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Functions and uses of *now* in the speech of newcomers to Ireland

I. Introduction

The last roughly twenty years have seen a steady rise in research on varieties of English as spoken in Ireland (e.g. Fillpula 1999; Hickey 2005; Corrigan 2010; Amador-Moreno 2010). One line of research that has been particularly fruitful is the corpus-based investigation of pragmatic aspects of varieties of Irish English. While early work in this area dealt with hedging phenomena (Farr and O’Keeffe 2002; Farr et al. 2004), more recent research has explored a range of issues such as politeness strategies and relational work in different interactional contexts (Clancy 2005, 2011; Farr 2005), the uses, meanings and functions of silence and mitigation (Kallen 2005), vocatives (Murphy & Farr 2012), different types of questions (O’Keeffe 2005) and discourse markers (Amador-Moreno 2005; Clancy & Vaughan 2012). Much of that research has to date been carried out on the basis of the one million word Limerick Corpus of Irish English which consists of a diverse set of recordings of naturally occurring speech (Farr et al. 2004). Although Ireland underwent significant social change between the 1990s and 2007 due to both unprecedented levels of economic growth and immigration to Ireland,¹ research on language use in general and pragmatics in particular continues to primarily focus on the speech of people who speak varieties of Irish English as their main or only language. Aside from some recent work on the use of the discourse marker *like* among a small group of Polish immigrants to Ireland (Nestor et al 2012) and some work on newcomers’ attitudes to Irish English (Migge 2012), we know relatively little about adult newcomers’ engagement with varieties of English spoken in Ireland.

This paper aims to make a contribution towards filling this gap by investigating newcomers’ use of the element *now*. Focusing on the speech of 59 newcomers to

¹ At the height of the boom, the foreign population of Ireland nearly doubled within the space of four years: from 7% or 274,000 people in 2002 to 13%, or 420,000 people in 2006. Until recently, UK citizens constituted the largest group of newcomers (Gilmartin & Mills 2008), however, recent census data suggests that people from Poland exceed UK citizens. Other newcomers came from a variety of EU 15 (e.g. France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands) and EU 25 (e.g. Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia) countries, and from countries outside of Europe such as Australia, the United States, Nigeria and India.

Ireland, I examine whether or not and to what degree newcomers are adopting the different uses of *now* some of which appear to be specific to Irish varieties of English (Clancy & Vaughan 2012), and what factors promote their use. Although discourse elements have figured prominently in sociolinguistic investigations (e.g. Schifffrin 1987; Brinton 1996; Aijmer 2002), there is very little research on their use by language learners and by people who are learning a second dialect (of English). According to Müller (2005:1), the lack of studies on the use of discourse elements by learners is somewhat surprising because “pragmatic competence in terms of knowing the cultural values of the second language, for example, is recognized as being essential for successful communication” in Second Language Acquisition studies and since discourse elements are generally not consciously learned in the same way as structurally embedded elements their acquisition is crucially dependent on exposure to interactions in the language. In that sense then, the relative degree of acquisition of discourse elements by learners then functions as an index of learners’ level of exposure to and contact with the language and, by extension degrees of integration.

The element *now* is an interesting case. It is a commonly used element in varieties of English. However, despite its ubiquity, there appear to be certain uses of *now* that both researchers (Clancy and Vaughan 2012: 236-240) and speakers and non-speakers of varieties of Irish English appear to see as characteristic of Irish English. For instance, when asked about what they see as distinctive about Irish ways of speaking English, several of the newcomers to Ireland whose data will be examined in this study singled out uses of elements such as *like*, *now* and *would* as being emblematic of Irish English. A woman of Nigerian origin (A), for instance, explained that certain of the uses of *now* in Irish English are distinctive and that she uses them only in specific contexts, namely when interacting with Irish people.

A: [...] The way they use *like*, I don’t now how to ex, explain that, in some instance where they would, em, say something and they would use that word *now*, I’m trying to think and, em, I’m thinking now.

[...]‘I’m after’, yeah, ‘I’m after...’, yeah, oh yeah, that’s another thing, and then *now* as well...

B. Do you think..?

A. ...they use *now* as well.

B. Right, *now*, yeah, ‘now’.

- A. 'We'd better fight *now*, or...', em.
- B. '*Now* get your bag'.
- A. Or 'do something *now*', something, you know, those expressions, but I would only find myself, you know, saying something like that if I'm talking to an Irish person, or, I'm in a group where the Irish people are [...] (N2)

The bulk of the data for this study come from semi-guided interviews with sixty recent immigrants focusing on their experiences in Ireland.² Participants had either arrived in 2004 or in 2007 and were identified using three key methods: snowballing, flyers, and online recruitment via a number of on-line forums for expatriates. Most participants were interviewed twice over a period of two years and interviews lasted about an hour. Participants are representative of Ireland's immigrant population. They consisted of thirty-six women and twenty-four men and their ages ranged from 23 to 68 years of age, with the overwhelming majority in their twenties and thirties. Interviewees originated from different European countries,³ Australia, North America, India, Uganda and South Africa, and lived in a variety of locations throughout Ireland. Many of the interviewees held a third level degree or had had professional training prior to arriving in Ireland and a small number of them also held a fourth level degree. In Ireland, they worked in a variety of occupational sectors. Some of the interviewees held an occupation commensurate with their educational qualification and/or similar to the one that they held prior to coming to Ireland, while others had to, at least initially, work in jobs below their level of qualification and experience.

Table 1: Occupation of interviewees at time of interview

<i>Construction</i>	5	Architect, engineer, technician, administrator
<i>Wholesale and retail trade</i>	3	Sales
<i>Hotels and restaurants</i>	6	Porter, waiter, receptionist, bar staff
<i>Banking and financial</i>	4	Bank, insurance, administrator

²The IRCHSS-funded project was entitled *Towards a dynamic approach to research on migration and integration* (PI: Mary Gilmartin, University of Maynooth) and ran from December 2008 to December 2010. Due to issues with recording and transcription quality with a few recordings, only 54 interviews were analyzed in detail for this project.

³They came from the France, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and UK.

<i>services</i>		
<i>Real estate, renting and business activities</i>	11	Administrator, call-centre operative, IT project manager
<i>Education</i>	6	Lecturer, teacher, administrator
<i>Health and social work</i>	4	Doctor, nurse, therapist
<i>Other community, social and personal service activities</i>	4	Childcare, trade union, charity
<i>Students</i>	7	Part-time work in childcare, retail
<i>Other</i>	3	Consultant, business owner, artist
<i>Not employed</i>	7	Homemaker, retired, asylum seeker

Some of the data come from another research project that focused on African immigrants to Ireland.⁴ For the second project, thirteen people living in the Dublin area were accessed through a variety of community groups and interviewed once. Interviewees worked in retail, community services, were full time students or did voluntary work because as asylum seekers they were barred from working. All interviewees lived in the Dublin area. For the purpose of this project five of the thirteen recordings were analyzed in detail.

Part two of the paper reviews the concept of discourse marker and current knowledge about the uses and functions of *now* in English and Irish English in particular. Part three discusses the distribution of *now* in the interviews with newcomers to Ireland, focusing on those uses that are emblematic of Irish English in. The final part summarizes the findings and discusses their implications.

2. Review of the Literature: Discourse elements and research on *now*

Since the data analysis in this paper will particularly focus on *now*'s non-temporal or discursive uses, I briefly discuss the concept of discourse marker before reviewing the literature on *now*.

⁴The project funded by the UCD Seed funding scheme was entitled *Linguistic practice and social identity in the context of migration in contemporary Ireland* and ran during 2006.

2.1. Discourse markers

According to Müller (2005: 2) research on discourse markers also variously referred to as discourse particles (Aijmer 2002) or pragmatic markers (Brinton 1998) started with Robin Lakoff's (1973) work on sentence initial *why* and *well*. Since that time a fair amount of research has been carried out on these elements with a view to capturing their nature (e.g. Schiffrin 1987; Aijmer 2002). However, instead of generating a definitive set of defining characteristics, research to date has highlighted their heterogeneous nature. For once, it is now quite clear that they do not all belong to a single lexical class or even have a single linguistic structure. While some of them are single morphemes such as *well*, *like*, others are phrasal elements such as *I mean* and *you know* in English. Moreover, while they appear to be susceptible to phonological reduction, not all of them have or will necessarily undergo it. Discourse markers tend to be quite frequent in spoken, conversational discourse, but they are also found in written discourse, though to date little research has been done on their uses and frequency in literature (but see Amador-Moreno 2005, 2012). There has also been some discussion about their position in the sentence. While discourse markers often appear utterance initially, they, or at least some of them, are also found in utterance medial and/or final position. All researchers appear to agree on the fact that discourse markers are independent of sentential structure as their removal from an utterance does not render it syntactically ungrammatical. According to Müller (2005: 6), this is the only property that distinguishes discourse markers from their non-discourse marker homonyms. With respect to their function, it is clear that they are multifunctional in nature and that they contribute to the pragmatic interpretation of utterances such as providing insights into an utterance's place in the discourse structure or signaling changes in the framing of an utterance. According to Schiffrin (1987), pragmatic markers provide contextual cues in that they guide the interpretation of an utterance such as an utterance's illocutionary force, provide cues as to how an utterance links to the context and/or its relationship to the textual sequence in which it occurs.

2. 2. Current knowledge on *now*

Descriptive works on English generally describe *now* as a circumstantial adverb which indexes the temporal circumstances of an activity. It locates an event or state –

working at a certain location, being hungry, availability to speak – at the present time (1).

- (1) a. <#> Yeah <,> yeah <,> yeah <#> I thought I didn't like working there but *now* I've decided that I do. (ICE-Ireland, S1A-057)
b. God I'm so hungry *now* I'd love to go for my dinner. (ICE-Ireland, S1A-046)
c. *Now* isn't a good time to speak to him.
(http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/now_1)

It is also used to set up temporal relationships between utterances. In (2) *now* indicates that “getting dark” followed a previously mentioned event.

- (2) It was getting dark *now* and we were tired.
(http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/now_1)

Now is also used to indicate a temporal sequence. In (3) *now* indexes that being a vegetarian started ten years ago and that this state of affairs is still on-going.

- (3) She's been a vegetarian for ten years *now*.
(http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/now_1)

Now as a circumstantial adverb is very frequent in spoken discourse, particularly in conversational interactions, and may occur in a variety of positions within the utterance such as utterance initially, medially or finally.

Besides functioning as a circumstantial adverb, *now* also performs various discursive functions. As a discursive marker it occurs in utterance initial position, is de-accented and unstressed, part of a larger intonational unit and may collocate with other discourse makers. According to Schiffrin (1987: 44), *now*'s discursive meanings are linked to *now*'s deictic meaning. Like temporal *now*, which is a proximal deictic that locates “an utterance in a ego-centered space, i.e. a space dominated by the producer, rather than the receiver, of an utterance” (Schiffrin 1987:245), *now* in its discursive uses is also ego-centered, focusing attention on the speaker's view and what they have to say. Discursive *now*, like other proximal deictics is also evaluative: “now is used to highlight interpretive glosses for one's own talk which a speaker

him/herself favors.” (Schiffrin 1987: 245). Schiffrin (1987) identifies two broad uses of discourse marker *now*. First, it is found “in discourse in which the speaker progresses through a cumulative series of subordinate unit” (Schiffrin 1987: 232) such as lists, arguments and comparisons. In this case *now* helps to overtly structure the discourse by introducing or highlighting subparts of a comparison (4) or argument (5).

- (4) a. It’s nice there.
- b. *Now* our street isn’t that nice. (Schiffrin 1987: 231)

- (5) a. They have an open classroom at Lansdon.
- b. *Now* there’s lots of the mothers in that room are very upset about it.
- c. I’m not. (Schiffrin 1987: 234)

Second, *now* also marks pivotal shifts in the participation framework or footing of an utterance, changing “the mode through which the speaker is related to the information being presented.” (Schiffrin 1987: 240). It signals a (momentary) change in conversational activity (Clancy & Vaughan 2012: 228) and functions to clear “a bit of conversational space” (Biber et al. 1999: 1088). For instance, in (6) it marks a shift from a declarative sentence to an interrogative one that enquires about reception and understanding on the part of the hearer.

- (6) They’re using socialism t ‘fight capitalism. *Now* can you understand that?
(Schiffrin 1987: 240)

In (7) three people are talking about the substandard conditions that an elder has to suffer in a retirement home and the reason for that. Presentation of the reason for the elder’s suffering – the elder’s stinginess – is set off from the presentation of the conditions using utterance initial *now*.

- (7) <S1A-055\$A> <#> <unclear> several words </unclear> <#> A place like Saint Ita 's sure would be ideal for the likes <{> <[> of him </[>
<S1A-055\$B> <#> <[> Yeah </[> </{>
<S1A-055\$E> <#> But you know it 's cruel where he 's above in Mallow now like <#> And he 's in that ward just there 's three beds here <,> three facing him

three behind him and this kind of thing like <#> **Now** he has plenty of money like but he wouldn't pay to go into a home <#> He <{> <[> wouldn't pay to have a phone below now </[> (ICE-Ireland, S1A-055)

Aijmer (2002: 92) also points out that besides introducing a different conversational activity, *now* is also used to intensify or highlight a subjective opinion particularly in a conflictual situation:

- (8) ^non of whom will :sp\eak to each_other#
 and ^all of whom want to cut each other's thr\oats#
 ^**now!**I think this is a :very bad th\ing# -
 ^bad thing for British dem\ocracy# -
 I [e] . ^watch I [we] I'm ^old e_nough#
 to have ^watched the !Labour . the ^L\iberal_Party#
 (5.5 683-88)

Most researchers (e.g. Schiffrin 1987; Aijmer 2002) focus on *now*'s use in utterance initial position. However, Clancy & Vaughan's (2012: 229, 236ff) work on *now* in Irish English shows that *now* also performs non-temporal functions in utterance final position. As a pragmatic marker, *now* performs two functions. When it co-occurs with other markers of affective meaning, it is used as a marker of affect intensification. Take for instance example (9). Here *now* highlights or intensifies the negative feelings expressed by *lunacy*.

- (9) <Speaker 1> No I'd never do that.
 <Speaker 2> I'll go.
 <Speaker 1> Sarah I wouldn't do it.
 <Speaker 2> I always wanted to do that.
 <Speaker 3> It's lunacy **now**.
 <Speaker 1> I wouldn't do it. (Clancy & Vaughan 2012: 229)

The intensification function of *now* is also found in (some) other varieties of English. In contexts in which *now* occurs in conjunction with face-threatening activities such as challenges, disagreements, evaluations and orders, it functions as a hedge (Clancy

& Vaughan's 2012: 238). In these instances, where it often also co-occurs with other hedges, it mitigates the face-threat to the hearer's face that is inherent in such activities. It "downtone[s] the illocutionary force of an utterance allowing the speaker to weaken his/her commitment to its propositional content." (Clancy & Vaughan 2012: 237). This usage is evident in the discussion about a student loan application (10). Speaker C is urging a bank official to process the application quickly because he is running out of money. A is taking this request for faster processing as a face-threat and reprimands C, ordering him to avoid unfriendliness. C mitigates the face-threat inherent in orders by postposing *now* to the command.

- (10) <S1A-053\$C> <#> <[> So I said </[> </{> it 'll be another fortnight <#> Well do you think you could do it a bit faster like you know <#> I've got no money here
 <S1A-053\$A> <#> Don't be rude *now* <#> Sure you 're on the list <#> We 're doing the best we can <&> laughter </&>
 <S1A-053\$C> <#> And then my money ran out so I banged down the phone and said shit (ICE-Ireland, S1A-053)

Clancy & Vaughan (2012: 235) argue that the use of *now* as a hedge is unique to Irish English and contributes to the high frequency and salience of *now* in Irish English as opposed to British spoken English, for instance. They argue that *now*'s use as a utterance final hedge contributes "towards minimising power", underscoring "a crucial characteristic of the pragmatic system of Irish English: the emphasis on solidarity and corollary downtoning of power, both actual and conversational." (Clancy & Vaughan 2012: 240). This characteristic of the pragmatics of Irish English has been discussed in more detail by Farr & O'Keeffe (2002) and Kallen (2005), who argue that indirectness is a crucial characteristic of social interactions in Ireland.

Clancy & Vaughan (2012) also highlight yet another function of *now* that appears to be particular to Irish English, namely its use as a presentative marker. As a presentative marker, *now* makes an entity in the real world salient to the discourse, i.e. it points to it. Example (11) is an example of presentative *now*. Its use makes salient the money that is being handed over as part of the verbal interaction. This use was also commented on by several of the newcomers to Ireland.

- (11) <Speaker 1> Can I use the internet please?
<Speaker 2> Yeah yeah sure.
<Speaker 1> Thanks very much.
<Speaker 2> Are you finished?
<Speaker 1> And I printed up two pages. How much is that?
<Speaker 2> One fifty. *Now*. Thanks.
<Speaker 1> Thanks very much. Bye. (Clancy & Vaughan (2012: 241)

3. *Now* in the speech of newcomers to Ireland

The transcribed audio-recorded interviews with newcomers to Ireland were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Using the software package Wordsmith Tools 6 (Scott 2008), all instances of *now* were randomly extracted for each interviewee from the transcribed recordings. Each concordance line was then examined individually in order to determine the precise function of each token of *now*. Below I first present the frequency distribution of the various functions of *now* and then discuss each function in more detail based on a qualitative analysis of the data.

3. 1. The frequency of *now* in the speech of newcomers to Ireland

Analysis of the 59 semi-guided interviews with newcomers to Ireland produced a total of 1870 token of *now* (Table 1). As in the case of other corpora, such as the British National Corpus and the Limerick corpus of Irish English whose data consist of speech produced by native speakers of English,⁵ temporal uses of *now* are more frequent than any of the other uses of *now*. However, in the immigrant data examined here, temporal uses of *now* by far outweigh other uses of *now*; they make up 91% of the total number of *now* tokens. Compare this with Clancy & Vaughen's (2012: 234-235) figures based on an analysis of 500 randomly selected occurrences of *now* from the Limerick corpus and the British National corpus, respectively. Less than half

⁵The term native speaker is somewhat controversial as it is often used to mean monolingual. In this paper, I use the term as short-hand for a person who has been using a variety of English as a main or as the only means of communication for most or all of their interactions since childhood.

(41%) in the case of the Limerick corpus and 61% of all the *now* token in the British National corpus were found to have a temporal meaning.

There are also broad similarities with respect to the distribution of the other functions of *now*. In the immigrant data, as in the British National corpus and in the Limerick corpus, discourse marker uses of *now* are more frequent than instances where *now* functions as a pragmatic marker. However, non-temporal uses of *now* are much less frequent in the immigrant data. They only constitute 5% and 4%, respectively, of the total instances of *now* in the immigrant data while they make up about a third each in the Limerick corpus (discourse marker 31%; pragmatic marker 28%) and about 37% and 2% respectively in the British National corpus. Clancy & Vaughan (2012) argue that the frequency difference between pragmatic marker *now* in the Limerick corpus and in the British National corpus is indicative of the fact that this function of *now* is particular to varieties of Irish English.

Table 1: The distribution of *now* in the corpus of semi-guided interviews with newcomers to Ireland

Temporal <i>now</i>	Discourse <i>now</i>	Pragmatic <i>now</i>	Presentative <i>now</i>	Total
1708 (91.3%)	92 (5%)	63/7	2	1870

In order to gain a better understanding of the actual distribution of the different instances of *now* in the semi-guided interviews, I also explored inter-speaker variation. All interviewees made use of temporal *now*. However, only 20 of the 59 interviewees used both discourse marker and pragmatic marker *now*, 15 used only discourse marker *now* and ten employed only the pragmatic marker *now* besides *now* in its temporal function; only one person made use of presentative *now*. It is equally interesting to note that a total of 14 people used only temporal *now*. While in some cases (7) the absence of non-temporal *now* may be related to interviewees' comparatively low levels of competence in English, there also appear to be other reasons for the absence of non-temporal *now* as there are also a few cases (3) where native speakers of English from the UK and the USA only used *now* in its temporal function. Further research is required on this issue. Overall, the distribution suggests that non-temporal uses of *now* are established among most of the interviewees.

However, the discourse marker function of *now* appears to be somewhat better established across interviewees than the pragmatic function of *now*. Following Clancy & Vaughan's (2012) discussion of *now*, the main reason for this might be that discourse marker *now* is common to a number of different varieties of English while *now* as a pragmatic marker is specific to Irish varieties of English. This then suggests that only about half (50.8%) of the interviewees have acculturated to some degree to Irish ways of speaking English.

3. 2. Temporal uses of *now*

All interviewees made use of several instances of temporal *now* in the course of their interview(s).⁶ Some interviewees (3) made substantial use of it as their interviews contained more than 60 instances of *now* across two one hour interviews while others made relatively less use of it, employing less than ten instance of *now* across two interviews. In the majority of cases, between twenty to forty tokens of temporal *now* were found in the two interviews and about half of that in the case of the interviewees that were only interviewed once (11).

Different uses of temporal *now* were found in the recordings. Some of these *now* token functioned to locate an activity in the present, usually implicitly or explicitly comparing activities in two different time periods. In (12) the interviewee contrasts his previous activities at work presented in the past tense with those that he is currently engaged in, marking the latter as current by using both present tense and *now*.

(12) For example, I helped a little bit with the Lisbon Treaty, which we lost. I am helping with the local election right *now*. I am the group which is working with the counselors' candidates in the local elections. (2007POL01)

⁶ The recordings also included a number of instances where *now* occurred in fixed expressions such as *now and then*, *nowadays*. These instances were excluded from consideration.

In this function, *now* may either be found in sentence or utterance final position (12) or sentence-initially (13), being sometimes modified by elements such as *right* that emphasize the currency of the activity (13b).

(13) a. Interviewer: And your wife doesn't work?

Interviewee: Well, *right now* she doesn't because she is sick, but she is working as a graphic designer (2007POL01)

b. Interviewer: So is that the main thing you do outside of work and study?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: So you surf everyday.

Interviewee: *Now* actually I am studying so I don't go often, but also last year I had no car but last year I was living with some guys who had a van or a car, so we were going daily. (2007IT01)

The use of temporal *now* in discourses involving comparison (of activities) in different time periods or different locations is rather common in all interviews, but particularly in second interviews, because interviewees frequently employed comparison to make sense of their lives in Ireland.

Now is also used to mark temporal relations between utterances or their sequencing order. For example, in (14a) *now* is used to mark that the international job only materialized after the person had been employed with a company for some period of time. In this usage, *now* is often combined with *and* (14b) to emphasize the successive nature of the events. *Now* is also used to indicate that some event or state has been on-going for a while (14c).

(14) a. ...so she works with, eh, Lucent Technologies and, em, she's been with them for such a while and *now* she has an international job with them and they sent her to Holland for one year... (African II)

b. I started in reservations just like everybody else *and now* I am in hotel coordination where I work directly with the hotel managers, tell them their success reports on how they are dealing with our preferred guests, the people who come to our hotels often. (2007US11)

b. I think Finnish [is the language I'm most comfortable in] but I haven't spoken Finnish for a few months *now* so mostly I speak Polish to the friends

in my college, so that would be... (Fin 1)

3. 3. Discourse marker uses of *now*

In the immigrant data, discourse marker *now* is used in similar ways as described for other corpora such as the Limerick corpus (Clancy & Vaughan 2012), American English (Schiffrin 1987) and the London-Lund corpus (Aijmer 2002). There are a few instances of discourse marker *now* where it is used to structure discourse (Schiffrin 1987: 232). Take for instance extract (15). Here the interviewee, a man from Venezuela who had spend most of his adulthood in the US before moving to Ireland, is explaining the role of language knowledge in his current job.

(15) No it is because we are dealing with all of Europe and Asia, South America and the United States so we have to have a language for each country so we have like 16 different languages represented, that is for the reservation part. *Now* moving into the next level it is a lot different because now I have to interact with a lot of Irish people because the people (2007US11a)

In extract (15), he is comparing different occupational levels (front line service versus managerial level) in this company with respect to the types of people that employees have to deal with and the importance of knowing languages other than English. *Now* introduces the second part of the comparison – interactions on the managerial level – highlighting that it is a subpart of the comparison structure. The use of *now* in comparisons was not very common overall and mainly found among interviewees coming from the USA, though (16) is an instance from a French interviewee. Further research is needed to determine the distribution of this use of *now* in varieties of English and other languages.

(16) I wouldn't say I am unfairly treated [unclear] like I got teased and everything for that but nothing that would [unclear]. Like there is always this [unclear] maybe I am very typically French and they are typically Irish [unclear] but it is not too bad this way. *Now* the customer is another story. (2007FR1)

As a discourse marker, *now* is also frequently used to mark what Schiffrin (1987: 240) described as pivotal shifts in the participation framework or footing of the interaction. For instance, in example (17) the interviewee is first providing the interviewers with information about an organization and then puts forward her own assessment of the organization's purpose. The assessment part is set off from the former by the use of *now* which is combined with *I think* which overtly marks what follows as an opinion.

(17) [...] when I was studying in university in Ljubljana I was a member of a student organisation called BEST which stands for Build a European Students of Technology and this organisation is again everywhere in Europe except Ireland and UK for some reason

Interviewer 1: They are always different.

Interviewee: [unclear overlapping 00:50:47:11] .org and you will see where it is. **Now** I think the main thing of this organisation is that, first of all it's technical students and the main activity are summer courses which are 2 week long courses on some technical topic [...] (SLO1)

The examples in (18) are instances, where discourse marker *now* is used to introduce a different footing. Here the interviewee is first asserting her acquaintance with Italian chipper families in Dublin and then moves on to give the interviewee privileged information about them. That is, in (18) she shifts from a personal experience narrative to a knowledge discourse that highlights her professional engagement with this group of people – she had done a documentary on them for one of her class projects. This change in the way the interviewee relates to the interviewer is overtly marked by the use of *now* and the phrase *I will tell you what other people never say about this community*. The use of *ok* preceding *now* further emphasizes that what follows is to be understood as involving a different mode of engagement with the interlocutor.

(18) I know all of them because of this [unclear overlapping 01:27:46:11]. I know them and ok *now* I will tell you what other people never say about this community. They made a lot of money yes on fish and chips but they made a lot of money on gambling. (2004IT01)

3. 4. Pragmatic marker *now*

The interviews also include instances where *now* functions as a pragmatic marker, adding affective meaning to an utterance. As in the case of the Limerick corpus (Clancy & Vaughan 2012), pragmatic uses of *now* in the interviews with newcomers to Ireland also occur utterance finally rather than utterance initially. As a pragmatic marker, *now* generally co-occurs with emotion or affect expressing forms and either emphasizes their affective meaning (19) or mitigates their illocutionary force (21). In example (19a), for instance, *now* intensifies the emotional content of the verb *love*, conveying that the interviewee feels very strongly about West Cork and in (19b) it amplifies the negative feelings expressed by *gutted*.

- (19) a. I have been to Galway, Dublin, I haven't been to the North of Ireland yet. I love West Cork **now**, I have been there a few times, to Clonakilty, it is nice. Dublin I have been to a couple of times, two or three times, a nice city but it is a bigger city. (2007FR01)
- b. I think so yes. I think like I am kind of happy kind of here now at the moment like and I would be pretty gutted **now** like if I was going to lose my job and I did have to go back. I would be kind of, yes. I am just kind of happy how it all kind of worked out and the kind of the friends I made like and where I am at the moment like so, and with the work and stuff like so. (2007uk1)

There are a few cases in the data where it is not clear whether *now* functions as a pragmatic marker or as a temporal form, possibly conveying both meanings. In (20), for example, it is not clear whether *now* intensifies *big*, or whether reference is made to the fact that Sligo used to be small and has grown significantly in recent years.

(20) Interviewer: And do you like living in Sligo?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: What do you like about it?

Interviewee: The size of the town, it is a very small town. Some people say to me, 'Sligo is a very big town **now**.' I am from a small Polish city with about 400,000 people. (2004POL03)

The use of *now* as a marker of intensification is less commonly found in the data than its use as a hedging device. Clancy & Vaughan (2012) argue that *now* as a mitigator is used to downplay power relationships in face sensitive interactions. Since the interactions in the context of the semi-guided interviews were generally not hierarchical or conflictual in nature, we do not find these kinds of uses of *now*. However, there are instances where *now* appears to mitigate the impact or force of an assertion. For instance, in example (21a) the interviewee wants to downplay the implication that he was acting in a completely goal oriented manner as that has overtones of arrogance. In order to mitigate this implication he modified the verb *knew* with *kind of* and *now* which both reduce its force. In (21b), *now* is mitigating the force of *I don't know*, suggesting that the interviewee is not completely in the dark about the outcome of the demand; note that she then also moves on to explain that she has already received approval from Ireland.

(21) a. Interviewer: And so is the firm that you are working for is that the one that you had chosen out of the 5 interviews that you did?

Interviewee: It is. I kind of knew *now*, I knew before I, out of the 10 interviews really like I kind of knew that if this firm had offered me a place I would have gone for them like because I knew about them before and stuff and they offered a place then like so its. (2007UK1)

b. Interviewee: Yes and that's what I had the contact with the Revenue here because I need the letter from them that I am a taxed resident here and it was easy I just called them and they sent it so.

Interviewer: Oh. So and that worked out without any problems?

Interviewee: Well I don't know *now* it's in process. It worked out on the Irish side I don't know what Slovenia is going to say. (SLO 1)

In some cases, it is not quite clear whether *now* has a temporal or a pragmatic function. Take for instance example (22) where the interviewee talks about any aspects of English language use that teachers in Nigeria found particularly unacceptable and 'cracked down' on when she was a child.

(22) Em, I can't remember, I couldn't, you know, think of any one of them *now*, you know, but there were, like, if you have an English language class, because we have English Language and English Literature, so when we have English language classes, they would, em, talk more of tenses, and, em, and how you write letters and things like that, and when to use, when you start with a certain, you know, word, you have to continue with it throughout, you cannot mix, you know, it was a lot of different dimensions to what we were doin', but I can't really remember *now* practical English, you know, because we had practical English. (African II)

In (22), *now* modifies *think of any one of them* and *I can't really remember*. On the one hand, *now* may be indicating that the interviewee is momentarily not able to remember or think of any specific examples. However, it is equally possible that *now* is downtoning the fact that the person is not able to provide specific examples to support their case. The fact that *now* co-occurs with the discourse marker *you know*, which functions to appeal to the interlocutor's understanding, can be seen as evidence in support of the pragmatic interpretation of *now*.

The pragmatic use of *now* which Clancy & Vaughan (2012) identified as distinctive of Irish English was not used by all interviewees and was only used to a small extent (once or twice) by most interviewees who employed it, suggesting that it has not (yet) been widely integrated into these newcomers' language usage.

3. 5. Presentative *now*

Another use of *now* that was found to be characteristic of Irish English was its use as a presentative. Clancy & Vaughan (2012) did not identify a single use of it in the Limerick corpus. In the immigrant corpus, there are two tokens (23) that are susceptible to being instances of presentative *now*. Both tokens were uttered by the same person, the son of Irish parents with a strong Irish identity.

(23) a. Interviewee: No I just go back and get all that done over there.

Interviewer 2: Really?

Interviewer 1: Do you? Yes?

Interviewee: *Now* if I could I would like. I have had to, I would use a kind of

a doctor and stuff but I think it's very, it's just I can't figure it out at all really like. (2007UK1)

b. Interviewer : How about for example media and newspapers and whatever you read. What kinds of things do you read? Like if you want to find out?

Interviewee: BBC.co.uk.

Interviewer: You don't read the Irish Times or

Interviewee: Ah no I do. *Now* I would read the Irish Times a bit now.

In both examples *now* appears to put focus on what follows. In both case, the proposition introduced by *now* adds new information and also contrasts with previous information supplied by the interviewee. It might thus be best to categorize this usage of *now* as that of a contrastive focus marker rather than as a simple presentative marker.⁷

4. Conclusion

This paper examined the uses of *now* in the speech of people who had relatively recently come (between 2-6 years) to live in Ireland for a variety of reasons. The investigation of semi-guided interviews with 59 people coming from a range of European and non-European countries revealed interesting similarities and differences with respect to the use of *now*. All interviews made use of *now*. However, as in the case of so-called native speakers of varieties of (Irish) English, temporal uses of *now* were most prominently represented over all and were found in the speech of all interviewees. All other uses of *now* constituted less than 10% of the total number of tokens from all interviews and they were also unevenly distributed across interviewees. Some interviewees made only use of discourse or pragmatic uses of *now* while the data from others contained uses of both types of *now*. Presentative *now* was only found in the speech of one interviewee. The paper also found that pragmatic uses of *now* in the immigrant data were not always exactly parallel to those discussed by Clancy & Vaughan (2012) based on native speakers of Irish English. The discussion suggests that *now* does not only operate on the interlocutor's face wants – mitigation

⁷Of course, it is equally possible to argue that this is one of the discourse marker functions as this usage of *now* contributes to structuring the discourse.

of a threat to the interlocutor's face – but can also be used to downtone a threat to the speaker's face.

From the perspective of integration, these results suggest that a fair number of interviewees have not at all or only weakly acculturated to Irish ways of speaking English and/or are actively resisting adoption of linguistic features that are emblematic of Irish English for a variety of reasons (Migge 2012). While degree of contact with Irish people and attitudes to things Irish certainly play an important role in determining patterns of language use and appear to be good reasons for explaining usage patterns of *now* in the case of some interviewees, other factors such as the interactional context need to be considered in more detail too. For instance, the low frequency of non-temporal uses of *now* and particularly pragmatic marker uses of *now* might also be due to the fact that semi-guided informational interviews provide little opportunity to use them. It is possible that more conversational data that figure prominently in native speaker corpora would produce a more even distribution and a higher incidence of non-temporal *now* uses as they provide greater opportunities to use them. This also touches on a broader issue, namely the fact that we still know very little about the distribution of discursive and pragmatic elements across interactional contexts in general.

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