November 2016

Language Change and Ideology in Irish Radio Advertising

Joan O'Sullivan
Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick

Language Change and Ideology in Irish Radio Advertising

Joan O'Sullivan (University of Limerick)

Introduction

Language ideologies have been defined as 'sets of representations through which language is imbued with cultural meaning for a certain community'. These representations can be seen as 'ways of understanding the world that emerge from interaction with particular (public) representations of it' (Cameron, 2003: 447-448). Therefore, language ideologies emerge from the way language is represented, particularly in the public sphere. More specifically, the relationship between the media and ideologies of language has been well researched and documented (Spitulnik, 1998; Johnson and Ensslin, 2007; Coupland, 2010). In relation to the medium of radio, Spitulnik (1998) points out that this medium has a role in the establishment of language ideologies and is in turn shaped by such ideologies. Coupland observes the influence of the mass media on 'the evaluative and ideological worlds in which language variation exists in late modernity' (2010: 56, 69).

Turning more specifically to the area of advertising in the media, because advertisers are required to reflect the attitudes and aspirations of their

audience, the analysis of advertising can function as a way of 'taking the ideological temperature' in a particular society (Vestergaard and Schroder, 1985: 120). Similarly, Lee (1992: 171) sees advertisements as 'the meeting place of many different ways of speaking', which reflect the discursive practices of the society in which they function. Lee's research illustrates not only how advertisements echo ways of speaking in a particular society, but also highlights ideological dimensions of language use in advertising.

The importance of taking the changing nature of a country's sociolinguistic situation into account when looking at how it interacts with market discourses has been highlighted. Kelly Holmes (2005) refers to the Irish context as an interesting focus for such research. While under the Irish Constitution, Irish is the first official language of Ireland, Irish English (English as it is spoken in Ireland) has effectively replaced the Irish language as the first language of the majority of the population; this has come about as a result of Ireland's colonisation by Britain up to the early twentieth century as well as factors such as famine and emigration (Filppula, 1999: 9-11). In addition, southern Irish English[1] has recently undergone what Hickey (2004: 46) views as unquestionably the most

---

[1] Broadly speaking, Ireland can be divided, in linguistic terms, into two sections; one section is the north (or the province of Ulster), comprising the six counties of Northern Ireland (which are part of the UK) but also the Republic of Ireland county of Donegal. (Hickey, 2004:.30); the second section is that of the south which comprises the provinces of Munster, Connacht and Leinster, encompassing the remaining counties of Ireland.

important case of language change in modern-day Ireland, the shift in pronunciation of Dublin English to a new form which has spread at a rapid pace throughout southern Ireland

In order to look at how language ideologies and changes in these ideologies are reflected linguistically in the context of broadcast advertising in Ireland, this study exploits a corpus of radio advertisements from an Irish radio channel, aired over a thirty year period, from 1977 to 2007. While an initial examination of the corpus indicated the exploitation of a number of languages and varieties of English (e.g. the symbolic use of the Irish language, the use of American English, pseudo-French accents etc.), the predominant varieties exploited were standard British English and Irish English. As Lee (1992: 160) points out, ideological issues associated with standard and non-standard varieties are especially visible in the colonial situation which involves power inequalities between the colonisers and the colonised, together with manifest linguistic differences between standard and non-standard varieties. In light of the colonial history of Ireland and the history of shared media boundaries between Britain and Ireland, and in view of the predominance of standard British English and Irish English in the corpus, the main focus of the study is therefore on changes in relation to these varieties, with a focus on accent, and the associated language ideologies.

The paper begins with descriptions and ideological considerations of the main accent varieties found in the corpus before turning to the study itself and the methodology employed. The findings of the study are presented and discussed, first of all in relation to the 1977 and 1987 subcorpora and secondly in relation to the two more recent subcorpora, 1997 and 2007. Finally, conclusions are drawn in relation to these findings.

Language variety and ideology in the Irish Context

Standard Southern British English (SSBE)

 Standard language varieties tend to be associated with high status and prestige (Milroy, 2000). Indeed, Bell (1991: 145) points out that a colonial history can cause perceptions of the standard variety as being superior to the local variety. He cites the case of prestige New Zealand radio and TV in the 1980s, in which announcers spoke with a close-to Received Pronunciation (RP) accent. This accent is seen as having high social status as regards education, income and profession. It is associated with radio and television in the British context and is used in particular by BBC newsreaders and presenters (Hughes, Trudgill and Watt, 2012: 3-4). More recently, the term Standard Southern British English (SSBE), is replacing RP as it is seen as a 'less evaluative' term (Hughes, Trudgill and Watt 2012).

While varieties associated with prestige in the Irish context can be understood as either SSBE (RP) or alternatively what might constitute or

equate with a (quasi) 'standard' or 'educated' variety of Irish English, it is necessary, however, to consider the question of what constitutes an 'acceptable' prestige variety. Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1991: 12) is relevant here. The 'habitus' refers to a set of dispositions which generate specific actions and reactions, and lead to 'regular' practices, views and attitudes about what is or is not appropriate in a particular situation. Indeed, Hickey (2005: 33) suggests that we need to question the status of standard forms of British English in Ireland. He discusses how, on the one hand, Irish people do not want to be seen as having an 'unacceptable' accent but, on the other hand, in his words, 'It would not befit any nationalist-minded Irish person to imitate an English accent' which is regarded as 'snobbish', 'pretentious' and worthy of derision (Hickey, 2005: 34).

This suggests that while SSBE is available for exploitation in the context of radio advertising in Ireland, a 'standard' accent variety of Irish English (as opposed to vernacular Irish English) may be more appropriate in the Irish context; this leads us to a consideration of the language ideologies associated with these choices.

Accent varieties of Irish English[2]

With regard to Irish English, Filppula (1999: 12) points out that some Irish English accent features are common to speakers of different social and

---

[2] See Appendix A for description of accent features

educational backgrounds. One such feature is rhotic pronunciation[3], where /r/ is pronounced in syllable-final position (as in *river*, *fur*) and where followed by a consonant (as in *dark*, *yard*) (Amador-Moreno, 2010: 77); this contrasts with non-rhotic SSBE pronunciation, where /r/ is generally not pronounced in such positions. Further examples are the 'soft' /t/ in words like *heat*, which is pronounced more like *sh* than *t*) and also the distinction between the *wh* and *w* sounds (e.g. *which* and *witch*). However, Hickey (2011: 5) tells us that some of these Irish English features disappear when speakers of Irish English adopt 'less local' accents. Indeed Hickey (2013) claims that Irish people may be sensitive to 'strongly vernacular' accents. The pronunciation of *th,* for example, where it is difficult to distinguish between pairs such as *tree* and *three*, *fate* and *faith*, *breed* and *breathe*, *dare* and *there,* (Amador-Moreno, 2010: 78) is seen as stigmatised and is a feature to which Irish people are sensitive. Such sensitivity may be partly explained by what Croghan (1986) observes as the adoption of 'the political culture of language from England which included the myth that [Irish English] was deviant'.

As regards a 'standard' variety of Irish English, Hickey (2005: 208) claims

---

[3] The exception is 'lower class' Dublin English which is non-rhotic or only weakly rhotic (Hickey, 2005: 8).

that what he terms 'non-local Dublin English' and what can 'loosely'[4] be referred to as 'educated' Dublin English has functioned as a 'quasi-standard' in the south of Ireland since the beginning of the twentieth century. Similarly, Filppula, in more recent discussions on standard Irish English (2012: 86), points out that the so-called 'Dublin 4 English' has been identified as being associated with a 'standard' Irish English, Dublin 4 being the area in Dublin city where the national broadcaster RTÉ is based. He observes how 'Dublin 4 has a mainly professional and middle-class population, whose usage of English serves as 'a model for educated Irish English usage in general' (*ibid*).

Hickey refers to this so-called Dublin 4 English as constituting the beginnings of a shift in pronunciation in southern Irish English in the 1980s and 1990s. He attributes the origin of this accent to speakers from this affluent area, the 'Dublin 4 set' (Hickey, 2005: 47), who saw themselves as 'trendy, modern, [and] sophisticated' and wanted to dissociate from the local culture. This new accent, often referred to as 'D4', soon however became the object of comment and ridicule and was often satirised in the media. Another term 'Dartspeak'[5] was coined in reference to the putative accent of southside suburban residents. This term was later changed to 'Dortspeak', a satirical

---

[4]Hickey (2005: 208) adds the *caveat* that too much weight should not be attached to the stipulation of formal education for speakers of this variety, the salient point being that it is not the local variety.
[5] DART is an acronym for Dublin Area Rapid Transport, a suburban railway serving commuters in the southern part of Dublin city.

term deriving from the rounded vowel pronunciation i.e. *dart* as *dort*. Hickey describes how the accent 'came to be disliked' and cites a well-known Irish newspaper columnist, Kevin Myers, who writes that 'The written word cannot begin to convey the awfulness of the Dortspeak, which seems to have taken over southside middle-class schools' (Myers, 2000: 64, cited in Hickey, 2005: 48). Amador-Moreno (2010: 81), in her discussion on Dublin English, provides examples of how such pronunciation is often negatively perceived and can be the object of mockery. In time, according to Hickey (2005: 48), Dortspeak became less fashionable and was avoided by younger speakers, a trend which was perhaps consolidated by such satirical comment.

Dublin in the 1990s was a classic setting for language change (Hickey, 1999: 268). The second half of the decade saw the beginning of a period of population growth and increased prosperity in Ireland, due to the economic boom. This was particularly marked in Dublin, which was becoming increasingly cosmopolitan. In-migration to Dublin city increased, forming a set of 'socially mobile' speakers, who wished to dissociate from local and traditional values and culture (Hickey, 2004: 46). These conditions are seen as central to language change. This group sought a non-local but socially acceptable form of Dublin English. According to Hickey, while discarding unpopular elements of D4 and Dortspeak, the pronunciation form which developed nevertheless retained a number of features of these accents. The

resulting accent, which Hickey (2004) originally termed 'new' Dublin English he now refers to as 'advanced' Dublin English (Hickey, 2013), henceforth AdvD. This accent displays similarities to some features of British and American English, although Hickey (2013) contends that these are coincidental and not systematic.

Hickey claims that, given the status of the capital, Dublin, in the Republic of Ireland, non-vernacular Dublin speech serves as an unofficial standard for the rest of the Republic. Therefore, AdvD is seen by those speakers outside of Dublin who wish to distance themselves from their regional variety as an acceptable accent, thus meeting a demand for a non-local form. The spread of this new accent to other parts of the Republic of Ireland is attributed to a need for 'urban sophistication' (Hickey, 2004: 45). It was particularly apparent in the case of younger speakers, predominantly among females but was later adopted by males also, as it spread quickly throughout the Irish Republic. Hickey (2013) points out that, having now established itself as mainstream, this new accent continues to develop, showing a number of new features in recent years.

Advanced Dublin English and ideology

When considering the ideologies around the AdvD accent, Coupland's observations on style shifting in Western Anglophone countries are particularly relevant. By style shifting here, we refer to how speakers

change their way of speaking, for example from the accent associated with their particular locality to a less locally-bound one. In the Irish context, for example, a person with the distinctive accent associated with their locality might shift style to AdvD in order to sound less 'local'. According to Coupland, while style shifting away from vernaculars in order to escape social stigma may be seen as positive, nevertheless the ideological climate makes style-shifting 'a highly charged and risky business, subject to social monitoring and threatening further sanctions when it "goes wrong"' (2007: 89).

This 'social monitoring' is apparent in the way in which AdvD has been the object of media comment in recent years, and is particularly interesting given the concern of this study with the ideological dimension of variety choice. The division between local and newer pronunciation has been parodied by Irish writers such as Paul Howard in his series on the character, *Ross O'Carroll-Kelly*, as referred to by Amador-Moreno (2010: 81). Ireland's national television broadcaster, RTÉ (Raidió Teilifís Éireann) has also featured programmes parodying this form of pronunciation in the form of the video diaries of 'Dan and Becks', an affluent couple from Dublin's southside, in 2007. Amador-Moreno (2010: 81), in her discussion on Dublin English, provides examples of how such pronunciation is often negatively perceived and can be the object of mockery.

Furthermore, Moore (2011: 57) identifies a 'moral panic' which he says has taken hold in Ireland with regard to this pronunciation, and is evidenced in media debate and commentary. Moore observes how the accent is 'explicitly denaturalized' in the Irish sociolinguistic context and 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 spreads 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...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)

Such ideological representation suggests that the choice of this advanced form in Irish advertising may be a 'risky' one. This will be further explored below.

We have seen how standard ideologies of language in radio advertising in Ireland can manifest themselves in two forms. Firstly, more traditional standard language ideologies and the notion of one 'correct' form are visible in the choice of standard British English accent as opposed to Irish English. Secondly, the visibility of a homogenous quasi-standard 'non-local' accent through the rejection of 'local' accents of Irish English can indicate that such standard ideologies are still at play, albeit in a less conventional guise.

The study

The radio advertisement corpus on which the study is based is comprised of 160 radio advertisements from RTÉ Radio 1, the principal radio channel of Irish public-service broadcaster, Raidió Teilifís Éireann. In order to facilitate a longitudinal study, the corpus was divided into four sub-corpora; each subcorpus is made up of 40 ads from the years 1977, 1987, 1997 and 2007. The corpus, therefore, spans the thirty year period, from 1977 to 2007. This period is interesting in that it is framed by two major events in Ireland's economic and social history, Ireland's accession to the European Economic Community in 1973 and the demise of the Celtic Tiger in 2007. Coupland (2010: 59) points out how social change plays a part in the reshaping of language use and language ideologies.

As regards a framework for analysing the ads, the genre of advertising brings together many different discourses and ways of speaking and incorporates many different genres (Lee, 1992: 173). Lee exploits Sussex's (1989) 'Action' and 'Comment' components of the ad which are based on different genres. The Action component is comprised generally of dialogic interaction in specific contexts, for example, the context of shoppers discussing the merits of a particular store or product. The Comment component (which names and provides general information on the product), on the other hand, can be equated to the voice-over or slogan of the ad and

what Piller (2001) terms 'voice of authority' and tends to be monologic and decontextualised. The aims of the ad, Lee points out, are firstly to create an acceptance of the product through consumer identification with the actors who 'represent' the product, partly achieved through the use of local varieties, and secondly to sanction the action of purchase through the use of a standard variety and its associations with authority and expertise. In the case of his study of a corpus of 108 ads (broadcast in a Swiss-German channel in 1989), Lee observes that the Comment voice tends to be in High German, the standard variety in this context, and associated with 'general discourses of power and authority' (Lee, 1992: 172). The Action component, on the other hand, is dominated by non-standard Swiss varieties and is linked with 'discourses of everyday informal interaction'.

A study of Australian television ads by Sussex revealed that the Comment was dominated by 'educated' rather than 'broad' Australian voices (Sussex. 1989: 165). Lee (1992: 183) sees parallels between the tendency to use the standard High German in the Swiss context and that of post-colonial societies to use standard British English. In both situations, the standard variety has prestige but is not 'the language of the heart and the emotions' (*ibid*).

The ads for the 1977 subcorpus were broadcast over several months throughout the year while those for 1987, 1997 and 2007 were aired over a

number of days in the month of December in the year in question. The majority of the ads in the 1977 and 1987 sub-corpora were broadcast during the very popular 'Gay Byrne Show' which featured forums and discussion, often around what were, at the time, taboo subjects in Irish society. Oram (1986: 551) points out that in 1986, this show attracted '44 percent of all housewives in the country and pull[ed] in over 1 million's worth of advertising a revenue a year.' The ads comprising the 1997 subcorpus were aired around a current affairs magazine programme, 'Today with Pat Kenny' which acted as a replacement for 'The Gay Byrne Show', following the retirement of its presenter. This show was preceded by a talk-based entertainment programme, 'The Tubridy Show', to form the context for the 2007 subcorpus. The majority of the ads are for Irish products and services and, in several cases, particularly in the 1977 and 1987 sub-corpora, they feature voiceovers by well-known Irish broadcasters and actors.

Following Lee (1992: 173), the ads in the corpus are categorized according to Sussex's (1989) components of 'Action' and 'Comment', as described. We have seen how, according to Lee, the Comment component functions as a 'purveyor of privileged information' an important function of the discourse of power (Lee 1992: 172-3) while the Action component, is associated with 'everyday informal interaction'. Therefore, the location of a particular variety in terms of Action and Comment can provide important indications

of the function of that variety in the advert and the language ideologies on which the association of variety with a particular function is based.

Findings and analysis

Hughes et al (2012) distinguish between the terms *accent* and *dialect,* defining dialect as varieties differentiated by differences of grammar and vocabulary, while accent, on the other hand, refers to variations in pronunciation (Hughes et al, 2012: 3,13). In the present study, which focuses mainly on accent rather than dialectal variation, SSBE is differentiated from Irish English accent on the basis of rhotic or non-rhotic accents[6], given that rhotic pronunciation is a key feature of Irish English (Hickey, 2004: 41) but not a feature of SSBE. The distinction between SSBE and Irish English accent, for the purposes of this study, is thus based on rhotic as opposed to non-rhotic pronunciation in terms of the quantitative analysis, although other features are discussed in relation to the qualitative analysis.

The quantitative analysis shows SSBE and Irish English to be the main accent varieties in the corpus overall. Focusing on these two varieties (see Figure 1), SSBE predominates in the earlier sub-corpora, especially in the Comment components, at the expense of Irish English. However, Irish English shows dramatic increases in both ad components in the later sub-

---

[6]Where /r/ is pronounced in syllable-final position (as in *river, fur*) and where followed by a consonant (as in *dark*, *yard*) (Amador-Moreno, 2010: 77)

corpora, with a corresponding fall in SSBE. These quantitative findings indicate the prevalence of ideologies which place SSBE as the variety most appropriate in the transmission of the advertising message in the context of Irish radio advertising in the earlier decades (as represented by the 1977 and 1987 sub-corpora). This is indicated not only by the predominance of SSBE features overall in the earlier sub-corpora but by the fact that this accent is found more frequently in the Comment components or authoritative voice of the ads. However, the results indicate that this pattern is not maintained and, overall, there is an increased presence of Irish English in both components in the later corpora. These quantitative findings, on the face of it, suggest that standard language ideologies prevail in the sub-corpora of 1977 and 1987 but are less evident in the later sub-corpora.
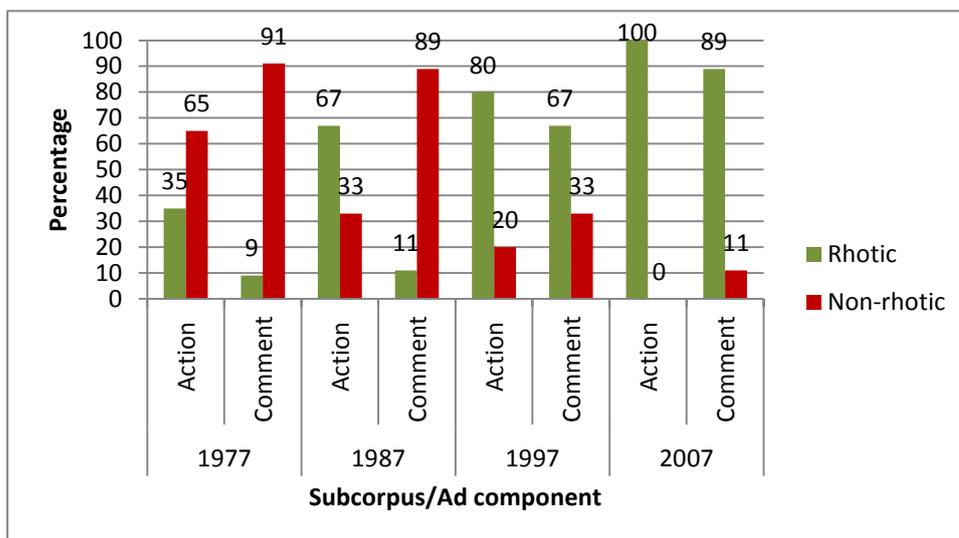

Figure 1: Percentage of ad components (Action or Comment) displaying rhotic (IrE) and non-rhotic (SSBE) accent

1977 and 1987 sub-corpora

As discussed above, the SSBE accent is more frequent in the two earlier sub-corpora. The fact that it occurs more often in the Comment component as the 'slogan' of the ad associates this pronunciation form with 'power and authority' (Lee, 1992: 172-173). However, it is noteworthy that on closer examination, a number of ads, although they employ non-rhotic pronunciation, do not consistently use SSBE accent features and actually display 'telltale' Irish English features. Indeed, in the majority of the ads which show non-rhotic pronunciation in the 1977 and 1987 sub-corpora, individual speakers use Irish English features in combination with the non-rhotic /r/.

In the *Philips* microwave oven ad (Advert 1), for example, although the speaker uses non-rhotic pronunciation (e.g. Line 002 indicated by superscripted *r* as in easie[r]), she also uses a 'soft' /t/, a well known Irish English feature as observed by Amador-Moreno (2010: 78) in the pronunciation of *heat* (Line 003) so that the *t* sounds more like *sh*.

Advert 1 Philips microwave ovens[7]

1977: Comment only

001 FCV: Philips make their energy saving microwave ovens

002   to make life easie**r** fo**r** you (.)

003   Philips microwave ovens can defrost (.) hea**t**

004   or cook a wide variety of food in minutes

005   allowing you more time

006   to be a good host (.) hostess (.) husband o **r** wife(.)

007   Philips microwave ovens

Note: Non rhotic accent is illustrated by superscripted *r* e.g. *bette*ᵣ

This suggests that the SSBE associated non-rhotic pronunciation feature is consciously adopted by the speaker and indicates the deliberate use of this anomalous feature by the Irish English speaker. This provides further evidence for the existence of ideologies which deem SSBE as the 'correct' form and as most appropriate as the authoritative voice.

While overall, the Action components tend to display Irish English accents to a greater extent than the Comment components (see Figure 1), it is noteworthy that in the 1977 subcorpus, ads featuring the SSBE pronunciation in both Comment and Action are more common.

---

[7] In the transcriptions, *MCV* and *FCV* refer to the male voice of the Comment component and the female voice of the Comment respectively. *M1, M2, F1, F2,* etc. refer to the speakers in the Action components, indicating first male speaker, second male speaker, first female speaker, second female speaker, and so on. Pauses are indicated by (.). Emphasised utterances are underlined.

Advert 2 below for *Hedex* painkillers from 1977 illustrates such a pattern where the Action and Comment components both display standard British non-rhotic pronunciation (indicated by superscripted *r*). However, the ad is noteworthy 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; one of the housewives, Joan, complains of a headache whereupon the second housewife recommends the product. The second part of the ad is set on the following day and features Joan's friend telephoning her to ask how she is feeling. Joan replies that she is feeling 'grand' (Line 010). This use of the word *grand* in the sense of *fine* is a recognised feature of Irish English (Dolan, 2004: 114). It is notable that Joan's pronunciation, while not identifiable with a particular region or county, is however rhotic, as associated with Irish English (see Line 004), while that of her friend is non-rhotic, as associated with SSBE (see Line 005). The Comment component, which follows the Action, also employs non-rhotic pronunciation (Line 013). The image of both women, however, regardless of accent, is that of middle-class suburban housewives. This has parallels with Lee's study in that the Action components, in which the localised 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 features in terms of vocabulary. Her function here could be construed as being similar to that of the Comment voice in naming and providing information on the product. 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.

Advert 2 Hedex

1977: Action and Comment

001		((children shouting))
002	F1:	oh why can't they keep quiet (.) don't they know I've got a splitting headache?
003	F2:	why don't you take something for it Joan?
004	F1:	I <u>would</u> but most pain kille**r**s seem to upset my stomach
005	F2:	Hedex won't (.) he**r**e take these
006		I'll get some more on the way home (.) they're easy to swallow-
007		((phone ringing))
008	F1:	hello (.)
009	F2:	are you feeling any bette**r** [this mo**r**ning Joan?
010	F1:	oh I'm feeling **grand** (.) Hedex worked ma**r**vellously
011		from now on I won't take anything else (.)
012		listen I'll see you at three and we can go -
013	MCV:	Hedex (.) powe**r**ful against headaches (.) gentle on you**r** stomach

Note: Non rhotic accent is illustrated by superscripted *r* e.g. *bette**r***

However, in Figure 1 we can see that in the thirty years from 1977 to 2007,

the percentage of Comment components which display Irish English rhotic pronunciation increases dramatically, which effectively means that the rhotic accent, as associated with Irish English, changed from being an exceptional to an almost exclusively occurring feature of the Comment component. The next section looks at the later corpora with a focus on the relatively new accent of AdvD.

1997 and 2007 sub-corpora

With regard to the increase in Irish English rhotic accents in the later subcorpora, closer analysis reveals that, overall, non-local (as opposed to local, e.g. Cork accent[8] or 'local' Dublin[9]) Irish English accents, including AdvD, dominate in both components. Given Hickey's (2013) observation of how AdvD has established itself as the new mainstream or quasi-standard form of Irish English, it is interesting to focus on how this accent is exploited in the corpus. Unsurprisingly, given that it only became established in the 1990s, AdvD is not in evidence in the two earlier sub-corpora. It is, however, visible in the 1997 subcorpus, occurring more frequently in the Comment component than in the Action (see Figure 2).

---

[8] Regional accent associated with the southern Irish county of Cork
[9] This accent is associated with speakers who 'show strongest identification with traditional conservative Dublin life of which the popular accent is very much a part' Hickey, 2004: 44).
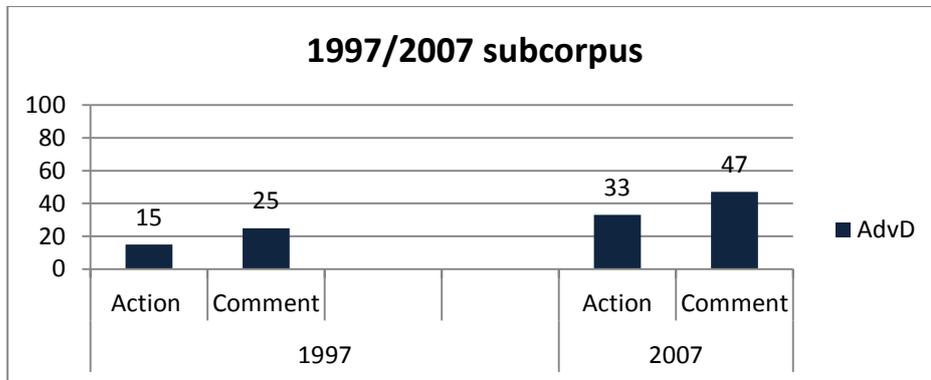
1997/2007 subcorpus

Figure 2: Percentage of ad components (Action or Comment) displaying AdvD 1997/2007

NOTE: Figures represent percentage of total numbers of the particular component which displays Irish English accent variety

AdvD shows an increase in both components of the ad in the 2007 subcorpus, suggesting that it is being increasingly exploited, not only as a feature of 'the discourse of power', but also as that of 'everyday informal interaction' (Lee, 1992). However, in both 1997 and 2007 subcorpora, it occurs more often in the Comment components than it does in the Action, thereby establishing it as the authoritative voice. The fact that it dissociates from local forms and has parallels with SSBE in respect of some features (Hickey 2013), on the face of it, suggests the operation of standard language ideology. In a number of ads, the juxtaposition of local accents in the Action component with AdvD in the Comment (see Lee, 1992: 176) highlights the contrast between traditional and contemporary contexts, and in some instances, between older and younger speakers. This affords the younger speakers an energy and vitality not available from more conservative pronunciation forms.

An ad from the 1997 subcorpus for the Money Transfer company, *Western Union,* (Advert 3 below) illustrates this contrast effectively. While its Comment component does not use AdvD, nevertheless its Action component shows advanced and local features in juxtaposition within the Action component. In the Action scenario, a young man phones his mother from the United States with a request for cash to enable him to attend a so called 'Bachelor Party'. The son's pronunciation of *party* (Line 004) and *star* (Line 008*)* show the retroflex /r/, which is characteristic of AdvD but also a feature of American accents. The word *party* (Line 004) is pronounced as *pardy*, a further feature of AdvD which is paralleled in American English (Hickey 2013). As we have discussed, Hickey observes that this advanced form is more prevalent among younger speakers and suggests that it is 'indicative of the current youth subculture which is recognizably different from that of contemporary parents' (Hickey, 2005: 73). The mother-son relationship is represented in part through the contrast in their characters, and this is accentuated through the juxtaposition of the pronunciation features of mother and son. The mother's more conservative Irish English accent appears somewhat anachronistic against the more contemporary accent of the son. Contrast is also achieved through the use of terms such as the mother's reference to the '*Stag night'* (Line 005) in response to the son's use of the North American term '*Bachelor Party'* (Line 004). The mother is depicted as the more comic and ridiculous character through her over-

indulgence with regard to her son and her reaction to the news of his impending marriage (Line 011) and this effect is heightened through the more local terms and accent. This has the effect of intensifying the associations of the son's pronunciation form with North American culture, and more generally with a sense of the cosmopolitan, sophistication and 'urban modernity' (Hickey, 2005: 72) as well as 'pleasure' and 'instant gratification' values[10]; it resonates with Hickey's (2005: 6-7) claim that this accent stems from 'the group of those aspiring upwards-the socially ambitious'.

Advert 3 Western Union

1997: Action and Comment

001		((telephone ringing))
002	M1:	yeah <u>Ma</u>
003	F1:	hi son how are the States?
004	M1:	fine ah I've got a **bachelor pardy** to go to
005	F1:	you mean a **stag night**
006	M1:	yeah so I need some cash
007	F1:	I'll send it <u>right</u> over with Western Union (.) it'll be with you today
008	M1:	ah ma you're a sta**r** (.)
009	F1:	so son (.) who's getting married?
010	M1:	<u>I</u> am
011.	F1	<u>SON</u>

---

[10] Robert Flavin, Consumer Insights and Planning Manager of the alcoholic drinks company *Diageo* speaks of the 'indulgence' stage of consumer mindset and decision making 'where at the height of the Celtic Tiger pleasure, me-time, instant gratification were core values' (Archive.ie 2013).

012 MCV: with four hundred Western Union agents in Ireland

013   including most main post offices

014   you can send 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

However, while generally associated with younger speakers in the corpus, in a number of the ads, the accent is used by older speakers and 'parent' characters who are represented as cosmopolitan and 'socially ambitious' (Hickey, 2005: 6-7). This situates the accent as not limited to young people's speech but rather linked with a contemporary image, not just within a youth subculture, but for all those who wish to be associated with a new, more modern Irish identity.

Such a context is associated with an ad for the 'Talktime' package of *Eircom* homephone and broadband (Advert 4 below). This ad features a mother commenting on how she is able to keep in touch with her family cheaply even though they have 'gone global'. Interestingly, the accent of the mother has distinct AdvD features including retroflex /r/ (also a feature of American English) as in *New York* (Line 001) and the pronunciation of the *o* in *global* and *local* which is close to the standard British pronunciation. The use of AdvD in this ad contrasts with its use in the *Western Union* ad (Advert 3) in that it is a feature of the speech of the parent character.

Advert 4 Eircom Talktime

2007: Action and Comment

001	F1:	New York Sydney and Donegal (.)
002		my family really <u>has</u> gone gl**o**bal
003		but with great rates from Eircom Talktime international
004		we have lots of proper chats so it feels like they're l**o**cal 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
009		freefone one eight hundred three six nine three six nine
010		for a great value Eircom Talktime package that's you (.)
010		terms and conditions apply.

The use of AdvD features in this ad challenges Hickey's (2005: 73) earlier contention that this newer form delineates the speech of young people from that of their parents. Indeed Hickey observes that the speech of female speakers over the age of forty rarely shows advanced features (Hickey, 2007: 151). He claims that this accent is found predominantly to be a feature of the speech of those females under the age of twenty five who appeared to have a self-image of 'urban modernity' (Hickey, 2005: 72). It is interesting that another ad with safety advice from Ireland's Electricity Supply Board (ESB) is delivered in an AdvD accent by a middle-aged, high-profile, female Irish

broadcaster and chat-show host. This broadcaster is often the subject of media comment as she is the mother of a relatively large family, yet manages to juggle career and parenthood. Amador-Moreno (2010: 81), in discussing the new Dublin accent, alludes to this well-known personality, associating her with the 'prototypical female speaker' of this accent. Its employment in these ads suggests that this accent may now be linked with contemporary Irish identity, not just within a youth subculture but for all those who wish to be associated with a new, more modern and 'socially ambitious' (Hickey, 2005: 6-7) Irish identity.

With regard to Moore's (201: 49) observations of media representations of AdvD as 'inauthentic', for the most part AdvD is not represented as such, nor is it generally associated with a mocking tone. Its employment in the Action components of the ad as part of the repertoire of the characters in these scenarios can be said to give it authenticity in the sense that it represents the language of everyday interactions.

However, the 'moral panic' in relation to AdvD as described by Moore (2011) comes through in an ad for the *Spar* grocery chain (Advert 5 below). The ad features the characters of Santa Claus (M2) and Rudolph his reindeer (M1), making their Christmas gift deliveries. The accents of both characters are exaggerated, and in this way they characterise stereotypical images of both 'posh' Dublin and 'straightforward' (Coupland, 2003: 424) provincial

Irishness. Rudolph speaks with a hyperbolised version of the regional accent associated with the southern Irish county of Cork, (mainly achieved through the accent's rising intonation (Hickey 2004: 33) as in Lines 003 and 011), but also through such pronunciations as *the* as *de, then* as *den* (Line 008) and think as *tink* (Line 011), while Santa's accent is an extreme form of AdvD. Notable AdvD features of this accent in the ad include, for example, the pronunciation of *got* as *god* (Line 002) (as in *pardy* for *party* in Advert 3) and the pronunciation of *o* (as in *ok*) which is more in keeping with an SSBE accent (Lines 005 and 006). The word *sparkly* (Line 007) in particular is hyperbolised, with the first syllable pronounced almost as *spore*. Hickey (2004: 49) observes that this feature of AdvD was attracting comment around the time of his publication, (e.g. the pronunciation of *bar* as *bore*) and the extreme form plays on and exploits this feature [11]. This hyperbolised representation of AdvD is unique in this corpus but anecdotal evidence suggests that it has been a feature of Irish advertising in recent years.

While the Cork-accented Rudolph is not depicted as such in a derogatory way, he is nevertheless seen as the comic character. Santa, on the other hand, is the more serious and sophisticated figure and the one who imparts the important information, although in an embellished and somewhat derisive form of AdvD.

---

[11] The pronunciation of the examples *spore* and *bore* is rhotic Irish English rather than SSBE.

Advert 5 Spar

2007: Action and Comment

001 M1:   ((panting)) (.) right (.) what've we got to eat?

002 M2:   **god** a carrot at the last house Rudolph (.) looks nice

003 M1:   nice? nice? how do I know it isn't a genetically ↑ <u>modified</u> carrot?

004   we've no idea where it's been (.) is it Fairtrade?

005 M2:   ammm **ok** (.) well Spar now has reindeer food for just two euro

006   and all proceeds go to the Irish Hospice Foundation

007   and it's all a bit **sporkly** and magical too

008 M1:   oh right (.) well let's hope the **de** next family has some **den** (.)

009 MCV: always there for you with reindeer food at Christmas

010   under the tree at Spar (.)

011 M1:   Santy (.) I **tink** we should get a hybrid ↑ sleigh

The hyperbolised representations are particularly interesting in light of the representation in media reports of AdvD as 'inauthentic' (Moore 2011), as discussed. The extreme and comic representations of both Cork accent and AdvD in the Action are set apart from the voice of the Comment which, interestingly, also employs advanced Dublin features (though not in a hyperbolised way), to convey the serious voice of authority.

Both accents are culturally familiar to Irish English speakers and their hyperbolised representation side by side in the ad could be said to depict the 'moral panic' in relation to this accent. The Cork accent, like the local Dublin accent, is associated with those who identify with traditional conservative values and gains 'authenticity' through this association. The AdvD is,

however, 'not authentically linked to any particular place' (Moore, 2011: 42,49).

This ideological situation is effectively replicated in the ad, by highlighting the contrast in these varieties and the authenticities (or inauthenticities) associated with them. Hickey (2005: 106) refers to the 'phonetic gulf' between the 'new' accent and conservative Cork English. The patent artificiality of both accents positions the ad as 'laughing with' rather than 'laughing at' the speakers of both local and non-local varieties of Irish English, and indeed at what has become a mild hysteria around the putative contradictory values of these accents. The ad effectively acknowledges that the AdvD accent is seen as contrived, but in addition, that the strongly vernacular Cork accent is also contrived and that neither variety and both encapsulate Irish identity.

However, while it is represented in a hyperbolised way, the advanced Dublin form is nevertheless associated with the more serious, sophisticated and authoritative voice of the ad. It is the voice of Santa, as opposed to his animal helper, Rudolph. Therefore, the prestige status of this form, which dissociates itself from local accents, is still maintained.

Conclusions

The dominance of standard language ideologies is apparent in the conscious adoption of the SSBE accent in the earlier sub-corpora and the association of

this accent with the voice of authority; it is further reinforced through the relegation of Irish English to the Action components. It is important to note, however, that Irish English is not actively denigrated in these sub-corpora, but rather has compromised status by virtue of its marginalised role in the Comment and therefore in its role as the authoritative voice.

Notwithstanding the increase in Irish English in the 1997 and 2007 sub-corpora, standard ideologies can also be detected in the dominance of the quasi-standard AdvD, particularly as the authoritative voice of the Comment and the rejection of 'local' forms. However, while more common in the Comment components of the both 1997 and 2007 sub-corpora, it shows increases in both Action and Comment in the 2007 subcorpus. Its parallels with SSBE in relation to some features and active dissociation from local forms could be said to be indicative of the persistence of standard language ideology, albeit manifest in a standard Irish English rather than a standard British accent. Given its parallels with SSBE and American English with regard to some features, it has connotations of cosmopolitanism; furthermore, it exudes energy, dynamism and a sense of the contemporary, especially where it is juxtaposed against local conservative accents in the Action components Although, associated with youth subculture, the use of this accent in some ads by older speakers and 'parent' characters suggest that it is not limited to young people's speech but rather it is associated with

a contemporary and 'socially ambitious' (Hickey, 2005: 6-7) Irish identity.

Interestingly, where it appears in the Action components, AdvD generally represents 'everyday language' and is not represented as 'inauthentic' in the sense in which Moore (2011: 49) describes. However, in one ad, the hyperbolised representation of both AdvD and a vernacular Irish English form, serves to confront the 'moral panic' in relation to the authenticity of this accent and in so doing, acknowledges a more multi-faceted identity in relation to speakers of Irish English (cf Koslow et al, 1994). Notwithstanding the stylised representations of both accents, however, the AdvD is still associated with the more serious and expert voice, thereby underpinning its status.

Cronin (2011: 56) observes how Ireland's integration into the 'turbomarket' of the English language has resulted in 'more global, less distinct forms of English' with the distinctive features of Irish English, which were at one time 'consciously cultivated as a marker of specificity' being eroded. However, White (2006: 221) sees a standard variety of Irish English as having 'a prestige which regional dialects lack' and as being the most appropriate vehicle for communicating Irish identity globally. She observes how the way in which we use language allows us to reconcile our local and global identities. As she puts it:

> … 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)

White's claim is borne out in the ad corpus through the increasing prevalence of AdvD which has replaced SSBE as the prestige accent. This illustrates the interaction between the sociolinguistic situation and advertising discourse. The widespread use of the quasi-standard Irish English accent indicates that standard language ideology is still prevalent. However, the acceptability of a standard Irish English as opposed to standard British English nevertheless indicates a movement away from the rigorous notion of standard as based on a single 'correct' variety of English.

Bibliography

Amador-Moreno, C.P. (2010) *An introduction to Irish English,* London: Equinox.

Archive.ie (2013) *MBA news Ireland* (online) Available at: http://archive-ie.com/ie/m/mbaassociation.ie/2012-07-11_109047_19/MBA_NEWS_IRELAND/ [Accessed 04 /10/ 2013].

Bell, A. (1991) *The language of news media,* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Bliss, A.J. (1984) 'English in the south of Ireland' in Trudgill, P., (ed.), *Language in the British Isles,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.135-151.

Bourdieu, P. (1991) *Language and symbolic power*, Oxford: Polity Press.

Cameron, D. (2003) 'Gender and language ideologies' in Holmes, J., and Meyerhoff, M., (eds.), *The handbook of language and gender,* Oxford: Blackwell, pp.447-467.

Coupland, N. (2003) 'Sociolinguistic authenticities', *Journal of Sociolinguistics,* 7(3): 417-431.

Coupland, N. (2007) *Style: Language variation and identity,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Coupland, N. (2010) 'Language, ideology, media and social change' *Performing the self (Swiss papers in English language and literature),* 127-151, (online) Available at: http://slbtest1.cf.ac.uk/encap/resources/language_ideology_media.pdf [Accessed 02/01/ 2014]

Croghan, M. (1986) 'The Brogue: Language as political culture' in Harris, J., Little, D. and Singleton, D., (eds), *Perspectives on the English language in Ireland: Proceedings of the first symposium on Hiberno-English,* Dublin 1985, Dublin: Centre for Language and Communication Studies, pp.259-269.

Cronin, M. (2011) 'Ireland in translation', *English Today*, 27(2): 53-57.

Filppula, M. (1999) *The grammar of Irish English: Language in Hibernian style*, London: Routledge.

Filppula, M. (2012) 'Exploring grammatical differences between Irish and British English', in Migge, B. and Ní Chiosáin, M., (eds), *New perspectives on Irish English*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp.85-99.

Hickey, R. (1999) 'Dubln English: Current changes and their motivation' in Foulkes, P. and Docherty, G., (eds), *Urban voices: Variation and change in British accents,* London: Arnold, pp.265-281.

Hickey, R. (2004) *A sound atlas of Irish English,* Berlin: Mouton.de Gruyter.

Hickey, R. (2005) *Dublin English: Evolution and change*, Amsterdam: Benjamins

Hickey, R. (2011) 'Present and future horizons for Irish English', *English Today,* 27(2): 3-16.

Hickey, R. (2013) *Variation and change in Dublin English* (online) Available: https://www.uni-due.de/VCDE/ [accessed 03/01/2013].

Hughes, A., Trudgill, P. and Watt, D. (2012) *English accents and dialects*, 5th ed., New York: Routledge.

Johnson, S. and Ensslin, A., (2007) 'Language in the media: Theory and practice' in Johnson, S. and Ensslin, A., (eds), *Language in the media: Representation, identities, ideologies,* London: Continuum, pp.3-22.

Kelly-Holmes, H. (2005) *Advertising as multilingual communication,* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Koslow, S., Shamdasani, P.N. and Touchstone, E.E. (1994) 'Exploring language effects in ethnic advertising: A sociolinguistic perspective', *Journal of Consumer Research,* 20(4): 575-585.

Lee, D. (1992) *Competing discourses: Perspective and ideology in language,* London: Longman.

Lippi-Green, R. (1997) *English with an accent: Language, ideology, and discrimination in the United States,* London: Routledge.

Milroy, J. (2001) 'Language ideologies and the consequences of standardization', *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 5(4): 530–555.

Moore, R. (2011) ' "If I actually talked like that, I'd pull a gun on myself":
Accent, avoidance, and moral panic in Irish English', *Anthropological
Quarterly,* 84(1): 41-64.

Oram, H. (1986) *The advertising book: The history of advertising in Ireland,*
Dublin: MO Books.

Piller, I. (2001) 'Identity constructions in multilingual advertising',
Language in Society, 30(2): 153-186.

Spitulnik, D. (1998) 'Mediating unity and diversity: The production of
language ideologies in Zambian broadcasting' in Schieffelin, B.B., Woolard,
K.A. and Kroskrity, P.V., (eds), *Language ideologies: Practice and theory,*
Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.163-188.

Sussex, R. (1989) 'The Americanisation of Australian English: Prestige
models in the media' in Collins, P. and Blair, D., (eds), *Australian English:
The language of a new society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
pp.158-170.

Vestergaard, T. and Schroder, K. (1985) *The language of advertising,* Oxford:
Blackwell.

White, G. (2006) 'Standard Irish English as a marker of Irish identity' in
Omoniyi, T. and White, G., (eds), *The sociolinguistics of identity*, London:
Continuum, pp.217-232.

Appendix A: Accent features
NOTE: To listen to sound files of these accent features, see Hicley (2013)
https://www.uni-due.de/VCDE/

Accent feature	Accent
Rhotic : *r* is pronounced in words like *diver, fur, dark, yard etc.*	Irish English (vernacular and non-vernacular)
Non-rhotic: *r* is not pronounced in words like *diver, fur, dark, yard etc.*	SSBE (RP)
Retroflex (rhotic) *r* as in American English	Advanced Dublin English
'Soft' *t*: *t* in syllable-final position pronounced as *sh* e.g *heat*	Irish English (vernacular and non-vernacular)
Distinction between *wh* and *w* sounds (e.g. *which* and *witch*).	Irish English (vernacular and non-vernacular)
Lack of distinction between *wh* and *w* sounds (e.g. *which* and *witch*) as in SSBE and American English	Advanced Dublin English
Lack of distinction between *t* and *th* and *d* and *th* sounds e.g. *tree/three, fate/faith, breed/breathe, dare/there*	Vernacular Irish English
Rounded vowel pronunciation e.g. *dart* as *dort*	Advanced Dublin English
'T flapping' i.e. *t* pronounced as *d* as in American English	Advanced Dublin English
o pronounced as diphthong as in SSBE	Advanced Dublin English