General Regionally Annotated Corpus of Ukrainian (GRAC): grammatical diachrony, competing norms, and diaspora language

The General Regionally Annotated Corpus of Ukrainian (GRAC) is the only corpus of Ukrainian with in-depth annotation of the regional/diatopic parameter, that was particularly important in the history of the Ukrainian language that had different regional standards in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and still has many traces of dialectal variation in the written norm (cf. Danylenko 2015). The corpus has more than 400 million tokens and represents different genres of written texts from 1816 to 2019 in different regions of Ukraine and diaspora. It came to include also private letters, spoken (TV) and early poetic texts. In the talk, the current state and recent developments in the functionality of the corpus on different platforms (KonText and NoSketchEngine) are presented.

The paper offers a case study in diachronic/diatopic morphological variation: the declension vs. invariability of the borrowed nouns ending in -o of the type *kino.* They are declined according to Slavic patterns e. g. in Czech (*do kina*) but are invariable in Standard Russian. The research question is which parameters condition the choice between the two options in Ukrainian. Before 1940, both variants were possible in Standard Ukrainian under Soviet norm for many borrowings, but since, *pal'to* 'overcoat' < Fr. *paletot* remained the only such lexeme. Meanwhile, the diaspora Ukrainian, opposed to the Soviet regulations but having no uniform standard, continued to allow variation for such nouns (Ažnjuk 1999) as is shown by the GRAC. Since 1970s and especially after the Ukrainian independence proclaimed in 1991, this variation has been revived in Ukraine proper. However, often different instances of the -*o* nouns in oblique cases within the same texts are attested with both possible morphological strategies. The corpus data are tested against case, prepositions, and lexicon as possible factors behind the choice. Hypotheses explaining these factors are proposed.

References

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