even a parenthetical can answer entirely random questions. If so, some pragmatic embedding akin to the one provided by Onea & Ott will be necessary for Koev's theory as well. Thus it seems to us that the two approaches have the potential to complement each other.

In conclusion, this book represents a noteworthy scholarly achievement that not only offers a lasting contribution to the field, but also serves as an excellent entry point for junior researchers exploring the semantics and pragmatics of parentheticals. By leaving a number of questions unresolved, it will undoubtedly catalyze additional research on parentheticals.

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**Donatella Montini and Irene Ranzato (eds.),** *The dialects of British English in fictional texts* (Routledge Research in Language and Communication 10). Abingdon: Routledge, 2021. Pp. ix + 217. ISBN 9780367856115.

Reviewed by Alex Broadhead, University of Liverpool

The value of this essay collection lies chiefly in two areas. First, the volume surveys dialect representation across a broad sweep of periods and media, with the result that several interesting connections across the centuries and across different technologies are implicitly suggested, between, for instance, the plays of Shakespeare and the sitcom *Derry Girls* (2018–22), or between the poems of Robert Burns and television subtitles. Second, it represents the largest concentration of work to date on the subject of English literary dialect in translation. Because of these original elements and because of the

breadth of its coverage, this collection has every right to take a place on the increasingly laden shelf of recently published books on the subject of dialect representation in writing and on screen. Most notable among these are Jane Hodson's *Dialect in Film and Literature* (2014) and *Dialect and Literature in the Long Nineteenth Century* (2017), Urzula Clark's *Staging Language: Place and Identity in the Enactment, Performance and Representation of Regional Dialects* (2019) and Patrick Honeybone & Warren Maguire's *Dialect Writing and the North of England* (2020).

As Donatella Montini and Irene Ranzato's introduction makes plain, the approach taken by the majority of scholars who have contributed essays to this collection is stylistic-sociolinguistic, with equal attention given to the poetic dimensions of dialect representation as to its role in shaping social reality. In this regard, they take their cue from two studies published in 2007: Asif Agha's *Language and Social Relations* (2007) and Nikolas Coupland's *Style: Language, Variation and Identity* (2007). Following Agha and Coupland, the emphasis here is on the creative as well as the polysemous nature of dialect representation. Where the essays collected here break with Agha and Coupland is, of course, in focusing on the imaginary speech and simulated reality of fiction. The introduction ends with a bold claim:

> The 'poetic' texts analysed in this volume – from Early Modern plays to contemporary novels, films and TV series – are testimonies to the fact that voices, accents and dialects on page, stage and screen have been continuously reinvented while being represented, and that their aesthetic force always transcends the particular identity they may convey, be it national, regional or social. (p. 7)

The editors of this volume might be forgiven for overstating the transcendental aesthetic power of fictional dialect representation. The aesthetic possibilities of some forms of dialect writing – dialect literature in particular – have tended to be undervalued by critics, with Graham Shorrocks, for instance, suggesting that 'the primary function of the dialect writer was to entertain and instruct his readers – *not* to provide an essentially aesthetic experience' (1996: 404, original emphasis). Elsewhere, I have argued that dialect literature can and should be taken seriously as art (Broadhead forthcoming). However, it is not difficult to find examples of texts in which the linguistic stereotyping is so crude and so ideologically fraught that readers cannot help but interpret it in terms of social identity, regardless of whatever its 'aesthetic force' or narrative function may be. Perhaps it is more accurate to say, following Susan Ferguson, that

> it would be a mistake to suggest that forms of language that appear in novels are disconnected from those outside the novel. But there is a potential level of meaning to fictional language, including fictional dialect, that correlates to the internal workings of the novel. To understand how dialect works in the novel, we must understand how it fits within the socio-linguistic system constructed by the novel (the ficto-linguistics), as well as how it responds to the sociolinguistic patterns accepted by the world outside the novel. Aspects of the dialect that may seem absolutely inconsistent from the sociolinguistic perspective often have a clear logic when viewed from the perspective of the narrative. (Ferguson 1998: 3)

In Ferguson's account, sociolinguistic and 'ficto-linguistic' systems 'interact' within novels. Even in those cases where the ficto-linguistic – or aesthetic – system predominates in a text, it cannot completely prevent readers from bringing sociolinguistic expectations and values to it. As Ferguson shows us, there is a way of talking about the relationship between the aesthetic and social dimensions of a text that is complex and nuanced, and that avoids either/or thinking or hyperbole. Thus, while the introduction to this volume is to be commended for foregrounding the aesthetic value of dialect representation, its zeal sometimes comes at the expense of nuance.

It should be noted, however, that the collection as a whole is generally distinguished by nuance and sensitivity to complexity. This is certainly the case in the first essay, Marina Dossena's 'Scots as the language of the uncanny: The case of nineteenth-century Gothic narratives' (pp. 11–29), which kicks off the first part of the volume, 'Voices on page'. Dossena considers the work of the eighteenth-century poets Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns, as well as the prose fiction of the nineteenth-century authors Robert Louis Stevenson and James Hogg. In the work of these authors, writes Dossena, 'Scots is employed to frame the narrative and outline both characters and contexts, and how this contributes to the definition of what is "uncanny" while being presented (paradoxically) as quite familiar from the linguistic point of view' (p. 11). Scots here plays a central role in what present-day writers call 'world-building' – that is, constructing a fictional reality that is distinct temporally and/or in terms of logical possibility from the world of the readers – while simultaneously being grounded in language that is immediately recognisable to Scots readers.

Joan C. Beal contributes the second chapter, 'Enregistering nationhood: Cornwall and "Cornu-English" in the works of Alan M. Kent' (pp. 30–46). In this essay, Beal puts forward the dialect-infused poetry of Alan M. Kent as an exemplar of the ways in which Cornu-English, a non-standard variety of the English language spoken by many in Cornwall, is increasingly becoming enregistered as emblematic of Cornish identity. This version of Cornish identity, writes Beal, is one 'distinct from the "English"', and also separate from the Celtic-derived Cornish language now spoken by only a relatively small proportion of the Cornish population. What distinguishes recent Cornu-English writing in general, and Kent's in particular, from earlier dialect literature originating in the county is its connection with 'the true technological and industrial past of Cornwall and its post-industrial present' (p. 38) as opposed to the 'backward and rustic' settings of traditional dialect literature (p. 42). The great value of this chapter is its focus on a neglected variety of English and an unusual body of writing that breaks with traditional forms of dialect writing.

As noted above, one of the main selling points of this essay collection is the attention given by a number of its contributors to the issue of English dialect writing in translation. One of these contributors is Josep Marco Borillo, whose essay is titled 'An analysis of the use of vernacular in Sebastian Barry's *Days without End* and its Spanish and Italian translations' (pp. 47–66), although it should be noted that his discussion concerns the representation of Irish English dialect rather than English dialect writing per se. At the outset of the essay, Borillo provides a brief and yet dense and detailed summary of

practical and critical responses to the fraught issue of dialect in translation. Borillo's analytical approach to Barry is grounded in his own taxonomy of options faced by the translator of dialect. These include: standardisation of the dialect, substitution of regional dialect features with highly colloquial or non-regionally specific non-standard features, translation of the dialect into another dialect in the target language (p. 50). Borillo observes that, in the Spanish and Italian versions of Barry's *Days without End*, both translators opt to translate Irish English features into the standard variety of their respective target languages. Notably, however, the decision of the Italian translator to employ a greater 'range of expressive resources' (p. 63), 'beyond the lexical level to achieve a sustained colloquial effect' (p. 61), leads Borillo to deem his effort more successful than that of the Spanish translator. The wider implication of this, suggests Borillo, is that the aesthetic functions of non-standard dialect can be preserved to some degree by translators, even when they choose not to make use of non-standard forms from the target language.

The second part of the essay collection, 'Voices on stage', turns its attention to the theatrical possibilities of dialect representation, beginning with Donatella Montini's chapter, 'Shakespeare's multilingual classrooms: Style, stylisation and linguistic authority' (pp. 69–90). Montini reads scenes within Shakespeare's plays, in which characters attempt to teach or learn foreign languages (be they English or Latin), by the light of Nikolas Coupland's work on 'stylisation'. In Shakespeare's multilingual dialogues, Montini finds a striking contrast to the 'conventional picture of the triumph of the [English] vernacular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' (p. 84). While Shakespeare's plays assert the 'cultural prestige and linguistic richness' of English against that of Latin and French, they also involve non-native speakers undermining the authority of English (p. 84), as well as complex explorations of sociolinguistic hierarchies within the English language itself (p. 85). What emerges from Montini's study is a complex and subtle picture of linguistic variation within Shakespeare's writing.

The next chapter, Cristina Paravano's '"Peden bras vidne whee bis cregas": Cornish on the early modern stage' (pp. 91–107), explores the fleeting uses of and references to the Cornish language in the plays of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Paravano's scholarship is excellent and her argument makes a persuasive and well-evidenced case for the role of dramatic texts in the historical stigmatisation and marginalisation of Cornish. This acknowledged, the inclusion of this essay in a collection themed around dialects of British English is a little difficult to explain. Cornish, as Paravano notes and as, earlier in the volume, Beal points out, is not a dialect of British English, but rather a separate language derived, like Scottish Gaelic, Irish Gaelic and Welsh, from a Celtic source, unlike English, which has its roots in Anglo-Saxon. Paravano observes that 'rather than actual Cornish speakers who employ their native language consistently, we find single or derivative Cornish words' (p. 91). A case might have been made here for reading such passages, in which characters speak a sort of mixed code, as early examples of the kind of Cornu-English described by Beal. In that way, this chapter might have been aligned a little more closely with the theme of the essay collection. As it is, the essay stands instead as a very valuable and engaging but anomalous addition to this volume.

In chapter 6, '"Aw'm Lancashire, owd cock, and gradely heart": Enregistered Lancashire voices in the nineteenth-century theatre' (pp. 108–29), Javier Ruano-García advances a fascinating argument concerning the use of Lancashire dialect on the nineteenth-century stage. As Ruano-García points out, 'unlike fiction and poetry, theatrical representations of the Lancashire dialect have gained comparatively little attention' (p. 113). This neglect is quite unmerited, as it turns out: Ruano-García finds in stage renditions of the Lancashire dialect a rich, complex vein of material, which contrasts in revealing ways with better-known prose and verse from the same period. Two main differences distinguish theatrical representations of Lancashire dialect on the one hand, and prose and verse representations on the other. The first lies in the much broader social appeal and reach of stage performances, when compared to prose and verse, which tended to be marketed to wealthier and more socially exclusive audiences (p. 113). The second can be found in the greater level of linguistic variation between theatrical performances. As Ruano-García observes:

> [The Lancashire dialect] was not circulated as a static repertoire of linguistic features indexical of a set of pre-established meanings, but rather took the form of a dynamic inventory that playwrights and performers adapted to the place of the representation, the audience, and their shared ideas about the social persona associated with such forms. (p. 124)

The examples analysed by Ruano-García paint of a picture of the nineteenth-century dialect writing scene quite different from many existing accounts.

The seventh chapter, 'Some observations on British accent stereotypes in Hollywood-style films' (pp. 133–49) by Patrick Zabalbeascoa, ushers in the third and final part of the collection, 'Voices on screen'. Zabalbeascoa examines the strategies translators have adopted when rendering in target languages scenes involving cinematic code-switching between British English and American English. Focusing on Spanish translations in particular, and covering a wide variety of different genres, Zabalbeascoa considers the complex formal, practical and cultural factors at play when characters switch between the two varieties of English, for instance the role of humour, flatness versus roundness, stereotyping or signalling membership of an outgroup. The author suggests that, as American English and British English are neither dialects of one another nor separate languages, the relationship between the two poses a unique challenge for translators, which in some cases verges on the seemingly 'impossible' (p. 147).

In the following chapter, Irene Ranzato's 'The accented voice in audiovisual Shakespeare' (pp. 148–67) approaches the question of Shakesperean regional variation from an original and intriguing angle. After noting the critical consensus that regional dialects play a minimal role in Shakespeare's overall oeuvre, Ranzato goes on to examine the considerably more significant presence of regional accent variation in screen adaptations of his work, at least since the 1960s. Ranzato expands Kozloff's taxonomy (2000) of the function of dialogue in film to draw out the meanings of dialect and accent in her case studies. Ranging from the use of Cockney as comic relief

in productions of *Othello* and *The Comedy of Errors*, to the incorporation of American accents in an adaptation of *Richard III*, to the use of an African American accent in a screen version of *Titus Andronicus*, Ranzato finds that the general tendency in many such directorial choices is towards polarisation. This is to say that 'even high-end audiovisual texts such as Shakespearean films follow an "us" versus "them" ideology' through the dialectal contrasts that they set in motion (p. 163).

Chapter 9, by Lydia Hayes, is titled 'Bastard from the North or Kingg in th'Nohrth? /ˈbɑːˌstəd/ /frɒm/ /də/ /nɔːθ/ or /kɪŋg/ /ɪn/ /də/ /nɒːθ/' (pp. 168–93). Hayes' discussion covers a lot of ground in relatively few pages, taking in the HBO television series, *Game of Thrones*, its translation into Spanish, distinctions between Northern and Southern English and their equivalents in Central and Andalusian Spanish, the theories of enregisterment and indexicality and Hayes' own concept of the 'dialectal meme', extrapolated from the work of the evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins on cultural memes. It is this latter concept, the dialectal meme, that will be of most interest to scholars of dialect representation. The concept of the dialectal meme, while similar to that of the 'indexical meaning' or 'social meaning' which are now in common sociolinguistic parlance, is especially well suited to the analysis of audiovisual representations of dialect, especially when translated. This is due to the pseudo-biological nature of dialect in translation: 'as dialectal memes move across the translational frontier', writes Hayes, 'they evolve' (pp. 169–70), in the sense that the associations attached to a particular linguistic variety (e.g. Northern English) by necessity must transform and adapt in order to exist in the new linguistic environment into which they are translated. Hayes' taxonomy is a valuable one, which I anticipate, will be taken up by other scholars in the field.

The final essay in the collection, chapter 10 '"Why is he making a funny noise?": The RP speaker as outcast' (pp. 194–210), by Luca Valleriani, examines the representation of Received Pronunciation in the Northern Irish television comedy, *Derry Girls*. Valleriani points out that, while RP is commonly glossed as a 'regionless' neutral and universal variety of English, in Northern Ireland and Scotland this is far from the case. Indeed, it is precisely the marked nature of RP in these contexts that makes it ripe for mockery in *Derry Girls*, argues Valleriani. Much of the essay's analysis focuses on the English character of James, whose RP accent attracts metalinguistic commentary, usually of a humorous nature, from the Northern Irish characters, but who is accepted into their ingroup, notwithstanding that his manner of speech continues to mark him as outgroup (pp. 206–7).

As the foregoing summary has, I hope, demonstrated, the scope of *The Dialects of British English in Fictional Texts* is impressively broad, and several of the chapters, in particular, those of Ruano-García and Hayes, point out intriguing new possible directions for the study of dialect representation. In the main, this is a well edited, cohesive and thoughtfully structured book notwithstanding an especially egregious instance of repetition that occurs across pages 1 and 2. But this is a minor matter, which does not detract from the considerable scholarly value that Montini and

Ranzato's collection will hold for researchers in sociolinguistics, historical linguistics, dialectology, literature and film, and translation studies.

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**Geoff Lindsey**, *English after RP: Standard British pronunciation today.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019. Pp. xvi + 153. ISBN 9783030043568.

Reviewed by Kate Hammer, University College London

This book by Geoff Lindsey describes changes in the pronunciation of standard British English, known as Received Pronunciation (RP), which have taken place over the last few decades (since about 1950). It is a vital contribution to the current literature as it