

# Contents

List of maps .....	VII
List of figures .....	VII
List of tables .....	VII
List of abbreviations .....	IX
Acknowledgments .....	X
1. Introduction .....	1
1.1. Data and method.....	4
1.2. The Northern Subject Rule: descriptive problems.....	5
1.2.1. Type of subject, position of subject .....	7
1.2.2. Type of verb.....	12
1.2.3. Other patterns of agreement variation.....	13
1.2.4. The ‘markedness paradox’ .....	14
2. Theoretical accounts of verbal agreement variation.....	16
2.1. Proposed formal analyses of the NSR .....	16
2.1.1. Henry (1995).....	16
2.1.2. Corrigan (1997).....	21
2.1.3. Börjars and Chapman (1998) .....	25
2.1.4. Hudson (1999) .....	27
2.2. Theoretical approaches to variation.....	28
2.2.1. Competence and performance.....	29
2.2.2. Individual grammar and community grammar.....	32
2.2.3. Variable-rules theory .....	35
2.2.4. Stochastic Optimality Theory .....	36
2.3. A usage-based approach.....	38
3. History and origins of the NSR .....	45
3.1. The development of the NSR from Middle English .....	45
3.2. The Origins: Old English affix reduction and analogical spread.....	50
3.3. The Scandinavian hypothesis .....	57
3.4. The Celtic hypothesis .....	60
4. Verbal agreement in the <i>SED</i> .....	63
4.1. The data.....	64
4.2. An overview .....	69
4.3. Non-NSR agreement patterns.....	71
4.3.1. West Midlands verbal <i>-n</i> forms.....	71
4.3.2. Verbal <i>-s</i> with <i>I</i> .....	74
4.3.3. Verbal <i>-s</i> with <i>thou</i> .....	76
4.3.4. Levelling of <i>was/were</i> .....	76
4.3.5. Verbal <i>-s</i> with <i>we, you, and they</i> .....	80
4.4. The Northern Subject Rule in the <i>SED</i> .....	82
5. Verbal agreement in the <i>NITCS</i> .....	93
5.1. The data.....	93
5.2. Pronominal subjects .....	97
5.3. Full NP subjects .....	103

5.3.1.	Regional variation.....	103
5.3.2.	Social and apparent-time variation.....	105
5.3.3.	Linguistic conditioning factors: syntactic constellation.....	109
5.3.3.1.	Inverted clauses .....	110
5.3.3.2.	Relative clauses .....	110
5.3.3.3.	Subject-verb distance.....	113
5.3.4.	Linguistic conditioning factors: types of subject NPs.....	114
5.3.4.1.	Demonstrative pronouns .....	115
5.3.4.2.	Interrogative pronouns.....	116
5.3.4.3.	Indefinite quantifying phrases .....	117
5.3.4.4.	The indefinite pronoun <i>ones</i> .....	118
5.3.4.5.	Lexical items: <i>times, days, things</i> .....	118
5.3.4.6.	Other conditioning factors .....	119
5.3.5.	Conclusions: the conditioning of NSR effects .....	121
5.4.	Existential <i>there</i> .....	123
5.4.1.	Regional variation.....	125
5.4.2.	Social and apparent-time variation.....	127
5.4.3.	Linguistic conditioning factors .....	130
5.4.3.1.	Negation.....	130
5.4.3.2.	Clause structure .....	132
5.5.	Conclusions: agreement in Northern Irish English.....	133
6.	Verbal agreement in <i>FRED</i> .....	135
6.1.	The data .....	135
6.2.	Pronominal subjects: present tense verbs .....	137
6.3.	Pronominal subjects: <i>was/were</i> levelling.....	138
6.4.	Existentials and <i>-r</i> levelling.....	140
6.5.	Full NP subjects .....	145
7.	Conclusions .....	151
	Appendixes.....	155
A.	<i>Varbrul</i> multivariate analysis methods.....	155
1.	Maximum likelihood regression analysis .....	155
2.	Significance testing with <i>Varbrul</i> .....	156
3.	Dependency and interaction between factor groups .....	157
4.	Clustering speakers.....	159
B.	<i>SED</i> data lists .....	160
C.	<i>NITCS</i> data tables .....	190
D.	<i>FRED</i> data tables.....	196
	References .....	199
	Index.....	213