

Workshop 1: Local grammar research: Analysis and practice

Convenors:

Dr. Hang Su (Sichuan International Studies University);

Dr. Ling Lin (Shanghai Jiao Tong University);

Dr. Lei Zhang (Anhui University of Finance and Economics)

Time: 9:00 am – 11: 30 am October 25, 2024

Abstract: The concept of ‘local grammar’ initially originated from Gross (1993) and has been further developed by Sinclair and his colleagues (e.g., Hunston & Sinclair 2000; Barnbrook & Sinclair 2001; Hunston 2002; Barnbrook 2002; Sinclair 2010, 2016). While Gross (1993) was primarily concerned with applying local grammar into developing a finite automata, recent local grammar research mainly focused on describing particular meaning and/or function. Hunston (2002: 178), for example, points out that each local grammar “seeks to account for, not the whole of a language, but one meaning only”, and Hunston and Su (2019: 571) explicitly state that a local grammar “is always a grammar of a discourse function”.

The rationale of promoting local grammar research has been adequately justified by previous research. In particular, Barnbrook and Sinclair (2001) note that the kind of specialised local grammar can “outperform” general grammar, and Butler (2004: 158) further argue that “rather than a single general grammar, we might end up with a set of local grammars for particular areas defined by their communicative functions in the discourse”.

Not surprisingly, then, recent years have witnessed some studies that employed the local grammar approach to develop specialised grammars of specific meanings or functions (e.g., Cheng & Ching 2016; Su 2017, 2018; Su & Wei 2018; Su & Fu 2023; Yu et al. 2024; Zhang et al. 2024). Despite its increasing popularity, however, newcomers of local grammar research face a number of challenges (e.g., data retrieval, terminology identification). To overcome these challenges, this workshop will address methodological issues concerning local grammar research and provide guidelines for practicing local grammar analyses, aiming to promote local grammar research and, more importantly, to develop new analytic techniques in corpus linguistics.

Programme

Session	Content	Instructor
Session 1	Introduction to local grammar (30 minutes)	Hang Su
Session 2	Local grammar research: Case study 1 (30 minutes)	Ling Lin
Session 3	Local grammar research: Case study 2 (30 minutes)	Lei Zhang
Session 4	Practicing local grammar analysis (1 hour)	Hang Su, Ling Lin, Lei Zhang

Note: Please bring a computer with you.

Workshop 2: LancsBox X and DDL: A practical workshop for educators

Convenor: Vaclav Brezina (Lancaster University)

Time: 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm October 25, 2024

Abstract: This workshop discusses the best current practice in Data Driven Learning (DDL) and introduces a new version of #LancsBox, #LancsBox X, a software package designed for the ease of use in research and pedagogical contexts. #LancsBox X can be used with very large corpora (millions and billions of words) and is therefore uniquely suitable for the exploration of general corpora representing a number of different genres/registers such as the British National Corpus 2014 (Brezina et al, 2021; Love et al., 2017). #LancsBox X, developed at Lancaster University, offers an innovative architecture and user experience, which allows intuitive engagement with existing corpora as well as analysis of users' own data (e.g. student essays, online texts etc.).

The workshop is open to anyone interested in innovative exploration of language using computational tools. It does not presuppose any technical or statistical knowledge. The users will need to bring their own laptops and pre-install #LancsBox X from the tool's website: <https://lancsbox.lancs.ac.uk/>