

***DukeWrites* Enrichment Suite**

COCA: Introduction and Registration

With Rene Caputo, ESL Specialist, Thompson Writing Program

Hi, I'm Rene Caputo, Duke University ESL specialist with the Thompson Writing Program. And we're going to take an introductory look at the Corpus of Contemporary American English, also known as COCA. In this tutorial, we'll look at what COCA is, what you might use it for, and how to register.

So to get to the site, you want to do a search for COCA and BYU. BYU is Brigham Young University. And that is where creator Mark Davies and his team are based.

So let's just click in here. And let's talk for just a moment about the word corpus. A corpus is a body or a collection. And this particular corpus is a collection of more than 520 million words of text.

And the collection includes spoken texts (that is, transcripts of news broadcasts, primarily), fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic texts (that is, journals, journal articles).

The value of using this COCA corpus is that you can look for patterns of language usage. And when you look at the results of a particular search you've done, you can use that information to inform and improve your own writing and your own language usage.

So to get started, you want to go ahead and register for this site. And you can do that through this icon here for the profile. If you've already registered, you can just go ahead and log in.

Here's our registration button. And just a very short form to fill out, so COCA can have a little bit of an idea who you are and how you might want to use this corpus. I have already filled that out for myself, so I am not going to do that here. But when you're done doing that, you can just go ahead and click submit here.

Registration is free and using the site is also free. After you come to the site, after you do a few searches, if you have forgotten to log in, you will be reminded. And once in a while, you will be asked to consider donating to support the maintenance of this corpus ~ and support the work, therefore, of Mark Davies and his team in updating the corpus. And from time to time, they create new mini-corpora or corpuses.

So that's it for our introduction to COCA. In our next video, we'll try a search or two together. See you there.