**Introduction to Corpus Linguistics**

WiSe 2018-2019

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**Session 5. Collocations**

The goals of our today’s session is to learn

a) what collocations are;

b) how to find frequencies of combinations of two words in a UD corpus, parsed with the help of udpipe;

c) how to compute their collocation scores

Exercise

Provide the missing word:

Who \_\_\_\_\_ the beans?

\_\_\_\_\_ breads \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

We’ve decided to withdraw from the project for the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ future.

The wrong \_\_\_\_\_ of the stick.

Sorry I’m late. I’ll make \_\_\_\_ the time this evening.

He was in trouble, but the support of his fans pulled him \_\_\_\_.

His talk was an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ disaster!

Collocation = a sequence of words that co-occur more often than one could predict due to chance alone (i.e. based on the frequencies of the individual words).

Compare:

- *of* + *the*: both of and the are highly frequent, so it is not surprising than their combination is frequent, too.

- *foreseeable future*

*future* is a common word with 22,378 instances in the British National Corpus (Data: Taylor (2012: 107);

*foreseeable* is a rare word with 427 instances;

*foreseeable* + *future* occurs 294 times: two thirds of the total frequency of foreseeable!

For computing different measures of collocation strength, we need the following for frequencies for each pair of words:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Word 2** | **Not Word 2** | **Marginal row frequencies** |
| **Word 1** | a | b | a + b (the total frequency of Word 1) |
| **Not Word 1** | c | d | c + d (the total frequency of all words other than Word 1) |
| **Marginal column frequencies** | a + c  (the total frequency of Word 2) | b + d (the total frequency of all words other than Word 2) | Total size of corpus: N = a + b + c + d |

The frequency d can be computed as the total size of the corpus minus a, b and c.

Exercises

1. Compute the frequencies a, b, c and d and all marginal frequencies for *foreseeable* + *future*. The size of the British National Corpus is 100M words.

2. The formula for **expected frequency** is as follows:

E = (a + b)\*(a + c)/N = (F1\*F2)/N

where F1 is the frequency of the first word, F2 is the frequency of the second word, and N is the total corpus size.

Compute the **expected frequency** of foreseeable + future and compare it with the **observed frequency**!

Where can collocations be important?

* lexicography
* translation studies
* language teaching
* language for specific purposes (e.g. legal or scientific terminology)
* psycholinguistics and child language acquisition (pre-fabricated chunks)
* distributional models of semantics

**Data**

We’ll use a corpus compiled from online Wikipedia articles, which is freely available from the Leipzig Corpora Collection. One can also download news and miscellaneous websites in about 200 languages. The URL is as follows:

<http://wortschatz.uni-leipzig.de/de/download>

The corpus has already been parsed by myself (in order to save time!). Please save it locally first.

The corpus is available from GitHub. Its name is eng\_wiki\_ud.txt. Only 8 columns are available. This is what the first lines look like. The first line contains the column names. Do you remember what they mean?

token\_id token lemma upos xpos feats head\_token\_id dep\_rel

1 10 10 NUM CD NumType=Card 2 nummod

2 Years year NOUN NNS Number=Plur 6 nsubj

3 of of ADP IN NA 5 case

4 Time time NOUN NN Number=Sing 5 compound

5 Team team NOUN NN Number=Sing 2 nmod

6 presented present VERB VBD Mood=Ind|Tense=Past|VerbForm=Fin 0 root

7 a a DET DT Definite=Ind|PronType=Art 10 det

8 round round NOUN NN Number=Sing 10 compound

**R practice**

1. Open the corpus in R.

wiki <- read.table("eng\_wiki\_ud.txt", header = T, sep = "\t", quote = "")

dim(wiki)

#[1] 243131 8

head(wiki)

… #The same as in the corpus file

This means we have more than 243K tokens – words, numbers and punctuation marks. We won’t make a distinction between those for the time being. As you’ll see that won’t affect the results. See previous files for information how to remove punctuation marks.

2. Extract all lemmas.

wiki\_lemmas <- wiki$lemma

length(wiki\_lemmas)

#[1] 243131

3. Compute all frequencies of lemmas.

We’ll use the familiar function table() to compute the frequencies. For technical reasons, we need to transform the numeric vector with frequencies into a data frame.

wiki\_lemmas\_freq <- table(wiki\_lemmas)

sort(wiki\_lemmas\_freq, decreasing = TRUE)[1:20]

#wiki\_lemmas

#the , . be of and to a in " he as - have for that ( ) with by

#15130 10910 10347 7913 7190 5855 5355 5308 5149 2531 1999 1828 1805 1787 1785 1712 1681 1663 1482 1447

wiki\_lemmas\_freq\_df <- data.frame(lemma = names(wiki\_lemmas\_freq),

lemma\_freq= as.numeric(wiki\_lemmas\_freq))

head(wiki\_lemmas\_freq\_df)

#lemma lemma\_freq

#1 ' 369

#2 '' 1

#3 '. 1

#4 '06 1

#5 '60 1

#6 '74 1

You can see that there’s a lot of noise. We’ll ignore it for the time being.

4. Create pairwise combinations of words by putting together pairs of lemmas.

For example, the first lemma will go together with the second lemma, the second one with the third one, and so on. We can create two lists (factors) of lemmas: the left neighbour and the right neighbour. The last lemma doesn’t have another word on the right, so we exclude it.

wiki\_lemmas\_right <- wiki$lemma[2:243131]

length(wiki\_lemmas\_right)

#[1] 243130

wiki\_lemmas1 <- wiki\_lemmas[-243131]

wiki\_coll <- data.frame(left = wiki\_lemmas1, right = wiki\_lemmas\_right)

head(wiki\_coll)

#left right together

#1 10 year

#2 year of

#3 of time

#4 time team

#5 team present

#6 present a

Now we can create the combination of the words – candidates for collocations:

wiki\_coll$together <- as.factor(paste(wiki\_coll$left, wiki\_coll$right))

head(wiki\_coll)

#left right together

#1 10 year 10 year

#2 year of year of

#3 of time of time

#4 time team time team

#5 team present team present

#6 present a present a

5. Compute the frequencies of the combinations of words.

As usual, we use the function table(). As in Step 3, we need to create a data frame from the frequency vector.

wiki\_together\_freq <- table(wiki\_coll$together)

sort(wiki\_together\_freq, decreasing = TRUE)[1:10]

#of the . the in the , and , the to the . in it be and the ) .

#1966 1696 1284 1162 866 803 630 500 472 465

wiki\_together\_freq\_df <- data.frame(coll = names(wiki\_together\_freq),

freq\_coll = as.numeric(wiki\_together\_freq))

Not surprisingly, the function words and punctuation marks are the most frequent combinations. They are not interesting for us, however. What we need are those collocations that are more frequent than expected. For this purpose, we need to compute collocational strength, using the frequencies a, b, c and d.

6. Put together all frequencies: collocations and individual lemmas.

First, we get rid of repeated lines in the data frame with words and their combinations because we already have all frequency information. We only need unique combinations now. Note that this will make the list almost twice shorter.

wiki\_coll\_unique <- unique(wiki\_coll)

#[1] 134905 3

Next, we need to put all frequencies together. For each combination, we need to get the frequency of the left neighbour, the frequency of the right neighbour, and the frequency of the combination.

First, we add the frequency of the left neighbour:

wiki\_coll\_all <- merge(wiki\_coll\_unique, wiki\_lemmas\_freq\_df, by.x = "left", by.y = "lemma")

head(wiki\_coll\_all)

#left right together lemma\_freq

#1 ' bilingual ' bilingual 369

#2 ' Harbor ' Harbor 369

#3 ' average ' average 369

#4 ' training ' training 369

#5 ' Silent ' Silent 369

#6 ' attention ' attention 369

colnames(wiki\_coll\_all)[4] <- "freq\_left"

Next, we add the frequency of the right neighbour. Note that we use the same list of frequencies in wiki\_lemmas\_freq\_df!

wiki\_coll\_all <- merge(wiki\_coll\_all, wiki\_lemmas\_freq\_df, by.x = "right",

by.y = "lemma")

head(wiki\_coll\_all)

#right left together freq\_left lemma\_freq

#1 ' Tamagotchis Tamagotchis ' 2 369

#2 ' 'romance 'romance ' 1 369

#3 ' wholesaler wholesaler ' 2 369

#4 ' word word ' 117 369

#5 ' cold cold ' 12 369

#6 ' Boas Boas ' 4 369

colnames(wiki\_coll\_all)[5] <- "freq\_right"

Finally, we add the frequencies of the combinations.

wiki\_coll\_all <- merge(wiki\_coll\_all, wiki\_together\_freq\_df, by.x = "together", by.y = "coll")

head(wiki\_coll\_all)

#together right left freq\_left freq\_right freq\_coll

#1 '' " " '' 1 2531 1

#2 ' - - ' 369 1805 1

#3 ' " " ' 369 2531 6

#4 ' & & ' 369 52 1

#5 ' ( ( ' 369 1681 2

#6 ' ) ) ' 369 1663 4

7. Compute the frequencies b, c and d.

Now we have the frequency a (freq\_coll) from the table. But we need the frequencies b, c and d. The frequency b (the frequency of the left neighbour with all other words) can be obtained as freq\_b = freq\_left - freq\_coll. The frequency c is the frequency of the right neighbour with all other words. It can be computed as follows: freq\_c = freq\_right – freq\_coll. The frequency d can be computed as the frequency of all tokens (number of rows in the corpus) minus the frequencies a, b and c.

nrow(wiki)

#[1] 243131

wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_b <- wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_left - wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_coll

wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_c <- wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_right - wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_coll

wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_d <- nrow(wiki) - wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_coll - wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_b - wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_c

head(wiki\_coll\_all)

#together right left freq\_left freq\_right freq\_coll freq\_b freq\_c freq\_d

#1 '' " " '' 1 2531 1 0 2530 240600

#2 ' - - ' 369 1805 1 368 1804 240958

#3 ' " " ' 369 2531 6 363 2525 240237

#4 ' & & ' 369 52 1 368 51 242711

#5 ' ( ( ' 369 1681 2 367 1679 241083

#6 ' ) ) ' 369 1663 4 365 1659 241103

8. Compute collocational strength (log Odds Ratios).

Log Odds Ratios

LOR = log (a\*d/(b\*c))

In order to avoid division by 0 (if b or c is equal to 0), we add a small amount to each frequency:

Adjusted LOR = log ((a + 0.5)\*(d + 0.5)/((b + 0.5)\*(c + 0.5))

wiki\_coll\_all$LOR <- log((wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_coll + 0.5)\*(wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_d + 0.5)/((wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_b + 0.5)\*(wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_c + 0.5)))

It may be useful to inspect only frequent collocations (e.g. more frequent than 5):

wiki\_coll\_short <- wiki\_coll\_all[wiki\_coll\_all$freq\_coll > 5,]

wiki\_coll\_short[order(-wiki\_coll\_short$LOR), ][1:20, c(1,10)]

together LOR

75154 Los Angeles 16.138986

103277 San Francisco 13.326204

51128 et al. 12.714954

96278 Prime Minister 12.095894

111992 Supreme Court 11.753265

127636 United States 11.656189

19947 Air Force 11.005428

82405 New Zealand 10.989902

82403 New York 10.696120

63224 High School 10.545776

127635 United Nations 9.641755

78640 Middle East 9.494288

13324 19th century 9.417907

32713 blood vessel 9.162544

44409 de la 9.038874

12269 16th century 9.034846

127633 United Kingdom 8.918725

133881 World War 8.898453

59877 Great Britain 8.676736

13721 20th century 8.650618

**Exercise**

Inspect the collocations with LOR greater than 5. What classes of collocations can you identify? What are your conclusions about the nature of Wikipedia, the primary interests of its creators?

**Exercise**

a) Use the corpus of Trump’s tweets and find the top 20 strongest collocations.

b) Use the corpus from Pottermore and find the top 20 strongest collocations.