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Terminology and the evolution of
linguistic prejudice: The conceptual
domain of ‘Irishness’ in the
Historical Thesaurus of English and
the *Hansard Corpus of British
Parliamentary Speeches*

Terminologia e evolução do
preconceito linguístico: O domínio
conceitual de ‘Irishness’ no
Historical Thesaurus of English e no
*Hansard Corpus of British
Parliamentary Speeches*

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Abstract: This article draws on the *Historical Thesaurus of English* and related resources, the *Mapping Metaphor* project and the semantically tagged *Hansard Corpus of British Parliamentary Speeches*, to consider how the Irish have been imagined and named in Anglophone culture, and how 'Irishness', alongside the attributes of other 'races and nations', in the terminology of the *Mapping Metaphor* project, has developed metaphorically over time, with a focus on the association between Irishness and anger and foolishness. The article concludes by illustrating how the names and metaphors of the Irish are contested discursively in a corpus of British Parliamentary speeches. The article serves as a practical introduction to the *Historical Thesaurus of English* and the *Hansard Corpus* and how they may be used, in conjunction with related online resources, to explore aspects of English language, discourse and culture.

Keywords: Terminology; Historical Lexicography; *Historical Thesaurus of English*; *Mapping Metaphor in English*; *Hansard Corpus of British Parliamentary Speeches*.

Resumo: Este artigo baseia-se no *Historical Thesaurus of English* e recursos relacionados, no projeto *Mapping Metaphor* e no *Hansard Corpus of British Parliamentary Speeches*, para considerar como os irlandeses foram imaginados e nomeados na cultura anglófona e como o conceito de 'Irishness', ao lado de atributos de outras 'raças e nações', desenvolveu-se metaforicamente ao longo do tempo, com foco na associação entre 'Irishness' e raiva e tolice. O artigo conclui ilustrando como os nomes dos irlandeses e metáforas sobre eles são contestados discursivamente em um corpus de discursos parlamentares britânicos. O artigo serve como uma introdução prática ao *Historical Thesaurus of English* e ao *Hansard Corpus* e discute como eles podem ser usados, em conjunto com recursos on-line relacionados, para explorar aspectos do idioma, do discurso e da cultura do inglês.

Palavras-chave: Terminologia; Lexicografia histórica; *Historical Thesaurus of English*; *Mapping Metaphor in English*; *Hansard Corpus of British Parliamentary Speeches*.

1. The Historical Thesaurus of English

Linguistic research in the early decades of the 21st century is increasingly characterised by the use of ‘big data’ such as digital corpora. However, the analysis of digital corpora can also be informed by the large-scale, largely manual, research that characterised the 20th and even the 19th century, namely the scholarship that produced the *Oxford English Dictionary* and its offshoot the *Historical Thesaurus of English* (KAY; ROBERTS; SAMUELS; WOTHERSPOON 2009). These vast lexicographical resources are particularly useful in the semantic analysis of English language corpora. The present paper illustrates the application of these lexicographical resources to corpus analysis by tracing one particular example of linguistic prejudice - the signification of ‘Irishness’ in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the *Historical Thesaurus of English*, and the *Hansard Corpus of British Parliamentary Speeches* (ALEXANDER; DAVIES 2015).

At a meeting of the Philological Society on 15th January 1965, Professor Michael Samuels of the Department of English Language at the University of Glasgow announced his intention to produce a historical thesaurus of English. He later revisited his reason for undertaking this formidable project in *Linguistic Evolution* (SAMUELS 1972: 180):

We will not be able to account properly for semantic change [...] until it is possible to study simultaneously all the forms involved in a complex series of semantic shifts and replacements. The required data exist in multivolume historical dictionaries like the OED [*Oxford English Dictionary*] but they cannot be utilised because the presentation is alphabetical, not notional. The need is for a historical thesaurus which will bring together under single heads all the words, current or obsolete (and all the obsolete meanings of words still current) that have ever been used to express single and related notions.

In 2009, forty-four years, nine months and one week after the meeting of the Philological Society, a team, then led by Professor Christian Kay, brought this vision to completion, and the online *Historical Thesaurus of English* (HT) was launched, alongside a print version, the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary* (HTOED). The HT classifies almost 250,000 concepts, based

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on a common-sense or ‘folk’ taxonomy that was developed over the four decades of the project’s duration. Every sense of every word in a series of multi-volume historical dictionaries was collated and categorised by a team of lexicographers under the directorship of Samuels and then Kay. The conceptual domains expressed by these senses are first divided into The External World, The Mental World and The Social World, and then the words are sorted by increasingly fine distinctions according to their senses. The first two levels are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The Organisation of the HT

First level		
01 The world	02 The mind	03 Society
Second level		
01.01 The earth	02.01 Mental capacity	03.01 Society & the community
01.02 Life	02.02 Attention & judgement	03.02 Inhabiting & dwelling
01.03 Health and disease	02.03 Goodness & badness	03.03 Armed hostility
01.04 People	02.04 Emotion	03.04 Authority
01.05 Animals	02.05 Will	03.05 Law
01.06 Plants	02.06 Possession	03.06 Morality
01.07 Food and drink	02.07 Language	03.07 Education
01.08 Textiles and clothing		03.08 Faith
01.09 Physical sensation		03.09 Communication
01.10 Matter		03.10 Travel & travelling
01.11 Existence & causation		03.11 Occupation and work
01.12 Space		03.12 Trade and finance
01.13 Time		03.13 Leisure

01.14 Movement		
01.15 Action		
01.16 Relative properties		
01.17 The supernatural		

Source: (http://ht.ac.uk/downloads/HT_Semantic_Hierarchy.pdf)

Each semantic domain is coded, and the three primary categories (01 The World, 02 The Mind and 03 Society) afford 377 further categories, each of which allows successively fine distinctions. The concept ‘Irish’, for example, is coded as:

01.04.07.06.02|03 (n.) The Irish :: native/inhabitant Ireland. 2018. In The Historical Thesaurus of English, version 4.21. Glasgow: University of Glasgow. Retrieved 20 October 2018, from <https://ht.ac.uk/category/?id=40925>.

The coding distinguishes between the collective sense of ‘Irish’ as referring to (a) the nation collectively, and (b) any inhabitant of that nation. The coding assigned to the word (01.04.07.06.02|03) thus indicates that the word has been categorised successively as:

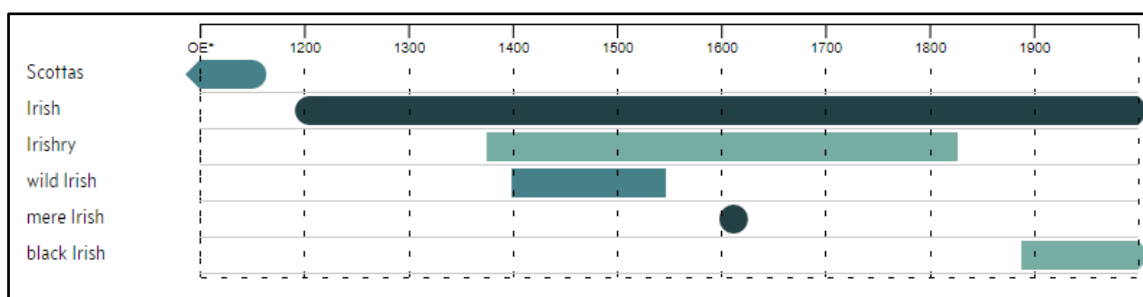
01 The World
 04 People
 07 Nations
 06 Native/Inhabitant of Europe
 02 The Irish
 03 Native/inhabitant of Ireland

As Samuels foresaw, once each sense of every dictionary headword had been categorised, the nature of conceptual domains that had been dispersed throughout the dictionaries can be brought together and arranged chronologically, so their historical development can be examined. The collective sense of ‘Irish’ (attested from c1205), then, occupies a conceptual

domain alongside other terms, including ‘Scottas’ (OE), ‘Irishry’ (1375-1827), ‘wild Irish’ (1399-1547), ‘mere Irish’ (1612), and ‘black Irish’ (1888-). Those interested in how the words relate to each other within this conceptual and chronological ecology need to refer back to the historical dictionaries from which the entries are taken. The OED, in this case, notes that ‘Irishry’ refers to ‘Irish people collectively; the Irish nation, specifically the native, Catholic Irish as opposed to Protestant settlers from England and Scotland’; ‘wild Irish’ referred to ‘Gaelic-speaking Irish people inhabiting the areas of Ireland not under English control, and subsequently also Irish people regarded (especially by the English) as uncivilized, primitive, or unruly’; ‘mere Irish’ is a late survival of a use of ‘mere’ meaning ‘Of a people or their language: pure, unmixed’; and ‘black Irish’ is an ‘adjective and noun, sometimes derogatory, describing an Irish person, or one of Irish ancestry, having dark hair and a dark complexion or eyes’.

By examining the members of the semantic domain together, as a lexical set, the Anglophone construct of Irishness is clearly evident: the Irish are a primitive people, dark-haired and dark-complexioned, adhering to their Gaelic language and Catholic religion. The HT also shows the chronological reach of these aspects of ‘Irishness’ in Anglophone written culture (Table 2).

Table 2: Timeline visualisation of 01.04.07.06.02 n. *The Irish*



2. Images of the Irish in the HT

The timeline visualisation is suggestive of those characteristics of Irishness that hold sway in the Anglophone imagination over time. The Old English term ‘Scottas’ is replaced by the term ‘Irish’; the expression ‘Irishry’ that is associated particularly with Catholicism is most attested from the 14th to the 19th century; the notion of the Irish as wild and primitive has its most productive period from the 14th to the 16th century; the notion of the Irish people and language as being ‘mere’, as in undiluted and pure, is relatively uncommon and historically archaic (although as we shall see, it returns in the 19th century); and the conception of the Irish as being physically distinct, dark-eyed and dark-complexioned, dates from the late 19th century and continues to the present day.

There are, of course, other senses of ‘Irish’, not only referring to the collective but to the individual, the native or inhabitant of Ireland. In this sense there is a much wider variety of expressions falling within the conceptual domain (see Table 3). A subcategorisation of this domain shows several patterns. The patron saint of Ireland is invoked in nicknames like ‘Paddy/Pat/Paddywhack/Patlander’ with ‘Mick’ and ‘mack’ as alternatives, the latter being the Celtic patronymic ‘Mac’. As for the former, according to Oxford Dictionary of Christian Names (s.v. Michael), ‘The name was not used in Ireland much before the 17th cent., but is now one of the commonest Irish names, often abbreviated to Mick, Micky, or Mike.’ The OED entry adds, ‘Use of the word was perhaps reinforced by the numerous Irish surnames in Mc-, and Mac-.’ The saints’ names ‘Patrick’ and ‘Michael’ also invoke a Catholic heritage.

Table 3: HT section 01.04.07.06.02|03 Native/Inhabitant of Ireland

Irishman c1205- Ireis 1297 Yreis 1297 Irish 1613-1828 Scots mack 1617-c1688 hooded man 1621 + 1641 Teague 1661-1900 colloq. bog-trotter 1682-1855 dear joy 1688-1710 colloq.	Teaguelander 1689-1732 colloq. boglander 1730/6-1755 bog-stalker a1758 brogueneer 1758-1840 Milesian 1771- joc. Paddy 1780- freq. derog. Pat 1806- Irisher 1807- Paddywhack 1811-1846	West Briton 1816- Patlander 1820- Greek 1823- slang potato-eater 1823- Grecian 1853- slang Mick 1856- joc. Harp 1904- US slang
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Other nicknames include ‘Teague’ (which the OED identifies as the ‘Anglicized spelling of the Irish name *Tadhg*, variously pronounced /teig/, /ti:g/, /taig/, fancifully identified with *Thaddeus* and its familiar form *Thady*), and ‘Teaguelander’. This name, often in the form ‘Taig’, can also be a ‘Protestant term of contempt for a Roman Catholic.’ Rather more classical nicknames are ‘Milesian’, from ‘*Milesius*, Latinized form of Irish *Míl Espáine*, the name of a legendary Spanish king whose sons (as reported in *Lebor Gabála*) are reputed to have conquered and reorganized the ancient kingdom of Ireland about 1300 b.c.’.

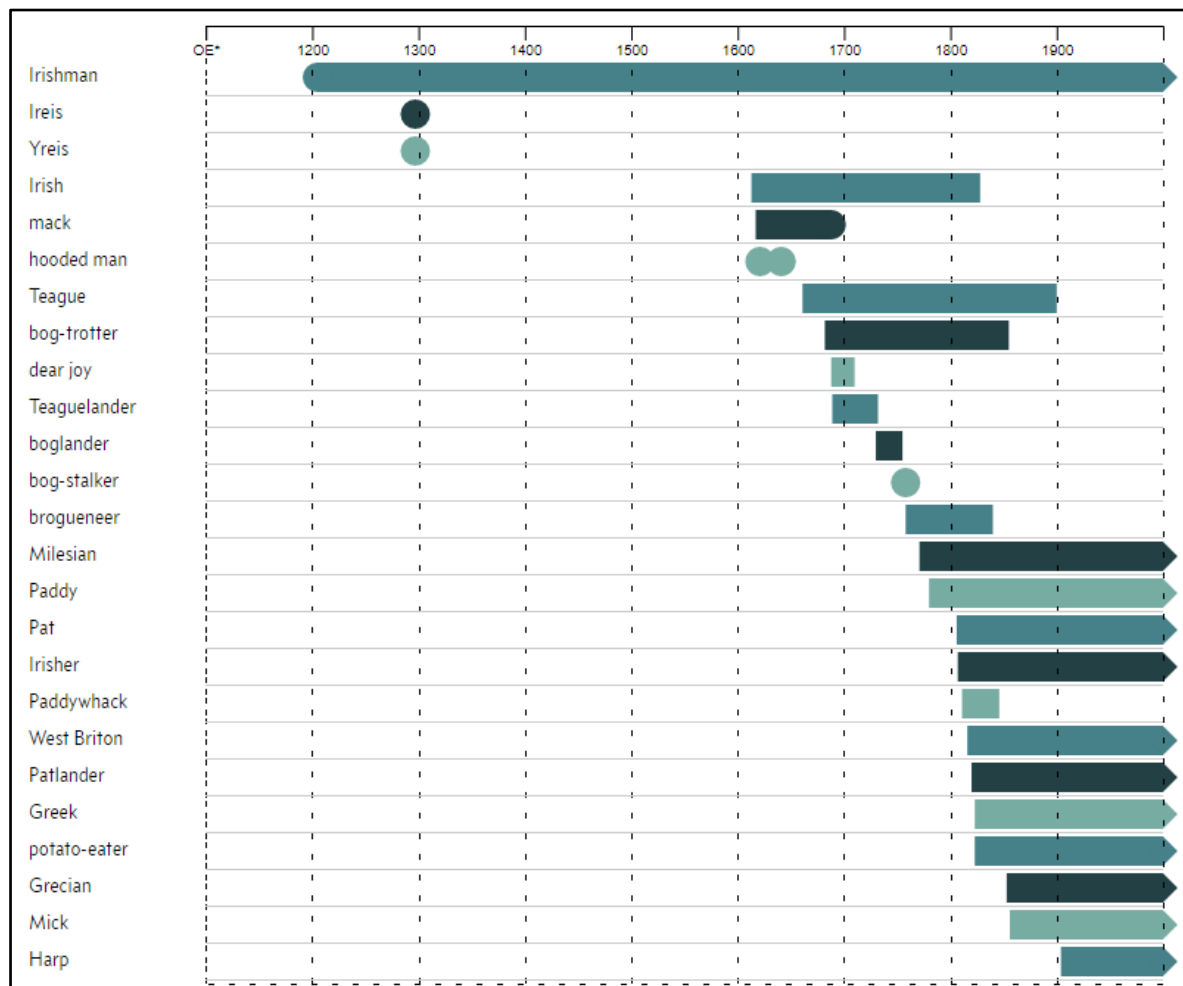
The remaining expressions are more or less explicable. ‘Dear Joy’ is described in the OED simply as ‘a familiar appellation for an Irishman’; the term is so defined in a dictionary of cant from the late 17th century, but, as with so many slang expressions, no clear etymology is given. In the 19th century, we learn, Irish immigrants to England referred to themselves, or were referred to, as ‘Greeks’ - the OED gives a citation from a dictionary of slang published in 1823 that informs us that ‘Irishmen call themselves *Greeks*—none else follow the same track to the east; throughout this land, many unruly districts are termed *Grecian*.’ A less classical set of epithets is ‘bog-trotter’, ‘boglander’, ‘bog-stalker’, picturing the Irish as those who inhabit or set foot across an unfertile and inhospitable wasteland. Again, a less than positive view of Irishmen is evoked by ‘hooded man’, a term that is

explained by the poet, Spenser, around 1599: ‘For a Theife it [sc. the Irish mantle] is so handsome..he can in his mantle passe thorough any town or company, being close hooded over his head..from knowledge of any to whom he is indangered.’ Less common expressions, like ‘brogueener’, refer to perceived characteristics of the Irish, for example that they speak with a strong accent or ‘brogue’, and ‘potato-eater’, a 19th century term that alludes to the staple food of many Irish people, and (in the century in which the term was coined) simultaneously evokes the blight that resulted in a catastrophic famine. The two remaining terms are worth remarking on: ‘West Briton’(1816-) draws on a unionising strategy also evident a full century earlier, in Scotland, to obscure traditional national nomenclature with ‘regional’ alternatives. The OED cites a letter from one J. Giffard to Sir Robert Peel on 19th March, 1816, (Brit. Library Add. MSS. 40,253, f. 258) in which he argues, ‘Had the whole [of the United Kingdom] been called by one common name *Britain*—we should have had the Inhabitants proud of the glorious Title *Britons* and we *West Britons* would have been as much conciliated and attached as the *North Britons* are.’ ‘Harp’ is a more recent Americanism, attested from the early 20th century, whereby the inhabitants of Ireland are referred to by one of its national symbols. The OED citations inform readers that, when tossing coins, ‘harp’ could mean ‘tails’ in Ireland (‘from Hibernia being represented with a harp, on the reverse of the copper coins of that country’) and the word was also used to refer to Irish women, probably as a reduced form of ‘harpy’.

The words in the conceptual domain of individual inhabitants of Ireland reinforce and give detail to the patterns evident in the collective domain of ‘The Irish’: from an Anglophone perspective, Irish individuals remain the Other: Catholic, Gaelic-speaking (or marked by a Gaelic accent), criminal, and impoverished (inhabitants of a wasteland, living on a diseased staple). There is a strategy, however, for incorporating the Other into the Self, namely by constructing the imagined nation as Britain and renaming Ireland as its western region. The timeline in the HT (Table 4) again shows the

chronological rise (and occasional fall) of the words that articulate these concepts.

Table 4: Timeline visualisation of 01.04.07.06.02|03 Irish::Native/inhabitant of Ireland



Keen collectors of words referring to Irish people will possibly note apparent absences in the HT inventory, one being ‘Fenian’, which the OED defines as, originally, a member of a mercenary army that supported the King of Eire, and, more recently, ‘one of an organization or ‘brotherhood’ formed among the Irish in the United States of America for promoting and assisting revolutionary movements, and for the overthrow of the English government in Ireland.’ Accordingly, this term is found in the HT in the categories ‘pertaining to ancient warriors’ and ‘members of Irish political associations’:

03.03.13|02 (adj.) Pertaining to warriors collectively :: ancient Irish.

2018. In *The Historical Thesaurus of English*, version 4.21. Glasgow:

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University of Glasgow. Retrieved 20 October 2018, from <https://ht.ac.uk/category/?id=155160>.

03.04.06.17.06|03.01 (n.) Irish politics :: societies/associations :: members of. 2018. In *The Historical Thesaurus of English*, version 4.21. Glasgow: University of Glasgow. Retrieved 20 October 2018, from <https://ht.ac.uk/category/?id=161280>.

In the former conceptual domain, the word ‘Fenian’ exists in a relatively small group of related terms for ancient Irish warriors, namely ‘kern(e)’ 1422 + 1550, ‘Fein(ne)’ 1782-, ‘Shanavests’ 1811-, and ‘Fenian’ 1816-. In the latter domain, of members of Irish political associations, the term exists in a network of semantic relations with ‘hougher’ 1712-1878, ‘White boy/Whiteboy’ 1762- ‘Steel boy’ 1772-, ‘United Irishman’ 1791-1837, ‘Defender’ 1796, ‘Orangeman’ 1796-, ‘Marksman’ 1800-1813, ‘Orangist’ c1800-1822, ‘Thresher’ 1806-1812, ‘Marchman’ 1813, ‘Rockite’ 1828-, ‘Brunswicker’ 1828-, ‘Terry Alt/Terryalt’ 1831-1898, ‘whitefoot’ 1832-, ‘Repeal Warden’ 1841-, ‘Young Irelander’ 1855, ‘Fenian’ 1864-, ‘Land-leaguer’ 1880, ‘Invincible’ 1883-1887, ‘Leaguer’ 1892, and ‘Prov(v)ie’ 1972-. The point of this example is that the alert user of these lexicographical resources needs to look at different sets of key words and explore different parts of the HT to build up a fuller picture of the cultural world evoked by the lexical items.

In short, then, the examples of ‘Irish’ and ‘Fenian’ illustrate the enormous power of the HT to (to repeat Samuels’ words, quoted above) ‘bring together under single heads all the words, current or obsolete (and all the obsolete meanings of words still current) that have ever been used to express single and related notions’ (SAMUELS 1972: 180). Once this has been done, the user has access to a conceptual domain, a kind of ‘map’ of the way in which related concepts, here ‘Irish’ as a nation and the inhabitants of that nation, have been articulated in Anglophone culture over the past thousand years. As the HT came to fruition, the resemblance of many of the ‘folk taxonomies’ to conceptual domains, as they were increasingly being described in cognitive

semantics (eg LAKOFF & JOHNSON 1980; KÖVECSES 2006; KAY & ALLAN 2015) became highly suggestive. The conceptual domains of the HT cannot be understood as representing an individual's cognitive domain (there are, for example, many English-speaking individuals who would not have any mental category at all for Irish political associations); however, one way of looking at the HT is as a representation of the collective cognitive domains of the Anglophone community over the past millennium. It is not an infallible representation, of course: the multivolume historical dictionaries on which it is based are the process of generations of lexicographers' labours to record all the senses of the written (and only latterly the spoken) language. The record can never be complete or comprehensive; however, the data that we do have is considerable and, as the example of 'Irish' itself shows, it can be highly illuminating of recurrent patterns of thought.

2.1. Mapping Irishness in Metaphor

The online HT has other affordances. A quick search for 'Irish' in the HT will give results beyond the senses of either the nation or its inhabitants, for example 'Irish' is also found in categories such as:

01.07.02.02.06.01|05 n. Drink :: Whisky :: **Irish whisky** (1889)

01.08.01.14.01.06.02|01.03.02 n. Textiles :: Made from flax/hemp/jute :: types of :: linen :: **fine Irish** (1784-)

01.09.04.05.03|01 n. Use of drugs, poison :: Snuff :: **types of Irish** (1806/7)

These examples represent a semantic broadening of the meaning of 'Irish' to mean whisky, linen or snuff that originates in the country. The HT codings, of course, indicate the semantic shift from one conceptual domain to another, and the senses are tagged by the earliest OED citation. On the completion of the HT, it became evident that the codings could be used to map the process of conceptual shifts - effectively the development of

metaphors - in English, over time. An AHRC-funded project, ‘Mapping Metaphor with the Historical Thesaurus’, led by Professor Wendy Anderson of Glasgow University, set out to begin this task (ANDERSON 2015). The main project outcomes were a further online resource, the *Metaphor Map of English* and a volume of essays on metaphors related to landscape, beasts, plants, food, death, colours, excitement, religious anxiety, madness and sanity, power and authority, criminality, weapons and armour, and the process of reading (ANDERSON, BRAMWELL & HOUGH 2016). The task of tracking and the multitude of conceptual shifts in English was, of course, Herculean, and the fine-grained detail of the HT could not be reproduced in the short time available to the project team. However, the online *Metaphor Map of English* (MME) is again suggestive of the ways in which Irishness has been understood in Anglophone culture. The following illustration also demonstrates how the online resource can be used.

A quick search for the term ‘Irish’ on the MME homepage indicates that the term is to be found in several categories, and in connection with several metaphorical relations. It should be noted that the MME category codings are different from those of the HT (Table 5).

Table 5: Results of a MME Quick Search for ‘Irish’

Categories with matching descriptors	Categories with matching examples of metaphor
1A14 Named regions of earth 1D08 Races and nations 3D03 Politics 3H03 Church government 3L02 Money	1D08 Races and nations 2A18 Intelligibility 2D07 Anger 2G02 Languages of the world

The term ‘Irish’, as Table 5 shows, can be found in a number of conceptual domains or categories, including the geographical space, the inhabitants of the nation, the political domain, the religious domain, and the domain of specific currency. Some of these categories enter into metaphorical relations, as one domain is ‘mapped’ onto another. For the purposes of this article, we will follow the mapping of *Races and nations* onto *Anger*.

The MME category ID08 *Races and nations* is the last of eight subcategories of 1D *People*, others being 1D01 *Humankind*, 1D02 *Persons*,

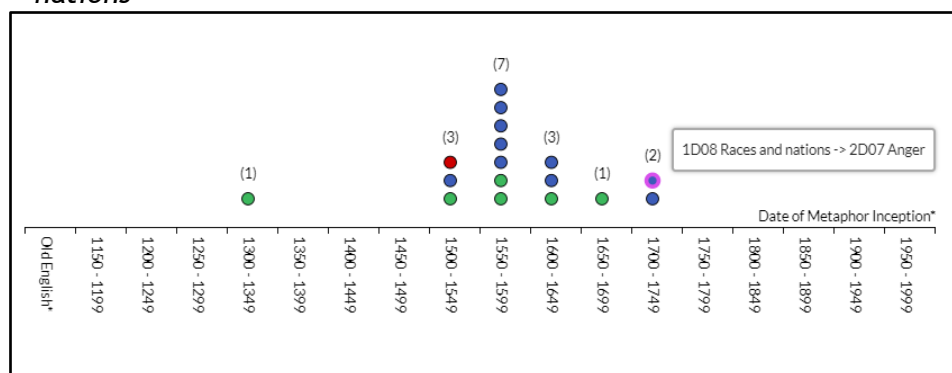
1D03 1D03 *Male Persons*, 1D03 *Female Persons* and so on. In the folk taxonomy on which the HT and MME are based, the categories are not co-hyponymic with each other but they indicate where groups of semantically related terms have evolved in the language, and they are therefore sensitive to historical prejudices and anxieties. ID08 *Races and nations* enters into a number of metaphorical relations, which can be explored by clicking on the link from the Results page following a quick search for 'Irish'. The metaphorical relations can be viewed in a number of ways online, a downloadable table, a card, a timeline or a visualisation. The table view shows the different domains that *Races and Nations* relates to in Anglophone culture. The arrows show the directionality of the metaphor (one-way source to target domain or bidirectional). An indication of the strength of the metaphor is given, based on the coders' perception of the strength of the systematicity of the metaphor, which in turn is based on an assessment of the number of instantiations found, and criteria such as their duration and the range of genres in which they are found (ANDERSON, personal communication).

There is an indication of the 50-year period in which the earliest attestation is found, and some examples. Table 6 shows the Table View for metaphorical relations for *ID08 Races and nations*.

As Table 6 indicates, *Races and nations* as a category in English is open to a number of metaphorical developments that would be worth further study in themselves, from Goths being associated with destruction to Latins being excitable and Spartans and Romans being brave. The sole mention of 'Irish' on this list is in its association - alongside 'Gothic' and 'Scot' - with the domain of *Anger*, and, for the purposes of this article, that metaphorical transference is what we will pursue. Table 7 shows the Timeline view of the same information as Table 6, but this display has the virtue of indicating how these national characteristics develop their associations with other attributes over time. The latter half of the 16th century seems to have been a particularly productive one in terms of associating racial and national characteristics with other conceptual domains.

Table 6: Table view of metaphorical relations involving 1D06: *Races and nations*

Category 1	Direction	Category 2	Strength	Start Era	Examples of metaphor
1D08: Races and nations	←	1G01: Food and eating	Strong	1600-1649	<i>butter-box, Leek, Sauerkraut/Sourcroust, Pea-soup, Spaghetti, Sausage</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	1I01: Physical sensation	Strong	1550-1599	<i>sybarite, Spartan, Spartan</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	1I06: Sexual relations	Strong	1300-1349	<i>sodomite, sodomite, squaw, French, Ugandan</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	1K03: Destruction	Strong	1650-1699	<i>goth, vandal, hun</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	1L03: Size and spatial extent	Strong	1550-1599	<i>pygmy/ogymy, Patagonian</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	1O22: Behaviour and conduct	Strong	1500-1549	<i>Turk, Turkish, myrmidon, Moorism, mohawk, Saracenic, Bohemian, Hunnish, Victorian</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2A17: Foolish person	Strong	1550-1599	<i>Essex calf, boeotian, sawney, Essex girl</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2A21: Lack of knowledge	Strong	1550-1599	<i>home-born, home-bred, philistine, philistine, philistia, yahoo</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2A22: Truth and falsity	Strong	1550-1599	<i>Spanish, jew, yankee</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2B10: Tastelessness	Strong	1600-1649	<i>Gothish, transalpine, Saracen, Visigoth, Vandal, barbarian, Philistine</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2C02: Bad	Strong	1500-1549	<i>Turk, turkish, Punic, Hunnic, vagabond, flounderkin, tartarean, Hunnish, Siwash, apache, pachuco</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2D03: Excitement	Strong	1700-1749	<i>French, Latin</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2D07: Anger	Strong	1700-1749	<i>Gothic, Scot, Irish</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2D14: Pride	Strong	1600-1649	<i>Hogen Mogen, gascon, Latin, Essex man</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2D17: Courage	Strong	1550-1599	<i>Roman, Spartan, Spartan</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	2F10: Taking and thieving	Strong	1550-1599	<i>Hungarian, Tartarian</i>
1D08: Races and nations	→	3A07: Solitude and social isolation	Strong	1500-1549	<i>barbarian, Ishmaelitic, Bohemian</i>

Table 7: Timeline view of metaphorical relations involving 1D06: *Races and nations*

With respect to the Irish, the association of *Races and nations* with *Anger* is relatively late, coming in the early 18th century, at a time, obviously, of political turbulence following the Great Revolution and the Union of the Parliaments. However, returning from the Metaphor Map to the HT, we can see that the earliest attestation of ‘Irish’ with *Anger* is later still, and associated more with the United States than the United Kingdom. ‘Irish’ is part of a subcategory Angry Temper, alongside ‘dander’ and it dates from 1834. Tracing this line back to the OED, we find this sense of ‘Irish’ defined as ‘colloq. (orig. U.S.). Fieriness of temper; passion, anger, rage. Chiefly with *up*, esp. in *to get one’s Irish up*.’ Citations begin with no less a personage than Davy Crockett, who notes in the narrative of his life (1834) that ‘Her Irish was up too high to do any thing with her.’ The association of Irishness with anger, then, seems more to do with perceptions of immigrant characteristics in the USA than colonial resentments in Britain.

Perhaps even more stereotypically, ‘Irish’ also contributes to the transference between *Races and nations* and 2A17: *Foolish person*, a tendency that is attested generally from the late 16th century. For example, Henry Care, a writer and polemicist, notes in his *English liberties; or, The free-born subject’s inheritance* (c.1682) that a particular set of attributes were ‘Silly, Servile, yet conceited and Cruel, Creatures altogether of an Irish understanding.’ In a later OED citation (1725), the Irish satirist, Jonathan Swift, takes this characteristic foolishness for granted, when he writes ‘They laught at such an Irish Blunder, To take the Noise of Brass for Thunder.’

The Mapping Metaphor project is highly suggestive in its tracing of metaphorical developments in the English lexicon. From Table 7 we can note that by far the earliest conceptual shifts relating to *Races and nations* were to do with *Sexual relations* (early 14th century, beginning a trend where the French and the inhabitants of Sodom were seen as sexually promiscuous and/or deviant). The tendency to associate particular characteristics with other groups really takes off in the early 16th century when badness, behavioural attributes and social isolation are added to the conceptual associations with different national and racial groups; for example, Apaches

are bad, Turks are ill-behaved and Bohemians are marginal to society. It is again suggestive that this process coincides largely with the beginnings of English colonial adventure and imperialist expansion. The Metaphor Map, however, only gives a broad outline of these shifts from one conceptual domain to another, and the resource needs to be used with both the HT and the OED to provide more detail. The fact that Jonathan Swift, an Irishman and satirist, is cited as trading on the image of Irishness as foolishness alerts the user to the possibilities of internalising stereotypical views of one's one racial or national group, and also the possibility of treating such stereotypes with amused affection or subversive irony. The OED citations give glimpses of such possibilities, but to explore them further, one needs to go to a corpus.

3. The Hansard Corpus of British Parliamentary Speeches

A further offshoot of the HT is the online Hansard Corpus of British Parliamentary Speeches. Available as a distinct contribution to the Brigham Young University suite of online corpora, the Hansard Corpus (HC) was designed by Professor Marc Alexander of Glasgow University, the current director of the ongoing HT. The corpus contains 1.6 billion words of British Parliamentary Speeches from 1803-2005, tagged grammatically and also - uniquely - according to the categories of the HT. It is therefore possible to explore a massive corpus of political discourse about a range of topics, including Ireland, using the categories of the HT. This article concludes with a few illustrations of how this kind of exploration might begin.

A simple search of the frequency of the word 'Irish' in the HC shows that it appears frequently, particularly in the 1880s and 1890s, during a period of civil unrest known as the 'Land War' (Table 8).

Table 8: Frequency of the occurrence of the word 'Irish' in HC, decade by decade 1800s-2000s

ONTEXT																				CLICK ON COLUMN HEADI																			
1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000																			
1512	1706	2658	11023	14289	7725	14634	19031	54977	45771	34022	38483	14147	5899	2097	1849	4078	7459	7713	8952	4312																			
303.90	239.12	228.87	392.75	470.44	234.15	427.67	512.96	915.92	894.67	526.07	482.13	197.33	61.97	22.11	15.29	26.82	45.67	41.98	50.54	48.75																			

During the 1890s there are a number of occurrences (precisely 10) of the expression 'wild Irish', mainly in a particular debate in which the term is bandied about between speakers. Most of the occurrences are in fact attributed to a single speaker, Lord Clonbrock, an Irish peer, who also uses it in conjunction with 'mere Irish' in a response to Viscount Clifden, during a debate on land legislation in Ireland, recorded in the House of Lords on 31st May 1897:

My noble Friend is reported to have said "he should say that the **wild Irish** had been got at." Now, my Lords, some centuries ago, according to an old chronicler, Irishmen were divided into "**mere Irish, wild Irish, and very wild Irish.**" As a native of the Pale my noble Friend would be classed as "**mere Irish,**" and would naturally look upon a poor Connaught man like myself as "**wild Irish.**" I cannot complain of that; it was probably only from extreme politeness that he refrained from including me among the "**very wild Irish.**" But I do not quite know what he meant by saying "the **wild Irish** had been got at."

As with the citation from Swift, we can see Irish speakers drawing upon the stereotyped conceptual attributes of Irishness, more or less ironically, as the exchange develops and the speaker plays with categories and preconceptions. The several occurrences of 'mere Irish' in Lord Clonbrock's speech contribute to a total of 8 occurrences of the collocation in HC in the 1890s. There are earlier occurrences in the HC; however, the alert user should be aware that not all collocations have the sense defined in the OED: compare these two occurrences from the 1840s:

- (a) It contained a clause making void the grant, if the Duke should alienate or demise the premises to the **mere Irish**, or to any who should not have taken the oath of supremacy within a year previous.
- (b) This was no **mere Irish** question; it was an English question...

TradTerm, São Paulo, v.37, n. 2, janeiro/2021, p. 515-537

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Only in the first instance does the collocation refer to a particular type of Irishness, that is, 'pure and undiluted'; In the second instance it is the nature of the question, not the race, that is at stake.

The HC tags the corpus using the HT semantic categories, which can be useful and stimulating, though the results must be treated with caution as the tagging of a corpus of this scale is done at least partly automatically, and so the results can be counter-intuitive. However, even given the necessary constraints on the accuracy of coding, searches can be revealing. For example, the association between Irishness and foolishness can be explored by choosing the search item *Irish* and using a semantic code {AR:24:b} *Foolishness/Stupidity* to identify collocates (up to four items on each side of the search item) that fall into that conceptual category. The one word that appears in the results is *fool* (in its nominal and verbal forms), which appears in 22 occurrences, largely from the land legislation debates, a selection of which are exemplified below:

he could not **fool** the Irish Members in this matter
 He saw no reason why it should be supposed that Irish landlords were bigger **fools** than English landlords
 that whatever faults they have, the Irish people are not absolutely **fools**
 comes forward with a direct bribe, which, he thinks, the Irish people are **fools** enough to welcome and accept
 Irish landlords were not **fools** and that it would not pay the landlords to turn their
 Irish tenants are not **fools**; but that tenant would be a **fool** ...
 believe that the Irish tenants are knaves or the English people **fools**
 Does my right hon: Friend take the Irish tenant for a **fool**? I think that the Irish tenant may be relied upon
 the Irish tenants are not **fools** and that they are opposed to this,
 But Gentlemen from Ireland replied that the Irish tenants are not **fools**
 We have been assuming to-night that the Irish tenants are not **fools**:
 The hon: Member seems to suppose they are **fools**
 You suggest the Irish Judges would be **fools**:
 The argument was that the Irish were knaves or **fools**: [Cries of "No!"]

The interesting point about these actual corpus examples in which 'Irish' collocates with terms associated with foolishness is that the

stereotypical foolishness is regularly denied. Even so, the underlying stereotype informs the discourse even while the discourse tokens repudiate it. The examples from the corpus demonstrate the value of using the resources - the OED, the HT, the MME and the HC - in combination, and with a certain degree of critical flexibility.

4. Conclusion

This article has sought to introduce readers to the kinds of linguistic and cultural research that can be undertaken using relatively recent and undeniably powerful lexicographical resources. The *Historical Thesaurus of English* project has turned the multi-volume historical dictionaries, principally the OED, inside-out, painstakingly recategorizing the entire lexicon of English, past and present, according to semantic categories. The outcome of this massive project allows users to share Samuels' vision of tracking concepts over time, and observing how they fit into the evolving lexical ecology that articulates a network of concepts characterising cultural assumptions at any period of time. The example of 'Irishness' has been used as an illustration. As well as referring to a nation and its inhabitants, the term 'Irish' engages in a series of conceptual shifts that illustrate how Anglophone culture has imagined the Irish over time: as wild, unconstrained, unintelligible Gaelic speakers, superstitious Catholics, a pure and undiluted race, dark-eyed and swarthy-complexioned, foolish and hot-tempered. The *Mapping Metaphor* project shows how terms that refer originally to races and nations gradually transfer their meanings into conceptual domains associated with personal attributes, such as sexual incontinence, untrustworthiness, foolishness and anger. Diachronic, semantically tagged corpora such as the *Hansard Corpus* demonstrate discourse in action. We see by looking at the results of corpus searches that the meanings and conceptual shifts indicated by the HT and the MME projects exist in contention: that participants in discourse draw on cognitive associations such as 'Irish people are foolish persons' not only to portray members of a category in this way, but also to challenge and

repudiate such conceptions. In short, the dictionary, thesaurus, metaphor map and corpus must be considered as complementary resources in any research that combines lexicographical and cultural studies.

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All data and screenshots are taken from the online HT, MME and HC websites:

<https://ht.ac.uk/>, <http://mappingmetaphor.arts.gla.ac.uk/>, and

<http://hansard-corpus.org>

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