

## Levels of Americanization in world Englishes

Pam Peters & Adam Smith

A striking finding of Goncalves et al.'s 2018 study on Twitter data was that the impacts of American English on other varieties of world English were much more evident in non-anglophone countries such as China and Indonesia than in anglophone countries such as India and South Africa. This finding is further investigated in our Trilateral project (with researchers at Hamburg University and Fudan University), using large volumes of data from online newspapers in 8 countries, 4 anglophone and 4 non-anglophone ones. Our aim is to see whether the same difference in the levels of Americanization (use of identifiably American words and American spellings) can also be found in online news reporting in anglophone and non-anglophone countries, i.e. writing for mass circulation. We also explore the linguistic ecology and socioeconomic contexts of news reporting in each country, to see how far they can account for the differences.

This research is corpus-driven, helped by very large up-to-date corpora of 20 anglophone varieties of English in the NOW corpus, including the 4 we chose to investigate: Sri Lankan, South African, Singaporean, Philippine. For the 4 non-anglophone varieties in China, Germany, Indonesia, Namibia, we created 20 million-word reference corpora of newspaper data from the Factiva database. Preliminary analysis of the levels of Americanization in the non-anglophone varieties showed frequencies of American spellings and heteronyms running twice as high as the British in 2 or 3 of the non-anglophones – though not all, with Namibia standing apart. The research also indicates differential takeup of American features in anglophone varieties of English in the Indo-Pacific region, reflecting their respective post-colonial histories and linguistic ecologies.

Goncalves, B., Loureiro-Porto, L., Ramasco, J., & Sanchez, D. (2018) Mapping the Americanization of English in time and space. PLOS

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0197741>