

# Irish Dialect Heritage and Memory in Northern England

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Recent projects such as the *Notts language project* (Nottingham University)<sup>1</sup> and *Our Heritage, Our Stories* (Universities of Glasgow and Manchester & the National Archives)<sup>2</sup> have worked towards increasing the representation and valorising the status of regional varieties in the UK by facilitating their inclusion in museums, archives, or libraries, and by including voices of the communities in their work (see Braber & Howard 2024, Hannaford & Alexander 2024).

Driven by a similar motivation, this paper presents a first sketch of my post-doctoral project, in which I tackle questions of dialect and heritage, and collective and cultural memory (Assmann 2010) in northern England. My goal is to scrutinise the importance of linguistic Irishness for speakers with Irish heritage in the North of England. I furthermore aim to analyse the linguistic impact of Irish migration to England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as, to my knowledge, no systematic study on the role of Irish English in the North of England has been done to this date.

Methodologically, I intend to employ a mixed-methods approach which combines archival sources (e.g. from the digitised *Archive of the Irish in Britain*)<sup>3</sup> and interviews with speakers from different generations and backgrounds within the Irish diaspora. This way I plan to fill not only a gap in the academic discourse on language histories from below (Elspaß 2005) but enable members of the communities themselves to partake in it.

## References

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- Hannaford, Ewan D. & Marc Alexander. 2024. Linguistic diversity in institutional collections: beyond preservation to valorisation. *International Journal of Language Studies* 18, 91-112.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://celebratingnottslanguage.co.uk/>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://ohos.ac.uk/>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://repository.londonmet.ac.uk/lists/2>.