Exemplary structure of a corpus-based termpaper:

The mandative subjunctive

1 Introduction

- the subjunctive in English has been disappearing from the English language
- it is still preserved in formulaic and so-called mandative uses (i.e. in constructions expressing wishes, orders or requirements)
- Tottie (2002: 163) states that the mandative subjunctive, illustrated in (1a) is particularly frequent in AmE and spilling over to BrE; in contrast, BrE uses periphrastic modal verb constructions as in (1b) or simple indicatives as in (1c)

(1) a. He suggested that she <u>play</u>.
    b. He suggested that she <u>should play</u>.
    c. He suggested that she <u>played</u>.

- announce and motivate the structure of the paper!

2 Previous Research

- Tottie (2002: 163) offers no empirical data to support this statement
- Crawford (2009: 264) provides corpus data leading him to conclude that *demand*, *ensure* and *insist* are mandative triggers with different degrees of strength (strong, moderate and weak), but he uses a classification that is not amenable to support Tottie's claim
- the present study aims to verify Tottie's claim on the basis of British and American corpora

3 Methodology

- make every methodological decision explicit; give your reasoning behind it!
- every step in the analysis should be replicable so that the results could be verified by another researcher!

3.1 Corpora

- to investigate this problem, the Brown corpus family, a quartet of four parallel corpora is used: the Brown corpus of written American English published in 1961, the LOB corpus, a comparable corpus of written British English, equally published in 1961, the American Frown corpus, composed of the same text types published in 1992, and the FLOB corpus, representing written British English from 1991

3.2 Search Expression

- in the Concord function of WordSmith Tools, the following search expressions were used:
  - *demand*, *ensure* and *insist* and all inflectional forms of these verbs (*-s*, *-ed*, *-ing*) with the context word *that* at a distance of 0 words to the left and 1 word to the right

3.3 Categorization of Examples

- instances of uninflected 3rd person singular verbs and the base form *be in* the present tense were categorized as subjunctives, e.g.:

(2) ... the governor insisted that he <u>lower</u> his prices in accord with the scale ... (Brown)
(3) But he insisted that it <u>be</u> housed in a special museum. (Brown)

- instances lacking the ordinary sequence of tenses were categorized as subjunctives, e.g.:

(4) I know now why the students insisted that I <u>go</u> to Hiroshima even when I told them I didn't want to. (Brown)

- negated instances lacking *do*-support were categorized as subjunctives, e.g.:

(5) The British people demanded that their government <u>not leave</u> Ulster. (Frown)

- instances where the search word does not represent a verb were excluded, e.g.:

(6) The danger was that the fall in incomes caused by the reductions in output made in order to reduce inventories might lead to such a drop in consumers' <u>demand that</u> the attempt to liquidate inventories would fail, leading to another round of cuts in output. (LOB)

- instances where the verbs were not followed by a dependent mandative subordinate clause were discarded, e.g.:

(7) The outlaws were not always poor men, but the poor man did not <u>demand that</u>. (LOB)

- instances where the verb form is ambiguous between subjunctive and indicative were discounted, e.g.:

(8) But every time I suggest this to her, Mrs. Wright turns it down and demands that <u>I go out</u> and punish Mr. Wright. (Brown)

- examples of *insist* where the meaning of the verb is not mandative were excluded, e.g.:

(9) Mr. Bush, on the other hand, <u>insists</u> that advocacy would be wasted on an intractable Congress. (Frown)

- examples where the verb form in the *that*-clause is ambiguous between indicative and subjunctive, e.g. were excluded:

(10) Congress should ensure that federal snoops after our phone records <u>get</u> the busy signal more often. (Frown)

4   Results

- the results for the four corpora (British and American, 1960s and 1990s) are kept separate
- for the following tables, three types of verb forms are distinguished: subjunctives, modal periphrases and indicatives

Table 1:   Realizations of the verbal syntagm in subordinate clauses dependent on *demand/demands/demanding/demanded* immediately followed by the subordinator *that*

		subjunctives		modal periphrases		indicatives		total
		tokens	percentage	tokens	percentage	tokens	percentage	tokens
BrE	LOB (1961)	2	50%	2	50%	0	0%	4
	FLOB (1992)	4	36%	6	55%	1	9%	11
AmE	Brown (1961)	17	100%	0	0%	0	0%	17
	Frown (1991)	10	100%	0	0%	0	0%	10

Table 2:   Realizations of the verbal syntagm in subordinate clauses dependent on *ensure/ensures/ ensuring/ensured* immediately followed by the subordinator *that*
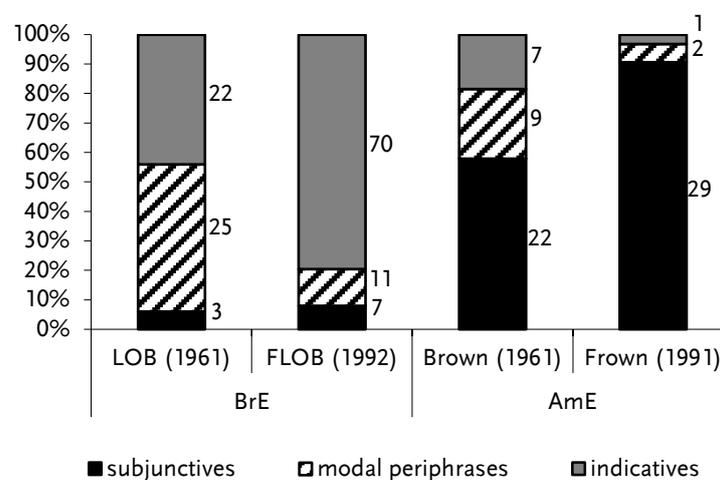
		subjunctives		modal periphrases		indicatives		total
		tokens	percentage	tokens	percentage	tokens	percentage	tokens
BrE	LOB (1961)	0	0%	13	37%	22	63%	35
	FLOB (1992)	1	1%	3	4%	69	95%	73
AmE	Brown (1961)	0	0%	6	46%	7	54%	13
	Frown (1991)	5	83%	1	17%	0	0%	6

Table 3:   Realizations of the verbal syntagm in subordinate clauses dependent on *insist/insists/ insisting/insisted* immediately followed by the subordinator *that*

		subjunctives		modal periphrases		indicatives		total
		tokens	percentage	tokens	percentage	tokens	percentage	tokens
BrE	**LOB (1961)**	1	9%	10	91%	0	0%	11
	FLOB (1992)	2	50%	2	50%	0	0%	4
AmE	**Brown (1961)**	5	63%	3	38%	0	0%	8
	Frown (1991)	14	88%	1	6%	1	6%	16

- Figure 1 summarizes the findings from the three mandative verbs on a more abstract level.

Figure 1:   Realizations of the verbal syntagm in subordinate clauses dependent on three mandative verbs (*demand, ensure* and *insist*) immediately followed by the subordinator *that*

5   Discussion

- exploit your results in every possible respect!
- draw all kinds of comparisons, but make sure you do not compare apples with pears!
- contextualize your results with previous research on the topic (section 2)
- try to make reference to diachronic trends (conservatism/innovation/revival) and to overarching explanations (colloquialization, regularization, economy/densification, grammaticalization, Americanization etc.)

6   Conclusion

- address the problem stated at the beginning (Introduction)!
- summarize the results of the corpus analyses as far as relevant!
- give a critical assessment of the empirical study, its merits and limitations!
- point out avenues for further research!

References

Crawford, William J. (2009) "The Mandative Subjunctive." In: Günter Rohdenburg & Julia Schlüter (eds.) *One Language, Two Grammars? Differences between British and American English.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 257-276.

Tottie, Gunnel (2002) *An Introduction to American English.* Oxford: Blackwell.