

Forms and Functions of Second Person  
Plural Forms in World Englishes: a  
corpus-based Study



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## **Declaration**

This thesis has not been submitted in support of an application for another degree at this or any other university. It is the result of my own work and includes nothing that is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated. Many of the ideas in this thesis were the product of discussion with my supervisor Willem Hollmann.

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## Abstract

The present work is a corpus-based research on the plural forms of the second person pronoun *you* (2PL forms henceforth) which focuses on the similarities and differences among twenty varieties of English. The corpus (GloWbe) contains 1.9 billion words collected on the web in 2012. The 2PL forms I have analysed are the result of both morphological and analytic strategies of number marking: *yous(e)*, *yi(s/z)*, *yus*, *you guys*, *you all* and *y(')all*, *you two*, *you three*, *you four*, *you ones* and *y(ou)'uns/yin(s/z)*, *you lot* and other *you* + NP-PL expressions. The aim of my research is provide an empirically informed description of the forms and functions of 2PL forms in contemporary English. This is done by combining the analysis of corpus data with the literature on 2PL forms as well as the relevant theories on language change.

The results show that there are two main geographically-related trends in the use of 2PL forms: analytic strategies are preferred in the US, whereas morphological strategies are preferred in the European and Australian varieties of English. As far as the uses are concerned, 2PL forms were observed to perform other functions besides number-marking: they can work as possessive determiners and pronouns, singular-reference emphatic markers, and attention-getting devices. The reanalysis of 2PL forms into markers of possession, the semantic bleaching evident in singular-reference 2PL forms, and the instances of phonological reduction observed in the forms *y(')all* and *yin(s/z)* are seen as clues to on-going processes of grammaticalization. On the other hand, the significant involvement of 2PL forms in pragmatically charged contexts (mainly expressing emphasis and politeness) and the similarity of some attention-getting 2PL forms to pragmatic markers are seen as clues to the pragmaticalization of 2PL forms.

On a theoretical level, 2PL forms offer some insight on the processes of grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and intersubjectification. In particular, an alternative view of intersubjectification as a sub-process of pragmaticalization is proposed. Pragmaticalization, in turn, is seen as a distinct, independent process from grammaticalization. The linguistic evolution of 2PL forms is also described from the

perspective of constructionalization (Traugott and Trousdale 2014), which solves the issues related to the definition of the boundaries between grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and intersubjectification. Finally, the strong pragmatic character observed of singular-reference suffixed 2PL forms is used to support the theory of morphopragmatics (Dressler and Barbaresi 2015, 2017).

Keywords: second person pronouns, number-marking, pragmatic marking, social categorization, World Englishes, grammaticalization, pragmaticalization, intersubjectification, constructionalization

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# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

## List of geographical varieties

US – United States

CA – Canada

GB – Great Britain

IE – Ireland

AU – Australia

NZ – New Zealand

IN – India

LK – Sri Lanka

PK – Pakistan

BD – Bangladesh

SG – Singapore

MY – Malaysia

PH – Philippines

HK – Hong Kong

ZA – South Africa

NG – Nigeria

GH – Ghana

KE – Kenya

TZ – Tanzania

JM – Jamaica

IC = Inner Circle

OC = Outer Circle

## Forms and Functions

2PL forms – second person plural forms

*You* NP-PL – *you* followed by a plural noun phrase

2PL form/PL – plural reference

2PL form/SG – singular reference

2PL form/POSS – marking possession

2PL form/POL – marking politeness

2PL form/CONTR – expressing contrast between speaker and interlocutors

2PL form/AG – attention-getter

### **Other**

G – General section of the corpus

B – Blog section of the corpus

# 1 Introduction

The main aim of the present work is the description of the forms and functions of second person plural forms in World Englishes by means of a corpus-based analysis. The reason for having a work like this is to be found in the fragmentary and partial descriptions of these forms in reference grammars and dictionaries of English (Jespersen 1933, Leech and Svartvik 1975, Quirk *et al.* 1985, Greenbaum 1991, Biber *et al.* 1999, Huddleston and Pullum 2002) that generally do not provide details about the frequencies and pragmatics of second person plural forms and seldom provide information about the geographical distribution. Even more recent corpus-based linguistic studies on pronouns generally do not mention second person plural pronouns (cf. for example Angermeyer and Singler 2003, Biber *et al.* 1999, Erdmann 1978) and when they do, they focus on the quantitative dimension alone: for example, Quinn (2009) compares the distribution of *y'all* and *youse* in the British, American, Australian and New Zealand varieties of English; Kortmann and Schneider (2004), Szendrői and Kortmann (2011) focus on the frequencies and distribution of the linguistic features (plural second person forms included) that are common to the world varieties of English, leaving out a qualitative analysis of the functions of the forms besides the mere marking of plurality. Similarly, the research based on the International Corpus of English (ICE) has, apparently, never dealt with the uses of second person plural forms in World Englishes so far: see, for example, the work by Farrell (2020) which considers *ye* and *youse* only in the Irish classroom environment and Deuber (2009) who mentions only the form *all you* in an ICE-corpus based study on Caribbean English.

To the best of my knowledge, the present work is the first attempt to provide a corpus-based description of second person plural forms in World Englishes that

combines both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of analysis in order to obtain a detailed, usage-based description of the forms. The picture obtained from the analysis of corpus data will be used to confirm, disconfirm or refine the already existing definitions of number-marked second person pronouns. This will be done by contributing with information about their frequencies, distribution, semantics, syntax and pragmatics. The perspective of the present study is mainly synchronic, although diachronic information is used in the outline of the origins and the development of the frequencies of occurrence of the single forms over time. The significance of the findings is tested against a sample analysis of *you* which aims to verify whether second person plural forms have developed different uses from the standard pronoun. Finally, the investigation of second person plural forms also poses some theoretical questions about the possibility for the forms to be undergoing processes of linguistic change such as grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and intersubjectification. This expands the scope of the present work beyond the corpus analysis of synchronic data to attempt to make inferences about the processes of language change are based on the historical descriptions of second person forms as well as the general theory of relevant diachronic phenomena. The evolution of second person plural forms is also analysed from the perspective of constructionalization (Traugott and Trousdale 2014), which represents a holistic approach overcoming the issues of determining where grammaticalization ends and pragmaticalization begins.

It is well-known that, historically, English used to distinguish between singular and plural second person pronouns (Quirk and Wrenn 1957). Although the linguistic codified difference between singular and plural reference has always lingered in different forms in the regional dialects of English, it was formally lost in the standard variety during its transition into Modern English (Brunner 1963), which saw the establishment of *you* as a single form for both.

Nowadays, the marking of number on *you* in non-standard varieties is carried out through two main kinds of linguistic strategies: morphological and analytic. In the former case, the pronoun *you* is suffixed by means of the marker for making regular plurals in English, i.e. *-s* (e.g. *book* (SG) > *books* (PL)), generating two main spelling forms *yous* and *youse*, and several secondary (less frequent) ones, mainly featuring a reduced root vowel, such as *yiz*, *yez*, etc. In the latter case, *you* is immediately followed by a plural or collective noun or a numerical quantifier that suggests a plural

interpretation of the pronoun, as happens for *you guys*, *you all*, *you lot*, *you ones*, *you two*, *you three*, etc.. Many other second person plural forms can be found in English pidgins and creoles such as *unu/una* in West Caribbean and West African varieties, *wuna* in the Barbados, *aayu/alyu* in Eastern Caribbean varieties (Kortmann and Schneider 2004). However, the present work will not engage with these forms as pidgins and creoles of English are not part of the corpus (GloWbe).

As already mentioned, number-marked second person pronouns are very often neglected or relegated to secondary-importance features when it comes to including them in grammar descriptions. The corpus-based approach adopted in this work reveals that the phenomenon is, instead, very much alive in spoken language, especially in informal and colloquial contexts. Not only do different varieties of English world-wide display instances of number marking on second person pronouns, but it seems that different varieties have developed different forms, sometimes independently of each other: for example, Irish *yiz* is the result of the suffixation of *you* whereas Pittsburghese *yinz* is the result of the grammaticalization of *you ones* (see section 2.1). In addition, thanks to the analysis of the data I have collected from the GloWbe corpus, I have found that number-marked second person forms are being used to perform further functions than the mere marking of plurality (e.g. expression of possession). Several of these additional functions do not seem to be accounted for in the literature. For example, *The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber et al. 1999: 330), whose focus is on spoken language, describes *yous(e)* as follows:

The dialectal form *yous* is a second-person plural pronoun, filling the gap left by the absence of number contrast for *you* in modern standard English:  
*I am sick to death of **yous** – all **yous** do is fight and ruck and fight - do you ever see a house like it Albert?* (conv)

In the definition above, only the plural-marking function of *yous* is mentioned, although *yous*, as well as other second person plural forms in English, can also identify a singular referent, mark possession, work as pragmatic markers of emphasis, politeness (in-group), contrast (out-group) and as an attention-getter.

The thesis is structured as follows: chapter 2 deals with the definition of second person plural forms, the literature, the aims of the present work and the research questions; chapter 3 contains a description of the corpus, the data, the methodology and the theoretical background; chapters 4-7 are dedicated to the analysis of the eleven forms considered in this study; in chapter 8, the results of the analysis of the single forms are brought together and compared in order to highlight the major tendencies in the linguistic behaviour of second person plural forms in World Englishes. Finally, I will draw some conclusions in chapter 9.

# 2 Second person plural forms: definition, history, non-standardness

In this chapter, I will provide a description of the linguistic phenomenon of 2PL forms based on the literature and the historical data on the frequencies of the forms (sections 2.1-5). I will also cover some of the theoretical scholarship I draw on to interpret my results, namely the theories of grammaticalization, pragmaticalization, intersubjectification (section 2.6) and constructionalization (2.7). Finally, I will discuss the aims of the present work together with the research questions (section 2.8).

## 2.1 2PL forms: a definition

Second person plural forms (2PL forms henceforth) are English forms of the second person that are marked for number. These forms are typical of colloquial, spoken language, therefore their use in more formal contexts or written language is generally frowned upon (cf. section 2.3-4 below).

2PL forms can be grouped into two main categories according to the formal strategy used to mark plurality on *you*: morphological and analytic (see table 1 below). Morphological marking of plurality follows the rule of pluralisation of regular nouns in

English, i.e. suffixation by the mark *-s*. This process generates forms such as *yous*, *youse*, *yis* (and the spelling variant *yiz*), and *yus*. Analytic strategies of number marking on *you* are those in which *you* is followed by an item that marks plurality, and include subcategories such as *you* NP-PL, *you* + cardinal number, *you* + *all*, *you* + *ones* (see table 1 below). The categories *you* + cardinal number and *you* NP-PL are open ones, since, virtually, new members can be added indefinitely: *you* can be followed by any cardinal number or plural noun phrase. However, the frequencies of occurrence of the expressions *you* + cardinal number and *you* NP-PL in the corpus reveal that only a few forms belonging to these categories are consistently used as plurals of *you*: *you two*, *you three* and *you four* for the former (cf. chapter 5) and *you guys*, *you people* and *you lot* for the latter (cf. chapter 7). For this reason, the ones listed are also the only 2PL forms of the categories that will be analysed and described in this study.

**Table 1 – Overview of English 2PL forms**

Morphological	Analytic	Morphological + Analytic = double marking
<i>You</i> + <i>-s</i> : <i>yous</i> , <i>youse</i> , <i>yis</i> , <i>yus</i>	<i>You</i> + cardinal number: <i>you two</i> , <i>you three</i> , <i>you four</i> , (...)	<i>Yous(e) two</i> , <i>two yous(e)</i>
<i>You</i> + <i>-z</i> : <i>yiz</i>	<i>You</i> + <i>all</i> : <i>you all</i> , <i>y'all</i> , <i>yall</i>	<i>Yous(e) all</i>
	<i>You</i> + <i>ones</i> : <i>you ones</i> , <i>y(ou)'uns</i> , <i>yinz</i>	-
	<i>You</i> + NP-PL: <i>you guys</i> , <i>you people</i> , <i>you lot</i> , (...)	<i>Yous(e) guys</i> , <i>yous(e) people</i> , <i>yous(e) lot</i> , (...)

Finally, a third category of 2PL forms considered in this study is the one that results from a combination of morphological and analytic marking: in other words, double marked 2PL forms, such as: *yous(e) guys*, *yous(e) all*, *yous(e) two*, *yous(e) bastards*, etc. (table 1 above; see section 4.6).

The list of 2PL forms considered in this study was obtained by combining linguistic studies on the second person in English, reference dictionaries and grammars and informal sources such as the Urban Dictionary (cf. sections 2.3-4, below). In an attempt to include as many spelling variants as possible or other 2PL forms that are not mentioned in the sources cited above, I have performed POS-tagged and wildcard



searches in the corpus. For example, I searched through the instances returned for the corpus tag for pronouns, i.e. [pron.ALL], as well as the wildcard search *y\** which returned any occurrence that started with *y* and was followed by any sequence of zero or more characters. The list obtained by POS-tagged and wildcard search was subsequently checked for instances of 2PL forms. As already mentioned in the introduction, since English-based pidgins and creoles are not represented in the corpus (see section 3.1), other 2PL forms such as *(h)unu/una*, *wuna*, *aayu/alyu*, and *y(u)aal* (Kortmann and Schneider 2004) were not analysed.

They are called ‘forms’, despite looking like second person plural pronouns, because they do not always work as personal pronouns: in some cases, 2PL forms are used as possessive determiners, possessive pronouns and pragmatic markers (see section 2.4, chapters 3-7). The very label ‘pronoun’ has long been questioned in the literature because of the conception that comes as a consequence of the etymology of the word (from Latin *pro-* *nomen*) that implies the notion of ‘substitution’. As Wales (1996: 3) observes, the first and second person are particularly resistant to being defined in terms of substitution, since it is not easy to define what they substitute for, given the variability of referents they can indicate. The reference of *I* and *you* shifts all the time in conversation (i.e. personal deixis) in order to indicate the roles that the participants are taking at a particular point in the communicative exchange (i.e. the speaker vs. the addressee/listener).

However, even the label ‘2PL forms’ is slightly problematic: although these forms mark plurality most of the time (91.8% of the times they occur in the Glowbe corpus - see sections 3.1-2 for a detailed account of the corpus and the data), they can in fact be used with singular reference for emphatic reasons (see sections 2.4, 4.4, chapter 6, chapter 7). 2PL forms may work as prototypical plural pronouns, but, similarly to other personal pronouns (cf. Lakoff 1976, Bosch 1983), also have an evaluative and emotive dimension that is seldom taken into account. This corresponds to the fundamental function of 2PL forms of creating and managing the speaker-hearer relationship and defining social groups, which challenges the long-standing belief (see, for example, Lyons 1977, Heine and Narrog 2011) that personal deictics carry very little semantic content. The creation and widespread use of 2PL forms over the centuries and across regional dialects witnesses the need for the speaker to express meanings that the standard pronoun *you* cannot express. One of the aims of the work is to uncover and raise awareness on the functions and pragmatic uses of 2PL forms besides the most

obvious marking of plurality on the second person (for a complete list of research questions addressed in this thesis, see section 2.6 below).

As will be shown in more detail in section 2.4 below, 2PL forms have been generally put aside in linguistic studies, relegated to footnotes or ignored altogether because of their non-standard character. Even when their existence in certain English dialects is acknowledged (as in Kortmann *et al.* 2004), the approach is quantitative and fails to recognise or highlight the uses and pragmatic functions of 2PL forms. This represents, in my opinion, a substantial loss that does not do justice to the richness of the system of personal deixis in English. Moreover, as a consequence of overlooking regional features, learners of English as a second language are often, if not always, provided with a distorted, narrower picture of what the pronominal system in English actually looks like, as Wales (1996: 8) already noted. The general tendency is to teach English as if only the standard variety is worth learning and speaking (cf. 2.5 below), despite the fact that the language that is actually used every day rarely complies with the ‘standard’, given its inevitable variation across geographical areas and as a consequence of sociolinguistic factors such as age, gender, social class and level of education (Labov 1966, Gumperz and Hymes 1972, Chambers 2002).

This partial perspective generally leads to varieties other than British or American English being mostly or completely ignored. In the specific case, so far the study of English personal deixis has focused on the standard English of the UK and US (as also observed by Wales 1996: xii), leaving out other regional varieties (such as Australian English, Indian English, etc.) that count millions of speakers but that are not recognised the same linguistic importance as British and American English. After all, even the acknowledgement of the linguistic differences between British and American English is a rather recent affair: the first textbooks that demonstrate how the two varieties differ importantly on all levels of language analysis, such as Kövecses (2000), Trudgill and Hannah (2002) and Tottie (2002), date back to the first years of the 2000s. Certainly, the literature does not lack in linguistic descriptions of the world varieties of English, which are made available by linguists such as Filppula (1999) for Irish English, Guy (1991), Hundt (1998), Peters *et al.* (2009), Warren (2012) for Australian and New Zealand English, Gargesh (2006) for South-Asian Englishes, Bautista and Gonzales (2006) for South-East Asian Englishes, Kamwangamalu (2006) and Melchers and Shaw (2011) for South African Englishes, Schmied (2006) for East African English, Omoniyi (2006) for West African English. However, regional varieties of English still tend to be

considered as dialects that ‘deviate’ from the standard represented by British and American English (cf. 2.5 below), as shown by the fact that they are hardly ever mentioned in reference dictionaries or grammars of English (see section 2.4 for a more detailed account; cf. also Wales (2003)).

## 2.2 Why study 2PL forms?

The importance of the second person in the pronominal system is certainly known because of its fundamental role in the communicative exchange (Wales 1996). Together with first person *I*, that indicates the speaker, the second person refers to one of the two fundamental roles without which no communicative exchange would take place at all: the addressee. Be it concrete, physically present or only hypothetical, the addressee in English is indicated by *you*, except for reflexive cases in which one is talking to oneself.

If, on the one hand, the second person is essential for interpersonal communication to take place, on the other, how it is used is also a delicate matter of sociolinguistics and politics (Wales 1996). The way a speaker chooses to address his/her interlocutor(s) will affect their relationship, which will evolve as many times as the forms of address change in order to mirror the speaker’s attitude towards the addressee(s) and their relationship itself. A straightforward example of how the use of personal pronouns can shape the speaker-hearer relationship is the dichotomy in-group/out-group marking. Generally languages possess lexical or grammatical ways to define social groups or categories, which are based on many characteristics such as age, gender, social class, political belief, ethnicity, etc. (Keblusek *et al.* 2017). Membership to a particular social group – or the exclusion from it – is recognised and made explicit through a set of “modes” (in Keblusek *et al.*’s words 2017: 2) of communication such as dialect, slang and accents as well as forms of address. English marks inclusivity in the group with dedicated personal pronouns such as *we* and *us*, but also lexically with vocatives such as *mate*, *buddy*, *love*, etc. Throughout this study, it will be shown how the second person *you* combines with other linguistic material, e.g. suffixes and noun phrases, into expressions that are used as in-group or out-group markers, i.e. to create and refer to social categories. As already said in section 2.1 above, 2PL forms appear at first blush only to mark plurality on the second person (e.g. *yous(e)*, *you all*, *you guys*, etc.). However, a more detailed analysis of their use in context reveals a pragmatic,

deeply sociolinguistic value of these forms that seems to be often ignored by grammarians and linguists (such as Jespersen 1933, Leech and Svartvik 1975, Greenbaum 1991, Leech 1992), most likely because of their non-standardness (cf. also sections 2.3-4 below on how 2PL forms are described in the literature).

As Wales (1996, 2003) has often pointed out, there is a gap in the study of the new pronominal forms in the world varieties of English. She states (2003: 1):

The accepted story also ignores the development of new singular and plural oppositions in pronouns and pronominals of address in regional speech, not only within the British Isles, but also, very importantly, beyond them.

The fact that 2PL forms are such a widespread feature in all the varieties of English considered in this work already says something about the cognitive principle underlying their use: 2PL forms are convenient. They are more informative than the standard pronoun *you*, because they overtly indicate the number of the addressees and/or that some pragmatic implication (e.g. emphasis, politeness, contrast) has to be inferred (see section 3.4-6). The linguistically explicit codification of the singular/plural distinction is very common among the languages of the world: according to the data available in the World Atlas of Language Structures (WALS, features 34-35A; accessed November 2019), only 28 out of the 291 languages considered do not mark plurality on nominals, and only 9 out of 250 languages do not mark plurality on personal pronouns.

It is surprising, then, that it has yet not been taken into account how 2PL forms constitute a linguistic need, and, therefore, deserve some attention. Indeed, plural forms of the second person are widespread in many other languages and are linked with the expression of politeness, the shaping of the speaker-hearer relationship and, ultimately, social classes (e.g. French *vous*, southern dialectal Italian *voi*, etc.).

The main purpose of this work is, then, to raise awareness about the forms and functions of 2PL forms in the world varieties of English (see section 2.6 below for a complete list of research questions). This will be done by combining the results of a corpus-based analysis of 2PL forms into a linguistic description that accounts for present-day use of 2PL forms in 20 varieties of English (see section 2.8 below on the research questions). On a theoretical level, this will help to provide a thorough picture of the paradigm of the second person in present-day English, which turns out to be much richer than traditionally believed. When going beyond Standard English, i.e. “the

idealised variety” (Wales 1996: 13), the frequent statement about pronouns being a stable, ‘closed class’ of items (see, for example, McArthur 1992) can be easily challenged. Indeed, it will be shown how 2PL forms, which are relatively new features (see section 2.3 below), have soon developed a wide range of pragmatic functions.

Furthermore, studying how 2PL forms are used in present-day English also creates new awareness about both spoken English and the mechanisms of language change: for example, I will show in chapter 9 that a detailed analysis of the pragmatics of 2PL forms provides useful insights into the processes of grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and (inter)subjectification of personal deixis.

Providing a more detailed, informed description of 2PL forms is also important when it comes to learning English as a second language. For native speakers, the lack of representation of 2PL forms in reference dictionaries and grammars of English can be easily compensated by the fact that they are constantly in contact with its alternative, ‘non-standard’ forms of address in everyday interaction. This is a possibility that is seldom available to learners of English who do not live in anglophone countries. Nonetheless, they should be given the whole story: learners should be constantly reminded of the existence of a standard English, but also that it is only one of the many – equally worthy, albeit not necessarily in the same contexts – varieties of English (cf. 2.5 below), of the substantial differences between spoken and written language as well as how blurred the concept of ‘correct’ use of language is.

## **2.3 Historical remarks on 2PL forms in English**

Number-marking on the second person is not new to English. When *you* was established as the only standard way of referring to the addressee(s), second person forms in English expressed number, as well as social distance between the interlocutors and politeness (Strang 1970).

In Old English (5<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century), *you* was the plural of the second person in the accusative (*ye* was the corresponding nominative case), while *thou* and *thee* were the nominative and accusative forms respectively for the singular (Quirk and Wrenn 1955). From the 13th century, during the Norman ruling, *you* began to be used in the literature as a singular pronoun of polite address. As a result of its common occurrence in informal, familiar and private speech, *thou* became the pronoun of the immediate and factual present that expressed deep emotions, intimacy and familiarity in Middle

English (Hogg 1992: 153), with *you* establishing as the pronoun of public, fashionable and polite address. The uses of the second person pronouns continued to evolve until the 16th and 17th centuries (Early Modern English) when *you* and *thou* ended up expressing, respectively, formality and informality (Mulholland 1967 and Quirk 1971). In Modern English, *you* and *thou* were still considered the unmarked and marked forms of the second person, but *thou* had also become associated with rhetorical and literary registers thanks to its frequent use as pronoun of address in the English translation of the Bible (Wales 1996: 77). In present-day English, *thou* still survives in many dialects of English. However, in standard English *thou* is now considered an archaic, dialectal, non-standard form, as shows the fact that it is often excluded from reference grammars of English (Leech and Svartvik 1975, Huddleston 1988, Greenbaum 1991).

Over the centuries, many dialects of English have always continued to express the difference between singular and plural *you* by developing a host of new second person plural forms even when *you* established as the only second person pronoun with both singular and plural reference. It is in Early Modern English, i.e. at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, that forms such as *you all*, *you two* and *you ones* begin to appear in texts and transcriptions of dialogues. New second person plural forms continued to be created all the way through the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some of which have become more common over time (e.g. *you guys*) while others (such as *yous(e)*) have lost ground soon after the 1960s (see section 2.3.1 below).

Some information about the origins and geography of 2PL forms comes from the literature. It is generally agreed upon considering *yous(e)* as a feature brought to English by Irish immigrants. Irish speakers might have simply transferred to English the singular/plural distinction that was already present in Irish Gaelic (*tú* vs *sibb*) (Wright 1961, Grant and Murison 1976, Cassidy 1954, Gramley and Pätzold 1992, Algeo 2001, Corrigan 2010). Therefore *yous(e)* and other suffixed 2PL forms are supposed to be found mainly in areas that were the destination of Irish immigration waves that took place between 17<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, i.e. Britain, Australia, New Zealand and the US. Concerning *y'all*, although not explicitly supported by any literature or evidence, Crystal (2004: 449) claims that it began to be substantially used around the turn of the 19th century in the southern states of the US by African-Americans. The use of *y'all* seems to have rapidly spread among the southern whites of all social classes and to other regions of the US, as black people moved into northern

states after the Civil War. However, similarly to *yous(e)*, *y'all* is considered a feature that was brought to the US by the Irish and Scottish immigrants of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as is *you'uns* which was derived from the original *you ones* and became a regional feature of the Pittsburgh area in Pennsylvania and Appalachia (Lynch 2008; Montgomery 2006, cited in Johnstone 2013).

In this section I will try to give a general picture of when the different 2PL forms were first mentioned in English texts by drawing on the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) and three historical corpora: the Helsinki corpus (Old, Middle and Early Modern English), the Corpus of English Dialogues (1560-1760) and the Corpus of Historical American English (1810-2000). I will also try to give a brief account of how the frequency of occurrence of 2PL forms has developed over the centuries in order to have an idea of how the different forms position on the timeline. However, as already said in section 2.5, as the focus of this study is mainly synchronic, I will not attempt to get into detail about the functions and uses of 2PL forms over time. Research into the diachronic development of 2PL forms is, nevertheless, needed and constitutes grounds for further development of the present work.

### **2.3.1 A history of frequencies of 2PL forms**

The three historical corpora were searched for all the 2PL forms considered in this study: *yous(e)*, *you two*, *you three*, *you four*, *you all*, *y(')all*, *you guys*, *you people*, *you lot*, *you ones*, *y(ou)'uns*, *yin(z/s)*. The spelling variants of the forms were obtained with wildcard searches and included in the major categories of 2PL forms according to the strategy of number-marking: for example, suffixed 2PL forms such as *yez* and *yiz* that are much less frequent than the forms *yous* and *youse* were included in the countings of *yous(e)*.

The earliest examples of occurrence of 2PL forms in the OED date back to 1541 for *you ones*, 1560 for *you all* and 1586 for *yous(e)*. The rest of the 2PL forms mentioned are found in texts from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: *you people* in 1898, *you guys* in 1972, *you lot* in 1943, and the grammaticalized forms of *you ones*, namely *youns* and *yinz* were found in texts from 1912 and 2006 respectively. According to the data in the Helsinki corpus, the first 2PL forms recorded in English are *you all* (frequency in Early Modern English = 36.03 pmw), *you two* (21.52 pmw) and *you ones* (4.59 pmw). Similarly, The Corpus of English Dialogues returned hits for *you all* (52.73 pmw) and

*you two* (15.2 pmw) but also *you three* (2.78 pmw).

It is in Modern English that 2PL forms seem to spread considerably. Indeed, instances of all the 2PL forms but *you ones*, and *yinz* were found in COHA. Table 2, below, reports on the 2PL forms ordered by frequency of occurrence together with information about the year of first appearance and the evolution in the frequencies until the 2000s. Although COHA offers data for each decade between 1810 and 2000, I have chosen, for ease of reading, to report the registered frequencies of occurrence in four periods: 1810-1850, 1860-1900, 1910-1950 and 1960-2000. All the generalisation made on this data, however, are only indicative of the actual evolution of the frequencies of occurrence of 2PL forms over time for two main reasons: the language sampled in COHA comes from written texts, whereas 2PL forms are typical features of spoken language (see section 2.1 and 2.4); the only geographical variety represented is American English.

**Table 2 – Frequencies of occurrence of 2PL forms in COHA (pmw)**

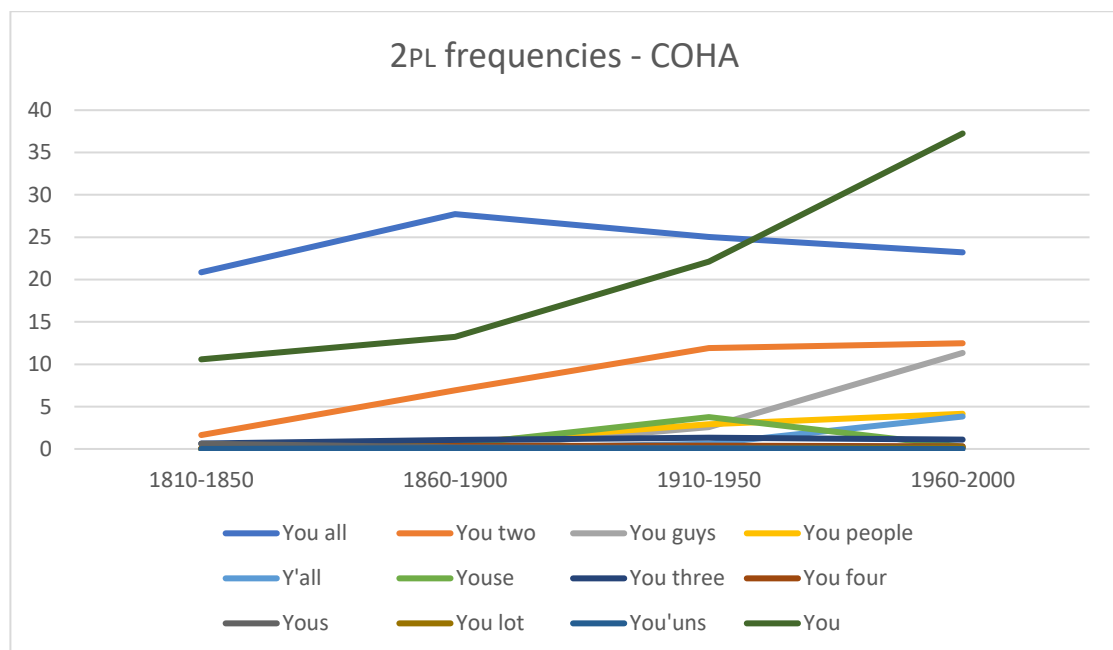
	Year of first occurrence	1810-1850	1860-1900	1910-1950	1951-2000	Mean
<i>You all</i>	1810	20.86	27.73	25.04	23.20	24.88
<i>You two</i>	1810	1.64	6.94	11.93	12.48	9.61
<i>You guys</i>	1910	0	0	2.57	11.34	4.44
<i>You people</i>	1820	0.09	0.69	2.91	4.15	2.41
<i>Y'all</i>	1870	0	0.04	0.62	3.83	1.44
<i>Youse</i>	1870	0	0.45	3.76	0.26	1.34
<i>You three</i>	1810	0.64	1.07	1.33	1.12	1.12
<i>You four</i>	1840	0.07	0.34	0.39	0.31	0.31
<i>Yous</i>	1850	0.62	0.18	0.11	0.16	0.22
<i>You lot</i>	1930	0	0	0.02	0.17	0.06
<i>You'uns</i>	1870	0	0.10	0.05	0	0.04
<hr/>						
<i>You/PL</i>		10.58	13.25	22.12	37.25	23.1

The years of first occurrence of the 2PL forms show that the first instances of 2PL forms are those already found in the Helsinki corpus and Corpus of English Dialogues, i.e.



*you all*, *you two* and *you three*. Only *you ones* did not return any hits in COHA, although it was found in the Helsinki corpus. The oldest 2PL forms are also the most frequent in COHA, except for *you three* that is only the seventh most frequent. These forms are soon followed by the appearance of *you people*, *you four* and *yous* in the texts of the next forty years. Closer to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contracted forms such as *y'all* (> *you all*) and *you'uns* (> *you ones*) begin to occur in COHA, together with a spelling variant of *yous*, i.e. *youse*. Finally, the newest 2PL forms seem to have appeared in the first half of the 1900s, namely *you guys* and *you lot*.

Figure 1 – Frequencies of occurrence of 2PL forms and plural *you* in COHA (pmw)



The frequencies of 2PL forms in the four periods (1810-1850, 1860-1900, 1910-1950 and 1960-2000) are reported in order to have a sense of the development of their frequencies of use over the two centuries represented in COHA. As can be observed in both table 2 and the chart in figure 1 above, the oldest 2PL form *you all* is also the most frequent plural form of the second person among the other forms. *You all* is even more frequent than plural *you* until after the 1950s, when *you* becomes the most frequent plural second person pronoun and the frequencies of *you all* continue a decline that had started between the 1860s and 1900s. The frequencies of *you two*, increase steadily over the four time periods and remains the third most frequent 2PL form until the 2000s. Although it first appears in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *you guys* gains popularity

between the 1960s and the 2000s and still represents the second most frequent 2PL forms in present-day English (see chapter 8). Other forms such as *you people* and *y'all* see an increase in the frequencies of occurrence after the 1950s, although they nevertheless remain less frequent forms together with *you three*, *you four*, *you'uns*. Finally, after an increase in the frequencies of occurrence between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *yous* and *youse* become gradually less common after the 1950s, mirroring the rising frequencies of other 2PL forms such as *you guys*, *you people* and *y'all*.

As already stated, however, this data is partial and does not take into account regional preferences of use as well as the spoken language variety. This can impact the frequencies of occurrence of the 2PL forms mainly by increasing the likelihood of occurrence of more standard forms such as *you all*, *you two*, *you people*. On the other hand, non-standard forms such as *y'all*, *yous(e)* and *you'uns* will be less likely to be found in written texts unless they are used within the dialogues of fictional books.

## 2.4 2PL forms in reference dictionaries and grammars

In this section I will report on how 2PL forms are portrayed in some of the main dictionaries and reference grammars of English in order to have a sense of what kind of information is already available about 2PL forms and whether a corpus-based analysis confirms, disconfirms or adds to the literature. As far as the dictionaries are concerned, I have tried to include geographical variation as much as possible. The dictionaries I have consulted are: the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Collins Dictionary* and *Cambridge Dictionary* for British English; *MacMillan* and *Merriam-Webster* for American English; *The Australian National Dictionary*, *the Canadian Oxford Dictionary*, *the Indian English dictionary* (<https://amritt.com/india-english-dictionary/> accessed: November 2019), *A Dictionary of Nigerian English*, and *the South African English Variety* on the Oxford Dictionary on-line. Among these, the dictionaries of Nigerian and South African English did not mention 2PL forms at all.

I was also interested in understanding whether and how 2PL forms are defined for learners of English as a second language. Therefore, I have compared some of the main learner's dictionaries of English (*Oxford*, *Cambridge COBUILD*, *Cambridge*

*Academic, Merriam-Webster*) and reported their definition of the different 2PL forms here. Given the non-standard character of 2PL forms, the expectation is not to find entries for 2PL forms in learner's dictionaries.

A third source I have consulted to gather information about 2PL forms is the online *Urban Dictionary* (UD henceforth). The UD is a dictionary with a very informal style where any user can insert an entry. It gives useful access to metalinguistic knowledge on 2PL forms and, in particular, on the speakers' judgement of the forms and their uses.

Finally, I have consulted reference grammars of English. I have chosen *The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber *et al.* 1999) for its special focus on spoken language of which 2PL forms are a feature, *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (Quirk *et al.* 1985), and *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language* (Huddleston and Pullum *et al.* 2002).

It will be shown how the picture that comes out of the definitions of 2PL forms in dictionaries and reference grammars of English is a partial one, that leaves out any reference to the pragmatic functions of 2PL forms.

### **2.4.1 *Yous(e)* in dictionaries**

The most common definition of *yous(e)* that can be found in dictionaries describes *yous(e)* as a dialectal, non-standard way to signal plurality of reference of the second person pronoun *you* (see section 2.5 for a definition of 'standard'), as in (1) below.

(1) No wonder *youse boys* are always rioting. (OED)

However, both *the Oxford English Dictionary* (OED henceforth) and *the Australian National Dictionary* (AND henceforth) mention that *yous(e)* can also be used with singular reference, as in (2) below.

(2) Listen Harry, if *youse* were an out of work staker no one'd lend you a pair of strides. (1976, Hurst&Cameron, AND)

Neither OED nor AND, however, specify the actual function of singular-reference *yous(e)*. Why would a speaker use a plural form of the second person to address a

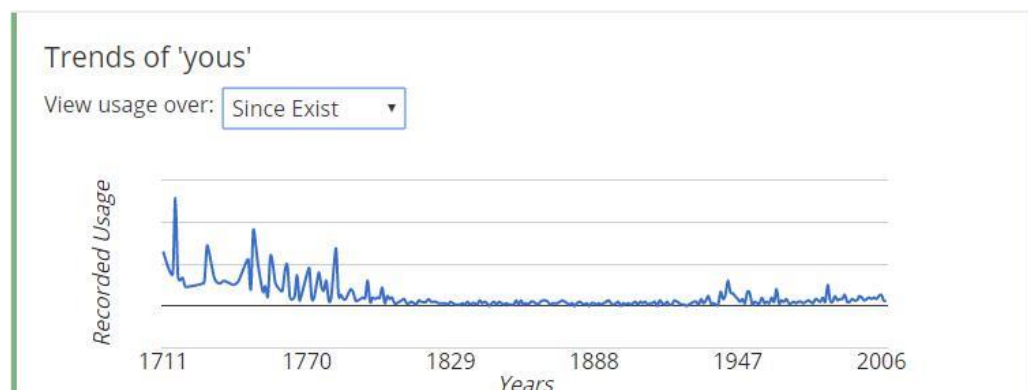
singular reference that could be addressed with *you*? According to the analysis of corpus data, singular-reference *yous(e)* expresses familiarity and/or emphasis (cf. chapter 4).

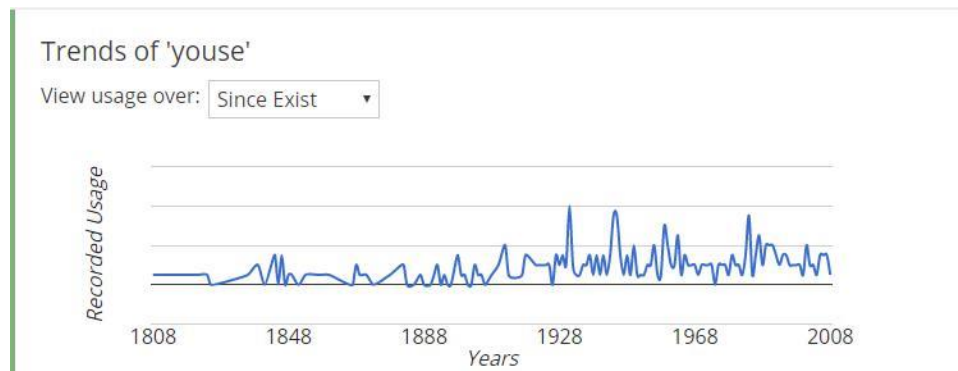
AND also mentions a third function of *yous(e)* that is omitted in the rest of the dictionaries considered, i.e. *yous(e)* can work as a possessive determiner, as in (3) below.

(3) Keep youse eyes peeled. (1979, Humpries, AND)

As far as geographical distribution is concerned, dictionaries agree on considering *yous(e)* as a regional feature of Irish English, American English, and Australian English. Although synchronic frequency information are not provided in any of the dictionaries I have consulted, *The Collins English Dictionary On-line* offers an insight on the development of the frequencies of occurrence of the two variants *yous* and *youse* by providing a graphic representation of the trends of use between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries (see figure 2 below).

**Figure 2 – *Yous* and *youse* in the Collins Dictionary on-line**





It is not specified, however, what sources were used as data for the graphic representation of the frequencies of *yous(e)* as well as the unit of measure on the vertical axis of the graph. Therefore, the only two things that can be inferred by observing the graphs are: first, it is suggested that the first recorded usage of *yous* precedes the ones of *youse* by almost a century. Second, the trends of the curves over time suggest a sort of 'complementary' distribution of the two variants, whereby to the decrease in frequency of *yous* over the years corresponds an increase in the frequencies of *youse*, which is in line with the frequency data of *yous* and *youse* found in COHA (see section 2.3.1).

Unfortunately, the other suffixed 2PL forms identified in section 2.1 did not find a mention in the dictionaries except for *yez* that is considered a spelling variant of *yous(e)* in both OED and AND.

#### 2.4.2 *You all, y'all and yall* in dictionaries

In the OED and the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* *you all* is defined as an American English pronoun that is used with plural reference. It is not clear whether the label American dialect only refers to the geographical variety of English or also hints at a dialectal, as in 'non-standard' use of the feature. It is listed as an alternative form of *y'all*. Indeed, the examples used to illustrate its use feature *y'all* in all the 20 sentences shown (as in (4) below).

No matches were found for one-word *yall*.

- (4) Not even a pounding migraine will keep me from posting bad poetry for *y'all*.  
(OED)

In the *Collins dictionary* online, *you all* is defined as an American pronoun, used especially in the South, ‘chiefly’ as a plural pronoun. Yet, it is not specified what other uses it can have. It is classified as ‘common usage’, which means that *you all* is among the 10000 most frequent words in the dictionary. The register characterised by the use of *you all* is an informal one. According to the history of its recorded usage, it was particularly common in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but its use started to decrease at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the present day (see figure 3 below).

*Y’all* is defined in the *Collins dictionary* as an informal way to say *you all* in the Southern varieties of American English, therefore as an informal plural pronoun. No information is provided about its historical evolution as is done for *you all*. Similarly to the OED, the one-word 2PL form *yall* is not mentioned at all.

In the American English section of the *MacMillan Dictionary* online, *you all* is not listed in the entries. *Y’all*, instead, is defined as a typical pronoun of spoken language that is used as an alternative way to say *you all*. It is also specified that it can be used as an attention-getter, especially in Southern US. The one example used to show the attention-getting function is: *come on y’all; we have to get going*. In line with other dictionaries, however, one-word *yall* is not mentioned as either a variant or a different form to *y’all*.

**Figure 3 – Usage of *you all* over the last 300 years (Collins dictionary)**



In line with the other dictionaries, the *Merriam-Webster* defines *you all* as a chiefly Southern pronoun, usually addressing two or more persons with its first use dating back to 1631, however the source is not cited. *Y’all* is considered a variant of *you all* performing the same function of expressing plurality.

Finally, the *Cambridge Dictionary* online, lists *you all* as regional use of American English with *y'all* being a variant, specifying that it is a normal part of polite speech in the South East of the US.

The *Australian National Dictionary* online and the *Indian English dictionary* do not contain an entry for neither *you all* nor *y'all* in line with the Australian preference for suffixed forms (see section 4.1).

### **2.4.3 *You two, you three and you four* in dictionaries**

None of the forms are mentioned in the dictionaries considered. One reason may lie in the fact that *you two*, *you three* and *you four* are not considered to be plural forms of the second person *per se* as much as a combination of the pronoun *you* with numerals. However, it will be shown that especially *you two* has crystallised into an expression with specialised meaning i.e. two people bond by a close relationship that are, therefore, considered as a conceptual unit (cf. chapter 5).

### **2.4.4 *You + NP-PL* in dictionaries: *you guys, you lot, you people, you ones (you'uns, yinz)***

Similarly to the category of 2PL forms *you + cardinal no.*, *you + NP-PL* forms are not mentioned in the dictionaries considered except for *you people* that is found in the *Indian English Dictionary*. This is surprising in two ways: first, *you guys* is the second most frequent plural form of *you* after *you all* in the corpus (22.42 pmw; see section 9.1). Second, it would be expected at least from dictionaries of American English such as the *MacMillan* and *Merriam-Webster* to mention forms that are generally believed (cf. section 2.4) to belong to the American variety such as *you guys*, *you people*, and *you ones*. The same expectation holds for dictionaries of British English such as the OED, *Collins COBUILD* and *Cambridge* concerning *you lot*, a form that is particularly common in the UK (see chapter 8). The non-standardness of these forms cannot justify their absence from dictionaries of English, even more so given that other less frequent forms are dedicated an entry, as already seen with *yous(e)* and *y'all*.

The 2PL form *you people* is described in the *Indian English Dictionary* as a plural form with no derogatory implication for the addressees. This suggests an

awareness of the use of *you people* as a device to criticise the interlocutors in other varieties of English. Indeed, the derogatory use of the category *you* + NP-PL forms is mentioned by Quirk *et al.* (1985) and supported by the analysis of corpus data (see chapter 7).

#### **2.4.5 2PL forms in learner's dictionaries**

As already said, checking whether learner's dictionaries mention 2PL forms is another way to assess the degree of acknowledgement of their existence and usage. The learner's dictionaries I have considered are: the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, the *Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary* and the *Cambridge COBUILD Learner's Dictionary*.

Among the eleven 2PL forms considered, only *yous(e)* and *you all* find a mention in learner's dictionaries: *yous(e)* is found in the *Oxford* and *Cambridge* dictionaries but not in the *Merriam-Webster*. It is described as a non-standard, dialectal form of *you* that is used to express plurality. On the other hand, *you all* and *y'all* are mentioned in the *Oxford* and *Merriam-Webster* dictionaries but not in the *Cambridge Dictionary*. In line with the regular dictionaries, *y'all* is treated as a contracted form of *you all* rather than an individual form with specific functions (cf. chapter 6). In both entries, it is specified that *you all* and *y'all* are regional forms of the southern dialects of the US and are used in informal conversation.

In sum, the learner does get a sense of the existence of 2PL forms, despite their informal and non-standard character. However, similarly to what happens in regular reference dictionaries of English (cf. section 2.4), not all forms are mentioned, which is especially surprising when frequent and common forms such as *you guys* are concerned.

#### **2.4.6 2PL in the *Urban Dictionary*: a speakers' perspective**

Finally, I have considered the *Urban Dictionary* (UD henceforth) ([www.urbandictionary.com](http://www.urbandictionary.com)), a web-based dictionary dedicated to neologisms and English slang. In the UD submissions are regulated by volunteer editors. This means that there is no explicit lexicographical design behind the compilation of entries. Any



user of the internet is, thus, allowed to insert his/her own entry, and choose on which aspects of the word to focus. Definitions do not necessarily contain those pieces of information that one expects to find in a reference dictionary (e.g. the grammatical category of the word, all the multiple senses a word can have, information about its use, etc.); rather, definitions are very often edited in an ironic and informal way. Although it does not give a linguistically informed perspective on the linguistic features mentioned, the *Urban Dictionary* provides useful information about the speaker's perspective. In addition, its informality can be seen as an added value to the naturalness of speakers' judgements, which will be free of any formality constraint and willingness to sound informed and educated.

The trend in the UD is similar to the one found in the main dictionaries of English: not all 2PL forms are dedicated an entry. *You two, you three, you four* are not mentioned, probably because their form is rather standard, their meaning clear and do not belong to any slang.

*Yous(e)* is defined in one entry as 'a grammatical necessity which is sadly lacking in the English Language' (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Youse>, October 2019). In the same entry, a comparison is drawn with other European languages in which one can find a linguistically codified difference between singular and plural *you*. A further comparison is made with Southern American English where *you all* is used with the same function as *yous(e)*, i.e. the expression of plurality. The other entries for *yous(e)* in the *Urban Dictionary* add further details, which are summarised in the list below, about the geography of the phenomenon, its usage, and the (often negative) attitude of the users towards it. According to the users of the *Urban Dictionary*, *yous(e)* is:

- an Australian term of Bogan origins ('Bogan' is Australian and New Zealand slang used to indicate people who are considered unrefined or unsophisticated)
- a local dialect in-group marker (see section 2.2) used in Neston/Little Neston (Cheshire), Parkgate and Ness (UK)
- used in South Philadelphia, Northern New Jersey, Philadelphia and Boston
- something heard from the least educated people
- the 'pinnacle of ignorant grammar'

Similarly to reference dictionaries, in the UD as well *you all* and *y'all* are treated as

synonyms and as Southern US second person pronouns that express plurality. Some users also claim that *you all* and *y'all* are not used only by the uneducated, despite the general tendency to believe so.

The 2PL form *you guys* is defined in the UD as an ‘informal, plebeian’ way of addressing a group of people with no specification of gender despite the formally male noun *guys*. The users manifest the feeling that it is gaining popularity among the highly educated and even in the Southern varieties of American English where the local form *y'all* would be normally used. More prescriptive accounts define *you guys* as a ‘bad-enough’ term that becomes a complete ‘vulgar aberration’ in its double-marked variant *yous(e) guys*, which is often heard in Long Island. An interesting perspective on *you guys* is given by a user who points out that the attitude of the speaker who uses *you guys* towards the interlocutors is ‘often angry and upset’. This highlights a pragmatic use of *you guys* as an outgroup marker that is also confirmed by the analysis of corpus data (cf. chapter 7) and that is not mentioned in either dictionaries or grammars of English except for Quirk *et al.* (1985) (see section 2.4.7 below). The tendency to use *you guys* in a derogatory way for out-group marking is also supported in this entry of the UD by some examples of conversion of the nominal expression *you guys* into a verb, as in (5) below. The use of *you guys* as a verb is clear from the morphology *-ed* and *-ing*, whereas its derogatory use can be inferred from the context.

- (5) ‘Work sucked today. I got YG’d (*you guysed*)’  
‘She is always YG’ing me (*you guysing* me)’

*You lot* is generally described as a synonym of *you people* and *you guys*, therefore of a plural second person pronoun with no further specification about the geography or its connotation.

*You people* is defined as the plural of *you*, although it apparently implies a reference to ethnic minorities in the US, such as African Americans, Latinos and other minorities that have become more and more implied in the reference over time. One user defines *you people* as an expression used to address ‘others that are not of your race’, thus working as an outgroup marker, similarly to *you guys*. Outgroup marking of 2PL forms belonging to the category *you* + NP-PL is a function that is also highlighted in the analysis of corpus data (cf. chapter 7), although not mentioned in reference dictionaries or grammars besides Quirk *et al.* (1985).

Finally, *you ones* is not mentioned in the UD, although the reduced forms *you'uns* and *yinz* are. The former is described as a plural pronoun of the southern and central Appalachia. Historically, *you'uns* is believed to have evolved from the phrase *you ones* which was supposedly used by Scots-Irish immigrants to the US. *Yinz* is, instead, widely recognised to be a plural form of *you* of the Pittsburgh area. It is often labelled 'illiterate' and 'extremely ugly'.

#### 2.4.7 2PL forms in reference grammars

If the representation of 2PL forms in dictionaries of English is already scant and fragmentary, reference grammars do not drift away from the tendency to treat 2PL forms as secondary-importance features. The most accurate account of 2PL forms is given in Biber *et al.* (1999), probably as a consequence of the priority given to the analysis spoken language. In Biber *et al.* (1999), five of the 2PL forms identified in section 2.1 are at least mentioned: *yous*, *you all (y'all)*, *you guys* and *you two*. These 2PL forms are all described as means of marking plural reference explicitly on the second person. They are dialectal, regional forms that are typically used in informal exchanges. The only geographical information is given about *yous*, which is said to be used in Northern Ireland and in the North-East of the US, and, less specifically, about *you all* and *you two*, which are shown to occur more frequently in the American English variety compared to British English (see table 3 below). *You all* and *you two* are also the only two forms for which frequency information were made available.

**Table 3 – Frequencies of *you all/y'all* and *you two* (pmw) (Biber *et al.* 1999: 330)**

	<i>You all + Y'all</i>	<i>You two</i>
British English	50 pmw	40 pmw
American English	150 pmw	20 pmw

Table 3 above displays how, first of all, the forms *you all/y'all* are more frequent than *you two*. *You all/y'all* are three times as frequent in American English as in British English, whereas *you two* is twice as frequent in British English as in American English, which highlights some regional-specific tendencies that will be supported by the analysis of corpus data later in chapters 5 and 6.

Quirk *et al.* (1985) only mentions three forms: *youse*, *you all* and the category

*you* + NP-PL exemplified by *you people* and *you boys*. *Youse* is relegated to a footnote of a section on marking number on pronouns (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 344) and defined as a low prestige plural form. *Youse* is also said to be used in Northern US and Liverpool and Glasgow in the UK. The use of *you all* and *y'all* is attributed to the Southern varieties of American English independently of the social level of the speaker. This is an important point that was already made in an entry of the *Urban Dictionary* (see section 2.4 above), given that 2PL forms are generally believed to be features belonging to lower-class, uneducated speech (see section 2.4 above). The category *you* + NP-PL is mentioned in a section on the forms of vocatives (1985: 774). For the first time, there is an attempt in reference sources to characterise 2PL forms as expressing the attitude of the speaker: as some users suggest in the *Urban Dictionary* as well, the category of 2PL forms *you* + NP-PL is generally used to create 'unfavourable epithets' such as *you bastard*, *you coward*, *you fatty*, *you idiot*, etc. (1985: 774). The tendency for 2PL forms to express the speaker's attitude towards their interlocutors will be addressed in detail and supported with corpus evidence in the sections on the analysis of data (chapters 4-7).

Finally, in Huddleston and Pullum *et al.* (2002), only *you all* finds a mention in a section on compound pronouns (2002: 427) and NPs in vocative functions (2002: 522). It is specified that *you all* is used in Southern US and that it is considered a compound pronoun because the universal *all* does not work as an adjunct of the expression but as a necessary piece of it. In other words, *you all* is considered a fixed expression that does not allow any item to occur between *you* and *all*. This will be shown to be true of other 2PL forms considered in this study, with grammaticalization being advocated as the major force behind the formation of compound 2PL forms (cf. chapter 3).

### **2.4.8 Summary**

Reference sources of the English language such as grammars and dictionaries treat 2PL forms differently from less formal approaches to linguistic discussion such as the *Urban Dictionary*. The main reason for this is to be found in the non-standardness of 2PL forms, and the general tendency to base reference grammars and dictionaries on the standard variety of English, which often means 'written English' (see 2.5 below).

However, this approach brings two main consequences: it looks like 2PL forms do not exist in the language, whereas, as quantitative data show, their use is widespread in all the 20 varieties of English sampled in the corpus (see section 8.1). This approach has led to considering 2PL forms as features of secondary importance, hence also a lack of thorough studies on their forms, frequencies and uses. Along the same lines, learners of English as a second language are generally not provided with the whole picture on the pronominal system in English, and probably come to know about 2PL forms only when they come in contact with natural-occurring English in everyday conversation.

The few descriptions of 2PL forms in reference grammars and dictionaries mostly concern their primary function as plural second person pronouns, their informality and dialectal character and some information about the regional area in which they are used: *yous(e)* is described as a feature of Liverpool and Glasgow in the UK, Irish English, American English and Australian English that can also be used with singular reference and as a possessive determiner. However, it is not explained why a pronoun marked for plurality would be used for singular reference, also considering that the prototypical singular second person pronoun would be *you*. *You all* and *y'all* are considered to be Southern US pronouns.

It is in the grammar by Quirk *et al.* (1985) that a first account of the pragmatic functions of 2PL forms is provided: the category *you* + NP-PL is observed to be used to negatively connotate the addressees (e.g. *you bastards*, *you idiots*), therefore as an out-group marker (Quirk *et al.* 1985).

Frequency and historical information about 2PL forms in dictionaries and grammars seem to be rare and imprecise. The frequencies of use are only specified for *you all* and *you two* in Biber *et al.* (1999) with an attempt to compare their uses between the British and American English varieties. Historical information is specified only for *yous(e)* and *you all* in the *Collins Dictionary* with graphs about the frequency trends of the two forms from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. It appears that both forms were particularly common in the 18<sup>th</sup> century but then became less and less common over the 19<sup>th</sup> century until today, with the frequencies of *yous(e)* displaying a slight increase in the 2000s. However, it is not specified what kind of data were used to inform the graphic representations.

Unsurprisingly, the portrait of 2PL forms in learner's dictionaries is even more scant and minimal. Only the two forms *yous(e)* and *you all* are mentioned with their entries being limited to their characterisation as non-standard, dialectal plural forms of

the second person.

Notwithstanding its informal approach that lacks the methodology normally used in scholarly work, the *Urban Dictionary* provides the most useful information regarding the use of 2PL forms. Seven 2PL forms find an entry in the *Urban Dictionary* (i.e. *yous(e)*, *you all*, *y'all*, *you guys*, *you lot*, *you people*, *you'uns*, *yinz*), which are compiled with information about the geography, functions, sociolinguistic and the speaker's evaluative information. *Yous(e)*, for example, is described as an in-group marker, whereas *you guys* and *you people* tend to perform out-group marking. This is in line with what Quirk *et al.* (1985) suggest of the category *you* NP-PL to which both *you guys* and *you people* formally belong. Evaluation judgements about 2PL forms are also inferable from the description that users make of the forms. Often, 2PL forms are considered to be “ignorant grammar”, used by “least educated people”, “ugly” and “illiterate”. On the other hand, users are also noting that 2PL forms such as *you all*, *y'all* and *you guys* are spreading to highly educated social classes as well as to other geographical areas than the ones where they are most common.

In sum, the description of 2PL forms in both official and unofficial sources of linguistic reference reveals a partial and fragmentary knowledge about the functions and uses of the forms. Reference grammars and dictionaries fail to recognise both the existence of some 2PL forms and their functions besides the expression of plurality. Even when the effort to display the frequencies of occurrence of some 2PL forms is made (cf. Biber *et al.*(1999)), there is no attempt to account for the pragmatics of 2PL forms, and their sociolinguistic value in terms of defining the relationship between the speaker and the addressee(s) as a consequence of ‘social group marking’. Pragmatic and sociolinguistic information, on the other hand, are pointed out in informal sources such as the *Urban Dictionary*, whose claims are based on the opinions and intuitions of the users that compile the entries.

## **2.5 The concept of non-standardness in relation to 2PL forms**

As can be noticed in the definitions presented so far, 2PL forms are defined as non-standard features due to their dialectal and informal character. The question arises

therefore as to what exactly ‘standard’ means and whether there is such thing as Standard English. Understanding what Standard English means is also central to a work that aims to compare the regional varieties of English across the world.

Standard English is certainly a convenient label to quickly refer to English *as we learn it*, i.e. a language characterised by a set of conventions that are currently taught in schools, written in grammars, and shared by a wide variety of people (native speakers, users, or learners). Yet, the linguistic debate around the label ‘standard’ is a delicate one, since it is linked with the level of social prestige and the concept of acceptability, and both have social consequences.

Among scholars there is apparently no general consensus on what the definition of standard English should actually be. According to *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (2000), for example, Standard English is a highly elastic and variable term, since it depends on both the region and the variety that it is being contrasted with i.e. something that is considered ‘standard’ in one variety may not be considered so in another, and the other way around. As Crowley (1999) points out, there has always been some confusion about both the terms *standard* and *English*. Concerning the term *standard*, its meaning ranges from indicating a variety of language that is internally uniform to identifying the variety that represents the highest level of excellence. As for the word *English*, the main problem is that many have failed to distinguish between spoken and written language (cf. for example Honey (1997)), and have, instead, identified standard English exclusively with written English, thus overlooking the fact that speech and writing are not the same thing. In fact, not all writing is in fact in the standard language (Bex and Watts 1999). Similarly, Trudgill (1992) states that not only spoken and written language share the same structure, but also that spoken language takes its features and norms from written language. Later, though, Trudgill and Hannah (2013: 2) acknowledge the differences between written and spoken language by stating that: “Although Standard English is the kind of English in which all native speakers learn to read and write, most people do not actually speak it.”

For many years the assumption that a standard variety of English – characterised by a uniformity of orthographic, typographic, grammatical and lexical practices – actually exists has been a widespread idea, with this assumption being very often linked

to the belief that standard English constitutes a superior and prestige variety, since it represents the language spoken by the educated class (Davis 1999).

How did the whole issue of standard English begin? Many believe that the first sixty years of the eighteenth century have been crucial to the setting up of the notion of a *standard national language*, since those were the years when a tendency to establish strong and explicit connections between nation-state and a national language was born (Watts 1999).

Underlying any conception of standard language there is the idea – mainly common within the nineteenth- and twentieth-century linguistic tradition – that languages exist in *canonical* forms that are legitimised, even though the continuous changes a language undergoes are quite obvious. This is what Milroy (1999) suggests of languages such as Latin, Greek and Sanskrit – and later English, Spanish, and French – that used to be studied in their standard, *classical* or canonical forms (Milroy 1999: 17):

[Languages] exist at their highest level of abstraction in standardised forms, and these abstract objects are, in principle, uniform states. Yet, apparently paradoxically, all languages, including these major languages, are observed to be variable within themselves and not uniform at all, and they are also in a continuous state of change.

According to Wales (1996) as well as Milroy (1999), standard languages are only fixed idealizations and do not represent the language reality, where even those who are believed to speak standard language will never in fact conform to the idealised expectations.

As already mentioned, standard language is very often related to two other main concepts: the one of ‘prestige’, and the ‘correct’ usage of language. Very few authors would deny that the standard is the prestige variety, i.e. the variety that is accorded a degree of respect within the society, and that is, therefore, thought to be the most appropriate for serious public communication, especially if written.



Historically, we can say that Standard English was selected (though of course, unlike many other languages, not by any overt or conscious decision) as the variety to become the standard variety precisely because it was the variety associated with the social group with the highest degree of power, wealth and prestige. Subsequent developments have reinforced its social character: the fact that it has been employed as the dialect of an education to which pupils, especially in earlier centuries, have had differential access depending on their social-class background. (Trudgill (1999: 124))

From this perspective, standard language acquires a strong social character, since it is closely related to the social hierarchy in a way that, as already shown by Trudgill (1995), the further down the social scale one goes, the more non-standard forms one finds. As a consequence of being a socially charged language, the standard variety becomes also a language of ‘social exclusion’ (Watts 1999: 73) for those who do not, or cannot, conform to it.

The idea of a correct use of language has its origins during the industrial revolution, which saw the emerging of a new middle class which was insecure of its own social position. This had an effect on language as well, pushing people towards the search for those forms that were the marks of politeness that characterised the speech of the upper classes. The awareness of social status differences, thus, led the middle class to rely on grammars and pronunciation dictionaries for guidance in their linguistic behaviour, to the point that specific issues of usage such as the choice of *who* or *that* became ‘morally, socially or politically charged’ (Klein 1994: 43, cited in Cheshire 1999). The notion of correctness in standard English brings along a great deal of prescriptivism, together with the idea that words have *true* meanings (Davis 1999) and forms, that can be fixed by setting down both orthography and denotations. More precisely, in a prescriptivist approach lies the assumption that certain linguistic forms are correct because they express the intended meaning in the best possible way. Thus, those forms have to be encouraged, whereas deviations from the correct forms lead to imprecision of meaning, and, consequently, to social chaos. A correct usage of language, therefore, also means adopting a good social behaviour and showing to be a good citizen.

A milder, more democratic approach to correctness is presented by Quirk (1985). He rejects the ideas of the existence of both a single standard and of a consequent single notion of correctness, favouring a more elastic concept that encompasses linguistic variation:

There are few enough (not least among professional linguists) that would claim the existence of a single standard within any one of the ENL1 countries [i.e. countries where English is the L1]: plenty that would even deny both the possibility and the desirability of such a thing. Recent emphasis has been on multiple and variable standards (insofar as the use of the word 'standard' is ventured): different standards for different occasions for different people—and each as 'correct' as any other. (Quirk 1985: 2–3)

Already in the 1950, Robert A. Hall had challenged the traditional views of correctness. In his *Leave Your Language Alone!* he stated that there was 'nothing good or bad, correct or incorrect, grammatical or ungrammatical' in how general people were using their language (cited in Milroy 1999: 19). Along the same lines, Kachru (1985) raises the question of the worldwide development of varieties of English, proposing the idea of the *social construction* of the notion of correctness that is strictly related to mutual intelligibility.

[T]he pragmatics of the uses of the English language can be understood only if a dynamic polymodel approach is adopted. What we should recognize is that at one level we have an internationally understood English, in spite of its local characteristics. In addition, there are several types of Englishes, for example in South Asia or parts of Africa, which are not meant necessarily for the consumption of a native speaker of English. They have their national or regional functions. On the cline of Englishness these may be low, but functionally they serve the purpose of communication as does any other human language. (Kachru (1985: 123))

Although scholars such as Quirk and Kachru claim a new conception of standard language which can be fragmented into different – also non-native – varieties, the idea

that standard English as a single variety exists has long stood in the minds of people thanks to what Milroy (1999: 18) calls *standard-language culture*:

The awareness of a superordinate standard variety is kept alive in the public mind by various channels (including the writing system and education in literacy) that tend to inculcate and maintain this knowledge – not always in a very clear or accurate form – in speakers' minds. The main effect of these is to equate the standard language – or what is believed to be the standard language – with the language as a whole and with 'correct' usage in that language, and this notion of correctness has a powerful role in the maintenance of the standard ideology through prescription.

In sum, standard English can be considered a variety among other varieties of English, though it is an unusual variety with respect to a number of parameters: first, it cannot be linked to a particular geographical area (even though its origins are thought to be in the South-East of England (Bex and Watts (1999))); second, it does not have an associated accent – although the RP is normally considered the standard accent, in fact very few speakers actually speak it; third, there is no continuum with other varieties of English, since it constitutes an all or nothing affair, i.e. at one point a feature is said to be either standard or non-standard; fourth, it is the most important variety from a social, intellectual and cultural point of view, therefore it is, as already said, a 'social variety' (Trudgill 1999) (see also McWhorter 2002).

Given the focus on the world varieties of English, the approach of this work towards the standard is, of course, one that considers it a fluid concept that takes into account regional differences and values them as much as any other variety. It is, therefore, not linked with the notion of correctness or social value. The purpose of this work is not to judge the acceptability of 2PL forms and their uses in the world varieties of English, but to stress the richness they bring to the language. As already mentioned, the label 'standard' will nevertheless be used to indicate the prototypical uses of the pronoun *you* in comparison with 2PL forms.

## 2.6 Grammaticalization, pragmaticalization, intersubjectification

One of the purposes of my investigation of 2PL forms is to find out whether 2PL forms display any sign of linguistic evolution in their use. In order to do so, one can look for linguistic clues that suggest that 2PL forms are involved in processes of grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and (inter)subjectification.

The most traditional definition of grammaticalization was formulated by Kuryłowicz (1975: 52) and focuses on the degree of grammaticality of a linguistic item: grammaticalization is at play when a morpheme transits from a lexical to a grammatical status or from a less grammatical to a more grammatical status (for example, the development of the adverbial suffix *-ly* out of derivational *-like* which, in turn, developed from Old English lexical word for 'form, body' *lic* (Nevalainen 1997). However, over time and depending on the linguistic approach adopted, the concept of grammaticalization has stretched in different directions and become a more sophisticated, far from uniform, concept. Bybee *et al.* (1994), for example, identify the frequency of occurrence as the driving force of grammaticalization. Boye and Harder (2007), on the other hand, define grammaticalization in terms of pragmatics and competition for discourse prominence, with grammaticalization being a diachronic process that generates linguistic expressions that are less prominent, i.e. parts of incoming information that are not highly prioritised in the process of understanding.

Although grammaticalization is generally understood as being a diachronic process, it is also claimed that it can be identified through the analysis of synchronic data (Croft 2003, Langacker 2005, Traugott and Trousdale 2010). A number of mechanisms of change are identified in the literature as indicating that grammaticalization has been or is going on. Among the most frequently mentioned are phonological reduction, semantic change, reanalysis and obligatorification (Hopper and Traugott 1993, Bybee *et al.* 1994, Haspelmath 1998, Fischer 2007). Phonological reduction, also called phonological attrition, is a process that involves the loss of phonetic substance of a linguistic item. English examples of phonological reduction are *I'm going to* that becomes *I'm gonna* and, sometimes, even *I'mma* (also *Imma* and *Ima*).

Semantic change, sometimes referred to as semantic bleaching or desemanticization (Heine and Kuteva 2002), can be observed when the semantics of an expression shifts as a result of grammaticalization. The terms "semantic bleaching" and "desemanticization" suggest a "loss" of meaning. They are generally used to identify a shift from a more lexical to a more grammatical meaning of an expression, such as auxiliary verbs that derive from lexical sources (*be going to*, *have to*) or prepositions that often derive from body parts (e.g. *back* (Svorou 1993)). However, as observed by many scholars such as Heine *et al.* (1991) and Sweetser (1988), the idea of "loss" of meaning is controversial, as grammaticalization also involves enrichment of grammatical meaning: for example, *have* gained an obligation meaning in *have to*. The term "semantic change" seems to be more appropriate to describe what happens to the semantics of the expression that undergoes grammaticalization. For example, in the collocation *pretty ugly*, the word *pretty* has not "lost" its original meaning of "nice, beautiful", which is retained in the contexts in which *pretty* is used as an adjective. The semantics of *pretty* has shifted into meaning "moderately, rather" when it was grammaticalized as a hedging adverb.

Reanalysis is defined by Langacker (1977: 58) as a process that involves a change in the structure and/or class of an expression that is not altered in its form. Among the possible changes, he lists boundary shifts (e.g. *hamburg-er* > *ham-burger*) and syntactic and semantic reformulation (1977: 64), as happens, for example, with the future auxiliary *will* deriving from lexical *will*, which displays changes in both the semantics (i.e. the expression of volition evolves into the expression of futurity) and syntax (i.e. fixed position in the sentence). Related to the process of reanalysis is obligatorification, which refers to the increased constraint in the use of a grammaticalized item: since *will* developed into an auxiliary, it has to precede the verb. According to Lehmann (1995: 164), obligatorification is the opposite of "the free choice of items according to the communicative intentions of the speaker". Although it is indicated by Lehmann (1982, 1995) as one of the parameters of grammaticalization, obligatorification is considered as a predictable by-product of reanalysis and decategorialisation, i.e. the loss in morphosyntactic properties of the original expression that has undergone grammaticalization (Heine and Narrog 2011). Obligatorification is, therefore, not necessary for grammaticalization to take place (Heine and Kuteva 2007,

Heine and Narrog 2011), and nor are the rest of the mechanisms if considered independently of one another, as such changes happen all the time in the language (Bybee *et al.* 1994). Based on these observations, Newmeyer (1998) even goes as far as suggesting that grammaticalization as a phenomenon does not actually exist. Grammaticalization is generally believed to be a unidirectional process (except for scholars such as Newmeyer 1998, Beths 1999, Janda 2001, Norde 2009, Nuyts 2013), which is to say that once a lexical item has become phonologically reduced and lost its original semantic properties, there is no way to retrieve them (cf. Haspelmath 1999, Bybee *et al.* 1994). The reasons why grammaticalization happens at all can be currently summarised into two main approaches: in one grammaticalization is guided by the frequency of use that turns some lexical items into new grammatical constructions (Bybee and Hopper 2001, Torres-Cacoullous and Walker 2009); in the other, grammaticalization is mainly motivated by the speaker's need for optimal rhetorical solutions (Waltereit 2006).

As also pointed out by Wales (1996), one of the domains that has been generally neglected in the studies on grammaticalization is personal deixis, i.e. personal pronouns and person markers, which belong to the most conservative categories of grammar (Heine and Narrog 2011: 7). In the analysis of 2PL forms in this thesis, the three main processes of grammaticalization, i.e. phonological reduction, semantic change and reanalysis, will be used to show that 2PL forms are undergoing grammaticalization, which is here intended in its traditional definition without reference to the pragmatic implications of the linguistic change of 2PL forms. The evolution in the pragmatics of 2PL forms will be, instead, considered part of the pragmaticalization process (Erman and Kotsinas 1993, Aijmer 1997, Diewald 2011). The term 'pragmaticalization' was first introduced to refer to the diachronic development of discourse markers and modal particles (Erman and Kotsinas 1993), which can be hardly subsumed under the label of grammaticalization (Zayzon 2009, cited in Diewald 2011). The difference between grammaticalization and pragmaticalization began to become sharper when Aijmer (1997: 2), through the analysis of *I think*, showed how the former process mainly concerns the evolution of lexical expressions into grammatical forms or structures, whereas the latter concerns linguistic expressions that have developed into tools for expressing the speaker's attitude towards the hearer. Along the same lines, Günthner

(1999: 437) analyses the development of the German conjunction *obwohl* into a discourse marker and highlights its newly developed conversational function deriving from a grammatical one. However, Günthner (1999) also recognises that the development of discourse particles resembles the mechanisms of grammaticalization. Moreover, as explained below, the process of evolution of a lexical or grammatical expression into one that is used to express the speaker's attitude and/or perform a conversational function is sometimes referred to as (inter)subjectification.

As already mentioned, in the analysis of 2PL forms the processes of grammaticalization and pragmaticalization will be kept separate for two different reasons: first, the 2PL forms that appeared to be most grammaticalized are not necessarily the same that seem to be the most pragmaticalized; second, the pragmaticalization of 2PL forms is much more extensive than their grammaticalization. This indicates a strong tendency in the specialisation of the functions of 2PL forms, which is best described as intersubjective (Traugott 2014, see below) and appears to be intrinsically linked with the concepts of in-group and out-group marking.

The parameters that will be considered as clues to the pragmaticalization of 2PL forms will be their occurrence in pragmatically charged contexts (specifically, contexts in which politeness or a contrast between the interlocutors is expressed) together with the occurrence of *attention-getting* 2PL forms (see section 3.4 for a full definition), which in some cases resemble proper pragmatic markers rather than vocatives. Pragmatic markers are here defined as linguistic items that seem to have little propositional meaning but, in Beeching's (2016: 1) words, "oil the wheels of conversational social interaction" and help the negotiation of meaning between the interlocutors. Pragmatic markers are fundamental in spoken language, which is perfectly in line with the spoken character of 2PL forms. Prototypical pragmatic markers are expressions such as *well, you know, like, I mean* (Beeching 2016: 1). 2PL forms were observed to be sometimes used as pragmatic markers as well, thus free from the pronominal function from which they originate. For example, *y(')all* can be used to seek the interlocutors' approval without necessarily aiming to refer to them as an attention-getter would (see section 6.2.4). One main way of distinguishing between pragmatic-marking 2PL forms and pronominal 2PL forms is the locus of occurrence in the sentence: pragmatic-marking 2PL forms tend to occur in the right periphery of the sentence, which

is where pragmatic markers of intersubjectivity (see below) generally tend to occur (Traugott 2013).

A final argument employed to support the grammaticalization and pragmaticalization of 2PL forms concerns the difference with the standard pronoun *you*. I have analysed a randomised sample of 2,500 occurrences of *you* using the same analytical frame used to study the functions of 2PL forms. The aim was to highlight any significant differences that would further confirm how 2PL forms have developed into forms with specialised functions that are not expressed by *you*.

If grammaticalization and pragmaticalization are used as labels to refer to the grammatical and pragmatic changes undergone by 2PL forms, (inter)subjectification will be called on to refer to the current tendencies of use of 2PL forms as a result of the two processes. However, it is necessary to define how intersubjectification is intended here, since the literature about it is extensive and very diverse when it comes to defining what (inter)subjectification is and what the parameters to recognise it are.

The main problem with the definition of intersubjectification is its relationship with the similar concept of subjectification. In the literature, subjectification is generally given two definitions: a more general one that concerns the intrinsic subjectivity of language, whereby the presence of the speaker can always be identified, be it through the choice of words, perspective and attitude towards the propositional content (Benveniste 1971, Lyons 1982, Traugott 1989, Langacker 1991, 2008). A second definition of subjectification considers it as a more specific process involving the semantics of a linguistic element (Traugott 1989, Traugott and Dasher 2002). At the end of the process, a morpheme, word or phrase has acquired new semantic traits that encode the speaker's perspective and attitude, shifting from objective (propositional) to subjective meaning (Traugott 1989). Among the grammatical expressions that typically encode the speaker's stance are: auxiliaries expressing deontic or epistemic modality such as *may*, *will*, *can*, adverbs such as *actually*, *really*, *frankly*, discourse markers such as *in fact*, *well* (Traugott and Dasher 2002). Among subjective lexical expressions are speech-act verbs such as *state*, *insist*, *hypothesise*, *request* as well as adjectives expressing the speaker's stance such as *bloody* (Traugott and Dasher 2002).



With intersubjectification (Benveniste 1971), the semantics of a word or expression further shifts from the speaker's perspective to the speaker's attention to the addressee's face (Traugott 2003). Thus, according to Traugott, intersubjectification originates from subjectification, both of them being primarily semantic and only secondarily pragmatic processes (Traugott 1989, 2003, 2006). For a word or expression to become intersubjective, a pragmatic value has to be added to its use and this has to become conventionalised. In other words, Traugott advocates that in order for an expression to be considered intersubjectified, it has to have developed into a new form-meaning pairing that is distinguished from both the objective and subjective form-meaning pairing. As far as English is concerned, Traugott (2006: 37) mentions the development of subjectified discourse markers such as *perhaps* and *sort of* into hedges used to reduce the assertiveness of an utterance, thus the imposition on the addressee, as examples of intersubjectification. However, in Fanego's (2006) analysis of Spanish *de hecho*, semantic, phonological and morphosyntactical differences can only be highlighted between objective and subjective uses of the adverb, yet not between subjective and intersubjective uses. In comparison to its objective use, subjectified *de hecho* displayed special intonation, the tendency to occur in clause-initial position, which is not normally occupied by adverbs in Spanish, the loss of the possibility to be focalised in clefts and coordinated with other manner adverbials. Intersubjectified *de hecho*, on the other hand, did not display any intonation, syntactic or contextual difference from subjectified *de hecho*, in line with the analysis of *in fact* proposed by Aijmer and Simon-Vanderbergen (2004). In response, Traugott might still argue that subjective and intersubjective uses are semantically different, therefore representing a different form-meaning pair. The analysis of 2PL forms will show that it is not possible to clearly distinguish between subjectified and intersubjectified uses as they often overlap.

Similarly to subjectification, also intersubjectification is considered to be inherent in communication, especially in cognitive studies, to the point that all language can be said to be intersubjective since it is successful only if the speaker pays attention to the addressee's needs (cf. Schrifin 1990, Nuyts 2001, Verhagen 2005, Langacker 2006). However, linguistically, some expressions encode a higher degree of intersubjective meaning than other, more procedural ones. One can easily capture the

difference between the function of linkers and connectives such as *moreover*, *and*, *in sum* and highly intersubjectified elements such as expletives, which work both as in-group and out-group markers, euphemisms, honorifics, etc. (Traugott 2003, 2011). Although a conceptual difference between non-intersubjective and intersubjective linguistic expressions is evident, a model for the linguistic operationalisation of intersubjectivity (i.e. the criteria that allow the identification of the phenomenon) is yet to be found. Traugott (2011) aims to find the linguistic markers of intersubjectification, but comes to the conclusion that the research in the field is too various and too closely related to the particular expression(s) analysed to be able to build a model of how intersubjectification is operationalised. What is clear, however, is that intersubjectification happens when pragmatic implicatures end up becoming a part of the semantics of the linguistic expression, that it can take place alongside grammaticalization, although not necessarily, and that intersubjectified elements tend to occur in the periphery of the clause (Onodera and Suzuki 2007, Traugott 2013).

As already mentioned, for the present work, the label '(inter)subjective' will be used to refer to the result of the changes undergone by 2PL forms and their current tendency to be used as conversational tools for expressing the speaker's attitude as well as establishing and managing the speaker-hearer relationship. For the same reason, I will not adopt Traugott's perspective in the strict sense of expecting a new form-meaning pairing for (inter)subjectified uses of 2PL forms, since I believe that the character of 2PL forms is better captured by a gradient approach to the description of data, similarly to what other studies such as Wichmann *et al.* (2011) and Ghesqui re (2011) have done. I will also argue that, at least in the case of 2PL forms, (inter)subjectification should be considered as a sub-process of pragmaticalization rather than an independent one (see section 8.4).

## **2.7 The constructionalist approach and 2PL forms**

The issue of the fuzziness of the boundaries between grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and intersubjectification can be addressed by adopting a constructionalist perspective. In the constructionalist approach, all the levels of language

analysis (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics) are integrated. This brings together the two main traditions in the literature about grammaticalization: the one that considers language change as involving increase in dependency (obligatorification) and reduction of various aspects of the original expression (phonological, semantic) (cf. Lehmann 1995, Haspelmath 2004) and the most recent tradition according to which grammaticalization includes expansion of semantic-pragmatic, syntactic and collocational range (cf. Himmelmann 2004).

Constructionalization is the label given to the processes involved in linguistic change observed from a constructionalist perspective. Constructionalization, as defined by Traugott and Trousdale (2014), is based on the concept of "construction": a form-meaning pairing in which the association between form and meaning is arbitrary and conventional, i.e. symbolic and shared among a group of speakers. Constructions can be classified according to their size, phonological specificity, type of concept and schematicity (Langacker 2005, 2008, Traugott 2007, Bybee 2010, Trousdale 2012). Size indicates whether a construction is atomic or monomorphemic (e.g. *red*, *data*, *if*, *-s*) or complex (e.g. *on top of*). Phonological specificity concerns the degree of specification of the phonology of a construction, e.g. *red* is fully specified whereas more schematic and abstract constructions such as subject-auxiliary inversion is not phonologically specified. Many schemas are intermediate, i.e. partially specified, such as the nominalisation strategy *V-ment*. The type of concept refers to the two poles of contentful (i.e. lexical) and procedural (i.e. grammatical). However, the majority of the constructions combine the two types. As Traugott and Trousdale (2014: 12) point out, the distinction between contentful and procedural is not only gradient but subject to change. Even procedural constructions, such as deictics, can be associated with contentful meanings, as happens, for example, with the verbs *come* and *go* (Traugott and Trousdale 2014: 12). Finally, schematicity indicates the degree of abstraction of a construction. Kemmer (2003: 78) also defines it as "how cognitively entrenched patterns of experience are." Constructions are very rich, imbued with a great deal of pragmatic meaning, as well as phonetic features which are rarely replicated outside of the particular speech event. They are organised in a network (Hudson 2007), which is far from the more traditional view of language as being composed of a grammar plus dictionary (Hudson 2007: 509).

The constructionalist approach to language change is usage-based meaning that

change is change in usage. And the locus of change is the construct, i.e. an instance of use. In other words, linguistic change is located in speaker-hearer interaction and negotiated between speakers in the course of interaction (Milroy 1992: 36). According to the constructionalization paradigm there are two types of linguistic change: a first type includes the changes that affect features of an existing construction: semantics (*will* intention > *will* future), morphology (*will* > *'ll*), collocational constraints, etc. These changes do not necessarily lead to a new construction. They are called "constructional changes". The second type indicates the creation of a new form-meaning pairing and is labelled "constructionalization". For an innovation to count as change it must have been replicated across speakers, resulting in conventionalization i.e. the integration of the innovation in a tradition of speaking and/or writing. Frequency is considered a determining factor in language change, but also a problematic one since it is not clear what level of frequency is sufficient for pattern storage and entrenchment of a construct (cf. Blumenthal-Dramé 2012). Moreover, as Clark and Trousdale (2009: 38) suggest, the necessary frequency for entrenchment is "relative, not categorical or universal".

The mechanisms underlying linguistic change in constructionalization are not language-specific but rather related to the general characteristics of the human cognitive system. As Bybee (2001: 1990) points out:

By postulating a finite set of mechanisms attributable to human neuromotor, perceptual, and cognitive abilities, which interact with linguistic substance in acquisition and in language use, a range of possible language structures and units will emerge.

Two driving mechanisms in constructionalization are productivity and analogy. Productivity concerns the extensibility of schemas (Haiman 1994, Himmelmann 2004). For example, past tense is productively marked by affixation (*-ed*) and sometimes marked by stem change (*drink - drank*). When new verbs are introduced in the language, their past is usually formed by the more productive and "regular" method of affixation *-ed* (Traugott and Trousdale 2014: 17-18). Much work on productivity is concerned with frequency. Routinization and automatization (Pawley and Syder 1983, Haiman 1994) resulting from frequent use and repetition are key factors, together with another hallmark of increased productivity that is increased collocational range (Traugott and Trousdale 2014: 18). Analogy is a mechanism linked to the cognitive ability of

analogical thinking whereby the mind grasps the similarities between objects, or, in the specific case, between linguistic constructs. Analogy is, therefore, a precursor of linguistic change (cf. also Fischer 2007), since recognising the similarity between constructs also means that certain constructions can be generalised to other contexts, resulting in increased schematicity and productivity. For example, the past construction *V-ed* can be extended to new verbs such as *google* out of analogy with other regular verbs.

Constructionalization also involves the mechanism of neoanalysis, which corresponds to the traditional label of "reanalysis". Neoanalysis can be observed when a construct has changed in both morphosyntactic form and semantic/pragmatic meaning. Formal changes alone and meaning changes alone cannot constitute constructionalization. An example of neoanalysis cited by Traugott and Trousdale (2014: 15) is the quantifying construction *a lot of*, which was originally interpreted as a partitive construction with the morphosyntactic analysis *a lot – of*. Once the pragmatically invited inference of quantity came to be salient among a group of speakers, it was semanticised, i.e. it became encoded in the semantics of the expression. As a consequence *lot* came to be no longer understood as a measure unit, and the expression was neoanalysed into an inseparable chunk *a lot of* meaning "a great quantity of".

As already mentioned in section 2.6, I will use the concepts of grammaticalization and pragmaticalization in order to highlight the type of functions developed by 2PL forms, i.e. whether they mark grammatical or pragmatic categories. However, the theory of constructionalization (Traugott and Trousdale 2014) will be used in order to provide an overall account of the linguistic development of 2PL forms.

From a constructionalization perspective, 2PL forms, which were born as constructs that expressed plurality (see section 2.4), over time have expanded their reference to include singular referents and mark possession (see chapter 8). The expanded contexts of use of 2PL forms indicate a higher degree of schematicity of the features compared to their original use as plural markers as well as an increased productivity. Underlying the productivity of 2PL forms is the essential use of these forms in an intersubjective way. In other words, it is the expression of intersubjective meaning that might have driven analogic thinking into using 2PL forms when marking

intersubjectivity independently of the functions the forms express on a grammatical level (plural vs. singular and/or possessive) (see chapter 8 for a detailed discussion on the functions of 2PL forms).

## 2.8 Aims and research questions

In sections 2.1-5, I have tried to illustrate what linguistic and social contexts 2PL forms belong to. It was highlighted that the linguistic approach to 2PL forms is generally fragmentary and superficial, despite the fact that 2PL forms are common features in all the regional varieties of English. A major obstacle to the acknowledgement of the existence of 2PL forms and their functions is represented by the concept of ‘standardness’: being 2PL forms used in informal, spoken language, they are considered non-standard, therefore not relevant enough to be included in reference dictionaries or grammars of standard English. Drawing from these considerations, the primary aim of the present work is try to compensate for the lack of information about the forms and functions of 2PL forms in the world varieties of English. I am also interested to see how 2PL forms differ from standard *you*. Therefore, the research questions in relation to the descriptive dimension of the thesis are:

1. How many 2PL forms are there in World Englishes?
2. How frequent are they?
3. How are 2PL forms geographically distributed? Can region-specific preferences be identified?
4. What are the functions of 2PL forms? Do they only mark plurality? What are the pragmatics and semantic prosody of 2PL forms?
5. How do the semantics and pragmatics of 2PL forms differ from standard *you*?

On a more theoretical level, the occurrence of phonologically reduced forms of *you all* and *you ones*, i.e. *y'all*, *yall*, *y(ou)'uns*, *yinz*, together with the fact that in some contexts 2PL forms appear to work as pragmatic markers rather than pronouns, raises further questions (see sections 3.5-6 for a definition of the three phenomena):

6. Is it possible to talk about grammaticalization of 2PL forms?
7. Is it possible to talk about pragmaticalization of 2PL forms?

8. Is it possible to talk about (inter)subjectification of 2PL forms?
9. Is it possible to talk about constructionalization of 2PL forms?

The answers to my research questions will be provided by the analysis of corpus data (see chapter 3 on the methodology). However, the present study does not aim to be a comprehensive account of 2PL forms, mainly because it is a study that draws primarily on synchronic data and would certainly benefit from a deeper analysis of the diachronic dimension, especially as far as the processes of linguistic change such as grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and (inter)subjectification are concerned. Although diachronic data about the frequencies of occurrence of 2PL forms are used to give a sense of when 2PL forms first appeared in English, a proper diachronic analysis of the forms was excluded for reasons of space, but surely represents one way this study can further develop.

Secondly, so little has been said about the forms and functions of 2PL forms in the literature that a single work could not possibly deal with the many linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of all the forms considered here. I will try, as far as possible, to begin to bridge the gap left in the literature by compiling an updated, empirically informed description of how 2PL forms are used in the world varieties of English. This will be done by testing the claims made about 2PL forms in all the sources cited so far against the corpus data. I will then add new analysis dimensions about the functions, semantics and pragmatics of 2PL forms in order to formulate a more accurate description that could be implemented in dictionaries and grammars of English. Finally, I will try to show that second person pronominal forms are not so resistant to change as traditionally believed. As Wales (1996: xii) claims:

Users of English have always created their own ‘systems’ of pronouns or ‘rules’ of use for their own needs and strategies, and continue to do so, often in complete disregard of grammarians’ notions of logic.

# 3 Corpus, data, and methodology

In this section, I will discuss the methodology used in the analysis of 2PL forms in the 20 varieties of English considered in this thesis. The first section 3.1, is dedicated to the description of the corpus, followed by a description of the dataset and how it was obtained (section 3.2). In section 3.3, I will focus on the diatopic perspective and the model used to arrange the varieties of English in the analysis of the data. In section 3.4, I will define the categories used in the analysis of the functions of 2PL forms and what will constitute the evidence to support the grammaticalization and pragmaticalization of 2PL forms. Finally, in section 3.5, I will illustrate the methodology related with the analysis of the collocates and the semantic prosody of 2PL forms.

## 3.1 The corpus

The corpus chosen for my study is the GloWbe corpus: a 1.9-billion-word synchronic corpus sampling language from 20 different varieties of English. Its suitability for the present study centres around three main reasons. The first is its size, thanks to which it is possible to investigate less frequent features such as 2PL forms; the second is the possibility to compare data across geographical varieties which is one of the aims of my investigation; the third is the type of language collected in the corpus, i.e. web



language (forums, blogs, posts, online newspapers and the related users' comments), which represents a category of data that is relatively close to spoken language yet accessible in written form, thus particularly useful when considering 2PL forms, as they are characteristic features of spoken, informal conversation (see section 2.1 and 2.4). Moreover, this is useful for both the authenticity of the data, since it is the speakers themselves that produced the sentences instead of being the result of a transcription process.

The *Corpus of Global Web-Based English* (GloWbe) was collected from 1.8 million web pages (roughly 340,000 websites) in 20 different English-speaking countries (see figure 1 below). The corpus was created by Mark Davies of Brigham Young University and released in 2013 at <https://www.english-corpora.org/glowbe/> [accessed 1 November 2019]. The web pages were collected roughly one year before the release date (December 2012) and post-processed in order to clean the data from the noise that is intrinsic to web data.

As far as the geographical location of data is concerned, it is relevant to ask how well Google can perform in recognising which country a web page comes from. An expected answer would be that it discriminates among the web pages by looking at the country domain in the web address (e.g. *.de*, *.ca*, *.it*). What happens, however, when there is no indication of the country domain, and an international domain such as *.com*, *.org*, *.eu* is rather found? In that case Google will look for other clues: the IP address, any location information that can be spotted on the web page, the web page related links, any relevant information from Google Places. Moreover, Google can at any time get information on where the users interacting on a given web page come from. For example, if Google observes that 95% of the visitors to a web site are from Singapore, and that 95% of the related links are web pages from Singapore, then it will guess that the web site in question is from Singapore. It may not be a perfect technique; however, according to the GloWbe compilers, it has proven to work efficiently in some dialect-oriented searches ([http://corpus.byu.edu/glowbe/?f=textsm\\_e](http://corpus.byu.edu/glowbe/?f=textsm_e)).

Figure 1, below, shows the sections and subsections that were used to compile the corpus. The sections correspond to the 20 varieties of English, whereas the subsections concern the type of source from which the data were gathered: *general*

(which may also include blogs<sup>1</sup>) and *blog* sections; each of these sections is further divided into web sites and web pages. The numbers of words for each section and subsection are also provided in figure 1, below.

**Figure 1 – Number of words in the GloWbe corpus divided by varieties and subsections**

(<http://corpus.byu.edu/glowbe/>)

Country	Code	General (may also include blogs)			(Only) Blogs			Total		
		Web sites	Web pages	Words	Web sites	Web pages	Words	Web sites	Web pages	Words
United States	US	43,249	168,771	<b>253,536,242</b>	48,116	106,385	<b>133,061,093</b>	82,260	275,156	<b>386,809,355</b>
Canada	CA	22,178	81,644	<b>90,846,732</b>	16,745	54,048	<b>43,814,827</b>	33,776	135,692	<b>134,765,381</b>
Great Britain	GB	39,254	232,428	<b>255,672,390</b>	35,229	149,413	<b>131,671,002</b>	64,351	381,841	<b>387,615,074</b>
Ireland	IE	12,978	75,432	<b>80,530,794</b>	5,512	26,715	<b>20,410,027</b>	15,840	102,147	<b>101,029,231</b>
Australia	AU	19,619	81,683	<b>104,716,366</b>	13,516	47,561	<b>43,390,501</b>	28,881	129,244	<b>148,208,169</b>
New Zealand	NZ	11,202	54,862	<b>58,698,828</b>	4,970	27,817	<b>22,625,584</b>	14,053	82,679	<b>81,390,476</b>
India	IN	11,217	76,609	<b>68,032,551</b>	9,289	37,156	<b>28,310,511</b>	18,618	113,765	<b>96,430,888</b>
Sri Lanka	LK	3,307	25,310	<b>33,793,772</b>	1,672	13,079	<b>12,760,726</b>	4,208	38,389	<b>46,583,115</b>
Pakistan	PK	3,070	25,852	<b>38,005,985</b>	2,899	16,917	<b>13,332,245</b>	4,955	42,769	<b>51,367,152</b>
Bangladesh	BD	4,415	30,813	<b>28,700,158</b>	2,332	14,246	<b>10,922,869</b>	5,712	45,059	<b>39,658,255</b>
Singapore	SG	5,775	28,332	<b>29,229,186</b>	4,255	17,127	<b>13,711,412</b>	8,339	45,459	<b>42,974,705</b>
Malaysia	MY	6,225	29,302	<b>29,026,896</b>	4,591	16,299	<b>13,357,745</b>	8,966	45,601	<b>42,420,168</b>
Philippines	PH	6,169	28,391	<b>29,758,446</b>	5,979	17,951	<b>13,457,087</b>	10,224	46,342	<b>43,250,093</b>
Hong Kong	HK	6,720	27,896	<b>27,906,879</b>	2,892	16,040	<b>12,508,796</b>	8,740	43,936	<b>40,450,291</b>
South Africa	ZA	7,318	28,271	<b>31,683,286</b>	4,566	16,993	<b>13,645,623</b>	10,308	45,264	<b>45,364,498</b>
Nigeria	NG	3,448	23,329	<b>30,622,738</b>	2,072	13,956	<b>11,996,583</b>	4,516	37,285	<b>42,646,098</b>
Ghana	GH	3,161	32,189	<b>27,644,721</b>	1,053	15,162	<b>11,088,160</b>	3,616	47,351	<b>38,768,231</b>
Kenya	KE	4,222	31,166	<b>28,552,920</b>	2,073	14,796	<b>12,480,777</b>	5,193	45,962	<b>41,069,085</b>
Tanzania	TZ	3,829	27,533	<b>24,883,840</b>	1,414	13,823	<b>10,253,840</b>	4,575	41,356	<b>35,169,042</b>
Jamaica	JM	3,049	30,928	<b>28,505,416</b>	1,049	15,820	<b>11,124,273</b>	3,488	46,748	<b>39,663,666</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>220,405</b>	<b>1,140,741</b>	<b>1,300,348,146</b>	<b>170,224</b>	<b>651,304</b>	<b>583,923,681</b>	<b>340,619</b>	<b>1,792,045</b>	<b>1,885,632,973</b>

Being collected over a one-year span in 2012, GloWbe is a snapshot corpus; therefore, data are not supposed to be updated. Although one may question the corpus balance since it lacks an explicit sampling frame, the fact that data from the web were first downloaded and then redistributed has a positive impact on the replicability of the studies based on its data, since no material will presumably be added, nor will data be deleted by the users as happens daily on the web.

Yet, there are a number of disadvantages and limitations that a web-based corpus may bring along. As far as the GloWbe corpus is concerned, some specific limitations can be noticed. First of all, as already mentioned, the corpus relies heavily on how Google identifies what data corresponds to which variety of English, i.e. by obtaining information about the country domain of the web site, IP addresses, and the

<sup>1</sup> This refers to webpages that also contain blog sections.

web pages' related links. Supposing that one blindly trusts this procedure, a question arises: what happens if, say, an Australian user is writing on an Irish forum? Does it count as Australian or Irish English? The answer would be: Irish English, as there is no way to obtain all the necessary background information about every single user writing on a webpage. Thus, any claim that is supposed to account for whichever English variety contained in the corpus must be cautious.

Second, the corpus is POS-tagged, so the queries can be restricted to a particular grammatical category. For instance, it is possible to look for *those* as a determiner only, see (1), and discard the occurrences of *those* as pronoun, see (2).

(1) 'So all *those single parents* out there trying to get some of the money back' (US B)

(2) 'Give some punishment to *those who* are against these by-laws' (TZ G)

However, as could be expected, for other types of features, namely less widespread and non-standard ones, the POS-tagging fails to mark grammatical categories correctly. One example is the distinction between the third person object pronoun *them* in (3) and the non-standard form of the determiner *those* in example (4) which are both marked as pronouns in the corpus.

(3) 'The decision of Carol Jennings to contact *them* about her family's tragic history' (GB G independent.co.uk)

(4) 'Or should I call *them girls* as in most cases they were between 19 and 24' (US B blogs.reuters.com)

The reliability of the tags is particularly relevant for the present work, since searching by POS-tagging will not allow me to discard the instances of 2PL forms that I am not interested in, such as the cases when the pronoun is a part of a plural nominal expression, as in the case of *many thank yous, I love yous*, etc.. Therefore, wherever necessary, I have chosen to manually clean the dataset before analysing the data (cf. Section 3.2 below).

Third, the corpus does not provide metadata about the speakers, such as age, gender, level of education, etc. These sociolinguistic parameters are essential to a qualitative analysis of linguistic data as they might affect the pragmatic implications of

the use of a linguistic feature. In an attempt to counterbalance the absence of sociolinguistic information about the speakers, I tried to extract as much information as possible from the co-text and context of occurrence of 2PL forms. In many cases, information about the age, gender, relationship between the interlocutors, social group and so on could be deduced by looking at the expanded context of the occurrences or other clues found on the web page (e.g. account names including gender and birth year, cultural references, other linguistic features typically associated with certain age or social groups, etc.).

Finally, the corpus does not sample language from English-based creoles and pidgins, which did not allow me to include a few other 2PL forms such as *(h)unu/una*, *aayu/alyu*, *wuna*, *y(u)aal* (Kortmann and Schneider 2004) in the analysis.

### 3.2 The dataset

In order to collect a dataset to be used for the analysis, a list of 2PL forms was obtained from the literature (cf. Wales 1996, Biber *et al.* 1999, Kortmann 2004, Quinn 2009; see section 2.3-4) and the Urban Dictionary on line ([www.urbandictionary.com](http://www.urbandictionary.com)). The data obtained by querying the corpus for each one of the forms considered were then manually checked in order to leave out the occurrences that looked like 2PL forms but were, in fact, part of pluralised multi-word nominalised expressions such as *yous* in (5a) below, as well as the ones in which the pronoun *you* and the quantifier belonged to two different phrases, as in (5b-c) below.

(5)

- a. You rarely get thank *yous* and usually even the people you help show you little respect. (US G)
- b. And they give *you two* routes to follow: [...] (US G)
- c. Your point about writing it down and having it in front of *you all* the time is spot on. (IE G)

Besides the occurrence of false-positive instances of 2PL forms, other three categories of occurrences needed to be discarded from the datasets:

1. metalinguistic comments, see (6) below;

(6) ‘lost, although in certain dialects plural forms such as *youse* and *y’all* (especially in the southern United States) exist.’ (CA G homes.chass.utoronto.ca; italic added)

2. double or triple occurrences: occurrences that are exact or almost exact copies of other occurrences;
3. occurrences containing a spelling mistake that makes *you* look like a 2PL form, see *yous* in (7) below:

(7) ‘maybe *yous* *hould* kinda run the idea through her first.’ (MY G suarakan.info)

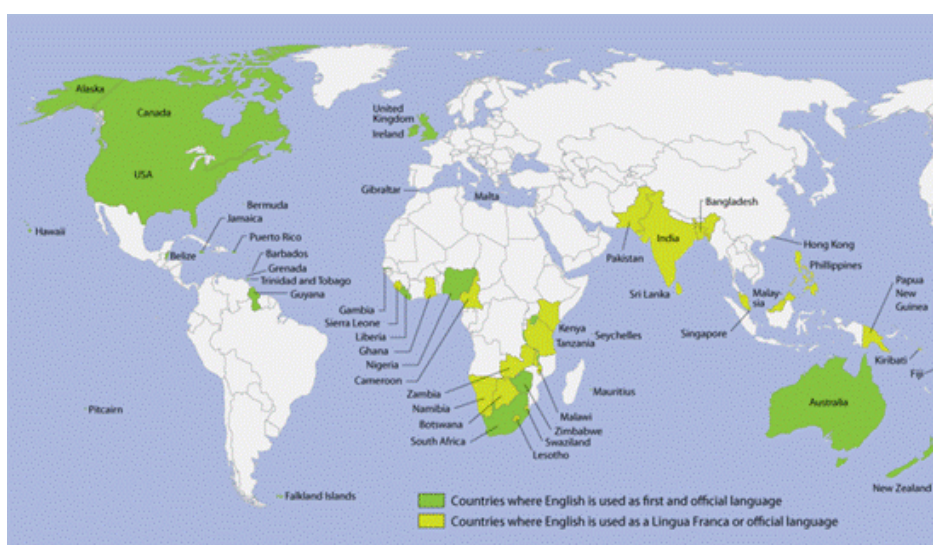
For each one of the 2PL forms in the list (i.e. *yous(e)*, *you two*, *you three*, *you four*, *you all*, *y(‘)all*, *you guys*, *you lot*, *you people*, *you ones*, *y(‘)uns*, *yinz*, *you* + NP-PL), I have analysed a total of 10,000 occurrences, i.e. one randomised sample of 500 instances (refined) for each of the 20 geographical subsections of the corpus. Whenever sample analysis could not be carried out because in some varieties the less frequent 2PL forms did not occur at least 500 times, I have analysed all the occurrences available and specified that the generalisations made according to smaller datasets are to be taken as indicators of trends of linguistic behaviour rather than proper tendencies. Since the corpus sub-sections corresponding to the single English varieties are not equal in size (see figure 1 above), I normalised the frequencies on a per-million-words basis.

### **3.3 Diatopic variation in the corpus**

As already seen in section 1.5, one of the aims of this work is to find out whether it is possible to highlight differences of usage of 2PL forms that depend on the geographical variety of English in which they are used. The twenty varieties of English sampled in the GloWbe corpus can be very different from each other with respect to a number of factors: firstly, geographical position (e.g. American English vs. South-African English vs. Indian English), secondly, status of the language (first official vs second official language) and, finally, contact with other languages such as native languages (e.g. Hindi or Marathi in India, Yoruba in Nigeria, Maori in New Zealand) and/or pidgins

and creoles (e.g. Australian pidgin English, Nigerian Pidgin English, Jamaican Creole, etc.). For the purposes of my work, I have chosen to adopt Kachru's (1985) model of the English-speaking countries. In Kachru's model, the difference between having English as a first or second official language is captured by the labels of Inner Circle and Outer Circle (see figure 2, below). The Inner Circle groups together the countries where English is used as a first official language, whereas the Outer Circle groups together the countries where English is used as a second official language (mainly with an institutional role) besides a local first language. More specifically, the label *Inner Circle* (IC) covers the varieties of English spoken and written in Australia (AU), Canada (CA), the United Kingdom (GB), Ireland (IE), New Zealand (NZ), and the United States (US). The label *Outer Circle* (OC) indicates the varieties of English spoken and written in Bangladesh (BD), Ghana (GH), Hong Kong (HK), India (IN), Kenya (KE), Tanzania (TZ), Jamaica (JM), Sri Lanka (LK), Malaysia (MY), Nigeria (NG), Philippines (PH), Pakistan (PK), Singapore (SG), and South Africa (ZA). As can be observed, most of the countries included in the OC are former colonies of the UK or US. Although the varieties described in the model seem clear-cut because they are classified according to the countries in which they are spoken, therefore on the basis of national identity, Kachru himself (1985) acknowledges that the categories are not clearly defined and fuzzy areas exist.

**Figure 2 – Map of English-speaking countries (ESP country project, 2011)**



Kachru's model (1985) was the first to consider the idea that English had developed into many varieties that were linguistically equal, opposing Quirk's view (1985) who

argued that a standardised form of British English should constitute the model for all non-native varieties of English.

In the literature, various other models of arrangement of the English varieties have been proposed in order to account for the main differences among them. For example, Trudgill (1995, 2002) proposes to discern between *high contact* vs. *low contact* varieties of English. *High contact* varieties include traditional L1 varieties (UK, Ireland, USA, Australia, etc.) including modern urban, dialectal and standard varieties. *Low contact* varieties refer to L2 varieties of English and pidgins and creoles. Although this classification displays a shift towards a sociolinguistic approach, differently from the nation-state focus for which Kachru was criticised (see, for example, Bruthiaux 2003), in the case of the present study it would not yield a different arrangement of the varieties for a number of reasons: first, internal differentiation within a single variety, as far as regional dialects, urban and standard varieties are concerned (e.g. US, UK or Indian English) is not available in the corpus; second, my research is not concerned with pidgins and creoles of English. By leaving out these two main aspects, the distinction goes back to L1 vs L2 varieties of English, which is a difference that can be captured by referring to Inner and Outer Circles.

Yet another well-known model is Schneider's (2007), who is mainly concerned with the evolution of the varieties of English. These are classified according to four main categories of variation: extralinguistic factors, identity constructions, sociolinguistic conditions and linguistic effects. The aim of Schneider's classification is to establish at what stage of development – between the five identified (see below) – each variety is:

- Foundation: English is brought in in a non-English-speaking country;
- Exonormative stabilisation: the locals begin to learn the second language; code-switching occurs;
- Nativisation: the second language undergoes important changes in phonology, morphology and syntax; heavy lexical borrowing from the local language occurs; English displays a marked local accent;
- Endonormative stabilisation: changes to the second language become stable and are codified in new norms;

- Differentiation: group-internal linguistic markers emerge in the new variety of English

The reason why Schneider's model is not applicable to the present study has to do mainly with the purposes of the investigation, which concern the description and understanding of the uses of a grammatical feature in the varieties of English, rather than making any claim about the stage of evolution of the varieties considered.

What can add on to Kachru's model in the explanation of the use of 2PL forms is the notion of *vernacular universals* (Chambers 2004) or *angloversals* (Mair 2003). These terms refer to the shared properties of spoken varieties of English that seem to be the result of using language in a particular way rather than geographical contact or political influence. In the literature, vernacular universals would be called on to explain how varieties that are historically and geographically unrelated display instances of the same spoken phenomena, such as double negation, subject-auxiliary inversion in indirect questions, generalised past tense use, etc. Cross-variety similarities that cannot be explained by geographical influence are shown to be related to the level of language acquisition: speakers with the same level of English proficiency are likely to produce similar language independently of their L1s (Mair 2003), corroborating the validity of the classic distinction between L1 and L2 varieties of English. This approach is also supported by a featured-based study conducted by Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi (2009) on 76 morphosyntactic features including pronominal gender, reflexives, negation and many others, which yielded the same arrangement of English varieties: L1 Englishes clustered together, as well as L2 Englishes and pidgin and creoles, with the last two being more similar to each other than to L1 Englishes. According to this, it will be expected that the use of 2PL forms will also display different trends between the Inner Circle and Outer Circle varieties, whereas no significant difference should be observed between varieties belonging to the same circle. As will be shown in chapter 9, however, 2PL forms are used rather consistently across both varieties and circles. The functions of 2PL forms in the different varieties are never significantly different. The only variation is found in the preference of some forms over others in terms of frequency of occurrence.

Given the purposes and data availability of this study, Kachru's classification



of English varieties into Inner and Outer Circle seems to be a convenient one in order to capture the main differences in the description of how 2PL forms are used across the world varieties of English. One must always keep in mind, however, that the danger of underrepresenting variation is intrinsic to any generalisation that is made based on linguistic data. As Siemund *et al.* (2004: 293) point out:

Varieties of English are not uniform and well defined object of study. [...] They are the result of complicated processes of language contact, language shift, language acquisition and change and in many cases are right in the middle of such processes. Moreover, they display a high degree of internal differentiation across individual speakers and speaker groups

[ It simply does not seem plausible to assume that this complexity can be captured by some simple generalization.

### **3.4 Semantic and pragmatic categorisation of 2PL forms**

In this study, 2PL forms are analysed from both the quantitative and qualitative perspectives. Quantitative analysis aims to show how frequent 2PL forms are in World Englishes, whether some 2PL forms tend to be more frequent than others, and if the observed differences are significant. The frequencies of occurrence of 2PL forms were also compared across the 20 varieties of English available in the corpus with the aim of finding out whether geographical influence as well as the status of English as either an official L1 or L2 can help explain the tendencies observed. The frequencies used in the quantitative analysis are reported on a per-million-word basis so that the data could be comparable independently of the size of the regional subsection.

As far as the qualitative analysis is concerned, the categories used to analyse the data were obtained in a corpus-driven pilot study. The dataset for the pilot study consisted of randomised 100-word samples of instances of 2PL forms collected for each of the 20 varieties in the corpus (20,000 words in total). The occurrences were manually analysed in their context of occurrence in order to see what kind of functions 2PL forms tend to perform. A first outcome of the search for the functional categories of 2PL forms showed that many categories of functions were common to all the 2PL forms

considered. These can be divided into two main categories according to the kind of information expressed: one is *grammatical marking* and the other *pragmatic marking*. *Grammatical marking* comprises the marking of plurality ((8) below) and possession ((9) below).

(8)

a. Great points, after reading through the article and comments I think *you guys* are starting to hit the nail on the head. (US B)

b. May I humbly request *you all* to observe one minute of silence in respect of our late founders. (TZ G)

(9)

a. Stop watching tv it's obvious poisoning *yall people minds* [...] (US B)

b. I am sure that I lost some business under similar circumstances to *yous*. (CA B)

Although some 2PL forms only mark plurality, it is not unusual to find 2PL forms working as possessive determiners and pronouns. In fact, in some contexts, some 2PL forms can also indicate singular addressees, although these instances do not count as grammatical marking but rather pragmatic marking, with the purpose of expressing familiarity and/or emphasis (see (13) below).

*Pragmatic marking* involves more sub-categories than *grammatical marking*: the expression of politeness, the expression of contrast between the speaker and the interlocutor(s), attention-getting and singular-reference emphatic identification. The expression of politeness is, here, intended as the strategies that the speaker uses in order to establish and maintain a good relationship with their interlocutor(s) (Lakoff 1973, Grice 1975, Leech 1983, Fraser 1990, Kasper 1998, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Spencer-Oatey 2000, Scollon and Scollon 2001, Watts 2003). The theories of politeness are generally linked with the concept of *face*, which indicates an individual's public self-image that has to be preserved and not threatened. This work is not concerned with finding an optimal theoretical framework for the analysis of the instances of politeness involving 2PL forms. The ones cited above can differ very much according to the principles and maxims that identify polite linguistic strategies. What

is essential to the present work is the acknowledgement of the common two-fold principle underlying linguistic politeness: making the addressee feel good and avoid the addressee's discomfort. These two sub-principles will be used to classify the type of pragmatic functions 2PL forms perform in the varieties of English.

The occurrences of 2PL forms in contexts expressing politeness involve instances of both face enhancement and face-threat avoidance. Face enhancement is linguistically coded through expressions of praise, such as compliments, but also gratitude, love, blessing, hoping and wishing (see (10) below). Face-threat avoidance is performed through the *rituals of departure* (Leech 2014): these indicate the utterances whose purpose is to allow the speaker to leave the conversation without performing a face-threatening act that is inevitable when the intention is to abandon a communicative exchange. Therefore, the speaker closes the conversational turn by promising the interlocutor(s) that they will share a conversation again, thus reducing the face-threatening effect of leaving (see (11) below).

(10)

- a. Well done to *yous* and more success (IE B)
- b. We would like to say a very big thank you to *you all*. (IE G)
- c. I'm impressed - congrats, *you two*! (AU B)
- d. My deepest respect to *you three gentlemen* for engaging the blogpost in mature, warm and very friendly discussions.

(11)

- a. Will keep *yous* posted. (GB)
- b. See *yall* here and there on Bronco Country! (US B)
- c. I hope to see *you guys* again soon...(AU B)

Obviously, a question rises about whether the strategies of politeness can be considered the same across varieties of English, especially in the cases of the Outer Circle varieties in which the concept of politeness can be influenced by what is considered to be polite in the local culture and language. This is one of the two reasons why I believe that considering only a broader definition of politeness instead of adopting one model over

the others will be a benefit to the present work: the speech acts considered acts of politeness are likely to be positive speech acts anywhere, e.g. compliments, blessings, wishes and unlikely to be understood as impolite. In this way, they still comply with the definition of 'maintaining a good relationship with the interlocutor' proposed above. A second reason for not having a different politeness framework for OC varieties lies in the fact that the language analysed is still English, which means that even English L2 speakers are likely to adhere to the conventions of politeness of the language they are speaking at a particular moment.

The second pragmatic function category used in the analysis of 2PL forms is the expression of contrast between the speaker and the interlocutor(s). 'Expression of contrast' is, here, intended as a broad term used to comprise different speech acts that share the same purpose: the desire of the speaker to take distance from the interlocutor(s). In this category of occurrences, 2PL forms are used to emphatically identify the addressee(s) and create tension between the interlocutors. The speech acts involving 2PL forms that express contrast encode different degrees of psychological distance and face threat. The speaker may wish to express a simple divergence of opinions, disagreement with the interlocutors' attitude and ways of behaving, but also question the interlocutors' intelligence and ability to judge righteously, underline hypocritical behaviour and, finally, create a proper contrast by openly despising the interlocutors (see (12) below). In other words, the function of expressing contrast can be seen as the opposite of the expression of politeness as its purpose is the opposite of promoting social comity and creating and maintaining a good relationship with the interlocutor(s).

(12)

- a. How cowardly *you all* are? (GB G)
- b. No, man. Look. *Y'all motherfuckers* better calm down. (US G)
- c. Bloody hell *you guys* are an ignorant bunch! (ZA G)
- d. Why can't *you guys* pay them a fair wage on time and give them decent conditions?  
(US B)
- e. Hate *you people*! (AU G)

As much as the speech acts that express contrast between the interlocutors would still be expressing the same meaning independently of the occurrence of the 2PL form, there are two observations that suggest that 2PL forms have somehow been associated with this context. First, some 2PL forms belonging to the category *you* NP-PL explicitly mark the contrast between the interlocutors with unfavourable epithets such as *motherfuckers* in (12b) above, but also *bastards*, *mean people*, *idiots*, *ignorant leftists*, etc. as will be shown in section 4.6.4. Second, as shown in section 9.3, the times in which the standard pronoun *you* occurs in contexts expressing contrast between the interlocutors are very few (0.01% of the times *you* occurs in the corpus) compared to the times in which 2PL forms are used in the same contexts. Therefore, the expression of contrast can be seen as one of the pragmatic functions expressed by 2PL forms. Given the variability of the speech acts that can be included in the category *expression of contrast* (see (12a-e) above), I will not use a list of operational criteria for the identification of such function. The analysis of the context will determine whether the function of the 2PL form in a given expression can be counted as an instance of *expression of contrast* as I have defined it above, i.e. "the speech acts that encode different degrees of psychological distance and face threat."

One may of course wonder how 2PL forms can perform such opposite functions of expressing both politeness and contrast. It will be later shown in chapters 4-7 that the single 2PL forms always tend to prefer one end of the continuum: for example, *you all* is used in politeness contexts much more often than in contrast contexts (43.2% and 9.4% of the times it occurs in the corpus respectively); on the other hand, *you people* is regularly used to express contrast more often than politeness (65.6% and 3.9% of the times it occurs in the corpus respectively). Therefore, what 2PL forms do in fact, as will be explained later, is express informality and identify prominent referents.

The third pragmatic function 2PL forms were observed to perform in the pilot study is *attention getting*, which indicates the strategies adopted by the speaker in order to obtain the interlocutors' attention. The *attention-getting* function performed by 2PL forms resembles what is generally labelled *vocative* in the literature (Sonnenhauser and Noel-Aziz 2013), although the definition and classification of vocatives tend to vary according to the theoretical background: according to Zwicky (1974: 787), vocatives in English do not serve as an argument of the verb and are signalled by a special intonation. Similarly, Levinson (1983: 71) proposes a syntactically non-integrated definition of vocatives that, although referring to the addressee(s), are neither part of

the semantics nor the syntax of the predicate, which can also be deduced by the prosody the sets them apart from the rest of the sentence. A more functional definition of vocatives is given by Daniel and Spencer (2009: 626) and Lambrecht (1996: 267) who focus on the purpose of calling out, attracting and maintaining the addressees' attention, as well as by Schaden (2010: 176) who, in an attempt to formulate a strictly semantic definition, describes vocatives as having the sole function of identifying and describing the addressee(s). It is with Portner (2004, 2007) and Predelli (2008: 103) that vocatives begin to be considered as primarily pragmatic tools with expressive function: the purpose of the vocative is performative in the sense that it does not contribute to the semantic content of the sentence, but does provide explicit instructions on how the content has to be processed. Formally, vocatives can be realised through morphological marking, dedicated prosody and/or syntactic position (cf. Sonnenhauser and Noel-Aziz 2013 for a more detailed account). Although in English vocatives are marked by prosody and syntactic non-integration (extra-sentential), 2PL forms that work as vocatives also display morphological marking and dedicated forms (see singular-reference *yous(e)* in section 4.2 and *y(')all* in section 6.2.3-4). For the purposes of this work, vocatives will be considered from their functional perspective, i.e. attention-getting devices with expressive function, hence the name of the functional category *attention-getting*. However, both the syntactic restrictions (i.e. non-integration and occurrence in the periphery of the sentence) and semantic function of identification and description of the addressee(s) will be used to explain some of the tendencies displayed by attention-getting 2PL forms. The syntactic preference for the right periphery of the sentence or utterance displayed by attention-getting 2PL forms, in particular, seems to be correlated with the type of functions they fulfil in the language. As Leech (1999) suggests, the syntactic position in which vocatives occur corresponds to a dominant function among the three main ones identified for vocatives in English, i.e. summoning the interlocutor's attention, the identification of the addressee(s) and establishing and maintaining social relationships. Vocatives that appear in the left periphery combine the attention-getting function with the function of singling out the appropriate addressee(s); vocatives that appear in the right periphery are more likely to combine the function of identifying the addressee(s) with that of tuning, maintaining and reinforcing the social relations between the speaker and the addressee(s) (Leech 1999: 116). As will be shown in the analysis, this latter case is in line with the linguistic behaviour displayed by attention-getting 2PL forms and, more generally, with the intersubjective character of 2PL forms (see section 3.4).

The last pragmatic function category considered in the analysis of 2PL forms is *singular-reference emphatic identification*. This category comprises the instances in which 2PL forms do not work as plural personal pronouns but as markers of emphasis with singular reference. This function was observed to occur with only three of the ten 2PL forms considered in the analysis: *yous(e)*, *y'all* and *yall* (see (13), below).

(13)

- a. I know that youse and Sir Peter are not the same person. (IE G)
- b. Done. Yo, what *y'all* doing, man? What you doing? Drop this shit off. (US G)
- c. Baby, *yall* are the reason that I'm still acting crazy [...] (TZ B)

The categories of analysis presented so far are functions shared by all 2PL forms. Yet, in some cases, 2PL forms are used to express additional semantic meaning that other 2PL forms do not, e.g. the expression of inclusiveness in the case of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* (see ch. 6), the specification of the number of addressees with *you* + cardinal no. expressions (see ch. 5), derogatory identification with *you people* and *you lot* (see ch. 7). These cases of linguistic specialisation of different 2PL forms will be dealt with in more detail in the related chapters.

Ambiguous occurrences that could not be classified for their function were treated differently according to the degree of ambiguity in the use. As already said, the occurrences of 2PL forms were assigned to one or more categories according to their function in the context. However, there were cases in which it was not so much the context that could not help to determine the function of the 2PL form as the fact that the sentences were written in such a peculiar way that it was impossible to make sense of the sentence at all (see (14) below).

(14) *Youz* go tae aw the best pose-holes (GB G)

Incomprehensible occurrences represent a very small share of the occurrences (an estimated 0.6% of the total number of occurrences of 2PL forms in the corpus) and, for this reason, were discarded from the dataset, given the low impact on the overall

frequencies of occurrence of 2PL forms. Partially ambiguous occurrences of 2PL forms, such as (15) below, do not represent an important share of occurrences (an estimated 5.7% of occurrences of 2PL forms).

(15)

To actually rise up and get down to the big house and say right *you lot* get yer bags yer sacked (GB G)

They were assigned to a 'dominant' functional category, since at least one of the functions of ambiguous occurrences was clear from the context. For example, in (15) above, it is clear that the 2PL is plural rather than singular but it is not clear whether *you lot* is an attention-getter or the subject of the following imperative *get*. So this was assigned to PL but not the pragmatic functions. Once again, as the percentage of occurrence of partially ambiguous sentences is low, a partial analysis of the functions should not significantly affect the generalisations made on the analysis of the functions of 2PL forms.

A final point that is worth making about the functional analysis of 2PL forms is that the functions are obviously not all mutually exclusive. Grammatical functions, pragmatic functions and the semantic prosody can overlap. Obviously, one instance of 2PL in a given context cannot be plural and singular at the same time, but it can certainly be plural, work as an attention-getter and be found in a context in which politeness is expressed, as in (16) below.

(16) It was super inspiring *y'all!* (NZ B)

Occurrences of 2PL forms generally combine at least two functions (a grammatical and a pragmatic one). In the analysis of functions, an instance of a 2PL form is counted as many times as the number of functions it performs. For example, (16) above is assigned to PL, POL and AG. This explains why the percentages of occurrence of the functions of a 2PL form do not add up to 100% but usually more than that. The table below might help to understand the process of calculating the percentages of occurrence of each functional category.



**Table 1 – Functions of *you guys* in American English (with overlaps)**

Function	Frequency of occurrence in %	Total
Neutral plural	39.80%	39.80%
Positively connotated context [of which politeness]	22.61% [of which POL = 20.33%]	22.61%
Negatively connotated context	35.10% + [AG = 0.71%]	35.81%
Attention-getting	2.35% [of which NEG=0.71%]	2.35%
Possessive	0	0

*You guys* in American English can be used as a plural in a neutral context, plural in positively connotated contexts among which the most frequent use of *you guys* is for the purpose of expressing politeness; *you guys* is also used in negatively connotated contexts, of which 0.7% is represented by the occurrences in which *you guys* works as an attention-getter in a negatively connotated context. The total percentage of occurrence of *you guys* in negatively connotated context is, therefore, obtained by adding 35.1% of occurrences of plural *you guys* in negatively connotated contexts and 0.7% that is the percentage of attention-getting *you guys* occurring in negatively connotated contexts. By adding up all the percentages of occurrence of each functional category, the total amounts to 100.5%.

### **3.5 Collocations and semantic prosody**

Collocate analysis is used to further support the findings of the analysis of the functions performed by 2PL forms. A collocation is generally defined in the literature as the tendency of two or more words to occur together more frequently than can be expected by chance (Firth 1951, Strang 1968, Sinclair 1991-2004, McEnery and Hardie 2012). The analysis of the collocates of 2PL forms is used to provide further information about the semantic traits they express, their grammatical and syntactic preferences, the kind

of context 2PL forms tend to occur in and, finally, their semantic prosody, i.e. whether 2PL forms display a tendency to be used with either a positive or negative connotation (Louw 1993, Hunston and Francis 2000, Sinclair 1996, 2004).

The analysis of the collocates of 2PL forms was carried out by means of the software AntConc ([www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc](http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc); last access: November 2019). The occurrences of 2PL forms were downloaded from the corpus, saved in *.txt* format and run through the software. The span chosen was +/- 5, whereas the Minimum Collocate Frequency (MCF) ranged from 2 to 20 depending on the overall frequency of the 2PL form considered in the corpus: in order to reduce the effect of chance as much as possible, more frequent 2PL forms required higher MCFs. The second reason for having a range of MCFs was to avoid missing out potential collocates of less frequent 2PL forms, especially lexical rather than grammatical collocates, which are the ones that contribute the most information on the use of 2PL forms and yet are less likely to appear in the results of the collocate analysis of less frequent 2PL forms. The first list of collocates returned by AntConc for the different 2PL forms was manually checked in order to eliminate double and triple occurrences of the same sentence that might skew the MI scores. The Mutual Information (MI) is the statistical measure that is used to establish how likely it is for two collocates to co-occur compared to chance. The MI score that is generally accepted as a threshold for a collocation to be considered significant is 3.0 and above (Hunston 2002: 71).

The semantic prosody of 2PL forms was obtained by manually counting the occurrences of 2PL forms in either a positively or negatively connotated context. Among positively connotated contexts I have included the occurrences in which 2PL forms express positive and negative politeness, as well as any other sentence in which the speaker displays a benevolent attitude towards the interlocutor(s) as in (17) below.

(17)

a. I'm willing to take holidays and help *you guys*. (AU G)

b. I am so excited to share with *you all* that I am expecting and with twins! (CA G)

The category of negatively connotated contexts comprises the instances in which the speaker wishes to take distance from the interlocutors or openly despises them (see (18a-b) below), including the instances of sarcasm and irony that actually still encode a contrast with the interlocutor(s) (see (18c) below).

(18)

- a. Think of the shit *you lot* caused at that age. (US G)
- b. *You people* are so dang stupid and senseless that it's a shame. (US G)
- c. I bet *you lot* would be impressed if I wrote a learned article about stoats. (GB B)

The rest of the instances in which the speaker is addressing the interlocutor(s) by means of a 2PL form yet not expressing his/her attitude towards them were considered neutral sentences.

I have indicated the context of occurrence of 2PL forms and the speech acts they express as criteria for establishing the semantic prosody of a form instead of giving a list of collocates. This is because collocates in isolation are generally not the best predictors of the semantic prosody of an expression. Sinclair (1996) considers semantic prosody to be the discourse function of a sequence rather than the property of a word: indeed, words that in isolation may seem positive, e.g. *smart*, *help*, *well*, can end up acquiring a negative semantic prosody if they consistently occur in negatively connotated contexts such as the ones in (19) below.

(19)

- a. Not so smart considering what was stored there. (CA B)
- b. What they learn in economics won't help them run a business. (US G)
- c. This year, they did slightly well with a little over 22.8 points per game. (PH B)

Similarly, grammatical collocates such as auxiliaries, prepositions, etc., which in isolation seem neutral, acquire a connotation when they frequently occur in either positive or negative contexts: for example, the preposition *for* is a frequent collocate of some 2PL forms in contexts that express a benefactive meaning. Thus, *for* + 2PL form

is considered a positively connotated expression and its occurrences are counted as instances of positive semantic prosody.

The frequencies of occurrence of 2PL forms in each of the three contexts (positive, negative, neutral) were expressed in percentages out of the total number of occurrences of the 2PL form in the corpus. A 2PL form was considered to have either a positive or negative semantic prosody only if the difference between the percentages of occurrence of the form in positively and negatively connotated contexts was statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ).

## 4 Suffixed 2PL forms

Suffixed 2PL forms are defined in section 2.1 as forms that result from the suffixation of the second person pronoun *you* with the *-s* morpheme (e.g. *yous(e)*). Although the *-s* suffixation strategy resembles the one for regular pluralisation in English (e.g. *cat* (SG) + *-s* > *cats* (PL)), suffixed 2PL forms are considered non-standard plural forms of *you* that are mainly used in informal conversation (see section 2.1). It is also noted in the literature that, besides marking plurality, suffixed 2PL forms have long been used with singular reference and as possessive determiners (see section 2.4). The origins of the forms are circumscribed within the areas of Ireland and Scotland and their uses in countries that have witnessed important immigration waves from both areas, namely Australia and New Zealand (see section 2.4).

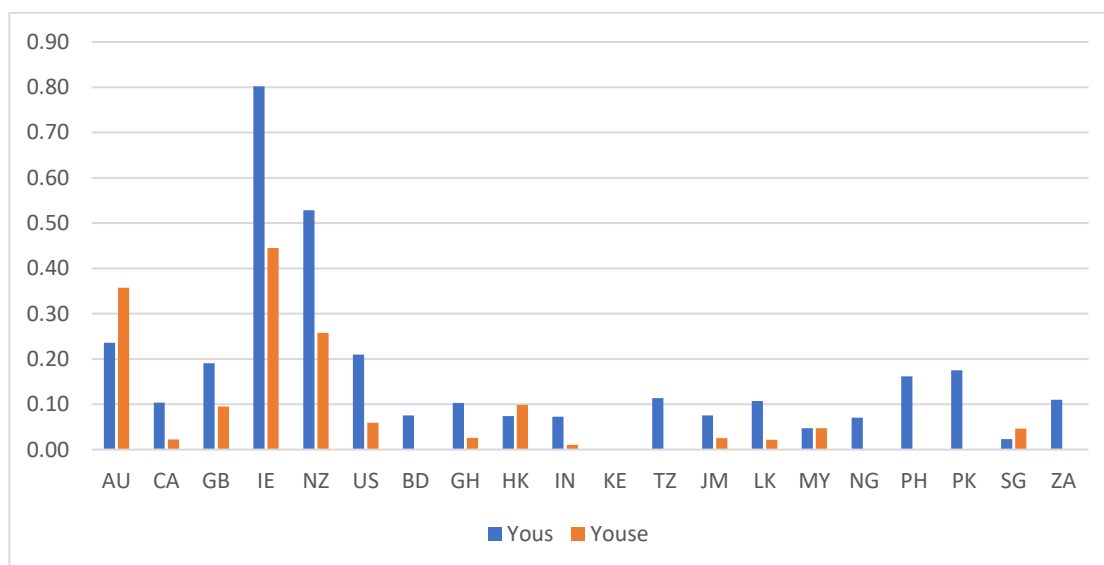
In this section, it will be shown how the different suffixed 2PL variants can, in fact, be simply considered different realisations of the most frequent form *yous(e)*, since all forms display the same linguistic behaviour. The chapter is structured as follows: section 4.1 illustrates the frequencies of occurrence of the different suffixed 2PL forms in the 20 varieties of English sampled in the corpus; section 4.2 discusses the functions of suffixed 2PL forms. Section 4.3 deals with the collocates of 2PL forms and the patterns they are most frequently involved in. Section 4.4 deals with the pragmatics of suffixed 2PL forms. Section 4.5 compares the linguistic behaviour of 2PL forms with the one that

characterises standard *you*. Section 4.6 is a discussion of double- and triple-marked occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms. Finally, I will draw some conclusion in section 4.7.

## 4.1 Frequencies of suffixed 2PL forms

The overall frequency of suffixed 2PL forms in World Englishes is not particularly high: 0.36 pmw (token frequency = 683). Figure 1 below displays the frequencies of occurrence of *yous* and *youse* in the 20 varieties considered. Being the 2PL forms other than *yous* and *youse* rather infrequent, the frequencies of occurrence are displayed in tables 1 and 2 below. Both the absolute and normalised frequencies are reported since the latter might be affected by the very low number of occurrences.

**Figure 1 – Frequencies of *yous* and *youse* in World Englishes (pmw)**



**Table 1 – Absolute and normalised frequencies of 2PLs other than *yous(e)* in World Englishes 1**

	<i>Yez</i>		<i>Yiz</i>		<i>Yooz</i>		<i>You'z</i>	
<i>Inner Circle</i>								
Variety	Tokens	Pmw	Tokens	Pmw	Tokens	Pmw	Tokens	Pmw
AU	3	0.02	-	-	-	-	-	-

CA	2	0.01	-	-	-	-	-	-
GB	1	-	7	0.02	3	0.01	2	0.01
IE	25	0.25	27	0.27	-	-	1	0.01
NZ	1	0.01	-	-	-	-	-	-
US	2	0.01	1	-	2	0.01	-	-
<i>Outer Circle</i>								
PH	3	0.07	-	-	-	-	1	0.02
ZA	4	0.09	-	-	1	0.02	-	-
TZ	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.03

**Table 2 – Raw and normalised frequencies of 2PLs other than *yous(e)* in World Englishes 2**

	<i>Yeez</i>		<i>Youz</i>		<i>Yu(s/z)</i>	
<i>Inner Circle</i>						
Variety	Tokens	Pmw	Tokens	Pmw	Tokens	Pmw
AU	-	-	-	-	1	0.01
CA	-	-	-	-	1	0.01
GB	1	0.01	5	0.02	2	0.01
IE	1	0.01	-	-	-	-
NZ	-	-	1	0.01	-	-
US	-	-	3	0.01	2	0.01
<i>Outer Circle</i>						
PH	-	-	1	0.02	-	-
IN	-	-	1	0.01	-	-

The first observation that follows from looking at the frequencies of occurrence is the substantial difference in the occurrences of *yous* and *youse* on one side, and the rest of the suffixed 2PL forms, namely *yez*, *yiz*, *yooz*, *you(')z*, *yeez*, and *yu(s/z)* on the other. The preference for the orthographic realisations *yous* and *youse* can find an underlying reason in the concept of "eye dialect" (Krapp 1926). According to the "eye dialect", the speaker would rely on the orthography of existing words to represent dialectal forms, for which a standard orthographic convention is not available. In the case of *yous* and

*youse*, it might be easier for the speaker to simply join the existing orthography of the pronoun *you* and the plural mark *-s* instead of having to create new orthographic forms such as *yez*, *yiz*, *yooz*, *you(')z*, *yeez*, and *yu(s/z)*.

#### 4.1.1 *Yous* in the Inner and Outer circles

The total number of occurrences of *yous* in the GloWbe corpus is 389 (3.14 pmw). The average frequencies of *yous* in the Inner and Outer circles are very different: 0.34 pmw in the IC and 0.09 pmw in OC, meaning that *yous* in IC is almost four times as frequent as in the OC ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0001).

The varieties of the IC in which *yous* occurs most frequently are Irish English (0.81 pmw), New Zealand English (0.52 pmw), and Australian English (0.23 pmw) (figure 1 above). The frequency of occurrence of *yous* in Irish English is significantly higher than the average in the IC ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0012), which may quantitatively support the hypothesis of the Irish origin of the feature (cf. Section 2.3 on the history of suffixed 2PL forms). This would also explain why the two varieties that have historically undergone a significant Irish influence, namely New Zealand and Australian English (D'Alton 1920, Sweetman 1983, Jones 1997, Hickey 2010), display high frequencies of *yous* as well (see figure 1 above). *Yous* is less frequent than the average in American English (0.21 pmw), British English (0.19 pmw), and Canadian English (0.1 pmw) (see table 1 above). The latter, in particular, displays a significantly lower frequency of occurrence of *yous* when compared to the average frequency in the IC ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.018). As will be shown in chapter 9, the low reliance of the American and Canadian varieties on suffixed 2PL forms is related to a higher reliance on other 2PL forms such as *you guys* and *you all* or, in the case of Canada, a low reliance on 2PL forms in general.

When considering the OC, the lower frequencies of occurrence of *yous* also combine with an areal use of the pronoun: *yous* appears to be most frequent in Pakistani English (0.17 pmw; also significantly more frequent than the average,  $p$  (t-test) = 0.004), and Philippine English (0.16 pmw), both Asian countries. However, other Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Malaysia and India, display low frequencies of *yous* (see figure 1 above).



### 4.1.2 *Youse* in the Inner and Outer circles

*Youse* is a spelling variant of suffixed *you* that appears to be much less frequent than *yous*. Indeed, the total number of occurrences of *youse* in the whole corpus is 198 (1.53 pmw), meaning that *youse* is roughly half as frequent as *yous*. However when comparing the average normalised frequencies of *yous* and *youse* in the IC and OC, the p-value is 0.6, therefore the difference is not statistically significant. The average frequency of *youse* in the IC is 0.2 pmw, and drops to 0.02 pmw in the OC.

Instances of *youse* could be found in all six English varieties of the IC (see figure 1 above). Interestingly, although the tendency in the IC is to prefer the variant *yous*, the Australian English section contains more instances of *youse* than *yous*: 54 (0.36 pmw) and 36 (0.23 pmw) respectively. However, the variety in which *youse* is most frequent, as in the case of *yous*, is still Irish English (0.44 pmw), which is, as happens with *yous*, followed by Australian English (0.36 pmw) and New Zealand English (0.26 pmw). In the remaining three varieties belonging to the IC, the frequencies of *youse* do not exceed 0.1 pmw: British English (0.1 pmw), American English (0.06 pmw), and Canadian English (0.02 pmw) (see figure 1 above).

The frequencies of *youse* seem to be much less homogeneous across varieties. Indeed, many varieties in the IC display frequencies that are significantly higher or lower than the average: Irish English (0.44 pmw; t-score= 8; p= 0.0004) and Australian English (0.36 pmw; t-score= 5.3; p= 0.003) display significantly higher frequencies. By contrast, Canada (0.02 pmw; t-score= -6; p= 0.001), US (0.06 pmw; t-score= -4.6; p= 0.005), and Great Britain (0.1 pmw; t-score= -3.3; p= 0.02) display frequencies that are significantly lower than the average.

In the OC, in 7 (out of 14) varieties of English *youse* did not occur at all. Among the seven varieties in which it does, only Hong Kong displays frequencies of *youse* that are significantly higher than the average (p (t-test) = 0.00001). The remaining 6 varieties displaying some instances of *youse* are spoken in Asian countries, except for Ghana and Jamaica (see figure 1 above).

### 4.1.3 Other spelling variants in the Inner and Outer Circles

The eight spelling variants besides *yous* and *youse* are much less frequent and much less widespread across varieties (0.5 pmw overall) (see tables 1 and 2 above).

*Yez* was found in all six varieties of the inner circle, but in only two of the OC, namely Philippines and South Africa. Its frequency is highest in Irish English (0.24 pmw) and already drops to 0.08 pmw in South African English, the second variety in which *yez* is most frequent.

*Yiz* was only found in three of the IC varieties, namely British English, Irish English, and American English. Similarly to other suffixed 2PL forms, *yiz* in Irish English (0.26 pmw) is much more frequent than it is in the other two varieties (GB= 0.01 pmw, US= 0.002 pmw), which suggests that *yiz*, as well as *yez*, represent a typical Irish phenomenon. Occurrences get even scarcer when considering the spelling variant *yeez*, which is only found in Irish (0.01 pmw) and British English (0.002 pmw).

*You'z* was found in two varieties of the IC (British and Irish English) and two of the OC (Philippines and Tanzanian English). It is most frequent in Tanzanian English (0.03 pmw) and Philippine English (0.02 pmw), therefore in the OC, and less frequent in the IC, where it reaches its highest frequency of 0.01 pmw in Irish English, and 0.005 pmw in British English.

*Yooz* was only found in three varieties, two belonging to the IC, namely British English and American English, and one to the OC, i.e. South Africa. South African English is the variety in which *yooz* is most frequent, with 0.02 pmw, definitely more frequent than in British English (0.007 pmw) and US (0.005 pmw).

Occurrences of *youz* could be found in five varieties of English, three belonging to the IC, i.e. British, New Zealand and American English, and the remaining two belonging to the OC, namely Philippines and Indian English. *Youz* is most frequent in Philippine English (0.02 pmw), followed by American English and New Zealand English with a frequency of 0.01 pmw.

Finally, *yu(s/z)* was found in only four varieties, all belonging to the OC: Australian, Canadian, British, and American English. The variant is not very frequent,

as can be seen by looking at the highest frequency of occurrence (Canada) which is 0.007 pmw.

#### 4.1.4 Conclusion

Out of the eleven different suffixed 2PL forms, only two appear to be the most frequent ones: *yous* and *youse*. These are also the ones that are most widespread across the varieties of both the Inner and Outer circles. Indeed, *yous* is found in all the varieties represented in the corpus but Kenyan English, and *youse* is found in all the varieties of the Inner circle and seven varieties of the Outer circle. Even between these two most frequent suffixed 2PL forms, a strong tendency to prefer *yous* can be observed. This might be due to the fact that *yous* complies with the English grammar rule for generating regular plurals, i.e. by adding the *-s* morpheme at the end of the word. However, Australian English seems to prefer *youse*, which is one and a half times more frequent than *yous*, going against the trend displayed by most world varieties of English.

Generally, both *yous* and *youse* reach higher frequencies of occurrence in the varieties of the Inner rather than the Outer circle. In particular, frequencies are highest in Irish English (*yous*= 0.8 pmw; *youse*= 0.4 pmw), Australian English (*yous*= 0.2 pmw; *youse*= 0.3 pmw), and New Zealand English (*yous*= 0.5 pmw; *youse*= 0.2 pmw). The fact that *yous(e)* is most frequent in the English varieties that have experienced a close and prolonged contact with the Irish communities makes *yous(e)* look like a trace of the Irish diaspora, quantitatively supporting what other authors had already claimed in the literature (cf. Jones 1997, Hickey 2010). In other words, the origin and the expansion in the geography of suffixed 2PL forms may be due to the Irish immigration waves of the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which saw their destination in countries such as Britain, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand (cf. D'Alton 1920; Sweetman 1983).

When considering the rest of the variants, namely *yez*, *yeez*, *yiz*, *you'z*, *yooz*, *youz*, and *yu(s/z)*, the picture changes drastically. First of all, the highest frequency of occurrence drops to 0.03 pmw; second, instances of each variant could be found in the varieties of the IC, but three of them (i.e. *yiz*, *yeez*, and *yu(s/z)*) could not be found in the OC varieties. While three variants were more frequent in the OC varieties (namely *you'z*, *youz* and *yooz*), *yiz*, *yez* and *yeez* are most frequent in Irish English, which means

they may be thought of as a predominantly Irish phenomenon. No variant was found in the OC and not in the IC, suggesting that the direction of linguistic influence spreads from inside to outside the circles:

IC < OC

In sum, the picture of suffixed 2PL forms that emerges from the analysis of frequencies centres around four main points:

- 1) Although 10 different suffixed 2PL variants could be identified, both Inner and Outer Circle varieties display a strong preference for only two, i.e. *yous* and *youse*, a tendency that complies with the concept of "eye dialect" (Krapp 1926).
- 2) Irish English, Australian English, and New Zealand English display the highest frequencies of occurrence of suffixed 2PL forms; British English displays the highest number of variants (10); however, preferences towards *yous(e)* are clear, since the frequencies of variants other than *yous(e)* are incredibly low; Australian English displays a preference for the variant *youse*. The preference of these varieties for suffixed 2PL forms will also correspond to a lower reliance on other formal categories of 2PL forms (see chapter 8).
- 3) Suffixed 2PL forms are rather infrequent in American English; a tendency to avoid them was observed in Canadian English. It will be shown in chapter 8 that the two varieties display a preference for other categories of 2PL forms, namely *you* NP-PL and *you + all*.
- 4) In the Outer Circle, preference for single variants is less obvious to figure out; it is harder to spot trends that can account for either single varieties or single suffixed 2PL variants since the frequencies of occurrence of a form in and across varieties are never significantly higher or lower than the average frequency of occurrence of suffixed 2PL forms in the OC (i.e. 0.02 pmw).

## 4.2 Functions

Although suffixed 2PL forms look like plural forms of *you*, they do not always perform the function of signalling plural reference (as in (1) below). The analysis of corpus data supports what already claimed in the literature (section 2.4) that suffixed 2PL forms are also used to refer to single entities and possessive determiners (see (3) below). What the corpus analysis reveals is the pragmatic implication of expressing emphasis and familiarity that comes with the use of suffixed 2PL forms with singular reference (see (2) below) as well as the fact that suffixed 2PL forms can work as possessive pronouns (in place of *yours*) besides possessive determiners (see (4) below).

(1) I don't dislike any of *yous* four! (GB G)

(2) I know that *youse* and Sir Peter are not the same person. (IE G)

(3) If you want to order two cups at the same time, that is *yous choice*. (GB G)

(4) I am sure that I lost some business under similar circumstances to *yous*. (CA B)

Not all the varieties of English of the Inner and Outer Circles display instances of all four functions. Plural (PL henceforth) and singular-reference/emphatic (SG henceforth) suffixed 2PL forms are by far the most frequent and the ones whose instances could be found in the majority of the varieties in the corpus. Possessive determiner suffixed 2PL forms (POSS henceforth) appear to be less frequent and less widespread across varieties. Even less frequent than determiners are possessive pronoun suffixed 2PL forms (see section 4.2.3).

### 4.2.1 Frequencies of the functions of suffixed 2PL forms

In this section I will discuss the frequencies of each of the functions performed by suffixed 2PL forms and their distribution across varieties. Since no specific trend of linguistic behaviour could be identified for the single spelling variants, I have chosen to present the data in two subsections: the first (4.2.1.1) concerns the most frequent

variants *yous* and *youse* which are considered together given the similarity of their linguistic behaviour across varieties of English; the second section (4.2.1.2) is a discussion of the frequencies of the functions of all the remaining spelling variants which were grouped together and kept separate from the two main variants *yous(e)* due to the very low frequencies of occurrence. The aim of the division is to avoid skewing the frequency counts as much as possible, especially when considering the OC varieties for which the subsections of the corpus tend to be much smaller in comparison with the IC subsections. Despite normalisation, very low frequency variants combined with small subcorpora may affect the countings, which is better avoided especially in the case of suffixed 2PL forms, given their overall low frequency of occurrence in the corpus.

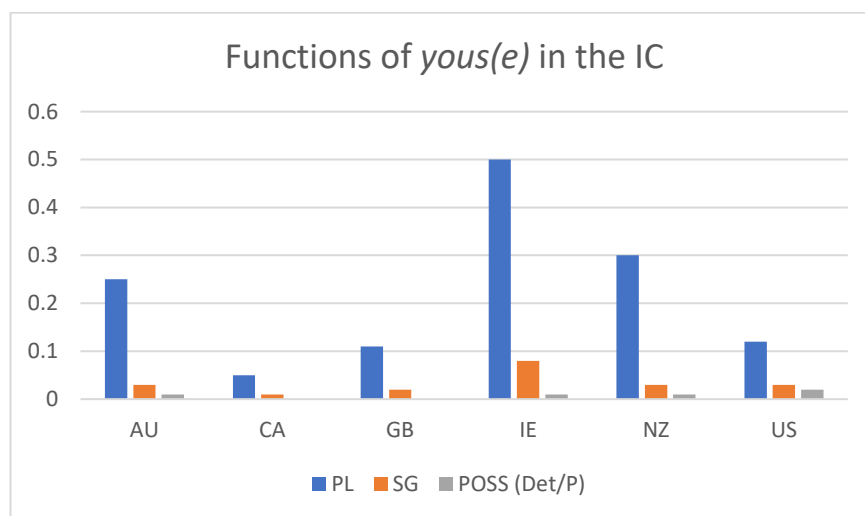
#### 4.2.1.1 *Yous(e)*

As far as the Inner Circle is concerned, the function of expressing plurality is the most frequent one. Its average frequency in the Inner Circle is 0.28 pmw, roughly four times as frequent as the second most frequent function performed by *yous(e)*, i.e. singular reference/emphasis (average frequency in the IC = 0.06 pmw). In British English, New Zealand English and American English, *yous(e)* can also work as a possessive determiner, although instances of this function are far less common than both plural and singular/emphatic *yous(e)*. Lastly, four instances of *yous(e)* working as possessive pronoun could be found in the Australian English, Irish English, New Zealand English and American English. This function, however, is even less frequent than possessive determiner *yous(e)* (see figure 2 below), and may be susceptible to the speaker's knowledge of English standard spelling, as it may as well represent an incorrect spelling of the actual possessive pronoun *yours*, also given the phonetic resemblance between the two forms. The unreliability of the linguistic data on possessive pronoun *yous(e)* led me to exclude it from the countings in statistical significance testing. Therefore, only possessive determiner *yous(e)* was considered in order to account for the possessive function. The incorrect spelling due to phonetic similarity is unlikely to occur in the case of the possessive determiner, since standard *your* (e.g. BrE ['jɔ:]) and *yous* (e.g. BrE ['ju:z]) represent two very different phonetic realisations, making it unlikely for a speaker – independently of his/her knowledge of English spelling conventions – to mistake one for the other when writing.

Turning to the frequencies of the single functions, it is possible to observe that *yous(e)*/PL is most frequent in Irish English, followed by New Zealand English and Australian English (see figure 2 below). *Yous(e)*/SG is generally – and significantly ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.01) – less frequent than plural *yous(e)* yet most frequent in, once again, Irish English compared to the other varieties. *Yous(e)*/POSS.DET is most frequent in New Zealand, whereas *yous(e)*/POSS.PRO is most frequent in the US.

American English is the only variety of the IC that displays at least one occurrence of each of the four functions performed by *yous(e)*. Instances of three of the functions are found in Australian, British, Irish, and New Zealand English (see figure 2 below). Finally, Canadian English is the only variety in which *yous(e)* performs only the two most frequent functions, i.e. plural and singular/emphatic. However, it is also the variety in which suffixed 2PL forms are least frequent, therefore the likelihood for instances of less frequent functions to surface in the data is very low.

**Figure 2 – Functions of *yous(e)* in the Inner Circle (pmw)**

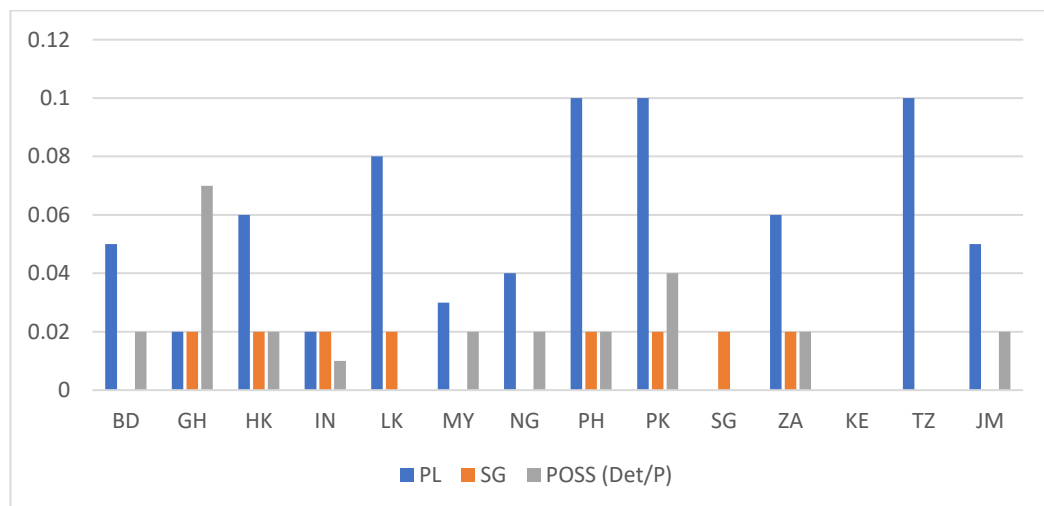


The picture in the OC is not very different. *Yous(e)*/PL is again the most frequent function with an average frequency of 0.04 pmw, i.e. twice as frequent as the second most frequent function *yous(e)*/POSS.DET (0.02 pmw), five times as frequent as *yous(e)*/SG (0.008 pmw), and thirteen times more frequent than *yous(e)*/POSS.PRO (0.003 pmw). Differently from the IC, in the OC *yous(e)*/POSS.DET is not only more frequent than *yous(e)*/SG, but is also found in a higher number of varieties than

*yous(e)/SG* (see figure 2 above), classifying as the second most frequent and most widespread function of *yous(e)* after *yous(e)/PL* in the OC.

*Yous(e)/PL* could be found in twelve varieties of the OC and is most frequent in the Philippines (0.1 pmw), Pakistan (0.1 pmw), Tanzania (0.1 pmw), and Sri Lanka (0.08 pmw) (see figure 3 below). *Yous(e)/POSS.DET* is the second most frequent and most widespread function: it was found in ten varieties and is most frequent in Ghana (0.07 pmw) and Pakistan (0.04 pmw). *Yous(e)/SG* was found in seven varieties with the same frequency of around 0.02 pmw. Lastly, possessive pronoun *yous(e)* was only found in two varieties, namely Nigeria and Philippines, with a frequency of 0.02 pmw (see figure 3 below). Apparently, no particular trend concerning the functions of *yous(e)* could be considered as being related to an obvious geographical factor, e.g. African vs Asian varieties.

**Figure 3 – Functions of *yous(e)* in the Outer Circle**



#### 4.2.1.2 Other suffixed 2PL variants

Suffixed 2PL spelling variants other than *yous(e)* tend to perform only the plural function, both in the Inner and Outer Circles. This is true of *yez*, *yiz*, *yeez*, *youz*, and *yu(s/z)*, although *yooz* and *you'z* also occur as singular-reference/emphatic pronouns as well (see table 3 below).



The tendency for suffixed 2PL forms in table 3 below is very similar to the one displayed by *yous(e)*, i.e. the plural function is always the most frequent and the most widespread across varieties. Instances of singular/emphatic and possessive suffixed 2PL forms appear to be not only less likely to find, but also extremely less frequent than plural suffixed 2PL forms. It is not surprising, then, that a function such as possessive marking, which was already difficult to find in the larger datasets of *yous(e)*, did not occur at all when considering the less frequent variants.

**Table 3 – Functions of other 2PL variants in the inner and outer circles**

<i>Yez</i>	AU	CA	GB	IE
PL (Tokens)	3	2	1	25
PL (pmw)	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.2
	NZ	US	ZA	PH
PL (Tokens)	1	2	4	3
PL (pmw)	0.01	0.01	0.08	0.07

<i>Yiz</i>	US	GB	IE
PL (Tokens)	1	7	28
PL (pmw)	0.002	0.02	0.2
<i>Yooz</i>	US	GB	ZA
PL (Tokens)	2	1	1
PL (pmw)	0.005	0.002	0.02
SG (Tokens)		2	
SG (pmw)		0.005	

<i>You'z</i>	GB	IE	PH
PL (Tokens)	2	1	
PL (pmw)	0.005	0.01	
SG (Tokens)			1
SG (pmw)			0.02

<i>Yeez</i>	GB	IE
PL (Tokens)	1	1
PL (pmw)	0.002	0.01

<i>Youz</i>	US	GB	NZ	IN	PH
PL (Tokens)	5	3	2	1	1
PL (pmw)	0.01	0.007	0.02	0.01	0.02

<i>Yu(s/z)</i>	GB	AU	US	CA
PL (Tokens)	2	1	2	1
PL (pmw)	0.005	0.006	0.005	0.007

#### 4.2.2 Conclusion

Suffixed 2PL forms can perform up to four different functions: they can work as plural pronouns, singular-reference markers of emphasis and/or familiarity, possessive determiners and possessive pronouns. What could be observed by analysing the corpus data is that a lower frequency of occurrence of a particular suffixed 2PL form corresponds to a lower number of functions that are fulfilled by the form itself. In other words, the higher the frequency of occurrence of a form, the higher the probability to find instances of all four different functions. Indeed, if one considers the most frequent variant in the corpus, *yous*, instances of all four functions can be found in both the IC and OC, and are most frequent in the varieties in which *yous* is most frequent, namely Irish, New Zealand and Australian English. The variant *youse*, which is half as frequent as *yous*, although still much more frequent than the rest of suffixed 2PL forms, displays instances of all four functions in the IC but only of plural and singular *youse* in the OC, where frequencies of occurrence drop considerably (see figures 2-3 above). When considering less frequent suffixed 2PL variants, the plural function is the only one performed by all, whereas singular/emphatic 2PL forms are much less frequent and less

widespread across varieties (only 4 in the whole corpus display instances of singular 2PL forms other than *yous(e)*). This claim is also supported by what happens in Canadian English, a variety belonging to the IC for which a large dataset is available, but where even the most frequent suffixed 2PL variants in World Englishes, namely *yous* and *youse*, display very low frequencies: *yous* was found to occur only as plural and singular/emphatic pronoun, and *youse* occurs only as a plural pronoun (see figures 2-3 above).

The correlation between frequencies of occurrence of suffixed 2PL forms and the number of functions they perform can be summed up in an implicational hierarchy of functions:

$$PL < SG/EMPH < POSS (DET/PRON)$$

According to the hierarchy, the higher the frequency of the suffixed 2PL form, the higher the probability to find instances of functions further right on the hierarchy. As a consequence, the expectation is that the varieties of English displaying instances of possessive suffixed 2PL forms will also display instances of singular/emphatic and plural suffixed 2PL forms, which is exactly what happens in the IC varieties.

Statistical tests showed that plural-reference 2PL forms are significantly more frequent than singular-reference/emphatic 2PL forms ( $p = 0.012$ ), which suggests that the use of these forms as pragmatic markers of emphasis with singular-reference is less prototypical than the one of marking plurality (see table 4 below). Singular-reference emphatic suffixed 2PLs are, in turn, significantly more frequent than possessive suffixed 2PLs ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.00001). Finally, as far as geographical variation is concerned, no variety-specific preferences could be observed for any of the functions of suffixed 2PL forms.

**Table 4 - Average frequencies of the functions of suffixed 2PL forms in IC and OC (pmw and % out of the total number of instances of suffixed 2PL forms)**

	PL	SG	Poss (A/P)
IC	0.25 (83%)	0.04 (13.4%)	0.005 (1.7%)
OC	0.04 (51.3%)	0.01 (12.7%)	0.02 (2.6%)

As far as the OC is concerned, it is perhaps interesting to point out how possessive determiner *yous(e)* tends to be more frequent (see table 4 above) and more widespread across geographical varieties than singular/emphatic *yous(e)* (see figures 2-3 above). The difference in the frequencies of these two functions between IC and OC is statistically significant ( $p= 0.01$ ) and suggests that the accessibility hierarchy of functions of suffixed 2PL forms in the OC is more accurately described as:

PL < POSS(D/P) < SG/EMPH

This may be explained by considering the function that English is called on to perform in the OC varieties. Indeed, complying with the hypothesis that singular suffixed 2PL forms work as orality pragmatic markers expressing emphasis and empathy in face-to-face informal conversation, therefore as a tool of colloquial, social interaction (see also section 4.4), it is not surprising that frequencies of this function are lower in those countries where English plays mostly an institutional role, i.e. it works as a *lingua franca* where local varieties are not mutually intelligible. It is expected, then, that social, informal interactions in these countries would take place in the local language rather than in English, and that the latter would be instead deployed for political, economic and intellectual purposes. All contexts that require a higher level of formality leave very little space for the colloquial kind of language of which singular *yous(e)* is expected to be a feature.

A final remark on the functions of suffixed 2PL forms discussed so far concerns their interpretation as clues that hint at the grammaticalisation of suffixed 2PL forms. Both the singular-reference and possessive-marking functions represent instances of semantic change and reanalysis (Croft 1990, Hopper and Traugott 1993, Haspelmath 1998): what is semantically lost is the trait [+plural]; in the case of possessive 2PL forms, the personal pronoun is also reanalysed into either a possessive determiner or possessive pronoun (see chapter 9 for a full discussion).

### 4.2.3 Possessive suffixed 2PL forms

As already mentioned in section 2.4, suffixed 2PL forms can work as both possessive determiners ((5-6) below) and pronouns ((7) below). Moreover, differently from what can be done with standard *your*, the possessor can be marked for plurality (see (5) below).

(5) Just interested to see if the latest deals gets them thinking and *youse guys thoughts* on it. (GB G)

(6) *Yous SA identity* has not been erased (ZA G)

(7) There were, are, and will continue to hear many stories *like yous* from north as well as south. (LK B)

Possessive suffixed 2PL forms are not very frequent in the corpus (25 instances in total,  $M = 0.017$  pmw): within the category, possessive determiner 2PLs are more frequent than possessive pronoun 2PLs in both the Inner and Outer Circle varieties (see table 5 below).

**Table 5 - Raw frequencies of possessive suffixed 2PL forms in World Englishes**

	Poss Det	Poss Pro
CA	-	1
GB	5	-
IE	-	1
NZ	3	-
US	2	1
GH	3	-
IN	-	1
JM	1	
LK		1
MY	1	

NG	1	
PH	1	
PK	2	
ZA	1	
Tot.	20	5

In order to understand more about how possessive suffixed 2PL forms are used, the contexts in which they occur was analysed. Due to both the scarce number of occurrences as well as the likelihood of possessive pronoun 2PLs to be instances of typos or simply incorrect spelling since the phonetics of *yours* and *yous* might be in some cases, especially in the OC varieties, confused, I have chosen to exclude the instances of possessive pronoun suffixed 2PLs from the semantic and syntactic analysis of the context of possessive suffixed 2PL forms. This means that the generalisations that will follow in this section will be based exclusively on the linguistic behaviour of possessive determiner 2PLs.

A trend could be identified in the IC varieties to use possessive 2PLs to encode a contrastive meaning. For example, in (8) below the speaker is emphatically stating that the choice is no one else's but the addressee's (personal and particular) and that is probably different from a presupposition or expected behaviour.

(8) If you want to order two cups at the same time, that is *yous choice*. We are not taking away anyone's choice. (GB G)

In (9) below, the contrast is drawn between something that belongs and relates to the addressee and no one else (i.e. that particular skydrive) and something broader and less specific (i.e. shared data). Contrastive meaning is also codified by the use of the conjunction *while*.

(9) While *yous skydrive* is limited to 25GB the amount of shared data is virtually unlimited. (US G)

The analysis of a control sample of instances of standard *your* (500 randomised occurrences) reveals that the difference in how frequently suffixed 2PL forms and *your* appear in emphatic contexts is significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.016). In particular, I have counted how many times the context of occurrence of the two possessive determiners *yous* and *your* implied an emphatic reading of the relationship between the possessor and the possessed item of the kinds identified in (8-9) above. By comparing the frequencies of occurrence, it was observed that 25.0% (0.005 pmw) instances of possessive suffixed 2PL forms express emphatic/contrastive meaning; on the other hand, in each of the 20 varieties analysed standard *your* appears in emphatic/contrastive contexts in no more than 3.2% of the occurrences (on average 0.49 pmw).

Emphasis on personal possession can also be observed in (10) below in which *own* is used as a further emphasiser. The emphatic character of suffixed 2PL forms is not surprising. In section 4.4 on the pragmatics of the forms, it is illustrated how emphasis is, in fact, one of the main pragmatic meanings expressed by suffixed 2PL forms. In the case of plural- and singular-reference suffixed 2PL forms, what is emphatic is the identification of the referent, whereas with possessive suffixed 2PL forms, it is the relation of possession to be emphasised as well as an implied difference with a general expectation that is related to the event expressed in the sentence (see (11) below).

(10) I mean now depends on *yous own decision*. (GB G)

(11) *Yous requirement* to replace nandor for long haired biologist, ok, but not quite politically correct. (NZ G)

Where emphasis on the possession relations and contrast does not seem to be underlying the use of possessive suffixed 2PL forms, an analysis of the semantics of the words modified by possessive determiner 2PLs suggests that it might have to do with the concept of (in)alienability (Nichols 1988: 572, 1992: 160). In other words, it seems that the closer to the addressees things are perceived to be, the higher the likelihood that possession is expressed through a possessive determiner 2PL.

The degree of (in)alienability of entities with respect to the possessor is culture-specific, even though typological studies reveal that there is a certain agreement among world languages to believe that body parts, kinship terms, and some culturally

possessed items (e.g. clothes, cars, pets, livestock, etc.) are considered to be more inherent to the possessor than other less related items, such as books, buildings, the weather, and so on (Nichols 1988, Roberts 1987, Chappell and McGregor 1996, cited in Siewierska 2004:144).

Especially in OC varieties, words such as body parts and concepts that closely relate to the interlocutor, namely health, dreams, wishes, and so on (see (12-25) below), constitute almost the totality of occurrences of possessive 2PL modification (90%; 18 out of 20 total instances).

(12) Which assists you developing *yous muscle tissues* significantly faster with pure substances. (GH G)

(13) *Yous sister* can download her book for free, and it includes the supplement list. (US B)

(14) Your observations seems to be result of *yous wishes*. (PK G)

(15) It aint worth *yous health*. (MY G)

Interestingly, in (14) the standard possessive pronoun *your* and the nonstandard possessive *yous* occur in the same sentence, which might suggest that one's *observations* are considered to be less inherent than one's *wishes*.

In table 6 below, all 18 instances of 2PL possessive modification are classified according to how close they can be perceived to be to the possessor (+/- inherent).

**Table 6 - Typology of words modified by possessive 2PLs**

+ inherent	Muscle tissues, skin, health, dreams, wishes, sallah (prayer/worship/homage), soul, story (of a person), choice, decision, thoughts, identity, sister
- inherent	(self-)Photos, ID, valuables, machines, sheep



The majority of them falls within the category of inalienable concepts that have to do with the very identity and singularity of the possessor, such as *wishes, choice, identity, soul*. Two instances refer to the possessor's body parts which are prototypically inalienable. Finally, even the less inherent entities, which do not stand in a part-whole relationship with the possessor, are entities that strongly relate with the possessor's identity (ID, photos, kinship relationships) and his/her living style and habits (see (16) and (17) below).

(16) Youse guys got ta stop laundering *youse sheep* in da machines. (NZ G)

(17) Why would youse guys cause yer'selfs such grief and have them installed in *youse guys machines*? (NZ G)

A counter-argument to inalienability is the possibility that what is considered to be inalienably possessed items are nothing more than very frequent words in the language (Haspelmath 2006). Although this principle can explain phonological reduction when expressing possession (see, for example, *me* realisation of 1sg POSS *my* in Lancashire dialect (Hollmann and Siewierska 2007)) through iconicity (Haiman 1985, Croft 2003, Haspelmath 2006), it does not seem to explain the addition of the *-s* marker to the second person pronoun *you*. In fact, possessive suffixed 2PL forms represent, if anything, phonological enrichment rather than reduction. Even a comparison with a control sample consisting of randomised instances of standard *your* (100 per variety = 2000 in total) reveals that prototypically inalienable possession (e.g. body parts, kinship relations, nouns defining the identity of the possessor, such as character, skills, inclinations, and in some cases clothes and cars) constitutes 40.1% of occurrences, whereas in the case of suffixed 2PL forms inalienable possession is expressed in 90% of cases, yielding a statistically significant difference ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0001).

To sum up, the analysis of the concordances of possessive suffixed 2PL forms reveals that they still maintain their pragmatic function of conveying emphasis and, although less frequently, contrast. However, another principle that seems to underlie the choice of using suffixed 2PL forms as possessive determiners may be the inalienability of the possessed item or entity, i.e. how close and inherently related they are to the possessor.

### 4.3 Collocates and patterns

The analysis of the collocates of suffixed 2PL forms constitutes useful heuristics to the semantic preference as well as pragmatic functions of the forms. Given that the purpose is to find out not only words that collocate significantly with suffixed 2PL forms, but also those that are specific to the non-standard forms and not standard *you*, some collocates with significant MI scores are not discussed here because they display either same or higher collocational strength with standard *you* (see, for example, *know* and *see* in table 7 below). On the other hand, the words displaying higher MIs when collocating with suffixed 2PL forms than standard *you* were considered to be actual collocates of suffixed 2PL forms. In the same fashion, collocates of suffixed 2PL forms that display lower MI scores than 3 – therefore not significant – were considered collocates of *yous(e)* if the same word showed an opposite collocational trend with standard *you*, i.e. the latter would tend not to appear in same context as the word itself (which is indicated by a negative MI score) (see, for example, *for* in table 13 below).

**Table 7 – Collocates of *yous(e)* in the IC (MI scores)**

Collocates of <i>yous(e)</i>	MI (2PL-collocate)	MI ( <i>you</i> -word) BNC
<i>Keep</i>	4.49	1.95
<i>Hope</i>	5.10	2.60
<i>Would</i>	2.06	1.93
<i>See</i>	3.23	3.30
<i>What</i>	2.11	2.10

<i>Thank</i>	5.57	5.90
<i>Don't</i>	4.46	3.17
<i>For</i>	0.99	- 0.12
<i>Know</i>	3.24	4.80
<i>-n't</i>	3.37	1.58
<i>If</i>	1.55	3.87
<i>Of</i>	3.2	- 2.86

Out of the twelve collocates identified at the beginning only seven appeared to be actual collocates of suffixed 2PL forms: the verbs *keep* and *hope*, the negations *don't* and *-n't*, the prepositions *for* and *of* and the conditional conjunction *if*.

Let us consider the contexts in which suffixed 2PL forms co-occur with the two strongest collocates. *Keep* seems to appear both to the left and the right of suffixed 2PL forms without any preference. In the cases in which *keep* precedes the suffixed 2PL form the latter follows the verb pattern, working as the object, as in (18):

(18) [...] [P]aying their taxes, to help *keep yous down in town*. (CA G)

Suffixed 2PL forms also follow *keep* in formulaic clusters such as (19) and (20):

(19) Will *keep yous posted*. (GB G)

(20) I will most definitely *keep yous in mind* for future functions. (NZ G)

Suffixed 2PL forms precede *keep* when it is the subject of the verb, as in (21):

(21) *Youys keep bringing that up*, get over it would ya (AU)

Half of the times (3 out of 6 instances) in which suffixed 2PL forms co-occur with *keep* (3.7% of the times *yous* appear in the corpus) they happen to also occur in a future context, as the presence of *will* signals (see, for example (19) and (20) above). This may suggest that a future interpretation of the sentence could be a criterion for choosing to use a suffixed 2PL form (see also section 4.4).

The collocate *hope* seems to display a clear preference of appearance to the left of the suffixed 2PL form; indeed, in 5 out of 6 instances (2.1% of the total number of times suffixed 2PL forms appear in the corpus) of co-occurrence it immediately precedes the suffixed 2PL form, with the latter working as the subject of the complement clause depending on *hope*, see (22):

(22) I *hope yous* enjoy catching up with Brian. (AU G)

As far as negations, namely *don't* and *-n't*, are concerned, suffixed 2PL forms are the subject in all 39 instances of co-occurrence, and in 17 instances the suffixed 2PL form and the negation co-occur with a third element, namely the conditional conjunction *if*. The resulting frequent cluster looks like "*if youse don't X*", suggesting that *youse* is likely to be used in the negated protasis of a conditional structure as exemplified in (23) below, expressing emphasis on the condition.

(23) How you're gonna cop it in the future, *if youse don't* pull your socks up. (AU G)

On the same line as with *don't*, suffixed 2PL forms occur with other negated modals and auxiliaries, such as *won't*, *can't*, *didn't*, *wouldn't* (29 instances, 11.7% of times suffixed 2PL forms occur in the corpus).

Suffixed 2PL forms appear to co-occur with the preposition *for* (7 instances, MI=0.99) more frequently than the same preposition does with the standard pronoun *you* (MI= -0.12) (see Table 13 above). In 5 out of 7 instances the context of co-occurrence is that of a benefactive prepositional phrase as in (24):

(24) Here is a debating issue *for youse all...* (AU G)

In only one instance, *for* co-occurs with the suffixed 2PL form in an infinitival clause pattern (25):

(25) Well, it's time *for youse to leave*. (AU G)

Finally, a strong preference can be observed for *of* to immediately precede suffixed 2PL forms. An expanded context analysis reveals that suffixed 2PL forms are frequently found in quantifying and partitive patterns of the kind *quantifier + of + you(s)* (53 of the 63 total number of co-occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms with *of* and 11.3% of the total number of instances of suffixed 2PL forms in the corpus), as shown in (26) below:

(26)

a. *Some of youse* will retain their racism (AU G) well, *three of youse*. I feel special.

(AU B)

b. So *all of youse* whining about immigration [...] (GB G)

c. I don't think *any of yous* have read the post properly (GB G)

In the very few cases (10 instances out of 63) in which *of* follows the suffixed 2PL form, the latter works as the complement of a prepositional verb, as happens with *remind you(s) of* or *warn you(s) of*, etc.

### 4.3.1 Conclusion

The search for collocates of suffixed 2PL forms required a fine-grained, qualitative analysis given the low frequency of occurrence of suffixed 2PL forms that could affect the results of the statistics. The results obtained by repeating the queries a number of times with different span and MFC settings were compared and combined with a manual cross-check of the expanded context in order to eliminate as many false positives as possible.

Suffixed 2PL forms display specific collocate preferences when compared with standard *you*. Suffixed 2PL forms most often co-occur with the verbs *keep* and *hope*. Suffixed 2PL forms and *keep* are most likely to co-occur in semi-structured, formulaic clusters of the kind *will keep yous posted*, and frequently in co-occurrence with a third element, generally *will*, which suggests a future interpretation of the sentence. In co-occurrence with *hope*, the suffixed 2PL form is generally the subject of the object complement clause dependent on *hope* (e.g. *I hope youse...*).

Another frequent collocate of suffixed 2PL forms is the negation *not*. The contracted form *-n't* appears to be a particularly frequent collocate of suffixed 2PL forms: it is attached to auxiliary and modal verbs such as *won't*, *can't*, *didn't*, *wouldn't* and, because of its form, also implies the informality of the context of use of this co-occurrence. The preposition *for* is a less frequent collocate of suffixed 2PL forms and is most likely to combine with the pronoun in a benefactive prepositional phrase (e.g. *For youse all*).

The preposition *of* is the collocate that proved to be a useful key to finding out about a pattern in which suffixed 2PL forms frequently occur: the quantifying/partitive pattern. The pattern generally appears in the form quantifier + *of* + 2PL form (e.g. *Some of yous(e)*). The quantifier can be both specific (e.g. *three of yous*) and non-specific (e.g. *any of yous*). The occurrence of suffixed 2PL forms in partitive structures can be perhaps explained by the tendency, already displayed in the case of singular-reference 2PL forms, to express emphasis. In the case of quantifying/partitive structures, what is emphatic is the act of identifying a smaller group of people among a larger one that is already 'on-stage' (see section 4.4 for a more detailed discussion). By doing this, attention is drawn to the smaller group which, thus, becomes an in-focus referent (Langacker 2008). This may also explain the occurrence of suffixed 2PL forms in a context such as partitive structures in which the interpretation of the pronoun is unambiguously plural therefore not needing an overt marking of plurality on the personal pronoun: for example, *some of you* implies that *you* is referring to more than one person if it is possible to identify only *some* of them. Where the plural marker may appear to be redundant as a plural interpretation is already suggested by the structure, the use of suffixed 2PL forms implies pragmatic marking of emphasis rather than merely grammatical marking of plurality (see also section 4.4 on the pragmatics of suffixed 2PL forms).

The findings of the analysis of collocates suggest that suffixed 2PL forms are likely to be found in contexts that imply a high degree of involvement and commitment for the speaker, given the semantics implied in two of the most frequent collocates, namely *hope* and *keep*. Since *hope* was found in co-occurrence with suffixed 2PL forms when the speaker is *hoping* for something to happen for the addressee (see (27) below), the co-occurrence was analysed as one expressing not only involvement on the part of the speaker but also empathy towards the interlocutor (see also section 4.4 below).

(27)

- a. I hope *yous* manage to get in some snorkelling while you're there (AU G)
- b. Hope *yous all* have fun at your festival (IE G)

A very similar reading also holds for *keep*, since it tends to co-occur with suffixed 2PL forms in contexts where the speaker is committing to doing something in which the interlocutor, addressed by means of the suffixed 2PL form, is also involved (see (28) below). The promise of a future interaction between the speaker and the interlocutor(s) (as in (28) below) is what characterises *rituals of departure* (Leech 2014), which are considered a politeness strategy aiming to avoid the face-threatening act of abandoning a conversation.

(28)

- a. Will keep *yous* posted. (GB)
- b. I will most definitely keep *yous* in mind for future functions. (NZ)

The analysis of the collocates of suffixed 2PL forms does point in the direction of considering suffixed 2PL forms as preferred devices for expressing politeness: suffixed 2PL forms frequently occur in contexts in which the speaker acts in a benevolent way towards the interlocutor(s), may it be the overt expression of love and admiration, or the promise of a future re-encounter (see section 4.4 below).

#### **4.4 The pragmatics of suffixed 2PL forms**

The analysis of the functions, semantics, and context of occurrence of suffixed 2PL forms provided useful clues to understanding the pragmatics of suffixed 2PL. First of all, it was observed that when suffixed 2PL forms are used with singular reference their actual function is pragmatic, i.e. express emphasis (see (29) below and section 4.2 above).

(29)

- Are *yous* the new librarian?

- Who?

- *Yous*.

- Me? Israel looked over his shoulder: were there more of him?

(US G)

Another pragmatic function performed by suffixed 2PL forms that involves the expression of emphasis is the attention-getting function (AG henceforth) (Waltereit 2002) (see (30) below). Suffixed 2PL forms/AG represent the 2.2% of the total number of occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms in the corpus. They are most frequent in Irish English (3.7% of occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms), New Zealand English (3.5%) and Australian English (3.5%).

(30)

a. Oh *youse*. Stop giving her a hard time. (US G)

b. No more games, *yous*. (US G)

In (30) above, it can be observed that attention-getting suffixed 2PL forms occur in the periphery of the sentence and do not constitute a part of the propositional sentence, as shown by the fact that they can be deleted without changing the propositional meaning. What they make explicit is a particular kind of reference that is not only emphatic but also conveys a certain negative attitude of the speaker towards the interlocutor(s). When performing the attention-getting function, in other words, suffixed 2PL forms tend to look less like personal pronouns and more like pragmatic markers with a clear subjective and intersubjective function (Traugott 2014): suffixed 2PL forms/AG are used to express the speaker's attitude and manage the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor(s).

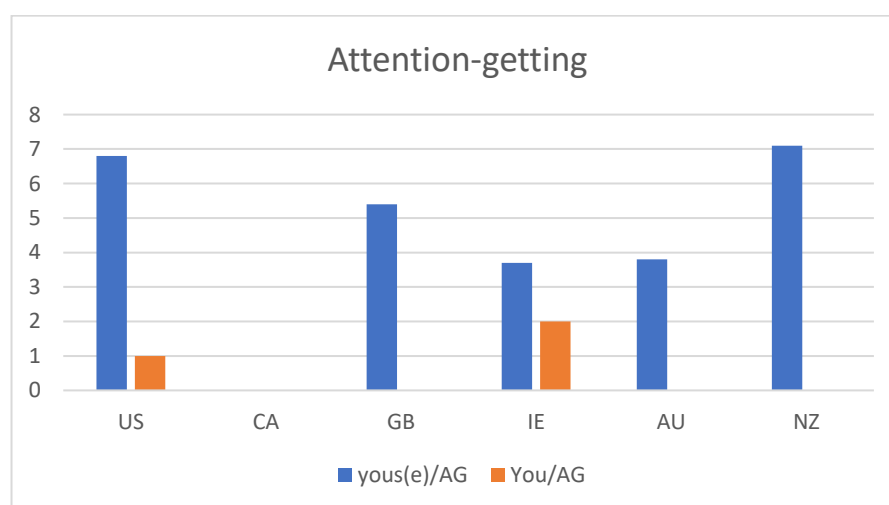
Suffixed 2PL forms/AG can be classified according to the position they occupy in relation to the propositional sentence, namely left or right periphery (LP and RP respectively). Suffixed 2PL forms/AG are most frequently found in the RP (13 out of 21 instances of 2PL/AG forms in the corpus) and less frequently in the LP (8 out of 21



occurrences of 2PL/AG forms). Traugott (2014: 7) shows how, historically, the RP is an important locus for the development and occurrence of pragmatic markers. As already said in section 3.6, RP pragmatic markers are linked with the concept of intersubjectivity which describes all the linguistic strategies that aim to regulate the speaker-hearer relationship as well as the evaluation of what is being said or written (e.g. question tags, hedges, honorifics) (Brems, Ghesquiere and Van de Velde, 2014). Therefore, in their linguistic evolution, elements that are increasingly recruited to the RP undergo intersubjectification shifting from a semantic contribution to the text to a more pragmatic one. This seems to be particularly true of the instances of suffixed 2PL forms that appear in conversational formulaic sentences and are used to express politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001) (see below). Furthermore, 9 out of 21 total occurrences of Suffixed 2PL/AG in the corpus are instances of double-marked expressions (e.g. *Cheers, yous twos* (IE B)) which suggests an already advanced stage of grammaticalization and further motivates the development of new functions such as pragmatic ones.

The preference for suffixed 2PL forms over standard *you* to work as attention-getting devices is also suggested by the distribution of attention-getting standard *you*: not only are suffixed 2PL forms/AG found in 5 varieties of the IC whereas *you*/AG is only found in 2 (namely US and Ireland), but suffixed 2PL forms/AG were found to be more frequent than *you*/AG (see figure 4 below).

**Figure 4 – *Yous(e)/AG* vs *you/AG* (percentages out of total number of instances of the form in the corpus)**



The pragmatic traits of emphatic identification and evaluative meaning are also distinctive of another category of suffixed 2PL forms, namely the double-marked structure *yous(e)* + NP-PL. As will be explained in detail in section 4.6, this structure is used to emphatically identify a social category. The emphasis of the identification is linked with the speaker's evaluation of the category itself which tends to be derogatory. The trend is consistent across varieties of English as can be seen in (31) below. In (31b), in particular, the structure is located in the RP and detached from the main sentence, a syntactic configuration that resembles suffixed 2PL/AG as well as pragmatic markers in general.

(31)

- a. *Yous fuckers* aren't getting rid of the RedNut easily! (GB G)
- b. Should of left it alone in the first place *yous pack of bright sparks*. (IE G)
- c. Why don't you stop looking for alternate reasons why people can't stand *yous nasty hippie bastards*. (US B)

Other suffixed 2PL structures that involve emphatic identification are partitive and quantifying constructions, as in (32) below:

(32)

- a. So, *some of yous* are going home. (US G)
- b. To *those of yous* that have and are suffering. (US B)
- c. This transfer is no up to *any of yous*. (GB G)

The aim of suffixed 2PL forms in partitive and quantifying structures is that of drawing attention to the larger group and, subsequently, focus on the smaller group within the larger one. Langacker's notion of profiling (e.g. 2008: 66) helps to see the emphatic referential nature of 2PL forms in the partitive context: the partitive structure selects a certain conceptual base which is linked to the process of identification; by selecting the suffixed 2PL form (e.g. *yous*) the conceptual base can be narrowed down in scope to indicate the referents identified by *yous* and exclude any other referent; *yous* is now the 'onstage' portion of the conceptual base and is foregrounded as the general locus of attention; within the latter, further attention is directed to a smaller portion (the one indicated by

the quantifier, e.g. *those, some, any, two*, etc.) which corresponds to the profile, i.e. the specific focus of attention within a foregrounded immediate scope.

Another argument that supports the emphatic nature of the identification carried out in partitive and quantifying structures is the low frequency of occurrence of standard *you* in the same context. Indeed, the MI score describing the collocational strength of *you* and the preposition *of* is negative (MI= -2.86), which indicates that the two words tend to shun each other. On the other hand, not only *yous(e)* co-occurs with *of* more often but the collocational strength between the two words is significantly higher than chance (MI (*yous(e)-of*) = 3.24).

The last argument that supports the emphatic character of suffixed 2PL forms comes from an instance of corpus data in which nonstandard and standard pronouns occur together:

(33) Well, not you, but the annoying *yous* among you. (US G)

In example (33) above, the scope of reference (i.e. the larger group) is identified by standard *you* and is not highlighted as, instead, is the profiled, or focalised, smaller group within the larger which is codified through the suffixed 2PL form *yous* and carries, once again, the speaker's evaluative meaning (i.e. those who are annoying/the annoying ones).

Emphatic identification is only one of the main pragmatic functions that are operationalised through the use of suffixed 2PL forms. A second function is the expression of politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001). The analysis of collocates in section 4.3 showed how the use of suffixed 2PL forms is linked with the semantic traits of [+commitment][+agentivity] [+benefactive][+futurity]. These are also common to many conversational formulas and ritualised interactional linguistic behaviour (e.g. rituals of departure) involving the use of suffixed 2PL forms (see (34) below).

(34)

a. Let *youse* know. (IE G)

b. See *yous* later, Adrian. (GB G)

- c. God bless *yous*. (US B)
- d. It'll do *yous* good. (AU G)
- e. Thank *yous* so much, Maria. (AU B)
- f. Love *youse all*. (GB G)

The type of speech acts in which suffixed 2PL forms are involved seem to be strategies for expressing politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001).

Most of the instances of suffixed 2PL forms that I analysed fall within the category of positive politeness (70.1%). In this usage suffixed 2PL forms are most often found in exclamative sentences expressing compliments, congratulations, gratitude, blessings, good wishes, forgiveness and participation (see (35) below).

(35)

Compliments: *Yous fuckin rock* (US G)

Congratulations: *Well done to yous and more success* (IE B)

Gratitude: *Thank youse* (IE G)

Blessings: *May God give yous strength* (GB G)

Good wishes: *Good luck to yous* (GB G)

Forgiveness: *I forgive yous* (MY G)

Participation/sharing: *I'm with youse guys on this* (SG G)

The instances of suffixed 2PL forms appearing in linguistic contexts of negative politeness (14 instances, 29.7% of the occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms expressing politeness) are less frequent when compared to instances of positive politeness (33 instances, 70.1%). The main speech act in this category is *promising*, which semantically entails both commitment on the part of the speaker and a future projection for the realisation of the event. The linguistic codification of this category of speech acts typically involves the use of routinised expressions, which are generally known in the literature as *rituals of departure* (Leech 2014), such as *see youse there* (AU G), *let youse know* (IE G), *see youse* (US B), and

expressions that aim at closing the conversational exchange, such as the aforementioned *will keep you posted* (GB G). The acts of closing and abandoning a conversation bring a face-threatening component to the exchange and a consequent need for compensation through strategies of negative politeness, which in the specific case involve the use of linguistic expressions that suggest that the farewell is only temporary by committing to a future event involving both the speaker and the interlocutor(s).

In sum, the pragmatics of suffixed 2PL forms appears to be far from random. With certain speech acts, namely those that foster speaker-interlocutor relationship building, suffixed 2PL forms very commonly play the role of pragmatic markers of politeness (20.2% of the total number of occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms). In nearly all cases (the only two exceptions are *You fuckin' rock* (US G) and *You rock* (IE G)), suffixed 2PL forms are coded as the object of the proposition, who also is the beneficiary of the action or event that is expressed by the main verb (e.g. love, forgiveness, gratefulness, letting know, keeping posted etc.) in line with what was found for the semantic analysis of collocates (see section 4.3).

Whether there is a risk of performing a face-threatening act or not, expressing positive or negative politeness points at the speaker's willingness to establish and maintain a (good) social relationship with their interlocutor(s). This pragmatically prominent context in which there is a need to ensure social comity, i.e. guarantee a relationship balance between speaker and interlocutor which can be mutually beneficial and functional to a felicitous linguistic exchange (Lakoff 1990, cited in Leech 2014), calls for the use of suffixed 2PL forms rather than the standard pronoun *you*. Indeed, by comparing the frequencies of occurrence of the two in pragmatically charged contexts, i.e. contexts in which the pronominal form performs a pragmatic function beyond the mere reference to the interlocutors, such as the expression of emphasis or empathy, a significant difference in the occurrences can be observed ( $t= 3.3$ ,  $p= 0.007$ ) suggesting that suffixed 2PL forms do tend to work as pragmatic markers, differently from standard *you* which normally appears in pragmatically neutral contexts (see also section 4.5 below).

The pragmatic functions of expressing positive and negative politeness and promoting a speaker-addressee relationship seems to be at odds with a trait of suffixed 2PL forms that is related with the identification function, i.e. the creation, through plural noun phrase post-modification, of a negatively connotated social category (section 4.6

below; see also chapter 8). However, these instances can be explained by the emphatic character of suffixed 2PL forms as well as the marking of associativeness (Corbett 2000) that was called on to explain the suffixed 2PL NP-PL pattern in section 4.6.

(36) Well done. How much is that going to cost? Should of left it alone in the first place, *yous pack of bright sparks*. (IE G)

(37) *Youse idiots* are gonna be sorry when ya don't got us to sell you giant piles of shit no more! (US G)

Example (36) above may help to see the emphatic character of the identification thanks to the dislocation of the suffixed 2PL NP-PL to the right periphery of the sentence which is a locus of focalisation strategies (Birner and Ward 1998). In example (37) the emphatic character of the expression can be seen in the co-occurrence in the same sentence with the reduced pronoun *ya* which is the out-of-focus subject of the subordinate clause. In both cases, the suffixed 2PL form introduces a category of people that are associated to one another according to some property, which is the very function of the suffixed 2PL NP-PL structure. Derogatory 2PL NP-PL structures do not seem to be as common when involving the standard pronoun *you*. In the first 50 most frequent combinations of *you* with a plural noun phrase in the corpus, only 6 are instances of identification with derogatory meaning and are reported in table 8 below together with their frequencies.

**Table 8 – Derogatory *you* NP-PL (absolute/pmw)**

NP	Tokens	Pmw
<i>idiots</i>	621	38.5
<i>nuts</i>	364	22.5
<i>fools</i>	358	22.1
<i>morons</i>	270	16.7
<i>haters</i>	214	13.2
<i>bastards</i>	154	9.5

In other words, the tendency for standard *you* is to appear in derogatory 2PL NP-PL structures 12% of times it co-occurs with a plural noun phrase, differently from what happens with suffixed 2PL forms which appear in derogatory 2PL NP-PL structures 40% of times they co-occur with a plural noun phrase (see section 4.6 for the a detailed account of the instances of the structure). The difference between the two tendencies is statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.03) and suggests that suffixed 2PL forms are preferred in this context.

The statistically significant difference between the frequencies of occurrence of suffixed 2PL forms and standard *you* in pragmatically charged contexts suggests that suffixed 2PL forms are undergoing a process of pragmaticalisation (Erman and Kotsinas 1993), whereby they have developed into preferred pronominal forms for expressing pragmatic meaning (see section 4.5 below and chapter 8).

#### **4.5 Significance: standard *you* as a control sample**

As seen in section 4.2, suffixed 2PL forms display a linguistic behaviour that is consistent across varieties when considering the number and frequency of functions that they can perform (PL < SG/EMPH < POSS). At this point, it is important to understand whether the standard pronoun *you* performs the same number of functions and with similar frequencies to suffixed 2PL forms.

I analysed a sample of randomly selected 200 instances of *you* for each of the 20 varieties in the corpus in order to obtain a more detailed insight of the distribution of its functions. The analysis suggests that standard *you* performs three main functions: singular reference (see (38) below), plural reference (see (39) below) and work as an impersonal pronoun (see (40)) or used in order to address a hypothetical individual (see (41)).

(38) You are a wonderful human being. (US G)

(39) If one of you don't order soon we'll be thrown out of the boozier. (IE G)

(40) As with anything though, your body will adjust somewhat as you put more miles on the bike. (CA G)

(41) If you moved into a pig sty you can move out of a pig sty (AU G)).

The main difference between standard *you* and suffixed 2PL forms, then, is the range of functions each of them performs. Firstly, even though standard *you* and suffixed 2PL forms are both used for plural and singular reference, each of them displays different frequencies of occurrence of the two functions. In particular, standard *you* is used for singular reference much more frequently than plural reference: on average, *you* identifies a singular referent 54.6% of times it occurs in the corpus (4633.1 pmw) and a plural referent only 4.4% of times (372.1 pmw). Suffixed 2PL forms, on the contrary, work as plural pronouns on average 83.8% of the times they occur in the corpus and only 13.6% of times they identify a singular referent. Secondly, the difference between the two trends is not only statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.057) but also bears a qualitative difference: while the identification of a singular referent can as well be the only function that standard *you* is called to perform in a particular context, singular-reference suffixed 2PL forms always add pragmatic meaning to the sentence (see also section 4.4 above on the pragmatics of suffixed 2PL forms). In fact, it seems that the core function of singular suffixed 2PL forms is work as pragmatic markers of emphasis before they do as devices to convey singular reference. The opposite trend was observed for standard *you* which rarely appears in pragmatically charged contexts, such as emphatic identification (42), expression of empathy and/or politeness (43a-b), etc. (7.5% of the total number of occurrences of *you* in the corpus).

(42) *You fools*, little chicken was right. Remember my words. (US G)

(43)

a. I can feel the tension in your article and *admire you* for wanting to work through it. (AU B)

b. And *hope I'll still see you* sometimes at The Artist's Road. (NZ B)

The statistically significant difference ( $p= 0.007$ ) in the frequencies the two pronouns occur in pragmatically charged contexts is one of the main factors that explains the co-



existence of the two pronominal forms in the language as well as the instances of co-occurrence in the same sentence and when referring to the same entity (see (44) below):

(44) Well, not you, but the annoying *yous* among you. (US G)

A third main difference in the functions concerns standard *you* being often used impersonally (30.8% of the times, 2556.5 pmw) whereas not a single instance of impersonal suffixed 2PL forms was found in the corpus. Finally, standard *you* is never used as a possessive determiner or pronoun whereas suffixed 2PL forms, although not very frequently (see tables 4-6 above), are.

Taking into account the differences observed for standard *you* and suffixed 2PL forms as far as functions and frequencies are concerned, it is possible to formulate two hierarchies that account for the trends in the use of the two pronouns and that look very different from each other (note: the symbol > is used here to indicate higher or lower frequency of occurrence, not implication):

standard *you*: SG > IMP/HYPO > PL

suffixed 2PL forms: PL > SG/EMPH > POSS

In sum, the analysis of corpus data shows that standard *you* and suffixed 2PL forms display very different linguistic behaviours, not only in the typology but also the frequency of the functions each of them performs. As also confirmed by statistical testing, standard *you* is prototypically used to identify a singular referent or impersonally in pragmatically neutral contexts. On the other hand, suffixed 2PL forms are prototypically used as plural pronouns and markers of emphasis. The co-existence of the two forms and the possibility of co-occurrence in the same sentence can be explained by two main factors: the first, suffixed 2PL forms express plurality unambiguously thanks to the explicit plural marker *-s*; the second, suffixed 2PL forms express pragmatic meaning that standard *you* does not (see also section 4.4 above).

## 4.6 Double and triple marking of suffixed 2PL forms

As seen in section 4.2, the main function of suffixed 2PL forms is to indicate plurality of reference unambiguously. This already represents extra marking compared to the standard form *you* that is also used for plural reference. However, suffixed 2PL forms can also be found in combination with other plural markers, such as *guys*, *all*, *lot*, etc. (see (45) and (46) below) resulting in double- or triple-marked expressions (cf. Nichols 1986). I will argue that the main factors explaining double and triple marking are firstly grammaticalization, and secondly the semantic and pragmatic enrichment that is contributed to the sentence by the use of suffixed 2PL forms.

(45)

- a. *Yous guys* are on the wrong side (US G)
- b. I know *yous all* said that they were but its nice to hear it from the doc. (NZ G)
- c. I'm tired of getting movies from Hollywood -- sorry that I'm picking *youse lot* in Hollywood (GB G)
- d. *Youz gals* can ship that? (PH G)

(46)

- a. Anyway *all yous people* on this have absolutely no idea of the amount of people that visited (IE G)
- b. Not *all youse kids* are past racism (AU G)
- c. Objective? I take it *youse guyses* believe in your "Rapture" (US G)

Double- and triple-marked expressions featuring suffixed 2PL forms can be divided into sub-categories according to the type of marking they bear. I identify six different categories which will be dealt with in detail in the following sections (4.6.1-6):

1. 2PL *all/all* 2PL: occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms that are immediately either preceded or followed by the collectivising *all*;

2. 2PL *guys*: occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms that are immediately followed by the gender-marked plural noun *guys* in all its spelling variants (e.g. *goize*);
3. 2PL + cardinal number: the occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms that are immediately either preceded or followed by a cardinal number;
4. 2PL NP-PL: occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms that are post-modified by a complex noun phrase which specifies something about the 2PL (e.g. *Youse clever dogs*);
5. Others: other generic, less frequent collectives (e.g. *lot, people*), and gender-specific (e.g. *gals*) or age-related (e.g. *boys*) modifiers;
6. Triple-marked expressions involving a combination of two categories (1-5) on the list.

Double-marked expressions represent 16.5% of the total number of instances of suffixed 2PL forms in the corpus, whereas triple-marked expressions represent only 1.9% of the occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms in the corpus. Double-marked expressions involving *yous(e)* seemed to be already common in the early 1900s. Indeed, *youse guys* totals 35 instances in COHA (0.08 pmw); its earliest instance dates back to 1904 when R. F. Zogbaum published an issue in the magazine *Century* and used the expression in order to describe the language of “our modern Yankee man-of-war's-man” (COHA: 1904 MAG *Century*). *Youse all* appears to be half as frequent as *youse guys* (11 and 22 instances in the whole corpus respectively; 0.02 pmw and 0.04 pmw respectively), with its earliest examples showing in *The Hairy Ape*. The same double-marked expressions involving the spelling variant *yous* are very rare in the corpus: *yous guys* appears only once (1990), whereas *yous all* appears to be slightly more frequent with its 4 occurrences (0.009 pmw), of which 2 are found in 1850s and 2 in 1920s.

## 4.6.1 2PL *all/all* 2PL

### 4.6.1.1 2PL *all*

As can be observed by comparing table 9 and 10 below, *yous(e) all* is the most common double-marked expression across varieties of English (see (47) below). It is most frequent in Australian and Irish English, two varieties in which it covers more than 10% of the totality of instances of *yous(e)* in each.

(47)

- a. Sure *youse all* have your own houses. (IE G)
- b. I remember him coming up to me in a race in Carlow asking how far it was to the hill. When I responded that I hadn't a clue he replied 'Sure aren't *youse all* from the country?' (IE G)

The occurrence of the double-marked expression *yous(e) all* seems to suggest a certain degree of grammaticalization of the form *yous(e)*. This can be best observed from a semantic point of view, since the semantic change of *yous(e)/PL* to include a singular reference interpretation for emphatic purposes creates potential ambiguity, as in examples (45b) and (47b) above. The ambiguous reference to the number of addressees is solved by adding the marker *all*, probably out of analogy with the form *you all*. Obviously, the occurrence of *yous(e) all* can simply reflect the speaker's need to underline the inclusiveness of all the addressees, as in (47a) above in which the reference is unambiguously plural. However, this does not explain why the speaker resorts to a double marked expression such as *yous(e) all* instead of the more common form *you all* (cf. chapter 8). The reason may lie in some added semantic value in the double-marked expression *yous(e) all* which can be seen as a reinforced version of the plural *you all* (see chapter 6 for a detailed account), in which *yous(e)* adds emphasis to the identification of the referents, similarly to what is done with singular-reference *yous(e)* (section 4.2 above).

**Table 9 – Frequencies of occurrence suffixed 2PL + *all***

Variety	Tokens	% out of total number of instances of suffixed 2PL forms
IE	6	9.8
AU	6	11.3
GB	2	5.4
US	1	4.3
PH	2	28.6
PK	1	11.1
IN	1	100
GH	1	100

**4.6.1.2 *All* 2PL**

The double-marked expressions in which the inclusiviser *all* precedes the plural pronoun (see (48) below) hint at a further step in the grammaticalization process: we would expect a partitive construction of the kind *All + of + 2PL*. However, *all + 2PL* probably represents a phonologically reduced version of it, thus suggesting a certain degree of grammaticalization.

(48) Thanks for the posts *all yous* above, they have made me think more deeply about the lyrics (US G)

Surprisingly, the raw frequencies of this double-marked expression are higher than its non-reduced version *all of yous(e)* (14 and 9 instances respectively), and it only occurs with the most frequent 2PL variants, i.e. *yous* and *youse*.

**Table 10 – Frequencies of occurrence of *all* + suffixed 2PL**

Variety	%	% out of total instances of suffixed 2PLs
IE	4	3.5
US	2	1.2
AU	2	3.7

NZ	3	14.2
PK	1	11.1
HK	1	25
JM	1	100

Seven varieties display instances of *all yous(e)*, four of them belonging to the IC and only 3 to the OC. In particular, Irish English is the only variety that displays instances of both variants, whereas New Zealand English is the variety with the highest frequency of occurrence (apart from Jamaica and Hong Kong for which the percentages of occurrence are likely to be skewed by the very low number of occurrences of *yous(e)*).

#### 4.6.2 Suffixed 2PL *guys*

Suffixed 2PL form + *guys* in all its spelling variants is the double-marked equivalent of the more common *you guys* (cf. chapter 7) (see (49) below).

(49)

a. Oh, thats just for conservatives to follow, right? Not *yous guys*.

(US G)

b. *Youz guyz* don't know how to make salsa, etc. (US G)

*Yous(e) guys* appears in seven varieties of English, all of them belonging to the IC but two instances that were found in Singaporean English (see table 11 below). The frequency of occurrence of suffixed 2PL + *guys* is highest in New Zealand in which it represents 57.1% of the occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms (see table 11 below). This suggests a routinised linguistic behaviour and, consequently, a certain degree of grammaticalization.

**Table 11 – Frequencies of occurrence of suffixed 2PL + *guys* (tokens; % out of the total number of occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms in the variety)**

Suffixed 2PL + <i>guys</i>	CA (2; 20.2%), GB (8; 6.2%), NZ (12; 57.1%), US (7; 5.7%), AU (2; 3.7%), IE (2; 4.4%), SG (2; 48.5%)
----------------------------	---

In expressions of the kind suffixed 2PL form + *guys*, the marking of the second person pronoun can be mainly explained by the analogy with the more common plural form *you guys* (22.4 pmw), although it is impossible to categorically exclude the influence of the semantic and pragmatic factors that seem to be at play when suffixed 2PL forms are used, such as speaker's commitment, emphasis and empathy (see section 4.4 above).

#### 4.6.3 Suffixed 2PL + cardinal number

Although the raw frequencies of the combination suffixed 2PL form + cardinal no. never exceed 2 instances per variety (table 12 below), it is perhaps worth pointing out that, as happens with *all*, this combination can be divided into post-modifying and pre-modifying position of the cardinal number: in the first case, the cardinal number follows the suffixed 2PL form, thus specifying the number of referents, as in (50) below; in the second case, the cardinal number precedes the suffixed 2PL form, a structure that is likely to represent a reduced version of the partitive structure cardinal number + *of* + suffixed 2PL form (e.g. *The two of yours*) as can be observed in (51) below in which the determiner *the* is retained.

(50) What am I doin' here wid *youse two*? (HK G)

(51) The *two yours* also have the same voice actor. (US G)

**Table 12 – Frequencies of occurrence of suffixed 2PL + cardinal number**

<i>Yous(e) two</i>	IE (1; 1.2%), HK (1; 25%)
<i>Two yours</i>	GB (1; 1.3%), US (2; 2.4%)
<i>A thousand yours</i>	US (1; 1.2%)

The only cardinal number that appears in the occurrences across different English varieties is *two*, which is unsurprising if one considers that communicative situations in which one wants to address two people are likely to be more frequent than the ones in which one ones to specifically address three or four people instead of using a common plural (cf. also chapter 5). This is also supported by typological research which sees duals as being more frequent and widespread than trials but less frequent than plurals (cf. Greenberg 1966, Corbett 2000, Croft 2003).

Since quantity is already specified by the cardinal number, the use of suffixed 2PL forms is likely to imply a special pragmatic reading of the reference to the addressee as is often the case when suffixed 2PL forms are used instead of the standard pronoun *you* (see section 4.4 and 4.5 above), which in the specific cases of examples (41) and (42) above seems to be of an emphatic nature.

#### **4.6.4 Suffixed 2PL + NP-PL**

The post-modifying pattern featuring suffixed 2PL forms is not very frequent in the corpus; however, it gives useful insights into the semantic prosody (Louw 1993, Hunston and Francis 2000, Sinclair 2004) underlying the use of the forms in these particular contexts. The marking of plurality in the pattern surfaces on both the pronoun and the post-modifying noun phrase. In particular, it appears that the pronoun has the role of signalling plurality, whereas the following NP formally agrees with the pronoun, and, functionally, adds information about how to further identify the entities referred to by the pronoun (see (52) below).

(52) We are the ones we've been waiting for, *youse ignorant leftists!* (US B)

As can be observed in Table 20 below, in all 18 instances of the suffixed 2PL + NP-PL pattern, the post-modifying noun phrase following the suffixed 2PL form adds a specification of identification, which generally aims to negatively connotate the group of addressees identified by the 2PL form. Even when the expression could entail a neutral (e.g. *youse Americans*) or positive in-group marking (e.g. *youse fellas*) interpretation, the



expanded context would nonetheless seem to reveal a derogatory tone as in (53) and (54) below:

(53) I...am \*totally\* dumbfounded as to why *youse Americans* continue to live in your country if all youse're gon na do is complain (IE G)

(54) Shame on *youse fellas* who used to dangerously entertain us all (NZ B)

The only exception to the trend is *youse blokes* in American English which actually works as an in-group marker (Keblusek *et al.* 2017) aiming to both attract the attention of the addressee(s) and create empathy with the speaker, see (55) below.

(55) *Youse blokes* aren't gunna believe this; my wife once repaired Rolf Harris' trousers [...] (US G)

The only variants that displayed instances of this pattern were the two most frequent ones, i.e. *yous(e)*, and *yus*. Moreover, instances of the pattern could only be found among the occurrences of suffixed 2PLs in the IC. Table 13 below shows all the instances of 2PL + NP-PL patterns divided by varieties. The pattern seems to be particularly frequent in Irish English, although other varieties display at least two instances of it. Canadian English is the only variety of the IC that did not display instances of the pattern.

**Table 13 – Instances of 2PL + NP-PL (IC)**

GB	<i>Yous fuckers; youse English boys; yus virgos</i>
IE	<i>Yous pack of bright sparks; youse free staters; youse liberal omadhaus, youse</i>
	<i>Americans; youse Anglo bastards; youse eejits</i>
NZ	<i>Yous nasty hippie bastards; yus mean people; youse fellas</i>
US	<i>Yous yanks; youse idiots; youse blokes; youse ignorant leftists</i>
AU	<i>Youse clever dogs; youse bastards</i>

#### 4.6.5 Others

In this paragraph I will give a brief account of peripheral (as in frequency of occurrence) double-marked expressions other than the ones presented in the previous sections. The first is 2PL *lot*, which is a specific phenomenon of British English. Similarly to *all*, *lot* works as a collective but also as an associative marker (i.e. you and other people associated with you) (Corbett 2000) whose scope, I suggest, could be broadened as to embrace a similitive interpretation (i.e. you and those like you according to certain characteristics) (Haspelmath and Buchholz 1998), see the geographical and social interpretation in (56) below:

(56) Fact it's great success story full stop (that's' period' for *youse lot* elsewhere). (GB B)

The second is suffixed 2PL + *people*: the noun *people* here is specific for the semantic feature of animacy and aspecific for gender. One instance is found in American English (1.2% of the totality of occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms) and one in British English (0.6% of the occurrences of suffixed 2PL forms). Although *yous(e) guys* can be used in the same gender-specific fashion, an analysis of the context in which *yous people* is found suggests that the latter is rather used as an out-group marker, i.e. refer to – and take distance from – those who do not belong to the same social group as the speaker's (cf. Social Identity Theory (Tajfel 1979) and Moscatelli *et al.* 2016), as shown in (57) below (see also section 7.2).

(57) People who don't have knowledge and you take it without even checking and what *yous people* say are always out of context # you call us muslims evil and stupid (US G)

The last two double-marked expressions that I will mention here are examples of gender-specific and age-related markers: the former is *youz gals* (58), found in Philippines English, and representing the opposite-sex counterpart of *yous(e) guys*; the latter is *youse boys* (59), which is found in Irish English (2.2% of instances of *youse* in the variety) and specifies both the gender and the age group of the addressees.

(58) *Youz gals* can ship that??? # Be afraid of the women. (PH G)

(59) *Youse boys* had better take a taxi. There's no busesalong here any more. (IE B)

#### 4.6.6 Triple-marked expressions

Triple-marked expressions surface in the corpus as a combination of at least one of the strategies of double-marking (4.7.1-5 above) with a further plurality marker, which in the specific cases included in this paragraph corresponds to either *all* or the suffix *-s*.

By looking at table 21 below, it is possible to observe that the most common strategy of triple-marking across varieties of English is the one whereby the universal quantifier *all* precedes a double-marked expression, which is generally of the kind *yous(e) + NP-PL*, see (60) below.

(60) Anyway *all yous people* on this have absolutely no idea of the amount of people that visited that (IE B)

In the cases in which *yous* is not followed by a plural noun phrase, *all* itself may be marked by suffixation, as in the case of *alls yous* in US, see (61) below.

(61) There will be enough chairs, books, CDs, and love for *alls yous*. (US B)

There are only two cases in which *all* is not used as a triple-marker: *yous twos* in Irish English (see (62a) below), in which the double-marked base *yous two* is further marked by suffixation of the cardinal number, and *youse guyses* in American English (see (62b) below), in which the already plural noun *guys* is, again, further pluralised by adding the suffix *-es*.

(62)

a. Cheers *yous twos*, this is a great read. (IE B)

b. I take *youse guyses* believe in your “Rapture” whole websites up on that (US G)

The use of *all* in triple-marking constructions can perhaps be explained by the addition of the semantic traits of *inclusiveness* and *collectiveness* to the already pluralised expression. Indeed, the majority of triple-marked expressions tend to identify a specific category of people (e.g. teachers, kids, taxpayers, etc.). On the other hand, triple-marking seems to indicate that the *-(e)s* suffixation takes place by phonological analogy with the second person pronoun suffixation (e.g. *You-s two-s*) (see table 14 below).

Diatopically, the varieties displaying the highest numbers of instances of triple-marking form a clear cluster, namely Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, in which the overall frequencies of occurrence of suffixed 2PL forms are also highest (see table 14 below). This would support the grammaticalisation explanation, also given that among all the suffixed 2PL forms, only the most frequent ones, i.e. *yous(e)*, appear in triple-marked expressions.

**Table 14 – Instances of triple marking on suffixed 2PL forms**

AU	All	yous	teachers
	All	youse	kids
	All	youse	mugs
IE		Yous	twos
	All	yous	people
	All	youse	guys
US	Alls	yous	
		Youse	guyse
NZ	All	youse	guys
	All	youse	taxpayers
	All	youse	intelligent types
HK	All	youse	non mancy types
JM	All	youse	guys

In two cases (see (63) below), it is either the main verb that takes the triple marker *-s* although in agreement with a first-person subject, or the inclusive marker *all*. In view

of the mobility of the *-s* suffix around the sentence it may be the *-s* marker alone, rather than the whole suffixed 2PL form, that conveys informality, empathy and positive attitude. This is, in fact, a kind of marking that is also performed on a variety of word classes in English, such as the adverb *anyways* (vs. *anyway*), the interrogative pronoun *whereabouts* (vs. *whereabout*), the American verbal expression *gots to go* (vs. *gotta go*), and proper names that take the *-s* ending when abbreviated (e.g. *Abigail* > *Abs*) (cf. McCumber 2010). Since in all cases the basic referential meaning is not changed by the *-s* suffixation, it can be concluded that it is pragmatic meaning that is being added.

(63)

a. And love for *alls yous* (US G)

b. I *loves youse all!* (US G)

#### 4.6.7 Conclusion

Five different categories of double-marking could be identified for suffixed 2PL forms in World Englishes. According to corpus data, the most frequent double-marked structures are of the kind 2PL *all/all* 2PL and 2PL *guys*. These are also the ones that are most widespread across varieties of English, although they display the highest frequencies in the Inner Circle ones, and especially in Irish English, New Zealand English and Australian English, all varieties in which suffixed 2PL forms are already frequent.

As can be seen above, double marking on suffixed 2PL forms can take place as both pre-modification and post-modification. In particular, *all* 2PL is seen here as a reduced, therefore grammaticalised, version of *all of* 2PL.

I have argued that grammaticalization is one of the factors that helps explain the redundancy of double marking involving suffixed 2PL forms. The hypothesis is that the pluralised expression is either grammaticalised to such a degree that the speaker would feel the need to reinforce specification of number (as in the case of *yous(e) all*, since *yous(e)* can be used with singular-reference so there is potential for ambiguity) or the double-marking could be the result of phonological analogy with the more common

expression *you guys* in the case of *yous(e) guys*. However, a possible reason for double marking may be semantic and pragmatic enrichment, i.e. a second plural marker is added in order to not only quantify the addressee(s) but also to specify the reference in some additional way (animateness, inclusiveness, collectiveness, etc.). This is especially true of double-marked expressions that acquire sociolinguistic value by using the plural pronoun to identify a particular social category or group of people, very often in a derogatory way (see *yous(e) NP-PL*).

As far as triple-marked expressions are concerned, the most frequent triple-marker is *all*, an already frequent double-marker, that specifies inclusiveness and in-group marking, i.e. belonging to a specific social category (cf. Also chapter 6).

## 4.7 Conclusions on suffixed 2PL forms

A first hypothesis concerning the functions of suffixed 2PL forms saw these forms working as plural second person pronouns in which plurality is overtly coded on the pronoun by adding the *-s* or *-z* marker for regular plurals in English. Although signalling plural reference is the most frequent function, the analysis of corpus data reveals that suffixed 2PL forms can perform other functions and mark both grammatical and pragmatic meaning. Grammatical marking other than plurality mainly concerns the reanalysis of suffixed 2PL forms into possessive determiners and/or pronouns. The occurrence of possessive suffixed 2PL forms is, together with singular-reference and double- and triple-marked suffixed 2PL forms, also considered a clue to the grammaticalization of suffixed 2PL forms (see also section 8.4). The expression of pragmatic meaning is what distinguishes suffixed 2PL forms from standard *you* and concerns the marking of in-group and out-group, emphasis, empathy and attention getting (see also chapter 8 for a more detailed discussion). In other words, suffixed 2PL forms display a highly intersubjective character, since they are used in order to manage the speaker-hearer relationship, get the addressee's attention, and allow the expression of the speaker's attitude towards the interlocutor(s). The significant differences in the frequencies with which suffixed 2PL forms were found to express pragmatic meaning compared to standard *you* leads to thinking that suffixed 2PL forms have been undergoing processes of pragmatization (see also section 8.4). From this

perspective, it is also possible to think of a new interpretation of the formal realisation of suffixed 2PL forms in which the *-s* suffix is no more a marker of plurality but, rather, a marker of pragmatic meaning, thus supporting the theory of morphopragmatics, i.e. pragmatic meaning marked through morphology (Dressler and Barbaresi 2015).

## 5 *You* + cardinal number

In this section, I will analyse the expressions that mark number on *you* by means of post-modification through cardinal number. I will look at their frequencies of occurrence in the GloWbe corpus, functions, collocations and context of occurrence. The aim is to uncover what specific meanings and functions are expressed by these structures besides number specification, and whether they are undergoing processes of grammaticalisation or pragmaticalisation. The information obtained through the analysis of corpus data will, then, be used to draw comparisons with other strategies of number-marking on the second person pronoun *you* (e.g. *yous(e)*, *y'all*, *you ones*, etc.) (see chapter 8).

The main structural feature of the pattern *you* + cardinal number concerns the specification of the exact number of addressees referred to by the second person pronoun *you*. According to the corpus data in the GloWbe, the specified quantity is hardly ever higher than four (see examples (1a-c) below).

(1)

a. “How did *you two* meet?”

“She messaged me on Facebook on that day and we started talking (US G).”

b. Thank *you three* for such a wonderful evening, we loved getting to meet you! (CA G)



c. *You four* are having a good time over there. Bit too much champagne? (GB G)

This is in line with the tendency displayed by many languages of the world as far as linguistically explicit quantifiers are concerned. Indeed, number specification tends to follow the universal hierarchy outlined by Comrie (1989) and reported below:

*singular > plural > dual > trial/paucal*

As already mentioned, the only forms of the pattern *you* + cardinal number that occur in the corpus involve the quantifiers *two*, *three* and *four*, but not *five* or *six* and so on. I will try to find out whether the world varieties of English comply with the implicational hierarchy above, i.e. the varieties that display instances of *you four* will also display occurrences of all the quantifiers to the left.

Specifying the number of referents is not always only a matter of giving precise information of quantity. Number is very often specified in order to set certain referents apart from the rest of potential referents: for example, *you two* is often used to identify *a romantic couple* i.e. two people who are generally conceived as a constituted unit and, consequently, expected to share a number of actions and events (e.g. get married, have children, prepare vows, etc.); see (2) below, cf. also section 5.2.1 below:

(2) I know *you two* planned on getting married in a big fancy wedding. (US G)

In other cases, the strategy of specifying number is used in order to express emphasis or contrast, similarly to the function performed by right dislocation in *it-clefts* (e.g. *It is you that...*) (see (3) below):

(3) You, Pat, and Corbett. I do check in with Darren but *you three* are the ones I spend the most time with. (US G)

Each of the expressions that can be linked back to the structure *you* + cardinal number

appear to express different semantic nuances from the competing structures that potentially express the same referential meaning: *the two of you*, *you both*, *both of you*, *the three of you*, *the four of you*, etc.. The analysis of corpus data allowed to identify the semantic and pragmatic traits according to which each number-marked structure differs from the others (see section 5.2.4 below).

The chapter is structured as follows: the first section is dedicated to the methodology used in the analysis (5.1); this first section also includes a general analysis of the distribution of *you* + cardinal number expressions in World Englishes. In section 5.2, I will discuss the analysis of *you two* and compare it with its four competitors, namely *the two of you*, *you both*, *both of you*, and *yous(e) two*. Similarly, in section 5.3, I will discuss the analysis of *you three* and compare it with its formally closest competitor, i.e. *the three of you*. In section 5.4, I will discuss *you four* and its competitor *the four of you*. Finally, I will draw some conclusions in section 5.5.

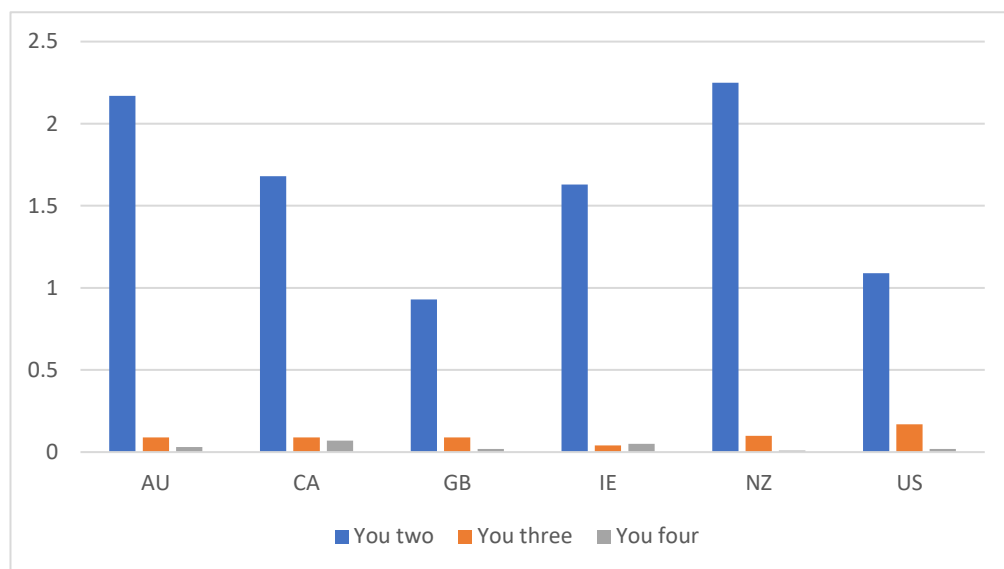
## 5.1 Methodology

The instances of *you* + cardinal number and the competing structures were obtained by simple-querying the corpus for each of the expressions considered (namely, *you two*, *you three*, *you four*, *both of you*, *the three of you*, etc.) as well as by means of wildcards that would return any occurrences of *you* that was followed by any cardinal number spelled as a word or number (e.g. *you three or you 3*). The datasets obtained for each cardinal number co-occurring with *you* were subsequently checked in order to leave out the occurrences in which the cardinal number did not work as a quantifier of *you* but would rather belong to a noun phrase following the pronoun (e.g. *Let me give you two examples* (CA G)) and double or multiple occurrences of the same instance. Once a more reliable dataset was obtained, the instances were recounted and raw frequencies were normalised on a per-million-words basis.

Figure 1 below displays the frequencies of *you* + cardinal number in the varieties of the Inner Circle (i.e. British English (GB), American English (US), Irish English (IE), Canadian English (CA), Australian English (AU) and New Zealand English (NZ)). When comparing the frequencies of occurrence, it can be observed that in each variety of the IC *you two* is always more frequent than *you three*, and *you three* is always more

frequent than *you four*. To this trend the only exception is represented by IE in which *you four* is slightly more frequent than *you three*, yet a difference that is not statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.996). In general, however, both *you three* and *you four* are definitely less frequent than *you two* across varieties of English. The varieties that display the highest frequency of number post-modification on *you* are New Zealand, Australia, Canada and Ireland (see figure 1 below), which, apart from Canada, are varieties that showed the highest reliance on morphological plurals of *you* as well (i.e. *yous(e)*) (see section 4.3).

**Figure 1 - Frequencies of *you* + cardinal number in the IC (pmw)**

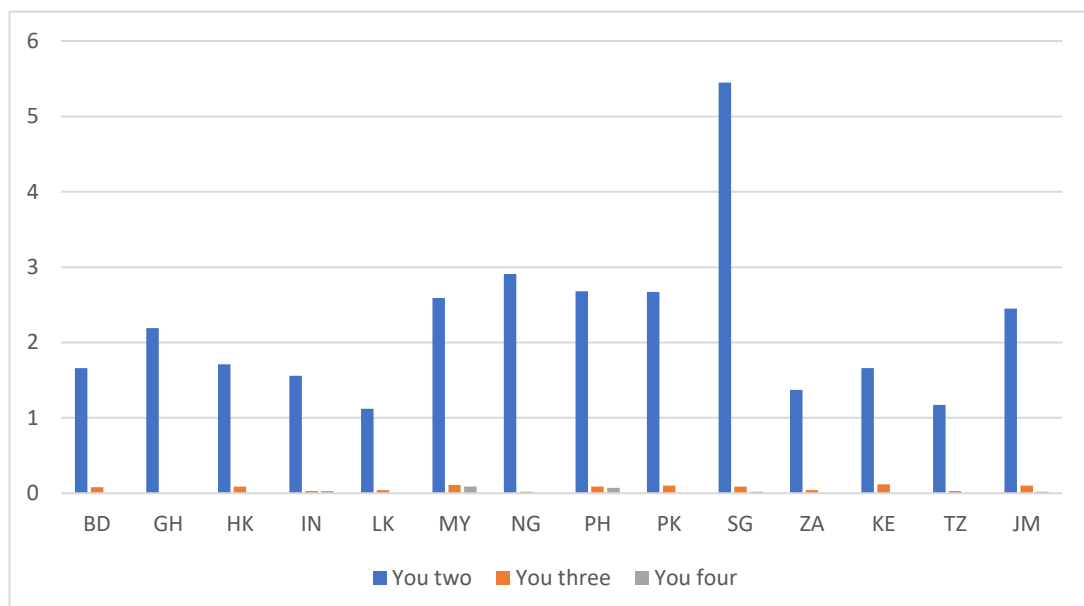


Instances of the pattern *you* + cardinal number were found in all the varieties of the Inner Circle despite the low frequencies of higher quantifiers than *two*. The tendency in the Outer Circle supports what was found in the Inner Circle and corroborates the hypothesis according to which the higher the numerical quantifier, the lower the frequencies of occurrence as post-modifier of *you* (see *you four* in figure 2 below). Indeed, whereas instances of *you two* were found in all the varieties of the Outer Circle, *you three* did not surface in the dataset of Ghanaian English, and *you four* could not be found in 9 out of 14 varieties belonging to the Outer Circle (see figure 2 below).

Among all the varieties, some display a greater reliance on this number specification strategy: this is the case in Malaysian, Philippines and Jamaican English, for example, which display instances of all the three number-marked expressions, and

whose frequencies of occurrence show to be similar to the ones found for the Inner Circle varieties (cf. figures 1-2). Singaporean English is another variety that displays instances of all three number-marked expressions, although the frequency of occurrence of *you two* is much higher than the ones of *you three* and *you four* (see figure 2 below). The tendency may be motivated by the influence of the main languages of these countries: the pronominal systems of Malay, Tagalog (the Philippines) and Tamil (Singapore) all contain specification of number on the second person (Lewis 1947, Kroeger 1991, Andronov 2005).

**Figure 2 - Frequencies of *you* + cardinal number in the OC (pmw)**



The comparison with the competing structures will be dealt with in the separate sections dedicated to each of the three *you* + cardinal number expressions.

As far as collocation analysis is concerned, similarly to what was done for suffixed 2PL forms, the analysis of the context surrounding *you two* will be used in order to find out about the semantic preference and prosody (Louw 1993; Hunston and Francis 2000; Sinclair 2004) of the expression, i.e. any tendency of *you two* to co-occur with certain semantic and pragmatic traits (e.g. unity, emphasis, etc.) and whether it tends to occur in positively or negatively connotated contexts. The software AntConc was used to look for collocates of *you two* with the following parameter settings: Minimum Collocate Frequency (MCF) 10, span 3L and 3R, sorted by MI scores. Once

a preliminary ranking of potential collocates was obtained, the co-occurrences were checked for double or triple instances and refined. A definitive list of collocates of *you two* was then obtained by selecting the co-occurrences with MI scores higher than 3, a commonly adopted threshold for considering a collocation statistically significant (Hunston 2002: 71).

Where the data allowed it, I analysed the instances of double and triple marking of number on *you* + cardinal number expressions (e.g. *all three of you guys* (GB B), *you two girls* (GB G)) in order to obtain more information on the linguistic behaviour of the expressions, as in the context of occurrence and the semantic and pragmatic traits that they expressed. The questions that need to be answered are: why do *you* + cardinal number structures occur in double- or triple-marked expressions? What are the semantic and pragmatic traits that cannot be expressed by the *you* + cardinal number expression alone? Is double marking linked with an on-going process of grammaticalization? The analysis of corpus data suggests that the function of these pluralised expressions has more to do with pragmatics than the mere marking of plurality.

In the next three sections, I will analyse each of the expressions that mark number on *you* by means of post-modification through cardinal number. As mentioned earlier, each section will contain subsections on the frequencies and distribution, functions, collocations and context of occurrence.

## **5.2 *You two***

As already mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, among the analytic strategies of pluralisation of the second person pronoun *you* by specification of the number of addressees, *you two* is by far the most common one (see (4a-c) below). Its high frequency of occurrence may be due to a number of factors: in terms of likelihood, it may be the case that situations in which one specifically addresses two people are more common than those in which three or four people are addressed. This is supported by tendency in the languages of the world to have linguistically encoded forms for duals more often than trials and by the universal implication to have duals in case a language shows to have trials (Comrie 1989; cf. Introduction to this chapter). The data in the GloWbe corpus show that *you two*, on average, is more frequent in the OC (2.23 pmw), and

especially frequent in SG (5.45 pmw), than the Inner Circle (1.63 pmw). Among the varieties of the Inner Circle, only New Zealand (2.25 pmw) and Australia (2.17 pmw) show a frequency of *you two* which is higher than the average, whereas its frequency of occurrence is lower than the average in GB (0.93 pmw) (see table 1 below). This is in line with what was found for suffixed 2PL forms (e.g. *yous(e)*): it was observed that New Zealand and Australia showed a greater reliance on pluralised second person pronouns than other Inner Circle varieties such as Great Britain (see section 4.3). Indeed, the frequency of occurrence of *you two* in Great Britain is similar to the frequency of occurrence of morphological plurals such as *yous(e)* (namely, 0.10 pmw; see section 4.3).

As can be observed in (4c), below, in which the first *you* and *you two* are refer to the same two addressees, there are contexts in which *you two* is deliberately chosen over *you*. The aim of the analysis reported in this section is to find out in what contexts *you two* is more likely to be used and what are the semantic traits or pragmatic functions that differentiates it from bare standard *you*.

(4)

- a. Today is not about *you two*. Today is about Howard and Bernadette, and me. (US G)
- b. Think about it, *you two*, before you post something so utterly stupid again. (CA B)
- c. The underlying issue is a question you might have as to whether *you two* are truly compatible or equally matched. (PK B)

In the next section, the functions performed by *you two* will be introduced and discussed together with their frequencies.

## 5.2.1 Functions

### 5.2.1.1 Referential functions

A first analysis of *you two* concerns its referential functions, i.e. the kind of reference it

performs. From the analysis of the concordances, it appears that the expression *you two* is used to identify two main categories of referents: the first category, which I labelled *unit*, indicates the instances in which *you two* refers to two people bound by a close relationship (e.g. family members, close friends, sports team, music bands, etc.) and that are linguistically represented as an item (see (5) below); within this first category, a consistent share of the occurrences is represented by the instances in which *you two* identifies a *romantic couple* (see (6)). The subcategory of *you two/couple* was found to be very frequent to the point that it suggests a routinised behaviour for *you two* to be used with such specification of meaning (see table 1 below). The second category, on the other hand, comprises all the instances of *you two* that refer to two separate, unrelated individuals, which I labelled *non-unit* (see (7) below).

(5)

- a. Thank you and Simon for your wonderful site – *you two* are doing good work. (IE G)
- b. When did *you two* start performing and creating music together? (GB G)
- c. Usually the mom and baby don't turn out like *you two*. (US G)

(6)

- a. Let your children know that *you two* need time alone together. (AU G)
- b. Then you really have to take it in consideration of how long *you two* have been together and exactly how serious the bond is between the two of you. (IN G)
- c. I really think *you two* should write about a book about how to garden together as a couple. (US B)

(7)

- a. It is so good to see down to earth, respectable young ladies like *you two* being positive role models for young women. (US G)
- b. [...] [S]uddenly opening, Katniss and Madge peering at the two curiously. “*You two...having fun?*” Katniss asked, arching both her eyebrows. (US G)
- c. *You two*, just talk with each other a bit. Compare notes. (CA G)

Table 1 below shows the average frequencies of occurrence of the two main referential

categories and the sub-category *unit/couple* in World Englishes. The frequencies are expressed in percentages of occurrence out of the total number of occurrences of *you two* in the corpus and in per million words. In GloWbe, *you two* displays a strong tendency to indicate two referents bound by a close relationship rather than two unrelated people being addressed at the same time (see table 1 below). Indeed, *you two/unit* constitutes 68.6% of the occurrences of *you two* in the corpus, yielding a statistically significant difference in the percentages of occurrence of *unit* and *non-unit you two* ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.003) (see table 1 below). As already mentioned, within the dominant category *you two/unit*, *you two/couple* represents the majority of the occurrences (38.3% out of 68.6%) and, thus, another consistent tendency of use of *you two*.

**Table 1 – Frequencies of occurrence of referential functions of *you two* in WE**

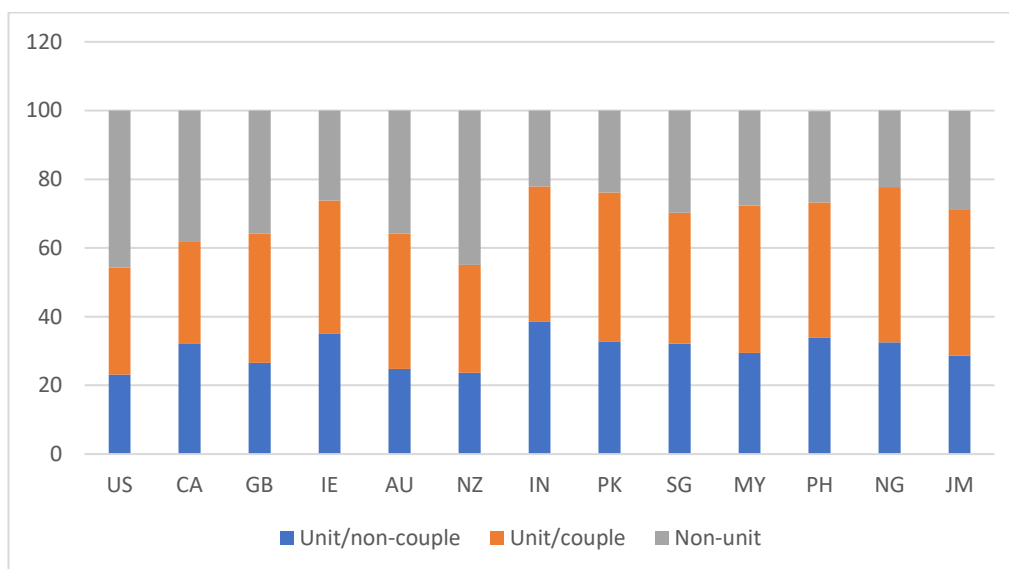
Function	%	Pmw
Unit	68.6	3.67
Unit/couple	38.3	2.05
Non-unit	30.9	1.65

#### ***5.2.1.1.1 Geographical variation of referential functions***

The percentages of occurrence of *you two/unit* do not vary very much across regional varieties (see figure 3 below). However, two varieties display a significantly lower percentage of occurrence of *you two/unit* (Unit + Unit/Couple in figure 3 below) compared to the average: one is New Zealand English (55.1%) and the other is American English (54.3%) ( $p=0.002$ ). These lower frequencies reflect into a significantly higher frequency of occurrence of *you two/non-unit* in US and New Zealand when compared to the average in World Englishes (30.9%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.002) (see figure 3 below). From the percentages of occurrence of *you two/unit* and *you two/non-unit* in US and New Zealand, it seems that half of the times *you two* occurs in these varieties, it is used as a mere quantifier, and it is done significantly more often than in the rest of the varieties in the corpus.



**Figure 3 - Referential categories of *you two* in World Englishes (%)**



A statistically significant difference ( $p= 0.004$ ) can be observed between the varieties of the Outer Circle and Inner Circle concerning the use of *you two/couple*: Pakistani English, Malaysian English, Nigerian English, and Jamaican English display a more frequent use of *you two/couple* compared to the varieties of the Inner Circle (see, for example Canadian English, American English and New Zealand English) (see figure 3 above). This tendency does not seem to be explained by the factor of geographical influence, given that Pakistan, Malaysia, Nigeria and Jamaica are very distant from each other. However, it can be motivated by a transfer from the L1s of these countries if they feature dual expressions. This, of course, requires further research that is not in the scope of the present work.

In the next section, I will use the analysis of the collocates of *you two* to add a deeper insight into the use of *you two* and introduce its pragmatic functions.

### 5.2.2 Collocates

In this section, I will deal with the collocates of *you two*, which were divided into three main categories according to the kind of information that their analysis provides:

- 1) grammatical words (including prepositions, auxiliaries, copulas, etc.) will be used to figure out the syntax of the expression;
- 2) lexical words will be used to identify the semantic preference (Sinclair 2004) of the expression and the categories of speech acts it tends to occur with;
- 3) interjections and attention-getters represent the main clue to the pragmatic functions of *you two*, i.e. getting the attention of the interlocutor and taking the floor (Goffman 1981, Quirk *et al.* 1985: 853, Wierzbicka 1992, Trask 1993, Crystal 1995).

If *you two* behaves similarly to suffixed 2PLs (e.g. *yous(e)*), then it is expected to occur in contexts of positive politeness, in the protasis of the hypothetical structure, and in attention-getting contexts more frequently than the standard pronoun *you* does.

### 5.2.2.1 Grammatical words

The copula *are* (MI = 4.8) is an expected collocate of *you two* given the plurality of the expression and its subsequent call for agreement. An even higher MI score (5.3) describes the co-occurrence of *you two* with the preposition *between* (see table 2 below).

**Table 2 – Grammatical collocates of *you two***

<i>Collocate</i>	<i>MI score</i>
<i>Between</i>	5.3
<i>Are</i>	4.8
<i>If</i>	4

Even in this case, however, the co-occurrence could be expected, giving that *between* is a preposition that by definition describes a relationship between two items. In 16.7% (26 out of 155 instances) of cases in which *between* is the head of the prepositional phrase *between you two*, the type of identification which is performed by the pronominal expression *you two* is either a contrastive or emphatic one (see (8a-b) below) by which the speakers sets apart two particular individuals from the others (i.e. just the two of you and no one else), therefore not only seeking to specify the number

of addressees. In the majority of cases, *you two* co-occurs with *between* when it is a synonym of *couple* (see (9a-b) below). An analysis of the extended context shows that 98 out of 155 instances of co-occurrence refer to a romantic *couple* which is 63.2% of co-occurrences of the collocates. The remaining 20.1% of co-occurrences are instances of mere specification of number for reference purposes with no further implications in terms of added pragmatic meaning (see (10) below).

(8)

a. Yes, they drive you potty – but that's between *you two*. You are a united front. (GB G)

b. Trying to figure out who is the dumb and who is the dumber between *you two*. (LK B)

(9)

a. If it didn't work out between *you two*, it wasn't meant to be. (US G)

b. Dick sees it's over between *you two*. It's obvious he has quit. (AU G)

(10)

Keep the lines of communication open between *you two* to hopefully spark discussion about values, right and wrong, and so on. (US G)

A third grammatical word that significantly co-occurs with *you two* is the conditional conjunction *if* (MI = 4.0). *If* tends to co-occur with *you two* in the protasis of a conditional structure 83.6% of times (see (11a-b) below), a linguistic behaviour that is similar to the one displayed by suffixed 2PL forms (see section 4.6) but not by standard *you* which co-occurs with *if* 11.1% of times it occurs in the corpus:

(11)

a. Get off the web sites *if you two* are exclusive. (US G)

b. *If you two* were breaking up, that's none of my business (US G)

### 5.2.2.2 Lexical words

In order to find lexical collocates of *you two* (i.e. words with higher semantic content than grammatical ones, such as verbs, nouns, etc.) the parameter of minimum collocate frequency was brought to 5 instead of 10. The span was left unchanged. This choice is a consequence of the lower frequency of occurrence of lexical words in the language when compared to grammatical words (cf. Biber *et al.* 1999). Once again, words with MI scores higher than 3 were considered collocates of *you two* and analysed here.

Six lexical collocates were identified and reported in table 3 below together with their MI scores. The analysis of the extended context of four of the collocates, namely *congrats*, the more formal *congratulations*, *done* and *thanks* suggests the nature of the speech acts in which *you two* tends to be involved.

**Table 3 – Lexical collocates of *you two***

<i>Collocate</i>	<i>MI score</i>
Congrats	4.6
Congratulations	3.6
Done	3.6
Listen	3.5
Stop	3.3
Thanks	3.2

By looking at examples (12a-d), it is possible to observe that the speaker is in all cases showing his/her approval or praising the interlocutors.

(12)

a. I'm impressed - congrats, *you two*! (AU B)

b. Very inspiring *you two*! Congratulations on all of that. (US B)

- c. Exceedingly well done *you two*! (AU G)
- d. Still very interesting...Thanks *you two*, I love it. (IE G)

Similarly to what I observed for suffixed 2PL forms (section 4.8), it looks like *you two* is likely to be used in context where politeness is expressed (17.4% of the times *you two* occurs in the corpus) (see section 4.8), differently from standard *you* which occurs in politeness contexts only 6.1% of times it occurs in the corpus ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.006).

The remaining two collocates, namely *listen* and *stop* share some properties that suggest another type of context of usage for *you two*. As can be observed in examples (13a) and (13b), the speech acts performed do not aim to show approval or wish well. Instead, a very short sentence made up of either a hortative in the case of *listen* or imperative in the case of *stop* and *you two* is used as an attention-getting device. This is also confirmed by one of the examples in which the hortative *listen up* is preceded by another attention-getter hortative, namely *come on* (see (14)).

(13)

- a. Listen, *you two*...this is getting complicated with the fantasy/revenge plot. (SG G)
- b. Stop bickering, *you two*! (GB G)

(14)

Come on, *you two*, listen up and create an action to secure the financial future of the more. (CA G)

The tendency for *you two* to appear in attention-getting contexts is, again, shared with suffixed 2PL forms (see section 4.5), and, similarly to their linguistic behaviour, attention-getting is rather linked with a negatively connotated or neutral pragmatic context. A context of tension can be easily observed in the sentences involving *stop*, in which speakers are asked to put an end to something that is irritating the speaker or is considered despicable or unacceptable (e.g. fighting) (see (15a-c) below). On average, in World Englishes *you two* works as an attention-getter 5.4% of the times it occurs in the corpus (see also section 5.2.3).

(15)

a. “Stop talking, *you two*” Miss Battle-Scars called out, pointing her bell at the two errant children. (IE G)

b. Emma says “Stop fooling around *you two*, let's see where it leads. We might find Dane.” (AU B)

c. Ram: laughs and says ok ok stop fighting *you two*! (IN G)

### 5.2.2.3 Interjections and attention-getters

The tendency for *you two* to be used in attention-getting contexts is also particularly visible when considering particles such as *hey*, *oh*, and *hi* which show high MI scores in collocation with *you two*. In particular, *hey* and *oh* represent the prototypical attention-getters (Ameka 1992, Wierzbicka 1992, Wilkins 1992) while *hi*, apart from being a greeting ((16) below), is the word through which a new interlocutor also takes part in an ongoing conversational exchange (see (17) below).

(16)

Patty: Hi, *you two*. Boy, am I bushed. I think I overdid it a bit today. (NZ G)

(17)

- You'll get it on UTUBE...

- Hi *you two*! Well had a bad day, but not to do with me husband leaving. (GB G)

In the context of attention-getting, the function of *you two* is to specify its reference in such a way that any referent other than *you two* can be excluded, i.e. “just you two and no one else”. This is shown in examples (18a-b) and in particular in (18c) where contrast between the addressees and the rest of the referents is linguistically coded through the use of coordination between two noun phrases, one in the second and the other in the third person, namely *you two* and *they also*.

(18)

- a. And no rusting your popcorn at the back now please...hey, and *you two* in the back row, do you mind? (GB G)
- b. Hey, *you two* there! Yes, you, Doves. Come over here! (CA B)
- c. You and Busby – *you two* and they also, the missionaries. (NZ G)

The interjection *oh* co-occurs with *you two* in a structure that could be said to represent a linguistic constituent of its own, as also shown by the coordination with a nominal expression in (19a). The type of speech act performed when *oh* co-occurs with *you two* is an exclamation with a patronising facet, as shown in (19a-b) below.

(19)

- a. Oh *you two* and your dancing around each other. (SG G)
- b. Oh *you two* -- stop playing so coy with each other. (SG G)

### 5.2.3 The pragmatics of *you two*

The search for collocates of *you two* provides some useful hints concerning the pragmatics of the expression: *you two* was observed to perform three pragmatic functions, i.e. the expression of politeness, attention-getting and the expression of contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors. The function of attention-getting tends to overlap with both the expression of politeness and contrast, as can be observed, for example, in (18a) and (19b) above.

The significant co-occurrence of *you two* with words such as *congrats*, *congratulations*, *thanks* and the expression *well done* reveals that this type of plural is likely to be found in contexts where politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001) is expressed. As already mentioned, *you two* is used in contexts of politeness 17.5% (on average in World Englishes) of the times it occurs in the corpus.

When working as an attention-getter, *you two* is part of a speech act in which

the attention of the interlocutors is sought in a linguistically explicit way through the use of imperatives (e.g. *Listen up*), and/or interjections (e.g. *hey, oh*) (see section 5.2.2 above). *Attention-getting/you two* occurs, on average, 5.4% of the times in the corpus, a frequency that is significantly higher than both *AG/yous(e)* and *AG/you* (see table 4 below) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.03).

**Table 4 – Percentages of occurrence of *you two*, *yous(e)* and standard *you* in attention-getting contexts**

	<i>You two</i>	<i>Yous(e)</i>	<i>You</i>
Attention-getting (%)	5.4	2.4	0.5

In other words, *you two* is twice as likely as *yous(e)* and five times as likely as standard *you* to occur in attention-getting contexts, corroborating the idea that 2PL forms do not work as markers of number alone, but as pragmatic markers as well.

Finally, the third pragmatic function performed by *you two* is the expression of contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors: it may concern a difference of opinion, disagreement or encode the speaker's overt dislike of the interlocutors (see (20) below).

(20)

- a. *You two* are idiots. (US G)
- b. [*Y*]*ou two* are incapable of apologising. Too much pride, not enough brains. (AU B)
- c. Cut out the noise. *You two* don't know anything about fighting. (IE B)

The function of expressing contrast is rather at odds with the one of expressing politeness, and although *you two*/CONTR occurs less frequently than *you two*/POL in the corpus (12.2% and 17.5% respectively), the difference between the frequencies of the two functions is not statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.95). The coexistence of such different pragmatic functions is due to the general tendency of *you two* to occur in pragmatically charged contexts, expressing informality and emphasis, independently of



the semantic prosody of the context itself (see also chapters 8-9). Indeed, when compared to standard *you*, *you two* occurs in pragmatically charged contexts at least four times as often as standard *you* does (29.7% and 6.6% respectively). Being a statistically significant difference ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.009), it is possible to conclude that *you two* displays a consistent tendency to occur in pragmatically charged contexts that standard *you* does not, therefore suggesting a certain degree of pragmaticalization.

### 5.2.3.1 Geographical variation of the pragmatic functions of *you two*

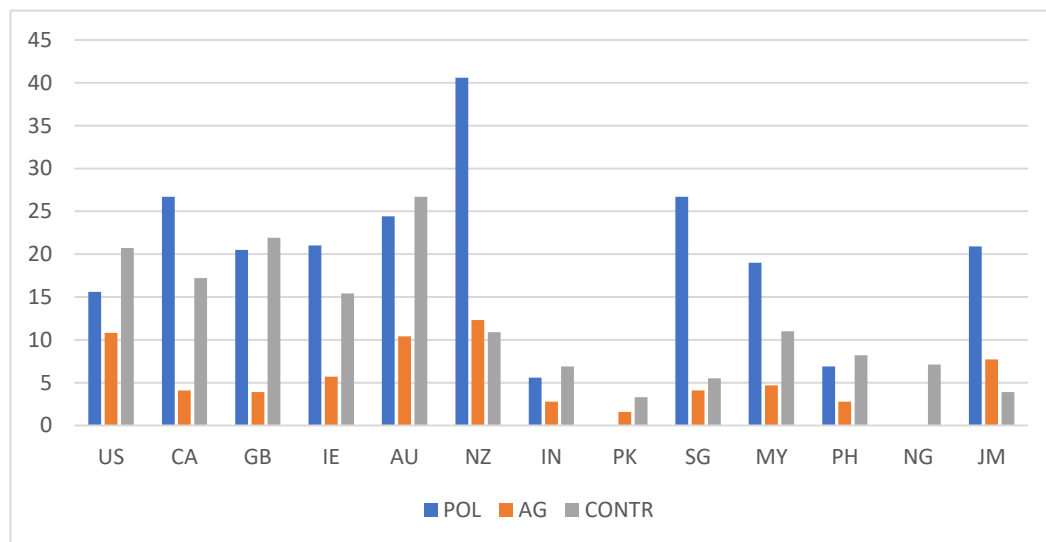
In this section I will describe how the world varieties of English differ in the use of *you two*. I will discuss the three pragmatic functions that were analysed above, i.e. the expression of politeness, attention-getting and the expression of contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors.

As far as politeness is concerned (figure 4 below), a certain variation in the frequencies of occurrence across varieties can be observed: the frequency with which *you two* expresses politeness ranges from a peak of 40.6% of the occurrences in New Zealand English to the very low frequencies of 5.6% in Indian English and 6.9% in Philippines English, to zero occurrences in Pakistani English and Nigerian English. In general, the varieties of the Inner Circle display a higher percentage of occurrence of *you two*/POL than the Outer Circle varieties (see figure 4 below), except for American English in which *you two*/POL is significantly less frequent than the average in the Inner Circle ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.006) (see figure 4 below). In the case of Inner Circle varieties, a low frequency of occurrence of *you two*/POL is explained by a preference to occur in contexts in which contrast is expressed (see figure 4 below). This is certainly the case of Australian English, British English and American English.

Similarly, in the varieties of the Outer Circle in which *you two*/POL is particularly infrequent, *you two*/CONTR is slightly but not significantly ( $p$  = 0.25) more frequent to be able to justify the very low frequencies of occurrence of *you two* compared to Inner Circle varieties. What can perhaps be explanatory is a general avoidance in the Outer Circle to use *you two* in pragmatically charged contexts, as also demonstrate the frequencies of occurrence of the third and last pragmatic function of *you two*, i.e. *attention-getting*. Indeed, except for Jamaican English, in the Outer Circle

varieties *you two* is used as an attention-getter significantly less frequently than in the Inner Circle (p (t-test) = 0.01). Within the Inner Circle, on the other hand, New Zealand, US and Australia display a significantly higher percentage of occurrence of *you two*/AG than the average in the Inner Circle (p (t-test) = 0.003).

**Figure 4 - Pragmatic functions of *you two* (% out of the total number of occurrences of *you two* in the corpus)**



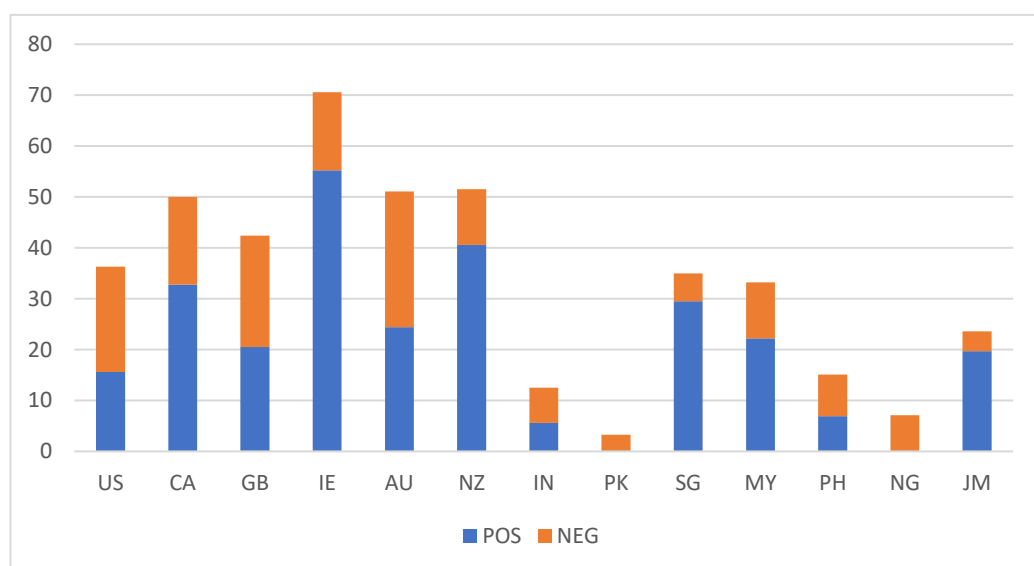
By looking at the percentages of occurrence of the three pragmatic categories together (figure 4 above), it can be observed that three varieties of the Inner Circle tend to use *you two* in pragmatically charged context more often than others: *you two* in US and Australia tends to be mainly used to convey a contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors as well as an attention-getting device; in New Zealand, *you two* displays a strong tendency to express politeness and be used as attention-getting device. The preference of *you two* to be used in pragmatically charged contexts in these varieties, more often than is done in the rest of the varieties of the Inner Circle (see figure 4 above), hints at a higher degree of pragmaticalization of *you two* in US, Australia and New Zealand.

### 5.2.4 Semantic prosody

The semantic prosody of *you two* tends to be variety-specific and does not display a

consistent tendency even within the circles (see figure 5 below): *you two* tends to occur in positively connotated contexts in Irish English (55.2% of the total number of occurrences), New Zealand English (40.6%), Canadian English (32.8%), and Singaporean English (29.5%); on the other hand, *you two* displays a greater tendency to occur in negatively connotated contexts than positively connotated ones in Australian English (26.7%), British English (21.9%), and American English (20.7%). Moreover, the varieties of the Outer Circle that display a very low or non-occurrence of *you two* in positively connotated contexts also display a preference for *you two* to occur in negatively connotated contexts: see, for example, Nigerian English, Pakistani English, and Indian English (figure 5 below). The tendency that is common to the Outer Circle varieties, however, (except for Singapore, Malaysia and Jamaica) is for *you two* to not occur in either context, suggesting a preference for pragmatically neutral contexts and, therefore, a lesser degree of pragmaticalization compared to Inner Circle varieties.

**Figure 5 - Semantic prosody of *you two* (% out of the total number of occurrences of *you two* in the corpus)**



### 5.2.4.1 Summary

The function pertaining to the pluralised expression *you two* is first of all of pragmatic nature: its reference is intrinsically specific since it identifies only two referents among the possible ones. It tends to refer to addressees who share a close relationship and are,

therefore, conceived as a unit: this is particularly evident in one of the specification of meaning developed by *you two*, i.e. when it identifies a romantic couple. *You two* displays a significantly strong tendency to occur in pragmatically charged contexts where it is mainly used to express politeness, contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors and emphasis when working as an attention-getter. Finally, although different varieties of English display different tendencies, the semantic prosody of *you two* was observed to be on average positive.

### 5.2.5 What about competitors?

In order to obtain a deeper understanding of the use of *you two*, I have analysed the forms and functions of its competitors, i.e. other expressions that indicate duality in English. In this section I will consider four: *both of you*, *you both*, *the two of you*, and *yous(e) two* (see also section 4.7.3). These expressions were chosen because they seem to perform the same functions that *you two* performs in the language. Specifically, *both of you* and *you both* are the two expressions that convey *inclusiveness* (Biber *et al.* 1999) by specifying that both of the addressees are included, not only one of them (see section 5.2.4.1 above). *The two of you* was chosen because it emphatically identifies the addressees and sets them apart from the other possible addressees, similarly to what *you two* was observed to do in the contexts that I called *emphatic or contrastive identification* (see section 5.2.1 above). Emphasis is also visible in the use of the definite article *the* which implies a specificity in the identification. The original idea was to also include the coordinated expression *you and you* among the list of possible competitors of *you two*. However, the process of extracting useful occurrences from the corpus proved to be extremely challenging, therefore I will leave the analysis of the expression to some possible future development of my research. Finally, I will draw a comparison between *you two* and *yous(e) two*, which I have analysed in deeper detail in section 4.6. I will consider *yous(e) two* as an informal counterpart of *you two* (cf. McCumber 2010 on *-s* as a marker of informality in English) and compare them in order to find out whether there are differences in their frequencies and distribution.

Among the considered expressions of duality, the highest frequency of occurrence in World Englishes is displayed by *you both* (5.42 pmw), which is followed

by its competitor *both of you* (3.44 pmw) (see table 5 below).

**Table 5 – Frequencies of occurrence of expressions of duality in World Englishes (pmw)**

	IC (pmw)	OC (pmw)	WE (pmw)
<i>Both of you</i>	2.86	4.57	3.44
<i>You both</i>	5.93	4.91	5.42
<i>The two of you</i>	1.44	2.01	1.72
<i>Yous(e) two</i>	0.0005	0.0015	0.001
<i>You two</i>	1.63	2.23	1.93

#### 5.2.5.1 *You both* and *both of you*

A deeper analysis of the frequency of occurrence and the semantics of *you both* and *both of you* reveals some differences of use. Firstly, *you both* displays similar frequencies in both Inner Circle and Outer Circle, whereas *both of you* appears to be more frequent in the Outer Circle than the Inner Circle (see table 5 above). A reason for this could be found in the analysis of the expanded context, which showed that *both of you* is often used in the Outer Circle varieties where other alternatives such as *any of you*, or *none of you* are expected to occur in the Inner Circle (as in (21) below where the negation *don't* would call for *either of you*).

(21) So I don't blame *both of you*. (NG G)

Secondly, although semantically both expressions are believed to convey *inclusiveness* (Biber *et al.* 1999: 275), an analysis of the concordances suggests that *you both* entails different semantic traits when compared to *the both of you*. I will argue that the two expressions have in common the semantic trait [+similative] in that they indicate referents that share some property or event, but differ on the trait of inclusiveness.

Specifically, it seems that *you both* tends to be used when inclusiveness is to be expressed as well as when the two referents share a conceptual or emotional bond, e.g. family members. On the other hand, *the both of you* tends to be used when the referents share a property or an event but are still being considered as single entities instead of a unity (see (22-24) below).

The difference can be best observed in the contexts in which *both* indicates romantic couples and members of a family (see examples (22) and (23) below).

(22)

- a. Tom and you are an exceptional couple of people, I wish *you both* nothing but the best. (GB G)
- b. We wish *you both* a very long, prosperous and happy life together. (GB G)
- c. How will they ever explain the twins that they were lying to them all the time? Maybe they will say: "*You both* were too little to stay behind without parents. We did it for *you both*." (GB B)

In all the sentences in (22), the referents of *you both* are considered to be a unit. This happens in (22a-b) in which the couples are the recipient of the speaker's good wishes for a future to be shared together. In (22c), *you both* refers to twins, therefore two people bound by a blood relation, who are sharing the same event of being lied to. Note that *you both* is used twice, i.e. in a consistent way, every time the twins are being directly addressed. Therefore, the semantic traits that describe the sentences in (22) can be considered to be [+similative], as the referents are the beneficiaries of the same wish (22a-b) or sharing the same event (22c), and [+inclusiveness], as the referents are considered to be a unity bound by law in the case of couples (22a-b), or blood in the case of family members (22c). The tendency for *you both* to be likely to refer to two entities conceived as bound together at some level is also visible in example (22d) below, in which the speaker has chosen a coordinated structure *me and you both* instead of the inclusive plural pronoun *us*.

(22)

- d. He is a product of evolution - just like me and *you both*. (GB G)

Let us now consider the sentences in (23a-c):

(23)

a. But do want to be with her? Nothing wrong with that if its what *both of you* want.

(AU B)

b. Conflicts start to arise. *Both of you* start to doubt each other's possibility as a potential lover. (GH G)

c. When the divorce is granted, *both of you* are free to marry under US law. (PH G)

The referents identified through the expression *both of you* are still sharing the same condition or event, but, differently from what happens with *you both* are conceived as single entities rather than part of a unity bound by a close relation: in (23a), “wanting to be together” has to be reciprocal, therefore each of the two are involved in the event but from different perspectives, as one is the target of the other and the other way around. This is different from saying that the two (as a couple) are aiming at the same goal. In (23b) as well, it is reciprocity that explains the relationship that is being described by *both of you*: the events is about doubting the other person, an event that is experienced in a different way by each of the two referents. Finally, (23c) shows that to each of the referents is granted the freedom to marry someone else, therefore encoding distance and separation between the two referents rather than closeness and inclusiveness. In other words, *both of you* seems to express a more similar concept to *each of you* than collective concepts such as *the couple*, *the siblings*, *the family*, etc. Therefore, the semantic traits that can sum up the use of *both of you* are [+similative] [+separate individuals]. This analysis would also be in line with the principle of proximity (Givón 1984: 970) and iconicity (Bybee 1985; Croft 2000; Haspelmath 2008), whereby forms that are considered semantically closer will also occur morpho-syntactically closer, which would explain the formal difference between *you both* and *both of you*.

Even when they are not identifying a couple or family unit, *you both* and *both of you* display visible differences in the contexts of occurrence. In (24) and (25), the common semantic trait is the similative interpretation of the context, meaning that the two referents indicated by either *you both* and *both of you* are sharing the same

experience or event. However, it is the attitude of the speaker towards the event that seems to change between (24) and (25). Indeed, in (24a-b) the speaker's attitude is that of showing empathy towards the interlocutors that are sharing the same experience. In (25a-b) below, the speaker's attitude towards the interlocutors is negatively connotated. In (25a), the speaker aims to convey impatience and irritation caused by the interlocutors' behaviour. In (25b), the speaker overtly shows attrition with his/her interlocutors.

(24)

a. Umm it could be that *you both* came out of Indian religions. I don't think color had a thing to do with it. Culture more like. (US B)

b. *You both* have sons who are in Iraq or on their way to Iraq. (US G)

(25)

a. That's enough from the *both of you!* (US G)

b. For some reason, I just took a dislike to the *both of you.* (US G)

This analysis is further corroborated by looking at the collocates (parameters: span 3L/3R; MCF 5) of the two expressions (see table 6 below). *You both* tends to significantly collocate with positive words, such as *thank, agree, love*, whereas the collocates of *both of you* tend to be mandative modals such as *must* and *should*.

**Table 6 – Collocates of *you both* vs. *both of you* (MI scores)**

<i>You both</i>	MI	<i>Both of you</i>	MI
<i>Thank</i>	6.5	<i>Must</i>	4.5
<i>Agree</i>	4.9	<i>Should</i>	4.2
<i>Have</i>	3.8	<i>For</i>	4.2
<i>Love</i>	3.6	<i>Can</i>	4.0
<i>Very</i>	3.4	<i>Help</i>	3.9

An analysis of the extended context shows that *you both* tends to occur in contexts of



politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001), such as *thank you both, love you both, very happy Christmas, very excited for you both, very glad for you both*, as well as other generally positive contexts, such as *have an honest chat, have lots of things in common, have some form of closeness, agree on most points*. The extended contexts of the collocates of *both of you*, instead, appear to be much less positive: *must* co-occurs with noun phrases such as *obstacle, nasty experience, and regrets*; *should* occurs with phrases such as *go to see a family counsellor, share of guilt, seek help*; the preposition *for both of you* co-occurs with adjectives such as *frustrating* and *not reasonable*, as well as noun phrases such as *criminal repercussions* and *only chance to feel close*. Even when a collocate is potentially positive, as in the case of *help*, it collocates with an event that is portrayed as dangerous (e.g. *defuse the situation*) (see 26(a-c) below).

(26)

- a. *Both of you* must have had some nasty experiences. (NG G)
- b. *Both of you* have your share of guilt. (SG B)
- c. *Both of you*, help me to defuse this situation. (ZA G)

In sum, the analysis of corpus data has revealed that *you both* and *both of you* are not semantically and pragmatically equivalent (see table 7 below). The only semantic trait they show to have in common does not seem to be the *inclusiveness* of the referents, as already claimed by Biber *et al.* (1999), but the *similative* interpretation of the event, meaning that the two referents are experiencing a similar situation. The first difference between the two expressions is to be found in how the two referents are related to each other: if they are conceived as a unity, as in the case of couples and family, *you both* is likely to be used; if the two referents are considered as individuals in their singularity, then *both of you* is likely to be used. As far as the semantic prosody (Sinclair 2004) and pragmatics are concerned, *you both* shows a tendency to appear in positively connotated contexts in which the speaker shows empathy towards the interlocutors and in contexts expressing politeness such as gratitude, blessing and loving (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001). On the other hand, the tendency displayed by *both of you* is to occur in negatively connotated

contexts in which either the two referents are experiencing some kind of difficulty or an overt contrast towards the two is being expressed.

**Table 7 – Semantic and pragmatic traits of *you both* vs. *both of you***

<i>You both</i>	<i>Both of you</i>
+ similitive	+ similitive
+ empathy	- empathy (+contrast)
+ conceptually closer (unity)	- conceptually closer (single out)
+ positive connotation	- positive connotation

### 5.2.5.2 *The two of you*

*The two of you* is the quantifying expression of duality that is most similar to *you two*, as it involves *two* as quantifier, although it is arranged differently syntactically. Not only does the quantifier precede the second person pronoun but it is also determined by the definite article *the* which already adds definiteness to the expression. The questions I will try to answer through the analysis of corpus data are:

- 1) In what ways do *the two of you* and *you two* differ?
- 2) Is there any variety-specific tendency or preference as far as the frequencies or functions of each expression are concerned?
- 3) Is one the grammaticalised or marked version of the other? Or are the two the result of independent routinised linguistic behaviour?

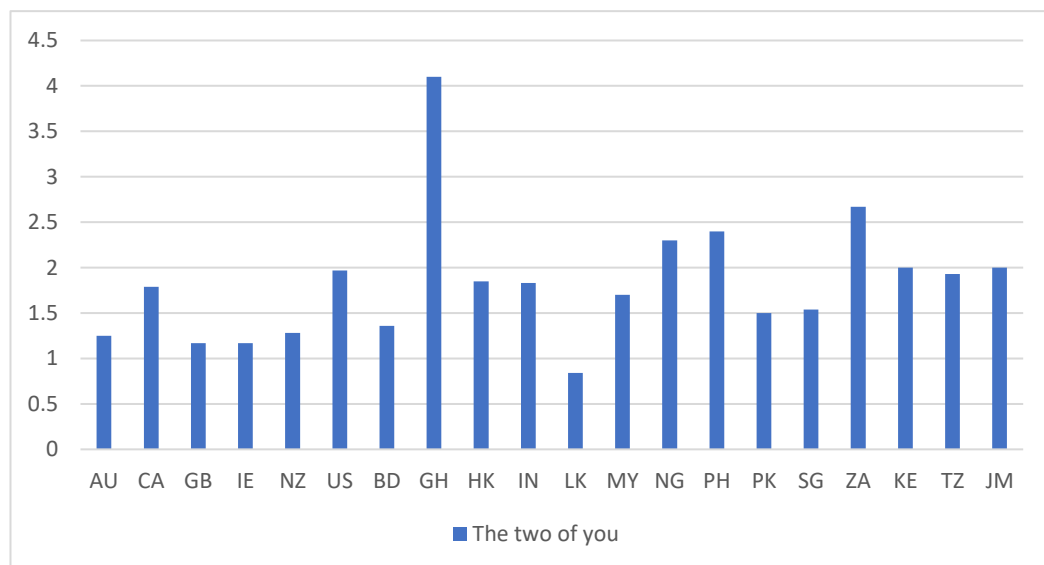
In order to answer these questions, I will look at the frequencies, functions and collocates of both *you two* and *the two of you* in World Englishes.

#### 5.2.5.2.1 *Frequencies*

As already mentioned in section 5.2.4.2 above, *the two of you* is on average more frequent in the Outer Circle than the Inner Circle (2.01 pmw and 1.44 pmw

respectively). Among the Inner Circle varieties, US (1.97 pmw) and Canada (1.79) display a higher frequency of occurrence than the average. A higher frequency of occurrence of *the two of you* in the US combines with a frequency of occurrence of *you two* that is lower than the average (see figure 1 above) in a variety-specific tendency to prefer the former over the latter. As far as the Outer Circle is concerned, Ghana is the variety that displays the highest frequency of occurrence (4.10 pmw), i.e. twice as much as the average in the Outer Circle. On the other hand, *the two of you* shows to be particularly infrequent in Sri Lanka (0.84 pmw) when compared to the average frequency of the expression in the Outer Circle (see figure 6 below). However, *you two* as well was found to be not particularly frequent in Sri Lanka (1.12 pmw vs. average 2.23 pmw) either, suggesting that the tendency in Sri Lanka is not to explicitly mark duality on second person pronouns through the use of the cardinal number.

**Figure 6 - Frequencies of occurrence of *the two of you* in World Englishes (pmw)**



#### 5.2.5.2.2 Functions

I chose to analyse the occurrences of *the two of you* using the same categories of function I used in the analysis of *you two* so that it would make it easier to compare the two expressions. The categories are: neutral number marking (i.e. *non-unit*), periphrasis of *couple* ((27) below), emphatic/contrastive identification, i.e. setting apart the referents identified by *the two of you* from the rest of possible referents ((28) below),

and expression of politeness (see section on collocates below).

(27)

a. If your future partner is of the same sex as you, *the two of you* won't be creating children. (US G)

b. Take your wife someplace that has meaning for *the two of you*, like the first place you met. (PK G)

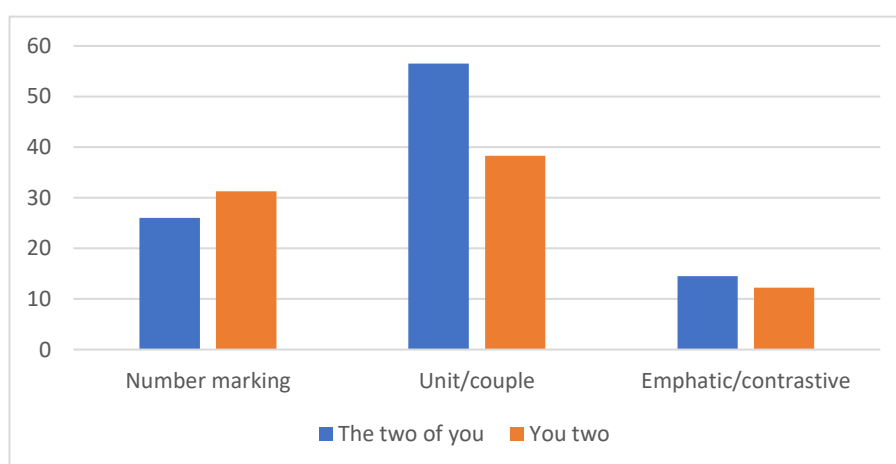
(28)

a. Then keep it between *the two of you* and share the book with your friends. (US G)

b. You only need to be *the two of you*, but it's helpful for your teammates to come along. (PH G)

Figure 7 below illustrates the differences in the frequencies of each function category between *the two of you* and *you two*. The percentages refer to the number of occurrences of a particular function category out of the total number of occurrences of the expression, whereas normalised frequencies are expressed in per million words.

**Figure 7 - Frequencies of the functions of *the two of you* vs. *you two* (pmw)**



The least frequent context in which the two expressions occur appears to be the emphatic/contrastive one. Indeed, the emphatic identification category represents only

14.5% of the total number of instances of *the two of you* and 12.2% of the total number of instances of *you two*.

The greater share of occurrences is divided between the categories of neutral number marking and unit/*romantic couple*. When considering these two categories some differences between the two expressions can be highlighted. *You two* seems to be more likely to be used as a neutral number marker than *the two of you*: *you two* was found to be a neutral quantifier 31.3% of times, whereas the same function is performed by *the two of you* 26.0% of the times the expression occurs in the corpus. This analysis seems to be in line with the frequency with which *the two of you* is used to indicate *couple*, namely 56.5% of the times it occurs in the corpus, whereas *you two* is used as a synonym for *couple* less frequently, i.e. 38.3% of the times it occurs in the corpus (see figure 7 above). A further argument that could support the preference for *the two of you* to be used as a synonym of *couple* is to be found in its occurrence with the inclusive *together*. The hypothesis is that if *the two of you* actually represents a stronger bond between the addressees than *you two* does, then its frequency of co-occurrence with *together*, which in the specific case would act as a specifier of the strength of the bond, should be lower than the frequency of occurrence between *you two* and *together*. The tendency is indeed supported by the corpus data, according to which *the two of you* tends to co-occur with *together* 0.027% of the times it occurs in the corpus, whereas *you two* does 0.18% of the times it occurs in the corpus, i.e. six times as much as *the two of you together*.

In sum, it looks like *the two of you* has developed into a routinised expression to indicate a romantic couple more than *you two*, although the latter displays a strong tendency to refer to people that share a close relationship but are not necessarily a couple as well. This difference is also statistically significant (p-value = 0.005).

#### 5.2.5.2.3 Collocates

The analysis of the functions already yielded some statistically significant differences concerning the use of *the two of you* in comparison with *you two*. In this section, I will try to obtain more information about the context of occurrence of the expression by looking at its collocates. The aim is to find out about the semantic preference and

prosody of *the two of you* in order to see whether further differences concerning the contexts of occurrence can be found when comparing it to *you two*.

The parameters for the search of collocates of *the two of you* are the same that were used for *you two*, *you both* and *both of you* so these expressions can be compared with other number-marked ones involving the second person pronoun *you* such as morphologically marked *yous(e)*, i.e. 3L/3R span, MCF = 5. After checking for double occurrences and false positives, the final list of significant collocates of *the two of you* was obtained and is reported in table 8 below.

**Table 8 – Collocates of *the two of you* (MI)**

Collocate	MI
<i>Between</i>	6.48
<i>Just</i>	6.43
<i>For</i>	4.85

The strongest collocate of *the two of you* is the preposition *between* (MI = 6.48). The two combine together in the prepositional phrase *between the two of you* (see (29) below), defining the specificity and exclusivity of the bond shared by the two addressees. *Between the two of you* represents in the data a way of emphasising that no one else should take part in the event but the two referents identified by *the two of you*. It is not surprising, then, that *between the two of you* also co-occurs (4.9% of the times *between the two of you* occurs in the corpus) with another strong collocate, namely *just* (MI = 6.43) to further emphasise the exclusivity of the participation to the event (see (30) below).

(29)

a. The love *between the two of you* carries the relationship quite automatically. (US G)

b. This process of "circuitry bonding" that is occurring *between the two of you* will be occurring with increasing frequency. (AU G)

(30)

- a. If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, *just between the two of you*. (GB G)
- b. Remember that what you tell your doctor is *just between the two of you*. (CA G)

However, when it does not co-occur in combination with *between*, *just* co-occurs with *the two of you* performing a very similar function of emphasising the exclusivity of the two addressees with respect to the rest of possible entities that can take part in the event (see (31a-b) below).

(31)

- a. It's *just the two of you* on stage and you can't just replace one member (IE G)
- b. Try to create small talk time, *just the two of you* will be totally in tune with each other. (CA B)

Finally, the preposition *for* significantly (MI = 4.85) collocates with *the two of you* in a benefactive contexts in which the two addressees are the beneficiaries of the event (see (32a-b) below) (similarly to *yous(e)*, cf. Section 4.6).

(32)

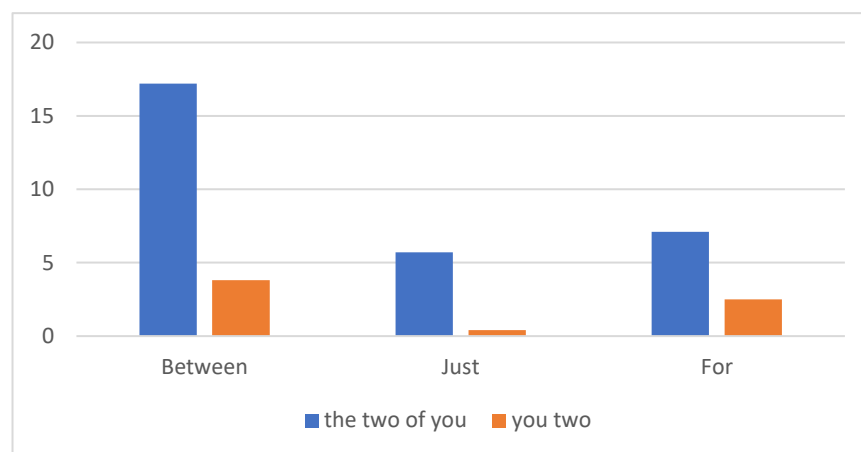
- a. Receive and extend grace...pray about what could work well *for the two of you*. (ZA B)
- b. And it can be the start of an important bonding session *for the two of you*. (GB G)

It is now to be verified whether the significant collocates that were identified for *the two of you* are also shared by *you two* and the other way around; that is to say, whether the collocates found for *you two* are also collocates of *the two of you*. The expectation is to find different collocations for each and, consequently, different contexts of occurrence, which will correspond to the semantic and pragmatic specialisation of each of the two competing expressions.

The data in figure 8 below allow to compare both the collocational strength of

*between, just* and *for* between *the two of you* and *you two* and the frequency of occurrence of each collocation (expressed in percentage out of the total number of instances of *the two of you* or *you two* in the corpus). Although *you two* significantly co-occurs with all the three collocates of *the two of you* (MI > 3), their collocational strength is lower than the one describing the co-occurrence of the collocates with *the two of you*. This is also confirmed by the frequency with which each collocation occurs out of the total number of occurrences of either *the two of you* or *you two*. For example, the collocation *between the two of you* represents 17.2% of the total number of occurrences of *the two of you*, whereas *between you two* represents only 3.8% of the total number of occurrences of *you two* in the corpus. The tendency should be considered even stronger, given that *you two* is more frequent than *the two of you* in the corpus (1.93 pmw and 1.72 pmw respectively).

**Figure 8 – Co-occurrence of the collocates of *the two of you* with *you two* (MI score)**



Similarly, when comparing how the strongest collocates of *you two* relate to *the two of you* it was observed that there is no overlapping. Indeed, when looking for instances of co-occurrence of *the two of you* with *congratulations, congrats, thanks, well done*, only one instance of co-occurrence with *congratulations* and one instance of co-occurrence with *thanks* were found in the whole corpus. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that *the two of you* and *you two* stand in a relationship of complementary distribution as far as speech acts of politeness are concerned. In other words, *the two of you* seems to be very unlikely to be found in contexts in which gratitude, blessing, good wishes, compliments or praise are being expressed towards the two addressees. This can



perhaps be explained by the fact that conceiving two entities working together as a single unit can be naturally connected with a positive outcome of the event.

Another context that characterises the use of *you two* but does not *the two of you* is attention-getting. The corpus was searched for instances of co-occurrence between *the two of you* and the attention-getting interjections *oh*, *oi*, *hey*, the greeting *hi*, and the exclamation point *!*. However, none of the combinations returned any instance of co-occurrence, showing that, once again, the context of attention-getting is more likely to involve *you two* (see sections 5.2.4.2 above), confirming the higher degree of pragmaticalization of *you two* that was already suggested in comparison with standard *you*.

Finally the collocates of *the two of you* were compared with the ones found for *you both* and *the both of you*. The preposition *for* was the only collocate that also significantly co-occurs with *both of you* (MI = 4.85 and 4.21 respectively).

### 5.2.5.3 Summary

In this section, the analytic strategies of marking duality on the second person pronoun *you* were analysed. In particular, corpus data were used in order to find out whether there are differences among the four main structures that were considered, namely *you two*, *the two of you*, *you both* and *both of you*, as far as their frequencies, functions and semantic prosody are concerned.

Although in the literature these structures are treated as similar to one another with the main functions of marking number and expressing inclusiveness (Biber *et al.* 1999: 80, 184, 258-9, 275-8), thanks to the analysis of corpus data differences concerning the frequencies of occurrence, collocates, therefore context, and semantic prosody could be highlighted.

Firstly, some expressions are generally more frequent in the corpus than others: *you both* is the most frequent (5.42 pmw), followed by *both of you* (3.44 pmw), *you two* (1.93 pmw), and *the two of you* (1.72 pmw). Three of the four expressions were observed to be more frequent in the Outer Circle than in the Inner Circle: *both of you* (4.57 pmw), *you two* (2.23 pmw), and *the two of you* (2.01 pmw). This tendency does not seem to be explained by a transfer from the L1s of the countries belonging to the

Outer Circle into English, as none of the L1s display dual forms.

Secondly, although the expressions share the semantic traits of marking duality, each of them seems to have developed a specific routinised behaviour for expressing other meanings that do not tend to be expressed by the others. In the case of *you both*, it was found that it is most frequently used in order to express inclusiveness and participation to the same event by the two addressees. Furthermore, the bond between the referents of *you both* is strong, as it is often used to refer to family members (see section 5.2.4.1 above). Conceptual closeness was also used to justify the formal realisation of *you both*, which involves less linguistic material than its competitor *both of you* (proximity principle, Givón (1984: 970); iconicity principle (Bybee 1985; Croft 2003); iconicity of cohesion and contiguity (Haspelmath (2008))). Similarly to *you both*, *both of you* expresses the sharing of an event by the two addressees, but the nature of the bond linking the two referents seems to be different. *Both of you* tends to be used in contexts in which the two individuals are not conceived as a unit (as in the case of *you both*) but as single individuals who simply take part in an event where the other referent is involved (see section 5.2.4.1 above). *You two* was observed to be frequently used to indicate two people who share a close relationship as well as a *romantic couple*, and differently from the rest of the expressions, it is the only one involved in the act of getting the attention of the interlocutor, therefore working as an attention-getter (see section 5.2.3 above). Finally, *the two of you* is the expression with the highest degree of specialisation, since in more than half of its instances of occurrence it is used to identify a *romantic couple*. It is very frequently found in co-occurrence with *between* and *just*, which work as emphasisers of the bond between the two addressees and as specifiers of its exclusivity (see section 5.2.4.2 above) which makes it differ significantly from *you two/couple*.

Lastly, the search for collocates uncovered the differences in the contexts of occurrence of the expressions considered, and ultimately their semantic prosody (see table 9 below). The tendency for the quantifiers of duality in World Englishes is to appear in contexts of positive politeness: this is certainly the case of *you two* and *you both* which tend co-occur with speech acts such as gratitude, well-wishing or praise (see sections 5.2.2-3, 5.2.4.1 above; cf. also section 4.6 on suffixed 2PL forms). This is also partially true for *the two of you*, which generally appears in neutral contexts, i.e. neither positive nor negative, and less often in positively connotated contexts, namely when

the expression is a part of the prepositional phrase *for the two of you* thus identifying the beneficiaries of an event (see section 5.2.4.2 above). On the other hand, in line with its function of singling out referents instead of treating them as a unit, *both of you* tends to occur in negatively connotated contexts in which contrast, a difference of viewpoints, or some kind of divergence between the addressees is being expressed (see section 5.2.4.1 above).

**Table 9 – Semantic and pragmatic traits of the expressions of duality in World Englishes**

	<i>You both</i>	<i>Both of you</i>	<i>You two</i>	<i>The two of you</i>
Bond between the two addressees	+ strong	- strong (single out)	-/+ strong	++ strong
Speaker's attitude towards the addressees	+ positive	- positive/+ negative	+ positive	neutral/+positive
Speech act(s)	Positive politeness	Contrast/drifted apart	Positive politeness; attention-getting	<i>Couple</i> ; emphasis on exclusivity; benefactive

### 5.3 *You three*

In the introductory section, the frequencies of *you three* were compared with the ones of the other two strategies of marking plurality through the specification of the number of addressees. In this section, the functions and related frequencies, the collocates and context of occurrence of *you three* will be analysed and discussed. However, due to the low frequency of *you three* in the corpus, it was impossible to discuss the geographical variation of its use.

### 5.3.1 Frequencies

On average, *you three* is more frequently used in the varieties of the Inner Circle (0.10 pmw) than Outer Circle (0.07 pmw). However, the expression is generally not particularly frequent, considering that it only occurs 187 times in the whole corpus (0.08 pmw). Among the varieties of the Inner Circle, the one that displays a significantly higher frequency of occurrence of *you three* compared to the rest of the varieties is New Zealand (0.98 pmw), whereas Irish English is the variety in which its occurrence shows to be lower than the average (0.04 pmw) ( $p < .05$ ). In the Outer Circle, a tendency for the African varieties of English not to use *you three* can be observed: firstly, no occurrences of *you three* could be found in Ghana; secondly, the frequency of occurrence of *you three* in Nigeria, South Africa, and Tanzania range between 0.02 and 0.04 pmw (see table 1 in the introductory section above). The only African variety in which it appears to be frequent is Kenya (0.12 pmw). However, it is useful to bear in mind that the token frequencies for *you three* are very low, therefore frequencies on a per-million-word basis can be affected by it. Outside of the African varieties, only India displays a low frequency of occurrence of *you three* (0.03 pmw) compared to the average in the Outer Circle (see table 1 in the introductory section above).

### 5.3.2 Functions

The analysis of the concordances allowed to identify some of the semantic and pragmatic traits that characterise the use of *you three*. The categorisation of the functions of *you three* results from a combination of semantic and pragmatic traits. The main differentiation among the functional categories of *you three* is visible on the pragmatic level and mainly concerns the expression of the speaker's attitude. Thus, three hypercategories were identified: positive, neutral and negative speaker's attitude. Within each of these categories, subcategories of functions of *you three* were identified according to some recurrent semantic traits that were observed to be expressed, i.e. [+similative], [+specific], and the pragmatic function of attention-getting (see table 10 below).

**Table 10 – Functions of *you three* (semantic and pragmatic traits)**

Positive speaker's attitude	Neutral speaker's attitude	Negative speaker's attitude
[+similative][+inclusive]	[+specific]	[+similative][+derogatory]
[+specific]	[+specific][+attention-getting]	[+specific][+contrast]

Similarly to *you two*, by *similative* it is here meant that the three referents identified by *you three* are sharing the same event or experience. When a positive speaker's attitude combines with a similative interpretation, the resulting semantics of the expression is one where *inclusiveness* is expressed (see (33a-c) below).

(33)

- a. Otherwise, it sounds like *you three* are doing great! (KE B)
- b. *You three* have so many people praying for you it's unreal. (IE B)
- c. I told your sister today that *you three* make me wish I had sisters. (GB B)

The semantic trait [+specific] refers to the identification of referents in contexts in which *you three* is not used to exclusively specify the number of interlocutors, nor to convey inclusiveness, but to set three specific addressees apart from the rest of possible addressees (see (34a-c) below).

(34)

- a. *You three* being the best of your divisions. (GB G)
- b. The public disparagement of Mr Power and Mr Harper has only shown *you three men* to be very brave, a great deal more intelligent. (GB B)
- c. I would pay to watch *you three* make fun of movies. (US B)

When the speaker's attitude towards the event is neutral, *you three* is either used as a simple quantifier specifying the number of addressees (see (35a-c) below), or as an attention-getter (see (36a-c) below).

(35)

- a. "What are *you three* going to do this afternoon?"(US G)
- b. "Aye, we believe so." The shorter one replies. "*You three* were lucky." (GB G)
- c. I have left my treasure to *you three*; and I wish you to remember me for as long as you live. (HK G)

(36)

- a. Hi *you three*. It has been said many times and I will say it again. (NZ G)
- b. Well, come along, *you three*, we must see after him. (AU G)
- c. Okay, *you three*. Who's who? Are you going to tell me this time, (IE G)

In contexts connotated by a negative speaker's attitude, the expressed semantic traits are, again, [+similative] and [+specific]. In the first case, the resulting interpretation of the sentence is a derogatory one in which the speakers takes distance from the addressees or openly despises them (see (37a-c) below).

(37)

- a. What have *you three children* done with my fucking wall, *you little bastards!* (GB G)
- b. That is EXTREMELY sexist and *you three* are obviously *sexist* against women. (US G)
- c. He had more real life friends than *you three pukes* will every have so take your rude comments and stuff them. (US G)

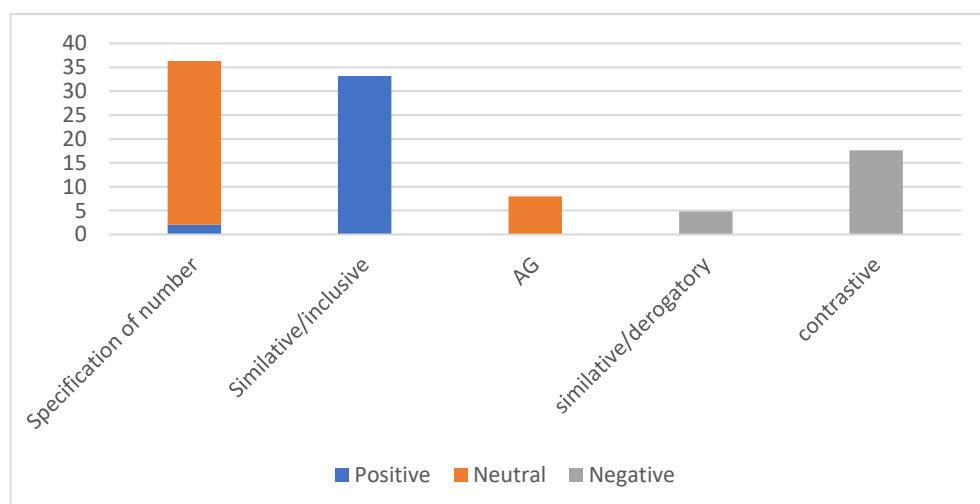
In the second case, the kind of identification carried out by *you three* is a specific one in which the addressees are set apart from the rest of possible referents according to some action or behaviour that the speaker is opposing. Differently from the similitive interpretation which resembles social categorisation, the function of the expression is to specify the act of taking part in a particular event rather than *being* something (e.g. A sexist, a bastard, cf. (36a-b) above) (see (38a-c) below).

(38)

- a. “Will *you three* stop talking politics!” (US B)
- b. She's bringing shame on the family. And *you three* shouldn't encourage her! (AU G)
- c. I hope *you three* have gotten over your girlie spat with the lip balm. (AU B)

The frequencies of occurrence of each of the categories introduced above are reported in figure 9 below. Given the few occurrences of *you three* in the corpus, the frequencies of the functions are reported in tokens, percentages out of the total number of occurrences of *you three*, and per-million-words.

**Figure 9 - Frequencies of occurrence of the functions of *you three* with semantic prosody**



The most frequent contexts in which *you three* occurs are the ones in which it specifies

quantity and expresses inclusiveness, both showing roughly the same percentage of occurrence out of the total number of instances of *you three* (34.2% and 33.2% respectively) and same normalised frequency (0.027 pmw) (see figure 9 above). On the other hand, *you three* occurs in negatively connotated contexts 22.4% of the times it occurs in the corpus (0.018 pmw). Between the two categories identified for the negatively connotated contexts, the one comprising the instances of *you three* used to identify a social category in a derogatory way is much less frequent than the one in which the speaker uses *you three* in order to take distance from the interlocutors' point of view or event they are taking part in (0.004 pmw vs 0.014 pmw respectively) (see figure 9 above).

In other words, the tendency for *you three* is to be used as either a specifier of the exact number of addressees, i.e. a mere quantifier, or a conveyor of the positive attitude of the speaker towards the interlocutor through the expression of speech acts of politeness, namely compliments, well wishing, blessing, etc. (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001) (see (39a-c) below). This context of use is something that *you three* shares with other number-marked forms of the second person pronoun *you*, namely suffixed 2PL forms (cf. Section 4.8), *you two* (cf. Section 5.2.2), *you both* (cf. 5.2.4.1).

(39)

- a. It's a small thing we can do to show how much we admire *you three*... (NZ B)
- b. Nothing has made me prouder in my life than having *you three* as my sons. It was an honour to be your father. (HK G)
- c. My deepest respect to *you three gentlemen* for engaging the blogpost in mature, warm and very friendly discussions. (KE B)

Another function that *you three* shares with other forms of number-marked second person expressions is the one of *attention-getting*. (cf. Section 5.2.1-3 on *You two*, 4.4 on suffixed 2PL forms). Attention-getter *you three* represents a share of 8.0% of the total number of occurrences of the expression in the corpus (0.006 pmw). Table 11 below reports the percentages of occurrence of the number-marked second person forms considered so far in the context of attention-getting out of the total number of



occurrences of each in the corpus.

**Table 11 – Percentages of occurrence of *you two*, *yous(e)* and standard *you* in attention-getting contexts**

	<i>You three</i>	<i>You two</i>	<i>Yous(e)</i>	<i>You</i>
Attention-getting (%)	8.0	5.4	2.4	0.5

As already mentioned in sections 5.2.3 and 4.4, the observed tendency as far as the function of attention getting is concerned is for 2PL forms to express it significantly more often than standard *you* ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.007). In the case of *you three*, the tendency appears to be even stronger as it works as an attention-getter at least three times as much as the other number-marked second person forms. This is in line with the specificity of the identification performed by *you three* and the willingness to set apart three specific individuals from the rest of the addressees.

### 5.3.3 Collocates

The collocates of *you three* were searched and their expanded context analysed in order to obtain more information about the context of occurrence of the expression. The search parameters were the same as the ones used for the other number-marked second person forms, i.e. span 3L/3R and MCF = 5. The resulting collocates with MIs > 3 are reported in table 12 below.

**Table 12 – Collocates of *you three***

Collocate	MI
<i>For</i>	3.3
<i>Of</i>	3.2

The strongest collocates of *you three* appear to be two prepositions: *for* and *of*. The extended context reveals that *you three* tends to co-occur with *for* in a benefactive context, i.e. the speaker is talking about some event or state of which the addressees are the beneficiaries. In 5 out of a total of 7 instances, this co-occurrence appears in a context in which positive politeness is also expressed (see (40a-c) below), confirming the tendency for *you three* to appear in positively connotated contexts, which was already pointed out when analysing its functions (section 5.1.3.2).

(40)

- a. Big hugs for *you three* with much much love from Belgium (GB G)
- b. Care package is awesome, and they are just the best! So happy for *you three*. (US G)
- c. This helps Goodness go round and round. I am very grateful for *you three*, and appreciate you enormously! (AU B)

The preposition *of* co-occurs with *you three* in the partitive structure of the kind *quantifier + of + you three* (see (41a-c) below). The occurrence of *you three* in partitive structures represents 3.7% of the times *you three* occurs in the corpus (0.003 pmw), an occurrence that could be expected given the plurality of the expression.

(41)

- a. At that stage, it will be possible to do DNA tests on *all of you three* adults, plus the baby. (JM G)
- b. “How would *any of you three gentlemen* like to have to accept cigarettes or tobacco from your daughters or sons?” (GB G)
- c. “Come now, let us see *which of you three* loves me.” (US G)

### 5.3.4 Double marking

*You three* was observed to be often further pre- or post-modified by other plural NPs that add more information about the referents identified by *you three*. Since the post-modifying NPs are always plural and can, thus, act as number markers, I will consider the occurrences of plural post-modification of *you three* as instances of double- (see (42a-c) below) and triple-marking (see (43) below).

(42)

a. Michael, you, Peter and Angry are right and *you three all* demonstrated a caring and compassion beyond your pragmatism. (AU G)

b. “*You three guys* did. One time, and it wasn’t nice!” (PH B)

c. My offering seems very tame compared to *you three gals!* (GB G)

(43) The problem is that the flat should ideally be divided between *all you three people* after your father death. (IN G)

As can be observed in (42) the double-marker can be a quantifier (42a), a plural noun (42b), a plural noun which is further specified for other semantic traits, as in (42c) in which *gals* conveys information about number, gender and informality. Similarly, in the only instance of triple-marking (43) the double-marker is *people*, a noun that adds information about the trait [+human], whereas the triple-marker is, again, the inclusive quantifier *all* in pre-modifying position. Given the frequency of occurrence of *you guys* (21.7 pmw) in the corpus, it can be hypothesised that in the cases of double- and triple-marking the combination *you* NP-PL acts as a plural that is specified for other semantic traits (e.g. [+human], [+informality], etc.), and *three* works as a marker of number and specificity of identification (i.e. [+number], [+specific]). However, this does not hold for *you gals* (0.06 pmw) which is less frequent than *you three* (0.08 pmw) in the corpus, suggesting that specification could go the other way around, i.e. *you three* is the pluralised bit which is further specified for gender by *gals*. This latter hypothesis is in line with 12 out of 24 instances of double-marked *you three* involving NP-PL post-

modification which does not represent a common strategy of number marking as, for example, *you all* and *you ones* seem to be (see (44a-e) below).

(44)

- a. You three *machomen* (US G)
- b. You three *winners* (CA B)
- c. You three *gentlemen* (GB G)
- d. You three *strong women* (AU G)
- e. You three *heavy hitters* (AU G)

The universal quantifier *all* works as a specifier of inclusiveness (i.e. [+inclusive]), which, together with the rest of the markers, contributes to an emphatic and exclusive interpretation of the identification of addressees, i.e. only you three and no one else.

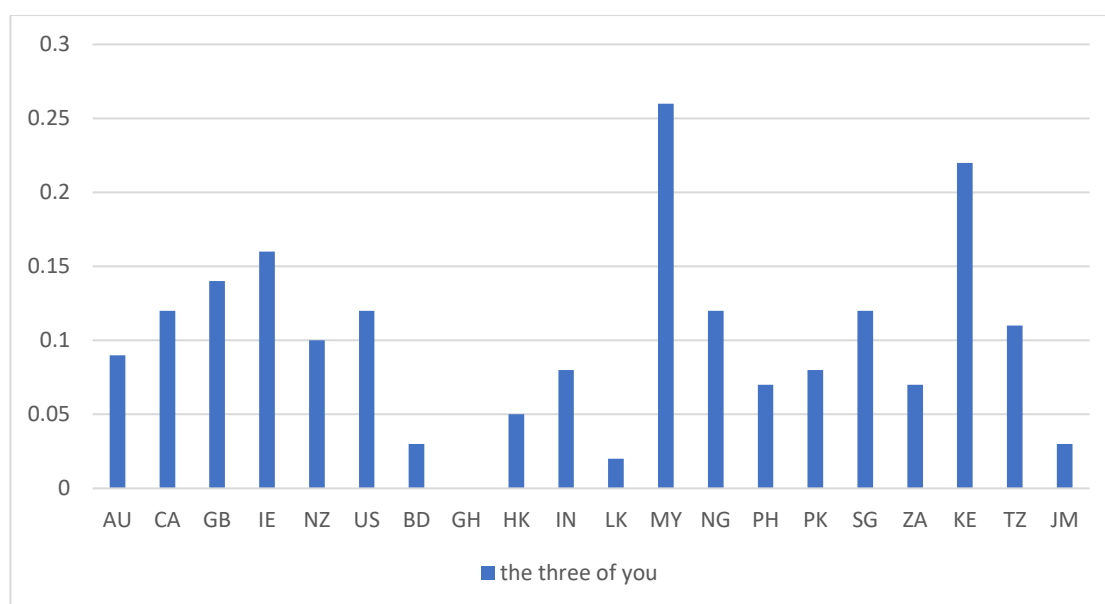
Double-marked *you three* represents 12.8% of the total number of instances of *you three* in the corpus (0.01 pmw). The varieties that display higher occurrences of double-marking are Australia (38.4% of the total occurrences of *you three* in the section; 0.03 pmw), Great Britain (14.3% of the total occurrences of *you three* in the section; 0.01 pmw), and US (7.2% of the total occurrences of *you three* in the section; 0.01 pmw). Given the large share of occurrences of double-marked *you three* in Australia, it can be suggested that *you three* has reached a higher degree of grammaticalization in this variety compared to the other varieties of the Inner Circle. The tendency in Australian English for 2PL forms to be double marked was also observed for suffixed 2PL forms, for which double- and triple-marked expressions represented 19.7% of the total number of instances of suffixed 2PLs in Australia (cf. Section 4.6). Interestingly, *you two* does not seem to be involved in double-marked expressions as frequently as *you three* is, although the former is more frequent in the corpus than the latter (1.93 pww vs 0.08 pmw respectively). Indeed, only 5.1% of occurrences of *you two* appear to be double-marked (0.08 pmw). However, this tendency can be explained by the fact that a large share of instances of *you two* are used to indicate a romantic couple (see section 5.2.1), a concept that is less likely to need any further specification in terms of gender, social category and familiarity/informality.

### 5.3.5 Competing structures: *the three of you*

In this section, I will analyse the competitor of *you three*, namely *the three of you*. The aim of the analysis is understand how the two expressions differ in terms of semantic and pragmatic traits expressed and, thus, motivate the co-existence of both in the language. Information about the use of *the three of you* will be obtained through the analysis of the frequencies, functions and context of occurrence (including collocates).

Firstly, as far as the frequency of occurrence is concerned, *the three of you* is slightly more frequent in the corpus than *you three*: its total number of instances is 219 (vs. 187 occurrences of *you three*) and normalised frequency 0.10 pmw (vs. 0.08 pmw for *you three*) (see figure 10 below). It is more frequent in the Inner Circle (72.6% of the total number of occurrences of *the three of you*; 0.12 pmw) than the Outer Circle (27.2% of the total number of occurrences of *the three of you*; 0.09 pmw). Among the Inner Circle varieties, none displays a tendency to use *the three of you* significantly more often than the rest of the varieties. On the other hand, three varieties of the Outer Circle display a significantly higher frequency of occurrence of *the three of you* in comparison with the average of the circle ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0001), namely Malaysia (0.26 pmw) and Kenya (0.22) (see figure 10 below).

**Figure 10 – Frequencies of occurrence of *the three of you* in World Englishes (pmw)**



When analysing the functions, two main categories could be identified for *the three of you*, namely number marking with inclusive interpretation (see (45a-d) below) and emphatic identification (see (46a-d) below). In the former case, *the three of you* is used in order to refer to a group of people of which it is a specifier of number but, at the same time, of inclusive reference, in the same fashion as the quantifier *all* would work (see (45a-d) below). In the case of emphatic identification, *the three of you* indicates either a group of referents that are set apart from the rest of the possible addressees according to some property or characteristic (46a-b) or sharing of a particular event (46d), or the referents are not conceived as a group but as single individuals sharing the same experience (see (46c) below).

(45)

- a. To *the three of you*: Take a dive into the voting area, roll it and vote. (CA B)
- b. Congratulations to your new miracle life!!! Much love to *the three of you* and the entire family! (GB G)
- c. I hope *the three of you* heal up quick. (US G)
- d. I've heard sweet stories about you and Tyson... well Tyson with your son, *the three of you*, and I smile and get teary-eyed at the same time. (US B)

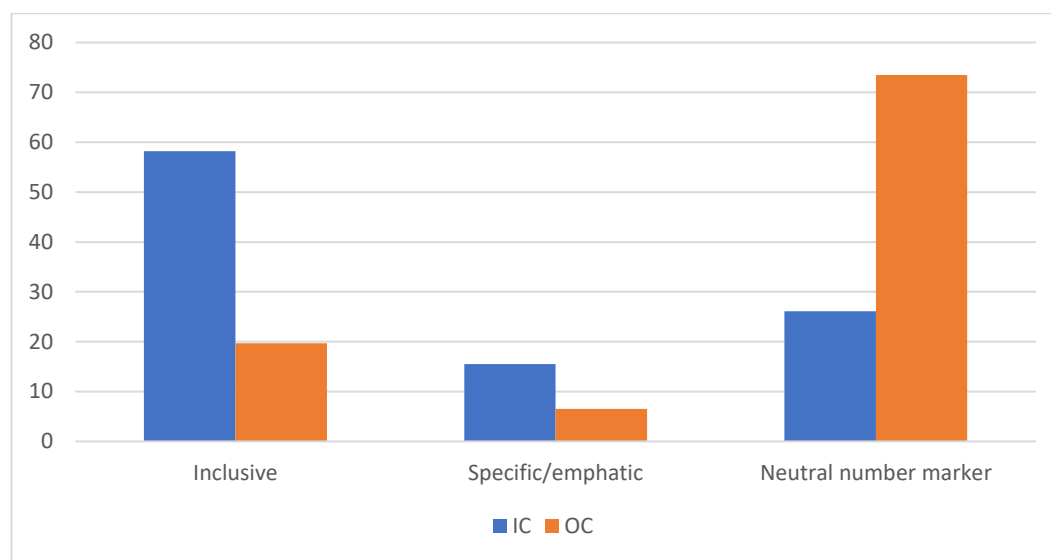
(46)

- a. *The three of you* are thieves and should do a little work for your millions. (CA G)
- b. Apart from that, I enjoyed the show and was very impressed - *the three of you* made a good team. (GB G)
- c. Ms. DICKINSON: Well, I think that *the three of you* should talk amongst yourselves, and you decide what you think (US G)
- d. I will be the loneliest person there knowing *the three of you* are not in the crowd. (IE G)

The category of inclusive number marking was observed to be much more frequent than

the emphatic identification one (see figure 11 below). The latter represents 22.0% of the total number of occurrences of *the three of you* in the corpus (0.02 pmw). This is a similar percentage to the one found for *you two* appearing in emphatic or specific identification contexts (see section 5.2.1), although slightly lower than the one found for *you three* performing the same function (27.7%, see 2.2.2 above).

**Figure 11 – Frequencies of the functions of *the three of you* in the IC and OC (pmw)**



It can be, thus, concluded that *the three of you* is most frequently used as a marker of number and inclusiveness much more frequently than *you three*, which was observed to be interpreted as inclusive only 33.2% of the times it occurred in the corpus (cf. 5.3.2 above). The search for collocates of *the three of you* did not yield any significant result, thus neither confirming nor disconfirming the tendencies found in the analysis of functions.

Finally, *the three of you* appeared in double-marked expressions 4 times in the corpus (see (47a-d) below), which equals 1.8% of the total number of occurrences of the expression (0.002 pmw).

(47)

a. I don't think I would be sitting at the table if it wasn't for *the three of you guys* writing books that I read in high school that deeply impacted me. (GB G)

b. I can't do it anymore. I can't look after *the three of you guys* while I'm fighting. (US G)

- c. Your sister must have been very proud of *all the three of you*. (IN G)
- d. *All the three of you* deserve a vacation cause you all worked so hard. (MY G)

In (47a-b), it looks like the double marker is the quantifier *three* which specifies the number of the generic second person plural NP *you guys*. The identification of referents performed in these sentences by the double-marked expression seems to be an emphatic one: in (47a) the speaker is setting apart the three specific addressees (who wrote the books) from the rest (who did not); in (47b), the speaker is pointing out the impossibility of looking after each one of the addressees while also doing something else (i.e. fighting). In (47c-d), the double-marker is the quantifier *all*, therefore the added semantic meaning is that of *inclusiveness*. This is particularly evident in (47d), in which *all* is used twice in the sentence as a modifier of *you*.

### 5.3.6 Conclusion

Considering the results of the analysis of the concordances of *you three* it can be concluded that the expression occurs more frequently in the varieties of the Inner Circle than Outer Circle (0.10 pmw vs 0.07 pmw respectively), in which it mainly expresses specificity of identification (i.e. *just you three*) beside number marking (61.9% of the total number of instances of *you three*). The second most frequent function of *you three* is the expression of inclusiveness (33.2% of the total number of instances) and positive politeness (35.3% of the total number of instances). *You three* appears to be most frequently used when the attitude of the speaker towards the interlocutors is either neutral or positive (77.5% of the total number of instances) and less frequently in derogatory contexts (22.4% of the total number of instances of *you three*). In line with its tendency to specify the identification of addressees, *you three* very often tends to occur in contexts of attention-getting (8.0% of the total number of occurrences), and it does significantly more often than other 2PL forms (cf. *You two* and *the two of you* (section 5.2.5.2), *yous(e)* (section 4.2), *you* (section 4.5), etc.). Finally, 12.8% of the occurrences of *you three* were instances of double marking, suggesting a certain degree of grammaticalization.



The analysis of how the competitor *the three of you* behaves linguistically further confirmed what was found for *you three* and suggests that the two expressions are used with different functions: firstly, *the three of you* is, in 77.9% of cases, used to express inclusiveness rather than specificity of identification; second, no instances of attention-getting *the three of you* was found in the corpus; third, only 1.8% of the occurrences of *the three of you* were double-marked, suggesting a lesser degree of grammaticalization than *you three*. Indeed, not only does *you three* contain less linguistic material than *the three of you* which is typical of grammaticalised expressions (cf. phonological erosion (Heine 1993, Heine and Kuteva 2007)), but also the more frequent occurrence in double-marked expressions suggests that *you three* has, to some extent, undergone semantic change and, therefore, needs to be further specified for inclusiveness more often than *the three of you* does.

## 5.4 *You four*

*You four* is the last of the number-marked expressions that were considered for the *you* + cardinal number section. It shows to be much less frequent than *you two* and *you three*, as already mentioned in the introduction to this chapter (see table 1 above): its total number of occurrences in the corpus is 44 (0.02 pmw), of which 72.7% are found in the Inner Circle and 27.2% in the Outer Circle. Given the low frequencies of *you four* it was impossible to carry out an analysis of the geographical variation concerning its use. I will, therefore, address the matter on a more general level and discuss how *you four* is used in World Englishes based on the few instances available.

The categories of functions that are expressed by *you four* are essentially three: the most frequent is number specification in a neutral (neither positively nor negatively connotated) context (see (48a-c) below), which represents 43.1% of the total number of occurrences of *you four* in the corpus; the second most frequent function is the expression of specific identification and positive politeness (see (49a-c) below), which represents 36.3% of the total number of occurrences of *you four* in the corpus; the least frequent context of occurrence is represented by a negatively connotated one in which *you four* is used to address a group of referents in a derogatory way (see (50a-c) below).

(48)

- a. What next for *you four* after that? (IE B)
- b. I am going to have to miss Thursday. Something came up last-minute. *You four* can still have fun. (MY G)
- c. He/She claims to have counted over 3 million people. Maybe *you 4* got counted! (JM G)

(49)

- a. Continually praying for *you 4*, Tania Schulz (Peters) (CA G)
- b. *YOU FOUR* ROCK BIG TIME! (GB G)
- c. That line was pure magic... I LOVE *YOU FOUR*! (US G)

(50)

- a. *You four* should be the last to criticize anyone. (CA B)
- b. *You four sociopaths* from HC have the history of mental illness (CA B)
- c. *You four idiots* were searching for me fanatically in your own ways like one eyed deer. (IN G)

*You four* was also found to express inclusiveness 18.8% it occurred in the corpus, whereas only one instance of attention-getting context involving *you four* could be found.

Given the low occurrences of *you four* the search for collocates did not produce any relevant result. However, its occurrence in double-marked contexts is particularly high (36.3% of the total number of occurrences), especially if compared with other number-marked expressions such as *you three* which occurs in double-marked contexts 12.8% of times (cf. Section 5.3.4), and *you two* which does 3.5% of the times it occurs in the corpus.

The results of the analysis of the competitor of *you four*, namely *the four of you*, confirm that the co-existence of the two expressions is due to a difference in the

functions each of the two express. Indeed, although the frequencies of the two expressions are similar, as *the four of you* occurs 51 times in the corpus (0.002 pmw), and more frequently in the Inner Circle (84.3% of times) than in the Outer Circle (15.6% of times), the functions that were observed to be expressed by *the four of you* have mainly to do with the marking of number and the expression of inclusiveness (74.5% of the times *the four of you* occurs in the corpus) (see (51a-c) below), and emphatic/specific identification as in (52a-c) below (23.5% of times). Lastly, differently from *you four* which tends to occur in double-marked expressions (see above), no instance of double-marked *the four of you* could be found in the corpus.

(51)

- a. I guess the final question has to be do you ever see *the four of you* getting back together and playing one more time? (GB G)
- b. Let's work on the basis that if *the four of you* can agree, you move ahead and tell us next month (GB G)
- c. Can you tell me a little about *the four of you*? I've heard rumors that you're all from the same town (US G)

(52)

- a. It can only be accessed by *the four of you*. (IE G)
- b. Thank you for still reading, *the four of you* who are left. (SG G)
- c. But now there's just *the four of you* as a core. Has that changed at all? (AU B)

In sum, *you four* and *the four of you* differ in their functions and contexts of occurrence: *you four* is four times less likely than *the four of you* to express inclusiveness; *you four* is three times as likely as *the four of you* to occur in contexts in which politeness is expressed (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001), and is found in emphatic contexts twice as frequently as *the four of you*. *You four* is also used in contexts in which the speaker is taking distance from or despising the interlocutors, whereas *the four of you* is very unlikely to be found in the

same context. Finally, only *you four* is frequently found in double-marked expressions, whereas *the four of you* is not.

## 5.5 The pragmatics of *you* + cardinal number

In this final section I will bring together the results of the analysis of the three pluralised expressions *you two*, *you three*, and *you four* considered in this section.

Three main traits seem to be shared by the three *you* + cardinal number expressions: the first is the specificity of the identification of referents, which is a consequence of the form of the expressions. The exact number of addressees is specified (e.g. two, three or four) allowing to identify a restricted group of referents among a larger one. The second trait is the tendency of these expressions to occur in contexts of politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001) significantly more often than standard *you* does ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.006). Indeed, the most frequent collocates of *you* + cardinal number expressions are words that typically identify positive speech acts such as congratulating, well wishing, thanking, loving, etc. The third trait is the tendency of *you* + cardinal number expressions to work as attention-getters by which the speaker calls for the attention of a specific subset of addressees. This last trait appears to be specific to *you* + cardinal number expressions as their competitors (i.e. *the two of you*, *both of you*, *the three of you*, *the four of you*) were never found to perform this function.

The traits identified for *you* + cardinal number are also common to suffixed 2PLs forms such as *yous(e)*. Although the specificity of identification is higher for *you* + cardinal number than suffixed 2PLs, the expression of positive politeness and the tendency to appear in attention-getting contexts characterise suffixed 2PLs as well. This means that 2PL forms share the same functions and differ in the same way from the standard pronoun *you*. As already shown in section 4.5, the functional difference between 2PL forms and standard *you* is statistically significant. On the other hand, the similarities in the linguistic behaviour of pluralised second person pronouns was already evident in table 19, above, in which the percentages of occurrence in attention-getting contexts were compared across second person pronominal expressions: 2.4%

for *yous(e)*, 5.4% for *you two*, 8.0% for *you three* and 2.2% for *you four*, which are all higher than 0.5% of times in which standard *you* works as an attention-getter.

One of the main research questions posed at the beginning of the section concerned the possibility for *you* + cardinal number to be undergoing processes of grammaticalization and pragmaticalization. Both formal and semantic clues seem to point in that direction: firstly, *you* + cardinal number expressions contain less linguistic material than other competing expressions of quantity such as *the two of you*, *the three of you*, *the four of you*, which is typical of grammaticalised expressions; secondly, their function in the language is not simply that of specifying the number of the addressees as a mere quantifier would do (e.g. *two* in *this section discusses two empirical studies* (US G)). By looking at the context of occurrence, it appears that the main function of these quantifying expressions is pragmatic: most frequently (on average 20.7% of the times *you* + cardinal number structures occur in the corpus), the speaker seeks to show sympathy or empathy towards the interlocutors through politeness; less frequently, *you* + cardinal number expressions are used to create and emphasise a situation of contrast between the speaker and addressee(s) (on average 13.4% of the times *you* + cardinal number structures occur in the corpus) usually concerning a difference of point of view or opinion.

## 6 *You all, y'all and yall*

In this chapter, I will analyse a second analytic strategy for marking plurality on *you*, i.e. by post-modification of the universal quantifier *all*. *You all* finds its earliest mentions in the literature in 1920s (cf. Axley 1926-7, Hills 1926-7), although it appears that there is no agreement on its origins or semantic values (Wales 2003: 15). What is agreed upon, however, is its geographical distribution: *you all* together with its reduced forms *y'all* and *yall* is strongly associated with the southern varieties of American English (Wales 2003: 15), the Caribbean and some North American varieties (Kortmann and Schneider 2011: 224). Differently from *you* + cardinal number, but similarly to suffixed second person plural forms (e.g. *yous(e)*), *you all/y(')all* forms of address bear a social stigma, probably because these forms (in particular, *y(')all*) were at first associated with slave language (Wales 2003: 16).

Tillery and Bailey (1998) and Tillery *et al.* (2000) provide some information about the sociolinguistics of *you all* and *yall*. A series of surveys were used to determine how the two 2PL forms are used in different areas of the US and by speakers belonging to different age groups. In the Southern varieties of American English, *you all* was used by older and middle-aged people, whereas *yall* was favoured by under-25. Outside of the Southern varieties, both forms were more frequently used by under-25 speakers. As far as the functions are concerned, in Oklahoma more than 1/3 of the speakers surveyed

would use *yall* with singular reference. The New York area was observed to be more resistant to the spreading of *yall*, probably due to the occurrence of other 2PL forms such as *youse*, *you guys* and *youse guys*.

The aim of this chapter is build a linguistic description of *you all/y(')all* that includes their frequencies of occurrence, functions and pragmatics in World Englishes. At the same time, I will try to highlight the geographically specific uses of these forms, i.e. whether different varieties of English display different preferences for certain functions and/or semantic prosody of *you all/y(')all*. As far as the frequencies are concerned, the aim is find out whether the forms *you all/y(')all* are actually specific to the American varieties or are frequently used elsewhere in the Inner or Outer circle varieties. Concerning the functions, I will discuss whether *you all/y(')all* only work as plural pronouns or, in line with other plural-marked second person plural forms (2PL forms henceforth) (cf. 4.8-9, 5.1.5), have developed other functions besides plural marking. This will be done through a qualitative analysis of the corpus data (GloWbe corpus), which will also help me observe how *you all/y(')all* behave pragmatically, i.e. the kind of speech acts they occur with and the semantic prosody of their context of occurrence (Louw 2000; Sinclair 2004). Wales (2003: 16) has already pointed out that *y(')all* occurs in phatic and formulaic phrases such as *thank y'all* and *y'all have a nice day*. This is one of the categories of speech acts that other 2PL forms were found to occur with as well (cf. Sections 4.8-9, 5.1.5), and one of the main functional differences between non-standard 2PL forms and standard *you* (cf. 4.9, 5.1.5). The qualitative analysis of the context of occurrence will also be supported with the analysis of collocations. Significant collocates of *you all/y(')all* will be analysed in their context of occurrence in order to obtain more information about the semantic preference of *you all/y(')all*, i.e. whether they tend to co-occur with particular semantic fields more often than could happen by chance (Sinclair 2004).

Besides giving an account of the distribution and functions of *you all/y(')all* in World Englishes as well as in the single varieties, I will also try to show that *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* represent three different stages of the grammaticalization of *you all*, and that *y'all* and *yall* are the result of phonological reduction rather than being spelling variants of the same form. Although it may be argued that, if pronunciation is taken into account, it may be difficult to find a difference between the three forms, especially between *y'all* and *yall*, I decided to consider spelling as a clue to a possible difference in the way the speakers think about and use the forms. The datasets for the three variants

were analysed separately as I had already done with the suffixed forms *yous* and *youse* (cf. chapter 4). However, differently from *yous* and *youse* which displayed the same linguistic behaviour, *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* were observed to differ according to parameters such as the degree to which inclusiveness is expressed and the attitude of the speaker. The results of the analysis will be brought together in the final section (6.4) in order to highlight similarities and, most importantly, significant differences between more and less grammaticalised variants of *you all*, its formally closest competitor *all of you*, the other 2PL forms, and, finally, standard *you*.

## 6.1 Frequencies

The strategy of marking plurality on *you* by post-modification of the universal quantifier *all* displays an average frequency of occurrence of 30.9 pmw in GloWbe (table 1 below). By comparing the total number of occurrences of each variant *you all*, *y'all* and *yall*, it is possible to observe that the analytic form *you all* (27.9 pmw) is more frequent than the other two forms, and contracted *y'all* (2.39 pmw) is, in turn, more frequent than one-word *yall* (0.54 pmw) (see Table 1 below). This pattern of distribution could be rather expected given that only *you all* represents a standard pronoun, whereas both *y'all* and *yall* are considered to be non-standard.

**Table 1 – Frequencies of occurrence of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* in World Englishes (the darker shade indicates IC varieties)**

Variety	<i>You all</i>		<i>Y'all</i>		<i>Yall</i>		Tot. Pmw
	Token	Pmw	Token	Pmw	Token	Pmw	
AU	4147	27.98	164	1.1	19	0.12	29.21
CA	2909	21.58	281	2.08	24	0.17	23.84
GB	10348	26.69	464	1.19	72	0.18	28.07
IE	3290	32.56	133	1.31	21	0.2	34.08
NZ	2226	27.35	92	1.13	12	0.14	28.62
US	11885	30.72	2730	7.05	530	1.37	39.15



BD	764	19.26	18	0.45	4	0.1	19.81
GH	1025	26.43	104	2.68	28	0.72	29.84
HK	873	21.58	27	0.66	6	0.14	22.39
IN	2360	24.47	122	1.26	37	0.38	26.12
LK	1163	24.96	24	0.51	0	0	25.48
MY	1366	32.2	49	1.15	11	0.25	33.61
NG	1716	40.23	350	8.2	70	1.64	50.08
PH	1205	27.86	127	2.93	30	0.69	31.49
PK	1299	25.28	22	0.42	22	0.09	25.81
SG	1386	32.25	130	3.02	6	0.14	35.41
ZA	1164	25.65	117	2.57	36	0.79	29.03
KE	1134	27.61	120	2.92	15	0.36	30.89
TZ	1163	33.06	107	3.04	33	0.93	37.05
JM	1331	33.55	195	4.91	150	3.78	42.25
Mean WE	27.99 pmw		2.39 pmw		0.54 pmw		30.9 pmw

Within the Inner Circle, the varieties that tend to rely most on *you + all* as a strategy of pluralisation of *you* are: American English (39.1 pmw), Irish English (32.5 pmw), and Australian English (29.1 pmw). In the Outer Circle, it is Nigerian English (40.2 pmw), Jamaican English (33.5 pmw), and Tanzanian English (33.0 pmw) the rely most on *you all/y(')all* (see table 1 above), i.e. two African varieties and one that has historically undergone linguistic influence from the languages of West and Central Africa (Sebba 1993, Brown-Blake 2008). This is also supported by the fact that, in addition to Jamaican English, *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* tend are frequently used in other African varieties of English namely Ghanaian English, and South African English (see table 1 above).

American English is the only variety in the Inner Circle with the highest frequency of occurrence of each variant compared to both the frequencies of occurrence in other varieties of the Inner Circle and the average frequency of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall*

in the Inner Circle (see table 1 above). This suggests a variety-specific preference in using *you all*/*y('all)* as plurals of *you*, which is also in line with the American English non-reliance on other strategies of pluralisation such as suffixed *yous(e)* (frequency = 0.21 pmw vs. the average frequency of 0.34 pmw in the Inner Circle; see section 4.1), and *you* + cardinal number (e.g. frequency of *you two* in US = 1.09 vs. the average frequency of 1.63 pmw in the Inner Circle; see section 5.2).

Some variety-specific preferences can be observed in the Outer Circle as well: first of all, Nigerian English displays the highest frequencies of occurrence of *you all* and *y'all* (40.2 pmw and 8.2 pmw respectively), and, in general, higher frequencies than the average in the Outer Circle. *You all* and *y'all* are more frequent than the average in Jamaican English as well, which is also the variety in which *yall* is most frequent among the varieties of the Outer Circle. The third highest frequencies of occurrence of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* are displayed by Tanzanian English, which is, once again, an African variety of English (see table 1 above).

## 6.2 Functions and context

In this section, I will report on and discuss the analysis of the functions of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall*. In order to do so, I have considered, first of all, the frequencies with which each variant expresses a semantic trait that is implied in the universal quantifier *all*, namely inclusiveness (Comrie 1980, Filimonova 2005). The hypothesis is that if *y'all* and *yall* represent two different stages in the process of grammaticalization, then semantic change is likely to affect the expression of inclusiveness. In other words, *yall* should express inclusiveness less frequently than *y'all*, which, in turn, should express inclusiveness less frequently than *you all*, with each subsequent stage of grammaticalization thus working more and more as a mere plural of *you*. Secondly, I have analysed the context of occurrence of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* as well as their collocates in order to obtain more information about their functions and pragmatics. Finally, I will show how *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* differ from both their formally and semantically closest competitor *all of you* and the standard pronoun *you*.

### 6.2.1 *You all*

As already mentioned in the introduction to this section, the first recognisable trait in *you all* is the expression of inclusiveness (see (1a-c) below). Therefore, a first research question concerned whether inclusiveness is expressed all the time or there is a number of occurrences of *you all* that work as a mere plural of *you*. Occurrences of non-inclusive *you all* would represent instances of semantic change (Gabelentz 1891, Hopper and Traugott 1993, Bybee *et al.* 1994, Haspelmath 1998, Heine and Kuteva 2004, Durkin 2009, Aarts 2011) thus suggesting the presence of an on-going process of grammaticalization.

In the dataset that I have analysed, very few instances of non-inclusive *you all* could, in fact, be observed to occur (see, for example, (2a-c) below).

(1)

- a. Downing's crossing is not the best (*you all* have heard the story about Liverpool signing him based on a hacked video). (GB G)
- b. Hope *you all* have a wonderful day! (US G)
- c. Thank *you all* for the great job in hosting this conference. (US G)

(2)

- a. To learn the guitar wouldn't be boring if there was *a bunch of you all* trying to learn together. (ZA B)
- b. How do *you all* prepare for a gig? (GB G)
- c. [...] [O]r *you all* are just a bunch of bored housewives. (US G)

In (2a) above, *you all* occurs in a partitive construction, which is intrinsically in contrast with inclusiveness because of its semantics: it would be odd to set apart a group of referents while meaning to address all of them. In (2b), the speaker is addressing a band, therefore expressing inclusiveness would be redundant as it is obvious that the whole band will prepare for a gig and not only a couple of members. As inclusiveness is clear from the context, the use of *you all* in (2b) is more likely to have to do with the expression of plurality alone. Finally, in (2c), the pre-modification of *you all* by means of the same universal quantifier *all* suggests that *you all* is perhaps not perceived as expressing inclusiveness, therefore requiring a dedicated (double-)marker. As shown in

table 2 below, the instances of non-inclusive *you all* are few compared to the instances in which *you all* still entails inclusive meaning: non-inclusive *you all* represents only 2.7% of occurrences against the 97.3% of occurrences of inclusive *you all*. The percentages of non-inclusive occurrences increase when considering *y'all* and *y'all* (see sections 6.3-4 below).

**Table 2 – Referential functions of *you all* in WE**

	%	Pmw
Inclusive	97.3	26.04
Non-inclusive	2.7	1.77

Besides expressing inclusiveness, the analysis of the context suggests that more than a third of the times that *you all* occurs in the corpus (43.2%), it does so in contexts in which politeness is expressed (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001) (see table 3 below).

(3)

- a. It was really awesome to meet *you all* and I hope we can meet again! (CA B)
- b. We would like to say a very big thank you to *you all*. (IE G)
- c. I am sending *you all* my very best wishes. (GB G)

(4)

- a. Guys, I beg *you all* to forgive me. (PH B)
- b. I'll be keeping *you all* updated on Facebook and Twitter. (CA B)
- c. May I humbly request *you all* to observe one minute of silence in respect of our late founders. (TZ G)

**Table 3 – Pragmatic functions of *you all* in WE**

	%	Pmw
Politeness	43.2	10.70
Neutral inclusive	47.4	13.12

Negative/contrast	9.4	2.46
Attention-getting	1.6	0.42

The tendency to occur in contexts in which politeness is expressed is what makes *you all* significantly differ from standard *you*, which occurs in contexts of positive politeness only 6.1% of the times it occurs in the corpus (see table 3 above;  $p$  (t-test) = 0.039).

A less frequent context of occurrence of *you all* is the one in which a contrast between the speaker and the addressees can be inferred, as shown in examples (5a-c) below. This context of occurrence represents only 9.4% of the occurrences of *you all* and is significantly less frequent than the positively connotated and neutral ones ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.016) (see table 3 above).

(5)

- a. How cowardly *you all* are? (GB G)
- b. And *you all* want to talk about bullying. Look at your post. (US G)
- c. *You all* don't live in our neighborhoods *you all* are not looking at all the things that's going on out here. (US G)

Finally, the least frequent pragmatic function performed by *you all* is the attention-getting one (AG). *you all*/AG only occurs 1.6% of the times in the corpus. Although not very frequent, *you all*/AG still represents a useful hint to the pragmaticalisation of the pronoun, since it is when performing the attention-getting function that 2PLs look like actual pragmatic markers. They tend to display an emphatic character in the identification of referents and occur in the right periphery of the sentence, which is the preferred locus of occurrence for intersubjective pragmatic markers (Traugott 2013) (see (6) below). The connotation of *you all*/AG can be either positive (6a) or negative (6c) but it can also occur in pragmatically neutral contexts (6b) in which its main function is to allow the speaker to enter a conversation.

(6)

- a. Hi *you all*, lovely erudite developers. (CA G)
- b. Hey *you all*! Here we are, helpless as a creeper without staff. (KE G)
- c. Oh, come on *you all*. Can't you see the obvious. (PK B)

The preference for *you all* to occur in contexts in which politeness is expressed is also supported by the analysis of collocates reported in table 4 below (parameters: 5L/5R, MCF = 20; significance = MI > 3 (Hunston 2002)). The most frequent collocates of *you all* are verbs such as *thank*, *hope* and *love*, which typically encode speech acts of politeness, as shown in examples (7a-c) below.

**Table 4 – Collocates of *you all***

Collocate	MI
<i>Thank</i>	5.44
<i>Hope</i>	5.15
<i>Love</i>	5.10
<i>Know</i>	5.07
<i>With</i>	4.66
<i>Will</i>	4.40

(7)

- a. Thank *you all* for your comments. (ZA B)
- b. Anyway hope *you all* feel better soon. (GB G)
- c. Thank you and love *you all*. (NZ G)

More specifically, thanking, wishing well, and love all represent speech acts that aim to praise the addressees or show empathy towards them, which one can classify, therefore, as expressions of politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001). The verb *know* co-occurs with *you all* in the plural-marked version of the routinised colloquial expression *as you know*, as shown in (8a-b) below. The purpose of using *you all* in this context seems to be the building of a common ground of knowledge as well as getting the interlocutors to share the speaker's point of view by taking it as a given (see (8b) below).

(8)

- a. First of all, *as you all know*, the President has made it a critical part of his foreign

policy to refocus on the Asia Pacific. (US B)

b. It couldn't be done, *as I'm sure you all know*. (NZ G)

Turning to the preposition *with*, which appears in co-occurrence with *you all* as head of the prepositional phrase *with you all* (see (9a-e) below), I observed that its context of co-occurrence with *you all* is generally positively connotated (82.7% of the times *with you all* occurs in the dataset), and hints at a positive sharing of some experience with the addressees, as shown in examples (9a-e) below.

(9)

a. My thoughts and best wishes and love are *with you all!* (AU G)

b. Look forward to work closely *with you all*. (LK G)

c. It is a very great pleasure to be *with you all* today. (GB G)

d. It is great that I can pray *with you all*. (IE G)

e. I am blessed to have been there *with you all*. (US B)

Finally, the future auxiliary *will* tends to co-occur with *you all* in what Leech (2014) defines as *rituals of departure*, i.e. the speech acts that aim to reduce the face-threatening effect of leaving a conversation and it does it by promising the interlocutor(s) that there will be a future exchange, as observable in examples (10a-c) below. *Rituals of departure* (Leech 2014) are one of the strategies used to express politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001).

(10)

a. They will be making their way into my pictures that *I will be sharing with you all soon!* (AU B)

b. Anyhow, *I will keep you all posted* and I hope you come visit me often. (JM G)

c. I hope you all understand, and *I will see you all soon*. (GB B)

The last parameter of the analysis of *you all* concerns the semantic prosody of the pronoun. The data suggest that *you all* tends to be used with a positive connotation, very often linked with the expression of politeness, rather than a negative one: indeed, *you all* occurs in a positively connotated context 48.2% of the times it occurs in the corpus, whereas only 9.4% of the times in negatively connotated contexts. The difference

between the two percentages of occurrence is significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.003), thus indicating a consistent trend for *you all* to be used positively.

### 6.2.1.1 Geographical variation of the functions of *you all*

In this section, I will discuss regional variety with respect to the functions of *you all*. The categories considered are the same that have been analysed so far in the chapter, namely *inclusive* vs. *non-inclusive* reference, the pragmatic functions of expressing politeness, attention-getting and expressing contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors, and, as far as semantic prosody is concerned, positively vs. negatively connotated contexts of occurrence.

As already discussed above, the main semantic difference concerning the use of *you all* is related to the expression of inclusiveness. Since the tendency of *you all* is to express inclusiveness 97.3% of the times, I will only discuss the regional differences in the percentages of occurrence of non-inclusive *you all*, as this will hint at the stages of grammaticalization of *you all* in the different varieties.

**Figure 1 - Inclusive vs. non-inclusive reference of *you all* (% out of the total number of occurrences in a variety)**



Considering that the average occurrence of non-inclusive *you all* in the corpus is 2.6% of the total number of occurrences of *you all*, the varieties that display the highest



number of occurrences are Singaporean English (4.9%), New Zealand English (4.6%), Malaysian English (4.5%), Australian English (4.4%) and Philippines English (4.2%) (see figure 1). The difference with both the average percentage of occurrence of non-inclusive *you all* in the corpus and in the rest of the regional varieties is statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.01) and seems to be explained by geographical influence, given how close New Zealand and Australia are on one side, and Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines on the other, and also how close these two main areas are to each other. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that *you all* seems to be most grammaticalised in the Asian and Australian/Pacific varieties of English.

Turning to the pragmatic functions of *you all*, the expression of politeness (*you all*/POL) was observed to be the most frequent compared to both attention-getting and the expression of contrast. The varieties that display the highest frequencies of occurrence of *you all*/POL are Tanzanian English in which it represents the majority of the instances of *you all* in the variety (69.1%), as does in Philippines English (59.5%), Irish English (58.5%) and New Zealand English (52.3%). These frequencies are significantly higher than both the average frequency of *you all*/POL in World Englishes and in the single regional varieties ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.01). No variety displays a significantly lower percentage of occurrence of *you all*/POL compared to the average in World Englishes.

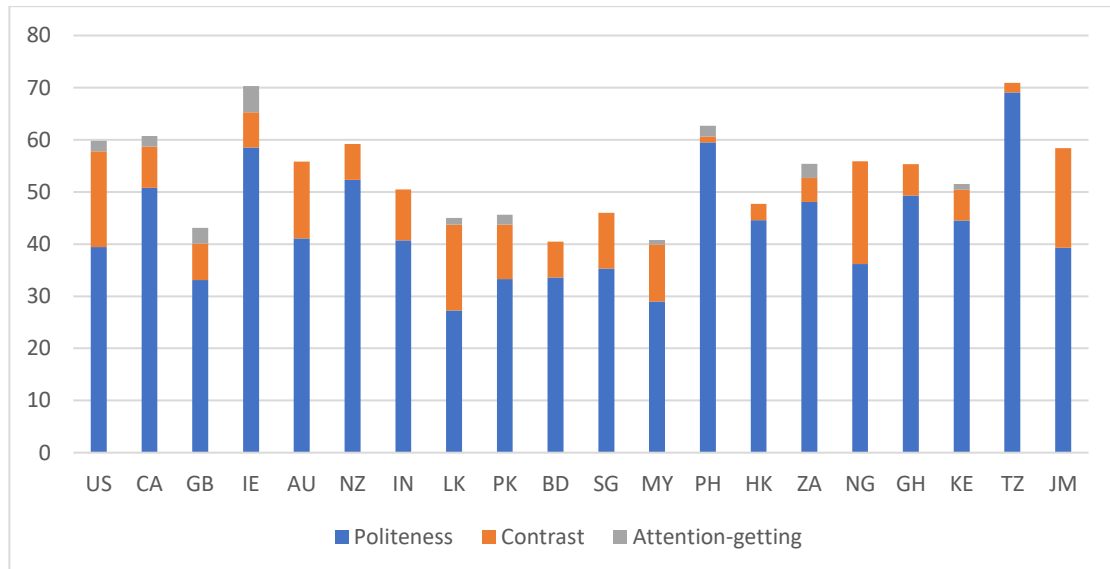
The strong preference to use *you all* to express politeness reflects into the low frequencies of occurrence of *you all* in contexts in which a contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors is expressed (see figure 2 below).

The average frequency of contrast *you all* (*you all*/CONTR) in World Englishes is much lower than *you all*/POL (9.4% of the occurrences of *you all* in the corpus and 43.2% respectively), especially in the varieties that display a preference for *you all*/POL (see table 6 above). However, *you all*/CONTR does reach percentages of occurrence that are significantly higher than the average in some varieties ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0001): in Nigerian English, *you all*/CONTR represents 19.7% of the total number of occurrences of *you all*; in Jamaican English it amounts to 19.1%; in American English it represents 18.4% and in Sri Lankan English the 16.4% (see table 6 above).

The last pragmatic category is *attention-getting* (AG). As observable in figure 2 below, *you all* is not very frequently used as an attention-getter (1.6% of the total number of occurrences of *you all* in World Englishes): *you all*/AG only occurs in six varieties, all belonging to the Outer Circle. The highest percentages of occurrence of

*you all*/AG are found in South African English (2.7%) and Philippines English (2.1%) (see figure 2 below) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.004).

**Figure 2 - Pragmatic functions of *you all* (% out of the total number of occurrences)**

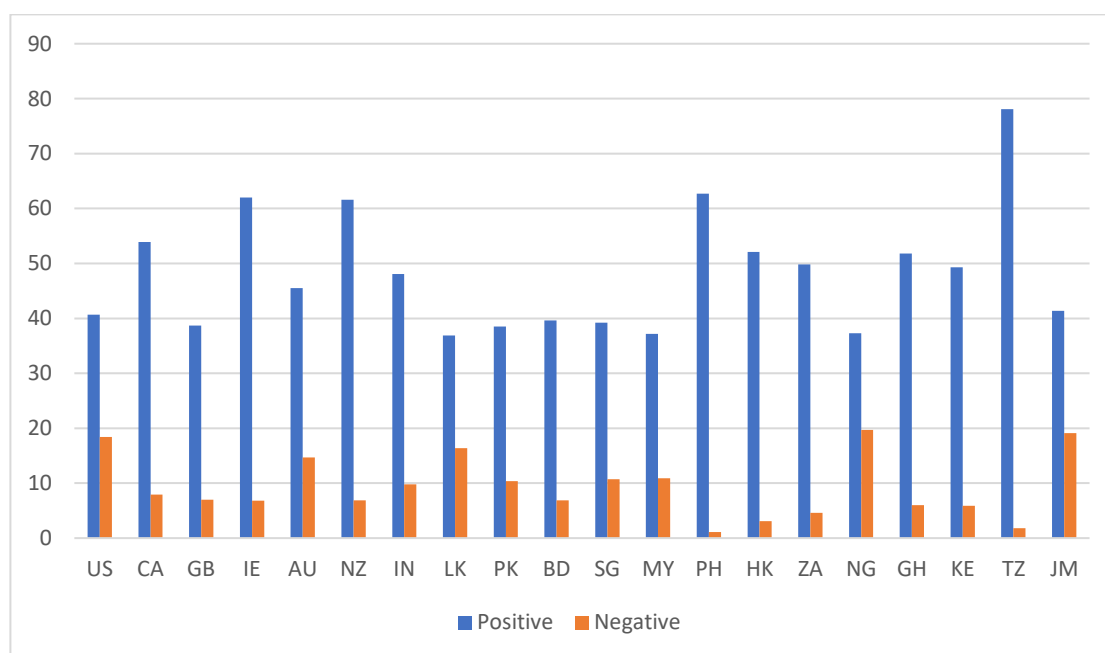


By combining the frequencies of occurrence of the three pragmatic categories, it is possible to deduce which regional varieties use *you all* to express pragmatic meanings most often, therefore displaying a higher degree of pragmaticalisation of the pronoun. In Tanzanian English and Irish English, although *you all* is never used as an attention-getter, it is mainly employed in contexts of politeness (see figure 2 above). Similarly, *you all* is mainly used to express politeness in New Zealand English, a variety that also displays a high frequency of occurrence of non-inclusive *you all* which suggests a further stage in the grammaticalization of the 2PL compared to other varieties (see figure 2 above). The same holds for Philippines English, which besides using *you all* to express politeness, it is also used as an attention-getter, and, similarly to New Zealand English, the variety displays a high frequency of occurrence of non-inclusive *you all* therefore hinting at processes of both grammaticalization and pragmaticalisation of the 2PL form.

Finally, the semantic prosody of *you all* seems to be in line with the overall preference of *you all* to occur in contexts of politeness, as it tends to be found in positively connotated contexts significantly more frequently than in negatively connotated ones ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.03). This is particularly true of Tanzanian English in

which *you all* occurs in positively connotated contexts 78.1% of the times it occurs in the variety, as well as Philippines English (62.7% of positive *you all*), Irish English (62.0% of positive *you all*) and New Zealand English (62.6% of positive *you all*) (see figure 3 below).

**Figure 3 – Semantic prosody of *you all* (% out of the total number of occurrences)**



### 6.2.2 *All of you*

In this section, I will analyse how the direct competitor of *you all*, the inclusive expression *all of you* behaves linguistically. Although other expressions can be considered competitors of *you all*, such as *every one of you*, *each of you*, *each and every one of you*, for reasons of space, I will deal with the formally closest *all of you* and leave the analysis of the others to further research.

*All of you* is formally different from *you all* in that it resembles quantifying constructions of the kind quantifier + *of* + quantified entities. I will try to find out whether it is also functionally different from *you all* by analysing the occurrences of *all of you* in the corpus.

A first difference between the two expressions can be highlighted in the frequencies of occurrence: *all of you* is significantly less frequent than *you all* in World

Englishes. Its average in the Inner Circle is 7.24 pmw vs. 27.81 pmw of *you all*; similarly, in the Outer Circle its average is 8.89 pmw vs. 28.17 pmw of *you all* ( $p=0.003$ ). As far as the functions are concerned, however, *all of you* does not seem to differ very much from *you all*. In table 5 below, it can be observed how the frequencies of occurrence of the functions of expressing politeness and inclusiveness are virtually the same. However, *all of you* does seem to be significantly preferred in contexts of attention-getting, as in (11a-c) below ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.001).

**Table 5 – Functions of *all of you***

	Politeness	Inclusive	AG	Categorisation
<i>All of you</i>	37.8%	95.5%	2.1%	15.5%
<i>You all</i>	36.5%	94.7%	0.4%	0.8%

(11)

- a. Come with us, *all of you*! (AU B)
- b. Receive it, engrave it in your minds, *all of you*. (US G)
- c. *All of you* who participate, send me your pics. (US B)

Attention-getting is a function that *all of you* has in common with other non-standard 2PL forms such as *yous(e)* (cf. 4.3-6), and *you + cardinal number* (cf. 5.1-5), rather than standard *you* which works as an attention-getter only 0.5% of the times it occurs in the corpus (cf. 4.3-6).

What seems to be a special function associated almost exclusively with *all of you*, at least compared to other non-standard 2PL forms in English, is the function of categorisation, which are the instances in which *all of you* is used in order to create a social category by means of relative clause post-modification (12a-b) or plural NP post-modification (12c). As shown in table 8 above, this function represents 15.5% of the occurrences of *all of you* in the corpus, but only 0.8% of the instances of *you all*, yielding a statistically significant difference ( $p=0.007$ ).

(12)

- a. So, please, *all of you who are at University*, especially those who are struggling [...]  
(GB G)

- b. I want to thank *all of you who have been working so hard* for these candidates. (US B)
- c. The first aim is to showcase the works of these artists and the second is to inspire *all of you artists and designers* out there [...] (US B)

The pragmatic prosody of *all of you* does not particularly differ from *you all*. The majority of the occurrences of *all of you* are split between positively connotated (45.1%) and neutral contexts (40.4%), similarly to *you all* (positive = 38.5%; neutral = 47.2%). The only slight difference was found in the occurrence of *all of you* in negatively connotated contexts, i.e. instances in which the speaker expresses some sort of contrast or disagreement with the interlocutors, as in (13a-c) below.

- (13)
- a. *All of you* picking on a little girl should be ashamed of yourselves. (US G)
  - b. I hope *all of you* brainwashed fools like Communism. (US G)
  - c. I can tell that *all of you* were spineless bullies. (US G)

Sentences like the ones in (13a-c) represent 13.9% of the instances of *all of you*, and 9.0% of the instances of *you all*. However, the difference is not statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.92).

In conclusion, *all of you* seems to differ from its competitor *you all* in its frequency of occurrence, which is significantly lower than the one of *you all* (7.24 pmw and 27.17 pmw respectively;  $p$  (t-test) = 0.003), and two functions for which *all of you* seems to be preferred over *you all*, namely attention-getting and social categorisation.

### 6.2.3 *Y'all*

In the introduction to this chapter *y'all* was hypothesised to be a grammaticalised variant of *you all*, which is mainly suggested by the phonological erosion this form is the result of (*y'all* < *you all*). However, in order to be able to talk about grammaticalization, phonological erosion alone is not sufficient. *Y'all* will, thus, be considered a grammaticalized form of *you all* if other processes that are typically associated with grammaticalization, such as semantic change and reanalysis (Croft 1990, Bybee *et al.*

1994, Haspelmath 1998, Heine and Kuteva 2004), can be identified in the analysis. Similarly to *you all*, a main clue to the semantic change of *y'all* could be represented by a lower number of occurrences of inclusive *y'all* compared to *you all*, which expresses inclusiveness 97.3% of the times it occurs in the corpus (see section 6.2.1 above).

The results of the analysis show that not only is inclusiveness expressed less frequently by *y'all* (see table 6 below) than *you all*, but *y'all* seems to work as an attention-getter (see (14) below) more frequently than *you all* does. Furthermore, *y'all* has developed a pragmatic function that is not expressed by *you all*: singular-reference emphatic identification (see (15a-c) below).

(14)

- a. But *y'all!* I have to drive the Beltway around DC for this little trip. (US G)
- b. It's national crisis, *y'all*. (US B)
- c. *Hey, y'all*. Just wondering whether or not I have a 'faulty' unit. (GB G)

(15)

- a. Dude, don't change nothing about *y'all*. (TZ B)
- b. Henry, come on, *y'all* can't be this stupid. (GH G)
- c. Done. Yo, what *y'all* doing, man? What you doing? Drop this shit off. (US G)

As far as the expression of inclusiveness is concerned, the occurrences of *y'all* are split almost equally between inclusive and non-inclusive uses (see table 9 below). Behaving rather differently from *you all* which expresses inclusiveness most of the times (94.7%), *y'all* displays a substantial tendency to work as a mere plural (50.3% of the times it occurs in the corpus), thus corroborating the idea of semantic change, and, consequently, grammaticalization.

**Table 6 – Frequencies of occurrence of the expression of inclusiveness in WE**

	Inclusive		Non-inclusive	
	%	pmw	%	Pmw
<i>You all</i>	97.3	27.05	2.7	0.75
<i>Y'all</i>	79.4	1.85	20.4	0.57
<i>Yall</i>	19.6	0.10	80.4	0.43

The grammaticalization of *y'all* is even more evident in double-marked occurrences (4.8% of the total number of occurrences of *y'all* in the corpus; 0.11 pwm), such as (16a-c) below. These examples seem to suggest that the inclusiveness originally implied in the unreduced *you all* cannot be expressed by *y'all*, thus requiring to be specified by means of the universal quantifier *all* itself, making *y'all* look like a mere plural. Unsurprisingly, *all you all* represents only 0.04% of the occurrence of *you all* in the corpus. However, *all y'all* occurs less frequently (2.3% of the times *y'all* occurs in the corpus) than *all y'all*, although it is used non-inclusively 80.4% of the times it occurs in the corpus, which still needs an explanation.

(16)

- a. So for *all y'all* who don't know how to live life Ghana style, listen up. (GH G)
- b. Ok, for *all y'all* that don't know what a Betsy Wetsy Doll was, let me tell you. (US G)
- c. Can still applebuck better than *all y'all*, and y'all know it! (US G)

Turning to the pragmatic functions of *y'all*, table 7 below shows that, when occurring in a pragmatically charged context, *y'all* is most likely to work as an attention-getter, i.e. the instances in which *y'all* works as a tool for getting and directing the attention of the interlocutors towards the speaker's message. When in co-occurrence with greeting expressions, instead, such as *hi*, *good morning*, *hey* etc. (see (14c) above), the function of *y'all/AG* is to announce that the speaker is joining the communicative exchange. *Y'all/AG* represents 19.6% of the total number of occurrences of *y'all* in the corpus. It is also the function that distinguishes 2PL forms from standard *you*. As already highlighted in section 5.2.3 on *you* + cardinal number, the percentages of occurrence of attention-getting 2PL forms are significantly higher than attention-getting *you* ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.007). *You/AG* represents 0.5% of its total number of occurrences in the corpus, whereas *yous(e)/AG* occurs 2.4% of times, *you two* 5.4%, *you three* 8.0% and, finally, *y'all* 19.6% of the times it occurs in the corpus. Similarly to other 2PLs/AG, *y'all/AG* displays a preferred syntactic position of occurrence, i.e. the right periphery of the sentence (see (14b) above). *Y'all/AG* is found in this position 90.6% of the times it occurs in the corpus, representing a very consistent tendency which is typical of pragmatic markers with an intersubjective function (Traugott 2013: 7).

**Table 7 – Frequencies of occurrence of the pragmatic functions of *y'all* in WE**

	%	Pmw
Attention-getting	19.6	0.46
Politeness	15.9	0.33
SG Emphatic Identification	1.1	0.02
Contrast/negative	18.7	0.43

The second most frequent pragmatic function performed by *y'all* is the expression of contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors (see (17) below). In this context, the speaker conveys his/her contrast with the addressees by performing a face-threatening act such as insulting, blaming or reproaching (see (17) below). The use of *y'all* in negative contexts can be linked to the emphatic function of the pronoun, which *y'all* shares with other 2PL forms (see sections 4.4, 5.5). Contrast *y'all* occurs on average 18.7% of the times in the corpus, a higher frequency than politeness *y'all* (15.9%), reversing the tendency displayed by *you all* to prefer contexts of politeness (see section 6.2.1 above).

(17)

- a. Now, I'm going down to the South, *y'all people* are dummies. (US B)
- b. No, man. Look. *Y'all motherfuckers* better calm down. (US G)
- c. *Y'all* are just a bunch of haters. (US B)

Nevertheless, the preference of *y'all* to express contrast does not impact on its semantic prosody that still tends to be positive: its occurrence in positively connotated contexts (see (18) below) represents 23.0% of the occurrences against 18.7% of the times that it occurs in negatively connotated ones (see table 8 below).

**Table 8 – Semantic prosody of *y'all***

	%	Pmw
Positive	23.0	0.54
Neutral	58.3	1.37
Negative	18.7	0.43



(18)

- a. What a courage your daughter displayed! It is a clear picture of how *y'all* parenting her. (US G)
- b. Hope *y'all* like it. Come on girls, do you believe in love? (IN G)
- c. I know better, it's just hard – so it was good to hear *y'all* put it in your own eloquent words. (GB G)

The expression of politeness ((19a-b) below) represents the third most frequent function of *y'all* which is found in this context 15.9% of the times it occurs in the corpus (see table 10 above). It is the first time that expressing politeness is less frequent than the function of expressing contrast (see table 10 above) (cf. *yous(e)*, *you* + cardinal no., *you all*; sections 4.4, 5.5, 6.2.1). The preference is not statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.10), however it indicates a trend that appears to be stronger when considering the most grammaticalised form *yall* (see 6.2.4 below).

(19)

- a. I love how generous *y'all* are. (US G)
- b. I luv *y'all* and I watch *y'all* on videos all the time! (GB G)
- c. I'll keep *y'all* posted. (CA G)
- d. Have fun, see *y'all* in Texas. (IE G)

Finally, 1.1% of the times it occurs in the corpus, *y'all* was found to identify singular referents ((15a-c) above). Its function in this context does not seem to have to do with marking plurality or expressing inclusiveness as much as expressing emphasis. The singular-reference with emphatic function was already observed to occur with other 2PL forms such as *yous(e)* (cf. 4.8-9), and was interpreted as a further clue to the grammaticalization of 2PL forms on one hand, and to an undergoing process of pragmaticalization, on the other (Erman and Kotsinas 1993). *Y'all*, as well as other 2PL forms, indeed, is acquiring new pragmatic and highly intersubjective (Traugott 2013: 7) functions that do not tend to be expressed by the standard pronoun *you* (4.5), such as the expression of politeness, attention-getting, and emphasis. This is also confirmed by the analysis of the collocates of *y'all* (MI > 3; span: 5L/5R; MCF = 10): the strongest collocate of *y'all* is the verb *know* (see table 9 below). The contexts in which this collocation occurs is linked with the building of agreement between the speaker and the

addressees as well as a common ground of knowledge, as shown in (20a-c) below, similarly to what happens with *you all* co-occurring with the same verb *know* (see section 6.2.1 above).

(20)

- a. *Y'all know* it'll be done that way so they can have it out by November. (US G)
- b. [T]hough, I would dock marks for her platforms, which *y'all know* I hate. (IE B)
- c. What the craziest thing you've ever witnessed/experienced at school? *Y'all know* these kids are endless, unpredictable entertainment! (US B)

**Table 9 – Collocates of *y'all***

Collocate	MI
<i>Know</i>	5.59
<i>Love</i>	5.51
<i>Should</i>	5.38
<i>See</i>	5.15
<i>Of</i>	4.63
<i>With</i>	4.41

The second strongest collocate of *y'all* is *love* (see table 12 above), which represents one of the most prototypical positive politeness speech acts (see (19a-b) above).

*Should* is the third strongest collocate of *y'all* (see table 12 above). In co-occurrence with *y'all*, *should* appears to be a less impositive directive (see (21c) below) (Searle 1969, Brown and Levinson 1987), therefore a negative politeness strategy, rather than an operator for expressing the speech act of advising for the addressees' well-being and happiness. This is particularly visible in the instances in which the speaker antagonises the addressees or asks them to do something harmful, as in (21a-b) below.

(21)

- a. *Y'all should* sit you f\*\*\*\*\*g useless hungry asses now. (NG G)

- b. No for real, *y'all should* all go find the highest bridge you can find hold hands and jump. (US G)
- c. *Y'all should* be able to figure this out. Get this done. (CA G)

The verb *see* is found in collocation with *y'all* in the already mentioned *rituals of departure* (Leech 2014), which are one of the strategies for expressing politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001) (see (19c-d) above).

The preposition *of* is found in collocation with *y'all* in partitive structures, as shown in (22a-c) below. For the conceptualisation of group that is intrinsic in partitive structures, i.e. the selection of some entities out of a larger group, I have suggested that in this context *y'all* cannot express inclusiveness, since it would be at odds with the focus on a smaller group (see, in particular, inclusive double-marking in (22c) below). The significance of the collocation with *of* would further support the claim of the semantic change and grammaticalization of *y'all* into a mere plural.

(22)

- a. Do you think *any of y'all* could listen to them or try some of them and see if you like any? (IE B)
- b. [B]ut *most of y'all* are unable to be civilized and cooperative. (US B)
- c. My purpose on earth is to bring a little inspiration and delight to *all of y'all*. (US G)

Finally, *y'all* significantly co-occurs with the preposition *with* in the sharing of experiences (see (23a-c) below). The context of occurrence of *with y'all* is in all cases positive, perhaps underlining through the use of *y'all* the pleasure of sharing an event.

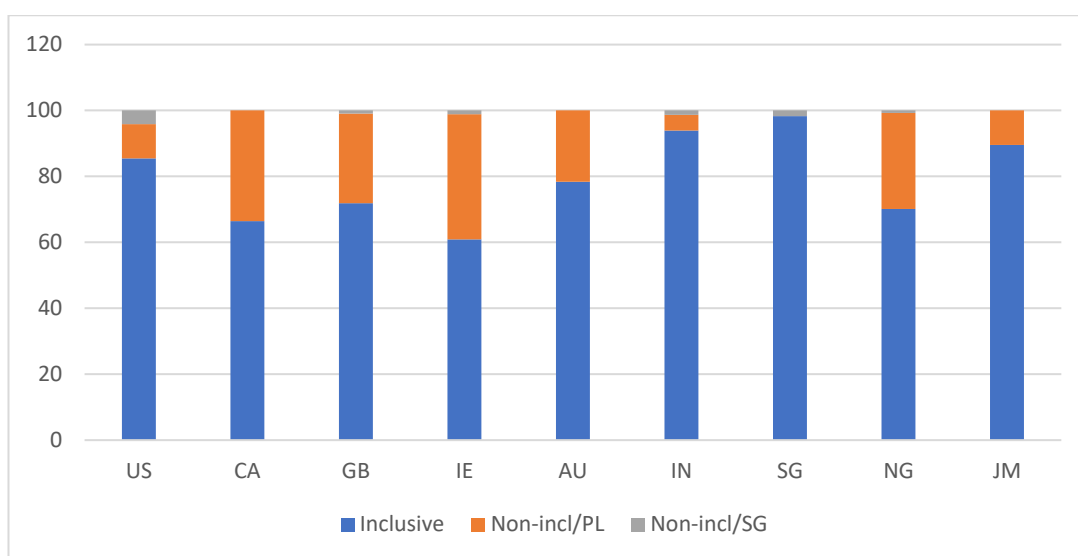
(23)

- a. I am happy and thankful to have been included. Really lovely to *be with y'all*... (US B)
- b. I am so right there *with y'all*. (US G)
- c. We had so much fun *with y'all* too! (JM G)

### 6.2.3.1 Geographical variation of the functions of *y'all*

In this section I will discuss the variety-specific uses of *y'all*. The categories that I have compared across varieties are the same that are discussed in the general section, i.e. the expression of inclusiveness, politeness, contrast, attention-getting and the semantic prosody of *y'all* (see figure 4 below).

**Figure 4 - Expression of inclusiveness and singular-reference *y'all* (% out of the total number of occurrences)**



As discussed above in section 6.2.3, the referential function of *y'all* includes a category of instances in which it refers to a singular individual. Singular-reference *y'all* (*y'all*/SG) falls within the category of non-inclusive reference and is seen as a further step in the grammaticalization of the form *you all*, being it an instance of phonological reduction, semantic change (non-inclusive) and reanalysis (singular instead of plural reference). Therefore, the regional varieties that display the highest frequencies of occurrence of *y'all*/SG will also be the ones in which *y'all* is most grammaticalised compared to the rest of the varieties. The frequencies of occurrence of non-inclusive *y'all* (*y'all*/NON-INCL) and its sub-category *y'all*/SG are shown in figure 4 below. The regional varieties for which enough data (i.e. at least 150 occurrences of *y'all*) were available and that I am going to comment on are: American English, Canadian English, British English and Australian English for the Inner Circle, and Indian English,

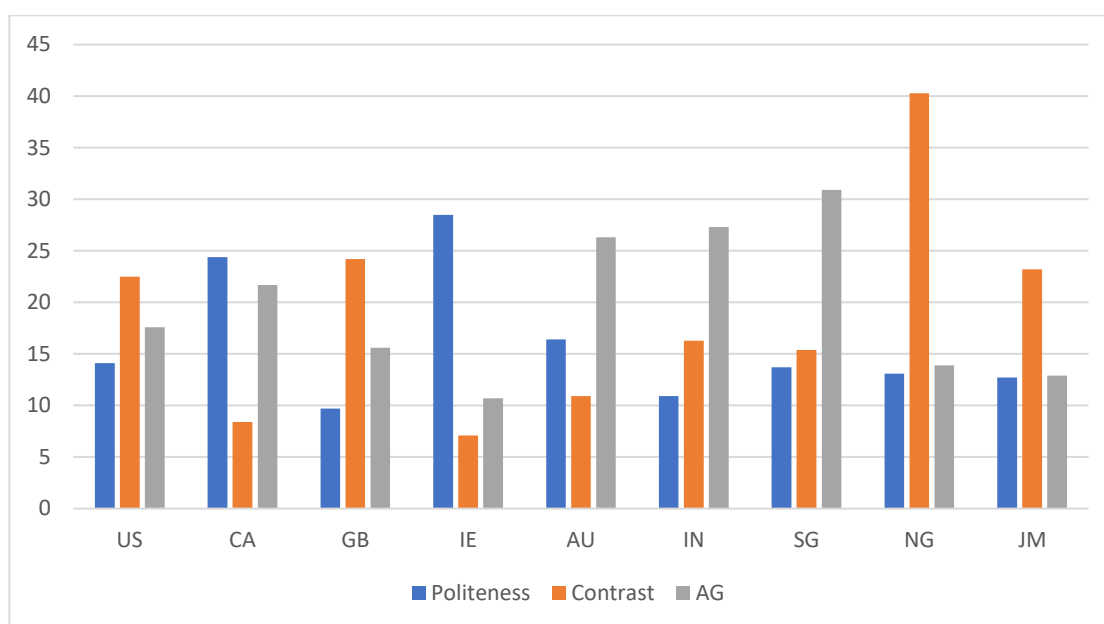
Singaporean English, Malaysian English and Jamaican English for the Outer Circle.

The highest frequencies of occurrence of *y'all*/NON-INCL were found in Irish English (39.1% of the total number of occurrences of *y'all*), Canadian English (33.6%) and Nigerian English (29.9%) (see figure 4 above). These percentages of occurrence are significantly higher than the average in World Englishes (19.4%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.005). Although Ireland, Canada and Nigeria display the highest frequencies of occurrence of *y'all*/NON-INCL, these are not the varieties with the highest percentages of occurrence of the sub-category *y'all*/SG. Indeed, it is in American English that *y'all*/SG reaches its highest frequency (4.1%), followed by Singaporean English (1.7%) (see figure 4 above), both significantly more frequent than the average in World Englishes ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0005 and 0.01 respectively). Besides the US and Singapore, *y'all*/SG does not occur in all the 9 regional varieties considered: it does in British English, Irish English, Indian English and Nigerian English, but not in Canadian English, Australian English and Jamaican English (see figure 4 above). Therefore, *y'all* can be said to have grammaticalised in five regional varieties, although for two different reasons: in Ireland, Canada and Nigeria the grammaticalization of *y'all* has mainly to do with its phonological reduction and semantic change; in the US and Singapore, it has more to do with phonological reduction and reanalysis into a singular-reference pronoun.

The pragmatic functions of *y'all* are not different from the ones of *you all*, i.e. the expression of politeness, attention-getting, and the expression of contrast between the speaker and the interlocutor(s) (see figure 5 below).

The expression of politeness is significantly more frequent than the average in two varieties: Irish English (28.5%) and Canadian English (24.4%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.03). The preference to use *y'all* in contexts of politeness also corresponds to an avoidance to express a contrast between the speaker and the interlocutor(s) in these varieties. The difference in the frequencies of politeness *y'all* (*y'all*/POL) vs. contrast *y'all* (*y'all*/CONTR) in both Irish English and Canadian English is statistically significant and, therefore, indicates a consistent trend of use ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.005).

**Figure 5 - Pragmatic functions of *y'all* (% out of the total number of occurrences)**



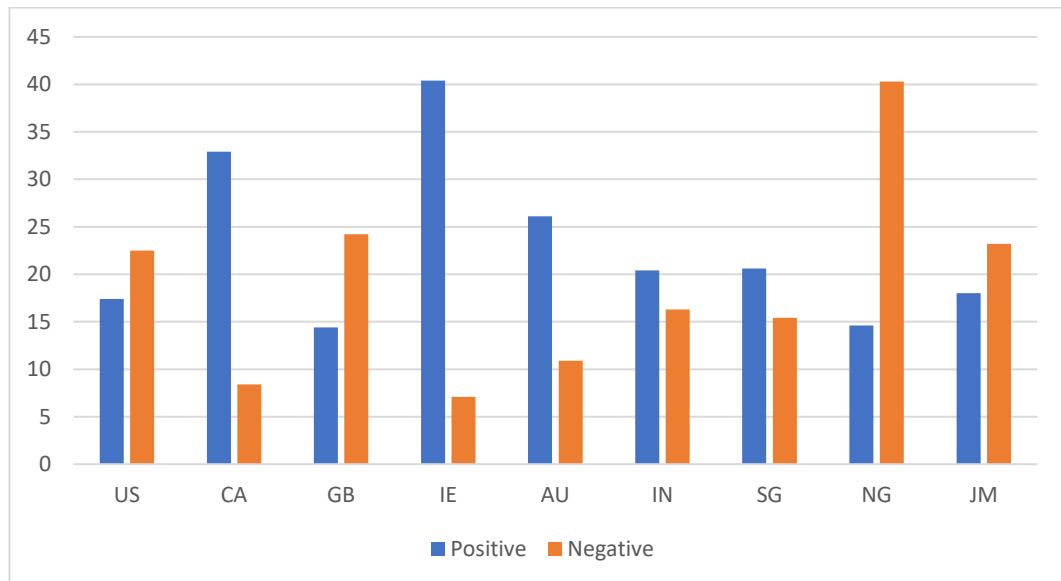
On the other hand, in British English the percentage of occurrence of *y'all*/POL is significantly lower than the average (9.7%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.001), which corresponds to a preference for *y'all* to express contrast (24.2%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.002) (see figure 5 above). However, the highest frequency of occurrence of *y'all*/CONTR belongs to Nigerian English (40.3% of the occurrences of *y'all*), which is three times as frequent as *y'all*/POL in the variety ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0001) (see figure 5 above). The third variety in which *y'all*/CONTR is more frequent than the average in World English as well as *y'all*/POL is Jamaican English (23.2%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.001). The rest of the varieties display an average frequency of occurrence of both *y'all*/POL and *y'all*/CONTR (see figure 5 above).

As far as the function of attention-getting (AG) is concerned, three varieties display a frequency of occurrence of *y'all*/AG that is significantly higher ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.001) than the average in World Englishes: in Singaporean English *y'all* is an attention-getter 30.9% of the times it occurs, 27.3% of the times in Indian English, and 26.3% of the times in Australian English. The rest of the varieties display an average frequency of occurrence of *y'all*/AG except for Irish English in which *y'all*/AG represents only 10.7% of the occurrences of *y'all*, a significantly lower frequency than the average ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.01) (see figure 5 above). The attention-getting function represents a strong clue to the pragmaticalisation of 2PL forms, since when performing this function 2PL forms work as proper pragmatic markers (see section 3.4). It is possible to conclude,

thus, that in Singapore, India and Australia *y'all* displays a high degree of pragmaticalisation compared to the rest of the varieties.

As far as the semantic prosody of *y'all* is concerned, it was observed that the preference for either a positive or negative semantic prosody of *y'all* is variety-specific (see figure 6 below). In five out of nine varieties *y'all* tends to occur in positively connotated contexts more often than it does in negatively connotated ones: these are Canadian English, Irish English (expectedly, given the high occurrences of *y'all*/POL in these varieties), Australian English, Indian English, and Singaporean English (see figure 6 below). The varieties in which *y'all* is mainly used in negatively connotated contexts are: American English, British English, Nigerian English and Jamaican English (see figure 6 below). These trends do not seem to be motivated by a geographical influence between varieties, apart from, perhaps, Irish English exerting linguistic influence on Australian English as was hypothesised for the similarities concerning the use of *yous(e)*.

**Figure 6 – Semantic prosody of *y'all* (% out of the total number of occurrences)**



#### 6.2.4 *Yall*

As already mentioned earlier in the introduction to section 6.2, taking into consideration the spelling of *yall* in comparison to the other two variants *y'all* and *you all*, it looks like *yall* represents the most grammaticalised form of *you all* since it is spelled as a

single word in which *you* and *all* cannot be identified anymore. However, if this is true, *yall* should also display a different linguistic behaviour than its less grammaticalised counterparts. Given the differences between the variants *you all* and *y'all*, *yall* should express inclusiveness even less frequently than *y'all* does, and, consequently, much less frequently than *you all*. A final clue to considering *yall* as a variant *per se* would be the occurrence of pragmatic functions that differ from both *y'all* and *you all*. The data available in the corpus for *yall* were not sufficient to be able to carry out a cross-variety comparison of the uses of *yall*. I will, therefore, discuss its general use in World Englishes.

Beginning from the expression of inclusiveness, as already mentioned in section 6.2.2, the analysis of corpus data showed that *yall* entails inclusiveness only 19.6% of the times it occurs in the corpus (0.106 pmw) (see table 10 below). This means that non-inclusive *yall* represents the 74.9% of the occurrences in the corpus (see example (24a-c) below), which is three and a half times more frequent than non-inclusive *y'all* which occurs 20.4% of the times in the corpus ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.003) (see section 6.2.3 above). The non-inclusiveness of *yall* is particularly visible in two contexts: the first is double marked expressions (occurring 2.3% of times; 0.014 pmw), such as (24b) below, in which inclusiveness is marked by adding the inclusiviser *all*; the second is partitive structures involving *yall* such as (24c) below, which occur 6.0% of times (0.032 pmw).

(24)

- a. And *yall* would be alone together except the screamin fans but at least you both would be together. (ZA B)
- b. Um, I hope *all of yall* reading this know that's right. (US G)
- c. Hope this helps *some of yall*. (GB G)

**Table 10 – Functions of *yall* in WE**

	%	Pmw
Plural	94.5	0.510
[of which INCL]	[19.6]	[0.106]
[of which AG]	[5.4]	[0.029]
Singular	3.8	0.020



Possessive	3.2	0.017
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A first reason to believe that *yall* represents a more grammaticalised variant of *y'all* can, thus, be found in how (in)frequent the expression of inclusiveness is. A second clue to the grammaticalization of *yall* concerns the two contexts in which it does not work as a mere second person plural pronoun that are illustrated below.

Similarly to *y'all* (section 6.2.3 above), and *yous(e)* (section 4.4), *yall* can indicate a singular referent, see (25a-c) below.

(25)

- a. Go gurl. *Yall* don't want power. You want change. (US G)
- b. Baby, *yall* are the reason that I'm still acting crazy [...] (TZ B)
- c. Oh but you're already assuming than nothing else can be accomplished after marriage. *Yall* are already assuming that your man will be so terrible. (NG G)

As in the case of the other 2PL forms, the analysis suggests that the actual function of *yall* in these cases is that of expressing emphasis, therefore pragmatic meaning. This is also confirmed by the fact that *yall* is not consistently used to refer to the interlocutor (see (25a) and (25c) above); rather, it is used to signal where the important piece of information is located in the sentence: in (25a), the speaker underlines that the interlocutor's situation should be interpreted in a different way; in (25c), the speaker tries to point to the interlocutor as the sole cause of her own discontent. Singular *yall* occurs 3.8% of times in the corpus (0.020 pmw) (see table 16 above), which is slightly more frequent than singular/emphatic *y'all* (2.8% of times; 0.060 pmw) (cf. Section 6.2.3 above).

The second function differs from plural pronoun *yall* not because it does not express plurality, as in the case of singular *yall*, but because it works as a possessive determiner instead of personal pronoun (see (26a-c) below).

(26)

- a. Stop watching tv it's obvious poisoning *yall people minds* [...] (US B)
- b. I readed some of *yall comments* and yall are talking about dancehall is responsible for the crime [...] (JM G)

- c. It's her life damn it, not yours, deal with *yall own issues*, let her deal with hers [...] (JM G)

In the sentences above, *yall* works as a substitute for standard *your*. This function could not be observed for either *y'all* or *you all*, but it is shared with suffixed 2PL forms such as *yous(e)* (see section 4.2). Possessive determiner *yall* occurs 3.2% of times in the corpus (0.017 pmw) (see table 10 above). Being specific to only *yall* among the three variants of *you all*, and representing an instance of reanalysis (Heine and Kuteva 2002; Traugott 2012), it can be considered a clue to the higher degree of grammaticalization with respect to *y'all* and, consequently, *you all*.

So far, I have tried to show how *yall* represents the furthest grammaticalized form of plural *you all* by highlighting its general “loss” of the semantic trait of inclusiveness, the occasional use for singular reference, and its occasional word class shift from pronoun into a possessive determiner. The analysis of singular-reference *yall*, however, has already suggested that some process of pragmaticalization (Erman & Kotsinas 1993; Aijmer 1997) of *yall* may as well be at play. The use of singular reference *yall* was explained by its supposed function of expressing emphasis, whereby *yall* is used to stress that the event described in the proposition is closely related with its subject (see (25a-c) above). Emphasis is also conveyed in another category of functions that *yall* is called on to perform, namely attention-getting (see (27a-c) below).

(27)

- a. *Yall*, I didn't literally mean she's god. (US B)  
b. It's 2012, *yall*. Let's be real women [...] (US G)  
c. Twihards getting ridiculously overemotional about it. This isn't Forks, *yall*. (GB G)

As can be observed in (27a-c) above, *yall* does not really identify the main participants to the event. It rather works as a tool by which the speaker calls for the interlocutors' attention. Attention-getting is a pragmatic function that is performed by *y'all* as well (see section 6.2.3 above), and in this case as well, the attention-getter occupies a peripheral slot in the sentence (either at the very beginning or at the very end). *Y'all*/AG occurs in the right periphery definitely more frequently than the left periphery (see section 6.2.3 above) which made it even more likely for *y'all*/AG to be considered an actual pragmatic marker (Traugott 2013: 7). Similarly, *yall*/AG displays a strong tendency to

occur in the right periphery (79.6% of the times *yall*/AG occurs in the corpus). As far as the frequencies are concerned, *yall*/AG occurs less frequently than *y'all*/AG (5.4% of the times *yall* occurs in the corpus vs 15.4% of the times *y'all* occurs in the corpus), suggesting a preference for *y'all* to be used as an attention-getter. As already mentioned in section 6.2.3 above, attention-getting is also the function that distinguishes 2PL forms from the standard pronoun *you* which is rarely used as an attention-getter (0.5% of the times it occurs in the corpus).

Finally, the third and last pragmatic function expressed by *yall* is politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001) (see (28a-c) below). Once again, this is a function that non-standard 2PL forms tend to express more frequently than standard *you* does (6.1% of the times; cf. sections 5.5, 4.5). *Yall* is used in contexts of politeness 15.3% of the times it occurs in the corpus (0.081 pmw), similarly to *y'all* in the same context (15.5% of times it occurs in the corpus; 0.26 pmw) (see section 6.2.3 above), but less frequent than *you all* occurring in the same context (38.5% of the times it occurs in the corpus; 11.64 pmw).

(28)

- a. Thank *yall* for your patience w/me over the yrs...Time well served. (TZ B)
- b. *Yall* stay blessed. (JM G)
- c. I am so happy for *yall*. (US G)

The analysis of the collocates of *yall* confirms what has already been found with the analysis of the functions so far. As shown in table 11 below, the significant collocates of *yall* appear to be the modal *should*, the preposition *of*, and the inclusiviser *all*.

**Table 11 – Collocates of *yall***

Collocate	MI
<i>Should</i>	5.23
<i>Of</i>	4.57
<i>All</i>	3.8

The modal *should* is also a collocate of *y'all* (see section 6.2.3 above). As already

mentioned above, the speech act of advising (as in (29a-c) below) can be seen as a less face-threatening version of a directive (Searle 1969; Brown and Levison 1987), therefore a polite counterpart, which is in line with the tendency of *yall* to express politeness.

(29)

- a. Everytime you talk to your FIL he says a few words about how *yall* should stay together and you listen. (US G)
- b. I think *yall* should do the same, write about yall own problems [...] (JM B)
- c. [*Y*]all should post it up tomorrow. (US B)

*Yall* occurs with the preposition *of* in partitive structures (see (24b-c) above) as other 2PL forms do (cf. *Y'all* section 6.2.3, and *yous(e)* section 4.3). Apart from suggesting that both *yall* and *y'all* are used non-inclusively, differently from *you all* which is found in partitive structures only 0.5% of the times it occurs in the corpus, the occurrence of 2PL forms in partitive structures was also interpreted in section 4.3 in the light of Langacker's notion of profiling (2008: 66). According to it, the referents identified by the 2PL form are an on-stage portion of all the possible referents, among which the speakers selects (profiles) a subgroup indicated by the quantifier in the partitive structure, e.g. *some* in *some of yall* (IN G). In this way, *yall* would still be used to bring the portion of referents it indicates to the attention of the interlocutors, thus expressing, similarly to the singular-reference function, emphasis. Lastly, *yall* occurs with the inclusiviser *all* in double marked expressions, which are already discussed above and interpreted as a reinforcement for the loss of the semantic trait of inclusiveness resulting from the grammaticalization of *yall* (< *you all*).

The last piece of analysis of *yall* concerns the nature of the speaker's attitude that is conveyed by means of the plural pronoun. As already done with both *you all* and *y'all*, I have counted the frequencies of occurrence of *yall* in positively or negatively connotated contexts and neutral ones (see table 12 below).

What can be observed by looking at table 12 is that *yall* occurs in neutral contexts most of the times, similarly to both *y'all*, which occurs in neutral contexts 59.8% of the times it occurs in the corpus, and *you all*, which does 47.2% of the times.

**Table 12 – Semantic prosody of *yall* (%)**

Positive	Neutral	Negative
19.6%	43.1%	26.2%

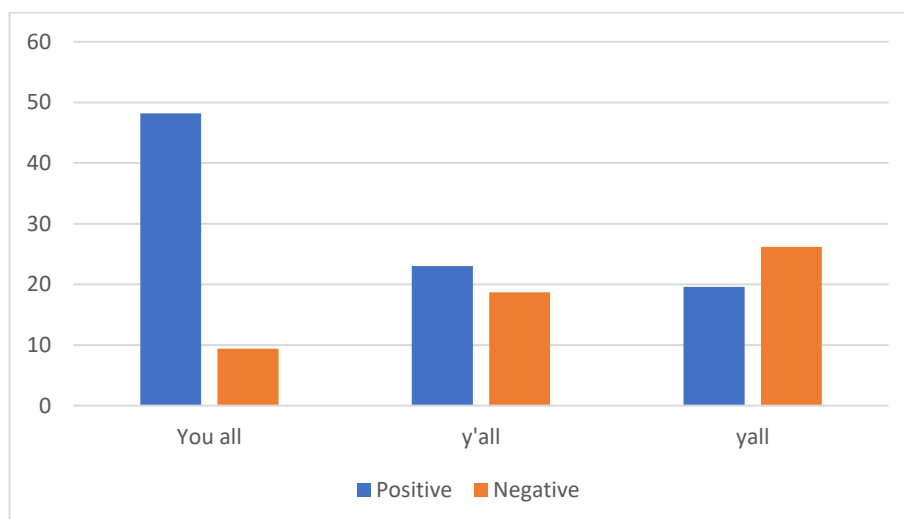
It is its frequency of occurrence in negatively connotated contexts, such as (30a-c) below, however, that appears to be a specific tendency of *yall*.

(30)

- a. No wonder everybody hates *yall*. (US G)
- b. What the hells wrong with *yall*... (IN G)
- c. Honestly *yall* have no taste for talent. (US B)

Not only are negatively connotated contexts the second most frequent contexts of occurrence of *yall*, but *yall* is also the only variant that displays a preference for such contexts over positively connotated ones (see figure 7 below).

**Figure 7 - Semantic prosody of *yall*, *y'all* and *you all* (% out of the total number of occurrences)**



### 6.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown how frequent second person plural forms marked by means of the universal quantifier *all* are and what functions they tend to perform in the

language. I have analysed the three variants *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* separately, in order to see whether these would differ in linguistic behaviour, therefore representing three different stages of grammaticalization.

As far as the frequencies of occurrence are concerned, it was observed that *you all* is the most frequent form of plural (27.81 pmw), followed by *y'all* (2.36 pmw) and *yall* (0.43 pwn). American English displays the highest frequencies of all three forms, confirming the tendency in the literature to consider these forms as typical of the American varieties of English and, in particular of Southern ones (Wales 2003; Lynch 2007). However, the data also showed that these forms are particularly frequent in the African varieties of English, such as Nigerian English and Tanzanian English, as well as in Jamaican English.

As far as the functions are concerned, a number of differences between more and less grammaticalised variants of *you all* were found, which suggested some sort of process of functional specialisation for each of the variants which differentiates them from both *you all* and standard *you*. The main difference concerns the expression of inclusiveness which is supposed to be the main trait expressed by this category of plurals, which are realised by means of the universal quantifier *all*. What could be observed by analysing the data is that inclusiveness was expressed less and less frequently the more one proceeded towards the most grammaticalised end of the continuum *you all* - *y'all* - *yall* (see table 13 below).

**Table 13 – Expression of inclusiveness (% out of the total number of occurrences of a variant)**

<i>You all</i>	<i>Y'all</i>	<i>Yall</i>
97.3%	79.4%	19.6%

Whereas almost all of occurrences of *you all* express inclusiveness, *y'all* does 79.4% of the times it occurs in the corpus, and *yall* roughly 20% of the times. Decreasing frequencies in the expression of inclusiveness were interpreted as a sign of semantic change and, therefore, grammaticalization (Croft 1990, Hopper and Traugott 1993, Haspelmath 1998, Heine and Kuten 2004), which was already hypothesised because of the phonological erosion that turns *you all* into *y(')all*. Moreover, *y'all* and *yall* display a number of instances of double marking (4.8% and 2.73% of the total number of

occurrences respectively). Interestingly, the double-marker is always *all*, confirming a loss of the trait [+inclusive] for *y'all* and *yall* which has to be expressed otherwise.

Another reason to believe that *y'all* and *yall* are grammaticalised forms of *you all* is their reanalysis into a singular pronoun and/or possessive determiner (see table 14 below). Moreover, the fact that only *yall* occurs as both a singular-reference pronoun and possessive determiner constitutes a further clue to the higher degree of grammaticalization compared to *y'all* that is only reanalysed into a singular-reference pronoun (see table 14 below). Besides representing an instance of reanalysis, the function of singular-reference *y'all* and *yall* is pragmatic, since it is used to express emphasis.

**Table 14 – Other functions**

Function	<i>You all</i>	<i>Y'all</i>	<i>Yall</i>
Attention-getting	1.6%	19.6%	5.4%
Singular/emphatic	0	2.8%	3.8%
Possessive determiner	0	0	3.2%

Definitely more frequent than emphatic singular-reference *y(')all* is the pragmatic function of expressing politeness, which is common to all three forms *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* (as well as other 2PL forms such as *yous(e)* section 4.4, and *you* + cardinal number section 5.5). Politeness is most frequently expressed by *you all* (see table 15 below), whereas *y'all* and *yall* seem to have specialised in the expression of other pragmatic functions such as contrast, attention-getting and, as already said, emphasis.

**Table 15 – Expression of politeness (%)**

<i>You all</i>	<i>Y'all</i>	<i>Yall</i>	<i>You</i>
43.2%	15.9%	15.3%	6.1%

As shown in table 15 above, not only does *you all* appear in contexts of positive politeness at least two and a half times more frequently than both *y'all* and *yall*, but it also does more than six times more frequently than the standard pronoun *you*, which represents a statistically significant difference ( $p= 0.0005$ ). The decrease in the

frequencies of *y(')all*/POL does not seem to be justified by grammaticalization as much as the preference of the two grammaticalised variants to occur in contexts expressing contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors. Indeed, the overall frequencies of occurrence of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* in pragmatically charged contexts, independently of the pragmatic functions the variants perform, are rather similar (see table 16 below). On the other hand, a difference can be noticed between *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* and the standard pronoun *you* concerning how often the 2PL forms, on one side, and the standard pronoun on the other are involved in pragmatically charged contexts. The difference is significant ( $p= 0.0002$ ) and supports the hypothesis of 2PL forms undergoing a process of grammaticalization (see also section 8.4).

**Table 16 – Percentages of occurrence of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* in pragmatically charged contexts (average)**

<i>You all</i>	<i>Y'all</i>	<i>Yall</i>	<i>You</i>
53.1%	54.3%	62.7%	6.6%

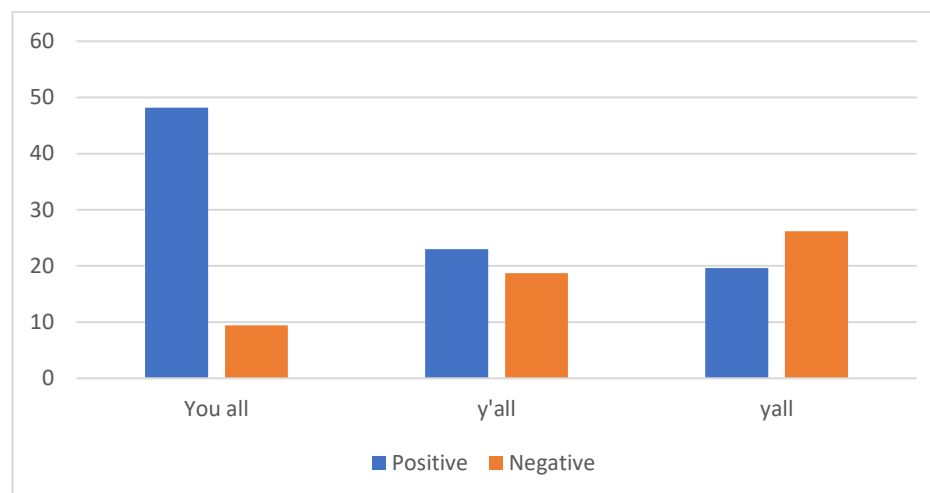
Another pragmatic function that is closely related with grammaticalisation and common to the three variants *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* is attention-getting, whereby the 2PL form works more as an actual pragmatic marker than a referential device: it is used to manage the speaker-hearer relationship, regulate the alternation of conversational turns and seek the addressee's agreement. Attention-getting is most frequently performed by *y'all* than both *yall* and *you all*. However, it is in all cases more frequent than attention-getting *you* (0.5% of the instances of *you* in the corpus), yielding a statistically significant difference ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.04). Although the standard competitor *all of you* displays some instances of the attention-getting function as well, attention-getting *all of you* is still less frequent (2.07% of the occurrences of *all of you* in the corpus) than attention-getting *y(')all*.

As far as the semantic prosodies of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* are concerned, a tendency can be observed for grammaticalised variants to occur more and more frequently in negatively connotated contexts (see figure 8 reported below). The preference to use *you all* with a positive connotation is evident and statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0003). *Y'all* displays a weaker preference for positively connotated context than *you all* as well as an increased frequency of occurrence in negatively connotated contexts. Finally, with the furthest grammaticalised variant *yall*,



the tendency of *you all* is reversed: *yall* displays a preference to occur in negatively connotated contexts, which is statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.01).

**Figure 8 - Semantic prosody of *yall*, *y'all* and *you all* (%)**



In sum, the analysis of corpus data suggests that *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* represent three consecutive stages of the grammaticalization of the plural *you all*. This was shown through the instances of phonological erosion, semantic change and reanalysis. On the other hand, both *y'all* and *yall* have acquired new functions that are prototypically pragmatic, namely attention-getting, the expression of emphasis, and contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors, which hints at an on-going process of pragmaticalization (Erman and Kotsinas 1993). The pragmaticalization of *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* is also supported by the tendency to occur in pragmatically charged contexts (both positively and negatively connotated) more often than in pragmatically neutral ones, differently from standard *you* that occurs in neutral contexts 87.7% of the times. The pragmatic functions performed are always related with the management of the speaker-hearer relationship, e.g. manage the conversational turns, express the speaker's opinion of the interlocutors, express politeness, get the interlocutor's attention. It is, thus, evident how *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* have developed a strong intersubjective character (Traugott 2013), which is in line with what was found for other 2PL forms as well (cf. sections 4.4, 5.5, 8.4).

## 7 *You* + plural NP

In this chapter I will deal with the strategy of pluralisation *you* + plural noun phrase (*you* NP-PL henceforth) whereby number is marked by making the pronoun *you* be followed by a plural noun phrase. The most frequent *you* NP-PL expression is *you guys*, but many others are used in English, although less frequently, which do not only specify plurality but other features of the addressees as well, mainly gender and/or age (e.g. *you ladies*, *you girls*) (see (1a-d) below) (see table 1 below). As already seen in the literature review (chapter 1, sections 3-4), the category *you* NP-PL is mainly used to refer to social categories from which the speaker takes distance. In other words, *you* NP-PL forms tend to be used as outgroup markers and occur in impolite speech acts, as will be shown in more detail below.

(1)

- a. Great points, after reading through the article and comments I think *you guys* are starting to hit the nail on the head. (US B)
- b. Received product quickly and as advertised...A thumbs up for *you folks*. (CA G)

- c. It was my first show to watch with *you girls*, and I really enjoyed it. (SG G)
- d. I only pray God will have mercy on her. *You men* should be careful of girls today. (NG G)

Below I have reported a list of the ten most frequent *you* NP-PL expressions in the GloWbe corpus (see table 1, below). Here, I will briefly focus on their frequencies, semantic traits and variety-specific preferences. In the following sections, I will analyse in detail the first three most frequent ones, namely *you guys*, *you people*, and *you lot* for which a good quantity of data were available. Similarly to what was done with the other 2PL forms, I will try to find out whether the most frequent *you* NP-PL forms are undergoing processes of grammaticalization and pragmaticalisation, and whether they display similar linguistic behaviours to the rest of 2PL forms in terms of functions, context of occurrence and semantic prosody (Louw 1993; Hunston and Francis 2000; Sinclair 2004). At the same time, I will try to highlight any variety-specific preferences as well as similarities and differences between varieties of English.

As can be observed in Table 1 below, *you guys* is the most frequent *you* NP-PL expression in the corpus. It is also significantly more frequent than the rest of the *you* NP-PL expressions taken together ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) (see also 7.1 below). Although significantly less frequent than *you guys*, *you people* is the only expression that is more frequent than 1.0 per million words (5.24 pmw, see table 1 below, 7.2 below).

Among the varieties of the Inner Circle, the pluralisation strategy *you* NP-PL seems to be particularly productive in the US: when comparing relative frequencies (pmw), five out of ten *you* NP-PL expressions are most frequently used in American English, namely *you guys*, *you people*, *you folks*, *you idiots* and *you kids*. British English is the only other variety of Kachru's Inner Circle (see chapter 3, section 3.3 for discussion) that displays a preference for one of the ten *you* NP-PL expressions, i.e. *you lot* (see 7.3 below).

It is mostly within the Outer Circle (see again chapter 3, section 3.3), however, that *you* NP-PL becomes a frequent strategy of number-marking: for example, Nigerian English displays a high frequency of occurrence of *you guys* (see 7.1 below), *you people* (see 7.2 below), *you ladies*, *you men*, *you women* (see table 1 below) compared to the

other varieties of the Outer Circle. By looking at the forms, it seems that it is common in Nigerian English to specify the plural expression so as to represent the gender of the addressees. However, this tendency does not seem to be motivated by L1 influence, given that none of the three main languages of Nigeria (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) inflect the personal pronouns for gender, and, in the case of the second person pronoun in Yoruba, not even for number (Greenberg and Spencer 1966, Newman 2000, Okorochukwu 2012).

Within the South-East Asian varieties, Malaysian English, Singapore English and Philippines English seem to rely particularly on *you* NP-PL compared to other South-East Asian varieties. These varieties display a preference for the forms *you guys*, *you ladies*, *you girls*; in other words, a generic one (*you guys*) and two inflected for gender and age. The tendency may be motivated by L1 influence in Malaysia: the pronominal system of Malay contains specification of number, gender and familiarity or informality (Lewis 1947). However, the pronominal systems of Tagalog, the main language of the Philippines, and Tamil, one of the main languages of Singapore besides English, only mark number on the second person (Kroeger 1991; Andronov 2005).

Finally, Pakistani English seems to particularly rely on the use of *you people* as a plural of *you*. I will come back to this in section 7.2, below, when discussing *you people*. Once again, the tendency does not appear to be motivated by L1 influence, since the three main languages spoken in Pakistan that I have considered (Urdu, Sindhi and Punjabi) all possess an inflected or dedicated form for the plural of *you* (Schmidt 1999, Trumpp 1872, Colin 1991).

**Table 1 – 10 most frequent *you* + NP-PL in GloWbe**

<i>You</i> + NP-PL	Tokens	Pmw	Variety-specific preferences
You guys	42302	22.42	US, NG, SG, MY, PH
You people	9778	5.24	US, PK, NG
You lot	2188	0.89	GB
You folks	1541	0.82	US

You ladies	878	0.47	SG, MY, NG
You girls	755	0.39	SG, MY
You idiots	621	0.33	US
You men	468	0.25	NG
You kids	409	0.21	US, SG
You women	407	0.21	NG

Plurality on *you* is sometimes marked by means of the plural indefinite pronoun *ones* generating the expression *you ones*. This does not seem to be a frequent strategy of plural-marking on *you*, as it only occurs 19 times in the GloWbe corpus (0.01 pmw) and 2 times in COCA (0.003 pmw). Probably because of its low occurrence, *you ones* rarely finds a mention in the literature (cf. Biber *et al.* 1999, Kortmann and Schneider 2012). Wales (2003: 11) and Johnstone (2013: 230) only mention it in order to show from where grammaticalised forms such as the Glaswegian *yins* and Pittsburgher and Appalachian *yinz*, and its older variant *you'uns/y'uns* (Lynch 2008; Johnstone 2013), have developed. Perhaps, another reason that explains why *you ones* and its reduced variants are generally ignored in the literature can be found in their geographically restricted use as well as social meaning (Lynch 2008; Johnstone 2013): *yinz*, in particular, is seen as an in-group marker for Pittsburghers, and, on the other hand, as a feature of working-class speech that sounds “incorrect” if used within a standard variety (Johnstone 2013: 238). Its original form *you ones* was apparently brought to America by Scotch-Irish immigrants in the nineteenth century, together with other second person plural forms such as *yous(e)* and *you all* (Montgomery 2006, cited in Johnstone 2013) (cf. Chapters 4-5). According to Johnstone (2013: 231), *yinz* is now no more perceived as deriving from *you ones*; rather, the speakers analyse it as a monomorphemic unit that has no relation with other words at all. In other words, *yinz* seems to have undergone grammaticalization, given its phonetic change, phonological reduction, and morphological reanalysis.

The next four sections will deal with each of the three most frequent *you* NP-PL forms separately: *you guys* will be analysed in section 7.1, *you people* in section 7.2, *you lot* in section 7.3. Section 7.4 is dedicated to the analysis of the few available data for the form *you ones*. Finally, I will draw some conclusions in section 7.5.

## 7.1 *You guys*

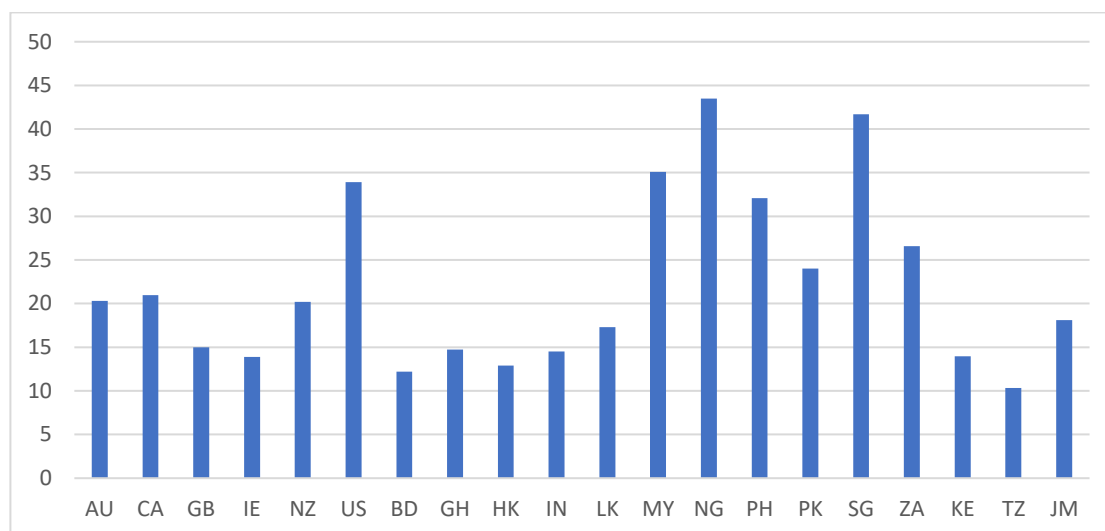
*You guys* is the most common strategy of pluralisation of *you* by plural noun phrase post-modification (see table 1 above). Its average frequency in the Glowbe corpus is 22.42 pmw, which means that *you guys* is the second most frequent strategy of pluralisation of *you* in the corpus after the most frequent *you all* (30.5 pmw) (cf. *you two* 1.93 pmw, *yous(e)* 0.34 pmw). Wales (2003: 12) notices how, although *you guys* used to be for male reference only, it is more and more common to see *you guys* being used to refer to both sexes. The loss of gender specification can be seen as a clue to the grammaticalisation of *you guys* into a generic plural. Moreover, in her study on the use of *you guys* in the dialogues of the TV series *Friends*, Heyd (2010) confirms that *you guys* refers to men and women with the same frequency and it is found to occur more frequently when the context implies a higher involvement of the speaker, i.e. a high engagement towards either the topic of the utterance or the relationship between the participants to an exchange (Katriel and Dascal 1989).

The average frequency of occurrence of *you guys* is very similar between the Inner and Outer Circle (20.74 pmw and 22.66 pmw respectively). Within the Inner Circle, American English is the variety with the highest frequency of occurrence of *you guys* (i.e. 33.95 pmw, see figure 1 below), which is significantly more frequent than the average in the Inner Circle ( $p = 0.015$ ). On the other hand, Irish English seems to be the variety with the lowest frequency of *you guys* (13.92 pmw, see figure 1 below). This is in line with the tendency of Irish English to rely on other pluralisation strategies such as *yous(e)* (see 4.3).

In the Outer Circle, Nigerian English and Singaporean English are the varieties in which *you guys* is most frequent (43.54 pmw and 41.70 pmw respectively; see figure 1) and significantly more frequent than the average in the Outer Circle ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.002). However, it does not seem that *you guys* is as common in other African varieties as it is in Nigeria: the frequency of occurrence in South Africa is average (26.58 pmw), but it is lower than the average in Kenya, Ghana, and the lowest in the Outer Circle in Tanzania (see figure 1 above). A slightly different situation can be observed for South-East Asian countries: besides Singaporean English, *you guys* is very frequent both in

Malaysia and the Philippines, which might suggest a geographical preference in the use of the expression (see figure 1 above).

**Figure 1 – Frequencies of *you guys* in World Englishes (pmw)**



The main function of *you guys* is in all cases to work as a plural of *you*. Indeed, no instances of singular-reference *you guys* were found in the dataset, differently from what was observed with other 2PL forms such as *yous(e)* (section 4.4) and *yall* (6.2.3). The mere expression of plurality in a pragmatically neutral context (see (2) below) represents 52.9% instances of *you guys* in the corpus (16.41 pmw), therefore classifying as the most frequent function (see table 2 below). However, in a few instances *you guys* resembles other 2PL forms in that, besides marking number, it is used to perform other functions, such as the expression of politeness, emphasis, attention-getting and marking possession (see table 2 below and section 7.1.1).

(2)

a. I would just like to recommend a quick piece of software with *you guys*, which also happens to be free. (IE B)

b. Since *you guys* offer package for the events whats the best and of course affordable price. (GB G)

c. Are *you guys* going to watch the Life of Pi? (IN G)

**Table 2 – Functions of *you guys* in World Englishes**

	%	Pmw
2PL	52.9	11.86
2PL.POL	23.6	5.29
2PL.CONTR	23.3	5.22
2PL.AG	1.4	0.31
2PL.POSS	0.2	0.04

*You guys* is involved in contexts of politeness 23.6% of the times it occurs in the corpus (see table 2 above) (see (3a-c) below). The percentage is similar to the frequencies with which other 2PL forms occur in the same category of contexts (e.g. *y'all* expresses politeness 15.9% of the times it occurs in the corpus (see section 6.2.3); *you two* 17.5% of the times (section 5.2)), and, once again, significantly more frequently than *you* occurring in contexts of politeness ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.006) (section 6.4).

(3)

a. This is great stuff. *You guys* are a life saver. (AU B)

b. Thank *you guys*! (KE G)

c. *You guys* have been amazing throughout this whole OnLive rollercoaster. (GB G)

The context in which positive politeness is expressed is by definition positively connotated. However, 23.3% of the instances of *you guys* appear in negatively connotated contexts in which a contrast between the speaker and the addressees can be inferred, as in (4a-c) below. The frequency of occurrence of *you guys* in contexts expressing contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors is very similar to the one of *you guys* expressing politeness (see table 2 above), which can be explained, as in the case of *you two* (section 5.2.1), as a tendency for *you guys* to be used to create social categories independently of the speaker's attitude towards them.



(4)

- a. *You guys* keep digging and you keep falling in the holes yourselves. (US G)
- b. We are not finished with *you guys*...watch out for the black youth, it's not over. (ZA G)
- c. Bloody hell *you guys* are an ignorant bunch! (ZA G)

Finally, the least frequent functions of *you guys* are the ones where the expression works as an attention-getting device (see (5a-c) below) and as a possessive determiner (see (6) below) (see table 2 above).

(5)

- a. Hey *all you guys* from the “C of S”. (AU G)
- b. Seriously, *you guys*, call a cardiologist. (US B)
- c. *You guys*, the two of you sort of seem to be the best defensive players [...]. (US G)<sup>2</sup>

(6) Wow! Alex, *you guys* colonial arrogance and mentality are amazing and astounding. (LK G)

These two functions are also common to other 2PL forms such as *yous(e)*, *y(')all*, *you two* (sections 4.4, 5.5, 6.2), although it seems that they are expressed less frequently by *you guys*. Indeed, attention-getting *you guys* covers only 1.4% of the occurrences of *you guys* in the corpus, whereas the function of attention getting represents from 2.4% to 19.6% (cf. *yous(e)/AG*, *you + cardinal number/AG*, *y(')all/AG* (sections 4.4, 5.5, 6.4)). Although it displays higher frequencies of occurrence with other 2PL forms, the

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<sup>2</sup> As already underlined in section 3.4, the pragmatic functions performed by 2PL forms are not mutually exclusive. In example (5c), *you guys* is an attention-getter and also occurs in a context in which politeness is expressed.

function of attention getting was already described as characterising *you guys* by Wales (2013: 12).

Similarly, possessive determiner *you guys* occurs only 0.2% of the times *you guys* occurs in the corpus, whereas the two other 2PL forms that display instances of possessive function, namely *yous(e)* and *yall* perform this function 2.1% and 3.2%, respectively, of the times they occur in the corpus.

Turning to the collocates of *you guys* (settings: 3L/3R, MCF = 10), the significant ones are very similar to the ones found for other 2PL forms such as *you* + cardinal number and *y(')all* (sections 5.2-4, 5.2): lexical verbs that are linked with the expression of politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001), as shown in table 3 below.

**Table 3 – Collocates of *you guys***

Collocate	MI
<i>Hope</i>	4.05
<i>Love</i>	3.88
<i>Why</i>	3.82
<i>Thank</i>	3.40

*Hope*, *love*, and *thank* are verbs through which the speaker generally expresses positive feelings towards the addressees, as shown in (7a-c) below.

(7)

- a. So I hope this small tip can help *you guys* out! (MY B)
- b. You know how much I love *you guys* and to be part of this company of players has been amazing. (GB B)
- c. Thank *you guys* for putting together a memorable trip to Tanzania! (TZ B)

The adverb *why* seems to be a collocate that is specific to *you guys* as it was never observed to significantly co-occur with other 2PL forms. The context in which *you guys* co-occurs with *why* is most of the times a direct question of which *you guys* is the subject (56.2% co-occurrences of *why* and *you guys*) (as in (8) below), and, less frequently, an indirect question of which *you guys* is the subject (18.7% co-occurrences) (see (9) below).

(8) Why are *you guys* shooting him? (IN G)

(9) I can't understand why *you guys* are hyping this game so high. (GH G)

What is common to both direct and indirect question contexts is the speaker's attitude towards the addressees, which, in all the co-occurrences, conveys a sort of contrast and a difference of opinion with the interlocutors (see (9) above, (10a-c) below). The consequence of the speaker's hostile attitude is sometimes a face-threatening act.

(10)

a. This is why *you guys* are a joke and about to lose the election. (US G)

b. Why can't *you guys* pay them a fair wage on time and give them decent conditions?  
(BD B)

c. Why are *you guys* so dang competitive? (AU G)

The context in which *you guys* co-occurs with *why* is, therefore, a negatively connotated one. This co-occurrence represents 2.8% of the total number of occurrences of *you guys* in the corpus. The adverb *why* indicates a very specific concept, that is the reason(s) behind an action or thought, which, in the specific case of *you guys*, are actions or thoughts that should have been avoided. The co-occurrence of *you guys* with *why* in such a negatively connotated context can perhaps be explained by the emphatic character of the identification which is, in turn, linked with the emphatic character of the speech act of asking for (or questioning) the reasons for the addressees' behaviour. The function of expressing emphasis is, after all, rather common among 2PL forms: this

is the main explanation that motivates the occurrence of singular-reference 2PL forms such as *yous(e)*, *y'all* and *yall* (sections 4.4, 6.2), and represents the second most frequent function in the case of *you four* (section 5.4; see also 8.2). Furthermore, the co-occurrence of standard *you* with *why*, although frequent, is not statistically significant (MI = 2.7) making the co-occurrence of *why* with *you guys* look like a preference.

To sum up, in many ways, *you guys* is similar to other 2PL forms analysed so far: it tends to occur in pragmatically charged contexts in which politeness is expressed or emphasis is put on a contrast between the speakers and the interlocutors. Although less frequently than other 2PL forms, *you guys* can also work as an attention-getter and possessive determiner. 2PL forms that are found to perform these functions are generally seen as undergoing processes of grammaticalization, on the one hand, and, pragmaticalisation, on the other (see sections 3.6 and 8.3). Grammaticalization can be especially seen in the reanalysis of a personal pronoun into a possessive determiner. Pragmaticalisation can be observed in the fact that the function of attention-getting makes 2PL forms look more like actual pragmatic markers than personal pronouns: their main function is, indeed, not exclusively referential as much as intersubjective, i.e. to regulate the exchange between the interlocutors as well as manage their relationship (Traugott 2013). Finally, what seems to be specific to *you guys* is its significant co-occurrence with the interrogative adverb *why* in negatively connotated contexts. The co-occurrence of *why* and *you guys* is likely to be linked with the expression of emphasis, with the speaker trying to highlight a difference of opinion or disapproval of their addressees.

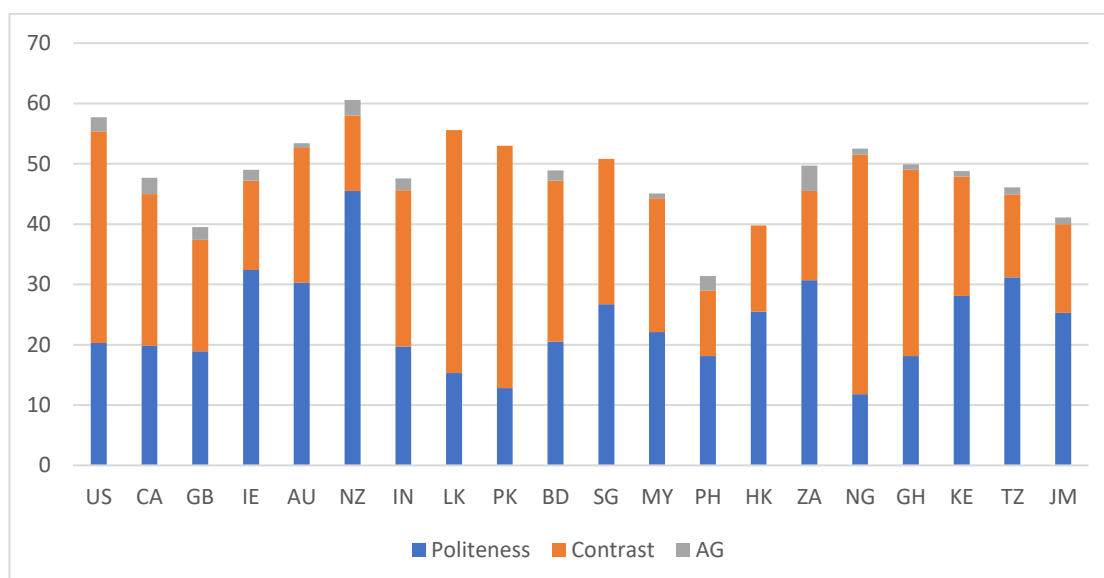
### **7.1.1 Geographical variation of the functions and use of *you guys***

Since *you guys* is used with plural reference across all the varieties of English considered in this study, regional differences mainly concern its pragmatic functions as well as semantic prosody rather than its referential function. Although *you guys* was observed to function as a possessive determiner, the varieties in which *you guys*/2PL.POSS occurs are only three, i.e. Bangladeshi English, Nigerian English and

Jamaican English, and the occurrences are so few that it is impossible to make any claim concerning the regional differences of this category of *you guys*.

Figure 2 below shows the percentages of occurrence of the three pragmatic functions identified for *you guys* as well as the rest of 2PL forms: the expression of politeness, attention-getting and the expression of contrast.

**Figure 2 - Pragmatic functions of *you guys* (% out of the total number of occurrences)**



As already shown above in the analysis of *you guys* (see section 7.1 above), the functions of expressing politeness and contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors display very similar average frequencies of occurrence in World Englishes (23.6% and 23.3% of the total number of occurrences of *you guys* respectively). However, different varieties display different tendencies as far as either polite *you guys* or impolite *you guys* are concerned, which will obviously also reflect on the semantic prosody of *you guys* in these varieties.

*You guys*/2PL.POL is significantly more frequent than the average in New Zealand English (45.5% of the total number of occurrences of *you guys*), Irish English (32.4%), Tanzanian English (31.2%), South African English (30.7%) and Australian English (30.3%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.004) (see figure 2 above). In other words, in these varieties *you guys* is preferably used to express politeness towards the interlocutors, a trend that is also supported by the low percentages of occurrence of *contrast/you guys*

in the same varieties.

On the other hand, the varieties that display a preference for *you guys* to be used as a means to encode a contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors, thus as an outgroup marker, also tend to use *you guys* to express politeness less frequently than the average (see figure 2 above). This is especially true of Sri Lankan English in which *you guys* expresses contrast 40.3% of the times it occurs in the variety, as well as Pakistani English (40.2%), Nigerian English (39.7%), American English (35.1%) and Ghanaian English (30.9%) (see figure 2 above).

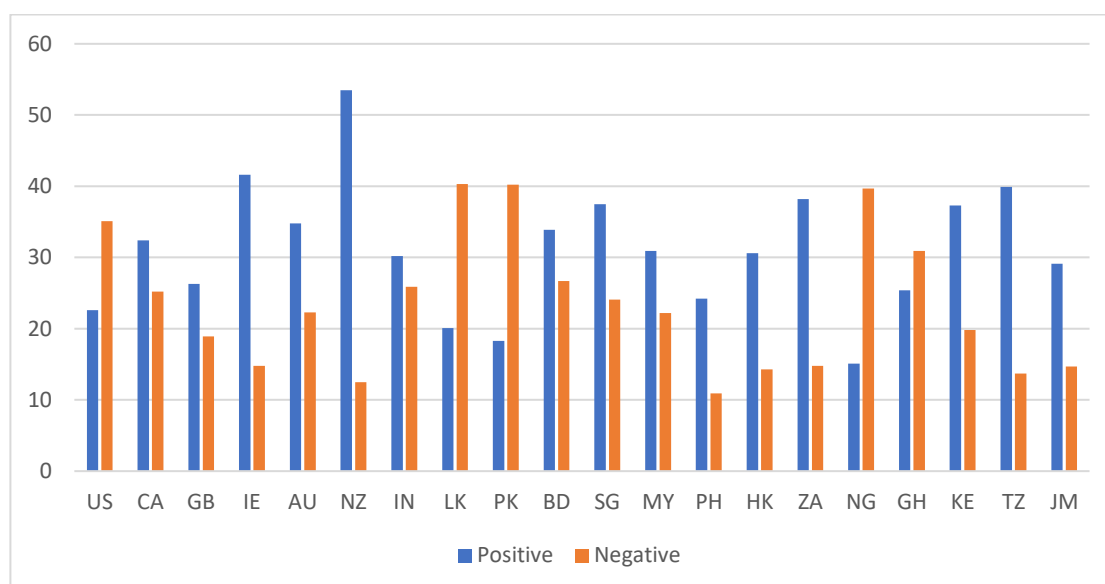
Although it may look like geographical influence can motivate the similarity in the regional tendencies of use of *you guys* (see Irish English, Australian English and New Zealand English all preferring *you guys*/2PL.POL), it does not seem to explain why the African varieties display opposite preferences: on one side Tanzania and South Africa prefer *you guys*/2PL.POL while, on the other, Nigeria and Ghana prefer *you guys*/2PL.CONTR.

Attention-getting *you guys* (*you guys*/2PL.AG) was observed to be not very frequent in World Englishes (mean = 1.4%) but in five varieties it displays a significantly higher frequency of occurrence than the average: in South African English the frequency of occurrence of *you guys*/2PL.AG is three times greater than the average (4.2% of the total occurrences of *you guys*) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0006); then follow Canadian English (2.7%), New Zealand English (2.6%), Philippines English (2.4%), American English (2.3%) (the difference in the frequencies of occurrence of *you guys*/2PL.AG in the four varieties compared with the average occurrence in the corpus returned  $p$ -values  $\leq 0.001$ ) (see figure 2 above). The function of attention-getting also represents the strongest clue to the pragmaticalization of the form, given that *you* NP-PL/AG work as actual pragmatic markers (see 7.1 above). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that *you guys* is most pragmaticalized in South Africa, Canada, New Zealand, the Philippines and the US.

The regional tendencies of the semantic prosody of *you guys* are partly dependent on the regional preferences for either the pragmatic function of expressing politeness (ingroup marking) or contrast (outgroup marking). Although on average *you guys* seems to occur more often in positively rather than negatively connotated contexts (mean = 31.1% and 23.6% respectively; see figure 3 below), the regional varieties that

display a positive semantic prosody for *you guys* are New Zealand English (53.5%), Irish English (41.6%), Tanzanian English (39.9%), South African English (38.2%), Singaporean English (37.5%) and Kenyan English (37.3%). On the other hand, the varieties that display a preference for a negative semantic prosody of *you guys* are also the ones that display a preference for the pragmatic function of expressing contrast: Sri Lankan English (40.3%), Pakistani English (40.2%), Nigerian English (39.7%), American English (35.1%) and Ghanaian English (30.9%). Once again, geographical influence can account for the similar tendencies displayed by *you guys* in Irish English and Australian English, but not for the differences between the African varieties.

**Figure 3 – Semantic prosody of *you guys* in World Englishes (%)**

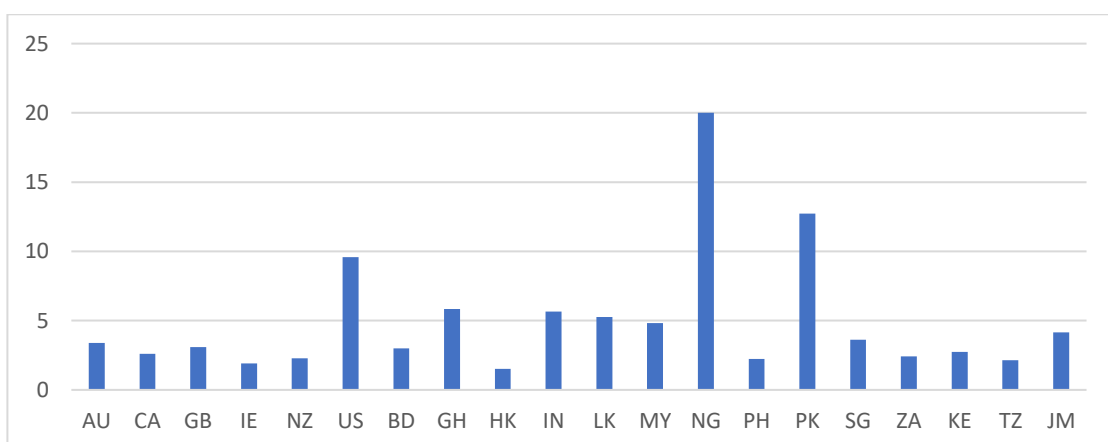


## 8.2 *You people*

In the expression *you people* the plural marker is the generic noun *people*. The analysis of the frequencies, functions and context of occurrence of *you people* will be used to highlight how it differs from *you guys* which represents its direct competitor since it uses the same number-marking strategy *you NP-PL*.

*You people* is considered to be an uncommon form in British English by Wales (2003: 12) in her analysis of the BNSC. In the GloWbe corpus as well, *you people* is much less frequent than *you guys*: the average frequency of *you people* in World Englishes is 5.24 pmw, whereas *you guys* occurs with a frequency of 22.42 pmw ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0011). *You people* was found to be slightly more frequent in the Outer Circle than Inner Circle (5.45 pmw and 3.82 pmw respectively). The difference is not statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.147), but it mirrors the variety-specific preferences of using *you people* as a plural of *you*. Indeed, Nigerian English is the variety that displays the highest frequency of occurrence of *you people* (20.07 pmw), which is also significantly higher than the average frequency of occurrence in all the varieties in the corpus ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.005). Similarly, another Outer Circle variety, namely Pakistani English, displays the second highest frequency of occurrence of *you people*, that is 12.73 pmw (see figure 4 below). The frequencies of occurrence of *you people* in Nigerian English and Pakistani English are even higher than in American English, the only variety in the Inner Circle in which *you people* is significantly more frequent than the average ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.008) (see figure 4 below). Finally, similarly to what happens with *you guys* (section 7.1 above), Irish English is, again, the variety that relies the least on *you people* when compared to the other varieties in the Inner Circle ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.004), which I explained, above, with reference to the preference for other 2PL forms, such as *yous(e)* (section 4.3).

**Figure 4 – Frequencies of occurrence of *you people* in World Englishes (pmw)**



Turning to the functions of *you people*, the analysis seems to suggest that the expression has developed some specific usage tendencies that are not shared by other 2PL forms.



So far, 2PL forms have been found to have similar functions that would make them differ from standard *you*: the tendency to express politeness, emphasis (singular-reference 2PLs) and contrast, work as attention-getting devices and, although less commonly, mark possession (see sections 4.5-8, 5.2-4, 6.2-4). Although instances of all the pragmatic functions that other 2PL forms tend to perform could be found in the dataset for *you people* as well, the expression displays a strong preference for occurrence in contexts that express contrast between the interlocutors (see table 4 below). The tendencies of other 2PL forms, on the other hand, are quite the reverse: they tend to occur more often in contexts expressing politeness and, in general, positive speech acts (cf. *yous(e)*, *you two*, *you three*, *you four*, *you all*).

**Table 4 – Functions of *you people***

Function	%	Pmw
Contrast/distance/outgroup	65.6	3.03
Neutral	30.5	1.40
Politeness	3.9	0.18
Attention getting	4.5	0.20

The main function of *you people*/2PL.CONTR is to create a category of addresses from which the speaker aims to take distance: this may be due to a difference of opinion, behaviour, moral stance or political, religious and ethnic categories (see (11) and (12) below). In other words, when found in negatively connotated contexts, *you people* seems to work as an out-group marker (Keblusek *et al.* 2017). The distance and/or contrast between the speaker and addressees can be conveyed through both direct and indirect speech acts. Among the direct speech acts are face-threatening acts such as imperatives (see (11a) below), insults (see (11b-c) below), and overt demonstrations of dislike.

(11)

- a. My previous post is very clear and neat, *you people* better understand the essence of that. (IN B)
- b. I hope *you people* burn in hell. (US B)
- c. *You people* are a disgrace to the party. (US G)
- d. Hate *you people*! (AU G)

Among the indirect speech acts are indirect questions mainly doubting the addressees' ability to understand or interpret a message or a situation (as in (12a-b) below), exclamations (as in (12c) below), and advice ((12d-e) below).

(12)

- a. Do *you people* even realize what that would mean? (US G)
- b. Why are *you people* blaming men for overpopulation? (US G)
- c. What absolute naivety *you people* espouse. (AU B)
- d. Kristen Stewart is a grown woman and *you people* need to start treating her like one. (US B)
- e. *You people* need to listen harder. (NG B)

The second most frequent context of occurrence for *you people* is a pragmatically neutral one in which its main function is that of marking plurality (see (13a-c), below). This function represents 30.5% of occurrences of *you people* in the corpus (see table 4 above). However, even in neutral contexts, the semantics of social categorisation might still be present, although not necessarily negatively connotated (see (13a-b) below).

(13)

- a. Can I ask you something? Why do *you people* wear pyjamas all day? (HK B)

b. *You people* are competing with our young and brightest for the same opportunities [...]. (US G)

c. Have any of *you people* ever seen dogs riding in the back of pickup trucks? They love it. (US G)

Unsurprisingly, the expression of politeness ((14a-c), below) represents, in the case of *you people*, a marginal function which occurs only 3.9% of times in the corpus. Not only does *you people* occur in contexts of politeness significantly less frequently than other 2PL forms, which tend to be used to express politeness on average 32.6% of the times they occur in the corpus ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.004), but it does even less frequently than standard *you*, which occurs in contexts of politeness 6.1% of the times ( $p$  = 0.003). This further supports the tendency shown by *you people* to be used as a negatively connotated out-group marker.

(14)

a. May Allah bless you and help *you people* for creating and working for this fabulous site. (IN B)

b. Website is very informative and being a gadget geek I really appreciate the work *you people* are doing. (IN B)

c. I may not join this webinar but I appreciate *you people*. (PK G)

The few instances of occurrence in politeness contexts (12 tokens) also display a tendency for Outer Circle varieties to use *you people* to express politeness rather than Inner Circle ones. Indeed, only 3 occurrences were found in the Inner Circle (token frequencies: US = 2; Great Britain = 1), whereas the remaining 9 were found in the Outer Circle (token fr.: India = 4, Nigeria = 2, Singapore = 2, Pakistan = 1). This trend is also supported by the few occurrences of *you people* in positively connotated contexts (token fr.: 6; 2.7% occurrences of *you people*) ((15a-b) below): only one occurrence was found in the Inner Circle (Canadian English); the remaining 5 occurrences were found to occur in Outer Circle varieties (token fr.: Malaysia= 1, Singapore= 1, Nigeria= 1, India= 1, Bangladesh= 1).

(15)

a. Good news for all *you people* who've been reading tips about the Gap road up to Fraser's Hill. (MY G)

b. I'd love to try out and to meet *you people*, and come out of my shell, because I'm also very shy. (CA G)

Lastly, the function of attention getting ((16a-b) below) represents 4.5% of occurrences of *you people* (0.20 pmw, see table 8 above).

(16)

a. *You people!* You really think one person can be entirely good or evil? (GB G)

b. *You people*, present day Tamils have no blood lineage to them [...]. (LK G)

Interestingly, in the few instances of attention-getting *you people*, the expression occurs consistently in the left periphery of the sentence, which is the locus where attention getters prototypically occur (Waltherit 2002). On the other hand, it also represents another tendency that differentiates *you people* from the rest of 2PL forms, which tend to occur in the right periphery of the sentence when performing the function of attention getting. The occurrence in the right periphery is also seen as representing a major clue to the pragmaticalization of 2PL forms, since, according to Traugott (2013: 7), this is the locus where intersubjective pragmatic markers tend to occur. However, the frequency of occurrence of *you people*/2PL.AG is higher than many other 2PL forms performing the same function: *yous(e)*/AG occurs 2.4% of the times *yous(e)* occurs in the corpus; *you four*/2PL.AG does 2.2% of the times, *you all*/AG occurs only 1.6% of the times, *you guys*/2PL.AG does 1.4% of the times. Considering also the very high frequency of occurrence of *you people* in pragmatically charged contexts expressing contrast between the interlocutors, I will conclude that it is possible to talk about pragmaticalisation of *you people*.

The analysis of the collocates of *you people* supports what was already observed in the analysis of the functions. The most significant (MI > 3) collocations involve the typical operators of face-threatening speech acts such as blaming, commanding, insulting, etc. (see table 5 below).

**Table 5 – Collocates of *you people***

Collocate	MI
<i>Shame</i>	5.56
<i>Need</i>	4.95
<i>Why</i>	4.75
<i>Should</i>	4.63
<i>Wrong</i>	4.56
<i>Who</i>	4.31

The noun *shame* is the strongest collocate and is used in routinised expression *shame on you*, as in (17a), below. As collocates of *you people*, *need* and *should* are used to express indirect imperatives, such as (17b-c), below. Similarly to the function of *need* and *should*, the adverb *why* co-occurs with *you people* when working as an operator for indirect directives. In (18a-c), below, the form is that of a question, but the actual function of the sentence is suggest the addressees to take a different approach to the situation with the question implying a disapproval of the addressees' stance or behaviour. The co-occurrence of *why* with the pragmatic function of expressing an indirect directive and a negative attitude of the speaker towards the addressees is a collocation that *you people* shares with *you guys* (section 7.1), but not with other 2PL forms (see 4.6, 5.2-4, 6.2). It may be suggested, then, that the trend is specific to the number marking strategy *you* NP-PL.

(17)

- a. Shame on *you people*. *U people* always change the original article of the writers to betray other innocents. (PK B)

- b. This is amazing. *You people* need to shut up and grow up. (US G)
- c. *You people* should go home and develop your rotten city Ogmobosho. (NG G)

(18)

- a. [...] and in the process sounding like a broken record. Why don't *you people* try something else? Denounce the action publicly on your local TVs, website etc. (NG G)
- b. So why can't *you people* simply get over it and tolerate the fact that a lot of heterosexual people – we don't want to persecute you – but we find the sight of two men kissing creepy. (GB B)
- c. “Download for free” = steal. Why don't *you people* use the correct terminology? (GB G)

The adjective *wrong* co-occurs with *you people* in another question that is generally used to take distance from the addressees and, at the same time, doubt their ability to judge righteously (see (19a-b), below).

(19)

- a. What the hell is wrong with *you people*? This story is from years ago. What the hell are you trying to prove? (US G)
- b. What is wrong with all *you people* claiming this is the result of single mothers? (GB G)

Finally, when in collocation with *you people*, *who* introduces a relative clause that specifies who are the addressees identified by *you people* according to some property or behaviour they all share (see (20a-c), below). The significant co-occurrence of *you people* with a relative clause is perhaps the most visible clue to its categorisation function, since in this context the speaker addresses a group of people with specific opinions or behaviour and excludes any other referent. Interestingly, in 61.9% occurrences of *you people* + relative clause are marked by the inclusive quantifier *all*, which is probably used for emphasis ((20a, 20c), below).

(20)

- a. All of *you people* who think this is a stupid app are just mad [...] (US G)
- b. I'm tired of *you people* who think that just because you see it on tv. (GB G)
- c. Shame on all *you people* who have been aware of the situation for so long and have done nothing. (CA G)

In conclusion, *you people* seems to behave rather differently from other 2PL forms such as *yous(e)*, *you* + cardinal number, *you all* and *y(')all*. Firstly, *you people* displays a very strong tendency to occur when the speaker's attitude towards the addressees is negative: not only is *you people* used as an outgroup marker but, most of the times, it is involved in the expression of face-threatening speech acts such as directives, insults and questions whose function is doubting the addressees' ability to understand and behave properly in a given situation. Consequently, *you people* is rarely involved in contexts expressing politeness, this latter being, instead, a preferred context of occurrence for many 2PL forms (cf. Sections 4.8-9, 5.2-4, 6.2). Moreover, *you people* occurs in contexts of politeness even less frequently than standard *you*, indicating a strong trend for *you people* to be used to imbue the speech act with a negative attitude towards the addressees. Another aspect according to which *you people* differs from other 2PL forms is the syntactic position in which attention-getting *you people* tends to occur, i.e. the left periphery of the sentence, differently from the rest of attention-getting 2PL forms that tend to occur in the right periphery, which is the portion of the sentence of utterance where pragmatic markers (of intersubjectivity) tend to occur (Traugott 2013: 7). However, given the frequency of occurrence of *you people*/2PL.AG and its strong preference for pragmatically charged contexts, I will conclude that it is still possible to consider *you people* as pragmaticalized.

### **7.2.1 Geographical variation of the functions and use of *you people***

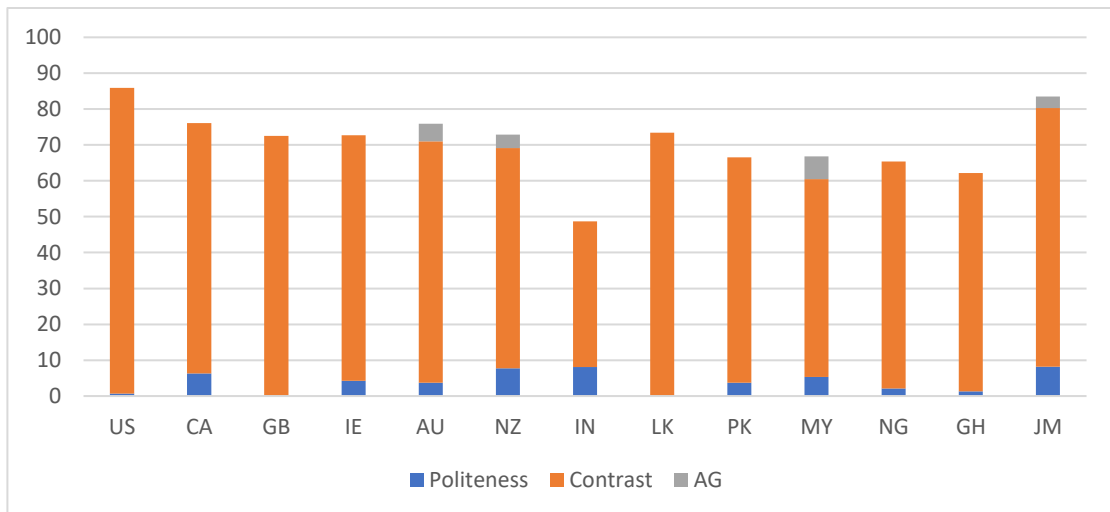
The reference of *you people* is always plural except for 0.6% of the occurrences of *you people* in Indian English in which the 2PL form works as a possessive determiner (see

(21) below). Regional variation, therefore, only concerns the pragmatic functions of *you people* and its semantic prosody.

(21) As you said his parents are not happy with *you people* marriage. (IN G)

As far as the pragmatic functions are concerned, the general tendency across varieties is for *you people* to be used to express a contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors (see section 7.2 above, and figure 5 below). This tendency is particularly strong in American English, where 85.2% of the occurrences of *you people* are occurrences of *contrast/you people* (see table 10 below). Similarly, Sri Lankan English (73.4%), British English (72.5%) and Jamaican English (72.1%) display a frequency of occurrence of *contrast/you people* that is significantly higher than the average in World Englishes (65.6%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.04).

**Figure 5 – Pragmatic functions of *you people* in World Englishes (% out of the total number of occurrences)**



Some varieties display a significantly higher frequency of *you people/2PL.POL* than the average, namely Jamaican English (8.2%), Indian English (8.1%), New Zealand English (7.7%) and Canadian English (6.3%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0002) (see figure 5 above). However, the frequencies of *you people/2PL.POL* are always much lower than *you people/2PL.CONTR*. As far as Indian English is concerned, then, the analysis of corpus

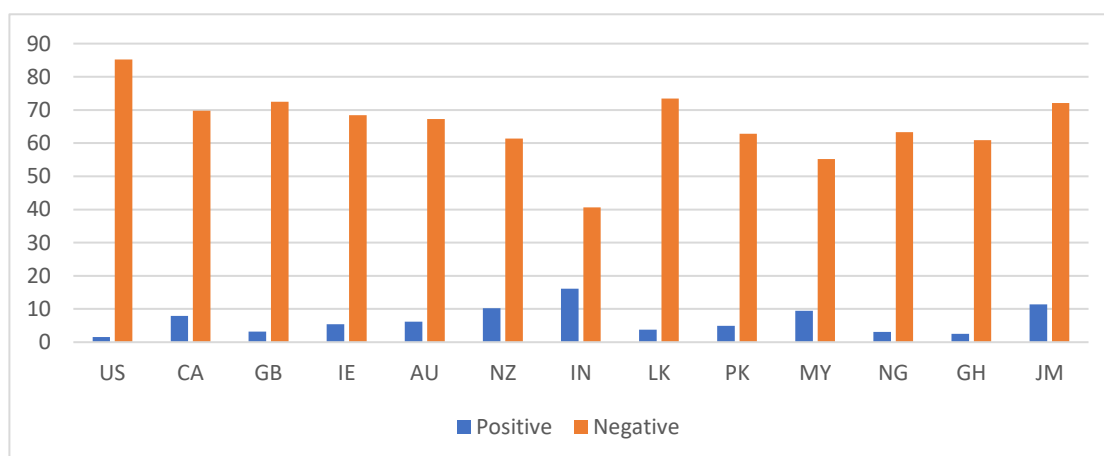


data contradicts what stated in the Indian English Dictionary about the form *you people*, which is described as a neutral 2PL form that is not intended to belittle or criticise the addressees (see section 2.4.4).

Only three varieties display occurrences of *you people*/2PL.AG: Malaysian English (6.3% of the occurrences of *you people*), Australian English (4.9%), New Zealand English (3.8%) and Jamaican English (3.2%). The occurrences of *you people*/2PL.AG, however, are not so much an indicator of the pragmaticalisation of *you people* as are the percentages of occurrence of *you people* in pragmatically charged contexts (politeness, contrast and attention getting together), which cover on average 73.4% of the total occurrences of *you people*, suggesting a high degree of pragmaticalisation.

Turning to the semantic prosody of *you people*, it is already clear by looking at the pragmatic functions that its semantic prosody is overall negative, as also shown in figure 6 below. A strong negative semantic prosody is found in US, Sri Lanka, the UK and Jamaica, while a less negative semantic prosody is found in Indian English and Malaysian English, although still more common than the positive one (see figure 6 below).

**Figure 6 – Semantic prosody of *you people* in World Englishes (% out of the total number of occurrences)**

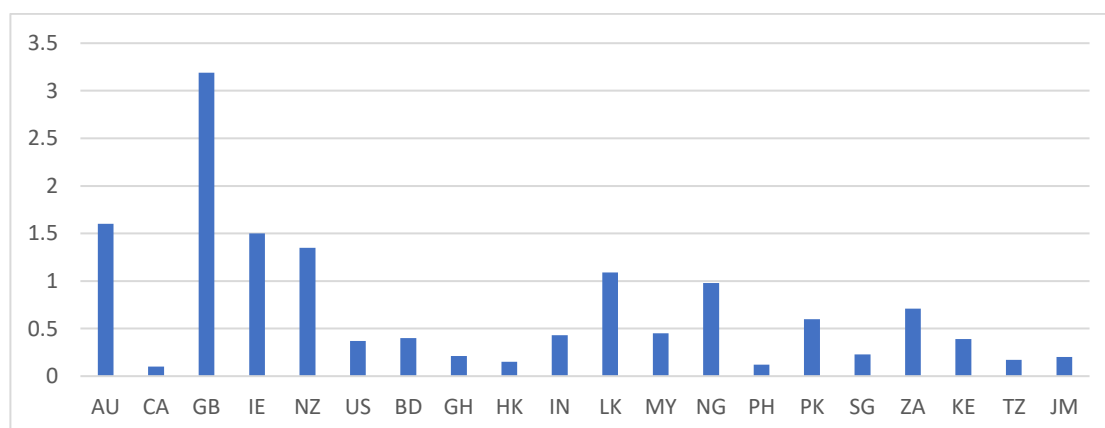


### 7.3 *You lot*

In the expression *you lot*, plurality is conveyed through the noun *lot* whose semantics can imply either a large amount or a group or set of people or things. I will use the analysis of the frequencies, functions and contexts of occurrence of *you lot* to discuss its usage and distribution as well as how it differs from other *you* NP-PL forms such as *you guys* and *you people*.

The average frequency of *you lot* in the World Englishes in my study is 0.89 pmw, which means that it is significantly less frequent than both *you people* (5.24 pmw) and *you guys* (22.42 pmw) ( $p \leq 0.001$ ). This can be explained by the distribution of *you lot* whose use is mainly found in British English (3.19 pmw) (see figure 7 below), suggesting an areally specific usage tendency, which also motivates its higher frequency in the Inner Circle rather than Outer Circle (1.36 pmw and 0.44 pmw respectively) (see also figure 7 below). Even within the Inner Circle, Canadian English and American English display a significant non-reliance on *you lot* as a plural of *you* compared to the average ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.009), which is perfectly in line with the preference for *you guys* (see 7.1), *you people* (see 7.2), as well as *y(')all* (sections 6.2.2-3).

**Figure 7 – Frequencies of occurrence of *you lot* in World Englishes (pmw)**



Turning to the functions, the analysis of corpus data suggests that the main function performed by *you lot* besides plurality is categorisation. This means that the addressees indicated by *you lot* are treated as belonging to the same social category (see (22a-d)

below). The category could be *ad hoc*, as in (22a-b), or might correspond to a more or less conventional social group, such as politicians in (22c), and football supporters in (22d).

(22)

a. A big chunk of our thanks has to go to *you lot*, the people who visited, talked about the project [...]. (NZ B)

b. Was there a d notice on Sa-vile? Or were *you lot* too busy illegally tapping the phones of “celebrities” for the gossip? (GB G)

c. It's all about the political game with *you lot* and the people who put you there TO SERVE US have had about enough! (AU B)

d. The usual bitter rag comments from all corners of the world I see, *you lot* are obsessed with City, a team from a place you have never been to [...]. (GB G)

What is already visible in the examples in (22) above is that the nature of the context in which *you lot* is often involved is a derogatory one. This is reflected in the figures presented in table 6 below. Expressing a negative speaker's attitude towards the addressees is the most frequent function performed by *you lot*, which makes it look like an out-group marker (Keblusek *et al.* 2017, cf. also section 1.4) (see section 7.2 above). The derogatory function of *you lot* is also noticed by Wales (2013: 13), who suggests that it is possibly “slightly disparaging or retorting” and may be impolite (see (23a-d) below). The analysis of data also allow a quantification of the derogatory function of *you lot* which is, in fact, the most frequent compared to other functions (see table 6 below): it represents 66.5% of the occurrences of *you lot* in the corpus, similarly to the frequency of occurrence of *you people/2PL.CONTR* (65.6%, cf. section 7.2).

**Table 6 – Functions of *you lot* in World Englishes**

<i>Categorisation</i>	%	Pmw
Contrast/outgroup/derogatory	66.5%	0.59

Neutral	30.3%	0.26
Attention-getting	6.2%	0.05
Politeness	3.2%	0.02

(23)

- a. *You lot* seriously need help. But of course, I'm just a misogynistic nutjob. (AU B)
- b. I have no time to deal with the ignorant views produced by *you lot*. (AU G)
- c. How about I bowl down with my megaphone and scream to the whole world how *you lot* are a bunch of inbred, uneducated, angry little trolls [...] (NZ B)
- d. But *you lot* are too illiterated to comprehend that. (GB G)

The second most frequent context of occurrence of *you lot* is a neutral one (30.3% of the occurrences of *you lot* in the corpus; see table 6 above) in which its function is create and refer to a category of addressees who are, as already mentioned above, perceived and treated as a group (see (24a-c) below). Neutral *you lot* does not seem to be used by the speaker to express their attitude towards the addressees, therefore, this is the category of occurrences of *you lot* that most resemble a mere plural of *you*.

(24)

- a. Anyhow. I hope *you lot* buy the 920. That's all. (GB B)
- b. So, bring on London Fashion Week! I can promise *you lot* that I'll be seeing more of it this September. (GB G)
- c. Do any of *you lot* have magic tips? (GB G)

A third function expressed by *you lot* is attention getting. Similarly to other 2PL forms performing the same function, *you lot*/2PL.AG is used in order to catch and direct the addressees' attention to what the speaker says (see (25a-c) below). *you lot*/2PL.AG represents 6.2% of the occurrences of *you lot* in the corpus, which is higher than the percentages of occurrence of both *you guys*/2PL.AG and *you people*/2PL.AG (cf. 7.1-2), and in line with the tendencies displayed by other 2PL forms performing the

attention-getting function (cf. In particular, *yall* (6.2.3), *you three* (5.3)). The derogatory character of *you lot* is visible when working as an attention-getter as well: roughly half (46%) of the occurrences of *you lot*/2PL.AG occur in negatively connotated contexts. Similarly to other attention-getting 2PL forms, *you lot*/2PL.AG also displays a strong tendency to occur in the right periphery of the sentence (89.2% of the times *you lot*/2PL.AG occurs in the corpus), which is where intersubjective pragmatic markers tend to occur (Traugott 2013), suggesting an ongoing process of pragmaticalization for *you lot*.

(25)

- a. Get a move on, *you lot*, you're here to ring, not just stand around! (GB G)
- b. Oh come on *you lot*...let's wait n see...shall we? (NZ G)
- c. Right *you lot*, you are not helping! (GB G)

Finally, 4.5% of all instances of *you lot* occur in a positively connotated context in which the attitude of the speaker towards the addressees is a benevolent one: 3.2% of occurrences of positively connotated *you lot* are, indeed, instances of politeness (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001), as shown in (26a-c), below. The frequency with which *you lot* is used to express politeness, however, is much lower than other 2PLs performing the same function ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.005) in line with the strong tendency displayed by *you lot* to work as a derogatory outgroup marker.

(26)

- a. I'm so happy with *you lot* and my website, can really see this business going well because I have you. (AU B)
- b. Love the gurus community so much that we're building our whole site around *you lot*. (IE G)
- c. Team R, well, how lucky was I to be lumped with *you lot*. (HK G)

The analysis of the collocates of *you lot* further supports what was found in the analysis

of functions. As shown in table 7 below, three significant collocations were observed for *you lot*: the verb *need*, the pronoun *who* and the adverb *how*.

**Table 7 – Collocates of *you lot* (GloWbe)**

Collocate	MI
<i>Need</i>	4.9
<i>Who</i>	3.8
<i>How</i>	3.4

As a collocate of *you lot*, the verb *need* expresses directive speech acts (as in (27a-c) below) in which the speaker, in a rather patronising way, suggests the addressees to do something. In line with the derogatory character of *you lot*, the context of occurrence of this collocation is never positively connotated, as it always expresses a perceivable contrast between the speaker's and the addressees' points of view (see (27a-c) below).

(27)

- a. We are good at overstating failure. Something *you lot* need to do as well. (PK G)
- b. Oh lord, some of these replies...*you lot* need to step down from your high horses and start being realistic. (GB G)
- c. What makes you think that Kenny can turn it around in ONE season? *You lot* need to get a grip or get lost. (GB G)

The pronoun *who* co-occurs with *you lot* when it introduces a relative clause in which the speaker gives some details about the addressees indicated by *you lot* (see (28a-c) below). These are the instances that most obviously display the categorisation function of *you lot*, as the relative clause specifies the characteristics according to which the referents are being grouped together.

(28)

- a. We know it all too well, I just hope *you lot* who are doubting us don't ever get sick or become disabled. (GB G)
- b. It's *you lot* who claim agenda and propaganda against people who don't like Liverpool. (GB B)
- c. It's *you lot* who have no clue how the real world works [...] (GB B)

Finally, the adverb *how* is used to introduce an exclamative sentence which highlights, always in a derogatory way, some despicable quality or qualities of the addressees (see (29a-b) below).

(29)

- a. How utterly moronic *you lot* are. (GB B)
- b. Look how fractured *you lot* are, Fundamentalism and Liberalism, seems to me you have no UNITY [...]. (NZ G)

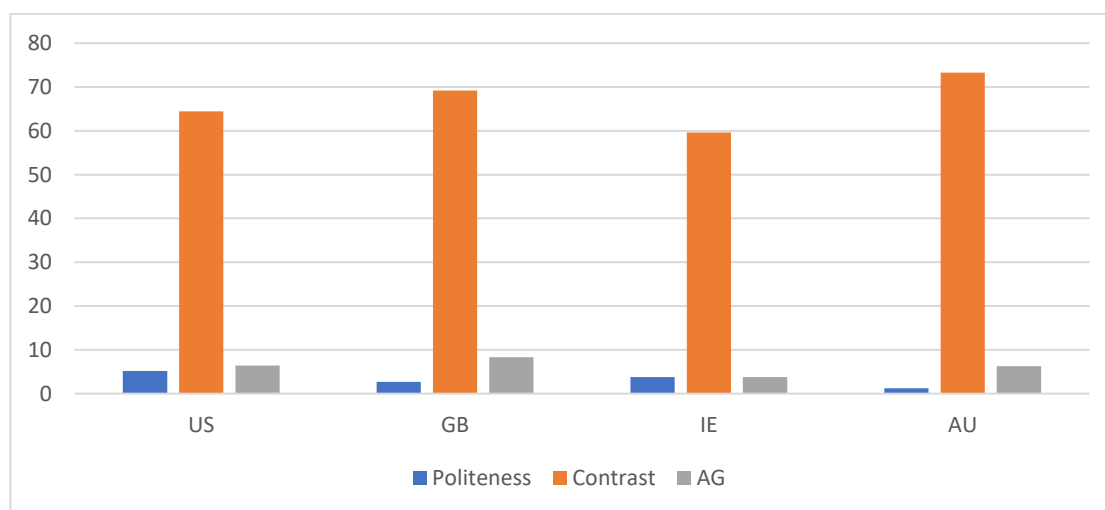
In conclusion, the 2PL form *you lot* seems to be mainly used in British English, although it can be found in all the twenty varieties in the corpus with much lower frequencies. Its main function is the categorisation of the referents, who, when addressed with *you lot*, are conceived as sharing some kind of property, be it a point of view, social behaviour, social class or attitude towards a situation. However, the social categorisation performed by *you lot* is a derogatory one: most of the times the speaker uses *you lot* to take distance from their interlocutors and even perform face-threatening acts such as insulting and doubting the interlocutors' ability to judge righteously. The derogatory character is something that *you lot* shares with *you people* (section 7.2), but only to a lesser extent with *you guys* (section 7.1). Among the rest of 2PL forms, *you three* (section 5.3) and *yall* (6.2.3) are characterised by a similar tendency to express a negative attitude of the speaker, although they do much less frequently (roughly half the times) than *you lot* and *you people*. Finally, *you lot* can work as an attention-getting device, similarly to *you people* but not *you guys*, and to other 2PL forms such as *y'all*

(6.2.2), *yall* (6.2.3), *you three* (5.3) and *yous(e)* (4.4). This is seen as a clue that hints at an on-going process of pragmaticalisation of *you lot*, which is also supported by its preference of occurrence in pragmatically charged contexts rather than neutral ones.

### 7.3.1 Geographical variation of the functions and use of *you lot*

The low frequency of *you lot* in the corpus and the consequent lack of data did not allow me to carry out a thorough cross-variety comparison of *you lot*. Therefore, I am going to briefly comment on the differences among the four regional varieties for which data were available, namely American English, British English, Irish English and Australian English (see figure 8 below).

**Figure 8 - Pragmatic functions of *you lot* (%)**



Similarly to *you people*, *you lot* is mainly used to express a contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors. This tendency is particularly strong in Australian English (73.3%) and British English (69.2%) (see figure 8 above), although the difference with the average is not statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.12). The stronger tendency to use *you lot* to express contrast in Australia is also matched by the significantly lower frequency of *you lot*/2PL.POL compared with the average ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0001) (see figure 8 above). At the opposite pole is American English which, although displaying an average occurrence of *you people*/2PL.CONTR, it also displays a significantly higher

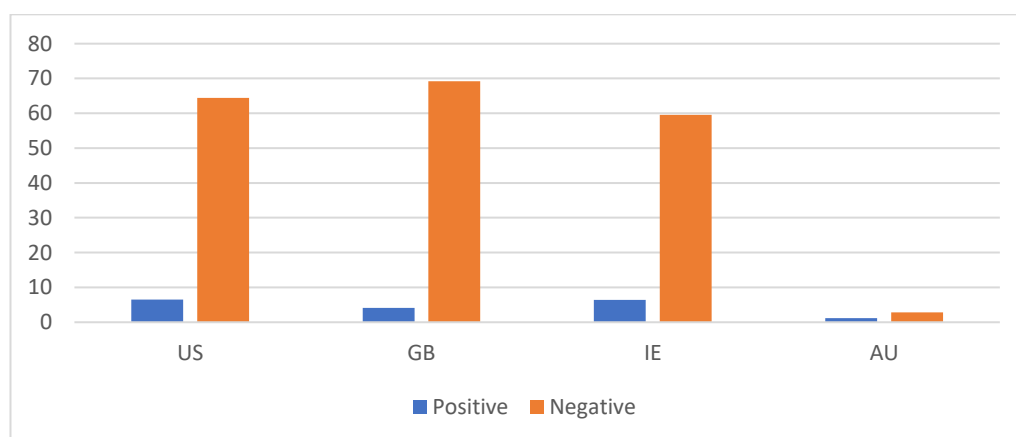


occurrence of *you lot*/2PL.POL than the average ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.001) (see figure 8 above).

As far as attention-getting *you lot* is concerned, British English is the variety with the highest frequency of occurrence (8.3% of the total occurrences of *you lot*), whereas Irish English is the one with the lowest (3.8%). The difference between the two frequencies and the mean frequency of *you lot*/2PL.AG is in both cases statistically significant ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.001; 0.0009) and combined with the percentage of occurrence of the other two pragmatic functions (see figure 8 above), suggest that *you lot* is more pragmaticalized in British English than is in Irish English.

Predictably, the semantic prosody of *you lot* seems strongly negative (see figure 9 below), and is, in particular in Australian and British English.

**Figure 9 - Semantic prosody of *you lot* in World Englishes (% out of the total number of occurrences)**



#### **8.4 *You ones, y(ou)'uns and yinz***

As already mentioned, *you ones* and its grammaticalised variants *y(ou)'uns* and *yinz* did not return many occurrences in either GloWbe nor COCA. However, I will try to give a short account of how these forms are used in the few occurrences that were available.

Starting from the frequencies, the standard *you ones* displays both the highest frequencies of occurrence as well as the most widespread distribution across varieties: as can be observed in table 8 below, instances of *you ones* were found in American English, New Zealand English and British English in the Inner Circle, and in Indian

**Table 8 – Frequencies (token) of occurrence of *you ones*, *y(ou)'uns* and *yinz***

	US	NZ	GB	IN	HK	Tot.
<i>You ones</i>	2	4	2	2	2	12 (0.006 pmw)
<i>Y(ou)'uns</i>	2	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Yin(s/z)</i>	5	-	-	-	-	-
Tot.	9 (0.004 pmw)	4 (0.002 pmw)	2 (0.001 pmw)	2 (0.001 pmw)	2 (0.001 pmw)	19 (0.01 pmw)

The other two grammaticalised variants, *y(ou)'uns* and *yinz* display few occurrences only in American English, confirming the geographical specificity of these forms.

As far as the functions and context of occurrence are concerned, *you ones* seems to work as both a plural marker (10 out of 12 instances), see (1) below, and a possessive determiner (2 instances), see (2) below.

(1) *You ones* I'd notice and really miss if you went away. (NZ G)

(2) [S]igning up like will help *you ones own performance* [...] (GB G)

In the few instances that occur in the corpus (see table 8 above), *y(ou)'uns* works as both a second person plural and possessive determiner, similarly to *you ones* ((3a-b) below), whereas *yin(s/z)* appears to work only as a second person plural ((4) below). Johnstone (2013: 238) claims that *yin(s/z)* also works as a noun prefix, suffix and adjective. However, no example of use is provided that could be reported here.

(3)

a. Fuck both of *you'uns*. (US G)

b. He's going to put it on *you'ns heels* to make you stick better in the next fight. (US G)

(4) A lot of us are still behind *yinz* but there's 11 weeks left and we haven't seen you find the rhythm. (US G)

Little can be said about the semantic prosody of *you ones*, *y(ou)'uns* and *yin(s/z)* as well. *You ones* was found to occur twice in contexts of positive politeness and twice in negatively connotated contexts; the remaining 8 instances occurred in pragmatically neutral contexts. One of the two instances of *y(ou)'uns* occurs in a negatively connotated context (see (3a) above), not much differently from the second instance in (3b) above, in which the speaker is being sarcastic with the interlocutors. Finally, four out of five times *yin(s/z)* occurs in the corpus, it does in a pragmatically neutral context. Only one instance occurs in a negatively connotated context encoding a sort of contrast between the speaker and the addressees (see (5) below).

(5) *Yinz* do realise that there is precedence to this, right? (US B)

In conclusion, *you ones*, *y(ou)'uns* and *yin(s/z)* seem to be areal features that are specific to American English, and, in particular, to the city of Pittsburgh and the Appalachian area (Johnstone 2013), although other varieties such as New Zealand English, British English, Indian English and Hong Kong English displayed a few instances of occurrence. Besides working as second person plural pronouns, *you ones* and *y(ou)'uns* seem to work as possessive determiners as well, similarly to what other second person plural forms, such as *yous(e)*, *y'all*, *yall*, *you guys* and *you people* do (cf. chapters 4-6). Due to the very low number of occurrences of these forms in the corpus, however, it was virtually impossible to obtain any further information on their functions, context of occurrence and semantic prosody.

## 8.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have analysed the frequencies and uses of the three most frequent *you* NP-PL expressions: *you guys*, *you people* and *you lot*. Despite the very low frequencies of occurrence in the corpus, I have also tried to provide more information about the distribution and uses of the forms *you ones*, *y(ou)'uns* and *yinz*.

The analysis of the occurrences of *you guys* suggests that it behaves similarly to other 2PL forms: it displays a preference of occurrence in pragmatically charged contexts that is significantly stronger than the one displayed by standard *you*; as Wales

had already underlined for British English (2003: 12), *you guys* can work as an attention-getter that raises the involvement of the interlocutors in a conversation, although it does it less frequently than other 2PL forms do; what does not seem to be mentioned in the literature (cf. sections 1.3-4) is the occasional reanalysis of *you guys* into a possessive determiner as well as its tendency to occur in positively connotated contexts more often than in negatively connotated ones, although it does not seem to be used to express politeness as often as other 2PL forms.

*You people* and *you lot* were observed to have developed a very strong preference of occurrence in derogatory contexts rather than positive ones. In line with this tendency, both expressions rarely occur in contexts where politeness is expressed, which constitutes the main difference with the rest of 2PL forms analysed so far. Apart from their quite consistent derogatory, impolite character, which had already been noted by Quirk *et al.* (1985: 774) and Wales (2003: 13) for *you lot* in British English, both *you people* and *you lot* display similar tendencies to the other 2PL forms, in particular as far as the attention-getting function is concerned. In the Glowbe corpus, between the two, only *you people* was found to work as a possessive determiner. However, the non-occurrence of *you lot*/2PL.POSS may be due to the low frequency of *you lot* in the corpus. The possessive function is generally infrequent also with the other second person pronominal forms considered in the study, so it is conceivable that its co-occurrence with the already infrequent *you lot* is so rare that it completely failed to surface in the data. Despite the low frequencies of the forms *you one*, *y(ou)'uns* and *yinz* in the corpus, the first two were found to perform possessive marking besides marking plurality. Unfortunately, it was impossible to obtain any further information about the functions, context of occurrence and semantic prosody of *you ones*, *y(ou)'uns* and *yinz*.

# 8 Forms and functions of 2PL forms in World Englishes

In this final chapter, I will bring together the results obtained from the corpus-based analysis of 2PL forms in order to answer the research questions identified in section 2.6 and reported below:

1. How many 2PL forms are there in World Englishes? How frequent are they? How are 2PL forms geographically distributed? Can region-specific preferences be identified?
2. What are the functions of 2PL forms? Do they only mark plurality?
3. What are the pragmatics and semantic prosody of 2PL forms?
4. How do the semantics and pragmatics of 2PL forms differ from standard *you*?
5. Is it possible to talk about grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and (inter)subjectification of 2PL forms?

6. Have 2PL forms undergone constructionalization?

## 8.1 Frequency and distribution of 2PL forms

This study has focused on 11 different 2PL forms belonging to five categories that are based on formal criteria: *yous(e)* belongs to suffixed 2PL forms, *you two*, *you three* and *you four* to the category *you* + cardinal number, *you all*, *y'all* and *yall* to *you* + *all*, *you ones*, *y(ou)'uns* and *yinz* to the category *you* + *ones*, and *you guys*, *you people* and *you lot* belonging to the category *you* + NP-PL.

The frequencies of occurrence of 2PL forms in English vary very much according to the form considered. The most frequent 2PL form is *you all* which occurs 27.8 times per million words across all the varieties I looked at taken together, whereas the least frequent is *you ones* and its grammaticalised forms *y'uns* and *yin(s/z)* which together occur 0.01 times every million word (see table 1 below).

By comparing the frequencies in table 1 below, it is possible to observe a great difference in the frequency of occurrence of the two most frequent 2PL forms, namely *you all* and *you guys*, and the rest of 2PL forms. *You all* and *you guys* are significantly more frequent than the third most frequent 2PL form *you people* ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.015). The reasons for the frequency gap between *you all* and *you guys* compared to the rest of 2PL forms can be found in the combination of three factors: the degree of standardness of *you all* and *you guys*, the fact that the two forms are particularly common in varieties that count many speakers (see figure 1 below), and their low degree of specificity.

*You all* and *you guys*, compared to some other plural-marked forms, can perhaps be considered relatively (although, of course, not completely) standard based on the fact that both forms are the result of the combination of standard items, i.e. *you* + the universal quantifier *all*, in one case, and the NP-PL *guys*, in the other. I hypothesise that these forms would be rated by English speakers as more standard than other 2PL forms such as *yous(e)*, *y(')all* or *yinz*, as these do not neatly correspond to existing

standard forms<sup>3</sup>. Since the standardness of a form is related with its acceptability (see section 2.5), a greater reliance on more standard forms could be expected compared to more non-standard forms, which would account for the difference in the frequencies of *you all* and *you guys* compared to the rest of 2PL forms. Another factor that might influence the frequency of occurrence of some 2PL forms is the concept of “eye dialect” (Krapp 1926), i.e. the orthographic representation of non-standard forms. I would tentatively suggest that rendering non-standard pronoun forms is more straightforward if the author can make use of existing words. Therefore, I hypothesise that forms such as [jugaɪz] and [juːɪ], which are easily represented orthographically as *you guys* and *you all*, might end up being used more often in writing than forms such as [jɪnz] or [jɪz], whose orthography is less straightforward inasmuch as it cannot make use of existing words. In other words, the frequency of [jɪnz] or [jɪz] in speech may perhaps not be reflected as fully in writing as that of [jugaɪz] and [juːɪ].

A question emerges about other 2PL forms that are the result of the combination of standard expressions, possess a clear orthography, yet do not display particularly high frequencies of occurrence: *you two*, *you three*, *you four*, *you people*, *you lot*, *you ones*. As already said, however, the gap between the most frequent forms *you all* and *you guys* and the rest of 2PL forms is not motivated by the standardness of the forms alone but rather in combination with the geographical factor and the semantic specificity of the expressions (see below).

The second factor which I would like to point to as a possible explanation of the frequency gap between *you all* and *you guys* is the geographical factor: both forms are particularly common in American English, which is not only a variety that counts roughly 225 million speakers (Ethnologue 2015), but also the variety that, at the present time, exerts the greatest influence over other varieties of English mainly due to economic and political factors (cf. americanization of English (Leech *et al.* 2009, Gonçalves *et al.* 2018)). On the other hand, the fact that some 2PL forms are not particularly frequent does not necessarily mean that they are less used overall. The low frequency might be a sign that their use is very geographically restricted: this happens, for example, with *you lot* whose use is specific to British English (see section 7.3),

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<sup>3</sup> Two observations are in order here. First, speakers of varieties that do not have *you all* or *you guys* may judge these forms to be less standard than speakers of varieties that do. Second, my hypothesis would of course ideally be tested empirically, but that is left as an opportunity for future study.

*yous(e)* that represents a feature of Irish English (see section 4.3), and *you ones*, *y'uns* and *yin(s/z)* that are specific to the city of Pittsburgh (PA) and the Appalachian area (see chapter 7).

**Table 1 – Frequencies of occurrences of 2PL forms in GloWbe (pmw)**

<i>You all</i>	27.81	<i>You lot</i>	0.89
<i>You guys</i>	22.42	<i>You three</i>	0.86
<i>You people</i>	4.62	<i>Yall</i>	0.54
<i>Y'all</i>	2.35	<i>Yous(e)</i>	0.28
<i>You two</i>	1.82	<i>You four</i>	0.02
		<i>You ones (y'uns, y'in(s/z))</i>	0.01

Thirdly, *you all* and *you guys* are less specific than forms such as *you two* or *you three* therefore more likely to be used, given that the times in which the speaker needs to specify the number of addressees tend to be less frequent than those in which a generic plural will be sufficient for the purposes of communication. This is evident in the typological findings concerning number marking (Greenberg 1966, Corbett 2000, Croft 2003), whereby the tendency in the languages of the world is to mark plurality before duality and duality before triality:

Number: singular < plural < dual < trial/paucal

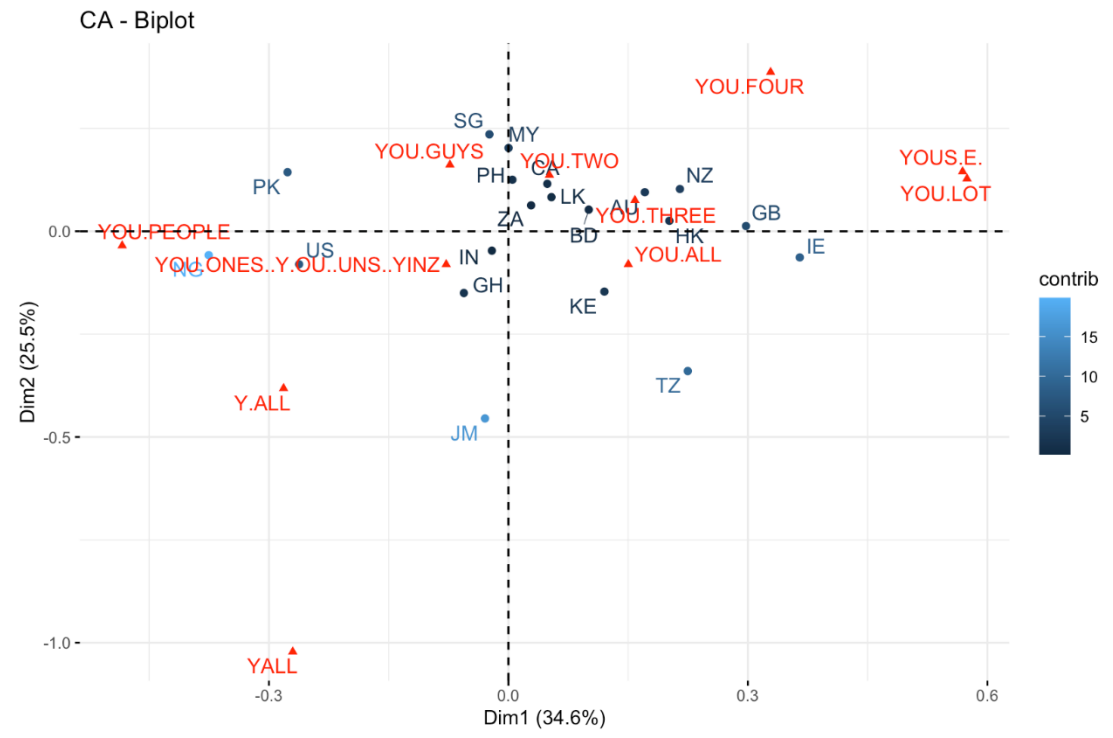
The relationship between the frequencies of occurrence and the high degree of specificity of *you* + cardinal no. forms can also be observed in the higher frequency of *you two* compared to *you three*, which is, in turn, much more frequent than *you four* (see table 1 above). As already said in chapter 5, occasions on which the speaker will address exactly two people will likely be more frequent than those on which the speaker will need to address exactly three or four people. This also explains why *you* + cardinal number forms do not involve higher numbers than four (cf. chapter 5).

As far as geographical variation is concerned, figure 1 below displays the simple correspondence analysis of the frequencies of occurrence of all the 2PL forms considered in the twenty varieties of English in the corpus. Due to the low numbers of the frequencies of occurrence, the analysis only captures 60% of the variation, thus representing an approximation of what the actual representation should be. However, it



gives visual access to the preferences of some varieties of English for some 2PL forms and the corresponding non-reliance on other forms (cf. Tantucci and Wang 2018 for a more detailed account on how to describe correspondence analysis data concerning pragmatic uses).

**Figure 1 – Frequencies of occurrence of 2PL forms in World Englishes**



Among the twenty varieties considered, American English, Nigerian English and Jamaican English display the highest degrees of reliance on 2PL forms both in terms of number of different forms and frequencies of occurrence. Indeed, in American English 9 out of 11 forms occur with a higher frequency than the average in the corpus. The same happens in Nigerian English with 7 forms and in Jamaican English with 5 forms. The preferred forms are *you all*, *you guys*, *y'all* and *yall*. The similarities in the linguistic behaviours of the US and Jamaica are not new, given both the geographical vicinity and the political and economic influence of the US in Jamaica (cf. for example, Sullivan 2006). Nigeria, on the other hand, has always been part of the British Commonwealth until recent times when political, economic and social interaction between the US and Nigeria has increased, translating into an americanization of Nigerian English, as already pointed out by Awonusi (2007).

Although less frequently, other English varieties that seem to rely on 2PL forms more than others are the South-East Asian Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines (see figure 1 above). The preferred forms and frequencies in these three varieties seem to cluster together around the forms *you all*, *you guys* and the category *you* + cardinal no., which is generally less frequent in other varieties (see figure 1 above), probably mirroring the singular/plural distinction marked on the second person pronouns of these countries' main languages (cf. Malay, Mandarin Chinese, Tamil, Filipino) (see section 5.1 and chapter 7 for a more detailed account).

Another geographical cluster of similar tendencies of use of 2PL forms is displayed by the UK, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. The preferred forms are different from the ones identified for US, Nigeria, Jamaica, and the South-East Asian varieties. European and Australian varieties prefer forms such as *yous(e)*, *you lot*, and to a lesser extent *you two*. The tendency is not surprising given that *yous(e)* is believed to be of Irish origins and *you lot* a feature typical of British English (cf. sections 2.3-4). This also explains why *yous(e)* and *you lot* are preferred 2PL forms in countries that have witnessed considerable immigration waves from Ireland and the UK (cf. sections 2.3-4).

Finally, some varieties display a tendency to not use 2PL forms: within the Inner Circle, although Canada displays some use of 2PL forms, it is far from resembling the tendencies displayed by its geographical neighbour US. In the Outer Circle, India displays a very low reliance on 2PL forms but for *you ones* which is not explained by L1 influence. Other varieties that display a rather infrequent use of 2PL forms are Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, once again in the South-East Asian area, and Hong Kong.

## 8.2 Functions

As already outlined in sections 3.4-5, the functions performed by 2PL forms concern the expression of both grammatical and pragmatic meanings. Grammatical marking includes the marking of plurality and possession. Table 2 below summarises which 2PL forms mark the two grammatical categories identified. The percentages indicate the frequency of occurrence of the function out of the total number of occurrences of the

2PL form in the corpus. *You ones* and its reduced variants are not reported here due to the scarcity of data that did not allow to carry out an analysis of functions, as already mentioned in section 7.4.

**Table 2 – Grammatical marking of 2PL forms**

	<b>PL</b>	<b>POSS</b>
<i>You all</i>	100%	-
<i>You guys</i>	100%	0.2%
<i>You people</i>	99.4%	0.6%
<i>Y'all</i>	97.2%	-
<i>You two</i>	100%	-
<i>You lot</i>	100%	-
<i>You three</i>	100%	-
<i>Yall</i>	96.2%	3.2%
<i>Yous(e)</i>	87.6%	2.1%
<i>You four</i>	100%	-
Mean	98.0%	0.6%

Plurality marking is what all 2PL forms have in common and represents the most frequent function expressed by 2PL forms. Many 2PL forms occur in the corpus only with plural reference: plurality is the only grammatical feature marked by six out of ten 2PL forms, namely *you all*, *you guys*, *you two*, *you three*, *you four*, and *you lot* (see table 2 above). When 2PL forms do not express plurality 100% of the times they occur in the corpus (as happens with *y'all*, *yall*, *yous(e)* and *you people*), they are used, although much less frequently, with singular reference. As explained in section 3.4, singular-reference 2PL forms constitute instances of both semantic change and pragmatic enrichment, since they are used to express informality, familiarity and/or emphasis of reference, which is why they are not treated as grammatical marking (see 8.5 below).

Possession is the second grammatical category marked by 2PL forms. Only 4 forms display instances of possession marking: *you guys*, *you people*, *yall* and *yous(e)* (see table 2 above). Together with singular-reference 2PL forms, the occurrence of possessive 2PL forms, as already discussed in section 3.4, is seen as a further clue to the

grammaticalization of 2PL forms, since it represents an instance of reanalysis of a personal pronoun into a possessive determiner and/or pronoun.

Turning to pragmatic marking, 2PL forms were found to perform four different pragmatic functions: the expression of emphasis, politeness, contrast between the speaker and the interlocutor(s) and attention getting (see section 3.4 for a detailed definition) (see table 3 below). All these functions seem to be linked with the use of 2PL forms as tools for expressing the speaker’s attitude towards the interlocutor(s), manage the speaker-hearer relationship and create social boundaries by defining the in-group and out-group. The expression of emphasis, however, is not so much linked with the relationship between the speaker and the hearer as is with information structure (Lambrecht 1994, Langacker 2013, Trotzke 2017; see also section 3.4). 2PL forms used for the purpose of expressing emphasis add focus to the reference: this was observed to be the main function of singular-reference 2PL forms as well as quantifying and partitive structures involving *yous(e)* (section 4.6.1). Moreover, the expression of emphasis seems to underlie the significant collocation of *why* with *you guys* in rhetorical questions (see section 7.1). As already mentioned in section 3.4, the expression of emphasis can also overlap with other pragmatic functions: most often, emphatic reference can be inferred in contexts in which the speaker is expressing contrast with the interlocutor(s) or in attention-getting contexts, which are intrinsically emphatic in their role of directing the attention of the interlocutor(s).

Table 3 below summarises which 2PL forms perform the different pragmatic functions and with what frequencies. Frequencies are expressed in percentages out of the total number of occurrences of the 2PL form in question in the corpus. The percentages refer to the times a single function is expressed but, as explained in section 3.4, more than one pragmatic function can be expressed at the same time by a 2PL form. A last column is dedicated to the percentages of occurrences of each 2PL form in pragmatically charged contexts.

**Table 3 – Pragmatic functions of 2PL forms in World Englishes (%)**

	<b>Emphasis (tot.)</b>	<b>Singular- emphatic/ familiar</b>	<b>Politeness</b>	<b>Contrast</b>	<b>Attention- getting</b>	<b>Tot (prag.)</b>
<i>Yous(e)</i>	28.3	12.4	20.2	9.3	2.4	44.3

<i>You all</i>	17.1	-	43.2	9.4	1.6	54.2
<i>Y'all</i>	31.3	2.8	15.9	18.7	19.6	57.0
<i>Yall</i>	30.6	3.8	15.3	26.2	5.4	50.7
<i>You two</i>	21.8	-	17.5	12.2	5.4	51.5
<i>You three</i>	25.8	-	35.3	22.4	8.0	65.7
<i>You four</i>	25.1	-	36.3	5.8	2.2	44.3
<i>You guys</i>	17.6	-	23.6	23.3	1.4	48.3
<i>You people</i>	26.6	0.6	3.9	65.6	4.5	74.0
<i>You lot</i>	27.3	-	3.2	66.5	6.2	75.9
Mean	25.2	1.9	21.4	25.9	5.6	56.5

In table 3 above, 2PL forms are grouped according to the strategy of pluralisation. This is done to highlight similarities of behaviour within the same formal category. By classifying 2PL forms according to the two opposite pragmatic functions of expressing politeness, on one side, and contrast on the other, it is possible to observe that the general preference for 2PL forms is to express politeness: *yous(e)*, the category *you* + cardinal no. and *you all* are preferably used as in-group markers (see politeness column in table 3 above).

The forms belonging to the category *you* NP-PL, on the other hand, display a strong tendency to be used as out-group markers: besides *you people* and *you lot*, other less frequent *you* NP-PL tend to be derogatory (see contrast column in table 3 above; cf. also section 4.7 and chapter 7). The only exception to the category is represented by *you guys*, which does not display a preference for either use and, overall, is not used in pragmatically charged contexts as often as the other two *you* NP-PL analysed (see table 3 above). Therefore, the form *you guys* appears to behave more similarly to a neutral marker of number than a marker of intersubjectivity and emphasis as the rest of 2PL forms. However, in sections 8.3-4 it will be shown how *you guys* is still more similar to the rest of 2PL forms than standard *you*.

A preference for working as out-group markers could also be highlighted for *y'all* and *yall* (see table 3 above). As much as it might seem surprising, considering that the form they derive from (i.e. *you all*) displays a strong tendency to be used as an in-group marker (see politeness column in table 4 above; see also chapter 6), it reinforces the interpretation of *y'all* and *yall* being grammaticalized and pragmaticalized forms of *you all* (see section 6.4 and 8.4 below).

As far as the expression of emphasis is concerned, the 2PL forms that are used for emphatic purposes more often than others are *y'all*, *yall* and *yous(e)*. *You people* and *you lot* also appear to express emphasis more often than the rest of 2PL forms; however, their emphatic character is mainly linked with their tendency to express contrast between the speaker and the interlocutor(s) (see table 3 above).

Closely related to the expression of emphasis is the function of attention getting. On average, 2PL forms work as attention-getting devices 5.6% of the times they occur in the corpus. A significant preference to occur in attention-getting contexts is displayed most of all by *y'all* (19.6% of the total number of occurrences;  $p$  (t-test) = 0.0001 compared to the average of occurrence of attention-getting 2PL forms). *Y'all* occurs as an attention-getter even more often than the more grammaticalised *yall* (attention-getting *yall* occurs 5.4% of the times) (see table 3 above). Although less frequently than *y'all*, *you three* as well was found to frequently work as an attention-getter (8.0% of the times *you three* occurs in the corpus;  $p$  (t-test) = 0.051). On the contrary, some 2PL forms perform the attention-getting function significantly less often than the average: this is true of *you guys* and *you all* which work as attention-getters 1.4% and 1.6% (respectively) of the times they occur in the corpus ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.006), but also of *you four* (AG = 2.2%) and *yous(e)* (AG = 2.4%) ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.001). However, *you four* and *yous(e)* are low frequent forms in the corpus in general, therefore even less likely to occur in the attention-getting context that is generally not very frequent in the language.

Finally, some 2PL forms display a routinised behaviour in expressing certain additional semantic traits: *you all* expresses inclusiveness (section 6.2.1), *you two* tends to indicate referents that share such a close relationship that they are conceived as a conceptual unit (i.e. mainly romantic couples, but also members of the same family, members of a band, etc.) (section 5.2), *you three* and *you four* make the reference more

specific by adding detail on the exact number of addressees and allow the speaker to refer to a subset of possible addressees indicated by plural *you* (sections 5.3-4).

Overall, 2PL forms seem to be used to express pragmatic meaning at least half of the times they are used (see table 3 above), which suggests they have developed a strong pragmatic, intersubjective character. Although pronominal forms are intrinsically intersubjective as they continuously define the roles of the speaker and addressee(s) in conversation, 2PL forms were observed to have the additional pragmatic functions of expressing the speaker's attitude towards the interlocutor(s) and manage social distance through the marking of the in-group and out-group. In the next two sections, I will suggest that the formal and semantic properties that distinguish 2PL forms from standard *you* can be seen as the result of processes of language change such as grammaticalization and pragmaticalization.

### 8.3 2PL forms and standard *you*: differences and significance

Are 2PL forms different from standard *you*? Significantly. The results of the analysis of *you* according to the same parameters and categories used in the analysis of 2PL forms reveal that the standard pronoun is used very differently from 2PL forms (see table 4 below).

**Table 4 – Grammatical and pragmatic functions of *you* in World Englishes**

	PL	SG	POSS	EMPH	POL	CONTR	AG	Tot. Pragm
<i>You</i>	45.4%	54.6% (impersonal/non emphatic)	-	9.8%	6.1%	0.01%	0.5%	16.4%
2PL forms (mean)	98.0%	1.9% (personal/emphatic)	2.6%	25.2%	26.1%	25.9%	5.6%	56.5%
P-value	0.0002	0.0001	0.0004	0.0003	0.0005	0.0028	0.0294	0.0010

Beginning with grammatical marking, standard *you* was found to occur slightly more frequently with singular reference (54.6%) than plural reference (cf. also 4.4.2), differently from 2PL forms that occur with plural reference 98.0% of the times they occur in the corpus ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0003). Secondly, standard *you* was never found to be used as a possessive determiner or pronoun, whereas 2PL forms are 2.6% of the times they occur in the corpus (see table 4 above).

Turning to pragmatic differences, standard *you* occurs in context in which pragmatic meaning is expressed much less frequently than 2PL forms: the occurrences in which *you* is used to express emphasis, politeness, contrast or is used as an attention-getter taken together constitute only 16.4% of the times *you* occurs in the corpus (see table 4 above). 2PL forms, on the other hand, display a preference to occur in pragmatically charged contexts (on average 56.5% of the times 2PL forms occur in the corpus), which, compared to the trend displayed by standard *you*, represents a statistically significant difference ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0002). Being standard *you* and 2PL forms significantly different both grammatically and pragmatically, it is possible to conclude that 2PL forms have developed specific uses and functions that are not shared with the standard pronoun.

#### **8.4 Processes of linguistic change of 2PL forms: grammaticalization, pragmaticalization, intersubjectification and constructionalization**

On a theoretical level, the research questions regarded the possibility for 2PL forms to be undergoing processes of linguistic change. The questions were firstly brought about by formal observations: the forms *you all* and *you ones* also occur in the corpus in phonologically reduced forms (i.e. *y'all*, *yall*, *y(ou)'uns*, *yinz*.) that seem to be the result of grammaticalization. However, phonological reduction was not visible in all forms: *yous(e)*, *you* + cardinal no. and *you* + NP-PL never appeared in shorter forms. It was with semantic and functional analysis that the grammaticalization of 2PL forms became apparent. Semantic change was found in phonologically reduced forms of *you all* which progressively lose the semantic trait of inclusiveness the more a form is



grammaticalised: *yall* expresses inclusiveness less often than *y'all* which, in turn, expresses inclusiveness much less often than *you all* (see section 6.3 for a detailed account). Semantic change was also found in phonologically non-reduced forms that are used with singular reference (namely *yous(e)* and *you people* beside *y'all* and *yall*) and in occurrences of 2PL forms that are double- or triple-marked for plurality (see section 4.7). A third clue to the grammaticalization of 2PL forms was identified in the reanalysis of some forms into possessive determiners and/or pronouns, i.e. *yous(e)*, *yall*, *you guys*, *you people*.

However, not all 2PL forms display signs of grammaticalization. Only five out of ten 2PL forms considered in the study occur with singular reference and/or mark possession (see table 5 below). If we hypothesise that the degree of grammaticalization of a 2PL form corresponds to the sum of the times it occurs with singular reference and as a possessive determiner or pronoun, the ranking from the most to the least grammaticalized forms would correspond to the one in table 5 below.

It is also visible in table 5 below why *y'all* and *yall* are claimed to represent two different stages of the grammaticalization of *you all*: only the most grammaticalized *yall* displays both processes of semantic change (from plural to singular reference) and reanalysis into a possessive determiner (see also section 6.4).

**Table 5 – List of 2PL forms from most to least grammaticalized (% out of the total number of occurrences of a 2PL form in the corpus)**

	SG	POSS	Total
1) <i>Yous(e)</i>	12.4%	2.1%	14.5%
2) <i>Yall</i>	3.8%	3.2%	7.0%
3) <i>Y'all</i>	2.8%	-	2.8%
4) <i>You people</i>	0.6%	0.6%	1.2%
5) <i>You guys</i>	-	0.2%	0.2%

A second process of linguistic change that possibly involves 2PL forms is pragmaticalization. This is mainly suggested by the frequent occurrence of 2PL forms in pragmatically charged contexts, which happens significantly more often than with standard *you* (see table 4 above) and suggests that pragmatic implicatures have become entrenched in the use of 2PL forms. The pragmaticalization of 2PL forms is further supported by their frequent use as attention-getters. The function of attention-getting is particularly relevant to the purpose of deducing the degree of pragmaticalization of 2PL forms as it is a mostly pragmatic, rather than referential, function (Portner 2004, 2007; Predelli 2008). The attention-getting function also offers a syntactic criterion for the identification of pragmaticalization: attention-getting 2PL forms (except for *you people*, see section 7.2) tend to occur in the right periphery of the sentence, which several linguists have observed is the main locus where pragmatic markers occur (Onodera and Suzuki 2007; Traugott 2013, 2016).

As with grammaticalization, if we suppose that the degree of pragmaticalization of a 2PL form corresponds to its frequency of occurrence in pragmatically charged contexts, the ranking would look like the one in table 6 below. According to the ranking, the most pragmaticalized 2PL forms are the out-group markers *you lot* and *you people*. These two forms rank very high because of their strong tendency to express contrast between the speaker and the interlocutors (see table 3 above), whereas they rarely work as neutral or positive plural markers.

**Table 6 – List of 2PL forms from most to least pragmaticalized (% out of the total number of occurrences of a 2PL form in the corpus)**

	AG	Pragmatically charged (POL, CONTR, EMPH, AG included)
1) <i>You lot</i>	6.2%	75.9%
2) <i>You people</i>	4.5%	74.0%
3) <i>You three</i>	8.0%	65.7%
4) <i>Y'all</i>	19.6%	57.0%

5) <i>You all</i>	1.6%	54.2%
6) <i>Yall</i>	5.4%	50.7%
7) <i>You guys</i>	1.4%	48.3%
8) <i>Yous(e)</i>	2.4%	44.3%
9) <i>You four</i>	2.2%	44.3%
10) <i>You two</i>	5.4%	35.1%

The third and fourth most pragmaticalized forms are *you three* and *y'all* (see table 6 above). In this case, the high frequencies of occurrence in pragmatically charged contexts seems to be related with the frequencies with which *you three* and *y'all* are used as attention getters: *you three* and *y'all* work as attention-getters 8.0% and 19.6% of the times they occur in the corpus respectively, which are also the highest frequencies of occurrence of 2PL/AG compared to the rest of the forms. Moreover, *y'all* was observed to be a frequent marker of emphasis (see table 3 above). *You all* ranks fifth because of its strong tendency to be used as an in-group marker that expresses inclusiveness and politeness (see section 6.2). The sixth most pragmaticalized form is *yall*, which tends to be frequently used as an attention-getter as well as to express emphasis and contrast between the speaker and the interlocutor(s) (see table 3 above). As already said, *you guys* does not display a preference for being used as either an in-group or out-group marker, but nevertheless occurs in pragmatically charged contexts 48.3% of the times, in 17.6% of which it expresses emphasis. Even the percentage of *you guys*/AG is the lowest among the 2PL forms considered. Thus, *you guys* seems to be a neutral form as far as the semantic prosody is concerned, but still preserves a strong pragmatic character that does not allow it to be classified as a mere second person plural marker. *Yous(e)* and *you four* display similar frequencies of occurrence in pragmatically charged contexts. *Yous(e)* occurs as an attention-getter slightly more frequently than *you four*. Both are preferably used as in-group markers with *you four* displaying a stronger tendency than *yous(e)* to occur in contexts of politeness and be avoided in contexts in which the speaker and interlocutor(s) are in contrast. Finally, *you two* displays the lowest frequency of occurrence in pragmatically charged contexts compared to the rest of 2PL forms, despite being used as an attention-getter more often

than other forms (see table 3 above). The pragmatic character of *you two* is mostly related with the expression of emphasis (21.8% of the times it occurs in the corpus; see table 3 above) and the definition of social boundaries (i.e. two referents taken together vs. the rest of possible referents; cf. section 5.2). Despite the lower frequency of occurrence of *you two* in pragmatically charged contexts compared to other 2PL forms, 35.1% is still significantly more frequent than the percentage of occurrence of standard *you* in pragmatically charged contexts ( $p$  (t-test) = 0.0014). Thus, no 2PL form can be said to be used as a mere grammatical marker of plurality.

For some aspects, the process of pragmaticalization outlined here resembles another process of language change labelled ‘intersubjectification’ (Traugott 2003, 2011; see also section 3.5 for a more detailed account). The two processes share a common definition: both are concerned with pragmatic implicatures that become part of the semantics of a linguistic expression and the development of propositional content into pragmatic content (Erman and Kotsinas 1993, Aijmer 1997, Traugott 2003, Diewald 2011). However, as already explained in section 3.5, intersubjectification is further defined as the process that results into linguistic expressions in which the speaker expresses his/her attention to the addressee’s face (Benveniste 1971, Traugott 2003, 2011). As much as this is a definition that captures some of the uses of 2PL forms, the identification of intersubjectification poses some challenges: since, to the best of my knowledge, to date there is no model for its operationalisation, as already pointed out by Traugott (2011), intersubjectification is very difficult to identify and to keep separate from pragmaticalization. Even the syntactic criterion identified by Traugott (2013) for the identification of intersubjectified elements, which is the occurrence of the linguistic expression in the right periphery of the sentence, is typical of pragmatic markers in general (Traugott 2016).

Furthermore, all language, especially conversation, can be said to be to a certain degree intersubjective, since to have a successful exchange, the speaker has to constantly take the addressee’s communicative needs into account (Schriffin 1990, Nuyts 2001, Verhagen 2005, Langacker 2006; cf. section 3.5), including the addressee’s face (cf. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, Ide 1989, Scollon and Scollon 2001). Therefore, it is hard to establish whether features such as 2PL forms, which are born as personal deictics and, for this reason, are intrinsically intersubjective, have undergone further intersubjectification.

More generally, the label 'intersubjectification' does not seem to encompass all the directions in which 2PL forms have pragmatically evolved. While it is true that 2PL forms are involved in the management of the speaker-hearer relationship by marking the in-group and out-group, familiarity and informality, they also mark non-intersubjective pragmatic meaning such as emphasis and acquire a procedural role in conversation when working as attention-getters.

Therefore, if we choose to speak about intersubjectification of 2PL forms, it has to be considered as a sub-process of pragmaticalization rather than an independent one. For as much as pragmatic implicatures become part of the semantics of a linguistic expression in both cases, not all pragmatic implicatures entail an intersubjective function. When considering 2PL forms, in particular, the process of intersubjectification can only be seen as the strengthening of the degree of intersubjectivity of 2PL forms that, being personal deictics, are already intersubjective by definition.

The question emerges as to whether intersubjectification should be considered as a sub-process of pragmaticalization more generally, i.e. when linguistic elements that are not already intersubjective are taken into account. The similarity in the definitions of the two processes as well as the syntactic similarities in terms of occurrence of intersubjectified and pragmaticalized elements in the right periphery of the sentence seem to point in that direction. Obviously, further studies that take into account a wider variety of linguistic expressions are required. Supporting the idea that intersubjectification is a sub-process of pragmaticalization would involve highlighting the development of pragmatic uses besides intersubjective ones within the process of linguistic evolution of an expression.

As already mentioned in section 2.7, many issues concerning the boundaries between grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and intersubjectification can be overcome by adopting a constructionalist perspective (cf. Traugott and Trousdale 2014). The theory of constructionalization provides a holistic picture of the development of linguistic items and expressions such as 2PL forms, as it considers the different dimensions of language, i.e. phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics, as integrated. In other words, the language dimensions are gradient, fluid and constantly interact with each other, which is why one dimension should not be considered separately from the others. "Constructionalization", thus, comes to indicate

any kind of linguistic change that generates a new form-meaning pairing, irrespectively of it being a change in the phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, collocational range or a combination of these. In this view, the linguistic development of 2PL forms can be analysed according to the mechanisms and principles of constructionalization, i.e. schematicity, productivity, analogy, neoanalysis (or reanalysis) and conventionalisation (cf. section 2.7). On the phonological level, 2PL forms display instances of both enrichment and reduction. Enrichment can be observed in suffixed 2PL forms such as *yous(e)* whereby the 2PL form is marked with the suffix *-s* out of analogy with the construction for making regular plurals in English. Analogy can also be observed in double-marked expressions such as *yous(e) guys* (cf. section 4.6). On the other hand, phonological reduction can be observed in *y(')all* and *yinz* which represent neoanalysed versions of the original forms *you all* and *you ones*. Mirroring the change in form, 2PL forms were also observed to have expanded the range of functions they can perform, which corresponds to an increased schematicity and productivity. A wider range of functions was also observed in forms that do not display phonological change, such as *you guys*, *you lot*, *you people*, *you two*, *you three*, *you four*. As far as grammatical marking is concerned, some 2PL forms have shifted from marking plurality only to being used to refer to singular referents to marking possession. However, not all the 2PL forms analysed have reached the same level of schematicity: as already mentioned and observable in table 2 above, only *yous(e)*, *yall*, *you guys* and *you people* display instances of possessive marking. Similarly, only *yous(e)*, *y'all*, *yall*, and *you people* are used with singular reference. A reverse tendency was observed for the pragmatics of 2PL forms, which seems to have become more specialised rather than schematic. At present, 2PL forms are preferred (conventionalised) forms for intersubjective contexts in which they express emphasis, politeness, contrast and work as attention-getters.

# 9 Conclusion

The aim of the present work has been the investigation of 2PL forms in World Englishes. In particular, the definitions of 2PL forms provided in English dictionaries, reference grammars and other linguistic studies have been compared to the description of 2PL forms that emerges from a corpus-based analysis. The results of the analysis add some new insight into the forms and functions of 2PL forms: firstly, the geographical distribution of 2PL forms is much wider than the one identified in the literature. Instances of 2PL forms were found in all the 20 varieties sampled in the GloWbe corpus, which means that 2PL forms are widely used in the countries where English is the first official language as well as those in which English is a second official language. In other words, 2PL forms seem to be an angloversal, i.e. one of English vernacular universals (Mair 2003, Chambers 2004).

As far as the functions of 2PL forms are concerned, the forms were observed to have a much more complex pragmatics than generally portrayed. In the literature, 2PL forms are described as performing up to three functions: to mark plurality, familiarity/informality and possession. However, 2PL forms in World Englishes appear to be principally pragmatic features and only secondly referential ones. As much as they might be born as plurals of *you*, it seems that they have developed a strong pragmatic character that can be observed in their way of functioning as essential tools for the creation and management of the speaker-hearer relationship as well as the expression of emphasis and the speaker's attitude. Every time 2PL forms are used, the degree of involvement of the speaker is high, as feelings, emotions, opinions and contrasts are going to be expressed. Forms such as *you all*, *you* + cardinal number and *yous(e)* are

used to express politeness and, thus, contribute to building and maintaining a positive relationship with the interlocutors. Forms such as *you people* and *you lot* are used to take distance and thus help create the social boundaries of in-group and out-group. Forms such as *y'all* are used to take and conclude turns in conversation as well as seek the interlocutors' attention and understanding, thus acquiring a procedural role in the alternation of utterances in a conversational exchange. The highly pragmatic character of 2PL forms is something that distinguishes them from standard *you*, whose use is mostly referential and often impersonal.

I have shown how 2PL forms display signs of linguistic evolution that can be linked back to the processes of grammaticalization and pragmaticalization by combining the analysis of synchronic data with the literature on 2PL forms and the relevant theories on language change. Intersubjectification is also taken into account, although considered as a subprocess of pragmaticalization in the case of 2PL forms, which, besides having developed a strong intersubjective character, have also acquired non-intersubjective pragmatic functions, such as the expression of emphasis and attention-getting (see section 8.4). It was also shown how the issues concerning the boundaries between grammaticalization, pragmaticalization and intersubjectification can be overcome by adopting a constructionalist perspective to the development of 2PL forms.

Furthermore, the pragmatic analysis of the form *yous(e)* adds support to the theory of morphopragmatics, i.e. pragmatic meaning marked through morphology (Dressler and Barbaresi 2015; see also section 4.7). This is especially visible in the occurrences of singular-reference *yous(e)* in which the pronoun is not used to mark plurality but familiarity, informality and/or emphasis. Although characterised by a different etymology, McCumber (2010) had already noted the pragmatic use of the *-s* suffix in English: slang *-s* is found in expressions such as *whatevs*, *totes*, and *for reals* as a suffix that marks informality and/or familiarity. The *-s* suffix in 2PL forms originates from the plural-marking suffix *-s* but, similarly to slang *-s*, has also developed into a marker of pragmatic meaning on personal pronouns.

A detailed analysis of the reanalysed instances of 2PL forms into possessive determiners and pronouns shows that possessive 2PL forms are used not only to mirror the number of the possessors (possessive 2PL forms are also used with singular



possessors) but also to indicate a close relationship between the possessor(s) and possessed item, which can be interpreted in terms of inalienability (e.g. body parts, a person's inner self) or cause-effect relationship (e.g. the speaker is the cause of his/her thoughts, decisions, wishes) (see section 4.2.3).

Overall, 2PL forms represent evidence supporting the fact that personal deictics do undergo linguistic change and are far from being a fixed, closed class of elements, contrary to what often claimed in the literature (see, for example, Lyons 1977, Heine and Narrog 2011: 40). In fact, the range of functions that can be expressed by 2PL forms is rich and essential to the management of the speaker-hearer relationship as well as the exchange of content in conversation.

There are, however, some limitations to the present study. These mainly concern three aspects: the nature and availability of data for some forms and English varieties, the accuracy with which the corpus classifies which linguistic material belongs to which geographical variety, and the lack of a diachronic analysis of the functions of 2PL forms. The corpus is compiled with web-based language, which means that, although the language on forums and chats very much resembles spoken language, it is still written. Therefore, the data might still be affected by the medium, which brings about its own conventions (e.g. punctuation) and reaction times (not necessarily immediate), hence reducing the naturalness that would characterise the speech flow. Another limitation of the corpus concerns the size of the geographical subsections: the subsections that sample the language of the Outer Circle varieties are much smaller than the ones of the Inner Circle varieties (section 3.1). This might affect the frequencies of occurrence, given that some 2PL forms are very infrequent in English in general (e.g. *yous(e)*, *you four*, *you ones*) and become even less likely to occur in smaller datasets. Furthermore, the corpus does not include English-based pidgins and creoles, other 2PL forms belonging to these varieties had to be excluded from the analysis. A third issue with the corpus concerns the assignment of the language data to a geographical subsection. This operation is carried out by a software that takes into account the location clues available on the webpage where the data are found (e.g. the domain *.uk*, *.ie*, etc., the IP address). However, this method can be inaccurate: some domains (such as *.com*) do not contain geographical information, and, at the same time, users from any place in the world can interact on forums and web pages of other countries. Moreover, neither the domain of the web page nor the IP address are the best predictors of the variety of English a

particular user is speaking: does the language produced by a Spanish-L1 speaker who lives in the UK count as British English? The answer most linguists would give is likely to be negative, yet if this speaker posts on a web page with a UK domain name or with a UK-based IP address the corpus would nevertheless classify their language as British English. Thus, a follow-up study of this work should test the results of the analysis I have obtained on a different dataset which would ideally be composed of spoken material classified according to the dialects of the speakers (e.g. the ICE corpora).

Furthermore, the corpus does not provide the metadata about the users of 2PL forms. In order to obtain at least partial information about the speakers, the co-text and expanded context of occurrence of 2PL forms were analysed. Many web pages contained information about the users that could be deduced from their account names and information as well as from other information provided by the speakers themselves in the conversation. However, the availability of sociolinguistic information such as age, gender, social group, level of education, etc. will certainly be prioritised in the choice of a corpus for follow-up work, as it will contribute in an essential way to the refinement of the pragmatic generalisations made on the uses of 2PL forms.

A final issue that should be addressed in future follow-up work concerns the need for a diachronic analysis of the development of the functions of 2PL forms. This would essentially contribute to the discussion about the process of constructionalization of 2PL forms, which, in the present work, draws mainly on synchronic data (see section 3.2) and inferences informed by our general understanding of the diachronic processes of language change.

Finally, the research on 2PL forms would benefit from including data on the speaker's judgement of the forms in terms of their degree of acceptability in more or less formal contexts of interaction as well as of the awareness of the different functions and semantic implicatures related to their use.

Despite the limitations due to the nature and availability of data listed above, a cross-variety corpus-based research on 2PL forms has provided valuable insights into the pragmatics of the forms by combining the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of analysis. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first work that aims to provide a detailed description and comparison of the forms and functions of 2PL forms in 20 varieties of English based on their distribution and the analysis of the context the forms

occur in. The existing literature on the subject focussed on the description of either single forms (e.g. Tillery *et al.* 2000 on *you all* and *yall* in US English), the quantitative dimension of 2PL forms alone (e.g. Kortmann and Schneider 2004) or did not use corpus data as a base for their generalisations (e.g. Johnstone 2013).

Such empirically-informed description of the forms, functions and distribution of 2PL forms can also have useful implications for teaching: the students of English as a second language can – and should – be made aware of the existence of the different forms of the second person pronoun besides standard *you* as well as the usage tendencies that characterise each form. As a consequence, the students will also be reminded of the intrinsic variation of language and the importance of knowing about the non-standard, spoken features, which are an integral part of everyday speech. Teaching about 2PL forms also means providing a less distorted picture of the pronominal system in English, which is richer than usually portrayed, if varieties other than the standard are taken into account.

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