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**Advertising to An Ever-Changing Irish Audience**

**Walter Cullinan - 13149245**

**Supervisor: Dr. Elaine Vaughan**

**Name:** Walter Cullinan

**Student No:** 13149245

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**Supervisor:** Dr.Elaine Vaughan, University of Limerick, Ireland

**External Examiner:** Dr Ivor Timmis, Leeds Beckett University, UK.

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### Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how companies and company brands have used Irish stereotypes and commodified the language of the Irish people in Ireland. This study aims to answer the research question: “How have national and international companies advertised to a uniquely Irish audience?” The goal is to analyse how brands have been advertised to an Irish audience through English in a way that appears uniquely and authentically Irish. In addition brands utilise Irish English in marketing to Irish consumers

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### Author Declaration

'I hereby declare that this project is entirely my own work, in my own words, and that all sources used in researching it are fully acknowledged and all quotations properly identified. It has not been submitted, in whole or in part, by me or another person, for the purpose of obtaining any other credit / grade. I understand the ethical implications of my research, and this work meets the requirements of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Signature: ..... Date: .....

## List of Abbreviations

AmE: American English

IrE: Irish English

NZ: New Zealand

NZE: New Zealand English

RP: Received Pronunciation

StE: Standard English

NZ: New Zealand



## Introduction

Language is imperative in advertising. It can be employed to trigger strong emotions and to either endear or alienate consumers. Language is particularly interesting today because of the high level of homogenization. Many languages seem quite similar and young people especially, tend to abandon their traditional variety of language in favour of a more popular one. People are exposed to television, radio, social media sites, websites and pop music from all over the world and as a result prestige languages and standard varieties can become the standard. Currently, British Received Pronunciation (RP) and American English hold the most influence and are the varieties of English most widely taught to language learners around the world. The relevance of other varieties of English, each with its own unique features, characteristics, slang and phrases, needs to be considered. This thesis explores the Irish English variety and its relevance in the world today.

In order to investigate Irish English, the chosen methodology will be qualitative research as it is quite flexible and the primary sources are available online. No surveys or interviews will be undertaken, however, this thesis may encourage further quantitative research in the future. The samples will be chosen for their contemporary relevance. They will incorporate new technology and have an online presence in Ireland and abroad. There will be research into Irish English, especially its unique features and its relationship to the Irish people. This study aims to investigate the attitudes of various sources towards Irish English in the past and for the future. Ireland has become one of the top technological centres of the world, a headquarters for Google and Facebook in Dublin's "Silicon Docks". It is no longer the secluded island on the edge of Europe.

This development has affected the nation of Ireland in many different ways. Financially it is better off than ever before. Irish culture and identity are changing. The question of Irish identity will be investigated in relation to the language used in Ireland today. Language is particularly important in marketing and advertising. The marketing and advertising industry will be investigated as well as the language it uses. The dominance of English will also be investigated, especially in the case of language homogenization. There are certain challenges, which companies advertising in Ireland, must consider. Advertisers in Ireland often have similar narratives, featuring mainly Irish stereotypes and traditional views of Ireland. As Ireland becomes more cosmopolitan, companies must be particularly aware of their advertising methods.

Case studies will then be conducted on the samples chosen. An in-depth analysis into what criteria the selected companies use Irish English in a more globalised world will be carried out. The thesis will then conclude with results and a discussion of what was found in the study.

### Methodology

The method chosen was qualitative research. In order to achieve a detailed study, three case studies were undertaken. While quantitative research is chosen frequently in the linguistics field in order to obtain a better understanding of marketing in Ireland and abroad, qualitative research was chosen to investigate the companies using Irish English. It was also important when investigating identity and online language usage. The qualitative research method was also chosen for the research study for secondary sources. In order to get a modern-day view, a search was carried out online for particular content which may be of interest and relevance. Much content is produced online and more people are joining the online community every day. As a result, there is more exposure to different cultures, so the main aim was to find something uniquely Irish online and to investigate whether or not it was actually relevant to the Irish people and culture.

The targeted samples were picked because of their relevance today in terms of technological changes in society and especially in language. The samples are particularly relevant when it comes to language in Ireland. The samples chosen were the Vodafone advertisements aimed at Irish audiences and available on YouTube. The company Vodafone have several different adverts; three of the four selected were found to be strongly aimed at Irish audiences, amassing almost 1.25 million views when together. One advert analysed was from Vodafone New Zealand and used as a comparison with the Irish advert chosen. The first advert selected was “Piggy Sue” because of its popularity, expressed on social media, among audiences when it was first aired on Irish TV. “Piggy Sue” was so popular it was expanded to a series of adverts. However, for this study only the original advert was analysed and then compared with the New Zealand version of the advert. The third and fourth adverts were under the same title ‘Farmerz’. It featured the comedy trio Foil, Arms and Hog, popular on YouTube. These adverts interpreted Irish stereotypes in a way which was particularly interesting, as its success depended on whether viewers found it funny or offensive.

Overall Vodafone was chosen as it is a large international mobile phone network. The purpose is to view its advertising and to investigate if and how it targeted Irish people specifically. As Holmes points out, it is very beneficial for companies to have websites in the native language of the country from which the website is being accessed. The aim is to investigate if Vodafone tailors its language for Irish audiences even though the native language for the vast majority of people in Ireland is English.

The next sample chosen to be investigated was the website Hairy Baby. This has particular relevance when considering Irish English, language and marketing. Hairy Baby is an Irish company which has commodified Irish English. It advertises clothing (t-shirts, hoodies, hats) and household items (bags, cushions, cups). On all of its merchandise Irish humour is intertwined with popular culture, through a phrase, pun or image specifically aimed at people who have grown up in Ireland. To further the investigation, three categories were selected. Each category reflected a different aspect of Irish culture:

- (1) Irish English
- (2) GAA/sport phrases
- (3) Quotes from *Father Ted* the popular TV show based in Ireland.

It was particularly relevant because of modern globalisation to see whether or not the merchandise would be understood and prove to be popular among Irish people. It also makes one wonder whether or not Irish people are embracing their identity and rejecting the powerful wave of popular culture.

### Literature Review

When discussing the language used in Ireland we have to consider both Irish and English, even though there are no longer any monolingual speakers of the Irish language (hereafter Irish; Hickey 2011), and far more speakers bilingual in Irish and English (Amador-Moreno 2010). The history of English in Ireland is one of co-existence with Irish. Amador-Moreno identifies some main factors which contributed to the language shift from Irish to English, such as the English and Scottish plantations of the 17th century, the Famine (1840), the influence of the school system, and emigration. According to Hickey (2011), the first language shift in Ireland started in the East of the country where there was greater contact with the British, specifically from North Dublin to

Waterford, before eventually spreading to the West of Ireland. Irish was far more prevalent along the West coast from Donegal down to Kerry (2011).

Irish is still relevant in Ireland today, holding a significant symbolic and cultural characteristic of the Irish identity today. In the Irish Constitution Irish is the first official language of Ireland and the majority of people in Ireland spoke it until the 19th century (Holmes 116). The influences on the English language in Ireland today can be seen and heard, on the streets, in schools, and in the media in general (Holmes 120). The Irish language is a huge part of the Irish identity, a language which many respect and appreciate. The Irish identity continued to flourish, despite the language being marginalised. However, it does still have an effect on the Irish psyche today as it brings up many different connotations. The loss of the language in everyday life has fractured the Irish identity. Ireland's identity is complicated, which is the very reason it dominates national conversation (Sezan 127). Kallen makes the point that whatever English language was settled here during the 17th century, its character has been noticeably changed and altered by its close proximity to the Irish language, and the existence in that language of certain well-defined features and contrasts (1997).

There has been the debate with relation to characterising the English spoken in Ireland. Both Hickey (2011) and Amador-Moreno (2010) agree that Irish English (henceforth IrE) is a better term than Hiberno-English or Anglo-Irish, as it reflects how other varieties of English are labelled e.g., Canadian English, Australian English, Scottish English etc. IrE is particularly important as a variety because of its rich vocabulary and history, having stretched all over the world even into some of the world's most renowned movies (Walshe 2009). Not only in media or in Ireland but also abroad the Irish emigrants have changed the English language in British colonies from Canada (Kallen 1997) to New Zealand (Hickey 2011). Ireland has a culture of emigration as well as immigration and in this modern day it is inconceivable for Ireland not to be influenced by American culture, especially in terms of modern English usage.

Another important text is *Vox Popular: The Surprising Life by Media* by Robin Queen (2015) investigates the effect of media on language and vice versa. She analyses the language of popular TV shows such as *Mad Men* and *Modern Family*. Queen also talks about how people use media as a way of understanding, organising and categorising their experience.

She talks about how important language is during social interactions, how language is fluid and how people and monitor the language we use and other people's use of language, sometimes shifting it to feel part of a group or be more distinct, and also highlights the importance of identity and how media groups people together unlike also working as part of the communities of which they are part of. Queen, like Manovich (2002), goes into detail with media like television but online media seems to be neglected when talking about the language and identity.

Page et al. (2015) also focus on social media. They concentrate on language use online. Similar to the text by Park et al, this text studies social media in detail but also how social media relates to other to other forms of different Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC). Identity and language are deeply connected when it comes to language and the media in general. "At its most basic, identity is about who or what something is perceived to be by neither self nor others" (Queen 2015, p.162) Language is a significant piece of the identity puzzle. Today's media differs from older media which was used to categorise and familiarise different communities. Today however people have the ability to define their own identity online through Facebook, YouTube etc. "for many users a frequent topic of discussion is themselves" (Park et al 2015, p.1). Language is key in discussions of identity.

In this world of new technology people can now communicate faster and more efficiently than ever before, which has led to huge amounts of data becoming available to analyse: "Twitter users send 500 million messages a day alone" (Park et al. 2015, p. 2). The language used in online media is frequently interpersonal as people are genuinely in a social environment or going about their everyday lives messaging friends (Park et al). Ireland has a long history of emigration, from Europe to America to the Middle East, the expats bringing their language and culture with them (Hickey 2011). The Irish identity is conflicted, due to its colonial history, emigration and oppression. Many Irish people form communities no matter where in the world they are and share the common interest of the Irish sports like Gaelic football and hurling (GAA collectively) as a way of highlighting and spreading their culture with locals (Hassan 2007). With such a great diaspora abroad and contact with many other varieties of world Englishes online, there is a greater commodification and recognition of IrE. People are more likely to resonate with an accent when the variety is no longer

linked with class correctness and became socially meaningful and part of their identity (Johnstone 2009).

Generally, there are different accents with many different assumptions in Ireland. Many are observed in good humour and acceptance, however, the manufactured accent in Dublin called the ‘D4’ (the postcode of a prosperous area in Dublin) accent has caused national controversy. It brought the question of class into the conversation as it was seen as a mechanism to “hive off” from the other Dubliners and the rest of Ireland (Moore 2009). However, in general, many Irish identify with IrE as the many websites such as; Joe.ie, Lovin.ie, TheJournal.ie TheDailyEdge.ie and IrishCentral.com were purposefully set up to use IrE and connect with Irish users online who identify themselves as Irish, in Ireland and abroad. Joe.ie for example, gets 3.1m unique monthly users, 450,000 Facebook fans and 220,000 Twitter followers (Webb 2016). With the rise of “citizen journalism” and most big newspapers using online media as way to connect with readers, it has become easier than ever for people to voice their opinions and contribute to a story, be it on blogs, forums, message boards or in the comment sections of website articles.

The connection with identity would appear to be growing in strength as the world becomes more globalised. Ireland is beginning to lose some of the uniqueness it had 10 or 20 years ago; now lots of its cities carry the same franchises, with the cities becoming virtually identical to those in Britain and Europe (Cronin 2007). The rise in globalisation is driving changes in languages across the world. American and British language is spreading across the globe and Standard American and British Englishes carry greater prestige than IrE. Many commentators dislike the language change of the modern world; however there is the paradox of traditional, unique language which is idealised (Bielenberg) and the natural modernization of language which has been happening for centuries but has become more apparent now because of globalization and global village the internet has created (Linehan 2016).

Knowing the details of languages in different countries can be a huge advantage to companies when advertising their business, product or website (Holmes 2009). Knowledge about audience and customers are vital for big businesses and every year a colossal amount is spent collectively on advertising: approximately \$600 billion was spent on advertising and marketing in 2015 (eMarketer 2016). Online and offline, media companies find it difficult to nail down the ambiguous

Irish identity, before the turn of the century the quintessential “Irish-Ireland” was to be found in the West of Ireland where it was not as metropolitan as the eastern side of the island. However, increased Europeanisation and an economic turnaround for the better has led in one way to the constitutional definitions of Irishness narrowing during a time when the composition of Irish society has broadened through immigration. On the other hand, it can be argued that there are just more varieties and meaning of what it is to be Irish today (O’Boyle 2012). Joyce points out the IrE language use of an older generation which still has a lot of relevance today, as language takes many different forms it can take a long to change. Joyce gives examples of influences of Old Irish which were relevant in the 20th century and some features still remain to this day (1910). However, the use of Americanisms and the influence of American and global culture on Ireland has brought an unstoppable wave of new language especially in English (Hickey 2011).

With all the new media and globalisation it is easy to conceive how minority languages and varieties can become engulfed by the dominant, standardised languages. In the case of Ireland, written and printed English has been completely standardised on British norms, but spoken English has never been standardised to British (RP) pronunciation. This uniqueness of speech has led to websites and books capitalising on IrE, as a result commodifying Irish English.

IrE has been widely studied in linguistics, history and culture. However, the commodification of IrE in Ireland is less well-documented. In addition, the rise of websites, social media and online businesses, which feature a significant amount of IrE, have not been studied, possibly because they are so newly popular in the mainstream media. Using IrE and Irish characteristics can also be a controversial topic, so investigating how a big company advertises to an Irish is also of interest.

## 1. Irish English

### *1.1 Characteristics of Irish English*

Many linguists agree that a great deal of the pronunciation is due to the influence of the Irish language and also older forms of English: “Whatever type of English was brought to Ireland in the 17th century, its character has been noticeably altered and continuously reinforced because of its close contact with the Irish language and the existence in that language of certain well-defined features and contrasts” (Kallen 2013, p. 75). It also has to be considered that as native speakers,

vernacular vocabulary or slang naturally occurs. Joyce refers to these factors for the foundation of Anglo-Irish: “Our Anglo-Irish dialectal words and phrases are derived from three main sources; the Irish language, Old English and the dialect of Scotland and independently of these two sources, dialectal expressions have gradually grown up among our English-speaking people, as dialects arise everywhere”(Joyce 1910, p.1). There are many different unique characteristics of IrE as well as some characteristics which can also be found in other varieties of English. Hickey gives a comprehensive list of characteristics in the three categories; phonology, morphology and syntax.

**Table 1: Shared features in vernacular varieties of Irish English**

*Phonology*

- 1) Lenition of alveolar stops to fricatives in positions of high sonority, e.g., city [siʃi]
- 2) Use of clear [l] in all positions in a word (now recessive), e.g., field [fi:ld]
- 3) Retention of syllable-final /r/, e.g., board [bo:rd]
- 4) Distinction of short vowels before /r/ (now recessive), e.g., tern[tern] versus turn [t ^ rn]
- 5) Retention of the distinction between /ʌ/ and /w/ (now recessive), e.g., which [ʌitʃ] and witch[witʃ]

*Morphology*

- 1) Distinction between second singular and plural personal pronouns, e.g., you[ju] versus youse[juz] /ye[ji] /yeez[jiz]
- 2) Epistemic negative *must*, e.g., He *mustn't* be Scottish.
- 3) *Them* as demonstrative, e.g., *Them* shoes in the hall.



### Syntax

- 1) Perfective aspect with two subtypes:
  - a) Immediate perfective, e.g., *She's after spilling the milk.*
  - b) Resultative perfective, e.g., *She's the housework done* (OV word order)
- 2) Habitual aspect, expressed by *do+be* or *bees* or inflectional-sin the first person singular
  - a) *She does be* reading books.
  - b) *They bees* up late at night.
  - c) *I gets* awful anxious about the kids when they're away.
- 3) Reduced number of verb forms, e.g., *seen* and *done* as preterite, *went* as past participle
- 4) Negative concord, e.g., *He's not interested in no cars*
- 5) Clefting for topicalisation purposes, e.g., *It's to Glasgow he's going.*
- 6) Greater range of the present tense, e.g., I know him for more than six years now.
- 7) Lack of *do* in questions, e.g., Have you had your breakfast yet?
- 8) *Be* as auxiliary, e.g., They're finished the work now.
- 9) *Till* in the sense of 'in order that', e.g., Come here till I tell you.
- 10) Singular time reference forever, e.g., She never rang yesterday evening.
- 11) *For* to infinitives of purpose, e.g., He went to Dublin for to buy a car.
- 12) Subordinating *and*(frequently concessive), e.g., We went for a walk and it raining

Table 1: Hickey 2011, p.4

Perhaps one of IrE's most well-known features is the altered pronunciation of the English 'th' sound: "it may be said that the general run of Irish people never sound it all; for it is a very difficult sound to anyone excepting a born Englishman", and also excepting a small proportion of those born and reared on the East coast of Ireland (Joyce 2). This is still a very common feature; however, far more people than just English people can produce this sound. The sources of these features require lots of study and linguists still debate where their origin derives from. Hickey notes possible linguistic origins by which they may have formed. Language is key when it comes to one's identity and remains a controversial topic in Ireland.

<b>Table 2: Suggestions for Possible sources of Features of Southern Irish English</b>	
<i>Phonological Features</i>	<i>Possible source</i>
Dental/alveolar stops for fricatives	Transfer of nearest Irish equivalent, dental/alveolar stops
Intervocalic and pre-pausal lenition of /t/	Lenition as a phonological directive from Irish
Alveolar /l/ in all positions	Use of non-velar, non-palatal [l] from Irish
Retention of [ɹ] for < wh >	Convergence of input with the realisation of Irish /f/ [ɸ]
Retention of syllable-final /r/	Convergence of English input and Irish
Distinction of short vowels before /r/	Convergence of English input and Irish
<i>Morphological features</i>	<i>Possible source</i>
Distinct pronominal forms 2 <i>p.sg.</i> + <i>pl.</i>	Convergence of English input and Irish
Epistemic negative must	Generalisation made by Irish based on positive use
Them as demonstrative	English input only
<i>Syntactic features</i>	<i>Possible source</i>
Habitual aspect	Convergence with South-West English input on east coast, possibly with influence from Scots via Ulster. Otherwise transfer of category from Irish
Immediate perfective aspect with after	Transfer from Irish
Resultative perfective with OV word order	Possible convergence, primarily from Irish
Subordinating and	Transfer from Irish
Variant use of suffixal -s in present	South-west input in first period on east coast

Clefting for topicalisation	Transfer from Irish, with some possible convergence
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Table 2: Hickey 2011

As well as these features there are more which used to be more common. Joyce gives some examples in his book, which is mainly based on HE. One feature in IrE that came from the Irish again is the tendency not to answer questions with a plain yes or no. In Irish, there are no definite words for "yes" or "no" e.g.,

Q: "An bhuil tú go maith? – Are you well?"

A: "Tá mé go maith" – I am well"

As Joyce points out, this has affected the way Irish people speak IrE today: "We hardly ever confine ourselves to the simple English yes or no; we always answer by a statement. 'Is it raining Kitty? Oh no sir, it isn't raining at all.'" (Joyce 1910, p.130)

Another feature is the use of the word "sure" which is not used in the same way in IrE as it is in SE. Joyce provides some examples: "one of our commonest opening words for a sentence: 'Sure I did that an hour ago', 'Sure you won't forget to call here on your way back?' 'James, sure I sold my cows.'" (Joyce 1910, p.130) Also one of the main differences is the pronunciation of "sure" is different to American English. "Sure" is pronounced in Ireland as /ʃʌr/, often written as shur; however, in AmE, it is pronounced as /ʃʊər/. Walshe cites Moreno when discussing the main uses of out the main uses of sure can be used as an affirmative, negative and interrogative sentences and its versatility can be extended in meaning also. (Walshe 2009, p.122).

Another word which the Irish have become known for is "feck". Partly why this word gained so much popularity is due to the popular show *Father Ted*. Dolan describes this as "a euphemism for fuck" (91). Often used in the terms where "fuck" could be used e.g "What a fecking fool", "Ya little fecker!". However, as Walshe points out this cannot be used in terms of sexual intercourse: "Moreover, it is important that while feck can be used to replace fuck in many circumstances... it cannot be used as a synonym for fuck in the sense of 'sexual intercourse'" (Walshe 2009, p.149).

## 1.2 Irish English and Irish Identity

Identity is a key part of an individual's personality and the same can be said of a nation. Every nation has its own unique identity but a national identity has the same three functions (at its most basic level) no matter what country it is:

Firstly, it provides a sense of collective belonging to a group of people who perceive themselves bonded by common experience and a reference system for distinguishing one group of people from another. Secondly, it is the basis for deciding who should be allowed to be full and acknowledged citizens of a nation-state. Thirdly, it influences the character and goals of this nation-state in a manner supposed to be in the collective interest of all the people.

(Delanty and O'Mahony 2001, p.2)

The case of Irish identity is a curious and controversial one. The Irish language is still alive but takes a secondary position to English in the daily lives of people across the country. One of the most effective ways of maintaining control over a colony and the people in it is the control of language. This has especially affected the Irish psyche: "forced passages from one language to another often cause cultural suffering as people try to deal with problems of identity, often a fractured identity which has deep repercussions in daily lives" (Cambria 2014, p.19).

This sense of fractured identity is clear in some of the Irish literature and discussed in great detail by the artists and poets of Ireland. Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill, a famous Irish poet, is a polyglot, fluent in Irish, English, Turkish, Dutch and German. However, her true love is Irish and she writes strictly in Irish. She has a great admiration and respect for the Irish language, but also thinks it is a key marker of the Irish identity: "Irish identity is very complicated and very fragmented":

A lot of this has to do with our history and also the way that the Irish language was marginalised. In the nineteenth century, the whole population made efforts - perhaps not entirely conscious, but maybe more conscious than we think - to substitute English for Irish. So we have a country like Ireland, which is in some ways obsessed with identity because we have a complicated identity.

(Sezen 2007, p.127).

Irish identity is partly so complicated because of our attitude towards English language and culture. What is it that makes Ireland different? The Irish appearance is no different to that of the English, the language is the same, but the need to be differentiated from the British is required. The English language can be seen as something forced upon the Irish, in order to control and homogenise them.

The poignant poem “A Grafted Tongue” by John Montague sums up this attempt at drowning out Irish by the British Empire:

An Irish  
child weeps at school  
repeating its English.(9-12)

Decades later  
that child's grandchild's  
speech stumbles over lost  
Syllables of an old order (37-40).

It is clear that there was great tension between Ireland and England for centuries, oppression, discrimination and war defining the relationship between the Irish and England. Cambria uses language as a symbol of these tensions between the two: “Language, in particular, is the battlefield where the fight for identity is most fought, the development of world Englishes and, in the case of Ireland of Irish English, is only one of the outcomes of this fight” (Cambria 2014, p.31).

Even though Irish is not used as widely or holds the same influence on our spoken English, one could argue that the Irish people have succeeded in making English their own language, even influencing other Englishes around the world where Irish expats have gone. One could argue that overall the rise of English in Ireland has benefitted the Irish greater than people realise. Even though Ireland has suffered culturally and linguistically, it enabled many Irish to travel the globe and carry traditions such as Gaelic Games, Irish music, celebrations, food and of course the Irish Pub: “...the recently formed GAA Overseas Committee estimates that there are approximately 30,000 adults and 7,000 juveniles playing hurling and Gaelic football outside of Ireland in 350 clubs” (Hassan 2007, p.393). The Irish Pub is a concept which has been exported all over the world, but with such commodification comes the feeling of insincerity and lack of authenticity when representing Irish culture:

The Irish pub has become a worldwide commercial phenomenon. Its huge success since the 1990s has been the result of a conceptual, marketing, design and branding effort to create a complex figment of ‘Irishness’ attractive to non-Irish consumers, but increasingly difficult to reconcile with contemporary, multicultural Irish life.

(Grantham 2009, p.257)

The commodification of Irish culture has also affected the Irish identity and has put all the Irish under one category i.e “the land of a thousand welcomes”, “old thatched cottages”, “the land of saints and scholars” and “happy-go-lucky drunks”, because this is what sells abroad and in tourist attractions around Ireland like Temple Bar and Bunratty Castle, as a speaker of Ól Irish Pub Company (a company centered around setting up Irish pubs around the world. Diageo, the makers of Guinness is also a company involved in this.)

Ireland and Irish culture is a big pulling factor of the Irish pub concept. Thanks to the worldwide success and [sic] culture rich history crammed with writers and poets such as James Joyce, Seamus Heaney and William Yeats to name a few and more recently the musical talents of U2, The Corrs and The Cranberry's. Add to this the well-renowned friendliness of the Irish and you quickly understand why people of all nationalities choose an Irish pub as their watering hole.

(Gartham 2009, p.261).

This kind of attitude has put expectations on the Irish identity. It is like a package being sent abroad and being repackaged and sent back to Ireland. One also has to consider how well known the Irish identity was a global identity before the time of rapid globalisation:

The tragic history of emigration and the Irish diaspora have in a very real sense made Irishness long since a global identity...while on one hand, Ireland signifies “roots, belonging, tradition”, it has also spelled at the same time “exile, diffusion, globality, diaspora.”

(Mays 2005, p. 6).

## 2. Advertising and Marketing

A huge amount of money goes into marketing every year, eMarketer says it is well into its billions: “Around the world, advertisers will spend \$592.43 billion in 2015, according to new figures from eMarketer, an increase of 6.0% over 2014” (eMarketer Website). A huge part of this is a lot to do with language. “The language of advertising has been described as a ‘functional dialect’, a term that describes the product of a process whereby language is chosen and used for a particular purpose and consequently becomes a variety of its own because it becomes associated with its particular function” (Holmes 8). This is important to remember when discussing identity and how to get people to identify with brands, products and businesses etc.

## *2.1 Standardized Language*

Globalisation is increasing rapidly and the world seems smaller than ever; it is sometimes described as a “global village”. With such a variety of languages, it is interesting to see how companies advertise in different countries and also different languages. Globalisation has presented many new perspectives on advertising and marketing. New technology is revolutionising how businesses are set up and how they are advertising has changed hugely as well: “Never before have conditions for global communications been so perfect. For the first-time agencies are able to devise and implement communication strategies from one source which is global but also attuned to the peculiarities of the market- and even able to address customers” (Haller 2012, p.9). However, with this increase in technology advertisers have to adapt. Consumer’s attention is no longer on one screen i.e the television; people are now on their phones, laptops, computers etc. These add a totally new dimension to the advertising of businesses and interaction with customers. This is especially true for companies marketing to a younger generation:

Within the world of mobile, there are so many opportunities and ways to make content that can get a consumer's attention. But video is the medium with the most consumer attention at the moment. Now, that's not necessarily anything new. Video has always been the deepest way to engage an audience. The wide and fast success of television and movies shows us that. The Internet hasn't changed that at all, but it's certainly made it more apparent. And not only has it amplified the importance of video as a way to connect, but it's also put the tools to make it into the hands of so many more people.

(Vaynerchuk 2016.p.13).

Not only is this important for social media networks to understand, but also how advertisers can truly engage with their target audience, be it a video on YouTube, a blog post or a post on a social media platform. This is a great advantage for advertising today because they are not as dependent on print media, which means it is cheaper to set up a new marketing campaign through social media: "Until now the production and distribution of moving advertising images have been expensive, but thanks to high-speed internet, the use of video and similar media is now worthwhile" (Haller 2012, p.9).

## *2.2 Language in Media*

The globalised economy has led to a more homogenised world both culturally and linguistically. Language online has led to more dominance of the English language but more so as a lingua franca: “The main argument for having a special consideration of the English case lies in the fact that the language has meaning, use and significance, to a large extent, independent of the countries in which it is spoken, and its use in multilingual advertising is, not exclusively but very often, not motivated by a desire to allude to the perceived stereotypical characteristics of countries of which the language is associated”(Holmes 2009, p.67) With so many countries using English as a second language, it can be easily seen why English is so popular. However, whether English is taking over or not is a different question and there is no black or white answer. Having resources such as websites available makes it easier for an international company to adapt to the local language, therefore encouraging linguistic diversity.

## *2.3 Advertising to the Irish Market*

Marketing in Ireland can be particularly difficult because of the identity question, with many regional accents, the Irish language, and also the divide between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. However, as Ireland is quite unique so it may be considered easy to advertise to compared to global markets:

Although advertising has become truly transnational (insofar as texts, practices and ownership increasingly transcend national barriers), situated advertising workers still cater primarily to local audiences and therefore culture continues to ‘matter’ in advertising. Indeed, the constant dialogue and negotiation between the local and the global, and the particular and the general – evident especially in a regional market like Ireland – makes advertising an attractive choice for those investigating work in the culture and creative industries.

(O’Boyle 2012, p.351)

Advertising in Ireland can be difficult to perfect and according to Holmes there are two main concerns:

Firstly, the informalization trend whereby advertising texts seek to imitate normal everyday communication, including accent and dialect; secondly, the role of minoritized indigenous language in advertising. The Irish situation, like most linguistic situations, is not, however, a straightforward case in which there is a dominant code and a dominated one.

(Holmes 2009, p.116).



However, with these different aspects affecting the advertising industry they also produce different opportunities for companies to get creative and truly engage with the Irish public:

The Irish context contains three elements in effect, all of which could be exploited by advertisers: the Irish language as the first official language of the country with largely symbolic meaning and value for a majority; the Irish language as an indigenous, regional minority language in a largely English-speaking context; and, thirdly, English with an Irish accent/dialect.

(Holmes 2009 p.117).

Perhaps the spoken word is much more differentiated when discussing differences; however, this text will focus on written Irish English later on. The issue of accents in Ireland is always a concern for advertisers in Ireland; like in many other countries attitudes to different regional accents can have many different connotations, sometimes positive and sometimes negative. One accent which causes controversy and has a lot of negative connotations in Ireland is the “D4” accent:

This new accent, usually termed “D4” (after the postal code of a mostly well-to-do part of south Dublin), has been explained by observers and commentators in the Irish media as a way for younger, newly affluent speakers to “hive off” from the masses, by avoiding pronunciations seen as emblematic either of working-class Dublin identity or of rural Irish provincialism.

(Moore 2011, p.42).

The general connotations of this accent are particularly negative because of the people’s reasons for manufacturing a different accent seemingly because they think they are superior to everyone else. Several articles have been written about this accent in national newspapers discouraging people to talk “D4” and to embrace their own natural accent instead:

The same is now happening with Hiberno-English. People are taking on the Dublin 4 accent rather than their local accent because it is seen as the way to get ahead. Our Irish way of speaking is considered backward. That is why so many people now talk about pawking their caw.

(Bielenberg 2016).

The older, more uninhibited, Irish accent is much preferred in this case, carrying no social stigma and being actively encouraged:

Nowhere is the language more colourful than Tuam, Co Galway, a town remarkable for its distinctive vocabulary. You can still hear people referring to a woman as a "tome feek". In Tuamspeak, a house is a "cane", splendid is "peach", and local people have been known to call a church a "pineapple".

(Bielenberg 2016).

Generally, a more neutral accent is considered best as it is less offensive, however this can make advertisements on TV and radio feel uniform and monotonous. Usually, to avoid controversy neutral Irish media voice tends to be adopted: "Neutral is used here in inverted commas to indicate that this accent is far from having no connotations to the Irish ear it sounds like an educated, urbane (Dublin) voice" (Holmes 2009, p.120). This accent, however, is quite bland but it is better than offending a group of people from a certain region, which has happened several times according to Holmes. Some advertisers play on a stereotype well-known around the country which may be universally understood; however, it may offend the people of the region, or in this case county, greatly:

For example, when *eircom.net*, an Irish internet service provider and telecommunications company used, a Cork accent in a recent campaign, so many complaints were received - generally from Cork people - that the ad was withdrawn and recorded using a neutral Irish radio voice.

(Holmes 2009, p.121).

Another example of a common misuse of an accent is the North Dublin associated with crime and working class people: "Telecom Phonewatch, a monitored burglar alarm service, chose to portray deviant criminal behaviour using an urban 'uneducated', in this case, Dublin, the accent in a radio advertisement. The advertisement was aired during the Christmas season and it featured a man in a Dublin accent saying, 'Just what I always wanted' when he comes across a house that is not monitored by Phonewatch" (Holmes 2009, p.121). All of these concerns had been taken into

account when analysing the Vodafone ads, and the HairyBaby merchandise which will be examined in greater detail.

#### *2.4 Irish Stereotypes and Traditional views in the Media*

There is always a risk of offending people when it comes to advertising, often due to stereotypes and misrepresentation of people. It is interesting how the following images portrayed the Irish people. Punch magazine caricatured the Irish people as peasants, uneducated, alcoholics, rough and constantly drunk. Meanwhile, British people were always seen as civilised, educated, upstanding citizens and well-off. This attitude was portrayed in the British media with examples of non-native English speakers from Ireland making mistakes in English. Also, there were lots of cartoons depicting the Irish with pigs as they grew so dependent on them with little money, the pigs could be used to pay rent or for food during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



THE PIG THAT WON'T "PAY THE RINT!"



PIGHEADED OBSTRUCTION.

*Image 1: The Pig That Won't Pay The Rint      Image 2: Pigheaded Obstruction*

As the years move on, these images (images 1 and 2) became significantly less associated with Irish people, however it is still something which advertisers must be aware of. There is a fine line between what is culturally accurate, while also not offending people. When it comes to advertising,

companies generally have two options when trying to appeal to an Irish audience and an audience abroad: a nostalgic, old and isolated Ireland, or they can highlight the newly diverse Ireland, which is at the centre of technology, culturally aware and modern: “On one side, these brands appeal to a pre-modern Celtic culture or traditional solidarity, but on the other, they aspire to and exhibit a postmodern, hybridised, and aspirational cosmopolitanism, though to differing degrees” (Kuhling 2008). Lots of Irish brands can be seen today making the most of both sides in different advertisements and campaigns. These factors can be seen in the Vodafone ads and the HairyBaby website which will both be discussed in detail.

### 3. Case Study Vodafone Ads Ireland and New Zealand

The purpose of this study is to analyse the language used and see the differences employed to make an advert unique to the country it is being advertised to. Additionally, it is also important to investigate whether the language is accurate and realistic for the people the ad is being targeted at. Both of these videos have the same concept: a pig is found in a rural area by a man in a van; unsure what to do he calls all his friends and enquires about missing pigs in the area or if anyone in the area keeps them. In the end, they found out that the owners are pig farmers, but after keeping the pig for so long both men grow attached to the pig known as Piggy Sue and decide to keep it. Both ads were aired on television however, they are popular on YouTube, the Irish ad has 808,837 views and the New Zealand ad almost 450,000. The videos are very well known and popular with lots of engagement on social media and entertainment websites. The general message of both ads is that no matter where you are you can count on Vodafone for coverage and as a reliable phone service.

#### *3.1 Piggy Sue Vodafone Ireland*



Piggy Sue Ireland (Vodafone Ireland YouTube, 2015)

The Irish video is all about a pig found in the idyllic rural roads of Ireland. The whole video is set in the countryside, the main character, Dónal is shown driving in his van and comes across a little pig in the middle of the road. Feeling sympathy for the pig, he picks it up and drives around calling various people in search of the pig's rightful owner. Eventually finding out that the owner is a pig farmer who will send the pig to slaughter, he decides to keep it and they live happily ever after. There's not much of a linguistic difference but the advert is distinctly Irish, with people's names, place names and subtle accent differentiating it from StE:

Dónal: Hey Meadbh, I was driving over Sally Gap(Wicklow) and there's a pig sittin' in the middle of the road. You don't know anyone who's lost a pig do ya?"

Meadbh (Barwoman in a pub): "Hold on now, hold on. Has anyone here lost a pig? No Sorry Dónal

Dónal: Hey Harry, you don't know anyone out your way he keeps pigs do ya?

Harry: Huh, I just know they taste alright

Dónal looks at the pig in a slightly annoyed but joking tone: "Pig"

With not much luck he stops the van on the side of the road and feeds the pig some biscuits.

"Do you want some of this biscuit? They're custard creams".

With no luck, Dónal resorts to posting a picture online in the hope someone will see it, which they do. Dónal calls the woman about the pig:

“Yeah, hi, am, I’m phonin’ about Sue, yeah, the pig... I could have it back to ya,. Today.”

He drives with the pig to the person's address and there's a sign outside it saying ‘Free Range Pork’, he then looks at the pig.

The next scene is Dónal driving up the road with the pig in the passenger seat, he calls Meadhbh again

“Hey Meadhbh, ya don’t know anything about looking after pigs, do ya?”

Overall, quite a simple advert, with the message that with Vodafone you can get coverage everywhere and everywhere, even in between the mountains and valleys of county Wicklow.

### *3.2 Piggy Sue Vodafone New Zealand*



Piggy Sue New Zealand (Vodafone New Zealand, 2015)

This advert being set out in the New Zealand countryside, it looks much more desolate than the Irish countryside. Again, he is in a red van however it is a lot older. The man is scruffy and heavy wearing casual clothes: a pair of jeans, a polo shirt and a fleece, along with a pair of boots. The man comes across a pig in the middle of the road. Not knowing what to do he calls the people in the area that he knows, from his hands-free set with the pig in the passenger seat.

Keith: Dobby, it's Keith. I was driving along Dundas lane and there was a pig in the middle of the road. Anyone over there know anything about it?

Dobby: No, no, mate, you're in a different valley, no one knows a thing.

Keith shows his frustration and calls another friend

Keith: Yeah, you don't know anyone out that direction who owns pigs?

Mechanic: Awh cretin, I'm not too sure over there.

Keith dejected: Bloomin pig!

After letting the pig inside on a rainy night, Keith goes out and about again looking for the owner.

Keith: Nah it's wee one.

Old Shoplady: Guy just down the road from me that's got a couple of pigs.

Keith sends a picture of the pig to a farmer in a tractor in the middle of an open field

Keith: So you got the picture?

Farmer: Yeah it's not mine"

Keith talks to the mechanic again: You don't anything about looking after pigs?

Mechanic: Nah not really, I just know they taste alright.

Dobby: Any luck?

Keith: Nah they didn't find a thing.

Finally, Keith gets an email from the owner asking about the pig and he then calls the owner:

"I got your email about Sue...the pig. I could bring her back to you tomorrow, or the next day? This afternoon? (Rising intonation for a question) Ah okay. I'll...I'll see you then".

Keith drives to the farm and sees "Free Range Pork" written on the side of the shed. He looks at the pig and the scene cuts to him closing a cardboard box and bringing it to the farmer. The scene cuts away to him driving his van and he looks down the pig is on the floor by the passenger seat.

### 3.3 Analysis of the Advertisements

The setting is very important as it portrays the kind of environment that Vodafone think will identify with the people of Ireland and NZ. The idyllic, green landscape of Ireland has long been associated with Ireland and Vodafone make use of this: there are no buildings, other cars on the road or busy towns, yet they are trying to convey a message of modernity in their ad, that people all over can get their new faster internet. The same can be said for the ad based in NZ; every scene the viewer is shown in the ad is uninhabited by people for the most part. The shop, the mechanics and the farm have no one near them. The two ads could be judge unrealistic in this way.

The language in both ads is also key for an ad to be realistic. Vodafone picked two very clear accents with little or no connotation. A lot can be determined by an accent, class, region, education etc. However, in these ads, it is hard to know where these men belong in society. To avoid controversy it would seem Vodafone just picked a vague character so as more people could relate to him. All we know about both men is that they are post men in the local area.

### 3.4 Linguistic features of the ad in Ireland

This advert features very subtle characteristics of IrE. The main character, Dónal, has a ‘neutral’ Irish accent. His accent has no distinct features which places him in a particular part of Ireland; it resembles a middle class, Dublin accent, which is the most common in Irish advertising. -in’ instead of -ing, this is a common feature across all of Ireland but especially in Dublin. “Ya” instead of “you”, this is another common feature across all of Ireland and is used in this ad to create a more informal context between the characters.

“I was drivin’ over Sally Gap and there’s a pig sittin’ in the middle of the road” Dónal uses the perfective tense here. It was commonly used in Hiberno English when describing an event that just happened very recently by using “was”, *verb+ing* and another verb in the present tense in this case “sitting”. Another feature that arguably could be interpreted as Irish is the one Harry uses when asked if he knows anyone in the area who keeps pigs, to which he replies “Huh, I just know they taste alright”, going back to the way Irish people tend not to give a “yes” or “no” answer or else



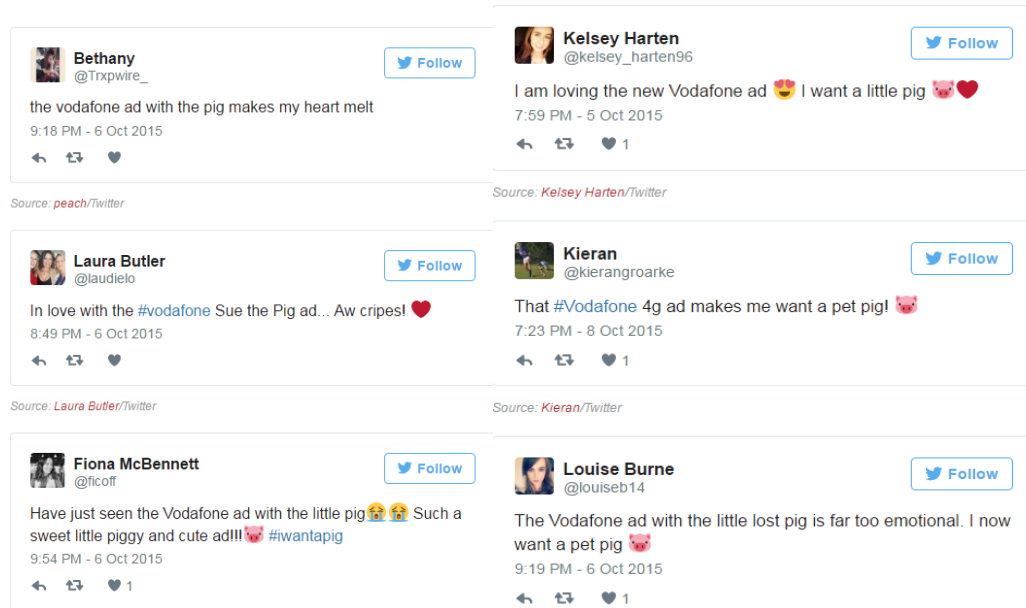
respond with humour. The language and landscape are key features which Vodafone have particularly highlighted, in order to make this a distinctly Irish advert. It is a realistic representation of Ireland, its landscape and its people, and is far from “Stage Irish”.

### *3.5 Linguistic features the ad in New Zealand:*

This advert also features very subtle deviations from StE. The NZE is quite different from IrE. The pronunciation of the vowels in *lane* and *mate* pronounced as /ai:/ instead of /ei/. There is also no use of the rhotic /r/ in this case. Another interesting feature that is used to highlight the NZE accent is the rising intonations at the end of the questions *did you get my picture/?/?*. Another feature of NZE is the use of the word “mate”, which is common all over New Zealand as well as Australia. It commonly used when answering or asking a question or a greeting. An interesting contrast is that where Dónal said “Pig!”, Keith says “Bloomin’ Pig”, one can only speculate why this was left out, perhaps because it would be too associated with BE for Irish viewers. An IrE equivalent may be *bleedin*, *feckin*, or *bloody*, but maybe would change the tone of the ad too much. It is interesting also that in the NZ ad they also left out the part when Dónal explains the biscuits are custard creams to the pig, possibly because this is much more associated with Irish and British people.

### *3.6 Audience Reaction in Ireland*

Overall, the reaction of the video was really good in Ireland. The ad was very tasteful as well as some good humour in it. None of the viewers of the ad associated with the aforementioned stereotypes to avoid when advertising in Ireland, Even though the main character Dónal brings a pig around with him. *TheJournal.ie* even did an article about it which was viewed almost 35,000 times, it also highlighted people’s reaction on the social media platform Twitter.



### Audience Reaction (Journal.ie, 2015)

Overall, Vodafone's ad campaigns in NZ and Ireland are very smartly done. Considering Vodafone's international scale of branding, it is interesting why they picked the smaller populations of NZ and Ireland to focus on when they could have used standard BE or AmE in order to get their point across. Vodafone is perhaps targeting NZ and Ireland with the Piggy Sue commercial because of the agricultural background. There was a time when the British magazine Punch would characterise the Irish people as uncivilised, untrustworthy and frequently accompanied by a pig, as many people could not pay rent and would give the landlord a pig in place of money. This does not seem to be associated with Irish people today or implied in this ad, which is why it was so well received by the Irish public.

## 4. Case Study 2: Vodafone 'Farmerz' Ads and Hairy Baby Clothing

### 4.1 Analysis of Farmerz Vodafone Ad 1:



Farmerz (Vodafone Ireland Youtube, 2015)

The setting is distinctively Irish: green fields, an old stone wall and sheep in the background. The outfits of the characters are distinctly Irish also: each has a dirty shirt, jeans and a flat cap or a “Paddy cap” as it has become synonymous with the “Irish Paddy”. The adverts use IrE pronunciation as they try to figure out how to use the new Vodafone technology but are left hopelessly clueless.

The scene opens in the setting previously described with the outfits previously described. One farmer (F1) is standing in the middle with a sprong (fork for throwing hay) over his shoulder with one farmer to the right (F2) and one to the left (F3) lean against the wall.

F1- “I heard you like dogs, so we got you a sub-woofer” use of rhotic /r/

F2: “Ohh yeaah?... What’s it do?” (lack of do i.e does, in this case)

F1: “... Dunno” Use of /u/ instead of /ʌ/

F3: Takes out his mobile phone and shouts into it “What the hell is a sub-woofer?”(elongated /u/), he waits a few seconds and the answer comes up on the screen, he reads, “It says it gives you more... bass” (pronunciation of /ei/ is more stressed).

F2 replies flippantly: “Tut, don’t like fish”.

The main joke being here is that a “sub-woofer” is a type of speaker but the farmers associate it with a dog, but don’t know what it does. A sub-woofer is a speaker which has a louder

bass(pronounced like *base*) than other speakers, the farmers then associate this with type of fish also known as *bass*.

#### 4.2 Analysis of Farmerz Vodafone Ad 2:

The scene opens in the same scenic view with the same outfits. In this ad, the farmers are discussing a pop song by singer Katy Perry, a popular American singer.

F1: “Daisy dukes” strong pronunciation of /ei/

F3: Leans in “Bikinis on top”

F1: “No dunno” /

F2: Takes out his phone and shouts “California Girls, lyrics!” He reads the answer off the screen “Sun-kissed skin so hot ‘ll melt your popsicle”(Usage of clear /l/ in all positions in all the words mentioned)(Distinction of short vowels before /r/ in “California Girls”)

F1 and F3 agree: “oh yeah, yeah”

F3: “Right lads, I’m off”

F2: “Alright so”

F3: Miley and Beyoncé need milking.

The farmers in this ad are trying to figure out the lyrics to *California Girls* but are not having much luck remembering. The subtle details are what makes this video funny. The farmers represent people not able to keep up with the world they are living in. They are hearing pop songs from America and trying to remember the lyrics. In the end one of the farmers says “Miley and Beyoncé need milking”, this is just small example of how American culture has affected Ireland. Vodafone intended it to be how the clueless farmers are now part of the global village but it also highlighted the influence of American culture in Ireland.

#### 4.3 Overall Analysis of Farmerz Ads

These ads are short but very effective at communicating their message as well as quite funny to Irish audiences. Their main usage of IrE is in the category of phonology. Their accents are not the standard “neutral” Irish accents used in most Irish ads; instead, they are associated with the country, rural areas of Ireland, in Dublin slang they would be referred to as “culchies”, a term used for anyone not from Dublin.

This advertisement is much more humorous and controversial, which might explain why it was only on their YouTube channel, unlike Piggy Sue which was aired on TV. Their accent is more distinct, however, it is not known which region of the country they are from. Going by the linguistic features one could guess that is most likely the midlands or Munster area of Ireland.

The most prolific feature of IrE in the ads are the rhotic /r/. In the first ad the farmers talk about the “sub-woofer” with a strong pronunciation of the rhotic /r/. Another feature exaggerated but still accurate is the clear usage of /l/ in all position of the words “California”, “girls” and “lyrics”. Another feature of IrE is used to identify with an Irish audience is the elongated use of the vowels in the first ad: “*Dunno*” Use of /u/ instead of /ʌ/ and the elongated use of /u/ in *woofer*. Even though there are not many sentences to analyse, one sentence can be interpreted as IrE: “*Ohh yeaah?... What’s it do?*”, the absence of *do* in this case *does*. These ads are short and aimed at an Irish audience.

#### 4.4 Analysis of HairyBaby

HairyBaby is a company with Irish people as their main market. They have three specific niches which represent the Irish population and produce products which they think will apply to an Irish market.

- (i) Firstly, the niche of the GAA which is considered a big part of the Irish identity and culture.



*Image 1:* “Take your points and your goals will come”, popular GAA phrase. Shoot the ball over the bar first because it is easier and then as the game goes on you will get a goal without trying too hard.



*Image 2:* “Timber Merchant” a hurler who tends to break a lot of hurleys, made from the ash wood, during a game of hurling. Known as the “tough guy” in the team.



*Image 3:* “He’s not from the Parish” a known insult in GAA terms for an outsider in the team or on the opposing team.



*Image 4: “Point Lads”* Incorporating a GAA umpire’s phrase, indicating it was a point for the team, and flag into the recognisable statue of Liberty.



*Image 5: “Wide ball”* Incorporating a GAA umpire’s phrase and signal that the ball has gone wide and that the team did not get a score, into the Christ the Redeemer statue in Brazil.



*Image 6: “Junior B Separating the boys from the men since 1884”*. Junior B is a particular division in every county known to be particularly rough, mainly because of the lack of skill, older players at the end of careers bullying younger players on the pitch.



*Image 7 “Hospital Pass Specialist”*: This is in reference to a “hospital pass”, which means a pass from a player which puts the receiving player in particular danger of getting injured

by a player from the opposing team. Adding on “specialist” makes it humorous as the “hospital pass” is one of the worst things you can give a teammate.

- (ii) Another distinctly Irish take HairyBaby use is incorporating the Irish language into their products:



Image 8: “Beidh mé are ais” meaning “I’ll be back” taken from the famous film *Terminator*.



Image 9: “Is maith liom mo stache” meaning “I like my stache”. A good use of Irish, using the Irish “mo” for mine as the start of moustache, to make a sentence which makes sense.

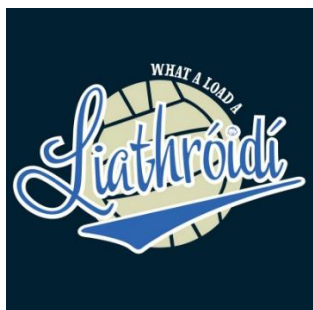


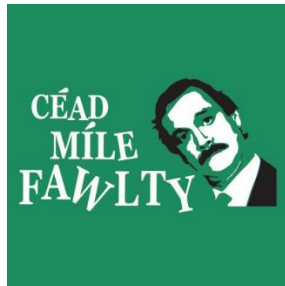
Image 10: “What a load of liathróidí” meaning “What a load of balls”. Similar to HE, substituting an Irish word for English, also using “liathróidí” censors the word “balls”



referring to male genitalia instead of the word “bullshit” in SE, as not everyone can understand it.



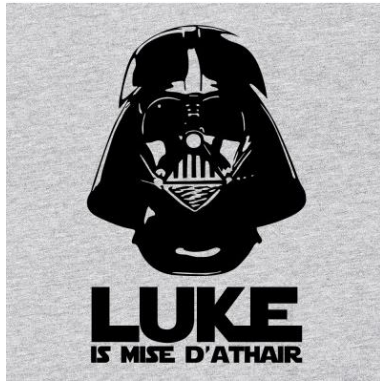
*Image 11:* “Labhair leis an laimh” meaning “Talk with the hand” also taken from a famous movie quote “Talk to the hand” also famous in the *Terminator* film.



*Image 12:* “Céad Míle Fawltý” a play on words of one of the most common Irish phrases “Céad míle fáilte” mixed with a popular English comedy called *Fawlty Towers*.



*Image 13:* “An bhfuil tusa ag labhairt liomsa?!” Meaning “Are you talking to me?” from the famous film *Taxi Driver* starring Robert De Niro.



*Image 14: “Luke, is mise d’athair” Meaning “Luke I am your father” taken from the *Star Wars* movie. Possibly the most famous movie quote of all time, given an Irish twist.*

- (iii) *Another variety of language commodified by HairyBaby is IrE and is also incorporated into pop culture, puns and pictures.*



*Image 15: ‘Tis fierce shtormy”, use of ‘tis is common among IrE speakers instead of “it is”, ”fierce used for very and sh instead of s common on the West of Ireland.*



*Image 16: “Shteak, spuds and pull like a dog” a phrase used by two brothers who won silver medals in the Olympics sh instead of s again. Also usage of IrE slang for potatoes “spuds”.*



*Image 17: “Sick as a small hospital” IrE phrase used for exaggeration.*



*Image 18: “I’d murder a bag of chips!” IrE and possibly StE for exaggeration.*



*Image 19: “Sound as a pound”: rhyming IrE slang. “Sound meaning nice/kind/good”.*



*Image 20:* “Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe ☐ Yer grand! ☒” IrE usage of “Yer” and also “grand”, in StE it would mean something magnificent or huge, whereas in Ireland it can mean good/mediocre or a polite way of saying it was bad. Also used to refuse being offered something instead of "No" usually "Ah no yer grand thanks!" would be an acceptable response.



*Image 21:* “Jez I’m bacon” meaning “Jesus I’m baking” but with IrE pronunciation Je:z I’m be:kin’ ”



*Image 22:* “State of Yer man” Usage of state here means the appearance. “Yerman” is the IrE pronunciation of “Your man”. This is often used when both people know the person so they don’t need to **know** his name or a person they both know but don’t know the name of.

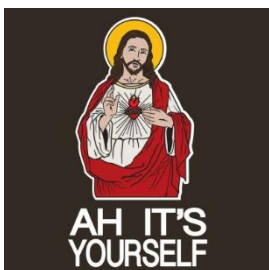


Image 23: “Go ahead make my tay”: Another movie quote with an IrE twist, used in the famous film *Sudden Impact* with the actor Clint Eastwood, this phrase has the IrE pronunciation of tea which was influenced by the Irish equivalent “té” phonologically written as “te:”.

- (iv) The last niche investigated is the one featuring the famous TV show *Fr.Ted* which also incorporates IrE.



Image 24: “Feck off, cup” *Feck* is common all over Ireland and is distinctly Irish. It is technically a curse word but is a much more censored version of the word. For example generally, in Ireland, “feck” would be acceptable to say in front of one's parents, however, “fuck” rarely would.



*Image 25:* "Ah it's yourself" Foregrounding a technique by words and phrases can be highlighted and here there is also use of an emphatic pronoun.



*Image 26:* "Sure I wouldn't know I'm from Donegal" the use of the word "sure" here is usually pronounced "shur" and is very common in IrE all over Ireland.



*Image 27:* "The Chinese, a great bunch of lads". "Lad" and "lads" a very common words in IrE and all over Ireland. It is now becoming more common in Britain also, most likely originated from Old English. Originally meant as a mischievous young man".

#### 4.5 Results

The ads which Vodafone released are uniquely Irish and provide some Irish stereotypes for the audience to connect with. The main joke of the ad depends on the audience's ability to poke fun at themselves, or at people they know. Ireland is quite a small country with a huge agricultural background which is why a lot of people may be able to relate to this ad. Many people outside Ireland may also come from a large rural environment and know farmers like this, or older people in their community who are struggling with technology like the farmers in the video. Vodafone went the opposite direction of the Piggy Sue ad with the set of Farmerz online videos, opting for a more rural or "culchie" accent not associated with Dublin or a city in general. Unlike Dónal they

are also not used to the new technology which Vodafone had upgraded to. In order to fully appreciate this advert, the consumer would have to have grown up in Ireland, been to Ireland, or know the same type of people in a different country. Interestingly this ad was not aired on any of the broadcasting channels of Ireland, only on the Vodafone Ireland YouTube channel.

The Hairybaby website has completely abandoned StE and solely focused on Irish and IrE. HairyBaby mixes up languages, images and themes to create products which Irish people can relate to. In order to understand the jokes, consumers would have to be able to understand, in some cases Irish, but also IrE. They would have to have grown up or lived in Ireland for some time in order to get a full understanding of the humour used. The HairyBaby company see it as much more beneficial and profitable to appeal to a sense of nostalgia, incorporating old school rhymes, films and IrE phrases which may be not used as much anymore.

## 5. Conclusion

This thesis has shown the relevance of IrE in advertising and commoditification of IrE today. The advertisements and website were analysed using qualitative research. This research could possibly open up this topic to quantitative research in the future. Online media is being used more often every day and with it more linguistic and sociological features can be analysed. The samples were chosen because of their use of IrE in an ever changing world where RP English and American English are the most prestigious of the varieties of English. However even though RP English may not carry the same importance in Ireland it would seem to be becoming more common, as the various newspapers articles panic over the English language used in Ireland. The Piggy Sue ad represents the future of IrE and the language used for the HairyBaby website may become a thing of the past. Ireland is stuck in between two of the main influencers of English and with more migration into and out of the country, the language can only become more standardised.

Ireland was always an interesting case for linguists, from the language shift to the general ambivalence towards RP English, its creative slang and characteristics which were adopted from Irish language. IrE may take on more symbolism, as in to show character and to differentiate from StE. The main conclusion that this essay proved is that IrE is continues to be highly relevant and

this is expected to grow. Also if companies want to succeed in Ireland it is recommended, from this thesis, that they should reject StE and use IrE in order to truly connect with the Irish people, risking controversy and causing offence. As Vodafone represented with Piggy Sue this can be done subtly and to good effect. While the Farmerz advert possibly intended to receive more laughs, it did not achieve the same reaction as Piggy Sue because of the lack of storyline. It represented an older Ireland, like HairyBaby, that is heavily dependent on nostalgia. How long the nostalgia of an older Ireland can continue before it becomes unrecognisable will remain to be seen. Considering the analysis companies advertising to an Irish have many different options and ways to build a bond with their audience and consumers. Embracing IrE and the old traditional ways of Ireland, going the opposite direction and establishing a more “neutral” form of IrE. As well as incorporating the Irish language more into their advertising, which would resonate with a lot of people, but also exclude a lot people. Advertising in Ireland can be a difficult task for any company but the more standardized accents and dialects the easier it will become, with that however, it will become more difficult for companies to differentiate from the others and truly create a company and brand people genuinely love.



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