

Preface

The English language as it is spoken in Wales is a somewhat different entity depending on one's perspective and choice of terminology. The label (WelE), used by linguists, indicates a membership in the family of World Englishes and linguistic characteristics and geographically defined borders that differentiate the variety from the neighbouring British and Irish ones. It also implies that there is a Welsh English, displaying some degree of internal consistency, and furthermore that this variety has some national and cultural significance in Wales.

This book aims to show that instead of a single variety, Welsh English is a cover term for diverse accents and dialects used in Wales. The geographic borders of Welsh English are also somewhat hazier than those of Wales itself: the borders and coastal areas have been highly permeable to linguistic influence for centuries and language always travels along with its speakers. In other respects, the aspects mentioned above apply: Welsh English does belong in the family of World Englishes. It is a British variety, yet it has both first and second language speakers and contains considerable cross-linguistic influence from the Welsh language. It therefore sits rather ill at ease with broad categories such as the Inner Circle (Kachru 1992) or high-contact L1 varieties (Kortmann, Lunkenheimer & Ehret 2020). Welsh English can, however, be defined as a language-shift variety, in accordance with Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008: 6). Complementing the impact of historical language shift and present-day bilingualism is the dialect influx from England, connecting Welsh English to the British territory, culture and history. The combination of these streams of influence is what creates both the diversity and the distinctiveness.

As regards national and cultural significance, Welsh English cannot compete with the indigenous minority language of Welsh. However, as shown by numerous studies discussed in this book, the English accents and dialects of Wales are not devoid of such significance either. It is not our intent to make a case for Welsh English any more than to deflate or promote Welsh; indeed, if anything, the chapters and linguistic descriptions in the present volume testify of the interconnectedness of the two languages in the minds and communities of their speakers. The study of the dialects and sociolinguistics of Welsh has a longer history than that of Welsh English (e.g. Durham & Morris 2016), which reflects the seniority of Welsh as a local vernacular. Despite its medieval roots, Welsh English as we know it today is young, also in comparison to many other World Englishes.

The present book is intended to provide an update on the current knowledge of the variety. The previous major publications on the subject include three regional volumes of the *Survey of Anglo-Welsh Dialects* written by David Parry (1977, 1979) and Rob Penhallurick (1991), and the fourth compilation volume (Parry

1999). Apart from Penhallurick's North Welsh English volume, however, these books have enjoyed limited circulation. Another major, book-length publication on Welsh English is *English in Wales*, edited by Nikolas Coupland (1990b) in association with Alan Thomas. These publications have been instrumental in putting WeE on the map in English linguistics, offering an exhaustive account of the traditional rural dialects as well as of certain aspects of sociolinguistic variation. Recent decades have witnessed an increase of interest in the Welsh dialects of English in the form of several PhD theses (e.g. Paulasto 2006, Podhovník 2008, Quaino 2011, Hejná 2015, Roller 2016, Jones 2018) utilizing more recent data and sociolinguistic methods of research. Our aim is to bring these data and studies together for a comprehensive description of the present-day status of Welsh English in various parts of the country.

As a result of the authors' fields of expertise, we are especially utilizing the interview corpora collected by Heli Paulasto in the Southwest, Southeast and North Wales in 1995–2000 and 2012, the Millennium Memory Bank data from 1998–1999 and BBC Voices survey from 2004–2005, which Rob Penhallurick is well acquainted with, and the survey of English in Gwent conducted by Benjamin A. Jones (2016b). Further information on the corpus data is presented in Section 1.6 and in association with the related results. The *Survey of Anglo-Welsh Dialects* recordings and publications are consulted as well, but the focus of the book is on the recent research materials.

In addition to new materials, we are taking a more variationist and quantitative approach to Welsh English than the traditional descriptions of the variety. Although we have an excellent overview of the structural and lexical characteristics of (traditional) Welsh English, few of the structural characteristics have been studied quantitatively, in order to see to what extent the features in fact emerge in regional varieties, who uses them, or how the usage patterns compare across different areas. Chapter 3 on morphosyntax, in particular, takes full advantage of Heli Paulasto's interview corpora, which involve speakers of different ages and linguistic backgrounds in different parts of the country. In this sense, the present volume wishes to exceed the expectations of a typical handbook and provide fresh research on language variation within Welsh English. The same applies to Chapter 4 on lexis and discourse features, which avails of recent lexical surveys in the southeast of Wales by Paulasto and Jones as well as corpus-based analyses of invariant tags and discourse-pragmatic markers.

To be able to contextualize Welsh English as a variety of World Englishes, we furthermore pay attention to the neighbouring British and Irish varieties as well as to the global spread of specific features. The study of English language morphosyntax on a global scale has benefited enormously from endeavours such as the *electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English* (eWAVE; Kortmann et al. 2020)

and dedicated research across the English language complex. These diverse multilingual settings of present-day English form the broad framework also for the study of Welsh English.

As to the division of labour in the book, Heli Paulasto has been responsible for Chapters 3 and 4, Rob Penhallurick for Chapters 2 and 6, and Ben Jones for Chapters 5 and 4.5. Ben Jones and Heli Paulasto contributed to Chapter 7, and Chapter 1 is a joint effort.

