Preface

This book deals with the linguistic consequences of migratory processes from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives. The regional focus is the island of Ireland with particular emphasis on Ulster in the north but diasporic varieties of Irish English are also included. These are captured in historical correspondence corpora documented in Amador-Moreno (2019) and McCafferty & Amador-Moreno (2012a) as well as Fitzpatrick (1994). Historical databases created by the author for previous projects will similarly be put to new uses here. The work also interrogates extensive recordings of contemporary Mid-Ulster English which have been compiled *ab initio* specifically for this purpose from sociolinguistic interviews that the author undertook with local and migrant youngsters in three distinctive locations of Northern Ireland between 2012 and 2014.

Part I takes a novel, inter-disciplinary approach drawing on models and methods first established in historical studies, geography and sociology to offer insights into how population movements impact upon the language ecologies of both sending and receiving countries. It begins with an analysis of the corpora already noted to evaluate key concepts which have been developed in migration theory. That first chapter has two over-arching aims: (i) To determine whether there is robust evidence in the aforementioned diachronic and synchronic corpora of the migration patterns argued for in the scholarly literature; (ii) To provide a new framework for correlating population flows and language ecologies which is then explored in the following chapters. While the analysis pertains particularly to the island of Ireland today and in the distant past, the findings are shown to also resonate in other communities where intensive phases of migration have been intrinsic to their development. I take a chronological approach here beginning with immigration to Ulster during the Mesolithic period and ending with that which characterises more recent times. At the forefront of the discussion in all subsequent chapters of Part I is the interrelationship between migratory movements and their diverse linguistic consequences. Important issues that are addressed is the extent to which the nature of migration has changed over time and whether that, in turn, has impacted upon the degree to which language ecologies can actually be affected.

Part II takes the model a step further by honing in on the specifics of the language contact opportunities afforded by migration for both individuals and societies. Chapter Five therein begins by evaluating and testing on the corpus data already introduced a range of frameworks that have been developed to account for the acquisition of first and second languages as well as language shift scenarios in which the former can attrite when the right social circumstances

prevail. Chapter Six details and critiques the data collection methods, protocols and fieldwork techniques associated with the compilation of the contemporary Mid-Ulster English corpus. The latter is then interrogated in Chapters Seven through Nine to uncover the benchmark patterns of variation and change that obtain with respect to features from different modules of the local grammar, i.e. variability with respect to the {-ing} suffix; relative markers and the system of quotation. Although much scholarly attention has been devoted to these variables elsewhere in the English-speaking world, they have never before been examined in this dialect using the comparative sociolinguistic approach advocated here (see Tagliamonte 2004a). Speech samples from matched cohorts of new migrants whose first languages are Lithuanian and Polish, respectively, are then compared so as to assess whether they have acquired similar internal and external constraints on the variation observed. Key research questions explored in Part II would thus include: (i) Do ethnolinguistic minorities maintain their community languages?; (ii) Is the learning of first or second languages different in any respect and how might this be explained?; (iii) What evidence is there of substratal transfer from Lithuanian and Polish and is this factor worth considering more systematically in comparative accounts of how variation is acquired by L2 speakers?; (iv) Can the methods advocated within comparative sociolinguistics be applied to determine not only the extent to which global indigenized varieties do or do not relate to one another but also whether diverse learner Englishes can be explored using the same model?; (v) Are variables from different linguistic modules acquired more or less readily by learners?; (vi) Does it matter whether the dependent variable being learned is stable or not?