Irish English

English has been spoken in Ireland for over 800 years, making Irish English the oldest variety of the language outside Britain. This book traces the development of English in Ireland, both north and south, from the late Middle Ages to the present day. Drawing on authentic data ranging from medieval literature to contemporary examples, it reveals how Irish English arose, how it has developed and how it continues to change. A variety of central issues are considered in detail, such as the nature of language contact and the shift from Irish to English, the sociolinguistically motivated changes in present-day Dublin English, the special features of Ulster Scots, and the transportation of Irish English to overseas locations as diverse as Canada, the United States and Australia. Presenting a comprehensive survey of Irish English at all levels of language, this book will be invaluable to historical linguists, sociolinguists, syntacticians and phonologists alike.

RAYMOND HICKEY is Professor of Linguistics in the Department of English, Essen University, Germany. His previous books include Motives for Language Change (Cambridge University Press, 2003) and Legacies of Colonial English (Cambridge University Press, 2004).
STUDIES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

General editor
Merja Kytö (Uppsala University)

Editorial Board
Bas Aarts (University College London), John Algeo (University of Georgia), Susan Fitzmaurice (Northern Arizona University), Richard Hogg (University of Manchester), Charles F. Meyer (University of Massachusetts)

The aim of this series is to provide a framework for original studies of English, both present-day and past. All books are based securely on empirical research, and represent theoretical and descriptive contributions to our knowledge of national and international varieties of English, both written and spoken. The series covers a broad range of topics and approaches, including syntax, phonology, grammar, vocabulary, discourse, pragmatics and sociolinguistics, and is aimed at an international readership.

Already published in this series:

Christian Mair  Infinitival Complement Clauses in English: a Study of Syntax in Discourse
Charles F. Meyer  Apposition on Contemporary English
Jan Firbas  Functional Sentence Perspective in Written and Spoken Communication
Izchak M. Schlesinger  Cognitive Space and Linguistic Case
Katie Wales  Personal Pronouns in Present-day English
Laura Wright  The Development of Standard English, 1300–1800: Theories, Descriptions, Conflicts
Charles F. Meyer  English Corpus Linguistics: Theory and Practice
Stephen J. Nagle and Sara L. Sanders (eds.)  English in the Southern United States
Anne Curzan  Gender Shifts in the History of English
Kingsley Bolton  Chinese Englishes
Irma Taavitsainen and Päivi Pahta (eds.)  Medical and Scientific Writing in Late Medieval English
Elizabeth Gordon, Lyle Campbell, Jennifer Hay, Margaret Maclagan, Andrea Sudbury and Peter Trudgill  New Zealand English: Its Origins and Evolution
Raymond Hickey (ed.)  Legacies of Colonial English
Merja Kytö, Mats Rydén and Erik Smitherberg (eds.)  Nineteenth-Century English: Stability and Change
John Algeo  British or American English? A Handbook of Word and Grammar Patterns
Christian Mair  Twentieth-century English: History, Variation and Standardization
Evelien Keizer  The English Noun Phrase: the Nature of Linguistic Categorization
Irish English
History and present-day forms

RAYMOND HICKEY

Essen University
# Contents

*Detailed list of contents*  ix  
*List of maps*  xiv  
*List of tables*  xv  
*Preface*  xix  

1 Introduction  1  
2 History I: The coming of the English  30  
3 History II: The settlement of Ulster  85  
4 The emergence of Irish English  121  
5 Present-day Irish English  296  
6 Transportation overseas  384  

*Appendixes*  
1 An outline of Irish history  419  
2 The history of Irish English studies  423  
3 Extracts from the *Kildare Poems*  426  
4 Forth and Bargy  429  
5 Glossary  431  
6 Maps  437  

*References*  446  
*Subject index*  488  
*Name index*  497
Detailed contents

1 Introduction
   1.1 The aim of the present book
       1.1.1 Scope of this study
       1.1.2 The old and the new
   1.2 Questions of terminology
       1.2.1 Anglo-Irish, Hiberno-English and Irish English
       1.2.2 Northern Irish English
       1.2.3 Non-linguistic terms
       1.2.4 Ireland and Britain
       1.2.5 External references
       1.2.6 The term Irish
   1.3 The identity of Irish English
       1.3.1 English in Northern Ireland
       1.3.2 Mixed accents
       1.3.3 Negative definers
       1.3.4 Misconceptions about Irish English
       1.3.5 Malapropisms and shibboleths
   1.4 An outline of attitudes
       1.4.1 The historical background
       1.4.2 British English and Irish English
       1.4.3 Attitudes, consciousness and recognition
       1.4.4 Irish universities and the English language
       1.4.5 Is there ‘standard Irish English’?
       1.4.6 Possible future developments
2 History I: The coming of the English
   2.1 External developments
       2.1.1 The spread of English
Detailed contents

2.1.2 The situation in late medieval Ireland 33
2.1.3 Ireland under the Tudors 34
2.1.4 The seventeenth century 37
2.1.5 The eighteenth century 41
2.1.6 The nineteenth century 45

2.2 Languages in medieval Ireland 48
2.2.1 English and Anglo-Norman 49
2.2.2 The status of Anglo-Norman 50
2.2.3 The position of English 52

2.3 A singular document: the Kildare Poems 54
2.3.1 Sound segments 55
2.3.2 Sound processes 59
2.3.3 Open syllable lengthening 62

2.4 The antiquarian temptation: Forth and Bargy 66
2.4.1 Origin 67
2.4.2 Handling the orthography 69
2.4.3 Forth and Bargy and the Kildare Poems 70
2.4.4 A postulated sound system 72
2.4.5 The dialect of Fingal 82

3 History II: The settlement of Ulster 85

3.1 Background 85
3.1.1 Plantation in Ulster 87
3.1.2 Mid-seventeenth-century Ulster 90
3.1.3 Ethnic distribution in seventeenth-century Ulster 91
3.1.4 Presbyterianism in Ulster 92

3.2 English in Ulster 93
3.2.1 Irish in Ulster 94

3.3 Ulster Scots 96
3.3.1 Attestations of Ulster Scots 99
3.3.2 The Ulster Scots revival 100
3.3.3 Delimiting Ulster Scots 103
3.3.4 Grammar 108
3.3.5 Vocabulary 110

3.4 Ulster English 110
3.4.1 Denominational differences 112
3.4.2 The north–south transition 113
4 The emergence of Irish English

4.1 Language shift in Ireland
4.1.1 Access to English and role of input
4.1.2 Unguided adult language acquisition

4.2 The case for contact
4.2.1 Types of contact
4.2.2 What can be traced to contact?
4.2.3 The search for categorial equivalence
4.2.4 The prosody of transfer
4.2.5 Coincidental parallels
4.2.6 What does not get transferred

4.3 Structural features of Irish
4.3.1 The verbal area
4.3.2 The nominal and pronominal areas
4.3.3 The prepositional area
4.3.4 Sentence structure

4.4 The grammar of Irish English
4.4.1 The verbal area
4.4.2 The nominal and pronominal areas
4.4.3 The prepositional area
4.4.4 Determiners
4.4.5 The adverbial area
4.4.6 Sentence structure
4.4.7 Conclusion: the significance of the nineteenth century

4.5 Models and interpretations
4.5.1 Retention and convergence
4.5.2 Evidence for grammaticalisation
4.5.3 Arguments for creolisation
4.5.4 Prototype analysis

4.6 Ireland as a linguistic area

4.7 Epilogue: the influence of English on Irish

5 Present-day Irish English

5.1 The early modern background
5.1.1 Shakespeare and Irish English
### Detailed contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2</td>
<td>The tradition of caricature</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3</td>
<td>The language of Jonathan Swift</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.4</td>
<td>Drama in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.5</td>
<td>A summary of historical features</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Vernacular Irish English</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Supraregional Irish English</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>The sound system</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.1</td>
<td>Vowels</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.2</td>
<td>Consonants</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.3</td>
<td>Lenition in Irish English</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.4</td>
<td>Yod dropping</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.5</td>
<td>Stress patterning</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.6</td>
<td>Lexical sets for Irish English</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Urban Irish English</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.1</td>
<td>English in Belfast</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.2</td>
<td>English in Derry</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.3</td>
<td>English in Coleraine</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.4</td>
<td>English in Dublin</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>The lexicon of Irish English</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>The pragmatics of Irish English</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7.1</td>
<td>The vernacular mode</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7.2</td>
<td>Consensuality</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7.3</td>
<td>Pragmatic markers</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilogue 1</td>
<td>Irish English as a second language</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilogue 2</td>
<td>The language of Irish Travellers</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Transportation overseas</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Emigration from Ireland</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.1</td>
<td>Assessing features in overseas varieties</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.2</td>
<td>Features not found overseas</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.3</td>
<td>Survival of non-standard features in overseas varieties</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.4</td>
<td>Further developments overseas</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>The Irish in Britain</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1</td>
<td>Merseyside</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.2</td>
<td>Teesside</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.3</td>
<td>Tyneside</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.4</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Detailed contents

6.3 The United States 398
  6.3.1 Ulster Scots in the United States 399
  6.3.2 Nineteenth-century emigration 402
  6.3.3 African American English 405

6.4 Canada 407
  6.4.1 Newfoundland 407
  6.4.2 Mainland Canada 409

6.5 The Caribbean 410
  6.5.1 The case of Barbados 411

6.6 Australia 414

6.7 New Zealand 417

**Appendixes**

1 An outline of Irish history 419
2 The history of Irish English studies 423
3 Extracts from the *Kildare Poems* 426
4 Forth and Bargy 429
5 Glossary 431
6 Maps 437

**References** 446

**Subject index** 488

**Name index** 497
Maps

5.1 Present-day Belfast
A6.1 Provinces and counties of Ireland
A6.2 English dialect regions in Ireland
A6.3 Irish-speaking districts (Gaeltachtai) in present-day Ireland
A6.4 Source areas in Scotland for seventeenth-century emigration to Ulster
A6.5 Varieties of English in Ulster (after Harris 1985)
A6.6 The present-day greater Dublin area
A6.7 The spread of English from Ireland
A6.8 Locations of informants from the Tape-Recorded Survey of Hiberno-English Speech
# Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Prominent features of northern Irish accents of English</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Implicational scale for syntactic features of (southern) Irish English</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Haugen’s criteria for standard languages</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Approximate scales of standardness for Irish English</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Recessive features in mainstream Irish English</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Features shared by middle-class Protestants and Catholics in southern Ireland</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Illiteracy in mid to late nineteenth century Ireland</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Population and land holdings in mid to late nineteenth century</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Features of medieval Irish English after McIntosh and Samuels (1968)</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Consonantal features in the language of the <em>Kildare Poems</em></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Phonological processes in the language of the <em>Kildare Poems</em></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Open syllable lengthening in the <em>Kildare Poems</em></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Possible Flemish loanwords in Forth and Bargy</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Comparison of features in the <em>Kildare Poems</em> and Forth and Bargy</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Summary of the main reconstructed features of Forth and Bargy</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Demographic percentages for seven counties in Ulster c. 1660 (after Robinson 1994 [1984]: 105)</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Types of English in Ulster (See map 6A.5 in appendix 6)</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Main areas of Scots settlement in Ulster</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Features of Older Scots and conservative Ulster Scots</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Reflexes of Middle English /o/ before /l/, [l]</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Historical vowel quantity changes and Ulster Scots</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Grammatical features of both northern and southern Irish English</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Possible sources of features in Irish English</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

xxv
### List of tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Features of unguided adult language acquisition</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Types of contact</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Category and exponence in Irish and Irish English</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Factors favouring transfer of grammatical categories</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Non-occurring features of Irish in <em>A Collection of Contact English</em></td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Responsives and tag questions in English and Irish</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Data sources for grammatical analysis of Irish English</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Code-switching in <em>A Collection of Contact English</em></td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>Highest acceptance figures (over 50 per cent) in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentence Amn’t I leaving soon anyway?</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>Acceptance figures for non-standard verbal concord in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em></td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>Acceptance figures in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentence He went to Dublin for to buy a car</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>Acceptance figures in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentence She allowed him drive the car</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>Acceptance figures from Ulster counties in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentence He might could come after all</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>Information in verb phrases and aspectual distinctions</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>Acceptance figures in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentence I know her for five years now</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>Stages in the development of the immediate perfective in Irish</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>Acceptance figures in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentence She’s after spilling the milk</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>Contrast between <em>simple past</em> and <em>resultative perfective</em></td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>Results for contrast between <em>simple past</em> and <em>resultative perfective</em></td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>Acceptance figures in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentence She has the housework done</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>Exponence of the habitual (iterative and durative) in varieties of English</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>Development of invariant <em>be to be (es)</em> habitual in Ulster English</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>Acceptance figures in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentence She does be worrying about the children</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>Highest acceptance figures in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentence Did you use to cycle to school?</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>Relative acceptance figures in <em>A Survey of Irish English Usage</em> for the test sentences (1) She does be worrying about the children and (2) Did you use to cycle to school?</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of tables  xvii

4.27 Acceptance figures in *A Survey of Irish English Usage* for the test sentence *They bees up late at night* 236
4.28 Acceptance figures in test for the sentence *The kids bees up late at night* 237
4.29 Highest acceptance figures (90%+) in *A Survey of Irish English Usage* for the test sentence *Are ye going out tonight?* 238
4.30 Highest acceptance figures (70%+) in *A Survey of Irish English Usage* for the test sentence *What are youse up to?* 239
4.31 Highest acceptance figures (50%+) in *A Survey of Irish English Usage* for the test sentence *What were yez up to?* 240
4.32 Highest acceptance figures (87%+) in *A Survey of Irish English Usage* for the test sentence *He likes the life in Galway* 253
4.33 Highest acceptance figures (80%+) in *A Survey of Irish English Usage* for the test sentence *She never rang yesterday evening* 254
4.34 Highest acceptance figures (80%+) in *A Survey of Irish English Usage* for the test sentence *Come here till I tell you* 266
4.35 Distribution of contractions of *will* by author 273
4.36 Hierarchy of inversion with embedded questions 274
4.37 Tests for inversion with embedded questions in *A Survey of Irish English Usage*: (1) *yes/no* questions, (2) *wh*-questions 275
4.38 Convergence scenarios in the history of Irish English 280
4.39 Suggestions for sources of key features of southern Irish English 282
4.40 Stages of grammaticalisation (Heine and Kuteva 2004: 80) 283
4.41 Extension of the habitual in Irish English 289
4.42 Areal features in Ireland 293
5.1 Historical features of Irish English pronunciation 304
5.2 Occurrences of *serve*, *service*, *deserve*, *certain* with *serve*-lowering among nineteenth- and twentieth-century authors 311
5.3 Restriction of vernacular features as of the twentieth century 313
5.4 Syllable position and lenition in Irish English 324
5.5 Classification of lenition alternatives in Irish English 324
5.6 Lexical sets for supraregional Irish English 327
5.7 Changes in Derry English (DE) 343
5.8 Changes in Derry English according to ethnicity 344
5.9 Features of fifteenth-century Dublin English 347
5.10 Vowel realisations in local Dublin English 352
5.11 Dublin Vowel Shift, principal movements 356
5.12 Reactions to vowel retraction and rounding 357
5.13 Comparative vowel values of local, mainstream and new Dublin English 357
List of tables

5.14 Further features of new Dublin English 358
5.15 New Dublin English (NDE) and Estuary English (EE) / Cockney 361
5.16 Group of non-native speakers of Irish English 377
5.17 Selected lexical items supposedly typical of Shelta (from recordings of Travellers in the sound archives of the Department of Irish Folklore, University College Dublin) 382
6.1 Possible sources for features in overseas varieties 386
6.2 Features of Tyneside English attested in the Newcastle Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English (NECTE) 395
6.3 Irish-born in the United States after the mid nineteenth century 403
6.4 Development of English on Barbados 412
Preface

This book offers an overview of Irish English, both of its history and its present-day forms. English has existed in Ireland for over 800 years and so is the oldest form of the language outside the island of Britain. It has furthermore developed internally in many ways, for instance, through the early establishment of urban varieties, particularly in the cities of the east coast, most notably in Dublin. The language has also been under the continuing influence of Irish, which was the first language of the majority of the population until the beginning of the nineteenth century. This makes Irish English a language-shift variety and so offers a scenario for the development of English which it shares with countries as far apart as Scotland and South Africa.

The question of language contact is considered in detail in the present book (see section 4.2). Recently, there has been much linguistic discussion of the relative weight to be accorded to contact or to the retention of inherited features of British English and the treatment here is intended to reflect prevailing concerns and standpoints in variety studies.

The development of English in Ireland has seen several periods characterised by waves of settlement. Perhaps the most significant of these for present-day Irish English was the large-scale settlement of the north of the country from the west of Scotland and the Lowlands in the seventeenth century, yielding Ulster Scots, a unique variety of English which has increased in topicality in recent years. The interaction of Scots settlers with both Irish speakers and other settlers, chiefly from the north of England, has led to a complex linguistic landscape in Ulster which is given special treatment here (see chapter 3).

From a sociolinguistic point of view the study of Irish English is a rewarding enterprise. The two major cities of Ireland, Belfast and Dublin, are important because of the varieties of English found there (see section 5.5). Studies of these offer perspectives on sociolinguistic developments which are undoubtedly of interest to scholars in the field. The investigations of Belfast English have provided insights into the linguistic nature of social networks. These are available in the many studies by James and Lesley Milroy and are summarised here. For Dublin English the investigations carried out by the author in the past decade
xx Preface

(Hickey 2005) are presented to show what change has taken place recently and in what direction contemporary supraregional Irish English is moving.

The transportation of English from the British Isles to overseas locations began in the early seventeenth century. The precise nature of the transported varieties is of importance to the genesis of overseas forms of English (see the contributions in Raymond Hickey (ed.), *Legacies of Colonial English*, Cambridge University Press, 2004). For scholars working in this area it is essential to have first-hand descriptions of the source varieties. A primary aim of this book is to provide this kind of description, seeing as how Irish English has fed into varieties of English at such diverse locations as Canada, the United States, the Caribbean, Australia and New Zealand in the course of three centuries.

The field of Irish English is served well by many studies in article form and a few monographs (see Hickey 2002a for details). In recent years a more data-driven approach has become obvious (see Filppula 1999). The present study is to be understood in this light. For the historical sections (in sections 2.3 and 2.4) the author has used his *Corpus of Irish English* (available in Hickey 2003a). For the discussion of present-day varieties (see chapter 5) several sets of data were employed, above all *A Sound Atlas of Irish English* and *A Survey of Irish English Usage* (Hickey 2004a), as well as data collected specifically for the present book. These sources offer a new basis on which to both test traditional views and reach new conclusions about the exact nature of Irish English.

To conclude, I would like to thank the three anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press who went to considerable lengths to offer constructive criticism from which the book has benefitted appreciably. In addition, my thanks go to various colleagues who have helped me with their expertise in areas which interface with Irish English (acknowledgements are given at the appropriate points in the book). Lastly, I would like to thank the staff at Cambridge University Press, especially Helen Barton, the linguistics editor, for her encouragement and professionalism, as well as Kay McKechnie for her help and patience during the production process.

Raymond Hickey
October 2006