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Are You Being Naughty, Disobedient, or Rebellious? A Corpus-Based Study of English Synonyms

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A Corpus-based Study on the Meanings, Distribution, Collocations, and Formality of 'Concentrate', 'Emphasize', and 'Focus'

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A Multidisciplinary Corpus-based Comparative Analysis: Lexical Bundles in Language Teaching, Health Sciences, and Business Management Research Articles

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Japanese Writing Skill Development through Active Learning Approach via Online Classroom

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David Crystal's 50 Questions about English Usage

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NIDA Language and Communication Journal is the official journal of the Graduate School of Language and Communication, National Institute of Development Administration. The journal, ranked in the first tier of Thai Journal Citation Index (TCI), is currently published as a periodical, with two issues annually (June and December). The purpose of this journal is to disseminate information of interest to language and communication scholars, and others interested in related social sciences. The journal presents information on theories, researches, methods, and ideas related to language and communication as well as related interdisciplinary social sciences. The editors welcome a wide range of academic papers, including research articles, review articles, and book reviews.

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Sawasdee. Thank you for picking up this issue of **NIDA Journal of Language and Communication**. With the release of this issue, we are delighted to announce that the journal is now indexed in Thailand Citation Index (Tier 1). We are committed to keep improving the quality of our journal to be worthy of the trust of the authors to have their quality manuscripts published with us and the readers who choose our journal as their academic companion.

Though this issue is not prepped to be a special issue, coincidentally we have three papers in the field of corpus linguistics. Originating from the same methodology, the objectives vary and each paper reveals interesting insights on English language usage. The first and the second paper use corpus linguistic methodology to reveal the subtle shades of meaning in a set of synonyms: naughty-disobedient-rebellious and concentrate-emphasize-focus, respectively. While the paper by Punyapa Boontam uses BNC and COCA to investigate synonym usage cross-culturally, the paper by Pariwat Imsa-ard draws on the data from COCA and two online dictionaries, namely Longman and Merriam-Webster, to identify the similarities and distinctions of the synonyms. The third paper by Woravit Kitjaroenpaiboon, Sresuda Wongwiseskul, Thanakorn Puksa, and Benjamas Khamsakul, instead of looking at synonymous words, shifts its attention to compare the use of lexical bundles based on the corpus of 90 international journal articles from three academic fields. The findings of these three papers contribute tremendously to the fields of English language studies and English academic writing. The fourth paper by Anatee Abdulah and Kasma Suwanarak reveals the factors attributive to success and failure on English communication skills of Thai adult learners using qualitative questionnaire and semi-structured interview. While the first four research papers deal with English language and English-language teaching, the final paper by Pailin Klinkesorn is an exploration of Japanese writing skills development. It analyses students' achievement and satisfaction toward teaching and learning style based on the Active Learning concept. This issue ends with a review of a book by a world-renowned linguist David Crystal titled *David Crystal's 50 Questions About English Usage* by Chamaipak Tayjasananant.

On behalf of the journal, I would like to thank all the contributors, reviewers, editorial teams, and staff who made this issue possible. Any errors there may be, I'll take as my own.

Khwanchira Sena

Editor-in-Chief

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Are You Being *Naughty*, *Disobedient*, or *Rebellious*? A Corpus-Based Study of English Synonyms

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Abstract

English synonyms can be used to expand the vocabulary skills of students; however, students tend to encounter thesaurus errors when they apply synonyms in the wrong context. Therefore, in order to differentiate synonyms effectively, corpus-based analysis should be applied. This research study examined the similarities and differences between *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* in terms of meanings, collocations, degrees of formality, and grammatical patterns across the different standards of English, namely British and American English. The corpus data was drawn from the British National Corpus (BNC) with the assistance of the online tool Sketch Engine (SkE) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to represent different varieties of English which can broaden the knowledge of the students across cultures. The results show that these three synonyms are taken as loose synonyms because they cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts even though they could share the same core meaning as an act of not being willing to follow or obey someone or something. The corpus data from BNC and COCA reveal some shared characteristics and contrastive features. Therefore, the findings of the study may have a profound impact in the fields of English language teaching, especially in a digital technology-driven age, as corpus data can serve as a useful tool to explore the authentic language patterns and help enhance learners' metalinguistic awareness.

Keywords: Corpus-based Analysis, Corpus Linguistics, English Synonyms, Vocabulary Teaching

1. Introduction

In a digital technology-driven age, it is undeniable to say that learning English is far more convenient and accessible for ESL/EFL learners around the world. Digital technology, which is both available online and offline, could enable students to have more exposure to a number of English learning resources. Precisely, English language skills play a vital role in the 21st century and can help students achieve their goals and lead to career opportunities as English serves as a tool that enables them to communicate effectively with people from other countries (Kirkpatrick, 2007). Nevertheless, among the four main skills of English, vocabulary is considered as the most essential skill because lexical competence and lexical knowledge are regarded as the foundation for learners to comprehend both written and spoken languages and

lead to successful communication (Alquahtani, 2015; Ling, 2005; Nation, 1994). In the same vein, the lack of vocabulary knowledge can limit the number of sentences that they would like to produce and consequently lead to learners' frustration (Caro & Mendinueta, 2017). Considering this problem, ESL/EFL learners tend to experience the problem of lexical variety when they are assigned to do the writing task in English (Ferris, 2009). Despite its importance, English is implicitly considered as one of the most difficult subjects in Thailand as students tend to encounter difficulties when learning English, especially when it comes to real-life communication due to their limited vocabulary knowledge (Sasum & Weeks, 2018).

Nonetheless, one of the effective ways to expand the students' vocabulary skills is using synonyms as investigating synonyms can help enhance students' metalinguistic knowledge, for example, part of speech, register, and collocations (Shaw, 2011). Sotoudehnama and Soleimanifard (2013) found that teaching new words through synonyms could enhance the students' short-term vocabulary learning and increase the excitement in the classroom. Moreover, the study of synonyms plays an important role in terms of improving learners' accuracy and fluency in English (Shahzadi et al., 2019). Learning synonyms is also crucial for learners who seek advancement in writing as they would be able to use a variety of words in their work (Phoocharoensil, 2010). Liu (2010) also explained that learners with the ability to use various synonyms would be able to convey their message effectively and rarely fail to interpret the meaning. However, there is a concern when teaching synonyms to students known as *thesaurus errors* which tend to occur when learners apply synonyms in the wrong context (Ferris, 2009). Due to L1 interference, differentiating meanings and usages of synonyms poses a difficulty for most EFL/ESL learners as translating synonyms directly into their L1 might lead to confusion and thesaurus errors (Aroonmanakun, 2015). Significantly, one factor that ESL/EFL teachers and learners should be aware of when using English synonyms is that some synonyms cannot be used interchangeably in some contexts. It should be noted that relying solely on intuition and definitions provided by dictionaries is not sufficient to distinguish synonym pairs (Francis et al., 1996; Phoocharoensil 2020). Thus, corpus data can provide valuable insights into naturally occurring language that is largely unavailable to linguistic intuition (Sinclair, 1991; Szudarski, 2018) and serve as a reliable tool to distinguish synonyms effectively (Biber et al., 1998; Hunston, 2002; Moon, 2010).

This research study aims to examine the similarities and differences between *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* in terms of collocational patterns, degrees of formality, and grammatical patterns across the different standards of English, namely British and American English through a corpus-based investigation. The selection of the synonyms was determined based on their appearance in the British National Corpus (BNC)/Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) headword lists (Nation, 2017). The BNC/COCA lists are designed primarily for learners of English as a foreign language which contains the headwords from the 25,000 BNC/COCA word families that come with the Range program. Specifically, *naughty* was listed in the first 1,000 BNC/COCA headwords, and *disobedient* was listed in the eighth 1,000 BNC/COCA headwords, reflecting their high frequency of occurrence in real-life language use. Significantly, *rebellious* was listed in the Academic Vocabulary List (Gardner & Davies, 2014) which contains 20,000 or so most frequent words (lemmas) in the 120 million words of COCA Academic. Consequently, according to the lists, the high frequency of occurrence of each target synonym indicates its usefulness for EFL learners and their teaching worth. Furthermore, these three synonyms can confuse EFL learners because of their overlapping meaning in the L1 language. By way of illustration, there are many different shades of meanings and wordplay in Thai language that could refer to *naughty*, *disobedient*,

and *rebellious*. For example, *deuu*(^{ดื้อ}) in Thai language could be translated into *naughty* and *disobedient*. However, there is a variety of *deuu* in Thai wordplays such as *deuu dann*, *deuu dan*, *deuu deung*, and *deuu phaaeng* that might pose a difficulty for Thai students as it can be challenging for low proficient learners to notice the differences of these synonyms when translating from Thai into English. In this case, *deuu phaaeng* cannot be translated into *naughty* nor *disobedient*, but it should be translated as *rebellious*. Therefore, the results of this study would be beneficial for EFL/ESL teachers as it helps shed light across L2 education and raise awareness among teachers of the implementation of a corpus in teaching synonyms to EFL/ESL students which is suitable for today's data-driven age because it can enhance both academic knowledge and ICT skills at the same time.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Corpus Linguistics

O'Keeffe et al. (2007) have defined a corpus as "a collection of texts, written or spoken, which is stored on a computer" (p. 1). Therefore, corpus linguistics is the study of language through investigating the authentic data in a naturally-occurring context which is beneficial for language learners in terms of authenticity, speed, and reliability (Lindquist, 2009; Sinclair, 1991).

\$1 per share. The company also granted Phemus warrants to	buy	350,000 shares of common stock at \$1 a share . # DELRINA
4 years ago. The announcement that Saudi Arabia is to	buy	48 of the aircraft has come as a relief to workers at
8,928.55 +7,500= 16,428.55 to invest. He or she may now	buy	5 per cent of the equity of the ungeared firm , ABC
, of Britain 's 100 most prescribed drugs , he can	buy	67 abroad . sell them for 20 per cent less than the
, exclusive voucher with you. Hand it over when you	buy	a big value Shows'n'Rides sheet of 12 individual tickets and you
I 'd improved a little bit. And erm managed to	buy	a car and I paid four hundred and ten for it .
the vodka (pause) and say it was n't even enough to	buy	a carry out (pause) but do n't say it unless she says
set their own limits. If you can only afford to	buy	a certain amount of organic produce , potatoes would be a good
you feed your pet on unnecessarily expensive food or could you	buy	a cheaper alternative . ? If you grow houseplants try propagating
wife Shirley -- who have a married daughter -- will also	buy	a few things for the house with their summer windfall . #
it work ? Is this safe ? # 3) #	Buy	a fuzz box . I have tried the new Marshall Bluesbreaker FX
to come on Central News. why Americans are flocking to	buy	a great British boot # Welcome back . A down to earth
? ' Denis protested . ' Well , it wo n't	buy	a gun . Perhaps a few bullets ? But give it to
Miranda , not many people of your age can afford to	buy	a house like this . KITS must be doing frightfully well .
, but with a three-year contract, he is planning to	buy	a house . ' Perhaps in Bearsden or Newton Mearns , '

Figure 1. KWIC Concordance lines of *buy* in BNC

In order to explore the corpus data, concordance lines, a list of sentences showing an occurrence of the target word in a particular context (Lindquist, 2009), need to be analyzed systematically. The search word or phrase is called the 'node' which is usually presented in the center of the concordance line known as Key-Word-In-Context displays (KWIC concordances), as shown in Figure 1. KWIC concordance lines will help enhance learners' awareness through investigating the lexico-grammatical patterns by looking at words or phrases which precede or follow the node word. From Figure 1, the right of the node word shows that *buy* is usually followed by an object noun introduced by article *a*, indicating a high instance of noun phrases which is also post-modified by prepositional phrase introduced by *of* and *like*. On the other hand, the left of the node word shows that *buy* is usually preceded by preposition *to*, suggesting prepositional phrase. Likewise, learners can investigate the most frequent collocations of the target words which occur in a specific context by looking at the

frequency figures. It should be noted that the most basic statistical measure in corpus linguistics is a frequency count which is the number of instances or hits of an item that occurs in a corpus.

	■	CONTEXT	FREQ	ALL	%	MI	
1	■	MONEY	344	36031	0.95	3.25	<div></div>
2	■	SELL	197	7455	2.64	4.72	<div></div>
3	■	SHARES	195	8257	2.36	4.56	<div></div>
4	■	BUY	154	12084	1.27	3.67	<div></div>
5	■	AFFORD	144	4347	3.31	5.04	<div></div>
6	■	GOODS	127	9928	1.28	3.67	<div></div>
7	■	CLOTHES	102	6858	1.49	3.89	<div></div>
8	■	EQUIPMENT	94	8716	1.08	3.42	<div></div>
9	■	EXPENSIVE	70	5666	1.24	3.62	<div></div>
10	■	DRINK	69	7627	0.90	3.17	<div></div>

Figure 2. Frequency figures of *buy* in BNC.

From Figure 2, the most frequent words that co-occur with the node word 'buy' are *money*, *sell*, *shares*, *buy*, *afford*, *goods*, *clothes*, *equipment*, *expensive*, and *drink*, respectively. It can be interpreted that the collocation of *buy* is associated with business terms, such as *money*, *shares*, and *goods*. Also, other possible verbs that could occur with *buy* are *sell* and *afford*, whereas *expensive* is the most frequent adjective that co-occurs with *buy*. These findings could help EFL/ESL learners to understand the contextual usage of the word effectively and lead them to the further investigation of language patterns as this could shed light on other new words or grammar rules that they have never experienced before (Jones & Waller, 2015).

2.2 Corpus-based Study of English Synonyms

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005) defines a *synonym* as “a word or expression that has the same or nearly the same meaning as another in the same language” (p. 1557), such as *big* and *large*. Synonyms can be classified into strict or absolute synonyms and loose or near-synonyms based on the degree of overlapping use of the words in a particular context. Regarding strict or absolute synonyms, two words can be used interchangeably, meaning that one could substitute the other with no effects on meanings and language patterns. In contrast, loose or near-synonyms may share some overlapping meanings and they cannot replace each other in some contexts (Jackson & Amvela, 2000). Their overlapping meanings may differ to a greater or lesser degree in certain areas (Jackson & Amvela, 2007). For example, the synonyms *discover* and *find* can be used interchangeably in the context *She discovered/found that her husband was having an affair*, but not in the context *She doesn't find it easy to talk about her problems*, or in *Who discovered America?*. Hence, loose synonyms are commonly found in English whereas strict synonyms are almost non-existent (Palmer, 1997).

More importantly, Jackson and Amvela (2000) posit some useful criteria that can be used to distinguish near-synonyms, namely dialects and standards of English, formality or style, and connotation. To elaborate, standards of English such as British, American, or Australian English can shed some light on differences between synonyms; for example, *dummy* (BrE and AusE) and *pacifier* (AmE), and *port* (AusE), *luggage* (BrE), and *baggage* (AmE). Moreover, formality or style should be taken into consideration when differentiating synonyms, for example, *book* (informal) and *reserve* (formal), and *ask* (informal) and *enquire* (formal). Lastly, in order to determine any differences between synonym pairs, connotations concerning negative or positive senses should be pointed out; for instance, *famous* (positive)

and *notorious* (negative), and *impulsive* (positive) and *impetuous* (negative). Thus, corpus-based analysis can be considered as an effective tool to analyze the synonyms systematically according to register difference, frequency, and collocations (Biber et al., 1998; Moon, 2010).

Chung (2011) found that synonyms *create* and *produce* shared some senses of meaning, but the corpus data drawn from Brown Corpus and Frown Corpus revealed that *create* seemed to co-occur with objects in a fewer quantity which required a high level of creativity, whereas *produce* tended to be followed by objects in a larger quantity with a low level of creativity. Jarunwaraphan and Mallikamas (2020) also arrived at the same conclusion that near-synonyms can have different connotations despite their overlapping core meanings. With the assistance of COCA, it was discovered that the verb collocates of *chance* tended to convey negativity (e.g., *decrease chances* and *lost all chances*), on the other hand, the collocates of *opportunity* revealed more positive connotations (e.g., *creates enormous opportunities* and *afforded the opportunities*).

Considering usage of synonyms, knowing the register of the words is helpful for students to distinguish the different usages of the synonyms, such as the differences between spoken and written language (Shaw, 2011). For example, *shot* in the academic register could refer to a medical injection; however, when it occurs in fiction or spoken context, it employs the meaning of a gunshot. Implicitly, corpus data could reveal the register difference by examining the frequency of the words that occurred in different text genres, such as spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper, and academic.

Dealing with genre differences, the degree of formality could be revealed. For example, if a word is frequently used in an academic context, it can be indicated that that word mostly occurs in a formal context. Cai (2012) found that *great* was used more frequently than the other six synonymous adjectives: *awesome*, *excellent*, *fabulous*, *fantastic*, *terrific*, and *wonderful*, obtained from COCA corpus. Interestingly, it is evident that *fabulous*, *fantastic*, *great*, *terrific*, and *wonderful* occurred in spoken genre, whereas *awesome* and *excellent* were commonly used in magazines. The findings suggested that these synonyms were common in an informal context. Using COCA, Phoocharoensil (2020) also found that *error* had the highest tendency to occur in academic texts, reflecting the high degree of formality, whereas *mistake* and *fault* mostly occurred in the informal contexts; such as television and film subtitles.

In terms of collocations, different collocates that co-exist with the target synonyms can implicitly identify the ability of a set of synonyms to substitute each other in some particular contexts. Sumintana and Tawilapakul (2019) investigated the synonyms *cure* and *heal*, using the corpus data obtained from COCA. It was found that *cure* is frequently followed by disease and problems such as *cancer* and *disease*, while *heal* frequently co-occurs with emotional injuries and something abstract, for example, *wounds* and *people*. Hence, they are loose synonyms due to differences in collocational patterns. In a similar vein, according to the corpus data in COCA, Aroonmanakun (2015) found that *fast* was used to emphasise the high speed of the action (e.g., *fast bike*, *fast computers*, *fast internet*), on the other hand, *quick* was often associated with the action being carried out in a short time (e.g., *quick answer*, *quick call*, and *quick drink*). Similarly, corpus data can also increase students' collocational awareness as it reveals the frequency of collocations of the words and provides a mutual information (MI) score which shows how frequently each word is connected (Shaw, 2011). According to Hunston (2002), an MI score of 3 or higher indicates that two items are collocated. Therefore, apart from looking at the frequency, MI scores should also be taken into consideration in order to see the collocational strength of the words.

Lastly, grammatical patterns can unveil the similar or different syntactic patterns of the synonyms which can help to distinguish the strict and loose synonyms. Jirananthiporn (2018) also suggests that the learners should be provided with the lexico-grammatical patterns when synonyms are introduced. Gu (2017) examined the synonyms *obtain* and *gain* through BNC corpus. They found that the syntactic patterns of these two words are similar in the pattern of “verb + object noun” and “verb + adverb”. Nonetheless, the result shows that *obtain* is more frequently used in the passive voice. By the same token, Petcharat and Phoocharoensil (2017) found that *proper*, *appropriate*, and *suitable* cannot be used interchangeably in all grammatical contexts despite their shared common core meaning.

3. Research Methodology

This study is a contrastive corpus-based synonymous analysis. Significantly, a “corpus-based” investigation is often undertaken to check the researcher’s intuition about language use which is distinctive from a “corpus-driven” investigation where the researcher approaches the corpus data with an open mind to explore the emerged patterns (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001). Considering the scope of the study, a corpus-based analysis was employed to investigate the collocational patterns, formality, and grammatical patterns of *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* to confirm their status as near-synonyms.

3.1 Sample

Three synonyms *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* were selected to be analyzed in this present study, following the criteria of collocations, formality, and grammatical patterns. The selection of the synonyms was determined based on their appearance in the BNC/COCA Level word family lists, namely 1st 1,000 BNC/COCA headwords (Nation, 2017a) and 8th 1,000 BNC/COCA headwords (Nation, 2017b). The BNC/COCA lists are designed primarily for learners of English as a foreign language which contains the headwords from the 25,000 BNC/COCA word families that come with the Range program. Specifically, *naughty* was listed in the first 1,000 BNC/COCA headwords, and *disobedient* was listed in the eighth 1,000 BNC/COCA headwords, reflecting their high frequency of occurrence in real-life language use.

Table 1 shows the definitions of *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* from the Cambridge University Press (n.d.).

Table 1. Definitions of *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* in Cambridge University Press (n.d.)

<i>Synonyms</i>	<i>Definitions</i>
<i>Naughty</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When children are naughty, or their behaviour is naughty, they behave badly or do not do what they are told to do 2. Used slightly humorously to describe an adult who has behaved badly or an adult's bad action 3. Involving or suggesting sex

<i>Synonyms</i>	<i>Definitions</i>
<i>Rebellious</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If a group of people is rebellious, they oppose the ideas of the people in authority and plan to change the system, often using force 2. If someone is rebellious, they are difficult to control and do not behave in the way that is expected
<i>Disobedient</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refusing to do what someone in authority tells you to do 2. Not doing what you are told to do

Given the definitions, *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* share the core meaning suggesting the action of resistance and the sense of not doing what one is told or expected to do. However, there are some overlapping concepts shared by the three synonyms which are not explicitly explained in the dictionary. Consequently, the choice of the synonyms was predetermined by the fact that *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* appear to be problematic and confusing among EFL learners due to their similar L1 meanings. Therefore, a corpus-based analysis should be used as evidence to broaden the understanding of the similarities and differences of the near-synonyms and provide insightful information on unique patterns and usages in naturally-occurring settings.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

The analysis was conducted in both quantitative and qualitative ways with the assistance of the online tool Sketch Engine (SkE). Sketch Engine is a useful and convenient toolbox to elicit the data from BNC corpus as it provides KWIC concordance lines, frequency/tokens, collocation, word sketch, sketch differences, and syntactic patterns/colligation. In order to ensure the representativeness of the data, a well-balanced corpus containing a variety of subsections representing different genres of language use should be utilized (Hunston, 2002). Therefore, corpus data used in this study were drawn from two significant corpora, namely BNC representing British English, and COCA representing American English. To elaborate, BNC was originally created by Oxford University Press in the 1980s and early 1990s, containing 100 million words of text from a wide range of genres (e.g., spoken, fiction, magazines, newspapers, and academic). Moreover, in order to triangulate the data, the corpus data drawn from COCA, one of the largest American English corpora and the counterpart to BNC, was collected to investigate the dispute of the three synonyms across different varieties of English. Specifically, COCA is composed of more than one billion words in 485,202 texts, including 24-25 million words added each year from 1990-2019 which is evenly divided between the genres of TV and Movies subtitles, spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic journals. Therefore, BNC and COCA are the only large, well-balanced corpora of English that are freely available online which can complement each other. In terms of genre balance, BNC is 10% spoken and 90% written, while in COCA the corpus is nearly evenly divided (20% in each genre) between spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspaper, and academic. BNC has a much wider range of spoken sub-genres, while COCA is composed of unscripted conversations on television and radio shows. Both corpora are very well balanced in terms of sub-genres for the written genres (e.g., Newspaper-Sports, or Academic-Medicine). However, due to a discrepancy in genre balance between COCA and BNC, only the corpus data drawn from the five shared genres, namely spoken,

fiction, magazine, newspaper, and academic, were included in this study for a comparable comparison.

In light of the investigation, the degree of formality, collocational patterns, and grammatical patterns were used as the criteria to distinguish the three near-synonyms by analyzing the data that emerged from the corpora. By way of illustration, the degree of formality was determined based on the frequencies of each synonym occurring across different genres. In addition, the MI test was used as the corpus statistics to identify the strength of collocations as the co-occurrence of words is statistically significant if the MI score is at least 3 (Hunston, 2002). Only the first 10 noun collocates that frequently co-occur with the target synonyms in each corpus source were examined. Since the target synonyms were adjectives, looking at how these words modified nouns might yield some useful patterns for EFL students to improve their writing and translation skills, and provide insights to investigate the connotations of each synonym. Therefore, only noun collocates were analyzed in this study. To investigate the pattern of ADJECTIVE + NOUN, one right-span of the node was set as the criterion to search for noun collocates of the target synonyms. Moreover, the concordance lines extracted from both COCA and BNC of each synonym were taken into consideration in order to enhance the understanding of their usage and meanings in particular contexts. Lastly, in terms of the grammatical patterns, only prepositional patterns of each synonymous adjective were investigated. Subsequently, the researcher re-examined the findings to increase the reliability of interpretation.

4. Results and Discussion

The synonymous adjectives *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* are analyzed and presented according to their lexical information, that is, formality and collocational patterns, and their syntactic information; that is, grammatical patterns. The detailed analysis with rationales is as follows.

4.1 Degrees of Formality

In terms of formality, the distributions across five different genres in BNC, namely spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper, and academic were explored to represent British English. The results were ranked in terms of its frequency per million which is a normalized frequency.

Table 2. Comparison of frequency of *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* in different text types in BNC

Genre	Naughty		Genre	Disobedient		Genre	Rebellious	
	Freq.	Per million		Freq.	Per million		Freq.	Per million
SPOKEN	231	23.18	FICTION	19	1.19	MAGAZINE	28	3.86
FICTION	186	11.69	ACADEMIC	13	0.85	ACADEMIC	37	2.41
MAGAZINE	44	6.06	SPOKEN	3	0.30	NEWSPAPER	22	2.10
NEWSPAPER	45	4.30	MAGAZINE	2	0.28	FICTION	33	2.07
ACADEMIC	33	2.15	NEWSPAPER	0	0.00	SPOKEN	6	0.60
Total	539			37			126	

Table 2 illustrates that of these three synonyms, *naughty* occurs with the highest frequency in BNC (539 tokens) which is higher than *rebellious* (126 tokens), and *disobedient* (37 tokens), respectively.

According to Table 2, it can be assumed that many non-academic disciplines prefer *naughty* to *disobedient* and *rebellious* because of the high rate of occurrence of *naughty* in spoken (231 tokens) and fictions (186 tokens), and its lowest frequency in academic. To elaborate, this corpus data can support the assumption that *naughty* has a higher degree of informality reflecting its usage in colloquial and everyday language than the other target adjectives. Similarly, *disobedient* is discovered to be frequently used in a non-academic context because of its occurrence in fiction (19 tokens). However, *disobedient* can also be commonly used in the academic genre (13 tokens) signalling its usage in a formal context. More importantly, *rebellious* tends to be used in formal contexts because of its frequent occurrence in magazines (28 tokens) and academic (37 tokens).

With this assumption, these synonyms are considered near-synonyms because they cannot replace each other in some registers in British English. In order to strengthen the reliability of the study, the frequency of the occurrences of the target synonyms across five different genres in COCA, namely fiction, magazines, spoken, newspapers, and academic, are compared to validate the degree of formality of these three synonyms in American English.

Table 3. Comparison of frequency of *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* in different text types in COCA

Genre	Naughty		Genre	Disobedient		Genre	Rebellious	
	Freq.	Per million		Freq.	Per million		Freq.	Per million
FICTION	460	3.89	FICTION	86	0.73	ACADEMIC	383	3.20
MAGAZINE	459	3.64	ACADEMIC	75	0.63	MAGAZINE	386	3.06
SPOKEN	288	2.28	MAGAZINE	44	0.35	FICTION	320	2.70
NEWSPAPER	228	1.87	SPOKEN	20	0.16	NEWSPAPER	309	2.54
ACADEMIC	59	0.49	NEWSPAPER	16	0.13	SPOKEN	227	1.80
Total	1,494			241			1,625	

Table 3 shows that among the three synonyms, *rebellious* occurs with the highest frequency in COCA (1,625 tokens) which is higher than *naughty* (1,494 tokens), and *disobedient* (241 tokens), respectively. Interestingly, this sequence is not aligned with those found in BNC.

As illustrated in Table 3, *naughty* is found most frequently in fiction (460 tokens), followed by magazines (459 tokens). The result indicates that *naughty* is commonly used in an informal context, reflecting its usage in fictional and conversational language. In a similar vein, the occurrence of *naughty* in American academic contexts is the lowest (59 tokens), which is consistent with the findings found in BNC. Thus, the informality of *naughty* is confirmed in both British and American English. However, *naughty* in COCA does not appear as high-frequently in spoken English as it does in BNC. Moreover, there is a clear trend that *disobedient* occurs with the greatest frequency in fiction (86 tokens), followed by academic (75 tokens). The result reveals that *disobedient* is commonly used in informal English which is in line with the occurrence of *disobedient* in BNC. More importantly, it is apparent that *rebellious* has the highest frequency occurring in academics (383 tokens), followed by magazines (386 tokens). The high rate of occurrence of *rebellious* in the academic genre and its low frequency in spoken can support the assumption that it has a higher degree of formality than the other

target adjectives. This denotes that the usage of *rebellious* in American formal contexts is common, which is corresponding to the findings in BNC. Interestingly, it was observed that the occurrences of both *disobedient* and *rebellious* in spoken American English is low, so it can be assumed that they were not commonly used in communication based on their frequencies in the spoken genres.

Thus, the degree of formality of the three synonyms in both COCA and BNC suggests that these synonyms differ in terms of the style or word register of the contexts in which they occur, confirming their status as near-synonyms. The findings of this study complied with previous research (Biber et al., 1998; Cai, 2012; Jackson & Amvela, 2000; Moon, 2010; Phoocharoensil, 2020; Shaw, 2011) that a corpus tool is considered as a useful tool in analyzing the distributions across genres of the synonyms in order to distinguish them effectively based on formality.

4.2 Collocations of *Naughty*, *Rebellious*, and *Disobedient*

The second part will focus on the collocational differences of these synonyms. In this study, MI scores in the following tables show that the target synonyms are significantly collocated with their collocates since an MI score is higher than 3 (Hunston, 2002).

Table 4. Noun collocates of the synonyms *naughty*, *disobedient*, and *rebellious* in BNC

Rank	<i>Naughty</i>				<i>Disobedient</i>				<i>Rebellious</i>			
	Noun collocate	Frequency		MI value	Noun collocate	Frequency		MI value	Noun collocate	Frequency		MI value
1	boy	51	boy 41	8.48	child	3	child 2	7.08	attitude	4	attitude 3	7.91
			boys 10	7.16			children 1	5.13			attitudes 1	6.64
2	child	21	child 11	5.68	schoolboy	1		11.65	streak	3		11.70
			children 10	4.59								
3	girl	20	girl 18	7.10	stomach	1		9.13	officer	3		7.31
			girls 2	4.61								
4	word	10	word 4	4.58	tools	1		9.02	peasant	3	peasant 1	8.20
			words 6	4.81							peasants 2	9.15
5	schoolboy	7		10.59	youth	1		8.25	determin ation	2		8.43
6	schoolgirl	6	schoolgirl 4	10.54	boys	1		7.70	nature	2		5.73
			schoolgirls 2	11.30								
7	things	6		4.02	hair	1		6.89	students	2		6.02
8	bits	5		7.41	mean	1		5.22	youth	2		7.48
9	dog	4		5.81	members	1		5.78	teenager	2	teenager 1	9.15
											teenagers 1	9.00
10	daddy	3		7.29	-	-		-	Yorkshire men	1		14.31

According to Table 4, it is clearly shown that *naughty* in British English tends to co-occur with the noun collocates that are associated with young children such as *child(ren)*, *boy(s)*, *girl(s)*, *schoolboy*, and *schoolgirl(s)*, supporting the definition provided in the dictionary. To be more specific, *naughty* has the highest tendency to co-occur with *boy(s)* (51

tokens), followed by *child* (21 tokens), and *girl(s)* (20 tokens), respectively. Semantically, it is interesting to point out that boys are evidently perceived as naughtier than girls, reflecting the gender stereotype. To enhance the understanding of the collocation behaviors in contexts and consequently decrease the thesaurus errors (Ferris, 2009), some examples of the concordance lines from BNC are presented.

(1) Ta da, don't be a **naughty boy** again. I open the second letter, would you please appear in court [*spoken*]

(2) the Colonel's lady whined to her husband.' Was I a **naughty girl** to ask for champagne?' [*fiction*]

(3) If they thought he was going to stand in front of them like a **naughty schoolboy**, they were mistaken.' [*fiction*]

As shown in (2), it can be assumed that *girl* in the corpus data does not only mean young children, but also adult women as *naughty* in (2) is used humorously to describe an adult's bad or socially unacceptable action. Thus, this assumption supports the definition in the dictionary. Moreover, it is noticeable that *naughty* can co-exist with non-living phenomena such as *word(s)*, *things*, and *bits*. Significantly, the findings reveal that *naughty* can be used to modify inanimate objects to convey sexual feelings and thoughts, or behaviors and languages that are not socially acceptable, which confirms the definition provided in the dictionary as illustrated in the following concordance lines from BNC.

(4) "What's that then?" **Naughty words**, Mum. Not very lady-like at all. What would Davey think? [*fiction*]

(5) is a symptom of your sexual frustration. You want your nice boyfriend to do **naughty things** -- the things this girl does in your fantasies. [*newspaper*]

(6) men looking too excited. # Naughty Magazines are allowed to show a man's **naughty bits** only if they resemble a map of the Mull of Kintyre, Scots-born Pauline [*newspaper*]

Likewise, Table 4 highlights the fact that *disobedient* shares some of the frequent collocates with *naughty* as it tends to co-occur with *child(ren)*, *schoolboy*, and *boys* as well. Similar to *naughty*, *disobedient* frequently co-exists with non-human noun collocates such as *stomach*, *tools*, and *hair*. However, *disobedient* does not denote sexual connotations. To elaborate, *disobedient* is used to personify the objects to signal the act of refusal against the users' intentions, as shown in concordances (7) and (8).

(7) In here they can't get me. And I'm safe from those **disobedient tools** too. They've had their day." [*fiction*]

(8) could sense the various cuts and nicks on my queasy jawline, my short but **disobedient hair**, the unhappy hang of my uniform, my lustreless black boots. [*fiction*]

Crucially, this usage of *disobedient* is not commonly exemplified in the dictionary despite the fact that it frequently co-occurred with non-human; therefore, it can be suggested that corpus tools can offer a new research perspective to explore language use beyond native-speaker intuition (Hunston, 2002).

Considering the noun collocates of *rebellious*, they are apparently different from *naughty* and *disobedient* because *rebellious* frequently co-exists with the words that reveal a greater sense of seriousness than the other two synonyms, for example, *streak*, *officer*, *peasants*, and *determination*, as exemplified in (9), (10), and (11).

(9) Young people with curiosity and a ***rebellious*** streak are only too ready to experiment. [*newspaper*]

(10) This ugly crime against Lebanon and its legitimacy followed a series of threats by the ***rebellious*** officer [*newspaper*]

(11) In 1549 the citizens of Exeter believed the ***rebellious*** peasants to be intent on pillage; Norwich merchants concealed their valuables and fled. [*academic*]

In addition, confirming the definitions provided in the dictionary, *rebellious* is likely to collocate with adults or young adults, for example, *officer*, *Yorkshiremen*, *peasants*, *youth*, and *teenager(s)*, while *naughty* and *disobedient* are more frequently collocated with younger groups of people. In terms of semantic preference, *rebellious* tends to create a sense of suppression and disagreement with people in authority when it co-exists with its noun collocates indicating opposed groups of people, as evidenced in the concordances (12) and (13).

(12) the third youngest president of all time and five years younger than the voice of ***rebellious*** youth, Bob Dylan. [*newspaper*]

(13) 1489 the earl of Northumberland lost his life at the hands of a force of ***rebellious*** Yorkshiremen when he was trying to collect the subsidy granted that year [*academic*]

As can be seen in the concordance lines, the corpus data can reveal some historical contexts and events that happened in a particular setting. It is also observed that *rebellious* can co-occur with abstract nouns, for instance, *attitude*, *determination*, and *nature*, to indicate a strong will of the opposition, as illustrated in (13) and (14).

(13) But maybe that's what the pop world needs -- a bit of ***rebellious*** attitude. 'Disagreed' is just having a pop at the governments of [*magazine*]

(14) And from somewhere inside she felt a spurt of ***rebellious*** determination. 'I'll make it work. I will...' And then [*fiction*]

Even though the target synonyms may share core meaning, they are different in noun collocates to some extent which could yield different shades of meanings in some contexts. Therefore, regarding the different denotative meanings of *naughty*, *disobedient*, and *rebellious*, it can be assumed that they are loose synonyms since they cannot substitute each other in all possible contexts.

In order to compare the collocations of these three synonymous adjectives across the varieties of English, the data obtained from COCA representing American English were analyzed as listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Noun collocates of the synonyms *naughty*, *disobedient*, and *rebellious* in COCA

Rank	<i>Naughty</i>			<i>Disobedient</i>			<i>Rebellious</i>		
	Noun collocates	Frequency	MI value	Noun collocates	Frequency	MI value	Noun collocates	Frequency	MI value
1	boy	73	boy 59 7.11	child	18	child 8 6.39	teenager	41	teenager 29 9.76
			boys 14 5.79			children 10 5.84			teenagers 6 7.42
									teen-ager 6 10.98
2	child	54	child 30 5.66	son	8	6.75	spirit	28	spirit 25 7.18
			children 24 4.47						spirits 3 6.28
3	girl	37	girl 31 6.00	kid	4	kid 1 4.53	youth	21	7.31
			girls 6 4.35			kids 3 4.96			
4	word	37	word 20 5.42	daughter	4	daughter 2 5.40	streak	19	9.43
			words 17 5.03			daughters 2 7.82			
5	dog	32	7.05	wife	3	5.38	slave	17	slave 4 6.48
6	things	29	4.23	dog	3	6.27	son	15	8.33
7	bits	26	9.41	organ	2	9.02	republics	14	4.90
8	list	17	5.63	legs	2	6.53	nature	14	10.19
9	corner	8	5.74	hair	2	5.19	behavior	14	behavior 11 5.31
									behaviors 3 5.40
10	thoughts	7	5.65	act	2	4.92	teen	13	8.26

As can be seen in Table 5, the collocations obtained from COCA have more varieties than those drawn from BNC. It is apparent that the first most frequent noun collocates of *naughty* and *disobedient* in COCA are similar to those found in BNC. Notably, *boy(s)* is the most frequent noun collocate of *naughty*, and *child(ren)* is the most frequent noun collocate of *disobedient*. On the other hand, the first most frequent noun collocate of *rebellious* in COCA, that is, *teenager(s)*, is different from BNC (i.e., *attitude(s)*).

In a similar vein, *naughty* is frequently used with young children (e.g., *boy(s)* and *girl(s)*), and, similarly, boys are also stereotypically viewed as the naughtier gender due to the higher tendency of *boy(s)* than *girl(s)* in COCA. Hence, these findings are consistent with the data found in BNC. Moreover, the collocation *naughty corner*, supports the assumption that *naughty* tends to be involved with children as *naughty corner* is used as a common form of punishment to discipline children.

(15) 'What Would the Supernanny Do?' Supernanny would send him to his *naughty corner* and say, 'That is unacceptable.' [*fiction*]

Interestingly, it is noteworthy to point out that *naughty* in the American context can be associated with Christmas because it has a high tendency to co-exist with *list*, suggesting the common usage of *naughty* in the festive event as illustrated in (16).

(16) Hi. I got the stomach flu on Christmas Day because I was on the ***naughty list*** this year. [*spoken*]

Furthermore, it is noticed that *naughty* is also used to signify a sexual connotation in the American context as it tends to collocate with *word(s)*, *thing(s)*, *bit(s)*, and *thoughts*, as exemplified in (17) and (18).

(17) "Whisper some sexy compliment or all the ***naughty things*** you're going to do to him when you get home, or lean [*magazine*]

(18) the relationship platonic, she had to admit that she'd been having some very ***naughty thoughts*** about her hot new boss. [*fiction*]

In terms of *disobedient*, the noun collocates found in COCA are relatively similar to BNC. The occurrences of *disobedient* in American English is often related to dominance-submission as it is frequently collocated with *kid(s)*, *child*, *son*, *daughter*, and *wife*. As illustrated in (19) and (20), it can be inferred that these collocates mirror patriarchy and dominance-submission in families.

(19) but he has left his mark, for in pressing the blood-stained key to his ***disobedient wife's*** forehead, he has left there the tell-tale sign of her desire branded [*academic*]

(20) the hand and forcibly put him to bed. If he wanted to be a ***disobedient child***, I was forced to play the role of the strict parent. [*fiction*]

Similar to BNC, it is observed that *disobedient* in COCA can be commonly used with noun collocates associated with body organs such as *organ*, *legs*, and *hair* to give them the human characteristic of behaving against the owner's will, as shown in the following concordances.

(21) "Just forget it, " he said, as much to his ***disobedient organ*** as to his unintentionally sexy consultant. "It's a cute idea [*fiction*]

(22) I walked, or more likely wobbled, out of Sunbrook Retirement Residence, my ***disobedient legs*** carried me back to the park and the weathered redwood bench [*fiction*]

Notably, *rebellious* in COCA shares some common noun collocates with BNC, for example, *teenager(s)*, *youth*, *streak*, and *nature*. Despite the shared noun collocates, it is observed that *rebellious* has the highest tendency to co-occur with *teenager(s)* (41 tokens) which appeared to occur with low frequency in BNC. More importantly, it can be assumed that the occurrence of *rebellious* with *teenager(s)*, *youth*, and *teens* manifests the higher usage of *rebellious* with young adults than the other two synonyms, as evidenced in (23).

(23) my vacation to work for free helping strangers," recalls Nathan, a typically **rebellious** teenager who usually avoided spending time with his parents and sisters. [newspaper]

Furthermore, the data obtained from COCA reflect some parts of the American history regarding African American slavery as *rebellious* is discovered to co-occur with *slave(s)*, signifying the usage of *rebellious* with a higher degree of seriousness than the other two synonyms of racial discrimination and enslavement, as illustrated in (24) and (25).

(24) # 1839 # Amistad Mutiny A Spanish ship commandeered by 53 **rebellious** slaves lands on Long Island. [magazine]

(25) Two of the more notorious Americans represented are the **rebellious** slave Nat Turner and the fire-and-brimstone preacher Jonathan Edwards. [academic]

Thus, concordance analysis and the study of collocational patterns can lead to more insightful information and understanding of meaning in context because vocabulary cannot be acquired in isolation and the co-selection of words also needs to be taken into account (Cheng, 2012; Sinclair, 2004; Thornbury, 2002). It can be concluded that the collocational patterns of *naughty*, *disobedient*, and *rebellious* obtained from COCA and BNC confirms their status as near-synonyms since they could not share the same shades of meanings and cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts. Moreover, it was found that there is a consistency of the collocational patterns and connotations of the three synonyms across different varieties of English. The current findings are generally in agreement with those in previous studies (Aroonmanakun, 2015; Biber et al., 1998; Chung, 2011; Jackson & Amvela, 2000; Moon, 2010; Sumintana & Tawilapakul, 2019).

4.3 Grammatical Patterns of *Naughty*, *Rebellious*, and *Disobedient*

The last important criterion used to distinguish the synonyms is grammatical patterns. Due to the fact that *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* are adjectives, they tend to occur as a modifier in attributive positions, postpositive positions, and predicative positions to modify nouns. Therefore, the target grammatical pattern in the study is ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION. The possible grammatical patterns of *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* were elicited from Word Sketch function of SkE in BNC corpus, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. The grammatical patterns of *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* in BNC

Synonyms	Adjective + Preposition	Examples from concordance lines (BNC)
<i>naughty</i>	<i>naughty</i> by	Are these just bad vibes and sour grapes or is hip hop just too naughty by nature for the mainstream?
	<i>naughty</i> of	It's naughty of your mother not to let you have them.
	<i>naughty</i> with	So prodigal and naughty with caresses ,
<i>rebellious</i>	<i>rebellious</i> in	people who have experienced unemployment are more rebellious in spirit does not itself explain why this occurs.
	<i>rebellious</i> about	Tories who feel rebellious about the railways,
	<i>rebellious</i> towards	He's a very like er rebellious towards rock and roll.

	<i>rebellious</i> against	his father or some other relation was among the most bitterly <i>rebellious <u>against</u> a system</i> that could tolerate such things.
<i>disobedient</i>	<i>disobedient</i> to	were the greatest enemies to monarchy and most <i>disobedient <u>to</u> Kings</i> ,

Regarding their grammatical structures in the forms of ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION, as shown in Table 6, it can be observed that the three synonyms are likely to be followed by different prepositions. Interestingly, the preposition *against* that co-occurs with *rebellious* (e.g., *rebellious against a system*) could reflect the distinctive register of this word as it could enhance the sense of conflict and opposition, which is corresponding to the noun collocates of *rebellious*. Thus, *naughty*, *disobedient*, and *rebellious* are loose synonyms since they do not share the same grammatical patterns in some particular contexts. In order to cross-check the data in BNC, the ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION patterns of the three synonyms in COCA were investigated.

Table 7. The grammatical patterns of *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* in COCA

Synonyms	Adjective + Preposition	Examples from concordance lines (COCA)
<i>naughty</i>	<i>naughty</i> by	Women are nice and men are <i>naughty <u>by</u> nature</i> .
	<i>naughty</i> with	We have to do a bit <i>naughty <u>with</u> the red vibes</i> .
	<i>naughty</i> to	Kissing was very <i>naughty <u>to</u> the Japanese</i> . Santa thinks it's <i>naughty <u>to</u> have wine</i> before nine.
<i>rebellious</i>	<i>rebellious</i> with	He's going to get a little more <i>rebellious <u>with</u> his parents</i>
	<i>rebellious</i> by	We're teens -- <i>rebellious <u>by</u> nature</i> .
	<i>rebellious</i> about	He's got something to be <i>rebellious <u>about</u>...</i> namely, <i>being gay</i> in a homophobic society.
	<i>rebellious</i> to	He was argumentative and <i>rebellious <u>to</u> his father</i>
	<i>rebellious</i> against	Maha and Hanan have always been <i>rebellious <u>against</u> background, tradition, and taboos</i> of all sorts.
<i>disobedient</i>	<i>disobedient</i> to	I will become <i>disobedient <u>to</u> God's call</i> for holiness in my life.

According to Table 7, despite some shared prepositions (i.e., *with* and *to*), it is apparent that the target synonyms have different grammatical patterns regarding ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION. Moreover, it was discovered that there are some similar and different usages of prepositions that follow the three synonymous adjectives across two sources of corpora representing two varieties of English. To illustrate, Table 7 reveals some unique grammatical patterns in COCA that do not appear in BNC. For instance, *naughty* in COCA can be followed by *to* + *infinitive* to show the action (e.g., *naughty to have wine*) and *to* + *noun* to indicate a person whom a speaker behaves badly to (e.g., *naughty to the Japanese*), on the other hand, *naughty of* only exists in BNC. It is also interesting to point out that *rebellious* can be followed by a wider variety of prepositions in COCA than in BNC, namely *with*, *by*, and *to*. However, it cannot be generalized that *disobedient in* or *rebellious to* do not exist in British English because of the limitation of the corpus evidence that is not capable of collecting all of the language used in natural-occurring contexts (Aston, 2001). Results such as these align with those found in Gu (2017) and Petcharat and Phoocharoensil (2017). Since the three synonyms do not share

all the same grammatical patterns, thus they cannot replace each other in all grammatical contexts, confirming their status as near-synonyms.

5. Conclusion and Pedagogical Implication

In conclusion, this study sheds some light on how to implement corpus data into analyzing the similarities and differences of English synonyms. Based on the contrastive corpus analysis across BNC and COCA in this study, the synonymous adjectives *naughty*, *rebellious*, and *disobedient* yield interesting results to confirm that most English synonyms are loose synonyms (Palmer, 1997) because they cannot be used interchangeably in every context (Jackson & Amvela, 2000) with regard to their distinctiveness of collocations, degrees of formality, and grammatical patterns. Regarding distributions across five different genres, it can be concluded that these three synonymous adjectives cannot substitute each other in all contexts due to their different degrees of formality. *Naughty* most frequently occurs in informal contexts as it has the highest tendency to appear in non-academic contexts in both American and British English. Conversely, *disobedient* and *rebellious* most frequently occur in more academic disciplines reflecting its usage in formal contexts. Therefore, the distinction in genres and formality highlighted with the assistance of corpus tools are important and useful criteria to effectively differentiate synonyms (Szudarski, 2018). In addition to genre differences, collocation analysis by looking at the top 10 most frequent noun collocates of each synonym is considered to be another vital criterion to distinguish near-synonyms (Cheng, 2012; Sinclair, 2004; Thornbury, 2002). Based on the discovered collocational patterns of the target synonyms, they are still different in noun collocates signaling different lexical patterns and usages in naturally occurring contexts; thus, it can be concluded that *naughty*, *disobedient*, and *rebellious* cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts. Interestingly, some of the emerged corpus data reveal that *naughty* and *disobedient* tend to share some noun collocates such as *child(ren)* and *boy(s)*, which indicate overlapping meanings and support the definition in the dictionary that *naughty* and *disobedient* are commonly used with children to suggest undesired behaviors. Crucially, one of the differences between *naughty* and *disobedient* is that *naughty* tends to denote sexual connotation when it is used with inanimate objects such as *things* and *words* whereas *disobedient* is used to personify the objects to signal the act of refusal against the users' intentions such as *disobedient tools* and *disobedient legs*. It is also noteworthy to point out that this collocational pattern of *disobedient* is not widely covered or exemplified in the dictionary; thus, corpus tools can offer a new research perspective to explore language use beyond native-speaker intuition (Hunston, 2002). On the other hand, *rebellious* is more likely to be used with teenagers. Nevertheless, the corpus data drawn from both BNC and COCA suggest the usage of *rebellious* with a higher degree of seriousness than the other two synonyms when it co-occurs with *slave(s)*, *streak*, and *determination*. Lastly, according to the grammatical pattern ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION elicited from the corpora, the three synonyms are likely to be followed by different prepositions which confirm their status as near-synonyms.

To some extent, these findings can have a profound impact in the fields of English language teaching, especially in vocabulary teaching, as it is apparent that corpora serve as a useful tool to explore the authentic language patterns and help enhance learners' metalinguistic awareness through investigating concordance lines and collocation patterns (Shaw, 2011). By following the above corpus-based approach, ELT practitioners and L2 learners will be able to distinguish synonyms effectively, apart from solely consulting dictionaries or native-speaker

intuition. Moreover, exploring language patterns through corpus data can enhance learners' lexical knowledge and lexical competence (Liu, 2010; Phoocharoensil, 2010; Shahzadi et al., 2019). In light of classroom implications, providing learners with concordance lines and collocational patterns extracted from COCA and BNC when introducing new vocabulary to them is considered to be more useful than providing only a single word (Jirananthiporn, 2018) as they can exemplify the real-life language patterns. It is also noteworthy to point out that learning vocabulary through the concordances and collocational patterns can broaden the learners' horizons as they may incidentally learn cultures, beliefs, ideologies, and history of the target language, especially when two corpora across English varieties are compared. For example, the usage of *naughty list* in the American context signals Christmas and the pattern of *rebellious slave(s)* signifies African American slavery. Moreover, frequency lists showing degrees of formality of each word and grammatical patterns should be provided to learners in order to help them overcome difficulties in distinguishing near-synonyms, apply the synonyms in the correct contexts, reduce the thesaurus errors, and consequently, improve their writing and translation skills (Ferris, 2009; Phoocharoensil, 2010; Sasum & Weeks, 2018). To elaborate, it would be more beneficial for learners to be exposed to the ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION patterns such as *rebellious against* and *naughty to* so that they will be aware of the correct usage of each synonym and use corpora as a useful resource to refine their writing. In conclusion, the incorporation of corpus evidence in EFL/ESL material development should be advocated as corpora can provide some additional data that is non-existent in the dictionary or beyond native-speaker intuition (Aroonmanakun, 2015; Sinclair, 1991; Szudarski, 2018).

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A Corpus-based Study on the Meanings, Distribution, Collocations, and Formality of ‘*Concentrate*’, ‘*Emphasize*’, and ‘*Focus*’

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Abstract

This research explored the distinctions and similarities between three synonymous verbs, ‘*concentrate*’, ‘*emphasize*’ and ‘*focus*’, in terms of their collocations, sense of meaning, and grammatical patterns. Data were gathered from three online dictionaries, namely (1) the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2014), (2) the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (online version), and (3) the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (online version), as well as the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. The former method concerns the analysis of frequency and MI scores of each verb, while the latter method is concerned with the analysis of concordance lines. Throughout the eight text types of the COCA, ‘*focus*’ appears to be most commonly used in academic texts and was found least often in fiction genre. Furthermore, two grammatical structures are shared by the two pairs of synonymous verbs: ‘*concentrate*’ and ‘*focus*’, and ‘*concentrate*’ and ‘*emphasize*’. The results also revealed that, although having similar meanings, near-synonyms can behave differently in terms of collocation and semantic preferences. The results of this study can be used as supplementary materials by English language educators to help students learn more English vocabulary, especially in academic writing.

Keywords: synonymous verbs, collocation, corpus-based study, grammatical patterns

1. Introduction

The importance of vocabulary in language learning could not be overstated (Gass & Selinker, 2008). If learners cannot understand the vocabulary they are given, it is likely that they cannot comprehend it and thus fail to acquire it (Folse, 2004). To date, there is a growing body of pertinent literature which acknowledges the importance of vocabulary, especially in language learning. To understand a language more precisely, learning synonyms is thought to be an effective way to broaden one's vocabulary. However, one of the most challenging aspects in English language learning is that English language vocabulary has an infinite number of synonyms, making synonyms a challenge in vocabulary learning (Laufer, 1997). Furthermore, L2 learners even find learning synonyms confusing and difficult, since they may believe that one word is enough for them. For example, the verbs ‘*concentrate*’, ‘*emphasize*’ and ‘*focus*’ are technically synonyms that correlate with the same meaning of paying attention to a particular matter. Particularly, in academic writing, these three words are frequently used.

However, when these verbs are examined in texts, they seem to have different collocational patterns which will be later discussed in the result section.

There seems to have been no analysis of the synonymous verbs ‘*concentrate*’, ‘*emphasize*’ and ‘*focus*’ in a single study, and therefore, the similarities and differences of these three synonymous verbs are worth examining. Importantly, these three verbs are listed among the top 3,000 most frequent words of the BNC/COCA lists (Nation, 2017) and listed in the Academic Word List (AWL) most frequent words (Coxhead, 2000); hence, English language learners are likely to encounter these three verbs frequently. Furthermore, several researchers (e.g., Ly & Jung, 2015) argue that dictionaries' shortcomings may be one of the reasons why it is difficult for L2 learners to distinguish between loose synonyms, leading them to use synonyms in incorrect contexts. To counter these concerns, this research centered on the three English synonyms for ‘*concentrate*’, ‘*emphasize*’ and ‘*focus*’, with the aim of determining some correlations and variations in their collocational patterns and senses of meaning, as well as exploring their formality. The findings of this study are intended to help teachers and educators develop vocabulary teaching materials, and help students learn how to use near-synonyms naturally.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Synonyms

A synonym is a term or phrase that has a similar or nearly identical meaning to another word. Indeed, several academics (e.g., Cruse, 2000; Jackson & Amvela, 2000; Taylor, 2003) have attempted to describe the word synonym. According to Jackson and Amvela (2000), a synonym is "a relationship of the sameness of meaning that holds between two terms" (p. 92). Furthermore, Taylor (2003) defines a synonym as a pair of terms whose semantic similarities outnumber their differences and do not primarily contrast with one another.

Synonyms are classified into two types: absolute and near synonyms. Absolute synonyms must be similar in all meanings and be interchangeable in the same way using the same collocations (Lyons, 1995; Jackson & Amvela, 2000). However, the majority of synonyms in the English language are near synonyms, also known as loose synonyms. To clarify, these synonyms have the same or identical meanings, but they cannot be used interchangeably in all cases due to a variety of reasons, including their ranging scales in meaning and use patterns.

Indeed, absolute synonyms of the same register and style are difficult to come by. Cruse (2000) shows that, in English, there might not be any true absolute synonyms. When comparing such two English adjectives as ‘*big*’ and ‘*large*’, they seem to have the same sense and register. According to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2014), however, ‘*large*’ refers to something of great size and amount, while ‘*big*’ can also refer to something of certain degree or important. When examining these two terms more closely from the comprehensive definitions in dictionaries, it can be seen that the small difference is handled by classification, with ‘*big*’ being used for certain degrees and ‘*large*’ being used for some amounts. As a result of this distinction, the two adjectives are not considered absolute synonyms.

2.2. How to Distinguish Synonyms

Synonyms can be distinguished using a number of criteria. The researcher differentiated synonyms based on three criteria: meaning, degree of formality, and collocation, as these are two main concerns explored in this analysis.

2.2.1. Formality

Although synonyms may have similar meanings, they may vary in terms of formality. Some words, for example, are expected to be used in formal contexts such as academic texts, while others are expected to be used in informal contexts such as colloquial language. According to Jackson and Amvela (2000), informal terms include English slang words, which are commonly used in spoken English. The following synonyms, for instance, can be differentiated by their degree of formality as follows:

Formal Language	Informal Language
fundamental	bare-bones
inflate	blow up
simple	a piece of cake

According to relevant literature, Bailey (2015) highlights the following characteristics of words in formal contexts:

1. The use of Latin and Greek terms such as *attitude* and *harmony*;
2. Formal language, which avoids using personal pronouns to refer to the action's performer, such as *I* and *we*;
3. The use of concise language, such as *fifteen years* rather than *several years*.
4. Accurate vocabulary, such as the distinction between the terms *law* and *regulation*.

In addition, Leech and Svartvik (2003) list the following characteristics of words in informal contexts:

1. The use of terms such as *a lot of* and *stuff* that imply imprecision;
2. The use of idioms or slang terms, such as *kids*;
3. The use of two-word verbs, such as *go ahead* and *carry about*;
4. The use of contractions, such as *can't* rather than *cannot*;
5. The use of personal pronouns like *I* believe or *we* believe;
6. Extensive use of *wh-question* types, such as *Why did the pandemic happen?* instead of *The pandemic was caused by five major factors*.

2.2.2. Collocations

In addition to formality, a collocation can be used as another criterion to distinguish synonyms. To clarify, certain synonyms are distinct due to their collocational restrictions. In other words, they are intended to co-occur in association with certain words. Collocations are described in a variety of ways by different scholars. According to Benson (1989), “Collocations are set, random repeated combinations of terms in which each word effectively maintains its meaning,” (p. 85). Furthermore, Nation (2001) and O'Dell and McCarthy (2011) describe collocations as the normal form in which words occur together or belong to one another. To clarify, the adjective ‘*interested*’ is frequently used with the preposition *in*, and the verb ‘*communicate*’ is frequently used with the preposition *with*. According to Schmitt (2010), collocations can be divided into two types: *grammatical collocations* and *lexical collocations*.

To begin, *grammatical collocations* consist of content and grammatical words (specifically prepositions) as follows:

- Noun + preposition: *decision on/about*
- Verb + preposition: *listen to*
- Adjective + preposition: *interested in*

Second, lexical collocations are made up of two content words as follows:

- Verb + adverb: *pay well*
- Verb + noun: *make payment*
- Adjective + noun: *prompt payment*

Nation (2001) demonstrates that collocations are important in language learning for some reasons. To begin with, stored word sequences are fundamental language knowledge and use, so language knowledge can be considered ‘collocational knowledge’. Second, knowing collocations is crucial to becoming fluent in English and using acceptable and appropriate language. Also, according to Kozlowski and Seymour (2003), collocation learning has some implications; for example, collocations enable EFL/ESL learners to effectively use words in conveying accurate meaning. Furthermore, appropriate collocations assist EFL/ESL students in improving their writing by allowing them to use more natural language.

2.2.3. Grammatical Patterns

To distinguish synonyms, Phoocharoensil (2010) suggests that, despite having the same central meaning, words in a series of synonyms do not all have the same grammatical patterns. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (online version), the following two phrases, ‘*consist of*’ and ‘*be made up of*’, denote the same literal meaning, which is “to be formed from the people or things mentioned”. These two words, on the other hand, cannot be found and used in the same grammatical patterns. It is correct to use ‘*consist of*’ in active constructions, such as “This book consists of five main parts,” but it is ungrammatical to use it in the passive voice, as in “This book is consisted of five main parts.” Similarly, the phrase ‘*made up of*’ is only used in passive structures, as in “This book is made up of five main parts,” and it is never used in active speech, as in “This book makes up of five main parts.”

2.3. Previous Studies Related to Synonyms

Several studies have looked at synonyms using corpus-based data from a variety of corpora, such as the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the British National Corpus (BNC). According to previous research, common criteria used to distinguish synonyms include definitions and their senses of meanings, collocations, and formality.

Bergdahl (2009) looked at the distinctions between three English synonyms: ‘*beautiful*’, ‘*handsome*’, and ‘*good-looking*’. COCA and five contemporary dictionaries were used to compile the data. Despite the fact that the three synonymous adjectives communicate the same core sense of meaning, the results showed that they are used differently. For example, the adjective ‘*beautiful*’ is more commonly used by women than by men, while the adjective ‘*handsome*’ is more commonly used by men. According to COCA, despite the fact that the word ‘*good-looking*’ is gender-neutral, it is more widely used by men.

Gu (2017) conducted a corpus-based analysis to compare the two English synonyms ‘*obtain*’ and ‘*gain*’ in terms of genre, colligation, collocation, and semantic prosody. The information was gathered from three online corpora: Sketch Engine, BYU-BNC, and Just the World. It was discovered that ‘*obtain*’ appeared frequently in written English in the fields of natural and pure science, while ‘*gain*’ appears frequently in trade and finance. In terms of colligation, ‘*obtain*’ and ‘*gain*’ share a common grammatical pattern of *verb+object noun*; however, ‘*obtain*’ was commonly formed in passive construction. It was found that ‘*obtain*’ was frequently formed in passive construction. Furthermore, ‘*obtain*’ was often used to convey a concrete meaning, while ‘*gain*’ was often conveyed metaphorically.

In addition, Petcharat and Phoocharoensil (2017) investigated the definitions, collocations, degrees of formality, and grammatical patterns of the three English synonymous adjectives ‘*appropriate*’, ‘*proper*’, and ‘*suitable*’. Three dictionaries and COCA were used to compile the data. While having the same core meaning, the three adjectives varied in collocations, degrees of formality, and grammatical patterns, according to this analysis. To clarify, it appears that ‘*appropriate*’ is more widely used in formal settings. In terms of grammatical patterns, the words ‘*appropriate*’ and ‘*suitable*’ may appear in all grammatical structures of the word ‘*proper*’, while the word ‘*proper*’ cannot appear in all grammatical structures of the words ‘*appropriate*’ and ‘*suitable*’. For instance, the word ‘*appropriate*’ may appear in all grammatical structures of the word ‘*proper*’ as in ‘linking v. + *appropriate/proper*+ that’, and the words ‘*suitable*’ may appear in all grammatical structures of the word ‘*proper*’ as in ‘linking v. + *proper/suitable*+ that’.

Lately, Nugroho (2018) attempted to examine two presumably synonymous words, namely ‘*rich*’ and ‘*wealthy*’, using BNC. According to this study, ‘*rich*’ and ‘*wealthy*’ are considered near-synonyms because they have a similar meaning but are not interchangeable in some contexts. Furthermore, ‘*rich*’ is a term that is widely used to describe both human and non-human beings.

The aforementioned studies demonstrate how to distinguish synonyms using various criteria and corpora and dictionaries as sources. The aim of this study was to examine the differences and similarities between the synonymous verbs ‘*concentrate*’, ‘*emphasize*’, and ‘*focus*’, focusing on distribution across eight genres in COCA, and the analysis of collocations based on frequencies and mutual knowledge (MI) scores. Therefore, the aim of this study was to compare and contrast three English synonyms based on the following questions:

1. How are the synonymous verbs ‘*concentrate*’, ‘*emphasize*’, and ‘*focus*’ distributed across genres?
2. What are the common noun and adverb collocates of the synonymous verbs ‘*concentrate*’, ‘*emphasize*’, and ‘*focus*’?
3. What are some grammatical patterns shared by the three synonymous verbs ‘*concentrate*’, ‘*emphasize*’, and ‘*focus*’?

3. Methodology

3.1. Data Collection and Data Analysis

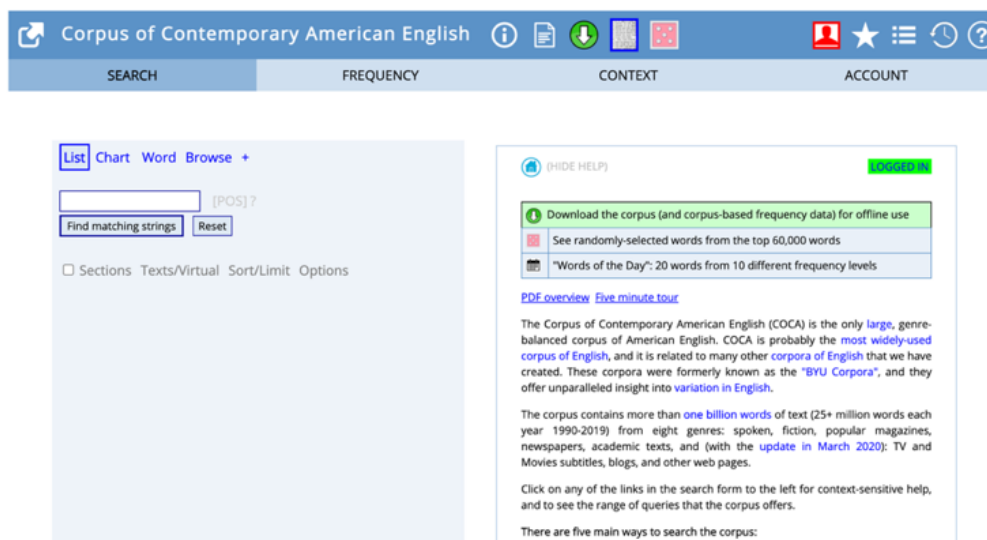


Figure 1. Corpus of Contemporary American English

COCA, which is a corpus of American English, was used to gather data for this study (see Figure 1). COCA was selected because it is likely one of the most commonly used English corpora in the field of English language teaching, with over 1 billion words of text included from over the last two decades (Davies, 2010). Currently, COCA includes spoken, TV and movie subtitles, blogs, webpages, fiction, mainstream magazines, newspapers, and academic texts (see Figure 2). For a variety of purposes, COCA is thought to be a valuable and resourceful corpus (Davies, 2010; Hu, 2015). To begin with, COCA represents American English and is significantly larger than other available American English corpora (e.g., Corpus of Historical American English [COHA], Corpus of American Soap Operas, and TIME Magazine Corpus) due to its immense size of 1 billion words. Second, the COCA is made up of information gathered from texts that are evenly divided into eight genres. This year-to-year genre balance corpus will provide data that is distinct from other corpora. Third, COCA is a 'monitor' corpus, which means that it is constantly updated, and new texts are added.

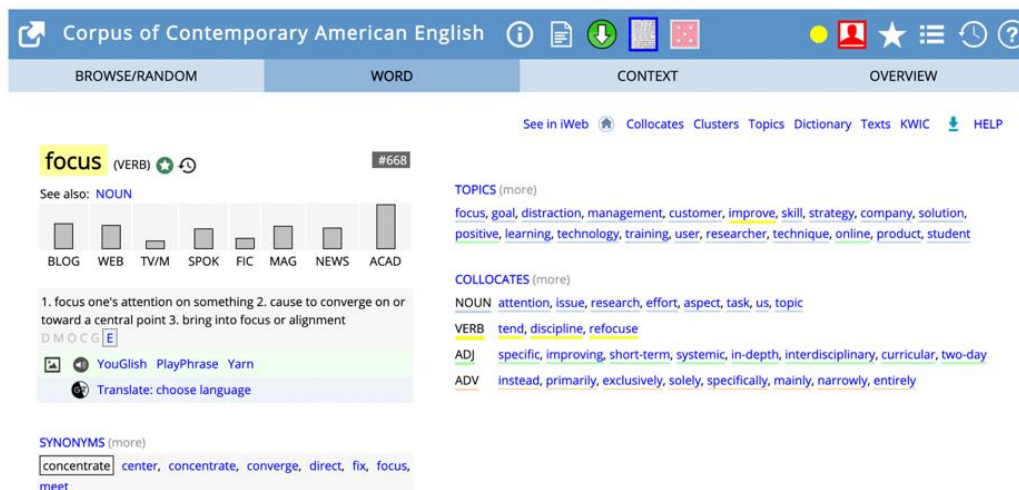


Figure 2. Word distribution across eight genres

To answer the first two research questions, COCA was used to look up the frequencies and distribution of the three synonymous verbs 'concentrate', 'emphasize', and 'focus' across eight different genres. Noun collocates and adverb collocates often co-occurring with the three synonymous verbs were investigated for the second research question. The Mutual Information (MI) value was used to measure the collocational strengths in order to select common collocates. The MI value governs "the chance of two words co-occurring in view of their frequencies in co-occurring with all the others in the corpus" (Lui & Lei, 2018, p. 6; Phoocharoensil, 2020). It is important to acknowledge, however, that the MI value has some limitations. While some collocations have high MI ratings, according to Cheng (2012) and Szudarski (2018), they may not be representative due to their low number of occurrences. Thus, both frequencies and MI values were used to assess the strength of collocation in this study. The noun collocates in COCA's top-20 frequency list with a MI score ≥ 3 (see Figure 3) were chosen because this is a significant value for collocational association (Cheng, 2012; Gablasova et al., 2017). To answer the third research question which concerns with grammatical patterns, a qualitative method was conducted. To elaborate, the grammatical structures of the three verbs were investigated in this study through analyzing the dictionaries and the concordance lines from COCA.

The screenshot shows the COCA interface with the word 'focus' selected. The 'COLLOCATES' tab is active, displaying a table of collocates for 'focus' (VERB). The table is organized into four columns: NOUN, ADJ, VERB, and ADV. Each column lists collocates with their frequency and MI score. The MI scores are highlighted in red boxes.

+ NOUN		+ ADJ		+ VERB		+ ADV	
NEW WORD	MI	NEW WORD	MI	NEW WORD	MI	NEW WORD	MI
attention	4.56	specific	2.65	tend	3.28	instead	3.72
issue	2.56	improving	4.17	discipline	2.87	primarily	4.96
research	2.87	short-term	2.64	refocus	3.04	exclusively	5.69
effort	2.99	systemic	2.63			solely	5.40
aspect	3.11	in-depth	2.74			specifically	3.47
task	2.51	interdisciplinary	2.76			mainly	4.16
us	4.31	curricular	3.05			narrowly	6.29
topic	2.58	two-day	2.62			entirely	2.63
intervention	2.65	laser-like	6.20			largely	2.81
obama	3.32	generative	3.77			heavily	3.12
curriculum	2.74	preserving	2.68			intently	5.50
prevention	3.13	preventative	2.61			intensely	4.55
lens	3.16	underserved	2.73			tightly	3.24
essay	2.64	in-service	2.89			sharply	3.01
america	6.20	salacious	3.51			traditionally	2.67
laser	3.38	parabolic	4.31			squarely	4.60
washington	8.06	school-wide	2.97			predominantly	2.86

Figure 3. Collocations with their MI scores

Concerning the formality, the degree of formality of each concordance line in each word was examined from the Key Word in Context (KWIC) which is considered the common format for concordance lines as seen in Figure 4. As shown in Figure 4, the left-hand column lists the various genres from which the data in each line were extracted. It is worth noting that the node provide is centered on the line, surrounded by color-coded words marked according to their parts of speech; for example, pink represents verbs, bright blue represents nouns, and green represents adjectives. Concordances using color-coded KWIC allow researchers to more readily analyze some grammatical patterns (O'Keefe et al., 2007).

Corpus of Contemporary American English			
SEARCH	WORD	CONTEXT	OVERVIEW

KWIC	CONCENTRATE	VERB	See also as: NOUN	# lines: 100 200 500 1000	Collocates	Clusters	Topics	Dictionary	Texts	KWIC	
------	-------------	------	-------------------	---------------------------	------------	----------	--------	------------	-------	------	--

WEBSITE		SORT	SORT	SORT
1	WEB:2012:	. # But the growth in global air travel was highly	concentrated	across U.S. metros -- airports in the 50 largest U.S. global
2	WEB:2012:	Women are also usually shorter and lighter than men, further	concentrating	alcohol in their blood. Therefore, when women of average size
3	WEB:2012:	throw him. He grabbed my arm and hunched over,	concentrating	all his weight downwards. He stopped my movement cold, three
4	MAG:1998:	whole time I'm screaming at my trainer. " Wilson	concentrates	all of her energy into each exercise. " I watch my
5	ACAD:2001:	. It would be the United States against which he would	concentrate	all of his energies. # By 1995, however, bin
6	WEB:2012:	the previous tip refers to high intensity work where you must	concentrate	all your mental resources in order to do the best job you
7	MAG:2005:	heavens have to offer, from the intense multitude of stars	concentrated	along the Milky Way to the dim, seemingly cold regions around
8	WEB:2012:	number saying the Democratic Party is friendly to religion is	concentrated	among Democrats and independents. A clear majority of
9	BLOG:2012:	The changes he Ginsberg proposed shared a common theme: to	concentrate	and centralize more power at the top of the party and to
10	WEB:2012:	120 years the national savings and investment stream has been	concentrated	and collected into ONE locality, Wall Street. The Dow Index
11	BLOG:2012:	as my molasses seemed strong.. so added more orange juice	concentrate	and Kecap Manis ... but the detail on how to prep &
12	WEB:2012:	HP formula was achieved by increasing the amount of whey protein	concentrate	and potassium caseinate. The individual daily milk quantity
13	NEWS:2002:	is cooperating with the FDA. The plant produces grapefruit	concentrate	and remains in full operation, Phillips said. # HEALTH CARE
14	NEWS:1990:	first hole. Any first hole. I say to myself	concentrate	and swing easy. But it's like starting over again each
15	MAG:1996:	early, from an incident where a child is having trouble	concentrating	and the teacher sees it as non-compliance, to where
16	SPOK:2011:	of things we need to do so you really need to	concentrate	and you know, really be on. COURIC-1voice-ove: But who

Figure 4. Example of the KWIC concordance line of 'concentrate'

4. Results and Discussion

In order to answer the three research questions, the similarities and differences in meanings are demonstrated first, then the results concerning the overall frequency of the three synonymous verbs in the eight genres, the degree of formality in different contexts, and their collocations are presented, respectively.

4.1 Similarities and Differences in Meaning between 'concentrate', 'emphasize', and 'focus'

When comparing the definitions of 'concentrate', 'emphasize', and 'focus' from the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2014), the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (online version), and the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (online version), the three verbs are described as paying attention to a particular matter.

Table 1. Definition of *concentrate*, *emphasize*, and *focus* from three dictionaries

Words	Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English	Merriam-Webster Dictionary	Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary
concentrate	<i>to think very carefully about something that you are doing (V.i)</i>	<i>to bring or direct toward a common center or objective (V.t)</i>	<i>To give all your attention to something and not think about anything else</i>
	For example, 1) I tried to read a few pages, but I found it hard to concentrate . 2) The study concentrated on physics, not biology,	For example, 1) The lenses concentrate sunlight.	For example, 1) I can't concentrate with all that noise going on.
	<i>to make a substance or liquid stronger by removing some of the water from it (V.t)</i>	<i>to focus one's powers, efforts, or attention (V.i)</i>	<i>to bring something together in one place (V.t)</i>
	For example, 1) Plant roots concentrate uranium in cell walls.	For example, 1) Farmers are concentrating on the wheat harvest.	For example, 1) We need to concentrate resources on the most run-down areas.
		<i>to make less dilute (V.t)</i>	<i>to increase the strength of a substance by reducing its volume, for example by boiling it</i>
		For example 1) You should concentrate syrup.	For example, 1) Plants and microorganisms can concentrate metals from the environment.
emphasize	<i>to say something in a strong way</i>	<i>to give special attention or importance to</i>	<i>to give special importance to something</i>
	For example, 1) The report emphasizes the importance of improving safety standards.	For example, 1) He emphasized the word "maybe."	For example, 1) His speech emphasized the importance of attracting industry to the town
focus	<i>to give special attention to one particular person or thing, or to make people do this</i>	<i>to cause to be concentrated (V.t)</i>	<i>to give attention, effort, etc. to one particular subject, situation or person rather than another</i>

For example, 1) He needs to focus more on his career.	For example, 1) They focused their attention on the most urgent problems	For example, 1) She was distracted and finding it hard to focus .
<i>to point a camera or telescope at something, and change the controls slightly so that you can see that thing clearly</i>	<i>to concentrate attention or effort (V.i)</i>	<i>to change something so that you can see things clearly</i>
For example, 1) She turned the camera and focused on Martin's face.	For example, 1) focus on the most pressing needs	For example, 1) It took a few moments for her eyes to focus in the dark.

Table 1 shows that ‘concentrate’, ‘emphasize’, and ‘focus’ tend to have a similar central sense of paying attention to a particular matter, although there are some distinctions concerning exact meanings and uses. The words ‘focus’ and ‘concentrate’, for example, show more precision in terms of their definitions. To illustrate, ‘concentrate’ can refer to making something less dilute, and ‘focus’ can refer to adapting something to see things clearly. In terms of use, ‘emphasize’ are used with the object (transitive verb) whereas ‘concentrate’ and ‘focus’ can be used either *with* or *without* the object (transitive and intransitive verbs), depending on the meaning. Clearly, the results of this study showed that the terms ‘concentrate’, ‘emphasize’, and ‘focus’ do not have the exact precise definitions and thus cannot be used interchangeably in all situations. In terms of meanings, this observation is consistent with Cruse (2000) and Jackson and Amvela (2000), who indicate that two synonyms can be loose or near synonyms.

4.2 Frequency and Distribution

To gain a better understanding of general use patterns of the three synonymous verbs, the researcher initially queried COCA for overall and cross-register frequency data for each of the synonymous verbs as shown in Table 2 and Table 3, followed by their collocates in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 2. Overall frequency of the three verbs across the genres from COCA

Genre	<i>concentrate</i>		<i>Emphasize</i>		<i>focus</i>		Total frequency
	Frequency	Per million	Frequency	Per million	Frequency	Per million	
Blog	1,249	9.71	1,123	8.73	17,892	139.11	
Web	1,282	10.32	1,317	10.60	16,292	131.12	
TV	1,944	15.18	137	1.07	5,834	45.55	
Spoken	981	7.78	1,238	9.81	14,627	115.96	
Fiction	1,956	16.53	382	3.23	5,259	44.45	
Magazines	2,234	17.72	1,476	11.71	15,124	119.95	
News	1,328	10.91	1,177	9.67	13,408	110.13	
Academic	1,808	15.09	4,656	38.87	30,721	256.46	
Total	12,782		11,506		119,157		143,445

As seen in Table 2, the verb ‘*focus*’ occurs with the greatest frequency (119,157 tokens), whereas the verbs ‘*concentrate*’ and ‘*emphasize*’ are less frequent (12,782 and 11,506 tokens, respectively) in the corpus data.

Table 3. Distribution of the three verbs across the genres

Genre	<i>concentrate</i>		Genre	<i>emphasize</i>		Genre	<i>focus</i>	
	Frequency	Per million		Frequency	Per million		Frequency	Per million
Magazines	2,234	17.72	Academic	4,656	38.87	Academic	30,721	256.46
Fiction	1,956	16.53	Magazines	1,476	11.71	Blog	17,892	139.11
TV	1,944	15.18	Web	1,317	10.60	Web	16,292	131.12
Academic	1,808	15.09	Spoken	1,238	9.81	Magazines	15,124	119.95
News	1,328	10.91	News	1,177	9.67	Spoken	14,627	115.96
Web	1,282	10.32	Blog	1,123	8.73	News	13,408	110.13
Blog	1,249	9.71	Fiction	382	3.23	TV	5,834	45.55
Spoken	981	7.78	TV	137	1.07	Fiction	5,259	44.45
Total	12,782			11,506			119,157	

In Table 3, both ‘*focus*’ and ‘*emphasize*’ have the highest degree of formality, as their occurrences are the highest and most frequent (30,721 tokens with 256.46 per million and 4,656 tokens with 38.87 per million, respectively) in academic texts. Regarding formality, both ‘*focus*’ and ‘*emphasize*’ seem to be formal, as indicated by their frequency in the academic genre. However, concerning the tokens with numbers per million, ‘*focus*’ appears to be more commonly used in academic genres than ‘*emphasize*’. The fact that ‘*focus*’ and ‘*emphasize*’ are mainly associated with formal English is supported by them having the lowest frequency in informal contexts. Specifically, ‘*focus*’ occurs with the lowest frequency in fiction (5,259 tokens with 44.45 per million) and TV and movie subtitles (5,834 tokens with 45.55 per million), and ‘*emphasize*’ occurs with the lowest frequency in TV and movie subtitles (137 tokens with 1.07 per million) and fictions (382 tokens with 3.23 per million); all of which are considered to be informal English genres (Moon, 2010). Concerning the verb ‘*concentrate*’, its occurrences are the highest and most frequent (2,234 tokens with 17.72 per million) in somewhere between formal and informal texts, that is, magazine genre (Davies, 2020). In addition, the second and third most frequent genres in which ‘*concentrate*’ occurs are Fiction (1,956 tokens with 16.53 per million) and TV (1,944 tokens with 15.18 per million), which are considered as informal genres.

Clearly, the findings are in line with pertinent literature suggesting the adoption of genre differences as a criterion to distinguish synonyms (Jackson & Amvela, 2000; Phoocharoensil, 2020). To elaborate, the three synonymous verbs ‘*concentrate*’, ‘*emphasize*’, and ‘*focus*’ commonly used in different genres, signaling that they are near-synonyms and cannot be used interchangeably in every context.

Table 4. Nouns collocates of *concentrate*, *emphasize*, and *focus* in COCA

Rank	<i>concentrate</i>			<i>Emphasize</i>			<i>focus</i>		
	Noun collocater	Frequency	MI Score	Noun collocater	Frequency	MI Score	Noun collocater	Frequency	MI Score
1	effort	463	3.38	importance	1,613	6.81	attention	4,797	4.56
2	wealth	145	4.05	need	886	4.13	aspect	713	3.11
3	difficulty	130	3.62	role	521	3.33	prevention	261	3.13
4	breathing	77	4.48	approach	319	3.30	lens	244	3.16
5	inability	72	4.72	aspect	315	4.14	america	223	6.20

6	america	30	5.72	skill	298	3.21	laser	207	3.38
7	europe	30	8.28	learning	181	3.28	washington	206	8.06
8	china	23	3.63	theme	153	3.44	beam	165	3.07
9	iraq	22	9.30	curriculum	141	4.03	iraq	161	9.76
10	california	20	6.98	teaching	117	3.08	china	106	3.42
11	firepower	17	5.10	prevention	84	3.69	california	95	6.81
12	washington	17	6.87	diversity	72	3.16	europe	94	7.51
13	africa	17	7.39	significance	69	3.49	africa	93	7.42
14	schoolwork	16	5.79	cooperation	60	3.19	ruussia	68	7.84
15	japan	16	7.81	literacy	52	3.48	fundamental	59	3.88
16	ruussia	16	8.17	similarity	52	3.93	chicago	55	6.47
17	Texas	15	7.10	continuity	51	4.74	texas	49	6.39
18	Clinton	14	7.65	necessity	50	3.48	japan	49	7.01
19	germany	13	7.13	unity	50	3.52	mexico	48	6.37
20	England	11	6.82	orientation	44	3.05	november	47	7.05

According to Table 4, it is evident that ‘concentrate’ and ‘focus’ seem to be more synonymous, as these two words share certain common collocates. The 10 noun collocates that ‘concentrate’ and ‘focus’ share are America, Europe, China, Iraq, California, Washington, Africa, Japan, Russia, and Texas, where all the 10 noun collocates are related to geographic vocabulary. However, the only two noun collocates that ‘emphasize’ and ‘focus’ share are *aspect* and *prevention*, while ‘concentrate’ and ‘emphasize’ do not share any noun collocates from the top-20 frequency list.

Table 5. Adverbs collocates of *concentrate*, *emphasize*, and *focus* in COCA

Rank	<i>concentrate</i>			<i>emphasize</i>			<i>focus</i>		
	Adverb collocater	Frequen-cy	MI Score	Adverb collocater	Frequen-cy	MI Score	Adverb collocater	Frequen-cy	MI Score
1	instead	335	3.74	strongly	165	4.20	instead	1,771	3.72
2	highly	193	3.49	repeatedly	129	4.38	primarily	1,317	4.96
3	heavily	131	4.19	rightly	33	4.23	exclusively	871	5.69
4	mainly	97	3.99	traditionally	32	3.04	solely	784	5.40
5	solely	95	4.77	sufficiently	28	3.56	specifically	719	3.47
6	exclusively	92	4.86	continually	24	3.17	mainly	584	4.16
7	primarily	86	3.43	strategically	8	3.08	narrowly	452	6.29
8	intensely	23	4.21	selectively	7	3.53	heavily	333	3.12
9	geographically	23	5.30	persistently	3	3.09	intently	171	5.50
10	wonderfully	19	4.15	characteristically	3	3.28	intensely	156	4.55
11	intently	19	4.75				tightly	142	3.24
12	fiercely	15	3.88				sharply	121	3.01
13	densely	8	3.98				cognitively	60	5.76
14	spatially	8	5.14				singularly	49	5.24
15	understandably	7	3.19				principally	38	3.60

According to Table 5, it is evident that ‘concentrate’ and ‘focus’ seem to be more synonymous which is similar to those in Table 4, as these two words share certain common adverb collocates. The eight adverb collocates that ‘concentrate’ and ‘focus’ share are instead, heavily, mainly, solely, exclusively, primarily, intensely, and intently, where all the eight adverb collocates are related to vocabulary of degrees. However, ‘emphasize’ does not appear to share any adverb collocates with ‘focus’ and ‘concentrate’ from the top-20 frequency list. In fact, there could be more adverb collocates shared by these three synonyms, but due to the exclusion of those with an MI score lower than 3, some may be absent from Table 5. Therefore, it is also significant to acknowledge that the shared noun collocates are limited to only those presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

The semantic preference of synonymous words may be used to classify noun collocates into categories based on their semantic similarity. According to Hunston (2002), semantic preference is described as the regular co-occurrence of a lexical item with items expressing a specific evaluative value. To put it another way, semantic preference is a connection between a group of semantically similar words and word types (Begagić, 2013). Ly and Jung (2015) demonstrated that knowledge about collocations can help decide the association ranges of terms searched, as well as the semantic relationships among their collocates.

Table 6. Semantic preference of noun collocates of *concentrate*

1. GEOGRAPHY	America, Europe, China, Iraq, California, Washington, Africa, Japan, Russia, Texas, Germany, England
2. EXERTION	Effort, difficulty
3. MISCELLANEOUS	Wealth, breathing, firepower, schoolwork, Clinton, inability

All the noun collocates were grouped based on their semantic preference. In Table 6, the noun collocates of '*concentrate*' are categorized into three main themes, namely GEOGRAPHY, EXERTION, and MISCELLANEOUS. The majority of its noun collocates belong to GEOGRAPHY. Looking at Table 6, it is clear that the noun collocates appear to be associated with cities and countries, as illustrated below:

- It had been the victim of a sophisticated attack that had **concentrated** on at least 20 other companies originated in China. (GEOGRAPHY)
- Other says the city should be **concentrating** its efforts on selling OTB. (EXERTION)
- The Assad government is **concentrating** its firepower on big cities like Damascus and Aleppo. (MISCELLANEOUS)

Table 7. Semantic preference of noun collocates of *emphasize*

1. EDUCATION	role, approach, aspect, skill, learning, theme, curriculum, teaching, diversity, literacy, cooperation
2. REQUIREMENT	importance, need, significance, necessity
3. CHARACTERISTICS	similarity, unity
4. MISCELLANEOUS	prevention, continuity, orientation

All the noun collocates were grouped based on their semantic preference. In Table 7, the noun collocates of '*emphasize*' are categorized into four main themes, namely EDUCATION, REQUIREMENT, CHARACTERISTICS, and MISCELLANEOUS. The majority of its noun collocates belong to EDUCATION. Looking at Table 7, it is clear that the noun collocates appear to be associated with teaching and learning, as illustrated below:

- The Outreach center **emphasizes** lifelong learning, interdisciplinary, project-based... (EDUCATION)
- And it's always been known as a place that **emphasizes** teaching and academic excellence. (EDUCATION)

- It would then **emphasize** the importance of staying in the faith. (REQUIREMENT)
- South Korea experiences with political liberalization may **emphasize** an important similarity. (CHARACTERISTICS)
- ... be incorporated in a public health approach to drug policy that **emphasizes** prevention education and diversion to treatment ... (MISCELLANEOUS)

Table 8. Semantic preference of noun collocates of *focus*

1. GEOGRAPHY	America, Washington, Iraq, California, Europe, Africa, Russia, Chicago, Texas, Japan, Mexico
2. SCIENCE	Aspect, prevention, lens, laser, beam
3. MISCELLANEOUS	Attention, fundamental, november

All the noun collocates were grouped based on their semantic preference. In Table 8, the noun collocates of '*focus*' are categorized into three main themes, namely GEOGRAPHY, SCIENCE, and MISCELLANEOUS. The majority of its noun collocates belong to GEOGRAPHY. Looking at Table 8, it is clear that the noun collocates appear to be associated with cities and countries, as illustrated below:

- Many of Germany's top exporters have for years been **focusing** on China and other more dynamic markets in Asia. (GEOGRAPHY)
- Because it comes with a macro lens, the iPhone **focuses** on the subjects, not the background. (SCIENCE)
- We firmly believe that it is the most important place to **focus** public attention and individual ingenuity. (MISCELLANEOUS)

4.3 Degree of Formality

The degree of formality of the texts was assessed using Bailey's (2015) and Leech and Svartvik's (2003) main features. The results showed that COCA emphasizes the degree of formality, as seen in Table 9.

Table 9. Percentages of concordance lines of the three verbs in formal and informal contexts

Synonyms	Total concordance lines of each synonym: 200			
	Formal		Informal	
	No. of lines	Percent	No. of lines	Percent
concentrate	107	53.50%	93	46.50%
emphasize	141	70.50%	59	29.50%
focus	159	79.50%	41	20.50%

Table 9 shows the distribution of concordance lines for each synonym in both formal and informal contexts after examining the degree of formality of each concordance line (see Figure 4) using Bailey (2015) and Leech and Svartvik (2003) guidelines for separating formal and informal synonyms. The words '*concentrate*', '*emphasize*', and '*focus*' appear in both formal and informal settings. Concerning the formal contexts, '*focus*' scores the highest (159 lines) while '*emphasize*' and '*concentrate*' score less (141 lines and 107 lines, respectively).

Furthermore, the results show that the three synonymous words studied in this research are not identical in terms of formality due to the occurrences in different genres and the analysis of concordance lines based on the criteria by Bailey's (2015) and Leech and Svartvik's (2003). In addition, '*concentrate*' appears in formal and informal texts at similar percentages (53.50% and 46.50%, respectively), which accords with the findings in Table 3 indicating that '*concentrate*' appears in somewhere between formal and informal texts. Overall, these findings seem to be in line with the results from the distribution of three synonymous verbs across the genres presented in Table 3.

4.4 Grammatical Patterns

The grammatical structures of three verbs were investigated in this study through analyzing from the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2014), the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (online version), the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (online version), and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) as shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Shared grammatical structures of *concentrate*, *emphasize*, and *focus*

Synonyms	Shared Grammatical Structures
<i>concentrate</i> and <i>focus</i>	<i>concentrate/focus</i> + on + N.
<i>concentrate</i> and <i>emphasize</i>	<i>concentrate/emphasize</i> + that + S. + V.
<i>emphasize</i> and <i>focus</i>	-

Table 10 shows that these three synonyms have two grammatical structures in common. The verb '*concentrate*' appears to share grammatical structures with '*focus*' (*concentrate/focus* + on + N.) and '*emphasize*' (*concentrate/emphasize* + that + S. + V.), whereas '*emphasize*' and '*focus*' do not share any grammatical structures in common. A possible explanation is that '*focus*' requires being followed by the preposition *on* and can be considered an intransitive verb, while '*emphasize*' does not require any prepositions and can be considered a transitive verb. Nonetheless, it is likely that certain grammatical structures are missing from the dictionaries and 300 concordance lines used in this analysis and some of the grammatical structures are not shared by both synonymous verbs. The findings of this study support what Phoocharoensil (2010) suggested, namely that words in a series of synonyms cannot all be used in the same grammatical patterns while having the same core meaning.

The results of this study indicate that corpus-based research can provide more informative knowledge than a dictionary alone, especially in terms of use in different contexts (Hunston, 2002). In this study, the results show that the synonymous verbs '*concentrate*', '*emphasize*', and '*focus*' are called 'near-synonyms,' and this is in line with Phoocharoensil (2020) and Jarunwaraphan and Mallikamas (2020), who stated that near-synonyms may be used differently in terms of collocation and semantic preferences while having identical definitions. Other linguists (e.g., Stubbs, 2001; Taylor, 2003) also back this up, showing that true synonyms are uncommon and that all synonyms are truly near-synonyms. Additionally, McCarthy et al. (2010) established that true synonyms are very uncommon and non-existent, arguing that they are uneconomical since they result in unnecessary redundancy in a language. Other research exploring synonymy (e.g., Liu, 2010; Petcharat & Phoocharoensil, 2017; Uba, 2015) showed that synonyms are often not exactly similar in context, and thus are not totally interchangeable. The analysis of these three synonyms demonstrates that, although they have

a common core meaning, they vary in certain specific features or senses of meaning, grammatical patterns, and collocations. As a teacher, I often notice that many students misunderstand these three synonymous terms. For instance, several of them use an ungrammatical pattern such as **I want to emphasize this topic* in analogy to *I want to concentrate/concentrate on this topic*. It is possible that they base their usage on an analogy, resulting in the term being used in the pattern of another synonym (Phoocharoensil, 2010).

5. Conclusion

Regarding distributions across eight different genres of the synonyms ‘concentrate’, ‘emphasize’, and ‘focus’, it can be concluded that these three synonymous verbs cannot substitute each other in all contexts due to their different degrees of formality and collocates. ‘Focus’ is the most common in formal contexts because it has the greatest tendency to appear in academic contexts. Furthermore, some verbs share certain common collocates. America, Europe, China, Iraq, California, Washington, Africa, Japan, Russia, and Texas are the 10 noun collocates that ‘concentrate’ and ‘focus’ share, and all 10 noun collocates are tied to geographical vocabulary. However, the only two noun collocates shared by ‘emphasize’ and ‘focus’ are aspect and prevention, while ‘concentrate’ and ‘emphasize’ do not share any noun collocates from the frequency list. It is proposed in this study that data from corpora may provide additional information not contained in dictionaries. Furthermore, this research shows that corpora can be helpful because they act as a valuable language teaching tool for English language teachers, and it is critical that teachers teach their students to be aware of the differences between synonymous terms and how to use them properly. To support this, Shahzadi et al. (2019) also advocate the use of corpus-based analysis in language instruction as a way to explain synonym usage and help language learners expand their vocabulary. As a result, using corpus methods to illustrate the difference in genres and formality is an essential and useful criterion for effectively distinguishing synonyms (Szudarski, 2018).

It should be noted, however, that this study has some limitations. First, the findings of this investigation focused primarily on interpreting facts from corpus concordance lines, and the English language may not be accurately represented by a single corpus (Hunston, 2002). Second, only three synonyms are investigated in this study. As a result, further research should focus on other terms in the collection of synonyms, such as highlight or stress. Finally, the number of noun collocates is restricted to the top 20 frequency lists. Other noun collocates beyond the top-20 frequency list can help to create a clearer and more detailed image of the collocational patterns of the synonyms being studied. Moreover, other kinds of statistics (e.g., *t*-score) may be used in collaborating with MI scores to demonstrate the degree of confidence with which we can claim the association of collocations.

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A Multidisciplinary Corpus-based Comparative Analysis: Lexical Bundles in Language Teaching, Health Sciences, and Business Management Research Articles

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Abstract

This research analyzes and compares lexical bundles (three- to five-word units) in language teaching, health sciences, and business management research articles, including their communicative functions. The corpus comprises 90 internationally published research articles from the world's top five journals in the three disciplines. Cargil and O'Connor's (2009) Introduction Method Results and Discussion Structure was applied as a framework for compartmentalizing the sections of the research articles and ANTCONC was applied as a key concordancer. In this study, lexical bundles must be found at least five times in every 100,000 words and in five different texts. Conceptual frameworks of corpus scholars were utilized to analyze communicative functions of the lexical bundles. The findings reveal 182 lexical bundles in the language teaching research articles. One-way repeated measure ANOVA details there are no statistically significant differences between the use of them in all four sections ($p = .150$). One-hundred and eight lexical bundles are found in the health sciences research articles with some statistically significant differences between the use of them in some sections ($p = .016$). One-hundred and seventy-eight lexical bundles are found in the business management research articles with some statistically significant differences between the use of them in some sections ($p < .001$). In total, there are 371 lexical bundles in all 90 research articles. There are no statistically significant differences between the use of them in the research articles from the three disciplines ($p = .687$). Functional analysis reveals the lexical bundles provide 19 different communicative functions.

Keywords: Lexical Bundles, Research Articles, Language Teaching, Health Sciences, Business Management

Introduction

Lexical bundles are sequences of two or more words used with high frequency in discourses. They can represent genre and section of a research article (RA) (Huimin, 2010). Swales (1992) states that lexical bundles in an academic genre differ from ones in general language. For instance, the lexical bundles *in order to avoid* are frequently found in academic language more than in general language. Scholars proposed that only reading academic RAs could not help academics automatically improve their academic writing proficiency as the literary language in RAs is specific and not similar to general English. It has specific stylistic patterns and meanings in each discipline (Kitjaroenpaiboon, 2016). For example, the lexical bundle *cohesion of the*, in physics, *cohesion* means the intermolecular whilst in linguistics, it means how parts of a text are connected together. To write an RA, academics need guidance and to frequently practice writing (Kitjaroenpaiboon & Getkham, 2016a). Our point of view aligns with scholars stating that most academics do not know how to use academic lexical bundles for writing an RA (Cortes, 2013).

Collaborations between academics from different disciplines are necessary for scientific research (Simone et al., 2018). To solve challenges, academics, researchers, and students from different disciplines should work together (Morrison, 2014) and thus should understand how to use lexical bundles within the discipline and in others as well (McLaughlin & Parkinson, 2018). Most academics, researchers, and students take it for granted that, despite utilization in different disciplines, the same English language is similarly used (Joseph et al., 2010). Scholars pointed out that the nature of each discipline results in its specific linguistic characteristics. Natural science scientific paper writers tend to imply that their studies and findings are important whilst the social sciences writers tend to provide persuasive evidences that a need exists for the studies (Boutelier et al., 2011). This aligns with Conrad (1996) who proposed that different disciplines apply discipline-specific languages. By definition, when writing scientific papers, academics should apply a specific language to a specific discipline (Berkenkotter et al., 1991).

Upon reviewing studies focusing on lexical bundles in scientific papers (e.g., Damshevska, 2019; Hyland, 2008; Panthong & Poonpon, 2020; Wongwiwat, 2016), we found that a lexical bundle provides different communicative functions depending on the context it occurs in. For example, when the bundle *found that* occurs in the introduction section of RAs, it functions as referring to other studies (e.g., *numerous scholars found that*). However, when the bundle occurs in the result section, it functions to report findings (e.g., *we found that*).

Having RAs published is important for academics since it signifies academic success (Poggensee, 2016). English RAs help boost the world's academic advancement (Kanoksilpatham, 2005). If researchers or academics want their RAs to be accessible to others, theirs must be written in English (Genc & Bada, 2010). Nevertheless, not all academics can succeed in having their RA published since English is neither their first nor their second language (Kitjaroenpaiboon, 2016). Their English research writing proficiency is somewhat limited (Fadda, 2012). They do not know what lexical bundles are to be used for writing their RAs (Cortes, 2013). With this problem in mind, this paper thus explores and compares lexical bundles and their communicative functions, in each section of internationally published language teaching, health sciences, and business management RAs and between the three disciplines to determine whether the use of lexical bundle in different sections and different disciplines are similar or different. Language teaching, health sciences, and business management have been gaining popularity within the academic field as seen from an increase

of RAs published in the disciplines (Lindstromberg & Eyckmans, 2017). Therefore, RAs from the three disciplines were investigated to analyze and compare which lexical bundles are frequently used.

In this regard, lexical bundle knowledge can help academics comprehend their discipline-matters more accurately and will contribute to their success in professional communication skills (Chirobocea-Tudor, 2018; Cortes, 2004). Providing RA lexical bundle guidance in the three disciplines and between the three disciplines is an underlying reason the researchers conducted this study.

The key objectives of this research are:

- 1) to study lexical bundles in each section of internationally published language teaching, health sciences, and business management research articles
- 2) to compare whether the extracted lexical bundles are differently used in each section of each discipline
- 3) to compare whether the extracted lexical bundles are differently used between the three disciplines
- 4) to investigate the extracted lexical bundles' communicative functions.

Methodology

This study focuses on analyzing a corpus of internationally published RAs. Thirty internationally published RAs, from each discipline, were collected from the top five highest impact factors international journals.

The corpus of this study consisted of three sub-corpora. With regards to Scimago Journal Rank 2019 (Scimago, 2019), the top five highest impact factors international journals in language teaching are *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *Language Learning*, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *Reading and Writing*, and *English for Specific Purposes*. The top five highest impact factors international journals in health sciences are *World Psychiatry*, *Diabetes Care*, *Stroke*, *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, and *Pediatric Obesity*. The top five highest impact factors international journals in business management are *Journal of Finance*, *Journal of Financial Economics*, *Journal of Accounting and Economics*, *Strategic Management Journal*, and *Journal of Accounting Research*. Complying the methodologies of numerous corpus linguists (e.g., Baoya, 2015, Getkham, 2010; Kanoksilpatham, 2005), we randomly selected six RAs from these journals published between 2016 and 2019 to help increase the generalizability of the results.

Subsequently, the four researchers and three assistants analyzed and compartmentalized four key sections (i.e., introduction, methodology, results, and discussion) in the 90 selected RAs by applying Cargil and O'Connor's (2009) Introduction, Methodology, Result, and Discussion (IMRD) Structure of RAs as a framework.

'Lexical bundle' refers to the highest frequency word strings with two or more words in corpora (Biber et al., 1999; Hyland, 2008). Nevertheless, a word string, that can be identified as a lexical bundle, is one which occurs five times upwards per 100,000 words, in sub-corpora of a single register, over a range of five different texts (Biber et al., 2004; Nesi & Basturkmen, 2006). However, two-word bundles are too numerous while six or more-word bundles were too rare to occur or they do not meet the cut-off point criteria (Hyland, 2008).

In this study, the three- to five-word bundles were studied as they have been found to possess more content (Nasrabady et al., 2020). The cut-off frequency adopted a moderately high threshold at five times per 100,000 words and the dispersion threshold was set at occurring over five different texts in each corpus to retrieve the highest frequency and generally used lexical bundles in each discipline. To explore the lexical bundles, ANTCOCONC (Anthony, 2020) was applied as a concordance program to detect and count lexical bundles' frequencies.

To compare similarities and differences of the lexical bundles in each data set, one-way repeated measure ANOVA in PASW for Windows was applied. However, before statistical comparison, the frequencies of all lexical bundles needed to be normalized and the statistically significant difference value (p) was set at .05 (Biber, 1995).

To analyze communicative functions of the extracted lexical bundles, we synthesized conceptual frameworks of numerous corpus scholars (e.g., Baoya, 2015; Biber et al., 1999; Getkham, 2010; Kanoksilpatham, 2005; Kitjaroenpaiboon, 2016; Kitjaroenpaiboon & Getkham, 2016a; 2016b) and found that lexical bundles could provide 31 communicative functions. They are desire, direction, intention, ability, introduction, elaboration, condition, identification, tangible, intangible, time, politeness, request, further communication, offer, expectation, hybrid function, specific reference, action, evaluation, claim, knowledge, purpose, contradiction, ownership, generality, commentary, modified information, references to present research, tentativeness, and reporting results. These 31 functions were applied as a framework to analyze communicative functions of the lexical bundles in this study. During this stage, to provide reliability, group discussions were held. We and two native English professors together studied contexts in which lexical bundles occur to analyze their communicative functions. The researchers agreed that a unanimous view is required to conclude the functional analysis process of each lexical bundle.

Results

In this study, there are three sub-corpora. The corpus of language teaching RAs comprises 228,891 words, the corpus of health sciences RAs consists of 101,967 words, and the corpus of business management RAs contains 302,552 words. The results of the analysis are presented in the particular order of the research objectives.

1) Lexical Bundles in Each Section of Language Teaching, Health Sciences, and Business Management Research Articles

Table 1. Number of lexical bundles in each section of the research articles from the three disciplines

<i>Discipline</i>	<i>Sections</i>				<i>Total</i> <i>(by excluding the repeatedly occurring bundles)</i>
	<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Results</i>	<i>Discussion</i>	
Language Teaching	95	50	58	68	182
Health Sciences	14	43	15	53	108
Business Management	119	87	16	29	178

Table 1 details that in the language teaching RAs, 95 lexical bundles are found in the introduction sections, 50 lexical bundles are found in the methodology sections, 58 lexical bundles are found in the results sections, and 68 lexical bundles are found in the discussion sections. In the health sciences RAs, 14 lexical bundles are found in the introduction sections, 43 lexical bundles are found in the methodology sections, 15 lexical bundles are found in the results sections, and 53 lexical bundles are found in the discussion sections. In the business management RAs, 119 lexical bundles are found in the introduction sections, 87 lexical bundles are found in the methodology sections, 16 lexical bundles are found in the results sections, and 29 lexical bundles are found in the discussion sections.

2) Comparison of the Lexical Bundles in Each Section of Language Teaching, Health Sciences, and Business Management Research Articles

A comparative analysis, conducted to determine whether the extracted lexical bundles are similarly or differently used in each section of each discipline, reveals that in the language teaching RAs, a total of 182 lexical bundles were found. Nine lexical bundles are similarly found in all four sections, 14 lexical bundles are similarly found in three sections, 34 lexical bundles are similarly found in two sections, while 125 lexical bundles are found in one section. After receiving the frequency of the 182 lexical bundles in the language teaching RAs, we normalized their frequencies (to 100,000 words). Further, we analyzed them by one-way repeated measure ANOVA in PASW for Windows to determine whether their means are statistically significantly different (as shown in Table 2).

Table 2. One way repeated measure ANOVA for analyzing similarities of lexical bundles in the language teaching research articles

<i>Source</i>		<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Lexical bundles in each section of the language teaching RAs	Between groups	448.558	3	149.519	1.779	.150
	Within groups	45633.611	543	84.039		

Remark: $p > .05$

Table 2 details no statistically significant differences between the use of the lexical bundles in the four sections of the language teaching RAs ($F = 1.779$ and $p = .150$). It can be said that the lexical bundles in the four sections of the language teaching RAs are not different.

In the health sciences RAs, 108 lexical bundles are found. One lexical bundle is similarly found in all four sections, 14 lexical bundles are similarly found in two sections, while 93 lexical bundles are found in one section. Again, we analyzed the normalized frequencies by one-way repeated measure ANOVA (as shown in Table 3).

Table 3. One way repeated measure ANOVA for analyzing similarities of lexical bundles in the health sciences research articles

Source		SS	df	MS	F	p
Lexical bundles in each section of the health sciences RAs	Between groups	4192.491	3	1397.497	3.501	.016*
	Within groups	128122.467	321	399.125		

Remark: * $p < .05$

Table 3 details some statistically significant differences between the use of the lexical bundles in the four sections of the health sciences RAs ($F = 3.501$ and $p = .016$). It can be said that lexical bundles in the four sections of the health sciences RAs are **different**. We further studied a pairwise comparison table (as shown in Table 4).

Table 4. Pairwise comparison

(I) Section	(J) Section	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	p
Introduction	Methodology	-4.461	2.866	.736
	Results	.459	2.639	1.00
	Discussion	-6.995*	2.474	.034*
Methodology	Results	4.921	2.615	.375
	Discussion	-2.534	3.025	1.000
Results	Discussion	-7.455*	2.655	.036*

Remark * $p < .05$

Table 4 details some statistically significant differences between the use of lexical bundles in the introduction and the discussion sections and in the results and the discussion sections of the health sciences RAs ($p < .05$). However, there are **no** statistically significant differences in the introduction and the methodology sections, in the introduction and the results sections, in the methodology and the results sections, and the methodology and the discussion sections ($p > .05$).

In the business management RAs, 178 lexical bundles are found. Three lexical bundles are similarly found in all four sections, 17 lexical bundles are similarly found in three sections, 30 lexical bundles are similarly found in two sections, while 128 lexical bundles are found in one section. We further analyzed the normalized frequencies by one-way repeated measure ANOVA (as shown in Table 5).

Table 5. One way repeated measure ANOVA for analyzing similarities of lexical bundles in the business management research articles

Source		SS	df	MS	F	p
Lexical bundles in each section of the business management RAs	Between groups	4197.314	3	1399.104	15.403	.00*
	Within groups	48233.678	531	90.835		

Remark * $p < .05$

Table 5 details some statistically significant differences between the use of the lexical bundles in the four sections of the business management RAs ($F = 15.403$ and $p < .001$). It can be said that lexical bundles in the four sections of the business management RAs are **different**. We further studied a pairwise comparison (as shown in Table 6).

Table 6. Pairwise comparison

(I) Section	(J) Section	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	p
Introduction	Methodology	-.410	1.128	1.000
	Results	5.353*	.889	0.00*
	Discussion	3.611*	.880	0.00*
Methodology	Results	5.764*	1.004	0.00*
	Discussion	4.022*	1.073	0.001*
Results	Discussion	-1.742	1.059	.611

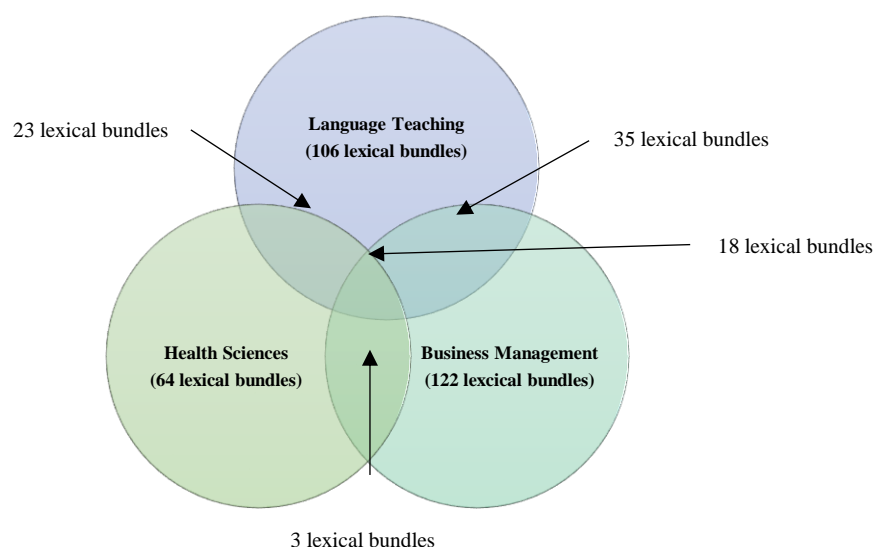
Remark * $p < .05$

Table 6 details some statistically significant differences between the use of lexical bundles in the introduction and the results sections, in the introduction and the discussion sections, in the methodology and the results sections, and the methodology and the discussion sections of the business management RAs ($p < .05$). However, there are **no** statistically significant differences in the introduction and the methodology sections and in the results and the discussion sections ($p > .05$).

3) Comparison of the Lexical Bundles in the Language Teaching, Health Sciences, and Business Management Research Articles

A comparative analysis, again conducted to determine whether the extracted lexical bundles are similarly or differently used between the three disciplines, reveals 371 lexical bundles in the RAs. Eighteen lexical bundles are similarly found in all three disciplines, 23 lexical bundles are similarly found in the language teaching and the health sciences, 35 lexical bundles are similarly found in the language teaching and the business management, and three lexical bundles are similarly found in the health sciences and the business management. One-hundred and six lexical bundles are frequently found in only the language teaching, 64 lexical bundles are frequently found in only the health sciences, and 122 lexical bundles are frequently found in only the business management (as shown in Figure 1).

Figure 1. Numbers of lexical bundles found in the research articles from the three disciplines



We then analyzed normalized frequencies of the 371 lexical bundles ($N = 371$) by one-way repeated measure ANOVA (as shown in Table 7).

Table 7 One way repeated measure ANOVA for analyzing similarities of lexical bundles in the language teaching, health sciences, and business management research articles

Source		SS	df	MS	F	p
Lexical bundles in the RAs from the three disciplines	Between groups	23.536	2	11.768	.376	.687
	Within groups	23181.306	740	31.326		

Remark $p > .05$

Table 7 details no statistically significant differences between the use of the lexical bundles in the RAs from the three disciplines ($F = .376$ and $p = .687$). It can be said that lexical bundles used in the language teaching, health sciences, and business management RAs are not different.

4) Communicative function of the Lexical Bundles Frequently in the Language Teaching, the Health Sciences, and the Business Management Research Articles

Applying conceptual frameworks of corpus scholars (i.e., Baoya, 2015; Biber et al., 1999; Getkham, 2010; Kanoksilpatham, 2005; Kitjaroenpaiboon, 2016; Kitjaroenpaiboon & Getkham, 2016a; 2016b) to analyze communicative functions of the 371 lexical bundles, we found that the lexical bundles in this study provide 19 communicative functions namely (1) Action, (2) Evaluation, (3) Identification, (4) Reporting Results, (5) Knowledge, (6) Specific Reference, (7) Time, (8) Commentary, (9) Contradiction, (10) Ownership, (11) Tentativeness, (12) Ability, (13) Claim, (14) Direction, (15) Intangible, (16) Tangible, (17) Elaboration, (18) References to Present Research, and (19) Hybrid Function (as shown in Table 8).

Table 8. Lexical bundles and their communicative functions

Communicative Function	Discipline		
	Language Teaching RAs (182 lexical bundles)	Health Sciences RAs (108 lexical bundles)	Business Management RAs (178 lexical bundles)
1) Action (37 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are presented in - are shown in - by the first - is illustrated in - measured by the - occurred in the - participated in the - presented in table - used in the - was used as - was used to - were asked to - were used in - were used to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assessed by using - analyses were performed - by using a - by using the - calculated as the - did not include - included in the - used to assess - used to identify - was approved by - was defined as - was obtained from - was used for - was used to - were classified as - were not included - were obtained from - were used to - written Informed consent was obtained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are driven by - by showing that - can be used - examine the effects of - paper is organized as follows - paper proceeds as follows
2) Evaluation (7 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - considered to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - considered statistically significant - shown to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are robust to - prior to the

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - significantly associated with - significantly higher in 	
3) Identification (14 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - each of the - for each of - of the same - of these studies - one of the - participants in the - research on the - the participants in - this type of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in patients with - one of the - with type .. diabetes - of at least - of patients with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - each of the - of the sample - one of the
4) Reporting Results (17 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - and found that - results of the - results showed that - results suggest that - showed that the - shown in table - shows that the - table ... shows the - the findings of - there was a - there was no 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - results suggest that - findings suggest that - no significant differences - significant differences in - there was a - there was no - there were no 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - also found that - and found that - and show that - results suggest that - shows that the
5) Knowledge (13 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - according to the - few studies have - in line with - in relation to - in the literature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - according to the - few studies have - in accordance with - in line with - in previous studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - according to the - in response to - in the previous

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - refers to the - studies suggest that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in relation to - not associated with - studies have shown 	
6) Specific Reference (8 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a second language - English as a second language - learners of English - native English speakers - native speakers of English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - body mass index - children and adolescents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difference in differences
7) Time (7 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - at the same time - at the time of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - at the time of - after adjustment for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a given year - at the same time - at the time of - during the sample period - the sample period - the time of
8) Commentary (2 lexical bundles)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to our knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for future research
9) Contradiction (2 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - did not differ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - did not differ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in contrast to
10) Ownership (7 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - we found that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - we found that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - we also found that - we analyze the - we control for - we examine the - we find that - we focus on - we found that
11) Tentativeness (10 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - likely to be - more likely to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - likely to be - more likely to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - less likely to - likely to be

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>it may be</i> - <i>it would be</i> - <i>may not be</i> - <i>more or less</i> - <i>seems to be</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>may have been</i> - <i>may not be</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>more likely to</i> - <i>the probability of</i>
12) Ability (5 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>be able to</i> - <i>the ability to</i> - <i>their ability to</i> - <i>were able to</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>allows us to</i> - <i>the ability to</i> - <i>their ability to</i>
13) Claim (8 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>this suggests that</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>is the first</i> - <i>the first study to</i> - <i>this is the first study</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>contributes to the literature</i> - <i>paper contributes to</i> - <i>this leads to</i> - <i>to the extent that</i> - <i>this suggests that</i>
14) Direction (3 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>it should be</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>are needed to</i> - <i>should be interpreted</i> 	
15) Intangible (28 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>analysis of the</i> - <i>depending on the</i> - <i>in the context of</i> - <i>in the discourse</i> - <i>in the following</i> - <i>information about the</i> - <i>knowledge of the</i> - <i>of the original</i> - <i>on the basis of</i> - <i>scores on the</i> - <i>the meaning of</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>an increased risk of</i> - <i>on the basis of</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>a function of</i> - <i>a measure of</i> - <i>an increase in</i> - <i>analysis of the</i> - <i>average number of</i> - <i>control for the</i> - <i>data from the</i> - <i>depending on the</i> - <i>depends on the</i> - <i>information about the</i> - <i>in the context of</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understanding of the - with each other - with regard to 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in the first - in the form of - in the next - in two ways - of the firm - the distribution of
16) Tangible (38 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a group of - a number of - a series of - a set of - a variety of - all of the - as part of - at least in - at least one - changes in the - compared to the - in the case of - the age of - the case of - the following research questions - the nature of - the next section - the number of - the proportion of - the second author 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a number of - a total of - in a large - as part of - compared with the - the association between - the number of - version of the - the general population - with respect to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a large number of - a number of - a sample of - a variety of - an indicator variable - at least one - change in the - changes in the - data for the - descriptive statistics for - in the sample - the dependent variable is - the nature of - the number of - the proportion of - value of the - variables used in - the internet appendix - with respect to

17) Elaboration (11 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>as well as</i> - <i>as a result</i> - <i>because of the</i> - <i>can be seen</i> - <i>due to the</i> - <i>in addition to</i> - <i>in other words</i> - <i>on the other hand</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>as well as</i> - <i>be due to</i> - <i>be explained by</i> - <i>because of the</i> - <i>in addition to</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>and in turn</i> - <i>as a result</i> - <i>as well as</i> - <i>due to the</i> - <i>in addition to</i> - <i>on the other hand</i>
18) References to Present Research (13 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>for this study</i> - <i>in a study</i> - <i>in the analysis</i> - <i>in the present study</i> - <i>in the study</i> - <i>in these studies</i> - <i>in this study</i> - <i>the current study</i> - <i>the present study</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>in the current study</i> - <i>in the study</i> - <i>in this study</i> - <i>the current study</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>in this case</i> - <i>in this paper</i> - <i>in this section</i>
19) Hybrid Function (141 lexical bundles)			
19.1) Hybrid Function: Evaluation and Tentativeness (1 lexical bundle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>appear to be</i> 		
19.2) Hybrid Function: Action and Knowledge (4 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>as compared to</i> - <i>as opposed to</i> - <i>as shown in</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>as described previously</i> 	
19.3) Hybrid Function: Action, Tangible, and Intangible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>followed by a</i> - <i>followed by the</i> 		

(2 lexical bundles)			
19.4) Hybrid Function: Evaluation and Knowledge (6 lexical bundles)	- <i>similar to the</i> - <i>related to the</i>	- <i>related to the</i>	- <i>associated with a</i> - <i>associated with the</i> - <i>consistent with the</i> - <i>relative to the</i>
19.5) Hybrid Function: Evaluation and Ownership (1 lexical bundle)			- <i>consistent with our</i>
19.6) Hybrid Function: Evaluation and Claim (1 lexical bundle)			- <i>consistent with this</i>
19.7) Hybrid Function: Evaluation and Reporting Results (1 lexical bundle)	- <i>found to be</i>		
19.8) Hybrid Function: Evaluation, Intention, Claim, and Purpose (1 lexical bundle)	- <i>It is important to</i>		- <i>It is important to</i>
19.9) Hybrid Function: Evaluation and Tentativeness (1 lexical bundle)	- <i>it is possible</i>		
19.10 Hybrid Function: Identification and Tangible	- <i>for the first</i>		

(1 lexical bundle)			
19.11) Hybrid Function: Identification and References to Present Research (3 lexical bundles)	- <i>of the present</i> - <i>of this study</i>	- <i>of the study</i> - <i>of this study</i>	
19.12) Hybrid Function: Reporting Results and Knowledge (3 lexical bundles)	- <i>have shown that</i> - <i>they found that</i>	- <i>has been shown</i> - <i>have shown that</i>	- <i>they found that</i>
19.13) Hybrid Function: Reporting Results, Tangible, and Intangible (3 lexical bundles)	- <i>the results for</i> - <i>the results of</i>	- <i>the results of</i>	- <i>a result of</i> - <i>the results of</i>
19.14) Hybrid Function: References to Present Research and Ownership (6 Lexical bundles)	- <i>in our study</i>	- <i>in our study</i>	- <i>in our analysis</i> - <i>in our data</i> - <i>in our sample</i> - <i>of our results</i> - <i>our second hypothesis</i>
19.15) Hybrid Function: Knowledge and Generality (2 lexical bundles)	- <i>there is a</i> - <i>there is no</i>		- <i>there is a</i> - <i>there is no</i>
19.16) Hybrid Function: Time, References to Present			- <i>our sample period</i>

Research and Ownership (1 lexical bundle)			
19.17) Hybrid Function: Intention and Purpose (21 lexical bundles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>be used to</i> - <i>in order to</i> - <i>is needed to</i> - <i>study is to</i> - <i>study was to</i> - <i>to determine the</i> - <i>to engage in</i> - <i>to ensure that</i> - <i>to note that</i> - <i>to investigate the</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>in order to</i> - <i>to account for</i> - <i>to assess the</i> - <i>to examine the</i> - <i>to identify the</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the decision to</i> - <i>to address this</i> - <i>to capture the</i> - <i>to control for</i> - <i>to estimate the</i> - <i>to examine the</i> - <i>to examine whether</i> - <i>to reduce the</i>
19.18) Hybrid Function: Ownership and Commentary (6 lexical bundles)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>we showed that</i> - <i>we hypothesized that</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>we assume that</i> - <i>we argue that</i> - <i>we estimate the</i> - <i>we show that</i>
19.19) Hybrid Function: Ownership and Action (2 lexical bundles)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>we use a</i> - <i>we use the</i>
19.20) Hybrid Function: Tentativeness, Tangible, and Intangible (1 lexical bundle)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the likelihood of</i>
19.21) Hybrid Function: Tentativeness and Evaluation			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>tend to be</i>

(1 lexical bundle)			
19.22) Hybrid Function: Ability Tangible, and Intangible (1 lexical bundle)			- <i>the ability of</i>
19.23) Hybrid Function: Claim and Reporting results (1 lexical bundle)			- <i>provide evidence that</i>
19.24) Hybrid Function: Direction and Intention (1 lexical bundle)	- <i>need to be</i>	- <i>need to be</i>	
19.25) Hybrid Function: Intangible and Time (2 lexical bundle)	- <i>at the end of</i>		- <i>at the beginning of</i> - <i>at the end of</i>
19.26) Hybrid Function: Tangible and Intangible (65 lexical bundles)	- <i>a range of</i> - <i>between the two</i> - <i>difference between the</i> - <i>differences between the</i> - <i>differences in the</i> - <i>in light of</i> - <i>in terms of</i> - <i>in the same</i> - <i>main effect of</i>	- <i>an association between</i> - <i>differences in the</i> - <i>the cross sectional</i> - <i>the development of</i> - <i>the effect of</i> - <i>the effects of</i> - <i>the prevalence of</i> - <i>the relationship between</i> - <i>the risk of</i> - <i>the use of</i>	- <i>a decrease in</i> - <i>a form of</i> - <i>a source of</i> - <i>at the level</i> - <i>difference between the</i> - <i>differences between the</i> - <i>focus on the</i> - <i>half of the</i> - <i>in terms of</i> - <i>in the same</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - most of the - part of a - part of the - some of the - structure of the - the absence of - the acquisition of - the comparison of - the degree of - the development of - the effect of - the effects of - the existence of - the extent to which - the lack of - the majority of - the presence of - the process of - the question of - the relationship between - the total number of - the use of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - leads to a - most of the - part of the - some of the - the absence of - the change in - the coefficient on - the cost of - the demand for - the difference between - the effect of - the effects of - the existence of - the extent of - the extent to which - the fraction of - the impact of - the interests of - the introduction of - the level of - the literature on - the percentage of - the presence of - the quality of - the ratio of - the relation between
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the remainder of</i> - <i>the rest of</i> - <i>the risk of</i> - <i>the role of</i> - <i>the sample to</i> - <i>the sensitivity of</i> - <i>the size of</i> - <i>the total number of</i> - <i>the use of</i> - <i>the value of</i>
19.27) Hybrid Function: Purpose, Tangible, and Intangible) (1 lexical bundle)	- <i>the purpose of</i>		
19.28) Hybrid Function: Tangible, Intangible, and Knowledge (1 lexical bundle)	- <i>based on the</i>	- <i>based on the</i>	- <i>based on the</i>
19.29) Hybrid Function: Intangible and Claim (1 lexical bundle)	- <i>the importance of</i>	- <i>the importance of</i>	- <i>the importance of</i>
TOTAL	371 lexical bundles		

Table 8 shows the 19 communicative functions of the 371 lexical bundles. All communicative functions derive from the communicative functions of lexical bundles as proposed by corpus scholars (i.e., Baoya, 2015; Biber et al., 2004; Getkham, 2010; Kanoksilpatham, 2003; Kitjaroenpaiboon, 2016; Kitjaroenpaiboon & Getkham, 2016a; 2016b). The functional analysis reveals that some lexical bundles provide one communicative function, while some provide two or more functions (known in this study as Hybrid Function) depending on the context in which they are found. For instance, *'the importance of'* has two communicative functions. They are Intangible and Claim.

Conclusion and Discussion

A total of 182 lexical bundles are found in language teaching RAs. The findings differ from Hyland (2008) who found 20 lexical bundles in applied linguistic RAs. The difference might be possibly due to the number of words contained in the lexical bundles. Hyland (2008) investigated four-word lexical bundles in his corpus while this study analyzes three- to five-word bundles.

A total of 108 lexical bundles are revealed in the health sciences RAs. It is also discrepant from Panthong and Poonpon's (2020) finding of 67 lexical bundles in medical RAs, Kwary et al.'s (2017) finding of 62 lexical bundles in health sciences RAs, and Cortes' (2004) finding of four lexical bundles in biology RAs. A possible reason affecting the differences might be that those studies also focused on exploring four-word bundles.

Additionally, a total of 178 lexical bundles are found in the business management RAs. The findings are discrepant from Damshevska (2019) who found 40 lexical bundles in business economic RAs. The difference might be because Damshevska (2019) focuses only on investigating four-word lexical bundles in his corpus.

It could be said that the number of words contained in a lexical bundle results in the findings. In other words, the fewer the numbers of words a lexical bundle comprises, the more frequently a lexical bundle is found and vice versa (Cardinali, 2015; Neely & Cortes, 2011; Nesi & Basturkmen, 2006).

Our observation is that 40 lexical bundles (i.e., *as well as*, *based on the*, *in order to*, *in terms of*, *in this study*, *one of the*, *the number of*, *the relationship between*, *the use of*, *a number of*, *in other words*, *in relation to*, *it is important to*, *most of the*, *on the other hand*, *related to the*, *showed that the*, *some of the*, *there is a*, *of this study*, *in addition to*, *the present study*, *as a result*, *be able to*, *compared to the*, *differences in the*, *found to be*, *in light of*, *in the context of*, *it may be*, *likely to be*, *may not be*, *more likely to*, *need to be*, *the ability to*, *the development of*, *the effects of*, *the importance of*, *the lack of*, *the nature of*) are similarly found in the introduction and in the discussion sections of the language teaching RAs. Similar to Bal (2010), lexical bundles found in the introduction sections are similarly found in the discussion sections. This might be because a discussion section plays the role of a mirror reflecting the content provided in an introduction section. RA writers always mention other previous studies and compare their findings with others in these sections (Lim, 2005). **No** statistically significant differences between the use of the 182 lexical bundles in all four sections of the language teaching RAs are found ($p = .150$). This implies that lexical bundles in all four sections of the language teaching RAs are quite **similar**. The findings are in line with Kitjaroenpaiboon and Getkham (2016b) who reported that linguistic characteristics in all four sections of language teaching RAs are quite identical.

Another observation is that three lexical bundles (i.e., *as well as*, *in order to*, *one of the*) are similarly found in the introduction and the method sections of the health sciences RAs. Three lexical bundles (i.e., *as well as*, *a total of*, *included in the*) are similarly found in the method and the results sections. Three lexical bundles (i.e., *as well as*, *compared with the*, *not associated with*) are similarly found in the results and the discussion sections. This might be because stylistic patterns in introduction are similar to ones in the method sections, ones in the method are similar to ones in the results, and ones in the results are similar to ones in the discussion. Writers provide an overview of a research methodology in the introduction and

detail the methodology again in the method sections, explain populations in the study in the method and the results sections, and provide conclusions of the results in the discussion sections (Misak et al., 2005). Some statistically significant differences between the use of the 108 lexical bundles in all four sections of the health sciences RAs are found ($p = .016$). This implies that the use of lexical bundles in some sections of the health sciences RAs are **different**. The findings differ from Bineta (2016) and Kitjaroenpaiboon and Getkham (2016a) who reported that lexical bundles and linguistic structures are identically used in all four sections of medical and nursing RAs. The findings of this paper are discrepant from those two might be presumably due to the different disciplines analyzed. Kitjaroenpaiboon and Getkham (2016a) state that each discipline has its own specific stylistic pattern despite being in the same science.

The other observation is that 36 lexical bundles (i.e., *as well as*, *a number of*, *the effect of*, *the number of*, *based on the*, *changes in the*, *due to the*, *in terms of*, *in the same*, *in this case*, *the level of*, *the likelihood of*, *the probability of*, *the value of*, *consistent with the*, *relative to the*, *the change in*, *the impact of*, *a variety of*, *an increase in*, *as a result*, *at the time of*, *focus on the*, *in addition to*, *less likely to*, *most of the*, *one of the*, *prior to the*, *tend to be*, *the cost of*, *the effects of*, *the extent to which*, *the relation between*, *the time of*, *we focus on*, *with respect to*) are similarly found in the introduction and the methodology sections of the business management RAs. This might plausibly be because the content of an introduction section and a methodology section similarly presents an overview of research and discusses other previous studies (Weissberg & Buker, 1990). Some statistically significant differences between the use of the 178 lexical bundles in all four sections of the business management RAs are found ($p < .001$). This implies that the use of lexical bundles in some sections of the business management RAs are **different**. However, the findings differ from Betul (2019) who found that similar lexical bundles are applied through all four sections of the economic RAs.

A total of 371 lexical bundles are found in the language teaching, health sciences, and business management RAs. **No** statistically significant differences between the use of the 371 lexical bundles in all RAs are found ($p = .687$). This implies that the use of lexical bundles in the three disciplines are quite **similar**. The findings differ from Kwary et al. (2017) who reported that lexical bundles found in health science RAs differ from lexical bundles found in social sciences. However, they are in line with Betul (2019) in that similar lexical bundles are found through the economic, the educational, the history, the medical, the psychological sciences, and the sociology RAs.

We also found that the lexical bundles with functions such as desire, introduction, elaboration, condition, politeness, request, further communication, offer, and expectation of Biber et al. (2004) are not found in this study. This lack of functions might be because Biber et al. (2004) investigated spoken discourse; however, RAs is in written academic discourse of nature is formal and conventional (Bailey et al., 2004). Subsequently, lexical bundles with the above communicative functions are not found in the analysis.

In summary, the lexical bundles in each section of the RAs are both similar and different. Plausibly, a factor affecting similarities of the lexical bundle uses is that the language applied for writing in all sections of RAs is an academic language which is rather conventional and formal and differs from general language (Ranney, 2012). Presumably, a factor causing differences is the underlying communicative purposes of each section which result in different uses of lexical bundles in each section (Rao, 2018). The introduction section provides an overview of related works and the importance of a study. The methodology section elaborates a research design. The results section presents the findings. Meanwhile, the discussion section

presents interpretations and comparisons of the findings (Pho, 2008). For example, in this study *few studies have* is frequently found in the introduction sections to mention previous studies. *Participants in the* is frequently found in the methodology sections to refer to the research populations. *Are shown in* is frequently found in the results sections to present an informational table. Also, *we found that* is frequently found in the discussion sections to conclude and compare findings with others.

That the 371 lexical bundles in these three disciplines are quite similar has been confirmed by **no** statistically significant difference ($p = .687$). Hyland (2012) says that academic language is always used for writing RAs in all disciplines and shares some stylistics in common among the disciplines. Academic language is always formal, conventional, and applied some similar lexical bundles (Hyland, 2007). For instance, *according to the*, *based on the*, and *results suggest that* are generally found in academic language. However, each discipline has its use of some discipline-specific lexical bundles (Ranney, 2012). For example, in this study, *English as a second language* is found explicitly in the language teaching RAs. In comparison, *in patients with* and *children and adolescents* are specifically found in the health sciences RAs. In contrast, *descriptive statistics for* and *difference in differences* are only found in the business management RAs. The researchers view that these discipline-specific lexical bundles are not seen as frequently as general academic lexical bundles. Subsequently, **no** statistically significant differences between the use of the total of 371 lexical bundles in the RAs from these three disciplines were revealed.

We view that studying lexical bundles and their communicative functions is essential for learning academic language in each discipline and they provide non-native English, novice, and inexperienced researchers RA writing guidance. Therefore, before academics or researchers write a discipline-specific RA or even a multidisciplinary RA, a lexical bundle analysis can be used to determine how lexical bundles are needed to write a text and prepare the bundle lists accordingly. Thus, as noted by Chirobocea-Tudor (2018), understanding lexical bundles with their communicative functions is a helpful though daunting task to enhance comprehension and utilization of lexical bundles in a discipline-specific context in a particular field of study or even multidisciplinary context.

The relationships between lexical bundles and sections of RAs and between lexical bundles and disciplinary variations have been discussed in numerous studies. In the academic genre, for example, the existing research studies showed some different usages of lexical bundles across conventional sections as well as across disciplines in the written form (Damshevska, 2019; Hyland, 2008; Panthong & Poonpon, 2020; Wongwiwat, 2016). As stated by scholars (Huimin, 2010; Hyland, 2012), the distribution of bundles not only characterizes particular genres, but also is a section and disciplinary marker. This study adds considerable empirical evidences in viewing lexical bundles as an intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary marker. Within the RA genre, despite the use of lexical bundles being similarly distributed in a wide range when examining the disciplines with interest, some mild variations could be treated as distinction marks.

This study contributes to the research on intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary study with the examples from language teaching, health sciences, and business management RAs. The intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary relationships, as revealed in the results, sees rather significant convergence compared with the divergent usages.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Studies

This study helps shed light on lexical bundles in academic writing in the three specific disciplines (i.e., language teaching, health sciences, and business management). All data sets were retrieved from the disciplines. Accordingly, generalizing of the results is restricted to those specific corpora. For further studies, future research might be conducted to determine how the data-driven approach can best be facilitated in English for Academic Purposes or English for Specific Purposes instruction. This can contribute to teaching academic writing.

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A Study of Attribution for Success and Failure in English Communication Skills of Thai EFL Adult Learners in Bangkok

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Abstract

This study investigated potential causes of success and failure of Thai employees (EFL adult learners) using four skills of English for communicating in workplaces based on the framework of Weiner's Attribution Theory (1985). Twenty Thai EFL adult learners gave reasons through self-evaluation whether they successfully attained their career goals. The participants were also asked to discuss important factors that help to develop their communicative competence in workplaces. A qualitative questionnaire and an in-depth interview were used for gaining such insight. Ability, effort, task difficulty, luck, interest, confidence, social factors, and cultural factors were found as causal attributions. There are six factors considered as attributions of success in using English for communication at work. Internal factors concerned ability, effort, interest, and confidence, whereas external factors concerned society and culture. Seven factors were revealed as attributions of failure in using English for communication at work. Ability, effort, interest, and confidence were internal factors, whereas external factors were task difficulty, social factors, and luck. The participants also suggested that in order to boost English communication success, factors such as effort and social factors must be involved. English training classes provided by organizations were highlighted. Spending more time learning English outside of work whether formally at language schools or informally in free time was also emphasized as paths to success.

Keywords: Attribution theory, Thai EFL adult learners, causal explanation, English as a Foreign Language

Introduction

In this time of globalization, there is an international language used as a shared means of communication. Among the most recent updates in the world's top 10 most spoken languages, English is the primary tool of communicating internationally among the 1.1 billion people around the world who speak it (Ang, 2021). People around the world can connect with each other more easily by using a shared language instead of their own mother tongues. Hence, learning to communicate in English as a lingua franca is paramount in today's world.

Thailand, like many other countries, has been attempting to assimilate with the world's international language. In the current school system in Thailand, English is the mandatory foreign language, being taught from grade 1 in primary to grade 12 in secondary school. It is one of the eight subjects that students must take in their required courses during this 12-year period of learning (Wiriyachitra, 2002). Moreover, in spite of the various reforms that Thailand's educational system has experienced over the past 2 decades, it is still evident that the Thai population consistently has too low a level of English proficiency to compete in the international community. Whereas there have been numerous studies attempting to find explanations to this known phenomenon, only a small number have actually investigated past classroom concerns (Young, 2021).

Although the study of English in primary and secondary schools for Thai students covers a period spanning 12 years, the results are still poor compared to those in neighboring countries. As a result, most Thais' English expertise is comparatively low. According to the latest EF English Proficiency Index of 2020 (EF EPI, 2020), Thailand ranked 89th out of 100 globally of non-native English-speaking countries. It currently resides in the "very low proficiency" group. Academically and professionally speaking, contributing factors such as educational administrators' policy view, commitment and motivation of students, and effective teaching methods in Thai schools and universities are claimed to be at fault. Statistically, a number of Thai students still have disappointing levels of English-language proficiency (Phothongsunan, 2015).

The obstacles in studying and teaching the English language in Thailand can be identified in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools. Biyaem (1997) suggests that these obstacles could be seen from two aspects, which are teacher's and learner's perspectives. From the Thai teacher's side, there are a number of inadequate conditions including tight schedules, overcrowded classrooms with approximately 45-60 students per class, and poor English knowledge especially authentic native-speaker's cultural knowledge. Moreover, they cannot provide classrooms that are fully equipped with modern and useful technology. Aside from that, from the Thai learner's perspective, most learners are not encouraged enough to confidently use the English language whether in verbal or written form. One reason is their fearful mindset regarding English language; they think that it is impossible to be fluent in English. Undeniably, one of the significant factors that decreases their ability to comprehend is the Thai language structure, such as its grammar, syntax, and sentence formation. More importantly, they rarely have opportunity to use English in everyday life. However, a significant proportion of Thai learners believe that English is important and they wish to be able to use it fluently. Yet, they still lack confidence in using English language in public.

Generally, not only young EFL learners are facing various obstacles in learning English language but adult EFL learners are also encountering similar challenges. In Kazakhstan, Assel (2014) emphasized the difficulties adult EFL learners face during the process of acquiring communicative skills of English language. Knowing grammatical and semantic rules does not seem to be enough. Learners also need to be exposed to how native speakers use the language while interacting. While in the Thai context, Jeharsae (2012) conducted a study on Thai employees in the customer service department at an international workplace to investigate existing problems in English oral communication. It was found that having trouble with listening comprehension and producing grammatical errors are the main problems reported by the members of customer service teams. One plausible reason for these problems among adult Thai EFL learners could be limited experience with or exposure to English interaction both inside and outside classroom. Such challenges would inevitably hinder the process of mastering

English oral communication for any EFL learners (Boonkit, 2010).

Despite the importance of the English language in business environments, the emphasis on English in the Thai curriculum remains insufficient. Communication skills are important for English usage in the workplace. Therefore, a good command of all four skills in English – reading, writing, speaking, and listening are required to fully communicate in the business world. Unfortunately, it is evident that the English curriculum in the Thai tertiary education does not pay enough attention to all of the essential four skills as a whole (Wiriyachitra, 2002).

In this case, it can be argued that Thai education infrastructure facilitating the English-language learning may not be preparing Thai learners to enter this flourishing world. The major reason for this can very well be the ineptitude of Thai educators and learners along with the lack of exposure to the language altogether. This contributes to Thailand being inferior to other countries in terms of business, economic, science, and technology. Take the scope of information technology in Thailand for example; Thailand's technological efficiency is considerably high. However, insufficient English capability actually contributes to the fact that Thai people still cannot thrive in the world of science and technology. This leads to the main concern regarding the importance of English-language education in Thailand, and whether the traditional pedagogy is entirely inadequate (Wiriyachitra, 2002).

Therefore, given the current lack of interest in EFL attribution research, the researchers would like to place importance on how working people perceive themselves regarding their success and failure in English communication. It should be fundamental to gain a comprehensive grasp of how adult Thai employees evaluate their own English-language performance in the workplace within the international business context in order to discover the causes of successful and unsuccessful communication via the English language.

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework of Attribution Theory

Concerning individuals' behavior and achievement in the area of EFL, various theories have evolved in the search for explaining the existing phenomena. Among these theories, attribution theory is one that has been paid attention to and developed by many scholars. It is centered on causes which can be determined by either internal or by external factors and is considered as an approach that can be utilized for assessing how people perceive their own behaviors and those of others'. Hence, attribution theory is about how people make explanations for the reasons why people act or perform the way they do.

According to Weiner (1985, 2010), the theory mainly concerns language-learning achievement and focuses on understanding how individual learners interpret events which then leads to explanations of their beliefs, actions, and behaviors. This effort can then explain various causes behind their actions.

Attribution can be classified into three causal aspects or properties including locus of control, stability, and controllability. Firstly, locus of control (location within or outside of the person) has internal and external factors. To elaborate, efficiency and attempt are internal while difficulty and luck are external locus of control. Secondly, stability (endurance over time) is

related to changes over time. For instance, efficiency and attempt are both internal causes, but efficiency can be viewed as stable while attempt is unstable. Thirdly, controllability defines the extent to which a person has control over causes. There are some causes that can be controlled and some that cannot be controlled. Controllable causes are often associated with internal factors such as personal skills and productivity. On the other hand, uncontrollable causes are external factors that often cannot be foreseen nor changed, such as talent, emotion, others' behaviors, and luck. To summarize, these three causal aspects contribute to the causes of any success and failure and will be the important concepts mentioned in this study.

Research on Factors Attributing to Successes and Failures in EFL

There are numerous factors uncovered by various studies in EFL in terms of understanding successes and failures in foreign-language learning.

Age and Gender

Regarding gender difference specifically in attribution to success, Saticilar (2006) found that there was similarity between male and female learners. The differences only appeared in details such as Turkish female learners attributed their success to effort (internal factor) more frequently than male counterparts. Turkish male learners tended to attribute their success to ability (internal factor) more compared to female learners. Concomitant to this, Genç's (2016) study on Turkish tertiary level EFL learners' attributions toward success and failure and the effects of gender, age, and perceived success on their attributions showed that gender is not a key component in determining a student's reasons for success and failure with respect to the reasons involving ability, effort, interest, task difficulty, luck, and factors concerning teachers and schools.

From the same research, age was not considered as an influential factor for EFL students in attribution of success and failure. In another Turkish research, Yavuz and Höl (2017) investigated the attributions of Turkish EFL learners on success and failure in learning English. The results show that there is no significant difference between the two groups; however, female students tended to accredit their success in learning English more toward internal factors than male participants. However, dissimilarity is shown in the Iranian context in the work of Mohammadi and Sharififar (2016). The study examined the attributions of Iranian English-language learners for their successes and failures and investigated the relationship between learners' gender and attributions. The research found that there is a relationship between learner's gender, proficiency level, and attributions. It seemed that male students attributed their success and failure to ability (internal) more than female students. On the other hand, females attributed their success and failures to luck (external) more than male learners.

Hassaskhah and Vahabi (2010) investigated the relationship between three age-groups and four attribution patterns (effort, difficulty of the task, ability, and luck) for academic success or failures in an Iranian EFL context. The age groups were divided into three categories: children, teenagers, and adults to see whether there was any relationship between age and their perceived causes for their success and failure in learning English. The findings show that different age groups shared the same perception of what factors hold the most and the least important position in their learning, but with different degrees toward specific factors.

Location

Farrha (2004) conducted a study between high and low achiever EFL learners within a Pakistani context. The result showed that there was no significant difference between urban and rural students concerning their successes and failures. In contrast, the work of Gobel et al. (2013) explored Malaysian urban and rural students' attributions for success and failure in learning English as a second language and showed that location is one of the most influential factors in attribution to success and failure in language-learning tasks. Urban students attributed their success more to their own abilities, whereas rural students tended to attribute their failure to lack of ability. The reasons behind such results could be because of the learners' attitude and the different level of English-language exposure. While undoubtedly learners who live in the city have greater exposure to English as a practical medium of communication, learners in rural areas struggle to have such opportunity (Gobel & Mori, 2007). In rural settings, rural learners often formed the view toward learning English language as something they could not relate to. In other words, English was forced upon them in a way that they had no control over.

Culture

It was found in a literature review of cross-cultural studies across the globe that culture could be considered as one of the most important elements. Different cultures are compellingly proven to yield different outcomes. The following four investigations were conducted in Asia, Middle East, and Western Europe.

In accordance with a study conducted in Asia by Mori et al. (2010), both Thai and Japanese university students attributed their success more toward external factors of teachers and classroom atmosphere. They also attributed their failure more toward internal factors of lack of ability and effort. This might imply that there are certain shared values among these two Asian cultures. The explanation to such tendency was presented by Markus and Kitayama (1991, as cited in Mori et al., 2010) that cultural differences may play a part in this. A number of Western cultures such as those of North America promote individualism (independence), while many non-Western cultures such as those of Japan and Thailand place the emphasis on collectivism (interdependence and connectedness). In such cultures, modesty is valued highly, taking credit for one's own success with explicit self-confidence is often considered as arrogance.

However, in other research conducted solely on Thai EFL university students, Nimitniwat (2012) found that the students attribute both their academic success and failure more toward internal factors, pointing most significantly at their own positive outlook. It was also reported that the attributions to failure are from internal factors which are credited as greater than the external factors, revealing their lack of ability as the most significant factor.

Comparably, within the Middle Eastern culture, Mohammadi and Sharififar (2016) conducted a study of the attributions of Iranian English-language learners for their successes and failures in learning English as a foreign language. The result, unlike Thai and Japanese students as in the work of Mori et al. (2010), suggested that attribution to both success and failure is derived more from the external factors. In an attempt to provide a reasonable explanation for the results above, applying Hofstede's (2011) cross-cultural concept seems appropriate. Middle Eastern cultural values are unique and different from those in Western countries and the rest of the world. In the Arab world, most people are conservative and modesty is a positive trait spoken about in the Koran. Therefore, it could explain why taking

credit for one's own success (internal) is not an option and they would rather attribute the reason to external factors. Moreover, countries in the Arab world exhibit high uncertainty avoidance, meaning that there are a number of societal restrictions and obligations culturally set in place. Such uncontrollable causes are naturally considered as external factors and might be used as a scapegoat responsible for one's failure in this case.

Interestingly, Genç (2016) conducted a study of Turkish tertiary-level EFL learner attributions to success and failure. Success tends more toward internal reasons and failure tends toward the external reasons which seems opposite to the work of Mori et al. (2010). A similar trend seemed to appear in the investigation into the attributions of Turkish EFL learners on success and failure in learning English by Yavuz & Höl (2017). The findings reveal that learners attribute their success and failure to both internal and external attributions but they attribute more toward internal factors. It could be concluded that a universal culture is not pertinent in this EFL attribution to success and failure; it varies from research to research to say the least.

Society

Considering factors concerning influences of society on English-language learners' success and failure, Williams et al. (2001) conducted a study of 25 English learners in Bahrain and concluded that not only positive mindset and constant practice, but also encouraging family were the most significant influential factors in English-learning success. Contrastingly, incapability of understanding skills, teacher's teaching strategies, and unfavorable social aspects on the lack of encouraging learning atmosphere and consistent discouragement were considered as factors for English-learning failure. To support this further, Nimitniwat (2012) revealed that the academic success rate has different causal attributions concerning social factors which include learners and parents' financial status, eagerness for success, temporary occupations, and learners and parents' academic background. Hometown, however, did not demonstrate different influential factors to learners' learning success.

English Proficiency

Gobel and Mori (2007) studied 233 Japanese university freshmen students in EFL oral communication and reading classes and found that there is a significant relationship among exam results and the attributions of likes, task difficulty, and proficiency of English. Thepsiri and Pojanapunya (2010) reported that, among freshmen university students in engineering and science related majors, effort, grades, class environment, and teacher's impact are influential factors on their success; whereas lack of effort, poor preparation, low proficiency of English, and improper learning approaches account for their EFL learning failure.

In addition, Hashemi and Zabihi (2011) found that internal factors and English-language competency actually develop a significant relationship in the Iranian subjects in the study. In other words, students' English-proficiency levels and internal attributions such as effort and interest are proportionally related. Furthermore, Yavuz and Höl (2017) also conducted a study of two groups of Turkish EFL students; one possessing a pre-intermediate level of English and another possessing an intermediate level of English. The study aimed to examine their attributions regarding success and failure in English-language learning. The difference in English proficiency level does not hold a statistical significance as one of dominant factors in attributions to success.

In contrast, Mohammadi and Sharififar (2016) compared two groups of Iranian students, elementary and advanced, and suggested that learners' English proficiency levels were attributed to part of their achievements and their proficiency levels are actually influenced by different aspects such as effort, deep down capabilities, and the difficulty of instant exams. Even though there was no significant difference in external attributions such as luck and students' competency levels, it still can be concluded that the levels of English-language proficiency and attributions are significantly related.

Methodology

Site and Samples

The participants in this research are a group of 20 young working adults between the ages of 23-35 years old and having worked for between 2-10 years. They were currently working for different companies in the private sector. The types of business they worked in were diverse, including medical health care, education, food and beverages, import and export, hospitality, media and graphics, and real estate. All the participants were purposively selected based on four criteria. For the first criterion, they must hold a bachelor's degree from either a public or private Thai university. Second, they studied in a non-English major. Third, they were working in a private company in Bangkok. Most importantly, for the fourth criterion, their employment entails using English as a means of communication at work.

Instruments and Data Collection Procedure

The researcher considered qualitative questionnaires and interviews as appropriate data collection techniques to identify the factors. The qualitative approach employed in this study helps answer the research questions appropriately and adequately as it comprehensively analyzes real evidence obtained from interviews with actual participants. In addition, qualitative research provides empirical inquiry of events based on the context from real life that can penetrate into the participants' point of view through current interaction in trying to understand the participants' aspect and essence (Merriam, 1998). Hence, the approach suits the study's agenda to describe and explain rather than make numerical determinations. Questions in the interview were developed through triangulate using both questionnaire and interview validity.

Qualitative Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. In the first stage of the study, the first set of the questions which pertain to the participants' demographic information was sent out to 60 working people the researcher had access to. Only a few selected individuals met all the criteria and were eligible to participate in the study at this stage. In the second stage, a set of qualitative questions which were designed to carry qualitative value consisting of eight open-ended questions, was then sent out to the selected participants. The researcher distributed the qualitative questionnaire to each participant via email in order to collect the respondent's self-report on their personal view of EFL English for communicating in the workplace. Even though the researcher did not directly explain what "attribution" meant, throughout the questionnaire all the question items were clear and easy to understand.

Semi-structured Interviews

As the main focus of this study was to explore how working people attribute their successes and failures in English communication at work, the researcher administered her own Interview Guide that included a mix of more or less structured interview questions to elicit their EFL learning experiences. All questions used were versatile in terms of flexibility and responsiveness. A semi-structured interview was used guided by questions prepared specifically to draw out descriptive answers, while the participants could still freely express their points of view. Moreover, this interview was conducted in both Thai and English individually for approximately 45-60 minutes. In this last step of data collection procedure, the individual semi-structured interviews took place a week after obtaining qualitative questionnaire responses from each participant. The interviews were conducted based on the key questions listed in the Interview Guide which was developed with the aim to obtain data about potential causes of successes and failures in English communication skills of Thai EFL adult learners and important factors that help develop the learners' English communicative competence in workplace. At this stage, the participants were allowed to discuss their experiences in a way in which they were comfortable. All the interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed into text as a way to prepare the raw data for the data analysis.

Data Analysis

This study employed an overall inductive strategy for data analysis. This inductive analysis ultimately yielded a description of the informant's key perceptions of their attribution to success and failure in English communication in their workplace. The researcher adopted Weiner's framework (1985) to set themes of dimensional classification scheme for causal attributions for the study.

Findings

This part presents the results in response to research questions.

RQ 1: "What are the EFL Thai adult learners' attributions for success in using English to communicate at work?"

Six factors were found as attributions for success in using English to communicate at work among the 20 participants who participated in both questionnaire and interview sessions. The study examined the role of locus of causality attributions closely. For internal factors, the factors concerned were ability, effort, interest, and confidence. For external factors, the factors concerned were related to society and culture.

From both questionnaire and interview, most of the participants attributed their success to internal factors which were ability, effort, interest, and confidence. In the open-ended questionnaire, 14 participants out of 20 accredited their success to internal factors and four participants gave credit to external factors. Two participants attributed their success to both internal and external. Moreover, during the interview sessions, all 20 participants ascribed their success to internal factors. This shows that both the answers from the questionnaire and the interview were triangulated.

Ability

“I think it was when my boss assigned me to be a customer service in an international department. I have ability to speak so the department mostly send me to take care of our foreign customers, also other departments often ask me for help in English.” (Participant D, Customer service)

“Back then it was when I received compliments about my English, that’s when I knew I was doing something right. Now it’s more about me getting better and better when it comes to English.” (Participant T, International coordinator)

Effort

“I try to get into a situation where I can offer my assistance in English, 90% of the patients I meet are international patients. This way I can practice using English daily that means I won’t forget how to use it.” (Participant I, Nurse)

“To help with my work, I am currently taking a course in English, and I also learn specific terms used in my work on my own. I try to remember new 10 words per day especially vocabulary related to the products and sales.” (Participant O, Sales)

RQ 2: “What are the EFL Thai adult learners’ attributions of failure in using English to communicate at work?”

In this study, seven factors were found as attributions of failure in using English to communicate at work. For internal factors, there were ability, effort, interest, and confidence. For external factors, there were task difficulty, luck, and social factors.

From the questionnaire findings, 9 out of the 20 participants accredited their failure to internal factors whereas seven pointed out external factors and four other participants claimed their failure was due to both external and internal factors. From the interview, 12 out of the 20 participants attributed their failure to internal factors. Five of them ascribed their lack of success to external factors. Two claimed that both external and internal factors were accountable for their failure, and one asserted that she had no failure in English communication at the workplace. This shows that both the answers from the questionnaire and the interview were triangulated with each other as the identical answer presenting itself by revealing most subjects’ failure occurs due to internal factors.

Ability

“When I don’t do well in English is when I cannot think of a word, and I need to open a dictionary for it, I forget how to spell because I don’t use it a lot. Writing is also difficult for me, I am not good in grammar and also speaking I don’t have good accent and cannot stress the word properly.” (Participant B, Staff Officer)

“Probably the lack of background knowledge and specific terms used in that particular context. I also want to add unfamiliar accents or unclear pronunciation/ bad enunciation from people I talk to when it comes to listening. Like some people are just hard to understand when they speak English.” (Participant T, International Coordinator)

Task difficulty

“But if I have to pick, it’s probably listening skill because it’s involved understanding people with different accents. And having to respond simultaneously. I can’t choose to listen to just those ones I can understand easily, you know. I can’t think of any particular incident. But the situations that usually give me a hard time are involved with listening to someone who can’t speak English well or if they can speak English but with weird accents then that is hard for me to respond because I can’t fully understand them.” (Participant T, International coordinator)

Effort

“When I don’t do well is when I don’t prepare enough, like in presenting the work, which it comes out bad.” (Participant G, Business process Excellent)

RQ 3: “What could be important factors that develop communicative competence of the EFL Thai adult learners?”

During the interview, the participants were asked to provide some suggestions of how they could improve their English communication skills. It was found that there were two factors which were effort and social factors in relation to improving and developing communicative competence at work. These two factors share the same type of stability; that is, they are unstable attributions, or temporary factors, which can be changed.

The results from the interview reported that the emphasis on organizational support appeared to be paramount as the participants saw this as a way for working people such as themselves to be able to improve their English communication skills. Nine out of 20 participants expressed that the company should place more emphasis on the importance of English and provide English training classes for employees. However, only one of all the participants reported that the organization had actually provided English training classes. Hence, the support from employing organization for could be considered as a social factor.

“I try to remember everything I’ve done like the vocab used in the menu; also I try to remember how others use English in every situation like how they talk with the boss. I also think that English is important. The company should provide English training courses for the employees so that the work can come out in the same direction and come out well. Because in a company even the announcement is in English, so the staff that don’t know English would not be able to understand it.” (Participant A, Menu translator)

Seeking resources, whether through formal or informal learning settings, seems to be equally an important approach the participants considered necessary for them as it could help boost their English communicative skills. Eight of them said that they practiced using English by themselves by engaging in some sort of English entertainment (e.g., movies, news, Netflix), by using social media (e.g., Facebook, YouTube), and by reading English books. One participant, in particular, mentioned having English conversation with her friends regularly to improve her speaking skill. These ways of learning were practically undertaken through informal settings.

“I practice by speaking, I have a Thai friend who I always speak English with, and I also chat with my foreign friends. So I won’t forget English.” (Participant D, Customer service)

“I try to remember what I did wrong and will get the help from my senior. Also I learnt by myself by watching English movies, watching news like BBC and CNN.” (Participant F, Import CS)

Two of the participants reported that they were currently taking English class at tutoring schools during their free time. However, only one was taking courses with native English-speaking teachers. This can be considered as another channel of formal learning settings accessed through the expenditure of individual effort to obtain self-development via improved English communication skills.

“Keep practicing, be patience improve skill more and more, take extra class. Right now I am taking an English course with Kru Louk Golf.” (Angkriz Academy, the English tutoring school) (Participant B, Staff officer)

“Read more English book, listen to English music, watching English movies and I try to remember how the foreigner speak. Right now, I also take the English extra class.” (Participant E, Graphic designer)

Regarding those who expressed the need for English training courses provided by the company, they said that they wanted the company to look back and pay attention to the importance of English in the workplace. They wanted the company to teach them at least the vocabulary used for specific purposes relating to their lines of duty. This could mean that there are most likely several difficulties at work which was very different environment from school. The vocabulary that they learned in school was insufficient for them to apply to the work context, which needs true English proficiency. They mentioned that it would not only enhance the English skills of the employee but also benefit the company as a whole. Though the eyes of the participants, such frustration could be removed by having support from the company. Providing resources needed in terms of specific vocabulary sets could help to save time and make the work process more effective. Communicating in English among those working in the same office could also be a good start to help provide a suitable environment for English communicative skill development in the long term.

Moreover, some of the participants mentioned that they regularly learned and practiced individually. As one respondent stated, *“I practice by speaking, I have a Thai friend who I always speak English with, and I also chat with my foreign friends. So I won’t forget English.”* (Participant D, Customer service). This shows that at present there is a real concern for the importance of English. Especially in workplaces where English is required, employees need to be proactive in learning the second language on their own as it will result in benefits that will remain with them throughout their career and be transportable from one workplace to another.

In addition, two of the participants mentioned that they were currently taking an English course because they wanted to be good at English. The reason behind this might be because there are a number of employees in their workplace who are proficient at English or perhaps their company particularly is in need of employees who are proficient in English. This shows that the participants are determined to improve themselves by taking extra classes. As one

respondent stated, *“Keep practicing, be patience improve skill more and more, take extra class. Right now I am taking an English course with Kru. Louk Golf.”*
(Participant B, Staff officer)

Noticeably, out of the 20 participants, only one reported that her organization had provided English training classes for employees. Thus, it can be concluded that the importance of in-house continual personal development in English language may be being overlooked by most companies.

Discussion

Communication Skills of Thai EFL Adult Learners

From the results found in this study, there are eight prominent causal attributions. The four factors are based on the framework of Weiner’s Attribution Theory (1985) – ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. Four additional factors found were interest, confidence, social factors, and cultural factors. EFL adult learners in this study attributed their success primarily to the internal factors such as ability, effort, interest, and confidence – with little to no recognition of any external factors. To elaborate, the Thai adult learners seemed to perceive their own ability as the key factor that brought them to successful English communicative performance determined by the amount of effort they put into their performance. When unsuccessful English communicative experiences at work were raised; however, the Thai adult learners revealed that external factors (i.e., task difficulty and social factors) were also responsible for their failure as much as internal factors such as ability. Surprisingly, however, one participant divulged that there was no self-perceived failure in her English communicative experiences.

Most research within EFL casual attribution of success and failure has been undertaken mostly within formal schooling contexts. However, this study investigated the rather untouched area of EFL working adults. Between the two different contexts – a Thai working context and a Thai school context – prominent casual attributions could appear differently as the two subject groups by nature have their own distinctive environments. Working people tend to have much greater expectations from their employers, some of which might require employees to undertake challenging tasks that may be difficult to execute well. In this study, which was conducted on working people (not students with support from teachers in school), internal factors were exclusively shown to be more prominent than external ones. Ability and effort appear to be the most found factors among the internal factors that the participants attributed to their success in English communication. The results from this study however could yield different results if the place and time, and most importantly the subject group, happen to change.

Interestingly, the result of this study show dissimilarity based on cultural aspects according to the tendency presented by Markus and Kitayama (1991, as cited in Mori et al., 2010) that cultural differences may play a part in this. A number of Western cultures such as those of North America promote individualism (independence) whereas many non-Western cultures such as those of Japan and Thailand place emphasis on collectivism (interdependence and connectedness). Therefore, in such cultures, modesty is highly valued, taking credit for one’s own success with explicit self-confidence is often considered as arrogant. External factors should be seen more as significant influential attributions. However, the findings of this

study revealed that the factors for both success and failure leaned more toward internal factors. This is similar to the finding of Nimitniwat (2012) whose research was conducted solely on Thai EFL university students. It was found that the students attributed both their academic success and failure more toward internal factors, pointing most significantly at their own positive outlook. It was also reported that the attributions to failure were from internal factors which were credited higher than the external factors, with their lack of ability rated as the highest. It might be safe to say that causes are diverse and can be varied across contexts and that the Thai EFL adult-learner context can be unique.

Delving into more of the external factor such as social factors, this study was conducted with EFL adult learners, with social factors playing a major role compared to other external factors in both the attribution to success and failure. This could be because they are no longer students in formal learning schools but are working while still learning through informal settings such as at the workplace. This is not in line with the findings of other research (e.g., Nimitniwat, 2012; Williams et al., 2001) that indicated that family support and teachers were the most influential social factors whereas, in this study, academic background and workplace environment were noteworthy. For instance, one participant working as a logistic and production coordinator elaborated how she was successful in using English for communicating in the workplace. She said, *"I think... it is because my workplace environment is multicultural, so it allows me to use English most of the time."* In contradistinction, another participant, a menu translator for a delivery company, stated that she was not successful in communicating in English. She admitted, *"I'm scared of speaking with foreigners. I'm afraid that what I'm saying will be wrong and colleagues will look down on me. So, I avoid using English at work."* For these reasons, it could be implied that the workplace environment has a strong influence on the participants' success and failure in using English.

In conclusion, both success and failure shown in this study was derived more from internal factors. This does not entirely fit the narrative provided by Kruger (1999) who stated that people tend to connect their success more to internal factors rather than external ones and they often blame external agents when they fail. Generalizations in this case might not be applicable.

Comparing Others' Success to One's Self

Some compelling data emerging from the interview sessions revealed that there were certain factors that could lead one to be more successful than others. The participants shared their thoughts on how family support, place of birth, generation, Thailand's environment, and a person's opportunity could be significantly relevant to one's success and failure in English communication.

Furthermore, two other comments revealed how the participants felt that Thailand was not an environment conducive to the practice of English in daily life. They felt that there were few foreigners in a school or in society to help stimulate an English-learning environment for everyday use. The two participants also mentioned that Thai educational policies and schools had not yet met their goals of enabling students be able to use English in everyday life. It could be the values held within Thai culture that make Thailand so unique, where only Thailand is experiencing such a discouraging environment to develop English language proficiency progressively as a nation.

Family and financial support were seen as one of the uncontrollable external factors that can drive one who receives it to success at being proficient at English. One participant, for instance, shared that school's location could be one of the factors for Thai EFL learners becoming successful in English. The participant noted that she used to study in a suburban area when she was young and she perceived this as being (uncontrollably) a disadvantage when it came to learning English. Time and globalization might also be factors due to English becoming more and more important nowadays. One participant shared her view on attitudes toward the importance of English from different generations.

Comparing Past and Present Trends

In comparison to the past, Thailand and Thai people show more understanding of the importance of English language and have been striving to improve English communication skills at a national level. However, in the workplace, Thais seem to struggle when English is commonly set as a requirement. Most of the participants said that they learned through practice. They learned from actual tasks at work. They said that the work was very specific which made them feel like they had to start over again when communicating in English in their workplaces. They learned from mistakes, not from learning obtained at school. Thus, they bettered themselves in the work environment. This raises questions regarding how Thai formal education prepares students for the professional world where English is essential. As one participant noted, it was not easy to use English at work because the assigned tasks were specific. This is not a new problem; however, it remains unresolved. In addition, this could be linked to whether it is possible for Thailand to move out of this English inefficient level as a nation. Those with better resources seem to find their way out on their own, but those without such resources seem to remain stagnant in their progress to become successful in the era of globalization.

Additional findings from the questionnaire and the interview

Some interesting perspectives could be drawn from the open-ended questionnaire and the interview. Remarkably, educational background in a formal setting and self-development in relation to English-language proficiency obtained from informal settings were involved. Different educational backgrounds can be seen as one of the interesting points. The participants who had previous formal education from international schools accredited their success to the years they had spent at school whereas those who had studied in Thai schools did not associate their success with their educational background. Intriguingly, some of the participants who received their formal 12 years and undergraduate years from a Thai program were taking extra English courses outside of work to improve their English communicative skills. All of the participants, in fact, participated in some forms of informal learning (i.e., self-study). This could imply that the formal setting (mandatory schooling) in Thailand might be lacking in the sense of providing sustainable knowledge that students could take to their future workplace to create successful English communication.

Limitations of the Study

Due to the data collection being in the form of qualitative questionnaire and semi-structured interview, and all participants knowing the researchers personally, some information or experiences that participants did not wish to share might have been withheld. Types of

schools and universities the participants attended were also diverse (either international school/university or Thai-medium school/university). It could be ideal to only focus on one type at a time and future comparative studies would be greatly encouraged. Limited accessibility was one of the two major concerns when sample selection process occurred. The researchers did not have accessibility to one specific organization; instead the 20 participants were from 20 different organizations. The scope can certainly show variety; however, this might not be specific enough if one seeks to make inferences about one particular company or business field. Another major concern was limited time constraining data collection and analysis.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study examined factors contributing to success and failure of the Thai EFL adult learners in using English to communicate at work and what could be important factors that develop communicative competence. Further research in the future will greatly benefit this area of EFL. Looking into EFL adult learners rather than those in school only, will contribute significantly to the understanding of how English communication in the workplace can be developed, particularly by investigating how the English subject is being taught in school and how existing educational policies can be of practical application in the arena of actual employment. Further studies, whether quantitative or qualitative, should be conducted due to the lack of exploration into this particular target population in the area of EFL informal settings.

Conclusion

Concerning EFL Thai adult learners' context of this study, most feedback drawn from the qualitative questionnaire and the in-depth interview revealed prominent causal attributions for success and failure in using English to communicate at work leaning toward internal factors. However, external factors particularly in the workplace environment also play an important role. The researcher has also concluded that there are two factors involved improving and developing communicative competence at work which are effort and social factors. These two factors share the same type of stability; they are unstable attributions, or temporary factors, which can be changed. Most participants wished that their companies could place more importance on the English language and the employers should provide English training classes for the employees (social factors). Furthermore, learning in informal settings whether by engaging in English-related activities and taking extra English classes can be viewed as self-reliance (effort). By doing so, this self-reliance can help to ensure that self-development still occurs even without support from workplaces.

In conclusion, it is important to acknowledge Thai workers' perceptions toward the reasons behind successes and failures of English language usage in workplace. This will be profitable for the future elimination of potential factors that obstruct Thai workers' English communication skills. When both teachers and learners come to the realization of the factors contributing to successful and unsuccessful communication in English, the suitable approaches to create successful EFL learners can be determined. Consequently, efficient English language communicators in workplaces should no longer be uncommon in the future Thai context.

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Japanese Writing Skill Development through Active Learning Approach via Online Classroom

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Abstract

This study investigates Japanese writing development's achievement and students' satisfaction toward the Japanese teaching and learning style based on the Active Learning concept via the online classroom through Google Meet and Google Classroom as the main channels in experimenting of the teaching and learning of a Japanese writing course. The target group was 30 sophomores enrolled in the "Japanese writing I" course of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The research tools were composed of (1) Learning Management Plan, (2) Achievement Pretest, (3) Achievement Posttest, and (4) Student's Satisfaction Evaluation Form. The data were analyzed using mean (\bar{X}), Standard Deviation (S.D.), and *t*-test. It was found that the students' posttest learning achievement mean was statistically and significantly higher than that of the pretest at the 0.01 level and the students were satisfied with the Japanese teaching and learning style based on the Active Learning concept at the high average ($\bar{X} = 3.77$).

Keywords: Japanese writing skill, Active Learning, online classroom, Japanese teaching and learning

Introduction

The development of teaching and learning, as well as that of students in a balanced and sustainable manner, has to focus on the development of people in the country amid the changing world of the twentieth-first century. This means learners need to possess skills comprising learning and innovation skills, implementation skills, media and technology access skills, and life and work skills. This means that not only do learners have to adjust, but instructors also need to do so in terms of acquiring new knowledge, developing teaching methods, organizing activities for learners to learn in an enjoyable way, and encouraging learning simultaneously. To be consistent with current learning skills, teachers need to design and facilitate learners to learn through hands-on learning until resulting in learning from within the learners themselves. Instructors play roles in guiding students to practice searching for knowledge, analyzing a variety of data, and appropriately synthesizing information, especially the use of online media as a guideline for personal life and studying at the same time.

Writing is a complex language skill, requiring proficiency and an extensive understanding of the basis of a language as well as the art of arranging utterances to be elegantly correct based on the principles of language used to convey what has been seen, heard, listened to, or one's thoughts to be understood by others. Step-by-step writing or a systematic process

of communicating will be able to make readers understand the content that needs to be easily conveyed. Therefore, learners should be trained in writing in a structured manner, step by step. Generally, technology nowadays plays an increasingly important role in teaching and learning, and teaching and learning research methods in this era are in various types, especially the Active Teaching and Learning, which encourages students to develop an analytical, synthetic, or problem-solving process and interact with the environment related to their learning, thus increasing communication channels with different learners and leading to continual learning (Changkwanyun et al., 2021). Due to this, the researcher is interested in combining such learning concepts with the use of technology for skill learning and to develop students' essay writing abilities through searching and learning from data in a variety of formats. Rapidly providing learners with advice or feedback to learners, taking advantage of online learning opportunities, and enhancing knowledge outside the classroom continue to meet the objectives of studying based on the curriculum changing from learning in the classroom to online teaching management via Google applications, including learning management via VDO conference with Google Meet and online classroom management via Google Classroom as one tool to create and develop a model used in teaching and learning Japanese writing and study the learning achievement, students' satisfaction to develop the teaching and learning process of Japanese writing in a variety of formats suitable for the present era. Chuleetham (2020) said that Google Classroom is an innovative teaching program that Google developed to support effective classroom teaching by adhering to the principles of collaboration between teachers and students. It also functions as a platform the target students use for online teaching. The students have a sound understanding of how to use it for online learning.

Research Objectives

1. To study the achievement of the development of Japanese writing skills based on the "Active Learning" concept through online classrooms
2. To study the satisfaction toward the Japanese writing teaching method based on the "Active Learning" concept through the online classrooms

Definitions of Terms

1. Japanese writing skill refers to the ability to convey meanings by arranging words to convey one's thought, understanding, and feeling to readers in appropriately descriptive Japanese writings on one's own stories and experiences through the process-based teaching approach.
2. Active Learning means a learning model allowing students to participate in the implementation of Japanese writing learning activities to form understanding from teaching management that reduces the process of only conveying content to students and develops ideas focusing on practice and providing feedback to students through online classrooms using Google Meet and Google Classroom.
3. Learning achievement refers to the score of writing ability from the essay writing test of which the Rubric Score is used for an assessment in four areas, namely story plotting, appropriateness of grammar and language use, vocabulary, and consistency of the use of language arrangement.
4. Students' satisfaction refers to the satisfaction of studying Japanese writing using developing Japanese writing skills based on the Active Learning concept that comprises the aspects of learning activities and teaching activities.

Literature Review

Active Learning

Currently, teachers need to develop their capabilities to keep pace with the rapidly changing world which has changed to a world of information and technology, or a complex world society. The world society has become a knowledge society or a learning society. Educational personnel and organizations must adapt to become a learning organization to respond to such changes. Learning management in the 21st century is vital for both teachers and learners to simultaneously step into the learning process. Teachers need to adjust their roles to be "learners" studying together with the learners. Teaching and learning need to be adjusted to be in the form of "Teach less, learn more", learning from practice and real life. Providing learners the opportunity to express their own opinions with the promotion of lifelong learning skills as well as the use of effective teaching methods will result in learners achieving in learning. Learners must put learning theory into practice. It is important that learners have a learning process, which is the most essential point and the most complex as well (Panich, 2012). Active Learning is based on the concept that an appropriate environment helps students to learn and build on new things on their own. There are various learning activities that learners participate in. This helps learners develop knowledge and skills effectively and students have the opportunity to remember the content of the lesson more than 50% by learning through media and activities. Instructors do not need to focus on explaining the content but function as a facilitator in the activities. This can be done both in the classroom and outside the classroom and this is available to learners of all levels (McManus, 2001 as cited in Iamboonyarit et al., 2020, p. 6).

Teaching and learning of foreign languages at present, in the era of Thailand 4.0, have the goal of developing language as a tool for communicating with others in a variety of situations according to daily and professional needs as well as being an important driving tool for internationalization (Gomaratut, 2021). In the paradigm of former foreign language teaching and learning, a trial of computer-assisted instructional media, computer for language teaching, electronic lessons, and web pages for language teaching was made and found that these teaching materials were effective in enhancing learners' abilities.

The study of Toda (2019) discussed three new language learning styles: Active Learning (AL) and hands-on learning; Flipped-Learning (FL) and Reverse Learning; and Blended-Learning (BL), which is a learning model that aims to involve learners in the learning process instead of receiving knowledge from the instructor alone. The researcher stated that this new learning approach will encourage learners to think deeply and achieve high-level learning. Thus, they noted that instructors need to be flexible and open to experimenting with new approaches for the future and consider introducing three online learning resources that the researcher developed namely: Waseda Course Channel, Japanese Pronunciation Practice through Shadowing, and Japanese Pronunciation for Communication (JPC) by introducing a Japanese pronunciation course designed by Toda (2019) using the BL approach along with the use of the three online resources developed.

Fukushima (2021) studied students' satisfaction toward the implementation of active learning in advanced Japanese reading classes. Regarding the classroom activities, the students overall were most satisfied with the active learning instructional model. Especially, students thought that active learning helped them develop their thinking skills, communication skills, and collaboration skills. In addition, it was discussed that the management of Japanese

language learning in Thailand is not very active in nature. Teaching is often in a narrative format focusing on memorization and theory rather than practice. For this, Munintarawong and Methapisit (2015) suggested that teachers need to design instruction that promotes communication skills, problem-solving, use of technology skills, and teamwork consistent with Active Learning.

Regarding Japanese language learning through the online method, Phanichvibul et al.'s (2021) study titled "Analysis of problems and characteristics of teaching and learning management in normal and online formats" found that each subject had a different effective teaching style according to the four skills. Teaching grammar had a good performance on the synchronous teaching style, teaching reading is effective for flipped teaching style and conversation course requiring the practice of listening, and speaking skills are effective for mixed teaching style.

The study of teaching methods in the Active Learning model is diverse, considering the suitability of each skill including diverse environments and learners. However, there are few experiments measuring Japanese writing skills for foreigners. Also, to the best of this researcher's knowledge, there are no studies on teaching writing skills through online classrooms for Thai learners. Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying such teaching methods as a guideline for developing writing skills that are beneficial to teachers and learners.

Writing learning and teaching styles

Writing is a process involving text that appears alphabetically and vocabulary and grammar arranged correctly and corresponding with the purpose of the writer to communicate to the reader. It can be concluded that writing is the process of conveying an author's thoughts and feelings using symbols and letters, which the author arranges systematically and correctly based on the writing structure and grammar to express meanings to readers (Satyophas, 2002). Writing is important as a communication tool that plays a role in human daily life. It is a communication that can be shown as evidence of written records that preserves the story, thoughts, needs, and experiences of the writer (Sirichanda, 2011).

Raimes (1987, pp. 83-84) mentioned five writing teaching styles:

1. Free-Writing Approach: In terms of teaching writing, this approach has a purpose to train learners to write information or content until they become fluent rather than practicing writing to emphasize style and the correctness of language use. Therefore, writing teaching activities are in the form of writing practice. For writing in this way, the writer must write to convey the ideas as much as possible regardless of grammatical correctness. This approach focuses on developing writing confidence, writing criteria and language use.
2. Paragraph-Pattern Approach: This writing teaching emphasizes the correct use of language as well as compiling the text using the sample work written for learners to study at a paragraph level and have learners imitate the writing of various paragraphs as shown in the examples.
3. Grammar Syntax Organization Approach: For this approach, teaching begins with learners learning the essential elements of sentences, verb patterns, and writing planning focusing on the sequence of events before and after among the others.
4. Communicative Approach: This approach is teaching that focuses on creating content used in daily life. Therefore, it pays attention to the purpose of writing and the reader.

Hence, learning activities are in the form of roles that are written depending on purpose and who is the reader.

5. Process Approach: This approach entails teachers emphasizing the writing objectives and readers, how to start writing, and with what process. In writing, learners must receive feedback from peers and teachers. Teaching writing via this approach provides learners the opportunity to express their own experiences as well as to exchange experiences with each other with an instructor as a facilitator for learning. Therefore, the teacher has to change their role of giving instructions and explaining to guiding learners, facilitating and organizing learning activities for learners using activities that have a variety of forms to accompany the teaching to create fun and enthusiasm for learning.

In the field of writing skills of foreign languages, Prasansaph (2018) said about foreign language writing skills for communication that it is a skill that learners must develop to a level that can be used effectively. The teaching style that teachers use in the classroom should be a teaching style that can help develop learners' writing skills for advanced communication (p. 69). Also, Cimcoz (1999) proposed that most learners dislike writing because it is a difficult and complex skill requiring knowledge, complex understanding, and having to control what to write that may entail a number of considerations simultaneously. English teaching experts agreed that previous writing instruction has not yet promoted writing for communication and the writing ability of Thai students remains low and ineffective.

Krusen and Panjiang (2020) studied the development of writing skills of Mathayom 5 (second grade of high school) students who used basic Japanese writing exercises comparing proficiency in pre- and post-lessons with Matthayom 5 basic Japanese writing exercises and assessing the satisfaction with the basic Japanese writing exercises. The achievement of basic Japanese writing was measured by a multiple-choice test of 30 items and a satisfaction assessment form. Based on the assumption that the writing skill exercise can solve the problem of writing Japanese grammar in connection with more complex sentences, the researchers showed that writing ability was higher after studying than before using basic Japanese writing exercises. In addition, students' satisfaction with the reinforcement exercises was at a high level in terms of difficulty suitable for high school level with consistent content and content in each set that is unique.

Tanaka and Kubota (2016) said that a Japanese essay consists of paragraphs that should each have one concept and three parts of introduction, main content, and conclusion. These three parts must conform, in particularly the introduction and conclusion should be consistent. This approach has become the norm of Japanese essay writing and it is defined in the Japanese writing teaching style. Good writing involves writing that is easy to understand for the reader. However, writing should focus on the basic elements first. Creativity and interest are complementary to the final stage of writing.

Writing skill is one of the fundamental subjects in the study of Japanese as a foreign language. Shimada et al. (2019) studied and synthesized writing techniques that are important for students' learning to be applied in teaching and learning at the university level. Writing instruction will be designed to suit the perceptions of the learners and assessed by rubric criteria. They evaluated 23 essential writing techniques such as "Writing the subject and predicate to be consistent" and "Write it concisely without duplicate words or meanings". The study was conducted by collecting information via the internet and consisted of a total of 567 participants. It was found that the composition of writing techniques can be divided into three main categories: basic appearance, document design, sentence and sentence structure. These

are simple techniques that students use to write Japanese. This classification can be applied to design and assessment for lessons.

Methodology

Participants

In this study, the sample consisted of 30 sophomores of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, enrolled in a Japanese writing course, having had approximately 90 hours of basic Japanese grammar instruction. Students use different devices to aid their learning, including: mobile phone 83.3%, computer 72.2%, and tablet 50%. Students write essays for teachers using computers or tablets. For those students with no equipment, they write on paper and use take photographs with phones to submit them. The study was conducted from January until March 2021, 3 hours per week for 6 weeks, excluding pretest and posttests.

Tools

The format for organizing the Japanese writing skills activities was based on the "Active Learning" concept through online classrooms via Google Meet. The researcher based the content on the "Minna no Nihongo I Yasashii sakubun" textbook (Kadowaki & Nishimura, 2014). The content consisted of six topics conducted over six weeks, with students learning from easy to difficult, such as a description of a place, a person's description, taking an example, expressing opinions follow the steps as follows:

- Teacher used Google Meet to allow students to learn and analyze writing topics with proper grammar and media formats for images and video clips along with the recorded video which students can access and watch anytime they want to.
- Teacher checked understanding via various mean such as answering questions, playing games, and discussion.
- Students wrote essays in Japanese and submitted via Google Classroom.
- Teachers evaluated the essays and provided feedback, submitted back via Google Classroom.
- Students revised their work based on instructions and submitted back to teacher on time.

The Japanese writing pretest and posttest was scored using scoring rubric adapted from Huda and Rahadiano (2019) consisting of four criteria, namely story plotting, appropriateness of grammar, vocabulary use, and consistency in the use of arranged language used by considering the criteria for selecting the list items which have the IOC above 0.5 then submitted to three experts on Japanese curriculum and instruction for evaluation by Japanese native speakers.

Regarding the students' satisfaction toward learning activities, the questionnaire consists of two parts: satisfaction in Learning activities and Teaching activities which considered the criteria for selecting the list items which have the IOC above 0.5 which were then submitted to three experts on curriculum and instruction, on learning management development, and on evaluation.

Procedures

Relevant documents such as academic reports and reports on the operations of groups and organizations which contain content relevant or consistent with the knowledge related to the research were compiled. The findings were summarized, analyzed, and presented as an essay task in an analytical and systematic manner.

A review of the literature was conducted to survey students' learning devices, and 30 sophomores were surveyed in order to develop teaching-learning activities based on online learning resources that students are interested in and frequently use. After this, the following steps were followed:

- Applied the teaching activities to check the contents by Japanese curriculum and instruction and Japanese native speaker.
- Applied the teaching activities to test in a non-experimental sample to determine the weakness of the activity.
- Prepared the complete teaching activities.
- Pretest by writing an essay on the topic. "My future" on December 11, 2020, and posttest on the same topic on January 29, 2021.
- Conducted the comparative analysis of the average Japanese writing ability by analyzing basic statistical values, mean, and standard deviation and the *t*-test method.
- Analyzed the level of satisfaction of the students of the experimental group toward the learning activities by analyzing the mean and standard deviation of the score obtained from the survey responses.

Findings

The findings from this study were divided into two parts: a measure of learning achievement in Japanese writing and a measure of students' satisfaction toward the development of Japanese writing skills based on the Active Learning concept through online classrooms as follows:

Measurement of learning achievement in Japanese writing

In measuring Japanese language learning achievement, the researcher presented the findings of the data analysis comparing the average scores before and after class and presented the average percentage and standard deviation of the achievement score which consists of (1) the findings of the analysis of averages score before and after classes and (2) the comparative analysis of the average scores before and after classes, respectively.

Table 1: Results of the analysis of average scores before and after studying Japanese writing

Components of Japanese writing skill	Full Score	Pretest		Posttest	
		\bar{X}	S.D.	\bar{X}	S.D.
Plotting	4	2.33	.884	3.40	.563
Appropriateness of grammar and language use	4	2.00	1.050	2.70	.837
Vocabulary	4	2.10	1.062	2.77	.626
Consistency of the use of language arrangement	4	2.87	.937	3.33	.758
Average Score	16	9.30	3.313	12.20	2.041

Table 1 shows the average scores from the Japanese language learning achievement pretest of the experimental group using the development of Japanese writing skills based on the "Active Learning" concept through an online classroom. It was found that the students had an average score of 9.30 out of 16. The students had the most average score on consistency of the use of language arrangement with an average of 2.87; followed by the plotting with an average of 2.33; vocabulary with an average of 2.10; and the appropriateness of grammar and language usage, with the average of 2.00, respectively.

Regarding learning activities that encourage students to writing about their daily experiences, the story was plotted by the pupils based on their personal experiences before writing in Japanese. They are compiled the story in their native language or a second language (English). This could explain why the consistency of the use of language arrangement component scores are higher than other categories of scores. The mean scores after studying in the experimental group using the development of Japanese writing skills based on the concept of "Active Learning" through online classrooms with a total average of 12.20 out of a total score of 16 points. In each aspect, the ordering characteristics was more or less different from the pre-study tests in terms of plotting and consistency in the use of language. Nevertheless, the average scores were improved in all aspects, that is, story layout with an average of 3.40; consistency in the use of compiled language with an average of 3.33; vocabulary with an average of 2.77, and grammatical appropriateness and language use with an average of 2.70, respectively.

The researcher used the scores derived from an achievement test in learning Japanese writing, before and after studying, in the analysis of mean and standard deviation and analyzed by comparing the averages before and after studying of the experimental group using a paired sample *t*-test.

Table 2: Results of pretest and posttest comparison from the experimental group

Test	N	\bar{X}	S.D	T	df	P
Pretest	30	9.30	3.313	7.015	29	0.000***
Posttest	30	12.20	2.041			

*** for .01 level of significance

Table 2 shows that the average score of the pretest was $\bar{X}=9.30$ ($SD=3.313$), the mean score for the posttest was 12.20 ($SD=2.041$), the *t*-value was 7.015, and the significance was 0.000, meaning that the average achievement score of the Japanese writing before and after studying of the experimental group for Japanese writing skills development based on the Active Learning concept through an online classroom was statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that the aforementioned teaching and learning approach resulted in improvements in learning achievement.

2. Measurement of students' satisfaction toward Japanese writing skills development based on the "Active Learning" concept through online classrooms

The researcher measured the students' satisfaction toward the development of Japanese writing skills based on the "Active Learning" concept through an online classroom that were classified into two aspects: learning activities and teaching activities. It was found that students who learned from Japanese writing skills development based on the Active Learning concept through online classrooms were satisfied overall at a high level ($\bar{X}=3.77$), with each aspect having a high level of satisfaction. In teaching activities, students were most satisfied at the

highest average ($\bar{X} = 4.02$). Students were satisfied with learning activities at a high level ($\bar{X} = 3.52$), with each aspect classified by item as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Students' satisfaction with learning activities in an online classroom

Student Satisfaction with Learning Activities	\bar{X}	S.D	Interpretation
Have more interaction with teachers	3.80	1.064	High
Have more interaction with peers	3.23	1.406	Average
Have more courage in expressing opinions during studying	3.67	0.922	High
Better learn more content	3.73	1.230	High
Being bored with online learning	3.27	1.437	Average
Being enthusiastic in learning	3.10	1.185	Average
Have more concentration and focus on learning from online learning	3.03	1.299	Average
Appropriate media and applications used in learning	4.03	0.765	High
Being convenient and relaxing in learning	3.80	1.270	High
Total	3.52	1.185	High

*4.51-5 = excellent, 3.51-4.5 = high, 2.51-3.5 = average, 1.51-2.5 = poor, 1.00-1.50 = very poor

The researcher analyzed mean, standard deviation, and the satisfaction of students toward the development of Japanese writing skills based on the concept of Active Learning through online classrooms in terms of learning activities by asking for satisfaction on the behavior and opinions of students toward the learning management experiment and found that the overall average was at a high level ($\bar{X} = 3.52$). The top three were appropriate learning media and applications ($\bar{X} = 4.03$), followed by more interaction with teachers ($\bar{X} = 3.80$), and students are more comfortable and relaxed in learning ($\bar{X} = 3.80$). Third, they learned the content better ($\bar{X} = 3.73$) and the least selected topic was greater concentration and attention to study from online learning ($\bar{X} = 3.03$).

Table 4: Students' satisfaction with teaching activities in an online classroom

Student Satisfaction with Teaching Activities	\bar{X}	S.D	Interpretation
Appropriate transfer of knowledge of teachers	4.50	0.630	High
Students know the learning objectives of each lesson	4.23	0.728	High
Be informed of information and recommended with additional online learning sources	4.17	0.834	High
Be appropriately assessed	4.30	0.794	High
Be supported to express opinions both during study and outside classes	3.97	0.765	High
Students be able to be rapidly informed with study results and supported for self-development	4.30	0.837	High
Be promoted to have team-work skill	3.37	1.217	Average
Be promoted to have Information Technology skill	3.50	1.592	High
Be promoted to have responsibility and discipline	3.83	1.085	High
Total	4.02	1.036	High

*4.51-5 = excellent, 3.51-4.5 = high, 2.51-3.5 = average, 1.51-2.5 = poor, 1.00-1.50 = very poor

For teaching activities, the overall mean was at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.02$). When asking about the satisfaction of students in learning from support and teaching activities, it was found that the overall satisfaction was at a high level. The top three most satisfied sub-topics were: the appropriate knowledge transferring method of the teachers ($\bar{X} = 4.50$), followed by the appropriate evaluation, and students could quickly acknowledge the results of their studies and supported their own development. The mean values were the same ($\bar{X} = 4.30$) and the students

knew the learning objectives in each lesson ($\bar{X} = 4.23$), and the least chosen topic encouraged students to have teamwork skills ($\bar{X} = 3.37$) with a moderate level of satisfaction.

Discussion

Achievements in the development of Japanese writing skills before and after studying

From the analysis of the results of the pre-learning achievement test in Japanese writing of the students in the experimental group using the development of Japanese writing skills based on the "Active Learning" concept through an online classroom of 30 students, the target audience completed two semesters of Japanese grammar lessons (approximately 90 hours). It was found that the students had an average achievement score of 9.30 out of 16, with a score of consistency in the use of the arranged language and the plotting of an essay that stands out in the appropriate grammar and use of language and vocabulary, that is, can well understand and determine the format of the essay with the components such as the introductory part, the body, and the conclusion of the story.

From the basic observations in the class, the students understood and learned the writing style of essays in Thai and English before they might use the skills that have been studied to be applied in the Japanese essay writing section on grammar and vocabulary. Students employed a method to search for words from a dictionary or applications to write in their essays in which some words might not have correct meanings for the contexts of the sentence and the content they wanted to convey if they choose to use it through searching and copying it immediately. In the case of words that they have not encountered before, they might distort the intended meaning. The students in the experimental group had a moderate level of understanding of Japanese grammar used in storytelling. By having studied basic Japanese grammar in the first semester, students could use the grammar they have learned at an elementary level to write a description of simple sentences at the introductory level appropriately. However, at the point of having to explain complex sentences, there was also confusion in grammatical arrangements to be correct based on the Japanese language grammar used to describe more difficult sentences. It is the point where students have to ask their teachers through teaching management immediately and exchange ideas through organizing the activities to generate new ideas that they can apply in their own writing.

When studying the achievement with a posttest, it was found that the scores were different from the pretest in all aspects, such as being able to describe stories that occur in daily life from their own experience and express their opinions in correct Japanese language. Students improved their Japanese writing skills with the online classroom through various media to present and give feedback on the results directly to each student at the right time. It was found that the student's ability in consistency with the use of arranged language, and plotting has evolved and better conformed to the criteria of structured content in Japanese essay writing. For the grammatical appropriateness and the use of language and vocabulary aspects, it showed that the students understand how to use words appropriate for the context. They could employ a variety of grammar appropriate for the style of the essay and the situation with an average score of 12.20 out of a total 16 points. From the statistical value, it was found that the average achievement score of Japanese writing course before and after learning of the experimental group was different from the statistically significant level at 0.01, indicating that the teaching and learning approaches resulted in improvements in learning achievement. It is interesting to note that, in the pretest, consistency in the use of arranged language has the higher

average score for plotting but after learning to develop writing skills, students learned how to write a narrative in the form of plotting a story that is similar in each section including observing together with learning as well as providing feedback to students, thus resulting in the higher achievement of the posttest. Students had developed a clearer plot with higher average scores than language consistency.

The development of the writing skills of the sample group was through a learning-from-example process, principles, and methods of writing in which students acquire the ability to communicate correctly in writing according to the rules and students have the correct language expressions consistent with the meaning of writing. Instructors have used teaching methods through online media, both in the form of sub-writing that emphasizes the correctness of language use in learning essays from writing the samples together with the teaching style of writing with the emphasis on grammatical arrangements and relationships where students will learn the essential elements of sentences, forms, verbs, and writing planning with emphasis on chronological order from observing students in the early stages of learning writing skills. There were some students who disliked writing because they lacked a systematic approach to arranging what they want to communicate. Also, in the case of a foreign language (Japanese), it was found that most English writing students disliked writing because it is a difficult skill and requires knowledge, complex understanding, and they have to control what to write taking a number of considerations into account simultaneously which, in practice, when students have to tell a story according to a given topic systematically, students must take into account the style of language, grammar, and Japanese vocabulary that must be used for writing too, which is consistent with the study of Prasansaph (2018).

If the teacher uses the method of teaching and learning in the style of Active Learning approach that allows students to see examples, exchange discussions in the online classroom with friends and teachers and practice it themselves, there is a system of thinking that is consistent with learning along with the feedback from instructor in reinforcement. This provides students strong motivation to improve their writing skills both in terms of development and improvement. From the method of Active Learning through online classrooms, including Google Meet, together with the information, this has been recorded in the Google classroom which makes it more convenient to check information and the work in each set allows students to assess the development of skills on their own.

The study of Tantayanusorn (2011) mentioned a process-based teaching style for learners to express themselves and write an essay based on their own interests through the searching process, arranging ideas that could be obtained through group discussion with instructor feedback. This can generate higher achievement. Therefore, if the instructor can fulfill such online activities while not teaching in the classroom, they can encourage learners to have a more positive learning process. Nonetheless, care and monitoring of students' learning is also an important process for learning management to the develop students. This corresponds with Toda (2019) who found that the use of ICTs is one way to solve traditional face-to-face teaching problems of both learners who do not have the opportunity to practice and teachers who do not have time to teach in class. However, the myth that technology cannot completely replace teachers persists.

Students' satisfaction toward the development of Japanese writing skills based on the "Active Learning" concept through the online classroom

The researcher measured the students' satisfaction toward the development of Japanese writing skills based on the "Active Learning" concept through an online classroom by presenting the results of the analysis of satisfaction levels in the form of 5 levels. It was found that the students had a high level of overall satisfaction and were satisfied with the teaching activities more than the learning activities. During this trial, the university conducted the teaching of each course online due to the pandemic (Covid-19), and this influenced the teaching style of the teacher in each course. Additionally, there were impacts on students who needed to adjust their methods and learning styles in a new way. From the results of the study, the students were less satisfied with their learning activities, and this may be due to the unequal ease of learning, for example, study environment, location, school supplies, and so forth. According to survey data, there were a wide range of obstacles in this respect, which could explain why the satisfaction level differed from the teaching activities.

For the students' satisfaction in the learning activities, it was found that the students were satisfied in the first place with the appropriateness of media and applications used in learning, more interaction with teachers, comfort and relax to study, and learn the content of the study better demonstrate the development of students' skills with Active Learning teaching through various online channels.

There is a wide variety of applications that are convenient and tools that students use in their daily life, especially the mobile phone. Applications that researchers choose to use in teaching have used platforms, mainly Google, because students can easily access and use it. It is the right choice and has few barriers to use because there are widely supported devices and there is no application purchase costs. In the learning activities, some students turn on the camera to communicate facial expressions. This allows teachers to observe the understanding and reaction of students to the teaching; however, some students with limited equipment may not be able to turn on the camera or are otherwise restricted in terms of convenience of place and environment.

The researcher noticed that the students had the courage to ask questions and communicate with teachers during the online course periodically. The application is used to facilitate students to ask questions. Comments can be expressed through voice, facial expressions, or typing during a class at the convenience of students immediately, which differs from classroom teaching. Students might try to find a time to ask questions when the teacher provides them the opportunity to ask questions or might be concerned that it will disturb other students in case of raising their hands to ask questions. Hence, the concerns of the students were reduced and they were comfortable in terms of posture during the study. There is more freedom than sitting in the classroom and worrying about the attention of the teacher at certain times while studying including the learning atmosphere where students choose to do the online learning activities that will create concentration and learning that is suitable for each student.

However, the teacher should observe the learning behavior, conversation, and communication of students with teachers during teaching activities in a number of ways, such as through text messages and student screen observation among the others to provide care for students as thoroughly and smoothly as possible given the limitations of online teaching through electronic devices that are different from directly observing the behavior of students in the classroom. This corresponds with the study of Rumpantetch (2021) in that the learners

have a positive attitude about using online lessons through the Moodle program and the achievement of English idioms was developed in a good direction (p. 13).

Conversely, in the learning activities in which the students were least satisfied in the last three positions were: students interact more with their peers. This results in greater enthusiasm for learning and concentration. There was a greater interest in learning from online learning. There were differences in the different learning environments, including learning in this way, through Google Meet, and most students were unable to communicate with each other during the teaching activities. When the teacher divided the activities or focused on small groups, students were more likely to use the chat method and converse via video conferencing. Beneficially, this online learning generated communication. There were significantly fewer group process interactions than in classroom learning due to the fact that students were in different locations. There might also be factors resulting in higher concentration in studying such as not seeing the reactions of other students and not being in a physical classroom where distractions can more easily occur. At some points in the study, there were distractions or there was no continuity in learning. Sathirathai (2019) explained that an online society might not completely replace the creation of a learning society in the offline world because people often learn from each other unconsciously when they meet face to face. Learning from each other is a social process in which there are tutors, mentors, and peers resulting in more learning than online learning. Future trends in education through technology and innovations have developed a variety of studies to support and solve the problems for the learning of current students that have changed from one-way learning. This creates skills that arise from practice, analysis, and learning at the same time. In the future, such technology might be able to meet the needs of the student's learning in another dimension.

For the satisfaction with teaching activities, students were satisfied with the topics, how to pass on the knowledge of teachers, and the appropriateness of the evaluation, students could be informed of their grades quickly and supported their own development, and students knew the purpose of learning in each lesson consistent with the learning management plan in the study that the teacher chose a method that the students can learn appropriately, with assessment and clearly stated purpose of each topic and received results quickly from providing feedback by online channel, instructors could use equipment such as mobile phone or tablet and conversations, and provide feedback to students faster than using paper. This is consistent with the work of Taweesri and Autthawuttikul (2015) which suggested that teaching using teaching methods combined with the use of innovative media can create effective learning for learners. It is one way to encourage learners to learn in accordance with the current conditions through online media that is close to the learners in daily life (p. 2036).

On the other hand, the sub-topics that the students were least satisfied with were encouraging responsibility helps to promote information technology skills, and helps students to develop skills to work together as a team. Likewise, the study by Phunpon (2021) on learners' opinions concerning online learning noted that that they feel comfortable and relaxed, but disagreed that online learning increases their interaction with their peers, thus the researcher explored the problems arising from the development of writing skills, communication through students' writings and teacher presentation using a variety of learning materials. It was an option for students to study from the resources offered by the teacher. Therefore, the likelihood of students using other ICTs in their studies was less and corresponds to their satisfaction in improving the aforementioned learning skills in relation to the interaction with peers. Hence, the students' satisfaction in working together as a team was at a moderate level only.

In addition to the nature of writing that emphasizes that students communicate stories that are relevant to the context of each individual and provide individual feedback, there is a lower level of collaborative skill than learning in other skills. The study of Chuachai (2018) commented on the transition from classroom learning to learning through the entire network, which might still be ineffective (p. 220). Meanwhile, Toda (2019) also commented that there was not one blended learning model that is “the most appropriate instructor strategy.” Generally, teachers need to plan and take action and carefully blend learning with consideration whether that is appropriate for learners in their care from the teaching environment. In today's teaching, teachers might employ teaching methods in the form of a combination of techniques to prepare and allow students to adapt to the changing learning style in the future.

Recommendations

From the development of the Japanese writing skills based on the "Active Learning" concept through online classrooms, the recommendations for teaching and learning management are offered to those who have tried to apply instructional management based on the “Active Learning,” concept combined with teaching through online classrooms which has a different format from studying and doing activities in the classroom. The media and equipment that students use in learning are different including the difference in the learning environment of students variable in the study of skill development. This causes students to waste time in reviewing the content again. Recommendations for further studies might include samples with similar learning conditions, such as equipment, location, and environment, and further studies for the development of writing skills in other dimensions.

For teaching at the present time, there is a rapid change in communication technology and the transfer of knowledge in various sciences is necessary for teachers to apply and develop teaching methods to be consistent with such changes. There is an active learning model for learning in the classroom to develop students' learning achievements that can be applied in online learning in a variety of topics in addition to the study of writing development. Hence, further studies might try to determine the development of other skills such as reading, listening, and speaking through online forms to derive a guideline for teaching management, planning, and benefits for teachers to smoothly manage their learning in accordance with the changes in the current world.

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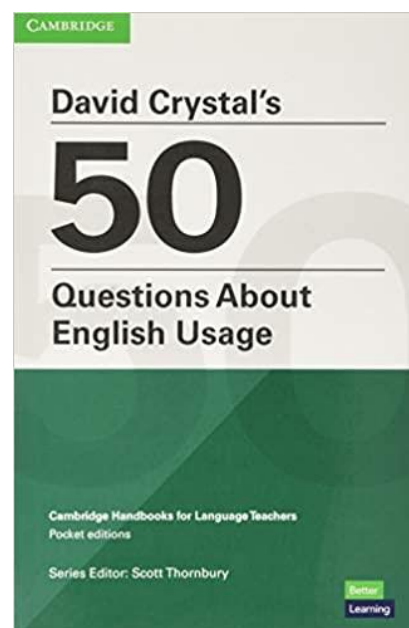
Book Review

David Crystal's 50 Questions about English Usage

Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers (Pocket editions), Cambridge University Press

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This pocketbook, written by one of the most acknowledged professors of the English language, is a welcome addition to the English-language teaching and learning literature.

Unlike many books in this field which tend to focus on introducing new trends in teaching with little account of the variation and change of English, resulting from contacts and the long history of the language, the aim of this book is to answer 50 questions regarding these dynamic aspects of English Usage. David Crystal's answers to these questions have been carefully put together in five parts of the book, as follows.

Part A provides answers to 14 questions regarding variation and change of English words and idioms. These questions specifically involve the current number of English words and new words each year, varied lexical choices referring to the same meaning (e.g., *fire*, *flame*, and *conflagration* or *cup* and *mug*), the optional usage of *-st* in the preposition *amongst* (vs. *among*) and the conjunction *whilst* (vs. *while*), different uses and senses of the derivational suffixes *-ic/-ical* (as in *electric* vs *electrical* or *historic* vs *historical*), the addition of the suffix *-ish* in colloquial English (e.g., *girlish* or *womanish*) or the use of it as a word on its own to mean *kind of* or *sort of*, the expression *you're welcome* in response to *thank you*, the increasing use of *at all* as a question ending (e.g., *Have you been there at all?*), the use of the pidgin form *long time no see* by native speakers of English, the use of *well* to mean *good* (as in *You look well in this dress*), and the expression with repeated words (such as *well good* or *it takes what it takes*).

Part B deals with 15 changing uses of English grammar trends, with Crystal (2021) emphasizing, "We are talking about trends here, not absolute rules" (p. 60). These trends are the use of the indefinite articles *a/an* with uncountable nouns, for example, *a coffee* or *an evidence* and dropping the definite article *the* for convenience reasons, the use of the conjunction *and* at sentence beginning in written English (previously considered informal). Other flexible rules and different stylistic alternatives are also discussed, including the options of *-ed/-t* for past participles (as in *learned* and *learnt*), the increasing use of *go* to mean *say* in reported speech, the use of the object pronoun *me* as a subject pronoun, the use of *wh-* words (*whatever*, *whoever*, *whenever*, or *wherever*) as relative pronoun or independently on their own,

the increasing use of the final “be” in questions (e.g., *What will the results be? What will the effect of Covid-19 be?*), the use of Team X vs. the X team, and the use of the apostrophe before gerunds to indicate formality, for example, *Ivan’s travelling by train* (as compared with *Ivan travelling by train*, which is considered more informal). Answers to some grammatical issues are clarified, that is, why “aren’t I” is a tag question for “I am”, whether “because”, “as”, “since” and “for” are interchangeable, and whether the relative pronouns *which* and *that* or the omission are different in meaning. In this part Crystal (2021) also speculates the future of irregularities and their simplifications particularly in pidgins, creoles, non-standard English, including learners’ English, specifically discussing “went”, “was”, and the dropping of the third person singular suffixes -s/-es being dropped in Standard English as in pidgins, creoles, non-standard English, including learners’ English.

Part C focuses on responding to six questions on different pronunciation patterns, ranging from the origin of RP to recent changes in accents of English in the UK. One of the most outstanding accents which have recently emerged is Estuary English, popularly spoken first by “younger people in and around London” (McAurthur et al., 2018, p. 235) and later by celebrities and in media. Crystal (2021) also observes other trends in English pronunciation, including the changing rhythm and stress patterns (i.e., moving toward the stress-timed nature or tum-te-tum-te-tum), the final consonant of such a word as *morning* is pronounced with the /n/ sound, and the use of high-rising tone at the end of statement as a question.

Part D presents variation and change of English spelling and punctuation in nine questions. It particularly discusses irregularities in English spellings resulting from Greek loan words, UK/US differences, French vowel spellings, capitalization, apostrophes, the use of commas to present listings, the use of the question mark (?) in exclamations, and the hyphen. Part E answers six questions related to a variety of English genres, ranging from the literary Shakespeare language to texting, which indicates changes of English due to time and technology. This final part of the book also addresses differences between spoken and written genres, as well as non-standard language use often found in phishing language.

There are a number of reasons why I highly recommended this book. First, the authors’ have succeeded in making concepts of variation and changes in English light and easy to grasp for those starting to be interested in the sociolinguistics of English. Other strengths of the book which have contributed to it winning a major prize in the UK include: (1) suggestions of related work on each topic for readers to explore; (2) questions for readers to reflect on their own classroom practice at the end of each chapter; and (3) a number of activities that prompt readers to think about cases, scenarios or real-life data, to create lessons, to solve classroom problems, and to examine what is in the minds of their learners. Many of these activities are photocopyable, and therefore are suitable for use in training courses or workshops.

This book is therefore not only a valuable handbook for in-service language teachers, but it will also serve as a useful resource for pre-service teachers, postgraduate students of applied linguistics, and professional researchers interested in evolving issues in the field of educational psychology and language teaching and learning. I strongly recommend it.

About the reviewer:

Chamaipak Tayjasanant obtained a PhD in TEFL from the University of Exeter. She is an associate professor at the Department of Linguistics, The Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University, Thailand, and in charge of teaching both undergraduate and postgraduate courses with particular interest in teacher and learner psychology and sociolinguistics.

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