Challenges of Using Corpora in Language Teaching and Learning: Implications for Secondary Education

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Lee, Shinwoong. 2011. Challenges of Using Corpora in Language Teaching and Learning. Linguistic Research 28(1), 159-178. A number of advantages of using corpora in language teaching and learning have been identified by many corpus linguists and thereby its implementation into the language classroom has been highly recommended. However, the challenges and limitations of the use of corpora have not been extensively discussed, and without critically examining the use of corpora in language pedagogy it seems premature to urge teachers to use them in their classroom. In this vein, the purpose of the current paper is to provide a critical evaluation on the use of corpora in language teaching and learning and provide implications for their use in secondary school in Korea. It is argued that without a pedagogical mediation of corpora and resolving some practical problems, the pedagogical potentials of corpora may not be realized. It is also suggested that the integration of corpora into secondary school can be fostered by providing: (a) pedagogically relevant, level-specific corpora; (b) a Korean secondary learner corpus that can show the learners' common problems; (c) an online database of corpus-based resources; and (d) a corpus workshop for pre- and in-service teachers. It is concluded that the appropriate and effective use of corpora in the classroom is partly a technical issue, but primarily a pedagogical one. If the use of corpora in the classroom is not extensively discussed and researched to develop a pedagogical blueprint for the integration, the expected pedagogical outcomes that a number of corpus linguists simply expected may not accrue to learners and teachers. (Hanyang University)

Key Words corpora, language learning and teaching, secondary education