CATEGORIZATION OF ACTIVITIES USED IN EFL TEACHING.
A CORPUS BASED STUDY ON THE EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT
POTENTIAL OF DIDACTIC MATERIALS

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The objective of this study is to categorize real teaching material used in the EFL classroom (Sánchez, 2004), according to whether the activities analysed promote the learning of forms or the development of communicative competence.

Due to the increasing amount of didactic materials for the teaching of EFL, classifying and analysing activities’ explicit and implicit learning potential is a fundamental issue within the area of SLA (i.e. Criado et al. 2009, 2010, 2012; Tomlinson, 2003, 2011). Inasmuch as the promotion of one type of activity or another in the classroom can have consequences on the learning outcome, an inappropriate selection of activities can result in the learner having a biased command of the foreign language.

The method followed implies the following procedures: (i) scan and digitize complete didactic units from 16 textbooks in order to compile an activity corpus; (ii) use text management software like Monocon, WordSmith or Casualcon in order to elaborate lists of frequency, concordances and detect keywords for the activities (specially from the instructions in each activity’s heading); (iii) analyse the corpus to label each activity individually by examining its major focus (the explicit learning of forms, the natural acquisition of skills, or a combination of both); (iv) study the result from the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the activity corpus.

Categorizing teaching activities used in the EFL classroom is of utmost concern to both SLA researchers and EFL teachers. Using the corpus as a tool, scholars and foreign language teaching professionals would be able to access and select the activities that would best fit their students’ needs very easily and quickly.

Referencias