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Nota di contenuto	Corpus Linguistics at Work -- Editorial page -- Title page -- Copyright page -- Table of contents -- Acknowledgements -- 1. Introduction -- Corpus linguistics: between theory and methodology -- An empirical approach to the description of language use -- Language as function in context -- The input of the new technologies -- Different corpora for different purposes -- This book -- The corpora used in this book -- Notes -- 2. Language teaching -- When the corpus does not prove the point: the example of any -- Defining extended units of meaning: the example of fickle and flexible -- Extended units and meaning disambiguation: the example of all but -- Extended units and communicative grammar: the example of except that -- Extended units of meaning - a view of synonyms as false friends: the example of largely vs broadly -- The cumulative side of usage and syllabus design -- Conclusion: discovery procedures, changing roles and self-access -- Notes -- 3. Corpus Issues -- Introduction -- The rise of corpus linguistics -- Corpus Definition -- Issues: authenticity -- Issues: Representativeness -- Issues: sampling -- Conclusion -- Notes -- 4. The corpus-based approach -- Definition -- Insulation --

Standardisation -- Instantiation -- Discussion-the corpus-based approach -- Notes -- 5. The corpus-driven approach -- Introduction -- Definitions -- Word and lemma -- Conclusion -- Notes -- 6. Item and Environment -- Extended units of meaning -- Extended units of meaning: the example of the naked eye -- Extended units of meaning: the example of proper -- Semantic prosodies -- Semantic prosodies: the example of andare incontro -- Delexicalisation -- Delexicalisation: the example of real -- Delexicalisation: the example of bel -- Ideology -- Conclusion -- Notes -- 7. Working with corpora across languages -- Introduction -- Progressive steps between form and function. The example of in (the) case (of) and its Italian equivalents -- From in the case of to nel caso di -- From in case of to in caso di -- From in case to se per caso -- The example of real and its Italian equivalents -- Items and their collocates: a web of relations across languages -- Conclusion -- Notes -- 8. The contextual theory of meaning -- Notes -- 9. Historical Landmarks in meaning -- The historical and evolutionist period -- European structuralism: Saussure -- The structuralist approach to meaning - Bloomfield and Zelig Harris -- Formal grammars - Chomsky -- Notes -- 10. Conclusion -- Corpus-driven linguistics (CDL): position statement -- Goals -- Standpoint -- Methodology -- Categories -- Body of knowledge -- This Book's assumptions and issues -- Concluding remarks -- References -- Appendix 1 Concordance of all but from the Economist and the WSJ Corpus 55 out of a total 411 Instances. -- Appendix 2 Exercise on all but from the Economist and WSJ Corpus -- Appendix 3 Exercise on except that from the Economist and the WSJ Corpus -- Appendix 4 Concordance of proper (Attributive use) from the BBC corpus 55 out of a total 631 Instances -- Appendix 5 Concordance of Andare incontro from the Italian Corpus 49 Instances In total -- Appendix 6 Concordance of in the case of from the Birmingham Corpus 50 instances out of a total 550 -- Appendix 7 Concordance of nel caso di/del/della etc. from the Italian Corpus 50 out of a total 319 instances -- Appendix 8 Concordance of in case of from the Birmingham Corpus 45 out of a total 56 instances -- Appendix 9 Concordance of in caso di from the Italian Corpus 50 instances out of a total 83. -- INDEX -- The series STUDIES IN CORPUS LINGUISTICS (SCL).

Sommario/riassunto

The book offers a combined discussion of the main theoretical, methodological and application issues related to corpus work. Thus, starting from the definition of what is a corpus and why reading a corpus calls for a different methodology from reading a text, the underlying assumptions behind corpus work are discussed. The two main approaches to corpus work are discussed as the "corpus-based" and the "corpus-driven" approach and the theoretical positions underlying them explored in detail. The book adopts and exemplifies the parameters of the corpus-driven approach and posits a new unit of linguistic description defined systematically in the light of corpus evidence. The applications where the corpus-driven approach is exemplified are language teaching and contrastive linguistics. Alternating between practical examples and theoretical evaluation, the reader is led step-by-step to a detailed understanding of the issues involved in corpus work and, at the same time, tempted to explore for himself some of the major applications where a corpus-driven methodology can reveal unprecedented insights into linguistic patterning.