) This comes across equally clearly in descriptions of the growing success of *Twf*, for instance one project worker discussing their presence at public events: “I think people know about the project now. [...] People come to the [*Twf*] tent expecting to obtain information about learning Welsh” (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:145). That this is becoming a resource for learning Welsh is significant, reliant as that is upon some form of standard language.

The germinal nature of *Twf* prevents a better understanding of its potential effects on diversity – as does the scarcity of research about *Twf*, especially critiques (the studies cited are fairly unabashedly in favour). Sociolinguistic detail about *Twf* has also not been collected (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:145). It seems possible that *Twf* is more favourable to diversity than education, encouraging as it does use of language outside the classroom. Still it does seem closely allied to education in many ways, relying on mass-produced materials and often doubling as a teaching resource. Like the discussion of Welsh language media, however, answering these questions would require further investigation.

5.8.4 Conclusion

There may be a numerical rise in Welsh use; but “safeguarding the language and the dialect are two different things altogether” (M.C. Jones, 1998: 238). McMahon notes: “this dialect suicide may strengthen allegiance to standard Welsh and perhaps enable Welsh to combat the threat of murder by English; but if so, the language will survive at the cost of its dialectal diversity” (1994: 291). In sum, two assertions can be made: that linguistic diversity is largely absent from

the discourse of this language revival; and that nothing is in place to gauge its vitality. This, moreover, is palpably not the point of the exercise; ‘the language’ as a whole is the main priority.

To revisit the two criteria of diversity: what of variation and variability in revived Welsh? The evidence suggests that extant variation in the local dialects was declining long before the modern revival began, similarly to other “healthy” languages but more intensely (M.C. Jones, 1998:235). A standard language, acquired as a skill via education, seems not to address this, and indeed to introduce its own pressure on diversity.

Other revival measures, while less overtly standardised, still appear to rely on some degree of standardisation. One important conclusion is that, as in the Cornish case, the effects upon diversity in Welsh were not written into the policies behind its revival; they materialised during the planning process. It is in the practicalities of delivering the policy goals that these restrictions have come about, and that diversity has been compromised.

Meanwhile the one trace of actual diversity in modern Welsh – mixings with English and other innovations – goes against the grain of bolstering a language in this way, as these cannot be identified under the banner of ‘Welsh’. They are something else, something other, and at odds with a movement whose aim is to fortify a particular language against precisely this kind of dilution. This is reflected throughout M.C. Jones’ discussion of these deviations from Welsh, given especial clarity in one discussion of what to do about them in the classroom.

The need for more analytic focus in the immersion classroom is a suggestion aimed at trying to eliminate some of the non-native elements highlighted in the speech of many immersion pupils. One of the many hypotheses put forward for the persistence of ungrammatical forms is linked to error correction, or feedback, and represents another potentially fruitful avenue of future research. The basic question is should immersion teachers correct the errors made by their pupils and if so, when? The issue is more problematic than it initially appears in that for the teacher to interrupt communication

will clearly be detrimental to the student's development of self-confidence and fluency and may hamper classroom interaction. On the other hand, however, for an error to 'pass' uncorrected will mean that a learner may interpret his answer as correct and thus potentially re-use a deviant structure in the future.

M.C. Jones, 1998:32

The genuineness of this dilemma is what stands out: how to balance confidence and fluency with the obvious need for correctness – anything other than which presents a danger to Welsh.

B.L. Jones (1994), reminiscing on everyday examples of “the poetic creativity of speech in a lesser-used minority language such as Welsh” (p.238), ends with the following soliloquy:

It is a fact that all the examples of lexical raciness which I quoted earlier on, all apart from the last two, come from the speech of elderly persons.

Preliminary results of the 1991 population census for Wales are beginning to appear. They seem to indicate a fall in the rate of decline in the overall number of people able to speak Welsh. Percentages of Welsh speakers among school children and in the younger age groups are increasing. Bilingualism, it appears, is being stabilized. There is a proven capability, mainly through education, to generate an increasing number of potential Welsh speakers. A question remains, however, about the richness and creativeness of a lesser-used minority language like Welsh which is being promoted through education and other conscious means today. But then should one ask about the quality of a minority language or is such a question nothing more than nostalgic yearning for a world that has passed?

B.L. Jones, 1994:242

Setting aside his purposefully wistful, almost polemical undertones (echoed by Coupland, in press), it serves to reprise the claims originally laid out in language policy and planning: to “protect linguistic diversity”. This is a grand claim; but the practical output may not foster the variation and variability that so centrally comprise diversity. In B.L. Jones' terms, the European Charter does not ask about the “quality” of a minority language. The purported success of the Welsh language revival, and its place as a widely acclaimed example of ECRML implementation, reiterates the rhetorical misapplication of linguistic diversity for this modern language revival.

5.9 Conclusion

It is an opinion held by many that “received speech is pure, and dialectal speech impure”, forgetting that received speech has been highly “doctored” in the course of ages from some form of dialectal hereditary, and hence is really the impurest possible form of speech.

Ellis, 1889:254

Language is at the same time a living thing and a museum of the fossils of life and civilisation.

Gramsci, 1957:110-111

Two pertinent “unresolved questions” at the end of C.H. Williams’ monograph (2008:398), are: “How can the diversity within regional or minority languages be respected?”; and “Can recognition only be achieved at the cost of reducing internal variation and assimilation to a norm?”. That these questions remain unanswered reveals both the troublesome nature of diversity in relation to group recognition, and the genuine lack of inquisitiveness about it.

The minority languages reviewed here appear to be facing many of the pressures evidenced in British English from the 19th century onwards: propagation of a standard form of the language in education; the weakening of local dialects around pressure points created by that standard; and, in the Welsh case, longer term mixing of local dialects amidst increasing mobility. The times and the languages are different; the pressures, processes and results are more similar. The victim throughout is not any given language, but linguistic diversity.

If we consider linguistic diversity as comprising new innovation as much as existing differences, then language revivals based on achieving specifiable outcomes seem ill suited to support this. It is worth returning to a point raised in §5.1.2, the distinction between “identity politics” and “diversity politics”; and that “the diversity politics model is [...] the least specific in relation to normative agendas and institutional arrangements” (Squires, 2002:130).

Kimura (2005) argues for the legitimacy of planned languages; and that conscious interference is inherent in any minority language, given the effort required to ensure its use. This may be so, but arguments for equality are not arguments for diversity. The latter is far more abstract, with little relevance to discrete groups; and can be damaged by attempts to shore up this representative capacity of language. Linguistic innovations by their nature cannot be protected; they have yet to occur. There can be no fondness for the unknown.

In sum, while the ECRML sets out to promote diversity and avoid standardisation (CoE, 1992a: Paragraph 26; §5.6), in many ways it achieves the opposite. Highlighting this gap in the rhetoric of language policy and planning is not just terminological nitpicking. Declaring protection for linguistic diversity not only overstates the abilities of current efforts, but also obstructs future research from working out ways to protect diversity, having already claimed to do so. In light of this, it may help to revise Ferguson's conflation of "the preservation of linguistic diversity and bilingual education" (2006:9), and the other similar claims cited in §5.5. Correspondingly "minority language rights" and "the preservation of linguistic diversity" (ibid. p.10) may also need to be dissociated, in the search for greater clarity over the abilities and limitations of planned intervention on human language.⁴³

5.9.1 Rewriting the enthymeme

Having described the rhetorical underpinnings of language policy and planning as an enthymeme in §5.5.1, it is worth revisiting that, and proposing some adjustments in light of the evidence presented. The original enthymeme is as follows: linguistic diversity is declining; protecting minority languages will protect linguistic diversity; therefore protect minority languages. If the

⁴³ A broader ambition for this investigation, then, is to contribute to wider debates about the limitations of social policy, and the gap between its stated aims and its outcomes (e.g. Fergusson, 2004).

foregoing argument holds any weight, then this enthymeme is false. If that is the case, and again going on the evidence presented, then the enthymeme can be rewritten in one of two ways:

- Linguistic diversity is important. Promoting minority languages does not protect linguistic diversity. Therefore do not promote minority languages.
- Minority languages are important. Promoting minority languages protects minority languages. Therefore promote minority languages.

Quite how diversity might be encouraged is well beyond the remit of this investigation. If there is any normative element here, it is simply to urge a more humble approach, and to draw apart two related yet distinct concepts: promoting minority languages, and protecting linguistic diversity. These two goals may be uncomplementary, or even mutually antagonistic.

The struggle of language policy and planning may not be a simple dichotomy of linguistic diversity against global homogenisation; but a much more complex and uncontrollable process, often with unforeseeable and unintended consequences, equipped with more modest powers than is often claimed. Even if a kind of language planning nirvana were reached where “all languages and cultures, regardless of their status or numerical size, can be integrated into processes of socio-economic development” (Walsh, 2006:127), this may only buttress a plurality of language systems. If linguistic diversity really is a desirable goal, then quite how it could be encouraged will take a great deal more research. Nevertheless, realising the limits of the current paradigm is the first essential piece of that puzzle. In Gellner’s words:

The emergence of a single universal culture may yet come: only the future will tell. But for the time being, what we see is the replacement of enormous cultural diversity by a limited number of high cultures with political pretensions. That is the age of nationalism. We might not have anticipated it but, with hindsight, we can understand it.

Gellner, 1997:36

Chapter 6

Conclusions

Just as in literature one differentiates “styles” of ways of writing, one can distinguish “ways of operating” – ways of walking, reading, producing, speaking etc. [...] Thus a North African living in Paris [...] insinuates *into* the system imposed on him by a low-income housing development or the French language the ways of “dwelling” (in a house or a language) peculiar to his native Kabylia. He superimposes them and, by that combination, creates for himself a space in which he can find *ways of using* the constraining order of the space or of the language. Without leaving the place where he has no choice but to live and which lays down its laws for him, he establishes within it a degree of *plurality* and creativity. By an art of being in between, he draws unexpected results from his situation.

de Certeau, 1984:30 (orig. emphases)

6.1 Limitations and further work

At the end of this investigation, there are many more questions than answers. In a sense, that is how it should be. Let me outline some of the more pressing of these, before offering conclusions.

One area of regional dialect levelling not mentioned was its general absence in northwest England, and even apparent resistance, in contrast to the southeast and northeast (e.g. Watson, 2006). A number of possible explanations present themselves, one of which there is space to mention. While the northeast and southeast have clear urban centres – allowing concentrated regional flows of migration and commuting – there is much greater density of urban centres in the northwest (Figure 6.1). The possibility that such a ‘crowd’ of urban centres might forestall regional levelling in some way would be an important addition to the model.

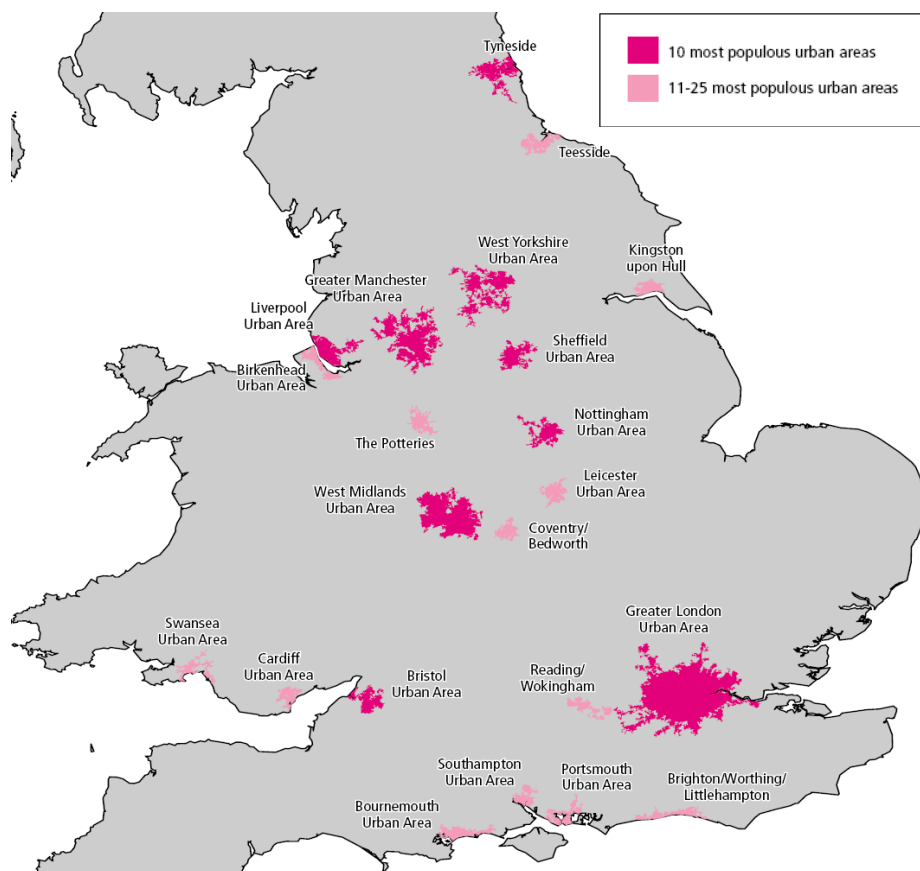


Figure 6.1 Major urban areas in England and Wales (Pointer, 2005:49)

Chapter 3 noted how urban segregation (often along ethnic lines) prevents interaction and dialect mixture (Kerswill, Torgersen & Fox, 2006a,b; Guzzo, 2006; Labov, 2008). This leaves open the question of whether such enclaves are more connected with other enclaves in other cities, and whether this allows maintenance of group codes between these spatially disparate locations – somewhat along the lines of the Siler City example analysed by Wolfram et al. (2004). As Clifford notes on the related subject of diasporic communities,

[D]ispersed peoples, once separated from homelands by vast oceans and political barriers, increasingly find themselves in border relations with the old country thanks to a to-and-fro made possible by modern technologies of transport, communication, and labour migration. Airplanes, telephones, tape cassettes, camcorders, and mobile job markets reduce distances and facilitate two-way traffic [...] between the world's places.
Clifford, 1997:247

This might add an explanatory angle to the case of AAVE, specifically its divergence from other varieties of US English (much the tone of Labov, 2008), and simultaneous internal convergence:

Cross-generational change [...] indicates that younger speakers are moving away from the localized Pamlico Sound dialect toward a more generalized AAVE norm.
Wolfram et al., 2000:315

Examining whether this applies to cases in the UK could be especially informative, perhaps combining the insights of Guzzo (2006) with those of Kerswill, Torgersen & Fox (2006a,b).

Regarding language policy and planning, aside from linguistic diversity, another under-reported issue is how the subject of social exclusion plays out, as the focus shifts from language rights to language survival. To be sure there are concerns over how these policies reproduce existing structures of domination (e.g. Kibbee, 2003:53-54), and the possibility of “ ‘double minorities’ (or members of a minority group who dissent from the dominant identity of that group” (Ingram, 2001:138 – see also Ingram, 2002:35). As Habermas argues of Quebec’s language laws:

Even if such group rights could be granted in a constitutional democracy, they would be not only unnecessary but questionable from a normative point of view. For in the last analysis, the protection of forms of life and traditions in which identities are formed is supposed to foster the recognition of their members; it does not represent a kind of preservation of species by administrative means. [...] The constitutional state can make this hermeneutical achievement possible, but it cannot guarantee it. For to *guarantee* survival would necessarily rob the members of the freedom to say yes or no [...]. [T]he only traditions and forms of life that can sustain themselves are those that *bind* their members, while at the same time [...] leaving later generations the *option* of learning from other traditions or converting and setting out for other shores.

Habermas, 1998:22 (orig. emphases)

Still, this does not clarify whether minority language policies not only reproduce but also create new inequalities. This is explored in more detail in Appendices 8 and 9, but one particular question cannot wait until then, which is consistently unasked in the literature. If the main driver of language policy and planning is education, then what of those children who simply do not attend school? In even the most developed countries, there is a persistent and non-negligible number of permanent absentees from mainstream schooling. If a minority language is mostly transmitted via education, then the risk of further excluding these already disenfranchised young people is magnified. This comes across even in the community-based projects described by Edwards & Newcombe (2005), with social inclusion as one of their ostensible aims. Describing feedback from project workers, the authors note that:

Some also felt that it was futile to talk about bilingualism to parents with deep-rooted social problems, for whom language issues were a very low priority.

Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:141

This possibility of social exclusion being perpetuated and furthered is at least downplayed, when the fate of the language is the predominant concern. That question must urgently be addressed in future research. Hopefully the current investigation has provided some analytical tools for such an analysis.

6.2 Conclusions

Returning to the bounds of this investigation, some tentative conclusions are due. Chapter 1 began by looking at variationist sociolinguistics, and its motivation to explain linguistic heterogeneity; but that this heterogeneity has not been distinguished in turn from diversity. This has meant that claims by language policy and planning to protect linguistic diversity have gone unquestioned by otherwise well-equipped variationists.

A useful way to conclude all this is in terms of *measures* and *indicators* (Spicker, 2004). The former describes a condition in its entirety; the latter gives a useful benchmark of it. Low income may indicate poverty; but one can be rich without an income, or poor if money is acquired but quickly spent. The benefit of indicators is that they are easy to quantify, explain, analyse and compare; but the trade-off is their distance from reality. In relation to the current investigation, I would suggest that neither language policy and planning nor variationist sociolinguistics can fully measure linguistic diversity – recall Milroy’s caution cited in §1.4, that linguists

cannot “observe” language change in progress (even though it is sometimes claimed that we can). This is because we cannot observe dynamic processes directly in abstract objects: we can observe the products of change, as historical linguists always have. The claim can therefore be rephrased as a claim that we can *detect* change in progress in synchronic states by comparing outputs or products of variation in present-day states of language.

Milroy, 2003:149 (orig. emphasis)

However, by analysing both variation and variability, variationists do appear to have a better set of indicators. Applying these indicators to language policy and planning has hopefully allowed a clearer critique of its claims regarding linguistic diversity: demonstrating the continuance of ambient declines in the diversity of protected minority languages; and new pressures on diversity apparently introduced by the planning measures themselves.

The assumption that official efforts can protect everything about a minority language could be seen as myopia; but it is also just a matter of perspective. If all you have is a hammer, the old saying goes, then you will see every problem as a nail. If all we have to protect linguistic diversity is official intervention, then all we can do is defend specific languages against change, not encourage diversity as an innovatory process.

Another contribution of this investigation has been to question a presumption in language policy and planning, that majority languages are immune from the destructive effects felt by minority languages (voiced in particular throughout C.H. Williams, 2008). They will flourish while their smaller counterparts perish. This comes partly from the conflation of declining diversity and language death reviewed in §5.5.1.1. This investigation has concentrated on British English, as an oft-cited dominant language; but these declines in diversity are happening in other “healthy” languages as well (M.C. Jones, 1998:235). This suggests that the same conditions are causing declining diversity in minority and majority languages alike, just at different speeds. Meanwhile, as Chapter 5 demonstrated, these declines can actually be accelerated and extended by current models of language policy and planning – conditioned as they are by the priorities of their government sponsors. As such, declining diversity may not be caused by the domination of any particular languages, but by the conditions of modern society itself.

Moreover, the things that people like Crystal (2008) champion as a resurgence of diversity in a postmodern era (text speak, internet slang etc.) are quite alien to the kinds of language planning activities discussed so far. These things are not regulated, planned, mandated, audited or assessed; they are borne of innovation, and are beyond the bounds of recorded language. There is something called linguistic diversity, but it is outside the present paradigm of “defining, documenting and developing minority and endangered languages and language varieties” (King

et al., 2008b:2). It lies in the innovatory practices of individuals, mixing language repertoires to create new and unprecedented expressions. The cracks, the spaces between languages, and outside their known elements; this is where variation and variability collide.

What I am suggesting is that linguistic diversity, the “creativity and evaluation of meaning” inherent to language-as-practice (Wright, 2007a:208), is not amenable to protection. Innovation cannot be fortified. It is impossible to defend that which has not yet happened; and this potential, this yet to occur, this indeterminate future, is a fundamental part of that enigma.

Being in support of linguistic diversity, then, does not mean fortifying existing languages such that they might stand the test of time. Linguistic diversity is facing inexorable decline, and despite bold claims to the contrary, it seems that nothing is in place to stop it.

Finally, to sum up on the unknowable evasiveness of linguistic diversity, let me end with the words of Michel de Certeau:

[T]he operations of walking can be traced on city maps in such a way as to transcribe their paths (here well-trodden, there very faint) and their trajectories (going this way and not that). But these thick and thin curves only refer, like words, to the absences of what has passed by. Surveys of routes miss what was: the act itself of passing by.

[...]

Walking affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects, etc., the trajectories it “speaks.” All the modalities sing a part in this chorus, changing from step to step, stepping in through proportions, sequences, and intensities which vary according to the time, the path taken and the walker. These enunciatory operations are of an unlimited diversity. They therefore cannot be reduced to their graphic trail.

de Certeau, 1984:97,99

Chapter 7

Appendices

Appendix 1. What is linguistic diversity actually made of?

In a sense linguistic diversity is ‘made of’ all the different ways of using language. This is only half the story though. If properly programmed, robots could make all these noises and signs. The actual diversity ‘exists’ within the minds of people using language; and to illustrate this point requires a brief detour into psycholinguistics.

Linguistic diversity, in the sense of sounds issuing forth from billions of mouths across the world (and hands in the case of sign language), has a physical form; and that form lies in the mind.

How language is actually formulated in the grey matter is a massively complex operation; and it differs subtly from individual to individual. Certain fields of psycholinguistics have paid attention to the cognitive differences in ‘different languages’ – that is, how the speakers of ostensibly separate languages (e.g. English and German) encode their thoughts differently owing to the different structures of those languages (Bornkessel, 2005, 2006).

For the current investigation, an important question arises. If there are cognitive differences between distinct ‘languages’, what about ‘dialects’? In African American Vernacular English, for example, the two sentences ‘I usually go to work in the afternoon’ and ‘I be going to work in the afternoon’ – the first typical of Standard English, the second AAVE⁴⁴ – mean essentially the same thing, but remain distinct syntactic constructions, each processed differently in the mind. The question then is: how deep does diversity go? Without going into the minutiae of this problem, it is useful simply to keep in mind that dialects, as heuristics, can represent differences not only in the mouth but also in the mind, and this is what is being lost: as dialects fade away, so do different ways of thinking, and of expressing those thoughts.

⁴⁴ For more details of African American English, see e.g. Sutcliffe (1992:38-68), Green (2002) or Rickford (1999).

Appendix 2. A focus on heterogeneity elsewhere in linguistics: neurotypology

Sociolinguistics is not alone in under-articulating the extent of linguistic diversity. In psycholinguistics too, an important question is how speakers of different languages think differently while speaking, and how this correlates with structural differences in their languages. For example, describing a cat sitting on a mat: this takes one grammatical and syntactic form in English, another in German, another in Igbo, and so on. Subjects, verbs, objects, predicates, articles, plural markers, tenses, cases, moods, and so on; a vast matrix of linguistic building blocks need to be arranged for a message to be put across. Each language uses different building blocks, and in different orders. German verbs, for example, typically come at the end of sentences, whereas in English they typically end up in the middle. Consequently, a German speaker and an English speaker describing the same activity will display different sequences of neural activity.

At the forefront of this type of psycholinguistics is the emerging field of neurotypology, which uses brain scanning equipment to map the different neural patterns in people speaking different languages (Bornkessel, 2005, 2006). This allows arguments about cognitive differences corresponding to linguistic ones. However, all this relies on comparing speakers of identifiably discrete languages. This method would not be helped, and may be somewhat obfuscated, by a discussion of overall diversity. Thus a common strand emerges across quite different fields of linguistic enquiry, but for similar reasons: explaining systematic differences related to language, and taking descriptive space away from diversity in its entirety. This is quite clearly focussed on demonstrating the complex heterogeneity of language; but is not helped in this endeavour by fully articulating the wider picture of diversity.

Appendix 3. Is language used to express identity?

In variationist studies, the question of positive agency in dialect change sometimes manifests itself as a question of ‘identity’; whether, over and above normal stylistic variation, people construct and use a dialect *all the time*, in order to express their allegiance to a specific place or group. Perhaps the most explicit such claim is made by Llamas (2000, 2007) in her treatment of a “convergent trend in MbE [Middlesbrough English] with varieties from further north” (2000:135), as discussed in §3.4. For reasons of space, I concentrate here mainly on her account.

Evidence suggests that the incidence of glottalisation of intervocalic (p t k) is considerably higher in Tyneside English than in MbE. Therefore, in increasing the use of word medial intervocalic glottalised stops the young speakers of the [Middlesbrough] sample are bringing MbE closer to Tyneside English, suggesting a convergent linguistic trend. This convergence correlates neatly with the shifting identity of Middlesbrough and the pulling of the urban centre out of North Yorkshire and into the North East. In this light, the motivation for the sudden increase in the use of a localised North Eastern feature, thought to be recessive, may seem straightforward. [...] [C]ontact alone does not explain the motivation for the linguistic changes. Therefore, relevant attitudinal information is examined [...].

Llamas, 2000:138

Older people in Middlesbrough have comparatively more dialectal similarity to Yorkshire than Tyneside. Llamas suggests that, on the one hand, personal choice guides this habitual choice of certain geographically associated dialect variants; and on the other, that this is so ubiquitous that “the young speakers are bringing MbE closer to Tyneside English”. The speakers’ conscious choices are moving the language of the whole community in a different direction, and these choices are based on identities to which these young people ascribe. This is based on her results to questions asked of her respondents; for example “What accent would you say you had?”:

Among older speakers, the most frequently given response is “Yorkshire.” [...] The most frequently given response of the middle-aged speakers is “Teesside,” [...] while among the combined young speakers the most frequently given response is “Middlesbrough.” This suggests that speakers react to changing political boundaries of the area in which they live [...].

Llamas, 2007:596

Llamas foregrounds changing political boundaries and changing media broadcast areas which have both brought Middlesbrough away from Yorkshire and towards Tyneside. She claims that:

speakers within the speech community systematically choose variants to realise their sociolinguistic identity.

Llamas, 2000:144

As such, the dialectological trend in Middlesbrough towards increasing similarity with Newcastle is the result of an increasingly northeast identity:

The shifting of Middlesbrough from an orientation toward Yorkshire to one toward the North East, given the sociopolitical situation, correlates neatly with the higher level of use among young speakers of the glottalized form of (p), a characteristic feature of the North East. [...] We may hypothesize, then, that this represents a convergent linguistic trend *motivated by young speakers' positive identification with varieties of the North East*, and most particularly with that of Newcastle as the dominant center of gravity in the region.

Llamas, 2007:601 (emphasis added)

Identity is consistently presented as the reason that these youngsters are consciously asserting a particular identity. However, no mention is made of changing patterns of mobility and interaction, as outlined in Chapter 3, which may also have an influence: the changes in the migration and commuting patterns of people in Middlesbrough away from Yorkshire and towards Tyneside. This at least adds to, if not brings into question, Llamas' sole focus on agency.

In the contexts of increased contact with people from the northeast, and decreased contact with Yorkshire, these Middlesbrough residents could then quite separately form a social identity, and a conception of themselves, in which Yorkshire did not figure especially highly. These separate processes could then be brought together as a negative reaction to the question of whether they thought their accent should be referred to as either Yorkshire or Geordie.

Llamas does give a brief rundown of how contact between Middlesbrough and Tyneside has increased in recent decades, both physically and with the increased presence of Tyneside accents in the media; concluding that:

Although contact with and exposure to accents from further north appears to have increased, then, we cannot simply assume that speakers from Middlesbrough identify positively with varieties of English found further north and in particular the accent of the major urban centre of the North East, Newcastle. In order to gain insight into the motivation for the increased use of this North Eastern feature, we must attempt to access the local knowledge that speakers operate with when constructing and projecting their sociolinguistic identities and then correlate this attitudinal information with the linguistic evidence procured.

Llamas, 2000:138-139

The straightforward assumption here is that, in order for MbE speakers to participate with Newcastle in a northeast levelling trend, these speakers must *first* have positive socio-psychological associations with that place and those people. Although contact has happened between the two, without these positive feelings regional levelling cannot happen. Llamas poses the question in her questionnaire, ‘What would you think if your accent was referred to as Geordie or Yorkshire?’ (2000:129). This attracts respectively positive and negative responses from the younger and older respondents. This she takes as evidence of a changing Middlesbrough identity, which has been a main reason for the changing dialect.

As detailed in Chapter 3, this change in Middlesbrough is not absolute; and Llamas reports that northeast levelling features are adapted by these youngsters in a peculiarly local way – specifically their use of glottalisation. Llamas correlates this persistence of “Middlesbrough English” with the antagonistic relationship felt with Newcastle:

An ardent sense of rivalry and even hostility towards the Geordie accent and what it is perceived to stand for is demonstrated in the responses from the informants. This hostility is expressed by all four adolescent females of the sample (the adolescent females being the speakers with the most marked increase in the use of the glottalised

stops, and therefore those at the vanguard of the convergent trend). The rivalry and hostility is expressed largely as a dislike of the accent and a resentment towards the perceived dominance of Newcastle in the North East. This open hostility would suggest that, on a conscious level, the young speakers from Middlesbrough do not identify openly and positively with Tyneside or the Geordie accent.

Instead, the higher level of use of glottalised stops is concurrent with an increased confidence expressed by young speakers in the status of Middlesbrough as both an accent and an ‘place’ (sic) in its own right. The hostility towards Newcastle and the Geordie accent, with the refusal of young speakers to see Middlesbrough as a satellite of the dominant Tyneside conurbation, suggests that young speakers see themselves as ‘North Eastern’, but as from Middlesbrough. The most plausible interpretation of the increased use of the glottalised stops then seems to be that in increasing their use of a localised feature, young speakers from Middlesbrough are not identifying with Newcastle, but are indexing their Middlesbrough identity.

Llamas, 2000:143

By examining attitudinal information, a tension is revealed between the hypothesised identification with Tyneside suggested by the increased use of glottalisation amongst young speakers and the overtly negative and hostile attitudes towards Newcastle and the Geordie accent. Moreover, evidence for use of the strategy of localism in self-identity and a growing confidence in the status of Middlesbrough amongst young speakers has been presented. We can infer, then, that the increased use of glottalisation indexes a Middlesbrough identity and not a conscious identification with Newcastle [...]

Llamas, 2000:145

A strategy of localism appears to be being utilized by the young speakers of the study to construct their place identity, and one way of indexing this identity linguistically may be by demonstrating a higher level of use of glottalization of (p) and a higher level of glottalling of (t).

Llamas, 2007:602

Nevertheless, it follows from the geographical data on the partial but incomplete integration of the Tyne-Tees northeast region, that adoption of typically Tyneside dialect features should likewise be piecemeal and incomplete. It is also telling, as the integration of the Tyne-Tees region continues apace, that these differences should lessen over time, with a “shift in the perception of the accent from one that is readily identifiable to one that is becoming indistinct from the accent of Tyneside” (Llamas, 2007:597). Watt and others do actually provide a satisfactory account of dialect levelling based on interpersonal contact (e.g. Watt, 2002:50-53). The question remains then why identity is continually privileged in this way.

Moreover, Llamas is not clear on exactly why contact alone does not explain the change, presenting no evidence to the contrary, e.g. groups who have *more* contact with Tynesiders yet *less* convergence with Tyneside dialect features, or vice versa.

There does appear to be some kind of Middlesbrough identity; and that identity does appear to coincide with a particularly Middlesbrough way of speaking. However, to conclude that Middlesbrough young people use dialect features to express identity is to presuppose that use of dialect features is the *assertion* of an identity, rather than the *reflection* of an identity already formed through contact. Their positive or negative associations with that dialect – recorded by her attitudinal questionnaire – could have been formed after the event; that is, their dialect became more like Newcastle, after which they began to think of the dialect as being more northeast than Yorkshire, not the other way around.

It may be that the “shibboleths of Geordie speakers” (Watt, 2002:47) came about purely as a result of contact, and only then became invested with social meaning, as people realised who tended to use these features. My claim is not so much that this is the case; but that there is no way to tell with the available evidence. Essentially, we have three models of causation, which can be schematised as follows:

Dialect causality model 1: identity causes dialect

Pattern of mobility + political boundaries etc. → local identity → local dialect

Gloss: people living in a certain town (e.g. Middlesbrough) move and interact mostly within that town; and beyond that mostly within the region (e.g. northeast). That town is also politically integrated into the region. These things create intersecting local and regional speech

create or reiterate their own sense of local belonging. The two may co-exist – they are correlated – but there is no causal link between the two. They coincidentally report regional and local identities that correlate with their dialect use.

Model 1 appears to characterise the position taken by Watt (2000, 2002), Llamas (2000), and to a less clear extent Torgersen & Kerswill (2004). My point here is that, given the research methods employed, *these three models cannot be distinguished*. To take the Middlesbrough example, it makes sense for the younger respondents in Middlesbrough to react negatively to suggestions that they might sound like they are from Yorkshire. *They do not sound like they are from Yorkshire*. It is not necessary or useful to claim that people *first* saw these as being typical of a northeast, non-Yorkshire group, and *then* actively maintained them in order to sustain feelings of solidarity with that group.

The disconnect between social identity and sociolinguistic practice is made somewhat clearer when we consider evidence against claims that “the maintenance of linguistic distinctiveness vis-à-vis an identifiable outgroup is a sociolinguistic priority” (L. Milroy, 2002:9). In a perceptual experiment on French-speaking residents of Provençal, Kuiper finds that “there is no correlation between the way people labeled the Parisian region on the perceptual map and the way they rated it in the correctness and pleasantness tasks” (2005:44). They hold what they perceive to be Parisian French in high regard, imagining that this is something inaccessible to them given their upbringing and geographical location. This conditioning, Kuiper continues, blinds them to quite how strongly their own Provençal accent is becoming evermore similar to Parisian.

They not only believe that there is a more correct variety of French being spoken in Paris, and that they themselves do not have access to that variety [...], but they are unaware that their own speech is nearly indistinguishable from the norm they identify.
[...]

They seem convinced that, despite all their efforts, their own speech is in some way inferior, and when asked to perform in the target variety, they fail to perceive that they have been doing so all along. The major difference between their native speech and that of Paris exists in their minds, the product of their having adopted not only the Parisian norms for correctness, but the Parisian evaluation of their linguistic performance.

Kuiper, 2005:46-7

Had these Provençal residents recognised that they were in fact abandoning their local dialect, then their positive evaluation of the Parisian variety could be held as evidence of some (semi-)conscious assertion of a supra-local/non-Provençal/Parisian identity. As it is there is no such connection: they are participating in a levelling trend with Paris and this corresponds with their negative evaluation of local dialect features; yet they seem not to recognise this, thinking that the Parisian variety remains forever inaccessible. Thus the reverse position, that a northeast levelling variety demonstrates the (semi-)conscious assertion of a regional identity (as Watt & Llamas claim for Tyneside) seems equally untenable. These two may correlate, but that does not equal causation. Any such claim, on the basis of the available evidence, remains untenable.

Appendix 4. Reassessing existing research with linguistic virtual collectives

Some brief remarks are worthwhile about how the linguistic virtual collective, and global linguistic innovations, might help to reassess existing sociolinguistic research. Let me begin with Kerswill & Williams (2000b), who grapple with how three different types of the non-standard ‘th-fronting’ – [ʔ] for intervocalic /t/, [f] for /θ/, [f] for /ð/ – have sprung up simultaneously in Milton Keynes, Reading and Hull, as well as Leeds (Wakelin, 1977). Kerswill (2003) also notes this development among adolescents in Newcastle and Durham, of which he says:

there is a striking sense in which the dates [...] for the nonidiosyncratic introduction of th-fronting do not support a diffusion model. The change seems to ‘hit’ very large regions simultaneously, particularly the far north of England (including Newcastle and Durham) and the central belt of Scotland (represented by Glasgow) at about the same time. [...] In Durham, none of my 1983 cohort of seventeen 14-16 year olds used th-

fronting; however, 14-15 years olds attending the same school in 2002 did use the feature to a considerable extent. [...]

For both cities, the pattern is broadly similar: the boys use th-fronting more than the girls; the boys use more fronting of /ð/ than of /θ/, while the girls show no such difference. It is clear from the available evidence that the feature is entering urban Newcastle and semi-rural Durham at the same time in the same way. [...] [I]t is not possible to argue that the feature has diffused from Newcastle to Durham. It seems likely that [...] both diffusion (from the south; note that Middlesbrough adopted the feature some years before Durham or Newcastle) and levelling seem to be likely mechanisms for the change. Unlike the case with [vowels], this is a feature that is spreading throughout Britain: a likely scenario is that, once the feature is adopted by a critical mass of people, perhaps simultaneously in more than one location within a region, it can spread by a process of both levelling and diffusion.

Kerswill, 2003a:235

There is a question over what is causing this simultaneous change in so many disparate places, among those individuals (children) conventionally found to be the least likely to pioneer a given change. An account based on face-to-face contact and mobility is challenged here:

We must consider reasons why this happened at the same time for all three variables. The first possible explanation is that they are all consonants, and therefore pattern differently from vowels, which, as we have argued elsewhere (Williams & Kerswill 1999), show no North-South convergence at all.

Kerswill & Williams, 2000b:77

These data could perhaps be elaborated by the possible priming effect of the media, and the different tendencies to engage with media dependent on class, age, urban-rural location and other factors outlined in Chapter 4. This is also picked up speculatively in the following:

Another discourse marker that is thought to be rapidly innovating in the urban centres of Britain is *innit* as an invariant tag. This time the origins of the new uses are thought to lie not in the USA but in the speech of British ethnic minorities [...].

[...]

In our recordings *innit* occurs far less frequently than the discourse marker *like*: there are only 36 tokens in total. A further difference is that *innit* is used exclusively by working-class speakers. [I]n London *like* was used by all social groups (though more frequently by the middle-class speakers); whereas *innit* was used more frequently by working-class speakers. Perhaps, then, convergence in the use of globally innovating features (such as focus marker *like*) is not led by any single social group. This would fit with the idea mentioned earlier that the international media, especially TV and films from the USA, play a role in the dissemination of features that are spreading on a global scale. Global identities are additive, and need not affect existing social or regional identities; and, if the spread of globally diffusing forms does not rely exclusively on

face-to-face contact, speakers of all social and regional groups may acquire the forms simultaneously.

Cheshire et al., 2005:156

Similarly Foulkes & Docherty (2000) remain inconclusive as to why labiodental /r/ should be moving around the UK and pioneered by the working class. Britain (2002:58-59) raises a quandary about children and adolescents picking up unmarked features apparently from the southeast of England first, ahead of adults. Since children and adolescents are the least socio-economically mobile residents of these disparate speech communities, he notes that it is hard to explain such a spread on the basis of contact alone. He speculates that:

The presence of some of these forms well away from the South of England may well, of course, not be due to diffusion at all, but to independent developments in different locations [...].

Britain, 2002b:59

I would claim that there is room here for an examination of the role of the media, mobilising the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 4. It may not explain everything, but it could shed light on what Trudgill referred to as the “softening-up process produced by the engendering of favourable attitudes through television programmes” (1988:43).

A further pertinent area of analysis is the difference between transmission of speech with and without visuals. Does the screen allow certain linguistic innovations an easier route into the speech community? Is a visual cue necessary for complex, ‘high-context’ variants to be adopted, or is sound enough? Alongside the various demographic variables I have mentioned, these sorts of sensory variables may also turn out to be significant. The literature on hip-hop (especially Cutler, 1999) often speaks of the imperfect imitation of a given form of speech, for example middle class white kids “crossing” into, and borrowing from, the repertoires of rappers, but essentially failing; and producing an incomplete, “inauthentic” type of language (see Rampton,

1995, 2001, 2006). Since the ostensible medium of this borrowing is music, perhaps this can be brought together with the research reviewed so far, into a unified theory of media/dialect relations. After all, everything I have said about adoption and adaptation could just as well be seen as imperfect imitation, just at a somewhat less conscious level.

Appendix 5. The democratic basis of language policy and planning

One problem for democracy thrown up by the ECRML is its requirement that language groups be consulted, but nobody else; and that this serves as a legitimate basis for planning activities that affect everyone within that broader administrative unit of the population. As Edwards has it:

The brutal fact is that most ‘big’ language speakers in most societies remain unconvinced of either the immediate need or the philosophical desirability of officially-supported cultural and linguistic programmes for their small-language neighbours. Some among the minority also share this doubt and it is, in many instances, a minority within a minority who actively endorse [minority language promotion as a form] of social engineering.

Edwards, 1994:195-196

As is apparent in the Cornish case, this can potentially result in consultation among a very small number of individuals from organised interest groups, without wider public mandate. There is an ongoing Cornish language survey but this is designed only to gauge existing numbers of Cornish users, and has no questions about whether people are interested in the kinds of official revival efforts being planned. The Cornish Language Partnership newsletters occasionally contain anecdotal reports of people enjoying Cornish language events. For example a report of the *Dydh Lowender* (Fun Day) in the June 2007 newsletter quotes one attendee as saying:

I took my 15yr old girl along who doesn’t speak Cornish at all and she really enjoyed herself. She wants to go the next one. It was really good fun and all abilities mixing and having fun.

Or this report on Cornish-English bilingual menus in Jamie Oliver's restaurant *Fifteen Cornwall*:

Jo Davey, Fifteen Cornwall's Marketing Manager, says [...] "When the translation went up on the website, we had a very positive response – it seemed to really engage the interest of visitors to the website and proves how important it is to keep Cornish heritage alive".

A similar example comes from the July 2007 newsletter (p.2), reporting on the introduction of Cornish signage by the *JD Wetherspoon* pub chain, including one pub given a Cornish name:

"The idea for using Cornish came about over a period of time and through discussion with local Cornish people about how they would like to see the Cornish language used more within the Duchy," explains Georgina Bridges, Area Manager for JD Wetherspoon. "As a result of this Wetherspoons thought that it would be a fantastic idea to help teach the younger generation in particular some Cornish words by incorporating them into our pub signs. We then became very involved with local artists and sign writers to progress this idea and it has gone from there. It is very important to JD Wetherspoon that by doing this we have become more involved with the Cornish community and are helping to preserve Cornish heritage."

The link in this case between the group of people questioned and the Cornish people as a whole is somewhat thin. More problematic is the subtext of all this in terms of the wider revival; and the implicit suggestion that this approval for signage in privately owned pubs might indicate widespread support for large-scale publicly-funded introduction of Cornish into mainstream education. This is rhetorically magnificent, but less democratically grounded.

Slightly clearer nods towards a democratic mandate come from the less frequent mentions of surveys; but again these are predominantly from small groups of people already enthusiastic about the language: for example the Blackheath Declaration reported in the Cornish Language Partnership's June 2007 newsletter (p.3), signed by a group of 26 like-minded long distance walkers and submitted to parliament, asking government: "To find means of making space available in the curriculum in State Schools in Cornwall for the teaching of Cornish history,

culture and the Cornish language”. This report ends by echoing an aim found throughout the literature to “give the Cornish language back to the people of Cornwall”.

The clearest indication so far that the people of Cornwall do in fact want provisions in Cornish has come in the form of the 2007 Quality of Life Survey (Cornwall Statistics, 2007). This 19-page report, comprising 61 questions, contained two on the Cornish language:

Q24 Are you aware of the Cornish language? Please tick only one box:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have detailed knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> I know it exists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Q25 To what extent do you support moves towards greater opportunities for the use of the Cornish language in social and public life in Cornwall? Please tick only one box:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly in favour | <input type="checkbox"/> In favour | <input type="checkbox"/> Neither in favour or against |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Against | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly against | |

The results were reported in the January 2008 newsletter as follows:

92% of respondents stated that they were aware of the Cornish language with a further 5.7% indicating they had ‘detailed knowledge’.

Just under half [...] were neither in favour nor against greater use of Cornish, while 31.8% indicated they were in favour with 9.9% strongly in favour.

[F]emale respondents are more likely to support greater use of Cornish than male respondents, with 34.3% of females in favour compared with 26.9% of males.

Age appears to be a factor with, encouragingly, the younger respondents favouring greater use. The highest [...] support is among those aged 25-34, with 48.4% in favour.

The imprecision of these questions is where the importance of subtext lies. The relation between this question and the actual plans to introduce Cornish into schools is simply not clear. The effect of this is to enhance legitimacy for the language revival, but it remains unclear whether these respondents understood what they were agreeing to. Further, in the context of 59 other questions,

such an imprecise and inoffensive sounding question seems likely to garner positive responses.

This, however, is the clearest democratic mandate for the language revival.

It is perhaps a little wide of the mark to criticise Cornish promotional literature for bias towards Cornish. More important is that this sort of privileging of languages without clear democratic motivation is fully supported by the ECRML. The revival of the Cornish language has not been motivated by populist demand; not even by debate among elected representatives, but by the concerted efforts of a small band of unelected enthusiasts. The Cornish people may be in favour of this, they may not; but this is not the prime motivation for the revival; and the policies behind the revival do nothing to interrogate that. It has to be said that Cornish is at the extreme end of this problematic relationship between language revival and democracy, but in a way that is exactly the point: that, taken to its logical conclusion, this is what the current model of language policy and planning can become.

Appendix 6. Geographical distribution of Welsh speakers

| Area | All people aged 3+ | | Able to understand spoken Welsh | | Able to speak Welsh | | Able to read Welsh | | Able to write Welsh | | Able to either speak, read or write Welsh | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---|--|
| | Number | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Isle of Anglesey | 64,679 | 41,220 | 63.7 | 38,893 | 60.1 | 35,510 | 54.9 | 33,246 | 51.4 | 39,885 | 61.7 | |
| Gwynedd | 112,800 | 77,966 | 69.1 | 77,846 | 69.0 | 72,276 | 64.1 | 69,264 | 61.4 | 79,184 | 70.2 | |
| Conwy | 106,316 | 37,112 | 34.9 | 31,298 | 29.4 | 29,085 | 27.4 | 26,077 | 24.5 | 33,839 | 31.8 | |
| Denbighshire | 90,085 | 28,146 | 31.2 | 23,760 | 26.4 | 22,431 | 24.9 | 19,858 | 22.0 | 26,119 | 29.0 | |
| Flintshire | 143,382 | 24,630 | 17.2 | 20,599 | 14.4 | 20,611 | 14.4 | 17,687 | 12.3 | 24,364 | 17.0 | |
| Wrexham | 124,024 | 23,051 | 18.6 | 18,105 | 14.6 | 18,386 | 14.8 | 15,280 | 12.3 | 21,822 | 17.6 | |
| Powys | 122,473 | 30,754 | 25.1 | 25,814 | 21.1 | 24,849 | 20.3 | 21,428 | 17.5 | 29,414 | 24.0 | |
| Ceredigion | 72,884 | 39,753 | 54.5 | 37,918 | 52.0 | 35,564 | 48.8 | 32,795 | 45.0 | 39,424 | 54.1 | |
| Pembrokeshire | 110,182 | 26,915 | 24.4 | 23,967 | 21.8 | 22,006 | 20.0 | 19,360 | 17.6 | 26,358 | 23.9 | |
| Carmarthenshire | 167,373 | 93,742 | 56.0 | 84,196 | 50.3 | 76,179 | 45.5 | 67,479 | 40.3 | 88,946 | 53.1 | |
| Swansea | 216,226 | 39,644 | 18.3 | 28,938 | 13.4 | 29,434 | 13.6 | 23,155 | 10.7 | 35,629 | 16.5 | |
| Neath Port Talbot | 130,305 | 30,297 | 23.3 | 23,404 | 18.0 | 24,204 | 18.6 | 18,956 | 14.5 | 29,061 | 22.3 | |
| Bridgend | 124,284 | 17,820 | 14.3 | 13,397 | 10.8 | 16,835 | 13.5 | 12,415 | 10.0 | 19,449 | 15.6 | |
| The Vale of Glamorgan | 115,116 | 14,795 | 12.9 | 12,994 | 11.3 | 13,790 | 12.0 | 11,632 | 10.1 | 16,096 | 14.0 | |
| Rhondda; Cynon; Taff | 223,924 | 35,940 | 16.1 | 27,946 | 12.5 | 32,838 | 14.7 | 25,851 | 11.5 | 37,683 | 16.8 | |
| Merthyr Tydfil | 54,115 | 7,110 | 13.1 | 5,532 | 10.2 | 6,241 | 11.5 | 4,726 | 8.7 | 7,422 | 13.7 | |
| Caerphilly | 163,297 | 19,954 | 12.2 | 18,237 | 11.2 | 18,997 | 11.6 | 16,098 | 9.9 | 22,611 | 13.8 | |
| Blaenau Gwent | 67,795 | 6,112 | 9.0 | 6,417 | 9.5 | 5,820 | 8.6 | 5,312 | 7.8 | 7,543 | 11.1 | |
| Torfaen | 88,062 | 8,940 | 10.2 | 9,780 | 11.1 | 8,839 | 10.0 | 8,165 | 9.3 | 11,041 | 12.5 | |
| Monmouthshire | 82,351 | 7,719 | 9.4 | 7,688 | 9.3 | 7,191 | 8.7 | 6,443 | 7.8 | 8,899 | 10.8 | |
| Newport | 131,820 | 12,170 | 9.2 | 13,135 | 10.0 | 12,006 | 9.1 | 11,123 | 8.4 | 15,144 | 11.5 | |
| Cardiff | 294,208 | 37,736 | 12.8 | 32,504 | 11.0 | 34,060 | 11.6 | 29,169 | 9.9 | 39,368 | 13.4 | |
| WALES | 2805701 | 661526 | 23.6 | 582368 | 20.8 | 567152 | 20.2 | 495519 | 17.7 | 659301 | 23.5 | |

Table 7.1 Welsh speakers: numbers and percentages, by local authority, by type of ability (WLB, 2001)

Appendix 7. Other instances of micro language planning

Tulloch (2006) uses the term micro language planning to describe efforts to promote the Irish language through local community groups; but relying on standardised materials. Like the Welsh *Twf* programme, this may involve disparate local groups, but promoting the same standard language. There is a difference here between ‘micro’ politically and ‘micro’ linguistically, with corresponding incompatibilities with encouraging linguistic diversity.

To recall the instances of new diversity in modern Welsh – borrowings from and mixtures with English – it is here that encouragement for diversity might find some purchase. Cotter (2001) describes a Dublin-based Irish language community radio station, *Raidió na Life* (RnAL), and its overt support for “innovative” forms of Irish – namely the “low prestige [...] Dublin Irish” (p.306) of semi-fluent speakers who learnt Irish in school. At RnAL, “mistakes, disfluencies and English-dependent loan translations [...] are tolerated in an effort to produce language outside of the classroom” (p.308). This may encourage innovation on a wider scale, or it may not (Cotter does not say if Irish usage is increasing outside the RnAL studio); but still it is a “radical departure” (p.307) from conventional approaches, operating beyond official efforts focussed on preservation and education.

Tulloch (2006:282) argues that language planners in Ireland should support such “innovative” urban Irish. However, this is no more than symbolic approval for something happening outside the regulatory environment of the official programme. She reviews various other efforts to protect “dialectal diversity” in a range of revived languages. Yet these are mostly about raising the profile of dialects. No mention is made of whether diversity itself is strengthened as a result; nor does this seem the purpose. What Cotter (2001) identifies, and what Mac Giolla Chríost (2007) repeatedly touches on, is that diversity arises in non-prescriptive, unregulated

environments; but this cannot be achieved by overtly planned efforts. Where innovative practice exists, it is peripheral, limited in scope and support precisely due to its lack of accountability in transparently demonstrating increased use of the language. These things may happen independently of such planning, but this can only be symbolically approved by language policymakers and planners, for whom diversity remains elusive, forever lost in uncertainty.

Appendix 8. New inequalities in revived minority languages

Processes of linguistic standardization have a functional and an ideological dimension. Linguistic standardization is functional, inevitable and necessary in large and technologically advanced communities of speakers because it ensures easy communication across large geographical distances, across social classes and ethnic groups, and across national boundaries. Beyond what is necessary in these purely functional terms, standardization is also ideologically driven. It is not just practical and useful dialect leveling on a larger scale, but involves an element of “suppression of optional variability” (Milroy and Milroy 1991: 17) for its own sake. Certain pronunciation variants are enforced by dominant elites as social markers, symbolic correlates of membership (or lack thereof) in a dominant group, so that proper pronunciation becomes an element of proper social conduct and, ultimately, even of the speaker’s perceived moral integrity. At the risk of oversimplifying, one could summarize twentieth-century developments by saying that the functional pressures for standardization have strengthened further as a result of the rise of the audiovisual media, whereas the ideological pressures have weakened as a result of the egalitarian, democratic, and to an extent anti-authoritarian, ethos that has come to characterize public discourse in the Western world in the second half of the twentieth century.

Mair, 2006:201

One issue touched upon in this investigation has been the possibility of new inequalities created by language policy and planning. This is hinted at by authors who discuss the reproduction of existing systems of domination, namely by making prestige varieties of minority languages; but a great deal remains to be said. One of the “unresolved questions” at the end of C.H. Williams (2008) is “How are compulsory forms of language education used to perpetuate and to create new forms of inequality in society?” (p.397). This can be related to a wider literature on paradoxes in struggles for minority rights:

[J]ust as appeal to ‘universal human rights’ can lead to the suppression of groups whose identities are perceived to be unreasonable and irrational by the powers that be,

so appeal to group identities can lead to the suppression of dissident individuals whose identities are perceived to be deviant *vis-à-vis* the group.

Ingram, 2001:138

As Ó Raigáin & Shuibhne have it:

When a substantial minority of a minority is denied full effective citizenship because of the language, then language and language rights matter.

Ó Raigáin & Shuibhne, 1997:12

These flag up important potential inequalities, the “symbolic violence” committed against dialect speakers in this process (Bourdieu, 1991:45); but, like the critiques reviewed in §5.5.1 that mention linguistic diversity, they do not follow this up with specific evidence. This allows discrepancies in other areas of the literature to go unchecked. For example C.H. Williams describes the Type 5 planning efforts of certain polities as a heightened drive towards inclusion:

[S]everal of the more astute regional governments, such as the Generalitat de Catalonia and the Wales Assembly Government (sic), are recasting their principal language policies in terms of the social inclusion of migrant and immigrant populations, most of whom feel bypassed by recent gains in establishing a bilingual [...] regime.

C.H. Williams, 2008:17

This obscures a more basic point. If migrants feel bypassed in the establishment of a bilingual regime, then that exclusion is a product of the language planning effort itself. This confusion is compounded by the overriding concern with the number of speakers, and disinterest in quality of life, or issues of exclusion. In a longitudinal study of the Welsh language between 1971 and 2001, H. Jones (2005a) rigorously compares Welsh use against age and sex; but not class, income, mobility or any other measure of disadvantage, not even giving caveats for these. The dearth of material about the possibilities of social exclusion created by language revivals leaves this type of assertion without counterpoint.

At a more general level, considering efforts other than education, by concentrating on a nuclear family, or the community, or any other social structure, and promoting language through these, runs the risks of worsening the consequences of falling outside that structure, especially when that language is promoted as part of a national identity. The difficulties felt by project workers in the Welsh *Twf* project – “that it was futile to talk about bilingualism to parents with deep-rooted social problems, for whom language issues were a very low priority” (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005:141) – was given more attention in a later talk (Edwards, 2008). When questioned by an audience member about this possible social divide, Edwards, herself a main architect of the *Twf* project, did ponder whether it was legitimate for services to mainly benefit such people who are, in her words, “already privileged in society”; but she then seemed to tail off. As C.H. Williams put it (2008:398), these remain “unresolved questions”.

Appendix 9. Class and geographical mobility in Welsh use

H. Jones’ (2005a) gives a detailed breakdown of Welsh language use between 1971 and 2001. He notes an increase, attributed to Welsh-medium schooling, albeit with some abandonment post-education (Table 7.2):

| | Percentage able to speak Welsh in 1991 | Percentage able to speak Welsh in 2001 | | |
|-----------|--|---|--|--------------------|
| | | Simple roll forward of 1991 percentages | Expected on basis of 1991 Census numbers and LS transition rates | 2001 Census result |
| Age group | | | | |
| 3-14 | 24.3 | | | 37.2 |
| 13-24 | 19.3 | 24.3 | 30.6 | 28.2 |
| 25-34 | 14.1 | 17.8 | 18.8 | 15.9 |
| 35-44 | 14.9 | 14.1 | 14.6 | 14.4 |
| 45-64 | 16.5 | 15.6 | 16.2 | 15.6 |
| 65+ | 22.6 | 21.0 | 20.5 | 19.5 |

Table 7.2 Comparison of percentage able to speak Welsh in 2001, as reported by the 2001 Census and as estimated on the basis of the 1991 Census (H. Jones, 2005:16)

Census estimates, thus give an indication as to the impact of migration on the percentages recorded as able to speak Welsh. [...] The 13-24 and 25-34 year old age groups are those most heavily affected with the percentages able to speak Welsh depressed by 2.5 and 2.9 percentage points, compared to the percentages which might have been expected.

H. Jones, 2005a:16

Nevertheless there is a general increase, and he gives a detailed breakdown in the report of age

| | ALL PEOPLE | Understands spoken Welsh only | Speaks but does not read or write Welsh | Speaks and reads but does not write Welsh | Speaks reads and writes Welsh | Other combination of skills | No skills in Welsh |
|---|------------|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| ALL PEOPLE | 2,075,347 | 107,116 | 44,500 | 25,397 | 275,590 | 52,553 | 1,570,191 |
| 1. Higher managerial and professional occupations | 122,656 | 6,407 | 2,042 | 1,578 | 15,063 | 3,008 | 94,558 |
| 1.1. Large employers and higher managerial occupations | 45,288 | 2,408 | 765 | 501 | 4,238 | 1,034 | 36,342 |
| 1.2 Higher professional occupations | 77,368 | 3,999 | 1,277 | 1,077 | 10,825 | 1,974 | 58,216 |
| 2. Lower managerial and professional occupations | 333,165 | 20,123 | 6,738 | 4,569 | 51,576 | 9,723 | 240,436 |
| 3. Intermediate occupations | 166,135 | 8,404 | 2,903 | 1,950 | 22,168 | 4,801 | 125,909 |
| 4. Small employers and own account workers | 146,595 | 8,647 | 3,754 | 2,056 | 24,707 | 2,818 | 104,613 |
| 5. Lower supervisory and technical occupations | 161,807 | 9,079 | 3,448 | 1,685 | 17,948 | 3,375 | 126,272 |
| 6. Semi-routine occupations | 254,268 | 12,613 | 5,218 | 2,614 | 28,939 | 5,506 | 199,378 |
| 7. Routine occupations | 206,358 | 9,633 | 4,518 | 2,042 | 20,993 | 3,375 | 165,797 |
| 8. Never worked or long-term unemployed | 79,482 | 3,406 | 1,872 | 668 | 6,508 | 1,232 | 65,796 |
| L14.1 Never worked | 56,822 | 2,131 | 1,316 | 432 | 4,109 | 713 | 48,121 |
| L14.2 Long-term unemployed | 22,660 | 1,275 | 556 | 236 | 2,399 | 519 | 17,675 |
| Not classified | 604,881 | 28,804 | 14,007 | 8,235 | 87,688 | 18,715 | 447,432 |
| L15 Full-time students | 150,263 | 6,292 | 2,307 | 1,623 | 35,039 | 5,908 | 99,094 |
| L17 Not classifiable for other reasons | 454,618 | 22,512 | 11,700 | 6,612 | 52,649 | 12,807 | 348,338 |

Table 7.3 Sex and NS-SeC by knowledge of Welsh in Wales, all people aged 16-74 (ONS, 2005d)

and sex of speakers in each Census. However, he excludes social class from his analysis – or, in the terms of the Census, National Statistics Socio Economic Classification, or NS-SeC. This omission is common to other reports (e.g. ONS, 2005c). These data do exist though, and they reveal other details about who is making up this increase in Welsh speakers.

As Table 7.3 shows, use of the Welsh language is broadly concentrated among those in employment, and is at its lowest among the long term or permanent unemployed – the most acutely excluded individuals. The invisibility of this issue from studies of Welsh, and the broader language policy and planning literature, is explicable when the predominant measure of success is the overall number of speakers; but this is questionable on other grounds, regarding the priorities of social policy more generally.

Even if the social inequality problem were discarded, however, there appears to be another problem for Welsh language planning. Training the highly mobile middle classes to produce Welsh appears to have had a detrimental effect. One of the major discrepancies highlighted by H. Jones (2005a:16) in the predicted increases in Welsh speakers is migration. Though he does not compare social class in the same way as sex and age, in a later analysis of these results he goes on to note that:

Skilled manual and unskilled people were also significantly less likely to out-migrate, compared to those in professional occupations. Residence in the traditionally Welsh-speaking area significantly increased the odds on out-migration only in the 1991-01 decade.

H. Jones, 2007

Relatedly, Drinkwater & Blackaby describe a “net brain drain from Wales”, an “outflow of well qualified Welsh residents” (2004:19) after education; and that “Wales loses a disproportionate

share of its younger and more educated people, even after controlling for other personal characteristics” (ibid. p.21).

Using a variety of data sources, it is shown that people leaving Wales are younger and more educated than migrants to Wales. Furthermore, younger and more educated Welsh individuals appear to have a higher willingness to move than their counterparts living elsewhere in Britain.

Drinkwater & Blackaby, 2004:abstract

Significantly, H. Jones (2007) points out the exception to this rule, finding that “Welsh-speakers are less likely to out-migrate, especially as adults, than those who can not speak Welsh”.

Looking at final stage secondary school students, Coupland et al. (2005:15) report that “competence in Welsh (in whatever school this variation exists) is significantly associated with level of affiliation [to Wales]”. In a later study reviewing the results of a survey of ethnolinguistic subjectivity towards the Welsh language, Coupland et al. report that:

The most competent speakers of Welsh, independently of where and when they gained their lived experience of Wales, affiliate most strongly to Wales, show the strongest personal commitment to supporting the language, support its use across all domains, and engage most strongly with Welsh cultural life in all respects.

Coupland et al., 2006:369

It is not clear whether the labour statistics represent a free choice or a limitation (i.e. whether Welsh speakers actually want to stay in Wales, or are somehow less able to migrate). Regardless, if Welsh speakers migrate less, and if Welsh is concentrated among skilled people in employment, then stemming that brain-drain could become a novel postmodern argument in favour of promoting the Welsh language. Even if Welsh did become concentrated among the educated and created further exclusion and inequalities, would this be a worthwhile price to pay to save the Welsh economy? Such arguments are an even further remove from the discourse of human rights outlined earlier. My point is not to parody these, but to point out a theoretically possible extreme end of the division between language rights and language survival.

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