

Section 3

Varieties Meet Histories

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Abstracts

Marion Schulte (Bielefeld)

Early audio recordings and the development of Irish English in the 20th century

Contemporary Irish English is a relatively well-described variety of English (e.g. Hickey 2007; Kallen 2013; Peters 2016). Comparatively little is known about the historical development of this variety, however. Some aspects of historical stages of Irish English can be studied with written documents (Hickey 2005, 2007), but texts are less suited to researching phonetic and phonological aspects.

High quality recordings of radio and television shows and interviews with members of the public have recently been made available through different repositories and digital collections (in particular the RTE archives, the digital repository of Ireland, and UCD's digital library)¹, and these provide more suitable data to study phonetics and phonology. These recordings allow us to investigate earlier stages of this variety of English with modern instrumental methods for the first time. In this talk, I will use a variety of such early recordings of different speakers across a variety of genres from sports commentary to political speeches to shed light on the development of phonetic and phonological aspects of Irish English in the 20th century. A number of features that have been described as particularly salient in contemporary Irish English will be investigated with acoustic means. This will provide new evidence on when and how these features have emerged and spread in Irish English since the 1920s, but also on which features may have fallen out of use over the course of the 20th century.

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Sandra Jansen (Leipzig)

Varieties meet History – Linguistic repercussions of national economic developments in a peripheral community

In this presentation I discuss the linguistic consequences of domestic political decisions and economic developments for the peripheral community of Maryport in West Cumbria, UK, i.e. when during Thatcher's time as PM in the 1980s a number of political decisions were made such as the privatisation of state utilities for the UK, which had socioeconomic consequences such as the increase of unemployment in particular in the north of England and also in the

¹ Digital Repository of Ireland <<http://www.dri.ie/>> RTE Archives <https://www.rte.ie/archives> UCD Digital Library <<https://digital.ucd.ie/>>

community under scrutiny. However, communities in West Cumbria were hit by economic unrest even before the 1980s.

Up till the middle of the 1960s, Maryport can be described as an economically deprived but close-knit community with the majority of people working in factories and the mines in Maryport. The decline of ports which hit cities around the country, e.g. Liverpool, Newcastle and Glasgow also took place in West Cumbria. The community structure broke more and more open when the cargo port closed and jobs were lost. Moreover, due to the geographically and economically peripheral position, over the years a feeling of resignation due to deprivation set in.

Based on a spoken corpus of Maryport English, I investigate two sound changes – the loss of taps and the increase of T-glottaling – in the community over the past 70 years. I discuss how the breaking away of close-knit ties and the deprivation as consequences of the political decisions and economic developments mentioned above have led to the increase of dialect contact situations and the exhilarated willingness to accept non-local norms into the local speech. I argue that up till the 1960s, the community could be described as geographically peripheral while the socioeconomic changes influenced the linguistic development of the community in the way that Maryport now has to be described as a community which is not protective of local norms anymore.

Ulrike Altendorf (Hannover)

Embryonic variants as 'seeds' of things to come - Tracing the phonetic origins and social trajectory of S Retraction in the South-East of England

Among the first to report on S Retraction as an innovation in English English was Peter Trudgill in 2003 (see also Altendorf 2003, Bass 2009), when he "observed [S Retraction] informally from a number of people, including broadcasters, all of them apparently under 30" (59). The present study will trace the socio-phonetic beginning of this trend by presenting the results of an auditory and acoustic analysis of /str/- and /stj/-clusters in by now historical data from a socially stratified sample of 40 male and female adolescent speakers recorded in 1998 in London, Colchester and Canterbury.

The acoustic analysis of spectral peaks as well as the auditory classification of variants show that retraction was significantly more advanced in the speech of male speakers and of lower social classes. Knowing how the trend has progressed in the meantime (Levon & Holmes-Elliott 2013), I will venture to interpret the synchronic pattern of variation as a snapshot of a sound change in progress. As such it took the form of a change from below that had reached the middle class in the late 1990s. It was about to enter the upper middle class where we can find the first very rare retracted variants in the speech of individual speakers. These one would have been likely to interpret as mere coarticulatory effects. In retrospect, however, they can be identified as "embryonic variants" representing "the very earliest stage of linguistic change in progress" (Trudgill 2002, 41) or, in other words, the 'seeds' of things to come.

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Svenja Kranich, Elisabeth Hampel & Hanna Bruns (Bonn)

Requests across varieties and cultures. Norms are changing (but not everywhere in the same way)

In cross-cultural as well as in variational pragmatic studies, requests have been widely studied, typically bringing to light variation concerning levels of directness (cf. e.g. Blum-Kulka 1987, Barron 2006). The present paper investigates to what extent recent cultural changes have affected speakers' norms concerning the expected formulation of a request in different English-speaking countries (UK, India) as well as in Germany. The variational plus contrastive approach has been chosen in order to be able to differentiate clearly between the impact of cultural and linguistic factors.

For this study, participants are asked to complete Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs), filling in the missing request in scenarios with different hierarchical relationships between speaker and addressee. The data thus collected is not the most natural and spontaneous, but brings to light speakers' internalized norms, which justifies DCTs as a valid method for our purpose. Focus group interviews complement the findings to give us an insight into speakers' attitudes. Data from speakers in two age groups, 18-30 and 50-65 years (total n=180), is collected in order to observe ongoing changes. Our hypothesis, based on the analyses carried out so far, is that younger speakers of British English and German show less variation across different power situations than older speakers, due to a decreasing importance of overt hierarchies in both countries (cf. Mair 2006: 5). Indian English speakers, even younger ones, by contrast, still attach more value to hierarchical relations, and behave remarkably different from the two other groups when talking to superiors (e.g. using more negative politeness strategies). The study is part of a larger project that investigates the impact of recent cultural change on linguistic behaviour.

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Robert Fuchs (Hamburg)

Recent diachronic change in spelling and lexis

Philippine English is one of the few postcolonial varieties of English mainly influenced by American (and not British) English from its inception. Previous research on recent diachronic change indicates that this influence continues. Philippine English followed some of the recent syntactic change going on in American English, although some variables also indicate an emergence of properly Philippine norms (i.e. endonormativity; Alonsagay & Nolasco, 2010; Borlongan & Lim, 2012; Collins et al., 2014a; 2014b; 2014c; Collins 2016; Schneider, 2011). The present study extends this research by analysing change in lexis and spelling in two parallel (sub-)corpora from the 1960s (Phil-Brown) and 1990s (ICE-PHI), a dataset also used in previous studies. In total, 17 cases of lexical variation (e.g. *lorry/truck*, *film/movie*) and 11 types of spelling variation (e.g. *-ise/-ize* in verbs, *-isation/-ization* in nouns) were considered. The items that were queried are taken from, among others, Awonusi (1994) and Hänsel & Deuber (2013).

Results indicate that, despite the early American influence on Philippine English, it still followed British norms in a substantial minority of cases in the 1960s. By the 1990s, these remnants of British influence have almost wholly been replaced by an adherence to American norms. The results can be accounted for by the retreat of British influence in the world and an increase in American influence during this period. Finally, and more broadly, the article discusses the notion of Americanisation and how it can be traced and accounted for. In particular, it argues that spelling is particularly useful as a variable to measure degrees of Americanisation.

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Benedikt Szmrecsanyi (Leuven)

Prescriptivism versus colloquialization: the rise of relative *that* in 20th century British and American English

I report on a project (see Hinrichs, Szmrecsanyi & Bohmann 2015; Grafmiller, Szmrecsanyi & Hinrichs 2016) investigating the relative importance of prescriptivism vis-à-vis other cultural developments that fuel variation and change in written styles, such as the colloquialization of the norms of written English (e.g. Hundt & Mair 1999). Utilizing a variationist research design, the study is specifically concerned with relativizer choice in restrictive relative clauses with inanimate antecedents, as in (1):

- | | | | |
|-----|----|--------------------------------|-------------|
| (1) | a. | This is the house that | Jack built. |
| | b. | This is the house which | Jack built. |
| | c. | This is the house \emptyset | Jack built. |

In written-edited-published British and American English from the 1961-1992 period as sampled in the Brown family of corpora (Brown/LOB/Frown/F-LOB), alternation among relativizers is undergoing a massive shift from *which* to *that*, with American English spearheading this change. But what exactly are the factors driving this change? On the one hand, style guides – in particular US American ones (e.g. Strunk & White 1999) – prescribe relative *that* and proscribe relative *which* in restrictive relative clauses; on the other hand, *that* is the more informal option compared to bookish *which* (Tagliamonte, Smith & Lawrence 2005). To investigate if prescriptivism or colloquialization is responsible for the shift, we analyzed a dataset spanning $N = 16,868$ relative clauses. Tokens were annotated for a variety of language-internal (e.g. relative clause length) and language-external (e.g. genre)

conditioning factors. But crucially, the annotation also included information about additional areas of variation regulated by prescriptivism, such as the proscribed use of stranded prepositions and the prescribed avoidance of the passive voice – the assumption being that if the *that*-shift is a prescriptivism-driven change, then those writers who go *which*-hunting should also be those who avoid e.g. preposition stranding and the passive voice. Regression analysis of the dataset shows that (i) relativizer deletion follows different constraints than the selection of either *that* or *which*, (ii) the *that*-shift is a case of institutionally backed colloquialization-*cum*-Americanization, and (iii) uptake of the precept correlates with avoidance of the passive voice at the text level but not with other prescriptive rules.

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Christine Elswailer (München)

Divergence in Two Historical Varieties: The Use of Modal Auxiliaries in Commissive and Directive Speech Acts in Older Scots and Early Modern English Letters

Compared to Early Modern English, Older Scots is still under-researched. While, for instance, in historical pragmatics in recent years new insights have been gained, e.g. regarding speech acts in Early Modern English (cf. Busse 2008; Culpeper & Archer 2008), for Older Scots equivalent analyses are largely wanting. This study, which is based on the *Corpus of Early English Correspondence* and the *Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots*, aims to fill this gap by comparing the use of modal auxiliaries in commissive and directive speech acts in Early Modern English and Older Scots letters.

Letters of the Early Modern period often display a set structure with certain parts performing particular interactional functions. They commonly contain a representative part, such as a report of events. Often, however, the letter-writer tries to persuade the addressee to fulfill a request or to secure support by expressing their commitment. The persuasive force of such directive and commissive speech acts is frequently heightened by the use of modal auxiliaries. *May*, for instance, occurs in subordinate clauses indicating the purpose of a

request, as in *I request you (...) to haist you haime that I m ay haif your company*, or justifying it, e.g. *and als your grace may the mair esely help your servitouris*. The present study will analyse changes in the use of *may*, *can*, *shall* and *will* in directive and commissive speech acts in letters written between 1500 and 1700, taking discourse, interactional and sociolinguistic factors, like social distance, into account, and will contrast their usage in the two varieties studied.

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Claudia Lange (Dresden) & Tanja Rütten (Köln)

The Language of Discovery - towards a history of English in India

Not much seems to be known about the earliest phase of English in India, the 'foundation' phase in terms of Schneider's Dynamic Model of the evolution of Postcolonial Englishes. Schneider himself devotes a bit over a page to the time from 1600 to the middle of the 18th century and concludes: "basically the early English input to India was far from elitist: "those who came to India were mostly uneducated merchants, sailors, and soldiers" (Krishnaswamy and Burde 1998: 80)" (Schneider 2007: 163). While there is general agreement that the English and their language became more entrenched in India once the East India Company secured its stronghold in Bengal in 1757, marking the beginning of Schneider's second phase of exonormative stabilization, we would like to challenge the notion that most travellers to India were uneducated. Nayar (2012) has untangled the discourse communities and social networks of early explorers to India, who wrote detailed reports about what they perceived as marvellous, exotic, and/or dangerous, reports that were eagerly received at home. Even before the colonial project of charting the unknown land came into full swing (cf. Cohn 1986, Arnold 2000), highly literate amateur naturalists created narratives about their discoveries in and of India.

Investigations of the rich legacy of discovering the Indian subcontinent are not lacking. So far, however, they have been scrutinized from a horticultural, economic, political or historical interest. The language used to describe the flora and fauna of India has rarely received any special interest, and most documents remain largely untouched by linguists.

In our paper, we look at the language of discovering and exploring the flora and fauna in early colonial India. We investigate correspondence, diaries, notes, travel descriptions etc. and aim at a systematic description not only of individual genres, but of the network which the written artefacts present to us. Our purpose is twofold: On the one hand, we present the various discourse forms that are used to describe the Indian natural world. At the same time, this project intends to evaluate how much potential the respective written (and hand-painted or drawn) artefacts have for a historical perspective of English in India.

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Daniela Koble-Hanna (Trier)

The development of *as* and *for to* as complementizers in British English Dialects

This paper describes the historical development and regional distribution of the complementizers *as* and *for to* in nominal and infinitival clauses respectively. Similar to other non-standard features of Modern English, such as multiple negation (see, e.g. Beal 2004; Horn 2010; Wagner 2004), these were common in earlier periods of the language but have persisted in regional dialects.

In Present-Day English, the complementizers *as* and *for to* are rarely used. The complementizer *as* is the non-standard alternative to *that* in nominal clauses, and, according to the OED, occurs in southern English and some US American dialects. It is most common in the expression *seeing as (how)*, but example (1) illustrates that it also occurs with other matrix verbs.

(1) *I reckon as how there must be a great ruck of sense we'll never plunder.* (OED online, A. Garner [Thursbitch](#), 2004))

Non-standard *for to* introduces subject-less infinitive clauses. The OED calls this usage “archaic or vulgar” if it is synonymous with ‘in order to’ and “obsolete in educated use” when it does not introduce a purpose clause, as, for instance in example (2).

(2) *Blustering winds..make the Seas for to rage and roar* (OED online, 1659 D. Pell [Πελαγος](#) 328 (note))

Data from the corpora FRED, ICE-Ireland and NICTS will provide an overview of the regional distribution of these complementizers in 20th century British English. Their diachronic development will be investigated in the Helsinki Corpus, MEG-C, the CEEC and EEBO.

Corpora used

CEEC: Corpus of Early English Correspondence

(<https://www.helsinki.fi/en/researchgroups/varieng/corpus-of-early-english-correspondence>)

EEBO: Early English Books Online (<https://corpus.byu.edu/eebo/>)

FRED: The Freiburg corpus of English Dialects (<https://fred.ub.uni-freiburg.de/>)

Helsinki Corpus: Helsinki Corpus of English Texts

(<http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/CoRD/corpora/HelsinkiCorpus/>)

ICE-Ireland: The International Corpus of English, component Ireland

(<https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/ICE-Ireland/ICE-Ireland/>)

MEG-C: The Middle English Grammar Corpus (<https://www.uis.no/research/history-languages-and-literature/the-mest-programme/the-middle-english-grammar-corpus-meg-c/>)

NICTS: The Northern Irish Corpus of Transcribed Speech

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