

Expressing Opinions

Some different expressions can be used to let a person know your opinion of a topic. Put a check ✓ next to each word or phrase that you have used to express your opinion.

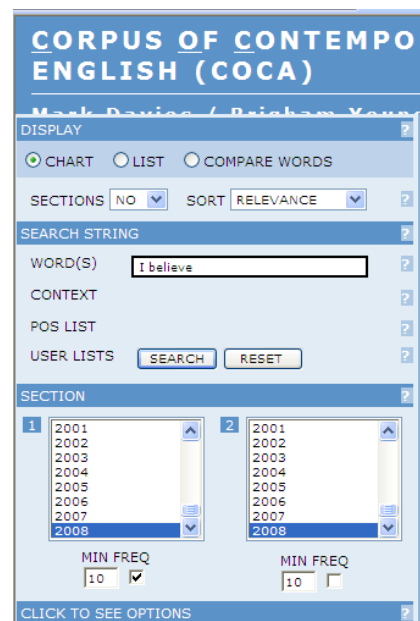
- I believe...
- I feel that...
- It seems to me that...
- If you ask me...
- It is clear that...
- In my opinion...
- I think that...
- Some might say...
- As I see it...
- Personally, I think...
- The point I'm trying to make is...

Today, we are going to look at a corpus, which is a large collection of writings by a particular person, on a particular subject, or of a particular type. We will look at a corpus of American Spoken English, to find out how these opinion phrases are used. Let's begin!

We will try to answer this question today:

Do these words and phrases typically occur in spoken or written English? Are they academic or informal?

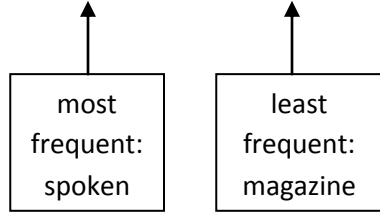
1. We will search for where the opinion phrases are used in English. Are they used more in spoken English, academic English, or other areas?
2. In your web browser, go to <http://www.americancorpus.org/>
 - a. On the left-hand side, type in the following information so that it matches the image below:
 - i. Select chart
 - ii. Sort: relevance
 - iii. Words: I believe
 - iv. Section 1: select "2008"
 - v. Section 2: select "2008"
 - vi. It should look like this →
 - vii. Click "search"



3. Look at the results.

CLICK ON BARS FOR [I BELIEVE] IN CONTEXT (HELP)

SECTION	SPOKEN	FICTION	MAGAZINE	NEWSPAPER	ACADEMIC	1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2008
SEE ALL SECTIONS									
PER MIL	169.8	46.0	31.9	41.0	33.3	73.5	69.2	58.1	56.2
SIZE (MW)	78.8	74.9	80.7	76.3	76.2	103.4	103.0	102.6	77.9
FREQ	13382	3444	2573	3132	2535	7597	7123	5964	4382



Therefore, we can assume that “I believe” is most often used in spoken English. It is rarely used in academic English. So, you won’t want to use this in your academic papers!

Let’s look at the next phrase: “I feel that”.

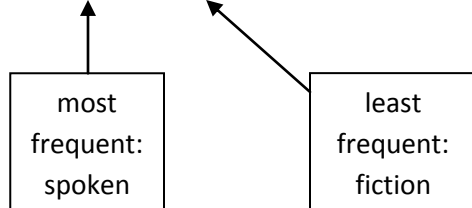
1. **Predict:** Do you think this phrase will occur more in spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper, or academic?

_____ because _____

2. Repeat the steps above to find frequencies for “I feel that”. Just replace the search string words with new words. All other parts remain the same.
3. What do your results show? Does it look like this, below?

CLICK ON BARS FOR [I FEEL THAT] IN CONTEXT (HELP)

SECTION	SPOKEN	FICTION	MAGAZINE	NEWSPAPER	ACADEMIC	1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2008
SEE ALL SECTIONS									
PER MIL	13.7	2.2	3.2	4.3	2.7	7.3	5.2	4.5	3.5
SIZE (MW)	78.8	74.9	80.7	76.3	76.2	103.4	103.0	102.6	77.9
FREQ	1079	161	262	327	202	752	538	465	276



4. Try the other words and phrases.
5. As you find the results, put the information in the table on the next page.

Name: _____ Date: _____

6. Fill out this table with your information. Put a check ✓ in the box that it is MOST FREQUENT.

Opinion Phrase	Spoken	Fiction	Magazine	Newspaper	Academic
1. I believe...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I feel that...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. It seems to me that...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. If you ask me...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. It is clear that...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. In my opinion...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I think that...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Some might say...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. As I see it...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Personally, I think...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. The point I'm trying to make is...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Which of these phrases can be used common speech?



Role Play!

Directions: Find a partner and decide who is "A" and who is "B". Have a conversation about your topic but be sure to use the opinion phrases that are appropriate for conversation.

A

B

Cats are the best pets

Dogs are the best pets

Schools should not sell junk food

Schools should sell whatever food they want

Cell phones should be allowed in class

Cell phones should not be allowed in class

Homework should be banned

Homework should be mandatory

Zoos do more harm than good

Zoos are beneficial to animals and people

Smoking should not be allowed in public

Smoking should be allowed in public