

Research Repository UCD

Title	Minority language ownership and authority: perspectives of native speakers and new speakers
Authors(s)	Nic Fhlannchadha, Siobhán, Hickey, Tina
Publication date	2016-01-12
Publication information	Nic Fhlannchadha, Siobhán, and Tina Hickey. "Minority Language Ownership and Authority: Perspectives of Native Speakers and New Speakers" (January 12, 2016).
Publisher	Taylor and Francis
Item record/more information	http://hdl.handle.net/10197/7394
Publisher's statement	This is an electronic version of an article published in International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism (2016). International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism is available online at: www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13670050.2015.1127888.
Publisher's version (DOI)	10.1080/13670050.2015.1127888

Downloaded 2024-03-28T04:02:09Z

The UCD community has made this article openly available. Please share how this access benefits you. Your story matters! (@ucd_oa)



© Some rights reserved. For more information

BEB-1340.R2 Final Proof

To CITE

Nic Fhlannchadha, S. and Hickey, T.M. (2016) Minority Language Ownership and Authority: Perspectives of Native Speakers and New Speakers. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism.* Online publication http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2015.1127888

Minority Language Ownership and Authority:

Perspectives of Native Speakers and New Speakers

Siobhán Nic Fhlannchadha[1] and Tina M. Hickey[1]

[1]School of Psychology, University College Dublin, Ireland

Corresponding author:

Dr. Siobhán Nic Fhlannchadha, School of Psychology, Newman Building, UCD, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.

Email: siobhan.nic-fhlannchadha@ucdconnect.ie

Second author:

Dr. Tina M. Hickey, School of Psychology, Newman Building, UCD, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.

Email: tina.hickey@ucd.ie

Acknowledgements

This work was funded by An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta. The authors also wish to acknowledge the very helpful comments from two anonymous reviewers.

Minority Language Ownership and Authority: Perspectives of Native Speakers and New Speakers

Abstract

The Irish language is a minority language undergoing the attenuation and accelerated change commonly seen as threatened languages come under increasing pressure from the dominant language. The decline of the numbers of traditional speakers and growing numbers of L2 speakers of Irish has given rise to some contested spaces regarding authenticity, accuracy and ownership of the language, as well as who has the right to produce and distribute the resources associated with/generated by the language. This study explored the attitudes and experiences of native and high-proficiency L2 speakers ('new speakers') of Irish with respect to these issues. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17 Irish speakers, 7 young adult native speakers (four female, aged 18 – 26 years) and 10 young adult high-proficiency new speakers (six female, aged 19 – 31). Thematic Analysis showed a significant decline, in the view of both groups, in the confidence and authority of native speakers of Irish, and a change to a view among both groups that goodwill and commitment to the language's maintenance is more important than linguistic accuracy. The commonalities and differences between the native speaker and new speaker groups are explored, and the implications for the future of Irish are considered.

Keywords

Irish language, identity, ownership, native speaker, new speaker, qualitative

Introduction

Irish speaker demographics

Irish is an indigenous minority language that is the first official language of the Republic of Ireland, although most children are exposed to it only as a second language in the educational system. Census (2011) showed that although 1.7 million people, or two-fifths of the population, claimed some knowledge of Irish, only 2% of the population reported speaking Irish daily outside of the education system. Native speakers of Irish are clustered in regions known collectively as the *Gaeltacht*, officially designated Irish-speaking communities located mainly in geographically isolated areas on the western, southern and northern seaboard. Ó Riagáin (1997) noted that Irish is quite unusual among minority languages given the significant state support it has received since the first Irish government in 1922, following centuries of oppression under English rule. Despite this support, Ó Giollagáin (2014) and Walsh and MacLeod (2008) have argued that legislation such as the *Gaeltacht Act 2012*, the *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030* and the *Official Languages Act 2003* have been more symbolic than effective. Recent reviews of language use have pointed to an acceleration of this shift from Irish to English in *Gaeltacht* areas (see Ó Giollagáin, Mac Donnacha, Ní Chualáin, Ní Shéaghdha & O'Brien 2007).

Hindley (1990) raised concerns some decades ago about declining intergenerational transmission of Irish in the home, which now appears to be under greater pressure as more *Gaeltacht* parents opt to speak English in the home. Ó hIfearnáin voiced concerns that the decisions made by parents in the *Gaeltacht* regarding their patterns of home language use were not always made in a "fully informed climate" (2008, 527). He found that some parents in the *Gaeltacht* attributed their decision to speak English with their children to a desire to ensure that their children be bilingual in English and Irish. These parents were unaware that the majority language is unlikely to be threatened, but that the minority language requires more support and enrichment for successful acquisition.

While intergenerational transmission of Irish has come under growing pressure in the *Gaeltacht*, outside of these areas, a number of factors have contributed to rising numbers of Irish L2 speakers, including Irish-medium primary and secondary schools, summer camps and the statutory supports and recognition of Irish as an official working language in the EU. All of these things help to increase the status of the language and give it added value in educational qualifications, the labour market and the media. As a result of these mainly urban phenomena, and in contrast to the deterioration of linguistic vitality in the *Gaeltacht* noted by

Ó Giollagáin et al. (2007), O'Rourke and Pujolar argue that the progression and extent of the emergence of new speakers of Irish is stimulating a "deterritorialisation" (2013, 54) of the language into new, urban spaces and away from the *Gaeltacht*.

New Speakers

'New speaker' is a relatively recent term in minority language research, particularly in the context of language revitalisation. O'Rourke and Walsh define a new speaker as an individual who acquired their language in a context other than the home, such as through immersion or other bilingual education, or as an adult, and who now uses the language with "fluency, regularity and commitment"(2015, 64; see also O'Rourke, Pujolar & Ramallo 2015). The generation of new speakers tends to be viewed as a successful outcome of revitalisation policies, but O'Rourke et al. (2015) also noted that tension can arise between new speakers and native speakers, due to differences in their understanding of issues such as legitimacy, authority and authenticity.

Bourdieu and Thompson (1991) describe as a 'legitimate speaker' the type of speaker who holds the authority and linguistic capital to determine what constitutes the 'right' way to speak the language. Varying value is attributed to speech depending on the value ascribed to the person speaking it, and on the context. As discussed by Hornsby (2015), Costa (2015), O'Rourke and Ramallo (2011), and O'Rourke (2011), native speakers are frequently seen as the most 'legitimate' speakers of a language. Davies (2008) discussed the different views of native speakers, from "the repository and guardian of the true language" (447) to the view of the native speaker as "the standard setter" (447). Above all, he noted that arguments about the concept of the native speaker hinge on personal identity, the sense of self that is strongly linked with the power conferred by being a native speaker. Thus, the view of their legitimacy is generally linked to an expectation that native speakers have authority as language users, and that however the language is spoken by native speakers is the 'correct' use of that language (Heller & Martin-Jones 2001). However, this view may be mediated by disparities in the status of native speakers and learners of a particular language. Ballinger (2013), in a study of expert-novice pairs in immersion schools in Canada, found that Anglophone teenagers who were L2 learners of French rejected the authority of French native speaker peers regarding grammatical accuracy when working together. Hickey (2013) argued that this highlighted the vulnerability of native speaker authority and legitimacy when L2 learners are perceived to have higher status in certain contexts than native speakers. This has been found

in other contexts also, for example Frekko (2009) in the Catalan context and O'Rourke and Ramallo (2013) in the Galician context.

Questions of authenticity are intertwined with origin, the view that authentic speakers are 'from somewhere', and are bound to both geographical roots and a defined community. Authentic language is viewed as the genuine expression of that community, and authentic accent "signals... who you are, more than what you say" (Woolard 2008, 2). O'Rourke and Walsh (2015) note that this perspective leads to the reification of native speakers, who are held up as champions of the 'true' or 'authentic' form of the language. O'Rourke and Ramallo (2013) observed that a speaker's authenticity is open to challenge if they are not bound to those territorial roots. Eckert (2003) cautioned against the uncritical acceptance of the ideological construct of the 'true', unchanging and uncontaminated way in which a language should be spoken, given its limited utility for understanding language progress. It encourages the perception of languages as static and measurable entities, and the categorisation of their speakers into definable and preservable unchanging groups (Jaffe 2015; Ó hIfearnáin 2015; O'Rourke & Ramallo 2011).

This view that there is one true version of a language is in some contexts linked with imposition of a standard variety, or its elevation as the most prestigious variety. This is highly relevant to exploration of the issue of authority in Irish as Standard Irish (*An Caighdeán Oifigiúil*) constitutes a long-standing and highly salient authority in addition to that of the native speakers and about which native speakers and new speakers may hold differing views. The Standard was published in Irish in 1958 by *Rannóg an Aistriúcháin* (the Translation Section of the Houses of the *Oireachtas*, or parliament) for those using the language for official purposes in legal and administrative matters, and its aim was to regularise the grammar and spelling of written Irish in official documents. While the Standard does not have the authenticity of the native dialects of Irish, its authority is amplified by its use in assessing proficiency in examinations, and as a result, it tends now to be used as the standard for assessing spoken Irish also (Stenson & Hickey 2014). Ó Murchadha (2010) has pointed to the fact that there is nothing inherently superior about the Standard but, as Milroy (2001) also noted, the standard variety tends to be interpreted as the highest prestige variety by virtue of links to formal domains such as education, the media, and as part of the national standard ideology. The second significant consequence of the implementation of the Standard language in Irish is visible in what Milroy described as the "development of consciousness among speakers of a 'correct', or canonical, form of language" (2001, 535), which he argued

can lead to a decline in the value of native speakers' dialect-specific varieties. It is such issues relating to authority and authenticity that are the subject of this study of young adult Irish speakers.

Aims of the present study

This study aimed to explore the views of a sample of self-defined proficient Irish speakers, including both native and new speakers, regarding grammatical accuracy and acceptability in current Irish usage, and consider how these attitudes impact on their Irish use and on their views and experiences in relation to language ownership and authority. The power distributions among native and new speakers are also considered, with a view to gaining a better understanding of factors impacting on different types of speakers of a vulnerable minority language (Government of Ireland 2010; UNESCO 2001).

Method

Participants

Young adult proficient speakers of Irish in university were the focus of this study because this age-group constitutes the pool from which the parents of the next generation of Irish speakers are likely to emerge, and their views and experiences are particularly relevant to the future of the language. O'Rourke (2011) outlined another relevant reason for focusing on students in the study of ownership of Irish: given the increased value of the language in the labour market due to opportunities in the media and the European Union, students are "expected to engage in struggles over the production and distribution of linguistic resources and over the legitimisation of relations of power" (331) as some may seek to use their school-generated proficiency in Irish to capitalise on these opportunities.

The young adult participants of this study were recruited through the Irish-speaking club and social network of a large Irish university, where participants were also asked to forward information about the study to college friends who were fluent in Irish. This purposive sampling technique was identified by O'Toole and Hickey (2013) as successful in a context in which participants meeting the inclusion criteria are relatively uncommon in the population. The boundaries between native and new speakers in Irish are sometimes opaque, therefore the criteria used for inclusion in the native speaker group here were that participants had been born and raised in the *Gaeltacht*, with Irish as the dominant home language. The criteria for inclusion in the new speaker group were that participants were proficient Irish

speakers who were born and raised outside of the *Gaeltacht*, with English as the dominant home language. Recruitment materials specified that a high level of Irish proficiency was required, and all recruitment materials were presented in Irish only, in order to allow those with moderate and low levels of proficiency in Irish to self-exclude.

A total of 17 young adults took part in the study: 7 native speakers, and 10 new speakers. Participants' language background information was collected using the Brief-Language Background Questionnaire (B-LBQ), a 13-item questionnaire designed for the present research and which included a self-report measure of proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, comprehending and grammar. Of the seven native speaker participants, four were female, with ages ranging from 18 to 26. All the native speaker participants reported Irish as their first language, though their use of Irish in the home growing up ranged from 50% to 100%, suggesting that some experienced Bilingual First Language Acquisition. Half of the native speaker group rated Irish as their strongest language now, and the other half judged that their Irish and English were equally strong. All of the native speaker participants had attended Irish-medium primary and post-primary schools, and three were studying Irish at university.

Ten young adult new speakers participated (six female, age range 19 - 31). All of these participants reported English as their first language, with Irish acquired Irish in education. Four of the participants had attended Irish-immersion schools at both primary and post-primary level, one attended an Irish immersion primary school but not post-primary, two attended an immersion post-primary school but not primary, and the remaining three attended mainstream schools at both primary and post-primary level. Three were studying Irish at university. This group's current daily use of Irish was widely spread, with half the group using Irish between 20% and 100% of the time and the other half rarely using Irish since completing their post-primary education. While all of them rated English as their strongest language, they rated their Irish as 'highly proficient'.

Procedure

Participants completed the B-LBQ prior to the interview, allowing them to be assessed in terms of the criteria for inclusion. Arrangements were then made for the interview, which typically lasted 25-35 minutes, with the longest interview lasting 55 minutes. All recruitment emails arranging interviews were in Irish only. The introductions and early exchanges in the interviews were also conducted only in Irish, but at that point all participants were given the

option of continuing the interview in Irish, English or both languages. All native speaker participants spoke Irish in the interviews. Eight of the ten new speaker participants spoke Irish only, indicating a level of comfort in their conversational fluency, while one spoke both English and Irish. Only one new speaker participant switched to English.

All interviews were conducted by the first author, a native speaker of Irish, of similar age to the participants. Given the reflexivity of qualitative research, it was noted that conscious and subconscious choices made by the interviewer in word choice and accent could impact on what and how much participants shared, given the interaction between a native Irish speaker of one dialect in face-to-face interviews with native speakers of other dialects, as well as new speakers using a range of dialects/varieties of Irish. This was addressed by adjusting the interview script in light of a speaker's dialect and word choices, and by making deliberate efforts to mirror their speaking rate and use of dialect features.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006). Audio recordings of the 17 interviews were transcribed verbatim, checked for accuracy and consistency and assigned a code, with substitutions made for any identifiers. As the interviews with the new speakers were conducted first, a draft coding frame was developed based on the themes which emerged from those interviews and then formalised following discussion between researchers regarding comprehensiveness. This first coding frame was tested for applicability to the native speakers' transcripts and then significantly expanded to accommodate additional themes noted in their interviews. This frame was again revised and formalised following discussion between researchers. Finally, the revised coding frame was applied to all data. Inter-rater agreement (based on a sample of 10% of the transcripts), using the simple proportion agreement method was over 70%, and following Campbell, Quincy, Osserman and Pedersen (2013) this was deemed acceptable given that all coding was done by one knowledgeable coder.

Results

Irish use

In order to situate the data and these speakers, their frequency and contexts of Irish use are outlined first. All native speaker participants reported their current main domain of use as in the home with family. However, all of them also reported using English to some degree in the

home now (half were raised in homes in which both Irish and English were spoken). This shows that, even in Irish-speaking homes in *Gaeltacht* communities, the family's language is likely not to be exclusively Irish. In their current life in college, the native speakers indicated more variable Irish use, with one native speaker reporting lower use of Irish than might be expected given her friends' Irish proficiency: "I don't know why I don't speak Irish all the time; most of my friends have Irish so I don't know why" (NAT5). (In quotes presented here, speaker codes include 'NAT' and 'NEW' to signal native and new speaker participants respectively.)

In contrast to the home use of Irish among the native speaker participants, the primary domain of use for all the new speaker participants was in education. While nine new speaker participants did mention using some Irish at home, it occurred infrequently, and tended to be aimed at encouraging siblings learning Irish. All of the new speakers saw social benefits of speaking Irish among their college networks of friends: "Here in college I think I have many more friends than I would have if I didn't speak Irish" (NEW4). Interestingly, all of the new speakers (but none of the native speakers) commented on the value of Irish as a secret language*: "It is very useful when there are strange people or you are trying to say something to your friends" (NEW9).*

Stenson (1993) noted the universal bilingualism that exists among Irish speakers after centuries of close contact with English. All of the participants commented on needing to make frequent choices about what language to use, given that the majority language, English, is always an option for both native and new speakers. Some participants reported that every time they used Irish reflected a conscious decision. Opinions differed regarding how their language choice was influenced by others, but did not align with a native/new division. Some reported leaving the decision to others, while others took a stronger position on choosing to speak Irish:

> I would speak Irish with them [any friends who the speaker knew could speak Irish] all the time and I won't accept answers in English. If they started speaking English with me, I would speak Irish back. (NEW3)

Analysis of the data from this sample of young adult native and new speakers revealed the salience of themes relating to **Irish identity, accuracy, ownership and authority.** Figure 1 summarises the themes and subthemes identified and this is followed by discussion of each theme with summary tables and illustrative quotes.

INSERT FIG 1 ABOUT HERE

Identity

The theme of identity emerged as highly salient and the subthemes are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 Subthemes and illustrative quotes on theme of Irish Identity

SUBTHEME	ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTE	Discussed by	
		% NAT	% NEW
More valued as native speaker	There's pride because we are from the Gaeltacht so I feel proud when other people are speaking it. (NAT6)	100	90
Using Irish makes one stand out	When we say write happy birthday I'd be the one to write 'breithlá shona' [sic] and they just laugh coz it's typical of me. (NEW5)	71	90
Love of the language	I love [Irish], I love speaking it and I love studying it and writing it. (NEW1)	57	70
Economic/ career value	I work in a summer camp every summer so [it's valuable] for my job and for work. (NEW7)	57	70

Value of being an Irish speaker: sense of being special

Many of the native speaker participants emphasised the special status they perceived in coming from the *Gaeltacht*, which conferred membership of the group of native Irish speakers. They also identified as special the fact that their Irish was achieved with ease through home use: "it is much easier to speak a language and to have it when you speak the language at home" (NAT3), and native speaker participants linked this ease of acquisition with a **naturalness** about their use of the language that they identified as a salient difference between them and proficient L2 speakers:

> I'm not criticising people who learned their Irish from books and just in school, but I think that that naturalness is very important because that is kind of the flavour, the character that the language has. (NAT7)

This linkage of ease of acquisition and naturalness of use with greater access to the character, flavour and essence of the language speaks to a view of **native speakers' greater authenticity** compared to new speakers' variety of Irish learned in schools. This view was

echoed in the responses of several native speakers interviewed, but it was notable that in many cases it was also tempered by a reluctance to criticise or claim superiority explicitly.

Almost all (90%) of the new speakers also discussed authenticity and approximately half appeared to agree with the native speakers in attributing greater authenticity to native speaker Irish. However, it was interesting to find that nearly all of the new speaker participants also reported being **regarded as special** in their own (English-speaking) community by virtue of their ability to speak Irish well:

> People always pass comments, whether it's 'oh God you're great'. (NEW5)
>
> If people [know I] have Irish they think that 'yer man is able to speak Irish, he's probably a clever person'. (NEW2)

Similar sentiments were expressed by the new speakers interviewed by O'Rourke (2011), which highlights the importance of this perception of Irish as contributing to a sense of being special in the identity of new speakers: speaking Irish was seen as giving special status to both groups. For the native speakers this arose from their membership of the *Gaeltacht* community of Irish speakers, while for the new speakers it was due to their Irish proficiency distinguishing them from the rest of their English-speaking community. Thus, this perception among the native speakers seemed to be mainly internally-generated and grounded in membership of the community of speakers of a variety of Irish that they, and some new speakers, perceived to be the more authentic Irish spoken in the *Gaeltacht*; whereas the value identified by the new speakers appeared to be partly related to the fact that that their Irish proficiency compared very favourably to the typical Irish proficiency of non-*Gaeltacht* speakers.

Accuracy

Attitudes to grammatical accuracy and variability emerged as a strong theme in the interviews, and the subthemes are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Subthemes for theme of Irish Accuracy

SUBTHEME	ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTE	Discussed by	
		% NAT	% NEW
Effort more important than accuracy	I would say if you have a love for the language you wouldn't care if the grammar is right. (NEW9) I understand that I am making mistakes but at the same time I'm still putting what I want to say forward. (NEW7)	71	80
Lack of confidence	[Gaeltacht people] don't have good grammar because they don't learn it in the schools... I am afraid to write things and I ask my father to correct nearly everything I write." (NAT2) Maybe I am paranoid but sometimes I think [native speakers] think 'this daft eejit trying to talk Irish again'. (NEW2)	71	80
Accent	I think that that naturalness is very important because that is the flavour, the character in the language. (NAT6) Sometimes I would be nervous that someone wouldn't be able to understand me, because of my accent." (NAT3)	100	70

Effort is worth more than grammatical accuracy

Some of the native speaker and new speaker participants claimed that having the **right attitude** towards Irish, and making the effort to speak it, is more important than having accurate grammar. According to this view, what is critical in evaluating Irish speakers is that they show the right attitude to it, that is a love of the language and a desire to see it supported and maintained. Significantly, this view transcended the speaker categories, and was noted in 70-80% of participants in both groups. Some of the new speaker participants identified the ability to communicate as sufficient, and appeared to see accuracy as supplementary if communication was not impaired:

> We have Irish now and we are communicating without being fluent, without having native Irish, it's like - it'll do. (NEW8)

While this was certainly more explicit among the new speakers, it was notable that such views were acknowledged by 71% of the native speaker sample also. Overall, the majority of this group of young adult speakers indicated a belief that being well-disposed to Irish and making the effort to speak it are more important than grammatical accuracy, with some of these interviewees viewing accuracy as desirable but not necessary.

Native speakers' and new speakers' lack of confidence in their accuracy

These speakers' elevation of the 'right attitude' and effort over accuracy was further illuminated when they revealed negative perceptions of their own accuracy. Despite the evidence already discussed regarding views of the specialness of *Gaeltacht*/native speaker Irish, it emerged that some native speaker participants reported becoming more aware of **inadequacies in their Irish grammar** as a result of meeting proficient new speakers:

> In university with people who are studying Irish, they have everything perfect. ... sometimes it's difficult to think of the right word [in Irish]. (NAT3)

Some were conscious of gaps in their Irish vocabulary compared to the wider Irish vocabularies of new speakers studying Irish, while others identified grammatical deficiencies that they attributed to less formal teaching of Standard Irish and Irish grammar in *Gaeltacht* schools than in Irish-immersion schools:

> [Gaeltacht people] don't have good grammar because they don't learn it in the schools... I am afraid to write things and I ask my father to correct nearly everything I write. (NAT2)

The majority of the native speaker group appeared lacking in confidence about their own levels of Irish grammatical accuracy, particularly compared to immersion-school graduates. Some native speakers interviewed reported that *Gaeltacht* schools strive for accuracy according to the rules of the local dialect:

> The teachers took it that we knew the rules and then for the rest it was more important that they developed [dialect of X]. We have rules that are not in the Standard and wouldn't be right according to proper grammar. (NAT7)

They indicated an awareness of the lower status of dialect Irish compared to the Standard that is evidenced in the lack of recognition of accuracy according to dialect in examinations where the Standard language is the yardstick.

Thus, it appears that different factors may contribute to the views of native speakers and new speakers that accuracy is not essential. Some the new speakers interviewed reported that grammar was not a priority for them provided that they could communicate their meaning and make efforts to speak and learn the language. While many native speakers interviewed agreed that the right attitude to Irish and willingness to speak the language were most important, they also reported a lack of confidence in their own Irish grammar, and a feeling that their education as native speakers of dialect did not equip them to compete with

pupils from immersion schools in particular who are proficient users of Standard Irish. **Low confidence** in their grammatical accuracy emerged, therefore, as a highly salient theme from the majority of these proficient speakers of Irish, both native and new speakers. This may help to explain why accuracy was not prioritised by the majority interviewed, who reported that they valued fluency and communicative competence more. When significant numbers of proficient speakers of a language lack confidence in their own accuracy, they may be more likely to accord a higher value to other factors such as having the right attitude to using the minority language, communicative effectiveness, and accent, discussed below.

Accent – valuable but not indispensable

Accent emerged as one of the most salient markers (for both native and new speakers) of the native speaker variety**.** Many native speaker participants commented positively on their own accent, noting that it is perceived by others as a more important signal of high proficiency than accuracy:

> Most people accept that [I am a native speaker] because I have the accent and sometimes grammar gets lost in the accent. (NAT2)

This quote illustrates her view that the **authenticity of her accent inspires confidence** in her as a legitimate speaker. The speaker indicated that she feels her accent can either conceal errors or allow her some leeway with regard to grammatical accuracy. However, it was clear there were some limits to the advantages of an authentic native speaker accent, relating principally to dialect. All of the native speaker participants who spoke the Ulster dialect reported having to adjust their accent to be understood, even by other native speakers of different dialects, and they appeared to be highly aware of the difficulties their accent caused their interlocutors: “Sometimes I would be nervous that someone wouldn’t be able to understand me, because of my accent (NAT3)”. The Ulster dialect tends to be regarded as least like the other two dialects in both pronunciation and grammar.

Research has shown that accent is frequently a very salient issue for language learners, but there are some contradictory findings. Singleton (2001) argued that the degree to which a language learner’s L2 accent sounds native is often cited as a measure of their success as a language learner. Graddol (2006) disagreed, noting that new speakers may admire the authenticity of native speakers’ accent, but may view it as either unattainable or unnecessary for them, preferring to self-identify as a new speaker with new speaker norms.

Research on new speakers of Scots Gaelic (Nance 2013), Occitan (Costa 2015), Dutch (Cornips 2008), Yiddish and Breton (Hornsby 2015) has shown them to use some aspects of accent such as intonation pattern to mark local identity affiliation. Nance (2013) disputed the controversial concept of 'incomplete acquisition' by learners, arguing that speakers may actually have fully acquired the language to the extent they need, and that this also affects the speech sounds they use to achieve this communication. This is pertinent to the new speakers here who reported that, rather than deliberately trying to sound like native speakers, instead use a hybridised accent to mark their identity as a new speaker. One new speaker explained this as being due more to a reluctance than to an inability to adopt the native accent:

> I always feel silly if I put - kind of, you know, a Galway accent on when I'm speaking Irish because that's, that's not the way I speak. (NEW5)

This illustrates the importance of accent for identity and authority: new speakers in Dublin are more likely to mix with other new speakers than with native speakers, resulting in the dominance of the new speaker variety in their Irish-speaking community. This dominance is likely to promote a sense of authority among the urban high-status speakers of this variety that is perceived by many of them to equal the authority of the native speaker variety, because this variety is the norm among their peers. Thus, some of the new speakers interviewed reported that they do not need to try to 'pass themselves off' as native speakers because they can claim equal legitimacy as Irish speakers without that accent, which was also discussed by Piller (2002). It was notable that new speaker participants used terms like "neutral Irish" (NEW6) and "ordinary Irish" (NEW8) to refer to their accent and variety of Irish, which suggests that they were defending the authenticity of either a variety of Irish that is not tied to any *Gaeltacht*, or a Dublin dialect, as the following quote suggests:

> I have a **typical Irish accent** but it's from the area I'm from, it wouldn't be an Irish accent as in the sense of someone that's from the Gaeltacht. (NEW5)

Overall, the data revealed interesting differences between the two groups regarding accent: native speaker participants saw their accent as defining them more than their accuracy. By establishing their link to the language territory, their accent conferred membership of the group of *Gaeltacht* native speakers, and was therefore the basis of their claim for authenticity, even helping to confound outsiders' detection of their grammatical deficiencies. Despite these merits of the authentic Irish native speaker accent, what was notable was that the new speakers in this study do not, in fact, strive to sound like native speakers, but instead feel that

their own accent as speakers of a post-traditional variety (Ó Murchadha 2015) of Irish has sufficient legitimacy in its own right to satisfy them. McEwan-Fujita (2010) and O'Rourke (2015) have also considered this tension between traditional and new speakers of Scots Gaelic and Irish respectively.

Ownership and authority

Looking across the major themes, it was found that Ownership and Authority emerged as the most significant relational themes throughout the analysis, and the subthemes are listed in Table 3.

Table 3 Subthemes for theme of Irish Ownership and Authority

SUBTHEME	ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTE	Discussed by	
		% NAT	% NEW
Native speakers as authority	They think I have the advantage because I am a native speaker. (NAT5)	85	90
New speakers as authority/ legitimate	It can be heard in the suburbs and in the city centre... It's not as directed on the Gaeltacht as it was, it's more inclusive. (NEW9)	71	100
The Standard as authority	I feel that the Standard is important so there is some benchmark to say if it is right or not. (NEW4)	71	50
Sharing the language	It doesn't matter if you are in or outside the Gaeltacht having something to do with Irish if you are happy to speak it there are advantages to that. (NAT3)	100	100
The future	I don't think there will be much native Irish left. I don't think there will be any left in the Gaeltacht. (NEW1)	57	90

Authority: native speakers and new speakers

One native speaker drew attention to the irony that while some learners are wary of negative judgement by native speakers, the latter may suffer 'imposter syndrome' because they are not sure they can claim authority, given their low confidence in their accuracy:

> They [learners] are afraid, 'oh no you'll judge my Irish, I don't want to talk to you'... People think just coz I am from the Gaeltacht that I 'have it'! (NAT2)

What was striking about this speaker was that her tone indicated that she herself doubted 'having it' in terms of her proficiency in Irish. The concern she noted among learners and new speakers that their Irish would be judged harshly by native speakers, and her awareness of deficiencies in her own Irish, points to a perception of a 'them and us' among new and

native speakers which was also present in the discourse used by the new speakers interviewed by O'Rourke (2011).

Thus, an interesting contradiction emerged, where native speaker participants acknowledged that language learners may assume that native speakers have superior Irish, but they themselves were well aware of deficiencies, outside of accent, that undermine their authority in the language. They struggled to reconcile their authentic accent and fluency with their lack of confidence in their grammar compared to some highly proficient new speakers. Native speakers also reported having aspects of their use of Irish questioned by new speakers, revealing some frustration with learners who elevate the Standard and inclusion in a dictionary over native speakers' dialect:

> They [the new speakers the participant lived with] won't say Gaelainn [her own pronunciation of Gaeilge used in Gaeltacht in the south of Ireland] because there's still that thing: it's not in focal.ie [an online dictionary; now www.tearma.ie]. (NAT6)

This quote points to a sense of an **undermining of her authority,** and demonstrates her frustration that her new speaker peers' benchmark of the pronunciation and legitimacy of an Irish word was its presence in a dictionary, rather than her own use as a native speaker.

In parallel with this evidence of a decline in the authority of the native speaker, some new speakers also reported experiencing criticism and being hurt by hearing their Irish described as **'book Irish'**, which they felt undermined the authenticity of that variety of Irish. However, a small number of new speakers accepted this criticism, and saw it as required to uphold standards in the language, with one noting:

> They [native speakers] want everyone to have accurate Irish and everything - and that's fine because it's needed so everyone doesn't have kinda higgildy piggildy Irish at the same time." (NEW2)

This quote in particular points to the ideological tension between what is desirable and what is sustainable discussed by Ó Murchadha and Ó hIfearnáin (forthcoming), as it reveals the participant's awareness of a need to maintain standards in the language, but it was interesting that his perception was that this was overseen by the native speakers, whereas the young adult native speakers interviewed indicated that they lacked confidence in their authority to do this.

The Standard as Authority

The findings in relation to grammar and accuracy need to be considered with regard to Standard Irish (*An Caighdeán*) as the **main marker of authority and legitimacy** in the language. Half of the new and three quarters of the native speaker participants explicitly referred to the Standard as the primary authority when asked to name the authority they recognised in relation to accuracy. Their understanding of the Standard was that it was an abstract set of rules that speakers must abide by in formal contexts and which is governed by academics and Irish speakers highly educated in the technicalities of the grammatical system:

> I think **the people who write the dictionaries make the decisions.**.. Book Irish is what they have, the people who are studying Irish and are extremely accurate in relation to grammar - I would be embarrassed [to talk to them]. (NAT3)

This last comment is particularly illuminating as it suggests a wide separation between her own kind of Irish and the "book Irish", which is perceived as removed from native speaker varieties and both legitimate and prestigious in academic terms but lacking in authenticity. Overall, these participants seemed to indicate that authentic native-like Irish is increasingly being seen as less valuable or advantageous than the proficient new speaker variety.

Sharing the language?

Despite a keen awareness of differences in how they use Irish, there was a notable consensus among both native and new speaker participants of a need to share, given that **everyone owns the language**. This position appears to lead to a conclusion that all speakers are equal, whether native speakers over new speakers:

> I am a native speaker, but that's not to say that I have more value than someone, some other native speaker from Donegal or someone with Irish from Dublin. (NAT1)

What appears to be emerging is an acceptance among both the new and native speakers of the contribution of the other and the value –and necessity - of having both types of speakers to maintain and share responsibility for a language under threat:

> It's on everyone to keep [Irish] alive and not put it at risk. (NEW9)

Participants were aware that not all speakers have reached this stage of acceptance. Several native speaker participants were familiar with a disparaging attitude to learners among some

native speakers. New speakers were aware that some people in the *Gaeltacht* may be unwilling to converse with them, which one new speaker reported as follows:

> I've had the odd time alright, if I was in the Gaeltacht... They'd know I wasn't local. I might be in the pub and I might start speaking Irish and they go 'we don't speak Irish here'. (NEW6)

O'Rourke (2011) also noted this experience among the new speakers she interviewed. However, all participants interviewed unanimously rejected this behaviour and argued for the inclusion of language learners and proficient L2 speakers:

> Sometimes, people with high proficiency don't want to talk to people who don't have equal proficiency because they think they have more of a right to the language than them. But that's an idiotic attitude. (NAT1)

Both groups appeared to believe that, in the face of increasing threat to the language, making the effort to speak the language is now vitally important, more important than accuracy or monopolisation of language ownership, given their joint endeavour of maintaining a threatened language.

The future of the Irish language

Finally, several participants commented on the future of Irish and the following quotes stood out in their similarity in terms of how they point to a **decline in the use of Irish in the *Gaeltacht*** and the traditional varieties and a shift to post-traditional varieties that accompany an increase in the use of Irish outside of the *Gaeltacht*:

> The Irish of the Gaeltacht will decline – the old Irish... [while] the Irish of the suburbs and the Irish of the Gaelscoileanna [Irish immersion schools] will improve. I don't think it [Irish] is dead. It is dead in one style, the natural style, that is dying. But the non-natural style, the English style, I think that will increase and improve. (NEW4)

> A man at home says Irish will exist but maybe neither you nor I will understand it. (NAT5)

These quotes clearly point to awareness and resignation about **major changes** occurring in Irish. New speakers outside of the *Gaeltacht* are being associated with the modern way of speaking the language while the traditional Irish spoken in the *Gaeltacht* is seen as dying out

and valued mainly for its historical value, with native speakers functioning in the future as curators of this variety. Figure 2 attempts to summarise the main themes discussed.

INSERT FIG. 2 ABOUT HERE

Discussion

O'Rourke observed that the new speakers she interviewed strove to "stand out and exist as a distinct linguistic group" (2011, 339) and this also appeared to be the case for the new speakers interviewed in this study. Traditional models of *Gaeltacht* Irish appear to have been, or are being displaced as the only desirable standard in Irish, with evidence of accommodation to a new non-traditional variety, which Ó hIfearnáin and Ó Murchadha concluded was very significant in a community "undergoing continuing language shift to English, where access to conservative speaker models is becoming more scarce" (2011, 103). The generation of new speakers from L2 learners is generally viewed as a successful outcome of revitalisation policies, but it prompts re-evaluation of how language ownership, legitimacy and authority are construed. These data point to a growing gap between authenticity and authority in the language among young adults: those who have authenticity lack confidence while those who lack authenticity are seen as having authority stemming from preferential access to a variety more like the Standard language, which Ó Murchadha and Ó hIfearnáin (forthcoming) argue is in the process of being ideologically upgraded from low-status to best-language status through a process of demotisation.

The generation of new speakers from L2 learners prompts re-evaluation of what aspects of the language are most valuable. While Jaffe (2013) and Ó Murchadha (2013, 2010) have argued that revitalisation efforts which aim to resurrect the language in the pre-shift form are unrealistic, the reverse is a prioritisation of function over form, whereby the linkages between linguistic and communicative competence are broken down through the prioritisation of the latter and the neglect the former, as discussed by Jaffe (2013) and as Woolard (2008) notes is encouraged in some revitalisation campaigns such *La Queta* in Catalonia. It is argued that this would create equally significant problems of managing target varieties, given the concerns that O'Toole and Hickey (2013) and Péterváry, Ó Curnáin, Ó Giollagáin and Sheahan (2014) have raised about the attenuated Irish of *Gaeltacht* children. Language change brings with it concern over purity and language attenuation, and ideological

tension between what is sustainable in a minority language context, and what is desirable from the perspective of the people who speak the language (Ó Murchadha & Ó hIfearnáin forthcoming).

The post-traditional variety of Irish is a product of typical usage outside of the *Gaeltacht* and does not stake its legitimacy on being a descendant of the traditional varieties. The results presented here support those of Ó Murchadha (2013) in showing that this post-traditional variety of Irish is now posing a stronger challenge to the status of the *Gaeltacht* varieties, as new speakers can speak Irish well without aligning themselves with any *Gaeltacht* dialect. Whether this post-traditional variety of Irish will be accepted as legitimate by native speakers remains to be seen, but many of the participants here appeared to regard it as authoritative. McEwan-Fujita (2010) also observed the emergence of new registers in Scots Gaelic, which she associated with professionals who use Gaelic in their occupation, and described the active avoidance of English borrowings or codeswitches as one of the most telling features of this variety. She argued that the association between this register and the professional arena increases its likelihood of being regarded as a High register and, in line with traditional models of diglossia, associated with power and prestige. However, Smith Christmas and Ó hIfearnáin (2015) dispute this association, claiming that more traditional Gaelic speakers regard this register as artificial and non-native, in part *because of* its deliberate avoidance of codeswitching, and as a result they claim that it is not accepted as a High register. They also sounded a note of caution, arguing that the Scottish and Irish contexts are incompatible with traditional models of diglossia, and noted the need for research in these contexts in challenging these traditional models. The current study further highlights the value of research on the Irish context in order to test and extend such models. A strength of this study lies in its focus on young adult highly proficient Irish speakers who constitute some of the diminishing group of parents of children who could potentially be raised as native Irish speakers. In terms of the limitations of this study, it should be noted that the results presented here cannot be assumed to be representative of all Irish speakers, firstly given its focus on a particular age-group, and secondly because the native speakers interviewed had all chosen to leave the *Gaeltacht* to pursue their chosen studies in university and thus, their views may not be shared by peers who remained in the *Gaeltacht.*

Conclusion

Native speakers are being displaced as the authority in Irish by urban speakers with apparently higher prestige, afforded to them by the link between their variety and formal domains such as education and media, and their access to the Standard language. The decline of traditional speakers raises questions about authenticity, competence, and ownership in terms of rights to produce and distribute the resources generated by language. Similar struggles have been observed in other minority language contexts including Corsican (Jaffe 2015, 2013), Galician (O'Rourke and Ramallo 2013, 2011), Scots Gaelic (McLeod & O'Rourke 2015; Armstrong 2013; McEwan-Fujita 2010), Occitan (Costa 2015), Yiddish and Breton (Hornsby 2015).

The participants who shared their views and experience in the present study seemed torn between preservation of traditional Irish and a desire to safeguard the future of the language by making it more accessible to a variety of speakers. This tension is deserving of further discussion among different groups of speakers, particularly in university education, in order to raise awareness of differences in the priorities and authority of different types of Irish speakers. The native speakers appeared to be aware of disparities of status outside of the linguistic arena (for example the urban-rural divide) and are wary of difficulties or embarrassment that their accent or variety could cause. Nevertheless, they did seem to believe that their Irish, which they believe is more natural and more representative of the character of the language, is also more authentic than that of the new speakers, although they were also unwilling to lay claim to the status of authority or ownership of the language. Conversely, the new speakers appeared confident that their variety of Irish was more resilient than the native varieties, but some expressed concerns that the expansion of this post-traditional variety of Irish would involve the loss of some crucial aspect of the language.

These results show tension between groups of speakers, with criticism and defensiveness on each side, tempered by recognition of the urgent need for unity and cooperation in order to safeguard the language. Similar tension has been rife in the revival of Cornish, and Sayers and Renkó-Michelsén (2015) argue that significant resources have been wasted on ideological debates about what constitutes 'true Cornish'. There is a need to raise awareness among educators and parents of the particular needs of young Irish native speakers to ensure that they are better equipped as speakers of dialect who also have access to and command of a revised Standard language, which allows for better recognition of dialect features in the evaluation of spoken Irish in examinations. There needs to be promotion of

discussion among learners of the continuum of accents, so that new speakers are helped to see the value of striving for a more authentic accent in Irish, and offered better access in education to achieving an accent in Irish that helps rather than hinders their communication with native speakers. There is an urgent need to promote discussion of these issues, and it would appear that this could most fruitfully be initiated at university among student teachers and university students, as an important first step in opening debate about what variety of Irish will survive in the future.

References

Armstrong, Timothy Currie. 2013. " "Why won't you speak to me in Gaelic?" Authenticity, integration, and the Heritage Language Learning Project." *Journal of Language, Identity & Education* 12 (5): 340-356. DOI: 10.1080/15348458.2013.835585.

Ballinger, Susan Gail. 2013. "Towards a cross-linguistic pedagogy: Biliteracy and reciprocal learning strategies in French immersion." *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education* 1 (1): 131-148. DOI: 10.1075/jicb.1.1.06bal.

Bourdieu, Pierre, & John B. Thompson. 1991. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Braun, Virginia, & Victoria Clarke. 2006. "Using thematic analysis in psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3 (2): 77-101. DOI: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

Campbell, John L., Charles Quincy, Jordan Osserman, & Ove K. Pedersen. 2013. "Coding in-depth semi-structured interviews problems of unitisation and intercoder reliability and agreement." *Sociological Methods and Research* 42 (3): 294-320. DOI: 0049124113500475.

Cornips, Leonie. 2008. "Loosing grammatical gender in Dutch: The result of bilingual acquisition and/or an act of identity?" *International Journal of Bilingualism* 12 (1-2): 105-124. DOI: 10.1177/13670069080120010701.

Costa, James. 2015. "New speakers, new language: On being a legitimate speaker of a minority language in Provence." *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 231 (1): 127-145. DOI: 10.1515/ijsl-2014-0035.

Davies, Alan. 2008. "The native speaker in applied linguistics." In *The Handbook of Applied Linguistics*, edited by Davies, Alan and Catherine Elder, 431-450. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. DOI: 10.1002/9780470757000.ch17.

Eckert, Penelope. 2003. "Elephants in the room." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7 (3): 392-397. DOI: 10.1111/1467-9481.00231.

Frekko, Susan. 2009. "Social class, linguistic normativity and the authority of the 'native Catalan speaker' in Barcelona." In *The Native Speaker Concept: Ethnographic Investigations of Native Speaker Effects*, edited by Doerr, Neriko Musha, 161-184. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Government of Ireland. 2010. *20-year Strategy for the Irish language 2010–2030.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Graddol, David. 2006. *English Next*. Vol. 62. London: British Council.

Heller, Monica and Marilyn Martin-Jones. 2001. *Voices of Authority: Education and Linguistic Difference*. Westport, Connecticut: Ablex Publishing.

Hickey, Tina. 2013. "On mature reflection: Commentary on Ballinger." *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Education*, 1 (1):149-156. DOI: 10.1075/jicb.1.1.07hic.

Hindley, Reg. 1990. *The Death of the Irish Language: A Qualified Obituary*. London, UK: Routledge.

Hornsby, Michael. 2015. "The "new" and "traditional" speaker dichotomy: Bridging the gap." *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 231 (1): 107-125. DOI: 10.1515/ijsl-2014-0034.

Jaffe, Alexandra. 2015. "Defining the new speaker: Theoretical perspectives and learner trajectories." *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 231 (1): 21-44. DOI: 10.1515/ijsl-2014-0030.

Jaffe, Alexandra. 2013. "Minority language learning and communicative competence: Models of identity and participation in Corsican adult language courses." *Language and Communication* 33 (4): 450-462. DOI: 10.1016/j.langcom.2013.04.002.

McLeod, Wilson and Bernadette O'Rourke. 2015. "'New speakers" of Gaelic: Perceptions of linguistic authenticity and appropriateness." *Applied Linguistics Review* 6 (2): 151–172. DOI: 10.1515/applirev-2015-0008.

McEwan-Fujita, Emily. 2010. "Ideology, affect, and socialisation in language shift and revitalisation: The experiences of adults learning Gaelic in the Western Isles of Scotland." *Language in Society* 39 (1): 27-64. DOI: 10.1017/S0047404509990649.

Milroy, James. 2001. "Language ideologies and the consequences of standardisation." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 5 (4): 530-555. DOI: 10.1111/1467-9481.00163.

Nance, Claire. 2013. "Phonetic variation, sound change, and identity in Scottish Gaelic." PhD diss, University of Glasgow.

Ó Giollagáin, Conchúr. 2014. "Unfirm ground: A re-assessment of language policy in Ireland since Independence." *Language Problems and Language Planning* 38 (1): 19-41. DOI: 10.1075/lplp.38.1.02gio.

Ó Giollagáin, Conchúr, Seosamh Mac Donnacha, Fiona Ní Chualáin, Aoife Ní Shéaghdha, and Mary O'Brien. 2007. *Comprehensive Linguistic Study of the Use of Irish in the Gaeltacht: Principal Findings and Recommendations.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Ó hIfearnáin, Tadhg. 2015. "Sociolinguistic vitality of Manx after extreme language shift: Authenticity without traditional native speakers." *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 231 (1): 45-62. DOI: 10.1515/ijsl-2014-0031.

Ó hIfearnáin, Tadhg. 2008. "Raising children to be bilingual in the Gaeltacht: Language preference and practice." *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 10 (4): 510-528. DOI: 10.2167/beb457.0.

Ó hIfearnáin, Tadhg, and Noel Ó Murchadha. 2011. "The perception of Standard Irish as a prestige variety." In *Standard Languages and Language Standards in a Changing Europe*, edited by Kristiansen, Tore and Nikolas Coupland, 97-104. Oslo: Novus Press.

Ó Murchadha, Noel. 2015. "Folk linguistic awareness and post-traditional variation in minority languages." *Presentation at the 10th International Symposium on Bilingualism*, New Jersey, June 20-24.

Ó Murchadha, Noel. 2013. "Authority and innovation in language variation: Teenagers' perceptions of variation in spoken Irish." In *Language (De)standardisation in Late Modern Europe: Experimental* Studies, edited by Kristiansen, Tore and Stefan Grondelaers, 71-96. Oslo: Novus Press.

Ó Murchadha, Noel. 2010. "Standard, standardisation and assessments of standardness in Irish." In *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, 207-235. Dept. of Celtic Languages and Literatures, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University.

Ó Murchadha, Noel, and Tadhg Ó hIfearnáin. Forthcoming. "Converging and diverging stances on target varieties in collateral languages: The ideologies of linguistic variation in Irish and Manx Gaelic." *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*.

Ó Riagáin, Pádraig. 1997. *Language Policy and Social Reproduction: Ireland 1893-1993*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

O'Rourke, Bernadette. 2015. "Language revitilisation models in minority language contexts: Tensions between ideologies of authenticity and anonymity." *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* 24 (1): 63-82. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3167/ajec.2015.240105.

O'Rourke, Bernadette. 2011. "Whose language is it? Struggles for language ownership in an Irish language classroom." *Journal of Language, Identity and Education* 10 (5): 327-345. DOI: 10.1080/15348458.2011.614545.

O'Rourke, Bernadette, and Joan Pujolar. 2013. "From native speakers to new speakers-problematising nativeness in language revitalisation contexts." *Histoire Épistémologie Language* 35 (2): 47-67. URL: http://htl.linguist.univ-paris-diderot.fr/hel/documents/orourke2013.pdf.

O'Rourke, Bernadette, Joan Pujolar, and Fernando Ramallo. 2015. "New speakers of minority languages: The challenging opportunity–Foreword." *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 231 (1): 1-20. DOI: 10.1515/ijsl-2014-0029.

O'Rourke, Bernadette, and Fernando Ramallo. 2013. "Competing ideologies of linguistic authority amongst new speakers in contemporary Galicia." *Language in Society* 42 (3): 287-305. DOI: 10.1017/S0047404513000249.

O'Rourke, Bernadette, and Fernando Ramallo. 2011. "The native-non-native dichotomy in minority language contexts: Comparisons between Irish and Galician." *Language Problems and Language Planning* 35 (2): 139-159. DOI: 10.1075/lplp.35.2.03oro.

O'Rourke, Bernadette, and John Walsh. 2015. "New speakers of Irish: Shifting boundaries across time and space." *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 231 (1): 63-83. DOI: 10.1515/ijsl-2014-0032.

O'Toole, Ciara, and Tina M. Hickey. 2013. "Diagnosing language impairment in bilinguals: Professional experience and perception." *Child Language Teaching and Therapy* 29 (1): 91-109. DOI: 10.1177/0265659012459859.

Péteráry, Tamás, Brian Ó Curnáin, Conchúr Ó Giollagáin and Jerome Sheahan. 2014. *Iniúchadh ar an gCumas Dátheangach: An Sealbhú Teanga i Measc Ghlúin Óg na Gaeltachta [Analysis of Bilingual Competence: Language Acquisition among Young People in the Gaeltacht]*. Baile Átha Cliath: Partners in Print, Ltd.

Piller, Ingrid. 2002. "Passing for a native speaker: Identity and success in second language learning." Journal of Sociolinguistics 6 (2): 179-206. DOI: 10.1111/1467-9481.00184.

Sayers, Dave and Zsuzsanna Renkó-Michelsén. 2015. "Phoenix from the Ashes – Reconstructed Cornish in relation to Einar Haugen's four-step model of language standardisation." *Sociolinguistica* 29 (1): 17–38. DOI: 10.1515/soci-2015-0004.

Singleton, David. 2001. "Age and second language acquisition." *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 21: 77-89. DOI: 10.1017/S0267190501000058.

Smith Christmas, Cassie, and Tadhg Ó hIfearnáin. 2015. "Gaelic Scotland and Ireland: Issues of class and diglossia in an evolving social landscape." In *Globalising Sociolinguistics: Challenging and Expanding Theory*, edited by Smakman, Dick and Patrick Heinrich, 256-269. New York: Routledge.

Stenson, Nancy. 1993. "English influence on Irish: The last 100 years." *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 2: 107-128.

Stenson, Nancy, and Tina Hickey. 2014. "In defense of decoding." *Journal of Celtic Language Learning* 18: 11-40. URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10197/6715.

UNESCO. 2001. Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (2nd Ed). Paris:UNESCO Publications Office.

Walsh, John, and Wilson MacLeod. 2008. "An overcoat wrapped around an invisible man? Language legislation and language revitalisation in Ireland and Scotland." *Language Policy* 7: 21-46. DOI: 10.1007/s10993-007-9069-0.

Woolard, Kathryn. 2008. "Language and identity choice in Catalonia: The interplay of contrasting ideologies of linguistic authority." In *Lengua, Nación e Identidad: La Regulación del Plurilingüismo en España y América Latina [Language, Nation and Identity: The Regulation of Multilingualism in Spain and Latin America]*, edited by Süselbeck, Kirsten, Ulrike Mühlschlegel and Peter Masson, 303-323. Madrid: Vervuert-Iberoamericana.

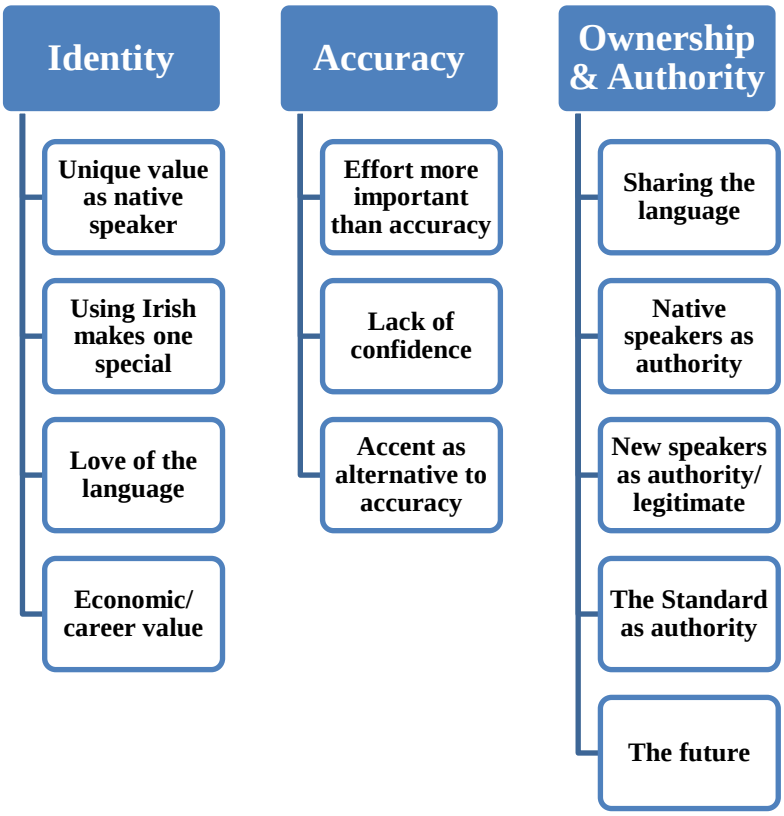


Figure 1 Main themes and subthemes identified

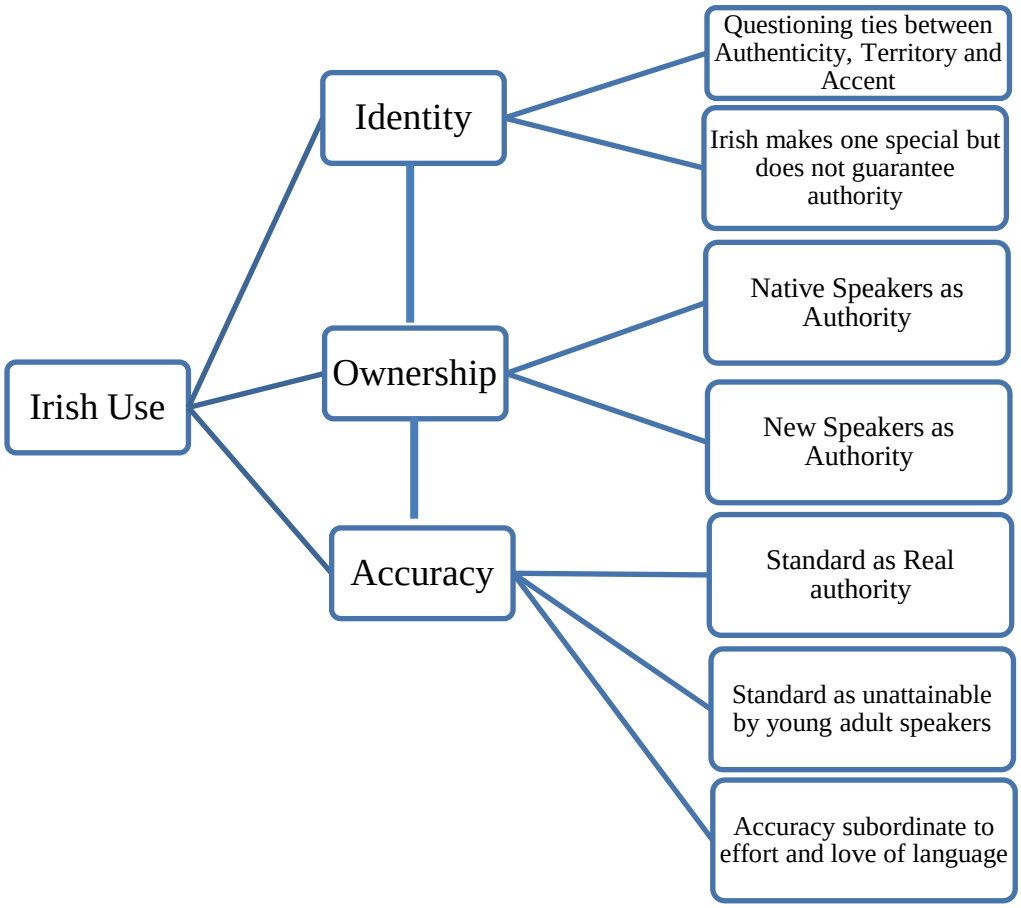


Figure 2 Summary of results