

Verb-noun collocations in written discourse of Iranian EFL learners

ABSTRACT

When native speakers of English write, they employ both grammatical rules and collocations. Collocations are words that are present in the memory of native speakers as ready-made prefabricated chunks. Non-native speakers who wish to acquire native-like fluency should give appropriate attention to collocations in writing in order not to produce sentences that native speakers may consider odd. The present study tries to explore the use of verb-noun collocations in written discourse of English as foreign language (EFL) among Iranian EFL learners from one academic year to the next in Iran. To measure the use of verb-noun collocations in written discourse, there was a 60-minute task of writing story based on a series of six pictures whereby for each picture, three verb-noun collocations were measured, and nouns were provided to limit the choice of collocations. The results of the statistical analysis of ANOVA for the research question indicated that there was a significant difference in the use of lexical verb-noun collocations in written discourse both between and within the four academic years. The results of a post hoc multiple comparison tests confirmed that the means are significantly different between the first year and the third and fourth years, between the second and the fourth, and between the third and the fourth academic year which indicate substantial development in verb-noun collocation proficiency. The vital implication is that the learners could use verb-noun collocations in productive skill of writing.

Keyword: Language proficiency; Verb-noun collocation; Witten discourse; Iranian EFL learners