Vztahy irského a anglického jazyka v období let 1890 - 1930
BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

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Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání

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Plzeň 2021

UNIVERSITY OF WEST BOHEMIA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
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The relations of Irish and English in Ireland in the period of 1890 - 1930
BACHELOR THESIS

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Pilsen 2021

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor doc. Justin Quinn,
Ph.D. for his guidance, patience, valuable advice and time spent on the thesis.

ABSTRACT

Karpíšek, Vratislav. University of West Bohemia. April, 2021. The relations of Irish and English in Ireland in the period of 1890 – 1930. Supervisor: doc. Justin Quinn, Ph.D.

Irish and English in Ireland have coexisted in Ireland for centuries and the aim of this thesis is to show the historical development of their relations, the status they enjoyed and their role in forming Irish identity. The period between the years 1890 and 1930 will be described in detail in regards to language use, politics, educational and sociolinguistic factors. Education was also important in the revival of Irish, and for its attempt to stop the language shift to English. The thesis also aims to explain the specific position of the Gaeltacht and Northern Ireland. Ultimately, the thesis provides answers and reasons of language shift in Ireland and attempts to explain the most important trends in language use in Ireland.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Irish and English have been present in Ireland for centuries. The aim of this thesis is to describe their coexistence during one period and explain some of the linguistic and political processes connected with the language shift, which took place in Ireland. The language shift in Ireland was a long process, which lasted for several centuries. English was introduced to Ireland approximately in the 12th century for political reasons. Initially, English was limited to towns of economic and political importance; however, following the Reformation and other major historic events in the 16th and the 17th century, English became more widespread and in the 19th century, was the main language of the Irish people.

Apart from history, this thesis is focused on the role of political forces and educational institutions on the status and use of Irish and English and provides an explanation of tendencies and trends in language use at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, concentrating on the first three decades of the 20th century. Education played an important role in the language revival; the policies and methods of the school system are analysed along with their impact on the linguistic situation. The role of religion is mentioned to explain how one's religious affiliation influenced language use and how it was involved in the revival of Irish.

Complex political changes in this period divided Ireland into two separate countries. In the final part, two important territorial units in relation to Irish and English are touched upon, one with a considerable native Irish-speaking population (the Gaeltacht) and the other one where Irish disappeared almost completely (Northern Ireland). Ultimately, the goal is to present the reader with an explanation of the most important linguistic changes in Ireland in the period from 1890 to 1930 and find the factors that created the contemporary situation in Ireland.

This topic connects well with post-colonial studies and is closely related to political and linguistic imperialism we have analysed within a cultural section of the English studies of my bachelor's degree programme, as well as the topic of migration. Great Britain greatly influenced Ireland for centuries and we find many similarities between both cultures. Moreover, I would argue that the topic of migration is deeply connected to how English became a matter of importance for those who wished to emigrate to Anglophone countries

chiefly in the 19th century, such as the U.S.A. or Canada, which caused a general transformation of perception of Irish and the majority considered English to be more useful in their lives.

I chose this topic in order to analyse a phenomenon I have been interested for a long time. I had little information about why English is dominant in Ireland and how that came about; it was obvious that there must have been a certain transformation given the different cultural background and political will to separate from Great Britain. My initial interest in this topic was shallow and did not provide me with a satisfactory explanation, therefore I decided to go more in depth and discover the reason for it.

I am also interested in the relation between majority and minority languages in general, their status and the strategies employed to preserve them so that the linguistic environment remains diverse, indeed, every language expresses a particular extralinguistic reality, and it is worth preserving.

A few examples I can provide are the relations of German and Sorbian languages in Germany, Russian and Belarusian in Belarus or a number of Turkic and Finno-Ugric languages and majority Russian in Russia. The case of Belarus is also one of a massive language shift; even though Belarusian is an official language in Belarus, it is spoken by a tiny minority natively and most active speakers are enthusiasts who wish to preserve the cultural heritage of Belarus. Therefore, I find this research beneficial for my understanding of factors that lead to a decline of a language and what measures can be adopted to stop it. I also learnt a lot about the role of education in language use and its impact on social and political life of a country.

2. HISTORY

This chapter will map the history of Irish and English on the territory of Ireland with special attention to the period 1890 – 1930. The ultimate aim of this thesis is to describe how both languages influenced one another and how they coexisted in Ireland. It is essential for us to know the historical development in order to understand the language shift and overall linguistic processes.

Both Irish and English were present in Ireland for centuries and enjoyed different degrees of prestige; the number of speakers of the respective languages fluctuated. There is a tendency to associate a language with a nation as nations tend to use languages as a sign of identity. Throughout the course of this thesis, certain traits or characteristics are attributed to nations or to particular groups of people inasmuch as any language directly reflects its speakers and the particular reality they live in therefore it gives an insight into how the nation thinks, what considers to be important and describes its values (Suleiman, 2002, p. 27). These, however, are not meant to be understood as essentialism.

Also, I will use the terms minority and majority language. A minority language is one which is not the most widespread. Such languages are mostly used at home among family members or in a community actively or passively utilising it for various reasons and occasions. They also do not enjoy such prestige and in order to function flawlessly in a society dominated by a majority language, it is almost always necessary to have a command of the language of the majority so as not to be excluded from social and political life. Such a distinction of minority and majority languages is defined chiefly by the number of speakers actively using the language and its official status (Suleiman, 2002, p. 27).

It is impossible to determine the date of the first contact as there were connections between both languages ever since their emergence due to relative geographical proximity. The real change came in 12th century when Anglo-Norman attacks reached the shores of Ireland. Gradually, more territory fell under English administration. However, Irish was the main language and many English settlers were sooner or later linguistically and culturally assimilated. Such a trend continued for many centuries onwards. Reacting to this, a legal document called Statutes of Kilkenny (1366/67), aimed to distinguish between the Irish and English settlers and, above all, keep the new settlers to Ireland loyal to the

Crown. The act was one of the first major attempts to limit the Irish language as we can see below:

> If any English or Irish living amongst the English use the Irish language amongst themselves contrary to this ordinance and thereof be attaint, that his lands and tenements, if he have any, be seized into the hands of his immediate lord until he come to one of the places of our lord the King and find sufficient surety to adopt and use the English language and then that he have restitution of his said lands by writ to issue out of the same place. In the case that such person have not lands or tenements, then his body shall be taken by some of the officers of our lord the King and committed to the next gaol, there to remain until he or another in his name find sufficient surety in the manner aforesaid (Statute of Kilkenny, 1366).

However, unless English was absolutely needed for trade or other situations, an ordinary person had no reason to use it in place of their mother tongue. Furthermore, at that time governments were rarely concerned with the language of such people, hence the impact was quite weak (Hindley, 1991, p. 3).

The political crisis caused by Henry VIII and his successors who imposed Reformation on the majority Catholic Irish was met with a number of uprisings and much stronger accent on the English language as a unifying element in Ireland. Henry VIII was also declared the King of Ireland. The Irish perceived it as an attempt to limit their freedom and tie them politically closer to England. Protestantism was enforced as a state religion. English-speaking settlers were given the lands of rebellious Irish families, thus strengthening their position (Ó Laoire, 2005, p. 196-7).

During the Tudor period (1485 – 1603), the English viewed the Irish and their language as inferior and insignificant. The Irish were rebellious subjects for obvious reasons, such as different faith, language, ethnic affiliation etc., therefore the English rulers considered it essential to impose their own government, laws and public order to resolve the issue once and for all. The Reformation furthered anglicisation as vernacular languages penetrated the ecclesiastical sphere and the position of Latin became less important; although, Henry VIII's daughter Elizabeth provided a press for the Irish translation of the Bible and the work was finished between the years 1602-3. The general tendency, however, remained identical (Hindley, 1991, pp. 5-6).

One more tool of anglicisation were plantations (Munster, Ulster), as a great number of settlers was sent to work in Ireland and replace the rebellious Irish population. Such a community within a larger community could probably work, but the English-speaking population did not increase over the years and under the influence of the surrounding Irish element, they were assimilated and the entire idea collapsed. In the 16th century, most English speakers resided in the capital Dublin and settlements around it, as well as in several other towns of political or geographical importance. English was thus a language spoken solely in urban areas, whilst rural areas were Irish speaking (Ó Laoire, 2005, p. 197). It is evident from the Figure 1 (Hickey, 2011, p. 82) that the English-speaking population resided chiefly in ports and towns of political and commercial importance such as Belfast, Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford.

Figure 1

The ethnolinguistic situation in Ireland, circa 1500

Key

⊞ Core Irish-Speaking Zone

⬚ Transitional Multilingual Zone

☐ Core English-speaking Zone
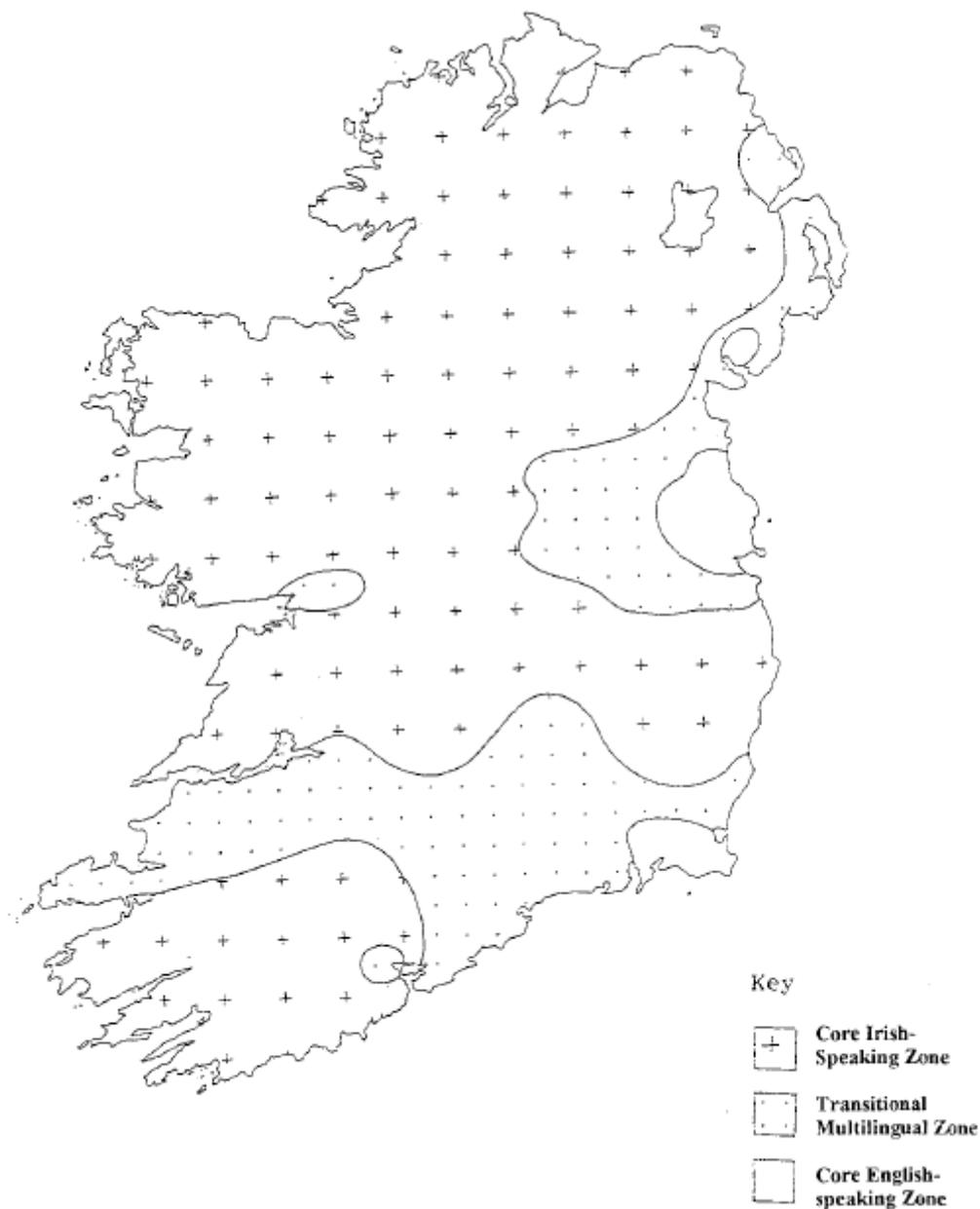
      Apart from that, an event called the Flight of the Earls (1607) created a political vacuum when Irish noblemen were driven out of Ulster and left for Europe. They were replaced by English and Scottish settlers and the Irish-speaking population was either anglicised or driven out of the best land to make room for English-speaking population in the same way it occurred in the south of Ireland. The Flight of the Earls became a major

cause of the decline of Irish in Ulster and shaped its future distinct position within Ireland (Hickey, 2011, pp. 110-11).

The policy of giving the English speakers preferential treatment assumed that by adopting English, the subjects would also adopt the new religion more easily and it would make them more loyal to the Crown. However, English officials were aware that it is no use preaching in a language the people do not understand. For this reason, it was recommended that ministers should preach and pray in Irish in those places where English was not understood. This is summarised in words of Sir Henry Sidney: "in choice of which ministers for the remote places where the English tongue is not understood, it is most necessary that such be chosen as can speak Irish. For which, search would be made, first and speedily, in your own Universities" (Calendar of the state papers relating to Ireland 1574–85; as cited in Crowley, 2000, p. 31).

The 17th century is connected with the Stuart dynasty. The trends remained identical to those set by Tudors. English spread to every part of Ireland, which was caused by various land reforms in that time and the preceding centuries. Many Irish natives were replaced by English-speaking settlers. Education was available only in English. Army, governmental institutions and law was dominated by English, as well as most Protestant parishes (Smyth, 2007, pp. 403-4). In this period, Smyth believes that approximately one third of the country's population could speak English; nonetheless many of these could also speak Irish. Approximately 80% of the population could speak Irish, whilst many were proficient in English as well. Bilingualism of this sort was the result of practical and economic factors and created a curious linguistic situation (Smyth, 2007, p. 408). Most translations of this and preceding period were from English to Irish, which further highlights the prestige and political and economic importance it enjoyed. As for literature generally, the number of English books published highly outnumbered the quantity of books in Irish, thus creating imbalance in this bilingual environment. Given the obvious political and economic position of power of English, the outlook was bleak for the Irish language.

The 18th century was marked by oppressive laws intended to limit the rights of Irish-speakers and Catholics in Ireland. Politically, however, it was a time of peace. The general approach to English shifts and many parents sent their children to study in English schools to secure their prospects (MacDonagh, 1983, p. 104). The gentry of eastern and central Ireland were fully anglicised, even though the native population was still

predominantly Irish-speaking. Catholic identity was almost always connected with the ability to speak Irish and this applies to all territory of Ireland including Ulster, which usually stands apart from the general picture of Ireland due to its historically high concentration of Protestants. Approximately around the year 1750 Irish commenced its decline and English gained the upper hand in a notional linguistic struggle. At the end of the 19th century, just about a half of the population consisted of monolingual Irish speakers (MacDonagh, 1983, p. 104). An illustrative quote below was chosen for its explicitness with which it describes a language situation in Ireland at the turn of the century.

> The English language is pretty generally in use throughout the county, and we very seldom meet with any person, who is not capable of speaking it with some degree of fluency; yet, when together, the peasants all converse, and if they have a story to tell, or a complaint to make, they still wish to be heard in Irish; understanding the idioms of that language better than they possibly can those of English, their story can be conveyed more expressively, and, of course, work more upon the feelings of their auditors; indeed there is no language more copiously supplied with pathetic expressions, or more calculated to touch the feelings, than that of the Irish; so much so, that it has become a proverbial expression, "Plead for your life in Irish" (Thompson, 2016, pp. 94-5).

As we slowly approach the period of our main interest, we may note that the pace at which Irish was ceding to English at ever greater speed. At the beginning of the 19th century, precisely speaking in 1800, the Act of Union was passed, which deprived Ireland of its parliament, further limiting its rights and autonomy. It was a reaction to the attempt to overthrow British rule in 1798. The Irish language was losing ground due to numerous factors, the main ones being schooling in English (to illustrate, speaking Irish at school was prohibited and pupils were even beaten for such "bad behaviour" (Doyle, 2015, p. 132), the Catholic Church, whose mission began to be led in English, general approach of the masses to English as a necessity and the Great Famine (1845 – 1849), which had enormous consequences (Ó Tuathaigh, 1972, p. 157-8). More than a million people passed away and many survivors emigrated. English at that time became so widespread that native Irish speakers were no longer in the majority. The census in 1851 was the first attempt to record the number of Irish speakers officially. Monoglot Irish speakers were scarcely 5% of the

total population and the number was steadily dropping in the next censuses. The consequences of the Great Famine are displayed in Figure 2 (Hickey, 2011, p. 113) and Figure 3 (Hickey, 2011, p. 112) below.
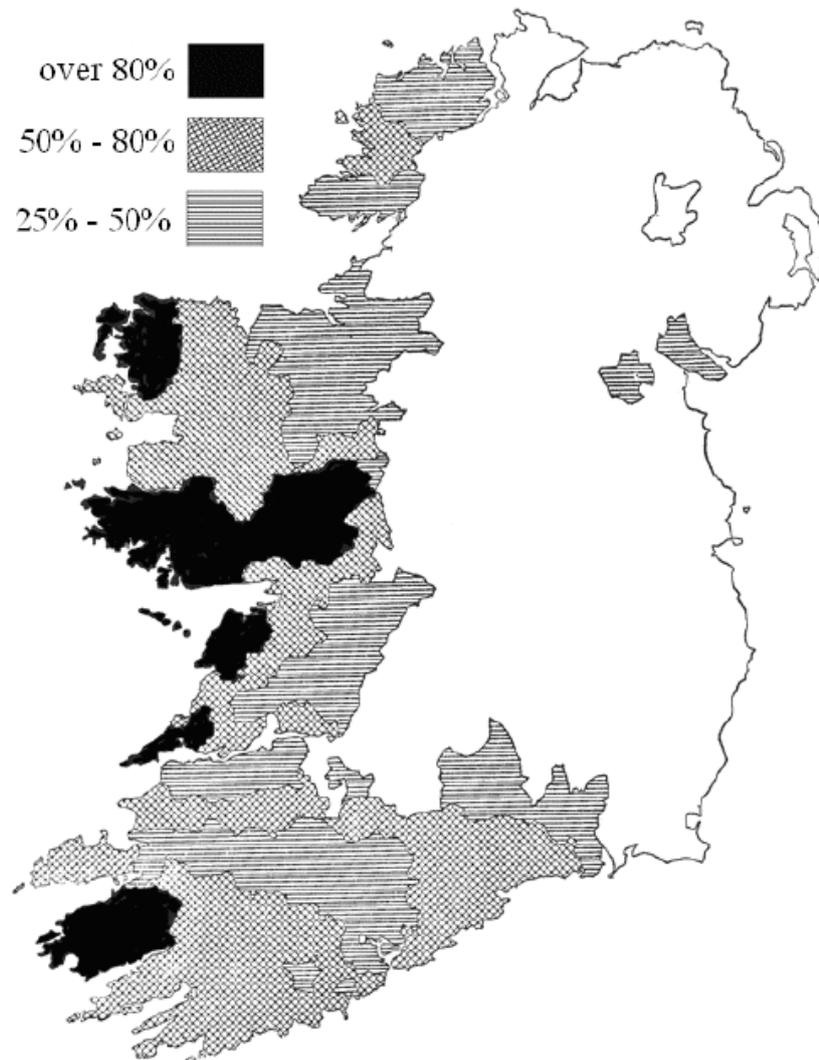
Figure 2

Irish-speaking areas prior to Great Famine divided by districts
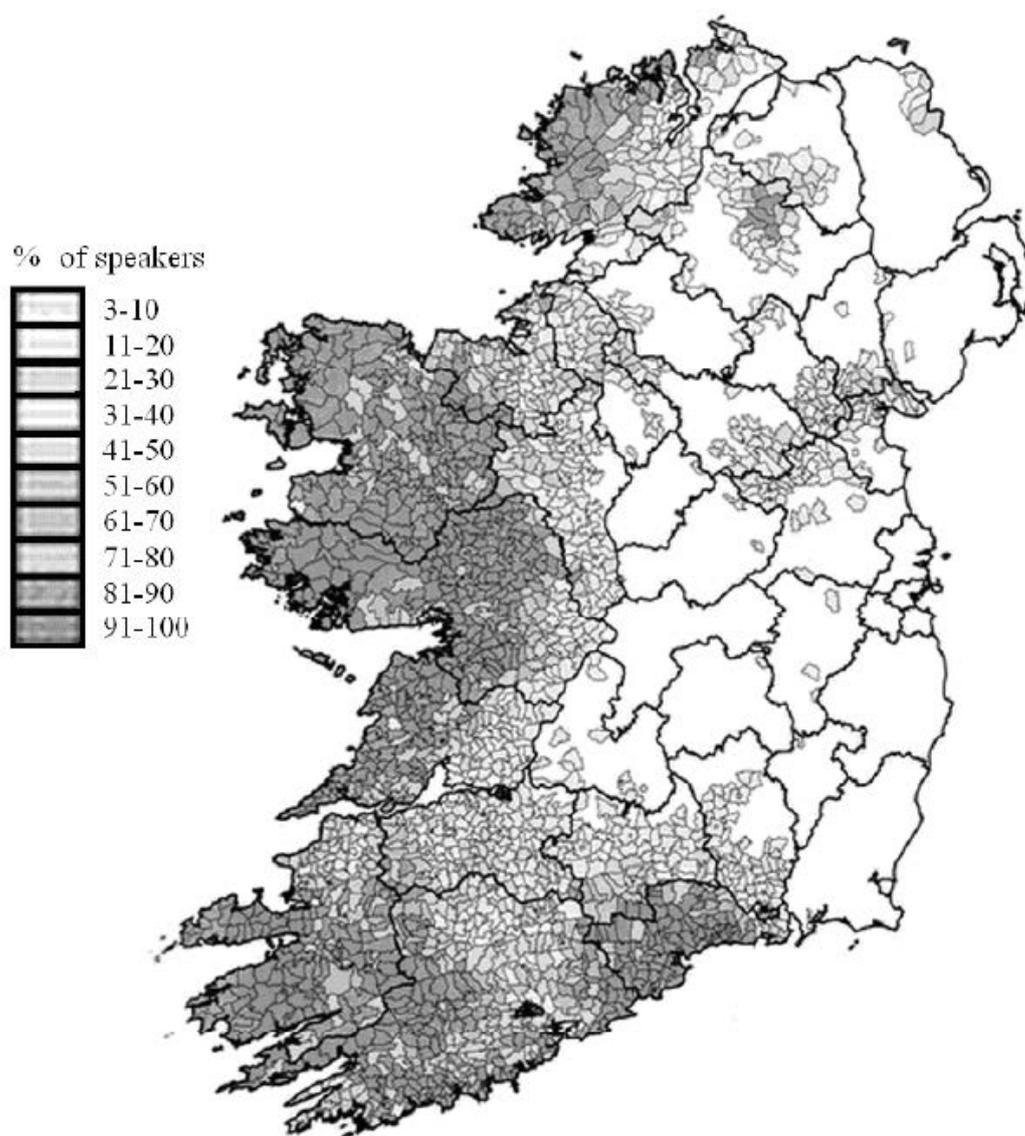
Figure 3

Irish-speaking areas after Great Famine based on the 1851 census

During the first half of the 19th century, the prevailing opinion was that if one wished to succeed in the world, one must do it through the medium of English. Gradually, Irish began to be associated with poverty and English with wealth (Ó Cuív, 1969, p. 82). Due to the Famine and adverse living conditions, the Irish thus increasingly chose to use English as it provided multiple economic advantages. Moreover, many Irish people dreamt of a future in the United States or Canada, which were again countries where it was necessary to have a command of English (Akenson, 1991, p. 136). It was no exception

when people rather spoke broken English to their children instead of passing Irish on to them which they usually knew better (Ní Mhunghaile, 2015). The lifestyle and language of Catholics and Protestants was blending because of the unifying force of English and a way of life, cultural values and a perspective on life it carried (Akenson, 1991, pp. 136-8).

To present an example of the radical language shift, Eoghan Ó Gramhnaigh born in Athboy in 1863 stated that "thirteen out of fifteen people who could speak Irish in his town in 1880 are now dead" (Ó Cuív, 1993, p. 27). The western part of Ireland was especially stricken and the illustrative quote describes one of the last waves in terms of language shift towards English.

Politically, there were attempts to liberate the Irish due to inspiration from Europe and its revolutionary year of 1848 and consecutive movements, the goal of which was to create autonomy for smaller nations. Irish nationalism was born and gathered momentum during the 19th century; however, the English language had already become a matter of identity and the main tool of communication amongst Irishmen of that period (Ó Laoire, 1999, p. 198). This English was however employed in a manner depending on the writer. For instance, J. M. Synge based his characters' speech on Irish English vocabulary and speech patterns, while W. B. Yeats included Irish themes in his works, and wrote in standard English. This movement is called the Anglo-Irish revival and it was particularly strong in the next century and the last few decades of the 19th century.

DEVELOPMENTS OF 1890 - 1930

The foundation of the Gaelic League which strove to revive and protect endangered Irish was a milestone. It did not emerge from nowhere; it was rather a continuation of projects started years earlier. Let us briefly mention one of these efforts (Lyons, 1985; Doyle, 2015, p. 165).

One of them was the Society for the Preservation of the Irish language (SPIL) founded in Dublin to preserve the living language (rather than just recording it in a written form). It had the support of people representing a broad spectrum of society and the main intention was to cultivate Irish wherever it was still alive. That was to be achieved through education. The Society requested Irish to be an optional language in primary schools. This was accepted, however there were few teaching aids and many of the teachers did not speak Irish. On top of that, parents would pay extra for the child to attend these Irish

classes. The Society was ready to overcome these obstacles and published *An chéad leabhar Gaedhilge* (First Irish Book); this was an imperfect text-book, but it was the first of its kind and, served as inspiration for future publishers.

Doyle (2015, p. 167) also describes that "right through the 1880s and 1890s the above-mentioned Society pressed for the appointment of professors of Irish in the various teacher-training colleges. In 1892 a motion was passed at the annual conference of the National teachers, which made Irish a part of the curriculum of the teacher-training colleges, and in 1897 the first professor of Irish was appointed in the main training centre, St Patrick's College in Drumcondra in Dublin." These events improved the position of Irish in schools and enabled the wider employment of Irish in following years.

It should be noted that the daily attendance in the Irish National System of Education was about 500 thousand pupils with only a small fraction receiving any Irish instruction (Akenson, 2014, p. 140).

An approach akin to that proposed by The Society was adopted in secondary schools. The problem was that authors of the curriculum overlooked the abilities of pupils, and their visions of Irish learning were not realistic. Irish was fully accepted as a language of instruction in 1900. In tertiary education it appeared only sporadically and chiefly focused on older literature rather than modern linguistic situation.

The other main area where the SPIL wished to make its mark was the publishing of new and old literature. In 1882 a breakaway faction of the Society, the Gaelic Union, published the first edition of *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* (The Gaelic Journal), a bilingual periodical. Apart from that, publishing of folk songs became quite popular. When the Gaelic League arose, the Society was marginalised due to its restrained position to Great Britain and fell out of favour completely during the first half of the 20th century.

The Gaelic League (*Conradh na Gaelige*) was founded in 1893 with the main objective to retain the language at all costs. It emphasised that it must be spoken to survive. This policy was reflected in an unusual manner. All Irishmen were a priori potential Irish speakers and their desire to speak Irish, regardless of their competence, made them Irish speakers. It was a pragmatic approach considering most Irishmen were neither able nor willing to speak Irish at that time. Douglas Hyde, the co-founder and president of the Gaelic League gave a number of speeches, in which he clearly states the necessity to preach Gospel in Irish-speaking districts and to develop the living language by both speaking it and reading it. Over time, the number of branches of the movement increased,

which resulted in more cultural activity, e.g. folk music concerts or trips to the countryside (Doyle, 2015, pp. 177-80).

> Our primary object should be to make the Gaelic language live in the homes of the people […] We must directly appeal to the common people […] Large numbers will not come far to hear us. We must therefore address small numbers, organizing our movement on, perhaps, a parochial basis […] To supply men and funds an organization is necessary (GJ, March 1893: 179; as cited in Ó Huallacháin 1994, p. 52).

Hyde's appeal was heard primarily by the urban middle class who believed in progress and education, and considered themselves nation-builders. The movement presented itself as non-political, which allowed it to accept broad variety of members. Patrick Pearse summarised the endeavours of the Gaelic League as a response to a question "Cad is cuspóir do Chonnradh na Gaedhilge?": "Gaedhil do chur ag labhairt Gaedhilge". (What is the aim of the Gaelic League? To have Irish people speaking Irish) (Ó Súilleabháin, 1981, p. 177, as cited in Kelly, 2002, p. 142).

Publishing played an important role in spreading awareness of the Irish cause. Printed documents were the main source of propaganda and the Gaelic League published teaching aids, folk-song collections and text-books. It encouraged printing new literature and most books were equipped with a glossary for Irish learners. Pamphlets enjoyed particular popularity and they were utilised to spread the Irish national idea amongst as many people as possible. There was also a weekly newspaper called *Fáinne an Lae* (The break of day) founded in 1898. However, there was a dispute with the original owner and a new newspaper *An Claidheamh Soluis* (The sword of light) was established by the Gaelic League. Both journals were bilingual, and they inaugurated a new phase when there was a consistent Irish text published every week accessible to broad audience. In 1903, Patrick Pearse, an important figure of the Irish national movement, became the editor of *An Claidheamh Soluis* newspaper. Since the newspaper was based in Dublin, there was little knowledge of the real needs of the rural Irish-speaking communities. However, *An Claidheamh Soluis* would prove influential . The ideas presented were original and topical, and its goal was to present an Irish perspective. Aside from plays, poetry and prose, there were also "Simple Lessons in Irish" written by Fr. Eugene O' Growney. Although the

amount of learning material was insufficient, any incentive to promote Irish was more than welcome (Doyle, 2015, pp. 181-85; Kelly, 2002, pp. 87-102).

Ten years later, Patrick Pearse wrote:

> I have come to the conclusion that the Gaelic League, as the Gaelic League, is a spent force; and I am glad of it. I do not mean that no work remains for the Gaelic League, or that the Gaelic League is no longer equal to work; I mean that the vital work to be done in the new Ireland will be done not so much by the Gaelic League itself as by the men and movements that have sprung from the Gaelic League or have received from the Gaelic League a new baptism and a new life of grace (Crowley, 2000, pp. 216-17).

This decline of the organisation was caused by a number of factors, one of which was the pressure to engage in politics. As I mentioned earlier, the movement was chiefly apolitical and inclusive of as many members as possible. However, the political situation was escalating and people increasingly demanded a clear stance against Great Britain and English. Officially, the status quo remained identical in the face of Easter Rising and other events following up until the 1920's, however numerous members of the Gaelic League were politically engaged and openly anti-British (O'Callaghan, 2009, pp. 11-39).

The Irish language has developed to be a strong tool of opposition and resistance to the English influence and a vital part of Irish nationalism.

When the Irish Free State was established as a political entity in 26 of Ireland's 32 counties, many things changed. Most of Ulster was not included in the Irish Free State for historic and demographical reasons that will be discussed separately. The most important change was the establishment of the Irish language as the national language and its position in the constitution. It was made compulsory in the school system and partly in public administration. This change by no means meant the elimination of English from society; even a nationalist party like Sinn Féin did not consider it viable. Knowledge of Irish was not widespread and not even all deputies of the Irish Free State parliament had good command of the Irish language.

From the point of view of status, Irish became official and according to the Constitution of the Irish Free State (Saorstát Eireann) Act, 1922, Article 4,

The National language of the Irish Free State (Saorstát Éireann) is the Irish language, but the English language shall be equally recognised as an official language. Nothing in this Article shall prevent special provisions being made by the Parliament of the Irish Free State (otherwise called and herein generally referred to as the "Oireachtas") for districts or areas in which only one language is in general use.

Irish was thus defined to be a national language. This turnabout allowed the Irish government to not only continue revivalist policies, but also provided a chance to further develop and broaden the use of Irish. Even though the English no longer had official status, it remained the main language of the Irish Free State in practice (Máille, 1990; Chríost, 2013, pp. 112-22).

An interesting and a visionary thought was expressed in 1920 by Thomas MacDonagh who outlined his conclusions in regards to English language and literature in Ireland and how it can become national.

First, that an Anglo-Irish literature, worthy of a special designation, could only come when English had become the language of the Irish people, mainly of Gaelic stock; and when the literature was from, by, of, to and for the Irish people.
Second, that the ways of life and the ways of thought of the Irish people – the manners, customs, traditions and outlook, religious, social, moral, – have important differences from the ways of life and thought which have found expression in other English literature.
Third, that the English language in Ireland has an individuality of its own, and the rhythm of Irish speech a distinct character (Crowley, 2000, pp. 219-21).

The census of 1926 in Irish Free State surveyed the ability to speak Irish. Hindley (1991, p. 21) states that there was an attempt to distinguish native speakers from learners in order to distinguish between these two asymmetrical groups; ultimately, this was not possible and everybody declaring any knowledge of Irish was listed as an Irish speaker. Native speakers were returned as 50% more numerous at ages 10-14 and 5-9 and with other discrepancies, it was impossible to publish such data due to its implausibility. The number of monoglot Irish speakers dropped from 20,953 in 1901 (32 counties) to 12,460 in

1926 (26 counties) and then magically grew to 18,283 (26 counties) in 1936 after which the distinction amongst various forms of command of Irish ceased to be made and published. To illustrate, in Figure 4 (Central Statistics Office, 2020) there is a detailed table of figures concerning the number of speakers and its development throughout the history of censuses in Ireland in the period of our interest. Figure 5 (Chríost, 2013, p. 114) demonstrates the extent of Irish-speaking territory after the 1926 census.

Figure 4

Census figures

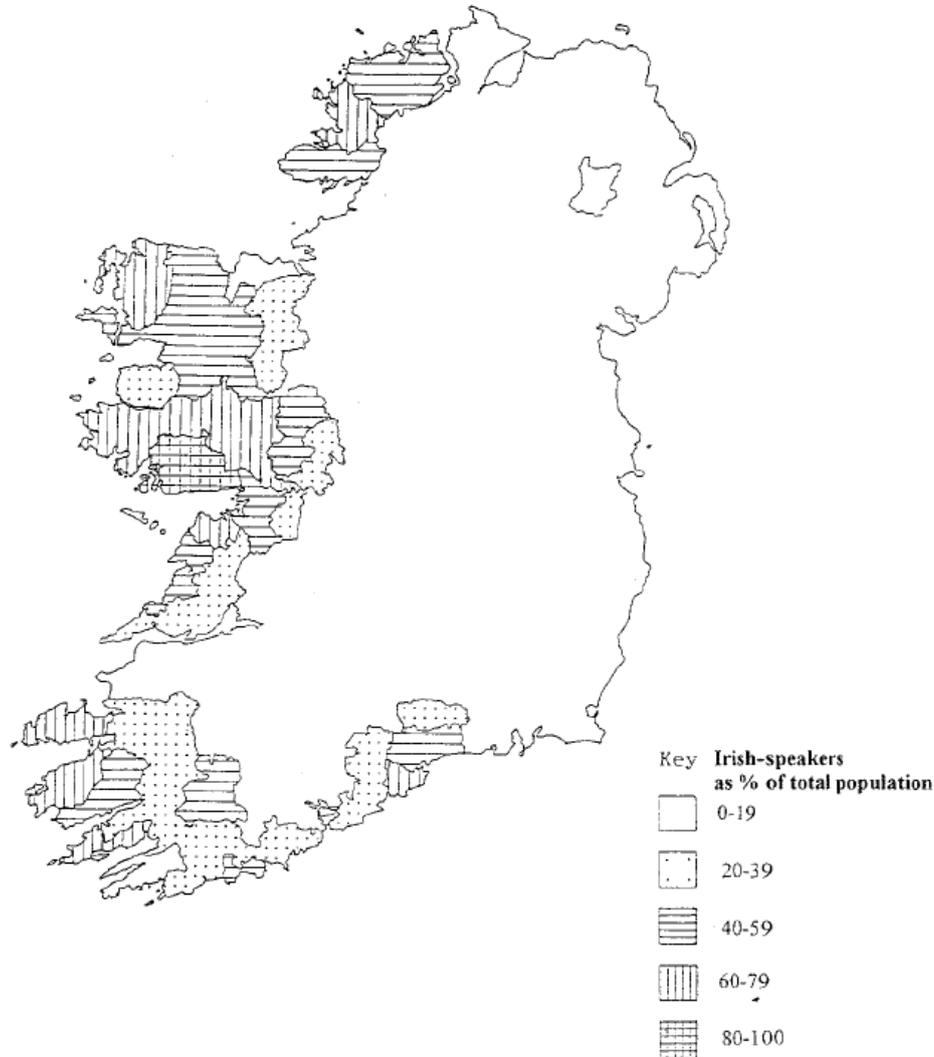| Year	Irish speakers	Non-Irish speakers
1881	924,781	2,945,239
1891	664,387	2,804,307
1901	619,710	2,602,113
1911	553,717	2,585,971
1926	543,511	2,428,481

Figure 5

The Irish language in Ireland after 1926 census

Key — Irish-speakers as % of total population
- 0-19
- 20-39
- 40-59
- 60-79
- 80-100

In conclusion, noticeable changes of the linguistic situation took place over the course of history. Irish, a primary language of the absolute majority of the Irish population for centuries, was gradually replaced by English due to political and socioeconomic factors. The beginning of Irish's decline can be traced back to the 18th century and from that time on, it progressed and English started to gain the upper hand. Notwithstanding the revivalist efforts of the 19th and 20th centuries, little has been achieved and English has maintained its dominant position amongst the Irish.

Following Independence, both languages coexisted in the country. The tendencies listed above continued and the language shift was far too quick and advanced to be stopped

or averted. Even though the Irish language suddenly enjoyed an improved official position, this hardly affected the overall linguistic situation in Ireland. To put it bluntly, Irish became the national language whilst English remained the primary language in Ireland. Let us now proceed to education and its impact on the linguistic situation in Ireland.

3. EDUCATION AND RELIGION

In this chapter, I am going to describe the changes to the linguistic situation of Irish with regard to education. While the official status of both languages was developing and the formation of the Irish Free State brought new developments, the roots of this change reach back further. Education is one of the central indicators of language use and is actively engaged in language planning. The school system helps us understand the status the language enjoys and a population's knowledge of it. Hence it is an important factor in researching the mutual influence of English and Irish. I will also briefly address the role of religion in language use and its impact on education and the revival is touched upon.

Education was at the centre of the language-revivalists's attention and interest. The role of school in the propagation of Irish was significant. During the 1880s and 1890s the Society for the Preservation of the Irish language promoted the appointment of professors of Irish in teacher-training colleges. In 1892 a motion was passed at the annual conference of National teachers that, made Irish a part of the curriculum of the teacher-training colleges, and in 1897 the first professor of Irish was appointed in the main training centre, St Patrick's College in Dublin (Doyle, 2015, p. 167).

One demand was to make all tuition bilingual and abolish regulations regarding the usage of Irish. In 1904, such a bilingual programme was approved by the Commissioners of National Education in Irish-speaking districts and it was to be launched in the school year 1906-7 with 36 schools operating according to the programme and 110 schools of this type in 1908 (O'Donoghue & O'Doherty, 2019, p. 53). In comparison with the school year 1921-22, 239 schools of this were in operation. However, less than 10% of students applied to be examined in the Irish language. Nevertheless, the number of students taking Irish at secondary school grew rapidly after National University of Ireland (NUI) introduced a compulsory examination in Irish for matriculation in 1913 (Kelly, 2002, p. 7).

The bilingual programme was welcomed in Irish-speaking parts of Ireland and the programme was even supported by the local Catholic clergy. On the other hand, most monolingual English-speaking parents were sceptical of it, fearing that its implementation would handicap the pupils' future economic prospects. (O'Donoghue & O'Doherty, 2019, pp. 44-49).

Moreover, there were increasing calls for more Irish in schools within the Gaelic League, which was active in promoting the use of Irish and was involved in helping

teachers and offering language courses to anyone interested. Patrick Pearse, one of the major figures of the revival, argued that not only should be Irish saved, but also it should be introduced in the purely English-speaking regions as a second language, saying:

> where English is the home language, it must of necessity be the 'first language' in the schools, but I would have a compulsory 'second language', satisfied that this second language in five-sixths of the schools would be Irish. And I would see the 'second language' be used as a medium of instruction from the earliest stages. In this way and in no other way that I can imagine can Irish be restored as a vernacular to English-speaking Ireland (O'Donoghue & O'Doherty, 2019, p. 47).

By that time, political force of Sinn Féin supported educational efforts to promote Irish and encouraged compulsory Irish on all levels of school system. Kelly (2002, p. 8) also states that "following the formation of the first *Dáil* in 1919, the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) passed a resolution forming a group of representatives in order to frame a programme for the national schools in accordance with Irish ideals and conditions."

It should be noted that the daily attendance in the Irish National System of Education at the beginning of the 20th century was about 500,000 pupils with only a small fraction receiving any Irish instruction (Akenson, 2014, p. 346).

The Gaelic League was aware that the majority of its members were adults who had not learnt Irish at school. Hence, local Irish classes were established. The teachers instructing these classes were called *múinteoirí taistil* (travelling teachers) with another type of teachers called *timirí*, who were appointed to English-speaking districts to both instruct and promote Irish and its usage in the respective district. Teachers in these classes used progressive and from our point of view modern and effective methods, such as the Direct Method where a pupil is immersed in the language from the beginning, avoiding all use of the student's L1, along with an emphasis on speaking rather than writing. The task of such a teacher was also to bring up a generation of patriots and culturally contribute to the community. It was more of a vocation than a proper job from a modern perspective. Teachers had to cycle from one place to another and the salary was modest. Nonetheless, this allowed many adults to learn Irish, thus fostering in them a sense of the linguistic and

national identity; the ultimate aim of this was to partake in the national movement that would eventually lead to a free Ireland (Doyle, 2015, pp. 185-7).

However, the activity of the Gaelic League was also criticised. For example, in one of his letters, J. M. Synge expressed his anger with the League saying that their doctrine was based on ignorance and fraud, while old Irish speakers are dying and children will not use two languages when they can just as well use only one, that is English (Crowley, 2000, p. 211).

The most important change taking place after Independence was the establishment of the Irish language as the national language and its position in the constitution in 1922. It was made compulsory in the school system and partly in public administration.

When we discussed the rather slow development of representation of Irish in school system prior to Independence, we could see there were many obstacles preventing the full incorporation of Irish into the school system. Now, after Independence, Irish became compulsory practically without exception and was a requirement for many positions in public administration and in third-level entrance examinations (Macardle, 1968, pp. 951-2). It was expected that both teachers and pupils will be enthusiastic about the instruction and will be motivated to utilise the language as much as possible. The central idea of a "new Irish school" was to introduce pupils to Irish values and the richness of its culture, such as music, history and traditions (Kelly, 2002, p. 16-17). Often, there was an accent on the Catholic identity as the antithesis to the British Protestant model (Tierney, 2016, p. 20). Also, in certain cases pupils were supported by the government and given a possibly unfair advantage if they took examinations answering in Irish, as is stated in 1923–1924 Rules and Programmes (Department of Education [1924] Rules and Programmes, pp. 20-21). This might have been true initially, but in the long run, there was an imbalance between the aspirations and ambitions of nationalist leaders and social reality. This is reflected mainly in the fact that regardless of the officially expressed need for enthusiasm and encouragement of both teachers and students, it was not evident at what pace and in what way the changes were supposed to take place. For instance, there were objections addressed to the Minister of Education Eoin Mac Néill in 1924 that Irish was introduced in schools too quickly. A few years later, James Dillon, then a deputy for the National Centre Party, publicly said that enforcing compulsory Irish before public opinion was prepared would be formed, was going to "kill the Irish absolutely, finally and irrevocably" (Comisiún um Athbheochan na Gaelige, 1963; as cited in Kelly, 2002, p. 19). James Dillon

also warned of growing resentment amongst the population. On the other hand, some revivalists called for quicker implementation of new measures and considered learning Irish a "national duty."

Notwithstanding the fact Irish became compulsory, parents could object against Irish or English being taught to their children and their wishes were supposed to be respected. Critics of such an approach were convinced that parents should not have a say in such matters of national importance, and that compulsory Irish was necessary for a success of the revival (Kelly, 2002, p. 19). A revival-conscious approach was initially dominant, but there was an increasing number of voices which sought to change this approach. One argument against compulsory Irish was based on the idea that if Irish should be taught forcefully and globally, the chances were that pupils would come to dislike the language and be unwilling to use it outside the school. Irish was to stay compulsory in Gaeltacht. An objection was also raised against the strict rules for evaluating teachers.

A core handbook was called *Notes for Teachers: Irish* (1933) and it designated the Direct Method mentioned above for teaching Irish. It advised that Irish should not become merely a school subject. Such was the emphasis on speaking that writing was neglecting, and while talking, practically any answer was accepted with no attention to fluency, pronunciation etc. However, it is ironic that despite all the plans and emphasis on spoken language, which was indeed utilised in practice, the chief consequence was a concentration on writing and working with texts. This might have contributed to the failure of revival efforts, since the ideals put forward by the Government and its bodies were unfortunately distant from the reality. Such lack of balance was caused by the backwash effect of preparing students for examinations in which, the oral part was either completely absent or insignificant. Nevertheless, the prevailing opinion amongst academics was that the spoken language was more important than mastering reading and writing (Kelly, 2002, pp. 21-24).

According to the Government's announcement, Irish was supposed to become sooner or later the sole language of instruction (Buachalla, 1988). Public Notice Number 4 announced that starting from 17 March 1922, the Irish language was to be present either as a tool of instruction or as a subject of teaching for at least one hour in every primary school in Irish Free State, if the competence of teachers allowed for it. Notwithstanding objections, the revival of Irish through the school system was one of the cornerstones of national policy. Irish was given preferential treatment and certain subjects were limited to make way for Irish (Kelly, 2002).

At first it was accepted as an inevitable measure that led to the consolidation of Irish, though the Irish National Teachers' Organisation expressed its fear that teaching of history, geography or mathematics would be secondary because of the instruction in Irish. The organisation also believed Irish was not always the best language of instruction as there was no clear definition of proficiency in the language for either teachers or pupils (Kelly, 2002, p. 44). The concerns mentioned above were largely ignored by the government despite the fact that many of these remarks were well-founded.

We should keep in mind that throughout the centuries and with progressing anglicisation, Irish dialects were confined to areas that were either isolated or hard to access. This caused a relatively strong divergence in spoken Irish in the places in question and certain dialects even became mutually unintelligible (Hindley, 2011, p. 117). Huge regional differences amongst dialects therefore hindered the employment of Irish in education as there was no generally accepted standard of the language. Hence, one of the pivotal tasks of *An Gúm*, the institution founded to publish educational materials for Irish instruction, was to standardise Irish and its orthography in order to enable its employment in school instruction. However, even after the standardisation, schoolchildren essentially learnt Irish that was quite different from their own. More information about *An Gúm* and its activity follows below.

By 1928, the number of primary schools entirely Irish-teaching increased to 1240, which was a remarkable shift in comparison to preceding years. Furthermore, 3570 primary schools were bilingual in the language of instruction and 373 primary schools used solely English to teach. In the following years, the employment of English in primary schools expanded even further (Kelly, 2002, p. 45).

Secondary schools, albeit constituting a small portion of pupils in comparison with primary schools, were also subject to this language policy, even though the independent character they enjoyed made it slightly less viable. However, even prior to changes implemented after the establishment of the Free State, Irish was present in approximately 80% of secondary schools as it was a subject for the Intermediate Examination by 1922 (Kelly, 2002, p. 60).

Since 1913 Irish had been a prerequisite for matriculation at the National University of Ireland. Furthermore, in contrast with primary school, where each teacher was required to have a sufficient command of Irish, secondary schools were required to have just one teacher of Irish, who then taught all Irish classes. Financial aid was provided to schools

and teachers utilising solely Irish as a medium of instruction and a fraction of this aid was also granted to schools teaching at least a half of the subjects through Irish. Such support led to an increase in pupils taking Irish for various examinations and bore its fruit (Ó Riagáin, 1992, p. 31).

One interesting and a very progressive idea was to divide Irish secondary schools into categories on the basis of pupils' command of Irish, thus forming a system akin to language schools or universities, namely Class A, Class B (further distinguishing between B1 and B2) and Class C. To clarify the meaning, Class A was a school where Irish was taught and spoken by teachers and students. Class B was a school where Irish was taught, albeit used as a medium of instruction only in certain subjects. Class C was a school where Irish was only taught. By 1931, only 34 schools were able to reach the Class A status (Kelly, 2002, p. 61).

The introduction of compulsory Irish required a clear ideology. This was established by reference to the historical importance of the language. Thus, it would also be an outright betrayal of previous and succeeding generations if the language was allowed to die out. It was also important for its dissimilarity with English, thus further underlining the separate position of Ireland and its people. Irish people also cannot live or prosper without their "native" language; this idea was captured in the slogan *gan teanga gan tír* (roughly, with no language there can be no country). One argument also accentuated the specific spiritual dimension of Irish. The most significant reason was that the language expressed the old tradition and ancient roots of the language, which was a common phenomenon at that time all across Europe, when nations striving for independence or developing a national idea based their nation on ancientness to justify it in the eyes of stronger and better established nations of Europe (The Stationery Office, 1965, p. 7-14).

With respect to this cultural and ideological environment, it is also necessary to mention bowdlerisation in literary works that depicted sexuality and other morally and religiously questionable behaviour. For instance, the biography of Peig Sayers, a prominent work of the Irish-language literature, was heavily edited for educational purposes and certain parts that did not fit with her presupposed saint-like character were removed from the book (T. F. Shea, 2012, pp. 1-13). In another case, James Stephens' *The Crock of Gold* (1912) contains quite a different approach to sexuality, between the Philosopher who is an embodiment of thinking, contemplation and refusal of emotions, but also a neutralised

depiction of a human body, an acceptable one, in comparison with the Celtic god of love Angus Óg and Caitilín and her pursuit of love and sensation (O'Grady, 1997, pp. 62-72).

The demand for Irish, as we can clearly see, was enormous and due to its sudden broad implementation, most teachers were not equipped with sufficient knowledge of the language. Hence, special preparatory colleges were established to prepare national teachers for their task. They were located in Cork, Dingle, Donegal, Dublin, Galway and Mayo; courses were given during vacation periods and thanks to this institution, 50% of the teachers acquired sufficient knowledge and qualification to teach Irish by 1929 (Ó Domhnalláin, 1977, pp. 83-96).

Another obstacle to successful tuition was an insufficient quantity and quality of language text-books. It was no pleasant surprise when the Department of Education in 1924 and in consecutive years reported that the absence of suitable text-books limited the possibilities of more general employment of Irish in teaching and general usage (Report of the Department of Education, 1924-26, p. 93). This report was however met with silence and inaction from the side of the Government, even though voices such as *Irish Schools Weekly* pointed out the unsatisfactory situation in primary schools above all. It was not until 1926 when the Government finally took action and established a directive to sponsor Irish language text-books called *Coiste na Leabhar* ("the Books Committee") or shortly *An Gúm* ("the scheme" or "the action plan"). Initially, it was chiefly focused on the need for suitable school text-books. Before being published, texts had to be submitted to a committee of Irish scholars who decided whether the text was acceptable. Primary school text-books were then examined by inspectors before their final approval (Kelly, 2002, pp. 87-92). This was a lengthy process which interfered in quick saturation of immediate needs of teachers. The volume of books printed and rendered to schools remained lower than required which caused problems in tuition. That led to the Department of Education to announce that teachers in primary schools are to carry out their work without text-books and texts in Irish in general as they supposedly excessively relied on them (Kelly, 2002, p. 83). In 1931 and years following, there was a decrease in the volume of newly published texts (Kelly, 2002, p. 87-92).

In addition, Irish had not been fully standardised and two scripts were used, namely *an chló-Rómhánach* (Roman type) and *cló-Gaelach* (Irish type, or uncial). There was a clear preference for the Roman type in the Department of Education, although a shift from the Gaelic to the Roman type was to be gradual. The majority of text-books were therefore

still printed using Gaelic script, however towards the 1930s, Roman type proved to be progressive and received broad recognition (Doyle, 2015, p. 217).

A special kind of tuition was necessary for the civil servants, which was a rare example of the use of Irish outside the school system. Following the establishment of the Free State, Civil Service positions required a command of Irish in order to extend the field of usage of the language. The examination was written and from 1926 oral with preparatory courses preceding it in order to provide enough time and resources to learn the language. The courses were organised by *Cumann Gaodhalach na Stát Sheirbhíse* founded in 1926. The *Gaeltachtaí* (inhabitants of the Gaeltacht) were encouraged to join the ranks of Civil Service to further strengthen the Irish element. Although far from being unexpected, most communication and work was conducted in English, therefore it would not be accurate to classify it as an augmentation of employment of Irish.

The state and its administrative bodies were not the only actors that affected the linguistic situation. Religion always played a key role in language use and its impact should not be underestimated. Due to its leading position amongst the Irish, the Catholic Church is predominantly represented in the following section, while Protestant faiths mostly continued in the trends set before the Independence and their influence remained prominent in urban areas.

The Catholic Church had always been an influential institution in Ireland and also a central element of Irish national identity. Although the Catholic Church tried to collaborate with the Irish Free State and in decades prior to its establishment on certain issues regarding language and education, the languages of significance in the Catholic Church throughout 19th century were undoubtedly Latin and English. In the case of the English language it was presumably a natural effect of the language shift in Ireland, as well as its official role in Great Britain. Though it must be stated that the Church did little to help the position of Irish (Kelly, 2002, p. 124-126). We should keep in mind that the Catholic Church was followed by the majority of people (steadily around 90% of the population, Central Statistics Office. [1861–1926], p. 1) and served as an example and authority for the people, therefore we should not underestimate its direct and indirect influence on the language choice of the Irish people.

In Figure 6 (Akenson, 1991, p. 158), we can see the development of Irish illiteracy rates in children of 5 years and above in censuses from 1861 to 1901, while the last was conducted with children of 9 years and above based on their religious affiliation. It is

evident that a great deal of Catholic children was for a long time excluded from the school system due to socioeconomic reasons. The gap gradually disappeared during the first half of 20th century; however, instructed children were usually coming into contact with English, which had direct impact on the language shift.

Figure 6

The illiteracy rates in Ireland, 1861 - 1911

Denom./Year	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911
Roman Catholic	45.8%	39.9%	31%	22%	16.4%	11.3%
Anglican	16%	14.2%	10.9%	8.6%	7.3%	4.2%
Presbyterian	11%	9.6%	7.1%	5.6%	4.9%	2.7%
Methodist	9%	6.7%	5.5%	4.4%	4.1%	1.6%
Others	9.6%	8.1%	5.3%	5%	4.7%	2.3%

English was used extensively even in Gaeltacht for religious instruction. According to Maynooth Statutes that came into effect in 1927 and the Programme of Religious Instruction in the Catholic Colleges and Secondary Schools for 1928-29, the local vernacular was to be used regardless of the language of instruction (Kelly, 2002, p. 127).

In conclusion, considering the imperfections and overall situation mentioned above, schools were truly the only institution with Irish as a medium of communication and tuition. Still, initially vital and zealous teachers became disillusioned after years of teaching Irish with little effect on the linguistic reality of Ireland. Irish remained at school in spite of expectations and did not penetrate everyday life. The number of actual Irish speakers, i.e. those who utilised Irish in all spheres of life, was decreasing in subsequent censuses, i.e. after the 1926 census with an exception of a slight increase between the years 1926 and 1936, and even though the interest was initially enormous, the problems

connected with tuition organisation and the insufficient teaching materials decreased the quality of education. Generally speaking, there was also little need for knowledge of Irish in practical every-day situations and that might be why English remained the main language of the masses. We shall now proceed to the geographical topics of Gaeltacht and Ulster.

4. THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE

In this chapter, I am going to deal with the two important territorial units which are significant for the Irish language and its educational aspect, two areas that are different from the rest of Ireland. Both were unique in their treatment of Irish and their degree of anglicisation. The Gaeltach aimed to preserve Irish in places where it existed natively, thus protecting the speakers from the English language and culture. Northern Ireland is a territory consisting of 6 counties which did not join the Irish Free State in 1922 and remained a part of Great Britain. Even though it was initially involved in the revival, the predominantly Protestant population and the high level of anglicisation present for centuries almost completely eradicated the Irish language there. After 1922, little was done for the preservation of Irish at schools and amongst the population and English clearly dominated. Let us now look at the Gaeltacht in detail.

The Gaelic League and later, the Irish Free State, which continued the League's work, strived to retain Irish alive in those places, where it was spoken natively. The goal was to keep these areas alive and presumably expand them, should the linguistic and revival reforms succeed.

The term "Gaeltacht" was not chosen by coincidence. Terms Gael and Gall were used to distinguish the pre-Norman inhabitants of Ireland from the newcomers and other settlers. The nouns Gael and Gall were turned into an adjective Gaelta and Gallta respectively, further enriched with a suffix –(a)cht to form a noun. The Gaeltacht would therefore mean "a state of being Gaelic", whilst Galltacht "a state of being foreign." The first use of the term Galltacht can be traced back to 17th century (McLeod, 1999, pp. 1-20). Galltacht had a negative connotation of English-speaking people of non-Gaelic origin living in towns in the eastern part of Ireland, or the Pale. Such a view had to be modified as most of Ireland was English-speaking and therefore could be easily labelled as Galltacht. One consequence of this state of affairs was that the only way to maintain one's full Irishness if from, or living in, the Galltacht was to periodically visit the Gaeltacht to rediscover what qualities an Irish person should possess and how to become a "Gael", truly Irish *(fíor Gael)*, so to speak.

At the beginning of the 19th century, it was however too early to call the Irish-speakers a collective body as they had not yet formed any coherent society and there was hardly any awareness of the fact among the masses. There was also no standardised

language which could be used globally and Irish was divided into three main dialectal groups, namely Munster Irish, Connaught Irish and Ulster Irish. Therefore, the Gaeltacht project often connected different people on the basis of their ability to speak Irish; this was done to keep the language alive at all costs (O'Donoghue & O'Doherty, 2019, p. 8).

In a more general sense, the term Gaeltacht began to be used at the beginning of the 20th century and acquired the meaning connected with a particular territory or place. This understanding can be traced in the Fr. Ó Duinnín dictionary with a following definition:

Gaedhealcht, -a, f., the state of being Irish or Scotch: Gaeldom, Irishry, the native race of Ireland; Irish-speaking district or districts; the Gaeltacht; bean de'n Gh, a woman of the Irishry (Art MacC.); G. Alban, the Highlands of Scotland (O'Donoghue & O'Doherty, 2019, p. 2).

It is necessary to define what the Gaeltacht constituted of before we grasp its unique position. The Gaeltacht is a general term including two distinct areas. *Fíor-Ghaeltacht* (true, or pure Gaeltacht) was defined as those territories where 80 percent residents or more spoke Irish and an area called *breac-Ghaeltacht* (speckled, or mixed Gaeltacht) includes territories where at least 25 percent of the overall population spoke Irish. The statistical data for these territorial definitions were taken from the 1911 Census (Chríost, 2012, p. 235). *Breac-Ghaeltacht* areas were linguistically mixed and many of the speakers were bilingual. To be considered an Irish speaker meant one had an ordinary conversational knowledge of Irish (Kelly, 2002, p. 115). A further specification came with the Housing (Gaeltacht) Act in 1929 and the School Meals (Gaeltacht) Act in 1930. Although the acts were based on the principles listed above, some Irish speakers were excluded from the grants (Kelly, 2002, p. 116).

The idea to demarcate a special area was proposed by English-speaking members of the Gaelic League. The west of Ireland served as inspiration for various writers and painters. Its people were admired for living close to nature; however, this was mostly for reasons of poverty and scant opportunity of finding work outside agriculture. Many authors were connected with the Gaeltacht and in whose works this is reflected. For instance, J. M. Synge, a prominent Irish writer and a playwright, travelled several times to the Aran Islands where he improved his Irish speaking skills and became acquainted with the Islanders' way of life. His experiences served as inspiration for his book The Aran Islands published in 1907 (Kiberd, 1978, pp. 3-21). Similarly, Patrick Pearse, a writer, teacher, poet and political activist, deeply engaged with the west of Ireland, its people and

language. Patrick Pearse travelled extensively around Connacht and even purchased a plot of land in Ros Muc where he frequently retired to write unbothered. During the summer, his house was used as a Gaeltacht summer centre for pupils who wished to improve their Irish. This was where he realised that the future of Irish was in the hands of the native speakers rather than enthusiasts in Dublin and elsewhere (Augusteijn, 2010, pp. 96-98).

The Gaelic League viewed the people and their land as an example to follow in terms of language and cultural uniqueness. It was the real antithesis to the English language and culture flowing from England (Ó Torna, 2005, pp. 144-149). Moreover, nationalists and revivalists saw the authenticity of the Gaeltacht in its pre-urban way of life which was again contrary to the anglicised cities and towns whence English stemmed and expanded. The isolation, poverty and primitive way of life retained the purity of the language and kept it free of most foreign influence, thus preserving the spirit of national creativity and identity. Nevertheless, English was still the language of choice for many parents throughout the Gaeltacht due to socioeconomic reasons (Fishman, 1973).

The area of the Gaeltacht was frequently visited by students of Irish and enthusiasts wishing to absorb the Gaelic spirit, whilst dwelling in unspoilt nature. The Gaelic League organised formal classes in the Gaeltacht during the day and when they ended, there was room to converse with native Irish speakers in informal setting. Conditions were set to exclude lukewarm members of the movement and those who spoke too much English in order to preserve the fragile environment intact.

> Má ba iad na ceantair Ghaeltachta an pointe teagmhála a bhí ag muintir na hÉireann lena ré stairiúil órga féin agus má bhíothas chun coincheap den náisiún a bhunú ar an tuiscint go raibh nasc sna ceantair Ghaeltachta leis an seansaol, ansin b'éigean a dhearbhú go gcaomhnófaí an tobar nó an fhoinse sin. Níor mhór é sin a dhéanamh ar son an phobail féin, a raibh de rath orthu an cultúr neamhghalldaithe a bheith acu, agus ar son phobal na Galltachta araon.
> (If the Gaeltacht districts were the point of contact for the people of Ireland with their own historical golden age, and if the concept of the nation was to be based on the understanding that the Gaeltachts were connected to the old way of life, then it was necessary to ensure that this source be preserved. This had to be done both on behalf of the Gaeltacht community, which was fortunate enough to have an un-

Anglicized form of culture, and on behalf of the people of the Galltacht) (Ó Torna, 2005, p. 149).

Notwithstanding the enthusiasm of the Gaelic League to preserve the western region, Irish was fading in the Gaeltacht. Between 1891 and 1926, the number of people speaking Irish dropped by 18 percent. According to the report presented by the Gaeltacht Commission in 1926, the Irish language had little prestige and parents were often reluctant to pass it on to their children. The situation at schools was no better and teachers sometimes were not capable of teaching in Irish, even though they might have had obtained a certificate confirming their ability to do so. In linguistically mixed areas, 701 teachers had no qualification for tuition of Irish and 471 teachers could teach it only as a subject. These figures directly influenced the *fíor-Ghaeltacht* area. The Commission therefore recommended teachers without necessary qualification were replaced, or that they obtain such qualification within a short time. Moreover, it was deemed necessary for Irish to become the sole language of instruction. However radical it may seem, in reality these changes were not implemented strictly and 5 years after the report was published, 50 percent of the Gaeltacht students were taught through the medium of English anyways (Kelly, 2002, pp. 115-7).

In contrast to the Gaeltacht, Northern Ireland, also sometimes referred to as Ulster is a territorial entity under Great Britain. It is mentioned separately inasmuch as it developed differently after the establishment of the Irish Free State. It consists of 6 counties and one of the chief characteristics is its Protestant identity and strong unionist tendencies. The name "Ulster" historically referred to 9 Irish counties in the northern part of the island, but since the separation it has been unofficially used for contemporary six counties as well. Etymology of the word is not certain; however, the most probable ones are following ones. It may be derived from a Norse name "Uladztir", an adaption of Irish "Ulaidh" and "tir", which means "land" in Irish. Alternatively, "Ulaidh" combined with a Norse genitive "s" and Irish "tír". Another point of view suggests a combination of "Uladh" and "ster", a Norse word for "place", attested in Norway and Shetland Islands (Duffy, 2014, p. 26)

Historically, the high concentration of Anglicans and Presbyterians was caused due to geographical proximity to Scotland and Wales. Most Protestants were of Anglo-Irish descend who came in various waves of colonisation, whilst original Irish settlers were practically always Roman Catholics. Since Belfast was long with Dublin the most

important administrative centre, the usage of English has been high for centuries. However, Irish was used in villages of 6 counties well into the beginning of the 20th century. This is clear from the figures concerning the number of Irish-speakers before the separation in Figure 7 (Chríost, 2013, p. 135). Ulster was in no way excluded from the Irish revival policy prior to 1922.

Figure 7

The percentage of Irish-speakers by age in the six northern counties (Ulster)

Age/Year	1901	1911
<3	0.2	0.4
3-9	3.4	7.5
10-17	10.9	25.9
18-29	21.4	23.3
30-59	38.2	25.7
60+	25.8	17.2

The first census conducted in 1851 disclosed low numbers of monolingual Irish speakers in Northern Ireland in comparison to other Irish counties with the exception of Leinster where the figures were even lower. The number of speakers further decreased until 1911 when the last census was carried out. The following one appeared only 80 years later in 1991. Pockets of Irish speakers in   1911 could be found in the area of Red Bay in north-east Ulster, in central Ulster to the west of Lough Neagh, in the southern reaches of Armagh and Down counties and in southern and western Tyrone, Fermanagh and it bordered the Gaeltacht area of Donegal. Even though there is no data after 1911, we can logically assume the assimilation of Irish speakers was progressing. Such an assumption is not baseless. After partition, the six counties and the inhabitants of Northern Ireland had not access to political and linguistic connections created by the Gaelic League and other organisations. Prior to the division, political and linguistic policies usually either copied the general Irish tendencies or were accepted more or less reluctantly; however, after partition, they were severed and Northern Ireland was isolated from the remainder of the Irish territory. Notwithstanding efforts and recognition of Irish in 1904 and later revivalist efforts in Ireland, there was just a small number of children who would be able to take

advantage of such an improvement of conditions for Irish speakers in Ulster (Chríost, 2013, pp. 134-5).

After the separation of Northern Ireland, the educational policies were restrictive rather than encouraging. The British government had little reason to support the movement and the Irish language; this resulted in a drop in primary schools teaching Irish by 50 percent and in primary schools teaching Irish as an extra subject between 1923 and 1926 from 5531 to 1291 schools (Adams, 1979, pp. 113-22). Ironically, when the northern branch of the Gaelic League *Comhaltas Uladh* requested a more flexible approach to teaching Irish in primary schools, the contrary was achieved. When *Comhaltas Uladh* requested an introduction of Irish to classes below the third grade, the Ministry of Education restricted Irish classes to the fifth, sixth and seventh grade only in 1926. Later in 1933, all grants for instruction of Irish were terminated, which affected 10500 pupils. Of the total number of pupils, 14 percent were pupils at Catholic schools and 5 percent pupils at regular primary schools (O'Reilly, 1999, p. 21). Over the years, Catholicism and a command of Irish came in Northern Ireland to designate people who did not wish to be associated with the British people, culture or government. (O'Reilly, 1995, p. 14).

5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to describe the relations of Irish and English and provide an explanation of the language shift which occurred in Ireland and which had considerable impact on the political and social situation in Ireland.

First, English was a colonial language in Ireland even though the term "colonial" is primarily associated with overseas possessions in Africa and Asia in popular culture. Ireland was a politically subjugated territory which naturally meant that its people and language had a lower status. English was introduced as a language of culture and Irish was considered to be a language of peasantry unworthy of closer attention. The process which took place immediately after is called cultural assimilation. One culture dominates the other and the dominated culture commences to assume cultural patterns of the more dominant culture. In Ireland, this was not a case of massive immigration modifying the ethnic composition, but of a culture which was politically and economically more dominant. The language of the coloniser therefore takes on prestige and is a sign of loyalty. Moreover, economic factors were the most significant in the language shift during the 19th and the 20th centuries.

Second, a massive blow which served as a catalyst of decline of Irish as a vernacular was the Irish Potato Famine which resulted in more than one million deaths and enormous emigration. The toughest conditions were in rural areas, therefore we can assume a majority of the deceased were Irish speakers as rural communities were always a bastion of the Irish language on the contrary to mostly anglicised towns and cities. Those who emigrated were either assimilated into the respective linguistic communities or preserved the language for a few generations at most.

Third, a serious obstacle to the development of any language was its inferior legal position. Some of the laws such as Statutes of Kilkenny or Penal Laws restricted the use of Irish and thus limited the development of Irish in fields connected with public life and administration. It also pressured Irish speakers to switch to English.

With the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, people who wished to speak Irish were free to do so and Irish gained an official status. However, the language shift was already far too advanced to be averted or stopped, therefore the majority remained English-speaking. Attempts to revive Irish through the educational system were not as successful as the revivalists had expected and schools had little impact. The Gaeltacht project slightly

slowed down anglicisation but this Irish-speaking territory progressively contracted. On the other hand, Northern Ireland and its continual political presence in Great Britain led to Irish becoming almost extinct and absent from the socio-political life. This situation started changing only in the 1990s.

In conclusion, notwithstanding the establishment of the Irish Free State and its broad use of Irish through the educational and administrative system, there was little hope of Irish becoming the sole language of Ireland.

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SUMMARY IN CZECH

Irština a angličtina jsou přítomny v Irsku po staletí a cílem této práce je ukázat historický vývoj jejich vztahů, postavení, které měly, a jejich roli v utváření irské identity. Období od roku 1890 do roku 1930 navíc bude detailně popsáno ve vztahu k užívání jazyka, politice, vzdělávacím a sociolingvistickým faktorům. Vzdělávání také hrálo důležitou roli pro své aktivní zapojení do oživení irštiny a pokusilo se zastavit jazykový posun k angličtině. Kromě toho je cílem této práce vysvětlit specifickou pozici Gaeltachtu a Severního Irska. Nakonec práce nabízí odpovědi a důvody jazykového posunu v Irsku a pokouší se poskytnout vysvětlení nejdůležitějších trendů v používání jazyka v Irsku.