

Corpus-based techniques for practitioners of EFL:

how to use **DIY** and free online corpora in classroom

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Workshop on Corpus-linguistic Applications

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The background

Data-driven learning:

“ Language learning based upon *direct contact* with language corpora..”

“...in order to *see patterning* in the target language and *form generalizations* about language form and use”

Theory or Practice?

- A lot of research
- Few in-class applications
- Teacher training on corpora
- DDL know-how and guidelines

The Curriculum

- ❑ new Common Curriculum for Foreign Languages in general upper-secondary schools
- ❑ an extension of the existing Integrated Foreign Languages Curriculum
- ❑ incorporates aspects from the CEFR Companion Volume (2020)

The curriculum's goals:

- communicative competence,
- language and intercultural awareness,
- mediation skills
- digital literacy.

The new Curriculum: key features

1. organised in broad thematic areas and individual thematic units,
2. detailed descriptions of the expected learning outcomes (communicative language actions/activities and competencies and digital skills),
3. horizontal connection with indicative activities per level of language proficiency (New!)

Is a DDL approach compatible to the new Curriculum?

- a dynamic learning process
- technology plays a key part
- teachers collaborate with students in the interpretation and evaluation of the material

Step-by-step procedure

- What do we want to teach? ->
consult the curriculum
run diagnostic test
- What is our learners' CEFR level? ->
placement test
- How do students prefer to learn? ->
needs analysis questionnaire

An example of DDL application in class

The material

- **ECCo (Corpus of English Coursebooks)**
 - Pedagogic corpus
 - English coursebooks approved for use in Greek Senior High schools
 - Use Wordsmith tools
- **Corpus of American English (COCA) as a ‘supporting’ corpus**
 - free mega corpus
 - abundant natural occurring language
 - user friendly interface

The Web (‘quick n’ dirty’ source of data)

The DDL Training Sessions (vocabulary learning)

- Gentle immersion => (from googling to querying corpora online)
- In our case 5 training sessions
(Printed handouts, Google forms & use of online corpora)
 - Googling unknown words ('innuendo') and consulting online dictionaries
 - Querying an online corpus ('swirl of innuendo')
 - Querying pairs of words that often confuse them ('deny' / 'refuse')
 - Investigating a printed handout of concordances in order to formulate grammatical rules (past simple / continuous)

DDL Lesson 1: Confusing words

Enter the COCA corpus and form the query:

- display: KWIC

- word(s):
 affect / effect
 adverse / averse
 born / borne
 complement / compliment

- sections: spoken + newspaper

Go through the results and search for the meaning of the word

1. write down what part of speech is each word in the centre of the result line
2. write down an example of a sentence containing the word
3. can you guess the meaning of these two words?

And then, fill in the Google Form with their findings

The COCA output



SEARCH

WAIT

CONTEXT

ACCOUNT

FIND SAMPLE: [100](#) [200](#) [500](#) [1000](#)

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CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT

HELP

SAVE

TRANSLATE

ANALYZE

1	2019	SPOK	CBS_Morning				. NORAH-O'DONNELL) : How can oversharing impact a child later in life? Could it affect their future getting into schools or jobs? TAYLOR-LORENZ) : A
2	2019	SPOK	NPR_Morning				Erdogan to that conclusion as well. KING) : How could Russia's involvement here affect U.S. foreign policy in the region? SILLIMAN) : Russia's foreign
3	2019	SPOK	CBS_Morning				is tracking the developments from Beijing. Ramy, how do you think this will affect the negotiations? Good morning to you. RAMY-INOCENCIO) (CBS-M
4	2019	SPOK	CNN_Burnett				kind of a bridge, but to throw your principles out or the principles that affect another family directly or the Khashoggis. BURNETT) : An American farr
5	2017	SPOK	CBS: Face The Nation				funny case. Like he just will lie or like make things up for the affect it has on other people. That's not a way that a good person
6	2017	SPOK	NPR: How I Built This				to be something that you just can't get out of your head that must affect your sleep and just - your thought process, and it just must become all-con
7	2017	SPOK	NPR: How I Built This				off the radar for lots of years, so, I mean, did that affect , you know, your ability to call the shots in that negotiation? ROSS-BAGDASARIAN-J#
8	2017	SPOK	Fox: (-)				an economy that is worth an estimated \$28 billion. So, will this really affect things, or are we still talking about margins here? BOLTON# Well, numbe
9	2017	SPOK	Fox: Story: Maccallum				Rod Rosenstein in his interview with Chris Wallace was where classified material is released to affect the policy of the government to embarrass the
10	2017	SPOK	CNN: CNN Tonight				this investigation? DEAN# Well, it's hard to believe that it didn't affect the thinking of the deputy attorney general when he decided to appoint a spec
11	2016	SPOK	PBS_Newshour				place that the U.S. is engaged in, which is internal politics on the ground affect what the future will be. FREDERIC-WEHREY# Absolutely. In Libya, the ;
12	2016	SPOK	Fox: Fox News Sunday				know if it's even going -- I don't think it's going to affect people's view of who and what Donald Trump represents to them, given this
13	2016	SPOK	Fox: O'Reilly Factor				I agree with that 100 percent that Americans have to evaluate how his character would affect the country if he got elected. GOLDBERG# Right. O'REI

The COCA output

Corpus of Contemporary American English

SEARCH WAIT CONTEXT ACCOUNT

CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT HELP SAVE TRANSLATE ANALYZE

1	2019	SPOK	ABC_Nightline	🔍	🔍	🔍	able to evade even being identified for such a long period of time, in effect , because law enforcement really wasn't sharing information with each ot
2	2019	SPOK	NBC_Today	🔍	🔍	🔍	spend their money somewhere. OPRAH-WINFREY-WW) : I love bread. KATE-SNOW) : The Oprah effect worked when she first signed on to Weight Wa
3	2019	SPOK	NBC_Today	🔍	🔍	🔍	wellness tips on Instagram. HODA-KOTB) : Sure. KATE-SNOW) : And that has had an effect on all these companies. HODA-KOTB) : All right. Thank you
4	2019	SPOK	NBC_Today	🔍	🔍	🔍	very hot down south. Also out west, we have some heat advisories in effect . That's a look at the weather across the country. Now here's
5	2019	SPOK	NBC_Today	🔍	🔍	🔍	Southern Arizona of all places. We actually have flash flood watches and warnings in effect . There's some remnant moisture from a disturbance that
6	2019	SPOK	PBS_Newshour	🔍	🔍	🔍	that era, we were motivated, and we felt we could really have an effect on the way things work in the world. JEFFREY-BROWN) : Idealism was still in
7	2019	SPOK	PBS_Newshour	🔍	🔍	🔍	a ticking time bomb. AMNA-NAWAZ) : The new rules are set to go into effect in October. Acting Director of Citizenship and Immigration Services Ken
8	2019	SPOK	PBS_Newshour	🔍	🔍	🔍	General Xavier Becerra said the rules have led to -- quote -- " a chilling effect " on immigrant families. XAVIER BECERRA (D), California Attorney Gener
9	2019	SPOK	NPR_FreshAir	🔍	🔍	🔍	beautiful since I saw it for the first time. It produced a very interesting effect on me emotional and also cerebral - you know? - something that I can
10	2017	SPOK	CNN: Anderson Cooper	🔍	🔍	🔍	turns out that's not true. And it sort of started this snow bawl effect that's now turned into this very politicized environment. ANDERSON-COOPER, -C
11	2017	SPOK	CNN: Anderson Cooper	🔍	🔍	🔍	me to continue to want to be a better person. And he had that effect on everyone, especially his soldiers. He was a sergeant, so he was
12	2017	SPOK	CBS: Face The Nation	🔍	🔍	🔍	That's the voters of Alabama having their say, but does that have any effect on the larger Republican Party? SCOTT# Well, certainly, the reality of it
13	2017	SPOK	CBS: Face The Nation	🔍	🔍	🔍	Congress, both very fine men. The reality of it is that the ripple effect on the Republican Party is yet to be determined. The truth of the matter
14	2017	SPOK	Fox: Story: Maccallum	🔍	🔍	🔍	, and make a lesson of them. Yes, that this will have that effect . As far as journalists go, the only question here -- the federal government
15	2017	SPOK	Fox: On The Record: Baier	🔍	🔍	🔍	on Meryl Streep, it was a string of 140 characters, but the same effect . He just gets it out there. It goes around the press, has
16	2017	SPOK	Fox: Sunday Morning Futures	🔍	🔍	🔍	we'll know what it looks like. And it will include that it takes effect starting January 1st of this year. So, the market is wise to say
17	2017	SPOK	CNN: CNN Tonight	🔍	🔍	🔍	fully and cooperate with him on everything he needs so that, he, in effect , gets on with the program. that the White House -- the cloud over
18	2017	SPOK	CBS: This Morning	🔍	🔍	🔍	say McCain. But this is exactly what they had been dreading. DR-JON-LAPOOK# It can effect -- it cause a headache, it can cause weakness. But I'll tell
19	2016	SPOK	PBS_Newshour	🔍	🔍	🔍	DAVID-BROOKS# Well, first of all, the videos are just harrowing and have an effect on, all of us and an effect on the national mood. It's
20	2016	SPOK	PBS_Newshour	🔍	🔍	🔍	videos are just harrowing and have an effect on, all of us and an effect on the national mood. It's just this is a man losing his life
21	2016	SPOK	PBS_Newshour	🔍	🔍	🔍	, the Chicago case, there does seem to be some evidence of a Ferguson effect , of the cops being -- not wanting to be on those videos, and

DDL Lesson 2: the grammatical properties of Modal Verbs

Enter the COCA corpus and form the query:

- display: KWIC
- word(s): will/ would/ should/ could/may/ might
- sections: spoken + newspaper

Go through the results and search for patterns

1. - What words do MAux usually come after?
2. - What two categories of words usually follow a MAux?
3. - How do they form question/ negation?
4. - What is their 3rd person singular?
5. - Are they followed by 'to'/ take an 'ing'?

And then, fill in the Google Form with their findings

DDL Lesson 3: the senses of ‘may’ and ‘might’

- a. Printed handout
- b. ECCo and COCA corpora

Activity 1:

Identifying grammatical structures and senses
9 edited, full sentences taken from ECCo

Look at the sentences and answer the questions:

- a. which are the **modal verbs** that you can see?
- b. ‘may’ and ‘might’ are usually associated with (underline): **present/ future/ past**
- c. ‘may’ is used to express **general truth, wish, permission** and **possibility**. Which sentence shows each of these senses?
- d. ‘might’ is used to express (very formal) **permission** and **low possibility**. Which sentence shows each of these senses?

Shoot for the moon; you might get there!

- Have a look at the following sentences.

Which are the modal verbs that today's lesson focuses on?

- a) ..and I 'd like, if I may, to give a few handy tips..
- b) May you have a long a healthy life!
- c) Dr Porentz: Can I answer?
King: You may.
- d) Thank you, God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.
- e) Female 1: Hi, I'm from a local radio station and Jill thought you might be able to talk to me about your work...
- f) When you administer it to human patients, you might as well call it patient necrosis factor.
- g) Senator: Well, if I might say, I want to repeat...the turtle eggs may be accidentally crushed by tourists...
- h) Doctor: If you give in to phobia, then you may let it rule your life.
- i) Excuse me miss, I'm Julia Marquez for WRSB , may I ask your name and what are you doing in this line?

Activity 2:

Match the two halves of concordances which were had been taken from ECCo so as to make full sentences.

Activity 3:

Form full sentences with chunks of sentences taken from COCA (CBS, CNN and ABC TV networks corpora), into affirmative, interrogative and negative forms, using 'may/ might'

eg. And/ whatever/ New York/ be,/ matter/ less/ than/ what /we/ believe/ it is..

Activity 4:

Handout with gap filling activity made with 5 sentences taken from ECCo

Fill in the gaps with

a. may/ might

b. the verb in the appropriate form

eg. If you put some fruit in a glass bowl, you(dream) you are wearing the glass bowl on your head

What do the students say



“Making corpus queries is ‘easy’”
fun”

“Working on a computer is


“Concordance output seems quite ‘strange’”

“[Corpus] examples are better than studying and memorizing rules”

“Better understanding of how English is used”

What in-class application has taught us

1. Opt for a 'Gentle immersion' for smoother introduction into DDL
2. Make good use of what the students are already familiar with
3. Encourage them to work in pairs or groups of three
4. Distinct role for every team member
5. Online experimentation and use of printed handouts



Try applying DDL
methods in other
school subjects
as well!

Thank you!