The *European Literary Text Collection* (ELTeC)

A multilingual corpus of European novels (1840-1920)

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Context

Working Group 1. COST Action Distant Reading for European Literary History (CA16204)

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Objectives

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… build a multilingual European Literary Text Collection (ELTeC), (…) containing around 2,500 full-text novels in at least 10 different languages, ***permitting to test methods and compare results across national traditions.***[a]

[a] Memorandum of Understanding

- Avoid "Yet Another 19th-Century Novels corpus"
- Allow comparison between languages and cultural traditions.

Representativeness and balance

Non random corpus, but balanced.
Balance criteria:[1]

- Date: 1840 to 1920
  - 1840-1859 (T1)
  - 1860-1879 (T2)
  - 1880-1899 (T3)
  - 1900-1920 (T4)

[1] https://distantreading.github.io/sampling_proposal.html

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- Reprint count: at least 30 % “high” and 30 % “low”.
- Author gender: 10 ∽ 50 % female authors.
- Length: at least 20 % of
  - short (10k∽50k word tokens)
  - medium (50k∽100k word tokens)
  - long (>100k word tokens)

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Representativeness and balance

- Fictional prose narrative
- First edition as book between 1840 and 1920s.
- Published in a European country.
- No translations: originally written in the language of the collection.
- One novel per author. Only 9∽11 authors should be represented by three novels.

Annotation

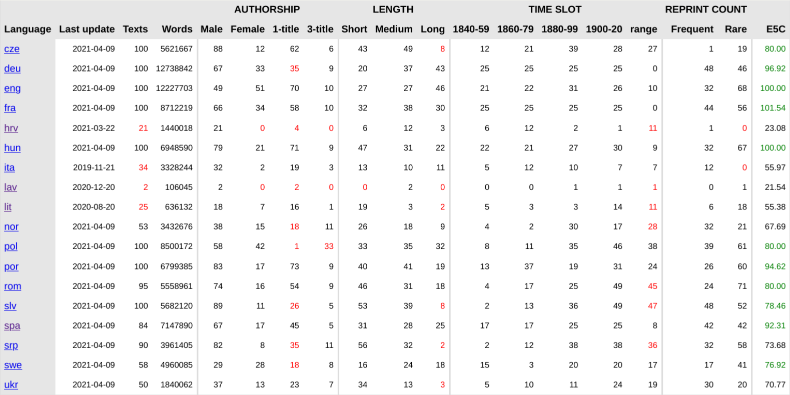
Each collection is organized in three levels:[2]

- Level 0: plain text.
- Level 1: XML-TEI.
  - TEI Header:
    - Author, title, extent.
    - Source
    - Profile: languages
    - Balance criteria
  - Structure.
  - Text tags as code switching, titles, “emphs”, verse lines or quotes.
- Level 2: Lemmas and PoS.

Example: Gómez de Avellaneda *Sab* 1841.

[2] https://distantreading.github.io/Schema/eltec-1.html

Current state



				AUTHORSHIP				LENGTH			TIME SLOT					REPRINT COUNT		
Language	Last update	Texts	Words	Male	Female	1-title	3-title	Short	Medium	Long	1840-59	1860-79	1880-99	1900-20	range	Frequent	Rare	E5C
cze	2021-04-09	100	5621667	88	12	62	6	43	49	8	12	21	39	28	27	1	19	80.00
deu	2021-04-09	100	12738842	67	33	35	9	20	37	43	25	25	25	25	0	48	46	96.92
eng	2021-04-09	100	12227703	49	51	70	10	27	27	46	21	22	31	26	10	32	68	100.00
fra	2021-04-09	100	8712219	66	34	58	10	32	38	30	25	25	25	25	0	44	56	101.54
hrv	2021-03-22	21	1440018	21	0	4	0	6	12	3	6	12	2	1	11	1	0	23.08
hun	2021-04-09	100	6948590	79	21	71	9	47	31	22	22	21	27	30	9	32	67	100.00
ita	2019-11-21	34	3328244	32	2	19	3	13	10	11	5	12	10	7	7	12	0	55.97
lav	2020-12-20	2	106045	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	21.54
lit	2020-08-20	25	636132	18	7	16	1	19	3	2	5	3	3	14	11	6	18	55.38
nor	2021-04-09	53	3432676	38	15	18	11	26	18	9	4	2	30	17	28	32	21	67.69
pol	2021-04-09	100	8500172	58	42	1	33	33	35	32	8	11	35	46	38	39	61	80.00
por	2021-04-09	100	6799385	83	17	73	9	40	41	19	13	37	19	31	24	26	60	94.62
rom	2021-04-09	95	5558961	74	16	54	9	46	31	18	4	17	25	49	45	24	71	80.00
slv	2021-04-09	100	5682120	89	11	26	5	53	39	8	2	13	36	49	47	48	52	78.46
spa	2021-04-09	84	7147890	67	17	45	5	31	28	25	17	17	25	25	8	42	42	92.31
srp	2021-04-09	90	3961405	82	8	35	11	56	32	2	2	12	38	38	36	32	58	73.68
swe	2021-04-09	58	4960085	29	28	18	8	16	24	18	15	3	20	20	17	17	41	76.92
ukr	2021-04-09	50	1840062	37	13	23	7	34	13	3	5	10	11	24	19	30	20	70.77

https://distantreading.github.io/ELTeC/index.html

ELTeC-SPA

Current situation:

- 84 novels (7147890 tokens).
- Balancing criteria satisfied:
  - Time slots: 17, 17, 25, 25.
  - Genre: 67 male and 17 female authors.
  - Size: 31 Short, 28 medium and 25 long.
  - Reprints: 42, 42.

List of novels

ELTeC-SPA

Text sources:

- Miguel de Cervantes Virtual Library (University of Alicante);
- CLIGS corpus (University of Würzburg), mainly for the two last periods;
- Hispanic Digital Library (Biblioteca digital hispánica) from the Spanish National Library (Biblioteca Nacional).

ELTeC-SPA - Development team

I have practically done all the selection, review and annotation work by myself, but I have had help from:

- Pilar Escobar, Gustavo Candela and other colleagues from the BVMC; as well as José Calvo from CLIGS, share with me novels annotated in XML-TEI.
- Lou Burnard provided me several scripts to transform between TEI formats: from BVMC or CLIGS format to ELTeC format.
- During the annotation process, I have had help from my students of the *Master of Literary Studies* at the University of Alicante.

Many thanks to all of them!

ELTeC-SPA - Problems

Compilation problems:

- It has been hard to find novels from the first period 1840-1859. There are few novels digitalized from this period.

Annotation problems:

- Perhaps the annotation of code switching:
  - sometimes it was difficult to find CS in the texts;
  - time consuming task.
- Other aspects were annotated with regular expressions and some patience.

Open issues

Languages: What about Catalan, Basque and Galician?

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- ELTeC-CAT: two novels under development:
    - Vayreda, Marià (1904) *La punyalada. Novela montanyenca*
    - Bosch de la Trinxeria, Carles (1889) *L'Heréu Noradell: estudi de família catalana*
- ELTeC-EUS :-(
- ELTeC-GLG :-(

Volunteers? Join the Action:

`https://www.distant-reading.net/about/participate/`

Open issues

Level 2 annotation:

- Part of Speech and lemma for each token.
- Universal dependencies.
- Automatic annotation with human validation of some fragments.

ELTeC corpus

- Development version: `https://github.com/COST-ELTeC`
- Stable versions:
  - Official `https://zenodo.org/communities/eltec`
  - TEIpublisher: `https://teipublisher.com/exist/apps/eltec/index.html`
  - GAMS: `http://glossa.uni-graz.at/context:eltec`
  - TextGRID (test): `https://dev.textgridrep.org/browse/3thgt.0`