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### **DÜŞÜK SEVİYEDE İNGİLİZCE BİLGİSİNE SAHİP, YABANCI DİLİ İNGİLİZCE OLAN ÖĞRENCİLERİN DERLEME DAYALI DİLBİLGİSİ ÖĞRENİMİ HAKKINDAKİ GÖRÜŞLERİ**

*Funda DÜNDAR\* - Yunis ŞAHİNKAYASI\*\* - Hamide ŞAHİNKAYASI\*\*\**

#### **ÖZET**

Bu nitel çalışmanın birincil amacı, Brigham Young Üniversitesi-İngiliz Milli Derlemi (BYU-BNC) veya küçük bir derleme çalışan AntConc (ücretsiz kelime dizini programı) ile öğrenim gören düşük seviyede İngilizce bilgisine sahip öğrencilerin dilbilgisi başarı ve tutumlarının ölçüldüğü nicel bir çalışmada ortaya koydukları olumsuz tutumlarının sebeplerini anlamaktır. Çalışmanın ikincil amacı, katılımcıların derlem araçlarını kullanarak dilbilgisi edinmeye karşı gösterdikleri tutumlar hakkında daha detaylı bilgiler edinmektir. Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi, Bilgisayar ve Öğretimi Teknolojileri Eğitimi Bölümünde öğrenim gören birinci sınıf katılımcıları arasından yedi gönüllü katılımcı seçmek için amaçlı örnekleme metodu kullanıldı. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme yoluyla toplanan veriler içerik analizi yapıldıktan sonra ana ve alt kategorilere ayrıldı. Bu analizde açık, eksensel ve seçici kodlama yöntemleri sırasıyla kullanılmıştır. Kodlama listesinde ortaya çıkan ana başlıklar şu şekildedir: İngilizce geçmişi, derlem araçlarının değerlendirilmesi, dersin değerlendirilmesi, öğrenme sürecine etkisi olan dış faktörler, derlem ve İngilizce çalışma kitabının karşılaştırılması, öz değerlendirme, öğretmenin değerlendirilmesi, sınıf arkadaşlarının değerlendirilmesi, İngilizce'ye olan genel tutum ve derlem tabanlı öğrenmenin geliştirilmesi için öneriler. Katılımcıların çoğu aslında gelecekte de derlem ile İngilizce öğrenmeye karşı ilgililerdi fakat öncelikle temel İngilizce bilgilerini geliştirmeye ihtiyaç duydular.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Derleme dayalı dilbilgisi öğrenimi, derlem kullanımına karşı tutum, derlem araçlarının değerlendirilmesi, düşük seviyede İngilizce bilgisine sahip öğrenciler, BYU-BNC ve AntConc 3.2.1

\* Okt. Piri Reis Üniversitesi El-mek: fundasahillioglu@gmail.com

\*\* Yrd. Doç. Dr. Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Bilgisayar Öğretmenliği ve Teknolojileri Eğitimi Bölümü, El-mek: yunnus2001@yahoo.com

\*\*\* Yrd. Doç. Dr. Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Bilgisayar Öğretmenliği ve Teknolojileri Eğitimi Bölümü, El-mek: hsahinkayasi@gmail.com

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## PERCEPTIONS OF LOWER LEVEL EFL STUDENTS ON CORPUS-BASED GRAMMAR LEARNING

### ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to understand the reasons underlying students' negative perceptions of corpus use in a quantitative study, which assessed the grammar achievement and attitudes of lower-level EFL students who were taught with a corpus tool, which was either BYU-BNC or AntConc 3.2.1 which is run with a small corpus. The secondary purpose of this study is to acquire more detailed information about the attitudes of participants towards learning English grammar with corpus tools. A purposive sampling method was used to select seven volunteer freshman participants majoring in the Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technology at Mustafa Kemal University in Turkey. The data, collected with semi-structured interviews, were content-analyzed by coding data, identifying and relating the categories and sub-categories, that is, open, axial and selective coding were conducted respectively. Accordingly, the following main categories were developed from the coding lists: English background, evaluation of the corpus tool, evaluation of the lesson, external factors on learning, comparison of corpus and the English textbooks, self-evaluation, evaluation of the teacher, evaluation of the classmates, attitude towards English, and advice on improving corpus-based learning. Most of the participants were indeed interested in learning English with corpus use in the future, but they first needed to develop their fundamental English knowledge.

### STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

#### Introduction

Many countries are integrating computer and Internet use in teaching contexts, which provides learners with several facilities, such as learner autonomy skills, visual learning, and student-centered learning contexts. In China, the government promotes integration of computer networking in classrooms. Similarly, Turkish education system attaches importance to English learning in schools starting from the primary to the higher school education. Accordingly, smart boards, and tablet use have been encouraged in Turkish schools. Computer labs have been common in many higher education where learners develop research skills and improve their knowledge.

The developments are not limited to the computerized infrastructure of the teaching environments. The advancement has influenced teaching methods as well. Recent developments in English language teaching address corpus linguistics, which is a methodology based on the analysis of electronically collected texts. Corpus based language teaching makes use of language processing programs in a way that learners expose to original texts derived from field specific contexts, such as journalism, medicine, or spoken language. These programs assist learners with their investigation of the linguistics properties of the

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texts. However, application of the method in language teaching has brought about several issues as to which type of participants are suitable for the method, what qualities a corpus must have, and how the learners must be trained.

### **Aim**

The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to uncover the reasons underlying students' negative perceptions towards corpus use in a previously carried out quantitative study which assessed the grammar achievements and attitudes of lower level EFL students who were taught with two corpus tools, either BYU-BNC or AntConc 3.2.1 which is run with a small corpus. In this sense, the factors affecting training session, corpus based teaching, and effectiveness of the tools were examined. Also external factors were investigated for any possible reason for the negative attitude. The secondary purpose of this study is to acquire more information about the attitudes of participants towards learning English grammar with corpus tools. For one reason, participants' insightful answer contribute to the implementation of the method with lower levels of EFL students.

### **Method**

The qualitative study was carried out right after the quantitative study. A purposive sampling method was used to select volunteer freshman participants majoring in the Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technology at Mustafa Kemal University in Turkey. After the data was collected from semi-structured interview, seven records were chosen to be analyzed by considering the clear posture of attitude and content-rich data. Among them, there are four records from BYU-BNC and three records from AntConc group with both positive and negative attitudes. All the interviews were transcribed in a form which states the time, participants, question and answer, and four levels of coding for each answer. To reduce and manage the data, several revisions were performed. The data were coded into content related categories, that is, open, axial and selective coding were conducted.

### **Findings**

The data analysis process from the coding lists resulted in the following main categories: English background, evaluation of the corpus tool, evaluation of the lesson, external factors on learning, comparison of corpus and the English textbooks, self-evaluation, evaluation of the teacher, evaluation of the classmates, attitude towards English, and advice on improving corpus-based learning. To go further with the findings,

### **Conclusion**

The perceptions of participants about the method, appropriateness of the tools, and the contribution of the tools into learning indicate that corpus based grammar teaching need to be designed carefully especially while studying with lower level EFL students. Although a less carefully planned teaching may result in negative points, corpus samples and functions contributes to learners' vocabulary knowledge, forming grammatical rules and interpretation skills. In addition, the corpus to be

processed with the tools must be appropriate in terms of the difficulty level of the language. Accordingly, lower achievers need to study with more basic language, so that they could interpret and understand easily. Otherwise, it could cause them to lose their motivation. To sum up, most of the participants were indeed interested in learning English with corpus use in the future, but they first needed to develop their fundamental English knowledge.

**Keywords:** Corpus-based grammar learning, attitudes towards corpus use, evaluation of corpus tools, lower level EFL students, BYU-BNC and AntConc 3.2.1.

## Introduction

Integration of corpus-based instruction in foreign language teaching, especially in writing, grammar, and translation education, has been gaining ground for a couple of decades. Researchers favor corpus-based learning for several reasons, such as enhancing learner autonomy and forming student-centered teaching. Based on the definition made in the Glossary of Corpus Linguistics, a corpus is a whole collection of text compilations selected and analyzed upon specific criteria. (Baker, Hardie & McEnery, 2006, p. 48). Research on corpus data suggested that frequency information and register variation need to be included in classroom materials and syllabi. Corpus texts are authentic and distinct in terms of genres. Also, pedagogical materials could be designed based on corpus findings. The texts in a corpus are in machine readable formats; hence, they could be available electronically in classrooms. Learners could work on these texts like linguists. Eventually, the process results in increasing learner autonomy.

Early studies of corpus-based language teaching were carried out in the late-1980s and early-1990s. An early and pioneering method of integrating corpus into language teaching was data-driven learning, which was developed by Tim Johns. The method was later upgraded and processed by different researchers. Leech (1997) suggested several ways of including corpora for teaching purposes: direct use (reference publishing, materials development, and language testing), indirect use (teaching about, teaching to exploit, and exploiting to teach), and teaching-oriented corpus development (LSP corpora, L1 developmental corpora and L2 learner corpora) (as cited in McEnery and Xiao, 2010, p. 5). Considering the direct approach, students are exposed to authentic language through corpus tools. They are supposed to extract rule-based findings from concordance lines. As for teachers, they adopt a mediating role. Students are guided through asking questions about the preceding or following parts of speech of a search term, how many instances of this are observed, or what language rule can be inferred from this frequency. Teachers are not to interfere with the students during their exploration of language.

Based on the results of a previously conducted quantitative study in which lower level EFL students were taught grammar through two corpus tools, which were AntConc classroom concordance run by a small corpus, and a free-access reference corpus, Brigham Young University British National Corpus (BYU-BNC), learners demonstrated achievement in learning grammar through corpus tools; however, their attitude remained negative towards the use of corpus in learning grammar. Because of the unexpected results, the current study was conducted to understand the underlying reasons and have an insight into students' evaluation of the lesson and related dynamics.

## Literature Review

The investigation of the historical development of corpus linguistics is likely to be categorized as non-computerized and computerized. Although it has been used in language teaching

for a few decades, it goes back to earlier times. As Teubert (2005) states "the historical developments of corpus linguistics dates back to two hundred years ago, when the philologists embraced the philosophy of the enlightenment and set off to find the laws that make language work" (p. 2). Because of the absence of computer technology, the process was carried out manually, and this effort was time-consuming. An early work of this kind of methodology was "A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles," by Danish professor, Otto Jespersen (1909). In writing this grammar book, he compiled many literary reading texts and noted interesting English examples, and included these texts in his book. With the advent of computer technology, the first electronic corpus, Brown Corpus, was generated in 1960. However, there were controversial issues between generative grammarians and descriptive linguists. Generative grammarians dominated the linguistic circle at that time. They believed that native speaker intuition gives strong proofs about the correct use of language. Descriptive linguists, however, opposed grammarians and assumed native speaker intuitions do not provide empirical evidence. These arguments caused a halt in advances in the field for about twenty years. During the 1980s the field gained popularity again because computer technology helped it to improve. Texts could be collected, saved, and processed electronically. At the beginning of this period, the field made contributions in compiling dictionaries and reference sources. It was then that corpus studies were integrated into English Language Teaching.

There are different definitions of corpus linguistics. While some researchers call it a theory, some define it as a methodology. It is argued that corpus linguistics has more than a methodological basis. It has theoretical foundations in that corpus linguistics has its own "sets of rules" and "pieces of knowledge". (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001. p. 1)

Jacqueline Leon (2005) reveals that the promotion of the term corpus linguistics in the 1990s has marked an important milestone in the attempt of making corpus work a new mainstream discipline within language sciences (p.36). For example, corpus investigations paved the way for material writers to revise several well-known or fossilized grammar rules by basing their findings on corpus information. When 20 million words of Longman grammar of spoken and written English was investigated, it was found that, contrary to the belief that the progressive aspect is not common in conversation, the progressive aspect is indeed more frequent in conversation than in other registers (Biber, et al., 1999). It is a fact that corpus analyses through electronic corpora and tools have provided language researchers with many new findings and have assisted them tracking the latest language changes. This makes corpus linguistics a revolutionary area. Electronic corpora provide users with quantitative data. One can find frequency values in registers and can compare whether the query is a formal or informal sample of language in relation to the register type of the text. Also, it is possible to find out collocation patterns, lemma forms and synonym matches through facilities of corpus tools.

Corpus linguistics aims to provide researchers with reliable data from authentic language systematically collected from written or spoken texts. In this regard, a corpus means more than a large collection of machine-readable texts. There are different corpus data sets which are compiled for different purposes, such as a reference corpus for dictionary compilation or a small corpus for subject-specific investigation of language. These data sets are formed based on several considerations, such as representativeness and size. Essentially, the term "size" in a corpus can be described as the number of texts derived from different registers. Therefore, it is closely related to the purpose in compiling the corpus. To exemplify, if the purpose is to investigate chunks of language in journalism, the size of the corpus needs to be from field-specific texts. The advantage of a small corpus here can be valued by frequently occurring patterns which may not appear that much in the reference one. Although a big corpus incorporates smaller ones as sub-categories in its size, smaller corpora may demonstrate richer language properties, since it would include more hits from register-

specific language. According to Biber (1993), "representativeness refers to the extent to which a sample includes the full range of variability in a population" (p. 243). The point here is that linguistic variants change according to the genre of texts, so the inclusion of a large size of genres proves that the texts are rich in linguistic properties. In other words, the size of the corpus should be as representative as possible.

The relevant data can be processed through a concordancer or online corpus databases. Two common corpus tools are AntConc, which is a freeware classroom concordancer developed at Waseda University, Japan, by Lawrence Anthony, and BYU-BNC, which is a free access reference corpus developed by Mark Davies at Brigham Young University. Both tools share similar facilities, such as, parts of speech, concordance, and frequency value, key word in context, sorting out a search term, collocation query, and paragraph view. On the other hand, BYU-BNC has more additional facilities, such as lemma query and comparison to other corpora.

Although the implementation of corpus in language teaching has gained prominence, some issues remained controversial. As Sinclair (2004) summarized, corpus data could provide correct use of language from original English texts. However, the occurrence of every chunk of language cannot be generalized as correct use because the use of language may change in different genres. In other words, the frequency rate of words or phrases may vary in different sizes of corpus, but still could be found in corpus data. The level of language learners was another criticism brought to corpus-based studies. While many existent studies suggest studying corpus with intermediate or advanced level of students, there are not sufficient findings that argue the opposite. Chambers (2007) asserts that "the absence of beginners is noteworthy in corpus-based studies" (p. 8). In addition to this, several studies reported positive attitude towards corpus use; however, the participants were mostly higher levels of English learners. On the other hand, there are few studies proving that corpus use is inappropriate for lower levels.

### 1.1.1 Data-driven Learning

Exploring language by examining original English texts within concordance lines is closely associated with the method of Data-Driven Learning. Although this method was reported in several researches in the 1980s, the variety of publications in this field points to Tim Johns as the main practitioner of this method of the use of corpora in language teaching. Tim Johns (1991) used the method in a remedial grammar course with international lower-level groups. Studies related to DDL reveal that corpus consultation may be used in a number of ways, such as, as a part of a language course, for personal use, for selecting purpose-based samples, or as a whole corpus.

Alex Boulton (2012) offers an example of DDL specializing on the activities of Tim Johns. To start with the delivery of corpus data, Johns usually made hands-on paper-based activities. He also suggested *blackboard concordancing* in which students use a text and write concordance lines from it on a blackboard. Johns (2008) reported that there is no need for technology with that method. Paper-based texts could help learners investigate concordance lines gradually until capable of independent investigation.

The way DDL is implemented constitutes an important part of the method. Inductive learning is central in DDL. On the other hand, it is possible to use deductive learning to test language uses. As for the role of the teacher, he or she should not transmit the knowledge directly, instead, the teacher should lead or collaborate with learners. In other words, learners should be self-directed and the teacher should guide them in investigating corpus data. Finally, DDL helps with the skills of writing, especially in understanding collocation patterns, reading, vocabulary, and grammar. Boulton (2012) stated that Johns suggested activities for these skills, such as, "making sentences from

fragments for increased coherence, inferring meaning from context and guessing the background information” (pg. 575).

### **1.1.2 Implementing Corpus Data in Language Teaching**

Facilities that corpus linguistics provides range from testing hypotheses to describing language by simply working on authentic samples. In the case of writing, EFL students have difficulty in conveying the message. Considering native speaker’s writing skills, EFL writing has artificial characteristics because of the effect of mother tongue. Accordingly, when we learn a new language, our first language competence overwhelms the second language. Moreover, students heavily rely on the instructor’s direction and feedback. In the light of these problems, it is apparent that facilities of corpus linguistics as stated above can help learners get correct feedback and acquire native-like language competence. In the case of grammar teaching, investigating authentic samples may cause confusion for lower levels. Initially, learners need to acquire basic knowledge about parts of speech. The following studies are aimed at describing how corpus data may be integrated into language learning.

Uçar and Yükselir (2015) used corpus exercises to practice the collocations in the main course book used by the students. They had one controlled and one experimental group. The level of the students was pre-intermediate. Despite the absence of a training session, a statistically positive significant difference was recorded between the control and experimental groups at the end of the treatment.

Granath (2009) carried out a corpus-based study in relation to EFL syntax courses. Students were given fifteen edited sentences with a key word of “round” and another fifteen with “that”. The teacher had already edited the first five sentences to include all word classes of round (adjective, verb, noun, preposition, adverbial particle). However, the sentences were not ordered in the form of concordance lines, therefore, students could examine them in full sentences. The instructor allowed learners to investigate the key words and the parts of speech occurrences around the key words.

The study carried out by Liu and Jiang (2009) is noteworthy for comparing lower levels and higher levels of English. The idea of including both EFL and ESL students was to compare the effectiveness of the new teaching approach. Participants from a Chinese university had a pre-intermediate level of English, while students of an American university had higher levels of English. The participants from the Chinese university received training with BNC Baby. The American university students were trained with BNC. The results showed positive development in learning lexico-grammatical patterns by enhanced language awareness.

Vannestal and Lindquist (2007) focused on students’ attitudes towards corpus-based grammar teaching. Students were given problem-solving assignments and they formed their own grammar rules by using a free access corpus tool. In class, students received peer teaching, in other words, they explained the grammar rules to each other. Before students started their learning, they were introduced to issues related to grammar and corpus research. The first practices were based on printed out concordance lines, then the students carried out corpus queries on a computer. Students worked in groups of four. They taught grammar rules to each other. Finally, the teacher revised all corpus-based answers in the class and made sure that everybody worked on corpus. The study reported a negative attitude towards corpus work in class.

### **Research Questions**

Following the quantitative research, which revealed some unexpected results about the attitude of learners, a qualitative study was launched to understand the reasons behind the negative attitude. As noted by Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2012), a qualitative study can help to clarify and

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explain the relationship between variables. Therefore, we held a semi-structured interview with nineteen questions focusing on the following main points:

1. What are the main and underlying reasons of students' low attitude towards corpus use in learning English?
2. What are the opinions of students about using corpus-based data driven learning?
3. What are the contributions of corpus-based English learning for students?

## Method

### Participants

The participants of the qualitative study are chosen from volunteer students at both sections of AntConc group and BYU-BNC group. A purposive sampling was determined as sampling method. After the completion of the interviews, we chose the records that would provide detailed and insightful information from both sections. As it was stated researchers "use their judgment to select a sample that they believe, based on prior information, will provide the data they need". (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012, p. 100). Totally 14 interviews were conducted. The records were selected on some criteria, such as the low and high grades of achievement test, higher and lower value of pre and posttest of the questionnaire of reaction to corpus use. The following tables indicate how the interviewees were selected by considering the pre and post-test mean scores of some critical items from the questionnaire of reaction to corpus use. These items are asked in Turkish. The English version for each item is as follows:

Item 11: The use of corpus is helpful in learning language

Item 24: I can understand the purpose of using corpus in this lesson

Item 25: I would like to use corpus for grammar in future

Item 26: When I have problem about grammar, I consult for corpus

Item 27: I can find the data I need in corpus

Item 28: I love corpus the more I discover about it

Item 29: Learning corpus has increased my self-efficacy beliefs towards English grammar

Item 30: On the whole, corpus is a crucial source in learning English Grammar

Item 33: Corpus should be used for all university courses

Item 34: All English lessons should incorporate corpus in Turkey.

Table 1. BNC Group selection of follow-up interview based on the Comparison of pre and posttest of the critical items on the questionnaire of reaction to corpus use

Participants	BNC Group selection of follow-up interview											
	Pre-mean	Post mean	Item 11	Item 24	Item 25	Item 26	Item 27	Item 28	Item 29	Item 30	Item 33	Item 34
1	4,91	4	5/5	6/5	6/4	4/4	5/5	6/6	5/5	5/5	4/6	5/5
2	4,71	4,36	4/6	5/5	6/5	4/5	3/3	5/5	6/5	6/5	6/5	5/4
3	3,53	2,82	3/2	2/2	2/1	2/1	3/1	3/1	3/2	3/1	5/2	5/2

Note that the values under the items are indicators of fixed choice response derived from a Likert scale. The numbers state that 1: Totally disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: somewhat disagree, 4: Somewhat agree, 5: Agree, 6: Totally agree. As can be interpreted from the table, the posttest mean values of all selected participants are lower than pre-test. However, they show positive responses to some items, or their responses have not changed during the implementation. According to the table



three participants from the BYU-BNC group was selected on the range of positive or negative attitudes. Relatively, the first and second participants drive a positive attitude. On the other hand, the third participant has negative attitudes.

Table 2: AntConc group selection of follow-up interview based on the Comparison of pre and posttest of the critical items on the questionnaire of reaction to corpus use

AntConc Group selection of follow-up interview												
Name	Pre-mean	Post-mean	Item 11	Item 24	Item 25	Item 26	Item 27	Item 28	Item 29	Item 30	Item 33	Item 34
1	3,85	2,64	1/1	1/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	7/1	7/1
2	4,21	3,97	5/4	5/5	5/5	4/4	4/4	4/5	4/4	5/5	6/5	6/5
3	2,94	3,26	3/4	3/3	2/4	2/3	2/3	3/3	1/4	2/2	3/1	4/2
4	2,59	4,18	2/5	2/5	2/5	2/5	2/3	1/6	2/5	2/5	1/5	2/5

Considering the table above, the first and third participants have negative attitudes; however, the second and fourth participants drive a positive attitude to the use of corpus in language learning.

#### Instrument(s)

The main instrument used in this study is a semi-structured interview. A semi-structured interview schedule was implemented to uncover any points that might be missed earlier and discover the reasons behind the unexpected results. The interview form was composed of 8 parts and 20 questions. The construction of the questions is arranged on personal information, assessing corpus tool, lesson time, attitude towards English, self-assessment of the participants, strong and weak points of the teaching methods, the role of the teacher, participant opinions about grammar, and corpus-based English learning. It was not piloted before and the language was in Turkish. It was revised by a Turkish Language Teacher. Firstly, in the personal information part, students were asked about their age and English background. Secondly, participants evaluated the corpus tools based on to what extend they think that they were effective and user-friendly. In addition, participants commented on the method used during the lesson time. They were asked if they could manage with inductive learning, what they think about assignments and how it contributed to their learning. Next, they compared their attitude towards English before and after they received corpus training. Also, participants gave their opinions about the classroom setting, the teacher and the classmates.

#### Data Collection and Analysis

The Qualitative study was carried out right after the term ended. Students were informed about the importance of their insights about the implementation. Participating in the survey was on voluntary base. As a result fourteen participants from both groups were interviewed in a classroom. They were assured that their personal information was kept secret. Also, their achievement grade would not be affected negatively for the criticism they made. All the interviews were recorded by an MP3 voice recorded. Participants were free to leave the interview if they would not want to continue.

After the data was collected from semi-structured interview, seven records were chosen to be analyzed by considering the clear posture of attitude and content-rich data. Among them, there are four records from BYU-BNC and three records from AntConc group. All the interviews were transcribed in a form which states the time, participants, question and answer, and four levels of coding for each answer. To reduce and manage the data, several revisions were performed. Axial coding was conducted to develop a coding system with main and sub categories. After using several coding systems, a selective coding process was followed so that irrelevant codes could be omitted. The last step was to combine each section's codes to form a broader category system by organizing the main codes indicating similar themes under one category. This process was carried out for both groups. Eventually, two similar category systems were obtained from the data analysis.

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## Results

After data analysis, a broad category system was formed. Accordingly, main categories are English background, Evaluation of the tool AntConc or BYU-BNC, Evaluation of the lesson, External factors on learning, comparison of corpus and the English textbooks, self-evaluation, evaluation of the teacher, evaluation of the classmates, attitude to English, and advice on improving corpus-based learning. In the following parts the categories will be presented.

### English Background of the Students

Studying with corpus was an unusual experience for the EFL students. In this sense, participants were asked to evaluate their previous English learning process. Accordingly, participants at both sections stated that they have been learning English more than five years. Although it seemed to take a long time, the exposure to real English sentences was not adequate therefore students generally stated to have Basic English knowledge. Also some of the reasons why they have lower level English are based on traditional learning.

### Evaluation of AntConc

This category involves the strong and weak points of AntConc tool and its use in learning grammar. Participants were asked to evaluate the tool in terms of its effect on learning, tool's facilities and students' experience with the tool. To start with the strong points, all students agree that AntConc provides effective learning by examining concordance lines. The more sentences they examine, the more they become familiar with different structures. Thanks to this method, most of the students reported improvement in vocabulary knowledge and interpretation skills. As regard to the functions of the tool, most of the students found its facilities practical and useful in running query and examining concordance hits. Among them they benefited from colored demonstration of query form, concordance and file view of the search term. Some students stated to discover multiple meanings of a word from context because they could examine the file view of the search term. One of the students appreciated the tool, since it provided a different methodology than traditional learning although it was difficult to get used to. Another contribution of the tool was providing long-term retention about grammar rules. One of the students emphasizes that "when I remember the grammar rule, the concordance view of the query appears in my mind. Participants' negative points focused on the tool's method, understanding the sample sentences and poor vocabulary knowledge. It required data driven learning and this method was a new thing in their English learning, so they found it challenging to study with AntConc. Two participants agreed that their level of English was not appropriate to work on it. One of the participant stated that "I really had difficulty in understanding. If only the sentences had been more basic then I could have understood. I think some friends whose English knowledge is good didn't have as much difficulty as I had."

### Evaluation of BYU-BNC

Participants' comments focused on three major points: the functions of the tool, effect of BYU-BNC on learning English and overall evaluation of the tool. . To start with functions of the tool, two participants indicated that registers helped them examine sentences in different contexts. Another favorable function was frequency. One of the students maintained that "by studying BYU-BNC, I realized that when a word has multiple meaning, its context may also change." All participants agreed that parts of speech facility (POS) of BYU-BNC is user-friendly. Three students were confident about remembering the grammar rules for a long time. They stated that BYU-BNC provided long term retention by examining sentence structures through POS codes. Another facility of the tool was concordance view. By simply investigating right and left occurrences of the query students stated to be able to understand if a word is an adjective, verb or adverb. It also helped them

to interpret the meaning from the sentence and improve translation skill. Two participants agreed that corpus enriched their vocabulary knowledge in that they were able to remember the words they came across frequently

As for the negative perceptions about the tool, negative points about the tool were on training process and poor English competence. Some participants couldn't resolve exactly how to use the tool in learning grammar, which caused them to focus more on the use of the tool rather than grammar itself. One successful participant suggested that the tool could contribute a lot to English competence of those intermediate students, who at least are able to make basic sentence translation, but it is not appropriate for lower level English learners. In order to overcome the difficulties all participants suggested more practice with BYU-BNC especially in training project. Some also suggested keeping the time for training longer before starting to use the tool because they think mastery in corpus could be achieved in time. Lastly, one student claimed that BYU-BNC caused anxiety about learning English, since he encountered a lot of unknown words in texts. Another student expressed their anxiety about failing in class.

### **Evaluation of the Lesson for Both Sections**

This category includes participants' opinions about deductive and inductive teaching, corpus training, and other factors affecting the lesson. Considering inductive learning, there are both positive and negative points. The corpus-based lessons were based on inductive teaching in which students are required to form grammar rules by exploring a lot of sample sentences. When participants' English background is considered, inductive teaching remained immensely different and difficult. Two participants, one from AntConc and one from BYU-BNC, think that inductive way of learning is useful because it enhances learner autonomy. Moreover, four students suggested that inductive teaching helped for long-term retention. According to one student "this method supported my grammar knowledge. I wasn't able to make sentences in English, but by examining the word order on the left and right of the query, I can make sentences from now on." Although inductive teaching was approved by participants, they prefer studying with corpus through deductive learning because it required more effort and concentration which was challenging for lower level students. As for exercises, they were carried out with pair work and in-class discussion. Two students from AntConc reported that studying corpus with pair work was effective. Three students from BYU-BNC reported that pair work is motivating in interpretation exercises.

### **External Factors Affecting the Lesson**

Participants were asked whether there were negative factors affecting the achievement or attitude towards corpus such as classroom setting, internet connection, and class size. Complaints were usually about inadequate number of computer and weak internet connection.

### **Evaluation of Students' Own Performance**

In seeking answers for the reason why students displayed negative attitude despite meaningful achievement, participants were asked to evaluate their performance during corpus based education. The most frequent strong points were being motivated to study corpus and participate in the lesson. Three participants from AntConc and two participants from BYU-BNC group stated to be motivated. To mention about weak points, AntConc and BYU-BNC participants showed passive participation in lesson. They did not study enough and had difficulty in running queries.

### **Evaluation of Classmates**

The aim of asking participants about the performance of classmates was to uncover the general perception of using corpus in learning English. In case students, might hesitate to tell the real

feelings about the method with the fear of teacher or getting low grade, it would be better to ask about what other students think of the new method. In fact, that category presents important facts about the reasons why students reported low attitude. Essentially, the evaluation conveyed negative points. Participants emphasized that students found the method appropriate for intermediate students because they had poor English and it was a difficult program. Also, a lot of students had lower vocabulary knowledge. It caused them to develop prejudices against corpus. However, negative attitude was not only based on the difficulty of corpus. Participants at both section stated that some classmates didn't spend enough effort to understand and use the tools. For example, some cheated homework tasks and some made up excuses for not studying.

### **Attitude to English**

Participants were asked to compare their opinions and attitude to English before and after the study. By doing this it was attempted to find out if the tools made any difference in students' attitude. Most of the participants noted that they had problems with English because it was difficult to remember and can easily be forgotten. One student stated that in every term, his class studied similar subjects, and it was usually based on grammar teaching. Three students stated that they had gradual positive attitude with the use of corpus tools. A student from BYU-BNC section claimed that it increased self-motivation and another suggested that BNC helped him become aware of the importance of learning English.

### **Evaluation of the teacher**

Considering the comments, students do not have a problem with the way teacher did the lesson or managed the class, whereas a lot of students agreed with the success of the teacher.

### **Comparison of the corpus tools to English course books**

The common view was that textbooks include basic sentences. They internalize deductive teaching and not more practical compared to corpus tools. Besides textbooks are organized for grammar subjects, therefore they are exam-oriented. Compared to textbooks, corpus tools were more efficient. Both sections agreed that forming grammar rules through corpus is more useful because users examine concordance lines. However, studying corpus as a unique course material can be boring. It should be supported with other skills such as listening and speaking.

### **Advice on improving corpus-based teaching**

Two people focused on more practice with the tools in training session and homework tasks. Three people stated that homework tasks or summer projects may be varied, and the time of the lessons can be longer. Also, studying corpus shouldn't be limited to one term. Three people suggested studying corpus with deductive learning, which is easier to deal with for students at lower level. Six people emphasized that textbooks or audiovisual material aids need to be used with corpus. For a better understanding of how to use the tools, some students suggested effective note taking both in training session and during lessons.

### **Discussion**

One of the unexpected result was recorded on the negative reaction of the students toward corpus-based grammar teaching although they had become successful in grammar achievement tests. It was clear that there were not a direct connection between the achievement tests and the estimated positive reflection from the students. At that point, several reasons need to be questioned, such as the English competence of the learners and processing the available corpus tools.

One of the reasons why students showed negative attitudes could be their lower level of English. It was clear that students have elementary English or pre-intermediate levels of English. As some students stated it was time and effort consuming to comprehend the real English texts. Accordingly, students felt frustration and became demotivated.

Another reason is the lack of learning experience with inductive learning, in other words, data driven learning. As Sun (2003) stated concordancing doesn't automatically lead to inductive learning in all students because of their previous lack of familiarity with inductive thinking (as cited in Vannestal & Linquist, 2007, p. 345). During the teaching session, students were observed to insist on learning the rules with deductive learning and then search the rule among concordance lines. For example, students could not understand the aim in scanning many sentences on the frequency value. However, it was aimed to raise consciousness on how the grammar rules are formed based on some accompanying grammatical structures. There was a shift from inductive to deductive teaching. After changing the method, learners were observed to decrease their oppositions against inductive learning method. In this sense, it is of importance to carry out a careful planning before implementing deductive and inductive teaching

A third reason for negative attitudes could be explained with the duration of the study. Although the training took a few weeks, some of the students stated that they were still trying to figure out how the tools work. We came to the conclusion that the training session must be kept longer for the learners who had not used any corpus tool before. Moreover, the teaching period should not be limited to one term. Some students stated to be positive about using corpus for future learning. In case of teaching with corpus for more than one term, the changes in their attitudes could show variety. For one reason, students would be more familiar with the method and the tools.

The findings of the study put forward that there is a trade-off in using corpus for lower-level EFL students. Corpus provide students with real English from different registers and different varieties of a grammar structure; therefore, their perception of the grammar rules are enriched within context. However, examining original language samples is challenging to lower level EFL students, which results in negative attitudes towards the method. From this point, it was highly recommended to apply corpus-based grammar teaching with deductive teaching method.

### **Conclusions**

The perceptions of participants about the method, appropriateness of the tools, and the contribution of the tools into learning indicate that, corpus based grammar teaching need to be designed carefully especially while studying with lower level EFL students. Although a less carefully planned teaching may result in negative points, corpus samples and functions contributes to learners' vocabulary knowledge, forming grammatical rules and interpretation skills.

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