

Alongside approaches to the English of the Irish diaspora, the English of incoming migrants in contemporary Ireland is also examined (e.g. the attitudes of migrants towards Irish English). Interestingly, the volume succeeds in reflecting a major social change that Ireland has undergone in the last decades: Ireland, traditionally a country of emigration, has become a destination for immigration.

As is suggested in its title, this volume is a state-of-the-art contribution to the study of Irish varieties of English. It will certainly be appealing to linguists, particularly to those scholars interested in varieties of English, sociolinguistics, and language variation and change. Undoubtedly, *New perspectives on Irish English* lays down guidelines for the research on Irish English that is to come.

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PAUL MANNING, *The semiotics of drink and drinking*. New York: Continuum, 2012.  
Pp. 245. Pb. \$44.95.

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Drink and drinking lubricate social interaction. Paul Manning argues in his new book that to attend to this process properly might require an ethnographic and historical approach that breaks down binary distinctions between studies of language and studies of material form and brings the two into a common field of inquiry through an innovative approach to semiotics. Manning draws on a range of materials including blogged and semifictional interactions between patrons and Starbucks baristas, observations from fieldwork in the Republic of Georgia, and a well-sampled secondary literature on drink and drinking, to offer a flight of beverage studies across contrasting North American capitalist and Caucasian postsocialist modernities.

The introduction (chapter 1) offers a theoretical model for the study of signs and their material properties that draws heavily on the work of Marx, Charles Peirce, Bruno Latour, and the recent writings of several North American anthropologists. The other chapters, in the words of the author, ‘are each devoted to a different aspect of a different drink whose material properties mediate sociality to such an extent that an entire ethnography of a certain time and place can be written with that drink as the “hero” of the story’ (29–30).

Equal parts conversation analysis, political economy of a Starbucks latte, and meditation on theories of the public sphere, ‘Coffee’ (chapter 2) uses baristas’ rants about interactions with customers to inquire into the scaffolding of phatic

labor built upon service encounters over coffee. ‘Gin’ (chapter 3) then explores the semiotics of savage and civilized, raw and cooked, as they have emerged through post-colonial notions of connoisseurship and the Anglo-American social genre of the cocktail party.

Chapter 4, ‘Water’, turns the book toward the postsocialist Republic of Georgia for a comparison of the semiotics of ‘mineral’ or ‘spring’ waters with North American understandings. Chapter 5, ‘Colas and uncolas’, is a study of a semiotics of postsocialism through varieties of carbonated drinks and their local scenes and meanings of consumption. Chapter 6, ‘Wine’, extends the author’s exploration of talk and social, political, and economic transformation in Georgia as reflected in shifting social rituals of wine consumption. Chapter 7 continues the sampling of how an alcoholic beverage (‘Vodka’) structures Georgian interactions, such as in terms of fictive kinship, ritual poetry, and a temporality different than beer’s. In chapter 8’s substitution for a conclusion, Manning explores the subject of beer to synthesize issues of drink, postsocialist politics, postsocialist consumption, Western modernity, and the hybridity of ‘natural’ (and national) ingredients.

This book reads at times much more as *a* semiotics of drink and drinking among cosmopolitan postsocialist Georgians and their contemporary North American peers than *the* semiotics of drink and drinking. Nonetheless, this robustly integrative and historically situated theory of the materially and the interactively social advances us immensely toward the latter in its contributions to how we understand the role of libations in interaction, sociability more broadly, and signs in society.

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MARTIN CORTAZZI & LIXIAN JIN (eds.), *Researching cultures of learning: International perspectives on language learning and education*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013. Pp. xix, 355. Pb. \$80.98.

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This book is an excellent collection of research-based papers, presenting a wide range of international scholars’ orientations, viewpoints, and critical stances on cultures of learning in various contexts in different countries.

The book consists of sixteen chapters divided into four differently themed sections. The first part focuses on the concept of learning cultures, elaborated and redefined through a combination of both teachers’ and learners’ values, expectations,