

Corpus Competition

Target Students: Senior High school

Duration: 45 minutes

Corpus used: COCA

Group number: 11

Group members: Kaiwen Zhu (Kevin)

Words: farther & further

- 1. Test students' knowledge – detect lexical errors**
- 2. Hands-on corpus searches by students – look for language patterns**
- 3. Inductive discovery by students – summarize language patterns**
- 4. Output exercise - USAGE**

Stage 1: Test students' knowledge

Step 1: Use fill-in-the-blanks to test their background knowledge

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the word.

1. Could you speak _____ (loud) please? It's so noisy here.
2. Do you have any _____ (far) questions?
3. It was _____ (far) to the shops than I expected.
4. John can jump _____ (high) than his classmates.
5. The fog is so thick. I can't see _____ (far) than about ten meters.
6. Can you provide any _____ (far) ideas? It's still not clear.

Teacher's reminder: This is a transition warm-up activity to link comparative form with the word pair farther & further. Therefore, there are some blanks with other adjectives or adverbs. Once the teacher identifies a knowledge gap from the first activity, he/she may write the students' wrong answers on the board so that everyone can see them, and the teacher can tell the students that "These are some of the mistakes you guys made. We'll come back to them later."

Stage 2: Hands-on corpus searches

Step 1: Put the words in contexts

1. Provide authentic sentences from COCA

Provide some authentic sentences chosen from the dictionary and the corpus, and have the students try to find out the pattern individually.

Authentic sentences:

Future scholarship should **further** develop the practical application of our theory.

Finally, **further** research should be done on actual return data to analyze these fee structures.

Farther down the hillside the city of Portland stretched in myriad lights that pulsed along the snaky blackness that was the Willamette River.

The sun had to be **farther** away than the moon from Earth.

Step 2: Introduce [Collocates] & [Compare] function in COCA

First, have the students search for the collocations of the two words by using [Collocates] and [Compare] function.

Second, let them summarize the words around these two words, and try to find out the difference. Then, they can fill in the table below.

Farther is used to describe:	Sentences from the corpus:
Further is used to describe:	Sentences from the corpus:

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If it's not possible for students to do hands-on search, the teacher can provide the following images for reference.

Words collocate with “further”

	CONTEXT	FREQ	ALL	%	MI	
1	RESEARCH	2356	185649	1.27	3.47	
2	STEP	1633	72385	2.26	4.30	
3	FURTHER	1170	81903	1.43	3.64	
4	INVESTIGATION	982	43929	2.24	4.28	
5	READING	966	90418	1.07	3.22	
6	EVIDENCE	964	96015	1.00	3.13	
7	NEEDED	919	99580	0.92	3.01	
8	ANALYSIS	730	72374	1.01	3.13	
9	PREVENT	463	34030	1.36	3.57	
10	DISCUSSION	439	43026	1.02	3.15	
11	COMMENT	417	29913	1.39	3.60	
12	DETAILS	381	39032	0.98	3.09	
13	EXPLORE	364	18044	2.02	4.13	
14	COMPLICATED	317	19182	1.65	3.85	
15	INVESTIGATE	311	12174	2.55	4.48	
16	EXPLORATION	278	9232	3.01	4.71	

Words collocate with “farther”

	CONTEXT	FREQ	ALL	%	MI	
1	THAN	1887	890758	0.21	3.60	
2	AWAY	1462	278161	0.53	4.91	
3	FARTHER	917	12499	7.34	8.71	
4	DOWN	749	527164	0.14	3.02	
5	GO	744	529413	0.14	3.00	
6	NORTH	595	123288	0.48	4.78	
7	LITTLE	567	401783	0.14	3.01	
8	SOUTH	547	126155	0.43	4.63	
9	ALONG	336	164816	0.20	3.54	
10	EAST	282	82286	0.34	4.29	
11	WEST	265	103067	0.26	3.87	
12	APART	223	32352	0.69	5.30	
13	MILES	213	77231	0.28	3.98	
14	MOVED	197	82223	0.24	3.77	
15	MOVE	189	118834	0.16	3.18	

Comparison between the Collocations with “Farther” & “Further”

WORD 1 (W1): FARTHER (0.15)

	WORD	W1	W2	W1/W2	SCORE
1	FARTHER	917	6	152.8	1,001.4
2	HIKE	19	0	38.0	249.0
3	STRAIGHTER	17	0	34.0	222.8
4	JUPITER	16	0	32.0	209.7
5	AFT	13	0	26.0	170.4
6	RUNS	13	0	26.0	170.4
7	KM	11	0	22.0	144.2
8	NEARER	11	0	22.0	144.2
9	HALLWAY	10	0	20.0	131.0
10	BALL	142	15	9.5	62.0
11	PENETRATED	15	2	7.5	49.1
12	UPLAND	11	2	5.5	36.0
13	FLY	54	10	5.4	35.4
14	PARKING	21	4	5.3	34.4
15	SHIPS	10	2	5.0	32.8
16	TRAVELED	59	12	4.9	32.2
17	GALAXY	19	4	4.8	31.1

WORD 2 (W2): FURTHER (6.55)

	WORD	W2	W1	W2/W1	SCORE
1	STUDIES	789	0	1,578.0	240.8
2	DISCUSSION	439	0	878.0	134.0
3	COMMENT	417	0	834.0	127.3
4	PROVIDE	411	0	822.0	125.4
5	COMPLICATED	317	0	634.0	96.8
6		316	0	632.0	96.5
7	DAMAGE	302	0	604.0	92.2
8	EXAMINATION	268	0	536.0	81.8
9	STUDY	1448	3	482.7	73.7
10	RESEARCH	2356	5	471.2	71.9
11	COMPLICATING	229	0	458.0	69.9
12	COMPLICATE	228	0	456.0	69.6
13	EXAMINE	225	0	450.0	68.7
14	NOTICE	213	0	426.0	65.0
15	INFORMATION	1217	3	405.7	61.9
16	DECLINED	195	0	390.0	59.5
17	EXPLANATION	195	0	390.0	59.5

Step 3: Explicit explanation - Comparison between further & farther

The teacher explains the similarities and differences explicitly. Students can revise the table above and correct their mistakes.

Further vs. Farther: What is the Difference?

Farther

We usually use farther to talk about a physical length or distance. Farther is the comparative form of far when talking about physical distance.

If you can replace the word farther with a phrase like "more miles" or "more distance", then you are using it correctly.



Examples:

If you walk farther down the road, you will see my house.

(If you walk more miles down the road, you will see my house.)

How much farther until we get there?

(How many more miles until we get there?)

Further

We usually use further to talk about a metaphorical (abstract) distance, like a distance in time. It refers to a time or amount. Further is the comparative form of "far" when you mean "much."

Further is another way of saying "additional" or "more time."



Examples:

His plan needs further study.

(His plan needs additional study.)

I won't listen to this any further.

(I won't listen to this for any more time.)

(<https://www.really-learn-english.com/farther-vs-further.html>)

Teacher's reminder: The teacher may now go back to the board and correct the students' wrong answers in Stage 1 with the whole class and explain why they are wrong.

Step 4: Introduce synonyms of the two words

The teacher introduces the “=” symbol, and have the students search for synonyms of further and farther.

Then, the teacher introduces a table of synonyms on further and farther, which is shown below, and provide explanations on their similarities and differences.

Discuss the usage of the synonyms on COCA with a partner.

Synonyms of “farther”	Synonyms of “further”
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more remote	more
more distant	additional
Longer	extra

Future scholarship should **further** develop the practical application of our theory.

i) Finally, **further** research should be done on actual return data to analyze these fee structures.

Finally, **more** research should be done on actual return data to analyze these fee structures.

ii) His plan needs **further** study.

His plan needs **additional** study.

iii) I plan to **further** my education.

I plan to spend **extra** time on my education.

iv) Move your chair **farther** toward the back of the room.

Move your chair **more distance** toward the back of the room.

v) How much **farther** is it to the airport?

How much **longer** is it to the airport?

vi) Texas is **farther** south than Oklahoma.

Texas is **more remote** than Oklahoma.

Teacher's reminder: Corpus is not everything. The role of the teacher should be a guide and instructor, so when the result list cannot provide the desirable results, teachers should add something more. For example, we can use thesaurus dictionary to find the synonyms of further and farther as well.

Stage 3: Output exercises

Step 1: Reading and speaking task

Read the passage below, and pay attention to the differences between farther and further.

Consider the house, tree, and sunflower in the illustration at the top of this post. The sunflower is **farther** from the tree than the house is. But it would sound a bit odd to say that the sunflower is **further** than the house, given that the sunflower lies in the opposite direction. On the other hand, it would be colloquial to say that the sunflower is **further** from the house than the tree is, because the tree and the sunflower lie in the same direction. A mathematician might say that **further** is referring to the increase of a vector, and **farther** to the increase of a distance. To say it in English rather than in math: farther refers to a greater distance, literal or metaphorical, from a shared measuring point. **Further** refers to a greater progress in a shared direction.

A few examples: If John ran around a one-mile racetrack while Mary was running around a pond with a three-mile circumference, then Mary ran **farther** than John—but it would sound wrong to say she ran **further**. If John drove from Brooklyn to New Jersey, and Mary drove from Brooklyn to Philadelphia, then it's reasonable to say that Mary drove **further**. (You could also say she drove farther, but in that case you would be signalling that you're primarily interested in the relative distances they covered and that it doesn't much matter to you whether they were moving along the same path.) If John was able to carry the Holy Grail only a hundred yards into a primeval forest before expiring, and Mary buckled on her armor and picked up the Grail where it lay, her intent would have to be to carry the Grail **further**, not **farther**. In fact, it's possible for her to carry it **further** even if she doesn't carry for as great a distance as John carried it.

<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/further-and-farther-a-theory>

Then, discuss the following issues in the group:

1. the main idea
2. the usage of farther & further
3. is it proper to replace them with synonyms the students learned.

Step 2: Homework

a) Read the following dialogue, and then:

1. Circle all the Chinese words which refer to [physical distance], and underline all the Chinese words which refer to [an abstract meaning of making progress, or “more”].

2. Translate the dialogue into English.

“有个坏消息是，去医院的路比我们想象中更远。”

“所以我们应该走更远，不是吗？”

“我们必须停下来。”

“为什么？”

“我们不能走再远了。”

“你能进一步解释吗？”

“这片区域将会有更多的袭击，所以很危险。”

“但是我们也不能待在这里。你有什么进一步的计划吗？”

“博物馆应该更加安全，而且很近。我们去那里吧。”

b) Write a composition about travelling and planning.

Your friend and you are planning for a future trip to a city. You'll be given a map, so you can compare different routes.

For the first paragraph, you need to make comparisons about the total distance of different routes. For the second paragraph, you should ask your friend for more details of the plan because he didn't state clearly last time.

You should meet the following requirements:

- Write at least 200 words in total, including at least three "farther" and three "further" respectively.
- Write at least three questions in the second paragraph.
