

# The acquisition of Manchester dialect variants by adolescent Roma migrants

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## Abstract

This dissertation reports the results of an ethnographically informed, variationist sociophonetic account of the acquisition of vernacular English dialect features by adolescent Roma migrants attending a Manchester high school. As one of the first studies of Romanian Roma acquisition of English, this work speaks to ongoing discussions about migration, integration, and social factors impacting upon language acquisition. I also address discussions concerning methodological approaches to and the importance of the study of the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a new language.

Recently, Manchester has seen an influx of Roma migrants. Previous research suggests that migrants can acquire local patterns of variation in a new language and that social networks may impact upon this acquisition. What remains unclear is why certain speakers acquire more local features than others. The findings of this study contribute to knowledge through the use of a mixed methods approach combining quantitative analysis of speech data with ethnographic observations to provide a fine-grained, methodologically robust analysis of linguistic variation.

I report analyses of three vocalic variables. Results indicate that speaker's friendship networks have a statistically significant effect on linguistic production. The more open speakers' friendship networks are, the more likely they are to reproduce local patterns of variation. Ethnography exposes the unreliability of participants' self-report data on friendships and give context to the quantitative results, indicating complex interactions between speakers' Roma and local identities. These findings give weight to the argument that more mixed methods variationist SLA research is needed.

Increasing superdiversity in urban centres make this an important area of research both for the experience of migrants and those who live in the countries they move to. Where there is evidence of dialect acquisition, this can be seen as an indicator of the way in which an individual is positioning himself or herself within the local culture.

# Chapter 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

This dissertation presents the results of a mixed methods, variationist sociophonetic study examining the social factors that impact upon the acquisition of Manchester dialect features by adolescent Roma migrants. Migrants, especially children, have existed within a 'research void' because they are perceived as lacking economic and political importance (Ackers & Stalford, 2004). However, increasing diversity and changes in migration patterns mean that many people now live in superdiverse communities (Vertovec, 2007). This has led to migrants in many countries having increased political and economic importance. In the UK, migrants are currently very much at the centre of discussions of politics, the economy, and issues of community cohesion.

Recent research addressing the language acquisition of migrants has indicated that they can acquire local, vernacular dialect features in a new language (Drummond, 2013b; Lybeck, 2002; Schlee, Meyerhoff, & Clark, 2011; Wolfram, Carter, & Moriello, 2004). What is still unclear is why some speakers acquire more local features than others (Drummond, 2013b; Lybeck, 2002; Schlee et al., 2011). In addition to more macro social categories, such as age, there have been indications that social networks may have an impact on dialect acquisition in a new language (Drummond, 2013b; Lybeck, 2002; Schlee et al., 2011). However, the majority of studies that discuss the impact of social networks on new language acquisition have not employed ethnographic methodologies that are best suited to the investigation of those communities and their networks.

Monolingual variationist sociolinguistics examines the relationships between linguistic and social variables. Ethnographic sociolinguistic research (e.g. Cheshire, 1982; Eckert, 1989, 2000; Mendoza-Denton, 2008) demonstrates the importance of using long-term participant observation when examining locally salient networks and practices. Ethnographic endeavour can provide us with key contextual information that gives fine-grained detail concerning the resources that speakers use to express their own individual identities. Identity and language are inextricably intertwined, and yet social identity and the integration of migrants are too infrequently on the agenda of researchers working within SLA (Miller, 2003). '[T]o talk about SLA without talking about identity and representation, is to miss aspects of the utmost salience to the acquisition of discourses in a new language' (Miller, 2003:188). Moreover, without using the most appropriate methods available to us, such as ethnography, we are unable to develop a full understanding of the lives and experiences of migrants and their language use.

With these issues in mind, the primary research questions I address in this study are:

1. To what extent do Roma adolescents in Manchester acquire vocalic variants typical of their locally-born peer groups?
2. To what extent do Roma adolescents in Manchester show variation that reflects the same underlying constraints operating on the variation of their locally-born peers?
3. Where there is acquisition, what social factors impact upon this acquisition?

The vast majority of research into dialect acquisition focuses on monolinguals, with some investigation into a second or other language, often French (e.g. Regan, 1996). Typically, such SLA research examines the acquisition of a 'standard' dialect, often with the language learners living in their country of birth. In contrast, the current study focuses on the acquisition of vernacular, regional dialect features and is set in a context where English is the dominant language. I in no way assume that the migrants of this study want to achieve pronunciation resembling their Manchester-born peers. The focus of this study is the reasons why some do when others do not.

Arrival of the Roma to the UK is a relatively recent phenomenon, and their dialect acquisition has not previously been studied. Unlike other migrant groups, when they arrive in the UK, most Roma have had very little or almost no prior contact with the English language. This provides an ideal opportunity to study an extreme case of dialects and languages in contact (Chambers, 1995:97).

Previous research investigating migrants' language use has demonstrated that such studies can further both our understanding of the dynamics of linguistic variation and contribute to our knowledge and understanding of second language acquisition (Bayley & Regan, 2004). Where there is evidence of migrants acquiring a local dialect, this might be an indicator of the way in which an individual is positioning himself or herself within the local culture (Drummond, 2013b). Increasing superdiversity in urban centres makes this an important area of research both for the experience of migrants and those who live in the countries they move to.

## 1.2 Organisation of chapters

**Chapter 2** presents the geographical and linguistic backdrop to the current study. I begin with the broader context, a brief history of migration in Manchester, England. I include information about the arrival of Romanians in the city, which include the Roma participants of this study. I introduce the fieldsite, a Manchester high school, and provide a snapshot of the local area. I also discuss the situation of increasing superdiversity within our urban centres and end with a discussion of the Manchester dialect features that are relevant to the current study.

**Chapter 3** synthesises a range of background literature that informs the variationist sociophonetic direction of this dissertation. This review focuses on the development of SLA in parallel to Labovian sociolinguistics and the contributions that variation theory can make to the field of SLA.

**Chapter 4** details the methodology used in this mixed methods study, focusing on the ethnographic approach and the advantages that I believe this brings to variationist analyses. I discuss my own personal positioning as an

ethnographic researcher and describe some of my experiences of conducting linguistic ethnography in the course of this study. I end with a brief discussion of the quantitative sociophonetic methods employed, which I go onto develop in more detail in the following chapters which address each of the three variables in turn.

**Chapters 5, 6, and 7** directly address my motivations, research questions, the previous research, and phonetic methodology involved in my analyses of the three vocalic variables: *letter*, *happy* and *goose*. Where appropriate and informative, I discuss observations taken from my period of ethnography in order to contextualise and further elucidate the quantitative results. The results and subsequent discussion sections show that friendship network consistently predicts phonetic variation among the Roma participants.

**Chapter 8** returns to the primary research questions of this study, synthesising the results from all three variable analyses. The findings are in line with what has been found in previous studies that migrants can and do acquire and produce local dialect variants, but the results here indicate that the role of social networks is a key factor in phonetic variation. I discuss the importance of social networks and illustrate these points with the presentation of four case studies.

Finally in **Chapter 9**, I summarise and conclude the study, including the identification of potential areas for future research.

### **1.3 Implications for the current study**

Despite calls for more SLA research that truly combines ethnographic study with variationist analysis (Bayley & Regan, 2004:332), there is still very little sociolinguistically oriented SLA research. A key aim of the current study is to move forward the ideological and methodological link between variationist sociolinguistics and SLA. This dissertation adds weight to the argument that more mixed methods approaches are needed, especially in light of this study's exposure of the unreliability of the participants' self-report data on friendship networks.

This study confirms the importance of examinations of the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in SLA and English as a lingua franca (ELF) contexts. Previous research suggested that social networks may impact upon speakers' production of dialect variants. The findings of the current study evidence that social networks can indeed have a very strong influence on production. Moreover, I argue that social networks may be used in SLA research as a reliable indicator of other harder to measure variables, including attitude and level of integration into the local community.

The results of this study demonstrate how the Roma participants' language use does not merely reflect their identities, but it constitutes them. Those Roma adolescents who produce vernacular variants accomplish meaningful identity work through their manipulation of language, enabling some speakers to express a less Roma and more local, Manchester identity.

## 1.4 Transcription conventions

One of the central aims of this study is to present a fully integrated mixed methods analysis of phonetic variation in a new language. I present a number of passages from recordings and fieldnotes throughout this dissertation where I use discourse analysis to support my descriptions and analyses. Where I reproduce spoken extracts, I use the following conventions:

- each line represents a single intonation unit
- standard British English spelling is used, but some basic aspects of pronunciation have been retained (e.g. *gonna* as a contraction of 'going to').
- narrow phonetic transcriptions are included where relevant to the analysis

A key to symbols used in transcription are detailed in Table 1.1. The above conventions and table below are also reproduced in the Appendix at the end of this dissertation for ease of reference.

**Table 1.1: Transcription key**

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Description</b>
:	lengthening
(.)	Pause of 1 second or less
(n)	Pause of specified duration of seconds
[	Overlapping speech
(( ))	Transcriber comment or omitted information
[ ]	phonetic transcription
↑	Rising pitch accent
<u>underline</u>	Emphatic stress

## 1.5 Summary

In this chapter I have described the aims of the study and provided a brief background to the current research. I also discussed the implications of this study. In Chapter 2, I move onto describe the geographical and linguistic context of the current study, first establishing the socio-historical situation of migration in Manchester before introducing the Roma people who make up the participants of this study. I also introduce the locus of this research, Saltar High School, and I end with a discussion of the Manchester English(es) that my participants may or may not be acquiring. In Chapter 3, I present a review of the literature that informs the direction of this dissertation.

## **Chapter 2 Geographical and linguistic context**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I begin with a description of the context of Manchester as a whole. I provide a brief history, detailing the waves of migration that have moulded the diverse nature of the city's inhabitants as they are today. In Section 2.3, I discuss the increasing issues of superdiversity that are facing urban centres such as Manchester. In section 2.4, I introduce the fieldsite of this study, Saltar High School, and I present a range of neighbourhood- and school-level statistics. In the final part, section 2.5, I discuss Manchester's linguistic landscape in which the Roma participants of this study find themselves.

### **2.2 Manchester: a migrant city**

Manchester is a city in the North West England (see inlay **Figure 2.1**). The school that is the focus of this study lies within the area governed by Manchester City Council that makes up the Metropolitan Borough of Manchester, the red area of the main map in **Figure 2.1**.





**Figure 2.1 Map of the Metropolitan County of Greater Manchester. Metropolitan Borough of Manchester highlighted in red. Inlay shows Greater Manchester's location in the North West of England.**

Today, the city has a population of over 514,400 and is situated in the Metropolitan County of Greater Manchester that has a population of over 2.5 million.<sup>1 2</sup> Due to its prominence as an industrial city, the close proximity to the port of Liverpool, and its railway and canal links to the rest of the UK, Manchester has a long history of immigration and settlement. Its population is composed of layers of migrants, some generations old and some first generation (Schofield, 2007). Migration has far-reaching consequences for the social fabric of communities and profound sociolinguistic consequences, being the prime cause of language and dialect contact (Kerswill, 2006). The Roma participants of this study contribute to one of the most recent layers of migrants that have come to Manchester. Their presence here, the environments in which they live and go to school, and the other people they encounter are all a part of the on-going movement within the city. It is therefore key to understand

<sup>1</sup> I use the terms *Manchester (city)* and *the city* interchangeably. In both cases I refer to the area of the Metropolitan Borough of Manchester.

<sup>2</sup> All demographic data were retrieved from ONS 2011 Census.

the context of the environment in which my participants find themselves. The following section briefly describes the history of migration in Manchester.

### **2.2.1 Pre-war period**

Manchester's transition from what was once 'an obscure, ill-cultivated swamp' (Engels, 1993:11) into a bustling market town is due to its importance and reputation as a centre for both the production and trade of cloth. Manchester's geographical environs made it an ideal place for the production of yarn and fabrics. The cotton industry put Manchester on the map, but the origins of the production of cloth in the area are obscure. Credit may in part be due to migrants: a group of Flemish weavers who brought new skills with them when they settled in the town in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century (Pevsner, 1969:265).

From the 15<sup>th</sup> Century onwards Manchester's importance in the region began to increase dramatically, making it a bustling market town (Kidd, 2008). Manchester remained that way until the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century, when with the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the city's proximity to places of coal production meant easy access to the fuel that the machines of the Industrial Age needed. The new steam-engine powered cotton mills revolutionised the way that cotton and yarn were produced and made Manchester the 'shock city of the 1840s' (Briggs, 1965:56). At this time, the higher wages of early industrialism attracted a number of rural migrants from nearby Lancashire and Cheshire. Many came in search of a better life, and the city also saw the arrival of Irish migrants escaping the Great Famine (Kidd, 2008).

By the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Manchester was both at the centre of the revolution of the cotton industry that gave it the nickname 'Cottonopolis' (Kidd, 2008:16), as well as a parallel revolution in engineering (Kidd, 2008:23), which was necessary to keep the mills moving. In addition, Manchester's reputation as a centre of commerce and finance meant that it could trade with the world, and this contributed greatly to Manchester's international success (Kidd, 2008:19).

The growth of the area's population occurred rapidly, almost quadrupling in size between 1800 and 1851. This resulted in serious social issues (Kidd, 2008:14). There was social segregation based on great wealth

divides and widespread squalor and degradation amongst the poor. In 'Little Ireland', an area close to the city centre, there could be up to 4,000 adults and children crammed into just 200 cottages. To make problems worse, flooding was common and dwellings were always damp. Typhoid and cholera were rife. Friedrich Engels, who lived in the city for two years and documented *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*, asserted that the people of 'Little Ireland' must have reached 'the lowest stage of humanity' when he saw the 'masses of refuse, offal and sickening filth lie among standing pools in all directions' (Engels, 1993:34).

Although conditions today are nowhere near as harsh as those described by Engels, there is still an amount of social segregation and deprivation found in Manchester. Just as in many other cities, certain areas of Manchester are predominantly inhabited by different ethnic groups and areas are largely influenced by wealth. Migration to Manchester has historically come in waves. As each new group of migrants arrives, they tend to make a centre around the areas where they are housed or can find affordable housing, establish community associations and places of worship, and eventually form large and well-organised communities (Vertovec, 2006:3). For example, the two largest ethnic groups in Manchester now are the Afro-Caribbean community and the Asian communities, who each live centred around a different neighbourhood south of the city centre. In some of the more deprived areas, like in Little Ireland back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, overcrowding and the subsequent health and safety issues it brings are an issue for residents, including the Roma participants of this study, as we will see in Section 2.4.1 below.

Following Manchester's rise to become a giant of world trading in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century saw Manchester's comparative international importance begin to decline as other cities caught up. Cotton production and trade also declined, but Manchester's increasingly diverse manufacturing base meant that it could continue as a great trading city of the world. During the Second World War, many of the industries converted to support the war effort, for example bomb-making or construction of the famous 'Lancaster' bomber aircraft (Kidd, 2008).

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the largest group of migrants to be living in Manchester and neighbouring Salford were Jews from Eastern Europe fleeing anti-Semitism and persecution.<sup>3</sup> They formed and still make up England's largest Jewish community outside of London (Kidd, 2008).

### 2.2.2 Post war

In the period following the Second World War, cotton production and trade continued to decline. Manchester's economic structure underwent huge change. Severe job losses and rises in unemployment took their toll on Manchester between the 1960s and the mid 1980s, with over 150,000 manufacturing jobs lost (Kidd, 2008). Focus moved away from manufacturing and onto the service industry, with the greatest employment found in the delivery of health and education services.

Through the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Manchester has seen a number of waves of immigration. In the post-war period there was a labour shortage in Britain, and there were large-scale migrations in response to the urgent demand for workers in building, engineering and manufacture (Haslam, 1999). Government initiatives brought workers from the Caribbean and Africa. As the British Empire gradually broke up, including the granting of independence to India and the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, many more people came to the UK in search of employment. The Asian community now comprises over 17% of Manchester's population. Manchester is home to 'The Curry Mile', a famous stretch of south Manchester which is said to have the largest concentration of Asian restaurants in the UK, as well as Chinatown in the city centre - the third largest in Europe (Christiansen, 2003).

### 2.2.3 Current situation

Table 2.1 shows a breakdown of Manchester's ethnic minority groups according to the 2011 census. In total they comprise 33.4% of the population compared with only 14% of the population of England and Wales. The largest non-white

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<sup>3</sup> Salford lies within Greater Manchester (see **Figure 2.1**). *Greater Manchester* as a term didn't appear until the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and was not administratively created until 1974.

group in Manchester is the Asian community originating in the Indian subcontinent which totals 12.1% of the Manchester population. The largest of those groups are Pakistani (8.5%). The other large community of note in Manchester is the Black African community that makes up just over 5% of Manchester's population.

**Table 2.1 Population by ethnic group in Manchester and England and Wales**

Population by ethnic group	Manchester	England & Wales
All white	66.6%	86.0%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group	4.6%	2.2%
Pakistani	8.5%	2.0%
Indian	2.3%	2.5%
Bangladeshi	1.3%	0.8%
Other Asian	2.3%	1.5%
Black Caribbean	1.9%	1.1%
Black African	5.1%	1.8%
Other Black	1.6%	0.5%
Chinese	2.7%	0.7%
Other	3.1%	1.0%

In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Manchester has already seen two large-scale waves of migration. In May 2004, eight Central and Eastern European countries, including Poland, became part of the EU. The UK was one of only three existing EU member states that allowed migrants from these countries to come more or less without restriction (Drinkwater, Eade, & Garapich, 2009). In 2007 Poles were the largest group registering for work in the UK (Bauere, Densham, Millar, & Salt, 2007:11). Since Poland's accession to the EU in 2004, Britain has witnessed the largest single wave of in-migration that the British Isles have ever experienced, with the Poles being the largest ever single national group of entrants (Salt & Millar, 2006:335). However, because of a lack of a reliable system to record the multiple variables involved with migration, such as self-employment and length of stay, it is difficult to find accurate estimates of the total number of Polish migrants in the UK.

Romania and Bulgaria, called the EU2 countries, both joined the EU in January 2007. This is the time when the majority of the participants of my study began to arrive in Manchester, typically joining family and friends who had already arrived from other countries in the EU in a process of chain migration (Boyle, Halfacree, & Robinson, 2014:36; Kerswill, 2006:10). Migrants from Romania and Bulgaria were subject to restrictions on their rights to work, claim benefits and access social housing during their accession period. This period and the restrictions ended on 1 January 2014. The ending of restrictions attracted much negative media attention in the UK with many fearing a 'flood' of unskilled migrants coming to exploit the British benefits system (Light & Young, 2009; Vicol & Allen, 2014). Just as with the Polish migrants, accurate figures are very difficult to obtain. However, the Office of National Statistics (ONS) (2014) has estimates of figures for Bulgarian and Romanian migration to the UK since they joined the EU in 2007. These figures are based on data from the International Passenger Survey.

For the year January to December 2013, the estimated population of Romanian citizens in the UK was 128,000 compared to 102,000 in the previous year. Latest figures for the year ending June 2014 show that 32,000 EU2 citizens migrated to the UK, with over three quarters of those stating that they were coming for work reasons. This represents 6% of total immigration to the UK for that year. Estimates show 167,000 Bulgarian and Romanian citizens were employed in the UK in July to September 2014, a 33% increase on the same period in 2013.

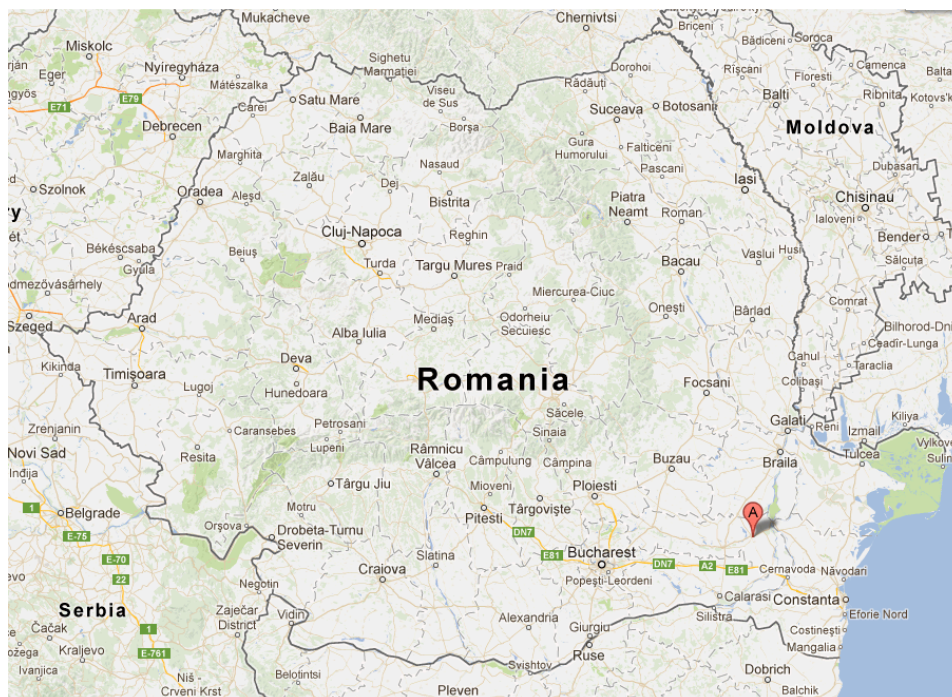
### **2.2.3.1 Introducing the Roma**

Most of the participants of this study originate from Țândărei in south east Romania (see **Figure 2.2**) and by 2009, around 50 Romanian Roma families made up the community of East Manchester.<sup>4</sup> The participants in this study are members of the Romani, or Roms, community whose history has been traced back to India through their Indo-Aryan language (Matras, 2005:1). Their history is one of migration, often forced, and their language shows

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<sup>4</sup> The similarity between the names *Romanian* and *Roma* are entirely coincidental, although often a cause of confusion.

movement out of India into Europe (Hancock, 2002; Matras, 2005). In 2008, the European Romani community was estimated at between 10 and 12 million people, making them Europe's largest minority group (Crepaldi, Barbera, Boccagni, & Naaf, 2008:3). However, due to the fact that they often do not fit into an ad hoc description of either a national or ethnic minority, many countries do not recognise them as such (Crepaldi et al., 2008:viii). As a result of their lack of ethnic or national status, in many countries, the Roma are often treated as outsiders to the class system or as an underclass.



**Figure 2.2** Map indicating the location of Tândărei in south east Romania

Romania is home to the largest group of Romanies in Europe, estimated at between 500,000 and 2.5 million. While estimates of numbers of migrants can be hard to establish accurately as mentioned above, this situation is even more complex with Romanies. Many outside the UK live in illegal settlements and have no form of identity papers, making accurate estimates impossible (Shvey, Flaherty, & Higgins, 2005:1162). Furthermore, a legacy of severe and widespread discrimination and oppression that continues to the current day means that many Romanies do not self-identify for fear of further persecution.

The Romanies of Europe are not a homogeneous group, but are composed of several different communities. Many official organisations (e.g.

Council of Europe) recognise five main groups that may then be further divided according to occupation or territorial origin or both (Crepaldi et al., 2008:1). Most of the participants of this study originate from southeast Romania and belong to the Romani group referred to as Peptenari or Kangliari, meaning 'Comb-makers' (Matras, Fabeni, Leggio, & Vránová, 2009:2). 'Gadje' is the Romani term that is usually used to mean outsiders or anyone who is not Roma (Matras et al., 2009:22).

Since the late 19th Century, use of the term *Romani*, an umbrella name used for and by all Romani groups, has become an established tradition among scholars (Hancock, 2002; Matras, 2005). Accordingly, I use Romani when referring to the Romani people and their language. However, to refer to the Romanies participating in my research, I use the term *Roma*. This decision is in line with the emic nature of my study (see chapter 4, section 4.2) and motivated by the observation that, even though this practise is not shared by all Romani people (Hancock, 2002:xix), most participants in my study self-identify as Roma.<sup>5</sup>

## 2.2.4 Summary

The results of historical waves migration to Manchester has made it one of the most multicultural cities in the UK. Until more recent times, this multiculturalism was characterised by large, well-organised African-Caribbean and Asian communities made up of citizens originally from Commonwealth countries or formerly colonial territories. However, since the early 1990s there has been a marked rise in net immigration and changes in immigration patterns that have brought with them a transformative 'diversification of diversity' (Vertovec, 2006:4).

## 2.3 Superdiversity

This 'diversification of diversity' (Vertovec, 2006:4) has brought changes that have altered the face of social, cultural and linguistic diversity in Manchester,

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<sup>5</sup> Note: Romani (singular); Romanies (plural); Roma (singular & plural).



just as they have in many cities worldwide. So much so that areas like Manchester that would have previously been characterised as multiculturally diverse because of their ethnic minorities have now become 'superdiverse':

'[S]uch a condition is distinguished by a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants'

(Vertovec, 2007:1024)

A relatively recent concept, superdiversity, represents a move away from the essentialism of social groups and a move towards a recognition and acceptance of diversity (Vertovec, 2007). Diversity within a city is traditionally conceptualised in terms of *ethnicity* and *country of origin*. Superdiversity problematises this traditional approach on the basis that the two terms are often and confusingly used interchangeably and they may provide a misleading, one-dimensional appreciation of contemporary diversity. This one-dimensional approach does not take into account a variety of other significant variables that affect where, how and with whom people live. These variables which must be seen as mutually conditioning alongside ethnicity and country of origin, include age, gender, residence and status, and labour market experiences (Vertovec, 2007). Issues of ethnicity, race country of origin, residency, and status frequently form part of discussions centred around the Romani community, especially as many of them have no form of identity papers, as outlined in section 2.2.3.1 above.

Vertovec (2006:25) indicates that while quantitative analyses will have much to offer the study of superdiversity, there's also a great need for more and better qualitative studies that can examine situations and relationships based on multiple variables, rather than basic ethnic categories alone. By observing 'daily habits of perhaps quite banal intercultural interaction' (Sandercock & Lyssiotis, 2003:89) we can identify local micropolitics that give us a much deeper understanding of actions and their motivations.

This brings to mind an experience I had in school. I approached a teacher to ask if I could take a Roma student and his African classmate to do a recording in the following class. The teacher informed me that the two students didn't 'get on' and suggested that I take a different boy with the Roma student

instead. When I expressed my surprise and asked why they didn't get on, I was told that 'Roma kids don't get on with the black kids'. I referred back to check my earlier fieldnotes about the two students' relations and, as I continued my observations, I confirmed that they were indeed friends and spent time interacting happily with each other both inside and outside of class.

On reflection, I realised the teacher was ascribing stereotypical preconceptions to the situation based only on ethnic categorisations. The perception that the Roma and black communities do not 'get on' is something that was expressed to me by a number of teachers on various occasions. However, I had observed their 'daily habits of perhaps quite banal intercultural interaction' (Sandercock & Lyssiotis, 2003:89) and knew that the two young men were friends. I came to the situation from a bottom up approach where I just saw the boys as two friends, but the teacher in question came at it from a top down perspective, acting upon a prior held assertion.

A number of teachers explained their reasoning behind the assertion that the groups do not mix well was because there had been clashes in the past, resulting in fights. There is a school of thought that suggests regular contact between conflicting groups may mutually reduce prejudice and increase respect (Vertovec, 2006:26). However, habitual contact is in itself no guarantee of this, especially where obstacles are put in place by the attitudes and actions of outside parties in a position of authority, such as the teachers. Indeed it is possible that in that situation, regular contact could entrench such group animosities (Vertovec, 2006:26).

Certainly I believe that in spaces where such contact and possible tension exist, to have an intermediary party, such as the teacher in my example, involved in this way is a potentially dangerous situation. I observed classes, and this teacher would habitually group the students in his class based upon their ethnicity. This could potentially foster or reinforce notions of difference and boundaries based solely upon ethnic categories. Grouping people in such fixed terms as country of origin or ethnicity cannot capture the true nature of relationships and social structure within a superdiverse environment. This is especially pertinent to the Roma where the lines of ethnicity, race, and country of origin are blurred even further. Long-term,

qualitative research is an excellent way to study the complexity of such situations.

Migration and superdiversity are predicted only to continue to increase. According to the Multilingual Manchester Project at the University of Manchester, there are between 150 to 200 languages spoken by the residents of Greater Manchester. These languages are present in neighbourhoods and schools, in official information from local authorities, in businesses, and in the media. The large number of languages is a reflection of Manchester's current state of superdiversity. Migrants have always been a part of the fabric of Manchester, but increasingly this situation is reflected globally. Much of the recent discussion and study of World Englishes and English as a lingua franca (e.g. Durham, 2014) is representative of this.

Previous research has evidenced that investigations into migrants' language use such as this one are important because they can both help us to further understand the dynamics of linguistic variation and change (see e.g. Cheshire, Fox, Kerswill, & Torgersen, 2008; Sharma, 2005) and contribute to our knowledge and understanding of the field of second language acquisition (Bayley & Regan, 2004). Much research has been done into first language dialect acquisition as well as people learning English as a second or foreign language. However, this is often done in an EFL context and typically involves looking at the acquisition of a 'standard' dialect, rather than a regional or vernacular one, as the current study does.

Migrants learn English for very different reasons and are a highly understudied group, both in general and linguistically. This especially applies to migrant children who exist in a 'research void' (Ackers & Stalford, 2004). Migrants are often perceived as lacking any political or economic importance and are therefore mostly 'invisible' from research (Reynolds, 2008). In light of the superdiversity in our cities and increased tension between the traditional, non-migrant population and migrants, for example in the UK, this situation must be resolved, and through research, we can better understand migrants' experiences and issues and the potential solutions to conflict. Having presented the backdrop of Manchester, I now move onto the fieldsite itself.

## 2.4 The fieldwork site: Saltar High

This study examines the impact of social factors upon the language of Roma adolescents in a particular locale: the High School. Motivated largely by Eckert's (1989, 2000) ground-breaking research, there have by now been a number of studies that have focused on a cohort of high school students (e.g. Drager, 2009; Eckert, 2000; Kirkham, 2013; Lawson, 2009; Martyn, 2016, forthcoming; Mendoza-Denton, 2008; Moore, 2003; Nance, 2013; Snell, 2008). The social structure of a high school is made up of different groups, for which students must construct and perform their identities in order to gain membership. This makes the high school an ideal location for ethnographic and variationist sociolinguistic analysis that takes a social constructionist approach, such as the current study.

Another reason many sociolinguistic researchers choose schools as their fieldsite is the fantastic opportunity school life provides to observe and record the vernacular (Eckert, 2000). Labov (1972a, 1972b) and many others regard the vernacular, a speaker's least self-monitored speech, to be the most interesting style of speech because it provides researchers with 'the most systematic data for our analysis of linguistic structure' (Labov, 1972b:208). It has since been acknowledged that information about speakers and communities can be gleaned from the study of all speech styles. Also recognised is the fact that any speech situation, including the sociolinguistic interview, involves some form of monitoring. However, the vernacular, or as close as we can get to it, is still highly sought.

On first impressions, there are many settings and events in school that deter use of the vernacular, but there are also a vast range of situations that encourages its use. As we shall see in Chapter 4, adolescents are linguistic innovators which makes research conducted in the high school particularly of interest. High school is problematic for many students and becomes a site for resistance and rebellion, and use of the vernacular is in itself an act of rebellion. For example, I have recordings of a number of students passionately discussing their dislike for certain teachers and how unfairly they have been

treated, as well as other topics of importance to their everyday lives: data that is rich in sociolinguistic variation.

The fieldsite of this study, Saltar High School, lies on the border of two administrative wards of Manchester City Council.<sup>6</sup> The school is situated within a predominantly white neighbourhood, but on the border of one of the most ethnically diverse areas of Manchester. This has bearing on the sociodemographic makeup of the school's students, as well as the attitudes of both students and their parents. Because of this somewhat complex situation, I begin with a description of the area directly surrounding Saltar High in order to gain a better understanding of the context of the school.

### **2.4.1 The local area**

Saltar High lies on the west edge of Shorthill, a predominantly white area, but very close to the east border of Keanly, an area inhabited by a large number of minority ethnic residents. The school's catchment area covers areas of high deprivation to the centre and east of the city centre. The vast majority of students at the school come from either the predominantly white area of Shorthill or the highly diverse area of Keanly.

According to the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), Shorthill, as a ward, ranks as the fourth most deprived ward in Greater Manchester, with high levels of benefits claimants, and, in particular high levels of Lone Parent Income Support claimants (Manchester City Council, 2011).<sup>7</sup> Keanly is ranked 15<sup>th</sup> most deprived ward in Greater Manchester. Furthermore, both wards are in the top one percent of the most deprived areas in England. Shorthill is considered the worst area in Manchester for Living Environment Deprivation, a measure that considers quality and value of housing, with Keanly ranked eighth. Property purchase and rental prices in the area are considerably lower than elsewhere in Manchester and much of the rest of the UK. Unemployment

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<sup>6</sup> The names of the school and locations, as well as the names of the participants in the study, are pseudonyms.

<sup>7</sup> The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 combines a number of indicators to produce an overall score of deprivation across areas of England, called Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs). Indicators include income, employment, health, education, crime, living environment and housing. Each of the 32,482 LSOAs are ranked relative to one another; number 1 is deemed to be the most deprived.

is also considered in the IMD, and Manchester is ranked the third most deprived local authority in terms of employment deprivation. Unemployment in both wards is much higher than both the Manchester and national averages.

The ONS 2011 Census indicates that the population of Shorthill, where the school is situated, stands at over 17,000 inhabitants. The area is slowly becoming more diverse, but continues to have a lower level of ethnic diversity than Manchester as a whole. The most recent figures show that Shorthill has 57.6% all white population, highlighted in red in Table 2.2, compared with a 2006 figure of 82.4% all white population. Table 2.2 shows figures for Shorthill, Keanly, Manchester, and England and Wales overall. In contrast to Shorthill, Keanly’s all white population currently stands at only 27.2% (2006 figure: 38.7%). Shorthill has 42.4% non-white population, in contrast to Keanly of which 72.8% of its population are non-white, shown in blue in Table 2.2. Almost three quarters of the inhabitants of Keanly are from a non-white ethnic group. This is a huge amount when compared with the figures from non-white ethnic groups for Manchester (33.4%) and England and Wales together (14%).

**Table 2.2: % of total population by ethnicity (white/non-white) in Shorthill, Keanly, Manchester, and England and Wales**

Population %	Shorthill (2006)	Shorthill (2011)	Keanly (2006)	Keanly (2011)	Manchester (2011)	England & Wales (2011)
All non-white ethnic groups	17.6%	42.4%	61.3%	72.8%	33.4%	14.0%
All white	82.4%	57.6%	38.7%	27.2%	66.6%	86.0%

Table 2.3 shows a breakdown of the population by ethnic group in Shorthill where the school is, Keanly where many of the school’s students live, and Manchester and England and Wales for reference. The key fact to take from Table 2.3 is that, whereas Shorthill’s largest group is white (red shaded box), followed by Pakistani at 16.0%, Keanly’s largest group by far is migrants from Pakistan at 35.7% (blue shaded box) compared with only 27.2% whites. Bangladeshis are the third largest group in Keanly, making up 11.4% of the population. These figures contrast sharply with those for Manchester and England and Wales, where the Pakistani population only comprises 8.5% and 2.0% respectively.

**Table 2.3: % of population breakdown by ethnicity in Shorthill, Keanly, Manchester, and England and Wales**

Population by ethnic group (2011)	Shorthill	Keanly	Manchester	England & Wales
All white	57.6%	27.2%	66.6%	86.0%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group	5.3%	4.2%	4.6%	2.2%
Pakistani	16.0%	35.7%	8.5%	2.0%
Indian	1.3%	2.9%	2.3%	2.5%
Bangladeshi	1.6%	11.4%	1.3%	0.8%
Other Asian	2.4%	3.4%	2.3%	1.5%
Black Caribbean	2.4%	2.7%	1.9%	1.1%
Black African	7.9%	5.1%	5.1%	1.8%
Other Black	2.0%	1.9%	1.6%	0.5%
Chinese	1.6%	1.9%	2.7%	0.7%
Other	2.0%	3.7%	3.1%	1.0%

Although I could find no literature on the topic, I have had conversations with academics and professionals working with the Roma community in Leeds, Sheffield, and Glasgow who confirm that many Roma choose to live in ethnically diverse areas of their respective cities, often alongside Asian communities. Keanly has the highest number of non-white ethnic groups of all the wards in Manchester, the largest of those groups being the Pakistani community. Many of my participants reported that they could communicate with speakers of other Indo-Aryan languages, such as Urdu and Hindi, because those languages share a core vocabulary with Romani that many Roma can recognise. It is possible that this could be an influencing factor for Roma choosing to live in a community where they feel more at home both linguistically and physically. Some of the Roma girls told me that they had been mistaken for being Muslim. Stories included strangers in the UK making the assumption that they didn't eat pork and commenting upon them looking like members of the Asian community because some of them have dark skin and hair, also a number of adult Roma women wear headscarves, which could be mistaken by some for the hijab (headscarf worn by Muslim women). For a

group of people who have historically been persecuted on account of how they look, it may be of relief and benefit to the Roma to live in an area where significant racial diversity does not make them marked.

The low cost of living and accommodation available in the local area has also been shown to be a motivating factor for many Roma who come to Manchester. Property purchase and rental prices are considerably lower in Shorthill and Keanly than in Manchester and the rest of the UK (see Table 2.4). Both wards have some of the cheapest rental housing in Manchester. 92% of properties in Manchester fall into council tax bands A to C, compared with only 66.3% overall in England. This figure rises to over 99% in the two wards of focus here. This is higher than all other districts in the county and comparable core cities, with the exception of Nottingham. This higher proportion of properties in bands A to C shows that these areas have particularly high concentrations of lower value property, and the average sale and rental prices in Table 2.4 confirm this.

**Table 2.4 Average sale and rental prices of properties**

	Shorthill	Keanly	Manchester	England
% properties Council Tax bands A to C	99.7% (85.2% in Band A)	99.1% (67.2% in Band A)	92% (59.7% in Band A)	66.3%
Average Sale price	£85,793	£112,112	£147,202	£249,958
Average Rental price (2 bed)	£464	£503	£703	£1,003

Across the North West, Roma families tend to cluster in areas with high numbers of privately rented properties (Bacon, 2011:11). This applies to the participants of the current study, with very few exceptions. Table 2.5 shows that in 2011, privately rented properties in Keanly accounted for 38.1% of all property in the ward where most of the participants live. This is somewhat higher than the City average of 30.0%. In contrast, properties that are rented through the council or housing associations (28.4%) and owner occupied (33.5%) properties are at a lower percentage than Manchester overall (social: 31.6%; owner occupied 38.5%). Shorthill's figures are largely comparable to those of Manchester as a whole.



**Table 2.5: % owner occupied/social rented/private rented properties**

Tenure of household	Shorthill	Keanly	Manchester	England
Owner occupied	40.6%	33.5%	38.5%	64.1%
Social rented	30.1%	28.4%	31.6%	17.7%
Private rented/rent-free	29.3%	38.1%	30.0%	18.2%

A July 2011 report entitled 'Working with Roma in the North West' states that one of the problems Roma encounter is exploitation in the private rental sector, with rents charged usually double that of the public sector.

Overcrowding and substandard accommodation are rife with houses that are frequently occupied by more than one family, although often this multiple occupancy is done on a temporary basis until members of the newer family find employment and can move into their own home (Bacon, 2011:12).

Overcrowding is not only a health and safety issue for the Roma themselves, but also causes issue for the non-Roma residents. Overcrowding often results in young people congregating in public areas. This can be intimidating for non-Roma residents and lead to claims of anti-social behaviour (Bacon, 2011:11). While conducting fieldwork I met with various agencies working with the local communities. A police officer told me of occasions where the police had been called to a local park because a concerned local resident had reported that there were gangs of young men gathered there. When the situation was investigated, the police officer explained that there were indeed a lot of young Roma men gathered in the park, but there was no action that the police could take because the men were playing football and using the park for communal purposes – meeting, chatting, and playing. While overcrowded housing may be a cause for residents spilling over into communal areas, this encounter also reflects how traditional English communities have changed in their use and expectations of the functions of public places. Many of us no longer use communal places in the way that they were originally intended, to the extent that it causes alarm when people do.

**Table 2.6: % households with English as the main language**

<b>English main language (in household)</b>	Shorthill	Keanly	Manchester	England
All people	77.2%	50.6%	81.2%	90.9%
No people	12.6%	24.5%	10.3%	4.4%
Some people	10.2%	24.8%	8.5%	4.7%

As a final part of my description of the similarities and differences in the two geographical areas directly surrounding Saltar High, I turn to the percentage of households where English is the main language spoken. Table 2.6 starkly demonstrates the extent of the population difference between Keanly and Shorthill, Keanly and Manchester, and Keanly and England as a whole. Keanly only has half of its households (50.6%) where everyone in the house uses English as their main language, whereas Shorthill and Manchester's have well over three quarters (77.2% and 81.2%), with nearly all of England's households having English as their main language (90.9%). Keanly has a quarter of households where either some people use English as their main language and a quarter where nobody in the house has English as their main language. This is a huge difference from both Shorthill and Manchester overall, where figures for both categories are between approximately 8-12%. In England, only 4.4% of houses have no people using English as their main language and 4.7% where some people do. This is highly representative of the diversity and mix of ethnicities that can be found in the area and are represented in Table 2.3 above.

This concludes my description of the area surrounding Saltar High School. The next section goes on to describe the school itself.

### **2.4.2 Introducing Saltar High**

Saltar High School is a mixed sex, multicultural, multifaith comprehensive secondary school with places for 900 pupils aged 11 to 16, although it is rarely fully subscribed. During the period of my fieldwork, the school was at around three quarters capacity with approximately 675 students enrolled.

The Ofsted report (2011) provides an overview of the school from the time I was there:

'[Saltar] is a smaller-than-average size secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is well above average, as is the proportion of students whose first language is not English. The number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the number of those with a statement of special educational needs. Well-above average numbers of students join the school other than at the start of the school year.'

(Ofsted, 2011)

The large cohort of Roma children attending the school undoubtedly has an impact on the factors considered by Ofsted above: they are a minority ethnic group; their first language is not English; and many of them do not start school in September. Table 2.7 contains data given to me by Saltar High indicating the number of Roma students in each Academic Year (AY) since 2007. However, as mentioned previously, Roma do not always self-identify as Roma. As a result, there are times when the staff at school will record a new student as being *Gypsy/Roma*, even when his or her parents have stated that their child is Romanian or Czech, for example (not Roma).<sup>8</sup> This allocation is based on a number of factors, including previous schooling and literacy skills. Many Roma migrants have not previously attended school, or have only done so for very short periods, and many cannot read or write when they arrive. The numbers in the *Total* row are the combination of those students who have self-identified as *Gypsy/Roma* and those who identify with their country of origin, for example Polish/Czech/Romanian, which the school calls *White European*.

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<sup>8</sup> *Gypsy/Roma* is the label used by the school. Gypsy is considered by many to be a pejorative term, although there are certain groups and individuals that ascribe the term to themselves.

**Table 2.7 No. of students in Roma Cohort at Saltar High by Academic Year (AY)**

Ethnicity (declared)	AY 2007-8	AY 2008-9	AY 2009-10	AY 2010-11	AY 2011-12	AY 2012-13
White European	15	37	58	71	55	Not given
Gypsy/Roma	12	22	61	82	92	Not given
Total	27	59	119	153	147	56

These issues of labelling raise a need for discussion about the rights of an individual to decide their own identity by stating what they want to be called and how they want to be recognised. This is another reminder of some of the difficulties in accurately identifying numbers of Roma, as well as the complexity discussed in section 2.3 regarding the traditional definition of diversity being based on country of origin or ethnicity, and the confusion that can exist between these terms. The school staff would argue that it is an absolute necessity to allocate new arrivals in this way in order to help teachers better understand students' needs and for the allocation of resources, such as Roma teaching assistants to classrooms. There is also the issue of government funding that schools receive for quotas of *disadvantaged* and *Special Education Needs* (SEN) pupils, with concerns that teachers and staff may be inclined to mislabel students in order to increase budgets. However while of great interest, further investigation of these issues are outside the immediate scope of the current study.

The figures in Table 2.7 show that by the end of my fieldwork there were a total of 56 Roma students enrolled in school (red shaded box), over 8% of the student population. Numbers peaked in the Academic Year (AY) 2010-11 when nearly 20% of students at the school were Roma. The cohort for AY 2012-13 saw a considerable drop in figures because many families have moved out of the local area.

Saltar High was originally created through the amalgamation of three schools that were perceived to be failing in 2000. In 2006, Manchester City Council confirmed that it had signed contracts on their first Building Schools for the Future project to create a brand new community campus in Shorthill, east Manchester. In Autumn 2008, the new campus opened, bringing together the mainstream high school of Saltar High with a 100 place Special Education

Needs (SEN) College on one campus. The eight-acre campus includes a very clean, bright, modern building shared between the two schools. The £25.4m building features a two-storey 100-metre-long internal 'street', four-court sports hall, gym, dance and performing arts studios, 400-seat theatre, learning resource centre with ICT facilities and specialist subject zones for science, humanities and English. For the SEN school, there is a sensory room as well as a medical suite with physiotherapy and hydrotherapy pool facilities.

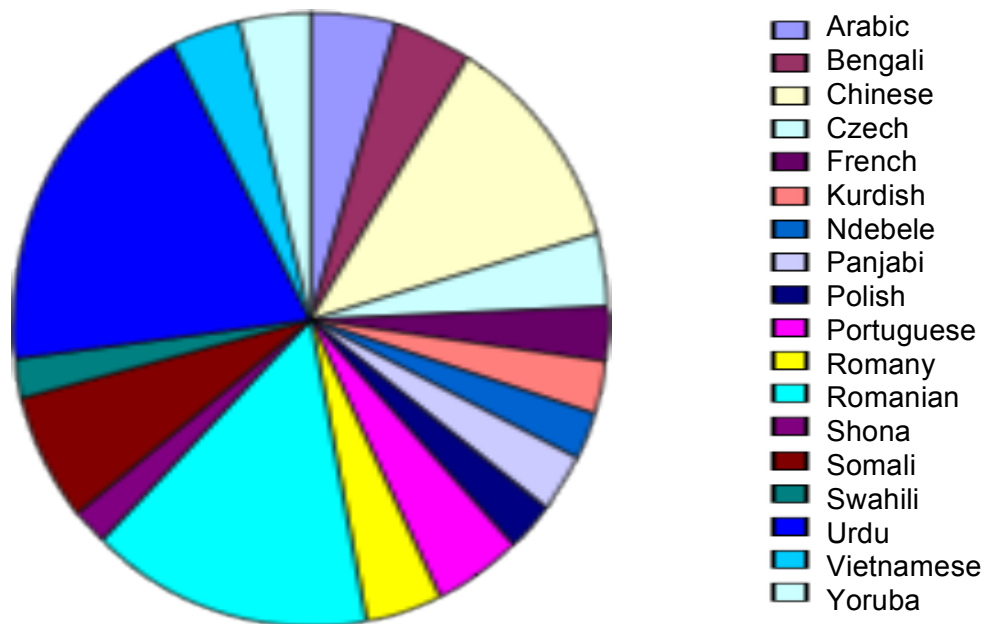
Saltar High's aims as outlined in its prospectus are:

- to be inclusive to all and provide pupils with a safe and happy learning environment, where all cultures and backgrounds are respected and understood;
- to ensure a smooth transition between leaving primary school and joining high school;
- to encourage pupils to acquire the knowledge, skills and experience to enable them to achieve their full potential;
- to find, encourage and nurture each pupil's ambition and talent by developing a learning programme that is geared around their individual needs;
- to offer the best possible learning environment, facilities and technologies;
- to provide the best staff and extensive support to make learning effective and enjoyable

(Saltar High, 2011)

The current study takes place in a culturally and linguistically superdiverse urban setting. The Head of the school is proud of the diversity found at Saltar High and considers it to be one of the school's strengths. Saltar High has a very international student population, and staff work hard to encourage students' awareness and respect for the diversity of cultures (Edden, McCormack, Prendergast, & Hughes, 2010:4-5). Figure 2.3 illustrates the distribution of ethnic minority languages spoken at the school. Urdu is the most widely spoken language after English, due to the large Pakistani community living in Kearnly (see section 2.4.1); the second is Romanian. Roma speakers are shown in yellow. Government statistics for 2010 state that 40.4%

of the languages spoken within the school are not English (Edden et al., 2010:4-5).



**Figure 2.3 Distribution of ethnic minority languages prominent within Saltar High School (taken from Edden et al., 2010)**

This diversity was actively celebrated in the school. Posters on the walls and noticeboards around the school and classrooms often featured a wide variety of languages. Topic or theme related enrichment week, such as 'Diversity Week' or 'Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month' (GRTHM), were held across the school or specific year groups. The GRTHM was coordinated by organisations outside of school including Manchester City Council. During this time, much of the imagery used in school and the focus of class discussions revolved around the stereotypical image of the Romanies, such as living in caravans or wagons. Roma at this school are not Travellers and their ancestors did not live in caravans. Travelling is in fact limited to only a minority of the Romani population (Matras, 2014). While I believe that the intentions of the organisers and staff at the school were good, this teaching of a false history leads only to further misunderstandings, confusion, and the reinforcement of stereotypes. Additionally, it could be argued that having a fixed period of time where a certain group is singled out and identified as being different from those around them acts out a process of othering that can again reinforce stereotypes, as well as issues of domination and subordination.

However, comparable focused periods of cultural awareness, such as Black History Month, have been shown to benefit and inform communities.

Schools in England have a legal duty to promote diversity (Department for Children, 2007:3), and the monthly school newsletter and other promotional materials often featured Saltar High's celebration of the many faiths and cultures found in school. Some students also told me that they enjoyed the diverse nature of the school, stating that they felt it enhanced and enriched their friendships and learning. However, other students expressed a less enthusiastic attitude and some told me that they had experienced racism in school. Some White British students felt discriminated against both because of the additional attention and provision for ethnic minority students and the way in which they were treated by staff. Some told me that they felt that many of the English as an Additional Language (EAL) students could 'get away with a lot more stuff' than they themselves were allowed to on account of the EAL students having different backgrounds and experiences of schooling and lower proficiency in English.

This concludes my description of the school and surrounding area. I return to the context of the school in Chapter 4 where I explain my methodology and describe my experiences of doing fieldwork at Saltar High. Having described the geographical surroundings of my fieldsite, I now move onto a description of the linguistic landscape of Manchester.

## **2.5 Speaking in Manchester**

As I have described above, both Manchester and Saltar High are in a state of great diversity, even superdiversity. If I am to consider my participants' dialect acquisition in English, I must first understand what features they are being exposed to and may be acquiring. My first research question, as I set out in Chapter 1, asks:

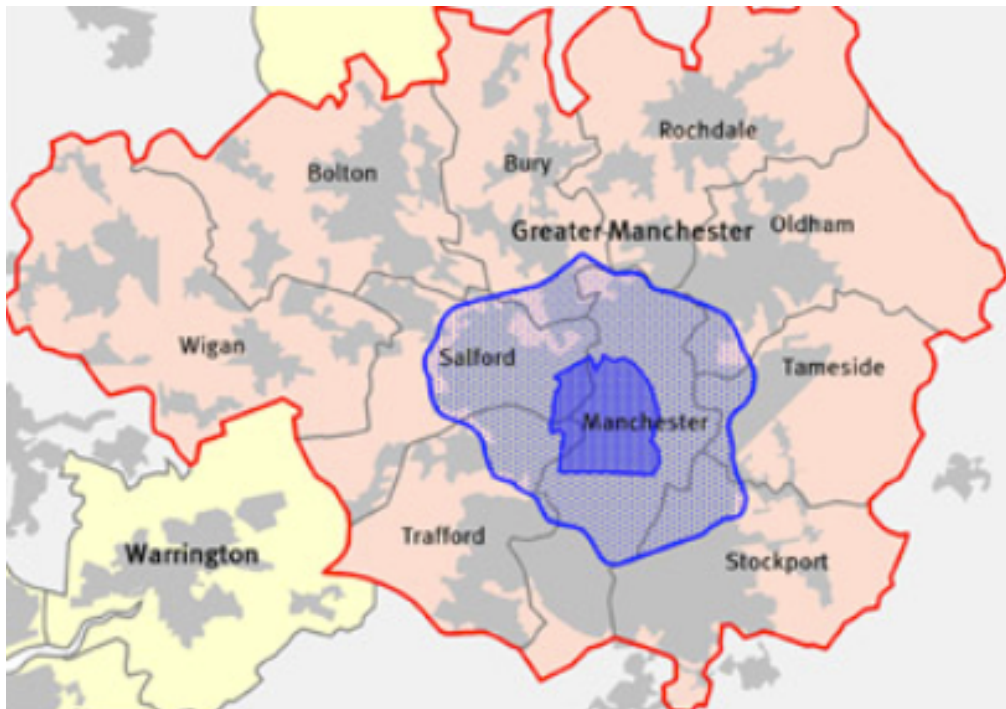
1. To what extent do Roma adolescents in Manchester acquire vocalic variants typical of their locally-born peer groups?

It is important to ensure that any variation I observe in Roma English is present

in the speech of the Manchester-born peer group for two reasons. Firstly, there is not a great deal of detailed phonetic research available on Manchester dialect features, and it is possible that there is a substantial amount of geographical variation of Manchester dialects (see below). It is not sufficient to assume that the Manchester-born speakers who my participants come into contact with produce the same variation reported by other scholars. Secondly, given the diverse context of the school (see section 2.4), it is possible that the young people's speech exhibits a range of multi-ethnic influences that have not been recorded in previous studies. If I have evidence of the variation patterns of the Manchester-born students, I can be more confident in my findings of variation, or lack of it, in Roma English speech. Having said this, I do of course inform my analyses with the existing research on speech in Manchester. This section goes some way to describe the Manchester dialect(s) and some of the linguistic influences that the participants of the current study may be exposed to.

All language varieties change over time. They are products of a process of evolution that involves competition and selection in different contact settings (Mufwene, 2002:53). These varieties are by-products of population movement and idiolectal contact that has constantly shifted throughout history and continues today. As we saw in Section 2.2, Manchester's history has been greatly influenced by its flow of people, just as its ways of speaking have. The dialects of Manchester and the surrounding areas only exist by virtue of the idiolects identified within individual speakers from whom they are an extrapolation (Mufwene, 2002:52). The existence of these individual varieties means variation in Manchester speech, and variation that comes with a highly diverse set of influences given the diversity of the Manchester population. A commonly used example of variation in the north of England is what lexical item different speakers use to mean *a bread roll*. The north west of England has a wide variety of lexical items for bread roll, including *roll*, *bap*, *bun*, *barm*, *muffin*, *cob*, *oven bottom*, *batch*, and *teacake* (University of Manchester, 2015). Where my participants use a variant other than *roll*, this could mean that they are acquiring greater sociolinguistic variation in the local dialect. But I must first identify what the variants of the local dialect are.





**Figure 2.4: Greater Manchester area map (taken from Baranowski & Turton, 2015)**

The north west of England encompasses extensive regional dialect variation, and speech production can vary greatly, depending on the area of Manchester or Greater Manchester. **Figure 2.4** shows the area of Greater Manchester shaded red, but this area cannot be taken to be one dialect area. The satellite towns that make up Greater Manchester, such as Bolton and Oldham, have their own distinctive varieties.

In one of the only detailed phonetic analyses of the Manchester accent to date, Baranowski & Turton (2015) define the boundaries for their Manchester variety as the area enclosed by the M60 ringroad (dotted blue area in **Figure 2.4**) because they suggest that the more localised area of Central Manchester (solid blue area) may be too restrictive. Saltar High, the site of the current study, falls just outside of Central Manchester (solid blue), but within Baranowski & Turton's area dotted blue area. However this boundary includes parts of Stockport and Salford, and therefore raises popular local issues for discussion regarding disagreement about whether the Salford accent has the same features as Manchester; again more research is needed. This lack of defined dialect area is one reason why I decided that it would be more appropriate for my study to focus on the speech of the actual students in my fieldwork site, although where appropriate and research is available, I do

compare and contrast with the wider body of research.

There have been few academic studies that specifically examine Manchester dialects. Trudgill (1999) divides the North into six dialect areas, including Manchester in the more general area of *Northwest Midlands*. These areas are based on five phonological criteria:

- /h/-dropping/retention: Northwest Midlands speakers drop /h/
- monophthong versus diphthong in FACE: diphthong found in Northwest Midlands speech
- velar nasal plus: Northwest Midlands speakers articulate /g/ after a nasal in words like *long* and *singer*
- rhoticity versus non-rhoticity: Northwest Midlands speech is non-rhotic
- final vowel of *happy*: *happy*-tensing not found in Northwest Midlands (see Chapter 6 for further discussion)

'While these features do serve to distinguish the major dialect divisions in the North of England, they are not the only features which are salient' (Beal, 2008:130). More recently, it has been noted that there are further differences between the Manchester accent and those of its surrounding areas and descriptions have become more detailed. In one of the most recent descriptions, Hughes, Trudgill, & Watt (2013) note several features of Manchester English that can be added to the list from Trudgill (1999) above, including those shown in Table 2.8:

**Table 2.8 Manchester dialect features (taken from Hughes et al., 2013)**

Consonantal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• /l/ realized as [ɫ] in both onset and coda positions</li> <li>• /t/-glottaling in pre-consonantal and intervocalic positions</li> <li>• (th)-fronting</li> <li>• full de-rhotacisation</li> </ul>
Vocalic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of FOOT/STRUT split, making <i>foot</i> and <i>strut</i> homophones both produced with /ʊ/</li> <li>• <i>book</i> and <i>spook</i> words may be homophonous with the vowel in both being produced with /u:/</li> <li>• final /ɪ/ in words like <i>city</i> is lax, and may be markedly more open; [ɛ] is a</li> </ul>

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frequent pronunciation

- /u:/ is fronted and often markedly diphthongal, for example *pool*
  - unstressed final vowel of words such as *better* or *pasta* (and analogous constructions like *passed her*) is often backed and lowered compared with the equivalent vowel in RP. It may reach [ɑ]. This pronunciation is one of the principal stereotypes of Mancunian speech.
- 

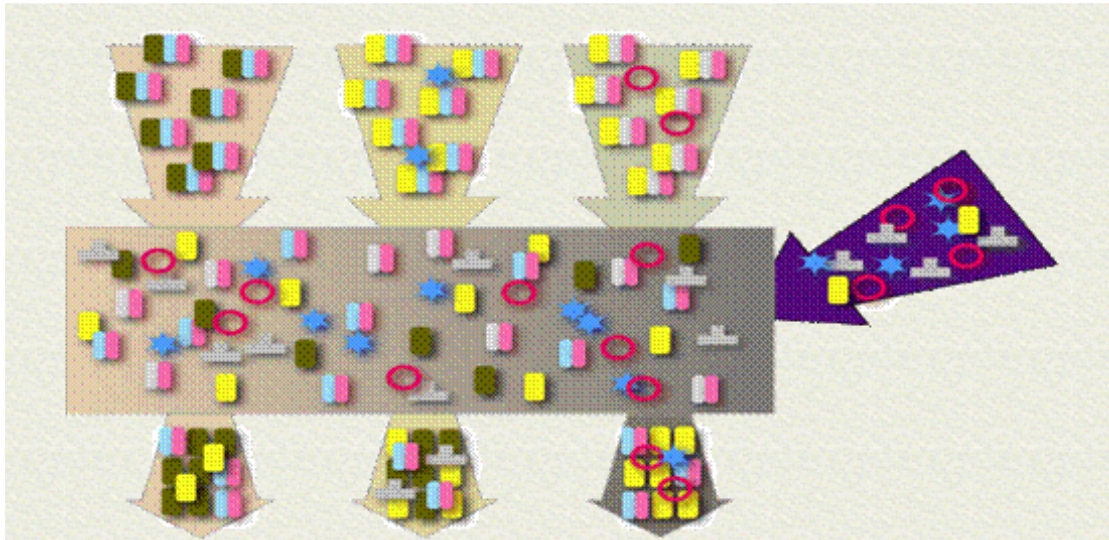
Another feature that Hughes et al.'s (2013) brief description of Manchester English includes is the retention of a long /u:/ vowel in words ending in -ook (A. Hughes et al., 2013; Wells, 1982), such as *book* and *look*. This feature is recessive and now, most Mancunians, including the locally born peers of my participants, pronounce *book* with the shorter /ʊ/ vowel typical of Northern Englishes. This feature is therefore highly localised, restricted only to certain areas of Greater Manchester such as Bolton. In contrast, some of the features Hughes et al. (2013) list are supralocal features that are found across the country, for example /t/-glottaling and (th)-fronting. This is representative of how it is a whole matrix of features that make up any one variety, and not all speakers born and bred in Manchester will produce all of the features outlined by Hughes et al. (2013).

The features listed above describe a traditional, white Manchester accent. However, as we have seen, Manchester has long been a destination for people in search of work and a better life, from both within the local area and much further afield, much like the parents of the participants of my study. This leads to a situation of dialect and language contact. My participants are not only exposed to the more traditional white Manchester accent described above. They also encounter many other Englishes, including those spoken by members of the Asian and Black Caribbean communities, Englishes from other parts of the UK and from abroad. I move now to a discussion of how this complex situation relates to my study and Manchester's superdiversity.

### **2.5.1 The Manchester feature pool**

Superdiversity (see Section 2.3) is a feature of increasing globalisation, and diasporic communities are increasing in size and number in the urban centres

of the world, such as Manchester. In a diasporic community, each speaker contributes his or her own set of linguistic features, and the resulting linguistic performance draws on a feature pool made up of every idiolect (Hinrichs, 2011; Mufwene, 2002). Where language acquisition occurs within these communities it is 'a recreation process in which the learner makes a system out of features selected from utterances of different individuals with whom he/she has interacted.' (Mufwene, 2002:45).



**Figure 2.5: The three tiers of the feature pool (taken from Mufwene, 2012)**

Figure 2.5 is Mufwene's (2002, 2012) visualisation of the feature pool. The top tier represents the input linguistic systems. These are the idiolects or dialects of the same language, which contribute features to the pool. The pool is made up of a mixture of all of these features, as well as features of the arrow to the right, which in Mufwene's version indicates different non-native systems. The bottom tier represents the output idiolects, the features that each speaker adopts into his or her own speech.

Cheshire et al. (2011) employed Mufwene's (2002) concept of a feature pool in their study of the impact of multilingualism on London English and the role that children and adolescents play in linguistic innovation. London, like Manchester, has seen very high rates of immigration and both language and dialect contact have been common throughout its history. Cheshire et al. (2011) and Kerswill et al. (2013) describe the findings of two research projects that took place in London between 2004-2010. The first compared speech data from 49 adolescents aged 16-19 in Hackney, a highly ethnically and

linguistically diverse area of inner-city east London, with that of eight older speakers in Hackney, as well as 49 adolescents and eight older speakers from Havering, a predominantly monolingual outer-city area of London. The second project focused on the age of acquisition of different features of London English by recording 120 speakers between four-40 years old from another north London borough with similar multiethnicity and multilingualism to Hackney.

In each project, the young people were divided into 'Anglos' and 'non-Anglos'. The Anglo group corresponds approximately to the official terminology of *white British* in that these speakers were composed of members of families of British origin who had lived in the area for two or more generations (Cheshire et al., 2011:157). The non-Anglo group was comprised of everyone else and roughly represented the ethnic makeup of the areas that they had been recruited from. It could be argued that this is too much of a binary distinction that could potentially miss out important details. For example, if a speaker had one Jamaican grandparent, but all other members of their family were Anglo, that speaker would still be ascribed to the non-Anglo category. If everything about that speaker's life, including their speech patterns, were Anglo, then this ascription to the non-Anglo ethnic group would cause issues in the analysis and interpretation of results (Drummond, 2015). However, the possibility of this situation arising is relatively rare, and the results of the pieces of research are of great interest and relevance to this current study.

Cheshire et al. (2011) examined a range of variables, including changes in phonology, morphosyntax and discourse markers. They found evidence of the emergence of an innovative set of contact features that they label as a new variety of 'Multicultural London English' (MLE). This is as a result of a situation of unguided group second language acquisition, with speakers accessing a pool of variable features which, when put together, can be said to constitute MLE. For some features, selection from the feature pool may be governed by factors that would typically influence selection in language contact scenarios, such as salience. For other features, the output reflects the frequency of features in the input varieties as well as social factors, such as friendship networks.

The influence of friendship patterns was particularly important in the

case of non-standard article forms. Multiethnic friendship networks increased the chances of speakers producing the article as [ə] or [ðə] plus glottal stop before word-initial vowels, rather than the standard and mainstream indefinite [ən] or [ði]. High frequency use of the non-standard variants among the Bangladeshi male adolescents appeared to be influencing the production of their white Anglo male peers (Cheshire et al., 2011:187). This reflects the way in which migration effects the makeup of social networks, for both the migrants and the destination societies, with the result that language change and language shift may be accelerated (Kerswill, 2006:6).

Similar to the inner city London sites of the studies described above, the Manchester that my participants find themselves in is hugely multicultural. My participants do not only acquire English in class. Much acquisition is done through unguided language acquisition in multi-ethnic friendship groups where a range of interlanguage varieties are spoken alongside traditional white Manchester English as described above, Afro-Caribbean English, and indigenised second-language varieties such as Indian English. They also hear non-indigenised varieties, including English as spoken by Romani, Romanian, Czech, Chinese, Urdu, Polish, and Russian speakers to name a few. Each of these speakers will have their own evolving idiolect, making up the input of the top tier of Figure 2.5, and will produce different sounds based on any number of factors.

This gives an idea of how a young migrant arriving in Manchester would have an enormous pool of features to choose from. Although we do at times make a conscious choice as to which word it is appropriate to use, the selections that form our idiolectal habits are generally unconscious ones. They are influenced by where we acquired a language or variety and who we interacted with (Mufwene, 2002:45). So language learners unconsciously select, modify and recreate different combinations of the features they hear from everyone they have interacted with in order to form their own idiolect. Resulting in their output, the bottom tier of Figure 2.5.

In order to investigate and describe here what features my participants may be acquiring, I must endeavour to identify what some of the common input features of such a multicultural English may be.

### 2.5.1.1 Multicultural Manchester English

In a pilot study, Drummond (2013a) investigated what features occur in Multicultural Manchester English, in part to ascertain what similarities and differences exist between Manchester and those features described in the MLE studies above. Drummond analysed the speech of five young males from different backgrounds living in Manchester aged between 16 and 21 (see Figure 2.6). The participants were: two Somali migrants; one Manchester-born, mixed race speaker of Jamaican parents; one white, Manchester-born male of South American parents; and one white Anglo speaker.

Drummond (2013a) described a *matrix* of potential Manchester dialect features (see Figure 2.6) that includes traditional local features such as the lack of FOOT/STRUT split, supra-local features of GOOSE fronting and (th)-fronting, and Multicultural Manchester English (MME) features that include monophthongisation of the GOAT and MOUTH vowels and the use of lexical features such as *bare* (to mean *very* or *really*) and *mans* (as a substitute for personal pronouns), all of which can also be found in MLE.

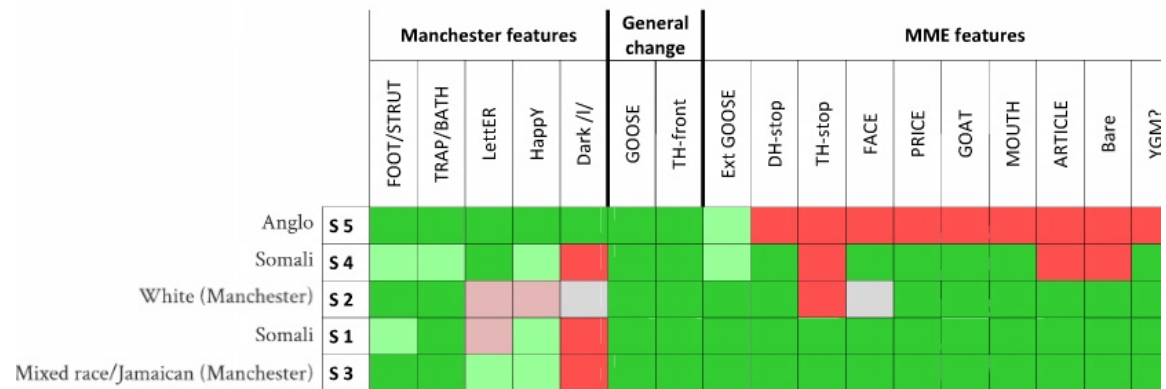


Figure 2.6 Matrix of Multicultural Manchester features (Drummond, 2013a)

The coloured blocks in Figure 2.6 represent a cline where red means that the speaker did not produce that particular feature, pink indicates that he occasionally produced the feature, light green often produced the feature, and dark green where the speaker produced that feature most of the time. A grey block indicates that there were not enough tokens of that variable to be analysed.

The Anglo speaker represented what we would expect from a traditional

white Manchester accent, producing only Manchester features and undergoing general, supra-local changes. Apart from some tokens of the extreme GOOSE fronting (which could possibly be an extension of the supra-local change of GOOSE-fronting), he produced no Multicultural Manchester features whatsoever. All of the other speakers produced most if not all of the MME features in addition to the more traditional Manchester features, with the exception of dark //.

Although this is only a very small speaker sample, Drummond's (2013) pilot study is to date the only piece of research that examines the impact of immigration and multiculturalism on vernacular Manchester English. If the results were replicated on a larger scale we would perhaps see that many of the features found in Multicultural London English can also be found in Manchester, but currently some Anglo speakers seem to be resisting these changes. If I am to examine the acquisition of Manchester English by my Roma migrants, I must also consider that they would very likely acquire supralocal and multicultural features as well as the more traditional Anglo Manchester features.

## **2.6 The future: polylinguaging in superdiversity**

Today's world is increasingly superdiverse. In 2003 it was estimated that at least 25% of the world's population spoke English reasonably proficiently with 750 million people speaking English as a foreign language with at least a 'medium level of conversational competence' (Crystal, 2012:68). Increasingly, English is being learnt and used to communicate, not with native English speakers, but as an international lingua franca for use in business, industry, medicine, science and education (Durham, 2014:2).

In the superdiverse context of the current study, the vast majority of my participants use English as a lingua franca (ELF) many times a day, both in and out of classes. Thus far, the sociolinguistics of ELF has received little attention from researchers (Durham, 2014:1), but rapidly growing numbers of ELF users means an increasing demand for better understanding of the linguistic processes of ELF use and what it can tell us about acquisition and



language use in more general terms. Because the users of ELF are not 'native' speakers, this means that researchers need to develop ways of measuring language acquisition that do not use native speakers as a baseline (see V. Cook, 1999; Piller, 2002 for further discussion).

While many SLA and monolingual educators consider a person's ability to speak a language to mean using the features associated with that particular language, in real life, 'speakers may use the full range of linguistic features at their disposal or in their feature pool, in many cases regardless of how they are associated with different "languages"' (Møller & Jørgensen, 2012:1). Møller & Jørgensen (2012) make the distinction between 'a language': 'the sociocultural construct believed to comprise a set of features which sets it apart from all other sets of features' and the real world use of language: languaging.

Furthermore, polylinguaging is defined as 'the phenomenon that speakers employ linguistic resources at their disposal which are associated with different "languages", including the cases in which the speakers know only few features associated with a given "language" (Jørgensen, 2010; Møller, 2009).' Most scholars who have written about languaging use the term predominantly in connection with language use by 'late-modern urban youth' in superdiverse environments (Jørgensen, 2008:161). But in fact, 'we are all languagers', and we use 'whatever linguistic features are at (our) disposal with the intention of achieving our communicative aims' (Jørgensen, 2008:169).

In the time over which I have written this dissertation, the discourse surrounding research on (super)diversity and language has developed. Migration patterns are having an increasing effect on the worldwide economic and political situations, with discussions regarding immigration at the very centre of the UK 2015 election campaigns and policy discussions. While superdiversity may be 'a timely rather than enduring notion' and one that comes with a sell-by date (Rampton, Blommaert, Arnaut, & Spotti, 2015:8), research in the field has never been more important and with more potential for real world impact.

## **2.7 Summary**

This chapter has provided a vital backdrop of the geographical and linguistic context of the current study. I explained how waves of migration have moulded Manchester, making it the superdiverse city it is today. All of this has the utmost relevance to this study because the Roma participants are just the latest layer of migrants to arrive here, and they find themselves in a school that is made up of diversity that is a reflection of the broader situation. I described the two local neighbourhoods that are directly relevant to the school and introduced the fieldsite itself, Saltar High. I ended with a discussion of the linguistic landscape in Manchester.

In the following chapter, I present a review of the literature that informs the direction of this dissertation.

## Chapter 3 Variation in a new language

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a synthesis of the background literature that informs the direction of this dissertation. The current study lies at the intersection of variationist sociophonetics and the field that is traditionally called Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The goals of this study are to contribute to our knowledge and understanding of dialect acquisition in a language (English) that is not the speakers' own original language. Much debate surrounds the use of terminology in SLA, and there are a number of different terms used in the literature. Different terms are used by different authors to refer to the same concept, or at times, the same term is used to refer to different things. I begin in section 3.2 with a discussion of the issues surrounding the relevant terminology, and I set out the parameters for use of terminology in the rest of this dissertation. Section 3.3 describes three phases of variationist research in SLA. In section 3.4, I acknowledge that there have been criticisms of social approaches to SLA, but argue for the approach and discuss some of the criticism that have been applied to the more traditional cognitive perspectives. In support of a social approach, I end with a discussion of the contributions that have been made to SLA by variation theory.

### 3.2 The terminology of the field of SLA

The current study investigates the acquisition of variation in English by a migrant community. This would traditionally fall within the field of SLA, where *second* language is conceptualised as any *non-native* language acquired beyond the *first* language. In the field of SLA, a speaker's existing language is

typically referred to as *first language*, *L1*, *mother tongue* or *native language*, and the language they are learning would be referred to as the *second language*, *L2*, *foreign language* or *target language*. However, there are a number of authors, myself included, who feel that these terms are unsatisfactory.

All of the participants in my study are from Romania, and they have known two languages from birth: Romani and Romanian. Romani is the community language, spoken in the home and with family and friends. Before coming to the UK, Romanian would have been used to speak to anyone outside of the Roma community. Here in the UK, participants still frequently use Romanian with translators, interpreters, teachers, and teaching assistants because there is not often no Romani speaker available. Therefore, regarding terminology, it may not be possible to say which would be their *first language*. The terms *mother tongue* and *native language* have been criticised as being overly emotive, muddled, and potentially inaccurate (Coulmas, 1981; Rampton, 1990). Rampton (1990:97) argues against a number of assumptions that are made when using the terms *native speaker* and *mother tongue*. One assumption of the use of these terms is that language is acquired genetically. This is not always the case, and certain languages may not be passed down in this way. Languages may instead be acquired in social settings. Additionally, even where an individual is born into a certain group, this does not mean that he or she will be able to use that group's language in all situations:

[M]any native speakers of English can't write or tell stories, while many non-native speakers can. Nobody's functional command is total: users of a language are more proficient in some areas than others. And most countries are multilingual...from an early age children normally encounter two or more languages. Yet despite the criticisms, the terms native speaker and mother tongue remain in circulation, continuously insinuating their assumptions.

(Rampton, 1990:98)

Finding adequate terminology for talking about the new language speakers acquire is equally challenging. I find use of the term *second language* problematic, especially with regard to the participants of my study.

They all know at least two languages, some more. Therefore, it would be inaccurate to call English their *second* language. English is already a global language, and this brings into question why we would call it a *foreign* language (G. Hall & Cook, 2012:274). Moreover, *foreign* language is a problematic term for the context of the current study, since the participants are living in the country where the language is spoken. *Foreign* language is also often used as half of a binary with *native*, so using *foreign* would further reinforce the issues that come with the term *native*. Finally, *target* language gives the impression that all speakers want to speak a prescribed, predetermined, *standard* variety and could also be said to have 'unfortunate military overtones' (G. Hall & Cook, 2012:274). While much SLA research focuses on learners' acquisition of a *standard* variety, in reality many speakers, especially migrants such as the participants of the current study, are not exposed to *standard* language.

In order to avoid many of the issues detailed above, I endeavour to adopt terms that are more neutral (see below). However, in the interest of balance, it is important to state that not all SLA researchers agree. Kasper (1997) points out that all theories pick and choose the terms they adopt depending on the particular epistemological stance. She states that even holistic, socially situated research approaches, such as anthropology and ethnography, 'construct their idealized agents by reducing away what seems trivial in terms of the adopted theory' (Kasper, 1997:309). She argues that the nonnative constructs focus on what is held in common by the agents being studied and what is relevant to the SLA research context.

However, because of the reasons discussed above, I favour the use of more neutral terms, such as those put forward by Cook (2010) and Hall & Cook (2012:274):

- Own language: 'the language which the students already know and through which (if allowed), they can approach the new language' (G. Cook, 2010:xxii)
- New language: 'the language being learned' i.e. English in the current study (for further discussion, see Cook (2010:xxi-xxii)).

I adopt these terms for use throughout this thesis. However, in line with Hall &

Cook (2012), I also acknowledge the currency of the differing terminology. Where other authors have used a different term, I typically adhere to their use as appropriate.

### **3.3 The evolution of variationist research in SLA**

As outlined above, this study lies at the intersection of variationist sociophonetics and SLA. These are at times opposing but also potentially complementary fields. I now move onto a discussion of the developments of these two fields in relation to the direction of this dissertation. Regan (2013:276) categorises the evolution of variationist research in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) into three phases: early, middle and current. In the following section, I will discuss each of these phases in turn.

#### **3.3.1 Early phase: 1970s to 1980s**

Through the late 1960s and early 1970s, the field of SLA research developed in parallel to the monolingual studies of variationist sociolinguistics. Both fields investigated speakers' underlying systems, with a specific focus on understanding whether linguistic variation was random or systematic (Regan, 2013:276). Early variationist studies, such as Labov's (1972a) study of African American Vernacular English in New York, were often interested in looking at non-standard, marginalised varieties. In parallel, a number of early SLA studies that examine variability in learner language were also interested in marginalised speakers, often focusing on migrants moving from the developing to the developed world (Huebner, 1979; Wolfram, 1985). However, despite the two fields having areas of common interest, only a few researchers made connections between the two fields before the 1980s (e.g. Dickerson, 1975; Tarone, 1979). It was not until the late 1980s that SLA research began to recognise and take advantage of the insights that variationist methods of data collection and analysis could provide (Bayley, 2005:2).

Since the field of SLA began, researchers have been concerned with the systematicity of learners' language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000:166). Lado's

(1957) Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) was key in pushing the early field of SLA forward and putting language learners' L1 at the forefront of investigation. The CAH was intended to form the basis of a system whereby teachers could predict learner errors and areas of difficulty. According to the CAH, differences in speech between a learner's actual performance and the target L2 forms are attributed to 'interference' from learners' L1s. The CAH has been stated in two versions (Wardhaugh, 1970:124): a strong version that was largely rejected, and a weak form that still influences SLA today. The strong form of the CAH predicts that by comparing the distribution of phonemes and allophones in the L1 and L2, those features of L2 phonology that are similar to those of a speaker's L1 will be easy to acquire. The CAH also predicts that the greatest difficulty in acquisition will occur when a contrast between two or more allophones in the L1 is found to be a contrast between two phonemes in the L2 (Lado, 1957:2).

This strong form of the CAH remained highly popular throughout the 1960s, but by the late 1970s, a lack of empirical evidence supporting the hypothesis called its definitive nature into question (see Dickerson, 1975; Nemser, 1971). Many of the errors that the CAH predicted were not observed in learner language. In addition, teachers and researchers reported that many learners would make the same errors even when they had different L1s. It was therefore asserted that the hypothesis could not be used to predict all learner errors, but was of more use as a retrospective explanation of errors within learner language. In fact, Lado (1957) himself did not claim his theory to be all encompassing and had already called for further research to be done. When the claims of the strong form of the CAH failed to materialise when tested against empirical data, scholars realised that there were many kinds of error that could not be predicted or explained by contrastive analysis alone (Sridhar, 1980:223).

As the 20th Century progressed, the weaker form of the hypothesis was adopted. In this form, the CAH serves as a tool to retrospectively explain observed learner phonological difficulties, rather than predict or presuppose as the stronger form does. This weaker version continues to play a central role in the study of learner language, although it has been criticised by some for being merely 'heuristic' (Eckman, 1977:316).

Following the rise and decline of the CAH through the 1960s and 1970s, a great deal of attention was paid to the study of learner language. SLA studies frequently focus on the initial stages of the acquisition process. During this time, it is observed that learners develop an 'approximate system' which shares features of both the learner's first language and the target language but is fully explainable by neither (Selinker, 1972). Selinker (1972) termed this learner language 'interlanguage', and although other names have been used to describe learner language (e.g. approximative system (Nemser, 1971) and idiosyncratic dialect (Corder, 1971)), it is the term 'interlanguage' that has endured.

Before the 1980s, very few SLA studies implemented variationist methods in their study of interlanguage variability. One early example is Dickerson's (1975) research that examined the pronunciation of // and /r/ by Japanese learners of English in a range of phonological environments. Dickerson stated explicitly that she intended to extend the variationist model to the SLA context, and, in doing so, she found that the learners' interlanguage did indeed consist of a system of variable rules influenced by phonetic environment and style.

Gradually more researchers began to take advantage of variationist methodologies. Results began to attest to the fact that variation in interlanguage is not random, as was previously thought, but highly systematic and constrained by multiple linguistic and social factors, just as in a speaker's own language (see Adamson & Kovac, 1981; Beebe, 1980; Beebe & Zuengler, 1983; Berdan, 1996; Dickerson, 1975; Tarone, 1982; Wolfram, 1985). Prior to this, there was a tendency in much SLA research to attribute learners' variation in interlanguage to a single co-occurring contextual factor. Beebe (1977), Ellis (1987), Selinker & Douglas (1985), and Tarone (1985) attribute observed variation to: ethnicity of the interlocutor; amount of planning time available; discourse topic; and attention to speech respectively. 'Remarkably, each of these studies found evidence from interlanguage variation in support of the researchers' theoretical positions' (Bayley, 2005:3). However, none of those authors examined the possibility that the real cause of variation may be a combination of multiple contextual influences, and that those factors may affect different groups of learners differently.



In 1981, Adamson & Kovac published what is thought to be the first use of Varbrul (variable rule analysis) in SLA. Varbrul, developed by Labov and colleagues, is a set of multivariate statistical analysis methods originally designed for the analysis of phonological variation within monolingual variationist research. Methods of multivariate analysis that are frequently used in quantitative variationist sociolinguistics, such as VARBRUL, allow researchers to model the simultaneous effect of multiple linguistic and social factors that may impact on speech. The introduction of this type of quantitative analyses into SLA marked a turning point.

Previous SLA research that expected to find a single overarching explanation for speaker variation presents a vastly oversimplified picture given the complexities of communication. What is key to the current study, and indeed to research in the variationist tradition in general, is to examine what relative strength many different factors have when associated with speaker variation (Bayley, 2005:3). Although it is never possible to report all social, physical and linguistic features, it is important to endeavour to report and include in the model of variation as many features as possible, such as the interlocutors, physical surroundings, topic of discussion, features of the social and physical context, as well as features of the linguistic context of the variable form (Tarone, 1979).

Following Adamson & Kovac's (1981) study, it became increasingly common for research that looks at variation in interlanguage to use Labovian techniques of data collection and analysis, such as the sociolinguistic interview and Varbrul. The findings of such research repeatedly confirmed that L2 variation is systematic and constrained by both linguistic and social factors, and in doing so demonstrated that quantitative multivariate analysis is a powerful tool in the analysis of highly variable L2 speech data (Regan, 2013:277).

### **3.3.2 Middle phase: two types of variation**

Much early phase SLA research examines what teachers considered errors and frustrating problems with variability in interlanguage (Dickerson, 1975). Research was often situated in the language classroom and learners acquired

the standard, prestige variety. Any variation or deviation from the target language was seen as 'problematic', and this 'problematic' variation in interlanguage has been labelled as Type 1 variation (Mougeon, Rehner, & Nadasdi, 2004). Type 1 variation corresponds to Corder's (1981) term 'vertical variation' and Ellis' (1985) 'developmental variation'.

This Type 1 variation refers to the learner's increase in proficiency 'along a continuum of cognitive or articulatory difficulty' (Adamson & Regan, 1991:2). A commonly used example of vertical variation is the learning of English negative constructions, which may consist of four stages:

Stage 1	no + verb	'She no understand'
Stage 2	don't + verb	'She don't understand'
Stage 3	AUX + not	'She can't play'
Stage 4	DO + not	'She doesn't understand'

(Adamson & Regan, 1991:2)

Teachers regard success as the student acquiring the final stage of this target form and eliminating what would be considered to be the incorrect usage of earlier stages.

From monolingual variationist sociolinguistics, we now understand that we have systematic variation in our own languages and many forms that may be considered by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers to be invariant in English are in fact used variably by speakers in their own language. All speakers exhibit variation in speech, and so most learners will be exposed to linguistic variation and vernacular features. This is especially true for migrant learners of English, such as the participants in the current study, who are most likely to interact with and come into contact with working class and minority speakers of English (Bayley & Regan, 2004:334).

The choices we make concerning variation in our speech form a part of our identity construction in that moment, our choice of self-presentation and how we build a relationship with our interlocutors (Regan, 2013:278). In our own languages, knowledge of these patterns of variation is part of a speaker's sociolinguistic competence, and therefore in order to become fully proficient in the new language (if that is what a speaker wishes to do), language learners must also acquire these patterns of variation (Bayley & Regan, 2004).

Mougeon et al. (2004) called this form of variation Type 2 variation.

The term Type 2 variation corresponds with Corder's (1981) 'horizontal' variation and Ellis' (1985) 'social' variation. It refers to speakers' progress along a sociolinguistic dimension (Regan, 2013:278), acquiring non-categorical variation as a function of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, such as age or gender (see section 3.5). 'The horizontal continuum in interlanguage is similar to the continuum of social dialects found within a speech community' (Adamson & Regan, 1991:2).

Acquisition of Type 2 variation, a strand of research that began to emerge in the 1990s, is the focus of the current study. Research suggests that speakers can acquire variants of a new language, such as the English variants of the (ing) variable: [ɪn] and [ɪŋ] (Adamson & Regan, 1991; Schleeef et al., 2011). Some learners also produce these variants within the same linguistic constraints as native speakers (Major, 2004; Mougeon et al., 2004), for example in English, the apical variant [ɪn] is favoured most in progressives (e.g. he's walking) and least in nouns (e.g. ceiling) (Labov, 1989:87). Where systematisation of the variable is acquired, this indicates acquisition of sociolinguistic competence (Schleeef et al., 2011), which is seen as a crucial indicator of co-membership in a speech community (Labov, 1972b, 2001).

A speaker's sociolinguistic competence broadly corresponds to native speakers' communicative competence (Hymes, 1972:281). This is made up of a speaker's knowledge of syntactic, semantic and phonological rules as well as their sociolinguistic competence, knowledge of the norms that govern our interactions, including: 'knowledge of when to speak or be silent; how to speak on each occasion; how to communicate (and interpret) meanings of respect, seriousness, humour, politeness or intimacy' (Milroy, 1987:85).

One thing that makes sociolinguistic competence so difficult to acquire is that, for the most part, the underlying processes and patterns are subconscious. The fact that most people are not conscious or aware of the variable rules that they use every day, even in their own language, means that the rules are very difficult for new language learners to notice and acquire (Durham, 2014:22). Whereas for syntax and lexis, there are dictionaries and reference books to support the teaching and learning, there are no such resources for the teaching of sociolinguistic variation (Lyster, 1996:167). If a speaker exhibits the underlying variation in a new language, both for features

where the variation is stylistically motivated and those where the variation is internally constrained, that strongly suggests acquisition of sociolinguistic competence and mastery of the new language. This makes examination of the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence a very valuable resource for understanding language acquisition better (Durham, 2014:22).

To summarise, Type 1 variation is the study of linguistic competence and how well a speaker has acquired the categorical structures of a new language; Type 2 variation, the focus of this dissertation, is the study of sociolinguistic competence and how well a speaker has adopted the sociolinguistic norms of a community (Adamson & Regan, 1991:3). SLA studies that address Type 2 variation typically fall into two categories: those that focus on advanced speakers' acquisition of variation and its application to the SLA framework, and those like the current study that investigate migrants integration into local communities. This second group of studies does not typically reflect on the implications of their findings for the process of acquisition (Durham, 2014:21). I will now go on to discuss some of the key studies that examine Type 2 variation.

### **3.3.2.1 Investigations into Type 2 variation**

There is a growing body of research investigating Type 2 variation, although most studies still look at the acquisition of 'standard' variants, often in the context of a formal language classroom. Conversely, the current study focuses on acquisition of vernacular dialect features in a native English-speaking context. Schumann's (1978) Acculturation Model applies to naturalistic rather than classroom SLA in dominant L2 settings. According to the model, the degree of acquisition in an L2 is proportional to the degree of acculturation by the learner to the L2 group. The greater the social and psychological distance between a learner's attitudes, knowledge and behaviour towards the L2 group, the less contact he will have and less open to the available input, and consequently a lower level of acquisition.

Many of the studies into Type 2 variation take place in the context of a language acquisition classroom. However, it could be argued that the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence is of greater importance to those

living in the country of the new language and having to use that language every day. Immigrants, such as those in the current study, who have to communicate effectively with speakers of English and other language backgrounds in order to live, attend school, and potentially work in the UK may have a greater need for sociolinguistic competence than those studying in a language acquisition classroom in their own country.

There are a number of previous studies that examine the acquisition of target language variation patterns in naturalistic situations. These include: Adamson & Regan's (1991) study into variation of (ing) by Cambodian and Vietnamese immigrants; Bayley's (1996) study of Chinese speakers of English and their patterns of consonant cluster reduction; Major's (2004) study of four stylistically conditioned phonological processes in native and non-native speakers (Japanese and Spanish); and a number of studies that have examined Polish migrants' acquisition of English, such as Schlee et al. (2011), Drummond (2010, 2013b), Diskin and Regan (2015), and Diskin (2016). Much of this research emphasises the crucial role that contact with native speakers in a variety of situations has on L2 acquisition, another focus of the current study.

Regan (1995, 1996) studied Irish learners' acquisition of the deletion of French *ne*. Speech recorded in sociolinguistic interviews from before and after a year in France was analysed and compared. Regan's findings suggest that the amount of contact the learners had with native French speakers had an impact on the speaker's language acquisition. Unfortunately, there was no quantitative data recorded on the effect of native contact on language acquisition (Regan, 1998). However, her qualitative observations indicate that those who had the most contact with native speakers while living within the native speech community were more likely to be approaching native speaker colloquial usage after their time abroad. Nagy, Blondeau, and Auger (2003) found that young Anglophone Montrealers who interacted regularly with their francophone counterparts were far more native-like in their use of subject-doubling in French than those who had fewer French-speaking contacts. Schlee et al.'s (2011) findings also suggest that increased contact with native speakers results in the production of more native-like variants and the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence.

Schleef et al. (2011) examined the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence and the (ing) variable by Polish teens living in Edinburgh and London. Results of a multivariate analysis of recorded speech data from a combination of reading tasks and semi-structured interviews showed that the Polish adolescents could adopt the variants and patterns of variation typical of their locally born peers despite having been in the country for a relatively short amount of time (average 2.5 years). In the course of interviews, participants were asked about their friendship ties in the UK in order to investigate the relationship between the teens' social networks and their variation of (ing). In Edinburgh, social networks made a significant contribution to variant selection: Poles who had Scottish friends were more likely to use the apical variant [ɪn] typical of their Scottish peers. Conversely those who said they only mixed with Poles disfavoured the use of the local apical variant. However, in London the social network results were not significant. It is unclear why.

The study of participants' social networks was only a part of Schleef et al.'s (2011) analysis, and the more traditional variationist methodologies they used (reading tasks and sociolinguistic interview) were suited to the larger aims of their study. However, one possible explanation for the difference in their London and Edinburgh social network results is the unreliability of self-report data from interviews (see Fisher, 1993). As we shall see in the current study, ethnography is vital in an investigation of social networks because self-report data alone is not always reliable. I return to a discussion of this in Chapter 4.

The importance of local networks for L2 acquisition by immigrants has been reported in other studies. Wolfram et al. (2004), for example, investigated the glide trajectories of the /ai/ diphthong by two emerging Hispanic communities in North Carolina, USA, the state which had the most rapid increase in its Hispanic population during the 1990s. This study highlighted the relationship between individual style, use of variable forms, and speakers' associations with dominant ideologies, and showed how speakers may use variable features to mark certain aspects of their identities or to create a new L2 identity. In the study, the local diphthong was unglided, in contrast with the Spanish glided /ai/. Conversational interviews and

instrumental analysis of speech data indicated that the acquisition of local dialect features in this community was highly variable, even when speakers had the same lengths of residence, proficiency, community background, and family history.

To illustrate this point, the authors discuss the different patterns of language use shown by a brother and sister aged 13 and 11 respectively whose parents had immigrated to the region from Mexico. Unlike most of the speakers discussed by Wolfram et al. (2004), the brother typically produced the local variant: e.g. monophthongal /ai/ in words like *nice* and *rice*, as well as other salient features of Southern U.S. English. Wolfram et al. explain this through observations that the boy identified strongly with the local, athletic, non-Hispanic 'jock' culture. His sister, on the other hand, produced very few unglided variants and showed little evidence of accommodating to the Southern vowel system. The authors explain that she was strongly oriented to mainstream American institutional values. Such talk of 'Jock' culture and the connection of linguistic production with ideological values is highly reminiscent of Eckert's (1989, 2000) work on Communities of Practice (see section 2.3), and yet Wolfram et al. (2004) failed to mention this in their work. Social networks are located within the community and studies focusing on local networks typically use ethnography, but Wolfram et al. do not. Ethnographic observation is a long-term endeavour whereby the researcher becomes a participant in the community they are observing. Because ethnography focuses on small communities for long periods, ethnographers can observe locally salient social practices and categories, such as social networks (see Chapter 4).

In this section, I described key studies investigating the acquisition of Type 2 variation. Corder's (1981) categorisation of the two types of variation has been criticised as not being completely distinct (see Dickerson, 1975; Wolfram, 1985). However, the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a new language is now an important area of study for variationists, and it has become part of the current third phase of SLA research (Regan, 2013:278). In order for communication to be successful, whether within a culture or between people from different cultures, interlocutors must have an understanding of

the meaning of speech acts within a community and be able to interpret the meaning of speakers' uses of different linguistic forms, many of which are variable (Bayley, 2005:8).

Key to the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence is an understanding of stylistic variation. In order to communicate effectively, a speaker must understand that a change in style may be necessary when moving from the more formal classroom environment to speaking with friends, for example. Even after years of study, many learners find it very difficult to develop a range of styles and alternate between them (Mougeon et al., 2004). In the typical language classroom, students learn only a superordinate style that is based around institutional discourse: talking about institutional and academic business (Tarone & Swain, 1995:168). If that is a learner's only domain of communication, there may be some confusion on hearing, for example: "Well come on guys let's go get some burgers". To interpret this example, at the very least the hearer needs to have acquired the sociolinguistic competence to understand that this is a casual invitation and that "guys" in that context may include both males and females (Tarone & Swain, 1995:172).

Studies of Type 2 variation acquisition are therefore not only of theoretical interest, but also have a practical function to assist learners and teachers to understand the importance of the acquisition of a range of styles and appropriate alternation between them (Mougeon et al., 2004).

### **3.3.3 The three waves of monolingual variationist research**

As discussed in the previous section, as the second or middle phase of SLA research moved into the current phase, scholars began to take a much more social approach to new language acquisition. In order to explain the current phase of SLA, I first give a brief description of the three waves of monolingual variationist sociolinguistics that have had such an influence on current SLA research.

The vast majority of SLA variationist research involves data collection techniques and methods of analysis typical of the first wave of research into monolingual variation. This first wave of studies correlates linguistic variation



with global social categories, such as social class, age, and gender (e.g. Labov, 1972b; Trudgill, 1974) and reveals a regular socioeconomic stratification of linguistic variables. In first wave research, a speaker's linguistic variation is seen as a reflection of their membership of broad predetermined macro-social categories such as age or ethnicity (e.g. Labov, 1972b).

However, these are abstract categories that do not necessarily align in any significant way with how individuals define themselves (Mendoza-Denton, 2002; Milroy, 1987). Viewing speakers as homogeneous merely by virtue of them all belonging to the same age or social class, for example, misses out on so much important fine-grained social detail (Lawson, 2009:85). We are all so much more than just our age, gender, and class, and it is unlikely that any of us would be content to be reduced to such broad, locally meaningless categories. There are much smaller scale categories that speakers feel are relevant to themselves and that they belong to on a local level. Moreover, these categories may be salient within that particular local context, but not in another. In order to uncover this fine-grained detail, researchers need to understand much about the local values and local social systems before they can even begin to analyse what significance the use of language has within that community (Milroy, 1987:33).

By focusing on the local, such as a speaker's social networks (Milroy, 1987), second wave studies connect language use with less abstract categories than first wave research and are able to add detail to the broad overview of sociolinguistic variation provided by the first wave. However, in seeing language as 'belonging' to one network or group, many second wave studies still represent language use as a reflection of, or even determined by, the social structure (Eckert, 2000:3). In the eyes of the second wave, a speaker has little control or autonomy to use language dynamically.

In contrast, studies of the third wave of variationist investigation give much more control back to the speaker as an individual. Third wave research sees forms of variation, both linguistic and non-linguistic, as ways for speakers to differentiate themselves from one another. Language is seen not just as a reflection of social difference, but as playing a fundamental role in the construction of social meaning. In Eckert's (1989) ground-breaking third

wave study set in Belten High, Detroit, ethnography allowed her to perceive the way different sections of the school community participated in the life of the school. What made the speakers distinct was not their membership of a group or network, but their practices, such as how they dressed, where they hung out, and how they talked. Eckert was a participant observer in the school for two years, never entering the classroom, and maintaining distance from the authority structure of the institution, so that the teens would accept her presence and she could observe their social practices.

Coupled with her detailed ethnography, Eckert demonstrated the social meaning of variation through statistical correlations between adolescent participation in group practices and their realisation of six phonological variables and one syntactic variable. Her extensive analysis went beyond correlation of the variables with broad categories (such as gender or social class) to investigate the relationship between variation and her participants' practices and networks, 'effectively shifting her focus from what people *are* to what people *do*' (Moore, 2003:22). Eckert's 'bottom-up' analysis began with the individual as the basic unit, and she thus demonstrated that 'the meaning of variables is located not in the categories of people who employ them, but in the performance of identities that populate categories' (Eckert, 2002:4).

### **3.3.4 Third phase SLA research**

Just as in monolingual variationist sociolinguistics, SLA researchers began to feel the need for a more multilayered, fine-grained understanding of speakers' variation. This was achieved through the combination of ethnographic and quantitative analysis, which researchers found could provide a more nuanced description of participants, their lives, histories, and language. Quantitative research provides us with a macro perspective that taps into large-scale trends of social life. This viewpoint can then be complemented by the micro perspectives that qualitative research provides: 'a micro-analysis of how the broad trends affect or are perceived by the individuals' (Dörnyei, 2007:173).

Being able to confirm an argument or the existence of a phenomenon by using two or more independent methods should mean that uncertainty is

greatly reduced. Where the use of mixed methods is appropriate, it can have a number of advantages. Johnson et al. (2007:115) summarise potential advantages of mixed methods (taken from Jick (1979)). Mixed methods can:

- allow researchers to be more confident of their results
- stimulate the development of creative ways of collecting data
- lead to thicker, richer data
- lead to the synthesis or integration of theories
- uncover contradictions
- by virtue of its comprehensiveness, serve as the litmus test for competing theories.

Variationist SLA research that employs second or third wave sociolinguistic methodologies is scarce. There are a number of longitudinal studies which have shown how more detailed, fine-grained knowledge of participants can lead to better understanding of the acquisition of variation (e.g. Regan, 1996; Tarone & Liu, 1995) but very few that really immerse themselves in the lives of their participants and unearth the ways in which they construct meaning socially.

Mendoza-Denton (2008) examined the linguistic production of female first and second generation Mexican migrants attending a high school in the US. Drawing inspiration from Eckert's (2000) work, Mendoza-Denton's study was a linguistic ethnography of Latina girls in Sor Juana High School in the San Francisco Bay area in North California. She focused on both the social and the linguistic resources used by the students to negotiate and index their orientation towards two opposing groups of local girl gangs, the Sureñas (Southerners) and Norteñas (Northerners).

Mendoza-Denton combined an in-depth, qualitative analysis of a two-year period of participant observation with a quantitative analysis of linguistic features: the /ɪ/ vowel, with pronunciations ranging from high front [i] to low mid [æ] (Mendoza-Denton, 2008:236) and what the author calls 'Th-Pro' a lexical set which consists of *anything*, *something*, *nothing*, and *thing* which the Latinas employ and manipulate as discourse markers (Mendoza-Denton, 2008:265). Results indicated that the core members of both gangs behaved similarly in relation to raising and lowering of /ɪ/. It was expected that the two

gangs, being highly socially differentiated, would behave differently in relation to the variable. However, Mendoza-Denton found that in fact the two groups behaved similarly because both Communities of Practice were indexing a particular type of Latina identity.

Mendoza-Denton (2008) identified a total of six Communities of Practice occupied by the participants in her study, all manipulating linguistic variables differently in order to negotiate particular social identities. One of the groups, the Latina Jocks, all have Mexican ancestry, but were born in the US. As their name suggests, similar to Eckert's Jocks, they were closely integrated into the institutional fabric of the high school and essentially existed outside both the social and the linguistic system of the immigrant population. They were the group who were both least likely to raise /ɪ/ or manipulate the TH-Pro discourse markers. Mendoza-Denton found TH-Pro discourse markers to be a powerful linguistic variable, packed with covert prestige, that was used by the gang girls as an ethnic marker to index and negotiate particular social identities and orientations towards cultural norms.

While there were already recognised divides in Sor Juana High School between the affluent area of Foxbury Hills and the predominantly working-class area of Fog City, as well as between immigrant and non-immigrant student populations, Mendoza-Denton's ethnography revealed even more fine-grained distinctions in these social categories of the school. These distinctions in the social fabric were only observed as a result of the ethnographic approach, and they would have been missed if the speakers in Sor Juana were considered through the Labovian framework of speech communities (Lawson, 2009:69).

Mendoza-Denton states that she hopes to persuade linguists that 'we must look at language by looking beyond language, we must look holistically at the life-world of the people with whom we work and investigate the richness of practices that are inextricably tied to language, weaving with it one continuous tapestry' (2008:3). The type of information Mendoza-Denton (2008) was able to access about speakers' personalities, activities, and behaviour is a clear example of the detailed, textured qualitative data that the ethnographic researcher can provide us with. Mixed methods may not be best suited to every research situation. However, where appropriate, a mixed

methods approach can provide a more fine-grained and methodologically robust analysis of linguistic variation (Eckert, 2000:69). While this researcher believes this approach to be advantageous, it is important to acknowledge that there are criticisms and alternative approaches that can be taken. I now move onto a brief discussion of these in the next section.

### **3.4 Different approaches to the study of SLA**

In contrast to a variationist sociolinguistic approach, the vast majority of SLA research considers the language acquisition process to be an internalised, cognitive process, and the phenomena that are researched, such as input and transfer, are typically conceptualised from a psycholinguistic perspective. For non-variationist theoreticians (e.g. Gregg, 1993; White, 1989), acquisition is an individual phenomenon located within the individual's mind or brain. Such scholars completely discount the importance of variation in learner performance and language acquisition to the study of SLA. For these investigators, interlanguage variation is a factor related to performance, and is therefore irrelevant to a description of a learner's idealised competence (Tarone & Liu, 1995:1-2).

Those SLA researchers who do consider variation focus on interlanguage, often examining Type 1 variation at stages along the process of language acquisition (see section 3.3.2). These scholars (e.g. Dickerson, 1975; Ellis, 1985, 1987; Tarone, 1983; Young, 1991) focus on speakers' variation in interlanguage as a source of information about how interactions in different social contexts influence both interlanguage use and overall interlanguage development. For example, international teaching assistants were shown to be more fluent and grammatical when lecturing in their field of expertise than they were when talking about everyday topics, like cycling or their favourite foods (Selinker & Douglas, 1985). Tarone (1983, 1988) and Tarone & Liu (1995) argue that it is important for any sociocognitive account of SLA to do three things: first, include a description of interlanguage variation; second, include an explanation as to why that interlanguage performance varies systematically from one social context to another; and

thirdly, to relate this variation in performance to the development of the interlanguage system.

However, for many researchers, the key distinction between the acquisition of language competence and language performance ‘in the Chomskyan sense’ (Gregg, 1993:278) of the terms is impossible to reconcile. In the generative view, competence is categorical, not variable. For Gregg (1990), variation in grammatical production in different social contexts can only be a characteristic of language performance. Variation has nothing to do with language knowledge or competence and it is therefore untenable that variable rules could have a psychological reality of any kind in the mind of the learner (Tarone, 2007:838). In a response to Firth & Wagner (1997), many SLA researchers, such as Gregg (1990), Gass (1988), and Kasper (1997) all agree that since the focus of SLA is not on language use, but on language acquisition, it is natural for that research to focus more on psycholinguistic variables than sociolinguistic ones (Larsen-Freeman, 2000:169).

Firth & Wagner (1997:285) called for a complete reconceptualisation of SLA research ‘that would enlarge the ontological and empirical parameters of the field’. They criticised SLA research for too strongly emphasising the individual, the internalisation of mental processes, and the development of grammatical competence (Firth & Wagner, 1997:288). They argued against the imbalance of theory and methodology in the field that favoured cognitive and mentalistic orientations over those concerned with the social and contextual. They argue this imbalance has ‘skewed perspective on discourse and communication, which conceives of the foreign language speaker as a deficient communicator struggling to overcome an underdeveloped L2 competence, striving to reach the “target” competence of an idealized native speaker’. Firth & Wagner (1997:286) proposed three major changes to the study of SLA:

- a significantly enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use
- an increased emic (i.e., participant-relevant) sensitivity towards fundamental concepts
- the broadening of the traditional SLA data base

In response, Kasper (1997) argues that although social contexts can influence SLA, the language learning process is itself cognitive and she maintains that there is a strong split between language acquisition and use. Although Gass (1988:88) concedes that perhaps 'some parts of language are constructed socially', she insists that this in itself does not imply that 'we cannot investigate language as an abstract entity that resides in the individual'. She thereby maintains her view of learning as largely an individualised mental process (Zuengler & Miller, 2006:46).

By contrast, Firth & Wagner (1997:290) argue that meaning does not occur in 'private thoughts executed and then transferred from brain to brain, but a social and negotiable product of interaction, transcending individual intentions and behaviours'. They reject many of the fundamental precepts of SLA including the premises of interlanguage itself, 'namely, that language learning is a transitional process that has a distinct and visible "end"' (Firth & Wagner, 1998:91). In line with Rampton (1997), they also reject the etically viewed construct of the language learner as an idealised, autonomous language acquirer: the 'individual-as-"nonnative speaker"/"learner"', arguing instead that they should be considered to be a 'participant-as-language-"user" in social interaction' (Firth & Wagner, 1997:286) (see Chapter 4, section 4.2 for discussion of emic vs etic approaches). Firth and Wagner (1997) and Rampton (1997) argue that, rather than seeing learners as 'failing' when they do not achieve native-like competence, we could consider that learner language forms are actually different from the target language structures, not because of incomplete L2 competence, nor fossilizations of IL forms, but rather because the marked or 'deviant' forms are deployed by the learners for social purposes. For example, they may be empathizing with their interlocutors, or reverting to earlier features of their interlanguage in order to signal that they are, in fact, learners (Rampton, 1987). The position that Firth & Wagner (1997) and Rampton (1997) put forward is that non-native speakers have multiple social identities, and being a learner is just one of them (Larsen-Freeman, 2000:170).

One of the biggest critics of Firth & Wagner's (1997) proposal was Long (1997). He vehemently maintains that social context has no impact on the learner's cognitive processes.

Remove a learner from the social setting, and the L2 grammar does not change or disappear. Change the social setting altogether, e.g., from street to classroom, or from a foreign to a second language environment, and, as far as we know, the way the learner acquires does not change much either, as suggested, e.g., by a comparison of error types, developmental sequences, processing constraints, and other aspects of the acquisition process in and out of classrooms.

(Long, 1998:93 cited by Tarone, 2007:839)

Coming from a variationist sociolinguistic standpoint, Long's view seems to me to be based more on theoretical presuppositions than empirical data. Tarone (2007:839) argues that Long seems to regard the learner's cognitive processes as if it was a computer, processing L2 input, incorporating it into the grammar, and then mechanically generating output, completely impervious to any changes in social context. Nevertheless, in the time since Firth & Wagner (1997) sparked this debate, there has been increasing interest in theories and models of SLA that consider the learner to be a social being whose cognitive processes are affected by their social interactions and relationships with other. To provide some examples, Batstone (2002) found that individuals orient differently to L2 input in communicative contexts than to L2 input in learning contexts, Beebe & Giles (1984) related sociocultural variation to learner cognition through speech accommodation theory. Speech accommodation theory considers both convergence towards variety and divergence away to be strategies of identification with the communicative norms of some reference group, which can be either present or absent at the time of speaking. Rampton (2005:81) showed that Pakistani students' lack of identification with their non-Pakistani English teacher led to them diverging from the standard variety by increasing their use of *me no*, a stigmatised variant of *I don't*, when they were addressing her. See Tarone (2007) for an excellent overview of further research and discussion.

Much of this debate is irreconcilable because it involves two vastly opposing ontological positions that reflect 'fundamental differences in the way they frame their understanding of learning' (Larsen-Freeman, 2002:37). My belief is that interfacing, interdisciplinary perspectives are almost always



preferable, even where they conflict, to singularity and that conflicting views can actually stimulate and further our knowledge and understanding if we leave ourselves open to alternative points of view. In one sense it could be argued that all Firth & Wagner (1997) call for is a redressing of the balance of cognitive and social approaches, theories and methodologies within SLA. What is unhelpful to advances in the field are assertions concerning the irrevocability of the distinction between language acquisition over language use, which create barriers, and seal off the area of SLA 'as a kind of intellectual "private property"' (Firth & Wagner, 1998:91). Just as the micro-social studies of the third wave of variationist sociolinguistics can draw from the macro-social approaches of the first and second wave and vice versa, so too can social approaches to SLA learn from and contribute to cognitive approaches.

With that in mind, I now move onto a presentation of some of the key contributions made by variation theory to SLA.

### **3.5 Contribution of variation theory to SLA**

While there have been criticisms of a social approach to SLA, this study is firmly rooted in the belief that such approaches can complement other research and provide us with a richer depth of knowledge regarding the acquisition of a new language. Analysis of variation in a new language has indicated that a number of social and psychological factors may impact upon acquisition. These include: context of acquisition, the role of input, age, gender, and identity. I now go on to discuss each of these in turn.

#### **3.5.1 Context of acquisition**

There are three contexts that have been the focus of most SLA research: the language classroom (Dewaele & Regan, 2001; Mougeon, Nadasdi, & Rehner, 2010; Rehner, Mougeon, & Nadasdi, 2003); study abroad contexts (Regan, 1995; Regan, Howard, & Lemée, 2009); and naturalistic contexts (Blondeau, 2010). Across all three of these contexts, Regan et al. (2009:135) found a cline of gains in sociolinguistic competence, with the least

gains in a traditional classroom environment and the most acquisition occurring in long-term, naturalistic settings. The cline can be summarised as:

Regular classroom < Immersion < Study abroad < Naturalistic context  
(Howard, Mougeon, & Dewaele, 2013:346)

Naturalistic learners generally demonstrate the highest levels of vernacular variant use, even at times approaching native speaker norms (Howard et al., 2013:346). It is perhaps unsurprising that speakers develop a greater sociolinguistic repertoire that includes vernacular variants when they are in a context where they have greater opportunity for interactions with local speakers outside of a classroom setting (Mougeon et al., 2010:155). It is therefore natural that the context of acquisition is so closely tied to opportunities for contact with local speakers and the input of vernacular variants (Durham, 2014:23).

Context, input (which I come to next), and contact with native speakers are heavily intertwined. A number of studies have demonstrated that context, particularly opportunity for contact with native speakers, is key to the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence (e.g. Meisel, 1983; Nagy et al., 2003; Regan, 1995; Schleef et al., 2011). I return to discussions of the importance of social networks below. With regard to the context of acquisition, variationist research, such as the studies cited here, brought much-needed attention and fine-grained empirical evidence to an aspect of new language acquisition that had previously been somewhat neglected and left no doubt as to the importance of social context in accounts of acquisition (Regan, 2013:283).

### **3.5.2 Input**

Context, above, and input are very closely related. In order to assess whether a speaker is acquiring Type 2 variation in a new language, we must know what the relevant variants are and be sure that the speaker is actually being exposed to that variation. However, the amount of exposure and contact a speaker has with the new language can be very difficult to measure.

Within monolingual dialect acquisition studies, a social network

approach has been used effectively (see section 3.5.5.1), but it was thought by some SLA scholars this would be problematic when dealing with dialect acquisition within a new language. In a monolingual situation, it is assumed that the only influential contact is that of the second dialect (D2) speaker. The logical extension of that is that in a multilingual situation, the only influential contact would be the local English (L2 D2) speakers (Drummond, 2010:69). However, recent research indicates that using the new language, even in a lingua franca setting, can lead to increased local dialect variants being acquired in the new language (e.g. Durham, 2014).

Many early SLA studies were based around the formal classroom environment. It was therefore assumed that input was 'standard' and that 'standard' varieties and 'native-like' competence was the aim for learners. Of course, just as in the current study, this is not always the case, especially for migrants who are actually more likely to be in contact with a vernacular variety. For example, Nestor and Regan (2011) report that their participants, Polish migrants living in Ireland, were likely to have Irish English as input, and, depending on their social networks and workplace, probably a regional variety of Irish English, rather than Standard Southern British English. It is key to investigate how speakers react to the actual features of the variable language of the community to which they are exposed, not just what is held up to immigrants as the ideal variety (Regan, 2013:287).

In the Schlee et al. (2011) study described above, researchers contrasted Polish adolescent migrants' production of the (ing) variable in both London and Edinburgh. Poles living in Edinburgh produced more of the apical variant which follows the pattern of their Edinburgh-born peers. Without a clear picture of what the locally-born teenagers' variants are, and consequently what input the migrants are receiving from the local teens, it would be impossible to accurately interpret the results of this study.

Previous variationist sociolinguistics research has provided us with detailed descriptions of a wide range of language varieties. The use of mixed methods has given us fine-grained descriptions of the speech in communities where migrants may have moved to (Regan, 2013:281). This information is vital in ascertaining whether participants are acquiring the speech norms of the communities in which they are living. Although surprisingly little has been

written about the sociophonetics of the Manchester dialect(s) (see Chapter 2 section 2.5), what research has been done is of the utmost importance to the current study.

### 3.5.3 Age

Age is a significant factor in much monolingual variationist research where linguistic variation is often subject to age grading. While this is usually taken across a wider scale, age may still be a factor in my study when comparing the youngest high school cohort of 11-12 years with the oldest 14-16 years.

Age of arrival (AoA), the age that a speaker arrived in the new dialect area, has been found to be a highly significant factor in new dialect acquisition in monolingual studies (e.g. Berthele, 2002; Bortoni-Ricardo, 1985; Tagliamonte & Molfenter, 2007). Siegel (2010) provides a detailed account of issues and studies that have dealt with monolingual D2 acquisition. Migrants who move to a new area and begin acquisition at a younger age, especially 13 years or below, have the highest rates of D2 variants (Siegel, 2010:84). On the basis of evidence from previous research, Chambers (1992:689) concluded: '[A] person 7 or under will almost certainly acquire a new dialect perfectly, and a person 14 or over almost certainly will not. In between those ages, people will vary.' However, this has been contradicted by some studies of morpholexical features, where native-like D2 acquisition may occur up to 16 or 17 years of age (e.g. Foreman, 2003; Kerswill, 1994; Kerswill, 1996)

Prior to the emergence of variationist studies, SLA research typically viewed age from a psycholinguistic perspective, referring mainly to the importance of the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) that states if language acquisition does not occur by the time an individual reaches puberty, some aspects of language learning, particularly pronunciation, may never be fully achieved (Lenneberg, 1967).

The claims of the CPH have been called into question by a number of studies, including Piller (2002) which will be presented in section 3.5.5 below. Flege et al. (1996) analysed the speech of Italians who had all started learning English between the ages of three and 21 years. In their examination of speakers' productions of word-initial consonants /p,t,θ,ð/ in English, they

found that some speakers who learnt English in late adolescence or early childhood produced English consonants that were comparable to the native English control group. While 'age of L2 learning was clearly important, it was by no means an overriding determinant' of how well the speakers produced English consonants (Flege et al., 1996:47). Language use factors and motivation also had a strong influence on production. Their findings correspond to those of Bongaerts et al. (1997). As part of a series of studies addressing the issue of ultimate attainment by late second language learners, Bongaerts et al. (1997) found that some Dutch university students who had not received English instruction before the age of 12 were rated as native-like by native speakers of English. In some cases, the Dutch students were rated more highly than native English speakers due to the Dutch speakers having a more standard accent. This is contrary to previous notions that older people are incapable of sounding like native speakers (Regan, 2013:283).

Despite the evidence of research into advanced L2 learners that has identified late learners whose performance is indistinguishable from that of native speakers for a range of phonological and morphosyntactic measures (e.g. Birdsong, 1992; Bongaerts, 1999; Piller, 2002), the CPH is still 'lurking as a set of tacit assumptions' (Bialystok, 1997:116) in discussions of SLA theory and practice. Continued overemphasis in SLA research on poor adult learners and an underemphasis on adults who master L2s to native-like levels (Marinova-Todd, Marshall, & Snow, 2000:9) does not further the field, and more focus is needed on a range of research that includes expert language users of all ages.

The amount of time that a speaker has lived in the area of the new dialect, or Length of Residence (LoR) has also received considerable attention. However, Siegel (2010) describes 17 studies that examine monolingual new dialect acquisition and demonstrates that the existing evidence on the importance of both LoR and AoA is highly mixed. Speakers with long LoRs and low AoAs can easily be identified with little or no evidence of variants of the new dialect, indicating that other factors must also have an impact.

### 3.5.4 Gender

Adamson & Regan's (1991) study of Vietnamese and Cambodian migrants living in Philadelphia found that the male speakers accommodated to native male speech norms in their production of the (ing) variable, rather than adopting the overall community norms. Both male and female speakers, like native speakers, used more of the apical variant in casual style, for instance. But male speakers often continued to use it even in careful style and went to considerable efforts to approximate male norms. Their quantitative analysis indicated that gender was a greater influencing factor than style. Similarly, Major (2004) examined gender and stylistic differences in the English of native speakers of Japanese and Spanish. He studied four phonological processes widespread in all varieties of American English and found that gender stratification was acquired before stratification for style.

Much SLA research that addresses issues of gender has found that females generally use more standard variants than males (e.g. Adamson & Regan, 1991; Major, 2004; Rehner et al., 2003). This is in line with the findings of monolingual sociolinguistics. However, some SLA research has found the opposite, with females producing more vernacular variants than males (e.g. Drummond, 2010; Schlee et al., 2011). A possible explanation for this has been that speakers are reinterpreting or transforming the constraints of the new language. Nevertheless, observations suggest that speakers typically use new language variants which correlate with speaker sex appropriately and with some degree of agency which adds support to the view that language helps construct rather than simply reflect identities (Drummond & Schlee, forthcoming)

### 3.5.5 Identity

While one of the key contributions of the second and third wave of monolingual variationist sociolinguistic has been a deepened understanding of the relationship of language and identity, variationist SLA research has paid very little attention to identity thus far, despite the fact that as far back as 1972 Guiora et al. (1972:422) recognised that '[e]ssentially, to learn a second

language is to take on a new identity'. As discussed in Section 3.3.3, third wave variationist sociolinguistics is about social meaning based on social constructionist conceptions of language (Bourdieu, 1977)(Bourdieu, 1977). Identities are fluid, dynamic, changeable, and contextually realised (S. Hall, 1996; McRobbie, 1996); they are constructed and re-constructed by the reflexive self (Giddens, 1991). Multiple resources are used in the construction of our identities, including language and linguistic variation (Eckert, 2012). 'Language and identity cannot be separated from each other or correlated with each other; they are co-constitutive' (Drummond & Schlee, forthcoming).

Gatbonton et al. (2007:839) report on two studies that examined the relationship between pronunciation and ethnic group affiliation and identity. An assumption made by the vast majority of SLA research and language teaching is that language learners want to be able to acquire 'native-like' proficiency. However, this assumption is highly questionable. Aside from the fact that using native speakers as a baseline is considered by some scholars to be unreasonable: '[a]sserting that "adults usually fail to become native speakers" [...] is like saying that ducks fail to become swans' (V. Cook, 1999:187), learners may not even want to achieve such a high level of proficiency.

The first study reported in Gatbonton et al. (2005) examined two groups of students: a group of Francophone Montreal residents who were learning English at a local college, and a group of Quebec Francophone students learning English in Quebec. Gatbonton et al. (2005) examined the perceptions of the Montreal residents when listening to their Quebec peers speaking English and French. This study was carried out in the 1970s, a time when Quebecois nationalism was intense (Gatbonton et al., 2005:493). The second study contrasts with the first in that it deals with a context where language groups were not in conflict: two groups of native Chinese learners of English attending universities in Montreal. In this second study, Gatbonton et al. (2005) investigate the attitudes of one group of Chinese students toward their peers when speaking both Chinese and English.

Both the Chinese and the Francophone learners of English indicated that when they heard speakers with higher levels of pronunciation accuracy in English, those speakers were perceived to be less loyal to their home group.

Gatbonton et al.'s (2005) findings suggest that language learners have a choice, which may or may not be made intentionally. This choice involves weighing up the relative costs and rewards of achieving new language proficiency against the possibility of being perceived as disloyal to the home group (Gatbonton et al., 2005:493). Learners can choose to strive to attain the highest possible level of mastery in the new language, gaining access to resources that are controlled by the new language community. However, in doing this, the learners risk being perceived negatively by their home group and even being labelled as having 'sold out' (Taylor, 1977 cited by Gatbonton et al., 2005:505). Conversely, learners may maintain their own accent in the new language and continue to sound like members of the home group while maintaining their identification with, and perhaps even strengthening loyalty towards, that group. However, this must be weighed up against the social costs of a lower level of pronunciation accuracy with the new language community. Alternatively, learners may choose to take an intermediate position, striving for the highest level attainable, while still retaining 'ways of manipulating their pronunciation to clearly signal where their loyalties lie' (Gatbonton et al., 2005:506). These results clearly show that language learning is not just 'a matter of accumulating knowledge of discrete language elements', but it is a process of identity construction in which learners participate in a community of users (Gatbonton et al., 2005:508).

In Gatbonton et al.'s (2005) study, we saw that speakers might make a choice to avoid acquiring local variants in order to reinforce their home group identity. But even where learners' explicit intention is to achieve what could be considered ultimate attainment in a language, this involves much more complex issues and processes than the basic mechanics of acquiring vocabulary and grammar. As I described in section 3.3.2, achieving a degree of proficiency to the point where one might be considered to have mastered a language involves not only acquisition of the vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, but also the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence.

In contrast to Gatbonton et al. (2005), Piller (2002) describes the experiences of bilingual speakers 'passing' as native speakers. In the study, Piller asked bilingual couples to record a conversation between themselves. In each of the relationships, one partner had English as his or her first



language, and the other German. Most of the couples were reluctant to record an everyday conversation, so she suggested a list of possible topics, including their language habits and attitudes toward each other's countries and cultures. 17 of the 38 conversations involved discussions of the speakers not being recognised as being from another country, passing as native speakers, without Piller having included any reference to this or issues of native/non-native speaker status in her suggested topics.

Piller (2002) found that neither the age at which new language instruction began nor age of migration were good indicators of eventual success in achieving a high level of competence. Learners' personal motivation, choice, and agency, which Piller defines as the control individuals have over their own learning, appeared to have a greater influence over achievement than age. This is further emphasised by the fact that many of her participants distinguish between the time when they began to learn the language and a time when they 'really' began learning: a point where they became active and aware of their own learning process.

Piller (2002:191) describes passing as an act and a temporary performance of identity that was typically sustained for only a limited amount of time. Speakers were aware of passing and some boasted with pride about how long they could keep up the act of being a native speaker. In performance of passing, speakers exhibited heavy use of certain stereotypical variants of non-standard varieties. Piller points out that this could be considered a form of hypercorrection, but argues that her speakers show high awareness of issues of sociolinguistic competence. The speakers' overuse of these variants are therefore more likely to be as a result of conscious awareness of the covert local prestige the stereotypical features held, and Piller claims that this speaker is employing those variants to indicate insider status.

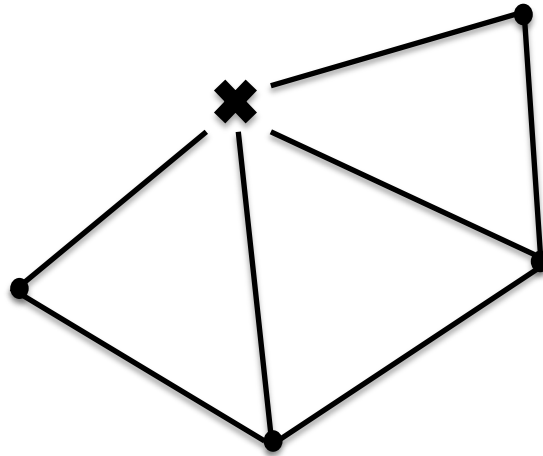
While the participants in Piller's study only performed their native speaker identity temporarily, more long-term identities can be assumed where a learner: makes the choice to achieve native-like pronunciation and be accepted by the local native speaker community (as we saw in Gatbonton et al., 2005); and/or is open to the target culture and keen to integrate into local

social networks (e.g. Lybeck, 2002). With this in mind, I now move onto a discussion of literature that involves social networks, identity, and language.

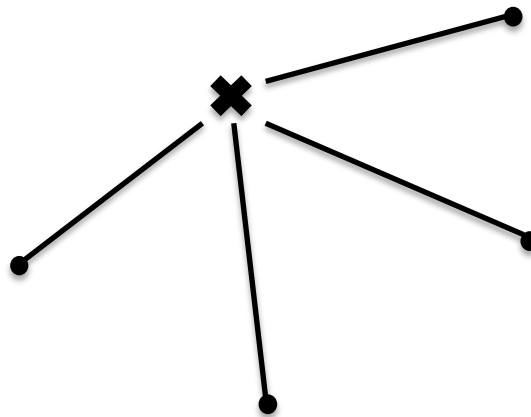
### **3.5.5.1 Identity and social networks**

The basic hypothesis of social network studies is that people interact meaningfully as individuals, and by focusing on the characteristics of the links that bind those individuals together, rather than the individuals themselves, we can find out more about their social behaviour and identify explanations for that behaviour. The idea of social network as an analytic concept was originally introduced because it was felt that there was a great deal of social behaviour that could not be accounted for by concepts based on status, territorial location or economic activity (Milroy 1987:46).

Social network theory has been widely used in variationist studies of the second wave (see section 3.3.3). The main premise of social network theory in variationist sociolinguistics is that an individual's linguistic production is influenced by the makeup of his or her personal relationship ties. These ties make up a network, and that network is considered to be anchored by individuals. Each speaker acts as an anchor, the ego or central focal point of their own network; this is represented by the 'X' in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 below. Speakers' social networks can be characterised as closed or open (Blom & Gumperz, 1972; 1999; Dubois & Horvath, 1998). Closed networks are high density (see Figure 3.1 below), where each person's contacts all know each other, and multiplex, whereby each individual is linked to others in more than one capacity – a relative and a co-employee, a neighbour and a friend. Open network ties are low density (see Figure 3.2 below). Each of the individual's contacts do not know each other, and uniplex, which means the individual only associates with others in his or her network in a single capacity (Milroy, 1987:20-1).



**Figure 3.1 High-density personal network structure: X is the focal point of the network (Milroy, 1987:20)**



**Figure 3.2 Low-density personal network structure: X is the focal point of the network (Milroy, 1987:20)**

The practice of using local social networks in monolingual sociolinguistics, rather than abstract large scale social categories, became more frequent following Milroy's (1980) account of sociolinguistic variation. Influenced by the work of the earlier linguistic anthropologists, Milroy conducted an ethnographic investigation of the use of phonological variables in three working-class communities in Belfast: Ballymacarrett (a Protestant area in East Belfast), the Hammer (a Protestant area in West Belfast) and the Clonard (a Catholic area in West Belfast). All three areas are poor working-class districts with a high rate of unemployment. Milroy immersed herself in the life of each community and got to know her participants as a 'friend of a friend' (Milroy, 1987:53) which allowed her greater opportunity to be drawn into the local networks.

Milroy calculated a network score for each individual speaker. This was

based on a six-point network strength scale that was constructed with reference to the key notions of relative multiplexity and density of each speaker's personal networks (Milroy, 1987:139). She found that there was a correlation between an individual's score on the network strength scale and their use of vernacular variants. For example, in Ballymacarrett, male networks were particularly close-knit, which Milroy found led to an adherence to the use of local vernacular norms. In contrast, the females in Ballymacarrett had much more open networks and as a result, their language use was less vernacular.

In the Clonard community, the female informants formed clusters of networks of the kind usually associated with male networks. All except one of the younger (18-25 years) females worked and socialised with their co-colleagues outside of work in a way that would be normally associated with working-class men (Milroy, 1987:148). This gave the younger females in the area a high network score. The Clonard men, on the other hand scored low on the scale because they had less dense networks. Milroy explains that as a result of very high unemployment in the area at the time most of them men had to travel outside of the local area to find jobs. Clonard females exhibited a high rate of use of the nonstandard (a) variant, something which would normally be more typical of male speaker. This led Milroy to conclude that the speakers' production of this variable was more closely related to network structure and membership than it was to gender. The dense, tight-knit networks, such as those of the young Clonard women, function as vernacular norm-enforcement mechanisms, exerting pressure on members to be linguistically homogeneous.

Milroy's study revealed the importance of locally based analyses, as well as the capacity for social network analysis to reveal fine-grained layers of social grouping and classification. What makes the social network concept such a highly valuable tool for sociolinguistic analysis is its apparent universality. As Milroy states:

The term social network refers quite simply to the informal social relationship contracted by an individual. Since all speakers everywhere contract informal social relationships, the network

concept is in principle capable of universal application and so is less ethnocentric than, for example notions of class or caste.

(Milroy, 1987:178)

This universality means that social network analysis can also be highly effective in research that examines SLA. Lybeck (2002) was concerned with why some learners acquire more native-like pronunciation than others, much like the current study. She examines the acculturation experiences, social networks, and L2 pronunciation of nine North American women aged between 30-41 years living in Norway. Lybeck conducted a longitudinal sociolinguistic study in which she interviewed each of her nine female participants twice, six months apart. Lybeck (2002) reports that participants who shared close-knit multiplex social networks with Norwegians used linguistic features similar to their group members, whereas speakers whose social networks were more open and uniplex developed fewer native-like linguistic features. The speakers who Lybeck describes as least successful at acquiring native features found it difficult to form a new Norwegian identity. They struggled to communicate and perceived their Norwegian interlocutors to be unhelpful, leaving them feeling isolated and misunderstood. These women's experiences differed greatly from the two participants who were most successful in acquiring native-like pronunciation who thought that 'one's language reflects what type of person one is in the culture. They described their identity as somewhat different in the new culture and new language, but they were able to accept this new part of themselves' (Lybeck, 2002:181).

These notions of how we identify and see ourselves in a new culture and language is captured perfectly by one of Lybeck's participants who at the first interview had very native-like Norwegian phonology according to Lybeck, with a very high rate (88.9%) of Norwegian, native-like *r*. However, by the time of her second interview six months later, this speaker had greatly reduced her use of native-like *r*, by almost 25%. Lybeck explains that this could be a result of the fact that this particular participant had experienced disappointment at her efforts to communicate with the local Norwegians and as a result, her attitude toward the target culture changed, and she stopped trying to acculturate. Her self-described sociocultural identity had shifted to greater

alignment with American culture and consequently her linguistic production had done the same.

While Lybeck's study focused on speakers' social networks, she did not conduct ethnographic research. She instead conducted semi-structured interviews and relied upon this self-report data from her participants. As we shall see in the next chapter, self-report data is confounded by issues of unreliability. Nevertheless, most sociolinguistic and SLA research relies on it and Lybeck's participants' views on their own identity, social network, and language are insightful.

The studies I have discussed in this section all deal with the relationship between language, social networks, identity, and integration. Milroy found that speakers' language use was a reflection of their membership and level of integration into local networks. Gatlinton et al. (2005) discussed the agency of speakers' ability to choose their level of integration into the local community and achievement of pronunciation, although this 'choice' may be highly pressurised by affiliation to the home ethnic group. Lybeck examined 'learners' ability to take on a new identity in the target culture and to integrate into social networks that could nurture their acculturation and ultimately their L2 acquisition process' (Lybeck, 2002:177). Piller addressed issues of passing as a native speaker or passing as 'not different' and fully integrated into that society and culture.

It feels that these issues of integration, identity, and language have never before in my lifetime been so politically charged in the UK, and this has led me to question the underlying implications behind 'integration'. Migrants, including, and at times especially, Roma, are talked about in terms of their integration. As I explained in the last chapter, migrants are increasingly at the centre of current political and social discussions. In September 2013, France's Interior Minister, Manuel Valls, made headlines when he said in a radio interview that people from the Roma community had lifestyles that were 'clearly in confrontation' with French ways of life. He said that only a minimum of Roma could and actually wanted to integrate in France and that '[t]he majority should be delivered back to the borders' and return to Romania or Bulgaria (BBC News, 2013). 'Integrate or leave' seemed to be his message and this reflects one of the issues I have with the term 'integration'. It seems

to implicitly contain the notion that that minority group must take on the dominant, mainstream society's values and cultures. It sets up an 'us and them' scenario and only one side holds the power.

Nevertheless, issues of integration are of great importance to Europe and the EU, another hotbed of discussion and disagreement in the upcoming UK election. Every EU member state (except Malta) has drawn up either a National Strategy for Roma Integration or a set of measures concerning the integration of their Roma populations. These measures set out to celebrate shared values, promote a strong sense of personal and social responsibility, challenge all forms of extremism and intolerance, give everyone the ability and aspiration to prosper, and 'benefit all members of our communities, including Gypsies, Travellers and Roma' (European Commission, 2015).

A separate report written for the European Commission as a Benchmark for immigrant integration cites 'frequency of contacts with host country and country of origin' to be an indicator of cultural integration, along with: attitude towards basic rules and norms of the host country; choice of spouse; language skills; and delinquency (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003:33). The report acknowledges that attitudes towards the rules and norms of the host country may be difficult to measure, with measuring language skills being easier to handle. The report states that being able to communicate with members of the host society 'may also affect attitudes towards migrants in the host society (and vice versa)' (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003:34). This acknowledges the important fact that the issues around attitudes and integration are a 'two-way street'. Later in the report the authors detail four external indicators of immigration that include 'perceptions of migrants by the host society' and the 'role of the media' (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003:36). Our identity is not just what we construct for ourselves, but it is also impacted on by how we are perceived by others.

On the issue of social networks as an indicator of integration, the report states that '[I]t is often thought that migrants who maintain close ties with their country of origin are not well integrated into the recipient society. At first glance, therefore, the number of contacts in the recipient country may be a useful indicator of integration' (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003:34), but questions whether to differentiate between contacts within the migrant's own community

and those outside and issues around the availability for migrants to make opportunities for contact outside of their own community.

As this report shows, there is a range of factors which can be used as a basis for the measurement of an individual's degree of integration into the local community. While network patterns cannot always reflect an individual's affinities and attitudes towards a community or group, the degree of multiplexity and density of a speaker's social networks can be a useful tool in providing a more detailed picture and may to some extent be able to subsume other less easily measurable variables, such as attitudes. (Milroy, 1987:140).

Milroy's (1980) study demonstrated that members within a social network have shared norms and ideologies, about language, cultural values, and social practices. She also showed that these issues must be understood in relation to the particular social context we are investigating. In order to make claims about group affiliation, social values and practices, and identity, we must examine 'from the point of view of the individuals who enact it' (Bucholtz, 1999:210) and we must avoid privileging our own interpretations over those of our participants (Nestor, Ní Chasaide, & Regan, 2012:342). The method best suited to this form of investigation is ethnography. I return to a discussion of the pivotal role of ethnography and social networks in the current study in the next chapter.

### **3.6 Summary**

In this chapter I have described the context of the current study that lies at the intersection of research into SLA and variationist sociolinguistics. I have synthesised the extremely broad-ranging background literature that informs the direction of my research. I have defended my decision to take a variationist approach to new language acquisition by presenting key areas where variation theory has made considerable contributions to the field of SLA.

In Chapter 4, I move onto a discussion of the mixed methods employed here, concentrating on the contribution of thick description and fine-grained detail that ethnography can bring to provide a rich account of language use.



## Chapter 4 Methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and justifies the methods used to collect and analyse data in this thesis. This study employs mixed methods, combining qualitative ethnography with quantitative phonetic analysis. The aim of using mixed methods is to quantitatively investigate linguistic variation in Roma speech and to gain a better understanding of the social factors impacting upon the adolescents' use (or lack) of local variants through examination of qualitative data. Previous research, such as that of Lybeck (2002), Schlee et al. (2011) and Drummond (2013b), indicates that social networks may have an impact upon the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a new language.

However, most of the studies that indicate that social networks may be a significant factor do not use methodologies that tap into local networks. As I explain later in section 4.3.2, the invaluable insights that I gained from my ethnography enabled my understanding and analysis of my participants' social networks, which eventually emerged as pivotal to the findings of this study.

Qualitative data analysis, such as the ethnographic methods used here, aims to understand the social world through the experiences of the research participants and what is locally salient. This makes such methods ideally suited to answer research question three as set out in chapter 1 which addresses the social factors impacting upon acquisition. However, in order to answer the first two research questions concerning the use and patterning of variants in the Roma migrants' speech, it is also necessary to use quantitative methodology. Quantitative analysis, including auditory and acoustic analyses and statistical testing, enables me to identify patterns in the speech of my

participants, which I can then relate statistically to social categories identified over the course of my ethnography. I therefore apply my qualitative findings within the field of sociophonetics, a typically quantitative framework.

Combining methods in this way provides a fine-grained and methodologically robust analysis of linguistic variation (Eckert, 2000:69). Ethnography and its ability to provide fine-grained contextualised detail to quantitative analyses are at the heart of this study. As a result, the main focus of this chapter concentrates on my qualitative methodology. I briefly introduce the quantitative methodologies used toward the end of this chapter, but wait until the chapters addressing the individual variables to discuss in more detail the quantitative approach used in relation to each variable.

I begin with a discussion of what ethnographic methods are and how they have been applied in previous research, especially when dealing with adolescents. I also discuss my personal positioning as an ethnographic researcher. In section 4.3 I describe my experiences of doing fieldwork at Saltar High and talk about the social groups of my participants. Section 0 then discusses the methodology used to collect the linguistic data for the study. Finally section 4.5 introduces the quantitative sociophonetic element of this research.

## 4.2 Ethnographic methods

[O]f all forms of scientific knowledge, ethnography is the most open, [...] the least likely to produce a world in which experts control knowledge at the expense of those who are studied. The skills of ethnography consist of the enhancement of skills all normal persons employ in everyday life; its discoveries can usually be conveyed in forms of language that non-specialists can read.

(Hymes, 1980:105)

The use of ethnography in qualitative sociolinguistic research dates back to Hymes (1962). Originating in the field of anthropology, ethnographic research is a methodology that gives us the opportunity to learn about people's lives

from their own perspective and from within the context of their own lived experience (O'Reilly, 2005:84). This emic, or bottom-up, approach means that qualitative researchers take the experiences and words of participants as the starting point. This contrasts with, but can crucially be used to complement, a more top-down or etic approach that starts with macro-social categories, such as social class, age and gender.

Ethnography is a long-term endeavour in which the researcher positions herself both as a participant within the community that is the focus of her study and as an observer. Rather than being one method, ethnography is in fact a family of methods, and as the Hymes quote above states, the skills and training required to carry out ethnography are really just an enhancement of everyday activities, such as asking and answering questions and taking an interest in the lives of others around us. The main method of ethnography is participant observation (O'Reilly, 2005:84). Participant observation involves participating in and observing people's daily lives over a period of time, as well as a range of other tasks that may include asking questions, making mental notes and then later writing them up into fieldnotes, doing interviews, collecting data, drawing up lists, constructing databases, and being (self-) reflective.

An ethnographic researcher must both participate as part of the group and endeavour to observe objectively. As a result, there is an inherent tension between these two sides. The central problem is that as a participant observer, the researcher must try to 'live as a human being among other human beings yet also having to act as an objective observer' (Middleton, 1970:9). Being an observer has been a longstanding matter of concern within the field of sociolinguistics. Labov (1972a) argues that the vernacular, the style in which a speaker pays least attention to their speech is of greatest interest to linguists because it is the most systematic speech style. Labov (Labov, 1966, 1972b) revolutionised variationist sociolinguistics through his development of fieldwork methodology that is specifically aimed at accessing vernacular speech, including techniques and questions for the sociolinguistic interview. '[T]he aim of linguistic research in the community must be to find out how people talk when they are not being systematically observed; yet we can only obtain this data by systematic observation' (Labov, 1972a:209). This

is known as the 'Observer's Paradox'. By taking an ethnographic approach and becoming a participant as well as an observer in the day-to-day interactions of my participants, a researcher can, to a certain extent, limit the effect of her presence in her research and thus somewhat reduce the effect of the Observer's Paradox.

One cause of a reduction in the effect of the Observer's Paradox is the trust that develops between the researcher and participants. Trust is essential to the process of ethnographic fieldwork, both for gaining and maintaining access to the fieldwork site as well as to the lives and experiences of the participants themselves. I found the importance of establishing trust to be heightened in the case of the Roma adolescents. First, as a result of historical persecution and ongoing discrimination, some Roma exhibit a mistrust of authority. I discuss this further in Section 4.3, but over the course of my fieldwork, I noticed how time to build relationships and trust made all the difference to the way in which the young people reacted to my presence in school. In order to bring individual speakers' agency and ownership of their language and identity to the fore, I had to be familiar enough with each member of the community and their day-to-day social practice to be able to understand the meaning behind their language use. I had to develop trust, and this could only be done through the adolescents seeing me repeatedly and becoming familiar with me through the context of ongoing ethnography.

Secondly, in the years following the arrival of Roma in Manchester and those leading up to my study, there had been a number of research projects and investigations conducted by various local agencies and organisations that involved series of interviews with families and young people from the Romanian Roma community in the area. Many of the young people expressed their boredom and frustration with being interviewed and asked the same questions repeatedly, and this would only have increased had I conducted traditional sociolinguistic interviews. The time spent through ethnography meant that I could ascertain a lot of information through natural conversations, and then later in my recordings, I was able to let my participants lead on topics for discussion. I present the methodology used for recordings in section 0, but first, I discuss the usefulness of using ethnography when working with adolescents.

### 4.2.1 Ethnography and adolescence

Adolescence represents a key life stage when individuals find themselves in a social and physical hinterland between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is a stage when some of the most dramatic linguistic changes occur (Kerswill, 1996:196). Labov (2001) defines the adolescent group as being aged between 13 and 16 years old, and this is the boundary that the majority of L1 studies use, especially those that adopt more ethnographic approaches. However, every child is individual, and 13 and 16 years of age cannot be considered a cut-off point. Children gain sociolinguistic maturity slowly, and as young adolescents, at around 12 years old, they approach the age when their orientation shifts from the family unit to their peer-group. This orientation is symbolised, among other things, by an allegiance to non-standard speech (Kerswill, 1996; Kerswill & Williams, 2000; Romaine, 1984). In the UK, most children move to a secondary high school at age eleven. At high school, young people begin to be expected to take part in extra curricular activities, and peer groups become more tightly embedded into the school experience (Eckert, 1989:12). The more adolescents mature, the more tightly integrated into their peer-groups they become. There is evidence that bilingual children reach a 'turning point' at around 11-13 years when they stop speaking primarily the language of their parents and start speaking the language of their peers (Poplack, 1978:90). Finally, stabilisation of the vernacular is believed to occur between the ages of 14 and 17 (Labov, 2001; Tagliamonte & D'Arcy, 2009).

Ethnography allows the complex ways in which adolescents construct identity and meaning through their appearance, actions, and language to emerge at the local level, in the context where it has meaning for them. This enables researchers to work with, rather than on, adolescents by discovering the meaning in, rather than imposing meaning on, adolescent behaviour (Eckert, 1997:58). So much sociolinguistic research is explained through adult-relevant categories, such as socioeconomic class, which is typically assessed as a composite of educational level, occupation, income, and perhaps value and style of residence. These are all aspects of life that adolescents have no control over (Eckert, 1997:52) and it is unsurprising,

therefore, that the patterning of none of the six phonological variables that Eckert (1989, 2000) researched in the speech of adolescents at Belten High correlated with the parents' socioeconomic class.

For migrants, these socioeconomic categories are even more unrepresentative. In their home country, they may be considered well-educated, have a good job and income, and an above average home and therefore be considered upper-middle class. However, in their destination country, they may be considered uneducated, struggle to find employment, and live in poor conditions, thus rendering them low or working class. This status inconsistency may have implications for a migrant's social identity, their process of integration, and their acquisition of the new language (Kobiałka, 2016). For these reasons and the fact that Roma are often treated as outsiders to the class system or as an underclass (see section 2.2.3.1), I do not describe the status of these migrant adolescents in terms of their parent's socioeconomic class.

While Eckert's (1989, 2000) studies made great strides in the field, adolescents had already been identified as being able to provide a rich source of vernacular speech (Labov, 1966). But more than just being passive producers of the vernacular, adolescents are 'linguistic movers and shakers' (Eckert, 1997:52), innovators who create, negotiate and maintain social meaning that is linked to linguistic variation (Eckert, 2000; Mendoza-Denton, 2008). They are a prime source of information about the role of language in social practice.

While not an ethnographic endeavour, the first major sociolinguistic study of adolescents and vernacular language use was Labov's (1972a) study of 9-18 year olds' use of the highly stigmatised variety of Black English Vernacular (BEV) in New York. In Chapter 3, I spoke about the notion of social networks as an analytical tool for examining language use (see section 3.5.5.1). In Labov's (1972a) study, he examined the makeup of pre-existing social groups in a social network analysis of three gang-affiliated adolescent peer groups. Whereas Milroy (1980) gained access to the social networks in Belfast as an insider using the 'friend of a friend' method, Labov gained access to the groups' social networks by using an insider as an intermediary to collect his primary data.

Following data collection, Labov analysed speech from a number of the male African American gang members. Results of analysis of five variables found that speakers' use of the vernacular is an important marker of group identity and membership. In his analysis of copula deletion, the zero form of which is a stereotype of BEV, Labov (1972a:280) demonstrated how the rate of copula deletion correlated to the extent to which speakers were integrated into the vernacular culture. Focusing in on one gang alone, known as the Jets, Labov was able to identify four degrees of integration into the BEV culture: the core members, secondary and peripheral members, and finally the lames. The lames, who were effectively outside of the street culture, produced only a 20% rate of the zero form of the copula, whereas the core and secondary members used it 46% of the time. Through his systematic account of the grammar of these speakers, Labov was instrumental in changing government educational policy and helping to increase understanding and reduce prejudice against BEV speakers.

While Labov's (1972a) study did not use ethnographic methodologies, these were the first major findings that relate linguistic production and variation to the degree of engagement within peer groups. Labov also showed that it is adolescent peer groups who are primarily responsible for using and transmitting the full resources of the vernacular. This focus on adolescent social network structure is an important starting point that has led to this current examination of social factors impacting upon Roma adolescents' speech. I return to a further discussion of social networks in the current study in section 4.3.2 below.

Cheshire (1982) was the first fully ethnographic study to reveal how adolescents' linguistic production relates to their degree of involvement in their peer group and alignment with vernacular culture. Like both Labov (1972a) and Milroy (1980), Cheshire focused on speakers' friendship networks. Over the course of nine months' participant observation, Cheshire recorded approximately 22 hours of data from several groups of adolescent boys and girls in Reading, England. Most of her participant observation was done in two local adventure playgrounds: Orts Road and Shinfield (Cheshire, 1982:13). Cheshire found that the participants naturally fell into three friendship groups. The three groups were: the Orts Road boys (ten boys aged

11-17); the Shinfield boys (three boys aged 13-15); and the Shinfield girls (eleven girls aged 9-13). All of the speakers were working-class, from the same local area, and shared social interests, activities and values.

Cheshire (1982:26) lists a total of 14 morphological and syntactic variables that she analysed in the speech of the adolescents. She calculated a frequency index of the rate of standard and non-standard variants. This revealed links between the gender of the participants and their linguistic variation, as well as showing the level of integration of each of the speakers into either the vernacular culture (activities and practices that are not approved of by the general public or establishment) or legitimate culture (those activities that *are* legitimised by the establishment).

While Cheshire's results were in line with previous research (e.g. Milroy, 1980; Trudgill, 1974), showing that the boys generally used more non-standard variants than the girls, it was only by examining the social practices of the adolescents that Cheshire was able to show the way in which the linguistic features fulfilled different social functions for the different sexes (Cheshire, 1982:97). Merely showing how the variables were distributed across gender groups did not explain the social meaning of the variables to those speakers. To do this, Cheshire established a 'vernacular culture index' (VCI) that identified six social practices that could be measured to reflect the young people's degree of involvement in the vernacular subculture of the playground (Cheshire, 1982:97-102). These practices were:

- skill at fighting
- carrying of weapons
- involvement in criminal activities
- choice of employment
- personal style
- amount of swearing

They stood in contrast to the mainstream cultural practices and activities based around films, music and clothing that were legitimised by the general public and the establishment.

When she applied the VCI to the group of ten Orts Road boys, Cheshire found that she could distinguish four subgroups, all showing differing



levels of alignment with the vernacular culture. Group 1 had the most allegiance to the vernacular culture. They were the best fighters, carried weapons, had 'masculine' jobs, were involved in petty crime, were concerned with their personal appearance, and swore the most. Group 4 showed the least allegiance to these activities, and groups 2 and 3 fell in the median. Having established the four subgroups, Cheshire correlated the rate of vernacular variants across the groups revealing a relationship between the distribution of the variables according to the level of engagement with the vernacular culture. She found that group 1 members consistently used more non-standard variants, and the rate of vernacular use typically fell according to group affiliation, with group 4 members using the least.

Cheshire's (1982) study is a prime example of the way in which mixed methods can be used to complement each other, resulting in a much more detailed interpretation of linguistic phenomena (Milroy & Gordon, 2003). Cheshire demonstrated how the linguistic variation of this apparently homogeneous group could be better understood when their social practices, social networks, and level of engagement with the vernacular culture were taken into consideration. Through her participant observation, she was able to collect vital data that could be interpreted to show how adolescents are active practitioners in the development of meaning making through fine-grained patterns of variation which they use to construct their identity and negotiate differing levels of group membership.

Adolescent social networks become stronger as individuals progress through the life stage. As they get older, adolescents are exposed to a wider circle of acquaintances and consequently an increasing inventory of linguistic variants (Chambers, 1995:189). The younger children come to school with pre-existing friendships, but in childhood the locus of activity is the local neighbourhood and community (Chambers, 1995:189), which for these children is predominantly Roma. It is only with the increased freedom and social expectations that secondary school and adolescence bring that they have the opportunity to make more contact with non-Roma children locally if they so wish. If they do not make contact with their Manchester-born peers, it is possible that they will not acquire very many local dialect variants. In this

way, the adolescent life stage is key to young Roma forming local friendship ties and perhaps acquiring local dialect features.

In summary, ethnography has been shown by many studies to be an additional approach that can be used to complement the repertoire of methods available to sociolinguists when trying to access adolescent vernacular speech. Born out of anthropology and a desire to be emic, the ethnographer wishes to understand and describe groups and individuals by focusing on social categories that are meaningful to the members of that society themselves. This section has detailed my motivations for the use of ethnography to further understand the ways in which these adolescents construct their identities through linguistic variation in English.

#### **4.2.2 My positioning as an ethnographic researcher**

A fundamental tenet of ethnographic research is that there exists no neutral position for a researcher - if you are engaged in social interaction, you are part of that interaction, and who you are is going to affect the kind of data you have access to.

(Modan, 2007:286)

A key element in social research is an acknowledgement of the researcher's own background. As the above quote indicates, we cannot help but bring parts of ourselves to our research, whether it is quantitative or qualitative, but within ethnography, personal, individual characteristics can have a much greater effect on what we study and what we find than for other methodologies. I spoke earlier about the inherent tension that exists in participant observation: 'participation requires emotional involvement; observation requires detachment' (Paul, 1953:441). By foregrounding our own involvement in the study, we, as researchers, can become more aware of our own biases, experiences and interests that inevitably influence the way in which we observe the unfolding events of fieldwork. By shifting to a more reflexive 'observation of participation' (Tedlock, 1991), the researcher can release some of the tension of participant observation and develop deeper understanding of the research context. For these reasons, I now explicitly discuss my own unique situation and positioning as a researcher in this study.

I was born in Stoke-on-Trent in England, but my first memories are of growing up in the south of Spain. My parents moved there when I was a baby. While in Spain, I attended an international school. I remember there being mostly English students, but also children from Germany and France. All the classes were taught in English, but I remember hearing a babble of so many different languages. I think it was from my experiences of living in Spain that I developed a love for languages in general, but to this day I have a particular fondness of Spanish. Thinking about it now, in the context of what I have learned over the course of doing a PhD, I think one thing I love the most about speaking languages other than English is the opportunity it offers me to take on characteristics of the identity I associate with that language.

When I was eight years old, we returned to Stoke on account of my Grandmother being very ill. I was sent to a private Catholic school for the remainder of my junior schooling, after which I moved to a multi-denominational private high school in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire where we then lived. For my A-levels, I was sent to a public boarding school in the south of England. To outsiders' eyes I would be regarded as having received a very privileged education. While this is true, and my mother clearly wanted me to get the best education possible, the motivation for sending me to boarding school was actually the result of a very difficult, volatile home life which made it extremely difficult for me to concentrate on my studies. With hindsight, this experience taught me that things are not always as they seem. In order to fully understand a situation, you must know as many of the details as possible. While actions may seem superficially to have a clear motivation, there are often hidden motives that lie beneath the surface. I also developed a deeper understanding of the malleable nature of identity and being able to put on a mask to suit different situations. Perhaps this is where my passion for ethnography comes from: I enjoy delving into the details of the lives of participants in an endeavour to fully understand the context of their situation.

Throughout school, I was never surrounded by the type of diversity that the students of Saltar High experience. I grew up in a white middle-class family. Between the ages of eight and 15, I lived in a predominantly white area where the primary industries of mining and pottery were in decline. At boarding school, there were a lot of international students from Kenya, Japan,

China, and South Africa to name but a few. However, the vast majority of my peers were other white British students.

When I started my fieldwork at Saltar High I had no previous experience of Roma, apart from the fact that my Mum used to say that my Grandmother, who was Irish, was a Romani Gypsy. To this day, I still do not know if this is true. However, because of that story, I suppose I had an awareness of the stereotypical lifestyle of Romanies, one of nomadism and living in 'gypsy wagons'. I was surprised and intrigued to learn over the course of the project that there are in fact many different groups of Romanies, and that the participants of my study and even their parents wouldn't remember a time of living in caravans. Much of the history of my participants is misunderstood and mis-imagined by the communities in which they live here in the UK and at times by the Roma themselves. This situation leads to challenges when it comes to talking about Roma to new audiences. As Matras (2014) states in the wonderfully insightful book 'I Met Lucky People: The Story of the Romani Gypsies', a key text for dispelling myths and deepening understanding of the vast Romani or Roms community: '[w]hen telling people who the Roms are, we must often begin by telling them who they are not'. Misunderstandings and miscommunications still lead to a huge amount of discrimination and oppression toward the Roma community here in Manchester and around the world, and I did encounter this type of tension in school, both from staff and students. This situation is further intensified within the current UK pre-election context where issues of migration are highly politically charged.

As a result of this, I feel a huge responsibility in my writing. It is important for me to be clear that while this piece of research has no underlying political agenda, I am certainly 'pro-Romani' in as far as I am pro any group of people. I believe that people are individuals and there will be good and bad experiences to take from every interpersonal encounter. I do not believe that we can say because of the actions of some members of a group, that all the members of that group will act in the same way. My experience of spending time alongside the Roma students and members of staff at Saltar High was funny, sad, enlightening, and enriching. But I consider this not to be a result of them being Roma, but because they are funny,

individual, interesting people, and the only reason that I talk about them as being distinct from any other group of students in the school is the result of the labels put on them by the dominant authority structure.

I am also very aware that I am an outsider, Gadge. Ethnography has a history of little-understood communities being studied by outsiders from the dominant discourse, and there is no escaping the fact that this is true of myself in the context of this study. I feel privileged to have the opportunity to introduce the Roma people I met to an audience who may not have encountered Roma before. At the same time, I am aware of the power and potential for abuse that this situation brings. Apart from where I think it has been necessary, I have tried to treat my participants as I would participants from any other group.

During my time spent at Saltar High, I was often surprised by the way in which Roma were treated as a group separate and distinct from the many other migrants attending the school. The Roma had their own member of staff, a Roma Coordinator. The 'Roma Gypsy Traveller' group had their own history month (see section 2.4.2) and an achievement awards ceremony which were both organised in conjunction with Manchester City Council. While all of this was well-intentioned and was reported to have had positive effects on Roma attendance, achievement, and participation, I was very aware that no other group was singled out for such particular attention. The young people were labelled and othered from the moment they set foot in the school, even to the extent to which the school would allocate an individual to the Roma cohort on its records even where that individual was identified as Romanian, not Roma (see Chapter 2 section 2.4). The actions of the school staff are somewhat understandable. They felt deluged with a group of students who came with apparently unique, previously unseen needs and set of circumstances, and the school had to learn to cope incredibly quickly.

However, my approach has been to try to treat my participants as I would participants from any other group. I believe that in order for the Roma, or any other discriminated against people, to fully achieve equality, we must first practice that equality. In order for them to become truly equal, I must treat them equally, as I would any other group. I have tried to speak about my Roma participants' practices and the attitudes they have expressed to me

only where I believe it has a bearing and can further understanding of my quantitative findings, rather than forcing the idea of 'Roma-ness' into my discussion. I hope it can be seen from my descriptions that I have been very careful to try not to patronise or give my participants any 'special treatment' by virtue of their being Roma. I believe, as with all groups, that the Roma should have *their own* voice, and I am passionate in my support for this.

This section aimed to provide an insight into my positioning as a researcher in my linguistic ethnography at Saltar High. I discuss this further in relation to my positioning to the Roma students in the following section where I describe my experience as an ethnographer in school.

### 4.3 Linguistic ethnography at Saltar High

I accessed the school by first sending a letter to the Coordinator of EAL Provision at the school. I followed this up with phone calls to the school that eventually led to a meeting with the Roma Coordinator and Head of EAL, where I proposed my plan for fieldwork. I feel passionately that it is important to give something back to the school in exchange for their support and co-operation with my research, especially given the relatively long-term nature of my project. So, at the meeting, I also offered to do some work for the school as an expression of my gratitude.<sup>9</sup> However, I made it clear that I would not be able to take on any role until my observation period was complete because this could impact on the type of relationship I was trying to develop with the students. Once we had agreed the arrangements and a start date, I applied for a renewal of my enhanced clearance CRB form which was then checked by staff at the school.

I began visiting the school in July 2011, conducting observations of the students when they arrived in the mornings, at break and lunch times, and when they left in the afternoon, two to three times per week. Eckert (2000:75) was 'scared silly' when she went to do fieldwork in school for the first time, and my initial few days of going into the school were really quite scary and

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<sup>9</sup> I had planned to conduct a number of teacher training sessions in school based on my observations and findings. However, changes within the school mean that this is now unlikely.

intimidating. It surprised me how many emotions and memories of my own schooldays were brought back, and for some time, I really did feel like I was back at school. After very initial introductions to EAL staff and a few pupils, I was very much left to come and go as I wished. As a result I had to discover my own way around, find classrooms that I wanted to be in, and introduce myself both to staff and students. I once again felt like I was the new kid back at school.

The school is situated on a purpose-built site with expanses of grassed areas on two adjacent sides. As you approach, you pass the semi-detached properties of an ex-Council owned housing estate. Driving onto the large car park and as I walked into the building, I was struck by how modern the school looks. Going in the Main Entrance (see Figure 4.1), automatic doors open up, with the second set of doors needing a proximity card to get through. The receptionist would buzz me through every time I visited before arming me with my Visitors' Pass which had to be worn on a lanyard around my neck at all times. Security overall was tight. Students were not allowed down toward the reception end of the huge 'street' that led from the visitors' entrance to the food hall, unless they had an exit pass.

The 'street', which is really just a huge corridor two-storeys high, gives the feeling of space, but also feels quite clinical. Rather than a floor above, there are platforms suspended so you can see people on the next floor up going in and out of classrooms leading off to the right. On the ground level, there is a dance studio, drama studio, and theatre hall where assemblies are held on the right. To the left is the building that is occupied by the SEN college. Although much is made in publicity materials about the shared space, pupils from the two schools never really mix. Lunch and break times are staggered and Saltar High students would only ever see the SEN pupils when passing in the corridor. At the end of the street the space opens up to reveal a small cafeteria and larger dining hall area, with a smaller outdoor playing area to the left and the much bigger and more popular outdoor space off to the right.

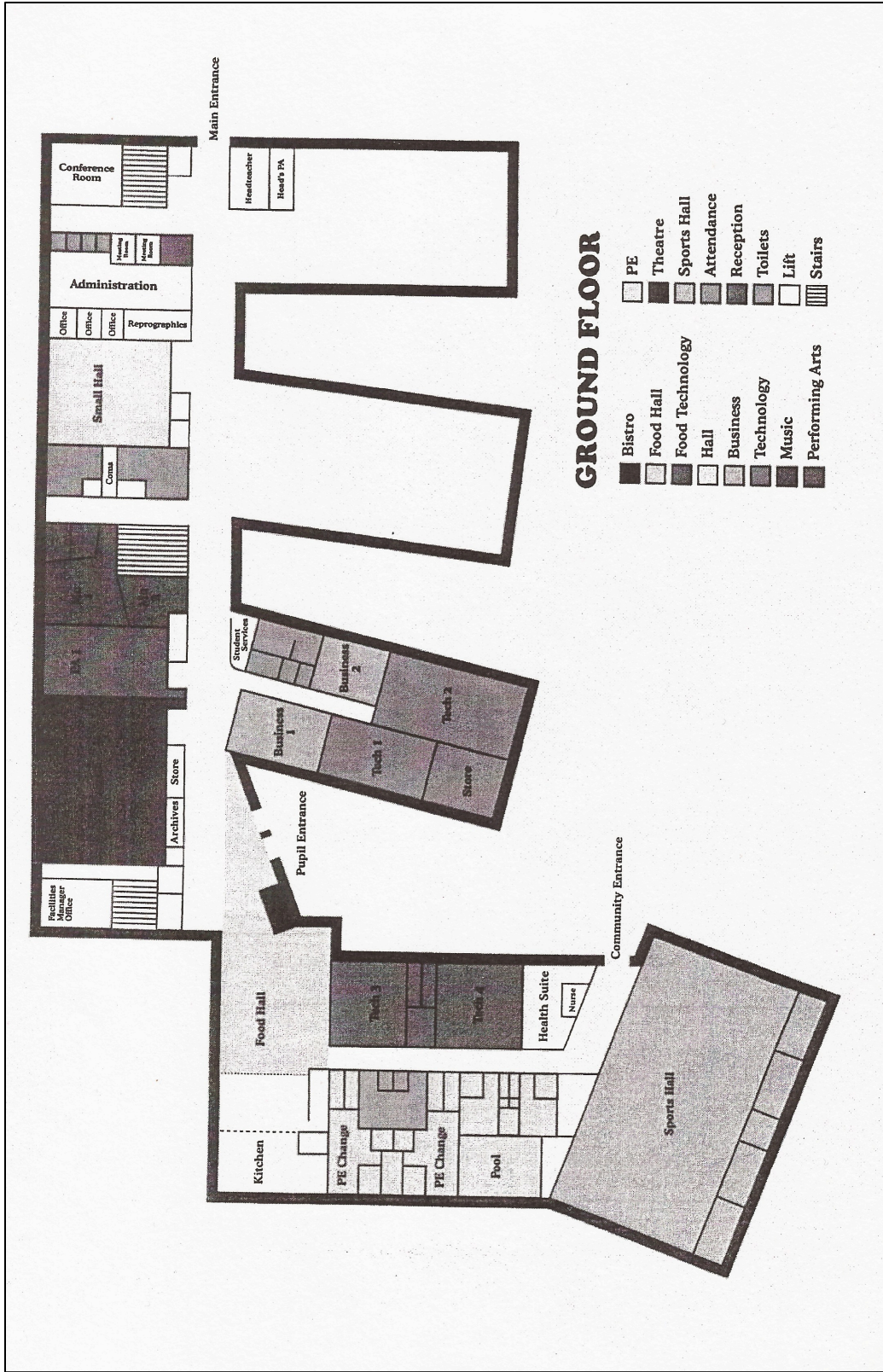


Figure 4.1 Map of Salter High School



Arriving at school first thing, as students trickle into the Pupil Entrance by the food hall (see Figure 4.1), they are greeted by a wall of three staff members sat at desks who regularly pull students aside to be questioned on some element of their dress. The wrong kind of shoes, not sporting a blazer, having too much jewellery or hair ornaments (this caused many Roma students lots of trouble) become the subject of much discussion. For the boys, no blazer, or the wrong type of trousers are also frequent issues. The common areas fill up and the smokers and football players head out to the playing courts. The noise level increases until 8.25am, when the buzzer sounds three times over the racket to signal students must go to form time. Depending on their House, some pupils line up for assembly in the Food Hall area and get their attendance and uniform checked before they go in to the main hall. Quiet falls. Some latecomers trickle in through the late entrance by the sports hall (labelled Community Entrance in Figure 4.1). There are a lot of latecomers and on most days they include a number of Roma students.

For the first few weeks, I would walk around the school corridors and playgrounds, saying 'hi' to everyone as I passed them, trying to look cool as I walked past the glass-fronted classrooms. As with Eckert (2000:75), I too felt overwhelmingly like an outsider, especially in the throngs of lunchtimes and playtimes. Gradually, I began to be recognised and spoken to by a number of the students, both Roma and non-Roma. However, I noticed quickly that there was a striking difference in the ease with which many of the non-Roma students spoke to me compared with the guardedness of the Roma pupils.

Children, especially adolescents, are often suspicious of adults who show interest in their activities because they are aware of the authoritarian roles and privileges that adults have that they do not, including the right to decide institutional rules and norms of behaviour (Moore, 2003:38). However, I find that this distrust is even greater within the Roma cohort at the school. This does not just apply to the teens either. Roma have a reputation for being members of a very private, protective community that often appears closed off from and highly suspicious of outsiders. At times this is greatly exaggerated by non-Roma people, or Gadje as non-Roma are called. However, where there is a wariness of outsiders, this is not an unjustified attitude to take. Romanies have suffered intensive and extensive persecution throughout

history (Y. Bauer & Milton, 1992; Hancock, 2002; Milton, 1991). It was, then, not very surprising that one of the first questions I was asked by a 14 year old Roma boy at school was: 'You're from the Council, aren't you?'.

Over time, this suspicion lessened, and the young people became braver and asked more questions about both me and the nature of my project. In the same way as Moore (2003:39), I tried a number of ways of explaining my research and eventually found the most easily accepted and understood explanation was that I was writing a book about people who come to live in Manchester and go to this school. For those who probed further, they found the concept of a PhD very difficult to understand. But I found that most of the young people just accepted my presence and were not at all interested in what I was doing or why I was there and all my anticipation and anxiety of how I would explain my project was unfounded.

Once I got to know some of the adolescents, they would generally introduce me to their wider group of friends. What is quite striking about many of the Roma adolescents is that they do not on the whole mix with non-Roma students in their break and lunchtimes, although this situation is changing as numbers of Roma enrolled in school reduce (see Chapter 2 section 2.4). When I first went to the school, there was a much larger cohort of Roma at the school. They would gather together, in specific areas of the school, separated from the local students, with the exception of a few interactions. Fights broke out often, at times between or involving Roma students and sometimes between non-Roma students. Again, I noticed that fighting in school greatly reduced by the end of my fieldwork.

During class times, the ground floor was quite quiet with members of staff getting coffee from the Bistro area, and the occasional student being challenged by staff as to why they were out of class or whether they had their permission pass. I then spent most of my time between the three floors above the theatre side of the school (see Figure 4.1). Each floor has two corridors leading off the main staircase and each of those corridors is assigned a subject area, for example Maths, Science, or English. The corridors are long, flanked on either side by floor to ceiling windows through which you can see into the classrooms. It's very common to see a student stood outside the door of a classroom during class times. Due to behavioural issues and depending

on the attitude of the individual teacher, it is quite usual for a student to be asked or ordered to leave class. During the time they wait outside, various passing members of staff may come to ask them why they've been sent out, with varying degrees of challenge.

Initially I had not planned to do observations in classes because I did not want to be associated with the teachers and authoritarian position within the school structure (Eckert, 1989, 2000). It is for this reason that many ethnographers prefer to avoid the classroom (e.g. Drager, 2009; Lawson, 2009; Mendoza-Denton, 2008; Moore, 2003), but conversely, a number of researchers have entered the classroom with great success (e.g. Kirkham, 2013; Martyn, 2016, forthcoming; Nance, 2013; Snell, 2008). As a result of the reticence I felt from some of the Roma adolescents to make contact and talk to me, I decided that I would try observing classes in order to be able to talk to them a little more easily. In fact, I found that it gave me much more opportunity to sit and chat with the students as they did their work in class. I was able to observe the nature of their interactions and how they positioned themselves relative to their peers and teachers. It was especially useful for my observation of some of the less integrated Roma who only participated in all-Roma interactions outside of class, because it also gave me the opportunity to observe how they interacted with non-Roma adolescents. I made it clear to members of staff that I did not want to be associated in any way with authority in the classroom and I would just sit at the back and observe. This request was respected by most teachers, apart from one or two incidents that were quickly rectified.

A key feature of ethnographic research is the ability to be flexible and change plans where appropriate and necessary. Due to the nature of the Roma community and the ethnographic perspective of my study I felt it was beneficial to adjust my methodology to suit my project and ensure that I have access to the richness of social detail that I need.

### **4.3.1 The participants**

As I explained in Chapter 2, the participants of this study are members of the Romani community who made the journey to Manchester from south east

Romania. Through my contact with the Romani Project at the University of Manchester, I was able to meet with a teacher at a primary school that feeds into Saltar High. She was able to provide me with a lot of valuable information about the group of Roma students who moved from primary school to the first year of secondary school (Year 7), in September 2012. This information encouraged me in my decision to focus my research on the two ends of the adolescent age spectrum available to me within the school.

In order to investigate this, I took the participants for my study from two age groups: Year 7, the first year of high school, aged 11 to 12 years; and Years 10 and 11, the last two years of this high school, aged 14 to 16 years. In total, there are 27 Roma participants included in this study. This corresponds to virtually all Roma students within those academic year groups. There were a very small number of Roma individuals from these year groups who I was unable to record due to their unavailability, for examples being absent from school.

Table 4.1 lists all of the Roma participants analysed in this study.

**Table 4.1 Roma participants**

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Yr gp</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age (at recording)</b>	<b>Stream</b>	<b>AoA (years)</b>	<b>LoR (years)</b>
<b>Stefan</b>	11	M	16	Mainstream	7	9
<b>Marko</b>	11	M	16	Mainstream	10	6
<b>Dukker</b>	11	M	16	EAL	12	4
<b>Gildi</b>	11	F	16	EAL	15	0.5
<b>Pitivo</b>	11	M	16	EAL	14	2
<b>Talitha</b>	11	F	15	Mainstream	10	4
<b>Aishe</b>	10	F	14	Mainstream	9	5
<b>Florica</b>	10	F	15	coreEAL	12	3
<b>Emilian</b>	10	M	15	EAL	11	4
<b>Cappi</b>	10	M	15	coreEAL	10	5
<b>Djordji</b>	10	M	15	Mainstream	9	5.5
<b>Filipo</b>	10	M	15	coreEAL	10	5
<b>Ion</b>	10	M	14	Mainstream	10	4
<b>Fonso</b>	10	M	14	Mainstream	1	13
<b>Bo</b>	10	M	15	coreEAL	6	10

<b>Andrzej</b>	7	M	12	Mainstream	5	7
<b>Luca</b>	7	M	12	Mainstream	7	6
<b>Jal</b>	7	M	11	Mainstream	8	3
<b>Elijah</b>	7	M	12	Mainstream	11	1.5
<b>Durril</b>	7	M	11	Mainstream	7	4
<b>Pia</b>	7	F	11	EAL	8	4
<b>Danior</b>	7	M	12	Mainstream	6	6.5
<b>Noah</b>	7	M	12	Mainstream	8	5
<b>Chal</b>	7	M	12	Mainstream	6	6
<b>Anis</b>	7	F	12	coreEAL	5	7
<b>Lavinia</b>	7	F	12	EAL	10	2
<b>Esma</b>	7	F	11	Mainstream	7	4

Participants were recorded in friendship pairs (see section 0 below). As a result of my Roma participants being able to choose a friend to be recorded with, I also recorded a variety of non-Roma students. Some Roma participants asked to be recorded with Manchester-born friends. Where this happened, I included those Manchester speakers in the Manchester-born group for analysis. As previously discussed, I analysed the speech of a small number of Manchester-born speakers. By doing this, I am able to say with greater certainty whether the patterns of variation I found in my participants' Roma English correspond to acquisition of local vernacular dialect features and sociolinguistic competence. In total, I analysed six Manchester-born speakers, one male and one female from each of the year groups from which I was analysing Roma participants (Year 7, 10, and 11). My criteria for choosing these Manchester speakers were:

- born in Manchester
- lived nowhere else in the UK apart from the Manchester area
- attending school in the same academic year groups as the Roma participants
- balanced distribution of males and females

As well as other Romanian Roma students and a small number of Manchester-born friends, some of my participants chose other non-Romanian Roma migrant friends to be recorded with. As a result, I also have recordings

of students from Kuwait, France, the Czech Republic, Poland, Italy, Portugal, Ghana, and Russia. I did not conduct any analyses on the speech of these students.

### **4.3.2 Roma social groups at Saltar High**

When I began doing ethnography at Saltar High, it was a daunting task to try to determine which social groups existed and which people belonged to which groups. My primary focus had to be the Roma students, who initially appeared to be a homogeneous group. Quite quickly, I began to see that within the Roma community in school, there were smaller groups who interacted and behaved differently. As time progressed, I was able to identify two Roma groups.

Members of the first group stayed very close to other Roma students and would very rarely be seen in groups of mixed ethnicity. At break and lunch times they would gather in quite large groups of up to 20 students, moving around the area of the Bistro (see Figure 4.1) where at least one Roma teaching assistant (TA) would stand on duty. The males of this group would wear their hair in a standard short-back-and-sides style. Most of the females of this group would wear their hair long either in a ponytail or plait. They would often have (against school regulation) flowers and clips in their hair and long, dangly earrings as well as bangles, bracelets and rings. There was a lot of 'horseplay' at all break times. The boys and girls would hit and chase each other boisterously. This was done in good spirits the vast majority of the time, but they were often shouted at by Anglo members of staff who perhaps mistook this behaviour as potential for eruptions of violence. Fights were relatively frequent, especially in the early days of my ethnography, so the teachers' concern was perhaps understandable. Roma teaching assistants were often chastised by Anglo teachers for not adequately controlling the behaviour of the Roma students. A favourite lunchtime activity of the students was listening to music. Members of this group would listen mostly to Romanian music and would love playing it to me, explaining the lyrics, telling me about the famous singers and who from their family knew them. Some of the males would also listen to hip-hop.

When I came to join this more closed group at break times, I found conversations were sometimes difficult because they often lacked confidence in their English. I noted that members of this group rarely used vernacular English features, such as discourse markers, swearing, glottalisation, and as my observation continued, I was unsurprised to learn that many of them were in the EAL stream of classes. My interlocutors would frequently seek the help of a member of the group with stronger English to translate for them, sometimes this would be the Roma TA who was usually a relatively young member of the community (in their 20s). As a result, they were often treated and behaved as a *mate* rather than an authority figure. This had both positive and negative impact for the school. It was considered highly necessary in order to gain the trust of the students and develop cultural understanding, but was also viewed negatively by some Anglo members of staff because of the perceived lack of control that they exerted over the Roma students.

The mixing of ages that occurred within the school Roma community is very representative of the mixing of ages that goes on within the wider Roma community. Students would have family members in many different classes across the school, and at break times all ages would mix together.<sup>10</sup> This situation is similar to relationships found in tribal societies, villages and traditional working-class communities where networks are typically both dense, meaning most people in the network all know and are linked to each other, and multiplex, meaning they are related and neighbours and classmates for example (Milroy, 1987:52) (see section 3.5.5.1).

While the first group that I have just described were somewhat homogeneous in their appearance, the other group were more varied. I call them one group, although they did not necessarily all hang around together. However, the members of this group did share characteristics in clothing, hair, and music style for example that made them distinct from the closed group. Individuals from this group were members of other groups whose individuals were not primarily Roma and their friendship network ties were more uniplex,

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<sup>10</sup> Many of my participants use the term *cousin* to refer to any family tie further than siblings, parents and grandparents. Uncles, nieces, in-laws etc. were all referred to as cousins. It is possible that use of this term indicates anyone who you cannot marry (Yaron Matras, personal communication, 5 December 2013).

meaning that not everyone they socialised with necessarily knew each other. The groups did not have names for themselves, so I call this group the open networks group because of the nature of their open friendship ties that reached outside the immediate school Roma community. Individuals from this group would leave class at breaktimes and if their closest friends were not in class, they would typically go to their usual meeting place. Some would meet in the food hall, some, especially the older ones, would go outside to the large playing courts to play football, chat, listen to music and smoke. As a result, members of this group all circulated around a much larger space than the first group. Members of the first group would go outside and splinter off, but would orientate themselves and eventually return to the central point. Members of the open group would at times gather with the Roma-only group, but this was on a much less frequent basis than members of the closed group. The open group members' non-Roma friends were almost always in the same year group as them, in contrast to the closed group who would mix across all ages.

A lot of the males in the open group would have parts of their hair shaved with lines or patterns, some dyed sections of their hair blonde, and some would have parts of their eyebrows shaved. Females also would dye their hair blonde or red, and while most still typically had long hair usually in a ponytail, they tended to have fewer and less intricate decorations and clips in their hair than those with more closed networks. As part of the school uniform, girls had the option of wearing either black trousers or a black skirt. The vast majority of Roma females wore trousers to school. A number of the females from the open group would regularly get detained by one of the members of staff and punished for wearing jeans instead of trousers by being sent to the Internal Exclusion Unit, which meant that you were excluded from classes for the day. When they did wear trousers, some of the boys and girls from the open friendship networks group would tuck the bottoms of their trousers into their socks in a similar way to many of the Anglo students. A style which, when combined with other factors, has been used to index being 'urban' and



'not posh' (Stuart-Smith, Pryce, Timmins, & Gunter, 2013:527) and related to 'chavs' (Bennett, 2013:148; Snell, 2010:13).<sup>11</sup>

Most of the participants in the open group attended mainstream classes, with little or no support from TAs. When I approached members of this group, they were comfortable conversing in English and easy to make conversation with. Many of them had close friends who did not speak Romani or Romanian. They were therefore used to communicating in English, often as a lingua franca. I noticed a number of vernacular features in the speech of many members of this group, for example the Northern British English STRUT vowel, intervocalic and word-final glottalisation, local lexical items such as *pants* instead of *trousers*, frequent use of discourse markers such as *man* and *like* which was also used as quotative, and they would often swear and use vernacular English insults. I also noticed that rather than listening to Romanian music all the time, people from this group would also listen to more Western pop music, such as Rihanna, Beyonce, and much more hip-hop and R&B than the closed group.

Because friendship networks have been shown to be a significant factor in previous research (Drummond, 2013b; Schlee et al., 2011), I was keen to investigate my participants' friendships further. I did this through observation and during my recording sessions. As in other studies (e.g. Cheshire et al., 2008; Drummond, 2013b; Schlee et al., 2011), I asked all of my participants about their friendships, e.g. who their closest friends were and how many close friends they had, where their closest friends were from, who they would confide in if they had a personal problem, who they spent most of their time with during school days, and who they saw outside of school. Some of the responses I got surprised me. Extract 4.1 and Extract 4.2 below are typical of the responses I got especially from my male participants.

#### **Extract 4.1**

1 Gerry: do you have friends from different countries or are most of

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<sup>11</sup> *Chav* is a UK term used to describe young working class people 'characterized by brash and loutish behaviour and the wearing of designer-style clothes (esp. sportswear); usually with connotations of a low social status' (OED Online, 2015).

2                    your friends Roma  
 3     Stefan:     like er  
 4                    I have like er  
 5                    you see  
 6                    er like all school knows me (.)  
 7                    like er  
 8                    I- I- like  
 9                    no like just friends like best friends close friends everyone (.)  
 10                   so basically I got about (.) eight hundred friends in school  
 11     Gerry:     wow ((*laughs*))  
 12     Stefan:     loads  
 13                    everyone cares me because I'm good guy so  
 14                    I'm good guy to them and they're good guy to me (.)  
 15                    especially girls are good  
 16                    girls  
 17                    as well (.)  
 18                    so every day just respect each other

**Extract 4.2**

1     Gerry:     what about you Ion  
 2                    who are your best friends  
 3     Ion:        his friends is my friends (.)  
 4                    my friends is your friends  
 5                    everyone my friend in the school  
 6     Gerry:     ((*laughs*))  
 7     Ion:        if I know them  
 8                    if I don't know them  
 9     Gerry:     but if if you had a problem  
 10                    or like  
 11                    I don't know  
 12                    a a girlfriend problem or like something to talk to your friends  
 13                    [about]  
 14     Fonso:     [what] if he got a boyfriend

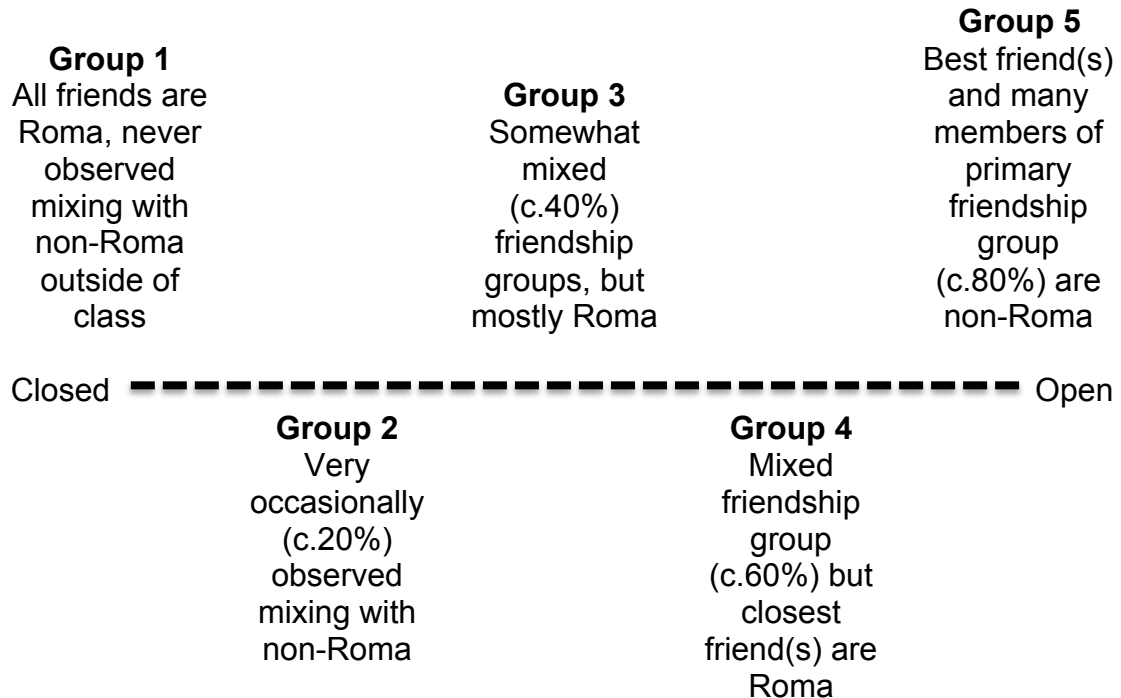
- 15 Ion: ((laughs))  
 16 Gerry: ((laughs))  
 17 Ion: everyone  
 18 I don't know  
 19 all my friends ((laughs))  
 20 Gerry: have you got any friends who aren't Romanian  
 21 Fonso: yes  
 22 Ion: yes  
 23 we have a lot of friends  
 24 Gerry: who who are your friends who aren't Romanian  
 25 Fonso: er (2)  
 26 is a lot  
 27 I  
 28 Ion: I don't really know: their names  
 29 but I have a lot of friends

In Extract 4.1 above, Stefan tells me that he has over 800 friends (line 10) and that everyone in the school is close to him (line 13), while in Extract 4.2, Ion and Fonso cannot tell me who they would go to with a personal issue (lines 17-8) and cannot even give me the names of any friends who are not Romanian even though they are adamant that they have those friends (lines 21-9). Not all my Roma participants answered in this way, but many either could not or would not give me the names of their closest friends. Reflecting on these answers and after speaking to Professor Yaron Matras, the head of the Romani Project at University of Manchester, I realised that the very concept of friendship, especially *best* friends and the functions that friendships serve can be different across different communities and cultures (Gummerum & Keller, 2008).

This situation also acts as a strong reminder of the issues involved in self-report data. Much of what we think we know from previous sociolinguistic and SLA research is based on self-report measures. However, respondents' information may not always be reliable. Many respondents give answers that they believe the researcher wants to hear, and they may provide distorted or untrue information because they want to put across a certain impression of

themselves. This social desirability bias has been found to occur in virtually all types of self-report measures (Fisher, 1993:303).<sup>12</sup> This clearly demonstrates the importance of using ethnography, especially when dealing with communities across different cultures.

It became clear that I could not rely on self-report data from my participants regarding their friendship networks. I knew from my observations up to that point that various individuals did in fact have certain friends who they spent more of their time with than others. I turned to my fieldnotes for further clarification. Having established the two groups described above, I looked more closely at the closed group. I found that there was a large core of around ten participants who I never saw speaking with any non-Roma students outside of class times; all of their friends were Roma, group 1 in Figure 4.2. There was another group of about seven participants who I would see very occasionally mixing with non-Roma (group 2) and a third group of just three participants who had somewhat mixed friendship groups, but again their friends were predominantly Roma (group 3).



**Figure 4.2 Cline showing varying openness of Roma friendship networks of participants**

<sup>12</sup> It is thought that indirect questioning may be able to reduce the effect of social desirability bias, but the extent of its effectiveness is still unclear (Fisher, 1993:304).

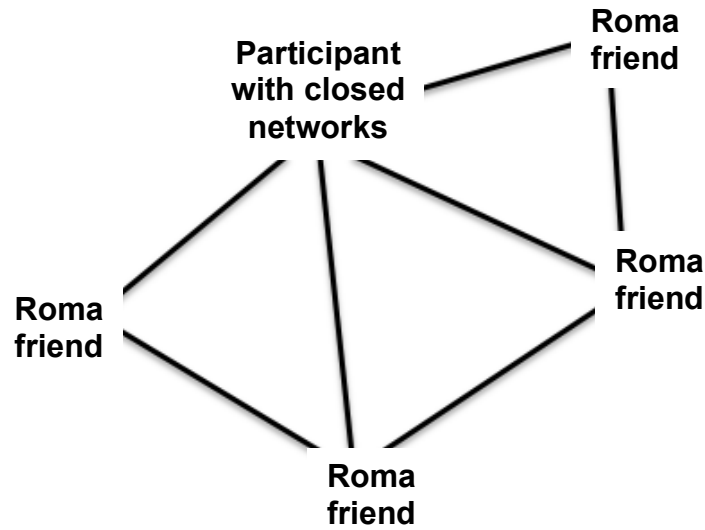
When I examined my notes on members of the open group, I found that there were about four participants who I knew had best friends who weren't Roma and when I saw them outside of class times, they were usually in a group made up mostly of non-Roma students (group 5). There were another three participants whose friendship groups were still very multi-ethnic, but their very closest friends were Roma (group 4). Table 4.2 provides a breakdown of these groups.

**Table 4.2 Breakdown of all participants and friendship network groups**

Description of friendship group; number of participants	Name	Gender	School year group (yr7/10/11)	Nationality of key/best friends <b>if not Roma</b>
<b>Friendship network group 1</b> All friends are Roma, never seen mixing with non-Roma outside of class  n = 10	Anis	female	year 7	BEST FRIENDS ROMA
	Lavinia	female	year 7	
	Pia	female	year 7	
	Jal	male	year 7	
	Florica	female	year 10	
	Djordji	male	year 10	
	Ferke	male	year 10	
	Fonso	male	year 10	
	Ion	male	year 10	
	Gildi	female	year 11	
<b>Friendship network group 2</b> very occasionally (c.20%) seen mixing with non Roma  n = 7	Elijah	male	year 7	BEST FRIENDS ROMA
	Luca	male	year 7	
	Noah	male	year 7	
	Bo	male	year 10	
	Marko	male	year 11	
	Pitivo	male	year 11	
	Dukker	male	year 11	
<b>Friendship network group 3</b> somewhat mixed (c.40%) f'ship groups, but	Andrzej	male	year 7	BEST FRIENDS ROMA
	Cappi	male	year 10	
	Emilian	male	year 10	

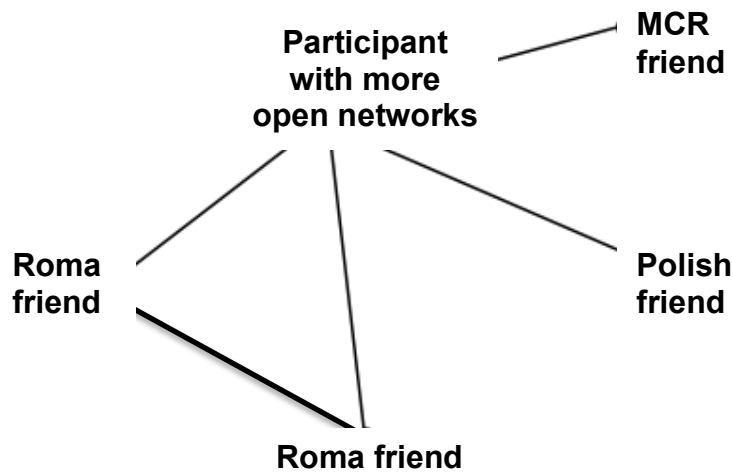
predominantly Roma n = 3				
<b>Friendship network group 4</b> mixed f'ship group (c.60%) but closest friend(s) are Roma n = 3	Chal Stefan Tillie	male male female	year 7 year 11 year 11	MCR born girlfriend(s) best friends Polish and Roma
<b>Friendship network group 5</b> best friend(s) and many members of primary f'ship gp (c.80%) are non-Roma n = 4	Esmá Danior Durril Aishe	female male male female	year 7 year 7 year 7 year 10	best friends Polish and English best friend Czech best friend Russian best friends Polish and Czech

In Chapter 3, I described the way in which social networks have been used as an analytical tool in sociolinguistics. I also talked about the structural characteristics of social networks, involving density, often considered to be the most important characteristic, and multiplexity. Dense networks are ones in which a large number of the individuals to whom the ego or focal point is linked are also linked to each other. Multiplex networks are ones where each individual is linked to others in more than one capacity – a relative and a co-employee, a neighbour and a friend (Milroy 1987). The nature of the networks for those participants with the most closed networks (i.e. friendship network group 1) is illustrated in Figure 4.3. Closed network members all have relatively dense and multiplex networks.



**Figure 4.1** Illustration of participant's closed friendship network

In contrast, those speakers with more open networks have less dense and more uniplex ties, as represented in Figure 4.4:



**Figure 4.2** Illustration of participant's open friendship network

As Figure 4.4 shows, even those speakers with more open networks will have different clusters of friends. 'Clusters are segments or compartments of networks which have relatively high density: relationships within the cluster are denser than those existing externally and may also be considered as

being relationships of like *content'* (Milroy, 1987:50). So, even those Roma with more open friendship networks will have clusters of dense, multiplex Roma friendships alongside the less dense, more uniplex ties.

It has been argued that density of key clusters in a speaker's network could be a more influential norm enforcement mechanism than density overall (Cubitt, 1973). It is likely that Roma speakers in each of the friendship groups will have more and denser clusters of other Roma in their networks than the next group. By this I mean that friendship group 1 will have very dense, multiplex clusters, much more so than friendship group 2, and in turn, friendship group 2 will have more and denser clusters than friendship group 3, and so on. This varying rate of density could act to reinforce the norms of the Roma community, especially for those speakers with the densest clusters in their network.

As explained above, I grouped the participants into friendship groups based upon the ethnic distribution of their friendship network. In effect, the number of the friendship group they fall into equates to a network score. Cheshire et al. (2008) also used this methodology. The researchers asked their participants in the course of sociolinguistic interviews questions such as: How many close friends have you got? What ethnicity are they? Following the interviews, each speaker was given a score of 1-5 based on the self-reported ethnic distribution of their friendship network:

- 1 = all friends same ethnicity as self
- 2 = up to 20% of a different ethnicity
- 3 = up to 40% of a different ethnicity
- 4 = up to 60% of a different ethnicity
- 5 = up to 80% of a different ethnicity

(Cheshire et al., 2008)

Cheshire et al. (2008) used the network score in a quantitative analysis of the Anglos' networks. This was possible because their Anglo participants were an ethnically homogeneous group, and therefore the network score measured the proportion of non-Anglos amongst their friends. However, the researchers could not use the network score to quantitatively analyse the non-Anglos' networks because the non-Anglos were ethnically heterogeneous, consisting of approximately eleven different self-defined ethnicities. A quantitative



analysis on this sample would not be meaningful.

My participants are all Romanian Roma and are, therefore, an ethnically homogeneous group. As a consequence it is possible for me to use the network score, or friendship network group 1-5 allocation, for quantitative analysis. I present results of this quantitative analysis in the following chapters.

#### **4.4 Collecting linguistic data**

The recorded data total over 30 hours of audio recordings which were supplemented by my long-term ethnographic observations. I began to conduct recordings in June 2012, following around 12 months' participant observation. This may seem like a long time to wait for many sociolinguists who would come into school and conduct sociolinguistic interviews and data collection that same day, and may never see their participants again. However, this long period enabled me to establish relationships and gain trust with my participants: a key feature of the ethnography that my study entails.

The initial plan was to record in friendship pairs, with one Roma participant and a Manchester-born friend of their choosing. The intention was to facilitate the most casual and natural atmosphere possible, given the fact that the recordings were being done in school (Milroy & Gordon, 2003:66). However, I quickly found that this 'ideal world' scenario did not reflect the reality of the friendship bonds of the students. As a result there are some recordings with two Roma students together, a Roma student with another EAL student, and three rather than two students, but these situations occurred organically and were at the request of the participants. Because the speakers in the pairs are friends, this could be said to be a more accurate representation of an everyday speech event than individual interviews with one participant and the researcher, resulting in greater opportunity to access vernacular speech (Hall-Lew, 2009:26). It is possible that Roma speakers choosing to be recorded with other EAL students may have had an effect on the linguistic results, for example because they accommodated to their speaking partner (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). However the analyses

(Chapters 5-7) do not show major deviations for speakers who were recorded with different partners or in different groupings.

In addition to recordings with Roma students, I also conducted some recordings with Manchester-born students in order to get comparative speech data from Manchester-born students. This was also useful because it seemed to ease the focus from just Roma students so that they didn't feel singled out. These data are key to answering research questions one and two. I planned to record each Roma participant more than once, but for two participants, I was only able to get one recording because they subsequently left the school.

I did not conduct 'interviews' with my participants, in the traditional sense of the answer-response model (Wolfson, 1976)(Wolfson, 1976) that you would find in a more traditional Labovian sociolinguistic interview. Whenever possible I allowed the adolescents to lead the direction of the conversation around topics that they wanted to talk about. I took this approach in order to avoid the question-and-answer scenario typical of a more formal interview, where the power lies with the interviewer and not the interviewee (Lawson, 2009:86; Moore, 2003:43). I encouraged my participants to interact with me on as equal a basis as possible. This approach also recognises that my participants are individuals with different interests. If I had followed a standardised set of questions, I would not have acknowledged my participants' unique characteristics (Lawson, 2009:86). Where the conversations were slow to flow, I had prepared an idea of certain topics that I could talk to my participants about, such as living in Manchester, school life, activities outside of school, friendship networks, home life, but speakers each brought their own 'take' on these questions and were always encouraged to talk freely on other subjects too and the conversation was in no way constrained to these topics.

Most recordings were done during class times when, with prior agreement with the relevant teacher, I was able to take the students out of class and to an empty classroom. In the summer months, some recordings were conducted outside in the playground at the request of the students. Occasionally, members of staff would knock and come in to get something from the classroom we were in, and it was not uncommon for other students to knock on the glass looking onto the corridor or even open the door and

come in to joke and ask questions about what we were doing. I always tried to accept these interruptions and exchanges between friends as an opportunity for recording vernacular speech when least observed by the speaker.

The data from the recordings were subsequently subjected to quantitative auditory and acoustic analysis with reference to the qualitative observations gained through my ethnography. This knowledge enables me to contextualize Roma linguistic variation in English and acquire further understanding of how the adolescents' variation is tied to their social practices.

## **4.5 Sociophonetic methods**

This is a variationist sociophonetic study that employs mixed methods to find quantitative and qualitative correlations between linguistic variation in a new language and social variables. The majority of this methodology chapter has been dedicated to the qualitative element of this study, the ethnography. My decision to focus heavily on the qualitative in this chapter is based on the fact that, while a number of sociophonetic SLA studies have been done, a key tenet of this research and part of its contribution to knowledge is in the endeavour to be truly mixed methods. Having discussed the qualitative elements, I now turn to the quantitative. A detailed description of the quantitative methods used is given in the individual chapters for each of the three variables, but I now turn to a brief outline of the broad methodologies used here.

Sociophonetics, a subfield of sociolinguistics and phonetics, focuses on the study of socially conditioned phonetic variation (Hay & Drager, 2007). Sociophonetics includes quantitative methods, techniques, and explanations for linguistic variation and change from both phonetics and sociolinguistics (Foulkes, Scobbie, & Watt, 2010:703). While early variationist studies correlated linguistic variation to macro social categories, variation is now also considered in other ways, such as its use in identity construction.

This is a mixed methods study that combines elements of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Acoustic and auditory analyses are

conducted for the variables, and descriptive and inferential statistical methods are employed in order to identify and describe variable patterns in the data. Variation was analysed using R (R Core Team, 2015). In order to provide a level of certainty that the observed patterns in the data are not due to chance, multivariate analysis was performed using Rbrul (D. E. Johnson, 2009). Multiple regression analyses have been used in the study of sociolinguistic variation since the 1970s, as explained in Chapter 3, the most well-known of which are the VARBRUL programs. These programs offer researchers the ability to consider multiple influences on linguistic variation (D. E. Johnson, 2009:359). Rbrul offers further important advantages in that it can handle continuous as well as categorical data and that it incorporates mixed-effects modeling. For each of the variables analysed here, mixed-effects models using individual word and speaker as random effects were applied to the data using Rbrul. Mixed-effects models are able to estimate effects of both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors on continuous data (D. E. Johnson, 2009:362), and allow speaker and item to be integrated into the model as random effects (Baayen, 2008:275).

## 4.6 Summary

This methodology chapter has provided an outline of the fieldwork site and the methods used for data collection and analysis. Data were collected and analysed using two contrasting, yet complementary frameworks: ethnography and variationist sociophonetics. The daily lives of students were observed via participant observation and their friendship networks were mapped, participants were selected and recorded in order to elicit the data needed for sociophonetic analysis and provide further ethnographic detail. In total 27 speakers were recorded and analysed here.

The following chapters present detailed accounts of the variable analyses. First I focus on the features that are considered to be representative of local variation: the *letter* and *happy* vowels. Chapter 7 presents an analysis of *GOOSE*-fronting. This analysis examines how Roma participants of this study react to a supralocal variant and a change in progress. Finally,

Chapter 8 provides a more in depth discussion of how my qualitative data informs my quantitative findings. I turn now to my analysis of the letter vowel.

## Chapter 5 The *lettER* vowel

The aim of this thesis is to examine what social factors influence the acquisition of vernacular variants in a new language. This chapter analyses the realisation of phrase final *lettER* vowel among the Roma participants at Saltar High in terms of its sociolinguistic patterning and indexical potential.

This chapter begins with a description of this vowel in general before moving onto a description of its production in Manchester. Section 5.2 discusses my motivations for analysing this sound and the research questions addressed in this chapter. I then go on to discuss previous research on the variable. Section 5.4 discusses the data and methods used to analyse this variable. Section 5.5 gives details of the results, and the chapter finishes with a discussion of the results in terms of social practice and group membership in Section 5.6.

### 5.1 The *lettER* vowel

The *lettER* vowel (Wells, 1982:165-167) is merged with the *comma* set in non-rhotic British English varieties such as Mancunian and is therefore usually produced with final schwa e.g. *letter* [letə]. The clitic pronoun *her* often adopts the same quality as *lettER*, so that *tell her* is homophonous with *teller* (Wells, 1982:166). Both the *lettER* and *comma* lexical sets involve weak unstressed vowels that occur word-finally, and though Wells (1982:165) does not consider them really to be members of the standard lexical sets, the vowels have important indexical and diagnostic value in distinguishing accents. The sets of *lettER* and *comma* are exemplified in Table 5.1:

**Table 5.1: examples of tokens within *lettER* and *comma* lexical sets**

<i>lettER</i>	<i>paper, better, Manchester, rubber, order, tiger, teacher, brother, sister,...;</i> <i>metre, centre,...;</i> <i>sugar, calendar, liar,...;</i> <i>indicator, anchor, survivor, author, professor, major,...;</i> <i>flavour, armour, humour, colour,...;</i> <i>martyr, satyr, zephyr,...;</i> <i>figure, pressure, measure, feature, failure,...</i>
<i>comma</i>	<i>quota, vodka, panda, saga, sofa, Gemma, visa, drama, arena, phobia,...</i>

### 5.1.1 Manchester *lettER*

By examining nine female speakers of American varieties of English, Flemming & Johnson (2007) found significant phonetic differences between schwa in word-final position and word medially. They found that word-final schwa has a relatively consistent mid central vowel quality, while word-internal schwa is higher. Recent research on Manchester English shows that the Manchester *lettER* vowel is both syntactically and morphologically conditioned. Rather than being a mid central vowel, absolute phrase-final /ə/ is realised as a backer and slightly lower vowel, but this variation does not occur where there is a suffix, for example in *letters* (Baranowski & Turton, 2015; Ramsammy & Turton, 2012). Where a sound becomes lowered and backed, the highest part of the tongue moves from a position towards the front or centre of the mouth to an area further to the rear and bottom of the vowel space.

## 5.2 Motivations and research questions

My motivations for analysing the *lettER* vowel were that it appears to be a local, stable variant that is relatively contained to the Manchester area, illustrated by its stereotype status. The findings of Ramsammy & Turton

(2012) suggest that lowering and backing of *lett*ER may be linked with laxing of the happy vowel, which is also analysed in this study. Of all the features analysed here *lett*ER appears to be the most salient. This is represented by the fact that there is a stereotype that Manchester speakers say *Manchest*[p] (A. Hughes et al., 2013; Ramsammy & Turton, 2012) and the fact that two of my participants explicitly commented on it. The feature's salience could be both an encouraging factor or a hindrance to acquisition depending upon participants' attitudes.

The research questions of the present chapter are:

1. To what extent Roma adolescents reproduce the patterns in production of phrase-final /ə/ of their Manchester born peers?
2. What factors impact on whether the Roma adolescents do this?

### 5.3 Previous research

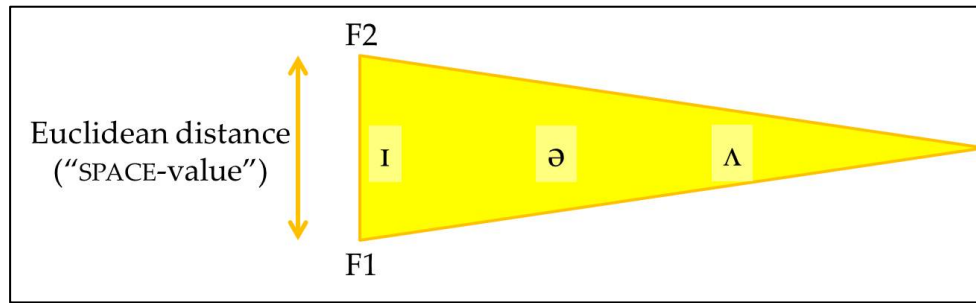
Kondo (1994) investigates schwa variation in RP, finding that variation in schwa is largely predictable from phonetic context. Tollfree (1999:170) describes speakers of broad South East London English as having an additional open variant [ɐ] which is particularly noticeable phrase finally. The *lett*ER vowel has been examined in some northern English dialects, including Newcastle, where *lett*ER is particularly open, around [ɑ], but not necessarily as far back as [ɑ] (Wells, 1982:376). Watt & Milroy (1999) say older and/or working class Newcastle speakers often have a very open [ɐ] variant, while [ə] is still more generally heard for middle class speakers. Moisl & Maguire (2008:61) find production of /ə/ could distinguish whether speakers were from Newcastle or Gateshead and correlated well with social characteristics of the speakers such as class and gender. Flynn (2010) found that adolescents in Nottingham typically realised *lett*ER as [ə], but some females, especially working class, produce a laxer variant that he transcribes as [ɐ] in phrase-final position.

With regard to Manchester English, there is very little research that examines the Manchester English *lett*ER vowel. Hughes et al. (2013) observe that production of unstressed word-final [ə] is often backed and lowered in



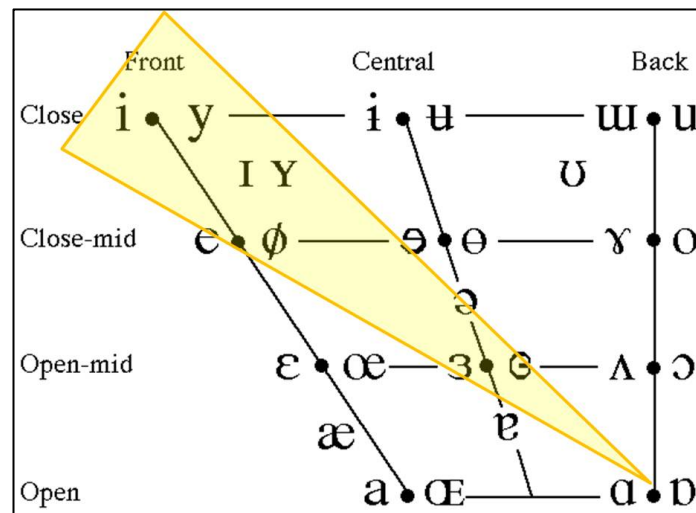
comparison with RP and may reach [ɑ]. They also remark that it is one of the principal stereotypes of Mancunian speech. Beal (2008:136) comments that speakers in Manchester and Sheffield have [ɒ] for *lett*ER, while Tynesiders have [ɐ]. However, Ramsammy & Turton (2012) argue that reports of such extreme backing and lowering of *lett*ER in Manchester English are probably exaggerated. Nevertheless, this feature is highly salient both for Mancunians themselves and those from outside the area. The Internet is rich with advice on how to ‘sound authentically Mancunian’ by pronouncing any word that ends in ‘-er’ as ‘-oh’. This headline from a local online magazine is another example: ‘Sleuth finds out about Manchestoh, the Haciendoh and the futoh’ (Manchester Confidential, 2010). Here the words *Manchester*, *Hacienda* (a local nightclub), and *future*, which would for many (non Manchester-born) speakers be produced with /ə/, are all replaced with an orthographic representation of a lowered and backed variant of the *lett*ER vowel.

In the first detailed phonetic study of Manchester vowels, Ramsammy & Turton (2012) acoustically analysed the speech of 20 speakers from the Manchester area. Speakers were recorded reading a number of sentences designed to test realisations of /ə/ in a range of different phonological environments, for example, absolute phrase-final position (er#), as in *They wrote a long letter* and in plurals (erPL#) *letters*. Distracter sentences were also included in order to divert participants’ attention away from the purpose of the study. Formant frequency measurements of F1, F2 and F3 were extracted at the midpoint of each realisation of *lett*ER. These raw formant values were then converted to Bark values and Lobanov-normalised. Ramsammy & Turton (2012) then used the Euclidean distance or SPACE-value calculation (F2 minus F1) to capture variation in vowel quality (see also Kirkham, 2013; Nance, 2013).



**Figure 5.1: The Euclidean distance/SPACE-value decreases as the vowel becomes backed and lowered (from Ramsammy & Turton, 2012)**

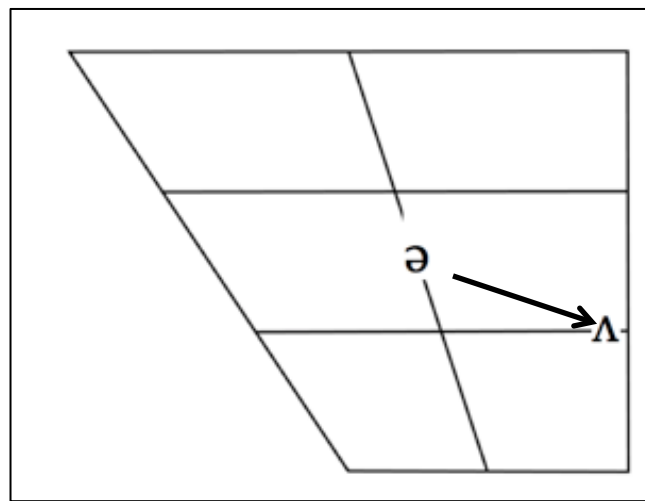
A Euclidean distance is the distance between two points in multidimensional space. Figure 5.1 shows how the Euclidean distance or SPACE-value ( $F2$  minus  $F1$ ) decreases as a vowel becomes backed and lowered. Figure 5.2 shows the Euclidean triangle laid over the vowel space. As production of the vowel moves toward the bottom and back of the oral space, the SPACE-value decreases correspondingly. If the SPACE-value is a high number, the vowel being produced is toward the front, upper area of the vowel space. If the SPACE-value is low, a lower, backer vowel is being produced.



**Figure 5.2: Euclidean triangle over the vowel space (from Ramsammy & Turton, 2012)**

The sensitivity of the backing process to morphology, e.g. *letter* vs *letters*, had not been investigated prior to Ramsammy & Turton's (2012) study. They labelled the two environments as erPL# for the phrase-final

plurals and er# for the word-final and phrase-final environment. They found that many Manchester speakers backed and slightly lowered the *lett*ER vowel so that production was around [ʌ] instead of [ə], so *letter* [lɛtə] became [lɛtʌ] (see Figure 5.3).<sup>13</sup> Additionally, Ramsammy & Turton (2012) explain that some *lett*ER vowels sounded impressionistically partially rounded for some speakers, perhaps even approaching [ɔ], but this was not shown to be a general pattern. The effect of both backing and lowering appeared to be increased when the sound occurs phrase finally. This is when the effects were most auditorily salient.



**Figure 5.3** Approximate location of lett[ə]s and lett[ʌ] vowels in Manchester English.<sup>14</sup>

In contrast, Ramsammy & Turton found that in erPL# (phrase final plural form), Manchester speakers maintained the production of a centralised schwa vowel. Ramsammy & Turton's (2012) results showed inter-speaker variation for this variable and suggested this may be sociolinguistically constrained. They found that the backing of *lett*ER correlated with the broad social categories of age and class, with younger Working Class speakers and younger middle-class males producing [ʌ] in phrase-final position.

<sup>13</sup> There is no STRUT/FOOT contrast in Manchester English.

<sup>14</sup> The exact placing of the [ʌ] vowel is highly variant inter-speaker and only appears here to give an impression of where the realisation generally lies.

## 5.4 Phonetic methodology

In the current study, a total of 1176 letter tokens were analysed from the 27 speakers summarised in Table 4.1 (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1). I aimed to include all tokens of phrase-final unstressed /ə/ from my data. Initially, I identified all tokens that fell into both the *lettER* and *comma* lexical sets. However over 50% (253 of 500) of *comma* tokens were the words *Roma* or *Romania*, and many speakers articulated the word final vowel as [a]. Further investigation into the reasons for this is outside the scope of the current study. However, it is probable that the pronunciation of the end of these words as [a] is as a result of them ending in orthographic <a>, as well as them being high frequency words in the participants' own language which would typically be produced with a final [a]. I therefore decided to exclude the *comma* set and focus only on tokens of *lettER*. I also identified tokens containing erPL# forms (phrase final plural, e.g. *letters*) and er (phrase medial, word final, e.g. *a letter came*) in order to see if speakers' variation was syntactically and morphologically conditioned, in line with previous research (Ramsammy & Turton, 2012).

Following identification of tokens, a number of word and phrase-level properties were coded for in ELAN (ELAN; Sloetjes & Wittenburg, 2008). The following linguistic environment factors were coded for:

- lexical item: the word in which a token of word final /ə/ occurred
- preceding and following phonetic contexts: transcribed using broad segmental transcription of what was actually produced, rather than a notion of 'underlying' phonemes. For example in the word *letter*, if the /ə/ vowel was actually preceded by a glottal stop, I coded a glottal stop as the preceding environment, rather than a /t/
- word and phrase position: these factors were coded so that phonetic environment was only investigated where it was fully variable, i.e. absolute word- and phrase-final positions. erPL# positions were also coded (e.g. *letters*) for comparison
- vowel in previous syllable: in order to examine possible effects of vowel-to-vowel coarticulation

- number of syllables in word and intonation phrase: coded based upon auditory impressions of actually produced syllables, rather than citation forms
- word class [noun; verb; adjective; adverb; preposition; pronoun]

### 5.4.1 Auditory analysis

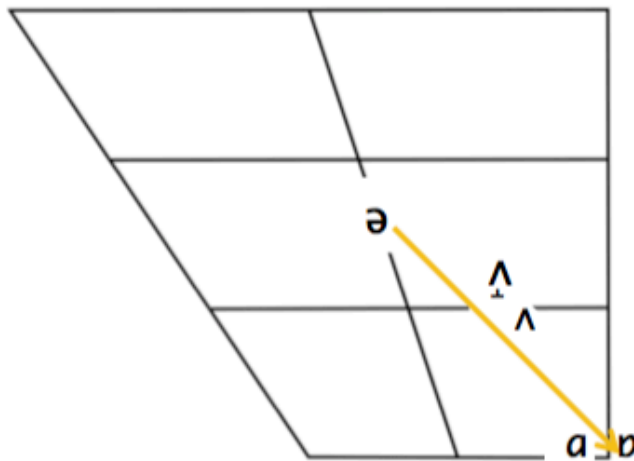
Every instance of a phrase-final word which might potentially have /ə/ or /ə/s in word-final position was identified as a token and the vowel was coded as shown in Table 5.2. In order to achieve this categorisation, I listened to all the *lettER* vowels and allocated them to their nearest vowel, apart from in the case of what became category 2, the raised STRUT vowel [ʌ̠]. Tokens of this category fell between the centralised schwa variant and the lowered backed STRUT category, I therefore added the diacritic to indicate slight raising. I checked these categorisations against an online IPA resource with sound which can be found at <http://www.yorku.ca/earmstro/ipa/vowels.html>.

**Table 5.2 Auditory categories for *lettER* analysis**

<i>lettER</i> variants	Code
[ə]	1
[ʌ̠]	2
[ʌ]	3
[ɑ]	4
[ɒ]	5
other	0

The 0 categorisation consisted of realisations that fell outside of the continuum. Speakers who produced variants that were put into this category were typically of lower proficiency in English and these realisations could be viewed as pronunciation errors (Drummond, 2010:88). Study of these variants falls outside the scope of the current study. Therefore, once identified, the tokens containing variants in category 0 were removed, and no further analysis was conducted on them.

The categorisations shown in Figure 5.4 above are not intended to be phonetically precise. I allocated the vowel sounds into categories that could be reliably distinguished. The symbols used represent the nearest vowel to what was heard. Variants 1-5 lie approximately on a continuum between the centralised realisation of *lettER* as schwa [ə] and a lowered backed variant [ɒ], as Figure 5.4 below illustrates. This reflects the speaker's ability to choose to position his or her production at any one of a number of points along the continuum (Milroy & Gordon, 2003:144).



**Figure 5.4** Continuum of variant categorisation for auditory analysis of the *lettER* vowel

### 5.4.2 Acoustic analysis

Acoustic analysis was used to confirm and complement the findings of the auditory analysis. All tokens of *lettER* were subjected to acoustic analysis using Praat (Boersma & Weenink, 2015). While there is no direct one-to-one relationship between the auditory and acoustic analyses of vowels, particularly when analysing the first and second formants alone (Foulkes et al., 2010), it can be beneficial to combine both auditory and acoustic techniques. There are a number of previous studies where acoustic analysis is used on data which has already been coded auditorily (e.g. Drummond, 2010; Watt & Milroy, 1999). Using both techniques together helps to prevent incorrect analysis of individual tokens and it is often the case that the acoustic analysis helps clarify the auditory analysis or vice versa (Drummond, 2010:90).

The measurement used to capture vowel quality was the SPACE-value (F2-F1) at the temporal midpoint of the vowel (see section 5.3). This is typical of many studies that examine vowel production because the midpoint of the vowel should be as distant as possible from the coarticulatory influences of neighbouring segments. This is especially important for examination of schwa realisation because, although word-final schwa is produced relatively consistently by speakers as a mid central vowel, previous research indicates that word-internal schwa may be particularly sensitive to coarticulation (Flemming & Johnson, 2007; Kondo, 1994). At the midpoint of the vowel, the formants will be as close as possible to the 'true' or 'target' values for that vowel (Lindblom, 1963).

The formant data were transformed to the Bark psychoacoustic scale using the formula in Traunmüller (1990). The Bark scale provides measurements that are a closer approximation to what the human ear perceives. The SPACE-value data were not subjected to any further normalisation procedures because the F2-F1 measurement is already a formant-extrinsic normalisation technique that captures information about relative formant values, which normalises for interspeaker variation (Kirkham, 2013:176). Subjecting the data to any further normalisation processes may risk 'over-normalising' the data, which would then reduce potentially significant sociolinguistic differences (Kirkham, 2013:176).

The results of the acoustic analysis were plotted onto a scatter diagram using Microsoft Excel. By labelling the points in the scatter diagram with the numbers 0 to 5 relating to the auditory analysis categories, it was possible to visually check the consistency between the two techniques (Drummond 2010:90). Ideally I wanted to see instances of each number grouped together in the diagram. Any tokens where the auditory categorisation and the acoustic measurement did not agree were checked. Usually this would result in agreement, but occasionally a discrepancy still existed. Rather than immediately discarding these instances, I considered them in the broader context of the current study. The participants of this study have no access to acoustic measurement and auditory perception of the speech sounds is the only tool at their disposal. Vowel perception is a complex process that relies on a wide range of elements in the speech signal. While F1 and F2

frequencies can play a part in determining how a vowel is heard, they represent only part of the acoustic information carried in the signal (Milroy & Gordon 2007:150). Therefore, where the acoustic and auditory coding did not agree, the original auditory analysis was checked again, and this final auditory categorisation was recorded.

### 5.4.3 Statistical analysis

To investigate patterns in these vowel data I used multivariate analysis. Cross-tabulations of factor groups were examined to check for potential interactions and artificial effects. *lettER* was measured as the continuous outcome variable using the SPACE-value in Bark. Predictor variables included all of the linguistic factors listed above (see section 5.4) ,as well as a number of social factors described below. In each model, individual speaker and word were entered as random effects. Table 5.3 details all of the factors used in the mixed effects models.

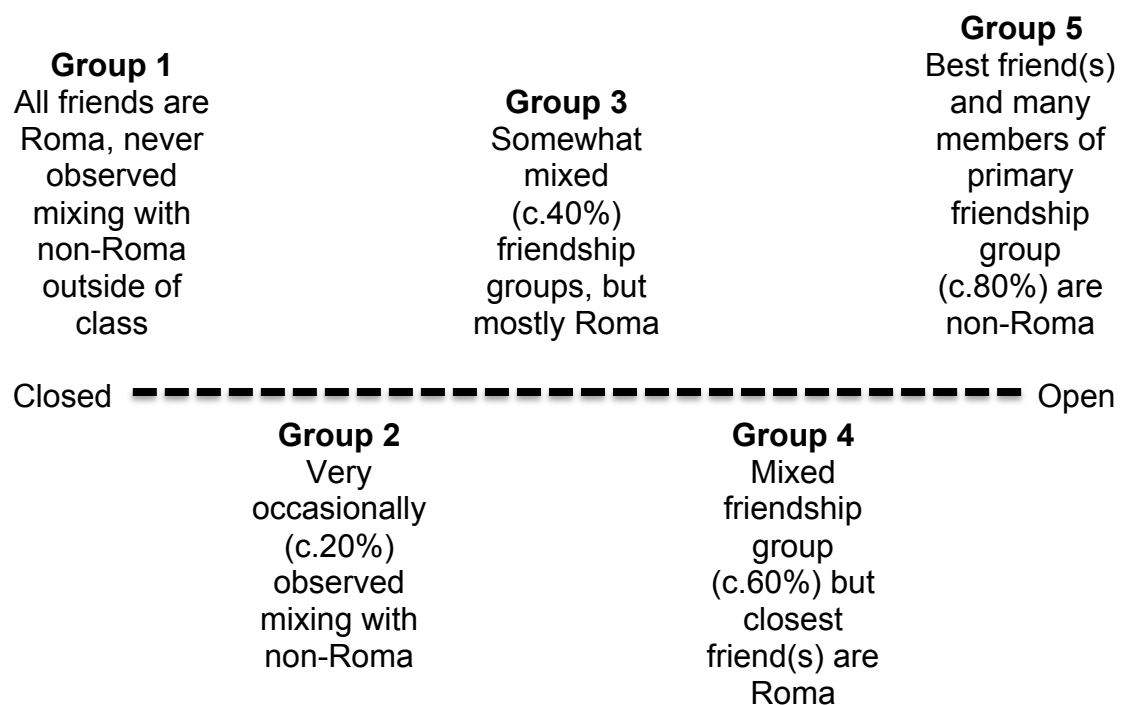
**Table 5.3 Independent and dependent variables used in the mixed-effects models**

<b>Dependent variable</b>
SPACE-value
<b>Independent linguistic variables (see section 5.4 for description)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lexical item (random effect)</li> <li>• preceding and following phonetic contexts</li> <li>• word and phrase position</li> <li>• vowel in previous syllable</li> <li>• number of syllables in word and intonation phrase</li> <li>• word class</li> </ul>
<b>Independent social variables</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual speaker (random effect)</li> <li>• age (min: 11 years; max: 16 years)</li> <li>• gender (female; male)</li> <li>• year group (year 7; year 10; year 11)</li> <li>• age of arrival (AoA) (min: 1 year; max: 15 years)</li> </ul>



- 
- length of residence (LoR) (min: 6 months; max: 13 years)
  - academic stream (EAL; coreEAL; mainstream)
  - self-identification as Roma (yes; no)
  - friendship group (1-5; open/closed)
- 

As part of my quantitative analysis, I coded for friendship group as laid out in Figure 5.5 below (see also Chapter 4 section 4.3.2). However, with only three participants in each of friendship group 3 and 4, and only four participants in the most open group, friendship group 5, the cell count is too low to be ideal for statistical analysis. Therefore, for the purposes of the statistical analysis, I collapse Groups 1, 2, and 3 to form one more closed friendship networks group. Groups 4 and 5 are then also collapsed to form a more open friendship networks group.



**Figure 5.5 Cline showing varying openness of Roma friendship network groups**

The closed friendship network group contains members from friendship groups 1-3, totalling 20 of the 27 participants (74%). As described in detail in Chapter 4 section 4.3.2, all speakers in the more closed network group spent all or most of their time with other Roma students and Teaching Assistants. At

break times, they stayed very close to the central Roma group in the area of the Bistro. The appearance of members of this group tended to be more traditionally Roma. Because the students wore a uniform to school, this was most noticeable in the hair and jewellery styles that the young people wore. Members of this group typically listened to traditional Romanian music.

The open friendship network group includes all speakers from friendship groups 4 and 5 (see Figure 5.5 above). This group totalled 7 of 27 participants (26%). The main characteristic of speakers from this group is the diversity of their friendship networks, with all of them spending the majority of their time with non-Roma students. At break times, these speakers would often be found away from the main Roma group. They would frequently return to the central Roma group and spend time with their Roma friends, but they could move fluidly between this group and their non-Roma friends. They often had more mainstream hair, jewellery and clothing styles, and they would listen to a more diverse selection of music than the majority of speakers in the more closed networks group.

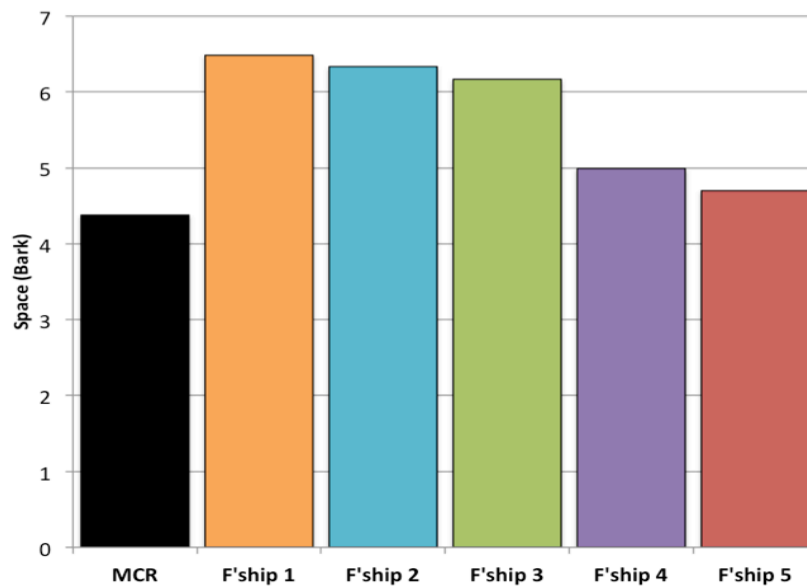
I have now explained my methodology for analysing the *lettER* vowel and described the findings of previous research. I now move onto a presentation of the results and discussion of my findings for *lettER*.

## 5.5 Results *lettER*

This section focuses on results of the multivariate analysis of the production of phrase final /ə/. Like Ramsammy & Turton (2012), I found that in erPL# environment the Manchester-born peers maintain a centralised production of the schwa vowel. However when there is no morphological suffix this is often produced with a lowered backed realisation. The effect of both backing and lowering certainly appears to increase when the sound occurs phrase finally, and this is when the effects are most auditorily salient.

Once I had ascertained that the Manchester students produce this variation, the next thing to establish was whether the Roma adolescents produce a similar pattern of variation to that of their Manchester-born peers.

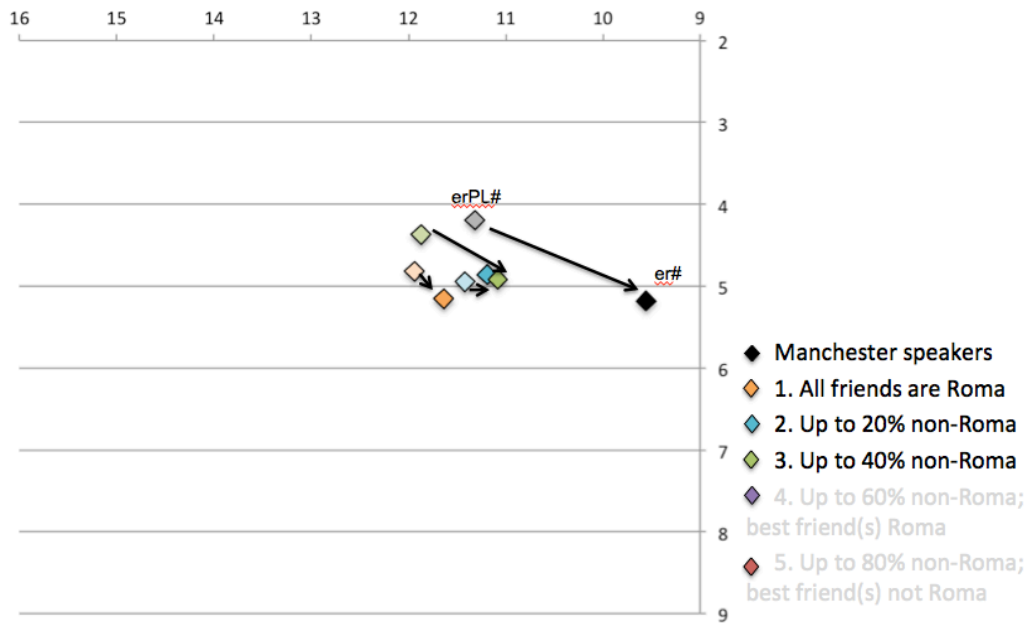
From conducting a factor-by-factor analysis, I found that the clearest patterns in variation can be seen by visualising the data according to friendship group:



**Figure 5.6 Average er# production by friendship group**

As Figure 5.6 shows, the more open friendship network groups (4 and 5) have significantly lower backer realisations of /ə/ compared with the less open network groups (1-3). The higher SPACE-values shown on the y-axis of Figure 5.6 indicate a more centralised realisation of /ə/, whereas lower values indicate a lower backer realisation. The average SPACE-value for the Manchester speakers I recorded in school is shown in on the left of the chart in black.

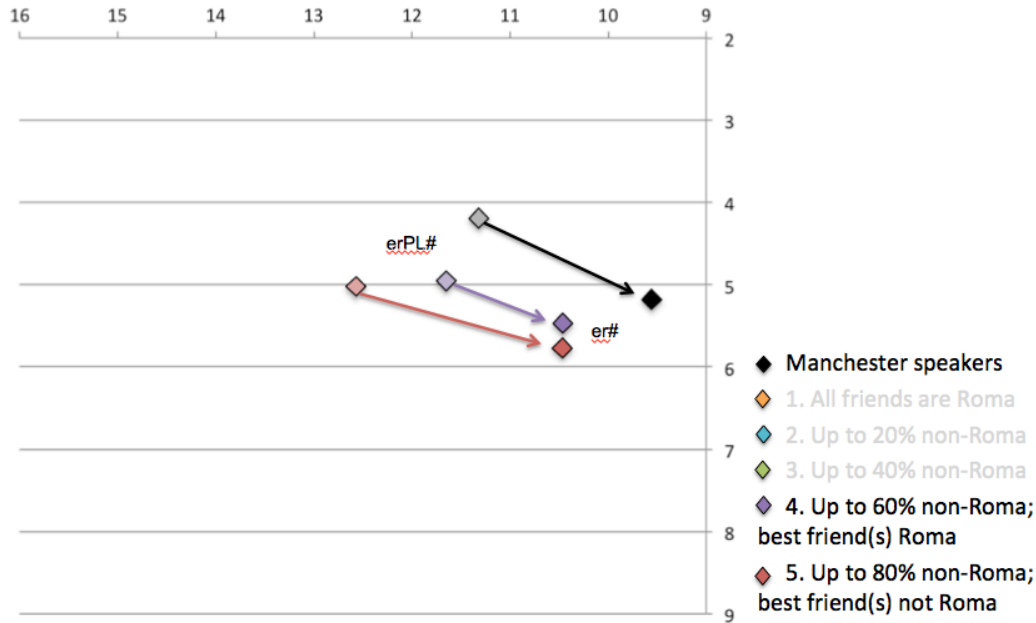
Figure 5.6 shows that members with more open networks (friendship groups 4 and 5) have an er# realisation that is approaching that of the Manchester speakers. In order to see if there was a difference between the adolescents' production of er# and erPL#, I plotted the mean space value for each friendship group in both er# and erPL# environments onto a scatter plot. I began with the more closed friendship network groups. Figure 5.7 shows the plots for members of friendship network groups 1, 2, and 3. The Manchester-born speakers are shown in black for reference. The Manchester-born speakers have a relatively central mean production in the erPL# environment, shown in grey, which moved to a lowered backed production in er#, shown in black. This movement is indicated by the arrows.



**Figure 5.7: Variation between erPL# and er# environment means for friendship groups with closed networks (1-3). Manchester speakers shown in black for reference.**

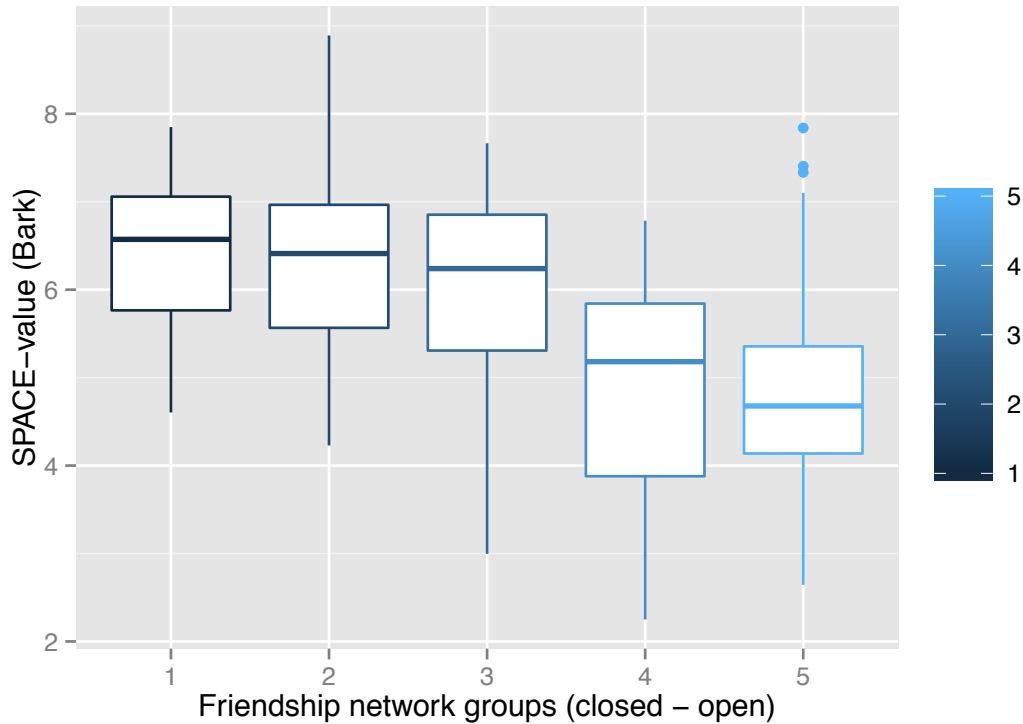
The all-Roma friendship network group, in orange, and friendship network group 2, in blue, have very little movement in Figure 5.6 as indicated by the tiny arrows between erPL# (lighter and more central) and er# position (darker and backer). Friendship network group 3, shown in green, has more movement, but still very little when compared with the Manchester speakers.

Figure 5.8 shows the movement between erPL# and er# position for the Manchester speakers and the more open friendship groups. Both the more open friendship network groups (4 and 5) have a much bigger difference between vowel production in the two environments than the more closed friendship network groups in **Figure 5.7**. Those speakers with more open friendship networks produce variation that is much more in line with the Manchester-born speakers.



**Figure 5.8: Variation between erPL# and er# environment means for friendship groups with open networks (4 and 5). Manchester speakers shown in black for reference.**

Once I observed this pattern in the data, I was curious to investigate further the differences between the closed and open groups. Figure 5.9 below indicates a clear pattern: for each subsequent increase in diversity of friendship group, the mean SPACE-value decreases, indicating that the vowel production is lowered and backed. Friendship group 5 is considerably more lowered and backed than the other groups. As shown through the boxes of the boxplot having roughly equal height, all friendship groups show a similar range in space-value, apart from friendship group 4. This could indicate that the speakers in friendship group 4 are really where the transition or acquisition of the Manchester variant is occurring, and those speakers in friendship group 5 have mostly completed acquisition of the variant.



**Figure 5.9: Mean SPACE-value for production in er# environment for all five friendship groups**

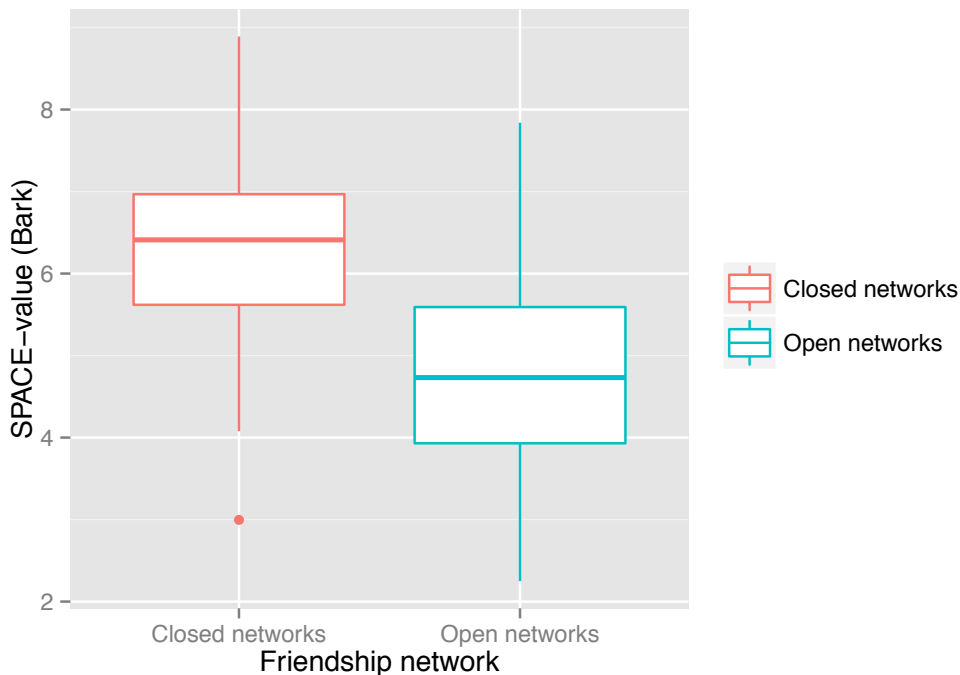
The results from the two-way ANOVA revealed that this pattern is statistically significant. However post hoc pairwise Bonferroni comparisons demonstrated that differences between each of the friendship groups were not always statistically significant. Table 5.4 shows the results of this test.

**Table 5.4 *p*-value results of post hoc pairwise Bonferroni comparison of friendship groups**

	<b>Friendship 1</b> <i>p</i> -value	<b>Friendship 2</b> <i>p</i> -value	<b>Friendship 3</b> <i>p</i> -value	<b>Friendship 4</b> <i>p</i> -value
<b>Friendship 2</b>	1.00000	-	-	-
<b>Friendship 3</b>	0.44714	0.57120	-	-
<b>Friendship 4</b>	6.6e-07	6.4e-07	0.00034	-
<b>Friendship 5</b>	4.0e-11	2.5e-12	1.4e-06	1.00000

The pattern between groups 1, 2 and 3 is not statistically significant (greyed text), nor is the difference between groups 4 and 5 (greyed text). But there is a statistically significant pattern between the closed and open groups (1,2,3-4,5:  $p < .001$ ). For further analysis of this variable, I therefore collapsed groups

1-3 and 4-5 to form two friendship groups made up of closed and open networks respectively as shown in Figure 5.10:



**Figure 5.10: Mean SPACE-values for participants with closed (left) and open (right) friendship networks**

I then ran the regression model again, this time using the collapsed friendship groups. The results are summarised in Table 5.5. In terms of linguistic predictors, a preceding liquid or glottal results in a much lowered backed production of /ə/. This effect can be explained with reference to the articulatory effects of liquid consonants on surrounding vowels, whereby preceding liquids generally lower F2 in the following vowel (Tunley 1999). Other linguistic factors such as word class and preceding vowel were not shown to be significant predictors.

The only social factor that was significant was the diversity of the friendship groups. The more open friendship network group have significantly lower backer realisations of *er#* when compared to the more closed network group. Other social factors such as gender, age of arrival, age or year group were not significant predictors in this model.

**Table 5.5 Final regression model for absolute phrase-final *lettER* (er#)**

	Factor	Log odds	Mean	p
Preceding	Affricate	0.856	6.226	0.007
	Semivowel	0.323	5.709	
	Stop	0.146	5.924	
	Nasal	0.142	5.909	
	Fricative	-0.246	5.645	
	Liquid	-0.451	5.024	
	Glottal	-0.771	4.753	
Friendship	Closed friendship network	0.769	6.285	3.79e-07
	Open friendship network	-0.769	4.821	
Not significant	Word class; syllables in word/phrase; word rhythm; preceding vowel; nuclear accent Gender; age; year group; AoA; LoR; self-identification; stream			
Model	Deviance 664.268    df 11    Intercept 5.441    Grand mean 5.795			

## 5.6 Discussion for *lettER*

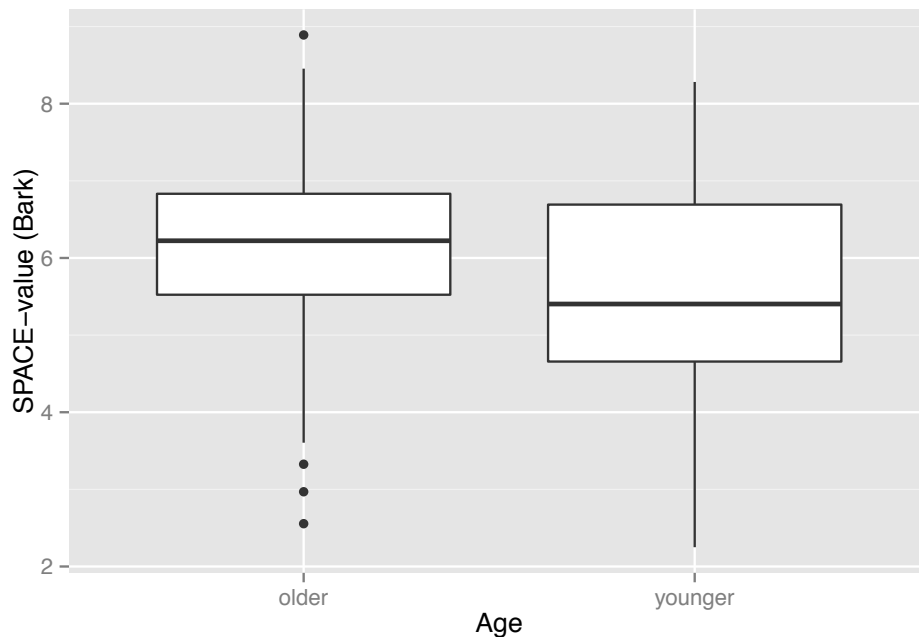
The key finding for *lettER* is that the Roma adolescents living in Manchester are, to varying degrees, acquiring local patterns of variation in word-final /ə/. The most important factor for determining this is the openness of their friendship networks which is statistically significant, showing a positive correlation between more open social networks and the production of Manchester patterns of variation of /ə/.

I was surprised that age, including AoA and LoR were not shown to be significant in the model overall because this has been a key factor in other studies. It is possible that any effect of age was overshadowed by the strength of the effect of social network. However while visualising my data, I did notice that the younger speakers tend to have a lower backer phrase-final *lettER* vowel than the older speakers and a post hoc Bonferroni pairwise t-test showed that the difference between these two groups is statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). This pattern can be seen in Figure 5.11.

For the younger group, the mean age of arrival is 7.3 years (min 5; max 11) and length of residence stands at 4.7 years (min 1.5; max 7). It is possible that because they arrived at a younger age, they are more likely to acquire the local variants. Additionally, almost all of the younger speakers would have attended primary schools in Manchester. Primary schools in the area are



smaller and there are fewer Roma clustered in individual primary schools than at the secondary schools, so it is also possible that they had less opportunity to hide behind other, stronger English speakers as well as being exposed to a wider variety of features, including the laxer *lett*ER variant. At one of the main primary schools that feeds into Saltar High, there were no EAL classes separating the students, all the children were taught all subjects together as one class, further increasing opportunities for contact.

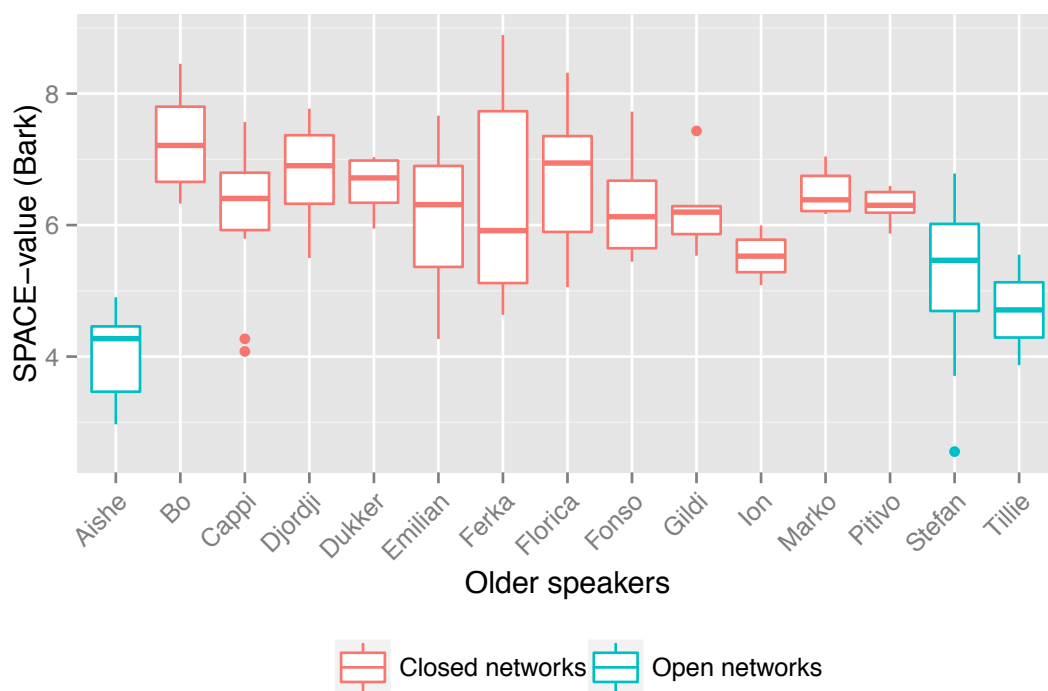


**Figure 5.11: Mean SPACE-values er# environment for older cohort (left) and younger cohort (right).**

AoA and LoR of the older group is more diverse between participants than in the younger group, with the mean AoA being 9.7 years (min 1; max 15) and mean length of residence is 5.3 years (min 6 months; max 13). This is not that different from the younger group. It is possible that the key difference here was the fact that there were much greater numbers of the older cohort all together at Saltar High that many of them had no need to mix with non-Roma if they did not want to. Large numbers of them were put together in EAL classes and kept away from the mainstream which may have added to this segregation.

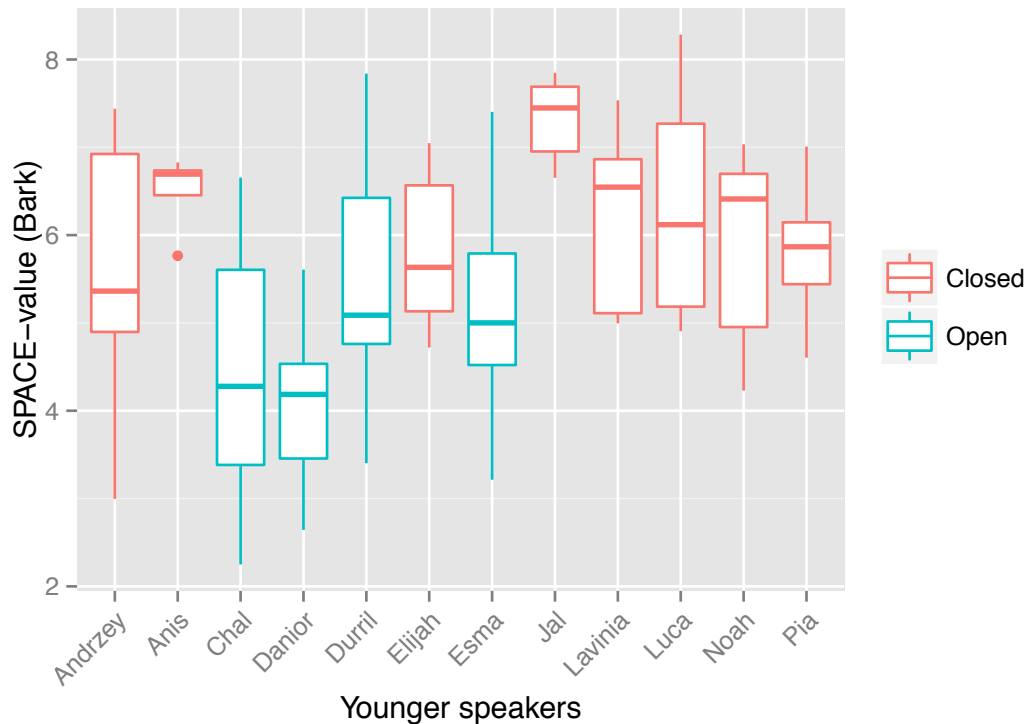
The boxplot in Figure 5.12 shows each participant in the older age group. The colours distinguish whether the speaker is from the closed friendship network groups (shown in red) or the more open friendship network

groups (blue). Two thirds (n=10) of the older speakers (14-16/years 10 and 11) have more centralised realisation of *er#*. Only one third (n=5) have lower backer realisation that is similar to the Manchester speakers. The vast majority of speakers in the closed friendship groups have mean *SPACE*-values that fall between 6 and 8 Bark. Only two speakers who have more closed friendship networks have lower backer mean *SPACE*-values which fall between 4 to 6 Bark, similar to what the Manchester-born speakers produce for *er#*. All three speakers from the more open friendship groups have lowered backed productions that are comparable to the Manchester-born speakers.



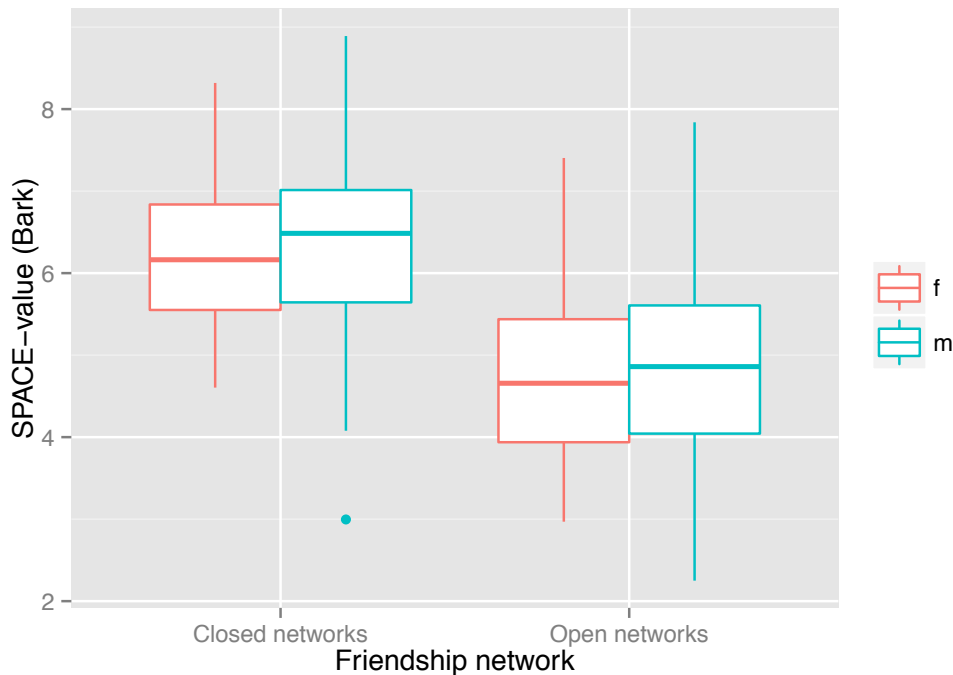
**Figure 5.12: mean *er#* *SPACE*-values for older speakers (Years 10 and 11)**

In contrast to the older age group shown above, Figure 5.13 illustrates that over half of the speakers (n=7) from the younger age group (age 11-12/year 7) have lower backer productions of *er#* with mean space values between 4 to 6 Bark, which is comparable to what the Manchester born speakers produced. With speakers with more open friendship networks (blue) having the most lowered backed productions of all.



**Figure 5.13 mean er# SPACE-values for all younger speakers**

While gender was not significant in the multivariate analysis, I was interested to visualise if there was a pattern among the males and females of the open and closed networks. Figure 5.14 shows that for both friendship groups, the females (in red) lead in the production of a laxer er# variant. While participants here are relatively evenly balanced in age, they are not balanced for gender. There are eight females compared with 19 males. Five of the eight females (62.5% females) are in the closed group compared with 15 of the 19 males (78.9% males). Leaving 37.5% of the females in the more open friendship networks group compared with only 21.1% of the males. There are fewer females in general, which may be an influencing factor in why their networks are more open than the males. With fewer Roma females to talk to, it is possible that they turn to their non-Roma counterparts and this leads to more open friendship networks which in turn increases their exposure to the vernacular variants.



**Figure 5.14: mean er# space-values for closed and open friendship networks by gender.**

So while age and gender may have some influence on er# realisations, it is the diversity of friendship networks that are shown to be most significant factor, something which has been noted in previous studies. Drummond's (2010:126) regression analysis results indicate that adult Polish migrants living in Manchester that had a native speaker partner were more likely to produce the Northern British English STRUT and that it did not seem to matter whether their partner was from the local area or not. However, more qualitative information about the background of the native speaker partners was needed to further clarify this situation. By virtue of having a native-speaker partner, regardless of where they were from, the Poles were more likely to have more social contact with other native speakers who would quite possibly have local or Northern English variants. The same can be said for the Roma adolescents at Saltar High in the more open social networks.

Dubois & Horvath (1998, 1999) found that social network interacted closely with gender and age in their Cajun participants' realisations of (th) and (dh) in Louisiana, USA. For example, they found that women with closed networks used much more of the ethnically marked stop variants [t] and [d] than those with open networks who used the more standard English interdental fricatives [θ] and [ð]. The pattern was much less evident for the

male participants. This gender network effect was consistent across all three age groups that they examined.

Cheshire et al. (2011) found that adolescents who had more multi-ethnic friendship ties were the most innovative in their use of features in the emergence of a new vernacular of Multicultural London English. While the open network Roma group do not appear to be doing anything innovative with regard to the Manchester *lett*ER variants, they are being innovative in so far as they are a minority group that is breaking away from the main closed Roma group in order to pursue new identities, ways of being, and ways of speaking.

The extreme density of the closed networks results in a homogeneity of norms and values which might extend to interactional and linguistic norms (Milroy, 1987:61). The density of the networks of the closed group may in part account for the lack of variation and vernacular features. Whereas the open group have access to more resources that are available for their manipulation including the Manchester variables. The effect of having an open network may be that assimilation into the Anglophone population is accelerated (Dubois & Horvath, 1998:259). Members of the open network friendship group socialise much more with non-family members, have best friends and even boyfriends or girlfriends outside of the Roma community and spend much more time outside of the Roma only group. It is possible that the members of the open network group are indicating their alignment with a less-Roma oriented identity that is reflected in their choice of friends, dress, music, and language, specifically here, *lett*ER variation.

This will be discussed further in this dissertation, but if these preliminary conclusions are shown to pattern across the other variables, this may have implications for other research in the field. For example, in Schlee et al. (2011), both the teenagers living in Edinburgh and London seemed to follow the overall native speaker rates of the apical variant of (ing) for the city they were living in, so Edinburgh based migrants used more of the apical variant than the London based teens. Friendship networks were found to be significant in Edinburgh, with those Polish adolescents with more Edinburgh natives in their friendship networks producing more of the apical variant. However, it was unclear why friendship networks were not significant in the London results. The categories that were used in the quantitative analysis for

the Polish teens' friendship networks were: 'mostly English-speaking' or 'mostly Polish-speaking'. Setting aside the issues of self-report data mentioned above, if, as my results suggest, it is not just having native English friends in your friendship groups, but having a diverse or multi-ethnic friendship group that can impact, then this could be why their London results were different. For Polish teens living and going to school in London, it's highly unlikely that they only had Polish friends or English friends, and perhaps the diversity of networks and its consequent influence on speakers' production was missed.

## 5.7 Summary

The research questions investigated in this chapter were:

1. Do Roma adolescents reproduce the patterns in production of /ə/ of their Manchester born peers?
2. What factors impact on whether the Roma adolescents do this?

The results show that some Roma adolescents do come close to reproducing the Manchester pattern of variation by producing a laxer variant in phrase-final position. The most significant social factor impacting upon this is their friendship networks, with members of the open networks following the pattern more closely.

The role of social networks and the results presented here will be discussed again in Chapter 6 in light of the results from the related *happy* variable. Chapter 7 will present my analysis of GOOSE-fronting and then Chapter 8 synthesises the main findings from all the variables and discusses their implications for the acquisition of sociophonetic variation in a new language.

## Chapter 6 The *happy* vowel

The previous chapter presented the analysis and results of the *lettER* variable. This chapter discusses the analysis and results of the realisation of phrase-final /i/ among the Roma participants at Saltar High. This chapter begins by briefly describing the variable, both in general terms and how it is typically produced in Manchester. Section 6.2 outlines my motivations for choosing this feature and the research questions that will be addressed in this chapter. I then review previous work on word-final /i/ in varieties of British English. Section 6.4 discusses the data and methods used in analyses and then I discuss the results. The final section brings together the results and discussions for both the *lettER* and *happy* variables.

### 6.1 The *happy* vowel

The *happy* vowel is the name that Wells (1982:165) gave to the lexical set of words that have a final /i/. Table 6.1 provides some examples:

**Table 6.1 Examples of tokens within the *happy* lexical set**

<i>happy</i>	<i>happy, city, baby, copy, ready, busy, economy,...;</i> <i>uni, spaghetti, taxi, chilli, salami,...;</i> <i>movie, bookie, calorie,...;</i> <i>coffee, committee,...;</i> <i>hockey, money, valley,...;</i> <i>Chelsea, Swansea,...</i>
--------------	--

Word-final /i/ is the only full (non-schwa) lax vowel that occurs in final open syllables (Harrington, 2006:441). The quality of a word-final unstressed /i/ is

generally considered to be closer to [ɪ] in conservative varieties of RP (Wells, 1982:165). However research shows that since the 1950s in many dialects of British English, including more contemporary RP, word-final /i/ has been undergoing a change from [ɪ] to a fronter and higher monophthong in the region of [i] (Wells 1982:258), a phenomenon known as *happy*-tensing.

Occurring word finally, /i/ frequently occurs as the last syllable in a prosodic phrase; a primary context for syllable lengthening in many languages (Harrington, 2006:441). Where tensing occurs in phrase-final environments, this may subsequently lead to lengthening or tensing in all environments. This could in turn explain the patterns of *happy*-tensing that have been found (Harrington, 2006:441; Kirkham, 2013:164). However, *happy*-tensing does not occur across all dialects, including Manchester English.

### 6.1.1 Manchester *happy*

In contrast to the dialects that are undergoing *happy*-tensing, research indicates that in some northern English varieties, for example Sheffield and Manchester English, word-final /i/ is often realised as a lower and backer vowel approximating [ɛ] (Baranowski & Turton, 2015; Beal, 2008; Ramsammy & Turton, 2012). This may be especially salient in phrase-final position (Wells, 1982). In Manchester, production of phrase-final lax variants was only found for working-class speakers, indicating that the variable is sociologically conditioned (Ramsammy & Turton, 2012; Baranowski & Turton, 2015).

I use the same notation indicating the linguistic environment of the *happy* vowel as I did in the previous chapter. Therefore, i# indicates word- and phrase-final position (e.g. *puppy* and *coffee*). iPL# signifies phrase final tokens with the plural morphological suffix (e.g. *puppies* and *coffees*).

## 6.2 Research questions and motivations

My motivations for analysing the *happy* vowel in the speech of the Roma adolescents are that, like the *letter* vowel, *happy*-laxing appears to be relatively localised to the Manchester area. This means that I will be able to contrast Roma acquisition of these two regional variants with a supra-local



variant, my third variable GOOSE-fronting. Additionally, despite that fact that none of my participants commented explicitly on the Manchester production of the *happy* vowel, there is still some saliency attached to this variable, as the following definition from the Urban Dictionary shows:

Citeh: Phonetic for "City" in a Mancunian accent. The name given to Manchester City by fans of Southern football (or soccer to Americans) clubs because of the way Mancs pronounce it.  
*Arm reet glad to be a northerner and Ah sahpport Citeh.*

(Urban Dictionary, 2015)

The main research questions for this chapter are:

1. To what extent do Roma adolescents produce a lowered backed *happy* vowel in phrase-final position?
2. What factors impact upon this?

In addition, Ramsammy & Turton's (2012) preliminary findings indicate that a lax *happy* vowel is strongly correlated with a lax *letter* vowel. They found the speakers who backed *letter* also produced a laxer phrase-final *happy* variant.

Therefore I have an additional research question for this chapter:

3. If some Roma adolescents at Saltar High reproduce Manchester patterns of variation for *happy*, are they the same participants that produce a lowered backed *letter* vowel?

### 6.3 Previous research

Previous research on the unstressed vowels in British English is dominated by studies of *happy*-tensing, rather than *happy*-laxing, the focus of this investigation. Furthermore, the vast majority of *happy*-tensing research has focused almost exclusively on ethnically White Anglo speakers. Harrington (2006) reports a gradual tensing of *happy* from [ɪ] towards [i] by the Queen over 50 years of Christmas broadcasts, indicating that the vowel has become higher and slightly fronted over the course of the Queen's reign. Fabricius (2002) also observes that contemporary RP speakers are far more likely to produce *happy* realisations closer to [i] than [ɪ].

Sociolinguistic research typically indicates that *happy*-tensing is a

sound change that has spread from the south of England, but this is problematised by the fact that [i] has existed in some northern dialects, such as in Liverpool and Newcastle, since at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Beal, 2000). This brings into question Trudgill's (1999:82) claim that the tensed form 'jumped' over other cities to spread to Liverpool and Newcastle. Another possibility is *happy*-tensing is found in Liverpool and Tyneside speech because those speakers have historically experienced greater dialect contact due to their coastal location than other areas of the north (Knowles, 1997). Some Midlands accents, such as in Derby (Docherty & Foulkes, 1999), Leicester (A. Hughes et al., 2013) and Nottingham (Flynn, 2010), also use the tenser [i] variant.

Hughes et al. (2013) report production of the *happy* vowel to be [i] in Southern England and [ɪ] in some areas of Northern England. As early as 1978, Lodge transcribed the *happy* vowel as [ɛ̃] in his study of the Stockport dialect, a part of Greater Manchester. Hughes et al. (2013) explain that in contemporary Manchester English the final vowel of words like *city*, *seedy*, or *hazy* is lax, and may be markedly more open than [ɪ]; they add that [ɛ] is a frequent pronunciation.

Regarding linguistic environment, studies have found that phrase-final *happy* has an open quality in many northern English dialects (Wells, 1982; Docherty & Foulkes 1999). Wells (1982:165) notes that lowering and backing of *happy* displays contextual variation, with some speakers using [i] before a vowel, as in *happier* or *tidy it*, and [ɪ] before a consonant and in absolute final position: *tidy them*; *tidy*. Ramsammy & Turton (2012) and Baranowski & Turton (2015) found that Manchester speakers produce the *happy* vowel something like [ɛ̃] in phrase-final position. Ramsammy & Turton (2012) found that both working- and middle-class speakers produce a backed variant of *er#*, but their results showed that only working-class speakers produce lowered and backed variants of *happy*.

## 6.4 Phonetic methodology

In total, 1396 *happy* tokens were analysed from 26 speakers, one speaker

less than for *lettER* because this speaker did not provide enough tokens. Tokens of *happy* were identified as being those containing a word-final /i/, the vowel that occurs in words ending in orthographic <-y>, <-ie>, <-i>, <-ee>, <-ey>, <-ea>, such those given in Table 6.1 above. Words with <-ay> suffixes, such as days of the week *Monday etc.*, were not included because neither the Manchester nor Roma speakers analysed exhibit variation in the [i ɪ ɛ] monophthong space for these words (Kirkham, 2013:163). As with the *lettER* variable, I wanted to establish whether both Manchester speakers and Roma produced different variants depending on word and phrase position. I therefore also identified, coded and conducted analysis of iPL# forms (phrase-final plural), e.g. *taxis*.

Following identification of tokens, a number of word- and phrase-level properties were coded for in ELAN (ELAN; Sloetjes & Wittenburg, 2008). The same linguistic environment factors were coded for *happy* as I used for *lettER*. They are listed again here for ease:

- lexical item: the word in which a token of word-final /i/ occurred
- preceding and following phonetic contexts: transcribed using broad segmental transcription of what was actually produced, rather than a notion of ‘underlying’ phonemes. For example in the word *butty*, if the /i/ vowel was actually preceded by a glottal stop, I coded a glottal stop as the preceding environment, rather than a /t/
- word and phrase position: these factors were coded so that phonetic environment was only investigated where it was fully variable i.e. absolute word- and phrase-final positions. iPL# positions were also coded (e.g. *taxis*) for comparison
- vowel in previous syllable: in order to examine possible effects of vowel-to-vowel coarticulation
- number of syllables in word and intonation phrase: coded based upon auditory impressions of actually produced syllables, rather than citation forms
- word class [noun; verb; adjective; adverb; preposition; pronoun]

### 6.4.1 Auditory analysis

Every instance of *i#* and *iPL#* was identified, and the production of the vowel was coded as a discrete variant according to its proximity to a cardinal vowel as shown in Table 6.2. These were later collapsed into the binary variants of higher or lower vowels. From here on, for the purposes of this analysis and in accordance with previous research, I use the term *tense* to refer to the higher and fronter realisations, and *lax* to refer to lower and backer vowel realisations (Wells, 1982; Harrington, 2006).

**Table 6.2 Auditory categories for *happy* analysis**

<i>happy</i> variants	Code	Binary variants
[i]	0	{ Higher }
[ɪ]	1	
[ɛ]	2	{ Lower }
[ɛ̃]	3	

My intention was then to check the accuracy of my auditory analysis during acoustic analysis in the same way I did for *lettER*. However, when I came to examine the vowels in Praat, the second formant frequencies for most of the vowels were very unclear, and the programme seemed unable to reliably identify the formants. In utterance-final position, many vowels undergo reduction or weakening processes, such as shortening or devoicing, which can make acoustic detection of formants extremely difficult. This meant that I was not able to conduct an acoustic analysis for *happy*. In my analysis of the *lettER* vowel, I first conducted an auditory analysis and then checked my judgements against acoustic measurements. I was satisfied that my auditory judgements were in agreement with the acoustic findings for *lettER* and was therefore confident that an auditory approach alone would be sufficient for analysis of the *happy* vowel.

Milroy & Gordon (2003:150) discuss the benefits and disadvantages of both acoustic and auditory methods. It is possible that auditory analysis judgments are open to greater subjectivity than acoustic ones. It is certainly

true that an auditory analysis alone would not enable me to make such fine-grained distinctions between sounds as is possible with instrumentation. However, instrumental techniques and the precise measurements they provide can give the impression of a more accurate representation of the phonological variation being studied (Milroy & Gordon, 2003:150), and while in some cases this may be true, this is not always the case. Many phoneticians argue that the measurement of formant frequencies alone only represents a part of the acoustic information being carried in the sound signal. It is possible that dynamic information, such as the transitions in and out of adjacent consonants, are much more important to vowel perception (Milroy & Gordon, 2003). By taking an auditory approach to the analysis of this variable, I am to a certain extent more closely replicating the process of my participants than acoustic analysis can offer. In auditory analysis, I make judgments about vowel quality based on the entire speech signal, using the same input available to the participants of my study.

#### **6.4.2 Statistical analysis**

Because the analysis conducted on the *happy* variants was auditory, this was analysed as a categorical variable, unlike *letter*, which was measured as a continuous variable in terms of *SPACE*-value. Therefore, my dependent variable was the relative proportional frequencies of a lax variant in the *i#* environment. As with the *letter* variable, speakers' variation was first explored through a visual examination of the data and then tested for statistical significance. The social and linguistic predictor variables included in the multivariate analysis were the same as for *letter* as Table 6.3 shows. The above factors were entered into the mixed-effects logistic regression model in order to examine their relative contributions to the overall variation. In each model, individual speaker and word were entered as random effects.

**Table 6.3 Independent and dependent variables used in mixed-effects models for *happy***

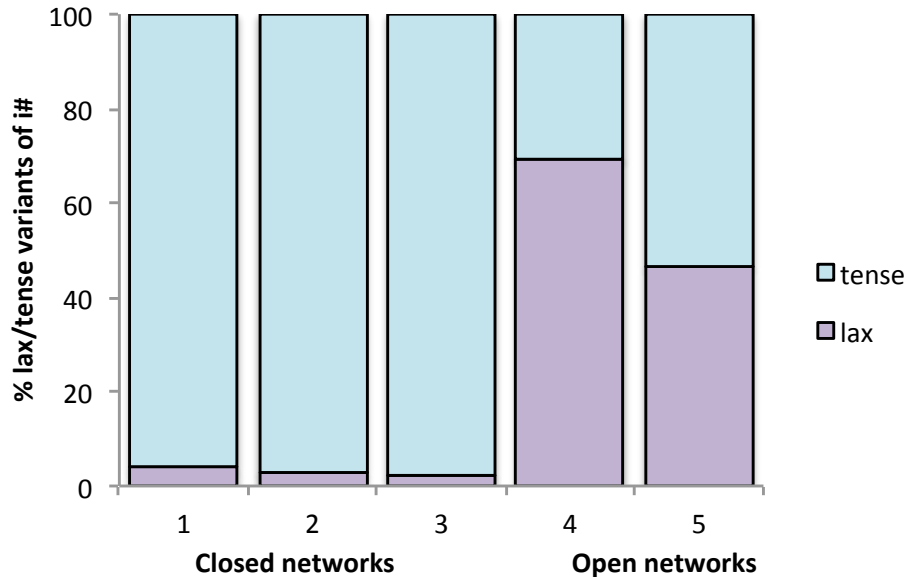
<b>Dependent variable</b>
Percentage of lax variants in <i>i#</i> environment
<b>Independent linguistic variables</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lexical item (random effect)</li> <li>preceding and following phonetic contexts</li> <li>word and phrase position</li> <li>vowel in previous syllable</li> <li>number of syllables in word and intonation phrase</li> <li>word class</li> </ul>
<b>Independent social variables</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>individual speaker (random effect)</li> <li>age (min: 11 years; max: 16 years)</li> <li>gender (female; male)</li> <li>year group (year 7; year 10; year 11)</li> <li>age of arrival (min: 1 year; max: 15 years)</li> <li>length of residence (min: 6 months; max: 13 years)</li> <li>academic stream (EAL; coreEAL; mainstream)</li> <li>self-identification as Roma (yes; no)</li> <li>friendship group (1-5; then collapsed into open networks and closed networks)</li> </ul>

## 6.5 Results

This section focuses on results of the multivariate analysis of the Roma adolescents' production of phrase-final /i/. I found that in *iPL#* environment the Manchester-born speakers produced a tense variant. However, when there is no morphological suffix, the Manchester-born peers of my participants categorically produced a lax centralised variant [ɛ̃] in phrase-final position.

My next step was to check whether the Roma adolescents exhibited variation between *iPL#* and *i#* environments. For *iPL#*, all Roma participants produced a tense /i/, but only some produced a lax variant for *i#*. During my

visual examination of the data, I initially looked at how the five friendship groups patterned in their production of phrase-final /i/. This is shown in **Figure 6.1** where the purple shading indicates the proportion of use of a lax variant [ɛ] or [ɛ̃] in *i*# position. The blue shading represents the proportion use of a tense variant.



**Figure 6.1** Rate of lax *i*# for all speakers across all friendship groups

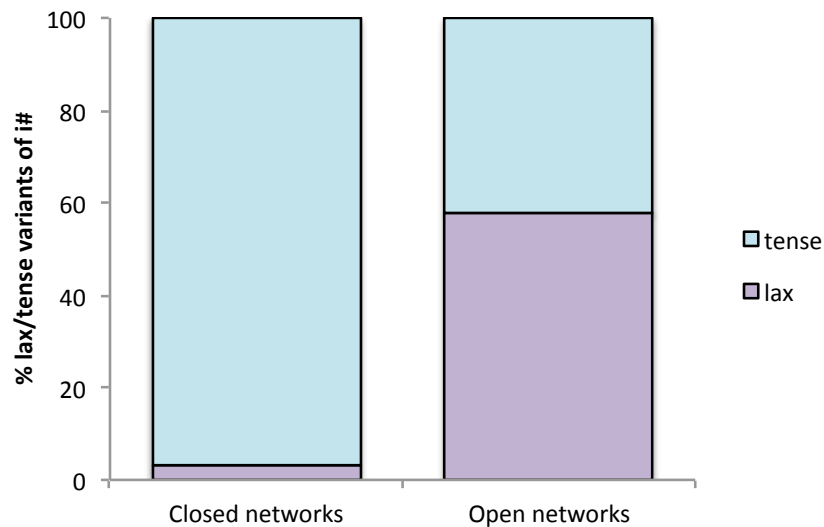
**Figure 6.1** demonstrates that there is a very clear difference between the three more closed network groups on the left and the two groups of speakers with more open networks on the right. All three of the more closed friendship network groups have a very low frequency (below 4%) of lax variants. In stark contrast, friendship network group 4 produce 69.4% of *i*# tokens with a lax vowel, and the group that has the most diverse friendship networks produce 46.5% of their *i*# tokens as lax. It is somewhat surprising that this figure is lower than group 4, but I will return to this in the discussion section below.

The regression model that provided the best fit for the data involved collapsing the five friendship groups into two: closed and open networks. This was unsurprising given the clear distinction between these two groups, as **Figure 6.1** showed. The results are summarised in Table 6.4. The only statistically significant factor is friendship networks.

**Table 6.4 Final regression model for *happy***

	Factor	Log odds	Factor weight	p
Friendship network	Closed networks	12.179	>0.999	1.7e-06
	Open networks	-12.179	<0.001	
Not significant	Word class; syllables in word/phrase; word rhythm; preceding vowel; nuclear accent, preceding phonetic environment Sex; age; year group; AoA; LoR; self-identification; stream			
Model	Deviance 166.887 df 4 Intercept -5.219 Grand mean 0.197			

The participants with the more open friendship networks are much more likely to produce a laxer realisation of *i#* than the closed group, as **Figure 6.2** shows below. Those speakers with open friendship networks produce lax *i#* variants 58% of the time. In contrast, those speakers with more closed networks only produce 3% lax variants.

**Figure 6.2 Rates of lax *i#* variants between open and closed friendship network groups**

Other social factors, such as gender and age of arrival, were not significant predictors in this model. None of the linguistic factors entered into the model, such as preceding phonetic environment, were shown to be significant. This suggests that social network factor is the best predictor of variation among the Roma adolescents across this dimension of *i#* realisation.



## 6.6 Discussion of *happy*

The main research questions for this chapter are:

1. Do Roma adolescents produce a lowered backed *happy* vowel in phrase-final position?
2. What factors impact upon this?

I now address these questions and I will come to the third research question for this chapter in Section 6.7.

### 6.6.1 Do Roma adolescents produce a lax *happy* vowel in phrase-final position?

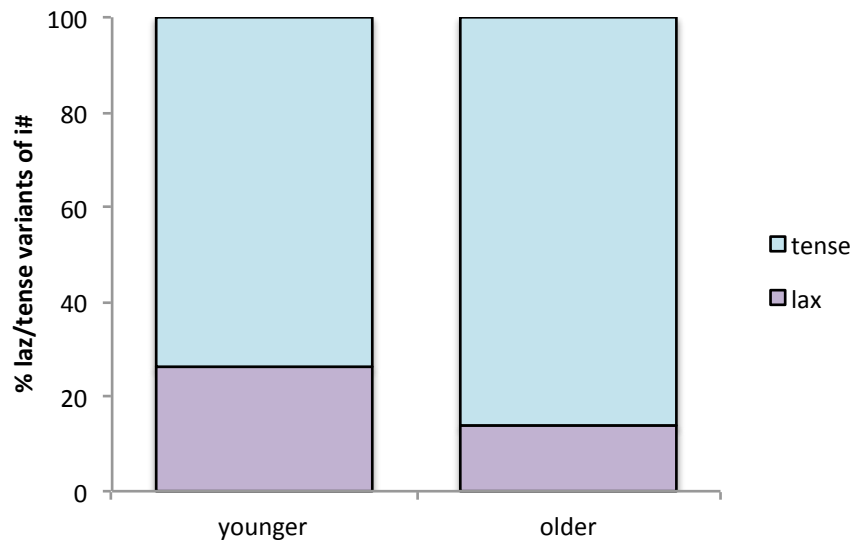
The key finding for *happy* is that the Roma participants of this study have, to varying degrees, acquired local patterns of variation in word-final /i/. While the vast majority of Roma participants do not reproduce the Manchester patterns of variation between word-internal iPL# and word- and phrase-final i#, four of the speakers do produce a lax i# variant over 75% of the time. Two Roma speakers categorically produce a lax variant of i# as the Manchester-born speakers do. This will be discussed in more detail below.

### 6.6.2 What factors impact upon *happy* variation?

The factor shown by the multivariate analysis to be most significant in impacting upon Roma *happy* variation in English is friendship network. Those young people whose social networks are more open are much more likely to produce a laxer /i/ in word- and phrase-final position. Unlike *letter* where preceding phonetic environment influenced vowel production, the multivariate analysis did not indicate that any linguistic factors were significant predictors of a lowered backed *happy* vowel. In addition, social factors other than friendship network, such as age and gender, were not shown to be significant. However, while visualising my data I noticed some patterns, which I now briefly turn to.

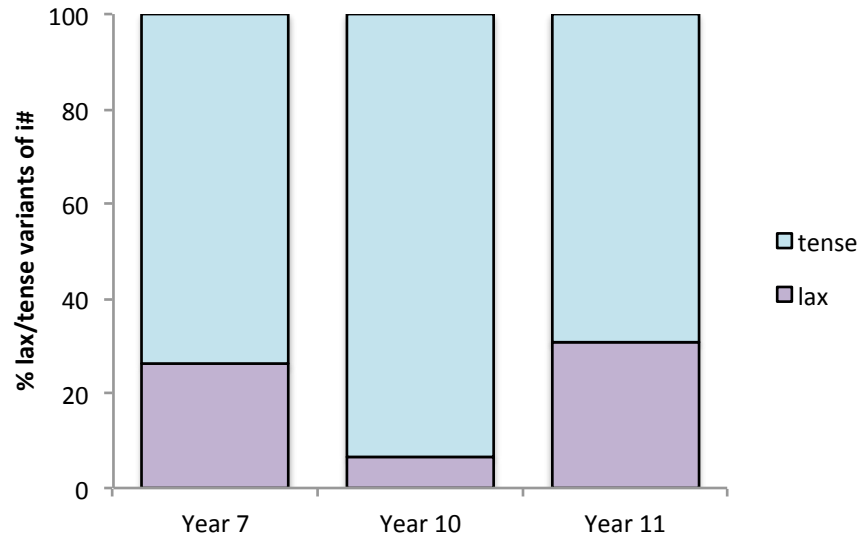
### 6.6.2.1 Age

As with *lettER*, the younger cohort, who are all in year 7 (ages 11-12), are a little more likely to produce a lax variant in the *i#* environment than the older group which is made up of both year 10 and year 11 students. This pattern can be seen in Figure 6.3. Younger speakers produce the lax variant 26% of the time, whereas older speakers only produce 14% lax variants.



**Figure 6.3 Rate of lax *i#* variants among older and younger participants**

When I looked more closely at the different year groups, I saw that the pattern was somewhat more complex, as Figure 6.4 shows.



**Figure 6.4 Rate of lax /i#/ variants across school year groups**

Of the 12 speakers from year 7 and the 6 speakers from year 11, 33% of them (n=4; n=2 respectively) have open friendship networks, as opposed to only 11% (n=1) from year 10. As I explained for *lettER*, the group of older Roma adolescents experienced a period of being part of a large group, whereas the younger speakers were much more thinly distributed among primary schools. This has resulted in those year groups where there were fewer speakers having more open networks, as opposed to the year 10s where there were a lot more Roma together and therefore their networks are more dense and multiplex.

### 6.6.2.2 Gender

Figure 6.5 shows that the females produce almost twice as many lax variants for /i#/ than the male participants. Males produce 17% lax variants, whereas for females 30% of the variants produced are lax. Overall there are fewer females than there are males, which may lead them to have less dense and multiplex networks. Of the year 10 cohort that is the most closed of all the year groups, the only speaker of the nine with an open friendship network is female.

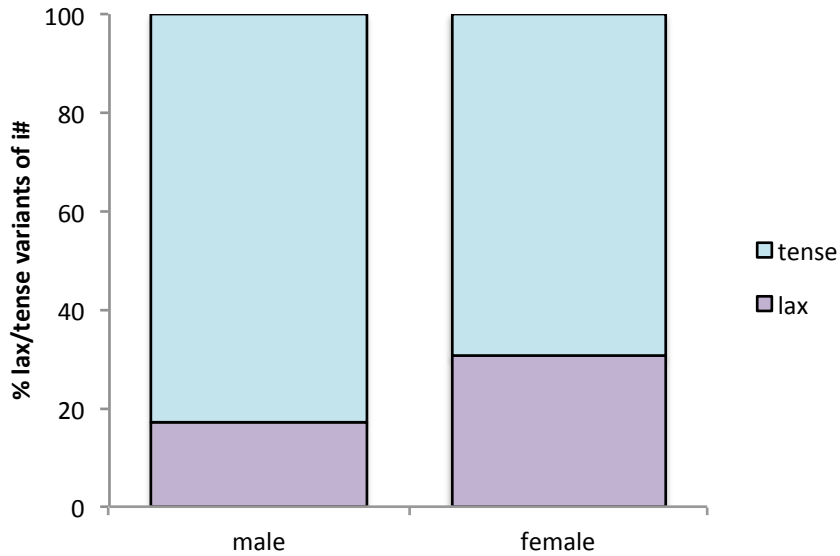


Figure 6.5 Rate of lax *i#* variants by gender

### 6.6.2.3 Academic stream

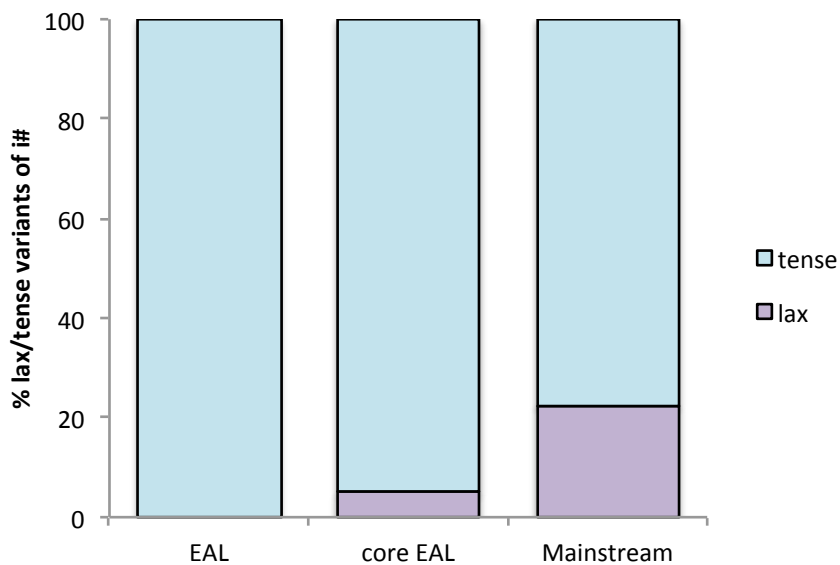


Figure 6.6 Rate of lax *i#* variants by academic stream

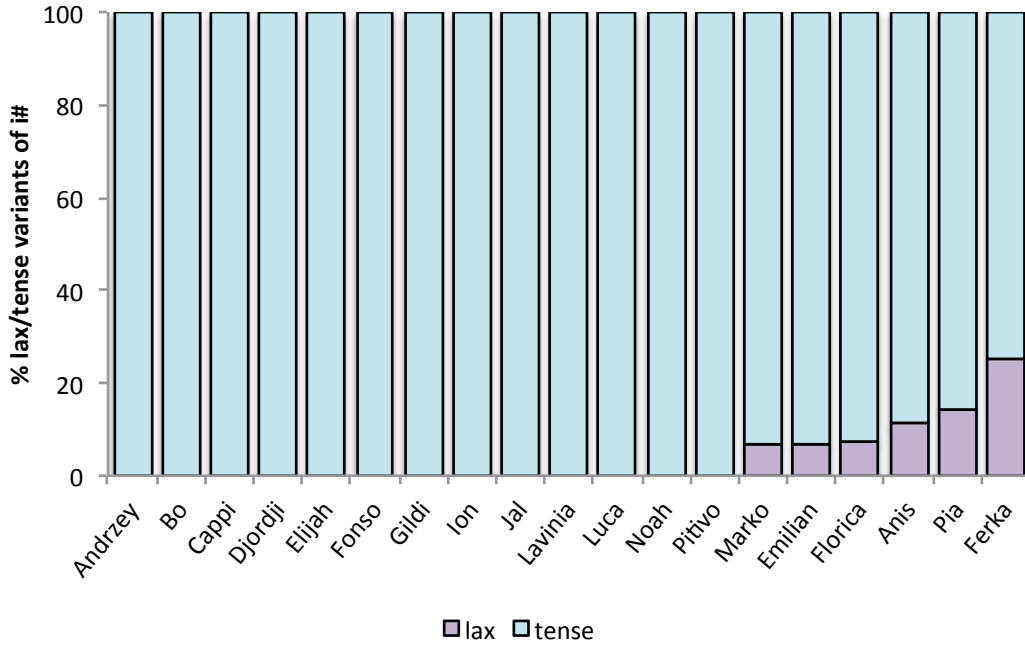
Figure 6.6 shows the rates of the lax variant of *i#* for speakers across academic stream. The aggregate frequency for the EAL stream is 0%, 5% for the coreEAL stream speakers, and 22.5% for the mainstream speakers. It is possible that a student’s allocation to a particular academic stream is linked to the structure of their social network. It could be that as they are integrated

more into the wider body and life of the school that their friendship ties become more open and their linguistic production is a reflection of this. However, given the wide range of diversity and large numbers of EAL streamed students in school (see Chapter 2 section 2.4), it could also be argued that being in the EAL classes gives those speakers greater access to a diversity of other students, and so their networks could be more open from being in the EAL classes. But language proficiency and confidence may hamper interaction with speakers who do not share your own language. Also, certainly at the time of my fieldwork in school, due to sheer volume of Roma students in the school, many of the EAL classes were entirely populated by Roma, making interaction in EAL classes with students from elsewhere unlikely.

#### 6.6.2.4 Friendship

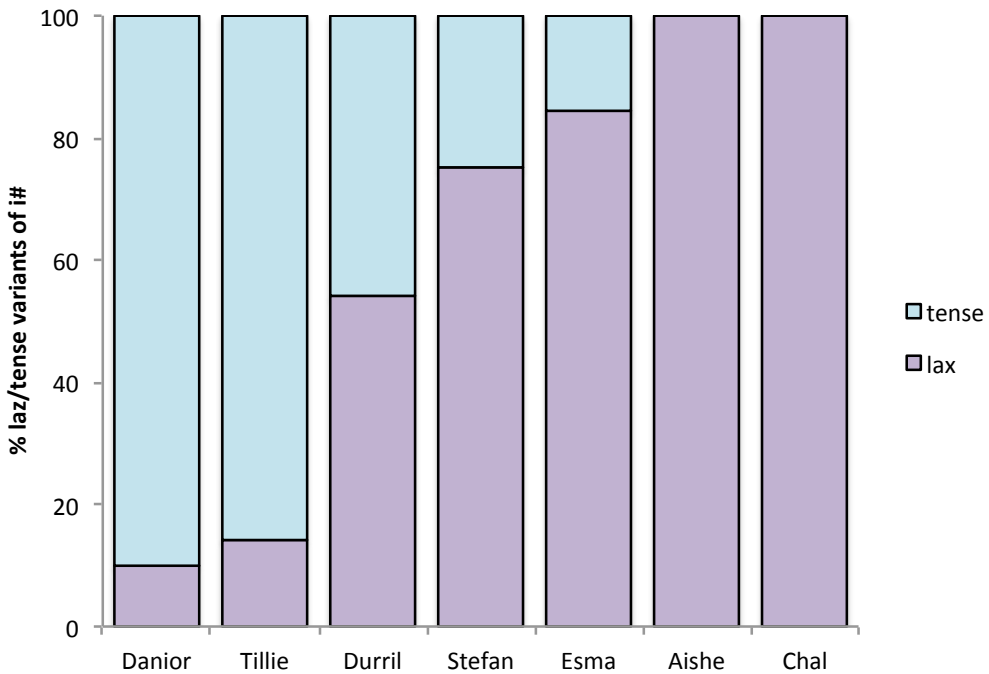
Finally I turn to my discussion of the only significant factor: friendship network. I first present an analysis of the behaviour of individuals within each network group.

Figure 6.7 shows the rates of the lax *i#* variant for all the speakers from the more closed network group. We can see that the individuals of this group do not have uniform rates of *happy*-laxing. Most of the speakers (13 of 19) categorically produce a tense variant. The rest of the speakers have very low rates of lax /i/ production in the *i#* environment, with all except one speaker producing a lax variant less than 15% of the time. Ferka, a year 10 male, is the highest lax user from this closed network group, producing a lax /i/ 25% of the time.



**Figure 6.7 Rate of lax /i#/ for speakers with more closed friendship networks**

Moving onto the individuals that have more open networks, Figure 6.8 shows a large increase in *happy*-laxing when compared with the closed network group.



**Figure 6.8 Rate of lax /i#/ for speakers with more open friendship networks**

Here, there are two categorical users of a lax variant in /i#/ environment. Aishe, a year 10 girl, and Chal, a year 7 boy. This pattern replicates the

Manchester-born speakers' variation. Aishe's best friends were Polish and Czech, but she was also well integrated among the Manchester-born students. Of the older cohort, she was the participant who had the most diverse, multi-ethnic friendship network. Chal was also very well-integrated into the non-Roma student community, with a very diverse, multi-ethnic friendship group. Chal was born in Spain and only moved back to Romania for a short while, before his parents moved back to Spain. Reports from his primary school teachers indicate that he was very motivated to learn and quickly became well-integrated, involving himself in activities, like being on the school football team. He was one of only two Roma students from the primary school chosen and funded to go on a residential activity week with other students from the local area. The school selected students based on good participation and behaviour in school and motivation to learn.

Chal's word internal production was very fronted, even in words where the Manchester-born speakers produced [ɪ], such as *flip*, he would say [fli:p]. This is possibly an influence from Spanish, but makes it even more striking that in *i#* position, he always produces a highly salient [ɛ̃], for example in the words *ready* and in the second part of *marie curie*, the name of one of the organisational houses of the school where the phrase-final lax variant of *curie* contrasts with the tense word-final vowel in *marie*. Chal had quite a lot of vernacular features in his speech, such as glottalisation, Northern British English STRUT, and (th) fronting, his speech was peppered with *like*, he used vernacular lexical items such as *snapback* for baseball caps and *pants* for trousers, and he swore a lot in English. He spoke to me a number of times about the language used on the hip-hop tracks he listened so, which perhaps indicates that he had an increased awareness about language and vernacular features. Chal's main interest was sport and he was part of the football team at Saltar High. His closest friends were a Manchester-born student who was also on the football team and another Roma student.

Esma, a year 7 female, and Stefan, a year 11 boy, both had high rates of *happy*-laxing, 85% and 75% respectively. Esma and Stefan were siblings and both had very diverse friendship networks, which they were both very proud of (recall Stefan's claims to have over eight hundred friends in Extract 4.1 in the previous chapter). Despite what he said, my observations of

Stefan's social interactions outside of class times, including who he arrived to school with in the mornings and who he left with in the afternoons, painted a slightly different picture. The vast majority of Stefan's meaningful interactions were with other Roma males. It is true, he would circulate at break times, moving around many non-Roma groups, and he did know a lot of non-Roma students in school, but he would normally only linger with these students for a few minutes at a time, joking and flirting with the girls or having brief conversations about football or something that had occurred in school with the boys. In contrast, the situations where he seemed to really engage and spend the most time tended to be with all or mostly Roma groups.

However, in the period of my two years' observation, he did have two different Manchester-born girlfriends, which may have had an impact on his linguistic production. While most of the Roma did not seem to have much of an idea about different social groups within the school, Stefan did seem to have some understanding, possibly as a result of his more open networks. He connected the *popular people* to also being smokers and talked briefly about *geeks*. He used a number of vernacular variants in his speech for example: glottalisation; (th)-fronting; *can't be arsed*; *pissed off*; *she never done*; *he done nothing*; as well as *happy-laxing*. Stefan's sister, Esma, who was in year 7, produced slightly more (85%) of the lax variant than Stefan (75%).

Esma was extremely friendly and always made a point of coming to say hello to me and was always happy to talk to me. Like Stefan, she was very proud of the diversity of her friends and included the names of several Manchester-born females in her close friends, but her best friend was a Polish girl called Ana. Esma really surprised me during a recorded conversation in school when she appeared to deny being Roma, despite her knowing that I had recorded her brother Stefan. At the start of the following extract from that conversation, Esma is telling me that some of the Roma boys smoke in school:

**Extract 6.1**

- 1 Esma: like I'm Romania  
2 and some of the (.) Romas boys do ((*smoke*))





typically associated with the West Indian population, and it is used to express disgust, defiance, disapproval, disappointment, frustration or impatience (Alim, 2004). This was a feature commonly employed by a number of Roma students, especially females. It is not entirely clear in this passage whether Esma's suck-teeth is an expression of her dislike of smoking or Roma boys, or indeed both.

Her insistence that 'I'm Romania' indicates that she is distinguishing herself from being Roma. This was often said by the Roma girls about another non-Roma Romanian student, Amanda: *We're Roma, she's Romania*, omitting the suffix indicating nationality. The issue of Roma not identifying themselves as Roma is frequently reported and usually the reason given for this is fear of discrimination or persecution. Schvey et al. (Schvey et al., 2005:1167) outline the assertion by Viorel Achim, an expert on the Roma, that there are five layers of self-identification within the Roma community:

1. Roma who display all the traditional ethnic characteristics and who identify themselves as Roma in all contexts
2. Roma who display all the traditional ethnic characteristics, and whom others identify as Roma, but who identify themselves as such only in an informal context, not in official administrative contexts
3. "Modernised" Roma, who thus no longer display the visible indicators of the traditional way of life, but who identify themselves as Roma, both in formal and informal contexts
4. "Modernised" Roma, who tend no longer to identify themselves as Roma, or who do so on an intermittent basis, and whom others may or may not identify as Roma
5. "Former Roma" who are completely integrated into the majority population and who no longer identify themselves as Roma

I would argue that Esma's identity fluctuates somewhere between 2 and 5. Perhaps with her brother, and her friends and family, she would be closer to 2. I certainly feel that with me, she presented an identity somewhere closer to 5, a less-Roma, more Romanian identity. With me, it seemed that she just wanted to be seen as another migrant, in line with the vast majority of students in the school, rather than being part of the highly marked Roma

minority. In this way, Esma is being agentic by choosing her own identity and how she wants to express it.

In the above recording Esma was sat with both myself and her Polish friend, Ana, so it is possible that this had an influence on Esma's responses. However, when combined with my other observations about Esma, I believe that this, like her speech, is a part of an (adolescent) rebellion against quite a traditional mother and Esma's assertion of a more non-Roma identity.

I was so taken aback that it took me a moment to process the tacit assertion that Esma seemed to be making that she is not Roma. This is shown by the pause in conversation in line 11 before I make the decision to explore this further by talking about languages spoken in line 12. The reason this surprised me so much was that Esma and I had spoken about the fact that I had recorded her brother Stefan, and I thought she must surely have known that I would have spoken to him about being Roma. However, on reflection it is possible that either she did not make this connection or that she was not aware that this was a focus of interest to me because I had been speaking to a range of other migrants, Manchester-born students, as well as Roma in school. It is possible that she thought she could pass as a non-Roma Romanian migrant. I repeat the extract here from line 11 for ease of reading:

**Extract 6.1 (repeated from above for ease)**

- 11                   (2)
- 12   Gerry:       so what languages can you speak
- 13   Esma:       I speak (.) Roma Romanian but I- I'm
- 14                   I'm Romania (.)
- 15                   so I speak (.) Rom[a]
- 16                   there's two languages
- 17   Gerry:       so do you talk
- 18                   what do you talk to your mum and dad
- 19   Esma:       my mum and dad learn to speak Rom[p]
- 20   Gerry:       yeah
- 21   Esma:       yeah we we now talking Rom[p]
- 22   Gerry:       yeah

- 23 Esma: we not talking ((*can't hear*))  
 24 we we like being Romanians and we lo-  
 25 we learn how to speak Rom[p]  
 26 Gerry: yeah  
 27 Esma: so now we speak it  
 28 cos my mum liked it

As she starts to answer my question about what languages she speaks (line 12), she hesitates: 'I speak (*pause*) Roma, Romanian' and then she emphasises the distinction she is trying to make again with *but*: 'but I'm Romania'. She hesitates again in line 15: 'so I speak (*pause*) Rom[a]'. It felt as if she were trying to decide whether to include Roma in her list of languages at all. She seems to be choosing her own identity, explicitly performing Romanian-ness, rather than Roma-ness, and legitimising it because she speaks Romanian. In line 15, *Roma* is phrase final. Like many of the other participants, Esma produces the final vowel as [a], rather than a schwa or lowered backed variant as we would anticipate Manchester speakers to do.

In order to make sure that I really knew what she was trying to say, I then asked her what language she spoke at home with her parents. All of my other participants, including Esma's brother, told me that they spoke Roma exclusively in their home setting. Esma thinks on her feet and quickly tells me 'my mum and dad learn to speak Rom[p]' (line 19). I think this is the point in the conversation where Esma really decides that she's going to perform a non-Roma migrant identity to me. This is signalled by her choice of *letter* variant. In contrast to the previous instance of *Roma* in her last utterance, Esma produces this phrase-final *Roma* with a lowered backed variant close to [p].

Esma seems to be suggesting that the family decided to learn Romani because their mum liked it and now they speak to each other in Romani at home: 'yeah we we now talking Rom[p]' (line 21). She continues to use the lowered, backed variant in phrase final position for the rest of this section: 'we we like being Romanians and we lo- we learn how to speak Rom[p]' (line 24-5). The assertion 'we like being Romanians' seems like an odd thing to say,

but here she is again drawing my attention to the distinction between being Romanian compared with Roma.

Both Esma and Stefan told me that their mum wears a long skirt and headscarf, which is the traditional Romani woman's way of dressing. Their mother speaks very little English and when English-speaking visitors come to the house, they have to translate for her. Esma also told me that she was not allowed to go church when she was menstruating, although she quite liked this because it meant that she could just 'chill'. She would not be allowed to have a mobile phone until she was 13 and she was not allowed a Facebook account 'cos you chat with boys'. All of which indicates that her home life is quite strict.

She expressed great jealousy at Ana having a Facebook account: 'she's allowed cos she's Poland' (another example of using the country name for a nationality, rather than changing the suffix) and the fact that Ana could wear whatever makeup and nail polish she wanted. Esma told me that she rebels against her mother's wishes for her to wear a skirt at home because she much preferred wearing her jeans and Vans trainers. She would sometimes wear jeans to school which would result in her being excluded from classes for the day. In music, Esma and Ana loved Justin Bieber, Chris Brown, Taylor Swift, and Beyoncé, and Esma rarely listened to Romanian music, unlike many of the other Roma in school. Esma performed this non-Roma identity through her speech which contained many vernacular features, including glottalisation, (th) fronting, *like*, double negatives, *yous* instead of *you* and *chilling*.

Esma was highly socially aware. This is reflected in the passage above where she employs the highly salient, exaggerated, stereotypical, vernacular Manchester *lettER* variant in her performance of passing as not Roma. I return to further discuss Esma as a case study in Chapter 8, but her use of these stereotyped variants is highly reminiscent of the bilingual speakers' use of stereotypical non-standard variants when passing as native speakers in Piller's (2002) study (see Chapter 3), but instead of creating insider status and passing for a native speaker, Esma is constructing and performing a non-Roma, Romanian migrant identity.

All the remaining members of the open networks group had much lower rates of variation than the speakers I have already discussed. Durril, Tillie and Danior only produced 54%, 15% and 10% of variants as lax respectively. Durril and Danior are cousins and they are both in year 7. Neither of them liked primary school very much and were not very well-integrated according to their teachers from primary. They both say that they prefer high school and they have made a number of non-Roma friends since arriving, although not as many Manchester-born friends as most with open networks. Danior, who has a very low (10%) rate of lax variants told me about how difficult he finds it sometimes to speak English in class and he often code-switched between Romani, Romanian and English.

Tillie was a year 11 girl and she only produced a lax *i#* variant 15% of the time. Tillie had quite mixed friendship groups, but she was also very deeply embedded within predominantly Roma social groups. Her best friend was for a while a Polish girl, but at some point they fell out and following that she became best friends with another Roma girl. They would walk around the school at break times listening to Romanian music, sharing headphones between them with one earpiece each. Tillie was often absent from school and eventually left. I was told by other Roma students that this was because her family moved to Birmingham. I would consider Tillie to be only on the very edge of the open networks group, bordering on more closed networks and this is reflected in her production of more tense *i#* variants.

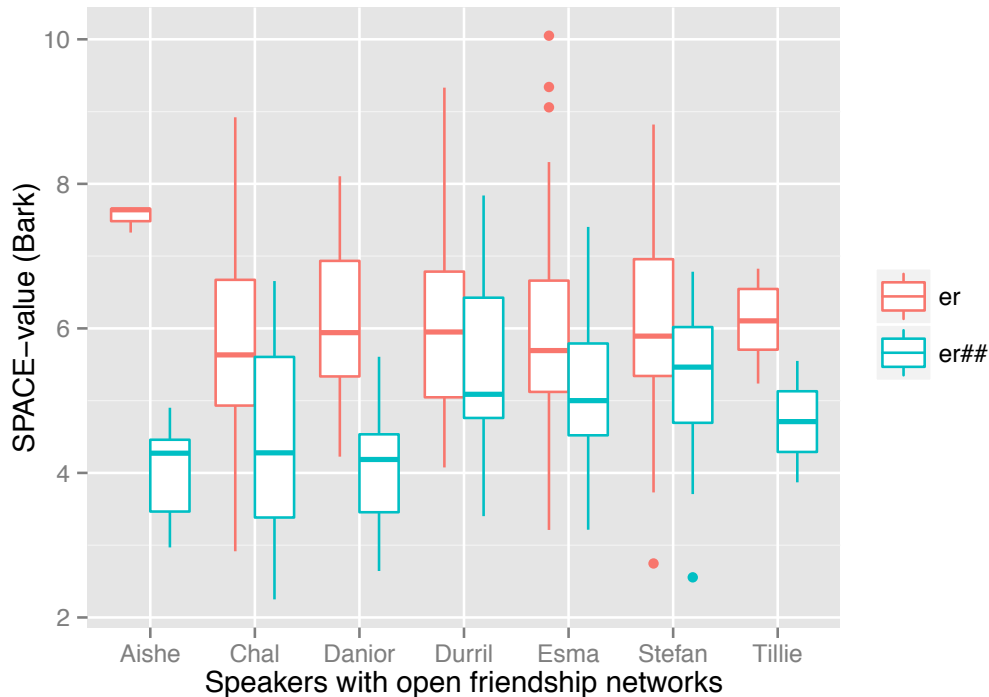
## 6.7 Discussion bringing *happy* and *letter* together

I now turn to the additional research question addressed in this chapter which is:

3. If Roma speakers reproduce Manchester patterns of variation for *happy*, are they the same participants that produced a laxer *letter* vowel?

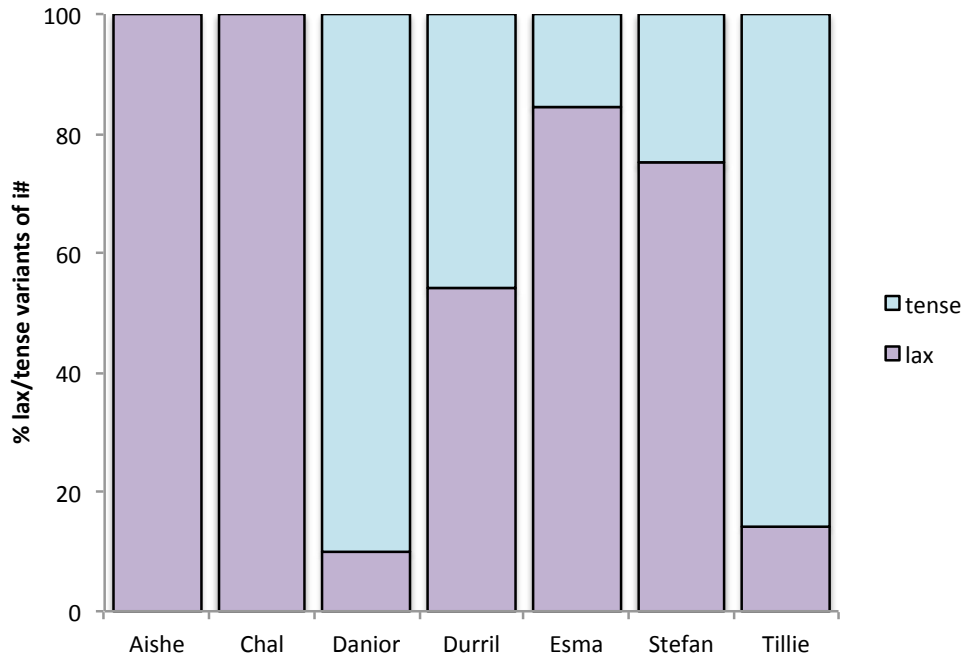
Ramsammy & Turton (2012) found that nearly all speakers who backed *letter* also produced a laxer *happy* vowel. Correlation analysis of *i#* and *er#* realisations revealed a strong ideolectal correlation between the use of *happy*

backing/lowering and *lett*ER backing. I was therefore interested to see if the same Roma adolescents who lowered and backed *er*# also are the ones who produce a laxer *i*#. Figure 6.9 shows participants with open friendship networks' variation between *er* word internally (*er*PL#) and *er* word and phrase finally (*er*#). There is a clear pattern of lowering and backing in *er*# position for every speaker.



**Figure 6.9 Variation between *er* word-internally (*er*PL#) and *er*# environment (SPACE-value Bark for speakers with more open friendship networks)**

As Figure 6.10 shows, Danior and Tillie, produced very few lax *happy* variants. However as Figure 6.9 above shows, they both have variation for *lett*ER. Some Roma commented on the stereotype of Mancunians pronouncing their hometown as *Manchestoh*. It is therefore possible that the *lett*ER variant is more auditorily salient and that Danior and Tillie have therefore acquired local variation in *lett*ER but have only just begun to acquire variation in *happy*. Perhaps this is unsurprising because, as I explained in Section 6.6.2.4, Danior has only developed more open networks since his arrival in primary school that year. Both Danior and Tillie sit on the borderline between more closed and more open networks.



**Figure 6.10** Rate of lax *i#* for speakers with more open friendship networks

Durril, Stefan and Esma had 54%, 75% and 85% rates of lax variants for *happy* respectively and Figure 6.9 shows that they also have variation in their production of *lettER*. Finally, Aishe and Chal both lower and back their phrase-final *lettER* vowel considerably. These two speakers were also categorical users of *happy*-laxing, so it appears that there may be a connection between their *lettER* and *happy* production.

Certainly for speakers with open networks, all of the speakers show variation in *lettER* and *happy*, and *lettER* variation appears to be the most advanced, possibly because of the saliency of lowering and backing in *er#* position, as evidenced by its status as a stereotype.

This concludes the chapter on the *happy* vowel. The following chapter moves onto a presentation of the results of a supralocal variable, GOOSE-fronting.



## Chapter 7 The GOOSE vowel

The previous two chapters examined regional, Manchester-based variation. This chapter looks at GOOSE-fronting, a change that has been in progress in the UK for a century or longer (Jansen, 2012:113) and has been found in varieties of English around the world, making it a supralocal change.

The structure of this chapter is the same as the previous results chapters, beginning with a description of the vowel and change before moving onto an explanation of my motivations for choosing this sound. I then discuss previous research, my data and methods and my results. I end with a discussion and how participants' use of GOOSE-fronting relates to their social practice and group membership.

### 7.1 The GOOSE vowel and GOOSE fronting

The GOOSE vowel refers to the lexical set which is defined by Wells (1982:147) as 'those words whose citation form in RP and GenAm has the stressed vowel /u(:)/' (e.g. *rude*; *who*; *new*). Despite the IPA symbol denoting a high, fully back rounded vowel, GOOSE in English is usually produced more centrally and would be transcribed as [ʊ] or [ɯ] (Catford, 1988:128). The GOOSE vowel can occur in both checked positions where it is bound by preceding and following consonants in words (e.g. *rude*; *school*), and in following unchecked positions with no consonant (e.g. *who*; *sue*). It is frequently preceded by the palatal approximant /j/ (e.g. *new*; *duty*) (Wells 1982:147).

Over the past 30 years, there has been a large amount of research documenting a process of change in the GOOSE lexical set. In that time, there have been a number of studies on different Englishes that show this feature becoming more advanced or fronted in apparent time. When a vowel becomes

fronted or advanced, the highest part of the tongue moves from a position towards the back of the mouth or vowel space to an area that is further forwards. GOOSE-fronting has been found in varieties of American English where it is widespread (Baranowski, 2008; Clarke, Elms, & Youssef, 1995; Fought, 1999; Fridland, 2008; Hall-Lew, 2005, 2009; Labov, Ash, & Boberg, 2006), as well as Australian (Cox, 1999; Harrington, Cox, & Evans, 1997), New Zealand (Easton & Bauer, 2000; Hay, Maclagan, & Gordon, 2008), South African (Mesthrie, 2010) and UK Englishes (Altendorf & Watt, 2008; L. Bauer, 1985; Cheshire et al., 2011; Holmes-Elliott, 2015; Kerswill & Williams, 2005; Williams & Kerswill, 1999).

### 7.1.1 Manchester GOOSE

GOOSE-fronting has been attested in varieties in the Midlands and north of England, including Nottingham (Flynn 2012), Carlisle (Jansen 2010) and Greater Manchester (Baranowski & Turton, 2015; V. Hughes, Foulkes, Haddican, & Richards, 2011). Where Manchester GOOSE-fronting may differ from other varieties is pre-coda // (e.g. *school*; *cool*). While this environment usually inhibits GOOSE-fronting (Fridland, 2008; Hall-Lew, 2005; Mesthrie, 2010), some working-class Manchester speakers have been found to front in this environment (Baranowski & Turton, 2015). Drummond (2013) found occurrences of very advanced GOOSE variants in the speech of speakers both born in Manchester and migrants living in the city.

## 7.2 Motivations and Research questions

One of my key motivations for examining this variable was to see whether there was a difference in how Roma adolescents react in their acquisition of a global or supralocal variant rather than the quite regionally localised laxing of *letter* and *happy*. If Roma participants GOOSE-front in all environments, including pre-coda //, this could indicate that they are acquiring the local version of the variant, rather than a supralocal one. In addition, since it is a change from below, GOOSE-fronting is probably the least salient of the three

variables investigated here. This allows comparison between this variable and the more salient laxing of letter.

Therefore, the research questions addressed in this chapter are:

3. To what extent do Roma adolescents produce a fronted variant of GOOSE similar to those of their Manchester-born peers?
4. Where adolescents do GOOSE-front, is this fronting inhibited before coda-//?
5. What factors impact on whether Roma adolescents GOOSE-front?

### 7.3 Previous research

The vast majority of studies that examine GOOSE-fronting are acoustic and report the change in GOOSE in terms of a single movement within the back-front dimension. Acoustically, GOOSE-fronting manifests itself in speakers' production of a higher F2 which indicates the body of the tongue being further forward in the vowel space than for the high back [u:]. Research has shown that GOOSE-fronting, along with the quotative BE LIKE, is a current global change that is occurring in English, with its spread being virtually complete (Cheshire et al., 2011:155).

Evidence suggests that GOOSE-fronting is typical of a 'change from below' (Labov, 2007:346). Labov (1966) originally made the distinction between a change from above or from below. Changes from below are often the product of the operation of internal linguistic factors and they operate well below a speaker's level of conscious awareness. Changes from below may take the form of a gradual shift, beginning in a low-status group, that may continue over the course of generations. The change then gradually becomes generalised in the speech of other groups (Labov, 1966:128). A change from below is unlikely to receive overt commentary or be subject to style shifting.

In contrast, a change from above comes from outside of the local speech community. They result from contact, and speakers are often aware of the linguistic form, and may come from or be the result of societal pressure. Labov (1966) provides an example of a change from above in the form of post-vocalic /r/ in New York City. At the time of Labov's (1966) study, the New York

accent was generally non-rhotic, meaning that speakers did not typically realise post-vocalic /r/, for example in words like *car* and *card*. However, the rhotic accent, where post-vocalic /r/ is realised, was considered to be more prestigious, speakers were thought to sound more educated, and rhoticisation was linked to higher socioeconomic status and more formal speech. Speakers were aware and made comment on this feature, which shows that awareness was above the level of consciousness.

In Labov's (1966) department store study, he examined the interaction between speech style and class. In order to investigate class, Labov conducted his study across three different department stores that each had a different socioeconomic target market. Saks represented the higher end of the market and equated roughly with upper-middle class. Macy's was a more middle-class store, and Klein's catered for the lower working-class end of the socioeconomic scale. Labov used a random, anonymous survey technique whereby he visited each store in the guise of a customer. He would ask one of the salespeople working at the store for directions to a department which he had previously identified as being located on the fourth floor. The words *fourth* and *floor* were key because they both contain post-vocalic /r/, the variable that Labov wanted to examine. Labov's method meant that he was able to elicit speech in both casual and emphatic style. He did this by pretending that he had not heard the worker's initial response 'Fourth floor' and asking him or her to repeat the answer. The second response would usually be spoken in careful style under emphatic stress (Labov, 1966:45).

Labov (1966) found that post-vocalic /r/ was indeed stratified by class, as shown across the different department stores. The higher end the store, the more post-vocalic /r/ was fully realised. In addition, the more careful, emphatic the speaker's speech style, the more fully realised his or her post-vocalic /r/ would be. Labov interpreted this style shifting to mean that /r/ was above the level of consciousness and rated as a prestige feature: a change from above.

While GOOSE-fronting is widespread, there is little evidence that speakers are aware of this feature. It is not subject to overt social commentary, and it does not appear to have connotations of prestige or stigma attached to it or to show any strong link to particular social or regional groups (Fridland, 2008; Haddican, Foulkes, Hughes, & Richards, 2013). Where social

conditioning factors have been found to operate on GOOSE-fronting they are often particular to that individual community and may even have inconsistencies within that community (e.g. Fought, 1999; Mesthrie, 2010). When compared to linguistic conditioning factors, which are discussed below, social effects appear weak. In summary, GOOSE-fronting does not appear to show any consistent social patterning and speakers do not appear to be aware of it. Taken together, these observations suggest that GOOSE-fronting is a naturally occurring endogenous change that operates below the level of consciousness and hence is typical of a 'change from below' (Labov, 2007:346).

Evidence of the global nature of GOOSE-fronting can be found in previous research. Harrington et al. (1997) and Hay et al. (2008) report a centralised variant [ɥ] for both Australian English and New Zealand English respectively. In South Africa, GOOSE-fronting, which was previously an identity marker of white South African English, is more recently adopted by middle-class speakers of other ethnicities (Mesthrie, 2010). Mesthrie (2010:28) argues that GOOSE-fronting is 'deracialising' because it has been adopted by young people and middle class speakers, making it now a marker of age and social status, rather than race.

In the U.S., GOOSE-fronting has been found to be widespread and to be in a parallel relationship with the fronting of GOAT (Baranowski, 2008; Labov et al., 2006). The speed of diffusion of GOOSE- (and GOAT-) fronting and the fact that in many contexts it seems to lack strong indexical links to local social distinctions (Fridland 2008) are two reasons why it is of particular interest to linguists interested in sound change (Haddican et al. 2013:374). As Fridland (2008) observes for North American varieties, GOOSE-fronting has diffused into speaker groups that do not usually participate in sound changes anchored to local social factors, i.e. minority and migrant communities. In particular, GOOSE-fronting has been reported among African American speakers in several communities (Fridland & Bartlett, 2006), Chicano speakers in Los Angeles (Fought, 1999) and Asian Americans in San Francisco (Hall-Lew 2009).

In England, Wells (1982:148) identified a fronting of the GOOSE vowel in urban vernaculars, commenting that a 'rather central than back quality for GOOSE' is found in 'most English popular urban speech'. Harrington (2007)

found evidence of a real time, diachronic change in the production of the GOOSE vowel by the Queen in her Christmas broadcasts between the 1950s and 1980s.

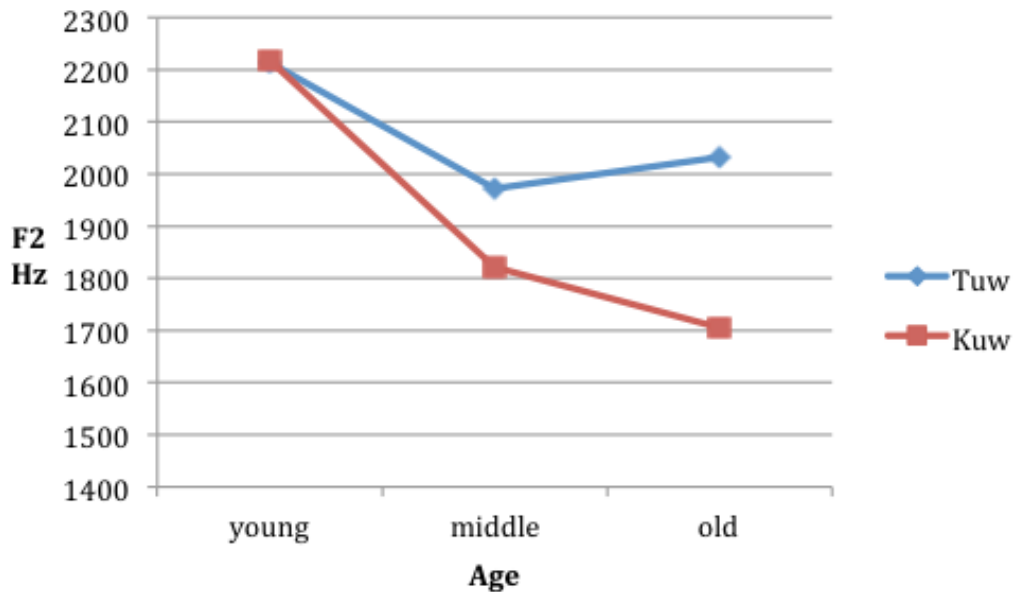
Cheshire et al. (2011) indicate that in MLE, an innovative variety that is being spoken by working class, young people from a wide range of ethnicities living in inner London, the GOOSE vowel is often very fronted, even more so than in other varieties of London English where it is already often produced very central or nearly front. Cheshire et al. (2011:171) found evidence of incrementation for this vowel, showing that the fronting of GOOSE is a feature that appears to emerge slowly during adolescence for Multicultural London English speakers, peaking between 16-19 years old, rather than a feature that is acquired early on in childhood.

### 7.3.1 GOOSE-fronting in the north of England

Beal (2008:130) only mentions GOOSE very briefly as being realised as /u:/ and /uʊ/ in northern English, but any closer examination of specific regions or of the fronting phenomenon is not discussed. Cruttenden (2014) and Upton (2008:272) also speak in general about the north of England, stating that many areas have a fronted articulation of /u:/. GOOSE-fronting has been evidenced in the speech of younger speakers in Newcastle in the north east (Buchstaller, 2008) and Cumbria in the north west (Jansen, 2012).

There are very few examinations of GOOSE in Manchester English. In a pilot study, Drummond (2013) found that both Manchester-born and migrant speakers living in Manchester produce a fronted GOOSE and/or an extremely fronted GOOSE vowel similar to that found in Cheshire et al.'s (2011) MLE study. Baranowski & Turton (2015) analysed the vowels of 44 speakers (36 white British, 5 Pakistani, and 3 Black Caribbean). Statistical analysis was conducted in relation to social factors such as age, gender, social class, and ethnicity. They found that age had a significant impact upon the fronting of GOOSE. Mancunians over the age of 30 produced a much more advanced GOOSE vowel when preceded by allophones with coronal onsets (e.g. *two*, *do*), which they refer to as /Tuw/, compared with those with non-coronal onsets (e.g. *goose*, *boot*, *food*), /Kuw/, as Figure 7.1 shows. This pattern replicates that

found in most other dialects of English.



**Figure 7.1** Expected mean F2 of /Tuw/ and /Kuw/ by age (from Baranowski & Turton, 2015)

For speakers below 30 years of age, Baranowski & Turton (2015) found there was no difference in GOOSE-fronting between the two environments. Younger speakers produced a fronted variant for both /Tuw/ and /Kuw/. Their regression analyses supported this and indicated that age was the only factor playing a role in GOOSE-fronting, with no significant effects for gender, social class, or ethnicity.

Preceding phonetic environment is frequently reported to be the strongest conditioning factor for GOOSE-fronting (Holmes-Elliott 2015:189). Baranowski & Turton (2015) present a two-way coronal vs non-coronal split, as do many other studies (e.g. Hall-Lew, 2005; Cheshire et al., 2011), while some studies present a three-way palatal, coronal and non-coronal split (e.g. Fridland, 2008; Flynn, 2012; Mesthrie, 2010). Where palatals are included in the analysis, they tend to front the most, followed by preceding coronals, then non-coronals: non-coronals < coronals < palatals (Holmes-Elliott, 2015:185). This pattern is exceedingly regular in its progression across different speech communities (Fridland, 2008:442). However, this effect has been shown to weaken over time, meaning that eventually all phonetic environments can be found to behave uniformly, but where the change is relatively new, preceding

phonetic environment shows a much stronger effect. For example, Harrington et al. (2008) found that phonetic conditioning on GOOSE-fronting had a much stronger effect for older speakers than younger speakers, who showed greater levels of GOOSE-fronting overall.

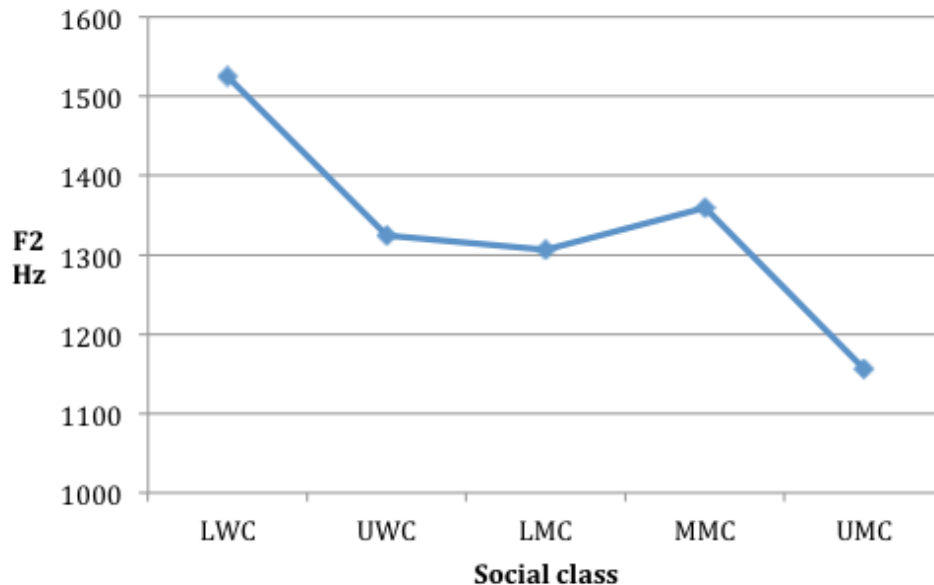
Holmes-Elliott (2015:207) presents an even more detailed picture of linguistic patterning of GOOSE. In her analysis of rates of GOOSE-fronting in speakers from Hastings, on the south coast of England, she includes the sonorants /l,r,w/. She reports the following pattern to be statistically significant in her data: /l,r,w/ < non-coronals < coronals < palatals.

While preceding phonetic environment is shown to be a strong conditioning factor, the strongest form of phonetic conditioning in most reports is GOOSE followed by coda // (e.g. *cool, school, rule*) (Hall-Lew, 2005:4; Fridland, 2008:443; Mesthrie, 2010:10). In the vast majority of studies carried out on English varieties, coda // has been found to inhibit GOOSE-fronting, with the exception of some southern varieties of American English and Liverpool English in the UK (V. Hughes, Haddican, & Foulkes, 2013). For other varieties, the inhibitory effect of pre-coda // contexts was initially considered to be absolute, not permitting any degree of fronting at all. However, later studies have suggested that this environment does eventually participate, but at a much slower rate (e.g. Flynn 2012). This may indicate that every context is ultimately susceptible to fronting although pre-coda // resists the longest (Fridland, 2008:445).

Reports of pre-coda // GOOSE-fronting in the North West are mixed. Hughes et al. (2011) found that fronting was indeed prohibited pre-// in their study of 16 speakers from Greater Manchester. However, Baranowski & Turton's (2015) analysis revealed a more nuanced pattern of GOOSE-fronting pre-coda // than had been shown previously, one conditioned by social class. They established five socio-economic levels between their 44 Manchester speakers, ranging from lower-working to upper-middle class, based on the speaker's occupation. Lower-working class was defined as the speaker being an 'unskilled blue collar worker' such as a cleaner; upper-working class was counted as 'skilled blue collar worker', for example a plumber or electrician (Turton & Baranowski 2015). They found that in pre-coda // environment, upper-middle class speakers retracted GOOSE to produce a backed variant,



represented by a lower F2 value in Figure 7.2 below. Most of their Manchester speakers, specifically those from upper-working to middle-middle class, produced a centralised variant similar to what other studies have found. However, the lower working class speakers produced an advanced, centralised GOOSE variant pre-coda //, represented by a high F2 value in Figure 7.2, with some tokens 'well front of the centre line' (Baranowski & Turton 2015).



**Figure 7.2 Expected F2 of /KuwL/ (school, pool, etc.) by social class (from Baranowski & Turton 2015)**

In contrast to the /Tuw/ /Kuw/ split discussed above, the coda // environment was only conditioned by class and was not shown to be constrained by any other social factors such as age. This suggests that the 'variable fronting of GOOSE before coda // in Manchester is a case of stable sociolinguistic variation rather than a change in progress' (Baranowski & Turton 2015).

The majority of students at Saltar High would fall into the lower-working class category if considered under Turton & Baranowski's (2015) methodology for social class allocation. The typical jobs that I heard Manchester-born students at Saltar High speak about their parents having were cleaners, caretakers, and bin-men, for example. Many of their parents were unemployed. If Roma adolescents are fronting GOOSE before coda //, this could indicate that

they are acquiring local rather than supralocal variation.

Compared to the linguistic factors discussed above, social factors have much less impact on GOOSE variation according to previous research. However, age is frequently reported as a significant factor, with younger speakers having higher rates of fronting, suggesting a change in progress. Otherwise, social factors generally function only at a local level, which is consistent with a change from below. For example, Fought (1999:18) found that GOOSE-fronting was predictable depending on whether a speaker was affiliated with a gang which also interacted with that speaker's gender, and Mesthrie (2010) found that in post-Apartheid South Africa GOOSE-fronting might carry connotations of prestige through its former association with standard white South African English. The findings suggest that GOOSE-fronting begins as a phonetically conditioned change, operating below the level of consciousness. Where social evaluation develops, this can often only be understood in terms of the specific context in which the change is happening.

In the current study, I do not examine whether a change is happening in Manchester English. I investigate whether the Roma migrants, who are the focus of this study, are reproducing the patterns of variation of their Manchester-born peers. If the participants of this study produce a very advanced or extreme fronted GOOSE vowel, it could be that they are (subconsciously) selecting and acquiring this from the feature pool around them. Specifically if they produce fronted variants preceding coda /l/, then it could be argued that they are acquiring Manchester variation.

## 7.4 Phonetic methodology

In total, 1377 tokens of GOOSE were analysed from the 25 Roma speakers. This is two speakers less than for LETTER because those two speakers did not produce enough tokens of this variable. I aimed to include all lexically stressed tokens of /u(:)/ in this analysis. Usually prepositions and pronouns are unstressed, so these were not included. Because of the importance of the coda

// environment to my analysis (see above), I included all tokens of goose pre-coda //.<sup>15</sup>

Following identification of tokens, a number of word- and phrase-level properties were coded for in ELAN (ELAN; Sloetjes & Wittenburg, 2008). The following linguistic environment factors were coded for: preceding and following phonetic environment, word class, word position, position in intonational phrase, and whether the token was nuclear accented or not. As for the previous variables, broad transcriptions were used for preceding and following phonetic environment.

### 7.4.1 Acoustic analysis

All tokens of GOOSE were subjected to acoustic analysis using Praat (Boersma & Weenink, 2015). Formant measurements are usually taken at the temporal midpoint of the vowel in order to ensure measurement is taken at the point as far removed as close as possible to the ‘true’ or ‘target’ value for that vowel (Lindblom, 1963). However, Harrington (2010:182) argues that a vowel target should be defined differently according to the positioning of the sound’s production in the vowel space. He suggests that for high front vowels peak F2 should be used, and for high back vowels minimum F2. Because the focus of this analysis was on GOOSE, which is usually produced relatively centrally in (urban) English varieties (Wells, 1982; Catford, 1988), and GOOSE-fronting which moves production of the sound to a high front vowel, I decided to extract formant values at the point of peak F2. In order to avoid coarticulatory influences from neighbouring segments, I took formant measurements at maximum F2 within the middle half of the vowel (Nance 2013:139). The vowel formant measurements were normalised using the online NORM suite Lobanov (1971) normalisation method.

### 7.4.2 Statistical analysis

To investigate patterns in these vowel data, I used multivariate analysis with normalised peak F2 measurement as a continuous dependent variable.

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<sup>15</sup> Due to the inhibitive coarticulatory influence of pre-coda // on GOOSE-fronting, the majority of studies exclude these tokens from their main analysis.

Predictor variables included all of the linguistic factors listed above, as well as the social factors included for the other variables. In each model, individual speaker and word were entered as random effects. Table 7.1 details all of the factors entered into the regression analyses for GOOSE.

**Table 7.1 Independent and dependent variables used in the mixed-effects models for GOOSE**

<b>Dependent variable</b>
Normalised peak F2 value within middle half of the vowel
<b>Independent linguistic variables</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lexical item (random)</li> <li>• preceding and following phonetic contexts</li> <li>• word and phrase position</li> <li>• word class</li> <li>• nuclear accent</li> </ul>
<b>Independent social variables</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual speaker (random)</li> <li>• age (min: 11 years; max: 16 years)</li> <li>• gender (female; male)</li> <li>• year group (year 7; year 10; year 11)</li> <li>• age of arrival (min: 1 year; max: 15 years)</li> <li>• length of residence (min: 6 months; max: 13 years)</li> <li>• academic stream (EAL; coreEAL; mainstream)</li> <li>• self-identification as Roma (yes; no)</li> <li>• friendship networks groups (1-5; closed/open)</li> </ul>

As well as the regression model, the variation was also explored through a factor-by-factor analysis. The effects were examined visually and tested for statistical significance.

## 7.5 Results for GOOSE

As explained above, previous research indicates that linguistic factors, rather than social factors, have the most impact on variation in GOOSE. The constraint patterns for the linguistic conditioning of GOOSE are usually consistent across different varieties of English, with preceding phonetic environment being the strongest conditioning factor. Therefore, I begin the presentation of results with this factor. Coda // has been observed to be a strong inhibitory factor in most cases, but not always in Manchester English. Section 7.5.2.1 discusses coda // conditioning in my data. To conclude discussion of the linguistic factors, I move onto results of the operation of following phonetic environment on the GOOSE vowel.

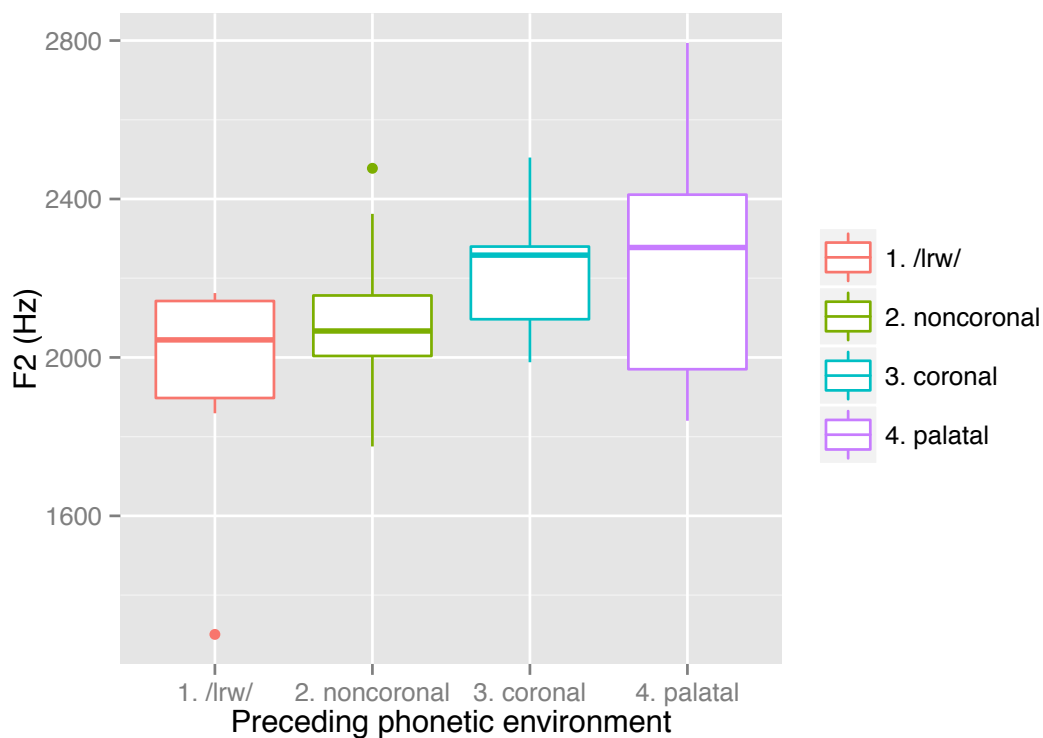
Table 7.2 shows the final regression model for GOOSE. In line with previous research, preceding phonetic environment is the strongest conditioning factor and the only linguistic factor that my analysis showed to be significant. Friendship network was found to be the only significant social factor. In light of this, I will discuss each of the linguistic factors described above in terms of the variation between friendship groups. None of the other linguistic or social factors, including following phonetic environment, gender, or age of arrival were shown to be significant.

**Table 7.2 Final regression model for GOOSE**

	Factor	Log odds	Mean	p
Preceding	Palatal	161.454	2118.818	2.11e-05
	Coronal	61.324	2063.907	
	Non-coronal	-33.539	1878.068	
	lrw	-189.239	1741.550	
Friendship network	Open	184.848	2284.803	0.00116
	Closed	-184.848	1854.221	
Not significant	Following phonetic environment; word class; word position, intonational phrase position; nuclear accent Gender; age; year group; AoA; LoR; self-identification; stream			
Model	Deviance 18558.18 df 1 Intercept 2025.871 Grand mean 1989.518			

### 7.5.1 Preceding phonetic environment

The categories for preceding phonetic environment used in this study are: palatal; coronal; non-coronal; and sonorants /l,r,w/. The first thing I wanted to establish is how the Manchester-born peers of my participants were patterning GOOSE. Figure 7.3 shows the normalised F2 production of the GOOSE vowel according to the preceding phonetic environment by six Manchester speakers who attend Saltar High. Where the GOOSE vowel is more fronted, a higher F2 value will be observed.



**Figure 7.3 Preceding phonetic environment conditioning of GOOSE fronting for Manchester-born speakers**

Figure 7.3 shows the Manchester speakers produce more fronted GOOSE variants when the vowel has a palatal onset (purple box) and they front least following a sonorant onset (red box). This pattern corresponds to that Holmes-Elliott (2015:207) reported. The effect of the sonorants /l/, /r/ and /w/ was anticipated as all three sounds are known to have a lowering effect on F2 (Watson et al. 2000; Carter & Local 2007). An ANOVA confirmed that the visible trend was statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). The fronting effect of a preceding palatal environment has been reported across a number of varieties,

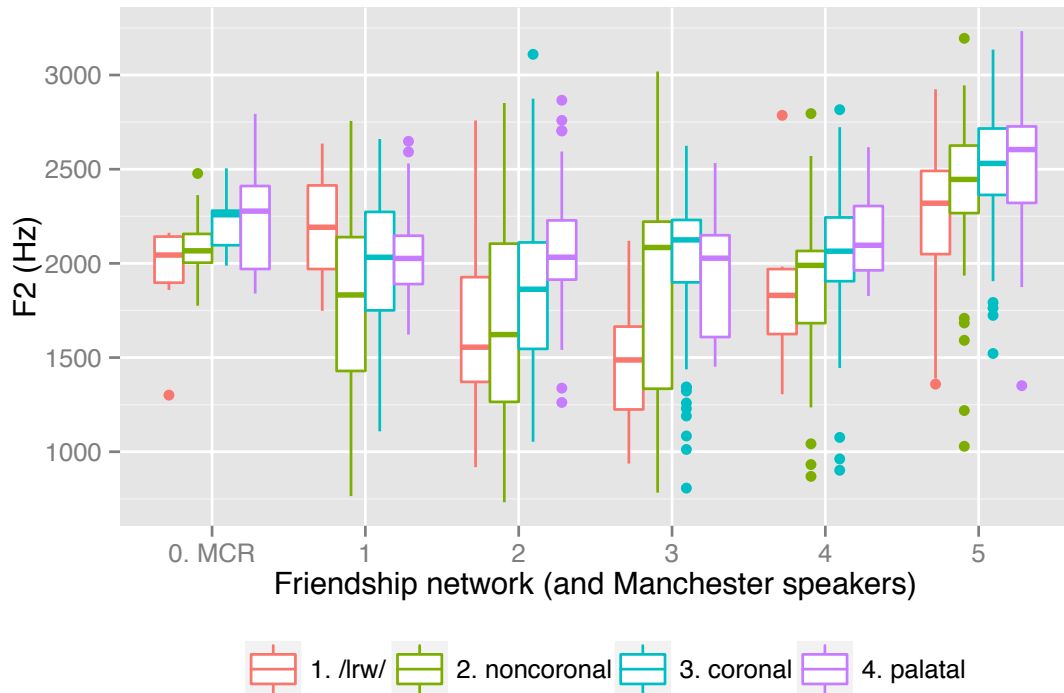
and the pattern illustrated in Figure 7.3 aligns with young people's GOOSE-fronting production in a number of other studies where preceding phonetic environment strongly conditioned GOOSE-fronting.

However, Baranowski & Turton (2015) found that younger speakers (under 30 years of age) produced equally fronted GOOSE vowels when preceded both by a coronal onset and a non-coronal onset, with an average expected F2 of around 2200 Hz. This is not the case with the Manchester speakers in this study. The green and blue boxes of Figure 7.3 represent non-coronal and coronal onsets respectively. The Manchester speakers all produce a more fronted GOOSE vowel when preceded by a coronal onset. However, a Bonferroni test revealed that none of the pairwise comparisons were significantly different. The median peak F2 in my data for a preceding sonorant is 2044 Hz and for a palatal onset 2278 Hz.

Two of the six Manchester speakers analysed in the current study pattern in the same way as the younger speakers in the study of Baranowski & Turton (2015) by producing a more fronted GOOSE for non-coronal onsets, but this does not show up in the results for Manchester speakers as a group. The combination of ANOVA and pairwise tests show that the differences between the phonetic categories are not significant, but the overall trend is. As explained above, the linguistic conditioning of the GOOSE vowel has been shown to weaken over time. The fact that the overall trend is statistically significant, but the differences between the phonetic categories are not corresponds to the finding of previous research. Holmes-Elliott (2015:209) found that the differences between the patterning of phonetic categories for older speakers were statistically significant, but for younger speakers aged between 16-18 years, the overall trend was significant, but the pairwise comparisons were not.

In Chapter 5, I explained that for statistical analysis I need to collapse the five friendship groups into two groups representing speakers with more closed (friendship groups 1-3) and more open (friendship groups 4 and 5) social networks. The statistical analysis of GOOSE revealed that networks also have an effect on GOOSE-fronting as was shown in Table 7.2 above. While visualising my data I noticed some interesting differences between the two more open networks groups. Therefore, Figure 7.4 shows GOOSE-fronting as

conditioned by preceding phonological environment for all five friendship groups, 1-3 being those speakers with more closed networks and 4 and 5 speakers with more open networks. The Manchester-born peers of the Roma participants are on the left of the chart for reference.



**Figure 7.4** GOOSE-fronting across all friendship groups and Manchester-born speakers to the left for reference.

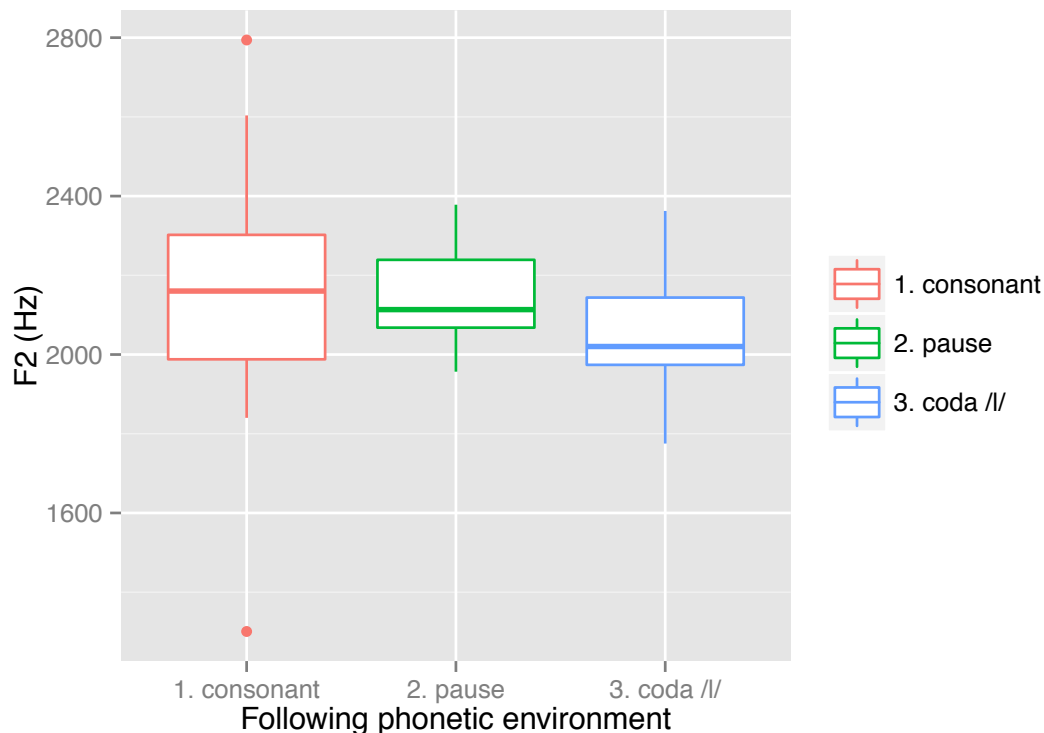
We can see from Figure 7.4 that the more closed network speakers' (1-3) GOOSE production is slightly more back and the patterning does not necessarily follow that of the linguistic conditioning exhibited by the Manchester speakers. The more open network speakers on the right (4 and 5) do follow the same pattern of conditioning by preceding phonetic environment as the Manchester speakers, although group 4 produces slightly backed variants and group 5, those with best friends who are not Roma and the most diverse friendship groups, produce fronter variants than speakers from Manchester. This will be discussed in Section 7.6, but overall the results suggest that Roma speakers with more open friendship networks are reproducing the patterns of variation of the Manchester-born speakers.



## 7.5.2 Following phonetic environment

### 7.5.2.1 Coda //

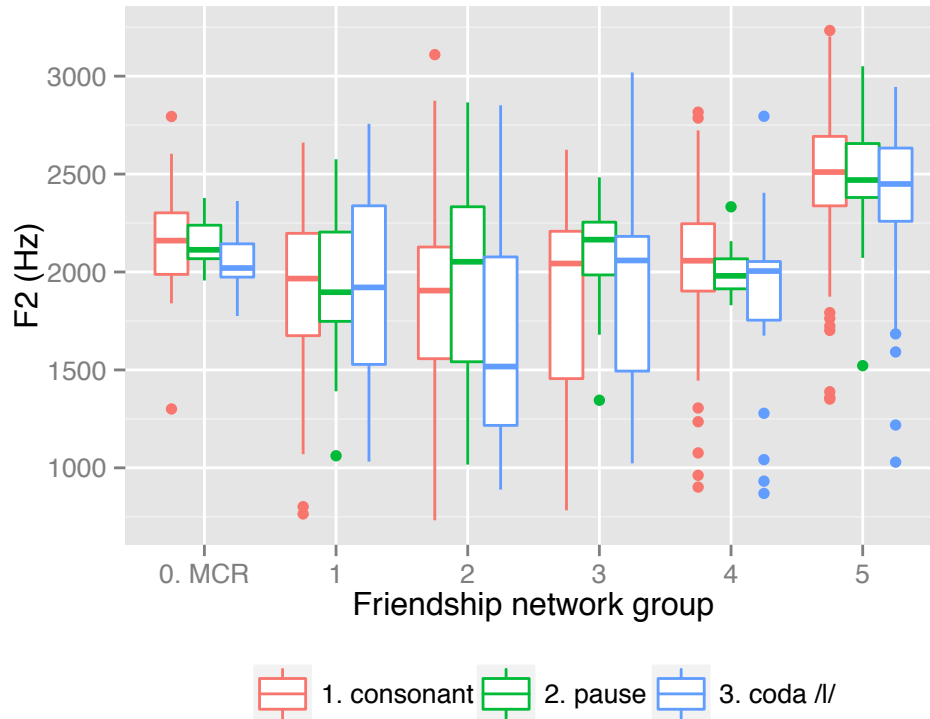
Baranowski & Turton (2015) found that Manchester speakers' GOOSE-fronting is not necessarily inhibited by a following //. Figure 7.5 shows how the coda-// environment conditions GOOSE production for the Manchester-born speakers I analysed in my study. The blue box represents GOOSE production when followed by coda-//, green is when followed by a pause, and red indicates the GOOSE vowel followed by a consonant other than //. Although GOOSE production may be slightly lower before coda-// than other following phonetic contexts for these Manchester speakers, a Bonferroni pairwise comparison indicates that the differences between the environments are not significant.



**Figure 7.5** GOOSE-fronting of Manchester speakers according to following phonetic environment

These results are in agreement with the findings of Baranowski & Turton (2015), indicating that coda // does not inhibit GOOSE-fronting for Manchester speakers. This contrasts with most other varieties of English. If my Roma

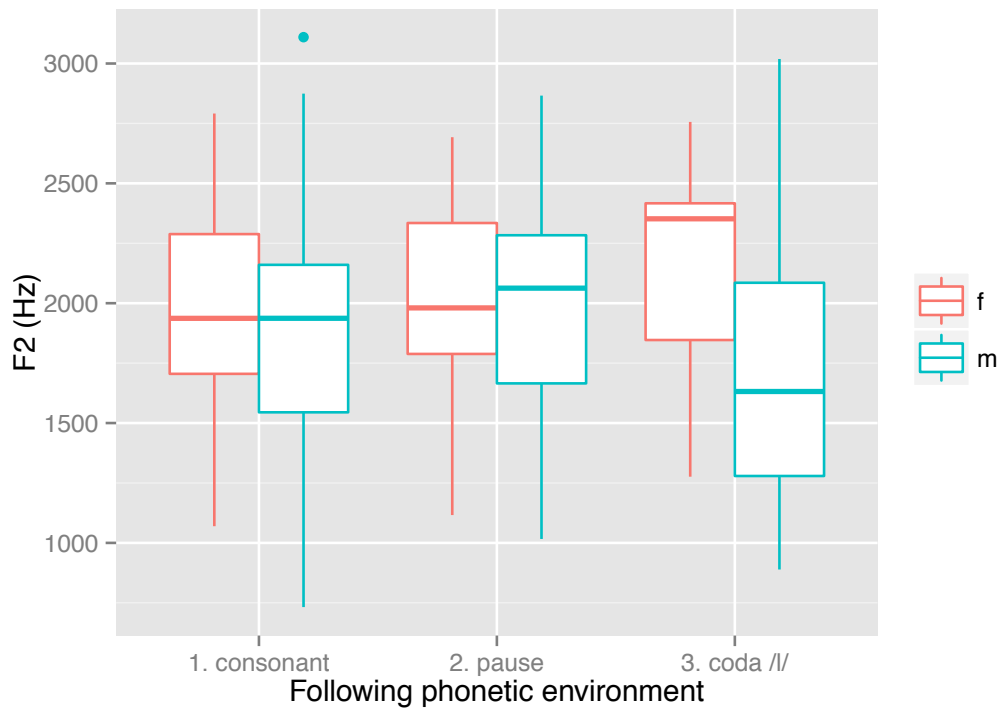
participants' production of a fronted GOOSE variant is not inhibited by coda-//, this could indicate that they are acquiring Manchester patterns of variation. Figure 7.6 shows rates of GOOSE-fronting for all five Roma friendship groups with the Manchester speakers on the left for reference purposes.



**Figure 7.6 GOOSE-fronting according to following coda // for all friendship groups. Manchester speakers on the left for reference.**

Group five is shown on the far right of Figure 7.6. These speakers have the most open and diverse friendship networks and they pattern closest to the Manchester-born speakers. As we saw with the previous results, speakers from this group produce considerably more advanced variants than the Manchester speakers, but coda-// does not appear to inhibit the production of a fronted GOOSE vowel. However more detail is needed. The differences between the three environments for the Manchester speakers were not statistically significant, so I tested each of the friendship groups with pairwise comparison tests. The only group that shows a significant difference between the following phonetic environment was friendship group 2 where we can clearly see the pre-coda // production has a much lower F2.

I thought it was strange that most of the other groups did not show evidence of coda // inhibiting fronting, especially from the more closed networks groups (1 and 3), so I investigated patterns in these data further and I found that coda // separates speakers by gender. This pattern is clearest when visualized with the collapsed groups into open and closed network; this is shown in Figure 7.7 (closed networks) and Figure 7.8 (open networks).

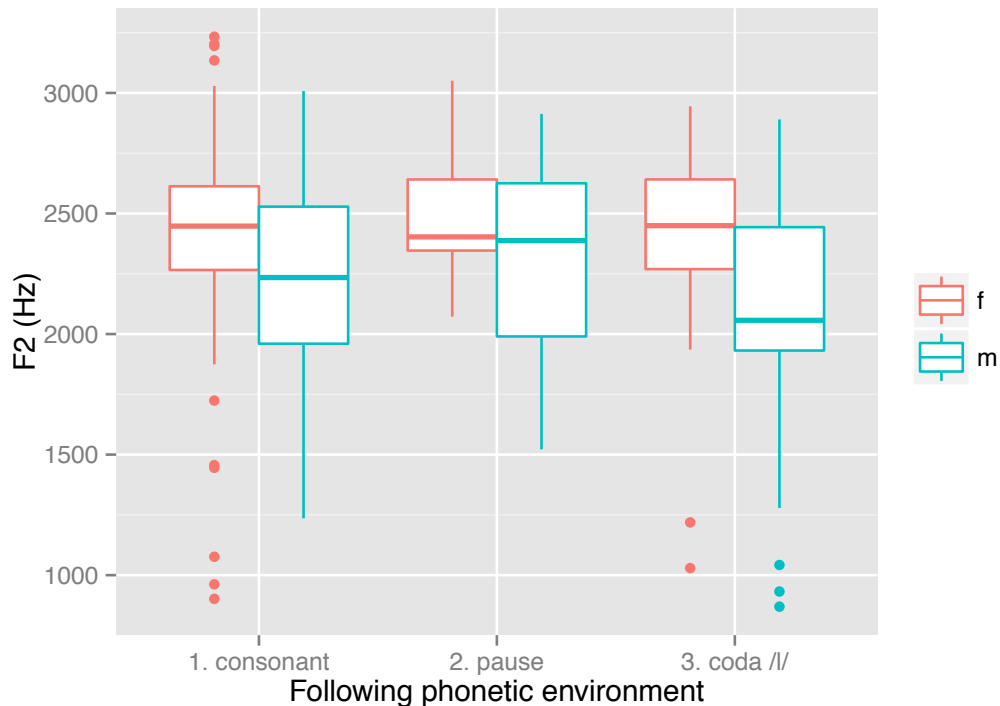


**Figure 7.7 Closed networks group GOOSE-fronting by gender with following phonetic environment**

As Figure 7.7 above and Figure 7.8 below show, there is a clear gender divide with regard to GOOSE-fronting before coda-//. In general, the males tend to produce backer GOOSE vowels than the females, and for the more closed networks speakers (Figure 7.7), male production before // is considerably further back than before a pause or other consonants. Unusually, the females with closed networks (Figure 7.7) push GOOSE before // even further forwards than the other environments, making it extremely front.

For speakers with more open networks (Figure 7.8), we can see that across the board speakers are producing a more advanced GOOSE, with most vowels having a peak F2 above 2000 Hz. The females with more open networks have extreme fronting of GOOSE for all following environments. While

the males' production of GOOSE is generally very similar to that of the females, especially pre-pausally, again there is a big difference pre-coda // . This difference is not as large as it was for the closed networks speakers, but this is still the environment in which the boys are lagging behind the most.

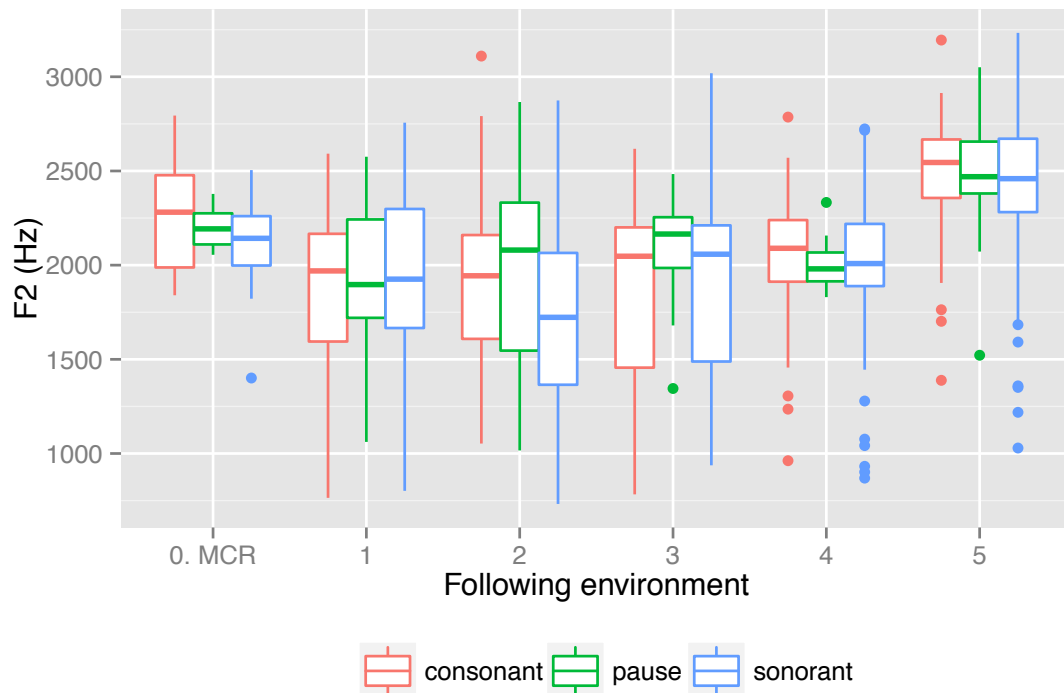


**Figure 7.8 Open networks group GOOSE-fronting by gender with following phonetic environment**

### 7.5.2.2 Following phonetic environment

As well as coda-//, there has been shown to be another factor influencing the linguistic conditioning of GOOSE-fronting: a following sonorant, pause, or consonant (Flynn 2012; Holmes-Elliott 2015). Baranowski & Turton (2015) do not discuss this, which may mean that this was not found to be significant in their results. Indeed, for my own data, the multivariate analysis did not indicate following phonetic environment to be significant. However, I was interested to see if Roma pattern similarly to my Manchester speakers and if the results here mirror those for the other conditioning factors. In order to ensure that following phonetic environment was only examined where it is fully variable, and not as property of the word, this factor was only examined in unchecked syllables (i.e. *blue*, *zoo*, *grew* etc.).

Figure 7.9 shows the patterning of this factor across all the speakers broken down by individual friendship groups. The Manchester speakers are again on the far left of the chart for reference. From Figure 7.9 we can see that for the Manchester speakers, a following consonant promotes the highest degree of fronting for this factor, and following sonorants promotes the least, i.e. sonorant < pause < consonant. This pattern is in line with findings of previous research (e.g. Holmes-Elliott 2015). However an ANOVA does not confirm the overall trend to be significant for the Manchester speakers. Bonferroni pairwise comparison tests also reveal that the individual differences between each of the environments are not significant. It is possible that this is because the feature is losing its phonetic conditioning as has been reported in previous studies.



**Figure 7.9 GOOSE-fronting with following phonetic environment for all friendship groups. Manchester speakers on left.**

Possibly because this trend was also insignificant in their data, Baranowski & Turton (2015) do not discuss the conditioning of GOOSE for following phonetic environment, apart from coda-//, so there are no directly comparable results for Manchester speakers. However, despite its lack of statistical significance, the patterning exhibited by the Manchester speakers on

the left is in line with previous research from the north of England (Flynn 2012) and the south (Holmes-Elliott 2015). Nevertheless, Figure 7.9 is still of interest because we can see that the only group of Roma who follow the pattern of variation shown by the Manchester-born speakers is again the group who have the most open and most diverse friendship networks. Just as with the Manchester speakers, participants from friendship group five pattern for this factor: sonorant < pause < consonant, but, just as for the Manchester speakers, neither the ANOVA nor the pairwise comparisons indicate that the trend is significant.

In summary, apart from being more advanced than the Manchester speakers, the GOOSE vowels of friendship group five pattern very closely to their Manchester-born counterparts for both preceding and following phonetic environments.

## 7.6 Discussion

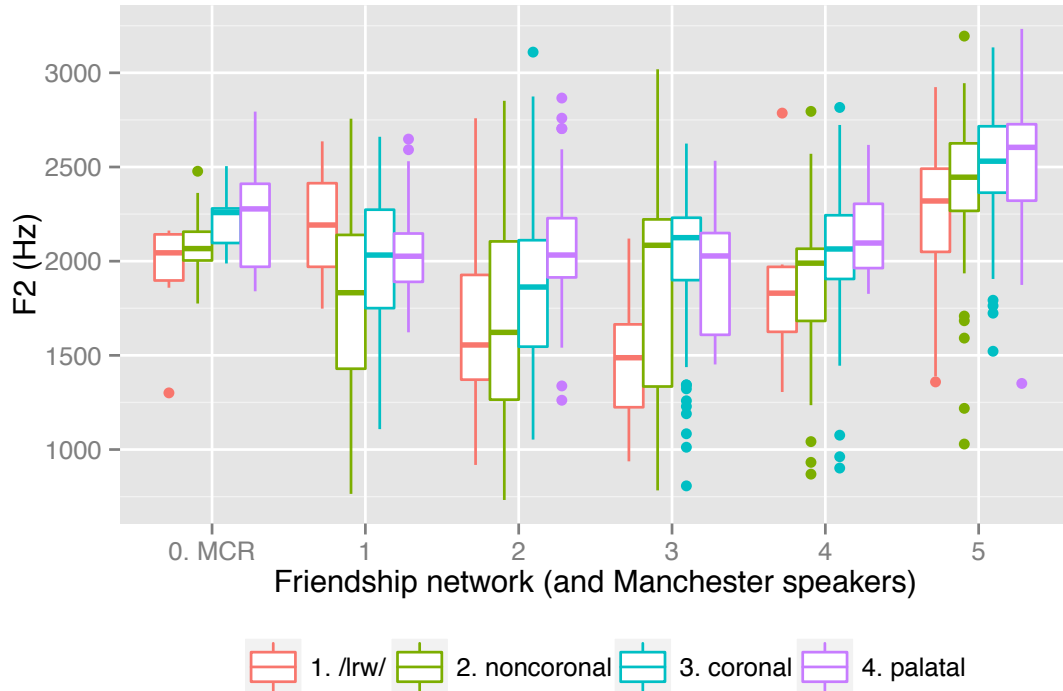
The research questions addressed in this chapter are:

1. Do Roma adolescents produce a fronted variant of GOOSE similar to those of their Manchester-born peers?
2. Where adolescents do GOOSE-front, is this fronting inhibited before coda-/l/?
3. What factors impact on whether Roma adolescents GOOSE-front?

### 7.6.1 Do Roma adolescents produce a fronted variant of GOOSE similar to those of their Manchester born peers?

Roma adolescents with more open friendship networks do more or less reproduce patterns of GOOSE-fronting of their Manchester-born peers. For the Manchester speakers, preceding phonetic environment is shown to be the most significant factor, patterning sonorant /l,r,w/ < non-coronal < coronal < palatal. Figure 7.4 showing results for this factor is reproduced in Figure 7.10 below. The more open Roma friendship network groups (groups 4 and 5) exhibit the same linguistic constraints as the Manchester-born speakers, but

group 4 produces goose with slightly lower mean F2 values than the Manchester speakers and group 5 produces higher F2 values.



**Figure 7.10** GOOSE-fronting across all friendship groups and Manchester-born speakers

Following phonetic environment was not shown to be significant for either the Manchester speakers or the Roma adolescents. Therefore, in line with the findings of Baranowski & Turton (2015), coda // does not inhibit GOOSE-fronting in the Manchester English spoken by both my Manchester-born speakers and my Roma participants. Again, friendship group five patterns closest to the Manchester speakers analysed in this study, all be it with more advanced F2 production.

This leads me to the question of why, for all conditioning linguistic factors, friendship group 5's production of GOOSE is so much further front than all that of the other Roma groups and the Manchester speakers. One explanation as to why speakers with more diverse friendship groups and more open social networks are fronting more may be that they are performing a type of *hypercorrection* of the GOOSE vowel. *Hypercorrection* typically involves a speaker's awareness of differing degrees of prestige associated with language varieties (Labov, 1966, 1972b). In cases of hypercorrection, we would expect a

speaker of a less prestigious variety to attempt to produce a more prestigious pattern or form, but in doing so they overshoot the target and this results in an 'incorrect' form. The classic example provided by Labov (1966) is the variable occurrence of post-vocalic /r/ (e.g. *guard*; *floor*) in New York City dialects. Labov found that in more formal speech styles, the lower middle class speakers produced post-vocalic /r/ more frequently than the upper middle class who would usually use more of that variable. Labov labelled this form of hypercorrection to be *statistical* hypercorrection, whereby speakers, in an attempt to emulate a more prestigious variety, produced the feature more than the people they were trying to emulate would normally do.

The other type of hypercorrection Labov identified is *structural* (or *qualitative*) hypercorrection. This arises when speakers extend a prestigious linguistic form to environments in which it otherwise would not occur. A common example of this involves speakers of Cockney English who usually omit /h/ word initially. When trying to speak more formally, a person may add /h/ to the beginning of words, even when in the standard or prestigious variety, the word would not usually begin with /h/, for example 'get [hawt] of my house' instead of 'get out of my house' (Eckman, Iverson, & Song, 2013:259).

Hypercorrection in a new language tends to occur later rather than earlier in the acquisition process (Eckman et al., 2013:261). It therefore follows that it is those speakers who are probably the most advanced in their acquisition of English who are hypercorrecting. This would be a form of quantitative hypercorrection. Roma adolescents could have heard and noticed that there is a fronted GOOSE vowel and be overcompensating in their efforts to reproduce what they are hearing. While monolingual hypercorrection is often seen as an outsider's linguistic overcompensation that arises from a misreading of the social value of a particular linguistic form (e.g. Baugh, 1992), examples of hypercorrection in a new language are typically seen as learner 'errors' (e.g. Eckman et al., 2013). However, it could be argued that heavy or over use of a vernacular variant could in fact be linked with a speaker having increased sociolinguistic awareness or competence in a new language. It is possible that those speakers with the more open friendship networks are in fact aware of the covert prestige that GOOSE-fronting may have, and are using that subconscious knowledge to align themselves with the local community. They could be using

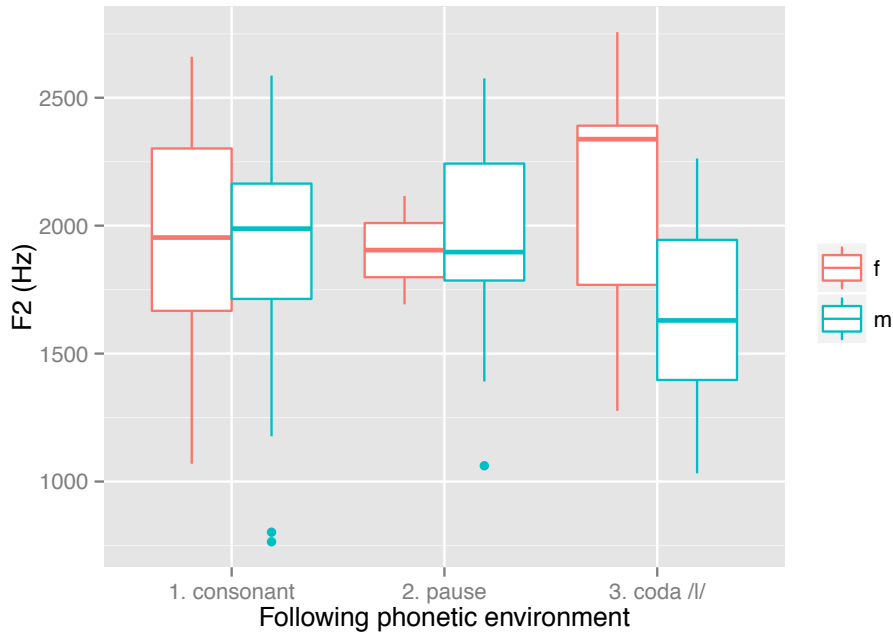


fronting of the GOOSE vowel to establish insider status and even to pass as local (Piller, 2002:193).

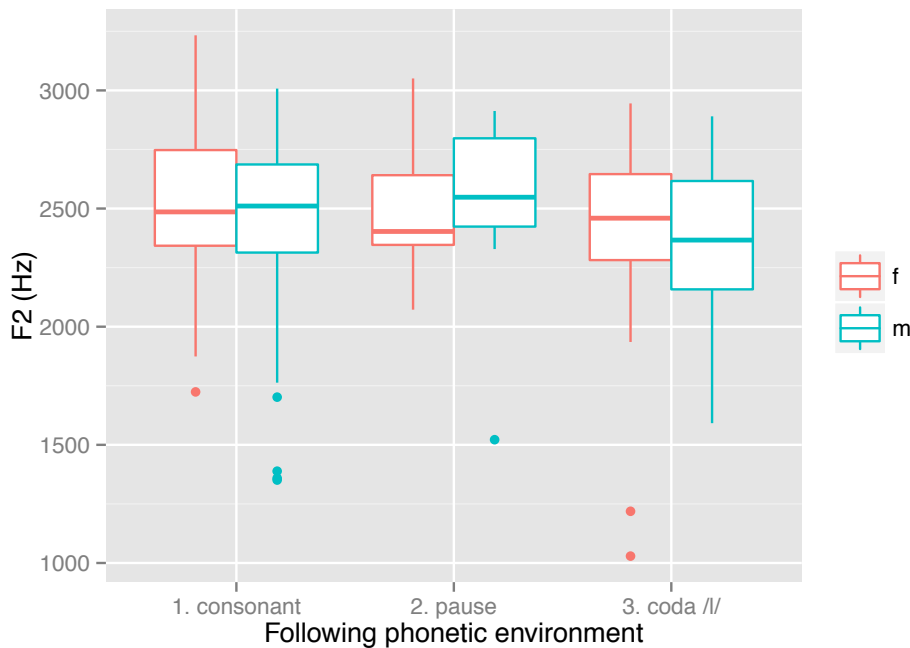
Hypercorrection may also account for the gender differences in the pre-coda // environment addressed in research question two below.

### **7.6.2 Is Roma GOOSE-fronting inhibited before coda //?**

The Manchester-born speakers' GOOSE vowel is not significantly inhibited from fronting pre-coda //. On initial inspection of the data, it seemed that coda // inhibited GOOSE-fronting for very few of the Roma participants. This would mean that the Roma adolescents are following the patterning demonstrated by the Manchester-born speakers, but the fact that even the more closed friendship network speakers were doing this warranted further investigation. On closer inspection I observed a strong gender divide for GOOSE-fronting pre-coda //. In general, the boys do not front pre-coda //, but the females do. In fact speakers with closed friendship networks front much more pre-coda // than before other consonant and pauses. Notably, the effect of this seems to weaken and/or the female speakers' production in the other environments catches up. Compare the difference in pre-coda // GOOSE-fronting for males and females of the most closed friendship group (group 1) shown in Figure 7.11. Males and females produce similar F2s for both pre consonantal and pre-pausal environments, but for coda // the girls' GOOSE is much more fronted and the boys' is further back.



**Figure 7.11 GOOSE-fronting pre coda // by gender in friendship group 1**



**Figure 7.12 GOOSE-fronting pre coda // by gender in friendship group 5**

However, for the speakers with the most open friendship networks, those from friendship group five, shown in Figure 7.12, we can see that the differences have been smoothed out. The environments pre-consonant and pre-pausal have moved forwards to as close F2 production as coda // for the girls, and the boys have also almost caught up with the girls in all environments too.

Again hypercorrection could be an explanation here. Overall the females seem to be much more sensitive to the Manchester pattern of GOOSE-fronting before coda ///. In previous research GOOSE has not shown consistent patterning in terms of gender. Patterns often need to be understood in terms of locally meaningful social categories and practices (e.g. Fought, 1999). Recall in my discussion of the happy vowel I found a significant gender effect with females producing significantly more lax phrase word final variants than the males. I argued that this could be because there are far fewer Roma females than males in school which results in the females having less dense and multiplex networks than their male counterparts. These more open networks could mean that certain patterns of variation could be more salient to the females, and in turn they overestimate the fronting of the vowel in this environment leading them to produce a more fronted variant pre-coda // than in other environments.

Baranowski & Turton (2015) found that lower working class speakers produced an advanced, centralised GOOSE variant pre-coda ///, represented by a high F2 value which was shown in their graph reproduced in Figure 7.2, with some tokens 'well front of the centre line'. The 'high' average F2 value lies around 1525 Hz. It is not clear from Baranowski & Turton's (2015) methodology whether F2 measurement was extracted at the peak of midpoint of the vowel. If their measurement was taken at the midpoint, then it would follow that the averages in my data which were all taken at the peak of F2 would be higher.

The Manchester speakers that I analysed from Saltar High appear to produce a much more fronted /uwL/ variant, as Figure 7.5 showed, with a median peak F2 of 2020 Hz. The median peak F2 of my Roma speakers' pre-coda // is at almost 2500 Hz. So these measurements are considerably higher than Baranowski & Turton's study found. Also their pre-coda // values are remarkably lower than the average younger speaker's F2 of 2200 Hz which was given in Figure 7.1.

Age was not found to be a significant factor in coda // environment by Baranowski & Turton (2015), leading them to suggest that the variable fronting of GOOSE before // in Manchester is a case of stable sociolinguistic variation, rather than a change in progress. They do not give the range of ages of their

44 speakers, but their young category includes speakers up to 30 years of age. It is possible that there were no adolescents included in their analysis or very few.

The impact on linguistic innovation that adolescents have was discussed in detail in Chapter 4. Cheshire et al. (2011) found that the GOOSE vowel of Multicultural London English became more fronted into adolescence and they found some speakers had an extremely fronted variant. This pattern of younger speakers increasing the degree of fronting as they get older resembles that of other 'global' features, such as the spread of the quotative BE LIKE (Kerswill et al., 2013:272). While Baranowski & Turton (2015) found a stable variant in their study, it is possible that the data in my study represents Roma acquisition of a multicultural urban English (extreme) fronted GOOSE and the speakers are applying this across all following environments, including coda-//. Despite the fact that GOOSE-fronting is generally considered to be below the level of consciousness, I noticed during my fieldwork that many students at Saltar High, including both Manchester-born and Roma, seemed to produce a very fronted GOOSE vowel, especially before //. The words *cool* and *school* were very high frequency words and it was especially salient that these were being produced by many students with an extremely fronted variant.

Fronting before // is not prohibited in Liverpool English (Hughes et al., 2013) and so it is possible that this is an influence from there. Although the cities are less than 35 miles (56 km) apart, I think this unlikely, however, because the two cities are very much distinct and rivalry between them is intense. Other Liverpool features have not been adopted by Manchester speakers and it would be odd if this one feature was chosen to be used. Another possibility is that this is an innovative variant occurring in pre-coda // environment. Because the GOOSE-fronting pre-coda // environment is unusual for English and I noticed this feature's saliency in Manchester-born speakers as well as those from elsewhere, it is possible that speakers are emphasising this differentiating feature and in doing so are making it more extreme.

More research needs to be done to investigate whether Manchester (adolescent) speakers are producing a very advanced or extreme fronted variant and what the influences on this production are. There is a lack of research on Manchester speech, but more recent projects such as that of

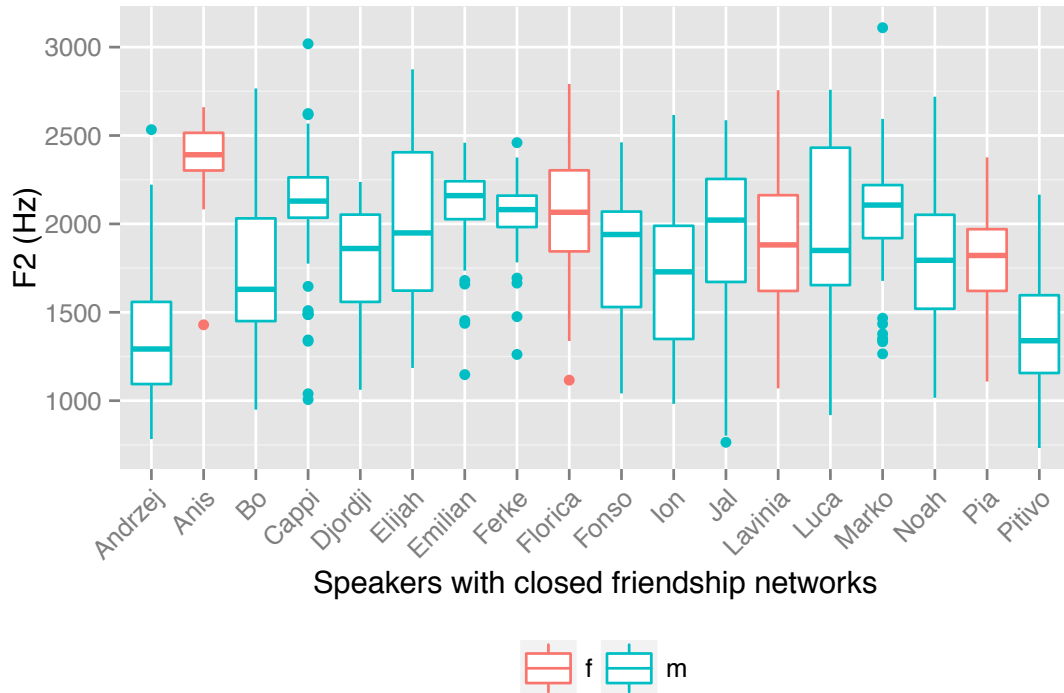
Baranowski & Turton (2015) and the ongoing UrBEn-ID project at Manchester Metropolitan University (Drummond & Dray) will help to bridge this gap. Unfortunately this is outside the scope of the current project because my focus is on Roma production of GOOSE.

### **7.6.3 What factors impact on whether Roma adolescents GOOSE-front?**

Linguistically, the only factor that has a significant impact on Roma (and Manchester) speakers' GOOSE-fronting in English is preceding phonetic environment. ANOVA showed this pattern to be significant, but Bonferroni pairwise comparisons indicated that the differences between environments were not. This follows the findings of previous research which suggests that linguistic conditioning of GOOSE becomes weaker over time, which is typical of a change from below. This indicates that GOOSE-fronting's conditioning by preceding phonetic environment is relatively advanced in Manchester.

It does not appear that Roma speakers are acquiring this conditioning in gradual steps, but they acquire the conditioning at the stage at which the Manchester speakers are at. This is shown by the Roma speakers who have more open networks patterning in exactly the same order and with similar significance to the Manchester speakers, although more advanced for those who have the most open friendship networks.

The only social predictor that is significant is friendship group. For the statistical analysis it was necessary to collapse the five friendship groups into two, but some value was taken from examining the five groups separately, showing that the speakers with the most open networks of all (friendship group 5) consistently patterned most closely to the Manchester speakers, although they were also consistently more fronted in their GOOSE production than their Manchester-born peers.

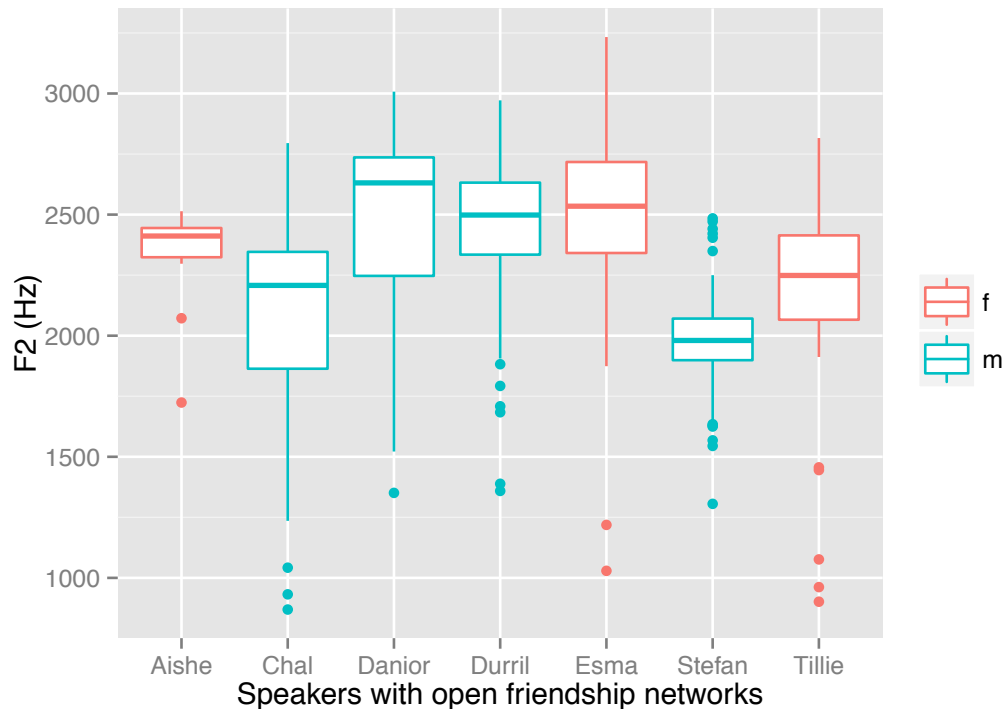


**Figure 7.13 GOOSE-fronting by all speakers with more closed friendship networks**

Figure 7.13 shows rates of overall GOOSE-fronting for all speakers who have more closed friendship networks. We can see that the individuals of this group have very varied peak F2s for GOOSE. Most speakers have a median peak F2 that lies around the 2000 Hz line. The two speakers at each end of the x-axis, Andrzej and Pitivo both have retracted productions of GOOSE indicated by a low F2. Both Andrzej and Pitivo had a number of Arabic-speaking friends. It is possible that Andrzej and Pitivo's backed production of GOOSE is influenced by their friendship group, although analysis of this falls outside the scope of the current study. In general, long Arabic vowels are produced at the periphery of the vowel space, so /u:/ would be a high (very) back vowel, while short ones are more centralised, meaning that /u/ would be a little further forward, but probably not as centralised as English [ʊ] (Saadah, 2011). It would be interesting to investigate this further in future research.

The only other speaker who has a strikingly different production of GOOSE from the others in Figure 7.13 is the female speaker with a very high peak F2, Anis. Anis was a year 7 female, aged 11 at the time I interviewed her. She was extremely Roma oriented and I never saw her mixing with non-Roma

students outside of class. However, she attended primary school and was very close friends with Esma. I described Esma at length in Chapter 6. She had the most open friendship networks of all participants, and her variation for goose is represented in Figure 7.14:



**Figure 7.14 GOOSE-fronting by all speakers with more open friendship networks**

Anis arrived at primary just after Esma and from the reports of her primary school teachers, Esma took Anis under her wing. This friendship continued into secondary school, and whenever I saw Esma away from her usual diverse friendship group that included both Manchester-born students and friends from elsewhere, she would usually be with Anis near the main Roma group in the Bistro/Food Hall area. It is possible that Anis produces a very fronted GOOSE vowel as a result of her friendship with Esma who had more open networks, but also produced an extremely fronted GOOSE, as Figure 7.14 shows.

Within the more open friendship network group, there is only really Stefan whose mean peak F2 is slightly lower than the others and he is in fact very close to what the Manchester speakers produce. I spoke about Stefan, Esma's brother, in the last Chapter. He is the year 11 Roma boy who claimed to have over 800 friends in school and had two Manchester-born girlfriends in

the time I was doing my fieldwork. His GOOSE production could be seen in one of two ways. First of all, it could be explained that in fact he is close to an accurate reproduction of the Manchester GOOSE and that this is perhaps because of the diversity of his friendships and the fact that he has spent so much time with Manchester speakers through his girlfriends. However, given his performance for the other variables, and his patterning of GOOSE when examined in more detail, I would say this is not the case.

For letter, Stefan's er# production was coming close to the laxness of the Manchester speakers, but really his space-value lay between that of the speakers with less diverse friendship groups and those with more diverse friendship groups who approximated the space-values of the Manchester-born speakers. For happy, he was not a categorical happy laxer like the Manchester speakers and many of the more open friendship network group; he produced a lax i# variant 75% of the time. Despite claiming to have 800 friends, I observed that he spent a lot of his time outside of class with other Roma males. He was not really interested in music, but when he did listen to music it was often Romanian. Although he had some idea of different social groups within the school (e.g. popular people; geeks), his best friends were Roma. For these reasons, I interpret Stefan's production of GOOSE as again being in-between the more closed friendship network groups and the more open ones. It just happens that for this variable, F2 production between the two groups intersects Manchester speakers' production because the speakers with the most open friendship networks (group 5) produce more advanced GOOSE variants.

One of my key motivations for examining this variable was to see whether there was a difference in how Roma adolescents react in their acquisition of a global or supralocal variant rather than the quite regional specific variation of letter and happy. The key environment to answer this question is coda //l/. From these results it seems that those Roma adolescents who are acquiring vernacular English dialect features are also acquiring the linguistic conditioning that is specific to Manchester, rather than the supralocal variants. Where Roma speakers produce locally conditioned variants, this could indicate that they are using these features to construct a more locally-oriented, rather than a globally-oriented, social identity (Nestor et al., 2012). I discuss this further in the following chapter.



## **7.7 Summary**

This chapter concludes my analyses of the three variables: letter, happy and GOOSE-fronting. The following chapter synthesises the main findings of the ethnographic and linguistic analyses of all the variables and discusses their broader implications for the study of sociophonetic variation in a new language.

## Chapter 8 Discussion

Each of the last three chapters presented a detailed discussion of the implications from that specific analysis. The purpose of this chapter is to bring these findings together so that they may be reviewed in terms of their broader implications for the study of new language acquisition. I reserve drawing my formal conclusions until the following, final chapter of this dissertation. This review now begins with a recap of the research questions presented in Chapter 1.

The main aim of this thesis is to examine the social factors impacting upon the acquisition of vocalic variation in a new language by adolescent Roma migrants. It is key to state that I in no way assume that the migrants of this study want to achieve pronunciation resembling that of their Manchester-born peers, but the focus of this study is the reasons why some do when others do not. In doing so, my research contributes to knowledge of both the field of SLA and variationist sociolinguistics. The specific research questions that were outlined in Chapter 1 are:

1. To what extent do Roma adolescents in Manchester acquire vocalic variants typical of their locally-born peer groups?
2. To what extent do Roma adolescents in Manchester show variation that reflects the same underlying constraints operating on the variation of their locally-born peers?
3. Where there is acquisition, what social factors impact upon this acquisition?

This study was conducted from an emic, ethnographic perspective. As I have presented in the previous results chapters, the most statistically significant social factor to have emerged from my analyses of these data has been

friendship network. Within the framework of the school, members of staff distinguish between immigrant and non-immigrant student populations, much like in Mendoza-Denton's (2008) study (see Chapter 3 section 3.3.4).

However, at Saltar High, there is a further distinction, that between other immigrant and Roma immigrant populations. This is exemplified by the fact that they had a Roma Coordinator who was my initial contact at the school (see Chapter 4 section 4.2.2). Whether there is a need for such a distinction is questionable. However, my findings show that there are even further fine-grained distinctions within the Roma social groups of this school.

Within the apparently homogeneous Roma group, there are levels of integration, acceptance and tension between participants' Roma identities and a more general migrant identity, as well as identities that lean more toward the Manchester culture. If a researcher were to take a more traditional Labovian approach to this study, he or she might have used a more etically imposed categorisation as a starting point, such as the school's streaming system of EAL, core EAL and mainstream. Through my ethnography, I have found that this is not a statistically significant factor in acquisition, integration, or identity construction for these students. Many who have been mainstream for years do not produce Manchester features. Results achieved using streaming or any other etically imposed category would have missed the detailed processes of identity construction in which the production of Manchester features are used. What I have found to be key in this study for the Roma at Saltar High is the makeup of participants' friendship networks, a factor which emerged emically from my period of participant observation. In light of the importance of friendship network as a factor, I frame the following discussion, where relevant, in relation to participants' social networks.

Section 8.1 addresses research questions 1 and 2. In Section 8.2, I turn my attention to question 3. Section 8.3 investigates why social networks have been shown to have such strong significance in the current study, and this is further illustrated by a presentation of case studies in Section 8.4. I then move on to draw my formal conclusions in Chapter 9.

## 8.1 Acquisition of variation

The first two research questions address whether the Roma adolescents analysed here acquire local patterns of variation. Very few of the Roma participants display what could be considered consistent local pronunciation across all three variables. However, there is a wide range of inter-speaker vocalic production and, while most speakers do not produce variants that could be viewed as having been influenced by the local accent, a small number do. This inter-speaker variation reflects what has been found in previous studies. What is striking here is that the pattern of inter-speaker variation is clearest when viewed according to the nature of the participants' friendship networks. The third research question that addresses the social factors impacting production is discussed in Section 8.2 below. First, I turn to a discussion of Roma production for each of the three variables.

### 8.1.1 *Let*ER

Previous research shows that Manchester speakers' production of the *let*ER vowel is syntactically and morphologically conditioned. Speakers produce a backed and slightly lowered variant of *let*ER in phrase-final, word-final environment: *er*#.

Approximately 25% (n=7) of the 27 Roma participants analysed for *let*ER produced a lowered backed variant for the /ə/ vowel in word-final phrase-final position. The location of the Roma English lax variant was typically more open than the Manchester speakers and not as far back, while the Manchester variant has been shown to be more backed than lowered (Turton & Ramsammy 2012). It is possible that this could be as a result of Roma speakers responding to visual stimuli from the Manchester speakers. If Manchester speakers produce the *er*# variant with a visibly more open mouth position, some Roma speakers could try to replicate this production. This could result in increased lowering, which is more visible to interlocutors, and slightly less backing, because that is less visible. It would be of interest to investigate this further using video recordings in order to see whether there are visual cues to the variation. Impressionistically, there seems to be a

visible opening of the mouth when Manchester-born speakers produce *er#*.

Nevertheless, variation very similar to that of the Manchester speakers analysed both in this study and in previous research (Baranowski & Turton, 2015; Ramsammy & Turton, 2012) is achieved by a quarter of the Roma adolescents. Therefore, the results for the *lettER* variable indicate that the Roma adolescents can acquire the constraints and patterns of variation of their locally-born peers.

### 8.1.2 *Happy*

Like *lettER*, *happy* has also been shown to be both syntactically and morphologically conditioned in Manchester English. Previous research indicates that Manchester speakers produce a laxer variant of the *happy* vowel in phrase-final, word-final environment: *i#*.

Fewer Roma speakers produced lax variants for *happy* than *lettER*. Only 19% (n=5) of the 26 Roma speakers analysed produced over 50% of lax *i#* variants. Moreover, only 15% (n=4) of them neared the categorical laxing in word- and phrase-final position of the Manchester-born speakers. Two Roma speakers produced a lax *i#* 100% of the time, which was the same as their Manchester-born peers. In contrast to *er#*, none of the participants overtly commented on the lax Manchester *i#* variant. The reduced salience of the Manchester *happy* vowel could perhaps account for the lesser number of participants reproducing it. Although only a small number of participants replicated the Manchester variation, these results indicate that some Roma adolescents have acquired the constraints and can reproduce the patterns of variation of their locally-born peers.

### 8.1.3 GOOSE

The results of *lettER* and *happy* variables evidence that the Roma speakers can acquire local variation, including syntactic and morphological constraints. The *GOOSE* variable is phonetically conditioned in a number of environments, and the patterning could therefore be more complicated for the migrants to acquire than for the previous two vowels.

The Manchester speakers typically produced the GOOSE vowel around a peak of 2200 Hz. Research question 1 asks to what extent the Roma participants produce vocalic variants typical of their Manchester-born peers. The regression analysis results show that the mean peak F2 of those speakers with more open friendship networks was 2284 Hz, very close to that of the Manchester speakers. However, for GOOSE, the evidence of sociolinguistic competence acquisition lies in whether they adhere to the constraints operating on the variable. In previous research, a number of linguistic constraints have been shown to act upon GOOSE-fronting: GOOSE pre-coda //; following phonetic environment; and preceding phonetic environment.

GOOSE preceding coda // has been shown in most reports to have the strongest form of phonetic conditioning, with the coda // environment inhibiting GOOSE-fronting in most varieties of English. However, in my data, coda // was not found to significantly inhibit GOOSE-fronting for the Manchester-born speakers. This is in agreement with Baranowski & Turton's (2015) study. The results of analyses of my participants' speech also indicate that coda // does not inhibit a fronted production of GOOSE for the Roma speakers. The lack of inhibition by coda // on fronting of the GOOSE vowel could indicate that some Roma migrants are acquiring the local, Manchester GOOSE variant, rather than a supra local one which should be inhibited by //. This in turn could indicate that certain of the Roma adolescents are using this feature to express a local, as compared to a global, identity. Many of the female Roma in particular produce an extreme fronted GOOSE variant in pre-coda // environment. I come to a discussion of gender influence on Roma English variation in Section 8.2.2 below.

Aside from coda // environment, the next strongest conditioning factor on GOOSE has been found to be the preceding phonetic environment. Again, some of the Roma speakers patterned in the same way as the Manchester speakers: sonorant /l,r,w/ < non-coronal < coronal < palatal. Where those Roma did adhere to the same linguistic conditioning as the Manchester speakers, the patterning was shown to be statistically significant for both the Roma and local speakers, indicating again that Roma adolescents can acquire the local, linguistic constraints.

The final conditioning factor investigated for GOOSE was following phonetic environment. While the Manchester and those Roma with more open friendship networks patterned in correspondance with previous research (e.g. Holmes-Elliott, 2015), following phonetic environment was not shown to be a statistically significant factor. This could be a result of the linguistic conditioning of GOOSE-fronting weakening over time. I was able to confirm that a small number (n=4) of Roma speakers with open friendship network ties pattern for following phonetic environment in the same way as the Manchester adolescents who were analysed from Saltar High: sonorant < pause < consonant.

For all three conditioning linguistic factors for the GOOSE vowel, participants with the most open friendship networks matched the constraint ranking of the Manchester-born speakers. This suggests that, as for *letter* and *happy*, those Roma with the most open friendship networks have acquired the Manchester variation. Not all of the Roma adolescents do this. In fact, the speakers who do make up just under 25% of the population sampled here.

#### **8.1.4 Changes from above or below**

In Chapter 7, I discussed Labov's notions of change from above and change from below in relation to GOOSE-fronting. In order to determine whether a linguistic change comes from above or below, we must consider both a speaker's level of awareness of the feature and the source of the change. Contact-based changes from above, like rhoticisation in New York (Labov, 1966), originate from outside the immediate speech community. Changes from above are driven by social forces and demonstrate socioeconomic and stylistic stratification. Changes from below, on the other hand, originate and are driven by system internal pressures. Unlike changes from above, these changes operate below the level of consciousness and do not show the same socioeconomic or stylistic stratification.

A sociolinguistic model of SLA also accounts for changes from above and below. Changes from above typically occur in formal classroom settings and involve new forms that are explicitly learned. As in a monolingual context,

speakers typically possess an awareness of whether features are prestigious or stigmatized if the change come from above. Change from below, on the other hand, arise spontaneously and occur where new forms are implicitly internalised. Changes from below are typically acquired in informal social settings (Preston, 1989:143-4; Tarone, 2007:844).

The participants of this study are highly unlikely to be taught these Manchester English variants in the classroom, and this would suggest that the acquisition of these variants by my participants is a change from below. It is also possible that participants, especially those who are more self-aware and have more open friendship networks, such as Esma, are aware of the covert prestige that some of the features carry, and they could employ production of Manchester variants in order to establish an insider status. Although I did not ask my participants directly about their awareness of the features under examination here, only two participants overall commented on the salience of any of these variables (the letter vowel; see section 5.2). Further investigation is needed, but I would anticipate that the vast majority of my participants, apart perhaps from Esma, acquire the Manchester variants spontaneously, completely below the level of conscious awareness. Where acquisition occurs, it would therefore be classified as a change from below.

### **8.1.5 Summary: acquisition of variation for all three variables**

In summary, all three of the variables have been acquired by some Roma participants in a local manner. Across all variables analysed here, five of the 27 participants (18.5%) can be said to consistently produce patterns of variation comparable to the patterns of variation of their Manchester-born peers. Therefore, in answer to the first two research questions, the results from the analyses of this study indicate that Roma adolescents in Manchester can acquire vocalic variants and the underlying constraints operating on variation that are typical of their locally-born peers, but only a small number have done this. Where such systematisation of variables is acquired, this indicates the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence (Chapter 3 section 3.3.2).



The acquisition of sociolinguistic competence is desirable to many language learners because it can indicate ‘mastery’ of a language. While it would be inaccurate to assume that all migrants wish to master a new language, there are certain circumstances in which high levels of achievement in acquisition are required, such as for business or study. As I discussed in Chapter 2, global migration patterns are changing and our urban centres are becoming increasingly diverse, even superdiverse. Many migrants now must be able to communicate effectively in the language of the country to which they move. While some may be content to be merely understood, for others, full or close to full mastery of the new language is required. Those speakers must show that they have acquired the variable rules of that language. They must acquire sociolinguistic competence. If we can develop greater understanding as to why and how certain individuals acquire sociolinguistic competence in a new language when others do not, we can learn more about the process of language acquisition and help those who need to do it.

The findings of the current study reflect those of other SLA research. I have established that some speakers can and do acquire sociolinguistic competence in a new language, but this does not answer my final research question as to why some speakers acquire local variation in a new dialect and language but others do not.

## **8.2 Social factors impacting upon acquisition of variation**

What has been somewhat unclear in previous research is why some speakers acquire local variants while others do not. In pursuit of an answer, this section addresses the third and final research question:

3. Where there is acquisition, what social factors impact upon this acquisition?

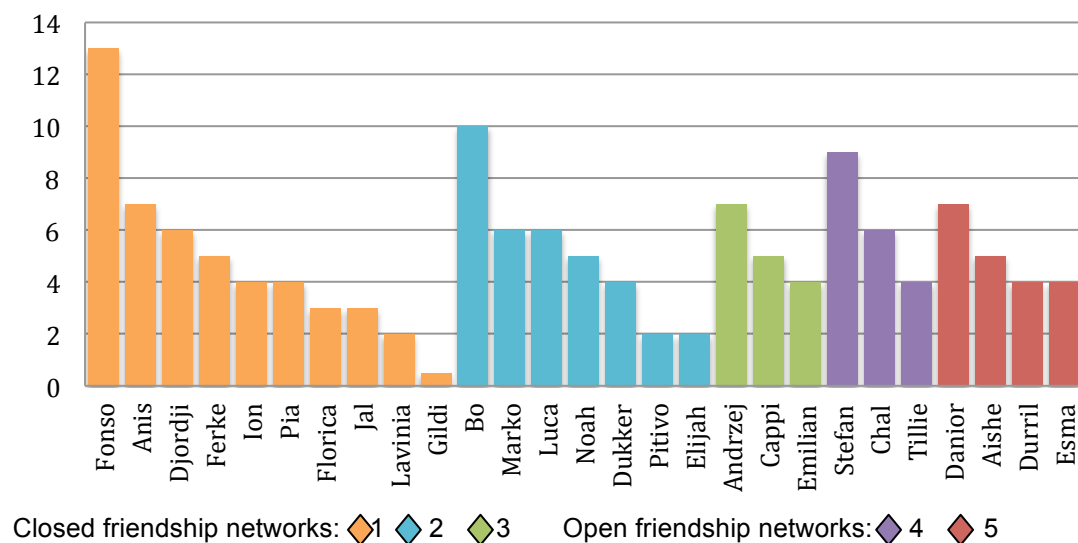
I begin this discussion with some of the factors that have been found to impact in previous research, but were not found to be significant here. One apparently obvious causal factor of increased acquisition is a low age of

arrival (AoA) and a long length of residence (LoR).

### 8.2.1 Age of arrival (AoA) and length of residence (LoR)

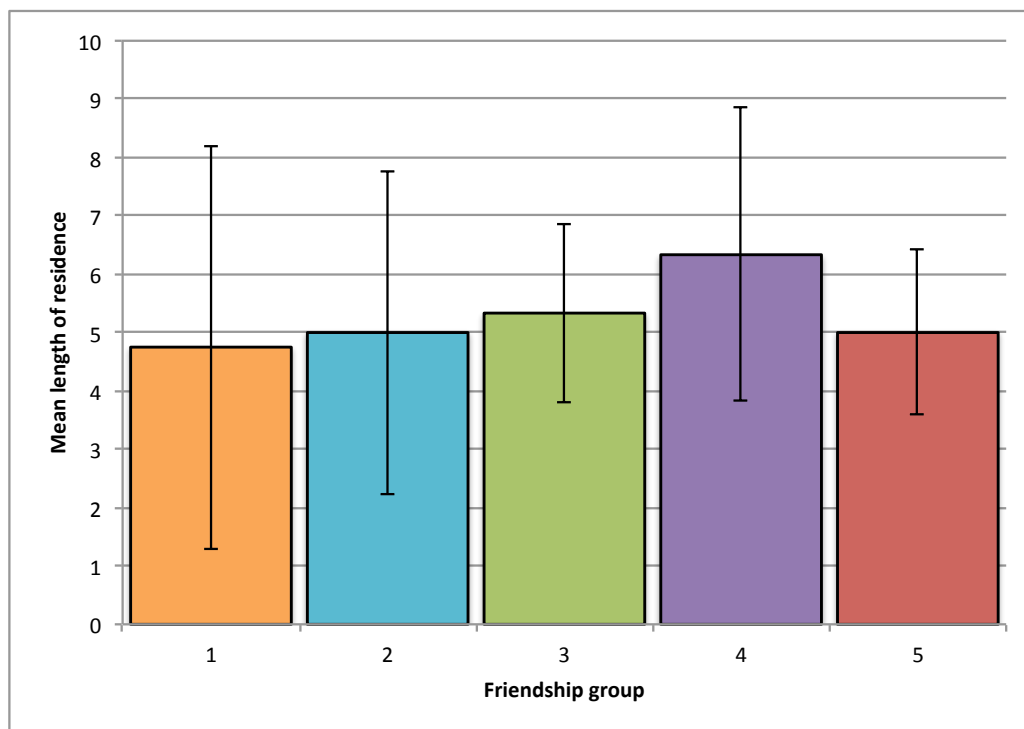
Because a low AoA seemed like it would be an obvious factor in increased vernacular acquisition, I was surprised that neither AoA nor LoR were shown to be significant for my data. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.5.3, existing dialect acquisition research provides a mixed picture as to the importance of AoA and LoR, with some speakers having low AoAs and long LoRs, but little or no evidence of the D2.

In the current data, the LoRs of the participants range from 0.5 years to 13 years, with a mean LoR of five years. The average LoR of around five years reflects the fact that most of the participants came to the UK approximately a year after Romania joined the EU in 2007. Figure 8.1 shows individual participants LoRs grouped by friendship group. The most closed network group, group 1 in orange on the left, has the most diverse range of LoRs, with the longest and shortest LoR of all the participants falling into this group. We might expect those who came much earlier to have more diverse and open friendship networks as a result of them being in the UK longer, but this is not the case. Fonso (LoR=13 years; friendship group 1) and Bo (LoR=10 years; friendship group 2) especially remind us that just living in a place for an amount of time, does not necessarily mean the development of local network ties, integration, or indeed dialect acquisition.



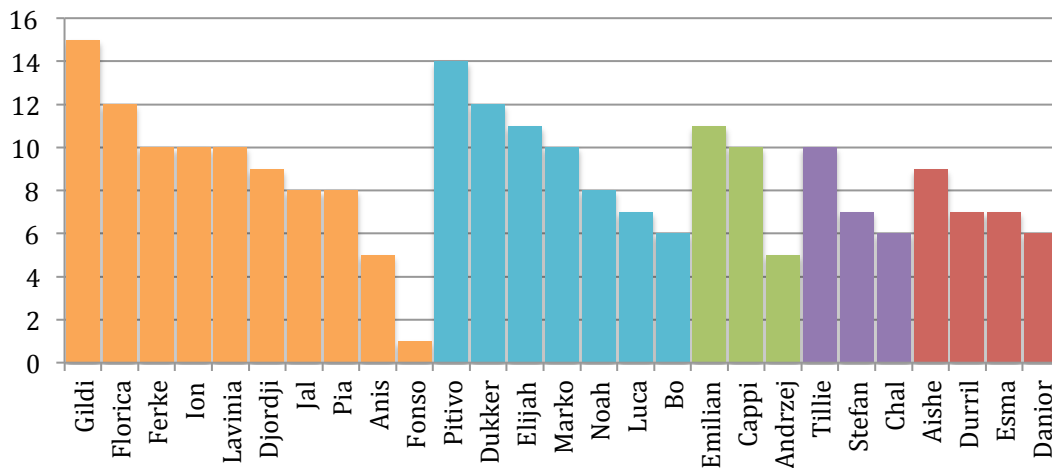
**Figure 8.1** Individuals' length of residence by friendship group

Figure 8.2 presents the mean LoR for each friendship group with the standard deviation (SD). Apart from friendship group 4, the mean LoRs are approximately the same across friendship group. Friendship group 1 has a large SD (3.45) because of the outliers, especially Fonso (LoR = 13 years) and Gildi (LoR = 0.5 years). While friendship group 4 has a slightly longer LoR, friendship group 5 has an LoR equal to friendship group 2 (5 years), but with the smallest SD (1.3) of all the friendship groups. Overall, there is no statistically significant trend in relation to LoR.



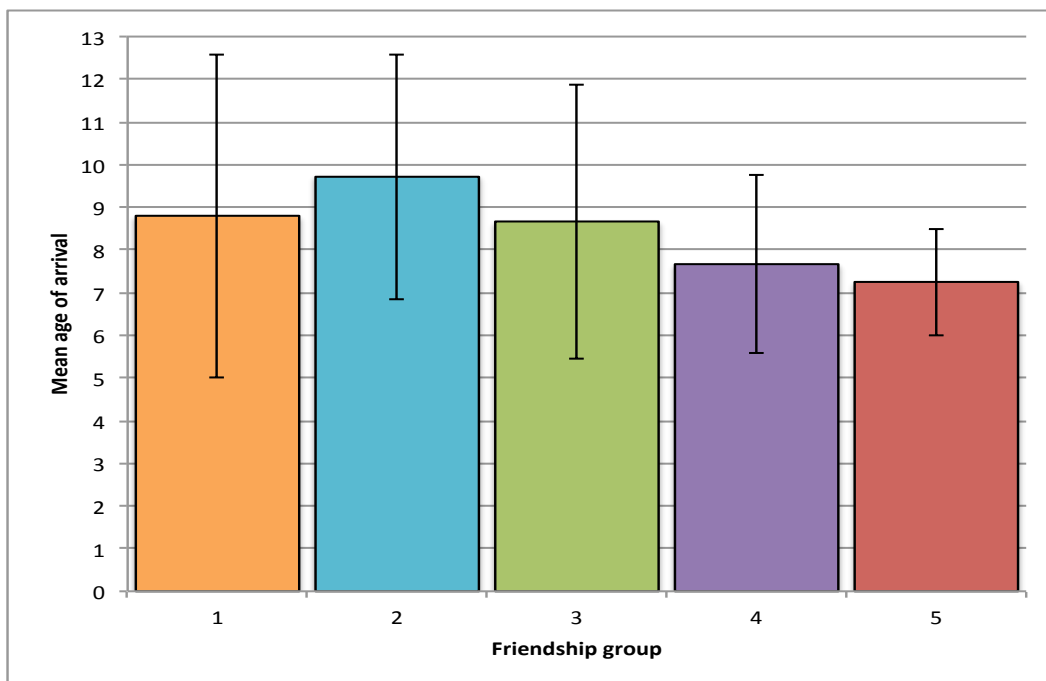
**Figure 8.2 Mean length of residence with Standard Deviation by friendship group**

On initial inspection, participants' AoAs appear to tell a similar story, as Figure 8.3 shows. As I explained in the results chapters, AoA was not a statistically significant factor for any of the variables considered here. The minimum AoA these participants is one year (Fonso) and the maximum is 15 years (Gildi) who are both in friendship group 1. While not being shown to have a significant influence on participants' production of local variants, we can see from Figure 8.3 that in general the Roma adolescents with the more open friendship networks (purple and red) appear to have slightly lower AoAs.



**Figure 8.3 Individuals' age of arrival by friendship group**

By plotting the mean AoAs and SD for each of the friendship groups, this general trend is confirmed, as Figure 8.4 below shows.



**Figure 8.4 Mean age of arrival by friendship group**

The closed network groups, 1-3, have mean AoAs of over 8.5 years, with group 2 spiking up to 9.7 years. The low mean AoA of group 1 is influenced by the very low AoA of one of the participants, Fonso (AoA=1 year), which can be seen in Figure 8.3. Speakers from the more open network groups, 4 and 5, have mean AoAs of 7.7 years and 7.25 years respectively,

and these two groups have the smallest SD indicating that most of the participants arrived at around the mean age. The trend is not statistically significant, but it would be interesting to see if, with a larger sample of speakers, this trend would be repeated and its effect become stronger. It certainly appears from Figure 8.4 that those Roma who arrived younger and had the opportunity to mix with non-Roma in primary school may have more diverse, open friendship networks by the time they reach high school.

According to Chambers (1992:689), for monolingual dialect acquisition, a person who moves to a new dialect area and begins acquisition under seven years of age 'will almost certainly acquire a new dialect perfectly' (see Chapter 3, section 3.5.3). The vast majority of the participants of this study came to the UK before the age of 13, so in general they should all be in a comparable position when it comes to this factor. With the results showing such a wide range of acquisition between speakers, there are clearly other influences acting upon acquisition and production that brain maturation alone cannot explain. It follows that the younger a child arrives in a new place, the more likely he or she is to be exposed to different groups and perhaps make friendships outside of their own immediate community through primary school experiences and exposure.

The long-term nature of my fieldwork and observation period gave me opportunity to investigate the lives of my participants in greater depth than some other methodologies might allow. I visited one of the main primary schools that feeds students into Saltar High and I was able to meet the Head of that primary. There was a key difference between the way in which Saltar High organised migrant newcomers when compared with that of the primary school I visited. At Saltar High, students were immediately segregated into the EAL or EAL core streams if their language skills were judged to not be up to a standard suitable for full mainstream class attendance. Whereas, in the primary school they did not have separate EAL classes or streams for any of their migrant students. For each primary year, all students in that year were taught together and support was given to students as they needed it, but as part of the class as a whole. This integrative approach in conjunction with the young age of the migrants may have contributed to them being able to form stronger bonds with a more diverse group of students which in turn leads to

greater vernacular acquisition. The primary school environment may provide the young migrants with a small community of sympathetic people who are able to provide support and help the new learner through a difficult integration period (see also Larsen & Smalley 1972:46 in Lybeck 2002:177).

Because ethnographic observation of social networks has rarely been addressed in new language acquisition research, there is sparse evidence to compare this result to in order to see whether AoA and the openness of social networks interact, but it would be useful to investigate this further. It also suggests that AoA may have more of an influence than LoR, as there was no clear trend in the LoR data.

Where speakers have a very low AoA and long LoR, but still exhibit little evidence of acquisition, other factors must be considered, and I return to a discussion of this later in this chapter. In the same way, where speakers have higher AoAs and shorter LoRs accompanied by high rates of acquisition, we must examine what other factors are at play. The only two participants who produced Manchester-like variation and arrived at an age older than the average 8.7 years were females: Aishe (AoA=9; friendship group 5) and Tillie (AoA=10; friendship group 4). I have discussed gender briefly where relevant for the results of individual variables. In the following section I discuss the relationship of gender and social networks across all the variables.

### 8.2.2 Gender

Previous research has found that variants that correlate with gender can be acquired and used appropriately and with agency by speakers in a new language (Drummond & Schlee, forthcoming). While gender was not found to be significant in the multivariate analyses of the variables considered here, there are still consistent patterns across all the variables that I turn to now.

For the *letter* vowel, the Roma females generally produce a slightly higher rate of lax variants than the male participants. This means that the variation of the Roma females is generally closer to that of the Manchester-born speakers than the Roma males. In their production of the *happy* variable, again the females consistently pattern closer to Manchester speakers

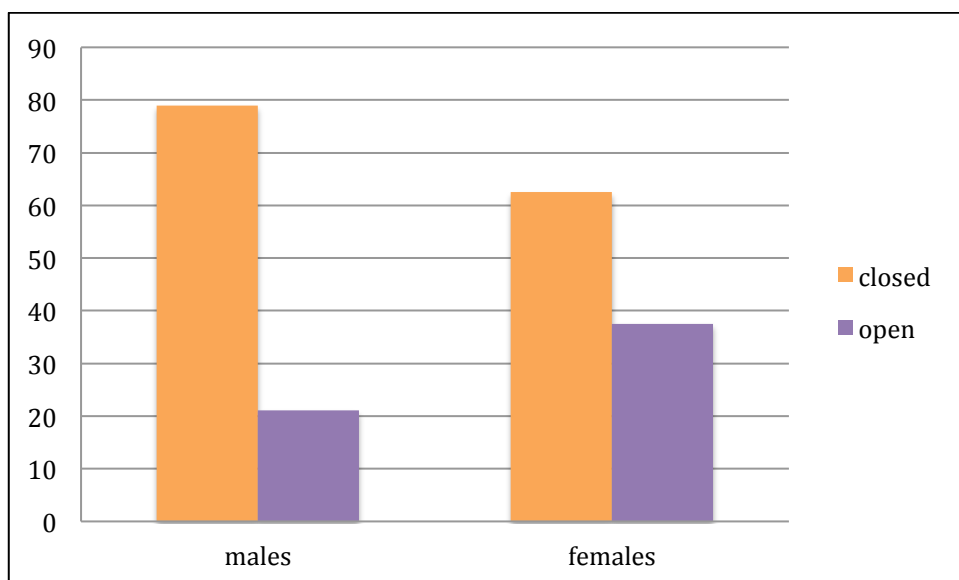
because they produce slightly more lax variants of *i#* than the male Roma participants.

For *lettER* and *happy*, from the small amount of monolingual phonetic research available on Manchester speech, I could not find any evidence that gender is a factor in lax production of phrase-final, word-final vowels. However, the third variable, GOOSE-fronting, is a change from below and production is often influenced by a speaker's gender. Labov's (2001:292) fourth principal of the social factors of linguistic change states that: in linguistic change from below, women use higher frequencies of innovative forms than men. Nevertheless, consistent gender patterning has not been found in previous research on GOOSE-fronting. Gender effects are often not significant or their effects may be overshadowed by those of the linguistic constraints (e.g. Hall-Lew, 2005). In addition, gender is often shown to interact with other factors, such as age (e.g. Flynn, 2012; Holmes-Elliott, 2015). Many studies showed that socially conditioned patterning for this variable is often better understood when considered in terms of locally meaningful social categories (e.g. Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992).

Results from the current study only show consistent gender patterning for GOOSE when the vowel occurs in pre-coda // environment. Gender also interacts with the openness of speakers' friendship networks, which is the only statistically significant social factor. For both males and females with more open friendship networks, coda // does not inhibit GOOSE-fronting and their peak F2s of GOOSE preceding coda // are very similar to GOOSE when followed by another consonant coda or a pause. The female speakers' F2 results were particularly consistent across all of the environments. In addition, both Manchester and Roma females lead in GOOSE-fronting for all environments. I put forward that this indicates that the participants of this study who have more open friendship networks are acquiring both the external, social and the specifically local, internal linguistic constraints for this variable.

For males with more closed friendship networks, GOOSE with a following // significantly inhibits fronting compared with any other consonant coda ( $p < .0001$ ) and when followed by a pause ( $p < .001$ ). This contrasts with the males with more open networks where fronting is not inhibited before pre-coda //. This could indicate that those males with more open friendship

networks are acquiring the local variant. In stark contrast, females with more closed networks have considerably higher median peak F2 production for coda // than the other environments, although the Bonferroni pairwise comparison does not show this to be significant. I explain this pattern as being an increased sensitivity, due to lesser numbers, of the female Roma to the Manchester patterns of GOOSE-fronting pre coda //. This occurs no matter what the makeup of the females' friendship networks are. The reduced numbers of female Roma compared to male Roma in the school community results in all the females having varying degrees of less dense and multiplex networks than the males. The females of the group are forced, due to circumstance, to spend more time with other non-Roma girls. Examples of this can be found in Physical Education classes which are separated by gender, resulting in the female Roma spending these classes in much more diverse groups than the male Roma, and in general classes, teachers quite frequently organise groups in class by gender, again forcing the female Roma to mix with non-Roma students more than the males. Reduced numbers also mean that at times if a Roma girl wants another girl to talk to, the only females available may be non-Roma. Roma girls are by default already mixing more with non-Roma students than the boys. This spills out into their wider social networks ties as meaningful friendships are formed.



**Figure 8.5 Proportion (%) of males/females with closed/open friendship networks**



Figure 8.5 shows that the proportion of female Roma participants with open friendship networks is 38% compared with only 21% of the males with open friendship networks. 79% of male Roma participants have closed networks, compared with 62% of the females. This gives the female participants greater opportunity for contact and input with non-Roma students which, in turn, increases their exposure to, and acquisition of, the vernacular variants. Figure 8.5 above demonstrates that there is an interaction between language, gender and social network in my data, a relationship which has also been observed in previous research (e.g. 1999; Dubois & Horvath, 1998) This leads me onto my discussion of the only social factor that was found to be statistically significant across all three variables analysed here: friendship network.

### **8.2.3 Friendship**

Friendship network is the only social factor found to be significant for all three vocalic variables. Very few studies have examined the influence of social networks on new language dialect acquisition using the ethnographic methods of enquiry that are best suited to an investigation of this kind. The observations of the current study again illuminate the issues of unreliability that can be encountered with self-report data and demonstrate the importance of using a mixed methods approach when investigating social networks. Previous research has provided valuable insights, including those studies that gave initial indication that social networks were a key factor in migrants' acquisition of the vernacular (e.g. Schleef et al. 2011; Drummond 2010). However, in order to gain deeper understanding, more fine-grained investigations are needed moving forwards.

In the following section, I develop my discussion of why social networks are so important both in the current study and for avenues of future research.

## **8.3 The importance of social networks**

The clearest patterns of participants' variation could be visualised by organising the data according to speakers' friendship networks. These visible

patterns were confirmed by the statistical analyses. We have already seen in Section 8.2.2 that friendship network interacts with gender in the current study, with females being more likely to have open networks than males, possibly as a result of their lesser numbers in the Roma school community. Section 8.2.1 described how AoA also interacts with friendship because, on average, participants with more open friendship networks tend to have lower AoAs. This shows how important it is that multiple factors are considered and why sociolinguistic methods and multivariate analyses that can cope with multiple variables are vital to further understanding of SLA.

On paper, the participants of this study are highly homogeneous, for example in social background (they are all Romanian Roma migrants) and age (they are all between 11 and 16 years old). However, as we've seen, there is a large amount of individual variation and differing patterns of language use, even among members of the same family. Although AoA and gender demonstrated some patterning that related to linguistic production, they were not statistically significant. Participants' friendship network is the only factor that was statistically significant across all the variables examined here. As discussed in Chapter 3, network membership can account for individual variation where many of the more macro social categories could not.

Even when variables of age and gender are held constant, the closer an individual's network ties are with the non-Roma community, the closer his language approximates to Manchester vernacular norms. Conversely, close-knit ties to the Roma community appear to help to support solidarity and adherence to Roma culture and values. This results in less acquisition of local vernacular variants. This could be seen as an important mechanism in language maintenance for the Roma community in Manchester (I return to this below).

As well as accounting for variation where macro social categories may not be able to, the use of the social network concepts of multiplexity and density can, to a certain extent, subsume other, less easily measurable variables Milroy (1987:140). The following section sets out some of the factors which, although not directly measured in the current study, may be accounted for within social networks.

### 8.3.1 Social networks and context of acquisition, contact, and input

As outlined in Chapter 3, context of acquisition, amount of contact with native speakers, and the quality of the linguistic input received are factors that are all linked and have been found to be important in the acquisition of type 2 variation and sociolinguistic competence. Previous research indicates that there is a cline of gains in sociolinguistic competence related to the context of acquisition, with naturalistic contexts resulting in the most acquisition and classroom study the least:

Regular classroom < Immersion < Study abroad < Naturalistic context  
(Regan et al. 2009; Howard et al. 2013)

Acquisition in the current study takes place in a naturalistic context and this is the same for all of the participants. What changes is the amount of contact, and therefore input, that different participants have with speakers from outside of the Roma community. While I do not have a complete picture of what input each participant receives, I gathered a lot of information about this over the course of my ethnography. At this stage, I must rely on participants' self-report data because I was not able to observe them outside of school times. I use these data on the understanding that the information may not be entirely accurate, but they do allow me to build some picture of what input different participants may be subject to. At home, all of the participants speak Romani with their families. A number of the participants reported seeing non-Roma students outside of school hours, but very few reported interacting with non-Roma outside of school. Those who told me that they speak to non-Roma friends outside of school are all in either friendship network group 4 or 5. In school, most members of staff are local, Anglo Manchester English speakers. The other students in school speak either Anglo Manchester English or produce features of Multicultural Manchester English. Those students who are not from Manchester use English as a Lingua Franca.

The fact that those speakers with more open friendship networks reported that they interact with non-Roma students outside of school hours indicates that they may have more contact with Manchester speakers and

therefore more vernacular input than those Roma with more closed networks. However, on closer examination, only one of my participants, Esma, had a best friend who was English. She also had a Polish best friend, and they were part of a very multicultural and diverse friendship group of which Esma was very proud. It could also be that by having more open friendship networks, those speakers do have increased contact with Manchester-born speakers. Of course not every member of their friendship group needs to be from Manchester in order for this to be the case. Stefan, Esma's brother who is in friendship network group 4, had Manchester-born girlfriends, but his closest male friends were Roma. Participants in the most open of the friendship groups, group five, all had best friends who were not Roma, but Esma was the only one with an English best friend. Table 8.1 shows a breakdown of the participants with the most open networks, those speakers in friendship group 5.

**Table 8.1 Breakdown of individuals in friendship group 5**

Description of friendship group; number of participants	Participant name	Gender	School year group (yr7/10/11)	Nationality of key friends <b>if not Roma</b>
80% mixed: best friend(s) and many members of primary f'ship gp are not Roma n = 4	Esma	Female	year 7	best friends Polish and English
	Danior	Male	year 7	best friend Czech
	Durril	Male	year 7	best friend Russian
	Aishe	female	year 10	best friends Polish and Czech

As discussed previously, the amount of exposure and contact a speaker has with the new language can be very difficult to measure. Drummond (2013:69) suggests that this is because this must always involve an element of self-assessment on the part of the individual that frequently leads to inconsistency and inaccuracy as a result of social desirability bias. While this is true in studies that rely on sociolinguistic interviews alone, the current study demonstrates that ethnography can provide us with an

alternative to the self-report data that has traditionally been used. However, it must also be remembered that even as an ethnographer, I have only seen my participants in the school context. While I can claim to have a greater level of ethnographic detail than those studies involving sociolinguistic interviews alone, my data and results are also restricted somewhat because I cannot see what my participants do outside of school.

One way of assessing the level of contact participants have with other speakers is through an examination of their social networks, as done here. Many previous SLA studies have only considered speakers' contact with other native English speakers to be important (e.g. Drummond, 2010; Schlee et al., 2011). However, the results of the current study, in line with the findings of Durham (2014), indicate that using the new language, even in a lingua franca setting, can lead to increased local dialect variants being acquired in the new language.

Durham's (2014) study presents the first examination of sociolinguistic competence and the acquisition of native-like variability in an English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) context. She analyses a range of linguistic variables (future tense, relative pronoun choice, complementiser use and adverbial placement) in ELF data from the email exchanges of Swiss speakers (with German, French and Italian mother tongues). Durham found that the Swiss ELF users acquired patterns of variation comparable to native speakers and concludes that ELF provides opportunities for the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence on a par with year abroad learners (Durham 2014:153). Just as in the current study, the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence does not occur just through contact with native speakers. It appears that for some speakers, regular language use can contribute in itself to production of vernacular variation. This is especially the case when the language is used for a range of functions, including those of the social kind which are generally not found in a classroom (Durham 2014:153).

Durham's (2014:153-4) analysis highlighted that ELF speakers often have a greater level of linguistic and cultural sensitivity towards others, and that this sensitivity may lead to an enhanced ability to match the linguistic patterns of others. It is therefore possible that more naturalistic contexts of use, including those found in lingua franca and year-abroad contexts, could

lead to increased sociolinguistic competence. Durham (2014:153) compares her findings to those of Regan et al. (2009), who found that the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence was most likely to occur outside of the classroom environment. By just having the opportunity to use language outside of the classroom, native language patterns increased. While it is also likely that participants in the current study with more open networks had more contact with, and input from, native speakers, the findings of the current study in conjunction with Durham (2014) indicate that it is not necessarily only with native speakers that acquisition occurs.

Sociolinguistic competence can be acquired in lingua franca contexts. 'The regular use of a language contributes in itself to native-like patterns of use, especially when it is used for a range of functions including those of the social kind which are generally not found in a classroom.' (Durham 2014:153). I return to the potential importance of such findings in the final chapter where I draw my conclusions.

### **8.3.2 Social networks and attitude**

In studies of migrants' language use, attitudes towards the place they have moved to, the norms and ideologies of the host culture, and the local variety have been identified as an important factor influencing the acquisition of variation (Drummond & Schlee, forthcoming). For example, in his study of Polish migrants living in Manchester, Drummond (2013:82) found that the effect of positive attitude increased when LoR was higher and vice versa. In turn, the more positive a speaker's attitude toward Manchester, the more likely he or she was to use local variants.

Of course, not all speakers will follow this pattern. An example in the current study is Fonso. Figure 8.3 above showed that Fonso had a LoR of 13 years, the longest of all the participants. Given this long LoR, it could be reasonable to assume that he would be highly integrated into the local community, have a very positive attitude toward Manchester, and produce a number of the local variants. This is not the case. As a result of a number of difficult experiences, Fonso has quite a negative attitude to English people, and he produces no identifiable Manchester-influenced patterns of variation

for the variables examined here. Attitude and integration can be difficult to measure, but Fonso is an excellent example of how well social network structure can also incorporate features of attitude and integration. Fonso falls into friendship network group 1, the speakers with the most closed of all the friendship network ties. His membership in the most closed friendship network group reflects his centrality to the Roma group and lack of integration into the local community, which could in part be a result of his negative attitude toward English people because of his bad experiences. I return to a more detailed discussion of Fonso's case study in section 8.4 below.

Previous research has shown that closed, dense, close-knit social network structures function within communities as important mechanisms of vernacular language maintenance, with the capacity to resist the social pressures associated with the standard language (e.g. Milroy 1987). My results reflect a very similar situation, but reflecting the complexity of the SLA context. In my study, dense, close-knit Roma networks function as mechanisms that inhibit and resist the social pressures of the acquisition of vernacular English variants. Conversely, more open friendship networks, characterized by lower density and increased uniplexity of ties that reach outside the Roma community, function as mechanisms that provide greater opportunity for local dialect acquisition. The maintenance of Roma community ties could therefore be seen as a powerful motivator for maintenance of the Romani language and culture. Moving outside of the Roma group and developing uniplex ties with non-Roma could be seen by some in the community as a threat to Roma identity, especially in light of examples such as Esma. Esma had the most open networks of all my participants, and she appears at points to explicitly reject or resist her Roma identity.

### **8.3.3 Social networks and identity**

[T]he attitude an individual has toward the target culture helps in the construction of identity in relation to that culture. A positive attitude suggests a willingness to be part of the target culture, whereas a negative attitude suggests a desire to remain separate.

(Drummond 2013:89)

Language and identity are inextricably intertwined. When migrants arrive in the UK for the first time, with little or no knowledge of English, their identity is tightly bound to their own language. While most of the migrants studied in previous SLA research would have had some knowledge and exposure to the new language, it is important to be reminded that the Roma participants of the current study typically would have had much less or even no experience and exposure to English at all before coming to the UK. For the adolescents in this study, establishing new social networks and finding a place and a voice in their new settings is part of the linguistic and therefore social identity work which must be done (Miller, 2003:2). Even if they arrive in a large group or move into an already established Roma community, they have to learn to survive in the school environment. Learning and speaking English is a vital part of this process.

Discourse patterns are some of the strongest expressions that we have of our social identities (Gee, 2015). We constantly shift our identities, and we use linguistic variation to express solidarity with and claim membership of different groups (Miller 2003:43). For the participants in this study, school life revolves around the everyday project of establishing a social identity, and peer groups play a vital role, as havens of emotional support. 'The peer network isn't just the place where you reinforce your image or where you communicate. It is a social structure which is integral to self construction' (Wexler, Crichlow, Kern, & Matusiewicz, 2005:134). For migrants, peer groups often take on a particular self-affirmatory significance (Miller 2003:127). All of the participants of this study (as well as the other migrants I observed in school) associated socially according to heritage (Ryan, 1997:40), and many of the participants only associated with other Roma. However, some, such as Esma, had more open friendship networks. These speakers still associated according to heritage, but they were also able to move fluidly between their heritage group and others.

In order to focus in on the lives of the participants in my study and to further understand the social identities being performed by them and the role that the variables examined in this study play in those identity performances, I now present a number of case studies. I have decided to present the case studies of two pairs of participants. This is to demonstrate how the similarities



and, often more importantly, the differences in experiences and attitudes can be indexed in the identities of individuals who on paper could look remarkably similar.

## **8.4 Case studies**

### **8.4.1 Fonso and Aishe**

I have chosen to pair Aishe and Fonso because they were both 14 years old at the time of my recording them and they were both in year 10, and yet, their friendship networks and language production are at very different points of the scale. Aishe is female and Fonso is male. They are a clear example of the gender differences experienced by this particular group. Also Fonso is an extreme case which serves to remind us that the amount of time spent in a place alone is not sufficient for acquisition; there are multiple factors at play.

#### **8.4.1.1 Fonso**

Fonso arrived in the UK at the age of one and has the longest LoR of all the participants, 13 years. Despite this, the makeup of his social networks placed him in friendship group 1, the most closed of all the groups. I only ever saw him with other Roma, usually boys, outside of class. A number of the Roma males he hung around with were also his cousins and neighbours. When he arrived in school and left after school he was always with a Roma-only group around him. Fonso's family arrived in the UK in 2000, seven years before Romania joined the EU and eight years before most of the participants of this study came over. This would mean that he would have been one of only a very small number of Romanian Roma migrant families living in the UK at that time. His family spent two years in Leeds before they moved to Liverpool where they spent another three to four years. They finally moved to Manchester when he was about seven. His English was relatively fluent, he could speak well and would often translate for others, but his pronunciation had very few Manchester features. I would never have guessed that he had been living in the north of England since he was one year old.

Aishe's friendship networks placed her in friendship group 5, the most open of all the groups. And yet her AoA is much higher than Fonso's and higher than the average for the group at nine years of age, which makes her LoR five years, much lower than that of Fonso. Aishe's friendship group was diverse, made up mostly of Poles, Czech and English students. Her best friend when I started my fieldwork was a Czech Roma girl, but while I was there, they fell out and she subsequently became best friends with a Polish student. She also named an English girl as one of her closest friends. She had much more opportunity for language contact and input from non-Roma speakers than Fonso, both from her Manchester friends and her Polish or Czech friends who used ELF. The makeup of their friendship networks is a reflection of there being more Roma males than females. Aishe's friendship network is prototypically female for this group in that it is more open, with less dense and more uniplex ties, whereas Fonso's is typical of the Roma males: more closed; dense and multiplex.

Fonso's attitudes and his identity seemed to be very much tied into being Roma. He placed high value on his relationships within the Roma community. He talked about the support that he and his family received from relatives and other members of the Roma community. Both he and his cousins spoke about how when there are problems or issues with members of the local community, they gather all their families together in order deal with the situation. There is a very high level of solidarity and support within the local Roma community. Fonso seemed to avoid opportunities to interact with non-Roma students. When assigned to mixed groups in the classroom, he would often prefer to talk and joke with other Roma students outside of the group he'd been assigned to. He talked openly about issues of racism that he had experienced in the UK, especially in Liverpool as he describes in extract 8.1 below from a recording with Fonso, Djordji, another year 10 Roma male, and Freddie, a year 10 male from Kenya.

#### **Extract 8.1**

- 1 Djordji: you know
- 2 you know which one is the racist one

3                    Liverpool  
4     Fonso:    oh Liverpool  
5                    you know  
6     Djordji:   racist  
7     Fonso:    we been like once  
8     Djordji:   to church  
9     Fonso:    yeah yeah  
10                  so I was going there in Liverpool  
11                  and it was some kids  
12                  and they went to like to (.)  
13                  because there was Roma there  
14                  so they want to want to like to bang them (('bang' = fight))  
15                  so I was saying 'why you wanna fight' (.)  
16                  they all was just throwing stones and all that  
17                  but I didn't want to fight them  
18                  because you will (.) mess up all their church and then (.)  
19                  all them gonna go out so  
20                  it was no point so I just stayed there  
21     Gerry:    so you think it's really racist in Liverpool

Djordji brings up the fact that he thinks Liverpool is a racist city (line 2), which spurs Fonso on to tell me two separate incidents which he presents to me as 'racist' in Liverpool. Fonso immediately sets up an 'us and them' situation through his language in lines 13 and 14. The 'us': 'there was Roma there' and the 'them' who are the 'kids' from Liverpool: 'they want to bang them'. He begins to craft a difference and a sense of 'Roma' and 'other' between the two groups. He reinforces this sense of difference in line 18 when he describes the church as 'their church'; it is not his space and perhaps he feels unwelcome there.

This story may also tell us something of Fonso's attitude to religion and the church because he tells us that he didn't want to fight them 'because you will mess up all their church' (line 18). Here he appears to display a respect for the church which the local community is not showing. He told me on another occasion that now his dad is a reformed Christian, having followed a

life of crime and been 'a bad person' in the past. Fonso himself juxtaposed the two notions of being either a Christian or a bad person – in his mind it appears that someone cannot be both.

The next extract follows on directly from the last:

**Extract 8.2**

- 21 Gerry: so you think it's really racist in Liverpool  
 22 Fonso: yeah:  
 23 pfffff  
 24 I don't know why  
 25 same as scrap metal  
 26 I been there with my dad  
 27 you know s- er sunday miss  
 28 er every saturday  
 29 I'd go with my dad (.)  
 30 Gerry: right  
 31 Fonso: I'd I'd work  
 32 I'm helping him  
 33 because he's doing scrap metal (.)  
 34 so (..)  
 35 ((gestures to Djordji)) he's doing as well (.)  
 36 so I: go in you know in Liverpool (.)  
 37 and: people start to filming  
 38 people was recording  
 39 you know filming  
 40 they say 'go go  
 41 go home  
 42 go now'

This second story gives us further insight into Fonso's life. In line 21, he starts talking about scrap metal. Scrap metal collection is a stereotypical trade often ascribed to the Romanies. The stereotype was common knowledge in school and can be highly stigmatised by local communities. Roma students would joke with each other about being scrap metal men when they were

older, and the term was at times used perjoratively by non-Roma students toward the Roma to provoke aggression. Fonso assumes or acknowledges this shared understanding with the two Gadge or non-Roma in the conversation, Freddie and myself. Fonso's dad collects scrap metal for a living, and sons often help their male relatives with this at weekends and during the school holidays. Without stating it explicitly as he did in the first story: 'there was Roma there' (line 13), in the second story, Fonso implicitly enacts a Roma identity by aligning himself with a practice that is associated with a stereotypical Roma identity: 'same as scrap metal I been there with my dad' (lines 25-6).

Fonso hesitates as he starts to tell me the story. He seems to become aware that both Freddie and I are listening, Gadge, who might perhaps judge him for his dad being in the scrap metal business. He interrupts the story by gesturing at Djordji and including him to show that he also helps his dad in the trade: 'he's doing as well' (line 35), aligning his friend Djordji with himself, scrap metal, and therefore a Roma identity.

He brings the story back to the original point, that of the racism that he experienced in Liverpool. He tells me (line 37) that people started filming him and said 'Go, go. Go home. Go now.' (lines 40-2). In this section, Fonso appears to attribute the filming and being unwelcome and told to go back to Romania to the fact that he and his father were doing the scrap metal collection, an activity which is closely associated with the Roma identity. Again there is a sense of 'us', his Roma identity, and 'them' the people of Liverpool, and he feels unwelcome, with it being made clear that that place, Liverpool, is not his home because he is told to 'go home'.

Fonso's case study, with his very young AoA and long LoR, reflects the fact that just living in a country from a young age and for a long period of time does not automatically lead to integration or dialect acquisition. Fonso's attitudes and experiences are all reflected in his very closed, dense, multiplex Roma social network ties, as well as his lack of acquisition of vernacular English dialect variants. In contrast, I now turn to the case study of Aishe, another year 10 student.

### 8.4.1.2 Aishe

Aishe came to the UK at nine years of age and did not have the opportunity to go to primary school and be fully integrated in mainstream classes from such a young age as Fonso. Yet within five years, she is in full mainstream classes at Saltar High and has a diverse, open friendship network. Aishe's best friends were Polish and a Czech Roma girl, but she was also well integrated among the Manchester-born students. Of the older cohort from Year 10 and Year 11, she was the participant who had the most diverse, multi-ethnic friendship network and the most local variants of the variables studied here.

Her Czech Roma friend exhibited a lot of Manchester variation, and, to the untrained ear, it would be difficult to identify the fact that she was not born in the area. It is possible that Aishe's acquisition of some Manchester variation was as a result of this close relationship and their use of ELF. Aishe's variation between word-internal letter and er# was the greatest of all the participants by some distance. She also used a lax i# variant categorically, the same as the Manchester-born speakers, and Aishe produced the most fronted goose variants of the older cohort.

In conversations, Aishe came across as quite a romantic at heart. In contrast, it seemed that her sister, Tillie in Year 11, put forward a tougher, more aggressive identity. Aishe went giggly over boys and she loved romantic films, her favourite of which was Titanic. While she aligned to a certain extent with non-Roma practices in listening to the popular Western music of Chris Brown, Nikki Minaj and Shakira, she also showed a fluidity in her identity because she also loved the romantic lyrics and stories of the Romanian music, aligning here more with a Roma identity and her Roma peers.

With regard to relationships, Aishe made a very clear distinction in one conversation with me between Roma boys and non-Roma boys. Prior to this conversation she was going out with a Roma boy, but in the extract from my fieldnotes below, she rejects the more traditional Roma notion of marrying within the Roma community:

I ask Aishe and [friend] about boyfriends. Aishe says that she just split up with her Romanian Roma boyfriend. I ask if they would ever go out with

an English boy and [friend] says 'no'. When I ask why not she says 'cos they want only one thing'. But then Aishe disagrees and says she doesn't think they only want one thing. [Friend] starts teasing her about the fact that she fancies [names two of the Manchester-born boys in her class]. Aishe then explains to me that she doesn't want to marry a Roma boy and when I ask her why not, [friend] says 'cos they're beating on girls'. A quite heated exchange ensues where they argue about why they don't like Roma boys. Aishe ends by repeating that she doesn't want to marry a Roma boy, but won't really give me any further information on why.

In this extract, Aishe appears to be distinguishing how attractive boys are to her based on their ethnicity. She performs 'Roma boys' as being romantically unattractive. She does not draw attention to the fact that she is Roma, and will not give me information as to why she doesn't find them attractive. In not performing a more traditional Roma identity of marrying within the Roma community, it could be argued that she is performing a more non-Roma identity to me here.

Just as Fonso showed us that having a young AoA or long LoR does not necessarily lead to vernacular acquisition, Aishe exemplifies that fact that other factors can override a shorter LoR and lead to increased integration and language acquisition, and social networks are a reliable indicator of that. When Aishe arrived, she was one of a large group of Roma, but of that group, there were fewer girls than boys. It is possible that this motivated her to make female friends from outside of the Roma school group who were also migrants in a similar position to her. Using her English as a lingua franca, especially with her closest friend who had a lot of local features and was very well integrated into the Manchester networks, meant that she had contact, input, and opportunity for vernacular acquisition.

Unfortunately, Aishe's family left Manchester before the end of my fieldwork period, so I did not get to spend as much time with her as most of my other participants. She told me that she had aspirations to go to college and get a good job. The experience of conducting ethnographic fieldwork is strange. I developed relationships with my participants and I care for them all. Having come to the end of my research, I have now lost touch with my

participants, including Aishe, but I sincerely hope that she was able to fulfill her aims.

### 8.4.2 Anis and Esma

Esma and Anis were both Year 7 females aged 11 and 12 respectively at the time of recording. I have chosen to present this pair as case studies because, unlike Fonso and Aishe above, Esma and Anis have relatively similar AoAs and LoRs, and yet their social networks and language production are very different. Anis came to Manchester when she was five years old, giving her a LoR of seven years. Esma was a little older when she arrived at seven years which means she has a LoR of four years.

Anis and Esma also share family ties. They told me that Anis' father and Esma's mother are cousins, and so the two girls also call themselves cousins.<sup>16</sup> Anis' family came over before Esma's. Anis attended the same feeder primary school that I discussed in Section 8.2.1 from Year 2, aged six years old. Anis told me how she remembered Esma coming to primary school in Year 4 when Esma was eight years old. Based on this information and given that Anis arrived earlier, we might assume that she would have the more open social networks, but this is not the case. The nature of Anis' friendship ties placed her in the most closed friendship group, group 1. Anis told me that Esma was her best friend, but notably, Esma named a Polish and another English student as her best friends, rather than Anis. Esma's non-Roma best friends, along with her diverse wider friendship group and the weak or low-density, uniplex nature of her social ties put Esma in the most open friendship group, group 5. This really demonstrates the effectiveness of the social network concept in making distinctions between individuals that may otherwise seem quite similar.

With regard to clothing, hair and jewellery, Anis appeared to me to be typically Roma. She always wore her long dark hair in a ponytail, she often wore flowers and clips in her hair, she wore earrings and sometimes had bangles on her arm, often under her school jumper in class times where she

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<sup>16</sup> Recall footnote regarding Roma use of the term *cousin* in Chapter 4 Section 4.3.2.



could keep them away from teachers' eyes. Esma also wore what jewellery she could get away with, but, rather than dangly earrings, she would wear studs. Her school blazer sported a large number of metal pin badges which were presented to students in school assemblies for good attendance and behavior. Esma told me that her mum didn't let her have her hair down in school 'cos you might get nit' (nits). Rather than wearing her long dark hair in a plait, ponytail, or tied up in a loose bun like a few of the other Roma girls did occasionally, Esma chose to put her hair high up on her head in a large neat bun, using a foam ring to shape the bun; this was a style which was very fashionable among the local, Manchester and non-Roma girls. Esma's appearance was always very neat and tidy.

Esma really liked school. One of her primary school teachers told me that, despite arriving later than other students, Esma was highly motivated and made very quick progress, especially with her spoken English. In more traditional Roma culture, women would usually stay in the home to look after children, rather than having a job. Extract 8.3 details the girls' responses when I ask them what they would like to do as a job.

### Extract 8.3

- 1 Gerry: so what would you like to do in the future  
 2 like for a job  
 3 Esma: I wanna be a teacher  
 4 Gerry: do you  
 5 Esma: yeah  
 6 Gerry: what would you like to teach  
 7 Esma: I wanna teach erm (.) maths  
 8 er (.) music  
 9 er (.) art (.)  
 10 and English  
 11 Gerry: wow (.)  
 12 what about you (*looking at Anis*)  
 13 Anis: (*suck-teeth*) teacher  
 14 Gerry: ↑yeah

15 Esma: I t- I always tell miss ((*name removed*)) I wanna be a teacher  
 16 every day

This part of the conversation starts with Esma's very quick, eager, definite response: 'I wanna be a teacher' (line 3) and she has lots of idea about what subjects she would like to teach in lines 7 to 10.

Anis' response appears to be the same, and from this passage alone it would be fair to assume that both girls were in similar minds when it comes to their preferred career paths. However, in line 13, Anis very loudly sucked her teeth. As I explained in chapter 6, suck-teeth is typically an expression of disapproval, frustration or impatience (Alim, 2004) that many of the female Roma participants produced. While Anis is outwardly performing a more mainstream non-Roma identity to me that possibly she thinks I will approve of, the suck-teeth feature is more in line to what I had discovered about Anis in the course of my ethnography and yet another piece of evidence of the way in which self-report data may be subject to self-desirability bias (see Chapter 4).

Throughout the course of my ethnography, Anis seemed to be very much a more traditional Roma girl. Her appearance as described above, her interests, film and music tastes, and her friendship ties were all strongly aligned with those of the Roma community. In conversation with her primary school teacher, I had been told that Anis was rather unmotivated in school and not integrated, despite having been attending since Year 2. The teacher also informed me that from what she knew of Anis, all Anis seemed to want in life was to follow the more traditional Roma route by becoming a housewife and having children.

Although other interpretations are possible, I would argue that through my ethnography, I am aware of Anis' more Roma-oriented identity. In the above extract she shifts her identity, by performing a more mainstream identity that perhaps she believes is more acceptable to what I may represent to her: the dominant ideology. But the sucking of her teeth is a paralinguistic feature that reveals her underlying feelings. Anis follows the loud suck-teeth, a demonstration of her disapproval of my line of questioning, with a very short, dismissive, one-word answer 'teacher' (line 13).

It is possible that she gave me this answer because it was the same answer that Esma gave and I had responded very positively to that: 'wow' (line 11), without thinking about the effect my response might have on Anis. My upward inflection on 'yeah' in line 14 was meant to encourage further response from her, but instead Esma cannot wait to come back into the conversation. Esma may well know that Anis does not really want to be a teacher, and it is possible that Esma wants to make the point that she truly wants to be a teacher which is demonstrated because she *always* told her previous teacher: 'I *always* tell miss I want to be a teacher every day' (line 15). In this utterance, Esma uses two emphasisers, *always* and *every*, and she adds an emphatic stress to the *always*.

Of all of the participants of this study, Esma was the one student who I felt was really performing the least Roma identity and trying to construct something different that was not necessarily a Manchester or Anglo identity, but just an identity that was non-Roma. I wrote in Chapter 6, section 6.6.2.4 about Esma and her claim that her family only spoke Romani at home because her mum liked it, which I know to be untrue. What I felt when Esma denied her Roma heritage is that she seemed to be torn between having to choose a Roma or a non-Roma, Romanian identity, and she chose to go with her non-Roma one.

Perhaps, like many people, Esma assumes that only one identity element can be claimed at a time, and people can often feel torn between different identities (Norris, 2007:657). The perception of being torn between two or more identity elements is not exclusive to national or ethnic identity construction. A person can be torn between a new 'divorcee identity element' or a 'mother identity element' (Norris 2007:657), and during the course of my fieldwork I was at time torn between my identities as a 'participant' or an 'observer', and as a Graduate Teaching Assistant I was at times unsure of the boundaries between my 'student' or 'teacher' or 'researcher' identities. Of course I was all of those things at the same time, but as we transition in and out of situations, we put on different 'hats', we construct and reconstruct our own identities.

Previous research indicates that those speakers who are more able to pass as a local or become further integrated into the local community often

have greater awareness, socioculturally and sociolinguistically (e.g. Lybeck 2002; Piller 2002; Miller 2003). Throughout the course of my fieldwork, Esma demonstrated to me that she was highly socially aware, much more so than most of my other Roma participants. She and her brother were the only two Roma who could tell me something about the different social groups, such as the ‘geeks’ and ‘popular people’ in school and Esma understood the connection that the popular people were often smokers. Within the complex network of social groups in the school, Esma succeeded in integrating herself into a nurturing network of friends, many of whom were migrants like herself. This has been shown in previous research to be a key factor for speakers who are successful in the acquisition of new language dialect features (e.g. Lybeck 2002). As described in chapter 6, she was highly aware of the differences between her more traditional Roma parenting when compared with that of her Polish friend with regard to Facebook and clothes for example.

Esma came across as being very confident and assertive, while at the same time always polite and cooperative with me. She went out of her way to make new friends and was proud of the multiethnic friendship group she had gathered. As mentioned previously, she was extremely friendly and always made a point of coming to say hello to me when she saw me. I witnessed her negotiate with teachers on a number of occasions and because of her linguistic ability and the cultural capital that she had in school, both with her peers and members of staff, she was often able to get her own way, seemingly without teachers realising, something she discusses in the following extract.

#### **Extract 8.4**

- 1 Gerry: do you get told off if you come to school late
- 2 Esma: yeah:
- 3 the teachers comes and check (.)
- 4 and miss told me last week
- 5 ‘your name was first’
- 6 and it should’ve been detention
- 7 she let me off

8 she always let me off

Students who arrived at school late came in through a different entrance and had to sign a late book stating the time. Later in the day, a member of staff goes around to all the students who have signed the late book, speaks to them about why they were late, and usually hands out detention slips to them. As in the situation Esma describes here, she was often able to avoid detention by sweet-talking whichever teacher was involved. Throughout my period of fieldwork, I regularly saw Esma negotiating her way out of homework, detentions, and pretty much any job that she did not want to do. She could argue her point, make excuses, and get people on side with her sweet nature, and she was often successful at getting herself out of potentially difficult situations. She did not necessarily know that she was doing it, but she was extremely skillful at it.

Miller (2003) qualitatively addresses issues of social identity for Asian and European migrants attending schools in Australia. Miller demonstrates that language competence develops alongside other forms of social capital and argues that schools have an important role to play in either maintaining or challenging dominant discourses of difference. Miller (2003) presents a number of case studies, one of whom, Milena, a migrant from Bosnia via Denmark, reminds me greatly of Esma. Milena, like Esma, was very resourceful and successful in integrating within the school and crafting an identity in her new language. Miller (2003:113) identifies four thematic strands that are central to Milena's language and identity work: agency; language competence; social networking; and confidence.

Like Milena, Esma demonstrated great agency. This was most highly exemplified in her choosing to put forward a non-Roma identity. Esma was independent and assertive. As discussed above she had both the confidence and linguistic ability in English to discuss, negotiate, persuade, and convince both her peers and members of staff in matters that were important to her. Esma managed to move fluidly between the dense and multiplex Roma networks and her non-Roma friends with whom she had sparser, uniplex ties. Esma reaped the rewards of her brother, Stefan, being popular and well-known. She was aware of this and knew that this gave her some benefits in

school. She told me in one recording: 'it's good because some girls know me and like me because I'm Stefan's sister. That's why they like me and they help me'. But even away from the influence of her brother, Esma could make new friends easily and was very proud of the diverse makeup of her friendship group. Her social networks provided her with ample opportunity to use English in natural settings, sometimes with Manchester speakers and sometimes in an ELF context. Her 'repertoires of speech, language and action continually fed in to her developing confidence and a stronger sense of her social membership and identity' Miller (2003:138).

Just as for Milena in Miller's (2003) study, Esma could employ her symbolic and linguistic capital to influence the people and events around her, and this ability meant that she was able to move fluidly between groups. Agency, social networking, confidence, and language competence are all resources that are valued within the school environment. Esma possessed all of these and could utilise them in the negotiation of, at times, a more non-Roma identity.

It seems from the case studies presented here, if I were to consider Esma and Fonso the two extremes, that perhaps the acquisition of vernacular dialect features in a new language could be a threat to the Roma identity, similar to that discussed in Gatlinton et al. (2005). Fonso, who explicitly and implicitly performed a very strong Roma identity, produced very few Manchester features, whereas Esma who had many of the local, vernacular features, performed a more non-Roma identity. However this is a very overly simplistic statement. But for a community, such as the Roma, who may be concerned about loss of their language, traditions and cultures, it is possible that they would view individuals such as Esma in a less favourable light, and even put pressure on them to lessen their contact and acquisition of the new language. I have no evidence for this in Esma's case, but this would perhaps be an interesting avenue for further research.

## 8.5 Summary

I began this chapter with a discussion of the findings of the current study in relation to my three research questions. The first two questions dealt with acquisition of Type 2 variation and sociolinguistic competence. The results here indicate that some speakers can acquire sociolinguistic competence in a new language, and that in fact some of the Roma participants could be said to be acquiring local sociolinguistic competence. I explained why this is important and what it can tell us about speakers' language acquisition. Section 8.2 addressed the third and most crucial question of this study, that of what social factors impact upon the acquisition of these participants. I discussed factors that were not significant, but patterned in relation to the significant social factor, participants' friendship or social networks. Both age of arrival and gender interacted with social networks.

In Section 8.3, I discussed why social networks are so important and the way in which they can explain inter-speaker variation when macro social categories may be unable to. I went on to address how the social network concept can be used to help us better understand the interplay of other, harder to measure variables, such as contact, input, and attitude. Finally I moved onto a discussion of identity. Language is tightly bound to our identities which are fluid, dynamic, and changeable. Peer network is key in the construction of identity for migrants and I illustrated these points with paired case studies.

More SLA research is needed that deals both with speakers' social networks and identity. In light of this, in the final chapter, I begin with a discussion of potential future directions for research in the related fields before drawing my final conclusions.

## Chapter 9 Conclusions

In section 9.2 of this chapter, I draw my formal conclusions to this study. This research aims to contribute to wider debates surrounding language and identity, migration, and social networks, as well as methodological and theoretical issues concerning the field of SLA. First, I turn to a discussion of potential future directions for research that lead on from the current study.

### 9.1 Directions for future research

It is now over ten years since Bayley & Regan (Bayley & Regan, 2004:332) called for more sociolinguistically oriented studies of SLA that combine both intensive ethnographic study and variationist analysis. Yet it seems very little has been done. The current study goes some way to contribute, but every piece of research has its weaknesses, and this study is no different.

While I have been able to explore the social networks of one group of participants, it would be interesting to investigate the friendships of the more open group beyond their closest friends in order to develop a better picture of their language acquisition and use. I would like to take those individuals with more open networks and further explore both the degree of ELF use and the amount of contact and input from Manchester-born speakers through an examination of first and second order zone ties (Milroy, 1987:46-7). An alternative to this would be to take the third wave of SLA further, in line with research of monolingual sociolinguistics, to focus on the communities of practice (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992) of some of the migrants with open networks, for example by focusing on Esma's diverse friendship group.

I support the argument that the future of SLA research must run parallel and even in conjunction with monolingual sociolinguists in order to



address the void of attention that has been paid to the voice of migrants and the importance of identity construction in a new language. Certainly in order to study and understand identity further, focus cannot stay on individual linguistic features. A practice-based approach that focuses on a clustering of features associated with identities in the third wave often leads to investigations of style or stance (Eckert, 2012). Investigations that take such an approach using mixed methods, including discourse analysis, are a potentially important avenue for future study.

In light of increasing superdiversity and political, media and social interest in migration, any way that we can develop a more detailed picture of the issues and experiences of migrants, their integration, and their language acquisition will help to enhance and further our understanding of the field, as well as being able to provide real world impact.

## **9.2 Conclusions**

This study has explored what social factors impact upon local dialect acquisition by Roma adolescents living in Manchester. I have shown that migrants can and do acquire local dialect features in a new language, along with the constraints that condition variation. That acquisition is variable between speakers, and the key factor for acquisition of local variation for the speakers in this study is friendship network. In this study, friendship or social network has been shown to be a reliable indicator of language contact and input, as well as speaker attitude and integration. Speaker identities and language are deeply intertwined. Use of the social network concept helped in understanding the complex relationships and the fluid ways in which different speakers employ the resources available to them to construct and reconstruct their identities.

This research goes some way to fill the void of migrant research (Ackers & Stalford, 2004). Investigations into migrants' language use can help us to both further understand the dynamics of linguistic variation and change (e.g. Cheshire et al., 2008; Sharma, 2005), as well as contribute to our knowledge and understanding of the field of second language acquisition

(Bayley & Regan, 2004; Wolfram et al., 2004). Moreover, dominant media and political discourses represent the fact that migrants are now of great political and economic importance, especially in light of increasing superdiversity, making issues surrounding migration a key focus for research.

The vast majority of research into new dialect acquisition focuses on monolinguals, with some investigation into a second or other language, mostly French. However, this is often done with learners of a foreign language living in their country of birth and typically involves looking at the acquisition of a 'standard' dialect. In contrast, the current study focuses on the acquisition of vernacular, regional dialect features and is set in a context where English is the dominant language: a relatively under-studied combination.

There was some suggestion from previous research that social networks were an important factor for the acquisition of vernacular dialect features. However this had not been investigated using the ethnographic methodologies best-suited to accessing local networks. This study demonstrates the importance of using mixed methods for the investigation of social networks. Without ethnography I would not have been able to determine the true makeup of the Roma participants' friendship structure. The results indicate that social networks are a key factor in Roma acquisition of vernacular variants. Furthermore, this study shows how the social network concept can be used to great effect for the study of new language acquisition and the interrelation between social networks and other variables, such as attitude and identity. This study helps to lessen the gap in knowledge regarding dialect acquisition and variation in a new language by furthering understanding of the impact that a speaker's networks and identity construction have upon dialect acquisition.

Arrival of the Roma to the UK is a relatively recent phenomenon, and their dialect acquisition has not previously been studied. This provides us with a great opportunity to study an extreme case of dialects and languages in contact (Chambers, 1995:97). I observed differences in the ways that the different groups (open and closed networks) regard and approach their use of English in school. For the closed network speakers, English is a functional tool which they use to get through the school day. They don't seek out opportunities to use English, and they only really use it when they have to

throughout the school day, for example when addressing members of staff, or if directly brought into contact with another student who cannot speak Romani or Romanian. They consider themselves Romani speakers in an otherwise English-speaking world.

For the more open network speakers on the other hand, English is a way of meeting, communicating and accessing the world around them. Many of them have deliberately sought out people away from the Romani community who they can communicate with in English. This is of course not always conscious and the fact that they have to communicate in English may be an accident of it being a lingua franca. They are more a part of and connected with the English-speaking world in which they live. Some of these speakers may even go as far as to resist 'being Roma'. This cannot be exemplified more strongly than by the extreme case of Esma, who makes a clear step away from a Roma identity in our recordings, even going so far as to deny her own (linguistic) heritage. By being more open to such opportunities means that these speakers have more contact with those outside the Roma community and therefore have more opportunities for exposure and contact with both Manchester and ELF speakers.

In a world where there is increasing contact with other varieties and languages, understanding how sociolinguistic competence is acquired offers valuable insights, especially in light of increasing English as a lingua franca contexts. The findings of this study confirm the importance of examining the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a new language. Research that considers only Type 1 variation omits the importance of issues of migrant identity and voice, as well as potentially missing key information about the language process and the processes of acquisition. Speakers are indeed capable of acquiring the complex, subconscious processes involved in sociolinguistic competence, something that truly contributes to migrants becoming part of a (speech) community.

Much research into migrants and their language acquisition and use lays great emphasis on ethnicity. Indications from the current study (and Durham, 2014) that sociolinguistic competence may be acquired even within an ELF context could suggest that it is not only the ethnicity of social networks

that can impact, but that also the openness of a speaker's social networks, as well as issues of attitude and identity construction.

One of the key aims of this study was to move forward the ideological and methodological link between variationist sociolinguistics and SLA. The results and discussions contained in this dissertation demonstrate how the Roma participants' language use does not merely reflect their identities, but it constitutes them. The linguistic variables examined here index an individual's characteristics and I suggest that those Roma adolescents who produce vernacular variants accomplish meaningful identity work through their manipulation of these features, enabling some speakers to express a less Roma, more local, Manchester identity, as compared to a global identity.

# Appendix

## Transcription Conventions

- Each line represents a single intonation unit
- Standard British English spelling is used, but some basic aspects of pronunciation have been retained (e.g. *gonna* as a contraction of 'going to').
- Narrow phonetic transcriptions are included where relevant to the analysis

**Table Appendix 1 Key to transcription conventions used**

Symbol	Description
:	lengthening
(.)	Pause of 1 second or less
(n)	Pause of specified duration of seconds
[	Overlapping speech
(( ))	Transcriber comment or omitted information
[ ]	phonetic transcription
↑	Rising pitch accent
<u>underline</u>	Emphatic stress

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