

Corpus linguistics and linguistic innovations in non-native Englishes

Convenors: Sandra C. Deshors (Las Cruces), Sandra Götz (Giessen) & Samantha Laporte (Louvain-la-Neuve)

In line with the current effort of corpus linguists to reduce the existing paradigm gap between EFL (i.e., foreign English variants) and ESL (i.e., indigenized English varieties), this workshop focuses on the investigation of linguistic innovations across the two non-native English variants. Linguistic innovations have been shown to characterize individual non-native variants across several linguistic domains (e.g. phonology, semantics, morpho-syntax). Indian English, for instance, yields some of its most creative forms and structures on the lexico-grammatical level in speakers' innovative uses of prepositional verbs, ditransitive verbs and light-verb constructions (Mukherjee & Hoffmann 2006; Mukherjee 2010). While identifying such kinds of innovations and distinguishing between errors and innovations is essential to understand if and how New Varieties develop new conventions (Van Rooy 2011), there is often an indeterminacy between what counts as an innovation and what is regarded as an error (Bamgbose 1998). Prevailing theoretical frameworks, such as Kachru's (2006) Three Circles model, have separated EFL and ESL as two distinct variants, *norm-dependent* and *norm-developing*, respectively. With this distinction, however, linguistic deviations in EFL, labeled as errors, tend to coincide with those labeled as innovations in ESL (Edwards 2014).

Recent (corpus) studies are beginning to challenge this dividing line between EFL and ESL and the general view that innovations and errors should be divided by institutional status alone (Bruthiaux 2003, Deshors 2014, Edwards 2014, Gilquin 2011, Laporte 2012, Li & Mahboob 2012). By (i) recognizing shared innovations across the EFL and ESL variants and (ii) showing how English plays an increasing role in identity construction and transcends its typical EFL functions, those studies present EFL users as creative speakers. They also raise the question of the suitability of theoretical frameworks based on history and geographical legacy to accommodate discussions of language varieties (Bruthiaux 2003, Li & Mahboob 2012).

In this context, this workshop provides a meeting ground for scholars seeking to bring new methodological, empirical and theoretical insights to innovations in non-native Englishes. We particularly welcome

- (i) corpus-based case studies exemplifying the lexical/morphological/syntactic creativity of EFL and ESL speakers,
- (ii) papers seeking to explore the methodological issues related to the corpus-based study of innovations and,
- (iii) papers seeking to go beyond the prevailing theoretical models.

Abstracts for this workshop should be 400 to 500 words long (excluding references). They should be submitted by e-mail to linguisticinnovations2015@gmail.com by 1st February 2015. Notification of acceptance will be sent out in late February.

References

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