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“That’s well cool”- recent changes in the use of intensifiers in the Spoken BNC2014

Intensifiers such as *very*, *really* and *so* typically precede adjectives with an emphasising function. They hold a great fascination because of their variability and the changes they undergo. However they have been difficult to study because of the lack of spoken corpora representing contemporary English. The situation is now changing and we can study phenomena characteristic of spoken language on the basis of authentic corpus data in the recent Spoken BNC 2014 which also contains sociolinguistic information about the speakers. In my talk I will discuss some intensifiers in contemporary English which are either upcoming or losing in popularity as shown by a comparison with the older British National Corpus from the 1990s. The intensifiers *really*, *so*, *super* and *well* are increasing in frequency. Speakers say things like *well bad*, *well shameful*, *well good pizza*. Other intensifiers such as *dead (funny)* are becoming less frequent).