Teaching   Guides

Target Students: Tertiary Level (freshmen in SCNU)

Corpus Used: COCA; SkELL

Class Duration: One Class Period (45mins)

Lesson objectives: 1. To enhance students' language awareness and critical thinking by guiding them to analyze two current news reports with the similar theme;

2. To help students classify respectively the collocates of some of the content-based words, such as "fund / funding" and some VREB patterns, with corpus use;

3. To provide students with authentic language use opportunities and critical thinking opportunities.

Teaching procedures

About the lesson:

This is one period of the two weekly audio-visual news lessons. Two pieces of current news of similar topics are shared in class weekly. Students form stable learning pairs and are divided into two big groups (Group A and Group B) to analyze the news reports respectively and share with the whole class after or at the end of the class. Vocabulary learning and discourse analyses are the two routine parts before the audio-visual news exercises. This teaching plan is just about the news analysis part, the audio-visual part is in the other teaching plan.

1. Background introduction:

US president Donald Trump posted a four-page letter on Twitter on May 20, 2020, announcing that US government may cut funds permanently for WHO. In the following, let's analyze two relevant news reports from two authoritative media home and abroad respectively, one from the American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) (https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-escalates-fight-world-health-organization-threatens-permanently/story?id=70771446), and the other from Chinadaily (https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202005/20/WS5ec46eb9a310a8b241156e09.html). The focus of the analyses is on the language features and the attitude embedded in the news reports.

2. Provide the news titles and stimulate students to guess the possible content of the news reports based on their titles:

Class Work: Discovery Activity

1) Trump escalates fight against World Health Organization, threatens to permanently cut US funds (from ABC)
2) US still trying to shift blame by threatening WHO, China (from Chinadaily)

Teacher tips: Try to push every student to share opinions with their classmates. Guide them to focus on words with negative meanings in the titles like "fight, threatens, blame".

3. Divide the class into Group A and Group B. Ask them to try to list some possible expressions to report this event.

Big Group Work: Discovery Activity

Teacher tips: Stimulate the students to think about the potential language uses under these titles. It is a warming up stage for language understanding and use.

4. Provide the students with the readability results of both news reports. Divide them into smaller groups within Groups A and B according to the amounts of paragraphs of the two pieces of news. Ask students to find out expressions that they don't know or that they consider important or special or interesting.

Small Group Work: Discovery Activity

Teacher tips: The Flesch Reading Ease and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level of the readability show that both the ABC and Chinadaily reports may be a bit difficult even for college students. Encourage the students to use the corpus searches when they are confused or not sure. This task functions as the vocabulary scaffolding for the news analyse.

Readability of ABC report and Chinadaily report respectively:

Counts			Counts	
Words	838		Words	295
Characters	4517		Characters	1632
Paragraphs	18		Paragraphs	9
Sentences	33		Sentences	10
Averages			**Averages**	
Sentences per Paragraph	1.8		Sentences per Paragraph	1.1
Words per Sentence	25.3		Words per Sentence	29.5
Characters per Word	5.2		Characters per Word	5.4
Readability			**Readability**	
Passive Sentences	18%		Passive Sentences	10%
Flesch Reading Ease	34.5		Flesch Reading Ease	19.1
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	14.7		Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	17.9

5. Guide the students to focus on expressions that can reflect the theme and content in both news reports. Focus on the following two types for detailed explorations. Try to complete Tables A to D.

1) Theme-connected expressions with "funding";
2) Content-connected expressions like "cede the global stage to", "shift blame", "smear sb. /sth.", "fault sb./sth.", etc.

Small group Work: explorative Activity

Teacher tips: Encourage the students to try to solve the problems by using the corpus searches. However, because of the time limitation in class, just guide the students to focus on some of the expressions that can reflect the theme and content in the two news reports. This task functions as the vocabulary scaffolding for the news analyse.

* First of all, show some corpus search examples to the students, guiding them to learn the collocations or patterns and meaning and use of the expressions in the news reports. Take "funding" as an example, both news reports are about Trump's letter to stop funding WHO. What are the other phrases meaning "stop funding"? What about going further to know more collocations of "funding"? How about the specific usage of "funding"? Show some of the COCA research results to the students for reference:

Teacher tips: In case some students may fail to keep to the point, the teacher provides some of the corpus searching process and search results.

(1) Searching for similar usage of "stop funding":

Class Work: observational Activity

List Chart Word Browse +

=stop_v* * funding* *   verb.ALL ⊟
Find matching strings   Reset

1	☐	END FEDERAL FUNDING FOR	7
2	☐	END ALL FUNDING FOR	5
3	☐	BLOCK FEDERAL FUNDING FOR	4
4	☐	STOP FEDERAL FUNDING OF	4
5	☐	BAN FEDERAL FUNDING OF	4
6	☐	END TAXPAYER FUNDING OF	3
7	☐	BAN FEDERAL FUNDING FOR	2
8	☐	BAN PUBLIC FUNDING OF	2
9	☐	PREVENT FEDERAL FUNDING OF	2
10	☐	STOP THE FUNDING OF	2
11	☐	STOP THE FUNDING ,	2
12	☐	END FEDERAL FUNDING .	1
13	☐	BLOCK FCC FUNDING .	1
14	☐	BLOCK FAITH-BASED FUNDING ,	1
15	☐	BLOCK ANY FUNDING FOR	1
16	☐	BAR STATE FUNDING OF	1
17	☐	STOP THAT FUNDING FROM	1
18	☐	STOP SETI FUNDING .	1
19	☐	STOP PUBLIC FUNDING .	1
20	☐	STOP PROVIDING FUNDING TO	1
21	☐	STOP POLITICAL FUNDING FOR	1

(2) Going further to search for phrases of "verb +fund/funding":

List Chart Word Browse +

`_v* * fund*_nn* *`   noun.ALL ⊟

Find matching strings   Reset   Help

1	☐	HAVE THE FUNDS TO	128
2	☐	CUT OFF FUNDING FOR	52
3	☐	HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM	35
4	☐	CONSIDERED . FUNDING CREDITS	32
5	☐	LEARN THE FUNDAMENTALS OF	30
6	☐	CREDITS GIVEN FUNDING CREDITS	29
7	☐	USE THE FUNDS TO	28
8	☐	SUPPORTED BY FUNDING FROM	26
9	☐	HAVE SEED FUNDING TO	24
10	☐	HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR	24
11	☐	HAVE THE FUNDING TO	23
12	☐	HAVE THE FUNDS FOR	23
13	☐	UNDERSTAND THE FUNDAMENTALS OF	23
14	☐	RECEIVE FEDERAL FUNDS .	21
15	☐	RAISE THE FUNDS TO	20
16	☐	USE FEDERAL FUNDS TO	20
17	☐	USING PUBLIC FUNDS TO	20
18	☐	FIND THE FUNDS TO	19
19	☐	HAVE SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO	19

(3) Going to the concordances to observe the specific usage of phrases of "verb +fund/funding" , taking "cut off funding" as an example:

ompeo announce earlier this spring that they would **cut off funding** to any organization, foreign organization, that sort of promoted policies t
imber of liberal wish-list items such as attempts to **cut off funding** for some of the president's immigration moves. # Instead, the leaders pro
on so many losses and wants her legacy cemented would actually **cut off funding** from someone who's said publicly. that there's an understa
Tony tweeted this. President Trump should immediately **cut off funding** to sanctuary cities. David said I wish the border wall construction wo
. the thing you have to do is they can **cut off funding**. HENNINGER# Yeah. PAUL# And if you're going to do that, you
ne post, nor did Schmidt ever threaten to **cut off funding** because of it, Google said.
ve Jay Mohr filed bills. Representative Hodges' bill would basically **cut off funding** of public finance from municipalities who engaged in sanct
ongress, the Senate has put together bill to **cut off funding** to the Department of Homeland Security to do just what your lawsuit was designe
ion of the Day. " Should the federal government **cut off funding** for sanctuary cities? There are 300 of them. Go to Facebook.com/SeanHannit
y are? Why are the Democrats so eager to **cut off funding** for the Department of Homeland Security? Well, the answer is, this is

* After the demonstrations, encourage the students to do the corpus search and analyze the search results in pairs.

Teacher tips: Pair work can push every student to participate in the task and guarantee that the students can have someone to turn to when having questions and puzzles. The following tables are guidances for students to read through the news reports while paying attention to the language features and the meaning and attitude embedded in the reports.

A. Read through the reports and find out what verb(s) come immediately before the theme-based word **_funding_**.

noun	Verb(s) comes before **_funding_**
funding	stop/cut the funding; ...

B. Read through the reports and find out some verb(s)or verb phrase(s) that can help to illustrate the ideas of the news reports:

verbs	word(s) or phrase(s) comes afterwards
cede; shift; smear, fault ...	cede the stage to China; shift the blame to China; smear Beijing's efforts to do sth.; fault sb./sth.; ...

C.After identifying some expressions based on the two news reports, try to go further to find some examples from the corpus, paying attention to form, meaning and use at the same time.

use pattern	Examples from the corpus
1. VREB + _fund / funding_	...
2. CEDE + _stage to_ NOUN	...
3. SHIFT + _blame(s)_	...
4. SMEAR + sth.	...
5. FAULT+ sb./ sth.	...
6. ...	...

D.Observe some of the corpus search results and share with the whole class your findings of form, meaning and use of some of the expressions used in the two news reports.

1) Part of the corpus search results from SkELL and COCA:

SkELL | cede | 🔍 | Examples | Word sketch | Similar words | More features | More languages

cede verb | Context ⬭

subject of cede

Spain | treaty | France | Mexico | territory | Britain | tribe | government

object of cede

territory | Florida | Taiwan | sovereignty | land | province | control | island | premium | colony | region | ground | portion | authority | power

adjectives with cede

most

modifiers of cede

formally | effectively | officially | finally | much | back | then

SkELL | blame | 🔍 | Examples | Word sketch | Similar words | More features | More languages

blame noun | switch to blame (verb) | Context ⬭

verbs with blame as subject

the blame rests | the blame lies | the blame falls on | the blame goes

verbs with blame as object

to apportion blame | to pin the blame on | to deflect blame | to shift the blame | laid the blame | heaped blame | place the blame | shoulder the blame for | to assign blame

lay the blame

modifiers of blame

full blame for the | the entire blame for | as much blame | more blame

1	☐	TAKE THE BLAME FOR	186	
2	☐	PUT THE BLAME ON	173	
3	☐	TAKE THE BLAME .	137	
4	☐	PLACE THE BLAME ON	63	
5	☐	TOOK THE BLAME FOR	61	
6	☐	TAKING THE BLAME FOR	56	
7	☐	PIN THE BLAME ON	53	
8	☐	TAKE THE BLAME ,	48	
9	☐	PLAYING THE BLAME GAME	47	
10	☐	SHIFT THE BLAME TO	43	
11	☐	LAY THE BLAME FOR	42	
12	☐	PLAY THE BLAME GAME	42	
13	☐	PLACE THE BLAME FOR	41	
14	☐	PUT THE BLAME WHERE	40	
15	☐	GET THE BLAME .	38	
16	☐	LAY THE BLAME ON	38	
17	☐	PUTTING THE BLAME ON	38	
18	☐	LAID THE BLAME FOR	35	
19	☐	SHARE THE BLAME FOR	35	
20	☐	PLACED THE BLAME FOR	33	

2) Part of the corpus search in COCA:

List Chart Word Browse +

cede_v* *_nn* *   noun.ALL

Find matching strings   Reset

3) Part of the corpus search results from COCA:

1	☐	CEDE POWER TO	24	
2	☐	CEDE CONTROL OF	21	
3	☐	CEDE CONTROL TO	11	
4	☐	CEDE AUTHORITY TO	9	
5	☐	CEDE GROUND TO	8	
6	☐	CEDE CONTROL OVER	6	
7	☐	CEDE CONTROL .	4	
8	☐	CEDE POWER AND	3	
9	☐	CEDE SOVEREIGNTY OVER	3	
10	☐	CEDE GROUND .	3	
11	☐	CEDE OWNERSHIP OF	3	
12	☐	CEDE POWER ,	3	
13	☐	CEDE CONTROL &SITE=WORLD;	2	
14	☐	CEDE CONTROL "	2	
15	☐	CEDE LEADERSHIP IN	2	
16	☐	CEDE POWER (	2	
17	☐	CEDE TERRITORY FOR	2	
18	☐	CEDE TERRITORY .	2	
19	☐	CEDE POWER OR	2	
20	☐	CEDE TERRITORY TO	2	

competing voices which will not easily **cede the stage to** the old forces of Islamist outrage. And without dictators to fan

Cold War hysteria. Plot and character **cede the stage to** emotion and character type. While earlier films noir portrayed the downfall

and be entertainingly dramatic, although able to **cede the stage to** others when appropriate. Those with histrionic personality disorder insist on

urnals, the theological community will continue to **cede the stage to** those who offer a narrower and more rigid appropriation of the Catholic

6. Go back to the two news reports, share answers to Tables A to D, sum up the language features and attitudes embedded in the two news reports. Then compare the wordclouds of the two news reports, try to retell the main ideas of the two news reports by using some of the expressions you have done the corpus search. Meanwhile try to think about the reason why the title of the ABC reports seems to focus on Trump and WHO but the reports actually talks quite a lot of about China. Share with your class your personal comments.

Class Work:
Consolidation Activity &
critical thinking activity

Wordcloud of ABC report:
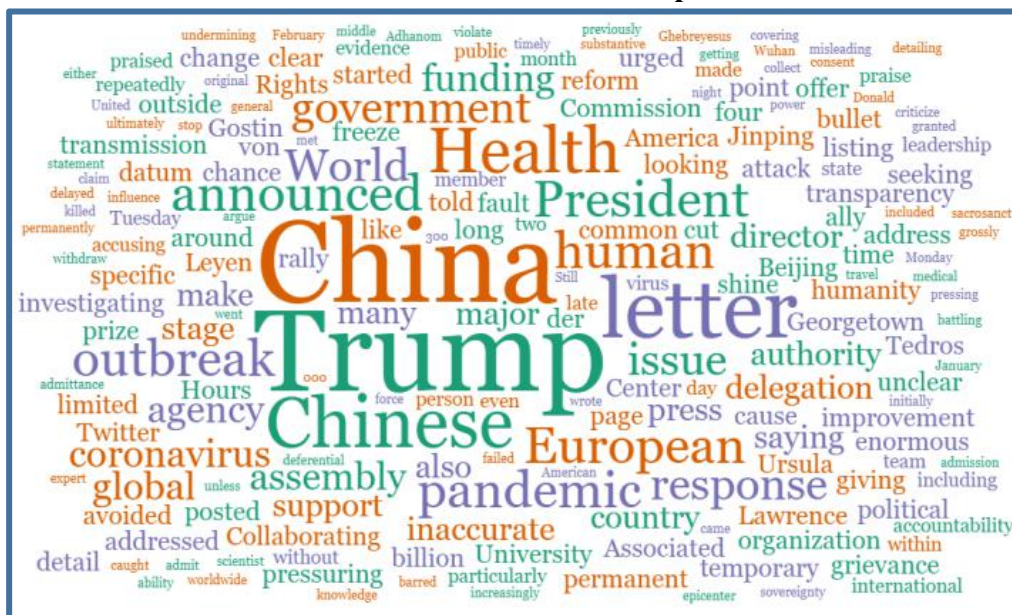
Wordcloud of Chinadaily report:

7. Oral and writing tasks as after class assignment

Teacher tips: Encourage the students to go further to learn and share more about the current affairs by using the language patterns in these two news reports.

1) Try to use language patterns explored in Task 5 to write down your comments, you may continue the relevant topics about the different attitudes towards WHO and the control of Covid-19 in the USA and China respectively.

2) Try to revisit COCA and SkELL to find out corpus uses for at least three more expressions used in either news reports, analyze both their patterns and meanings, and

then make up sentences for oral practice.

3) Get access to any written and audio-visual reports about Trump's claiming to stop funding WHO. Try to compare the potential differences in language and attitude in different reports based on the language features. Share your comments on the reports.