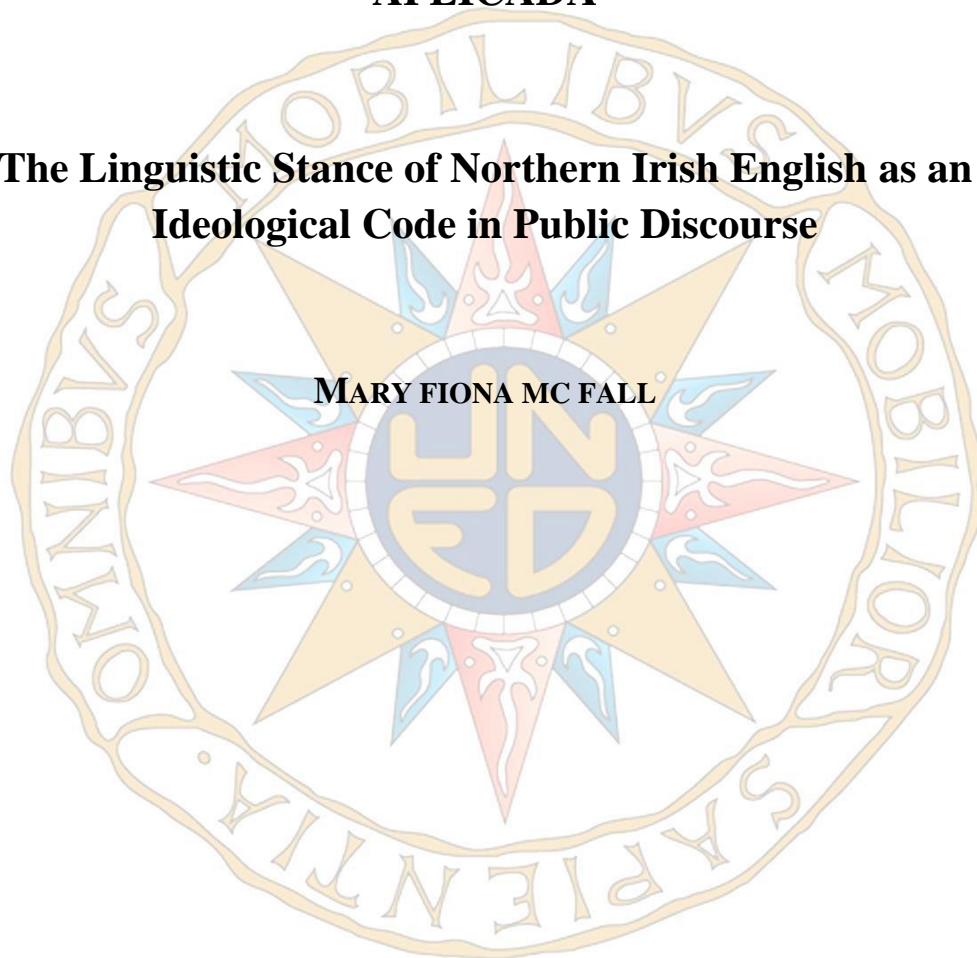




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**The Linguistic Stance of Northern Irish English as an
Ideological Code in Public Discourse**

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Abstract

The troubled history of Northern Ireland, largely due to its colonization by the British government, has brought about a segregation and mutual rejection of the two main religious/ideological communities (Protestant/Unionist and Catholic/Nationalist) living side by side on the island. This division has caused a phenomenon of almost fanatical nationalism in both groups i.e., a yearning for the days of British imperialism by the Protestant/Unionist community and a desire for the Ulster province's transition from a British colony to an all-Ireland republic by the Catholic/Nationalist community. Members remain firmly attached to the social identities of their ingroup and may even perceive the outgroup as hostile and dangerous. In this Master's dissertation, I have set out to show how the phonological variants of the Northern Irish English dialect (NIE), used in the public domain, differ according to the professed ideology of the speakers in each speech community, with Protestant/Unionists preferring the Received Pronunciation English variant (RP) and Catholic/Nationalists preferring the NIE standard dialect. I aim to show that these differences are not regiolects but may be considered as sociolects. I believe that speaker intentionality in both of these sociolects is a conscious move not only to distance ingroup members from the outgroup through linguistic allegiance to either NIE or RP standards, but that through said choices of performative speech acts, continuously reaffirm ideological stance and allegiance.

Keywords: Northern Ireland, colonization, Protestant/Unionist, Catholic/Nationalist, NIE, RP, ideology, speech community, regiolect, sociolect, speaker intentionality, linguistic allegiance, performative speech acts

1. Introduction

Sociolinguistics allows us to analyse language events under the influences of ethnicity, gender, ideology, and social rank. Sociolinguistic studies are important tools for the enhancement of educational practices, language policies, politics, and the media (Schmitt & Rodgers, 2020). This sociolinguistic study aims to look at language variation from an ethnic, political, and ideological viewpoint and will try to prove the existence of, explain the reasons for, as well as the patterns and structures of two sociolects in the British annexed province of Ulster in the North of Ireland.

Ireland is an island situated in the North Atlantic Ocean. It is separated from the British mainland by the Irish sea and is divided into the Republic of Ireland with a population of around 5.1 million people and Northern Ireland, an annex of the UK, with a population of just over 1.8 million people. The official languages spoken in the Republic of Ireland are English and Irish. In 2018, the Irish linguist Aodán Mac Póilin stated in his book of essays, *Our Tangled Speech* that there are currently around 1.5 million Irish speakers on the island (Mac Póilin, 2021). Irish has been an official language, alongside English, in the Republic of Ireland since the Republic's independence from Britain in 1922, but only since May 2022 has a bill been pushed through Westminster to make the Irish language official in the North of Ireland. That same "Language Act" also contemplates the officialization of the Ulster Scots dialogue spoken in the North of the Ulster Province.

Although the entire population of Ireland speaks English, which will be referred to generally as Irish English (IRE) in this study, the linguistic variations of the English dialect spoken in the Republic of Ireland are very different to those of the English dialect spoken in the North of Ireland, (NIE) in this study. Both also differ greatly from standard English or Received Pronunciation, (RP) in this study, spoken in the rest of the British Isles. To understand this Master's dissertation, it is necessary first to recognize the existence of the linguistic variations found in NIE and link them to the historical events and differing migrations that have occurred in the area.

Due to the proximity of the English mainland, the English language permeated the island of Ireland through the continuous raids from the Scottish and English, in particular the Anglo-Normans (Cunliffe, 2010). It took longer to move north into the province of Ulster, and it was only when the Scottish and English planters seized the lands from the Irish speaking

natives, in the seventeenth century, that the English language became more predominant in the area. The planters initially settled the North and the East of Ulster but soon extended throughout the whole province. The Irish speaking “Gaeltacht” area of Donegal remained predominantly so right up to the beginning of the twentieth century. Hence, the English spoken in Ireland (IRE) has varied linguistic elements of the English spoken by those planters from the Southwest and the Midwest of England, Scottish English-speaking planters, and the indigenous Irish language.

1.1. Justification and Objectives

In this Master’s dissertation, we will be looking at the linguistic variables in NIE provoked by historical events, between two territorially based cultural groups, both born within its boundaries. The first group consider themselves members of the British nation-state, i.e., sharing identity and culture (including linguistic identity) with the rest of the British Isles and reneging on any form of Irish identity by clinging tightly to their Britishness through their Protestant /Unionist ideologies. The second group feel affiliated to the Irish nation, which they believe to be socio-culturally different to the rest of the British Isles. They follow Catholic/Nationalist ideologies and traditions, while being forced to live inside what they see as an imposing state, a state-nation (Linz, Stepan and Yadav, 2003).

I aim to show that these two ideological groups can be defined as two different speech communities with two different language ideologies, based on different linguistic features. The linguistic variants in the different speech communities can be seen as a reinforcement of the community’s social and political values where the linguistic variation, even of the same language, NIE as is the case here, is a question of language loyalty. People are consciously aware of their personal, ethnic, geographical, political, and family identities and this awareness plays an important role in their language use, where this allegiance is expressed by a further allegiance to linguistic variables. In fact, these speech communities can even be defined by their use of these linguistic variables (Llamas and Watt, 2009).

As a native of Northern Ireland, born into a Catholic/Nationalist family in a working-class area of Belfast, I have always known that how we speak in the region known as Ulster, and especially in Belfast, is very different to how people speak in the rest of the British Isles. However, I have always noticed that public figures, especially Unionist/Protestant politicians

emulate a standard British RP accent in their public discourse, whereas Catholic/Nationalist politicians speak “like us,” i.e., the linguistic variation generally spoken in Northern Ireland. I have always been interested in the Language /Identity and Language Ideology connection (Johnstone 2018). So, in this Master’s dissertation I have decided to explore the linguistic differences and ideologies in both speech communities. I intend to show that the language variables in both speech communities differ depending on the professed political allegiance of each group. I aim to show that the pro-British population in Ulster may have linguistic loyalty to a more RP variation of IRE, whereas the Catholic/Nationalist population adhere more to the linguistic features of NIE. The linguistic features to be studied are the presence or absence of the rhotic /r/, the dropping of the “g” in the gerund aspect of the verb, the presence or absence of vowel variations different to the RP standard and the presence or absence of the T- voicing in public discourse.

Therefore, this study can be divided into two categories. Firstly, a formal linguistic category, based on research on varieties of IRE and NIE as opposed to RP standards to explain the absence or presence of such RP standards in two different speech communities in Northern Ireland. The second category of objectives I aim to research are of a sociolinguistic type in order to explain the present day sociocultural and political context in Northern Ireland and how the use of the English language has helped to shape the two different Ulster identities by producing two different speech communities with their own linguistic variants. According to Schmitt & Rodgers (2022), the tendency in the rest of the British Isles is for differences between accents to become less marked due to geographical and social mobility. This is not played out in Northern Ireland where there is great linguistic variation, especially phonological variation between two speech communities in the Ulster province. My goal here is to analyse and understand these variations in an attempt to prove that these are socially provoked and therefore somewhat external to the linguistic systems of linguist shift or linguistic change and that they may be considered as speaker-based conscious choices to demonstrate ideology through language loyalty.

By studying the presence or absence of different features in each of the speech communities —the “g” dropping phenomenon, the absence or presence of the rhotic /r/, the presence or absence of vowel variations deviant from the RP standard and the absence or presence of T-voicing.

I intend to analyse different phonological aspects in a series of political speech acts in two opposing political speech communities, the Protestant/Unionist speech community in the Ulster province and the Catholic/Nationalist speech community in the same province. To do so, I will create a corpus of speech acts, taken from the public domain to test if these features are indeed relevant and adapted to each political discourse and by extension to the identity or political positioning of the transmitter of this discourse through their speech acts.

I hope to discover how often these features occur in the corpus discourse and if the speech community in question, consciously, decides either to use or not to use the linguistic variable in question. I intend to look into the connotations of the use or non-use of these variables and find out what this choice means for both the speaker (message transmitter) and the listener (message receiver). I also aim to show whether the speaker tries to attribute more prestige to their speech acts through the presence or absence of certain linguistic variables and the possible stigma or prestige attached to such choices.

With a very heavy heart, I would like to show that these two communities are still miles apart, socially, ethnically, and ideologically. Although, thankfully, people in Northern Ireland are no longer killing each other to prove their allegiance to one ideology or another, they have not resolved their differences. It is very easy to categorize individuals and their speech communities through their linguistic choices, stigma and mistrust that arises from these choices. This study aims to examine and give reasons to explain that stigma. Not only in Northern Ireland does the Catholic/Nationalist speech community stigmatize the RP accent and its emulated variations used by some members of the Protestant/Unionist speech community, but this stigma is also present all around the British Isles and RP is no longer an accent to which non-RP speakers aspire. It is negatively associated with being distant and arrogant (Trudgill, 2013). On the other hand, Curtis (1981) cites prejudice against the Irish as “one of the largest secular trends in English cultural history.” He stipulates that they are perceived to be violent and very heavy drinkers. This is how the Protestant/Unionist community stigmatizes the Catholic /Nationalist speech community and their quest to distance themselves from this stereotype is possibly a reason for their adherence to RP pronunciation.

Another of my objectives is to show that in Northern Ireland, far from being a socio-economic fixture (Wells 1982), language choice in public discourse is a personal choice. This language choice may be described as “the ways of talking that create and are created by conventional ways of thinking” (Alba-Juez, 2022). Therefore, I aim to research the hypothesis

on the hypercorrection of the Protestant/Unionist speech community as opposed to the covert prestige that may be gained by the refusal to emulate RP linguistic features by the Catholic/Nationalist speech community. The final objective is to show that the differences in linguistic variation may be due to the allegiance to the British monarchy by one group of speakers analysed and allegiance to an Irish republic by the other group of speakers.

1.2. Literature Review

The hypothesis that people are always trying to accomplish something through their discourse is an idea that has been looked at by language ideologists on numerous occasions. Recent research on this topic can be seen in (Johnstone 2018), with her work on how people speak in Pittsburgh, US and to what ends. Other studies sometimes place the linguistic variations into a socio-economic dichotomy (Todd, 1989) which perhaps was applicable to Northern Ireland in the past, since Catholics were less educated and had fewer civil rights than their Protestant counterparts on the island, due to the historical colonial process. I would like to show that linguistic choice in Northern Ireland now transcends the socio-economic perspective and is more a question of language ideology. To research the topic from a functional perspective, I will consult Gimson's guide to the *Pronunciation of English* sixth edition by Alan Cruttenden (2001) for a general revision of RP. To look at general IRE variants and to explain the process of the language shift from Irish to English, I will research Raymond Hickey's *Irish English History and Present-Day Variants* (Hickey, 2007) and I will follow that up with a study of John C. Wells' work on *English Accents in the British Isles* (Wells, 1982) for a more in-depth study of the IRE variants.

For the history of the English language in Ireland and more information on linguistic features, I will consult Peter Trudgill's book *Language in The British Isles* (Trudgill, 2001) and to obtain a more modern perspective, will consult these aspects in the book by Geoff Lindsey called *English After RP* (Linsey, 2019). This book has a foreword from the linguist John C. Wells and is pivotal in its valuable insight into the stigma attached to hypercorrection in the use of RP.

To further study stigma and linguistic identity from a Discourse Analysis perspective, I will revise the notes from the material on the subject of Discourse Analysis from the Master's programme in Applied Linguistics by Dr Alba-Juez (UNED, 2020). Previous study of the

subject during the Master's course has led me to studies by Schiffrin (2006) and Johnstone's heuristic for analyzing discourse (2017), Mikhail Bakhtin's essays (1971) on the intertextual approach to language and Bordieu whose observation that "language has become marketable, and a sort of commodity and its purveyors can market themselves through their skills of linguistic and textual manipulation" (Bordieu,1982) all ring very true with this research.

The Irish Studies Centre website at Queen's University Belfast is a valuable resource for this type of research, allowing me access to reviews on social identity and conflict in Northern Ireland (Gallagher, 1986), the Northern Irish identity (Mc Nicholl, 2019) and Mc Bride on identity, unity, and the limits of democracy (Mc Bride, 2007). Ruth Wodak's study set down in her book *Language, Power and Ideology* (Wodak,1989) is an excellent resource for information on political ideology and language. I must also mention the valuable material, too long to set out in the limits of this Master's dissertation, published on the online platform for the subjects of the Master's in Applied Linguistics in English, UNED.

Key to my analysis is the research on the studied speech acts from a gender perspective, especially in the Protestant/Unionist community, based on work by Deborah Tannen (1996), as is Labov's work on linguistic variants and social norms (Labov, 1972). For my conclusions on speaker intentionality and identity in Northern Ireland, I aim to study the Irish historian Mc Bride (2007) and also look into the resurrected ideas on Whorfianism and language as a construct for different realities in Shotter (2002), which I feel is applicable to the Northern Ireland linguistic reality. To get a better grasp of the social implications of the "g" dropping phenomenon in the history of the English language, I will consult Kiesling (2019). I will also research Labov's "Situational Formality" theory (Labov, 1972), as regards "g" dropping to discover if it may be applied to the speech communities to be analysed.

In her book *Evaluation and Context* (2014), the linguist and UNED professor, Laura Alba-Juez describes linguistic evaluation as

a dynamical subsystem of language, permeating all linguistic levels and involving the speaker's or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoints on, or feelings about, the entities or propositions that s/he is talking about which entails relational work including the (possible and prototypically expected and subsequent) response of the hearer or (potential) audience. This relational work is generally related to the speakers and/or the hearer's personal group, or personal set of values. (Alba_Juez, 2014)

I aim to show that this “personal set of values” is played out linguistically in the accents and other aforementioned linguistic features in Northern Ireland and not only from a socio-economic perspective but from a political ideological stance, which may be considered the “verbal realization” (Alba-Juez & Thompson, 2014) of that stance.

1.3. Methodological Process and Description of Sample Population

This Master’s dissertation will be divided up into four chapters. In the introduction, I have explained the linguistic situation in Northern Ireland and the identity and ideologies connected to the different speech communities in the region. I have also given a review of the literature on the topic of linguistic identity that I have consulted to write this study. In the second chapter, I will detail the history of the English language on the island and the attrition of the Irish language caused by the language shift from Irish to English. This is important since both IRE and NIE still retain different features of the Irish language as well as some Middle English features introduced by the English settlers.

In the second chapter, I will also cover current expressions of identity and culture associated with different accents in Ulster, rooted in the political beliefs and traditions of the two different speech communities to be studied, the ideas of prestige or stigma attached to these cultures and how the opposing speech communities perceive them in their attitudes to each other. The third chapter will deal with my methodology and the corpus I have compiled to test my hypothesis. I will explain how I went about my data collection, how I organized and analysed it and the results I obtained. In the fourth and final chapter, I will set down my results and discuss their implication for my hypothesis, while drawing conclusions that I hope will be relevant for this study.

To finish off, I will create a reference section at the end of my dissertation to, hopefully, point other scholars in the right direction if they are interested in studying language and stigma in Northern Ireland. In the Annex, the reader will be able to consult relevant information on the different members of the sample population including place of origin, ideology, religion and gender, as well as a table illustrating the frequency of the different linguistic features studied and links to access the tested discourse.

To test my hypothesis on whether certain linguistic features are particular to one speech community or another, I drew up a list of random public figures from both sides of the

community. I checked their religious beliefs and their political ideology. I then developed a linguistic corpus of data taken from different media, television, and radio programmes where these figures had spoken in public in the Irish and foreign media. The first data collection consisted of audio bites taken from two popular radio shows in Northern Ireland, “The Stephen Nolan Show,” a programme from BBC radio Ulster hosted by a controversial Northern Ireland journalist and” Talkback,” a morning current affairs programme hosted by another Northern Irish journalist on BBC Radio Ulster, William Cawley. I chose the BBC, firstly, because of its policies for integrating multicultural English and regional English presenters and anchors into its radio schedules, and secondly because these are programmes that I am familiar with, so I was aware that I could have access to the speech acts of diverse public figures from both the Protestant/Unionist speech community and the Catholic/Nationalist speech community.

The second data collection was carried out by accessing the YouTube platform for video clips of public speakers performing speech acts in different interviews and public acts. I also accessed the Facebook Social Networking site to gather data on the sample members as well as audio clips for analysis. The sample population is made up of 25 different speakers, all public figures, i.e., politicians, journalists, celebrities. 11 of them are self-professed Protestant/Unionists and 11 are Catholic/Nationalists. There are also 3 members of a third group that I will label Other, since although I may be able to intuit their political and religious ideologies, I have been unable to confirm them. Each of these audio and video clips that make up this corpus last between two minutes and two minutes thirty seconds.

Since the members of the sample population in the corpus are all public figures, and the media, television, and radio programmes where these samples were taken from are public and of free access, no informed consent was needed for the investigation. I then added four columns alongside the list of speakers to register frequency and use of the different linguistic variations to be studied. I listened to each one of the audio or video clips and marked up the frequency of the four linguistic features to be researched, the three phonological variables and the grammatical one. I expect to find that Catholic/Nationalists will report a greater frequency of the grammatical variable, dropping of the “g” suffix in gerund verb form, a greater frequency of the rhotic/ r/, a lesser frequency of vowel variation to the RP standard and a higher frequency of T-voicing in their discourse, as opposed to the lesser frequency of the dropping of the “g” suffix, the lesser frequency of the rhotic /r/, a higher frequency of vowel variation to the RP standard and a lesser frequency of T-voicing in the discourse of Protestant /Unionists.

2. General Overview of Irish English

2.1. A History of the English Language in Ireland

To understand the reasons for the linguistic variations on the island, I will first outline the historical events leading up to the present linguistic and political situation in Northern Ireland, which has led to the existence of two opposing communities, evolving into two different speech communities (Wells, 1982). It is therefore necessary to revisit the sixteenth century when Henry the Eighth, English monarch of the British Isles was denied divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, by the Catholic Pope Clement VII. This caused a schism between the Catholic church and Henry's supporting government leading to both religious and political estrangement from the rest of Western Europe during the historical events known as the Reformation (Cunliffe, 2004). Catholicism was maligned, with Protestantism, the new religion, forcibly becoming the religion of the proletariat. The island of Ireland, increasingly under British rule since the invasions from the mainland beginning in the twelfth century was also subject to the government-driven reformation. The recusancy of the colonized Irish became a means of protecting their national identity.

With civil wars developing all over the British Isles, the Irish inhabitants, especially in Ulster the Northeast province, were discontent. Their lands had been stolen from them and passed over to Scottish Protestant settlers in the colonizing events known as "The Ulster Plantation" at the beginning of the seventeenth century. This "planting" of British/Scottish colonists was seen as "overtly religious in intent and action" (Honing, 2021). The idea was to rid the island of its Catholic traditions and instil the new Protestant ideals in the population. The late seventeenth century saw the arrival of Sir Oliver Cromwell, English Lord Protector, who instilled the Penal Laws in Ireland excluding Catholics from politics and landholding, banning schools for the Irish and making it punishable by law to speak their native language. The whole of Ireland was witness to a "three-way division between the protestant towns under royalist control, Scottish Ulster and the rebel Catholic countryside" (Cunliffe, 2004), where Irish Nationalism ballooned. The English dialect, precursor to modern English, had spread to the detriment of the Irish language. The English, as colonizers, regarded their Celtic-speaking subalterns as savages in need of domestication. This move to eradicate their language was a deliberate colonist strategy intended to sever the indigenous people's Gaelic roots and therefore, their most basic rights (Mc Kenzie et al, 2022). By 1800, however, a third of the population of the island of Ireland was still Irish speaking. The main speakers were the Irish

peasants. In 1801, the Act of Union was passed creating the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and as a result, the Irish parliament was abolished. Resentment grew with calls for tenants` rights on their landholdings and the restoration of the Irish parliament. The situation was especially precarious for the Catholic peasants who depended on their potato crop to feed their families. In 1845, when the potato crop failed,

Britain left these people to their own devices, refusing aid or supplies to mitigate suffering, causing over one million deaths. Another million people were forced to emigrate to the United States to look for a new future (Kennedy & Mc Raild, 2022). An ever-growing nationalist representation in the form of the political organization, “The Fenian Brotherhood,” was seen in the Irish parliament. Most of the island of Ireland was in favour of establishing home rule for the country except in the northern province of Ulster, where the staunch Protestant community was very much against it and fearful of the spread of Irish nationalism.

There are four provinces on the island of Ireland: Ulster, Munster, Lenster and Connaught. Ulster originally constituted nine counties: Donegal, Derry, Tyrone, Antrim, Fermanagh, Cavan, Monaghan, Down and Armagh. After the failed week-long Easter Rising, a revolt against British dominion, in Dublin in 1916, and the subsequent execution of prominent members of the Fenian Brotherhood, the Irish Republican Army (IRA, a republican paramilitary organization founded in 1969 in response to British rule in Northern Ireland) began to strategically attack military bases and the British police force in a fierce guerrilla warfare campaign.

During the British Prime minister Lloyd George`s legislation in 1916, talks were held to try and bring peace to the land. The British government proposed the annexation of six of Ulster`s counties to remain part of the United Kingdom and the other twenty-six counties, including those of Cavan, Fermanagh, and Donegal, originally belonging to the province of Ulster, to become the Irish free state or Republic of Ireland. This treaty did not go down well in the Irish parliament and sparked the tragic civil war known as the “Troubles” that did not finish until 1998 with the signing of “The Good Friday Agreement” that brought a devolved government back to Belfast. Unfortunately, hate and sectarianism caused by the annexing of Ulster is still very present in the province of Ulster, Northern Ireland to this day.

2.2. Present Sociocultural and Political Context: Language and Identity

In this part of my dissertation, I will outline some of the characteristics of four of the different communities living on the island. I will not include the communities that are totally removed from the Irish/English rivalry inherent in the four communities to be studied. These “indifferent” communities are generally immigrants to the country, attracted by the increasing economic boom and prosperity, especially in the Republic. I have devised four categories for said communities. The first one is the Irish Nationalist community, living in the “Free State,” independent from Britain since 1922, exercising their language rights and the right to enjoy Irish cultural and sporting events with no political stigma attached. This community lives alongside the minority Southern Irish Protestant community in peace and harmony.

The latter community shows pride in their links with England without the ideological histrionics seen in Northern Ireland. They feel British but at the same time respect and even adhere to some of the culture and traditions of Ireland, celebrating St Patrick’s Day and making sure their children are competent in the Irish language. At the same time, they may organize loyalist events like the memorial services that took place in Dublin to mourn for and pay their respects to the recently passed Queen Elizabeth the Second. They have profound respect for the British monarchy and the role it has played in Irish politics. Irish unionism is linked to the landed gentry and a group of respected intellectuals like Johnathan Swift or George Bernard Shaw, who although both were Irishmen, felt allegiance and cultural links to Great Britain. Fortunately, both communities live in peace and harmony. The situation north of the border, however, is very different. As I have mentioned before, The Protestant/Unionist community and the Catholic/Nationalist community are still very divided.

At this point, I will outline some of the characteristics of both groups that live north of the border and try to explain their attached identities. To do so, I need to delve into the present sociocultural and political context in Northern Ireland. After the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, several changes were enacted there mainly to the advantage of the Catholic/Nationalist population. They were awarded the same constitutional rights as their Protestant counterparts, something unheard of since before Cromwell’s time. The Protestant/Unionist population lost none of their constitutional rights. Today, the right of the people of Northern Ireland to decide their nationality, either British, Irish or both is recognised. The promise of a referendum for a united Ireland is on the table, the condition being that the population on both sides of the border vote to that end. The conditions for a referendum at the

time of the signing of the Agreement were not met. While a substantial number of people in Northern Ireland were in favour of a referendum, they were not in the majority. The Agreement also saw the setting up of several cross-border institutions to promote peace and indeed opportunity and wellbeing for all the inhabitants of the island. It reinforced existing democratic institutions like the institution against social or political discrimination in the North of Ireland and several North-South institutions and cross-channel British-Irish institutions.

One of the most controversial changes was the disbanding of the British police force, The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), whose ranks were filled by Protestant/Unionists and whose discrimination and cruelty towards the Catholic/Nationalist community is well-documented. The Police Force of Northern Ireland (PSNI) was set up with a campaign to incorporate Catholics, nationalist and non-nationalist into the force. This caused friction in the Protestant community since their ruling power, backed by Great Britain in the form of the RUC, was removed. They felt vulnerable and as if they had lost their protection and support from Great Britain although, currently, the percentage of Catholics in the PSNI is still only 32% of the force. Talks with the IRA, involving renowned figures with experience in complicated peace processes like Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu, brought about the decommissioning of their weapons.

As a result, hundreds of Republican prisoners were released in a gesture of goodwill. This also caused friction in the Unionist community, even though members of the Protestant paramilitary organizations, Ulster Defence Association (UDA, a violent Protestant vigilante group founded in Northern Ireland in 1971) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF, a Protestant paramilitary group founded in Northern Ireland in 1966) were also released. Provisions for The Irish Language Act as well as provisions for an act to promote the Ulster Scots dialect in the region were initiated. It is interesting to note that there are many voices that state that this insistence on the pushing forward of an Ulster Scots Act is a Unionist/Protestant response to the Irish Language Act.

Due to this upheaval, the Unionist/Protestant community no longer held the clout they had enjoyed since the time of the Ulster Plantation. The Good Friday Agreement intended to open the doors to equality and end discrimination and sectarianism in Northern Ireland. To a large extent, it has succeeded in doing so. However, Protestant/Unionists communities still had the upper hand. The Irish Language Act that had been initiated in the Agreement was not

pushed through until early 2022. Irish symbols and flags were still forbidden in Northern Ireland and are still not legally flown over government buildings to this day.

In her excellent paper, “Unionism, Identity, and Irish Unity: Paradigms, Problems and Paradoxes.” Jennifer Todd refers to a “Two Traditions Paradigm,” where each of the communities are as far apart as ever. She defines each of these two paradigms as “dynamic, content-ful, internally contested and asymmetric in its construction” (Todd, 2021). She believes that both these identities have been shaped by history and politics and become personalized into their corresponding psyches (Todd, 2021). Political scientists are baffled about this paradigm and do not know whether to define it as a “religious conflict expressed in political terms or a political conflict with a powerful religious dimension” (Mac Poílin, 2021).

First, we will examine the Protestant /Unionist paradigm. Unionism in Northern Ireland can be described as a concept where the members of the group do not profess to be Irish, even though their ascendants have been living on the island for over 400 years. They feel most definitely British. They have been accused of being reactionary, supremacist, which I, personally, believe to be an overstatement. They are, however, represented by very conservative, right-wing political parties. The truth is that since the Good Friday Agreement, the Protestant/Unionist community sees itself as more vulnerable. They felt abandoned by Britain in 1998 and this has become more exacerbated since Brexit and the Northern Ireland Protocol, a transport agreement backed by Europe in response to border control restrictions. Northern Ireland has gained more status in Europe since Brexit yet Boris Johnson’s Protestant/Unionist supporters in Northern Ireland are seen as imperialists and troublemakers.

With the coming to power of Michelle O’Neil, as First Minister for Sinn Féin (the largest Catholic/Nationalist political party on the island and former political wing of the IRA) in the devolved government in Northern Ireland in 2021, the Protestant/Unionist community feels the threat of a possible unification of the island with the Irish Republic. They also, along with many members of the Catholic/Nationalist community, fear the return of the dark days of the Troubles, which strikes incongruent since in true Donald Trump fashion, they are the community fuelling the crisis by refusing to sit down with Sinn Féin and sort out the important bread and butter issues affecting the people of Northern Ireland, like healthcare, housing, energy, and education.

The Catholic/Nationalist, on the other hand, is the antithesis to these ideals. They are anti-imperialist, supported by left-wing parties like Sinn Féin. They have felt deprived of their

language and culture for centuries. This “elaboration” of the Catholic/Nationalist is largely due to British repression and colonization, shaped by the Great Famine and England’s refusal to mitigate the problem. The Irish emigrant, leaving their home, never to return is portrayed by storytellers and filmmakers worldwide. Animosity towards the English is widespread. I, myself, an educated non-religious member of the Catholic/Nationalist community personally feel this animosity and cannot, reasonably, explain why. This nationalism is played out in many aspects of life in Northern Ireland.

Another important contributor to this rejection of anything “English,” including the Protestant/Unionists of Northern Ireland is the Irish Gaelic League (Mac Poílin, 2021). The Gaelic League was founded in 1893 to promote the Irish language in Ireland. Its beginnings were largely non-political. The founder, Douglas Hyde, a Church of Ireland, Roscommon man, was intent on reviving the Irish past and traditions that he felt had been replaced by “planter” culture. To all intents and purposes, this stand was meant to be purely cultural, yet it stirred Nationalist feelings up and down the island, especially in Belfast, where the English settlers still enjoyed privileges that the native Irish did not. The rhetoric of the League professed to be non-political but there was an undercurrent of nationalism, promoting anti-English sentiment that exists to this day (Mac Poilin 2021).

This political subtext chased away many Unionists who had previously been involved in the league as supporters of the Irish language revival, leaving it open to the recruitment of more and more nationalists. Those previously engaged Irish Unionists subsequently moved away from the Irish part of the equation and concentrated on being Unionists, with allegiance only to Britain. The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) may also be considered a contributor to this anti-Unionism. It had been founded ten years before The Gaelic League with the aim of promoting Irish culture through Irish traditional sports like Gaelic Football, Hurling and Camogie. It has continued to be successful and unquestionably Catholic/Nationalist as an institution in the whole of Ireland with a spectacular turnover of 87 million euros in 2020 (GAA Annual Report, 2020). There are multiple reasons to explain the socio-political context in Ireland and in Northern Ireland in particular but the limitations of this Master’s study only allows me to delve into a few of them.

2.3. Language Identity and Stereotypes in Ireland: The Linguistic Stigma

As we have seen in the preceding chapters of this dissertation, the Irish language, instead of gathering a culture together, is separating it right down the middle. Although there is a small majority of Protestant/Unionists learning Irish in the north of Ireland, there is still stigma surrounding the language. In 2018, Queens University Belfast published a communiqué that it would not be using signage in Irish on the university grounds in a bid to “providing a good and harmonious environment free of flags, emblems, graffiti or other materials, or actions or language thought to be provocative, offensive or intimidating” (personal correspondence from Queen’s University, 2018). This blatant show of stigma from one of the most important universities on the island smacks of the ancient discourse that the Irish language is disruptive and the language of barbarians. In a bid to counteract the revival of the Irish language, the Protestant/ Unionist community have pushed through, along with the Irish Language Act, an Act to revive Ulster Scots, which to some linguists is only a political ploy in response to the possible increase of Republican ideology due to the revival of the Irish language.

This detailed explanation on the trials and tribulations of the Irish language is necessary in this dissertation, even though this study deals with the study of the English language and its dialectical features depending on the speech community, either Catholic/Nationalist or Protestant/Unionist, the speaker hails from. In this chapter, I will explain some of the stereotypes created by either the acceptance or rejection of these dialectal features and how these stereotypes are open to linguistic stigma. In 1974, the Reverend Ian Paisley, a right-wing anti-Catholic Protestant minister, with an enormous following among Northern Irish Unionists said that Catholics “breed like rabbits and multiply like vermin.” In 1988, at a European Parliament session in Strasbourg, he was expelled from the chamber for calling Pope John Paul the Second, the “Antichrist.” He was the instigation of riots and violence against the Catholic/Nationalist community and put endless effort into trying to boycott the terms of the Good Friday Agreement. This verbal hatred manifested in his speeches increased the stigma surrounding Ulster Catholic/Nationalists and continues to this day in the more subtle but less reactionary discourse of the Unionist politicians in Northern Ireland.

By contrast, the Catholic/Nationalist community still perceives the Protestant/Unionist community as the “Planters,” the “Colonizers” who stole their land and robbed them of their tradition. The perception, albeit erroneous, that the Protestant/Unionist community still enjoys more rights and privilege is still very present. At the same time, there is still a romanticism

attached to the perception of the IRA as freedom fighters and Irish martyrs. This is illustrated in an incidence in Northern Irish sport that occurred just recently. When the women's Irish national football team qualified for the World Cup in October 2022, their IRA victory chant "Up the Ra" sounded all over social networks, justly causing outrage in the Unionist/Protestant community. When questioned, the female athletes declared that "it just came out." Although it is very naïve to state that this means that the Catholic/Nationalist community still adhere to violent principles, it is certainly troubling and shows just how deep this stigma-causing animosity runs.

The importance of symbology and its link to identity has been discussed in many referenced studies. In Northern Ireland, Irish/Catholics stigmatize Protestant/Unionist symbols and vice versa. The most important symbol to the Protestant community is the Union flag or "Union Jack" and the regional Ulster flag or "The Red Hand of Ulster," which Catholics refuse to recognise because they believe the Irish province of Ulster to be nine counties and not the six counties that make up the British colony. These are closely followed by the symbols of the Orange Order, like the orange sash, the bowler hat and the standards displayed every 12th of July commemorating the defeat of the Catholic king, James the Second by William of Orange at the "Battle of the Boyne" in 1690. The Catholics see these symbols as reactionary, a provocation, and a reminder of centuries of oppression.

The symbols used by the Catholic/Nationalists are the "Irish Tricolour," illegal until 1998, the IRA military beret and dark glasses, and the different GAA flags. The Catholic/Nationalist community also have also a strong music tradition with a whole genre denominated "Irish rebel songs" where the Irish struggle for independence is detailed and where the "planters" are demonized. These symbols are seen by the Protestant/Unionist community as incendiary tools and calls for violence. Stigma can also be observed in the names given to children in the province. Irish names like "Oísín" and "Maeve" are given to Catholic/Nationalists in honour of Irish Mythology, whereas names like "William" and "Elizabeth" are given to Protestant/Unionists in honour of the British Royal family. This barrage of reciprocal stigma is played out in the existence of linguistic stigma in the English language spoken in the province, especially in the public domain, with Protestant/Unionists using one set of linguistic features and Catholic/Nationalists using another.

While discussing linguistic stigma, I think it is important to include the stigma surrounding RP not only at a Northern Ireland national level but also at an ever increasingly

worldwide level. Since I will be analysing the different sociolects spoken by the Protestant/Unionist community and the Catholic/Nationalist community, I would like to give a brief review of RP and the connotations it holds. Received Pronunciation (RP) is the name attributed to the variant of English that was spoken by the elite aristocrats that inhabited the English capital of London at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The name was given to the dialect by the phonetician Alexander Ellis as the accent and pronunciation of RP was happily “received” as the standard by the British upper classes all over the country (Lindsey, 2019). The RP era was also a marker of the British Empire’s colonial success, where the country’s expanding power brought new wealth to the middle classes.

With this wealth came prestige and these “new rich” entrepreneurs began to invest in the colonies, acquiring more and more assets and as a result, more prestige. This period saw the rise of the, paradoxically called, “public schools.” Instead of being educated at home as had previously been the case, the sons of these new upper classes were educated in “public” albeit very elite institutions (Trudgill, 2001). Trudgill states that these “public schools” were key to the propagation of RP since RP is devoid of all regional aspects of the English language. It gained the now, outdated, prestige that it held right up to the middle of the last century precisely because it is devoid of regional linguistic variants.

I have already explained the important part the English language has played in the colonization of the island of Ireland and the language shift caused by the prohibition of the Irish language. During the “Troubles” this “prohibition” was extended to any English accents that were not RP. When I was a child, none of the actors, newsreaders, nor sports anchors spoke like anybody I knew personally. Local British Broadcasting Company (BBC) television broadcasting in Northern Ireland did not begin until 1953 and even then, all the media figures spoke with an RP accent. Britain continued to exude power and superiority over their exploited colonies and indeed their own lower socio-economic classes right up to nearly the end of the twentieth century where the power of the ruling classes was maintained through its language variant, RP (Linz, Stepan and Yadav, 2003).

During the period of the Second World War, the BBC was crucial in reporting war news and for boosting English morale. The BBC deliberately maintained the RP dialect (Gimson, 1981), exposing their listeners to daily barrages of weak vowels, schwas, and perfectly elaborated gerund forms, with no “g” dropping. For many people today, RP seems to be linked with a glorious past of aristocracy, wealth, and success. For others, the colonized, it is almost

certainly not linked to glory days but smacks of suppression, ideas of superiority and oppression. The British colonies all have their own English Pidgins and Creoles. Ireland is no exception. These upper-class RP hypercorrect linguistic features drag up 400 years of British colonialism to the Catholic/Republicans living on the island, while they are a source of patriotic pride to the Protestant/Unionists who reside there.

2.4. General Features and Characteristics of IRE and NIE

At this point, I feel it is important to detail some of the different linguistic features of the three English dialects to give readers, who may not be familiar with the subject, an insight into these differences. According to Hickey (2007), the linguistic divisions of Ireland can be divided into the East coast region, the Southwest region, and the West region. In the west of Ireland, the language shift from Irish to English came much later and to this day is where the main concentration of Irish speakers can be found on the island. The language variation spoken in Ulster differs from that of the rest of the Island due to the Scottish influence from the Plantation settlement in the seventeenth century. In the speech of the Irish midlands, we can observe linguistic characteristics of the three linguistic regions.

Linguistic studies outline three different periods in the development of the English language in the British Isles. The so-called Old English (OE) period spans around 449 AD until the Norman Conquest circa 1100-1150, when the new Middle English (ME) period began. Milroy denominates it as a “linguistic break” between the two periods (Milroy, 1992). Middle English transitioned into what is known as Modern English around the beginning of the sixteenth century largely provoked by William Caxton’s printing press and the start of the Renaissance period in Europe. Due to the geographical closeness of the two islands, England has always been Ireland’s nemesis. This complicated relationship began around the twelfth century and brought the English language in its ME form to the island. The cities of Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Dublin were settled around that time. Dublin had long been established as the capital of the country. It had previously been settled by Vikings around the eleventh century and was a strategic port situated halfway down the East coast. Because of its geographical positioning, it became an important stronghold for both the English and their language.

The English went on to settle Cork in the south, and Limerick and Galway in the west. English was still predominant in Dublin but not in these areas, where the Irish language was still spoken by the majority. This gave rise to a situation of linguistic contact between English, Anglo-Norman and the more predominant Irish language. In the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the English language began to decline on the island mainly because the English-speaking settlers had weak ties to the mainland and in fact enjoyed this newfound independence from the English crown in the colony. This came to a head during the English reformation period when these settlers were still Catholic and began to identify more and more with the native Irish.

The history of the English language on the island of Ireland has always been a complicated affair. Around the ninth century, Ireland was frequently invaded by Scandinavian raiders. It was at the battle of Clontarf in 1014 that the relationship with Denmark and Norway finished and that same period can also be considered as the period in which those Scandinavians living in Ireland finally assimilated with the native Irish population. There is in fact some evidence of the effect of Old Norse on the Irish language, particularly in its lexis (Hickey, 2007). This influence seems to have lasted well into the fourteenth century and can be seen in documents like *The Statutes of Kilkenny* (1366), composed in Anglo-Norman, where the population was encouraged to speak English, or *The Acts of Parliament* (1472) which attest to Anglo-Norman as a language of law. Even so, the Irish language thrived right up until the seventeenth century.

When King Henry the Eighth was proclaimed King of Ireland in Dublin in 1542, only a few of those present could understand the English proclamation and it had to be translated into Irish. It was, however, during the Tudor period when the English language began to gain more ground. The English continued to consider the Irish as primitive and hostile, in need of taming. They believed that the only way to do this was through “the imposition of English government and public order” (Hickey, 2007), which of course meant the imposition of the language. The founding of Trinity College, Dublin (the oldest university in Ireland) in 1592 by Henry the Eighth’s daughter Elizabeth the First was another strong point for the further advancement of the English language on the island since the university could only be attended by the Protestant population and the working language was predominantly English. Another important factor in the rise of IRE were the plantations in Ireland instigated by the English government, the most important of these being the Munster Plantation in the Southwest and the Ulster plantation in the North. These were carefully implemented strategic plans to impose

English rule and language on the entire island. England increasingly gained power, defeating the Irish at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601 and causing the native leaders to flee for their lives from the north in what is romantically known as the Flight of the Earls. These events opened up a political and linguistic void that was quickly filled by English authority, indubitably aiding the anglicisation of the island. Cromwell's transplantation policies, where the native Irish were chased even further to the west and forced to leave their lands behind for the English settlers only abetted the process.

All these factors played an important role in the linguistic shift of Irish into IRE but those also responsible were "the indigenous Irish-speaking community which switched from Irish to English between the seventh and the nineteenth centuries" (Hickey, 2007). The use of English became attributive, a means to allow the native Irish to advance socially. Things may have turned out very different if the Penal Laws passed in Ireland after the Reformation forbidding Catholics to practice their religion had not been enforced by Cromwell in the seventeenth century. One of the enactments of these Penal Laws was the prohibition of the use of Irish in public life. Bliss sees events like Cromwell's transplantation policies as the beginning of the linguistic shift to modern Irish English and there is evidence of elements of the Irish language in the phonology of IRE as early as the sixteenth century in areas settled in the southwest (Bliss, 1984).

During the time of the penal laws, with England's quest to eradicate everything Irish, Catholics were denied any formal education. This period saw the setting up of illegal "hedge schools" (improvised classes in rural environments by Catholic teachers and clergy) where the emphasis on Irish culture and language was placed, yet basic instruction in English was carried out. The hedge schools had an influence on Irish English since the teachers who gave this instruction were not native English speakers but native Irish speakers, hence the interference of their first language in the use of their second (Bliss, 1972). The period between the eighteenth and nineteenth century was a period of prosperity for the English settlers in Ireland and indeed the English language, with writers such as Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), Edmund Burke (1729-1797) and Richard B. Sheridan (1751-1816) at the forefront of the Irish literary scene. They all had one thing in common: they all wrote in English.

Throughout this period, the native Irish population, their culture, and language was neglected at all levels by the English authorities. The people were oppressed in a strict feudal system, their language was prohibited, and they were denied education. Despite these

impediments, there is evidence of an Irish literary counterculture with Irish writers like Seán Ó Neachtain amusing readers with linguistic puns for a bilingual audience. In fact, Ó Neachtain's work is full of examples that demonstrate the influence of Irish syntax on the English language at that time. In the second half of the eighteenth century, there was a surge to try and teach the Irish to speak English properly. With this in mind, the Irish writer Thomas Sheridan published his *Rhetorical Grammar of the English Language* (1781), in which he laid down prescriptive rules to help the Irish to speak English correctly. The quest for social advancement by the Irish pushed this movement forward and Irish fell further into decline.

In the nineteenth century, three important events took place which helped accelerate the linguistic shift to English. The first of these was the cause championed by Daniel O'Connell, famous for the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act (a series of laws to fight discrimination against Catholics) in 1829. He paradoxically urged the Catholic population to learn English to be able to progress socially and economically. It was thanks to that same act that Catholics were given access to primary education in 1831 in the National School System where instruction was in English. This of course gave even more weight to the language shift.

Perhaps the most tragic of these language varying events was the Great Famine from 1845 to 1848. The potato was a staple in both the rural Irish diet and the rural Irish economy. So, when the potato crop failed three years in a row, one million people died of starvation and around another million emigrated. The traditional Irish lifestyle, culture and language was uprooted and destroyed and since emigration was the only real option for survival, the English language became "an even greater priority" (Hickey, 2007) for these aspiring emigrants. The attrition of the Irish language progressed steadily through the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century where in Hickey's book *Irish English History and Present-Day Forms*, published in 2007, he cites that there are only 30 to 40 thousand native Irish speakers left in the south-west, the mid-west and the north-west.

After this general description of the linguistic situation in Ireland, I would now like to focus on the features of IRE and NIE. I have already referred to the renowned linguist John Christopher Wells' book, *Accents of English* (1982), and Raymond Hickey's volume *Irish English History and Present-Day Forms* (2007), as well as Hickey's *Handbook of the Varieties of English* (2004) to give a description of the linguistic features of IRE compared to RP. Wells states that the vowel system of IRE is different to that of standard RP. There are systemic variations and changes to be found in long vowels, diphthongs, and weak vowels. An example

of the latter would be that the initial “o” in “official” and “opinion” would be pronounced as a weak form /ə/ in RP, whereas in IRE, the /o:/ is longer and more central (Wells, 1982).

The Irish accent is a rhotic accent with a very extensive range of vowel oppositions following /r/ and this particular /r/ is usually dark and retroflex /ɹ/. In IRE, the alveolar and dental stops /θ/ and /ð/ are realized as dental plosives, therefore the adjective “thin” instead of being pronounced as [θin], would sound the same as “tin” [tin]. Hickey also cites the intrusion of Irish coronal stops into IRE. In the eastern and southern regions of the country, these coronal stops were alveolar but, in the west, these stops were dental /t/ and /d/. When these speakers had to articulate the English /θ/ and /ð/ they used the Irish equivalent dental stops so that words like “thinker” and “tinker” became homophones. This linguistic phenomenon does not occur in NIE, where the /θ/ sound is pronounced in the same environments as RP.

The liquid /l/ is clear in most positions in IRE as in “feel” [fi:l] compared with the dark /ɫ/ in RP English [fi:ɫ]. In IRE, Wells points out a type of schwa absorption, where the /i/ of RP, generally becomes /ə/ as in the pronunciation of the word “lion” which in RP would be [laɪən] but in IRE would absorb the schwa and be pronounced [laɪn] (Wells, 1982). Hickey gives the linguistic features of IRE by areas that he has marked out as linguistically relevant. He stipulates the east coast as stretching from the city of Drogheda down to the city of Wexford including the capital, Dublin. He lists, as Wells does, the phonological features of this speech community as a fortition of dental fricatives to alveolar stops, e.g., “think” [tɪŋk]. He cites a lack of low vowel lengthening before voiceless fricatives as in [pɑt] for “path” and a front onset of /au/ as in [tæun] or [tɛun] for “town.” He also mentions the use of centralised /ai/ seen in the vowel of the modifier “quite” [kwəɪt] as well as the breaking of long high vowels, especially in the Dublin area, e.g., “clean” as [klijən]. He mentions the fortition of alveolar sibilants in pre-nasal position (e.g., “isn’t” as [idn̩t]) and the glottalization of lenited /t/, e.g., “foot” which has gone from [fut] to [fuʔ] and finally [fuh].

In the south and west regions of the country from County Cork right up to County Mayo, the language shift from Irish to English was influenced by the rural speech communities of native Irish speakers. One of the main phonological features of this area is the raising of /ɛ/ to /i/ in nasals “cape” [ki:p], or “neck” [ni:k]. There is also evidence of an open realization in the short vowel /o/ lexical set, giving way to a more open back rounded vowel, e.g., the pronunciation of the county of Cork by its inhabitants as [kaɪk].

In the Irish Midlands or the northerly central part of Ireland, one can see a mixture of the linguistic features of IRE and NIE. U-fronting is a feature as is the retroflex /ɹ/ as opposed to the more velarised /ɹ̠/ found in the south. In addition to these features, the IRE spoken in the Midlands is also characterized by the shift of /tʃ/ to /k/ in word-internal positions, present in the other linguistic areas on the island like ['fɔrkʉ:n] for “fortune” (Hickey, 2004). Another important characteristic of IRE is the “g” dropping phenomenon where the final “g” of the gerund form of the verb is not pronounced, making the “ing” suffix sound /ən/ as opposed to /iŋ/ in RP English (Lindsey, 2019).

NIE, on the other hand, has elements of Scots, Gaelic and seventeenth-century English. There are more elements of Ulster Scots in the language in the north of Ulster and more elements of the English spoken in the Irish midlands in the south. The English spoken in the city of Belfast is a mixture of the two. According to Wells, an almost complete loss of phonemic vowel length distinctions has developed in NIE. Wells cites three instances of phonetic length in vowels. The first one states that all vowels are short before a following /p, t, tʃ and k/ giving variations such as [fit] “feet,” [but] “boot,” [kʌt] “cut,” etc. (Wells, 1982). Secondly, all vowels are long except /i/ and /ʌ/ before final /v, ð, z, r/ as in the examples “grieve” [gri:v], “lose” [lu:z], save [se:v], or “fair” [fɛ:r]. This has given way to the use of long allophones of /e,ɛ,a,ɔ/ in any monosyllable close to a consonant other than /p, t, tʃ, k/, which Wells refers to as the “Ulster Lengthening” (Wells 1982).

Vowels in polysyllabic words are most commonly short compared to RP as in the long vowel in “mess” [mɛ:s] as opposed to “message” [mɛsɪdʒ], which is short. Other features of NIE are the tendency towards diphthongization of the lengthened allophones /ɛ,ə,ɔ/ as in “bed” [bɛ'əɖ] and “leg” [lɛ'ɪɟ] (Wells,1982), and one of the most striking features is the restriction of the weakening of vowels in unstressed syllables in comparison to RP, where this linguistic feature (schwa) is present in nearly all linguistic environments. Compare with the IRE strong vowel as in “postman” ['postmɑ'n] or the strong stressed vowel in “Oxford” [-fɔ'rd] or “Birmingham” [-hɑ'm]. The Ulster /u/ has very little lip rounding according to Wells, when it is followed by a consonant other than /v,ð, z, r/ , as in “doom” [dʉ:m], or suit [sʉ:t]. In longer environments, it is usually a centralized front /u:/ as in “who” [hʉ:], or the verb “choose” [tʃʉ:], with the same pronunciation as the third person singular form of the verb to “chew,” “chews.”

Another feature of the Ulster accent is the fronting of both short and long variants after /j/ as in “mule” [mjʉ] or “few” [fjʉ:]. Before /r/ the allophone is more open and central as in

“cure” [kjø:r] or “poor” [pø:r]. In a Belfast accent, the vowels /ε α, ə/ are fully open, front or central, if they are short, giving rise to sets like “pet,” “pat,” “pot” all pronounced as [pa-t], whereas these same lengthened allophones are diphthongized as in “bed” [bε'əd] or “leg” [lε'ig] or the verb “have,” which has gone from [hɑ:v] to [hɔ:v] to [hɔ'əv], or “cod” [kɔ'əd] (Wells, 1982).

Apart from these allophonic variations in NIE as opposed to IRE, some consonant variations can also be observed in both dialects. I have already mentioned the southern /t/ /d/ use in words like “think” [θiŋk] or “breathe” [bri:ð], where the allophones /θ/ and /ð/ in the north, however, would be used as in standard RP. T-voicing is also common in the north and may lead to neutralization of the /t/ vs /d/ opposition giving examples like “party” ['paɪde] rhyming with “hardy.” Wells describes the preglottalization of intervocalic /p/ and /t/ as being “common” in Ulster, giving examples like pe|ʔ|pper and bu|ʔ|tter. He states that in Ulster, the /ʃ,ʒ,tʃ,dʒ/ realizations tend towards a stronger palatal pronunciation /ç,z,tç,dç/, probably coming from the Irish.

The variations of IRE and NIE are diverse as opposed to RP but the limitations of this Master’s study only allows me to list some of them in the explanation above. For that same reason, I will only be researching the frequency of the presence or absence of the 4 linguistic variables explained in the preceding chapters. The reason for this choice of group of variables is due to the frequently observed differences in the use of these variables in the varied utterances that make up the speech acts of both speech communities to be studied, i.e., Catholic/Nationalist and Protestant/Unionist.

3. Analysis of Recordings

3.1. Method and Results

I started gathering data for this study in July 2022. I randomly selected 25 participants, 11 self-professed Protestant/Unionists, 11 self-professed Catholic/Nationalists and 3 other public figures, whose ideological position could not be confirmed. Each member of the sample was born and is still living in Northern Ireland. 9 of them are females and the remaining 16 are males. The sample members are all active public figures from the domains of politics and the mass media, except for one who is a certified medical doctor at a Northern Ireland hospital with a history of public interviews and discourse.

I investigated the work of Professor Jeffrey Kallen at Trinity College Dublin. Professor Kallen is an active contributor to the International Corpus of English (ICE). The ICE corpus was established in 1990 with the aim of compiling corpus material for comparative studies of English worldwide. Currently, there are twenty-six research teams from around the world gathering material for the ICE corpus. Each research team collects material for the varieties of English spoken in the countries in which they live and work. Each country corpus has one million words of text, either spoken or written and the protocols for corpus design are common to each variety of English.

Professor Kallen is responsible for the Ireland component of the ICE corpus. This corpus is made up of 300 spoken texts in a variety of discourse registers both formal and informal. These texts are available in MP3 forms and in annotated transcript form. One can also consult 200 written texts from both the published and unpublished linguistic domains. NIE and IRE are equally represented in both types of text, which makes it a unique resource for studying varieties both north and south of the border. The interlocutors in the corpus are required to have been born on the island and educated in the English language.

Based on the Ireland ICE corpus of linguistic data, I designed my own corpus by randomly searching for audio and video clips of each sample member engaged in public discourse. Each clip lasts between two and two and a half minutes. I did not need to ask for informed consent from sample members since they are all public figures, and I did not need copyright permission to use the audio and video clips since they are all public access. The platforms I used to compile this information were *You Tube*, *BBC Radio Ulster* streaming and podcast service and the social networking site *Facebook*. The links for the audio files and the

frequency counts for the observed linguistic features in my personal corpus can be consulted in the Observation Data and Linguistic Markup Chart in the annex of this Master's dissertation, which includes the dates they were selected and the sex and professed ideology of the 25 interlocutors. The geographical origin and duration of each soundbite is also registered. I have also included a first draft record sheet in the results section stipulating the sex and the professed ideology (Protestant/Unionist), or Catholic/Nationalist, and the frequency of the tested phonological variants for each sample member.

There are points to be clarified about my choice of identifying features in the sample. Firstly, although age is an important identifying feature in sociolinguistic studies and is generally included, it is not considered in my study for two main reasons: my research interest is more on the absence or presence of certain linguistic features and the promotion of linguistic stance this absence or presence implies and also because the age variable requires further detailed study, which would transcend the limitations of this dissertation. The ages of the sample members range from between 24 and 70 years old at the time of the corpus compilation. This omission of the age identifier is justified in my study since I am testing language use in the whole speech community based on ideology as opposed to individual characteristics of each of the sample members according to age.

My study also omits the socioeconomic variable usually tested for in robust sociolinguistic studies because the limitations of this Master's study does not allow me to give a full socioeconomic picture of each of the sample group members. I believe that this omission is justifiable here as all the sample members are public figures well-voiced in public discourse. Nineteen of the sample group members hold a university degree and those sample members who do not have a university degree or similar (six sample members) have decades of experience in public discourse. However, in keeping with research carried out by the linguist, Deborah Tannen (1996), the sex variable plays an important role in this sociolinguistic study given the advanced research on Gender Linguistics and the characteristics of the female utterance as opposed to its male counterpart.

I listened to each audio clip twice at three different times in the period from July 2022 to November 2022, making a total of 6 listening sessions for each recording. I then recorded the frequency of the following four variables: dropping of "g" in the gerund form of the verb (ING DROPPING on the record sheet), the presence or absence of vowel variation as opposed to RP standards (VOWEL VARIATION on the record sheet), the presence or absence of the

rhotic /r/ (NO RHOTIC R on the record sheet) and the presence or absence of T-voicing (T-VOICING on the record sheet).

(See record sheet 1 for the distribution of sex and professed ideology of each sample member and the number of times each variable did or did not occur)

Record Sheet 1

SEX	IDEOLOGY	ING DROPPING	NO RHOTIC R	VOWEL VARIATION	T -VOICING
1. Female	Nationalist	3	0	0	2
2. Female	Unionist	0	0	0	0
3. Male	Unionist	0	7	0	0
4. Male	Nationalist	4	0	0	4
5. Male	Unionist	0	5	6	0
6. Male	Unionist	2	11	11	0
7. Male	Unionist	1	1	1	3
8. Male	Unionist	0	9	14	0
9. Female	Nationalist	3	0	0	7
10. Female	Nationalist	0	0	0	15
11. Male	Nationalist	6	0	0	16
12. Male	Other	0	0	1	5
13. Male	Other	0	0	1	0
14. Male	Nationalist	0	0	1	3
15. Male	Other	1	3	1	5
16. Male	Nationalist	3	0	0	3
17. Male	Unionist	0	0	0	4
18. Male	Nationalist	2	0	0	9
19. Male	Unionist	1	0	1	1
20. Female	Unionist	0	0	1	0
21. Male	Nationalist	4	0	0	8
22. Female	Nationalist	13	0	0	7
23. Female	Unionist	0	1	8	0
24. Female	Unionist	0	0	1	0
25. Female	Nationalist	6	0	1	4

Using the free software *Jamovi 2.2.5* (Version 2.3.18), I drew up tables and graphs to illustrate my results for the frequency of the variables to be tested. I did so in 5 phases. First with a descriptive analysis of the distribution of the sample members according to sex and professed ideology (see table 1) and later with 4 contingency tables and 4 corresponding graphs to show the accumulated frequency of each of the studied variables by sex and identity (see tables 2, 3, 4 and 5).

3.1.2. Sample

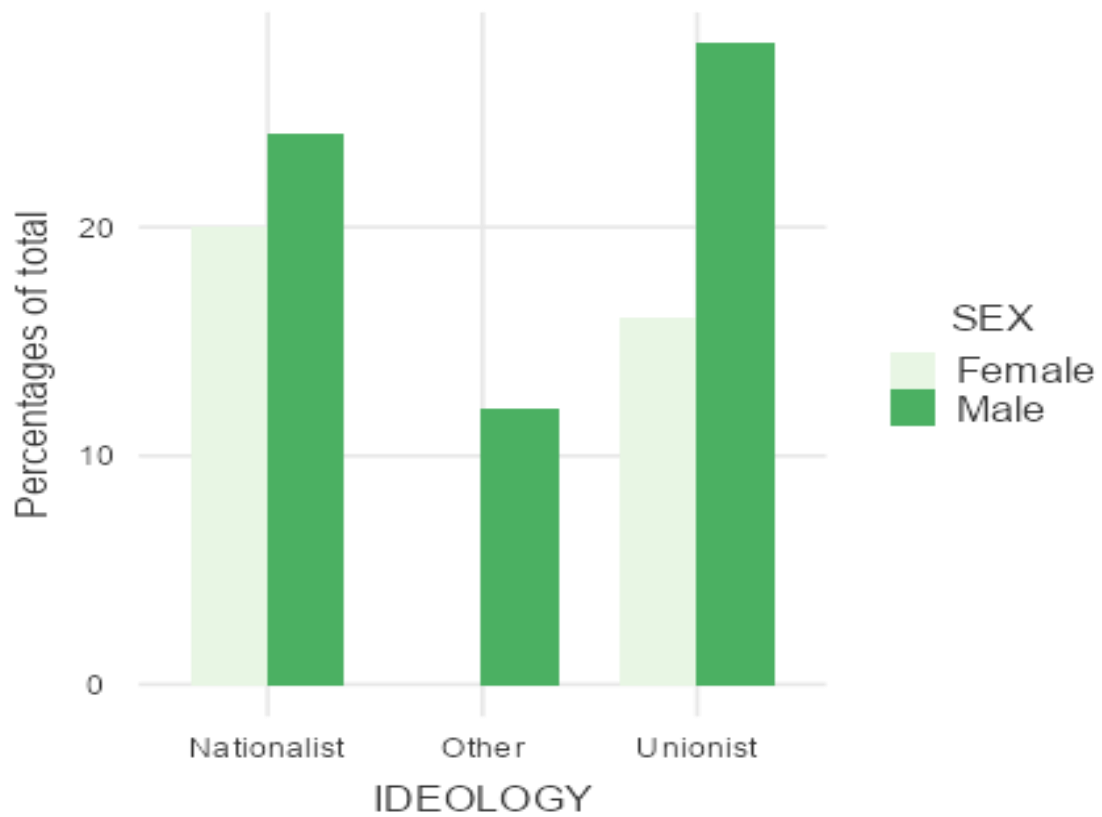
Table 1. Distribution of sample by sex and ideology

IDEOLOGY		SEX		
		Female	Male	Total
Nationalist	Observed	5	6	11
	% within row	45.5 %	54.5 %	100.0 %
Other	Observed	0	3	3
	% within row	0.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %
Unionist	Observed	4	7	11
	% within row	36.4 %	63.6 %	100.0 %
Total	Observed	9	16	25
	% within row	36.0 %	64.0 %	100.0 %

Distribution table 1 shows the distribution of the sample (counts and percentages) by sex and ideology. The total female count for the whole sample is 9 (36%) and the total male count for the whole sample is 16 (64%). The total Nationalist ideology group is comprised of 11 members, 5 of them female, making up 45.5% of the female Nationalist group, and 6 of them male, making up the remaining 54.5% of the male Nationalist group. The sample members with no stipulated ideology (Other) are 3 males, which make up 100% of this group. The total Unionist ideology group is made up of 7 males, 63.6% of the group and 4 females 36.4%, of the group.

(See graph 1 for percentages of the total sample by sex and identity)

Graph 1. Distribution of sample by sex and ideology



3.1.3. Studied Variables

ING (G) DROPPING

Table 2. Total counts of ING DROPPING by sex and ideology

IDEOLOGY	SEX		Total
	Female	Male	
Nationalist	25	19	44
Other	0	1	1
Unionist	0	4	4
Total	25	24	49

Table 2 shows the accumulated frequency of the dropping of the “g” in the gerund aspect of the verb (ING DROPPING in this dissertation) by the total number of the males and females in the sample by sex and ideology. ING DROPPING occurred a total of 49 times in the 25 audio and video clips analysed, 25 counts in the total female sample and 24 counts in the total male sample. In the Nationalist ideology group, ING DROPPING occurred at a higher frequency than for the Unionist ideology group with a total of 44 counts for the Nationalist ideology group, 25 for females and 19 for males, whereas the Unionist ideology group registered only 4 counts of ING DROPPING, all 4 in the male Unionist group. There were no counts of ING DROPPING in the female Unionist group. The Other ideology group (all male) registered 1 count of ING DROPPING.

Some of the word types in the performative speech acts in the Catholic/Nationalist sample group that undergo this phenomenon are: “amazing” [ə'meɪz əŋ], “during” [ˈdʒʊərəŋ], “volunteering” [vɒləntɪərɪŋ], (22. Christina Black),¹ and “breaching” [ˈbriːtʃɪŋ], “representing” [rɛprɪˈzɛntɪŋ] and “competing” [kəmˈpiːtɪŋ] (25. Martina Anderson). In the Protestant/Unionist sample group, an example of the word types where ING Dropping occurs are: “trying” [traɪɪŋ] and “looking” [ˈlʊkəŋ] (6. Doug Beattie). In the Other sample group, the only word type where ING Dropping occurs is “taking” [ˈteɪkəŋ] (15. Sam Mc Bride).

(See graph 2 for the counts of ING-dropping by sex and ideology)

¹ All examples from the audio files analysed are identified by their number in the Observation Data and Linguistic Markup Chart (Annex) and name of speaker in brackets.

Graph 2. Total counts of ING DROPPING by sex and ideology.



ABSENCE OF RHOTIC R

Table 3. Total counts of the absence of RHOTIC /r/ by sex and ideology

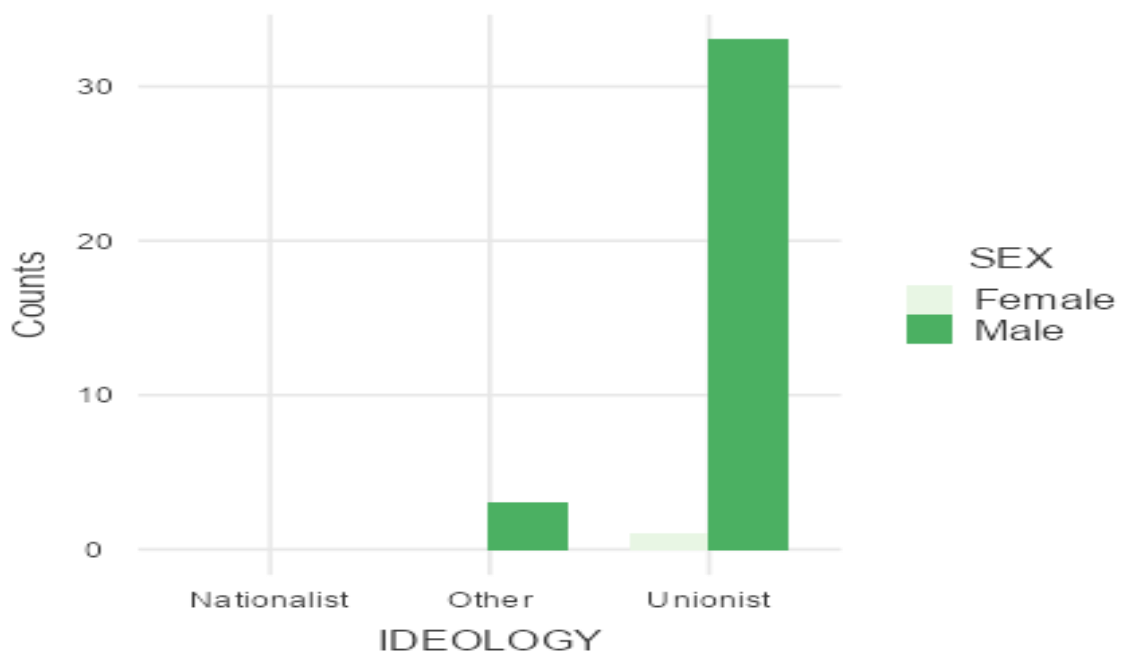
IDEOLOGY	SEX		Total
	Female	Male	
Nationalist	0	0	0
Other	0	3	3
Unionist	1	33	34
Total	1	36	37

Table 3 shows the total counts of the absence of RHOTIC R measured by sex and ideology. The total count of the absence of RHOTIC R in the analysis sample is 37. The highest count is observed in the Protestant ideology group with a registration of 34 counts out of the

total of 37 counts. The other 3 counts were registered in the Other male ideology group. The female Protestant sample registered a count of 1 whereas the total number of counts of accumulated frequency of the absence of RHOTIC R is 0 for the total Nationalist ideology, both male and female. For instance, the word types where there is an absence of the rhotic /r/ for the Protestant/Unionist sample group are “percent” [pə'sent], “Northern Ireland” ['nɔ:ðən 'aɪələnd], “short” [ʃɔ:t] and “support” [sə'pɔ:t] (6. Doug Beattie). There are no instances of non-rhotic /r/ in the Catholic /Nationalist group and in the Other sample group, some examples of word types are: “Stormont” [Sto'mənt] and “Northern Ireland” ['nɔ:ðən 'aɪələnd] (15. Sam Mc Bride).

(See graph 3 for the total accumulated frequency of the absence of RHOTIC R by sex and identity in the sample)

Graph 2. Total counts of the absence of RHOTIC /r/ by sex and ideology



VOWEL VARIATION

Table 4. Total counts of VOWEL VARIATION by sex and ideology

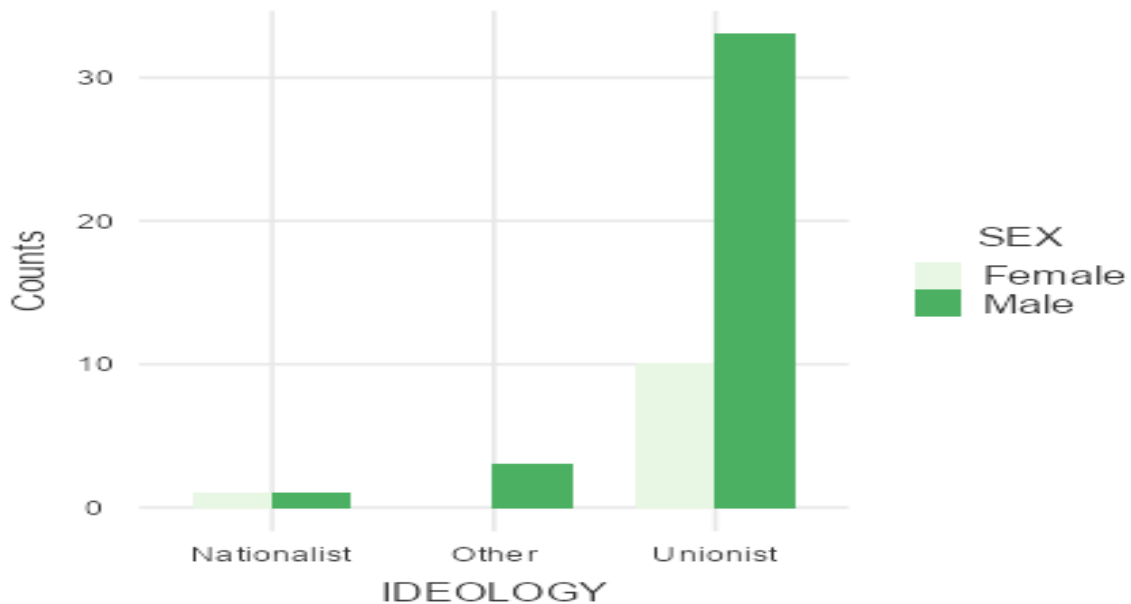
IDEOLOGY	SEX		Total
	Female	Male	
Nationalist	1	1	2
Other	0	3	3
Unionist	10	33	43
Total	11	37	48

Table 4 shows the total number of VOWEL VARIATIONS to a more RP variant as opposed to standard NIE by sex and ideology. The total number of VOWEL VARIATIONS in the sample is 48 with the highest count in the Protestant/Unionist sample group, The overall count for the Protestant/Unionist group for VOWEL VARIATION to a more RP linguistic variant is 43, 33 in the male sample and 10 in the female sample. The Catholic/Nationalist group registered a total count of 2 for VOWEL VARIATION to a more RP dialect, 1 for the males in the sample and 1 for the females. The all-male Other ideology group registered 3 counts of VOWEL VARIATION.

Some examples of vowel variation deviant from the more NIE variants are word types “made” [meɪd], “case” [keɪs], “patient”, [ˈpeɪʃənt] and “legislation” [lɛdʒɪsˈleɪʃən] in the Protestant/Unionist sample group (23. Tina Campbell), and in the Other sample group the word type “about” [əˈbaʊt] is registered (13. Peter Gray). For the Catholic/Nationalist group sample, the word types “Canadian” [kəˈneɪdiən] (14. Darragh Gannon) and “place” [pleɪs] (25. Martina Anderson) are registered.

(See Graph 4 for the total accumulated frequency of VOWEL VARIATION by sex and ideology in the sample).

Graph 3. Total counts of VOWEL VARIATION by sex and ideology



T- VOICING

Table 5. Total counts of T-VOICING by sex and ideology

IDEOLOGY	SEX		Total
	Female	Male	
Nationalist	35	43	78
Other	0	10	10
Unionist	0	8	8
Total	35	61	96

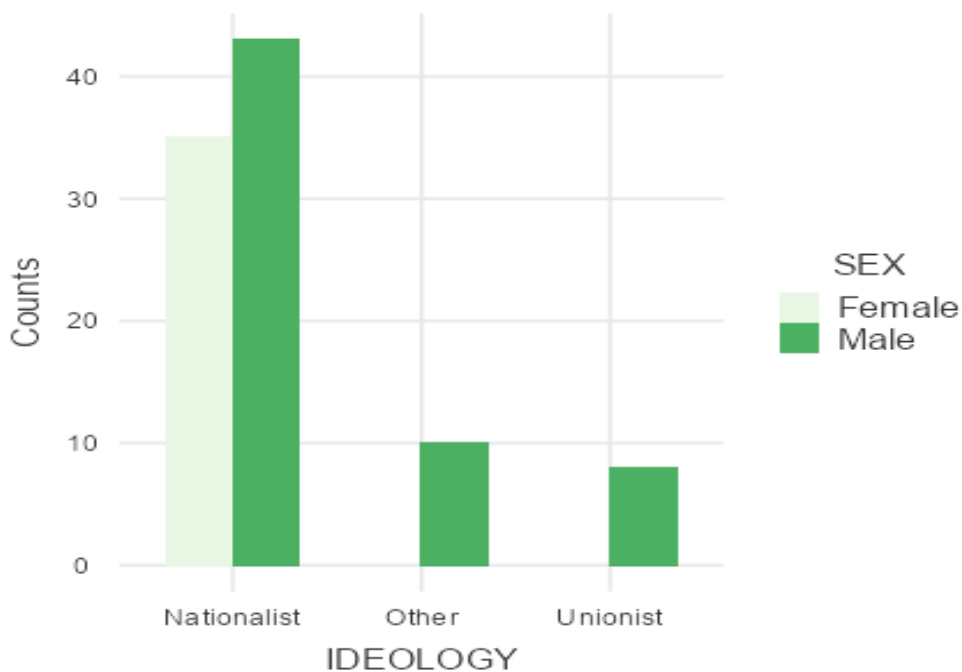
Table 5 shows the accumulated frequency of cases of T-VOICING in the total sample by sex and ideology. The total number of cases of T-VOICING in the sample is 96. The Catholic/Nationalist identity have the highest incidence of T-VOICING with a total count of 78, 35 for Catholic/Nationalist females and 43 for the males in the same group. In the Protestant/Unionist group, a much lower incidence is observed with a count of 8 for the whole

Protestant/Unionist sample. The count of 8 is observed only for the males in the Protestant/Unionist group. The females in the same group registered a count of 0. The all-male Other ideology group registered a total count of 10 for cases of T-VOICING.

Examples of T-Voicing are most prominent in the Catholic/Nationalist sample group with word types like “society” [sə'saɪədi], “rooted” ['ru:ɪd], “blatant” ['blədənt] and “fundamental” [fʌndə'mɛntl] (10. Orlaith Begley). In the Protestant/Unionist sample group, examples are: “united” [jʊ'naɪdɪd], “party” [pɑ:ɪdi] (17. Stephen Farry). For the Other group sample members, some examples of T-Voicing are: “limited” ['lɪmɪdɪd], “mitigate” ['mɪdɪgæt], “citizen” ['sɪdɪzn], “disabilities” [dɪsə'bɪlɪdɪz] and “societal” [sə'saɪədl] (12. Matthew O’Toole).

(See Graph 5 for the total accumulated frequency of cases of T-VOICING by sex and ideology in the sample)

Graph 4. Total counts of T-VOICING by sex and ideology



3.2 Discussion

From the onset of this study, I have set out to show that the Protestant/Unionists and the Catholic/Nationalists living in Northern Ireland can be linguistically classified as two different speech communities with two different language ideologies, based on different linguistic variations. The linguistic features of the Protestant/Unionist community adhere to a more RP type pronunciation with the Catholic/Nationalist community linguistically conforming, to the NIE standard. I wanted to show that the reasons behind this variation may be put down to language loyalty and, possibly, by extension, either loyalty to the British crown or to the Republic of Ireland. I believe that this loyalty is not only loyalty to the respective “state-nations” (Linz, Stepan and Yadav, 2003) but also a firm affirmation through a linguistic stance of what it means to be either British or Irish.

To further explain this, I consulted the work of Cillian Mc Bride, a Queens University, Belfast researcher, particularly his use of general Demos and Ethnos theories applicable to the two main political groups in Northern Ireland. According to Mc Bride, divided political cultures are characterized by how much of that political culture is based on ethnic fragmentation and how much on democratic participation. Historically, in this divided society, the majority ethnos (the Protestant/Unionist community) has always been treated as the political demos. Up until the Good Friday Agreement, the Catholic/Nationalist community was excluded from this political demo, i.e., acts of public reasoning (Mc Bride 2007) and was therefore treated as a minority of second-class colonized citizens. This gave way to the creation of a nationalist narrative, propagating the romantic idea that the people are sovereign and not those that rule them. Nationalism, not only in its Northern Ireland variant but worldwide, is essentially divisive and the reason for political instability in countries like Spain, Serbia or Canada, to name but a few. In nationalist ideology, there is no room for public reasoning since the political demos becomes intertwined with the ethnos (Mc Bride, 2007).

The striking aspect of the Northern Ireland problem is the existence of fanatical nationalism on both sides, Nationalist Irish and indeed Nationalist British. Both have their own particular nationalist obsessions, the former with their allegiance to a united Ireland and the latter with their obsession about being recognized as part of the UK. In addition, both communities possess a zealous religious element, which can also be held accountable for the ever-widening breach between the two communities. Therefore, we can pinpoint two social identities in fierce cultural competition, yet doomed to use the same language. To distance

themselves from each other, the members of these two speech communities speak in totally different ways, at least in public interaction. Their performative speech acts reflect this animosity and reaffirms their ethos values and their refusal to even consider a functioning public demo, i.e., a constitutional state where each society member is treated equally.

I set out to prove that these phonological differences are conscious linguistic stances to either demonstrate loyalty to a certain ingroup or to distance oneself from their outgroups. For the Protestant/Unionist community, I believe this linguistic loyalty extends to reaffirmation of their allegiance to the British Crown and for the Catholic/Nationalist community, to allegiance to the Republic of Ireland. My study results certainly point to this hypothesis and may be a reason why there are so many phonological differences in each group's discourse.

My convictions in that respect are based on Social Identity Theory. This is a term to describe how people perceive themselves according to the social groups they belong to. These groups can go from anything to a group of supporters of a particular football team to a group of scientists, experts in a particular field. These social identities, apart from having the potential to shape opinion or ideology and politics, may also shape tastes and preferences especially when the group member is emotionally tied to the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Social Identity studies claim that this affiliation to a particular group builds empowering self-esteem and other important psychological processes associated with social identities. Some of these include "within-group assimilation," pressure to adapt to the ingroup's norms, "intergroup bias," positive evaluation of the ingroup or "intergroup favouritism," where the different outgroups are negatively evaluated (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). These social identity theories are certainly applicable to the Northern Ireland scenario, where the Protestant/Unionist community and the Catholic/Nationalist community perceive each other negatively and in fact actively stigmatize each other. Furthermore, Social Identity Theory suggests that individuals experience collective identity based on their social group membership and this leads individuals to categorize themselves and other groups into "them" and "us." This is true of the two groups in question of Northern Ireland.

The stigma surrounding the Protestant/Unionist speech community as far as the Catholic /Nationalist community is concerned has already been discussed in this dissertation, as has the stigma surrounding the Catholic/Nationalist speech community. This stigma is further enacted through each communities' performative speech acts. The linguistic styles are different, with each community using their own reductive variety not only to explain or

reinforce their political, ideological and cultural stances but also in keeping with the linguistic relativity studies based on newly resurrected theories of Whorfianism, to re-create and re-enact them time and time again in their consciousness (Shotter, 2002).

The phonological choices made by the different speech communities in their discourse may initially be conscious, but language plays a very important role in creating said culture in one's head. It is a highly practical skill that is picked up much earlier than other cultural skills like reading or playing an instrument. It acts as a cultural representation system and through continuous representation both reinforces and moulds those representations in the system (Levinson, 1983).

The findings of my study are therefore relevant in this light, proving that Catholic/Nationalists do indeed adhere to more NIE fixtures, while Protestant/Unionists use more RP linguistic variants in their public discourse. While, unfortunately, the limitations of this study do not allow for research into Psycholinguistics and Discourse Analysis from a psychological point of view to delve into the cognitive capacities involved, I can safely say, from my research results, that the aforementioned adherence to certain linguistic variants in both speech communities can then be said to have a double function. Firstly, to transmit ideological allegiance through linguistic loyalty and secondly, to strengthen this allegiance and pass it on to other members of their particular ingroup.

3.2.1. Discussion of “ING” (G) Dropping

The first variable analysed in this study is the linguistic phenomenon “g” dropping, which is an allophone variant somewhere between the velar /ŋ/ and the alveolar /n/. “G” dropping only occurs in the gerund form of the verb. It does not occur in monomorphemic words like “ping” or “ring.” When “g” dropping occurs in NIE, the alveolar variant is used. It is found in popular culture, in songs imported from the United States of America and by British popular singers, where it is almost impossible to hear “ing” pronounced in an RP fashion. However, it is still considered unacceptable and incorrect in the public domain, especially in RP. According to Labov, “g” dropping has been present in the English language since the nineteenth century. It was stigmatized then and is still “a case of stigmatization without change” (Labov, 1966).

I was struck by the number of times one of the female Catholic/Nationalist sample members engaged in “g” dropping in the analysed audio clip during an international event in New York City. My first thought was “I wonder what the Americans are thinking about this” since the large amount of research on the phenomenon of “g” dropping is almost always linked to socioeconomic aspects. The fact that the Protestant/Unionist members of the sample engaged very little in “g” dropping during analysed discourse (4 counts in the male Unionist group and 0 counts for the female Unionist group) is significant since these groups continue to adhere to the standard RP pronunciation of said linguistic feature. The connotations of prestige, “the Queen’s English,” the British Monarchy, indeed, the superiority associated with the use of RP and in particular the absence of “g” dropping, which is a common linguistic feature of NIE indicates a strong connection with RP and a relevant rejection of this NIE variant.

Christina Black, the ex-Mayoress of Belfast and active member of the nationalist minded political party Sinn Féin engaged in “g” dropping a total of 13 times in her two-and-a-half-minute speech to the Irish/American society in New York. I have already expressed my surprise at the frequency of such utterances, which seems to point towards blatant speaker intentionality as regards “g” dropping, a phenomenon that has high frequency rates in the Catholic/Nationalist sample group. Belfast born Christina, (Tina) Black has a postgraduate in Political Sciences from Queens University, Belfast, therefore the socioeconomic factor discussed by Labov does not apply here. There may be an idiosyncratic element involved in Tina Black’s use of “g” dropping since the younger, better educated members of the Catholic/Nationalist community all engage in it. Michelle O’Neil, the Sinn Féin First Minister, 3 times in her one-and-a-half-minute speech, Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin politician, 4 times in his two-and-a-half-minute speech, Emma Sheerin, Sinn Féin politician, 3 times in her two-minute speech, Francie Molloy, elderly Sinn Féin leader and a staunch republican, 6 times in his two minute speech, Daniel O’Donnell popular Irish singer/songwriter, 3 times in his two minute speech. Daniel O’Donnell is an active campaigner for the Irish language revival movement and has clearly voiced his pro-republican inclinations in public on many occasions.

The Sinn Féin politician, Gerry Kelly has only engaged in “g” dropping twice in his minute and a half speech. This is probably because the discourse analysed has been taken from a party-political broadcast video which has been professionally recorded and Labov’s “situational formality” theory on “g” dropping, where speakers who normally engage in “g” dropping make a conscious effort not to do so in formal situations, has probably come into play here (Labov, 1972). The Sinn Féin lawyer and party representative for Belfast North, John

Finucane engaged in “g” dropping a total of 4 times in his two-minute speech after being first elected to the constituency. Martina Anderson, the Tyrone born European parliament representative for Sinn Féin engaged in “g” dropping a total of six times in her two-minute interview with other political party members.

In the Protestant/Unionist speech community, there are only two sample members that engage in “g” dropping. They are Doug Beattie, the leader of the right-wing Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) with a count of 2 cases in his two-minute speech to UUP voters and Stephen Nolan, the BBC Radio Ulster talk show host, with a count of 1 case of “g” dropping in his three-minute utterance. As I have already mentioned, none of the Protestant/Unionist female sample members engaged in “g” dropping at all.

In the Catholic/ Nationalist group, the counts of “g” dropping are significantly higher than in the Protestant /Unionist sample group with a total count of 44 (25 for the female Catholic/Nationalist sample members and 19 for the male Catholic/Nationalist sample members). The socioeconomic context here may be relevant since Catholics in Northern Ireland, until very recently, enjoyed lower levels of academic success than their Protestant counterparts. Since the Good Friday Agreement, however, those statistics have changed with more Catholic/Nationalist students studying university degrees, 51.7% of school leavers as opposed to 44% of Protestant/Unionist school leavers (NISRA, 2021). Out of the 11 Catholic/Nationalists in the sample, 7 have university degrees and 4 do not. The 4 sample group members who do not have a university degree do, nevertheless, have a long history of public discourse in the political domain. Thus, this figure suggests that higher education, or even the lack of it, is not necessarily a predictor of lower counts of “g” dropping in the Catholic/Nationalist group but is an intentional choice.

This affirmation is also backed up in the work of Labov. The frequency of the “g” dropping observed in the Catholic/Nationalist sample group does not fall in with Labov’s idea of the “style” of the analysed text. Labov considers linguistic discourse “style” to be influenced by the context in which the discourse is taking place i.e., in a formal or informal context (Labov, 1972). All of the audio clips in the Catholic/Nationalist group are in a formal context (public interviews or political speeches and addresses) so if Labov’s “situational formality” hypothesis were to play out, the sample members would pay more attention to their utterances and be more careful with the /ɪŋ/ pronunciation at the end of the gerund verb form.

As this is not the case, I claim that the Catholic/Nationalist group are directing their discourse to their listeners and delivering a double-barrelled message. First, that they are on a par with their voters and speak like them and secondly, they are at the opposite end of the scale to the Protestant/Unionist communities. They speak differently and in doing so, distance themselves from their Protestant/Unionist counterparts and all they represent, i.e., their Britishness.

I have also found previous research on the links between “g” dropping and images of “rural masculinity” as opposed to finishing the gerund form completely /iŋ/, which according to Kiesling, message receivers associate with images of higher intelligence (Kiesling, 2019). These images do fall in with the contrasting social identities of the Catholic/Nationalist and the Protestant/Unionist communities as discussed in this study, where the Unionists consider themselves to be more educated and urbane while considering the Nationalists to be more ignorant and rural. Nationalists, however, perceive Unionists to be elitist and even a little ridiculous in keeping with more modern views on the dialect they use, i.e., RP, which they consider outdated (Linsey, 2019). The Nationalists consider themselves to be “educated” underdogs from the land of great scholars like Joyce and Beckett.

This idea is present in the two-and-a-half-minute speech given by the young Sinn Fein politician Orlaith Begley. Orlaith holds a Master’s degree in Professional and Business Studies awarded by Queen’s University, Belfast. She uses labels like “apparatus” to describe British sovereignty over Northern Ireland and talks about “fundamental rights” for Irish Catholics in Ulster. In her performative speech act, she employs an admonishing tone, yet her discourse is concise and to the point. She comes across as the Irish “educated” underdog vindicating her rights as an Irish citizen. She does not however engage in “g” dropping, maybe because she is calling out the suppressors of her rights, i.e., the British, and either consciously or unconsciously, uses their RP linguistic standard (absence of “g” dropping to come across as educated). This is a daring statement, but I do feel there may be some truth in my observation. Nevertheless, further study in speaker intentionality and stance is needed to either prove or disprove this hypothesis.

3.2.2. Discussion of Absence or Presence of Rhotic /r/

The second variable to be analysed is the absence or presence of the rhotic /r/ in the speech of the Catholic/Nationalist or Protestant/Unionist members of the sample. The rhotic /r/ is a feature of the rhotic dialect NIE, whereas RP is a non-rhotic dialect. Therefore, the findings on the absence or presence of the rhotic /r/ are significant. The presence of rhoticity in NIE has no socioeconomic implications whatsoever, as it is standard all over the island. The absence of the rhotic /r/, however, does hold linguistic implications both for the speaker and the listener. The biggest incidence of the absence of the rhotic /r/ in the sample occurs in the Protestant/Unionist sample group, with a total count of 34 (1 female and 33 male).

This result, although significant, is surprising, especially since the incidence in the male Protestant/Unionist sample is significantly higher than in the female part of the sample. This may be explained by the work of Deborah Tannen and her ground-breaking research on gender linguistics, where female submission may be enacted or performed in the linguistic choices of the communities of practice (Tannen, 1994). The fact that the male speech acts performed by this group register such a high level of rejection towards the NIE variant portrays the patriarchal strength behind these speech acts. This falls in with the well-cited Protestant/Unionist conservative ideology. The Protestant/Unionist political leaders have publicly manifested themselves as anti-abortionists and anti-gay rights, basing themselves on the Bible as foundation for their beliefs.

Thus, the female members in the Protestant/Unionist speech community may be reaffirming their more passive roles in said community by letting the males “do the dirty work” so to speak. This is another bold hypothesis that calls for further research well beyond the scope of this Master’s dissertation. Nonetheless, findings for this frequency in the sample show that this speech community favours the RP pronunciation standard in this variable, suggesting there is a rejection from the Protestant/Unionist speakers towards the NIE rhotic dialect.

Yet, this finding strikes incongruous since the rhotic /r/ was introduced into Ulster by the Scottish planters in the seventeenth century (Hickey, 2004) and to all intents and purposes should be embraced by this ideological group as something coming originally from Great Britain. This is not the case here where the absence of the rhotic /r/ in the Protestant/Unionist group clearly indicates a preference for the non-rhotic RP variant. Once again, through language choice, the Protestant/Unionist group reaffirm their loyalty not to their Scottish ascendants, which should be the most natural choice when considering the intergenerational

impact of language, but to everything else the British nation stands for and their personally perceived self-prestige at delivering their utterances in an RP dialect. I believe this linguistic feature is enacted intentionally through the rejection of the rhotic /r/ and may be considered as another robust reason to reaffirm my already stated hypothesis on language loyalty and ideology.

As expected, in the Catholic/Nationalist group, there are no incidences of non-rhotic /r/ in the group sample for neither the males nor the females in the group. The speakers are faithful to the NIE dialect. This finding is also relevant since it shows a total rejection of the RP non-rhotic dialect by the Catholic/Nationalist speech community. While analysing these results, it is important to consider the origins of these speakers, where they live today and how geographical distribution is enacted in their language choice. What is surprising is that the sample members in both groups are all from Mid-Ulster and Belfast, where the characteristics of NIE are standard, yet the linguistic variants are extremely diverse. For example, there is a high count of the Protestant/Unionist sample members from the city of Belfast registering the absence of the rhotic /r/ (34), whereas in the Catholic/Nationalist sample, the group members, also from Belfast, never omit the rhotic /r/ variant in all instances of their discourse.

The region of Ireland where Ulster Scots is more predominant is in County Antrim, which has not been included in the sample. It is interesting to note that the sample members are from County Armagh, Tyrone, Derry and Down, all regions in Mid-Ulster. The limitations of this Master's dissertation does not allow me to apply the geographical variable to the statistical analysis carried out. To compensate for the lack of this information in my study, I have registered the geographical areas sample members come from on the record sheet found in the annex of this study.

The Protestant/Unionist sample group members who have a high incidence of omitting the rhotic /r/ are Peter Robinson, the Belfast born ex First Minister for Northern Ireland with a count of 11 times in his two-minute talk. It is interesting to note that this omission occurs 8 times when he uses the term Northern Ireland, in Northern 4 times and in Ireland, 4 times. It is as if by using an RP variant in the token, he is making it more British. Again, this is a personal appreciation and requires further research into the psychological aspects of Discourse Analysis. Another non-rhotic /r/ user is Jeffrey Donaldson, the new leader of the DUP since June 2020 with a count of 5 times in his two-minute speech.

One of the most striking counts of non-rhotic /r/ use can be seen in the discourse of the Protestant/unionist BBC radio presenter William Crawley. In his dialogue on the BBC radio show Talkback, he uses the non-rhoticised /r/ a total of 9 times during a speech act lasting two minutes. William Crawley is an ordained Presbyterian minister and has served in a Presbyterian parish in New York city. The notable absence of rhoticity in his speech, however, cannot totally be attributed to the linguistic interference that may have arisen from working abroad since American English is also, like NIE and unlike RP, a rhotic dialect.

In the Protestant/Unionist talk show host, Stephen Nolan's speech, there is one count of absence of rhotic /r/. It is significant that the token in which the phenomenon takes place is, like Peter Robinson, in the term Northern Ireland. Like Nolan, the BBC Northern Ireland newsreader, Tina Campbell also engages once in non-rhoticity in her two-and-a-half-minute speech. It is interesting to note that Tina Campbell is the only female Protestant/Unionist group member that engages in non-rhoticity. The other three do not.

3.2.3. Discussion of Vowel Variation

The third variable analysed in the study is vowel variation, in both length and quality, from the standard NIE variant to an RP variant. Based on J.C. Wells' book, *Accents of English* (1983), I have endeavoured to explain some characteristics of the NIE vowel system in chapter 2 of this dissertation. One of the most characteristic varieties are vowel lengthening and fronting, especially with the /u/ variant. Weak forms are not the norm in IRE and especially not in NIE. In RP, on the other hand, there are considerably more weak forms in connected speech than in NIE.

I expected to find that the speakers in the Protestant/Unionist sample group would register a higher count of vowel variation to a more RP variant. I observed this in my study results with the Protestant/Unionist group registering the highest count of 43 out of a total of 48 counts of vowel variation to a RP variant (33 in the male sample and 10 in the female sample). These frequencies show that the Protestant/Unionist sample group members are more prone to using a linguistic variant that is not the norm in NIE, favouring the RP variants, where the vowel fronting is avoided, and the weak forms are preferred.

I further expected to find a low frequency of vowel variation to a more RP variant in the Catholic/Nationalist group. My expectations were confirmed with only 2 counts of said

variation in the sample group (1 female and 1 male). These results clearly demonstrate the rejection of the Catholic/Nationalist group to these RP variants and their adherence to the NIE vowel variants. Lindsey reports on negative stereotypes associated with an RP accent, such as aloofness and arrogance (Lindsey, 2019). The rejection of the RP vowel variants by the Catholic/Nationalist group sample can be seen as evidence of the perception of the Protestant/Unionist speech community in that light. The Catholic/Nationalist sample group's conscious refusal to use this variant clearly reflects their language loyalty and by extension, their ideology.

Some of the more prolific users of weaker vowel sounds tending towards a more RP variant are the DUP leader, Jeffrey Donaldson and the UUP leader, Doug Beattie with a count of 6 for Jeffrey Donaldson and a count of 11 for Doug Beattie. Although, perhaps the most striking count is for William Crawley, the presbyterian minister turned radio presenter. As in the case of “g” dropping above, the weakening of vowel sounds is a characteristic of RP and is not justified by the fact that William Crawley lived abroad, since this phonological linguistic variant is not a characteristic of American English (AME), where vowel sounds are also more open and fronted as in NIE. The frequency may again be due to the “situational formality” hypothesis since Crawley is under scrutiny in his professional role as a newsreader in the public domain. Further studies are needed to investigate the possible reasons behind this phenomenon in Protestant/Unionists ideologists working in the media (Catholic/Nationalist radio presenters do not engage in this variant). Tina Campbell, (Protestant/Unionist) also registers a high count of vowel weakening, 8 counts in total. It is worth remembering that she is also a radio presenter and may present the same “situational formality” as her colleague William Crawley.

It is also interesting to note that the female sample member, Arlene Foster ex First Minister for the DUP political party from 2016 to 2017 did not engage in any vowel variation at all. The rest of the female Protestant/Unionist group sample members, Diana Dodds, European parliament representative for the DUP, and Arlene Foster (DUP ex First Minister) only engage once in vowel weakening. It is also worth mentioning that the Queen's University, Belfast professor, Catholic/Nationalist, Darragh Gannon engages once in vowel weakening as does Catholic/Nationalist Martina Anderson. This may also be put down to the “situation formality” hypothesis since at the time of recording, Darragh Gannon was giving an online conference in a Canadian university and Martina Anderson was a participant in a televised round table discussion.

3.2.4. Discussion of T-Voicing

The fourth and last variable tested is the absence or presence of the T-Voicing linguistic phenomenon in the sample group. T-Voicing is not a feature of RP but is a strong linguistic feature in NIE. I expected to find a high incidence of T-Voicing in both groups in the sample, given its frequency in the NIE dialect and the fact that all the speakers are geographically situated in Mid Ulster. I was surprised to find that, although there is a very high incidence of T-Voicing as expected, the count for the Protestant/Unionist group is very low. Out of a total count of 96 cases of T-Voicing, 78 counts are registered to the Catholic/Nationalist sample group members (43 male and 35 female), clearly showing the acceptance, and indeed favouring of the NIE variant in said group.

In the Protestant/Unionist group sample, only 8 counts of T-Voicing are registered and all of them to the males in the Protestant/Unionist group. This registration is significant as it, once again, implies the Protestant/Unionist sample group members conscious effort not to T-Voice in their public discourse. I can also consider the same hypothesis, based on research in gender linguistics, applied for Protestant/Unionist female use of rhotic /r/ to the frequency of T-Voicing in the Protestant Unionist female group, bringing them closer to findings for the Catholic/Nationalist group. This hypothesis focuses on the role of women's discourse reflecting their stance in a particular community of practice, which has already been discussed above in relation to the males in the same community taking responsibility for the linguistic stance of the group and leaving the females to play a more submissive role in speaker intentionality.

The highest counts of T-Voicing have been registered for the Catholic/Nationalist sample group members, female Sinn Féin political party member Orlaith Begley, with a count of 15 in her two-and-a-half-minute speech and her Sinn Féin colleague Francie Molloy with a count of 16 in his minute and a half speech act. Francie Molloy is in his early seventies and has no higher education qualifications, but Orlaith holds a Master's degree in Political Science. The fact that both Catholic/Nationalist sample members are from County Tyrone is most certainly an important factor in this study since the high frequencies of T-Voicing in both cases may be attributed to the sample group members' hailing from the same region and therefore speakers of the same regiolect.

It is worth mentioning the results of the research found for two other female Catholic/Nationalist group sample members, Emma Sheerin, younger member of Sinn Fein

with a university degree in Political Science and the aforementioned Martina Anderson, political representative for Sinn Féin in the European Parliament. Both are from County Derry and both frequently engage in T-Voicing in their speech acts with a total count of 7 for Emma Sheerin in her two minute speech and 4 for Martina Anderson. While initially analysing these results, I hypothesised that the reason for this linguistic phenomenon occurring so often may be due to linguistic interference due to the four speakers` proximity to the Gaeltacht regions in County Donegal. It is a valid point yet, one must also consider the relevant differences in the social profiles that may possibly have shaped the sociolinguistic profiles of these sample group members (Orlaith Begley, Francie Molloy, Emma Sheerin and Martina Anderson) i.e., age, education and gender. Despite this asymmetry, all four frequently engage in T-Voicing.

Furthermore, the other Catholic/Nationalist sample group members who also frequently engage in T-Voicing are from other parts of Mid Ulster like Belfast, i.e., John Finucane the Sinn Féin lawyer turned politician with a total of 8 counts, or Michelle O`Neill, the current Northern Ireland First Minister, who is from County Tyrone. Dr Darragh Gannon, the Catholic/Nationalist university lecturer in Irish Studies also engages in T-Voicing, albeit less than the other sample group members with a count of 3 times and Gerry Kelly, the Catholic/Nationalist Sinn Féin politician for Belfast, from Belfast himself, engages in T-Voicing 9 times in his two-minute speech. Tina Black, Sinn Féin mayoress of Belfast engages in T-Voicing a total of 7 times. Since Gerry Kelly, like Tina Black is also from Belfast, the initial explanation that T-Voicing is only a linguistic feature of the regiolect spoken in the border areas with the Gaeltacht areas of Donegal, i.e., County Derry and County Tyrone is not statistically significant in the results for the Catholic/Nationalist group sample.

In the Protestant/Unionist group sample, there are little or no counts for T-Voicing in the utterances of the sample group members, both male and female. In this sample group, there are members from Belfast, Kilkeel in South Down, from Newtownards, also in South Down, from Portadown in County Armagh, Enniskillen in County Fermanagh and Craigavon, in County Armagh. The highest incidence of T-Voicing in the Protestant/Unionist group sample is for the moderate Unionist Alliance Party member Stephen Farry, with a count of 4 in his two-minute speech. It is worth mentioning that the Protestant/Unionist Alliance Party is open to dialogue between the two communities to unblock the political stalemate in place since Brexit.

3.2.5. Discussion on the Other Sample Group Members

I cannot confirm the ideology of the Other (all male) sample group members, where results, given the small sample size, are not statistically relevant for this research. They do, however, present higher counts than the Catholic/Nationalist group in the absence of the rhotic /r/ variable (3), and in the vowel variation variable (3) and lower counts in the “g” dropping variable (1) and in the T-Voicing variable (10). This is in line with the Protestant/Unionist sample group, which also registered higher counts in both the absence of the rhotic /r/ and vowel variation variables while registering lower counts in the “g” dropping and T-Voicing variables.

The results of the Other sample group for “g” dropping (1) is low like the Protestant/Unionist frequency count (4), much lower than the Nationalist overall count for “g” dropping (44). On the other hand, I have observed that the T-voicing variable registers higher counts for the Other sample group (10) than it does for the Protestant/Unionist group (8). This further affirms the idea that T-Voicing is a very common linguistic variant in NIE but a variant that is consciously avoided by the Protestant/Unionist sample group members while the Catholic/Nationalist sample group frequently uses it (78). Reasons for this frequency of T-Voicing in the Other group sample may be because they are not linked to radical Unionist political parties. This sample of 3 males constitutes a moderate social democrat (Matthew O’Toole), a journalist (Sam Black), and the Director of Irish studies at Queen’s University Belfast (Peter Gray).

The absence of the rhotic /r/ in the Other group sample (3) is much lower than for the Protestant/Unionist sample (33), again demonstrating that the Other sample group has very few qualms about using the NIE linguistic feature while the Protestant/Unionist sample group manifest a rejection of the use of the rhotic /r/ in public discourse. The frequency counts for vowel variation to a more RP variant for the Protestant/Unionist sample group are a high number of the total counts (43 out of 48). For the Other sample group, however, they are low (3), much more in keeping with the Catholic/Nationalist count (2).

The reasons behind these findings for the Other sample group may be those aforementioned (moderate ideology and neutral stance taking) but to test this, further study on the linguistic variants and dialect used by members of the population who do not profess to be members of either the Catholic/Nationalist community or the Protestant/Unionist community, are necessary to contrast findings. Further study is also necessary from a Gender Linguistics

angle in order to delve into the linguistic influence of traditional patriarchal standards and their effects on female utterances.

4. Conclusion

This linguistic study set out to prove the existence of marked phonological differences in public discourse by both members of the Catholic/Nationalist and the Protestant/Unionist speech communities. These marked phonological differences pertain to either a standard RP variant of the English language (by the Protestant/Unionist speech community) or a more NIE variant (by the Catholic/Nationalist speech community). This study has been successful in that the existence of these varieties is clearly reported, as was expected, for both speech communities. The second part of the study set out to determine whether these linguistic choices are conscious choices of speaker intentionality and may be considered as a sociolect or indeed an ethnolect, i.e., if the choice of a more RP variant is a form of sociolect for the Protestant/Unionists and the choice of the NIE variant may be considered as a sociolect for the Catholic/Nationalists on the island. My hypothesis goes even further with the suggestion that the linguistic allegiance of these two different speech communities may be an extension of their political allegiance, either to the British monarchy, on the one hand, or to the Irish Republic on the other.

I believe that the results of this study clearly show that this is so. Protestant/Unionists do seem to make a conscious linguistic decision to use the RP dialect in their public discourse, much in the same way that Catholic/Nationalists seem to with their choice of the NIE regiolect in their public discourse. Peter Trudgill explains sociolects as opposed to dialects or regiolects as people's speech acts according to their social background and not always according to where they come from (Trudgill, 2003). The group sample members in this Master's study all come from the Mid Ulster region, where according to Hickey, the NIE linguistic variants are common to the whole area, yet my study shows considerable differences in the use of the linguistic features studied in relation to the speech community the speaker hails from.

The idea of a speech community came about in the early 1960s where the assumptions that the way people talked was determined by where they lived. Social factors began to be taken into consideration and the link between linguistic variants and social norms was clearly defined (Labov 1972). Labov's findings seem to be played out in this Master's study, where the socialization patterns, ideology, aspirations and the symbology associated with each of the two speech communities is poles apart, as is their use of certain linguistic variants. The speaker intentions of each of the sample members may also be linked to different social norms and political ideologies of each of their speech communities.

It has always been generally assumed that the acrolectal form or the standard is the prestigious form of the language, and this prestige is therefore transferred to the speaker. They are perceived to be better educated, more professional and even more trustworthy. This belief is losing ground however with the standard English variant beginning to lose prestige as it is seen as an outdated manifestation of Great Britain's colonial past. It is quite sad that the Protestant/Unionist community are so intent on hanging onto a form of discourse which is often the butt of jokes from, the Americans, the Irish and indeed the speakers of regional dialects in Great Britain itself.

The tables are therefore turning for NIE with its more basilectal communities of practice. There is a certain covert prestige in the way the Catholic/Nationalist communities speak, i.e. the NIE variant, whereas the prestige for the Protestant/Unionist community is in the RP variant. It cannot be considered as covert prestige since this is only applied to basilects. Both communities of practice stigmatize each other for the way they speak, and this is seen clearly in the results of this study. Not only is the Protestant/Unionist speech community stigmatized at home but since Brexit in 2020, the British and those who have affinity with Britain are losing respect internationally as is the English language, especially the RP variant with its connotations of a certain stereotyped Britishness. The use of the RP variants in the Catholic/Nationalist community of practice is not tolerated. This is reciprocal since the Protestant/Unionist community also stigmatize the Catholic/Nationalist community because of the way they speak. However, further study is necessary to discover if this stigma is to be encountered internationally.

There are, of course, many limitations to this research. In an ideal situation, a personal interview with each of the group sample members would have been in order, with questions about speaker intentionality and information on whether the speakers use different registers in different domains and if they are consciously aware of the diglossia involved in such speech acts. I would recommend that further studies investigate these possibilities since, unfortunately, the limitations of this Master's dissertation has not allowed me to do so.

There are also limitations in the distribution of the sample, I have only tested for the variables of ideology and sex. While I am aware that age and socioeconomic background are important variables in major sociolinguistic studies, I have chosen not to include the socioeconomic variable, since all the sample group members have higher education studies or have spent many years in the public domain. Hence the socioeconomic background is similar

for all. The age variable, important in robust sociolinguistic studies is not considered in my Master's dissertation. Rather, I am testing language use in the whole speech community based on ideology as opposed to individual characteristics of each of the sample members according to age. The sex variable has been included since it is important given the advanced research carried out on Gender Linguistics and the characteristics of the female utterance as opposed to its male counterpart (Tannen, 1996).

I would also recommend further study on linguistic variation taken out of the context of the public domain. Further discourse analysis in the private domains in Northern Ireland is necessary to test if these divisive linguistic variants are as common among lay speakers as they are among speakers in the media and the more public domains where these performative speech acts take place.

Finally, Todd argues that there is potential for miscommunication or at least ethnic differentiation by phonetic constraints between Protestant/Unionist and Catholic/Nationalist speakers' "traditional paradigm" (Todd, 1989). I believe that the results of this research, although limited by the constraints of the requirements of a Master's dissertation, contributes to the idea that there are two opposing active speech communities in Northern Ireland politics and discourse. These two speech communities firmly reject each other's linguistic variants in their performative speech acts and may be extended to include the rejection, through these speech acts, of each other's political and ideological stances.

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6. Annex

Observation Data and Linguistic Markup Chart

Group sample member name/profession/context /audio link and duration of audio	ID	GD	AR	VV	T-V	OR	DP
1. Michelle O'Neil/Northern Ireland First Minister (SF)/The Guardian Video https://youtu.be/9SBgkMQcLzk (1 min, 10 sec, full video)	C/N	3	0	0	2	Tyrone	2022
2. Noemi Long/Minister of Justice for Northern Ireland (AP)/The Guardian Video https://youtu.be/NSK_Jo-QTto (2 min, 18 sec, full video)	P/N	0	0	0	0	Belfast	2020
3. Peter Robinson/ex Northern Ireland First Minister (DUP) /Ted Talk https://youtu.be/ZP1G3MEN61U (0-2 min)	P/N	0	7	0	0	Belfast	2013
4. Gerry Adams/ex leader (SF)/ Interview with the Hudson Society https://youtu.be/KNUcnjhzNc4 (0-2min,30 sec)	C/N	4	0	0	4	Belfast	2018
5. Jeffrey Donaldson/political leader (DUP)/ Speech to the Northern Ireland assembly https://youtu.be/XJt-VE2QB8k (0-2 min)	P/N	0	5	6	0	Down	2021
6. Doug Beattie political leader (UUP)/ BBC Interview https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2431443156903879 (0-1,58 mins)	P/N	2	11	11	0	Armagh	2019

7. Stephen Nolan/BBC Northern Ireland talk show host /Interview with Doug Beattie (See Stephen Nolan podcasts file) Best of Nolan 2020 (no available link)	P/N	1	1	1	3	Belfast	2020
8. William Crawley BBC Radio Talk show presenter/ Interview https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0017b9q (0-4 min)	P/N	0	9	14	0	Belfast	2022
9. Emma Sheerin/politician for Mid Ulster (SF)/Speech in defence of abortion rights https://youtu.be/Z0cPJ9vpFI0?t=200 (3 mins 28 secs – 5 mins,9 secs)	C/N	3	0	0	7	Derry	2021
10. Orlaith Begley /politician (SF) Speech at Sinn Féin political event https://youtu.be/oP11V0b2834 (0-2min,30 sec)	C/N	0	0	0	15	Tyrone	2018
11. Francie Molloy/politician (SF) Speech at Sinn Féin headquarters https://youtu.be/VfDvWd0cIqo (0- 1 min, 30 sec full video)	C/N	6	0	0	16	Tyrone	2018
12. Matthew O'Toole/politician (SDLP) / Speech on the Coronavirus Legislation Bill https://youtu.be/zRZ_AtSxX_c (0-2 min, 30 sec)	OT	0	0	1	5	Belfast	2020
13. Peter Gray/Director for Irish studies QUB/ Introductory speech for book launch at Royal Irish Academy https://youtu.be/nPypca_se9M (0-2 min , 44 sec)	OT	0	0	1	0	Belfast	2022
14. Dr Darragh Gannon Irish Studies lecturer at QUB/ online conference at the D'Arcy Magee Beacon Fellowship https://youtu.be/-a1myXREDew (12 min,49 sec – 14 min,30 sec)	C/N	0	0	1	3	Unknown	2021
15. Sam Mc Bride/Journalist for the Belfast Telegraph/online conference at the Institution of International and European Affairs https://youtu.be/8YI7lmxU3cY (2 min 10 sec-4 min)	OT	1	3	1	5	Belfast	2022

16. Daniel O Donnell/Famous Irish singer/songwriter/ Interview at Skegness International Music Festival https://youtu.be/X7469m16A-Q?t=121 (1 min 30 sec-2 min,30 secs)	C/N	3	0	0	3	Derry	2019
17. Stephen Farry /Ex Minister for Employment (AP) Interview with Stephen Nolan https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p054q9pn (17 min, 37 sec to 18 min. 45 sec and 18 min, 51 sec- 19 min,46 sec)	P/N	0	0	0	4	Down	2022
18. Gerry Kelly/political leader/SF/political party broadcast https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcmKUjnHsAw (I min 30 sec)	C/N	2	0	0	9	Belfast	2022
19. Dr Gareth Hampton Senior Medic Southern Down Trust/ Interview with Stephen Nolan https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0dgklwb (2 min,45 sec-3 min ,58 sec and 4 min,15 sec-5.min 15 sec)	P/N	1	0	1	1	Armagh	2021
20. Diana Dodds/Member of the European parliament /DUP/ EU manifesto on business in Northern Ireland https://youtu.be/zf0dTmw444o (2 min, 28 sec)	P/N	0	0	1	0	Down	2015
21. John Finucane/politician for North Belfast /SF/Acceptance speech on winning the North Belfast constituency seat https://youtu.be/eMOtXQehpFc (1 min – 2min, 38 sec)	C/N	4	0	0	8	Belfast	2020
22. Christina Black/ Mayoress for Belfast/SF/ Address to America/Irish society in New York https://youtu.be/gmeWWByi5z4 (1 min-3 min ,49 sec)	C/N	13	0	0	7	Belfast	2022
23. Tina Campbell/ BBC Northern Ireland newsreader and presenter/7 am news bulletin https://archive.org/details/BBC_Radio_Ulster_20200229_070000?start=18 (14 sec - 41 sec and 1 min 22 sec-2 min 16 sec)	P/N	0	1	8	0	Belfast	2022

24. Arlene Foster/ex First Minister for Northern Ireland /DUP/ resignation speech at Northern Ireland assembly https://youtu.be/2XrHXO4SKVc (0-2 min,30 sec)	P/N	0	0	1	0	Fermanagh	2021
25. Martina Anderson/Member of the European parliament/SF/ participation in a round table discussion https://youtu.be/_bGOSp5ECz8 (24 sec- 2 min, 6 sec)	C/N	6	0	1	4	Derry	2020

LEGEND

ID = IDEOLOGY

GD = ING DROPPING

AR = ABSENCE OF RHOTIC R

VV = VOWEL VARIATION

T-V = T- VOICING

OR/DP = ORIGIN AND DATE OF PERFORMATIVE SPEECH ACT

SF = SINN FEÍN

DUP = Democratic Unionist Party

UUP = Ulster Unionist Party

AP = Alliance Party

QUB = Queen`s University Belfast

C/N = Catholic/Nationalist

P/U = Protestant/ Unionist

OT = Other