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New Dialect Formation and Contact-induced Reallocation: Three Case Studies From the English Fens

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ABSTRACT

When mutually intelligible, but distinct dialects of the same language come into contact, linguistic accommodation occurs. When this contact is long-term, for example in the emerging speech communities of post-colonial settings, such as the English in Australia and New Zealand (Trudgill 1986; Trudgill 2004; Britain, in press); oras a result of, say, New Town development (Omdal 1977; Kerswill and Williams 1992,2000; Dyer 2002; Britain and Simpson, forthcoming); indentured labour schemes (Barz and Siegel 1988; Siegel 1987, 1997; Moag 1979, Domingue 1981, Mesthrie 1992); or land reclamation (Britain 1991, 1997a, 1997b, 2002a, 2002b), the accommodation can become routinised and permanent, and, through the process of koineisation, a new dialect can emerge when children acquire accommodated language as their L1 . These new dialects are characteristically less 'complex', show evidence of intermediate 'interdialect' forms, and contain fewer marked or minority linguistic features than the dialects which came together in the original mix. In this paper we wish to highlight another possible outcome of koineisation, namely ***reallocation.*** Reallocation occurs where two or more variants in the dialect mix survive the levelling process but are refunctionalised, evolving new social or linguistic functions in the new dialect. We provide a range of examples of social and linguistic reallocation, from a number of historical and contemporary speech communities around the world, the dialects of which have developed from long-term contact and linguistic accommodation. We then focus on examples of phonological, morphological and lexical reallocation in one speech community affected by dialect contact, the Fens of Eastern England.

KEYWORDS: reallocation, dialect contact, new dialect formation, English dialects, koineisation, sociohistorical linguistics, Canadian Raising, Fens, allophonic variation

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I. INTRODUCTION

In earlier work on new-dialect formation (Trudgill 1986), it was indicated that in certain sorts of sociolinguistic situation involving contact between mutually intelligible dialects - colonial situations, new towns, rapid urbanisation — new dialects may develop. Drawing on a number of case studies involving different types of new-dialect formation in different languages from different parts of the world, an analysis was arrived at in which the processes involved in new-dialect formation were described as follows. In a dialect mixture situation, such as in a newly settled colony, large numbers of variants from the different dialects involved in the mixture will be found. As time passes and focussing begins to take place, particularly as the colony or new town begins to acquire an independent identity, the variants present in the mixture will gradually be reduced in number. This reduction will take place as a result of accomrnodation between speakers in face-to-face interaction, which may also lead to the development of new, intermediate or hyperadaptive or other interdialect fonns which were not actually present in any of the dialects in the original mixture.

Part of Trudgill (1986) was devoted to an examination of the extent to which this reduction does and does not take place in a random manner. It tums out, in fact, that a number of generalisations can be made about the non-haphazard nature of this reduction process. In determining who accommodates to who —and therefore which forms are retained and which lost — demographic factors involving proportions of different dialect speakers present will be vital. Purely linguistic forces will also be at work: the reduction of variants that accompanies focussing, in the course of new-dialect formation, takes place through the process of ***koineization.*** This consists of ***levelling,*** which involves the loss of linguistically marked and demographically minority variants; ***interdialectformation*** involving the emergence of forms that are linguistically (e.g. phonetically) intermediate between the ingredient variants; and ***simplification***, by means of which even minority forms may be the ones to survive if they are linguistically simpler, in the technical sense, and through which even forms and distinctions that are present in all ingredient dialects may be lost.

Here we concentrate on the interesting fact that it is not always necessarily the case that the final outcome of the reduction process will be a single victorious variant. In sorne cases, even afier koineization, a number of competing variants left over frorn the original mixture may survive. Where this happens, ***reallocation*** (also sometimes referred to as ***rule-governed contact*** (Taeldeman 1989) occurs. What this means is that two or more variants will only survive —or so it seems — if they acquire distinct functions in the new dialect. In other words, variants in the mixture which were originally from different regional dialects may avoid extinction by acquiring different sociolinguistic or other functional roles in the outcome of the mixture. We can classify the examples of reallocation in the literature to date into two types: ***socio-stylistic reallocation*** and ***structural reallocation.*** Afier having presented examples of these two types of reallocation from a range of comrnunities around the world that have witnessed dialect contact, we look in

more detail at three examples from the English Fens, an area of reclaimed marshland in Eastern England which has seen two phases of contact —the first from the 17th century onwards following reclamation by Dutch engineers, and the second from the mid 20th century onwards as the area came under the ever-increasing influence of varieties from London and the South-East of England.

II. SOCIO-STYLISTIC REALLOCATION

First, onginally ***regional*** variants in the dialect mix may acquire a new role as ***stylistic or social status*** variants in the new dialect. Trudgill's (1974) research on the East Anglian city of Norwich provides an interesting example of this. In the expansion of the population of Norwich during the course of the 19th century, and thus in the development of a new or at least modified urban dialect in the city, migration from surrounding rural areas played a big part. There was not in any case an enormous amount of regional variation within the relatively homogeneous area that formed the hinterland of Norwich, but in the koineization process most instances of regional variation that were brought to the city were levelled out, with only one variant surviving. For example, the eastern Norfolk usage of the TRAP-vowel rather than the DRESS-vowel before front voiced fricatives, e.g. never /nævə/, together /təgæðə/, has given way in the urban dialect to southern and western /ɛ/. The typical north Norfolk pronunciation of word-final unstressed -ed as -/ət/ as in 'wanted', 'naked', 'hundred' disappeared. The Suffolk version of the MOUTH vowel, approximately [ɛʉ], has disappeared in favour of the more widespread eastern Norfolk form [æʉ], while the old-fashioned postvocalic clear /l/ of Norfolk has given way to the nationally more widespread Suffolk dark /ɫ/.

However, in one particular case, not just two but three different regional variants survived in the urban dialect. Of all the phonological variables investigated in Norwich (see Trudgill, 1974), one of the most complicated was that which involved a very small set of lexical items of the type 'room', 'broom', 'groom'. The complication lies in the fact that words in this class have three different phonologically distinct pronunciations in the Norwich urban dialect. They can be pronounced with /u:/, the same vowel as in 'school' (and, in Norfolk, 'goal' —see Table 1); they can be pronounced with /ʊ/, the same vowel as in 'pull' (and 'home'); and they can be pronounced with /ʉ:/, the same vowel as in 'you'.

Why should the urban dialect of Norwich have three different pronunciations available for this small set of words? The answer lies in the sociolinguistic history of the city. As we have noted, like many other Bntish cities, the population of Norwich increased massively during the course of the 19th century from around 35,000 to more than 120,000 (see Green and Young, 1964). Much of the increase was due to in-migration to the city from the surrounding rural areas which looked to Norwich as their nearest urban centre. This area would have included most if not all of the county of Norfolk, in which Norwich is situated, as well as a fairly large area of north-eastern Suffolk. The work of the Survey of English Dialects (Orton and Tilling 1969), as

well as Trudgill's own observations, shows that all three of these pronunciations are to be found —as regional variants— in the local dialects of Norfolk and Suffolk. Broadly speaking, /u:/ is found in the local Traditional Dialects to the west of Norwich, /ʊ/ in the dialects to the south, and /ʉ:/ in the dialects spoken to the north and east. These three pronunciations have been refunctionalised in the city dialect with rather clear social status differences (Trudgill 1974, 1986). The first has higher status than the second, which in turn has higher status than the third (see Table 1 below). We are not able to say exactly why this has happened, but the westem variant no doubt has the highest social status because it happens to coincide with the RP pronunciation.

Table 1: The reallocation of pronunciations of the ROOM lexical set in Nonvich

Stage 1: The ROOM lexical set in Norfolk before the exoansion of Norwich.

Region of Norfolk	Pronunciation of the ROOM lexical set in this region
West Norfolk	/u:/
South Norfolk	/ʊ/
North and East Norfolk	/ʉ:/

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Stage 2: The social status of different variants of the ROOM lexical set in Nonvich subsequent to urbanisation

The social status of the different variants used in Nonvich	Pronunciation of the ROOM lexical set	Other words pronounced using this variant in Norwich English
High status —middle class users	/u:/	*school, goal, nose*
Middle status	/ʊ/	*pull, put, home, froze*
Low status —working class users	/ʉ:/	*you, soon, loose*

Examples of socio-siylistic reallocation can also be found beyond anglophone speech communities. Domingue (1981) reports examples of regional variants of Bhojpuri from the Indian sub-continent —see Table 2 below— being reallocated to perform stylistic functions in the Bhojpuri dialect of the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius following indentured labour movements from India in the 19th century.

Table 2: Reallocation in Mauritian Bhojpuri (based on Domingue 1981)

	Dialects of Bhojpuri from the Indian sub-continent			Mauritian Bhojpuri	
	Eastern	Central	Western	Informal	Formal
'big'	/bara:/	/baɽa:/		/bara:/	/baɽa:/
'temple'		/mandir/	/mandil/	/mandil/	/mandir/
'road'		/ra:hta/	/ra:sta/	/ra:sta/	/ra:hta/

Siegel (1997) provides evidence from Fiji Hindi, formed similarly to Mauritian Bhojpuri by the contact of many Hindi- and Bhojpuri-speaking indentured labourers sent to the South Pacific in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He shows that the third person possessive 'okar', which

originated from certain Bhojpuri dialects, and a more common Hindi form 'uske' co-exist in Fiji Hindi, but that the former is "considered rustic and ... is used by 'country bumpkin' characters in dramas or comedy routines" (Siegel 1997:127), whereas the latter has a wider and more prestigious currency. He also finds geographical reallocation, where two variants from different dialects of Hindi have become regional dialect markers in Fiji. The example he provides concems the glide inserted before the perfective suffix ā when it is added to a verb stem ending in 3. So, on the main Fijian island of Vitilevu, 'sang' is 'gāyā', but it is 'gāwā' in the northern islands of Vanualevu and Taveuni (Siegel 1997: 127).

Khamkhong (2004), investigating new dialect formation in Ban Khlong Sathon (BKS), a small settlement in northeastem Thailand that was established in the 1970s and attracted migrants from across the country, found that reallocation accounted for the distribution of the Thai negators ***bor*** and ***mai***. ***Mai*** is the negator used in Central (and Standard) Thai (spoken to the west of BKS) and ***bor*** the form used in the Isan dialect of Thai spoken to the north and east of BKS, and these forms were preserved by the original migrants. Khamkhong's analysis of the grandchildren of the original migrants, however, found both forms being used by individual children but each was reallocated according to topic, with ***bor*** being used most and when discussing informal everyday topics, and ***mai*** reserved for discussions about more formal topics, such as lessons at school, health issues and the local administration.

We conclude this review of socio-stylistic reallocation with a fascinating example from Penny's (2000:54-5) research on the formation of Latin American Spanish. He notes that in the 16th century, when Spanish was being taken over to the Americas, some parts of Spain dropped the /h/ in words which had descended from Latin <f-> e.g. ***hilar*** (to spin) and ***humo*** (smoke) and other parts of Spain retained it. He points to the fact that today, right across the Spanish-speaking Americas, /h/ retention is a characteristic of uneducated speakers and /h/ deletion is used by middle class speakers.

III. STRUCTURAL REALLOCATION

Structural reallocation occurs when two or more ingredient variants are allocated in the new koinéized dialect either to different phonological environments (Trudgill 1986: 159, Taeldeman 1989; Britain 1997a, 1997b), to different lexical environments (Taeldeman 1989, Britain 2001), or to different morphosyntactic contexts (Britain 2002b). Taeldeman gives the example of intervocalic /g/ in the borderland of East and West Flanders in Belgium (1989).

East Flemish:	[brœ:ɔ]	'brugge' (bridge)
	[li:ɔn]	'liegen' (to lie)
West Flemish:	[brɛrho]	
	[li:hɔ]	
Intermediary dialects:	[brœhɔ]	
	[li:ɔn]	

In the east intervocalic /g/ is always deleted, and in the west it is always preserved as a glottal fricative [h]. In the contact dialects between east and west, however, deleted forms are reallocated to positions preceding /ən/, and glottal forms to environments preceding /ə/.

Another rather clear example of structural reallocation is provided by a relatively new colonial dialect of English, that of Australia (Horvath and Horvath 2001). Broadly speaking, at the time when Australia was first being settled by English speakers from the British Isles, about 200 years ago, northem English dialects retained, as they do to this day, the original pronunciation of the BATH lexical set with /æ/. Dialects in the south of England, on the other hand, had probably already by this time acquired the newer pronunciation with /a:/, although it is recognised that the lengthening process in this lexical set was linguistically unstable. Ellis (1889), for example, demonstrates that whilst, overwhelmingly, the north had shori vowels and the south had long, a few tokens with long vowels were found, amongst other places, in Bradford in the north, and a few with shori vowels in London in the south. In addition, the prestige of the two variants was, at that time, contested (see, for example, Mugglestone 1995; Bailey 1996; Beal 1999). Both variants were, however, well represented in the dialect mixture that formed the original input for the formation of Australian English. Interestingly, although Australian English has in most other cases favoured south of England variants, as in the distinction between the vowels of STRUT and FOOT, in the case of the BATH lexical set, both the norihem and the southem variants have been retained, at least in some parts of Australia (Horvath and Horvath 2001). They have been broadly reallocated, however, to different phonological environments with /æ/ being restricted, for the most part, to positions before nasal clusters (e.g. 'dance', 'advance', 'plant') and with /a:/ being used before other phonological contexts. Horvath and Horvath show (2001: 350) that this pattem is regional to some extent, with cities in South Australia using /a:/ more than elsewhere, and that, in Sydney especially, words in which the vowel is followed by /sp/ (e.g. 'grasp') are more likely to have /æ/ than elsewhere, but their results provide strong evidence of a rather sharp (albeit still somewhat variable) allophonic distinction.

Lodge (1999; 2004) provides evidence of reallocation from 16th-18th century Parisian French. Paris witnessed great numbers of migrants flocking into the city during this period, and Lodge demonstrates how a number of different regional and social variants of French in Paris were, over time, reallocated lexically. He claims (1999: 63; 2004: 187-8) that the (oi) variable had three variants: [wa] (associated with the merchant classes); [wɛ] (an aristocratic form) and [ɛ] (a Normanism—Lodge 2004: 132), but that over time each variant was reallocated its own exclusive chunk of the lexicon, with [wa] being used consistently in words such as 'voir' (see) and 'François', [wɛ] in 'couettes' (bunches (of hair)) and [ɛ] in Français (French) and 'verre' (glass).

Long provides another example, this time from Japanese dialects. He finds (forthcoming),

in the interdialectal area lying between the large cities of Osaka and Kyoto, a clearly reallocated negation system. He discusses the way in which Osaka and Kyoto Japanese form negative and potential negative morphemes to be affixed to final consonant root verb stems. The system is presented in Table 3a below.

Table 3a: Reallocation in the regular and potential negative morpheme systems in Kyoto and Osaka (Long, forthcoming)

Dialect	Negative (i.e. 'do not')	Potential negative (i.e. can not)
Kyoto	-ahen *(e.g. kakahen — I do noi write)*	-ehen *(e.g. kakehen — I cannoi write)*
Osaka	-ehen *(e.g. kakehen — I do not write)*	-arehen *(e.g. kakarehen — I cannot write)*

Notice, importantly, the homonymic clash: the Kyoto potential negative is the same as the Osaka regular negative. In the geographical areas (e.g. Takatsuki) which lay between these two cities a reallocated system has developed —see Table 3b below— combining the regular negative of Kyoto with the potential negative of Osaka, and thereby avoiding the clash that the potential alternative reallocation system would have produced.

Table 3b: Reallocation in the regular and potential negative morpheme systems in the transition zone between Kyoto and Osaka (Long, forthcoming)

Dialect	Negative (i.e. 'do not')	Potential negative (i.e. can not)
Takatsuki	-ahen *(e.g. kakahen — I do not write)*	-arehen *(e.g. kakarehen — I cannot write)*

Trudgill (1985, 1986) has argued that so-called Canadian Raising may also have ansen out of a process of reallocation. Canadian English —and, crucially for this argument, a number of other colonial varieties of English such as that of St Helena in the South Atlantic— is characterised by very distinct allophones of /ai/ as in PRICE and /au/ as in MOUTH. Before voiced consonants and word-finally these diphthongs have open onsets, and before voiceless consonants central onsets: 'out loud' [aut laud]. The suggestion in Trudgill (1985, 1986) was that this was due to the process of new-dialect formation which led to the development of Canadian English as a new variety. Scottish-type diphthongs, with central onsets in all environments, and south of England-type diphthongs, with open onsets in all environments, were both present in the original dialect mixture which preceded the eventual focussed variety. Both vanants survived, but were reallocated a new function as positional allophonic variants. This reallocation was according to the very logical principle that the narrower diphthongs were confined to the pre-voiceless consonant environment where all English vowels have shorter allophones (Laver 1994:446).

111.1. The Fens: Historical and linguistic evidence of dialect contact

For most of recorded history the Fens were a more or less uninhabitable and uninhabited part of the UK'. The area between Cambridge and the Wash was for the most part undrained marshland which was subject to very frequent flooding. Up until the 17th century the northern coastline lay up to 12 miles further south than at present. Most of the Fenland population at that time lived on a few islands of higher ground and in small communities on this northern coastline. The southern two-thirds of the Fenland consisted of undrained marshland which was subject to tidal flooding in summer, more continuous flooding in winter and was hence too unstable in most places for permanent settlement.

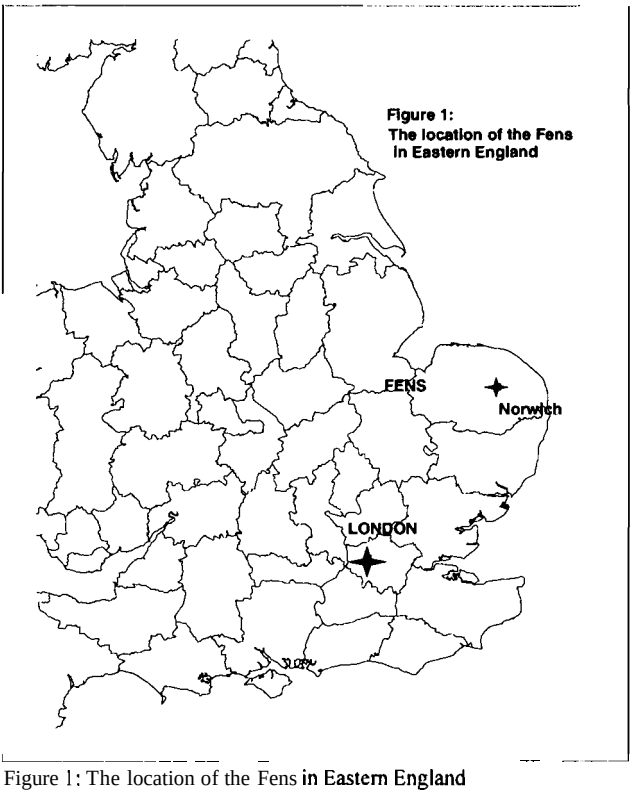


Figure 1: The location of the Fens in Eastern England

The Fens were seen as a miserable place, where its inhabitants eeked out a meagre living in the most difficult of circumstances. White (1865: 264) claims, for example, that "on these [Fenland] banks, the inhabitants for their better security erect their miserable dwellings, at a great distance sometimes from each other and very remote from their parish churches to which they rarely resort ... so that they seem to be cut off from the community and are deprived of almost every

advantage of social life", and Darby (1931: 40) quotes from Samuel Pepys who in a diary entry of 18th September 1663, describes his travels "over most sad fenns, all the way observing the sad life which the people of the place do live, sometimes rowing from one spot to another and then wading". A strongly negative reaction to the area was engendered. Darby (1931: 61) cites Felix who claimed the Fens were "especially obscure, which ofttimes many men had attempted to inhabit, but no man could endure it on account of manifold horrors and fears and the loneliness of the wide wilderness —so that no man could endure it, but everyone on this account had fled from it".

The physical impenetrability of the Fens to outsiders, the concentration of socio-political spheres of influence to the East and West, and the almost demonic external perception of the area and its inhabitants led to the Fens becoming seen as a major boundary between the East and the Midlands. These social, political and psychological barriers led to the development of linguistic ones which have survived to this day —the Fens are the site of one of the most important bundles of isoglosses in English dialectology —see Table 4 below for some examples.

Table 4: The Fens as a dialect transition zone: the realizations of a number of variables in Westem, Central and Eastern Fenland English

Lexical set (after Wells 1982)	Western Fens	Central Fens	Eastern Fens
STRUT	[ʊ]	[ɤ]	[ʌ]
ONE	[ɒ]	[ɤ]	[ʌ]
CASTLE	[a]	[a:]	[a:]
MOUTH	[ɐ:]	[ɐ:]	[ɛu]
NOSE	[ʌu - ɐu]	[ʌu - ɐu]	[ʊu]
Hill	∅	[h]	[h]
buyING	[ɪn]	[ɔn -ɪn]	[ɔn]
TAKE/MAKE	[tɛk/mɛk]	[tæɪk/mæɪk]	[tæɪk/mæɪk]
third person singular present tense marking?	present	present	variable
do-conjunctions? (Trudgill 1995)	absent	variable	present

Then, from the mid-17th century onwards, Dutch engineers were commissioned to begin drainage work in the Fens. This drainage work continued until the early years of the 20th century, and gradually this large area of more or less impassable marshland was turned into a highly fertile farming area of arable land. The reclamation naturally led to very considerable in-migration, especially into the more central and hitherto most inaccessible parts of the central Fens, and rather rapid demographic growth. Much of the in-migration (see Britain 1997a) was from the area immediately to the west of the central Fens (and to the west of the bundle of isoglosses) —Lincolnshire and Peterborough —and from the area immediately to the east of the Fens and the isogloss bundle —Norfolk. Between the householder count of 1563 and the first national census of 1801, the populations of the central Fenland towns of March and Chatteris rose by around 140%, and that of Wisbech by over 280% (Pugh 1953), growth levels much higher than those in other neighbouring towns and villages. The in-migrants had arrived to

exploit the new fertile land and to inhabit settlernents that prornised a rnuch more stable and prosperous lifestyle than the Fens were able to offer before. During the 18th and 19th centuries, this process of steady land-reclamation followed by in-rnigration frorn neighbouring areas rnust have led to considerable dialect contact and dialect mixture.

Despite the drainage, the Fens (particularly the central Fens, focussing on the towns of Wisbech, March and Chatteris) today still remain relatively isolated. Socio-economic developrnents in Britain during the second half of the twentieth century, which had particular mornenturn in the south-east of England (see Allen et al 1998), opened the Fenland up to greater influence from outside, and, consequently, to dialect contact. Certain local dernographic factors also intervened which help shape our understanding of the influences on this speech cornmunity. Because of the poor quality of housing in many of Britain's urban centres, particularly London, both before and after World War II, successive govemments ernbarked on a nurnber of large-scale programmes of urban redeveloprnent. As part of this, New Towns (e.g. Milton Keynes, Telford, Corby) were built—some pretty much from scratch and others, later, representing major expansions of already sizeable towns. These New Towns were supposed to provide complete self-contained new cornrnunities for their residents, with carefully integrated industrial, entertainment and infra-structural provision. Peterborough, on the western edge of the Fens, witnessed New Town development as part of the later tranche expanding a rniddle-sized town of the 1960s into a city of over 150,000 people by the end of the century. Although dialectologically Peterborough is of the northern English type (with [a] in the BATH lexical set and [u] in the STRUT set —see Britain 1991, 1997b, 2001), many of the rnigrants to Peterborough were frorn the (dialectological) south-east. It is highly likely that Peterborough is and will continue to act as a significant 'staging post' for the spread of linguistic imovations into the Fens, given its excellent service infrastructure (unrivalled in the north of East Anglia), its relatively young population, and its local reputation as a modem forward-looking and 'comected' city. In the late 1960s and early 1970s this New Town developrnent was supplemented, especially in the south-east, by so-called 'overspill' expansion — like New Towns in that large new residential areas were built for former residents of urban areas, but not as grand in scale or provision. Typical of such developrnents, the overspill expansion in King's Lynn —on the eastem edge of the Fens— consists of a very large housing estate on the edge of a medium-sized town. In the case of King's Lynn, most of the overspill population were from London and its immediate hinterland. The linguistic consequences of overspill development are, in the same way as New Towns, likely to be that urban variants come into contact with rural Fenland ones. In addition, therefore, to the more general socio-economic, including linguistic, changes in the south-east that are pulling the Fens out of their sornewhat secluded position, New Town and overspill developrnents nearby are also acting as sociolinguistic catalysts of dialect contact.

Today, the dialect of the central Fenland area shows rnany of the signs of having undergone koineization. There are sorne intermediate interdialect forms, notably the [Y] vowel

in the lexical set of STRUT which is phonetically intermediate between [u] and [ʌ]. There is also quite a lot of evidence of levelling: Ellis (1889: 253-4), for example, reports an area which has "very little dialect proper", and similar sentirnents were expressed by Miller and Skertchley (1878: 115-6). Britain (1997b:146-147) reports that the typical western Fenland forms of 'make' and 'take' with /ɛ/ have given way to the more widespread, and eastern, forms with /æɪ/. On the other hand, the typical eastern preservation of a distinction between the lexical sets of NOSE and KNOWS has given way to the rnuch more widespread, and western, rnerger.

Our interest here, however, lies in the extent to which the two catalysts of contact —reclamation from the 17th century onwards and late 20th century rnigration gave rise to reallocation. We look here at three characteristics of Fenland English which exemplify reallocation: one phonological, one lexical and one morphological. In order to dernonstrate that reallocation has taken place as a result of contact, we need to:

a) dernonstrate that the distinct linguistic forms which were reassigned to new functions existed independently in those varieties which came into contact;

b) attempt to show why the different forms are reallocated in the way they are.

III.2. Sources of data

The variationist analysis was conducted on three datasets of recordings from the Fens. The first, and most substantial, was the corpus of recordings of Fenlanders in informal conversation collected by Britain (1991). 81 speakers of both sexes, who were living within a 5 rnile radius of their birthplace, were selected frorn all areas of the Fens. Two age groups were chosen for the study: 45-65 year olds and 15-30 year olds (who grew up during the period of overspill/New Town expansion of Peterborough and King's Lynn). All informants fall into the broad category of 'working class' —none of the informants had received formal education beyond the age of 16, all were either current or retired agricultura1 workers, unskilled/manual labourers or low-status clerks. The numbers of informants according to age and sex are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: The number of informan&taking part in the Fenland survey according to age and sex. (All informants were working class, and were living within 5 miles of their birthplace)

Age	Men	Women	Total
15 to 30 years old	19	17	36
45 to 65 years old	22	23	45
Total	41	40	81

The availability of additional recordings with which data can be compared is unusual but an obvious advantage. The rernaining two corpora consist of recordings which, although not collected for sociolinguistic purposes, were collected in such a way that they fortuitously provide valuable data for such research. The King's Lynn Corpus, housed in that town's local library, was recorded as part of a Manpower Services Commission Local History Project carried out in the rnid 1980s. Ten speakers were interviewed, 7 rnen and 3 wornen. Four of the recordings came

frorn the "Northenders", once a small poor fishing sub-community in the north of the town, now alrnost totally dernolished following an urban land clearing and renovation scherne. The other speakers had been active in a number of other local trades and services: the railways, chemicals, engineering and market trading. All the speakers were over 55 years old and most in their 70s. The Chatteris corpus in the local museum is a collection of 11 individual recordings rnade over a number of years between 1974 and 1985 by the curator. Ten of these recordings, which are of varying length, formality and sound quality were of working class residents of Chatteris. Most were at least 70 years old. The other recording was of an ice-skater from Outwell, near Wisbech in the central Fens.

III.3. Case study 1: "Canadian Raising" of the PRICE diphthong

The first detailed case of reallocation that we present shows similarities with the Canadian example that we presented earlier and affects the diphthong in the PRICE lexical set. The dialect of the central Fens is characterised by what Britain (1997a) calls "Fenland Raising", parallel to the "Canadian Raising" of both PRICE and MOUTH discussed above. That is, the PRICE vowel has central onsets [əɪ] before voiceless consonants, but has [ɑɪ] or [a:] elsewhere.

The variationist analysis of the 81 recordings of Fenlanders highlights this allophonic distribution in more detail and establishes its socio-geographical distribution. A six-point quantitative index was set up. The variants and index scores assigned to each were as follows:

[ʊi]	5
[ʏi]	4
[əi]	3
[ʌi]	2
[ai - ɒi]	1
[a:- ɒ:]	0

In order to investigate the allophonic vanation of the onset between pre-voiceless environrnents and other environrnents, each token was coded according to following phonological segment. 18 possible following environrnents were analysed:

voiceless:	/p f θ s k t/
voiced:	/b m n z v ð dʒ l g/
boundary:	# /+ɪŋ/
schwa	/ə/

A quantitative index score was calculated for each of the 81 informants of the Fens study. The 81 speakers produced a total of 10835 tokens of /ai/ —4783 before voiceless consonants and 6052 in other environments. In the King's Lynn corpus there were 1405 tokens and 1170 tokens in the Chattens recordings.

Table 6: (ai) lndex Scores for Speakers Aged 15 to 30 years in 8 Fenland Urban Centres

Urban centre	lail preceding voiceless consonants		/ai/ preceding voiced consonants, tal and #	
	men	women	men	women
Western Fens:				
Peterborough	0.50	0.54	0.39	0.58
Spalding	0.51	0.54	0.48	0.56
Central Fens:				
Wisbech	3.06	3.01	0.97	0.26
March	1.93	2.88	0.96	1.02
Chatteris	1.68	1.86	0.92	0.95
Eastern Fens:				
King's Lynn	3.11		1.47	
Downham Mkt.	3.27	3.19	2.43	0.99
Ely	1.64	2.44	1.08	0.96

Table 6: (ai) lndex Scores for Speakers Aged 45 to 65 years in 8 Fenland Urban Centres

Urban centre	lail preceding voiceless consonants		lail preceding voiced consonants, /ə/ and #	
	men	women	men	women
Western Fens:				
Peterborough	0.55	0.69	0.57	0.64
Spalding	0.71	0.68	0.47	0.62
Central Fens:				
Wisbech	3.00	3.02	0.94	0.51
March	2.97	2.99	0.90	0.63
Chatteris	2.94	1.97	0.93	0.78
Eastern Fens:				
King's Lynn	3.18	3.05	1.97	1.63
Downham Mkt.	3.08	3.14	2.14	1.49
Ely	3.09	2.00	2.32	1.14

Tables 6 and 7 show the (ai) index scores for both men and women, 15-30 years old and 45-65 years old, in the main urban centres in the Fens and compare realizations of /ai/ before voiceless consonants with /ai/ preceding other environments.

The most striking feature of note in this data are the scores for the central Fenland towns, where there is a clear preference for central onsets (index score 3) in pre-voiceless positions yet open diphthong onsets (index score 1) or open monophthongs (index score 0) before other environments. The pattern is most marked among the older speakers, but also holds for the younger speakers where despite a tendency towards more open onsets in March and especially Chatteris, there is still a clear allophonic distinction. In the westem Fens, the data show that *all* speakers have (ai) index scores of less than 1.0 *in all environments,* in other words, all speakers have at least some monophthongal forms of /ai/ in all phonological positions. In the eastern

Feniand, onsets are altogether more close than in the western or central Fens, with central onsets in pre-voiceless positions, and onsets which are less open than in other parts of the region. It is also interesting to note that although monophthongal forms are present among all the informants in the west, they are only common among women in the central Fens. These data clearly show, therefore, that a Canadian Raising-type allophonic distribution of the (ai) variable is present in the central Feniand.

Table 8 shows the (ai) index scores for the speakers in the King's Lynn corpus, and the speakers from Chatteris and Outwell in the Chatteris corpus. This data supports the results of my own survey: adistinct Canadian Raising-type distribution in the central Fenland sites of Chatteris and Outwell, and generally more close onsets in all environments in the data from King's Lynn, a town to the east of the Fens.

Table 8: (ai) Index Scores for Speakers from the King's Lynn and Chatteris Corpora

Corpus	N' of informants	/ai/ preceding voiceless consonants	/ai/ preceding voiced consonants, /ə/ and #
King's Lynn	10	3.36	268
Chatteris	10	2.99	96
Outwell	1	300	102

We can now relate this historical and geographical evidence to a possible —and in our view the most probably accurate — explanation of Canadian Raising in the Fens. Ellis (1889), the Survey of English Dialects (see Britain 1997a) and Britain's own survey show that to the east of the Fens people tend to have raised onsets of /ai/ in all phonological positions, and people to the west have much more advanced open ones (see Table 9 below for some evidence from Ellis 1889). East Anglia, to the east of the Fens, is well known to be sociolinguistically conservative relative to many other varieties of southern British English whereas the East Midlands to the west are less so. It is quite likely therefore that the raised onsets in the east are due to a lag in the advancement of /ai/ from ME /i:/.

The developmental process which resulted in the emergence of reallocated allophony in the Fens can be reconstructed as follows: as the area was reclaimed, not only would mobility have become greater for the few native Fenlanders, allowing them more contact with neighbouring communities and the outside world, but also they were joined in large numbers by in-migrants from both east and west who moved on to the area to take advantage of the improved agricultura1 prospects. The native population would have interacted with speakers of less advanced forms of (ai) from the east and more advanced forms from the west. The initial post-reclamation speech community would have spoken a very mixed dialect containing [ɑi]-type forms, [əi]-type forms and whatever the native variant was. Importantly, we can point to the fact that no one area appears to have dominated in providing migrants to the central Fens. Thus no one input dialect was present in the new speech community in such numbers to enable it to 'swamp' other varieties.

Table 9: Realizations of the PRICE lexical set from locations to the east and west of the Fens in Ellis's (1889) survey of British dialects. Eustace (1969) was used to 'translate' Ellis's phonetic script into IPA.

Eosr d the Fens:		
Narborough (Norfolk):	|ʌi|	'I'
	|rʌit|	'right'
	|sʌid|	'side'
	|fʌind|	'find'
North Walsham (Norfolk):	|əi|	'I'
	|rəit|	'right'
	|səid|	'side'
	|fəind|	'find'
Norwich (Norfolk):	|əi|	'I'
	|pəip|	'pipe'
	|həi|	'high'
West of Fens:		
Huntingdon (Cambridgeshire):	(o i|	'I'
	|rɒ it|	'right'
	|sɒ id|	'side'
	|fɒ ind|	'find'
Peterborough (Cambridgeshire):	|nɑit|	'night'
	|tɑim|	'time'
	|lɑik|	'like'
Oakham (Rutland):	|rɑit|	'right'
	|tʃɑild|	'child'
	|fɑind|	'find'
Northamptonshire:	|mɑin|	'mine'
	|dɑi|	'die'
	|lɑiklɪ|	'likely'
	|tɑ imz|	'times'

Very gradually following settlernent, over a nurnber of generations, intercornmunication among the new residents would have becorne more regular and routine. According to the social network rnodel proposed by J. Milroy and L. Milroy (1985), we might expect more dense and rnultiplex network ties to develop over time in the new cornrnunity, and, since "a close-knit network has an intrinsic capacity to function as a norrn-enforcernent rnechanisrn" (J. Milroy and L. Milroy 1985: 359), the pressures of speech accornrnodation processes to reduce linguistic differences in such circurnstances would have prornoted the regularization of the variant aspects of the rnixed dialect. Children would be hearing the different /ai/ variants of their peers as well as their parents and, as part of their language acquisition process, would seek to irnpose regularity on this linguistic mêlée. Speakers would begin to focus a new koinéized variety. ln the case of /ai/, speakers appear to have sirnplified the rnixture of variants by reallocating thern according to principles of phonological naturalness —[ɔi] before voiced consonants and [ai] before other environments.

As time went on, the structure of /ai/ would have becorne gradually more focused with successive generations more cornpletely reallocating the different variants to different respective environments, as more and more individual speakers acquired the allophonic distinction. Eventually a new koinéized Canadian Raising-like systern would have crystallized in the Fens. Stages 1 to 3 in Table 10 below represent the developrnent of the Raising acquisition process frorn the irnrnediate post-reclamation period to the completion of dialect focusing. The patterns showing the allophonic variation that results frorn reallocation are italicized.

Table 10: The development of the Fenland Raising acquisition process from the immediate post-reclamation period to the completion of dialect focusing

	k speakers			
	older - - - - - - - - - - - - younger			
	A	B	C	D
STAGE 1 (immediately following reclamation) (approx. 1680-1750)				
/ai/ preceding voiceless consonants	[ɔi]	[ɑi]	[ai]	[ɑi]
/ai/ preceding voiced consonants, # and /ɔ/	[ɔi]	[ɑi]	[ɔi]	[ɑi]
STAGE 2 (2nd/3rd generation) (approx. 1730-1800)				
/ai/ preceding voiceless consonants	[ɔi]	[ɑi]	[ɔi]	[ɔi]
/ai/ preceding voiced consonants, # and /ɔ/	[ɔi]	[ɑi]	[ɑi]	[ɑi]
STAGE 3 (reallocation complete) (approx. 1800 onwards)				
/ai/ preceding voiceless consonants	[ɔi]	[ɔi]	[ɔi]	[ɔi]
/ai/ preceding voiced consonants, # and /ɔ/	[ɑi]	[ɑi]	[ɑi]	[ɑi]

Further evidence for a contact origin for allophony in the Fens is the ***absence*** of allophonic variation in (au). In Canada, Raising occurs in both /ai/ and /au/, and although the former is more commonly found outside Canada, the latter is the more salient (Chambers 1989: 76). Canadian Raising of /au/ does not occur in the Fens at all. For /ai/, the emergence of allophony is dependent on the existence in the unfocused dialect of allophones with onsets of differing degrees of openness which can be reallocated to different phonological contexts. We saw earlier that onsets were predominantly less open in the east than in the west. In the case of /au/, however, the onsets used by speakers on all sides of the Fens are consistently very similar, a half-open front [ɛ] (Britain 1991: Chapter 6; 2003). Since there were no different onset realizations in the dialect mix, reallocation simply did not occur.

III.4. Lexical reallocation of short and long variants of the BATH vowel

Similarly, the contact in the Fens between different variants of the BATH lexical set has resulted in *lexically-determined reallocation* (Britain 2001). As can be seen from the examples from Ellis's (1889) survey in Table 11 below, typically Northern short vowel forms of BATH-[a] —were (and still are) used in the dialects to the west and north-west of the Fens whilst those dialects to the south and east had and retain typically Southern long vowel forms-[a:].

Table 11: Realizations of the BATH lexical set from locations to the southeast and northwest of the Fens in Ellis's (1889) survey of British dialects. Eustace (1969) was used to 'translate' Ellis's phonetic script into IPA

***South* and Easi *of the* Fens:**		
Stanhoe (Norfolk):	**|tʃa :ns|**	'chance'
	|gra :s|	'grass'
	[fa :st|	'fast'
	|bra :ntʃ|	'branch'
Mattishall (Norfolk) & Framlingham (Suffolk):	**|la :f|**	'laugh'
	|a :sk|	'ask'
	|la :st|	'last'
***North* and *West of the* Fens:**		
Kettering (Northamptonshire) & Eye (Cambridgeshire):	**|gra s|**	'grass'
Cottesmore (Rutland):	**|tʃa ns|**	'chance'
	Ida ns|	'dance'
Stukely (Cambridgeshire):	**|tʃa ns|**	'chance'

The result of the contact between these two systems has been that some Fenland speakers have neither a typically southern nor typically northern system, but a mixed one, with short vowels used in some words and long vowels in others. This reallocation, however, appears not only to be purely lexically determined, with no apparent phonological conditioning of the placement of the different forms, but also is different from speaker to speaker. Table 12, for example, shows the variants used by a number of speakers from the Fenland town of Wisbech. Although three of them are consistent users of the long vowel, the other four speakers each have differently configured alternations of long and short. Yet these seven speakers are all brothers and sisters from one farnily.

Table 12: The BATH lexical setas used by 7 speakers from Wisbech in the central Fens

Sex of speaker	Age of speaker	Realisations of the BATH lexical set.
Female	47	categorical [a:]
Female	51	[afta], othenvise [a:]
Male	53	categorical [a:]
Female	55	[bras], [glas], [plant], othenvise [a:]
Female	57	categorical [a:]
Male	62	[plant], othenvise [a:]
Male	65	[kasl], [aftɔ], [staf], othenvise [a:]

Speakers are, nonetheless, consistent in their use of one form or the other in specific words, i.e. each *speaker* does have a system, their use of this variable is not characterised by free and haphazard variation[2]. Such variability suggests that the reallocation has taken place within a significant cross-section of the speech community —predominantly the older population of the Fens— but with different consequences at the level of the individual.

This example of reallocation, therefore, is somewhat unlike the others in the literature since it shows no apparent linguistic motivation for the redistribution patterns, nor community-wide acceptance of which lexical items should be reallocated to which vowel. Perhaps not surprisingly then, the reallocated mixture is also in decline, with fewer and fewer speakers over apparent time having such a mixture. Most younger speakers in the Fens are showing a preference for either the Northern short vowel system, or the Southern long vowel system, and are avoiding the mixed systems more typical of older generations. The consequence of this avoidance is that an isogloss appears to be emerging, with only an extremely narrow —a couple of kilometres— and sparsely populated transition zone between the two core areas (see Britain 2001, 2002a for more details).

III.5. The reallocation of past tense 'be' morphemes

The final detailed example of reallocation we will discuss here involves morphological reassignment following more recent dialect contact in the Fens, showing evidence of innovative forms typical of the influential dialects of the South-East of England interacting with more traditional Fenland and Midland ones.

Non-standard systems of past tense BE are common in many varieties in the English-speaking world (see, e.g., Britain 2002b for a review). In the Fens, the present system is sensitive only to polarity and not to number or person. Positive forms predominantly are ***was*** throughout the person and number paradigm, and negative forms, conversely, are ***weren***'t as in 1-4 below:

1. **he was right, weren't he?**
2. **You weren't ready in time, was you?**
3. **There was lots of people drinking coffee**
4. **There weren't a soul there.**

Historical evidence (as well as that from Britain's own research on the Fens) shows that this was not always the case, however. Ellis (1889) focuses rather little on morphological variation, but demonstrates, for example, that in parts of the East Midlands (slightly to the west of the Fens) the predominant form in clauses of positive polarity was ***were*** in the 19th century. From Bedford, for example, he reports 5-7 below (Ellis 1889:207):

5. **It were so queer**
6. **I were a-whining**
7. **The kettle were a-boiling**

In addition, from different parts of East Anglia he reports 8-10:

8. **As I were a-saying (Ellis 1889: 273)**
9. **I were 4 score year last Paschal Tuesday (Ellis 1889: 277)**
10. **Time the kettle were a-boiling for tea (Ellis 1889: 288)**

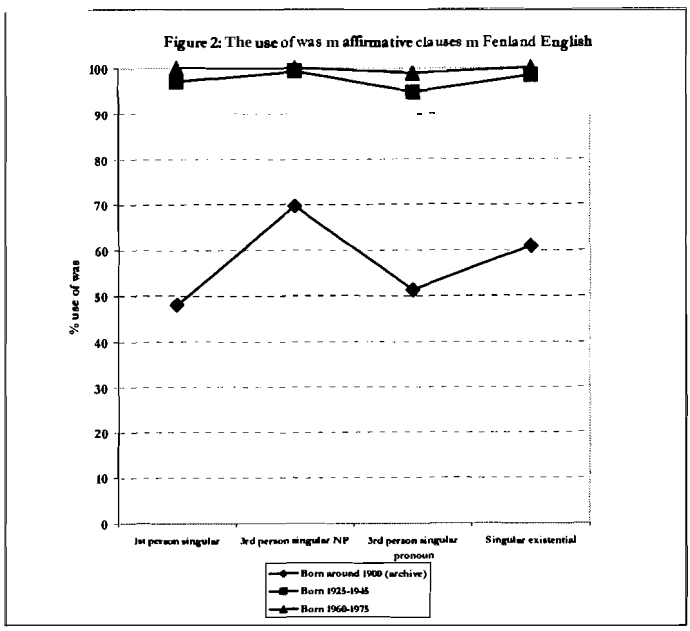
The Survey of English Dialects (Orton and Tilling 1969) from the mid-20th century shows not only a very wide range of patterns of past BE systems around the region, including several places showing ***were*** for standard ***was,*** but also a dazzling array of variant pronunciations of these forms. Table 13 shows the entries in the Basic Materials for a number of sites around the Fens. Other evidence from this region comes from two studies of nearby counties. Kökeritz (1932) provides close transcriptions of a number of early recordings of Suffolk speech which include tokens of past BE. A number of examples are present of levelling to ***were*** (e.g. *'**he were** [wɛ :ɽ] **a-whinnocking**'* (1932:214); *'**Iwere** [wɽ] **a-saying**'* (1932: 214)). Ojanen investigated past BE among NORMs (Chambers and Trudgill 1998) in the south-east of Cambridgeshire in both affirmative (Ojanen n.d., a) and negative (Ojanen n.d., b) contexts. Her work found that "the forms ***was*** and ***were*** show a striking distribution" for affirmative clauses. Six of her 18 speakers (living in four villages) showed a predominant use of ***were*** in non-standard positions, and the remaining 12 showed levelling to ***wus.*** The distribution of these different systems was geographical. The ***were*** levellers were all located to the north of her study area —nearer to the Fens— and showed no non-standard tokens of ***wus*** at all, with ***were*** levels in non-standard positions all over 90 percent. The 12 ***wus*** levellers were in more southern villages.

Geographically, then, *was* levelling is found in the far south of the county, with ***were*** levelling further north, in the part of the county neighbouring the Fens. Negative forrns show a dorninance of ***weren't*** regardless of the levelling orientations of individual speakers in affirmative clauses. Overall, levelling to ***weren't*** in non-standard contexts was at a level of 86.5 percent [N=52], with only one token of non-standard *wasn't*. (Ojanen n.d., b: 5, 8).

Table 13: Pasi icnsc of BE in thc Survcy of English Dialects for sclcctcd locations in East Anglia/East Midlands (Orton and Tilling 1969: 1187-1189, 1295-1297)

Location	1st singular affirmative	3rd singular pronoun affirmative	1st plural affirmative	3rd plural pronoun affirmative	1st singular negative	2nd negative	3rd singular pronoun negative	3rd plural prooouo negative
1 (L12)	|wəz|	|wəz|	|wəz|	|wəz|	|wɔnt|	|wɔnt|	|wɔnt|	|wɔnt|
2 (L13)	|wə|	|wəz|	|wə|	|wəz|	|wɔznt|	|wɔznt|	|wɔznt|	|wɔznt|
3 (L14)	|wəz|	-	|wəz|	|wəz|	|wɔ:nd |	|wɔ:nt|	|wɔ̃ənt|	|wɔ̃ənt|
4 (L15)	|wəz|	|wəz|	|wə|	|wə|	|wɒznt|	|wɔnt|	|wɔnt|	|wɔnt|
5 (Hu1)	|wəz|	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wɔ:nt|	|wɔ:nt|	|wɒn?|	|wɔ:n?|
6 (Hu2)	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wɒnt|	|wə:nt|	|wɒnt|	|wɒnt|
7 (C1)	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wɔ:nt|	|wɔ:nt|	|wɔ:nt|	|wɔ:nt|
8 (C2)	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wɔ :nd |	|wɔ :nt|	|wɔ :nt|	|wɔ :nt|
9 (Nf7)	|wəz|	|wəz|	|wə|	|wə|	|wɔənt|	|wɔənt|	|wɔənt|	|wɔənt|
10 (Sf1)	|wəz|	|wəz|	|wəz|	|wəz|	|wɔzn?|	|wɔzn?|	|wɔnt|	|wə:ɹnt|
11 (Sf4)	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wɔnd |	|wɔ:nt|	|wɔn?|	|wɔ n?|
12 (Ess1)	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wə|	|wɔ:nt|	|wɔ:nt|	|wɔ:nt|	|wɔ:nt|

It is clear then that at an earlier stage in the history of the areas neighbouring the Fenland speech cornrnunity, ***were*** for standard *was* was predominant. An analysis of the data archive frorn Chatteris mentioned earlier also revealed a preference for ***were.*** Figure 2 shows the results of the analysis of the Archived Chatteris data (speakers born between 1899 and 1911) cornpared with speakers from the Fens born later ('Old' = born between 1925 and 1945; 'Young' = born between 1960 and 1975). Whilst speakers born after 1925 almost consistently use ***was*** in positive contexts of standard *was*, the oldest speakers only do so roughly half the time. The oldest speakers are also sornewhat behind in the use of *was* in positive contexts of standard ***were*** (see Britain 2002b: 32). Clearly, the use of *was* across the positive paradigrn increased systematically throughout the 20th century. The picture for negative forms of BE is quite different. Here, the use of ***weren't*** irrespective of person and nurnber has a long tradition.



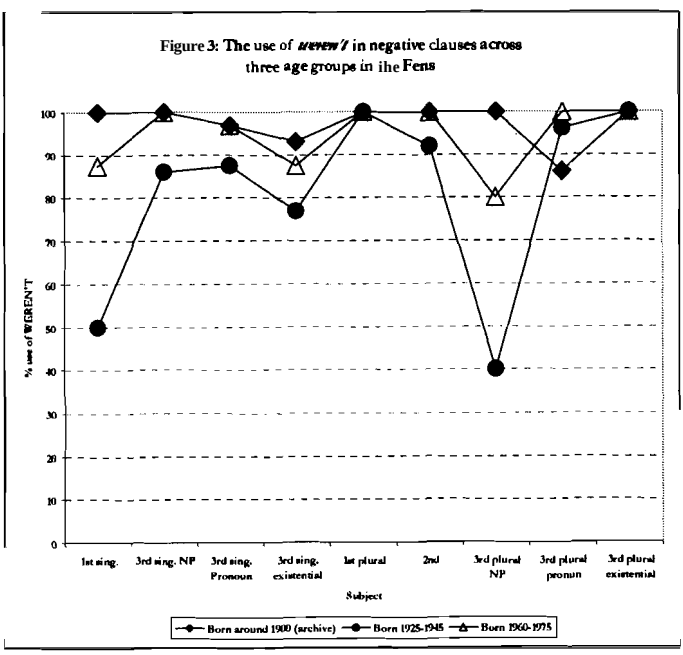


Figure 3 shows the results of the analysis of the three age-groups in the Fenland data for negative past BE. Here levels of weren't use are very high right across the speech community, and it is those speakers born between 1925 and 1945 who show the lowest levels of weren 't use. But clearly weren 't has been a robust and dominant feature of the Fenland variety for well over a century.

We have a mixed system therefore. A predominant use of was across contexts of positive polarity is a recent 20th century phenomenon in the Fens, but the use of weren't is clearly a much more long-standing and characteristically local feature. In order to seriously propose a reallocation analysis of past BE in the Fens we need to ask why, in this case, weren 't is the pivot form in the negative and *was* in affirmative contexts, since most forms of reallocation appear to be motivated either linguistically or socially.

Schilling-Estes and Wolfram (1994: 289) discuss why these two allomorphs of past BE are being used to transparently mark polarity rather than person and number, as is the case in the formal standard. They point, for example, to the clear analogy with other frequently occurring verbs in English, such as 'doldon't', 'will/won't' and 'can/can't', where the positive and negative forms are phonetically quite dissimilar, involving vocalic alternation as well as the insertion of negative marking [nt]. In the Fens, this polarity marking also applies to the verbs 'be' (which is realised as [m] in first person contexts, [s/z] in third singular or [a] in all other (conversational) affirmative contexts) and auxiliary 'have' ([v] (in 1st singular, 2nd and plural contexts) or [s/z] (in 3rd person singular position) which are *all* realised as [ɪnʔ - iːnʔ] in negative clauses, hence, again, with quite distinct positive and negative root forms. Another possible reason for the success of weren *'t* may well be 'faulty' analysis by language acquirers. The SED data make clear that negative past BE was realised in a wide range of forms. It is possible that forms such as [wɔːnt] or [won?] (commonly found in the SED data, but not in the Fens today) —which may have derived from phonetic processes reducing [wɒznt]— may well be *analysed* by acquirers and learners as weren't and adjusted phonetically accordingly. Such imperfect analysis is a recognised cause of such contact phenomena as interdialect (see, for example, Trudgill 1986) and supports a view of weren *'t* as a single suppletive (monomorphemic) lexical item, rather than a separable root and negative particle (Zwicky and Pullum 1983; Schilling-Estes and Wolfram 1994).

Schilling-Estes and Wolfram (1994) also explored possible explanations for the favouring of *was* as a pivot form for analogical levelling in positive contexts, highlighting:

- The linguistic 'basicness' (Hock 1986: 214-237) of *was* whereby 3rd person is more basic than other persons, singular more basic than plural, etc (Schilling-Estes and Wolfram 1994: 276).
- Broader based analogy with other verbs, including the sibilant similarity with regular present tense verbs (ibid., 276). This factor opens up the possibility that the spread of was levelling in East Anglia from the mid-20th century onwards may well have been

accelerated by the gradual loss of zero marking on 3rd person present tense verbs in parts of East Anglia. Until fairly recently, East Anglian varieties had no 3rd person present tense marking (see, for exarnple, Trudgill 1974, 1997; Kingston 2000; Spurling 2004), and hence sibilant similarity with the present tense could not have been a driving force for analogy.

• The fact that 3rd person forms are considerably more frequent in conversation than other forms, and are hence more likely to act as pivot forms (Hock 1986: 220; Schilling-Estes and Wolfram 1994: 276). In the Fens data discussed here, for example, 2168 out of a total of 3770 examples (57.5%) of past BE in affirmative contexts were 3rd person singular tokens.

Given these factors, and given the robust evidence of both ***was*** and ***weren't*** as potential ingredient forms at earlier stages of these dialects' evolution, reallocation is clearly the most plausible explanation for the development of a solely polarity-sensitive system over a person/number/polarity-sensitive one. Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle (1989: 209) provide a further example of dialect contact —this time in an urban setting— leading to what amounts to a similar reallocation of past BE. Their ***Survey of British Dialect Grammar*** showed that a considerable amount of ***were*** levelling was reported in contexts of standard ***was*** in the East and West Midlands. 12 out of 14 schools reported ***'I were singing'***, for example. In addition, the same schools report levelling to ***was*** in contexts of standard ***were***. ***'You was singing'*** was reported by 10 out of 14 schools. In Birmingham, the mostly highly urbanised city of the Midlands, however, a ***was/weren't*** variety is reported: there were no reports of non-standard ***were*** inpositive contexts, but 50 percent of all negative contexts were reported as being ***weren't*** —'*Mary **weren't** singing*'— whilst levelling to ***was*** in plural contexts reached 75 percent.

V. CONCLUSION

The linguistic outcomes of dialect contact are not haphazard, but tend to follow a relatively limited range of possibilities. Levelling and simplification are probably the most common (Trudgill 1986, Kerswill and Williams 1992), and the evolution of interdialect forms another not infrequent possibility (Chambers and Trudgill 1980: Chapter 8; Britain 1997b, 2001). Here we have outlined another potential consequence of contact —*reallocation*. This reallocation, as exemplified above, can be either socio-stylistic, where ingredient forms to the dialect mix take on different roles as markers of social status, or structural, where distinct variants in the mix are repositioned to serve linguistic functions. Such outcomes appear to be rarer, but should, nonetheless, be fully considered as potential explanations for both sociolinguistic and lexical variability and complex allophony and allomorphy.

NOTES:

[1] The location of the Fens in Eastern England can be seen in Figure 1.

[2] With a couple of interesting exceptions, see Britain (2003).

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