General assessment guidelines for 2163 World Englishes

Syllabus texts

Books

Melchers, Gunnel & Philip Shaw (2019) [3rd edition] *World Englishes*. London & New York: Routledge.

Articles (available in Canvas)

Aijmer, Karin (2018) 'Intensification with very, really and so in selected varieties of English', in S. Hoffmann, A. Sand, S. Arndt-Lappe & L.M. Dillmann (eds) *Corpora and Lexis*. Leiden/Boston: Brill|Rodopi. Pp. 106-139.

Collins, P. 2021. Cultural keywords in World Englishes: A GloWbE-based study. *ICAME Journal* 45. Pp. 5-35.

Collins. P. 2023. Modals and Quasi-Modals in English World-Wide. *Journal of English Linguistics* 51:3. Pp. 265-293.

Davies, M. & R. Fuchs. 2015. Expanding horizons in the study of World Englishes with the 1.9 billion word Global Web-based English Corpus (GloWbE). *English World-Wide: A Journal of Varieties of English* 36:1. Pp. 1-28.

Gonçalves, B., L. Loureiro-Porto, J. J. Ramasco & D. Sánchez. 2017. 'The fall of the empire: The Americanization of English'. MS.

Kytö, M. 2019. English in North America. In D. Schreier, M. Hundt, and E.W. Schneider (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of World Englishes*. Cambridge: CUP. Sections 8.4-8.5.

Lange, C. 2019. English in South Asia. In D. Schreier, M. Hundt, and E.W. Schneider (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of World Englishes*. Cambridge: CUP. Sections 11.4-11.6

Lange, Claudia & Sven Leuckert (2020) *Corpus Linguistics for World Englishes.* London / New York: Routledge. Chapter 6.

Schneider, Edgar W. (2017). 'Models of English in the World'. In Filppula, Markku; Klemola, Juhani; Sharma, Devyani (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of World Englishes*. Oxford: OUP. 24 pages.

Tottie, Gunnel. (2009). 'How different are American and British English grammar? And how are they different?', in G. Rohdenburg & J. Schlüter (eds), One Language, Two Grammars? Cambridge: CUP. Pp. 341-363.

The exam (term paper) tests the following learning outcomes as specified in the course descriptions:

ENG2163 (https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ilos/ENG2163/)
After completing this course you will:

- know about the differences and similarities between varieties of English around the world;
- be able to extract relevant linguistic data from the Global Web-Based English (GloWbE) Corpus;
- be able to describe and analyse those data from a contrastive perspective.

The students have also been made aware of the university's policy regarding plagiarism and cheating (including the use of AI) both in the seminars and through Canvas in the Term Paper Guidelines.

Assessment guidelines:
A term paper tests the candidate's knowledge of the chosen topic (see below) and of the syllabus, as well as the degree to which the candidate is able to apply relevant theory / background literature (primarily from syllabus texts) to concrete (empirical) linguistic data. The candidates have been instructed to extract their own data from the Corpus of Global Web-based English (GloWbE). The best papers are not merely descriptive, but engage in academic discussion of the topic treated. In the evaluation, both content and language are taken into account. The required length is around 10 standard pages.

Although it is a corpus study, the candidates should not be judged too harshly if their study lacks somewhat in terms of CL methods and techniques, as they have not necessarily had corpus linguistic training beyond this course (which is not primarily a CL course). However, some basic CL skills are expected (e.g. discussing frequencies and interpretation of concordance lines).

Term paper topics (students should choose one of the following):

Corpus study 1 – Intensifiers in varieties of English

Aijmer (2018) investigates three intensifiers (*very*, *really* and *so*) followed by an adjective in spoken data from four different varieties of English: British English, New Zealand English, Singapore English and American English. In her study, she demonstrates that the frequency and distribution of the intensifiers differ across the varieties. In addition, she finds that the adjectives also differ somewhat according to intensifier and variety.

Carry out a similar study on the basis of written web-based data in the Corpus of Global Web-Based English (Davies 2013). Start by using the following search strings in the **Chart function**: **very ADJ**, **really ADJ** and **so ADJ**. Then comment on the frequency and distribution of the intensifiers + ADJ in the four varieties that Aijmer investigated. Discuss to what extent your results (from the written mode) reflect Aijmer's findings (from the spoken mode).

Following this, choose **one inner circle** and **one outer circle variety** and create a sample of 100 concordance lines of **really ADJ** from each variety and compare and discuss the types of adjectives used in the first 50 lines in the sample in each of the two varieties.

Your term paper should be written as an academic paper, including an introduction presenting the aims of the study, a short background section with reference to Aijmer's (2018) study, as well as a section describing the corpus, before the body of the study (including an overview, analysis and a discussion of the data). Remember to include examples from the corpus to accompany your discussion/investigation. After the conclusion, include a list of references at the end.

References

Aijmer, K. 2018. Intensification with *very*, *really* and *so* in selected varieties of English. In S. Hoffmann, A. Sand, S. Arndt-Lappe and L.M. Dillmann (eds), *Corpora and Lexis*. Leiden / Boston: Brill | Rodopi. 106-139.

Davies, M. (2013). *Corpus of Global Web-Based English*. Available online at https://www.english-corpora.org/glowbe/.

Corpus study 2 – Lexis and spelling: Are Canadian English, Indian English and New Zealand English closer to British English or American English?

> "Some Canadians abhor Americanisms as vulgar and cling desperately to British usage.; others see British usage as obsolete or pretentious and happily adopt the American standard" (Boberg 2010: 40). "British influence has gradually ceded to American" (Melchers et al 2019: 87).
>
> "The origins of South Asian English lies in Britain" (Crystal 2003: 47).
>
> "Towards the end of the eighteenth century the continuing process of British world exploration established the English language in the southern hemisphere" (Crystal 2003: 40).

Historically, and as seen in the quotations above, both Indian and New Zealand English have their roots in the British variant of English, while Canadian English can be said to have strong ties to both British and American English. In recent years, we have arguably witnessed an Americanization of English (e.g. Gonçalves et al. 2017). With this in mind, carry out a corpus study where you focus on Canadian, Indian and New Zealand English (vocabulary and spelling) and their closeness to either British or American English. Your paper should include observations on frequency of occurrence and an analysis of concordance lines in the Canadian, Indian and New Zealand sections of the Corpus of Global Web-Based English (GloWbE; Davies 2013). Some hints as to what you may want to include in your study:

- **Spelling**: Focus on the following BrE vs. AmE spelling conventions: <*ou*> vs. <*o*> and <*ll*> vs. <*l*>. Use the Chart function and choose, and search for, a set of three words representing each of the two conventions from the spelling word list in Gonçalves et al. (2017: 14-16). (Remember that by using CAPITAL LETTERS in your search words, you will include all forms of the lemma. Discuss your findings and visualise them in a table/chart.
- **Vocabulary**: Use the following set of three BrE vs. AmE word pairs and search for them separately in the CA, IN and NZ sections of GloWbE: **rubbish** vs. **garbage**, **torch** vs. **flashlight**, **boot** vs. **trunk**. Use the Chart function and report on both raw and normalised frequencies (per 1,000,000 words) of the instances. Then create a sample of 100 for each word in each variety and study the top 20 occurrences. Discuss to what extent all instances of these words are relevant to the comparison and give reasons (and exemplify) why (not)?

- Based on your investigation (of both spelling and vocabulary), discuss to what degree the material in GloWbE-CA, GloWbE-IN and GloWbE-NZ reflects a closeness to present-day British or American English.

Your term paper should be written as an academic paper, including an introduction presenting the aims of the study, a short background section with reference to Gonçalves et al.'s (2017) study, as well as a section describing the corpus, before the body of the study (including an overview, analysis and a discussion of the data). Remember to include examples from the corpus to accompany your discussion/investigation. After the conclusion, include a list of references at the end.

References

Boberg, C. 2010. *The English Language in Canada: Status, History and Comparative Analysis*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. 2003 [2nd ed.]. *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge: CUP.

Davies, M. (2013). *Corpus of Global Web-Based English*. Available online at https://www.english-corpora.org/glowbe/.

Gonçalves, B., L. Loureiro-Porto, J.J. Ramasco and D Sánchez. 2017. "The fall of the Empire: The Americanization of English". MS. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318207547_The_Fall_of_the_Empire_The_Americanization_of_English [October 2024].

Corpus study 3 – The progressive aspect in varieties of English (e.g. the use of stative/mental/private verbs in the progressive, e.g. *describe, own, hear, know*)

Drawing on syllabus texts, formulate your own research question(s) to investigate the use of the progressive aspect in 2-4 varieties of English. The material should be culled from the Corpus of Global Web-Based English (Davies 2013). Remember to use a sample in the more qualitative (detailed) part of the study.

Your term paper should be written as an academic paper, including an introduction presenting the aims of the study, a short section with reference to background literature, as well as a section describing the corpus, before the body of the study (including an overview, analysis and a discussion of the data). Remember to include examples from the corpus to accompany your discussion/investigation. After the conclusion, include a list of references at the end.

References

Davies, M. (2013). *Corpus of Global Web-Based English*. Available online at https://www.english-corpora.org/glowbe/.

Assessment

Grades are awarded according to the national qualitative descriptions of letter grades (https://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/grading-system/index.html):

Symbol	Description	General, qualitative description of evaluation criteria
A	Excellent	An excellent performance, clearly outstanding. The candidate demonstrates excellent judgement and a high degree of independent thinking.
B	Very good	A very good performance. The candidate demonstrates sound judgement and a very good degree of independent thinking.
C	Good	A good performance in most areas. The candidate demonstrates a reasonable degree of judgement and independent thinking in the most important areas.
D	Satisfactory	A satisfactory performance, but with significant shortcomings. The candidate demonstrates a limited degree of judgement and independent thinking.
E	Sufficient	A performance that meets the minimum criteria, but no more. The candidate demonstrates a very limited degree of judgement and independent thinking.
F	Fail	A performance that does not meet the minimum academic criteria. The candidate demonstrates an absence of both judgement and independent thinking.