Compilation of the Learner Bilingual Corpus and Its Use in Class: Making Teaching Materials Using “EasyConc.xlsm”

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Three Learner Corpora useful for English Language Teaching in Junior and Senior High School

Corpus A: Corpus compiled by textbooks authorized by the Ministry of Education and EIKEN exam texts
Corpus B: Learner corpus: English texts produced by students
Corpus C: Learner parallel corpus: Japanese and its paraphrased English Texts. The English texts are the ones students could not express in English.

Corpus B — What students expressed by themselves in English

Corpus findings: Concordance of ‘-ed participles’ in passive form

Concordance of ‘Verb+ed participles’ (past tense) from the Corpus of Japanese Culture produced by junior high school students.

Pedagogical Implications from the findings of Corpus B:

- Concordance of ‘-ed participles’ in passive form

- From junior high school students’ writing, it is clear that students are unfamiliar with past participles in passive voice.

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The Dilemma of the Learners of English

- Why couldn’t Japanese learners of English express themselves in English?

- The main reasons:
  - They don’t have enough vocabulary to express.
  - Vocabulary input from the textbooks authorized by the Ministry of Education is not enough.
  - 1200 words should be taught to Junior high school students
  - 3000 words should be taught to senior high school students.
  - Without grammar, little communication may be possible; without vocabulary, no communication is possible. (Folse, 2004)
Theoretical background
—Without input, output cannot be expected

- The relation between input and output
- It is very important to know what they could not express in English.
- How can we utilize what they wanted to express but couldn’t in English teaching?

Corpus C—Six stages of Data Collection for Japanese-English Bilingual Corpus 1/2

- Stage 1
  - Implementing communication activities in English Classes.
- Stage 2
  - After the activities, students are asked to write the expressions in Japanese that they wanted to use in English but couldn’t during the activities
- Stage 3
  - Each question in Japanese from Students is input into each cell on Excel spreadsheet.

Corpus C—Six stages of Data Collection for Japanese-English Bilingual Corpus 2/2

- Stage 4
  - Each question in Japanese from students is translated into English by Japanese teachers and native English-speaking teachers.
- Stage 5
  - Data of Japanese questions and their English translations are incorporated into EasyConc_v.2.0.xls.
- Stage 6
  - Some pieces of grammatical information are retrieved by corpus tools in order to make worksheets for English classes.

Stage 1—Example of a communication activity in English class for the compilation of Japanese-English Bilingual Corpus

- Speaking Test called Interview Challenge
- Telling to the native English-speaking teacher about one lesson from the textbooks authorized by the Japanese Ministry of Education

Stage 2 to 5—Compilation of Japanese-English Bilingual Corpus: Matching each Japanese expression with its English translation on an Excel spreadsheet

- Translation from Japanese expressions into English in association with a native speaker of English

Last 13 examples out of 2895 questions from junior & senior high school students
Stage 6
Pedagogical Implication: Supplying learners with EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm as a production dictionary

- Using EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm as a Japanese-English dictionary
  - Searching for English sentences using Japanese keywords

Stage 6
The result of the retrieval: English sentences including Japanese keywords '勝' or '負'.

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Stage 6
The result of the retrieval: English sentences including English keywords 'win', 'wins', 'winning', 'won', 'lose', 'loses', 'losing', or 'lost'.

Extracts from the retrieval

The input of 'lose' and its conjugation from New Crown English Series Book 1, 2 and 3, the authorized textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concordance of 'lose', 'loses' and 'lost' from New Crown English Series Book 1, 2 and 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are only two sentences retrieved from New Crown English Series Book 1, 2 and 3 for junior high school students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Corpus finding 1: lexical verb 'lose' retrieved from EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm.

Concordance of 'lose', 'loses' and 'lost' from EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm.

Partial extract from the result
Pedagogical Implication 1: Ideas for creating teaching materials for English class

Creating a short story by using three words, such as ‘play’, ‘win’, ‘lose’.

- The input of ‘because’ and ‘while’ from New Crown English Series Book 1, 2 and 3, the authorized textbooks

Corpus finding 2: subordinating conjunctions, ‘because’

Concordance of ‘なので’, ‘だから’, ‘原因で’, ‘ために’, ‘のでせいで’ from EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsx

Partial extract from the result


Partial extract from the result

Pedagogical Implication from corpus finding 2 & 3: Getting students to be familiar with subordinating conjunctions

Gapfill exercises: Fill in the each bracket with a suitable linking word in the box.

1. I am very sleepy ( ) I was reading all night long.
2. I read a book ( ) listening to music.
3. I went shopping ( ) my friend, Yukiko, in Class 3.
4. I had to cut talking because I was reading at night.

Matching Exercises: Use a linking word in Box B to match the sentence parts in boxes A and C.

Box A
1. I can’t play the piano well
2. I watched the news
3. I wanted to see the movie

Box B
1. because
2. while
3. if

Box C
1. I was eating spaghetti
2./starred my favorite actor
3. I am a beginner.

The input of the post modification of relative pronoun ‘that’ from New Crown English Series, the authorized textbooks

Concordance of ‘that’ from New Crown English Series Book 3

Partial extract from the result

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Corpus finding 4: postmodification by relative clauses

Postmodification doesn't exist in Japanese language. Concordance of "買う", "欲しい" from EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm

291 One of a country's I bought was 1,000 yen. I couldn't buy a book I wanted in the bookstore.
293 I didn't have a book I wanted to buy in the bookstore.
290 There wasn't a book I wanted to buy in the bookstore.
294 I went shopping in the bookstore. But I didn't have enough money to buy anything. There wasn't anything I wanted to buy.
291 I went to the bookstore but I couldn't find the book I wanted. I looked at books in the bookstore.
293 I couldn't find the books that I wanted. I had to buy the book I wanted.

Partial extract from the result

Pedagogical Implication 4: Getting students used to postmodification by relative clauses

While working on the exercises below, Learners of English are exposed to frequently used expressions in communicative activities. Sentences in the exercise below are all from EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm.

A sample word order exercise:

1. I couldn't buy (a / wanted / book / I) in the bookstore.
2. That is (the / wanted / which / I / have / book) for a long time.
3. I went to the bookstore but I couldn't (find / books / I / any / wanted).
4. I went to the CD shop but I couldn't (one / I / which / wanted / find / the).
5. (one / I / of / accessories / bought) was 400 yen.

Conclusion

- It is important for teachers to know the expressions that learners want to use in English but can't through communication activities in your English classes.
- Why don't you compile bilingual corpus for your students? It will be a useful resource for your teaching.
- Bilingual corpus software such as EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm is easy to get from the Internet. Without that software, it would be impossible to retrieve necessary information from bilingual corpus.
- If you change Japanese data of EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm to your mother tongue, you can create your own corpus. If you add your data to EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm, you can create your own EasyConc_v.2.0.xlsm.

References

Lyttelton, D. 2010. 「英語スキット・ベスト50」—50 Skits for Learning English—. 明治図書

Thank you for your attention.

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