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QUEEN ELIZABETHS CHRISTMAS ADDRESSES: CORPUS ANALYSIS

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РІЗДВЯНІ ПРОМОВИ КОРОЛЕВИ ЄЛИЗАВЕТИ ІІ: КОРПУСНИЙ АНАЛІЗ

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This article presents the study of lexis in Christmas speeches of Queen Elizabeth II through corpus analysis by way of Voyant Tools software which, allows for multilevel text analysis, including such tools as word frequency analysis, collocation analysis, and the creation of word clouds and their trends, the study reveals the evolution of the monarch's rhetoric. The purpose of this paper is to study the lexical features and the frequency of use of certain words during the period from 1952 to 2021. The analysis shows that the most frequently used words in the speeches are christmas, people, year and commonwealth, which reflects the Queen's focus on a global audience. The word cloud also shows the use of words hope, good and happy, which indicates the positive and unifying nature of Queen Elizabeth II's speeches, demonstrates a focus on uplifting values and highlights the desire for general prosperity and harmony in the country. The findings allow us to trace changes in lexical preferences and rhetorical strategies, particularly in the context of addresses to the nation during festive periods or in times of hardship and sadness. Most importantly, with the increased use of words related to unity and community, the study also found an evolution in the Queen's rhetoric towards a more inclusive approach aimed at bringing together different social groups, focusing on uniting not only UK citizens but also the Commonwealth. In addition, an increased focus on personal happiness, well-being, spirituality and family values was identified, which underscores the monarch's desire to create an emotional connection with her audience. The collocation analysis tool helped to reveal that concepts of world and family often coexist in the context of Christmas addresses, emphasising universal values in Queen Elizabeth's speeches. In addition, a comparative analysis of the Queen's speeches with those of other political and public figures

seems to be appropriate, which will help to better understand the specifics of the monarchy's rhetoric in comparison with other forms of political communication.

Keywords: *corpus analysis, lexical changes, corpus of texts, Christmas speeches, corpus linguistics, Queen Elizabeth II.*

Стаття присвячена дослідженню лексики у різдвяних промовах Королеви Єлизавети II методами корпусного аналізу, який виконується завдяки програмі Voyant Tools, яка уможливлює багаторівневе дослідження тексту, включаючи такі інструменти, як аналіз частотності слів, колокацій, а також створення хмар слів та їх трендів, дослідження виявляє еволюцію риторики монархині. Метою даної роботи є вивчення лексичних особливостей та частоти вживання певних слів протягом періоду з 1952 до 2021 року. Проведений аналіз демонструє, що найбільш часто вживаними словами у промовах є christmas, people, year і commonwealth, що відображає те що королева зосереджується на глобальній аудиторії. Також за допомогою хмари слів простежується використання таких слів, як hope, good і happy, що свідчить про позитивне та об'єднавче спрямування промов Королеви Єлизавети II, демонструє фокус на піднесених цінностях і підкреслює прагнення до загального процвітання і злагоди в країні. Отримані результати дозволяють відстежити зміни у лексичних уподобаннях та риторичних стратегіях, зокрема у контексті звернень до нації під час святкових періодів або в періоди важких часів та смутку. Особливо важливим є те, що зі збільшенням частоти вживання слів, що стосуються єдності та спільноти, дослідження також виявило еволюцію риторики Королеви у напрямку більш інклюзивного підходу, спрямованого на об'єднання різних соціальних груп, фокусуючись на об'єднанні не лише громадян Сполученого Королівства, але й країн Співдружності. Крім того, виявлено збільшення уваги до питань особистого щастя, добробуту, духовності та сімейних цінностей, що підкреслює прагнення монархині створювати емоційний зв'язок зі своєю аудиторією. Інструмент аналізу колокацій допоміг виявити, що такі поняття, як, world та family часто співіснують у контексті різдвяних звернень, підкреслюючи загальнолюдські цінності у виступах Королеви Єлизавети. Подальші перспективи дослідження включають порівняння різдвяних промов Королеви з іншими її офіційними виступами. Крім того, доцільним видається порівняльний аналіз промов Королеви з виступами інших політичних та громадських діячів, що допоможе краще зрозуміти специфіку риторики монархії в порівнянні з іншими формами політичної комунікації.

Ключові слова: *корпусний аналіз, лексичні зміни, корпус текстів, різдвяні промови, корпусна лінгвістика, Королева Єлизавета II.*

Introduction. Corpus linguistics developed in the 60s and 80s of the twentieth century, at a time of rapid technological progress when 'technical communications' began to completely change human existence and research in the Humanities (Zyngier et al. 2008; Chesnokova 2016; van Peer and Chesnokova 2017). Therefore, its emergence revolutionized linguistic research. Corpus linguistics uses text corpora, which are standardized, unified and structured textual arrays used only for specific linguistic tasks. The first largest corpus was the BC (Brown Corpus), created at a private university in the United States (Brown University), which contained about 500 text fragments of several thousand words each, and, at the time, it was a quite significant breakthrough in computational linguistics and the ability to record language. Today, the existence of corpora makes life easier for linguists, but it should be clearly understood that this is not purely machine work, and in any case, no work can be done perfectly without human consciousness, which is a critically important tool. Corpus analysis makes human work much faster and easier, since the work is done by a computer; yet without human intervention and analysis, the work will still be flawed. After all, in corpora analysis, as in any other process, errors, inaccuracies and many other additional problems can occur.

Such an analysis allows not only to improve and further explore the conclusions of already conducted studies, but also to look at and define many seemingly traditional linguistic concepts and terms in a new way. It is also important that a corpus analysis will allow us to show the changes in the Christmas speeches of Queen Elizabeth II from 1952 to 2021, analysing 69 Christmas greetings (46,806 words in total). It is possible to see how social narratives, emotions, rhetoric, and vocabulary changed in the speeches from the very beginning of the monarch's reign in 1952 to the last speech in 2021 (van Peer and Chesnokova 2019). It is important to note that no such systematic corpus analysis has been conducted before.

Analysis of the latest research and publications. Latest research in corpus Linguistics is marked by the constant development of methods and tools as well as the development of software for analysing large volumes of texts, allowing for a deeper investigation of various aspects of language, such as lexical change, sociolinguistic variation and semantic trends. One of the newest developments for corpus linguistics is diachronic analysis, which allows tracking language changes over a long period. Corpus of Historical American English (COHA) was created by Mark Davis. COHA allows researchers to analyze not only changes in the use of words, but also changes in grammatical structures and rhetorical styles based on large text arrays, including works of art, newspaper articles and scientific publications. Contemporary research in this area also focuses on the analysis of linguistic variation related to social factors such as gender, class, ethnicity and

geographical origin. Thus Penelope Eckert, studied how speech varies across social groups and how these changes reflect social hierarchies, using large corpora of spoken language such as the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA).

Purpose. In this paper we aim at a corpus analysis of lexical changes in Elizabeth II's Christmas greetings from 1952 to 2021.

Summary tool. This is a general corpus analysis tool that provides a brief summary of the full text corpus by distinguishing between the number of all words and unique word combinations. It also shows the vocabulary density, readability index and average number of words per sentence.

This corpus has 1 document with 46,806 total words and 4,673 unique word forms. Created now.

Vocabulary Density: 0.100

Readability Index: 9.282

Average Words Per Sentence: 23.5

Most frequent words in the corpus:
- christmas (325); people (227); year (218); world (212); commonwealth (181)

Figure 1. Summary

The dataset encompassed a single document containing a total of 69 Christmas greetings. The entire corpus contained 46,806 words, with 4,673 unique word forms. The Vocabulary Density of the corpus was calculated to be 0.100. The Readability Index, a measure of the text's complexity, was determined to be 9.282.

 On average, each sentence in the corpus consisted of 23.5 words.

Word cloud. The visual cloud collected all the most used vocabulary in the corpus in that it allowed us to identify certain patterns of word usage and also provided a way to see the most frequently used terms. The word cloud presented in Figure 2 below shows that the word *christmas* is the most frequently used lexeme, thus echoing the Christmas theme of the speeches. The cloud also includes words *people, year, day*, which imply the Queen's attention on society and social problems. Also, words *happy, peace* and *good* demonstrate the focus on the positive and uplifting values and underscores a strong desire for the overall prosperity and harmony of the country. This highlights the strategic use of vocabulary to maintain stability and optimism among the audience. The Queen seems to be interested in making sure that everything goes well in the future, and this is rather typical of every speech.

Figure 2. Frequency analysis: "Cirrus" function

Collocation links. The collocation tool helps us to identify words that occur frequently and makes it easier to understand the changes that have taken place over the years. Analysing collocation, we can clearly see the relationship of the word *christmas* with other words: *millions*, *world, commonwealth*, *lives* and others. This indicates the focus of the Christmas greetings on the global audience of listeners. By emphasising universal values and highlighting the importance of interpersonal connections, which demonstrates the Queen's desire to go beyond national issues to address fundamental themes that are understandable to a global audience. The themes of unity, family peace, faith in the future, God's blessing, etc. can be traced. Moreover, the prominence of words *hope, future*, and *peace* suggests a deliberate emphasis on optimism and collective resilience, highlighting the Queen's effort to connect with and inspire a diverse audience across the Commonwealth.
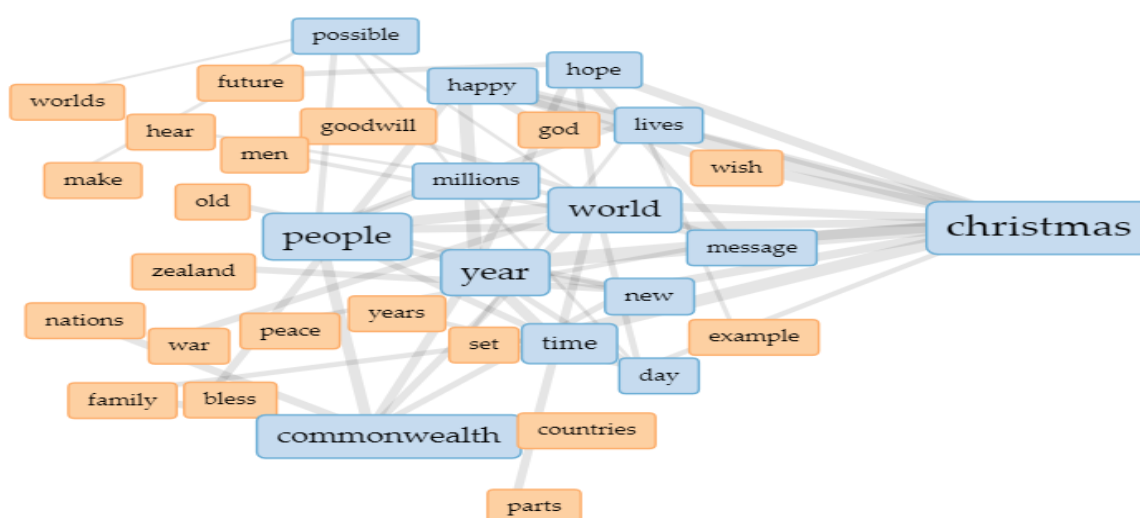

Figure 3. Links with a word "Christmas"

Collocations.

This analysis shows the lexical connections around the word *christmas* and allows us to understand the main emphases that the Queen made in her holiday addresses. The most common collocations with the word *christmas* are *year* (45 occurrences), *time* (36 occurrences), *day* (31 occurrences), *message* (27 occurrences), *new* (15 occurrences), *family* (15 occurrences), *wish* (14 occurrences), *story* (14 occurrences).This indicates that the speeches often summarise the events of the year or look to the future, or that the Queen emphasises the special period of Christmas as a time for reflection, unity and celebration and allows us to understand the main emphases that the Queen placed in her holiday messages.

Term	Collocate	Count (context)
christmas	year	45
christmas	time	36
christmas	day	31
christmas	message	27
christmas	new	15
christmas	family	15
christmas	wish	14
christmas	story	14

Figure. 4. Collocations with the word "Christmas"

Word frequency. This analysis shows the most frequent words which were used in Queen Elizabeth II's speeches from 1952 to 2021. The analysis revealed that the most frequent lexemes are *christmas* (325 occurrences), *people* (227 occurrences), *year* (218 occurrences), *world* (212 occurrences), *commonwealth* (181 occurrences), *time* (138 occurrences) and *family* (125occurrences). They are followed by words: *great, new, years, life, hope, happy, day, good, children* and *future.* Also, there are some words highlighted green: *great, happy, good*, which means that software identified them as those with positive collocation. These words are intended to resonate emotionally with the audience, fostering a sense of hope and communal prosperity.

	Term	Count ↓
1	christmas	325
2	people	227
3	year	218
4	world	212
5	commonwealth	181
6	time	138
7	family	125
8	great	124
9	new	114
10	years	105
11	life	105
12	hope	104
13	happy	94
14	day	94
15	good	89
16	children	88
17	future	84

Figure. 5. "Terms" functionality

Trends.

The trends presented a line graph of the relative frequencies across the corpus. Each term in the graph is coloured according to the word it represents, and at the top of the graph a legend displays which words are associated with which colours. For example, the words *year*, *world, people*, *commonwealth* and *christmas* reflect seasonal or cultural priorities that change in greetings over time. Such fluctuations in frequency indicate dynamic shifts in the focus of the speeches, which are likely to correspond to current events and social moods in a particular period.
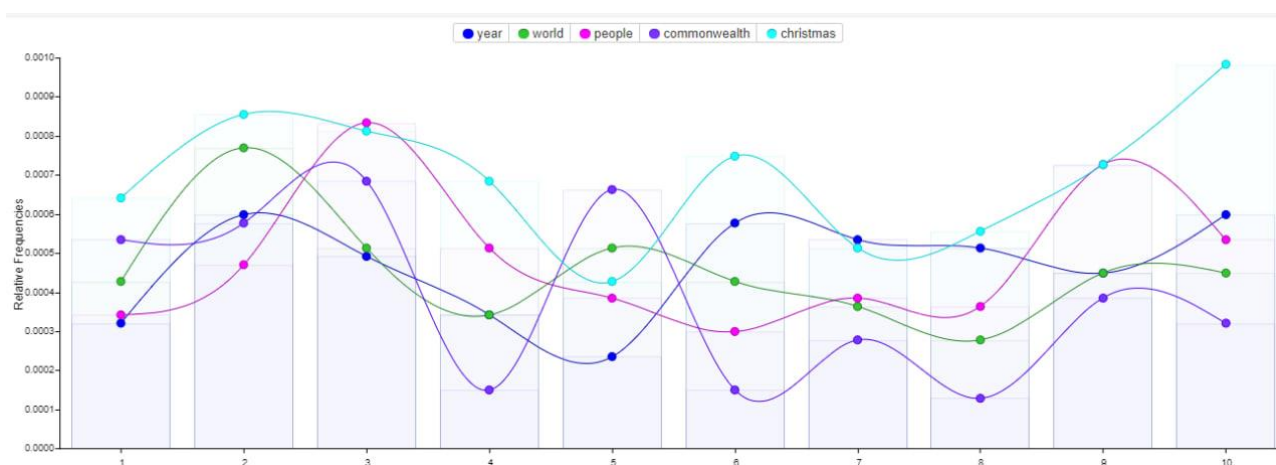

Figure. 6. "Trend" functionality

Conclusions and further research prospects. Through corpus analysis of Queen Elizabeth II's Christmas greetings, we have gained insights into the vocabulary and its use over the years and identified important constructions that the monarch clearly adhered to. Since this analysis was based on scripts from 1952 to 2021, we could notice the stable elements over the decades, as *christmas, people, commonwealth and family,* that were used in every greeting. Furthermore, these findings underscore the Queen's strategic use of language to foster a sense of continuity and stability within the Commonwealth, especially during periods of uncertainty or change. By examining these speeches, we can see how language serves as a tool for maintaining cultural unity and reinforcing shared values among diverse audiences.

A research perspective involves the analysis not only of Queen Elizabeth II's Christmas speeches, but also her other official speeches or interviews. It is also possible to compare the Queen's speeches with those of other political figures. A further comparison of Christmas speeches with those of political leaders would help to outline the unique characteristics of monarchical rhetoric that differ from other forms of political communication. It would also be interesting to conduct an analysis, comparing the speeches of Queen Elizabeth and another monarch, especially if we take the same time periods, such as an economic crisis or war.

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