

An Effect of the Collocation Instruction Model (InExILH) to Enhance Thai EFL Learners' Collocation Knowledge.

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Abstract

This research consists purposes to investigate the effect of the collocation instruction model (InExILH) to enhance university students' collocation knowledge. The model was developed and designed by involving the inductive teaching approach, an explicit explanation, and the Involvement Load Hypothesis. There were 39 English major students at a university in Thailand participating in the collocation learning with the InExILH model. Pretest, posttest, and delayed tests were developed to elicit the effect of the model on receptive and productive collocation knowledge. The collocation tests were provided as pretest, posttest, and delayed test. The result found an effect of the model on the students' enhancement of affected both receptive and productive collocation knowledge. The result also revealed that the collocation knowledge was retained for a week after learning through this model. Besides, the increase in receptive knowledge was higher than productive knowledge on both posttest and delayed test.

Keywords: Collocations, Collocation Instruction Model, InExILH model

Introduction

Collocation is the co-occurrence of two or more words (Woolard, 2000). It has gained more attention from scholars since it is the combination of words in a predictable way (Hill, 2000). Collocation is classified differently, and one of the classifications is grouped by its functions which are lexical and grammatical collocations (Benson, Benson, & Ilson, 1986).

Collocation is an aspect of vocabulary knowledge focusing on how learners identify which collocates occur with a node word and how learners use a correct collocate to a node word (Nation, 2001). The knowledge of collocation is also a key to indicate the standard use of the language. Communication like a native speaker requires correct use of collocations for better understanding. Collocations are embedded in both written and spoken discourses which lead to language fluency and accuracy (Erman & Warren, 2000). Many collocations were found in the first 1,000 content words considered a critical aspect of language communication (Shin & Nation, 2008).

However, collocations are difficult for foreign language learners. Sizes, patterns, closeness, and ranges cause collocations more challenging compared to single words (Nation, 2001). This leads to the slow development of collocation knowledge. Most EFL learners had limited knowledge of collocation (Suvarnamani,

2017; Yumanee & Phoocharoensil, 2013). Phoocharoensil (2011) claimed that verb-noun and adjective-noun collocations were considered the most serious problems. Although learners used many collocations in communication, they did not seem to aware of the correct combination of the words due to the standard use of the language. More importantly, as the semantic function of collocation includes congruent and incongruent collocations, intuitive knowledge of L2 is essential since not all collocations can be directly translated from L1. Shokouhi and Mirsalari (2010) and Wasuntarasophit (2015) claimed that learners could not acquire collocations since they tended to tie words using their L1 intuitive knowledge. The language was processed in L1, so they applied the L1 intuitive knowledge and then directly translated it into L2 without being aware of the correct use of words and their collocations. For example, if Thai university learners whose CEFR level was at A2 have low intuitive knowledge of L2, they would produce 'play yoga' instead of 'do yoga' because the phrase 'play yoga' was directly translated from Thai.

Scholars suggested an inductive approach to enhance learners' collocation knowledge (e.g. Pellicer-Sánchez, 2017; Szudarski & Carter, 2016). Szudarski and Carter (2016) found the improvement of learners' awareness and collocation knowledge after learning collocations in stories where collocations were underlined. Learning implicitly drew learners' attention and noticing so that knowledge was retained (Boer, Demecheleer, Deconinck, Stengers, & Eyckmans, 2017). Dankittikul and Laohawiriyanon (2018) and Yaemtui and Phoocharoensil (2019) claimed collocation resources such as the Data-Driven Language (DLL) and concordances provided learners an opportunity to expose to the use of collocations. Learners could repeatedly study and analyze words and their collocates used in an authentic text.

Ying and Hendricks (2004) developed a model called the Collocation Awareness Raising (CAR) model designed based on an inductive approach. This model impacted the awareness-raising of collocation use since more collocations appeared in their writing although some errors still appeared. Anyhow, learning inductively might lead to misinterpretation as no verification is provided (Dankittikul & Laohawiriyanon, 2018). Learners might be confused with the use of collocations since they only studied words from the resources without receiving any explanations and practices. Additionally, some collocations need to study explicitly (Laufer & Paribakht, 1998).

Explicit explanation as a deductive approach could clarify learners' understanding of collocations (e.g. Pérez Serrano, 2018; Zaferanieh & Behrooznia, 2011). Zaferanieh and Behrooznia (2011) found that a deductive approach was necessary for teaching and learning collocations as the teacher can call learners' attention and notice of the collocations by his explanations and demonstrations. Learners paid attention to and noticed collocations when receiving some explicit instructions, so their collocation knowledge was improved (Wasuntarasophit, 2015).

Additionally, explicit learning can be designed to provide more practices (e.g. exercises or activities) for learners to rehearse the skill and obtain in memory (Archer & Hughes, 2011). Pérez Serrano (2018) found a significantly higher recognition level of collocations gained after learning through explicit exercises. Hellstrom

(2016) suggested that exercises should be designed to involve a cognitive process. This could assist them to learn and store that knowledge in short- and long-term retention.

Exercises can be designed by engaging the Involvement Load Hypothesis (ILH) (Fallahrafie, Rahmany, & Sadeghi, 2015; Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001). The hypothesis was framed based on the motivation and cognitive construct within an exercise to encourage single-word learning and retention (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001). Fallahrafie, et al. (2015) found the effect of the ILH on the development of learners' vocabulary knowledge. Feng (2015) claimed the impact of the ILH that an exercise with a high degree of the ILH led to better learning and retention compared with a low one. Additionally, a productive task revealed a more significant effect on the improvement and retention of single words than a receptive task (Pourakbari & Biria, 2015). More importantly, Snoder (2017) found the impact of the ILH on collocation improvement. However, the result did not fully support the hypothesis due to the unexpected result of the tasks with relatively higher degrees. Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) proposed that a task with a higher degree outperforms, but no significant difference was found between the tasks with low and high degrees (Snoder, 2017).

The present study concerned the enhancement of learners' collocation knowledge. An attempt was made to develop a collocation instruction model by involving an inductive approach, an explicit explanation, and the ILH as the elements of the model. The model was named InExILH respectively according to its elements and process of learning. Therefore, the study aimed at exploring the effect of the collocation instruction (InExILH) model on the enhancement of university students' collocation knowledge in short- and long-term retention.

Purpose

to investigate the effect of the collocation instruction model (InExILH) to enhance university students' collocation knowledge.

Methodology

This study applied experimental research with a quantitative approach. The respective procedures were the pretest, the intervention with the InExILH model, the posttest, and the delayed test.

Participants: 39 first-year English major students were studying at a university in Thailand. They were considered low proficient EFL students because their CEFR level was at A2. They had no experience in studying abroad and spent approximately more than nine years learning English.

Target collocations: 40 collocations were divided equally into verb-noun and adjective-noun collocations. The target collocations were carefully selected regarding the syntactic patterns, node word, frequency, and strength as the criteria of collocation selection. Verb-noun and adjective-noun collocations were chosen as the syntactic patterns due to the frequent errors found by the students. Collocates were carefully selected for each known node word identified by the students. Then, collocations in which the frequency of co-occurrence was at least six times and the Mutual Information (MI) was three or above were selected. Finally, only unknown collocations by the students were the target collocations.

The collocation tests: The same test was used as pre, post, and delayed tests. It was designed into two types, the recognition and controlled production and the controlled production tests. The recognition and controlled production test was adapted from Makinina (2018) who developed a test to elicit the receptive knowledge of collocation focusing on the perception of what collocates occur with a node word. To complete this test, the students choose and match a correct and appropriate collocate to a node word to complete the sentence. The controlled production test was adapted from Durrant and Schmitt (2010). This was a productive test available for the students to recall the collocations. The students read sentences where the collocates were missing. However, the first letter of collocates and a node word were available to guide them to complete the sentences.

Intervention with the InExILH Model: Before the intervention, the objectives were informed and the students consented to participate in the study. During the study, the students completed the pretest in the first week and spent five weeks studying the collocations. After that, they took the posttest, and the delayed test was given a week later.

The students studied the collocations following the steps of the InExILH model including introduction, concept formation, concept interpretation, concept confirmation, and application. Firstly, the students were introduced to know the general concept of collocation and met the learning material in the introduction step. Secondly, the concept formation step was designed based on the inductive approach. They were asked to study the collocations bolded in the sentence examples and a page of the target collocations from the Oxford Collocation Dictionary for Students of English. There were three authentic sentences for each collocation selected from the BNC concordance, and the collocation dictionary was printed for the students to study the collocations. Additionally, the students were intervened with some guided questions to raise their noticing to the collocations. Next, in the concept interpretation step, the students were asked to interpret the collocations they had studied, present in class, and receive feedback. Then, the students received some explicit explanations to ensure their interpretations in the concept confirmation step. Finally, the application was available for the students to practice using the collocations in the exercises designed based on the ILH. The exercises including collocation spelling, collocation fill-in, and collocation translation exercises were developed to elicit productive knowledge of collocations.

Data collection and analysis: The data of the pretests, posttests, and delayed tests of the collocation tests were collected and analyzed with both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Result

The data were analyzed by the paired t-test analysis. Table 1 showed the results from the recognition and controlled production test. The data from the posttest ($\bar{x} = 37.36$, $SD = 2.02$) was significantly higher than that from the pretest ($\bar{x} = 2.20$, $SD = 1.63$) $t = 83.60$, $p = 0.000$. Moreover, the results indicated the significant difference $t = 70.91$, $p = 0.000$ between the pretest ($\bar{x} = 2.20$, $SD = 1.63$) and the delayed test ($\bar{x} = 37.15$, $SD =$

2.21). However, no significant different $t = 0.47$, $p = 0.641$ was found between the posttest ($\bar{x} = 37.36$, $SD = 2.02$) and the delayed test ($\bar{x} = 37.15$, $SD = 2.21$). These results from the recognition and controlled production test revealed the effect of the InExLH model on the enhancement of the receptive collocation knowledge as there was a significant increase of the posttest and delayed test from the pretest. More importantly, the receptive knowledge was retained as no significant difference was found between the posttest and the delayed test.

Table 1 The result of the recognition and controlled production test

Test	$\bar{x}$	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	p
Pretest -	2.20	1.63	.40	83.60	0.000*
Posttest	37.36	2.02			
Pretest -	2.20	1.63	.46	70.91	0.000*
Delayed test	37.15	2.21			
Posttest -	37.36	2.02	.44	0.47	0.641
Delayed test	37.15	2.21			

* $p < 0.05$

The result of the controlled production test was illustrated in Table 2. Like the data from the recognition and controlled production test, the result of the posttest ($\bar{x} = 35.76$, $SD = 2.58$) was significantly higher than the pretest ($\bar{x} = 1.98$, $SD = 1.35$) $t = 76.31$, $p = 0.000$. Similarly, the significant different $t = 64.16$, $p = 0.000$ was found between the pretest ($\bar{x} = 1.98$, $SD = 1.35$) and the delayed test ($\bar{x} = 35.33$, $SD = 2.94$). The result also indicated no significant different $t = 0.85$, $p = 0.401$ between the posttest ($\bar{x} = 35.76$, $SD = 2.58$) and the delayed test ($\bar{x} = 35.33$, $SD = 2.94$). The result from the controlled production test presented the enhancement of the productive collocation knowledge because of the significant increase of the posttest and delayed scores from the pretest. Additionally, productive collocation knowledge was retained.

Table 2 The result of the controlled production test

Test	$\bar{x}$	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	p
Pretest -	1.98	1.35	.44	76.31	0.000*
Posttest	35.76	2.58			
Pretest -	1.98	1.35	.51	64.16	0.000*
Delayed test	35.33	2.94			
Posttest -	35.76	2.58	.51	0.85	0.401
Delayed test	35.33	2.94			

* $P < 0.05$

Table 3 The result of the recognition and controlled production and the controlled production test

Test		t	p
Pretest	Recognition and Controlled production test -	0.79	0.434
	Controlled production test		
Posttest	Recognition and Controlled production test -	3.03	0.003*
	Controlled production test		
Delayed test	Recognition and Controlled production test -	3.09	0.003*
	Controlled production test		

* $P < 0.05$

Table 3 indicated the effect of the InExILH model on the enhancement of receptive and productive collocation knowledge. The data from the pretest showed no significant different $t = 0.79$, $p = 0.434$ between the recognition and controlled production test ($\bar{x} = 2.20$, $SD = 1.63$) and the controlled production test ($\bar{x} = 1.98$, $SD = 1.35$). However, significant difference $t = 3.03$, $p = 0.003$ was found from the posttest between the recognition and controlled production test ($\bar{x} = 37.36$, $SD = 2.02$) and the controlled production test ($\bar{x} = 35.76$, $SD = 2.58$) as well as the significant different $t = 3.09$, $p = 0.003$ from the delayed test between the recognition and controlled production test ($\bar{x} = 37.15$, $SD = 2.21$) and the controlled production test ($\bar{x} = 35.33$, $SD = 2.94$). The result could indicate that the model affected the improvement of the receptive collocation knowledge prior to the productive collocation knowledge.

Conclusion

The InExILH model is effective to enhance Thai university students' collocation. The model has an impact on both receptive and productive collocation knowledge, as well as collocation retention. The collocation resources, explicit explanation, and the design of exercises as the elements of the model including the inductive approach, an explicit explanation, and the ILH can indicate the enhancement of collocation knowledge.

Discussion

The InExILH Model, based on the inductive approach, explicit explanation, and the ILH, was effective in teaching collocation to Thai university students. The finding was in line with Ying and Hendricks (2004) who developed the CAR model developed from an inductive approach and found its effect on collocation learning, and Szudarski and Carter (2016) who claimed that the knowledge was improved after the students raised their awareness when studying inductively. The collocation resources for inductive learning, the sentence examples and the collocation dictionary, could be the rich collocation resources for the inductive approach to analyze the use of collocations. The resources could assist the students to repeatedly expose themselves to, study, and notice the collocations, then their awareness was raised (Boer et al., 2017). These resources should be

implicated since learners can analyze and study collocations in authentic texts as well as notice the use of collocations. Moreover, choosing authentic sentences from a concordance encourages learners to study the use of collocations.

Likewise, the effect of the model was partly from an explicit explanation. The result was consistent with Wasuntarasophit (2015) who gave explicit instruction and found that it increased the students' awareness and collocation knowledge. The students forming the concept of the collocation use in the resources needed more clarifications. An explicit explanation could confirm their understanding and encourage the students to obtain the collocations. The explicit explanation could draw the students' attention and raise their awareness of the collocations (Wasuntarasophit, 2015). More importantly, an explicit explanation provides a clear understanding of some collocations which require the intuitive knowledge of L2 since these collocations are difficult to be studied implicitly. Implicating an explicit explanation is clarified and confirmed learners' comprehension.

Another factor possibly impacted the enhancement of the students' collocation knowledge was the ILH. The result supported the hypothesis proposed by Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) that learning under the ILH led to vocabulary learning and retention. Although the target feature, collocations, of the present study was quite different from the previous studies' target feature which was single words. The result was still accorded with Fallahrafie, et al. (2015) and Feng (2015) who found the improvement of vocabulary knowledge and retention. The students completed three productive exercises to elicit the students' productive knowledge of collocations. They were able to elaborately study the collocations in the examples and the collocation dictionary to complete the exercises. Since the degrees of evaluation were increased in each exercise and required more depth of processing, it led to learning and retention (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001). Multiple productive exercises could enhance the students' knowledge and memorize the collocations (Pourakbari & Biria, 2015).

The result also indicated the effect of the InExILH model on the receptive collocation knowledge prior to the productive collocation knowledge. This was in line with Pérez Serrano (2018) who claimed the impact of explicit exercises on the increase of recognition level. The students completed three explicit productive exercises which impacted the enhancement of the receptive knowledge. The model also affected the enhancement of the productive knowledge although the slightly lower was found. This result was possibly influenced the characteristics of collocations since the collocations were hardly recalled (Peter, 2015). Exercises under the ILH can strengthen collocation knowledge since learners can practice using the collocations. The exercises should be carefully developed by considering the ILH in the design since the ILH can elicit collocation knowledge. Additionally, there should be resources providing learners to repeatedly study while completing the exercises.

Suggestion

Future studies might explore the perceptions towards the model to gain more insight data. The collocation resources might be designed into the DDL or stories which leads to a more comprehensible context for learners

because a sentence reading might not effectively reveal the meaning and the use of collocations. Additionally, studies might shift the focus to other different types or patterns of collocations such as grammatical collocation or idiom.

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