

CREATING A LIST OF KEYWORDS FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY TO MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATES IN SRI LANKAN STATE UNIVERSITIES USING THE CORPUS - BASED APPROACH

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Corpus Linguistics, which is viewed as a methodology or research tool by some linguists while others perceive it as a discipline or theory, has been progressing rapidly within the field of Linguistics since 1964 and it has become a useful approach in second language teaching with the advancement of technology. Conversely, according to Breyer (2008), teaching can be viewed as one of the fields where technology has very little impact. Corpus Linguistics, one of the results of the involvement of technology in language teaching, is an approach that could be very useful in second language teaching even though, it has not been adequately used or experimented with yet. However, the use of Corpus Linguistics in language teaching classrooms has started to progress very recently. Even though a considerable amount of research has been conducted on using Corpus Linguistics in a pedagogical aspect, little research has been carried out on using this approach in ESP classrooms. Specifically, studies have not been undertaken so far on the use of corpus linguistic tools to create keyword lists for undergraduates in state universities in Sri Lanka which would be helpful for vocabulary teaching in the ESP classrooms. Accordingly, the current study fills this gap. This quantitative study was done by using AntConc Corpus Linguistic Tools to create a list of keywords. CMU (Corpus for Medical Undergraduates) is the main corpus of the study, and the BE06 corpus compiled by Paul Baker was used as the reference corpus of the study. An exploratory analysis was carried out to identify the major themes in the corpus and it was followed by the categorization of keywords into groups thematically. As the last part of the study, a brief account of how these keywords can be used in the ESP classrooms to teach and develop vocabulary lessons also was given. Using a corpus-based approach has a big potential in ESP classrooms even though, using it in language teaching is somewhat challenging. Accordingly, the current study will give access to the field of Corpus Linguistics in ESP classroom in Sri Lankan tertiary education settings.

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