

A photograph of a busy outdoor market street. In the foreground, there are several stalls with white and green awnings, displaying various goods like produce and clothing. People are walking through the market, some carrying shopping bags. On the left, a brick building has a 'POLICE' sign above a glass door. A sign with the letters 'SH' is visible on the building's facade. In the background, there are more market stalls and residential buildings with chimneys under a cloudy sky.

Phonological innovation in London teenage speech

ICLaVE4, Cyprus

Eivind Torgersen†, Paul Kerswill†, and Sue Fox‡
†Lancaster University, ‡Queen Mary, University of London

*Linguistic innovators:
the English of adolescents in London, 2004–7*

Jenny Cheshire, Sue Fox
(Queen Mary, University of London)

Paul Kerswill, Eivind Torgersen
(Lancaster University)

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www.lancs.ac.uk/fss/projects/linguistics/innovators/index.htm

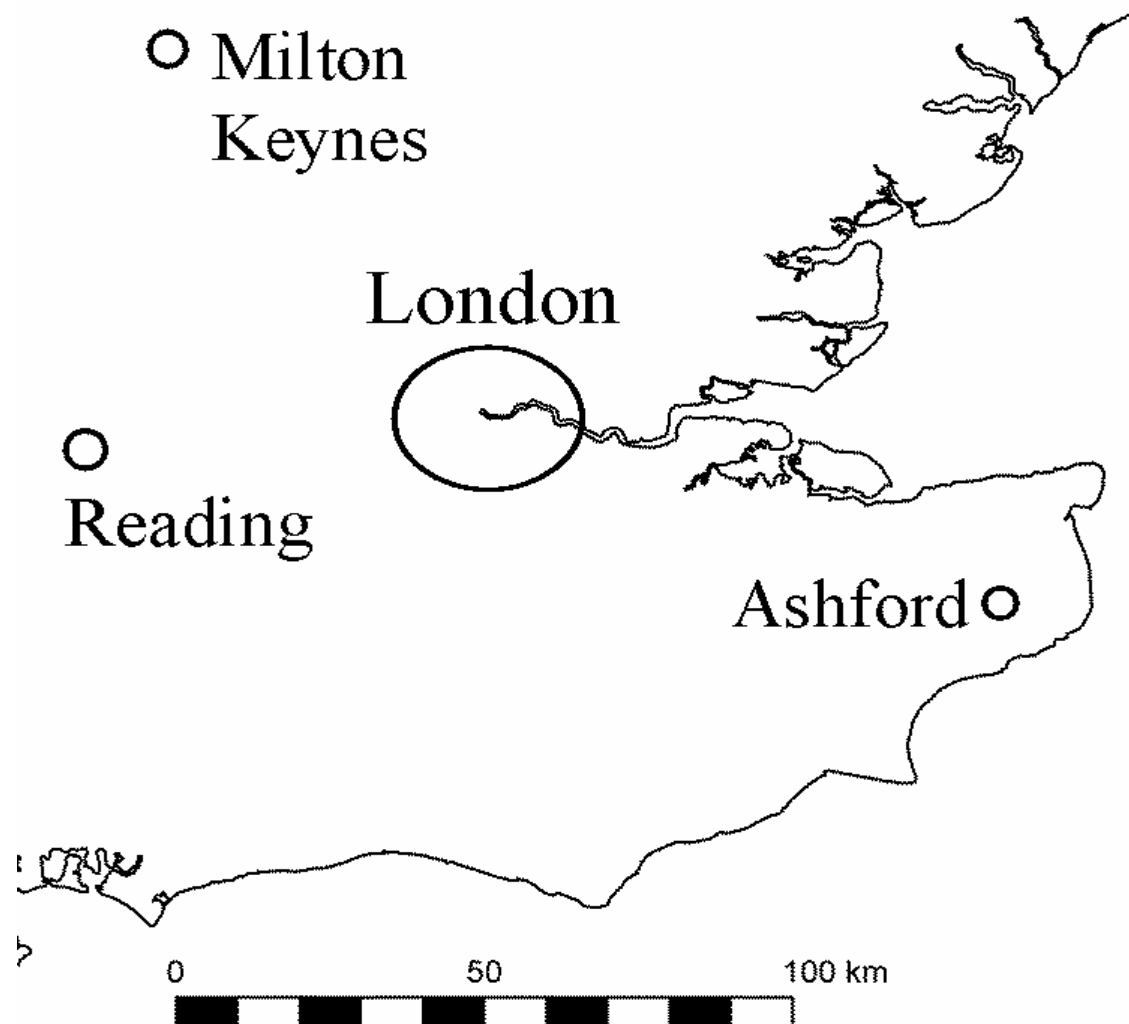


Project design

- 16 elderly Londoners
- 105 17 year old Londoners
- from inner and outer boroughs
- female, male
- “Anglo” and “non-Anglo”
- Free interviews in pairs
- 1.5m words transcribed



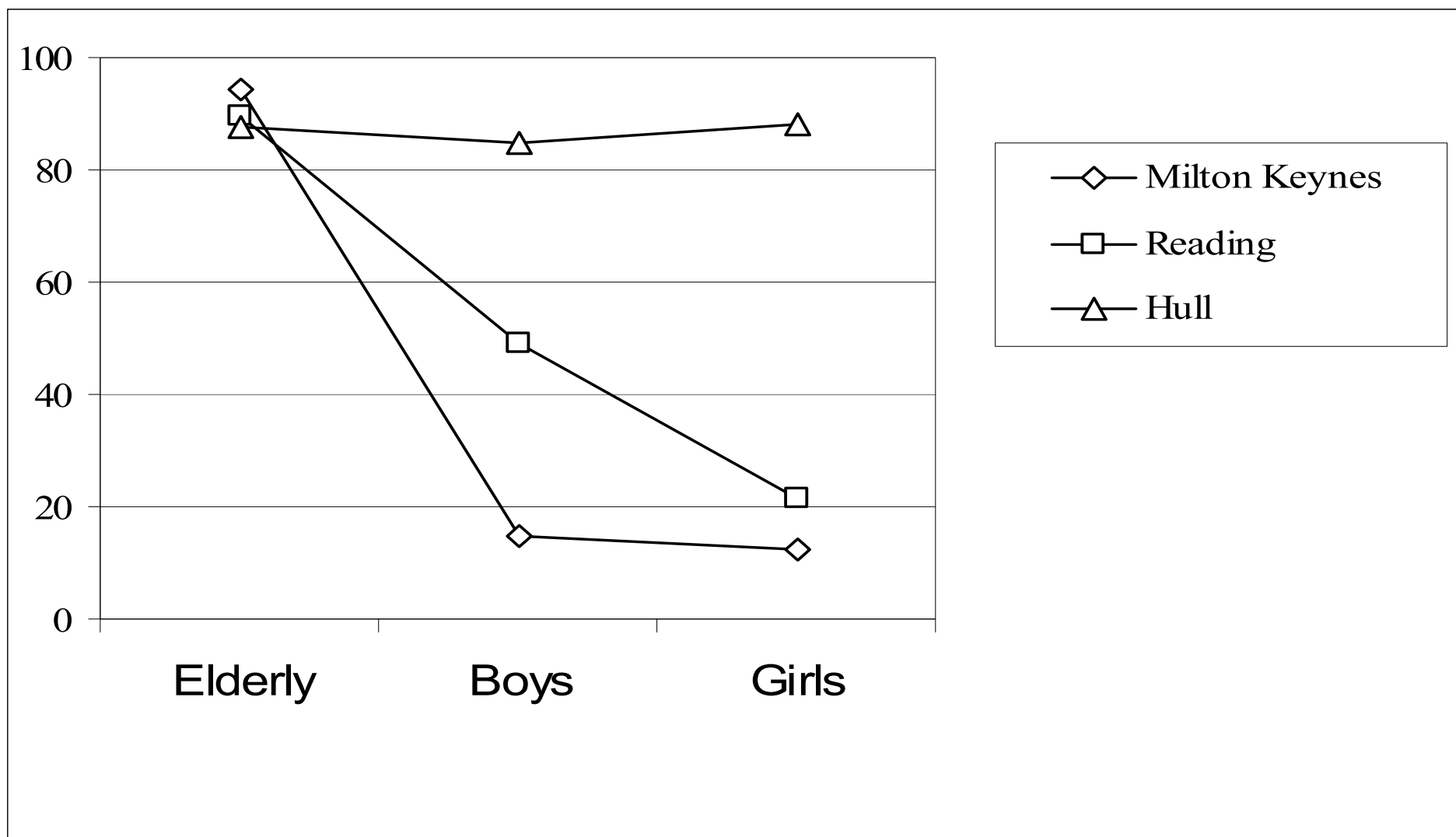
London and three “London periphery” towns



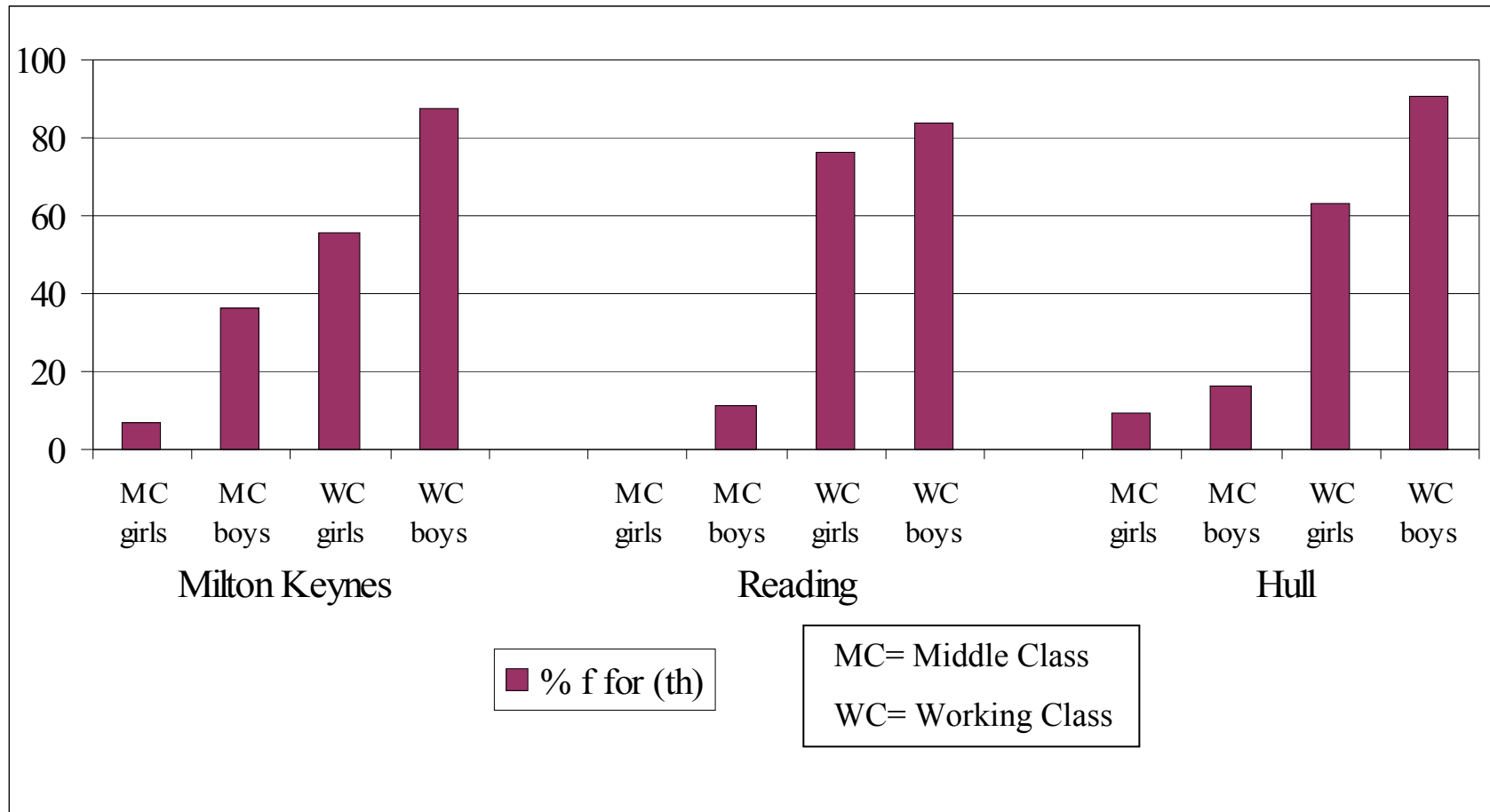
Findings from south-east England (“London periphery”)

- Reduced amount of H-dropping
- Increased amount of TH-fronting
- GOAT-fronting to [əY]
- “RP” variant in MOUTH [aʊ]
- Low-back onset of PRICE [aɪ] lowered/unrounded from [ʌɪ], [ɔɪ] or [ɒɪ]
- Fronting of GOOSE to [y:]
- Fronting of FOOT to [ʊ] or [ə]
- Lowering and backing of TRAP to [ʌ]
- Backing of STRUT to [ɹ]

Reduced H-dropping in London periphery



TH-fronting in three towns



Possible explanations for changes

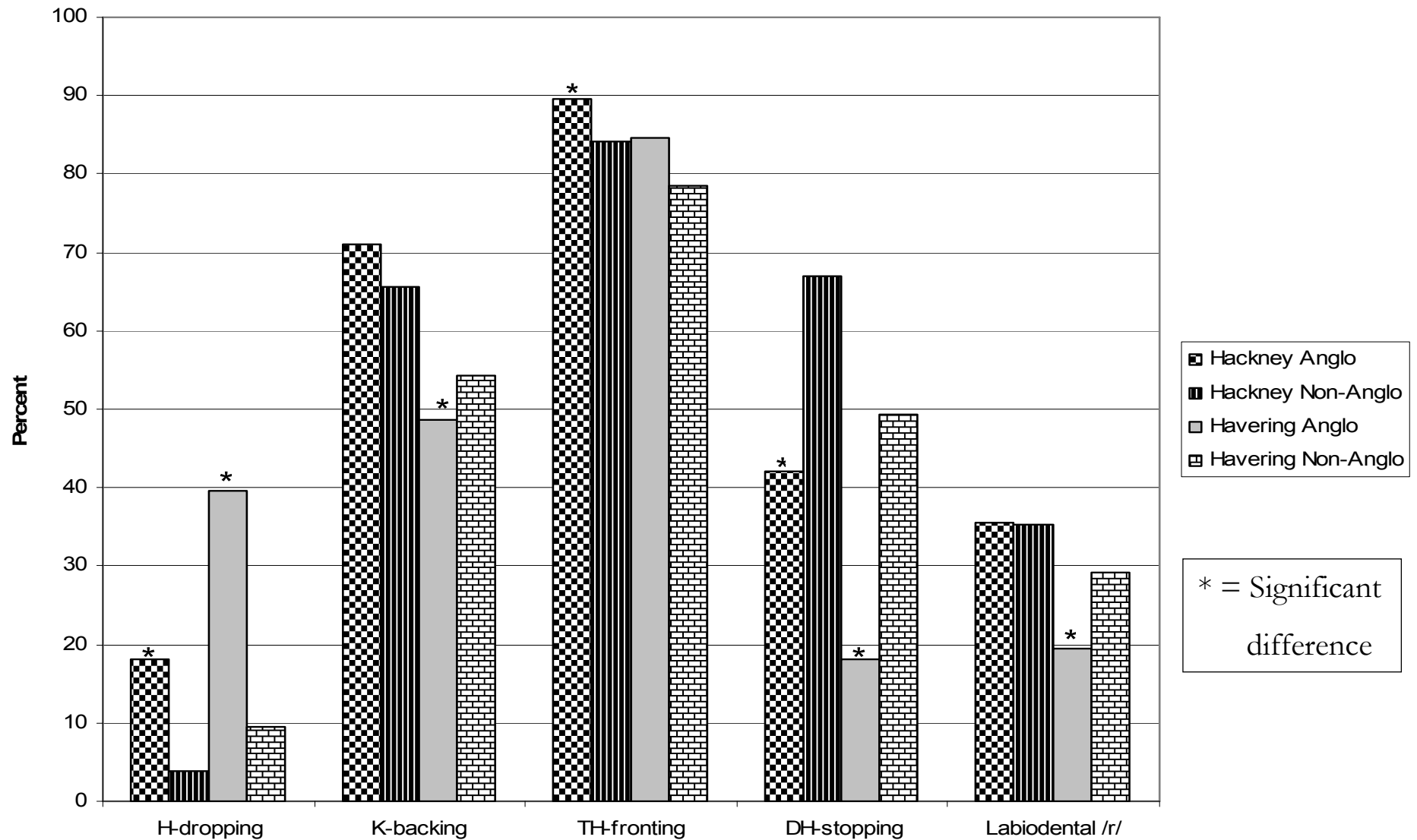
- Innovation
 - endogenous: from within the community
- Diffusion
 - from centre to periphery: directional
 - exogenous change (contact-induced)
- Levelling (or supralocalisation)
 - changes affect a whole region at once, with no directionality
 - again, exogenous change (contact-induced)

H-dropping

Milton Keynes & Reading elderly (1995)	Milton Keynes 14 year olds (1995)	Reading 14 year olds (1995)	Hackney 17 year olds (2005)	Havering 17 year olds (2005)
92%	14%	35%	9%	32%

Percent 'dropped' H in lexical words (interviews)

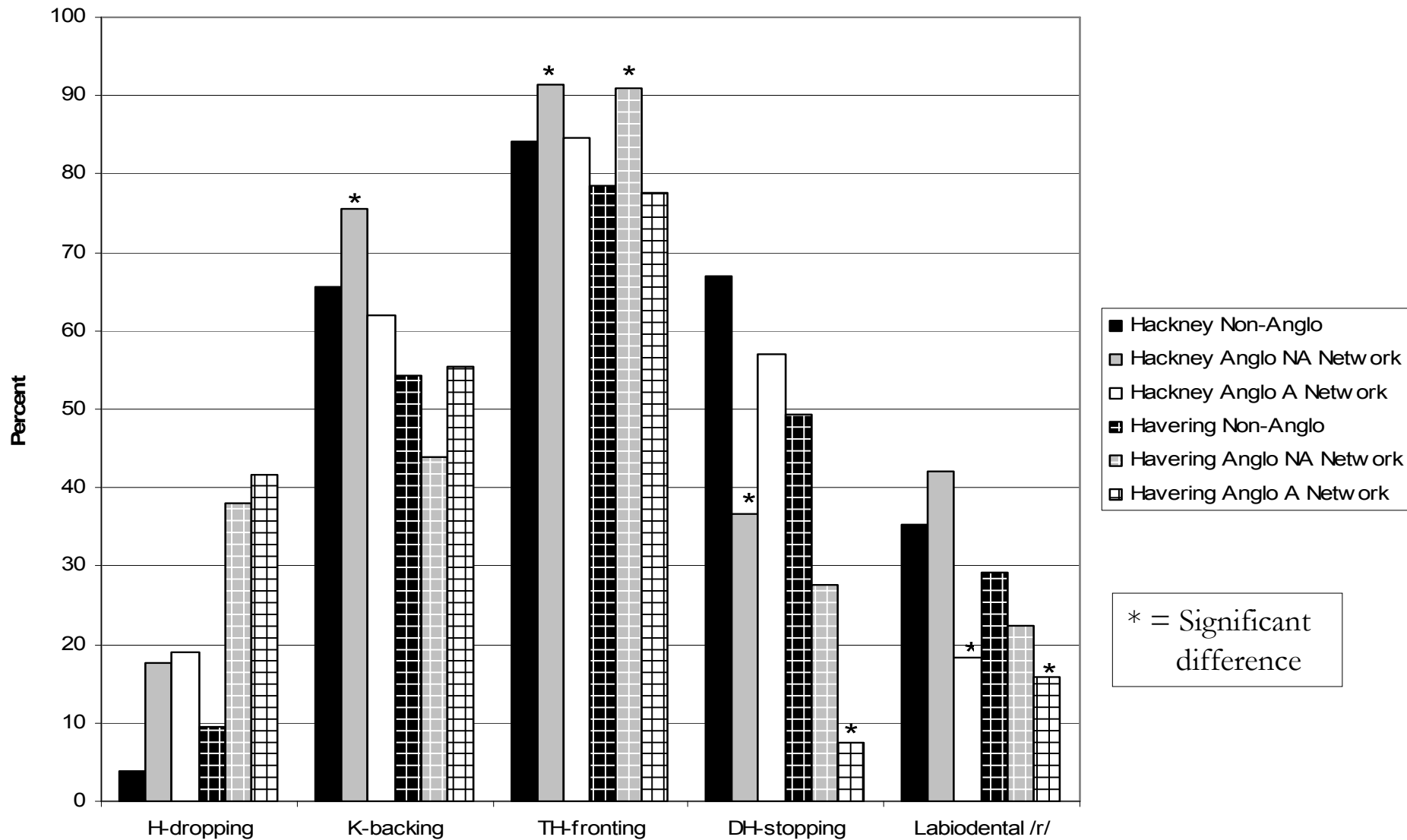
Consonant summary - ethnicity



Consonant summary -ethnicity

- H-dropping
 - non-Anglo less (Hackney and Havering)
- K-backing
 - non-Anglo more (Havering)
- TH-fronting
 - non-Anglo less (Hackney)
- DH-stopping
 - non-Anglo more (Hackney and Havering)
- Labiodental /r/
 - non-Anglo more (Havering)

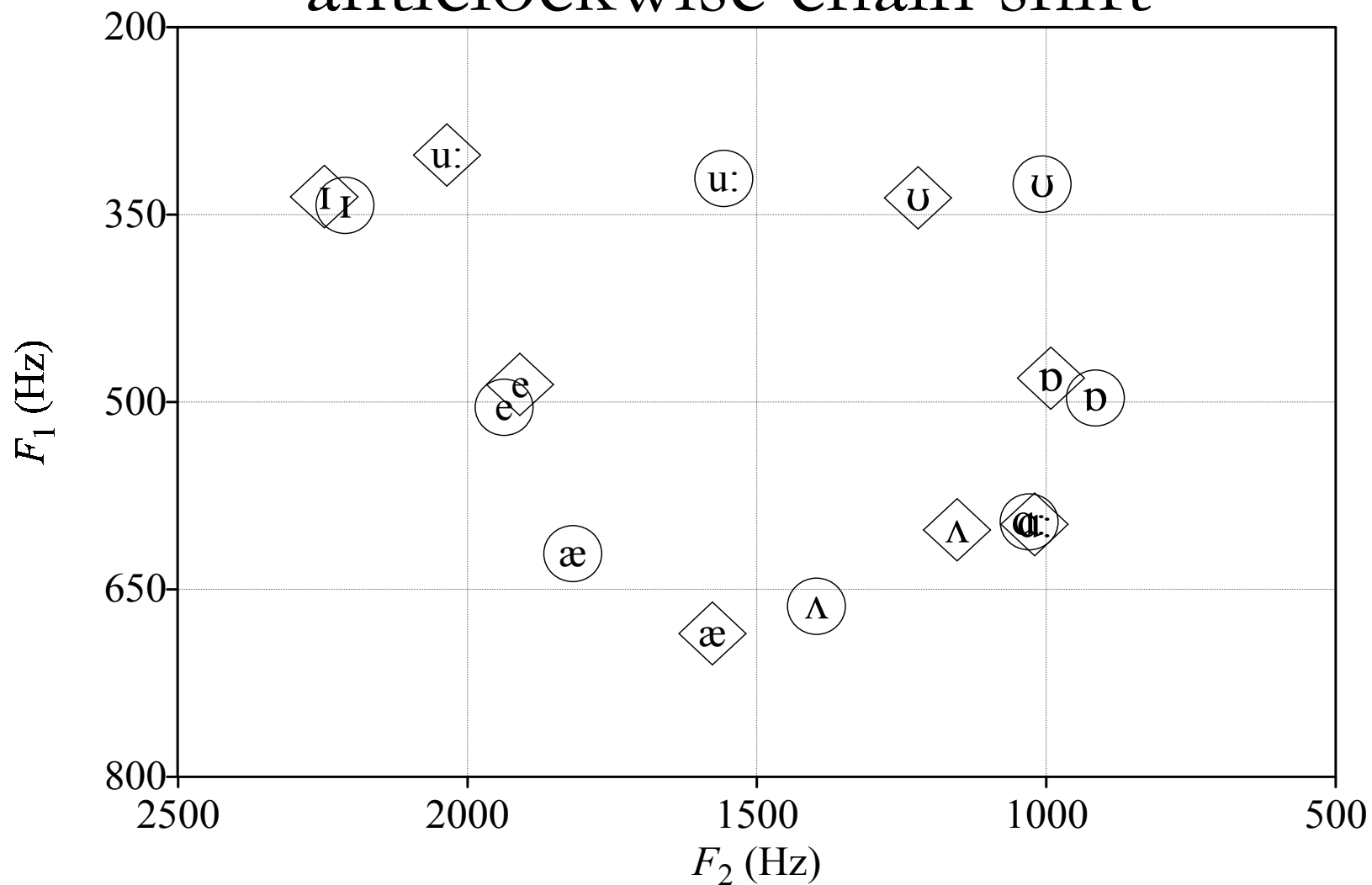
Consonant summary - networks



Consonants summary - network

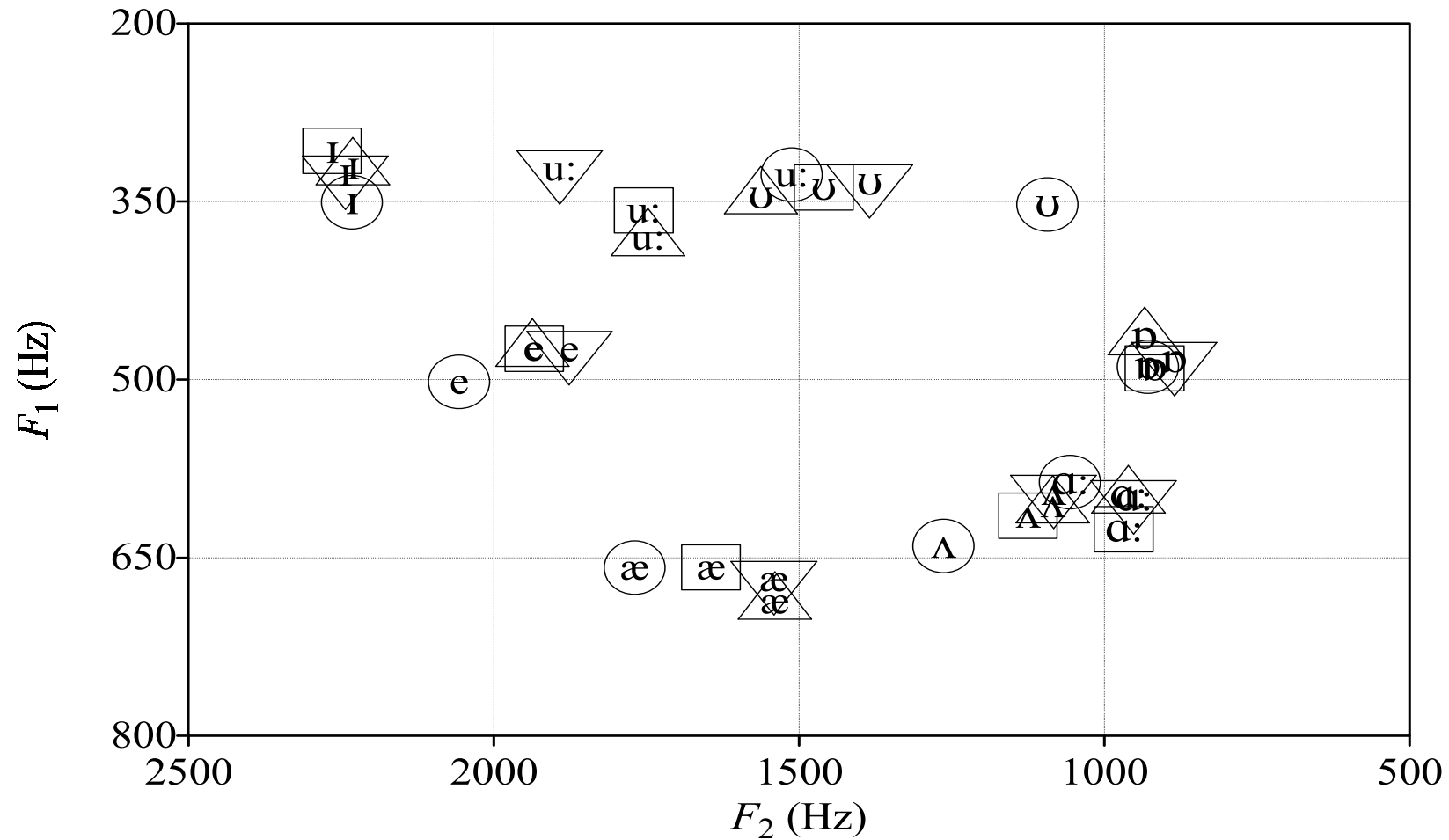
- Anglo with non-Anglo network
 - some similarities with the non-Anglo speakers – located between non-Anglo and Anglo speakers with Anglo network (reduced H-dropping, DH-stopping in Havering)
 - in the lead in some changes typically regarded as levelled forms (TH-fronting, labiodental /r/)
 - high degree of innovative K-backing in Hackney

Monophthongs in Hackney – anticlockwise chain shift



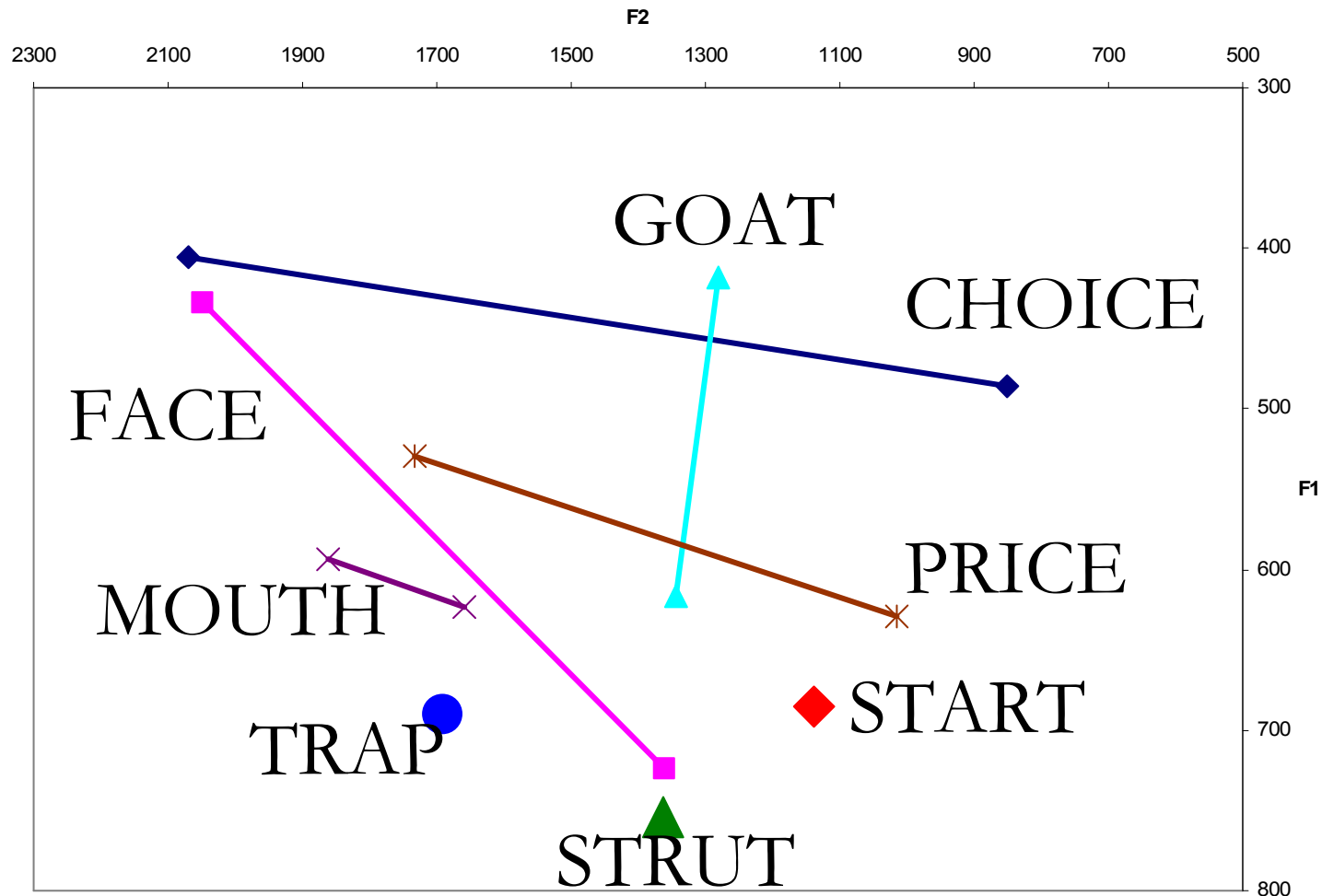
Elderly speakers (circles), Young speakers (diamonds)

Groups of speakers in Havering

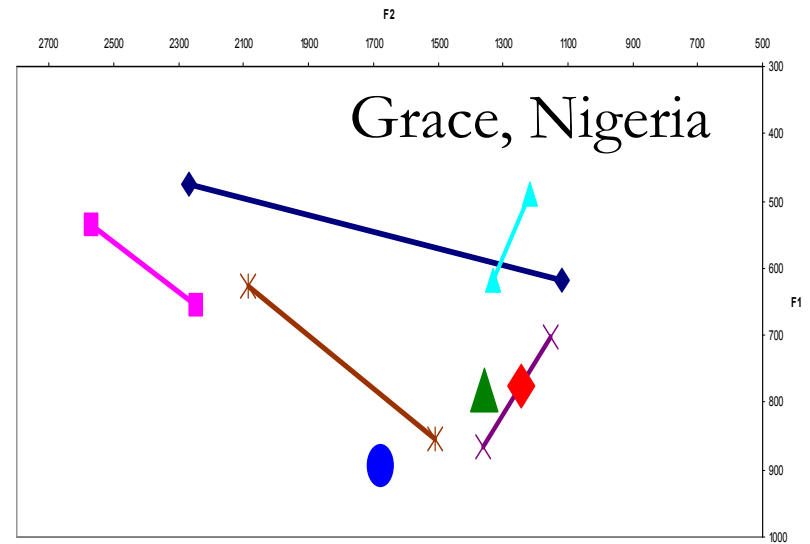
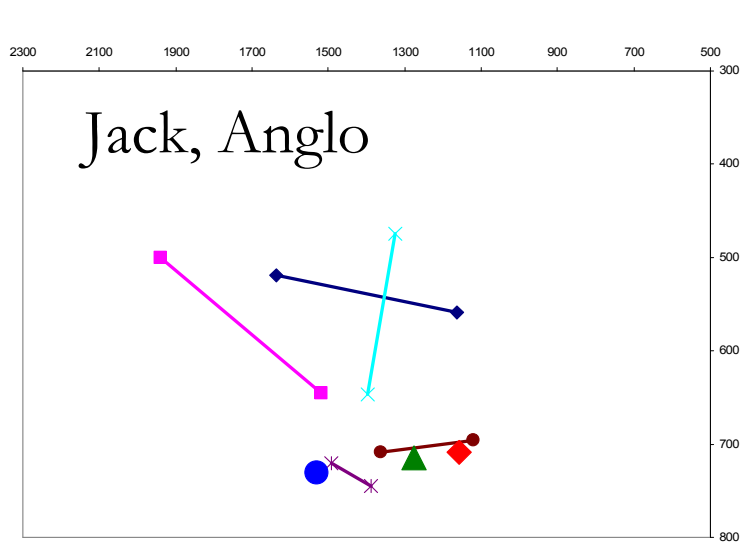
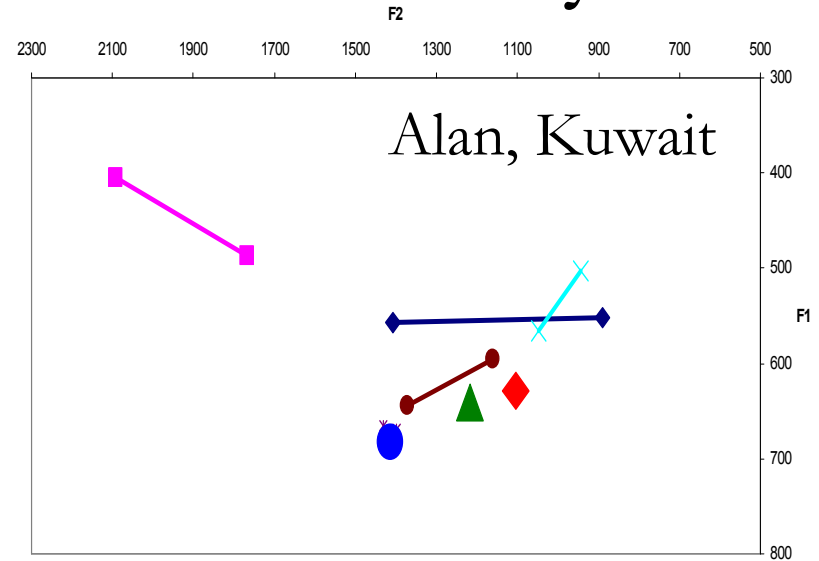
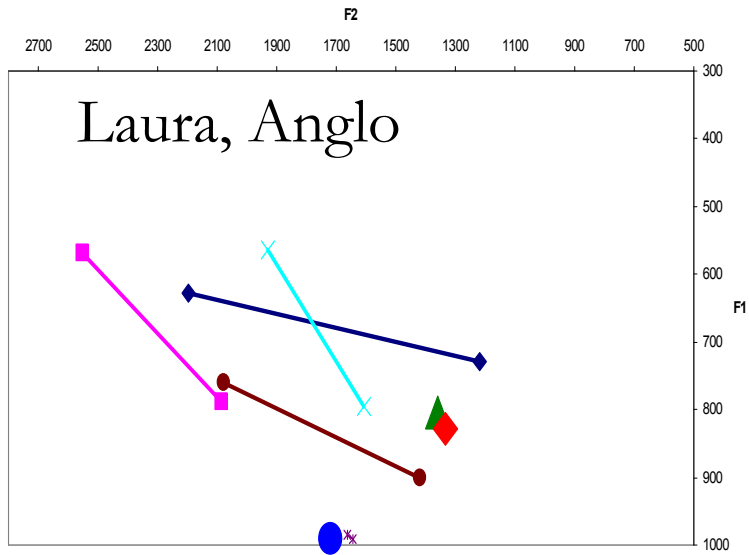


Elderly speakers (circles), non-Anglo speakers (inversed triangles), Anglo speakers with non-Anglo network (triangles), Anglo speakers with Anglo network (squares)

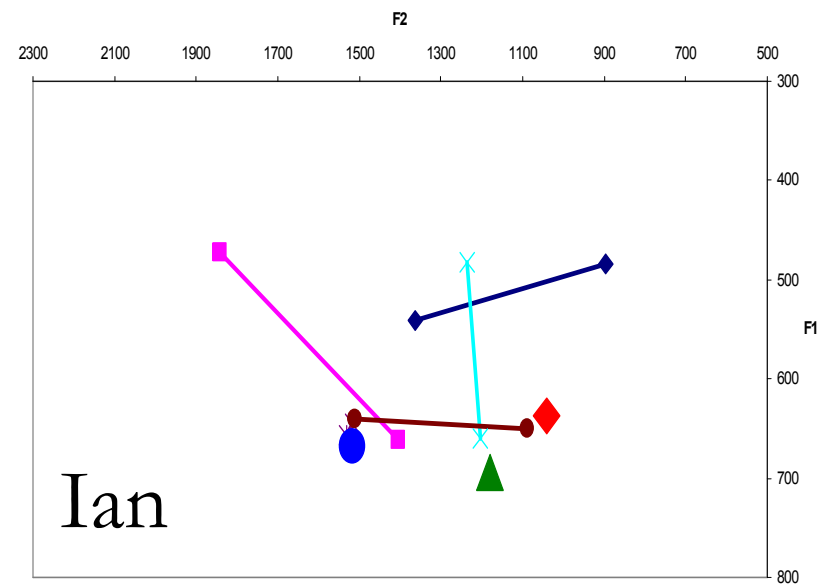
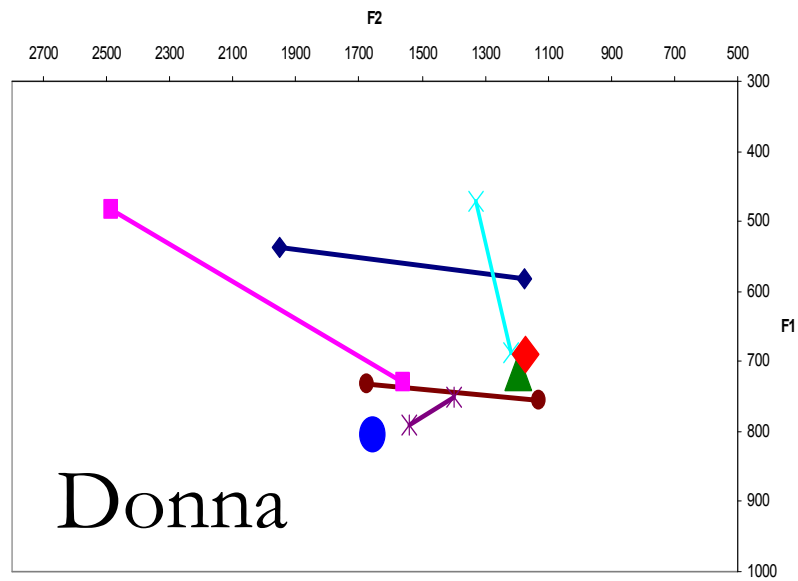
Working-class white Londoner born 1938



Young speakers in Hackney



Young Havering Anglo speakers



Innovation, diffusion and levelling revisited

Loss of H-dropping

- London matches London periphery in loss of H-dropping
 - but unexpected match between inner-city non-Anglos and high-contact periphery Anglos (Milton Keynes – New Town)
 - same feature – different social embedding
 - in periphery, possibly influenced by standardisation and high mobility
 - in London, possibly a result of high contact with L2 varieties of English

K-backing

- more in inner London than in outer London – **diffusion?**

DH-stopping

- more in inner London – traditional feature among Anglos
- non-Anglo led change – contact with L2 varieties – **divergence/innovation**
- avoided by Anglos in outer London – so **no diffusion**

TH-fronting

- young Londoners have almost universal TH-fronting
- but non-Anglo speakers have less TH-fronting than Anglos (also found in Birmingham) - **divergence/innovation**

Fronting of GOOSE

- Advanced in London, matching periphery
 - unexpectedly, most advanced among non-Anglo Londoners and Anglos with non-Anglo networks
 - as with loss of H-dropping, the same feature has different social embedding in inner London and periphery
 - extreme fronting among inner city non-Anglos is **innovatory**
 - **levelling** in periphery as part of a female-led change affecting the whole south-eastern area

Fronting of FOOT

- *Less* advanced in London than in periphery
 - in London, more advanced among Anglos, in line with the Anglos in the periphery
 - lack of fronting in inner city is conservative, matching Caribbean Englishes
 - **levelling** in periphery as part of a female-led change affecting the whole south-eastern area

TRAP-backing

- London matches London periphery town of Ashford (Torgersen & Kerswill 2004, *JS*)

STRUT-backing and raising

- London again matches London periphery town of Ashford

TRAP-backing and STRUT-backing and raising are no longer active changes

GOAT-fronting

- Prevalent among periphery speakers - **levelling**
- Absent in most London speakers, present in outer-city girls
- Instead, GOAT-monophthongisation
 - highly correlated with ethnicity (Afro-Caribbean, Black African) and multi-ethnic network (for Anglos)
 - monophthongisation: a result of (endogenous) **innovation** in the inner city, resulting from contact with British Caribbean English and L2 Englishes
 - **no general diffusion except to minority ethnic speakers**

PRICE

- More fronted than periphery
 - fronting and monophthongisation correlated with ethnicity
 - interpretable as **innovation with diffusion to periphery**

- Monophthongisation of FACE, PRICE and GOAT is correlated with four interacting scales:
- 1. Non-Anglo > Anglo
- 2. Non-Anglo network > Anglo network
- 3. Male > female
- 4. Inner London > outer London > London periphery (Milton Keynes, Reading, Ashford)
- These innovatory monophthongs are **centred on the inner city**. In their extreme forms, they are rare outside.

Conclusion - dialectology

- The developments lead to:
 - **divergence/innovation** in inner London
 - non-Anglo and Anglos with non-Anglo network in the lead in innovation
 - **levelling** in the periphery –Reading, Milton Keynes
 - Havering lies between inner London and periphery

Conclusions – innovation and change

- We must recognise **ethnicity** as a prime driving force behind innovation
- Face-to-face contact through social networks are the conduit for the diffusion of ethnically marked features

Thank you!

Our conference participation was

