

## **Abstract zur IDS-Jahrestagung 2012**

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### **FROM 'MULTI-ETHNIC ADOLESCENT HETEROGLOSSIA' TO 'CONTEMPORARY URBAN VERNACULARS'**

Research on crossing and stylisation in the everyday speech of young people in multi-ethnic urban areas of Britain during the 1980s and 1990s pointed to the emergence of new ethnicities with social class underpinnings, and there is compelling evidence that these mixed language practices have now been a stable feature of the urban working class sociolinguistic landscape for at least 30 years. How far, though, are they confined to youth? Are they really only transient age-specific phenomena, as terms like 'youth language' imply? This paper presents some evidence to the contrary. Focusing on post-adolescent and middle-aged informants in West London during 2008 & 2009, it describes the enduring significance of the styles initially identified with youth, examines the place that they now occupy within the informants' repertoires more generally, and attempts to settle some of the terminological dispute that characterises recent sociolinguistic research in this field, using Agha's theory of 'register' to try to reposition the notion of 'vernacular'.