# Teaching English for Real-Life Communication with Movie Reviews: A Corpus Approach

Romina Castagno\*
Hawai i Pacifc University

Milang Shin Hawai i Pacifc University

Yuki Tanaka Intercultural Communications College, Hawai i

#### Abstract

Corpus analysis can inform and enrich language teaching on a practical level. his paper aims to show how to effectively incorporate corpora, which are large electronic collections of authentic language, into voca! ulary and grammar teaching while utili"ing authentic tas#s. \$y using the concordancer %ntConc, we e&plored the word fre' uencies of nouns, ad(ectives, and ver! s used in online reviews of fantasy, romance, and action movies written ! etween )\*+),)\*+-. \$ased on the analysis, we suggest corpus,! ased teaching activities that can help . /O1. 20 learners to ma#e use of mini,corpora and to understand fre' uently used e&pressions in movie reviews. /uch understanding may lead to increased language proficiency in this content domain.

Introduction

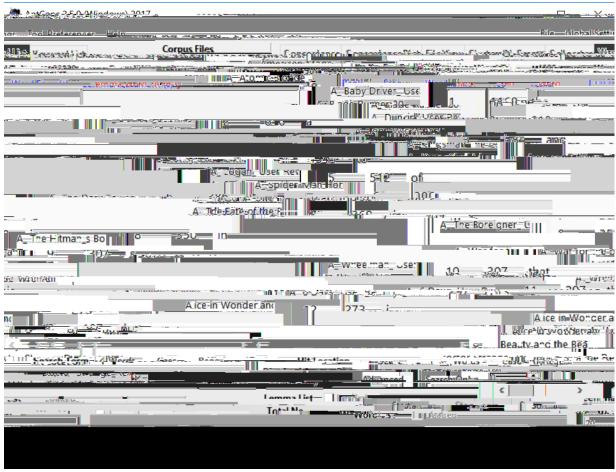
TESOL Working Paper Series

- ). Dhat are the #eywords that distinguish each genre and what are their collocatesM3. Dhat teaching materials and activities can! e created from the corpus fndingsM

Method

ata

collected movie reviews. %s is typically the case for many corpora, the top ten words in our corpus were all function words. he definite article the was the most fre' uent word in the corpus, and the indefinite article a was the second most fre' uent. he rest of the top ten words are all con(unctions, prepositions, and pronouns 5see 2igure +6.



#gure 1 d op en Dords Used in 4 ovie ?eviews

#### Top Ten Most (re) uent Content \* ords in the Movie Reviews

De manually collected the ten most common content words from the overall fre' uency list 5 a! le +6. he words mo ie and /m are often used for identification as in Gthis mo ie is good. H 3 ther words in a! le +, such as like and goo /, suggest that movie reviewers often e&press opinions and evaluate in writing their reviews. he adver! s /lst, reall /, and er / are also commonly used for evaluation. Nnowing the most fre' uent words can! e useful for learners! ecause they have a high chance of encountering them in this conte to in real, life situations.

a! le + Top Ten Content Wor #

## op en Content words

suchH' C

1	m٥	ľΑ

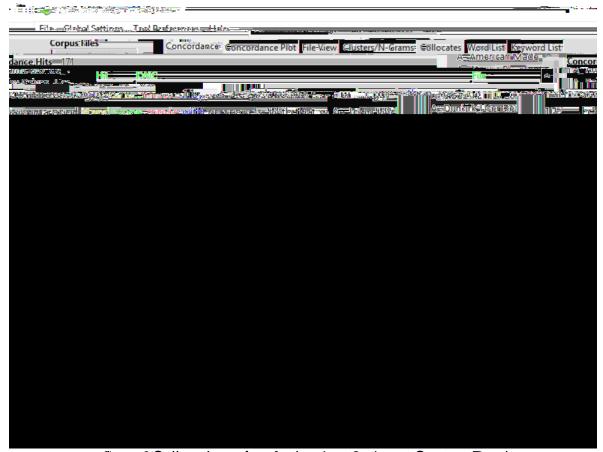
- 2. /m
- 3. ha é
- 4. like
- 5. *J*ust
- 6. has \*
- 7. reall \$\mathscr{S}\$
- 8. time
- 9. ér *\$*
- **10**. goo#

Collocations of the Most (re) uent Content \* ord

%s has ! een found in previous corpus analyses of movie reviews 5e.g., /org 4 ohamed, 7 arghipnic\*+-6, the most fre' uent word in the associated mo2/aND& Matthew its analyce with collocates to ascertain its semantic prosody. 2or this analysis, we used the concordance function in %ntConc and e&ecuted a NDIC search with the parameters +0, +?, or )0, )?. 2igure ) shows how the word mo ie Rouspet Rith) in the Walthes with the word mo ie Rouspet Rith) in the Walthes with the word mo ie Rouspet Rith) in the word mo ie Rouspet Rith in the word mo ie Rouspet Rith) in the word mo ie Rouspet Rith in the Word mo ie Rou %np '™U"ôð@

In terms of collocates, the word mo ie is fre' uently associated with evaluative ad(ectives, such as ,a #2/neC, a #8/E

retelf \* he total fre' uency of has may ! e due to its usage as ! oth a content word and a function word.



Mgure Of Collocations of mo ie, the 4ost 2re' uent Content Dord

## + rammatical (eatures of Movie Reviews a! le )

Top Ten /eterminers, Pronouns, an # 2er, s

Feterminers	Pronouns	; er!s
+. the	+. it	+. is
). a	). 3	). <i>"</i> as
C. that	C. "bu	C. are
:. this	:. he	:. ha é
J. one	J. his	J. like
9. an	9. the \$	9. has
there	their	can
A. all	A. ′é	A. , een
=. some	=. her	=. "1
+*. more	+*. m\$	+*. get

#### the

Fefnite article the is the most common determiner, which usually refers ! ac# to a referent that reviewers and readers are familiar with in general or from the preceding conte&t. In movie reviews, it is used most fre' uently in one of two ways.

he word the in . & ample /et + is used as part of a superlative. 2or instance, the ! elongs to the superlative form in cases such as Gthe most impressiveH and Gthe ! estH.

#### . &amples /et +

- +.+ . asily, the most impressive aspects throughout this flm were the ways the camera was used throughout the intense moments. 5%ction6
- +.) /he provides most of the humour in this movie, and e&ecutes her role very well, easily the ! est performance in the flm. 5?omance6
- +.C % /ilent; oice is one of the ! est movies I we seen so far this year. 52antasy6
- +.: %s long as you can! uc#le up and! e ready for the most ridiculous action yet, I! elieve you will have a! last with this storyline, while also! eing treated with ' uite a few heartfelt moments that this series has! ased its core story around family 6 P/IC0. 5%ction6

hrough these superlative constructions, reviewers e&press their own opinions or evaluate movies. he high fre' uency of the in superlatives may ! e due to the fact that people tend to use the superlative structure to emphasi"e their own reactions, which may ! e positive or negative towards one particular movie and not another. his construction is mainly used to descri! e and the movieks overall ' uality.

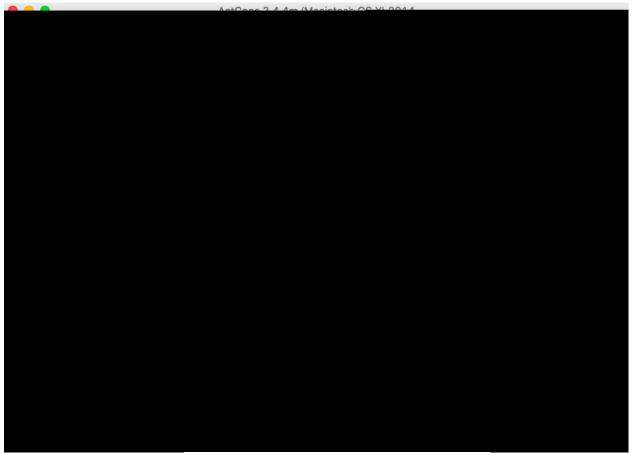
he word the in . & ample /et ) is used to indicate a specific feature. Here, the is used to refer to specific entities, such as movies or characters, and to indicate the same referent more than once.

#### . &ample /et )

- ).+ \$urton\$ more < othic loo# at %lice in Donderland (ust doesn\$t ma#e me a fan, ! ut that\$ not saying that others won\$t en(oy the flm. 52antasy6
- ).) Dhile nothing really happened to get me e&tremely into the movie, I defnitely remained entertained throughout the entire thing 5?omance6
- ).C lared Oeto is granted limited screen time! ut still manages to leave his mar# as the sinister Riander Dallace. 5%ction6
- ).: SThe Hitmans \$odyguardS is a ! uddy, action, comedy that has every ! uddy movie formula and cliche in the ! oo#. 5%ction6
- ).J If you en(oyed previous night at the museum P/IC0 movies you en(oy this one as well. It0s not as good as the first one! ut it0s! etter than the second one. he movie is cute with a great cast even if a lot of the (o#es come off pretty cheesy. 52antasy6
- . & amples ).+ and ).) ntalAttiv t momentsl eniAtsnt pa#E \$B/ momffor HBAtbour/100to

a movie title. . & ample ). J illustrates how the may ! e used to indicate movie se' uels. < enerally, in reviewing one movie in a series, reviewers will mention other movies for comparison, such as was the case for reviews of  $\mathcal{A}$ arr  $\mathcal{S}$ Potter,  $\mathcal{F}$ i  $\mathcal{M}$ et  $\mathcal{E}$ 0nes  $\mathcal{S}$   $\mathcal{T}$ ar  $\mathcal{S}$ , and  $\mathcal{S}$ ngsman.

a 2 igure C displays the top ten collocates of the indefinite article a



Agure 9 op en Collocates with the Indefnite %rticle a

he indefinite article a is found in several common e&pressions which are mostly made up of e&pressions of 'uantity 5. & ample /et C6. It is also often used in the corpus to comment on unspecified details of the movie! eing reviewed 5. & ample /et: 6. Here, movie reviews typically descri! e a #ey point, a signature scene, or a character to provide the reader with a type of summary and the reviewerks opinion without giving away too much a! out the movie. In addition, indefinite article a

#### . &ample /et C

- C.+ ... it o a predicta! ility with the overall story I will admit and even felt li#e a typical Fisney Tic# in some cases, ! ut this still stands out pretty well on it\( \mathbb{c} \) own much li#e previous flms ! y Fisney \( \mathbb{m} \) nimation. 52antasy\( \mathbb{c} \)
- C.) Het a! ley surrounded with an impressive and colourful collection of support as well8 Ion \$ernthal, Ion Hamm and Iamie 20&& trying to outdo each other in the menacing sta#es is a lot o fun in itself and its great to see them spearheaded! y the relia! le and infinitely watcha! le Nevin /pacey. 5%ction6
- C.C Hell! oy IIB he <olden %rmy still has overwhelming action and pretty wea# character development, ! ut it is ultimately an improvement over the original with a much more entertaining plot with a good fantasy angle to it and a lot o great set pieces, interesting creatures and great visuals. 52antasy6

. &ample /et :

TESOL Working Paper Series

+: .: %II in all, ulip 2everS is Pall disappointment. 5?omance6

#### . &ample /et +J

- +J.+ \$ut it is Harry Potter who may ! e called upon to ma#e the ultimate sacrifce as he draws closer to the climactic showdown with Oord; oldemort.52antasy6
- +J.) 2or the villains, the standout is \$oyd Hol! roo# as Fonald Pierce, the leader of the militant ?eavers group who is sent to retrieve Oaura. 5%ction6
- +J.C his is a flm a! out time, love, loss, and legacy 5theres a deep and honest monologue midway discussing legacy, which is ! rilliantly delivered ! y Dill 3 Idham6. 5? omance6

% second relevant point a! out a! le ) is that the ver! ha  $\ell$  is one of the most fre' uent ver! s across the movie genres represented in the corpus. he reason why it is fre' uent is that the ver! ha  $\ell$  performs various grammatical functions, such as e&pressing aspect 5. & ample /et +96 or o! ligation 5. & ample /et +-6, and various semantic functions, such as e&pressing causality 5. & ample /et +A6 and possession 5. & ample /et +=6.

%u&iliary ver! s mar#ing aspect are one of the most fre' uent in our data. In particular, use of present perfect often allows reviewers to draw on their past moviegoing e&periences or opinions formed through such e&periences when writing a new review 5. & amples +9.+ and +9.)6.

#### . &ample /et +9

- +9.+ 2or years, we half seen Dolverine use his claws in various flms! ut never to the level as seen in SOoganS. his violence stresses the !rutality this man has e&perienced and has carried with him for the hundreds of years that he has !een alive. 5%ction6
- +9.) Rot to single out this particular premise, ! ut flms revolving around gay couples ha \( \ell \) een terrifc over the last decade or so. \( 5 \cap \) omance\( \ell \)
- +9.C In the epic fnale, the ! attle ! etween the good and evil forces of the wi"arding world escalates into an all,out war. he sta#es ha é never ! een higher and no one is safe. 52antasy6

√a é is included

tl1@tthe

ha é eto W vertrínodall1@te&pression

t\*ätthe

5. &ample +-6.

#### . &ample /et +-

- +-.+ 2ans definitely receive all of the a! ove and more throughout he 2ate of the 2urious, ! ut to ! e perfectly honest, you ha \( \) to watch these flms as if you are sitting in the theatre watching a \( \) arvel flm. 5%ction\( \)
- +-.) here are very long se uences of silence, ma#ing you rela& and ta#e in either a romantic moment or the scenery around them, which I also found poetic at the same time, so I actualby have trou! le coming up with issues, ! ut I ha é to admit that I did f nd the movie slow at times. 5?omance6

✓a € is also fre' uently used as main ver! with a causative meaning to e&press the effects of the review on the readers or the movie itself on the viewers 5. & ample +A6.

- . &ample /et +A
  - +A.+ Row I@m certain that I will ha & people upset with me ! ecause I didn@t li#e the movie or the ! oo# and don@t consider it worthy of ! eing a ! ig ! udget motion pictureX 5?omance6
  - +A.) In the end, % < H3/ / 3?@ will ha \( \) you thin#ing, ha \( \) you discussing a! out life 7 time. 5?omance\( ( \)
- . &ample /et +=

a! le C & Aness o →ouns in Re ie 's o Each <enre

%ction	?omance	2antasy
he, his	3, me, he, him, her	7isne & Potter
Logan <i>&amp;</i> ackman	. nastatia . Christian	antas 🖋
action	lo é	e ects
″ar	relatioash, PW SN e6PW aupl 3">	cgi <i>9!%<b>.43</b>7</i> 0,
militar\$	romance	a#énture
C <i>3:</i>	marriage	prince
guns	a air	trilog \$'
se =uence	Se.	superhero
, <b>l</b> 00 <i>#</i>	couple	monster
terrorists	, o \$ rien#	″ar

In the action movie reviews, the nouns with high #eyness are fre' uently associated with words whose meanings are related to conTict, such as "ar, guns, and \loo#. he pronouns with high #eyness in the action reviews were the words he and his, and the proper nouns with high #eyness are Logan, and \( \delta \text{ckman}, ! \) oth of which are associated with men and masculini@

evaluative and to have a positive connotation.

It appears that ad(ective choices are not related to the movie ratings in the reviews. In the corpus, the action movie reviews had an average rating of 9.AJ out of +\*8 the romance movie

- :. %s# the students to watch the selected movie on their own time.
- J. %s# students to read and ! ring to class at least J reviews of the movie they (ust watched.

- A. <ive students time to discuss in their groups and write down the common patterns of usage for each ver!.
- =. 2or homewor#, assign students to write a review of their favorite movie. . ncourage students to use the ver! tenses they focused on and remind them of points they can write a! out, such as the story 5plot6 of movie, main characters, how they felt a! out the movie, effect of movies, se' uels to movies, recommendations for movies, and if the movie was adapted from a ! oo#.
- +\*. Have students read and provide peer feed! ac# on each otherks review.
- ++. %s# students to revise their reviews! ased on their peerks comments.
- +).. ncourage students to post their revised reviews on the ?otten omatoes we! site.

#### Conclusion

he activities a! ove guide students through awareness, raising tas#s and production tas#s to practice the genre of movie reviews. ogether with other educators 5e.g., Crawford 7 Csomay, )\*+98 \$reyer, )\*++8 lohns, +==+8 <avioli, )\*\*J, )\*\*=8 Oom! ardo, )\*\*=8 immis, )\*+J6, we ! elieve that corpora and corpus tools are effective teaching tools for increasing students% awareness of features of the target language and helping students to develop proficiency and confidence as independent learners.

#### References

- %nthony, O. 5) \*++6. :ntConc Concor #ancer #?etrieved from https://doi.org/10.1001/j.net1software1antconc1
- \$reyer, @. %. 5) \*++6. Corpora in language teaching an #learning / Potential, e áluation, challenges. 2ran#furtB Peter Oang.
- Connor, U. 7 Upton, ., %. 5)\*+: 6. /iscourse in the pro essions/Perspecti és rom corpus linguistics/Philadelphia Iohn \$en(amins Pu! lishing Company.
- Crawford, D. I. 7 Csomay, . . 5) \*+96. 70ing corpus linguistics. Rew @or#8 ?outledge.
- Iohns, .5+==+6. /hould you!e persuaded [two samples of data, driven learning materials. In Iohns 7 P. Ning 5. ds.6 ELR &urnal &Classroom Concor Ancing 5pp. +,+96. \$irmingham&C. O/, he University of \$irmingham. %vaila!le at https://lie&ically.net1wordsmith1corpus>linguistics>lin#s1 im\)\*Iohns\)\*and\)\*FFO.pdf.
- <avioli, O. 5) \*\* J6. E. ploring corpora or ESP learning. %msterdam8 lohn \$en(amins.
- Oiang, %. 5) \*\* 96. ?otten omatoes / entiment classif cation in movie reviews P?eport 0. /tandford University. ?etrieved from <a href="https://entimentclassif.cation.pdf">https://entimentclassif.cation.pdf</a>. /entimentClassif.cation.pdf.
- Oom! arddo, O. 5) \*\*=6. Ging corpora to learn a out language an #Ascourse 5pp. C=, -+6. \$ernB Peter Oang.

- Pang, \$. 7 Oee, O. 5) \*\*: 6. /eeing stars8. &ploiting class relationships for sentiment categori"ation with respect to rating scales. Procee #ngs o ∴CL, ++J,+):. ?etrieved from <a href="http811www.cs.cornell.edu1home1llee1papers1pang,lee,stars.home.html">http811www.cs.cornell.edu1home1llee1papers1pang,lee,stars.home.html</a>.
- Pang, \$., Oee, O. 7; aithyanathan, /. 5) \*\*)6 hum! s upM /entiment classification using machine learning technil ues. Procee #ngs o EM ≠LP, -=[A9. ?etrieved from http811www.cs.cornell.edu1home1llee1papers1sentiment.home.html.
- /orostinean, 4., /ana, N, 4ohamed 4., 7 arghi %. 5)\*+-6. /entiment analysis on movie reviews P?eport0. ?etrieved from <a href="httpl://ntern.com/httpl://nte
- ?ichards, I. C., ?odgers. . /. 5) \*\*+6. . pproaches an #metho #s in language teaching. Cam! ridge Cam! ridge University Press.
- a! oada, 4.5)\*++6. /tages in an online review genre. Te.t  $\mathcal{O}$ Talk  $\mathcal{P}(5)$ 6, ):-[)9=.
- immis, I. 5) \*+J6. Corpus linguistics or ELT/Research an #practice. Oondon, Rew @or#8 ?outledge.
- Darren, 4.5)\*+\*6 Online corpora or speci & purposes. £: ME & urnal 9B, +9=,+AA. ?etrieved from https://doi.org/10.1001/j.came1i(C: 1warren.pdf
- alai, . 7 2otovatnia, V. 5)\*+)6. /ata///i én learning/.: stu//ent/centere//techni=ue or language learning Theor//an//Practice in Language Stu///es //05-6, +J)9,+JC+. ?etrieved from <a href="httpsl11pdfs.semanticscholar.org1-Jdc1J">httpsl11pdfs.semanticscholar.org1-Jdc1J</a>: )A-+=9+AdAafc==c-\*! d! J-e)! cc)--AJd.pdf

### >>>>>>>>>

#### About the Authors:

Romina Castagno is an . nglish1/panish translator and an 4% . /30 candidate at Hawaii Pacifc University. /he is interested in analy"ing the patterns of written and spo#en language use in natural te&ts and conte&ts and how this analysis can enhance language learning and teaching.

Milang Shin is an 4% . /30 candidate at Hawaii Pacifc University. Her research interests are second language pedagogy, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and corpus linguistics.

Yuki Tanaka holds an 4% in . /30 from Hawaii Pacifc University. Her research and teaching interests are communicative language teaching, corpus linguistics, and the feasi! ility of an immersion e&perience in an . 20 setting.