

The Dominant English Type within the World Wide Web Domains of France and its Former Colonies

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Abstract

The stark contrast between British and American English can be seen in many books, journals or on the internet. Most countries have their own domain on the World Wide Web (WWW), making it possible to examine which variety of English is preferred in a given national WWW domain, even in countries with a national language other than English. This paper investigates whether the English used in the WWW domains of France (.fr) and its former colonies of Vietnam (.vn), Laos (.ln), Mauritius (.mu) and Senegal (.sn) is dominated by British English, American English or neither?

The decision was taken to make use of the CRISP-DM methodology and Bootcat Corpus Tool because of its ease of use to build a corpus and its ability to process the data quickly. The results were analyzed and formulas were deployed to calculate that British English is more dominant overall in Francophone domains compared to American English. However, some local variation was observed: American English is more widespread in Vietnam, probably due to American political influence after the end of French colonization; and, more surprisingly, American English seems more prevalent than British English in the .FR domain of France.

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