



## Corpus Analysis for Descriptive and Pedagogical Purposes. ESP Perspectives.

**Maurizio Gotti and Davide S. Giannoni (eds).**

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GOTTI and GIANNONI's *Corpus Analysis for Descriptive and Pedagogical Purposes* analyses and describes ESP language and settings following a corpus methodology. It offers the state of art in (a) corpus methodology, (b) corpus-based language description, and (c) pedagogical applications.

Section 1 “examines some general questions concerning the relationship between the field of corpus linguistics and that of specialised discourse.” (page 13) FLOWERDEW differentiates between “bottom-up analyses” and “top-down approaches”, and concludes that corpus analyses are much determined by the software used, the purpose of the investigation, and that it focuses on syntagmatic matters.

BONDI integrates Corpus Linguistics and Genre Studies with the aim of showing how corpus linguistics can be used to “heighten learners’ awareness of language in use” (page 45) and to support “authorial voice and reader orientation” (page 47). For instance, the author claims “you” is used in popular discourse whereas “we” is used more frequently in academic journals to show epistemic modality.

CHENG explores two-word co-occurrences in order to identify phraseology tendency in English, and suggests directions for developments in phraseological research and pedagogy. Her findings show that there exist “word co-occurrences that are specific to different sections of empirical journal articles” (page 84). This finding suggests that such co-selections tend to be more generic in the discussion, literature review and abstract than in the other sections of the RAs, in which they are more specific in nature.

NESI investigates citation practices in the *BAWE* Corpus. She centres on in-text citation in four sub-disciplines and explains in detail the corpus query techniques used. Her findings show that interdisciplinary variation regarding in-citation practices is widespread, that several learning activities should be

carried out with the aim of facilitating students' practices. The methodology used can also serve for reproducing more studies and for illustrating the kind of teaching activities that may be necessary to help students to cope with citation problems and difficulties.

PÉREZ-LLANTADA reviews critically “the main research trends used to analyse genres by means of multilingual corpora” (page 107), examines the reasons behind the small number of contrastive analyses regarding academic English, and discusses some of the main challenges to be faced if large-scale empirical studies of Academic English would be undertaken. Her main conclusions cast serious doubts on the same concept of Academic English as this is mostly used in the literature.

Section 2 describes analyses of selected linguistic features, carried out with the use of relevant specialised corpora and covering subject matters such as law blogs, newsroom discourse and astronomy. STAPLES and BIBER analyse the use of grammatical stance devices in medical discourse, particularly those used in nurse-patient interactions. Their findings indicate that nurses and patients use stances differently to speakers in general conversation.

PARTINGTON has two research aims (a) to examine “how speakers mark importance both at local and more macro levels” in a particular discourse type (page 143); (b) to demonstrate that the combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses is very effective in investigating “importance marking” in discourse. He uses a corpus comprising transcripts of talks downloaded from the *TED* Website (<https://www.ted.com/>) to describe several types of importance-markers and signal their role in discourse organisation and evaluation and demonstrates its usefulness at macro and micro levels. He finishes by opening up several lines of research.

GARZONE focuses on “blawgs”, i.e. “blogs used by the legal and professional community to exchange scholarly opinions, to debate topical issues and discuss important legal cases” (page 167). The author finds that “individualistic self-expression” is maintained in contrast to the typical characteristics of legal discourse, which aims to use impersonal features. She also finds that there are some linguistic devices, e.g. the second-person pronoun, which are used to build a sense of community and that metadiscourse devices are also used in order to approach the author's own experience.

CRESPO investigates female authorial voice between 1700 and 1900 in the *Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing*. After explaining the main

characteristics of the preface as a genre, she analyses contractions, first-person pronouns, pronoun “it”, second-person pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, “not”-negation, emphatics, causative subordination, discourse particles, indefinite pronouns, hedges, amplifiers, private verbs, possibility modals and some adverbial subordinators. She offers results segmented by century, genre, and frequency. These reveal that women reassess their presence in texts, although there are some differences regarding the three main variables under investigation.

MOSKOWICH and MONACO also investigate women’s authorial voice in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their analysis focuses on the expression of abstraction, as this can be observed by studying linguistic devices such as the use of certain conjuncts, passive clauses, “by”-phrases and subordinating conjunctions. They find that women writers of scientific texts also used an impersonal style.

FACCHINETTI offers insights in using Corpus Linguistics methods for compiling a bilingual glossary (English and Italian) of 498 entries of newsroom language. Each entry contains (a) a brief explanatory definition; (b) two examples of use from Italian newsroom jargon; (c) the equivalent entry in English; (d) phonetic transcription of its pronunciation; (e) two examples in English; (f) if applicable, lexico-grammatical information specifying peculiarities of lemmas and equivalents; (g) if applicable, sub-headwords; and (h) examples of use.

SALVI analyses the construal of political and banking language for institutional purposes by integrating a quantitative analysis of her small corpus with a Critical Discourse approach, which allows her to deal with issues such as cultural keywords and interpersonal. Her main finding is that in institutional settings facts and propaganda are interchangeable.

JOHNSON uses a corpus-based approach to investigate “risk” as perceived in two periods of British history. Her findings indicate that “risk” has changed. In 1993, risk was mainly perceived in connection with medical and economic problems, whereas in 2005 risk is mostly associated with violence and victimisation.

The third section “presents chapters dealing with the use of corpus resources for the teaching of specialised discourse” (page 18). COXHEAD “looks at links between corpus linguistics, ESP, vocabulary, and pedagogy” (page 289). She observes the challenges of working with corpora in ESP classrooms, offers some clues regarding the importance of specialised

vocabulary and the use of corpora for identifying specialised vocabulary, and comments the characteristics of some corpora and corpus tools, e.g. Kilgarriff's *Sketch Engine*.

LIARDÉT observes uses of grammatical metaphor in a learner corpus of Chinese students by integrating Systemic Functional Linguistics and Corpus Linguistics. She analyses the learners' deployment of grammatical metaphor with the aim of integrating the findings in a writing syllabus which will empower "learners to achieve advanced proficiency" (page 324).

SCHMIED includes the role culture and discipline play in his analysis of the personal pronouns, modal auxiliaries, and cohesive linkers found in the *ZAMA* Corpus, i.e. a corpus compiled with MA theses at Stellenbosch University. The author finds that discipline conventions are important whereas individual and group-specific differences are not relevant at all.

HILTUNEN and MÄKINEN analyse the use of formulaic language by non-native speakers of English. They compare several corpora and indicate that the teaching of formulaic language is necessary and that differences in their use are not correlated with native language but with personal choice.

MANSFIELD describes how she uses corpora in the classroom to increase the language awareness of graduates enrolled at the University of Parma. Her chapter shows several uses of corpora for language learning and teaching, two of which merit my attention: (a) the use of corpora allows students and instructors to search for meaning in context; and (b) using corpora leads learners to be more creative.

In general, this volume is another important contribution to the field of Corpus Linguistics and I strongly recommend it. It has three main characteristics. The first one is that it offers interesting works with publicly-available corpora, and these can be replicated. The second one is that it also includes works with in-house corpora, whose results must be taken as an act of faith. Finally, some chapters offer a good view of the state-of-art in Corpus Linguistics, something that is always welcome.

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