

Exploring Error Corpora  
L245  
Spring 2017

I want you to examine an excerpt from a corpus marked with spelling errors, available from these sites:

- Birkbeck spelling error corpus: <http://ota.ox.ac.uk/headers/0643.xml>
- Corpora of misspellings for download: <http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/~ROGER/corpora.html>

Note that this is one of the “Passages taken from the creative writing of about 20 children in a British secondary school in the 1960s, published (with their original misspellings) in ‘English for the Rejected by David Holbrook”

- The format is: `<ERR targ=correction> misspelling </ERR>`

Here are some points to consider in your examination:

1. Try to **classify** the errors into natural categories: what types of things is this writer doing?
2. Discuss which misspellings would be more or less difficult for a computer to handle. Why?
3. We are looking at errors produced by a child. What would you expect to be different for an adult? Would the errors be the same types and/or would you expect to see the (same) errors in differing amounts?

THE SICK SOW OF THE ARMY COURT One day Sergeant S. M. Bullimore told Hut 29 to clean `<ERR targ=Cynthia's` Cynthia `</ERR>` pig sty out. When Hut 29 got there they had to go and get some `<ERR targ=gas>` gass `</ERR>` `<ERR targ=masks>` marsks `</ERR>` because the smell was to strong When S M Bullimore came to the pig sty the pig was laid out on the `<ERR targ=floor>` foor `</ERR>` when they came back S. M. Bullimore said `<ERR targ=what>` wat `</ERR>` have you been doing to my sow we have not done anything we had to go and get some `<ERR targ=gas>` gass `</ERR>` `<ERR targ=masks>` marsks `</ERR>` because the smell was `<ERR targ=too>` to `</ERR>` strong that is only the soap `<ERR targ=what>` wat `</ERR>` I `<ERR targ=wash>` wosh `</ERR>` it with `<ERR targ=perhaps>` prasp `</ERR>` he `<ERR targ=ate>` et `</ERR>` some soap Flogger said shall I go and get the vet get back in the line `<ERR targ=before>` be for `</ERR>` I put you on charge Flogger said under `<ERR targ=his>` is `</ERR>` breath ‘go and have a `<ERR targ=pony>` poney `</ERR>` run’ what did you say o nothing sir go and get some `<ERR targ=whiskey>` wiskey `</ERR>` okay sir put some soap in it Flogger said Oswald OK said Flogger Flogger went off a little while after he came with a large `<ERR targ=soap>` soape `</ERR>` `<ERR targ=whiskey>` wiskey `</ERR>` he `<ERR targ=gave>` cave `</ERR>` it to S. M. Bullimore Then he `<ERR targ=gave>` cave `</ERR>` it to the pig A little while after the pig `<ERR targ=got>` go `</ERR>` up and there beside `<ERR targ=her>` here `</ERR>` were six little pigs S M Bullimore said that made `<ERR targ=her>` here `</ERR>` better that was not me that was the `<ERR targ=soap>` sope `</ERR>` you are on charge `<ERR targ=what>` wat `</ERR>` did you give `<ERR targ=her>` here `</ERR>` I `<ERR targ=gave>` cave `</ERR>` her some `<ERR targ=whiskey>` wiskey `</ERR>` and `<ERR targ=soap>` sope `</ERR>` you `<ERR targ=gave>` cave `</ERR>` her that no I `<ERR targ=never>` knver `</ERR>` I sir you did `<ERR targ=that's>` thats `</ERR>` one thing sir It has made her better.

Pigs When young up to being `<ERR targ=killed>` kild `</ERR>` for bacon When they are young you have to `<ERR targ=wait>` wate `</ERR>` 3 days then you can `<ERR targ=inject>` injeck `</ERR>` them for pneumonia diseases you have `<ERR targ=make>` mack `</ERR>` `<ERR targ=sure>` shore `</ERR>` they have `<ERR targ=dry>` drye `</ERR>` straw when you clean them out you should not leave a `<ERR targ=fork>` falk `</ERR>` in with them because the mother might `<ERR targ=knock>` nock `</ERR>` it down and the little pigs might stab `<ERR targ=themselves>` them souve `</ERR>` we

give <ERR targ=them> the </ERR> <ERR targ=worm> worme </ERR> <ERR targ=powder> pouder  
</ERR> that is when they get the <ERR targ=worm> worme </ERR> this will stop them from going  
thin you should box a little place off so only the little pigs can get in it that is so they  
can <ERR targ=get> ge </ERR> out of the way of <ERR targ=their> there </ERR> mother some  
people put a light in with <ERR targ=them> theme </ERR> to <ERR targ=keep> geep </ERR>  
them warm you have to make <ERR targ=sure> shore </ERR> that mother has a lot of milk. If  
she <ERR targ=has> as </ERR> not got <ERR targ=enough> a nough </ERR> milk you will have  
to feed them on a bottle when they <ERR targ=can> came </ERR> eat a little bit you can get  
them some little nuts <ERR targ=for> of </ERR> <ERR targ=fattening> fating </ERR> they  
can <ERR targ=eat> eate </ERR> some meal when they get a little <ERR targ=bigger> biger  
</ERR> we give them some <ERR targ=fattening> fating </ERR> food called Number 2 <ERR targ=when>  
whe </ERR> you wean that is take them from their mother you have got to see if they fight  
if there is any little <ERR targ=ones> wones </ERR> fighting when they <ERR targ=are> and  
</ERR> <ERR targ=big> bing </ERR> you have to see about <ERR targ=weighing> waying </ERR>  
when they have been <ERR targ=weighed> waid </ERR> and <ERR targ=ready> reddy </ERR> to  
go away to be <ERR targ=killed> kild </ERR> .

Billy Bunter was <ERR targ=too> to </ERR> large So they sent for <ERR targ=Him> Im </ERR>  
in charge <ERR targ=Him> Im </ERR> in charge was <ERR targ=too> to </ERR> thin So they  
sent <ERR targ=for> fro </ERR> Rin Tin Tin Rin Tin Tin heart is poor So they sent for Barbra  
Moore Barbra Moore was having dinner So <ERR targ=they> the </ERR> sent for Yule Brinner  
Yule Brinner sang <ERR targ=too> to </ERR> high Then they went to space in the sky

My heart is full of sadness My heart is full of joy It might be my wife Or it might be Helen  
of <ERR targ=Troy> Toy </ERR>

One Saturday I <ERR targ=thought> though </ERR> I would go to the Races at London I went  
on my <ERR targ=Royal> Royl </ERR> Enfield they can go quite <ERR targ=fast> farst </ERR>  
this was a <ERR targ=Royal> Royl </ERR> Enfield <ERR targ=?> Consulatoin </ERR> there were  
some <ERR targ=Royal> Royl </ERR> Enfield Racing there as well I saw a <ERR targ=Royal>  
Royl </ERR> Enfield come first it was like mine. there were the new <ERR targ=Japanese>  
Jappnese </ERR> <ERR targ=Honda> Hondor </ERR> they are very <ERR targ=fast> farst </ERR>  
and <ERR targ=getting> geting </ERR> quite popular in England I saw one man come off he was  
on a B.S.A. One man had to go in Hospital because he broke <ERR targ=his> is </ERR> <ERR  
targ=leg> lege </ERR> <ERR targ=another> a nouthar </ERR> man <ERR targ=hurt> hearte </ERR>  
<ERR targ=his> is </ERR> arm in a sidecar race I <ERR targ=don't> dont </ERR> <ERR targ=think>  
thing </ERR> it was much I <ERR targ=saw> sow </ERR> a <ERR targ=sidecar> side car </ERR>  
<ERR targ=turn> turne </ERR> right over the <ERR targ=sidecar> side care </ERR> man was  
alright but the <ERR targ=motorbike> motor bike </ERR> Rider was thrown into the crowd I  
<ERR targ=don't> dont </ERR> <ERR targ=know> no </ERR> what <ERR targ=happened> hapend  
</ERR> to him he was <ERR targ=hurt> heart </ERR> quite bad. the sidecar broke off the  
<ERR targ=motorbike> moter bike </ERR> and <ERR targ=spun> spund </ERR> down the track  
for 7 yards then hit a man who was on the corner and killed him his hat was blowing down the  
track the <ERR targ=motorbike> moter bike </ERR> <ERR targ=caught> caught </ERR> fire and  
<ERR targ=blew> blow </ERR> up the <ERR targ=petrol> petal </ERR> went all over the track  
but they <ERR targ=soon> sone </ERR> put it out by sand there was some oil got on the track  
as well it made it very slippery <ERR targ=There> They </ERR> were quite a few people there  
because it was a nice dry day The <ERR targ=final> fianl </ERR> race was on there were 2  
<ERR targ=Royal> Royl </ERR> Enfield 3 Japanese <ERR targ=Honda> Hondor </ERR> 1 B.S.A.  
3 <ERR targ=Triumph> Triumh </ERR> they were on the starting line Bang <ERR targ=they're>  
there </ERR> off one BSA is still on the starting line the rest are round the bend I can see  
one man off he is on a <ERR targ=Triumph> trumh </ERR> I think a Japanese <ERR targ=Honda>  
Hondor </ERR> is in the lead I think he is <ERR targ=going> go </ERR> to lead <ERR targ=he's>  
his </ERR> <ERR targ=won> one </ERR> by 3 yards and a <ERR targ=Royal> Royl </ERR> Enfield  
2 and a <ERR targ=Honda> Hondor </ERR> 3. The End