





## 2.3.4 Employing corpora for language learning

# Activities

#### Activity 1: What are corpora?

• Do you know what language corpora are? If not, can you guess what they are and what their function might be in language teaching/learning?

Write your views in the text box below.

When you finish, watch the video "Corpus Linguistics: The Basics" to check your guesses. You can find the link in the "Supplementary Materials" part of this Section.

#### Activity 2: What can corpora reveal about English?

#### **Question 2.1**

• What do you expect corpora might reveal about English?

Write your views in the text box below.



**ENRICH** 



## Question 2.2

• Can you guess the most frequent words in English – and in your own language, as well?

Write your views in the text box below.

## **Question 2.3**

Have a look at the following table with 2 columns with the 50 most frequent words in written (W) and in spoken (S) English.

- Think of what you answered in Question 2.2. Is there anything that matches your guesses?
- What do you notice that you did not expect to find?
- Would you use this table and this task with your students?

⊯ W	🗩 S	⊯≾ W	🗩 S	⊯≤ W	🗩 S	⊮ ₩	🗩 S	⊮ w	🗩 S
1.	1.	11.	11.	21.	21.	31.	31.	41.	41.
THE	THE	IT	IN	BE	THEY	ARE	FOR	THEIR	DON X
2.	2.	12.	12.	22.	22.	32.	32.	42.	42.
TO	I	ON	WAS	MY	WELL	AN	THIS	SHE	SHE
3.	3.	13.	13.	23.	23.	33.	33.	43.	43.
OF	YOU	HE	IS	HAVE	WHAT	THIS	JUST	WHO	THINK
4.	4.	14.	14.	24.	24.	34.	34.	44.	44.
A	AND	IS	IT XS	FROM	YES	HAS	ALL	IF	IF
5.	5.	15.	15.	25.	25.	35.	35.	45.	45.
AND	TO	WITH	KNOW	HAD	HAVE	BEEN	THERE	HIM	WITH
6.	6.	16.	16.	26.	26.	36.	36.	46.	46.
IN	IT	YOU	NO	BY	WE	UP	LIKE	WE	THEN
7.	7.	17.	17.	27.	27.	37.	37.	47.	47.
I	A	BUT	OH	ME	HE	WERE	ONE	ABOUT	AT
8.	8.	18.	18.	28.	28.	38.	38.	48.	48.
WAS	YEAH	AT	SO	HER	DO	OUT	BE	WILL	ABOUT
9.	9.	19.	19.	29.	29.	39.	39.	49.	49.
FOR	THAT	HIS	BUT	THEY	GOT	WHEN	RIGHT	ALL	ARE
10.	10.	20.	20.	30.	30.	40.	40.	50.	50.
THAT	OF	AS	ON	NOT	THAT XS	ONE	NOT	WOULD	AS







Write your views in the text box below.



## Activity 3: Extracts from English spoken corpora

Have a look at the following extracts from spoken English corpora. They can be used by learners to "observe" spoken language.

- What do you notice? What can you ask your learners to notice? (e.g., use of fillers, like 'erm'; short forms, as 'cos'; repetitions; slang forms; discourse markers as *Well*, *You know*, *I mean*...)
  - 1. ... only five of us. But eh. Right, well, we'll have to, but you know ....
  - 2. That's right. Yes, I mean that would be very good ...
  - 3. ... I can come on the Friday. Sixth is the Friday. Yeah, well I mean I think we need to ...
  - 4. What car they going in? Yes, well eh. Ten till two, usual? Ten till two, yes ...
  - 5. ... we, we produced erm, eh I mean we talked to young people and ...
  - 6. ... we've already been told that haven't we? Well I. Erm, if I. Do you, do you want me ...
  - 7. A place in Harlow? Well, I, I, I have asked for that ...
  - 8. Right, so I mean this is ... Listen, this is ...
  - 9. Yes, I've got plenty. Okay, well if you've got it, that's alright, I'll see you afterwards ...
  - ... the twenty fourth of September isn't it? Yes, twenty fourth. Well, it'll, it'll be the er, the twenty fourth ...
  - 11. Don't leave it too long Norman. Well yeah, I mean, your in the second week aren't ya?
  - ... we can come up with ideas, like the idea of that? Well I think the ideas should come from ...
  - Can we go ahead, or not? Can we go ahead. Well it's up to you. Right. What'll you suggest?
     Is this on yet? Yeah. Oh. Okay well, good morning ...







Write your views in the text box below.



## Activity 4: Corpora for discovering authentic use of English

Corpora for language learning can be a very useful tool for exploring authentic uses of English.

- How can language corpora help EL teachers to better scaffold their students' learning?
- How can language corpora enhance an ELF-aware approach in ELT?
- What might be the pedagogical advantages of using Data Driven Learning?
- Make a list of what you foresee as pros and cons of using corpora in the ELT class.

Write your views in the text box below.







## Additional Activity: Example from VOICE

Look at the extract below and notice how 'help' is being used by non-native speakers of English in the VOICE corpus.

- Is there any use that is not traditional? Which one?
- Is communication in any way affected? How?
- Do speakers use strategies to make themselves understood? Which ones?

		VOICE
heip	submit	- Conserve
Found 279 in 248	in 0.4	52s u1-25
* EDcon496:204	S1:	<7>TRAVEL 7 agencies (\$3 starts typing) where you go book your ticket OR erm (.) what what the article is mostly talking about ONLINE erm (1) (\$3 stops typing) using websites as channels (.) erm (1) the channel conflict strategy matrix (3) offers basically FOUR (2) core com- erm core strategies? (.) (\$3 is leaving through papers) which can he to erm (.) to ada;pt or or (1) adjust to an (.) to the use of new channel. (2) so the first one is compete? (2) which is basically saying that it is important to use the channel effectively because everyone else i- (.) is using it? (1) so you need to be optimal in in the use of your channel <5> for instance 5 .
* EDcon496:486		<5>i'll but i'll do that 5 <fast> i'll like guys i'm a little bit confused here you know i'm a student too </fast> (.) i'm <6> learning 6 <7> i'm 7 in the <1> learning 1 process help <2> me out 2
* EDcon496:501	S1:	= <loud>help me out </loud> help me out guys. (.) help me out. (.) whoever helps me out will get a cookie and a date with me. (.)
* EDcon496:708	S1:	pretty lady with the blue eyes. (.) we can't help it (.) i'm gonna go to class i think.
* EDcon521:118	584:	<ul> <li><un>xx </un> that but the thing is that hh they can't (do) drugs (1) e:r (.) or if they're alcoholics they can't drink alco-alcoho (.) they have to be sober and (.) straight up (.) and er and er (.) a lot of people choose (1) to rather do drugs because they're drug addicts (.) than (.) get the (help) (.) and those are the ones that we have? (.) in stock&lt;7&gt;holm <!--7--> (.)</li> </ul>
* EDint328:338	S1:	can i help you about @
* EDint328:366	\$3:	<7>when they 7 were young at school? (.) we used to help them.
* EDint331:495	51:	<4>because it is 4 it is the language that is going to (.) help us live with other nations (.)
* EDged31:103	S10:	and the seminar i think e:r will help (.) to (.) er learn about the other culture? (.)
* EDsed31:225	S1:	great, so you'll help me as a native.@@@@@  hh (.)
* EDsed31:475	S6:	<9>later on 9 or (.) [S22] can also help me <7> in this 7
* EDsed31:538	\$16:	fo:r the same reason (.) the other italian girls (have) said (.) because e:r (.) <smacks lips=""> e:r for example older people er hh er are very: er friendly and they: er HELP us er with everything but er students are erm quite cold er and especially in the courses they're (.)</smacks>
* EDsed31:1243	S11:	you don't have to to ask er for help (.)

Write your views in the text box below.