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CORPUS AS THE OBJECT OF LINGUISTIC RESEARCH

Khodjaeva Dilafruz Izatilloevna
PhD, Bukhara State University, d.i.xodjaeva@buxdu.uz

ABSTRACT

This article explores the role of corpora in linguistic research, highlighting their significance in studying language usage, structure, and change. It classifies corpora into various types, including spoken and written, annotated and unannotated, as well as synchronic and diachronic corpora. The discussion emphasizes the applications of corpora in different fields such as lexicography, sociolinguistics, and computational linguistics. Special attention is given to corpus typology, methodological considerations in corpus construction, and the importance of annotation in linguistic analysis. The article also addresses the necessity of rigorous empirical methodologies and reliable sources in corpus-based studies, underscoring how corpus quality directly impacts the validity of linguistic research. Overall, it provides a comprehensive overview of corpus linguistics and its essential role in modern linguistic studies.

KEYWORDS: corpus, computer linguistics, corpora, annotated and unannotated corpora, synchronic and diachronic corpora, written and spoken corpora, real-life language.

Introduction.

In linguistic research, a corpus is a collection of texts or speech recordings compiled based on a specific system and serves as a fundamental resource for studying language usage, structure, and variability. As researchers aim to study linguistic phenomena in their natural contexts, the significance of corpora becomes increasingly evident. Corpora not only reflect real-life language use but also provide large-scale data that facilitate drawing important conclusions about linguistic characteristics, language change, and cognitive processes[1] (McEnery & Hardie, 2012).

Corpora are classified into several categories based on their characteristics, purpose, and contextual representation. The primary categories include spoken and written, annotated and unannotated, as well as synchronic and diachronic corpora. Spoken corpora consist of transcriptions or recordings of speech, whereas written corpora encompass literature, media, and other written sources. Additionally, corpora can be either general or specialized. For example,

[1] McEnery T., Hardie A. Corpus Linguistics: Method, Theory and Practice. – Cambridge University Press, 2012.

specialized corpora focus on specific domains such as medical or legal language, while general corpora include a variety of topics and genres. Furthermore, there are subcategories such as learner corpora, which analyze the speech of non-native speakers, and parallel corpora, which compare translations in multiple languages. The applications of these corpora are extensive, spanning fields such as lexicography, linguistic diagnostics, sociolinguistic research, and computational linguistics[2].

The typology of modern corpora has attracted the attention of numerous scholars and remains a topic of ongoing discussion. Depending on the time period covered, corpora can be categorized as synchronic or diachronic. A synchronic corpus comprises linguistic data from a specific time frame, whereas a diachronic corpus includes textual data spanning years, decades, or centuries, allowing for the study of linguistic evolution over time. Various diachronic corpora have been developed worldwide, each designed with a specific purpose in mind[3].

This section aims to explore corpus types in greater depth, elucidate their fundamental principles, and discuss effective methods for their application. It will address key aspects of corpus compilation, such as representativeness and balance, as well as challenges encountered during analysis.

In academic research, it is crucial to support discussions with empirical evidence and correctly cite sources. This is particularly relevant in corpus linguistics, where reliance on empirical data is fundamental. The construction and analysis of corpora require adherence to rigorous methodologies. Using reliable and authoritative sources allows researchers to build upon previous studies, substantiate their conclusions, and ensure transparency in the research process. Ultimately, the accuracy and reliability of corpus-based findings largely depend on the quality of the corpora themselves. Therefore, understanding the strengths and limitations of corpora and determining their suitability for specific research questions is of paramount importance.

Spoken corpora consist of transcriptions of naturally occurring speech, which are crucial for phonetic, phonological, and discourse analysis, as they capture language as it is used in real-time. For example, the *Switchboard Corpus* comprises telephone conversations, while the *Cambridge and Birmingham Corpus of Spoken English* includes dialogues from various real-life situations[4].

Written corpora, on the other hand, contain texts from books, articles, and online materials. These corpora are particularly useful for grammatical and semantic analysis, as they preserve stylistic and textual structures. The *British National Corpus* (BNC), for instance, is a large-scale written corpus encompassing diverse genres, making it instrumental in research on lexical richness, grammatical structures, and textual coherence[5]. Additionally, written corpora are extensively employed in modern *Natural Language Processing* (NLP) applications to develop language models, further highlighting their significance in both scientific and technological domains.

If a corpus is unannotated, it consists of raw text without any modifications or additional information. Annotated corpora, however, are invaluable for linguistic research as they contain supplementary layers of linguistic data. These annotations may include *Part-of-Speech* (POS) tagging, syntactic parsing, semantic role labeling, or discourse markers. Resources like Penn Treebank, which is a syntactically annotated corpus, serve as fundamental datasets for syntactic parsers[6]. Such annotations enable researchers to delve deeper into linguistic phenomena and uncover complex interrelations.

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[2] Sinclair, J. *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation*. - Oxford University Press, 1991.

[3] Ataboyev N.B. Mediamatnlar diaxronik korpusida til rivojining empirik tahlil tamoyillar. – Filol. f. d-ri diss... – Farg'ona, 2024. – B. 44.

[4] McEnery T., Wilson A. Corpus Linguistics: An Introduction. – Edinburgh University Press, 2001. – P. 175.

[5] Burnard L. Reference guide for the British National Corpus (XML edition). – Oxford University Computing Services, 2007.

[6] Marcus M.P., Marcinkiewicz M.A., Santorini B. Building a Large Annotated Corpus of English: The Penn Treebank. – Computational Linguistics, 1993. – P. 313-330.

Corpus annotation is the process of adding linguistic information to a dataset, such as marking the grammatical category of words and their syntactic features. For instance, POS tagging is particularly useful for distinguishing homographs—words with the same spelling but different meanings or pronunciations. Take the word "present", for example, which can function as a noun (meaning "gift"), a verb ("to give a presentation"), or an adjective ("existing or current"). The pronunciation also varies: as a verb, the stress falls on the second syllable (*preSENT*), while as a noun or adjective, the stress remains on the first syllable (*PRESent*).

A basic method of annotation involves adding tags to words using underscores. For example:

- present_NN1 (singular common noun)
- present_VVB (base form of a lexical verb)
- present_JA (general adjective)

Conclusion.

Overall, the diversity of corpora underscores the breadth and depth of linguistic research. Whether spoken, written, annotated, general, or specialized, each type of corpus serves a unique research purpose. Properly conducted annotation, adhering to established standards, significantly enhances the utility of a corpus. The effectiveness of a corpus ultimately depends on its quality, making it essential for researchers to employ robust methodologies in corpus construction and analysis.

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