

THE ROLE OF CORPUS LINGUISTICS IN IMPROVING VOCABULARY TEACHING STRATEGIES

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Abstract. This study examines the role of corpus linguistics in enhancing vocabulary teaching strategies. It explores how corpus-based approaches provide authentic language data, support frequency-based learning, and improve learners' lexical competence. The findings demonstrate that corpus linguistics contributes to more effective, data-driven, and context-rich vocabulary instruction.

Key words: corpus linguistics, vocabulary teaching, lexical competence, language corpora, data-driven learning, English language.

Introduction

In recent decades, advances in technology and digital resources have significantly influenced language teaching methodologies. One of the most important developments in this field is the emergence of corpus linguistics, which involves the analysis of large collections of authentic language data (corpora). These developments have transformed traditional approaches to vocabulary teaching, shifting the focus from intuition-based methods to evidence-based practices. Vocabulary acquisition is a central component of language learning, as it directly affects learners' ability to communicate effectively. Traditional vocabulary teaching methods often rely on textbooks and teacher intuition, which may not always reflect real language use. In contrast, corpus linguistics provides access to authentic examples of language in context, allowing learners to observe how words are used in real-life situations.

As noted by leading linguists such as John Sinclair, language patterns can be better understood through the systematic analysis of real usage data. Similarly, researchers argue that corpus-based approaches enhance learners' awareness of collocations, frequency, and contextual meaning. The relevance of this study lies in the growing importance of integrating technology and authentic materials into language education. The aim of this study is to analyze how corpus linguistics can improve vocabulary teaching strategies and contribute to more effective language learning outcomes.

Materials and Methods

The study is based on data derived from well-known language corpora, including the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). These corpora provide extensive collections of spoken and written texts from various contexts. The research applies descriptive and analytical methods to examine how vocabulary is presented and used in authentic contexts. In addition, elements of data-driven learning (DDL) are considered, where learners interact directly with corpus

data to discover patterns and meanings. The theoretical framework is based on the works of John Sinclair and other corpus linguists, as well as definitions provided by major linguistic resources such as the Oxford English Dictionary.

Results

The analysis shows that corpus linguistics plays a significant role in improving vocabulary teaching strategies. First, corpora provide information about word frequency, allowing teachers to prioritize the most commonly used vocabulary. This ensures that learners focus on high-frequency words that are most useful for communication. Second, corpus data highlight collocations, or words that frequently occur together (e.g., “make a decision,” “strong coffee”). Learning such combinations enhances learners’ fluency and naturalness in language use. Third, corpora offer rich contextual examples, enabling learners to understand how words function in different situations. This helps avoid misunderstandings and promotes deeper lexical knowledge. Furthermore, corpus-based approaches support learner autonomy. Through data-driven learning, students actively explore language patterns, which increases engagement and retention. Instead of memorizing isolated words, learners develop analytical skills and a better understanding of language use.

Discussion

The findings suggest that the integration of corpus linguistics into vocabulary teaching has both pedagogical and practical advantages. Unlike traditional methods, corpus-based instruction is grounded in real language usage, making learning more relevant and authentic. Technological tools and platforms have made corpora more accessible to teachers and learners. As a result, corpus linguistics is increasingly incorporated into modern language classrooms. This approach aligns with communicative language teaching and task-based learning, which emphasize meaningful interaction and real-world language use. However, certain challenges remain. For example, corpus data can be complex and difficult for beginners to interpret. Teachers need proper training to effectively integrate corpus tools into their lessons. Additionally, selecting appropriate materials and tasks is essential to ensure that learners benefit from corpus-based activities. Despite these challenges, researchers emphasize that corpus linguistics represents a significant advancement in language teaching. It encourages a shift from prescriptive rules to descriptive, usage-based understanding of language.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has examined the role of corpus linguistics in improving vocabulary teaching strategies, with particular attention to its impact on frequency awareness, collocation learning, and contextual understanding. The analysis has demonstrated that corpus-based approaches provide valuable tools for enhancing lexical competence. The findings indicate that corpus linguistics supports more effective vocabulary instruction by offering authentic language data, promoting learner autonomy, and facilitating deeper understanding of word usage. It allows both teachers and learners to base their decisions on real evidence rather than intuition alone. Furthermore, the study highlights that integrating corpus linguistics into language education contributes to the modernization of teaching practices. While challenges such

as complexity and accessibility exist, they can be addressed through proper training and methodological adaptation. It can therefore be concluded that corpus linguistics does not replace traditional teaching methods but complements and enhances them. By incorporating corpus-based strategies, educators can create more engaging, accurate, and effective vocabulary learning experiences, ultimately improving learners' communicative competence in English.

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