

Quantitative Corpus Linguistics: A practical overview

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Overview

I. Introduction

- I. What is Quantitative Corpus Linguistics (QCL)?
- II. What is a linguistic corpus?
 - I. Types of corpora

II. Fundamental notions in QCL

- I. frequency lists
- II. co-occurrences (ngrams)
- III. concordances

III. QCL meets psycholinguistics – Statistical associations

- I. Bigrams and local syntactic ambiguity
- II. Beyond bigrams: Patterns and processing difficulty



What is Quantitative Corpus Linguistics?

- QCL is characterized by the *systematic* and *exhaustive analysis* of linguistic phenomena on the basis of a *linguistic corpus*.
- typically, QCL-research questions are formulated such that *conditional frequencies* constitute the *dependent variable*

Stefanowitsch (2005)



What is Quantitative Corpus Linguistics?

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e.g. Particle placement

John picked up the book -> SUBJ V PRT DO John picked the book up -> SUBJ V DO PRT

Condition 1: "heavy" DO

Condition 2: not "heavy "DO



What is a linguistic corpus?

- A corpus is a ...
 - collection of spoken or written text
 - machine readable



What is a linguistic corpus?

- A corpus is a ...
 - collection of spoken or written text
 - machine readable
 - produced in a *natural* communicative settingecological validity
 - ► representative for a {variety | genre | register}
 - o all parts of a {variety | genre | register} should be in it
 - ► balanced wrt a {variety | genre | register}
 - o proportions the parts make up should be mirrored



- general vs. specific corpora
- > synchronic vs. diachronic corpora
- monolingual vs. parallel corpora
- static vs. dynamic/monitor corpora
- plain vs. annotated (SGML/XML) corpora



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- > plain vs. annotated (SGML/XML) corpora
 - phonologically annotated
 - morphologically annotated
 - POS-tagged
 - Syntactically parsed



From:

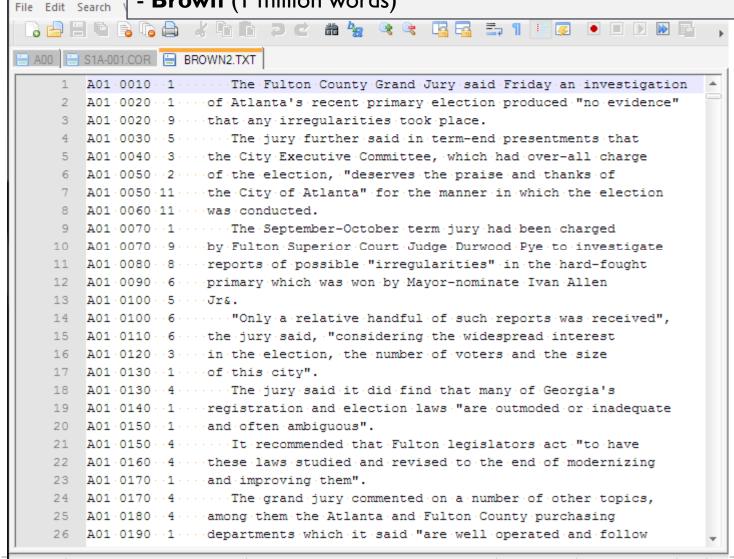
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Brown University Standard Corpus of Present-Day American English

Dos\Windows ANSI

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- **Brown** (I million words)



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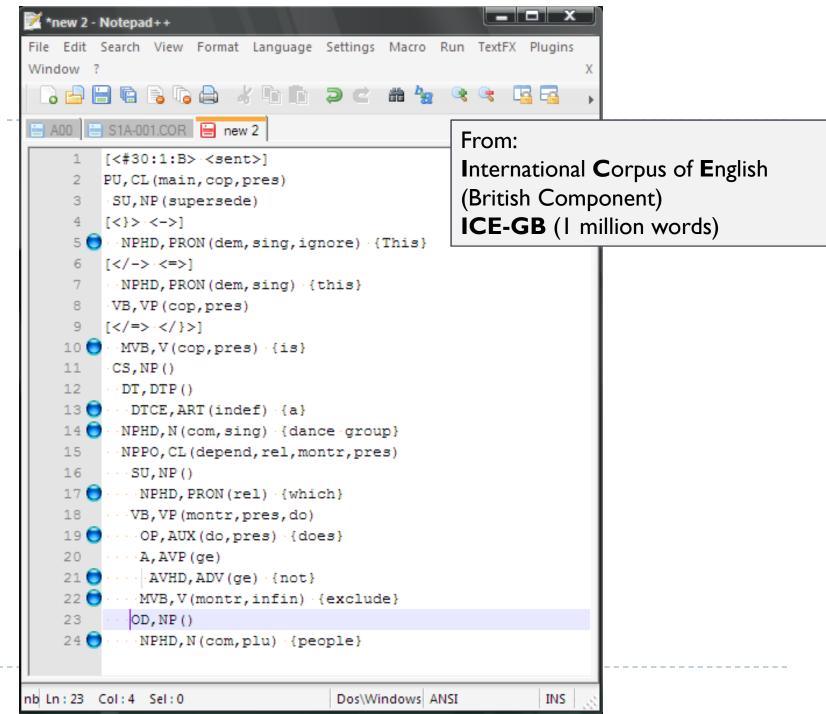


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Fundamentals in QCL

Frequency lists, Concordances and Co-occurrences

Wiechmann and Fuhs (2006) evaluate 10 concordancers



Fundamentals in QCL

Frequency lists, Concordances and Co-occurrences



Fundamentals in QCL Frequency lists

Count	Pct	Word
5624123	6.1950%	the
2869761	3.1610%	of
2354005	2.5929%	to
2342302	2.5800%	and
1963840	2.1632%	a
1796346	1.9787%	in
891945	0.9825%	is
885588	0.9755%	that
829362	0.9135%	for
793700	0.8743%	it
787379	0.8673%	was
756040	0.8328%	bquo
738536	0.8135%	equo
641979	0.7071%	on
610358	0.6723%	as
608010	0.6697%	with
584470	0.6438%	be
578009	0.6367%	's
556/13	N 6129%	he

Frequency list (excerpt): BNC written (3112 files; ~ 90 million words)



Fundamentals in QCL Frequency lists

Count	Pct	Word	A			
5624123	6.1950%	the	Wand for sure and lists are sureful for			
2869761	3.1610%	of	Word frequency lists are useful for			
2354005	2.5929%	to				
2342302	2.5800%	and	- choosing experimental stimuli correctly			
1963840	2.1632%	a				
1796346	1.9787%	in	-e.g. lexical decision			
891945	0.9825%	is	- corpus comparison			
885588	0.9755%	that	(-> stop lists)			
829362	0.9135%	for	(> stop fists)			
793700	0.8743%	it				
787379	0.8673%	was				
756040	0.8328%	bquo				
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Fundamentals in QCL

Frequency lists, Concordances and Co-occurrences



Co-occurrences -> Collocations

LEXIS

Collocation

(lexical associations)

strong versus powerful

different from versus different than

alphabetic versus alphabetical



Co-occurrences -> Collocations

LEXIS

Collocation

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- ► Extract all occurrences of target construction from corpus
- ► Call up *concordance*



A Concordance of word w is a display of every occurrence of w in the corpus together with a user specified context (KWIC-display (key word in context display))

> <s n="418"><w AVO>Meanwhile<c PUN>, <w NPO>Leonard <w NPO>Bernstein <w VBZ>is <w VBG>being <w VVN>celebrated <w PRP>b ks n="419"><w DT0>This <w VBZ>is <w VVN>entitled <w AT0>the <c PUQ>&bquo;<w AJ0>Royal <w NN1>Edition<c PUQ>&equo; <w PR <s n="420"><w ATO>The <w NN2>discs <w VBB>are <w TOO>to <w VBI>be <w VVN>issued <w PRP>in <w AJO>alphabetical <w NN1>or _ ... DREN<w POS>'S <w NN1>CHOICE <w DT0>This <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>list <w PRF>of <w NP0>Britain<w Ip<c PUN>. <s n="288"><c PUL>(<w AT0>An <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>directory <w PRF>of <w AJ0-NN1>s Ip<c PUN>. <s n="210"><c PUL>(<w AT0>An <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>directory <w PRF>of <w AJ0-NN1>s; <w AVO>either <w PRP-CJS>as <w ATO>an <w AJO>alphabetical <w NN1>list<c PUN>, <w CJC>or <w AVO>as 0>more <w AJ0>useful<c PUN>; <w DPS>its <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>list <w PRF>of <w NN2>foods <w V 00>to <w VBI>be <w VVN>issued <w PRP>in <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>order <w PRF>of <w NN1>composer< re <w XXO>not <w AVO>entirely <w PRP>in <w AJO>alphabetical <w NN1>order<c PUN>. <s n="1163"><w AVO 200 <w NN1>pupil <w NN2>files <w PRP>in <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>order<c PUN>. <s n="407"><w CJS> ek </hi><c PUN>, <c PUQ>&bguo;<w ATO>AN <w AJO>ALPHABETICAL <w NN1>CATALOGUE <w PRF>OF <w NN2>Names w PRP>from <w AT0>the <w AJ0>felicitous <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN2>conjunctions <w PRF>of <w NN1>Sc rds <w PNP>I <w VVD>filed <w PRP-AVP>in <w AJO>alphabetical <w NN1>order<c PUN>, <w CJC>and <w PNP> ing <w DPS>my <w NN2>listings <w PRP>in <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>order<c PUN>. ... <w NN1>book <w VVZ>comprises <w AT0>an <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>dictionary <c PUQ>&bquo;<w PRP>i 0>the <w NN1>basis <w PRP>for <w AT0>an <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>sort <w PRP>within <w DT0>each < n="702"><w AVO>Also<c PUN>, <w ATO>the <w AJO>alphabetical <w NN1>author/title <w NN1>arrangement ... ORD>last <w NN1>year<c PUN>, <w PRP>in <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>artist <w NN1>order<c PUN>. <s n <w AVO>now <w VVN-VVD>indexed <w PRP>in <w AJO>alphabetical <w NN1>order <w PRF>of <w NN1>name <w P ... <w NN2>counties <w VVN>taken <w PRP>in <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>order <w PRF>of <w NN1>rotation < ...</p> ... ATO>the <w ORD>last <w PRP>in <w ATO>an <w AJO>alphabetical <w NN1>list <w PRF>of <w NN2>MPs<c PUN> CRD>two <w NN2>words<c PUN>, <w PRP>in <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>order<c PUN>, <c PUQ>&bquo;<w NN <w CJC>and <w AJ0>new<c PUN>, <w PRP>in <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>order<c PUN>, <w AV0>only <w VVG >been <w VVN>put <w ORD>first <w PRP>by <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>chance<c PUN>, <w XX0>not <w PRP 0-NN1>GAWOR <w VVZ>continues <w DPS>his <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>advice <w PRP>on <w NN0>fish <w UN>, <w PRP>with <w AT0>a <w AJ0>proper <w AJ0>alphabetical <w NN1>index <w CJC>and <w DT0>much <w ...

24 matches

Original text order

Strings matching: <w *>alphabetical



A (partial) concordance of alphabetical

<u>L1</u>	search term	R1
This	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	list
An	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	directory
An	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	directory
an	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	list
its	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	list
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	order
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	order
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	order
an	<w aj0="">ALPHABETICAL</w>	CATALOGUE
felicitous	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	conjunctions
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	order
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	order
an	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	dictionary
an	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	sort
the	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	author/title
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	artist
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	order
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	order
an	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	list
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	order
in	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	order
by	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	chance
his	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	advice
proper	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	index



Collocate display of alphabetical

Table 2.3 A collocate display of alphabetical based on the BNC

Word at L1	Freq L1	Node word	Freq Node	Word at R1	Freq R1
<w prp="">in <w at0="">an <w at0="">the <w prf="">of <w cjc="">and <c pun="">. <c pun="">,</c></c></w></w></w></w></w>	77 36 23 6 6 6	<w aj0="">alphabetical</w>	234	<pre><w nn1="">order <w nn1="">index <w nn1="">list <w nn1="">indexing <w nn1="">subject <w nn1="">sequence <w nn1="">listing</w></w></w></w></w></w></w></pre>	89 15 13 12 12 11
<w aj0="">ascending 5 <w cjc="">or 5 <w aj0="">strict 4</w></w></w>			Α,	-	6 5 2

From Gries (2009)



Collocate display of *alphabetic*

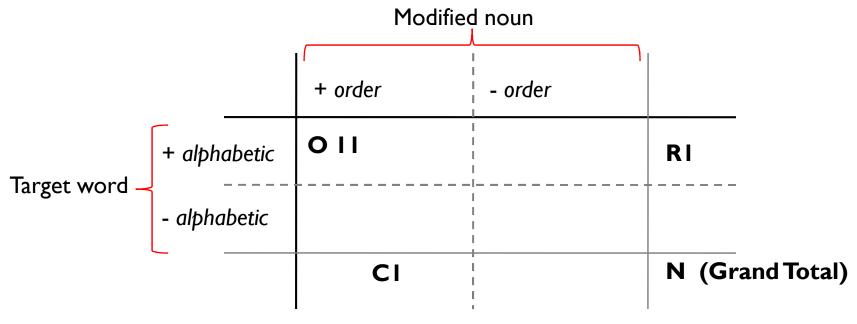
Table 2.2 A collocate display of alphabetic based on the BNC

Word at L1	Freq L1	Node word	Freq Node	Word at R1	Freq R1
<w prf="">of <w at0="">the <w at0="">an <w prp="">in <w prp="">such as</w></w></w></w></w>	8 6 5 2 2	<w aj0="">alphabetic</w>	42	<w nn1="">literacy <w nn1="">writing <w nn1="">order <w nn1="">character <w cjc="">and</w></w></w></w></w>	7 5 3 3 2
<w dps="">our <w cjs="">when <w aj0="" widespread=""> <w nn2="">systems <w aj0="">varying</w></w></w></w></w>	2 1 1			<w nn1="">system <w nn2="">characters <w nn1="">culture <w prp="">in <c pun="">.</c></w></w></w></w>	2 2 2 1

From Gries (2009)



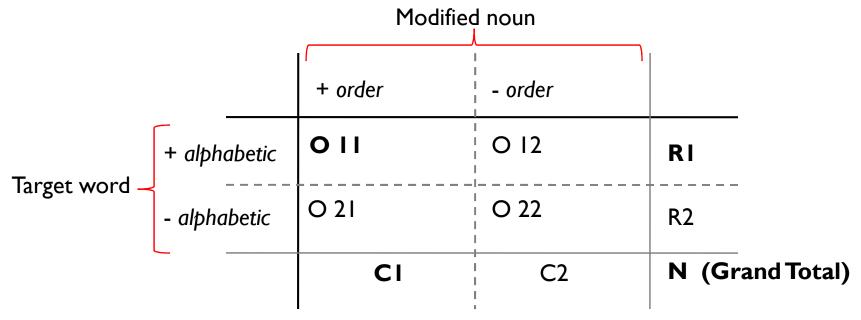
Fundamentals in QCL Distinctive collocates



Frequency signature of a pair = { O11, R1, C1, N }



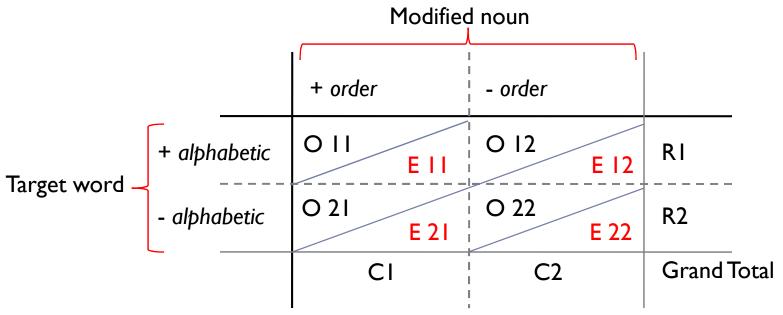
Fundamentals in QCL Distinctive collocates



Frequency signature of a pair = { O11, R1, C1, N }



Fundamentals in QCL Distinctive collocates



- ► Compare observed with expected frequencies via some measure of statistical association
- ► Identify statistically significant collocates (Maybe *alphabetical* and alphabetic modify different types of nouns)



Fundamentals in QCL Co-occurrences

LEXIS

Collocation

(lexical associations)

strong versus powerful

different from versus different than

alphabetic versus alphabetical

GRAMMAR



Fundamentals in QCL Co-occurrences

LEXIS

Collocation

(lexical associations)

powerful strong versus

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alphabetical



(functional associations)

e.g. preferred gram. function or POS

of a word

GRAMMAR



Fundamentals in QCL Co-occurrences

LEXIS

Collocation

(lexical associations)

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versus alphabetical

Colligation

(functional associations)

e.g. preferred gram. function or POS

of a word

Collostruction

(associations between word and syn. pattern)

e.g. give in ditransitive construction

GRAMMAR



QCL – More domains of application Language comprehension

Corpus-derived predictions about human language processing

I. Bigram information

I. Association strength between verbs and complementation patterns



Associations and probabilistic parsing

$NP/S \ local \ syntactic \ ambiguity$...right away NP is DO $NP \ is \ DO$...was nobody else but ... NP is subject of embedded clause TIME



Associations and probabilistic parsing

NP/S local syntactic ambiguity

...right away NP is DO



Inspector Clouseau suspected [the phantom]... SUBJECT V_{trans} [NP]...

...was nobody else but ... NP is subject of embedded clause

TIME

 t_i

Comprehension processes is influenced by many informational sources

- complexity of syntactic tree
- definiteness of NP
- animacy of NP referent
- SUBCAT preference of V (= lexical bias)



Approaching the issue from a QCL point of view

Task1: Corpus choice

Task 2: Extract all [V NP]-sequences from a corpus

Task 3: Annotate -> develop data frame

Task 4: Statistical analysis



Approaching the issue from a QCL point of view

Task1: Corpus choice

	BNC	ICE-GB
Size	100 million	1 million
POS tagged	+	+
Parsed	-	+



Approaching the issue from a QCL point of view

Task1: Corpus choice

	BNC	ICE-GB
Size	100 million	1 million
POS tagged	+	+
Parsed	-	+

Task 2: Extract all [V NP]-sequences from a corpus

This involves the design of a search string (regular expression) that matches all and only those patterns that are instances of the target construction



Approaching the issue from a QCL point of view

Task 3: Annotate -> develop data frame

case	example.or.corpusID	VERB_LEMMA	SYNTAX
1	bla1	suspect	DO
2	bla2	acknowledge	DO
3	bla3	admit	S
4	bla4	know	S
5	bla5	understand	\mathbf{S}
6	bla6	discover	DO
7	bla7	announce	DO
8	bla8	write	S
13	bla13	suggest	DO
14	bla14	realize	DO
15	bla15	believe	S
16	bla16	notice	DO
17	bla17	feel	S
18	bla18	deny	DO
•••	•••		•••
4209	bla4209	believe	DO



Approaching the issue from a QCL point of view

► Task 4: Statistical analysis:

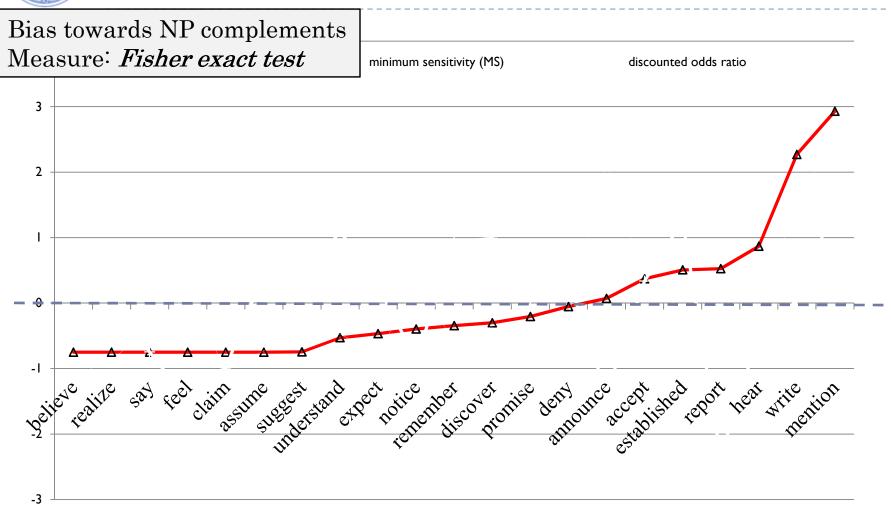
Measure association strength

Choose test and compute lexical bias towards complementation patterns from frequency signatures

	sentential object	nominal object	
+ suspected	OII	O 12 E 12	RI
- suspected	O 21 E 21	O 22 E 22	R2
	CI	C2	Grand Total



Fundamentals in QCL Statistical Associations

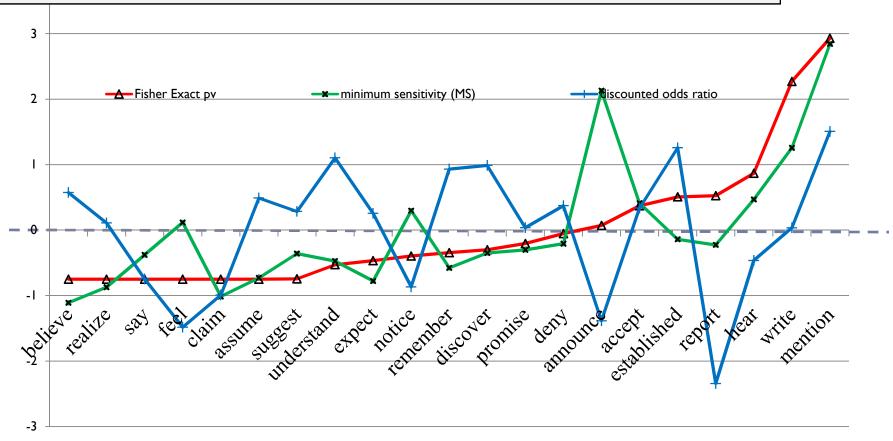




Fundamentals in QCL Statistical Associations

Bias towards NP complements

Measures: Fisher exact, minimum sensitivity, discounted odds ratios

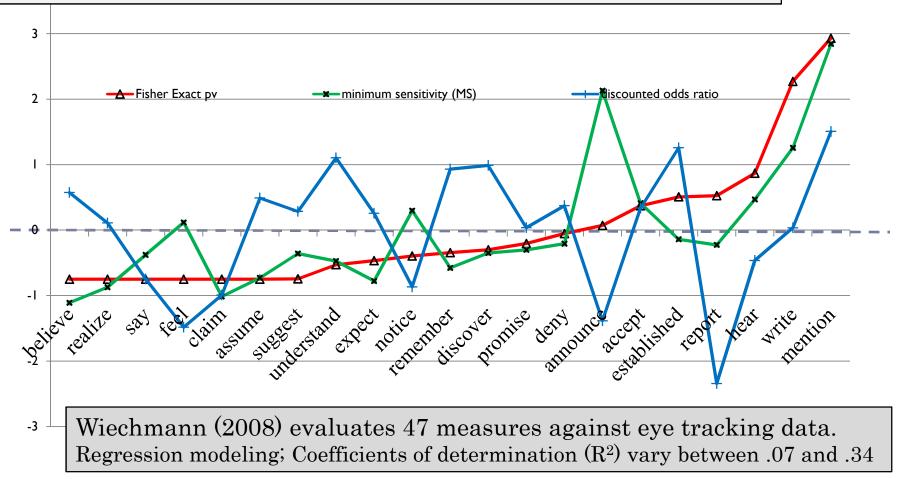




Fundamentals in QCL Statistical Associations

Bias towards NP complements

Measures: Fisher exact, minimum sensitivity, discounted odds ratios





QCL – Domains of application Complex Statistical Associations

Corpus-derived predictions about human language processing II

I. Complex associations (ngrams with n > 2)



QCL – Domains of application Complex Statistical Associations

Corpus-derived predictions about human language processing II

I. Complex associations (ngrams with n > 2)

Hypothesis:

Processing difficulty of complex construction is a function of degree of entrenchment (cognitive routinization) of construction type



QCL – Domains of application Complex Statistical Associations

Corpus-derived predictions about human language processing II

I. Complex associations (ngrams with n > 2)

TASK:

Assessing complex associative relationships



Fundamentals in QCL Data frames

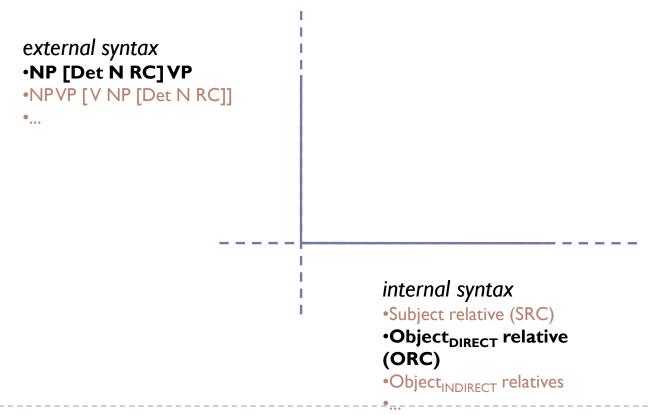
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206	<ice.gb:s1a.087#073:1:a></ice.gb:s1a.087#073:1:a>	spoken	do	fin.RC	Nsubj	direct.conv	informal
292 1930	<ice.gb:s1b.019#038:1:c> <ice.gb:w2e.006#004:1></ice.gb:w2e.006#004:1></ice.gb:s1b.019#038:1:c>	spoken written	do obl	Nfin.RC fin.RC	Nsubj Nsubj	formal reportage	formal informal
1482	<ice.gb:w2b.018#007:1></ice.gb:w2b.018#007:1>	written	obl	fin.RC	Nsubj	non.academic.tech. writing	formal
1151 1499	<ice.gb:w1a.015#061:3> <ice.gb:w2b.020#058:1></ice.gb:w2b.020#058:1></ice.gb:w1a.015#061:3>	written written	s a	fin.RC	subj subj	non.prof.writing non.academic.tech. writing	informal formal
1198	<ice.gb:w2a.006#066:1></ice.gb:w2a.006#066:1>	written	a	fin.RC	subj	academic.writing	formal
239	<ice.gb:s1b.002#100:1:a></ice.gb:s1b.002#100:1:a>	spoken	a	fin.RC	subj	formal non.academic.tech.	formal
1640 1121	<ice.gb:w2b.039#003:1> <ice.gb:w1a.009#068:1></ice.gb:w1a.009#068:1></ice.gb:w2b.039#003:1>	written written	a a	fin.RC fin.RC	subj subj	writing non.prof.writing	formal informal

Let's have a look



Case:

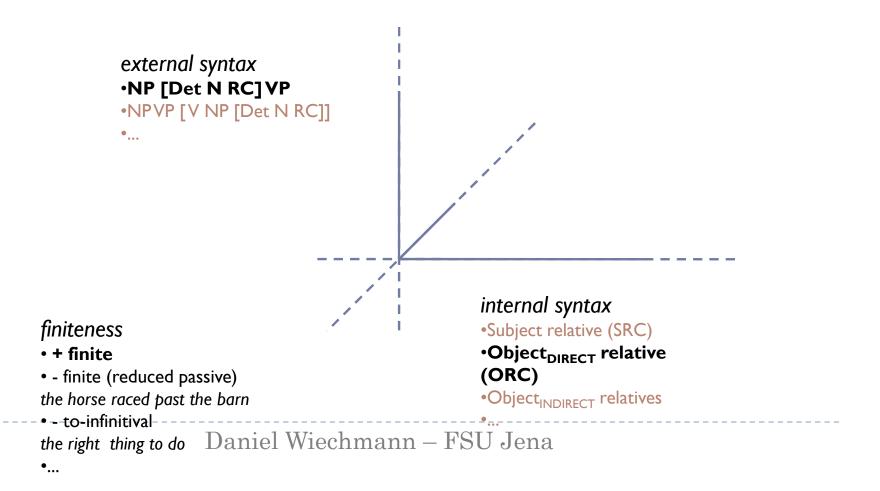
The man $_{RC}$ [that John hates] is actually quite nice.





Case:

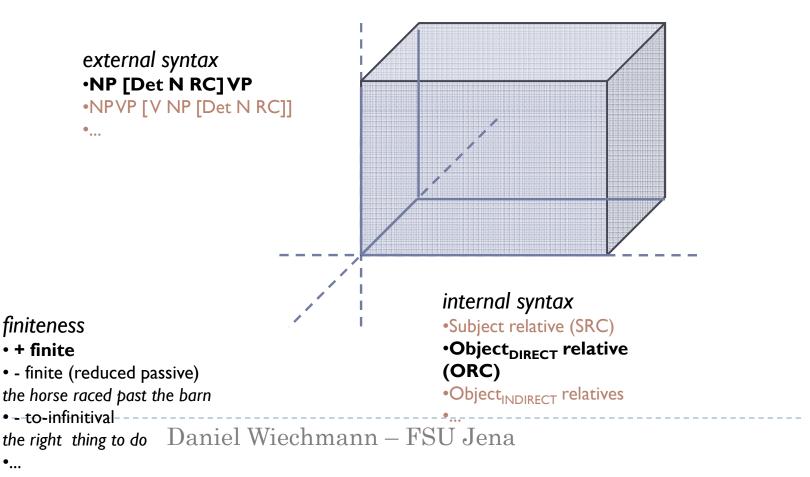
The man $_{RC}$ [that John hates] is actually quite nice.





Case:

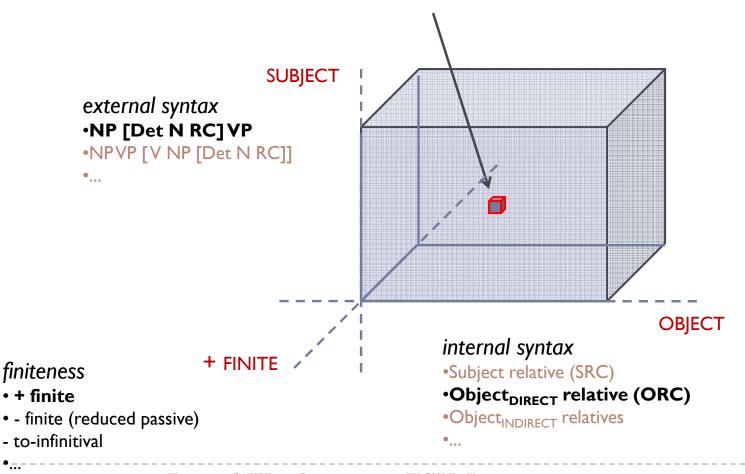
The man _{RC}[that John hates] is actually quite nice.



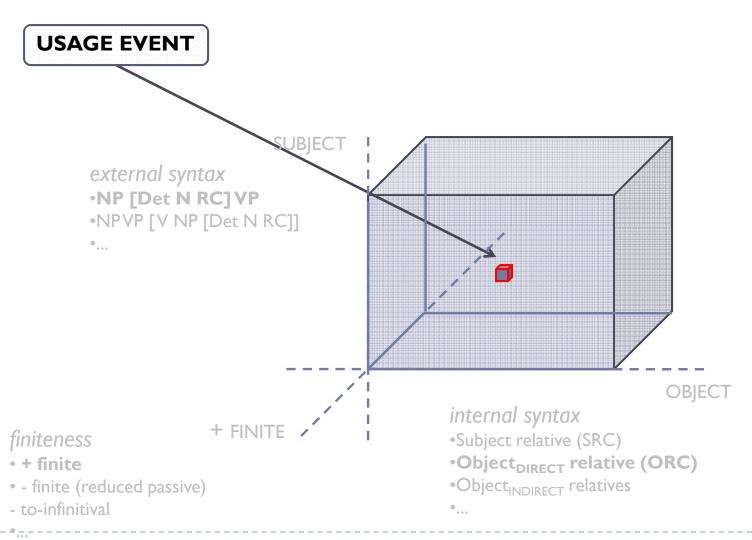


Case:

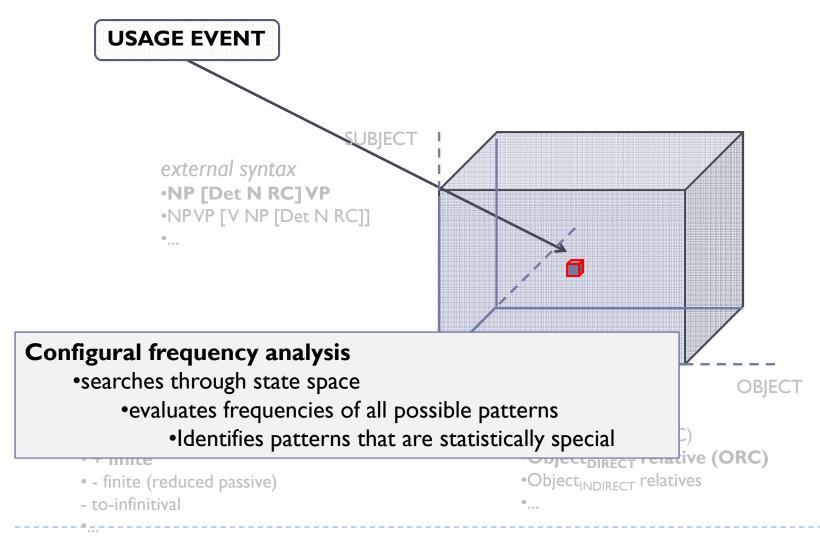
The man $_{RC}$ [that John hates] is actually quite nice.













Fundamentals in QCL Patterns and processing difficulty

- o (hierarchical) configural frequency analysis (von Eye and Pena 2004)
 - No functional distinction of variables
 - There are just patterns (configurations of a state space)
- Model type fits the conception of language of construction grammars (Goldberg 2006)
- o Follows ideas in exemplar-/memory-based language processing (Daelemans & van den Bosch 2005)



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