Exercise 2b: How can I establish the socio-political profile of a pair of texts?

Using the British National Corpus

You will need to register an account to gain full access, please see the eresources WebLearn for full details of how to register and to get the required password.

Before using this resource we would strongly recommend that you take the five minute guided tour

2. In the search box select Collocates then type in gay and openly, select the number of words on either side as 4.
4. To look at collocates of ‘openly’ found within the corpus, click on the link to the word.

5. By typing in a new search term, (and perhaps adjusting the number of words surrounding your search term), analyse collocates of openly; what does it reveal about the attitudes of the writers/audience towards ‘gay’?
7. Try this search again, but this time using the \([jj^*]\) command in the second collocates search box to limit your results to only include adjectives near your search term.

(N.B. * is a ‘wildcard’ search command, meaning it will pick up all instances of speech tags beginning with ‘JJ’, such as \(\text{JJR}\) (general comparative adjective (e.g. older, better, stronger)), \(\text{JJT}\) (general superlative adjective (e.g. oldest, best, strongest))

For more part of speech tags, you may wish to look at the brief description of the Basic Tagset used for word class annotation across the whole of the British National Corpus at:

http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/claws7tags.html