

Evaluative Sentential Relative Clauses in Native and Learner Speech and a Corpus of Textbook Materials

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Sentential relative clauses have been presented by Chafe (1982), Biber (1988) and Conrad & Biber (2001) as a feature typically associated with the involved, interactive and non-informational style of spontaneous speech and they have been shown by Tao & McCarthy (2001) to be especially used to display speakers' attitudes to the events and experiences they are relating in speech. The focus of this paper is on evaluative sentential relative clauses, i.e. those sentential relative clauses that speakers use to convey their attitudes to and evaluations of events or personal experiences as in *I've got other people to hitch with which is good*.

The aim of the first part of the paper is to present the results of an investigation of the use of evaluative sentential relative clauses in native and learner informal spoken English using two comparable corpora of informal interviews, namely LOCNEC (the Louvain Corpus of Native English Conversation, Centre for English Corpus Linguistics, Université catholique de Louvain) and the LINDSEI CD-ROM (Louvain International Database of Spoken English Interlanguage, Gilquin *et al.*, 2010). The Concord tool in WordSmith Tools 4.0 (Scott, 2008) was used to retrieve all the instances of 'which' from LOCNEC and from all the subcorpora included on the LINDSEI CD-ROM (spoken productions by learners from eleven mother tongue backgrounds: Bulgarian, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Spanish and Swedish). The automatic retrieval was followed by careful analysis of the concordances to identify all the instances of evaluative sentential relative clauses in the data. The various corpora used contain between 60,000 and 100,000 words of interviewee speech and the interviews all follow the same set pattern.

The second part of the paper sets out to explore whether learners' observed infrequent use of evaluative sentential relative clauses in informal speech (compared with native speakers) could to some extent be connected with the type of input they are exposed to in the classroom. To this end, the paper reports on an investigation of evaluative sentential relative clauses in the TeMa corpus, a pedagogically annotated corpus of textbook materials (Meunier & Gouverneur 2007). The study examines the presence of evaluative sentential relative clauses in the listening comprehension transcripts in TeMa and seeks to shed light on how the TeMa tapescript component compares with LOCNEC and LINDSEI when it comes to the use of these clauses and on the factors that could help explain the differences observed. The paper concludes with a discussion of the treatment of evaluative sentential relative clauses in a

number of corpus-informed reference grammars like Biber *et al.* (1999) and Carter & McCarthy (2006).

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