Connexions module: m13358

WORDCORR TOOLS*

Joseph Grimes

This work is produced by The Connexions Project and licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License †

Abstract

Wordcorr provides tools to enter and edit data, define differing analytical views of the data, annotate comparable data, tabulate correspondence sets, and review and refine the results of the analysis.

Here are some of the main things Wordcorr helps you with. There are other tools that will come up later, but these are the key functions.

Enter Data. Type in word lists for comparative analysis. The first word list establishes the sequence of entries for all the others. You have access to the complete International Phonetic Alphabet plus some other symbols. You can edit data after typing them in.

Define View. Since alternate analyses of the same data are possible, you perform each analysis in a separate **view**. You give each view a name, decide which **speech varieties** of the **collection** are to appear in the view and in what order, and the **threshold** percentage of the varieties in the view that must contain a **datum** in order to form a **correspondence set**.

Annotate. For each entry, you examine the data and decide which words could plausibly have descended from the same ancestral form (usually called the **protoform**, which you will endeavor to reconstruct). Each set of such words constitutes a **group**, and each group gets a one-letter **tag**. Within each group, you line up the **segments** that match each other, perhaps stretching the shape of some words by typing in the **Indel** symbol "/" to indicate that either a new sound may have been inserted in some of the words that would otherwise match, or a sound may have dropped out at the point where you insert the symbol. There are some minor tools for annotation as well. All the words in a group must have the same number of symbols; but different groups in the same entry do not have to have the same number of symbols.

Tabulate. Once all the groups in an entry are annotated, the groups with enough speech varieties entered to meet or exceed the view's threshold are taken up one at a time. Wordcorr transforms each group into correspondence sets. For each correspondence set, you indicate the probable protosegment of the protolanguage that the set represents, and indicate the phonological environment in which it probably was situated within the protoform. At first these judgments are only educated guesses; but as you proceed, patterns you begin to recognize take shape to give an attested picture of how changes happened.

Refine. As soon as a group is tabulated, its correspondence sets appear in the view's Results structure, which is organized **phonetically**, by the **place and manner** of articulation of the protosegments. You can refine it there, moving things around, changing protosegments, environments, and orderings. You can also extract a summary of the evidence for your hypotheses about language change, print out the whole results structure, or extract just the raw data.

Exercise 1

(Solution on p. 3.)

(select all that apply, in order)

a) varieties

^{*}Version 1.7: Mar 3, 2006 8:53 pm -0600

[†] http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/

Connexions module: m13358 2

- b) protolanguage
- c) results
- d) Indel
- e) correspondence sets
- f) group tag

See hint in $footnote^1$

¹The outcomes of annotation and tabulation are kept for you in permanent form.

Connexions module: m13358 3

Solutions to Exercises in this Module

Solution to Exercise (p. 1)

- e) correspondence sets
- c) results

The results from which you will deduce the form of the prolanguage and the changes that have taken place in the speech varieties consist of correspondence sets organized by protosegment and environment.