

Compilation of the Database of English Learner Texts (DELT)

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Learner corpora have become an increasingly prominent tool in areas of applied linguistics which deal with language learning and teaching. Following the need to archive learner texts that are collected for various projects at the department, the *Database of English Learner Texts* (DELT) was launched by the Centre for English Language Teaching in 2007.

DELT was designed as a flexible system allowing for the organization of written and spoken learner texts. It is a repository for texts produced by learners of English at various educational levels. Information on the learners who produced the texts and the setting in which the texts were produced are saved along with the texts. Since all these variables are saved with the texts in a relational database system, corpora can be defined according to specific criteria. The texts found in the search can then be exported to a text file for analysis.

DELT is meant to be a resource for the analysis of learner language, which will be available for research and demonstration purposes to both lecturers and students of the department. Apart from integrating data from other departmental projects related to the analysis of learner language in one database, the data collection is also extended as part of the DELT project. A current objective is the compilation of longitudinal learner data in language classes at the Department of English.

Learner corpora such as DELT, which are accessible to both lecturers and students, have great potential in informing tertiary language teaching. Accessible learner corpora not only allow lecturers to analyse particular problem areas, but also offer a resource for inductive language teaching.

For an example of how DELT can be used in tertiary language teaching see

Rankin, Tom; Schiftner, Barbara. 2009. "Using learner corpora as a resource to inform tertiary language Teaching". In *Conference Proceedings. Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practice in Language Teaching*. Special online issue of *VIEWES* 18/3. Available from http://anglistik.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/dep_anglist/weitere_Uploads/Views/Views_18_3_2009_special_issue.pdf (11 May 2009).