

The devil is in the detail: Using corpora to investigate spoken language varieties

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Limerick

This is the oddest place of which nobody in any other part of Ireland seems to know anything. Nobody could answer a single question we asked about it... (Charles Dickens, 1858)

I hate going out in Limerick, total weirdos and all out there... (LCIE, 2002)

Studies of Irish English using Limerick Corpus of Irish English (LCIE): Sample

- Farr and O’Keeffe (2002) *would*
- O’Keeffe and Amador-Moreno (2009) *after + V-ing*
- Vaughan and Moriarty (2012 and 2013) representations of IE: performing linguistic identities
- Clancy and Vaughan (2012) *now*

Now and Irish English

- Instead, somehow, it can convey disagreement, sarcasm, or even outright contradiction of a previous statement. It may be my imagination, but Irish women seem to deploy the sentence-ending “now” with more chilling effect than men. A husband may suggest, for example, that he’s “going to the pub with friends later”. But if his wife replies “Oh are you, now?”

(McNally, 2014)

The process for *now*



Are you right there Father Ted?

(Phone rings)

Father Ted: Father Crilly speaking.

Bishop Brennan: Crilly, it's Bishop Brennan.

Father Ted: Oh, feck! What? (French accent) Who is this? There is no Crilly 'ere.

(Hangs up) God, I just said "feck" to Bishop Brennan.

Dougal: He won't like that.

Father Ted: It's ok I put on an accent so he'll think he had the wrong number.

(Phone rings again)

Bishop Brennan: Crilly.

Father Ted: *Hello Bishop Brennan. I think you got the wrong number there.*

Bishop Brennan: Shut up Crilly. Shut up...



There and Irish English

- Attested examples...
- *Just read your e-mail **there**.*
- *There's someone looking for you **there**.*
- *I was talking to Máiréad **there**...*

T.P. Dolan

there *adv.*, used as a filler in HE dialogue, without necessarily indicating location.

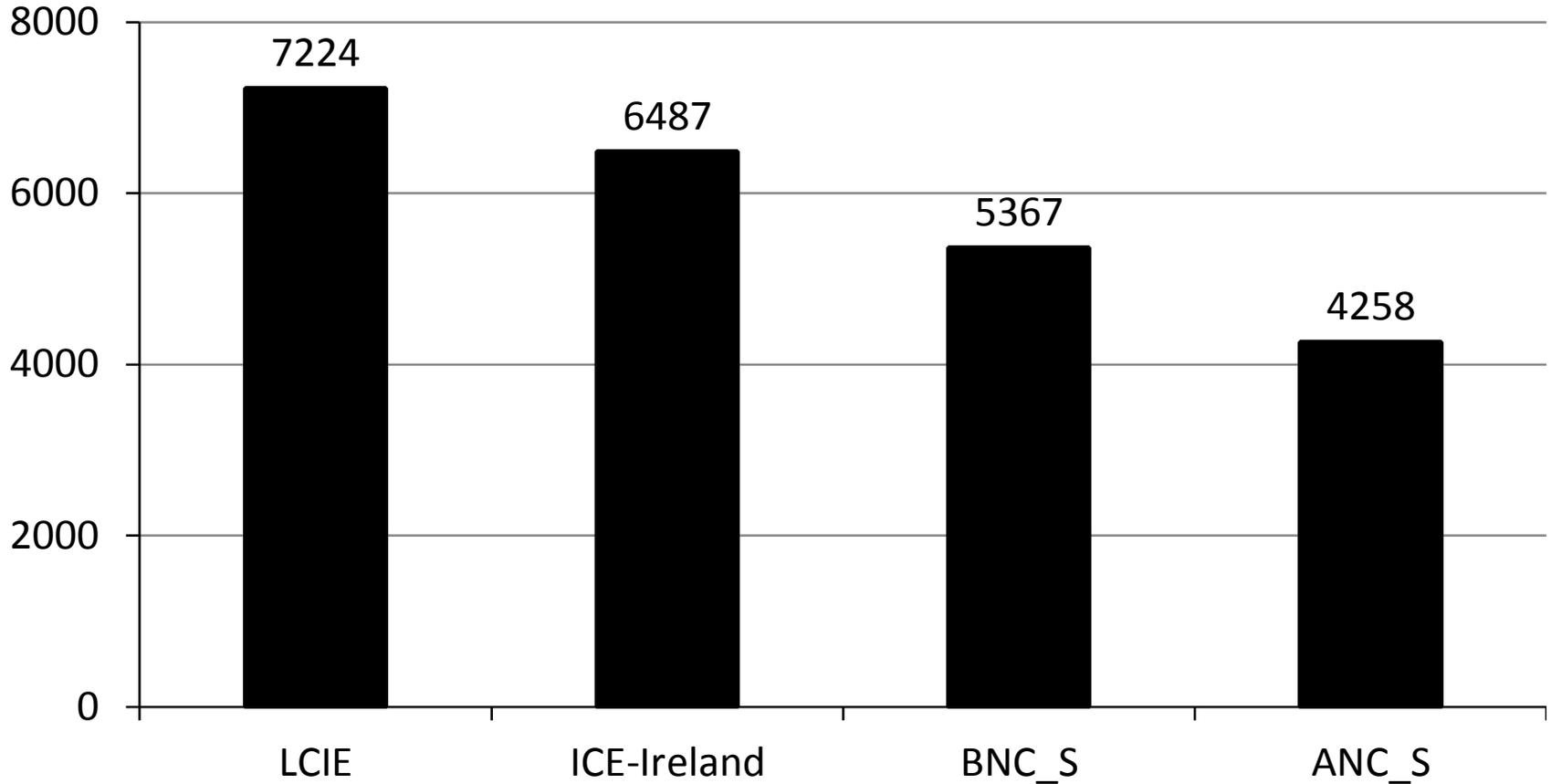
‘Her brother-in-law came up here there last week’ (Longford)

(Dolan, 2012: 251)

Corpora used

- LCIE = 1m words; face-to-face; intimate, socialising, professional, pedagogic, transactional...
- (Open) ANC = 3.2m words; face-to-face and telephone switchboard...

Frequency data



Frequencies per million words

There – categories in the literature

Existential *there*

There's an awful lot of tourists. [LCIE]

Referential *there*

*Just press that button **there**.* [LCIE]

*It's really neat and she says that everybody up **there** wears buttons on their socks.* [ANC]

Fixed phrases

*We had a little bit of snow **here and there**.* [ANC]

Presentative *there*

A: *Can I have the remote control?*

B: ***There** we go.* [LCIE]

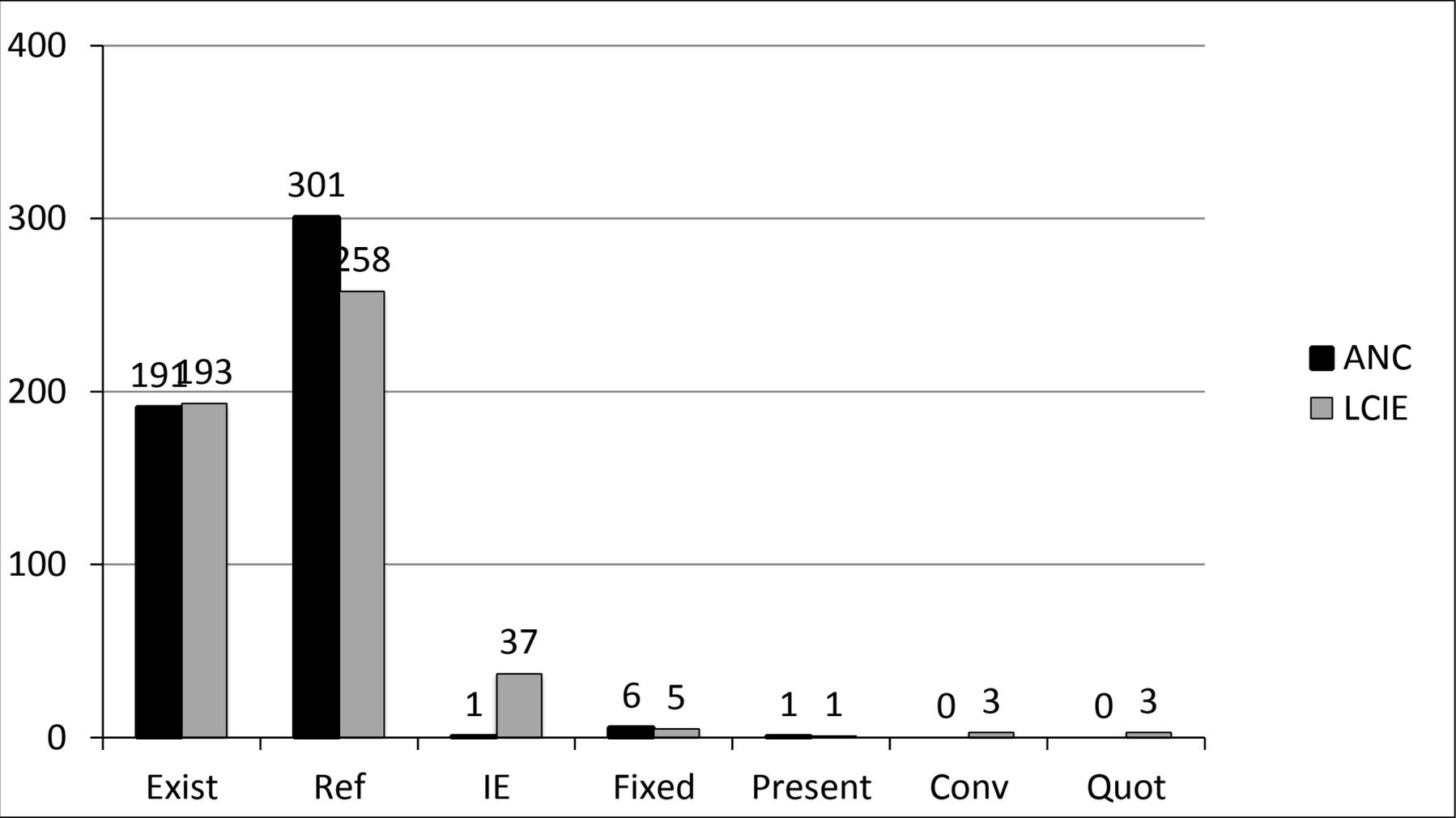
Conversational *there*

*Hello **there** and a very good afternoon to you.* [LCIE]

Test

- Randomised 500 concordance lines from LCIE and the ANC
- Loose test of the categories
- Close reading and categorisation
- Regenerated unclassifiable concordance lines
- Added new categories
- Quantified categories

ANC and LCIE categories compared



Spatial ⑨ Temporal

<\$3> What's up with you?

<\$1> What's up with you?

<\$3> What's up with you?

<\$1> I asked you first.

<\$E> pause <\\$E>

<\$1> Hey Lisa did you record anything there over the weekend that we can stick on?

<\$2> No. I should have recorded Jagged Edge last night and you could watch it.

There + time

<\$3> <\$01> Look at the <\\$01> house lads it's paint is it?

<\$2> Where?

<\$3> It's pink.

<\$2> She started roarin did she Shelly?

<\$1> Nah I picked her up she was grand I gave her back to Daddy and I went out again she was roarin.

<\$2> Roarin again she knows ya **see I was meant to be down with David there today** I'd I'd say he's like a bull with a sore hole that's all I was told <\$02> right left <\\$02>.

<\$1> <\$02> Down in the house <\\$02>.

Time stamp references in conversation

<\$1> Aideen my friend.
<\$2> Where is she? Sorry.
<\$1> Did she see you?
<\$2> I don't know.
<\$1> You know.
<\$2> **And I just nearly killed us there.**
<\$1> That's not good Tess.

<\$2> Come on Roscommon.
That's it.
<\$1> Go go. Get it up.
<\$2> Go on Roscommon. Ahh
dear God.
<\$1> **He took the wrong
option there.**
<\$2> Come on Roscommon.
Don't let him score.
<\$1> Come on Roscommon
now.
<\$2> It was a point.

Quotative *there*

<\$5> Oh he went mad, so we were sayin we were just laughin and out there. And I was fuckin gettin free cocktails and everything, and emm next thing Gavin came over and took it personally from some fellow, and **he says** “No you'll have to do the proper thing, the real proper thing now”. He got down on the one knee and **he was there** “Would you marry me?” **I was there** oh my God, **he was there** would you marry me, I said I'd marry you. And Gavin turned around and **said** one for the price of two, we have an open invitation now.

<\$6> Ahh.

<\$5> And he kept on **sayin** would you, would you and this really bugged me. Would you would you definitely and here's the happy couple to be.

<\$6> Ahh.

<\$2> When are yiz gettin engaged?

<\$5> I'm not gettin engaged.

Initial findings

- The first two categories are the most significant for both datasets
- Drilling down, there's more functional variation in the LCIE sample
- TP Dolan's description of *there* as a 'filler' doesn't quite cut it
- The LCIE sample also featured both a conversational *there* and a quotative *there*

We'll leave it there now!

Quotative 'there'

| N | Concordance |
|----|--|
| 1 | saying oh yeah are we goin going out are we goin going out and he was there who is it and I said Sinead Sinead in in Upmarket \$2 laughing |
| 2 | and I says to him can I get a taxi home to from Burgermac and he was there from where and I was like Burgermac and he was going on+ He |
| 3 | are we goin going out \$2 laughs what about next Tuesday night and he was there who's that . He sounds gay though doesn't he he's a really |
| 4 | anyway. Oh is he. Yeah ach I don't have time like I was telling him he was there but I won't see you all weekend and I won't see you then and I |
| 5 | twenty five euro". He had a flashing pen a pen on his face and all. He was there like this and he goes "I won it I won all four of them " Hey just |
| 6 | going to have to do something with the luggage now there Padraig and he was there you hav= do you have to do that and she goes ah yeah you'd |
| 7 | and he was there "would you marry me?" I was there Oh my God, he was there would you marry me, I said I'd marry you. And Gavin turned |
| 8 | thing, the real proper thing now". He got down on the one knee and he was there "would you marry me?" I was there Oh my God, he was there |
| 9 | six years I've been with has done the dirt on me and all this craic and I was there oh right so naturally enough I'm a prime candidate cause I'm in |
| 10 | was there but I won't see you all weekend and I won't see you then and I was there right we'll go for dinner door closing \$4 joins conversation . Is it |
| 11 | whole thing was going on and then a couple of days before the wedding I was there oh I'd love to wear that cause I'd never worn it cause I was |
| 12 | know you don't want to get with other people down there and all this and I was there+ I don't have time. +Exactly I really don't like I wouldn't have |
| 13 | oh is that Siobhan that I used to bring up and down to work laughing and I was there on the phone oh sorry I must have the wrong person oh I nearly |
| 14 | a really woman voice and he's a father + Yeah he said who's that and I was there . +and everything though. Is he? He's two children and he's |
| 15 | and I clearing throat sounds was trying to clear my throat laughter and I was there heh laughter and I let this unmerciful+ burp sound . + laughter |
| 16 | and goin out and whatever. Even just meeting up and being with him, I was there this isn't even what I want like. I just want to be able to go out |
| 17 | me like. Well she shocked me and I was down the middle but then I was there ah be Jesus. I couldn't know what she was on about. "Don't be |
| 18 | . He got down on the one knee and he was there "would you marry me?" I was there Oh my God, he was there would you marry me, I said I'd marry |
| 19 | it was a case of "Jesus he's fierce thoughtful" like you know laughs and I was there sure "he only puts it on like". Laughs . And she goes you know |
| 20 | we were kind of . Yeah and every time you were pulling in dad and I was there I'm coming to a corner I don't want there somebody parked in |
| 21 | had an ice pop packet of crisps and about three bottles of miller like and I was there this does not work now Bus laughter . Nah it all cancels itself |
| 22 | And he sounds real dope . +on the phone though. Hello. Ah stop cause I was there to him on the phone sayin saying oh yeah are we goin going |
| 23 | +And she started to put on well put on "oh you were in Marketing" she was there "oh and Liam is going to the lap dancing club did you hear |
| 24 | cos sheltering is" em kinda kind of define shelter then and then she was there like "So is there anything so we could put in" "That'll all now be |
| 25 | and there was a little brat in the class she was a real snot and she was there its not Thomas it is Thamas miss Thomas is spelt with th and |

References

- Dolan, T.P., 2012. *A Dictionary of Hiberno-English: The Irish Use of English (3rd Edition)*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.

Keyword list

| N | Keyword |
|----------|-----------------|
| 1 | <i>ah</i> |
| 2 | <i>am</i> |
| 3 | <i>ya</i> |
| 4 | <i>em</i> |
| 5 | <i>no</i> |
| 6 | <i>he</i> |
| 7 | <i>shure</i> |
| 8 | <i>laughing</i> |
| 9 | <i>cos</i> |
| 10 | <i>aam</i> |
| 11 | <i>she</i> |
| 12 | <i>eh</i> |
| 13 | <i>umhum</i> |
| 14 | <i>laughs</i> |
| 15 | <i>ye</i> |
| 16 | <i>now</i> |
| 17 | <i>laughter</i> |
| 18 | <i>s</i> |
| 19 | <i>d'you</i> |
| 20 | <i>will</i> |
| 21 | <i>mm</i> |
| 22 | <i>Jesus</i> |
| 23 | <i>muffled</i> |
| 24 | <i>t</i> |
| 25 | <i>there</i> |

LCIE list with ANC as
reference corpus