Irish English: a current account of Northern and Southern dialects

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ABSTRACT

Every realisation of speech differs amongst the speakers of a given language. There are many factors that could possibly affect this, such as, age, gender and social background as well as geographical factors, among others. Indeed, the phonology of the same language may present different characteristics throughout the different places in which that language is spoken. In the case of English -with its international language status, we can find many varieties spoken all over the word, which include, among other linguistic aspects, different pronunciation traits. In the present essay, a synchronic description of the phonology of present Irish English will be given. As the Irish language has had influence on Irish English pronunciation, in the first part of the essay a historic account of how English became the language spoken nowadays in the island will be presented together with a phonological account of Irish English in the north of the country and Irish English in the south. A transcription of the speech of two Irish people from those two areas of the island will then be analysed with the purpose of determining which phonetic-phonological aspects characterize each accent they exhibit. The results of the study show that both participants use features from their respective varieties. The Northern Irish English speaker makes use of NG Coalescence, the /w-ʍ/ opposition is present in his speech and he makes use of Schwa Epenthesis. Surprisingly, he does not follow the typical FOOT/GOOSE distinction, he does not use intervocalic preglottalisation, neither does he use Schwa Absorption or Elision of medial /ð/. The Southern Irish English speaker exhibits features such as the /ʌ-ʊ/ opposition, weakening of /juː/ and HAPPY tensing as well as dental plosives/t̪, d̪/ instead of the dental fricatives /θ, ð/, clear /l/, and presence of the /h/ sound in all environments. He also exhibits Glide Cluster reduction. He does not have the /aɪ-ɔɪ/ opposition for PRICE words and he does not make use of vowel reduction and the KIT and Schwa Merger. Processes he does not use are Schwa Absorption, Schwa Epenthesis and Yod Dropping. Factors such as identity, contact and standardisation are argued to be possibly affecting the way in which these speakers make use some pronunciation features and not others.

Keywords: synchrony of Irish English, Northern Irish English, Southern Irish English.

OUTLINE

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the English Language is spread all over the world. This happened mainly due to the British colonisation period during the 19th century. The British reached as far as Canada, The United States of America, Australia, India and parts of Africa among others. Thus, English is spoken in all those parts of the world, which, with time and the effect of contact with other languages has resulted into the development of several varieties of English. Among these varieties we find Canadian English, American English, Indian English, Singapore English and Caribbean English.

The aim of this essay is to give an up-to-date phonological account of Irish English of two recorded Irish people from two different areas of the island: north and south. This is so because there seems to be a clear distinction between north and south being influenced by the Irish language and English from England, respectively. In the north, this was a result of the Irish language lasting more than in other parts of the country. The south, however, witnessed a great amount of people coming from England to commerce so the language used was the one brought about by the English. This essay will argue that while some characteristics are present in the speech of the two participants some others are not. The Northern Irish English speaker uses vowel lengthening rules as in his variety, he uses dental fricatives as well as dental plosives, he also makes a distinction between the sounds /w-ʍ/ and makes use of the Schwa Epenthesis process. The Southern Irish English speaker does have the /ʌ-ʊ/ opposition, he sometimes uses dental plosives instead of alveolar stops, he uses /h/ sound in all environments and uses processes such as Glide Cluster Reduction. The presence of these features will be justified by suggesting that it is something that has to do with identity and contact. Features not present in their speech include FOOT-GOOSE and TRAP-PALM distinctions for the Northern Irish English speaker as well as intervocalic preglottalisation and Schwa Absorption and Elision of medial /ð/ among other features. For the Southern Irish English speaker, there is no /aɪ-ɔɪ/ diphthongs distinction, he does not make use of the /ʌʊ/ diphthong for MOUTH words, he does not make use of neither Schwa Epenthesis nor Yod Dropping processes. The absence of these features will be interpreted as a standardarization process. Moreover, the Southern Irish English speaker ascribes much more to his variety than does the Northern Irish English speaker to his own.

The essay has been divided into two different parts. Part I will include first a description of the synchronic and diachronic study of languages. Then, a historical account of the emergence of the accents and dialects in Ireland will follow. Finally, a synchronic description of Irish English where both Northern Irish English's and Southern Irish English's vowels, consonants and processes will be described. Part II will include firstly details of the methodology used for recording the speech sample, information about the participants, a phonological analysis of the sample, presenting first the speaker of the North and next the speaker from the South, as well as the discussion and conclusions.

2. PART I

In this first part, a synchrony-diachrony dichotomy of the language will be described (2.1). Afterwards, I will suggest why this is important for phonology and the study of the language in such respects. Then, a historical overview of how all the dialects and languages have developed in Ireland will follow (2.2). Finally, a broad synchronic description of current Northern Irish English (2.3) and Southern Irish English (2.4) will be provided.

2.1 The Synchronic/Diachronic study of languages

Nowadays, linguists may be interested in studying languages either synchronically or diachronically. The former has to do with the variations of language systems' rules in space. The latter, in contrast, has to do with the facts that alter a language along time. Most of the language studies carried out by German scholars in Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth century were diachronic. However, by 1916, Ferdinand de Saussure stated that there were two kinds of language study: a synchronic orientation and a diachronic one. (Herteg, 2008) According to de Saussure, the two kinds of study were so different that they must be distinguished and separated in the study. He put forth that, on the one hand, a systemic synchronic description of a living or a dead language can, and shall, be carried out without historical references. On the other hand, it was expressed that a diachronic description required at least two synchronic descriptions from different times of a given language. That is to say, what had been suggested was that synchrony could not be influenced by diachrony. Pure synchrony is required for the best possible description of a language at some point in

time. On the contrary, for a diachronic description of a language to be good enough at least two good synchronic descriptions are needed.

At the beginning of the 1920's the Prague school made new suggestions for describing vowels and consonants supporting the ideas of de Saussure (Hammarstrom, 2012). These ideas were mainly about the fact that you could study a language at a given point in time without having to analyse its evolution. Nevertheless, the historical linguists did not see the value of these new ideas, a reason why they would be severely criticised later on. In contrast, they maintained that description had to be explained diachronically and not based on contemporary synchronic studies of living languages.

We could say that de Saussure and the early Prague school (1920s and 1930s) started a new era in European linguistics. Based on their contributions, nowadays, linguists can either describe synchronically or diachronically the different aspects of a language, dead or alive. If the linguist chooses to make a synchronic description, he would choose to describe any aspect of a language in a given point in history using snapshots of language. If, in opposition, he chooses to describe a language diachronically, he would have to pay attention to a series of events that cause a change in a given aspect of a language. This is an important issue for the linguistic study in many different ways. First, it is important because, for being aware of how a language has evolved during a certain amount of time, correct synchronic descriptions of it are needed. Second, it is also important because as a consequence of observing facts that lead to a change in a language we can see that languages are externally influenced. This causes us to see language as something dynamic and undergoing continuous change. Finally, the diachronic description of a language gives us an insight for a better understanding of the present state of a language. The present is shaped by what happened in the past.

In the present essay, a synchronic description of Irish English will be provided. This description should serve to identify whether speakers of this variety follow the phonological traits that characterized each variety under analysis.

2.2 A historical overview of dialects and languages in Ireland

The English language was first introduced by the settlers who arrived to Ireland in the late 12th century. Before this first settlement, Irish was the only language spoken
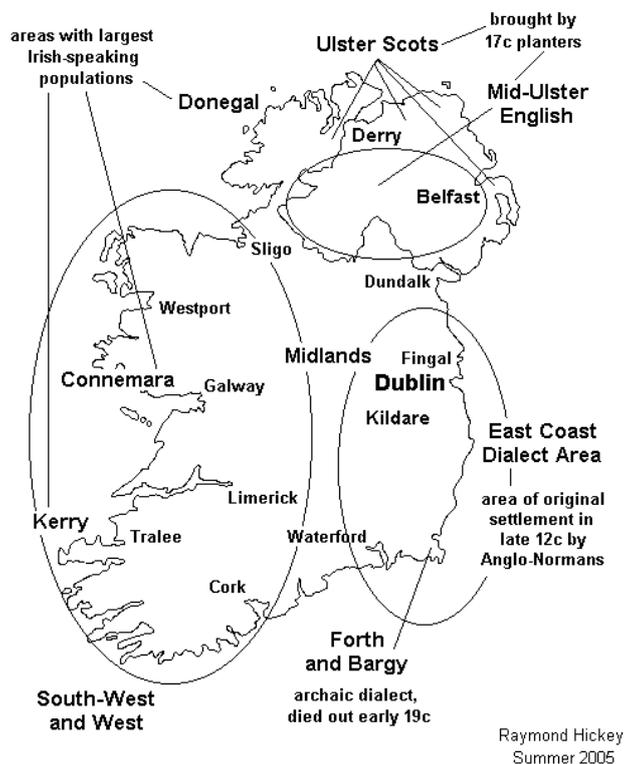
in Ireland. The group formed by these first settlers was actually quite heterogeneous. Among them were the Anglo-Normans (the military leaders) and the English (largely artisans and trades people) who settled in the towns of the east coast. There may well have been a few Welsh and Flemings among these (Hickey, 2006). As stated above, Ireland was back then a country where Irish was spoken. As a consequence of these settlers arriving to the island a language shift occurred, this being complete by the Late Modern Period (1700-1900).

Later, the introduction of Scots dialect in the northern part of the island in the early 17th century caused a division between Ulster, the most northerly province, and the rest of the country to the south (Wells, 1982). The Scots dialect was brought to Northern Ireland, particularly to Ulster, during the early 17th century. It was a result of the Settlements of Hamilton and Montgomery and the Ulster Plantation that happened at the time, as large numbers of Scots people arrived from Scotland. This dialect is frequently considered to be an ancient dialect of Standard English of England (Montgomery, Gregg, 1997). This introduction of this dialect gave rise to what nowadays is called Ulster Scots, the variety referred to as such in the most northerly parts of Ireland.

As a result of these settlements, Irish started to lose its power little by little as more and more people started to learn English. During this period, it became common among the islanders to believe that the old language was a barrier for progress. As a consequence, people started to deprive themselves of their language and from the 17th century onwards, Irish was banned from public life (Hickey, 2007a). However, there were not censuses which gave data on speakers of Irish and English before 1851. This means that the picture one can draw of the decline of Irish is not accurate. The language shift then occurred in rural areas because they lacked education from the native Irish. Then, what one can assume from 17th and 18th centuries in rural Ireland is that there was functional bilingualism. Nevertheless, by the early 19th century, the importance of English for advancement in social life was being pointed out repeatedly by people such as the political leader Daniel O'Connell. According to Hickey (2007a), the fact that Irish people learned English in an unguided manner plays an important role in the nature of Irish English. Bliss (in Hickey, 2006: 4) puts forth that this fact is responsible for both "the common malapropisms and the unconventional word stress found in Irish English". This plays an important role in phonology because speakers who learn a language as adults tend to retain the pronunciation of their native language and have

difficulty with segments which are unknown to them. It was not until the late 19th century that Irish people realised that they had lost a great part of their culture and started to retrieve at least some of it.

The situation nowadays is the result of the many changes that happened during centuries and which made the language situation further complex. As shown in the map below, three main dialect areas seem to exist. The south of the country is divided into two main areas: the East Coast Dialect area and the South-West and West area. The former is the oldest one. The latter the latest to engage the language shift from Irish to English. In this area there are still areas such as Donegal, Connemara and Kerry where the language still survives. The north of the country consists of the counties of Ulster. This area, conditioned by the 17th century Scottish settlement, represents Ulster Scots speech. The variation spoken here differs considerably to that one from the rest of the south. Finally, there seems to be a part of Ireland, the Midlands, which does not belong to any of these separate groups and has characteristics of both the north and the south.

Map 1: The dialect situation in Ireland (Hickey, 2004)

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Map 1: The dialect situation in Ireland (Hickey, 2004)

Nowadays, English is the language spoken my most of the inhabitants of the island and Irish is taught in schools to children whose first language is English. Nonetheless, the distinction between north and south varieties is that to such an extent that it is worth noting the differences between the speech of someone from the north and that from someone from somewhere in the south.

2.3. Synchronic description of Irish English

In this section, I will give an insight into the phonological characteristics of Irish English. Irish English is often used to design the English spoken in the south (Hickey, 2007a). Here, however, the term will be used to refer to the speech of the whole island of Ireland. Different scholars use different terms for determining the speech from the north and that from the south. In the north of the country the terms are used to reflect historical origins e.g. Ulster Scots which refers to the English stemming from the initial Lowland Scots settlers. Mid-Ulster English is used for geographically central varieties which are largely of northern English provenance. There is also what is called Contact English which is found occasionally to refer globally to varieties spoken in areas where Irish is also spoken (Hickey, 2007a). To avoid confusions, in the present work I will refer to the variety of the north as Northern Irish English. In general, three main terms are to be found for English in the south of Ireland: Anglo-Irish, Hiberno-English or Irish English. I will use Southern Irish English.

2.3.1 Synchronic description of current Northern Irish English

The historical province of Ulster is rather larger than the present Northern Ireland (nowadays UK). The counties of Donegal, Monaghan and Cavan which now belong to the Republic of Ireland were once part of Ulster. This seems to be the reason why people living in these counties have a much more similar speech to Northern Ireland (UK) than to counties to the south of Ireland.

The speech of Ulster varies through this area giving rise to different categories of English. Among these categories three main speeches are distinguished: Ulster Scots, Mid Ulster English and South Ulster English. Here, the features that are more distinguishable from those found in Southern Irish English are the ones that will be presented. Bearing in mind one of the speakers analysed in the present essay is from

county Donegal, the information presented here will sometimes centre more on Ulster Scots, the type of speech someone from Donegal would have.

2.3.1.1. Vowel system

What makes Northern Irish English more distinct from other varieties of Irish English as well as from RP is the vowel system. The most typical system seems to be the following one:

ɪ	i		u
ɛ ʌ	e		o
(ɒ)	aɪ ɔɪ	a ɔ	au

Table 1. Vowel system (Wells, 1982)

Wells established a lexical set system that is referred to as the lexical incidence. This lexical incidence aimed to establish patterns of regional variation in the phonologies of English dialects. Thus, lexical items that share vocalic or consonantal segments of these headwords could then be grouped into the same sets. The lexical incidence of the vowels of Northern Irish English given by Wells is as follows:

KIT	ɪ	FLEECE	i	NEAR	ɪr
DRESS	ɛ	FACE	e	SQUARE	ɛr
TRAP	a	PALM	a	START	ar
LOT	ɒ,ɔ	THOUGHT	ɔ	NORTH	ɔr
STRUT	ʌ	GOAT	o	FORCE	or
FOOT	u	GOOSE	u	CURE	ur
BATH	a	PRICE	aɪ	happY	e,ɪ
CLOTH	ɔ	CHOICE	ɔɪ	lettER	ər= ɚ
NURSE	ʌr	MOUTH	au	commA	ə

Table 2. Lexical incidence of Northern Irish English (Wells, 1982)

It is worth noting that, as table 2 shows, in Northern Irish English the *r* in spelling is always pronounced even after a vowel. The table above shows that the vowels in the lexical sets with the /r/ sound are neither diphthongs nor long vowels. The contrast between RP here is clear as the NEAR, SQUARE and CURE vowels would have the centring diphthongs /ɪə/, /eə/ and /ʊə/ respectively. START, NORTH and FORCE vowels would be long causing the disappearance of the /r/ sound in realisation.

According to Wells (1982) the phonetic qualities of the vowels in Ulster do not only vary regionally, socially but also allophonically. Due to space constraints, as well as being interested mainly in the variety of speech that someone from Donegal would use, I will only outline the features of Ulster Scots speech. Following the full sets proposed by Wells (1982) as in Table 2, there are a few things worth commenting. Firstly, that the vowel in FACE would generally sound like an [e]. Secondly, that FOOT/GOOSE vowels have a more centralised realizations amongst the middle-class (Corrigan, 2007). Being this a general characteristic of Ulster, high back vowels are also fronted and therefore realised as [ʉ]. It usually has rather little lip rounding and it must sound almost like [ɨ] in quality (Wells, 1982). In short environments, that is, in those environments in which the vowel is short it is less than fully close and central, e.g. *doom* [dʉm]. In long environments –environments in which the vowel is long- it is close and central or centralized-front: *who* [hʉː]. This quality is exactly the same one we have in the diphthong /aʉ/ which is realised as either [æʉ] or [əʉ].

Thirtly, considering that /ɪ/ and /ʌ/ are always short, Corrigan (2010) suggests that in Ulster Scots the KIT vowel would sound as something closer to [ӓ]. The usual realization of /ɪ/ is [ɨ], thus opener and more centralised than in the standard accents e.g. *sit* [sɨt]. Unstressed /ɪ/ may be qualitatively like the stressed vowel or –if followed by a velar or palato-alveolar- less open and centralised as in physics [ˈfɪsɪks]. Words with the same lexical incidence as the word *happy* may be pronounced different to RP and Southern Irish English. The *happY* vowel in the Scots areas may be /e/ as [ˈhape]. (Wells 1982) The quality of /ʌ/ varies regionally but in the Scotch-Irish area we typically find [ʌ]. Fourthly, the DRESS vowel is typically [ɛ] but is also realised as [a-æ]. In the Scotch-Irish areas (and Belfast) /ɛ/ and /a/ are usually neutralised in most environments involving an adjacent velar. The result of this neutralisation is phonetically like /ɛ/, e.g. beg=bag [bɛː].

Also, the TRAP/BATH/PALM vowels are usually realised as [æ] before /p, t/ and otherwise with [a]. The LOT/THOUGHT/CLOTH vowels tend to be [ɔ]. Another thing worth mentioning is that Northern Irish English, in general, shares a monophthongal pronunciation of the GOAT vowel with the Scots which can vary from [oː] *foal,* to [eː] *home,* or [ɔː] *snow* (examples from Corrigan, 2010: 34).

2.3.1.1.1. Vowel Length

The length of a vowel in this part of the country varies. In South Ulster English this is determined lexically, elsewhere it is determined by phonetic context (McColl Millar 2007). Thus, in Northern Irish English, when a vowel occurs morpheme finally, it is long. Also, when vowels are followed by /r, v, ð, z, ʒ/. And so are the ones which occur before an inflectional suffix. (Corrigan, 2010) In Ulster, as in Scotland with which shares this characteristic, there has been a near complete loss of phonemic vowel-length distinctions. The fact that they share this characteristic could be due to Scots' influence over Ulster. An example of this is the merger of /u/ in FOOT and GOOSE vowels, which were historically short and long respectively (Wells, 1982). It seems also possible in this variety to pronounce FOOT words with /ʌ/. Other merging processes in this variety would be that of front open rounded /a/ for TRAP and PALM (which in RP are /æ/ and /ɑ:/ respectively) words and that for an open-mid back unrounded /ɔ/ of LOT and THOUGHT (RP: /ɒ/ and /ɔ:/ respectively) as Table 2 shows.

As far as phonetic length of vowels in monosyllables is concerned, Northern Irish English has the following distribution (Wells, 1982). The vowels in this section are transcribed narrowing only in respect of length, not in respect of quality.

1. All vowels are short before a following /p, t, tʃ, k/: *feet* [fɪt], *boot* [bʉt], *mate* [met], *boat* [bot], *bit* [bɪt], *cut* [kʌt], *set* [sɛt], *pat* [pat], *pot* [pɔt]/[pɒt].

2. All vowels except /ɪ/ and /ʌ/ are long before a following final /v, ð, z, r/ or #: *grieve* [gri:v], *lose* [lʉ:z], *save* [se:v], *loathe* [lo:ð], *fair* [fɛ:r], *have=halve* [ha:v], *cause* [kɔ:z].

3. Long allophones of /e, ɛ, a, ɔ/ are used in any monosyllable closed by a consonant other than /p, t, tʃ, k/. This extra development is referred to as Ulster Lenghtening: *raid* [red], *bed* [bɛ:d], *pad* [pa:d], *pod*, [pɔ:d]. In the case of /e/ the result is a restoration of a historically long vowel.

It should also be said that for the purpose of determining vowel length, sonorants before the final consonant are ignored: e.g. *lamp* has short [a] like *lap* and *belt* has short [ɛ] like *bet* (Wells, 1982).

As far as polysyllabic words are concerned, vowels in those words are most commonly short. As a result, one can find *mess* [mɛːs] but *message* [ˈmɛsɪdʒ]. In many cases, however, internal morpheme boundaries condition the appearance of long vowels in polysyllable words. According to descriptions given above, the word *can* has a long vowel [kaːn] and this vowel still holds when added the *-ing* form to result in *canning* [ˈkaːnɪŋ] which is morphologically [kaːn#ɪŋ]. Nonetheless, the surname *Canning* being morphologically simple, has a short vowel: [ˈkanɪŋ]. Wells proposed that minimal pairs arose due to this fact as in *tanner* (who tans) [taːnər] vs. *tanner* ('sixpence', 'shoemaker')[ˈtanər].

As stated above, oppositions such as those found in other accents in TRAP vs. PALM or TRAP vs. BATH are not present in monosyllables throughout Ulster. This fact, coupled with the allophonic length rules, results in unpredicted pronunciations having RP as a reference e.g. the strong form of *can* having a long vowel [kaːn] while *can't* has a short one [kant] (RP: /kæn, kɑːnt/) (Wells 1982). RP, which stands for Received Pronunciation, is a Standard Variety of English found in England

2.3.1.1.2. Diphthongs

The MOUTH words have a diphthong of the [əʉ] type in the local accents of both areas of speech. The PRICE words are distributed into two distinct phonemic categories in the Scotch Irish area: [əi(ː)] or [a(ː)e]. The phonetic environment is what conditions the use of one or the other: [əi] before voiceless consonants, [ae] before vowels. But in many environments both are possible. Both PRICE and MOUTH vowels are usually realized as monophthongs in the environment of a following /r/ e.g. *power* [ˈpɑːəɹ]. In many rural areas the NURSE Merger[1] did not happen. As a consequence, the rural areas still preserve /ɛr/ in words with spelling *er* in some with *ear* or *ir*, and /ʌr/ is used with those with *ur* and some in *ir* spelling. Moreover, contrary to RP, the opposition between NORTH words with /ɔr/ and FORCE words with /or/ seems to have been preserved in Ulster (except in Belfast).

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[1] The NURSE Merger is a process that occurred in the early 17th century when short vowels /ɛ/, /ɪ/ and /ʌ/ were centralised to /ə/ before /r/.

2.3.1.2. Consonants

In this section, I will give an account on the consonants which have different realisations either from the Southern Irish English or from RP.

2.3.1.2.1. /θ/ and /ð/ & /t/ and /d/

/θ/ and /ð/ are always realised as dental fricatives [θ] and [ð] ([θɪŋk] for *think* and [bɹiːð] for *breathe)*, which contrasts with some alternative realisations of these two sounds in Southern Irish English, as will be explained in section 2.3.2.2.1.

In the north, however, dental plosives do exist as allophones of alveolar plosives /t/ and /d/. They are found in two environments: adjacent to /θ, ð/ as in *width* [wɪd̪θ] and to some extent in the vicinity of /r/ as in *tree* [t̪riː] or *ladder* [ˈlad̪ɚ][2]. This latter use in this environment is something characteristic of rural pronunciations in Ulster. It is typical in County Donegal probably due to contact with Irish (Hickey, 2007b). In Belfast, for instance, it is only the older speakers who use dental plosives conditioned by a neighbouring /r/. This means that where rural speakers would use [t̪] in words such as *butter* or *water,* people from Belfast prefer an alveolar tap [ɾ]. Examples from Adams (1948 in Wells, 1982) include [pʉɾˈɒːn] *put on* and [ˈhwɒɾɪdeˈdʉː] *what did he do*? Nonetheless, dental plosives may be used by people from Belfast when the conditioning /r/ is in the same morpheme. This gives rise to minimal pairs as in *flatter* (verb) and *flatter* (more flat) where the former is pronounced with [t̪] and the latter with [t]. Dentalisation of alveolar stops before /r/ is frequently attributed to Catholic speakers (Kirk, 1998 in Hickey, 2007b).

Preglottalisation of intervocalic /p/ and /d/ is common in Ulster. According to Milroy (in Wells, 1982), Londonderry city has this for both consonants, but Belfast commonly only for /p/. Words such as *pepper* or *butter* would exhibit [ʔ]. Straight intervocalic T Glottaling [ʔ] is associated with County Antrim, where it alternates with [ʔt]. The uses of it before syllabic [n̩], and sometimes before syllabic [l̩], are more widespread. It is common to hear forms such as [bʌʔn̩] *button* and [ˈlaʔn̩] *Latin* and

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[2] The diacritic ˛ is used under plosives to indicate that their realisation is this particular case is dental.

not uncommon to hear things such as [bɑʔl̩] *bottle* which is alternatively pronounced as ['bɑt̬l̩[^3]].

2.3.1.2.2. /k/ and /g/

/k/ and /g/ are nowadays palatalised throughout Ulster. It usually happens word-initially before a front or open vowel. In Belfast speech it is most noticeable in pronunciations such as *cab, can* or *car* [cɑːɹ]. This seems to be untypical of the firmly Scots areas. It is variable elsewhere in respect of the details of the conditioning environment. It has been claimed that in one Donegal locality the pair *back* and *baulk* can be distinguished not by their vowels but by their final consonants, as [baːc] vs. [baːk].

2.3.1.2.3. /ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/

The realizations of these sounds in Northern Irish English have a stronger palatal component than their counterparts in England. These consonants tend to be [ɕ, ʑ, tɕ, dʑ]. This may be due to the influence of Irish Gaelic: [ɕ] being the phonetic quality of the 'slender' /s,/ of Ulster Irish. Vowels in Irish are divided into slender and broad. Consonants are slender or broad depending on the adjacent vowel. If the vowel is slender, the consonant will also be slender and if the vowel is broad the consonant will also be broad. In the Scots-Irish area, palatalized [n,] and [l,] are also encountered being these generally realizations of /nj, lj/. Examples of these by Wells are ['jʉn,ən] *union* [mɫ,ən] *million.* He notes also, ['n,eːɹle] *nearly* and [gəˈl,oːɹ] *galore.*

2.3.1.2.4. NG Coalescence

The extension of NG Coalescence to all environments yields pronunciations such as [ˈfɪŋɚ] *finger* which are stigmatized and now becoming rarer in the Belfast working-class accent. Here, the pronunciation of *language* with [-ŋw-] is usual. The alveolarisation of velar nasals is less defamed in the North than it is in the South. It is present in verbs with final /-ɪŋ/ and nouns with similar endings, e.g. *walking* [ˈwɒːkn̩]. (Hickey, 2007b)

[^3]: The diacritic ˬ means that the consonant affected by it has become voiced as a consequence of a voiced consonant being near it.

2.3.1.2.5. Liquids

/r/ is used in initial position as a retroflex approximant [ɻ]. Post-vocalically, it can either be an alveolar approximant [ɹ] or a retroflex approximant [ɻ] (Corrigan, 2010:45). Post-consonantally, it may be dentalised when the consonant preceding is dental e.g. *three* [θr̪iː] (Hickey, 2007:115). Although a trill [r] is often used in rural Ulster a flap [ɾ] is also heard, particularly after /t/, as in *train* or *string* [st̪ɾ-] (Wells, 1982).

In Ulster, and the rest of Ireland, /l/ is typically clear in all environments. In Belfast and some other country areas to the north and west, nonetheless, dark [ɫ] is frequently used. The environment in which this occurs is in intervocalic and final positions after central vowels and centring diphthongs as *fill* and *fail.* Dark [ɫ] is also common initially before the back variants of /a/ as in *lad*. It is worth noting that polite speakers tend to correct vowel quality and [ɫ] together. This means that words such as *pull* vary between a broader form /pʌɫ/ and a less broad /pʉl/. (Wells, 1982) McCafferty (2007) indicates that the use of [ɫ] is a feature of Catholics, as Protestants favour the realisation [l].

2.3.1.2.6. Glide Cluster Reduction

The retention of /w, ʍ/ distinction is common in certain regional varieties of Northern Irish English (Harris, 1984). In initial position, such as in the word *where*, the /h/ sound remains as part of the sound /hw/, being pronounced [ʍ] in the more rural areas. Glide Cluster Reduction, however, happened in Belfast and some other urban parts where nowadays /w/ is common and frequently used.

2.3.1.3. Processes

Among the typical processes in Ulster we can find Elision of initial or medial /ð/. This seems to be an optional process. Wells (1982) states that *mother* could either be pronounced as [ˈmʌðɚ] or [ˈmɔ̈ɚ][4]. The deletion of /ð/ seems necessary to entail compensatory lengthening of the vowel. Gender seems to play an important role in this

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[4] The diacritic ¨ means that the vowel is centralised.

usage. Milroy's (1976 in Wells, 1982) study showed that it is much more common in men than in women.

In contrast to what happens in RP, weakening of vowels in unstressed syllables is restricted in Northern Irish English. A word such as *postman* keeps a strong vowel in its second syllable, thus [ˈpostmɑˑn]. Names such as Birmingham or Cunningham have /-ham/ and Oxford is not unstressed so /-ford/.

Other phenomena such as epenthesis (a sound which is not in a word or an utterance is inserted) are also common in Ulster. Vowel epenthesis is much more common than consonant epenthesis (although this occurs as well). 'In most cases, the function of vowel epenthesis is to repair an input that does not meet a language's structural requirements.' (Hall in Oostendorp, 2011: 1576) Schwa Epenthesis is somehow found but restricted to popular speech. This process consists of inserting a schwa in the environment of a preceding plosive and a following liquid or a nasal as in *petrol* [ˈpɛ̝təɹəl] or when it is preceded and followed by a consonant, where each of which is a liquid or a nasal as in *film* [ˈfɪləm].

2.3.2. Synchronic description of current Southern Irish English

In the south of the country, as well as in the North, there are also different varieties cohabiting one with another. Dublin, being the capital of the country, and also receiving many people from England because of its nearness and sharing language, has a different speech which influences the surrounding accents. Little by little, new features which arise in Dublin are becoming more common in the areas around it. In this essay, supraregional Southern Irish English is described. The term supraregional is used when people tend to use a more standardised variety so that they are not phonetically related with a specific locality. In this case, it is Dublin speech the one they take as a reference, as this is, according to Hickey (2007b), the one that will spread to the whole south in the future.

2.3.2.1. Vowel system

The vowel system of Southern Irish English is considerably different to RP. In fact, it has usually been noted by different scholars that it resembles much more the vowel system of Early Modern English, as many processes did not occur as it happened

in British English from which RP evolved. It also has striking differences with the one we find in Northern Irish English. According to Wells, the lexical incidence of the vowel system in the South varies considerably from the one from the north. In Table 3, the sets that differ in pronunciation from Northern Irish English have been underlined.

KIT	ɪ	FLEECE	i:[5]	NEAR	i:r
DRESS	ɛ	FACE	e:	SQUARE	e:r
TRAP	æ	PALM	a:	START	a:r
LOT	ɒ	THOUGHT	ɔ:	NORTH	ɔ:r
STRUT	ʌ	GOAT	o:	FORCE	o:r
FOOT	ʊ	GOOSE	u:	CURE	u:r
BATH	æ, a:	PRICE	aɪ	happY	i:
CLOTH	ɒ, ɔ:	CHOICE	ɔɪ	lettER	ər
NURSE	ʌr, ɜr	MOUTH	aʊ	commA	ə

Table 3. Lexical incidence of Southern Irish English. (Wells, 1982)

The pairs of oppositions /æ-a:/ and /ɒ-ɔ:/ seem problematic because they appear in some pairs of words but not in all of them. Some of the pairs vary freely from one speaker to another (Bertz in Wells, 1982). This implies that the distinction between /æ/ and /a/ is not always clear. This is due to the fact that there is a tendency to retract /æ/ and lengthen it somewhat, especially before voiced consonants, e.g. *man* [mæːn] ~ [maːn]. Some conservative speakers may also have [æ] for [ɛ] in *many* and *any*. (Wells, 1982)

As far as /ɒ/ is concerned, we can say that the low back vowel is typical of this variety. The /ʌ/ sound seems to be further back than the one found in RP. This is why it has been transcribed as [Ä]. The degree of rounding for this vowel made some Irish scholars to transcribed it as [ö] making it different to what it is found in other accents. Wells (1982) indicates that an RP [ʌ] is also found in high-status speech. A problem arises regarding the opposition with /ʊ/. Bertz (in Wells, 1982) states that the opposition is neutralized in most cases to /ʊ/ in popular varieties. Wells' impression of Irish accents as a whole is that most speakers have at least a potential /ʌ-ʊ/ opposition.

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[5] The FLEECE MERGER has not been carried out through whole Ireland. As a result, pronunciations such as *steel* /steːl/ occurred sporadically.

Vowel reduction operates in this variety. As a result, schwa can be found as a pretonic short vowel, e.g. *about* [əˈbaʊt]; it is rhotacised before /r/, e.g. *butter* [bʌt̬ə˞] and occurs in unstressed *–ed, naked* [ˈneːkəd]. In weak syllables the merger of KIT and schwa is also common. The suffix *–ing* is popularly realized as /ən/. Also, the first syllables of words such as *prefer, tremendous, peculiar, secure, hilarious, specific* all have [ə]. This is different to RP where there would use [ɪ]. Contrary to this, Irish English exhibits /oː/ where RP weakens first syllables as in *opinion* and *official.* In addition*,* Southern Irish English exhibits the pronunciation of words with weak forms not used in RP as in *when* /hwən/, *I* /æ/, *what* /hwət/, *sure* /ʃər/. The *my* [mi] weak form extends much more further up the social scale than in England. So does the weakening of /juː/ and likewise with Yod Dropping.

Nouns and adjectives like *window* or *yellow* have popular variants with /ə/ in the final syllable alongside the formal or middle-class /oː/ form. In contrast, verbs with this form such as *follow* or *swallow* have popular variants with /iː/ e.g. /ˈfɑliː/ and /swɒliː/. Bliss (in Wells, 1982) suggests that this is because verbs need to be able to add *–ing* and the insertion of /iː/ does not involve the awkwardness of two /ə/ in a row, e.g. *following* [ˈfɑliən]/ *[ˈfɑləən].

Finally, as presented by Wells (1982), HAPPY –tensing seems to appear in final open position, e.g. pity [pɪ̥ti] (example in Hickey, 2007b: 317) and it does not vary in quality as in the north. The final vowel in happY /iː/, phonetically [i] or [ɪ̥]. Speakers susceptible to RP use an opener [ɪ]. According to Henry (1958 in Wells, 1982), rural dialect forms include [əi] and [ə] in Connacht.

2.3.2.1.1. Vowel length

In Southern Irish English, vowel length is always distinctive. Long vowels seem to appear before /r/. As Irish English is rhotic there are no diphthongs corresponding to RP /ɪə, ɛə, ʊə/. In these cases, short vowels merge with /r/ to yield a rhotacised vowel, e.g. [ɚː] (Hickey, 2007b). As opposed to Northern Irish English, there are several things worth mentioning regarding vowel quality in Southern Irish English. Well's NORTH/FORCE distinction is one of them as it applies to many speakers. According to this distinction, words such as *mourning* and *mourning* would not be homophonous.

Hickey (2007b) suggests that the majority of words with /oː/ are loanwords from French taken in the Middle English period. Also, that /oː/ would occur preferable before /-rt, -rs, -r/ whereas /ɒː/ would be preferable in pre-nasal position, e.g. before /-rn/.

2.3.2.1.2. Diphthongs

We find these three diphthongs in Southern Irish English: /aɪ, aʊ, ɒɪ/. The onset vowels of these three diphthongs have a common realization as the same short vowels they represent in supraregional varieties, that is, [a] for /aɪ/ and /aʊ/ diphthongs and [ɒ] for the diphthong /ɒɪ/.

The opposition /aɪ/ vs. /ɔɪ/ is not established in all speakers of Southern Irish English. It is now mainly a rural or southern characteristic. As a result of Irish not having a diphthong resembling [ɔɪ], the 17th century alternative pronunciation with the vowel of PRICE was adopted in Southern Irish English, and now survives as an archaism. Speakers who have an established opposition between these two use /ɔɪ/ in the words *violent, violent, violin*, where the spelling *io* seems to be the reason why this happens.

The MOUTH vowel also has a fair range of phonetic variation but [ʌʊ] seems to be the commonest. There is an Irish oddity where /aʊ/ rather than /oː/ occurs before /-ld/.

2.3.2.2. Consonants
2.3.2.2.1. Alveolar and dental stops

The opposition between /t/ vs. /θ/ and /d/ vs. /ð/ exists in Southern Irish English, at least potentially (Wells, 1982). Hickey (2007a) suggests that this usage is a result of language contact with Irish. /t/ and /d/ are realised as apico-alveolar fricatives, e.g. *but* [bʌt̞] or *wood* [wʊd̞] except before a stressed vowel, word-initially: *tea* [tiː], word-medially: *titanic* [taɪˈtænɪk] or before or after a non vocalic segment: *lightening* [laɪtnɪŋ], where they are realized as stops.

2.3.2.2.2. Labio-velars

There seems to exist a distinction between voiced [w] and voiceless [ʍ] labio-velar glides in conservative Southern Irish English. The voiceless glide seems to be present in all instances where there is *wh-* in the orthography.

2.3.2.2.3. Liquids

The /r/ sound appears in Irish English both syllable-initially and syllable-finally as well as word-medially. In contrast to RP, there is no 'linking-r' and no 'intrusive-r'. The main realisations of it are the following described by Hickey (2007b):

1. Velarised alveolar continuant: [ɹˠ] is found in conservative mainstream varieties of the South, e.g. *core* [koːɹˠ].
2. Uvular /r/: [ʁ] is also found in local varieties of English in some places of Leinster. However, it is recessive and now only found in syllable-final position.
3. Retroflex /r/: this realisation [ɻ] arose in Dublin English but it has already spread over the south. It is expected to become the dominant realisation of /r/ in the south.

The /l/ sound has remained an alveolar in all syllable positions as it was traditionally. Exceptionally, Southern Irish English speakers tend to use the velarised [ɫ] in environments in which they would use it while talking in Irish, e.g. word-initially before /aɪ/ as in *like* [ɫaɪk]. Nevertheless, due to the spread of a recent usage of a velarised [ɫ] in syllable final position in Dublin English, this realisation has become more common in the speeches of the south, especially in females (Hickey 2007b).

2.3.2.2.4. /h/

The /h/ sound is present in all environments in Southern Irish English. The so common phenomenon of H-Dropping in urban English in Britain is not present in Ireland, neither in the north nor in the south. Moreover, due to Irish influence, the /h/sound appears in word-medially and word-finally, above all in names of Irish origins, e.g. *MacGrath* [məˈgraːh].

2.3.2.3.Processes

Schwa Absorption is an optional rule in this variety. It consists on eliminating a schwa /ə/ in the context in which the schwa is preceded by a vowel and followed either by a liquid or a nasal. This process happens more often in this variety than in RP due to the fact that where in RP we find the more conservative/ɪ/, in Irish we find more often/ə/. The process, however, tends to be avoided in the most educated accents. Yod Dropping is also possible, as in many dialects of English, under certain conditions: =(i) when /j/ is not in absolute initial position, (ii) when the segment before /j/ is regularly a sonorant, e.g. /n/ or /l/ and (iii) when the sonorant is alveolar or when the syllable to which the onset in question belongs is stressed.

3.PART II

In this second part, I will be analysing the speech of two Irish people, one representative of Northern Irish English and one representative of Southern Irish English. First, I will briefly explain the methodology used for recording the speech samples. Later, I will present an analysis by looking into those phonological traits which each of the participants exhibit and discuss to what degree they ascribe to the traits described in Part I.

3.1.Methodology

For the data collection, two Irish people were selected. For a more informal production of language, I decided to make a recording of two participants who knew each other in an interview-like setting, where someone asked them questions and they both answered casually. Unfortunately, the author of the present essay was not present at the recording time but was able to seek the help of someone who agreed to play the role of the interviewer[6]. The interview was carried out in the participants' house in England. The interviewer asked them a few questions so that the participants could follow a line of conversation in a setting in which they both felt comfortable so that the recording sounded as informal and relaxed as possible. The participants were not informed that they were being linguistically observed.

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[6] Many thanks to this person, who wishes to remain anonymous, for playing this role as well as the two participants for allowing me to record them.

3.2. Participants

The first one speaking is John, who is from Donegal and whose speech, hence, would be representative of Northern Irish English. John lived in Donegal until he was 21 when he left for London seeking a better life. He is now twenty seven years old. He speaks some Irish but he does not consider himself fluent in the language. He also has vague knowledge of German and understands a bit of Spanish. The second speaker is Paul, who is from county Carlow, hence, representative of Southern Irish English. He is twenty six years old. He does not speak any other languages. They both are middle-class working men living together in England, where they moved due to working conditions. The recording was carried out at their home in Bishop's Stortford in the east part of the county of Hertforshire in England.

3.3. Phonological analysis

This section will discuss the features present or absent in their speech. Together with the interpretation of the data that this transcription provides, possible justifications will be suggested. First, John's speech will be analysed and discussed in section (3.2.1) and then Paul's in section (3.2.2). Finally, a common feature will be presented and suggested as being features that both varieties have as a result of being part of the same country after all. An eight-minute long recording was obtained and phonetically (see Appendix 1) and orthographically transcribed (see Appendix 2). There are excerpts that have not been transcribed as a result of not understanding what the speaker was saying either because it was inaudible or because the transcriber could not understand them. These bits have been indicated as (…). Notice that the interviewer's words have not been phonetically transcribed.

3.3.1. Northern Irish English: John's speech
3.3.1.1. Vowels

John's speech clearly follows the vowel length rules of Northern Irish English. He makes use of long vowels before /r/ as in (J1: *north* [nɔːɹθ], *work* [wɔːɹk]; J6: *four* [foːɹ]; J17: *all sorts* [ɔːlʃɔːɹʃ]; J23: *normal* [nɔːɹməl]; J29: *hard* [haːɹd]; J30: *terms* [tɜːɹmz], *Northern* [nɔːɹθən], *Carlow* [kaːɹləʊ]; J31: *farmer* [faːɹməɹ], *your* [jɔːɹ]), before /v/ as in (J1: *have* [haːv], *over* [ɔːvəɹ]; J5: *even though* [iːvənðəʊ]; J6: *even* [iːvən]; J30: *live* [liːv]), before /ð/ as in (J2: *high smiths* [haɪsmiːðz]; J4: *you that*

[jʉː ðat]; J27: *see the* [siː ðə]) and also before /z/ (J18: *chorizo* [tʃɒɟiːzo]; J18: *he is* [hiːz]). In monosyllables, he uses long vowels before a following final /v/ as in (J1: *have* [haːv]. He also follows his dialect when he uses long /ɔ/ when closed by a consonant other than /p, t, tʃ, k/ as in (J2: *over* [ɔːvəɟ]) . However, his vowels are long before a following /p, t, tʃ, k/ as in (J3: *each* [iːtʃ]). He distinguishes FOOT and GOOSE vowels by length as in (J30: *good* [gʊd] and J35: *food* [fʉːd]) as well as TRAP and PALM vowels as (J1: *have* [haːv], *bad* [bad]) not being representative of his dialect. As far as vowel quality is concerned, he makes use of a more centralised vowel in FOOT/GOOSE words (J4: *through* [θɹ̥ʉː]; J5: *would* [wʊd]; J15: *food* [fʉːd]) and does not credit his accent when it comes to /ɪ/ as he does not make all of them short (J2: *recently* [ɟiːsənliː]; J3: *each* [iːtʃ]). He does not make use of /e/ for happY words (J4: *many* [manɪ]; J17: *actually* [əkʃʊəli]) and the DRESS vowel does not seem to be realised as neither [ɛ] nor [a-æ] but as [e] as in (J5: *as well* [əswel]).

Diphthongs are not realised as Northern Irish English descriptions of them suggest. He uses [aɪ] without variation for all PRICE words as in (J1: *fire* [faɪəɟ]; J2: *five* [faɪv]; J16: *diet* [daɪət]). The NURSE Merger seems to apply to his speech as in (J5: *here* [hɪəɟ]; J6: *years* [jiːəɹz], *director* [dɪɹektər], *understand* [ʌndəɹstand]; J21: *equalizer* [iːkwəlaɪzəɹ]) but he retains some words with [e] as (J6: *after* [afteɹ]; J25: *well* [wel]).

3.3.1.2. Consonants

As far as consonants are concerned, John realises every dental fricative as such as in (J1: *north* [nɔːɹθ], *things* [θɪŋz]; J3: *other* [oðeɹ], *through* [θɹ̥ʉː]; J13: *that* [ðət]; J5: *their* [ðeɪɟ], *they* [ðeɪ], *even though* [iːvənðəʊ], *there* [ðer]; J14: *the* [ðə]). He also uses the typical characteristic of county Donegal of using a dental plosive in the vicinity of an /r/ as in (J19: *training* [t̪reɪnɪŋ]; J31: *tractor* [t̪ɟaktə]; J36: *travel* [t̪ɟavəl], *trying* [t̪ɟaɪŋ]). Although intervocalic preglotallisation is common in this variety it is not shown in John's speech as he uses /t/ as in (J1: *pretty* [pɹetɪ]). There is no palatal realisation of neither /k/ nor /g/ in John's speech even though it is quite widespread in this variety. The realisations of /ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/ do not seem to have a

stronger palatal component that the ones found in England. However, NG Coalescence seems to be present almost every time as in (J1: *things* [θɪŋz]; J10: *boxing* [bɒksɪŋ]; J19: *training* [t̪reɪnɪŋ]; J27: *jumping* [dʒʌmpɪŋ]; J36: *trying* [t̪ɻaɪŋ]). As far as liquids are concerned, John's speech does include the pronunciation of every single orthographic *r*. He realises retroflex approximants word initially as in (J2: *recently* [ɻiːsənliː]) and an alveolar approximant after vowels as in (J1: *north* [nɔːɹθ]). He also dentalises it when the preceding consonant is dental (J4: *through* [θr̪ʉː]). Regarding /l/, John uses the clear /l/ in all environments as it can be seen in (J1: Ireland [aɪɻlənd]; J2: *recently* [ɻiːsənliː], *flat* [flat]; J4: *football* [fʊtbəl], *people* [piːpəl], *Paul* [pɔl]; J11: *play* [pleɪ], *class* [klaːs]; J14: *completely* [kɒmpliːtli]; J20: *Unstoppable* [ʌnstɒpəbl]). Surprisingly, he seems to retain the /w, ʍ/ distinction as he uses [ʍ] as in (J5: *where* [ʍeɹ]). This suggests that he may not think that feature is stigmatised because otherwise he would have not use it.

3.2.1.3. Processes

A clear process present in John's speech would be Schwa Epenthesis. He clearly uses this process in (J18: *film* [fɪləm]). This is even more noticeable as it is the interviewer (remember she is not a native speaker) who first pronounces the word in what it is supposed to be an RP accent [fɪɫm]. The contrast between the two pronunciations makes it clearer that he inserts a schwa between /l/ and /m/ sounds: [fɪləm]. Schwa Absorption may occur in Irish accents and in John's case it does not. He chooses to pronounce a weak schwa in (J4: *football* [fʊtbəl], *people* [piːpəl]). Elision of medial /ð/ is not present in John's speech. He does not seem to follow the restriction of vowels in unstressed syllables of Northern Irish English as he weakens the unstressed vowels as in (J11: *tennis* [tenəs], J16: *Ireland* [aɪɻlənd], J23: *normal* [nɔːɹməl]).

3.3.2. Southern Irish English: Paul's speech
3.3.2.1.Vowels

Vowel length in Paul's speech is always distinctive. As long vowels appear all the time before /r/ as in (P1: *Carlow* [kaːɹləʊ], *work* [woːɹk]; P4: *hard* [haːɹd]). Nevertheless, he realises diphthongs /ɪə, ɛə, ʊə/ which are not representative of this variation of English as in (P1: *here* [hɪəɹ], *year* [jɪəɹ]; P2: *yeah* [jeə]; P7: *actually*

[əktʃʊəlɪ]; P9: *supposed* [sʊpəʊst]). Although it is difficult to determine some oppositions in Southern Irish English, Paul seems to use /a/ all the time (P1: I [aɪ]; P4: hard [haːɹd]). It also seems that he preserves the /ʌ-ʊ/opposition as in (P13: *cabbage* [kʌbɪtʃ]; P14: *Unstoppable* [ʌnstɒpəbl]; P17: *wouldn't* [wʊdn̩t]). Weakening of /juː/ is also present (P10: *you* [ju]; P11: *you* [ju]; P20: *you* [jə]) as well as HAPPY tensing (P3: *easy* [iːsɪ]; P6: *normally* [nɔːɹməlɪ]; P17: *any* [enɪ], P21: *really* [ɹi:lɪ]). Vowel reduction and the KIT and Schwa merger are not present in his speech.

As far as diphthongs are concerned, we see that two of the three diphthongs in this variety are present in Paul's speech as can be seen in (P1: *I'm* [aɪm]; P5: *Monday* [mɒndeɪ]). It is surprising that he does not seem to have the so common opposition of /aɪ/ and /ɔɪ/ diphthongs, making all PRICE words sound with /aɪ/. MOUTH vowels do not seem to be /ʌʊ/ as the description suggests and that is clear in (P1: *South* [saʊθ]).

3.3.2.2.Consonants

Paul makes use of dental plosives instead of the fricatives at least in one occasion (P1: *thousand and thirteen* [t̪auzənd ən t̪ɜːɹtɪŋ]) but it is not the case that he realises them all the time (P18: *thousand* [θausənd]). This, according to Wells (1982), may be a result of the speaker wishing to exhibit a more sophisticated speech or making a conscious effort at elegance. Although it seems unlikely that Paul may want to sound sophisticated to his friend in an informal chat, the fact that they know that they are being recorded may have provoked this.

Paul also seems to use alveolar stops before a stressed vowel word-initially (P1: *twenty* [twentɪ]; P3: *to* [tu]) and before or after a non vocalic segment as in (P1: *twenty* [twentɪ], *county* [kʌnti], *east* [iːst], *moved* [muːvd], *August* [ɔːgɒst], *just* [jəst]; P4: *find* [faɪnd]; P16: *kind* [kaɪnd]; P25: *worst* [wɔːɹst]) and does not seem to make use of apico-alveolar fricatives elsewhere as is seen in (P10: *good* [gʊd]; P25: *about* [əbaut]; P28: *would* [wʊd], *but* [bʌt]).   He follows his variety when realising /s, z, ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/ as these are realised as in RP English.

As far as liquids is concerned, Paul pronounces all *r*'s as retroflex [ɻ]. Paul's realisations of /l/ always seem to be clear. As he does not speak Irish, he does not have that influence and does not velarise it where Irish speakers would. The /h/ sound is present in all environments in Paul's sample, H-Dropping not appearing in his speech. Paul's sample does not show a distinction between voiced [w] and voiceless [ʍ] labio-velar glides and he just uses the voiceless glide to all *wh-* words.

3.3.2.3. Processes

Schwa Absorption is not found in Paul's speech but being this an optional rule, it is not surprising. We did not find instances of Glide Cluster Reduction, Schwa Ephenthesis or Yod Dropping in Paul's speech.

3.4. Discussion

In short, we found that both participants exhibit phonetic –phonological characteristics of the speech variety they are representative of; however, some other traits reviewed in Part I were not reflected in their speech.

Regarding vowels, John, representative of Northern Irish English, shows features such as vowel length rules mostly and the NURSE Merger for some words. As far as consonants are concerned, he does use dental fricatives and dental plosives when the environment is appropriate. He also uses NG Coalescence and realises liquids as expected. He does also have /w-ʍ/ distinction. As for processes, John uses Schwa Epenthesis. Among the things not present we find that regarding vowels he does not have the FOOT-GOOSE distinction; neither does the TRAP-BATH distinction. He does not use /e/ for HAPPY words and DRESS words are not realised with /ɛ/. Moreover, he does not make use of diphthongs as supposed to according to the description of his variety. As for consonants, he does not use intervocalic preglottaling, neither do /k/ and /g/ sound more palatalised nor do /ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/ have a stronger palatal in his realisations. The processes not present in this sample are Schwa Absorption and Elision of medial /ð/.

In the case of Paul (representative of Southern Irish English), regarding vowels, he retains features such as vowel length rules. He also has the /ʌ-ʊ/ opposition, weakens /juː/ often and uses HAPPY tensing as expected. As far as consonants, he

makes use of them as expected in most of the cases: he uses dental plosives and alveolar stops when possible, /ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/ are always pronounced as expected, there is clear /l/ in all positions as well as retroflex /r/ and the /h/ sound is always present. He is also using Glide Cluster Reduction. He does not exhibit the PRICE /aɪ-ɔɪ/ opposition. He does not use /ʌʊ/ for MOUTH words neither. Vowel reduction and the KIT and Schwa merger are not present in his speech. There is no evidence in this sample of processes such as Schwa Absorption, Schwa Epenthesis or Yod Dropping.

As previously had been said, despite living and having been recorded in England, both speakers exhibited features from their respective Irish English varieties. Different factors may be the cause of the presence or absence of these characteristics. First of all, identity may be playing an important role for the retaining phonological characteristics of each variety. Although the participants were not directly asked about their feelings of attachment to their country of origin, it is likely that they are conscious about exhibiting their Irish origin in their speech. In John's case, who is using less features than Paul does, he could be avoiding some features such as the FOOT/GOOSE distinction which is a Northern Irish English feature to avoid showing where he is coming from. Paul, on the other hand, could be using more Southern Irish English features because he is aware that his accent is possibly closer to a standard Irish English accent. Therefore, the way a speaker feels about his own identity and how well or bad accepted the features of their accent may be are usually decisive in the way a speaker of a language is going to make use of the language. Another factor related with identity in the retention of their Irish traces in their accents may be contact. The two speakers spend time with Irish people and they also travel often back to their hometowns. Thus, contact with other Irish English speaking people as well as with their families may play a crucial role determining which features from their respective varieties they preserve. When a person is surrounded by those who speak with the same accent as they do, they usually and unconsciously feel more comfortable using those features belonging to their accents. Therefore, they make use of them more often than when they speak to people using other accents. Continuous contact with speakers of the same accent seem to reinforce the usage of several features; in John's case, for example, the usage of Schwa Epenthesis; in Paul's case, for instance, the usage of dental plosives.

The fact that they both work in London and live and were recorded next to it may be one of the reasons why some features were not found in their speech. They may have well consciously or subconsciously aimed at standardising their accents towards the variety spoken in the place where they currently live. In fact, both participants include the pronunciation of the [ɜː] sound (John's *world* in (J35) and Paul's *airplanes* or *ferries* (P30) a sound not described in their varieties but typical of the area where they work and live.

Finally, the results from the sample show that John ascribes less to Northern Irish English than Paul does to Southern Irish English. Among the possible reasons why John's accent may be deviating from Northern Irish English would be due to his knowledge of other languages. His knowledge of German and Spanish could make him not to use something which is more related to his origins. On the other hand, Paul, who does not have other language influences, seems to stick more to his own variety. Another possible reason to explain why this is the case would include Northern Irish English being a less standard variety than Southern Irish English in Ireland. Taking this into account, it would be likely to think that John does not use his variety as much as Paul because he is aware of its more rural usage and therefore of its status, probably having being stigmatised. Some accents are usually stigmatised because they are full of vernacular features which are a mark of shame. Northern Irish English is likely to be one of those accents which show rural features which are not accepted by others not belonging to them (Hickey, 2012).

4. CONCLUSION

To conclude, both participants exhibit phonetic features of the variety that they are representative of but not all of them. John ascribes to Northern Irish English as far as vowels, consonants and processes are concerned. In Paul's case, he follows Southern Irish English description more than he does not, although he does not make use of any processes described by the literature. I estimated that some possible reasons that seem to affect our subjects ascribing more or less to a variety had to do with aspects such as identity, and contact on the one hand, and standardization on the other hand. While identifying with a particular group or community and keeping in touch with it would play an important part when analysing our subject's accents, some standardization must also be considered in the case of our speakers, especially when living and working in a

different accent area. Whether those phonological aspects that were not found in John's and Paul's speech are due to a wish to homogenize their speech in the new community (England), a true standardization process that may be currently influencing Irish accents, or a matter of the idiosyncrasy of their own speech remains unsolved in the present essay and would need to be unravelled in further studies with a bigger speaker sample.

5. APPENDIX I: Phonetic-Phonological Transcription of the Recording

J1: [jeləʊ aɪm dʒɒn aɪm fɹom donegəl nɔːɹθ westəv aɪɹlənd əm twentɪ sevən jɪərz ɔːld əm ə faɪəɫ ɪndʒenɪəɫ ənd aɪ haːv muvd ɔːvəɫ tu eŋglənd tu wɔːɫk bɪkɒz θɪŋz got pɹetɪ bad ɪn aɪɹlənd]

P1: [ən aɪ neɪm ɪz pɔːl aɪm twentɪ sɪks aɪm fɹəm kʌnti kaːɹləʊ tu ðə sauθiːst əv aɪɹlənd laɪk dʒɒn aɪ muːvd əʊvəɫ hɪəɫ fɔːɹ wɔːk aɪ muːvd əʊvəɫ ɪn ɔːgɒst t̪u t̪auzənd ən t̪ɜːɹtɪŋ ən aɪ muvd hɪɹ jəst ə jɪəɹənahaːf]

J2: [jeə əm ɔːvəɫ hɪəɫ faɪv jɪəɫz and ə ɫiːsənliː mɪ ən pɔːl kiːp haɪsmiːðz so lovənt ə flat ɪnhəɫəun]

J3: [aː wɪ met iːtʃ oðeɹ θɹ̥ʉ fʊtfol]

P2: [fʊtbəl jeə]

J4: [jʉst θɹ̥ʉ fʊtbəl wɪ pleɪ fʊtbəl evɹɪ wensdɪ ɪvənwoθ kɫəʊdɪ gaɪz ðət por fɔɫ wəs ɪn ə hɒm səʊ ɪskan tel jʉ ðat ən jʉ dɒnt ɪz nɒt θat manɪ aɪɹɪʃ piːpəl ɔːvəɫ hɪəɫ səʊ dats hau aɪ met pɔl]

P3: [jez ɪz ɪz iːsɪ tu getʊ nəʊ ðə aɪɹɪʃ piːpəl ɪzənə]

J5: [jeə wʌns jʉ wʌns jʉ hɪəɫ ðeɪɫ aksənt jʉ dʒʌst nəʊ ɪgsaktlɪ pɪn a baɪ ðeɪɫ aksənt əswel jʉ kən kənəv ə fɛɹaɪdɪə əv ʍeɹ ðeɪ fɹom iːvənðəʊ aɪ wʊd faɪnd piːpəl fɹom ə kauntɪ kaɹləʊ ðer ʍeɹ pɔl ɪz fɹom kwaɪt haɹd tʉ ʌndəɹstand]

P4: [jə evɹɪwʌn kaɪnəv dʌz faɪnd ɪt haːɹd tu ʌndəɹstand mɪ]

J6: [jeə kɔziːvən afteɹ foːɹ jiːəɹz woːɹk ət maɪ kʌmpənɪ ə iːvən maɪ ɒpəɹeɪʃənz dɪɹektər sed dʒɒn aɪ kan agsəlɪ ʌndəɹstand jʉ nəʊ bɪkəz jəv kaɪn əv sləʊ daun ɪn dʒɒɹ dʒɒɹ aksənt]

P5: [kəz wen aɪ wen aɪ gɔː hɔːm fəɹ ðə wiːkənd baːk tu kaːɹləʊ aɪ kɒm baːk ɔːvəɫ ɒn ə mɒndeɪ ðət ðeɪ kant ʌndəɹstənd mɪ əɹɔːl]

J8: [je]

P6:[kʊdɪt ðət bi baːk tɔːlkɪŋ nɔːɹməlɪ]

J9: [je]

J10: [əʊ aɪ laɪk tə (…) bɒksɪŋ tɹenɪŋ bɪt əv tens gɒlf]

P7: [(…) laɪk tenəs əktʃʊəlɪ]

J11: [aɪ pleɪ tenəs kwaɪt gʊd əɪnə aɪv bɨg ə kaɪndə klaːs maɪself sʌməɹ tu ə rafaəl nadəl]

P8: [jɔːɹaɪz enɪweɪ]

J12: [jeə]

P9: [e maɪ meɪn hɒbɪz sʊpəʊstu biː stəɹtu baːk ən rugbi pleɪ fʊbɔːl əs wel ən ə wensdeɪ bʌt wʊdn̩ bi ə pɹɒ ɹugbi əɹ fʊtbəl enɪdə]

J13: [waɪˑz ðət nə]

P10: [e meɪnlɪ meɪnlɪ bɪkɔːs aɪm nɒt gʊd ət fʊtbɔːl weɹeəs ɪn ɹugbi ju dʒʌst gɹab ðə bɔːl (…)]

J14: [je kɒs bɔɪz ət fʊtbɔːl klʌm ðə bɒlbɔːlz ɹe dʒʌst kaɪnə ɹugbiz kaɪnə dɪɹekt ə ðeɪ laɪk tu skɪp ðə bɔːl fɔːweɹd wɪtʃ wɪ laɪk tu pleɪ ðə kɪtakɪ fʊtbəl]

P11: [aɪ dɒŋgetə ju nevə getə pleɪ ðə eɪmɪn jɔːɹ ən hæɹ]

J15: [anəʊ je bʌt ɪz kɒmpliːtli dɪfɹənt tu ɹugbi səʊ]

J16: [fevɹɪt fɯːd wel nəʊ ɪn aɪɹlənd]

P12: [(…)]

J17: [ðə pɒteɪtə wʊd biː part əv əʊɹ daɪət ɪt kaːnt biː ðə gʊd pɒteɪtə aː bʌt ə laɪk laɪkə laɪkə dɒnə wɒt ɔːlʃɔːɹʃ ɹiːlə əkʃʊəli]

P13: [haːm ən kʌbɪtʃ wʊd bɪ ðə haːm ən kʌbɪtʃ (…)]

J18: [ham ən kabɪtʃ havənt jʊ kamptɪən tə ətəv ɹɔːst ɹɒst biːf bʌts iːvən saləd spanɪʃ fʊd tʃɒɹiːzo]

J19: [fevəɹɪt fɪləm wel ə dʊ nɒt həv ə fevɹɪt fɪləm bʌt fevɹɪt aktəɹ wʊd həv tʊ bɪ denzəl waʃɪŋtən sɒ beɪsɪklɪ enɪ fɪləm ðət hiːz ɪnvɔːlvdə aɪd ɔlweɪz gɒnə bɪ ə gʊd fɪləm ən hiːz gɒt sʌm gʊd wʌnz laɪk t̪reɪnɪŋ deɪ]

P14: [aɪ θɔːt ʌnstɒpəbl wəz ə gʊd wʌn]

J20: [ʌnstɒpəbl wəz pɹetɪ gʊd wəz ðə wʌn wiː ləst (…) ðə last deɪ əktʃʊəli]

P15: [ə iːkwəlaɪzəɹ]

J21: [ðə iːkwəlaɪzəɹ jeə ðəts ə faɪə wʌn]

J22: [wel]

P16: [ɪts ə gaɪ huː həz ə kaɪnd əv ə hɪ kɒmz əkɹɒs əs ə verɪ kɑːm]

J23: [nɔːɹməl gaɪ]

P17: [nɔːɹməl gaɪ ðət wʊdn̩t dʊ enɪ hɑːɹm tu enɪwʌn bʌt ɹiːlɪ hiː hɪ gets ðiːvən fər kɹaɪmz əv piːpəl əv ɒðəɹ]

J24: [jez sɒ hi kaɪndəv hi ɪkwəlaɪzəz]

J25: [wel nəʊ maself aɪ laɪk əbɒt kɒn̪tɹɪ mjʊsɪk jʊ nəʊ (…)

(…)

P18: [kɑːɹləʊ ɪz ɪn ðɪ sauθ iːst ðə sʌnɪ sauθ iːst əv aɪɹlən ɪts veɹɪ tɒtʃə tiː (…) ɪts baut twentɪ faɪv θausənd piːpəl ðeɹ ə aɪm fɹɒm kɑːɹləʊ wɪtʃ ɪz ðə meɪn kaun ðə meɪn taun ɪn ðə kaunti ənd ʃaunə bɹeɪn ðə gɹeɪtɹ aɹɪɹ ɹub liːv ðeɹ (…) nekst bɪgəst taun ðə tɒlə taɪnk]

J26: [wel aɪ gɹʉ ʌp ɪn ə veɹɪ smɔːl tɒnland sɒ ðə hauzəz ɹelə kənspaɹst əɹəʊnd ðə nɪəɹəs valɪdʒ wəz prɒbəblɪ əbət ə meɪl əweɪ wɒzənt mʌtʃ ðeːɹ ɹʌst ʃɒpɒst fɪs ðə maɪ helθ sentəɹ səʊ jeə əsenʃəlz]

J27: [a duː kɒz ɪz verɪ dɪfɟənt fɟəm əʊvəɹ hɪəɹ əpɒsɪt əv ə nəʊnə vɜːɹtəblɪ bɨg enʌf təʊn sɒ ɪts kwaɪt dɪfɟənt bʌt naɪs bɪn ɟəʊn ðə faːɹm dʒʌmpɪŋ ən ðə traptɟɪ ju nəʊ wɪd wɪdəʊɪŋ tu siː ðə ʃiːp ən ðə kəʊz]

P19: [bɪt əv plauɪŋ]

J28: [bɨt əv plauɪŋ]

P20: [leɪŋ ən plauɪ ɪn dɒnegəl dʊ jə]

J29: [wel ɪ ɪts haːɹd tu pleɪ ɟɒks ju nəʊ]

P21: [jeə ɪz ɪmpɒsɪbəl ɟiːlɪ ɪzən ɪt]

J30: [je ɪn tɜːɹmz əv ðə laːnd ðə laːnd ðə laːmp wʊd ɪ verɪ dɪfɟənt nɔːɹðən nɔːɹðən aɪɹlənd tu dən saʊθ bʌt wɪv lɒts əv haʊzɹən frəm əv dɒnɪgəl aɪv liːv ðə laːnd kwaɪt gʊd dɪdn̩t aɪ ɪn kaːɹləʊ]

P22: [je juː ɔːld ðə laːnd ɪn kaːɹləʊ hi sɪt ɪtʃ gɟəʊ]

J31: [sɒ jeə pɒːl hɪz ə bɪg faːɹməɹ ju nəʊ səʊ hɪz hɪz əntez məʃiːnəɹɪ wɒt wʊd biː jɔːɹ fevɟɪt t̪ɟaktə ju nəʊ pɔːl]

P23: [ʃʊɹ ənt ɪnəns njuː hɒlənd]

J32: [njuː hɒlənd siː aɪv aɪv biː ə masɪv feɹgʊsən əv maself ju nəʊ]

P24: [maz ɪz nət bæd ju nəʊ]

P25: [bɪ haːpɪ ɪn jəɹ hɒlənd djuːd ə ðə wɔːɹst θɪŋk əbaut bɪɪŋ əʊvə hɪəɹ aɪ ɔːlweɪz faɪnd ɪz ðət wen ju gəʊ baːk hɔːm ju niːɹlɪ spiːk laɪk ə s̪treŋgəɹ dʊ ju get ðət]

J33: [nɒ]

P26: [səmtaɪmz aɪ get ə weːɹd fiːlɪŋ laɪk ðət je maself ɒn sʌm weɪz aɪ fiːl laɪk ə vɪsɪtəɹ]

J34: [aɪ θɪŋk piːpəl θɪŋk mɔːɹ əv ju wen juː gəʊ baːk hɒm (…)

P27: [dʊ ðə]

J35: [je]

P28: [əm aɪ laɪk dʑaɪvɪŋ ən aɪ wʊdn̩t biː ə bɪg fɑːn əv ɜːɹpleɪnz ər fɜːɹɪz laɪk aɪ wʊd həv dʑaɪv enɪweɹ aɪ wʊd laɪk bʌt nəʊ aɪ wʊdn̩t bɪ ə mʌsɪv fɑːn əv t̪rɑːvəlɪŋ nəʊ]

J36: [wel ən maself aɪ wʊd lɒːv tu gəʊ t̪ɹavəl aɪd laɪk tu t̪ɹavəl ðə wɜːɹld teɪk ə fjuː mɒnθs əf wɔːɹk (…) t̪ɹavəl əɹəʊnd ðə wɜːɹld səʊs naɪsəst bɔːɹn njuː pleɪsɪz dɪft̪ent ɪkspɹəɹɪənsəz dɪft̪ent kʌltʃərz t̪ɹaɪŋ ət dɪfɹənt fɯːd]

6.   APPENDIX II: Ortographic transcription

(J1): Hello. I'm John and from Donegal, North West of Ireland, I'm 27 years old. I'm a fire engineer and I have move over to England to work because things got pretty bad in Ireland.

(P1): My name is Paul and I'm 26, I'm from County Carlow (it's) in the south east of Ireland, like John I moved over here for work, I moved over in August 2013 […] I'm just here a year and a half.

(J2): Yeah, I'm over here five years and the… recently me and Paul keep high smith so we own a flat here.

Interviewer: How did you meet each other?

(J3): Ah we met each other through football.

(P2): Football yeah.

(J4): Just through football, we play football every Wednesday (…) it's not that many Irish people over here so yeah that's how I met Paul.

(P3): Yeah, it's easy, it's easy to get to know Irish people over here, isn't it?

(J5): Yeah, ah once, once you hear their accent you just know exactly pin ah by their accent as well you can can fair idea of where they are from even though I would find from ah county Carlow, there where Paul's from, quite hard to understand.

(P4): Yeah, everyone kind of does. Find it hard to understand me.

(J6): Yeah, 'cause even after four years working at my company ah even my operations director said: uh John I can actually understand you know because you've kind of slowdown in your, in your accent.

(P5): 'Cause when I , when I go home for the weekend back to Carlow and come back over on a Monday you can't understand me at all (…)

(J8): Yeah.

(P6): Could it that be back talking normally.

(J9): Yeah.

Interviewer: Apart from, football do you have any other hobbies?

(J10): Oh I like to boxing training, bit of tennis, golf…

(P7): (…) like tennis actually.

(J11): I play tennis quite good, ain't I? I've big and kind of class myself summer to… ah Rafael Nadal.

(P8): Your eyes anyway.

(J12): Yeah.

(P9): And my main hobby is supposed to be start to be, I play football as well on a Wednesday but wouldn't be a pro-rugby or a football anyway.

(J13): Why is that not?

(P10): Eh mainly, mainly because I am not good at football whereas in rugby you just grab the ball and (…)

(J14): Yeah, 'cause boys at football claim the ball balls and just kind of rugby kind of direct and they like to skip the ball forward which we like to play the kinaki football.

(P11): I don't get you never get to play the, I mean (…)

(J15): I know yeah but it's completely different to rugby so.

Interviewer: What's your favourite food?

(J16) : Favourite food? In Ireland.

(P12): (…)

(J17): The potato will be part of our diet. It can't be the good potato ah but I like, I like I like ah I don't know what, all sorts really actually.

(P13): Ham and cabbage would be the... Ham and cabbage (…)

(J18): Ham and cabbage. Haven't you consume to eat of roost, roost beef but even salad, Spanish food: chorizo.

Interviewer: And your favourite film?

(J19): Favourite film? Well I do not have a favourite film but favourite actor would have to be Denzel Washington. So basically any film that he is involved in, it'll always gonna be a good film and he's got some good ones like training day ah…

(P14): And also unstoppable was a good one.

(J20): Unstoppable was pretty good. What was the one we last (…) watched the last day actually?

(P15): The Equalizer.

(J21): The Equalizer yeah that's it.

Interviewer: What is it about?

(J22): Well…

(P16): He's a guy who has a kind of a he comes across as a very calm

(J23): Normal guy.

(P17): Normal guy that wouldn't do any harm to anyone but really he he gets the evil from crimes that people of other (…)

(J24): So he kind of he equalizes.

Interviewer: What type of music do you like?

(J25): Well myself I like (…) country music you know ah …

(…)

Interviewer: Could you describe the town you were brought up in?

(P18): Eh… Carlow is in the south east the sunny south east of Ireland (…) It's eh... about twenty five thousand people there. Eh I'm from Carlow which is the main cam... the main town in the county and (….)

Interviewer: What about you John?

(J26): eh… Well I grew up in a very small town land so the houses really (…) around, the nearest village was probably about a mile away. Wasn't much there, just shop (…) the main health centre so yeah, essentials.

Interviewer: Do you miss being there?

(J27): I do I… Cause is very different from over here cause obviously… big enough town so it's quite different but nice being round the farm … The trucktry you know. We are going to see the sheep and the cows.

(P19): Bit of ploughing.

(J28) : Bit of ploughing yeah.

(P20) : Laying and ploughing in Donegal do you?

(J29): Well, it's hard to plough in rocks you know.

(P21): Yeah, it's impossible really, isn't it?

(J30): In terms of the land, the land will be very different Northern, Northern Ireland to down South, we've got lots of house(…) from Donegal. I (…) the land quite good, didn't I? In Carlow?

(P22): Yeah yeah you (…) the land in Carlow (…) he did it grow.

(J31): So yeah Paul, he's a big farmer so and his ancient machinery… what would be your favourite tractor you know Paul?

(P23): Sure, it ain't be New Holland.

(J32): New Holland, see I've I've be a massive Ferguson of myself you know.

(P24): That is not bad you know.

(P25): Be happy in your Holland. The worst thing about being over here that I find funny is that when you go back home, you nearly speak like a stranger, do you get that?

(J33): Nah.

(P26): Sometimes I get the weird feeling like that, yeah, myself on some ways I feel like a visitor.

(J34): I think people think more of you when you go back home.

(P27): Do they?

(J35): Yeah…

Interviewer: Do you like travelling?

(P28): I like driving and I wouldn't be a big fan of airplanes or ferries, I like to drive anywhere I would. No, I wouldn't be a mass fan of travelling no.

(J36): Well myself, I'd love to go travel, I'd like to travel the world a few months off work (...) travel around the world… new places, different experiences, different cultures, trying different food…

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