CORPUS-BASED LINGUISTIC AND INSTRUCTIVE ANALYSIS: A STUDY ON ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS AND DELEXICAL VERBS IN ENGLISH CURRICULUM

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Abstract:

The influence of native language on the learners of the English language is not a new issue. Moreover, expressions of colloquial native expressions into English language are also common in English speaking people in India. Introducing English Collocations into the curriculum through practice exercises at the end of the lessons at primary and secondary level is a general practice of curriculums designers to improve the skills of language learners. There is a vast scope of research on the English collocations in lessons introduced to learners at the initial stages in Telugu speakers of native India. In fact, it is a neglected area of investigation that knowledge of collocation can also improve the language competency. This paper investigates the English collocations and delexical verbs used by English learners. In order to make a perfect investigative study on the topic, this attempt was undertaken two groups of rural Ranga Reddy District of Telangana State English learners of different proficiencies who belonged to 8,9 and 10th class levels. This investigation proved that the English learners of the Rural Students in Telangana depended on three major important things. They are 1. Native language Transfer 2. Synonymy 3. Over generalization. This study also showed that the high and low proficiency learners were almost familiar with collocations and delexical verbs. It stresses the importance of English teachers to consider the significant role of these strategies when designing curriculum.

Key words: native language, English collocations, curriculum, delexical verbs, significance.

Introduction:

 '**Make a mistake and cause a mistake'** are the two important issues discussed widely related to English language skills. Today, in ELT, The intervention of collocations in the acquisition of language skills is the most challenging one. Either teacher or the learner faces the problem equally in evaluation and interpretation of the text. Collocations, Synonyms and over generalization are the three major areas of the challenges which the researcher limit himself in the investigation of the language learners. The three strategies about to discuss in this study are the major sources of delixical verb deviations. Naturally, the learners of the areas selected for the study are depended on the mother tongue when they were asked to change the given words,

phrases or any related one. English delixical structures have their identical literal meanings and they are not supposed to use them as they are in the mother tongue. Before going into the deep details of the discussions, it would not be out of context to have a birds' eye view on the following issues.

In India, the study of delexical verbs is generally neither within the interest of the researchers nor it is given proper priority in the English class rooms. It seems they are given single words to be the primary source for the learners and the teachers. Among them, a few of the teachers and learners of the English language are aware of the usage and the importance of English collocations. Researchers like Sripicharn (2010) focused on the prefabricated chunks, delexical structures and on the high frequency words made a stress on the content words like nouns, verbs, adjectives and delexical verbs. English as an EFL, in the schools of India, is not only collocations neglected but also delexical structures which play a key role in the collocations. In order to get the high level of frequency, it is highly essential to incorporate the collocations in learning English Language. The objective of this paper is to examine the learning strategies; they used the error correction method, delexical structures paying attention to rural students.

Collocations:

Firth (1957) first used the word "Collocations" to give a proper procedure for a statement of habitual or customary usage of the word. The words are mingled with another words to form a collocation like *Shrug one's shoulder.* Here the word *Shrug* is used with *shoulder,* it is not collobrated with any other part of the human body. Have made a thorough study on the English collocation, Partington (1998) classified them into three categories based on their degree of restriction.

> *"Fully restricted collocations* are a group of words, a member of which can suggest the following or preceding words automatically. An example of this type of collocation is *stinking rich.* Whenever *stinking* occurs, *rich* is normally present with it.
> *Semi-restricted collocations* allow words to co-occur within the phrase, yet still limited in number. For example, the verb *harbour* is strictly associated with doubts, uncertainty, a grudge, or suspicion, but not any other words.
> *Unrestricted collocations* are able to engage with any lexical items in any circumstances. The adjective *fat*, for example, can co-occur with numerous collocates as long as it makes sense like fat girls, fat dogs and fat cats." (1998: 181)

Delexical Verbs

There are many opinions related the meaning of the delexical verbs, the researcher wants to take only a few of them as a supportive one to the argument made in the paper. The word *delexical* gives meaning to the weakened lexical meaning in a verb. The shifting of meaning from the verb to the noun is called delexicalisation. For example, '*Take a walk'* the verb 'Take' is semantically reduced an it is delexicalised and the noun 'walk' takes the core meaning of the whole phrase.

Thus delexical verbs are collocation, they are not used independently but they have to be followed by a noun or noun phrase.

The present research focused on the lexical collocations and the delexicalisation of the verbs. There is a huge scope for the study in second language acquisition of collocations throughout the world. The present study is corpus based since the data is drawn from a corpus of 500 word essays by the first year students of Intermediate in Rangareddy District of Telangana State. The researcher investigated the collocation errors in the corpus and the results show that the word 'get' phrases are most critical. The result of the analysis also expresses that the learning strategies used seems to be the strategy that learn relied on the most.

Review of Literature:

There are many researches carried on the collocation and delexical verbs in English. In 2011, Salehuddin made a corpus based study on the collocation which exposed particularly on types and sources of verb-noun collocational errors. The entire investigation is based on interlanguage theory and error analysis framework in data analysis. the result showed that there are seven types of common collocational errors, out of which preposition related collocational errors. Intralingua transfer and others are also play a major role in collocations. Juknevicience (2008) made a research on the high frequency delexical verbs like have, do, make, take and give and exposed that the direct translation is the major component strategies that the language learners. The other a few researchers are also made their investigation and it is found that the learners are to underuse the verb *do* in constructing interrogative and negative sentences in English. However, the research on delexical structures in Telangana State is very rare but a few studies on collocations and some common delexical verbs focused on content words like nouns, verbs, adjective and adverbs rather specific delexical verbs.
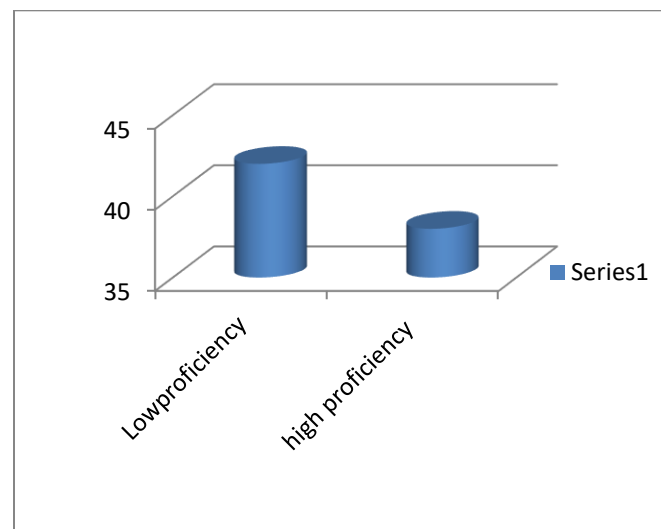
Date Collection:

The researcher selected 80 students from the intermediate college of Ranga Reddy district in Telangana State. They are made into two different groups i.e. low and high according to their performance in the pre test. Below 15 scored students are made into low and above 20 made into high groups. All the participants' age group is between 16-20. They studied English at their school level as the second language and compulsory subject. There are 42 boys and 38 girls.

Research Method:

The researcher administered the test to the two groups of participants and provided the test direction to facilitate the participants' understanding. There are 20 items of fill in the blanks are given to examine the participants productive skills. The required use of four delexical English verbs are given clearly and asked not to use single verb. The test time was 45 minutes and no electronic gadgets or dictionary are allowed.

Data Analysis:

The answers from the two tests are analyzed in qualitative and quantities manner. The researcher adopted descriptive statistics related to overall percentage is taken for explanation. The Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2013) is used to check the acceptability of combinations found in the learner language. In addition to this, there is an interaction with the participants after exam to check and discuss the deviant answers. The objective behind the interaction is to find the learning strategies, L1 transfer, synonymy and overgeneralization.

Findings:

The major findings in the L1 transffer is the major source of deviation which is half of the participants are high and the low proficiency in terms of collocations and the delexical verbs. Three major learning strategies played an important role in the production of delexical structures in learner's language. The strategy that evidently caused most problems is to face L1 transfer. The result also shows that 38 low proficient learners relied on L1 transfer and 42 high proficient learners depended on L2. They also believed to have more delexical and vocabulary knowledge and strongly relied on use of synonymy as a strategy. The strategy of overgeneralization is also played a role with the low frequency in the answers of the high frequency. It exhibited that they overused the delexical verbs *take* because it probably the most familiar delexical verb in their usage.

In the example,

"He *eats* breakfast at the school",

the verb eat is believed to be the direct translation of verb take in L1. The Telugu language people generally use the word (Tinu) as a substitute for eat. Though the example makes a good sense and does not violate the rules of Standard English Grammar the single verb use here is considered a deviant answer since the participant did not produce the expected target delexical structure. The participants who used single verb avoided using the target structure because they are probably not sure about the target answer.

Come and *see with your eyes* for yourself

The phrase 'see with your eyes' is not natural for native speakers of English because the phrase itself is redundant. When someone sees something, they must do it with their eyes not with the organs of the body. The phrase is an apparently the direct translation of a Telugu common phrase.

Conclusion:

The study reveals that the Collocations and the delexical words used by the learners did not simply fill in the gap with a single verb that defines the literal meaning of the given phrases. The learns directly translated the given phrases and used their knowledge of synonyms and causing inappropriate collocation in English. Overgeneralization is also another important strategy found in the learners' language. This is the reason why, the delexical verbs take is familiar with Telugu English learners and the relied too much on the use of take with nouns and noun phrase to form a delexical structure. Because of certain limitations, it is highly recommended that the future studies examine the Telugu EFL learners' receptive knowledge of delexical structures since the present study focused only on predicative skill.

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