Query in Grammatical Forms and Corpus Error Analysis

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Abstract : Two decades after coined the term "learner corpora" as collections of texts created by foreign or second language learners across various language contexts, and some years following suggestion to incorporate "focusing on form" within a Task-Based Learning framework, this study aims to explore how learner corpora, whether annotated with errors or not, can facilitate a focus on form in an educational setting. Argues that analyzing linguistic form serves the purpose of enabling students to delve into language and gain an understanding of different facets of the foreign language. This same objective is applicable when analyzing learner corpora marked with errors or in their raw state, but in this scenario, the emphasis lies on identifying incorrect forms. Teachers should aim to address errors or gaps in the students' second language knowledge while they engage in a task. Building on this recommendation, we compared the written output of two student groups: the first group (G1) employed the focusing on form phase by studying a specific aspect of the Italian language, namely the past participle, through examples from native speakers and grammar rules; the second group (G2) focused on form by scrutinizing their own errors and comparing them with analogous examples from a native speaker corpus. In order to test our hypothesis, we created four learner corpora. The initial two were generated during the task phase, with one representing each group of students, while the remaining two were produced as a follow-up activity at the end of the lesson. The results of the first comparison indicated that students' exposure to their own errors can enhance their grasp of a grammatical element. The study is in its second stage and more results are to be announced.