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Introducing Corpus Linguistics to Iranian EFL Teachers

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Introducing Corpus Linguistics to Iranian EFL Teachers

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Potential Corpus Linguistic Workshop Outline

What is a corpus? (20 minutes)

Definition (Corpus refers to the electronic authentic language database(s) available on the internet or stored in personal computers) (Hasselgard, 2001)

- Show actual example; e.g., Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)
- Show actual example of concordance.

What are potential benefits for language pedagogy? (25 minutes)

- Syntactic
- Discoursal
- Spoken and written
- Lexical (Willis, 1998)

Focus on spoken discourse to illustrate in more detail.

How can a teacher use a corpus in EFL classrooms? (40 minutes)

- Choose a specific skill area; e.g., spoken language - lexical or grammatical feature
- Use a corpus extract to demonstrate specific area
- Present actual exercises and student activities (e.g., Barlow, 1992)

What are the benefits of using concordance? (35 minutes)

- Produce a list of a selected linguistic items (words or phrases). (Biber, Conrad, & Reppen, 1998)
- Concordances can help learning collocations (McCarthy, 2001)

What types of activities can one employ using a corpus and concordance? (30 minutes)

Survey Results

Participants: 15 Iranian EFL Teachers, June 2016

Summary

- Teachers are unfamiliar with corpora and classroom uses.
- Teachers want to learn about EFL corpora use
- Speaking is perceived as being greatest for need enhancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas which participants think need new teaching methods</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>listening, 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading, 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>writing, 29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaking, 43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Present examples for different learner proficiency levels:

**Beginner:**
- Verb pairing game
- Computer cloze activity
- Screen shot analysis

**Intermediate:**
- Contextual analysis
- Express yourself
- Multiple choice
- Spot the error activity

**Advanced:**
- Concordance analysis pragmatics
- Situation analysis
- MICASE corpus (spoken English). (Barlow, 2002; Reppen, 2010)

Group Task: (1 hour or more, depending on number of participants)

- Groups of 3-5 plan a mini–lesson to present to participants. e.g., spoken language, the role of register (based on MICASE corpus)
- Discussion, questions, summary, and resource reference handouts
- If time, material development, and syllabus design (see Barlow, 2002)

Show Some Useful Websites: (15 minutes)

- Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)
- Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE)

Selected References