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**TÍTULO:** Eficacia del enfoque basado en corpus en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera.

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**RESUMEN:** El artículo describe la eficacia del enfoque basado en corpus en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera. Los autores se concentran en la noción de "corpus de texto" y la definen como datos unificados, estructurados y etiquetados con parte del discurso en forma electrónica que se utilizan para ciertas investigaciones filológicas y, más ampliamente, humanitarias. Los enfoques principales de la Lingüística del Corpus son humanistas, inductivos,

orientados conscientemente, deductivos. El modelo alternativo basado en la capacidad de encapsular, es decir, "aprender usando una base de datos" le da a cualquier estudiante acceso a numerosos hechos del uso del lenguaje y le deja al estudiante todo el trabajo de analizar estos hechos y encontrar respuestas.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** enfoque basado en corpus, eficiencia, enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera, corpus de texto.

**TITLE:** Corpus-based approach efficiency in teaching English as a foreign language.

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**ABSTRACT:** The article describes the corpus-based approach efficiency in teaching English as a foreign language. The authors concentrate on the notion of “text corpus” and defines it as unified, structured and part-of-speech-tagged data in electronic form that is used for certain philological and, more broadly, humanitarian researches. The main approaches of Corpus Linguistics are humanistic, inductive, consciously-oriented, deductive ones. The alternative model based on the ability to encapsulate, i.e. “learning by using a database” gives any student an access to numerous facts of language use and leaves the student with all the work of analysing these facts and finding answers.

**KEY WORDS:** corpus-based approach, efficiency, teaching English as a foreign language, text corpus.

## **INTRODUCTION.**

The development and implementation of the computer information technology, in particular, the access to the text corpus and corpus technologies as means of supporting the teaching of a foreign language remains one of the relevant directions of improving the methodology of such teaching. It is explained by the rapid development of corpus linguistics over the past decades, which has led to radical changes not only in the field of lexicography, as well as in the field of teaching a foreign language.

According to Plungyan (2008), it has allowed “to map out a new model of language, which in a number of significant relationships differs from the usual models that have been formed over the last quarter of the XX century” (Plungyan, 2008, p. 7–20).

In the process of teaching a foreign language, teachers are forced to turn to the best practices of corpus linguistics, because of the lack of adequate pedagogical textual materials and relevant vocabulary. “Investigating the microcosm of speech functioning in the communication process and trying to reflect the great in the small”, it solves the objectives similar to those that are close to both

general-didactic and private methodological aims (Gvishiani, 2008, p. 6).

The corpus instruments as tools for managing a large amount of data, in various ways lead down a chaotic variety of languages to a more organized set of words (Scott & Tribble, 2006). For example, in the leading world universities it becomes a daily practice to use the corpus data as an empirical component of lecture courses (Wu, Peng, 2016; Wang, Ge, Wang, 2013; & Kennedy, 2003), student assignments and individual projects (Teo, 2018; Sakaeva, Khakimzyanova, & Shamsutdinova, 2016; Gizatova, 2018). It turns out that the corpus-based approach is widely used in the process of the foreign language teaching methodology (Luo, 2018; Huang, 2017; Wang, 2014, 2015), etc.

Horina (2014) draws attention to the fact that it is necessary to speak about the lack of attention paid to the development of the skills of self-study work with the corpus, the corpus data assessment, as well as the possibilities of its use. It happens because they often have concerns that working with a corpus is associated with special data processing skills or information technology. On the one hand, many experts understand that the corpus-based approach has a great potential in teaching a foreign language, but, on the other hand, the difficulties dealing with the development of these new technologies seem quite insurmountable. Therefore, in order to use both linguistic and methodical potential of the corpus, the teachers have to share their experience and special training (Horina, 2014, p. 5). Conrad (2005) informs us that there is a “need for more empirical studies on the impact of using corpus materials and techniques in the classroom” (Conrad, 2005, p. 404).

## **DEVELOPMENT.**

### **Theoretical bases of the study.**

Corpus linguistics as a separate independent field was born in the USA and Western Europe in the late ‘60s of the XX century. Nowadays it is engaged in the creation and analysis of text corpora. With the increasing capabilities of modern computer technologies, since the mid-‘80s, the rapid

development is observed due to the emergence of different corpus projects in different languages and for various purposes in corpus linguistics (Nagel, 2008, p. 53).

The notion of corpus linguistics as a paradigm is taken up by Gries (2006), but the methodological conceptualisation is favoured, as he states that “over the past few decades, corpus linguistics has become a major methodological paradigm in applied and theoretical linguistics” (p. 191).

In 2001, Tognini-Bonelli (2001) described corpus linguistics as a “pre-application methodology” which possesses “theoretical status” (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001, p. 1). Similarly, Mahlberg (2005, 2006) describes corpus linguistics as “an approach to the description of English with its own theoretical framework” (Mahlberg, 2005; 2006), and to emphasize this employs the term “corpus theoretical approach”.

In directly addressing the issue she sees the difference of perception as stemming from the type of corpus linguistics which the researcher practices: “there is still disagreement on whether corpus linguistics is mainly a methodology or needs its own theoretical framework. Advocates of corpus-driven approaches to the description of English claim that new descriptive tools are needed to account for the situation of real text, and ideas of theoretical frameworks to accommodate such tools have started to emerge” (Mahlberg, 2006, p. 370).

Thompson and Hunston (2006) state that “at its most basic corpus linguistics is a methodology that can be aligned to any theoretical approach to language”. However, they go on to describe two major theories which have come out of corpus linguistics. First of all, that meaning is not located in single words, but in ‘units of meaning’ in Sinclair’s terminology, and consequently that communicative discourse unfolds largely as a series of semi-fixed phrases (Thompson & Hunston, 2006, p. 11–12).

The history of this question demonstrated that people paid attention on the idea of compiling the texts corpus for teaching a foreign language long time ago.

At the end of the 19th century, the Oxford English Dictionary was compiled based on the large number of cards with authentic examples. A few centuries before that, the collections of full texts, i.e. the high-status texts were gathered. They were stored in libraries and studied as samples of rhetoric, style, grammar. In the 18th century by the efforts of 500 monks, the first concordance was compiled and had the Latin translation of the Bible “Vulgate”.

Otto Jespersen, a well-known Danish linguist, who gathered a huge collection (about 300–400 thousand) of examples of unusual pronunciation, forms or sentences constructions, would definitely have become a passionate supporter of corpus methods if there had been computers at that time (Johansson, 2007). In this regard, the democratization of technology over the past 50 years has led to the fact that the power of personal computers exceeds the capabilities of computers, which could only afford superpowers in the ‘60s of XIX century (Scott, Tribble 2006). The corpus researches clarify and change the linguistic view of the language.

The corpus linguistics develops thanks to the notion of “text corpus” that becomes topical nowadays. The text corpus is “unified, structured and part-of-speech-tagged data in electronic form that is used for certain philological and, more broadly, humanitarian researches” (Zakharov, 2003, p. 52); “it is organized ontology of linguistic activity, which reflects all the genre diversity of the type of literature represented in it” (Rykov, 2003, p. 18).

According to Rykov (2003), remaining a complex verbal unity, the corpus contains a variety of information not only about the composition and structure of its linguistic data material, but also about other formalized methods for its presentation (words indexing, morphological information, etc.). Consequently, it can be considered as a semiotic system constructed in a special way (Rykov, 2003, p. 21).

Today, the corpus linguistics has the representative national linguistic corpora, which cover a large number of different genres and registers including: The British National Corpus (100 million words), COBUILD Bank of English (200 million words), which are constantly replenished; the specialized corpora, which represent both written and oral academic language: Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English, the LIBEL Corpus of Spoken Academic English; the speech corpora: CIC North America, Cambridge International Corpus, the materials of which formed the basis of oral and written English grammar “Cambridge Grammar of English” (Carter, McCarthy, 2011). There is a grammar of a new type devoted to a common cause and written letters. This is the Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English that is based on the Longman Spoken & Written English Corpus (Biber et al., 1999).

Defining the place of the corpus in the system of modern studying approaches, it is necessary to mention the humanistic approach (Aston, 2018; Huang, 2017; Duruttyova, 2012) that aims at a student. The training with the use of corpus instruments is also carried out within the limits of the inductive approach, implying a direction from partial to general, from the functioning of a grammatical or lexical phenomenon in various contexts to understanding its meaning and form (Tolstova, 2009).

In the modern methodology, the inductive approach to training is realized through a series of language form awareness of utterance (awareness-raising activities, discovery techniques, observation-based activities, noticing) within the consciously-oriented approach (Kolesnikova & Dolgina, 2001, p. 134; Teo, 2018; Sakaeva, Khakimzyanova, & Shamsutdinova, 2016). Such exercises are widely used in computer-assisted language learning and also in data-driven learning.

The undoubted advantage of using the corpus in the process of training is the possibility of using several modern approaches to learning (Tolstova, 2009). Within these approaches, it is assumed that a student acts as a researcher, he/she learns how to select “live” language data and systematize

them. The shift in focus from the deductive approach to the inductive one significantly changes the role of a teacher, who becomes an assistant, informer, curator of a researcher. In the centre of the corpus training of a language is the person who is taught, his / her needs and preferences (Bernadini, 2004).

Jones, who was at the origins of corpus teaching, noted that the main task of a student is to carry out the “discovery learning” (i.e. heuristic method) in a foreign language, but the main task of a teacher is to provide the context in which these strategies can be developed. This allows the student to “learn how to learn”. At the same time, a computer is to be represented in the centre of the process not as a surrogate teacher, but as a special type of informer.

The difference between a teacher and an informant may be better given in a stream of questions and answers. Usually the teacher puts the question to which he already knows the answer. The question is posed with the aim of checking the acquired knowledge. The student gives the answer and gets the reaction of the teacher. When the teacher acts as an informer, he/she is passive and remains silent until he/she receives an answer to a question from the student. The informant answers the questions as best as possible, after which extra questions from the student may follow. In this case, it will integrate the new information into the already existing scheme theory or knowledge system (Johns & King, 1991).

An earlier attempt to turn a computer into an informer and describe the system of rules by computer terms could not come close to a person’s abilities. That is why Horina proposed an alternative model based on the ability to encapsulate, i.e. to briefly demonstrate the linguistic competence based on the corpus examples set. This method was called “learning by using a database”. This is an approach that gives any student an access to numerous facts of language use and leaves the student with all the work of analyzing these facts and finding answers (Horina, 2014, p. 32).



The main research tool is the concordance per word, i.e. the compatibility lines of the word, ordered by the request of the right and left context. Horina adds that such a graphic organization allows vertical reading or scanning to identify patterns, words connections, prepositions, grammatical advantages and other relevant information (Horina, 2014, p. 32). Leech notes that a student must learn how to analyse the real facts of speech use, collected in the corpus of a language. The corpus tasks allow a student to try on the role of an experimentalist, who does his own unique research and does not compile other people's ideas (Leech, 1997).

Barlow considers the scheme 'meaning – form' to be built with the help of numerous examples of language use. The corpus helps to reduce this lengthy process as it is concentrated on the cases of speech phenomena use and it allows seeing the pattern clearly (Barlow, 1996).

Observing the behaviour of lexical, grammatical units, a student seems to read a lot of texts at the same time. They help him / her to memorize and assimilate the form, meaning, purpose of the word. Thus, a student has an opportunity to observe the conditions of the repetition and variation of language units in different contexts, but the corpus examples allow analyzing more specific lexical and grammatical chains with a large number of words and phrases. The set of corpus examples gives a student an opportunity to observe the topical language interaction, the relations between the form and content formed in this language community, the way in which they speak in specific situations of communication and how the relationship between the language situation and the language form emerges (Bernadini, 2004).

Bagramova notes that exercises based on body data are included in the tasks of understanding the language form, i.e. they allow one to turn to often false students' ideas about a foreign language that they do not realize. Thus, working with corpus data, "live" language applications is especially useful in cases of unconscious violation of the rule of using lexical units, significant interfering influences of the native language, incorrect compatibility, fossilization of mistakes, non-compliance

with the registry, misuse of lexical errors from the standpoint of usage.

When working with corpus data, it is possible to implement the idea of a differentiated approach to vocabulary, highlighting and practicing lexical units of increased complexity, with the help of a body support, in which students most often make mistakes (Bagramova 2005).

### **Methodology.**

The aim of the article is to demonstrate the corpus-based approach efficiency in teaching English as a foreign language.

According to Sinclair (2004), language looks rather different when you look at a lot of it at once. Large collections of text make it possible to see recurring patterns in people's language use in different contexts, and allow us to make reliable generalisations about it. This is what corpus linguistics is about: the systematic, empirical study of linguistic phenomena using corpora, i.e. electronic collections of authentic language use. Thanks to the increasing availability of English-language corpora, it is possible to apply corpus linguistic methods in most areas of research, including vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics, discourse, and language teaching. Corpus linguistics is also an excellent choice of methodology for student projects (Sinclair, 2004).

The main methodology of corpus linguistics that may be used in teaching English as a foreign language is triangulating methodological algorithm. It deals with both concordances, word lists, collocations and the process of compiling your own corpus and planning a research project (Baker & Egbert, 2016).

### **Results.**

The content of learning practical and professionally oriented foreign language proficiency is a combination of what students are to learn in order to achieve a level of foreign language proficiency. It will allow them to solve every day professional communication tasks. Some scholars

do not agree on the nomenclature of the components of learning content, its number varies.

There are two (Lapidus 1986), three (Rogova 1991; Solovov 2010) and up to seven (Shatilov 1986) components of learning content. It includes: speech skills; language material; skills in operating selected language material; some specific (educational) skills that serve speech activity (for example, the ability to use vocabulary topics, within which speech skills are formed); texts; language concepts that are not typical for the students of the native language, etc. (Lapidus, 1986). However, it is necessary to mention that the expected quality of a student's speech production directly depends on how well-selected minimums are grammatical and lexical. Because they both serve a particular type of verbal activity and are subject to designing the content of a practical language course.

The practice on the efficiency of the use of the corpus should be considered from the perspective of two directions proposed by Horina. Firstly, the corpus can be used as a source for the creation of educational materials, the selection of language facts for learning and teaching of the languages, as well as for clarifying the knowledge of the studied language. In particular, the selection of keywords through a collection of professionally-oriented texts helps to select the necessary and sufficient lexical and grammatical complexes for the formation of foreign-language professional communication competence. Secondly, the corpus can be used directly in the learning process itself, i.e. when exactly instruction in the classroom is conducted using effective techniques based on the corpus. In this case, the corpus and corpus information, a graphical representation of the word in the compatibility string can help to organise the teaching process (Horina, 2014, p. 32).

Today, there is a sufficient amount of corpus resources on the Internet for both teachers and students, which can be used in teaching English as a foreign language.

There are two types of resources based on corpus information for teachers on the Internet. The first type refers to information resources which provide data that can be used for creation of educational

materials; for instance, in the cases, when a linguistic question has arisen in the classroom and the teacher needs more information to develop practical training materials devoted to this phenomenon. The second type of the resources allows planning of lessons based on the corpus. An example is the Kibbitzers (URL: <https://lexically.net/TimJohns/>) which is one of the first corpus resources developed by Jones at the University of Birmingham in 1994. It is also represented on the web page of the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) (URL: <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/c/corpus/corpus?c=micase;page=simple>).

The web pages of the Kibbitzers' are based on the analysis of the hand-writing data materials of the students who learn English as a foreign language. Therefore, it always includes a sample of a hand-writing data materials of a student. The page format varies depending on the complexity to which it is devoted: either a concordance exercise with answers is suggested, or a link is given to an explanation of the problem phenomenon and how it should be used with examples. The volume of explanation depends on the language phenomenon that is being discussed. As a matter of convenience, the web pages of the Kibbitzers' are represented with the following categories: grammar, vocabulary, discourse, academic English; for instance, in the "vocabulary" section, explanations and examples are given of how and when the verbs illustrate, account for, explain are used, an example from grammar: a discussion of the use of reason to and reason for is observed.

The second website, MICASE Kibbitzers, represents the data materials of the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English. The users can make a search for 1.8 mln word usage, composing more than 190 hours of records of the transcribed language of various university events: lectures, classes and presentations at classes, meetings. Unlike T. Jones's Kibbitzers, i.e. almost finished exercises, MICASE Kibbitzers is organized as a set of research mini-projects on 14 topics, or based on the corpus of explanations of linguistic phenomena. The explanations are written in understandable language, but transforming them into ready-made exercises and training materials requires

additional efforts from a teacher.

In addition to the above-mentioned projects on the MICASE Corpus website, ready-made materials for lessons on 12 topics based on the corpus, created by a team of teachers and researchers and developers of the MICASE project, have been developed. The exercises also include the practice of listening to the corpus of oral academic speech.

There are also publisher sites, for example, Cambridge University Press (URL: <https://www.cambridge.org/>), which provides access to a dictionary based on the corpus. The dictionary has the links to exercises, lesson plans, handouts for students.

The Corpus Lab website is another useful resource (URL: <http://www.corpuslabs.com/>), where one can find tutorials (a method of transferring knowledge and may be used as a part of a learning process) and a set of tools for creating exercises.

## **CONCLUSIONS.**

If we talk about corpus resources on the Internet for students, the academic list of words (Academic Word List, Coxlicad 2002) is very popular as a source of expanding vocabulary when teaching academic English. The exercises based on the academic list are offered by Cobb at the Complete Lexical Tutor website (URL: <http://www.lextutor.ca>). Any student can enter the text of his / her written work and see how the words used by him / her are distributed or which frequency group of the academic list of words they belong to.

There are also three corpora available on the Internet that are worth mentioning:

- 1) The Corpus of Contemporary American English is the corpus of Modern American English, 400 million words, replenished by 2 million words every year (URL: <https://corpus.byu.edu/time/>)
- 2) The Time Magazine Corpus is the text corpus of Time Magazine, 100 million words (URL: <https://corpus.byu.edu/time/>)
- 3) The Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English, 1.8 million words (URL:

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/c/corpus/corpus?c=micase>; page = simple).

Corpus Linguistics has become a major methodological paradigm in applied and theoretical linguistics, mainly an approach to the description of English with its own theoretical framework. Due to the fact that the text corpus as a central formation of Corpus Linguistics is usually used in teaching English a foreign language, the alternative model of Horina is proposed as the key in modern teaching process.

This model is based on the ability to encapsulate, i.e. “learning by using a database” that gives any student an access to numerous facts of language use and leaves the student with all the work of analysing these facts and finding answers. It means that the efficiency of the use of the corpus should be considered from the perspective of two directions: 1) the corpus can be used as a source for the creation of educational materials, the selection of language facts for learning and teaching of the languages, as well as for clarifying the knowledge of the studied language, 2) the corpus can be used directly in the learning process itself, i.e. when exactly instruction in the classroom is conducted using effective techniques based on the corpus.

In this case, the corpus and corpus information, a graphical representation of the word in the compatibility string can help to organise the teaching process. In this case, there is a sufficient amount of corpus resources on the Internet for both teachers and students, which can be used in teaching English as a foreign language. There are two types of resources for teachers (data that can be used for creation of educational materials; resources that allow planning of lessons).

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