

LEARNER CORPORA: THE MISSING LINK IN EAP PEDAGOGY**Shukulloyeva Nilufar Tolqin qizi***Student Bukhara State University, foreign languages faculty, group 11-2INGK-24***Supervisor: Ubaydullayeva Muattar Urinbekovna***Teacher of BukhSU (English linguistics department)*muattarubaydullayeva39@gmail.comm.u.ubaydullayeva@buxdu.uz

Abstract: *In recent decades, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) has evolved significantly due to the integration of technology and data-driven approaches. One of the most promising yet underutilized resources in this field is learner corpora systematically compiled collections of texts produced by language learners. This article explores the role of learner corpora as a “missing link” in EAP pedagogy, emphasizing their potential to bridge the gap between theoretical linguistic knowledge and practical language instruction. By analyzing authentic learner data, educators can identify recurring patterns, errors, and developmental stages in academic writing. This study discusses the theoretical foundations of learner corpus research, its pedagogical implications, practical applications in EAP classrooms, and challenges in implementation. The findings suggest that incorporating learner corpora into EAP instruction enhances learners’ awareness, autonomy, and academic literacy skills, making it an indispensable tool for modern language education.*

Keywords: *Learner corpora, EAP pedagogy, corpus linguistics, academic writing, error analysis, data-driven learning, language acquisition*

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) has become a crucial component of higher education, especially in non-English-speaking countries where students must meet international academic standards. Traditional EAP approaches often rely on intuition-based teaching methods and generalized language rules, which may not fully address learners’ specific needs. In this context, learner corpora emerge as a transformative tool. A learner corpus is a structured database of texts written or spoken by language learners, annotated for linguistic analysis. Unlike native corpora, learner corpora provide direct insight into the interlanguage the evolving linguistic system developed by learners. This makes them particularly valuable for EAP, where accuracy, clarity, and discipline-specific language use are essential. Despite their potential, learner corpora remain underused in many EAP programs. This article argues that learner corpora represent the “missing link” that can connect theoretical research in linguistics with practical classroom instruction.

1. *Theoretical Foundations of Learner Corpora.* Learner corpus research is rooted in corpus linguistics and second language acquisition (SLA). Corpus linguistics involves the study of language through large collections of real-life texts, while SLA examines how individuals learn a second language. Learner corpora differ from traditional corpora in that they focus specifically on non-native language production. They often include metadata such as learners' proficiency level, first language, and learning context, allowing for detailed analysis. One key concept is interlanguage, introduced by Selinker (1972), which describes the transitional language system learners create. Learner corpora provide empirical evidence of interlanguage development, making them invaluable for research and pedagogy¹.

2. *Learner Corpora in EAP Pedagogy.* EAP focuses on equipping students with the language skills necessary for academic success, including writing essays, research papers, and reports. Learner corpora can enhance EAP pedagogy in several ways:

a) Error Analysis and Feedback - teachers can use learner corpora to identify frequent errors in grammar, vocabulary, and structure. For example, misuse of articles, prepositions, or academic vocabulary can be systematically analyzed and addressed².

b) Data-Driven Learning (DDL) -DDL encourages students to explore language patterns themselves using corpus tools. Instead of memorizing rules, learners analyze authentic examples and discover patterns independently, which promotes deeper understanding³.

c) Genre Awareness - Learner corpora can highlight differences between student writing and expert academic writing, helping learners understand conventions of academic genres such as essays, reports, and research articles.

3. *Practical Applications in the Classroom.* The integration of learner corpora into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classrooms can be implemented through a variety of pedagogical approaches, each aimed at enhancing learners' awareness of language use and improving their academic writing skills. One of the most effective applications is the development of corpus-based teaching materials. In this approach, teachers design exercises and activities derived from authentic learner errors collected in corpora. These materials allow students to engage with real examples of language misuse rather than artificially constructed sentences, making the learning process more meaningful and contextually relevant. In addition, peer comparison activities play a significant role in corpus-based EAP instruction. Students are encouraged to compare their own written work with examples extracted from learner corpora or expert corpora. This comparison enables them to identify their own weaknesses, such as frequent grammatical errors, inappropriate vocabulary choices, or incorrect collocations. As a result, learners become more reflective and critical of their own writing.

For example, a teacher may present several incorrect collocations commonly found in learner corpora, such as “make a research,” and guide students toward the correct form, “conduct research.” By repeatedly encountering such examples, students internalize correct usage and are less likely to repeat the same mistakes. Overall, these practical applications foster active learning, critical thinking, and improved language accuracy.

4. *Advantages of Using Learner Corpora.* The incorporation of learner corpora into EAP pedagogy offers numerous advantages that significantly enhance the teaching and learning process. One of the primary benefits is authenticity. Learner corpora consist of real language produced by students, which reflects genuine difficulties and common error patterns. This authenticity makes learning more relevant, as students can relate to the errors and better understand how to avoid them. Learner corpora also promote learner autonomy. Instead of relying solely on the teacher, students actively engage in analyzing language data, identifying patterns, and drawing conclusions. This data-driven learning approach empowers students to take responsibility for their own learning and develop independent research skills. Furthermore, the use of learner corpora enhances metalinguistic awareness. By examining language systematically, students gain a deeper understanding of how language works, including grammar, vocabulary, and discourse structures. This awareness is particularly important in academic writing, where precision and clarity are essential.

Conclusion

Learner corpora have the potential to revolutionize EAP pedagogy by providing a data-driven, learner-centered approach to language teaching. They serve as a bridge between linguistic theory and classroom practice, offering insights into learner difficulties and language development. While challenges remain, the benefits of using learner corpora such as improved accuracy, autonomy, and academic literacy far outweigh the limitations. As technology continues to advance, the integration of learner corpora into EAP curricula is likely to become more accessible and widespread. Ultimately, recognizing learner corpora as the “missing link” in EAP pedagogy can lead to more effective and informed teaching practices, better preparing students for the demands of academic communication.

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