

My full name is Elizabeth Claiborne Craig, and I am a citizen of the United States. I am a doctoral candidate in the linguistics program of the English Department at The University of Georgia with an expected graduation date of December, 2008.

In May of 2008, I traveled to the Universidad Andres Bello in Viña del Mar, Chile to collect writing samples from Spanish-speaking EFL students in order to document preposition errors in second language writing for my dissertation research. While in South America, I was also able to arrange to do the same writing workshops at Stael Ruffinelli, English in Asunción, Paraguay. The field research in both countries was completed in three weeks, and the title of this research was “Phraseology of a Semantic Split” (IRB Exempt). The study was found to be exempt from IRB approval because all participants remained anonymous, and there was no risk factor for participation in the study, which was voluntary. All participants were eighteen years of age or older and received an informational letter about the research project.

In order to collect the data, I conducted a writing workshop with the students on how to organize and develop an academic essay for college-level writing. The participating students then organized and typed their brief essays (approximately 500 words each) in the computer labs of the host institutions on a topic of their own choosing. All first-draft essays were then submitted to me electronically.

I built two text corpora of the students’ essays and labeled them CHILECT and PARALECT. The CHILECT Corpus contains 9,586 words (See attached), and the PARALECT Corpus contains 11,892 words. The text corpora were then submitted to an on-line, part-of-speech tagger called CLAWS 5, which tags every word for part of speech. Using the FIND command in the Word processor, I highlighted all tags for the occurrence of prepositions in the corpora: PRF for *of* and PRP for all other prepositions.

I then read every context with a preposition in it and recorded the preposition errors with regard to grammatical context, i.e. whether the preposition error occurred after a verb, adjective, or noun or at the beginning of a sentence (See Power Point presentation). It was found that the students had an 8% - 10% error rate with regard to prepositions, which is significant for any one part of speech, especially since prepositions make up 13% of any written academic discourse in English, second only to articles such as *the* and *a/an*.

Such a high error rate and the fact that such errors are distinctively non-native (Spanglish) helps establish the need for greater attention to instruction on preposition usage in English academic writing. In order to inform the teaching of prepositions, my dissertation will focus on the

frequent phrasal nouns, i.e. those followed by prepositional phrases, in freshman compositions at UGA from the Spring semester of 2008. Such informationally-dense writing contains a relatively high number of nominals and their colligates: determiners, adjectives, and prepositions. Errors with regard to such function words are quite common among non-native speakers, and teaching them in their lexical contexts as used by native speakers is thought by the researcher to be an excellent way to address this particular linguistic deficiency in ESL/EFL college writers.

Corpus studies allow us to analyze massive amounts of linguistic data very quickly and easily in order to obtain frequency information about actual language usage by both native and non-native speakers. I hope to also use the CHILECT and PARALECT corpora in the future for more comparative study of English language difficulties specifically for native Spanish speakers.

My actual travel expenditures for this research project are itemized below:

Award amount requested by researcher	\$1700.00
Actual amount of Tinker Travel Grant Award	\$1600.00

ACTUAL EXPENSES for Chile

Airfare from/to Atlanta to/from Santiago, Chile	\$1510.30
Entry fee for Chile	+ \$131.00
Transportation to Viña del Mar provided by host institution	
Room and board for 10 days/nights provided by host institution	
TOTAL for Chile	\$1641.30

ACTUAL EXPENSES for Paraguay

Airfare from/to Santiago to/from Asunción, Paraguay	\$510.43
Hotel (10 nights in Asunción, Paraguay)	\$576.30
Paraguayan visa	+ \$45.00
Meals in Asunción provided by host institution	
TOTAL for Paraguay	\$1131.73

TOTAL EXPENSES Incurred	\$2773.03
Sans Accommodations in Paraguay	- \$576.30
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES Incurred	\$2196.73

I went way over budget for the second leg, but it was worth getting all the additional data for my dissertation. Just in case there were any leftover funds, I will also submit an expense report for the additional airfare and the Paraguayan visa.