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| Low and Negligible Risk Research Project Description HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS |  |

### Purpose

* The Project Description is a mandatory component of submission of the Human Research Ethics Application (HREA) form. It is uploaded as part of your HREA through the UQ MyResearch system.
* The Project Description provides the background, rationale and methodological approach of a research project being submitted for ethics review.
* This template has been developed specifically to meet the needs of ethics review processes at UQ for Low and Negligible Risk (LNR) research. The information contained in this form and the HREA will assist reviewers in assessing the application against the principles outlined in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human* Research (2007, updated 2018), namely:
  + Research Merit and Integrity
  + Justice
  + Beneficence
  + Respect
* There is no need to duplicate information in the HREA into the Project Description or vice versa. It is recommended that you familiarise yourself with requirements of the MyResearch HREA so that information is not inadvertently duplicated in this Project Description. For example, for LNR research, information related consent, recruitment, risks and benefits is addressed in the HREA and does not need to be duplicated in the Project Description.
* To assist in completing this template, examples are provided of the type of information required in each section.
* In completing this form please:
  + Use plain/lay language, defining all technical terms and avoiding acronyms.
  + Keep to the section limits without altering font size (Calibri 11 pt) or margins (2.5 cm). Each section (questions 2-4) should begin on a separate page.
  + Be as concise as possible; it is not necessary to exhaust the page limits.

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| Project Details | * As listed in your HREA form in MyResearch |
| Title | X-much in Irish English Metapragmatic variation and language ideology |
| MyResearch application # | 2021/HE002387 |
| Lead/Chief Investigator | Martin Schweinberger |
| Project Description version/date | This study analyses which and how language internal characteristics cause adjectives to be attracted to an evaluative expressive marker, the X-much structure, in Irish and Australian English. The X-much structure, as in *LOL, ignorant much!?* (GloWBe, US B revolvermag.com) was made popular by Buffy the Vampire Slayer and is used predominately in informal (internet) language. X-much gained prominence as an in-group marker of Buffy-fans, then spread likely fuelled in CMC (Adams 2014). Structurally, it is a syntactically independent, evaluative expressive marker (Gutzmann & Henderson 2019). It expresses criticism or sarcasm, but it is also increasingly solidarity seeking (Hilpert & Bourgeous, 2020) and on the way to reaching constructional status World-wide distribution, with strongly varying frequencies of in different regions of the world. |

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| Research Scope, Aims, Themes or Questions (maximum one page) | * What is the research theme or question that this project is designed to explore? (NS 3.1) * Why is the exploration of this theme or answer to this question worth pursuing? (NS 3.1) |
| Research theme or question Briefly describe the purpose of the research and the overarching aim or research question. | |
| This study uses questionnaire and corpus data to analyze which and how language internal characteristics cause adjectives to be attracted to an evaluative expressive marker, the X-much structure, in Irish and Australian English. The aim of the study is to explore if and why the X-much structure is used differently across varieties of English and thus to explore linguistic and culturally motivated variability in language use. | |
| Background and specific aims Outline the current state of research/knowledge/discourse in the area and the specific project questions, aims or hypotheses. The description should demonstrate the need for the research and that it is based on a thorough review of the current literature; an extensive literature review is not required. Key references can be appended to this form. | |
| The X-much structure, as in “LOL, ignorant much!?” (GloWBe, US B revolvermag.com) was made popular by Buffy the Vampire Slayer and is used predominately in informal (internet) language. X-much gained prominence as an in-group marker of Buffy-fans, then spread likely fuelled in CMC (Adams 2014). Structurally, it is a syntactically independent, evaluative expressive marker (Gutzmann & Henderson 2019). It expresses criticism or sarcasm, but it is also increasingly solidarity seeking (Hilpert & Bourgeous, 2020) and on the way to reaching constructional status with world-wide distribution showing strongly varying frequencies of in different regions of the world. However, the causes for differences in use – be they intra-linguistic or extra-linguistic – are not yet explored. The present study aims to fill this gap using both corpus, i.e., usage, data and questionnaire data reflecting speakers attitudes. | |
| Significance How does your research help to fill a gap in the literature/knowledge; what are the expected outcomes and contributions? | |
| Given its recency, how and why the X-much constructions differs across varieties of English is not yet explored. The present study aims to close this research gap by determining exactly how and why the X-much structure is used differently across varieties of English and thus to explore linguistic and culturally motivated variability in language use. For instance, the study will analyze if the adjectives, nouns, and verbs that fill the X-slot in the X-much construction differ semantically. In addition, questionnaire data is used to tap into the perceptions of the X-much construction to analyze extra-linguistic factors that impact the use of the X-much construction. | |

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| Research Methods (maximum two pages) | * How will the planned methods explore the theme or achieve the aims of the research? (NS 3.1) * Demonstrate that the research has merit (NS 1.1) |
| Note: Questions related to recruitment, consent, data and privacy are addressed in the HREA. Consent forms, recruitment materials, non-standard questionnaires and measures must be attached to the HREA. | |
| Research participants or data Who are the research participants (demographics)? How will you engage with them? AND/OR What is the nature and specific source of the data or information to be collected/gathered/used and how will it be obtained?  The corpus data represents the hard copy version of the GloWbE (Corpus of Web-Based Global English). The questionnaires targets participants are L1 speakers of English above an age of 18 predominantly from Australia and Ireland. The participants are recruited via social media as well as emails, email lists, and newsletters from linguistic societies. The questionnaire data will be collected using a Google Forms survey on use and attitudes towards the X-much construction as well as socio-demographic information. | |
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| Methodology and timeline Describe the research approach and timeline. | |
| The data will be analysed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics as well as text analytics and qualitative analyses of open-ended questions. The questionnaire will be distributed as soon as possible (early 2022) and the data analysis and write-up should be finished by mid/end of 2022. | |
| Sampling strategy What is the sampling approach (e.g., selection criteria, target sample size)? Justify your sampling strategy. | |
| We aim to have a sample of 200 participants from both varieties to allow for meaningful statistical analyses. The participants are recruited via social media as well as emails, email lists, and newsletters from linguistic societies. | |
| Measures and procedures List standard measures (e.g., questionnaire, age), procedures (e.g., treadmill testing, structured interviews) and materials. Provide details of new measures/materials. Where relevant, attach instruments or materials to the HREA. | |
| The study uses corpus data to investigate language internal factors impacting the use and constraints of the x-much construction. The study uses questionnaire data to tap into the use and attitudes towards the x-much construction as well as sociodemographic information (age, gender, language use and background) to assess language external factors impacting the use and constraints on the x-much construction and to control for confounding factors. | |
| Data analysis Describe the data analysis plan (e.g., what are the strategies for matching and sampling, or for accounting for potential bias, confounding factors and missing information). What are the outcome measures/variables? | |
| The study aims to assess the use of the x-much construction in Irish and Australian English and thus aims to tap into natural language use of this construction using the GloWbE. In addition, the study targets educated speakers of both varieties as these are more likely to use a standard variety and they are more likely to use digital communication. The outcome variables are the attitudes towards the use of the x-much construction assessed on a Likert-scale. | |
| Other information related to research methods (where relevant) e.g., Incentives or reimbursements to be offered; debriefing procedures; procedures to allow participants to withdraw from the project (and the implications for compensation/incentives); for data linkage research, how will you manage any risk that linking databases of non-identifiable data could subsequently result in the individuals being identified? | |
| Participants are informed that their participation is voluntary and that they will not be compensated. Also, they are informed that they can stop filling in the survey at any point without repercussions. | |
| Research merit | |
| Describe how the methods, measures, procedures and analysis will allow you to meet the research aims? | |
| The corpus-based analysis allows us to analyse the intra-linguistic constraints and usage patters governing the use of the x-much construction while the survey data allows us to tap into the attitudes regarding the x-much construction in the respective speech communities. Thus far, there are no systematic studies comparing the use actual use and linguistic constraints on this newly emerging construction with socio-demographic and attitudinal data. | |

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| Other ethical issues (maximum half page) | * Dissemination of project outputs and outcomes (NS 3.1.69) * Other ethical issues to your research project? |
| Research Outputs What is the plan for reporting, publishing or otherwise disseminating the outputs/outcomes of the research (note: providing outcomes to research participants is addressed in the HREA)? | |
| The results of the study will result in a joint publication published in a collected volume and potentially a follow-up paper submitted to an international journal. | |
| Additional information Provide any other information you would like to convey to the reviewers that is not addressed elsewhere in this document or the HREA.  References  Adams, Michael. 2014. “Slang in new media. A case study”. Global English Slang. Methodologies and Perspectives, ed. by Julie Coleman, 175–186. London: Routledge.  Gutzmann, Daniel & Robert Henderson. 2019. “Expressive updates, much?” Language 95(1): 107–135.  Hilpert, Martin & Samuel Bourgeois. 2020. Intersubjectification in constructional change. From confrontation to solidarity in the sarcastic much? construction. Construction Grammar across Borders, ed. by Tiago Timponi Torrent, Ely Edison da Silva Matos & Natália Sathler Sigiliano [Constructions and Frames 12:1], 96–120.  Ronan, Patricia. 2019. Silly much? Tracing the spread of a new expressive marker in recent corpora. Studies in Variation, Contacts and Change in English 20: Corpus [Approaches into World Englishes and Language Contrasts]. Helsinki: VariEng. http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/series/volumes/20/ronan/ | |
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