Englishes Today

Englishes Today:

Multiple Varieties, Multiple Perspectives

Edited by

Cristina Suárez-Gómez
and Elena Seoane

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PART I:

NATIVE VARIETIES OF ENGLISH

CHAPTER ONE

ELEMENT-FINAL *LIKE* IN IRISH ENGLISH: NOTES ON ITS PERVASIVENESS, INCIDENCE AND DISTRIBUTION[1]

MARIO SERRANO-LOSADA

Element-final *like* is one of the most distinctive features of Irish English despite being an obsolescing trait in most English varieties. This chapter explores the incidence and distribution of this pragmatic marker in Hiberno-English with the aim of determining whether element-final *like* is used beyond private communication, i.e. in public communication situations. For this purpose, I analyze the public spoken dialogue component of ICE-Ireland (Kirk and Kallen 2007). The comparison of my results with those of previous accounts (Kallen 2006; Columbus 2009) sheds some light on the distribution and frequency of this pragmatic marker in Irish English. My findings suggest that element-final *like* often crosses into formal public settings despite being much more frequent in informal private conversation. Moreover, my data reveal that far from being a receding dialectal marker, element-final *like* is well entrenched in Irish English.

1. Introduction

Pragmatic (or discourse)[2] *like* is undoubtedly one of the most prominent traits of present-day vernacular Englishes (D'Arcy 2005, 2) and a widely acknowledged linguistic feature.[3] Overtly stigmatized, it is usually associated to the speech of adolescents and young adults (Andersen 2001; Tagliamonte 2005; D'Arcy 2007) and has been often considered a trait of non-standard and even careless speech frequently used as a 'filler' for lexical indecision (Underhill 1988, 234; Miller and Weinert 1995, 366). Nevertheless, the use of pragmatic *like* is pervasive across varieties of English (Miller and Weinert 1995; Dailey-O'Cain 2000;

Andersen 2001; Tagliamonte 2005; Levey 2006; D'Arcy 2008; Miller 2009; Schweinberger 2012).

As a pragmatic marker, *like* is well known for its "functional complexity and distributional versatility" (Andersen 2001, 210). In fact, its numerous functions have been described extensively in the literature; however, these descriptions have dealt almost exclusively with clause-initial and clause-medial instances of *like*. Element-final instances of the marker—i.e. instances at right periphery (Traugott 2012, 2013; Degand 2014)—such as (1), have received little scholarly attention:

(1) It's up to you, *like* <ICE-IRL S1B-016$A>[4]

Despite the stigmatization of pragmatic *like*, the written record reveals that the particle has been performing discourse-pragmatic functions for quite a long time. In fact, examples in which *like* is used parenthetically to qualify a preceding statement are frequent in descriptions of traditional dialects from the late nineteenth century onward, and the feature is attested in the OED as early as 1778 (Miller and Weinert 1995, 367-368; Andersen 2001, 222). In such early instances pragmatic *like* generally appears in utterance-final position (D'Arcy 2005, 4).

Element-final *like* has generally been considered a dialectal feature typical of the 'northern' varieties of the British Isles (Hedevind 1967; Miller and Weinert 1995; Andersen 2001; D'Arcy 2005). Recent research points towards the decline of this right peripheral marker in some of these varieties (cf. Bartlett (2013) for a study of the feature in Tyneside English). However, it is robust in Hiberno-English (Kallen 2006, 14). In fact, element-final *like* can be considered a distinctive trait of vernacular Irish English,[5] a feature of spoken informal interaction used, among other functions, to focus or hedge.

This chapter aims to examine the incidence and distribution of element-final *like* in Irish English. With this purpose in mind, I analyze the public spoken dialogue component of ICE-Ireland (Kirk and Kallen 2007) in order to determine whether the feature surpasses the sphere of private communication and crosses over into the sphere of public communication. I also draw on other studies derived from ICE-Ireland, namely Kallen's (2006) overview of element-final *like*, Columbus' (2009) study of this feature in the private spoken component of the same corpus, and Schweinberger's (2012) sociolinguistic study of discourse marker *like* in Irish English. The comparison of my results with those of previous accounts sheds some light on the distribution and frequency of element-final *like* in Irish English. My findings show that even though the marker is much more recurrent in informal and private communication than in

formal and public communication, it does often cross into more formal settings. Moreover, my data show that far from being receding or dialectal, element-final *like* is a well-established marker in Hiberno-English.

The chapter is organized as follows. Section 2 establishes some theoretical background and basic notions on pragmatic markers and *like*. Section 3 describes the corpus from which the data were extracted and the methodology that was followed. Section 4 presents the results. Section 5 is devoted to the analysis of my findings. Finally, in section 6 I set out my main conclusions and recommendations for future research.

2. On pragmatic markers and *like*

There is no easy way to define a pragmatic marker, nor is there consensus as to what constitutes one. According to Brinton (1996, 35), pragmatic markers are a "heterogeneous set of forms which are difficult to place within a traditional word class". These include items such as *ah*, *just*, *like*, *really*, *well*, *I mean*, *I think* and *you know* and are predominantly features of spoken discourse. Such markers are high-frequency items which are generally stylistically stigmatized and considered to have little or no propositional meaning (or at least to be difficult to specify lexically). Moreover, they are considered to be optional rather than obligatory features, occur either outside the syntactic structure or loosely attached to it, and have no clear grammatical function. Pragmatic markers may be multifunctional, operating simultaneously on the local and global levels, as well as on different linguistic planes (including textual and interpersonal levels) within the pragmatic component (Brinton 1996, 33ff.). Nevertheless, as Andersen notes:

> It is important to point out that the term 'pragmatic' is not meant to suggest that markers are void of semantic content or that the meanings they contribute are entirely inferred on an ad hoc basis. On the contrary, pragmatic markers convey meanings that are linguistically encoded, but these may be […] difficult to specify in terms of lexical import. Pragmatic markers are associated with aspects of communication that are to a great extent context-based, such as the identification of a speaker attitude towards an expressed proposition, where attitude includes notions such as speaker commitment, affective evaluation and evaluation of 'newsworthiness' (Andersen 2001, 22)

Taking these general observations on pragmatic markers into account, in the following I first provide a brief overview of *like* and its different

grammatical and pragmatic functions, then turn to a more detailed characterization of pragmatic *like* in element-final position.

2.1. *Like* as a pragmatic marker

Like is one of the most ubiquitous and multifunctional lexemes in the English language (D'Arcy 2006, 339). On a grammatical level, it may function as (2a) a lexical verb, (2b) a noun, (2c) a preposition, (2d) a conjunction, or (2e) a suffix:

(2a) I don't *like* that style of shoe. <ICE-IRL S1A-019$A>
(2b) It's too dangerous when you look at the *likes* of Bobby Nelson. <ICE-IRL S1A-097$B>
(2c) It looks *like* a key-ring. <ICE-IRL S1A-075$A>
(2d) And from time to time, you feel *like* you just want to walk away. <ICE-IRL S2B-025$A>
(2e) I found the negotiations we had with Fianna Fáil […] a lot more open and business-*like*. <ICE-IRL S1B-046$B>

Furthermore, *like* can also be a part of the quotative complementizer BE *like* (Romaine and Lange 1991; Buchstaller 2001, 2006; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004). The construction BE *like*, as in (3), constitutes a unit with the specialized function of demarcating sequences of reconstructed dialogue, i.e. quoting. Thus, BE *like* here functions as a verb, synonymous to *say*, which can be inflected both for tense and agreement and whose omission would cause ungrammaticality:

(3) And he *was like*, "oh my God! You're never going to believe what just happened!" You know? And I'*m like*, "what?" So he said, "uhm, basically what'd happened was his ex-girlfriend […]" <ICE-IRL S1A-044$A>

However, *like* can also perform a number of discourse and pragmatic functions (Andersen 2001; D'Arcy 2005, 2006). *Like* can be used (4) clause-initially as a discourse marker encoding textual information and relating the utterance to previous discourse (Schiffrin 1987; Brinton 1996), or (5) clause-medially as a discourse particle signaling pragmatic information such as the speaker's epistemic stance (Andersen 2001), among others (D'Arcy 2006, 339-340):

(4) The whole family is devastated […]. *Like* we'd all been at sea for twenty-one years. <ICE-IRL S2B-007$C>

(5) (a) He was *like* really winded but he managed to *like* grab her. <ICE-IRL S1A-044$A>
(b) This really is *like* a land under occupation. <ICE-IRL S2B-024$A>

The syntactic functions of *like* in examples (4) and (5) are not as precise as those in (2) and (3), and the omission of the word in (4) and (5) would not cause ungrammaticality. Whenever *like* does not have a clear lexical meaning and does not serve one of the ordinary syntactic functions illustrated in (2) and (3), it is considered a pragmatic marker (Andersen 2001, 212). One of the characteristic traits of pragmatic markers is their lack of lexical meaning: "As both a marker and a particle, *like* meets the semantic emptiness criterion, imbued instead with pragmatic meaning(s)" (D'Arcy 2006, 340). It is amongst these discourse and pragmatic functions that we find element-final *like*.

2.2. Element-final *like*[6]

Unlike the instances of pragmatic *like* exemplified in (4) and (5), utterance-final *like* (examples (6) and (7)) does not precede the information to which it is attached but follows it, appearing as a conversational tag on the right periphery:

(6) He used to race bikes, *like*. He said he'd be working on chains every week, *like*. <ICE-IRL S1A-093>
(7) Ah no, I'm not saying that I don't know anything about acting, *like*. <ICE-IRL S1A-032>

Pragmatic *like* at right periphery remains one of the marker's least studied positions (Kallen 2006; Columbus 2009; Bartlett 2013). In a recent study on discourse *like* in Irish English, Schweinberger (2012, 197, author's capitals) states that "clause-final LIKE with backward scope is the most frequently used variant in the Irish data and does not appear to wane as in North American varieties of English", despite the fact that its use "has decreased among speakers younger than 25 years of age" (Schweinberger 2012, 196). The vigor of element-final *like* in this variety of English is also supported by studies on second language acquisition. For instance, Nestor et al. (2012, 343) have shown that migrants learning Irish English are prone to acquire pragmatic *like* in clause-marginal positions (including utterance-final position), which are the positions favored by L1 speakers of Irish English.

According to Corrigan (2010, 79), the idiosyncratic Hiberno-English utterance-final *like* is used in a similar manner to *you know* in the standard. However, as we will see later on, *you know* and final *like* are not exactly equivalent; in fact, they may co-appear, as in examples (13) and (15).

> The particular use of *like* in [Northern Irish English/Ulster Scots], which therefore seems rather more unusual in the context of vernacular Englishes (though variants of it are attested in varieties that have been influenced by them […]) is the sentence-final form […]. In fact […] far from focusing or introducing new information, it often acts as a closing for a narrative. As such, *like* in this position marks the end of old information. Moreover, it doesn't appear to function inherently as a focuser and may even have similar properties of mitigation which Kallen (2005) argues for *I'd say/you know* (Corrigan 2010, 100).

Even though Corrigan doubts the marker's function as a focuser, Kallen (2006, 12) argues that element-final *like* may be used to focus attention on a particular segment, as well as to mitigate the impact of an assertion (or to signal the end of old information), or to allow for a less exact commitment to a particular position, among others. Kallen's functions are in line with the functions attributed by Miller and Weinert to clause-final *like* in Scottish English ("retroactive focusing power"; "countering potential interferences, objections or doubts", Miller and Weinert 1995, 388-389).

3. Corpus and methodology

All of the data were drawn from the *International Corpus of English: Ireland Component* (ICE-Ireland), co-directed by John Kirk (formerly Queen's University Belfast) and Jeffrey Kallen (Trinity College Dublin). The *International Corpus of English* (ICE) project was first envisaged by Sydney Greenbaum (1988), who advocated the need for compiling materials to facilitate comparative studies of standard varieties of English worldwide. Thereafter, linguists around the globe started to develop the ICE project. Each ICE corpus comprises one million words of spoken and written English produced after 1989 and follows a common corpus design. Moreover, every text included in these corpora is produced by authors and speakers aged 18 or older who have at least completed secondary education through the medium of English. The *Ireland Component* of the ICE project is one such corpus. First released in 2007, ICE-Ireland provides 300 transcribed spoken texts belonging to 15 different communicative situations and 200 written texts both from published and

unpublished sources. These texts—compiled in two phases between 1990 and 2005—cover a range of formal and informal discourse situations. Given Ireland's geopolitical status, each written and spoken text category contains an equal number of texts from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, which gives the corpus a unique cross-border and international comparative approach (Kallen and Kirk 2008, 3-5).

As mentioned above, this study aims to analyze the spoken public component of ICE-Ireland. Table 1-1 provides a full account of the spoken dialogue component of ICE-Ireland (Kirk and Kallen 2007, 9):

Table 1-1. ICE-Ireland spoken component

Text category	**Text-id**	**No of texts**	**Words**
Dialogue		**180**	**401,971**
Private		*100*	*231,213*
Face to face conversation (FTF)	S1A-001-S1A-090	90	210,540
Telephone conversation (TEC)	S1A-091-S1A-100	10	20,673
Public		*80*	*170,758*
Business transactions (BUT)	S1B-071-S1B-080	10	21,447
Classroom discussion (CLD)	S1B-001-S1B-020	20	43,345
Broadcast discussion (BRD)	S1B-021-S1B-040	20	42,632
Legal cross-examination (LEC)	S1B-061-S1B-070	10	20,013
Parliamentary debate (PAD)	S1B-051-S1B-060	10	22,390
Broadcast interview (BRI)	S1B-041-S1B-050	10	20,931
Monologue		**120**	**250,995**
Unscripted		*70*	*148,984*
Spontaneous commentary (SPC)	S2A-001-S2A-020	20	43,028
Unscripted speeches (UNS)	S2A-021-S2A-050	30	62,777
Demonstrations (DEM)	S2A-051-S2A-060	10	22,069
Legal presentations (LEP)	S2A-061-S2A-070	10	21,110
Scripted		*50*	*102,011*
Broadcast news (BRN)	S2B-001-S2B-020	20	40,579
Broadcast talks (BRT)	S2B-021-S2B-040	20	40,964
Scripted speeches (SCS)	S2B-041-S2B-050	10	20,468
Total Spoken Texts	S1A-001-S2B-050	**300**	**652,966**

In an unpublished paper, Columbus (2009, available online) explores the functions of Irish English element-final *like* as an invariant tag (i.e. a tag question that does not change form such as Canadian English *eh?*, e.g. 'He hates math, *eh?*'). To this aim, she analyzes the private spoken conversation component of ICE-Ireland (face-to-face conversation and telephone conversation, S1A 001-S1A 100), a total of 231,213 words. She retrieves 169 instances in the private spoken subcorpus (+23 unclear uses), i.e. 73.09 instances per 100,000 words. Her study concludes, among other things, that invariant tag *like* in Irish English is clearly a focus marker (cf. Miller and Weinert 1995; Kallen 2006; Schweinberger 2012). Given that Columbus (2009) analyzes the private spoken component of ICE-Ireland, this chapter centers on the spoken public component of the corpus.

In order to have a corpus comparable in terms of size to that of Columbus (2009), the following text categories were selected for a total of 211,722 words:

Table 1-2. Text categories included in the subcorpus (public spoken dialogue + broadcast talks)

Text type	Texts	Words	No. of texts
Classroom discussion (CLD)	S1B-001-S1B-020	43,345	20
Broadcast discussion (BRD)	S1B-021-S1B-040	42,632	20
Broadcast talks (BRT)	S2B-021-S2B-040	40,964	20
Parliamentary debate (PAD)	S1B-051-S1B-060	22,390	10
Business transactions (BUT)	S1B-071-S1B-080	21,447	10
Broadcast interview (BRI)	S1B-041-S1B-050	20,931	10
Legal cross-examination (LEC)	S1B-061-S1B-070	20,013	10
Total		**211,722**	**100**

Although broadcast talks are classified under scripted monologue and not under public spoken dialogue, I decided to include them in the subcorpus because (a), in most cases, these texts contain dialogue and (b) the immediacy of some of the texts give rise to some spontaneity. Most importantly, unlike other scripted text categories which do not yield any results, broadcast talks do provide examples for utterance-final *like* (something hard to imagine had these been truly scripted texts). Table 1-3 provides the overall percentage distribution of words by text category in the subcorpus:

Table 1-3. Percentage word distribution by text category

Text type	Words	Percentage
Classroom discussion (CLD)	43,345	20.5%
Broadcast discussion (BRD)	42,632	20.1%
Broadcast talks (BRT)	40,964	19.3%
Parliamentary debate (PAD)	22,390	10.6%
Business transactions (BUT)	21,447	10.1%
Broadcast interview (BRI)	20,931	9.9%
Legal cross-examination (LEC)	20,013	9.5%
Total	**211,722**	**100%**

The selected text categories were analyzed individually using AntConc 3.4.3[7] in order to obtain the concordances for *like* in utterance-final position as well as to register frequency and relevant contextual data. Element-final *like* instances were selected manually, removing all non-final, adverbial, verbal and quotative occurrences. Due to its multiple syntactic functions and its common use as a pragmatic marker, the form *like* appears in a vast number of contexts in the subcorpus, and a thorough reading of the context was necessary (often full text-files) in order to select the relevant examples.

4. Results

From a total of 727 occurrences for *like*, 97 occur before a pause and only 41 (+5 unclear cases) are element-final instances of *like*. However, utterance-final *like* does not always appear before a pause: it may be followed by other pragmatic markers, namely *you know* (6 out of 41 occurrences, e.g. "Or through sports and stuff *like you know*" <ICE-IRL S1B-075$B>) and *so* (1 out of 41 occurrences, e.g. "And they didn't know they were together, and that kind of thing *like so*" <ICE-IRL S1B-017$B>). Due to the ubiquity and multifunctionality of *like* and the fragmentary nature of spoken discourse, transcription alone does not always suffice to account for the value of the marker. Thus, considering the transcription alone may result in ambiguous readings of an utterance between, for instance, a right peripheral and an interrupted left peripheral *like*, such as in (8), or between a non-marker reading and a marker reading:

(8) The trouble about somebody like Fowles you see is that <,> well it <,> I suppose *like* <,> most of these novelists <,> is that they are writing in response to other novelists […] <ICE-IRL S1B-019$A>

In (8), it is not clear whether the utterance "I suppose *like* <,> most of these novelists" has been disrupted or the particle is an instance of element-final *like*. In fact, *like* in (8) may well be considered a hesitational or linking device. As Andersen (2001, 255) points out, *like* can appear where a speaker interrupts his or her utterance without continuing. However, at first glance, this 'terminated' utterance may also appear to be an instance of element-final *like*. Thus:

> There is frequently a need for a multi-level analysis of pragmatic markers, as considerations of aspects such as phonology, prosody, context and topic are required where the grammatical analysis arising from a mere browsing of computer lists of examples will not suffice (Andersen 2001, 215).

Given the fact that ICE-Ireland (version 1.2) is not fully annotated and that I did not have access to the voice recordings, ambiguous cases such as (8) arose. Examples such as this have been considered under the label 'unclear cases'.

Table 1-4 offers a detailed account of element-final *like* occurrences by text type. A comparison of the results in Table 1-4 with Columbus' (2009) results (169 occurrences [+23 unclear cases]) is most revealing. The private spoken component yields 73.09 occurrences per 100,000 words, while the public spoken component yields only 19.37 occurrences per 100,000 words. As expected, element-final *like* is far more recurrent in private communication than in public communication. However, this pragmatic marker is also present and indeed widespread in public communication, at least in certain text categories.[8] Furthermore, not all the text types considered within public communication require the same degree of formality. In fact, the number of instances of *like* seems to be inversely proportional to the degree of textual formality (Legal cross-examinations being the most formal, with no results). Despite its widespread use, utterance-final *like*, as other variants of pragmatic *like*, remains a rather stigmatized marker and is generally considered a feature of private and informal communication.

Table 1-4. Element-final *like* in the public spoken dialogue component of ICE-Ireland

Text type	Words	Texts	Element-final *like*		NF (per 100,000 words)
			Tokens	Unclear cases	
Classroom discussion (CLD)	43,345	20	22	3	50.76
Business transactions (BUT)	21,447	10	10	2	46.63
Broadcast interview (BRI)	20,931	10	3		14.33
Broadcast discussion (BRD)	42,632	20	3		7.04
Broadcast talks (BRT)	40,964	20	2		4.88
Parliamentary debate (PAD)	22,390	10	1		4.47
Legal cross-examination (LEC)	20,013	10	0		0
Total	**211,722**	**100**	**41**	**5**	**19.37**

Kallen's (2006) analysis of the full ICE-Ireland corpus (1 million words) accounts for 400 instances of element-final *like*. Although my own analysis does not cover the entire corpus, Kallen's numbers seem rather high. The total number of occurrences for element-final *like* in the spoken dialogue component of ICE-Ireland (c. 400,000 words) lies between 210-238 (given that some of the items tagged as 'unclear cases' might or might not be utterance-final instances of *like*). Therefore, the spoken dialogue component would account for 52.5% to 59.5% of the claimed 400 total occurrences. Consequently, the remaining spoken component (monologue) and written component (which amount to c. 900,000 words) should account for the 162-190 instances left (that is, 40.5% to 47.5% of the alleged 400 occurrences). However, a preliminary examination of the written component of ICE-Ireland does not yield any results for element-final *like*. This is only natural for a pragmatic feature which is characteristic of spoken registers. Moreover, the remaining spoken component of the corpus (scripted and unscripted monologue) does not seem to provide enough occurrences to account for the missing 162-190 items needed to complete the 400 claimed by Kallen. Such differences in numbers could very well be the result of trying to analyze pragmatic features in transcribed spoken documents without access to the audio

recordings or to properly annotated texts, as explained regarding example (8). Further research should be carried out to provide a more accurate count of utterance-final *like* in the corpus. The use of SPICE-Ireland in future research—a version of the spoken component of ICE-Ireland that has been annotated to display aspects of pragmatics, discourse, and prosody (Kallen and Kirk 2012) —may help overcome such shortcomings.

Table 1-5. Alleged occurrences of element-final *like* in ICE-Ireland

			Occurrences		**Percentage**	
			-	+	-	+
Spoken dialogue ICE-IRL	Private dialogue	Columbus (2009)	169	192	42.25	48
	Public dialogue	This study	41	46	10.25	11.5
	Total Spoken dialogue		*210*	*238*	*52.5*	*59.5*
Remaining ICE-IRL	Spoken monologue +Written component		190?	162?	47.5?	40.5?
Total ICE-IRL		Kallen (2006)	400		100%	

5. Analysis

The following sections are devoted to an analysis of the results for each specific text type category. Although examples will be provided, not every instance of element-final *like* in the subcorpus will be accounted for.

5.1. Classroom discussion (CLD)

CLD makes up 21% of the corpus and accounts for 22 of the total of 41 occurrences in the corpus (53.65% of the occurrences; 50.75 instances per 100,000 words). Three unclear cases were also registered, among which example (8) above is found. As a text type, classroom discussions are less formal than, say, formal lectures. The texts compiled are small tutorial group discussions in which a lecturer and a few students converse.

(9) Can you use any age group <ICE-IRL S1B-001$H>
Aoife <#> Uhm <ICE-IRL S1B-001$A>
I mean can you use like a teenager *like* <ICE-IRL S1B-001$H>
Well <,> yes there is nothing to stop you using whatever age group you want <ICE-IRL S1B-001$A>

Example (9) is taken from text S1B-001, a Sociolinguistics CLD. (A) is a female student in the 19-25 age band.[9] In spite of being public academic communication, the environment is fairly relaxed. Thus, the use of utterance-final *like* seems permissible, and even lecturers employ it, as shown in examples (10) and (11):

(10) Yeah <#> Well I mean it's up to yourself <,> it's up to you *like* <ICE-IRL S1B-016$A>
And I have to do the other essays then <ICE-IRL S1B-016$E>
(11) No it doesn't matter *like* <,> but it just meant that you know <ICE-IRL S1B-018$A>

Example (10) belongs to text S1B-016, an Old English CLD. (A) is a male lecturer (unknown age band). This lecturer uses element-final *like* up to three times (out of the six times that it appears in the text). In (11) (from S1B-018, a Clinicians' CLD) another lecturer uses element-final *like* three out of the four times that it appears in the text. (A) is a female lecturer in the 34-41 age band.

(12) <X> <#> It depends how many people there are in the conversation *like* <#> Because if there's more than say <.><ICE-IRL S1B-004$B>

Text S1B-004 is a Sociolinguistics CLD. In (12), (B) is a female student belonging to the 19-25 age band. However, she is not a native speaker of Irish English. Even though (B) studies in Belfast, she grew up in England.[10] Her use of utterance-final *like* is the only one uttered by a non-Irish speaker in the subcorpus. Nevertheless, it is rather revealing: although it is possible that the speaker's native variety of English features this trait (e.g. Tyneside English), it is also quite possible that she has picked up the marker in Ireland. Just as non-native speakers of English have been shown to acquire element-final *like* (cf. Nestor et al. (2012) for the case of *like* and Polish migrants in Ireland), it is plausible that speakers of other varieties of English assimilate the feature due to extensive exposure to it.

As demonstrated by the examples above, the use of element-final *like* seems rather widespread in CLD. Whenever used in this context, utterance-final *like* seems to express insecurity or lack of confidence (i.e., it functions as a hedging device). Although students (younger speakers) seem more prone to employ it, lecturers (one of which was in the 34-41 age band) use it as well: six (plus one unclear case) out of 22 occurrences in CLD are uttered by lecturers. CLD, which is probably the least formal

text type in the subcorpus, yields the most instances. Thus, element-final *like* appears to be associated with more informal styles (in fact, informal text types such as this one returned the most examples).

5.2. Business transactions (BUT)

BUT account for 10% of the total words in the subcorpus and for ten out of the 41 utterance-final *like* occurrences in the subcorpus (24.39%; 46.63 instances per 100,000 words). Two unclear cases were registered. Right peripheral *like* seems to allow reinforcement by means of a second pragmatic marker, as three of the ten examples are followed by *you know*. Examples (13) and (14) are instances of such concatenation of markers:

(13) And then I thought well you know she mightn't be that stupid *like you know* <ICE-IRL S1B-075$B>
(14) I'd I'd take four if it was last <,> the last choice *like* <,> *you know* <#> If I had a proper look around at the other places first <ICE-IRL S1B-077$B>

Example (13) is taken from text S1B-075 (WEA interview). (B) is a female community worker (unknown age band). Example (14) belongs to S1B-077 (Flatfinders). (B) is a male, presumably a student looking for accommodation. Element-final *like* seems fairly widespread in BUT. The situations portrayed in this text category are diverse and reflect different degrees of formality (e.g. flat hunting, job interviews, student meetings). However, such situations are still rather permissive and allow the use of the marker.

As regards the concatenation of pragmatic markers, the co-appearance of utterance-final *like* with *you know* would indicate that in spite of claims which consider both markers equivalent (Corrigan 2010, 79), in reality they are not. In fact, unlike *you know*, element-final *like* does not explicitly engage the interlocutor (the interlocutor's approval is not directly sought-after). While *you know* is intersubjective, utterance-final *like* is subjective. This agrees with Traugott's claim that expressions at right periphery do not necessarily need to be intersubjective (Traugott 2012, 22).

5.3. Broadcast interview (BRI)

BRI account for three occurrences (7.32%; 14.33 instances per 100,000 words), all followed by *you know*. BRI represents 10% of the subcorpus. Utterance-final *like* seems to be less frequent in the media, probably due to

the fact that speakers are more aware of their language when speaking in public settings. The three instances of element-final *like* are uttered by two Trinity College students who are being interviewed about sports (text S1B-050):

(15) Man is a very young fresher <,> just trying to get him to join hurling and football clubs *like you know* <ICE-IRL S1B-050$D>

5.4. Broadcast discussion (BRD)

BRD accounts for 20% of the total word count in the subcorpus, yet only three occurrences were retrieved (7.32%; 7.04 instances per 100,000 words).

(16) Well I would describe myself as a a wobbly to start with <#> Uhm <,> but <.> i </.> it does seem to me that the crucial issue is why do we have to wait for programmes *like* <ICE-IRL S1B-028$K>
(17) I suppose the basic idea of you know it was the Three Wise Men brought it up started it I suppose with the idea of <.> bringi </.> bringing gifts *like* <ICE-IRL S1B-040$C>

Example (16) is taken from text S1B-028 (Coleraine). (K) is a male speaker (unknown age band). Example (17) belongs to text S1B-040 (It's Friday 2). (C) is a male farmer (unknown age band). The third instance is uttered by the same farmer. Although the bulk of the occurrences in the subcorpus derive from urban settings, utterance-final *like* is not an exclusively urban feature. As (17) suggests, element-final *like* is also used in rural settings in Ireland. The data, however, do not allow us to make strong claims about the feature's geographical or sociolinguistic distribution. As regards Dublin, Amador-Moreno (2012, 24ff) points out that element-final *like* might be associated with 'local' Dublin speech (especially to working class North Dublin), which would explain why the more cosmopolitan and prosperous inhabitants of Dublin's Southside (pejoratively termed D4) tend to avoid it and favor medial positions.[11]

5.5. Broadcast talks (BRT)

Element-final *like* returns two occurrences in BRT (4.88%; 4.88 instances per 100,000 words). This text category accounts for 19% of the total word count of the subcorpus.

(18) I think without being patronising <,> you know the Unionists have an understandable and very severe <,> uh identity crisis <#> And I and I think <,> that an an Ireland which we build <,> has to reflect <,> the Unionist strand <,> of our history <ICE-IRL S2B-025$D>
So long as it isn't British *like* <,> <#> I mean what they would say is there are two nationalities on the island of Ireland <ICE-IRL S2B-025$E>
Whereas you know that isn't the case yourself <ICE-IRL S2B-025$D>
I don't know that <#> Well I'm representing <{> <[> what they might say <ICE-IRL S2B-025$E>

Even though utterance-final *like* is a feature of informal and familiar speech, it sometimes appears in more formal settings (Kallen 2006, 14). In example (18) (from S2B-025, Frontline 2), (D) is a male politician in the 42-49 age band and (E) is a broadcaster (unknown age band). As I have shown, while element-final *like* permeates the discourse of broadcast communications, its presence in the media is rather limited. Example (18) is significant for two main reasons. On the one hand, because it is the broadcaster (and not the interviewee) who uses the pragmatic marker: it is not customary for television hosts to make use of colloquial features during broadcasts. On the other, and more importantly, because of the context in which it is used. The text, dated between 1990-1994, is Northern Irish. In it, several people talk about the Irish conflict and the Downing Street Declaration.[12] When the broadcaster utters the element-final marker, he seems to be contrasting his in-group, the Irish, with the out-group, the British ("so long as it isn't British, *like*"). Thus, by employing this typically Irish marker, he could very well be aligning with his in-group. In (18), in-group ties and sense of belonging would license the use of an otherwise inappropriate expression for broadcast communication.

5.6. Parliamentary debate (PAD)

PAD makes up 11% of the total word count of the subcorpus. Since PAD is a fairly formal text type, the analysis returned only a single instance (2.44%; 4.47 instances per 100,000 words):

(19) The whole five of them <,> all my five workers <#> I'm not <,> I'm being honest about it <#> My five workers <#> And uh and all that the team that they had <#> And the big fancy cars and vans and so on <#> I don't know where they got the money from *like* <#> But

<,> let me say this <,> and yet they did not achieve what they want <#> The Democratic Unionist Party came second with seventeen hundred votes <ICE-IRL S1B-055$A>

Example (19) is taken from text S1B-055 (Multi-party talks 2). Although there is no data about the speakers, (A) is presumably a politician. This occurrence of utterance-final *like* appears in a Northern Irish transcription in which politicians are debating about the political situation in Northern Ireland. Thus, this instance of element-final *like* is probably uttered in the context of a tense political argument.

5.7. Legal cross-examination (LEC)

The query for LEC (9% of the subcorpus) did not return any instances of element-final *like*. LEC is the most formal register in the subcorpus. It may be the case that the corpus compilers did not have access to the original recordings and that oral features were eliminated from the transcriptions. According to Kallen and Kirk (2008, 8), "legal requirements in the Republic prohibit the recording of courtroom discourse, so the Republic of Ireland legal texts in ICE-Ireland come instead from testimony and presentations in legislative committee hearings".

6. Final remarks

Pragmatic *like*, one of the most prominent features of contemporary English vernaculars, is also subject to overt stigmatization. Over the course of this chapter I have examined the incidence and distribution of element-final *like* in Hiberno-English. To achieve this I have analyzed the public spoken dialogue component of ICE-Ireland to determine whether utterance-final *like* extended beyond the sphere of private communication and crossed over into the sphere of public communication. The comparison of my results with those of Columbus (2009) for the private spoken component of the same corpus helps shed some light on the distribution and pervasiveness of element-final *like*. As has been claimed, Irish English pragmatic *like* at right periphery is far more frequent in private communication than in public communication: suffice it to compare Columbus' (2009) 169 occurrences for the private spoken component to the 41 occurrences in the public spoken subcorpus of ICE-Ireland (73.09 vs. 19.84 occurrences per 100,000 words).

Although element-final *like* generally appears in informal speech settings, from time to time it does cross into more formal settings such as university lectures, business transactions and broadcast discussions. Notwithstanding, it does not seem to be entirely acceptable or common in more formal situations such as parliamentary debate or legal cross-examination. In such formal settings, element-final *like* appears at times in which speakers seem to 'let go' or 'lose control' over the way in which they are expressing themselves (see example (19)). Despite the fact that the younger generation seems to have a laxer attitude toward the use of the marker, older age groups have also been found to use final *like* (e.g. lecturers, as in examples (11) and (12)). Moreover, my results corroborate the claim that far from being receding or dialectal, element-final *like* is a well-established marker in Standard Irish English (Kallen 2006; Schweinberger 2012).

As regards position and function, *like* at right periphery allows concatenation with other pragmatic markers, namely *you know* and *so*. Pragmatic *like* and *you know* seem to have different functions in this position: the former is subjective while the latter is intersubjective. This challenges previous claims which consider the two markers to be equivalent.

ICE-Ireland has proven to be a useful tool to investigate pragmatic *like* in Irish English. However, the corpus may already be somewhat dated: some of the texts it contains are now over 20 years old. Contemporary data should probably be examined to determine whether there have been changes in the use of element-final *like* in Ireland, as some studies have pointed to the decline of the feature in recent times (Diskin 2013, 76).

It is my hope that this study has drawn attention to the still understudied pragmatic markers at right periphery in general, and that it has contributed to better comprehend the status of element-final *like* in Irish English in particular. Nevertheless, this study should be further extended and contrasted. In future research, element-final *like* should probably be examined from a more social perspective. Where does the marker stand in terms of prestige among Irish English speakers? Are there gender differences in usage and, if so, could these be related to the covert prestige of the marker? Element-final *like* has been used in Irish advertising: e.g. a Coca-Cola outdoor ad in Belfast, which featured several Belfast English expressions, included as its centerpiece the sentence "the Coke side of Belfast, *like*" (Corrigan 2010, 80). Why is the marker so pervasive and widespread in Hiberno-English while it is obsolescing in other varieties of English? Could element-final *like* positively identify its users as members of the Irish English speech community? Could it be

considered an in-group trait of national identity (see example (18))? All of these questions and others require answers in order to arrive at a better characterization of the feature.

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Notes

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[2] Hereafter, I refer to discourse-pragmatic *like* as a *pragmatic marker* (cf. Brinton 1996; Andersen 2001; Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen 2011 among others). Countless other terms have been proposed in the literature for pragmatic markers, from the traditional and most frequent *discourse marker* (Schiffrin 1987) to the more recent *discourse-pragmatic feature* (Pichler 2013, 4).

[3] Even the mass media have drawn attention to it. Cf., for instance, a story by Bill Weir on *Good Morning America, Weekend Edition* (April 19, 2009) http://abcnews.go.com/video/playerIndex?id=7375398 and Alex D'Arcy's interview on *Answerman*, as part of CBC Radio Sudbury's *Morning North* (August 18, 2010): http://web.uvic.ca/~adarcy/web%20documents/00026a49.MP3.

[4] All the examples used in this chapter are taken from the spoken component of ICE-Ireland (ICE-IRL) unless otherwise stated. The code in angle quotes (<S1B-016$A>) indicates speaker turn; it includes both a text id (S1B-016) and a speaker id ($A). The speaker id is identified with the symbol $ followed by a capital letter. The S in the text id stands for spoken discourse. The sequence S1B indicates that the file contains public dialogue. S1A texts contain private dialogues (face-to-face and phone calls). S2A and S2B stand for private and public monolog respectively (see Kallen and Kirk 2008).

[5] 'Irish English' and 'Hiberno-English' are used interchangeably throughout this chapter.

[6] The pragmatic marker *like* at right periphery has received different names in the literature. Kallen (2006) refers to it as 'clause-', 'element-' and 'utterance-final *like*' interchangeably. Corrigan (2010) terms it 'sentence-final'. Schweinberger (2012) favors the name 'clause-final *like*'. Bartlett (2013), in turn, refers to it as 'constituent-final *like*'. Throughout this chapter, I will use 'element-' and 'utterance-final *like*' interchangeably to avoid repetition. I choose these names over the more common 'clause-final *like*' because not all of the instances that I have analyzed appear after a clause proper (e.g. "Next page *like*" <S1B-006$B>). Moreover, 'element-' and 'utterance-final' fit Degand's (2014, 154-159) definition of right periphery more neatly.

[7] Freeware concordance program available at:
http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/software.html.

[8] An anonymous reviewer posed an interesting question regarding clause length and statistical normalization: since element-final *like* is, in principle, a clausal or sentential issue, statistical normalization per number of clauses, rather than per number of words, "would give even more support to the author's claim since the average number of words per clause is expected to be higher in public communication than in private texts." The reviewer does raise a very interesting

issue and I would certainly reinforce my claim. However, calculating clause numbers would be rather problematic. The corpus texts do not provide the total number of clauses per text, and trying to calculate them would be particularly complicated for spoken texts, where multiple speakers engage in conversation and there is a great amount of overlapping and truncated speech. Moreover, as explained in note 6, not all of the instances that I have analyzed appear after a clause proper (which is why I chose the terms 'element-' and 'utterance-' to refer to the marker in final position).

[9] All of the information pertaining to the texts and the speakers was retrieved from the ICE-Ireland *User's Guide* (Kallen and Kirk 2008).

[10] Codes <X> … </X>, used in the ICE corpora to mark up non-corpus material, which means that (B) does not "meet the criteria of inclusion in ICE-Ireland" (Kallen and Kirk 2008, 15). Thus, example (12) has not been taken into account for this study.

[11] Although Amador-Moreno's assessment fits well with others, such as Hickey's (2005) account of Dublin English, her claims need to be further validated: her work is based on the analysis of Paul Howard's novels and not on 'real' spoken data.

[12] The Downing Street Declaration—signed on December 15, 1993 by the British Prime Minister, John Major, and the Irish Taoiseach, Albert Reynolds—recognized both the right of the people of Ireland to self-determination, and that Northern Ireland would be transferred to the Republic of Ireland if and only if a majority of its population favored such a move. This treaty brought about the IRA's ceasefire declaration of 1994.