New speakers of Irish English: stance-taking and power relations between native and non-native speakers

In the last two decades, Ireland has become a new home to immigrants from a variety of different countries and thus to a large community of language users who don’t speak English as a native language. Linguistic analyses of language use in these communities often consider pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects, but tend to concentrate on the use of pragmatic markers (e.g. Corrigan 2015; Diskin 2017; Migge 2015; Nestor & Regan 2015; Schweinberger 2012).

The present study aims to add to existing investigations by exploring some of the tools and methods provided by corpus linguistics for the study of L2 Irish English pragmatics. Data for this study come from an ongoing ethnographic study of a community of adult L2 speakers in Dublin, and data sources include observation, field notes, recorded interviews, and texts produced by participants. The corpus is thus relatively small but rich in contextual detail. In order to exploit such a data set, different methods will be presented: Firstly, recorded interviews are used for an acoustic analysis of the realisations of word-final /t/. This phoneme has been connected with stance-taking for native speakers of Irish English (Schulte fc.), and the realisations produced by L2 speakers will be compared to the realisations and pragmatic strategies of native speakers. In the second part of the paper, traditional corpus linguistic methods including collocations, concordances, and keywords, will be used. This analysis will focus on the power relations and negotiations between native and non-native speakers.

References


