

Ongoing grammatical change and the new Englishes: Towards a set of corpora of English use in the expanding circle

Historical linguistics and global English use group:

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AIMS

This poster presents ongoing research that focuses on the expansion and diversification of English in the expanding circle. In current corpus linguistic thinking, such uses are understood under the notion of learner English. This project, informed by the recent insights in the sociolinguistics of globalization (Blommaert & Rampton 2011; Blommaert 2013), suggests that globalization has brought about changes to the role and status of English in many contexts, and that new approaches are needed to understand the diversity of English uses today.

BACKGROUND

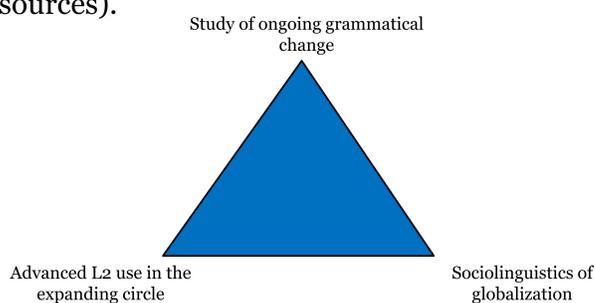
The recent (i.e. post-WWII or even post-Cold War) expansion of English has been approached from a range of perspectives:

- Considerable focus on the Outer Circle (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008);
- Schneider's Dynamic Model (2003) looks into the emergence of postcolonial Englishes;
- The dynamic model is "not well suited to grasp the vibrant developments in the expanding circle" (Schneider 2014: 9);
- Bridging the paradigm gap and questioning the divide between second-language and learner Englishes (Mukherjee & Hundt, eds. 2011);
- English as a lingua franca (Jenkins 2007; Seidlhofer 2011; Mauranen 2012) accounts for the new role and status of English.

OUR THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

We are not focusing on interlanguage phenomena (cf. the learner focus), nor are we focusing on the emergence of new varieties (cf. the study of postcolonial varieties).

Our theoretical and methodological toolbox consists of **triangulating** diachronic linguistics (*viz.* the methods from ongoing change), ELF studies (*viz.* advanced L2 use outside classroom setting), and the sociolinguistics of globalization (*viz.* re-thinking the canonized division of ENL-ESL-EFL and seeing language as a pool of resources).



Key research questions include:

- Compiling new balanced and representative corpus materials used as evidence;
- Accounting for the role of multilingual settings in shaping the core grammar of English (cf. Mair 2013);
- Testing the applicability of the methods in diachronic linguistics (Rissanen 2008) for the study of English in the expanding circle;
- Studying whether ongoing grammatical changes are accelerated or slowed down in new English uses.

OUR CORPUS WORK

We are currently compiling two 1m word corpora of English texts: The *Corpus of English in Sweden* (SWE-CE) and the *Corpus of English in Finland* (FIN-CE).

- The new corpora take into account the diversity of English uses and new emerging genres in the expanding circle (Table 1);
- These corpora should enable real time studies of how ongoing changes are adapted in the expanding circle;
- These corpora should enable comparisons with the existing corpora from which much of the evidence of the recent history of English is drawn (e.g. the Brown siblings);
- We use Sweden and Finland, two Nordic countries in which the role of English has undergone considerable changes (Leppänen et al. 2011; Bolton & Meierkord 2013), as a testing ground, and the sampling frame should ideally be repeatable elsewhere in the expanding circle.

Textual dimension	Business/civil admin.	Education	Media	Personal
Informational focus	Annual results publications	Academic prose (theses)		
	Annual results presentations (S)			
	Municipal webpages		On-line newspapers	
		Admin. e-mails	Organizational blogs	Professional blogs
Interactive focus				(Fiction)
				Personal blogs
		Student interaction		Tweets
			Media interviews (S)	Fan Fiction
			Face-to-face interv. (S)	

Table 1. The textual sampling frame for SWE-CE/FIN-CE

OUR SAMPLING CRITERIA

The two corpora are collected keeping in mind the following criteria:

- The materials are chronologically limited for the first half of the 2010s;
- The texts included should be available from public sources and be free from native-speaker language editing;
- The informants must be identifiable as Swedes or Finns either working and/or living in these two countries;
- The materials are divided into four domains of use (based on Appadurai's (1996) dimensions of global flows);
- The materials cover a continuum of texts, and textual variation is based on the purpose of texts (based on Biber's 1988: 104-108 dimension of informative vs. interactive texts)

ILLUSTRATIONS OF CASE STUDIES

A. Changes which contain a variable:

(I) The increase of the conjunctive uses (1) of ANY/EACH/EVERY + TIME at the expense of diachronically earlier adverbial uses (2) (cf. Brinton 2007; Laitinen forthcoming)

- 1) **Anytime** you enter the main market area, you end up in the folkvimmel. (SWE-CE, blog text)

- 2) An application for a Lab-Grad appointment may be submitted at **any time** during the year and an appointment may commence at **any time**. (FROWN H28)

Table 2 illustrates the ongoing change in the four Brown corpora (AmE: 39->60, BrE: 41->57) and indicates that the incoming form tends to be selected in the expanding circle (63%).

	Conj % (freq.)	Adv/PP/Comp. (freq.)	Total % (freq.)
Brown	39 (22)	61 (35)	100 (57)
LOB	41 (19)	59 (27)	100 (46)
Frown	60 (26)	40 (17)	100 (43)
F-LOB	57 (24)	43 (18)	100 (42)
ICLE	35 (66)	65 (121)	100 (187)
SWE/FIN-CE	63 (40)	37 (23)	100 (63)

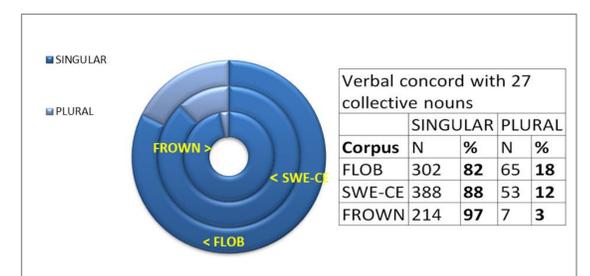
Table 2. Ongoing grammatical change in the inner circle and the expanding circle corpora (n=438)

(II) Studying the diachronic variability of verbal and pronominal agreement patterns of collective nouns (Lakaw, ongoing doctoral work).

- 3) However, deciding whether **the public is** rational or not might simply be the wrong question to ask. (SWE-CE, academic prose)

- 4) If **the public are** stripped of their main concern for warfare, why should it still be rational for them to care where their military is used... (SWE-CE, academic prose)

Figure 1. Verbal agreement of 27 collective nouns in 3 corpora



B. Changes of discourse frequency:

So-called subjective progressives (ALWAYS-type adverbials + progressive) seem to be slowly increasing in L1 varieties (cf. Smitterberg 2005; Kranich 2008; Laitinen & Levin forthcoming; Levin in preparation).

- 5) **I'm always starving** when I get home after school. (SWE-CE, blog text)
- 6) **I'm forever thinking** of ways to give design that extra kick, using unlikely sources. (COHA; Fiction)

Figure 2. Frequencies of ALWAYS-progressives per 1m words

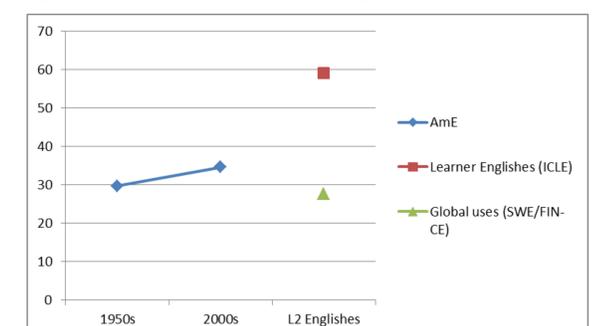


Figure 2 illustrates the recent increase in COHA and shows the frequencies in the new Englishes.

REFERENCES: SEE THE HANDOUT