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The significance of age and place of residence in the positional distribution of discourse *like* in L2 speech

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Abstract

This chapter investigates the use of discourse markers in L2 Irish English, specifically like by Polish people, assuming that the use of discourse markers is an indicator of integration. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are used to analyse the corpus of speech, focusing in particular on the positional distribution of like and the impact of age and place of residence. Results show that the L2 speakers use discourse like in patterns which correspond to those attested for L1 Irish English. Place of residence was a significant factor, with rural and urban speakers following rural and urban L1 patterns respectively. However, the younger speakers tended to favour urban (and global) clause-medial like over clause-marginal like, the more traditional pattern for Irish English. The young L2 speakers appear to be participating in the global change in like patterns.

Keywords:

1. Introduction

This chapter[1] focuses on the use of Irish English by second language (L2) speakers. In particular, we investigate the acquisition and use of the discourse-pragmatic marker *like* by Polish speakers living in Ireland. Our corpus includes adult and young speakers from both rural and urban locations, thus enabling an analysis of the significance of age and place of residence.

Research on L2 acquisition and use of language tended for many years since its inception in the 1960s to focus on the acquisition of standardised varieties as targets (for a recent overview of L2 research and variation, see Regan 2013; for variation and pragmatics, see Pichler 2013; Barron 2003; Barron and Schneider 2005; Schneider and Barron 2008; Murphy 2010; Vaughan and Clancy, 2011: 51). Only since the 1990s (e.g. Adamson and Regan 1991) has there emerged a research strand in second language acquisition (SLA) research, specifically from within a variationist perspective, which considers the acquisition of sociolinguistic variation and so-called 'non-standard' features in the second language. Instead of focusing uniquely on the acquisition of what is categorical in the L2 (the non-variable aspects, such as aspects of syntactic structure), a growing research thread is

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interested in how the learner relates to variable aspects of the L2, such as the acquisition of native-speaker variation patterns. In addition, there is a new interest in different varieties of language. In relation to the acquisition of English as an L2, for instance, there is a new focus on the 'non-core' varieties rather than the 'inner-circle' Englishes. Irish English is just one of these target varieties which is a possible input source for migrants today.

Research has shown that the acquisition of discourse markers is an indication of the acquisition of sociolinguistic variation in another language (cf. Sankoff et al. 1997). The acquisition of sociolinguistic variation is an important part of L2 acquisition. Learning a language is more than simply learning grammatical structures (Bayley and Regan 2004). The acquisition of sociolinguistic competence is also very important for permitting the speaker to relate to others, such as L1 (first language) speakers, and thus for integrating into other social groups. The acquisition of sociolinguistic competence centrally involves the acquisition of L1 variation patterns. This is particularly important for L2 speakers as they integrate into their new communities; it also plays an important role in the negotiation of second language identities. Furthermore, discourse markers can fulfil an interesting function in the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence for L2 speakers. In the same way as L2 speakers use unanalysed chunks, particularly in the early stages of acquisition (although advanced learners have been shown to also make use of such chunking (cf. Myles et al. 1999), often as a short-hand to 'sounding' native-like (Regan 1996, 1997), so too are discourse markers

available as a quick route to 'sounding' like a native speaker due to their salience and frequency in the input available to the L2 speaker.

Until recently, a monolingual perspective was the norm in the investigation of Irish English, not surprisingly given the fact that Irish society was assumed to be largely homogenous until the late 1990s. However, during the so-called 'Celtic Tiger' period, which lasted from the late 1990s until approximately 2007 and was characterised by economic prosperity, there was an enormous change in the profile of the population living in Ireland. This was particularly noticeable after the accession of ten new EU Member States, including Poland, on May 1st 2004. From a country of net emigration, Ireland rapidly became a country of net inward migration. This change in the social landscape has had a concomitant effect on the linguistic landscape in Ireland. For the analysis of Irish English, it is no longer sufficient to assume a monocultural society, albeit with two 'official' languages – Irish and English; Ireland, now, is very much a multicultural society composed of multilingual users of a multiplicity of languages. Since 2008, Ireland's economic woes have been well-documented, both nationally and internationally, and the onset of recession has seen a return to double-digit unemployment figures and net outward migration. This has led many to assume, perhaps simplistically, that the migrants who arrived in their thousands since the mid 1990s will now decide to return 'home' – in the popular consciousness, their country of birth. The recent publication of data from Ireland's 2011 Census implies the opposite. In the case of Polish nationals, there has been an almost 100%

increase, from 63,276 Polish nationals in 2006 to 122,585 in 2011. There are also increases reported for other non-Irish nationalities (e.g. Lithuanian, Latvian, Nigerian, Romanian, Indian, etc.), indicating that, contrary to public opinion, many migrants have chosen to remain in Ireland, hence making migration a "permanent feature of Irish society" (Ní Chonaill 2010). Despite the shift in Ireland's economic fortunes, the question of integration remains an important one. Language is an important indicator of integration, and the acquisition of the language of the majority is necessary for participation at all levels of society – educationally, politically and in the labour market. While there has been relatively extensive work carried out on features of L1 Irish English (e.g. Kallen 1994; Filppula 1999; Hickey 2007), the use of Irish English by non-native speakers who have immigrated to Ireland has remained largely absent from the linguistic portrait of Ireland to date (although see Nestor and Regan 2011; Nestor et al. 2012; Diskin 2013; Regan, in press).

Sankoff et al. (1997: 191) claim that the fluency with which speakers use discourse markers[2] in an L2 is an indication of how integrated they are into the local speech community. It is against the backdrop of this claim that we propose to investigate the acquisition and use of discourse *like*[3] by Polish people living in Ireland. Both academic and non-academic sources confirm

[2] In this analysis, we follow Schiffrin's description of discourse markers as "sequentially dependent elements that bracket units of talk" (1987: 31).
[3] Following D'Arcy (2008), we treat both the discourse marker and the discourse particle under the combined heading of discourse *like*.

that discourse *like* is one of the most "salient features of present-day vernacular English" (D'Arcy 2005: ii), and it is held up as an example of "a burgeoning change in progress" (Levey 2006: 413). What is also noteworthy is that the spread of discourse *like* throughout the global varieties of English "affords valuable opportunities to chart the transnational spread of a discourse-pragmatic innovation" (Levey 2006: 413). Much of the academic research on discourse *like*, which we review below, has been carried out on L1 speech. As already noted, we are concerned here with L2 speech and the use of discourse *like* by Polish speakers of Irish English as an L2. Hickey (2007: 376) notes that *like* is present in the speech of all age groups in Ireland. Therefore, we expect that the Polish participants in this study would be sufficiently exposed to the use of *like* in the L1 Irish English they hear.[4] Therefore, our aim is to investigate whether Polish speakers of Irish English are acquiring the patterns of variability of the wider L1 Irish English speech community.

The data for this study come from two projects. The first project investigates language acquisition and use in the Polish and Italian communities in Ireland. Participants were recruited in two locations: Dublin, the largest urban area in Ireland, and Co. Mayo, a rural region[5] on the western

[4] The question of contact influence from the L1 does not arise as Polish does not have an equivalent for discourse marker *like*. In the corpus, there have been (rare) examples of a direct translation of Polish *jak(o)* (like/as), e.g.

(ENG)	I work	*like*	a teacher
(PL)	Pracuję	*jako*	nauczycielka.

[5] The largest population centre in Co. Mayo is Castlebar, which was recorded as having a population of 11,972 in Census 2011

seaboard approximately 230km from Dublin. The second project investigates the acquisition of English as an L2 and the expression of identity through language in a cohort of Polish adolescents in the same two locations. The research methodology combined quantitative and qualitative approaches (see section 3) in order to investigate variation, language practices and the expression of social identity through language in these communities. This chapter presents a case study of sixteen of the Polish participants from both studies, and their use of discourse *like*. The speakers are 8 adults (4 urban, 4 rural) and 8 adolescents (4 urban, 4 rural). There was an equal number of male and female speakers and a variety of networks. We focus particularly on the positional distribution of discourse *like* and the impact of age and place of residence. All of the speakers came to Ireland after Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004.

The chapter is structured as follows: First, we review the literature on discourse *like* (section 2), with a particular focus on research on the use of discourse *like* in Irish English. In section three, we present the methodology, participants and coding schema. In section four, we analyse our corpus for the occurrence of discourse *like*. Finally, we draw some conclusions and discuss their implications. Our research shows that the L2 speakers in our study are using discourse *like* (see figure 1, section 4), and, as expected, there is a great

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(http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/statire/selectvarval/define.asp?maintable=CD134&PLanguage=0).

deal of interspeaker variation (see figures 1 and 2, section 4) (Young 1991; Bayley and Langman 2004; Regan 2004). We hypothesised that place of residence would be a significant factor, and that our Dublin-based participants would favour clause-medial discourse *like*, as described in Amador Moreno's research on Dublin English (2012; see sections 2 and 4.2.1), and, conversely, that the Co. Mayo speakers would favour discourse *like* in clause-marginal positions, the characteristic pattern for Irish English (Siemund et al. 2009; see sections 2 and 4.2.1). The raw figures suggest that this is the case but statistical tests do not yield any significant differences (see figures 4 and 5, section 4). An investigation of the frequency of discourse *like* as used by the participants suggests that, in both urban and rural locations, young people tend to favour clause-medial discourse *like* while our adult participants tend to favour clause-marginal discourse *like* (see figures 6-11 in section 4). This may indicate that younger speakers are moving away from the local Irish English pattern (which favours discourse *like* in clause-marginal and particularly in clause-final position) to a more global pattern for this feature.

2. Discourse *like*

Discourse *like* in Irish English, as in other varieties, has been receiving increased attention both within and beyond academia. In relation to use of *like* in all Englishes, many studies note the disregard with which discourse *like*, in general, is met: It has been described as "non-standard" and "intrusive [...]

[making] sentences seem disjointed to many listeners" (Underhill 1988: 234), as occurring "grammatically anywhere" (Siegel 2002: 64), as "a randomly occurring item devoid of semantic or pragmatic significance and functioning as a mere filler where speakers have difficulty encoding their message" (Miller and Weinert 1995: 366), and as "a meaningless interjection or expletive" (Dailey-O'Cain 2000: 60) which is deemed to "indicate either vagueness in thinking or general inarticulacy" (Levey 2003: 24). In Ireland, as elsewhere, the belief that American English has influenced Irish English and other varieties of English, as well as other more specific attitudes to *like*, are both propagated by and reflected in media reports. An article on language use in an Irish newspaper of record described *like*, along with other lexical items such as *all, whatever*, and *my bad*, as "the instant noodles of everyday language: bland, readily available and requiring the minimum of effort" (The Irish Times, October 14, 2009). The article claims that we use these words because we are lazy, "when we can't be bothered to engage our brains". In this case, the media seems to be drawing on the broader narrative of the perceived increasing Americanisation of Irish culture and global culture more generally. Meyerhoff and Niedzielski (2003: 535) claim that this type of response is "familiar". The U.S. is perceived as the powerful and dominant partner in globalised exchanges of all kinds and, in line with this, American English is "discursively constructed as a 'category killer', that is, a competitor that enters a market, 'with so much buying power that they almost instantly kill the smaller competitors'" (Klein 2000: 134, cited in Meyerhoff and

Niedzielski 2003: 535). *Like* is often believed to have been recently 'invented' by young people in its current form. It is associated with adolescents, particularly adolescent girls, and it is commonly proffered as an abundantly available example of the inarticulacy of youth. (However, see D'Arcy (2007) for a comprehensive dismantling of the many myths around the development and usage of *like*.)

2.1 Previous research

Previous research has demonstrated that discourse *like* has a long history of use in the English language. Romaine and Lange point to the fact that, "[m]ost changes are in circulation for some time before they are noticed" and that discourse *like* has "probably been used for over a century" (1991: 270) (see also D'Arcy 2007; Meehan 1991). D'Arcy (2007) provides references to *like* from the early part of the nineteenth century and points out that first-generation native New Zealanders who were born between 1851 and 1919 used *like*. Currently, in England, Ireland and Scotland, seventy- and eighty-year-olds use *like* (D'Arcy 2005, 2007, 2008). D'Arcy (2005: ii), in her variationist treatment of discourse *like*, concludes that, far from being unconstrained by syntax, discourse *like* is, in fact, highly constrained by syntax and occurs in specific positions among speakers of all ages. *Like*, in its "vernacular" uses (D'Arcy 2007: 392), i.e. in its discourse, quotative and approximative adverb functions, has been researched in a number of varieties

of English, including American English (e.g. Underhill 1988; Romaine and Lange 1991; Ferrara and Bell 1995; Buchstaller 2001), Canadian English (e.g. Tagliamonte and Hudson 1999; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004; D'Arcy 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008), Scottish English (e.g. Miller and Weinert 1995), London English (e.g. Andersen 1997, 1998; Levey 2003, 2006), Australian English (e.g. Winter 2002; Sharifian and Malcolm 2003), and Irish English (e.g. Kallen 2006; Farr and O'Keeffe (2002); Siemund et al. 2009; Amador-Moreno 2010a: 121-122, 2010b, 2012; Murphy 2010; Schweinberger 2012). Dailey-O'Cain (2000: 61) points to several studies (e.g. Romaine and Lange 1991) which conclude that *like* is undergoing grammaticalisation, a process whereby "particular items become more grammatical through time" (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 2).

2.2. Uses, function and position

In its standard grammatical uses, *like* acts as a lexical verb, noun, preposition, conjunction and suffix (cf. D'Arcy 2006: 339). We do not consider these uses further here. *Like* also has a number of "vernacular" uses: the discourse marker, quotative *be like* and the approximative adverb (D'Arcy 2007: 392; see examples (1)–(5) below). Pragmatically, discourse *like* can function as a hedge when the speaker wants to signal that there may be a discrepancy between what is spoken and what the speaker has in mind (Schourup 1985; Jucker and Smith 1998), or as a hesitation device when the speaker has

"planning difficulties" (Andersen 2001: 18). It can also function as a focus marker (cf. Underhill, 1988: 236). Clause-final discourse *like* (see below, example (5)) functions to counter possible objections and assumptions (Miller and Weinert, 1993: 366). We do not discuss function further in this chapter.

What follows ((1)-(5) below) are examples of the "vernacular" uses of *like* taken from our corpus. First, the quotative complementiser *be like* is used to introduce constructed dialogue (Tannen 1986), e.g.[6]

(1) It was 2006. There was plenty of jobs but like constructions jobs for guys and I was ***like***, 'What am I supposed to do, like? I'm not gonna be a painter or a tiler or something.' (Karolina, 70)

Second, *like* may also be used as an approximative adverb. D'Arcy (2008: 126) suggests that there may be a process of lexical replacement underway in Toronto English. The apparent time results in her study demonstrate that *like* when used in approximative contexts is favoured by speakers under 30 and that, in fact, *about* is being ousted by *like* in numerical contexts in this group, as in (2) below,

(2) So I had, ***like***, two, three hours a day just to learn English. (Gall, 187)

[6] To protect the privacy of participants, pseudonyms are used throughout.

Third, there is discourse *like* (see footnote 3). D'Arcy (2006: 339) states that a discourse marker is clause-initial and functions to relate the utterance (over which it has forward scope) to discourse which has gone before, e.g.

(3) a. ...and, ***like***, all the kids know that, you know, they are brothers. (Karolina, 902)

b. ***Like***, they're from Silesia but they went to study in Cracow and they stayed there. (Barbara, 1044)

A discourse particle, on the other hand, occurs clause-medially and functions pragmatically (e.g. by indicating "a speaker's epistemic stance to the form of the utterance") (D'Arcy 2006: 340), e.g.

(4) a. The best meat, ***like***, now is exported. (Jacek, 585)

b. ... but we'd love to have, ***like***, a big family and, like, he's always laughing at me because I would love to adopt some kids as well. (Karolina, 620a)

In this chapter, we are concerned with the positional distribution of discourse *like* in the corpus of L2 speech we have collected. As well as discourse *like* as it occurs in clause-initial and clause-medial positions, we also include *like* in clause-final position, e.g.

(5) a. We prefer, you know, just meet with the friends in hou- home, ***like***, you know, and just talk, ***like***, you know. (Wieszek, 586)

b. Well, you know, I don't mind, ***like***. I alway- Like, I would love to have, like, at least three or four. It's just, you know, if I think of giving birth to all of them, it's, like, kind of scary. (Karolina, 618)

c. And the tickets are so expensive, ***like***. You'd have to have five hundred per person. (Barbara, 796)

Irish English is "notable for its idiosyncratic usage patterns such as frequent use of clause-final LIKE" (Schweinberger 2012; original author's capitals). The use of clause-final discourse *like* is something which marks Irish English out as being quantitatively and qualitatively different from other world Englishes. Kallen (2006) points out that clause-final discourse *like* has received very little attention in the academic literature[7]. He suggests that this is because clause-final discourse *like* is "recessive and dialectal, not a part of current vernacular among younger speakers, and not widely evident in the standard language, however it is defined" (Kallen 2006: 14). Notwithstanding this, clause-final discourse *like* is "robust" in Irish English (Kallen 2006: 14), and he concludes that Irish English is '"the same but different"' to other standard varieties of English (2006: 7 and 20). Although

[7] With the exception of Cheshire et al. (1999). For further discussion on clause-final discourse *like*, see also Miller and Weinert (1995) and Hasund (2003).

the process of globalisation continues to impact on language change, Kallen states that it is not the case that one (perceived) dominant variety will “supplant” other varieties; rather, “the local and the global will come together and create new Englishes” (Kallen 2006: 20). Buchstaller and D’Arcy (2009), who outline the importance of the local in the adoption of global features of language, echo this. They suggest that the spread of quotative *be like* from American English does not progress simply as a wholesale adoption into local varieties. Rather, American English “offers linguistic material that can enter the repertoire of speakers in another locality as a resource to be imbued with linguistic and social meaning” (2009: 323). In this respect, tense, speaker sex and socioeconomic background appear to operate differently across the three varieties of English they investigated (American English, English English and New Zealand English) (see also Höhn (2012) for a discussion of quotatives in Jamaican English and Irish English). Generally speaking, Irish English *like* shares many characteristics with the use of *like* in other varieties of English, thus following global norms. However, the local also has an impact, and Kallen demonstrates this by drawing on the example of *like* in final position in both Irish English and British English (2006: 18). Sentence final *like* is common to both varieties, but it is rare in contemporary standard British English, albeit still found in dialectal varieties. On the other hand, it is “ubiquitous” in Irish English (Kallen 2006: 18). Kallen demonstrates that Irish English and British English are both quantitatively and qualitatively

different, reinforcing his assertion that Irish English *like* shares characteristics with other varieties but differs in important ways. D'Arcy considers clause-final discourse *like*, which she describes as "the 'traditional' (and obsolescing) British pattern, where LIKE takes backward scope" (D'Arcy 2005: 5; original author's capitals), and notes that the *Oxford English Dictionary* documents usage of *like* in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in this position (D'Arcy 2005: 4; see also Amador-Moreno and McCafferty, this volume). Siemund et al. (2009) analyse the positional distribution of discourse *like* in different varieties of English and use the ICE (International Corpus of English) components for the purposes of comparability. They conclude that there are two distinct distributional patterns: Irish English behaves similarly to Indian English (called the "Group A" varieties) insofar as discourse *like* mainly occurs in clause-marginal positions (clause-initial or clause-final). On the other hand, the "Group B" varieties, Philippine English and East African English[8], demonstrate a preference for discourse *like* in clause-medial position (2009: 30). In later research, Schweinberger (2010) adds British English, American English, Singaporean English and Jamaican English to the Group B varieties.

Amador-Moreno (2012) found a clear preference for clause-medial position in Dublin English. She analyses the use of discourse *like* in Paul Howard's novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-dress*, one

[8] East African English includes both Kenyan English and Tanzanian English.

novel in a series which parodies South Dublin English. She notes that, contrary to the dominant patterns of positional distribution in Irish English where discourse *like* appears more frequently in clause-marginal positions (and particularly in clause-final position), the majority of the occurrences of discourse *like* in the novel are in clause-medial position. In fact, there are only two occurrences of clause-final discourse *like* and one occurrence of clause-initial discourse *like*. Amador-Moreno questions whether the rise in the use of clause-medial discourse *like* in Dublin English could be indicative of supraregionalisation “whereby a particular language variety loses specifically local features and becomes less regionally bound” (2012: 33, citing Hickey 2003: 351), and she notes that Andersen has pointed to the possible influence of American English on varieties in which a discontinuation of the use of clause-final discourse *like* is apparent. However, Amador-Moreno claims that the spread of clause-medial discourse *like* in British English dialects are more likely to be the source of this development in Dublin English. Finally, she notes that if the rise in the use of clause-medial discourse *like*, so apparent through the rendering of Dublin speech in Paul Howard’s novel, is representative of spoken Dublin English in real time, then it would appear that Dublin English is becoming more globalised and less vernacular in its uses of discourse *like* (Amador-Moreno 2012: 33).

3. Methodology

A mixed methods approach was taken in this study, using quantitative and qualitative data and methodologies. Data was produced from sociolinguistic interviews as well as participant observation. The aim of the interviews was to elicit spontaneous vernacular speech and were also able to explore topics such as migration, identity and language use. Where possible and in accordance with the Labovian tradition, narratives were elicited using prepared ‘modules’. We propose that by triangulating the linguistic data with qualitative and survey data from the same participants, we will present a picture of the use of discourse *like* in the Irish English speech of Polish people in this study. The evidence will tell us more about language use and language practices of L2 speakers in relation to pragmatic markers as well as possible effects of migrant speech on Irish English speech in the present and future. Research shows that not only does the host community affect the language use of migrants but that there can be a reciprocal effect, with L2 speakers influencing the language of the host community, both by transferring elements from their L1 and also by the effects of the language they create from elements adapted to their needs (cf. Blommaert 2010; He 2013; Jacquemet 2013; Kelly Hall 2013; Martin-Rojo 2013; Seidlhofer 2013).

3.1 Participants

Participants were found through different approaches – the ‘friend-of-a-friend’ approach and the ‘snowball’ approach were supplemented with cold-calling. This was done in order to avoid the bias of linking into a specific network of friends and to facilitate the comparison of different categories of participants. As noted earlier, we use an evenly balanced sample of 16 people for this study: adults and young people, urban and rural. We describe the adult participants first.

Table 1: Ethnographic details – Adults

Name	**Sex**	**Age range**	**Length of residence**	**Location**
Barbara	female	31-40 yrs	4-6yrs	Dublin
Ewelina	female	20-30 yrs	2-4yrs	Dublin
Gall	male	31-40 yrs	4-6yrs	Dublin
Czesław	male	31-40 yrs	4-6yrs	Dublin
Karolina	female	21-30 yrs	4-6yrs	Co. Mayo
Bożena	female	31-40 yrs	2-4yrs	Co. Mayo
Wieszek	male	21-30 yrs	4-6yrs	Co. Mayo
Przemek	male	20-30 yrs	4-6yrs	Co. Mayo

Table 1 (above) provides brief ethnographic details for the adult participants. There are two couples in our data set – Barbara and Gall (Dublin) and Karolina and Wieszek (Mayo). Barbara and Gall were married when they arrived in Ireland and have one child. Barbara is a teacher and Gall is self-employed as an architect. Both have completed third level education. Karolina and Wieszek married after they had migrated to Ireland; they have no children. Karolina works in finance and Wieszek is self-employed as a construction contractor. After finishing secondary school, Karolina completed one year of a political science course before emigrating to America; Wieszek emigrated to America during the first year of an electrical engineering course (he did not complete his exams). Of the other Dublin-based participants, Ewelina is currently unemployed but is studying for a postgraduate degree and regularly goes back to her university in Poland because of this. She is married and lives with her husband in Ireland. They have no children. Czesław works in the medical industry. He lives with his partner in Dublin; his ex-wife lives outside of Dublin with their two teenage daughters. Finally, of the two remaining Mayo-based participants, Bożena is a qualified nurse and works full-time in a local nursing home. She lives in Ireland with her husband (who is unemployed) and her two children, one of whom (Agnieszka) has been interviewed for the purposes of this study. Przemek works as a waiter in a local restaurant. His girlfriend is Irish.

Table 2: Ethnographic details – Young people

Name	Sex	Age	Length of residence	Location
Nadzia	female	9	4-6 yrs	Dublin
Anna	female	10	9 mths	Dublin
Benedykt	male	14	2-4 yrs	Dublin
Jerzy	male	10	2-4 yrs	Dublin
Magdalena	female	13	0-2 yrs	Co. Mayo
Agnieszka	female	12	0-2 yrs	Co. Mayo
Mateusz	male	14	0-2 yrs	Co. Mayo
Bronek	male	10	2-4 yrs	Co. Mayo

Table 2 (above) provides brief ethnographic details for our young participants. In our Dublin dataset, Benedykt is 14 and is in 2nd year of post-primary school. He is an only child and lives in Ireland with his parents. Jerzy comes from a big family. He has one brother and four sisters. Nadzia was 9 at the time of interviewing and had moved to Ireland with her parents and older sister when she was almost 5 years old. Anna had moved recently to Ireland – she was only resident for 9 months when interviewed. She had an older sister who was attending a local post-primary school. Agnieszka (the daughter of Bożena from our adult data set) is 12 and is in 6th class of primary school. Magdalena is 13 and is also in 6th class. She lives in Ireland

with her parents and her older brother. Bronek is in 3rd class of primary school. He lives in Ireland with his parents and younger brother. Finally, of our Co. Mayo dataset, Mateusz is in 2nd year in post-primary school. He is an only child and lives in Ireland with his parents.

3.2. Interviewing

Participants were recorded in semi-directed sociolinguistic ‘interviews’ (which were, in fact, conversations) based broadly on Labovian modules, but guided by the participants’ own interests and the goals of the different studies. The interviews with adults mainly took place in the homes of the participants in an informal atmosphere, frequently over tea. The interviews with the young people mainly took place in their schools. The context was designed to be as relaxing as possible in order to elicit informal speech which, according to Labov (1984), is the most systematic speech. Mostly, the interviews with adults were carried out by two interviewers. The interviews with the young people were carried out by one interviewer (Nestor). We supplemented the data with written ethnographic questionnaires which were completed by each informant.[9] One of the authors (Nestor) speaks Polish fluently after a significant amount of time

[9] The ethnographic questionnaire was designed to elicit biographical, linguistic, socio-psychological and linguistic-educational data. There were two versions: one for adults and one for young participants. Results (for the young participants) have been reported elsewhere (cf. Nestor and Regan 2011 and Nestor 2013).

spent in Poland. She translated any Polish used during the interviews or in the ethnographic questionnaires. This knowledge of the participants' L1 also contributed to the relaxed mood of the interactions between interviewers and participants, and probably additional qualitative material.

These interviews give us insight not only into the linguistic production in English of the informants, but also into their experiences of living in Ireland. The time of each interview was variable. Insofar as was possible, the interviewer spent one hour talking with the participant. However, as many of the young people were interviewed during school time, this was not always feasible. The data were transcribed and coded for quantitative analysis of our chosen linguistic variable and qualitatively analysed from a sociolinguistic perspective.

3.3. Coding

There were a number of steps in the coding process. First, we extracted all occurrences of *like* (in all functions) from the corpus. We compiled a database of the occurrences of discourse *like* by excluding all other occurrences, i.e. we excluded *like* when used in its standard grammatical functions (verb, noun, preposition, conjunction and suffix; cf. D'Arcy 2006: 339; see section 2.2), and we also excluded quotative *be like*, *like* when used as an approximative adverb, *it's like* (frozen form), *like* when used as part of a general extender (e.g. 'and something like that'), false starts,

crosslinguistic *like* and tokens of *like* that were NA (‘not available’, following Schweinberger (2012). Instances of *like* were coded as a ‘false start’ when the participant started to formulate a clause using *like* but did not complete this clause. He/she then reformulated in a second complete clause and did not use *like*. Instances of *like* were coded as ‘crosslinguistic’ when it was clear that there was an influence from Polish on the speaker’s formulation in English (see footnote 4). Instances of *like* were coded as ‘not available’ (NA) when there was not enough syntactic information available to unambiguously code the occurrence of *like* or when the token did not occur in a complete clause (cf. Schweinberger 2012). Occurrences of *like* which were coded as ‘crosslinguistic’ or ‘not available’ were rare in the corpus.

Then, we coded the occurrences of discourse *like* according to linguistic and social factors. Social factors included sex, age, place of residence, length of residence, L1 *vs* L2 use, attitude towards living in Ireland, transnational activity and self-reported proficiency. In this chapter, we focus on age and place of residence.

Discourse *like* was also coded for position within the clause. This entailed coding every occurrence of discourse *like* for whether it occurred in clause-medial, clause-initial or clause-final position. Following Siemund et al. (2009: 23), a clause

> refers to either a syntactic unit consisting of minimally a subject-verb construction which may be accompanied by syntactically related constituents that modify the subject-verb construction or to elliptic utterances which can be rephrased as subject-verb constructions.

The authors go on to define a clause semantically as referring to "basic propositions that cannot meaningfully be segmented further without interfering with the truth conditions of the proposition in question" (Siemund et al. 2009: 23). We determined discourse *like* to be in clause-initial position (see examples 3a-b above) if it occurred:

> before the first obligatory constituent of the clause, i.e. clause-initial LIKE may not be the first linguistic unit of the clause construction since other optional expressions (e.g. other discourse markers) may precede its occurrence.
>
> (Siemund et al. 2009: 23-24; original authors' capitals)

Likewise, discourse *like* was coded as clause-final (see examples 5a-c above) if it occurred "after the last propositionally functional constituent of the clause" (Siemund et al. 2009: 24). Intonation was important in determining the position of discourse *like*, particularly at clause boundaries (cf. Hasund 2003: 80-82 for further discussion on intonation).

Finally, for the purposes of comparison, clause-initial and clause-final occurrences of discourse *like* were grouped together as clause-marginal. Thus, we were able to observe any differences between the use of discourse *like* in clause-medial and clause-marginal positions. A variety of statistical tests were carried out on the data to determine the significance of any differences.

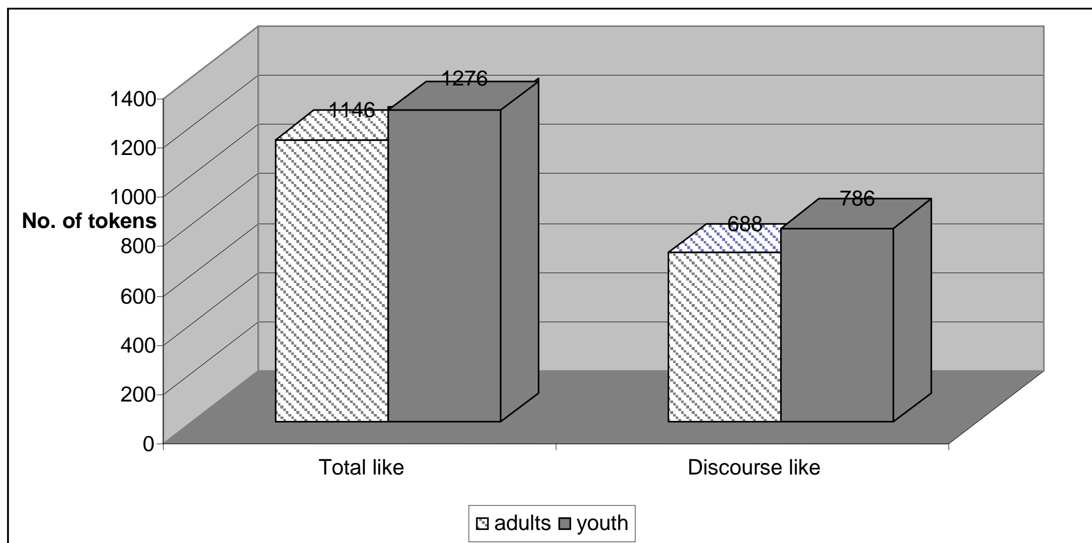
4. Results and Discussion

The aim of the analysis was to determine whether the Polish participants were using discourse *like* in the same way as L1 speakers of Irish English, and whether age and place of residence are significant factors. We found that the L2 speakers in this study are using discourse *like* in broadly similar patterns to L1 speakers, and that there is, as expected, a high degree of interspeaker variation (cf. Young 1991; Bayley and Langman 2004; Regan 2004).

Figure 1 shows a breakdown of how *like* was used in this corpus. Adult usage accounted for 1,146 tokens of *like* in all functions (M=143.25, SD=149.624) and 688 tokens of discourse *like* (M=86.00, SD=107.547); our younger speakers used 1,276 tokens of *like* in all functions (M=159.50, SD=145.425) and 786 tokens of discourse *like* (M=98.25, SD=97.300). In total, we analysed 2,422 tokens of *like* (in all functions); of these, 1,474

were tokens of discourse *like*, which represents 60.86% of all the occurrences of *like*.

Figure 1. Total occurrences of *like* and discourse *like*



4.1. Interspeaker variation

Interspeaker variation is to be expected in the speech of L2 learners and has been well-attested in previous research (cf. Sankoff et al. 1997). Figures 2 and 3 further illustrate the divergence in the individual rates of usage of discourse *like* by the various participants in this study. In the adult group, seven out of eight participants used at least 1 token of discourse *like*

(Ewelina did not use any). Among the younger participants, seven out of eight used at least 7 tokens of discourse *like* (Anna did not use any).

Figure 2. Interspeaker variation (adults); D = Dublin, M = Mayo

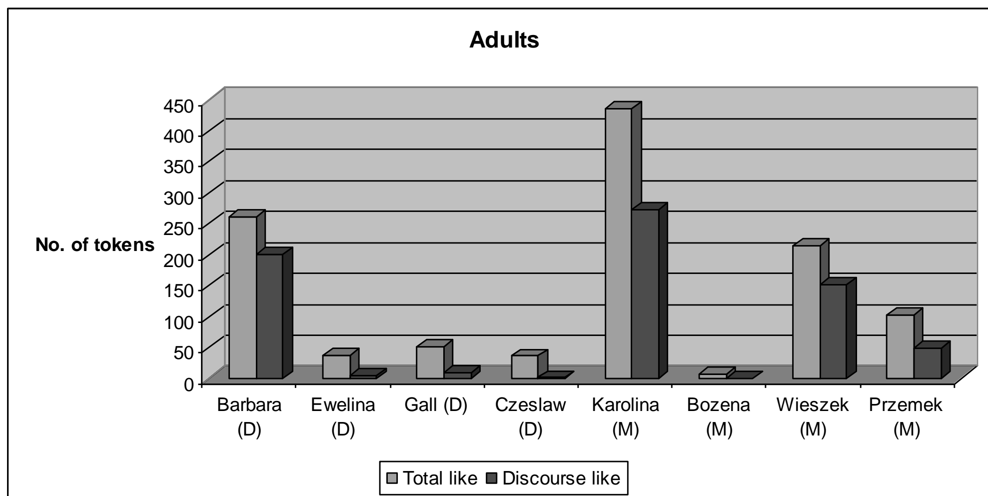
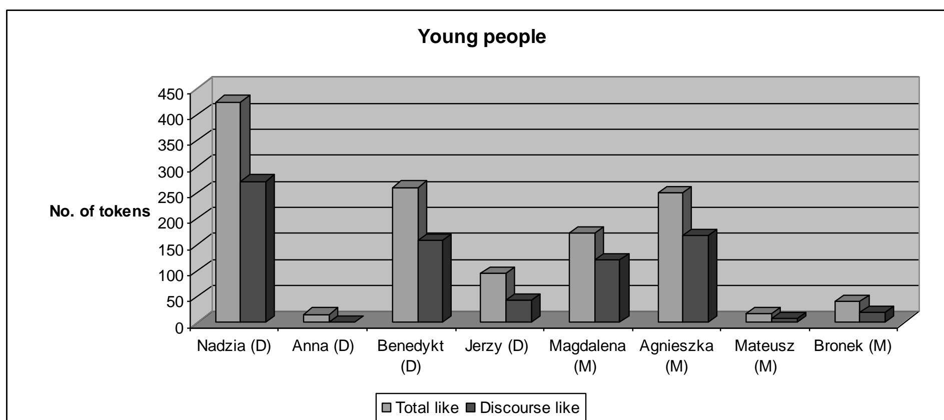


Figure 3. Interspeaker variation (young people); D = Dublin, M = Mayo



An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the total *like* usage (i.e. in all functions) by adults and young people. Young people used more *like* in all functions (M=159.50, SD=145.425) than the adult participants (M=143.25, SD=149.624). The difference between means was non-significant ($t(14) = -0.22$, $p > .05$).

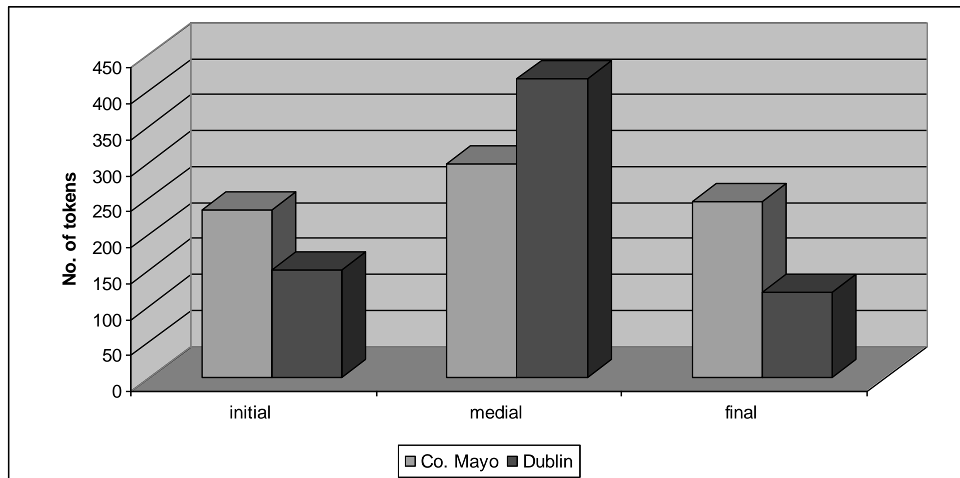
Discourse *like* usage by adult participants (mean rank = 8.06) did not seem to differ when compared with discourse *like* usage by young participants (mean rank = 8.94) ($U = 35.5$, $p > 0.05$). The Mann-Whitney U test was used.

4.2. Positional distribution of discourse like *in L2 Irish English: Place of residence*

We now turn to a discussion of the positional distribution of discourse *like* in our corpus. We will focus on two external factors that from the literature we know to have a potentially significant impact on how discourse *like* is used: age and place of residence. Using data already available (e.g. Amador Moreno 2012; Kallen 2006; Murphy 2010; Schweinberger 2012; Siemund et al. 2009), we present a preliminary exploration of a correspondence between the speech of the L2 learners in this study and the patterns of positional distribution of discourse *like* in the L1 speech community.

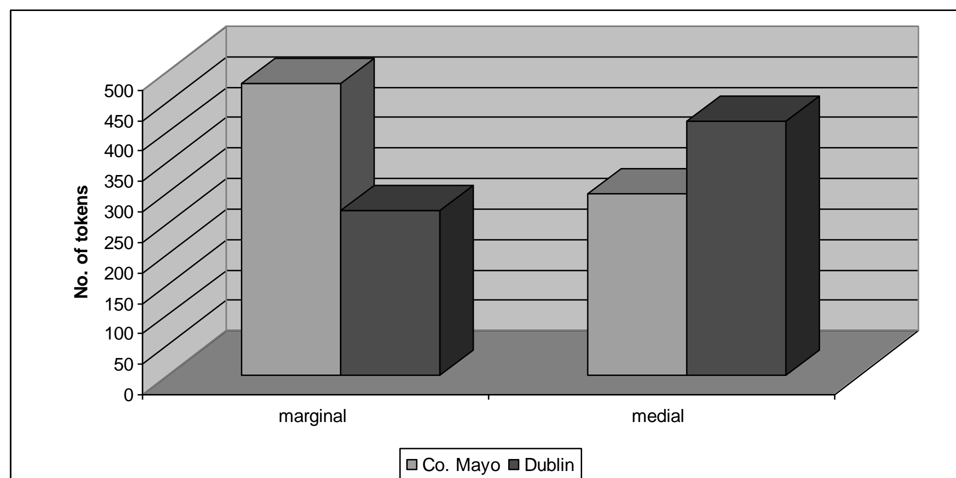
As outlined in section 2, we might expect that there would be a divergence in the positional distribution of discourse *like* depending on where the speaker lives, i.e. we would expect that the Dublin speakers would use higher rates of clause-medial discourse *like* than the Co. Mayo speakers (cf. Amador-Moreno 2012). The raw figures presented in figure 4 below show that clause-medial discourse *like* is used more frequently by our L2 Polish Dublin-based speakers whereas our L2 Polish speakers in Co. Mayo tend to use discourse *like* in clause-initial and clause-final positions more frequently. However, here we must sound a note of caution as one particular participant (Wieszek) uses 132 tokens of clause-final discourse *like*, thus somewhat skewing our dataset. We ran a Mann Whitney U test on these figures. There is no significant difference in all cases – clause-initial discourse *like* (Dublin participants: mean rank = 7.75, Mayo participants: mean rank = 9.25; $U = 38$, $p > .05$; clause-medial discourse *like* (Dublin participants: mean rank = 8.38, Mayo participants: mean rank = 8.62; $U = 33$, $p > .05$); and clause-final discourse *like* (Dublin participants: mean rank = 7.75, Mayo participants: mean rank = 9.25; $U = 38$, $p > .05$).

Figure 4. Positional distribution of discourse *like* by place of residence (adults and young people combined)



In order to better compare these data with those of Siemund et al. (2009), we combine clause-initial and clause-final into one category – clause-marginal – which allows us to better understand the clause-medial *vs.* clause-marginal breakdown for this corpus (see figure 5 below). The raw figures show a favouring by the Co. Mayo group of discourse *like* in clause-marginal positions while our Dublin-based speakers tend to favour discourse *like* in clause-medial positions. However, there was no significant difference in either case (clause-marginal discourse *like* usage: Dublin participants – mean rank = 7.50; Mayo participants – mean rank = 9.50; $U = 40.0$, $p > 0.05$. Clause-medial discourse *like* usage: Dublin participants – mean rank = 8.38; Mayo participants – mean rank = 8.62; $U = 33.0$, $p > 0.05$. The Mann-Whitney U test was used.)

Figure 5. Clause-marginal *vs* clause medial discourse *like* by place of residence (adults and young people combined)



4.2.1. The expression of an identity of place through the use of discourse like

We attempt to draw some preliminary conclusions on the possible work being done by speakers to express an identity of place through the use of discourse *like*. Amador-Moreno's (2012) analysis of discourse *like* in Dublin English (see section 2) would indicate that, because the majority of occurrences of discourse *like* occur in clause-medial position, clause-final discourse *like* is used less often in Dublin English than in the English spoken in the rest of Ireland (2012: 29-30). Alternatively, this may indicate

that the use of clause-final discourse *like* is perceived (through the medium of Howard's observations) as 'unfashionable' by the south Dublin characters in the novel (2012: 29-30). Amador-Moreno notes that the lack of a corpus of Dublin English does not allow for confirmation of this observation (2012: 30). Instead, she draws on other research in this regard. There is only one occurrence of clause-final discourse *like* that comes from Dublin English in the 400 occurrences of *like* analysed in Kallen (2006). The claim that clause-final discourse *like* is more common in Irish English spoken outside of Dublin is further strengthened by the evidence from Amador-Moreno and O'Keeffe (2009, cited in Amador-Moreno 2012) that shows that 19% of occurrences of discourse *like* occurred in clause-medial position with the remaining 81% occurring in clause-marginal positions. Therefore, it seems to be the case that, certainly in particular varieties of Dublin English, clause-medial discourse *like* is a more robust feature than clause-marginal discourse *like*. Equally, clause-final discourse *like* seems to be more characteristic of the Irish English spoken outside of Dublin.

Amador-Moreno suggests that her data confirm Hickey's (2005) claim that, by using higher rates of clause-medial discourse *like*, "fashionable" Dublin speakers actively try to distance themselves from local Dublin speakers and, thus, from the more localised, characteristic Irish English pattern of predominantly using clause-marginal discourse *like*. For a further discussion of the local and the global in the speech of Polish L1 speakers of Irish

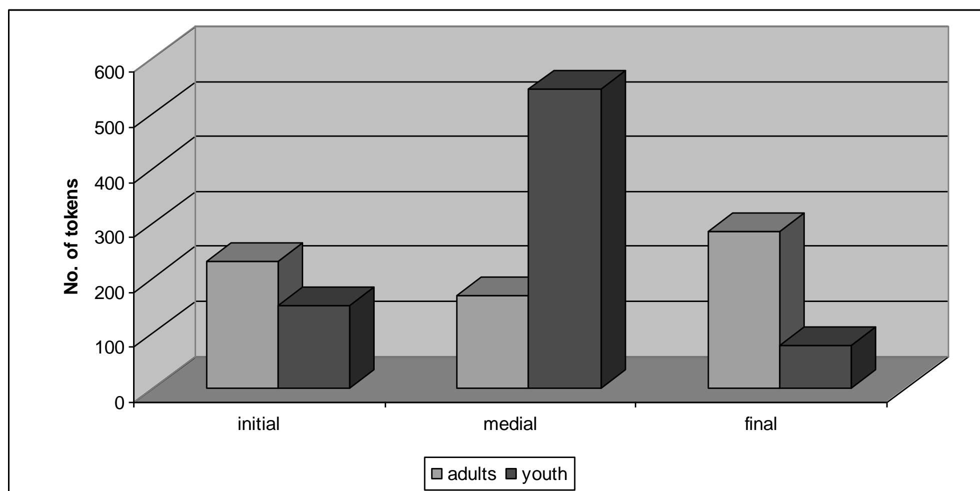
English see Regan (in press). We have suggested elsewhere (cf. Nestor et al. 2012) that the use of clause-medial discourse *like* indexes an upwardly-mobile, youthful, globalised identity. Conversely, we understand that 'local' Dubliners and rural speakers may make pragmatic use of clause-marginal discourse *like* in the identity work necessary to distance themselves from this globalised identity, recalling a more locally-based Irish identity. Whether the use of divergent patterns of discourse *like* not only indexes social identities at the local Dublin level but recalls a bigger question of Irish identity remains to be seen, as young, upwardly-mobile Irish people move towards a more cosmopolitan or globally-oriented style of speaking while, perhaps, distancing themselves from their 'local' Irishness. For now, it is interesting to note that there is a difference in the frequency of discourse *like* in the urban and rural speech of our participants, indicating that discourse *like* may play an important indexical role in the speech of both L1 and L2 Irish English speakers.

4.3 Positional distribution of discourse like *in L2 Irish English: Age*

Next, we focus on the impact of age. Figures 6-11 (below) show the difference in the positional distribution of discourse *like* usage among our adults and young participants. Figure 6 demonstrates that discourse *like* in the speech of our L2 speakers is used in each of the positions indicated by Siemund et al. (2009) for L1 speakers – clause-initial, clause-medial and

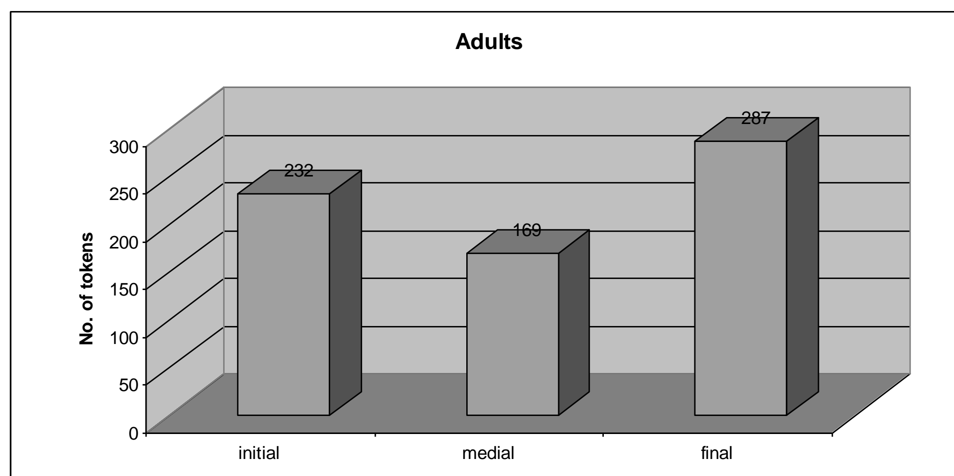
clause-final – but that there is variation in rates of usage for the different positions.

Figure 6. Positional distribution of discourse *like* among adults and young people



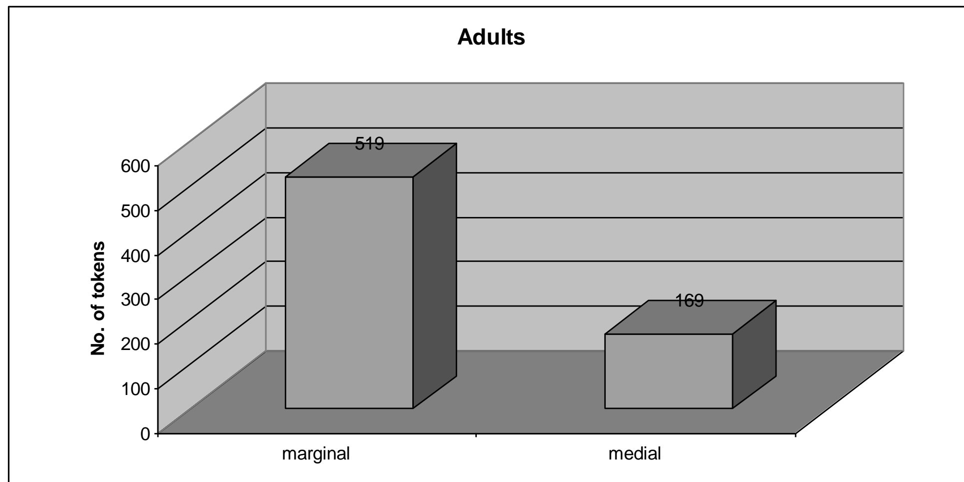
In the adult cohort, approximately 75% of tokens appear in clause-initial and clause-final positions (see figure 7 below), with discourse *like* occurring most frequently in clause-final position. As noted above (section 4.2), one participant may skew these figures as he uses clause-final discourse *like* 132 times in his interview.

Figure 7. Positional distribution of discourse *like* among adults



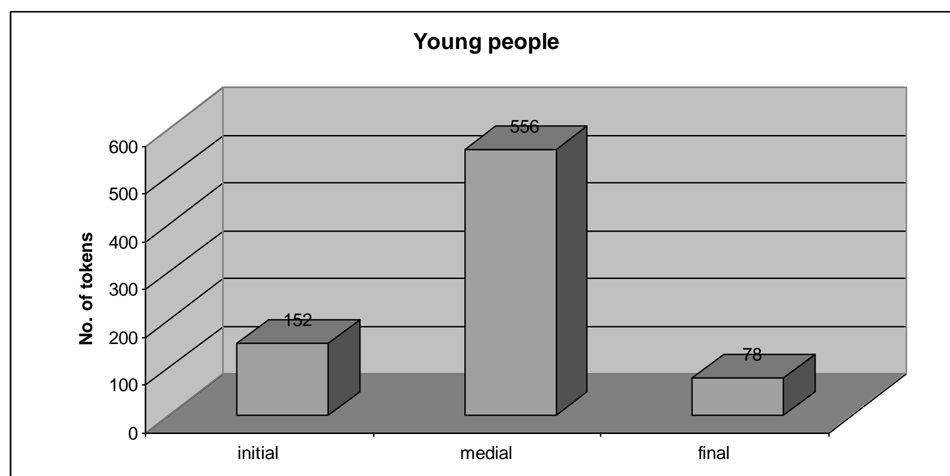
In order to better compare these data with those of Siemund et al. (2009), we combine clause-initial and clause-final into one category – clause-marginal – which allows us to better understand the clause-medial *vs* clause-marginal breakdown for this corpus (see figure 8). The adult group seems to favour discourse *like* in clause-marginal positions.

Figure 8. Positional distribution of discourse *like* among adults



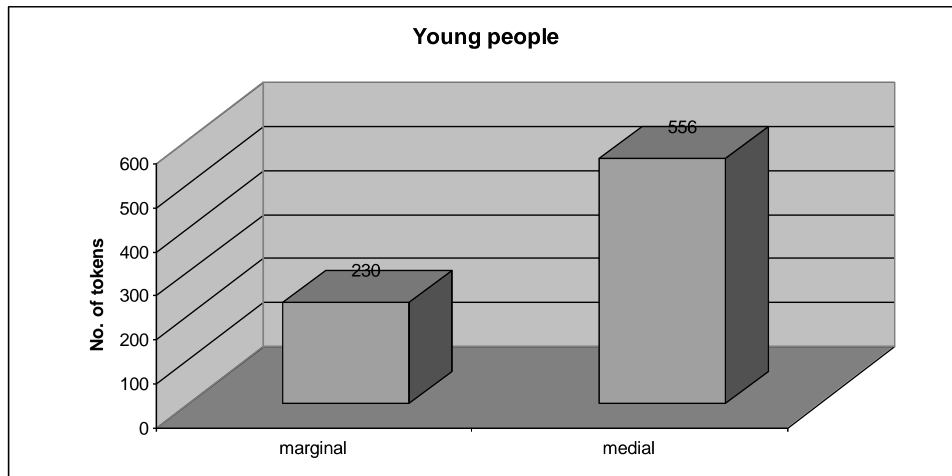
The data for young people (see figure 9) show differences from the data for adults in how discourse *like* is distributed according to position in the clause. Just under 30% of tokens appear in clause-initial and clause-final positions. This compares with almost 75% of tokens for the adult group in the same positions. Discourse *like* occurs most frequently in clause-medial position.

Figure 9. Positional distribution of discourse *like* among young people



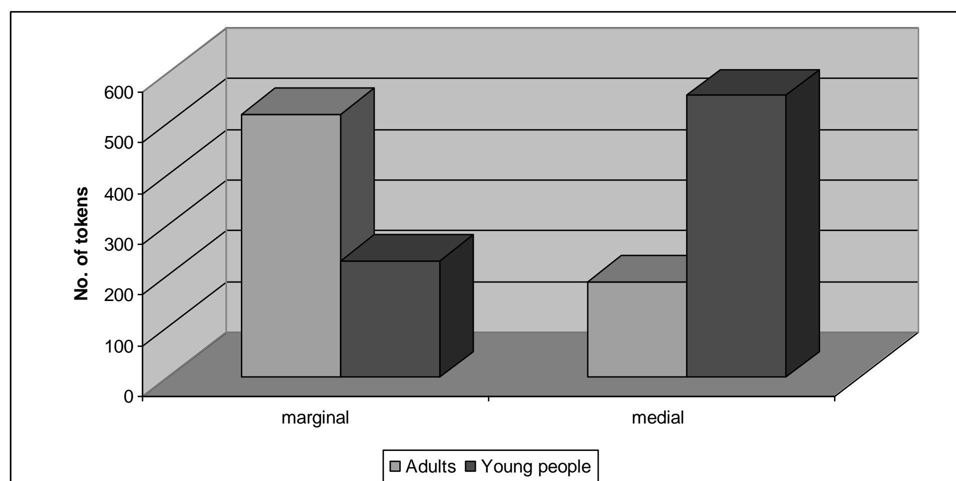
Again, we combine clause-initial and clause-final into one category – clause-marginal – which allows us to better understand the clause-medial *vs* clause-marginal breakdown for this corpus (see figure 10). The younger group favours discourse *like* in clause-medial position. Presumably this group of young L2 speakers are influenced in their use of clause medial *like* by input from young L1 speakers of Irish English who may be more likely to use *like* in clause-medial position.

Figure 10. Positional distribution of discourse *like* among young people



In figure 11, we compare the clause-marginal and clause-medial discourse *like* usage of adults with that of young people. The raw figures show a divergence in usage between both datasets. There is, however, no significant difference in either case (clause-marginal discourse *like* usage: adults – mean rank = 8.50; young people – mean rank = 8.50; U = 32.0, p > 0.05. Clause-medial discourse *like* usage: adults – mean rank = 6.88; young people – mean rank = 10.12; U = 45.0, p > 0.05. The Mann-Whitney U test was used.)

Figure 11. Clause-marginal *vs* clause medial discourse *like* by age (adults and young people combined)



In their data, Siemund et al. (2009: 27) found that speakers used discourse *like* in clause-marginal positions in 58.17% of cases and in clause-medial position in 31.45% of cases, a favouring for clause-marginal positions in L1 Irish English. In this L2 corpus, the raw data from our adult participants seem to broadly agree with this pattern. Data from our younger participants, however, seem to indicate a favouring of clause-medial discourse *like*, the more globalised position for this feature. Although these are raw figures, they suggest that there may be an impact of age in the patterning of the feature. Further analysis is necessary here.

5. Conclusion

The Polish L2 speakers of Irish English in this study use discourse *like* in patterns which correspond broadly to patterns attested for L1 Irish English usage (cf. Siemund et al. 2009; Murphy 2010; Schweinberger 2012). Overall, we find that, as with other L2 studies, there is a greater degree of interspeaker variation within the group than in L1 communities. Proficiency almost certainly is a significant factor here, but this requires further research. For now, we have attempted, through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, to provide a more nuanced analysis of the possible reasons for the degree of variation in the positional distribution and rates of usage of discourse *like*.

We had hypothesised that place of residence would be a significant factor. We predicted that the Dublin speakers would favour clause-medial discourse *like*, as described in Amador-Moreno's research on Dublin English (2012; see section 2), and, conversely, that the Co. Mayo speakers would favour clause-marginal discourse *like*. From our preliminary analysis, this seems to be the case. However, when we analysed the data further by age, we found that younger speakers favour clause-medial discourse *like* over clause-marginal positions. Our sample of data here is small, but we hope that further analyses of the entire corpus of L2 speech we have collected will allow us to nuance these findings further.

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