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University of Oslo
Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages
Home examination
Spring 2018

ENG2153 – English Corpus Linguistics

Disclosure of exam assignment: 11 June, 11.00 a.m.
Submission deadline: 14 June, 11.00 a.m.

Please use Times New Roman, 12 pt., 1 1/2 line spacing. Remember to include your candidate number (NOT your name), course code and semester. **The paper must be in PDF.**

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Break a leg!

1 # Exam Question

You find the exam questions in the attached PDF.

Answer ALL questions.

Question 1 counts 20%, Question 2 20%, and Question 3 60% of your final mark.
Proper reference must be given to any source that has been used.

Your answer should be around 10 standard pages.

Pass marks are required on all three questions.

The British National Corpus (BNCWeb cqp edition) and the Oslo Interactive English (OIE) Corpus are available through Fronter.

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Institutt for litteratur, områdestudier og europeiske språk

**TAKE-HOME EXAM
2018/SPRING
2 pages**

ENG2153 – English Corpus Linguistics

3 days   **11–14 June 2018**

Your paper must be submitted in Inspera **by 11 a.m.** on the submission day. Your paper must contain the following information:
- Candidate number (4 digits, which you find at StudentWeb), NOT your name
- Course code and course name
- Semester and year

Please use Times New Roman, 12 pt., 1.5 line spacing in the body of the text. All pages must be numbered.

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Question 1 (20%)
Discuss briefly TWO of the following points with reference to relevant literature on the subject. Illustrate with examples from the BNC or the OIE Corpus.

1. Pros and cons of part of speech tagging
2. Colligation
3. Language change and corpora
4. Pros and cons of corpora in language teaching/learning

Question 2 (20%)
Define what is meant by a "concordance line", and illustrate – with examples from the BNC or the OIE Corpus – how concordance lines can be applied to discover to what extent two words are synonymous or not.

Question 3 (60%)

Perform a corpus study, using BNC*web* to answer questions (a)-(d) below. Your discussion should be written as a coherent text and should include examples from the corpus.

Lindquist (2009: 180-182) discusses the grammaticalisation of START into a semi-auxiliary of inception ('beginning') when used in the patterns: START -*ing* and START + *to*-infinitive (i.e. when START is followed by either a verb ending in -*ing* or a *to*-infinitive. (Hasselgård et al. (2012: 170-171) call START in these patterns a catenative (aspectual) verb.) Examples (1) and (2) from the BNC illustrate the two patterns.

1) When did you <u>start acting</u>? (A06 2313)
2) When Arthur Guinness <u>started to brew</u> porter in his Dublin brewery ... (A0A 179)

a) Search for the two different types of patterns with START in BNC*Web*, using the following search strings:

   {start/V} *ing
   {start/V} to *_V??

   Give an overview of the number of hits returned in each case: which pattern is the most/least frequent one?

b) Perform the same searches as above, then use the "Frequency list" function to establish which verbs most frequently follow START in each of the patterns, i.e. which verbs are typically used in the -*ing* form and which are used in the infinitive (following *to*). Give an overview of the main tendencies, reporting on the top 5 verbs in each case, before discussing them briefly with regard to type of verb (transitive, intransitive, copular verb) and meaning.

c) How many overlaps are there among the top 10 verbs of the two patterns, and is it the START-pattern with -*ing* or the infinitive that is the most frequent one in each case? Choose one verb that is used in both patterns and discuss to what extent the patterns with START -*ing* and START *to*-infinitive express the same meaning.

d) Finally, Lindquist (2009: 181) suggests that the two patterns compete with the verb BEGIN followed by either *to*-infinitive or -*ing*. Focusing on -*ing*, compare the use of START -*ing* with BEGIN -*ing* in terms of frequency in the BNC. Then use the "Distribution" function and discuss to what extent the two patterns are used in similar categories (such as mode, text type, age of author, etc.). Are there any striking observations to be made?

References

Hasselgård, Hilde, Per Lysvåg & Stig Johansson. 2012 [2nd ed.]. *English Grammar: Theory and Use*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Lindquist, Hans. 2009. *Corpus Linguistics and the Description of English*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.