1.10 Compilation and linguistic analysis of a dedicated corpus for the Applied Sciences.

M.D.S.S. Kumara

Faculty of Applied Sciences, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Mihintale.

ABSTRACT

"Linguists have always used the word *corpus* to describe a collection of naturally occurring examples of language, consisting of anything from a few sentences to a set of written texts or tape recordings which have been collected for linguistic study" (Susan Hunston, 2002). A 'Dedicated Corpus' or a 'Specialized Corpus" is a corpus made up of specialized texts. With the development of Computational Linguistics, corpus access software programs, or concordancers, are used to access electronic corpora in order to make linguistic observations of various kinds.

Objectives of this research are to compile a corpus of the spoken academic discourse of the Faculty of Applied Sciences of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka and to make a linguistic analysis of the compiled corpus using an online concordancer in order to recognize the most frequent lexis and structures, which can be incorporated into the syllabus and teaching of the target English language teaching situation.

For the purposes of the present research, a representative sample of the lectures delivered by the lecturers of the four disciplines of Applied Sciences offered by the faculty was video recorded and the recordings were transcribed and, then, the transcripts were analyzed using the online concordancing program, 'Compleat Lexical Tutor'.

The analysis of the compiled Rajarata Corpus of Academic English (RACAE) (2009) through six of the tools of the concordancer, viz. VocabProfile, Frequency, Range, KeyWords, N-Gram, and Concordance, shows that the lexis and structures of the Applied Sciences spoken academic discourse are more 'general' rather than being 'specialized', as emphasized in the target English language teaching program. The results also reveal that the realization of the structures for 'definitions', 'classifications', and 'exemplifications', in the spoken academic discourse is different from those prescribed in the English language teaching text books.