Selected Features of Irish English and their Representation in the Ireland Component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-Ireland)

Laura From
Tampere University
School of Language, Translation and Literary Studies
English Philology
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Tässä pro gradu -tutkielmassa tarkastellaan valittuja Irlannin englannille tyypillisiä piirteitä ja niiden esiintymistä nykypäivän standardikielessä. Tutkielmaan valitut piirteet ovat prepositioiden käyttö, subjekti-verbi kongruenssi, habituaalisuus sekä Irlannin englannille ominaiset perfektit. Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää kuinka yleistä näiden piirteiden esiintyminen on Irlannin englannissa sekä miten stardardisaatio on mahdollisesti vaikuttanut piirteiden esiintymistiheyteen.

Tutkielmassa käsitellään empiirisen osuuden lisäksi englannin kielen historiaa ja asemaa Irlannissa sekä esitellään seikkoja, jotka ovat vaikuttaneet iirin kielen aseman heikentymiseen englannin noustessa valtaväestön kieleksi. Tutkielmassa esitellään myös sen kannalta oleellista aiempaa tutkimusta Irlannin englantiin liittyen ja tarkastellaan valittuja piirteitä kieliopin valossa.

Tutkielman empiirisen osuuden aineistona käytettiin elektronisen The International Corpus of English -korpuksen kahta osaa, joihin on koottu tekstiotteita Irlannin ja Iso-Britannian puhutusta ja kirjoitetusta englannin kielestä. Koska puhuttu ja kirjoitettu kieli on korpuksissa erotettu, näitä tarkasteltiin erikseen myös tutkielmassa.

Tutkimustulokset osoittivat, että Irlannin englanti eroaa erityispiirteiltään monessa suhteessa varsin selvästi Iso-Britannian englannista. Kaikkien tutkittujen piirteiden kohdalla korpuksesta löytyi riittävästi materiaalia osoittamaan, että näitä Irlannin englannille ominaisia piirteitä käytetään edelleen myös standardikielessä. Subjekti-verbi kongruenssi osoittautui yleisimmäksi erityispiirteeksi niin Irlannin englannissa kuin Iso-Britannian englannissakin. Piirre esiintyykin lähes kaikissa englannin kielen variaatioissa myös Brittein saarten ulkopuolella.

Aikaisempien tutkimusten ja tämän tutkielman tulosten valossa näyttää siltä, että Irlannin englannille tyypilliset erityispiirteet ovat edelleen käytössä myös standardikielessä. Standardisaatio ei ole näiden piirteiden osalta vielä täydellistä, vaikka viitteitä löytyy esimerkiksi siitä, että erityisesti tietyt perfektit saattavat tulevaisuudessa kadota Irlannin englannista kokonaan.

Avainsanat: Irlannin englanti, standardikieli, elektroninen korpus

1 Introduction

English has existed in Ireland for over 800 years and it is the oldest form of the language outside the island of Britain. Since the 12th century, it has developed internally in many ways and has struggled for its position in the country. The language has been under the continuous influence of Irish – the first language of the majority of the population until the beginning of the 19th century. However, today native speakers of Irish are few in number and are confined mainly to rural areas of the south-west, west and north-west. Irish English is a language-shift variety and its development shares characteristics with the English language in countries such as Scotland and South Africa, for example.

Irish English, like all other varieties of English, has its own distinct phonological and grammatical features. The purpose of this thesis is to examine some of the non-standard grammatical features of Irish English which make it a distinct variety of English. Unlike the features of a standard variety, the non-standard features are not cited in dictionaries or grammar books. However, as Harris (1993, 139) points out, this does not mean that varieties deviating from the standard language are inferior in any way.

The features chosen for the thesis are prepositional usage, plural subject-verb concord, habitual aspect and Irish English perfects, which were chosen on the basis of earlier studies on Irish English in order to make sure there was enough material to examine. Special interest lies in finding out how the features in question have survived in present day language usage and to what extent the process of standardization has affected the Irish variety of English. According to Trudgill and Hannah (1994, 106), the majority of the grammatical features of Irish English are only found in spoken language and especially in colloquial styles and therefore the comparison of spoken and written Irish English is of importance in the thesis as well.

The thesis begins with an outline of the English language in Ireland, followed by a discussion on various terminological and historical aspects on the matter. Previous studies on Irish English are

also briefly introduced along with the necessary theory to create a background for the analysis of the features from the International Corpus of English. The two subcomponents of the International Corpus of English (hereafter ICE) used in this thesis are the ICE-Ireland corpus and the ICE-GB corpus. The results from the ICE-Ireland corpus are analyzed and compared to the possible occurrences from the ICE-GB corpus in order to find out whether the distinct features of Irish English can be found in Standard British English as well.

2 English and Ireland

2.1 Introduction

According to Filppula (2004, 73) the morphology and syntax of Irish English follow essentially the same patterns which can be found in the other varieties of English on the British Isles. Since the teaching of English in Irish schools relies heavily on Standard English, 'educated' Irish English should not be all that different from Standard English. However, as one might assume various regional dialects and working-class varieties of English in Ireland show a number of features distinguishing them from other regional or social dialects of British English. Filppula (2004, 73) lists the main reasons for this phenomenon. First, the English language in Ireland still contains features of English from earlier periods in history that are either archaic or no longer in use in Standard English. Secondly, other varieties of English have left their mark on the morphology and syntax of English in Ireland and this can be seen especially with northern Irish English which has influences for example from the Scottish varieties of English. Thirdly, in addition to other varieties of English, the Irish language has also had an effect on the evolution of English in Ireland which can be seen even today. Finally, the shift from Irish to English in Ireland happened relatively quickly and the Irish at the time were poorly educated which had an effect on the situation of the English language in Ireland.

Hickey (2007) discusses the language shift in Ireland as well. According to him (ibid., p. 121), Irish never stood a chance against English in the fight of being the language of the majority in Ireland; since the 17th century the number of Irish-speaking people has shrunk to the size of little more than 1 percent of the population. He (ibid., p. 122) observes that in the course of history factors such as famine and emigration helped to accelerate the progress of the language shift and led to Irish quickly loosing ground from which it never recovered. According to Hickey (2007, 123) the Irish-speaking people of the poor rural areas suffered the most in the Great Famine of the 1840s. Thus, the number of lives lost to hunger and people leaving the country led to the number of Irish

speaking people decreasing rapidly. Hickey (2007, 123) estimates that even as many as two million Irish speakers were lost in less than ten years. He goes on to add that those who survived and stayed were forced to learn the new language and use it in order to survive amongst the English-speaking population and to prepare themselves for possible emigration in the future (ibid.).

2.2 Terminology

To this day, no consensus over the proper term for the English language in Ireland exists and this has led to a terminological confusion about the linguistic treatment of English in Ireland (Hickey 2007, 3). The matter is further complicated by the possible connotations a term has and as Filppula (1999, 34) points out, the significance attached to choosing a given term. The most commonly used terms for the English language in Ireland will be discussed next.

2.2.1 Anglo-Irish

In Hickey's (2007, 3) view, the most problematic of the terms is the one that has been in use the longest; evidence of Anglo-Irish being used when referring to a specific section of the Irish population dates back to the early 17th century and is still in use today. However, as Filppula (1999, 34) points out, the term is not used very often in linguistic and dialectological studies anymore. Hickey (2007, 3) argues that the term is unacceptable in linguistic contexts due to its literal meaning "an English variety of Irish". Additionally, the term does have some inappropriate connotations as well. It is used not only in linguistic contexts but for example also in politics and the term 'Anglo-Irish literature' has been used when referring to the literature in English written by Irish authors (Hickey 2007, 3; Filppula 1999, 34). However, outside of Ireland the term Anglo-Irish is seen as less problematic and is used for example by Canadian authors (Hickey 2007, 3).

2.2.2 Hiberno-English

The second term for the English language in Ireland is Hiberno-English. The creator and spokesperson for the term was Alan Bliss who used it in most of his research and from there it spread on to the works of a number of other scholars including Filppula, who justifies the use of the term in his work by stating that "it already has a certain tradition within the field of study and also seems established enough in the more general linguistic literature and international usage" (1999, 35). However, scholars such as Hickey (2007, 5) object to the use of the term for its complicated and technical nature; readers outside Ireland are able to understand the meaning of the term without an explanation. He (ibid., p.5) goes on to add that the English language in Ireland is often seen as not worthy a topic for academic research and using the term within Ireland might help to reinforce said attitudes.

2.2.3 Irish English

The term Irish English has become increasingly popular in the most recent research, although Filppula (1999, 34) mentions that Hayden and Hartog used it in their research already in the beginning of the 20th century. The term is seen as neutral and serious objections to it have not been found by scholars (Filppula 1999, 34; Hickey 2007, 5). The term refers to varieties of English in Ireland and is parallel to [established] labels such as Canadian English or Australian English. As Filppula (1999, 35) points out, the terms Irish English and Hiberno-English are used interchangeably by some scholars.

The term Irish English is also used in the present thesis because of its simplicity and lack of any serious faults or inappropriate connotations.

2.2.4 Standard Irish English

Mac Mathúna (2006, 114-115) defines Standard Irish English as "essentially Standard English with those features of lexis and grammar appearing across a range of spoken texts which may plausibly

be assumed to be of Irish origin". In addition to the characteristics that are unique to Ireland, Standard Irish English has some dialectal features from England and Scotland (Kirk 2011, 33). The Celtic elements in the language usage in Ireland are what distinguish Standard Irish English from other standard varieties in the world (ibid.).

According to Hickey (2007, 26) the non-regional variety of Irish English of the early 20th century was selected and accepted as a standard of English in Ireland by the Irish society. However, as he points out, the focus of the choice was on the exclusion of certain features that were characteristic of the Irish language and the process of standardization did not include codification or elaboration (ibid.). The grammar and spelling for Standard Irish English were adopted from Standard British English along with the vocabulary and other aspects of language (ibid.). Therefore, Standard Irish English shares many common characteristics with the standard varieties of Britain and North America, for example (Kirk 2011, 33).

Due to the fact that there has been "no deliberate planning of a standard form of Irish English and since its language norms are not governed by anyone", Mac Mathúna (2006, 155) raises the question of whether one can speak of such a thing as Standard Irish English at all. The present thesis shall not take part in that discussion, but will merely use the term Standard Irish English in order to separate it from Standard British English when comparing said varieties.

The history of English in Ireland will be discussed next in order to further illustrate the status of the English language in Ireland and the circumstances that led to the above mentioned situation.

2.3 The History of English in Ireland

Until the 17th century, almost the whole of Ireland was Irish-speaking, with English speakers confined for the most part to a few towns. However, the English were present in Irish-speaking Ireland already from the 12th century onwards (Crystal 1988, 219). The Normans arrived in Ireland in 1169 and the settlement of Ireland began. According to Bliss (1976, 5) Irish, Norman French and English were the languages fighting for popularity from early on. There were Welsh and Flemish-

speaking people arriving in Ireland as well, but their languages gained no ground in the new country (ibid.).

At the time of the arrival of the Normans, Irish was spoken by the majority of the people living in Ireland. Norman French was the language of the lords, the church and the upper class people and English was spoken among the mercantile classes. However, Bliss (1976, 5) observes Norman French having a significant advantage over Irish and English, since it was used in all parts of the Norman kingdom; it was the only language spoken in Normandy and England as well as in Ireland which became a part of the kingdom. However, after the early years of the 13th century, Norman French began to loose its foothold as the English language became increasingly popular in England and the same thing happened to Irish in Ireland. According to King (2006, 36), the English language first invaded the legal documents, town records and the like in the 14th and 15th centuries. The spread of the language was due to increased immigration from England to Ireland relating to trade (ibid.).

Interestingly, spoken English seems to have gone into decline in the 14th century among the wealthier Anglo-Irish people who in increasing numbers began to use Irish in their homes (King 2006, 36). Thus, the Irish language and culture spread rapidly during the 14th century and the area where the English were in control was quite small at the turn of the seventeenth century (Crystal 1988, 219). Due to the fact that the Irish language still had power among the people, the authorities became concerned about the position English in Ireland. Their solution in trying to reduce the use of Irish was the Statutes of Kilkenny in 1366 (Filppula 1999, 4; King 2006, 36). The Statutes imposed severe penalties to people who were caught using Irish. The English setters were threatened with the loss of their lands if they did not speak English and follow English custom. According to Bliss (1976, 7), this led to a large number of English people returning to England and by the end of the 15th century, the English rule over Ireland had severely diminished. Despite the efforts to try and reduce the use of the Irish language, it seemed to spread further, even into the area under English

control – the Pale – and was on its way to becoming the only language spoken in Ireland (ibid.). However, the actions of the Tudor monarchs in the 16th century changed the position of Irish in Ireland for good. The number of English settlers increased rapidly with the arrival of a large number of English officials and planters (Bliss 1976, 8). In the 16th and 17th centuries English speaking people were planted in Ireland by Queen Mary and King James I. King (2006, 37) states that with the settlement of Scots in Ulster, the population in Ireland began to shift from Irish to English. Thus, despite the fact that Irish was still the language of the majority, the 1659 census showed that English was rapidly gaining ground in Ulster and Dublin, which were easily accessed from England (ibid.). However, the Irish language continued to be spoken in the western parts of the country and it is in the west where most of the Irish-speaking population can be found even today (ibid.)

The English spoken in Ireland nowadays dates back to the 17th century, to about 1650 and the plantations established by Oliver Cromwell (Bliss 1976, 13). Large numbers of people were transferred from their homes to Connacht and their lands were given to the English which resulted in the fact that the Irish language began to die down in the wealthier areas and eventually all the wealthier people in Ireland spoke only English. According to Bliss (1976, 14), the English rule remained strong throughout the 18th century and society was divided into Protestant landowners who spoke English and Catholic peasants who spoke Irish. These two groups had little or no contact with each other and towards the end of the 18th century English began to gain a stronger foothold in Ireland (ibid.). Luke (2008) observes that the plantations resulted in the Irish being forced to learn English in order to be able to coexist with the English speaking population. The tenancy agreements and newspapers were all in English and those who wanted to understand what was going on in the country had to learn English (ibid.). At a time of industrialization, a person speaking English had more possibilities to advance in society, since the English were usually the ones hiring work force (ibid.). However, the most important event affecting the position of the Irish language in Ireland was the Great famine of the 1840s. As was mentioned above (see section 2.1), the population of

Ireland fell from over eight million to less than six million during a ten-year period and it was the poorer Irish-speaking people who either died or left the country altogether. After these events, the use of Irish continued to decline at a steady rate (Luke 2008).

Due to the division of the population in Ireland into the above mentioned two groups which had little or no contact with each other, a person speaking Irish had very little chance of ever hearing Standard English spoken. The Irish people who learnt English probably learnt it from somebody who spoke English that was very much different from Standard English (Bliss 1976, 16). The Irish influence in that person's speech was passed on to the next person who then passed it on and the influence of Irish in the speech of the peasants accumulated and became stronger and stronger (ibid.). According to Luke (2008), the Penal laws of 1695 were the reason why the Irish received their education in hedge schools. The teachers at these schools had learnt their English from the teachers before them and therefore none of the teachers had had an opportunity to hear the English people speaking English (ibid.). Luke (2008) goes on to add that the denying of formal education of the Irish people contributed to the fact that Irish influence was still present even in those parts of the country where the language had long ceased to be spoken.

The Act of Union in 1803 attached Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom (Crystal 1988, 219). The Irish parliament was established and Irish politicians became more and more interested in learning English in order to be able to argue their case in the parliament of England (ibid.). The role of the English language in Ireland increased even further.

According to Bliss (1976, 18) and Harris (1993, 140) the English spoken in Ireland today has two distinct groups of features; those which survived from the 17th century but are no longer in use in England, and those that are of Irish origin and have been transferred into English. The English and Scots brought to Ireland during the 16th and 17th centuries when colonization flourished influenced the language a great deal as well. Moreover, the contact between the Irish and English languages led to what Harris (1993, 140) calls an "early hybrid jargon". These jargons resulting

from language contact typically manifest themselves during the first stages of a language shift when the people give up their native language and adopt the language of the colonizers (ibid.). According to Harris (1993, 141) the influence of the contact can be seen mostly clearly in areas where people still speak Irish as their mother tongue or where it survived until recently. In other parts of the country and especially in those eastern areas which held most of the English and Scottish settlements, the influence of earlier forms of English and Scots stands out more (ibid.).

Due to the above mentioned factors, English in Ireland differs from Standard English in three ways; pronunciation, the choice of words used and the forming of sentences. Since the purpose of this thesis is to study some of the grammatical features of the English in Ireland, the first two ways will not be discussed further. The way in which sentences are formed in Irish English, however, is what falls under the scope of this thesis. According to Bliss (1976, 22) 17th century English has had practically no effect on the way Irish English puts words together to form sentences. It is the influence of the Irish language that can be seen here. If an expression in Irish English differs from that of Standard English, the Irish English expression is similar to the corresponding expression in Irish (Bliss 1976, 22). The following examples are taken from Bliss's discussion on the matter and illustrate the case in point:

She is dead these ten years. (Irish English)
She has been dead for ten years. (standard English)

I had him persuaded last night. (Irish English)
I have persuaded him. (standard English)

Don't be bothering him. (Irish English)
Don't bother him. (standard English)

The examples are numerous and these issues will be discussed in more detail later on as the results from the ICE-Ireland and ICE-GB corpora are analyzed.

The above-mentioned issues regarding the use of English in Ireland have been such that are common to the country as a whole. However, Bliss (1976) goes on to discuss issues relating to

English in Ireland that are distinct in different parts of the country. His example of an area different from most others is that of Ulster (ibid., p. 23). Ulster was settled by Scots for the most part and they spoke a dialect which was very different from Standard British English. In addition to this, the social conditions in Ulster were such that there was far more contact between people who spoke English and those who spoke Irish (ibid.). Therefore the influence of the Irish language was not as powerful in that area as it was in other parts of the country.

Since the settlement of Ireland the position of the Irish language has weakened considerably and nowadays English is used everywhere. Irish is still an official language of the Republic of Ireland, but its usage is centered only in specific rural areas in the west of the country (Crystal 1988, 221). However, it is clear that Irish has contributed a great deal to the variety of English spoken in Ireland. This influence can be seen in the data from the ICE-Ireland corpus as well (see chapter 6 for a more detailed discussion).

2.4 Irish English outside Ireland

Throughout history the Irish have emigrated from their home country to settle all over the world for two main reasons listed by Hickey (2007). Approximately between the years 500 and 800, Irish people left to aid the [Catholic] church in need in Britain (ibid., p. 384). The escaping of unfavorable circumstances in the country took place centuries later. This phase can be divided into at least four different types. The first example of this type of migration is the fleeing of defeated Irish military leaders to avoid becoming subjects to English rule (ibid.). The Flight of the Earls in 1607 is the most famous example: the Irish were defeated by the English at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601 and the Gaelic lords in Ulster were brought under the English rule. According to Luke (2008) this marked the end of the Gaelic period in Ireland with the traditional leaders fleeing to Spain from which they never return. As Hickey (2007, 385) observes, several key periods in Irish history witnessed this type of migration due to the fact that the Irish quite often earned their living as mercenaries abroad.

In the early 1650s Oliver Cromwell deported large numbers of Irish people to the island country of Barbados in the Caribbean Sea (Hickey 2007, 385). The decades following the initial settlement of Sydney, Australia in 1788 saw yet another period of deportations of the Irish by the English (ibid.).

Hickey (2007, 385) lists religious intolerance as one of the key reasons for the emigration of the Irish. During the 18th century the mainstream Anglican Church demanded the Scottish-origin Presbyterians in Ulster to take an oath and sacramental test, which resulted in growing tensions between the two churches and as a result many a Presbyterian decided to leave for North America (ibid).

Finally, economic necessity, which can be regarded as the leading cause for emigration, was the motivation for a very large number of Irish people who left Ireland for Britain, Canada and the United States in the 19th century (Hickey 2007, 385).

The above mentioned reasons all contributed to the fact that in the course of history the Irish people chose to leave their home country to search for a better life elsewhere. Naturally the language they spoke left its mark around the English speaking world as well. According to Crystal (2003, 338) evidence of Irish English can be found for example in the dialect of Liverpool, in North American and Caribbean dialects and it has also played a role in the varieties of English in Australia and New Zealand.

3 Previous Studies on Irish English

According to Hickey (2007), the various linguistic aspects of English in Northern Ireland have been described quite exhaustively. However, the matter is somewhat different when it comes to Southern Irish English. As Hickey (ibid., p.2) points out, there have always been studies of English done in the Republic of Ireland, but usually these studies have consisted of words and expressions and have not been very academic. He (ibid.) mentions studies by Hayden and Hartog (1909) and Hogan (1927) as early examples of research on Southern Irish English. Before the turn of the 21st century, the linguistic features of Southern Irish English were studied for example by P.L. Henry and Alan Bliss. In the past two decades, scholars such as Markku Filppula, Jeffrey Kallen and Raymond Hickey himself have contributed to the research as well (Hickey 2007, 2).

According to Hickey (2007, 27) Standard Irish English has been studied relatively scarcely and the focus of research has been on determining the nature of the features indigenous to Irish English and to ponder the origin and possible transportation of said features to varieties of English outside Ireland. Some important studies relevant to the present thesis are discussed next.

3.1 Filppula: *The Grammar of Irish English: Language in Hibernian Style*

The main work relevant in terms of this thesis is Filppula's *The Grammar of Irish English* from 1999. In his study, Filppula examined the most distinctive grammatical features of Irish English dialects and their relationships with earlier and other regional varieties of English. He also examined the continuing influence of the Irish language on Irish English and the similarities between Irish English and other Celtic-influenced varieties of English spoken in Scotland and Wales. His study concentrated on those features which on the basis of the data and also on previous studies can be said to be "distinctive of, though not unique to," Irish English dialects (Filppula 1999, 3).

The focus of Filppula's study was on southern as opposed to northern Irish English dialects. The data of his study were drawn from four southern Irish English dialects: "the rural (south)western dialects of Counties Clare and Kerry, the eastern dialect of rural County Wicklow, and the urban dialect spoken in Dublin city" (Filppula 1999, 2-3).

The data which Filppula studied differs a great deal from that of this thesis, since he examined several rural dialects of Ireland and only spoken Irish English. As can be expected, these rural varieties of Irish English provide much more occurrences of the different grammatical features than the corpora examined for this thesis did, because the ICE-corpus investigates 'educated' or 'standard' English. Furthermore, both the spoken and written parts of the corpora were examined for the purposes of the present thesis, which has its own effects on the outcome as well. The results from Filppula's study indicate that the features examined are very much present in present-day rural Irish English and that the influence of Irish can clearly be seen in different constructions of Irish English.

3.2 Hickey: *Irish English*

Hickey's study (2007) described the language usage of two very different groups of people: the elderly rural population and the younger urban population. The speech of the older people from rural parts of the country "reflects the usage closer to forms of Irish English spoken when the Irish shifted from the previous native language to that which the vast majority of them speak today" (ibid., pp. 2-3). In contrast, the language usage of the young urban people represents the sociolinguistic developments that have recently taken place in Southern Irish English in particular (ibid., p.3).

Hickey's study (2007) looks at the forms of English both in the north and south of Ireland. According to him (ibid., p. 2), the political division of Ireland is represented in the speech of the people as well with many linguistic features being split according to the division within the country. The study included ten data sources, five of which are based on collections made by Hickey

himself. The data sources were *A Collection of Contact English*, *A Survey of Irish English Usage*, Dublin English Recordings, Waterford English Recordings, *A Corpus of Irish English*, *Tape-Recorded Survey of Hiberno-English Speech*, Irish Emigrant Letters, Old Bailey Texts, Material for *A Linguistic Survey of Ireland* and Sound Archive of the Department of Irish Folklore, University College Dublin. To make the data sample as representative as possible, informants who were speakers of local forms of English were chosen (Hickey 2007, 162-171). On the basis of the data, acceptance rates for the distinctive features were calculated and analyzed.

3.3 Kirk and Kallen: "Assessing Celticity in a Corpus of Irish Standard English"

In their article, Kirk and Kallen (2007) try to suggest perhaps a different approach to the question of Irish language influence to Irish English. The data of their study come from a sample of Standard Irish English which differs from the material relating to dialects and certain sample sentences which have been used in many other studies on Celticity and Irish English. In their approach to Celticity, English in Ireland is "used in such a way as to point to the Irish language as a linguistic and cultural reference point" (ibid., p. 270).

In assessing Celticity, Kirk and Kallen focused on the examination of the International Corpus of English (see section 5.1 below). The international nature of the corpus allows comparisons with other varieties of English quite easily and in their study, the focus is on comparisons with the ICE-GB. They concentrated on finding evidence of Celticity in both grammatical and non-grammatical features of Irish English. The grammatical features chosen for their study were the perfective aspect, reflexive pronouns and inversion and embedded sentences. In terms of the perfective aspect, they studied those types of perfects which Filppula (1999) refers to as the *after* perfect, the medial-object perfect and the extended-now perfect. The features examined by Kirk and Kallen have been previously said to contain evidence of Celtic influence. According to Kirk and Kallen (2007, 271), the non-grammatical ways in which the Celtic characteristics of Irish English might manifest

themselves in the ICE-Ireland corpus were loanwords, code-switching and covert reference using standard English in ways specific to Irish usage.

Kirk and Kallen (2007, 293) state that, it could be easy to ignore the importance of Celtic influence in Irish English due to the high percentages of non-Celtic features in their study on the ICE-Ireland corpus. They, however, suggest that "Celticity manifests accumulatively at many levels – any feature of one level reinforcing that of another" (ibid., pp. 292-293). In their opinion, the lexical and grammatical aspects of Irish English entail certain cultural values within the Irish society and how the people of that society represent those values in their language usage as well (ibid.). The pressure towards standardization becomes clear in their study, but at the same time the present-day language usage continues to resist that pressure resulting in complete standardization not being achieved; elements of variation still exist in the standard context as well (ibid.).

4 Features Chosen for the Study

4.1 Prepositional Usage

According to Filppula (1999, 218) Irish English contains expressions which involve the use of prepositions not found in the standard variety of English or in other English dialects. The influence of Irish can clearly be seen especially in conservative varieties of Irish English. The prepositional system of Irish English reflects to a great extent the corresponding Irish usage, which according to Harris (1993, 172) is explained by the special role that prepositions play in Irish syntax. In Irish, prepositional phrases can be used to convey meanings which in other languages are expressed by verbs, adjectives or adverbs (ibid.).

The prepositions chosen for this study are *in*, *of, on* and *with*. Each preposition will be discussed in more detail in relation to the analysis of the given preposition in section 6.1.

4.2 Plural Subject-verb Concord

In subject-verb concord the number and person of the subject is what determines the form of the verb in a given context. Harris (1993, 154) lists three main types of verb-ending which mark subject-verb concord historically: *-eth*, *-(e)s* and zero. The first ending can only be found in very archaic language and the second one is the source of the modern *s*-inflection. The use of the three forms has changed considerably over the centuries. According to Harris (1993, 154), the stabilized pattern of usage of subject-verb concord is a relatively new phenomenon.

The -(*e*)*s* ending has a long history of being used with plural subjects and the feature is still present in many varieties of English today. Hickey (2007, 179) points out that not all varieties of English have the same subject-verb concord patterns. In Irish English the verbal ending *-(e)s* is seen not only in the singular but also in the plural. Harris (1993, 154) gives the example *the woman knows* and *the women knows* to illustrate the feature.   He goes on to add that the pattern extends to forms of *be* as well: *the women is/was* (ibid.).

The rules governing subject-verb concord tend to be variable rather than categorical (Harris 1993, 155; Hickey 2007, 180). Whether the subject is a pronoun, noun, or a noun phrase and the distance between the subject and the verb in a sentence can all have an effect on the occurrence of the *s*-ending across varieties. Harris (1993, 155) states that the extent to which speakers of Irish English do use the *s*-ending seems to depend on a variety of grammatical as well as social constraints. He goes on to add that one of the grammatical factors governing the likelihood of a verb appearing with an *s*-ending after a plural subject is the nature of the subject itself (ibid.). In general, the *s*-ending occurs with subjects which are full nouns (ibid.). The following examples of such usage are taken from Harris (1993, 155):

Them two **fellas was** hit.

Her **grandchildren comes** down.

According to Harris (1993, 156) the verbal *s*-ending tends to occur with a plural subject quite often in questions where subject-verb inversion takes place:

Is my hands clean?

Finally, the verbal *s*-ending also occurs with 'collective' noun phrases which despite the lack of a plural noun do have plural meaning:

The whole **six of us was** sitting...

Most of the hard core'**s** all **older men**.

However, as Harris (1993, 156) points out, collective noun phrases can occur with the *s*-ending in standard varieties as well.

According to Hickey (2007, 180), this feature is most characteristic to the dialects in the north of England and therefore often also labeled as the Northern Subject Rule (NSR). McCafferty (2003) offers a lengthy discussion on the matter and states that the feature originated from both England and Scotland at least in the dialects of Ulster (ibid., p. 106). In his opinion NSR was a feature that

was shared by both the settlers from the northern parts of England and the speakers of certain dialects from Scotland already present in Ireland (ibid.). In NSR the verbal -*s* ending is used with both singular and plural subjects in the third person. As McCafferty (2003, 109) points out, the use of the verbal -*s* ending with a singular pronoun follows along the lines of standard language usage. Thus, it is the plural context of the -*s* ending that is of interest here. The use of the -*s* ending in the NSR-construction is restricted in such a way that the verb allows for the non-standard ending if the subject of the verb is a noun phrase but also if it is not an "adjacent personal pronoun" (ibid.). McCafferty offers two examples from Fitzpatrick (Fitzpatrick in MacCafferty 2003, 109) to illustrate the matter:

> **His letters is** as short as ever the **[they] were**.
>
> The **[they] have** a place from Mr Ball and **is** very well off.

In the first example the non-concord form occurs with the noun phrase *his letters*, whereas the pronoun *they* requires the concord form of the verb due to their adjacency. In the second example *they* again requires the concord from of the verb, but the constraint does no apply to the second verb form not adjacent to the pronoun.

According to Filppula (1990, 150) subject-verb concord is one of those features that is present in all of the regional or social varieties of English in some way or another. The interest here lies in finding out the possible differences between Standard Irish English and Standard British English in terms of subject-verb concord.

4.3 Habitual aspect

The English language marks verbs to indicate the time at which an event took place using tense and aspect. According to Leech and Svartvik (2002, 415) tense is a way to indicate how close the action is to the time at which it is spoken about; for example in the past or in the present. Aspect on the other hand describes a state or reveals whether the action is ongoing or completed (ibid.). An

important category relating to aspect is the habitual, which Harris (19993, 162) remarks as referring to events taking place repeatedly over a period of time. In Standard English this temporal relation in past time is often expressed with the phrase *used to*:

He **used to come** home late every evening.

As Harris (1993, 162) points out, in some types of Irish English, the same can simply be expressed with *used*, as in this example from the ICE-Ireland corpus:

She **used always go**.
(S1A-053)

According to Trudgill and Hannah (1994, 106), in Irish English habitual and non-habitual actions or states are distinguished with the help of *do*, which is placed before the habitual verb and inflected for tense and person:

I **do be drunk**.

He **does be writing**.

Filppula (1999) uses the term 'periphrastic *do*' to refer to the uses of *do* discussed in the present section. He states that although this is a feature that sets Irish English apart from most other varieties of English, it also displays similarities with the southwestern British English dialects and some Welsh English dialects (ibid., p.130). Millward (1996, 385) points out that similar constructions are also found in the vernacular of African American English in the United States.

Habitual *be* or *do be* can be combined with *-ing* forms of main verbs to produce a 'habitual continuous' category (Harris 1993, 163). Thus sentences such as those below express each event as being repeated over a period of time:

They **be shooting and fishing** out at the forestry lakes.

They **do be fighting** among other.

According to Harris (1993, 163), *do* in sentences such as those above, is not necessarily stressed. The usage in his opinion is thus quite unrelated to the stressed auxiliary *do* which is generally used to emphasize a given word or phrase in English (ibid.).

4.4 Irish English Perfects

The Standard English perfect does occur in Irish English as well, but as Filppula (2004, 74) points out, Irish English has some distinct uses of the present and past tenses for "perfective aspect meaning" which in other varieties are expressed with the standard *have* perfect. Some of these usages and forms that are present in Irish English are either obsolete or non-existent in other varieties of English. Harris (1982) and Filppula (2004) distinguish altogether six different categories of Irish English perfects and these categories are discussed below. The labels for the categories are taken from Filppula (2004) and the examples from Filppula (1999, 2004) and Harris (1982, 1993).

4.4.1 The indefinite anterior perfect

The indefinite anterior perfect denotes events or state of affairs which take place at an unspecified point in a period leading up to the moment of utterance (Filppula 2004, 74-75). To express this time relation, Irish English prefers the simple past verb form:

> **Were** you ever in Bellaghy?
> (Have you ever been to Bellaghy)
>
> And do you go up to see it?
> I **never went** till it yet.
>
> I **never saw** a gun in my life nor **never saw** one fired.

Filppula (1999, 92) observes that the indefinite anterior perfect tends to occur with certain types of adverbials, such as *always*, *ever*, *never* and *often*. Semantically, the adverbials used with this type of perfect most often "denote the frequency with which the activity or state referred to is said to have

taken place or the time zone within which it is located" (ibid., p. 93). Thus the given activity or state is still relevant at the moment of utterance.

According to Filppula (2004, 76) the indefinite anterior perfect along with the extended-now perfect (see 4.3.5 below) is quite common even in educated speech. It is used almost universally instead of the standard *have* perfect where reference is made to activities, events, or states which have taken place in the "indefinite past" but which lead up to the moment of speaking in some way or another (Filppula 1999, 95). These two types of perfect can also occur in written texts, for example in newspapers. The Irish language has the equivalent structures as well, but according to Filppula (1999, 95), it is possible that they are based on similar perfects used in English of the earlier periods.

In his study on Irish English Hickey (2007) criticizes the term indefinite anterior perfect used by Filppula in his research. According to him, the Irish did not have a verb construction with the auxiliary *have* that could have been used instead of one without *have* (ibid., p. 195). Therefore, the Irish could not have "overrepresented the 'indefinite anterior of English in their speech" (Hickey 2007, 195). Filppula (1999, 98) himself does also point out that Irish does not have an equivalent structure of the English *have* perfect; it has only one means of expressing the past. This helps to explain the nature of Irish English perfects as well, since the variety has a number of features similar to those in the Irish language.

4.4.2 The *after* perfect

The *after* perfect, which Harris (1982, 11-12; 1993, 140) calls the 'immediate perfect' or the 'hot-news' perfect, is constructed by using *be* followed by *after* and an *-ing* -participle. This type of perfect refers to an event or activity which has taken place in the more or less recent past but the effects of which persist some way or other into the present moment or into a secondary point of time in the past (Filppula 1999, 99):

I'm after seeing him.

You're after ruining me.

And when the bell goes as six you just think you **were only after going** over and you get out and up again.

As Harris (1993, 160) mentions, the *after* perfect can also occur with noun phrases without a verb:

I'm only after my dinner.

According to scholars such as Filppula (2004, 76) and Ó Corráin (2006, 152), the *after* perfect is one of the features that Irish English is best known for. Due to its stereotypical nature, the use of the perfect tends to be avoided by educated speakers in formal contexts. However, the feature is very much present in informal contexts and for example in the language of speakers from the working-class or rural areas of Ireland. As Filppula (1999,99) points out, the use of the *after* perfect is not entirely unproblematic; it might lead to difficulties of understanding between speakers of Irish English and other British English varieties.

The *after* perfect most likely originates from the Irish language which has a similar construction to express this type of time relation (Ó Corráin 2006, 152). It has been in use in Irish English from the end of the 17th century (Corrigan 2011, 41).

In addition to the perfective use of the construction scholars such as McCafferty (2004) and Ó Corráin (2006) discuss the future references of the *after* construction. The instances of the construction in texts of early Irish English refer to the future instead of the past. McCafferty (2004, 148) argues that the English-speaking settlers in Ireland borrowed the construction from Irish and interpreted it as having future reference. He goes on to add that the different meanings of *after* were mixed with the Irish construction in the language usage before the latter half of the 19th century (ibid.). However, the future meanings of the construction only dominated until the 1850s when the perfective aspect took over (McCafferty 2004, 113). During that time the language shift progressed further and more and more Irish-speaking people chose English as their primary language. As Ó

Corráin (2006, 154) points out, the use of the construction for future reference would be very unusual in present day Irish English as well as Irish.

4.4.3 The medial-object perfect

The medial-object perfect, which Harris (1993, 160) calls the 'resultative perfect' describes a past event which still has relevance in the present. In this type of perfect transitive verbs are used to form a construction consisting of *have* and a past participle placed after the object of the clause:

> I **have it forgot**.

As Harris (1982, 12) points out, the medial-object perfect superficially resembles the perfect of Standard English, except for the fact that the *-ed* -participle is placed right after the direct object. In this type of perfect the focus is on the results of the action and not on the action itself. According to Filppula (1999, 108), the subject in these constructions is most often – although not always – the agent performing the action and the object is usually affected by said action in some way or another. As was mentioned above, the verbs used in this way are transitive and typically dynamic but occasionally instances of other types also occur especially in the more conservative rural varieties of Irish English (ibid.). Examples of this type of perfect include:

> It was calm and sun all the time. Cut it today, and turn it tomorrow, and bale it the next day… Couple of weeks, about three weeks we **had it** [the hay] **all done**.
>
> I'**ve it pronounced** wrong.

According to Filppula (2004, 76), the medial-object perfect and especially the *be* perfect (see 3.3.4 below) are features of Irish English that are falling out of use in present-day language usage. Both have similar constructions and usage in Irish, but it is also possible that they have survived from early Modern English (ibid.).

4.4.4 The *be* perfect

The verbs occurring in the medial-object environment were characterized as transitive. The *be* perfect, on the other hand, occurs with intransitive verbs and is formed with *be* and a past participle (Harris 1993, 160). According to Filppula (1999, 116) this type of perfect can be considered as a less obvious feature of Irish English. Like the medial-object perfect, the *be* perfect favors verbs with dynamic meaning; it is used with verbs of motion and change, such as *go*, *change*, *leave*, or *die* (Filppula 2004, 75). Examples of this type of perfect include:

> I think the younger generations **are gone** idle over it.
>
> […] particularly the valley up the Cranagh road **is** drastically **changed** and **improved** for the better.
>
> How many brothers and sisters do you have and what they're all doing?
> They'**re** not **left** school yet.

The meaning of the *be* perfect resembles that of the medial-object perfect: the focus is on the end-point or result of some prior activity or event. Hence Harris (1993, 160) groups both the *be* perfect and the medial-object perfect under the same heading 'resultative' perfect.

According to Hickey (2007, 196), the existence of this type of perfect can in part be caused by the fact that due to the language shift, Irish English does not use *have* in constructions such those in the examples above. Also, in earlier periods in the history of the English language the auxiliary *be* was frequently used with the types of verbs related to the *be* perfect (ibid.).

4.4.5 The extended-now perfect

Along with French, Irish and German, Irish English uses a present-tense form rather than a perfect-type construction to express extended-now time. In Filppula's discussion on Irish English perfects the extended-now is considered to be a perfect even though it uses a present tense form in its constructions (1999, 122). The extended-now perfect refers to events or states initiated in the past but continuing at the moment of utterance (Filppula 2004, 75). As Filppula (1999, 123) points out,

the extended-now constructions require a time-adverbial to express duration. Due to the peculiar nature of the extended-now perfect, speakers outside the scope of Irish English may have difficulties in understanding the time reference expressed (ibid., p. 122). The following sentences illustrate the use of simple or continuous present forms instead of the perfect that would be used in Standard English:

> **I know him from** he was a wee fella.
>
> **I know his family** all me life.
>
> **We're living** here seventeen years
>
> **Are you waiting** long on the bus?
> (Have you been waiting long for the bus?)

According to Hickey (2007, 196) the use of the extended-now construction is a feature that is characteristic to Ireland as a whole. However, the origin of the feature is a difficult matter in both Hickey and Filppula's opinion. According to Hickey (2007, 196) the feature was in use in the earlier periods of the English language and it is possible that the Irish adopted it during the language shift in Ireland. However, as was mentioned above, the Irish language at the time of the language shift did not have an equivalent form to *have* and in Hickey's view the native speakers of Irish would not have taken it as a part of their language usage at that time.

4.4.6 The standard *have* perfect

The standard *have* perfect can express all of the above mentioned meanings and is used in those ways in Standard English as well as in educated, especially written, Irish English. In the written language, the standard *have* perfect is of course the norm and is also used increasingly in present-day spoken Irish English (Filppula 2004, 75-76). The standard *have* perfect will not be included in the analysis below, since it cannot be considered as a distinct feature of Irish English.

5 Data and Methods

5.1 The Corpora Used in the Study

The data for the present thesis are drawn from two sub-components of the International Corpus of English (ICE). The corpus was compiled in order to provide machine-readable corpora of spoken and written English which could easily be compared with each other. The texts from the different sub-components in the International Corpus of English represent the English language in general but contain the specific cultural and linguistic elements of each country (Nelson et al. 2002, xi). These subcomponents have been compiled in countries such as Australia, Great Britain, Hong Kong, India, Ireland and Singapore (ibid.).

Greenbaum (1996) discusses the nature of the texts in the International Corpus of English, which generally come from the period 1990–1994. He describes the texts as coming from a number of specific text categories and that each category contains a fixed number of texts (ibid., p. 6). The two major text categories in the corpus are spoken texts and written texts. Inside the category of spoken texts, there are dialogues and monologues of which some are also scripted (ibid.). The written texts include manuscripts or printed texts (ibid.). The authors and speakers of the texts are at least 18 years of age, have received their education in English and have been born in the country of the corpus in question or have moved there at an early age (ibid.).

The two subcomponents used for the present thesis are the ICE-Ireland corpus and its British equivalent the ICE-GB corpus. The nature of the ICE allows for observations and comparisons to be made on a given feature in order to find out the aspects shared by varieties and also the differences and unique characteristics of each variety (Kirk 2011, 32).

5.1.1 ICE-Ireland

As all the other sub-components of the International Corpus of English, the ICE-Ireland corpus consists of the standard 200 written and 300 spoken texts, each text being approximately 2000 words. In total the corpus contains 1 million words. The spoken texts have been compiled in 15 different discourse situations, ranging from casual face-to-face and telephone conversations to parliamentary debates and legal cross-examinations. The corpus makes use of both formal and informal discourse situations to cover a wide spectrum of language usage. The written texts have been compiled from 17 published and unpublished domains (ICE-Ireland). As Kirk (2011, 32) points out, the language represented in the corpus mostly consists of the speech of educated or professional people who "have been influenced by the norms of written language".

The ICE-Ireland is internally divided; half of the data in the corpus comes from sources in Northern Ireland while the other half comes from the Republic of Ireland. This political division also represents the traditional dialect boundary of the island of Ireland as a whole.

5.1.2 ICE-GB

The ICE-GB corpus also contains the standard 200 written and 300 spoken texts, each being approximately 2000 words making the total number of words the above mentioned 1 million. Unlike most other corpora the ICE-GB is syntactically parsed at function and category level (Nelson et al 2002, 4).

5.2 Methodological Discussion

The features that were examined in the present thesis were chosen based on Filppula's study (1999) of the most distinctive grammatical features of Irish English. The features chosen for the thesis are prepositional usage, plural subject-verb concord, the habitual aspect and Irish English perfects. The aim of this thesis was to examine to what extent these features still exist in present-day Irish English. Due to the fact that the corpora used in this study consist of educated or even Standard

English, the interest lies in the process of standardization and its effect on the said features. The assumption is that the selected features are used more sparingly in the International Corpus of English than for example in the data in Filppula's study (1999). The type of language examined should make all the difference here.

In order to collect the necessary data, a computer program called Antconc was used, which is created for performing searches on computerized text files. Specific words, phrases and constructions were chosen based on the previous studies on Irish English to ensure the relevance of the findings. These are explained in more detail in chapter 6 below. The data was analyzed manually and the frequencies for each feature examined in the ICE-Ireland corpus were then compared to any possible findings from the ICE-GB corpus in order to see if any of the Irish English features exist in present-day 'standard' English.

6 Findings

The analysis of the data gathered will be discussed next. Each feature will be discussed separately and the spoken and written parts of the ICE-Ireland corpus will be treated separately as well. Comparisons will be made to any possible instances found in the standard variety of English i.e. the spoken and written parts of the ICE- GB corpus.

6.1 Prepositional Usage

The results of the particular prepositional usages of Irish English will be discussed next and the findings from the ICE-Ireland corpus will be compared to the possible occurrences in the ICE-GB corpus. The discussion will follow that of Filppula's (1999) and the searches were conducted along the lines of his study in order to see whether the results obtained for this thesis bear any resemblance to the findings from the earlier studies conducted on the matter. The findings are summarized in tables 1 and 2 below, with normalized frequencies per one million words given in brackets.

ICE-Ireland	Spoken	Written
in	10 (16,7)	2 (5)
of	2 (3,3)	-
on	5 (8,3)	1 (2,5)
with	2 (3,3)	-
Total	19 (31,7)	3 (7,5)

Table 1 Prepositional usage in the ICE-Ireland corpus

ICE-GB	Spoken	Written
in	2 (3,3)	1 (2,5)
of	2 (3,3)	-
on	1 (2,5)	-
with	-	-
Total	5 (8,3)	1 (2,5)

Table 2 Prepositional usage in the ICE-GB corpus

6.1.1 The preposition *in*

According to Filppula (1999, 226), the preposition *in* has uses which are specific to Irish English. Most of these uses involve the prepositional phrase *in it*, which is a loan translation from the Irish *ann* indicating existence (ibid.). Hickey (2007, 247) parallels the construction to the expression *da sein* 'to be there' in German which shows the same "metaphorical extension of the literal meaning of the locative expression". Expressions containing the phrase *in it* are found in all varieties of Irish English. The majority of occurrences of *in it* expressed a concrete location in some place. The first three examples are from the spoken part and last one is from the written part of the ICE-Ireland corpus:

(1) Pam Dwyer brought us up <,> she's a friend of the Saint John of God place up the Upper Springfield Road. Aye but sure they don't have nursing care **in it**…
(S1A-004)

(2) … So I went into the German shop before I went in Curley's. There was four people in it. There's nobody ever **in it**.
(S1A-009)

(3) See that aquarium that 's the biggest rip-off I ever seen
Oh it 's dear I haven't been **in it** as years.
(S1A-045)

(4) I could get a mansion for 200 a month […] we could both live **in it**.
(W1B-003)

According to Hickey (2007, 247) it seems that the influence of Irish during the language shift in Ireland was very much present in this type of prepositional usage. In all of these cases the prepositional phrase *in it* could simply be replaced with *there* or *in there*. In fact, as Filppula (1999, 227) points out this would be the use in Standard English.

Another distinctly Irish English feature of the use of *in* involves the metaphorical sense of location, i.e. existence (Filppula 1999, 227). However, the findings from the ICE-Ireland corpus did not contain any occurrences of this metaphorical existence. Filppula (1999, 228) lists also a third use of *in* which is related to the other two but instead of focusing on the existence of something, the focus is on presence. Two occurrences of this type of use were found in ICE-Ireland, one in the spoken part and one in the written part of the corpus:

(5) No matter how scenic or wonderful or pleasant the place is, it's only given that quality by the people who live **in it**. Although a busy little town […]
(S2B-023)

(6) Several times Rose tried to prod him towards the garden but after a short time he would just stand **in it**, disheartened, looking at the disorder before moving away.
(W2F-018)

ICE-GB provided altogether three occurrences of the local usage of *in it*, two in the spoken part and one in the written part of the corpus:

(7) So what's your current address?
I think I'd best just leave it because I'm only going to stay **in it** for three   months. By the end of the term I'm leaving <,> and that's my mother's place and I usually get my mail there once a week.
(S1B-080)

(8) Frank has re-modelled an ordinary suburban frame house into an art work <,,> and really does live **in it** with his young family…
(S2A-040)

(9) I can't remember whether I told you much about ours here in St. Maisal, but it is a terraced village house in the mountains dating back to the eleventh century. It had been abandoned for many years when we saw it (we've learnt since that the sculptor Maillot was born **in it**) and was in a terrible state.
(W1B-014)

The uses of the preposition *in* and more specifically the phrase *in it* turned out to be the most common of the prepositions examined here. However, the frequency of the uses is still fairly low in the context of the standard language. The expressions of metaphorical sense of existence with *in it* were non-existent in ICE-Ireland. The majority of occurrences expressed a concrete location of some sort as was the case in Filppula's study (1999) as well. However, the expressions of presence of somebody or something with *in it* were also fairly marginal in the data. It seems that the nature of the ICE-Ireland corpus had an effect on the results, because the number of occurrences in all the categories of *in* discussed here was higher for example in Filppula's study (1999).

6.1.2 The preposition *of*

According to Filppula (1999, 238) the preposition *of* has also developed a number of uses that differ from those in the standard variety of English. He describes one use of *of* in which the preposition is used to form a certain kind of noun phrase structure consisting of two nouns joined by the preposition *of*:

> "the first noun, although most often itself modified by an adjectival attribute, assumes the function of a kind of adjectival attribute to the second noun, with a clearly intensifying force".

One such example was found in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus where the two nouns are joined by *of* in a description of height:

> (10) Bob is **a tall scallion of a man**. A strapping six feeter from the rough end of the trench.
> (S1A-018)

The ICE-GB also provided two examples of this kind, both of which are from the spoken part of the corpus:

> (11) Well he had **an absolute beast of a ball** […] A sort of thrown-high bouncer fourth ball I think.
> (S1A-095)

(12) But no it wouldn't wash because I I've had a very uhm **pretty straightforward sort of a life** I'm afraid.
(S1B-042)

There was one other example of the attributive *of* which occurred in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus:

(13) **a wee girl of her age** like…
(S1A-002)

The written parts of the corpora did not produce any results of this kind and the occurrences from the spoken parts of the corpora seem to apply that this use of the preposition *of* is not that common in present-day Irish English or in Standard British English either. It seems that the standard nature of the language in the ICE-Ireland corpus has an effect on the number of occurrences found in the corpus, because the findings from Filppula's study (1999) seem to suggest a relatively frequent use of the attributive *of*. In addition to the attributive uses of *of*, the preposition has a number of other uses, most of which, however, are common in other dialects of English as well (Filppula 1999, 241).

6.1.3 The preposition *on*

The preposition *on* has a number of different functions in Irish English. According to Filppula (1999, 219), the best known of these functions is the use of *on* in expressions which refer to a disadvantage of some kind "from the point of view of the referent of the pronoun acting as the complement of the preposition". This type of usage of the preposition is known from varieties of English outside Ireland as well (Hickey 2007, 247). While the written part of the ICE-Ireland corpus provided no occurrences of this type, three examples of *on* used to express a disadvantage of some kind were found in the spoken part of ICE-Ireland:

(14) Anyway it was just so… Her and her girls…
My girls would never do that **on me**.
(S1A-011)

(15) No that 's fine. I haven't gotten around to listening to that tape yet. My little brother saw it and nicked it **on me** […] The tape you gave me on Friday to to have a listen to.
(S1A-052)

(16) It was a beautiful plant […] but somebody killed it **on me**.
(S1A-053)

In (14) the standard use could be "My girls would never do that to me" whereas in (15) the standard use might be "nicked it from me" as one might also say "stole it from me". The prepositional phrase could be left out altogether in (16). According to Hickey (2007, 247) in situations such as that in (15) the preposition *on* is often used instead of the possessive pronoun. In (15) the possessive pronoun might not accurately describe the situation since we do not know whether the tape actually belongs to the speaker or not. According to Hickey (2007, 248) the use of *on* in situations like these is a fairly new phenomenon and can be found in texts dating from the latter half of the 19th century.

Filppula (1999, 220) states that the preposition *on* can also be used to express different kinds of physical and mental sensations or states or processes. One such example was found in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus:

(17) Is her leg getting better?
No it's blown out like a balloon.
Oh dear she's got a lot of water **on her leg**.
(S1A-078)

In contexts such as that in (17), the preposition in Standard English would be *in*.

An additional non-standard usage of *on* relates to some type of possession. According to Filppula (1999, 221) *on* is used in this respect to express "an inherent physical or other property of the referent". Two occurrences of this type of usage with *on* were found in ICE-Ireland, one from the spoken and one from the written part of the corpus:

(18) Aye they're they're the shape of an eel uh and and there there's a a spike **on them** that would lance you up the back gill. Just behind the gills on the back there 's a spike…
(S1A-045)

(19) Towels are much safer. Much. Doesn't matter how many germs are **on them**.
(W2F-011)

In both (18) and (19) the preposition might be left out altogether and the idea could be expressed with *have*:

They're the shape of an eel and they **have** spikes that would lance you up the back gill.

Towels are much safer. Doesn't matter how many germs they **have**.

The ICE-GB corpus provided one occurrence of this type, found in the spoken part of the corpus:

(20) There are various types of roundabout from the <unclear word> roundabout to more complex ones with traffic lights **on** them.
(S2A-054)

The low frequency of occurrences with the preposition *on* in the ICE-Ireland corpus suggests that in this respect the language usage in the corpus is more like Standard British English. The data from Filppula's study (1999) came from a different type of language usage, which naturally had an effect on the results as well. In his data, the usage of the preposition *on* was much more common in all of the above mentioned senses. However, the non-standard uses of *on* were only marginal in the data from the ICE-Ireland corpus.

6.1.4 The preposition *with*

The preposition *with* is used in Irish English to "denote agency and/or instrumentality, cause or result of an action or a state, and even certain kinds of temporal relationships" (Filppula 1999, 232). The corresponding preposition for *with* in Irish is *le*, which in Irish can be used in a number of ways that are different from the English usage of the preposition (Hickey 2007, 246). The result of this usage has been the fact that present-day Irish English also has many non-standard usages of the preposition *with* (ibid.).

Interestingly, Filppula (1999, 232) mentions that in his study the expression of the duration of a state or an activity turned out to be the most prominent non-standard use of the preposition *with*, but no such occurrences were found in the ICE-Ireland corpus. An example from Filppula, however, illustrates this use:

Hugh Curtin is buried **with years**, but his grandchildren are there now.

The Standard English way of expressing the same thing would be:

Hugh Curtin **has been buried for years**.

There were two instances of *with* in the spoken part of the ICE- Ireland corpus used in the sense which Filppula mentions as expressing the cause of a state, event or action:

(21) They're not dying **with the cold** or anything. They're just literally passing on to the other side.
(S1A-036)

(22) A sixty-seven-year-old woman was taken to hospital **with a suspected heart attack** and a policeman suffered a minor arm injury.
(S2B-005)

The meaning covered by this use of *with* in (21) and (22) would be 'because of' or 'due to'. According to Hickey (2007, 246) 'by' is also one of the meanings covered by this use of *with* and evidence of *with* being used in such meanings is found in historical texts as well.

The two occurrences seem to be the only ones of this type in both parts of the ICE-Ireland corpus. The use of the preposition *with* seems to be very marginal in ICE-Ireland and does not manifest itself in ICE-GB either. On the basis of the findings from Filppula's study, one might have expected to find more evidence of the non-standard uses of *with* in the ICE-Ireland corpus as well. However, it would seem that these usages are not present in the language that ICE-Ireland represents.

As can be seen from Table 2 above, the ICE-GB corpus did not show any occurrences of the non-standard uses of *with* relevant to the Irish English context examined here.

The results from the ICE-Ireland corpus seem to suggest that the prepositional usage in Standard Irish English is not that different from the standard variety of English although some interesting cases were found in the corpus. Compared to Filppula's study (1999), the occurrences were far less numerous in the data examined for this thesis, which implies that the uses of the prepositions examined here are more common in rural dialects of Irish English which Filppula studied than the dialects that are included in the ICE-Ireland corpus. As can be seen from the results regarding the ICE-GB corpus, the non-standard prepositional usage of Irish English is fairly marginal in Standard British English. Undoubtedly British English has its own distinct features in terms of prepositional usage which, however, fall outside the scope of the present thesis and are not represented in the data found in the ICE-GB corpus either.

6.2 Plural Subject-verb Concord

The findings for the different types of plural subject-verb concord from the ICE-Ireland corpus are summarized in table 3 below and each type will be discussed in more detail. The results will be compared with the findings from the ICE-GB corpus, which are summarized in table 4 below. The normalized frequencies per one million words for each feature are given in brackets.

ICE-Ireland	Spoken	Written
Conjoined NP	1 (1,7)	-
*There*_NP	220 (366,7)	7 (17,5)
Collective NP	1 (1,7)	-
Other NP	4 (6,7)	-
They	3 (5)	-
Them	1 (1,7)	-
Other personal pronoun	2 (3,3)	-
Total	232 (386,8)	7 (17,5)

Table 3 Plural subject-verb concord in the ICE-Ireland corpus

ICE-GB	Spoken	Written
Conjoined NP	-	-
*There*_NP	75 (125)	4 (10)
Collective NP	1 (1,7)	-
Other NP	1 (1,7)	-
They	-	3 (7,5)
Them	-	-
Other personal pronoun	-	-
Total	77 (128,3)	7 (17,5)

Table 4 Plural subject-verb concord in the ICE-GB corpus

6.2.1 Conjoined NP

There was one instance in the ICE-Ireland corpus of a conjoined NP where the singular verb form is used instead of a plural one with a plural subject:

> (23) Unfortunately it has taken uh a large number of years now from the initial uh Fair Employment Agency where there was re resentment and opposition to the way the uh **Bob Cooper and the old agency was carrying out the functions**. (S2B-008)

The example is from the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus and remains the only one found from said corpus. The ICE-GB corpus provided no examples of a conjoined noun phrase used with a singular verb form.

6.2.2 *There_*NP

As can be seen from the table above, the search for the existential structure provided the largest number of occurrences. McCafferty (2003, 126) points out that this existential structure with *there* and a plural noun phrase as the subject of the construction is in general regarded as the most common context for the verbal *-s* ending. Filppula (1999, 155) points out in his study that the result is not surprising since this feature has spread widely in other varieties of English as well. As one might expect, the spoken part of the corpus provided more occurrences than its written counterpart; the number of relevant occurrences being 68 cases of *there was NP*. Some examples from the spoken part are presented below:

> (24) Because **there was only like say seven of them** in their class and there were like thirty in our class, they were allowed call her Mary.
> (S1A-011)

> (25) I was thinking like cos like **there was fourteen names** or something on the MEP thing.
> (S1A-084)

> (26) It used to be the District Partnership and it's the Local Charity Partnership now I uhm was chair in within that then **there was sub-committees** and **there was different programmes**…
> (S1B-075)

> (27) **There was quite a few calls** came in obviously from the greater Shankill area but **there was also us phonecalls** that came S2B-001 in from the falls and uh from along the Antrim Road there…
> (S2B-001)

In the written part of the corpus only two cases of this kind were found:

> (28) In 1985 the problem of food mountains was eased slightly as butter was sold to Russia and **there was new meat markets** in the East.
> (W1A-019)

(29) At that time **there was 108 days** to the 1st May. When the award was made on 18th January, there were 102 days left.
(W1B-025)

Example (24) from the spoken part of the corpus is somewhat intriguing, since the following sentence contains a concord from *there were like thirty in our class* but the first sentence has the non-concord form. Example (29) from the written part of the corpus has the same structure of non-concord form in the first sentence and the concord form in the second sentence.

The search for *there is NP* provided less results; only six examples of this kind in the spoken part of the corpus were found:

(30) **There is ones** actually that uh you know they're set up so you can like learn the Jewish language and all this…
(S1A- 014)

(31) But **there is gates** and I would assume…
(S1A-038)

(32) Now it's quite a large task cos **there is twenty thousand people** who have a homeless difficulty each year in Northern Ireland.
(S2A-031)

(33) **There is other things** motivation techniques. Uhm what else have I down there.
(S2A- 045)

(34) Well **there is rules** because I you know what I did there was I interrupted you know so you basically you don't interrupt people.
(S1B-004)

(35) But **there is definitely words** there that we would use yeah in everyday speech.
(S1B-006)

Additionally, a search was conducted with the contracted form *there's NP* to see whether it would provide more occurrences. As it turned out, the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus contained 144 occurrences of this type of construction with the contracted form *there's*. Examples of the said construction are presented below:

(36) Who's Kevin Nolan?
From Moylough.
There's no Nolans down in Moylough.
(S1A-087)

(37) But **there's big big happenings**. They're expecting I don't know ten thousand
people in Downpatrick or something.
(S1A-093)

(38) **There's those** who that come out onto the street and block the road.
(S1B-028)

The written part of the corpus contained five occurrences of the construction *there's NP*, three of

which were found in letters (39–41), one from an interview (42) and one from a fictional text (43):

(39) What's your plans? Fancy a bit a Cambodia, eh what? All the "war torn society"
business… Talking of which, **there's soldiers** all over the show here.
(W1B-003)

(40) Betty tells me **there's rats** in Wilowbrook – Carlotta's place.
(W1B-010)

(41) Fred's applying for jobs overseas as theres **there's no permanent jobs** here, at all.
(W1B-015)

(42) Showing me the two little parcels of heroin, Johnny explained: "**There's loads of
dealers** in Sean McDermott Street, and if you know who to look for, you can get
gear in a few minutes".
(W2B-017)

(43) **There's mountains of bread**, buttered and sliced, and big fat tomatoes heaped
into hills.
(W2F-019)

The corpus was also searched for the constructions *there has been NP* and *there's been NP* for

relevant occurrences and two such occurrences were found in the spoken part of ICE-Ireland with

the contracted form *there's been*:

(44) **There's been lots of rumours** you know flying about that he was seeing some
other woman.
(S1A-030)

(45) I mean there are pheasant uhm sparrowhawks and everything up there. And
there's been no complaints.
(S1A-048)

In the light of the findings from the ICE-Ireland corpus it seems that the form of the construction has an effect on the amount of occurrences found. If one excludes the occurrences with the contracted form *there's*, the results follow along the lines of Filppula's study (1999, 155) where he states that the non-concord usage seems to be more common in past context than in present context. However, when the contracted forms are taken into account, the situation is remarkably different. The present context as a whole is far more common than the past context due to the relatively high number of occurrences with *there's*.

There_NP was the most common feature of plural subject-verb concord in the ICE-GB corpus as well. The spoken part of the corpus provided more occurrences than the written part; altogether 75. There were five cases of *there was NP* in the spoken part of the corpus:

(46) **There was uh some comments** made on one of these practical write-ups, which I thought were actually a bit rude.
(S1A-059)

(47) I mean yes **there was elements** of it that were fun.
(S1A-076)

(48) One day I put these arms on her and I put a coat on her. I mean it was a bit stupid really because I mean at the other end of the coat **there was no legs** was there.
(S1B-049)

(49) Some like the doctor said **there was these institutions** where I could send her and it was the best thing for her…
(S1B-049)

(50) Yes there was an amount of debris in the uh lane where the accident occurred but **there was no visible skid marks** at the scene.
(S1B-068)

The search for *there is NP* in the spoken part of the corpus provided altogether five occurrences:

(51) Trouble is there's only me and really the job the essays I do there should be two people. Well **there is two people** but he doesn't do any of them.
(S1A-019)

(52) They're just the same as other people except under much greater stress and under much greater temptation. And for instance **there is drugs** in the book…
(S1B-024)

(53) Would she agree that uhm if **there is discussions** necessary, there might perhaps be another debate, after it's all set up which will not of course be before the decision…
(S1B-054)

(54) Uhm the quality of some of this isn't wonderful but I think you will detect that **there is significantly better things** going on than in the other material…
(S2A-030)

(55) Well I think that the Government's economic policy has been set out in the recent decisions on public expenditure which uh provide for a very substantial increase and **there is very clear indications** that the consequence of this is that…
(S2B-002)

One additional occurrence was found in the written part of the ICE-GB corpus:

(56) On the CD the presence of the close-miked instruments edginess with a touch of shrillness on the strings, though the background ambience is voluptuous enough. **There is only 42 minutes** overall.
(W2B-008)

The search for the construction *there's NP* provided additional 67 occurrences from the ICE-GB

corpus some of which are presented below:

(57) Uhm well I think it's interesting because **there's limitations** put on what you're able to do and it's finding ways around those limitations.
(S1A-002)

(58) I mean what's the good of being dead if you're still trying to get published on earth.
We've been through all that.
Well I think that I I think **there's other things** to come afterwards.
(S1B-026)

(59) As you know, I have a strong affinity to Americans, which is just as well, coz theres **there's millions** in my block.
(W1B-002)

(60) To compete with the best sides, we still have to improve in all respects, **there's no two ways** about it.
(W2C-014)

Examples (59) and (60) come from the written part of the ICE-GB corpus. Interestingly, the written part of the ICE-GB corpus contained the only occurrence with the construction *there has been/there's been*:

> (61) It is therefore from this that **there has been recently discussions** over th whether or not the development gap […] is in fact decreasing […]
> (W1A-015)

The results from the ICE-GB corpus resemble those from the ICE-Ireland corpus. When all of the occurrences are taken into account, the present context is far more common than the past context. In this respect the results from both corpora differ from the results of Filppula's study (1999) on these existential constructions with *there*.

6.2.3 Collective NP

Filppula (1999, 154) defines collective NP structures as nouns that do not have a plural form but nonetheless have plural reference. In this case a search with *people* was conducted to find cases where *people* would appear with a singular form of a verb. One such case was found in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus:

> (62) **People comes** with their cars and trailers here…
> (S2B-008)

A search with *people* was also conducted in the ICE-GB corpus to find out whether there were any such cases to be found, since the number of occurrences was only one in the ICE-Ireland corpus. One such case was indeed found in the spoken part of the ICE-GB corpus:

> (63) And it wasn't till the end of the year uh that it was quite clear I don't think this is disrupted, that he wasn't going to, uh get them, here and in the cases of the army and security **people wasn't** going to get their names…
> (S2A-063)

It seems that in standard usage the collective noun phrases tend to occur with plural verb forms. The written parts of the two corpora contained no examples where a collective noun phrase occurred with a singular verb form and the number of occurrences in the spoken parts of the corpora would seem to verify the matter.

6.2.4 Other NP

In the category of 'other NP', Filppula (1999, 154) includes indefinite, demonstrative and relative pronouns. There were four occurrences found in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus containing other noun phrases with a singular verb from:

(64) **This is the scores** for the boys, **this is the scores** for the girls […]
This is also **the co-ed schools**.
(S1B-009)

(65) And of course in the old country churches the family pew and family grace before **meals comes in**.
(S1B-042)

The written part of the ICE-Ireland corpus did not contain any examples of this kind and neither did the ICE-GB corpus.

6.2.5 *They*

There were no occurrences of *they is/ was* to be found in the ICE-Ireland corpus, but there were three occurrences where *they* occurred with the third person singular form of *say* as can be seen from the following examples:

(66) **They says** oh there's a disco and we were saying well it must be good for nobody's queuing in anywhere else you know.
(S1A-012)

(67) Riona Dowling went for an interview in Connor's
Who Riona Dowling went for… When December and **they says** I'm sorry You're rejected. (S1A-023)

> (68) Yeah they they got judges' score cards wrong **they says** but it's still the same winner.
> (S2A-003)

In relation to the Northern Subject Rule (see section 4.2 above), the occurrences from the ICE-Ireland corpus do not follow the restrictions of the NSR. The personal pronoun *they* should have an effect on the form of the adjacent verb if the rule was followed here. Therefore, the verb should occur without the *-s* ending here. However, since there are only three such occurrences found in the ICE-Ireland corpus, there is not nearly enough evidence to say whether the NSR is still present in Irish English today.

The occurrences are once again from the spoken part of the corpus and no such occurrences were found in the written part. It is perhaps somewhat surprising to find the last three examples from the corpus, since according to Harris (1993, 155) a bare plural pronoun such as *they* almost never takes the *s*-ending. He states that examples such as *they knows/is/was* are "ungrammatical" by the rules of Irish English (ibid.). However, such occurrences were to be found in the ICE-Ireland corpus even though the number of such occurrences was extremely low.

In the case of the ICE-GB corpus, the written part provided more results than the spoken part. The string *they is* occurred twice in the written part of the corpus and there was one case where *they* occurred with the third person singular form of *invade*:

> (69) **They is sending** the criminal types of prisoner to more distant camps in the north, for safety reasons.
> (W2F-005)

> (70) If **they invades** then **they is** sure to be dispelled.
> (W2F-005)

However, when the context of the examples is examined more closely, one can see that they come from a fictional text and therefore do not represent the standard variety of English in the sense in which it is examined here.

6.2.6 *Them*

There was one relevant token of *them was* to be found in the spoken part of the ICE- Ireland corpus,

but besides that no other occurrences of *them* with a singular verb form were found:

> (71) I don't know but they're doing a couple of things around Christmas in Julian's [...]
> **How many of them was** in it
> Uhm five a them
> (S1A-072)

As can be seen from table 4 above, no results of this kind were found in either part of the ICE-GB

corpus.

6.2.7 Other plural personal pronoun

The search for other plural personal pronouns (*we* or *you*) did not turn out to be very productive

either; there were two occurrences in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus where the pronoun

we occurred with a singular verb from:

> (72) **We says** to these boys at the end of the queue look what's everybody […]
> (S1A-012)

> (73) So **we was** there bursting our shite laughing at this guy like you know and he
> looked at us real serious and he says it may be funny to you but a guy crawled out
> of that vator one day with a bullet hole in his head the size of a quarter.
> (S1A-065)

According to Hickey (207, 182), verbal -s occurs very rarely with the plural forms of the first and

second person. Along with the plural pronoun *they*, first and second person plural pronouns do not

take the *s*-ending and examples such as the one found in the ICE-Ireland corpus are again

mentioned as being "ungrammatical" in Irish English by Harris (1993, 155). In his view, this feature

distinguishes the dialect from some other types of non-standard English in which, for instance, the

construction *we was* is used (ibid.). In the light of the findings from the ICE-Ireland corpus, Harris'

statement is perhaps too straightforward, since few occurrences with the plural pronouns were

found in the ICE-Ireland corpus. It would be interesting to find out as to what extent this feature

that does not follow along the lines of codified grammar is represented in the rural dialects of Irish English. After all, the few occurrences from the corpus that represents a more standard-like dialect did produce examples of this kind in the spoken part of the corpus.

Again, no such occurrences were found in the written part of the corpus. The ICE-GB corpus provided no results either.

The results from the corpora show that as in many other studies on the matter, the constructions with existential *there* are the ones where the plural -*s* ending is most frequently present. The data in Hickey's study (2007) suggest that the singular verb forms *was* and *is* after existential *there* constitute as widely accepted language usage in both the north and south of Ireland (ibid., p. 184). This was also the case in Filppula's study (1999), with a bias towards constructions with past reference. In the present thesis, however, it was the present context that provided the most occurrences due to the relatively high number of constructions with the contracted form *there's*. The category of 'other NP' was the second most common environment for the plural -*s* ending in the ICE-Ireland corpus. This was also the case in Filppula's study (1999) and in fact in the ICE-GB corpus as well, even though the number of occurrences was only one. In Filppula's study (1999), collective NPs were the third most common category, while the ICE-Ireland and ICE-GB corpora provided only one occurrence each for this type of plural subject-verb concord. The plural pronouns *they* and *them* as well as *we* and *you* seem to favor the concord form in the data from ICE-Ireland. There were only a few occurrences of these pronouns with the non-concord form. The said pronouns turned out to be a marginal feature in Filppula's study (1999) as well. However, as Filppula points out, his data did provide occurrences of *they was* and the non-concord form with verbs other than *be* and this according to him, is enough material to suggest that the constraints mentioned in relation to the Northern Subject Rule do not manifest as clearly in Southern Irish English (ibid., p. 156). The findings from the ICE-Ireland corpus seem to suggest the same, since examples such as *they says*, *them was* and *we was* were found in the data.

6.2.8 Plural Subject-Verb Concord and the Northern Subject Rule

McCafferty's study (2003) of the plural verbal -*s* ending in 19th century Northern Irish English was based on emigrant letters from Irish emigrants to Australia (ibid., p. 125). The findings from his data do differ to some extent from the occurrences found in the ICE-Ireland corpus. For the most part, the noun phrases found in ICE-Ireland did comply with the constraints regarding the Northern Subject Rule (NSR) examined by McCafferty (2003). The categories of 'conjoined NP', 'collective NP' and 'other NP' all have examples of a noun phrase as the subject of the clause with a singular verb form. However, it was the third person plural pronouns and the pronoun *we* that deviated from the NSR constraints in the data from ICE-Ireland. McCafferty (2003) found no occurrences of the pronoun *they* with the verbal -*s* ending unless there were other elements separating the subject and verb of the sentence. In the data from the ICE-Ireland corpus *they* occurred three times with the singular verb form of *say*. In addition to the pronoun *they*, there were such occurrences as *them was*, *we was* and *we says* in ICE-Ireland which seems to suggest that the language usage in the southern parts of Ireland differ to some extent to that of the northern parts of the country. This is indeed also suggested by Filppula (1999) who states that the constraints regarding the type of subject with verbal -*s* ending are not as strict in Southern Irish English as they are in some northern varieties of Irish English and Ulster Scots (ibid., p. 156). One needs to keep in mind, though, that the data in McCafferty's study came from the 19th century and does not represent the present-day language usage of Northern Irish English. It does, however, clearly demonstrate that the constraints of the NSR were very much present in the language usage of the people at that time.

6.3 Habitual aspect

The search for the habitual uses of *do* was conducted along the lines of the examples discussed in section 4.3 above to see whether the corpora contained any such uses. There was one occurrence of the habitual *do* in the ICE-Ireland corpus:

> (74) You know he looks like that… **that buck that does be on the television** on the video.
> (S1A-087)

There was also one occurrence where the pronoun *it* was combined with *be* to form the habitual:

> (75) Cos **most of the time it be either families you know young children to see the dinosaurs** or sort of you know uhm older people who want to come and see the uhm art.
> (S1B-073)

In addition to the two examples above and the one in section 4.3, ten occurrences of *used* to express a habitual action were found in the ICE-Ireland corpus:

> (76) They think they're really cool like uhm but some of the old guys still go in there who **used be** in the legal trade.
> (S1A-057)

> (77) What kind of parties **used you go** to? […] I went once at Christmas and that was it. **I used go** all the time last year cos of the UCI out the road in Coolock […] Yeah **friends used come out** and stay like like Bronwyn now **used come** out some Saturdays or whoever.
> (S1A-062)

> (78) She just made me drive. Even at **they used make me drive** a lot on my own which I used to hate doing […] But I remember **they used make me drive** on my own.
> (S1A-079)

> (79) The **women used be packing** packing above with us you see and **they used be packing** quite often.
> (S1A-083)

> (80) They're the best so they are, them black men. I used to have a great craic with them.
> What **used you be saying** to them?
> (S1A-087)

Example (78) is interesting in that the first clause has the non-standard construction *used make me*

drive while the relative clause contains the standard construction *used to*. The constructions in (79)

and (80) resemble the 'habitual continuous' category discussed in section 4.3 above, where *be* or *do*

be can be combined with *-ing* forms of main verbs. In this case, however, the *-ing* form is combined

with the phrase *used be*.

The ICE-GB corpus was also searched for occurrences of the habitual aspect as discussed above.

The only example of the type of constructions for the habitual aspect relevant here was found in the

spoken part of the corpus:

> (81) The palace had to be defended against bands of mercenary knights **who used**
> **roam** the countryside just stealing anything they could.
> (S2B-027)

Despite the fact that Bliss (1984, 143) states that the form of *do* in relation to the habitual aspect

is in very common use, the results seem to follow along the lines of Hickey's (2007, 18) views that

the use of *do* for the habitual is stigmatized. However, the thirteen examples representing habitual

aspect as it is discussed in the present thesis indicate that the distinctive ways of expressing habitual

action in Irish English are still in use in standard language as well. In addition to the examples

discussed here, both corpora naturally also contain a number of other habitual constructions which

will not be included in the present thesis.

6.4 Irish English Perfects

The results from both the ICE-Ireland and the ICE-GB corpora regarding the different types of

perfect used in Irish English are discussed below. The results from the ICE-Ireland and ICE-GB

corpora are summarized in tables 5 and 6 below and normalized frequencies per one million words

are given in brackets.

ICE-Ireland	Spoken	Written
The indefinite anterior perfect	5 (8,3)	-
The *after* perfect	7 (11,7)	-
The medial-object perfect	33 (55)	5 (12,5)
The *be* perfect	5 (8,3)	1 (2,5)
The extended-now perfect	6 (10)	2 (5)
Total	56 (93,3)	8 (20)

Table 5 Irish English perfects in the ICE-Ireland corpus

ICE-GB	Spoken	Written
The indefinite anterior perfect	-	-
The *after* perfect	-	-
The medial-object perfect	1 (1,7)	-
The *be* perfect	-	-
The extended-now perfect	1 (1,7)	-
Total	2 (3,3)	-

Table 6 Irish English perfects in the ICE-GB corpus

6.4.1 The indefinite anterior perfect

The indefinite anterior perfect tends to occur with certain types of adverbials and therefore a search for the perfect with adverbials *always*, *ever* and *never* was conducted. Five occurrences of the indefinite anterior perfect with the said adverbials were found in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus:

> (82) Well the church up in Beechmount's lovely. **Were you ever** up in Beecmount? (S1A-008)

> (83) I was in Provincetown <#> **Were you never** in Provincetown? (S1A-021)

(84) Jo what colour's that lipstick you've got on?
It's like a cherry colour or something.
I thought you wore pinks all the time.
I always wore that colour.
I didn't know that. I thought you wore like rose colours.
(S1A-025)

(85) Well **I never saw** anything like the beggars in that town yesterday.
(S1A-037)

(86) **I never knew there was fencers** until a couple of weeks ago and I was…
(S1B-050)

In the data examined by Filppula (1999) among the most common verbs were *see*, *be* and *know* which along with *wear* were the verbs used in the occurrences from the ICE-Ireland corpus as well. However, the results from ICE-Ireland seem to disagree with Filppula's statement that the indefinite anterior perfect is "extremely common" in the dialects of Irish English (1999, 95). It would seem that the standard nature of the texts in ICE-Ireland has more than likely affected the results here, because in Filppula's data the indefinite anterior perfect was favored instead of the standard *have* perfect on many occasions.

6.4.2 The *after* perfect

There were altogether seven occurrences of the *after* perfect found in the ICE-Ireland corpus. The occurrences are presented below:

(87) Just as you think one fella's getting on top the other comes back. In the opening round I thought for a while that Walsh was going to win inside the distance but he**'s after running** into a couple of hard ones here from Barrett.
(S2A-012)

(88) Yeah lads…a new fella is **after taking over** uhm one of the pubs at home. And **he's after coming back** from England you know and he's an old family friend.
(S1A-046)

(89) They thought he **was after going** into a coma with diabetes.
(S1A-055)

(90) Any word of that fella that escaped with all the money from Monasterevin? No your man who escaped with all the money. The wife and children **are after going** off there the other day.
(S1A-067)

(91) Oh yeah I actually yeah I had that book.
But I think you were saying all the copies are out in the libraries.
Yeah all the copies are out when I was looking. I'**m after booking** one.
(S1B-017)

(92) No Jesus you're not. That's no problem.
There'**s nothing new after coming** in anyway so
Try again in another couple of days.
(S1B-077)

Although Harris (1993, 160) mentions that the *after* perfect can also occur with noun phrases without a verb, the examples from the ICE-Ireland corpus all have a verb in the construction. All of the *after* perfect occurrences were found in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus. The written part and the whole of the ICE-GB corpus contained no occurrences of this type.

According to Hickey (2007, 206) the *after* perfect is found in all parts of the Republic of Ireland. He goes on to add that the differences in usage can be found between the north and south of the country and based on the data from *A Survey of Irish English* Usage, he states that the feature seems to be used less in the north of the country (ibid., p. 206).

Although the *after* perfect is said to be considered one of the best-known features of Irish English, the results seem to agree with Filppula's (2004, 76) statement that the *after* perfect is avoided by educated speakers in formal contexts (see section 4.4.2 above).

6.4.3 The medial-object perfect

The search for the medial object perfect was conducted by searching the verbs *do*, *make*, *build*, *get* and *forget* since they were the most common verbs found with this type of perfect in Filppula's study from 1999. There were altogether eight occurrences of this type of perfect found in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus that contained the verbs mentioned above. Some examples include the following:

(93) So there's there I'll have to show you there's a beautiful young girl Jean Cooper knitted from Ballyhalbert. And **she has it done** in a modern style. It was like a wee windcheater style.
(S1A-045)

(94) I think he was American but **he had a rucksack** specially **made** with a magnetic strip in the back.
(S1A-058)

(95) So if a company are using a spreadsheet to uh budget we'll say for the coming six months and they think that they **they have their spreadsheet done**, then they hear that the price of petrol is going to go up…
(S2A-042)

(96) So I'll put those into the fridge now < > And I'**ve** already **got one made** here, which I'll show you how to present in a second
(S2A-057)

(97) What they do is they they keep some of their pension and… until **they have twelve hundred built** up like for burial…
(S2A-057)

In addition to searching the corpus for the medial-object perfect containing the above-mentioned verbs, personal pronouns with the auxiliary *have* were also searched for in order to find additional occurrences of this type of perfect. The search for the medial-object perfect resulted in additional 25 occurrences from the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus and five from the written part of the corpus. Some such examples are presented below:

(98) […] there was a horse won the Grand National there a few years ago **we had a cow calved** that day I think it was Grit Arse I would have a cow of that name.
(S1B-035)

(99) We **have this pathway worn** into the Grants Office
(S1A-054)

(100) So **we have some orange wax melted** here.
(S2A-059)

(101) We have just had a lovely week of weather. Louisa is working in the shop since she came home so she gets my money. Mark is home from Belgium, he has no job yet. **He has Jeanette's house painted** inside out […]
(W1B-001)

(102) It is a 2 storied semi detached It's it's really nice but the décor is awful but we can change that through time. We only got it a few days ago so you can imagine the novelty hasn't woren worn off yet! **I have Luke tortured** trying to get it cleaned.
(W1B-004)

(103) Bob was up from Dublin although any time I saw him **he had his face stuck** to a beer can.
(W1B-007)

The examples found in the written part of the ICE-Ireland corpus were mostly found in letters in which the language tends to be less formal than in many other types of written texts. Once again, the nature of the texts themselves is a crucial factor in terms of the corpus providing occurrences of the features examined.

A search for the verbs *do*, *make*, *build*, *get* and *forget* was also conducted for the data in the ICE-GB corpus. One occurrence of the medial-object perfect with the verb *make* was found:

(104) Now the Moguls as I say come in in fifteen twenty-six. And in the second half of the sixteenth century you have a rule of Akbar. That's running just about parallel with Queen Elizabeth the First <,> And **he has lots and lots of manuscripts made** and this is a page from one of them.
(S2A-059

Example (104) is the only occurrence of the medial-object perfect in the ICE-GB corpus. The medial-object perfect in the data of British English was very rare in Filppula's study (1999) as well. In the light of the results from the corpora, the medial-object perfect seems to be very distinctly Irish English in nature. According to Filppula (1999, 116), it can cover a much wider range of meanings in Irish English than in the infrequent usage in British English. This type of perfect is a relatively common feature both in Filppula's study an in the ICE-Ireland corpus as well.

6.4.4 The *be* perfect

The search for the *be* perfect was conducted by searching the verbs *go*, *change*, *leave* and *die* as mentioned by Filppula (2004) and the verbs *come*, *vanish*, *wear*, *wither*, *fade* and *dry* which were among the most common verbs used with this type of perfect in Filppula's study of 1999. However, as Filppula (1999, 117) points out, there were no occurrences with the verbs *leave*, *change* or *die* in

his corpus data even though they are mentioned as being the most common verbs occurring with the *be* perfect-constructions. In the ICE-Ireland corpus, there were altogether six occurrences of the *be* perfect; one in the written part and five in the spoken part of the corpus. Despite the number of different verbs examined here, all of the occurrences were cases where the main verb was *go*. The results follow along the lines of Filppula's study (1999) where the majority of the results he found in the corpora involved the verb *go* as well. The examples from the ICE-Ireland corpus are presented below:

(105) But saying that Lauren, it was the receptionist this, I said to the receptionist here on the desk **is he gone in to visit**… She says yes his mother.
(S1A-008)

(106) Where **is the chair gone** from here […]
(S1A-066)

(107) **Is Ron gone** away?
(S1A-087)

(108) This guy it was his birthday and she took off his trouser… Oh God I think they'**re gone** a bit out…
(S1A-082)

(109) In his famous dialogue in Hybernian Style Swift noted the use of many Gaelic phrases carried over into English. I wonder what **is gone** with them, meaning I wonder what has happened to them.
(S2B-033)

(110) **Is Mr. Major gone** into the nudge-and-wink politics?
(W2E-002)

The fact that all the occurrences of the *be* perfect have *go* as the main verb, provide more evidence for the *be* perfect becoming "lexically frozen" (Filppula 1999, 120). It seems that the environment in which this type of perfect can occur is becoming more and more specific and this, according to Filppula indicates that the *be* perfect may eventually become obsolete in Irish English (ibid.).

6.4.5 The extended-now perfect

The search for the extended-now perfect was conducted by searching certain words and phrases in the corpus on the basis of the examples from the background sources. These words and expressions included words such as *since*, *days*, *weeks*, *months*, *years* and *decades*. Some examples of this type of perfect from the ICE-Ireland corpus include the following:

(111) He would never ever do anything to hurt anybody and **I know him since primary school** and I have never known Matt to say a bad thing about anybody. (S1A-018)

(112) Well **they're separated like for the last ten years or more**. (S1A-049)

(113) **I'm twenty-seven years at the money business now** and uh always at Christmas time especially. (S1B-040)

(114) **Louisa is working in the shop since she came home** so she gets my money. (W1B-001)

(115) **I am running this pub since 1947** and we never had an accident involving people leaving this premises. (W2C-017)

The last example comes from the written part of the corpus. However, the text is a newspaper article and the example is from an interview, thus representing spoken language.

The ICE-GB corpus was also searched for the extended-now perfect using the words *since*, *days*, *weeks*, *months*, *years* and *decades*. One such case was found in the spoken part of the corpus:

(116) And then I'm going to go on and say something a a very short something I may say about teaching itself […] I **I'm almost twenty-eight years out of the classroom** so I'm modest about my claims to talk about that. (S2A-021)

In Filppula's (1999) data on Irish English the number of present and past tense forms of the verbs with the extended-now constructions are fairly similar. However, all occurrences of the extended-

now perfect in the ICE-Ireland corpus have the present tense form, which, according to Kallen is "strongly favored over the past" (Kallen in Filppula 1999, 123).

In the data from the ICE-Ireland corpus the medial-object perfect was by far the most common type of perfect. The number of occurrences for the other four types were very close to each other with the *after* perfect being the second most common overall. The situation is very different from that of the data in Filppula's study (1999) where the most common types of perfect were the indefinite anterior perfect and the extended-now perfect, which were relatively infrequent in ICE-Ireland. However, the number of occurrences in each type of perfect in the ICE-Ireland corpus seems to suggest that these non-standard features are still present even in the Standard Irish English represented by the corpus. The results do follow along the lines of Kirk and Kallen's (2007, 293) view that elements of variation persevere in standard contexts as well with standardization never being fully achieved.

7 Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this thesis was to find out the extent to which the distinct features of Irish English have survived in present-day Irish English and whether standardization has had an effect on said features. The features chosen for the study were prepositional usage, plural subject-verb concord, the habitual aspect and Irish English perfects. The features were chosen keeping in mind several previous studies done on Irish English in order to make sure that they truly were characteristic of this variety of English. The theory of said features was discussed in length with the help of the background sources, after which the ICE-Ireland and ICE-GB corpora were searched for the above-mentioned features. The data was then analyzed and comparisons between the two corpora were made. The results were compared with the findings in Filppula's study (1999) in order to demonstrate how the nature of the data itself can have an effect on the number of occurrences in a given corpus.

As was mentioned above, the history of the English language in Ireland and especially its relationship with the Irish language has played a role in how the grammar of Irish English has developed its own distinct features. According to earlier studies on Irish English, Irish has without a doubt influenced the usage of English in the country and perhaps continues to do so even today. Many constructions in Irish English have their parallels in Irish and in addition to grammar the Irish language has also left its mark on the pronunciation and vocabulary of Irish English. However, the aim of the present thesis was not to thoroughly discuss or speculate on the origins of the features chosen, but to examine the features in a corpus that represents standard language usage.

Plural subject-verb concord was the most fruitful feature of Irish English and the results seem to indicate that the feature is still relatively frequent in present-day Irish English. Several occurrences of different types of non-standard subject-verb concord were found in the ICE-GB corpus as well, as was to be expected since subject-verb concord is by no means merely a feature of Irish English.

It is very much present in almost all varieties of English despite the fact that concord patterns may vary from one variety to another.

The search for typical Irish English usages of the prepositions *in*, *of*, *on* and *with* provided enough results to see that the feature is present in educated Irish English as well. Once again relying on earlier studies on the matter, evidence of these usages was frequent in the 'non-standard' varieties of Irish English as well. Overall, however, it would seem that the prepositional usage in Standard Irish English seems to follow that of Standard British English although some interesting cases were found in the ICE-Ireland corpus.

The most typical examples of the habitual aspect discussed in the background sources turned out to be virtually non-existent in the ICE-Ireland corpus. According to scholars such as Bliss (1984), the use of *do* in habitual contexts is fairly common, but the results from the corpus seem to disagree with this statement at least in standard language usage. It would seem that habitual actions in Standard Irish English are expressed either with the help of *used* or more often in ways parallel to Standard British English. However, one needs to keep in mind that habitual actions or states can be expressed in a number of other ways not discussed here.

The search for typical Irish English perfects provided a fair amount of results as well. There were instances of each type of perfect in the ICE-Ireland corpus, even though some were more prominent than others. The most frequent type of perfect in ICE-Ireland was the medial-object perfect which provided a much greater number of occurrences than the other four combined. The other types of perfect had almost the same number of occurrences in the data and therefore it is impossible to say whether one type is more common than the other. Evidence of a more non-standard type of language usage in terms of the different types of perfect was, however, clearly present in the ICE-Ireland corpus. Based on previous studies on the matter and the data analyzed for the present thesis, it does seem that this feature of Irish English is of a more non-standard kind.

The fact that the International Corpus of English represents 'educated' or 'standard' language obviously had an effect on the results. When analyzing the data, it soon became evident that the features examined were not that prominent in the ICE-Ireland corpus. It was, however, interesting to see the extent to which the features examined here were present at least in the spoken part of the ICE-Ireland corpus. In this case spoken and written language usages were quite different regarding all the features examined for the present thesis with the written part of the corpus providing only a handful of occurrences in almost all cases. Overall, the results suggest that the features examined for the thesis are a part of present-day educated Irish English as well and to some extent are present in the standard variety of British English as well. One needs to keep in mind, though that British English and its varieties have their own distinct ways of expressing meanings that were covered in relation to the features of Irish English here. Additionally, most of the features examined for the present thesis do not occur in Irish English alone, but can be found in other varieties of English around the world as well. It is the distinct forms of the said features in Irish English that were of interest here.

Despite the relatively low frequency of prepositional usage, plural subject-verb concord, the habitual aspect and Irish English perfects in the ICE-Ireland corpus, in almost all of the cases, there was enough evidence to suggest that these features are used in present-day Irish English. Presumably the usage these features represent is more prominent in the 'non-standard' varieties of Irish English which the corpus chosen for the present thesis does not represent. In the light of Kirk and Kallen's (2007) study on Celticity in Irish English it would seem that although the features examined here do not occur frequently in Standard Irish English, they do have a specific role to play in the language usage of the Irish people. Using the distinct features of grammar and perhaps even some Irish words or phrases, the speakers of Irish English demonstrate that they are a part of a specific culture and community. After all, language is one way of supporting your cultural inheritance and expressing your identity. As Kirk and Kallen (2007, 293) point out, the use of

distinct features of Irish English promotes certain "cultural values associated with Ireland and the Irish people". People who share common values and cultural backgrounds can in part be united through language. The results from both Kirk and Kallen's study (2007) and the present thesis show that with all of the features examined, there exists a certain amount of language usage that deviates from the standard in one way or another. The process of standardization then has not been complete in the Irish English context either and perhaps it is because of this aspect of a culturally inherited speech community that variation in language usage is still found in standard contexts as well. In this respect, the sense of belonging can in part be achieved through a shared language as well.

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