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SCHOOL IN BRITISH AND AMERICAN MEDIA DISCOURSE: A CORPUS STUDY

SCHOOL У БРИТАНСЬКОМУ Й АМЕРИКАНСЬКОМУ МЕДІЙНОМУ ДИСКУРСІ: КОРПУСНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

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The research is devoted to the analysis of collocations with the lemma SCHOOL in The Guardian and The New York Times issues published late in 2020 and early 2021. Two corpora have been created, each consisting of 70 articles devoted to problems of schools during Covid-19 time. The Sketch engine is the tool to process both corpora. The study mostly concentrates on the following patterns: modifiers of SCHOOL, verbs with SCHOOL as object. The analysis shows that the broadsheets reveal different aspects connected with school functioning during pandemic time. The Guardian articles present Primary+SCHOOL and Secondary+SCHOOL collocations as most frequent collocations with the first one twice more often used than the latter among modifiers of SCHOOL, in this way underlying most urgent questions schools, teachers and authorities face right now. The question of teachers' well-being is also raised in the broadsheet discourse as teachers receive more pressure during the school closing/opening process and dis-

tance learning mode. The New York Times discourse displays High+SCHOOL and Public+SCHOOL collocations with most frequent use, followed by Private+SCHOOL and Elementary+SCHOOL collocations, which demonstrates social issues depicted in the newspaper discourse and which are relevant for the country at the present time. The pattern verb+SCHOOL as object gives the picture of most vital problems connected with school closure, reopening and attendance. Thus, the most frequent collocations in The Guardian are Close+SCHOOL and Reopen+SCHOOL, while The New York Times offers Reopen+SCHOOL and Attend+SCHOOL. The both newspapers mostly give publicity to the events about schools which are happening in their countries. The media discourse reflects concerns about safety and bringing children back to school in the two countries. Many questions are connected with vaccination, though it is more highlighted in The New York articles.

Key words: SCHOOL, media discourse, corpus analysis, The Guardian, The New York Times.

Дослідження присвячене аналізу колокацій із лемою SCHOOL у виданнях The Guardian і The New York Times, опублікованих наприкінці 2020-го та на початку 2021 року. Створено два корпуси, кожен з яких складається з 70 статей, присвячених проблемам шкіл під час Covid-19 час. Sketch engine застосовується для обробки обох корпусів. Дослідження здебільшого зосереджується на таких моделях: modifiers of SCHOOL, verbs with SCHOOL as object. Аналіз показує, що національні газети розкривають різні аспекти, пов'язані із функціонуванням школи під час пандемії. У статтях газети The Guardian представлено колокації Primary+SCHOOL і Secondary+SCHOOL як найчастіше вживані словосполучення серед modifiers of SCHOOL, причому перші удвічі частіше використовуються, ніж другі. Питання про ментальне благополуччя вчителів також піднімається у газетному дискурсі, оскільки вчителі відчувають більший тиск під час процесу закриття/відкриття школи та режиму дистанційного навчання. У дискурсі газети The New York Times колокації High+SCHOOL та Public+SCHOOL позначаються найчастішим вживанням, наступними є Private+SCHOOL та Elementary+SCHOOL, що демонструє соціальні проблеми, зображені у газетному дискурсі, які є актуальними для країни нині. Патерн verb+SCHOOL as object дає уявлення про найважливіші проблеми, пов'язані із закриттям школи, її відкриттям та відвідуванням. Так, найпоширеніші колокації у газеті The Guardian є Close+SCHOOL та Reopen+SCHOOL, тоді як у газеті The New York Times – Reopen+SCHOOL та Attend+SCHOOL. Обидві газети здебільшого публікують події про школи, які відбуваються у їхніх країнах. Медіа дискурс відображає занепокоєння щодо безпеки та повернення дітей до школи в двох країнах. Багато питань пов'язані з вакцинацією, хоча це більш висвітлено у статтях The New York Times.

Ключові слова: SCHOOL, медійний дискурс, корпусний аналіз, The Guardian, The Times

Introduction. Currently, when the coronavirus disease pandemic has caused dramatic changes in all areas, in the field of education and schools it has affected not only teachers and pupils but all members involved in this process. The usual mode of education and teaching has changed drastically when schools were closed and students had to study autonomously staying at home. The burning issues connected with schools are depicted in the media as teachers, students, parents and everyone who has connection to this process are curious in the actual events and proposed ways out of the emergency. The problem has been given coverage by numerous international organisations among which there are UNESCO and UNICEF. UNESCO's main concerns [12] are how to keep schools open, support for teachers, learning loss, digital transformation of education and in general, future prospects of educational process; while UNICEF's reports [13] are concentrated on difficulties in different regions especially where children are deprived access to education. National broadsheets are also one of the main sources which inform readers of what is going in the field of education. Newspaper articles have been covering the problem of school during pandemic time, the media sources focus mostly on high, public, elementary, private, summer, secondary, primary schools. Thus, the aim of the research is to analyse collocations with SCHOOL in the British and American media

discourse focusing on Primary, Secondary, Public, Elementary, Private school issues.

Taking into account the aim of the article, the forthcoming tasks have been set:

- 1) to compile corpora of the of the Guardian and the New York Time newspaper articles covering school problems;
- 2) to process the two corpora and singling out collocations containing the lemma SCHOOL;
- 3) to analyse the achieved results and interpret text passages with collocations with SCHOOL;
- 4) to contrast the results obtained from two corpora depicting verbal pictures of schools giving in the Guardian and the New York Times texts.

The object of the study is newspaper discourse containing the lemma SCHOOL.

The subject of the study is collocations with SCHOOL in the newspaper articles.

The material of the study is the corpora of 70 the Guardian [10] and 70 the New York Times [11] articles devoted to school issues. The articles date from late 2020 till early 2021.

Methods. Both corpora have been analyzed and processed with the help of Sketch Engine [7]. The keyword method has been also used to identify words that are more frequent in the corpora studied. In order to find out social issues and matters raised in the newspapers, discourse analysis has been applied to study passages with collocations with the lemma SCHOOL. This method was

combined with the contextual interpretation analysis and comparative one so that to compare the use of lemma SCHOOL in both newspapers.

Theoretical background. Media discourse is a broad term which can refer to how reality is represented in broadcast and printed media from television to newspaper [6]. We are all affected by various sources of information, our points of view are shaped, reinforced and changed by our outlook to the media [5, p. 13]. Media discourse plays a significant role in society as it serves as the source of information about events happening right now and also it presents interpretation of these events, in this way reflecting and creating most important and urgent issues which should be given news consumers.

Speaking about text and discourse, there is often offered a distinction between these two terms. The term 'text' is used to define the observable product of interaction: a cultural object; and 'discourse' means the process of interaction itself: a cultural activity [9, p. 9]. To analyze language units we need to look at both the text itself and the interaction and context of it as it is pointless to study text in isolation [9, p. 10].

Corpus linguistics is widely used in the study of media discourse; with the help of it a wide range of opportunities exist to explore its peculiarities. Corpus linguistic research differs from most research in theoretical linguistics in that the language sample analyzed, and the methods used for that analysis, are central concerns [2, p. 34].

Corpus linguistics is a scientific method of language analysis. It requires the analyst to provide empirical evidence in the form of data drawn from language corpora in support of any statement made about language [3, p. 2]. Corpus linguistics is also a quantitative methodology; this means that corpus linguistics typically works with numbers which reflect the frequencies of words and phrases in corpora [3, p. 3]. Corpus represents a specific form of linguistic data. It is a collection of written texts that can be searched by a computer using specialized software [3, p. 6]. Corpus allows to search for a particular word or phrase, and to see the frequency of word in different sections of the corpus [2, p. 23]. Collocations and keywords are important techniques in corpus linguistics since collocations show important meaning connections between words. Therefore, corpus linguistics enables to study how problems of school are expressed in the media discourse and what language means have been used to depict the picture.

Results and Discussion. The corpora of articles from the two national broadsheets have been processed

and this enables us to build n-grams which illustrate the use of the lexeme SCHOOL and mostly frequently used collocates. The N-grams have helped to find out similarities and differences between collocations with SCHOOL in both newspapers. Despite the fact that n-grams present the same grammar patterns with the lexeme SCHOOL, they prove that different matters are raised and discussed in the newspaper sources. The main issues that are raised in the media discourse are the following: 1) how the Covid-19 pandemic has changed education process; 2) schools were / are closed all over the world; 3) online learning; 4) teaching remotely on digital platforms; 5) teachers, parents, pupils face a lot of difficulties while conducting education process. Surely, all these issues connected with ongoing events of the educational process are burning for society.

The N-gram (see Fig. 1) of collocations with modifiers of SCHOOL in The Guardian shows that collocations Primary+SCHOOL are used twice more often than collocations Secondary+SCHOOL. Such frequency defines that topics of primary school are predominant and are often raised in the media. Teachers face a lot of challenges while working with pupils of primary schools. Making them work autonomously is difficult due to age specific competencies: With children in primary schools and a career in secondary, Amy has seen the challenges faced by age groups. At primary age, it's a struggle to get children to do literacy and numeracy, and you can't just sit them down and ask them to work independently [10]. The next example highlights how primary pupils bear the brunt of lockdowns and school closures and the consequences it creates: Primary schools: pandemic causing 'significant' learning loss in England [10].

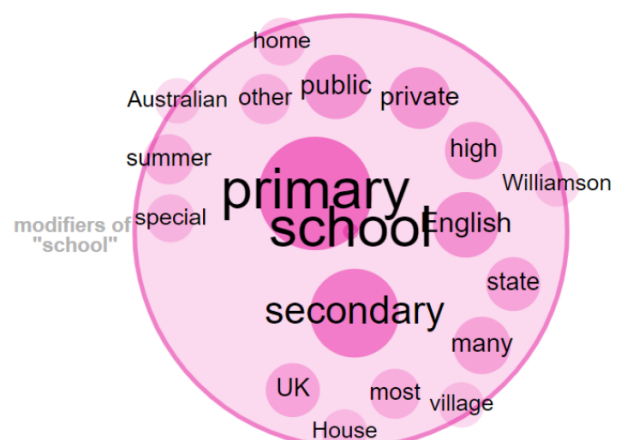


Fig. 1. The n-gram of modifiers of SCHOOL in The Guardian

Collocations Secondary+SCHOOL take the second place after Primary+SCHOOL ones. It illustrates the fact that these collocations are frequently used in the media discourse and secondary schools also face challenges of organizing educational process and lack of teachers because of the pandemic: Reports from secondary schools suggested that students and staff had adapted well to more stringent mask-wearing routines since they returned [10]. Other issues that have been revealed with the help of Discourse Analysis in the text passages with collocations Secondary+SCHOOL are issues of wearing masks, as it was mostly recommended for children of older ages, while keeping distance and washing hands are instructions for students of all ages, teachers and school staff are to follow them as well and to supervise and control the necessary social limitations in school buildings.

Concerns about mental health and well-being are widely discussed in the newspaper discourse. Parents, pupils and teachers face tremendous stress. Not all pupils or even parents or teachers can cope with it, they need help and pieces of advice how to prevent negative consequences: Lonfield wants mental health counsellors installed in every secondary school [10]. The analysis of the discourse gives a new insight about the situation of teachers' well-being: Reopen the schools or a generation will bear the mental health scars Lee Hudson [10], as during the pandemic time counsellors should support not only students but teachers as well since they are under even more pressure than before and are responsible for their pupils, consequently the issue of pupils and teachers' mental well-being is really urgent and widely discussed in the media discourse.

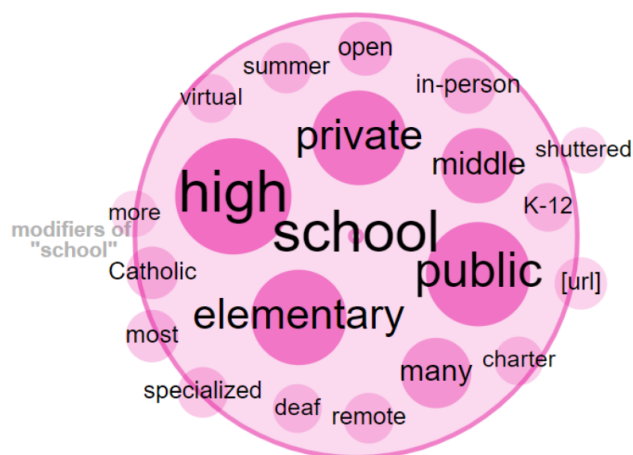
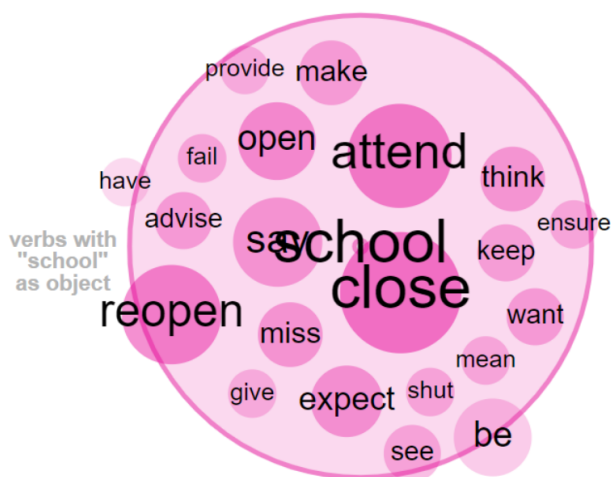


Fig. 2. The n-gram of modifiers of “school” in The New York Times

Having a look at the n-gram of collocations with SCHOOL in the New York Times (See Fig. 2), we can notice that this n-gram mirrors the following collocations: High+SCHOOL, Public+SCHOOL and the same amount of collocations devoted to private and elementary schools. It depicts that The New York Times’s discourse concentrates more on revealing the issues of High school and Public one. It shows that the newspaper articles reflect what is vital and important for their readers and what is going on in society: Middle and High school students were able to attend in –person classes for only about six weeks last fall before the entire system closed in November because of rising virus rates. High schools are the last to reopen partly because of lack of testing capacity, and because some high schools have been used as vaccination centers for New Yorkers [11]. The examples highlight the emergency of reopening schools and the issues connected with it.

The Guardian



The New York Times

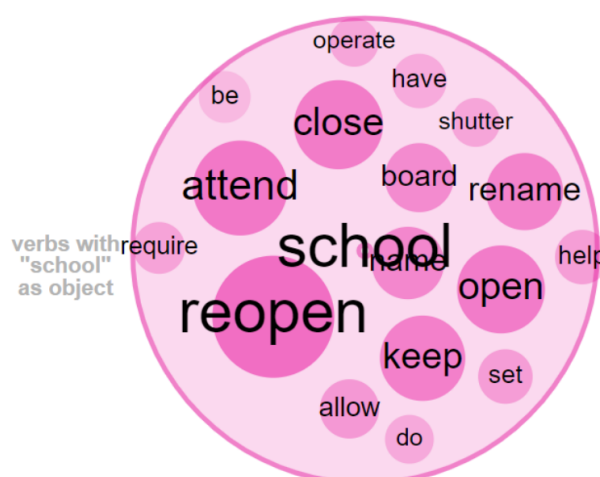


Fig. 3. The n-gram with verbs with SCHOOL as object in The Guardian and The New York Times

The comparison of n-grams (See Fig. 3) enables to show the fact that in The Guardian articles the issues of closing and attending schools are depicted more frequently than in The New York Time, whereas The New York Times devotes more attention to the matters of reopening schools and all aspects connected with having offline, face-to-face educational process and taking safety measures, still facing problems of teachers getting sick leaves.

When to bring pupils back to school is one of the most contentious issues of the coronavirus outbreak [10]. The variety of disputes arose with the closing and reopening of schools. Some parents were frustrated that the school had opened at all others were angry at the closure. Concern has been raised about the effect on COVID-19 infections of bringing all pupils on the same day. It was proposed to use a step-by-step gradual return in order to monitor the situation. School leaders are increasingly worried, having expected a phased return, especially in secondary schools, to enable education repeat Covid tests to be administered [10].

The plan for children to start returning to school in England has caused much debate about safety: The government faces a major revolt from teachers and head teachers over its plans to reopen schools. Head teachers began legal action against the Department for Education on Saturday in an attempt to force ministers to reveal why they think it is safe to reopen schools on Monday, given the higher transmissibility of the new Covid-19 variant, particularly among children [10]. Wearing cloth face masks should be a priority especially when it's hard to maintain social distance. It is obligatory for parents to practice hand-washing with their children at home and explain why it's important to do. When hand-washing is not available, they should use hand sanitizer. It should also be explained that they should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth: When the UK went into lockdown, closing schools made sense, based on the concern that children might be key drivers of infection in the population, as for other viruses like influenza. We also didn't know how children might be affected by the infection [10]. Understandably, parents and teachers are worried about what this will mean for risk to children, and teachers are justifiably concerned about risk to themselves [10].

The only way out in this unpredictable situation is vaccination. Vaccines continue to reduce a person's risk of contracting the virus that cause COVID-19. There are several reasons why is it important to vaccinate: because vaccines save lives; it protects your health; it allows to travel safely; it prevents

the spread of the disease: While Nolan has had coronavirus, during which time the boys did not become infected, she still has concerns about the implications of reopening schools on the rates of the virus in the community. "I'd feel better if teachers had been vaccinated, for the community, really," she said [1].

The Guardian covers the issue of safe returning to schools. Safety of the students is of vital importance that's why all measures should be used in order to provide a healthy school environment during the pandemic: The right way to reopen school must include the highest standard of Covid safety in schools, continued reduction of the virus in the communities we serve and access to vaccinations for school staff [11]. Clean air is vital for living and learning, and effective ventilation is an important part of Covid-19 prevention. Proper ventilation used with other actions can help reduce the spread of the disease.

"Ventilation, I would say, is much more important than masks ... and there's no negative side-effect of that," said Michie, highlighting that the government should have focused on addressing that issue while schools were closed [10]. The best time to make changes and upgrade all the systems is when school is not in session. Opening windows may help to bring in more fresh air but natural ventilation is not always possible because of the outdoor temperatures. School administrators should improve school ventilation to reduce risks related to Covid-19.

Speaking about school reopening we are talking at the same time about vaccination and the attitude towards it. Critics have raised concern that not all states had done enough to comply with the vaccine mandate: They complained that many states had not prioritized teachers for vaccination. The event took place as some local unions across the country, most notably in Chicago, continue to resist efforts to reopen schools, arguing that doing so before widespread teacher vaccination would risk lives [11]. Our goal was to understand, as well as possible, how prevalent the virus was in America's schools over the first weeks of classes. The numbers alone cannot answer whether reopening schools was safe or not, for students, employees or the surrounding community [11].

Another problematic issue raised in the articles is the measures taken by Biden Administration. The Administration is calling on entertainment venues to require tests or shots and for states to adopt mandates for school employees. It plans as well to ramp up testing capacity for the virus: The Biden administration is planning to spend

billions to ramp up testing to try to reopen schools and the economy [11]. Biden urges citizen to vaccinate in order to recover of the economy of the U.S. and without doubts it depends on blunting the spread of the virus.

The impact of school closure on children and teachers is gigantic. It can be compared with an earthquake and it demonstrates that the well-being of children and all members of learning process should be prioritized and urgent actions are needed to open schools safely.

Weighed against the substantial harms to children and parents from keeping schools closed, elementary schools should at least offer in-person learning, said Dr. David Rubin, a pediatrician and infectious disease expert at the University of Pennsylvania [11]. It is mandatory to ensure of lost learning and teaching process. Children will come back to school with quite different levels because of huge learning losses studying online using digital platforms. For the majority of children school is

the only safe place for socialization and meaningful learning.

Conclusions. The comparison of the newspaper articles of The Guardian and the New York Times depicts the problematic issues of school in Britain and America. The media discourse reveals the frequent issues in the society and possible ways out of vaccination, mental health, attending, closing and safe reopening of primary, secondary and high schools, vaccination, mental health.

The analysis has shown that The Guardian articles pay more attention to primary and secondary schools, at the same time The New York Times highlights the matters of high and public schools. More attention in the New York times is devoted to vaccination and pandemic situation, on the contrary safety measures are mirrored in The Guardian. All the differences can be explained by the interests of the readers and the newspapers try to reflect the burning issues that attracts attention of the society.

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