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# IRISH IDENTITIES

SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVES

*Edited by Raymond Hickey,  
Carolina P. Amador-Moreno*

LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL LIFE

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## Irish Identities

# Language and Social Life



Editors

David Britain

Crispin Thurlow

## Volume 18

# Irish Identities

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Sociolinguistic Perspectives

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Raymond Hickey  
Carolina P. Amador-Moreno

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# Preface

The present volume has its origins in a special topic panel at the Sociolinguistics Symposium in Murcia in 2016, organised by Carolina Amador-Moreno and Raymond Hickey, and entitled 'Irish English and the construction of identity'. The aim was to explore some of the issues that affect the relationship between language and society in the Irish context. By bringing together some of the central strands of what is a multi-faceted and multilayered relationship of language and society in Ireland, a volume was compiled in which the main focus has been on how identity is and has been signalled through the use of English in Ireland.

In the production of this book the editors received much support from the editorial staff at de Gruyter Mouton, specifically Lara Wysong and Rebecca Novack to whom we are grateful. Our gratitude also extends, of course, to the Bern University editors of the series Language and Social Life, Prof. David Britain, for his interest in our project, and especially to Prof. Crispin Thurlow, for his continuing enthusiasm for the project and his unfailing encouragement throughout the entire process.

Raymond Hickey  
Carolina P. Amador-Moreno  
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## **I Historical and contemporary dimensions of identity**



Raymond Hickey and Carolina P. Amador-Moreno

# 1 Linguistic identities in Ireland – Contexts and issues

## 1 Introduction

Identity is the property of uniqueness which pertains to a thing or being. For humans, our identity is the unique set of features which makes us individuals and different from others. But identity is also a concept, a view that each of us has of ourselves as unique humans. The properties which contribute to our uniqueness cover a whole range of features, and language is a central one of these. Not just what language we speak but how each of us realises this.

On the smallest social level, identity applies to individuals. But the concept also pertains to collections of individuals. On an ascending scale one can recognise at least the following: group identity, community identity, regional and national identity. The unique properties which constitute identity thus apply on different levels and on each of these the properties not only serve to form identity but to delimit one collection of individuals from others on the same level.

Identity has been defined as ‘a continuous unchanging property throughout existence’.<sup>1</sup> However, the view that it is somehow fixed, presumably in adolescence, is open to interpretation. Rather one’s identity is constantly being renegotiated as one proceeds through one’s life. Major changes to one’s social and private environment can trigger a redefinition of one’s identity, as can professional advancement, and language plays a role here as well. It is known from lifespan studies (Sankoff 2018) that the language of an individual is by no means static over one’s lifetime.

In addition to change determined by advancing age there is also the complex of identity projection, the act of determining one’s social persona, on a linguistic level by making language choices (Joseph 2010), largely unconscious, which enables others to attribute an identity to an individual. Ethnographic studies, in the vein of what is called ‘third wave sociolinguistics’, have shown that this is indeed the case (Eckert 2000, 2012).

While individual speakers each have a unique linguistic identity (Johnstone 2010), comparable to our unique fingerprints (Llamas and Watt 2010: 1), nonetheless speakers partake in a collective identity of the speech community to which they belong by performing ‘acts of identity’ in the sense of Le Page and Tabouret

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<sup>1</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, Second edition.

Keller (1985). Such a community can vary in size, by class, in social orientation, and speakers can not just partake in the community, but also react against its norms, both non-linguistic and linguistic. There is thus a tension between the individual and the community to which they belong, wish to belong to or wish to dissociate themselves from. For the former case linguistic identity is largely accepted from the community and in the latter the identity is generally constructed or alternative identities are adopted. In this sense, individual identity is ‘emergent’ in the sense of Bucholtz and Hall (2010:19) .

In any linguistic community there will be certain features which are indexical of the identity the individual is trying to project (Silverstein 2003), or of the group to which they are striving to associate with. For instance, the recent lowering of short front vowels in Dublin English (Hickey 2018) is indicative of young cosmopolitan female speech whereas the use of a high back vowel [ʊ] in words like *but*, *done*, *fun*, is indexical of strongly local Dublin English.

## 1.1 Social factors and linguistic identity

Considering that the choices speakers make in the use of linguistic variables tend to reflect the construction of identity and to identify speakers as members or non-members of different social groups, the chapters in the current volume deal centrally with social factors such as age, gender, social status and socio-economic class, ethnic identity, etc. In this sense, the volume is intended as a ‘site of encounter’ where various research perspectives have come together. The chapters explore new identities, the return of older ones, and the transformation of existing ones by using data from different contexts such as present-day spoken corpora, historical and fictional sources (including literary representations, comics, TV and film, etc.) as well as sociolinguistic questionnaires.

The issue of linguistic identity has many seemingly contradictory and paradoxical facets. In Irish history, linguistic identity involved several languages, initially Irish but also Old Norse and Norman French and later early forms of English. With the movement from the later Middle Ages into the early Modern Period, the manifestation of linguistic identity came to be realised by either the Irish or the English language. The fortunes of the two languages varied over the centuries but with the dawn of the modern era, from about 1700 onwards, the dominance of the English language could not be denied and continued to increase steadily leading to the situation in present-day Ireland where only a tiny minority of the population still speak Irish as a native language (Hickey 2011c).

In this volume the position of the heritage language Irish (Walsh, this volume; Mac Mathúna, this volume)<sup>2</sup> is considered, as are the different varieties of English spoken in geographically and socially diverse parts of the island. Language as a vehicle of national and cultural identity is centre-stage, as is the representation of identity in various media types (Ó hIfernáin 2000) and text genres. In addition, the self-image of the Irish as reflected in various self-portrayals and references, e.g. in humorous texts, is dealt with (Walshe, this volume). Identity as an aspect of both public and private life in contemporary Ireland, and its role in the gender interface (Jones 2016), is scrutinised in several contributions.

The present collection is aimed at both scholars and students interested in language and identity in the multi-layered situation of Ireland, both historically and at present. By addressing general issues surrounding the dynamic and vibrant research area of identity it reaches out to readers beyond Ireland who are concerned with the pivotal role this factor plays in present-day societies.

Edwards (2009) remarks that identity has become a popular term in many areas of cultural studies, ‘useful precisely because of its definitional nuances’ (Edwards 2009: 16). A standard, if somewhat traditional, definition of identity is found in the Oxford English Dictionary which defines it as follows: ‘to regard (a person, oneself) as *sharing the same characteristics*, interests, principles, experiences, etc., with; *feel (oneself) to be a part of*; model (oneself) on’ (italics ours, RH&CAM). In linguistics, identity refers to the choices speakers make within the envelope of variation which their language provides them in their immediate social environment (Myers Scotton 1980, Fuller 2008). These choices express both the personae of speakers as well as their wish to associate with others around them. Within this framework speakers construct their linguistic identity by the manner in which they speak and avail of sociolinguistically significant variables at their disposal (White 2006; Barron and Pandarova 2016; Clancy and Vaughan 2012; Corrigan 2015). Thus identity is a sociolinguistic means by which speakers achieve association with others, be the latter a social class, a social network, a community of practice or indeed a more intimate, family network (Clancy 2016), for example. Given that many speakers may express their wish for association via similar means, relative sameness can arise in the speech of delimitable social groups, this fact showing that identity refers to both a process and a state.

There have been many advances in the consideration of sociolinguistically determined identity, see the contributions in Preece (ed., 2016) and Nortier and

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<sup>2</sup> See further Ní Laoire (2016) on code-switching between Irish and English; and Ó hIfernáin (2014).

Svendsen (eds, 2015), for example, but the issue of identity has not yet formed the focus of study in the context of language in Ireland (Hickey ed., 2011b). In a country where there are two official languages (Irish and English), many regional varieties (Peters 2016) of both languages exist and for a large proportion of foreign-born residents in Ireland, linguistic identity is a malleable and ongoing matter. This identity is closely associated with Irishness and what it means to claim one is Irish. Linguistically, this not only involves recognition and acceptance of a specific accent and particular grammatical patterns but also participation in the pragmatics of Irish English, a field which has been the object of intensive research in recent years (Barron and Schneider 2005; Amador-Moreno 2010; Amador-Moreno, McCafferty and Vaughan, eds 2015; Migge 2015; Murphy 2015; O'Keeffe and Adolphs 2008; O'Keeffe and Amador-Moreno 2009). Indeed there are various research approaches which justify placing pragmatically defined linguistic identity centre-stage with a focus on Ireland, offering a site of encounter for a variety of scholars who have brought and continue to bring their expertise to bear on this field.

## 1.2 Determining speaker identity and perspective

There are basically two ways of determining speaker identity and perspective. For present-day forms of language speakers can be interviewed, either directly asking them about their own conception of linguistic identity or by asking them to assess their reactions to other speakers and hence gain insights into their perspectives on variation in their native language. This approach ties up with work on perceptual dialectology (Cramer and Montgomery, eds, 2016).

With previous stages of the language this is obviously not possible so that speaker identity must be reconstructed by the linguist by (i) examining metalinguistic comments or (ii) deducing it from language use. Comments by speakers can be used to determine their perspective on language use by others.

## 1.3 Different kinds of identity

The various kinds of identity, which can be recognised for any society, let alone one as historically and presently complex as that of Ireland, are characterised by much overlapping and interlocking. Nonetheless, for the purposes of classification and to render issues more recognisable we suggest treating types of identity as separate to begin with, all the while bearing their relatedness in mind. At the very least, eight types of linguistic identity can be identified:

- 1) National identity    2) Cultural identity
- 3) Regional identity    4) Class identity
- 5) Ethnic identity    6) Religious identity
- 7) Group identity    8) Personal identity

### 1.3.1 National identity

National identity (Wright 2012) is primarily with a state or major region and is often linked to politics, a particularly complex issue in Ireland (Cronin 2011). For the majority of speakers born to families with a background in Ireland their national linguistic identity is expressed by the type of English they speak. Irish-background, native speakers of English in general no longer speak the Irish language but use varieties of English as the carriers of their linguistic identity.<sup>3</sup> These varieties are not uniform across the country. However, there are a sufficient number of common features for individuals to be recognised by outsiders as Irish (a key function of linguistic identity). Here are four salient features: the Irish never use a retracted /ɑ:/ in the BATH lexical set (Wells 1982) and have a retracted realisation in the STRUT set along with a fricative /t/ intervocalically and word-finally before a pause and generally use dental stops for fricatives. There are two significant exceptions to this generalisation. The first is formed by those Irish people who are native speakers of Irish (Hickey 2011c: 9–25) or who, while not native speakers, identify linguistically with the Irish language by using it in their daily lives (O'Rourke and Walsh 2015). The second group is that of newer immigrants into Ireland who have acquired Irish English as a second language (Migge 2012; Diskin and Regan 2015, 2017) but whose primary linguistic identity lies with their first language (cf. Kobiałka 2016, more generally Mendoza-Denton and Osborne 2010), see following section.

### 1.3.2 Cultural identity

A different issue is that of broader cultural identity. Here one sees that the Irish language looms large in the background and many individuals in Ireland are ready to claim that Irish is their native language in the sense that it is seen as

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<sup>3</sup> Increasingly, language choice determines identity within the traditional Irish-speaking districts (collectively labelled the *Gaeltacht* in Irish) as virtually all individuals are bilingual and have both Irish and English at their disposal.

central to their cultural identity as Irish people (Hickey 2009) but, importantly, are not in a position to use it in everyday conversation. This attitude can be detrimental to the use of Irish as a vernacular language: if a vague claim of identity with the language – without using it – is regarded as sufficient for the purposes of cultural identity then people may feel that there is no need to speak the language or at least not as a fully functional mode of communication. This attitude is often behind the use of the so-called *cúpla focal* ‘couple of words’ by many speakers of English to flavour their speech with words from Irish without actually switching to this language (Kallen 2013: 38–45).

In addition, personal identity applies to individuals speaking English as a second language (Miller 2010) where there is a choice of language and not just of forms within a single language (Regan, Diskin and Martyn eds, 2016). The issue of adopting Irish English norms, or to what extent, among recent immigrants to Ireland, is an issue which has been the subject of new research, see Diskin and Regan (2017).

### 1.3.3 Regional identity

Within Ireland there are many features which help to pinpoint a speaker geographically. People from Cork or Kerry have an undulating intonation (Lucek and Garrett, this volume). Those from Dublin retain the /ʊ/ in *cut*, *done*, etc. (Hickey 2005; Kallen 2013) The Northerners have a fronted /ʉ/ and an offglide in the FACE lexical set (McCafferty 2001: 157–166; Corrigan 2010: 35–36). Of all types of identity, the regional form is probably the most traditional as it shows how speakers express their geographical rootedness, their sense of place, in language.

### 1.3.4 Class identity

This is the most difficult type to get a handle on in the context of Ireland. While the issue of social class (Block 2016) differs from the system known to operate/have operated in other English-speaking countries (Farr 2005: 206), it is clear that there are social class differences in Ireland and these are reflected in language use. The features perceived of as characteristic of working-class or rural speech are stigmatised, e.g. the use of alveolar for dental stops in the THIN and THIS lexical sets. There are grammatical indicators of class as well. For instance, the use of an habitual with *do*, e.g. *She does be worrying about the children*, is stigmatised but not the use of the *after* perfective or the resultative

perfective as in *He's after spilling the beer* and *They have the work done* respectively (Hickey 2007: 207+234).

### 1.3.5 Ethnic identity

Ethnic identity (García 2012; Lytra 2016) in the Irish context would involve the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland, where ethnicity and religion, as a social construct, is intertwined with politics (Mitchell 2006). But it also involves immigrant groups throughout the island of Ireland. Inasmuch as the latter groups are from outside Europe, from Africa or Asia one could also speak of racial identity. It is a moot question whether these different ethnicities in present-day Ireland will develop focussed varieties of English in the coming decades.

### 1.3.6 Religious identity

The issues of religious identity (Souza 2016) in Ireland is not a theological one but is based on ethnicity. This issue is of greatest relevance in Northern Ireland (Mitchell 2006) which has a majority of Protestants but where a sizeable section of the population is Catholic. In general, the Protestants and Catholics cannot be differentiated solely by linguistic features, more by discourse or paralinguistic cues. However, McCafferty (2001) did find small differences between Protestant and Catholic speech in his sociolinguistic investigation of English in Derry.

Historically, the Irish language has been linked to the Catholic church (see Doyle 2018) and Irish English retains many religious references (Farr and Murphy 2009) to this day despite the diminished status of the church in present-day Ireland.

### 1.3.7 Group identity

Groups on a level smaller than region or class are not easy to recognise in present-day Irish society. The best example is probably that of the travelling community. The Travellers (Kirk and Ó Baoill eds, 2002) are a minority who have lived on the margins of Irish society for many centuries (Ó hAodha 2011). While many contemporary sources refer to the Irish Travellers as an ethnic group, they are not recognised as such in Ireland. However, despite the fact that they are not ethnically separate from other Irish, they are distinct from the surrounding Irish

population due to a range of differing cultural characteristics, and they generally speak the variety of Irish English in the area in which they primarily move. They do, however, have distinctive vocabulary items deriving from Shelta (Hickey 2007: 379–383; see also Rieder 2018), the former jargon of the travelling community. The term ‘Traveller’ includes also the ‘settled’ (i.e. non-Travelling) community, which is also perceived as an outsider group in Irish society. Until the formation of a more multicultural society in Ireland recently, the travellers constituted, as argued by Ó hAodha (2011), the ‘Other’ for mainstream Irish society. It is possible for other communities of practice to exist or to arise which would have combinations of features not found in other groups.

### 1.3.8 Personal identity

There is a linguistic aspect to personal identity and this is often expressed by choices from the existing linguistic repertoire of forms available in varieties of Irish English, especially features which are part of ongoing language change (Hickey 2018). In this respect personal identity is closely connected with the projection of a speaker’s persona within a group, a subject which is central to third wave studies in sociolinguistics (see above), or with self-representation in the media as is shown in a number of papers in the present volume.

Personal identity also includes gender identity which has a linguistic dimension inasmuch as certain features of Irish English, especially those of recent young people’s speech, are largely confined to females (Hickey 2018), see further section 2.2 below.

## 1.4 How different types of identity relate to each other

The separation of different types of identity as attempted above is an undertaking with the goal of recognizing different strands in linguistic identity. But in reality these strands merge and intertwine. Hence the linguistic choices which characterise the projected linguistic identity of a speaker or speakers will rest on a combination of the types listed above. Furthermore, speakers can show relatively shallow linguistic identity, by using supraregional speech (Hickey 2013) which is close to an unspecified standard. This is true of many Irish people and nonetheless, national identity features – diagnostic features of Irish English – can always be found. Below this level regional and/or social features come to the fore with ethnic and group features coming in after

these. There would appear to be a hierarchical order to identity features, e.g. ethnic features in Derry (McCafferty 2001) are subsumed under regional features which separate northern from southern forms of Irish English. Again the density of features diagnostic of different types of identity are an indication of the depth of identity speakers express via their linguistic choices, made unconsciously or consciously.

## 2 Linguistic identity and language shift

Linguistic identity can survive language shift (Uí Chollatáin 2016) and did so in Ireland. The shift from Irish to English was preceded by a long period of language contact and bilingualism which had linguistic consequences (Mac Mathúna, this volume). The majority of the population shifted from Irish to English in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the greatest push to English taking place in the second half of the nineteenth century. Doyle (2018) draws attention to how political events in nineteenth-century Ireland had a significant impact on the general perception and status of the Irish and English languages. In the first half of the century, public life was dominated by Daniel O'Connell. 'As the commanding influence of his generation, O'Connell has been assigned a major role in the language shift, mainly because he has been portrayed as somebody who could have saved Irish, and instead used his influence to urge his devoted followers to abandon it.' (Doyle 2018: 360). As Doyle argues this is a simplistic way of looking at the language shift. O'Connell did not have an ideological agenda with respect to Irish, and there were other factors such as the role of the Church (Whelan 2005: 142), the progress of the railway connections between the two major English-speaking cities, Belfast and Dublin (Fitzgerald 2005: 21), and the growth of emigration, all of which contributed to the language shift.

The interaction of all of these factors and the resulting language shift are central to the discussion of linguistic identity in the context at hand. While it cannot be denied that Irish English is a contact variety, there is a lot more to this variety than the mere correspondence between features of grammar, vocabulary and phonetics. There are pragmatic reasons why certain features have survived (Amador-Moreno 2019) and there are also identity issues which concern the preservation of lexical, phonetic and grammatical features and which cannot be explained without looking at their context directly. Irish people managed to shift their linguistic identity from the variety of Irish they spoke to the form of English which they were exposed to. However, at the phonological level, for

instance, in no case did Irish people shift from Irish to anything like Received Pronunciation (the norm of southern British English pronunciation, Cruttenden 2014).

## 2.1 Transferring identity from Irish to Irish English

Before the language shift from Irish to English, and to a much more limited extent today, linguistic identity was realised via various regionally determined dialects of the Irish language (Hickey 2011a, 2011b). In the literature dealing with the language shift in Ireland authors tend to talk about the decline of the Irish language, rather than the rise of English. The shift to English from this perspective has not been seen as a gain, as Doyle (2018) points out. This is a remarkable view, considering that Ireland and Irish identity have been shaped around the English language for a long time, and that much of what has dominated Ireland's political and economic spheres in recent times has revolved around the link that English provides with North America and Britain.

It is a fact that the Irish successfully transferred their linguistic identity from the Irish language of their forebears to forms of English which they now speak and which are sufficiently distinct from other varieties of the language for them to function as the bearers of an Irish linguistic identity (Hickey 2016). This has happened in the context of a variety continuum, both geographical and social in Ireland: It is the supraregional variety of Irish English (Hickey 2007) which represents the ceiling, in terms of non-local language, and which is still sufficiently different from varieties of British English to act as a carrier of Irish identity. Indeed, the 'Irish' nature of this supraregional speech has increased with the exonormative reorientation which set in after Irish independence in the early twentieth century (see Hickey, this volume, for further discussion).

## 2.2 Linguistic identity before and after independence

The linguistic identity of Irish English would appear to have been affected by independence in 1922 and its aftermath (Hickey, this volume). Audio records of Irish people born during the nineteenth century show some features which would nowadays be regarded as very 'posh' English, cf. *country* [kʌntri] but it was not completely so, e.g. the recordings show a monophthong for the GOAT vowel (Hickey 2017). This would imply that Irish English became more Irish in the decades after independence with less exposure to English pronunciation models within Ireland.

## 2.3 Linguistic identity and gender: Separate or linked?

By and large the linguistic identity of both genders is similar in that there does not seem to be any linguistic norm in Ireland which is solely the domain of women or men. True, men tend to use more dialectal forms (as elsewhere in Western societies) and women tend to be at the forefront of change so that the new pronunciations of the past two decades have appeared and continue to appear in female speech to begin with, e.g. a centralised diphthong in GOAT (Hickey 2005: 90) or a lowered vowel in DRESS (Hickey 2018). But there are further gender-related aspects of language use in Ireland as Murphy (2010) has shown in her discussion of discourse-level features such as hedges, vague category markers, amplifiers, boosters and taboo language in the age- and gender-differentiated use of Irish English.

## 3 Structure of volume

Given the long-standing interconnections between the Irish and English languages in Ireland it seemed appropriate for the current volume to solicit contributions which share a focus on either or both of the languages. The first contribution (Walsh) examines the extent to which the Irish language is still a carrier of linguistic identity for an admittedly small section of contemporary Irish society. The background to the present-day situation of partial bilingualism in Irish and English is considered in detail by Mac Mathúna in his contribution.

The advent of modern Ireland can be said to have begun with independence in 1922. Educated middle-class individuals who acquired English before that date shows accents which are quite close to British accents of the time (Hickey 2017) while those who grew up in post-independence Ireland show a clear endonormatively oriented pronunciation of Irish English as shown in the contribution by Hickey.

The background to the modern era cannot always be determined in terms of cultural and linguistic identity, but one data source does allow one to draw certain conclusions, namely emigrant letters (Amador-Moreno and McCafferty 2012, Hickey ed., 2019; McCafferty 2016, 2017; Pietsch 2015) which encapsulate the Irish linguistic and local cultural experience in a singularly convincing way as demonstrated in the contribution by Amador-Moreno and Ávila-Ledesma, who offer a convincing account using the *Corpus of Irish English Correspondence* (McCafferty and Amador-Moreno 2012) to provide objective evidence for their hypotheses.

Ireland in the twenty-first century embodies both inherited views on language and new developments which reflect the youth of contemporary society. The attitudes towards vernacular varieties and their perception today is the subject of Lucek and Garnett's contribution, similar in vein to the examination of linguistic landscapes in Ireland found in Kallen (2010, 2014). The specific sociophonetic value of that salient feature of Irish English pronunciation, fricative /t/, forms the focus of the contribution by Schulte, whereas the role of linguistic identity in private contexts is the focus of that by Clancy which he constructs around his own corpus of intimate talk (Vaughan and Clancy 2016).

Apart from the linguists' view there is also the manner in which a community perceives its own linguistic identity. This is often manifest in jokes and humour, for instance, and can offer an additional perspective on identity, see the contribution by Walshe which continues on his work on Irish English in the media (Walshe 2009, 2013, 2016). The role which humour plays in the representation of identities in diaspora contexts is the subject of the contribution by Vaughan and Moriarty.

Another realm of society which is scrutinised in this volume is that of advertising, specifically radio advertising, where O'Sullivan examines the representation of English English accents as well as traditional and more recent Irish English accents, continuing work in this sphere which began over a decade ago, see Kelly-Holmes (2005), for example, and which has continued since (O'Sullivan 2013, 2015; O'Sullivan and Kelly-Holmes 2015).

The extent to which 'new' Irishness is shown in contemporary Irish fiction is the focus of the contribution by Terrazas-Calero which analyses the perception of Irishness among contemporary Irish youth.

Finally, there is a consideration of language identity in a traditional community of Northern Ireland, Ulster Scots (Hickey 2011b), which is presented in detail by Wolf.

## 4 Conclusion

Linguistic identity is a continually evolving phenomenon whereby speakers use a variety which uniquely identifies them in a spectrum of language forms. Nowadays Irish linguistic identity is expressed via forms of English, all of which are clearly recognisable as from Ireland and hence sufficiently delimited from other forms of English. For urban Irish English an additional social dimension arose (see contributions in Hickey ed., 2016) with vernacular varieties offering a unique profile for many city dialects such as those in Dublin (Hickey 2005) or

Cork. The extent to which ethnicity is reflected in language differences was investigated for Derry by Kevin McCafferty some years ago (McCafferty 2001) and adds a further dimension to identity issues, one which is not present in the Republic of Ireland or only with the non-Irish born, the so-called New Irish or non-nationals (Diskin and Regan 2015).

Linguistic identity manifests itself on different levels of language. For instance, on the phonetic level there are newly adopted features from American English (Hickey 2016) and, with these, young people in Ireland today have been developing new profiles for the sound system of Irish English. This is true on the grammatical level (Filppula 2012; van Hattum 2012; Ronan 2005; Siemund and Beal 2011) and not least on that of pragmatics where Irish English has a unique profile (Barron 2017) vis à vis other varieties of the English language and which it continues to maintain. The use of specific discourse markers (Amador-Moreno 2005, 2010: 119–123; Vaughan and Clancy 2011; Murphy and Farr 2012) in colloquial speech and in fictional representations (Amador-Moreno 2016; Amador-Moreno and Terrazas-Calero 2017; Barron 2017), and indeed in translations (Cronin 2011), attest to the vitality of this key variety of English and the strong function it serves in contemporary Irish society as a carrier of identity for its speakers.

It is hoped that the chapters in the present volume will contribute to an understanding of the dynamics of linguistic identity in today's world (Evans ed., 2015) by highlighting aspects of the Irish context which are of general relevance, e.g. to post-colonial societies (Sandhu and Higgins 2016) of the anglophone world, or other regions of Britain (see McColl Millar 2010). Linguistic identity will continue to be renegotiated and reinvented by speakers and their communities as we advance through the digital age (Darvin 2016) attaining new means and new channels for expressing our uniqueness through language.

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John Walsh

## 2 The Irish language and contemporary Irish identity

### 1 Introduction

The Irish language continues to play a key role in contemporary Irish identity despite, or perhaps because of its marginal position in Irish society. Due to its status as a core subject in the education system, knowledge of Irish is claimed by nearly 40 per cent of the population of the Republic (over 1.7 million people) although the actual number of regular speakers is much smaller. Levels of knowledge and use of Irish are much higher in the language's historical heartland, the Gaeltacht, but even there Irish continues to decline as a community language (Ó Giollagáin et al 2007).

Repeated sociolinguistic surveys have shown that although Irish is marginal for most Irish people, it is viewed as an important element of national identity. Later surveys also included data from Northern Ireland where, as expected, support for the role of Irish in identity is much weaker (Darmody and Daly 2015; Hickey 2009).

This study begins by describing briefly the demography of Irish and then elaborates a theoretical framework based on critical sociolinguistic studies of language and (ethnic) identity. It goes on to review statistical research conducted on attitudes towards Irish since the 1970s. This data is by its nature very general and does not discriminate on the basis of language competence or use. For instance, it does not explain the attitudes of the minority of active Irish speakers to language and identity. Therefore, the remainder of this study focuses on qualitative data gathered as part of an ongoing project on one section of that minority described as 'new speakers' of Irish, fluent and regular speakers who were not raised in the Gaeltacht with Irish as their primary language and from whose ranks many language activists are drawn (O'Rourke and Walsh 2015; Walsh et al 2015). Among the foci of the project are identities and ideologies expressed by new speakers in relation to Irish. This study provides insights into how such topics are navigated by one core group of fluent and committed Irish speakers, 'a minority within a minority' who exhibit strong language loyalty (Edwards 2016: 501).

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## 2 Sociolinguistic context of Irish

Although the ‘national’ and ‘first official’ language, according to Article 8 the 1937 Constitution, Irish is a minoritised language in its own nation-state. It is not widely used outside small pockets of the Gaeltacht, a series of scattered districts representing the remnants of the language’s historical heartland, and loose networks of speakers elsewhere in the country. However, the language retains a symbolic cultural importance for most Irish people due to decades of promotional activities by the state since 1922 and the acceptance of the discourse of Irish as the ‘national’ language, even though it is not widely spoken (Ó Riagáin 1997). In Northern Ireland, the importance of Irish is far more contested but is salient as an identity marker for nationalists, in the context of repression by the British government until relatively recently (Muller 2010).

The early decades of the Irish state were characterised by a dual policy of ‘Gaelicisation’, or the promotion of Irish among the majority of the population who no longer spoke it, and its preservation in the Gaeltacht where Irish was still spoken as a community language (Ó Riagáin 2008). Language shift to English continues to advance in the Gaeltacht to the point that the demise of Irish as community language has been predicted (Ó Giollagáin et al. 2007; Ó Giollagáin and Charlton 2015). Outside the Gaeltacht, the language-in-education policy that has made Irish a core school subject for almost a century has boosted the number of speakers, but regular use of Irish remains low.

Census returns on Irish indicate that a significant minority claims knowledge of it but that it is seldom used outside the education system. In the Republic of Ireland census of 2016, 1,761,420 people (39.8 per cent) reported that they could speak Irish, but only 73,803 people (1.7 per cent) – two-thirds of whom are located outside the Gaeltacht – said that they used it daily outside the education system. Both knowledge and use of Irish are highest in the Gaeltacht, where 63,664 people (66.3 per cent) reported that they could speak Irish but only 20,586 (21.4 per cent) said that they spoke it daily outside education, a decline of 11 per cent since 2011 (Central Statistics Office 2017). Statistics for Northern Ireland are based on different questions about self-reported language skills rather than frequency of use. In 2011 approximately 66,000 people (4 per cent) claimed the ability to speak, read, understand and write Irish, the highest number of skills possible and therefore probably the most competent speakers (Northern Ireland Statistical and Research Agency 2012).

### 3 Theoretical framework: Language, identity and nationalism

The debate about language, identity and nationalism has a long history and has been amplified in the modern era by the state-building project and the attendant process of language standardisation and its propagation by education and the media. Dorian documents the growing ‘ideology of contempt’ (1998: 7) towards minoritised languages that developed during this period and further marginalised speech forms deviating from favoured metropolitan norms and their associated ‘national’ identities. Joseph argues that national identities garnered support among the general populace as a direct result of their construction and promotion as ‘national’, pre-existing entities by nationalist impulses during the state-building process (2015: 19). Lytra concurs, stating that the ‘understanding of a language as the marker of an inherited national identity and allegiance is reinforced by states and their representatives through language policy and language planning efforts’ (2016: 134). Such efforts are founded on the notion of languages as discrete, bounded entities that can be fully ‘modernised’ and elevated to the status of ‘national’ languages serving recognisable and homogenous ethnic groups that are distinguishable from other such groups.

According to their traditional representation, ethnic groups have been viewed ‘as internally consistent with clearly defined boundaries delineated by language, culture, heredity and other attributes’ (Lytra 2016: 134). Such a view is consistent with an essentialist view of ethnicity that sees it as static and fixed, and with the parallel ideology of nationalism that promoted the ideal of ‘one nation, one language’. It stands in contrast to a social constructionist approach that conceives ethnicity as fluid and subject to negotiation, a view that has gained ground in the shifting identitarian sands of late modernity. Lytra quotes Harris and Rampton’s (2003) analysis of both approaches, in particular their discussion of the ‘strategic’ nature of social constructionism that allows individuals different options of self-identification: (a) embracing and developing their ethnocultural or linguistic identity, (b) distancing themselves from it or (c) emphasising identities of others (sometimes negatively). To this they add a fourth option, ‘(d) taking on someone else’s ethnicity, or creating a new one’, which involves ‘processes of mixing, blurring and cross-identification’ and foregrounds ‘issues like authenticity, entitlement and expropriation’ (Harris and Rampton 2003: 5, quoted by Lytra 2015: 134). In discussing ethnicity and language among British-born South Asian youths, Harris describes how such people engage in complex adaptation and adoption strategies rather than simply jettisoning their primary, historical identity and replacing it with a British one.

He writes that they are ‘shaped by an everyday low-key Britishness with new inflections’ (2006: 1–2). The opening up of additional identity options and the ability to cross ethnolinguistic lines is relevant to research on ‘new speakers’ of various languages including Irish (see below).

Predictions by partisans of modernisation theory that nationalism would fade away have not come to pass and since the 1980s various European minority languages have begun to seek recognition, often in parallel with political campaigns for self-government or independence (Ó Riagáin 2012). Therefore, rather than focusing on the state nationalisms of old, more recent academic work on language and ethnicity has been strongly characterised by research into indigenous and minority language contexts often operating at sub-state level. A ‘language revitalization paradigm’ in Europe and elsewhere in the late twentieth century largely adopted Fishman’s approach to ‘Reversing Language Shift’, which was based on the ideal of reconstructing the ‘native speaker’ community (Fishman 1991; ed., 2001). Such an ideological disposition accepted without question many of the historical tenets of linguistics such as the assumption of languages as bounded and the paramount importance of maintaining intergenerational transmission by ‘native speakers’ (O’Rourke et al 2015: 10–11).

However this revitalisation paradigm has been challenged in recent times by the field of critical sociolinguistics, which questions foundational concepts of linguistics and calls attention to the relationship between language and power. A strand of research within this field is devoted to studying what have been called ‘new speakers’, fluent and regular speakers of a language that was not their primary language of socialisation in early childhood in communities where it was dominant. The minority language movements who adopted the Fishmanian approach to revitalisation have themselves become increasingly characterised by larger numbers of ‘new speakers’, as more people adopt the languages as a result of policy initiatives. Given its critique of historical tendencies towards hierarchisation of types of speakers, the ‘new speaker’ label is not an attempt to divide speakers into rigid categories but rather a lens through which to analyse and understand the experiences and practices of people who adopt languages other than those in which they were socialised in early childhood. It is also an attempt to move beyond deficit-laden and hierarchical labels such as ‘non-native speaker’, ‘semi-speaker’, ‘learner’, ‘L1/L2’, ‘terminal speaker’, ‘last speaker’ etc. (O’Rourke et al 2015: 9–12). This branch of research straddles new speakers of indigenous minority languages such as Irish, Welsh and Basque as well as immigrants and transnational workers who adopt additional languages as a result of their mobility. The author of this study has been involved in recent years in a European research network on this topic (see [www.nspk.org.uk](http://www.nspk.org.uk)).

Research on new speakers also draws heavily on the concept of linguistic *muda*, which originated in the critical sociolinguistics of Catalan (and the Iberian peninsula in general). It refers to critical junctures in speakers' linguistic biographies when they change their practice substantially toward the target language (for analyses of Catalan, Basque, Galician and Irish, see Pujolar and Puigdevall 2015; Ortega et al 2015; O'Rourke and Ramallo 2015 and Puigdevall et al 2018). The Catalan verb *mudar* means to change or to transform and *muda* (plural *mudes*) is its noun. *Mudes* are transformational moments in linguistic practice and often coincide with a fundamental shift in self-perception due to the speaker's performance of an additional identity associated with the new language (Joseph 2016: 24). The concept of *muda* is consistent with the constructionist view of language and identity and creates an additional 'strategic' option suggested by Harris and Rampton above.

While most Irish historians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have not engaged critically over the past fifty years with the decline of Irish (see Walsh 2012a: 4–13 and 69–112), a notable exception is J. J. Lee who undertakes a lengthy analysis of the relationship between Irish, identity and national development in his milestone study of Ireland since 1912 (1989: 658–674).<sup>1</sup> Underlining the centrality of language to identity, Lee argues that 'but for the loss of the language, there would be little discussion about identity in the Republic' (ibid: 662). The cultural and political nationalism that defined Irish public life in the period of transition to independence prioritised Irish as a key marker of an independent Irish identity precisely because of its decline over the previous two centuries. Although the paradigm was based on the ideology of 'one-nation, one-language', the Irish situation was complicated by the overwhelming dominance of English following rapid language shift in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but the aim, at the level of rhetoric in any case, was to restore Irish to its pre-eminent position as the vernacular. To that end, post-independence governments granted key protections to Irish in education, media and public administration, cementing its central role in national identity in the early decades of the state (O'Rourke and Walsh 2015). However, as the hard slog of the language revival project hit home, the difference between aspiration and reality became sharply apparent. Irish retained its importance as a key marker of identity but in an abstract or symbolic sense only. The emerging identity of independent Ireland came to be closely associated with conservative Catholicism and was articulated overwhelmingly in English despite the state's official policy of revival (Ó Tuathaigh 2011). In the very different political

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1 Other recent exceptions are Wolf (2014), Doyle (2015) and Morley (2017).

context of Northern Ireland since 1921, speaking Irish became an oppositional identity, one of the ‘trenches of resistance’ to Britishness (Castells 2010).

## 4 Attitudes to Irish language and identity

In addition to the census of population, there is a wealth of survey data about Irish stretching back almost fifty years. As well as providing information about knowledge and use, the national language surveys from 1973, 1983, 1993, 2000–1, 2007–8<sup>2</sup> and 2013 are also important sources of quantitative information about attitudes to Irish and national identity. Since 2000, reflecting the changing political context, these surveys have also been conducted in Northern Ireland.

### 4.1 National surveys, 1973–1993

National language surveys on competence in Irish, use of it and attitudes towards it were conducted in the Republic of Ireland at ten-year intervals for twenty years from the early 1970s. The 1973 survey was conducted by the Committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research (CILAR 1975), was the first major sociological survey of its type in Ireland and based on a sample of nearly 2,500 respondents. In 1975, the newly-founded Linguistics Institute of Ireland / Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (ITÉ) took over responsibility for ten-yearly surveys in order to track changes longitudinally (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin 1994: 3). The attitudinal aspect of the CILAR/ITÉ surveys revealed strong support in the Republic for Irish as a symbol of ethnic identity, reflecting decades of official state support. The surveys found clear majorities in favour of the statements ‘no real Irish person can be against the revival of Irish’ (66–72 per cent); ‘Ireland would not really be Ireland without Irish-speaking people’ (60–4 per cent) and ‘without Irish, Ireland would certainly lose its identity as a separate culture’ (56–61 per cent). Despite such support, however, these majorities were not overwhelming, and there were minorities of 25–40 per cent in each case (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin 1994: 19).

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<sup>2</sup> Another national survey of use of and attitudes towards Irish in the Republic of Ireland was directed by sociologist Micheál Mac Gréil in 2009–8 (Mac Gréil and Rhatigan, 2009). The survey contained questions about language and identity but of a different type to the ITÉ/Foras na Gaeilge research, therefore making comparisons impossible.

## 4.2 All-Ireland survey, 2000–1

In 2000–1, the newly-established all-Ireland language body, Foras na Gaeilge, provided funding for an updated national survey on Irish. The questions replicated parts of the questionnaires used in the CILAR and ITÉ surveys but for the first time, the survey was also administered in Northern Ireland. For the survey, 1,000 adults were interviewed in each jurisdiction. Because of changes to the questions, comparisons with the earlier surveys with regard to identity are not possible except in two cases, one of which will suffice here as an example, the statement ‘Without Irish, Ireland would certainly lose its identity as a separate culture’. There was a significant reduction in the percentage who agreed with that statement, from a majority of 60 per cent in 1993 to 41 per cent in 2001, evidence that the historical majority belief that Irish played a key role in Irish identity had become a minority belief. However, despite sweeping socio-economic change in the period between the two surveys, a large minority still supported that view, evidence of the resilience of nationalism and national identity despite the predictions of modernisation theory (Ó Riagáin 2012: 125–6). Nationalist discourses may in fact be even more resilient than described by Ó Riagáin, as revealed by a reversal of the decline again in 2013 (see 4.3 below). The 2000–1 survey also revealed significant differences between the identity positions held by respondents in the Republic and Northern Ireland in relation to language. For instance, only four per cent of Northern Protestants believed that Irish was a defining feature of Northern Irish identity, compared to 21 per cent of Catholics (Ó Riagáin 2007: 379–382).

## 4.3 All-Ireland survey, 2013

In 2013, Foras na Gaeilge commissioned new research on attitudes towards and use of Irish in both the Republic and Northern Ireland. The project bore similarities to the 2000–1 survey (Ó Riagáin 2007) and was based on a sample of more than 1,000 respondents in each jurisdiction (Darmody and Daly 2015: 5). Respondents were presented with a series of statements about Irish, some of which were similar to those posed in previous surveys. As expected, the 2013 research also found that the association between the Irish language and identity was much stronger in the Republic than in Northern Ireland. However, in an apparent reversal of the 2000–1 findings, almost two in three respondents (64 per cent) in the Republic agreed with the statement that ‘without Irish, the Republic of Ireland would lose its identity as a separate culture’. On the other hand, only one in three (33 per cent) of Northern respondents agreed that Irish

was a fundamental part of the identity of Northern Ireland (Darmody and Daly 2015: 79–80). In an analysis of the surveys up to and including 2000–1, Ó Riagáin pointed out that the sharp fall in support for the central role of Irish in national identity occurred during the economic boom of the 2000s, while not positing a causal link between them (2012: 120). Similarly, it is possible that the restoration of support in 2013 is in some way related to the recession during the previous five years. Journalists following the former Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Enda Kenny around the country during the general election campaign of 2011 were surprised at widespread public opposition to his proposal to drop Irish as a compulsory subject for the Leaving Certificate (final school public examination) (Kerr 2011). Voters complained that Ireland had lost its economic sovereignty when bailed out in 2010 and that its culture and identity should not be given away either. The proposal was quietly dropped by Kenny's party Fine Gael when it was returned to government.

## 5 Methodology

The data analysed in this study are taken from a database of semi-structured interviews conducted from 2012–2016 with 100 speakers of Irish. For the most part, informants comprised people who had learned Irish through the education system but also included a smaller number of people who were raised bilingually or with Irish only outside the Gaeltacht, and who considered themselves distinct from Gaeltacht speakers. The sample also includes a span of competencies ranging from people who, when interviewed, were at the earlier stages of becoming new speakers, to highly fluent and idiomatic speakers who had adopted Gaeltacht varieties to the extent that they sometimes reported 'passing' as native (Piller 2002).<sup>3</sup> In the analysis that follows, the extracts are translations of the original Irish text. Due to pressure of space, it was not possible to include both versions. For an analysis in Irish of similar material, see Walsh et al (2015) and Walsh and O'Rourke (2015).

The interviews were coded with NVivo software according to three overarching themes: (a) language background, (b) language practices and (c) language ideologies and identities. Therefore the analysis that follows is based on a subsection of (c). As the interviews are language biographies, they also provide key information about the typical moments in which linguistic *mudes* occur.

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<sup>3</sup> The database of interviews forms the backbone of a larger ongoing research project on new speakers of Irish being conducted in co-operation with Prof. Bernadette O'Rourke (e.g. Walsh and O'Rourke, 2018; Walsh et al, 2015; O'Rourke and Walsh, 2015).

## 6 Identity among new speakers of Irish

As the new speaker lens is broad and inclusive, and as identity itself is such a multifaceted and complex phenomenon, the discussion that follows cannot be an exhaustive analysis of the topic, but is instead an overview of the most salient themes emerging from the data. The main themes are presented here in terms of (a) identity as a motivation for becoming a new speaker and (b) the personal identities of new speakers and how they understand what it means to them to speak Irish.

### 6.1 Identity as a motivation for becoming a new speaker

In terms of motivations, familiar articulations of a traditional cultural nationalist discourse around language and identity tend to be more prevalent among older speakers or those with lower levels of competence in Irish. More active and fluent speakers in younger age cohorts draw less overtly on such discourses and hint instead at a vaguer sense of Irishness. Personal family connections to the Gaeltacht are also powerful triggers for learning Irish and can be linked to the desire to forge a Gaeltacht rather than a national identity.

#### 6.1.1 Cultural nationalism

The presence of familiar discourses associated with cultural nationalism among older speakers is due in part to the dominance of such discourses at least until the 1960s, when the central place assigned to language and religion in national identity came to be challenged more widely in the context of the modernisation of Irish society (Lee 1989: 670–674; Ó Tuathaigh 2011). The dominant discourse as a motivating factor to re-learn Irish can be seen in the following extracts from interviews with two women in their late 50s, both of whom were attending an Irish language conversation group in a rural area. Martha had recently taken early retirement, giving her the time to re-learn Irish:

I resigned from my job last year and it's only now I'm thinking about / and that there are a lot of people from Poland in Ireland and they're speaking in their language and I was thinking it's very important that the people of Ireland speak in their own language too so you know it's only lately that I'm even thinking of it but it is // I would hate to lose it [...] I think it's part of our DNA you know?

Her friend Edel drew on a similar discourse:

I discovered that Irish was our language / that English wasn't our language / and the shock I got / [at] 10 or 11 years of age [...] I remember being shocked and kind of ashamed that we weren't speaking our own language / that we were speaking another language of another country.

Both Martha and Edel framed the importance of Irish in familiar nationalist terms, including the tropes of the duty to speak 'our own language' (Irish as the 'true' language of Ireland rather than English; Irish as the essence of Irishness, as fundamental as DNA) and 'one language, one nation' (Polish for Polish people, English for English people, Irish for Irish people etc.). Unsurprisingly, the centrality of Irish to national identity continues to hold greater resonance among Irish speakers from Northern Ireland, regardless of age. Colm, a 34 year-old community worker from a small town, described the importance of his Irish identity and the role of language in it:

I think I was a little revolutionary too and I was brought up in a revolutionary town in the North / the town I come from is a Republican town no doubt and I think that there was / that kind of feeling was obvious you know // [...] and I think that everyone in our community felt that identity was incredibly important to us and then in the eighties there was a lot of trouble on the streets and we were there and the other side were there and we had to wear signs to show who we were and I suppose I thought Irish was part of that / you know that it was a serious way to develop my own identity and to recognise who I was in this world.

In terms reminiscent of Castells' 'trenches of resistance' (2010), this extract suggests that an oppositional 'revolutionary' and 'Republican' identity motivated Colm to adopt Irish. His decision was supported by a social consensus that 'identity was incredibly important to us' and the view that Irish was a 'sign' of difference, essential to show how 'we' (nationalists) were distinct from 'the other side' (unionists). In a constructionist articulation of identity prompted by the specific socio-political environment of the North, Colm saw Irish as a fundamental tool for building his identity.

'Cultural nationalism' was cited specifically by Eimear, a 34-year old from Dublin who learned Irish at school and worked in the Irish language media, as her initial motivation to learn Irish. However, she explained that her views had evolved over time:

I suppose I had notions when I was younger I suppose that there was something very abstract about Irish and I didn't call it this at the time [...] but I suppose I can say now that the idea I had was something related in an abstract way to cultural nationalism or something like that and wouldn't it be great if all of us in the country were able to speak Irish and that it was the main language of the country [...] I have the same opinions [still] that it's an important thing [...] but in a way I'm more cynical now and I feel that the battle has been lost.

Eimear's use of the word 'notions' to describe her 'abstract' support for cultural nationalism when she was younger suggests that she now views that position as somewhat idealistic or naive. However even though her belief in the aims of the revival project ('that [Irish] would be the main language of the country') has waned somewhat ('I'm more cynical now . . . the battle has been lost') she still believes that Irish is an important part of her identity.

Most of the speakers aged 40 or under interviewed in the Republic were less willing to identify traditional cultural nationalism as a motivating factor, and instead articulated weaker versions of Irishness or a vague link with it. Niamh, a 25-year old teacher, was brought up with English and attended a Gaelscoil (immersion school) at primary level because her parents were supportive of Irish while not speaking it themselves. She did not consider that she became a speaker until she began using Irish socially at university. When asked what prompted her to become a speaker and whether or not it involved nationalism, she was unsure:

I don't know where it came from // I don't know if it is something inside me you know? [...] Without my parents and the school the Gaelscoil I couldn't imagine being a speaker / It's a mixture of things / I'm proud that I speak Irish and I feel you know that it shows that I am Irish but at the same time- it's hard for me / I don't know I can't explain it.

Niamh's uncertainty about national identity as a motivation to learn Irish is similar to that of many other new speakers in her age cohort. The reference to 'something inside me' echoes the comment about 'DNA' above and may reflect a residual attachment to cultural nationalism perhaps transmitted by her parents, but Niamh's discourse is vaguer and could not be characterised as essentialist. Although she is 'proud' to speak Irish and believes that the language indexes her Irishness, she does not state unambiguously that Irish identity was a strong motivation for her.

### 6.1.2 Gaeltacht as a motivating factor

The Gaeltacht is a constant point of reference for new speakers and both serves as an inspiration for a linguistic *muda* and an ongoing source of linguistic replenishment for speakers wishing to improve their competence or acquire a traditional dialect. Some speakers describe how a visit to the Gaeltacht in their youth awoke a sense of identity. This was the case for Colm, who travelled from his small town north of the border to a Gaeltacht summer college as a teenager:

There was a community there speaking Irish and it was great in my eyes / it really inspired me [...] [it was] a place where there was freedom and I say that in the broadest meaning of the word / it was depressing returning to the North at that time [...] the identity I was trying to create for myself I felt that everyone in the Gaeltacht had it naturally and therefore I felt really comfortable in their midst [...] I felt happier in myself than I had before.

For Colm, the Gaeltacht represented ‘freedom’ in contrast to the repressive atmosphere of the North during the Troubles. It gave him the freedom to construct his identity as an Irish person and Irish speaker in opposition to the British state. The people of the Gaeltacht ‘naturally’ embodied the Irish-speaking identity that he sought for himself, this endeared them to him (‘I felt really comfortable in their midst’) and brought him great personal satisfaction (‘I felt happier in myself’). Becoming aware of that desire was a powerful motivational factor to undergo a linguistic *muda* during his teenage years and eventually make Irish his primary language.

The new speaker cohort also includes people whose parents, grandparents or other relatives were from the Gaeltacht but who did not speak Irish to them in their youth. This personal connection can be a strong trigger for the person to reclaim Irish and adopt an Irish-speaking identity, often based on the Gaeltacht variety spoken by previous generations of their family. Jason, a 22 year-old student, was raised speaking English in a weak Gaeltacht area but decided to switch to Irish to his mother, a native speaker, when he was a teenager:

I speak Irish to my mother now that’s maybe four or five years ago / em until then we’d usually speak in English eh I decided when I was younger maybe fifteen / sixteen / seventeen years of age that I should eh to make more of an effort / to prompt her to speak Irish to me because / because she has great / wonderful Irish and I wanted to learn that accent and that richness and [...] I want / I’m trying to find a dialect my own dialect and I think the best way to do that is to speak Irish.

For Jason, becoming an Irish speaker was presented as activating his Gaeltacht identity linguistically: as he is from the Gaeltacht, he felt a linguistic dissonance by not being able to speak Irish. However, he decided not just to learn standard Irish but his mother’s specific dialect (‘that accent ... that richness’) with which he sought a connection (‘I’m trying to find a dialect, my own dialect’). Jason’s reference to ‘my own dialect’ could be read as a more localised version of the trope of ‘my own language’; rather than abstract cultural nationalism being the inspiration, the desire to reclaim the specific speech of former generations of his family as an act of identity was what motivated him to learn that particular dialect. At a later stage he cleared articulated his desire to create

an identity based not only on his Gaeltacht heritage, but on his specific Breac-Ghaeltacht<sup>4</sup> past:

I wanted to present myself as a native speaker which I suppose I wasn't // which I suppose I won't be because I am a kind of *Breac-Ghaeltachtóir*<sup>5</sup> eh I wanted to be able to present myself // in that way [...] what bothers me is that my own area [name] that area is declining greatly regarding Irish and the native speakers are almost all dead now em and I think it is my duty eh to keep that dialect going strongly [...] if people had a chance to put themselves in a certain area for a while [they would be] able to take the dialectal forms with them / that's why I think that you don't have to be born a native speaker but if the conditions are right as we say and if you are based in the place eh that you can make yourself into a native speaker even though you haven't been speaking Irish since birth.

This discourse touches on the choices faced by new speakers before they undergo a linguistic *muda* and the implications of such choices. Jason wanted to 'pass' as a native speaker (Piller 2002) but felt that it would be difficult because he was from the Breac-Ghaeltacht, where the local variety of Irish would be marked as less 'authentic' and less 'native'. However, precisely because of the weakness of Irish in his area, he embraced his hybrid heritage and decided that it was his 'duty to keep that dialect going strongly' despite its lower prestige as a Breac-Ghaeltacht variety. In a markedly constructionist position, Jason maintained that people could 'make [themselves] into native speaker[s]' of Irish regardless of their linguistic background by living in the area where the variety was spoken. Although his discourse rests on the paramount importance of the native speaker, Jason's identity project is based on a more hybridised form of nativeness as exemplified by the specific conditions of the Breac-Ghaeltacht. Similar pride in local Gaeltacht identity also inspired Micheál, a 24-year old student, to learn to a high level the dialect spoken by his grandfather's generation. Micheál was raised mostly in English close to a Gaeltacht area and previous generations of his family were Irish-speaking. He chose to acquire the dialect through intensive study of historical sources and by spending summer holidays with native speakers:

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4 'Breac-Ghaeltacht', literally 'speckled' Gaeltacht, refers to a partially Irish-speaking area, a category recommended by the Irish government Commission on the Gaeltacht which published its report in 1926. The Commission's other category was 'Fíor-Ghaeltacht', literally 'true' Gaeltacht, referring to a strongly Irish-speaking area (Government of Ireland 1926; Walsh, 2002). Although never enshrined in law, the categories of 'Breac-' and 'Fíor-Ghaeltacht' became embedded in folk perceptions of the Gaeltacht in the early to mid-twentieth century and persist to the present day among an older age cohort (Walsh 2011; Walsh 2012b).

5 His own coinage, meaning literally, a person from the Breac-Ghaeltacht.

I really enjoyed using the dialectal words [...] I am proud of that area and I am [from that area] [...] I had an aim that I would learn Irish as accurately as I could / not only the dialect but when I started learning the songs and listening to [singer] day and night / my aim was that people would understand that I was [from that area].

For Micheál, activating his linguistic identity as a speaker of a Gaeltacht variety was satisfying ('I really enjoyed using the dialectal words') and a source of pride ('I am proud of that area ... I am from that area'). Similar to Jason, he too hoped that it would allow him to 'pass' as a native ('my aim was that people would understand that I was from that area') by striving for full cultural immersion not only in the dialect but also local traditional songs.

## 6.2 Identity positions of new speakers

The new speakers featured in this study express a range of personal identity positions in relation to their inherited or acquired linguistic profiles. They may construct a new identity as an Irish speaker based on their changed linguistic practice, maintain a primary identity as an English speaker despite their frequent use of Irish or express a mixed or ambiguous identity. The sample also included a small number of speakers who were raised with Irish (or with Irish and English) outside the Gaeltacht and who defined themselves differently to Gaeltacht speakers. Competent and active speakers tend to position themselves as a third group between 'learners' and 'native speakers', but may also accord greater legitimacy to those raised with Irish in the Gaeltacht. For such speakers, consistent use of Irish is linked to the ongoing performance of their identity, and they are evidence that incorporating a new language into one's linguistic repertoire has implications for self-identification (Puigdevall et al 2018).

### 6.2.1 Primary Irish-speaking identity

Risteárd is from Dublin and was 30 at the time of the interview. He was brought up in a bilingual home, rebelled against speaking Irish as a teenager but returned to it in his twenties. When asked if nationalism was a trigger for his decision to return to Irish, Risteárd dismissed this as a narrow concept, instead choosing 'identity' to describe his motivations. He distinguished between an Irish national identity and an Irish language identity, categorising himself as a

‘Gael’<sup>6</sup> rather than an Irishman. As a result, he disassociated himself from many of the stereotypical symbols of Irishness which do not depend on the Irish language:

Now I don’t look at myself anymore as an Irishman [‘Éireannach’] but as a Gael [...] it has to do with language and culture and sport and so on so [...] I see that Irish is my first language now do you know? And I definitely speak more Irish than English now [...] but I suppose the difference between ‘Gael’ and ‘Éireannach’ is that I don’t look to St. Patrick’s Day or the Irish soccer team to express my identity like / I look at traditional music Gaelic games and / the language and so on to express my identity.

By favouring ‘Gael’ over ‘Éireannach’, Risteárd aligned himself with a specific form of Irish identity, one that is contingent upon speaking Irish and associated cultural practices (‘traditional music, Gaelic games’), rather than relegating it to a marginal and symbolic function in an English-speaking Irish identity based more on ‘soccer’ or ‘St. Patrick’s Day’. The fact that he ‘now’ saw himself as a ‘Gael’ and considered Irish his ‘first language’ suggests that he did not have these views in the past, perhaps a reflection of his rejection of Irish as a teenager and his decision to reclaim it subsequently. At a later stage in the interview, Risteárd aligned himself with ‘na Gaeil’ (Gael) as a ‘grúpa eitneach’ (ethnic group). Defining Irish speakers as a separate group suggests that Risteárd’s identity is based on resistance to the dominance of English, similar to Colm (see above) and there is no doubt about the primacy of speaking Irish to his identity.

Liam, a 27 year-old media worker, was raised mostly through English in the Gaeltacht. He also described himself as a ‘Gael’ and spoke of his sense of duty towards the language:

As someone who speaks Irish reasonably well / because I have a kind of duty to bring society on to the next generation and to speak it because if it isn’t spoken it isn’t alive and so we have to save it like to speak it out aloud because em if we don’t speak it who else will speak it? / Eh and you can’t give in / I suppose there is kind of an English-speaking country and that still exists and I suppose it will always exist but I suppose to fight your own corner as well [...] It’s definitely my own language because it’s mine I use

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**6** Irish has two words for an Irish person: *Gael* (pl. *Gaeil*) and *Éireannach* (pl. *Éireannaigh*). *Éireannach* has come to mean someone from Ireland who does not necessarily speak Irish, whereas *Gael* refers to an Irish-speaking person. It also connotes a sense of belonging to or affinity with the ideal of an Irish-speaking Ireland, as opposed to the current sociolinguistic context where English is overwhelmingly dominant. *Gael* is by no means universally used by Irish speakers to describe themselves, however, and is a contested label. See Morley, 2017 for a discussion of the historical use of the term in eighteenth Century literature. See McLeod, 2017 for a discussion of the Scottish equivalent *Gàidheal*.

it every single day and I have that I have a kind of loyalty to the language and I can definitely express myself in it and so on so it's mine for sure.

Liam's assessment of his Irish as 'reasonably good' positions him at a lower level of proficiency, presumably by comparison to native speakers. However his frequent use of the plural pronoun 'we' appears to index an identity of a specific group of new speakers who are neither learners nor native speakers. This group may be less competent than native speakers but is nonetheless more 'loyal' to Irish, is expected to speak it and has a 'duty' to pass it on to future generations. The struggle for recognition implied by 'you can't give in . . . fighting your own corner' is also a reflection of resistance to Ireland as 'an English-speaking country'. There is no doubt about Liam's ownership of Irish; he sees it as 'his' language both through his regular use of it and his competence in it. His primary identity is as an Irish speaker but within his peer group of new speakers who are distinctive from native speakers.

### 6.2.2 Ambiguous or mixed identity

Many of the new speakers interviewed expressed ambiguity about the importance of Irish to their identity or said that they felt distanced from it in some way. This was either due to their (greater) proficiency in English or sometimes because of a perception that Gaeltacht people 'owned' Irish more than they did. For instance, Tomás – who was raised speaking English in the Gaeltacht but who had Irish-speaking grandparents – emphasised a bilingual identity:

It's my own language but I know also that English is my language as well and / I don't have any uncertainty about that either / I love speaking English to people as a means of communication also even though I would have a certain extra respect for the dialect and for the Irish that I have as well I suppose.

Tomás said more in this extract about the importance of English to his identity but added that he held his own dialect of Irish in higher esteem. Irish and English are in competition on the terrain of his personal identity and it is possible that residual influence of the cultural nationalist discourse prompted him to add, almost as an afterthought, that he had 'a certain extra respect' for Irish. The addition of 'I suppose' after that statement could be significant, and Colm's discourse may be an example of tensions between overt and covert ideologies around language, where an individual articulates one position but in fact holds another often contradictory ideology (Shohamy 2006).

Several speakers felt that while Irish was in some way their language, Gaeltacht people had greater ownership of it, for instance Eimear:

E: Yeah I am very proud of Irish em and I am proud that it is connected that as a country is it ours but I don't know if it is mine-

I: Would you call yourself an Irish speaker?

E: Oh yes of course yeah yeah.

I: But you don't think you're fluent?

E: I don't think I'm fluent compared to the people I know / I don't think I'd like to put myself in that company em I // I have some way to go I'd say.

In another articulation of her support for cultural nationalism, Eimear accepted that Irish was an important part of Irish identity ('I am proud that as a country it is ours') but positioned herself as less connected to Irish because of her weaker competence in it ('I don't know if it is mine'). She considered herself an Irish speaker but not unconditionally, comparing herself unfavourably with the Gaeltacht speakers with whom she worked in the media ('I have some way to go'), inferring that they had a greater claim on Irish than her ('I don't ... like to put myself in that company'). This view was articulated more overtly by Deirdre, a 29-year old postgraduate student whose family language was English but who acquired idiomatic Irish from spending periods in the Gaeltacht. Deirdre also vehemently rejected the labels 'Gall' and 'Galltacht'<sup>7</sup> which are sometimes used in discourses around Irish and identity:

I don't know sometimes I think that Connemara<sup>8</sup> people own Irish and you know you're not good enough to speak Irish // and sometimes when I go back to the Gaeltacht some people say to me 'oh how do you speak Irish so well?' Em and I don't like that / I'm living in this country why wouldn't I? And I hate that word 'Galltacht' I'm no 'Gall' [foreigner] I'm an Irishwoman [Éireannach] / I was raised in this country just like everyone else em that word shouldn't be used any more in my opinion.

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7 'Gall' is taken as the inverse of 'Gael' and means a 'foreigner' or an 'English person', referring to the time when English speakers in Ireland were incomers or colonisers. 'Galltacht', taken as the inverse of Gaeltacht, referred historically to English settlers in Ireland and, since the late nineteenth Century, to areas where English speakers lived (Ó Torna 2005; McLeod 1999). 'Galltacht' was used regularly by language revivalists as a binary opposite to Gaeltacht in the late nineteenth and early twentieth Centuries. It is still used occasionally to refer to the rest of Ireland outside the Gaeltacht where English is dominant but is a contested term.

8 In Co. Galway, where the largest Gaeltacht area is located.

In terms of identity, Deirdre did not express unambiguous support for the idea that Irish is ‘her’ language. Although she used many Gaeltacht idioms, she complained of a lack of acceptance by Gaeltacht speakers and felt delegitimised for her less traditional linguistic production (‘you’re not good enough’). She criticised Gaeltacht people for censoring her over her ability in Irish while simultaneously expressing surprise at her fluency. Her frustration with the view that, as someone living in Ireland she would be unable to speak Irish, could reflect aspects of the ‘one country, one language’ paradigm. However, Deirdre’s discourse veers more towards the constructionist approach, particularly in her apparent rejection of the essentialism associated with labels such as ‘Gall’ and ‘Galltacht’. She condemned the use of ‘Galltacht’ to refer to the rest of Ireland outside the Gaeltacht and in particular the noun ‘Gall’, presumably because of the inference that everyone living in the Galltacht – including her – would be a ‘foreigner’. Interestingly, she used ‘Éireannach’ rather than ‘Gael’ when calling herself an Irishwoman, suggesting that she also found ‘Gael’ excessively essentialist. At another stage in the interview, similar to Liam above, she positioned herself as part of a distinct group of ‘cainteoirí breátha’ (fine speakers) outside the Gaeltacht who used Irish every day and argued that people like her will be crucial to the future of Irish.

One sub-set of the sample are people raised in Irish-speaking or bilingual homes outside the Gaeltacht and who considered themselves distinct from Gaeltacht speakers.<sup>9</sup> Despite the fact that Irish was their home language (either on its own or together with English), they perceived themselves as deficient in some way and did not identify unproblematically as ‘native’. Laoise, a 29 year-old woman, was brought up speaking Irish in a city outside the Gaeltacht and was working as a teacher at the time of the interview:

L: It’s my language yeah but again em I feel that / that the people in the Gaeltacht own it in a way that’s bigger / that’s stronger than I do [...] because they are from a Gaeltacht community or they are part of an Irish-speaking community but I was brought up in an Irish-speaking family inside an English-speaking community so that’s why.

I: So the Gaeltacht speakers have more ownership or a bigger right to the language?

L: I don’t think they have a bigger right but maybe they have more ownership and they have a wider experience too of / of spending their whole life through Irish than I do.

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<sup>9</sup> Some such speakers considered themselves equally legitimate to Gaeltacht speakers and declined to take part in the research.

Although she referred to Irish as her first language, Laoise felt that she lacked legitimacy compared to the Gaeltacht speakers who ‘own’ Irish more than her. In her mind, legitimacy seemed to be contingent upon the geographical concentration of Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht and their greater use of the language (‘an Irish-speaking community ... spending their whole life through Irish’). This points to the salience of territory in discourses around language and to the performance of identity through frequent use of a language (Joseph 2016: 24). Laoise lacked legitimacy because her family was an isolated case unable to live entirely in Irish in an English-speaking community.

As stated above, younger speakers in the Republic may play down cultural nationalism somewhat as a motivating factor. Similarly, in speakers’ personal narratives a vague sense of Irishness may still be present but it can also be broadened to link language to regional or international identities. Séamus, a 40-year old man, was raised mostly in English in Dublin although his mother was from the Gaeltacht. He did not question his linguistic background until his early twenties when he attended university and when identity and language were discussed by one of his lecturers:

Your man [lecturer] influenced me and he fostered maybe love for the language and a certain understanding of issues of identity and how important the language was as part of my identity as a Dub and as an Irishman and yeah it’s very important and yeah as a European even as well // that’s where those particular understandings came from.

In this extract, Séamus referred not only to the familiar link between Irish and national identity, but also to a broader range of identities including his background as a Dubliner but also as a European. This dilution of the centrality of Irishness to the Irish language and the inclusion of other options may reflect a ‘low-key Irishness with new inflections’, to borrow Harris’s wording (2006: 1–2).

### 6.2.3 Primary English-speaking identity

A small number of new speakers identified inferred that they identified primarily as English speakers. Máirtín, a 30 year-old researcher, was brought up with English only and learned Irish in a mainstream English-medium school before gaining fluency at university. He spoke Irish regularly and professionally but expressed frustration at making errors years after he first began to learn it. Because of this, he did not accept that Irish was his ‘own language’:

I don’t feel yet [that it is my language] eh I wouldn’t be one hundred per cent comfortable with Irish ever even / maybe I will be some day but I’m comfortable with Irish in certain

contexts but em I suppose I was brought up with the background of Irish English em that is the language if I have ownership of any language that's it Irish English and the English of my native area and the language that I was raised with [...] so I have knowledge of Irish but I don't own it.

Máirtín's discourse suggests that he identifies as an English speaker first and foremost, despite being 'comfortable' with Irish 'in certain contexts', presumably his work. Specifically, he identified 'Irish English' or the 'English of his native area' as being more important in identity terms. At a later stage, Máirtín said that if he had children in the future, he would find it 'unnatural' to speak Irish to them although he would want them to know Irish as part of cultural awareness.

## 7 Conclusions

As would be expected given their regular use of Irish, strong support for Irish as a marker of identity is found among the core minority of new speakers of Irish. However, such support is not restricted to Irish as a symbol of 'national' identity but may in fact be more locally constituted. As expected, some of the speakers featured in this study draw on familiar cultural nationalist discourses of the 'our own language' type in narrative accounts of their linguistic trajectories. However the data also reveal nuances in this position: while cultural nationalism continues to be salient, younger speakers from the Republic tend to downplay it and instead articulate a vaguer discourse of Irishness as a motivation for adopting Irish. A personal family connection with the Gaeltacht may be a more powerful trigger for a linguistic *muda* and manifest itself in the decision to acquire a local variety spoken by previous generations of the person's family. Although it may be influenced by the 'national language' ideology, the desire to forge a Gaeltacht identity can be viewed as more local both linguistically (the reclamation of a specific dialect) and subjectively (creating meaning in new relationships with a specific area rather than 'the nation'). Another salient aspect of identity in new speakers' discourse is their personal narratives in relation to Irish. These narratives reveal that their relationship with Irish, while important, is often complicated and may overlap or compete with other identity choices. Some speakers' identities are based strongly on Irish and they consider themselves first and foremost Irish speakers, sometimes defining themselves as 'Gaeil' (Irish speakers) rather than 'Éireannaigh' (Irish people). For such speakers the Irish language itself, rather than Irishness in general, is more important, evidence of disillusionment with the retreat of the state from the ideals of Gaelicisation over the decades. This stance involves a distancing from aspects of Irish identity normally expressed in English.

Despite being regular and fluent speakers, not all speakers claimed equal or unconditional ownership of Irish as ‘their’ language. Some expressed more ambiguous identities, qualifying their ownership of Irish as somehow attenuated because of their weaker competence in it, or due to a belief that Gaeltacht speakers have greater claim to it. This latter belief was expressed even by those who had been raised with Irish outside the Gaeltacht, suggesting that a geographical community is deemed to be more legitimate than scattered Irish speaking families. A minority of speakers considered English – or the particular local variety of Irish English that they spoke – as the language which carries most meaning for them.<sup>10</sup>

This study illustrates that even among the core minority of new speakers, there is no simplistic binary relationship between the Irish language and identity. To paraphrase Harris’s analysis of British Asian youth (2006; see above), while some new speakers see their Irish speaking identity as paramount, others ‘engage in complex adaptation and adoption strategies rather than simply jettisoning their primary, historical identity and replacing it with an Irish-speaking one’.

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Hickey (2017: 229) who maintains that ‘A clear profile for English in Ireland ensured that the linguistic identity of Irish people could be successfully transferred from the Irish to the English language.’

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Liam Mac Mathúna

# **3 Language identity, ideology and historical bilingualism in Ireland**

## **1 Introduction**

Several aspects of Irish/English historical bilingualism tend to be regarded as unproblematic. These include the retrospective assumption that the transitional nature of this bilingualism was inevitable. Even more arresting, however, is the fact that, from the beginning, Irish/English bilingualism was not envisioned as an outcome by those involved in the process. It seems that bilingualism was simply regarded as a necessary way-station between the culture of the past and that of the future. Nonetheless, it is striking that the acquisition of English was so widely deemed to involve the relinquishing of Irish. After all, the compelling pragmatic arguments for the desirability of mastering English in eighteenth-century Ireland relate to the public spheres of administration and commerce. Why then was no attempt made to promote a diglossic compromise, one might ask, whereby the speakers of Irish would have the best of both worlds, retaining their native Irish for domestic, social and cultural ends, while acquiring English for engagement with officialdom and trade, rather as obtains in many countries in Western Europe today? The answer is hardly a straightforward one. It likely has to take into account assertive English attitudes to their own language and its colonial role in Ireland going at least as far back as the Statutes of Kilkenny in 1366. It embraces the adoption by the Irish literati of English in place of Latin as the platform language of choice for translations from other European languages (c. 1475) (Mac Mathúna 2007: 7–9). It has to do with the struggle for power in Ireland under the Tudors in the sixteenth century and ambivalent English attitudes to the relationship between the Irish language and religion, taking into account the half-hearted utilisation by the Crown of Irish – the vernacular – in order to reform the Irish church. On the opposite side, it is quite clear that as the Nine Years War against Elizabeth I progressed (1594–1603), Hugh O'Neill and the other Ulster chieftains came to interpret their fight as essentially a religious one: they threw in their lot with Spain and the Catholic powers of Europe, a choice which provided them with a ready-made ideology as well as powerful potential allies.

This would seem to be the crux of the matter. Development of a language-based ideology would have required an innovative intellectual conceptualisation, which eluded the native Irish at the time, bereft as they were of the

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benefits of domestic university education. The gap was not filled by the sporadic counter-Reformation programme, based in Louvain on the European mainland in the first half of the seventeenth century, which had merely a peripheral impact on scholarly developments in Ireland. The Dublin scholar, Tadhg Ó Neachtain, testifies to an awareness in the 1720s that the Gaelic upper classes were abandoning Irish for English, but retaining their Catholic religion. There were indeed lone voices advocating support for the Irish language in the first half of the nineteenth century (e.g. Philip Barron who founded both a college and the *Ancient Ireland* journal in Co. Waterford, 1834–35, and Pádraig Phiarais Cúndún in his Irish language letters home from Utica, upstate New York, 1834–57) but the tide was pulling against them, and it continued to do so until it was almost too late to reverse the language shift. By 1851 there were just 1,524,000 speakers of Irish in Ireland, including 320,000 monoglots, out of a total population of 6,552,000. By 1891 the figures had declined to 680,000 Irish-speakers and a mere 38,000 monoglots, out of a total population of just 4,705,000 (Ó Tuathaigh 2015: 9, after Hindley 1990: 19). This was the unpromising context in which Douglas Hyde expounded his ideology for the de-anglicisation of Ireland (1892) and the Gaelic League was founded in Dublin by Eoin MacNeill and himself (1893). Thus, the call for support of the heritage language and culture of Ireland seems only to have struck a chord with the public after other matters had already been more or less satisfactorily resolved, e.g. Catholic Emancipation (1829) and a series of land acts (1870 on) had addressed the issue of farm ownership, and notwithstanding the social and cultural turmoil of death and emigration caused by the Great Famine (1845–49).

Drawing on the evidence for permeating bilingualism provided by code-mixed Irish-English texts, and interrogating contemporary comments on the state of Irish as a community language, this study examines the question of linguistic identity and ideology in Ireland over the extended period c. 1500–c. 1910 at personal, community and national levels, and argues that it was only with the adoption of Irish as one of the essential subjects for matriculation in the new National University of Ireland (1909) that a linguistic ideology of Irish moved centre-stage, symbolically at least elbowing religion to one side.

## 2 Languages in contact from 1169

Possession of Ireland's land was the key source of power in the country for the millennium following the Anglo-Norman invasion in 1169. From this point on the interests of those already in the country were different from those of the

newcomers. The native haves were at odds with the newcomer have-nots, who wanted to win land for themselves as quickly as possible. While land ownership was the central issue dividing the two groups, other points of difference would have been clear to the Irish and the Anglo-Normans. They spoke different languages and, although both communities were Catholic in religion, they expressed their devotion in divergent ways. The Anglo-Normans belonged to a much larger, more administratively centralised system than the Irish, theirs being a polity far closer to that of continental Europe. At any rate, the main factors distinguishing the two groups would have been linguistic-cum-cultural-cum-social. And both communities were undoubtedly aware of this. Although the descendants of the invaders came to possess some fifty per cent of the land, being particularly strong in the provinces of Leinster and Munster, with the passage of time and intermarriage there was much cultural exchange between the two groups. The Normans famously becoming more Irish than the Irish themselves, *Hibernicis ipsis Hiberniores*, and even produced an accomplished and learned bardic poet Gearóid Iarla, Gerald FitzGerald, Third Earl of Desmond (Mac Niocaill 1963).

Although Peter Burke states that it wasn't until the nineteenth century that national identity was beginning to prevail over social identity as a societal marker in Western Europe (2018: 40), he does note several indications that the English authorities displayed an ideological antipathy to the use of Irish and, subsequently, the indigenous languages of Britain several centuries earlier than this (Burke 2018: 40; cf. Crowley 2005b: 124). In fact, Crowley maintains that the English had learned a practical cultural lesson in their colonization of Ireland, namely 'that language is key to identity and (by corollary) that linguistic difference can operate as the basis of political and national difference' (2005b: 122). This advanced linguistic awareness can partly be explained also by the experience of England's leaders at home, where English was gradually replacing the role of French in the court, among the nobility, and in parliament, French having been the high language in a diglossic situation with English during the Middle Ages (Burke 2018: 27; cf. Burke 2004: 7). Thus French was under pressure in England in the realms of administration and justice, which it had previously shared with Latin. Many of these English domestic linguistic changes only concluded in the first half of the fifteenth century, so that the Irish experience with the 1366 Statutes of Kilkenny can be understood as forming part of an overall English move in favour of the English language, and indeed as a forerunner of developments in England itself. The fact that Ireland was at a physical remove from England, and the consequent external nature of the societal situation in the neighbouring island, may have lent greater clarity to the ideological factors at play, from the England perspective.

At any rate, there was clearly an ideological cadre at the heart of the colonial administration in Ireland, who resented the slippage from Anglo-Norman culture, customs and demeanour to Gaelic practices. The Statutes of Kilkenny contribute to our understanding in two important ways. Firstly, they show that the English administration based in Dublin Castle was in defensive mode, striving to maintain the separate identity of their grouping. Secondly, they set out the characteristics which were identified as dividing the two peoples, listing the attributes which should be retained by those of English descent in Ireland. It was noted that the colonists ‘forsaking the English language, manners, mode of riding, laws and usages, live and govern themselves according to the manners, fashion, and language of the Irish enemies’, with the result that ‘the liege people thereof, the English language, the allegiance to our lord the King, and the English laws there, are put in subjection and decayed, and the Irish enemies exalted and raised up, contrary to reason’ (Crowley 2000: 14). Over 150 years later the agenda changed and became decidedly more ambitious. Henry VIII’s *Act for the English Order, Habit, and Language* (1537) sought to make English the language of Ireland, extirpating Irish completely, precisely because the English state then felt ‘that cultural difference, to which linguistic difference was considered central, created political and national division’ (Crowley 2005b: 223):

... there is again nothing which doth more contain and keep many of his [viz. the king’s] subjects of this his said land, in a certain savage and wild kind and manner of living, than the diversity that is betwixt them in tongue, language, order, and habit, which by the eye deceiveth the multitude, and persuadeth unto them, that they should be as it were of sundry sorts, or rather of sundry countries, where indeed they be wholly together one body, whereof his highness is the only head under God. (Crowley 2000: 21)

While one year previously the clause relating to language in the Act of Union of England and Wales (1536) stipulated that the proceedings of the courts were to be in English, and that no Welshman was to hold any judicial or remunerated office unless he was proficient in that language, it didn’t actually ban the Welsh language (Jenkins 1997: 129). There was much to-ing and fro-ing with regard to the roles of English and Welsh as the medium of religion in Wales, but as the Welsh people had already succumbed politically to the English, and as the majority embraced the Reformation, Welsh soon inveigled a central place for itself in this sphere of life. The English seem to have granted the Welsh more lee-way precisely because they had already been successful in their efforts to subjugate Wales, and the country was no longer considered a threat to England. An act of 1563 declared that the Bible and Prayer Book should be translated into Welsh and used in those parishes ‘where the Welsh tongue is commonly used’ (Jenkins 1997: 81–83). No comparable act was passed in Ireland.

The same attitude as that displayed in the 1537 *Act for the English Order, Habit, and Language* for Ireland was expressed two generations later, during the Nine Years War in Ulster, by Edmund Spenser in his *View of the State of Ireland*, when, reflecting on the practice of the Romans, he has Eudoxus assert 'it hath ever been the use of the conqueror to despise the language of the conquered, and to force him by all means to learn his'. Irenius then responds: 'the words are the image of the mind, so as they proceeding from the mind, the mind must needs be affected with the words; so that the speech being Irish, the heart must needs be Irish, for out of the abundance of the heart the tongue speaketh' (Crowley 2000: 48–49, with references).

The proficiency of Sir Philip Sidney (1554–1586) in Latin, French, Italian and Greek, may have been the exception rather than the rule, if we are to judge by Shakespeare's description of an Englishman abroad in *Merchant of Venice* (1600). This reference occurs in a question and answer session between the Venetian lady, Portia, and her gentlewoman, Nerissa, which affords Portia the opportunity to assess her suitors from various nations, assigning them the stereotyped attributes of the late Elizabethan age. Thus when Nerissa enquires: 'What say you then to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?', Portia replies:

You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have but a poor pennyworth of English. He is a proper man's picture, but alas, who can converse with a dumb show? (Halio 1998: 115)

Or perhaps the situation was more complex. Palmer insightfully discusses the elision of the Irish language in sixteenth-century English accounts of happenings in Ireland, wishing it away, as it were. As an instance of this phenomenon, one may cite the case of Moryson, an accomplished linguist who originally wrote his *Itinerary* in Latin and knew German, Italian, Spanish and French. Palmer observes that his effusiveness about continental languages serves to point up 'the peculiarity of his erasure of Irish', which he mentions only once in his account of his years in Ireland from 1599 to 1603 which runs to over 700 pages (Palmer 2001: 67).

To my mind, this state of affairs illustrates the marked tendency of the English, and later the Americans, to place the onus on others to learn their language, rather than that they as English-speakers should go to the trouble of becoming proficient in other tongues, an attitude and frame of mind which has ultimately found global acquiescence from the speakers of other languages: the whole world is now anxious to acquire English as a *lingua franca*. Considering the significance of the first monolingual English dictionary, Robert Cawdrey's *A*

*Table Alphabetical* (1604), published just after *The Merchant of Venice*, Crowley makes essentially the same point when he observes that ‘the real importance of this first dictionary is the fact that it indicates both an increasing confidence in the English vernacular itself and in the role which the language (or a particular monologic conception of the language) played in the development of English nationalism’ (Crowley 2005b: 120–121). Crowley proceeds to argue that English, tied as it was to an imperial nation state, became the vehicle of a modern form of linguistic imperialism and colonialism, and that nowhere was this a more pressing issue than in seventeenth-century Ireland (Crowley 2005b: 122).

Appropriately for one who held the post of Attorney General in Ireland, John Davies put his faith in the implementation of [English] law, which would follow on from the conquering of the country: ‘So a barbarous country must first be broken by a war before it will be capable of good government; . . . For that I call a perfect conquest of a country which doth reduce all people thereof to the condition of subjects; and those I call subjects which are governed by the ordinary laws and magistrates of the sovereign’ (Davies 1612, writing in *A Discovery of the True Causes Why Ireland Was Never Entirely Subdued* (1612), quoted in Crowley 2000: 58). He was decidedly optimistic about the way matters were developing following the defeat of Hugh O’Neill:

Civil assemblies at assizes and sessions have reclaimed the Irish from their wildness, caused them to cut off their glibs and long hair, to convert their mantles into cloaks, to conform themselves to the manner of England in all their behaviour and outward forms. And because they find a great inconvenience in moving their suits by an interpreter, they do for the most part send their children to schools, especially to learn the English language; so as we may conceive an hope that the next generation will in tongue and heart and every way else become English, so as there will be no difference or distinction but the Irish sea betwixt us. And thus we see a good conversion and the Irish game turned again.

For heretofore the neglect of the law made the English degenerate and become Irish; and now, on the other side, the execution of the law doth make the Irish grow civil and become English. (Crowley 2000: 60)

Displaying the pragmatic perspective of an economist, William Petty advocated the use of English on practical grounds in his *Political Anatomy of Ireland*, written in 1672 and published in 1691, advising the Irish ‘to decline their Language’ because it

continues a sensible distinction, being not now necessary; which makes those who do not understand it, suspect, that what is spoken in it, is to their prejudice. It is in their Interest to deal with the *English*, for Leases, for Time, and upon clear Conditions, which being perform’d they are absolute Freemen, rather than to stand always liable to the humour and caprice of their Landlords, and to have everything taken away from them, which he pleases to fancy. (Petty 1691, quoted in Crowley 2000: 89)

The contrary view was advanced by Séathrún Céitinn, a confident and learned Irish-speaking scion of the Old English in Ireland, who confronted these very arguments in the 1630s in his famed *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, ‘The History of Ireland’, from a religious morality perspective. Taking Stanihurst specifically to task, he contends that a Christian victor ‘extinguishes not the language which was before him in any country which he brings under his control’, and that ‘it is not possible to banish the language without banishing the folk whose language it is’ (Comyn 1987: 36, 37; Crowley 2005b: 128). Although Crowley does not reference the Latin and English versions of Céitinn’s *magnum opus* which appeared very soon after its composition in Irish, he contends that the author’s choice of language ‘served as an implicit rebuke to those who were renouncing their language in favour of that of the conquerors’, while acknowledging Nicholas Canny’s argument (2001: 415) that this choice of medium stood the best chance of reaching both main elements of the Catholic population (2005b: 128).

At the turn of the seventeenth century, Hugh O’Neill seems to have understood the conflict as one which was essentially about religion. This allowed him to align himself with the major continental Catholic powers of Spain and the Papacy, while avoiding the need to conceptualise a bespoke ideological identity for Ireland, one which would be based on language and culture. It is not irrelevant to note that Gaelic Ireland had no university and that the lack of the inquisitive intellectual rigour fostered by such an institution and milieu seems to have been the fundamental weakness in Gaelic endeavours until Thomas Davis and Douglas Hyde addressed the lacuna several centuries later, the point being underscored by the fact that both of these came from an Anglo-Irish background. This is not to overlook the major pioneering contributions to the language movement made by Eoin MacNeill, Rev. Eugene O’Growney and many other, lesser known, figures, who may be counted among the pioneering native revivalists.

### 3 Manuscripts and printing

We may follow Peter Burke in refining McLuhan’s ground-breaking insight that ‘the medium is the message’ to ‘the medium is part of the message’, agreeing with him also that a simplistic model of a newer technology merely ‘replacing’ an earlier one is untenable and that one has to envision a growing complexity of ‘orality and writing, manuscript and print, print and radio, radio and television, television and the Internet. When new media are introduced, old ones survive, although their place in the package and the functions that they perform

are generally more limited or specialized than before' (Burke 2018: 239). It is the balance and chronological ordering within Irish culture of orality/manuscript/print which set the position of Irish apart from that of English and the majority of other European languages in the period covered by this chapter. For example, there seem to be no instances in Ireland of the simultaneous multiplication of manuscripts in Irish as elsewhere in western Europe in the late Middle Ages in 'commercial *scriptoria*, where groups of scribes would write down the same words from dictation and thus allow the "publication" of a text before the age of print' (Burke 2018: 249). As well as that, Irish-speaking Ireland seems to have been relatively little affected by 'notarial culture' (cf. Burke 2018: 249), unlike Welsh in Wales, although even there the Celtic language was greatly overshadowed by the dominance of English in this sphere (Jenkins 1997: 63–64, 80–81).

Nonetheless, religion was the paramount ideological sphere and community reference point for several hundred years after the Reformation, with language playing a secondary role as identity marker. Given that the proclamation of Christianity in the language of the people was a central tenet of the Reform movement, the fact that this approach was more honoured in the breach than in practice as regards Irish in Ireland, brings into sharp relief the fact that the societal transformations precipitated by the Reformation allowed individual leaders and groups of nobles to manipulate religion for their own ends, and in the supposed interests of separate nations. This was of course especially true in the case of Henry VIII, England's early sixteenth-century Tudor king. Initially, at least, his break from Rome had as much to do with the exigencies of his marital arrangements and the attractions of sequestering the Church's vast monastic wealth as any convictions which he held regarding theological concepts or doctrinal precepts.

All of this was reflected in the lack of verve in the promotion of the Reformation through Irish. Indeed, in the Introduction to his work on Protestant publications in Irish, 1567–1724, Nicholas Williams states 'In general the English believed that to speak Irish was to be disloyal to the English Crown' (Tríd is tríd chreid na Sasanaigh gurbh ionann an Ghaeilge a labhairt agus a bheith mídhílis do Choróin Shasana) (Williams 1986: 9). Unlike the situations which came to obtain for Welsh speakers in Wales and Scottish Gaelic speakers in Scotland, the attempts to promote the Reformed religion through the native language were tepid in Ireland. While the *Book of Common Order* was translated by Seon Carsuel into literary Irish, a form of Gaelic common to both Scotland and Ireland, for the use of Scottish Presbyterians and published in roman font in Edinburgh in 1567, printing developments on behalf of the Reformed religion took place at a leisurely pace, and fitfully, in the Irish language in Ireland. Prompted by none other than

Queen Elizabeth I herself, who provided the finance for the gaelic font used in its production, the first such book published was *Aibidil Gaoidheilge & Caiticiosma*, a catechism written by Seaán Ó Cearnaigh al. Seaan O Kearnaigh (Dublin 1571; cf. Ó Cuív 1994). Among the five main parts of this work, identified by Ó Cuív (1994: 11), is a translation of the catechism, largely in the form of question and answer, as found in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* (1994: 15). Ó Cuív (1994: 15–16) concurs with de Bhaldraithe's earlier identification of the influence of Carsuel's work on Ó Cearnaigh's versions of four (out of ten) prayers (de Bhaldraithe 1958–61). This pioneering catechism was followed by an Irish translation of the New Testament (Dublin 1602). *Leabhar na nVmaightheadh gComhchoidchiond*, a translation of the *Book of Common Prayer* was published by Seon Francke in Dublin in 1608. In 1631 William Bedell published a small bilingual booklet of just thirteen pages, which set out the fundamental religious elements of Protestantism: *Aibgitir .i. Theaguisg Cheudtosugheadh an Chriostaidhe nó The A.B.C. or the Institution of a Christian* (Williams 1986: 46). However, another half-century was to pass before the publication of Bedell's translation of the Old Testament in London in 1685.

By the year 1608 Protestantism had a small number of important spiritual publications in Irish to its credit and the Reformed initiative may have seemed to contemporaries to be gathering momentum, although this subsequently proved not to be the case. At any rate, it may well have acted as the catalyst for a flurry of Counter-Reformation publications in Irish on the Continent. Accordingly, the printed works which aimed at promoting the Protestant religion were soon paralleled by a modest and equally intermittent series of Irish-language Catholic publications, supplied by members of the Franciscan Order based at Louvain on the Continent (rather than by the Irish clergy at Rome). This endeavour was inspired by the Council of Trent (1545–63). Having acquired a gaelic font of their own in 1611, the Franciscans in the College of St Anthony, Louvain, produced three works in quick succession: *An Teagasg Críosduidhe* by Bonabhentura al. Giolla Brighde Ó hEodhasa (Antwerp 1611, Louvain, c. 1614/15: see Mac Raghnaill 1976: [viii]), *Desiderius, nó Sgáthán an Chrábhaidh* by Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire (Louvain 1616; cf. O'Rahilly 1941) and *Scáthán Shacramuinte na hAithridhe* by Aodh Mac Aingil (Louvain 1618; cf. Ó Maonaigh 1952). There was then a twenty-year gap before the publication (in roman font) of *Catechismus Adhon, an Teagasc Críostúí, iar na fhoillsiú à Ladin & à Ngaoilaig* by Fr Theobald Stapleton al. Teabóid Gáldubh (Brussels 1639; cf. O Doherty 1945). This was followed by Fr Antoin Gearnon's *Parrthas an Anma* in gaelic font (Louvain 1645). Part Catechism, part prayer book, *Parrthas an Anma* proved particularly popular, with extracts from it entering the manuscript tradition, especially in Munster (Ó Fachtna 1953: xvii–xviii).

A later work, *Lucerna Fidelium*, a Catechism written by Fr Francisco Molloy al. Froinsias Ó Maolmhuidh was the first book in Irish published in Rome (1676) by the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide (Ó Súilleabháin 1962: ix). *Lucerna Fidelium* has the further distinction of being the Irish seventeenth-century publication with the greatest number of copies in circulation (Ó Súilleabháin 1962: ix).

Alongside these printing innovations, the seventeenth century witnessed great manuscript compilations such as *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann*, ‘The Annals of the Four Masters’, overseen by the Louvain based Michél Ó Cléirigh, and Séathrún Céitinn’s *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* (‘The History of Ireland’), both compiled and written in the 1630s, and which circulated in manuscript until they were eventually published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, respectively. These were ambitious projects, majestic in scope, and in the case of Céitinn in particular, they achieved fame on the basis of the attractiveness of the author’s prose style, as well as the compelling ideology of their content. Poets such as Piaras Feiritéar, Dáibhí Ó Bruadair, Aogán Ó Rathaille and Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin, to name just some of the more renowned, continued to invigorate the Irish language itself, although, with the exception of groups such as the Ó Neachtain circle in Dublin, one does not get much of a sense of genre innovation (Mac Mathúna 2012a).

Just five years after Céitinn completed his *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, Teabóid Gálldubh or Theobald Stapleton in his Latin-Irish *Catechismus* (1639) had proclaimed the link between language and community then being acknowledged throughout Continental Europe, stating ‘there is no nation on earth that does not respect, read, and write its own language as a matter of honour’ (cf. Crowley 2005b: 128). Nor was this an isolated view. The introduction to *The English-Irish Dictionary: An Focloir Bearla Gaoidheilge*, edited by Conchobhar O Beaglaoich and Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín (al. Mac Cuirtin) in Paris (1732), outlined their case for Irish, introducing an interesting comparative dimension:

Of all the dead or living Languages none is more copious and elegant in the Expression, nor is any more harmonious and musical in the Pronunciation, than the IRISH, tho it has been declining these Five Hundred Years past, along with the declining Condition of our country; whereas most of the modern Tongues of Europe have been polishing and refining all that long Series of Time. . . . as it is, it will be found inferior to none.

(O Beaglaoich and Mac Cuirtin 1732: i; cf. Crowley 2000: 110)

Therefore, these writers saw the situation of language and country and, by implication, people and group identity as intertwined. However, it is not until the early eighteenth century in the scholarly circle formed around Seán and Tadhg Ó Neachtain in the urban environment of Dublin, that one finds evidence of the

original thinking that might have given rise to an innovative policy and structured programme in relation to bilingualism. For the Ó Neachtains and their circle displayed the requisite intellectual openness, vibrancy and initiative, as well as the capacity for original thought. Their rich and varied scholarly output shows clearly that they were at home with urban living and modernity (Mac Mathúna 2012a).

In fact, Tadhg Ó Neachtain observed the incipient process of language change taking place about him and referred to it specifically in an astute passage in his geography text, *Eólas ar an Domhan* ('Knowledge about the World'), composed in the 1720s. In this work he shows his awareness of contemporary socio-cultural developments. He noted explicitly that a language shift from Irish to English was taking place among the better off native Irish at the time, stating that the nobility were turning their backs on Irish, although they remained steadfast in their attachment to the Catholic religion. He adverts to the traditional attachment of the Gaelic nobles to the Irish language, and stresses the esteem in which the language had been held by all classes since olden times:

Alas now there is no one of the nobility of the Gaelic people who is not denying their tongue, selling off their reputations and the pride of Gael Glas and the people of that Míle who journeyed to us from Spain under a great shade of bravery, poetry, and learning. And when they established themselves, Irish was respected, here and yonder, and in every place as a language of the soil, fluent, abundant, lively, precise, swift, tasty, sweet, and that for thousands of years up to now . . .

And from all this it may be appreciated that it was held in great esteem by the king as well as the labourer; and now it is as the tallest tree, when it is cut under its base, it is much more dreadful and heavier to fell than the little shrubbery which is close to the ground. The same fate certainly befell the nobility of the Gaels as regards their language.

(Ní Chléirigh 1944: 12–13; translation by the author)

A recent collection of essays on the cultivation of Irish in the country's major urban settings in the period 1700–1850 throws much further light on the resilience of the language in such contexts, despite both the historical anglicised nature of the towns and cities and the increasing tendency for Irish speakers to switch to English. However, in many cases both the original preponderance of English speakers and the contemporary urban language shift among the more recently settled native Irish were countered by the ongoing migration of Irish speakers from country areas to the towns and cities. The position of Irish was further buttressed by the ideological and cultural commitment of many of the native learned classes to the language (Mac Mathúna and Uí Chollatáin 2016).

## 4 Code-mixing

Mikhail Bakhtin developed the concept of ‘interanimation’ to account for the multilateral influences of Latin and the vernacular languages on one another in Europe in the late medieval and early modern periods. These influences are reflected in the ubiquitous macaronic literary compositions which were stimulated by the widespread linguistic practice of code-mixing and code-switching across registers, genres and languages. Code-mixing, that is the employment of English in an ancillary role to Irish in predominantly Irish-language texts, was a significant feature of the interaction between the two communities and their two languages over a period of some three hundred years and has been studied in depth in a monograph by the author, *Béarla sa Ghaeilge* (Mac Mathúna 2007: xi-xii). Triggered by the increasing pressure of English in Ireland since Elizabethan times, Irish/English literary code-mixing remained largely a matter of individual creative choice up to about 1750. However, the phenomenon of code-mixing became more widespread during the eighteenth century, as native Irish society grew increasingly bilingual. Detailed examination of a range of Irish literary texts which accommodated English passages in their matrix over the period from 1600 to 1900 made it possible to calibrate variations and trends in the interaction between the two languages in Ireland over this extended period. Of interest and importance to the literary critic as they undoubtedly are, these examples of the two languages in contact also carry sociolinguistic import, in that they shed contemporary light from the inside, as it were, on Irish reaction to the nature and quality of societal exchange in what were extended periods of great cultural and social upheaval.

The exercise of English common law in place of the native Brehon system was the cornerstone of the administrative apparatus established in Ireland following the English conquest. The changed circumstances were seen by the victors to require one king, one allegiance and one legal system, if English sovereignty were to be firmly established in Ireland, again in the words of Sir John Davies (Gillespie 2006: 10). Common law imposed a new system of inheritance and facilitated the transfer of land to new owners. Linguistically, the change is reflected in an analysis of ‘Seven Irish Documents from the Inchiquin Archives’, covering the years 1576–1621, which Gearóid Mac Niocaill published in 1970. Primarily written in Irish, these documents are essentially framed within common law and contain small but increasing amounts of English, particularly in the final section, where the documents were signed and sealed. However, as the following citation from Davies, quoted above, shows, he felt that the Irish had no choice but to knuckle down and reconcile themselves to the new reality: ‘For heretofore the neglect of the law made the English

degenerate and become Irish; and now, on the other side, the execution of the law doth make the Irish grow civil and become English (Crowley 2000: 60)'.

Indeed, some of the native Irish adapted quickly to the new situation and sought to gain important positions for themselves as justices of the peace under the new dispensation, as is observed in an account dated to 1615: 'if any gentleman of the Irishry be of ten pounds revenues or of any manner of fashion or can speak English . . . he will use one means or another to be put in the commission of the peace' (quotation from MS Elsmere 1746, f. 21, Henry E. Huntingdon Library, San Marino, California, cited in Gillespie 2006: 69, 307). Nonetheless, the authorities too had their difficulties as is revealed in the official perspective on another instance of similar interaction between the two communities, which is to be found in contemporary State Papers (1613). Here it is observed: 'it is also very inconvenient that the judges are unacquainted with the Irish language, and cannot understand the witnesses that speak no English, whereby they cannot so well judge the cause' (*Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland*, 1611–14, pp 376–377, cited in Crowley 2005a: 41).

Although fluency and literacy in English would not have been common among the native Irish population in the seventeenth century, there was widespread appreciation of the import of various kinds of legal documents (see Gillespie 2006: 24–25). In the 1650s the dominance of the foreign-imposed administrative system spurred a number of poets to compose bitter political poems, which employed the legal and bureaucratic terminology of the authorities to subvert the validity of their goals. Drawing on a common store of vocabulary and phraseology these poets lamented the powerlessness of Gaelic Ireland and vented their anger at the turmoil in the country. They argued that it was not legal provisions and niceties, which held sway, but biased orders and judgements, expressed in the form of phrases, slogans and litanies, which were a travesty of justice and mere stratagems in a plot to seize land, to dispossess landowners and to extirpate enemies. The literary device of code-switching to English facilitates Gaelic perspectives on the legal process and includes almost manic refrains of the implementation of the outcomes, which convey well the frenzied nature of the assault on some of the native Irish:

*Le execútion bhíos súil an chéidfhir,  
costas buinte 'na chuinne ag an ndéanach.  
Transport, transplant, mo mheabhair ar Bhéarla.  
Shoot him, kill him, strip him, tear him,  
A Tory, hack him, hang him, rebel,  
a rogue, a thief, a priest, a papist.*

The first man hopes for *execútion*,  
 the later wants the means of exaction against him.  
*Transport, transplant*, my mind on English.  
*Shoot him, kill him, strip, him, tear him,*  
*A Tory, hack him, hang him, rebel,*  
*a rogue, a thief, a priest, a papist.*  
 (O'Rahilly 1977: 90, lines 127–132, with author's  
 translation)

Two or three generations later, most of the land of Ireland had changed ownership, power had been consolidated in the hands of the English authorities and a new status quo reigned in Ireland. Some of the country's poets now felt free to reference the common law legal apparatus for rhetorical purposes, framing critical commentary on contemporary events and happenings. They clothed their compositions in the English legal terminology of the country, declaiming warrants which often began with the word '*Whereas*', so common in the public pronouncements of officials of the new order. The so-called Warrant poems, which were composed in Munster in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, reflect a situation where the common law legal system was accepted and provided a framework for satire and banter. More than eighty such works have been brought together by Fr Pádraig Ó Fiannachta in *An Barántas* (1978). This anthology is quite heterogeneous as it includes works which relate to the *cúirteanna éigse* 'poetry courts' of the poetic confraternity as well as the satiric warrants, the common thread being the use of legal terminology and framework (Mac Mathúna 2012b; for the poetry courts see Ó Conchúir 2000; for a discussion of the principal legal terms see Ó Muirí 2002). As to form, two thirds of the warrants consist of a prose preamble and verse, with one third containing verse only; four are exclusively in prose (Ó Fiannachta 1978: 13, 25). The majority of the warrants involve censure of a range of thieving and criminal activities and mockery of pretentiousness. Much of the humour is generated by the contrast between the base and inconsequential nature of the crime and the solemn and bombastic language of the legal utterances with which they are condemned. A second set of contrasts may also be in play, namely, that between the relatively high social station in the native community of some of those cited in the Warrant poems – the status of the Catholic priest, for instance – and the petty nature of the crime of which another stands accused, be it the theft of a hat, a book or a rooster.

A typical satiric warrant includes a summary deposition by the informant and a statement of the crime committed. The physical characteristics of the person to be sought by a hue-and-cry posse are usually described in considerable detail from head to toe in most unflattering terms, with alliterating strings of

adjectives occasionally exhausting the entire alphabet, letter by letter. The poet calls on the sheriff and county authorities to search high and low for the culprit, checking every nook and cranny of the landscape traversed, the abodes entered and the males and females encountered. No punishment will be too good for the criminal, once apprehended. The warrant is frequently, but not invariably dated.

The Warrant is the principal literary genre in Irish where code-mixing is a standard and staple ingredient. As a term ‘macaronic’ relates to form and not to genre. There are many ways in which a song or poem may be macaronic. More usually, verses in each language alternate, the content of the second echoing and loosely translating the preceding stanza. Sometimes a pattern is adhered to rigidly, sometimes intermittently. Perhaps the most demanding form in the Warrant genre, stylistically, is that where each line combines both languages and metrical features such as assonance and rhyme have to be adroitly applied across them simultaneously, as in the following two verses:

*Whereas this day* do réir réim chirt an chalandair,  
*I received information* le héifeacht go dearfa,  
*The warrant I gave, much* le faobhar chum an fhairceallaigh,  
*He's got a supersedeas* le means chum é sheachaint air.

*To all bums and bailiffs* ó Bhéarra don Mhainistir,  
*Constables, gaolers,* is gach éinne dhen aicme sin,  
*Let none take his orders* barántas ná atharach,  
*Atá a theideal ar lár óm' láimhse* gan dearmad.

This may be translated as follows:

*Whereas this day* according to the course of justice of the calendar,  
*I received information* with import positively,  
*The warrant I gave, much* with energy after the lump (of a man)  
*He's got a supersedeas* with means to avoid it against him.

*To all bums and bailiffs* from Beare to Mainistir,  
*Constables, gaolers,* and everyone of that class,  
*Let none take his orders* warrant or alternative,  
*His title is wanting* from my hand without mistake.  
 (Ó Fiannachta 1978: 205–206, with author's translation)

However, in the eighteenth century the macaronic device was not confined to the Warrant genre, but was found in many other types of composition, including the ever-popular love songs. The dominant theme of these is poet-meets-girl in the mode of ‘As I roved out one May morning’. The motif of the young

travelling poet facilitated these meetings of strangers. In many instances, the maiden is given the initiative in discourse, and, interestingly, in the majority of cases, she addresses the poet in English. She is often portrayed as being anxious that her clothes should not betray evidence of their encounter and as needing her parents' blessing before she accepts the poet's entreaty to wed. For instance, in *Ag taisteal na dtriúch go dubhach im' aonar*, the poet Aindrias Mac Craith, presents himself as being rebuffed by the fair maiden, who had attracted him, with the following words:

*'Keep off, I say, you raking rogue,  
Have a care, don't tear my cloak,  
Or I vow and swear I'll break your nose  
If you abuse my gown, Sir!'*

(Ó Muirthe 1980: 45)

In another song the poet tells us that when he saw the girl 'I knew by her gazing she'd played the Hide and Go Seek', and proceeds:

*Do dhruideas féin léi agus d'iarras póigín nó trí,  
The answer she made, 'Young blade you are making too free',  
Is é a dúirt mé féin léi gur bheannaigh sí domhsa róbhinn,  
'And I'd like for to teach you to play the Hide and Go Seek'.*

*Do fhreagair an spéirbhean agus dúirt sí gur aerach mo shlí:  
'I'll tarry a while until more of the world I'll see,  
Táimse ró-óg, cúig déag an fómhar seo 'imigh dinn,  
Though I'd like a good dale to play the Hide and Go Seek'.*

Translating the Irish, this reads:

*I moved close to her and asked for a little kiss or three,  
The answer she made, 'Young blade you are making too free',  
I said to her that she addressed me most sweetly,  
'And I'd like for to teach you to play the Hide and Go Seek'.*

*The beauty answered and said that I had a merry way,  
'I'll tarry a while until more of the world I'll see,  
I am too young, fifteen this autumn past,  
Though I'd like a good dale to play the Hide and Go Seek'.*  
(Ó Muirthe 1980: 70; author's translation)

The outcome remains unclear despite the poet's assurance that he has a fine field of sheep, cattle, a bull and a calf, coupled with the information that his 'mother is old and she hates making butter and cheese' (Ó Muirthe 1980: 70).

## 5 Voices in the wilderness

Given that religion was the individual and group identity marker *par excellence* in Western Europe following the Reformation, one can appreciate that from their own particular perspective the native Irish, who retained their religion despite the Penal laws, but wanted their children to switch language in the interests of economic well-being and social advance, would have felt that they were being true to themselves and their group identity, and merely responding pragmatically to the overwhelming societal circumstances in which they found themselves. Even then, their attitudes to Irish often remained ambivalent, both at the shared and individual levels. Thus the Gaelic learned classes revelled in the virtuosity that adding English to their language repertoire of Irish and Latin allowed them, while the hedge schools established by the Catholics themselves usually concentrated on the teaching of English and arithmetic. Although there were many individuals who spoke out in favour of the Irish language during the 1800s, their calls received little support until all had been nearly lost in the final quarter of the nineteenth century.

Edward O'Reilly, lexicographer, was one of the native scholars who promoted the case for Irish. Drawing on the positive example of learned outsiders such as Colonel Vallancey, who attempted 'to elucidate our antiquities and bring fairly before the public the claims of ancient Ireland to a literary character superior to that of neighbouring nations', and others such as Leibniz who recognized the utility of Irish in tracing the Celtic roots of Europe, O'Reilly, contended in *Sanas Gaoidhíle Sagsbhearla: An Irish English Dictionary* (1817) that 'to the natives of Ireland, the preservation of this beautiful and expressive language should be of the utmost importance' (Crowley 2005b: 131). Indeed, O'Reilly's preface, in effect, represents explicit repudiation of the Tudor anti-Irish Act and Spenser's later articulation of the ideological rationale underpinning it:

That a great portion of our language should be nearly forgotten at the present day, will not be much wondered at, when it is considered that for some hundreds of years it had been the policy of Government to use every means in their power to eradicate our language, and to deprive our people of every opportunity to obtain education. For this absurd purpose our books were destroyed, acts of parliament passed, schoolmasters persecuted, and where laws of severity were found ineffectual, recourse was had to ridicule, to shame the people out of the most energetic, ... the most original and unmixed language now remaining in Europe.  
(Crowley 2000: 145)

One thinks also of Philip Barron, who founded an Irish college and a periodical, *Ancient Ireland*, both however short-lived, in County Waterford in 1834–35. Amhlaoibh Ó Súilleabháin, whose celebrated diary (1827–35) was first published

in the twentieth century, was as sociolinguistically perceptive as Tadhg Ó Neachtain in Dublin a hundred years earlier. For example, writing in his diary entry for 14 June 1827 – four years before the national schools were founded in Ireland – Ó Súilleabháin predicted the impact English-medium schools would have on Irish:

Will it be long until this Irish language in which I am writing will disappear? Fine big schools are being built daily to teach this new language, the English of England. But alas! Nobody is taking any interest in the fine subtle Irish language, apart from mean Swaddlers who try to lure the Irish to join their new cursed religion.

(de Bhaldraithe 1979: 25, cf. de Bhaldraithe 1970: 9)

He clearly understood the strategic importance of the increasing institutional support for English and the long-term consequences of the lack of a corresponding counterbalance for Irish. His entry for 5 January 1828 citing the establishment of a circulating library for English books is a case in point:

Some of the townspeople are organising a circulating library for a limited number of members. It has been established for the last year. Every member of the society pays five shillings a year. Alas! Who will establish an Irish language library? No such person is available. The English language of the Saxon is every day getting the upper hand of our own native language. Add to that a thousand million other blemishes and deficiencies under which we are suffering since the day the English once got hold of our native land – poor persecuted Ireland.

(de Bhaldraithe 1979: 43; cf. de Bhaldraithe 1970: 25)

Less well known are the sentiments expressed by the prolific early nineteenth-century author, Thaddaeus al. Thady Connellan (c.1775–1854), who had converted to the Church of Ireland from Catholicism. In the ‘Advertisement’ with which he introduced *The King’s Letter, Translated into Irish; with a Grammatical Introduction to the Irish Language, and Reading Lessons for the Use of His Majesty’s Irish Subjects* he has the following to say:

It has been suggested, that many, otherwise enlightened persons, may fear that any encouragement to the revival of the Irish language may be injurious, by delaying its decline, and the consequent extension of the English. This decline does not appear to me so rapid as it may to others: but with respect to the extension of the English language, I think it is more likely to be promoted by the cultivation of the Irish... A revival of the Irish language does not infer a depression of the English; but it is much to be wished, that many of those who speak but one of these languages, should learn to speak both. Nor is this difficult for the young: neither is it uncommon for a considerable proportion of the population of other countries to use two languages; as may be instanced in the Netherlands, in the maritime towns of Europe, in some of the smaller States of Germany, in Switzerland, in Canada, and even among several native tribes of the East Indies and America.

(Connellan 1825: v)

This must be one of the earliest occasions, if not in fact the very earliest, when a case was publicly articulated in favour of Irish/English bilingualism, citing international comparisons.

Particularly arresting is the case of Pádraig Phiarais Cúndún (1777–1857) who emigrated to America from Baile Mhac Óda, near Youghal in east Cork in 1826, settling in Utica in upstate New York. The letters in Irish which he sent from there to friends and former neighbours in Ireland in the years 1834–56 represent a fascinating cache of material, not least because of their intriguing interplay of prose letters and poetic compositions. Writing in *Irish Historical Studies* (1980), Kerby A. Miller noted that ‘we lack any series of letters from Gaelic-speaking emigrants, with but one exception, that of poet Pádraig Cúndún’ (Miller 1980: 117), an observation made the previous year by Breandán Ó Buachalla in an essay in *Go Meiriceá Siar* (Ó hAnnracháin 1979). More commonly known as Pádraig Phiarais Cúndún, the letter-writer in question was forty-nine years old when he emigrated to the United States in 1826. The following year he bought a farm near Utica in New York State and only began to write letters home in 1834, when he had fully paid off his loan and felt that he had become successful in his new surroundings. Reputed to have had no English, Cúndún is remarkable not just for his series of letters, many of which contained poems he composed, but for his uncompromising attachment to Irish, forcefully expressed at the end of many of his letters. The plea for a reply to his correspondence was regularly accompanied by an admonition to write back to him in Irish. However, in one instance, concluding a letter to Párlólán Suipéal in 1837, Cúndún goes even further, exhorting Suipéal to write to him ‘every year without fail. Take note to write to me in the Irish language or not to write at all’ (Bíodh fhios agat scríobh’ insan teangain Ghaoidhilge chugham nó gan scríobh’ ar éanchor) (Ó Foghludha 1932: 71). The evidence yielded by Pádraig Phiarais Cúndún’s correspondence is of great interest, not only because of the insights it gives into his experiences as a pre-Famine Irish emigrant in upstate New York, but also into his complex ideological, political and cultural views and how he sought to reconcile the tensions of identity and belonging resulting from his permanent move to America. Their evidence for Irish operating well as a contemporary community language, lends support to the emphasis placed in a recent ground-breakingly challenging reassessment of the fortunes of the Irish language by Nicholas Wolf in his monograph, *An Irish-Speaking Island* (2014). He summarises part of his arguments as follows:

Literary scholars have long discussed the creation of modern Irish literature in terms of the contributions of Irish-language writing to that process. By contrast, historical interpretations of the wider place of Irish speakers in the making of modern Irish culture have tended to avoid that question or else assumed, given language shift, that no role for Irish existed. This position is untenable. Evidence of Irish speakers participating in the shaping

of eighteenth- and nineteenth century cultural and political processes demonstrates to the contrary that this was a speech community that, so long as it existed, was fully capable of negotiating the changes shaping the Ireland that emerged at century's end.

(Wolf 2014: 273)

Wolf contends that the predominant emphasis placed by researchers on the historical perspective, together with our retrospective knowledge of the outcome of the interplay between Irish and English, have served to occlude the reality and vibrancy of community life as lived through Irish from 1770 to 1870, and most especially in the first half of the nineteenth century. He notes that the number of Irish speakers probably reached its highest point of about four million c. 1830, and stresses that this population was not comprised exclusively of the rural poor. He also provides new evidence regarding the role of Irish in the public sphere.

Of course, the best-known articulation of the case for the revival of Irish at this period is that set out by the patriot Thomas Davis (1814–1845), of Anglo-Irish stock, in the pages of the Young Ireland newspaper, *The Nation*. It is indicative of the relative status and influence of the two language groupings in the public sphere in Ireland in the nineteenth century that it should be Davis, someone who knew little Irish and one was speaking from outside the native tradition, whose ideology and words were to have the greatest public impact. A consummate journalist, his succinct aphorism-like expressions, proved as effective as any contemporary sound-bite. Indeed, many are still remembered and quoted to this day. His essay is a powerful combination of polemic and realism, as some extracts will demonstrate:

A people without a language of its own is only half a nation. A nation should guard its language more than its territories – 'tis a surer barrier, and more important frontier, than fortress or river. . . .

To lose your native tongue, and learn that of an alien, is the worst badge of conquest – it is the chain on the soul. To have lost entirely the national language is death; the fetter has worn through. . . .

Nothing can make us believe that it is natural or honourable for the Irish to speak the speech of the alien, the invader, the Sassenagh tyrant, and to abandon the language of our kings and heroes. . . . No! oh no! the 'brighter days shall surely come,' and the green flag shall wave on our towers, and the sweet old language be heard once more in college, mart, and senate. . . .

At present the middle classes think it a sign of vulgarity to speak Irish – the children are everywhere taught English and English alone in schools – and, what is worse, they are urged by rewards and punishments to speak it at home for English is the land of their masters. (Davis, 'Our National Language', *The Nation*, 1843, cited in Crowley 2000: 161–163)

Elsewhere in the same essay, Davis expresses the fear that any immediate attempt to introduce Irish into the eastern half of the country, either through the national schools or the courts would fail and the reaction might be so adverse

that it would extinguish the language altogether. But he continues quite presciently to venture that there might well be longer term possibilities: ‘no one contemplates this save as a dream of what may happen a hundred years hence’. On the other hand, he argues strongly that the Irish language should in the meantime be cherished, taught, and esteemed, and that it could be preserved and gradually extended (Crowley 2000: 163).

Writing on ‘Repeal Reading Rooms’ in the same paper, *The Nation*, in 1844, Davis maintained that the Repeal Association should provide a wide range of Irish language material for rooms in the districts where Irish is spoken. Indeed, he insightfully realised the need for Irish to occupy a space in the expanding world of newspapers and journalism, if it were to flourish. For instance, he observed that the plan to send out Bishop MacHale’s translations of classical works would not be sufficient to achieve the Association’s aim, without breaking new ground, viz. ‘without establishing a newspaper, partly in English and partly in Irish, like the mixed newspapers of Switzerland, New Orleans and Hungary’ (cf. Crowley 2000: 163–164).

## 6 Conclusion

Religion, land, famine and emigration, and Home Rule were the great social and political issues of the nineteenth century. Language had to wait in the wings. First to be resolved was religion, the societal stress generated by the contentious gap between state policy and the facts on the ground, the kneelers in the pews, as it were. The tension between the Catholicism of the great majority of the population and the legal constraints still in place, was eased in 1829 with the passage of the Act of Catholic Emancipation, championed by Daniel O’Connell. The payment of tithes by Catholics to the Church of Ireland was also ameliorated in the 1830s and the Church of Ireland was finally disestablished in 1870. The great land agitations, which had really never ceased since the appropriations and displacements of the various colonising plantations, 1550–1700, slowly lost their edge with the introduction of land acts from 1870 on: these facilitated the purchase of their holdings by peasants and subsistence farmers. But as these enduring central discontents were neutralised, others materialised and grew. The Great Famine of the late 1840s is thought to have resulted in a million deaths by disease and starvation, and impelled millions more to emigrate over the next century. These national disasters were compounded by their particularly devastating effect on the poorer Irish-speaking communities, although by then the language was already in sharp generational retreat even in the west and south of the

island. Politically, the Home Rule campaigns of O'Connell and Parnell were repelled by the British establishment. It was in this complex mix of old grievances being more or less resolved (religion, land) and societal upheaval (continuing famines, poverty, emigration, denial of Home Rule) that the cultural awakening of the late nineteenth century struck a chord with the people and released as it were a pent-up desire for cultural and intellectual renewal.

One can trace this revitalisation in broad movements, in innovative publications and in the birth of many new societies. The Gaelic language revival itself saw the establishment of organisations such as the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language (1876), the Gaelic Union (1880) and the Gaelic League (1893). These were paralleled by the founding of the Gaelic Athletic Association (1884) and the Anglo-Irish Literary Revival movement, spearheaded by W. B. Yeats, Lady Augusta Gregory and Edward Martyn. The year 1893 witnessed not only the founding of the Gaelic League, inspired by Eoin MacNeill, Douglas Hyde and the Rev. Eugene O'Growney, but also the publication of two seminal texts, Hyde's *Love Songs of Connacht* and Yeats's *Celtic Twilight*. The previous year Hyde had delivered his celebrated lecture entitled 'The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland', credited with acting as the catalyst for the League's foundation (reprinted in Ó Conaire 1986: 153–170).

The Gaelic League fought and won many battles during Hyde's tenure as President (1893–1915). It ensured the place of Irish in second level education. It achieved a bilingual programme for national schools in Irish-speaking districts. It fostered native Irish industry, using monster St Patrick Day processions for publicity purposes. It forced the Post Office to accept addresses in Irish on letters and parcels. It built on the success of *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge/Gaelic Journal*, the bilingual periodical established by the Gaelic Union in 1882, to found newspapers such as *Fáinne an Lae* (1898) and *An Claidheamh Soluis* (1899), part of an ambitious publishing effort embracing pamphlets, booklets and books which propelled Irish into the twentieth century as a modernised written vernacular. Hyde undertook an eight-month fundraising tour of America in 1905/06, collecting in all some \$64,000. This significant sum was largely used to finance the League's successful campaign to have Irish recognised as one of the essential requirements for matriculation in the new National University of Ireland (1909). This outcome was heralded as a great success in John Devoy's *Gaelic American*, and it is often regarded as the Gaelic League's greatest achievement and the highpoint of its activism. Indeed, we may conclude this chapter with Ó Tuathaigh's pertinent observation that this was one of the few occasions when the importance of language trumped that of religion in Ireland's public discourse (Ó Tuathaigh 2008): a lot had happened since the Ulster Earls set sail from Co. Donegal in 1607.

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Raymond Hickey

## 4 Adjusting language identity: Twentieth-century shifts in Irish English pronunciation

‘That harshness we call the Irish accent’

(John Walker *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary  
of the English Language*, 1791)

### 1 Introduction

For many varieties of English, the differences between forms in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries are only gradual, e.g. for Southern Hemisphere varieties like South African English (Bekker 2012; Bowerman 2012), Australian English (Burridge 2010; Horvath 2008) and New Zealand English (Gordon 2010, 2012). However, for Irish English there are considerable differences between the accent prevalent at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century and that found later in the twentieth century. The reason for the changes, which are abundantly apparent towards the mid-twentieth century, can be sought in the independence of (the south of) Ireland from Britain in 1922 and the subsequent re-orientation in the new country from an exonormative model of pronunciation of English, based on southern standard British English, towards an endonormative pronunciation model. This involved the adoption of certain existing vernacular features into the supraregional variety of English in Ireland which was based on middle-class educated usage in the capital city Dublin and which continued to provide an orientation for those speakers in Ireland who did not wish to avail of the vernacular variety of the region of the country from which they came.

For the discussions in this chapter the notion of ‘supraregional Irish English’ (Hickey 2013) is necessary. This term refers to non-local, non-vernacular forms of English in Ireland without resorting to the use of the term ‘standard’. The latter label is avoided because that would imply codification (in grammars, dictionaries, style manuals, Hickey, ed. 2012) which does not hold in the Irish case.

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## 2 Supraregional Irish English, c 1900

Since the Middle Ages Dublin has been the capital of Ireland. The city is much larger than any of the other cities in the country, for instance, it is about four times the size of Cork, the second largest city in the Republic of Ireland and over twice the size of Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland. The size of Dublin and the fact that it has been the seat of the English administration in the country for centuries and is the present-day location of the government has meant that it has been the guiding influence on the rest of the country in terms of customs, fashion and language. The form of English which acts as the supraregional variety of English throughout the Republic of Ireland is based on educated Dublin English usage (Hickey 2005: 208–209). So in tracing the development of supraregional Irish English in the past few centuries, it is necessary to focus on non-vernacular Dublin English, essentially the variety spoken by the educated middle classes of the capital city.

Before 1922 the entire island of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, this being renamed the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland after independence was reached for four fifths of Ireland covering the entire centre and south of the island. While it was still part of the United Kingdom the administration of Ireland was English and the exposure to general accents of English was greater than after independence due to the numbers of English people in government service in Ireland and the general orientation of the educational system towards an English model.

### 2.1 The accent of public figures born before 1900

Listening to recordings of Irish people born before 1900 the immediate acoustic impression of their voices is that they sound British. The accents are usually non-rhotic, with an open STRUT vowel and a lack of HAPPY-tensing, three features prominent in standard southern British English<sup>1</sup> at the time. The individuals recorded were usually writers, artists, political or cultural figures. For instance, there are short recordings of the poet William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) and the novelist James Joyce (1882–1941) reading excerpts from their works. Yeats had a country accent (if somewhat stylised), possibly deriving from his childhood stays in Co. Sligo, while Joyce had an urban middle class accent from Dublin. His family was

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<sup>1</sup> The open STRUT vowel is still characteristic of Received Pronunciation today while HAPPY-tensing has spread in this sociolect of British English, see Cruttenden (2014: 121–123 and 113).

lower middle-class and subject to frequent moves of house due to financial stress. In modern sociolinguistic terms, Joyce would be located in a social group – the lower middle class – which is known to be particularly active in language variation and change, striving to move upwards on the social scale (Labov 1972 [1966]).

It is an unexpected fact that the Dublin middle-class accent for those born before 1900 was surprisingly like standard southern British English of the time, even for individuals who had a negative stance towards Britain and the British and who were involved at some stage in the Irish revolution (1916–1923). To demonstrate this, the speech of two individuals has been examined in detail here. The first is W. T. [William Thomas] Cosgrave (1880–1965) who was prime minister from 1922 to 1932 (President of the Executive Council in the terminology of the Irish Free State). The second is his son Liam [William Michael] Cosgrave (1920–2017) who was also prime minister from 1973 to 1977 (then and since called Taoiseach – the terminology changed after the foundation of the Republic of Ireland in 1949) and also a member of the Irish parliament from 1943 to 1981. These two persons are suited for a comparison of accents as they share social class background, education and professional paths (both senior politicians). This means that the chief differentiating parameter between the two is age: the father W. T. Cosgrave grew up in late-nineteenth century Ireland while his son was reared in the young independent Irish state. The differences in speech between the father and son are dealt with in section 2.3 below, but first the common features are outlined.

## 2.2 Established features of Irish English

A number of features which are typical of the phonology of modern Irish English (Hickey 2004a, 2004b) can be recognised in the speech of both W. T. Cosgrave and Liam Cosgrave and indeed in all the other early audio recordings of Irish English.

### 2.2.1 TH-stopping

Irish English is noted for a lack of interdental fricatives, dental stops being found in the THIN and THIS lexical sets. This is true across the entire Republic of Ireland<sup>2</sup> with the possible exception of parts of Donegal or the border region with

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<sup>2</sup> Alveolar realisations of the dental stops of supraregional Irish English are found in vernacular rural varieties, especially in the south-west of Ireland, e.g. [ba:t] rather than [ba:t̪] for *bath*.

Northern Ireland where interdental fricatives are found in both Ulster Scots and Mid-Ulster English. The appearance of interdental fricatives in the speech of educated southern Irish, especially in coda rhymes, e.g. *path*, *teeth*, is due to a reading pronunciation of <th>. Indeed this pronunciation is recommended by the national television network, Radió Telefís Éireann, whose news readers and continuity announcers strive to realise <th> as fricatives (voiced or voiceless) with varying degrees of success. TH-stopping is found consistently in the early audio recordings of Irish English in coda onsets and variably in coda rhymes.

### 2.2.2 T-frication

A prominent feature of Irish English (Hickey 1984, 1996, 2009; Schulte, this volume) is the realisation of /t/ in positions of high sonority – intervocally and word-finally/pre-pausally – as an apico-alveolar fricative, e.g. *sit* [sɪt̪], *city* [sɪt̪i].<sup>3</sup> This realisation of /t/ is found in the speech of W. T. Cosgrave and others of his generation (Hickey 2017: 204) which would point to its establishment well before independence in Ireland. Furthermore, W. T. Cosgrave shows the same stylistic variation in the realisation of word-final, pre-pausal /t/ which is found with speakers of Irish English today. Consider the three realisations of the word *what* found in immediate succession in a recording of W. T. Cosgrave.

- (1) a. position of high sonority – apico-alveolar fricative:  
*what* [ʍɒt̪] *hope there is for mankind*
- b. very brief pause – aspirated stop:  
*what* [ʍɒt<sup>h</sup>] *prospects there are for peace*
- c. forward assimilation to following /k/ –unreleased stop:  
*what* [ʍɒt̚] *considerations*

### 2.2.3 GOAT-monophthong

The mid rising diphthongs of standard southern British English, found in the FACE and GOAT lexical sets, are traditionally monophthongs in Irish English

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<sup>3</sup> This feature was transported to Liverpool where it is found in the local urban dialect, Scouse (Watson 2007).

as the historical inputs to these diphthongs were also monophthongs. Irish English in the twentieth century shows a slight diphthongisation of these vowels, with considerable diphthongisation of the GOAT vowel, chiefly for female speakers, in the past few decades (Hickey 2003a). However, in the speech of those Irish people born in the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, the GOAT vowel was still a monophthong. In the recordings of both W. T. Cosgrave and his son the monophthongal realisation of the GOAT vowel can be clearly heard.

#### 2.2.4 FOR # FOUR distinction

What is described in the literature on accents of English as the NORTH-FORCE distinction (Wells 1982: 234–237) was found in all varieties of Irish English up to very recently (Hickey 2016) with a different realisation for each vowel. Both W. T. Cosgrave and Liam Cosgrave have a lower realisation (open mid back – [ɔ:] ) for the FOR vowel (Wells’ NORTH vowel) with the FOUR vowel (Well’s FORCE vowel) realised as a closed mid back vowel – [o:]. This distinction has been lost recently as part of the sound shifts which occurred in Irish English in the 1990s and the lack of it is now part of suprarregional Irish English. This means that word-pairs like *morning* ~ *mourning*; *born* ~ *borne*; *horse* ~ *hoarse*, originally distinguished by vowel quality, are now homophones.

#### 2.2.5 WHAT # WATT distinction

The voiceless approximant [ʍ], written <wh->, only occurs word-initially in English and is now only found with any robustness in conservative varieties of Irish English and Scottish English. In the speech of both the Cosgraves, the voiceless sound is clearly to be heard. It would seem that it disappeared in Irish English towards the end of the twentieth century leading to the loss of the WHAT # WATT distinction meaning that word-pairs like *which* ~ *witch*, *whale* ~ *wail*, *whet* ~ *wet* are now identical in pronunciation, each having a voiced labio-velar approximant as initial sound.

## 2.3 Transgenerational changes in the early twentieth century

The data<sup>4</sup> for the speech analysis presented here come (i) from a statement given by W. T. Cosgrave in 1930 for Pathé News (approx. 3 mins.) and (ii) an interview given by Liam Cosgrave on 5 April 1974 for British television after a meeting with Harold Wilson (approx. 1 min.). The latter interview is quite short but sufficient in quality to determine the realisations for the key features to be discussed here. Various other interviews with, and statements by, Liam Cosgrave were consulted to confirm that the feature values, evident in the 1974 interview, were indeed the speaker’s native realisations.

**Table 1:** Contrasting features in the speech of W. T. Cosgrave (1880–1965) and Liam Cosgrave (1920–2017).

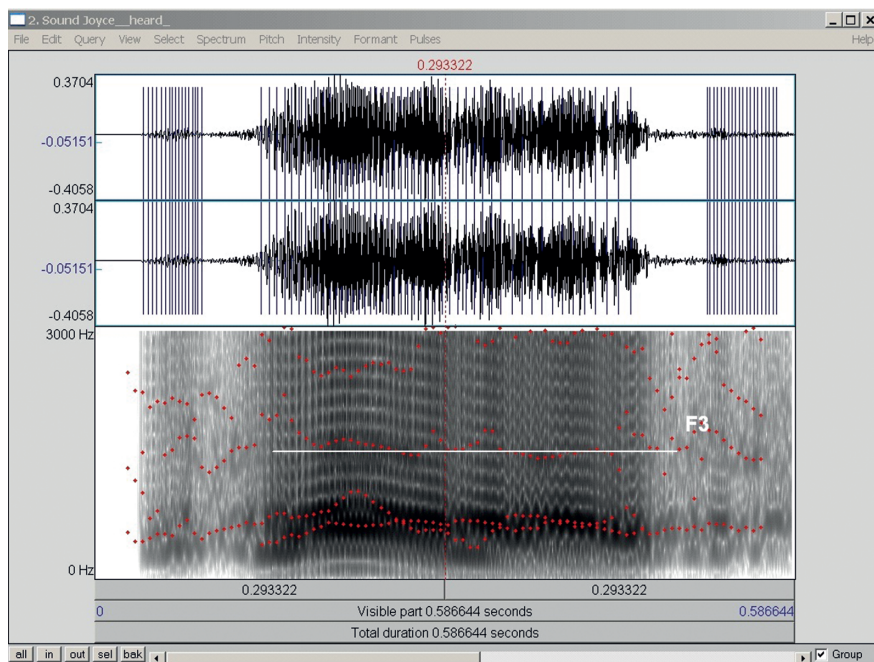
	W. T. Cosgrave	Liam Cosgrave
rhotic	mainly non-rhotic	yes
back STRUT vowel	no	yes
HAPPY-tensing	no	yes
raised PRICE vowel	yes	no
raised TRAP vowel	yes	no

The features in the above table represent the main segmental differences in the speech of the Cosgrave father and son and are discussed in the following sections in terms of their value as diagnostics of supraregional Irish English during the lives of these two individuals.

### 2.3.1 Rhoticity in pre-independence Irish English

The evidence of the Cosgraves, and that contained in other audio recordings from the early twentieth century (Hickey 2017), suggest that supraregional Irish English was variably rhotic. Consider the following two spectrograms of words pronounced by James Joyce. The indication of rhoticity is the lowering of the third formant in the second spectrogram (Figure 1) but not in the first (Figure 2).

<sup>4</sup> The changes to be discussed here are different from those which were lost in vernacular Irish English in the nineteenth century, on these see Hickey (2008).

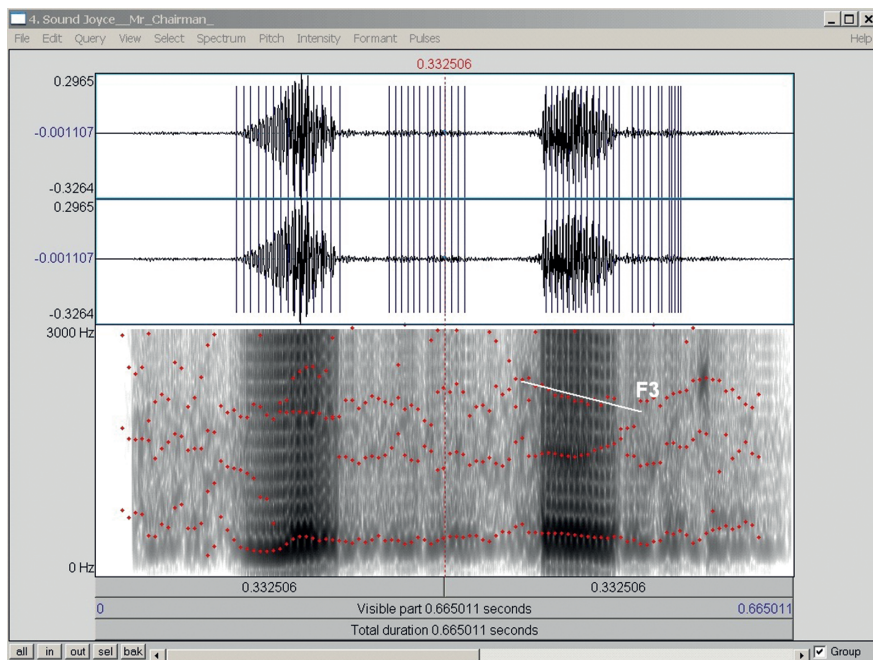


**Figure 1:** Joyce saying ‘heard’ (non-rhotic pronunciation, no lowering of the third formant).

A similar picture is given by W. T. Cosgrave: in the speech he delivered there are instances where non-prevocalic /r/ is found and where it is not. In the pronunciation of ‘therefore’ there is a slight dip in F3 towards the end, but in ‘elsewhere’ a few seconds later there is none. The phrase ‘we here in this country’ shows a non-rhotic pronunciation for ‘here’, evident in the constant third formant to be seen in the spectrogram below (Figure 3).

### 2.3.2 STRUT vowel

The present-day pronunciation of the vowel in the STRUT lexical set is a backed and perhaps slightly rounded vowel close to Cardinal /Λ/. An open and lowered realisation of the STRUT vowel is regarded by Irish people as typical of British accents to this day and is often used to ridicule such accents. Nonetheless, this realisation was found in pre-independence Ireland and continued in middle class accents of south Dublin for many decades at least into the third quarter of the twentieth century. One of the most noticeable segmental differences in the



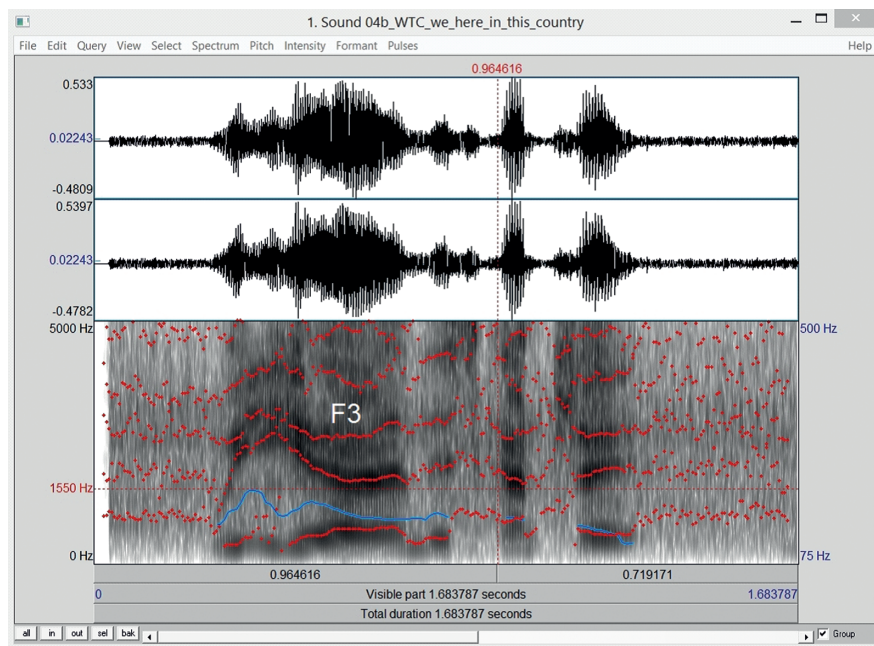
**Figure 2:** Joyce saying ‘Mr. Chairman’ (rhotic pronunciation, lowering of the third formant).

speech of W. T. Cosgrave and his son Liam is in their realisations of this vowel: the father had pronounced the word *come* as [käm] whereas the son had [käm].<sup>5</sup>

### 2.3.3 HAPPY-tensing

In present-day Irish English the use of a high front vowel for <-y> in word-final position is universal, for instance, the word *country* can only be pronounced [käntri]. However, in the speech by W. T. Cosgrave the pronunciation of this word is clearly [käntri]. This shows the open realisation of the STRUT vowel and the lowered and slightly centralised realisation of the final vowel. That both the vowel realisations in this word stem from a standard southern British English pronunciation is clear when one considers that the Irish language does not have a final unstressed [ɪ] (apart from a few function words) and that the

<sup>5</sup> This realisation is still distinct from the high back vowel [ʊ], typical of local Dublin English which does not have the FOOT-STRUT split (Wells 1982: 196–199).



**Figure 3:** W. T. Cosgrave saying ‘we here in this country’ (non-rhotic pronunciation, level third formant).

realisation of the /ʌ/ vowel in Irish is [ä], seen in a word like *loch* ‘lake’ is [tʰäx] (Hickey 2014: 145–152). Furthermore, all vernacular rural accents of Irish English have [ä] as the realisation of English /ʌ/.

### 2.3.4 TRAP vowel

Indications that the /æ/ vowel in the TRAP lexical set had a raised realisation more like /ɛ/ go back at least to the eighteenth century when prescriptivists like John Walker remarked on the pronunciation of this vowel. Under the heading *Irregular and unaccented Sounds* Walker notes:

There is a corrupt, but a received pronunciation of this letter in the words *any*, *many*, *Thames*, where the *a* sounds like short *e*, as if written *enny*, *menny*, *Tems*. *Catch*, among Londoners, seems to have degenerated into *Ketch*; (Walker 1815[1791]: 29).

The earliest recordings of speakers of Received Pronunciation also point towards the raised pronunciation, at least compared to the realisations found in

the later twentieth century (Henton 1983, Docherty 2010). It is not until the mid 20th century that this raising of [æ] is reversed, yielding the present-day tendency to have a lowered vowel in the TRAP lexical set (Bauer 1994: 120–121).

In keeping with this somewhat closed pronunciation of earlier speakers we find realisations in the region of a lowered low front vowel rather than a fully open front vowel with W. T. Cosgrave, i.e. *detached* [dɪ'tɛ-tʃt]. His son, however, had a lower vowel realisation, e.g. *matter* [mæt̪ə].

### 2.3.5 PRICE vowel

The raised realisation of the TRAP vowel is part of a general setting for the low vowels to be less open than in later varieties of both Irish English and British English. In the recording of W. T. Cosgrave he repeatedly uses the word *time* and on each occasion realised the diphthong in this word as [ɛɪ]. Liam Cosgrave, on the other hand, had a more open starting point for this diphthong, e.g. *signed* [saɪnd].

### 2.3.6 MOUTH vowel

Supraregional Irish English today has a noticeably front starting point for the diphthong in the MOUTH lexical set, e.g. *house* [hæʊs] with more raised variants typical of advanced Dublin English, especially among females, e.g. [heʊs] (Hickey 2016). This pronunciation is relatively recent having entered supraregional Irish English only in the last few decades. But it can be seen as a continuation of a tendency in Dublin English to use a front starting point for the MOUTH diphthong. W. T. Cosgrave has a low central starting point for the diphthong, cf. *founders* [faundərz] and *ground* [graund], more in keeping with Received Pronunciation of his time, but his son shows a more fronted starting point, e.g. *council* [kæʊnsəl].

### 2.3.7 Realisation of laterals

Syllable-final /l/ in present-day supraregional Irish English is velarised, e.g. *field* [fi:ld], *meal* [mi:t̪]. This is quite a recent development and all speakers born before the mid twentieth century had, and generally still have, a clear /l/ in coda positions. W. T. Cosgrave had this in words like *will* [wɪl] and his son did so as well, cf. *council* [kæʊnsəl], *details* [ˈdi:te:lz].

### 3 Endonormative reorientation

While the Irish accent was regarded as unpleasant to the ear by generations of English people (see Walker quote at the beginning of this chapter) with the gaining of independence the evaluation of the Irish pronunciation of English by the British became increasingly irrelevant to Irish people. In addition, professional advancement in Irish society would not have been impeded by an Irish accent to anything like the extent it would have been under British rule. Hence it is understandable that, while Ireland was an English colony, publicly acceptable varieties of British English should have provided an accent model for non-local speech in Ireland.

But what happened when Ireland was no longer a colony of England? The answer is that the suprasegmental accent of Irish English changed in the decades after independence (post-1922). The new social and cultural identity<sup>6</sup> found in Ireland was reflected on a linguistic level as well (Hickey 2003b). This happened by the promotion of certain vernacular realisations to the level of the suprasegmental variety of English in the new free state, later republic. Hence we are dealing with a process of ‘endonormative reorientation’.<sup>7</sup> It is significant that not all features of vernacular varieties were adopted into the nascent suprasegmental variety of Irish English. To account for the changes which happened one must consider the role of local Dublin English. Given that suprasegmental Irish English derives historically from educated Dublin English, found chiefly in the south of the city, then the promotion of some features but not others can be explained by the interaction of two main factors: (i) the Irish distancing themselves from English varieties and (ii) the avoidance of too strongly local features in the new suprasegmental variety. Thus there are a number of features of local Dublin English which remained in this variety alone (Table 2).

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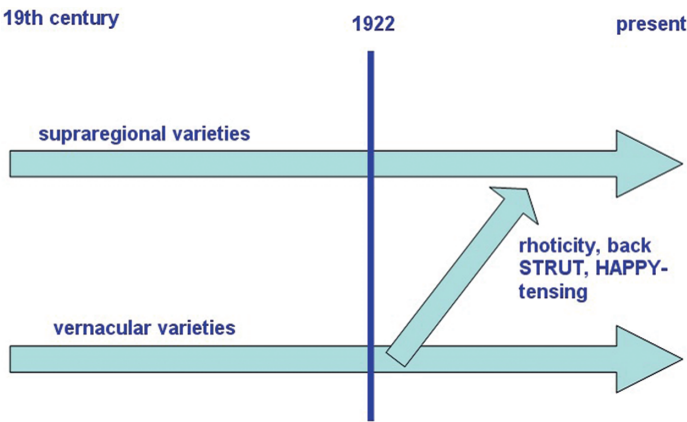
<sup>6</sup> The role which new identity plays in the formation of new varieties is a much discussed matter, see Trudgill et al. (2000), Trudgill (2004, 2008) for the view that identity is irrelevant and Hickey (2003b) for criticism of Trudgill’s views.

<sup>7</sup> The prefix *endo-* means ‘from within’ (inside the country in question, here Ireland) and contrasts with *exo-* ‘from outside’, found in *exonormative*, norms from another country, usually that of the original colonisers. In this respect the development in newly independent Ireland correspond to Phase 4 of the Dynamic Model by Edgar Schneider (see Schneider 2003, 2007). The sequence of phases which Schneider posits for other varieties of English (five in all, ending in *nativisation*) do not apply in that sequence in Ireland, e.g. *nativisation* had taken place long before the *endonormative* stabilisation being discussed in this chapter.

**Table 2:** Features of local Dublin English not found in Supraregional Irish English.

Local Dublin English	Supraregional Irish English
High back STRUT vowel	Low back STRUT vowel
T glottalisation	Absence of glottalisation
Weak rhoticity	High rhoticity
Central onset of PRICE vowel	Low onset of PRICE vowel
Breaking of long /i:, u:/	No vowel breaking
TERM-TURN distinction	No pre-rhotic short vowel distinctions

Distancing from British models of pronunciation meant abandoning certain features and adopting vernacular Irish realisations instead. Among there were the first three features found in Table 1 above and show in Figure 4 below.



**Figure 4:** Changes in three key features after Irish independence.

### 3.1 Remnants of exonormative accents?

The reorientation towards more exonormative models of pronunciation after 1922 did not happen suddenly and there were sections of Irish society which held on longest to English accents, still displaying the features shown in the second

column of Table 1 for many decades after independence. This was particularly true of national radio and television where such accents could be heard even into the 1970s. Later changes, from the 1990s and 2010s, came to be adopted in the media especially by young women working as news readers, weather forecasters, continuity announcers, etc. (Hickey 2003a, 2016).

### 3.2 And what about Ulster?

Varieties of English in Ulster have always been significantly different from those outside this province (this also applies to varieties of Irish, Hickey 2011). In particular the heavily Scots-influenced counties of Antrim and Down had distinct accents in the past and still do to this day, in both colloquial and less local speech. Nowadays figures of public life generally eschew southern standard British accents especially those who are strident in their identification with Northern Ireland as a distinct political and social entity within the United Kingdom. The question in the present context is whether this was the case at the beginning of the twentieth century? To answer that question, consider the accent of a prominent Ulster Protestant born in the nineteenth century, James Craig (1871–1940). He is comparable to W. T. Cosgrave: he was socialised in Ireland before 1900 and later became first prime minister, in his case of the new formed Northern Ireland (a constituent part of the United Kingdom), an office he held from 1921 to 1940. A short statement by Craig, in which he pledges his allegiance and loyalty to Great Britain exists as an audio recording. From this is it obvious that he had a British-like accent, with an open STRUT vowel and lack of HAPPY-tensing, just like W. T. Cosgrave. However, his accent was rhotic as are all varieties of English in Ulster. The recording suggest that he was, to a certain extent, donning an English accent. For instance, within the space of some few seconds he has the word *doubtless* [daʊtləs] with an RP-like diphthong followed by the word *doubt* [dəʊt] with the quintessentially Ulster realisation of the MOUTH vowel with a schwa onset and a high mid rounded endpoint.

## 4 Conclusion

The examination of early audio records for Irish English strongly suggests that there was a reorientation towards pronunciation closer to local accents in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland during the early-to-mid-twentieth

century. In the south of Ireland this was due to independence from Britain and in the north to the devolved government and the dominance of Unionism for some 50 years in that part of the United Kingdom. In both cases we can see that vernacular features percolated upwards into non-local speech given a weaning away from external norms. In both parts of Ireland this manifested itself in an increased distance from speech models in England for supraregional varieties of Irish English.

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Marion Schulte

# **5 Positive evaluative stance and /t/ frication – a sociophonetic analysis of /t/ realisations in Dublin English**

## **1 Introduction**

The various realisations of the phoneme /t/ have often been investigated in dialectology and sociophonetics (Hickey 2009). Some realisations of /t/ can even be considered stereotypical features of particular varieties of English or of a particular group of speakers; consider, for example the glottal stop realisation prevalent in many urban British varieties (e.g. Mees and Collins 1999; Llamas 2000). Speakers of Irish English also produce a variety of realisations of this phoneme, and one of them has been described as remarkable because it is so rare cross-linguistically. This is the fricated realisation of /t/, or, more accurately the “apico-alveolar fricative” (Pandeli et al. 1997: 67), which Hickey (1984 and 1995: 220) calls “particularly Irish”. Many of the studies that deal with this fricative, or with /t/ realisations in Irish English generally, connect the range of realisations found with different social correlates, among them class, age, and gender. Recent investigations have also connected this phonetic variation with stance-taking, however (O’Dwyer 2018; Schulte in prep.).

The present investigation combines an acoustic phonetic analysis of /t/ realisations with a detailed sociolinguistic study. The data for this study come from recorded sociolinguistic interviews with young Dubliners conducted between 2015 and 2017. The aim of this sociophonetic study is twofold: Firstly, it will provide an account of the different realisations of /t/ that can currently be found in the language of young female Dubliners in two different speaking styles; and secondly, it will try to establish which factors, both language internal and language external, can be correlated with the different realisations, with the focus lying on fricated /t/. The results suggest that a mixture of factors influences the realisation of /t/. Phonetic context and syntactic position explain a large part of the range of realisations and are especially successful at predicting taps, while frication and glottalisation seem to be influenced more by the speakers’ self-positioning and their evaluation of the discourse topic. For the speakers investigated here, a fricative realisation indexes appropriateness and prestige, and this realisation is favoured in monitored contexts and when speakers overtly express positive evaluative stances.

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The following section reviews some of the existing literature on phonetic and sociolinguistic aspects of /t/ in Irish English. The subsequent empirical part begins with information on the methodology employed and then provides the results separated into a word-list and a conversation context. The results are discussed in the following section, before concluding remarks are made.

## 2 Previous studies

Wells (1982) already describes different realisations of /t/, and refers to a “kind of voiceless alveolar slit fricative” as “one of the most conspicuous features of Irish English” (Wells 1982: 429). He classifies this process as lenition and mentions the realisation [h] as a further stage of this process. Other, non-lenited, realisations of /t/, such as glottal stop, voicing, and tapping, are also attested in Irish English. Wells makes frequent reference to sociolinguistic aspects: He claims that the fricated realisation of /t/ is “common at all social levels” (ibid.: 429), that /t/ voicing “is very typical of Dublin working-class accents, particularly with men” (ibid.: 430), that flapping is common among young speakers (cf. ibid.: 430), and that glottalisation “is found only in the casual speech of younger working-class Dubliners” (ibid.: 430).

Hickey (2007) also makes reference to fricated realisations of /t/ in his description of the sound system of supraregional southern Irish English. He asserts that in all positions other than before a stressed vowel, both word-initially and word-medially, and before or after a non-vocalic segment, “alveolar stops are realised as apico-alveolar fricatives” (Hickey 2007: 318). He refers to this process as lenition and mentions other realisations of /t/, e.g. glottal stops, that are the result of lenition in different local dialects (cf. ibid. 322). In the supraregional variety, however, lenition “encompasses only one sound” (Hickey 2007: 323), namely fricated /t/. According to Hickey, lenition in Irish English is restricted to particular phonetic contexts. It occurs in syllable codas in intervocalic or word-final position (ibid.: 323–324). With regard to sociolinguistic considerations he claims that style shifting can influence the realisation of /t/, and also mentions that “younger non-local speakers” may produce taps as “an alternative to frication” (ibid.: 323).<sup>1</sup> In Dublin, certain social characteristics may correlate with particular realisations of /t/: While lenition beyond the

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<sup>1</sup> Although he considers tapping to be a form of lenition, he claims it is “only found in word-internal position and only in immediately post-stress environments” (Hickey 2007: 322–323). He thus does not include taps on the lenition scale he proposes (ibid.: 323).

apico-alveolar fricative is generally “not continued in educated Dublin English”, “it is precisely the extension beyond the apico-alveolar fricative which is characteristic of popular Dublin English” (Hickey 2005: 39). In the following, he cites the glottal stop realisation as a feature of this local Dublin dialect (ibid.: 41). Other forms of Dublin English do not show this feature, however, exactly because it is so prominent in vernacular Dublin English (cf. also Hickey 2009: 123).

Jones and Llamas (2008) have recently investigated phonetic aspects of fricated /t/ in Dublin and Middlesbrough English. They use data from a controlled context, in which 10 participants at each location read target words in a carrier phrase, and analyse this with acoustic methods. They find that for some of their participants, fricated /t/ “occurs categorically (i.e. without gradience in individual tokens) and nonvariably or nonsporadically (i.e. in all tokens in the sample)” (Jones and Llamas 2008: 435). Although this is not primarily a sociolinguistic study, Jones and Llamas find differences in the frication rates of male and female participants: “These results indicate that in Dublin English, the frication of /t/ could be more common in female speech and that /t/ frication occurs categorically even in formal speech samples” (ibid.: 423).

Kallen (2005; 2013) discusses various realisations of /t/ in simple codas in different phonetic environments: in mono- and polysyllabic words with a stressed vowel immediately preceding /t/, in polysyllabic words when /t/ is the coda of a weak syllable. He reports on a number of unpublished studies that suggest that certain realisations of /t/ are “sensitive both to speaker gender and to the effects of style shifting” (Kallen 2013: 52). Many of these realisations, in particular [r] and [ʔ] are known from other varieties of English, but Kallen describes the fricated realisation as “most distinctive in Irish English” (Kallen 2013: 53). He lists many studies that have investigated this realisation at different points in time and in different areas of Ireland. Although it is already reported in early studies such as Henry (1958) or Leahy (1915 in Kallen 2013) for particular regional dialects of Irish English, it has more recently been attested at least for young speakers all over the Republic of Ireland and also in South Ulster English (Corcoran 1998 in Kallen 2013; Corrigan 2010). Kallen stresses the influence of phonetic and phonological context on the realisation of /t/: Certain “phonological environments may block the pattern we are examining here. We will not, for example, find lenition before stress (as in *attack* or *attend*), and complex codas which include following consonants (in words such as *bets* or *width*) either block lenition completely or severely limit it” (Kallen 2013: 54–55). As the studies he reports on work with very different methodologies, their results are difficult to compare. The evidence we have does, however, suggest social variation in the realisation of word-final /t/, and Kallen (2013: 56) calls for “[m]ore detailed quantitative work” in order to assess how the observed

“variation relates to factors such as geographical and social variation, speech style, connected speech phenomena, and the possibility of change in progress”.

All of the studies that investigate aspects of /t/ realisation in Irish English make reference to social correlates of the linguistic variation they observe, but do not provide a systematic sociolinguistic investigation of this pattern. The factors that are most often mentioned are social class, age, and gender. These studies also point to the importance of purely linguistic factors, however. Hickey (2007), and after him Kallen (2013), stress the impact of phonetic and phonological considerations on /t/ realisation. Both language internal and language external factors will therefore be taken into account in the following analysis.

### 3 Methodology

The present study is based on 7 audio-recorded interviews with women from Dublin. The semi-guided interviews were conducted between 2015 and 2017 and are roughly an hour in length each. The data investigated here form a subset of 30 interviews conducted with Dubliners. All speakers investigated are female, have been raised and still live in Dublin and are between 19 and 33 years old. All of them are either studying for a university degree or already hold one. Four participants are from north and west Dublin, three from south Dublin. The names used to refer to the speakers in this study are pseudonyms. This all-female subset was selected to make the sample as homogeneous as possible with regard to potentially relevant factors (above all gender) other than north- and southside residence. Some previous studies have found marked differences between the language production of north- and southsiders in Dublin especially concerning vowel realisation (e.g. Hickey 2005), and with such a sample of speakers this potential divide can be investigated with regard to /t/ realisation here. A detailed investigation of /t/ frication comparing male and female speakers in Dublin is being carried out at the moment (Schulte in prep.).

Each interview was started with a conversation about the participant's background, their neighbourhood, and their socialising habits. This was followed by a reading passage and the reading of individual sentences to elicit style shifting. A map drawing task formed the last part of each interview. Here, participants were asked to draw a map of Dublin with regard to language and the conversation revolved around their perception and attitudes towards linguistic variation in Dublin.

Sociolinguistic interviews often try to elicit data in different speech styles ranging from a rather informal, conversational style to the reading of a word list, which is assumed to represent a more careful and monitored way of speaking.

The present study compares the /t/ realisations of all participants as produced in the informal conversational part of the interview with their realisations in the reading part. Here, each participant was asked to read out individual sentences, presented to them one by one on separate cards. In the first set of sentences, the target word occurs in stressed position (1), and in the second set, it is unstressed (2). Stress is indicated by the use of capital letters and participants were also instructed to focus on these words.

- (1) She said GOAT again.
- (2) JOHN said goat again, not SARAH.

Each set of sentences contains four target words, which occur twice, so that 16 /t/ realisations per informant can be analysed. All sentences are presented to the participants in random order. The target words are monosyllabic, /t/ forms a simple coda and is in intervocalic position. The target words are: *goat*, *caught*, *pot*, and *cot*.

In order to assess the realisation in an informal speech style, every instance of word-final /t/ in a simple coda and in intervocalic or prepausal position that occurs in the first 20 minutes of each interview is analysed with acoustic and auditory means. Both Hickey (2005; 2007) and Kallen (2013) point out that /t/ frication is constrained by phonetic and phonological context, so this subset of all occurrences of /t/ is selected here. While /t/ frication and glottalisation are possible in intervocal and prepausal contexts in simple codas, other realisations are somewhat more restricted. Taps, for example, only occur intervocalically and not before pauses. Word-final /t/ is thus only realised as a tap when it is immediately followed by a vowel segment. The number of analysed words differs in each interview and ranges from 68 to 119. The analysis was performed with the standard phonetics software Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2015), and the following realisations are distinguished:

- (a) alveolar stop [t]: a period of silence indicates closure and a release burst is visible in the spectrogram
- (b) tap [ɾ]: a tap or flap is audible and there is support for this evaluation in the spectrogram and waveform, which usually show a short period of silence
- (c) fricative [t̟]<sup>2</sup>: a period of fricative noise follows either directly on the vowel segment or is preceded by a period of silence or closure

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<sup>2</sup> This transcription of fricated /t/ was introduced in Hickey (1984) and is adhered to here as (i) it shows the phonological assignment of the sound and (ii) the subscript caret suggests

- (d) affricate [ts] / [tʃ]: fricative noise is preceded by closure and a stop burst with varying grooving of the tongue between [s] and [ʃ].
- (e) glottal and glottalised [ɫ]: a full glottal stop is indicated by glottal pulses in the spectrogram, but this realisation is extremely rare in this sample.<sup>3</sup> Almost all tokens that are classified as glottal/glottalised show irregularity in the spectrogram and are instances of creaky voice.
- (f) drop and unreleased: a realisation is neither audible nor visible in the spectrogram. In principle, a drop can be distinguished from an unreleased stop by analysing the formant transitions at the end of the preceding vowel segment, but due to the relatively high level of noise in the data in general, this was not feasible here.

With the help of Praat, these realisations can be distinguished straightforwardly. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the spectrogram images of the most frequent realisations fricative, glottal/glottalised, and tap produced by the same speaker.

The qualitative analysis of the interviews is carried out based on Mayring's qualitative content analysis (Mayring 2015). The transcripts of the complete interviews are annotated with keywords and categories that are developed in a bottom-up process for this research project. This helps to find recurring themes and topics in the individual interviews and thus makes relatively open semi-guided interviews more comparable.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Word list

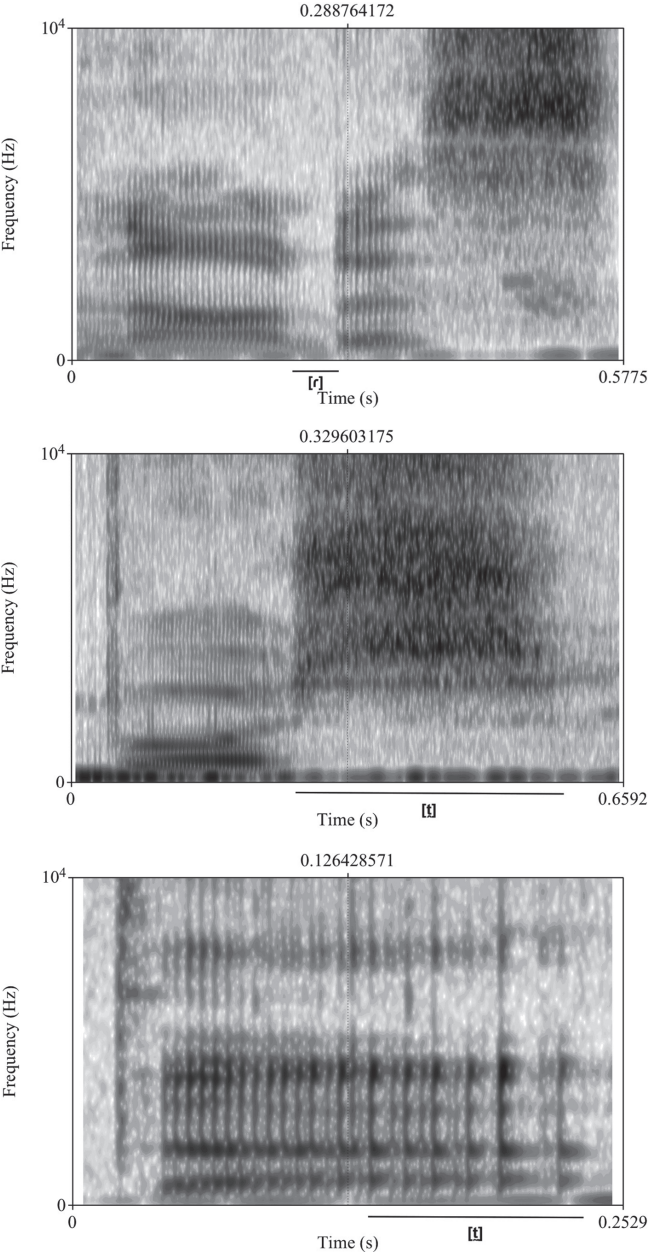
The word list realisations of all participants are illustrated in Figures 2 and 3. Only 5 of the 8 target words produced by Ciara are clearly audible in the unstressed context, and only those 5 are included here.

Most participants favour fricated or affricated realisations in both stressed and unstressed contexts. These two realisations are quite similar, as they both contain an extended period of fricative noise. In the case of an affricated realisation, this period is preceded by a stop closure and a burst, which is not present

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that the tongue does not make closure with the alveolar ridge. This symbol has the Unicode value 1E71.

<sup>3</sup> Glottal stops are more typical of vernacular male speech in Dublin, Raymond Hickey (personal communication).



**Figure 1:** Annotated spectrograms of tap (in *not as*), fricative (in *but*), and glottal/ glottalised (in *that*) realisation produced by Emma.

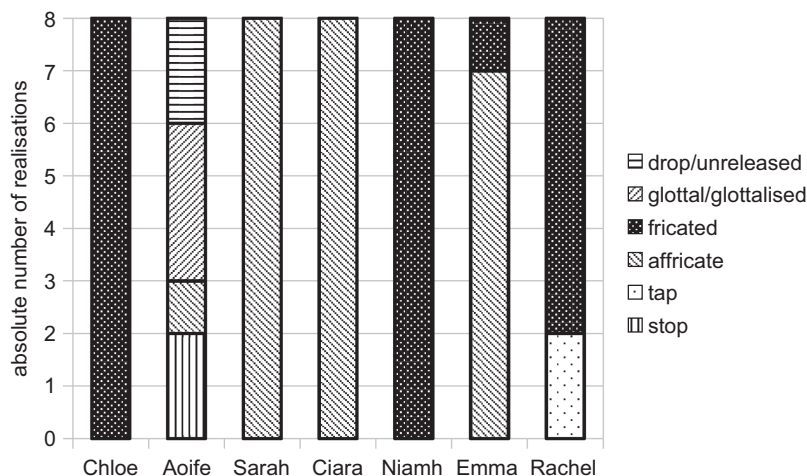


Figure 2: /t/ realisations in word list (stressed context).

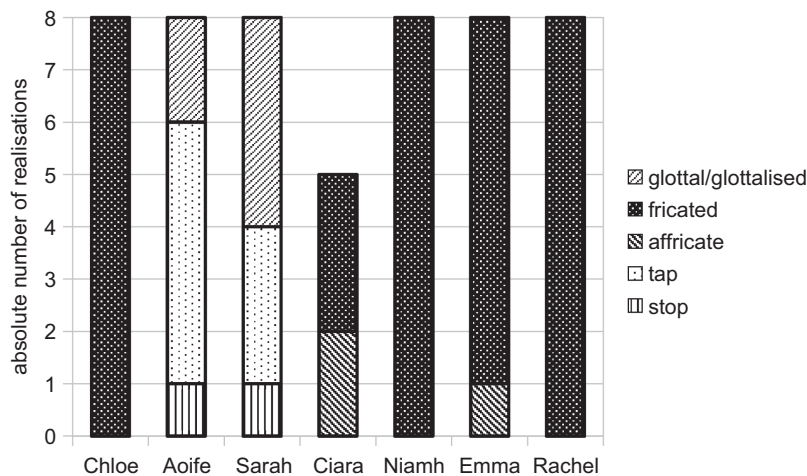


Figure 3: /t/ realisations in word list (unstressed context).

in fricated realisations. Frication noise is not present in any of the other realisations produced by speakers. In the stressed context, six speakers produce mostly or exclusively fricated and affricated realisations. Only Aoife shows a larger range of realisations. She produces one fricative, but also 2 stops, 3 glottalised and 2 unreleased realisations. In the unstressed context, three speakers realise all /t/s as fricatives, and two more fricate the majority of /t/s. Aoife and Sarah,

on the other hand, produce neither fricatives nor affricates. They realise all /t/s as stops, taps, or glottalised.

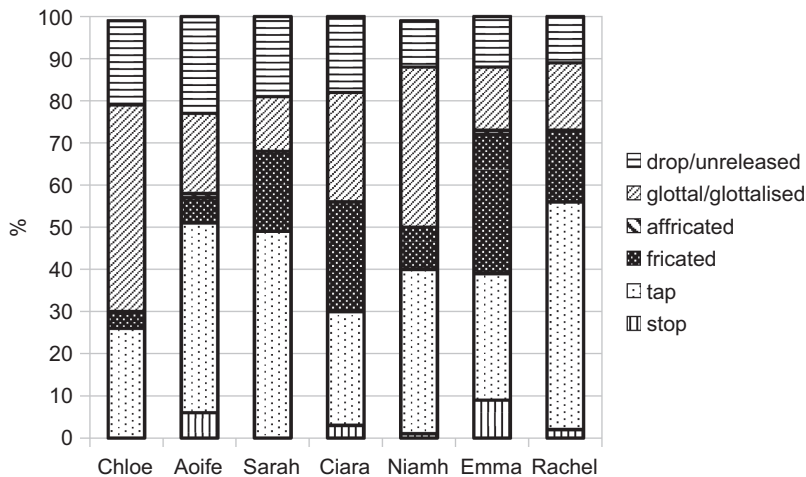
This means that two speakers, Chloe and Niamh, categorically fricate /t/ in this speech style. Two more speakers, Ciara and Emma, exclusively produce fricated and affricated realisations, and Rachel fricates the majority of all tokens. Only two speakers deviate from this pattern: Sarah is similar to the speakers previously described in the stressed context, but behaves more like Aoife, who differs substantially from the others, in the unstressed context. These results are comparable to the findings reported in Jones and Llamas (2008), who also mention a small number of speakers who categorically fricate their /t/s. In their study, informants who do not categorically fricate produce a fricated realisation only in the minority of cases or not at all, and frication seems to be more common for women than for men. Jones and Llamas (2008: 425) point out that “[f]or the male subjects, glottal realisations of /t/ were usual” among Dublin speakers. The data presented here show that glottal and glottalised realisations are also produced by some female informants in a monitored speaking style, however.

Although some speakers show variation in the realisations they produce, most of them favour a realisation involving fricative noise. It can be assumed that the speakers are aware that their pronunciation of the target words is of interest in this part of the interview, as this word is the only item that varies between the different sentences they have to read out. They are thus likely to produce a realisation they find appropriate in such a monitored context, and this seems to be one involving frication. The metalinguistic comments participants made during the interviews point into the same direction. All interviewees describe the north-south divide as important for Dublin, and most see a connection between this divide and both linguistic and social aspects. Those who live on the south side invariably describe the north side as somewhat “rough” or “dodgy” and they mention a difference in socio-economic status between the north and the south side. Many also believe that there are certain linguistic features connected with the two halves of the city. The realisation of word final /t/ is one of the features that comes up frequently in the interviews. Southsiders say that northsiders “drop their ts” or that they “don’t pronounce all the letters”. Some interviewees then go on to pronounce words to approximate the different accents they have described – they often choose the word *that* for illustration – and in all those cases the word-final /t/s are unreleased or dropped when they offer their version of a northside accent, while their version of a southside accent includes a fricated /t/ realisation. Some also pronounce the word in what they call a “posh voice”, which they usually connect to the D4 area. The /t/ is also realised as a fricative then, but the vowel is retracted compared to the more common southside pronunciation.

To conclude, it can be assumed that an unreleased or dropped realisation of word-final /t/ tends to be associated with an unprestigious accent, while a fricated realisation is the more prestigious pronunciation. Most of the participants favour realisations involving frication in this monitored context, so this is the realisation they judge to be most appropriate here. The variants that are produced and the meta-linguistic comments in the interviews thus both suggest that /t/ frication indexes social prestige for this group of speakers.

## 4.2 Conversation

The pattern that emerges from the conversational pronunciation is quite different. As shown in Figure 4, all participants produce a range of realisations. The most common ones across all interviews are tap, frication, glottalisation, and drop/unreleased realisation. Some participants also produce alveolar stops, but these occur only rarely, and affricates can only be found twice (once produced by Aoife and once by Emma). Although a fricative realisation occurs in all interviews, it is not the most frequent realisation for any of the speakers. This is quite surprising considering the categorical frication found for some of the participants in the word list context and the frequency of fricative and affricate realisations that can be found for all speakers apart from Aoife.



**Figure 4:** /t/ realisations in conversation. Percentages are rounded to the closest integer for each realisation and therefore may not add up to 100 exactly.

The conversation context therefore differs quite substantially from the word list context. Especially glottalisation and tap have been mentioned in previous studies as realisations favoured by male speakers and/or by working class speakers (Jones and Llamas 2008; Wells 1982), but are clearly also produced by educated middle class female speakers. This may, of course, be a result of language change, but it could also be due to methodological differences, as acoustic analyses are often based on word list contexts or scripted speech styles rather than free speech.

Although all informants produce the same range of realisations, the frequencies of each of these varies substantially between the interviews. About a quarter of all /t/ realisations produced by Chloe, for example, are intervocalic taps, while Rachel taps more than half of all /t/ tokens intervocalically. Taps occur only in intervocalic position, however, never word-finally before pauses. The difference between speakers with regard to glottalisation, which is less restricted than a tapped realisation in terms of position, is even larger: Aoife produces the smallest percentage of glottal and glottalised /t/s at 13% of all her tokens, while this realisation can be found in almost half of all instances of /t/ produced by Chloe. The amount of frication also varies between 4% for Chloe and 33% for Emma.

## 5 Discussion

A large part of the observed variation can be explained by linguistic factors: phonetic context of a target word and its syntactic position in the clause are good predictors for the concrete realisation of /t/. A multinomial logistic regression model with realisation as the dependent variable and phonetic context and syntactic position as the independent variables accounts for the majority of realisations and has a good fit.<sup>4</sup> The model for all speakers correctly predicts 56% of the variation found in the data, including almost all instances of tapped tokens and two thirds of fricated tokens. For each individual speaker, the correct prediction rate of this model varies between 56% for Chloe and 76% for Sarah.

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<sup>4</sup> Various criteria point towards a decent fit of the model in the context of a sociolinguistic study, including the Pseudo-R-Square measures Cox and Snell (0.378), Nagelkerke (0.401), and McFadden (0.167). A mixed effects model instead of a logistic regression model would be able to account for the effect each individual speaker has on the variation found in the data overall and would thus be preferable to a multinomial logistic regression. Mixed effects models for multinomial dependent variables, like the different realisations of /t/ that are found here, are not yet available, however.

For all speakers, taps are predicted with almost complete accuracy based only on the two factors context and syntactic position, but the other realisations are not predicted as successfully. While still two thirds of all fricated realisations are predicted correctly by the same model, less than a third of the glottalised tokens are predicted correctly, and almost none of the other realisations.

The addition of macro-level social factors, for example residence on the north vs. the south side, does not improve the model. This may well be due to the small number of participants, but in spite of some studies that suggest significant differences between north and southside speakers (e.g. Hickey 2005), recent work using acoustic analysis methods challenges this finding. Lonergan (2013) compares a large number of speakers from various areas in Dublin and analyses their vowel realisations with acoustic means. Although speakers are convinced that differences between north and southsiders, terms probably used to differentiate broadly between social groupings rather than referring to the geographic location, exist with regard to their linguistic production, he concludes that “the northsiders and southsiders recruited in this study differed little in how they realised most of the lexical sets.” This “suggests that the perceived north/south split in Dublin English is highly misleading” (Lonergan 2013: 250). The realisation of word-final /t/ may thus well be another feature that shows no stratification according to a simple north/south divide in Dublin.

As was detailed in Section 2, other sociolinguistic factors than the often quoted north/south divide have been proposed as correlates of different /t/ realisations, among them gender, age, and social class. These cannot be the only factors that interact with speakers’ language production, however, as even in such a homogeneous group of speakers as the present one, where all speakers are female, young, well-educated and middle class individuals,<sup>5</sup> considerable variation exists. Based on a detailed analysis of the interviews, I argue that this variation is influenced by the different stances expressed by the individual speakers. In the following discussion of the connection between /t/ realisation and stancetaking, I will concentrate on one realisation, namely fricative /t/, because this is such a remarkable and unusual realisation cross-linguistically and because it is so prevalent in monitored and formal speaking styles in Dublin English for both genders.

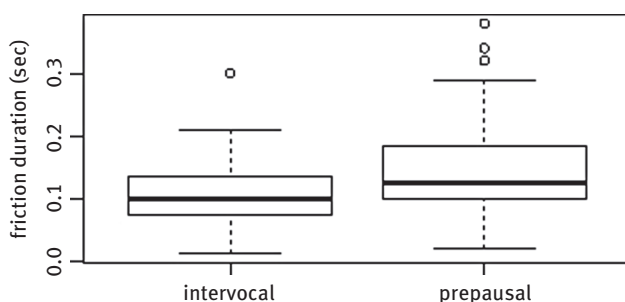
Fricated /t/s mostly occur in clause-final positions and before pauses. Ciara, for example, produces 18 word-final fricated /t/s. 15 of these occur in clause-final position and 15 are prepausal. This tendency can be observed for

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<sup>5</sup> A socially wider range of speakers is being used for the next, larger study (see Schulte, in prep.).

most speakers, and the relatively high predictability of this realisation in the regression model shows that the factors phonetic context and syntactic position determine a large part of the observed variation.

The fact that speakers seem to favour frication in clause-final and prepausal contexts is interesting, as these are positions that make this feature very noticeable. To emphasise a fricated realisation further, the period of fricative noise is significantly longer before pauses than in intervocalic position, as can be seen on the boxplots in Figure 5.<sup>6</sup> When speakers produce fricated /t/s, they thus choose prominent positions in the discourse and draw further attention to this marked realisation by increasing the length of the relevant segment.



**Figure 5:** Boxplots showing frication duration in seconds according to context.

/t/ frication is not simply determined by phonetic context and syntactic position, however. Even in this prominent position in the discourse, it is not the only possible realisation, as all speakers also produce other realisations before pauses and at the end of clauses. The question is then: Why do they choose to fricate in these particular instances? The data investigated here suggest that prestige and appropriateness, but also a positive evaluation of the topic speakers are talking about encourage fricated realisations of word-final /t/.

The connection between prestige and appropriateness and /t/ frication also outside of a word list style reading context can be observed in the interview conducted with Emma. As most speakers favour frication in the monitored

<sup>6</sup> A Shapiro-Wilk test suggests that the data are not normally distributed, which calls for a non-parametric test to determine whether the two samples are significantly different from one another. A Wilcoxon signed rank test, which is used for related samples, was used to show that this is indeed the case ( $W=692.5$ ,  $p=0.009$ ). The aggregated mean frication lengths per speaker are normally distributed, however. A paired t-test of these aggregated means also shows that the two contexts – intervocal and prepausal – are significantly different ( $t=-2.99$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=0.03$ ).

word-list context and also refer to the connection between this realisation and the notion of propriety and well-spokenness in meta-linguistic commentary during the interviews, this realisation can be assumed to be seen as the most appropriate by all participants. At the same time, the majority of /t/s in the conversation are neither fricated nor affricated. Emma is one of the speakers who produces only fricatives and affricates in the word list context, and she also favours a realisation involving frication in the conversation. She is, in fact, the speaker with the highest rate of fricated realisations in the conversation at 33%. Although fricated /t/s are generally most likely to occur before pauses and at the end of clauses, Emma also fricates intervocalically and within clauses. She also often fricates word-final /d/, especially when the word *and* occurs in pre-pausal position, but as this study focuses on the realisation of word-final /t/, the evidence regarding other fricated consonants has not been investigated systematically here. A closer look at the interview conducted with Emma reveals why this speaker favours frication so much more than other participants.

A qualitative analysis of the interview shows that Emma is generally very conscious about notions of appropriateness and social prestige and about her own position in society. Emma describes herself as living at “the posh end of town” in an area of north Dublin, although she did not have a “very privileged background” when she was a child. She expresses a desire to move to the southside of Dublin once she can afford that and describes the southside in very positive terms. At the same time, she stresses that “the one thing that does actually put me off is that my children would be growing up as southsiders”. The reasons for her reluctance to bring up a family on the southside rather than the northside are that “I don’t want them to be spoiled, you know, I want them to have a sense of having to kind of work hard for things and growing up in an area with sort of normal people and not being the elite”. Emma also notices linguistic differences associated with different social situations. She believes she speaks in a more formal way after the working week and when she talks about certain topics: “you have to sort of put on [/] I put on more of a posh voice”. She thus portrays her way of speaking in those situations as something that is different from her private persona, as it is “put on” and “posh”, and she notices this also in her colleagues. Although she does not think of herself as posh, she is clearly able to switch to a register that is considered posh when the social situation calls for that, even if that means that she has to change the way she speaks. She thus embraces the norms and expectations associated with professional and formal situations that are generally evaluated as prestigious. Emma points out that her friends have noticed that she sometimes speaks in this way and they “judge” her for it: “people will be like: ‘Who does she think she is?’”. This suggests that she does not fully separate her private and professional identities and

that she sometimes uses linguistic forms from her professional, posh repertoire in a private setting. Although these forms are generally evaluated as appropriate, this does not seem to be the case in an informal setting among friends.

Given that this speaker thus clearly prefers linguistic forms that are evaluated as prestigious and appropriate in a professional, non-local context even among friends, it is not surprising that she chooses the /t/ realisation that is considered to be the most appropriate one in a monitored context, such as a recorded interview. All speakers were, of course, aware that the interviewer was a linguist, and thus interested in the way they speak, and that their interviews would be recorded for later analysis, but Emma seems to have been particularly conscious of this. She refers to the researcher's expectations and goals a number of times throughout the interview. This level of meta commentary and awareness is unusual compared to the other interviewees.

Emma identifies strongly with her chosen profession, which, she feels, calls for a careful and posh way of speaking. She does not completely shed this professional identity even in informal and private contexts, and has noticed that it clashes somewhat with her own social background. She therefore considers herself to be a "border person in [/] in every sense". In addition to her general desire to produce prestigious linguistic forms even in private settings, she is also highly aware of the relative formality and monitoredness of the interview context. It is thus hardly surprising that Emma produces the highest amount of /t/ frication of all speakers.

The results up to this point suggest that /t/ frication is a highly prestigious variant in Dublin English generally. The meta-linguistic comments by participants in the interviews and the linguistic examples they give point towards an association of word-final /t/ frication with well-spokenness and propriety, and this is reflected in the high frication rates of speakers who choose to align themselves with such attributes. Another factor influences the frication of word-final /t/ in the context of the individual utterance, however: the evaluative stance a speaker is taking with regard to the topic she is talking about. The importance of stancetaking has recently become more prominent (again) in variationist sociolinguistics. Jaffe (2009: 3) defines stancetaking as "taking up a position with respect to the form or the content of one's utterance". Speakers always position themselves in this way in communication: "[T]here is no such thing as a completely neutral position vis-à-vis one's linguistic productions, because neutrality is itself a stance" (Jaffe 2009: 3). Stancetaking plays a crucial part in explaining how certain linguistic forms are connected with particular social roles via indirect indexicality. A well-described social category in this context is gender (Ochs 1992). Building on this, Kiesling (2009) argues that stancetaking can lead to sociolinguistic variation when stances are taken habitually by

speakers and are then associated with a particular social group or community of practice. These stances then index this social group or community of practice, and the linguistic means by which they are taken are connected to that social group through indirect indexicality.

The data investigated here suggest that /t/ frication is connected to a positive evaluative stance regarding the topic of the conversation. When speakers overtly express their approval of a situation, person, or fact within a conversation, they are likely to fricate, rather than glottalise or delete, the word-final /t/ s produced in that context. The following excerpts from the conversation with Ciara illustrate this association.

Ciara frequently fricates word-final /t/s, as a quarter of all of her /t/ tokens show that realisation. Fricated realisations occur throughout the interview, but they are particularly frequent when she is talking about things she evaluates positively:

MS: So erm how do you like it here then? Like studying here as well.

Ciara: I really like **it** [t̪], like at first it was like I kinda felt like oh I'm just [///] it [t̪] [//] it wasn't like I was going here proper. Like I felt like I was just kinda doing like grinds here and then I go back to secondary school, but like now I feel like # I'm properly going here.

MS: Mhm.

Ciara: If you know what [war] I mean, yeah. But [bat] erm # no I really like **it** [t̪] # like # someti[///and] like okay like some people you come across, they're not exactly the nicest and I think in like doing Business as well, like there's a certain stereotype with that [t̪] # but [baɹ] er # yeah no I [//] I really like **it** [t̪].

This contrasts with her realisations when she evaluates the topic she talks about more negatively. Ciara presents the area she lives and grew up in in a fairly negative light throughout the interview. She stresses the isolation on the northern outskirts of the city, the lack of public transport and places to socialise for teenagers and young adults. When asked which area of Dublin she would like to live in, she says this:

Ciara: Really actually I'd really just Howth or like Dun Laoghaire or somewhere near like the sea cause # I don't know I've [///] # what we [//] like we'd always go to the sea for like walks and stuff like **that** [t̪] and # er # or Skerries actually maybe.

MS: Yeah.

Ciara: Yeah. Basically anywhere in Dublin by the sea, **but** [t̪] I don't think I really move anywhere else.

MS: Why not?

Ciara: Just cuz like the like **complete** [t̚] # [///] I think it's just the i& [///] like when you're isolated from like # public transport and stuff like **that** [t̚], it has such an effect cuz it's just so annoying. Like it doesn't [/] it doesn't annoy [///] **it** [t̚] annoys me more I dunno #

We would expect the first word-final /t/ in this segment to be fricated, as Ciara talks about walks by the sea which she enjoys. When she focuses on aspects she evaluates negatively afterwards, she produces mostly glottalised realisations. Glottalisation, or creaky voice, does indeed seem to be used for the opposite purpose as frication, i.e. speakers utilise it when they evaluate a topic negatively or want to distance themselves from it. For reasons of space, this cannot be explored further in the present study, but is analysed in more detail in Schulte (in prep.).

Ciara also fricates in the context of negative evaluation, as for example in the word *complete* above. The fricated periods are shorter than those in positively evaluated contexts, however. In this excerpt, the frication period of /t/ in *complete* is 0.12 seconds, and that of *that* 0.15 seconds long – even though *complete* is in prepausal position and *that* is produced intervocalically. As was shown above, prepausal frication periods are generally longer than those in intervocalic position, but the stance taken by the speaker seems to influence frication length as well as overall realisation. This example also illustrates that the distinction between fricated and glottalised realisation according to different evaluative stances taken by the speaker is not categorical but rather a tendency, as can be expected regarding sociolinguistic variation.

Frication of word-final /t/ thus seems to be common when speakers express a positive stance towards the topic they are talking about. It would be interesting to see whether this linguistic expression of positive stance also extends to the interlocutor, not just the topic of a conversation. This is suggested by ethnographic observations made in Dublin, but the one-on-one interviews used in this study do not provide a suitable database to answer this question.

Following the argumentation in Kiesling (2009), a positive evaluative stance may have been the primary pragmatic function of /t/ frication. This could then have been associated with a prestigious social group and/or a prestigious social context in which it is habitually realised. The linguistic form has thus acquired the general assessment of propriety, sophistication, and well-spokenness, or maybe, depending on the evaluation, poshness. This explains the rejection of generally positively connotated linguistic forms, at least in non-local contexts, in the informal settings among friends described by Emma. The occurrence of /t/ frication in formal and monitored speaking styles, especially when produced by speakers who position themselves in accordance with such generally accepted norms,

would then be the expected realisation. Speakers who position themselves differently with regard to these values may well produce different realisations, both in monitored and formal, and in informal and colloquial contexts.

Preliminary results from the analysis of interviews conducted with male speakers support this, although there also seem to be some general differences in the realisation between male and female speakers. Male speakers are overall less likely to fricate /t/ in the monitored reading context and produce more affricates. If they fricate, their frication periods are shorter. They are also less likely to produce fricated realisations in the conversation. Some male speakers fricate at a rate and duration similar to that of the female speakers investigated here, however. These speakers fricate /t/ in the same contexts as female speakers – they favour clause final and prepausal positions and fricate when they evaluate the topic of conversation positively. A comparison between the realisations of male and female speakers will show whether male speakers produce different realisations of /t/ to mark stances than female speakers or whether those who do not fricate as often as the women in this study do so because they do not take the same stances as often (Schulte in prep.).

## 6 Conclusion

The present study has shown that word list and conversational data can differ substantially, with a small number of realisations found in the controlled contexts and a much larger range of realisations in spontaneous speech. This larger range of variants in the language produced by young, highly educated women includes realisations that have been associated particularly with male working class speakers in previous studies, especially taps and glottal and glottalised variants. Many existing studies in this field employ an auditory methodology or rely heavily on controlled contexts when using acoustic analysis methods (Hickey 2005; Jones and Llamas 2008; Kallen 2005), so it is unclear whether this difference is due to possible change, differences in methodology, or both. Controlled contexts and scripted speech have numerous advantages, of course, but based on the differences observed here, it might be difficult to extrapolate from the language produced in a controlled context to that produced when interviewees speak spontaneously.

Previous investigations have found the realisation of /t/ to be influenced by language internal factors and a number of sociolinguistic variables such as gender, age, and social class. The present investigation confirmed that two language internal factors, namely phonetic context and syntactic position, are

responsible for a large amount of the variation found in the data. While macro-level social factors are relevant to the phonetic realisation of /t/ as well, speakers' identity and positioning, and the evaluative stances they take definitely play an important role. The young women who participated in the present study are likely to produce fricated realisations of /t/ in monitored contexts, when they care about being seen as sophisticated, educated, and well-spoken, and when they take a positive evaluative stance towards the discourse topic. Future work will reveal whether a positive evaluative stance towards the interlocutor also correlates with /t/ frication, which is suggested by observations but cannot be tested on the data analysed here, and whether differences in /t/ realisations can be observed between female and male speakers.

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Stephen Lucek and Victoria Garnett

## 6 Perceptions of linguistic identity among Irish English speakers

### 1 Introduction

Perceptual Dialectology research has shown a level of insight on attitudes towards language variation that augments and enhances linguists' understanding of how language users view language variation. By identifying dialect areas, non-linguists can tell us a great deal about identity construction in large and small areas. Significantly, advances in GIS technology have allowed perceptual dialect studies to flourish in recent years (see Cramer and Montgomery (eds) 2016). While general volumes on Irish English tend to focus on political boundaries (Corrigan 2010; Kallen 2013) or dialectal boundaries (see Barry 1981b; Kallen 2006), there have been some attempts to further stratify Ireland into dialect areas (see Henry 1958; Bliss 1977; Moylan 1996), though language variation in Ireland is not always dependent on a geo-political view (see Hickey 2005, 2007). Northern Ireland has been extensively discussed (see Adams 1958; Milroy, L. 1976; Milroy, J. 1981; Henry 1995; McCafferty 1999; Corrigan 2009), offering rich descriptions of language variation in that jurisdiction. While dialect has been studied within the Republic of Ireland (Hickey 2007; Filppula 1991; Farr, Murphy and O'Keefe 2002), attitudes to dialects of Irish English in Ireland have not been studied in as much detail (see White 2006) with more focus on Dublin, specifically (Hickey 2005: 99–107; Lonergan 2016; Schulte, this volume). Dialect Atlases have attempted to represent a complex linguistic area where Irish (see Hickey 2011a) and Irish English speech areas (Hickey 2004) have been described. Included in Hickey (2004) is a Survey of Irish English Usage, which attempts to place features of Irish English usage in geographical regions and locales. This survey uses specific features of the variety that are attested to be contact phenomena (e.g. subordinating *and* (see also, Hickey 2007: 261–65)) and what can be considered older English dialect retention (e.g. *Be* as auxiliary (see also, Hickey 2007: 177–78)).

Yet with no thorough study on how Irish English speakers perceive themselves and fellow speakers of Irish English, we are left with little understanding of how variation is perceived in Ireland (see White 2006; Lonergan 2016) beyond what Hickey (2005: 99–107) tells us about conceptualisations of Dublin natives of dialects in Ireland.

This chapter, therefore, attempts to show how Irish people perceive variation in Irish English and by extension, the associations they may have

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subconsciously made about the speakers of dialects of English in Ireland as can be evidenced by the way dialects are used in literature (see Amador-Moreno & Terrazas-Calero 2017).

We have taken a Perceptual Dialectology (see Preston 1982; Preston and Howe 1987; Cramer and Montgomery eds, 2016) approach to dialect boundaries in Ireland, using data collected at a public linguistics event where we asked participants to complete blank maps of Ireland (see Current Data below). By analysing the types of words used to describe certain accents or dialects, we have categorised the words into ostensibly positive, negative or neutral groupings. Phrases such as ‘sing-song’ could be considered positive, whereas ‘harsh’ could be considered negative. Problematic descriptions of accents such as ‘flat’ do not provide much sentimental information about the people who speak Irish English in a ‘flat’ manner, inasmuch as phrases such as ‘sing-song’ have positive connotations, and ‘hard’ or ‘harsh’ have negative connotations. We therefore categorise ‘flat’ in this study as neutral.

Our data show that there is considerable overlap among the regions in which characteristics and features of the dialects are identified. More importantly, we find that areas are described with contradictory labels, with some labelled as both ‘sing-song’ and ‘harsh’ sounding among the dataset. Dialect words (e.g. ‘boy’ in West Cork; ‘howaya’ in North Inner City Dublin) are more homogenised and offer a glimpse into regional variation in the lexicon that may be related to characteristics that the participants used to describe people in these areas (e.g. ‘cute hoor’ in West Cork; ‘knacker’ in North Inner City Dublin).

Within our data collection, we also asked participants to label where they are from. This was important as it allowed us the opportunity to analyse attitudes to those accents that are ‘different’ from their own. These factors are all related back to the identity construction of the individual participants and how they describe their own dialect area. Without explicitly asking the participants if they feel that they speak with an accent, very few (4 of 23 participants) labelled their hometown as outside of any dialect area.

However, socio-political elements were evident in the data as well, particularly in Dublin, where we saw the difference of the ‘other’ being applied to a much smaller area. Positive or negative perceptions to particular accents within Dublin were not easily distinguished by where a person is from, however, as some participants from the north side of the city gave ‘positive’ words to describe the South Dublin accent, and one or two from the south side of the city were quite unflattering in their descriptions of some of the accents closest to them. Whether this comes from personal perceptions of individuals with those accents, or knowledge of socio-economic stereotypes within Dublin city is

unclear, however on both sides of the river there are multiple accents, all reflecting members of communities on all socio-economic levels.

Further discussion about perceptions beyond Dublin are provided, both on the basis of proximity of the speaker to a given accent, and also on a socio-economic level. We then offer a reflective critique of our methodology, and conclude by suggesting areas for expansion on this work.

## 2 Identity in language

The study of identity in language is well established and has considerable weight behind it. Social identities are as malleable and contextual as language use itself. Jenkins (2004: 8) describes the place of identity construction, maintenance and evolution as one of the “unifying themes of social science during the 1990s, and shows no signs of going away”. The tacit application of identity markers in everyday speech goes some ways towards the more informative (and, indeed, easier to generalise) group identity that is the focus of the current volume. There is something comforting about associating with a group, as this “signifies a continuity . . . that constitutes an unbroken thread running through the long and varied tapestry of one’s life . . . [and] can even invoke an almost mystical sense of connectedness” (Edwards 2009: 19). Speakers can wear their identifiers as badges of phonetic realisation, morphological variation, sentence structure, as well as choices from their lexical inventory. This group membership can then be something that transcends the traditional boundaries used in regional dialectology and moves into something that could conceivably be thought of as supraregional varieties, as we will discuss below.

Outgrouping can have be a powerful motivating factor, too, as seen in the Martha’s Vineyard study (Labov 1972) and countless Gender studies since (for a good overview of Gender studies, see Milroy (1980), Ochs (1992), Cheshire (2004) and Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2014)). The year-round residents of Martha’s Vineyard could access something that visitors had no ability to co-opt: authenticity. As alluring as in-grouping can be, there is a great nobility in standing out from the crowd. In Milroy (1980) there is a strong tendency for women in Belfast to use nonstandard, vernacular forms as a type of identity construction as a social network to refer to the ways in which an individual’s linguistic performance influences her/his neighbours in crafting a network of linguistic features

This kind of in-grouping can, of course, have a corollary outgrouping force that creates an “in-group solidarity” when a member’s “sense of worth is

threatened or tenuous” (Edwards 2009: 27). The threat of being outside the group, then, can provide an even more powerful impetus to ally ourselves with the group, and become an “us” rather than a “them”. The question then becomes how do we become members of a group? Is there a critical age after which we cannot change our group allegiance? Edwards (2009) suggests that “only those who grow up in a community can, perhaps, participate fully in this sort of ‘expanded’ interaction, because they alone can make the necessary ‘translations’” (55). This would seem to run contrary to the notion of creating and curating identities, as has been the case with the modern interpretations in identity studies.

## 2.1 Attitudes

While we are concerned with identities in this volume, we must also be aware that while an individual constructs an identity for themselves, everyone who comes into contact with this hypothetical identity constructor creates an out-group (or ingroup) attitude towards the constructor. In this way, the construction of identity is a bidirectional enterprise where input can come from the inside-out or from the outside-in. The following section directly addresses attitudes towards ‘otherness’ and ‘sameness’.

## 2.2 Fictional representations influencing attitudes

Carolina Amador-Moreno discusses in her book ‘Introduction to Irish English’ (2010), that fictional representations of Irish English have, over the years, been used either for satirical or propagandist aims, especially historically by non-Irish (let’s be honest, English) writers, such as Shakespeare, to portray a stereotype of not only an Irish English accent, but as a marker for stereotypes of Irish people. The notion of Irish English as one of the primary markers of identity in this context, in addition to the visual markers such as scenery, or clothing of the character.

In more recent works, however, the notion of Irish English as a marker of Irishness is depicted by native writers (Roddy Doyle, Paul Howard) as a means of creating authenticity of characterisation for works set in Ireland. It should be mentioned, of course, that Irish people are very perceptive to non-authentic Irish accents in film or TV. Attitudes to regional varieties have been exploited by advertising agencies as well, using attitudes to various parts of the country to convey a certain message. Amador-Moreno uses two examples of this: an Amstel advert from 2010 which has four younger men from Dublin, and a Brennan’s Bread advert, as described by Kelly-Holmes in 2005 which uses an older Dublin

actor, who also speaks with an older variety of Dublin English to help conjure a cosy image. These advertisements, used in broadcast media such as television and radio, make use of regional stereotypes, and in turn may influence the perception and attitudes towards those speakers among people living in Ireland.

## 2.3 Attractiveness

What makes a variety of a language more pleasing than others? Is there an inherent mellifluous quality to specific varieties of a language that others do not hold? Edwards (2009) notes that this is not the case and that “[n]either should it be thought, as some have traditionally . . . that some varieties simply *sound* better than others or are more aesthetically pleasing” (65). We will see further in the work on Perceptual Dialectology (below) that this can be directly refuted in the attitudinal studies that form the backbone of this subdiscipline. What practical implications this has, though, is that with prestige comes participants in studies who “exaggerate their use of higher-status forms” (69).

Once a variety has been tagged as being more pleasant or less pleasant, this arbitrary marker is difficult to shake. More to the point, “popular attitudes about the superiority/inferiority of languages are resistant to change despite the weight of linguistic evidence, than those concerning styles, accents and dialects are even more deeply ingrained” (Edwards 2009: 65). Whatever the process is that assigns values to varieties of a language, the association becomes stronger than any force of disassociation between variety and value.

## 3 Perceptual dialectology

The very notion of identity is an integral part of what Perceptual Dialectology seeks to study. How a non-linguist distributes dialect areas, and how they view the people who live there are clear understandings of variation and of identity. Indeed, the linguistic awareness that is tested in Perceptual Dialectology shows that “local identity is not strong unless the area supports some linguistic or other cultural caricature which helps promote such identification” (Preston 1986: 230).

Early work in Perceptual Dialectology centres around language boundaries between Holland and Germany and dialect boundaries in Japanese prefectures. Language mixing along the Netherlands/ Germany border appears to blur the line that separate nations (Kremer 1999). This lack of differentiation later leads to a situation where “the German or Dutch standard language enters our field

of vision as an interfering factor” (Kremer 1999: 31). National borders are, by their very nature, quite subjective. Similarly, in Sibata (1999) – which reports on a dialect survey conducted in 1957 – the consciousness of dialect borders is a felt thing: not immediately quantifiable, but certainly at the level of consciousness, or just below.

### 3.1 The English-speaking world

What these studies have in common is an esoteric mapping strategy. In visualizing their data, Kremer and Sibata are less than approachable from a non-specialist’s point of view. A major step forward in this work is Preston (1982, 1986). Using composite maps for displaying dialect areas across a landmass, the visualization of Preston’s Perceptual Dialectology findings offers a marriage of factual descriptions of the areas and descriptions of the people in those areas. Bucholtz, et al. (2007) expands upon this work by focussing on a smaller geographic area in the state of California. The methodology was largely similar to that applied in Preston (1986). Undergraduate students were asked to have interview participants “draw boundaries around each part of California where you believe people speak differently, and label the area” (p. 329). Here, the salience of each area that is identified feeds into a view of how California dialect(s) vary from a geographical point of view.

Further advancements come from the work of Montgomery (2012, 2016) and Evans (2013, 2016) who use GIS software as an analytical tool in their Perceptual Dialectology work. This technology not only allows for aesthetically pleasing visualizations, but also allows the reader easier access to the material. Montgomery (2012) specifically addresses proximity and accuracy as it applies to what other disciplines might consider “crowd-sourced” urban boundaries. Data of this type is particularly well suited to ArcGIS technology, using heat maps to show where greater or lesser agreement exists as to the location of places. Evans (2016) uses ArcGIS to show how data collected from rural participants can be quite useful in understanding how they view urban areas, in particular where they think that those places are. We will see below how the perceptions of Dublin, Cork and Belfast are contextualised in this way.

### 3.2 Ireland

Major work on Perceptual Dialectology in Ireland comes from The Survey of Irish English Usage, which is a central building block of Hickey (2007), and in the

fieldwork completed for PhD studies in Cork (White 2006a) and Dublin (Lonergan 2016). What these projects have shown us is that perceptions of differences can be seen in speakers from Cork, Dublin and the rest of Ireland. Of particular interest to the Irish English research community is the data from The Survey of Irish English Usage which has not been revealed in a major piece of work on its own, but rather as a supporting set of data in other publications from Hickey (see Hickey 2004, 2005, 2007, et seq.). Indeed, this work would certainly progress study and point towards new areas of scholarship on English in Ireland.

### 3.2.1 Identity in Irish English

The codification of Irish English as a discrete variety can be seen in a number of large scale projects (e.g. ICE-Ireland, The Survey of Irish English Usage). What these projects have shown to varying degrees is that there have been efforts to pinpoint a Standard variety or at least a variety of considerable social prestige. To these points, White (2006) seeks to trace standardisation processes at different points in Ireland's difficult twentieth Century political history. Here, Irish identity and the role language plays becomes a defining legacy of the Easter Rising. In the early days of the Irish Republic, the English language was seen as a colonizer's tool to repress the development Irish identity. This leads to the prominence of the Irish language in political exercises of the 1920s and 30s. *Bunreacht na hÉireann* (The Irish Constitution), while produced in Irish and English, provides evidence that the Irish language would be an essential marker of the Irish Republic in Article 8: "1. The Irish language as the national language is the first official language. 2. The English language is recognised as a second official language" (*Bunreacht na hÉireann* 1937). Whether this distinction has been strictly adhered to is debatable. What is inalienable is that English was viewed less favourably than Irish. That efforts to nativize the English that was, for better or worse, the operational language of Ireland, speaks to perceptions of the English spoken in Ireland. White hypothesizes that this should be viewed as evidence that "the colonized accepted the myth that their English usage was inferior and deviant when measured against the norms of standard British English" (White 2006: 223).

While the central thesis of White (2006) focuses on the standardisation of Irish English – which is also a central tenet of the Hickey (2007) finding of a supraregional Irish English – we certainly must approach identity from a multi-level approach. While the formation of standards of varieties of English represent a vital stage of a variety's development, social varieties spanning geographical borders present the identity creator with a number of roles in which they may

play a part, and may play a part in a creation of their own multi-faceted identity. On the first layer, this hypothetical speaker may be a monolingual English speaker; an Irish/English bilingual; a bilingual with another language other than English; or a polyglot who speaks a number of languages, as has become an increasingly more regular occurrence in modern day Ireland. Next, they may view themselves as purely Irish or as a “hyphen” Irish person with a second ethnic identity. Regional variation (though at times controversial in the literature on Irish English) can influence a speaker’s identity creation and can be rather easily recognised even to the uninitiated observer of Irish English. They may access social groupings, based around their sexual, political, ethnic, or aspirational identities. Finally, the speaker can also identify with a class distinction, which can be the central conceit in construction of a complex linguistic identity.

Where the current work becomes a point of departure from previous studies of Irish English is in the accumulation of factors in creation of the Irish English identity.

## 4 Methodology

The main techniques used in Perceptual Dialectology are elucidated in Preston (1999, xxxiv) and used in numerous recent studies (e.g. Montgomery 2013, Evans 2016). We used several of these techniques in the current study.

Draw-a-map asks participants to draw borders around speech or dialect areas on a blank map of an area. These tasks are designed to allow participants to think about speech areas as more than political boundaries and help to reflect the fuzziness of dialect borders. To this end, our participants were asked to take a blank map of Ireland and identify where people speak differently.

Our participants were also asked to identify the areas where different speech areas exist using descriptive terms or typical words used in that area. This is similar to what Preston describes as degree of difference tasks where the participants rate each area by how different it is from their home area.

### 4.1 Current data

The data for this study was gathered during a public outreach event, the Dublin Language Garden, in September 2015. This event was aimed at people of all ages, so families as well as adults were in attendance. All were invited to take part, however for ease of use, and avoid additional ethical hoops through

which to jump, only the maps of those participants aged over 18 have been included in this study.

Participation itself involved drawing boundaries and annotations on otherwise blank maps of the island of Ireland. All political boundaries, both at a national and a county level, were removed. It is well known that boundaries within Ireland have a somewhat chequered history, particularly the national boundary between the UK part of the island (Northern Ireland) and the Republic of Ireland. If anything, by removing this boundary from the map presented to participants, we were further determining attitudes and adding another layer of complexity to our data.

On receiving the map, participants were asked to complete 5 tasks:

1. Put a red sticker (provided) to show where you are from
2. Draw boundaries around where you think different dialects occur within Ireland
3. Label those accents
4. Describe the features of the accents of you have identified
5. Describe the characteristics of the people you think use those dialects

In total, we received 23 annotated maps from participants. The maps were scanned into jpeg format for digital use.

Once scanned, the maps were overlaid into a map of Ireland in Google Earth, and the borders traced on each map. This was a somewhat laborious task, but allowed us to then extract .kml data for import into ArcGIS. From here, we then multi-layered the different boundaries to develop rudimentary heatmaps, showing greater intensity where more participants agreed on where a dialect occurs. The different groups of dialectal occurrences were colour coded for ease of use.

The information from the last two tasks (describe the features of dialects, and describe the characteristics of those who speak those dialects) was tabulated, with the speaker's own home town and the dialects they identified cross-referenced against their responses to these tasks. This allowed us to easily pull out the information from respondents from Ireland, and those from outside Ireland.

## 4.2 Methodology for qualitative data

The maps were first analysed for the visual mapping data using Google Earth, and were then processed using an annotation tool (Atlas.ti 8). Each map was treated as a separate document within a project, and codes were allocated to the image according to the information provided. The codes used corresponded with the questions the participants were asked to answer on the maps:

<b>FROM</b>	-this indicated where the participant was from
<b>LOC</b>	-this indicated which dialect or region the features and characteristics referred to
<b>FEAT</b>	-this indicates what the features of the dialect are, according to the participant
<b>CHAR</b>	-this indicated what the characteristics of the speakers of specific dialects are, according to the participant.

Other information was also provided on some of the maps, which didn't necessarily fit into any of these categories, but we felt was still important to note. This information wasn't given a specific 'code'.

Once this information was coded according to the categories we required, we created co-occurrence tables to identify the frequency of particular features or characteristics, and which regions they were most frequently associated with by our participants.

Secondly, we organised the data in a 'network' structure (a feature of the software). This enabled us to create networks based on the relationships between these codes. Using a network as a means of knowledge representation, the relationships define the structure within these networks, and also provide further information for analysis.

The labels for relationships are provided by the annotation tool. The label **<is a property of>** (shortened form **<Prop>**, colour red) is typically assigned to features and characteristics, and linked to a LOC code. Label **<is associated with>** (short: **<Assoc>** colour blue) is used between features and characteristics that were all provided for a particular location by the same participant. Label **<said by participant from>** (short: **<Participant>** colour purple) is used to link features and characteristics with the place that the participant that listed them comes from. The label **<is part of>** (short: **<part of>** colour green) is used to link the LOC codes when smaller parts of a city or county are identified (for example, LOC South Dublin *is a part of* LOC Dublin).

By organising the data in this way, it became easier to identify patterns among the participants and their perceptions of dialects of Irish English.

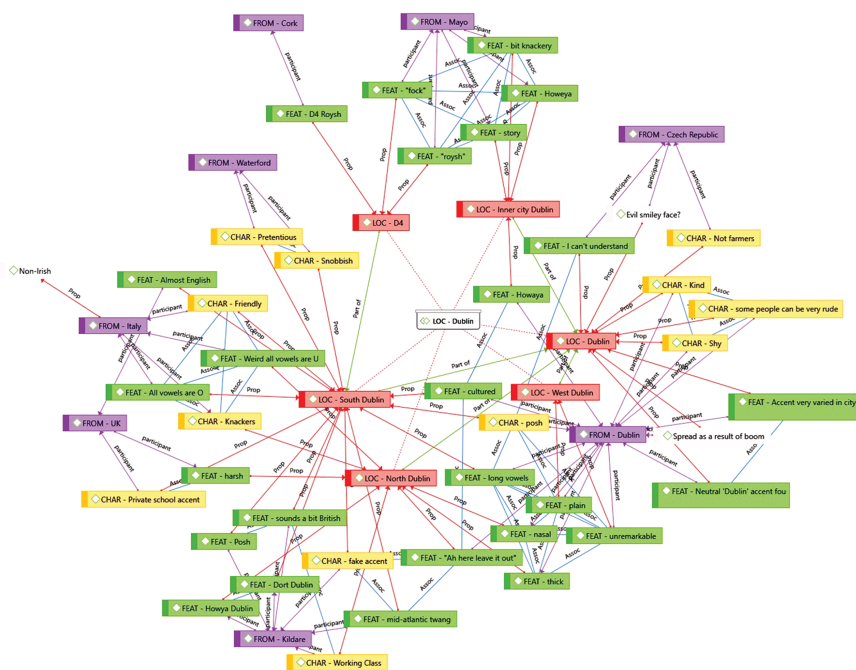
## 5 Results and discussion

### 5.1 Analysis of the qualitative data for Dublin

All participants were asked to define where they thought a Dublin accent sits, but many of the participants also specified individual accents within Dublin.

There is a known ‘north / south’ divide in Dublin, not only in terms of accents, but also through perceived socio-economic status. North Dublin was identified 12 times, and South Dublin was identified 12 times. The specific Dublin postcode ‘Dublin 4’, or ‘D4’ as it is also known is identified 5 times, and is the only specific part of the city that is mentioned. ‘Inner city Dublin’ is listed once, as well as ‘West Dublin’ which might typically incorporate areas that are considered more working class, such as Tallaght, Clondalkin, Walkinstown and Neilstown.

The full network of features and characteristics associated with Dublin can be seen in Figure 1. However, we will discuss these different identified accents in turn, taking into consideration the participants who identified them, and where they are from, as this may have an influence on their perception of those accents.



**Figure 1:** A network diagram of the features and characteristics presented by participants about the Dublin accent or accents.

While analysing this data, it became apparent that there were patterns in what was emerging from the 'features' data, as well as what was produced within the 'characteristics' data.

Within the ‘features’ data, the information presented by the participants can broadly be broken down into three groups: ‘Phonetic’ features (which discussed the voice quality and intonation, as well as the phonemes used that distinguish the accent); Words and Phrases that are most commonly associated with that region; and what we are calling ‘paralinguistic features’, which are to some extent evocative, or are used as blanket terms to describe the accent as a whole, without giving any specific qualities (for example, terms such as ‘broad’ or ‘flat’).

To discuss the characteristics that were attributed to the regional varieties identified, we can reasonably divide them into two categories: things that other people say about the regional variety (external attributions, if you will), and things that the people from the region say about themselves (internal attributions).

We will look at each of the geographical areas in turn using these terms of reference.

## 5.2 ‘Dublin’ as a single accent

First we turn to the features and characteristics associated with the ‘Dublin’ dialect, without any sub-division of dialectal areas within the city. Interestingly, 3 participants out of 10 from Dublin chose to provide features and characteristics that applied to Dublin as a single accent, rather than dividing it further into areas of the city, as many others did, that is the remaining 7 from Dublin. Of the 11 non-Dublin participants, 7 made a division of accents within Dublin. 3 of that 7 were from outside Ireland (UK, Italy and the Czech Republic).

Phonetic features used to describe the Dublin dialect were ‘Neutral Dublin accent found all over’, and ‘Accent very varied in city’. These were both provided by the same participant, who identified as being from Dublin (map 7). This suggests that, for this person, the accent that they grew up listening to is their idea of a ‘neutral’ accent. This is not unusual. What is interesting is that they then go on to describe the city as having a variety of accents, which they choose not to describe in detail.

Paralinguistically, we had a note from one of the participants from the Czech Republic to say ‘I can’t understand’, referring to the Dublin accent as a whole (map 4). This person did highlight ‘South Dublin’ within this wider Dublin accent, which implies that the South Dublin accent is different to the rest of Dublin, which they perceive as a single accent.

Of the characteristics ascribed to the people within the single location of Dublin, all are attributed internally (i.e. by participants from Dublin). Only two participants provide characteristics, though. The first simply identifies

people from Dublin as not farmers by drawing a line around Dublin and writing in ‘Farmers anywhere outside the greater Dublin area’ (map 1a), tying in with a stereotypical view of the ‘culchie’<sup>1</sup> and that those beyond the Pale are farmers. This is most likely a tongue-in-cheek description, however.

The second participant to provide characteristics attributed to Dublin as a whole describes people from the city as ‘kind’ and ‘shy’, although they then go to highlight that ‘some people can be very rude’ (map 21). No further information is provided to qualify this particular characteristic.

Of note is the phrase ‘spread as a result of boom’ (map 5). This falls neither into the category of a feature, nor as a characteristic of the speakers of Dublin English. However, it suggests that this person (who identified themselves as being from Dublin) is looking beyond traditional dialectal boundaries, and sought to provide us with further information as to how they feel the rest of Ireland is changing.

## 5.3 North Dublin

### 5.3.1 Features

The phonetic features most typically associated with a North Dublin dialect are ‘harsh’ (map 16), ‘nasal’ (map 17), and ‘weird – all vowels are U’ (map 13), ‘Thick’ (map 17), and ‘howaya’ (‘howya Dublin’) (map 12). For a further discussion of ‘Howaya’, see the section on Inner City Dublin.

Features given as words and phrases for North Dublin include ‘Ah here leave it out’ (map 22). This is in reference to a video that appeared on YouTube taken of a woman in North Dublin who was shouting at two men fighting. The video became very popular on YouTube and was shared on social media. It became so popular that the phrase became a meme in its own right, and has now become synonymous with what is perceived as a ‘typical’ North Dublin accent. By using this phrase, the participant, who identified themselves as from Dublin, is choosing to make use of this meme and considers it the most typical example of what the dialect sounds like in that part of the city.

A participant from the Czech Republic chose to state that they could not understand the accent. However, this person drew a line through the middle of

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘culchie’ is typically used to describe a person who doesn’t live in a city in Ireland. However, within Dublin, the term is used to describe anyone who isn’t from Dublin. For a detailed discussion of the use of ‘Culchie’, see Kallen (2013: 159–160, 230).

the entire country, and stated that north of the line, they could not understand anyone, whereas south of the line, they could. Dublin fell above that line.

### 5.3.2 Characteristics

Characteristics were less frequent among the responses, but those given for North Dublin are not positive. The term ‘knackers’<sup>2</sup> is used within the data to describe the people from North Dublin (maps 10 & 14), was used by a participant from Italy, suggesting that it is a salient term that that person has picked up during their time in Dublin, as it is a term often used to describe either those who are of extremely low socio-economic status who might typically engage in illegal activity, or as a highly derogatory term for members of the travelling community. That a person from Italy is familiar enough with the concept in the local dialect of a ‘knacker’, and is happy to use it in a fairly academic setting quite confidently indicates that the perception of North Dubliners (‘Northsiders’ as they are known in Dublin) as ‘knackers’ is highly salient within the community that this particular participant resides.

The phrase ‘working class’ is also given (map 15), this time by a participant from Kildare (a county to the immediate West of Dublin). There is no indication from their description of the dialect as to whether they consider this a positive or a negative characteristic. Indeed, they could simply have meant this in a neutral manner, particularly as they do not give any further information for this area.

## 5.4 Inner City Dublin

Inner City Dublin was only identified by two participants (map 9 and map 11), one of whom included this part of the city in with suburban areas Ballymun to the north of the city, and Ballyfermot to the west of the city (map 11). In this

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<sup>2</sup> ‘Knacker’ is a loaded slang term in Irish English sometimes used within Dublin to refer to a person of low social class (see Moore 2011: 42), and outside of Dublin, and in particular in Limerick, to refer to people from a low social class, but also to members of the Travelling Community (see Vaughan & Moriarty 2018: 17–18). We have taken references to ‘knackers’ and in extended use to the adverb ‘knackery’ to merely be a denigration of individuals of a low social class, and not to members of the Travelling Community.

latter case, they are indicating that they believe those suburban areas share features with Inner City Dublin. For that reason, we discuss them together here.

#### 5.4.1 Features of the Inner City Dublin accent

There are not many features assigned to this part of the city, and those that are focus on the words and phrases that the participants feel are typically used within that dialect. These include “Howaya” / “Howeya” (map 11 and map 9 respectively), which we have already seen is strongly associated with the North side of the city as well. While “howaya” is a shortened form of “how are you”, it is used more as a greeting such as “hello”, rather than an enquiry of well-being. Another phrase which is mentioned is “story” (map 9), shortened from the longer phrase “what’s the story?”, which is used as a greeting meaning “how are you?” or “what’s happening?”. In reality, the use of neither of these phrases is exclusive to the North side, or inner city of Dublin, yet this is how the participants chose to locate these phrases.

#### 5.4.2 Characteristics of Inner City Dublin people

The only characteristic specifically applied to Inner City Dublin people has echoes of attitudes toward North Dublin speakers. According to a participant from Mayo, people from Inner City Dublin are a “bit knackery” (map 9), echoing the “knackers” characteristic noted for Northsiders by a participant from Italy (map 13).

### 5.5 South Dublin and ‘D4’

As the area known by the postcode of Dublin 4, or ‘D4’ as it is often referred, is in South Dublin, we will discuss the two together, although those features that were specifically assigned to D4 we will highlight. Dublin 4 in particular is considered a very affluent part of the city, and indeed this is reflected in property prices in parts of this postcode. It is worth noting, however, that Dublin 4 in fact has a degree of variety in socioeconomic status among its residents, with less affluent areas such as Ringsend and Irishtown included within its boundaries. However, the reputation of Dublin 4 is based primarily on the areas of Donnybrook, Ballsbridge, and Sandymount, where many ambassadorial residences are located, as well as the national broadcaster RTÉ.

### 5.5.1 Features of South Dublin and D4 dialects

The phonetic features ascribed to South Dublin focus around vowels, with the Italian participant from map 13 stating that “all vowels are O” (in contrast to their comment about North Dublin, see above), and a participant from Dublin mentioning that ‘long vowels’ are what stand out as a feature for them (map 16).

The only word or phrase that is used to describe South Dublin as a whole is ‘Dort Dublin’ (map 12), which is used by a participant from Kildare to differentiate this side of Dublin from ‘Howya Dublin’ as they describe the North side of the city. The ‘Dort’ refers to the light rail service called ‘Dart’ that runs between the north and south of the city, including suburbs. The stereotypical accent, which includes the ‘long vowels’ mentioned above means that in certain parts of South Dublin, typically assigned to Dublin 4, [a] is much more back and slightly more open-mid, becoming closer to [ɑ̃] and [ɔ̃] (see Hickey 2011b: 540–42).

However, of the three features assigned to ‘D4’ by two different participants, two gave ‘roysh’ as a phrase that is indicative of the area (maps 6 and 9, where map 6 gives us “D4 Roysh”) and “fock” (map 9). Both of these participants are from Ireland: map 6 is from Cork, and map 9 is from Mayo. Somewhat notably, as neither of these participants are from Dublin, this shows that the D4 reputation is nationwide, not just known within Dublin. The likely reason for this is the popularity of the ‘Ross O’Carroll Kelly’ Irish Times column and series of books written by Paul Howard. The books and articles are written from the point of view of the fictional Ross O’Carroll Kelly, a South Dublin native who lives in the fictional part of the city called ‘Castlerock’, heavily based on Dublin 4. These columns are written in a way that parodies the accent found in the Dublin 4 parts of the city, and includes words and phrases like ‘Roysh’ and ‘fock’, and also ‘Dort’ (sometimes ‘Dorsh’, but not featured as such within our results). As such, this indicates that the accent as written by Paul Howard has now become the de facto representation of speech from that part of the city (see Amador-Moreno 2012; Amador-Moreno & Terrazas-Calero 2017).

The paralinguistic features provided by our participants about South Dublin give a broader picture about the general attitude towards people from this part of the city. Many of the paralinguistic features point to a sense of ‘otherness’ and focus on the way in which the accent sounds different from Irish, stating that it has a “Mid-Atlantic Twang” (map 22), it “sounds a bit British” (map 15) and is “Almost English” (map 16). This distancing of the South Dublin accent from other Dublin and Irish varieties comes from features such as how it is a “Cultured Dub accent” (map 11), a “Private school accent” (map 16), and

rather scathingly a “fake accent” (map 22). The last comment from map 22 is of interest, because this participant is from Sandyford, part of South Dublin. They have stated that there is a ‘fake accent’ with a ‘Mid-Atlantic twang’, but they don’t specifically state that the South Dublin accent is different from their own. They do, however, very clearly write in that they are from Sandyford, perhaps as an indication that they are not part of the group they are describing, and are therefore distancing themselves from it.

### 5.5.2 Characteristics of South Dublin people

These themes of otherness and indeed ‘fakeness’ carry through in the characteristics the participants assigned to the people from South Dublin. They are described as “snobbish” and “pretentious” by a participant from Waterford (map 19). The reputation of this part of the city once again is rooted in its perceived connection, or rather disconnection, with the rest of the country.

On a more positive note, however, the final characteristic assigned to the people of South Dublin is “friendly” (map 13) by the participant from Italy. Perhaps while this person has already gained knowledge of the word ‘knackers’ as they applied to people of North Dublin (see above), they either are unaware of the stereotype of the D4 South Dubliner, or they choose to ignore it.

This perception of ‘otherness’ applied to Dublin could potentially have roots in history, as data reviewed by Kallen (2013) from 1659 shows how, outside of Ulster, Dublin had the largest percentage of English speakers compared with other large cities in Ireland (where Irish was found predominantly in rural areas). If history paints a picture of Dublin as different to the rest of the country, how this perception of ‘otherness’ becomes applied to South Dublin could perhaps be ascribed to more recent occurrences, as described by Hickey (2005). Hickey describes this phenomenon as resulting from a desire among Middle-Class Dubliners such as doctors, lawyers and teachers living within the Dublin 4 postcode, as well as those who might not fall into the traditional category or middle-class, such as those working in the media, to distance themselves from “too localised forms of Dublin English” (Hickey 2005: 7), and to undertake some process of ‘linguistic dissociation’ (Hickey 2000). The stereotype of Dublin 4 being an area that deliberately sees itself as different, and therefore is seen by others as pretentious is now, it seems, being applied to the entire South Dublin region, despite South Dublin being a patchwork of locales of various socioeconomic status.

## 5.6 West Dublin

Only one participant mentioned West Dublin as a distinct dialect within the broader Dublin accent (map 17), and the features they applied to this part of the city were “plain” and “unremarkable”. They also indicated that they were from Dublin, as part of the first task asked of participants. It would be reasonable, then, to assume that they are from this part of Dublin, as they felt it important enough to mention and differentiate from the other varieties in the city that they give as North and South, yet they don’t consider it to have any particularly distinguishing features. When taken in the context of the entire map they provided, it becomes apparent that this participant has knowledge of linguistic terminology, having used symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet for other dialects, as well as descriptions of sounds such as “fricative”, “stops”, “fronted” and “palatal”.

## 6 Analysis of the qualitative data for Cork

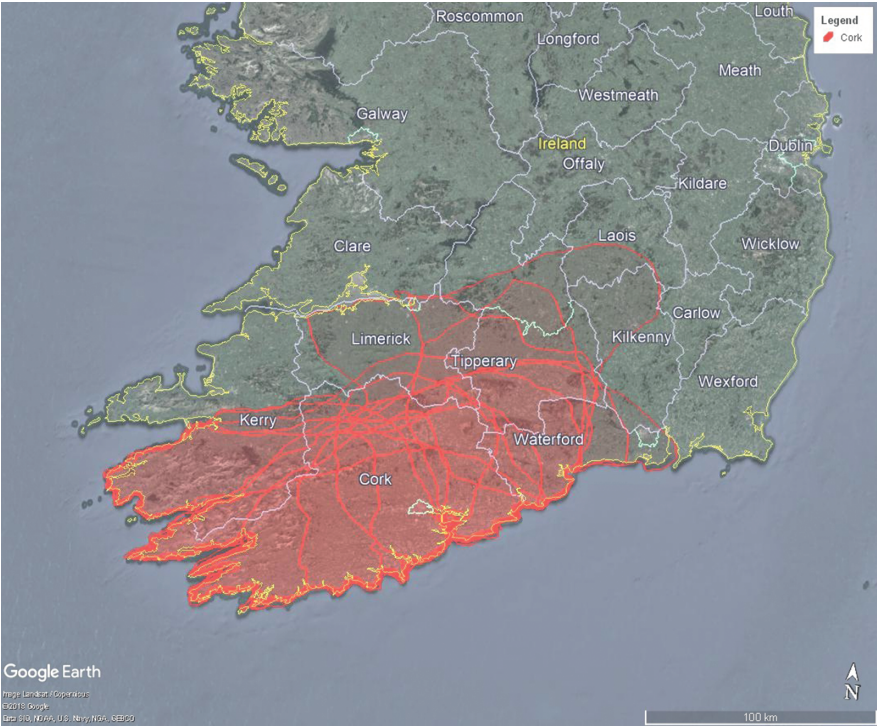
County Cork is Ireland’s largest county geographically, and Cork city is Ireland’s ‘second city’. The area is known for its strong independent nature, as is often represented in slogans such as ‘The People’s Republic of Cork’, and ‘The Rebel County’. This is shown in popular t-shirts, local websites, and even in the branding for beers that are brewed within the city.<sup>3</sup> Cork has a strong track record in Gaelic Football and Hurling, which can often lead to rivalries between counties across the country.

### 6.1 Identifying Cork

As a distinct style of speaking, Cork is one of the more identifiable counties in these perceptual data, as 17 of 23 participants had something to say about Cork. In describing Cork, our participants have a far less precise idea of where exactly Cork is. Figure 2 below shows a composite of those who identified Cork as an area with a distinct style of speaking, stretching into Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford, and sometimes nearly all of Kerry. The red polygons showing these responses can be contrasted against the county boundaries, shown in light grey.

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, the satirical news website: People’s Republic of Cork / Daon-Phoblacht Chorcaí <https://www.peoplesrepublicofcork.com/> (accessed 4th Feb 2018)



**Figure 2:** Composite image of all responses denoting the boundaries of a ‘Cork’ dialect.

This lack of geographic knowledge (or perhaps a tacit acknowledgement of the spread of a Cork style of speaking) is underscored by the features that our participants offered for speakers of Irish English from Cork.

## 6.2 Features of the Cork accent

The features associated with Cork tend to focus more on prosodic elements of the accent. Speed of speech is mentioned (‘very fast’ – as cited by a participant from Kildare (map 15)), along with manner of speech (‘soft’ according to the same participant from Kildare, or ‘nasal’, as described by a participant from Dublin), or the pitch: ‘higher voice when excited’, according to a participant from Belfast (map 18) and ‘intonation more varied’ according to a participant from Dublin (map 7). The notion of melody is also used to describe this particular accent, with ‘singing’ (used by participants from Dublin and Waterford) and

‘lilting’ (used by a participant from Mayo, who combines Cork with Kerry in a supraregional accent, see below). Melodic features such as this could reasonably be described as positive, and seem to be associated with Cork by people from across the country.

In addition to prosodic features, participants also commented on the sounds within the accent. Our participant from Italy (map 12) who described the accents of Dublin in terms of vowels did likewise for Cork, stating that ‘All vowels are E’. We also had a slightly tongue-in-cheek comment that the area around Blarney in Co. Cork has ‘American accents with all the tourists’ (map 16). Whether they mean that the local Irish natives all have American accents due to the influx of tourism, or whether the single accent you would most frequently hear comes from the American tourist themselves is unclear. They could be hinting at a change in progress, or simply making a statement about their opinion of the effects of tourism. Finally, with regards to accent, a participant from Dublin (map 20) combines the Cork and Kerry accents, saying simply ‘these two are the same but different’, describing the accent as ‘Corkish’. They know there is a difference, but they might not feel confident trying to explain those differences. However, they feel that the two regions share sufficient linguistic features that they should be categorised as an homogenous supraregional variety.

Our sole participant from Cork (map 6) chose to represent their home county with a single word: ‘Cawrk’. The inclusion of ‘w’ might indicate their feeling that there is perhaps some lip-rounding in the vowel, which they present as ‘a’.

### 6.3 Words and phrases

Our participant from Kildare told us that Cork ‘has quite distinctive phrases’, but didn’t choose to provide any examples of this. However, others did. A participant from Dublin (map 11) gave us the phrase ‘soft day (light rain)’. This refers to the phrase ‘soft day, thank god’, which is generally used when it’s raining, usually in a somewhat positive fashion, as a ‘soft day’ means that crops are getting watered. This phrase is typically associated with rural communities, specifically because of its association with farming. It is not exclusive to Cork, but can in fact be found throughout Ireland. It is unclear whether this participant chose to specifically associate a stereotypically rural phrase with Cork to make some sort of slight towards the area, or if they have only ever heard that phrase from people from Cork, and therefore only associate it with that part of the country.

We also have a use of the invariant tag ‘like’ give as an example of a Cork dialect (‘Cork-like’, map 8) by a participant from Dublin (see Amador-Moreno 2012; Schweinberger 2012, 2015; Lucek 2011).

### 6.3.1 ‘Boy’ as an indicator for a Cork dialect

Variants on the word ‘boy’ were reasonably frequent in the results for Cork, although this also appeared to a lesser extent for Kerry. As there was little agreement on whether this word ‘boy’, or variations thereof (‘BAI’, ‘West Cork Boy!’, ‘boi’), belongs to Cork or Kerry, we can see that ‘boy’ is synonymous with a Cork/Kerry continuum.

## 6.4 Characteristics of Cork people

Once again this perception of some manner of ‘otherness’ raises its head, although in this case, it seems that the ‘otherness’ is clearly coming from a desire among Corkonians, rather than imposed upon them from the rest of Ireland. Whether this is due to sporting rivalries, or simply regional pride, this is noted as an important characteristic by a participant from Waterford on map 19 who gives us “We are the masters of the universe”. Of course, this perception and attitude towards Corkonians from a participant from Waterford might also tell us a little bit about the relationship between the two counties, particularly as they share a border.

Within the supraregional representation that was provided by two of our participants, our participant from Mayo (map 9) describes people from this area as ‘cute hoor’, meaning a sly, untrustworthy person (see Dolan 2012: 131).

## 7 Analysis of the qualitative data for Belfast and Northern Ireland

The Northern Irish accent is frequently identified in non-scientific surveys conducted by dating apps and newspapers as the sexiest accent in the UK (Belfast Telegraph 2015). While this particular piece of information may not necessarily inform any linguistic investigations of Northern Irish English, it may go some way towards understanding the perceptions gathered for this study. Nineteen of the participants identified Northern Ireland area having a

distinct accent or dialect. Certainly this becomes an exercise in map reading in identifying jurisdictions between the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom. Of course with Perceptual Dialectology, what's most interesting is what participants say about the accent and the people who use it and separating the two. Of the 19 who identified Northern Ireland, 8 participants did not identify any aspects or features of the accent, nor did they mention anything specifically about the people who live there. We'll describe below the negative and positive aspects of the Northern Irish dialect area, as identified by the participants, some dialect words that were mentioned, as well as some phonological aspects of the dialect area.

## 7.1 Hard Norn Iron

Four participants labelled different parts of Northern Ireland as being hard or harsh. This can be seen as a rather negative marker of Northern Ireland speech or indeed the Northern Irish people. Other negative descriptors include the unequivocally political "traitors" to what could either be interpreted as a description of the sound of the language or the people, "talk through their teeth". One participant also offers a description of the people who are "friendly, but ready for a fight." Finally, a participant from the Czech Republic noted that they couldn't understand people from Northern Ireland.

## 7.2 Sexy Belfast

Only one participant identifies Belfast speakers as sexy. This same participant also identified Derry specifically as sexy, so perhaps this is the Perceptual Dialectology equivalent of an idiolect. As opposed to the harshness described by several participants, there seems to be a gradual transition from soft to hard going from West to East from Donegal towards Antrim. Other positive descriptors were 'forthright' and 'sing-songy' that goes from "high sing-songy" in the West to "low sing-songy" in the East.

### 7.2.1 Aspects of the phonology

A number of the participants commented on the phonology of the Northern Irish accent. Here, there were remarks about specific phonological features,

perhaps offered by participants who have some linguistics training. This includes “more palate involved” (map 5); “Belfaaaaast”, indicating an exaggerated long vowel sound (maps 9 and 18); “clipped vowels” in Donegal (map 9); “nasal” (maps 17 and 18); “quick speech” (map 18); “shorter vowels in Belfast” (map 18); and “not much rounding on vowels” (map 18). There were also two participants who specifically noted aspects of the Irish spoken in Ulster, “cad é mar ata tú” in Donegal (map 20) and “native Irish speakers, accent sounds more Irish” (map 15). While the tasks specifically asked for aspects of the English spoken in these areas, it is interesting that the aspects that these participants found remarkable related to the Irish language.

### 7.2.2 Dialect words

Four participants noted specific dialect words associated with Northern Ireland: “Dead on” (map 8), “aye” (map 10); /əkjnts/ (accounts) and /hay/ (how) (both on map 21).

## 8 Conclusions

We chose to discuss Dublin, Cork and Belfast in this chapter as they represent the 3 largest cities on the island of Ireland. Each has a very strong sense of identity among its residents, and between them, cross-political boundaries that we felt would most likely reveal differences in perception. Our participants did not let us down in this regard.

The sense of ‘otherness’ ascribed to parts of Dublin from all over the country as strong, if not stronger to the sense of ‘otherness’ shown towards people from Northern Ireland. Politically, one might expect some manner of negativity towards people from Northern Ireland, and particularly Belfast, given the sectarian violence between the two jurisdictions since partition in 1921. However, this was not necessarily the case. In fact, even within one map we had contradicting attitudes towards people from that part of the world, describing them as ‘sexy traitors’. Political boundaries do not, it seems, make too much of a difference to attitudes of ‘Irishness’ north and south of the border, but cultural identity does make a difference. That one of the characteristics given is that people from Northern Ireland are “similar to Dubliners except different accents” is perhaps an indication that the culture between the cities of Dublin and Belfast are more similar than the shared culture across the island of

Ireland, particularly as this comment came from a participant from Dublin. A shared identity with those across the border seems more likely to this person than a shared identity with those from other cities in the country, such as Cork, Galway or Limerick.

As we have seen, despite this feeling of collegiality of sorts between the two capital cities on the island, the political boundary still incites feelings of distrust, whether it is said in jest or not. ‘Traitors’ used to describe people from Northern Ireland by a Dubliner (map 1), and the feeling that they are “friendly but always ready for a fight” (map 17) may have been given as tongue-in-cheek responses to the task, but they do point to the political tensions between the North and South, which only reached a ceasefire thanks to the ‘Good Friday Agreement’ of 1998, less than 20 years before the collection of these data, and thus show that distrust in some way remains.

The perception of ‘otherness’ also rings true further south on the island, where the perceived sense of self importance among people from Cork by one participant gave a distinctly negative view.

The concept of Perceptual Dialectology by its very nature, of course, point to identifying differences and the sense of ‘otherness’ among groups of people in a geographical area. However, the sense of ‘otherness’ that is present within our data has more to do with how non-representative some dialects are of the country as a whole, rather than the differences between regions. As we have seen, sometimes those perceptions of ‘otherness’ are deliberately cultivated, particularly in the case of Dublin, leading to an attitude that the ‘others’ are fake or pretentious.

Among our participants, while evocative and paralinguistic features were present, it was quite common for responses to include stereotypical examples of the kinds of words and phrases people from a particular area use, rather than choosing to describe the sounds. This is not unreasonable, after all, lexicon and syntax are as much a part of a dialect as the phonological features.

Within our data, we identified key phrases that acted as indicators of a dialect. However, these were the phrases most noted within our set of participants during an event held in Dublin. We acknowledge that the very nature of the event, a public outreach event held for one evening as part of a larger University-wide event aimed at families and other non-linguists, could have led our participants to take a considerably less serious approach to the tasks we set for them. This acts in some ways as double-edged sword. On the one hand, relaxed participants are more likely to give honest answers, but on the other, they might be less inclined to complete all the tasks we set them. Subsequently, it would be beneficial to Perceptual Dialectology of Irish English if this same study could be replicated in representative locations across the whole island of Ireland.

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Göran Wolf

## 7 Ulster Scots identity in contemporary Northern Ireland

### 1 Introduction

When considering Ulster Scots one can recognize an interesting twist to language-identity-relations because it is uncertain whether the linguistic affiliation of the variety is clearly established. From a historical point of view, it is unquestionable that Ulster Scots is a variety bound up with Scots in Scotland as it was brought to the island of Ireland by settlers from Scotland who, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, brought with them different subdialects of Central Scots (cf. Grant and Murison 1986: xxv). It is similarly unquestionable that, at present, Ulster Scots is to be placed within the dialect continuum of English-based varieties that are spoken above an imaginary boundary running across north Louth, south Armagh, south Monaghan, north Cavan, south Fermanagh, north Leitrim and south Donegal (cf. Harris 1984; Hickey 2007; Corrigan 2010). The typological contradiction, which is likely to be exclusively academic, may remain unresolved and it is indeed unaffected by the two developments that have been noticeable with regard to Ulster Scots since 1990. On the one hand, in public discourse as well as in politics a growing debate about its status can be observed. On the other hand, a growth in its literary output points to a renaissance of the language variety. Both the debate and the renaissance of Ulster Scots also constitute (re)negotiations of Ulster-Scots identity.

In the present context I should like to highlight some aspects of the debate which has mostly focussed on the status of Ulster Scots and which can be illustrated as follows. In a satirical re-evaluation of the recent Northern Irish past, Glenn Patterson describes Ulster Scots with the words: “Like prose, it seems we had been speaking it all these years and didn’t know it.” (Patterson 2006: 198) First of all, Patterson’s witty remark acknowledges unmistakably that Ulster Scots has left its imprint on the linguistic ecology of Northern Ireland as have all other vernacular languages. At the same time, Patterson’s observation is his translation of the fact that “[i]n the 1990s, many of the 100,000 Ulster-Scots speakers, identified by language activists, were unaware that they were speaking Ulster Scots” (McIlvanney 2005: 208).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See also the detailed discussion of these various standpoints in Hickey (2011).

It is probable that most speakers of Ulster Scots have also been unaware of that status debate and perhaps they are not interested in it. Yet, the debate clearly shows that it is not only about the assignment of language-status. It also involves the formation of a contrived identity, or the denial thereof. Let us consider two extreme views observable in this debate. Ulster Scots is denied any existence in the following:

[U]lster [S]cots is such a waste. [I]t isn't even a language. [A]nybody can speak [U]lster [S]cots. [A]ll [you] have [to] do is speak lik[e] a [N]orth [A]ntrim farmer and uneducated.<sup>2</sup>

Interestingly, although the statement seeks to denigrate Ulster Scots, it still allocates geographical identity – North Antrim is indeed one of the regions in which Ulster Scots is spoken as a vernacular (cf. Fenton 2006: 39). The opposite of this denial can be found in statements that are attempts to postulate language status for Ulster Scots:

Ulstèr-Scotch is claught wi Scotch, at wus kerriet in tae whit's caa'ed Scotlann noo wi incummers frae tha Continen' o'Euraip roon aboot six hunnèr A.D. ('Ulster-Scots is a sister language to Scots, which itself was brought in to what we now call Scotland by settlers from continental Europe in about the 6th century A.D.')

<sup>3</sup>

This quote is shorthand for Robinson's description of Ulster Scots:

Ulster-Scots or 'Ullans' is a close relative of the language called Scots. The Scots language in Scotland is sometimes called 'Lallans', a Scots word meaning 'Lowlands' or 'Lowland Scots'. In Ulster, the Scots language has been known throughout this century as 'Ulster-Scots' and only in the past decade as 'Ullans'. Ulster-Scots is a west Germanic language which is derived from, and has its closest linguistic parallels, with Lowland Scots or Lallans. Indeed, Ulster-Scots has been described as a 'variant' of Scots, and as such has been accommodated within the coverage of the Scottish National Dictionary programme. However, many Scots language academics have observed that Ulster-Scots differs from its sister tongue: Ulster-Scots has its own range of dialects, along with its own distinctive literary tradition, vocabulary, and grammar; all of which differ in some respects from

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**2** This quote is a response to a video upload on YouTube. The video commented on is called "Queen's University Ulster-Scots Concert" (as accessed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ob3pG6PpvrY&feature=related> on 24 May 2011). The name of the video is misleading. Although the concert took place at Queen's University, it was not organised by the university. It was organised by the student society.

**3** This quote is a brief passage given on the website of the *Ulster Scots Language Society*. The Ulster-Scots definition and its English equivalent were retrieved from <http://www.ulsterscotslanguage.com/usl/language/> and <http://www.ulsterscotslanguage.com/en/language/> respectively (as accessed on 26 September 2011).

Lallans. In simple terms, the relationship between Ulster-Scots and Lallans could be compared to the relative positions of Irish and Scottish Gaelic.” (Robinson 2003: 112)

Such attempts to define Ulster Scots as a language in the sense of ‘a particular instance of a structured human system of communication’ (cf. McArthur 1992: 571) must, of course, be seen against the background of the *Belfast Agreement* and the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages*. In both declarations, Ulster Scots is officially and generously recognised (cf. ETS148 1992: 2 and BA 1998: [24]). However, both political documents do not state how the variety is to be viewed taxonomically, and neither document has yet translated into much concrete action. The *status quo* of Ulster Scots is concisely summarised in the introductory chapter of the Ulster-Scots-related issue of *Études Irlandaises*, in which Hutchinson brings in a further aspect that is also the main target of the present chapter:

Much of the debate has centred on the language question: is Ulster-Scots to be seen as a language in its own right, a dialect of Scots, a dialect of English, a ‘patois’, or simply, as the now classic put-down has it, ‘a DIY *language for Orangemen*’?

(Hutchinson 2013: 9; my italics)

In order to shed light on whether and to what degree Ulster Scots has, in its historical development, taken on an identity within “the Unionist, Planter and Protestant set of cultural belongings, in opposition to Nationalist, Republican, Catholic and Gaelic intellectual inheritance” (Ferguson 2008: 2), the present chapter proceeds as follows. In a first step, the chapter’s theoretical background is introduced. Since the study presented in this report specifically focuses on the written representation of Ulster Scots, central issues in this regard are discussed briefly and their implications for the identity-related questions at the core of this volume are outlined. This theoretical background is complemented by a brief exemplification of the ideological undercurrents of Ulster Scots. The next part deals with the study from which this contribution is derived.<sup>4</sup> It will describe both the data and methods of the original study, contextualise the research, and present selected analyses and findings. The selected findings result from a detailed comparison of the graphic representation of Ulster Scots in the period between 1750 and 1920 and at present, i.e. since 1995. Whereas these findings can serve to delineate a history of Ulster-Scots spelling

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<sup>4</sup> This contribution is related to research carried out for the author’s postdoctoral dissertation. Because of general limitations, what is presented here only deals with selected points of the original study. Readers interested in full accounts and detailed analyses are referred to the thesis (Wolf 2015), the published form of which is in preparation.

and show that the traditional dialect has developed a distinctive spelling, they can also reveal that, within the framework of the present volume, diverging spelling patterns are not necessarily bound up with language-internal developments only. On the contrary, it is argued in the final section of the chapter that some spelling patterns of present-day Ulster Scots are strongly related to contexts in which ethnic, ideological or political identity are of great importance.

## 2 Preliminaries

### 2.1 ‘Identity’

In the main, this chapter is based on the understanding of the concept of ‘identity’ as discussed in the introduction of the present volume and subscribes to the view that language and identity are inseparably intertwined (cf. Joseph 2004; Bucholtz and Hall 2010; Llamas and Watt 2010). However, the present chapter also subscribes to the point of view that identity is neither prescribed nor unchangeable (Pintarić 2016). With regard to Ulster-Scots identity, I might still add that, if identity is the result of “linguistic and semiotic practices” (Bucholtz and Hall 2010: 19), identity can be inherited as that set of practices that formed the identity of (cultural or linguistic) predecessors. The set is certainly not prescribed. As an historical source or a traditional form, it constitutes a proposal that may be subject to change if there are conditions that demand change. Conditions are particularly demanding if societal, political and other processes aid self-promotion and (re)development of identity. The (pro)active choice of indexical practices, their disregard, their alteration, or their reorganisation might coincide with claims to possess a language and/or identity exclusively (cf. Thim-Mabrey 2003). It is hoped that the chapter serves to illustrate that Ulster Scots is a text-book example of the latter.

### 2.2 Writing and spelling

In this chapter, spelling is chosen to be the target layer of language which serves as the basis for observations, analyses, findings and resulting conclusions. There are several reasons for that. In general, spelling seems to be a worthy object of research once again (cf. Sebba 2007, Jaffe, Androutsopoulos, Sebba and Johnson 2012; Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson 2012). Still, whereas the present-day structure and the history of Standard English spelling are well

documented (e.g. Venezky 1970, Scragg 1974, Carney 1994, Upward and Davidson 2011, Crystal 2012, Horobin 2013), spelling conventions of dialects and their historical developments are underresearched subjects (cf. Kniesza 1997: 24), and indeed, in comprehensive overviews of present-day varieties and traditional dialects, there are no chapters on spelling (cf. e.g. Burridge and Kortmann 2008, Kortmann and Upton 2008, Mesthrie 2008, Schneider 2008). Accordingly, the chapter sides with the few contributions that have genuinely taken up the study of non-standard spelling in its own right (cf. Trudgill 1999, Honeybone and Watson 2013, Bann and Corbett 2015, and Moll 2015) and treats written language as an autonomous and sovereign realisation of language in which specific usages as well as their possible changes are considered meaningful.

If writing is viewed as a realisation of language in its own right and spelling is a meaningful layer thereof, various questions can be asked. Among them are the following two questions that are of particular relevance in contexts that consider language and identity: (1) What function(s) does writing serve?; and more specifically (2) What functions does the written representation of a dialect or variety serve? Unsurprisingly, answers to those questions can be found, for instance, in 1980s research literature which subjected writing and written language to more detailed analysis and it was already at the very beginning of that decade that Coulmas emphasised the cultural value of writing: “Schrift ist nicht nur Vermittler, sondern auch Symbol einer Kultur” (Coulmas 1981: 15).<sup>5</sup> Almost thirty years later, Coulmas’ point was reinforced and refined by Wyrod. Referring to writing systems, he states that “scripts can also function as salient and revered *symbols of identity*” (Wyrod 2008: 41; my italics). That identificational force of writing is undeniable for spelling. The opposition of <-re>- and <-er>-spellings, e.g. <centre> vs <center>, to distinguish British from American English spelling is a very basic, yet convincing illustration of the aforementioned. A number of such spelling features may eventually add to form a coherent system and, in turn, that system can become a property with which speech communities express their identity. If so, that written representation can create a collective consciousness (cf. Lindqvist 2001: 196). Viewed from that angle, the consideration of orthography and spelling leads us to a very important observation:

Orthographies are not socially neutral exteriors of written language, but integrated parts of value clusters or systems which may differ on cultural and social grounds and, thus, go into the struggle for cultural hegemony which takes place continually in any society whether we choose to recognize it or not.  
(Wiggen 1986: 410).

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5 ‘Writing does not only transmit culture, it also symbolises culture.’ (This and all following translations by the author.)

Still, irrespective of this connotative value's role in identifying processes, the situational function of writing must also be taken into account. The very notions 'written language' and 'writing' are bound up with the activity of *producing*. Yet, it must be acknowledged that the activity of *receiving the utterance*, i.e. reading, is not less relevant. This has been put into perspective by Maas (1992). According to Maas, functional primacy can be given to reading:

'Schreibe, wie Du sprichst' ist nicht die Perspektive, aus der die Funktion der Schrift abzuleiten ist, die ja ihre primäre Funktion für einen Leser hat, in der Regel also für jemand anderen als den Schreiber; *das Schriftsystem soll einem Leser Sinnerschließungshilfen geben*. (Maas 1992: 5; emphasis added)<sup>6</sup>

Maas' point becomes even more apparent if the present context of dialect spelling is considered. Whereas a native speaker of a specific regional variety would be able to produce a correct reading of any text, i.e. a reading with authentic regional pronunciation, even if that text were spelt in the standard orthography of the overarching or adjacent norm, the written text itself, in terms of identity, does not reveal any regional, social or cultural attachment. It is only the text spelled out in dialect – i.e. containing *reading comprehension aids* relating to the corresponding regional variety – that can transmit its regional character to the reader whether that reader belongs to the respective speech community or not.

## 2.3 Ideology

The political and ideological dimensions of Ulster Scots might be apparent from a number of issues.<sup>7</sup> Here, it may be sufficient to allude to the variety's nomenclature and its origin. 'Ulster Scots' seems to have emerged as a cultural label in the second half of the nineteenth century. Towards the end of that century, opposition to the Union of Britain and Ireland grew and the appeal for Home Rule began to be a dominant factor in political thinking in Ireland. Although 'Ulster Scots' had been used before that time, it is in this context that the notion appeared very clearly as a counter-reaction. It is more than probable that publications such as Harrison's *The Scot in Ulster* (1888) added the political and ideological dimension to the notion. This is what can be read in Harrison's preface:

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<sup>6</sup> "Write as you speak" is not the perspective from which to derive the function of writing, which must primarily serve the reader, who ideally is not identical with the writer; thus writing is supposed to provide clues to understanding the meaning.'

<sup>7</sup> For detailed accounts as to politics and ideology in relation to Ulster Scots, see e.g. Kallen (1999), Mac Póilin (1999), McCoy/O'Reilly (2003) or Falconer (2007) and Hickey (2011).

Their English and Scottish origin seems to me to give to the men of Ulster an inalienable right to protest, as far as they are concerned, against the policy of Separation from Great Britain to which the Irish – with the genius for nicknames which they possess – at present give the name of Home Rule.  
(Harrison 1888: [v])

When, almost a century later, a booklet titled *Ulster – An Ethnic Nation?* states that its goal is “an inquiry into the *national identity* of the Ulster loyalist folk” (Ulster Society 1986: 3; emphasis added) and, indeed, this booklet contains a chapter on Ulster Scots called ‘The Ulster Dialect – The Distinctive Speech of a Distinctive People’, it is no longer questionable that the ideological tendency already found in Harrison’s *The Scot in Ulster* has successfully been carried into the present.

Thus, it cannot be denied that Ulster Scots as a vernacular is defined by the linguistic repertoire of Northern Ireland and neighbouring regions. Essentially, this means that Ulster Scots has existed vis-à-vis English, Irish English, Ulster English, Irish Gaelic as well as Scots in Scotland. A further point which, in terms of rivalry, adds fuel to the fire is alluded to in the foreword of Robinson’s *Ulster-Scots Grammar*:

The marginalization of Ulster-Scots for social and political reasons [...] has led many Ulster-Scots to consider their native speech to be ‘bad English’, as schools have often – and erroneously – asserted that it was.

(Michael Montgomery’s foreword in Robinson 1997: v)

As holds true for most traditional varieties and vernaculars throughout the world, the general development of Ulster Scots is determined by language-external realities. Those are frequently destabilised by economic priorities that more often than not consider *languages* only.

To summarise the above: (a) Ulster Scots is a variety in which identity cannot be detached from political or ideological positions; and (b) Ulster Scots is a variety whose present-day attempts at scripting and textualisation take place in a paradigm of rivalry with other varieties of English.

## 3 A study of written Ulster Scots

### 3.1 Data and methodology

The empirical data of the case study have been drawn from three sources. The present-day data comes from the *Miscellaneous Ulster-Scots Texts – Corpus* (MUST-C). The corpus was specifically compiled for this purpose. It is of an experimental nature and represents work in progress. To date, the corpus consists

of 224 texts covering the period from 1995 to 2014. They total some 310,598 words. At the moment, MUST-C comprises written texts only. The majority of which are taken from the internet. There they are readily available from blogs, private webpages, organisations' presentations and webpages related to the Northern Ireland government. Some printed material was also included in order to extend the compilation. Wherever possible all retrievable metadata, such as regional affiliation of author or editorial context, were added to the compiled texts. The second set of data represents written Ulster Scots of the late eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. This set of data constitutes the literary heritage of Ulster Scots and comprises 28 literary works from the period between 1753 and 1920.<sup>8</sup> These literary works can be regarded as an historical corpus of Ulster Scots, which is why they have been considered as a precursor to all material compiled in MUST-C. The third set of data is consists of 13 amateur or professional glossaries and word-collections. Ten of which are explicit records of Ulster Scots. The accessed lexicographical material totals 17,200 entries. The glossaries and word-collections are named in abbreviated form in Table 1 below; the full bibliographical details are given in the references.

The data retrieved from the wordlists are not irrelevant and the material was accessed for the following reason. In the analysis, I followed the question whether speech features are represented in written dialect material or, at least, whether they are intended to be portrayed. The material was also subjected to the further question of what the representation or, to be more precise, what the sum of represented features is able to tell us about the development and the nature of dialect and/or non-standard spelling. In this regard, my considerations are based on the following line of thought. The basic assumption is that a feature needs to be established in speech before it enters the domain of spelling. It follows that not all notable speech features will appear in writing. It also follows that, if they do, their appearance in writing is important and, what is more, meaningful to those introducing them in spelling. Of course, it might be objected that occurrences can be singular or accidental. To rule out such objections in terms of data, the lexicographical works were accessed as a further source of information. The wordlists, particularly those that are unrelated to the corpus data and the literary works, are able to indicate whether features have been considered as characteristic in the history of Ulster-Scots spelling.

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<sup>8</sup> The material that is the literary heritage of Ulster Scots is available online at the *John Hewitt Online Collection* of the *Ulster Poetry Project* <http://www.arts.ulster.ac.uk/ulsterpoetry/index.html> and at the book collection of the *Ulster-Scots Poetry Project* <http://www.arts.ulster.ac.uk/ulsterscotspoetry/index.html> (as accessed in May 2014). Note that despite a considerable overlap these two projects are not identical.

**Table 1:** Accessed glossaries and wordlists in chronological order.

YEAR	AUTHOR	ABBREVIATED TITLE
1880	Patterson	<i>Glossary of Words in Antrim and Down</i>
1892	Fischer	<i>Wörter im nord-irischen Dialekt</i>
1904	Marshall	<i>The Dialect of Ulster</i>
1905	Marshall	<i>The Dialect of Ulster</i>
1906	Marshall	<i>The Dialect of Ulster</i>
1923	Lutton	<i>Montiaghism</i>
1990	McIntyre	<i>Dialect Heritage of North Ulster</i>
1990	Todd	<i>Dictionary of Northern Ireland English</i>
1991	O’Kane	<i>Book of Ulster Dialect</i>
1993	Montgomery	<i>Barnish, Co. Antrim Dialect Dictionary</i>
1997	Robinson	<i>English/Ulster-Scots Glossary</i>
2000	Fenton	<i>Ulster-Scots in Antrim</i>
2012	Robinson	<i>English/Ulster-Scots Glossary</i>

Methodologically, the present-day material was subjected to corpus-linguistic analyses. The data were retrieved from MUST-C and processed with *WordSmith*. Several wordlists were created to account for all of the more than 19,400 types that occur over all 224 MUST-C texts. The wordlist files facilitated initial searches for probable targets and their comparisons. Then, a selection of phenomena was studied in detail, using the concordance feature of *WordSmith*. That was to verify their candidacy for more detailed analysis. Sometimes, this included further word-list processing in order to facilitate statistical statements. Attested frequencies have always been subjected to the Chi-square test to rule out their invalidity.<sup>9</sup> In contrast to that, the examination of the historical sources and the lexicographical material had to take a different methodological form. In spite of their accessibility, the historical Ulster-Scots texts were not available in machine-readable formats. Because of that, they have been studied by close reading. Glossaries and word-collections have been treated differently again. In contrast to their general purpose, i.e. user-based consultation of single lexical items,

<sup>9</sup> Again, this is fully documented in the original thesis (cf. Wolf 2015).

all word-lists were read from first page to last. In both data sets, relevant forms were noted and fed into registers of all crucial forms in individual sources. In a further step, cross-referencing directories facilitated comparisons and the tracking of inter-relations as well as general developments. On the whole, findings based on historical sources and lexicographical material have not been processed statistically. Examinations and conclusions related to that material are qualitative.

Chronologically, the study was carried out in reverse order. On the basis of Ulster-Scots related scholarship (most notably Gregg 1964, Gregg 1972, Harris 1984, Kingsmore 1995, Fenton 2006, Hickey 2007, Hale 2008, and Corrigan 2010), relevant phonological features were singled out as candidates likely to be represented in vernacular spelling. The selected features were arranged into four groups (see Table 2 below). Group A is formed by phonological features that Ulster Scots shares with Scots. Group B contains features unique to Ulster Scots vis-à-vis Scots in Scotland. The latter needs to be stressed particularly with regard to feature (i) in group B. This feature is not found in Scotland (e.g. Stuart-Smith 2003 or Johnston 2007). In Ireland, however, it is not exclusively Ulster-Scots. It has “a long history in the *entire* island” (Hickey 2007: 115) and is common in

**Table 2:** Selected Ulster-Scots features .

<i>(A) features Ulster Scots shares with Scots in Scotland</i>
(i) retention of syllable final /x/
(ii) historic vocalisation of word/syllable-final /l/
(iii) retention of Older Scots /u:/
(iv) fronting and raising of Old English /ɑ:/
(v) simplification of consonant clusters in final position
(a) reduction of <-ld> or <-nd> to <l> and <n>
(b) alveolar for velar nasal in progressive forms, i.e. /-ɪn/ instead of /-ɪŋ/
<i>(B) independent Ulster-Scots features</i>
(i) dentalised alveolar plosive in pre-/r/ position/t/ (shared with many vernacular varieties of Irish English)
(ii) indication of short central vowel in words such as <i>big</i>
(iii) no opposition between /ɛ/ and /a/ in some velar environments
<i>(C) default features</i>
(i) negation particle
(ii) negational contraction
<i>(D) exclusive features of Ulster Scots vis-à-vis Mid Ulster English</i>
(i) distinction between /ɹ/ and /w/
(ii) half-open back vowel in LOT and THOUGHT

conservative varieties of vernacular Irish English (cf., for example, Hickey 2004: 38). Group C is a group of default features, i.e. typical features that, from a neutral perspective, ought to be indicated in writing if a given text is meant to have a graphical Scots identity. Group D incorporates exclusive Ulster-Scots features.

In the original work (see footnote 3), all of the features in the above table have been studied. Because of space limitations this chapter will only refer to a selection of them. Their choice rests upon the fact that the features discussed here have been thoroughly investigated as speech features in Ulster Scots-related scholarship. The features included in this chapter have also shown clear results and do not share the complexity of other features which would take the discussion far beyond the limitations of this chapter.

The features included here are the following: A-i, i.e. the full phonological realisation of the velar and palatal fricative in syllable-final position whose existence in Ulster Scots is stated “to be by far the *most valuable* consonantal criterion for separating Ulster Scots from other varieties” (Montgomery and Gregg 1997: 615; emphasis added); B-ii, i.e. the Ulster-Scots equivalent to Standard English /ɪ/ which is described as a “short vowel, noticeably centred or retracted” and “somewhat lowered, approaching [ə]” (Gregg 1964: 165–166), and considered as a “standardised” phonological feature of Ulster Scots (cf. Harris 1984: 119); B-i, i.e. the dentalised alveolar stop in pre-/r/ positions, e.g. *better* [ˈbɛːtər/, that has been identified as a significant characteristic of Ulster Scots *vis-à-vis* Scots in Scotland (Gregg 1964: 184–185; cf. also Adams 1964: 2); A-v (b), i.e. the use of an alveolar nasal for a velar in progressive forms and in phonologically similar contexts that, while being the general and remarkably consistent realisation of <ing>-forms around the world with regard to its social and stylistic distribution (cf. Houston 1991: 241), in Ulster Scots, is socially acceptable or, at least, less stigmatised than elsewhere (cf. Kingsmore 1995: 101; also Hickey 2007: 116 and Corrigan 2010: 46); and D-ii, i.e. a feature exclusive to Ulster Scots *vis-à-vis* Mid Ulster English realised as “a half-open back, rounded vowel about cardinal in quality, which varies unsystematically in length, although it tends to be fully long” (Gregg 1964: 169) in words that belong to the LOT and THOUGHT lexical sets. After the above features had been tracked and statistically analysed in the present-day material, the historical sources were examined to trace their developments in spelling.

## 3.2 Findings

In this section, all relevant findings are given in condensed form. To provide clear references, paragraphs are numbered as given in Table 2 of the preceding section.

**Feature A-i.** In present-day written Ulster Scots, <ch>-spellings are preferred when the indication of the velar or palatal fricative is intended. Disregarding lexis of Gaelic provenance, the texts collected in the corpus contain a total of 4,037 tokens and 316 types that are relevant to the discussion of the written representation of [x] and [ç]. Of those, 3,252 tokens (80.5%) and 235 types (74.4%) show a <ch>-spelling, while 785 tokens (19.5%) and 81 types (25.6%) show a <gh>-spelling. It follows that the signalling of those fricative consonants in Ulster-Scots spelling is distinctive, but not homogeneous. In fact, where words clearly belong to the shared lexicon of English and Scots, texts tend to prefer the Scots convention, e.g. <micht>, <licht> and <richt> instead of <might>, <light> and <right>. If words are exclusively Scots and are not part of the common core of Standard English vocabulary, <ch>-spellings do not prevail quite as clearly. That is because the words in question – for instance, *sheugh* – are Scots, no matter what graphical variant is chosen to refer to its phonological form.

**Feature B-ii.** There is a considerable variation in positions where the retracted and lowered short Ulster-Scots vowel is supposed to be indicated. All attested spellings related to *big* shall serve as example. Of the latter there are 288 tokens and 5 types in the corpus. The absolute and relative frequencies are as follows: <baag> 268 tokens/52%; <bag> 7 tokens/1%; <big> 225 tokens/44%; <big> 4 tokens/1%; <bigg> 9 tokens/2%. Although there is no clear preference, we can still observe the opposition of <baag> and <big>. From a reader's perspective, it is questionable whether <baag> is intuitive. This also holds true for other spelling variants suggested for [ĩ]. However, they do not feature in the data related to *big*: e.g. <Brätain>, <commättee>, <fäsh>, or <thäng>. Be that as it may, as much as the variant [ĩ] may be viewed as a token of Ulster Scots in speech, the conscious choice to deviate clearly and consciously from in KIT-words can be seen as indication of Ulster-Scotsness in written texts.

**Feature B-i.** With regard to words in which dentalised stops may occur, it is safe to state that non-standard forms are preferred. Again, a great range of variation must be stated. The majority of all 3,260 tokens and 316 types show a preference for the following spelling patterns: 579 tokens and 82 types of <tth>/<Cth> as in *butthermilk* and *wunther-tim*; and 2,630 tokens and 217 types of <Ctè>/<Cè> as in *dauchtèr* or *scunnèr*.<sup>10</sup> Note that this feature is wide-spread in vernacular varieties of Irish English in general and is well-documented in history (Hickey 2007: 301–303).

**Feature A-v(b).** The realisation of the final position of progressive forms as an alveolar nasal has been characterised as a “vernacular universal” (Chambers

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10 C in the graphemic brackets stands for ‘consonant’.

2004: 129). Unsurprisingly, its representation in Ulster-Scots spelling is highly frequent. 11,608 tokens and 1,436 types of <-in(\*)>-spellings make a clear majority in comparison to 167 tokens and 92 types of <-ing>-spellings. Indeed, the speech feature is omnipresent. It is so maximally accepted, that, for example, also {thing}-compounds show <-in>-spelling in final position, even though they are, in comparison to progressive verb forms, morphologically different. There are 13 types of {thing}-compounds: *ivrything*, *oniething*, *onything*, *simthing* as well as *iverythin*, *naethin*, *oanythin*, *oniethin*, *onithin*, *onythin*, *simthin*, *somethin*, *sumthin*. The latter group make up 96.15% of a total of 104 tokens of {thing}-compounds.

**Feature D-ii.** As said above, the <oa>-vowel relates to words that belong to the lexical sets of LOT and THOUGHT. In Standard English, those lexical sets display the opposition of short /ɒ/ and long /ɔ:/. In Ulster Scots, that opposition does not apply. In pronunciation, the vowel is always [ɔ], its spelling, according to corpus evidence, most frequently <oa>, for instance in *blakthoarn*, *coancert*, *coarnfiel*, *moarnin*, *Noarth*, and *pletfoarm*. Tokens such as these are relatively frequent and numerically significant. The corpus texts show 196 types and 3,175 tokens of <oa>-spellings for the half-open back, rounded vowel. The statistics suggest that the convention is not unfounded. They also suggest that writers would consider the speech feature underrepresented if the convention were absent from written texts. However, it remains a moot point whether the convention is consistently applied.

To summarise some of the findings with reference to present-day Ulster-Scots orthography, Table 3 below gives an overview of the most likely spelling patterns as represented in MUST-C texts. The table only shows examples related to the features discussed above.

**Table 3:** Most Frequent Spelling Variants in MUST-C Texts (sample words).

<i>(A) features Ulster Scots shares with Scots in Scotland</i>
(i) retention of syllable final /x/ <throch>
(v) simplification of consonant cluster in final position
(b) alveolar for velar nasal in progressive forms, /-ɪŋ/ vs /-ɪn/ → <rinnin>
<i>(B) independent Ulster-Scots features</i>
(i) dentalised alveolar plosive in in pre-/r/ position <betther>, <mattẽr>
(ii) indication of short central vowel in words such as <i>big</i> <Brätain>
<i>(D) exclusive features of Ulster Scots vis-à-vis Mid Ulster English</i>
(ii) half-open back vowel in LOT and THOUGHT <coarnmill>

Table 4 below shall serve as a first point of comparison when considering the history of Ulster-Scots orthography,. This table also gives the year of publication of those works in which a feature is found to have been indicated in spelling for the first time.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 4:** First occurrence of selected features in the historical Ulster-Scots texts.

<i>(A) features Ulster Scots shares with Scots in Scotland</i>	
(i) retention of syllable final /x/	→ 1846
(ii) historic vocalisation of word/syllable-final /l/	→ 1753
(iii) retention of Older Scots /u:/	→ 1813
(iv) fronting and raising of Old English /a:/	→ 1753
(v) simplification of consonant cluster in final position	
(a) reduction of <-ld> or <-nd> to <l> and <n>	→ 1804
(b) fronting of final in progressive forms, /-ɪŋ/ vs /-ɪn/	→ 1804
<i>(B) independent Ulster-Scots features</i>	
(i) dentalised alveolar plosive in pre-/r/ position	→ 1846
(ii) indication of short central vowel in words such as <i>big</i>	→ 1817
(iii) no opposition between /ɛ/ and /a/ in some velar environments	→ 1901
<i>(C) default features</i>	
(i) negation particle	→ 1753
(ii) negational contraction	→ 1753
<i>(D) exclusive features of Ulster Scots vis-à-vis Mid Ulster English</i>	
(i) distinction between /m/ and /w/	→ ∅
(ii) half-open back vowel in LOT and THOUGHT	→ 1920

In the main, all the relevant features, except for the distinction of /w/ and /m/, have been signalled by written forms differing from Standard English orthography in Ulster-Scots works produced during the period from 1750 to 1920. That statement may be unsurprising. Yet, it conceals what was less foreseeable. Table 4 above shows that most of the features in sections (A) and (C), i.e. features that are unquestionably common to Ulster Scots and Scots in Scotland, have been present since the emergence of written Ulster Scots or from an early stage onwards. Interestingly, the graphical representation of the velar and

<sup>11</sup> Note that the table presents first occurrences of all features even though only five of which are discussed in this chapter.

palatal fricative, a key feature regarding the difference between English and Scots, sets in at a comparably late stage. With reference to features that are independent Ulster-Scots features, the table also gives consistent results in view of the following. Features exclusive to Ulster Scots can enter the written representation only after they have developed a stable presence in speech. Axiomatically, they must be a later development than the occurrence of features that had already been in the variety before those exclusive features started to emerge.

When the historical material was examined, a further pattern emerged. Around 1800 and throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century, we find texts that mainly exhibit *some* features from sections (A) and (C). From 1850 onwards, we find historical texts that display *all* features from those two sections. Works with the largest numbers of features indicated in spelling belong to the first two decades of the twentieth century. As a general result, increasing feature-density can be concluded if all historical texts and all texts collected in the corpus are strung together.

On the basis of the condensed accounts presented here, the history of Ulster-Scots spelling can be summarised as follows. The origins of the written representation of the variety are in Scotland and the first appearance of Ulster Scots owes much to those origins. Early Ulster-Scots works are – if the qualifier is allowed – almost Burnsian in spelling. Soon, however, there surface Ulster-based additions and, throughout the nineteenth century, Ulster-Scots spelling increasingly develops its own individual conventions. That continuous and gradual increase I should like to characterise as a ‘natural’ development that leads to a variant of spelling which deviates from Standard English as well as Scots in Scotland to a degree that the relatedness to both is still recognisable and transparent. It can be safely assumed that these adjustment in spelling reflect changes in pronunciation which had already occurred in Ulster Scots.

## 4 Conclusion

In this contribution, a condensed version of a case study of Ulster-Scots spelling has been presented. The main trend to observe in the comparison of historical variants with current conventions is that more and more features are indicated. Also, the latest additions to the speech features that are represented by spelling relate to features that are exclusive features of Ulster Scots, i.e. features that are neither shared with Scots in Scotland nor with Mid Ulster English. At first glance, this might be unsurprising and it might be regarded as a natural development. After all, speech features can only materialise in spelling, if, as said further

above, they have fully developed and stabilised in speech and have become salient therein. Accordingly, it seems obvious that the longer a variety exists as an independent entity, the more speech features exclusive to that variety might develop which, in turn, can become candidates for actual representation in spelling, if that medium for language is indeed available.

On closer inspection, however, we may review and, therefore, re-evaluate the fact that present-day representatives of written Ulster Scots wish to portray, in their spelling, as many features of spoken Ulster Scots as possible. To do that, we should like to revisit the observation of ‘increasing feature-density’. If one quantifies the spelling and provides percentages of ‘density of Ulster Scots spelling’-ratios, intriguing conclusions can be drawn in relation to identity. In this regard, the most extreme texts are found in MUST-C and they show percentages of feature-density between 60% and 100%. Modest texts would include nineteenth-century texts of Ulster Scots and they show ratios of 30% to 40%. Interestingly, the densest present-day texts have specific ideological underpinnings and, more often than not, occur in very specific editorial contexts. Highest density ratios have been diagnosed with texts by authors from regions where Irish has retreated for a long time, where Irish as a linguistic rival is not present as an everyday language, where Ulster Scots itself is regionally marginal, and where, regarding Northern Irish politics, Loyalist attitudes are more common and strongest. Highest density ratios have also been found with texts that are relatively untypical as far as typical text types of dialect writing are concerned, whose editing process involved a Standard English and an Irish parallel, and that were commissioned. In addition to their high ratios of feature-density, such texts also present the reader with artificial accumulations of spelling variants that go far beyond the inherited tradition. One could assume that examples such as the grave-accented vowel in *eftèrnuin* ‘afternoon’ or the tréma in *fäsh* ‘fish’ and *kängrick* ‘kingdom’ are indicators of the inventiveness and graphematical knowledge of those who introduced these spelling conventions to present-day Ulster Scots. Still, they are counter-intuitive and therefore problematic. This is particularly true of the grave accent because the diacritical mark, although added to the vowel letter, is intended to symbolise the quality of the preceding consonant. It is spelling suggestions such as these that show that the relatedness of some Ulster-Scots spellings to English and Scots is at times very opaque, if not in fact a caricature. On the one hand, cases affirm the artificiality that has already been attested for present-day written Ulster Scots (e.g. Kirk 2000: 137; Hickey 2011). On the other hand, I should like to suggest that, on the basis of the correlations outlined above, some Ulster-Scots texts are Unionist or even Loyalist Ulster Scots in terms of their identity.

With regard to the historical perspective, one last point shall be added. It appears that periods of change in Ulster-Scots spelling fall together with times of

political and societal instability and therefore with times in which identities are challenged. The period of the Home Rule movement and of the general movement towards Irish independence coincides with the period in which almost all Ulster-Scots features delineated in Tables 2 and 4 were represented in spelling for the first time. The same holds true for the recent decades. They are marked by the end of the *Troubles*, the *Belfast Agreement* of 1998 and the end of extreme civil unrest. In terms of Ulster-Scots spelling, those decades coincide with the emergence of unprecedented spelling variants as well as with the production of texts showing highest density-ratios of 'Ulster-Scotsness'. That assessment inclines me to conclude that the equation of 'social instability, whether specific or general, aids language change' (cf., for instance, Rydén 1979) not only holds true for (standard) languages, but also traditional varieties. With regard to the present volume, I might add 'contested identities' to the equation.

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## **II Linguistic identity across diverse sources**



Brian Clancy

## 8 Intimacy and identity in Irish English: A corpus pragmatic approach to the study of personal pronouns

### 1 Introduction

Intimate discourse, interaction between couples, families and close friends in private, non-professional settings, lies at the heart of our everyday linguistic experience (McCarthy 1998; Clancy 2016). It deserves more of the research gaze than it currently commands; therefore, this chapter explores how Irish intimates index their identity through their use of personal pronouns. Specifically, the analysis focuses on the use of the items *he*, *she* and *we* in the *Limerick Corpus of Intimate Talk* (LINT) a 600,000-word sub-corpus of the *Limerick Corpus of Irish English* (LCIE; see Clancy 2016). In its most elemental form, an index is a linguistic item that depends on either the co-textual or situational context for interpretation, for example the first or second person pronouns *I* and *you* (Silverstein 1976). Pronouns are, according to Wales (1996: xii), a “‘syntactic’ phenomenon [that] cannot actually be satisfactorily explained syntactically.” They are, instead, highly complex pieces of language, inevitably bound up in notions of speaker identity, relationships and power (Pennycook 1994; Wales 1996) and are, therefore, inherently pragmatic in nature. A speaker’s choice of which pronoun to use indexes their identity and positions them in respect to others. Schifffrin (2006) maintains that key to the creation of an identity for the ‘self’ is the creation of an ‘other’ in relation to whom the ‘self’ is defined. Personal pronouns, which, by and large, enable the creation of both a linguistic ‘self’ in the form of a speaker/writer and ‘other’ in the form of a hearer/reader (or indeed a third party), are fundamental to this identity creation process.

Bucholtz and Hall (2005) maintain that indexicality provides the connection between linguistic form and social meaning. In this respect, indexical items function on a number of discourse domains or levels. On the one hand, their discourse meaning needs to be understood in order to determine who is talking or, more pertinently for this chapter, who is being talked about. This enables conversational participants to adopt identities on a micro level, such as speaker-addressee, or meso level, such as protagonist in a narrative (see Greatbatch and Dingwall 1998; Ochs and Taylor 1995; Bucholtz and Hall 2005; Moore and Podesva, 2009). On the other hand, once these identities have been indexed, they then need to be considered in light of “the social worlds of

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actions, turns, and relationships in which the reference is produced and interpreted” (Schiffrin 2006: 130). In this way, “speakers make relevant their social identities through the discourse identities they take up” (Koester 2006: 6). For example, Kendall (2008) illustrates how, at the family dinner table, parents can have up to fifteen different meso identities such as head chef, social secretary, moral guardian, etc. She then explores these at a macro level by linking them with gendered parental identities within the family (see also Ochs and Taylor 1995). The mother assumes, almost exclusively, an identity of ‘nurturing disciplinarian’. In contrast, the father, primarily through his use of humour, constructs an identity of ‘rebellious comedian’. It is through our micro- and meso-level identities that our wider social identities emerge and are constructed (Bucholtz and Hall 2005; Koester 2006; Schiffrin 2006; Handford 2014). Thus, in a discourse and social sense, indexical items are used to anchor identity in interaction (Bucholtz and Hall 2005).

The chapter employs a corpus pragmatic methodology where tools such as word frequency lists are used to extrapolate pronominal patterns surrounding *he*, *she* and *we* that can be said to characterise intimate identity. In order to do this, *WordSmith Tools Version 7.0* (Scott 2017) is used to determine the raw and normalised frequency of occurrence of these pronouns, to generate the most frequent word clusters associated with them and, finally, to facilitate detailed examination of concordance lines that contain these items. This highly iterative approach demonstrates that the markedly frequent use of the pronouns *he* and *she*, and the two-word clusters *is s/he* and *did s/he*, is a way of speaking that is recognisably intimate. It is argued that the use of these pronouns constitutes the indexing of the linguistic style of intimates and, therefore, their identity. The analysis also focuses on the pronoun *we* and examines how although it is used less frequently in intimate discourse than in other context-types, it is an important linguistic tool in the creation of intimate identities at a variety of levels given its flexibility and multifunctionality with respect to the creation of in-groups and out-groups.

## 2 Corpus linguistic studies of indexicality and identity

Before dealing specifically with corpus studies that have explored the link between indexicality and identity, it is worth commenting on the ubiquitous presence of personal pronouns on spoken and written corpus word frequency lists. Rühlemann (2007: 66–69) posits four reasons for the frequency of *I* and *you* in

casual conversation; (i) *I* is prone to repetition (*I* is repeated at a frequency of about 200 times per million words in conversation (see Biber et al. 1999: 334)); (ii) *I* and *you* have a high frequency of collocation especially with cognitive verbs, for example, *I think* and *you know*; (iii) speakers in conversation show a clear tendency to prefer a direct mode than an indirect mode and (iv) conversation is co-constructed, with speakers taking turns and each new turn requires the reconstruction of the new speaker's deictic system. Regarding the distribution of these pronouns, Biber et al. (ibid: 333), using the Longman Corpus of Written and Spoken English (LWSE), have shown that the pronouns *I* and *you* are far more common in casual conversation than in other registers such as academic prose. The pronominal forms *he/him* and *she/her* are most common in fiction, closely followed by conversation; with the masculine pronoun more common than its corresponding feminine equivalent in both fiction and conversation. In the British National Corpus (BNC), however, Rühlemann (2007) has shown that the lemmas HE (*he, him, 'im* and *'e*) and SHE (*she, her* and *'er*) are more frequent in the demographically sampled spoken component of the BNC than in the written component as conversational participants "show a strong tendency to relate what happened to them and/or others" (p.71). He notes that the presence of narrative in conversation means that speakers need to be able to distinguish between whose speech is being presented through the use of reporting clauses such as *I said* or *she said*.

There have been a number of corpus studies, both spoken and written, that explore the use of pronouns in relation to identity. Clancy (2010) employs two corpora of Irish family discourse – one representing a middle class family from 'mainstream' Irish culture and the other, an Irish Traveller family. The Traveller Community in Ireland is a distinct minority ethnic group. He shows how the lemma YOU is more frequently used than the I lemma in both of these corpora. In general, personal pronouns play a pivotal role in establishing the deictic centre, typically organised egocentrically, between participants in conversation (see Lyons 1977; Levinson 1983; Rauh 1983; Fillmore 1997). The more frequent use of YOU is a result of the parents aligning their identity with that of their children. In their relationships with their children, parents have a dual identity as both an individual, *I*, and a parent, *mum/dad*. However, it seems that the *mum/dad* identity that is more frequently employed by parents, especially those with younger children, in order to "promote the addressee/child's perspective or world view" (Tannen 2007: 57). Therefore, there is a shift in the deictic centre in the family unit from an egocentric one, organised around the individual, to a more socio- or child-centred one based on an identity of 'being a family'. Clancy (2010) also divided *we* into its inclusive and exclusive perspectives in order to show how this pronoun indexes certain macro-social categories such as ethnicity or educational

background. He found that the settled family employed the use of exclusive *WE*, whereas the Traveller family did not. Through their use of exclusive *WE*, the settled family invoked membership of social groupings such as their friends, their co-workers, their fellow students and their city, thereby identifying themselves as members of a wider Irish society. In contrast, the absence of exclusive *WE* in the Traveller family signals the more closed nature of Traveller society, within which Travellers establish both their social and work identity. This lack of social mobility in the Irish Traveller family is attributed to the macro-social factors of socio-economic status and educational background.

Again working with *we*, Vaughan and Clancy (2013) note that *we* is twice as frequent in workplace discourse than in the casual, informal spoken Irish English represented in the Limerick Corpus of Irish English (LCIE). They maintain that understanding how *we* functions to index identity in different communities of practice such as the workplace or the family, “is crucial to interpreting how these communities are supported, created and realised pragmatically” (p. 64). Using two small corpora from the family and the workplace, they observe that the broad framework of inclusive and exclusive *we* can be successfully applied to family discourse but needs more elaboration in relation to the workplace context (see also Fortanet 2004; Vaughan 2007; Handford 2014). In the workplace, in addition to identifying the key community in-groups and out-groups, *we* is also required to “perform more complex functions in relation to politeness” (Vaughan and Clancy 2013: 69). Rühlemann (2007: 71) notes that *we* is more frequent in context-governed discourse (such as pedagogic, professional or transactional discourse) because “maintaining group identity is one of the underlying principle concerns.” In the context of media discourse, O’Keeffe (2006: 98–99) maintains that *we*, *our* and *us* “are central to the process of establishing and maintaining a sense of commonality and inclusion in everyday casual conversation between people who have a real common bond.” In media discourse, speakers can use *we* in order to immediately create an in-group identity. However, in contrast to the more general contexts of media discourse and the workplace, it may be that amongst intimates, there is a mutual recognition that group identity is a pre-existing concept maintained due to the nature of the speaker relationships and, therefore, members do not need to use *we* for either complex politeness work or, indeed, to establish close relationships more quickly.

From a written corpus viewpoint, Hyland (2002a and b) explores the use of author pronouns, most obviously the *I* and *we* pronouns, in corpora of both novice and expert academic writing. In common with other forms of communication, linguistic choices in academic writing, amongst them the choice of whether or not to use an author pronoun, align writers with certain values and beliefs. Hyland (2002a: 353) demonstrates how, on the one hand, soft knowledge domains such

as applied linguistics or marketing, use the first person *I* to “establish a credible scholarly identity and to underline what they have to say.” On the other hand, the hard sciences, such as engineering, use fewer author pronouns in general, although they do employ plural forms such as *we*, which results in a less personal style that strengthens “a position of objectivity by subordinating their own voice to that of their results” (ibid.). Novice writers, in Hyland’s studies these novices were also second language writers, show a reluctance to use singular or plural author pronouns in either the soft or hard sciences and this results in a weak sense of a particular, discipline-specific academic identity being portrayed. Thornbury (2010) uses the 10,000-word Cringe Text Corpus, a corpus of teenage narratives written predominantly by females. He found that identity chains in the corpus, co-referential items where every member of the set refers to the same person or event (see Hasan 1989), are mostly realised by a first person narrator in the form of *I* or *my*. This finding raises questions regarding the macro-social factors of age and gender. Rayson et al. (1997) note a strikingly greater use of both the first person *I/me/my/mine* and the third person *she/her/hers* by females in the British National Corpus. Amador-Moreno (2016) also highlights that first (*I/my/me/myself*) and second person (*you/your/yourself/ye*) forms are more than twice as frequent in a corpus of letters written by women than one written by men. She found that in the female letters, *I* clusters with mental verbs such as *hope*, *think*, *know* or *believe*, and argues female identity is recognised through the open expression of subjective opinions and feelings. The frequency of second person pronouns she attributes to the females’ attention to their addressee in that they treat letters as a conversational exchange between one another. Coates (2003) reveals that “self-disclosure ... is a significant feature of the stories told by women to their friends” (p. 118). In short, “story-telling is the way that women – and teenage girls – perform their gender” (Thornbury 2010: 281).

### 3 Data and methodology

In this chapter, in order to explore the frequency of occurrence of personal pronouns and, by extension their function in establishing an intimate identity, a sub-corpus of the *Limerick Corpus of Irish English* (LCIE) is employed. LCIE is a one-million-word corpus of contemporary spoken Irish English collected from a variety of contexts in the Republic of Ireland (LCIE does not contain any data from Northern Ireland or Donegal) between 1998 and 2003 (Clancy 2016). LCIE adopted the genre-based design of the *Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English* (CANCODE). Accordingly, spoken

language was collected that combined the nature of speaker relationship with the goal-types prevalent in everyday spoken language. Five different types of speaker relationship are represented in the corpus design matrix – *intimate* (family), *socialising* (friends), *transactional* (service encounters), *professional* (workplace) and *pedagogic* (classroom) – in addition to three goal-types – *collaborative idea*, *collaborative task* and *information provision* (McCarthy 1998 for a more detailed description of the design matrix). The sub-corpus used in this chapter is the *Limerick Corpus of Intimate Talk* (LINT) (see Clancy 2016). The LINT corpus is approximately 600,000 words in size and contains 208 texts ranging from a 149-word conversation featuring three speakers, given the title ‘close family/friends chatting about sick friend’ in the LCIE database, to the longest recorded conversation in the general LCIE corpus, an 18,698-word conversation classified in the database as ‘intimate collaborative idea’. In the initial stages of the analysis, LINT is compared to the spoken component of the British National Corpus, a ten-million-word corpus designed to be representative of spoken British English (see Crowdy 1993; Aston and Burnard 1998 for more information).

A corpus pragmatic methodology is employed in order to examine the occurrences of personal pronouns within LINT. Corpus pragmatics is a relatively recent development at the intersection of the fields of corpus linguistics and pragmatics and a growing number of studies are emerging that illustrate the benefits of this synergy (see, for example, Adolphs 2008; Romero-Trillo 2008; O’Keeffe et al. 2011; Aijmer and Rühlemann 2015). Corpus pragmatics makes use of specifically designed computer software to analyse the relevant corpora. Through the use of software tools, in this chapter frequency lists, word clusters and concordance lines are all analysed, the more traditional, ‘horizontal’ qualitative approach to pragmatics is integrated with the more ‘vertical’, quantitative approach to corpus linguistics (Aijmer and Rühlemann 2015). Word frequency lists, the starting point for most corpus researchers, appear visually as a list of all the types, a type is a unique word form, in a corpus in order of their frequency of occurrence (highest frequency first). Concordance lines, on the other hand, present a search item, or *node*, in the centre of the co-text, the words that occur to the left and to the right of the node. Finally, word clusters are a sequence of linguistic items that appear directly one after another in a corpus (the minimum word cluster size is two). These clusters represent one possible way of operationalising the study of collocation (McEnery and Hardie 2012). The use of these tools constitutes a bottom-up approach to corpus pragmatics where the starting point for the analysis are corpus frequency counts and then concordance lines are explored atomistically. Studies such as this one represent a highly iterative approach to the study of pragmatic phenomena. Corpus pragmatic studies also take a more top-down approach. For example, there

is an increasing focus on the development of pragmatic annotation systems (Garcia McAllister 2015; Kohnen 2015; Musi 2018; Weisser 2018) and on the use of ontologies, systems which facilitate the examination and integration of different annotation systems across different corpora, to develop corpus search strategies (Musgrave et al. 2014).

## 4 Analysis and discussion

In order to begin the foray into the role of pronouns in the construction of intimate identity positions, Table 1 compares the 20 most frequent words in the LINT corpus and the spoken component of the BNC with the personal pronouns that feature therein marked in bold (see also Clancy 2016).

**Table 1:** Top 20 most frequent words across two spoken corpora (pronouns in bold).

N	LINT	BNC (spoken)
1	<i>the</i>	<i>the</i>
2	<i>I</i>	<i>and</i>
3	<b><i>you</i></b>	<i>I</i>
4	<i>and</i>	<i>to</i>
5	<b><i>it</i></b>	<b><i>you</i></b>
6	<i>to</i>	<i>a</i>
7	<i>yeah</i>	<i>of</i>
8	<i>a</i>	<b><i>it</i></b>
9	<i>that</i>	<i>that</i>
10	<i>in</i>	<i>in</i>
11	<i>like</i>	<i>is</i>
12	<i>was</i>	<i>er</i>
13	<i>of</i>	<i>on</i>
14	<i>is</i>	<i>yeah</i>
15	<b><i>he</i></b>	<b><i>we</i></b>
16	<i>know</i>	<i>was</i>
17	<i>no</i>	<i>for</i>
18	<b><i>she</i></b>	<b><i>they</i></b>
19	<i>oh</i>	<i>have</i>
20	<i>on</i>	<i>it's</i>

Table 1 highlights a number of initial findings that may point towards unique intimate identity patterns. For example, unsurprisingly for spoken language, *I* and *you* feature prominently in the most frequently used words in both corpora. The other first impression is that third person pronouns *he* and *she* are more frequent in the LINT corpus (positions 15 and 18 respectively), whereas these pronouns are notable only by their absence from the top 20 words in the BNC. In a similar fashion, both the plural pronouns *we* and *they* occur in the top 20 words in the BNC (positions 15 and 18), yet do not appear on the LINT list. In order to further examine these initial raw frequency comparisons, the counts for the pronouns have been normalised per million words in Table 2.

**Table 2:** The frequency of occurrence of personal pronouns across the two corpora (normalised per million words).

	LINT	BNC (spoken)
<i>I</i>	27511	23991
<i>you</i>	25067	22187
<i>he</i>	9554	5622
<i>she</i>	7702	3157
<i>it</i>	22492	24377
<i>we</i>	4214	7733
<i>they</i>	6653	6932

Table 2 clearly demonstrates both the necessity for, and the usefulness of, the process of normalisation, simultaneously confirming and refuting some of the initial observations. As Table 1 also demonstrated, *I* and *you* are the most frequent pronouns in both LINT and the spoken component of the BNC. This frequency analysis demonstrates that intimates, through their use of personal pronouns, primarily orientate themselves to the key stakeholders in the immediate situational context, which, it could be argued is no different to discourse in other spoken contexts such as the workplace. However, what is distinct in amongst intimates in LINT is that the primary stakeholders, in addition to the people in the immediate context (the *I* and the *you*), include the *he* and *she* – those who are not present but are continually invoked. Table 2 shows that *he* is almost one third more frequent in LINT than in the BNC and *she* more than twice as frequent. Converse to these third person pronoun findings, *we* is 30% more frequent in the BNC than in LINT. The following analysis argues for *he* and *she* as markers of an intimate identity that creates solidarity through

invoking shared knowledge – specifically, in this case, shared knowledge of people known to the conversational participants but not necessarily present when the conversation takes place (Clancy 2016). In contrast, the limited use of the *we* pronoun in the LINT corpus also forms part of the identity of intimates and these findings are further explored in the following analysis sections.

4.1 Intimacy, indexicality and identity: The case of *he* and *she*

In order to further investigate the relatively high frequency of *he* and *she* in LINT and the connection between these pronouns and intimate identity, the top 10 most frequent 2-word clusters containing *he* and *she* were generated and the normalised results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Most frequent *he* and *she* 2-word clusters in LINT (normalised per million words).

he		she	
<i>he was</i>	2027	<i>she was</i>	1319
<i>he said</i>	797	<i>and she</i>	1008
<b><i>is he</i></b>	<b>589</b>	<i>she said</i>	752
<b><i>did he</i></b>	<b>481</b>	<b><i>is she</i></b>	<b>497</b>
<i>he is</i>	481	<b><i>did she</i></b>	<b>279</b>
<i>was he</i>	335	<i>she had</i>	261
<i>he had</i>	319	<i>she has</i>	239
<i>he did</i>	302	<i>she got</i>	234
<i>he didn't</i>	275	<i>but she</i>	227
<i>he has</i>	261	<i>she did</i>	221

Table 3 demonstrates that, for example, *he said* and *she said* are frequent clusters in LINT confirming the importance of third person reporting clauses in this context (see Rühlemann 2007). Of particular interest to intimate identity are the clusters *is s/he* and *did s/he* (marked in bold). Clancy (2016) has shown that *is* and *did* are frequent turn initial items in intimate discourse in comparison to workplace discourse and typically co-occur, as can be seen, with the pronouns *he* and *she*. He found that there were 359 instances in total in the intimate context type where *is* as a turn initial item co-occurs with *he*, *she* and *it*. Of these occurrences,

37% were composed of the two-word question forms *Is he?*, *Is she?* or *Is it?* functioning as a ‘small’ speaker turn. The word ‘small’ is used here as defined by McCarthy (2003: 35) who maintains that these small (in terms of number of words) contributions by listeners function to create and consolidate “the social and affective strata in talk”. Rühlemann (2007) maintains that questions such as these are illustrations of co-constructed question tags where participants share this conversational resource. Three example of this phenomenon can be seen in lines 15, 17 and 18 of Figure 1, a random sample of 20 concordance lines generated for *is he* and sorted one to the right.

N	Concordance
1	then you are prettier than him . <\$> Cheers <\$1> <b>is he</b> that ugly is he? <\$1> <\$X> He's   he has <\$X>
2	<\$1bf> I told you who he was now . <\$2cm> Wh=who <b>is he</b> Sarah? <\$3cf> <\$X> He's   he is <\$X>
3	MX too the way he introduces himself as well . <\$3> <b>Is he</b> really posh? <\$1> He lives in a big house that
4	That your other half no? <\$1> There's a sheet . <\$2> <b>Is he</b> out for the night now? <\$1> Oh he is yeah . <\$2>
5	about for you+ <\$2> Yeah . <\$1> +Or the second thing <b>is he</b> or she an invalid so a medical certificate should
6	. <\$3> <\$E> laughing <\$E> Yeah . <\$2> What height <b>is he</b> Niamh? <\$4> Six five . <\$2> Oh crikey <\$E>
7	the last only in the last couple of days that is where <b>is he</b> in college he's in boarding anyway somewhere
8	his exam is two and a half hours long . What time <b>is he</b> finished? <\$2> Well you're the maths teacher
9	. <\$1> Yeah. I know that like but . <\$4?> But like what <b>is he</b> doing? <\$3> Daithí has got em a nice car anyway.
10	. I know you want to play with it Shaun but you can't. <b>Is he</b> biting you? <\$1> No he's got a= <\$2> Funny isn't
11	. <\$1> Mmh that'll get the house and the place <b>is he</b> around at all to entertain em . <\$2> Oh he was
12	I showed to his office there today . <\$3> Pat <\$G?> <b>is he</b> a lecturer as well? <\$1> Yeah I've him for food
13	. <\$2> I'd say he's a great attraction , now Stewart <b>is he</b> ? <\$5> He's workin' there now . <\$2> Is he? <\$6>
14	oh I do boy <\$X> he's   he is <\$X> like his father <b>is he</b> ? <\$2cm> He is . <\$1bf> He is very like him .
15	. <\$2> <\$01> His uncle is <\$01> ah an M E P . <\$1> <b>Is he</b> ? <\$2> <\$02> Oh hold on now <\$02> . <\$3> <\$02>
16	at the stage where <\$1> He sounds very mature <b>is he</b> ? <\$2> He is in some ways. In other ways he's
17	<\$02> . <\$1> <\$02> Cause <\$02> <\$G1> off . <\$2> <b>Is he</b> ? <\$1> Yeah . <\$2> Oh he must be <\$G2> so . <\$1>
18	<\$H> honoured </SH> <\$3> Am I working no? <\$4> <b>Is he</b> ? <\$1> Seventh of June Saturday week . <\$3> Am
19	. I was asked . <\$2> And he's not a Fintan Character <b>is he</b> ? <\$1> I was askin' him the other day does
20	Ah come here he does he isn't a carp he's a farmer <b>is he</b> ? <\$1> No he has has um <\$G5> factories in

Figure 1: Random sample of 20 concordance lines with *is he* as node word (sorted 1R).

The study of question tags in Irish English from functional, genre-specific or variational viewpoints represents a research desideratum (Barron 2015). The canonical tag question consists of an *anchor* and a *tag* (Huddleston and Pullman 2002: 891). In extract 1, the expanded context for line 15 in Figure 1, speaker 2's *His uncle is ah an MEP* constitutes the anchor and speaker 1's response *Is he?* the tag.

## (1) [Context: Family chatting]

[**Transcription conventions:** <\$1>, <\$2>, etc. tags awarded in order of different speaker's appearance in conversation in the original transcriptions; <\$0> indicates the beginning, and <\\$0>, the end of a speaker overlap; <\$G> indicates unintelligible speech; = marks a false start]

<\$2> **His uncle is ah an MEP.**

<\$1> **Is he?**

<\$2> <\$0> Oh hold on now <\\$0>.

<\$3> <\$0> <\$G> <\\$0> whereabouts is he?

<\$1> Doesn't give the name does it?

<\$2> It was his uncle [name] maybe it's ah no hold on [name] MEP so no no it's not that his uncle was an MEP he must have some con= it says his uncle is living out there.

<\$3> Yeah the [family name] that kn= used to do the set dancing.

<\$1> Oh I know who he is yeah he's from am [place name].

<\$3> Are you serious yeah [place name].

Extract 1 features a co-constructed tag question, marked in bold, and also an example of the canonical question tag structure in *Doesn't give the name does it?* Kimps (2007 and 2018) argues that constant polarity question tags (as evidenced in the co-constructed instance marked in bold in extract 1) are orientated towards the hearer rather than towards a commitment to the truth of the proposition. Therefore tags such as in extract (1) function at a micro-level as turn yielders but also simultaneously as support markers or backchannels and result in expanded replies as opposed to, in theory, being constrained to a *yes/no* response. Similarly, the traditional question tag structure in *Doesn't give the name does it?* does not receive a short response. This long response to questions that, structurally at least, only require the speaker to give a 'small' answer is typical of intimate data (see also extracts (2) and (3)). On a macro-level in extract (1), the participants use question tags, amongst other linguistic devices, in order to establish shared knowledge of the family being discussed, with speaker 1 finally declaring *Oh I know who he is yeah*. The co-construction of this sociocultural knowledge of people in the wider society, outside the family unit, appears to be crucial to Irish intimate identity as represented in the corpus data.

Figure 1 also raises the wider sociocultural issue of politeness and identity in intimate discourse. Morris-Adams (2014: 156), echoing Kimps (2007), maintains that questions are 'other-orientated' in nature "displaying interest in the experiences and attitudes of the conversational partner". Requests, according to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness, are potentially face threatening. Therefore, the speaker has a range of compensatory linguistic strategies

available, ranging from not asking a question to making it very indirect, in order to soften or mitigate its force. However, on the surface at least, the questions asked in extracts (2) and (3), the expanded contexts of lines 1 and 4 in Figure 1 respectively, do not contain any traditional mitigating strategies such as conventional indirectness (the questions are marked in bold in the extracts).

- (2) [Context: Friends chatting while watching a football match]

<\$5> I pulled it off completely.

<\$1> You did but then you are prettier than him.

<\$5> **Cheers [name] is he that ugly is he?**

<\$1> He's got big hair.

<\$2> **You got a job from the mayor's office did you?**

<\$5> I got a call from the= I had to send in two references it starts in July and ends in August I'm sending in references so.

<\$1> **Who have you got as references?**

<\$5> Forum and this place I used to work at home. Made parts for windows and doors I did not make tea there.

<\$1> Laughs.

- (3) [Context: Friends chatting in the car]

<\$1> I wouldn't drink a lot a that now.

<\$2> **Was everything in the house here in it b= when ya moved in?**

<\$1> Everything yeah.

<\$2> **Ya don't have mouldy bread now like the last day do ya?**

<\$1> Fuckin better not be don't use the first slice though.

<\$2> **That your other half no?**

<\$1> There's a sheet.

<\$2> **Is he out for the night now?**

<\$1> Oh he is yeah.

What is notable in extracts (2) and (3), is the clustering of the question tags such as *is he?*, and *did you?* in (2), and *do ya?* and *no?* in (3). Andersen (2001) has associated tag questions with linguistic style. According to Bucholtz and Hall (2005: 597), the concept of language style refers to “a repertoire of linguistic forms associated with personas or identities.” Moore and Podesva (2009: 448 original emphasis) expand on this, defining it as “CLUSTERS of features rather than singular or isolated forms divorced from other language.” Thus, the more frequent use of *he* and *she* and the question forms *is s/he* and *did s/he* may be indicate of an Irish intimate speech style, and by extension, identity through their habitual use. Andersen (2001) argues that question tags exhibit a

functional overlap with items that are unconditionally classified as pragmatic markers such as *right* (see also Barron, 2015). The presence of these tags at the end of the speaker turn and the pragmatic function that they perform resonates with other research in the intimate context type that evidences politeness work being done at the *end* of the turn where it might be expected to be done at the *beginning* of the turn, at least in comparison to other context-types. Clancy (2018) demonstrates how in conflict episodes in Irish family discourse, rather than using pragmatic markers to preface disagreement which is the reported norm in the previous literature, are frequently mitigated in turn final position using, amongst other markers, question tags. Similarly, Vaughan et al. (2017) suggest that Irish intimates, in comparison to their British counterparts, perform indirectness and imprecision in different ways, frequently through a clustering of vague category markers with other pragmatic markers such as *you know*, again predominantly in turn final position. Therefore, although direct questioning strategies are permissible in intimate discourse, they can be mitigated by the presence of either a canonical or co-constructed question tag. This particular use and frequency of question tags might serve to index Irish intimate identity. Were other politeness strategies, such as, for example, indirectness used, this would instead signal unfamiliarity with this identity and may actually result in impoliteness on the part of a speaker.

## 4.2 Intimacy, identity and indexicality: The case of *we*

Another important pronomial index of Irish intimate identity is *we*. Mühlhäusler and Harré (1990) have shown that *we* is sufficiently flexible and multifunctional to encode any of the six persons that are usually referred to in English. Biber et al. (1999: 329) assert that “the meaning of the first person plural pronoun [*we*] is often vague: *we* usually refers to the speaker/writer and the addressee (inclusive *we*), or to the speaker/writer and some other person or persons associated with him/her (exclusive *we*). The intended reference can even vary in the same context.” Table 2 demonstrates that *we* is 30% more frequent in the BNC as it is in LINT. Clancy (2016) posits that intimate discourse is characterised by a spoken repertoire that does not include the frequent use of *we*. However, this is not to say that *we* remains unused in intimate discourse, and this point merits some consideration in relation to intimate identity. In fact, inclusive and exclusive *we* allows intimates to shift between a number of different identities on a number of different levels. In order to further examine the use of *we* to construct intimate identity, a random sample of 20 concordance lines was generated and these are presented in Figure 2.

N	Concordance
1	saying they owned this famous bagel factory . And <b>we were</b> away on this trip and they kept saying
2	+and we're all like this "Oh my fucking God" <b>cause we were</b> like famous <b>cause</b> Helena's from a little
3	them like . <\$2> well I remember now the night <b>that we were</b> cleaning up after emily's funeral lord
4	up to his house and all and met his ex-girlfriend. <b>We went</b> to all his favourite clubs and pubs and stuff
5	like Jesus <\$X> d'ya   do you <\$X> know like <b>if we thought</b> it <\$X> 'twas   it was <\$X> top secret .
6	any stand tickets? <\$1> I don't know that <b>now. We said</b> we'd get terrace . They were really
7	never woke us. Jimmy was like oh yea I forgot . <b>So we ran</b> down to the bus stop and didn't the two fat
8	a shit like , she doesn't even think of it anymore <b>like we never</b> talk about you like and I said it to her you
9	<\$4> <\$01> I know it was lovely <\$01> . <\$1> +<\$01> <b>we need</b> attentions <\$01> . <\$2> <\$01> Gee I'll tell
10	Shitty <\$E> television on in background <\$E> . <\$3> <b>We might</b> just have to go for a few drinks <\$E>
11	you lucky he didn't tell on ye. <\$1> Yeah but <b>shure we had</b> an excuse . <\$2> What was that? <\$1> We
12	I didn't speak to her now. She didn't say. <\$05> <b>We exchanged</b> a few words . <\$05> <\$4> <\$05> Well
13	. <\$3> But Trudy's a girls name like . <\$2> Yeah <b>b= we didn't</b> give her the name . <\$3> What? <\$2> <\$013>
14	you said the other night in the pub . <\$4> Oh yeah. <b>We crashed</b> at their house . <\$E> laughing <\$E> <\$2> I
15	we'd be the only people in the pub and then <b>when we come</b> out of the bathroom with full pints <\$E>
16	where all your photos are. <\$1> Oh okay and <b>what'll we call</b> it now? <\$3> Now there you are now so my
17	I know it's not at all. <\$2> And come here when <b>are we back</b> to college? <\$1> I have no idea . <\$2> I heard
18	now . <\$2> Are we all going in? <\$3> No how <b>would we all</b> go in? <\$2> Is that her house . Is that black
19	big problems . But there's six weeks to Korea <b>and we actually</b> have no training done . <\$4> We needed
20	in the night time we we give them a good bit <b>don't we?</b> <\$2> Yeah. <\$1> I suppose it wasn't too bad like

Figure 2: Random sample of 20 concordance lines with *we* as node word (sorted 1R).

Extract (4), the expanded context for line 13, demonstrates the use of *we* to construct intimate identity in family discourse. Earlier in the conversation, speaker 1 has been complaining about the name of the family dog, *Goldie*, and suggesting different names for her.

(4) [Context: Siblings chatting]

<\$1> But Goldie's a girl's name like.

<\$2> Yeah **b= we** didn't give her the name.

<\$1> What?

<\$2> <\$0> **We** didn't give her the name <\\$0>.

<\$3> <\$0> **We** didn't give her the name <\\$0>. Although she was so young she wouldn't notice it.

<\$1> She wouldn't have a clue shur.

<\$3> **We** could've changed it. **We** could call her am Alex.

<\$1> Shit for brains.

<\$2> Alex.

The other siblings use *we* (marked in bold) in the repeated utterance *We didn't give her the name* as a form of 'safety in numbers' defence to deflect the criticism of the dog's name from themselves. Mühlhäusler and Harré (1990: 174) claim that in this integrative use of *we*, "the social bonding aspect and the establishment of solidarity is of importance." The siblings create an in-group identity 'we the family' in opposition to the person or people who originally named the dog. They further strengthen this family group identity by claiming *We could've changed it* emphasising the power they had to change the dog's name had they chosen to. In intimate discourse, *we* can also function to identify other out-groups in contrast to the core in-group. In extract (5), the extended context for line 1 in Figure 2, three friends are chatting at a party about their experiences of food both at home and abroad.

(5) [Context: Friends chatting at a party]

- <\$4> Oh I know it's just I had dinner at my granny's yesterday and **we** had loads of homemade brown bread and it tasted lovely and she had this chicken casserole and she kept asking did anyone want more and everyone was like no no no. You just have to have dinner at my granny's. What will you have? Apple tart and cream? Rhubarb tart and cream? Or strawberries and cream? I was like I don't mind whatever you're having and she gives me a box and some Sunny D and I was like I'm just eating my dinner can I wait. Like she didn't sit down at all. She just kept making more tea.
- <\$3> Oh anytime **we** were at my granny's house **we** ate fists of scones. But remembering the time I was there I didn't really notice like. By the time **we** had left everyone was so stuffed it was not funny.
- <\$1> That's like me and the bagels over there. I'd ask what way can I get it done and they be like sour cream and all this shit and I'd be like I'll have a bit of butter and you know the way they don't eat butter the way **we** do here well they kept saying they owned this famous bagel factory. And **we** were away on this trip and they kept saying they'd bring us to this bagel factory and get loads of bagels to bring home. I said I didn't like bagels and they were all like what you know. And then **we** went and they were all telling me the strawberry ones were gorgeous or whatever but when **we** went I asked for a plain brown bagel toasted with a bit of butter. They were actually disgusted with me like do you know the way like I wouldn't accept it or you wouldn't accept it or=
- <\$4> But do you know the way **we** like our food? Well over there they like making huge different versions of it and I mean they love going out

for breakfast and they get really excited and the places they think you're going to love it and you know now if I get a fry I just want a fry but they get a fry with a waffle and a pancake and syrup around everything.

<\$3> Oh God.

<\$4> And I was actually sick watching these people eating like that.

<\$1> I can't understand that kind of thing like sweet stuff for breakfast.

<\$4> No and it's disgusting.

<\$1> It's not right.

In the first four instances of *we*, marked in bold, the participants are using an exclusive *we* to indicate a group that includes the speaker and others associated with them that does not include the addressees. The speakers do this in order to construct their identity as a member of a family group visiting their respective grandmothers' houses for dinner. Both speakers 3 and 4 connect this identity with the enjoyment of the food they eat on these occasions. Speaker 1 then introduces *over there* into the conversation in their first turn in the extract, which, it can be assumed, refers to a country other than Ireland. Speaker 1 uses *we* on four occasions in this turn. This *we* is again an exclusive *we*, the addressees do not appear to be included in the group, but it is uncertain as to whether speaker 1 is creating a family or friendship group identity in this instance. What is certain, is that on these occasions, *we* is connected with negative food experiences and it seems to be on the level of national identity. When speaker 1 claims *they don't eat butter the way we do here*, she seems to be taking a stance on food using *we* to identify herself on a macro-level as Irish – Irish people have butter on bagels, the people in the country she is visiting, do not. Speaker 4, again echoing speaker 1's use of *over there*, asks *But do you know the way we like our food?* This creates an inclusive *we* identity on two levels: *we* the participants in this conversation and also, perhaps, *we* the Irish people. This use of inclusive *we* creates a solidarity between the participants, evidenced by the other speakers' agreement with speaker 4, and this facilitates an identity where cultural differences are represented as normal and shared by many others. Therefore, in this extract it can be argued that there may be up to four different identities indexed through the use of *we* in the space of a short period of time (cf. Vaughan 2007; Handford 2014). This allows the participants to simultaneously assert their identity as both members of intimate groupings and members of the wider Irish society.

## 5 Conclusion

This study demonstrates the benefits of applying a corpus pragmatic approach to the study of linguistic identity, in particular the linguistic identity of Irish couples, families and close friends. The comparative raw frequency results when the LINT sub-corpus was compared to the spoken component of the BNC indicated that all pronouns are worthy of further examination. This chapter focussed in particular on the forms *he*, *she* and *we*; *he* and *she* were highlighted as more frequent in the LINT corpus, whereas *we* was shown to be less frequent in comparison with the BNC. It is argued that *he* and *she* are as important to the indexing of Irish intimate identity as *I* and *you* given that their role in the unfolding conversation allows intimates to continually invoke a repertoire of shared knowledge of non-present others that has evolved as the relationships between the conversational participants themselves has grown. Intimates have recourse to this wealth of knowledge in their dealings with one another and, therefore, can quickly build on already established solidarity through reference to this shared resource. In addition, *he* and *she* were also shown to cluster particularly frequently with the verbs *is* and *did* in order to form questions, a subset of which was shown to be question tags that occur in either a canonical or co-constructed format. Question tags have, to date, not received much research attention in the context of the variety Irish English (Barron 2015). However, in this chapter, they were shown to function both as other-orientated and pragmatic markers as part of intimates' interpersonal linguistic repertoire. It is argued that their habitual use, in tandem with the use of *he* and *she* as single items, constitute part of an Irish intimate linguistic identity. The pronoun *we*, on the other hand, was distinctive in that it occurred less frequently in LINT than in the BNC. *We*, however, is sufficiently flexible in its creation of different identities, as evidenced in the previous research afforded to it, that it could not be ignored in relation to intimate discourse. Although *we* is somewhat unnecessary, relatively speaking, at an intimate level as a device that quickly creates common bonds between speakers, it was nonetheless found to have a solidarity function at a macro-social level where speakers can use inclusive *we* to invoke, for example, national identity.

Obviously, the results presented here are not intended as categorical conclusions about the linguistic nature of Irish intimate identity, or indeed, intimate identity in general. The study deals with indexicality in its most elemental form, and, although style marking has also been referred to, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) have identified a range of other indexical processes whereby identity is constructed such as labelling, implicature, stance taking and code choice. All of these represent future opportunities for those interested in intimate identity. Furthermore, the

results are based on one corpus of intimate discourse. However, the LINT corpus, at approximately 600,000 words, is not a small spoken corpus by any means and, in comparison to other more abstract studies of identity, yields concrete, quantifiable findings that provide important potential linguistic patterns for comparison with similar corpora. This, synergised with the fast emerging corpus pragmatic analytical approach, offers much potential to the study of how identity is constructed at a number of different, though interconnected, levels.

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Shane Walshe

## 9 Salience and stereotypes: The construction of Irish identity in Irish jokes

### 1 Introduction

The Irish have long been the butt of jokes in the UK and the USA, with the humour often coming at the expense of stock characters named Pat, Mick, Bridget or Murphy. More often than not, the fact that these characters are Irish is indicated not only by their names or typical occupations as laborers, domestic servants or priests (Appel and Appel 1990), but also by the fact that their speech displays linguistic features which, rightly or wrongly, are associated with the Irish. These range from respellings that suggest Irish accents to morpho-syntactic, pragmatic or lexical features that are supposed to index Irishness, as in the following jokes from British and American anthologies:

- (1) “What a lovely healthy cow you have there, Farmer Kelly. I loike de colour of him, so I do.”  
“Yes, Finnigan. It’s a very expensive Jersey.”  
“Oh, pardon me den, I tought it was its skin.” (Cagney 1979: 18)
- (2) Mrs. McMilligan and Mrs. Conway were coming back from church.  
“Me son Jimmy’s comin’ home tomorra!” said Mrs. McMilligan.  
“That’s nice!” retorted Mrs. Conway. “But I thought he was sent up fer five years!”  
“He was that!” answered her companion, “but the lad got time off for good behavior!”  
“Oh my,” exclaimed Mrs. Conway, “it must be a blessin’ to you, to know you got such a fine son!” (Wilde 1974: 34)

Jokes like these, however, are not told only by outsiders, but also by the Irish themselves, who like to make jokes at their own expense and at that of their fellow countrymen, especially those from Kerry, Cork and Cavan.<sup>1</sup> Here, too,

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<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Davies argues that “[f]ar from being trapped in a single, fixed, and predetermined pattern of affiliation, and of reference groups or identification classes, an individual faced

linguistic features often contribute to characterisation, marking the speakers as generically Irish (example 3), or perhaps offering them a more local identity (example 4):

- (3) An Irish girl was working behind the counter at the Post Office when a man came in with a letter and asked for a first class stamp. The Irish girl gave the man the stamp and he asked, “Do I put this on myself?”  
 “No ya big eejit,” said the Irish girl. “Sure you stick it on the envelope.” (Adlam 2005: 81)
- (4) A Cork woman was visiting Dublin Zoo for the first time. One of the cages she stopped at was that of the kangaroo. Over the cage was a notice: *A native of Australia*.  
 “Holy mother of God,” she shrieked, “to think that me sister is married to one of dem tings.” (MacHale 2007: 21)

Given that Irish jokes such as these, whether published at home or abroad, sometimes indicate Irish identity by linguistic means, this chapter, in keeping with the focus of the volume, examines how this is done and how often. Taking a quantitative and qualitative approach, it compares the representations of the Irish in joke collections from North America, Britain and Ireland, thereby answering three main questions: 1) What proportion of Irish jokes indicate Irish speech via literary dialect? 2) Which features are most frequently employed to convey Irishness? and 3) Are there differences between the features used in books published for an Irish market and those for an international readership?

Before answering these questions, however, it is necessary to explore the connection between language and identity and to offer a brief overview of the *Irish Jokes Corpus* and of the features one could expect to find in the jokes.

## 2 Language and identity

The link between language and identity is hugely important, as attested by the increasing body of research on the topic (cf. Joseph 2004, Edwards 2009, Clark 2013, Evans 2015, Preece 2016). In his work on the matter, Joseph stresses that what one says, in terms of both form and content, is crucial in constructing

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with an ethnic joke about what appears to be his or her ‘own’ group can often manipulate the pattern in a creative way so as to become a sharer in the joke rather than a butt of it” (1990: 7).

one's identity: "It constitutes a text, not just of what the person says, but *of the person*, from which others will read and interpret the person's identity in the richest and most complex of ways" (2004: 225). Thus, a speaker who displays features associated with a particular national, regional, ethnic or social group will be regarded by others as having that identity. All that is required is a) the presence of salient features which reveal the speaker's origin and b) the ability of the listener (or reader in the case of literary dialect) to recognise those features and assign them to the correct language or variety. However, this is not always straightforward, as what is salient for one group may not be salient for another (cf. Hickey 2000: 59). For example, in Irish English (IrE), the "*after perfect*," i.e. the use of *after* and the continuous form of a verb in a perfective sense (e.g. "I am after losing my keys" meaning "I have just lost my keys"), is a feature that sets the variety apart from most other varieties of English and will therefore be noticeable to non-Irish people. For the Irish themselves, however, there is nothing striking about it, with Hickey's *A Survey of Irish English Usage* revealing that among informants "there was little if any awareness that the structure was non-standard" (2012: 108). Thus, although the "*after perfect*" may appear in Irish jokes published both at home and abroad, it is more likely to be employed as a linguistic stereotype to signal Irishness in books from outside Ireland (Hickey 2000: 59),<sup>2</sup> and as a perceived standard feature in Irish texts, where it is less salient. In the latter publications, in contrast, regional or antiquated features are more likely to carry salience, a notion echoed by Hickey, who comments, for example, on "the high awareness which native speakers have of lexical items which are archaic or typical of varieties more colloquial than the supra-regional one" (2000: 64). Thus, for jokes told in Ireland, local or old-fashioned features are likely to be used to give an Irish voice to characters.

Even when there is agreement, internationally and nationally, on what is salient to a variety, such as the sometime substitution of /d/ and /t/ for /ð/ and /θ/ in IrE<sup>3</sup> (examples 1 and 4 above), this does not mean that the use of this feature alone guarantees that those using it will be understood as being Irish. Evidence of this can be seen in a popular joke about a woman who gives birth to twins, a girl and a boy, and asks her brother to have them christened. She tells him to name the girl Denise and lets him choose a name for the boy. He returns and presents them proudly. "Here they are: Denise and Denephew."

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2 Moreover, the chances of the feature being used incorrectly are high in international publications since authors are less likely to have first-hand experience of acceptable contexts of use (Hickey 2000: 59).

3 Kallen calls this "the single most distinctive area of Irish English consonant phonology today" (2013: 50).

This joke, versions of which appear in the corpus both as a generic Irish gag (Hornby 1977: 67) and as a Cork one (MacHale 2007: 60), works because we recognise that many Irish people, and particularly those from Cork, pronounce /ð/ as /d/.<sup>4</sup> However, this pronunciation is not an exclusively Irish trait, as evidenced by the inclusion of a very similar joke in “Jewish-American Dialect Jokes and Jewish American Identity” (Brandes 1983: 235). There, it is an immigrant with a Yiddish accent whose pronunciation of /ð/ as /d/ is the butt of the joke. Thus, it is clear that a salient linguistic feature alone, particularly in isolation, is not enough to be able to narrow down identity to one ethnic or national group. Instead, it is best to see identity markers as a collection of salient features employed together in a unique fashion, echoing Ives’ definition of a dialect as “the use in one locality of speech traits that may be individually found somewhere else, but nowhere else in exactly the same combination” (1950: 152).<sup>5</sup> This chapter aims to discover exactly what this combination of features is and to see whether that particular mix is similar for Irish jokes published at home and abroad.

### 3 Previous research

Irish jokes belong to a genre known as ethnic humour, whereby “ethnic” “tends to be used in a broad way about a group that sees itself and is seen by others as a ‘people’ with a common cultural tradition, a real or imagined common descent, and a distinctive identity” (Davies 1990: 1).<sup>6</sup> Although there has been a large body of research on such humour, much of it focuses on the

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<sup>4</sup> The effectiveness of linguistic representations at conveying national identity is arguably less important when the jokes all appear together in a collection labelled “Irish Jokes” or something similar, or where the character who is speaking is named Mulligan or Murphy. The same onus is not on the reader to identify the speaker based on linguistic features alone as would be the case if the joke were to appear in isolation or the speaker were not named.

<sup>5</sup> This echoes Clark’s observation on the link between language and identity: “Notions of identity, therefore, as expressed through language, are manifested through a complex process of individuals or communities selecting characteristics of a language that together comprise a unique set of features through which identity can be expressed” (2013: 8).

<sup>6</sup> Davies adds that the judgement of what constitutes an ethnic group “is usually related to objective factors such as territory or language, though both of these may relate to the group’s past, and to the life led by its members’ ancestors rather than today’s members” (1990: 1). This point is important concerning, for example, the perception of Irish Americans as Irish. In many jokes, Irish Americans are given the speech features of their ancestors rather than those that they themselves would use today.

similarities of ethnic jokes worldwide (Davies 1990; 1998; 2002) and on the types of jokes made about particular ethnic groups (Davies 1998; 2010). Relatively little investigation, in contrast, has been conducted into (literary) dialect in such humour. Several studies, however, proved influential for the current chapter and are outlined briefly below.

Barron (1950), for example, compares the representation of African Americans, Jews and the Irish in US anthologies of jokes from the mid-1940s. Using a taxonomy that divides the jokes into categories such as dialect, theme, proper names, sex, occupations, and intergroup or intragroup composition, he discovers numerous similarities between the ways that the ethnic groups are portrayed. Although Barron, a sociologist, does not conduct any detailed linguistic analysis, the fact that he finds dialect represented in, on average, 80% of all jokes (1950: 90) suggests that linguistic features were important in indexing Irish, Jewish and Black identities at the time. Thus, his study offers a useful point of comparison regarding the first question posed in this study, namely what proportion of Irish jokes employ literary dialect to reflect Irish identity?

The importance of linguistic difference in indicating identity in ethnic jokes is also discussed in Davies (1987). He notes that, besides its primary function of helping to determine the identity of the joke tellers and the butts of their jokes (see examples 1 to 4 above, where respellings suggest the speakers' Irish accents), literary dialect can also shape the content and structure of the jokes (as in the accent-related wordplay on which the aforementioned Denise and Denephew joke hinges). Of particular interest to the current study is his claim that "[e]thnic jokes about the Irish in Britain (and in the past also in the United States) are much more directly tied to particular differences in the way the Irish speak English. An English joke-teller telling an ethnic joke about the Irish will often put on an 'Irish accent' or even a variety of different Irish accents. The distinctive sound of the Irish brogue and the use of characteristic Irish phrases are the basis of many British ethnic jokes about the Irish" (48). Thus, it will be interesting to see whether these observations, and particularly the supposed contrast between British and (contemporary) American jokes regarding their indication of Irish accent, will be reflected in the *Irish Jokes Corpus*.

The importance of accent is also addressed in Macaulay's (1987) study of the portrayal of Scottish dialect in Scottish humour. He stresses that jokes which require the indication of accent "may be very badly performed and still get the point across, since the intention is not to provide an accurate representation of the speech variety but rather to evoke stereotypes" (55). This notion of linguistic stereotypes will be important for the current study, particularly when examining the types of features used to index Irish identity in the jokes. Moreover, Macaulay notes that dialect humour relies on the ability of the

audience to co-create meaning through their awareness of the social significance of dialect features, an idea that is also addressed in Moore's (2011) research on Irish speech in the *Overheard in Dublin* series of books, which gather humorous exchanges overheard in Dublin city. Although Moore focuses less on the linguistic features used to indicate Dublin identity than on the structure of the jokes, he does stress the importance of the "directly quoted speech saturated with identity-revealing (phonological and lexical) shibboleths, indexed through deviant spellings," (233) and, like Macaulay, he highlights the significance of local knowledge for understanding the jokes, claiming that the local allusions are often so dense that the jokes are "often literally not funny except in Dublin" (232). These observations will be useful when analysing the regional Irish joke books, in particular, and the features included therein.

Needless to say, the many works that have looked at the representation of Irish speech in literature, television, film, comics and radio (e.g. Hickey 2007; Amador-Moreno 2006, 2010, 2015; Connell 2014; Walshe 2009, 2012; O'Sullivan and Kelly-Holmes 2017) were also important for this study as they indicate the types of features traditionally used to give characters an Irish identity and which could be expected to occur in Irish jokes. For example, in an examination of IrE pronunciation as represented in writing, Hickey lists the following features which one could reasonably expect to find: TH-fortition (<tank> for <thank>), T/D-dentalisation (<dhrup> for <drop>), S-palatalisation (<wesht> for <west>), post-sonorant devoicing (<kilt> for <killed>), post-sonorant stop deletion (<poun'> for <pound>), short E-raising (<gintleman> for <gentleman>), OL-diphthongisation (<ould> for <old>), unraised long E (<mate> for <meat>), long I-retention (<me> for <my>), and final-O-fronting or reduction to schwa (<folly> for <follow> and <fella> for <fellow>) (2007: 304–306). To that list, one can add another feature which has traditionally been one of "a repertoire of stock features which were generally assumed to be representative of Irish English," namely <oi> to suggest [əɪ], as in *Oirish* and *Oirland* (Hickey 2007: 301). Thus, even if Hickey concedes that some IrE features can only be conveyed with difficulty (2007: 11),<sup>7</sup> there are still plenty of ways in which Irish accents can be evoked via literary dialect.

Morphosyntactic structures which would be likely to appear in the jokes due to their frequency in literary representations of IrE can be found, for example, in Connell's 2014 study of the most common features in 50 Irish plays produced by the Abbey Theatre between 1902 and 2002. They include: non-standard use of

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<sup>7</sup> Features which would be difficult to indicate via respellings include *t*-lenition and the use of clear /l/.

the definite article, *it*-clefting, subordinating *and*, second person plural pronouns, left dislocation, non-standard subject-verb concord, lack of *do* support, and non-auxiliary contracted *have* (118–119). Moreover, one could expect representations of Irish speech to include the aforementioned “*after perfect*,” which is regarded as the most typical IrE feature, and, indeed, is cited by Amador-Moreno as being “the most widely used to portray Irish characters in fiction” (2010: 38).

Regarding lexical features associated with the Irish, one could anticipate words of Gaelic origin, such as *amadán* (fool) or *poitín* (an illicit spirit), as well as terms whose scope in IrE goes beyond the original standard English meaning, such as *grand* (which means “fine” or “lovely,” rather than “displaying grandeur”) (Hickey 2007: 363), or the quasi-lexicalised phrase *your man*, which does not refer to one’s male partner, but rather to any male who is currently being talked about, often with a distancing effect (Hickey 2007: 363). Other lexical items likely to appear due to their frequency in representations of Irish speech in comics and films (Walshe 2009, Walshe 2012 and Walshe 2017) include the following descriptors or terms of address: *boyo*, *bucko*, *lad*, *eejit*, *mammy*, *ma* and *da*.

Finally, pragmatic features that could be expected due to their prominence in fictional representations of IrE are *sure*, *arra*, *musha*, *yerra*, *ach*, as well as religious exclamations and euphemisms thereof (cf. Walshe 2009; Amador-Moreno 2006; O’Sullivan and Kelly-Holmes 2017). More recent representations of Irish speech in fiction have also noted the predominance of *like* as a pragmatic marker (cf. Amador-Moreno 2015).

## 4 Corpus

The *Irish Jokes Corpus* was compiled by the author and, in its current form, consists of material from dozens of Irish joke books published worldwide over the last 50 years. When complete, it will also comprise jokes from the early twentieth century, as well as texts dating back to the first Irish joke book, *Bogg-Witticisms: Or, Dear Joy’s Common-Places*, from 1682, thereby permitting diachronic and synchronic studies of the representation of Irish speech in joke collections from North America, Britain and Ireland. For the current study, however, the focus is on 40 joke books published between 1968 and 2016, with the majority coming from the 1970s and 1980s when there was a boom in ethnic humour worldwide (cf. Davies 1990). Half of these texts comprise the “international component” of the corpus, consisting of Irish jokes originally published in Britain or North America. The other half comprises the “national component,” featuring material originally published in Ireland, which is subdivided

into general Irish jokes and those about people from different parts of the country (including Galway, Cavan, Cork, Tipperary, Donegal and Dublin), which, together, offer a composite of how Irish speech is represented in Irish publications.<sup>8</sup>

The idea behind dividing the corpus into these subcomponents is that one can examine whether views of what constitutes Irish identity differ nationally and internationally. This is important because, as noted above, what is salient for one group may be non-salient for another. Moreover, the reason for grouping the books according to their place of publication rather than the origin of their authors is that, in keeping with Bell's concept of audience design, the jokes are likely to be tailored to their potential readership. Therefore, books published in Ireland are primarily aimed at Irish readers and, consequently, less likely to employ the types of linguistic stereotypes associated with the Irish in North America and Britain.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, expressions found in publications from outside Ireland are more likely to contain linguistic features that readers in those countries associate with the Irish rather than the types of local Irish features mentioned above. These may include actual IrE features which are salient to them or linguistic stereotypes that once existed and have been handed down. Indeed, Hickey argues that such stereotypes persist as they need not be encountered first hand, but are simply "part of the inherited knowledge of features which are putatively typical for a certain variety" (2000: 58). This is how linguistic stereotypes such as *faith and begorrah* and *top o' the mornin'* are so pervasive, even though they are not encountered in actual Irish speech.

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**8** Since IrE is an umbrella term for varieties of English spoken on the island of Ireland (cf. Hickey 2007: 5), books published in Belfast, for example, are placed in the national component, even if, politically, Belfast is in the UK. The assumption is that books published in Northern Ireland primarily target the local speech community and thus better reflect what are regarded locally as features of IrE. This is evident in the many local features that occur in those publications but not in the international ones, such as *thon*, *piggin'*, *Boys-a-dear* and *Taig* (Hill 1987).

**9** This notion can also be seen in the enregisterment and commodification (cf. Agha 2003; Beal 2009; Johnstone 2009) of IrE in Ireland today. For example, a series of popular magnets, mugs, door signs and other merchandise by Avokado and Co. currently on sale in Ireland capitalises on cultural references and turns of phrase that would be familiar to Irish audiences ("How's she cuttin'?", "Who's your man when he's at home?", "Just cop on", "Some gobshite alright"), but would not mean anything to outsiders. While outsiders may buy these products, the intended audience is first and foremost Irish people. Indeed, the company's website boasts that "We are Irish" and that the "fun authentic signs" on sale there "capture our expressions and identity," so much so that these are "signs we would buy ourselves." These links between language, identity and authenticity are important. With their familiar local expressions, these products are marked as being by the people and for the people, not the type of pseudo-Irish merchandise that one might find, say, in America around St. Patrick's Day (or, cringe, St. Patty's Day).

Since the analysis focuses on the representation of Irish speech in jokes, only those containing direct speech were selected for analysis.<sup>10</sup> Thus, some material in the books was ignored, leaving no room for gags without direct speech, or for humorous proverbs, limericks, newspaper notices, signs, and other material that is often included in these collections. Similarly, because the study focuses on the representation of Irish speech as a fictional construct, humorous quotations or quips from real people (e.g. Oscar Wilde and Brendan Behan) were not included in the analysis. Finally, no distinction was made between the speech of characters who were likely to have been born and raised in Ireland and, for example, Irish Americans, who sometimes appear in US publications. Although in real life, Irish Americans, particularly those of later generations, clearly speak differently to their cousins in the Old Country, the authors of the jokes label them all the same, namely as “Irish,” and, curiously, attribute largely the same linguistic features to them.

Although only jokes containing direct speech were included, not all of these employed literary dialect to suggest Irishness. Indeed, many “Irish” jokes just employed an Irish name for the protagonist or placed them in an Irish location, but contained speech that was perfectly standard, as in example 5. Such jokes were ultimately excluded from the analysis.

- (5) A woman telephoned an airline office in Dublin and asked, “How long does it take to fly to London?”  
 The clerk said, “Just a minute.”  
 “Thank you,” the woman said as she hung up. (Mr “O” 1993: 54)

In contrast, jokes containing non-standard features, whether canonically Irish or not, were included in the analysis. An inventory of these features was compiled while consulting the joke collections, including not only typical features of IrE as identified in the literature (e.g. respellings of <s> as <sh>, occurrences of the “*after perfect*”),<sup>11</sup> but also non-standard spelling or non-standard

**10** Some books (e.g. Millar and Keane 1994 and Healy 1977) include jokes in which the narration is very oral in nature, displaying numerous IrE features (*your man, says I*, etc.). However, while such narration would merit further study concerning its use of Bakhtin’s notion of double-voiced discourse (1981), for the current study and to ease comparison across the corpus, the focus is solely on direct speech.

**11** While S-palatalisation, i.e. the representation of <s> as <sh>, is an acknowledged feature of IrE (Hickey 2007: 304), not all such respellings are supposed to indicate an Irish accent. In many jokes, such palatalisation is meant to indicate the slurred speech of drunken characters. Thus, whenever the characters were identified as drunk, the feature was regarded as a reflection of their drunkenness and not of their Irishness.

grammar features in general. What was important at this stage was simply to establish a catalogue of features which appeared in the jokes and which authors believed to signify Irishness, regardless of whether they actually do so. Ultimately, the list amounted to around 350 features which appeared with varying degrees of frequency, with lexical items, such as *mott*, *spalpeen*, *forienst*, *yoke*, *poltroon* and *gobaloon*, comprising the bulk of features which occurred only once.

Once the inventory had been compiled, it was possible to search for the features in the corpus. Since the aim was to discover which characteristics of Irish speech one was most likely to encounter in any given joke, the features were counted once per joke to avoid numerous repetitions in one joke from skewing the overall frequency in the corpus. For example, the respelling of <my> as <me> is counted once rather than four times in the following:

- (6) Phelps was telling his cousin of a narrow escape during the war.  
 “The bullet went in **me** chest and came out **me** back,” explained Phelps.  
 “But,” said his relative, “it’d go through your heart and kill you!”  
 “Oh, no!” said Phelps. “**Me** heart was in **me** mouth!” (Wilde 1979: 69)

After the findings for each feature had been noted, they were ranked by their median frequency. This was done both for the whole corpus and for the individual subcomponents, so that a comparison could be made of the most typical features in each one (see Table 2). Using the median for these calculations rather than the mean further ensured that outliers would not skew the findings unduly.

## 5 Findings

When one looks at the overall findings from the *Irish Jokes Corpus*, the first thing that becomes clear is that the percentage of jokes containing Irish dialect features is considerably lower than that noted by Barron (1950) in his study of similar jokes from the 1940s. Whereas he found that 79.5% of Irish jokes in US publications from that period contained dialect features, that figure is down to 38.25% for similar texts from the 1970s onwards. The rate is also much lower for Irish jokes published in Britain (26.23%) and even lower again for the two types of publications from Ireland (20.24% and 13.46% respectively). Although joke books from the early twentieth century have not yet been digitized and entered into the *Irish Jokes Corpus* and are thus not treated in this study, a glance at them suggests similar findings to Barron’s, with almost all jokes from that

period (irrespective of whether they are from Ireland, North America or Britain) displaying multiple features of IrE, particularly phonological ones. Thus, as a first finding, one can speak of a decline in the degree to which Irish speech is indicated in Irish jokes over time. This corresponds to a trend identified by Evans Davies concerning ethnic jokes generally, namely that heightened sensitivity has led to a decline in the representation of dialects in ethnic humour and, particularly, to “a decrease in non-in-group dialect humor” (2014: 203).

In addition to representations of Irish speech being rarer in recent decades than in the past, there are differences in their distribution across the international and national components, with books published abroad more likely to include representations of Irish speech than those published in Ireland. Indeed, 29.85% of the jokes in international publications employed literary dialect to index Irish identity, compared with 20.15% of those in national publications. When these figures are examined further, they show that North American publications are most likely to indicate Irish speech (38.25%), while books dedicated to Irish regions are least likely to employ this strategy (13.46%). These findings can be seen in detail in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Jokes broken down according to origin, use of direct speech and indication of dialect.

	North America	Great Britain	Ireland (General)	Ireland (Regional)	Total
Jokes in total	1,666	5,649	2,906	1,953	12,174
Jokes with direct speech	1,252 (75.15%)	2,901 (51.35%)	2,060 (70.88%)	1,305 (66.82%)	7,518 (61.75%)
Jokes with direct speech indicating dialect	479 (38.25%)	761 (26.23%)	415 (20.14%)	263 (13.46%)	1,918 (25.51%)

Despite these differences in the percentage of dialect features used in joke books from the different countries, when it comes to the features that are used to index Irishness, there is actually a good degree of similarity across all four components, with most of the Top 15 features occurring in all of them and often in a similar order. Indeed, the most frequent feature, the respelling of <my> as <me> (see examples 2, 4 and 6), proves to be the quintessential marker of Irishness, topping the list in all four components. This finding and the other most common features are presented in Table 2, with the Top 10 explained in more detail and with examples below.

**Table 2:** Most common features used to index Irish identity across the individual components and the entire corpus.

	North America	Great Britain	Ireland	Ireland (Regions)	Entire Corpus
1	<me> for <my>	<me> for <my>	<me> for <my>	<me> for <my>	<me> for <my>
2	<-in'> for <-ing>	<-in'> for <-ing>	<i>Sure</i>	Lack of <i>do</i> support	<i>Sure</i>
3	Religious euphemisms	Redundancy (+ <i>indeed</i> )	Non-standard definite article	<i>Sure</i>	<-in'> for <-ing>
4	<i>Sure</i>	Religious euphemisms	Lack of <i>do</i> support	Non-standard definite article	<ye> for <you> (singular)
5	Religious expressions	<i>Sure</i>	Redundancy (+ <i>indeed</i> )	Redundancy (+ <i>indeed</i> )	Redundancy (+ <i>indeed</i> )
6	<ye> for <you> (singular)	Religious expressions	Religious expressions	Religious expressions	Lack of <i>do</i> support
7	<'Tis> for <it is> <'Twas> for <it was> etc.	<ye> for <you> (singular)	Religious euphemisms	<i>Them</i> as demonstrative	Religious euphemisms
8	<yer> for <your>	Lack of <i>do</i> support	Lack of subject-verb agreement	<i>Oul/ould</i>	Religious expressions
9	<an'> for <and>	Non-standard definite article	Overuse of progressive	Omission of relative pronoun	Non-standard definite article
10	Overuse of progressive	Overuse of progressive	<i>fella</i>	Religious euphemisms	Lack of subject-verb agreement
11	Redundancy (+ <i>indeed</i> )	Redundancy (+ <i>that</i> )	<-in'> for <-ing>	Lack of subject-verb agreement	Overuse of progressive
12	Non-standard definite article	<t> for <th>	<i>Da</i>	<-in'> for <-ing>	<i>It</i> clefting
13	<i>lad</i>	<i>Ma</i>	Multiple negation	<ye> for <you> (singular)	<oi> for <i>
14	<i>fella</i>	<'Tis> for <it is> <'Twas> for <it was> etc.	Adjective for adverb	Overuse of progressive	<d> for <th>
15	<i>after</i> perfect	<i>It</i> clefting	<ye> for <you> (singular)	<i>It</i> clefting	<'Tis> for <it is> <'Twas> for <it was> etc.

## 5.1 <me> for <my>

As noted above, the most common feature in the portrayal of Irishness is the re-spelling of <my> as <me> (see examples 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 15 and 16). Although this retention of the long I (cf. Hickey 2007: 304) can occur in other contexts, such as in <be> for <by> (cf. the religious euphemisms *Begod* and *Bejapers* below), <me> for <my> was by far the most common context. Indeed, in IrE, this realisation has become so entrenched that it is even said to be “the lexicalised vernacular pronunciation of the first person possessive adjective” (Binelli 2010: 52). Accordingly, it was ranked separately from other examples of long I retention, such as the aforementioned <be> for <by> or <meself> for <myself>. Nevertheless, despite being ranked separately, <me> for <my> still occurred in sufficient quantities to top the list of all features in the corpus. There could be several reasons for this. One is that, although the feature also occurs in other varieties of English, it has been shown to extend much further up the social scale in Ireland than in England (Wells 1982: 428), thereby giving it greater salience. Similarly, its aforementioned lexicalised status gives it even more prominence, as lexical items typically enjoy “a high degree of awareness” (Hickey 2000: 59) and thus are more likely to act as identity markers, which appears to be the case here.

## 5.2 Sure

The second most common feature across all components of the corpus is the pragmatic marker *sure*, which has long been regarded as the most distinctive pragmatic marker in IrE (cf. Amador-Moreno and McCafferty 2015: 282). Sometimes spelled <shure> and pronounced [ʃʌr], *sure* is very versatile and can occur in various positions, namely utterance initial, phrasal, internal to the utterance, utterance final and at the head of utterance tags (cf. Kallen 2013: 197–98). However, corpus studies (Amador-Moreno and McCafferty 2015 and Kallen 2013) have shown it to be most common in initial position, which also applies to the Jokes Corpus. Moreover, the international components of the corpus frequently couple it with *and*, as in “*Sure and . . .*,” something that was also noticeable in Walshe’s comics corpora (2013: 25). In terms of its function, *sure* is also varied. It generally serves as an appeal for consensus, but Amador-Moreno and McCafferty (2015: 280) acknowledge its role as a mitigator in “downplaying the reprimanding tone” of a statement, as in example 3 above, while Walshe notes its ability to suggest contrast (2009: 121). In example 7, it is used synonymously with *well*:

- (7) “My new wellies are hurtin’ me.”  
 “But you’ve got them on the wrong feet.”  
 “**Sure**, they’re the only feet I have.” (Murtie 1985: 48)

### 5.3 <-in’> for <-ing>

The next most frequent feature is the respelling of words ending in <-ing> with <-in’> to reflect the realisation of the velar nasal /ŋ/ as the alveolar /n/ (see examples 2 and 7). This particular realisation has long been acknowledged in scholarship on IrE, with Bliss, for example, noting that “the present participle ending *-ing* is generally pronounced /ən/” (1984: 145). Although “g-dropping” like this is by no means exclusive to IrE and indeed is a common feature of spoken English worldwide, its associations with Irish speech, particularly from an international perspective (Wells 1982: 427), should not be overlooked. Walshe’s studies of the speech of Irish superheroes in DC and Marvel comics, for example, found that this feature was used more frequently by Irish characters than by their international peers (2013: 95). This was reflected in the general trend in those publications of having Irish speech contain more allegro speech features – including elision (<o’> for <of>) and respellings to reflect weak forms (<an’> for <and>) – than that of non-Irish characters (Walshe 2013: 103). The high frequency of such allegro speech features could be intended to reflect what Hickey calls “a degree of indistinctiveness about southern Irish English, probably due to the amount of elision and assimilation found in the variety” (2007: 11). This notion is substantiated in the joke books (see Table 2), where the share of allegro speech features is greater in books published abroad, suggesting that for international audiences, in particular, Irish identity is associated with fast, indistinct speech.<sup>12</sup>

Returning to the feature at hand, namely the spelling of <-ing> as <-in’>, one can see that this substitution is also more frequent in the international component than in the national one. A reason for this, besides the aforementioned international perception of Irish speech as being faster and less distinct, is that, again particularly in the international publications, Irish characters are more likely to use the progressive form in non-standard ways. Although non-standard

<sup>12</sup> This view was confirmed in Walshe’s 2010 perceptual dialectological study “Separating the Irish from the Oirish.” When asked to describe features they typically associate with Irish speech, native speakers of English from Canada, the USA, Australia and the UK tended to mention Irish people’s quick speech and lack of clarity as being defining features of the variety.

usage like this can occur in IrE, particularly with stative verbs such as *want* and *need* (Filppula 2004: 76–78), it is often taken to extremes by international authors. Thus, if *g*-dropping is likely to occur wherever the *-ing* form of verbs appears, then the more of those contexts that arise through overuse of the progressive, the more likely the number of respellings of <-in> for <-ing> will be in the corpus.<sup>13</sup> Such overuse of the progressive and the associated *g*-dropping can be seen in the following:

- (8) “Me mother-in-law’s gone to her final reward,” said Donnegan to the bar-keep in Tamney’s Tavern, “and it’s a twenty spot I’m needin’ for a wreath. Could you be advancin’ me the twenty?”

The bartender emptied his pockets and the cash register, but the total came to only \$18.30.

“That’ll do,” said Donnegan quickly. “I’ll take the \$1.70 in drinks!”

(Wilde 1974: 48)

Incidentally, the importance of respelling <-ing> as <-in> becomes clear in instances where the alveolar realisation is necessary for the punchline of the joke, as in the following:

- (9) A man with a giraffe walked into a pub. They drank all afternoon, until around six o’clock, when the giraffe collapsed on the floor. Then his drinking partner staggered towards the door.

“Hey,” said the barman, “don’t leave that lying there.”

The man turned. “That’s not a lion. It’s a giraffe.” (Boyle 1997: 61)

This joke, published in Ireland, relies on the homophonous relationship between <lyin> and <lion> for its humour (cf. Wells 1982: 427). However, by neglecting to actually indicate *g*-dropping in *lying*, the author undermines the effectiveness of the joke, unless, that is, she already counts on Irish readers implicitly *g*-dropping whenever they see <-ing>.

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<sup>13</sup> The term *darlin’* also appears frequently in American publications, reflecting a finding for Irish characters in Marvel comics, where it was the fifth most frequent feature in the corpus (Walshe 2012: 285). Below is an example, with *darlin’* preceded by the non-standard use of the definite article, which was also amongst the most common features of the Irish Jokes Corpus (cf. section 5.8). “Mrs. O’Skelly,” said the landlord, “I’ve decided to raise your rent.” “Ah, now,” beamed Mrs. O’Skelly. “It’s the darlin’ ye certainly are. I was wonderin’ how I could raise it meself” (Wilde 1979: 64).

## 5.4 <ye> for <you>

The frequent appearance of *ye* for *you* in so many Irish jokes will not be surprising for anyone familiar with IrE. What may be surprising, however, is that <ye> here is not the distinctive second person plural pronoun (often pronounced [ji]) that is common in the variety (Hickey 2007: 238), but rather a representation of the pronunciation of the weak form of *you* singular, [jə], sometimes also written as <ya>.<sup>14</sup> The appearance of this feature among the most common ones of the corpus is largely attributed to the high volume of examples in the international component, and especially the North American part. This is to be expected given the ubiquity of the supposed Irish greeting “Top o’ the mornin’ to ye!” in American popular culture, where *you* (singular) is frequently respelled as <ye>. The use of *ye* in the jokes can be seen in the following:

- (10) There was an accident at the construction site. Coughlan ran to where Mooney lay in a pile of rubble.  
 “Are ye dead after such a nasty fall?” he said.  
 “That I am indeed,” said Mooney.  
 “Faith and you’re such a liar I don’t know if to believe you or not, bejabbers.”  
 “That proves I’m dead, ye idjit!” said Mooney, raising himself. “If I wuz alive you’d not be callin’ me a liar to me dead face.” (Wilde 1983: 124)

## 5.5 Redundancy (+ *indeed*)

The tendency for Irish speech to include redundant information was already noted over a century ago by Joyce, who wrote that, “We hardly ever confine ourselves to the simple English *yes* or *no*; we always answer by a statement. ‘Is it raining, Kitty?’ ‘Oh no sir, it isn’t raining at all.’ ‘Are you going to the fair today?’ ‘No indeed I am not’ (1910: 130). Redundancy of this nature, particularly accompanied by *indeed*, as in Joyce’s second example, proved to be very conspicuous when compiling the Jokes Corpus.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, rather than looking at

<sup>14</sup> The fact that these are intended to be *you* (singular) becomes clear from the contexts of the jokes, where an individual is being addressed.

<sup>15</sup> Redundancy accompanied by the emphatic use of *that* for reiteration or assertion (cf. Amador-Moreno 2006: 149) was also common in the Jokes Corpus (see examples 2 and 10). Other examples include: “Tell me,” he asked, “have you ever had this rash before?” “I have that,” said the man. “Ah,” diagnosed the doctor with shrewd professionalism, “you have it

all responses to *yes/no* questions for redundancy, those with *indeed* were examined and found to be common both in national and international publications. Examples include:

- (11) A lady hired a Kerryman to look after her goldfish. One day she asked him if he had changed the water in the goldfish bowl.  
 “Indeed I haven’t,” he replied. “They didn’t drink what I gave them last week.”  
 (MacHale 1976: 24)
- (12) “That’s a lovely suit you’re wearing, Brendan.”  
 “Yes, it was a surprise present from the missus.”  
 “A surprise, was it?”  
 “Indeed it was. I came home early one night and found it lying on the bed.”  
 (Murtie 1985: 34)

## 5.6 The lack of *do* support

The lack of *do* support also occurs frequently across all components of the corpus. This structure does not require the auxiliary *do* when forming the interrogative with *have* or when marking negation (cf. Hickey 2004: 126). Moreover, unlike in other varieties where the omission of *do* support is compensated for by the addition of *got*, this is not the case in IrE. Examples can be seen in the following:

- (13) Murphy was not feeling too well, the doctor told him, he’d have to sleep in the open, so he got a job in the police force. The first day he was on duty, he saw a car coming towards him, he put up his hand and said, “Halt, and, Stop as well.”  
 He said to the fella, “Have you a driving licence?”  
 The fella said, “I have.”  
 Murphy said, “It’s a good job you have, because if you hadn’t I’d want to see it.”  
 (Ginnity 1990: 36)

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again so” (Butler 1970: 14), and “Are you looking for a job, Murphy?” “That I am.” “Can you work with a wheelbarrow?” “Oh, no – I know nothin’ about machinery” (Murtie 1985: 118).

- (14) Two little Cork brothers were always late for school, one of them always fifteen minutes later than the other. So one day the teacher decided to ask them why.

“I had to eat a boiled egg for my breakfast, sir,” said the first young lad.

“And why were you late?” he asked the second lad.

“I had to eat a boiled egg for my breakfast too, sir.”

“But why were you fifteen minutes later than your brother?”

“Had I a spoon, had I?”

(MacHale 2007: 55)

Although the feature occurred prominently across all components of the corpus, it was most frequent in the national material and thus reflected Connell’s findings, as it was also one of the most indicative features of Irish speech in Irish drama. While the high frequency can possibly be attributed to writers’ knowledge of its use among Irish people, it could equally be evidence of their lack of awareness of this being a non-standard feature, particularly since the structure regularly appears in Irish journalism and even on official signs in Dublin airport asking “Have you your luggage?”.

## 5.7 Religious expressions and religious euphemisms

Religious expressions have long been associated with Irish speech. Indeed, as far back as in 1610, Camden said of the Irish that

[a]t every third word it is ordinary with them to lash out with an oth, namely by the Trinity, by God, by S. Patrick, by S. Brigid, by their Baptisme, by Faith, by the Church, by my God-fathers hand, and by thy hand.

(Camden 1610: II, 145)

Even today, the practice is very common, with IrE displaying a larger and more varied use of religious expressions than other varieties (cf. Farr and Murphy, 2009; Walshe, 2009: 129–37; Amador-Moreno, 2010: 69–70). Thus, it is not surprising to find numerous religious expressions throughout the *Irish Jokes Corpus* (see examples 4 and 10), where they typically occur in initial position and serve as pragmatic markers to express excitement, surprise, shock, anger, impatience, and other emotions. Examples include: *Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Lord bless us and save us, Glory be to God, Holy St. Patrick, Saints preserve us, Mother of God, Praise be to God, In the name of Saint Bridget, By the Holy Saints of Clonmacnoise* and many more. Besides expressions which overtly mention God, Mary, or specific saints, there are numerous euphemistic ones which omit or distort the sacred names. These include: *Glory be, Jaysus, Bejapers/ Bejabers/ Bejabbers/ Bejeepers/ Bejasus/ Bejaysus* (all euphemistic forms of *by Jesus*), and *Begorra* (a euphemism

for *by God*). Interestingly, the euphemistic forms outnumber the overtly religious ones in publications from outside Ireland, and vice versa, perhaps reflecting Farr and Murphy's (2009) finding that the use of religious expressions is not regarded as blasphemous by most Irish people, thus explaining their likelihood to use them and find them acceptable in print.

## 5.8 Non-standard use of the definite article

The non-standard use of the definite article has long been attested in IrE and is described by Filppula as “perhaps the most notable feature of the IrE noun phrase” (2004: 90). It was also one of the most prominent features in both Connell's corpus of IrE speech in drama (2014: 118–119) and in Walshe's corpus of IrE in film (2009: 119). One likely reason for its high frequency is its great versatility since IrE permits the use of the definite article in cases that one would not find it in Standard English. Indeed, Filppula (1999: 56) describes seventeen contexts in which it can occur. The most frequent of these in the Jokes Corpus are with names of members of the family (*the brother, the wife, the mis-sus*), with names of diseases and ailments (*the arthritis, the gonorrhoea, the foot and mouth disease*), and with non-count abstract nouns and concrete mass nouns (*the drink, the golf*). Such non-standard uses of the definite article can be seen in example 12 above and in example 15 below.

- (15) Sean O'Shian died. The wake was held in the house and the neighbors for miles around came to pay their respects. After the mourners had spoken to his mother, the eldest son noticed they seemed shocked at whatever his mother said, so he decided to listen in to the next conversation.
- “Och I'm so sorry for your trouble. He was a fine man,” he heard a neighbor say to his mother, “And what did he die of?”
- “He died of the gonorrhea,” she said.
- The eldest son hurriedly approached his mother and said, “Mother! Me da didn't die of the gonorrhea like you are saying. He died of the diarrhoea – a different thing altogether.”
- “Sure I know the difference, son,” she said, “but I'd rather your da was remembered as a bit of a sporting gentleman, instead of the auld shit he really was.”
- (O'Callaghan 1992: 26)

## 5.9 Lack of subject verb agreement

The last of the Top 10 most frequent features is the lack of subject-verb agreement. Again, this feature is not exclusive to IrE, but certainly appears prominently in Irish publications. This finding is also in keeping with those from Walshe's film corpus (2009: 119) and Connell's drama corpus (2014: 118–119), where non-standard subject-verb concord was one of the most common features. The following joke includes cases of “I goes” and “I knows”.

- (16) “I met this wan at a dance last week,” said Billo, “a real posh one. I asked her could I drive her home, and when we got to her flat she asked me in for a cup of coffee. Well coffee wasn't much in me line, but I thought there might be a hope that she'd have an oul' bottle somewhere, so in I goes. Yerra man, we weren't sitting down when she ups and says, ‘I'm going to get into a negliggy and relax’. I didn't know what she was talking about but in a halfa minute she comes in in a nighty and sits next to me on the settee. Then she put the lights out.”  
 “What happened then?”  
 “Well I can take a hint. I knows when I'm not wanted. I got me hat and went home.”  
 (Healy 1977: 11)

## 5.10 Discussion and conclusions

As became clear above, even though Irish joke books published abroad tended to use literary dialect more than those published in Ireland, the features employed to index Irish identity were quite consistent both nationally and internationally, with the most common features for suggesting Irishness being the respelling of <my> as <me>, the use of the pragmatic marker *sure*, some indications of allegro speech (g-dropping, the use of the weak *you* form, <ye>), redundancy in answer to *yes/no* questions accompanied by *indeed*, the lack of *do* support, the use of religious markers and euphemisms, the use of the non-standard definite article and a lack of subject-verb concord.

Some differences were noticeable, however, between the national and international components of the corpus. Firstly, books published abroad were much more likely to indicate Irish accent than those published domestically. This was perhaps to be expected, since Irish audiences typically react negatively when their accent is misrepresented as Oirish, seeing it as Paddywhackery (cf. Walshe 2009: 12). Secondly, international publications were sometimes guilty of including features such as *h*-dropping and intrusive *r*, which do not occur in the variety

and, indeed, have been described by Hickey as “negative diagnostics of Irish English” (2007: 16–17).<sup>16</sup> Thus, not only are international publications more likely to indicate accent, but they are also more likely to do so erroneously.

Regarding the representation of accents in Irish publications, it was remarkable that even jokes about specific regions rarely employed respellings to suggest local accents, although such features would be salient to Irish readers and generally easy to render via respelling. For example, *The Book of Galway and Connemara Jokes* (Magrath 1977) did not contain any examples of short E-raising (<gintleman> for <gentleman>), unraised long E (<mate> for <meat>), or the typical S-palatalisation associated with the “wesht” of Ireland. Similarly, MacHale’s *The All New Cavan Joke Book* (2012) did not feature a single example of the variety’s defining characteristic, the realisation of /k/ and /g/ as [kj] and [gj] before /æ/ and /a/. While there were occasionally indications of a Cork accent in the Cork joke books (cf. <d> and <t> for <th> in example 4 above), this proved to be the exception rather than the rule. Instead, rather than consistently respelling words to reflect Cork pronunciation, MacHale seems to rely on the reader reading the jokes with a Cork accent, which then guarantees comprehension of the punchline, as in the Denise and Denephew example.

Instead of relying on Irish accents to indicate Irishness, Irish texts resort to other means, namely the use of morphosyntactic, pragmatic and lexical features. The most frequent of these tended to correspond greatly with the most recurrent ones in Connell’s corpus of Irish plays, suggesting that Irish writers share a common set of features that index Irishness and that these differ somewhat from those used abroad. This applied irrespective of whether one was looking at general Irish jokes or those about Irish people from particular regions. It is unclear, however, whether these features are salient to those writing them and are therefore being used consciously as indicators of Irishness for characterisation purposes or whether they simply slip into their work as they are not perceived as in any way non-standard, as discussed above.

Finally, differences can also be found between the features used in the two international components of the corpus. Firstly, the American jokes are more likely to attempt to represent Irish speech than are the British ones (38.25% versus 26.23%). Secondly, when they do so, the ways in which accent is indicated differs on either side of the Atlantic. Although both types of publications tend to primarily suggest Irish accent via allegro speech features and <me> for <my>,

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<sup>16</sup> A recurring context for intrusive *r* was in a joke about a pair of Irish friends who see a sign “Tree Fellers Wanted” and lament the fact that there are only two of them, so they won’t get the job.

the British collections tend to display a higher rate of respellings to reflect what Davies calls “Stage Irish” speech (2010: 39). This includes respellings of <d> or <t> for <th>, <oi> for <i>, and <sorr> and <sur> for <sir>.<sup>17</sup> Even if not all of these appeared among the top 15 features, they were nonetheless much more frequent in the British rather than the American publications. This finding confirms Davies’ impression that “[t]he distinctive pronunciation and phraseology of new Irish migrants into Britain and the continued vitality of Irish English have meant that dialect stories told in a mock-Irish brogue have survived better in Britain than have similar tales in America” (1990: 60).

This chapter has offered a first glimpse at the linguistic features used to indicate Irish identity in collections of Irish jokes from around the world from the last half century. Future studies will focus on individual features and their representation, particularly those, such as the “*after perfect*,” which have been employed erroneously in the past. Moreover, when further joke books, particularly those from earlier periods, are added to the corpus, it will be possible to conduct more detailed diachronic and synchronic studies on the evolution of Irish identity in Irish jokes and to compare the findings with those from other genres that employ literary dialect, especially underexplored ones such as political cartoons and traditional songs.

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<sup>17</sup> Wells has commented on the last of these features, noting that rhoticity in IrE “has always struck English ears rather forcefully. Hence, eye dialect representations such as *sorr* ‘sir’, i.e. /sar/” (1982: 432).

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Elaine Vaughan and Máiréad Moriarty

# **10 *It's gems like this that make me wish I hadn't left Ireland!*: Humorous representations of Irish English and their role in diasporic identities**

## **1 Introduction**

In this chapter, we discuss the role of humorous texts in bringing to our attention aspects of perceived identities that have resonance at local, regional and national levels in Ireland, and beyond. In doing so, we assert the rich potential of these texts to bring into the foreground evidence of the sorts of sociocultural understandings required for humour to operate, and emphasise the potential of performative data to enhance our awareness of language practices around ideologies and identities (e.g. Chun 2004; Jaffe 2015; Johnstone 2011; Moriarty 2011; Murphy and Palma-Fahey 2018; Vaughan and Moriarty 2018; Vigouroux 2015). Humour is a complex phenomenon in social life more generally, and a pragmatically powerful and polyvalent resource in interaction more specifically (Vaughan and Clancy 2011). We present and analyse extracts from a series of animated cartoons, *Martin's Life*, and build on our previous research which focuses on representations of voices within the Irish (English) mediascape (Vaughan and Moriarty 2018). What these representations can offer in terms of insights into conceptions of 'Irishness' vis-à-vis the constellation of semiotic resources invoked to index aspects of identities is explored. The locus of humour in these texts, the use of marked phonological, lexical, pragmatic, and other discursive features, in combination with other semiotic modes (Bateman 2008), allows questions to be asked and answers essayed on the ways in which these features and modes are used to perform, and hence provide a visible indexing of, (perceived) sociocultural traits and identities. The response of the audience is a crucial dimension in our analysis. We include discussion of YouTube comments beneath the videos as an example of a key contemporary "reflexive arena" where "the use of heterogeneous stylistic resources, context-sensitive meanings, and conflicting ideologies . . . can be examined critically" (Bauman and Briggs 1990: 60), in that the performances can be commented upon, ratified and contested within these discursive spaces. We take up the ethnolinguistic approach to identity exemplified in Atkinson and

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Kelly-Holmes (2011), and similarly explore how “comedy constructs the audience in relation to identity and language and in particular whether the messages of the comedy appear to subvert or legitimise dominant beliefs and practice as regards identity and language ownership in Ireland” (p. 251), albeit from the point of view of Irish English identities, rather than ownership and control of the Irish language in Ireland.

The nature, role and impact of media on representations, perceptions and revitalisation, *inter alia*, has been a consistent line in the research on the Irish language in mediated contexts (e.g. Atkinson and Kelly-Holmes 2011; Cotter 1999, 2001; Moriarty 2009, 2011, 2015; Kelly-Holmes e.g. 2006, 2011; Kelly-Holmes and Atkinson 2017; Ó hÍfearnáin 2008, 2010; O’Sullivan and Kelly-Holmes, 2017; O’Sullivan, this volume). For example, Moriarty (2009, 2011) illustrates how the Irish language television station, TG4, has had a positive impact on both the use and the ideological standing of the language. Where Irish English in literary media is concerned, there is a strong tradition of harnessing literary dialect, or fictionalised representations, as linguistic data (see overview in Amador-Moreno 2005: 76–79). Much of Amador-Moreno’s work on Paul Howard’s Ross O’Carroll-Kelly series of novels (2012, 2015, 2016) has highlighted the congruencies between naturally occurring language data and its fictionalised counterpart(s), where discrete, complex linguistic features such as pragmatic markers testify to a representation’s faithfulness to the variety it is reflecting. Amador-Moreno and Terrazas-Calero (2017), also in relation to the Ross O’Carroll-Kelly series of novels, plot variation over time of particular key words, themselves enregistered features of Dublin English (cf. Agha 2003). There are also studies of alternative sources on the cline of literary media, such as graphic novels, to wit, Walshe’s (2012) study of the representation of Irish characters in Marvel comics, and how their speech is represented (see Walshe, this volume). There is in-progress work on the representation of a localised variety, Limerick English, in a recent graphic novel, *Savage Town* (Barrett *et al.* 2017), set in Limerick city (Vaughan 2018; Vaughan and Clancy 2018).

Of the work focusing on the presence of Irish and Irish English in mainstream media, Kelly-Holmes has noted the adoption of the Irish language and Irish English in advertising to ‘fetishise’ and commodify (Kelly-Holmes 2005, 2011). O’Sullivan (2013, 2015, 2018) has focussed on Irish English in radio advertising, and change over time in the use of certain phonological features, while O’Sullivan and Kelly-Holmes (2017) explore the growing vernacularisation of Irish radio advertising, and the ideological significance of the different voices in a corpus of radio advertisements. Walshe (2009, 2016, 2017) has looked at the representation of Irish English in films, identifying key features of Irish

English taken up by scriptwriters, and the relationship between authenticity and representations of varieties. Vaughan and Moriarty (2018) analyse the performances of a duo from Limerick city, the Rubberbandits, construing their comedy sketches as a challenge to hegemonic discourses surrounding Limerick city and ideologies of class distinction.

It is at the intersection in the study of mediated performances of Irish English and how these performances reflexively index aspects of identity, mainly via language but also other semiotic resources, that the present chapter makes its contribution. As mentioned previously, we are focusing on a series of digitally produced and circulated animations, which are broadcast on YouTube. Audience reaction to these animations is analysed via the comments left on the YouTube pages for each of the animations. The capacity for individuals to create and circulate such animations is enabled by the changes brought about in accessing media production in what Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes (2011, 2013) call “the performance era,” an era in which there is unprecedented access to new media spaces through the decentralisation of media production. Digital technologies and social media sites give access to new “performance domains” (Bauman 1986) and in the case we present enable a reconfiguration of the value ascribed to a local vernacular speech style, and the identities this style indexes (see also Millar, 2015). This is another interesting departure from research on the sociolinguistic impact of the current phase of globalisation, where the spread of global languages is perceived to be impacting negatively on so-called ‘small’ languages and on local vernaculars. Yet, as we document in our analysis, social media sites provide a platform for the performance of a local variety of Irish English, namely Cork Irish English, and enables the knowing humour typical of communities.

Cork is located on the South coast of Ireland. It is the second largest city in the Republic of Ireland with a population of approximately 220,000. Humorous media representations of Cork play on the idea that people from Cork have an air of superiority and are organising themselves to make a play for independence from the rest of the country. Such play has been commodified with many T-shirts, mugs etc. available bearing the slogan ‘The People’s Republic of Cork’. Typical linguistic features associated with the Cork variety of Irish English include phonological features such as a “large intonational range” and “... a very open realisation of the vowels in the LOT and THOUGHT lexical sets which is seen in (often stereotypical) pronunciations of the city’s name, [kaɪk]” (Hickey 2004: 33). The Cork accent is often described as having a ‘sing-song’ quality which lends itself to humour in mimicry of the accent (for a discussion of this see Walshe this volume).

## 2 The sociolinguistics of performance and the performance of identities

We characterise the animations as metalinguistic acts, “meaningful behaviours that typify the attributes of language, its users, and the activities accomplished through its use” (Agha 2007: 17). These are the features that are metapragmatically salient and allow us to bridge our analysis to key theoretical tropes of enregisterment and stylisation. In our analysis we position these animations as sites of oral vernacular play, and the comments as examples of written vernacular play. The *Martin's Life* animations are intended to be funny, of course, but the humour is contingent upon taken-for-granted everyday assumptions of local sociolinguistic realities: for the humour to work, the audience needs to recognise these realities being ‘staged’. In this way the study fits under the wider rubric of what has been called the sociolinguistics of performance (Bell and Gibson 2011). While the concept of style has underpinned sociolinguistic research for many decades (cf. Labov's (1966) New York department store study) the concept of stylisation within the sociolinguistics of performance seeks to capture the human ability to knowingly adopt the language pattern of another. In particular, we are interested in adding to the growing body of work that focuses on stylisation as a type of language play in media settings (cf. Woolard 1987; 1989; Jaffe 2000, 2015; Hill 2008; Vigouroux 2015). We align ourselves with Coupland's (2001) definition of stylisation as “culturally familiar styles and identities that are marked as deviating from those predictably associated with the current speaking contexts” (p. 345). This change in orientation from style to stylisations draws on Bakhtin's work on voicing. According to Bakhtin (1981), stylisation is characterised by its “multivoiced” nature and includes a type of language play or “an artistic image of another's language” (p. 362). From this perspective, voice is understood to be audience designed and indexed (Amador-Moreno and Villanueva 2018: 9; Vaughan and Moriarty 2018). Such performances are designed for the “enhancement of the experience” of the audience, but also reflexively rely upon the experiences of the audience to recognise and evaluate what it is they communicate and the ways in which they draw “special attention to and heightened awareness of the act of expression” (Bauman 1975: 293). The ability for an audience/listener to understand and make sense of this language play is dependent on the potential for linguistic resources to evoke ideas of characterisation. This idea is captured in the sociolinguistic concept of enregisterment i.e. “processes and practices whereby performable signs become recognized (and regrouped) as belonging to distinct, differentially valorized semi-otic registers by a population” (Agha 2007: 81). In what follows we highlight the localised styling of Irish English and Cork Irish English in the cartoons and

how these stylisations index the identity of the returned immigrant and the stereotypical image of the Irish mammy. Prior to providing this analysis, we offer a contextualisation and description of the animations.

### 3 The context of *Martin's Life*

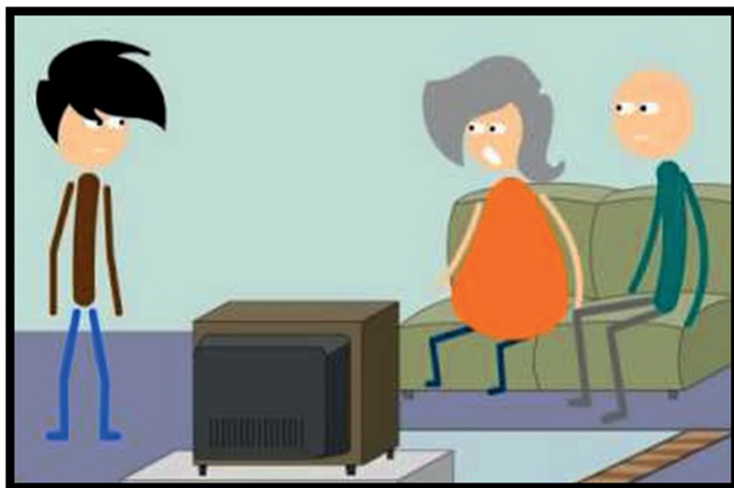
The *Martin's Life* animations we discuss here were published to the user-generated content video site, You Tube, by its creator/performer between September 2014 and February 2016.<sup>1</sup> The term 'creator/performer' is a deliberate choice: in common with the performers discussed in Vaughan and Moriarty (2018), the Limerick comedy duo The Rubberbandits, the creator/performer of *Martin's Life* prefers to remain anonymous although his identity is known.<sup>2</sup> The animated series invites the viewer to "follow the non-adventures of returned emigrant Martin as he struggles to adjust to life back in Ireland. He has moved in with his parents 'for the time being'."<sup>3</sup> The title images depict Martin, the central character, and Martin's family home, a detached house in the countryside in the ubiquitous Irish rain. Both of these images appear in every animation. Image 1, a screen capture from one of the animations we discuss, *Skinny Jeans*, shows how Martin and his parents are represented. The semiotic resources that are drawn on to mark Martin as a cosmopolitan youth are worth noting, and are achieved visually in his hairstyle, and his tight clothing, particularly his 'skinny jeans,' which phenomenon is explicitly commented on as part of that animation.

The context within which *Martin's Life* takes place is a simulacrum of post-Celtic Tiger Ireland, where the ebbs and flows of enforced and voluntary migration and immigration have created a new sociocultural reality: an Ireland that is ethnically more diverse, that has weathered (and is still weathering) a serious economic recession, with Irish nationals still emigrating, though at lower rates, and with returning migrants adjusting to life in this new Ireland – an Ireland that is arguably quite different to the one they left. Ireland has a long history of being an emigrant nation, from the key exoduses of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to the mass emigration due to famine in the 1840s, and various national and global events resulting in peaks and troughs in emigration

1 *Martin's Life* on You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbLkpKbhzwrk6PziEGBLVg?reload=9> [available when accessed 8/5/2018].

2 <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/corkman/news/gearing-up-for-cork-person-of-the-year-awards-35342177.html>

3 <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbLkpKbhzwrk6PziEGBLVg/featured>

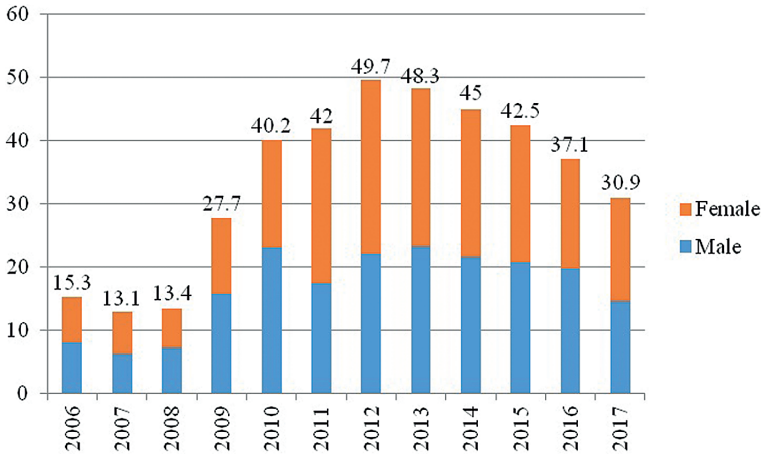


**Figure 1:** Martin and his parents *Skinny Jeans*, 18/3/2015.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfHwqfft3bA>

into the twentieth century (Fitzgerald and Lamkin 2008; Amador-Moreno and McCafferty 2015; McCafferty 2017). Emigration was simply a fact of life, notably again in the 1980s, until the 1990s and the period of dramatic economic growth, the ‘Celtic Tiger’. During this time, emigrants returning home to visit family and friends were encouraged to return permanently via pro-active campaigning and recruitment on the part of Irish state agencies (Hayward and Howard 2007; Ralph 2009). Consequently, the return to high levels of emigration in the aftermath of the global economic downturn in 2008 represented a schism in national narratives of 1990s/early 2000s prosperity, and new realities of austerity replete with a significant wave of emigration replaced them. This wave of emigration peaked in 2012, and though it appears now to be declining, this current ‘Generation Emigration,’ as the weekly column in the national newspaper *The Irish Times*, puts it, is one with a complex identity (see further discussion of this in Amador-Moreno and Avila Ledesma, this volume), both for those who continue living abroad, and for those who return.

Ralph (2009), discussing emigrants returning to Ireland from the United States having left during the mid-to-late 1990s, and the lack of attention to the returning emigrant at that time in migration studies, notes that the occasional appearance of the returnee in Irish literature is “often deployed as a foil with which to explore the normative socio-cultural expectations of the home country” (p. 186). The perspectives of ‘home and return’ present in media commentary



**Figure 2:** Number of Irish emigrants 2007–2017 (in '000s). Data from Central Statistics Office (CSO) (CSO 2011; 2017).

and personal narratives of the current Generation Emigration often articulate explicitly the nature of these sociocultural expectations: “Travelling and living in other countries makes us look at Ireland in a new way, sometimes in a more positive light and sometimes with a more nuanced appreciation of how conservative and unyielding the pillars of our society truly are” (Ní Shúilleabháin 2014). Personal narratives of all types have provided rich perspectives into the lived experiences of diasporic generations – the first-person narratives of the Generation Emigration series of articles, for example, or the interviews conducted by Ralph (2009) in the contemporary era, and studies of historical documents such as emigrant letters from a historical perspective. McCafferty and Amador-Moreno (2012) describe the creation of the Corpus of Irish English Correspondence (CORIECOR), a database which contains a large body of letters to and from emigrants from the mid-eighteenth to early twentieth century. Studies such as Amador-Moreno and McCafferty (2011, 2015) have underlined the value of CORIECOR and the personal letters therein as oral text types for diachronic studies on the development of Irish English, but also their potential as windows on diasporic identity creation, and personal meanings around notions such as *home* and *country* (Avila-Ledesma and Amador-Moreno 2016), pivotal concepts for emigrants in negotiating diasporic identities.

Narratives of emigration and return, and how they are played out in the media are the subject of McDaid (2014) and O’Leary and Negra (2016). The latter study collates perspectives on sources such as tourism campaigns like *The Gathering* (2013), columns like the aforementioned *Irish Times* fixture, Generation

Emigration, and particularly surprise homecoming videos, in which they note the centrality of the Irish Mammy. The Irish Mammy, they assert, should not be underestimated as “the central figure of emotional authority and authenticity,” and a persistent “rhetorical trope of family and nation” (ibid: 134; see also Murphy and Palma-Fahey, 2018). This is of particular relevance to the humorous texts we present here, as the mother figure, more so than the father, occupies a similar role in terms of authority, although in this case that authority is leavened by gentle (we argue) contestation of that authority and the sociocultural norms it represents in broader societal terms. McDaid discusses the representation of the emigration in Irish television advertising, emphasising the importance of advertisements as cultural artefacts and as evidence of a hegemonic encoding of response to emigration and return and “how society negotiates its complex relationship with identity, belonging and diaspora” (McDaid 2014: 41). Amongst the advertisements that McDaid discusses is an ESB<sup>4</sup> advertisement that was first shown in 1988. It is set to the tune of Dusty Springfield’s version of the song “Going Back”. A young man is shown arriving home, presumably from abroad, and being collected by his father at the train station. Their journey home along country roads, passing small towns illuminated by electricity, is intercut with scenes of the mother preparing for the son’s return in a glow of warmth and domesticity. An early sketch by the creator of *Martin’s Life* is a parody voiceover of the ESB advertisement, which was aired again in 2011 during the peak of the post-Celtic Tiger recession (ibid.). In a sense, in the same way that advertisements can show what we would gloss *capsule ideologies*, or “socially and politically laden” texts, as Callier (2014: 582) puts it, the *Martin’s Life* series are capsule representations of complex sociocultural realities.

The character of Martin fits into a profile of the returned emigrant that it is possible to construct using available Central Statistics Office (CSO) data for example, and reports in the national broadcast media, as well as others. The Dublin-based Crosscare Migrant Project reported that of the some four hundred respondents to its 2017 survey, *Home for Good*, on the experiences of migrants returning to Ireland, 41% had returned from Australia, and over 60% were aged between 26 and 35 (32.3% 26–30 and 28.4% 31–35), the generation arguably most impacted by the conditions created by the economic recession between 2008 and 2016 (Crosscare Migrant Project 2017: 5). Martin, it is implied, has returned from Australia, where we learn his sister is still living, and appears to fit into the 26–30 age bracket. Martin is from County Cork, and although the specific location is never mentioned, it is possible to surmise that he lives in a town close to

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4 ESB: Electricity Supply Board, the state power company in Ireland.

Cork city.<sup>5</sup> His mother and father are presented as typical, small town Irish parents, in fact, are presented as a trope of Irish parenthood – they are vaguely aware of and *almost* au fait with in twenty-first century Ireland, though they struggle to understand, for example, new technologies and social mores. There are seven short animations, each around one minute long, which resemble the multiple videos apparently covertly recorded with the home environment and uploaded to You Tube by mischievous youths. These videos usually foreground a parent or parents’ stupidity/unintentional hilarity and are published to the site with an actual or implied eye roll to the audience by the person recording, indicating that person’s savviness and sophistication by comparison. Situationally, *Martin’s Life* is similar: the episodes take place in a domestic environment – in the kitchen, or in the living room when the family are watching television. Table 1 details the episodes of *Martin’s Life* in the order in which they were published to You Tube, and includes details such as the number of views, comments and likes for each individual episode. Cumulatively, the videos (at the time of writing) have been viewed over 5.2 million times, and have over a thousand comments.

**Table 1:** *Martin’s Life* series details.

Date	Title	Time	Views	Comments	Likes
19/9/2014	<i>It’s a small world</i>	1:03	873,737	145	3.7k
8/10/2014	<i>Game of Thrones</i>	1:05	995,768	178	4.2k
18/3/2015	<i>Skinny Jeans</i>	1:05	991,258	159	3.5k
15/5/2015	<i>Referendum</i>	0:55	1,070,701	177	4k
28/10/2015	<i>Skyping the Sister</i>	1:01	543,682	182	2.4k
25/12/2015	<i>Christmas</i>	0:55	459,258	202	2.3k
3/2/2016	<i>Martin is Cork Person of the Month</i>	1:05	278,737	218	2.1k
		<b>6:29</b>	<b>5,213,141</b>	<b>1,261</b>	<b>22.2k</b>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbLkpKbhzwki6PziEGBLVg?reload=9>; figures those available on 8/5/2018.

5 When asked by his mother, ‘Are you going to town?’, Martin replies, ‘No, I’m going to Cork’ (*Martin’s Life*: ‘Skinny Jeans’).

## 4 Discussion

What follows is a discussion of excerpts from our transcriptions of the animations, and a dataset comprising the YouTube responses to the performance of Irish identities on display, as well as the particular attention given to creating authentic social actors – and, obliquely, what is understood as the source of the humour. In broad terms, the semiotic resources drawn on to generate authenticity for the performances are located in staging and styling recognisable social personae, tropes of some longevity such as the *Irish Mammy*, and the *Returned Emigrant*, using localised language features and connecting them to social roles. In each of the animations key phrases appear that strictly mark the variety used as located in Ireland, including contractions such as *c'mere* 'til (*we look at you*), the use of *them* for *those*, or pragmatic markers, such as *sure*, transcribed below as *shur* to reflect the phonological reduction related to its function in context (see Vaughan and Clancy 2016). The producer uses these elements to mark the language use as located in Ireland, and in Cork specifically. While language produced in fictionalised contexts is often considered less authentic than 'real-life' interactions, in creating these animations the producer is relying on the use of agreed upon socially recognisable sets of linguistic features that cross regional, gender and age boundaries. Our analysis was divided into three connected parts: firstly, we focused on the oral vernacular features that are drawn on to create the identities required for the humour to carry. Secondly, we looked at how these are enregistered to index a local identity, and finally how reflections of these enregistered vernacular features are projected in the written comments that accompany the *Martin's Life* animations. To lay this out more systematically, in the following discussion we develop a description of the social personae derived from their performance in the animations, highlight the various linguistic resources the creator draws on in styling tropes of the *Returned Emigrant* but particularly the *Irish Mammy*, and then how the audience for the animations comment on the performances. We find themes and patterns in the comments, such as explicit praise for the performance, the positive evaluations implicit in simple repetition and quotations, and the connection of identity to understanding and appreciating the humour by invoking conceptualisations of shared identity.

In the *Skinny Jeans* animation we eavesdrop on a 'typical' interaction between the parents and Martin who though living at home is now an adult, and yet still experiences the endless parental questioning normally associated with adolescence. For example, in Line 2 the character Mam orders Martin to come into the sitting room before he goes out so she can look at what he is wearing, an infantilisation of the character of Martin. Within her turns in Lines 2–14, Mam is asking Martin questions (in bold). In this extract from the transcripts of

the animations (1), aspects of the language particularly associated with Irish English, or local references, are underlined; in italics sayings that are localised.

(1) *Skinny Jeans* transcript excerpt

1. <M> I'm heading out there <\M>
2. <Mam> **C'mere 'til we have a look at you. Are you going to town?**  
<\Mam>
3. <M> No I'm going to Cork <\M>
4. <Mam> **At this hour of the night?** <\Mam>
5. <M> It's only five o'clock <\M>
6. <Mam> **And what are you doing in Cork?** <\Mam>
7. <M> I'm meeting someone <\M>
8. <Mam> **A girl?** <\Mam>
9. <M> Yeah <\M>
10. <Mam> **And where'd you meet her?** <\Mam>
11. <M> Online <\M>
12. <Mam> **Online? On what line?** <\Mam>
13. <M> The internet <\M>
14. <Mam> **The internet? Shur** she could be anyone <\Mam>
15. <M> What? <\M>
16. <Mam> *Shur you don't know her from a crow* <\Mam>
17. <M> I do <\M>
18. <Dad> Is she one of them transvestites? <\Dad>
19. <M> What? <\M>
20. <Dad> There was a thing about them there on the telly the other day  
<\Dad>
21. <M> About who? <\M>
22. <Dad> The transvestites. They said they could be watching you or anything from that aul internet <\Dad>

Most of Mam's utterances are phrased as direct or indirect questions, and her over-solicitousness – the way she interrogates Martin on the legitimacy of his date, arranged online – serves to highlight the generational divide in terms of contemporary dating norms. In this way, we see where the construction of the text and its micro-level linguistic choices reconstitute the macro-level socially understood category of the Irish Mammy (cf. also Johnstone 2011: 665). The stereotype of the Irish Mammy is one that has dominated cultural texts produced in and about Ireland for many decades, from the abiding image of 'Mother Ireland' in early Irish fairy tales, for example, or more recently comedian Brendan O'Carroll's character of Mrs Brown (see Murphy and Palma-Fahey, 2018 for further discussion

on Mrs Brown). The Irish Mammy is, as Ging (2017: 176) argues, “(...) a conservative, over-nurturing and sexless figure who considers men to be helpless, childlike and in constant need of care, yet fully accepts their patriarchal domination of her”. The Irish Mammy is typically represented as being fully devoted to her son, she is doting yet dogmatic, brutally honest in her opinion and prone to saying things that seem outlandish. In the *Martin's Life* animations, this trope of the Irish Mammy is very much played on. For example, in (2), also from the *Skinny Jeans* animation, we see the doting mother who is overly concerned with her son's clothing, while also learning new terms, seen in her repetition of 'skinny jeans':

- (2) Over-doting Mammy: Excerpt from *Skinny Jeans* transcript
23. <Mam> Are them jeans a bit too small for you? <\Mam>
24. <M> No. They're meant to be like that. They're meant to be too small. They're skinny jeans <\M>
25. <Mam> Skinny jeans. And have you any underpants on you? <\Mam>

The potential for the parents to express very non-politically-correct views is evident in Dad's innocent though wildly inaccurate notion of transvestites and the Internet in (1) (in the exchange in Lines 18–22). The character of Dad across the animations is portrayed as an individual hopelessly out of touch but trying gamely to navigate these cosmopolitan times. In his introduction of the term *transvestite* (line 18), the indication is that he is trying too hard to be cool: again, across the animations, this is often signalled through the use of a varietal feature with a modern referent – *them transvestites* (Line 18), *that aul internet* (Line 21). Mam's assertions are far sharper and more conservative, though played humorously – *Shur she could be anyone/Shur you don't know her from a crow* – showing her ignorance of the modern dating scene, as well as indexing 'typical' maternal disapproval of any romantic partner a son might choose. Through the Irish Mammy, brutal honesty is dispensed, though her voicing of comments that are both ignorant and prejudiced is somehow softened via the connection to the trope itself, as well as the humour poked at it. In the *'Tis a Small World* animation the brutally honest trope is evident in a very typical post-haircut interaction between a mother and son in (3): Lines 18–24 – the comment *he didn't take much off it* an evaluation of the haircut itself, establishing the context and setting the scene for the pointed humour that follows around the new diversity and liberalism in Ireland. Mam refers to the new hairdresser as *the Arab* and Martin's response, *He's from Iraq*, suggests that in this exchange we are being called upon to notice and contrast Mam's quasi-racist labelling and Martin's implied rebuke. In case the point is lost, we hear Mam's voicing of racist stereotypes associated with 'Arabs' in the outlandish comment in Line 24: *Iraq? You're lucky he didn't cut the head off you.*

- (3) The brutally honest *Irish Mammy*: Excerpt from *'Tis a Small World* transcript
18. <Mam> 'Tis a small world all right. I thought you were getting a hair-cut <\Mam>
  19. <M> I did get a haircut <\M>
  20. <Mam> God he didn't take much off it. Who'd you go to? <\Mam>
  21. <M> The new fella downtown <\M>
  22. <Mam> Who? The Arab? <\Mam>
  23. <M> He's from Iraq <\M>
  24. <Mam> Iraq? You're lucky he didn't cut the head off you <\Mam>

This stylisation of the Irish Mammy in *Martin's Life* provides an antidote to the Celtic Tiger 'Yummy Mummy,' indicating that the traditional conception of the Irish Mammy has retained its power. In a way, the animations celebrate this Irish Mammy, indexing a type of fixed normativity from which youth in diaspora can draw a sense of feeling that despite their own condition of fluidity that there are core aspects of their identity that will stay the same and serve to anchor them in times of uncertainty during periods of migration. The following example from our corpus of audience reaction to the animations, (4), this one posted under the animation *Game of Thrones*, but referring to *'Tis a Small World* as well as *Marriage Referendum*, captures both an implicit comment on the accuracy of the presentation, but also a suggestion about why the humour is not problematic. The suggestion is that the traditional tropes of Irish parenthood reflect a stereotype of people who are ignorant rather than malicious, and this mitigates their more eccentric pronouncements.

- (4) Audience Reaction to *Martin's Life*: YouTube comments under *Game of Thrones*  
**Getnasty08**

What I LOVE about this is that it captures how un-PC some Irish parents can be without any real malice. It's just so funny cos my Mam would ask the exact same thing you find in these videos about the gays, dwarfs, the "Arabs", but she's seriously one of the most live and let live people on the planet. It's just some of the things she'd says. I remember two friends from Canada thought she was an outrageous character altogether.

The animations are funny and fascinating as a window on the Irish identities, or the "characterological figures," the audiences for these animations recognise (Bell and Gibson 2011: 562). As Rampton (2006: 225) suggests, the stylisations played out in these animations invite audiences to use their wider

understanding to engage with questions of authenticity. This is achieved on two levels, firstly on an evaluative level, i.e. is it any good, and secondly on the level of accuracy, i.e. how fit for purpose the stylisation is (cf. Bauman 1975). Ultimately, it is the audience that authorises the relevance of these animations. With this in mind, audience reactions and comments on the *Martin's Life* animations were collected from public postings underneath each of the animations on YouTube. Particular themes, which chime with Rampton's commentary on the audience's perceptions of stylisation, emerged from the dataset of YouTube comments. Broadly, these are declarations of authenticity and/or familiarity, with some explicit comments relating to the 'Irishness' of the identities on display, and evidence of uptake via quotation, repetition or creative re-stylisation. As the extracted comments show (5), audience reaction explicitly references the identity work in the performances (*If your from Ireland This is the funniest thing ever [sic]*), and shows how familiar Irish people are with social personae, such as the Irish Mammy, and tropes of the uncouth parents – mothers and fathers who are direct in what they say with blatant ignorance or disregard for sensitivities around different cultures, different gender identities and so on:

- (5) YouTube Comments Corpus: Evaluation via declarations of authenticity and/or familiarity
1. I'm from Cork and I loved it
  2. This brilliance! You've captured the Cork/Irish perfectly- so funny!
  3. Can't stop watching these.. they're spot on like. :-)
  4. On what line? You wouldn't know her from a crow!! Irish and proud
  5. If your from Ireland This is the funniest thing ever. What line, lol?.

Another level that can be identified is audience uptake of the stylised Cork Irish English features, categorised in our corpus of YouTube comments as audience reaction under a theme of uptake via orthographic representation, which follows a three step evaluation process of *reaction* which can be overtly evaluative, as in (6) Line 1; repetition e.g. via direct quotation or reference to performances, as in (6) Line 3; and reflection, quotation plus individual creativity around the resources used in the performances, as in (6) Line 6. All of these could be construed as positive evaluations (+). There were no negative (–) comments recorded, rather unusually – although given the nature of the medium, these may have appeared since.

- (6) YouTube Comments Corpus: Uptake via orthographic representation and evaluation
1. By jesus this is f\*\*king hilarious (Reaction +)
  2. Great *schtuff* (Reaction +)

3. The poor *auld* dwarfs (Reflection/Repetition +)
4. Skittin (Reaction +)
5. *Myartin* (Reflection +)
6. Ah *shtop* lads. I'm *feckin dyin*. Me sides are *killin* (Reflection +)

These examples of audience engagement with, and reaction to, the *Martin's Life* animations exemplify the link between heteroglossic performances and 'indexical icons' (Silverstein 2000). Hillewaert (2015) reports on an extensive study of writing practices on Facebook, and the use of features from Swahili dialects in Kenya's Lamu archipelago which are stigmatised in spoken interaction. Although the context of her study is quite different to the present study, a number of her observations are strikingly germane to the nature of the online commentary generated by the *Martin's Life* series. Firstly, while we would argue that Irish English is not stigmatised in the same way as the vernaculars she discusses, it is arguably globally peripheral. In common with the young people she discusses, the commenters on the social network – in this case, YouTube, in Hillewaert's case, Facebook – harness the potential of digital orthography on social media to "reinvent (social and political) geographies," inscribing new values to local varieties, and even creating spaces to ensure their preservation (*ibid.*: 209). Further to that, there is the public nature of posting online, which leads individuals to perform their social ties in particular ways for others, as in (6) above. In combing through the comments attached to the different animations in the *Martin's Life* series, a feature that is interesting is that the commenters not only invoke their identity along national lines, but also along more regional and localised lines. (7) shows all elements of individual comments under the animation, *Skinny Jeans*, that explicitly reference national/regional/local identities, showing how the original performance is evaluated, and valorised for what it displays for and means to its audience.

- (7) *Skinny Jeans* categories of commentary: Invoking explicit markers of identity
1. these are so much better if your irish and you have parents like them
  2. You can only understand them if your Irish
  3. [On what line? You wouldn't know her from a crow!!] ☺ Irish and proud
  4. I miss being in West cork
  5. Pennies will probably be closed though since its already 5
  6. Ugh the irony of the irish accent ☺
  7. Irish ppl rule I'm irish too this is hilarious
  8. Who here is actually Irish and knows what penny's is it is a shop
  9. I'm from Cork

10. I am Irish you dublin
11. I love these it makes it better if your Irish
12. Is it penny's or Guineys? Just a brilliant show
13. Little Cork gems, simply hilarious.
14. I'm from Ireland to
15. If your from Ireland This is the funniest thing ever . What line, lol?.
16. It's gems like this that make me wish I hadn't left Ireland!
17. Lol I'm irish so funny
18. I'm Irish it true look at me name

Lines 1–18 are both standalone comments, but more frequently elements from longer comments which praise the performance in and of itself (*so relatable/ 'Tis gas shtuff/brilliant/ unreal/class/totally addictive*), its accuracy of portrayal (*the typical Irish parents/this is litterely my parents/he sounds just like me father*), and quotation (see (5) and (6) above), are explicit invocations of identity. These can be simple statements of nationality (*I'm Irish*), more specific local references (*Penny's/Guiney's*), and statements around needing to be Irish to understand the humour 'properly' – in other words, laying claim to something that is valued. Johnstone's (2011) study of dialect stylisation in comedy sketches on radio extends the purview of its discussion by showing how dialect stylisation can project more than one set of meanings, depending on the interpretive repertoires of the (in her case, listening) audience. By focusing on what the self-selected commenters, a subsection of the viewing audience, decide to bring forward for attention in their implicit and explicit evaluations (cf. Baumann and Briggs 1990), we can highlight what is being particularly attended to in the performance, and what makes it successful (and by extension, if required, unsuccessful). The ways in which the commenters reference and discuss identities lends a new lens with which to view the authenticity of the performance of Irish identities (cf. Rampton 2006).

## 5 Conclusion

The overall aim of the chapter is to illustrate the opportunities afforded to local language varieties in the context of globalisation, and to discuss what the function for the use of varieties in these spaces may mean in terms of sociolinguistic identities through an examination of a novel use of a specific variety of Irish English, namely Cork Irish English,. The analysis of quotidian media texts allows us to examine, simultaneously, acts of stylisation (Coupland 2007) and

acts of identity (LePage and Tabouret-Keller 1985). We characterise the *Martin's Life* animations as a creative hybrid of semiotic resources where there is both visual and audible semiotic play in the construction and performance of Irish identities. Here we focus only on the linguistic play in our discussion and analysis but we do acknowledge that there is a complex interconnection with the visualities used. In looking at the *Martin's Life* animations we are interested in analysing the possible intended social actions the producer aimed to comment on and what perhaps is accomplished, especially in the context of cosmopolitan identity that many young Irish adults who migrated directly following the economic crash desire, but simultaneously reject. Our analysis shows the characterological figure of the *Irish Mammy* is primarily foregrounded in each of the animations created. The use of certain resources, often in a playful manner, index common sociocultural stereotypes (Agha 2007), as is the case with the deployment of certain resources of (Cork) Irish English in the *Martin's Life* animations. This can be explained on the ideological level through iconisation, a process through which we link linguistic features with social groups: "as if a linguistic feature somehow depicted or displayed a social group's inherent nature or essence" (Irvine and Gal 2000: 37). As Johnstone (2011) argues in the context of her work on Pittsburghese, ultimately we are examining what Agha refers to as registers that link "cultural models of action that link diverse behavioural signs to enactable effects including images of personas, interpersonal relationships and type of conduct" (Agha 2007: 145). We argue that this approach to the sociolinguistics of performance enables the upscaling of local vernacular speech particular to these new performance domains created by digital technologies. In times of global mobility of people, languages and semiotic resources, we conceptualise things along a continuum of fixity to fluidity (Otsuji and Pennycook 2010). As Hastings and Manning (2004: 301) suggest, "stereotyped, essentialised voices of exemplary others are crucial to anchoring the linguistic system by which speakers index their own situational and social positions". This affords the sorts of possibilities Hillewaert (2015) observes in the amplification of the value of local vernaculars in particular modes (e.g. writing online), allowing for what she calls a *rooted cosmopolitanism*, which foregrounds a renewed value on, and pride in, origin, particularly for those living in diaspora.

Investigating where distinctive sociolinguistic identities are performed and what they index is particularly piquant and problematic now, as Ralph (2009: 184), studying conceptualisations of *home* puts it, "... in an era dominated by master narratives such as globalisation, transnationalism and cultural hybridity." Actual and virtual mobilities have created a situation of "destabilising flux" where the concepts of, for example, home and belonging, and we would

add, what is construed within the identities that adhere to these conceptions, often remain “the uninterrogated anchor of all this hypermobility” (Morley 2000: 3). In situations of diaspora, we argue, there is a need for what was left behind to stay the same: it is through this fixing that we orientate our own nostalgia, but also our own sense of authenticity and self, expressed here through the performance of identities, vernacular play, and explicit commentary on identities. The potential for data such as *Martin's Life* to shed light on conceptualisations of Irish sociolinguistic identities, much as with the potentialities of performed language data more generally, should not be underestimated.

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Joan O'Sullivan

# 11 Constructing identity in radio advertising in Ireland

## 1 Introduction

The complex, hybrid and contradictory nature of contemporary social identities and the role of the media in their construction and reconfiguration has been highlighted by researchers in the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries. Piller (2001: 181) argues that national or cultural identity is not static, but is continuously renegotiated, while Goldman and Papson (1996) observe how such identities have evolved to become more global and transnational. Piller investigates the role of advertising in identity construction and observes how

[i]n its multilingual practices, advertising shows an avant-garde-like readiness to embrace postnational discourses of unsettled, hybrid identities as expressed through the use of different linguistic codes. With regard to the conflict between national and transnational identities, advertising has become the late modern discourse par excellence.

(Piller 2001: 182)

Piller refers here to 'multilingual practices' in advertising; However, it is the contention of this study that hybrid identities can be constructed in media contexts, not only through the use of different languages, but also through the use of different varieties of the same language. Coupland (2003: 426) argues that the notion of membership of particular 'communities' has become increasingly complex and contextualised and that multiple social identities can be demonstrated and managed strategically through sociolinguistic choices.

In a social world where we are inundated with identity options and models, and information about their consequences and implications, sociolinguistic choices are necessarily more knowing and strategic.

(Coupland 2003: 426)

This chapter will explore how social identities are constructed through choice of variety in radio advertising in Ireland. This will be investigated through a diachronic analysis of a corpus of radio advertisements, the *Irish Radio Advertisement Corpus* (IRAC), broadcast on an Irish radio station at five time points between 1977 and 2017. The analysis will focus on how variety choice in the advertisements plays a role in constructing social identities in the Irish context, and how these identities are renegotiated through the decades in which the advertisements are broadcast. Exploiting Bell's (1984) *audience design* and *referee design* models, the chapter will explore questions such as the role of the

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different varieties of English in the construction of identity and the extent to which these identities have evolved to become more multi-faceted, global and hybrid.

The chapter is structured as follows. As the main varieties exploited in the corpus are *Irish English* and *Standard Southern British English* (SSBE), we begin with a description of these varieties; this includes the categorisation and description of 'local' and 'non-local' accent sub-varieties of Irish English, followed by a description of the accent variety of SSBE.

An explanation of the analytical frameworks employed in the study follows; Sussex's (1989) classification of the components of the advertisements in terms of *Action* and *Comment*, based on the genre of the discourse, is described; additionally, Bell's (1984) audience and referee design frameworks and their application to media communication, as well as to notions of identity construction, are outlined and discussed. We turn then to a description of the Irish radio advertising context and an examination of what might constitute audience or referee design in this context. The corpus, IRAC, is described and its analysis begins with a diachronic picture of the main accent varieties found in the corpus, between the years of 1977 and 2017. In the following section, specific advertisements are analysed to illustrate the classification of variety choice in terms of audience design and *ingroup* and *outgroup* referee design and the implications of this classification for identity work. Finally, conclusions are drawn in relation to the classification of this form in terms of audience and referee design and the role of advertising in constructing contemporary identities in the Irish context.

## 2 Varieties of Irish English

The term *Irish English* refers generally to English as it is spoken in Ireland in terms of both accent and dialectal features. Irish English, in this study, can be understood in terms of southern Irish English (as opposed to the Irish English spoken in Northern Ireland). Filppula (1999: 12) observes that, in general, Irish varieties of English are easy to recognise as regards phonetics and phonology; they have a number of elements common to speakers of all regions. Hickey (2011: 7) briefly summarises the range of shared phonological features in vernacular varieties for the south of Ireland as follows:

- 1) Lenition of alveolar stops to fricatives in positions of high sonority, e.g., *city* [siʲi]
- 2) Use of clear [l] in all positions in a word (now recessive), e.g., *field* [fi:ld]

- 3) Retention of syllable-final /r/, e.g., board [bo:rd]
- 4) Distinction of short vowels before /r/ (now recessive), e.g., *tern* [tɜrn] versus *turn* [tɜrn]
- 5) Retention of the distinction between /m/ and /w/ (now recessive), e.g., *which* [mitʃ] and *witch* [witʃ]

Hickey (2004: 30–34; 2017a) provides more detailed lists of phonological features on a regional basis.

In addition to shared features in vernacular varieties as outlined above, Filppula (1999: 12) points out that some features of Irish English are common to speakers of different social and educational backgrounds. Retention of syllable-final /r/, for example, is a feature which is common to prestige and vernacular varieties of Irish English alike, with the exception of 'lower class' Dublin English which is non-rhotic or only weakly rhotic (Hickey 2005: 28). However, Hickey (2011: 5) observes that, due to the effect of 'standardisation' through which speakers adopt 'less local' pronunciations, some vernacular features are not evident in supraregional varieties.

On the other hand, some features of vernacular Irish English are regarded by Irish people as 'strongly vernacular' and Irish people can be sensitive in this regard (Hickey 2017a). One such feature, as described by Amador-Moreno (2010: 78) is the realisation in many areas of Ireland of the phonemes /θ/ and /ð/ as dental plosives [t̪] and [d̪], so that pairs such as *tree* and *three*, *fate* and *faith*, *breed* and *breathe*, *dare* and *there*, can be difficult to distinguish. Hickey (2017a) also refers to local Dublin pronunciation which has features (such as low rhoticity as referred to above) which distinguish it from other vernacular Irish English forms.

Researchers, including Kirk and Kallen 2006; Kirk 2011; Hughes, Trudgill, and Watt 2012 agree that 'educated' or 'quasi-standard' Irish English can contain dialectal features of vernacular Irish English; however, these features tend to be muted by comparison with vernacular Irish English; Prestige or quasi-standard forms of Irish English are therefore most distinguishable from standard British English with regard to accent rather than dialectal features. This study focuses on accent, although dialectal features are also mentioned in relation to analysis of specific advertisements.

With regard to a standard for Irish English, Hickey (2005: 208) claims that what he terms 'non-local' or 'educated' Dublin English has served as a 'quasi-standard' in the south of Ireland since the beginning of the twentieth century (see Table 1). This form is characterised by its rejection of the 'narrow, restrictive identification' with 'traditional conservative Dublin life of which the popular accent is very much a part' (Hickey 2004: 44). Hickey initially subdivided

**Table1:** Terminology for Irish English accent sub-varieties.

Broad accent category	Accent sub-variety name	Alternative accent sub-variety names
Non-local/ standard (Hickey 2004)	Advanced Dublin English (Hickey 2004) (AdvD)	'fashionable' or 'new' Dublin English (Hickey 2004); 'Dublin 4' or 'D4' (Hickey 2004; Filppula 2012: 86); 'Dortspeak' (Myers 2000: 65); 'educated urbane', 'neutral' (Kelly-Holmes 2005: 120)
	Moderate Dublin English (Hickey 2004) (ModDE)	'educated' (Hickey 2005: 208); 'educated, urbane', 'neutral' (Kelly-Holmes 2005: 120)
	Supraregional Southern (Hickey 2004) (SrS)	'educated' (Hickey 2005: 208); 'non-local' (Hickey 2017a); 'educated, urbane', 'neutral' (Kelly-Holmes 2005: 120)
Local (Hickey 2004)	Local Dublin English (LD)	'Popular Dublin English' (Hickey 2004)
	Regional (Reg)	'Local' (Hickey 2004); 'Rural South-West/West' (Hickey 2004); accents subsumed under 'Regional' category

the non-local accent variety into a 'mainstream' section and a smaller group (originally termed 'fashionable' or 'new' Dublin English, and also 'Dublin 4' or 'D4' as discussed below, see also Table 1) which dissociated itself from the local 'low-prestige' group (Hickey 2004: 44). With regard to so-called mainstream Dublin English, Hickey states that, as in the case of any urban accent, particular popular features can be found in 'educated', non-local forms (Hickey 2005: 28), and he terms the locally influenced, but educated variety, a 'moderate Dublin' English (ModDE) accent (see Table 1), including features such as fronting of the /au/ diphthong and lengthening of low back vowels.

On a supraregional level, however, these metropolitan features are absent. Hickey (2004: 92) employs the term 'supraregional southern' Irish English to describe the broad-based non-vernacular pronunciation form in the south of Ireland (see Table 1). Like ModDE, this is derived from mid-twentieth century middle-class Dublin English but is without the Dublin features associated with ModDE. It may have variable features depending on geographical location but nevertheless 'a core of common features' (Hickey 2004: 92) can be identified which are characteristic generally of the longer established middle-class speech of the south. These include rhotic pronunciation, dental stops for dental fricatives, fricativisation of /t,d/ in

open position, RP<sup>1</sup> diphthongs /eɪ/ and /əʊ/ realized as monophthongs [e:] and [o:] respectively, retention of the distinction between /m/ and /w/, and lack of distinction between phonemically long and short low vowels before voiced consonants, for example *palm* and *dance*, both with [a:]. A number of these features are also found in vernacular varieties. See Hickey (2017a) for a more detailed account of Irish English varieties based on Wells' (1982) lexical sets, which are employed in categorising varieties in the study.

Hickey also refers in his earlier work to 'new' Dublin English, a further subdivision of non-local Dublin English which actively reject and dissociates itself from the local group (see Table 1). This is also termed Dublin 4 or D4 (Moore 2011, Filppula 2012). Filppula observes that 'Dublin 4 English' is associated with a standard Irish English, Dublin 4 being the area in Dublin city where the national broadcaster RTÉ is based (see Table 1). According to Filppula, 'Dublin 4 has a mainly professional and middle-class population, whose usage of English is, in the Irish context, regarded as the most prestigious variety serving as a model for educated Irish English usage in general' (Filppula 2012: 86).

In the 1990s, the population of Dublin expanded as a result of internal growth and in-migration due to the economic boom known as the 'Celtic Tiger'. Hickey proposes that the associated increase in prosperity and elevated international position gave rise to a desire among young people for an 'urban sophistication', represented linguistically by a reactive local dissociation from the vernacular form of their locality (Hickey 2004: 45–46). The resulting form, which Hickey originally termed new Dublin English, he now refers to as advanced Dublin English (see Table 1). Notable features include those of the so-called Dublin vowel shift (Hickey 2004: 47) involving a retraction of diphthongs with a low or back starting point and a raising of low back vowels. In addition, /r/ retroflexion and /l/ velarisation are features associated with this pronunciation. While AdvD has been argued not to have been influenced by British English or US English (Hickey 2017a), there are nevertheless observable parallels between AdvD and both these varieties, so media influence cannot be ruled out.

Hickey (2005: 72) points out that these emergent AdvD features had become prevalent throughout southern Ireland by the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century and on the basis of more recent research, he claims that AdvD is the new mainstream form of Irish English (Hickey 2017a).

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<sup>1</sup> Received Pronunciation (RP) is the accent associated with standard British English; it is associated with high social status as regards education, income and profession rather than with a specific region (Hughes, Trudgill, and Watt 2012: 3).

While these classifications must of course be understood as generalisations, the study differentiates between two very broad categories of southern Irish English. The term ‘non-local’ is used here as an umbrella term for the accent sub-categories outlined above of moderate Dublin (ModDE), supraregional southern (SrS) and AdvD (also known as ‘Dublin 4’ or ‘D4’), which are viewed broadly by Hickey (2005) as standard Irish English and align generally with what Kelly-Holmes (2005: 120) refers to as the ‘educated, urbane’ voices which dominate Irish media. The term ‘local’ Irish English, on the other hand, refers to the category comprised of easily distinguishable vernacular accents, including both local Dublin (LD) (also referred to as ‘popular’ by Hickey 2004: 57) and other regional (Reg) – rural and provincial – accents (see Table 1). Again, more detailed descriptions of the features of these varieties are available in Hickey 2017a.

### 3 Standard Southern British English (SSBE)

The term Standard Southern British English (SSBE) is a newer ‘less evaluative’ term for Received Pronunciation (RP). SSBE refers to accent as distinct from dialect and thus to variations in pronunciation rather than grammar and vocabulary (Hughes et al 2012: 3,13). This accent is associated with high social status as regards education, income and profession rather than being associated with a specific region. This prestige pronunciation form is associated with radio and television in the British context and is used in particular by BBC newsreaders and presenters (Hughes et al 2012: 3–4).

In the context of the present study, SSBE, which indicates the standard British accent, contrasts with the Irish English accent, and therefore is identified predominantly by syllable-final /r/ deletion, given that this is the main feature differentiating it from Irish English (Hickey 2004: 41; Kallen 2013: 47–48); other identifying phonetic features of this accent are not examined. Therefore attempts at the emulation of SSBE through syllable-final /r/ deletion, by speakers of Irish English are classified as SSBE. While the term refers to accent rather than dialect (in terms of grammar and vocabulary), in the context of this particular study, in all cases where SSBE accents (or simulations of such accents) were employed in the corpus, these accents combined with ‘Standard English’ (as defined above) features, in relation to grammar and vocabulary; therefore, for the purposes of the study, the term ‘Standard Southern British English (SSBE) will *imply* standard dialectal (grammatical and lexical) as well as pronunciation features.

## 4 Analytical frameworks

The frameworks for analysis of identity employed in the study are Sussex's (1989) advertisement components 'Action' and 'Comment' and Bell's (1984) audience and referee design models; these frameworks are examined below.

### 4.1 Structure of the ad: Action and Comment

Sussex's (1989) advertisement components of Action and Comment relate to the genre of the discourse. The Action component is comprised generally of context-based scenarios, often involving dialogic interaction, while the Comment component (which names and provides general information on the product), can be equated with the voice-over or 'voice of authority' (Piller 2001: 159–60) and tends to be monologic and decontextualised. In his study of a corpus of 108 advertisements (broadcast on a Swiss-German television channel in 1989), Lee observes that the Comment (High German) voice 'articulates with general discourses of power and authority', functioning as a 'purveyor of privileged information', a major function of the discourse of power (Lee 1992: 172–173). The Action component, on the other hand, is dominated by non-standard Swiss varieties and is associated with 'discourses of everyday informal interaction' (Lee 1992: 172–173). Similarly, Sussex's study of Australian television advertisements revealed that the Comment was dominated by 'educated' rather than 'broad' Australian voices (Sussex 1989: 165). The aims of the ad are firstly to create an acceptance of the product through consumer identification with the actors who represent the product, and secondly, to sanction the action of purchase through the authoritative Comment voice, thus appealing to the 'contrasting values' associated with status and solidarity (Lee 1992: 179–180).

### 4.2 Audience and referee design

The theory of audience design (Bell 1984) accounts for style shifts of speakers in both face-to-face and media communication. The framework assumes 'that speakers take most account of hearers in designing their talk' (Bell 1984: 159). Audience design is seen as the 'responsive' dimension of style and is used to explain style variation based on media audience (Bell 1984: 147, 1991: 126–127). Bell describes his study of how newsreaders on New Zealand radio shifted style according to two different stations, one aimed at a so-called 'higher status' and the second at a so-called 'lower-status' audience (Bell 1984: 171–172).

Bell (1984: 182) also identifies an ‘initiative’ dimension of style, ‘referee design’. In referee design, speakers diverge away from the style appropriate to their addressee towards that of a ‘referee’ who, while external to the interaction, nevertheless carries prestige for the speaker for the purpose of the interaction and therefore influences language choice. The framework distinguishes between *ingroup* and *outgroup* referees. With ingroup referee design, the speaker may shift to an extreme version of his or her own ingroup style with an ingroup or outgroup addressee. With outgroup referee design, speakers diverge from the speech patterns of their ingroup to the linguistic code and identity with which they wish to identify and which holds prestige for them for a particular purpose. The existence of consensus between the interlocutors on the prestige of the outgroup language for the particular purpose strengthens its strategic value.

Bell (1991: 137) describes his study of a sample of 150 advertisements from New Zealand TV (collected in 1986), which illustrates both audience and referee design. He found that while lexical items were used to show ingroup identity, the most common strategy was the maximisation of the use of phonological features. Successful referee design, Bell claims, employs the strategy of the repetition of a small number, or even just one important variant and furthermore, is not dependent on accuracy of reproduction (Bell 1991: 144). While audience design is more amenable to quantitative analysis due to its more long-term nature, referee design may occur in just one salient feature, and therefore qualitative analysis may be more appropriate (Bell 2001: 167). It is important, therefore, to apply both audience and referee design frameworks to analyses; regular patterns are more likely to be interpreted as audience design while divergences may be interpreted as referee design (Bell 2001: 166). In reviewing the relationship between audience and referee design, however, Bell (2001: 147) proposes that the initiative and response dimensions of style are ‘complementary and coexistent’; while we design our talk for our audience, we are simultaneously designing it in relation to other referee groups, including that of our own ingroup.

As we have seen, Piller (2001: 155) claims that advertising discourse is crucial in the construction of contemporary cultural identities. She examines the characteristics of the implied (German–English bilingual) reader in her corpus of German bilingual advertisements (2001: 163) and observes that despite the fact that receivers of such advertisements do not have uniform identities, they tend to be perceived in the realm of advertising with qualities such as ‘internationalism, future orientation, success and elitism, sophistication, fun, youth, and maleness’. Relating this to audience and referee design, we could say that the language of such German advertising has an initiative dimension in that it is instrumental in the construction of identity. By addressing the target mass audience as if they have the particular attributes outlined above, such advertising

discourse plays a role in constructing the identities of successful middle-class Germans. It can also have a responsive dimension in that, having helped in constructing this identity for its audience, it responds to the characteristics which are part of this identity. In this way, referee and audience design can be seen as having a symbiotic relationship in media contexts.

The next section will examine how such strategies in relation to variety choice can be applied to the Irish context.

### 4.3 Referee design, identity and the Irish context

In referee design, '[t]he baseline from which initiative shifts operate is the style normally designed for a particular kind of addressee' (Bell 1991: 127). While choice of style can be strategic, the impact of style in referee design is determined by the norm for a particular context. In order to identify what the baseline or norm is in the context of the radio-advertising corpus, we need to consider the radio station on which the advertisements in the corpus were aired. Up to 1979, RTÉ (Raidió Teilifís Éireann) Radio 1 was the national broadcaster's only English language radio channel available in the Irish republic; RTÉ Radio 2 was launched in that year and focused on popular music and chat, establishing RTÉ Radio 1 as the more serious channel, covering news, current affairs, music, drama and variety features, agriculture, education, religion, and sport. As all the advertisements from the corpus were aired on this station, its more serious nature suggests a more conservative and mature audience than that of Radio 2. Broadly speaking this audience could be associated with the supraregional southern variety of Irish English referred to above. Similarly, the subgroup of people who work on these advertisements as presenters or actors could be said to belong to an 'educated' and professional class associated with this variety. This is, of course, somewhat of a generalization but, as the supraregional southern variety is the more traditional conservative mainstream variety, we can, in general terms, take this style as broadly indicative of an audience designed style, while deviations from it can be regarded as referee design.

As regards ingroup referee design in the Irish context, a shift to an extreme form of vernacular Irish English can be interpreted as ingroup referee design, such a shift perhaps aimed at allowing the audience to identify with the characters so as to create solidarity through its differentiation from the outgroup style. Outgroup referee design, on the other hand, is based on an external variety and, in the Irish context, is most likely to take the form of another variety of English, such as North American or SSBE. Initial examination of the corpus reveals that this latter form is the predominant external variety. This prestige

pronunciation form is associated with radio and television in the British context and is used in particular by BBC newsreaders and presenters (Hughes et al. 2012: 3–4). As we have seen, Bell (1991: 146) highlights the prestige value of British dialects through the use of such dialects by advertisers in his study on New Zealand TV to associate with particular products.

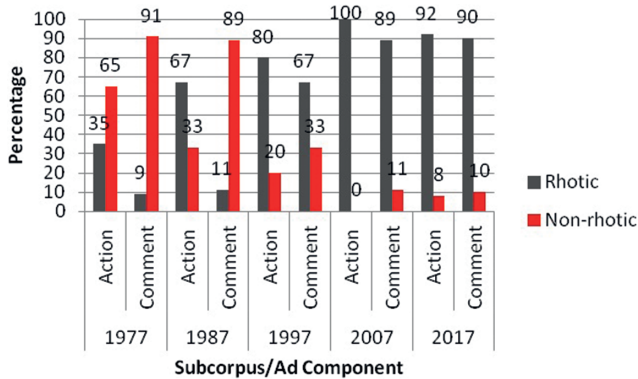
It is important, however, to point out that ‘Standard English’ in terms of accent was never adopted as an exonormative model for speakers in Ireland (Hickey 2012). As Hickey (2017b: 226) tells us, Irish English accents moved away from early-England middle class speech models after World War II. Indeed, the so-called ‘Dublin 4’ or ‘advanced Dublin English’ has a retroflex /r/ with a realization that is further away from RP than that of more conservative supraregional speakers. However, like the New Zealand situation, RP or SSBE can be interpreted as an ‘outgroup’ variety. Although it may not be the ‘desired norm’ for the Irish (Mac Mathúna 2004: 117), nonetheless RP or SSBE can be seen as carrying prestige for them for a particular purpose, in this case for the context of broadcast speech. The relationship between this accent variety and speakers in Ireland will be explored in relation to identity construction in the following sections.

#### 4.4 SSBE and Irish English in the IRAC corpus

The IRAC corpus is comprised of 200 advertisements; this main corpus can be divided into five subcorpora, each comprising 40 advertisements broadcast on RTE radio 1 at five time-points, the years 1977, 1987, 1997, 2007 and 2017. The advertisements were examined in relation to the occurrence of accent variety (Irish English or SSBE as identified by syllable-final /r/ retention or deletions, as described in section 3 above) in the particular component, Action and Comment.

Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of advertisement components displaying rhotic (Irish English) and non-rhotic (SSBE) accent through the decades on which the corpus is based. The prevalence of the SSBE feature in the 1977 and 1987 subcorpora, in particular in the Comment components of the advertisements, contrasts with its use in the later subcorpora, where Irish English rhotic pronunciation dominates in both Action and Comment.

As a starting point, we will look at the use of SSBE in terms of referee design (O’Sullivan 2016) in order to shed light on constructions of identity in the Irish context. The fact that prestige Irish English varieties are available for exploitation makes the use of SSBE in radio advertising in Ireland all the more remarkable and warrants an examination of how this form, or features associated with it,



**Figure 1:** Percentage of ad components displaying rhotic (Irish English) and non-rhotic (SSBE) accent.

can be categorized in terms of referee design, together with its implications as regards the construction of identity in the Irish context.

## 4.5 Irish identity and SSBE: Outgroup referee design

The more frequent occurrence of non-rhotic pronunciation in the two earlier subcorpora, particularly in the Comment components, associates this pronunciation form, which is external to the speech community associated with the audience of the advertisements, with discourses of ‘power and authority’ (Lee 1992: 172–173). However, non-rhotic pronunciation as associated with SSBE occurs in some instances in the Action components also. This could be seen as somewhat surprising in light of Lee’s finding that the Action tended to be associated with discourses of ‘everyday informal interaction’ (Lee 1992: 172–173) and designed to allow the audience to identify with the characters; in light of our interest in identity, it is important to look more closely at examples of the use of this accent in the Action components.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the 1977 subcorpus has the highest occurrence, within the corpus as a whole, of advertisements with non-rhotic pronunciation in their Action components. However, it is noteworthy that on closer examination, a number of advertisements, although they employ non-rhotic pronunciation, do not consistently use SSBE phonological features and actually display ‘telltale’ Irish English features alongside the feature of /r/lessness. Indeed, in the majority of the advertisements that display non-rhotic pronunciation in the 1977 and 1987 subcorpora, Irish English features are displayed in conjunction

with this non-rhotic accent. We will examine examples of advertisements from the 1977 subcorpus which illustrate this finding.

In Example (1) for *Glorney's Home and Garden*, the mix of standard phonological (i.e. non-rhotic /r/) and Irish English features is evident in the form of yod deletion in the pronunciation of [nju:] as [nu:]. The first enunciation of the word by Speaker F1 is the standard one (Line 002), but in further enunciations, the speaker uses the Irish English pronunciation (e.g. Line 003) as does the voiceover or Male Comment voice (MCV) (Line 009). Hickey (2005: 81) refers to this yod-deletion as a feature of very low salience, not significant as a social marker and having low awareness with speakers (as in Errington's concept of 'pragmatic salience', that is, 'native speakers' awareness of the social significance of different levelled linguistic alternants' (see Woolard 1998: 13). This mix of features underpins the deliberate or conscious nature of the non-rhotic feature, which can be said to be a more concrete or noticeable feature distinguishing between SSBE and Irish English than the yod deletion and thus a stronger indicator of prestige. The context is notably middle-class, depicting the couple shopping for fittings for a new house from the 'international selection', which, in turn, lends a cosmopolitan flavour to the scenario.

---

**Example (1) Glorney's 1977**

- 001 F1: I always swore I'd never [nevə] do it again (.)  
 002 once was enough but well: : here we go again (.) a new [nju:] house  
 003 and that means a new [nu:] bathroom [bɑ:θrɒm] suite (.)  
 004 new [nu:] kitchen (.) new [nju:] fireplaces [faɪəpleɪsɪz] (.)  
 005 windows (.) doors [dɔ:'z] and all the building material (.)  
 006 that's why John's off to Glorney's [glɔ:'ni:z] (.)  
 007 their international [ɪntə'næʃənəl] selection means one stop does the lot  
 008 MCV: Glorney's [glɔ:'ni:z] (.) Islandbridge and  
 009 now new [nu:] spacious showrooms in Townsend Street (.)  
 010 Glorney's [glɔ:'ni:z] (.) where houses become homes
- 

Example (2) below, an ad for *Hedex* painkillers from 1977, illustrates the pattern of the Action and Comment components displaying non-rhotic pronunciation. However, the ad is of particular interest in that within the Action component, which involves two characters, one of the characters uses non-rhotic pronunciation while the other employs rhotic pronunciation alongside other distinguishable Irish English features. The context of the ad is a conversation between two 'housewives' with background noises of children shouting. One of the housewives, Joan, complains of a headache whereupon the second recommends the product. The second part of the ad is set on the following day when Joan's friend telephones her to ask how she is feeling. Joan replies that she is feeling

'grand' (Line 011). This use of the word *grand* as meaning 'fine' is associated with Irish English (Bliss 1984; Hickey 2017c). It is notable that Joan's pronunciation, while not identifiable with a particular region or county and could be described as supraregional southern (the nonvernacular Irish English form, as discussed above), is however, rhotic while that of her friend is non-rhotic. The Comment component, which follows the Action, also employs non-rhotic pronunciation (Lines 014 and 015). Both women are depicted as middle-class suburban housewives and indeed Joan's use of these Irish English features do not affect her status in this regard. This has parallels with Lee's study in that the Action components, in which the localized varieties of Swiss German predominated, were mainly associated with 'middle-class' settings (Lee 1992: 175). However, it is interesting to note that Joan's friend and 'advisor', who first names and goes on to provide the information about the product, speaks with a non-rhotic accent and does not use any distinguishing Irish English lexical features. Her function here could be construed as being similar to that of the Comment voice in naming and providing information on the product (Lee 1992: 170). She is, in effect, 'a purveyor of privileged information' (Lee 1992: 172). In this case, therefore, the non-rhotic Comment voice reinforces the voice of Joan's friend in endorsing the product.

This strategy is also in evidence within the Action component in other advertisements in the 1987 subcorpus, for example, an advertisement for *Siúcra* Irish sugar (Example (3) below). In this advertisement, one character (F1) employs a supraregional southern accent (Lines 002, 004), while a second (F2) displays SSBE non-rhotic pronunciation (Lines 005, 007) and is used to consolidate the sanctioning voice or voice of authority, which, interestingly, is also non-rhotic (Lines 010, 012). This, ironically, is in relation to an Irish product which exploits the Irish word for sugar, *siúcra*. Again, notwithstanding the exploitation of this distinctive Irish marker in the product name, the choice of the SSBE-associated feature for the 'expert' voice can be said to reference an 'outgroup' identity, which is associated with the high social status of the speakers of this variety (as discussed in Section 3 above).

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#### Example (2) Hedex 1977

001 ((children shouting))  
 002 F1: oh why can't they keep quiet (.)  
 003 don't they know I've got a splitting headache?  
 004 F2: why don't you take something for it Joan?  
 005 F1: I would but most pain killers [kɪləʒ] seem to upset my stomach  
 006 F2: Hedex won't (.) here [hɪə] take these  
 007 I'll get some more on the way home (.) they're easy to swallow  
 008 ((phone ringing))  
 009 F1: hello (.)

- 010 F2: are you feeling any better [betə<sup>ɹ</sup>] this morning [mɔ:nɪŋ] Joan?  
 011 F1: oh I'm feeling **grand** (.) Hedex worked marvellously [mɑ:rv<sup>ə</sup>ləsli]  
 012 from now on I won't take anything else (.)  
 013 listen I'll see you at three and we can go  
 014 MCV: Hedex (.) powerful [paʊəfəl] against headaches  
 015 (.) gentle on your [jə<sup>ɹ</sup>] stomach

---

### Example (3) Siúcra 1987

- 001 ((background supermarket sounds))  
 002 F1: hiya Helen. (.) did you see the special offer on **fruit** [fru:t] ?  
 003 I've bought all I need for my Christmas baking (.)  
 004 I think I'll get the **sugar** [ʃʊgə] too while I'm at it  
 005 F2: But don't just say **sugar** [ʃʊgə 'ɪ] say Siúcra  
 006 F1: Hmm?  
 007 F2: Siúcra (.) Irish **sugar** [ʃʊgə 'ɪ]  
 008 F1: Oh yes of course (.) I'll be sure to –  
 009 MCV: Siúcra (.) is ready to meet all your Christmas needs (.)  
 010 with Siúcra brown **sugars** [ʃʊgə 'z] (.) Siúcra **caster** [kɑ:stə<sup>ɹ</sup>] (.) Siúcra icing **sugar** [ʃʊgə 'ɪ]  
 011 and the handy instant Royal Icing  
 012 Siúcra (.) **nature's** [nei.tʃə<sup>ɹ</sup>z] way of making good things (.) eve (h)n **better** [betə<sup>ɹ</sup>]
- 

These advertisements are interesting in that the 'expert' characters are positioned in the Action components, thus corroborating the Comment voice while also allowing for identification of the listener with the characters. This strategy of using 'housewife' characters emulating SSBE is a common one in these advertisements. At this time in Ireland, married women were only beginning to move back into the workforce (Ferriter 2004). In the decades of the earlier sub-corpora, in particular, 'housewives' made up a large proportion of the listener-ship of the 'accompanying discourse' (Cook 2001) in the form of the radio shows around which the advertisements are broadcast (Oram 1986: 551). It is conceivable that advertisements with this pattern are aimed at women who aspired to upward social mobility (characterized by the prestigious accent which was associated with broadcasting, both at home and in the UK) and therefore that the notions of overt prestige and outgroup referee design (based on a speaker of SSBE) dominate in these instances. Trudgill (1972) speculates that the orientation of women towards overt prestige is a result of their relatively powerless position in society, and they consequently develop linguistic strategies for upward mobility. In addition, the employment of the strategy within the Action component of using a housewife with a nonrhotic accent (the out-group referee) as the more authoritative figure alongside the 'baseline' of a less

'expert' rhotic speaker (audience design), for example, in the *Hedex* and *Siúcra* advertisements, can be seen as corroborating the authoritative and expert Comment voice. It would appear that the audience for these advertisements (housewives) are constructed as having aspirations towards high social status and a more sophisticated identity, as associated with broadcast style. However, the data imply that 'educated' varieties of Irish English are not considered appropriate in referencing this high status identity. This suggests a lack of 'cultural confidence' (Tymoczko and Ireland 2003) with regard to Irish English. As Croghan (1986: 265) claims, from the nineteenth century, the Irish adopted, in addition to the English language itself, 'the political culture of language from England which included the myth that [Irish-English] was deviant'.

In terms of audience and referee design theory and its application to these advertisements, Bell (2001: 167) points out that regular patterns of linguistic behavior are more likely to be associated with audience design, while referee design is associated with deviations from these patterns. The combination of Irish English phonological elements, interspersed with aberrational SSBE features visible in the advertisements, as described above, corroborates Bell's observation and indicates that the speakers in these advertisements are shifting style from Irish English (that of their ingroup) to what is regarded as the more prestigious style associated with the speakers of SSBE (the outgroup referee). As discussed, Bell (1991: 143) observes the repetition of a small number or even one variant as a successful referee design strategy, claiming that it is more important that a marked linguistic variant is displayed once out of a potential ten occurrences than that an unmarked variant occur nine times. As we have seen, this is visible in a number of advertisements in the corpus. Therefore, in the context of these advertisements, even a single variant associated with SSBE is sufficient to provide associations with this form and for this strategy to be effective in suggesting status and prestige. In this apparently very conscious emulation of this prestige outgroup style, the speakers in the advertisements illustrate effectively the initiative dimension of referee design.

As discussed, Piller claims that advertising discourse is crucial in the construction of listener identities. This initiative dimension creates a relationship with the audience and in this way plays a role in constructing the identities of middle-class Irish 'housewives' who were upwardly aspirational in terms of social standing. By addressing the target mass audience as if they have the particular attributes associated with the style of speaking, such advertising discourse is, in effect, playing a vital role in constructing the identities. Such advertising can also have a 'responsive' dimension in that, having helped in constructing this particular identity for its audience, it responds to the characteristics which are part of this identity.

In order to examine whether the advertisements have been effective in constructing identities associated with the prestigious SSBE speaker, it is necessary to look at the later subcorpora in terms of frequency of SSBE. As illustrated in Figure 1 above, the most notable change from 1977 to 2017 is in the way in which the referee in the Action is no longer a non-rhotic SSBE speaker. Interestingly, one of the few examples of the employment of non-rhotic SSBE in the Action component in the 2017 subcorpus is of a scenario in tongue-in-cheek style; this ad (Example (4) below) employs inter-generic intertextuality (Fairclough 1992) (where the voice of another genre is contained in the ad), in that it is reflective of the recent *Ladybird* book series for adults, which parodies the style (in terms of text and illustrations) of the company's books, written predominantly for children. In effect in this ad, both the RP/SSBE accent (in that it is presented in a style similar to old British newsreels, which featured the authoritative commentator and background musical accompaniment), and the notion of 'housewife' are presented as anachronistic, belonging to a bygone era (in which it is difficult to switch banks). This is conveyed by the suggestion that Kate's reaction to Seán's (apparently her husband or partner) question about dinner has added a note of tension to the initially jovial mood of the interaction (Line 008 and 009). Interestingly, the non-rhotic pronunciation, as in the earlier subcorpora, is not employed consistently by the speaker, M1. It is also worth noting that the use of the Irish firstname, Seán, contrasts with the names more usually associated with this series (Peter and Jane), again unsettling the established indexical values associated with the accent variety.

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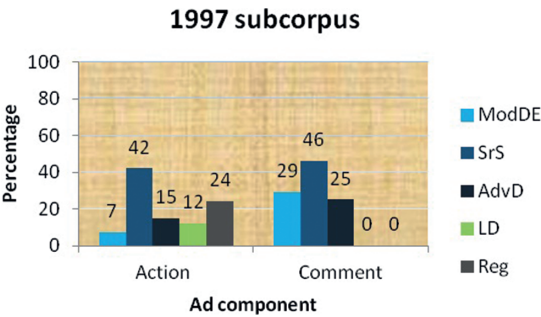
#### Example (4) Switch your Bank 2017

- 001 M1: Our book today is How to Switch Bank  
 002 I'll begin  
 003 **Seán** and Kate want to switch bank  
 004 But mistakenly think they're in an era where it's **hard** [hɑ:d] to do  
 005 Then Kate **discovers** [diskʌvə'z] Switch your bank dot ie  
 006 She finds switching bank is **easier** [i:zi ə] than she thinks  
 007 Even a current mortgage or credit **card** [kɑ:d] account  
 008 **They laugh about what silly billies they were** [wɜ:]  
 009 **Until Seán asks Kate what's for dinner** [dɪn.ə]  
 010 Switching bank is easier than you think  
 011 Visit Switch your bank dot ie  
 012 Supported by the **Department** [dɪpɑ:tmənt] of Finance
- 

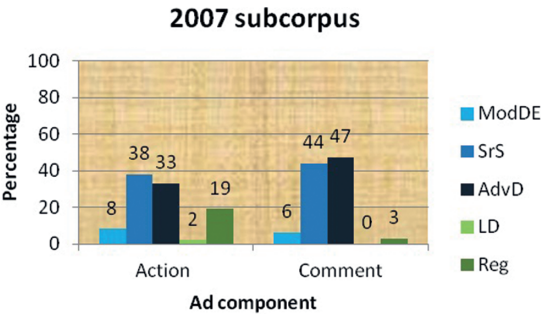
Based on the data, therefore, it would appear that identity based on the outgroup referee of the SSBE speaker was not sustainable in the Irish advertising context and that this variety has been replaced in constructing upwardly mobile identity. The variety which has replaced it will be examined in the following section.

### 4.6 Irish identity and Advanced Dublin English: Outgroup referee design

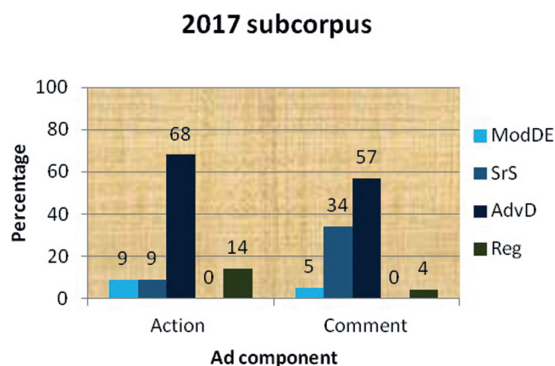
As illustrated in Figure 1, Irish English shows a marked increase as the decades progress, dominating in both the Action and Comment components from 1997 on. At this point, it is important to look at the Irish English rhotic accent at a more micro-level, in terms of sub-varieties of Irish English. Figures 2, 3 and 4 below provide us with a more detailed picture of the Irish English rhotic Action and Comment voices, based on the local/non-local categories outlined above. In the 1997, 2007 and 2017 sub-corpus, the majority of accents in both Action and Comment components fall into non-local subcategories; the moderate Dublin (ModDE) accent, the supraregional southern accent (SrS) or the relatively recently established AdvD, with far less frequent use of Local Dublin (LD) or regional (Reg). Overall, up to 2007, the SrS variety dominates, corroborating this variety as audience design at these time points. It is notable that the most remarkable



**Figure 2:** Percentage of advert components displaying Irish English accent sub-variety 1997.



**Figure 3:** Percentage of advert components displaying Irish English accent sub-variety 2007.



**Figure 4:** Percentage of advert components displaying Irish English accent sub-variety 2017.

difference in the later sub-corpora (1997, 2007, 2017) when compared with those of 1977 and 1987 is the advent of advanced Dublin English, and this variety becomes the dominant one in the 2017 subcorpus.

As we have seen, AdvD first appears in the 1997 subcorpus. This variety can be categorised generally as referee design in this subcorpus, where it is far less frequent than SrS in both ad components. Due to its dissociative nature, as described in Section 2 above, we might expect it to come under the category of outgroup, as opposed to ingroup referee design; this will be explored below and illustrated with reference to an advertisement from the 1997 subcorpus which shows how AdvD is used by particular characters in the Action as outgroup referee design, in order to call up associations with a more cosmopolitan outgroup identity.

The more frequent occurrence of AdvD in the authoritative Comment component corroborates its prestige status. However, as the quantitative figures demonstrate, AdvD is also exploited, albeit to a lesser extent, in the Action. This is illustrated in Example (5) for the money transfer company, *Western Union*, where we see evidence of AdvD, as based on the North American outgroup referee, in the everyday discourse of the Action scenario. In this advertisement, a young Irish man phones his mother from the United States with a request for cash to attend a so-called ‘bachelor party’. The character of the son is interesting in light of the comments of the Irish journalist and economist, David McWilliams, on how Ireland is viewed as having become ‘more American’ in recent years (McWilliams 2007: 97). Indeed, the son’s realisation of *party* (Line 004) and *star* (Line 008) exhibits the retroflex /r/, characteristic of both AdvD and North American English. Additionally, the word *party* (Line 004) shows T-flapping, another variable shared by these varieties. Hickey has viewed AdvD as delineating the boundary between

the sub-cultures of contemporary youth and contemporary parents (Hickey 2005: 73). The mother’s pronunciation appears somewhat anachronistic against the son’s contemporary Americanised AdvD, as in her exaggerated realisation of *today* in Line 007, as the monophthong [e:] rather than the diphthong [ei]. Contrast is also achieved through lexical items such as the mother’s use of *stag night* (Line 005) in response to the son’s North American term *bachelor party* (Line 004). This intensifies the associations of the son’s accent with the outgroup referee of North American English speakers, which is imbued with a sense of the cosmopolitan, mobility, sophistication and ‘urban modernity’ (Hickey 2005: 72).

---

**Example (5) Western Union 1997**

001 ((telephone ringing))  
002 M1: yeah Ma  
003 F1: hi son how are the States?  
004 M1: fine ah I’ve got a **bachelor party** [pa:ʔri] to go to  
005 F1: you mean a **sta(h)g** [sta:g] **night** [naɪt]  
006 M1: yeah so I need some cash  
007 F1: I’ll send it right over with Western Union (.) it’ll be with you today [təde:]  
008 M1: ah ma you’re a star [sta:ʔ] (.)  
009 F1: so son (.) who’s getting married? (heh)  
010 M1: I am  
011 F1: SON  
012 MCV: with four hundred Western Union agents in Ireland  
013 including most main post offices  
014 you can send [sɛ:nd] money around the world in minutes (.)  
015 Western Union money transfer (.) the fastest way to send money worldwide (.)  
016 call one eight hundred three nine five three nine five for your nearest location

---

We will look now to the 2007 subcorpus to investigate whether any changes have occurred within the decade in relation to this outgroup referee.

## 4.7 Irish identity and Advanced Dublin English: Evolution to audience design

Turning to the 2007 subcorpus, Figure 3 (above) shows the Irish English sub-varieties displayed in the Action and Comment components of this subcorpus. The increase in the use of AdvD in the 2007 sub-corpus (especially in the Comment where it surpasses SrS) suggests that this form may be moving towards replacing SrS as the audience-designed style in that it is becoming a more regular pattern. This is discussed now with reference to specific advertisements from the 2007 sub-corpus.

Example (6) is an advertisement with safety advice from the Irish *Electricity Supply Board* (ESB) and the *Age Action Ireland* charity organisation (which promotes better policies and services for older people). It is delivered by a well-known, middle-aged Irish current affairs broadcaster, whose ability, as the mother of a large family, to combine career and motherhood, is often the subject of media comment in Ireland. Her vowel sounds have AdvD features, for example, the realisation of *home* (Line 003) and *clothes* (Line 006) as diphthongs and the raised realisation of *avoid* (Line 007). Indeed, Amador-Moreno (2010: 81) alludes to this well-known personality, associating her with the ‘prototypical female speaker’ of AdvD, which she points out, is often the object of mockery. However, there is no hint of mockery in this advertisement; the advanced Dublin features rather operate as features of a serious and authoritative voice, conveying valuable advice for an older cohort of listeners.

---

**Example (6) ESB and Age Action 2007**

- 001 FCV: with electricity so much a part of our daily lives  
 002 Age Action and ESB customer supply  
 003 has some advice on its safe use in the **home** [həʊm] (.)  
 004 if you’re using a portable [pɔ:r tə bəl] electric heater  
 005 make sure it’s positioned safely  
 006 keep it away from curtains{ kərtənz} and don’t use it to dry **clothes** [kləʊz] (.)  
 007 in the kitchen **avoid** [əʊvɔɪd] overloading sockets and using extension leads (.)  
 008 this safety advice is brought to you by ESB customer supply  
 009 in association [əsəʊsɪeɪʃən] with Age Action
- 

AdvD is also evident in the Action scenario of an advertisement for *Eircom* homephone and broadband (Example (7)). In this advertisement, a mother speaks about how she is able to keep in touch with her family even though they have ‘gone global’. Interestingly, the accent of the mother has distinct advanced features including retroflex /r/ as in *New York* [jo:ɹk] (Line 001) and the extreme diphthongisation of *global* [gləʊbəl] (Line 002), which is closer to the RP or SSBE form, rather than the Irish English monophthong [glo:.bəl] (Hickey 2005: 75). The Comment voice also has elements of AdvD as in the velarisation of /l/ in the word *rental* in Line 008.

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**Example (7) Eircom Talktime 2007**

- 001 F1: **New York** [jo:ɹk] Sydney and Donegal (.)  
 002 my family really has gone **global** [gləʊbəl]  
 003 but with great rates from Eircom Talktime international

004 we have lots of proper chats so it feels like they're local again (.)  
 005 MCV: let Eircom Talktime International bring loved ones closer this Christmas  
 006 with one hundred minutes to over forty countries worldwide  
 007 and unlimited evening and weekend national calls  
 008 all for a fixed monthly fee of thirty five ninety nine including line rental [rentəʔ]  
 009 freefone one eight hundred three six nine three six nine  
 010 for a great value Eircom Talktime package that's you (.)  
 011 terms and conditions apply.

---

As discussed, Hickey associates AdvD with youth norms which are, 'recognizably different from that of contemporary parents' (2005: 73). However, in the *ESB and Age Action* and the *Eircom* advertisement, in contrast to the *Western Union* advertisement from the 1997 subcorpus (Example (5) above), it is employed by 'parent' characters. In this way, it moves away from the more conservative SrS style, associated with speakers of this age group and radio channel, and attempts to reference, not just a cosmopolitan image associated with British and US speakers (due to its parallels with these varieties), but also to identify with a contemporary, youthful image which dissociates itself, not only from the traditional local accent, but also from the more conservative supraregional form. This identification takes place, not just within a youth subculture but for all those Irish English speakers who wish to be associated with a new, more modern and 'socially ambitious' (Hickey 2005: 6–7) Irish identity. As Thakerar, Giles, and Cheshire (1982: 216) put it, it can be seen as 'linguistic divergence' by the older speakers 'motivated by psychological convergence' to a more fashionable image.

Hickey (2017a) views RTÉ presenters as instrumental in spreading AdvD in southern Ireland. The increase in the use of AdvD in both *Action* and *Comment* components in the 2007 sub-corpus and its overall dominance in the *Comment* components of this subcorpus suggest that what was initially a style based on referee design is now becoming an audience designed style and the regular rather than the exceptional pattern. Its appearance in the speech of older 'parent' characters, who can be associated with the more mature audience of the radio station, also points to its evolution as an audience-designed style. The AdvD accents of these characters contrast with the regional accents of the parent character in Example (5) (*Western Union*). Furthermore, the use of AdvD by more mature speakers suggests that it is developing associations with a wider age-range and is no longer such a key aspect in the delineation of younger and older speakers. It is interesting to compare these 'parent' characters with the 'housewives' of the 1977 subcorpus as discussed in section 4.5. AdvD appears to have replaced the outgroup referee of the SSBE speaker in this more recent subcorpus. Interestingly, however, the outgroup referee continues to be modelled

on broadcasting styles, in order to be associated with a more sophisticated and cosmopolitan identity.

Piller (2001: 4) cites research which claims that the existing social order is represented in genres such as advertising, but is also in turn influenced by and recreated by such discourses. Advertising in Ireland could be said, therefore, to have had an initiative role in the construction of the identity of the receivers of the ad as modern, sophisticated and cosmopolitan, through the employment of this accent, as seen in the 1997 subcorpus. Having helped to construct such identities, it responds to them using this same accent, but as an audience designed rather than a referee designed style, evidenced in the 2007 subcorpus (O'Sullivan 2018). However, the fact that, in many of the advertisements, relatively few variants associated with the new form are present indicates that this process was still in the transitional phase at the time of broadcast. Successful referee design, Bell claims, employs the strategy of the repetition of even just one salient variant and furthermore, is not dependent on accuracy of reproduction (Bell 1991: 144).

Moving to the most recent subcorpus, that of 2017 (Figure 4 above), we can see that AdvD is now the most frequent form in both Action and Comment. This corroborates its evolution to an audience-designed style and highlights the renegotiation of Irish identity to a more hybrid, cosmopolitan one, rather than one based on the colonising variety. According to postcolonial theorists, the postcolonial condition brings with it, 'power to appropriate the colonizer's culture and invest elements of it with new meanings as well as power to subvert colonial cultural authority and cultural forms' (Tymoczko and Ireland 2003: 8). Post-modernist theory proposes that when there is contact between groups of different cultures, they have the option to choose the extent to which they will appropriate aspects of each other's culture, and indeed group individuality and solidarity can be enhanced through a rejection of 'foreign' influence. In effect, 'the language of the coloniser ... [is] colonised in its turn by the language of the colonised' (Cronin 2011: 55).

By virtue of the fact that both SSBE and also the categories of nonlocal Irish English (as outlined earlier) demonstrate a rejection of traditional and local codes, they can be said to be associated with a contemporary and cosmopolitan identity, affording them a certain status and prestige. However, advanced Dublin English goes further than the other nonlocal varieties in that its sense of the cosmopolitan is accentuated by its encapsulating elements from Irish, British and American English, thus forming a hybrid, more globalised accent variety.

Hickey (2017a) describes more recent innovations in AdvD, the most prominent being the lowering of short front vowels, for example, *dress* [dræs]. In the original IRAC corpus which comprised the four subcorpora of 1977 to 2007,

newer features of advanced Dublin English, as observed by Hickey (2012), were not identifiable (O'Sullivan 2013:172). In the 2017 subcorpus, for the most part, the AdvD is mainly confined to /l/ velarisation and /r/ retroflexion, and is without the newer features. However, with regard to the children's accents exploited in this subcorpus, AdvD does in fact show these more recent innovations.

Short front vowel lowering is apparent in the DRESS vowel in both the *Curry's PC World* (Example (8)) and *Affordable Childcare* (Example (9)) advertisements, both of which feature the voices of children. This feature is apparent in, for example, the words *sell* (Line 001) in the *Curry's PC World* advertisement and *get* (Line 009) in *Affordable Childcare*. Short front vowel lowering works alongside /r/ retroflexion and /l/ velarisation, and even PRIDE retraction, as in the realization of *Ireland* with a back starting point (Line 001 in Example (9)) (see Hickey 2004: 46) to form an 'extreme' variety of AdvD. Notably in the latter advertisement featuring two children, however, the AdvD of the first child commentator, who is female (FCV), is juxtaposed against the more conservative Irish English accent of the male child commentator (MCV) whose pronunciation does not display any AdvD features. It seems somewhat anomalous, however, that alongside, the AdvD features, the FCV uses the strongly vernacular and stigmatized alveolar stop in the pronunciation of *three* as [tri:] (Line 005) whereas the MCV uses the less salient dental stop in the realization of *thousands* (Line 006). It is interesting to remark, nevertheless, that it is the child with the AdvD features who is the source of 'privileged information' (Lee 1992: 172–3) in that it is she who opens and closes the advertisement and also names the website it is promoting.

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#### Example (8) Curry's PC World 2017

- 001 F1: Do you **sell** [sæt] fridges?  
 002 M1: We do.  
 003 F1: And freezers?  
 004 M1: Yep  
 005 F1: And washing machines and dishwashers?  
 006 M1: All at unbeatable prices. In fact we won't be beaten on price  
 007 F1: And what about curly pieces?  
 008 M1: What's that?  
 009 F1: Curly pieces you know. Curly pieces **world** [wɜ:ɹld] we start with you  
 010 M1: Oh this is Curry's PC World.  
 011 We've got Ireland's largest range of home appliances and technology.  
 012 F1: Aah now everything makes sense  
 013 MCV: Curry's PC World. We start with you
-

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**Example (9) Affordable Childcare 2017**

- 001 FCV: Here's some good news for mummies and daddies in **Ireland** [aɪrlənd]  
 002 **Childcare** [tʃaɪldkɛər] will soon be a lot more **affordable** [əfɔːr.də.bəl t]  
 003 Because from this September every family can get a subsidy  
 004 For any **child** [tʃaɪld] aged between six months  
 005 and **three** [triː] years old in registered childcare  
 006 MCV: And **thousands** [ˈθaʊ.zənts] more will be eligible for extra **support** [səpɔːrt]  
 007 for children up to the age of fifteen  
 008 FCV: **Go** [gəʊ] to Affordable Childcare **dot** [dɒt] ie  
 009 To find out how much **support** [səpɔːt t] **your** child can **get** [gæt]  
 010 MCV: Brought to you by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs  
 011 FCV: Told you it was good news
- 

## 4.8 Irish identity and Advanced Dublin English: Ingroup referee design through stylisation

In the analysis up to this point, we have interpreted AdvD initially as outgroup referee design and have considered its evolution to an audience designed style. It is however, interesting to investigate whether this form, given its dissociative nature, can be seen in terms of ingroup referee design (where the speaker shifts to an extreme version of the ingroup style, based on a common variety, not shared by the outgroup). The exploitation of vernacular or local forms of Irish English (a common strategy in the corpus), in order to allow the listener to identify with the ingroup speaker, could be classified as ingroup referee design. It is worth investigating however, whether AdvD can ever be classified in this way and what the implications for constructing identity are.

Bell (2001: 166) observes how the responsive and the initiative dimensions of language use are manifest in various approaches to style, such as Bakhtin's (1981) concepts of Style (responsive) and Stylization (initiative) as well as Bell's (1984, 2001) own audience design (responsive) and referee design (initiative). Given that both referee design and stylisation are interpreted as initiative dimensions of style, Coupland's (2001) notion of 'strategic inauthenticity', which is achieved through stylisation, is useful in exploring the notion of AdvD as ingroup referee design.

Coupland (2001: 372) claims that the stylisation of dialect can be interpreted as a type of 'strategic self-deauthentication' through the employment of features of ingroup speech (in effect, ingroup referee design) while indicating 'less than full ownership' of this speech style. The fact that ingroup referee design is based on an extreme version of the ingroup style renders it inauthentic.

Therefore, ingroup referee design is inextricably bound up with the notion of authenticity. Moore (2011: 49) observes how media commentary in relation to the D4 or AdvD accent represents the accent as an 'imitation' and not 'real' or 'authentic' and how the D4 accent is 'explicitly denaturalized' as an ideological construct in the Irish sociolinguistic context (p.42). According to this construct, the accent has

no community of 'native speakers', only people who are pretending to be something they aren't; not authentically linked to any particular place, it spread across the countryside like an infectious disease; above all, it has no connection to a shared Irish past – it was only invented recently, during the economic boom years of the 'Celtic Tiger' economy. The 'D4 accent' is then itself an emblem, and a creature, of that recent and short-lived period of Irish affluence. . . all seem to agree that it is an imitation – that it is, in fact, 'imitation' as opposed to 'real' or authentic. It is no one's 'native' accent – it is always 'put-on' . . .

(Moore 2011: 49)

Amador-Moreno (2010: 81) also observes how this accent is derided due to its 'pretentious' image. The representation of this accent in the *Spar* advertisement (Example 10) is a hyperbolised and artificial representation of the accent, which, even in its natural form is seen as artificial and contrived.

Rudolph (M1) speaks with a hyperbolised form of the regional accent associated with County Cork; this is mainly achieved through the accent's large intonational range (Hickey 2004: 33) as in Lines 003 and 011, but also through such pronunciations as the realisation of *the* and *then* as alveolar stops i.e. *the* as [də] and *then* as [dən] (Line 008) and think as [tɪnk] (Line 011). Santa's (M2) accent, on the other hand, is an extreme form of AdvD, exploiting features such as T-flapping (Line 002) and GOAT-diphthongisation (Lines 005 and 006). The word *sparkly* [spɔ:kli] (Line 007) in particular is hyperbolised, the advanced form being closer to [spɔ:ɹkli] as in the realisation of *Spar* in the Comment (Line 010). Hickey (2004: 49) observes that the combination of retroflex /ɹ/ and vowel raising was a feature which was the subject of comment around the time of his publication (2004), and the extreme form plays on and exploits this feature. This form is associated particularly with a more extreme form of contemporary AdvD, satirically referred to as *Dartspeak*, DART being an acronym for Dublin Area Rapid Transport, a suburban railway serving commuters in the southern part of Dublin city. The pronunciation of the term *dart* was salient as a feature of AdvD as speakers used the word frequently to refer to the public transport system in the capital. This term was later changed to *Dortspeak* [dɔ:ɹspi:k] in order to satirise the retracted and rounded vowel pronunciation (see Table 1, Section 2).

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**Example (10) Spar 2007**

- 001 M1: ((panting)) (.) right (.) what've we got to eat?  
 002 M2: **got** [gɒr] a carrot at the last house Rudolph (.) looks nice  
 003 M1: nice? nice? how do I know it isn't a genetically **↑ modified** carrot?  
 004 we've no idea where it's been (.) is it Fairtrade?  
 005 M2: ammm **ok** [əʊkeɪ] (.) well Spar now has reindeer food for just two **euro** [jʊərəʊ]  
 006 and all **proceeds** [prəʊsi:dz] **go** [gəʊ] to the Irish Hospice Foundation  
 007 and it's all a bit **sparkly** [spɔːkli] and magical too  
 008 M1: oh right (.) well let's hope **the** [de] next family has some then [den] (.)  
 009 MCV: always **there** [ðeɪ] for you with reindeer food at Christmas  
 010 under the tree at Spar [spɑːɹ] (.)  
 011 M1: **Santy** (.) **I think** [tɪŋk] we should get a hybrid **↑ sleigh** ::
- 

Coupland (2001: 372) argues that the stylisation of dialect can be understood as a way of using normative community speech forms 'at one remove' so as not to explicitly advocate the norms of tradition and cultural stability, while at the same time respecting their value. While the AdvD, in contrast to the local Cork accent, may not be readily associated with conventional interpretations of tradition or of cultural value, nevertheless Coupland's criteria for stylisation (2007: 154) can be applied to the representation of both these accents in the advertisement. This representation projects personae external to the speech event; it is metaphorical; it is reflexive and knowing; it requires an audience from within the speech community to interpret it; it activates processes of social comparison and reassessment in and with receivers of the ad; it allows for another level of social context to be brought into the situation and thus facilitates re-evaluation of existing norms; it is creative and performed and involves a hyperbolic realisation of the styles targeted.

The juxtaposition of the hyperbolised forms of these accents, both of which are culturally familiar to Irish English speakers, could be said to signify the 'moral panic' which Moore proposes has developed in Irish society in relation to the 'authenticity' of the AdvD accent and its relationship to Irish identity (Moore 2011: 57). The notion of authenticity is of course ideologically constructed. In the Irish sociolinguistic environment, the Cork accent is perceived as having vernacular authenticity (Coupland 2007: 180–181) (O'Sullivan and Kelly-Holmes 2017: 278); like the local Dublin accent, it is associated with traditional conservative values. The AdvD, however, is seen as inauthentic in these terms, 'not authentically linked to any particular place' (Moore 2011: 42, 49). This ideological situation is effectively replicated in the ad, through its highlighting of the contrast in these varieties and the authenticities (or inauthenticities) associated with them. Indeed, Hickey (2005: 106) refers to the

'phonetic gulf' between new Dublin English (AdvD) and conservative Cork English. The stylised representations, however, allow the overall voice of the ad to distance itself from full ownership of both these voices. In Coupland's words: 'The transparent knowingness of the representation [...] gives the audience license to enjoying the parading of themselves, and even to find it confirmatory, credentializing, and solidary – as well as humorous' (Coupland 2001: 371). The patent artificiality of both stylised accents situates the advertisement as 'play', as 'laughing with' rather than 'laughing at' the speakers of both local and non-local varieties, and indeed at what has become a mild hysteria around their putative contradictory values. In effect, this 'inauthenticity', and the 'moral panic' surrounding it, is 'reflected back' to the Irish speech community, allowing the receivers of the ad to reconcile this 'moral panic' as part of a new Irish identity through a 'cultural reassessment' (2001: 371). The ad effectively acknowledges that the AdvD accent is seen as contrived, but the hyperbolised Cork accent is also contrived and that neither variety and both encapsulate Irish identity. The strategy of employing distinguishing features from the accents of the two, often seen as rival, counties functions to support the effect of self-reflexivity and that of 'laughing with' Irish English speakers as a speech community rather than 'laughing at' the speakers of particular varieties and therefore establishing both accents as part of an ingroup style.

As we have seen, stylisation can be seen in terms of the initiative dimension of language use and therefore as referee design (Bell 2001). At one level, the use of the AdvD accent, in that it dissociates from local accents, could be interpreted as outgroup referee design; on the other hand, however, through its stylisation, deauthentication and subsequent reauthentication alongside the Cork accent, the AdvD is given status as an ingroup style in a similar way to the Cork accent, both accents encapsulating the 'multiple identities' (Koslow, Shamdasani, and Touchstone 1994) of the Irish.

This hyperbolised representation of AdvD is seen again in the 2017 subcorpus in an advertisement promoting TV licence (Example (11) below). This hyperbolisation demonstrates how the AdvD form in 2017 has become enregistered as a stereotype in the Irish linguistic environment. The ad displays intertextuality in that it plays on the popular *Ross O'Carroll Kelly* series, which satirizes the accent and the group (from the privileged southside of Dublin) it indexes (Amador-Moreno and Terrazas-Calero 2017; Terrazas-Calero, this volume). The advertisement is based around a mock promotion for a travel agency which specializes in travel to rugby matches, with a voiceover bearing strong similarities to the fictional character of Ross O'Carroll-Kelly, a wealthy rugby union 'jock' from the prestigious and affluent D4 area in Dublin's southside; it suggests that there are

better things to spend money on than a fine for non-payment of TV licence. The advertisement hyperbolizes particular ‘unpopular’ features of the accent, many of which have been discarded (Hickey 2004: 46). These include the combination of retroflex /r/ and vowel raising (Line 007), as discussed in relation to the Spar ad (Example (10) above) and a rather extreme and hyperbolized PRIDE retraction (Line 001). Again, the stylization allows a distancing from full ownership of the accent.

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#### Example (11) TV Licence 2017

- 001 M1:** Tired [taɪrd] of lining [laɪnɪŋ] out for rugby tickets  
 002 The ruck for hotel rooms and the scrum for flights  
 003 So why not offload all the arrangements  
 004 For your next away game to SetPiece travel  
 005 The rugby match specialists  
 006 Let Set Piece Travel organise everything  
 007 Putting in the **hard** [hɑːd] **yards** [jɑːdz] so all you have to do is choose  
 008 Which of the **guys** [gaɪz] is coming on tour  
 009 MCV: Like a great rugby getaway  
 010 There are much better things to do with one thousand euro  
 011 Than pay a TV licence fine  
 012 Get your TV licence at TV licence dot ie  
 013 It's the law  
 014 M1: One try [traɪ] and you'll be converted  
 015 Set Piece Travel. Answering Ireland's [aɪrləndz] fans call  
 016 MCV: Brought to you by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
- 

This ad substantiates the enregisterment of this accent in the Irish English sociolinguistic landscape, and supports its categorization as an ingroup style and identity marker.

## 5 Conclusion

The changes in variety choice in IRAC through the decades suggests that speakers of Irish English have rejected the outgroup referee associated with SSBE in favour of that associated with AdvD, an accent variety which represents a more hybrid identity. White highlights the necessity, in the face of globalization, of maintaining a local identity projected through varieties of English which ‘do not carry the colonial taint of standard British English’ (White 2006: 222). As she puts it:

One way in which we manage to reconcile our citizenship of the global village and these more local allegiances is through our use of language, and in the case of Ireland, a standard variety of Irish English fits the bill, rather than standard British English with its colonial overtones, or Irish, which may express some aspects of Irish identity, but does not, unlike standard Irish English, easily permit users to link their local identity with a global one.

(White 2006: 223)

We have observed how SSBE, which dominated as an outgroup form in the 1977 and 1987 subcorpora, declines in the later subcorpora; this suggests that the 'colonial overtones' of this form render it an unsuitable one in linking local and global identity (White 2006: 223). We have observed the advent of the new Irish English accent variety of AdvD in the 1997 subcorpus and traced its development through the subcorpora of 2007 and 2017. Initially, it was designated as outgroup referee design, given its dissociative nature and due to its being the exceptional rather than the prevailing pattern. In the 1997 subcorpus, it references a contemporary, Americanised 'youth subculture', which is distinct from the more conservative values of parents. However, in the 2007 subcorpus, its increased frequency and use by 'parent' characters mean that it is no longer confined to younger speakers; this justifies its classification as audience design as it appears to respond to the newly constructed identities of these parent characters which can be associated with the more mature audience of the radio station. This resonates with the observation by Piller that receivers of advertisements, are constructed in advertising as having particular implied characteristics (2001: 173). Having constructed the identities of the more mature Radio 1 audience as modern, global and sophisticated, the advertisements then respond to these new identities using AdvD again, but this time as audience design. Finally, the enregisterment of AdvD facilitates its designation as ingroup referee design. It allows for the variety to be hyperbolized through stylization in the same way as vernacular Irish English varieties. In this way, through the patent artificiality of both forms, the receivers of the advertisements can exploit ingroup, socially meaningful varieties (Coupland 2003: 428) while circumventing the necessity to fully appropriate either the local or non-local Irish English form. Both local and non-local varieties can be reconciled as part of a new Irish identity, a reconciliation which is achieved through self-reflexivity and a 'cultural reassessment' (Coupland 2001: 371) of the values, norms and beliefs associated with these accents and what they index.

While style-shifting allows for strategic sociolinguistic choices and identity options, it can nevertheless be 'a highly charged and risky business, subject to social monitoring and threatening sanctions when it "goes wrong"' (Coupland 2007: 89) as we have seen in the folk linguistic accounts of AdvD. The reconciliation of conflicting identities is crucial if identity is not to be compromised. The

evolution of AdvD as the audience designed or normative style appears to facilitate this reconciliation of local and global identity.

As Hickey puts it, the ‘clear profile’ of Irish English, as distinct from British varieties, ensured that ‘the linguistic identity of Irish people could be successfully transferred from the Irish to the English language.’ Despite the advent of change in supraregional Irish English in the form of AdvD, and the ensuing ‘moral panic’ in relation to its authenticity, this distinctive profile is maintained through the unique features of this accent variety, ‘making it clearly identifiable as uniquely Irish’ (2017b: 229).

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## 12 ‘These kids don’t even sound . . . Irish anymore’: Representing ‘new’ Irishness in contemporary Irish fiction

### 1 Introduction

The term ‘identity’ is a fluid concept which gives individuals and communities a larger sense of being and group belonging (Abercrombie et al. 2006: 190). It is a cultural construct, which can and often is reconstructed (O’Donovan 2009: 95), depending, among other factors, on the social, historical and political backgrounds people have experienced. One of the ways through which people can express their identity is through their language.

Language systems do not appear unexpectedly and exist in a vacuum where they remain unchanged. On the contrary, they are ever-changing beings which are molded by the culture and society the speakers live in. Ranging from group affiliation or political ideology, to geographical location, gender, age, and even social class, among other factors, the way individuals speak indexes relevant sociolinguistic information, while *enregistering* distinct identities. The term *enregisterment* is a concept developed by anthropologist Asif Agha (2003), which refers to the processes whereby a set of linguistic features, which were previously unnoticed by a community of language users, becomes “socially recognized as [. . .] indexical of speaker attributes” (Agha 2005: 38). These processes or “orders of indexicality”, as per Silverstein’s taxonomy (1976/1995, 2003), involve the creation of *first order* links between demographics and linguistic features, which, then, undergo *second-order* sociolinguistic “coding”, and eventually become *third-order* markers of linguistic stereotypes. Johnstone et al. (2006: 83) exemplify this better in their discussion about the monophthongization of /au/ to [a:] in Pittsburghese, which they find to be indexical of working-class, male speakers from Pittsburgh.

In that sense, the reproduction of voice in fiction in the form of literary dialects (henceforth LDs) can also be understood as a cultural performance which is imbued with clues about “speakers’ and readers’ identities, intentions, [or] beliefs”, among other types of relevant information (Warner 2014: 362–364). Nevertheless, the successful representation of those identities will inevitably depend on how authentic-sounding the LD is to the readers. Schneider (2002: 71), for example, emphasizes the need for an LD to reproduce the non-standard linguistic features of a spoken dialect if it is to ‘sound’ as realistic as possible,

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while Hodson (2014: 200) points out the fact that its realism will depend on the readers' familiarity with the spoken dialect being represented, as well as with the set of values that are encoded in its use. Similarly, Ferguson indicates that while LDs act according to the "socio-linguistic system constructed by the novel (the ficto-linguistics)", they will also respond to the socio-linguistic values expected in the real world (1998: 3), thus functioning as great tools for the *enregisterment* of rich linguistic identities.

Given the connection that exists between identity and language, and the fact that they are both shaped by the context they are produced in, this study will explore what is the 'modern' Irish identity that is being *enregistered* through the use of fictionalized Irish English (hereafter FIrE) in a corpus of contemporary Irish English (IrE) fiction.

## 2 The representation of Irish English in contemporary fiction

The usefulness of literary dialects as tools for linguistic investigation has already been demonstrated in the case of FIrE (see, for example, Taniguchi 1972; Sullivan 1976; Bliss 1979; Dolan 1985; Amador-Moreno 2006; or McCafferty 2009). However, those studies either focused on the style of particular Irish writers, or on the use of specific linguistic features, thus leaving a big gap of knowledge concerning a more consistent diachronic and/or synchronic examination of the use of IrE in fiction.

Some scholars, however, have compiled important corpora of this literary dialect which allow for a more detailed examination of it. Hickey's (2003) *Corpus of Irish English*, for example, which is part of his *Corpus Presenter* suite, contains a certain number of mostly dramatic IrE texts ranging from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. Cesiri's (2012) *Corpus of Irish Fairy and Folk Tales* complements Hickey's, as it contains transcripts of folk tales which were narrated by nineteenth-century Irish peasant storytellers who lived in rural Ireland. More recently, Connell's (2014) *Corpus of Hiberno-English Literary Dialects* (CHELD) provided a more detailed idea of the state of twentieth-century Irish English, with CHELD comprising fifty theatrical texts written by seventeen authors whose work was produced by the Abbey Theatre, which was one of the fundamental pillars of the Irish literary scene. However, it does not include plays produced by any other theaters of the period. Albeit in a film context, Walshe has also contributed to the study of FIrE with his *Corpus of Irish Films* (2009), which takes on a more synchronic approach, as it analyzes the discursive, lexical, and syntactic features

that are characteristic of Southern Irish English as they appear in a collection of 50 films, spanning 1935 to 2007. Furthermore, O'Sullivan (2015; this volume) contributes to broadening the study of FIrE with her corpus of 168 radio advertisements aired in 1977, 1987, 1997, and 2007 on *RTE Radio 1*.

While Hickey's, Cesiri's and Connell's corpora are great tools for the empirical analysis of Irish English in fiction, they all have limitations in terms of representativeness and scope. Also, as stated above, with the exception of Walshe's and a few other studies (Amador-Moreno 2015, 2016; Palma-Fahey 2015; Walshe 2016 or Amador-Moreno and Terrazas-Calero 2017), no research that exclusively addresses the examination of FIrE as used in contemporary Irish fiction is available. This caveat, therefore, is what motivated the compilation of a collection of contemporary Irish English fiction which eventually became the *Corpus of Fictionalized Irish English*.

The current case-study, therefore, uses the *Corpus of Fictionalized Irish English* to carry out quantitative and qualitative analyses that examine which are the most recurrent pragmatic features that contemporary Irish writers are using to *index* modern Irish identity, and what values they serve in context.

## 3 Data and methodology

### 3.1 The Corpus of Fictionalized Irish English

The *Corpus of Fictionalized Irish English* (hereafter CoFIrE) is a rather small, synchronic corpus of written texts, totaling 1,137,923 words, out of which 19,479 were tagged for tokens of FIrE. It comprises a collection of sixteen works of contemporary Irish English fiction, written in the form of novels and short-story collections, which were produced in the Republic of Ireland by eight Irish writers, and which span the late twentieth century (1990s) through to the twenty-first century (see Appendix).

One of the key criteria for inclusion in CoFIrE was that a book contain abundant numbers of dialectal features, preferably appearing in the form of dialogues, as they are representative of orality in written texts. The reason plays were overlooked in favor of novels and short-story collections was the fact that these two genres often have larger word counts and, therefore, may potentially contain greater numbers of features of FIrE. In addition, they tend to provide more sociolinguistic information about the fictional speakers, be it in the form of information that the reader infers from the text, as narrative descriptions, or through the explanations offered by other characters. Such

information (or metadata) would, ultimately, be useful for the analysis of the representation of Irishness in contemporary fiction.

In order to have a balanced catalogue of novels and collections that was rich in linguistic features, different sources were consulted, like literature manuals such as Cahill's (2012), along with online reader and critic's reviewing sites like *The Irish Times Book Club*, or from literary magazines like *Electric Literature* (2018) or *The Millions* (2018). However, the most useful online resource was *Goodreads* (2018), which is a free, Amazon-owned, social network for bibliophiles developed by Ottis Chandler and Elizabeth Khuri in 2006. It functions as a book catalogue for a community of members, and offers the possibility to discuss literature, create book lists and reading challenges, or make contact with the writers, while also providing personalized algorithmic recommendations based on the member's previously-read shelf of electronic books. Most importantly, it allows the readers to rate and review the books they read. See below a member's review about Donal Ryan's (2012) novel which led to its inclusion in the corpus.

All together "The Spinning Heart" has hundreds of Hiberno-English<sup>1</sup> expressions; some pages have one or two in almost every sentence. I think that for Ryan, this is just a way of being true to the way people speak. (Anonymous 2015<sup>2</sup>)

Once the books were compiled, they underwent a process of codification which annotated the specific discursive items and features which have been identified in IrE grammars as distinctive of this variety. For that purpose, a manual codification system, which will be explained in the next section in detail, was personally designed and used in the annotation of CoFIrE, which allowed for more detailed quantitative and qualitative analyses of the corpus by means of tag searches using corpus software.

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1 'Hiberno-English' is one of the three terms which have been used to refer to the English language spoken in Ireland, alongside ethnically and religiously loaded *Anglo-Irish* and the more neutral *Irish English* (see Hickey 2007: 3–5 and Amador-Moreno 2010: 8 for further discussion). Deriving from Latin *Hibernia*, which is the name the Romans gave to Ireland, 'Hiberno-English' seems to emphasize only the Irish language, with most books and articles using it to refer to the fictional representation of the English spoken in Ireland, while showing a special interest in grammar and lexis, rather than looking at various other fields, like pragmatics (Amador-Moreno 2010: 8). Thus, the more neutral term *Irish English* is used in this study.

2 The name of this member has been anonymized and only his initials are shown in the in-text citation. This review was posted on *Goodreads* on July 14th, 2015 and can be accessed at: [https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/1335011579?book\\_show\\_action=true](https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/1335011579?book_show_action=true)

### 3.2 Annotating CoFIrE

Instead of annotating the entirety of the language used in the books, the coding system used in CoFIrE only focuses on the specific grammatical, lexical and pragmatic features of FIrE which occur in the books, and which appeared in grammars and dictionaries as being distinctive of IrE (Filppula 2002; Dolan 2006; Hickey 2007 and Amador-Moreno 2010). This system, therefore, marks the features in a macro and, at times micro, levels, and also tags as much sociolinguistic information about the characters as possible, which expedites subsequent qualitative and qualitative, linguistic and sociolinguistic analyses by means of corpus tag searches. The features of FIrE are distributed into three main linguistic categories which are represented by the following tags: <GR> (grammar), <VOC> (lexis), and <P> (pragmatics).

The linguistic features coded as <GR> were those which appeared in the literature as being distinctive of IrE, such as the use of the *after* perfect (see Filppula 2002: 102–5; McCafferty 2000; O’Keeffe and Amador-Moreno 2009; Kallen 2013; or Amador-Moreno and O’Keeffe 2018, among others); or the use of embedded questions, among other characteristics. The <VOC> tag, however, coded lexical features or dialectal words which are normally ascribed in the literature (see Dolan 2006) as belonging to this variety of English, or which appeared as distinctive of this variety in etymological searches. An example would be the use of the quasilexicalized phrase *your man*, or the use of vernacular words like *eejit* or *craic*.<sup>3</sup> The <P> tag, however, annotated specific pragmatic items, some of which were not necessarily only distinctive of IrE, but were so recurrent in the texts that they were annotated due to their pragmatic effect. This category is further subdivided into *taboo language* <PT>, *slang* <PS<sup>4</sup>>, *boosters*, <PBO>, *discourse markers* <PDM>, and *quotatives* <PQ>.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, this specific system involves the use

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3 All three are very colloquial expressions. *Your man* is a phrase used to refer to the (male) person currently being spoken about. In this case, the possessive does not function as such, and could even be replaced by demonstrative *that* (see Walshe 2009: 144). *Eejit*, however, is the lexicalized pronunciation of *idiot* in Irish English, which is less pejorative than the original word (Dolan 2006: 83), while *craic* is a loan from Irish, referring to fun, good time or social entertainment (Hickey 2007: 364).

4 Taboo and slang words were not included in the vocabulary category as they were coded for their pragmatic effect. However, a future revision of the annotating system will endeavor to double code all <PT> and <PSL> features as being lexical features too.

5 Quotatives were taken as pragmatic elements due to the fact that they functioned as markers within the text and not as grammatical units. Furthermore, the quotatives that were annotated in CoFIrE were those which deviated from standard ones, such as *say*, *reply*, or *answer*, among

of three main tags (see (1)). There is 1) an opening tag, 2) a general linguistic category class tag, and 3) a tag which indicates the specific feature being coded.

- (1) She says she's always, <PHDASR> like <PDM> <ML> </PHDASR>, wanted a music room? (Howard 2013)

As can be seen in (1), there is an opening tag which contains the initial letters of the writer's name, of the title of the book, and the name of the character who produced the feature. Thus, *PHDASR* would stand for *Paul Howard, Downturn Abbey*, and (the character of) *Sorcha who is being reported by another speaker*. Then, there is a general linguistic category tag, which in the example would indicate the fact that the feature falls under the *Pragmatics, Discourse Marker* categories. Finally, there is a tag which marks the specific feature that is being coded, which in (1) is *clause-medial like*.

Managing and analyzing a corpus of written texts of slightly over 1 million words which has been manually tagged can be difficult if the corpus metadata is not properly processed and organized (Sinclair 2005; Adolphs and Knight 2009: 42). The CoFlrE metadata, in this case, consists of information about the texts (i.e. writer's name and title of the publication), the annotated features of FlrE, and as much sociolinguistic information about the fictional speakers as was provided in or inferred from the books. As per Sinclair's (2005) guidelines on corpus metadata management, this information was stored separately from the corpus in a Microsoft Access Database. That file, which was designed to function as a relational database, contains three tables. 1) Table Books lists the book codes that were created to identify each text (e.g. *DRYSH: Donal Ryan, The Spinning Heart*). 2) Table Features catalogues all the annotated features of FlrE that occur in the corpus, and distributes them into the three general linguistic categories, thus facilitating the process of retrieving information about the specific features belonging to each category. Finally, there is 3) Table Characters, which contains as much information about the speakers as was inferred from or indicated in the books. This information ranges from the characters' nametags, to the feature and number of tokens they produced, their gender, location, or their age (where explicitly stated in the book) or approximate age cohort, where the character's age was not clearly indicated yet could be inferred from the book.

Furthermore, social class was another factor that was included in the characters' metadata. In order to do this, an original classification for social class,

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others, which were not coded. See section 3.2.1. for a description of the quotative repertoire annotated in the corpus.

which distributes characters into three (simple) general ranks (i.e. *low class*, *middle class*, and *upper class*) was created for this study.

Provided the fact that social status is not always explicitly mentioned in text, a series of criteria were developed so as to assign a social class to each character. These criteria, which take into consideration all the information pertaining their status available in the texts, include 1) their level of education (are they literate/illiterate?; do they have third-level education?, etc.), 2) their occupation (for example, are they construction workers, white-collar lawyers, sex workers, etc.), and 3) their economic status (are they blue collar workers, street criminals, wealthy characters, etc.). Following the classification for social class used in this study, therefore, the *low class* includes characters like thieves, Northside ‘skangers’<sup>6</sup>, criminals, sex workers, or pimps, among others. The *middle class*, however, comprises speakers ranging from unemployed builders, to foremen, brick layers, ‘non-skanger’ Northsiders, teachers, or small business owners, while the *upper class* comprises Southside Dubliners, lawyers, famous writers and musical composers, among others.

This chapter, therefore, investigates the way contemporary Irishness is being represented through the characterization of the corpus and *enregistered* through the use of FlrE. This is done by means of corpus searches by tags, using *WordSmith Tools 6.0*, which allow for a faster retrieval of the relevant data. Furthermore, tag searches were combined with WordList and concordance line searches which, help to systematically document and support what literary critics may perceive intuitively. The results show the transmission of a more ‘modern’ identity, which is not only seen in the language used by the characters, but also in the characterization of the corpus, as will be discussed in the following section.

## 4 Findings

### 4.1 Characterizing Irishness in CoFlrE

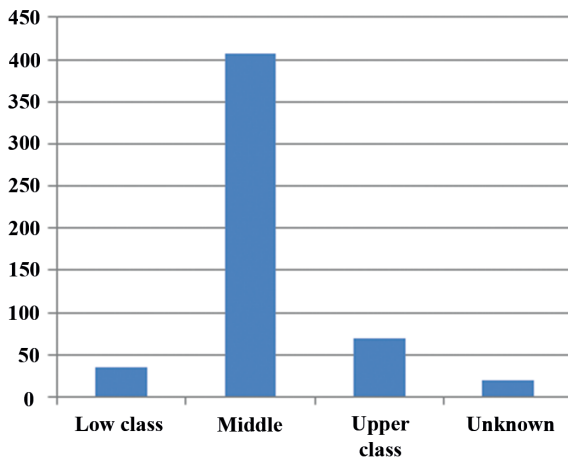
The analysis of the linguistic production of features by social class in CoFlrE is worth investigating as it seems to indicate a shift in terms of identity

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<sup>6</sup> *Skanger*: derogatory term of address used to refer to a young person from a high criminal rate area (usually in the north of Dublin) with a way of dressing, speaking and behaving which reveals their poor education and their low social class status.

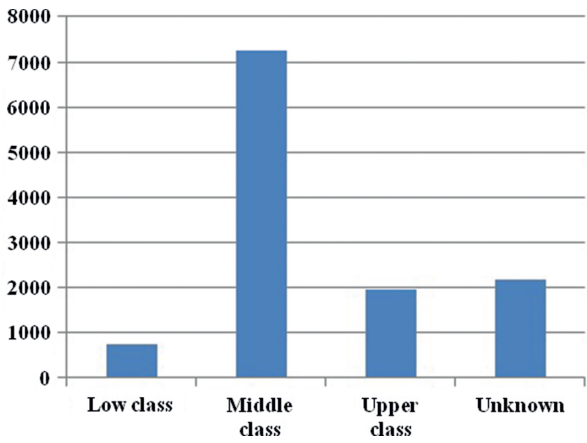
representation in contemporary IrE literature, which moves away from traditional, derogatory stereotypes.

While an initial examination of the number of tokens produced by social class indicated that the upper class was the one which had produced the most feature tokens (9,332 in total), a deeper look into their data, however, indicated that 93% of those (8,644) were produced by only one character, Ross, from Howard's *Ross O'Carroll-Kelly* (hereafter RO'CK) novels. This means that the upper class only produces 688 tokens. Seeing as Ross is the outlier in that class, his input was normalized so as not to askew the results from the overall analysis of the corpus. Thus, and as can be seen in Figure 1, the majority of the characters in the corpus producing features of FIrE belonged to the middle class, which was mostly made up of unemployed builders, foremen, brick layers, or former construction workers who lost their jobs due to the recession. Similarly, and after normalizing Ross' input, the analysis revealed that the middle class was also the one that produced the largest amounts of features (see Figure 2).



**Figure 1:** Number of characters per social class.

These results may be indicative of the fact that contemporary Irish writers are infusing their characterization with a more 'modern' identity which creates a sharp portrayal of the consequences of the economic recession, while also differing greatly from the traditional image of the Irish Paddy, a dehumanizing, colonial stereotype which represented the Irish as a poverty-stricken nation of brutish, dim-witted and/or drunken people, and which was popular in literary



**Figure 2:** Raw number of FIrE features produced per social class.<sup>7</sup>

representations of Irishness for centuries (see Hickey 2010 for a detailed discussion of the development and perpetuation of the Stage Irishman). This ‘modern’ identity seems to be further substantiated by the results found in the analysis of the most frequently produced pragmatic features of the corpus, which will be discussed in the next section.

## 4.2 Conveying ‘modern’ Irishness through fictionalized language

The linguistic analysis of the corpus appears to indicate the fact that contemporary Irishness is being *enregistered* more through the use of pragmatic features, rather than through the use of grammatical or lexical characteristics, for the study of these two categories reveals that the CoFIrE writers adhere to the use of features that have been stably associated with this dialect for centuries. For this reason, this study will focus on investigating the most recurrent pragmatic items in the corpus in detail, while only offering a brief account of the three most prominently used grammatical and lexical features.

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<sup>7</sup> Ross input (8,644 tokens in total), which was overrepresented in the RO’CK novels where he acts as character and narrator, was normalized by 688 words, which was the total amount of occurrences produced by the other upper-class characters in the corpus.

Thus, we find that, in terms of grammar, the CoFIrE writers highlight the use of 1) second-person, plural, personal pronoun *ye*, which is normally associated with IrE, especially with supraregional, southern IrE (Hickey 2007: 291). Furthermore, 2) the *after*-perfective tense, which is one of the best known features of IrE, and has traditionally also been used to represent this dialect in literature, also features prominently in the corpus, while 3) the overuse of the definite article in positions uncommon in other standard varieties of English ranks third in terms of recurrence (for a discussion on the contexts of use see Amador-Moreno 2010: 32–33). In the lexical category, however, we find that the most prominent item used by writers is the use of 1) *ma/mam*, which is a high-frequency item in Clancy's (2016) study of non-fictional, intimate discourse in IrE, and in Walshe's corpus of Irish films (2009: 140). The use of 2) the lexicalized word *auld*, which is indicative of OL-diphthongization (Dolan 2006), is also a salient feature in this category, along with 3) lexical item *your man*, which is a frequent IrE feature, particularly in the South, and which is used to refer to a person that is unknown to both interlocutors (Hickey 2007: 363).

The present study, however, focuses on investigating the use of pragmatic features, which are taken here as being potentially more productive in terms of indexing modern Irishness and linguistic change than the grammatical and lexical features. The higher prominence of pragmatic items in the corpus (12,746 occurrences) rather than traditional, regionally-distinctive grammatical or lexical features (with 3,507 and 3,226 occurrences respectively) is worth noting, as it could be indicative of the fact that contemporary Irish writers are acutely aware of the rules of orality. It could also mean that they actively decide to have their characters reproduce these items so as to infuse them with a more natural-'sounding' distinctiveness which indexes their complex identities and,

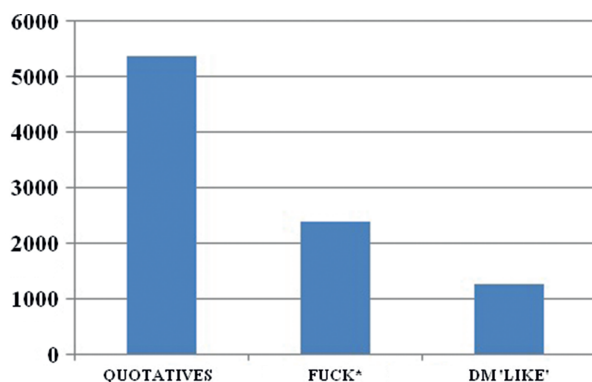


Figure 3: Raw number of occurrences of the three most frequently produced pragmatic features.

therefore, the current state of ‘modern’ Irishness. This study, therefore, investigates the way contemporary Irishness is indexed through the use of three most frequently produced pragmatic features in context (see Figure 3 below), namely 1) quotative verbs (*go* being the most recurrently produced verb with 3,162 occurrences), 2) the taboo word FUCK in its lemma form (with the variant *fucking* being the most prominent one), and 3) discourse marker *like*.

#### 4.2.1 Quotatives

Quotatives, or *verba dicendi*, are verbs and constructions, such as *say*, *insist*, or *declare*, which speakers use in order to report or introduce what others say. Their use is very frequent in natural interaction and oral narratives, which require for action-oriented narration (Barbieri 2005: 231). Furthermore, by functioning as ventriloquist and impersonating devices, they infuse more dramatic and theatrical effect into the narration (Tannen 2007: 21–22). The English quotative repertoire, however, has expanded over time (see example (2) taken from CoFlrE), giving speakers a wider range of forms with which to report direct speech. In addition, their use is affected by internal linguistic variables like tense, or grammatical subject, as well as by external variables, such as speaker age and gender (Barbieri 2005: 223), which means that their use can be a great tool for indexing speaker identity.

- (2) It’s a fact,’ he **went**. ‘All you can do is deal with it.’ I **was like**, ‘What about school?’ [...] I **was there**, ‘Jesus, Ronan, could you not have been, I don’t know, careful?’ (Howard 2013)

In the present study, quotatives are the most frequently used pragmatic feature. Their prominence in the corpus may be indicative of the fact that contemporary Irish writers use a highly oral style, which enriches their works by making them ‘sound’ as naturally in terms of real-life interaction as possible, and by fostering a more intimate relationship between speaker, i.e. character, and reader (Murphy 2010: 81). However, it is necessary to mention the fact that, although quotatives appear in 6 out of all 16 texts, this feature is over-represented by Ross, the main character and narrator in the RO’CK novels where previous research has found quotatives to act as hallmark features of Howard’s style for the emulation of orality (Amador-Moreno 2015: 381; 2016).

The study of the quotative repertoire as used in the corpus (see Figure 4) reveals that *go* is significantly more recurrent than the rest of the quotatives which were coded in the corpus. Although normally investigated in comparison to *be*

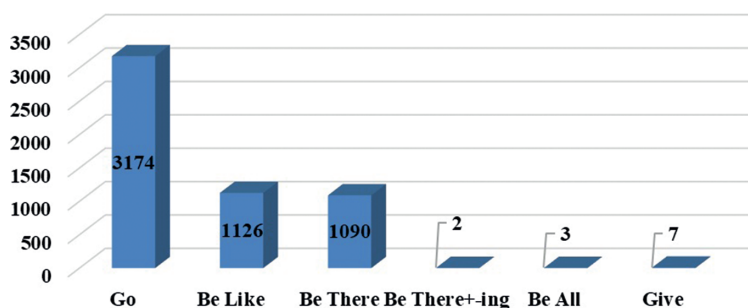


Figure 4: Repertoire and raw numbers of quotative occurrences in CoFlrE.

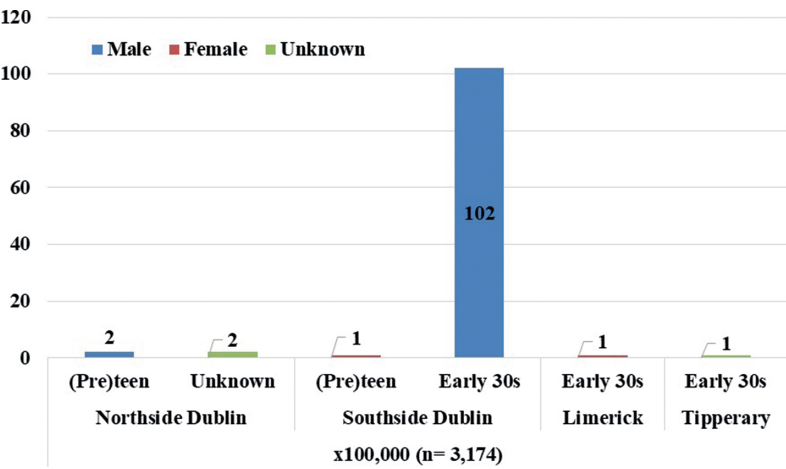
*like*, previous research into the use of *go* in other varieties has revealed that it is common in the speech of young speakers (see Tagliamonte and Hudson 1999; Macaulay 2001, or D'Arcy 2012). In IrE, Höhn's (2012: 273) analysis of the use of quotatives in *ICE: Ireland* and *ICE: Jamaica* revealed that, despite the occurrence of *go* and *be like*, *say* appeared to be the most frequently used verb. However, Amador-Moreno's (2015, 2016) studies of *go* in FlrE, especially in fictionalized Dublin English (hereafter FDubE), indicate that it is the most recurrently used structure to report direct speech, while indexing the voice of male speakers who are in their 20s-30s.

The analysis of the use of *go* in CoFlrE in terms of the effect of internal linguistic variables (see (3) and (4) below), indicates that *go* appears more frequently in present tense, especially in the form *goes* (2,283 occurrences), and collocates predominantly with third-person subjects. This means that it is used in the corpus to dramatize the narration by impersonating and/or reconstructing the speech and/or thoughts of the speaker or others in their own voice, which corroborates previous findings (Höhn 2012; Amador-Moreno 2015: 385).

- (3) Honor **goes**, 'Oh my God, you don't even know that you're getting this baby. Hashtag desperado!' (Howard 2013)
- (4) The cross-tattooed lad was [...] ignoring the woman in the tight jeans and for a finish she just stood there **going** You bastard. (Ryan 2013)

*Go* was then analyzed in terms of the potential effect the variables of age and gender might have had on its use. In order to do so, the input produced by Ross in Howard's novels, which, as mentioned above, was the largest, was normalized so as not to skew the results. The findings appear to indicate the fact that

*go* functions as a marker of in-group membership which indexes distinct identities depending on the speakers’ regional dialects, i.e. FDubE, Limerick IrE, or Tipperary IrE if we understand a narrator’s voice as mirroring the geographical origin of the characters from a story. 3 out of the 8 tokens produced by characters other than Ross were uttered by narrators who did not function as characters in their stories, but whose input, which is labeled “unknown” in Figure 5, has been counted in terms of age and geographical location. As can be seen, *go* is more frequently used in the corpus by upper-class, male speakers who are in their early 30s and live in Southside Dublin (Amador-Moreno 2016). This prominence of use in FDubE could indicate the fact that *go* functions as a marker of in-group membership and linguistic prestige for characters wishing to distinguish themselves from other speakers belonging to different social-classes (Hickey 2005: 7–8).



**Figure 5:** Distribution of quotative *go* per age, gender, and geographical location (after normalizing Ross’ input).

The analysis of quotative *go* in the production of characters other than Ross (i.e. only 8 occurrences) appears to be less distinctive of sociolinguistic factors than it is in FDubE, which might be due to the over-representation of this dialect in the corpus. In addition, and while minimal, the findings regarding social class indicate that *go* is more recurrent in the middle-class (3 tokens as opposed to 2 produced by upper-class speakers and 3 by unknown narrators). In terms of age

and gender, it is equally produced by speakers in their (pre)teens and in their 20s-30s (totalling 3 tokens respectively), appearing also to enregister male voice, although by a small margin of 3 (m) to 2 (f) tokens respectively. Thus, and although generalization should be avoided due to the small amount of occurrences in the corpus, the use of *go* in other dialects could, perhaps, index the voice of a young, middle-class, male speaker possibly in the 20–30 age cohort.

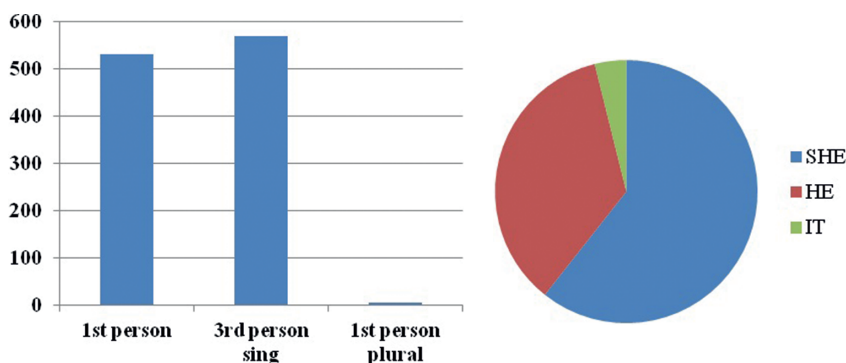
It is worth taking a brief look at the rest of the quotatives that appear in CoFIrE, as their analysis seems to reveal a potential linguistic evolution towards more globalized quotative uses which would corroborate the supraregionalization of IrE (Hickey 2007: 309). In other words, how this variety may be losing or exchanging more regionally-bound features for standardized forms acquired through contact with other varieties. This is best represented in the analysis of quotative *be like* (see (5) and (6)).

- (5) [...] so I said yeah that's totally cool, and he **was like**, yeah cool well I'll be in Renard's after the gig. (Ruane 2003)
- (6) I **was like**, NO WAY, there's no way I'm hovering here as well as at home in my parent's house. (Ryan 2012)

Despite often being popularly (mis)associated with the 'Valley Girl' persona, which stereotypes young, middle-class, females from the San Fernando Valley in California (see Tagliamonte 2016 and D'Arcy 2017 for further discussion), *be like* is a quotative that is prominent in the speech of young, female speakers (D'Arcy 2017: 23), often marking teenage voice across different varieties of English (see Andersen 2001, Tagliamonte 2016, or D'Arcy 2017 among others). In the case of IrE, this quotative indexes distinct social profiles due to its recurrence in the voice of young female speakers in their 20s-30s (Schweinberger 2015: 131). Functionally, *be like* seems to have evolved in other varieties, like AmE, where it has gone from reporting oneself and inner thought to also quoting others (D'Arcy 2017: 21), including emails and text messages (Tagliamonte 2016: 71–76).

While, initially, the results from the study of *be like* in CoFIrE seemed to corroborate previous findings (see Amador-Moreno 2016: 313) regarding gender, indicating its dominance among Southside Dublin, upper class, male characters (1, 120 occurrences), subsequent analyses showed that those were all produced by Ross. The remaining occurrences (6 in total) were produced by several upper-class, Southside Dublin, female characters in their 20s-30s. Due to Ross' overproduction, however, we cannot conclusively state that this quotative marks male speech in IrE, yet the fact that it is used by various females in

the corpus might be indicative of a process of evolution where *be like* could be developing into an index of distinct, (female) identity in Dublin. Furthermore, and in terms of pragmatic functions (see Figure 6), this quotative seems to mirror the functional evolution that occurred in AmE, as it is commonly used in the corpus to report the speech and thoughts of others, particularly the speech of females (*she* pronoun).



**Figure 6:** Distribution of *be like* per grammatical subject and third person singular subject pronoun gender.

Although appearing only in Howard's novels, the use of other quotatives like *be there*, *be there + -ing* (see Amador-Moreno 2015 and 2016 for a discussion on its use), *give* and *be all* (see (7) and (8) from Howard 2013), is worth mentioning, especially the occurrence of *all*, which is believed to have originated in California in the 1980s (Rickford et al. 2007: 4). Buchstaller et al. (2010: 193) point out that while *all* quickly rose to popularity among young adult, Californian speakers in the 1990s, its use was drastically reduced and replaced by *be like* by 2005. Despite the very low frequency of use of this quotative (only 3 occurrences), its appearance in the corpus, where it is solely used to report the voice of young, upper-class, Southside Dublin females, could be indicative of the rise of this feature in FDubE, where it might also acts as a marker of linguistic prestige and trendiness, while creating a distinction between speakers of different socioeconomic status.

- (7) She opens the front door and steps outside, **giving it**, 'Welcome, Patrica!'
- (8) **She's all**, 'How dare you moralise with me! With the way you carry on?'

The analysis of the quotative repertoire in CoFIrE, therefore, indicates that *go*, which is the most frequently used quotatives, functions as a marker of linguistic prestige in FDubE, indexing the voice of upper-class, male speakers in their early 30s, while distinguishing those speakers from other more 'local'-sounding ones who may belong to another social class. The study of the rest of the repertoire, especially of *be like* and *all*, seems to reveal the adoption of more globalized quotatives, which are believed popularly associated with AmE, while also indicating the supraregionalization of IrE (Hickey 2005: 351), and of DubE more specifically. Finally, it is necessary to mention that by making the speakers 'ventriloquize' what others within the fictional world say, which is a feature of natural oral spokenness, contemporary Irish writers may be utilizing these quotatives to function as devices through which they can create a sense of closeness which reinforces the bond between interlocutors, in this case, between characters and readers. This bond of familiarity that writers seem to be trying to recreate would seem to be further reinforced through the use of taboo word *fucking* and discourse marker *like* in CoFIrE, as will be explained in the following sections.

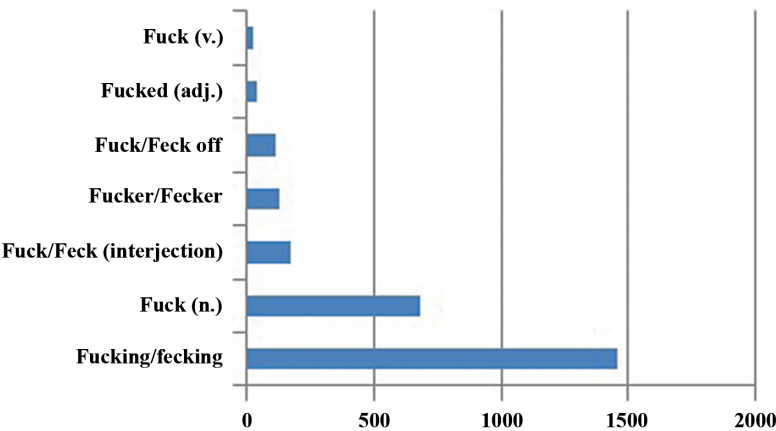
#### 4.2.2 Taboo word 'fucking'

The term *taboo language* refers to the use of words and phrases that are considered culturally and socially inappropriate. Among them we can find religious expressions, discriminatory language, sex-related words, or references to socially avoidable topics, e.g. genitalia, bodily functions or death, among other topics. Despite this, their use is highly frequent in naturally occurring interaction, where they can convey a level of emotional meaning that other words cannot communicate (Murphy 2009), thus also *enregistering* important information about their speakers.

As indicated in section 3.2., taboo word FUCK (in its lemma form, which includes the variants *fucking/fecking*, *fucker/fecker*, *fuck/feck off*, and *fucked*) is the second most recurrent pragmatic feature in CoFIrE. Previous research into the use of *FUCK* in other varieties found that it is more recurrent in the speech younger, male speakers (see Stenström et al. 2002 for a discussion on taboo language in the *Corpus of London Teenage Talk*), while McEnery and Xiao's (2004) analysis of its use in the *British National Corpus* showed that it was very recurrent in imaginary texts which had been written by male writers for a male only or mixed audience. In IrE, however, Clancy's (2016) study of the *Limerick Corpus of Intimate Talk*, a subcorpus of the *Limerick Corpus of Irish English* (LCIE), revealed that taboo language is a high frequency feature of informal discourse, with *fucking* acting as a bonding device in intimate conversations.

Murphy's (2009) investigation of its use in terms of age and gender in LCIE revealed that it is more recurrent in the voice of male speakers who are in their 20s, while her investigation of linguistic variation among Irish female speakers shows that it appears to be generationally bound to the same age cohort (2010).

The analysis of FUCK in CoFIrE (see Figure 7) reveals that *fucking* (including the phonological representations: *fuckin'*, *feckin'*, *fooken*, *focking*<sup>8</sup>) was the most frequently used variant, appearing in 15 out of the 16 texts comprised in the corpus. This study, therefore, focuses on the way *fucking* is used in FIrE to *enregister* Irishness in context.



**Figure 7:** Raw results of the analysis of the variants of FUCK as per their frequency of use in CoFIrE.

When examining the use of *fucking* from an age and gender viewpoint (see Figure 8), we find that this word functions as a marker of masculinity and age, as it is more frequently produced by male characters who are in their 20s-30s, which corroborates Murphy's (2009) and Clancy's (2016) findings. However, the analysis of the production of *fecking*, which is a milder form of *fucking* that is strongly associated with IrE, showed that it was solely produced by (lower) middle-class

<sup>8</sup> *Fecking* is a euphemistic form of *fuck* (Dolan 2006: 91). *Fooken* and *focking*, however, are phonetic representations which index specific speaker identities. On the one hand, *fooken* represents the use of the same vowel as the FOOT lexical set in the STRUT set, which is particular to 'local' Dublin English or Northside Dublin English (NDubE). *Focking*, on the other hand, showcases the lowered and unrounded vowel realization in the STRUT set that is characteristic of Southside Dublin English, also known as 'Dortspeak' or D4 accent (Hickey 2007: 328).

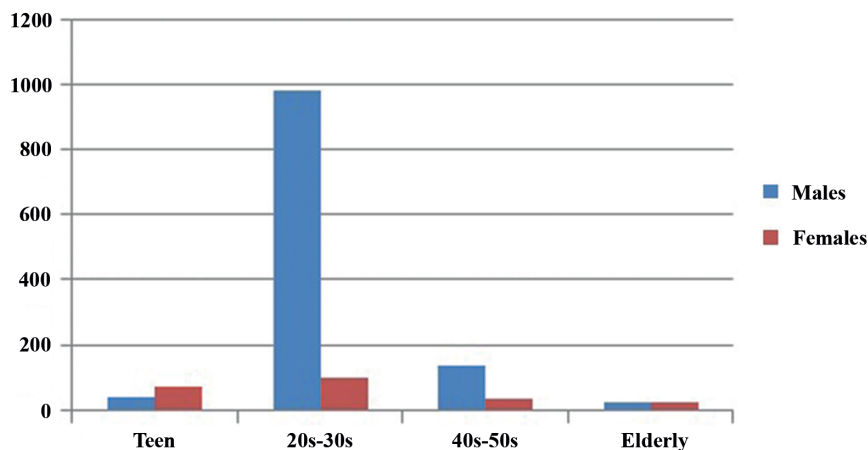


Figure 8: Distribution of *fucking* by age and gender.

speakers (the majority of whom were farmers or construction workers), and most of whom were from rural Tipperary. In addition, *fecking* is also more frequently produced by male characters, and appears to be generationally bound to older individuals, as it is more recurrent in the speech of speakers who are in their 50s and 60s. This might, therefore, suggest the fact that *fucking* functions as a marker or linguistic sophistication for younger, urban speakers who want to distance themselves from more regionally-bound taboo variants like *fecking*, which seems to *enregister* the voice of older speakers from rural areas.

*Fucking* was also used in CoFIrE to convey distinct emotional meaning. The investigation of its pragmatic functions showed that it functions recurrently as an intensifier which can index positive/neutral or negative emotional meaning, in examples like “I’ll **fucking** sue you” (Ní Dhuibhne 1999). The study of the conveyance of emotional meaning revealed that while speakers sometimes used it to express positive-neutral connotations, mostly in the form of emphasizing what is being said, or by transmitting excitement among other emotions (see (9) to (11) respectively), the speakers used it more frequently to express negative emotional meaning (see Figure 9), the most recurrent of which is anger (243 occurrences) followed by insults and dislike (with 75 and 61 occurrences respectively), (see (12) to (14)).

(9) It’s physical **fucking** pain she’s not in town any more. (Barry 2012)

(10) “Three nil, away an’ all, **fuckin’** deadly it was”. (Ruane 2003)

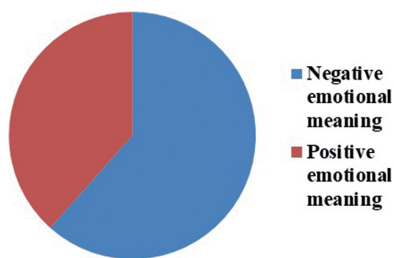


Figure 9: Conveyance of emotional meaning in CoFlrE.

- (11) She's a **fuckin'** mega dancer! (Barry 2011)
- (12) You were reading the paper! Now move, it's not a **fucking** library! (Ruane 2003)
- (13) What made you do that? **Fuckin'** doctors. (Doyle 1996)
- (14) These kids don't even sound **fucking**<sup>9</sup> Irish anymore. (Barry 2012)

A look into the potential effect of gender in terms of the variation in the conveyance of emotional meaning through *fucking* appears to indicate that while female and male speakers coincide in the larger transmission of negative emotional feelings (see Figure 10), the most predominant of which is anger, the range of negative emotions expressed by male characters is significantly wider than those transmitted by females. Although it is beyond the scope of this study to examine the cause of this difference in terms the conveyance of negative emotional feelings between both genders, this might be due to the fact that male speakers are the ones that produce *fucking* more frequently and feel, therefore, comfortable around its use.

The use of intensifying *fucking* in CoFlrE, therefore, is multilayered. On the one hand, it *enregisters* speaker identity, as it is more frequently used by male speakers who are in their 20s–30s. It also functions as a way for younger, more cosmopolitan speakers to dissociate themselves from the more regionally-bound *fecking*, which seems to index the voice of older, (lower) middle class, rural

<sup>9</sup> Although transmitting dislike, this example is worth taking a look at as it is produced by a speaker who complains about how young, Southside Dublin people have “horrible mid-Atlantic twangs. These kids don't even sound fucking Irish anymore” (Barry 2012: 13), which may indicate the fact that younger speakers in the South of Dublin prefer to have a more Americanized pronunciation rather than a local, more regionally-bound one.

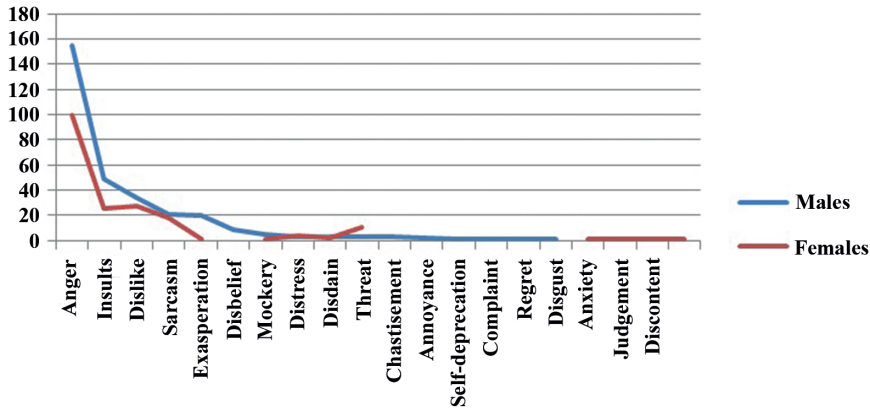


Figure 10: Raw data of the range of negative emotions transmitted per gender.

speakers. On the other hand, *fucking* can also index speaker motivation through its intensifying nature, as it conveys a series of emotional meanings, most of which are negative, with anger being the foremost emotion transmitted by both genders. Finally, the prominence of intensifying *fucking* as the second, most recurrent pragmatic feature in CoFIrE, which functions as a marker of informality and intimacy in spokenness, might also be indicative of the fact that contemporary Irish writers use it as a device through which they can create a bond of intimacy between the fictional interlocutors and the readers.

#### 4.2.3 Discourse marker like in CoFIrE

As a very high-frequency feature in every-day orality, discourse markers (hereafter DMs) have received much attention in linguistic research, especially DM *like*, which has become one of the most popular DMs among linguists. The reason for its popularity might be its pragmatically versatile nature, as it can serve the functions of an approximator, an exemplifier, a hedge (see, for example, Jucker and Smith 1998 for a discussion of these functions), a quotative (see Section 3.2.1.), or a focusing device (see, for instance, Levey 2008). In addition, its use is also perceived as transmitting informality and more friendliness among speakers (Dailey-O'Cain 2000: 73).

Although DM *like* is a well-known feature in AmE, where it is associated with adolescent and young adult female speakers (D'Arcy 2005), its use has rapidly spread to other varieties of English, where it also acts as a sociolinguistic marker, as it is recurrent in the speech of younger, normally teen speakers

(see Andersen 2001 or D’Arcy 2012; 2017). The use of this DM has also been identified as a marker of informality in both spoken and written representations of IrE (see Schweinberger 2012; Amador-Moreno 2015; 2016; Murphy 2015). In fiction, for example, Amador-Moreno (2015: 372) found that it can infuse realism into the texts by imitating the spontaneity of real spokenness, while also offering natural fluidity to the storyline, and indexing the intricate identities of the fictional characters that produce it. The influence of the variables of age and gender, however, seems to differ from its use in other varieties, as it has been found that it is more prominently produced by females who are in their 20s (Schweinberger 2015: 131; Murphy 2015).

A WordList search of CoFIrE, revealed that *like* appears within the first 25 more frequently used features in the corpus (see Table 1), with 6,583 occurrences per million words, while the analysis of all the linguistic features of FIrE that are annotated in the corpus indicates that it is the third most recurrent pragmatic feature (1,248 occurrences).

**Table 1:** WordList of the most frequent words in CoFIrE.

Rank	Word	Freq.	%
1	The	57.596	5,06
2	And	33.414	2,93
3	I	31.007	2,72
4	To	27.149	2,38
5	A	25.711	2,26
6	Of	21.914	1,92
7	It	18.584	1,63
8	In	17.088	1,50
9	He	16.460	1,45
10	You	14.652	1,29
11	She	14.021	1,23
12	Was	13.741	1,21
13	That	13.197	1,16
14	Her	9.754	0,86
15	On	9.253	0,81
16	For	8.028	0,70
17	Is	7.859	0,69
18	His	7.390	0,65
19	My	7.089	0,62
20	At	7.045	0,62
21	With	7.004	0,61
22	Me	6.868	0,60
23	Like	6.583	0,58

In terms of clause-positioning, *like* can appear in initial, e.g. *Like, I had to invite myself out to see her house* (Ryan 2012), medial, e.g. *This is, like, typical of my dad* (Howard 2014), or final positions, e.g. *He says it's urgent like* (Ní Dhuibhne 2003). Thus, an examination of clausal position in the corpus was carried out by means of tag searches which expedited the retrieval of the tokens. The tags used in the searches were 1) general linguistic category tag *PDM* (which annotates discourse markers), and 2) specific linguistic tags *IL* (clause-initial *like*), *ML* (clause-medial *like*), and *FL* (clause-final *like*). As Table 2 shows, there is a noticeable preference for clause-medial *like* (hereafter *ML*) which mirrors previous findings (see, for example, Amador-Moreno 2015). This positional predilection is important, as it could indicate the supraregionalization of IrE because it deviates from the traditional preference of this variety for clause-final *like*; a use which, despite appearing in varieties of England and Scotland, has not been attested in AmE (Tagliamonte 2012: 172), where the preference is for medial *like*. It is necessary to mention the fact that 68, 86% (822 tokens) of the total amount of *MLs* production in CoFIrE were produced by one particular character, Ross O'Carroll-Kelly, in his role as narrator. However, his narrative overrepresentation was separated from the number of *MLs* produced by other speakers (including his own production as a character) so as not skew the results of this investigation (Terrazas-Calero 2017 provides a more in-depth analysis of the narrative uses of medial *like*). Once Ross' input as a narrator was removed, the total amount of occurrences of *ML* was cut down to 255.

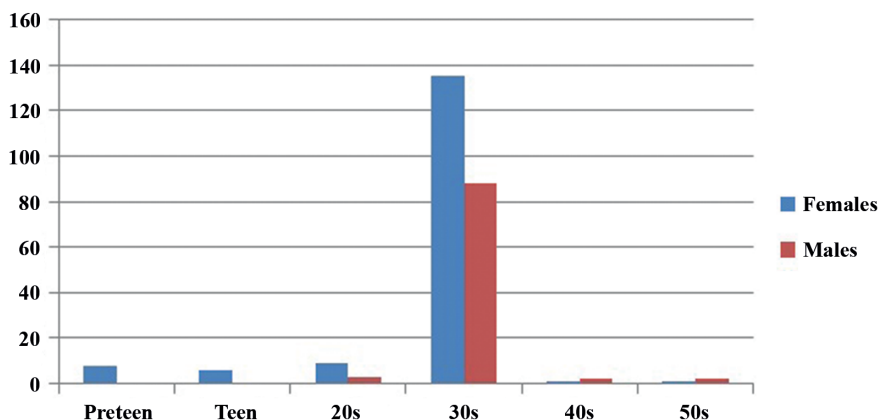
**Table 2:** Raw frequencies and percentages of use of DM *like* by clause position in CoFIrE.

Position	N. Occurrences	Percentage
Clause-initial	30	2.40%
Clause-medial	1077	86.29%
<i>without Ross' narrative input</i>	255	59.85% <sup>a</sup>
Clause-final	141	11.29%
	<b>Total: 1248</b>	
	<i>Without narrative input: 426</i>	

<sup>a</sup>This percentage results from the calculation of 255 divided by 426, which is the total amount of DM *like* occurrences that would be left if Ross' narrative production were to be counted separately from the production of other characters.

Given the common association of *ML* with AmE and young female speakers, and with female teenagers in other varieties of English, the effect of age and

gender-related variation was also investigated. The results (Figure 11) corroborate the previous literature by indicating that, despite being used by both genders across all age cohorts, ML is significantly more prominent in the speech of female speakers who are in their 20s-30s and not in their teens.



**Figure 11:** Distribution of ML tokens per age and gender (calculated without Ross' narrative input).

In order to examine the pragmatic functions medial *like* serves in CoFlrE, a corpus search for the tag *ML* (which annotates medial *like*) was undertaken and the concordance lines it generated were analyzed qualitatively. The results from this analysis indicate that ML can function as a 1) hedge (2 occurrences), e.g. *Yeah, he is, but you haven't met him, Amy. He's ... like, well when he was ...* (Ruane 2003), or 2) as marker of unclarity (76 occurrences) which can display unfamiliarity with the term being used (*She became, like, a fat whisperer or something* (Howard 2014)), or act as an approximator with quantifiable units (*He'd hand over the kid and I'd keep him for like, a night or some shit* (Ryan 2012)). However, it is more frequently used by the speakers as a 3) focusing device (177 occurrences) which emphasizes and dramatizes the content of the utterance (see (15) through (18)).

(15) Oh my God, thank you so much for stopping. We are, **like**, so dead.  
(Ruane 2003)

(16) We snack hard and we just, **like**, sway with the kitchen vibe? (Barry 2012)

- (17) She needs [...] security and it's up to us – as, **like**, her parents? – to give it to her. (Howard 2013)
- (18) The problem with having a Caesarian is that your body doesn't know that it's, **like**, had a baby? (Howard 2014)

The examples above are of special interest to this study because they reveal the use of medial *like* with linguistic features which have traditionally been perceived as belonging to AmE. Notice, for instance, the use of New Intensifying *So* in (15) (see Amador-Moreno and Terrazas-Calero 2017 for a detailed description of its use in IrE, and Zwicky (2011) and Irwin (2014) for its perception as an AmE intensifier among young females), or the use of High Rising Terminal<sup>10</sup> (HRT) in (16) to (18) (see Warren (2016) for an in-depth discussion of its use and common association with young California 'Valley' girls). In CoFIrE, HRT appears in 36 out of the 115 occurrences of focusing ML produced by female speakers, all of whom are solely upper-class, Southside Dubliners in their 20s-30s. Although the investigation of the pragmatic functions of focusing ML + HRT is beyond the scope of this chapter, its recurrence in the corpus warrants further research as it might reveal pragmatic variation from its use in other varieties of English.

The high frequency of DM *like* in clause-medial position in CoFIrE is, therefore, significant because it indexes distinct sociolinguistic identities, as it *enregisters* the voice of female speakers who are in their 20s-30s. Furthermore, the results seem to also indicate the adoption of 'new' or globalized uses of this DM combined with features which are commonly perceived as being of American origin. This may, therefore, substantiate the idea of the supraregionalization of IrE mentioned in previous sections. Finally, the use of ML and of ML + HRT as represented in contemporary Irish literature could reveal that this DM functions as a marker of sophistication and linguistic trendiness among young speakers who may use it to distance themselves from more regionally-bound identities.

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**10** High Rising Terminal (HRT), also known as *uptalk*, is an intonational deviation whereby a declarative sentence is *produced as an interrogative one?*. While the origin of this feature is unclear, with some studies linking it with Australian English, it seems to be more often perceived as having originated in the US during the 1970s-1980s, and is typically associated with trendy young/teen California 'Valley' girls (Warren 2016: 82).

## 5 Conclusion

Given the close connection that exists between language and identity, both of which are shaped by the socio-cultural contexts speakers live in, this study has investigated the way modern Irishness is *enregistered* through fictionalized Irish English. However, defining contemporary Irish identity is a complicated task. For centuries, Irishness was synonymous with the ridiculing stereotype of the Paddy, which seems to have stuck in literary representations until well into the twentieth century, when it began to be diluted due to the appearance of the Celtic Tiger in the mid 1990s. The Tiger was a period of excessively rapid economic growth spanning roughly until the late 2008, which brought about a ‘new’ identity that “expressed itself in a mad consumerism, in an arrogance towards the rest of the world, in a willful refusal of all ties of history and tradition” (O’Toole 2010: 5). However, the aftermath of the Tiger, which was characterized by a severe economic depression, massive unemployment and high emigration rates, seems to have left Ireland struggling to define its identity, which appears to be stuck between the image of the Irish Cosmopolitan and the Paddy (O’Donovan 2009: 107), while it tries to move away from the “repressive weight of history” and deal with the influence of globalization (Ni Eigearthaigh 2009), which is so often synonymous with Americanization.

Drawing from this bleak description of the state of post-Tiger Ireland, the present study has explored the way contemporary Irishness is *enregistered* through FIrE as it appears in a corpus of contemporary Irish fiction (CoFIrE). The results from the study of the corpus indicate the fact that, in terms of characterization, ‘modern’ Irishness is being transmitted and embodied in a literate, middle class of speakers, most of whom are unemployed or belonged to the construction sector but lost their jobs due to the recession. This identity not only creates a sharp portrayal of the consequences of the recession, but also differs greatly from the traditional Paddy stereotype. Furthermore, this chapter has also demonstrated that FIrE is being used by contemporary Irish writers not only to enrich their characterization by making fictional speakers sound as realistic as possible, but also to index their rich and complex sociolinguistic identities, thus conveying modern Irishness in the process. The linguistic analysis of CoFIrE showed that this ‘new’ Irishness is better represented through the use of the three most frequently produced pragmatic features, i.e. quotative *go*, taboo word *fucking* and clause-medial *like*.

The study of *go* and other quotative verbs has demonstrated that they act as markers of linguistic prestige for more ‘urban’ speakers who wish to dissociate themselves from more ‘local’ sounding speakers. Furthermore, the appearance of quotatives *be like* and *all*, which are strongly associated with AmE, could also be indicative of the fact that IrE, especially DubE, might be

adopting more globalized quotatives, which, therefore, also act as markers of distinct identities. Such a divide between the younger 'cosmopolitan' versus the 'more local' speaker is also indexed through the use of *fucking* as opposed to *fecking*, which *enregisters* the voice of older speakers from rural areas. Furthermore, the use of intensifying *fucking* can also convey distinct emotional meaning (generally negative) and predominantly in the form of anger. Finally, the prominence of DM *like*, which appears more recurrently in the corpus in medial position rather than in final, which was traditionally associated with IrE, also indexes distinct sociolinguistic identities, as it is recurrent in the voice of female speakers who are in their 20s-30s. Furthermore, the analysis of its occurrence in combination with NISo and HRT, both of which are features which are strongly linked to AmE, might also demonstrate the supraregionalization of IrE and, therefore, the preference for more globalized rather than traditional uses of this DM.

These more 'Americanized' uses of medial *like* as represented in contemporary literature could also indicate the fact that this DM is being used in IrE nowadays, and DubE more specifically, to *enregister* complex speaker identities, especially among younger, linguistically trendy and more cosmopolitan female speakers who want to distance themselves from more traditional and regionally-sounding speakers. This study has also demonstrated that, apart from functioning as a great tool for the *enregisterment* of speaker identities, FlrE and the use of these three pragmatic features, which are high frequency features in natural and informal interactions, also function as devices through which contemporary writers try to (re) create and strengthen a bond of intimacy between fictional speakers and, ultimately, between the fictional speakers and the readers.

The results of the present chapter, however, call for a broader study which looks into the causes for the potential globalization, of Irish English, such as the influence of mass media, of online gaming communities, social media, or TV shows, among other factors. Such a study would require the use of a larger corpus of FlrE as well as a reference corpus of contemporary spoken IrE which might reveal linguistic developments as well as the potential loss of traditional features associated with this variety. Finally, the need for such an investigation should be highlighted here as linguistic globalization of IrE may possibly lead to a dilution or a partial loss of the Irish identity.

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# Appendix

## Appendix 1: The texts included in the *Corpus of Fictionalized Irish English*

Roddy Doyle	<i>Paddy Clarke ha ha ha</i> (1993)	<i>The Woman Who Walked into Doors</i> (1996)
Éilís Ní Dhuibhne	<i>The Dancers Dancing</i> (1999)	<i>Midwife to the Fairies</i> (2003)
Donal Ruane	<i>Tales in a Rearview Mirror</i> (2003)	<i>I'm Irish: Get Me out of Here!</i> (2004)
Claire Keegan	<i>Walk the Blue Fields</i> (2007)	<i>Foster</i> (2010)
Nuala Ní Chonchúir	<i>You</i> (2010)	<i>The Closet of Savage Mementos</i> (2014)
Kevin Barry	<i>City of Bohane</i> (2011)	<i>Dark Lies the Island</i> (2012)
Donal Ryan	<i>The Spinning Heart</i> (2012)	<i>The Thing about December</i> (2013)
Paul Howard	<i>Downturn Abbey</i> (2013)	<i>Keeping up with the Kalashnikovs</i> (2014)

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# 13 Migration experiences and identity construction in nineteenth-century Irish emigrant letters

## 1 Introduction

The notion of emigration is strongly embedded in Irish culture. A recent report on *The Gathering*, an initiative promoted by the Irish Tourism Development Authority, *Fáilte Ireland*,<sup>1</sup> and designed to motivate members of the diaspora to come to Ireland to celebrate ‘the best of Irish culture’ and heritage, estimated the global diaspora population to be in excess of 70 million people. *The Gathering* was aimed at encouraging those with ancestral links to return ‘home’ for a series of special events and festivals. But the word ‘home’, as shown in the many stories that have appeared in the *Generation Emigration* section of *The Irish Times* (one of the national newspapers) gains a different weight in the discourse of the Irish emigrant. As Ralph (2009: 184) argues, *home* ‘is an inevitably value-laden concept, whose normative connotations can change across geographical space and scale and throughout the life-course’. This is precisely what one of the emigrants who has taken part in the *Irish Times* survey,<sup>2</sup> refers to when he draws attention to how the concept of *home* ‘changes when we move abroad’. That change in meaning observed by both the emigrants themselves and those who study emigration, has in fact been a constant in the history of Ireland, which became a country of ‘mass’ emigration between 1800 and 1845 (Fitzgerald and Lambkin 2008: 149). In such context the notions of home, homeland and belonging remain important discourses.

The narrative construction and re-construction of home and the reflection of homeland in fictional diasporic contexts has been dealt with in different studies (see for example O’Sullivan 1994) but little attention so far has been paid to the linguistic significance of these notions. Stroinska (2002: 95) points out that when people move to a new territory, images, feelings, voices and words are also carried as baggage, as part of one’s identity; words, as they point out, serve as ‘filters’ between the emigrant and the people to whom their migration experience is

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1 [http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/eZine/TheGathering\\_FinalReport\\_JimMiley\\_December2013.pdf](http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/eZine/TheGathering_FinalReport_JimMiley_December2013.pdf)

2 <http://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/generation-emigration/the-meaning-of-home-changes-when-we-move-abroad-1.2601837#.V4Kt8-pjAUc.mailto>

narrated. Brah's theorizing of migration, which revolves around the concept of diaspora, also focuses on the concept of home. In *Cartographies of Diaspora* Brah (1996) argues that diasporas often encompass conflicting narratives, conceptualizing 'home' as a mythical place of desire, but also as the lived experience of a locality. In the context of private narratives, emigrant letters provide us with valuable insights for the semantic-pragmatic analysis of *home* and other related terms. The following letters, by two different Irish emigrants writing from Argentina to another family member, show metalinguistic reflections on the use of this word:

- (1) Dear Sister, I take this opportunity of letting you know we are all in good health and trust yourself and brother enjoy the same blessing. We are all very sorry for John Boggan's leaving us for **home**, yet there is such a charm in the word **home** that few who enjoy the blessing rarely forget it. (Eliza Murphy, San Martín, Argentina, to her sister Margaret, Haysland, Co. Wexford, Ireland, 4 April 1870)
- (2) It is a pleasing duty indeed to converse with you (as it were) even in this manner and what make it more is that I know that every word you hear from me afford you consolation and pleasure. I trust you will consider that such is the case with me in return for I should consider my life deprived of a great deal of its happiness were I not to hear from you and the rest of my dear friends at **home**. **Home** I still call and consider it as it was there all the pleasures of my youth were enjoyed. Six years and more of my manhood were spent amongst you, and I look upon them to be the six happiest years of my single blessings. From the first thirteen years of our first separation I had almost ceased to remember of **home** or its attachments. But the six years of return has enkindled a fire that shall never be extinguished. (John James Murphy, Flor del Uncalito, Argentina, to his sister Margaret, Haysland, Co. Wexford, Ireland, 8 April 1868)

As can be appreciated, the word *home* is not used unconsciously by these letter authors. In both examples it is followed by a reflection on the part of the writer indicating their own attitude and feelings towards what they understand by *home* (in both cases meaning the country left behind, i.e. Ireland). A more recent study by (Ávila-Ledesma and Amador-Moreno 2016), which looks at the conceptualization of *home* and Irishness in male and female diasporic epistolary discourse, expanded these connotations to include among the aforementioned meanings of *home* the social and temporal dimensions. Within this context, the aim of our investigation in the present study is to analyze how the spaces and imaginaries of *home* are central to the construction of the identit

(ies) of the Irish emigrant in the nineteenth century (Blunt and Dowling 2006), bearing in mind that, as Val and Vinogradova (2010: 1) point out, identity is a dynamic process and ‘it changes depending on the goals of interaction and the situations in which individuals and groups find themselves’.

This chapter investigates the interrelationship between migration, language and diasporic identity formation in the context of nineteenth-century Irish emigration. More specifically, the study presents a contrastive, sociopragmatic analysis of migration experiences and identity construction as conceptualized in the private correspondence exchanged between Irish emigrants to Argentina and to the United States and their loved ones back in Ireland between 1840 and 1930. By analysing the concept of ‘home’ and other related words in private correspondence, the present study investigates linguistic patterns that characterize diasporic identity discourse in the context of Irish emigration.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 2 below will briefly introduce the data and methodology used in the analysis. Section 3 presents an examination of the word *home* in two sub-corpora from CORIECOR: one containing letters written and received by Irish emigrants who went to Argentina and another one containing letters written and received by Irishmen and Irishwomen who emigrated to the United States. Section 4 looks into the use of deictic forms *here* and *there* (and also, very briefly, *this* and *that*), paying special attention to the way they collocate with *home* and analysing the emotional value these terms have in the discourse of these Irish emigrants. Section 5 finally presents our conclusions in the light of how *home*, *here* and *there* behave in the letters and the emotional value that the letter authors imbue these terms with.

To review discussions of emotion research would probably take us too far: as Bednarek (2008: 5) points out, there are over a hundred definitions of emotion. Surveying previous studies of language and emotion also results in forays into disciplines as varied as psychology, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, etc. In this chapter we will focus on how corpora can be analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively in order to investigate sociopragmatic issues in a historical context.

## 2 Data and methodology

The private letters on which the socio-pragmatic analysis was based come from CORIECOR, the Corpus of Irish English Correspondence (McCafferty and Amador-Moreno, in preparation), a corpus of Irish emigrant letters containing material from the late seventeenth century to the early twentieth. For the purpose of this

study, two main sub-corpora: a 115,732-word Argentina component and a 289,939-word USA sub-corpus were extracted from CORIECOR and analyzed using AntConc 3.4.4 (Anthony 2016) and *WordSmith Tools 6.0* (Scott 2012).

The Argentina sub-corpus consists of 162 letters, of which 135 belong to the *Murphy* collection and 27 to the *Pettit* family.<sup>3</sup> The Murphy component contains correspondence written between 1844 and 1925. Most letters were exchanged between John James Murphy and his brothers William and Patrick, all of whom emigrated to Argentina, and a fourth brother, Martin Murphy, who stayed in Ireland. Of the 135 letters in this set, 132 were sent back to Ireland and only three to Argentina. In contrast, the Pettit letters (1864–1875) were written by a group of Argentina born women (Sally Moore, Sarah Moore, Fanny Murphy and Kate Murphy) belonging to the same family. All letters were sent to their cousin John James Pettit, who was also born in Buenos Aires in 1841 but emigrated to Melbourne, Australia after his mother's death.

On the other hand, the USA sub-corpus is composed of eight different collections for a total of 342 letters of which 219 missives were sent back to Ireland and 123 to USA. More specifically, the USA component included *The Prendergast Letters (1840–1850)*, *The Transatlantic Letters of an Irish Quaker Family (1840–1877)*, *Immigrants Letters to Antrim from the USA (1843–1852)*, *Ulster Migration to America Letters (1843–1930)*, *Historical Society of Pennsylvania Letters (1845–1851)*, *MacArthur Letters (1847–1858)*, *Carlow-Coogan Letters (1851–1896)* and *Your Fondest Annie Letters (1901–1911)*. Although most letters were exchanged within families, a small number of correspondents were either neighbours or friends.

The study takes an interdisciplinary approach that combines sociolinguistics (Chambers 2009), pragmatics and corpus linguistics (Aijmer and Rühlemann 2014; Baker 2006; Romero-Trillo 2008) methodologies. Corpus linguistics techniques such as keyword and word list extraction and concordance search have been used to identify and collect the linguistic patterns that characterize diasporic identity discourse in the context of Irish emigration. The first stage of the study involved an in-depth quantitative analysis, based on the identification and compilation of *home* and the empathetic deictic terms *here*, *there*, *this* and *that*, as in the cluster *this / that + country* (dealt with in more detail in Amador-Moreno, forthcoming). In the particular case of *home*, a total of 231 tokens were elicited from the Argentina data and 558 from USA. However,

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<sup>3</sup> The compilers of CORIECOR are grateful to Edmundo Murray for allowing us to include the letters in the corpus. The letters belong to the Anastasia Joyce Collection, 1844–1881. Colecciones Especiales y Archivos, Universidad de San Andrés. The authors are also grateful to Silvana Piga and Natalia Westberg for their help with the material held at the Universidad de San Andrés.

not all of these occurrences were relevant for the present investigation. Since this study is primarily interested in the re-construction of *home* in diasporic space(s), we excluded all those instances where the term was used by letter writers in Ireland as in example (3) below, and those instances of *home* in adjectival position as in *home-like feeling*, *home post*, *home market*, etc.

- (3) We often talk of the nice time and all the fun we used to have whilst you were **home** but them times will never come again unless you will return once more. (Mary O'Brien, Coolnacuppoge, Co. Carlow, Ireland to her cousin William Coogan, Brooklyn, NY, USA, 9 June 1886).

For this analysis, the examples from letters sent to the emigrants, where *here* refers to Ireland, were excluded. Also excluded from the study were the examples of *here* found in letters sent within the USA, unless they contained specific references to Ireland as home.

In the second part of the analysis, a qualitative examination of the linguistic patterns was conducted in order to ascertain the extent to which migration experiences and identity construction could be traced, tested and extrapolated from the letters.

### 3 *Home* and diasporic identity-making

As mentioned in section 1, one of the defining characteristics of diasporas is that they have multiple allegiances to places which, consequently, translates into more complex and multidimensional representations of *home* (Al-Ali and Koser 2002: 8). As Wiles (2008: 118) points out, *home*, then, is a slippery and multi-layered term that can be perceived not only as a physical place but also as a symbolic space of belonging, emotional attachment, intimacy and selfhood.

In the context of the Irish diaspora, Fitzpatrick (1994: 620) highlights the ambiguous nature of *home* which 'ranges in idiomatic location from dwelling or household to neighbourhood, nation or heaven' in the Irish-Australian correspondence. Drawing on Fitzpatrick's (1994) findings, Murray (2006) also examines the connotations of *home* in letters and other private narratives of four Irish families in Argentina. One interesting observation here is the strong, continuing connection with the place of origin, with 66% of *home* occurrences in Australia referring to Ireland vs. 53.5% in Argentina. Another important finding was the differences in the connotations 'household' (2.3% Australia vs. 53.3% Argentina), 'neighbourhood' (2.7% Australia vs. 20.2% Argentina) and 'country' (1% Australia

vs. 30.1% Argentina), which suggest a more abstract use of *home* among the Irish in Argentina as opposed to those in Australia (Murray 2006: 25).

A preliminary look at the uses of *home* in our data showed that, similar to Australia and Argentina, USA correspondents employed the word *home* in a variety of senses, signalling emotional commitment, self-identification and diasporic home-making (Blunt and Dowling 2006: 199). In general terms, a total of 432 examples of *home* were identified in the USA letters, of which 11% (n=49) of the occurrences referred to Ireland. Linguistically speaking, *home* meaning 'Ireland' generally collocated with the preposition *at*, with verbs indicating directional reference such as *go*, *leave* and *return* and with modifiers like *childhood*, *dear* and *old*. In consonance with Miller's (1985) findings, a more detailed examination of the collocations unveiled a profound homesickness embedded in *leaving home* structures and emotional expressions such as *my country*, *my dear home*, *yearnings for home*, *a longing for the dear ones at home*, *dear memories*, *happy days* and *dear old Galway*. In her book, *Outsiders Inside: Whiteness, Place and Irish Women*, Bronwen Walter (2001: 197) describes this phenomenon as identities of displacement which 'invoke Ireland as *home*, and revolve around memories of growing up in Ireland, return visits, a sense of national belonging and shared memories and stories that connect people across diasporic space' (in Blunt and Dowling 2006: 214) as in the following example:

- (4) It alone can only tell of the many happy days I spent by its waters in dear old Galway, and for one such day, I would now give almost anything. They were the days when my heart was light and happy, and it was there also I slept and dreamt that life was beauty and from that sleep I woke and found in America that life was duty. Fate is cruel to some at least it was so to me, for when it placed the Atlantic between me and those I loved, it stamped a mark on my life never to be forgotten. What good does anything afford you when you have a dear Mother that you cannot see? Jim, do you mind that night when you told us of your leaving **home**, how I cried, yes, fit to break my heart, for I know then, as I do now, what parting with a Mother meant. (Annie O'Donnell Pittsburgh, Penn. USA to her friend James Phelan in Indiana, USA, 25 August 1901).

Descriptions of the host country as *home* were scarce in the epistolary narratives sent back to Ireland, with only 3% (n=14) of the total amount of *home* occurrences. Interestingly enough, 11 out of these 14 examples occurred in letters written by the Hanlon and Kerr families, who are among the most emotionally attached to Ireland in the USA letters. White (1995: 2) describes this process as realignments of identity and remarks that emigrants 'conceptualize a number of

overlapping multiple identities which are the subject of constant renegotiation in the face of the conflicts and compromises of everyday life' (in Stroinska and Cecchetto 2003: 108). The formation of a diasporic, hybrid identity was also discussed in Fitzpatrick (1994: 624) who concluded that 'as emigrants settled down and reared children, they slipped easily into speaking of their Australian household as *home*'. In the USA data, the relationship between compromises of everyday life and *home* located in America was clearly traced, as illustrated in (5):

- (5) As soon as I read it I said, "I must get busy and answer it at once," but so many things pop up in our daily life to prevent doing the things we set out to do sometimes. I have been feeling quite poorly with bladder trouble and keeping everything going and quite a number of correspondents to take care of, I have a very busy life. I thought after school closed and I had the twins at **home** I would not be nearly so busy but everyday finds us just as much so. (Mrs. Michael Bernard Hanlon, Kansas, USA to a cousin in Ireland, 4 July 1932).

On the contrary, the coexistence of two places of identification was extremely frequent in the correspondence of Quaker migrants and their families within the USA. The most striking finding to emerge from this analysis was the significantly high number of *home* instances referring to USA, with 78% (n=337) examples. Walter (2001: 194) refers to this 'entitlement to claim the area of settlement as one's own and the state of feeling at *home*' as identities of placement. As Blunt and Dowling (2006: 214) put it, 'identities of placement are bound up with *homes* and families outside Ireland and Irish community life in diaspora'. In the case of the Quakers' epistolary discourse, this sense of belonging to the place where they settled was manifest in the use of *coming home*, *going home*, *returning home* and *staying home* structures and expressions like *thoughts of home* and *happy home of my childhood* where the term was used to denote both a physical location of dwelling and a symbolic place of attachment as in (6):

- (6) My dear brother, though another now claims my warmest affection I still love thee with the sincerity of a sisters love and, let me pass through what . . . [I may?], I will still look back with pleasure to the happy **home** of my childhood when we were both as happy as youth and innocence could make us, and when we knew nothing of the world than that it was all bright and beautiful. Oh! What happy days were those when we played together or together read or conned our lessons; will they never return? (Maria Wright Candee (n. O'Brien), Buffalo, NY, USA to Joseph Sinton O'Brien, NY, USA, 10 April 1842).

The general meaning of *home*, i.e. home as an abstract concept without any identity-making reference (7), was also attested in the USA data, with 4% (n=17) of the total amount. In this regard, it is important to mention that the present study did not differentiate among ‘household’, ‘neighbourhood’ and ‘nation’. As Table 1 (below) shows, we concentrated on four general, and rather broader, meanings of *home* in an attempt to disentangle and explain the relationship between migration experiences and diasporic identity formation.

**Table 1:** Uses of *home* in the Argentina and USA sub-corpora.

	Argentina		USA	
	Raw Freq.	nf.	Raw Freq.	nf.
Total	226	195.2	432	148.9
Home=Ireland	184	158.9	49	16.9
Home=Host Country (in letters sent to Ireland / Australia)	32	27.6	14	4.8
Home=Host Country (in letters sent within the host country)	1	0.8	337	116.2
Home=General	9	7.7	17	5.8
Home=Metaphorical	–	–	15	5.1

- (7) The good example which you daily experience in the religious life naturally stimulates you to the practice of piety, for living in a monastery without leading a holy life is just going against the tide. And now that you encourage me so strongly in the matter, allow me to suggest to you your obligation in the matter as charity begins at **home**. (William Coogan, Iowa, USA to his brother Matthew Coogan, New York, USA. 8 February 1869).

Finally, a small minority, 4% (n=15), of *home* occurrences referred to a metaphorical place or a space of emotional attachment. Of these 15 cases in the USA letters, 13 used *home* as synonymous with heaven (8), whereas in the two others it was constructed as an imaginary space that was imbued with feelings of belonging, intimacy (9) and happiness (Blunt and Varley 2004: 3). The relationship between happiness and *home* was also identified in Fitzpatrick (1994: 626) who notes that ‘when happiness was achieved in Australia, emigrants wrote that they felt at home’.

- (8) I hope, as do we all, that we will all yet see one another face to face, and many an earnest, humble prayer I offer to that end. But if any of us should happen to be called **home** to our eternal **home**, then it is that we should look to the future and prepare ourselves for that end we were created. (Edward J. Hanlon, Pittsburgh, Penn. USA to his parents in Ballymote, Co. Down, Ireland, 8 April 1876).
- (9) My dear Jim, How glad you all must have been to have your uncle **home** again, but I was awfully sorry he couldn't have stayed longer for, really, I cannot tell you how thoroughly I enjoyed his company. His nice pleasant manner made me feel at **home** with him right away, and how it pleased me to hear him talk so well of you, Jim. (Annie O'Donnell Pittsburgh, Penn. USA to her friend James Phelan in Indiana, USA 1 February 1903).

On the other hand, a total of 226 instances of *home* were identified in the Argentina sub-corpus, out of which 81% (n=184) referred to Ireland as *home*. In line with Murray's (2006: 25) findings, most of the examples came from the Murphy brothers' narrative (n=182) as opposed to only two occurrences in the Pettit letters. Similar to the USA data, *home* generally collocates with prepositions such as *at*, *for* and *from*, action verbs like *go*, *leave*, *take*, *send* and *write* and the modifiers *happy* and *dear*. An in-depth examination of the collocations revealed two main themes in the Irish-Argentina correspondence: (i) the Murphy brothers' strong connection with Ireland – conceptualized through *at home*, *going home*, *sending home* (*money*, *presents*, *cattle*) structures, and (ii) identities of displacement and nostalgia embedded in expressions like *dear friends at home*, *old house at home* and *dear happy home* as in (10). In contrast with the USA letters, these expressions of nostalgia do not convey a regretful, emigration-as-exile tone, but rather a statement of belonging to Ireland. In other words, it is fundamentally used to maintain family and social relationships between voluntary<sup>4</sup> emigrants (McKenna 1994: 208–211) and their families in Ireland.

- (10) These last three or four days I have fancied almost that I am still in Haysland enjoying the happy hours of your society, which often helped to pass away the winter evening over the happy fireside at the old house at **home**. Oh dear happy **home**. (John James Murphy, Flor del Uncalito, Argentina, to his brother Martin Murphy, Haysland, Co. Wexford, 26 August 1870).

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4 For a more detailed discussion of this see also McKenna (2000).

The emergence of diasporic, hybrid identities was also attested in the Argentina data with 14% (n=32) examples of host country as *home*, of which 14 occurred in the Murphy letters and 18 in the Pettit collection. In grammatical terms, *home* generally collocated with *arrive*, *come*, *leave*, *start for* and *proceed* in the Murphy narrative, indicating a directional movement that, in the case of John James Murphy, usually took place between his main *home* i.e. the *estancia La Flor del Uncalito* in Salto and Buenos Aires (11).<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, identities of placement and strong, emotional connections with Buenos Aires and its countryside can be traced in the Pettit epistolary discourse, with letter-writers referring to *going home*, *returning home*, *being at/away from home* as in example (12). Regarding *home* occurrences in correspondence sent within Argentina, there was just one example found in Catherine Murphy's letter to her siblings Nicholas and John Murphy in Uncalito.

- (11) I start for **home** tomorrow. We are to hold some Races at the Estancia on next Monday. I take out the prizes with me, two saddles, bridle, whip & spurs. They are to be private Races for horses of the neighbourhood, for our own amusement, & to be followed by a dance that night. (John James Murphy, Flor del Uncalito, Argentina, to his brother Martin Murphy, Haysland, Co. Wexford, 31 August 1873).
- (12) My mother is at present away from **home** on a visit to my brother Robert, we had a little son of his stopping with us to go to school and he got sick and was ordered to the camp by the doctor, so Mamma took him a fortnight ago and has not returned yet, he lives at Mercedes about thirty leagues from town but the western railway runs within four leagues of his place so that it is very convenient to go or come. (Sally Moore, Buenos Aires, Argentina, to her cousin John Pettit in Melbourne, Australia, 26 December 1866).

Finally, the general meaning of *home* accounted for just 4% (n=9) of the total amount (13). The present study did not identify any example of the metaphorical connotation of *home* in the Argentina sub-corpus.

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<sup>5</sup> Comparing the experiences of Irish Diaspora in USA and Argentina, Murray (2006: 20) observes that while in the 'United States until the end of the Civil War, the Irish were perceived at the same level of the most marginal segments, the Irish in Argentina advanced in the social ladder and reached much higher positions than gauchos and manual workers and, sometimes, even than the local petit bourgeoisie'.

- (13) I was indeed glad to hear of Bessy's marriage. James I hope has laid a good foundation on which to build the future prospects of his remaining family, and I trust Bessy will always show that gratitude to him and those that were instrumental in procuring her a happy and independent **home** by her kindness to those she left behind. (John James Murphy, Flor del Uncalito, Argentina, to his brother Martin Murphy, Haysland, Co. Wexford, 31 August 1873).

As Fitzpatrick (1994: 627) puts it, 'letters enable us to overhear [emigrants'] words, and the words they read, in that phase of migration when *home's* hemisphere remained ambiguous'. The results, as shown in Table 1, illustrate the multifaceted nature of *home* as well as its 'multiplacedness in the diasporic imaginary' (Brah 1996: 197). Overall, there seems to be a link between specific circumstances of migration and diasporic identity formation. The comparison of *home* occurrences in the Argentina and the USA sub-corpora showed that while both diasporas experienced *home* and identity-making processes in similar ways, the Irish in Argentina seemed to be more adapted to the new environment. In this regard, the use of *home* as Ireland in the Irish-Argentinean correspondence revealed a yearning for connectedness that enabled them to (re)negotiate national identity and belonging and to structure their lives in the host country. In the USA data, the dichotomy Ireland-as-home vs. USA-as-home showed polarized constructions of identities which, as discussed in Watt (2015: 56), are 'marked by an emotional struggle born of the contradiction between an attachment to an older home and the need to adapt to a new one'.

## 4 *Here, there* and empathetic deixis

In an interview with Stierstorfer on 'diaspora and home' (Stierstorfer 2015: 14), Homi Babha states that the term *home* has two sides as a concept:

One – something to do with the normalized, the naturalized, the inevitable, the original. It's there – the "thereness" of your existence, even more than the "hereness" of your existence. It is always there; this is my home. I understand this landscape. I know these people. I know the language, and so on. So that's one important concept. And the other, it seems to me, is the kind of Conradian idea that home is what you return to. So, there are these two moments of temporality, these two narrative moments – coming out of the home and somehow allowing yourself to imagine, whether you can or you can't, that you can go back: so emergence and return are complicit with the concept of home. (Stierstorfer 2015: 14–15).

This opposition between *here* and *there* is interesting when we look at how both adverbial forms behave in the private correspondence of these emigrants,

often in combination with the word *home*. Murray (2006: 24) notices that in the letters written by John James Murphy and his brothers *there*, like *home*, generally represent Ireland. A cross-comparative analysis of the deictic forms contained in the Argentina sub-corpus and the USA sub-corpus (see also Amador-Moreno, 2019) add further insights into the differences between the migration experience of those who went to North America and the experience of our Argentina emigrants.

A close look at the use of *here* and *there* in the USA corpus revealed a higher percentage of negative rather than positive attitudes implied in *here* in the USA data as compared to the Argentina data. Of the 844 examples of *here* in the USA sub-corpus, 154 were considered emotional or *empathetic* deictic uses in the sense suggested by Lyons (1977: 677), where the deictic form reveals emotional attachment and psychological closeness. A corpus-based analysis of the concordance lines containing *here*<sup>6</sup> showed 50.6% (n=78) negative uses as illustrated in (14) below, where the letter author complains about the amount of alcohol consumed in the host country.

- (14) The intemperate habits of the people **here**, form my principal objection to this place. This country consumes a vast quantity of “liquor” and it presents a greater amount of mortality, taken from the statistics of the state than any other county in it. (John Kerr to his Uncle, Napoleon, Arkansas, USA 25 May 1851).

Positive attitudes towards the host country (illustrated in example 15 below) were less frequent, with only 18% (n=28) of the total amount of empathetic deictic *here*. The remaining 31% (n=48) were examples like (16), where the letter writer is simply establishing a comparison between the host country and Ireland (examples like these were counted as neutral empathetic deictic tokens in both sub-corpora):

- (15) I like this country well and this place. There is very little sickness **here**, a little fever and ague, but nothing of any account; pretty warm in summer and cold in winter, good wages for every working man but very bad for idlers (William Kerr Cincinatti, Ohio, USA to his Uncle David Graham in Newpark, Co. Antrim, Ireland, 5 August 1848).

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<sup>6</sup> As mentioned above, for this analysis, the examples from letters sent to the emigrants, where *here* refers to Ireland, were excluded. Also excluded from the study were the examples of *here* found in letters sent within the USA, unless they contained specific references to Ireland as home.

- (16) The potatoes have the same disease **here** that they have in Ireland. (John Kerr, Perrysville, Pennsylvania, USA to his Uncle David Graham in Newpark, Co. Antrim, Ireland, 24 November 1845).

In contrast, the total amount of examples of *here* in the Argentina sub-corpus is 402, out of which 25% (n=100) can be considered as empathetic deictic tokens. Of the total amount of empathetic deictic examples, 47% (n=47) have a positive meaning as in example (17) below, and 13% (n=13) of them can be interpreted as negative as in (18).

- (17) We are as usual very much respected **here** both by the authorities and the respectable people of Salto (John James Murphy, Uncalito, Argentina, to his brother, sisters and friends, Ireland 20 July 1864).
- (18) How do you spend Xmas? **Here** it does be very dull indeed, the natives allow it to pass over unnoticed never celebrating it no more than any ordinary holy day (Kate Agnes Murphy, Buenos Aires, Argentina, to her cousin John Pettit in Melbourne, Australia, 12 September 1868).

Table 2 shows raw and normalized figures of empathetic deictic uses of *here* in both sub-corpora (nf. indicating normalized frequency, i.e. occurrences per one hundred thousand words):

**Table 2:** Empathetic uses of *here* in the USA and the Argentina sub-corpora.

	Argentina		USA	
	Raw freq.	nf.	Raw freq.	nf.
Total	100	106.9	154	53.1
Positive	47	50.2	28	9.6
Negative	13	13.9	78	26.9

An interesting point raised by Murray (2006) in relation to the letters sent from Argentina is that '[w]hen the writers mention *out here* to signify Argentina, they imply that Ireland is *inside*, and they feel exposed and insecure by being *out there*, that is, a place outside home' (Murray 2006: 24). The cluster *out + here* is a more recurrent pattern in the Argentina sub-corpus (12,4%) than in the USA

data (2%)<sup>7</sup> but the difference in frequency is probably due to the fact that the Irish who write from the Latin American country settled in vast tracts of land that were empty, whereas the Irish who write from North America were in more densely populated areas, where the sense of emptiness and isolation would not have been as keenly felt. This is evident in examples like (19) below, where the writer gives an account of how things are going in his *estancia*:

- (19) The sheep and camps **out here** are in splendid condition, but in many places they are still suffering for want of pasture, and the heavy storms of rains we had lately. (John James Murphy, Flor del Uncalito, Argentina, to his brother Martin Murphy, Haysland, Co. Wexford, 22 August 1866).

The analysis of *there*, as argued in Amador-Moreno (2019) is less revealing (see Table 3 below), probably because the discourse of the emigrants appears to be more focused on their new space(s) than on the space(s) left behind. The same criteria for the scrutiny of tokens described above was followed for *there*, so that only tokens of *there* meaning *Ireland* were taken into account. Examples like (20) were considered positive, given the nostalgic load that they carry, while examples like (21), where the use of *there* conveys an unfavourable attitude towards Ireland, were considered as negative:

- (20) Home I still call and consider it as it was **there** all the pleasures of my youth were enjoyed. Six years and more of my manhood were spent amongst you, and I look upon them to be the six happiest years of my single blessings (John James Murphy Flor del Uncalito, Argentina, to his sister Margaret, in Haysland, Co. Wexford, Ireland, 8 April 1868).
- (21) Dear Friends being **there** that would occasion me ever to think of Ireland, that distressed and ever oppressed country. (John James Murphy, unspecified, Argentina, to his brother Martin Murphy and friends, Haysland, Co. Wexford, Ireland, 25 March 1864).

The patterns of collocation of *there* in the USA sub-corpus, were even less insightful in terms of empathetic deictic uses than in the Argentina letters, given the low occurrence of tokens available. The same caveats discussed for the analysis of *here* in this sub-corpus apply in this case. Examples like (22) were

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7 The total amount of tokens in the Argentina letters is 50 (out of 402 concordance lines in total for *here*) while in the USA letters only 17 occurrences (out of 844 *here*) of *out + here* are found.

counted as positive, whereas occurrences like (23) which show a rather negative and curiously prescriptivist attitude towards *there* were counted as negative:

- (22) I have such a longing lately for going home that it would not surprise me if I should go even for a very short time, just long enough to see all those old dear friends. The summer months would be the most delightful to be **there**. Ireland in the summer!(Annie O'Donnell, Pittsburgh, Penn. USA to her friend James Phelan, 24 May 1903).
- (23) Everyone here speaks well, or as well as he can. No one is ashamed to pronounce properly. Not so in Ireland. Many **there**, who are able, will not speak well. (John Kerr, unknown origin, USA to the Grahams in Newpark, Co. Antrim, Ireland, 1840s).

Table 3 shows the distribution of tokens in both sub-corpora (nf = normalized frequency, occurrences per one hundred thousand words).

**Table 3:** Empathetic uses of *there* in the USA and the Argentina sub-corpora.

	Argentina		USA	
	Raw freq.	nf.	Raw freq.	nf.
Total	18	19.2	19	6.5
Positive	3	3.2	3	1
Negative	5	5.3	6	2

Other deictic forms such as *this* and *that* were also telling for the purpose of the present study. The following letter, reproduced below at some length, illustrates how the word *home* interacts with the cluster *this + country* and, to a lesser extent, also with *here*, in a clear attempt to portray the host country in a rather favourable light<sup>8</sup>:

<sup>8</sup> Murray (2006: 186 fn. 144) remarks: ‘Whether to convince friends and neighbours to emigrate to Argentina, or to justify himself before his social relations, there is a repetitive praise of the country in all [the letters written by J. J. Murphy].’

- (24) The climate and seasons you may see anything like it in Ireland, and for security of life and property I see no risk providing people carry themselves correct and fair. When at **home** I imagined these were great danger in living in **this country**, but this feeling took possession of my mind through a debility, and from the fear so much apprehended by people at **home**, as you remember how much we used to talk of these matters over our comfortable fire during the winter nights. But this has all vanished, and the danger I so much dreaded I find to be nothing more nor less than imagination and I now (whatever it has been from heretofore) see no cause for those fears, as I never saw an instance of murder or &c. without having been provoked and that in most cases caused through a drink and its effects. [...] What surprise people most on their coming to **this country** is to find it so much different to what they expected it to be when at **home**. The generality of people at **home** thinks we are living in a half civilized, half savage, a sort of desert wilderness such as we read of in Sin-Bad the Sailor, and other like fairy tales. The five years that I was at **home**, there were a greater change effected towards the enlightenment and the social life and happiness of foreigners living in **this country**, than there were for all the previous years of its Independence. My Dear Friends, you can with confidence believe me when I tell you (as I have on all occasions been truthful and sincere with you), that either with a family or without one, a man can live more happy and independent **here**, whether with half or 1/3 interest in a flock of sheep, than the best of your farmers can do at **home**. (John James Murphy, Flor del Uncalito, Argentina to his brother Martin Murphy, Haysland, Co. Wexford, Ireland, 20 June 1865).

In total 156 examples of *this + country* (with an empathetic deictic meaning) were found in the Argentinian letters, out of which 52%, (n= 82) have positive connotations along the lines of the excerpt above, and only 8% (n=12) have negative ones. A separate count was carried out for examples where clear comparisons with Ireland are established. Within these, 20 examples of *this country* in collocation with words like *home*, *Ireland*, *there* or the *old land* were scrutinized (see Amador-Moreno, 2019). In the Argentina sub-corpus, the majority of the occurrences of *this + country* in this environment (n=11) fall within the category of positive perceptions of the host land. However, some of the comparisons between *this country* and what is called *home*, *the old land/country*, *there*, or simply *Ireland* can be interpreted as negative (n=3) (as is the case of example 25 below, where the letter writer warns his reader(s) about the cultural shock that Irish emigrants sometimes experienced, as recorded also in Nevin's fiction (see Delaney 2017):

- (25) Of course **this country** has its own inconvenience and new comers frequently entertain strong feeling on their arrival (John James Murphy, Flor del Uncalito, Argentina, to his brother Martin Murphy and Friends? 1864).

As was the case with *here* vs. *there*, the empathetic meaning of *that* + *country* in the Argentina sub-corpus is not as high as the combination *this* + *country*. Of the total amount of tokens of *that* + *country* (n=9) in the letters, only 44.4% (n=4) can be considered examples of empathetic deixis, the remaining 55.6% (n=5) either do not show any emotional attachment or they are used in reference to Australia, and therefore, had to be excluded from the present study. Example (26) illustrates the uses of negative (empathetic deictic) *that*:

- (26) Philip Lambert, Ballygilane, is about coming out here I am thinking the longer people stops in **that country** the worse for themselves, as things is getting still worse every day. (John James Murphy, Flor del Uncalito, Argentina, to his brother Martin Murphy, Haysland, Co. Wexford, Ireland, 20 June 1865).

In her study of four different types of corpora, Bednarek (2008: 50) points out that there seems to be a preference for negative emotion terms over positive ones, even though this tendency is most striking in conversation, and she cites the work of Nöth (1992), and Schrauf and Sánchez (2004) to argue that there are more negative emotion labels than positive ones in discourse in general. However, if we take the empathetic deictic terms analysed here as examples of emotion terms, it is evident that in the Argentina sub-corpus, the weight of positive empathetic deixis is heavier. The comparison of empathetic deictic tokens in both sub-corpora would seem to indicate that the Irish emigrants who went to Argentina had a more positive attitude towards the host country than those who emigrated to the USA had towards the North-American country. However, as argued in Amador-Moreno (2019), since these findings are based on a small subset of corpora, and most of the Argentinian letters are written by an emigrant whose emigration adventure was very successful (John James Murphy), these conclusions must remain preliminary.

## 5 Summary and conclusion

This chapter has explored the interrelationship between migration, language and diasporic identity in the context of nineteenth century Irish history. The analysis of words such as *home*, *here*, *there*, etc. through the lens of corpus

analytic tools, has shown that semantic-pragmatic analyses can provide interesting insights into how the migration experience of the Irish was narrated to others through letter writing. The study of private correspondence shows how, rather than being a static category of possession (Val and Vinogradova 2010), diasporic identities change, and are often based on the emigrant's perception of one's own self, and on 'the evaluation of one's own past, the visions of one's own future' (Haller 2009: 183). The results observed in this study mirror those of Al-Ali and Koser (2002: 1) who argued that 'the changing relationship between migrants and their homes is held to be an almost quintessential characteristic of transnational migration'. The current findings provide additional evidence of emigrants' use of *home* as synonymous with identity (Blunt 2005), while a closer look at different time periods or the study of individual letter writers over time, would provide a more empirical diagnosis of change as such.

Identity is intertwined here with memory too, where *home* is understood as 'a site of memory' (see Blunt and Dowling 2006: 212) and with the type of 'thickening' that Aydemir and Rotas (2008:7) suggest as a reflection of the mutual impact of migration and memory, where place (and, by extension, we add, *home* too) becomes 'the setting of the variegated memories, imaginations, dreams, fantasies, nightmares, anticipations and idealizations that experiences of migration, of both migrants and native inhabitants bring into contact with each other.' The interconnection of home, identity and nostalgia is central to the area of memory studies; however, the discussion of the relationship between *home* and memory was beyond the scope of the present paper.<sup>9</sup> The present study's aim was to add to a growing body of literature on transnationalism and *home*. By the same token, the sociopragmatic analysis of a word like *home* in the context of emigrant letters is revealing in terms of issues such as separation and belonging, which are central to the area of migration studies. Also, the evaluation of psychological closeness through the use of deictic forms, contributes to the knowledge of other sociolinguistic issues such as acculturation, adaptation, which lie at the intersection between linguistic and historical analyses.

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<sup>9</sup> For further discussions on the theoretical, empirical and methodological issues that affect the understanding of memory, see for example Blunt and Dowling (2006); and Rothberg (2014).

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