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The influence of French upon the Anglo-Irish accent

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THE INFLUENCE OF FRENCH UPON THE ANGLO-IRISH ACCENT



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INTRODUCTION

The Anglo-Irish language is a generic term to deal with the English as spoken in the four provinces of Ireland (Connacht, Munster, Leinster, Ulster). We may also come across other designations to talk about this language, such as Hiberno-English, Irish-English.... Today, this language is mainly influenced by three tongues which are the English language, the Scottish dialect and the original Irish language.

Anglo-Irish evolved all along disruptions and regional changes, Ireland being filled with a multicultural and linguistic mixture from the invasions of Celts (5th century), Scandinavians (8th - 11th centuries), Normans (12th century), and English (13th century). The first form of English language (*Yola*) was only spoken in Dublin (in the Pale quarter) until the 16th century. The massive arrival and colonization of British settlers during the Tudor and Stuart dynasties in the 16th and 17th centuries reasserted the English language, especially in Ulster plantation (where Scottish dialects and the English tongue were spoken, which gave birth to the *Planter English*). The original Irish language slowly disappeared, but was recognized as a symbol of national identity to the EIRE, according to the fourth article of the constitution: "The national language [...] is the Irish language; but the English language shall be recognized as an official language".

For this first year of research, I decided to focus my studies on the Anglo-Irish accent as spoken by both native Irish speakers who have lived in France for decades and French speakers who have spent some times in Ireland and whose English is fluent. I have been interested both in Ireland and in sounds for a long time, and being able to work on phonetic accents was for me an opportunity to try a first approach on the Anglo-Irish accent, which I hope will trigger further researches in this domain.

Through this project of research, we will try to figure out what the influence of French is upon an Irish accent.

After stating the Anglo-Irish accent as established by investigations run by searchers, we will present our own analyses based on the recordings of several speakers.

1. STATE OF THE ART

1.1 Vocalic and consonantal systems of Anglo-Irish

1.1.1 Vocalic system

We will focus our analysis on the features of the Irish accent in the Republic of Ireland, and then we will compare it to the Northern Irish accent.

1.1.1.1 Southern Ireland

1.1.1.1.1 Monophthongs

/i:/

The /i:/ is as tense, long and close as in RP. Yet for Wells (1982: 425), the /i:/ is not spread everywhere in Ireland, and the conservative working-class tends to say [ste:l] for *steal*, sounding like *stale*. The monophthong [e:] is here a mid-long vowel.

Melchers and Shaw (2003: 76) settle that there is a tendency for the words in <ea> to be pronounced /e:/, and not /i:/.

/ɪ/

For Glain (2013: 74), the KIT words are pronounced the same way as in RP.

For Melchers and Shaw (2003: 76), /e/ and /ɪ/ merge in the South West of Ireland.

As far as the unaccented /ɪ/ is concerned, Glain (2013: 74) says that it is more likely to be pronounced with a schwa in the South. In the South, the final <i> is pronounced between the short and lax vowel /ɪ/ and the long and tense vowel /i:/, just as in RP: *happy* ['haepi].

/e/

For Melchers and Shaw (2003: 76) in South West Ireland, /ɛ/ and /e/ switch into /æ/ in words like *many*, *any*.

According to Wells (1982: 423), /e/ and /ɛ/ have the same quality as in RP.

/æ/ & /ɑ:/

Glain (2013: 73) says that PALM and START words are said with a frontier, tenser and longer vowel. It is articulated as [æ] but has the [ɑ:]'s length.

According to Melchers and Shaw (2003: 76), the vowels /æ/ and /ɑ:/ can merge together.

For Glain (2013: 74), TRAP words are said both in the North and in the South with an open vowel which is close to the realization of the [a] as pronounced in Western and Northern England. As far as BATH words are concerned, they are said with a shorter, frontier and laxer vowel [æ] (*after* ['æftə.ɹ]).

/ɒ/ and /ɔ:/

According to Glain (2013: 74), Wells (1982: 424) and Melchers and Shaw (2003: 74), LOT, THOUGHT and NORTH words are pronounced as unrounded vowels, similar respectively to [ɑ, ɑ:]. /ɒ/ can even be said as [æ] (*stop* [stap, staep]).

However, Wells (1982: 424) says that in words such as *stock /stalk, knotty/naughty, clod/clowed*, [ɒ] and [ɔ:] oppose one another. In Dublin *doll* and *was* are both said with a [ɔ:]. In weak position, the mid-long vowel [o:] can be used instead of a schwa (official [o:'flʃəl]).

/ʊ/ and /u:/

For Wells (1982: 422, 425), those vowels keep the same quality as in RP, but there can be sometimes neutralization between [ʊ] and [ʌ]. Wells also says that in some parts of Dublin, /u:/ is said with the diphthong [eʊ] (*school* [skeʊl]).

For Glain (2013: 75, 77), Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 105), some words originally said with [ʊ] in RP (*book, cook*) can be said with a [u:], and GOOSE words are said with a central [ʊ:].

/ʌ/

For Melchers and Shaw (2003: 76), /ʌ/ is often centralized into a schwa (*strut* [strət]).

According to Wells (1982: 422), the Anglo-Irish version for /ʌ/ is a mid-centralized, back and rounded vowel near [ʊ], whereas Glain (2013: 75) says that it sounds more like [ɔ].

/ɜ:/

This sound does not occur in Anglo-Irish because it is a rhotic language (the -r- is pronounced at the end of a syllable: an Irish will say [pɑ:ɹk] whereas an English will say [pɑ:k]). Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 104) say that it turns to [ʌɹ], but there remain exceptions, such as *nurse* [nɜ:ɹs].

/ə/

For Melchers and Shaw (2003: 77), /ʌ/ and /ɪ/ have a schwa quality in words like *strut* or *kit*.

In weak positions, Wells (1982: 427-428) says that Anglo-Irish tends to use more often the schwa instead of /ɪ/ (*rabbit* will rhyme with *carrot* for instance), and adopts the reduced form where there is apparently no need to do so in RP (*when* [hwən], *what* [hwət], *sure* [ʃəɹ]). Final syllables are also often replaced by a schwa (*swallow* ['swɒlə]). There can be schwa epenthesis between a plosive and a liquid or nasal (Dublin ['dʌbələn] - ['dɒbələn]).

1.1.1.1.2 Diphthongs

/aɪ / and /ɔɪ /

For Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 105) or Melchers and Shaw (2003: 76) the realization of the diphthong /aɪ / of PRICE shows a tendency to be neutralized with the diphthong /ɔɪ / of CHOICE.

For Wells (1982: 426), this tendency is used "because Irish has no diphthong resembling [ɔɪ], the 17th century alternative pronunciation with [aɪ] was in general adopted into the Irish-English of that time, and now survives as an archaism." Nevertheless, in some areas such as Dublin, the opposition between [aɪ] and [ɔɪ] is kept.

/eɪ /

Glain (2013: 76) says that the sound is close to the long and tense monophthong [e:] as well.

/aʊ/

According to Wells (1982: 427), the most common realization of this diphthong is transcribed as [ʌʊ], ranging from the popular pronunciation [æʊ] to the educated pronunciation [aʊ]. Wells (1982: 427) says that in Dublin, there is a possible

neutralization of the opposition between /aʊ/ and /o:/ in a generic context, and between /aʊ/ and /u:/ before an /r/ (*power* becomes homophonous with *poor*).

/əʊ/

According to Glain (2013: 76), this diphthong both in North and South is longer, backer, and more half-close. *No* will be pronounced [no:].

Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 105) say that uneducated speech turns /əʊ/ into [aʊ], and *no* is said [naʊ].

/eə/, /ɪə/, /ʊə/

Those diphthongs cannot occur in Anglo-Irish pronunciation since the language is a rhotic one. They will be respectively written [eəɹ], [ɪəɹ], [ʊəɹ], /ɹ/ being an approximant retroflex.

1.1.1.2 Northern Ireland

1.1.1.2.1 Monophthongs

Wells (1982: 439) says that in the North of Ireland, all vowels are short before /p, t, k, ʃ/.

/i:/

Glain (2013: 76), according to Meier (2008: 74), says that the FLEECE words are often pronounced with a close diphthong [eɪ]. For Wells (1982: 441), the /i:/ is more open and central, so that *beat* sounds like *bait*, not like *beet*.

/ɪ/

Turcsan and Herment (2015: 186) transcribe the KIT vowel with an [ë], which is between /e/ and /ɛ/, whereas Wells (1982: 421-422) transcribes it [ɪ̞], an opener and more centralized vowel which reaches the sound of [æ] with a following /l/. This [ɪ̞] comes from the Scottish accent and can never be lengthened.

Glain (2013: 74) says that the final unaccented <y> is either pronounced /ɪ/ or /e/.

/e/

For Melchers and Shaw (2003: 76), the opposition between /ɛ, e/ and /a/ is often neutralized before a velar consonant: *beg* and *bag* are homophonous words.

For Wells (1982: 439), /e/ and /ɛ/ are lengthened before final consonants /v, z, r, ð/. /e/ is a monophthong and half-close [ɛ:] in final position, but is a central diphthong ranging from [ɛə] to [iə] in a pre-consonantal position.

/æ/ & /ɑ:/

Wells (1982: 439), /a/ tends to be broadened before /p, t, k, ʃ/ into /æ/, but is lengthened before final consonants /v, z, r, ð/ as /ɑ:/. Melchers and Shaw (2003: 76) agree with Wells on the merging of /e/ and /æ/ sounds, leading *beg* and *bag* to be homophonous words in /ɛ:/.

Glain (2013: 73) says that PALM and START words are said with the same vowel [ɑ:] as in RP.

/ɒ/ and /ɔ:/

Wells (1982: 439) says that there will always be the short vowel before /p, t, k, ʃ/.

As far as /ɔ:/ is concerned, Glain (2013: 74) and Wells (1982: 442) say that the vowel can keep the same quality as in RP for NORTH words, with a retroflex approximant [ɻ] (*north* [nɔ:ɻθ]), or can be a closer vowel [o:] in FORCE words (*force* [fo:ɻs]).

/ʊ/ and /u:/

Wells (1982: 441) and Glain (2013: 75, 77) say there is no opposition between /ʊ/ and /u:/, being one single central phoneme [ɯ]. Herment and Turcsan (2015: 185) notice that the quality of this vowel is similar to that of the French [y] (<u> as in *russe*).

/ʌ/

Glain (2013: 75) agrees with Wells (1982: 441) in saying that /ʌ/'s quality varies, either being a half-open, back and unrounded vowel due to a Scottish influence, or being a closer, more centralized and more slightly rounded vowel from Anglo-Irish influence. Wells (1982: 445) also says that some words (originally pronounced with [ɒ]) follow a Scottish pronunciation: *what* and *want* can be pronounced with [ʌ].

/ɜ:/

For Glain (2013: 75), the vowel remains the same as in RP with the pre-vocalic [ɹ] added because of the rhotic accent (*bird* [bɜ:ɹd]).

1.1.1.2.2 Diphthongs

/aɪ / and /ɔɪ /

Those diphthongs are realized with a variation leading to the palatalization of the diphthong with the palatal approximant /j/: Turcsan and Herment (2015: 186) transcribe them as [ɔj] and [aj]. The realization of the diphthong is closer and backer. Glain (2013: 77) says that the first element of the CHOICE diphthong is closer: [oɪ] (instead of [ɔɪ]).

/eɪ/

Glain (2013: 76) says that tends to keep the RP diphthong /eɪ/. Nevertheless, when the diphthong is in a pre-consonantic position, it can be switched into the diphthongs [eə] or [ɪə] (*David* ['deəvɪd], *gate* [gɪət]), or into the long and tense monophthong [e:] (*David* ['de:vɪd]). Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 105) share Glain (2013: 76)'s suggestion, saying that /eɪ/ is often monophthongal, half-long and half-closed at the end of a word (*may* [me:]).

/aʊ/

Wells (1982: 444), Turcsan, Herment (2015: 186) and Glain (2013: 77) agree to say that /aʊ/ becomes more a more central diphthong [əʊ], with the first element which is less opened. For Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 102), /aʊ/ may range from [eʊ], [aeʊ].

/eə/, /ɪə/, /ʊə/

As in Northern Ireland, those diphthongs cannot occur in Anglo-Irish pronunciation since the language is a rhotic one. They will be respectively written [eɹ], [ɪɹ], [ʊɹ], /ɹ/ being an approximant retroflex. According to Glain (2013: 77, 78), [eɹ] can be pronounced with the diphthong [ʌɹ] (*care*) in Northern Ireland, or with the half-opened monophthong /e:ɹ/.

1.1.2 Consonantic system

1.1.2.1 Southern Ireland

/l/

All the phoneticians mentioned above agree to say that the /l/ is always clear both in the North and in the South.

-wh-: /ɹ/

Glain (2013: 79) says that /ɹ/ has a fricative labio-velar articulation, as opposed to the approximant labio-velar /w/.

For Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 105), Southern Ireland keeps the opposition between /ɹ/ and /w/ (*which* is not homophonous with *witch*).

/r/

All phoneticians mentioned before agree to say that Anglo-Irish is a rhotic language.

The post-vocalic /r/ is a retroflex approximant [ɹ], whose realization implies a stronger and higher degree of retroflexion. Glain (2013: 78) says that the area of approximation is located in the junction between the upper jawbone and the hard palate. Glain (2013: 78) quotes Meier (2009 : 179) who said that [ɹ] is longer than in RP.

According to Melchers and Shaw (2003: 77), the /r/ is a post-alveolar approximant before stressed vowels, with the same quality as in RP, and is a retroflex approximant in intervocalic and post-vocalic positions, with a dark sonority [ɹ].

/t/

An intervocalic /t/ can undergo several phenomena, among which are for instance T-Glottaling¹ (started ['sta:ɹɪd]), or T-Voicing² (better [betɹəɹ]).

According to Wells (1982: 430), those phenomena, which occur both in Northern and Southern Ireland, are used in order to reinforce the distinction between /t/ and /θ/.

Melchers and Shaw (2003: 74) say that "the post- and intervocalic /t/ is realized as a 'slit fricative' "³, (quoting Wells (1982: 429)), with the quality of [tʃ] or [ts]. This phenomenon is quite common to all social and geographical parts of the Irish Republic.

¹ According to Carr (2013: 157), the "/t/ undergo[es] glottalization between vowels, particularly when the first vowel has primary or secondary stress". It can be transcribed as [ʔt], or even [ʔ].

² T-Voicing is presented by Wells in his *Accents of English 1, An Introduction* (1982: 249) as the neutralization of the opposition between /t/ and /d/ in an intervocalic position).

-th-: /θ/ and /ð/

For Melchers and Shaw (2003: 74), the fact that *tin* can be homophonous with *thin* is due to an Anglo-Irish characteristic dental stop [t̪]: for most Irish people, /θ/ and /ð/ are realized as dental plosives [t̪] and [d̪]. A non-native Anglo-Irish speaker has difficulties in differentiating *those* from *doze*.

For Wells (1982: 430), there is still the opposition between [t̪] and [θ] and [d̪] and [ð], except in Dublin and Cork. Nevertheless, the neutralization between dental fricatives and alveolar plosives is possible in the environment of a following /r/: *three* and *tree* are homophonous (which is not the case in Ulster and Donegal), or before /l/ and /s/ (*faithless* ['fe:tləs], *faiths* [fe:ts]).

Glain (2013: 78) says that /t/ and /d/ can be dentalized at the beginning of a word.

1.1.2.2 Northern Ireland

/l/

According to all phoneticians, Northern Irish speakers use a clear /l/, with the exception of Belfast where some speakers can use a dark /ɫ/.

-wh-: /w/

For Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 105) Northern Ireland tends to have no contrast between -wh- and -w-, both pronounced with a /w/. However, Turcsan and Herment (2015: 188) say that the opposition remains in places where Ulster Scottish is spoken.

/r/

Herment and Turcsan (2015: 188) say that the realization of the /r/ can change according to the environment of the /r/: after a peripheral vowel, the /r/ is a retroflex approximant, and after a central vowel (/ə, ɜ:/), there is almost no consonantic presence of the /r/.

According to Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 102, 105), the /r/ is never flapped, but is a frictionless continuant ([r, R]) especially after /t/.

³ The term 'fricative' (Carr (2013: 6)) refers to a close approximation, but not a complete closure, "the air flow is not quite fully blocked [...] yet the articulators are so close together that friction is created as the air escapes". It is transcribed as [t̪].

/t/

Turcsan and Herment (2015: 188), Glain (2013: 78) and Wells (1982: 430, 445-446) say that in unaccented syllables in an intersyllabic position, the /t/ is tapped, written [ɾ], which means that there is a neutralization of the opposition between /t/ and /r/. Wells (1982: 430) gives the example of *What I mean* [hwaraɪmi:n].

1.2 Supra-segmental variations

1.2.1 Stress

Wells (1982: 436) says that a 'wordstress seems to be rather more flexible in Irish accents than in RP' (p.436). Alongside Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 106), he gives examples of those rare stress-shifts such as *affluence* / 'affluence, 'municipal / muni'cipal, 'orchestra / or'chestra, or dis'cipline instead of 'discipline. There can be variations within the same verb as well: *to educate*, but *he edu'cated her*.

1.2.2 Southern Ireland

As far as prosodic features are concerned, Glain (2013: 79) points out a characteristic phenomenon in the Irish intonation, talking about the "High Rising Terminal" phenomenon: the nucleus is rising, and so is the tail. The whole sentence seems to be a question, but it appears to be an assertion. Glain (2013: 79) notices that the use of this phenomenon is not really frequent, but is often adopted when the speaker addresses someone with a higher degree (a boss, a teacher...).

Wells (1982: 436) says that the Anglo-Irish intonation is quite similar to that of RP, excepting the fact that Irish "Yes-No questions" are said with a low-fall nuclear tone, instead of being said in a low-rise tone in RP.

He gives us an example:

Would you like some tea?

 (Anglo-Irish)



1.2.3 Northern Ireland

Wells (1982: 447-448) says that Northern Irish speech is different from the South and from RP. A majority of tone groups has a rising nucleus (instead of a falling one) and can be found in questions, statements and commands. The exceptions are exclamations, said with a falling tone.

Turcsan and Herment (2015: 189-190) noticed three kinds of typical Northern Irish intonation:

The "Rise-Plateau" (the most frequently used) has a high-rising nucleus followed by a high but stagnant tail.



The "Rise-Plateau-Fall" has the same rise as the Rise-Plateau's and but ends with a fall on the last syllable.



The "Simple-Fall" is composed with a fall on the nucleus which starts from a high level, but stops before reaching a too low level.



1.3 Grammar and lexicon

1.3.1 Grammar

North and South share many similarities with English on grammar and lexicon, but there are some distinctions between the two languages.

Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 103) picked up for example the use of *whenever* to refer to a single occasion (*Whenever my baby was born* instead of *when my baby was born*), or the use of *anymore* with a positive meaning, sometimes even referring to *nowadays*: *he comes a lot anymore* meaning *he comes a lot nowadays*.

1.3.1.1 Southern Ireland

It is mostly Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 106-107) who deal with the specific characteristics of Southern Irish grammar.

They say that most of the Southern Irish particularities in speech are noticeable in the colloquial style: *will* is often chosen instead of *shall*.

As far as tenses and forms are concerned, the past tense is used where one would expect the present perfect, which is avoided in most cases elsewhere (*If he saw her, he would not have done it, Did you have dinner*), while the progressive form Be + ING is more often used with fewer restrictions than in English (*I'm seeing it*). Let us notice the use of the adverb *after* with a progressive aspect in a sentence such as *I'm after seeing him*: an English speaker would have used *I've just seen him*.

The Imperative pronoun "Let" is often used for a second person imperative as well: *Let you stay here* means *stay here*.

There is also an aspectual distinction that Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 106) pinpointed between the habitual and in habitual states (*I do be drunk* means *I'm habitually drunk*).

As far as the construction of indirect questions is concerned, they are formed without a subordinator (if, whether), and keep the initial structure of the reversed question: *I wonder has he come*.

Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 107) or Melchers and Shaw (2003: 75) say that the answers to yes/no questions are elliptic verb phrases based on the Irish structure: *Are you going? – I am*.

Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 107) noticed that Anglo-Irish in Southern Ireland frequently uses IT-cleft constructions, even with copular verbs which is usually impossible in English (*It was very ill that he looked*).

1.3.1.2 Northern Ireland

Melchers and Shaw (2003) say that as in Scottish English, nouns which are used to indicate measure or time don't bear any mark of plurality (*five year, two mile*). They also show that Anglo-Irish makes a difference between the singular *you/ye* and the plural *youse*.

Anglo-Irish in the North also nominalizes phrases with a noun-like status: *If I had the doing of it again....*

1.3.2 Lexicon

According to Melchers and Shaw (2003: 78) and Todd (2000: 88), most of the metaphors and proverbs come from the Irish language both in the North and the South. Some words of the Irish vocabulary remain in cultural contexts: *a banshee* is a *fairy woman*, *a creel* is a *basket*.

Words borrowed from the English language have sometimes quite a different meaning, such as *backward* which means *shy*, or *thick* which means *witted*.

Some words with a French origin can be found in the regions of Scottish influence (France and Scotland have been closely connected for a long time until the Act of Union of 1707) such as *ashet* which is a large plate.

1.3.2.1 Southern Ireland

Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 107-108) say that Southern Irish vocabulary borrows from archaic forms of English, Scottish English, or Irish language. *Bold* means *naughty*, *to cog* means *to cheat*, or *evening* stands for *afternoon and evening*.

1.3.2.2 Northern Ireland

According to Melchers and Shaw (2003: 79) and Todd (1989: 341, 347), there is a tendency for Catholics to favour the use of words with Irish origins in Northern Ireland, whereas Protestants and Anglicans would rather use Anglo-Saxon words.

Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 103-104) say that Northern Anglo-Irish took from Scottish English (*aye* means *yes*, *burn* means *stream*, *pinkie* means *little finger*), and from Southern Ireland (as above, *Bold* means *naughty*, *to cog* means *to cheat*, ...).

But Northern Ireland has its own vocabulary as well: *to boke* means *to vomit*, *to gunder* means *to shout*, *to wither* means *to hesitate*.

Some Scottish idioms are also present in Northern Anglo-Irish: *I doubt he's not coming* means *I expect he is not coming*, *That's me away* means *I'm going now*.

2 INVESTIGATION, ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION

2.1 Investigation

2.1.1 Making a corpus and recording

All of the nine speakers who were recorded were asked to read the corpus (text and words), and to introduce themselves spontaneously during about two minutes. The total length of recordings spreads out to an hour and thirty seconds, among which are twenty-one minutes and thirty seconds of spontaneous speech.

I made my corpus⁴ out of several resources: I took words and a small paragraph from the PAC protocol (Carr et al., *Phonologie de l'Anglais Contemporain* 2004), and then I added words on which I wanted to work according to what I had read from researchers' investigations. In the end, my corpus was organized so that I had firstly a chapter on the main specificities of the Irish Accent in general⁵ (beginning with consonants /r/, /l/ and /t/ and then going on with monophthongs and diphthongs), and secondly a more specific approach of regional differences from North to South.

Some words occur twice or even three times because I thought it would be easier to categorize at first each monophthong and diphthong according to their pronunciation in a global Irish accent, and to go into details on the same sounds later. Yet, when I started recording, I noticed it was not the best way to process. Speakers were upset to see the same word several times, or did not understand why I had so many categories of words. Nevertheless, I found it interesting to see how each speaker would pronounce the same word at different places (for instance *worthy* in the group of /3:/ and in the group of -th-⁶). Another reason why I decided to keep this structure was because I had begun my recordings, and it would have been awkward not to have the same structure in each recording.

I had planned to record on my phone, which has a rather good quality of sound, but I could lend recording machine (a Zoom H4 Handy Recorder) from my father (who occasionally used it for musical purposes). I worked on how to use it and turned it into recording in .WAV, which is I think the best quality of sound.

2.1.2 Meeting speakers

Having some close Irish friends in Marseille, it was easy for me to start my investigations, whose aim headed more and more towards the Irish characteristics kept by those speakers living in a French environment.

⁴ APPENDIX 2: Corpus (pp 40 – 46)

⁵ APPENDIX 2: Corpus: l/ Irish accent in general (p 40 – 42)

⁶ APPENDIX 2: Corpus:

l/ A/ 2/ /3:/ sound (p 40)

ll/ A/ 3/ Neutralization between /θ/ and /t/, and /ð/ and /d/ (p 43)

The first speaker I recorded was a probatory lecturer in Aix-en-Provence. She is from the very South of Ireland, but went to study in Galway.

My second speaker is the daughter of a French Marseille woman and a Belfast friend, whom I recorded as well. Thus she speaks English and French fluently and she spends her summer holidays in Northern Ireland.

Her father has lived in France for thirty years and has worked as a translator and interpreter in English and French.

Then I met two students in English studies who had spent a year in Ireland. One of them lived in Dublin in an Irish family.

The second student spent a year in Galway and lived among a younger generation of people.

I recorded another Irish friend from Sligo (North-West of the Republic of Ireland) who spent his childhood in Ireland, studied for ten years in London and settled in France to teach English later on.

One of his children, whose mother is French, agreed to be recorded. She speaks fluently French and English and goes every summer in Ireland.

I could record one of my university teachers as well who studied Irish civilization, but who spent some time in England and America before settling in Ireland (two years in Dublin and a year in Belfast).

Another Irish friend from Cork agreed to be recorded. She spent some time abroad in England, Germany and Algeria before settling in France, where she now lives and works as an English teacher.

2.1.3 Further investigations: perceived Anglo-Irish accent.

At first, I aimed at running a socio-linguistic investigation upon speakers' perception of their own Anglo-Irish accent. Thus I questioned them on what were the main characteristics of this accent according to them, and if they had ever come across any specific feature in one or another part of Ireland.

Here is a summary of what came out of these interviews.

2.1.3.1 Global Anglo-Irish

2.1.3.1.1 Vowels and Consonants

There are still discrepancies between rural and urban accents, but basically, here are the main features noticed (apart from those already mentioned above):

- Diphthongs are often flattened down in Northern Ireland (*day* will be said with a [e – ε]), whereas going South, they go opener and opener.
- There is a tendency to pronounce PRICE words with a [ɔɪ] diphthong, neutralizing then the opposition /aɪ/ v.s. /ɔɪ/. Ireland will be pronounced "Oireland". A series of Eastern dialects of Dublin would pronounce /aɪ/ with a triphthong [aɪə].
- /t/ and /d/ are pronounced with an epenthetic /j/ in some parts of Ireland, being respectively voiceless /tʃ/ and voiced /dʒ/. A foreigner can mistake *due* with *Jew*, or *tube* with *choob*.
- /r/: There are three ways to pronounce the -r-.
 - One which is the same as in RP, a roll /r/, originally transcribed /ɹ/.
 - Another -r- is the -r- of rhotic accents, as in Gen Am, /ɹ/.
 - The last one is typical of Northern Ireland, a uvular /R/, which is very much like the -r- we have in French.

Some French speakers also think that “keeping the rhotic /ɹ/ is a resisting way” to show their difference from the English people. Yet, it is an external point of view, as seen from English second language speakers who can more easily stand back on this accent.

2.1.3.1.2 Grammatical features and intonation of Anglo-Irish.

Here are some oral expressions:

to be gas means something which is *odd but funny*.

to be cat means to be *mean*.

I do be means *I am* (without any emphatic meaning).

Thanks a million is literally taken from the Gaelic expression.

I'm just after doing something means *I have just done something* (Anglo-Irish often uses the progressive form, just like Gaelic).

As far as the intonation is concerned, some speakers think that Anglo-Irish is influenced by the Gaelic tone, rather than by the British tone. The position of the vocal chords in Irish is lower than in English: Irish people speak on a C key, whereas British people speak on the G key⁷.

⁷ On one same scale, the C Key is the international appellation for the French “clé de do”, which is produced with a lower tone than the G Key (whose French equivalence is a “clé de sol”). Here is the scale of reference: A B C D E F G / La Si Do Ré Mi Fa Sol.

2.1.3.2 Local features

2.1.3.2.1 From Dublin

- Dubliners often make glottal stops (computer [kəm'pju:ʔə])
- Grammatically, the way of speaking is close to the British way, and the dialect is influenced by a less rhotic accent, but the [ɹ] is still present in final positions (when spelling the letter -r-, most Dubliners would say [ɹ:ɹ]).
- The intonation is often marked by following high jumps and falls when they show their indignation, almost in a theatrical way.

2.1.3.2.2 From Belfast

- There is sometimes a different pronunciation for a same word: "it's full" [u:] but "I'm full up" [ʊ] - [o].
- Sometimes, people add a syllable to some words such as "Dublin" ['dʊbəlɪn] or "Film" ['flɪm].
- Northern Irish speech is more lilting because more influenced by the musicality of Gaelic, and of course closer to the Scottish language (which is a very close relative to the Irish language).
- Words are often more marked and more clearly pronounced, syllables are often broken up "perhaps because of the artificiality of English, being imposed to Gaelic speakers".

2.1.3.3 Remarks: French and Irish being close languages

Irish people get fewer troubles speaking French than English people:

- The Anglo-Irish language being a dialect in which the -r- is more often pronounced than in English because of its rhoticity, Irish people are more likely to pronounce a French -r- than Englishmen.
- Just as in French, the Gaelic dialect takes genders and numbers into account, therefore the grammatical complexity of French is more easily understood by an Irishman who has some Gaelic knowledge than by any other English speakers.

2.2 Analyses

2.2.1 Text and words

The analyses presented here have been made essentially out of intensive listening to each track, with sometimes some help from the praat software.

In the following pages, I will comment upon speakers' accents which are recorded on the tracks that you will find in the CD record at the end of this essay.

In this CD, there are two types of files, the first one with all the files of each speaker containing both the reading part and the spontaneous part, the second one with the list of words or sentences that I will comment upon.

For each comment, the CD reference is announced by the symbol 🎵 with the following number of the track. In the list, the track number is followed by the word which is analyzed between brackets.

For instance, the first track 🎵 1, 1' deals with Peter's pronunciation of DRESS words. You will find the comment below the table, and the corresponding track in the CD with 1 (Bed) and 1' (Wet).

2.2.1.1 Vowels

2.2.1.1.1 Monophthongs

For this following section, I chose to comment only upon three categories of words, either for they seemed quite representative of one particular pronunciation (for instance with the category of THOUGHT and FORCE words), or for they were quite unusual and interesting examples of a typical regional Irish pronunciation (for the DRESS words or the FOOT words categories).

The following comments (with no reference to a sound in the list of words) are secondary information for they occur occasionally and are not representative of one specific category of words. Yet, they were worth noticing.

Table 1: Monophthongs

Sounds	KIT words	FLEECE words	DRESS words	TRAP words	BATH, PALM / START words	LOT words	THOUGHT / FORCE words	FOOT words	GOOSE words	STRUT words	NURSE words
Speakers											
Rhian	[ɪ]	[i]	[ɛ]	[a]	[ɑ] / [ɑː]	[ɒ-ɑ]	[ɔ(:)-ɑ(:)] / [ɔː]	[ʊ - ɵ]	[u:]	[ʌ]	[ɜː]
Peter	[ɪ]	[i]	[e-ɛ] ↗ 1, 1'	[a]	[ɑ] / [ɑː]	[ɒ-ɑ]	[ɔ(:) - ɑ(:)] / [ɔː]	[ɪ - ʉ]	[ʉː]	[ɒ]	[ɜː]
Triona	[ɪ]	[i]	[ɛ]	[a]	[ɑ] / [ɑː]	[ɒ-ɑ]	[ɔ(:)-ɑ(:)] / [ɔː]	[ʉ]	[u:]	[ʌ - ɒ]	[ɜː] - ɛː]
Tiffany	[ɪ]	[iː]	[ɛ]	[a]	[ɑ] / [ɑː]	[ɒ]	[ɔː]/[ɔː(ɹ)]	[ʉ]	[u:]	[ʌ - ɒ]	[ɜː]
Lévana	[ɪ]	[iː]	[ɛ]	[a]	[ɑ] / [ɑː]	[ɒ-ɑ]	[ɑ(:)]/[ɔː]	[ʊ]	[u:]	[ʌ - ɒ]	[ɜː]
Andrew	[ɪ]	[iː]	[ɛ]	[a]	[ɑː]	[ɒ]	[ɔː]	[ʊ]	[u:]	[ʌ - ɒ]	[ɜː]
Kayna	[ɪ]	[i]	[ɛ]	[a]	[ɑ] / [ɑː]	[ɒ-ɑ]	[ɑ(:)]/[ɔː]	[ʊ - ɵ]	[u:]	[ʌ - ɒ]	[ɜː]
Karine	[ɪ]	[iː]	[ɛ]	[a]	[ɑ] / [ɑː]	[ɒ]	[ɔː]/[ɔː(ɹ)]	[ɪ - ʉ] ↗ 3	[ʉː]	[ɒ]	[ɜː(ɹ)]
Mary	[ɪ]	[iː]	[ɛ]	[ɑ]	[ɑ] / [ɑː]	[ɒ-ɑ]	[ɔ(:)-ɑ(:)]/[ɔː]	[ʊ]	[u:]	[ʌ - ɒ]	[ɜː]

- ↗ 1, 1' An interesting case was Peter making a strong difference between -e- followed by a voiced consonant (said [e], as in “bed” (3.55)) and -e- followed by a voiceless consonant (said [ɛ], as in “wet” (3.58)).
- ↗ 2, 2' Due to the rhoticity of the Irish accent, there is a difference between THOUGHT and FORCE words, respectively said [ɔ(:) - ɑ(:)] and [ɔː]. For instance, Rhian says “paw” (2.31) with a more open, unrounded vowel [ɑː], and says “more” (0.22) with a [ɔː].
- ↗ 3 Karine says “put” (1.24) with a sound ranging from [ɪ] to [ʉ], which is a more central and closer pronunciation, close to the French [y].

Remarks:

- Peter's final -y- (“worthy” (1.33)) is said with a /e/
- Mary is the only one to say “get” (1.04) the reduced sound [ə].
- Andrew says “says” (0.47) with the diphthong [eɪ], whereas all other DRESS words are said with a [ɛ].
- Lévana says three times “soot” with a [uː]
- Karine says “cook” (3.02) with the diphthong [əʊ], which is homophonous with *coke*.

6. Rhian also neutralizes sometimes the opposition between FOOT and STRUT vowels (“duck” (3.09) and “put” (3.11)).
7. Rhian, Peter and Karine pronounce the STRUT words also with the more neutral and central [ə] (Karine: “fifty-one” (0.20)).
8. Peter says “pearl” (1.28) with a vowel ranging from [e:] to [3:], and “fur” and “bird” (1.31) with a /w/ at the end ([3:w]).

2.2.1.1.2 Diphthongs

The words and vowels analyzed here are those of a specific Irish pronunciation of diphthongs. For instance, Peter’s and Karine’s pronunciations are typical of the Northern part of Ireland only.

Let us notice that all other diphthongs which are not put forward in the table are said with almost the same quality of vowel as in RP (except for the GOAT words, which are all realized with a backer and more rounded first element).

Table 2: Diphthongs

<i>Sounds</i>	<i>MOUTH words</i>	<i>GOAT words</i>	<i>PRICE words</i>	<i>CHOICE words</i>	<i>FACE words</i>
<i>Speakers</i>					
<i>Rhian</i>	[aʊ]	[oʊ]	[aɪ]	[ɔɪ]	[eɪ]
<i>Peter</i>	[ɛʊ] ♪ 4	[oʊ]	[aeɪ – ɛɪ] ♪ 7	[ɔɪ]	[e:] ♪ 8
<i>Triona</i>	[aʊ]	[o(ʊ)]	[aɪ]	[ɔɪ] ♪ 6	[eɪ]
<i>Tiffany</i>	[aʊ]	[oʊ]	[aɪ]	[ɔɪ]	[eɪ]
<i>Lévana</i>	[aʊ]	[o(ʊ)]	[aɪ]	[ɔɪ]	[eɪ]
<i>Andrew</i>	[aʊ]	[oʊ]	[aɪ]	[ɔɪ]	[eɪ]
<i>Kayna</i>	[aʊ]	[o(ʊ)]	[a(I)] ♪ 5	[ɔ(I)]	[e(I)] ♪ 9
<i>Karine</i>	[ɛʊ] ♪ 4'	[oʊ]	[aeɪ – ɛɪ] ♪ 7'	[ɔɪ]	[eɪ]
<i>Mary</i>	[aʊ]	[oʊ]	[a:I] ♪ 5'	[ɔ:I]	[eɪ]

1. ♪ 4, 4' Peter and Karine both pronounce the MOUTH vowel with a fronter and closer diphthong [ɛʊ] (Karine: "out" (2.05), Peter: "South" (0.45)).
2. ♪ 5, 5' Kayna and Mary emphasize the first element of the diphthong, Kayna saying [a(I)] ("buy" (2.46) (the quality of the vowel remain the same as in RP)), and Mary saying [ɑ:I] ("cry" (0.12)), with a longer, backer first element. There is the same phenomenon with the CHOICE diphthong.
3. ♪ 6 Triona pronounces "boy", "toy", "foil" (3.52 – 3.54) close to the PRICE diphthong.
4. ♪ 7, 7' Peter ("cry" (0.15)) and Karine ("cry" (0.11)) have the same way of saying PRICE words, with a fronter and laxer diphthong ranging from [æI] to [ɛI].
5. ♪ 8 Peter always says the FACE words with a rather long monophthong [e:] "age" (0.39). Sometimes his vowel can be short as well, when he says for instance "wait" (2.11), which becomes homophonous with *wet*.
6. ♪ 9, 9', 9'' Kayna and Lévana pronounce the "our" (Kayna: 0.40, Lévana: 0.36) with a long and back monophthong [ɔ:ɹ], and a rhotic final -r-, whereas Triona pronounces "our" (0.55) with a diphthong with a dominant first element [ɑ:ɹ].

2.2.1.2 Consonants

Here is in this table the classification of consonants as pronounced by speakers. Once again, I only analyzed some of them either for their specificities (for instance, Tiffany's and Karine's less marked rhoticity) or so that it could stand as an illustration for the whole category (as in the -th- pronunciation).

Table3: Consonants

<i>Sounds</i>	<i>-r- in post-vocalic position / in coda</i>	<i>-wh-</i>	<i>-l- in post-vocalic position / in coda</i>	<i>-t- and -d- in coda</i>	<i>Voiced -t-</i>	<i>-th- pronunciation</i>
<i>Speakers</i>						
<i>Rhian</i>	[ɹ]	[w]	[ɫ]	[dʒ] / [tʃ]	[t]	[θ] / [ð]
<i>Peter</i>	[ɹ]	[ʍ] ♪ 11	[l] ♪ 12	[dʒ] / [tʃ]	[t]	[θ] / [ð] ♪ 15, 15'
<i>Triona</i>	[ɹ]	[w]	[ɫ]	[dʒ] / [tʃ]	[t]	[θ] / [ð]
<i>Tiffany</i>	[ɹ] ♪ 10	[ʍ] ♪ 11'	[l] / [ɫ] ♪ 12', 12''	[dʒ] / [tʃ] ♪ 13, 13'	[t]	[θ] / [ð]
<i>Lévana</i>	[ɹ]	[w]	[ɫ]	[dʒ] / [tʃ]	[t]	[θ] / [ð]
<i>Andrew</i>	non-rhotic	[ʍ] ♪ 11''	[ɫ]	[dʒ] / [tʃ]	[t]	[θ] / [ð] ♪ 16, 16'
<i>Kayna</i>	[ɹ]	[w]	[ɫ]	[dʒ] / [tʃ]	[t]	[θ] / [ð]
<i>Karine</i>	[ɹ] ♪ 10'	[ʍ]	[ɫ]	[dʒ] / [tʃ] ♪ 14, 14'	[t]	[θ] / [ð] ♪ 17
<i>Mary</i>	[ɹ]	[ʍ]	[ɫ]	[dʒ] / [tʃ]	[t]	[θ] / [ð] ♪ 18

- ♪ 10, 10' Karine's and Tiffany's accents are not as rhotic as other speakers', but yet have a slight degree of retroflexion (Tiffany: "sport" (1.22)). Karine has a more nasalic rhoticity ("marry" (2.07)).
- ♪ 11, 11', 11'' Tiffany, Andrew, Peter, Karine and Mary pronounce words such as *witch* and *which* as not homophonous (Peter: "what" (4.42), Tiffany: "when" (6.44), Andrew: "which" (0.33)).
- ♪ 12, 12', 12'' Almost all of Peter's -l- are clear in any environment ("seal" (1.39)). Almost all of Tiffany's -l- are clear in final position ("fail" (1.52)), but pre-consonantic -l- are dark ("melt" (2.00)).

4. ♪ 13, 13', 14, 14' Tiffany says “bode” (2.42) with a voiced [dʒ], or “goat” (2.52) with the voiceless [tʃ].
Karine says the words “word” (1.10) with a [dʒ] or “knot” (1.44) with a [tʃ]⁸.
5. ♪ 15, 15', 16, 16', 17, 18 We can illustrate the phenomenon with Peter, who says “throw” (0,52) with a dental [t̪]⁹.
Some are making it quite often such as Andrew (“worthy” (1.27) as [d̪] or “earth” (1.23) and “mouth” (2.21) as [t̪]), Karine (“they” (0.05) as [d̪]) or Mary (“anything” (0.03) as [t̪]).

2.2.1.3 Some varieties in pronunciation

In this chapter, I have gathered secondary information which do not belong to any particular categories explained before. For instance:

- Triona, Rhian, Karine, and Andrew pronounce the -i- as [ə] in weak syllables, for instance in the words “rabbit” or “spirit”.
- Kayna pronounces the words “official” and “opinion” (2.36) with a [a], whereas Andrew and Mary pronounce it as a [o].
- The sound [ʃ] appears in Peter's and Triona's recordings when they respectively say “false” (Peter: 4.03) and “soot” (Triona: 3.48).
- Rhian pronounces the word “carter” (1.53) as homophonous with *character*.
- Tiffany, Peter, Karine and Mary say “bills” as homophonous with “builds”.
- Peter and Lévana add a syllable respectively in “film” (Peter: 4.13), saying [fɪləm] and “foil” (Lévana: 2.40), saying [fɔɪjəl].
- When Peter says “faced” (0.46), it seems to be homophonous with “fierced”.

⁸ APPENDIX 1: Praat Captures (1.1 ENDING -d- or -t- : /dz/ - /tʃ/ (p.35)).

⁹ APPENDIX 1 : Praat Captures (1.2 DENTAL /t/ OR /d/ (p.37)).

2.2.2 Spontaneous speech

- Rhian
 - ♪ 19 She says “brother” (0.48) with a [ʌ], which is more open, more central. It can sound even like a [ə].
 - The intonation in her speech is almost always rising.
- Peter
 - ♪ 20 He says the word “work” (0.54) with a backer and more rounded [ɜ:ɹ].
 - ♪ 20' He makes a fronter [εʊ], more neutral [əʊ] and even rounded [oʊ] when saying “now” (0.25).
 - ♪ 20'' He says the word “play” (1.01) with a long monophthong [e:].
 - ♪ 20''' When saying “baby” (0.29), he uses a long monophthong [e:] on the first syllable, and pronounces the final -y- with a more open vowel [e], sounding like ['be:be] (perhaps to sound like the French word).
 - His intonation is mainly rising.
- Triona
 - ♪ 21 She says “Ireland” (1.24) with a long monophthong [ɑ:].
 - Her intonation is mainly rising.
- Tiffany
 - ♪ 22 She pronounces the words “Irish” (1.20) with a backer first element [ɑ].
 - Some of her sentences end with a rising intonation, but most of the time, the intonation is falling (perhaps she has kept the Dublin accent, which is still influenced by the RP intonation).
- Lévana
 - ♪ 23 She says “had” (0.14) with a final [dʒ], and “that” (0.17) with a final [tʃ]¹⁰.
 - ♪ 23' Her intonation is mainly rising¹¹: “So, I'm Lévana, I spent around nine months in Ireland” (0,01 – 0,07)

¹⁰ APPENDIX 1: Praat Captures (1.1 ENDING -d- or -t- : /dz/ - /tʃ/ (p.36))

¹¹ APPENDIX 1: Praat Captures (1.3 INTONATION (p.48)).

- Andrew:
 - ♪ 24 The diphthong of the GOAT words is not said with a closer, more rounded [oʊ], but with the monophthong [o] (Andrew (2): “go” (0.38)).
 - ♪ 24' Andrew (2): “about” (0.33) is said with a [a] in the unaccented position.
 - ♪ 24'' Andrew (2): he says “Ireland” (1.45) ['aɪrələnd], adding a syllable.
 - He has a mainly falling intonation.
- Kayna
 - ♪ 25 When she says “south of” (0.06), she pronounces the -th- as [t̥]. Because of its pre and post-vocalic position, the -t- is voiced as [t]
 - Her intonation is mainly rising.
- Karine
 - ♪ 26 She says “sure” (1.25) with a [ʊ – y] which is more central, and even closer to the French pronunciation.
 - ♪ 26' She drops the -t- in “*they can't really place*” (1.44).
 - ♪ 26'' Her intonation is mainly rising¹²: “*when I arrived in Ireland, my accent was very English still, and it had become more Irish, but there's also the difference between the Dublin accent and the Belfast accent*” (1.07 – 1.21).
- Mary
 - ♪ 27 She pronounces the word “problems” (2.46) with a closer [o].
 - Her intonation rises sometimes, but most of the time, she makes falls a the end of her sentences.

2.3 Interpretation

Here is a table comparing the Anglo-Irish accent as defined by searchers and the accent which came out of our investigations:

¹² APPENDIX 1: Praat Captures (1.3 INTONATION (p.39).

Table 4: Comparison

ANGLO-IRISH ACCENT (THEORIES)	SOUNDS	ANGLO-IRISH (SPEAKERS)
[ɪ ~ e ~ ε]	KIT words	[ɪ]
[i: ~ e:]	FLEECE words	[i(:)]
[e ~ ε ~ a]	DRESS words	[e - ε]
[e ~ a ~ a(:)]	TRAP words	[a]
[æ ~ a:]	BATH, PALM / START words	[a - a]
[ɒ ~ a ~ a]	LOT words	[ɒ - a]
[ɔ: ~ a: ~ o:]	THOUGHT / FORCE words	[ɔ(:) - a(:)]
[ʊ ~ ʌ ~ ʊ ~ u]	FOOT words	[ʊ - ʊ]
[u: ~ ʊ:]	GOOSE words	[u: - ʊ:]
[ʌ ~ ʊ ~ ɔ ~ ə]	STRUT words	[ʌ - ɒ]
[ɜ: ~ ʌ ~ ʊ]	NURSE words	[ɜ:]
[æʊ ~ aʊ ~ ʌʊ ~ eʊ ~ əʊ ~ o:]	MOUTH words	[aʊ - εʊ]
[oʊ ~ o ~ aʊ]	GOAT words	[o(ʊ)]
[aɪ ~ aɪ ~ ɔɪ]	PRICE words	[aɪ - aɪ - εɪ]
[ɔɪ ~ aɪ ~ aɪ]	CHOICE words	[ɔ(ɪ)]
[eɪ ~ e: ~ eə]	FACE words	[eɪ - e:]

If we compare the investigations run by researchers and results which came out of this work, we can find out that there are few discrepancies between local Irish speakers and speakers recorded here (except the fact for instance that their KIT and FLEECE vowels are sometimes merging together into the same monophthong [i]). We can notice that there is a general tendency for peripheral realization of phonemes on the vowel system by speakers, the only central sound being the NURSE vowel. There is also a simplification of each sound (made with two sounds maximum: FOOT words are said by speakers with a vowel varying from [ʊ] to [ʊ̥], whereas according to the investigations, the vowel varies from North to South from [u: - ʊ̥] to [ʊ - ʌ]).

By analysing this table, we can see that the influence of French is not that visible among speakers. All of them have at least a fluent English with strong bases in the appropriate pronunciation of words.

Going further, I chose to have an external perspective on the subject, for this is important not to dwell on one single result and to consider many different interpretations as possible when listening to the tracks. Thus I asked an Irish phonetician to comment upon those speakers' accents, and here are the results which came out of his interpretation:

- Rhian's accent is close to a Dublin accent. She has rounded [u] phonemes, and makes stopping interdental.
- Peter's accent is mainly Northern Irish. He has some features from Ulster Scots such as the glottal stopping of -t- especially in final positions, and a slight palatalization of -s- in some words.
- Triona is mainly using English as learned in France, especially on the supra-segmental scale. There is in the difficulty for English second language speakers to make the difference between the KIT and FLEECE vowels.
- Andrew has a Southern Irish RP accent, with the RP rhotic form. He also makes his intervocalic -t- with a [ts].

- Kayna's accent is influenced by Northern Irish (from East Ulster), with her tendency to pronounce [eɪ] as [aɪ], and her fall-rise tone on final syllables.
- Tiffany has a less fluent English but has Standardized Southern Irish English forms, and makes aspirations on -t-.
- Lévana got a North American (East Coast) accent, with nevertheless a strong French influence in both segmental and supra-segmental features.
- Karine has an English RP basis with a French influence on the post-vocalic -r-.
- Mary's accent is a standardized Southern Irish RP. She has some North Dubliner features, and she shares many characteristics with Andrew.

Therefore, many interpretations are possible. I spent almost three months listening and working on the tracks, but having a French point of view upon speakers' accent, it was difficult to stand back on what could have been immediately noticed by a native Irish speaker, and even by any other Anglo-speaking people.

CONCLUSION

This work allowed us to establish an inventory of what the characteristics of the Irish accent are with a French influence upon it.

My researches having been made with several speakers from different origins, I can only present a general illustration for each phoneme, which are not necessarily true for every speaker I recorded.

Basically, according to the investigations, native speakers tend to keep Irish features such as the rhoticity of the post-vocalic and final -r-, or the realization of final -t- and -d- respectively as [tʃ] and [dʒ].

As far as the vocalic system is concerned, we can mention the backer STRUT vowel ([ʊ]), as well as the TRAP and BATH vowels which sometimes merge into a more central and shorter [a]. This leads us to mention also the American-like pronunciation of the LOT vowel, which ranges from [a] to [ɑ].

Dealing with diphthongs, the realization of the GOAT phoneme remains very rounded ([oʊ], sometimes said with the monophthong [o]).

Yet, with standardization, some features are not kept, such as the -l- which tends to be clear in most parts of Ireland but is dark when said by all native speakers.

Some regional phonemes are not kept as well such as the FOOT vowel, pronounced with a [ʌ] and standardized into the RP pronunciation [ʊ]. The FACE vowel, pronounced with a [e:], is almost systematically realized as [eɪ], whereas there is no more neutralization between PRICE and CHOICE diphthongs, pronounced respectively [aɪ] and [ɔɪ].

As far as French speakers are concerned, they share Irish features with natives, such as for instance the Irish rhotic form of the post-vocalic and final -r-, or the final -t- and -d- pronounced as fricatives [tʃ] and [dʒ].

On the vocalic system, they also have in common the more open LOT vowel [a] and the backer STRUT vowel [ʊ].

We may mention as well the opener THOUGHT vowel [ɑ:] (to compare with the FORCE vowel [ɔ]). Some also adopt other characteristics such as the regional features of the MOUTH diphthong ([εʊ]), or the FOOT vowel pronounced as [ɪ - ʌ].

Another consonantal feature is the voiced -t- in intervocalic position, just as in Gen Am, which is mainly adopted by the youngest speakers.

Yet, some French influence can be noticed in the neutralization between KIT and FLEECE vowels in [i], and in the occasional realization of the -r- as a French trill.

Beside the fact that French speakers speak with a less fluent English, French influence can be noticed as well on the supra-segmental scale, with an intonation which less lilting

than in Irish.

Therefore, natives and French speakers keep approximately the same Irish features.

Those features are basically on the vocalic system, with the backer vowels of STRUT and GOAT, the merging of BATH and TRAP vowels, and opener LOT and THOUGHT vowels.

The final [tʃ] and [dʒ] and the rhotic -r- are the main consonantal features.

There is no real and direct influence of French upon native speakers, mostly influenced by a more standard English. Yet, it is not entirely true in the other way. French speakers, because of their knowledge of English as a second language, are not implanted enough in the Irish culture and thus can be influenced by other accents, either French or English RP or American.

Yet, all of those speakers have a rather artificial accent, for it softens and loses a little bit of its specificities compared to a proper Irish speaker. Once in France, all of the speakers do not practice English daily, and not with an Irish influence. Four of them are teachers, and three others are still learning English with the educational system, all of them working with a rather unnatural standard accent.

Working on the Anglo-Irish accent was for me a fruitful experience. I found it really informative to tackle such an interesting subject for its variety of information, taking both from written and oral sources. It was a real challenge to work from professional researches to the building of my own investigations and analyses out of personal meetings and interviews. The more I learnt about the Anglo-Irish accent, the more curious I was to look for any detail in speakers' accent which could approve or disagree with what I had read.

Yet, pieces of information are not as classified as I thought they were. I was at first a little bit disappointed not to find one clear-cut pronunciation for one phoneme. Each speaker had their own way of pronouncing words, depending on their practice of Irish and the environment in which they lived. But this diversity of information brings more to reflect upon, considering several pronunciations as possible, taking into account the fact that the evolution of language is limitless, and that there is always something to work on.

I think that this first experience opened other fields of researches for the following years. The Irish accent is something I am very interested in, and perhaps these first-year analyses will lead to further investigations. To take from professional researches, but also to meet and work with people are some of the advantages of doing researches in phonetics and linguistics.

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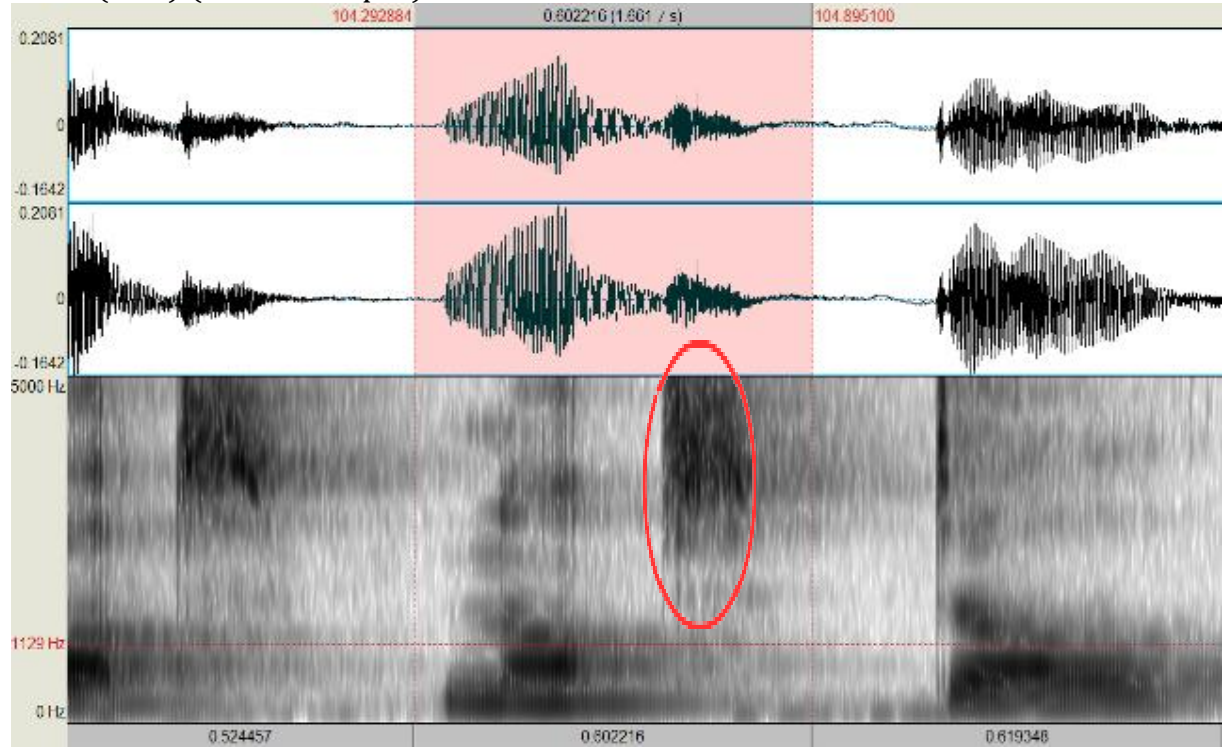
APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: PRAAT CAPTURES

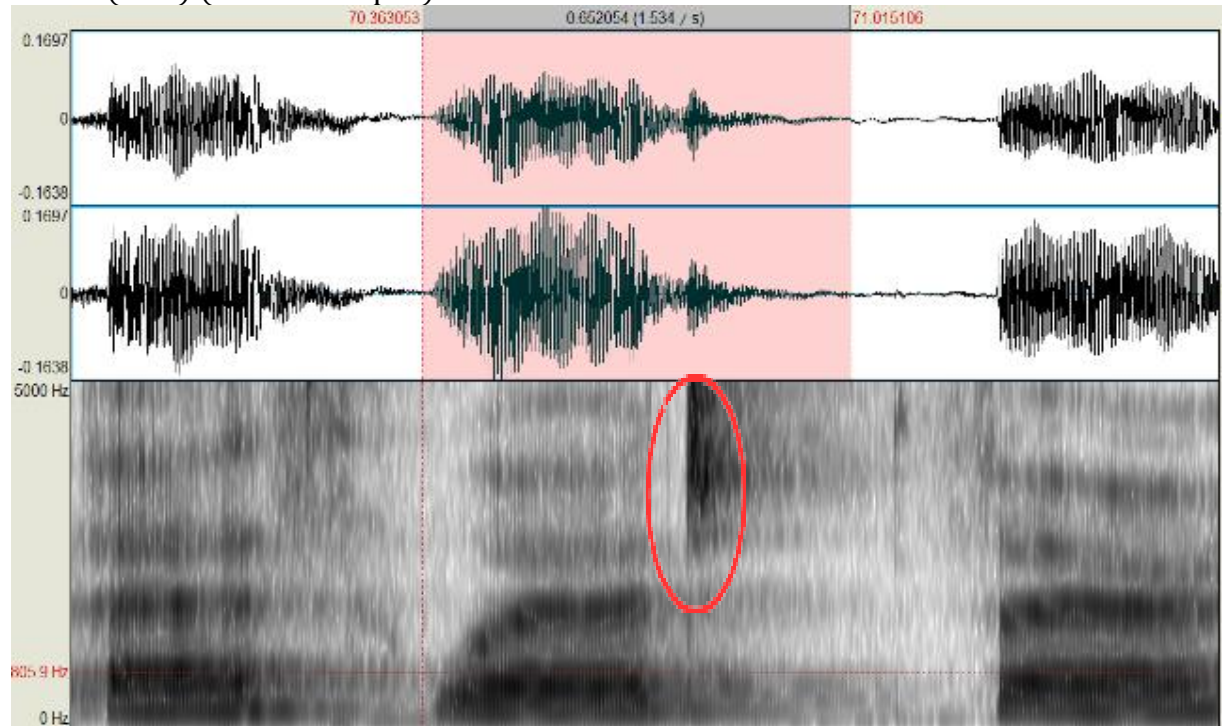
1.1 ENDING -d- or -t- : /dz/ - /tʃ/

- Karine:

'knot' (1.44) (Karine - corpus)

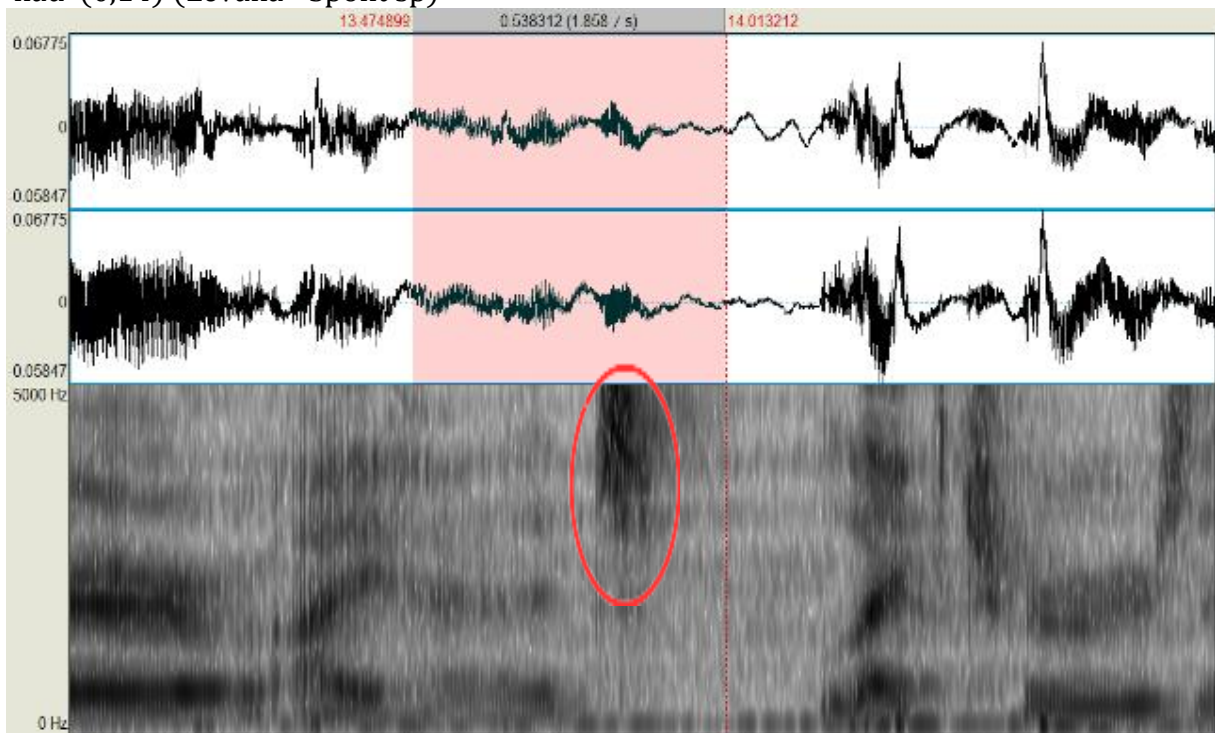


'word' (1.10) (Karine - corpus)

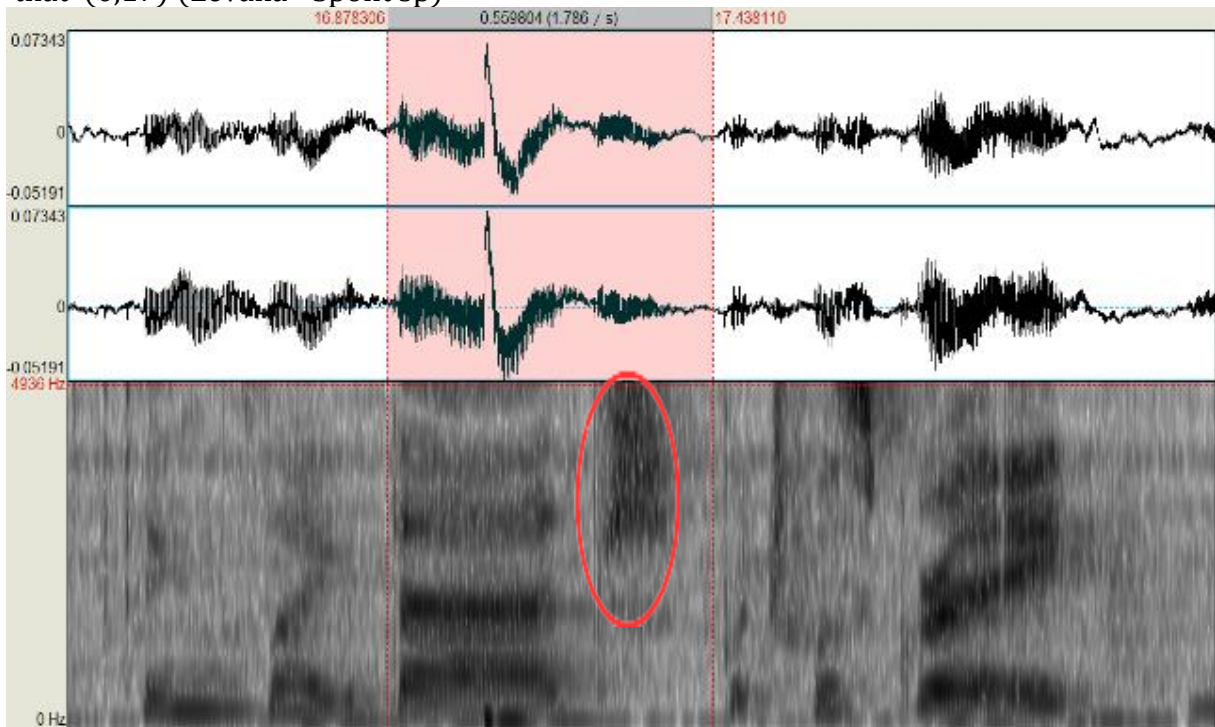


- Lévana:

'had' (0,14) (Lévana - Spont sp)

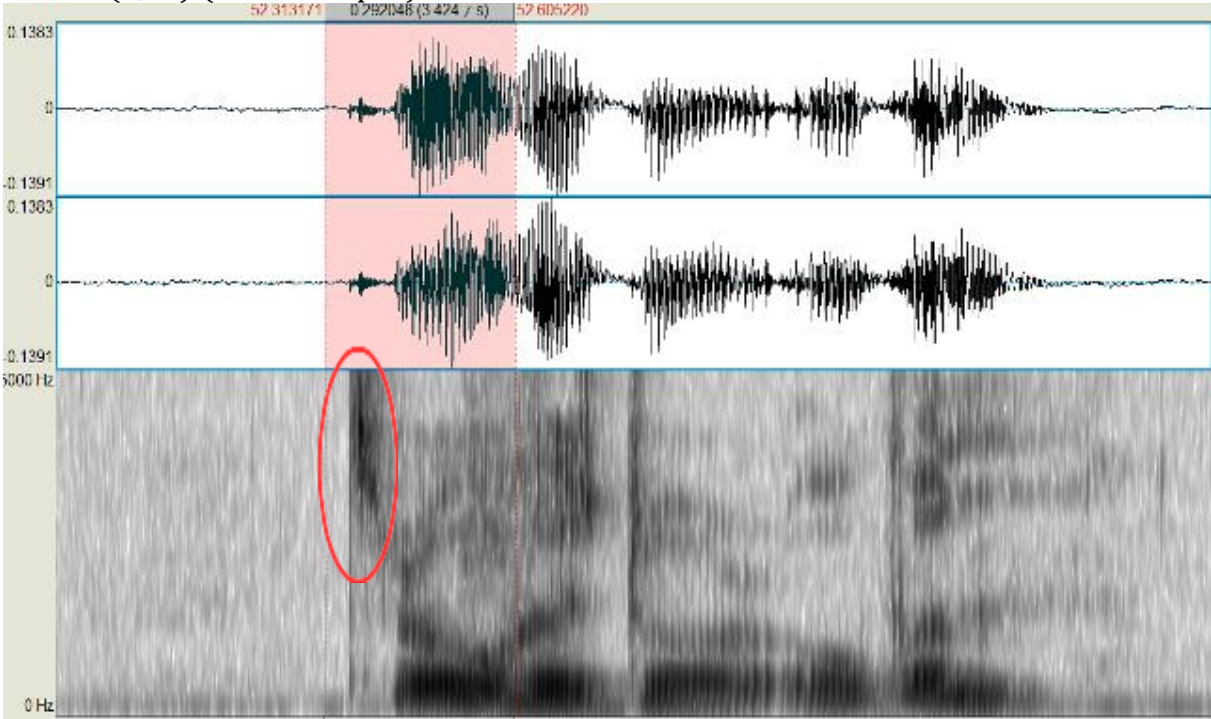


'that' (0,17) (Lévana - Spont sp)

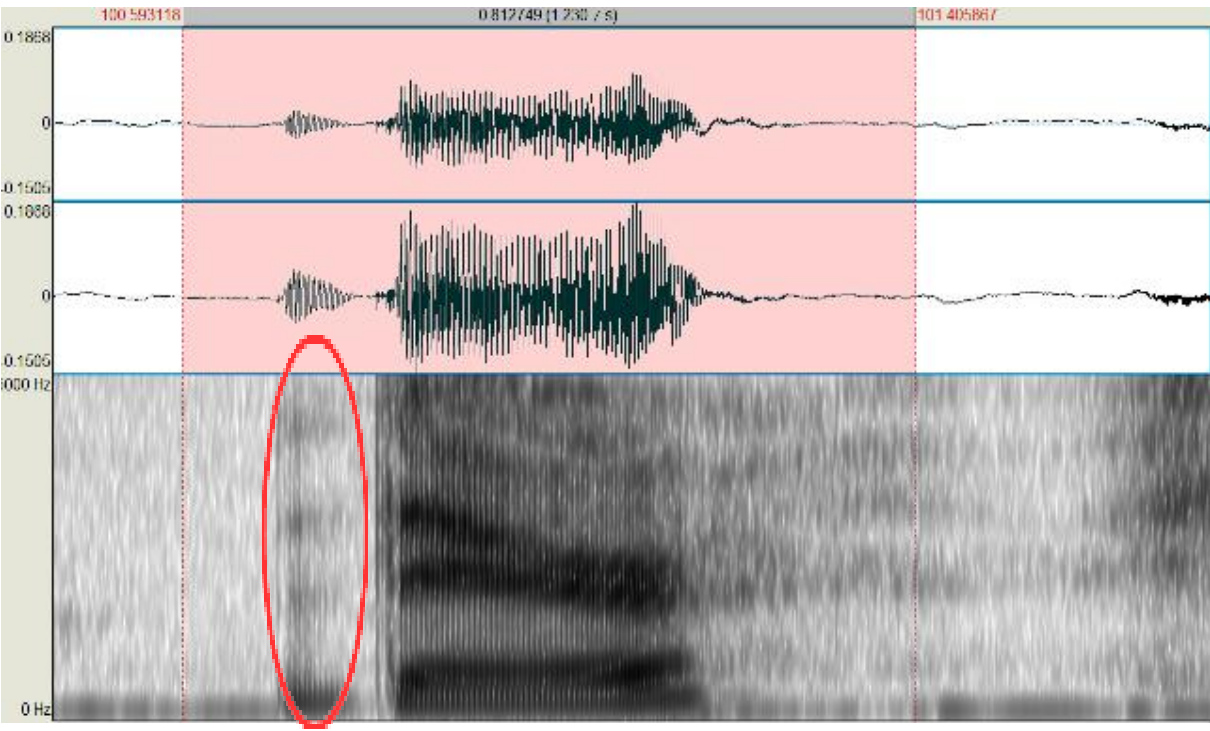


1.2 DENTAL /t/ OR /d/

- Peter:
'throw' (0,52) (Peter - corpus)

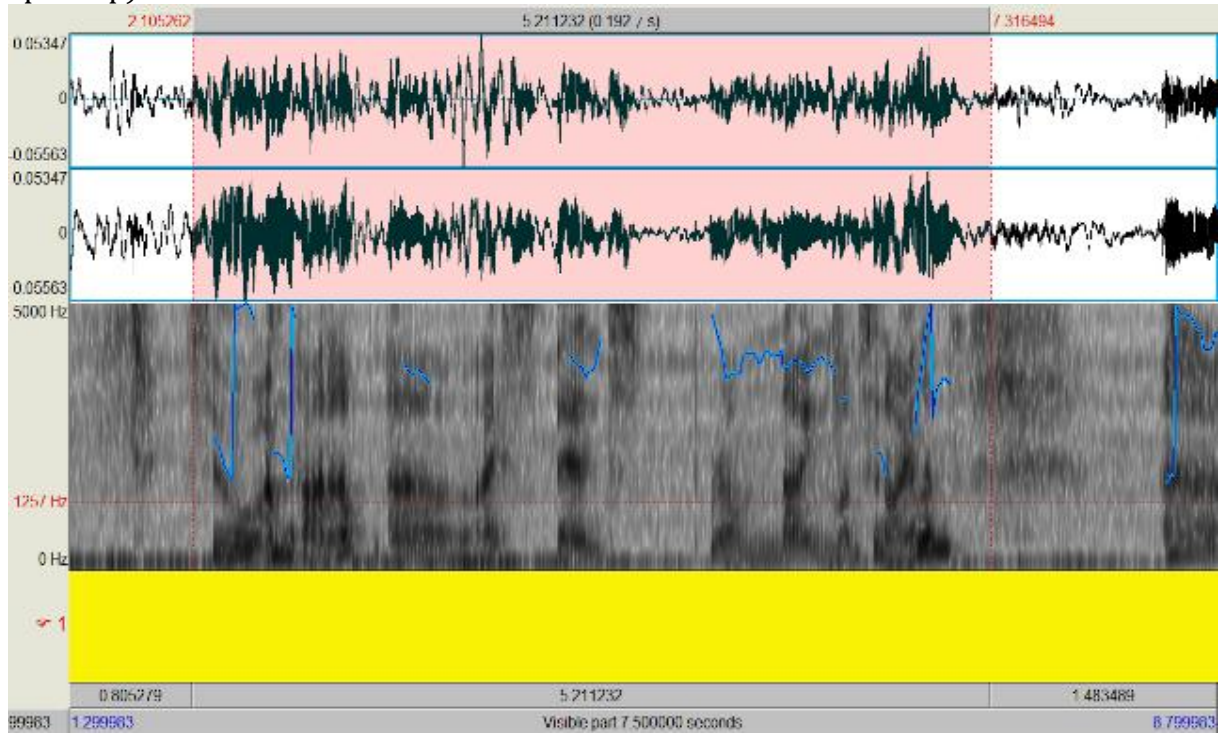


- Triona:
'there' (1,40) (Triona - corpus)



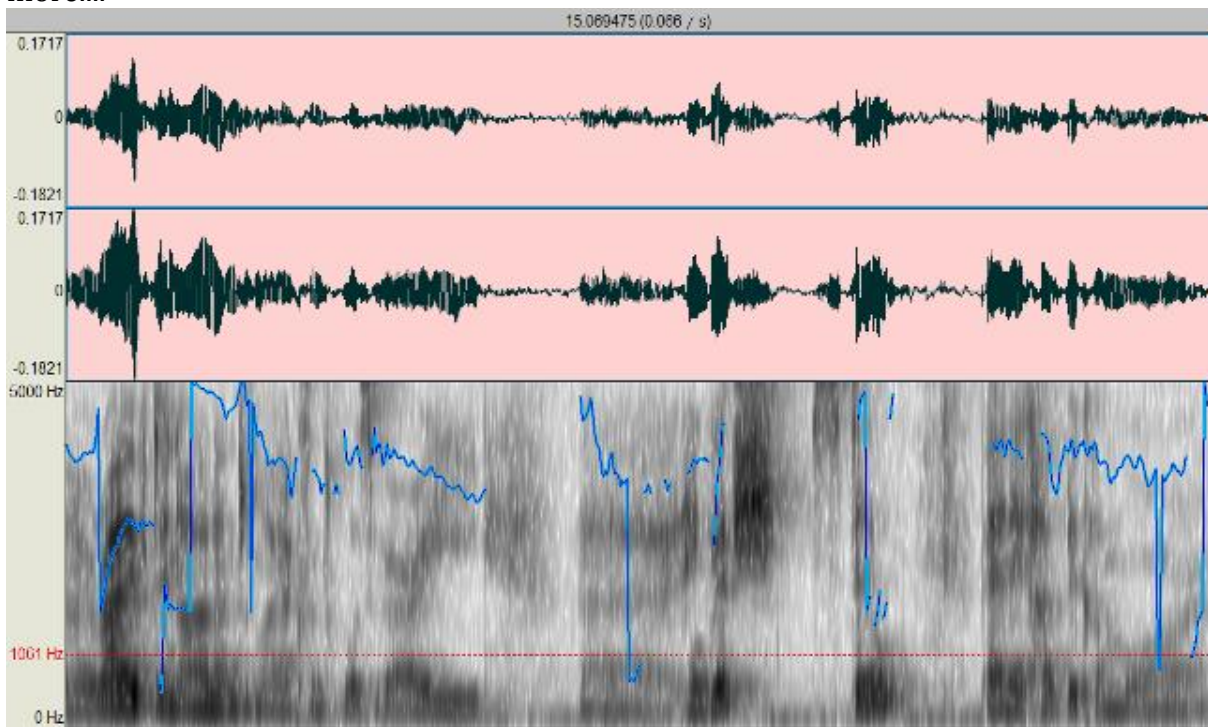
1.3 INTONATION :

- Lévana:
'So, I'm Lévana, I spent around nine months in Ireland' (0,01-0,07) (Lévana - Spont sp)

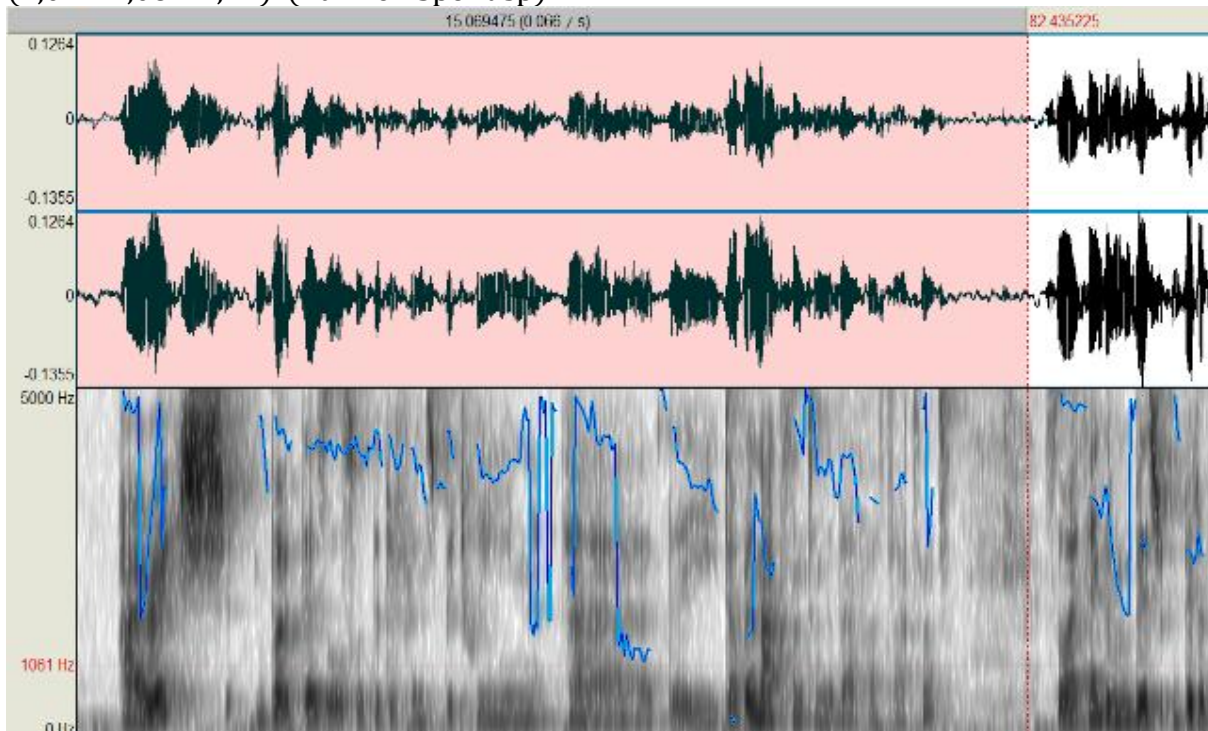


- Karine:

‘when I first arrived in Ireland, my accent was very English still, and it had become more....



... Irish, but there's also the difference between the Dublin accent and the Belfast accent' (1,07 – 1,08 – 1,21). (Karine - Spont sp)



APPENDIX 2: CORPUS (Parts in Italics only were visible for speakers)

PART 1 : READING AN EXTRACT

"If television personalities are anything like the rest of us, all they really want to do in Christmas week is snap at their families, criticize their friends and make their neighbours' children cry by glaring at them over the garden fence. Yet society expects them to be as jovial and beaming as they are for the other fifty-one weeks of the year. If anything, more so.

Take the Reverend Peter Smith, the TV vicar who sends out press releases in which he describes himself as "the man who has captured the spirit of the age". Before our 9 a.m. meeting at his media office on Crawshaw Avenue, South London, he faced, he says, a real dilemma. Should he make an effort to behave like a Christian, throw his door open, offer me a cup of tea or should he just play it cool, study his fingernails in a manner that shows bored indifference and get rid of me as quickly as possible? In the end, he did neither."

PART 2 : LIST OF WORDS

I/ Irish accent in General :

A/ Rhoticity :

1/ /ɹ/ sound

1. *there*
2. *here*
3. *sport*
4. *start*
5. *fierce*
6. *fore*
7. *fair*
8. *bored*
9. *barred*
10. *beard*
11. *pure*
12. *more*

2/ /ɜ:/ sound

1. *pearl*
2. *earth*
3. *word*
4. *fur*
5. *bird*
6. *purr*
7. *worthy*

B/ /l/ or /ɫ/ sounds

1. *feel*
2. *fail*
3. *doll*
4. *seal*
5. *bell*

6. *milk*
7. *melt*

C/ T Voicing

1. *water*
2. *party*
3. *county*
4. *started*
5. *carter*

D/ /ʊ/ quality (close to a /u:/)

1. *put*
2. *cook*
3. *soot*
4. *look*
5. *foot*

E/ /i:/ quality

1. *zeal*
2. *meal*
3. *meat*
4. *meet*
5. *steal*

F/ Diphthongs close to monophthongs

1 /eɪ/ is close to a /e/

1. *say*
2. *fail*
3. *wait*
4. *weight*
5. *mate*
6. *face*

2 /əʊ/ is close to /o/

1. *foal*
2. *bode*
3. *rose*
4. *nose*
5. *know*
6. *dole*
7. *goat*

G/ Vowels tending to be fronter

/ɒ/

1. *lot*
2. *cot*
3. *knot*
4. *doll*

5. *sorry*
6. *lock*

/ɔ:/

7. *more*
8. *board*
9. *paw*
10. *four*
11. *fore*
12. *for*
13. *caught*
14. *short*
15. *thought*

/aʊ/

16. *foul*
17. *bowed*
18. *anyhow*
19. *mouth*

H/ Weak positions

1/ Unstressed /ɪ/ is close to a /ə/

1. *spirit*
2. *peril*
3. *rabbit*
4. *tremendous*
5. *prefer*

2/ Unstressed /ə/ is close to a /o/

1. *official*
2. *opinion*

3/ Final /i/ quality

1. *marry*
2. *sorry*
3. *hurry*
4. *bury*

II/ REGIONAL ASPECTS

A/ Southern Ireland

1/ Neutralization between /ʌ/ and /ʊ/

1. *strut*
2. *rubber*
3. *supper*
4. *run*
5. *duck*

1. *put*
2. *full*
3. *cook*
4. *soot*

2/ Neutralization between /ɔɪ/ & /aɪ/

1. *choice*

2. *buy*
3. *tie*
4. *file*
5. *price*

6. *boy*
7. *toy*
8. *foil*

3/ Neutralization between /θ/ and /t/, and /ð/ and /d/.

1. *father*
2. *earthy*
3. *this*
4. *thick*
5. *worthy*
6. *faith / faiths / faithless*
7. *three*

4/ Quality of diphthongs

a/ /aɪ/

1. *Like*
2. *pike*
3. *fight*
4. *Price*

b/ /aʊ/

1. *out*
2. *mouth*
3. *pound*

5/ Western Ireland

a/ /e/ is close to /æ/

1. *many*
2. *anyhow*
3. *Mary*

b/ Neutralization between /ɪ/ and /e/

1. *kit*
2. *witch*
3. *sinner*
4. *big*
5. *bit*
6. *wit*

7. *dress*
8. *pet*
9. *bed*
10. *beg*
11. *bet*
12. *wet*

6/ Processes

a/ /ə/ absorption

1. *Police*
2. *suppose*

b/ Epenthesis

- *False* (close to 'faults')
- *bills* (close to 'builds')
- *Dublin* (3 syllables)
- *Film* (2 syllables)

B/ Northern Ireland

1/ Neutralization between /æ/ & /ʊ/ & /ʊ/

1. *sack*
2. *lap*
3. *fat*
4. *badge*
5. *fan*
6. *bat*
7. *pant*

8. *rung*
9. *rum*
10. *tuck*
11. *month*
12. *some*

13. *put*

14. *full*
15. *cook*
16. *soot*
17. *look*

2/ Scottish influence

a/ /ɪ/ is close to /i/

1. *king*
2. *brick*
3. *finish*

b/ /ɒ/ and /ɔ:/ in /w/ + -a- are close to /a/

1. *watch*
2. *was*
3. *wall*
4. *water*

c/ /ɒ/ quality

1. *what*
2. *want*
3. *oven*
4. *does*

3/ /e/ and /a/ are close

1. *beg*
2. *set*

1. *bag*
2. *sat*

4/ /ɒ/ and /ɔ:/ are distinct in front of /p, t, k/.

1. *lot*
2. *cot*
3. *knot*

4. *caught*
5. *naught*
6. *thought*

5/ Neutralization of /ʊ/ & /u:/ into /ʌ/

1. *put*
2. *full*
3. *soot*
4. *foot*

5. *zoo*
6. *mew*
7. *room*
8. *tool*

6/ Diphthong quality

a/ /aɪ/ is close to /eɪ/

1. *Like*
2. *pike*
3. *fight*
4. *Price*

b/ /aʊ/ is close to /eʌ/

1. *out*
2. *mouth*
3. *pound*

c/ /ʊə/ is close to /ʌə/

1. *sure*
2. *pure*
3. *cure*

7/ Wh- words are said with a /w/

1. *what*
2. *where*
3. *who*
4. *when*

8/ /t/ in Belfast

1. *fill*
2. *foil*
3. *doll*
4. *bell*
5. *milk*

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Marseille

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- note that for all scientific uses, the recorded data will be treated anonymously, meaning that all personal information (name, address, telephone n° etc.) will be deleted from any extracts on the audio tapes presented at conferences or in class.

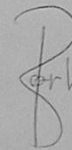
- wish for the following supplementary constraint to be respected :

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Place and date :

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Les Pennes Mirabeau

Le 24/05/2016

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Mary Ensminger

APPENDIX 4 : ARTICLE REPORT

J.C.Wells, *Accent of English 2, The British Isles* (1982)

G.Melchers and P.Shaw, *World Englishes* (2003)

INTRODUCTION

It was interesting to have several sources of information to work on for my researches. The Anglo-Irish accent, such as any other accent, is quite difficult to establish properly. There is no official pronunciation of one sound for a specific word. Sounds can evolve from one speaker to another according to their geographic locations or social status.

I will comment upon two investigations which seem to complete one another, which are J.C.Wells's *Accent of English 2, The British Isles* (1982) and G.Melchers and P.Shaw's *World Englishes* (2003). Both are a good match linguistically and phonetically speaking to understand the Irish accent from an external point of view.

It is important to consider that at the time of Wells's publication, there were very few investigations run on that subject, and in the phonetic domain more generally. Ever since, even if a lot researches have been made, Wells is still considered as one of the main references to start working on an accent. His study is striking for the diversity and variety of information, looking for any detail and accepting the fact that there can be several pronunciations for one same word.

General comparison:

Whereas Wells's work remains very much thorough, going into details, *World Englishes* adopts a more general approach which seems to be a good introduction to the study of any accent in the Anglo-speaking world. But let us notice that *Accent of English 2, The British Isles* is one of a series of three books published by Wells. The English accent in the British Isles is studied separately from the Commonwealth and the United States because of the numerous varieties of dialects spoken there.

Melchers and Shaw show us an equilibrium between phonetic and grammar. Thus, it is a less detailed work and target a larger analysis with a general approach upon phonemes, and a more important focus on the linguistic aspect of each language than in Wells's work. Therefore, there is only one book for all the Anglo-speaking world.

Historical background:

Wells enters straight into details and does not really set up the context and the evolution of the Anglo-Irish accent. On the contrary, Melchers and Shaw introduce us to the Anglo-Irish accent with a complete historical background, which allows us to understand the etymology and the dialects of the language. We learn for instance that words in Ireland come from different roots (Celtic,

Scandinavian, Norman, English). As far as English is concerned, it started being spoken

in the Pale only and was not imposed elsewhere until its reassertion by the Tudor and Stuart dynasties and the massive colonization of the North with the plantations in Ulster.

Melchers and Shaw talk about three varieties of English (Yola, Planter English, and Hiberno-English) which were spoken in Ireland in the 18th century. They take into account the status of the Irish dialect as well, which had been persecuted for so long and had nearly disappeared during the 18th and 19th centuries but was recognized in the constitution as the official language of the EIRE nowadays.

Phonemes:

Wells gives an information for every single phoneme. He takes into account the possible variation of the accent from one speaker to another. In Dublin for instance, some will pronounce LOT and THOUGHT words with the same back, rounded vowel /ɔ:/ whereas others will make a strong difference between both, even more open than in RP, saying LOT words with a fronted /a/.

More rural characteristics will be for instance the merging of PRICE and CHOICE words (especially in the wild West of the Republic).

Melchers and Shaw deal with the vowel system through a simplified but accurate means, which is presenting it through a table. It compares the accent of the EIRE and the North of Ireland with the conventional RP and GenAm. Some interesting conclusions come out of it, such as the fact that the STRUT words are said to be pronounced with the same quality of vowel everywhere, or that different phonemes in RP can merge in Northern and Southern Anglo-Irish (NURSE and SQUARE words, or CHOICE and PRICE words...). We can notice also that Gen Am and South Anglo-Irish accent are close as far as the length of vowels is concerned, making shorter phonemes than in RP or in Northern Anglo-Irish. Nevertheless, there are not many pieces of information brought about phonemes in their chapter. Monophthong, diphthongs and consonants all together are devoted three pages out of ten, whereas this is the main subject of Wells's study.

An interesting approach in Wells's work is the importance of the Gaelic influence upon the Anglo-Irish language: he establishes a link between the Anglo-Irish short vowels with the Irish short vowels of words like min, deich, fear, mar, deoch and muc. The pronunciation of long monophthongs is also taken from the pronunciation of the long Irish vowels in words such as mín, méan, fáth, bó, rún.

Wells is also the only one to give time to phonetical processes, talking about epenthesis, absorption and coalescence, but he does not dwell on dialects or lexicon, which are likely to be found in Melchers and Shaw's work. However, neither of them really exploit the supra-segmental scale.

Consonants:

Beyond Wells's analysis of the Irish vowel system, we may mention the precise description of some key consonants as well. Wells lists several pronunciations of -t- according to its environment and to the regional and social origin of the speaker (T Voicing, T Tapping, T Glottalizing...). The lenition of -t- into /h/ is a common Celtic process as well.

As far as the -r- is concerned, Wells says that there are two possible pronunciations for the /r/, one said as clear, and another one said with a post-alveolar approximant /ɹ/ in final and pre-consonantal positions. But Wells considers that the degree of retroflexion is not submitted to variation according to regional and social origins (for instance, in Dublin, a /r/ in a post-vocalic position after a /ə/ can drop, just like in RP).

Grammatical aspects:

This is where it is interesting to combine both works together. Melchers and Shaw bring a lot of interesting pieces of information on the grammatical scale. Indeed, we learn for instance that the lexicon in Ireland today takes mainly from three sources: Irish (from a cultural identity), English (from the plantations) and Scottish mixed with French-rooted words (Scots being numerous in Northern Ireland). Some Gaelic influence can be for instance the nominalization (giving the status of a noun to a sentence), such as in the example 'If I had the doing of it again, I would do it different'.

Another interesting point is the question of plurality in grammar. There is an unmarked plurality taken from Scottish language in words or expressions indicating the measure of time or space ('two mile', 'five year'...). Irish language also makes the difference between singular and plural for instance, and some people today separate the singular and the plural "you" (you / youse).

The question of 'habitual be' is also targeted, with the difference between 'he is sick now' (which is punctual) and 'he be's sick often' (which is habitual).

CONCLUSION

Wells's work is very much detailed and complete, but it would have been easier to recap things at the end of each point in order not to lose pieces of information. He establishes the global aspects of the Anglo-Irish accent at the end of his study in a very abstract way. It seems to present the Anglo-Irish accent as the one known and heard by the Anglo-speaking world, without its regional specificities.

Through Melchers and Shaw's work are concerned, it is interesting to see the evolution of the Anglo-Irish accent from the one as established by Wells and the one registered today. There are basically not many variations from one work to another; Wells being too specific to compare on each point, but the combination of both is a good summary of the Anglo-Irish accent.