

AN ANALYSIS OF COLLOCATION FOUND IN IELTS WRITING TASK 1

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ABSTRAK

The main purpose of this research is to analyze the collocation used by Indonesian IELTS test-taker on IELTS Writing task 1. The researcher analyses the data by identifying lexical collocation and collocation clash based on conventional theory, *iWeb14 Billion Word Web Corpus* and lexical collocation formula by Benson *et al.* The source of the data was students' answer for IELTS simulation Writing Task 1. There are three themes and these three tasks require the test takers to describe trend and comparison. The result shows that there are 74 lexical collocations and 37 collocations error found in task 1. This research revealed that collocation errors were caused by *inter language error* or interference from mother tongue and *intra language error* or overgeneralization.

Keyword: *Collocation, Lexical Collocation, Collocation Clash.*

INTRODUCTION

As one of the international tests to measure one's ability in English, IELTS test is widely used nowadays. It is used from many different purposes such as for gaining admission to the university in English Speaking Country, for applying a scholarship, for applying for a job or for migrating to English speaking country. The IELTS test has the four skills, namely speaking, listening, reading and writing. Among the four skills, test takers tend to get lower score in writing. That is one of the reasons why the researcher is interested in analyzing IELTS test takers writing test.

One of the problems faced by non-native language speakers in writing is that writing a correct collocation. McCarthy and O'Dell (2014) stated that collocation is a combination of word that consist of two words or more which is used together. This research has the research questions such as what type of lexical collocation, what type of collocation clash and what are the causes of collocation clash.

METHOD

This research used qualitative approach to analyse the collocation. According to Mason (2002), in qualitative research everyone can do the research in one large dimension of social world, texture of life, understanding, experiences and discourse or relationship work. The source of data was IELTS test taker candidates' answers for IELTS Writing Task 1. The data were collected based on each type of collocation theme namely collocation to describe trend and collocation to describe comparison. To identify the correct collocation the researcher used Web based tools namely *iWeb 14 Billion Word Corpora* developed by Mark Davies (2018), conventional theory and formula by *Benson et al*,

FINDINGS AND DISSCUSSION

The researcher collected those answer sheets and focused on Task 1. Every answer sheet was written by different participants so that the data will show many varieties of collocations, whether it is collocation clash or true collocation (Lexical collocation). This explanation below will show the brief result of this research.

1. A. Lexical collocation found in describing trend.

The researcher found many varieties of collocation that was written by the participants of IELTS Test Simulation especially in describing trend, the background knowledge of mastering English gives the impact of making collocation. To make it clear, this result will be divided based on the formulation.

- a. Verb + adverb

The most common collocation found in the test-taker answers were in the form of Verb + Adverb to describe trend. The head word used to describe trend mostly used by the test-taker were: *increase, decrease, and drop* and the pair of that word can be gradually, significantly, steadily etc. For examples *increase gradually, decrease slightly and drop significantly*.

- b. Adverb + verb

For Adverb + Verb Collocation, beside using the adverb to explain how the trend change, such as sharply, gradually or slowly, the test taker also used the combination by using adverb of frequency, such as always and keep. For examples *frequently increase, always increase and gradually decrease*.

- c. Adjective + noun

In this section, the formula of adjective + noun also has the role as collocation to show describing trend which is also considered as correct collocation according to the *iWeb14 Billion Word Web Corpus*. The adjective showed the quality of something such as *steady, significant, good, slight and big*. For example *significant increase, slight decrease and steady growth*.

- d. Verb + preposition

According to the *iWeb14 Billion Word Web Corpus*, preposition collocates with any verbs. For examples *become down, rose up and increase to*.

B. Lexical Collocation Found in Comparison

In describing comparison, the varieties of collocation also found from the participants essays. Many factors affect the collocation. This section below will show the correct collocation based on its formula and has been analyzed by using *iWeb14 Billion Word Web Corpus*.

- a. Adjective + noun

Collocation using this formula is the collocation which mostly used correctly by the test-takers. The participants consider noun can be collocated with any adjectives. For examples high percentage, low consumption, richest area etc.

2. Collocation Clash or Collocation Error Found in Describing Trend and Comparison.

The examples of collocation clash were discussed based on the cause of the error

- a. Inter Language Error

Inter language error is the error or clash in formulation of language expression in writing or speaking because of interference from learner's mother tongue or first language. The following examples are the collocations error :

- Constant Upward (Describing Trend)

The sentence written by the test taker is : A *constant upward* pattern shows in the Central and Eastern Europe.

It can be changed into adjective + noun or verb + adverb. For example *constant increase, raise constantly*.

The cause of this error can be classified as interference of learner's mother tongue. In this case the learners translated Indonesian expression literally "tetap naik/meningkat" into English expression "constant upward" which does not sound natural in English. Constant means tetap, while upward means naik/meningkat. However the expression constant upward does not collocate each other in English.

- Low visitor (Comparison)

Test taker sentence = Tourists who come to Sub-Saharan Africa in 2000 have a *low visitor*...

This is a way to show the quality, not quantity. The word visitor is countable noun, the weakness of this participant is can not be able to differentiate class of word and context. To make it right, the formulation can be noun(unit) + of + noun. For example *few of visitors*.

b. Intra Language Error

This errors can be in the form of overgeneralization. The test takers create a deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language

Such as the following example:

- Little increasement.

Test taker sentence = The sub-Saharan Africa and South America only show very *little increasement*.

There is no word **increasement** in English. This is caused by overgeneralization of the second language use to form a noun. In English one way to form a noun is by adding suffix -ment such as in the word *settle* (v) to become *settlement* (N). In this example, the rule to make a noun is by adding suffix -ment to the word *settle*. Test takers overgeneralize this rule and apply it to the word *increase* to become *increasement*. It results in an error and where combine with the word *little* it causes collocational clash. In English, the noun form of the verb *increase* is also *increase*. To correct this mistake it should be written as *A little increase*.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

a. Conclusion

The result shows that there are 74 lexical collocations found in task 1 (52 collocations in describing trend and 22 collocations in comparison)

and 37 collocation error found in task 1 (15 collocations in describing trend and 22 collocations in comparison).

Every language has its own collocation, the main factor of collocation clash causes is the interference by the mother tongue. Another factor is overgeneralization, of collocation or correct combination of words.

b. Suggestion

Based on the findings of this research, it is suggested that:

1. The approach and teaching of collocation must be given more by the lecturer or teacher for students.. The application like iWeb14 Billion Word Web Corpus can be the solution.
2. The dictionary of collocation must be introduced and used by the student.
3. The practice of collocation has to be used in practice by students, for instance in essay exercise or conversation exercise

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