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## Introduction

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The papers collected in this second issue of the *Helsinki English Studies* were first presented at the inaugural conference of the Finnish Society for the Study of English (FINSSE) at Turku in September 2001. The corpus linguistics session at the conference confirmed that there is not only a wide-spread interest in the field, and a great deal of activity, but also many innovative approaches. In addition to papers from the corpus linguistics session, this volume includes work based on two posters also presented at Turku.

The wide range of corpus linguistics is seen even in such a small selection of papers: from the history of English to Present-day English, from written to spoken language, and from contrastive studies to descriptions of corpus building, the writers cover many central topics in the field. In addition to experienced researchers from Tampere and Helsinki, the conference saw a strong presence of third generation corpus linguists from Helsinki, as is also seen in this volume.

Corpus linguistics provides an ideal tool for contrastive studies of language. **W. Robert Cooper** explores the differences and similarities of inalienable possession in Finnish and English. He describes the varying ways in which possessive nouns and suffixes are used (or not used) with body-part nouns. With the solid quantitative evidence provided by the corpus, a detailed analysis of the examples is used to bring additional light on the subject. The study was carried out using the *Tampere Finnish-English Bilingual Computer Corpus*, which is based on 20th century Finnish and English novels and their translations.

Another corpus of Present-day English, the *Helsinki Dialect Corpus*, consists of authentic interviews with speakers of traditional British English dialects. The corpus is now being compiled under the leadership of **Kirsti Peitsara** with the co-operation of some of the original field workers, including **Anna-Liisa Vasko**. Their paper shows that the transcription and coding of a corpus of spoken language presents problems quite unlike those faced in the compilation of written language corpora. Once the corpus is available, however, the study of dialects on many levels becomes possible. Their study illustrates how the syntactic properties of dialect speech are even more different from written standard language and its syntax than regular spoken language.

A very different type of spoken language is analysed by **Anna Mauranen**. She concentrates on academic speaking, using the *Michigan Corpus of Spoken Academic English* (MICASE). The corpus is still under compilation and aims at 1.5 million words of academic speech from across the University of Michigan. Rather than the more frequently studied lecturing, Mauranen's material consists of academic dialogues, taking place in seminars, group discussions, meetings and consultation hours. The particular focus is on the types of metadiscourse which do not appear in the more formal and polished academic discourses.

Exploring the dimensions of orality and literacy is the main point of **Carla Suhr**'s paper. Using a small corpus of six texts (2 plays, 2 pamphlets and 2 academic treatises) on the topic

of witchcraft, all from the late 16th and early 17th centuries, Suhr places the studied texts on a continuum based on the frequency of oral and literate features in them. Pamphlets stand out as a particularly complex genre. As a pilot study on the topic, this paper suggests fascinating avenues of further research.

On a different kind of continuum, **Anni Vuorinen** discusses the language of Queen Elizabeth I as a reflection of her gender role. Caught between her feminine biology and her masculine social role, it can be assumed that Queen Elizabeth (not unlike present-day professional women) sought to employ some masculine strategies in her language practises. Using parts of the *Corpus of Early English Correspondence* as well as an additional sample of letters written by Elizabeth, this study compares the language of the Queen with contemporary male and female courtiers.

Finally, in the area of corpus building, **Mikko Laitinen** describes the ongoing work in adding to the *Corpus of Early English Correspondence*, containing personal letters from the Late Middle and Early Modern English periods (1410?-1681). His paper deals with the *Supplement* and the 18th century *Extension* of the corpus, the principles of including material in both new parts, and the questions of coding the corpus.

As the papers collected here show, corpus linguistics is a vital and innovative area of research. The written materials used reach from literature to letters and the representations of spoken language from dialect interviews to drama. The approaches used to study these materials demonstrate the flexibility of corpus-based research: almost any area of any language - past or present - can be studied, and the possibilities for framing a question are endless.

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Since the move of this volume to a new platform, the old HTML format became impractical to maintain. The contents of the papers remain the same, only the contact information of authors and outdated links have been updated. All updates have been indicated as such.

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