VOCABULARY TEACHİNG THROUGH CONCORDANCES İN THE TEACHİNG OF ENGLİSH FOR SPECİFİC PURPOSES (ESP)

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Abstract

This study aims at introducing vocabulary teaching through concordances in the teaching of English for specific purposes (ESP). It focusses on how data from authentic language forms a context for selected vocabulary of a specific genre.

The aim of the methodology employed, vocabulary teaching at a point where grammar meets lexis are introduced and some sugestions are given for the classroom.

ÖZEL AMAÇLI İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİMİNDE VERİ TABANINA DAYALI SÖZCÜK ÖĞRETİMİ

Özet

Bu çalışma doğal dilden oluşturulacak veri tabanı yoluyla Özel Amaçlı İngilizce öğretiminde sözcük öğretiminin tanıtımını amaçlamaktadır. Özgün dilin özel bir alanla ilgili sözcük seçiminde nasıl bir bağlam oluşturduğu temel alınmıştır.

Bu yöntemin amaçları ve sözcük öğretimi dilbilgisi ile sözcük kesişme noktasında tanıtılmış ve sınıf çalışmaları için önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

1. Introduction

This paper tries to provide an introductory information on how access to a quality of textual evidence that has not been available before can have contribution to vocabulary teaching in ESP. Tribble and Jones (1990) briefly traces the history of concordancing from the 13th century in the task of producing a complete concordance of the Latin Bible. A concordance being a collection of the occurences of a word-form, each in its own textual environment can be considered as a text in itself. Tribble and Jones (1990:7) defines concordance as a reference book containing all the works of a particular author (except, usually, the very common grammatical words such as articles and prepositions), together with a list of contexts in which each word occurs .In other words, a concordance is a list of occurences of a particular word, part of a word or combination of words, in its corpus. A corpus or concordance is a type of language database that collects examples from spoken or written language. Examples are taken from all types of varying sources covering a wide range such as works of literature, language of the media and everyday idiomatic language.The use of computer in the design of a corpus is leading a wholesale changes in the collection of data which do not follow clear-cut rules but represents great flexibility. Programs called "concordance software were developed to perform all the tasks involved in compiling a concordance- locating all the occurences of a particular word and listing the contexts. The evidence provided by computer helps us find explanations since a linguistic description which is not supported by the evidence of the language has no credibility.

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Vocabulary knowledge covers a large part of language knowledge and language learners are said to use language properly in the degree of their ability to access to the mental lexicon to retrieve a piece of "ready made" language appropriate to a particular context. Recent research based on the hypotheses that human memory system stores lexical representations in multiple forms (Bolinger, 1976; Pawley and Syder, 1983) have come up with findings reflecting an element of "choice" that has to be made during language use. Such choice is referred to as "nativelike selection" by Pawley and Syder (1983). Ketko(2000) stresses the importance of multiword chunks in the investigation of the use of natural language to facilitate communicative competence. She uses the term"multiword chunk" in the sense used by Moon (1997:43) to refer to vocabulary items consisting of a sequence of two or more words which semantically and/or syntactically form a meaningful and inseperable unir (collocations, idioms, phrasal verbs, fixed phareses with pragmatic functions, etc.) With the growing interest that the comprehensive study of language must be based on textual evidence, the approach employed is to have data –based evidence from language use in a specific profession and the problem is finding and identifying typical examples. The focus will be on vocabulary teaching through concordances.

2. The selection of vocabulary in ESP

The universal characteristic of all ESP courses is that they do not teach 'general English.' but specifically tailored courses for particular, identified learners with highly specific needs, where the syllabus and materials involve the selection of specialized language and/or restriction of the "skills" taught. The criteria for the design of an appropriate syllabus for specific learners and their needs for more specialized language are classified by Strevens (1980:460) as follows:

1. Linguistic criteria
2. Situational criteria
3. Notional and functional criteria
4. Rhetorical criteria
5. Communicative criteria

Since linguistic criteria are applied on the language to be taught including the vocabulary selection and indices of word frequence, the concentration is on natural language use with vocabulary and the sentence patterns, expressions, etc. relevant to a particular group of people. Having the focus on vocabulary teaching in ESP, we have to be clear about what knowing a word means.

Our knowledge of vocabulary includes the following implications :

1. Speakers of a language recognize whether a word has high or low frequency of use. The word *book* is more frequent than *manual* or *directory*.
2. They recognize the sense a word has in a particular context The word *demand* has a different sense if used in business which deviates from its use as a request in everyday language.

3. They have knowledge of collocation, that is, they know the probability of a word being associated together with other words. On encountering the word *match* we can expect the words *field, football players, referee, goal-keeper.*
4. They recognize specific structural and grammatical properties of a word. The structural properties of words are acquired as part of vocabulary. Nilsen (1971) exemplifies this in with the form of cases:
   a. Abdul broke the bicycle with a rock.   O I A
   b. A rock broke the bicycle.   O I
   c. The bicycle broke.   O

5. They recognize different forms of a word derived from a base. *Cleaned, cleaning* and *cleans* are derived from *clean.*
6. They organize associative links between words. Such relationships are exemplified by Slobin(1971) as contrast or antonym (*wet-dry*), similarity or synonym (*blossom-flower*), subordinative classification (*animal-dog*), coordinate classification (*apple-peach*), and superordinate classification (*spinach-vegetable*).
7. They know the semantic value of a word. For example, the minimal features of *woman* is animate, female and adult.

The above mentioned implications call for systematic treatment of vocabulary although many language programs assume that vocabulary is a by-product and acquired through the practice of other language skills. With the advance of computer technology, concordances are now available to teachers for authentic language use in the classroom. The procedure for the creation of concordance lists below highlights the role of students in discovering language use on their own while it emphasizes the role of teachers in investigating more into the high frequency multiword chunks and chunks that are part of a language of a specific content domain.

3. Procedure for concordances

Any description in language starts with observation of language in use. Although we can have access to existing descriptions of the language, that is, other dictionaries and native speaker introspections, Sinclair (1991:37) suggests that the evidence from language in use be given priority. Given a corpus of a machine-readable form, the next stage is to derive some basic information from it. Since the focus of attention is on selected vocabulary of a specific genre, the sense (s) of the word that is of importance to that specific profession is used to show how corpus study can identify places where a user of English has a variety of options.

Sinclair (1991:106) briefly describes the procedure for concordances as follows:

1. The lines are trimmed so that only those words that are reasonably likely to be attracted by the node are left in.
2. A suitable cut-off point- for example, less than ten percent of the frequency of the node-should be determined.
3. Each of the remaining collocates is given a weighting by relating its frequency in the concordance to its overall frequency in the full corpus. So a common word gets a low rating, and a word which makes a distinctive collocation with the node will score high.
4. Each line of the concordance is now examined for the typicality of its collocates, by adding up the weightings of each collocate in its environment. The concordance is now re-sorted into an order of typicality, and the most typical instances should come to the top.

All the occurences of a word-form are retrieved, each in the middle of a line of a text. Each line is treated as if it were a sentence for the purpose of statistical analysis for the frequency of the word. To examine the vocabulary, a list of all the words are compiled in frequency order. In the case of analysis of large compilations of documents by particular author or representative of a particular genre, or else writings on a particular topic, this is called a corpus. Conclusions about the meanings and uses of words in natural language can be derived from a multiplicity of authentic texts. For example, vocabulary work in the form of collocation can be done especially in reading comprehension. Concordances represent information with the same or closely related words. Tribble and Jones (1990:15) classify the types of corpus into three groups as individual texts, specialist corpora and general corpora. Specialist corpora are suitable for the analysis of vocabulary meaning and use in ESP. The aim is to investigate the vocabulary in terms of various features that characterize a particular type of text, such as scientific articles, newspaper reports or modern short stories in general. We have to keep in mind that the bigger a corpus is the more likely to represent accurately features of texts of the appropriate type. The significance of corpus size can most easily be appreciated in relation to the frequency of occurence of individual lexical items. Having decided the type of corpus appriopriate to teaching/learning situation, the following guidelines can be of use:

1. Texts should be authentic. They should give learners direct access to natural language. With an intention to carry out some remedial work, student texts can be used as a specialist corpus. It provides patterns of error and comparison of their work with native-speaker texts, especially the most common misuses of words, inappropriate uses of words
2. It is known that it is very difficult to obtain recordings for most types of spoken discourse. You should choose texts appropriate to your field of study. Special care must be given in the case of spoken discourse as the spoken and written discourse of language represents different features.
3. Highly technical material is expected to be given only to advanced learners. Most common general contexts for particular words of a specific genre are provided.
4. Although the focus is on vocabulary, an inevitable link must be kept between vocabulary and grammar. For example, the-ing and -ed forms of *cross* must be considered along with various contexts in which articles, tenses and affixes are misused.
5. Most common immediate collocates are very useful to teach. Collocation is defined by Sinclair(1966) as the relationship a lexical item has with items that appear with greater than random probability in its (textual) context, and it helps readers to turn texts which seem unmanageable into manageable proportions.

Provided with the knowledge of type and characteristics of corpus, we have some suggestions for the applications of concordances in the classroom.

4. Suggestions for the classroom

The following corpus, though small in size just for the purpose of display, is gathered from texts of bookkeeping and accounting. It represents the most immediate collocates of the word "entry" and "journal".

Record only one type of *entry* such as entries for sales

In every journal *entry*, the sum of amounts

journal when making an opening *entry*, make a check mark
the same information as the balancesheet, adjusting *entries* are made in the general journal

This reversing *entry* is exactly the opposite of the adjusting

When a transaction is *journalized*, both the credit part and the credit

A two-column general *journal* similar to the one used by the Hill-Topmodel

Although the form of the cash *journal* is different from that of the

The possible questions asked can be given as follows:

1. What sort of word nearly always comes immediately before *entry*?

2. What is the most common meaning ascribed to the word *entry*?

3. What are grammatical properties of *journal* and *journalize?*

4. What sort of word nearly always comes immediately before *journal*?

The above exercise as the representative of the procedure requires the learner to supply information about the key word, using the clues in the contexts.

The following corpus is extracted from books on marketing management. Another possibility is to ask the learner to supply the key word itself. In this case, a concordance output can be turned into a gap fill exercise with the deletion of the keyword. The following corpus reflect examples in which the possibility of using *instead, for example, however, because* and *thus* have been discussed.

The fact is, of course, that 'big decisions' are rarely made by individuals. **Instead**, these decisions typically represent the collective judgement of many people who have been asked to prepare bits of information that are to be used in the process of selecting among alternative solutions....

Unquestionably, this is true of marketing costs, too. **For example**, marketing management salaries, the salary element in a salary plus commission salesmen's pay plan, and certain advertising costs are considered fixed in nature......

We cannot explore in detail the methods of measuring the prices of input factors. We should recognize, **however**, that this problem is similar to sales forecasting and that there is ample ....

Because a theory is generalized and abstract, it is frequently considered useless.....

The role of a theory is to facilitate the formulation of hypotheses -to narrow the range of plausible and testable explanations of phenomena and **thus** minimize the effort required to discover the relationships.

The corpus below can be used to identify words that collocate with the lexical item "cost".

is to get the best possible information at the lowest possible *cost*. His concern

that each of these approaches has advantages over the other that are not noted above as *"cost"* considerations

Estimates of the total *cost* of marketing based on foundations performed are roughly indicated by the amounts s has appropriately emphasizes the importance of futurity in *cost* analysis and the meaning of business decisions

Fortunately, both groups can make substantial contributions to our understanding of *cost* behaviour

Keeping in mind that the purpose of study determines the composition of the corpus, we can present a corpora to work on how a word functions in different parts of speech.

The *purchasing* agent in search of a new source and type of cleaning compounds reads the ads in the

publications. The homeowner who is contemplating the *purchase* of fire insurance hears the TV testimonials of

search for information, the consumer moves into the evaluation stage in a *purchase* situation. The evaluation

payroll pattern in this country. Seasonal *purchases* dominate the buying pattern of

arise out of the uncertainty of a decision may lead the *purchaser* to seek information that confirms his action

To exemplify the use of adjunct and disjuncts we can give the the corpus below:

Difficulty varies *markedly* from one job to another

And eating patterns. *Presumably*, this discussion would indicate ideas on loaf size, bread textures, preference for

If we select a random sample, chances are that the cost of selecting the sample will be *considerably* higher than that incurred in selecting a non-random sample.

They have consumed a unique role in purchasing particular types of media, most *notably* spot television and radio.

Short-run sales stimulant. *Hopefully*, of course, sales derived in this manner will have some long-run benefits as a result of product exposure.

Because sales promotions have these characteristics, there is *presumably* a greater opportunity to relate cause and effect.

its pulling power. This can be done at *relatively* low cost on several million cartoons, and a broad

In addition to the sample concordances prepared manually by the writer of this article, the corpus composed around the key term *evidence* by Thurstun (2002:3) exemplify the use of this word in the language of academic discourse. She indicates that the key terms chosen are common to all fields of academic learning without an attemp to include specialized or technical vocabulary.

may object that in the absence of conclusive *evidence* and analysis, one should stick with the loweres

e have already seen, however, that on present *evidence* and on the basis of extensive efforts at mot

they; contented themselves with the material *evidence* available in the form of bones and artefacts.

in science is open-ended and self-correcting. *Evidence* bearing upon it will be finely sifted. Some

assed to both daughter cells. More conclusive *evidence* comes from experiments in which the nuceus
ange, accounts of animal studies that provide evidence concerning the psychobiological "platform" for

only retrospectively and such experience, as *evidence* for the existence of mind, can appear only as

es and substances are needed. But this is not *evidence* for an additional hereditary mechanism. Here

ent, the conference focussed on the scientific *evidence* for, the impacats of , and policy responses to

arteacts of cultural success, and he gives *evidence* from several areas of mental health and educa

the causality of the corrections found. Some *evidence* may consist of tightly controlled laboratory

e incorporation of new material. Some of this *evidence* may be factual: the occurenec of certain fos

er apostles in comparison. Thomas demanded *evidence*. Nothing is more lethal for certain kinds of

) study of the lion pride. These animals show *evidence* of considerable kin selection in that the few

personal adjustment of each individual gives *evidence* of this, both at the level of unconscious

with no; cortex is vegetable. There is clear *evidence* of localisation of function in the cortex. In

of this book was published. Indeed the recent *evidence* on on plasmids can be seen as beautiful supporti

on. It is therefore interesting that there is *evidence* that the brain is remarkably good at recognis

ough not exactly, uniform rate. However, the *evidence* that has finally convinced me that the neutra

spots scare off predators, and there is some *evidence* that this is so. But even if this is adaptive ex

ute with impunity unless there is categorial *evidence* that you are swelling hospital waiting lists.

We are not yet sure how far this is true. The *evidence* that has led people to think that it may be

ain kinds of meme than a tendency to lok for *evidence*. The other apostles, whose faith was so stron

es) by refusing to speak, there is not enough *evidence* to convict either of them of the main crime,

dogma of of course a theory, but there is no *evidence* to suggest that it is wrong. The irreversible

best judgement afffair based on all available *evidence*, with varying degrees of demonstrable validit

As can be seen clearly, students are given tasks in which they experience the discovery of choices of multiword chunks appropriate to a specific genre of either spoken or written language. Students could be asked to compare their findings with the rules stated by grammar books as a final exercise. For example a mismatch Tribble (1989) identified between the usage of discourse markers such as *thus, therefore, yet*, etc. by native speakers and that of non-native speakers indicates the necessity to assess and construct models for effective academic writing. The discrepancy between evidence from authentic texts and grammar books requires the description of English underlying teaching to be reassessed.

5. Conclusion

The teaching material based on concordances in the hand of an efficient teacher can be an excellent source of raw material for language exercises. Although it is not my purpose here to propose a classification of vocabulary teaching exercises, such exercises cover a wide range from deducing the meaning of the key word from context to study of grammatical features of particular words (and of grammatical features) via the concordance of groups of associated words.

With the potential of computer technology to facilitate concordance making, learner's own discovery based on evidence from authentic language becomes central to the learning process. Sinclair (1986:202) notes that such computer tools "challenge our current linguistic descriptions quite fundamentally". The instructor are in a position to make explanations to fit the evidence rather than adjusting the evidence to fit a pre-set explanation.

Concordances reflecting the use of natural language have great contribution to vocabulary teaching because vocabulary teaching is not only a matter of learning the meanings of new words. A particular concordance is likely to reveal all sorts of other information about the keyword: grammatical features, common collocations, different meanings, idiomatic and metaphorical uses, stylistic features and connotations.

The selection of key words in multiword chunks using various materials is done at various levels, for different purposes and a corpus of examples can be prepared both for spoken language and written language (Academic textbooks, movie scripts, news and talk show transcripts). They help learners compose a repertoire of multiword chunks from which they choose fixed phrases with pragmatic functions, fixed phrases with discourse functions and phrases with de-lexicalized words according to their purpose and be aware of the close relationship and integration of grammar and lexis. Such an approach requires the use of vocabulary in discourse framework rather than at clause or sentence level.

The databases composed of examples from spoken and written in a language, in other words corpora, represent text of all types from varying sources; from literature and media to everyday idiomatic language spoken between friends. The importance of corpora to language teaching is that it gives us objective data on how language is used, not only how often, but also in which situations. In the case of teaching English for specific purposes such a process becomes increasingly important for providing English language instruction aimed at equipping the student with language skills for specific tasks. Corpora compiled for classroom use in ESP also show that the choice of word selected for a research may dictate a particular genre of text. Such collected naturally-occuring data is extremely helpful to discover facts about language and assigns the teacher the role of a researcher to investigate authentic language in terms of the needs and the skill levels of his/her students.

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