



Computer Corpus Applications in English Teaching Programs for Social Sciences and Humanities.

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Abstract

There is a growing need to offer degree programs of Social Sciences and Humanities in the English medium because of the demand in the national and international job market. When offering English medium degrees to local students, English Language Teaching (ELT) programs should include discipline-specific lexical and lexico-grammatical content. Whereas recognizing such content is challenging, tools in corpus linguistics can ease the burden of the curriculum designer since present day corpus studies use computer applications which are efficient and reliable. The present study was carried out to examine the research problem of recognizing the most frequent general and discipline-specific English lexis and structures relevant to the subjects offered by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka (FSSH-RUSL) by compiling and analyzing a digitalized corpus of Academic English. Corpus research methods use representative sampling, and both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Approximately 50,000 words data each were collected from 09 disciplines representing the 07 departments of FSSH-RUSL to compile Rajarata University Social-sciences and Humanities (RUSH) corpus, which consists of 463,729 words of digitalized samples of Printed Books using an Optical Character Recognition enabled google drive. Linguistic analysis of the RUSH corpus data was carried out using an online concordancer- Lextutor, and an open-source concordancer- AntConc. The results include Keywords, which are far more frequent in the sub-corpora of the RUSH corpus compared to a general corpus. Other corpus analysis applications which provided defining lexis are Vocabulary Profile, Frequency, and Frequency Range. Additionally, the range of Lexical Bundles (N-Grams) of the corpus produced by AntConc constitutes the common structures that could be included in the English curriculum of FSSH-RUSL. The paper suggests that these findings be used in the teaching material preparation for the ELT programs.

Keywords: Corpus research, Computer applications, Discipline-specific, English teaching

