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CONSTRUCT AND MINE YOUR OWN CORPUS FOR DESIGNING LANGUAGE TEACHING MATERIALS: THE USE OF 'AS' AND 'WHILE'

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INTRODUCTION

Fligelstone (1993) and Leech (1997) distinguish three different ways of using corpora in teaching: Teaching about, teaching to exploit and exploiting to teach. The first of these is teaching corpus linguistics. It covers the main areas such as its history, its data and subject matter, its methods of investigation, the models or theories it employs. The second way of using corpora is teaching students to exploit corpora with various software. In this way, students interact with corpora and find themselves learning a great deal about language. The last activity focuses on making selective use of corpora in the teaching of language. By exploiting a corpus of data, teachers can provide students with contextualized corpus examples of sufficient variety. Leech (1997:9) emphasizes that "in virtually all branches of linguistics or language learning, confrontation with relevant data can be illuminating". Mindt (1997) argues strongly that insights gained

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from corpora should be reflected in the design of language materials, even at the most elementary stage. Similarly, Aston (1997) emphasizes the contribution of the use of corpora both to learners' knowledge about language and to their proficiency in the language. Aston also notes that the most obvious pedagogic use of corpora is to treat them as sources of classroom materials which the teacher can select from and adapt according to requirements. Taking these views into consideration, this study, exploratory in nature, will be concerned with the teacher's designing his own corpus consisting of collections of newspaper texts, and the ways of generating exercises through concordances to improve students' linguistic skills.

RATIONALE

Teachers often go outside textbooks to find appropriate materials to consolidate what students have learnt. In this respect, the Internet provides an abundance of data and newspapers are a frequently used resource. As well as buying commercially available newspaper CDROMS, the teacher can compile his own corpus of news items from the Internet and thus can design exercises with authentic examples. Today, thanks to the World Wide Web most newspapers have their online versions freely available on the Internet. And texts procured from such sources can be compiled for educational purposes. Grundy (1993) states that newspapers are motivating as they provide interesting, topical, and varied information. They also open up the foreign society, its preoccupation, its habitual ways of thought, and its prejudices. The teacher can provide examples of a particular expression or construction by means of concordancy software such as Longman Mini-Concordances (Chandler 1989) or Micro Concord (Scott and Johns 1993), or Wordsmith tools (Scott 1999) With the help of these software all the contexts in which a specified expression occurs can be viewed, selected and sorted. So, the teacher can come up with a range of examples with which to illustrate a particular usage. As a way of illustrating how the teacher can construct and mine his own corpus, the paper deals with the use of as and **while** and present activities through concordancing techniques to provide the students with intensive exposure to the use of these items.

METHOD

The structure of the newspaper corpus consists of 10 news categories each of about 50.000 words. The resulting corpus contains 50,580 words. As Table 1 shows the news items were collected from a large number of categories to represent as broad range of stylistic

aspects as possible. The concordance employed to prepare the teaching activities is Wordsmith Tools Version 3.0 by Mike Scott.

Table 1 Structure of the Newspaper Corpus

News Category	No. of Texts	Total
National/International		50,000
Politics		50,073
Sports		50,020
Health		50,003
Science		50,009
Technology		50,088
Business		50,073
Education		50,193
Features		49,994
Arts Magazine		49,890
TOTAL		**500,343**

MATERIALS

The activities are based on the use of **as** and **while** because not only do these two conjunctions introduce clauses of time denoting temporal meaning but each also introduce different semantic relations. For instance, besides the temporal meaning, **while** also implies concession and contrast. Likewise, **as** realizes clauses of reason, similarity and comparison, proportion, and comment. (Quirk et al. 1997:1077-1117) The overlap of the semantic roles of these conjunctions, particularly those of **as**, might pose problems even for advanced learners. Thus, exercises extracted from concordanced output can be valuable for both interjecting authenticity into the learning process and providing an opportunity to the student to gain insight into how these conjunctions are used.

Thurstun and Cadlin (1998:271) note that the learning requires a chain of tasks or activities in which 'the successful completion of each task facilitates the completion of the succeeding activity'. Therefore, in order to realize the task continuity as defined by Candlin (1987) and Nunan (1989) and reflecting John's approach of Research-

Practice-Improvisation (Johns, 1991), the chain of activities in this paper is based on the following model presented by Thurstun and Candlin (1988 :272). This chain of activities is repeated for each key word:

- **LOOK** at concordances for the key term and words surrounding it, thinking of meaning.
- **FAMILIARIZE** yourself with the patterns of language surrounding the key term by referring to the concordances as you complete the tasks.
- **PRACTISE** key terms without referring to the concordances.
- **CREATE** your own piece of writing using the terms studied to fulfill a particular function of academic writing.

In Activity 1, students are provided with a full page of one-lien concordances so that they can familiarize themselves with the use of the conjunctions to be taught. Students are especially asked to note the patterns of language around the key words.

ACTIVITY 1 (*LOOK*)

EXERCISE 1 Study the following concordances and familiarize yourself with the use of the key words and

then answer the questions.

GROUP ONE

son, director of marketing at AirTran. "**As** the other airlines are looking to scale back a

NDLER RAWNIKI, Poland, Aug. 14 – **As** Henryk Banak loitered moodily next to his tract

this city's North End. Started in 1881 **as** a social service program to teach skills to imm

ons of wherever we live." A heat wave, **as** he defines it, is a variation from normal. Area

Qwest's president, also owned shares, **as** did Mr. Tempest and Cannon Y. Harvey, chief ope

Sometimes paint is altogether absent, **as** in Winterthur's superb examples of needlepoint,

ld unleash sudden floods and avalanches **as** it overwhelms reservoirs and stream beds, exper

a hurricane in the Florida Keys in 1935 **as** the sole Category 5 storms to hit the United St

, who entered the school system in 1962 **as** a math teacher, served on the District 21 board

s began springing up in the late 1980's **as** Michigan, Florida and other states established

erman made his reputation in the 1980's **as** the chief investment officer for Robert Bass, t

so less feverishly than in the 1980's. **As** they slowly bought new planes, they retired old

Ms. Robison and Ms. Maguire did in 1989 **as** founding members of the Dixie Chicks. The origi

at my plan seemed at first a success, **as** they headed off to the first day of class confi

s, for a Pluto flyby in 2015. In 1990, **as** its last act of planetary observation, Voyager

GROUP TWO

the river throughout the flood zone, and **while** it made sense to prevent people from rebuild

ree majors in two different years. But **while** the leader board merited watching, so did th

hile they waited for their appointments. **While** the questionnaire discussed only parental no

stern Mediterranean and southern Africa, **while** flourishing in northern climes – like the No

, was booed when he attacked Moby again, **while** Ms. Aguilera sneered, "Interesting," when sh

o left Iraq three and a half years ago. **While** Mr. Bush has not expressed an opinion on tha

that was created in the last agreement, **while** the union wanted to return to Dec. 31, which

or sketches for songs, for a next album **while** he was on the road working ''Play'' -- strum

, cost from $2,500 to more than $10,000. **While** some models are sold for civilian use, in ge

.96, or 18 percent, to close at $12.65. **While** AMD had problems before with production issu

oversee a workforce of more than 125,000 **while** managing an annual budget of $20 billion – t

e become a science experiment gone awry. **While** some sites are useful, educators say many ar

sed by 52 percent between 1998 and 2001, **while** the number

```
that passed the math tests rose 6
      o make about them must seem barbarous." While Mr. Insua's
Kafka is not exactly barbarous,
      agreed to attend school on a trial basis while
the search continued for more desirable patt
```

This section is followed by the familiarization activity. The first exercise aims to improve students' ability to distinguish the semantic roles of the conjunctions in question. The following exercise draws attention to the use of punctuation marks and what meanings these conjunctions acquire with such punctuation marks. The idea is to show that punctuation marks are significant signals of written language and some conjunctions may imply different meanings when used with certain punctuation marks. Also, the implication is that with the knowledge about the correct usage of punctuation marks students can express their ideas more clearly. The last exercise is designed to develop awareness of the clause types used with such conjunctions.

The familiarization activity is followed by Practice. Students are presented with a gap filling exercise. Pickard (1994) points out that gap filling exercises are easy to prepare and students have a sense of familiarity with this format. Johns (1991) calls such exercises "gapping using multiple contexts". They involve forming and testing hypothesis as well as noticing meaning and collocation. Concordancing allows the teacher enormous possibilities for the creation of gapping and matching exercises.

In the creation activity with the final group of exercises, students are given prompts to help them create their own clauses. The first exercise involves combining sentences with an appropriate conjunction. The last two are a bit more difficult in that students are required to complete the clauses given. Particularly, the last activity is more demanding because establishing the semantic relations requires both finding the appropriate conjunction and finishing the clauses meaningfully.

Exposing students to grammar–in–context and discoveries through such type of activities can build learners' competence and create an enhanced awareness of how seemingly similar structures occur in different contexts and serve different functions. Also, such activities can enable students to control the language structures they encounter in actual discourse.

ACTIVITY 2 (*FAMILIARIZE*)

EXERCISE 1 Which of the following statements do you think are true? Thick your answer in the space provided.

AS in line

1 implies temporal meaning	true	false.....
2 implies reason	true	false.....
3 implies similarity	true.....	false.....
4 implies comparison	true.....	false.....
5 implies proportion	true.....	false.....
6 implies comment	true.....	false.....
7 implies manner	.....	

WHILE in line

1 implies temporal meaning	true	false .....
2 implies contrast	true	false.....
3 implies concession	true	false.....

.....

2) Which positions in the sentences do as and while hold and which punctuation marks do they follow most? What meaning do they denote in such instances?

AS

words/punctuation marks .....

meaning .....

WHILE

words/punctuation marks .....

meaning .....

3) What most frequently follows as and while? (finite clause, nonfinite clause, verbless clause, noun phrase)

AS .....

WHILE .....

ACTIVITY 3 (*PRACTICE*)

EXERCISE 1 In the concordance below the conjunctions you have studied are missing. Decide which conjunction has been eliminated from each concordance line.

n duck and razorbill. The going gets more rugged ****** the trail continues down the coast, past Gr

n the city's 19th- and early 20th-century center. ****** the collection doesn't hold any surprises,

resent two powerful black women leading change. ****** Venus and Serena are sports icons, transcen

The price on the two-year note slipped slightly ****** the yield rose to 2.15 percent from 2.13 pe

ors found evidence of abuses at the Bank of China ****** he was president there from 1993 to 1999 an

with activity increased after three months or so. ****** with total knee replacement, physical thera

ied students who wanted jobs near their spouses. ****** it happens, there is a large theoretical li

alk of feeling alienated. Others in folk circles, ****** acknowledging the right of gay women to pla

ce Sept. 11, much has been made of Britain's role ****** a 'pivotal power' with the ability to act a

EXERCISE 2 In the exercises below draw lines matching parts of the sentences on the left hand side with the appropriate part on the right.

A

While at the Royal Opera House, Mr. Kaiser was criticized for renaming Floral Hall the Vilar Floral Hall after Alberto Vilar,	she sold 4,400 shares of Xoma's stock
While it is unclear when or if investors sold the shares,	it was easy to imagine Handel smiling down from heaven.
while the chorus sang its final praise of mirth,	he produced a good deal of work in other mediums and exhibited
While here, in addition to the three jobs he did win,	a number of earlier pieces done in Mexico:
While simultaneously betting its share price would fall by short selling the company's stock	The knee must be immobilized with a cast or brace for six weeks or longer/
While the patient uses crutches,	they clearly intended to profit from investing.
	the opera philanthropist, who donated £10 million, or about $15 million.

B

John Paul was greeted by a choir dressed in traditional Polish costume and a flag-waving crowd	as they scrambled from the wreckage.
And many Western diplomats believe that he wants to be remembered,	in light of the stock market's woes in July.
Views about how to counteract addiction vary here	as the man who finally remade Zimbabwe's colonial map.
Since the late 1980's this government-approved diet appears to have provided people with permission to eat as many carbohydrates	as builders turned more cautious.
Those who survived the initial landing detonated still more mines	as he descended with difficulty from his plane in Cracow.
	as they want.

ACTIVITY 4 (*CREATE*)

EXERCISE 1 Rewrite the following sentences with either <u>as</u> or <u>while</u>. In some cases both can be used.

1) Nearly all of these enormous houses have been put to use in the manner of separate locations on the show.

2) He can cajole or nudge.

He has no formal authority in this member-driven organization to shove the countries into agreement.

3) A twin-engine plane crashed.

It was trying to land in heavy rains in a northwestern Brazilian city, killing 24 people.

4) Mr. Insua's Kafka is not exactly barbarous. He is certainly far too flattened, lugubrious and monotonal.

5) The synthesis that became rock was his most important legacy. Elvis didn't only rock.

6) More battlefields are lost. The cries of preservationists become more anguished

7) Watching from the sidelines after being appointed three years ago in an unusual compromise.

He has had to draw on some of the humility and patience he learned during a brief period two

decades ago as a Buddhist monk.

8) The play begins. The camera offers a wide view of the stage, then closes in and fluently moves around.

9) That's the sort of résumé lots of good actors build. They wait for the great roles they hope will be forthcoming, the opportunities to show what they can really do.

10) Japan established relations with South Korea in 1965. It has not had diplomatic relations with the North.

11) Crane himself witnessed the war firsthand. Walt Whitman, Mathew Brady and Winslow Homer witnessed the war firsthand, too .

EXERCISE 2 Finish the sentences given below meaningfully.

1) While Dr. Lamm will not name names,.....

2) While he understands why his gadgets have been confiscated, ...

3) .....as he descended with difficulty from his plane in Cracow.

4) .....as many as 100,000 people in the resulting firestorm.

5) As plane after plane takes off .....

6) .....while
output at gas and electric utilities rose 2.3 percent
as hot weather pushed up demand.

EXERCISE 3 Finish the sentences below meaningfully using <u>While</u> or <u>As</u>

7) .....the group never really transcended its status as a regional or kitsch act.

8) The knee must be immobilized with a cast or brace for six weeks or longer,

9) .....they waited for their appointments.

10) The sky was dark, and it started to rain ....

12) He slowly lets out smoke from a cigarette ....

13) "What's she doing here?" people whispered, ...

CONCLUSION

Although restricted in size, the concordanced newspaper corpus used in this study has been valuable. Indeed, it has demonstrated how a computerized corpus with an appropriate concordencer can provide masses of authentic language and rich experience of the language. Obviously, it will not only help students gain insight into collocations and contextualized grammatical structures but also sharpen their analytical abilities. Although the focus is on only **as** and **while**, learning goes far beyond these particular items on which the activities are based on. The wealth of data and the rich context of language the newspaper corpus provide can build students' lexical and grammatical abilities, as well..

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Russified Azeri Surnames

Dr. Afet Abbasova*

In the East, including Azerbaijan, in Middle Ages, along with the first person's name, also other clarifying components took part in formation of anthroponomical system and the component named as ''nysba'' carried a function similar to the modern surnames. In the Moslem anthroponomical model not only a person's (basically only man's) own name, but also his elder son, father and grandfather's-related with father's side- names were listed and finally, person's toponomic origin (his ''nysba'') was stated. ''Nysba'' referred to the name of a place where the person was born, in some cases, spent main part of his lifetime, mostly got fame. Among the Azerbaijanis ''nysba'' was composed on the base of not only the name of the city or village where the person was born or got fame, but also the name of the tribe, kin he represented. In that case, both in the entire model of name system and morphological composition of nysbas, mainly Arabic structure was applied, but sometimes Turkish style was also spotted in the nysbas composed on the base of the person's kin and tribe's name. For instance, in the name of Muhammad Abu Said Bin Sadraddin Bin Ali At-Tabrizi Shamlu the first component indicated person's own name, the second component- person's elder son's name, the third component- his father's, the fourth component- his father's father's name, the fifth component- the place of birth, the last component- the name of kin he belonged to. Evidently, the last two names are anthroponomized toponims and ethnonims: they function as a ''nysba'' in person's name system. While the first component of this name was composed according to Arabic rules, the second component is of Turkish origin and style. There were added Arabic suffixes "-i" to the consonant, "-vi" to the vowel endings of the place names in the composition of ''nysbas'',''Nysbas '' were composed both for men and women in the same way. For example, Nizami Ganjavi and Mahsati Ganjavi.

Consequently, although there was no understanding of a surname in Islam, there was an understanding of the necessity of

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