

# Passivization and the Cognitive Complexity Principle in WEs: The case of finite and non-finite complementation clauses

Noura Abdou (Regensburg University, Germany)

Rohdenburg (1996:149) investigates the role played by processing complexity in the choice between grammatical alternatives in present day English. He lists passive constructions among cognitively more complex contexts where more explicit variants tend to be favored. In this respect, my present work adds to previous research by testing the effect of Rohdenburg's complexity principle (1996:151) on the envelop of variation between finite and non-finite complementation clauses (CCs) in terms of the use of passivized verbs in the CCs of verb *hope* across five varieties of English; namely British and American English (as norm-providing ENL varieties) and Singapore, Indian, and Philippine English (as nativized L2 varieties of English). Furthermore, previous research (e.g. Leech et al. 2009, Seoane and Williams 2006) has shown that there is a decreasing tendency of *be-passive* in British and American English academic writing in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This considered, my results will show whether the tendency towards higher use of active voice can also be found in the CCs of *hope*.

The present study aims to: 1) examine the distribution of finite (*that-clause*, zero-complementizer clause) and non-finite (*to-infinitive*) CCs in the previously mentioned varieties, and 2) shed more light on the reasons that might have contributed to the infrequent use of the passive construction in the CCs of *hope* across these varieties; such as the recurrent use of first person pronouns (Hundt and Mair 1999), the colloquialization of written English (Mair and Leech 2006), etc.

The database used for this study consists of the British, American, Singapore, Indian, and Philippine English components of the ICE corpora as well as Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English. The findings show a tendency for the previously stated varieties to favor non-finite constructions with *hope*, when the subject of the CC is co-referential with the subject of the main clause. It is also shown that the passive voice in the CCs is infrequently used in all varieties and regional variation is not highly significant. Additionally, the presence of passive constructions in the CCs is likely to result in the use of grammatically more explicit variant i.e. finite CCs in the varieties under examination. The results also show that the tendency towards the use of a more subjective style is not compatible with the use of the passive constructions, given that first person pronouns (*I* and *we*) account for above 75 % of all pronouns in main clauses across these varieties. More results will be discussed in detail in the presentation.

## References

- Hundt, Marianne and Christian Mair. 1999. "Agile" and "uptight" genres: The corpus-based approach to language change in progress. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 4. 221–242.
- Leech, Geoffrey, Marianne Hundt, Christian Mair & Nicholas Smith. 2009. *Change in Contemporary English: A Grammatical Study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Mair, Christian & Geoffrey Leech. 2006. Current change in English syntax. In Bas Aarts & April MacMahon (eds.), *The Handbook of English Linguistics*, 318–342. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Rohdenburg, Günter. 1996. Cognitive complexity and increased grammatical explicitness in English. *Cognitive linguistics* 7(2). 149-182.

# The superlative alternation in British vs. American English: Questionnaire-based insights

Nikolai Beland (University of Bamberg, Germany)

While the alternation of synthetic and analytic comparative forms ranks among the most extensively researched alternation phenomena in English, the superlative has to date received relatively sparse scholarly attention. In this talk, I will address this research gap, focussing on varietal differences in the light of evidence gleaned from a questionnaire-based elicitation study.

The corpus evidence presented by Mondorf (2009) for comparatives suggests a division of labour along the lines of Rohdenburg's (1996) complexity principle for a wide range of linguistic constraints. The tendency to resort to the analytic variant in cases of increased cognitive complexity has most recently been demonstrated to operate in both production and perception (Kunter 2017). Multifactorial corpus studies have found an impact of factors related to the adjectival base, such as the number of syllables, the final segment, and measures of frequency (Hilpert 2008, Cheung & Zhang 2016, Chua 2018). Empirical engagement with the superlative alternation has as yet been limited to selected linguistic variables (Cheung & Zhang 2016), notably excluding potential differences between varieties.

The results that will be presented come from a questionnaire study involving 723 participants from multiple varietal backgrounds, most prominently the standard reference varieties BrE and AmE. The 120 test sentences were manipulated along seven context-dependent factors and worded in such a way as to trigger the superlative of 23 mono- and disyllabic adjectives for which frequency analyses of BNC and COCA indicate considerable alternation. A sociodemographic part preceded the test items to enable the assessment of sociolinguistic variables. Hierarchical mixed-effects regression modelling (Gelman & Hill 2007) was used to assess the impact of context-dependent and user-related predictors.

The analysis suggests that context-dependent variables indeed play a role in the superlative alternation. Infinitival complementation and end weight have the strongest impact on the alternation of all linguistic constraints investigated. The results of two variables designed to measure morphosyntactic persistence (Szmrecsanyi 2006) turn out contrary to the expected trend. It is further observed that speakers of the two main reference varieties BrE and AmE do not exhibit systematic differences in their susceptibility to the cognitive mechanisms that may underlie this alternation. From a methodological perspective, I argue that elicitation studies of this kind constitute a valuable complement to the corpus studies conducted on this phenomenon so far in that they allow for the operationalisation of linguistic and extralinguistic variables in a controlled setting.

## References

- Cheung, Lawrence & Longtu Zhang. 2016. Determinants of the synthetic–analytic variation across English comparatives and superlatives. *English Language and Linguistics* 20(3). 559-583.
- Chua, Deborah. 2018. Understanding comparative alternation in y-adjectives: What else might we need? *Journal of Linguistics* 54. 459-491.
- Gelman, Andrew & Jennifer Hill. 2007. *Data analysis using regression and multilevel/hierarchical linear models*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Hilpert, Martin. 2008. The English comparative – language structure and language use. *English Language and Linguistics* 12(3). 395-417.

- Kunter, Gero. 2017. *Processing complexity and the alternation between analytic and synthetic forms in English*. Düsseldorf: University of Düsseldorf postdoctoral thesis.
- Mondorf, Britta. 2009. *More Support for More-Support: The role of processing constraints on the choice between synthetic and analytic comparative forms*. Studies in Language Variation 4. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Rohdenburg, Günter. 1996. Cognitive complexity and increased grammatical explicitness in English. *Cognitive Linguistics* 7(2). 149-182.
- Szmrecsanyi, Benedikt. 2006. *Morphosyntactic Persistence in Spoken English: A Corpus Study at the Intersection of Variationist Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, and Discourse Analysis*. Trends in Linguistics. Studies and Monographs 177. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

# Infinitival Complementation Choices with *Help* in Present-Day American and British English

Sofia Bemposta-Rivas (University of Vigo, Spain)

The objective of this study is to determine the factors that affect the choice of infinitival clausal (*to*-infinitive or bare infinitive (BI)) complements with the verb *help* in Present-Day English. The data are retrieved from the British National Corpus Baby (BNC Baby) for British English and the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA) for the period 1995–2000. The factors analysed are: The Distance Principle, the Complexity Principle and the avoidance of identity (Rohdenburg 1996, 2003; Mair 2002; McEnery and Xiao 2005; Schlüter 2005; Lohmann 2011). Distance is analysed through the number of words of the subject and of the material intervening between the main verb and the infinitival clause (Haiman 1983: 782-83). As regards the Complexity Principle, the scenarios investigated are: presence/absence of an intervening noun phrase between *help* and the infinitival clause, mood and tense of the main verbal group. Avoidance of identity is investigated through *horror aequi* and Rhythmic Alternation. In addition, text-type distribution, subject animacy and the semantic-pragmatic characterization of the constructions are also analysed here. The influence exerted by these factors is determined by a logistic regression analysis.

The findings show, first, a significant increase of BI complements in American English. Second, the presence/absence of an intervening NP strongly determines complementation choices: the BI pattern is favoured by the occurrence of a noun phrase between *help* and the complement clause. Third, as for distance and complexity, the *to*-infinitive is attested in higher proportions when the number of the intervening words between *help* and the infinitival clause increases. Fourth, in accordance with *horror aequi*, BI complements are preferred when *help* is preceded by a *to*-infinitive. Fifth, the high frequency of *help* plus BI in informal registers evinces the success and textual extension of this complementation choice. Sixth, the data do not give support to Rhythmic Alternation. And, finally, the model determines that neither subject animacy nor the semantic-pragmatic characterization of the constructions are statistically significant.

## References

- Haiman, John. 1983. Iconic and economic motivation. *Language* 59(4), 781–819.
- Lohmann, Arne. 2011. Help vs. help to - a multifactorial, mixed-effects account of infinitive marker omission. *English Language and Linguistics* 15(3), 499-521.
- Mair, Christian. 2002. Three changing patterns of verb complementation in Late Modern English: A real-time study based on matching text corpora. *English Language and Linguistics* 6, 105-132.
- McEnery, Anthony and Zhonghua Xiao. 2005. HELP or HELP to: What do corpora have to say? *English Studies* 86(2), 161–87.
- Rohdenburg, Günter. 1996. Cognitive complexity and increased grammatical explicitness in English. *Cognitive Linguistics* 7, 149-182.
- 2003: Cognitive complexity and *horror aequi* as factors determining the use of interrogative clause linkers in English. In *Determinants of Grammatical Variation in English*, Günter Rohdenburg and Britta Mondorf (eds), 205-49. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Schlüter, Julia. 2005. *Rhythmic Grammar: The Influence of Rhythm on Grammatical Variation and Change in English*. (Topics in English Linguistics 46.) Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

# Prototypical ING/ED subjectless supplements in Contemporary English

Carla Bouzada-Jabois (Universidade de Vigo, Spain)

Supplements are defined as “elements which occupy a position in linear sequence without being integrated into the syntactic structure of the sentence” (Huddleston and Pullum et al. 2002: 1350). The supplements under investigation (1) are nonfinite (ING/ED), subjectless, and with adverbial meaning. This meaning is context-dependent and it is sometimes underscored by the addition of a connector (Declerck 1991: 456-457), as in (2). These supplements are usually controlled by an element in the main clause as in (1) or (2), but they can remain totally uncontrolled (3). They might also occupy different positions in the structure of the clause most often without any change in their meaning.

- (1) I run through my dilemma again and again, *not getting anywhere*,... (ICE-GB:W1B-015 #097:5)
- (2) *When asked why*, inspectors said that there is usually little action an inspector can take following a finger amputation on woodworking machinery... (ICE-GB:W2A-018 #053:1)
- (3) *Using a range of climate scenarios for the USA*, it has been found that tick-borne diseases... would spread northwards... (ICE-GB:W2B-024 #023:1)

The aim of this presentation is to describe the prototypical subjectless nonfinite supplement from a syntactic and semantic perspective to distinguish between core and peripheral members of the category. Late Modern and Present-day English data has been retrieved from the Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English and from the British component of the International Corpus of English. Preliminary results show that there is a clear preference for ING (vs ED) supplements placed after the main clause. Most of the examples analysed are controlled by the main clause subject, although from Late to Present-day English there seems to be an increase of non-subject controlled and totally uncontrolled examples. Connectors are not the preferred option, and as regards their adverbial meaning, while most informative interpretations tend to appear in initial position serving a discourse-connective function to information in the previous clause or a frame-setting function for the information that is to come (Chafe 1984: 448), least informative meanings appear sentence-finally merely adding extra information to the main event (Kortmann 1995: 228).

## References

- Chafe, Wallace. 1984. How people use adverbial clauses. *Berkeley Linguistic Society* (BLS). 10. 437-449.
- Declerck, Renaat. 1991. *A comprehensive descriptive grammar of English*. Tokyo: Kaitakusha.
- Huddleston, Rodney & Geoffrey K. Pullum. 2002. *The Cambridge grammar of the English language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kortmann, Bernd. 1995. Adverbial participial clauses in English. In Martin Haspelmath & Ekkehard König (eds.), *Converbs in cross-linguistic perspective: Structure and meaning of adverbial verb forms – adverbial participles and gerunds*, 189-237. Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter.

# The material VVing construction: A corpus-based investigation

Cristiano Broccias and Enrico Torre (University of Genoa, Italy)

This paper uses COCA to describe the ‘material VVing construction’ (see also Goldberg 2006 and Matsumoto 2016). This is a high-level construction where V is a **material verb** (see Halliday & Matthiessen 2014), and Ving is a participle that describes a process temporally overlapping with V, see (1)-(2), which show that the construction has **intransitive** and **transitive** variants (see Cappelle 2005).

- (1) a. The toddler went screaming [down the street]<sub>PP</sub>. (Goldberg 2006)  
b. They came strolling [out of the woods]<sub>PP</sub>. (J.K. Rowling)  
c. She came looking [for him]<sub>PP</sub>. (COCA)  
d. He lay gasping [on the ground]<sub>PP</sub>. (COCA)  
e. He lay gasping [for air]<sub>PP</sub>. (COCA)  
f. Faith sat gripping [her saucer]<sub>NP</sub>. (Frances Hardinge)
- (2) a. The explosion sent glass flying [everywhere]<sub>AdvP</sub>. (*Longman Dictionary*)  
b. Bill took him kicking [into the room]<sub>PP</sub>. (Goldberg 2006)

Also, the VVing variants can be described in terms of whether any XP (e.g. a PP, AdvP or NP) following Ving is an argument of V, both V and Ving, or Ving only, see (1)-(2), where underlining indicates argumenthood. We will refer to this parameter as **XP-argumenthood**.

In a preliminary investigation with the verbs *come*, *go*, *run* (see Broccias & Torre 2018), the data were classified semantically as follows: **manner of motion**, when Ving is such a verb, e.g. *strolling*, as in (1b); **purpose**, when VVing depicts a specific action with an intended result, e.g. *come looking*, as in (1c); **activity**, when Ving describes a recreational or habitual activity, e.g. *shopping*; **emission**, when Ving depicts the discharge of a substance or the emission of a sound, e.g. *screaming*, as in (1a); **bodily**, when Ving describes a non-emissive bodily process, e.g. *shivering*; **grammaticalized**, when V takes on an inchoative function, e.g. *go missing*. Although in the last case V is not a material verb, such occurrences give a measure of the degree of grammaticalization that V can undergo. Finally, the examples were also coded in terms of XP-argumenthood.

The preliminary investigation seems to suggest that distinct verbs behave differently. For example, *come* is usually found with manner of motion Ving's while *run* prefers emission Ving's, independently of XP-argumenthood. Thus, we surmise that the data are best described by hierarchical/family resemblance models rather than radial networks.

In this talk, we will report on a more detailed investigation, currently in progress, which relies on larger datasets for a greater variety of verbs, both intransitive and transitive.

## References

- Broccias, Cristiano & Enrico Torre. 2018. From the VVingPP construction to the VVing pattern: A descriptive account. *Lingue e Linguaggi* 26. 81-99.
- Cappelle, Bert. 2005. Particles and the case for allostructions. *Constructions* 1, <http://www.constructions-online.de>.
- COCA: Corpus of Contemporary American English, <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>.
- Goldberg, Adele E. 2006. *Constructions at work: The nature of generalization in language*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Halliday, M.A.K. & Christian M.I.M. Matthiessen. 2014. *Halliday's introduction to functional grammar*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Matsumoto, Noriko. 2016. *Multiverb sequences in English: Their classifications and functions*. Kobe: Kobe University dissertation.

## Into-causatives in World Englishes

Thomas Brunner (Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany)

Language change in new varieties of English typically affects the “interface between lexis and grammar” (Schneider 2007: 83). A well-known argument-structure construction which is likely to vary across World Englishes for this reason is the so-called into-causative, which consists of a subject, a finite verb, a direct object, the preposition *into* and a non-finite verb. It refers to the subject referent causing the referent of the object to perform the action denoted by the non-finite verb.

(1) Peter tries to coerce Jack into letting Fay accompany them as their model (...).

(2) [M]ore brothers and sisters pity her and persuade her into thinking that marriage will solve her problems. (both from GLOWBE-GB)

Both form and meaning of the construction have been studied thoroughly on the basis of British and American English data (e.g. Gries & Stefanowitsch 2004; Davies & Kim 2018), with Wulff, Stefanowitsch & Gries (2007) documenting that in the first verbal slot, American English prefers persuasion verbs (e.g. *talk*), while in British English, verbs denoting physical force are more frequent (e.g. *bounce*, *bludgeon*).

A comparative study of this construction in World Englishes, however, is still missing. We seek to fill this research gap by studying a dataset of 13,222 into-causatives extracted from The Corpus of Web-based Global English (Davies 2013) using CQP, informed by Construction Grammar and by Schneider’s (2007) Dynamic Model.

First, we document that the construction’s frequency is, to an extent, proportional to a variety’s phase according to the Dynamic Model (Hoffmann 2014), with some unexpectedly high frequencies (e.g. in Nigerian and Ghanaian English). Second, using LNRE models (Evert & Baroni 2017), we detect that the productivity of the two verbal slots, too, is strongly in line with Schneider’s (2007) model. Both findings are accounted for by the effects of second-language acquisition and the differences

in the societal entrenchment of English. Third, using hierarchical clustering, we trace preferences for specific verb semantics and discuss to what extent they can be explained via culture-specific construals of causation.

## References

- Davies, Mark. 2013. *GloWbE corpus*. <http://corpus2.byu.edu/glowbe/> (1 July, 2014).
- Davies, Mark & Jong-Bok Kim. 2018. Semantic and lexical shifts with the ‘into-causative’ construction in American English. In Hubert Cuyckens et al. (eds.), *Explorations in English historical syntax*, 159–78. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Evert, Stefan & Marco Baroni. 2017. *zipfR: user-friendly LNRE modelling in R*. <http://zipfr.r-forge.r-project.org/> (November 27, 2017).
- Gries, Stefan Th. & Anatol Stefanowitsch. 2004. Covarying Collexemes in the into-causative. In Sally Rice & John Newman (eds.), *Empirical and Experimental Methods in Cognitive/Functional Research*, 225–236. Stanford, CA.: CSLI Publications.
- Hoffmann, Thomas. 2014. The cognitive evolution of Englishes: The role of constructions in the Dynamic Model. In Sarah Buschfeld, Thomas Hoffmann, & Magnus Huber (eds.), *The evolution of Englishes*, 160–180. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Schneider, Edgar W. 2007. *Postcolonial English: Varieties around the world*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wulff, Stefanie, Anatol Stefanowitsch, & Stefan Th. Gries. 2007. Brutal Brits and persuasive Americans: variety-specific meaning construction in the into-causative. In Günter Radden et al. (eds.), *Aspects of meaning construction*, 265–81. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: Benjamins.



## **“The Cardiff accent will be gone ... we’ll all have British accents”: language change in real and apparent time**

Rowan Campbell (Cardiff University, Wales)

This paper will present results from a sociolinguistic research project investigating language change in Cardiff English (CE), using two corpora of transcribed interview data. The first of these corpora comprises 254,000 words from 20 speakers interviewed in 2017. These speakers are split equally by gender and fall into two age groups, 20-30 and 63+ (retired). The second corpus is much smaller and consists of five recordings from the national archives of Wales. It contains 38,000 words from 6 speakers aged 59-80, who were interviewed between 1993 and 2009.

By examining contemporary data alongside legacy data, I make use of both apparent time and real time methodology to explore variation across time in two phonetic features: the (ing) variable and the ‘Kerdiff A’, which have been chosen to represent the global and the local respectively. Non-standard realisation /ɪn/ in polysyllabic words ending *-ing* is well-documented in CE as well as other Englishes, but is rarely studied in relation to age as it is considered a stable sociolinguistic variable (Tagliamonte 2004). Conversely, the ‘Kerdiff A’ is a stereotyped and stigmatized local vocalic feature that shows considerable inter- and intra-speaker variation. The BATH, START, and PALM vowels can be either front, e.g. /æ/, or back, /ɑ/. Front realizations can also be raised, showing a continuum of variation from /æ ~ ε:/, and are produced as /e:/ in performative Cardiff accents (Coupland 1988). This feature has not been analysed quantitatively before.

This paper will address the following research questions: do these two features show variation across age groups and corpora, and thus time? If so, what are the linguistic and social constraints for each feature? As noted above, the (ing) variable is considered stable and thus is not expected to vary over time. However, initial results from an auditory analysis of 2673 tokens reveal that younger speakers use the non-standard variant /ɪn/ significantly less than older speakers in both the contemporary and archive corpora ( $\chi^2 = 43.04$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Acoustic analysis of the ‘Kerdiff A’ variable is ongoing, but the public perception that the Cardiff accent is ‘dying out’ (as evinced by the title quote) suggests that we may expect to see it used less frequently by the younger generation. Both variables will be discussed in relation to Cardiff’s changing social context, and whether wider processes of language change seen in other cities in the UK are also happening here.

### References

- Coupland, N. 1988. *Dialect in use: sociolinguistic variation in Cardiff*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- Tagliamonte, S.A. 2004. Somethi[n]’s goi[n] on! Variable (ing) at Ground Zero. In Britt-Louise Gunnarsson, Lena Bergstrom, Gerd Eklund, Staffan Fidell, Lise H. Hansen, Angela Karstadt, Bengt Nordberg, Eva Sundergren, and Mats Thelander, eds. *Language Variation in Europe: Papers from the Second International Conference on Language Variation in Europe ICLaVE2, Uppsala, Sweden, 12th-14th June 2003*. Uppsala: Uppsala University. 390–403.

# Language Variation in New Brunswick's Anglophone and Francophone Communities: Ça va être right d'la fun.

Mary Ashley Dwyer, M.A. Université Lumière Lyon 2, Lyon, France

Most studies on linguistic variation in Canada concerning Canadian English are conducted in a small number of areas, notably Toronto and Newfoundland (e.g. Tagliamonte 2006, Clarke 2010). Other regions, however, are often neglected or grouped together, which results in an incomplete view of language use in Canada. This study intends to address this issue by investigating linguistic variation in the Eastern province of New Brunswick. New Brunswick is not only unique because it is a bilingual French and English province, but also because the language is influenced by the local Indigenous cultures (e.g. Mi'kmaq and Maliseet). This results in an intriguing mixed variety that utilizes features from each language source. This mixture has often been called *Chiac* (King 2008), a variety in which speakers utilize both French and English verb and sentence structures together, for example: "*J'ai crossé la street*" ('I crossed the street).

The study examines past and current research on the history of English use in Canada, as well as the distinctions pertaining to lexical, morphosyntactic and semantic variation (Avis 1967). To determine if New Brunswick is as homogeneous as suggested in the literature (cf., e.g. Dollinger and Clarke 2012, Boberg 2010), a linguistic survey was conducted in which 150 participants from all regions of New Brunswick took part. Several social factors were investigated, including age, gender, location and education. Subsequently, they were compared with smaller control groups from other parts of Canada, in order to establish any correlations and differences in language use.

The results of the literature review, as well the survey data findings, indicate several significant, linguistic distinctions in New Brunswick in comparison with other provinces: Regarding spoken New Brunswick English, many lexical, semantic and morpho-syntactic distinctions were found. For example: *What are you sayin'?* is used as a common greeting, whereas in compared provinces, such as Ontario, this was either not understood or interpreted as a request for clarification. Another example is the term *dooryard*, which refers to the exterior area of a home surrounding the most commonly used entryway.

Such examples demonstrate that New Brunswick exhibits unique linguistic features, which have not yet been discussed in the literature, and highlights the need for further study in these areas. The results of this study therefore yield an updated view of language use in the region and help provide a more concise picture of linguistic variation in Canada.

## References

- Avis, Walter S. 1967. *A Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles: Dictionary of Canadian English*. WJ Gage, Ltd.
- Boberg, Charles. 2010. *The English Language in Canada*. New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Clarke, Sandra. 2010. *Newfoundland and Labrador English*. Edinburgh University Press, 2010.
- Dollinger, Stefan & Clarke, Sandra. 2012. On the autonomy and Homogeneity of Canadian English. *World Englishes* 31.4, 449-466.
- King, Ruth. 2008. Chiac in Context: Overview and Evaluation. In Meyerhoff, Miriam & Nagy, Naomi: *Social Lives in Language—Sociolinguistics and multilingual speech communities*, 137-179. John Benjamins Publishing.

Tagliamonte, Sali A. 2006. *Analysing Sociolinguistic Variation*. Cambridge University Press.

# Modelling variation in verb number agreement with complex collective subjects: The interplay between morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic factors

Yolanda Fernández-Pena (University of Cantabria, Spain)

Verb agreement with complex collective subjects which often take plural verbs, such as *a bunch of things* or *a number of people*, has been explained in the literature in terms of a distributive or a quantificational reading of the collective noun (Huddleston & Pullum et al. 2002: 503; Smith 2009; Klockmann 2017) or in terms of the attraction exerted by the plural *of*-dependent (Levin 2001; Depraetere 2003). The research carried out thus far has bypassed the role that the *of*-dependent, in particular its morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic characteristics, plays in the resolution of verb number agreement.

This paper bridges that gap in the literature by reporting the results of a multifaceted corpus-based study with data from *The British National Corpus* (BNC) and *The Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA). In particular, this research analyses the verb number agreement variation of 23 complex collective subjects (e.g. *the majority of*, *a group of*, *a host of*) through a binary logistic regression analysis of the morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic factors pertaining to the *of*-dependent.

The results confirm that verb agreement with complex collective subjects is determined by both formal and lexico-semantic aspects. As concerns the former, the data show that the formal markedness (i.e. explicit plurality, *a bunch of thing-s*) of the noun within the *of*-dependent correlates with a high incidence of plural verbal patterns (62.48%), a trend which is significantly stronger with irregular plural nouns as a by-product of their contrastiveness (e.g. *a group of children*; 76.92% vs. *a group of kids*; 61.60%). Conversely, semantic markedness (i.e. conceptual plurality) is only determinant in the case of the highly frequent and formally-unmarked plural noun *people* (e.g. *the majority of the people*), particularly in simple syntactic domains (90.50%). With the increasing complexity of the subject (i.e. number of words and modifiers, clausal modification or embeddedness), only the *of*-dependents with formally-marked plural nouns, which provide an explicit cue of the conceptual plurality of the NP, still exert a significant impact on verb number (over 60%), while *people*, lacking explicit plural morphology, shows a progressively stronger preference for the default verb number (i.e. singular) (52%). Apart from the correlation between formal markedness and complexity, verb number agreement proves to also be constrained by the animacy of the referent and the quantifying interpretation of the collective noun in pseudopartitive configurations (i.e. *a N of N*), as both strongly favour plural verbal patterns (over 65%).

## References

- Depraetere, Ilse. 2003. On verbal concord with collective nouns in British English. *English Language and Linguistics* 7(1). 85-127.
- Huddleston, Rodney & Geoffrey K. Pullum et al. 2002. *The Cambridge grammar of the English language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Klockmann, Heidi. 2017. *The design of semi-lexicality. Evidence from case and agreement in the nominal domain*. Utrecht: University of Utrecht PhD dissertation.
- Levin, Magnus. 2001. *Agreement with collective nouns in English*. Lund: Lund Studies in English.
- Smith, Adam. 2009. Non-numerical quantifiers. In Pam Peters, Peter Collins & Adam Smith (eds.), *Comparative studies in Australian and New Zealand English*, 159-181. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

# **Bangladesh's position in the Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes and in the Extra- and Intra-Territorial Forces Model**

Laura García-Castro (University of Vigo, Spain)

Bangladeshi English (BdE) is a South Asian variety of English (SAE) that has received little attention in the literature on World Englishes, unlike other neighbouring varieties such as Indian English, one of the most extensively researched in the field. The aim of the current paper is to fill this gap by exploring the development of BdE since it entered the linguistic ecology of the territory in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to its present-day status, from attitudinal, functional and structural perspectives. In particular, the analysis will apply the parameters of two different models for the analysis of World Englishes: the *Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes* (Schneider 2003, 2007) and the *Extra- and Intra-Territorial Forces (EIF) Model* (Buschfeld & Kautzsch 2017).

Preliminary results on the evolution of BdE show that after independence in 1971, Bengali (the national language) was promoted as a sign of nationalism and local identity, to the detriment of English. Since then, and as contemplated in Schneider's (2007: 57) model, the linear progression of English in the country has been interrupted, leading to a decrease in proficiency. This places BdE between phases 2 and 3 of the Dynamic Model. In fact, Bangladesh has been described as falling "between an ESL and an EFL country" (Kachru 1994: 547) and BdE has been considered a foreign language rather than a nativized variety (Hoffmann, Hundt & Mukherjee 2011: 271). However, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century there has been a revival of English as a result of its promotion as the primary medium of education with the aim of creating a "strong and progressive knowledge-based and information technology-oriented society" (Chowdhury & Kabir 2014: 12). One of the key forces in the EIF Model, globalization, can account for the revival of English in Bangladesh. Thus, the EIF Model complements the Dynamic Model in that (i) it accounts for varieties whose linear progression has been interrupted and therefore do not comply with the unidirectional evolution expected here, and (ii) it includes current determinants of change absent from the Dynamic Model, such as the influence of globalization on varieties of English across the world.

## **References:**

- Buschfeld, Sarah & Alexander Kautzsch. 2017. Towards an Integrated Approach to Postcolonial and Non-Postcolonial Englishes. *World Englishes* 36(1). 104-126.
- Chowdhury, Raquib & Ariful Haq Kabir. 2014. Language Wars: English Education Policy and Practice in Bangladesh. *Multilingual Education* 4(21). 1-16.
- Hoffmann, Sebastian, Marianne Hundt & Joybrato Mukherjee. 2011. Indian English - An emerging epicentre? A pilot study on light verbs in web-derived corpora of South Asian Englishes. *Anglia* 129(3-4). 258-280.
- Kachru, Braj B. 1994. English in South Asia. In Robert Burchfield (ed.), *Cambridge History of the English Language*, vol.5, 497-553. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schneider, Edgar W. 2003. The dynamics of New Englishes: From identity construction to dialect birth. *Language* 79(2). 233-281.
- Schneider, Edgar W. 2007. *Postcolonial English: Varieties around the world*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

# UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH HUMOUR THROUGH COGNITIVE DISSONANCE IN MIXED METAPHORS AND MALAPHORS

Ekaterina Golubkova (Moscow State Linguistic University, Russia) and Maria Taymour (Moscow State Linguistic University, Russia)

*"To Err Is Human; To Study Error-Making Is Cognitive Science."*  
[Hofstadter, 1989]

Mixed metaphors and malaphors (*rocket surgery; when the cookie bounces*) in contemporary English have been considered as a source of cognitive dissonance since the appearance of Festinger's theory [Festinger 1957]. Traditionally perceived in linguistics as a faulty usage of metaphorical expressions, nowadays these malapropisms are given cognitive treatment. The last decade has brought about dramatic changes into cognitive linguistics by developing the cognitive paradigm and, accordingly changed the view of the status and the origin of mixed metaphors and malaphors [Semino 2016]. The change in the linguists' attitude towards mixed metaphors, where a mixed metaphor is defined as a cluster of metaphors which appear in close contextual adjacency but have different cognitive basis [Kimmel, 2010], started gaining momentum after the book "Metaphors we live by" by Lakoff and Johnson was published in 1980.

The phenomenon of a "malaphor", a term coined by an American scholar Lawrence Harrison in 1976 in his article 'Searching for Malaphors' for the Washington Post, is understood in this work as a blend of two (or more) idioms or clichés in modern English discourse, usually used to express speaker's creativity and their intention to create a humorous effect in a text or speech (e.g. *A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*).

The reevaluation of these phenomena in modern linguistics, i.e. a deliberate usage of hybrid structure within a stretch of a sentence or text, taking into consideration its creative nature and intentional usage by a speaker, requires special attention from linguists. The authors exploit the theory of cognitive dissonance [Festinger 1957] and apply the principle of cognitive consistency as a way to overcome disharmony in understanding modern British humour expressed in mixed metaphors and malaphors (e.g. *Don't put all your chickens in one basket before they are hatched*).

A linguistic-cognitive experiment that was carried out in order to check that, showed that malaphors produce low level of cognitive dissonance, and their humorous nature is better understood in the following cases:

- if a recipient knows the meanings of the constituents of a blend;
- if he or she can guess the equivalent expressions (cognates) in their native language;
- if the conceptual bases of both constituents of the target mixed metaphor / malaphor are the same.

*Key words:* mixed metaphor, cognitive dissonance, blend, humour

## References

- Festinger, L. 1957. *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Stanford University Press.
- Hofstadter, D., Moser D. 1989. *To err is human; to study error-making is cognitive science*. Michigan Quarterly Review, Vol. 28, No. 2. 185-215.
- Kimmel, M. 2009. *Why we mix metaphors (and mix them well)*. University of Vienna, Journal of Pragmatics, 42. 97-115.
- Semino, E. 2016 *A Corpus-based study of 'Mixed Metaphor' as a metalinguistic comment*. In Gibbs, R. *Mixing Metaphor*. UK: Lancaster University. 203-222.

## **Moves and Metadiscoursal Markers (MDMs) in the Abstracts of Research Articles (RAs) In Applied Linguistics, Engineering, Medicine, and Business**

Leah Gustilo (De La Salle University, Philippines), Aileen Valle (De La Salle University, Philippines) and Maria Isabel Vergel (De La Salle University, Philippines)

As abstracts are the most visible and 'most evaluated' sections of research articles (RAs) owing to the fact that most conferences judge the relevance of a paper submission using only the abstract section, the present study investigated how researchers/writers structure this section and how metadiscoursal markers aid writers in discussing meanings in texts and engage readers in the material through the expression of the writer's stance. This study aims at investigating the metadiscourse markers utilized by authors in the abstract section of RAs in applied linguistics, engineering, medicine and business. Six hundred (600) abstracts from high-impact factor journals published in 2015 to 2018 across four disciplines were sampled. Moreover, the moves of the 300 selected abstracts of RAs across disciplines were also identified. After identifying the moves, the MDMs present in each move were identified and tabulated based on Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse categories. AntConc Concordance software was utilized in order to count the frequency of MDMs across disciplines, while the moves were manually coded by the researchers based on Ken Hyland's (2000) five-move model of abstract section. Inter-rater agreement was employed to ensure reliability of coding and categorization of data. Results in the analysis of moves indicate that most of the writers across disciplines preferred discussing results, purpose, and methodology in the abstract rather than focusing on the background and implications of research. As regards metadiscoursal markers, it was clear from our analyses that transition markers are the most frequently used interactive metadiscourse markers across disciplines. Transition markers play a vital role in organizing and connecting the ideas of the writers. The use of interactional metadiscourse markers differed across four disciplines. In the field of applied linguistics and engineering, engagement markers were widely used. Engagement markers were employed to address the readers by either focusing their attention or engaging them in the discourse. On the other hand, in the field of business and medicine, hedges were highly employed as they were used to indicate the writer's reluctance in presenting propositional information. The findings on metadiscourse markers and moves in RA abstracts across disciplines can inform language teaching underpinned by genre-based approach to academic writing. Being the summary or face of research papers that presents the major parts of the paper, it is important that journal article writers are informed with these results so that the conventions of abstract writing based on empirical studies are established.

### References

Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. London, UK: Longman.

Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. Continuum: London.

## **Producing cultural authenticity: A soap opera as a source of historical creole data?**

Stephanie Hackert (LMU Munich) and Diana Wengler (LMU Munich)

Performed language, as found in radio or TV shows, was long considered unauthentic and thus not suitable as data for the analysis of vernacular varieties. However, Coupland (2001: 374) argues that even “stylized performance, including dialect stylization, can potentially deliver forms of personal and cultural authenticity that transcend local playfulness.” In this paper, we will introduce and critically evaluate a Bahamian radio soap opera from the early 1970s in order to gain insight into its potential as a source for documenting the recent historical development of urban Bahamian Creole English.

Our corpus consists of 68,000 words from *The Fergusons of Farm Road*, a radio show broadcast entirely in dialect. Initially endowed with an educational impetus, the Fergusons became a great local success; in all, almost 200 episodes were produced between 1970 and 1975. Our selection of linguistic variables is based on previous accounts of Bahamian Creole and includes the well-researched grammatical features of past inflection and negation as well as the Bahamian pronunciations of MOUTH and NURSE and the *a* vowels in START, PALM, and TRAP. Employing the methods of comparative sociolinguistics (cf. Tagliamonte 2013), we will contrast the historical radio data with contemporary conversational data in order to determine the strength and direction of constraints operating on the linguistic variables in the two data sets. The analyses will show that the linguistic constraints work in the expected directions and that, in general, the historical data have higher rates of creole features. While assuming decreolization seems tempting, we will argue that “load-bearing variables” (cf. Irvine 2004), i.e. variables considered representative of a certain variety, are deliberately and more uniformly used in the historical data. Thus, the latter seem to lend themselves rather to comparing the indexical status of certain features than to analyzing actual changes in frequency. Ultimately, we will argue that dialect performance may be regarded as an important form of “local community practice” (Coupland 2001: 368) that can meaningfully extend the range of “authentic” dialect data available to sociolinguistic analysis.

### **References**

- Coupland, Nikolas. 2001. Dialect stylization in radio talk. *Language in Society* 30: 345-75.
- Irvine, Alison. 2004. A good command of the English language: Phonological variation in the Jamaican acrolect. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 19: 41-76.
- Tagliamonte, Sali A. 2013. Comparative sociolinguistics. In J.K. Chambers & Natalie Schilling, eds. *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change*. 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 128-56.



# A first approach to Standard English pronunciation in Grenada

Eva Canan Hänsel (University of Münster, Germany)

While there have been descriptions of Standard English phonology in the larger anglophone Caribbean countries, little to nothing is known about Standard English in the small Caribbean nations such as Grenada. In Grenada, an English-based Creole exists side-by-side with Standard English and there is a measure of variation in between these two poles. While the Creole is the main vernacular and is often still stigmatized as 'bad' or 'broken' English, the official language 'English' (i.e. Standard English) is used in formal situations and is often acquired in the education system.

This study provides a first approach to Standard English pronunciation in Grenada by conducting (mostly) auditory analyses of selected variables. The analysis is based on 89 wordlists read by Grenadian students and teachers in September 2015. One set of variables allows studying variation between Standard English and the local Creole: voiceless and voiced *th*, consonant cluster reduction/retention, vowel and nasal in DOWN, and vowel length in FLEECE vs. KIT. Two further variables are included in the analysis to investigate a potential influence from American English: /t/-flapping and rhoticity. In order to determine which variants are considered standard forms in Grenada, the study focuses on the use and avoidance of variants by groups of speakers that are considered to have a good command of Standard English (cf. Irvine 2008). In metalinguistic interviews, several students and teachers reported that they perceived speech in 'town' (i.e. the capital) to be 'better' as compared to speech in the countryside. Many teachers reported that students have difficulty with Standard English pronunciation in class. Therefore, it can be assumed that in the Grenadian education system, Standard English is associated with the language used in town and by teachers rather than in rural areas and by students.

A statistical analysis using logistic and linear regression models unveiled that the location and the status of the speaker had indeed the most salient influence on the realizations of most variables. Teachers in general and speakers from the schools in town showed a dispreference for Creole realizations. However, the analysis revealed that these factors did not have a significant effect on the realizations of the nasal in *town* (a velar nasal was the dominant option across all groups and thus seems to be a standard form), on /t/-flapping (only one instance was found), and on rhoticity (semi-rhoticity was found across all groups). The results of the variables /t/-flapping and rhoticity suggest that an exonormative influence from American English is not relevant.

The findings show that meta-linguistic interviews can provide valuable insights about the local stratification of English. In addition, a second-wave approach that utilizes these locally salient categories is crucial to understanding the constraints and the local meaning of variation and what counts as Standard English in a small speech community.

## References

- Irvine, Alison. 2008. Contrast and convergence in Standard Jamaican English: The phonological architecture of the standard in an ideologically bidialectal community. *World Englishes* 27(9). 9-25.

# ***You don't see them autotuning the crap out of their songs ...*** **The [V the N<sub>taboo-word</sub> out of]-construction in World Englishes** Thomas Hoffmann (KU Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany)

In addition to abstract argument structure constructions (such as the Ditransitive construction), English also has 'marginal' argument structure constructions that are partly lexically filled and considerably more restricted in their semantic meaning. One example of such a construction is the "V *the hell out of* NP" (Perek 2016):

- (1) Quentin **acts the hell out of** this next scene, ... (GloWbE US B)

As Perek (2016: 165) points out, the "V *the hell out of* NP" construction is a two-argument structure construction that "generally conveys an intensifying function" and normally hosts two-participant verbs in its V slot. So far, however, the (limited) lexical variation of taboo N words displayed by the construction has been ignored in previous studies:

- (2) I thought the villain was incredibly lame. No disrespect to Javier Bardem, that guy could **act crap out of** any role, but he got a really annoying character to play. (GloWbE US B)
- (3) Michael Fassbender really **acted the shit out of** this one. (GloWbE AU G)

In addition to this, up to now, no study has investigated the variation of the construction in the various World Englishes. The present talk will combine a Usage-based Construction Grammar approach with insights from the Dynamic Model (DM) to trace the cognitive evolution of post-colonial varieties (following Hoffmann 2014). Drawing on data from the GloWbE corpus, a CQP search for the string "[pos="v.\*" [word="the" [word="hell|crap|shit|fuck" [word="out" within s" was used to extract all 6,634 relevant hits. These were analyzed for the variables N<sub>taboo word</sub> slot (Figure 1) as well as the productivity V<sub>slot</sub> (Figure 2), using "Large Number of Rare Events" (LNRE) models for the latter.

As the results show, *hell* is by far the most frequent filler of the N<sub>taboo-word</sub> slot (Figure 1), but there is considerable variation across variety types in the corpus (taking into account the frequency of the words outside of this construction, *crap*, e.g., turns out to be overrepresented in earlier stages of the DM). Furthermore, as predicted by Hoffmann (2014), the productivity of the V slot positively correlates with the evolutionary stage of a variety in the DM (Figure 2).

Figure 1:

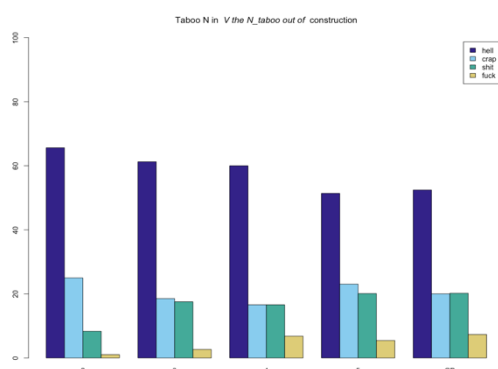
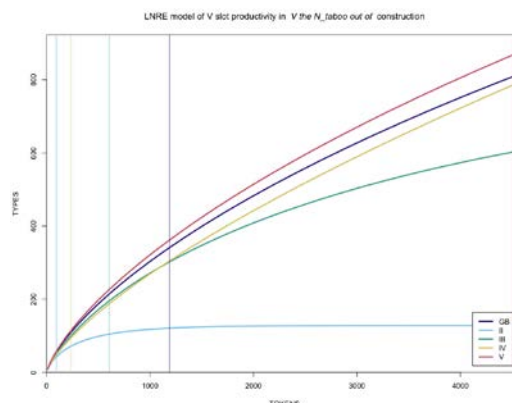


Figure 2:



## References

- Hoffmann, Th. 2014. The cognitive evolution of Englishes: The role of constructions in the Dynamic Model. In S. Buschfeld, Th. Hoffmann, M. Huber and A. Kautzsch, eds. *The Evolution of Englishes The Dynamic Model and beyond*. (Varieties of English Around the World G49.) Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 160-180.

Perek, Florent. 2016. Using distributional semantics to study syntactic productivity in diachrony: A case study. *Linguistics* 54(1): 149–188.

## English Comparative Correlatives: Paratactic vs. Hypotactic Features

Jakob Horsch (Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany) and Thomas Hoffmann (Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany)

English comparative correlative (CC) constructions typically consist of two clauses, C1 and C2 (cf. Culicover & Jackendoff 1999; den Dikken 2005):

(1) [*The more we get together,*]<sub>C1</sub> [*the happier we'll be.*]<sub>C2</sub>

In terms of its semantics, the construction has both asymmetric and symmetric properties: The relationship between C1 and C2 is conditional (asymmetric), but there is also parallel (symmetric) change in C1 and C2 over time.

Now, recent corpus-based studies (Hoffmann 2014; Hoffmann, Brunner & Horsch 2019) have shown that in Modern English (ModE), there is an iconic tendency of formal symmetry between C1 and C2.

Interestingly, diachronically the CC construction originally clearly was a hypotactic structure (Hoffmann 2014: 81). Two phenomena in ModE CCs that are remnants of a hypotactic relationship are *that*-complementizers in C1 (2) and optional subject-auxiliary inversion (SAI) in C2 (3).

(2) [*The more [that]<sub>THAT-complementizer</sub> he says,*]<sub>C1</sub> [*the less I wanna say.*]<sub>C2</sub>

(3) [*The more they work,*]<sub>C1</sub> [*the more [I will / will I]<sub>SAI</sub> pay them.*]<sub>C2</sub>

While Culicover and Jackendoff (1999: 549) state that *that*-complementizers “cannot appear in C2”, den Dikken (2005: 502) claims that they are indeed possible in both C1 and C2. Hoffmann (2014: 96) similarly states that an “optional *that*-complementizer [in C1] could only be found in earlier stages of English” and that “colloquial ModE apparently licenses an optional *that* in both C1 and C2.” Concerning subject-auxiliary inversion, Culicover and Jackendoff (1999: 559) claim that it occurs “marginally [...] in C2 but not C1.” Hoffmann (2014: 94 and 81) maintains that it is “optional” in C2 but “disfavored” in ModE (2014: 94).

In any case, these are features that have yet to be analyzed in a large corpus study, which may reveal how the syntactic relationship between C1 and C2 are stored in speakers' mental grammars.

Accordingly, the present paper presents the first large corpus-based analysis of the use of *that*-complementizers and SAI based on data from the British National Corpus. In the over 2,000 C1C2 tokens, only 29 cases of *that*-complementizers in C1 and also 2 in C2 were found, indicating that this feature is losing its hypotactic function. Consequently, we argue that this hypotactic feature is no longer a central property of ModE CCs. Similarly, no instances of SAI were found in C1, but 52 such cases in C2, indicating that this feature still does play a certain role. Yet, as we will also show, the parallel deletion/truncation of auxiliaries in C1 and C2 has assumed a much greater importance for ModE CCs.

## References

- Culicover, Peter W. & Ray Jackendoff. 1999. The View from the Periphery: The English Comparative Correlative. *Linguistic Inquiry* 30(4). 543–571.
- Dikken, Marcel den. 2005. Comparative Correlatives Comparatively. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36(4). 497–532.
- Hoffmann, Thomas. 2014. Comparing English Comparative Correlatives. Post-doc thesis.
- Hoffmann, Thomas, Thomas Brunner & Jakob Horsch. 2019. The More Data, The Better: A Usage-based Account of the English Comparative Correlative Construction. *Cognitive Linguistics* 30(1).

## A reconsideration of *why to*-infinitives

Tohru Inoue

The present paper describes and discusses the distribution of ‘*why to*-infinitive’, one of the constructions that have hitherto received little attention in the current literature, and the aim is to give some insights into the specific constraints governing its acceptability. The data for this study is collected from large present-day corpora such as the British National Corpus and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA).

It is a well-known fact that a *to*-infinitive can be used after a *wh*-word or phrase, as in (1).

- (1) a. I wonder who to invite.  
b. Tell me what to do.  
c. I don’t know where to put the car.  
e. Tell me when to pay.

(Swan 2016: Section 111.1)

As for a *why to*-infinitive, it is considered ungrammatical (e.g. Wierzbicka 1988; Dixon 1991; Eastwood 1994) or rare (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985; Swan 2016). It seems that this phrase occurs sporadically with other *wh*-word(s), other infinitive *wh*-clause(s), or the noun *reason*, as in (2) – examples here from COCA:

- (2) a. She would favor a “federal grant to teach Houstonians how and why to vote.”  
b. Knowing what to do, how to do it, and perhaps most important, why to do it has become an integral part of teaching.  
c. But now, after what happened to him, it was another great reason why to stop.

Furthermore, *why to*-infinitives may be acceptable when used as headings and titles, as in (3),

- (3) a. Thank you for your editorial “Why to supper Labeling GM Foods” in the August/September 2013 issue. (2013 COCA)  
b. *The Single Person’s Guide to Buying a Home: Why to Do It and How to Do It.*

(Book title)

This study attempts to provide a plausible explanation for the reason ‘*why to*-infinitive’ constructions are restricted in syntactic and semantic terms. It will be shown that (1) *why* functions as a disjunct and thus is less closely related to an *infinitive* than the other *wh*-words, and (2) the meaning of *why* (which implies that the speaker can’t think of any reason or cause for something) is incompatible with the meaning of the *to*-complement (which implies that the speaker volitionally becomes involved in the activity) (cf. Wierzbicka 1988; Dixon 1991; Duffley and Enns 1996).

## References

- Anderson, Elaine J. 1993. *The Single Person's Guide to Buying a Home: Why to Do It and How to Do It*. Cincinnati: Betterway Books.
- Dixon, R. M. W. 1991. *A New Approach to English Grammar, on Semantic Principles*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- Eastwood, John. 1994. *Oxford Guide to English Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Duffley, Patrick J. and Peter J. Enns. 1996. *Wh*-words and infinitives in English. *Lingua* 98, 221-242.
- Quirk, Randolph, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, and Jan Svartvik. 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London and New York: Longman.
- Swan, Michael. 2016. *Practical English Usage*. Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wierzbicka, Ann. 1988. *The Semantics of Grammar*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

## The Arctic Monkeys Then and Now

Lisa Jansen (University of Münster, Germany) and Anika Gerfer (University of Münster, Germany)

The renowned Sheffield indie rock band Arctic Monkeys intentionally stylize their Northern English accent and dialect features. By using these regional features, they index values such as authenticity, localness, and youthfulness, while at the same time resisting to adopt an Americanized singing style which is associated with commercial 'mainstream' popular music (Beal 2009). On their debut album, the Arctic Monkeys even openly criticize artists who betray their values and sell out their identity, i.e. use "the handbook" (Beal 2009: 225) and follow the Americanized mainstream to quickly achieve global success. However, after performing at the Glastonbury Festival in 2013, Alex Turner, the Arctic Monkeys frontman himself, was criticized by the audience for performing with a "weirdenheimer American accent" and for "acting like a 50's crooner" (Wakeman 2013). The aim of our study is to find out 1) whether and to what extent Turner's singing behavior has changed between their first album in 2006 and their most recent one released in 2018 and 2) which additional, non-linguistic factors may have influenced the audience's perception. For this purpose, we analyze salient Sheffield/ British and USA-5 (Simpson 1999) accent features in 30 songs of their six albums. As music performances are inherently multimodal, we further take extralinguistic aspects into account that might contribute to an actual or perceived transformation. The Arctic Monkeys have changed their outward appearance, experimented with different music genres, and broadened the topics of their songs.

Preliminary results show that the performance style of the Arctic Monkeys has changed on different levels. First, a change in their accent can be detected: Whereas songs of the earlier albums show an extensive Sheffield linguistic repertoire and a total absence of 'American' features, songs released on more recent albums show fewer Northern English features and a growing number of instances indicating an Americanized singing style, such as the realization of post-vocalic /r/ and /t/-flapping. However, salient accent features such as the Northern English variant of strut stay indexical for the band's origin and demonstrate the co-existence of possible conflicting identities (Trudgill 1983) in the band's language behavior. Second, non-linguistic factors such as Turner's metamorphosis into an Elvis look-alike and the band's use of different music genres, changing from 'edgy', independent genres like garage rock and post-punk to pop and glam rock, contribute to the perceived Americanization of the band.

## References

- Beal, Joan C. 2009. "You're not from New York City, you're from Rotherham": Dialect and identity in British indie music. *Journal of English Linguistics* 37(3). 223-240.
- Simpson, Paul. 1999. Language, culture and identity: With (another) look at accents in pop and rock singing. *Multilingua* 18(4). 343-367.
- Trudgill, Peter. 1983. *On dialect: Social and geographical perspectives*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Wakeman, Gregory. 2013. Glastonbury 2013: Arctic Monkeys singer Alex Turner responds to accent criticism. <https://www.inquisitr.com/822506/glastonbury-2013-arctic-monkeys-singer-alex-turner-responds-to-accent-criticism/> (23 December, 2018).

# English grammatical alternations and communicative efficiency: An information-theoretic approach based on Generalized Additive Models

Natalia Levshina (Leipzig University, Germany)

One of the central themes in corpus-based Construction Grammar has been the relationships between constructions and their collexemes (e.g. Stefanowitsch & Gries 2003 and later works). The present study focuses on one aspect of these relationships that has not received much attention, namely, maximization of communicative efficiency. If some collexemes are frequently used with a particular construction, e.g. the verb *give* with the ditransitive construction, one can say that this use has high predictability, or, using the terms from information theory (Shannon 1948), low information content/surprisal. In human communication, more predictable information tends to be expressed by shorter forms, and less predictable information is usually conveyed by longer forms. This idea is known as the principles of economy, least effort, etc. (e.g. Zipf 1949, Haiman 1980, Hawkins 2014). Some empirical support for predictability effects in constructional variation has already been found (e.g. Levy & Jaeger 2007).

The hypothesis is as follows: if there are two constructional variants that differ in formal length, the shorter variant is preferred when the collostructional combinations (e.g. the ditransitive construction + *give*) are more predictable, and the longer variant is chosen in less predictable contexts. This hypothesis is tested on the following functionally similar constructions:

- a) *help* + (to) Infinitive, e.g. *Mary helps John (to) cook the dinner*;
- b) *want to/wanna* + Infinitive;
- c) *go* (and) Verb, e.g. *Go (and) bring them in*;
- d) stative verbs + *home* vs. *at home*, e.g. *You should stay (at) home*.

In order to test this hypothesis, I use data from different English corpora and datasets (BNC, COHA, GloWbE and Google Book Ngrams). I fit several Generalized Additive Models with the short/long form as the response variable, and information content of a collexeme given the construction in question, and information content of the construction given the collexeme (cf. Attraction and Reliance in Schmid [2000]) as the predictors. The relevant variables known from the literature are controlled for. The statistical analyses support the research hypothesis.

## References

- Haiman, John. 1983. Iconic and economic motivation. *Language* 59. 781-819.
- Hawkins, John A. 2014. *Cross-linguistic Variation and Efficiency*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Levy, Roger & T. Florian Jaeger. 2007. Speakers optimize information density through syntactic reduction. In Bernhard Schölkopf, John Platt & Thomas Hoffman (eds.), *Advances in neural information processing systems (NIPS)*, vol. 19, 849–856. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Schmid, Hans-Jörg. 2000. *English abstract nouns as conceptual shells. From corpus to cognition*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Shannon, Claude E. 1948. A Mathematical Theory of Communication. *Bell System Technical Journal* 27. 379–423 & 623–656.
- Stefanowitsch, Anatol & Stefan Th. Gries. Collostructions: investigating the interaction between words and constructions. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 8(2). 209–243.
- Zipf, George. 1949. *Human Behaviour and the Principle of Least Effort: An Introduction to Human Ecology*. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley Press.



# Politeness Strategies in Requests: A Comparative Study of Strategies Used by German Learners of English and British Native Speakers

Limmer, Alice (Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg, Germany)

This study investigates differences in the perception and use of politeness strategies in English, comparing German learners of English (aged 15 to 18) and British native speakers. The data was gathered using a specifically constructed questionnaire which focused on requests and was based on Leech's Politeness Theory (Leech 2014). Participants were asked to phrase requests as well as rate given requests on a politeness scale ranging from "impolite" to "overly polite".

Two hypotheses were formulated on the basis of previous research (Pulaczewska 2014; Odlin 1989) and then tested against the data gathered:

1. German learners of English prefer more direct strategies in requests compared to British native speakers.
2. The longer the German participants in the study have had instruction in English, the more similar their answers will be to those of the native speakers.

The first hypothesis is not corroborated by the data. The German participants in the study rejected the direct imperative, which some of the native speakers judged as acceptable in some cases. The British native speakers, however, showed a stronger preference for very indirect strategies (such as *I was wondering if you could help me with this project.*) than the German students, who preferred conventionally indirect strategies (such as *Could you help me with this project?*) to both direct (e.g. 2<sup>nd</sup> person imperatives) and very indirect strategies.

The native speaker answers show a greater variation of the politeness level depending on the addressee, particularly with regard to the familiarity between speaker and addressee. While British participants used quite informal and direct requests with friends and parents on the one hand and high levels of indirectness with strangers on the other, the German participants tended to use a medium level of politeness towards all addressees, with only little variation. The study addresses different possible explanations for these results, taking into account linguistic as well as cultural and teaching-related issues.

The second hypothesis is supported by the data. The answers of the older group of German students were generally closer to those of the native speakers than were the answers of the younger group, indicating that a longer period of instruction correlates with more native-speaker-like intuitions and use of politeness strategies. However, some features are persistent throughout the German students' data. For example, while the British participants rated the two question variants with *can* and *could* roughly equally polite, both younger and older German participants perceived the questions with *could* as significantly more polite. Similarly, both German groups used *excuse me* more frequently in their freely formulated requests whereas the native speakers preferred apologies with *sorry*. A possible explanation explored in this study is the way politeness is portrayed in textbooks used in EFL teaching.

## References

- Leech, Geoffrey N. 2014. *The Pragmatics of Politeness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Odlin, Terence. 1989. *Language Transfer: Cross-linguistic Influence in Second Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pulaczewska, Hanna. 2014. *Directives in Young Peer Groups: A Contrastive Study of Reality TV*. Regensburg: Sprachlit.

## Could be it's grammaticalization

David Lorenz (Universität Rostock, Germany)

This paper presents research that studies grammaticalization synchronically, by tracing potential grammaticalization features in current variation and incipient change. I present a corpus-based case study of adverbial *could be*, and discuss possibilities for combining corpus and experimental work.

The context expansion and univerbation of *maybe* (from *it may be that*) provides a pathway of change that is, in principle, open to similar collocations, such as *could be*, *might be*, *should be*. Corpus data attest to the use of *could be* as an epistemic adverbial (1). This form appears to derive from *it could be (that)* in analogy to *maybe* (cf. López-Couso & Méndez-Naya 2016). Thus, *could be* is at a stage of incipient grammaticalization in at least some speakers' usage.

(1) *Could be Bob's still so hung over, he's sleepin'.* (GloWbE GB)

An account of these adverbials and the full phrase (*it could be (that)*) is given based on a) corpora of world Englishes (GloWbE, Davies 2013), and b) spoken British English (BNC and Spoken BNC2014, Love et al. 2017). Uses like (1) occur across varieties, albeit at low frequencies; the variant *could be + that*-clause is also attested, as well as *Could be* as an isolated phrase (2). In spoken BrE, all of these uses increase on a low level between 1994 and 2014; isolated *Could be* is relatively frequent and seems to provide the context that leads to other uses.

(2) *... maybe the government are polluting us and killing us off.*  
*Could be.* (Spoken BNC2014, S5PW)

The corpus data confirm the existence of a grammaticalizing use of *could be*, and they suggest an incipient development towards an adverbial. However, the low frequencies restrict the analysis and conclusions on further developments. Grammaticalization theory (e.g. Heine et al. 1991) predicts that adverbial uses of *could be* foster morpho-phonological fusion/erosion (e.g. a realization [kʊbɪ]) and that they pave the way to further adverbial uses such as (3).

(3) ? *They said that could be it will rain.* [compare *maybe*]

The presentation therefore includes an outlook on testing the propensity for further developments experimentally. E.g., phonetic realizations can be elicited through reading experiments, which can separate grammaticalization from frequency as the source of reduction; processing experiments can establish whether exposure to uses like (1) facilitates the processing of uses like (3).

## References

- Davies, Mark. 2013. Corpus of Global Web-based English (GloWbE).  
<https://corpus.byu.edu/glowbe>
- Heine, Bernd, Ulrike Claudi & Friederike Hünemeyer. 1991. *Grammaticalization: A Conceptual Framework*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- López-Couso, María José & Belén Méndez-Naya. 2016. From clause to adverb: On the history of *maybe*. In Gunther Kaltenböck, Evelien Keizer & Arne Lohmann (eds.), *Outside the Clause. Form and function of extra-clausal constituents*, 157–176. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Love, Robbie, Claire Dembry, Andrew Hardie, Vaclav Brezina & Tony McEnery. 2017. The Spoken BNC2014: Designing and building a spoken corpus of everyday conversations. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 22(3). 319–344.
- The British National Corpus*, version 3 (BNC XML Edition). 2007. Distributed by Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, on behalf of the BNC Consortium. [www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/](http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/)

## Grammatical variation in Indian English: The role of gender and age

Lucía Loureiro-Porto (University of the Balearic Islands, Spain) and Cristina Suárez-Gómez (University of the Balearic Islands, Spain)

This paper focuses on the role played by age and gender in language variation in Indian English, and is based on previous studies showing that young people promote language change (Tagliamonte 2016) and that women tend to be the leaders of such change (Labov 1990). The significance of the variables age and gender in language change has only recently been addressed in L2 varieties of English, and little is known about variation in Indian English in this respect. Notable exceptions are Lange (2009), who shows that women and young speakers seem to be leading language change from below in the use of the discourse particle *yaar* 'pal, mate' in Indian English, and Davydova (2015), whose exploration of the use of quotatives finds that women are less conservative than men. The presentation seeks to expand our understanding of this variety by analyzing spontaneous conversations (S1A files) in the Indian subcomponent of the International Corpus of English (ICE-IND), using the metadata revised and corrected by Hansen (2018). Four grammatical phenomena are considered: (i) relative clauses, with variation in the use of relativizers; ii) contracted vs non-contracted forms, iii) modals and semi-modals of necessity, iv) epicene pronouns (*he, he or she* and *they*).

A preliminary analysis of a partial sample of the data shows that the four phenomena seem to be undergoing change in Indian English, in that decreasing age correlates with an increasing frequency of innovative features here. Likewise, women seem to be leading these changes, with significant differences found between male and female speakers. If the systematicity of these preliminary findings are reflected in the analysis of the remaining sample of the data, it will be confirmed (i) that the ICE corpora, in particular ICE-IND, are of use in the analysis of apparent-time change in World Englishes, corroborating Hansen's (2017, 2018) findings for ICE-HKE, and (ii) that Labov's (1982: 78-79) consideration that "where women have not traditionally played a major role in public life, cultural expectations will lead them to react less strongly to the linguistic norms of the dominant culture" seems to apply to Indian English.

### References

- Davydova, Julia. 2015. Linguistic change in a multilingual setting. A case study of quotatives in Indian English. In Peter Collins (ed.), *Grammatical change in English World-Wide*, 297–334. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Hansen, Beke. 2017. The ICE metadata and the study of Hong Kong English. *World Englishes* 36(3). 471–486.
- Hansen, Beke. 2018. *A study of variation and change in the modal systems of World Englishes* (Corpus Linguistics and Sociolinguistics 82). Leiden: Brill.
- Labov, William. 1982. Building on empirical foundations. In Winfred P. Lehmann & Yakov Malkiel (eds.), *Perspectives on historical linguistics*, 17–92. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Labov, William. 1990. The intersection of sex and social class in the course of linguistic change. *Language Variation and Change* 2. 205–254.
- Lange, Claudia. 2009. 'Where's the party, *yaar!*': Discourse particles in Indian English. In Thomas Hofmann & Lucia Siebers (eds.), *World Englishes – Problems, properties and prospects. Selected papers from the 13th IAWC Conference*, 207–225. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Tagliamonte, Sali. 2016. *Teen talk. The language of adolescents*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## Emerging modals revisited

### Comparing English emerging modals in the spoken BNC1994 and BNC2014

Hanna Mahler (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany)

Prior research on the emerging modals *gonna*, *gotta*, and *wanna* (e.g. Krug 2000, Lorenz 2012, 2013, Hopper & Traugott 1993:3) has shown how these reduced forms underwent a grammaticalisation process and became established in the English language. Krug (2000), working partially with the BNC1994, provides an account of those verbs from Old English to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, there is no account of how the emerging modals have developed in spoken British English thereafter.

In 2017, the spoken component of the BNC2014 was published, providing an opportunity to study ongoing changes in spoken British English. The corpus makes it possible to follow the trajectory of the emerging modals from the 1994 datasets onwards. This study will therefore address the following research question: Comparing the BNC1994 and the BNC2014, how has the distribution of the emerging modals *gonna*, *wanna*, and *gotta* developed and how can their development be explained?

To address this question, corpus searches within the spoken components of the BNC1994 and the BNC2014 were conducted. To aid comparability of the datasets, only the demographically sampled sub-corpus of the BNC1994 was used, as the BNC2014 was designed to emulate this part of the older corpus. The analysis of the emerging modals included their frequency per million words as well as the percentage realised as the reduced variant (hence “contraction rate”).

My results concerning the change in real time differ greatly between the variables. *Gonna* has the highest normalised frequency and contraction rate, but both appear to be lower in the BNC2014. This supports the hypothesis by Krug (2000:175) that *gonna* has reached its saturation stage. *Gotta* shows a highly significant decrease in real time and appears to be falling out of use, which might be related to the re-organisation of the modal verb system in general (Leech 2003). *Wanna* is the only variable exhibiting a significant increase of contractions pmw and is therefore the only item that can still be regarded as an ‘emerging’ modal.

In the BNC2014, contraction rates further show a decreasing apparent-time pattern, with the two youngest groups (aged 0-14 and 15-24) contracting all the modals less frequently than older speakers. This development might partially be related to the phenomenon known as “adolescent peak” (Tagliamonte & D’Arcy 2009) but could also be caused by preadolescents being underrepresented in the data. Comparing the contraction rates for male and female speakers revealed that men’s contraction rates were significantly higher in both corpora, except for *gonna* in the BNC2014. This disappearance of gender-related differences lends further support to the hypothesis that *gonna* completed its grammaticalisation process.

This study therefore contributes to our understanding of the development of emerging modals in spoken British English by offering a real-time and apparent-time analysis of their trajectories. It provides insights into how grammaticalising forms behave as they near the completion of their change. Furthermore, it exemplifies the usefulness of large-scale corpora for the diachronic study of sociolinguistic phenomena in general.

## References

Hopper, Paul & Elizabeth Closs Traugott. 1993. *Grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

- Krug, Manfred G. 2000. *Emerging English modals: A corpus-based study of grammaticalization* (Topics in English Linguistics 32). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Leech, Geoffrey. 2003. Modality on the move: The English modal auxiliaries 1961-1992. In Roberta Facchinetti, Manfred G. Krug & Frank Palmer (eds.), *Modality in contemporary English* (Topics in English Linguistics 44), 223–240. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Lorenz, David. 2013. *Contractions of English semi-modals: The emancipating effect of frequency*. Freiburg: Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg dissertation.
- Lorenz, David. 2013. From reduction to emancipation: Is gonna a word? In: Hilde Hasselgård, Jarle Ebeling & Signe Oksefjell Ebeling (eds.), *Corpus perspectives on patterns of lexis* (Studies in Corpus Linguistics 57), 133–152. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Tagliamonte, Sali & Alexandra D'Arcy. 2009. Peaks beyond phonology: Adolescence, incrementation, and language change. In: *Language* (85), 58-108.

## The corpus-based study of ongoing grammatical change in English: New data, new concepts

Christian Mair (Freiburg, Germany)

Based mostly on the one-million-word corpora of written English of the “Brown family,” a substantial body of research on ongoing grammatical changes in present-day English was produced in the first decade of this century (e.g. Mair 2006, Mair and Leech 2006, Leech et al. 2009). The present paper argues that it is time to re-visit and possibly also revise these findings. This is not because the past decade has seen major changes which have escaped notice in previous research. What has dramatically improved, however, is the corpus-linguistic working environment and the theoretical framework in which research on ongoing change in English grammar can be carried out.

With many ongoing grammatical changes affecting constructions in the mid and low frequency bands, several very large corpora which have come online over the past decade (e.g. COHA, GloWbE and the generically more specialized Hansard and NoW corpora) can consolidate often provisional trends noted in the Brown family, expand the range of variables to be investigated, and increase the granularity of the analysis. The biggest improvement, though, is the coverage of spontaneous spoken language, where – for British English – the *Diachronic Corpus of Present-Day Spoken English* (DCPSE) and the new *BNC Spoken 2014* afford opportunities which go far beyond what was possible ten or fifteen years ago. In view of the fact that – by and large – convergent diachronic trends tend to be more common in formal and written genres, whereas divergence is more likely to emerge in speech, this more balanced coverage of the two modalities in the available corpora represents a genuine advance.

One noteworthy theoretical advancement is the better understanding of the interaction between prescriptive language ideologies of various types and actually ongoing changes which has been achieved in work such as Curzan (2014) and Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2018).

Revisiting two well studied changes – the decline of some core modals and the rise of the progressive, I will demonstrate that the use of new corpus data, while not fundamentally changing the picture, nevertheless requires considerable adjustments to the analysis. For example, data from the new BNC show that *have got to* is on the decline even in spoken British English and that phraseological chunks play a considerable role in the continuing spread of the progressive. A third variable, singular *themselves*, was studied because (i) it is still rare and (ii) its documented spread over the past few decades is taking place in a highly charged language-ideological context which pits traditional prescriptivism against more recent language planning efforts designed to make the language more inclusive. On the basis of the available evidence, *themselves* (a form of considerable historical standing in dialectal and nonstandard usage) is likely to become a rare instance of a new item being added to the “closed class” of pronominal forms in Standard English.

### References

- Curzan, Anne. 2014. *Fixing English*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Leech, Geoffrey, Marianne Hundt, Christian Mair & Nicholas Smith. 2009. *Change in contemporary English: A grammatical study*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Mair, Christian. 2006. *Twentieth-century English: History, variation and standardization*. Cambridge: CUP.

- Mair, Christian & Geoffrey Leech. 2006. Current changes. In Bas Aarts & April McMahon (eds), *The handbook of English linguistics*, 318-342. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Tieken-Boon van Ostade, Ingrid (ed.). 2018. *English usage guides: History, advice, attitudes*. Oxford: OUP.

## An acoustic study of /s/-retraction in Trinidadian English

Philipp Meer (University of Münster, Germany) and Wiebke Ahlers (University of Münster, Germany)

Sociophonetic research in the last decade observed a possible non-regional, non-variety-specific sound change affecting sibilants. Specifically, /s/ in (triple) consonant clusters is produced in a retracted position, approximating the palato-alveolar fricative [ʃ], esp. in /str/ (e.g. [ʃtuit] rather than [stuit] for *street*). Retraction has been observed in British English, New Zealand English, and, most notably, different varieties of American English (e.g. Stevens & Harrington 2016:118).

In sociophonetic research on Trinidadian English (TrinE) and other New Englishes, however, variability in the production of sibilants has received little attention. While previous impressionistic descriptions of TrinE suggest that affrication of /(s)tr/-clusters is common in some speakers (Youssef & James 2008), evidence on the realization of /s/ in /str/-clusters is lacking.

This study presents the results of a large-scale acoustic study of /s/-retraction in TrinE, using word list, reading passage, and interview recordings from 100 students and teachers from secondary schools across the island that were overall balanced for gender, region, ethnic distribution, and school type. The recordings were manually transcribed, automatically force-aligned using a version of FAVE calibrated to TrinE (Meer & Matute Flores 2018), subjected to a Praat script that extracted Center of Gravity (CoG) for all sibilants, and subsequently z-transformed. Likely outliers (approx. 8%) were excluded before analysis (final N=17,097). CoGs of singleton /s/ were compared to those of /s/ in /sk skr sp spr st str/-clusters using linear mixed effects modeling, with a fixed factor of /s/-cluster type and random factors of speaker (intercept and slopes) and word (intercept). Sociolinguistic effects were analyzed in a separate model.

The results show that /s/ in /str/-clusters is retracted in TrinE and approaches /ʃ/: CoG in /str/ is significantly lower than in singleton /s/ and all other /s/-clusters, whose CoGs were all high and undifferentiated. Although there is considerable overlap in CoG between /str/ and /ʃ/ across many tokens, a small but significant difference is maintained. Variability in the degree of retraction in /str/ is generally larger than in the other /s/-clusters: speakers differ in apparent time, with the two youngest age groups having considerably (but not significantly) lower CoGs comparable to /ʃ/. The degree of retraction was significantly higher in more formal speech. Both these observations might indicate change in progress toward full /s/-retraction in TrinE.

## References

- Meer, Philipp & José A. Matute Flores. 2018. Making FAVE ready for New Englishes: Applying and modifying FAVE for semi-automatic acoustic analyses of Trinidadian English vowels, NWAV 47, New York: New York University.
- Stevens, Mary & Jonathan Harrington. 2016. The phonetic origins of /s/-retraction: Acoustic and perceptual evidence from Australian English. *Journal of Phonetics* 58, 118–134.
- Youssef, Valerie & Winford James. 2008. The creoles of Trinidad and Tobago: Phonology. In Edgar W. Schneider (ed.), *Varieties of English: The Americas and the Caribbean*, 321-338. Berlin: Mouton.



## **We *might could* solve this syntactic puzzle: a speaker's choice hypothesis and beyond.**

**Cameron Morin (ENS Paris-Saclay, France)**

Multiple modals in English (MM) are a surprising series of non-standard dialectal structures found at least in certain varieties of the Southern United States (Di Paolo 1986; Nagle 1994; Butters 1996) and the British Isles (among others Brown 1991). Although they are a relatively understudied topic in research on modality and syntactic variation, MMs pose a number of theoretical issues, the most salient being the precise nature of their structure, e.g. is there a true modal, and if so, where is it, and what is the other element? This specific problem has been exclusively tackled and barely solved in dialects of the American South (Battistella 1995; Nagle 1997; Elsmann & Dubinsky 2009; Hasty 2012). Moreover, new research on the topic with respect to Britain was only initiated a few years ago in Scotland (Bour 2014), and it has complexified the issue of building a unified theory of multiple modals in the dialects of English concerned.

This paper aims to give a well-deserved overview of what MMs are, what has been found on them, and most importantly what remains to be done. It includes the results of a field survey I conducted for my MSc in the Scottish Borders (Hawick, 2018), which elicited judgment data from 60 respondents to investigate their claimed usage of double modals (DMs) and the ways they could manipulate them to create negatives, interrogatives and question-tags. The results have led me to formulate a provisional Speaker's Choice hypothesis, according to which DMs result from the selection of a true modal and the recategorisation of the remaining constituent as an idiosyncratic adverb. As part of my current PhD research proposal, I am interested in developing a constructional approach to this hypothesis, to be tested again in the future for a comprehensive synchronic account of multiple modals cross-dialectally.

### **References**

- Battistella, Edwin L. 1995. The syntax of double modal constructions. *Linguistica Atlantica* 17. 19-44.
- Bour, Anthony. 2014. *Description of multiple modality in contemporary Scotland: Double and triple modals in the Scottish Borders*. Freiburg, Germany: University of Freiburg dissertation.
- Brown, Keith. 1991. Double modals in Hawick Scots. In Peter Trudgill & John K. Chambers (eds.), *Dialects of English*, 74-103. London and New York: Longman.
- Di Paolo, Marianna. 1986. *A study of double modals in Texas English*. Austin, TX: University of Texas dissertation.
- Elsman, Minta & Stanley Dubinsky. 2009. Double modal syntactic patterns as single modal interactions. *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics* 15(1). 74-83.
- Hasty, J. Daniel. 2012. We might should oughta take a second look at this: A syntactic re-analysis of double modals in southern United States English. *Lingua* 122. 1716-1738.
- Nagle, Stephen J. 1994. The English Double Modal Conspiracy. *Diachronica* XI:2. 199-212.
- Nagle, Stephen J. 1997. What is double about double modals? In Raymond Hickey & Stanislav Puppel (eds.), *Language history and linguistic modelling*, 513-526. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

## Variation beyond varieties: A micro-diachronic approach to spoken ELF interaction

Marie-Luise Pitzl (University of Vienna, Austria)

Much of present-day corpus linguistics and sociolinguistics focuses on the description of particular linguistic features in standard (or non-standard) varieties of \*English in the Inner, Outer or Expanding Circle. Although research on English as a lingua franca (ELF) also often investigates a particular lexical, syntactic or pragmatic phenomenon, most ELF interactions inevitably cut across Kachru's circles and involve a range of languages beyond \*English. The diversity of multilingual ELF speakers and the ad-hoc nature of ELF interactions make them extremely interesting sites for observing variation, which is explored, however, without the aim of postulating or establishing characteristics of a (new) variety of \*English (see e.g. Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey 2011; Seidlhofer 2011; Mauranen 2012; Pitzl 2018a).

The situationally-emergent nature of ELF communication has recently led scholars to emphasize the importance of transience. Moving away from the more established notion of a Community of Practice (CoP), propositions concerning Transient International Groups (TIGs) (Pitzl 2018b) and Transient Multilingual Communities (Mortensen 2017) highlight the group dimension of interaction and the temporal dimension of language use in diverse groups. In order to take full advantage of these two dimensions in descriptive research, researchers are pushed to develop new methodologies that allow the in-depth investigation of particular linguistic or pragmatic phenomena in interaction across time. The micro-diachronic approach to spoken interaction introduced in this paper aims to do just that.

Drawing upon and combining a range of established research traditions (interactional sociolinguistics, conversation analysis, discourse analysis and corpus linguistics), the micro-diachronic approach to spoken interaction seeks to develop methodological tools for the systematic (large-scale) qualitative investigation of variation in interactive synchronic data sets. The phenomenon examined in this paper is lexical variation, in particular how a group of ELF speakers shifts from an established lexical item (*tension*) to a term newly introduced in the group (*ants in pants*). This transition is examined micro-diachronically with QDA software (MaxQDA) in four consecutive transcribed weekly team meetings. Relating this example of lexical variation to broader concepts like creativity and accommodation, the paper seeks to demonstrate the relevance of the micro-diachronic approach for the study of variation in sociolinguistics and pragmatics beyond ELF.

### References:

- Jenkins, Jennifer, Alessia Cogo & Martin Dewey. 2011. Review of developments in research into English as a lingua franca. *Language Teaching* 44(3). 281–315.
- Jenkins, Jennifer. 2015. Repositioning English and multilingualism in English as a Lingua Franca. *Englishes in Practice* 2(3). 49–85.
- Mauranen, Anna. 2012. *Exploring ELF. Academic English shaped by non-native speakers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mortensen, Janus. 2017. Transient Multilingual Communities as a field of investigation: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 27(3). 271–288.
- Pitzl, Marie-Luise. 2018a. *Creativity in English as a lingua franca: Idiom and metaphor*. Boston: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Pitzl, Marie-Luise. 2018b. Transient International Groups (TIGs): Exploring the group and development dimension of ELF. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca* 7(1). 25–58.
- Seidlhofer, Barbara. 2011. *Understanding English as a lingua franca*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## Recent change in stative progressives: Spreading to new semantic domains

Paula Rautionaho (University of Eastern Finland) and Robert Fuchs (University of Hamburg, Germany)

The recent diachronic increase in the frequency of the progressive has been attributed to the spread from its prototypical domain, dynamic verbs, to new domains, such as stative verbs. There is real-time evidence of increasing use of stative progressives in 19th-century British English (e.g. Smitterberg 2005), but data from the 20th century shows that this increase may be halting. Leech et al. (2009), for instance, do not find stative progressives contributing to the increasing use of the progressive in written English in the period from the 1960s to the 1990s (p. 130), and Smith and Leech (2013: 89) find a small, but statistically not significant increase. However, we currently lack evidence on the further development of stative progressives since the 1990s, as well as their usage in conversations rather than writing.

We therefore ask whether the progressive is applied to a broader range of stative verbs in the present day, compared to the early 1990s, and investigate this question with the spoken, demographic sections of the old and new *British National Corpus* (Love et al. 2017). We searched the corpora for a total of 100 stative verbs (lemmata), and restricted the analysis to a variable context where a progressive could potentially occur (excluding, for example, imperatives and idiomatic expressions such as *you know*). Of verbs occurring more than 5,000 times, we analysed a random sample of 1,000 occurrences per corpus. In total, c. 44,000 tokens were investigated.

Our results indicate that, while overall stative progressives have not become more frequent in the last twenty years (1994 6.43%, 2014 6.50%), the progressive is indeed applied to a broader range of stative verbs (1994 59 lemmata, 2014 65 lemmata). We apply distinctive collexeme analysis (DCA) to assess the collostructional strength of individual lemmata and groups of stative verbs on the one hand, and the two grammatical constructions under investigation on the other. The results show that cognitive verbs, rather than affective, are increasing their progressive usage, and that stance verbs stand out as the only category statistically significantly associated with the progressive. Overall, our results suggest that the rise of stative progressives has been halted and is confined to particular lemmata. However, this might suffice to sustain the popular impression of a general, continuing spread.

### References

- Leech, Geoffrey, Marianne Hundt, Christian Mair & Nicholas Smith. 2009. *Change in contemporary English: A grammatical study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Love, Robbie, Claire Dembry, Andrew Hardie, Vaclav Brezina & Tony McEnery. 2017. The Spoken BNC2014: designing and building a spoken corpus of everyday conversations. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 22(3). 319-344.
- Smith, Nicholas & Geoffrey Leech. 2013. Verb structures in twentieth-century British English. In Bas Aarts et al. (eds), *The verb phrase in English: Investigating recent language change with corpora*, 68-98. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smitterberg, Erik. 2005. *The progressive in 19th-century English: A process of integration*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

# On Prosody, Phonetics and Construction Grammar: The case of CAN I X, LE? ME X, and LEMME X

Elisabeth Reber (University of Würzburg, Germany)

The role of phonology for the modelling of constructions has been acknowledged by a variety of theories (e.g. Croft 2001). However, studies on the sound form of constructions which are grounded in the empirical analysis of spoken data and take a strictly inductive approach are still rare (cf. e.g. Berkenfield 2001, Bybee & Scheibman 1999 for exceptions).

In this paper, I am concerned with the formats CAN I X, LE? ME X, and LEMME X, which make visible the current speaker's planning of an emerging turn (cf. Caffi 2006: 82). Units of these kinds have been described as meta formulations for turn-taking (Szczepek-Reed 2018).

Taking an interactional, usage-based approach, I intend to investigate patterns of form and function in spoken realizations of CAN I X, LE? ME X, and LEMME X and discuss whether these can be analysed as constructions.

Based on a corpus of recent recordings of the Andrew Marr Show, I found that the data show recurrent patterns in terms of the phonetics and / or prosody, syntax, lexis, and metapragmatic functions and speaker role in CAN I X, LE? ME X, and LEMME X formats. This suggests that these represent semi-fixed constructions for which their respective sound shapes and full verb in the X-slots may be constitutive.

## References

- Berkenfield, Catie. 2001. The role of frequency in the realization of English *that*. In Bybee, Joan & Paul Hopper (eds.), *Frequency and the Emergence of Linguistic Structure*, 281-308. John Benjamins
- Bybee, Joan & Joanne Scheibman. 1999. The effect of usage on degrees of constituency: The reduction of *don't* in English. *Linguistics* 37. 575-596.
- Caffi, Claudia. 2006. Metapragmatics. In Keith Brown (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, 82–88. Elsevier.
- Croft, William. 2001. *Radical Construction Grammar. Syntactic theory in typological perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Szczepek Reed, Beatrice. 2017. "Can I say something?" Meta turn-taking in natural talk. *Pragmatics and Society* 8.161-182.

# Negation and the Cognitive Complexity Principle in the English Clausal Complementation System

Raquel P. Romasanta (University of Vigo, Spain)

The present paper focuses on the effect of the Complexity Principle (Rohdenburg 1996) on competing clausal complementation patterns. This principle states that “in the case of more or less explicit constructional options, the more explicit one(s) will tend to be preferred in cognitively more complex environments” (Rohdenburg 1996: 151). For example, the verb REGRET exhibits two sets of rival variants: (a) *that*- vs zero-complement clauses (*that*-CC and zero-CC), as in (1) below; and (b) *that*-CCs vs gerunds ((S)+*ing*-CC), as in (2). Given that negative polarity increases the complexity of syntactic environments (Rohdenburg 1996), the Complexity Principle could explain why (1a) and (2a) favor the more explicit clausal complement, a *that*-CC. Examples (1b) and (2b), however, show that the rival options can also occur in negative contexts, and thus the effects of negation on clausal complementation are still in need of close examination.

(1)

- a. We only **regret** that we did not meet him much earlier. (GloWbE, HK)
- b. We only **regret**  $\emptyset$  we did not meet him much earlier.

(2)

- a. Some days I **regret** that I did not go into another line of work. (GloWbE, US)
- b. Some days I **regret** not going into another line of work.

The impact of cognitive complexity on grammatical variation is more powerful in those L2 varieties “which are closer to the acquisition stages and less advanced in the evolutionary circle outlined in the Dynamic Model” (Steger and Schneider 2012). One of the cognitive effects observed in contact and second language acquisition contexts is a tendency towards isomorphism and transparency (Steger and Schneider 2012). The hypothesis here is that negative contexts will favor the use of (more transparent) *that*-CC to a greater degree in L2 varieties.

In order to gauge the influence of negation, I compare its effects in two L1 varieties and in all 14 L2 varieties available in the GloWbE corpus (Davies 2013). All tokens are manually analyzed for type of complementation pattern (*that*-CC, zero-CC, (S)+*ing*-CC) and negation (*not/n't*, *never*, *neither*, *nobody*, *no*, *none*, *nor*, *nothing*, *nowhere*). A preliminary overview of the results shows that negation seems to have mixed effects on verbal complementation. On the one hand, the tendency to select *that*-CCs in negative contexts rather than (S)+*ing*-CCs is stronger in L2 varieties. On the other hand, and contrary to expectations, the choice of *that*-CC over zero-CCs seems to be relatively more pronounced in L1 varieties. If these results are confirmed in the whole corpus, my hypothesis would only be partially confirmed, which would pose further questions for analysis.

## References

- Davies, Mark. 2013. *Corpus of Global Web-Based English: 1.9 billion words from speakers in 20 countries*. <http://corpus.byu.edu/glowbe/> (accessed February 8th, 2017).
- Rohdenburg, Günter. 1996. Cognitive complexity and increased grammatical explicitness in English. *Cognitive Linguistics* 7(2). 149-82.
- Steger, Maria & Edgar Schneider. 2012. Complexity as a function of iconicity: The case of complement clause constructions in New Englishes. In Bernd Kortmann & Benedikt Szmrecsanyi (eds.), *Linguistic Complexity: Second Language Acquisition, Indeginization, Contact*, 156-191. Berlin: De Gruyter.

# Expressive *much*: the rise of a new expressive marker in American Soap Operas and beyond

Patricia Ronan (TU Dortmund, Germany)

A new expressive marker has recently spread through televised and computer mediated communication. It consists of mostly syntactically independent noun phrases, adjectival phrases or verb phrases followed by *much*, as in

1. Holden: He who? Julia: **Jealous much?** (SOAP 6 2005 ATWT A B C)
2. (...) would be much better to have your fingerprints now. # Wow Christopher, **paranoid much?** What precisely is the difference between having you fingerprints taken and a photo (...) (GloWbE, IE G [thejournal.ie](http://thejournal.ie))

So far, research on this structure is sparse, a notable exception is the semantically oriented study by Gutzmann & Henderson (2015). It has shown that semantically, the modified phrase has largely negative connotations, such as *jealous*, *bitter*, *dramatic* or *paranoid*. Structurally, we find that the modified phrase is typically extrasyntactic, and has rising intonation pattern, which in written language is typically represented by a question mark.

Concerning the origin of the structure, OED (s.v. *much*) observes that it has been popularized by the American movie and series *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer*, but also provides examples of more recent spreads into other media genres. The current study investigates the spread from American Soap Operas to contemporary international Englishes and assesses the qualitative and quantitative extensions of the structure.

In order to do so, the study determines usage and frequencies of the structure in SOAP, the Corpus of American Soap operas (Davies 2011-), which consists of 100 million words of transcripts of informal and highly informal language from 2001 to 2012, as well as the *GloWbE*, the *Corpus of Global Web-Based English*, containing 1.9 billion words of web-based English of different English varieties from around the world. The target structures are searched for within the corpus interface of the Brigham Young Corpus suite.

Results will show that in early attestations in the SOAP corpus, usage of the structure was distributionally, semantically as well as syntactically, narrow. Then expressive *much* has been adopted by users of the English language basically world-wide, but with preference for certain geographic areas and it has, predictably, expanded both qualitatively and quantitatively. The study will describe and analyse this expansion.

## References:

- Davies, Mark. 2011-. *Corpus of American Soap Operas: 100 million words*. Available online at <https://corpus.byu.edu/soap/>.
- Davies, Mark. 2013. *Corpus of Global Web-Based English: 1.9 billion words from speakers in 20 countries (GloWbE)*. <https://corpus.byu.edu/glowbe/>.
- Gutzmann, Daniel & Robert Henderson. 2015. 'Expressive updates much?' In Csipak, Eva & Hedde Zeijlstra (eds.), *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung* 19. 266–283.
- OED Online. December 2018. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com> (31 December, 2018)

# Teacher language in the German EFL classroom: a model for spontaneous speech?

Anna Rosen (University of Freiburg, Germany)

Spontaneous speaking is considered an essential and yet often the most challenging skill in acquiring a foreign language. Recent research has indicated that a fluent and natural speaking style including the adequate use of conversational features (such as, e.g., discourse markers) is just as important to be accepted by an interlocutor as grammatical accuracy and therefore a prerequisite for successful communication (e.g. Brandt & Götz 2011). Studies on the use of some of these features by advanced (German) learners of English find that they use them significantly less often than native speakers (e.g. Götz 2013, Gilquin 2016, Rosen 2019). These studies plead for more consideration of typically spoken features and fluency-enhancing strategies in teaching and suggest that the spoken input of teachers could be an important stepping stone to a more adequate use of conversational features by learners. To date, however, no study has investigated the spoken input students are actually exposed to at German secondary schools.

To remedy this situation, this paper investigates which features of a “conversational grammar” (Biber et al. 1999) can be found in teacher language as represented in a 425 000-word corpus of 105 transcribed English lessons, recorded at German secondary schools between 2003 and 2004. The focus is on a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the use of discourse markers, stance adverbials, question tags and formulaic utterance launchers in comparison with British teacher language included in the classroom section of the British National Corpus. The results show that there is an overall tendency for such features to be used less frequently by German teachers of English compared to native-speaker teachers. More importantly, the evidence suggests that matters are more complex once individual features, their functional use and the input of individual teachers are under investigation. In a second step, the study therefore aims to determine whether the quality of teacher input has an effect on learners’ use of conversational features. The results are taken as an indication that the use of some features might indeed be teaching-induced. In general, however, teacher input in the German EFL classroom does not seem adequate enough to serve as a useful model for spontaneous speaking.

## References

- Biber, Douglas et al. 1999. *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. London: Longman.
- Brandt, Christiane & Sandra Götz. 2011. Fluency versus accuracy in advanced spoken learner language: A multi-method approach. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 16(2). 255-275.
- Gilquin, Gaëtanelle. 2016. Discourse markers in L2 English. From classroom to naturalistic input. In Olga Timofeeva et al. (eds.), *New approaches in English linguistics: Building bridges*, 213-249. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Götz, Sandra. 2013. *Fluency in native and nonnative English speech*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Rosen, Anna. 2019. The use of smallwords in the speech of German learners of English: a corpus-based study of the factors of instruction and natural exposure. In Sandra Götz & Joybrato Mukherjee (eds.), *Learner Corpora and Language Teaching*, 219-241. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

# ***Fresh Science, Science Buffs, and Exclusive Science Classes*** **A Discourse Analysis of Travel Advertising in a Popular Science Magazine**

Sofia Rüdiger (University of Bayreuth, Germany)

Print advertising has been a staple data source in discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and multimodality research for decades (see, e.g., Cook 1992). While many studies focused on the representation of male and female bodies or food, the present study aims its attention at advertising for a specific form of “luxury travel” (see Thurlow and Jaworski 2014), i.e., ‘educational traveling’.

This study examines travel print advertising in the popular science magazine *Scientific American*. *Scientific American* is a monthly publication reporting on scientific news to an informed readership. The range of fields covered is comprehensive and ranges from physics, mathematics, genetics, archaeology, linguistics, and psychology, to planetary science, medicine, public health, and neuroscience. The data used for this study consists of the 18 travel ads published in the 24 issues of *Scientific American* in 2017 and 2018. While 16 of these ads can be considered unique, two of them are expanded ads (i.e., unique ads which were re-published in a longer and modified form). The analysis of the ads then followed the frameworks of discourse analysis and the study of multimodality to arrive at a first description of the linguistic and visual style of this advertising genre.

While conversational style is mainly avoided in the ads (no direct address via personal pronouns, no disjunctive syntax and questions), the body copy of the ads is extremely rich in imperatives. All material under scrutiny caters to an audience interested in ‘lifelong learning’ and the ads repeatedly point to the scientific value of the travel experience (e.g., via repetitions of the lexical item “science” and the use of adjectives like “important” and “up-to-date”). The prospective travelers are rhetorically constructed as part of an in-group of “science buffs”. Additionally, the ads allude to the exclusivity of the science experience, marking the privileged nature of the commodity under sale (which can also be found reflected in the price ranges of the advertised trips). Multimodal elements of the analyzed ads include, on the one hand, pictures traditionally connected to traveling and tourism, such as landscapes, maps, tourist attractions, and wildlife. On the other hand, visual material is also used to evoke the field of ‘science’, depicting, for example, cell cultures, solar cells, (stylized) atomic structures, and dinosaurs. Noticeable is also that only very few human actors are represented in the visual material (apart from portraits of the experts which accompany the advertised trip for lectures, Q&As, etc.).

The study presented here is part of a larger research project on advertising in (popular) science magazines, which, despite the interest in advertising in the fields of discourse analysis and multimodality, has not yet been investigated systematically.

## **References**

- Cook, Guy. 1992. *The Discourse of Advertising*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Thurlow, Crispin & Adam Jaworski. 2014. Visible-Invisible: The Social Semiotics of Labour in Luxury Tourism. In Thomas Birtchnell & Javier Caletrió (eds.), *Elite Mobilities*, 176-193. London: Routledge.



# Of *boh*os and *froyo*: A study of ‘CloClo’ formations in contemporary English slang

José A. Sánchez Fajardo (University of Alicante, Spain)

Most studies of slang and colloquial speech have been traditionally devoted to the morphological and semantic examination of neologisms and innovative lexis (Eble 1996; Chatterton and Hollands 2003; Mattiello 2008), but the motives and sociolinguistic traits underlying their formation remain unexplored. This paper is intended to delve into the morphosemantic and motivational characteristics underlying the formation of CloClo units in contemporary English slang. CloClo are disyllabic clipped composites consisting of two consonant clusters (Cl<sub>1</sub> + Cl<sub>2</sub>) and having the vowel –o /ou/ as a syllable closure, e.g. *boho* < *bohemian*, *froyo* < *frozen yogurt*, *slo-mo* < *slow motion*. Earlier studies on this construction, particularly those by Gorman and Mackenzie (2009) and Gold (1999), suggest that there is morphological and phonological variation in the analysis and typology of these units, and that these types of compounds are palpable indications of trendiness and linguistic vogue. In our case, our investigation looks at the units that comply with the CloClo pattern, that is, the grapheme -o- and the diphthong /ou/, to assess if there are universal paradigms or trends that govern their coinage in English slang word stock, e.g. semantic transparency, graphemic and phonological alteration, and motivations (cf. Rodríguez and Sánchez). The research consists of two global stages: (i) data compilation and (ii) data processing. The former is intended to compile words complying with the pre-established CloClo pattern from descriptive and prescriptive dictionaries (Dalzell 2009; MWD11; OED3; Partridge 2000; Spear 1991; Thorne 2005); whilst the latter is expected to shed more light on the morphological and semantic paradigmaticity of this type of construction. Early findings suggest that although these units share morphological similarity, their semantic compositionality is highly dissimilar as it depends on the number of the input meanings of bases.

## References

- Chatterton, P. and Hollands, R. 2003. *Urban Nightscapes: Youth Cultures, Pleasure Spaces and Corporate Power*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Dalzell, Tom. 2009. *The Routledge Dictionary of Modern American Slang and Unconventional English*. New York/London: Routledge.
- Eble, Connie. 1996. *Slang and Sociability: In-Group Language among College Students*, The University of North Carolina Press.
- Gold, David L. “Stump-compounded New York city neighborhood names as an expression of trendiness and gentrification.” *BNF* 34(1), 47-58.
- Gorman, Kyle and Laurel MacKenzie 2009. “A Po-Mo Boho in SoHo: Emerging Specificity in English Templatic Hypocoristics”, *LSA Annual Meeting*. Available at [http://laurelmackenzie.com/presentations/Gorman\\_MacKenzie\\_LSA2009\\_slides.pdf](http://laurelmackenzie.com/presentations/Gorman_MacKenzie_LSA2009_slides.pdf)
- Mattiello, Elisa. 2008. *An Introduction to English Slang*. Milano: Polimetrica.
- MWD11 = *Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online*, 11th edition, 2003.
- OED3 = *Oxford Dictionary of English* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Partridge, Eric. 2000. *A dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, London/New York: Routledge.
- Rodríguez González, F. and Sánchez Fajardo, J. A. 2018. “Motives for clipped words in English and Spanish word-formation”. *Neologica* 12, 219-235.
- Spears, Richard A. 1991. *Contemporary American Slang*, Indiana, National Textbook Co.
- Thorne, Tony. 2005. *Dictionary of Contemporary Slang*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

# Quantitative models of referential choice: Lexical anaphora in English

Nils Norman Schiborr (University of Bamberg, Germany)

A long line of research in the tradition of Chafe (1976) has examined speakers' selection of referring expressions in natural discourse, generally framing this choice in terms of information packaging (Prince 1981, Givón 1983, Gundel et al. 1993, Gordon & Hendrick 1997), and espousing some notion of “activation states” (Chafe 1976, 1994) or “accessibility” (Ariel 1990). According to these theories, the choice of particular expressions is driven largely by the properties of the preceding discourse, and is sensitive to certain morphosyntactic, semantic, and prosodic features. Two of the limitations of many of these approaches, however, is that they base their claims on small data sets of chiefly written language, and often offer insufficient insights into their methodologies.

This paper presents ongoing research into the factors underpinning the choice between full, lexical noun phrases (e.g. *the woman, Jane*) and non-lexical expressions (e.g. *she*, zero anaphora) for references to given discourse entities in natural spoken discourse. It explores these dimensions using a nuanced, bottom-up approach based on spoken, spontaneous corpus data from the Multi-CAST collection (Schiborr 2015). These data have been annotated for the form and grammatical role of referring expressions, their information status, as well as their referential identity (see Haig & Schnell 2014; Schiborr et al. 2018).

Preliminary findings suggest that discourse-based factors such as recency and prominence serve as strong indicators for referential choice, but to different extents for different grammatical roles, human and non-human referents, and specific semantic classes of predicates. In addition to contemporary English, this paper offers a brief outlook on the larger typological perspective, which suggests that the aforementioned tendencies are likely to be crosslinguistically stable.

## References

- Ariel, Mira. 1990. *Accessing noun-phrase antecedents*. London: Routledge.
- Chafe, Wallace. 1976. Givenness, contrastiveness, definiteness, subjects, topics, and point of view. In Charles N. Li (ed.), *Subject and topic*, 25–55. New York: Academic Press.
- Chafe, Wallace. 1994. *Discourse, consciousness, and time: The flow and displacement of conscious experience in speaking and writing*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Givón, Talmy (ed.). 1983. *Topic continuity in discourse* (Typological Studies in Language 3). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Gordon, Peter C. & Randall Hendrick. 1997. Intuitive knowledge of linguistic co-reference. *Cognition* 62(2). 325–370.
- Gundel, Jeanette K., Nancy Hedberg & Ron Zacharski. 1993. Cognitive status and the form of referring expressions in discourse. *Language* 69(2). 274–307.
- Haig, Geoffrey & Stefan Schnell 2014. *Annotations using GRAID (Grammatical relations and animacy in discourse): Introduction and guidelines for annotators*, version 7.0. [multicast.aspra.uni-bamberg.de#annotations](http://multicast.aspra.uni-bamberg.de#annotations). (2 April, 2019.)
- Prince, Ellen F. 1981. Toward a taxonomy of given-new information. In Peter Cole (ed.), *Radical pragmatics*, 223–255. New York: Academic Press.
- Schiborr, Nils N. 2015. Multi-CAST English. In Geoffrey Haig & Stefan Schnell (eds.), *Multi-CAST: Multilingual corpus of annotated spoken texts*. [multicast.aspra.uni-bamberg.de#english](http://multicast.aspra.uni-bamberg.de#english). (2 April, 2019.)
- Schiborr, Nils N., Stefan Schnell & Hanna Thiele. 2018. *RefIND — Referent indexing in natural-language discourse: Annotation guidelines*, version 1.1. [multicast.aspra.uni-bamberg.de#annotations](http://multicast.aspra.uni-bamberg.de#annotations). (2 April, 2019.)

## Is the pattern ‘that’s Adj’ a construction?

### The relevance of individual variation.

Hans-Jörg Schmid (LMU Munich, Germany)

Sequences of the type *that’s right*, *that’s nice* or *that’s okay* occur fairly frequently in spontaneous spoken conversation. The analysis of spoken corpus data from the BNC suggests that in spite of its formal regularity and semantic compositionality the pattern ‘that’s Adj’ can be considered a construction according to the criteria established by Hilpert (2014: 14-22). In addition to being recurrent, the pattern is marked by collocational preferences and restrictions indicating three overlapping semantico-pragmatic clusters:

1. *that’s right/ true /correct* etc. for the expression of epistemic stance
2. *that’s nice/ cool /lovely* etc. for the expression of evaluative stance
3. *that’s alright/ fine /okay* etc. for signalling agreement or uptake of what was said before.

These clusters could be regarded as more specific variants of the general ‘that’s Adj’ construction on a meso-level in the constructional hierarchy.

However, going beyond the level of aggregate corpus data by looking into the conversational contributions by individual speakers one finds that speakers vary considerably in their preferences regarding the use of the pattern ‘that’s Adj’. Some speakers strongly favour the third variant of the potential construction, while hardly ever using the second one, others show the converse distribution. These findings indicate that what seems to be one construction with several variants from the perspective of conventionalization may well be represented in different ways in the minds of individual speakers.

This raises interesting questions related to the definition and status of the notion of *construction* as a “*conventionalized form-meaning pairing*” (Croft 2001: 19) or a “*stored form-meaning pairing*” (Goldberg 2003: 219; my emphases). On the one hand, it can be argued that such individual differences do not fall within the remit of linguistic analysis, whose task it is to describe conventional structures rather than individual representations. On the other hand, individual cognitive variation is an important source of social variation and language change and should therefore not be neglected. In my talk I will plead for a clear theoretical and methodological separation of collective conventionality and individual entrenchment and propose a dynamic model integrating both aspects of language (Schmid in print).

### References

- Croft, William. 2001. *Radical construction grammar: Syntactic theory in typological perspective*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.
- Goldberg, Adele E. 2003. ‘Constructions: A new theoretical approach to language’, *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 7(5): 219-224.
- Hilpert, Martin. 2014. *Construction grammar and its application to English*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Schmid, Hans-Jörg. In print. *The dynamics of the linguistic system. Usage, conventionalization, and entrenchment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

# Correlations between reading times, collocation and surprisal

Gerold Schneider

Corpora with eye-tracking and self-paced reading times by native and non-native speakers (Frank et al. 2013) allow us to shed new light on cognitive processes. Our study has the following aims: (1) we want to assess the important features in predicting reading times, (2) we aim to contribute to the research question of the cognitive importance of syntax and word sequences (Armeni et al. 2017), (3) we want to build reader models.

Theories of entrenchment (Langacker 1987) and usage-based models (Langacker 1988, Bybee 2007) have revolutionized cognitive linguistics (Janda 2013), but are also spearheading the paradigm shift in linguistics from theory-driven to empirical research. Formulaic sequences are easier to process for native speakers (Conklin and Schnitt 2012), but difficult to learn for L2 learners, and a source of innovation in outer circle varieties (Schneider and Gilquin 2016).

Formulaicity is related to Sinclair's idiom principle (Sinclair 1991) and can be measured by surprisal (Levy and Jaeger 2007, Schneider and Grigonyte 2018). We investigate the correlation between reading times as manifested in eye-tracking corpora and text-derived measures of formulaicity, particularly collocation measures (Evert 2009) and surprisal.

We report important correlations, for example between reading times and surprisal (covariance), individual variation (Cramer's V), and the influence of word length and frequency. We also predict reading times with linear regression, using surprisal, collocation, word length, POS tag, the individual reader, dependency syntax label, automatic parser confidence scores, distributional semantic class etc. as explanatory variables.

## References

- Armeni, Kristijan, Roel M. Willems & Stefan L. Frank 2017. Probabilistic language models in cognitive neuroscience: promises and pitfalls. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 579-588.
- Bybee, Joan. 2007. *Frequency of Use and the Organization of Language*. Oxford: OUP.
- Conklin, Kathy & Norbert Schmitt. 2012. The Processing of Formulaic Language. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 32, 45-61.
- Demberg, Vera & Frank Keller. 2008. Data from Eye-tracking Corpora as Evidence for Theories of Syntactic Processing Complexity. *Cognition*, 109(2), 193-210.
- Evert, Stefan. 2009. Corpora and collocations. *Corpus Linguistics. An International Handbook*, article 58, 1212-1248.
- Frank, Stefan .L., Ireme Fernandez Monsalve, Robin L. Thompson & Gabriella Vigliocco. 2013. Reading-time data for evaluating broad-coverage models of English sentence processing. *Behavior Research Methods*, 45, 1182-1190.
- Janda, Laura A. 2013. *Cognitive Linguistics: the Quantitative Turn*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Langacker, Ronald. 1987 *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar. Vol. 1. Theoretical prerequisites*. Stanford: SUP.

- Langacker, Ronald. 1988. A usage-based model. In *Topics in Cognitive Linguistics*, Brygida Rudzka-Ostyn (ed.), 127-161. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Levy, Roger & T. Florian Jaeger. 2007. Speakers optimize information density through syntactic reduction. *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems*.
- Schneider, Gerold & Gaëtanelle Gilquin. 2016. Detecting Innovations in a Parsed Corpus of Learner English. *International Journal of Learner Corpus Research*, 2, 2.
- Schneider, Gerold & Gintare Grigonyte. 2018. From Lexical Bundles to Surprisal and Language Models: measuring the idiom principle on native and learner language. *Applications of Pattern-driven Methods in Corpus Linguistics*, 82, 15-55.
- Sinclair, John. 1991. *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation*. Oxford: OUP.

## Lexical DO or auxiliary DO?

Saghie Sharifzadeh (Sorbonne Université, France)

This paper investigates *which PRP<sup>1</sup> do* (cf. [1]), *that PRP do* (cf. [2]) and *this PRP do* (cf. [3]) sequences and the apparent transitivity of the verb *do* in its aforementioned uses. The aim is to determine whether such transitivity can be explained by the presence of a lexical *do* in these structures or if *do* is in fact an auxiliary (i.e. a grammatical verb).

[1] *Perhaps she thinks it sounds n– better. **Which it does** really. Well it does really, yeah.* (BNC)

[2] *'Would you like my place? It's rather a tight fit,' she said apologetically, and the woman beamed at her. 'Thanks ever so, miss, I do call that kind,' she said breathlessly. 'I wish there was more like you, **that I do!**'* (BNC)

[3] *I remember one subject that required that she lay flat on the ground, and **this she did** for hours on end while I drew her.* (BNC)

To determine whether *do* is an auxiliary or a lexical verb, the following questions will be addressed:

- a. Can *do* be negated (this property being characteristic of operators)<sup>2</sup>?
- b. What types of antecedents does *do* have in such structures? Purely stative antecedents (e.g. *sound better* in [1]) are extremely rare with proforms containing a lexical *do* (cf. Lakoff & Ross 1976, Culicover & Jackendoff 2005), particularly with the proforms *do it*, *do this* and *do that* (in which, contrarily to *do so*, *do* is transitive).
- c. How often is *do* modified by an adjunct? Adjuncts are rare when an operator is in charge of the anaphora (cf. Miller 2011), i.e. in cases of post-auxiliary ellipsis.

The electronic corpora show that, in the syntactic structures *which PRP do* and *that/this PRP do*, *do* is sometimes auxiliary (e.g. when it refers to a predicate denoting a purely stative event, as in [1]), sometimes lexical (e.g. when it is modified by an adjunct, as in [3]), but that the syntactic properties used as identification criteria for an auxiliary / lexical verb are not always iconic of the semantic-discursive criteria which appeared prototypical of each form of *do* in other structures. The analysis of such sequences reveals a certain lack of differentiation between the lexical and the grammatical *do* because of a common factitive meaning, which is underlying in the operator. The properties of the lexical verb appear to spill over into the auxiliary, more particularly in the COCA. The fuzzy boundary between grammatical and lexical uses of *do* crystallises in the lexical status of the verb in *this PRP do* sequences and its auxiliary status in *that PRP do* sequences.

## References

- Culicover, Peter & Ray Jackendoff. 2005. *Simpler Syntax*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- Davies, Mark. 2004-. BYU-BNC: The British National Corpus. <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>
- Davies, Mark. 2008-. BYU-COCA: The Corpus of Contemporary American English. <http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/>
- Lakoff, George & John R. Ross. 1976. Why you can't do so into the sink. In James D. McCawley (ed.), *Notes from the Linguistic Underground*. New York: Academic Press, 101-111 (Syntax and Semantics 7)
- Miller, Philip. 2011. The choice between verbal anaphors in discourse. *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, 7099, 82-95. <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid>

---

<sup>1</sup> Personal pronoun.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Huddleston (1976: 333) and the *NICE* properties (Negation, Inversion, Code, Emphasis).

=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbnxwaGlsaXBtaWxsZXJsaW5ndWlzdGljc3xneDoyODQwYmI3NDgx  
NGUxOTAy, 1-14

# Factors influencing the acceptability of stative progressives in British and American English: A questionnaire-based study

Bonnie Sheppard, M.A. (University of Bamberg, Germany)

Even though stative verbs are generally believed to be incompatible with the progressive (see Quirk et al. 1985: 203), recent corpus studies and popular advertisement slogans suggest that stative progressives appear to be rising in acceptability. In this talk, I will present the results of a questionnaire study which examines whether the acceptance of these structures is influenced by sociolinguistic factors and adverbial complementation.

Recent studies based on corpora, such as ARCHER, LSAC and COCA, have observed an increase of stative progressives in the last decades (Kranich 2010, Levin 2013). Even though some theorists have labelled this change as a conglomeration of mere exceptions to the rule (Mair 2006), it is often either attributed to the semantic qualities of such structures, specifically their ability to express emotions and intensity, or to context-dependent variables, such as first-person pronoun subjects and adverbial intensification (Levin 2013, Gavis 1999).

In a questionnaire study involving 104 BrE and 53 AmE participants, several variables were tested to assess the acceptance of stative progressive structures. For this purpose, five stative verbs (*love, hate, like, want, know*) were used in positive and negated test sentences containing either none or one of four intensifying adverbs (*so, really, totally, absolutely*). After completing a form containing sociolinguistic data, such as age and gender, participants then rated the acceptability of each sentence on a Likert five-point-scale.

The descriptive analyses (including the statistical exploration of the results) point to the wide-spread acceptance of the progressive with states of emotion in both of the investigated varieties of English. Most notably, the highest acceptance rates were found amongst male participants and in the youngest age groups of AmE and BrE as well as the oldest age group of AmE. Therefore, this linguistic phenomenon seems to be more established in the English language than previous research suggested, while its use with certain adverbs is potentially governed by underlying linguistic (e.g. rhythmic and semantic) principles. For instance, the anticipated acceptability boost could only be seen with certain intensifiers (specifically with *really*), which however exhibited the same patterns across verbs and test groups. The results of this study thus trigger important research questions for more comprehensive and fine-grained follow-up studies.

## References

- Gavis, Wendy A. 1999. Stative Verbs in the Progressive Aspect: A Study of Semantic, Pragmatic, Syntactic and Discourse Patterns. *Dissertation Abstracts International, Section A: The Humanities and Social Sciences (DAIA)* 59(7). 2473.
- Kranich, Svenja. 2010. *The Progressive in Modern English: A Corpus-Based Study of Grammaticalization and Related Changes* (Language and Computers: Studies in Practical Linguistics (L&Comp) 72). Amsterdam, Netherlands: Rodopi.
- Levin, Magnus. 2013. The Progressive Verb in Modern American English. In Bas Aarts (ed.), *The Verb Phrase in English: Investigating Recent Language Change with Corpora*, 1st edn. (Studies in English language), 187–216. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Mair, Christian. 2006. *Twentieth-century English: History, Variation, and Standardization* (Studies in English language). Cambridge, UK, New York: Cambridge University Press.



Quirk, Randolph, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, and Jan Svartvik.1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*, London: Longman.

# “Holding grudges is so last century” – On the use of GenX so as modifier of nouns and noun phrases

Ulrike Stange (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Germany)

GenX so (Zwicky 2011) as a modifier of NPs is a recent innovation commonly associated with informal American English (*OED online 2005 Draft additions*, s.v. *so*, adv. and int.). Following up on Wee & Ying Ying (2008) and González-García (2014), the present study provides an in-depth empirical analysis of over 1,200 emphasised NPs (*absolutely*, *totally* and *very* are also considered). As instances of innovative language use are more likely to be found in soap operas than in natural spoken language (cf. Al-Surmi 2012: 131f.), the data are drawn from SOAP (Davies 2011-). Note also that media language 'does represent the language scriptwriters imagine that real women and men produce' (Rey 2001: 138). The results show that GenX so most frequently occurs with object pronouns (1), simple NPs (2), and names (3).

- (1) Mom, all this resentment stuff, anger - it's so not me. (*OLTL* 2004)
- (2) Everything I have is so last month. (*AMC* 2004)
- (3) Wow. That is so Adam Chandler. Your daddy must be real proud. (*AMC* 2009)

In line with Labov's (2001) Principle II, female speakers are the most prolific users of this “non-standard” (*OED*) emphasiser in general. While utterances like (1) and (2) are associated with younger speakers, (3) is common with older speakers, The so TIME-construction (as in (2); Wee & Ying Ying 2008) occurs exclusively in affirmative uses, while other types of simple NPs are virtually restricted to negated uses ( $p < 0.001$ ). In fact, there is a significant preference for negation in noun phrases (simple, complex and idiomatic) and reflexive pronouns, while affirmative uses commonly occur with nouns (bare, proper and numeral) and possessive pronouns ( $p < 0.001$ ). Last, the data reveal that, in affirmative uses, GenX so competes with *totally* in noun phrases (simple, complex and idiomatic) and with *very* as a modifier of names.

## References

- Al-Surmi, Mansoor Ali. 2012. *Authentic ESL spoken materials: soap opera and sitcom versus natural conversation*. Dissertation Northern Arizona University.
- Davies, Mark. 2011-. *The Corpus of American Soap Operas: 100 million words, 2001-2012*. <http://corpus.byu.edu/soap/>
- González-García, Francisco. 2014. *That's so a construction!* Some reflections on innovative uses of so in present-day English. In M. Gómez-González et al. (eds.) *Theory and practice in functional-cognitive space*, 271-293. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Labov, William. 2001. *Principles of linguistic change. Volume 2: social factors*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- OED* online. Available online at <http://www.oed.com>.
- Rey, Jennifer M. 2001. Changing gender roles in popular culture: dialogue in *Star Trek* episodes from 1966 to 1993. In Susan Conrad & Douglas Biber (eds.) *Variation in English*, 138-155. London: Longman.
- Stange, Ulrike. 2017. “You're so not going to believe this”: The use of GenX so in constructions with future *going to* in American English. *American Speech* 92(4), 487-524.
- Wee, Lionel & Tan Ying Ying. 2008. *That's so last year!* Constructions in a socio-cultural context. *Journal of Pragmatics* 40(12), 2100-2113.
- Zwicky, Arnold. 2011. “GenX so”: *Arnold Zwicky's Blog*. <http://arnoldzwicky.org/2011/11/14/genx-so/>

# Let's *try to/and* grow a tree: Determinants of particle alternation after base-form *try* in five ENL varieties

David Tizón-Couto (Universidade de Vigo, Spain)

The verb *try* has two main complementation patterns, with *to* and *and*. Particle variation is only possible in the base form, i.e. *try and* is available only when both verbs happen to be uninflected. Recent studies (Hommerberg and Tottie 2007, Ross 2013, Brook and Tagliamonte 2016) have dealt with its diachronic evolution and dialectal variation by focusing primarily on differences between the North American varieties and British English.

This paper reviews the factors previously claimed to condition the alternation and its variation in corpora from five countries where English is the native language (ENL). The data come from four ICE components that provide a complete spoken and written sample: Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland and New Zealand. The factors considered include 'variety', 'type of discourse' (spoken vs. written), 'formality', 'avoidance of repetition (*horror aequi*)', 'tense', 'following verb' and 'optimal syllable structure' (cf. Rohdenburg & Schläuter 2000). The statistical analysis makes use of two different methods of logistic regression and classification: binomial logistic regression and conditional inference trees (Levshina 2015).

The results suggest that the outcome is strongly conditioned by 'type of discourse': *try and* is more frequent in the spoken variant but *try to* is more frequent in the written variant. The New Zealand spoken data almost exclusively resort to the *and*-variant. The *to*-variant is more likely in the other four spoken varieties when *try* is in present or past tense; however, for the vast majority of the cases (i.e. *try* = imperative or infinitive) Australian, British and Irish speech tend towards the *and*-variant but Canadian includes both variants to the same proportion. As regards the written data, *horror aequi* (e.g. *to try to/and V*) is the most powerful trigger for the choice of the *and*-variant: a previous 'to' always favors the 'and' option, and this effect is especially strong in Canadian and British English.

The study confirms some of the distinctions previously reported but also highlights that the factors are not equally strong across registers and ENL varieties: New Zealand speech selects the *and*-variant by default and thus escapes the constraint of tense observed for the other spoken varieties (present/past tense favors the *to*-variant). Likewise, the effect of *horror aequi* is most clearly at work in the written medium.

## References

- Hommerberg, Charlotte & Gunnel Tottie. 2007. Try to or try and? Verb complementation in British and American English. *ICAME Journal* 31. 45-64.
- Brook, Marisa & Sali A. Tagliamonte. 2016. Why does North American English use try to but British English use try and? Let's try and/to figure it out. *American Speech* 91(3). 301-326.
- Levshina, Natalia. 2015. *How to do Linguistics with R: Data exploration and statistical analysis*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Rohdenburg, Günter & Julia Schläuter. 2000. Determinanten grammatischer Variation im Früh- und Spätneuenglischen. *Sprachwissenschaft* 25(4). 443-496.
- Ross, Daniel. 2013. Dialectal variation and diachronic development of *try*-complementation. *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences: Illinois Working Papers* 38. 108-147.

# Language attitudes research: Affordances of Acceptability Judgement Task

Kingsley Ugwuanyi (Northumbria University, UK & University of Nigeria, Nigeria)

Research on language attitudes has been undertaken mainly in disciplines such as social psychology, sociolinguistics and recently world Englishes. What appears consistent in these divergent disciplinary standpoints is that findings from language attitudes studies have increased awareness of the relationship between language users' attitudes and different aspects of their identities. What appears unsettled, however, is *how* to approach different aspects of language attitudes research. While a great deal of the research in social psychology appears to adopt indirect approaches such as Matched Guise Technique (MGT) or its variant known as Verbal Guise Technique (VGT) (McKenzie, 2010), approaches in sociolinguistics tend to be either direct or indirect, with a few studies adopting a mixed-methods approach (Kitazawa, 2013). One of the most contentious debates in this area of language research is whether the methodological approach should be direct or indirect. These two dominant approaches are informed by the *behaviourist* and *mentalist* theoretical underpinnings. In response to an emerging convergence of opinions to adopt an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language attitudes owing to its complex nature, this study intends to show what affordances Acceptability Judgement Task (AJT) holds. First, the study takes a critique of the major approaches within the discipline. Second, it argues that the language contact situation in world Englishes contexts further complicates language attitudes studies, and should therefore be approached differently. In other words, while the main approaches in language attitudes research might suffice to study attitudes in non-contact situations, it might not be so in world Englishes contexts. While conducting a larger study of attitudes pertaining to English language ownership among speakers of Nigerian English, this lacuna was identified. In this paper, I present the methodological choice I made: incorporating Acceptability Judgement Task to fill the identified lacuna. Data will be drawn from that study to support the argument put forward here. The overarching aim of this study is to show how neither of the main approaches in language attitudes research can (singly) sufficiently account for the attitudes phenomena, and to propose an 'integrated approach', which involves the employment of Acceptability Judgement Task (AJT).

**Keywords:** language attitudes, acceptability judgement task, world Englishes, Nigerian English, methods in language attitudes research

## References

- Kitazawa, M. (2013). Approaching conceptualisations of English in East Asian contexts: Ideas, ideology, and identification. University of Southampton: University of Southampton (PhD) thesis.
- McKenzie, R. (2010). *The social psychology of English as a global language: Attitudes, awareness and identity in the Japanese context*, Springer: London.

# Complementation patterns of English illocutionary shell nouns

Carla Vergaro (University of Perugia, Italy)

The literature on complementation has concentrated mainly on the verbal category. Not much research has been carried out on the complementation of nouns (see Vergaro & Schmid 2017).

In this paper we focus on illocutionary shell nouns, i.e. the class of abstract nouns reporting an illocutionary act and its propositional content (*his **assertion** that the town of Hebron is essentially an Arab town*), with the aim of checking for the correlation (i) between the meaning of these nouns and their preferred complementation patterns, and (ii) between their semantic similarity and their similarity in the distribution of complementation patterns.

We report the results of the investigation of a dataset of 181 illocutionary shell noun types belonging to a corpus of 335 illocutionary nouns developed by the author on the basis of speech act literature and grouped, following Searle, into the five classes of assertive (*assertion, claim, guess, etc.*), commissive (*promise, vow, offer, etc.*), directive (*request, order, edict, etc.*), expressive (*apology, complaint, boast, etc.*) and declarative (*abrogation, christening, excommunication, etc.*) shell nouns.

Two types of analysis were carried out in order to investigate the semantic and grammatical characteristics of these nouns. The semantic analysis was based on insights from speech act theory and the philosophy of language, and consisted in the development of the specifications – attributes and attribute values – that make up the conceptual structure of each lexical item (see Proost 2007). The results were tallied with a corpus-based grammatical analysis aimed at investigating the occurrence of individual tokens in grammatical constructions according to their unique specifications. Two hundred tokens of each noun type were randomly sampled from the Corpus of Contemporary American English. Using these data, the 181 nouns were subjected to an analysis of the relative frequencies of their complementation patterns.

Results indicate that the match between noun and complement is fairly confirmed in the prototypical core of each class of illocutionary shell nouns, where the more prototypical meaning of each shell noun type and the prototypical meaning of each grammatical pattern show the highest degree of compatibility. It is much less confirmed in the less prototypical and more specific nouns.

The distribution of the patterns among the shell nouns is motivated in terms of profiling effects (Langacker 1991). In the conceptual dependence relation between head and complement, the complement elaborates a salient feature of the head. The occurrence of a shell noun in a specific pattern highlights specific portions of the noun's conceptual structure, i.e. specific attributes and values, leaving the rest in the background. Elaboration of specific attributes and values accounts for the major or minor compatibility between noun and construction.

## References

- Langacker, Ronald W. 1991. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*. Vol. 2., *Descriptive Applications*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Proost, Kristel. 2007. *Conceptual Structure in Lexical Items*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Vergaro, Carla & Hans-Jörg Schmid. 2017. Do the meanings of abstract nouns correlate with the meanings of their complementation patterns? A case study on English commissive shell nouns. *Pragmatics & Cognition* 24(1). 91–118.

# Grammar and citation: Using corpus linguistics and social network analysis to identify language patterns in specific discourse communities

Don Watson (Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg, Germany)

Specificity in English for Specific Purposes (EAP) holds that literacy skills should be specialised for the particular professional and academic communities to which the writer belongs. While numerous studies have investigated the linguistic characteristics of various vocational communities, none have utilised Social Network Analysis techniques (cf. Bastian et al. 2009) to identify communities prior to analysing their language use.

This study aims to identify typical linguistic features of Research Articles (RAs) from a highly specific discourse community within the field of Psychology and asks if more highly cited or eigencentral RAs in this community are more prototypical in their use of these linguistic features than less cited/eigencentral papers (cf. Bihari & Pandia 2015). Utilising Biber's (1992) Multidimensional Analysis approach (on which see also Nini 2014, Thompson et al. 2017, Jin 2018), 452 RA abstracts published between 2005 and 2009 are analysed. The resulting co-occurrence patterns are then compared to citation and eigencentrality scores to see if highly cited/ eigencentral RAs varied less in their use of these linguistic features.

The analyses show that RAs with fewer citations (and lower eigencentrality) tend to vary more in their use of typically used linguistic features than those with more citations (or higher eigencentrality). These findings suggest that Teachers of EAP should consider using more highly cited RAs when selecting texts for use within the classroom.

## References

- Biber, D. (1992). The multi-dimensional approach to linguistic analyses of genre variation: An overview of methodology and findings. *Computers and the Humanities*, 26(5-6), 331-345.
- Bihari, A., & Pandia, M. K. (2015, February). Eigenvector centrality and its application in research professionals' relationship network. In *Futuristic Trends on Computational Analysis and Knowledge Management (ABLAZE), 2015 International Conference on* (pp. 510-514). IEEE.
- Bastian, M., Heymann, S., & Jacomy, M. (2009, March). Gephi: an open source software for exploring and manipulating networks. In *Third international AAAI conference on weblogs and social media*.
- Jin, B. (2018). A Multidimensional Analysis of RA Discussion Sections in the Field of Chemical Engineering. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, 61(3), 242-256.
- Nini, A. (2014). *Multidimensional Analysis Tagger 1.2 - Manual*. Retrieved from: <http://sites.google.com/site/multidimensionaltagger>
- Thompson, P., Hunston, S., Murakami, A., & Vajn, D. (2017). Multi-Dimensional Analysis, text constellations, and interdisciplinary discourse. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 22(2), 153-186.

## Vocalic variation in Standard English spoken by Trinidadian professionals

Michael Westphal (University of Münster, Germany), Ka Man Lau (University of Münster, Germany), Johanna Hartmann (University of Münster, Germany), Philipp Meer (University of Münster, Germany), Dagmar Deuber (University of Münster, Germany)

Emerging standard varieties, such as Trinidadian English, often exhibit a considerable extent of variation, as they are not fully codified. The International Corpus of English (ICE) provides an excellent tool to describe Standard Englishes in close detail on all levels of linguistic variation. However, most ICE-based research has focused on morpho-syntax (e.g. Hundt & Gut 2012), while the interest in ICE corpora for phonetic research has only intensified recently (e.g. Gut & Fuchs 2017).

This paper investigates vocalic variation in one emerging standard variety of English from the Caribbean, Trinidadian English, using data from the ICE Trinidad & Tobago. The study focusses on the educated English spoken by Trinidadian professionals (11 lecturers, 10 politicians, 8 lawyers) in formal contexts (unscripted speeches, non-broadcast talks, interviews, parliamentary debates, and legal presentations). This selection of speakers provides a solid basis for a thorough account of the current standard of spoken Trinidadian English that goes beyond previous descriptions, which are either impressionistic (Youssef & James 2004), are based on sociolinguistic interviews (Leung 2012), or focus on very specific contexts (Wilson 2014). The focus of the present study lies particularly on the variability in Standard Trinidadian English.

Preliminary results show that some variables are highly stable, while others exhibit salient intra- and interspeaker variation: for example, FACE and GOAT are almost categorically realized as monophthongs ([e:] and [o:]), while STRUT varies saliently between a central and a backed raised realization ([ʌ] and [ɔ]). MOUTH exhibits salient variability between [ʌʊ], [oʊ], and [ɔʊ]. BATH is shown to vary between TRAP [a] and START [ɑ].

We interpret this variability in the standard with regard to the complex variation between English and Creole, typical of anglophone speech communities in the Caribbean: the distinction between Creole features that are integrated into the standard and those that tend to be avoided is not categorical but fluid. This paper also discusses the benefits and problems of using ICE corpora for phonetic analyses: on the one hand, they offer authentic contexts to study the phonetics of Standard Englishes but on the other hand, the limited data of each speaker may potentially restrict an in-depth analysis.

## References

- Gut, Ulrike & Robert Fuchs. 2017. Exploring speaker fluency with phonologically annotated ICE corpora. *World Englishes* 36(3). 387-403.
- Hundt, Marianne & Ulrike Gut (eds.). 2012. *Mapping Unity and Diversity World-Wide: Corpus-Based Studies of New Englishes*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Leung, Glenda. 2012. *A Synchronic Sociophonetic Study of Monophthongs in Trinidadian English*. Freiburg: FreiDok, <https://www.freidok.uni-freiburg.de/data/9015>. (20 March 2019.)
- Wilson, Guyanne. 2014. *The Sociolinguistics of Singing: Dialect and Style in Classical Choral Singing in Trinidad*. Münster: Mosenstein.
- Youssef, Valerie & Winford James. 2004. The creoles of Trinidad and Tobago: Phonology. In Bernd Kortmann & Edgar Schneider (eds.), *A Handbook of Varieties of English. Volume 1: Phonology*, 508-524. Berlin: de Gruyter.

# **“The Caribbean Community *has* endorsed”: Agreement with collective nouns in Caribbean Englishes**

Guyanne Wilson (Ruhr Universität, Bochum)

In English, collective nouns such as *government* and *family* exhibit both singular and plural agreement, depending on whether the noun is interpreted as describing a single entity or a collection of several individuals. This variable has been recorded both as an example of regional variation, with American English using more singular agreement than British English, and of long term language change, with a move from plural agreement towards singular agreement being observed in British English (Levin 2006).

Hundt (2006) examines Philippines and Singaporean English, comparing them first to each other, and then to inner circle varieties. In addition to differences between the varieties, she finds that Philippines English behaves similarly to American English, its parent variety, but that Singaporean English also appears to be developing in the direction of American English, rather than its British English parent variety. She also reports differences between spoken and written registers. However, this variable has not been widely examined in other outer circle Englishes.

This study looks at grammatical and pronominal agreement with collective nouns in three Caribbean Englishes: Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica. It makes use of the Jamaican and Trinidad and Tobago components of the International Corpus of English, as well as a complementary 250,000-word corpus of Grenadian English. It compares the Caribbean varieties first with one another and then to inner circle Englishes, thereby interrogating the relationship between these peripheral varieties and central varieties by examining whether the Caribbean varieties align more with British English, which has historically been the dominant variety in the region, or American English, which has been shown to exercise increased influence on Caribbean Englishes (Hackert and Deuber 2015). It also compares Caribbean Englishes to the South East Asian Englishes in Hundt’s (2006 ) study. Furthermore, it examines whether there are significant stylistic differences between spoken and written registers, and the influence of specific lexical items on the use singular or plural agreement is tested.

Initial results suggest that, in terms of grammatical agreement, Caribbean Englishes use more singular agreement, but pronominal agreement is far more variable. It remains unclear, however, whether this is due to Caribbean Englishes aligning themselves with American English, or substratal effects of Caribbean Creoles.

The study has implications for the understanding of the relationship between inner and outer circle varieties, as well as among outer circle varieties themselves, particularly with regard to discussions of shared features, varioversals, and aroversals.

## **References**

- Hackert, Stephanie, & Dagmar Deuber. 2015. American influence on written Caribbean English: A diachronic analysis of newspaper reportage in the Bahamas and in Trinidad and Tobago. In Peter Collins (ed.), *Grammatical Change in English World-Wide*, 389-410. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Hundt, Marianne. 2006. The Committee Has/Have Decided...: On Concord Patterns with Collective Nouns in Inner- and Outer-Circle Varieties of English. *Journal of English Linguistics* 34(3). 206–232.



Levin, Magnus. 2006. Collective nouns and language change. *English Language & Linguistics* 10(2). 321-343.

## English in the GDR and GDR English

Göran Wolf (Georg-August-Universität, Germany)

Without doubt, Russian was given more emphasis in the educational system of the former GDR. However, there is sufficient evidence that English still played a very prominent role in everyday life. As language of international culture and communication, English influenced the linguistic ecology of the GDR as it did elsewhere. This influence, for instance, resulted in a large set of English-based loanwords. Various studies have analysed the English-derived lexicon of GDR German (e.g. Kristensson 1977 or Lehnert 1986) and it even seems that the loanwords from English can be characterised as 'GDR-specific' or 'GDR-based', a refined typology of the more general 'GDR-related' (cf. Schröder & Fix 1997).

One of the questions that arise from the above is whether it is also possible to discern a foreign-language variety of English peculiar to the former GDR? If so, a more interesting question seems to be how GDR English – if this nomenclature is permitted – can be accessed almost three decades after the collapse of that country?

Therefore, the paper will show that authentic, i.e. unaltered, GDR English can be found. It is, for instance, conserved in the songs of the late 1980s alternative music scene of the former GDR. Presenting a selection of (web-derived) sample texts and analyses that relate to phonological, morphological, syntactical and lexical features in them, this paper is able to demonstrate

- 1) that GDR English, unsurprisingly, shows interference from German;
- 2) that GDR English exhibits features that may be described as *ambiguous*; and
- 3) that this language-internal ambiguity appears to reflect the equivocal relationship between the GDR and the English language (cf. Jarausach 2006 or Berger & LaPorte 2010).

Although it is presently unclear whether other material of GDR English is available or accessible, the paper argues in favour of a corpus of GDR English because further studies will provide an insight into the mechanisms that made English penetrate a linguistic system in which, by political fiat, the language was accepted, but not desired.

### References

- Berger, Stefan & Norman LaPorte 2010. *Friendly Enemies. Britain and the GDR, 1949-1990*. New York and London: Berghahn Books.
- Jarausach, Konrad H. 2006. Die USA und die DDR. Vorüberlegungen zu einer asymmetrischen Beziehungsgeschichte. In Uta A. Balbier & Christiane Rösch (eds), *Umworbener Klassenfeind. Das Verhältnis der DDR zu den USA*, 26-31. Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag.
- Kristensson, Göran 1977. *Angloamerikanische Einflüsse in DDR-Zeitungstexten unter Berücksichtigung semantischer, pragmatischer, gesellschaftlich-ideologischer, entlehnungsprozessualer und quantitativer Aspekte*. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell.
- Lehnert, Martin 1986. The Anglo-American influence on the language of the German Democratic Republic. In Wolfgang Viereck and Wolf-Dietrich Bald (eds.) *English in Contact with Other Languages. Studies in Honour of Broder Carstensen on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, pp. 129-157.
- Schröder, Marianne & Ulla Fix 1997. *Allgemeinwortschatz der DDR-Bürger*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter.

# The grammaticalisation of pronominal *man* in contemporary grime lyrics

Roman-Henrik Zingel (Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg, Germany)

This paper focusses on the use of pronominal *man* in grime, a popular genre of mostly London-based rap. My corpus consists of 500 songs totalling 178,133 words. It will be shown that the language used in the recordings shares various features with the emerging variety of Multicultural London English (MLE; cf. Cheshire et al. 2011). Uses of *man* as a personal pronoun are especially salient:

(1) Man (1st Sg) talk slang / So the feds can't work out what I just said to a man (n)

In the corpus, more than 800 such examples were found, including singular, plural and indefinite pronouns. The absolute and relative frequencies of pronominal *man* by far exceed those recorded in previous studies on the feature in MLE (Cheshire 2013). It will be seen that this distribution is grounded in the lyrical content of the songs and the identity construction of the rappers. This claim will be supported by qualitative observations and diverging text frequencies in thematic sub-corpora.

The central part of this study finds that every principle of grammaticalisation proposed by Hopper (1991) applies to *man*: *layering*, *divergence*, *specialization*, *persistence* and *de-categorialization*. While co-existing with standard personal pronouns (layering), *man* is serving as a model of language change processes in its noun form, such as new alternative plural forms, e.g. *-dem* suffixation (cf. *girdem*, *boydem*, *dogdem*). Regarding specialization, up to 17% of pronominal references in the corpus make use of *man* (3rd Ps, both in singular and plural). The study will also show that *man* retains several of its nominal properties, both semantical (e.g. +male) and morphological (e.g. plural; possessive form *man's*). While characteristics of all five principles are found, it is argued that the observed process of grammaticalisation is still in its initial stages.

Broader issues regarding the feature will be addressed with reference to identity constructions by the artists in the context of sociolinguistics of performance (cf. Bell & Gibson 2011). I am arguing that *man* serves as an adequate alternative to standard pronouns especially in the context of grime lyrics. In a final step, I will present a model depicting these aspects of pronominal *man* that tries to capture referents at all potential levels: personas and addressees in the songs, the audience and the external/outside world.

## References

- Bell, Allan & Andy Gibson. 2011. Staging language: An introduction to the sociolinguistics of performance. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 15(5). 555–572.
- Cheshire, Jenny. 2013. Grammaticalisation in social context: The emergence of a new English pronoun. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 17(5). 608–633.
- Cheshire, Jenny, Paul Kerswill, Sue Fox & Eiving Torgersen. 2011. Contact, the feature pool and the speech community: The emergence of Multicultural London English. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 15(2). 151–196.
- Hopper, Paul J. 1991. On Some Principles of Grammaticalization. In Bernd Heine & Elizabeth Traugott (eds.), *Approaches to grammaticalization: Volume 1: Focus on theoretical and methodological issues* (Typological studies in language v. 19, 1), 17–36. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.