

Use of English Corpora as a Primary Resource to Teach English to the Bengali Learners

NILADRI SEKHAR DASH
Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata

ABSTRACT

In this paper we argue in favour of teaching English as a second language to the Bengali learners with direct utilisation of English corpora. The proposed strategy is meant to be assisted with computer and is based on data, information, and examples retrieved from the present-day English corpora developed with various text samples composed by native English people. The strategy will be beneficial to the Bengali learners if used with careful manipulation of tools and techniques used in advanced English Language Teaching (ELT) that advocates for the utilisation of empirical linguistic resources to empower the learners. This corpus-based approach becomes highly suitable in the present situation of Bengal where English is used as a 'lingua franca'

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years English language corpora are being used as primary resource in English Language Teaching (ELT). Corpora are considered indispensable, because they are providing reliable, authentic, and verifiable data, examples, and information hardly obtainable from any other means. In fact, the very idea of ELT without reference to English corpora appears to be unscientific, because corpora are giving opportunities to the learners to enrich themselves with present-day English in several directions and diversions. In essence, the data and information obtained from English corpora are providing valuable complementary perspectives towards the traditional linguistic principles of ELT (Biber 1996).

There are numerous core areas of First Language Teaching (FLT) and Second Language Teaching (SLT) where present-day English corpora are being utilised to address various language teaching needs