



► New Tendencies in the Use of English

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History of the English Language

- ▶ Old English: 450 CE to 1150 CE
- ▶ Middle English: 1150 CE to 1500 CE
- ▶ Early Modern English: 1500 CE to 1700 CE
- ▶ Modern English: 1700 CE to Today

English Corpora

- ▶ “Christian Mair at Freiburg was the first to construct parallel corpora of written British and American English spanning four decades in the twentieth century (the *LOB/FLOB* and *Brown/Frown* corpora). These are excellent resources enabling linguists to research changes in written English over 30 years.” (Aarts et al. 2010)
- ▶ American English: Brown (1961) Frown (1992)
- ▶ British English: LOB (1961), FLOB (1991)
- ▶ Survey of English Use
- ▶ International Corpus of English (the British variant known as ICE-GB)
- ▶ *London-Lund Corpus* (dating from the late 1950s to early 1970s)
- ▶ *Diachronic Corpus of present-Day spoken English*

| <i>Name of corpus</i> | <i>American or British English</i> | <i>Date of data collected</i> | <i>Spoken or written</i> | <i>Corpus size and design</i> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| LOB Corpus | BrE | 1961 | Written | Each corpus contains approx. a million words, in 500 text samples from 15 different genres. The four corpora are built according to the same design and sampling method. |
| Brown Corpus | AmE | 1961 | Written | |
| FLOB Corpus | BrE | 1991 | Written | |
| Frown Corpus | AmE | 1992 | Written | |
| SEU-mini-sp | BrE | 1959-1965 | Spoken | Each (sub)corpus contains approx. 80,000 words from a comparable and balanced range of spoken genres. |
| ICE-GB-mini-sp | BrE | 1990-1992 | Spoken | |

Getting More Progressive

| Press | 1961 | 1991/92 | % rise from 1961 |
|--------------------------------|------|---------|------------------|
| British English (LOB/ FLOB) | 606 | 716 | +18.2% |
| American English (Brown/Frown) | 593 | 663 | +11.8% |

Diachronic Corpus of present-Day spoken English

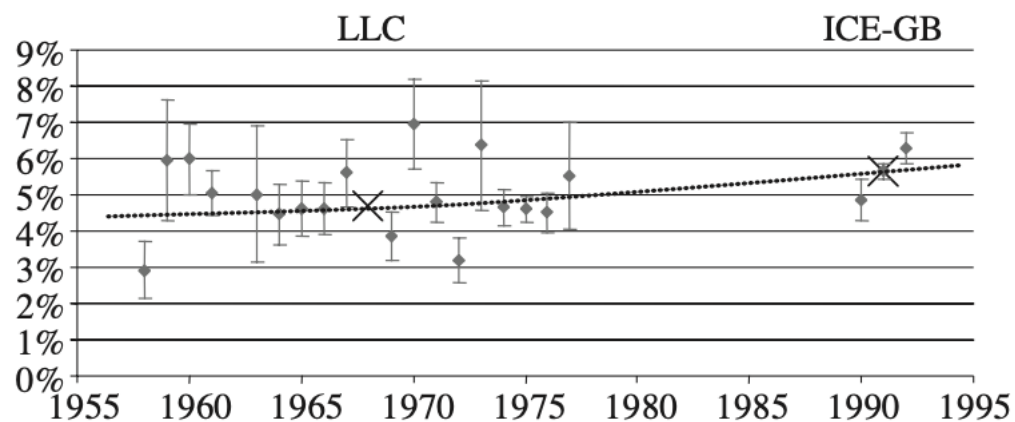


Figure 5: Charting the Rise in Spoken Progressive Use in English
Using DCPSE

Shall and Ought?

Table 4. Frequencies of modals in the four written corpora (including negative forms)

| | British English | | Log likhd | Diff % | | American English | | Log likhd | Diff % |
|---------------|-----------------|-------|-----------|--------|---------------|------------------|-------|-----------|--------|
| | LOB | FLOB | | | | Brown | Frown | | |
| <i>would</i> | 3028 | 2694 | 20.4 | -11.0 | <i>would</i> | 3053 | 2868 | 5.6 | -6.1 |
| <i>will</i> | 2798 | 2723 | 1.2 | -2.7 | <i>will</i> | 2702 | 2402 | 17.3 | -11.1 |
| <i>can</i> | 1997 | 2041 | 0.4 | +2.2 | <i>can</i> | 2193 | 2160 | 0.2 | -1.5 |
| <i>could</i> | 1740 | 1782 | 2.4 | +2.4 | <i>could</i> | 1776 | 1655 | 4.1 | -6.8 |
| <i>may</i> | 1333 | 1101 | 22.8 | -17.4 | <i>may</i> | 1298 | 878 | 81.1 | -32.4 |
| <i>should</i> | 1301 | 1147 | 10.1 | -11.8 | <i>should</i> | 910 | 787 | 8.8 | -13.5 |
| <i>must</i> | 1147 | 814 | 57.7 | -29.0 | <i>must</i> | 1018 | 668 | 72.8 | -34.4 |
| <i>might</i> | 777 | 660 | 9.9 | -15.1 | <i>might</i> | 635 | 635 | 0.7 | -4.5 |
| <i>shall</i> | 355 | 200 | 44.3 | -43.7 | <i>shall</i> | 267 | 150 | 33.1 | -43.8 |
| <i>ought</i> | 104 | 58 | 13.4 | -44.2 | <i>ought</i> | 70 | 49 | 3.7 | -30.0 |
| <i>need</i> | 78 | 44 | 9.8 | -43.6 | <i>need</i> | 40 | 35 | 0.3 | -12.5 |
| Total | 14667 | 13272 | 73.6 | -9.5 | Total | 13962 | 12287 | 68.0 | -12.2 |

Table 6. Comparison of SEU-mini-sp and ICE-GB-mini-sp: modals in spoken BrE (provisional figures)

| | SEU-mini-sp | ICE-GB-mini-sp | Log likhd | Difference (%) |
|---------------|--------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| <i>would</i> | 415 (5188) | 271 (3388) | 30.5 | -34.7 |
| <i>will</i> | 248 (3100) | 307 (3838) | 6.3 | +23.8 |
| <i>can</i> | 252 (3150) | 295 (3688) | 3.4 | +17.1 |
| <i>could</i> | 145 (1813) | 83 (1038) | 17.1 | -42.8 |
| <i>may</i> | 86 (1075) | 36 (450) | 17.5 | -54.1 |
| <i>should</i> | 100 (1250) | 84 (1050) | 1.6 | -17.3 |
| <i>must</i> | 87 (1088) | 35 (438) | 24.3 | -60.7 |
| <i>might</i> | 56 (700) | 50 (625) | 0.3 | -10.7 |
| <i>shall</i> | 26 (325) | 17 (213) | 1.9 | -34.6 |
| <i>ought</i> | 20 (250) | 9 (113) | 4.3 | -55.0 |
| <i>need</i> | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 1435 (17938) | 1187 (14838) | 23.5 | -17.3 |

Note: The figures in parenthesis show frequency per million words, and are therefore comparable to the figures for the written corpora given in Table 4.

Passive 'Get'

- (a) *onset of possession*: Next day it's the only way to **get** a ticket. (A06 937)
- (b) *stative possession*: You've **got** a perfect motive. (A0D 358)
- (c) *motion*: Without using any money, some of the escapees **got** as far as North Wales, Yorkshire, and Scotland. (A03 1009)
- (d) *permission*: You may not **get** to attend client meetings, but this depends on whether you were employed as an experienced but young professional or are a new entrant who is just beginning. (EVF 1759)
- (e) *causation*: Unfortunately, it is often difficult to **get** agents to attend these productions. (A06 1467)
- (f) *obligation*: You've **got to** look at evidence, that's what you've **got to** do! (A0D 2317)
- (g) *inchoative*: Sometimes students **get** anxious about this, and believe they are not making audience contact early enough. (A06 1394)
- (h) *passive*: Well, we **got** caught, of course, by this very Mr. Snead. (A06 924)

(Fleisher 2006)

Grammatical Rules

- ▶ Start sentences with a conjunction. But how is that allowed?
- ▶ End sentences with prepositions, if you want to.
- ▶ To boldly go and split infinitives.
- ▶ The singular ‘they/their/them’ replacing gender specific pronouns.





- ▶ Sofa → Couch
- ▶ Parlor → Living room
- ▶ Supper → Dinner

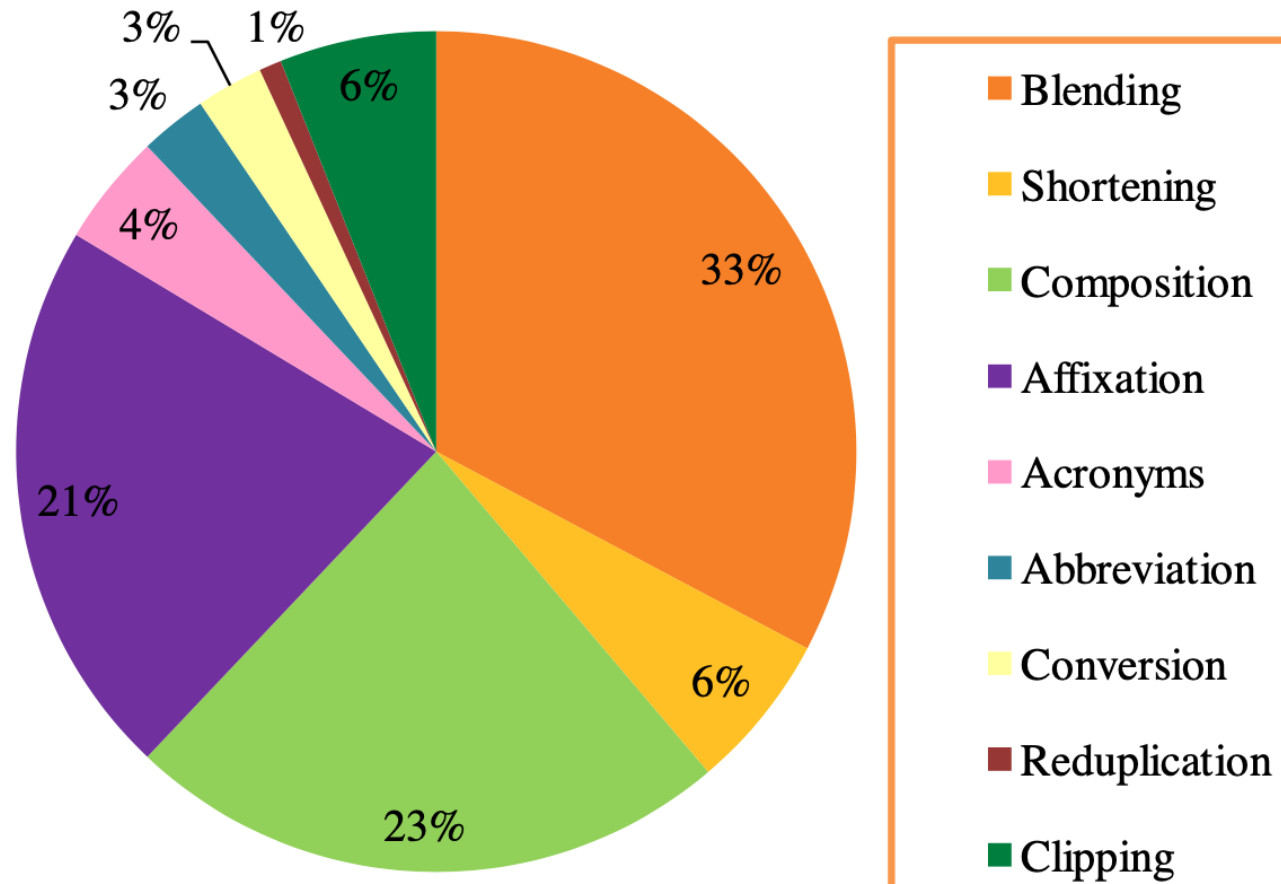
How do these changes come about?

- ▶ “As the internet has become a public device and a means of communication available everywhere, English spelling, vocabularies, pronunciation, and grammar have changed as well.” (Abbas)
 - ▶ The Internet
 - ▶ Technology
 - ▶ Social Media
 - ▶ Texting/Electronic Communication
 - ▶ English as a Global Language

Neologisms

- ▶ “There are various definitions of neologism in different dictionaries and books. The most general is a new word or phrase in the language or already existing word that acquires a completely new meaning and further is used as a new coinage. (Gontsarova 2013)
 - ▶ Affixation - contactless
 - ▶ Compounding - handbag
 - ▶ Clipping/Shortening - App, flu, phone
 - ▶ Blending - Spanglish
 - ▶ Acronyms - YOLO
 - ▶ Transferred Words - shushi, loco
 - ▶ Eponyms - Kleenex

Word formation types of 100 recent Neologisms





Lexical Changes

new words and words that
are “dying”.

- ▶ E-mail
- ▶ Chilax
- ▶ Staycation
- ▶ Google
- ▶ Selfie
- ▶ Bromance
- ▶ Contactless
- ▶ Band- Aid
- ▶ Betrothed
- ▶ Courting
- ▶ Salutations
- ▶ Whom

Lexical Changes

Acronyms

- ▶ YOLO
- ▶ GIF
- ▶ ASAP
- ▶ LOL
- ▶ OMG
- ▶ JK
- ▶ TMI
- ▶ IDK
- ▶ FYI
- ▶ AKA
- ▶ SMH
- ▶ TGIF
- ▶ TBH
- ▶ BTW
- ▶ NVM
- ▶ OMW
- ▶ TTYL
- ▶ IYKYK
- ▶ BFF

Semantics

- ▶ Mouse
- ▶ Keyboard
- ▶ Cloud
- ▶ Catfish
- ▶ Tablet
- ▶ Flex

“like”

- Before a quote
- Fill-in
- Modify adjectives and adverbs
- Modify approximations



Written English (informal)

- ▶ Lack of punctuation
- ▶ Spelling - boyz
- ▶ Capitalization - I was VERY upset
- ▶ Extra Letters - I'm soooooo happy for you!

Questions?

- ▶ What new words do you find yourself using?
- ▶ Any words that you have noticed that are “dying”?
- ▶ Do you think the usage of Modern English today leans more towards formal or informal?
- ▶ Do you believe that new tendencies are “ruining” the English Language?

References

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- ▶ Leech, G. (2004). Recent grammatical change in English: data, description, theory. In *Advances in corpus linguistics* (pp. 61-81). Brill Rodopi.