

Reassessing Language Change: The Challenge of Real Time

Annual Report, August 2014 – December 2015

1. *Conferences, presentations, seminars*

Terttu Nevalainen, Tanja Säily and Turo Vartiainen. “Upcoming resource: An online Language Change Database”. International Society for the Linguistics of English (ISLE 3), Zürich, Switzerland, August 2014.

Terttu Nevalainen and Tanja Säily. “Englannin vaihtelu ja muutos – tutkimusta ja tutkimuksen tutkimusta” [Variation and change in English – research and research into research]. 4K: Kielen, kirjallisuuden ja kulttuurin kohtaamisia [lecture series on language, literature and culture], Helsinki, Finland, January 2015.

Terttu Nevalainen. “A corpus linguist’s perspective: Modelling changes in syntheticity and analyticity in English over time”. A round table discussion with Peter Trudgill on community size and language complexity, Helsinki, Finland, March 2015.

Tanja Säily and Turo Vartiainen. “Upcoming resource: An online Language Change Database”. A round table discussion with Peter Trudgill on community size and language complexity, Helsinki, Finland, March 2015.

Terttu Nevalainen, Tanja Säily and Turo Vartiainen. “Language Change Database: A new online resource”. Poster, 36th Annual Conference of the International Computer Archive of Modern and Medieval English (ICAME 36), Trier, Germany, May 2015.

Terttu Nevalainen, Tanja Säily and Turo Vartiainen. “Language Change Database: A new online resource”. Poster, From Data to Evidence: Big Data, Rich Data, Uncharted Data (d2e), Helsinki, Finland, October 2015.

Jefrey Lijffijt and Tanja Säily. “Adjusting *p*-values for heterogeneity in collocation analysis”. From Data to Evidence: Big Data, Rich Data, Uncharted Data (d2e), Helsinki, Finland, October 2015.

Tanja Säily and Jukka Suomela. “*types2*: Exploring word-frequency differences in corpora”. Software demonstration, From Data to Evidence: Big Data, Rich Data, Uncharted Data (d2e), Helsinki, Finland, October 2015.

Eetu Mäkelä, Terttu Nevalainen and Tanja Säily. “Developing an interface for historical sociolinguistics”. Software demonstration, From Data to Evidence: Big Data, Rich Data, Uncharted Data (d2e), Helsinki, Finland, October 2015.

Tanja Säily. "Neologisms in early English letters: The case of *-ity*". Seminar on neologisms, Helsinki, Finland, November 2015.

Terttu Nevalainen and Tanja Säily. "Digital diversity in language studies: Is multidisciplinary collaboration the key to analysing rich data?". Presentation, conference of Langnet, the Finnish Graduate School in Language Studies. Tampere, Finland, November 2015.

2. *Events organized*

Terttu Nevalainen, Tanja Säily and Turo Vartiainen. A round table discussion with Peter Trudgill and colleagues on community size and language complexity. Helsinki, Finland, 19 March 2015.

Terttu Nevalainen, Tanja Säily, Turo Vartiainen, Agata Dominowska, Emily Öhman. VARIENG research seminar on language change. A presentation about the database under construction, discussion and feedback from other researchers. Helsinki, Finland, 4 December 2014

3. *Teaching*

Project Work in English Philology (ENG381, 406717)

14.01.2015–29.04.2015, 5 credits

Terttu Nevalainen, Tanja Säily, Turo Vartiainen, Agata Dominowska, Emily Öhman

The course took place in the 3rd and 4th periods of the academic year 2014–2015. The students worked towards adding content from the chosen articles to the database, took part in planning the architecture of the database and designing the project website. The course participants also contributed to the planning and organization of the round-table discussion with collaborating scholars in March.

One of the outcomes of the course was also a blog post on Peter Trudgill's lecture, published on the department website:

<http://blogs.helsinki.fi/nykykielet/2015/04/13/dont-save-english-save-the-dying-languages/>

4. *Publications*

Terttu Nevalainen, Turo Vartiainen, Tanja Säily, Joonas Kesäniemi, Agata Dominowska and Emily Öhman. Forthcoming 2016. "Language Change Database: A new online resource". *ICAME Journal*.

Tanja Säily and Jukka Suomela. Forthcoming. "*types2*: Exploring word-frequency differences in corpora". *Proceedings of the d2e conference*.

Turo Vartiainen. 2016. "A constructionist approach to category change: Constraining factors in the adjectivization of participles". *Journal of English Linguistics* 44(1): 34–60.

Turo Vartiainen. Forthcoming 2016. "Nominal evaluations in Present-day English: A corpus-based study of the definiteness and syntactic distribution of subjective and objective NPs". *Folia Linguistica*.

5. *Database: progress*

In 2015, the database was gradually planned and expanded by gathering and processing data from research articles, most of them written by scholars at the University of Helsinki. A grammar model was also developed to later serve as one of the underlying conceptual frameworks of the database.

At the same time, the online LCD platform was constructed and developed. The graph model that we chose for data description is the resource description framework (RDF). The technology chosen for back-end data management is Callimachus, a framework aimed at building linked data applications.

By the end of 2015 the database consisted of ca. 160 complete entries stored in an Excel file. Out of those, 100 had been transferred to the online database. In addition to that, we prepared more than 100 Excel files with quantitative research results in the form of tables, which are to be included in the final version of the database.

6. *Website and questionnaire*

The official website of the Language Change Database was created and updated:

<http://www.helsinki.fi/lcd/>

In the spring and summer of 2015, a questionnaire was distributed via our website in order to collect opinions and suggestions about the current state of the database.