

# Corpus linguistics, triangulation and experimentation

Keynote lecture

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## Outline

Corpus linguistics, as a method, is closely linked to the concept and practice of experimentation. Corpus data itself can be the focus of and sole data for an experiment, or it may be used in support of an experiment using another method. In the later case, results derived from corpora are often deployed as part of a triangulated approach to a research question. Different methods are deployed in pursuit of the same research question combining, for example, experimental data gathered in a laboratory context with findings from corpus data produced and gathered in naturalistic settings.

In this talk I will provide an overview of current trends in corpus linguistics which seek to bring different research methods together, through triangulation, to provide deeper insights into specific research questions. In doing so, I will show that as well as providing insight into a research question triangulation also has the potential to challenge some of the methods involved.

Drawing upon examples from recent work published by Baker and Egbert (2016), Egbert and Baker (2020) and McEnery, Brezina, Gablasova and Banerjee (2019) I will explore the exciting intersection created by triangulation. While I will clearly illustrate its promise, I will also look at the challenge that triangulation presents to the researcher. By looking in depth at the challenges that are encountered in integrating corpus data into the study of second language acquisition, I will outline how the promise of triangulation is balanced, at times, by real challenges that make the integration of corpus data with other approaches a far from trivial task in some theoretical contexts. Nonetheless, I will argue, both the promise and the challenge should be welcomed by researchers as steps on the path to a more robust theoretical framing of our understanding of language.

## References

- Baker, P., Egbert, J. 2016. *Triangulating Methodological Approaches in Corpus Linguistic Research*. New York: Routledge.
- Egbert, J., Baker, P. 2020. *Using Corpus Methods to Triangulate Linguistic Analysis*, New York: Routledge.
- McEnery, T., Brezina, V., Gablasova, D., Banerjee, J. 2019. Corpus linguistics, learner corpora and SLA: employing technology to analyse language use. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 39, 74-92.