9

The Effect of Economic Trajectory and Speaker Profile on Lifespan Change: Evidence from Stative Possessives on Tyneside

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Introduction

This chapter focuses on longitudinal change in a dialect called *Geordie*, spoken in the North East of England,[1] in the city of Newcastle and town of Gateshead, which are located on the north and south banks of the River Tyne. While, to the outsider, Geordie has become a general label for the North East (Wales 2006; Pearce 2011; Beal et al. 2012), amongst the people of the North East the term has a much more specific meaning.[2] Beal (2004b: 34) states that, in addition to Newcastle, the 'heart of the "Geordie Nation" […] those who would consider themselves as Geordies can be found throughout Northumberland and even in the northern part of the old County Durham, at least in Gateshead and South Shields' (see Fig. 9.1).

The heartland of the Geordie dialect was traditionally associated with the heavy industries characteristic of many Northern industrial cities in

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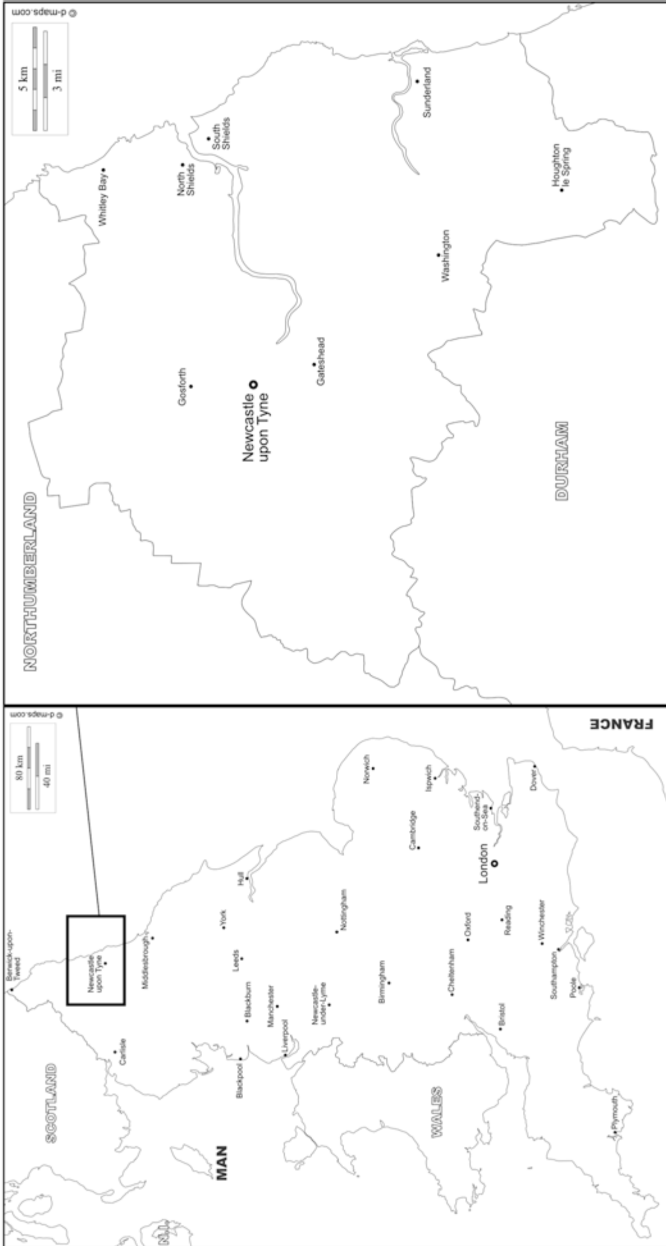


Fig. 9.1 Map of Tyneside

the British Isles (see the papers in Colls and Lancaster 2001; Beal et al. 2012). Since the 1950s, however, the Tyneside community has undergone dramatic socio-economic changes. Traditional economies, which had provided mass employment in the North East region, such as shipbuilding, mining, steel and glass manufacture, declined sharply, resulting in large-scale unemployment (see Figs. 9.2 and 9.3). As exemplified in (1), the economic downturn had traumatic consequences for many people living in the North East.

(1) … that was around the eighties especially with the shipyards closing, the mines closing, steelworks you know (…) ehm when they've lost their job through no fault of their own and then they can't get a job because there's none to be had … [Rob]

Since this economic depression, Tyneside has successfully reinvented itself as the retail, cultural and educational centre of the North of England (see OECD 2006; Vall 2007; Beal et al. 2012).[3] Not everyone has been able to benefit from this socio-economic recovery, however, and the

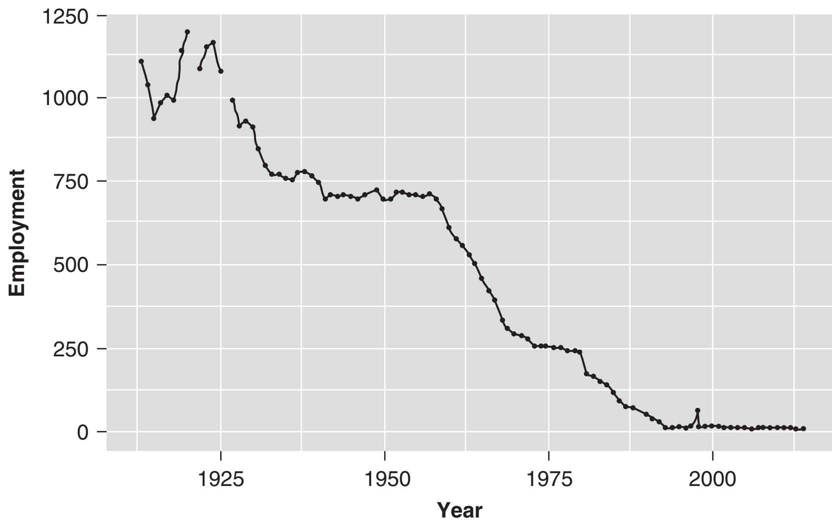


Fig. 9.2 Coal mining employment in the UK 1913–2014 (Source: Department of Energy & Climate Change 2015)

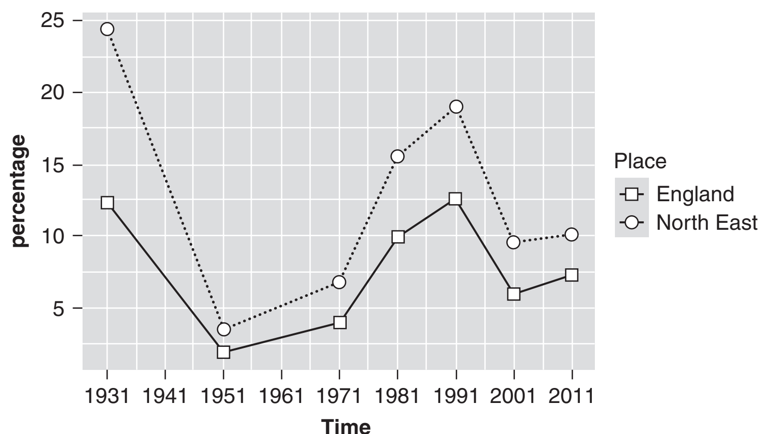


Fig. 9.3 Male unemployment rate (Data: Office for National Statistics)

region has still some of the highest indices of deprivation and unemployment of the UK.[4]

Social changes of the kind described for the Tyneside community present sociolinguists with a challenge. Labov (1994: 76) famously claimed that 'for a trend survey to yield a meaningful portrait of linguistic development, it is essential that the community have remained in a more or less stable state in the intervening period. If drastic changes in its demographic make-up have taken place, the changes we observe in language may have little to do with the logic of linguistic change in progress'.[5] In this chapter, we argue that sociolinguistic research can contribute vital information on the ways in which large-scale societal changes have impacted on the language use of socio-economically unstable populations, including, on a micro-level, the individuals who live in and, thus, form these communities. We will illustrate how comprehensive ethnographic research not only allows us to understand the effect that changes in social structure can have on linguistic change, but also—and more importantly—how it allows us to assess the extent to which individual speakers are representative of the community in the sense that they are typical of the time and place in which they were recorded.

The chapter explores the participation of Tyneside speakers in changes in the system of stative possessives, an ongoing morphosyntactic change that has been playing out in the English language for centuries (see Tagliamonte et al. 2010; Tagliamonte 2012). In our study, we illustrate the gradual increase of two incoming forms, *have got* and *got* on the basis of trend time data. We then report on a panel sample of six speakers recorded first in 1971 and then again in 2013, whose socio-economic trajectories epitomise the complex impact which the recent socio-economic upheaval has had on people's lives. Tracing language change across the lifespan of the individual allows us to investigate the effect of speaker-based factors, such as their personalities (Denis 2011), their contact with children (Buchstaller 2016) and the socio-economic trajectory of the individual speaker on their participation in ongoing longitudinal change (Wagner 2008; Bigham 2010; Sankoff and Wagner 2011; Rickford and Price 2013; Buchstaller 2016; Buchstaller et al. 2017). The present study, thus, contributes to our understanding of the extent to which older speakers past critical age go along with changes that sweep through the community around them (Sankoff 2004, 2005).

Data and Methods

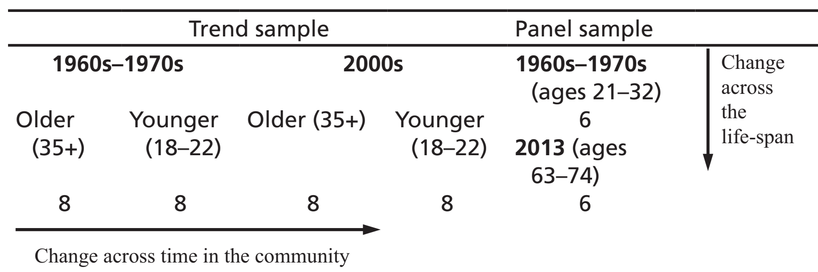
Large-scale data collection efforts on Tyneside date back to the late 1960s/early 1970s, when the *Tyneside Linguistic Survey* (TLS) gathered a sample of about 180 recordings in Gateshead and Newcastle.[6] In 1994, the *Phonological Variation and Change in Contemporary Spoken British English* (PVC) project recorded a second data-set on the Newcastle side of the river (Milroy et al. 1997, 1999). The corpus consists of 18 recordings with speakers from two neighbouring parts of the city which differ in terms of their socio-economic profiles, roughly corresponding to working-class and middle-class areas. Between 2000 and 2005, these two legacy corpora were combined to form the *Newcastle Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English* (NECTE) held at Newcastle University (Corrigan et al. 2005).

The most recent data collection project—the *Diachronic Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English* (DECTE, Corrigan et al. 2012; Mearns et al. 2016)—has added another layer to our growing repository of Tyneside speech. It combines the NECTE data-sets with a new monitor corpus, NECTE2, which was begun in 2007 at Newcastle University and has since yielded an average of 65 recordings per year. The creation of this third sub-corpus, therefore, expands the coverage of the Tyneside community from 1891, when the oldest TLS speaker was born, to 1996, the birth year of our youngest DECTE speaker. The combined data-sets, thus, cover over 100 years of speech from local people in the North East, which is—to our knowledge—the longest time span of any corpus of spoken English. Crucially, they allow us to trace longitudinal linguistic variation and language change during a time when the Tyneside community underwent radical social and economic changes.

Sociolinguistic research recommends trend studies as the most reliable method for studying ongoing change across the community (Trudgill 1988; Labov 1994). In this chapter, we investigate longitudinal change in the Tyneside area on the basis of a balanced sample of 16 speakers from the TLS data-set recorded in the early 1970s and a similar sample of 16 speakers from the part of the NECTE2 corpus collected in 2007–2008. We will compare and contrast the findings from this trend data-set with a small panel sample collected during an FP7 European Commission funded project (Buchstaller 2013–2017). For this panel data-set, we traced and re-recorded six of the original TLS speakers who were first interviewed in 1971 (see Table 9.1).

The analysis of longitudinal trend and panel data gives us the opportunity to study the linguistic malleability which individual speakers exhibit during their lifespan by comparison to the community trend (Sankoff 2004; Wagner 2008; Bigham 2010; Prichard and Tamminga 2012). Note that the 2013 re-interviews carefully replicated two aspects of the original interview situation: (i) the interactional setting (see Gregersen and Barner-Rasmussen 2011) and (ii) the interlocutor (Rickford and McNair-Knox 1994). In 2013, as previously in 1971, informants were recorded in their homes (with the exception of a former teacher who preferred to be interviewed at the university). Also, the 2013 fieldworker very closely matches the sociolinguistic characteristics of the 1971 interviewer. Both

Table 9.1 Sampling frame for the diachronic investigation of language change across longitudinal time as well as across the lifespan of the individual speaker



Trend sample				Panel sample	
1960s–1970s		**2000s**		**1960s–1970s** (ages 21–32)	Change across the life-span
Older (35+)	Younger (18–22)	Older (35+)	Younger (18–22)	6	
				2013 (ages 63–74)	
8	8	8	8	6	
Change across time in the community					

were male Newcastle University employees from the North East and both have a general Northern accent, which the informants were unable to localise when they were asked where they thought the interviewer was from.

The 1971 interviews asked a range of diagnostic questions regarding informants' tastes, values and lifestyle choices[7] and enquired about their general socio-economic situation. Our 2013 re-interviews aimed to find out about informants' lives since the initial interviews. Ethnographic questions tailored towards the individual speaker (based on what we knew about them from their first interview) provided us with important insights into their life-course during this time of economic upheaval and the way in which they position themselves towards these socio-demographic changes. Crucially, the rich personal data gleaned from the two interviews allowed us to situate the individuals within the overall Tyneside community in which they are embedded.

Table 9.2 briefly introduces our panel speakers, focusing on their socio-economic trajectories. Below, we give more information about these six individuals, especially regarding their personality and the type and intensity of their contact with children and younger speakers (see Labov 2001; Denis 2011).

Given what we know about the socio-economic development of the area in the past century, we would like to argue that these six speakers are representative of the time and place in which they were recorded. Their socio-economic trajectories span the gamut of life histories that characterise the complex development which the North East has undergone in

Table 9.2 Speaker profiles

	1971		2013	
	Age	Profession	Age	Profession
Upwardly mobile				
Fred	21	Clerk, student teacher	63	Retired religious education teacher
Aidan	25	Welder, starting lecturer	66	Retired college lecturer
Consistently middle class				
Nelly	29	Nursery nurse / kindergarten teacher	71	Retired housewife
Consistently working class				
Rob	23	Engraver	64	Engraver
Anne	23	Seamstress	64	Retired seamstress
Edith	32	Co-op salesperson, home-help	74	Retired home-help

the 42 years covered by our data. The upwards trajectory of two speakers, Fred and Aidan, epitomises the drastic changes from heavy industry to a post-industrial cultural and educational economy. Rob, Anne and Edith remained consistently working class, epitomising the large chunk of Tyneside which is economically classified largely as *traditional manufacturing* and *industrial hinterland* (Buchstaller and Alvanides 2013). Nelly, finally, remained at an economically stable middle-class position (as measured by aspirations, attitudes and housing).

In the following sections, we will assess the linguistic behaviour of our six panel speakers in the light of the ongoing longitudinal changes affecting the system of stative possessives in the Tyneside community.

The Change Under Investigation: Stative Possessives

In contrast to other ongoing linguistic changes described for the Tyneside community, such as the loss of traditional local features (Watt and Milroy 1999; Watt 2000; Beal 2004a) or the sudden influx of innovations in the system of quotation and intensification (Barnfield and Buchstaller 2010; Buchstaller 2014), the competition in the system of stative possession is

characterised by a gradual turnover. The resulting layering within the linguistic variable has played out since Early Modern English (Tagliamonte et al. 2010).

As a primary verb, *have* has expressed static ownership since the 10th century (see 2a).[8] In the late 16th century 'the idiom *have got,* [which] derives historically from a perfect construction' (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 112) developed stative possessive function, especially in the British Isles (as in 2b). In line with grammaticalisation predictions, the phonetic substance of *have got* has eroded over time, resulting in the contracted forms *'ve/'s got* typical of spoken language or spontaneous registers (see 2c). This reduction process has been brought to completion in some varieties of English, leading to the complete elision of *have* and the concomitant expression of stative ownership via *got* (2d).

(2) Development of stative possession (Tagliamonte et al. 2010; see also Crowell 1959; Jespersen 1961; Visser 1963–1978, examples from the OED, except for 2d).

	Stative possessive verbal complex	Example
a. Late 10th century	*Have*	*He..hæfde blæc feax (he had black hair)*
b. Late 16th century	Addition of *got*	*What a beard hast thou got*
c.	Contraction of *have*	*She's got plenty of money*
d. Early ModE	Elision of contracted *have*	*You got a light (T8_1971)*

In contemporary British Englishes, the competition in the system of stative possession plays out principally between two variants—*have* and *have got* (and its phonetically reduced forms). The latter has been steadily increasing in frequency throughout the last century (see Kroch 1989; Huddleston and Pullum 2002).[9] Whereas the newest variant, *got*, is generally considered US English and still rare in British Englishes (Jespersen 1961: 53; Tagliamonte 2012), recent research suggests that UK speakers have started to use *got* as a minority form (see Tagliamonte et al. 2010; Tagliamonte 2012; Buchstaller 2016).

Following the precedent set in the literature, our analysis examines the variability in the system of stative possessives by setting up a ternary variable which consists of the oldest form *have*, the bourgeoning variant (reduced or full) *have got*, as well as incipient *got* (see Tagliamonte et al. 2010). We will follow Tagliamonte and her collaborators in restricting the variable context to present (i.e. non-past tense) forms that are not modified by modal auxiliaries (see also Buchstaller 2016).

Changes in the Community and Across the Lifespan

We first consider the community trend before examining the behaviour of the individual panel speakers. Table 9.3 demonstrates that, by the early 1970s, when the TLS corpus was collected, *have got* had already made substantial inroads into the system of stative possession (50% *have* versus 49% *have got*). This result corroborates apparent time results on the basis of data collected in the late 1990s/early 2000s in Wheatley Hill—a locality approximately 20 miles (32 km) from Gateshead—where older speakers use *have got* in slightly less than 60% of all stative possessive contexts (Tagliamonte 2012). The trend data from our DECTE corpus extends the time-frame over which the variable can be explored into the 21st century and allows us to trace the incursion of *have got* into the system of stative possession in real time. As Table 9.4 reveals, by 2007, *have got* ratios have increased to 63%, an increment of 14% since the 1970s (compare Table 9.3). At the same time, the speakers of the recent time slice produce lower frequencies of *have,* which merely accounts for 31% in 2007, a reduction of 9%. The totality of our findings, therefore, supports the contention that Tyneside is part of a larger supra-local trend

Table 9.3 The system of stative possession in the 1970s

	N	%
Have got	64	49
Have	65	50
Got	2	2
Total	131	100

Table 9.4 The system of stative possession in 2007

	N	%
Have got	159	63
Have	77	31
Got	16	6
Total	252	100

Table 9.5 The system of stative possession amongst the older panel speakers on Tyneside recorded in 1971

	N	%
Have got	49	66
Have	24	32
Got	1	1
Total	74	100

towards increasing rates of *have got* (see also the results for speakers in Buckie and York, in Tagliamonte 2012). These findings place the North East of England fully in line with the development of the variable reported in the literature (see also Kroch 1989; Tagliamonte et al. 2010). A comparison between Tables 9.3 and 9.4 also reveals that *got*—the most recent incursion into the British system of stative possessives—is on the rise across real time.[10] The variant edges its way into the system with 2% frequency in the 1970s compared to 6% in 2007. We will revisit this issue below.

Let us now explore the sociolinguistic reality of this ongoing change in the panel data. Table 9.5 illustrates the system of stative possessives amongst our six panel speakers in 1971. Table 9.6 plots the same speakers 42 years later.

While the increase in stative possessive *got* is immediately noticeable (frequencies rose from 1% in 1971 to 8% in 2013), our panel speakers do not mirror the community-wide incrementation of *have got*: usage rates drop somewhat from 66% in 1971 to 61% in 2013. Hence, while the individuals constituting our panel corpus slightly surpass the community average of *have got* in 1971, by the time of their 2013 re-interviews, they have fallen behind the mean use of the form in the rest of the community. One possible reason for the patterning in Table 9.6 might be that the change in progress towards increasing rates of *have got* is arrested in the North East. Tagliamonte's (2012) apparent time data from

Table 9.6 The system of stative possession amongst the older panel speakers on Tyneside recorded in 2013

	N	%
Have got	115	61
Have	59	31
Got	16	8
Total	190	100

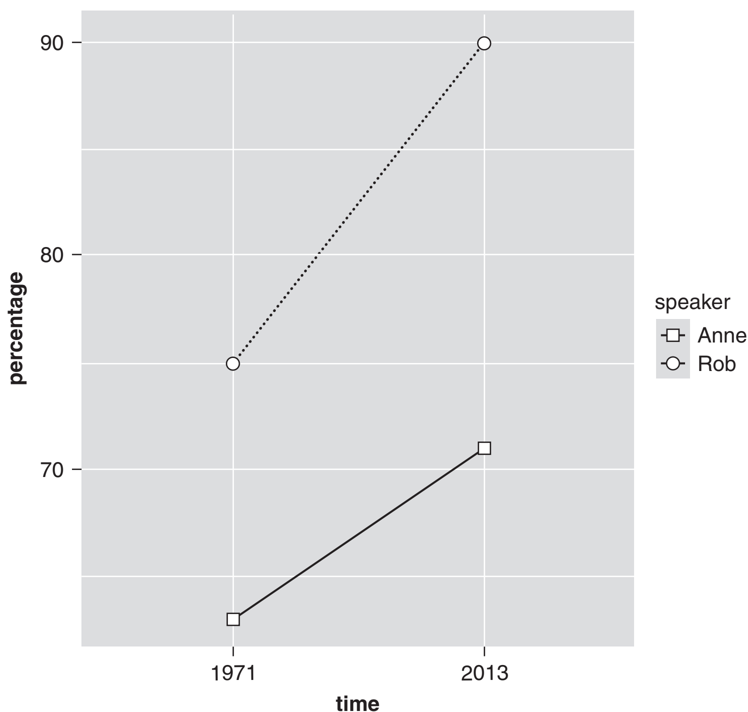


Fig. 9.4 *Have got* use amongst the panel speakers on Tyneside recorded in 1971 and 2013, socially stable working-class speakers

Wheatley Hill suggests that this might be the case since speakers in the youngest age bracket (ages 36 and below) seem to have retreated from *have got*. But the question remains why this would be the case. Historical sociolinguistics has revealed a number of cases where ongoing linguistic changes are arrested, often due to speakers' hyper-attentiveness of the form (Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2003). However, as Figs. 9.4 and 9.5 suggest, this seems not to be the case in the Tyneside community.

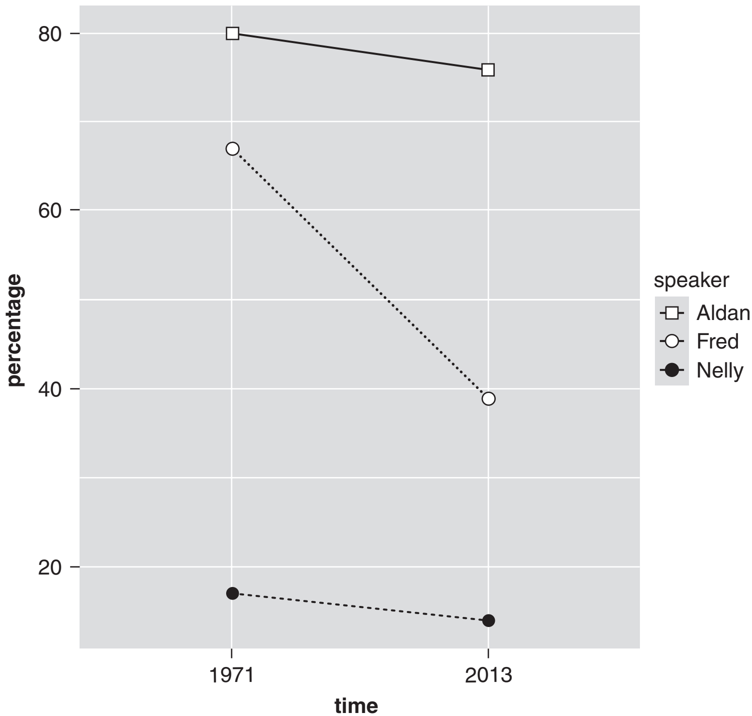


Fig. 9.5 *Have got* use amongst the panel speakers on Tyneside recorded in 1971 and 2013, socially upwardly mobile speakers (Fred, Aidan) and the stably middle-class speaker (Nelly)

In the following, we examine the stative possessive choices of five of our panel speakers across their life-course.[11] As we will see below, a detailed ethnographic analysis which considers speakers' socio-economic trajectory, their personality and their type and amount of contact with children can provide explanatory parameters for the different linguistic trajectories in our speaker pool.

When we split up the results for *have got* by the individual speakers—as Figs. 9.4 and 9.5 do—it becomes immediately obvious that two broad trends lie behind the aggregate numbers displayed in Tables 9.5 and 9.6: two speakers follow the overall community trend towards increasing ratios of *have got*. The three others show a falling trajectory across their lifespan. Fred, in particular, exhibits a drastic drop in the use of *have got* across the 42 years covered by the data.

The two speakers who participate in the ongoing change in the community are those individuals whose socio-economic trajectory has remained relatively stably working class across the 42 years covered by the data. This applies to Rob, the engraver, who increases his *have got* ratios from 75% to 90%, as well as to the upper-working-class seamstress Anne, whose frequencies rise from 63% to 71%. Recent research in variationist sociolinguistics has reported a number of cases where individuals follow community-wide trends during the course of their lives—a phenomenon termed *lifespan change* (Sankoff 2006; see also Thibault and Daveluy 1989; Yaeger-Dror 1994, 1996; Sankoff and Blondeau 2007; Wagner 2012a, 2012b; Buchstaller 2015). Our two stably working-class speakers can, thus, be added to the increasing number of speakers who have been shown to modify their linguistic system after critical age (Lenneberg 1967).[12]

Three other individuals, Nelly, Fred and Aidan, fail to go along with the community-wide trend towards increasing ratios of *have got*. All three speakers reduce their *have got* frequencies during the course of their lives, slightly in the case of Nelly (17% to 14%) and Aidan (80% to 76%) and rather more drastically in the case of Fred (67% to 39%). Sankoff and Wagner (2011: 206) have termed this behaviour, where speakers retreat from ongoing community-wide change, a 'retrograde change' (see also Buchstaller 2015). Notably, Sankoff and Wagner (2006: 10) found that the speakers who withdrew from incoming variants towards older, more conservative forms in their Canadian French sample were those individuals situated 'highest on the job scale'. Similarly, in our Tyneside community, Nelly, the middle-class speaker, not only produces the lowest frequency of *have got* in the sample, she also retracts from this incoming form during her lifespan. Also, note that Fred and Aidan, who do not participate in the ongoing change towards increased ratios of *have got,* were at the beginning of their upward socio-economic trajectory when they were first recorded in 1971. Speakers' ascent up the social ladder, therefore, seems to be marked linguistically by increasingly conservative language choices.

Let us now move on to examine an aspect of the ongoing change in the system of stative possessives which the speakers' socio-economic trajectory alone is unable to explain: the use of the most innovative (and low-

Table 9.7 Use of stative possessive *got* per speaker in the 2013 panel sample

	N	%
Aidan	5	10
Anne	3	9.7
Nelly	4	9.5
Rob	2	6.7
Fred	0	0

frequency) stative possessive form *got*. Table 9.7 plots the use of *got* across all speakers in the 2013 data (the 1971 data contained only one token of *got*, produced by Rob). While overall numbers are small and need to be supported by further evidence, it is obvious that, with the exception of Fred, all our panel speakers have taken on board the newest arrival in the system.

The two stably working-class speakers, Rob and Anne, who participate in the trend towards increasing use of *have got,* also pick up incoming *got* (*N* = 2 and *N* = 3). These two individuals are, thus, 'swept along with historical language change[s in the system of stative possessives which occur] in the wider community' during their life-course—the epitome of lifespan change (Sankoff and Blondeau 2007: 562).

In contrast, the speakers who exhibit retrograde change in their use of *have got* do not pattern in unison in terms of the adoption of innovative *got*. Fred, who drastically reduced his *have got* levels in opposition to the community-wide trend, also eschews innovative *got*. We interpret this finding to mean that Fred remains staunchly conservative with respect to incoming linguistic innovations—an observation that is supported by his behaviour with respect to a range of changes in progress (Buchstaller 2016; Buchstaller et al. 2017). Aidan and Nelly, on the other hand, who exhibit diminishing frequencies of *have got*, go along with the ongoing community-wide change towards the newest innovation—stative possessive *got*. Indeed, Aidan is the most prolific user of stative possessive *got* in the 2013 panel recordings (*N* = 5, 10%). In the following, we will draw on the ethnographic information gleaned from our in-depth conversations to help us interpret the linguistic trajectories of these speakers.

First, let us consider Nelly. How can we consolidate her linguistic conservatism towards the slow incoming change towards *have got* with her adoption of the newest form in the system of stative possession? Nelly's

professional choices and personal trajectory have meant that she has had regular and close contact with children and young people. She worked as a nursery nurse and kindergarten/preparatory school teacher until the age of 28, when she quit her job to care for her own children. Since becoming a grandmother, Nelly has been closely involved in the upbringing of her grandchildren (ages 9, 15 and 16), two of whom live nearby and whom she sees regularly (see example 3).

(3) We [Nelly and her grandson] sit at the table. And we just sit and chat and you can't shut him up. And then his parents come downstairs and they'll say 'just listen to you two'. But it's amazing what I can find out about him and he finds out all sorts of things you know.

Maybe due to her lifelong regular interaction with young people, Nelly displays very positive attitudes towards innovation and change in general. At 71 years of age, she is the only woman in the sample who reports using a mobile phone. As she discusses in (4), she has also embraced internet-based technology, even more so than her husband.

(4) The mobile phone it's very handy when you have your grandchildren there you know and they want picking up or anything like that. But otherwise, well my husband he can hardly text … I've had to program my name in it so that he can just press the button and we speak … We do have the internet. We only go on it really if we want to find something out. And e-mails that's – I very seldom do it that's why I don't have an e-mail address. It's my husband's. Just occasionally I'll say 'can I just borrow it a minute'

Nelly's adoption of the most recent newcomer in the system of stative possessives might, thus, be explained by her regular interaction with young people of all ages in combination with her positive attitude towards innovations and change more generally. Indeed, Buchstaller (2015) has shown that Nelly also takes on board *be like*, another fast-spreading linguistic form that indexes [+youth].[13] She, thus, fits Chambers' (2003: 95) speaker type of the hip 'insider, …who [orients to or] is more similar to the people in the next generation … linguistically' (see also Labov 2001).

What this effectively means is that Nelly picks up on highly salient youth trends (*be like, got*), but she does not necessarily go along with slowly progressing longitudinal changes (see Buchstaller 2015).

Finally, let us consider Aidan, who enthusiastically adopted stative possessive *got* without participating in the ongoing trend towards increasing ratios of *have got*. We will discuss Aidan in contrast to Fred, since both speakers underwent a rather meteoric social ascent into a position in the educational sector. Both Fred and Aidan mention the linguistic scrutiny under which they found themselves and Fred in particular comments on the degree to which he has changed his accent as a consequence of normative pressures (see 5, consider also Chambers 2003). But as we will see below, in spite of their parallel socio-economic trajectories, Aidan and Fred assume almost diametrically opposite stances in their 2013 interview, including their tastes, political persuasions and views of the world (see Buchstaller 2015, 2016; Buchstaller et al. 2017). Fred is not only staunchly conservative in his language use, he also revels in 'old-fashioned' pastimes, such as playing the flugelhorn (in 6a), and he regrets throwing away his Bakelite music records. Indeed, in our 2013 interview, Fred repeatedly describes himself as a 'nerd [who] … doesn't like modern stuff' (see also 6a and b). While we would rather characterise Fred as a geek, that is 'someone who has odd interests, and … who can be themselves and not care what anyone thinks' (Urban Dictionary), he certainly fits Roger's (2003: 284) adopter type of the 'laggard', which describes someone whose 'point of reference … is the past and [who is] suspicious of innovation and change'.

(5) *Interviewer*: Has your accent changed?

Fred: It certainly has changed. It changed because of grammar school ehm passing the Eleven Plus and going to grammar school. Being you know one of the one of the kids from the rough end of Gateshead you know you try to fit in with the middle-class kids … I find it difficult to classify myself. I'm obviously I would say I'm from working-class origins … I think I'm probably lower middle-class I would say. I don't have a posh accent but I don't have a broad Geordie accent which of course has changed anyway since the since the sixties and seventies.

(6) a. I learned to play the cornet or the flugelhorn … I enjoy playing the classical guitar which again is a typical nerd's instrument really ehm
b. I don't know yes it may be nostalgia yeah it may be it may be yeah no when I started it wasn't vinyl it was *(pause)* Bakelite. I should have kept those as well. I used to be interested in Gilbert and Sullivan at one time again a nerdy thing I'm just obviously a nerd yeah.

As Buchstaller (2016) points out, Fred's cautious attitudes towards innovation and changes also express themselves in his conservative stance towards modern educational policy, which he thinks has become much too lackadaisical and lenient ('I've got a fairly negative view about how education has gone'). This general conservatism might explain why Fred is the only speaker in the panel sample who has not picked up on the stative possessive *got*.

Aidan, on the other hand, the community college lecturer, adopts a much more progressive stance in the 2013 interview. As a self-professed 'left-winger', he welcomes many of the far-reaching changes British society has undergone in his lifetime, including increasingly egalitarian language ideologies (7), social mobility and diversity (8). While he portrays himself as very open-minded towards novel socio-cultural achievements, he also presents himself as an educator who strives towards an egalitarian teacher-student relationship (9).

(7) Kind of BBC accent that's changed hasn't it? And it changed from the days as well I found the old days nauseating … pretentious I will call it.
(8) I'd say people are less … polarised in the attitude than their attitude now and then what they used to be … Cockney, Geordie, Brummie what the hell does it make any difference … We've got this mobility now we have social dilution.
(9) gradually … the majority of teaching staff stopped wearing ties and wore a pullover open-necked shirt that that sort of thing. An- and things did change and the attitude you were 'Mister Fulham' in the early days 'Mister Fulham this Mister Fulham that' and then that didn't lie particularly well with me. I mean you know I'm Aidan

that'll do me. And then it towards the end it changed it became 'Aidan, Aidan this Aidan that'. There was a change a social change in the attitudes of staff and pupils and students.

(10) I'm- total time shift or whatever it was 'if the guy comes' wasn't 'guy' no- nobody said 'guy' that's an Americanism isn't it?

(11) I've got a tie I've got me wedding and funeral outfits but that's the only time it goes on.

How can we use this information to explain his enthusiastic uptake of stative possessive *got*? Note that indexical load [+young] and [+US] (Buchstaller 2016) of innovative *got* is similar to another Americanism, *guy*, which Aidan points out using himself (in 10). In contrast to other US-based innovations such as intensifier *totally* or quotative *be like*, which have triggered the wrath of language purists (Buchstaller 2015), however, the lexical item *guy* and stative possessive *got* are much safer choices for 'professionals of the language' (Sankoff et al. 1989), who want to portray themselves as au fait with modern trends but are nevertheless bound by normative expectations regarding their language use (Sankoff and Laberge 1978). Therefore, Aidan might adopt such variants as part of the egalitarian and casual persona he projects, dispelling notions of stuffiness and aloofness (see also 11). Thus, stative possessive *got* is 'available at a relatively low social cost to speakers [such as Aidan], who experience substantial [linguistic] marketplace pressures' but want to appear in touch with innovative linguistic trends (Buchstaller 2016: 17).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have explored changes in the system of stative possession that currently affect a community in the North East of England. Our trend data reveal that the overall trajectory of the change mirrors other Northern settings (see Tagliamonte et al. 2010). When we scrutinise the individual adjustments in linguistic habitus our panel speakers make across their lifespan, we find that the community-wide trend towards increasing use of *have got* goes hand in hand with two cases of instability across the life-course. Notably, these patterns of language use

are distributed according to speakers' socio-economic trajectory: while stably middle-class and upwardly mobile speakers tend to eschew the trend towards increasing ratios of *have got*, speakers whose position in the socio-economic system has remained working class embrace the change as it sweeps through the community around them. This finding adds to the growing number of panel studies that report post-critical age speakers picking up (lifespan change) or, indeed, eschewing (retrograde change) changes in community norms (Sankoff 2004; Sankoff and Wagner 2006, 2011; Wagner 2008; Bigham 2010; Prichard and Tamminga 2012; Buchstaller 2015, 2016). More specifically, our research supports Sankoff and Wagner's contention that the individuals' place in socio-economic structure can be operationalised as a determinant of their (non)adoption of ongoing linguistic trends across their lives.

The change towards the newest stative possessive variant, *got*, however, cannot be easily explained by recourse to socio-economic factors. We, therefore, rely on the thick, emic information we collected during in-depth sociolinguistic interviews (Geertz 1973) in order to explicate the individual trajectories of our panel speakers. This analysis, which remains exploratory due to the low numbers involved, suggests that socially upwardly mobile speakers who are generally open-minded towards innovation and change, as well as those individuals who maintain lifelong close contacts with young speakers, tend to embrace highly salient and rapidly incoming forms, such as *got*, while simultaneously eschewing gradual, slowly incoming variants (see also Buchstaller 2015, 2016).

Our panel sample has, thus, given us the opportunity to answer important questions about the role and impact of individual factors, such as speakers' socio-economic trajectory, their personality, network ties and the way they position themselves towards ongoing societal changes in determining the amount and direction of language change across the lifespan of the individual. Overall, our findings fully agree with Bowie and Yaeger-Dror's (2015) contention that a speaker's individual life history and their personality profile are 'more influential than would be possible if the critical period were operant' (see also Sankoff 2005). The results of our study further suggest that a combination of ethnographically collected trend and panel samples, which epitomise the socio-economic changes that have affected Tyneside, allows us to trace linguistic change across the community as well as across the life of the individual.

Notes

1. The North East region encompasses a number of other towns and cities, each with their associated varieties, such as the 'Smoggie' dialect in Middlesbrough (see Llamas 2007), the 'Mackem' dialect in Sunderland (Burbano-Elizondo 2006) and the 'Sanddancers' of South Shields (Beal et al. 2012).
2. We leave it to one of our interviewees to explain the contested geographical extent of 'Geordieland': 'People have said to me in the past and I hasten to add that this is not my own opinion that eh Geordies come from north of the river and if you're from south of the river you're not a Geordie … I used to say … "you've got to be able to piss out your back window into the Tyne before you can be classified as a Geordie". And they [people from Ashington] didn't like it'. [Aidan].
3. 'The cosmopolitan city of NewcastleGateshead was formed when Newcastle and Gateshead joined to become a single visitor destination linked by the River Tyne. [It boasts visitor magnets such as] the area's famous bridges and … the Quayside, Newcastle and Gateshead's iconic destination. A favourite English city-break destination it really has something for everybody' [http://www.visitnewcastlegateshead.co.uk/site/around-the-region/newcastlegateshead] (see Beal 2009: 153). The MSN Travel website even named Newcastle 'officially the best university city in Britain' in the years 2008–2011.
4. http://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/news/north-east-news/north-east-unemployment-figures-down-8306128
5. See also Bailey et al. (1991).
6. This is a conservative estimate since there is evidence of around 65 Newcastle and 130 Gateshead interviews. The TLS plan apparently involved interviewing approximately 250 people in Newcastle and 150 in Gateshead. How many of these interviews were indeed conducted is a matter of contention and new material keeps being unearthed (see Pellowe et al. 1972; Mearns 2015).
7. Questions included were 'Is the television always running in your house?', 'Which programmes do you watch?', 'Who do you vote for?', 'Have you ever been abroad?' and 'Do you think a woman should work once she has children?'
8. Stative *have* is distinct from dynamic *have*, which indicates events rather than states, as in *He had a swim,* from *have* expressing the meaning 'experience', as in *We had a wonderful holiday,* as well as from *have* expressing

obligation, as in *I have to mow the lawn* (see Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 111).

9. This is in contrast to North American varieties of English, where research reports increasing use *have* (Biber et al. 1999; Tagliamonte et al. 2010).
10. The percentages in Tables 9.3 and 9.5 do not add up to 100% because of rounding issues due to the small sample size.
11. We will not consider Edith since she produced very low numbers and very inconsistent patterns of stative possessives across her interview.
12. How salient is the change in the system of stative possessives? An analysis across the duration of the interview provides evidence of style-shift, the usual diagnostic adduced for socio-cognitive salience. This suggests that the variation in the system does not fully fly below the radar. Indeed, when we explored the data for signs of style shifting, we noted that Anne and Rob slightly increased their rates of *have got* across the length of the 2013 interview (from 66% to 75% for Anne and from 78% to 95% for Rob). This might suggest that the variant has achieved at least a moderate level of socio-cognitive salience amongst these two speakers, enough to allow them to modulate their linguistic system in the direction of ongoing trends (see Buchstaller 2016).
13. Already in 1971, Nelly uses two tokens of *like* in bridging contexts (Heine 2002), which do not occur in the canonical quotative frame but which, nevertheless, 'foreshadow […] a quote' (Gumperz 1982: 47). Whether these occurrences should be considered 'embryonic variants' (Gordon and Trudgill 1999) of quotative *be like* or whether they are already instances of full-blown quotation is largely a matter of interpretation (Buchstaller 2014). In any case, instances such as (a) and (b) are on the grammaticalisation path towards quotative function, and Nelly is clearly a frontrunner in their use for her generation (Edith produces one such token).

(a) Nelly_1971: Er saying things you know like 'Haway man let's away yem'.
(b) Nelly_1971: But more-or-less the way I speak and ending their words properly, like '[ɪŋ] end[ɪŋ]' you know, not saying 'end[ɪn] end[ɪn]' their words.

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