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Article



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ENGLISH CONTEMPORARY CORPORA LIST

Abstract: The development of corpus linguistics as well as the construction of modern corpora is one of the current issues of linguistics. In XXI century, the use of corpora plays a leading role in most linguistic research. At present, a number of new corpora exist, with the volume reaching several billion words. The large volume of corpora made it possible to carry out scientific studies on a larger scale and to compile dictionaries that are more voluminous.

Key words: corpus, Corpus of Contemporary American English, The Oxford English Corpus, The Cambridge International Corpus, The American National Corpus, The Open American National Corpus, Google Books Ngram Viewer, The News on the Web, The Global Web-based corpus of English.

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Introduction

Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) is the largest (560 million words) corpus of American English that includes a wide variety of texts of various genres. The corpus was created by Mark Davis, Professor of Corpus linguistics at Brigham Young University from 2000 to 2003¹. COCA is a mixed-type corpus, since it contains both written texts (fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, scientific literature and etc.) and spoken language. The corpus contains 560 million words and includes texts from 1990 to the present.

Written corpus is represented by such genres as fiction: short stories and plays from literary magazines, children's literature, first chapters of books published since 1990, as well as film scripts (113 million uses); texts from popular magazines such as Time, Cosmopolitan, Men's Health, Good Housekeeping, Fortune, Christian Century, Sports Illustrated (118 million uses); newspaper article texts are from 10 newspapers across America: USA Today, New York Times, Atlanta Journal Constitution, San Francisco Chronicle (114 million uses); scientific articles from

100 peer reviewed journals in different fields of science².

In the corpus, the volume of spoken texts is 118 million word uses. This sub-corpus contains transcripts, video and audio recordings from a wide range of radio and television programmes: All Things Considered (NPR), Newshour (PBS), Good Morning America (ABC), Today Show (NBC), 60 Minutes (CBS), Hannity and Colmes (Fox).

The corpus is accompanied by WordAndPhrase. The search interface provides a wide range of features: search for words, phrases, lemmas, grammatical forms, synonymous series and etc. The corpus is updated twice a year and is convenient for tracking the dynamics of linguistic changes. This is the most widely used structured text corpus, with approximately 10,000 users every month.

The Oxford English Corpus

The Oxford English Corpus is the largest corpus ever created. It contains over 2 billion words and reflects the state of the modern English in the entire area of its distribution. In addition to British and American English there are varieties of English from Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, the Caribbean,

¹ Kauhanen, Henri The Corpus of Contemporary American English: Background and history. <http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/CoRD/corpora/COCA/index.html>

² The Corpus of Contemporary American English.URL: <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca/>

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Canada, India, Singapore and South Africa. It contains texts which are created since 2000, the bulk of the materials are placed on the World Wide Web. The written texts are taken from literary novels, academic journals, daily newspapers and magazines, moreover, email letters, texts from social media and web blogs. The corpus is available only to Oxford University Press researchers and utilized for compiling dictionaries³.

The Cambridge International Corpus

The Cambridge International Corpus was created as a base for compiling educational materials and dictionaries of the English language. The corpus includes British and American texts of various types, native speakers' spoken speech recordings with a total volume of over 700 million word uses.

The Cambridge English Corpus includes examples of modern written English from a variety of sources, including newspapers, journals, novels, letters, emails, textbooks, blogs, and more. Moreover, the corpus includes a wide range of spoken English from a number of sources, including daily conversations, phone calls, radio broadcasts, interviews, speeches, meetings, TV shows, and lectures.

A number of advanced corpora are included into the Cambridge English Corpus:

The Cambridge Business English Corpus

The Cambridge Business English Corpus is a huge compilation of British and American business language that includes reports and articles, business books, and business sections from several national newspapers.

The Cambridge Legal English Corpus

The Cambridge Legal English Corpus is a collection of books, papers and newspaper articles regarding law and legal procedures.

The Cambridge Financial English Corpus

The Cambridge Financial English Corpus includes texts from leading financial magazines and journals, as well as texts related to economics and finance.

The Cambridge Academic English Corpus

The Cambridge Academic English Corpus includes written and spoken academic language from a variety of US and UK institutions, including lectures, conferences, student presentations, articles, essays, and textbooks at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

The Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English

The Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE) is a compilation of spoken English captured in a variety of situations in hundreds of locations throughout the British Isles (e.g. casual conversation, socialising, finding out information and discussions). Cambridge University

Press and the University of Nottingham collaborated on the development of the CANCODE corpus.

The Cambridge Corpus of Spoken North American English

The Cambridge Corpus of Spoken North American English (CAMSNAE) is a massive corpus of spoken English from North America. It contains recordings of people going about their daily lives, at work, at home with their friends, shopping, eating and so on.

The Cambridge University Press/Cornell Corpus

The Cambridge University Press/Cornell Corpus is a vast selection of North American English including family/friend conversations which are casual, highly interactive and multiparty. The Cambridge-Cornell corpus is the product of a collaboration between Cornell University and Cambridge University Press.

The American National Corpus

The American National Corpus (ANC) is a corpus of American English consisting 22 million words from written and spoken sources published since 1990. The corpus is modeled on the British National corpus (BNC) and intended to reflect the American version of modern English. The corpus creates the most complete picture of American English for further research in linguistics, education, lexicography and technology.

The project is implemented by an organization called the Linguistic Data Consortium. This consortium, founded in 1992 with a grant from the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA), includes universities, companies and government research laboratories. The organization is led by the University of Pennsylvania.

The ANC Consortium development team, comprising 15 publishers and a group of programmers, was set up to collect and process the information and decided to prepare the corpus in such a way that it would be compatible with existing software.

The first release of 11 million words of ANC took place in 2003. This version was a test version and was intended to analyze and identify weaknesses in the corpus. The next release was made in 2005. The size of the corpus doubled and amounted to 22 million words. The size and composition of this corpus does not allow to consider it as a representative corpus of American English. So far the developers have not reached the optimal volume for national corpora of 100 million words.

The Open American National Corpus

The Open American National Corpus was developed on the basis of the ANC. This version is inferior in size to the previous 2005 version and the corpus contains 15 million words.

³ The Oxford English Corpus URL:
<https://www.sketchengine.eu/oxford-english-corpus/>

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The Open American National Corpus (OANC) and its subcorpus The Manually Annotated Sub-Corpus (MASC) are American English text corpora. The corpus contains all genres of texts as well as transcripts of spoken data from 1990 onward. The Manually Annotated Sub-Corpus (MASC) as a whole contains 500 thousand words.

The main drawback is that in order to work with the Open American National Corpus it is necessary to install the corpus and a concordance program on a computer. Of all the available corpus managers, WordsmithTool is suitable for the Open American National Corpus. The process of installing the Open American National Corpus is measured in hours, and the processing of a single request goes beyond one minute. In doing so, the user customizes the settings for the installation of the annotation, which is contained separately from the corpus. This allows the user to work with an unannotated enclosure or to add only the information that the user needs. This option is probably intended to speed up the search for information on the enclosure. However, annotated and “clean” enclosures installed on medium specification computers take equally long to process queries. The main achievement of the developers is annotation, made to the standards set by the BNC Consortium.

Currently, the corpus is constantly being updated and when completed, this figure will increase to 100 million words. Words are arranged by frequency of occurrence in speech-from the most frequent to the rarest.

The corpus is available for non-commercial use for a fee and part of it, 15 million words - available for free download from the website.

Google Books Ngram Viewer

Google Books Ngram Viewer, a corpus of digitised books published in 2009, which presents the

texts of over one billion e-books published between 1500 - 2008. In 2011, the Google Ngram Corpus exceeded 200 billion words. In 2014, the second version of the Google Books Corpus was released with 155 billion uses of the written American English discourse and 34 billion uses of the British English[4]. The Google Books corpus contains, in addition to English texts, a much smaller volume of texts in 6 languages: Chinese, Spanish, French, Russian, German, Italian and Hebrew.

The News on the Web (NOW)

The News on the Web (NOW) corpus (2016) currently exceeds 5.7 billion words. The authors write that the corpus contains English-language texts from “2012 to yesterday”. Every day, the corpus is updated with texts for 4-5 million word uses. Every night from 10:00 am to 1:00 am, the texts are uploaded to the corpus:

HTTrack reads Internet addresses (URLs) from Google News and downloads 9-10 thousand texts into the corpus, after which the repeated and template texts are removed using JusText. The markup and lemmatisation of the texts are carried out using the CLAWS 7 software, the texts are added to the main content of the corpus. On the website it is possible to track the most popular word of the day or of the year.

The Global Web-based corpus of English

The Global Web-based corpus of English (GloWbE) (2013), like the second-generation ICE corpus, aims to represent as many regional variants of English as possible around the world. This corpus contains the texts of web pages and websites of 20 regional variants of English. The GloWbE corpus is 100 times larger than the ICE corpus: it has a volume of 1.9 billion word uses[5].

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