
WORKSHOP ON

LAW & LINGUISTICS

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APPLIED LINGUISTICS
& ESL (ALES�)

CORPUS LINGUISTICS

- Is a **research approach** in the study of spoken and written discourse, supporting **empirical, frequency-based** investigations of naturally occurring language-in-use.

Biber, Reppen, and Friginal (2010)

CORPUS LINGUISTICS

- A research approach for describing language **use** to answer the question:
How do speakers and writers across various demographics (or registers) actually use the **vocabulary and **grammar** resources available in a language?**

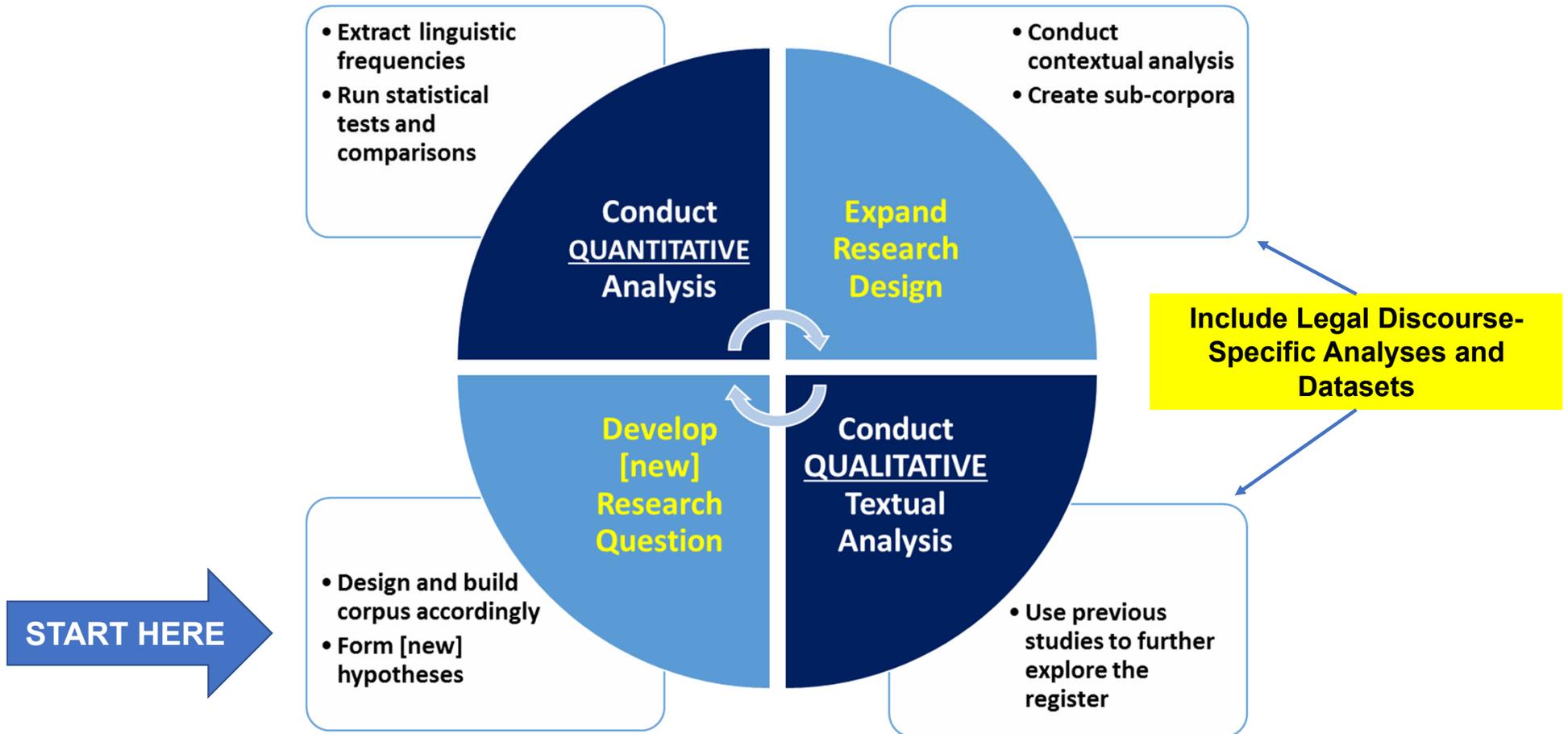
- **What is a CORPUS?**
 - ▣ A large, principled collection of ‘natural’ texts stored on computer
 - ▣ **A corpus should ‘represent’ particular language varieties** or *registers* (e.g., legal written discourse vs. press reports vs. television interviews)
 - ▣ **Design and size are important:** texts must be sampled from particular target registers

So what is corpus linguistics?

- A research approach – A way of thinking about language
 - ▣ Shines the spot light on language **use**: Registers and language for specific purposes
 - ▣ Allows investigation of language **choice**: Why does a speaker/writer use a particular word or grammatical form rather than alternatives?
 - ▣ Allows investigation of **meaning in context**: Why synonyms are usually **not** interchangeable
 - ▣ Allows investigation of **language preference**: What forms are rare? What is especially common?

CORPUS-BASED RESEARCH IN ESP/EOP

- Studies in the subfields of **English for Specific Purposes (ESP)** and **English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)** have increasingly utilized corpus-based approaches over the past 20 years.
- A survey of articles in many recent issues of *English for Specific Purposes Journal* or the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* shows that linguistic descriptions of professional/academic varieties of English are often primarily based on corpora (Biber, Reppen, & Friginal, 2010).



Potential stage cycle for corpus-assisted discourse analysis, adapted from Friginal (2008), Baker et al. (2008), and Friginal and Hardy (2014)

REFLECTIONS

1. Interdisciplinary collaborations are important and very meaningful.
2. The importance of taking into account diachronic change and shifts in language, especially functions/meanings, and how to interpret speaker/writer intent **[RQ: Is there evidence that Americans in the Founding Era could have used the word “emolument” to describe revenue derived from ownership of a hotel?]**.
3. Register differences – the 6 different sub-registers of COFEA.
4. Corpus Linguistics in the U.S., Europe, and globally.

