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A DISTINCTIVE COLLEXEME ANALYSIS OF *BE OBLIGED TO V* AND *BE REQUIRED TO V* IN BRITISH ENGLISH¹

Abstract: This paper investigates two roughly synonymous constructions, *be obliged to V* and *be required to V*, in terms of the infinitival complements they attract. Taking the viewpoint of Construction Grammar, which holds that constructions are form-meaning pairings varying in complexity and schematicity, this paper aims to explore the verb complements preferred by the two constructions examined. The research was conducted on the online *British National Corpus* applying collostructional quantitative analysis, i.e., the distinctive collexeme analysis, developed by Gries and Stefanowitsch (2003). The results reveal that the verbs that can fill the open slot in both constructions share common features, such as dynamic aspect and high transitivity, but also exhibit certain distinctive features. The results also demonstrate that these two constructions, although nearly synonymous and used in formal contexts, differ. *Be obliged to tend* to co-occur with communication verbs and those encoding verbal or interpersonal actions, whereas *be required to* predominantly attract formal verbs associated with institutionalized and result-oriented activities, particularly in legal, administrative, and medical contexts.

Keywords: *be obliged to*, *be required to*, constructions, collostructional analysis, corpus.

1. INTRODUCTION

The English language offers multiple formally similar ways of expressing obligation, which are often treated as interchangeable. However, corpus-based research within Construction Grammar has shown that even roughly synonymous constructions may differ in their collocational preferences and usage patterns (Gries, Stefanowitsch 2004).

¹The analysis is partly based on the findings presented in the author's M.A. thesis, *A Distinctive Collexeme Analysis of be obliged to V and be required to V in British and Canadian English*, defended on the 22nd of September, 2023, at the Faculty of Philology and Arts, University of Kragujevac, under the mentorship of the Dr. Tiana Tošić Lojanica.

Adopting this constructionist perspective, the present paper investigates two modal constructions, *be obliged to V* and *be required to V*, which are both associated with expressing obligation within formal contexts. Using distinctive collexeme analysis (Stefanowitsch, Gries 2003), the study examines which verbs are preferentially attracted to each construction in British English and whether these preferences can reveal subtle functional differences between the constructions. In other words, this paper will try to answer the questions:

1. Can some differences between *be obliged to V* and *be required to V* be detected based on the infinitival complements they attract?
2. Can verbs that are not recorded with both constructions provide additional insights into their usage?

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Within Construction Grammar, language is viewed as a network of constructions – a *construct-i-con*, understood as conventionalized form-meaning pairings of varying degrees of schematicity (Goldberg 1995; 2006). Constructions are stored within speakers' linguistic knowledge as long as they are frequently and conventionally used; their meanings are predictable based on their form or function (Goldberg 2006: 5), and they are associated with characteristic collocational preferences (Hilpert 2014a: 14–22). This makes corpus-based methods particularly suitable for their analysis.

Following Stefanowitsch and Gries (2003), many linguists have applied different types of collostructional analysis to gain insight into the behaviour of particular constructions, yet this section highlights only those most pertinent to this paper, i.e., those addressing modality.² For instance, Tošić-Lojanica (2021), applying distinctive collexeme analysis comparable to that of Stefanowitsch and Gries (2004), investigated the difference between the modal constructions *can* and *be able to* by examining their collocational preferences. The results show that *be able to* tends to occur with more abstract, technical, and science-related verbs and is therefore more formal, whereas *can* typically co-occurs with more dynamic, communicative, sensory, and cognitive verbs. A collexeme analysis was applied to the semi-modal construction *be obliged to* in The Canadian Strathy Corpus (Jovanović 2025). The study drew on the method proposed by Hilpert (2012: 134), which allows the identification of the lexical items that are most strongly attracted

² In a more recent study, Gries (2023) proposed the methods that can simplify (and accelerate) a distinctive collexeme analysis for descriptive purposes. In this paper, we retain the former methodological framework established by Stefanowitsch and Gries (2003), due to its widespread application in the current literature and the possibility of comparison with the results of the previous studies.

to a single construction with an open slot and the generation of a ranked list that can be interpreted qualitatively to assess the meaning of a construction. The results show that *be obliged to* strongly attracts verbs associated with formal register and actions involving loss or sacrifice on the part of the agent, particularly verbal and cognitive actions, while repelling verbs characteristic of informal register and actions from which an agent typically benefits.

Both constructions under investigation are used to express obligation, i.e., modal meanings. In English, modality can be expressed not only by core modal verbs but also by marginal modals, semi-auxiliaries, modal idioms, catenatives, or even main verbs (Quirk et al. 1985: 137). Quirk et al. (1985: 143) discuss semi-auxiliaries as a set of verb idioms which express modal or aspectual meaning and are introduced by one of the primary verbs *be* and *have*, such as *be able to*, *be about to*, *be due to*, *be bound to*, *be going to*, *have to*, *be obliged to*, etc. Furthermore, it is noted that these constructions are much closer to main verbs than are the modal idioms since they have non-finite forms and can occur with preceding auxiliaries: e.g., *James will be obliged to resign* (Ibid.). Similarly, Downing and Locke (2006: 319) offer a division of different modal realizations, including lexical-modal auxiliaries composed of *be* or *have*, another element, and infinitive (*have got to*, *be bound to*, *be likely to*, etc.). Both *be obliged to* and *be required to* follow this pattern.

In the construction *be obliged to* V, the verb *oblige* is used in its past participle form *obliged*, and functions here as an adjective³. In this form, it typically occurs after verbs *feel* or *be* and is followed by a *to*-infinitive. Hence, *to*-infinitive is an adjectival complement. As suggested by Biber et al. (2002: 335), the adjective *obliged* falls within the category of adjectives that control post-predicate *to*-clauses, and it belongs to the semantic category of willingness and ability. It denotes a degree of certainty or the tendency of the process to occur. As such, *be obliged to* is listed by Carter and McCarthy (2006: 670) as being one of the modal expressions containing the auxiliary *be* (together with *be about to*, *be supposed to*, *be bound to*, etc.). Furthermore, Carter and McCarthy (2006: 674) suggest that *be obliged to* usually refers to “obligations originating outside of the speaker.” In other words, those obligations are not imposed by a speaker himself or herself, but rather by external circumstances or some other person or institution. Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 207) point out that while deontic necessity is commonly glossed as “obligation,” *obliged* + infinitive is even stronger, since, for example, *I was obliged to return it* entails *as I did*. Carter and McCarthy (2006: 674) further state that *be obliged to* mostly occurs in formal contexts, which is supported by the following examples (Ibid.):

Washington, spacious and green, is a cosmopolitan and pleasing city. People still come here because they are obliged to; they stay on because they have come to love the place. When you're on a pedestrian crossing, the driver's legally obliged to stop.

³ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/obliged>

The construction *be required to V* comprises the verb *require*. The verb is listed by Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 173) as one of the lexical modals which express the same kind of meaning as the modal auxiliaries, but do not belong to the syntactic class of auxiliary verbs. It appears in the selected construction in its past participle form (*required*) and, preceded by the auxiliary *be*, forms passive voice (Huddleston, Pullum 2002: 1231). It is followed by a *to-infinitive* forming a non-finite complement clause (a post-predicate infinitive clause). It follows the 2P pattern defined by Biber et al. (2002: 329) as *be verb-ed + to-clause* or *NP + passive verb + to-clause*. Namely, *be required* and *be found* are the most common verbs in this pattern in academic prose (Ibid.). Furthermore, Biber et al. (2002: 331–334) claim that there are certain verbs controlling infinitive clauses in post-predicate position by their semantic domain. They suggest that *be required* is such a form. Its semantic domain is modality and causation (Ibid.). According to the definition of *be required to* (“[often passive] *to make somebody do or have something, especially because it is necessary according to a particular law or set of rules*”), it denotes an obligation imposed by someone other than the speaker himself, usually an institution, another person, external circumstances, or a law.⁴

3. METHODOLOGY AND CORPUS

Collostructional analysis, first introduced by Stefanowitsch and Gries in 2003, is a quantitative method within corpus linguistics “studying the relationships between words and the grammatical structures they occur in” (Stefanowitsch 2013: 290). The term itself is a blend of the words *collocation* and *construction*, and the method is most commonly applied within the theoretical framework of Construction Grammar. Its primary objective is to identify which lexical elements can be regarded as characteristic or “typical” for a particular grammatical construction (Hilpert 2014b: 391). More specifically, such an analysis investigates which lexical items tend to co-occur with a given construction and whether certain items appear with it more frequently than others. As formulated by Stefanowitsch and Gries (2004: 210), a collostructional analysis serves to determine the degree to which individual lexical items are either strongly attracted to or repelled by a specific grammatical construction. As Hilpert (2014b: 392) points out, such insights cannot be derived from raw frequency data alone; instead, an analysis should rely on the concept of expected frequency, which indicates which elements occur in a construction more often than would be anticipated in the case of a chance occurrence.

A collostructional analysis not only detects the lexical items that are typical of a construction, but it also reveals more about the construction itself since its meaning should match the meanings of the lexical items that occur within it

⁴ <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/require>

(Hilpert 2014b: 392). Thus, by exploring which lexical items typically occur with the construction, we can obtain more insight into the meaning of the construction. A collostructional analysis involves three related methods named by Stefanowitsch (2013: 291) as a *simple collexeme analysis*, *distinctive collexeme analysis*, and *covarying collexeme analysis*. A distinctive collexeme analysis is to be used when two or more constructions are to be compared in terms of their collocational preferences (Hilpert 2014b: 397).

Drawing on the described methodology, the study explores the pair of competing semi-modal constructions *be obliged to* and *be required to*. The aim is to identify the specific features of the verbs these constructions attract and their pragmatic differences. A distinctive collexeme analysis is used here to compare the collocational preferences of these two roughly synonymous constructions, i.e., to perform a direct comparison of their collocational profiles.

The corpus used is the British National Corpus (BNC),⁵ which was created by Oxford University Press in the 1980s – early 1990s as a balanced corpus consisting of more than 100 million words from many different genres, such as fiction, spoken language, magazines, newspapers, and academic discourse. However, it is important to highlight that the corpus was compiled before 1993 and has not been subsequently updated. Hence, it does not capture more recent developments in British English, which can be seen as one of the limitations of this study.

The observed frequencies of lexemes and the expected frequencies are compared under the null hypothesis using the Fisher-Yates test. The *p*-value, which indicates the degree of attraction between the collexeme and the construction, is called *collostruction strength*. The higher it is, the stronger the attraction is (Gries 2012: 93). Although such association measures are sensitive to a corpus size and statistical procedure (Schmid, Küchenhoff 2013), *p*-values are retained here as an indicative measure due to their widespread use in collostructional studies. This ensures the comparability with the findings of the previous studies (Gries 2015; 2023). The contingency table for distinctive collexeme analysis is given below.

Table 1. Contingency table for distinctive collexeme analysis

	V	–V	Totals
Construction A (<i>be obliged to</i>)	A	B	A+B
Construction B (<i>be required to</i>)	C	D	C+D
Totals	A+C	B+D	A+B+C+D

The analysis began with an exhaustive extraction of all instances of the construction (*be*) *obliged to* with an infinitival complement from the British National Corpus. The search returned 472 verb tokens, which were subsequently compiled into a frequency list based on their raw frequencies. The data were manually in-

⁵ <https://www.english-corpora.org/bnc/>

serted into a spreadsheet and carefully cleaned by removing duplicates caused by spelling variation (e.g., *recognize/recognise*) and excluding non-infinitival forms. After this procedure, 469 verbs remained. The same procedure was then applied to the construction (*be*) *required to*. 701 instances were extracted, manually inserted into the same spreadsheet, and inspected for errors, including the merging of spelling variants (e.g., *maximize/maximise*), the exclusion of non-infinitival forms (e.g., *accounting*), and the verification of atypical cases (e.g., *redeemthe*).⁶ This resulted in a total of 693 infinitives occurring with the construction *be required to*. At the next stage, verb frequencies were aligned in order to identify overlapping and construction-specific infinitives. This was done by applying a formula in the spreadsheet, which automatically selected shared and non-shared verbs. After alphabetic sorting, the data showed that 171 infinitives occur exclusively with *be obliged to*, while 395 occur exclusively with *be required to*. This analysis focuses only on the 298 infinitives found in both constructions. The construction-specific verbs are yet to be analyzed in the future.⁷

Subsequently, the list of overlapping verbs and their observed frequencies in both constructions was copied to a new spreadsheet since it was used as an input to *R-studio* software, which was employed to perform the analysis. By using an additional script (Flach 2021), designed only for the purposes of a collostructional analysis, *R-studio* provided the necessary data, including the expected verb frequencies and the collostruction strengths (*p*-value).

A qualitative analysis was conducted based on several criteria. First, the corpus context information was examined to determine the typical register in which each verb occurs in combination with the respective construction. Second, the verbs were classified according to their aspectual features as either stative or dynamic. Where additional semantic precision was required, an event-based classification distinguishing seven categories of lexical verbs was applied (Biber et al. 2002: 106–109). The analysis further considered verb transitivity, drawing on the framework proposed by Hopper and Thompson (1980): transitivity is seen as a continuum of ten semantic and pragmatic parameters, which can be either high or low. The higher the number of “high parameters,” the higher the transitivity of a clause. Finally, each verb was evaluated in terms of its inherent register, i.e., whether it is associated with formal or informal usage.

⁶ In this particular case, the context was “required to redeemthe mortgage”, so it became clear that the verb *redeem* was wrongly written together with the article *the*. The single instance of *redeemthe* was merged with the regular verb *redeem*.

⁷ A collexeme analysis of the construction *be obliged to* has already been conducted with a different corpus – the Canadian Strathy Corpus (Jovanović 2025).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The number of hits *be obliged to* V and *be required to* V equals 1503 and 3934 examples, respectively. Hence, the former one is less common than its counterpart. However, 190 verbs (out of 298) prefer *be obliged to*.⁸

Table 2 presents the verbs in descending order of attraction. As mentioned, 190 verbs are attracted to *be obliged to* and repelled by the construction *be required to*. However, in 160 instances, the *p*-values are greater than .05 (not statistically significant). Here, the focus is placed on the 30 verbs with lower *p*-values (statistically significant), and the table below shows the data for only the top 20 candidates.⁹

Table 2. Verbs most strongly attracted to *be obliged to* construction in the BNC

Collexeme	Observed Fq <i>obliged to</i>	Expected Fq. <i>obliged to</i>	Observed Fq. <i>required to</i>	Expected Fq. <i>required to</i>	Assoc.	Collex.str.	Signif.
accept	26	10.0	8	24.0	x	32.40297	*****
leave	24	9.4	8	22.6	x	28.56940	*****
say	12	3.8	1	9.2	x	23.09371	*****
offer	16	5.9	4	14.1	x	22.04929	*****
withdraw	12	4.4	3	10.6	x	16.51522	****
go	21	10.6	15	25.4	x	13.07134	***
move	12	5.0	5	12.0	x	12.31361	***
follow	18	8.8	12	21.2	x	12.13219	***
take	60	41.8	82	100.2	x	10.93528	***
tell	12	5.3	6	12.7	x	10.68822	**
resign	9	3.5	3	8.5	x	10.65686	**
retire	6	2.1	1	4.9	x	9.65878	**
wait	6	2.1	1	4.9	x	9.65878	**
call	7	2.6	2	6.4	x	9.01382	**
return	10	4.4	5	10.6	x	8.89978	**
travel	7	2.9	3	7.1	x	7.02500	**
sell	11	5.6	8	13.4	x	6.66648	**
continue	8	3.8	5	9.2	x	5.76096	*
abandon	4	1.5	1	3.5	x	5.49064	*
admit	4	1.5	1	3.5	x	5.49064	*

⁸ The results with the highest statistical significance ($p < .00001$) are represented by five asterisks. Four asterisks stand for $p < .0001$, three for $p < .001$, two for $p < .01$, and one asterisk signifies p -value $< .05$. If the p -value is higher than .05, the difference between the two constructions is not statistically significant (marked *ns*).

⁹ The full list of verbs is available from the author upon request.

The verbs display a relatively uniform decrease in collocational strength, with no abrupt or unexpected shifts across the ranking, i.e., some verbs show stronger attraction than others, with no single verb standing out as a markedly more dominant collexeme. This distribution may indicate that the meaning and usage of the construction are not strongly tied to a particular verb, but rather emerge from its association with a broader set of verbs. Based on the context of use, it appears that the instances of *be obliged to* + infinitive are mostly found in academic contexts, newspapers, and also fictional prose, especially when the topics revolve around commerce, law, and humanities. This does not stand for the first-ranking verbs only. All the verbs found in this construction with statistically significant collocational strength, except for *respect*, are dynamic/action verbs. This is in line with its main usage, i.e., expressing obligation (Carter, McCarthy 2006: 674). The noun *obligation* is defined as “something that you must do,” so it is only natural to expect some kind of action to be named after *be obliged to*.¹⁰ Among 30 verbs with lower *p*-values (statistically significant finding), six verbs of communication are detected (*say, offer, tell, ask, and consult*). In other word, the obligation denoted by the construction does not only refer to physical actions, but also verbal ones. Furthermore, almost all verbs are high in transitivity (more high parameters are present than the low ones). The exceptions, such as *continue* and *respect*, display more parameters that are considered low.

The analysis of the construction *be required* detected 108 verbs attracted to this construction and repelled by *be obliged to*. Only 23 verbs have the *p*-values low enough for the collocational strength to be statistically significant. Table 3 presents the data for the top 20 verbs only.

There is a significant discrepancy between the two verbs with the highest collocational strength (*be* and *produce*) and the remaining candidates. In addition, the collocational strength of *be* is more than four times greater than that of *produce*. The findings are not surprising in that the verb *be* can function both as a main and an auxiliary verb. On the basis of its frequency and the variety of use, it is not surprising that the verb *be* would take the first place on the list. The decrease in collocational strength regarding the rest of the verbs is more or less even and expected, i.e., no collexemes stand out. This suggests that the meaning and the use of the construction are associated with a broader range of collexemes. The verbs most strongly attracted to the construction predominantly appear in academic contexts, especially law and politics, medicine, commerce, and natural sciences. What is interesting is the fact that many verb complements denote certain administrative terms. For example, the verb *produce* collocates with *driving license, documentation, plan, certificate, evidence*, etc. Similarly, the verb *complete* collocates with *the application form, a record sheet, the documents*, etc. This only proves that these verbs, in combination with *be required to*, are often used in contexts of law and ad-

¹⁰ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/obligation>

Table 3. Verbs most strongly attracted to *be required to* construction in BNC

Collexeme	Observed Fq. <i>obliged to</i>	Expected Fq. <i>obliged to</i>	Observed Fq. <i>required to</i>	Expected Fq. <i>required to</i>	Assoc.	Collex.str.	Signif.
finance	1	4.4	14	10.6	y	4.86442	*
justify	1	4.4	14	10.6	y	4.86442	*
run	2	6.5	20	15.5	y	5.44470	*
make	42	56.2	149	134.8	y	5.59560	*
perform	4	10.0	30	24.0	y	6.09732	*
develop	1	5.3	17	12.7	y	6.58545	*
show	2	7.4	23	17.6	y	7.00960	**
register	2	7.6	24	18.4	y	7.54640	**
undertake	3	9.7	30	23.3	y	8.18403	**
submit	5	13.2	40	31.8	y	8.78192	**
obtain	3	10.3	32	24.7	y	9.21680	**
maintain	6	15.6	47	37.4	y	10.09179	**
determine	1	7.1	23	16.9	y	10.19554	**
establish	1	7.4	24	17.6	y	10.81283	**
operate	2	9.4	30	22.6	y	10.89083	***
use	12	27.4	81	65.6	y	14.53654	***
ensure	4	16.2	51	38.8	y	16.81216	****
complete	1	10.9	36	26.1	y	18.43868	****
produce	8	24.4	75	58.6	y	19.49576	****
be	13	67.1	215	160.9	y	85.28559	*****

ministration. Many complements denote medical terms as well, for example, collocates of the verb *ensure* are *solubilization of the drug*, *pain relief*, *patient*, *bowel*, *patient's skin*, *handicapped babies*, etc. This is also true for the verbs with lower collocational strength, such as *maintain*, collocating with *adequate hearing ability*, *a mitogenic response*, *normal hepatocyte function*, etc. Furthermore, a majority of the 23 verbs attracted to the construction are dynamic/action verbs such as *produce*, *use*, *operate*, *submit*, *make*, *run*, etc. This is in accordance with the main function of the construction *be required to* given in the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, “to make somebody do or have something, especially because it is necessary according to a particular law or set of rules.” Moreover, this definition is also supported by our findings that this construction mostly appears in contexts related to law. When it comes to transitivity, most verbs attracted to the construction are high in transitivity.

The comparison of the verbs attracted to each construction demonstrates that they also differ slightly in their uses and the contexts of their use. Apparently, *be obliged to* is more likely to attract communication verbs than *be required to*. In

other words, *be required to* seems to be limited only to physical actions, with a few exceptions such as *support*, *determine*, and *justify*. On the other hand, *be obliged to* is used to denote verbal activities. This observation is in line with the previous findings of the study focusing on *be obliged to* in a different corpus; *be obliged* frequently co-occurs with verbs denoting verbal activities (Jovanović 2025: 335). The verbs attracted to the construction *be required to* are more formal than the ones attracted to *be obliged to*. In other words, both constructions are used in formal contexts, but *be required to* appears to be more formal. Consequently, it is not surprising that it attracts a comparatively limited set of verbs. In addition, while *be obliged to* appears in newspapers and fictional prose, *be required to* is frequent in medicine-related topics.

A closer look into the verbs omitted from the distinctive collexeme analysis further supports our findings. The following verbs only occur with *be obliged to*:

appeal, apologize, argue, betake, comment, concede, confess, crawl, cry, disavow, disown, empathize, fall, feel, flee, hurry, laugh, legislate, like, lurk, persuade, rush, segregate, suffer, summon, suspend, tread, wade, etc.

The verbs are most frequent in legal contexts (e.g., *appeal, confess, disavow, legislate, suspend, etc.*). Moreover, most of the verbs are dynamic and a significant number of them are communication verbs, i.e., they encode verbal actions (e.g., *apologize, argue, comment, confess, etc.*). It should be noted that several verbs are related to emotions or expressing emotions (e.g., *cry, feel, laugh, suffer, etc.*), while some denote movement or the way of moving (e.g., *crawl, flee, hurry, lurk, rush, tread, wade, etc.*). These observations likewise support the previous conclusion that even though the construction *be obliged to V* is most frequent in formal contexts, it is not restricted to it. The following verbs only occur with *be required to*:

analyze, annex, constitute, cure, decide, dissect, elect, eliminate, enact, end, execute, finish, forfeit, infect, kill, memorize, predict, prevent, process, promulgate, ratify, rehabilitate, remember, reproduce, scan, stabilize, substantiate, think, understand, etc.

The verbs most commonly appear in the medicine-related contexts (e.g., *cure, dissect, infect, rehabilitate, reproduce, etc.*) and law (e.g., *annex, constitute, enact, forfeit, promulgate, ratify, etc.*), and most of them are dynamic/action verbs. Furthermore, there is also a significant set of verbs denoting mental activities (e.g., *decide, memorize, predict, process, remember, think, understand, etc.*) and those denoting bringing an end to something (eg. *finish, end, kill, execute, eliminate, etc.*). This observation may further support the distinction between the examined constructions; while *be obliged to* tends to appear with verbs denoting verbal actions, *be required to* combines with verbs denoting mental activities more frequently. In addition, the construction *be required to* seems to represent a more formal alternative since it almost exclusively co-occurs with formal verbs that belong to administrative or scientific jargon.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of the distinctive collexeme analysis of *be obliged to V* and *be required to V* indicate that, even though both constructions denote obligation and are mostly found in formal contexts, they are not fully interchangeable and they differ in their collocational preferences.

The corpus data show that *be required to V* occurs more frequently in the formal register, i.e., it is strongly associated with institutional, legal, and administrative discourse. Despite its lower overall frequency, *be obliged to V* attracts a greater number of verbs within the set of overlapping infinitives. Only a limited subset of these verbs proved to be statistically significant, indicating that collocational attraction is highly selective rather than widespread across the verbal inventory.

The qualitative analysis reveals that both constructions tend to attract dynamic and highly transitive verbs, reflecting their core function of expressing obligation. Nevertheless, there are clear differences with respect to verb types and register. The construction *be obliged to V* displays a tendency to collocate with communication verbs, suggesting that it is frequently used to encode verbal rather than purely physical actions. By contrast, *be required to V* predominantly attracts verbs associated with formal, institutionalized activities, particularly in legal, administrative, and medical contexts.

These findings answer the first research question: even roughly synonymous constructions operating within similar contexts may exhibit differences in usage. In particular, *be required to V* appears to be the more formal and functionally restricted construction, which may account for its narrower range of attracted verbs. Conversely, *be obliged to V* appears to allow for a broader range of action types, including verbal and interpersonal activities.

Finally, an examination of verbs that occur exclusively with one construction further corroborates these conclusions: emotional states and movement follow *be obliged to*, while *be required to* precedes mental or result-oriented actions. This answers the second research question defined in this paper.

While collostructional analysis is sensitive to methodological choices and corpus composition, the results presented here offer empirically grounded insight into the subtle functional differentiation of these two constructions. It should be noted, however, that the present study is limited to the British National Corpus, which has not been updated since 1993 and represents only one variety of English. Future research may extend this analysis by examining non-overlapping verbs in greater detail, exploring negative forms, or comparing these constructions across different varieties of English.

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АНАЛИЗА ДИСТИНКТИВНИХ КОЛЕКСЕМА *BE OBLIGED TO V* И *BE REQUIRED TO V* У БРИТАНСКОМ ЕНГЛЕСКОМ

Резиме: Предмет овог рада јесте анализа дистинктивних колексема модалних израза *be obliged to V* и *be required to V* у британском варијетету енглеског језика. Испитивани модални изрази, из перспективе конструкционе граматике, представљају конструкције са празним пољима намењеним инфинитивним допунама. Анализа дистинктивних колексема ових израза подразумева одређивање инфинитива које привлачи једна, а што са другом конструкцијом није случај. Циљ истраживања јесте утврђивање разлика између два наизглед синонимна модална израза. Истраживање је спроведено на онлајн-верзији корпуса британског варијетета *British National Corpus*, применом једне од квантитативних метода колострукционе анализе. Квали-

тативна анализа показала је да, иако су обе конструкције обично везане за формални регистар и изражавање обавезе, оне нису у потпуности замењиве. Обе конструкције најчешће привлаче динамичне и високо транзитивне глаголе, што је у складу са њиховом основном функцијом изражавања обавезе. Ипак, уочене су одређене разлике у погледу типова глагола које привлаче, али и регистра. Конструкција *be obliged to V* чешће се користи са глаголима комуникације и неретко се користи за означавање вербалних радњи. Конструкција *be required to V* углавном се јавља уз глаголе формалног регистра и употребљава се у институционалним дискурсима који подразумевају јасно дефинисану и резултатски усмерену активност, као што су право, администрација и медицина.

Кључне речи: *be obliged to*, *be required to*, конструкције, колострукциона анализа, корпус.